

## SURVEILLANCE REPORT

# Weekly influenza surveillance overview

1 November 2013

## Main surveillance developments in week 43/2013 (21–27 Oct 2013)

*This first page contains the main developments for this week and can be printed separately or together with the more detailed information that follows.*

During week 43/2013:

- All 27 reporting countries experienced low intensity of clinical influenza activity.
- Of 351 sentinel specimens tested by 21 countries, four specimens (1%) were positive for influenza virus.
- Three hospitalised laboratory-confirmed influenza cases were reported by the UK.

During the first few weeks of the 2013–2014 influenza season, there has been no evidence of sustained influenza activity in Europe.

**Sentinel surveillance of influenza-like illness (ILI)/ acute respiratory infection (ARI):** Low intensity was reported by all 27 reporting countries. For more information, [click here](#).

**Virological surveillance:** Twenty-one countries tested sentinel specimens, 1% of which were positive for influenza virus. For more information, [click here](#).

**Hospital surveillance of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases.** The UK reported three hospitalised cases infected with influenza viruses. For more information, [click here](#).

# Sentinel surveillance (ILI/ARI)

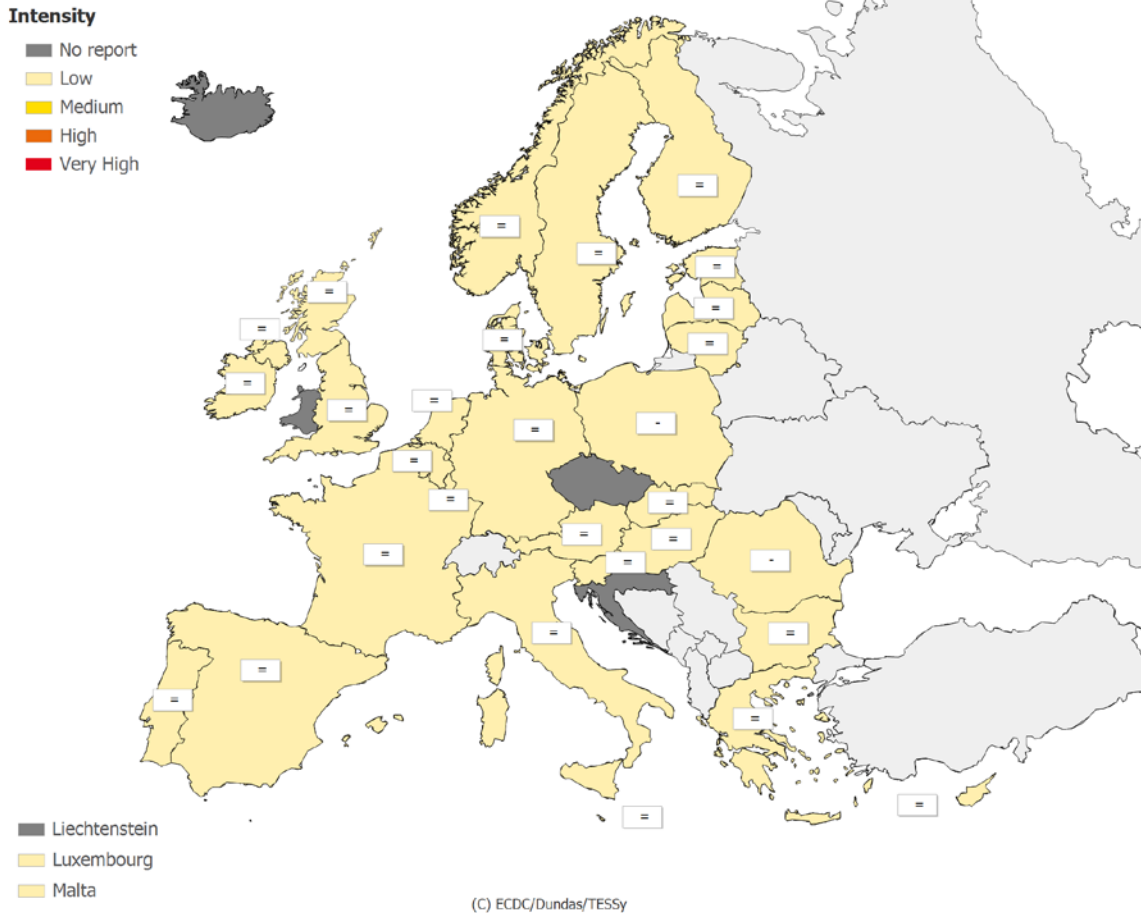
## Weekly analysis – epidemiology

For week 43/2013, clinical data were reported by 27 countries, all of which experienced low-intensity influenza activity, the lowest category of reporting (Table 1, Map1).

Of the five countries that reported local or sporadic patterns of influenza activity, two (Denmark and Sweden) had laboratory-confirmed sentinel influenza cases (Table 1, Map 2).

Decreasing trends were reported by Poland and Romania while all other countries reported stable trends (Table 1, Map 2). Nevertheless, in all countries the incidence of ILI/ARI was below the epidemic threshold.

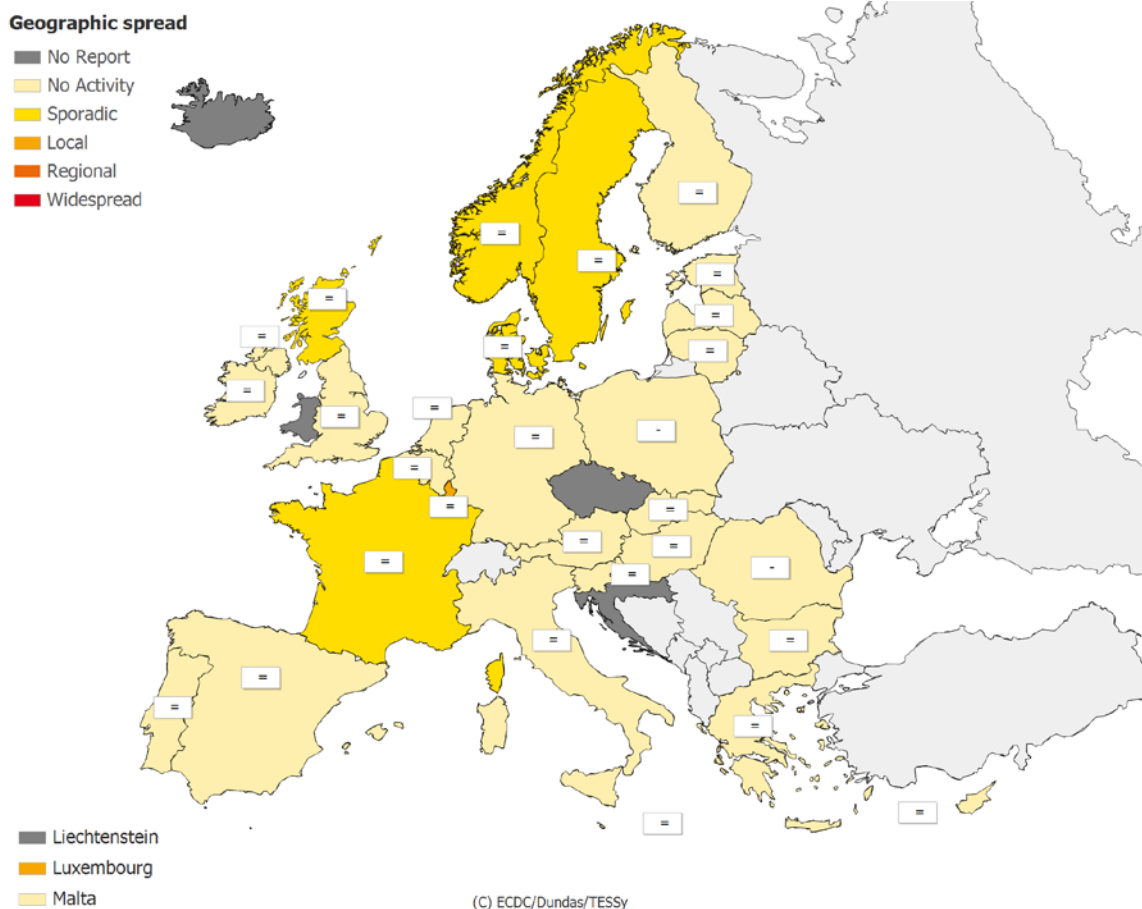
**Map 1. Intensity for week 43/2013**



\* A type/subtype is reported as dominant when at least ten samples have been detected as influenza positive in the country and of those > 40 % are positive for the type/subtype.  
 Legend:

<b>No report</b>	Intensity level was not reported	+	Increasing clinical activity
<b>Low</b>	No influenza activity or influenza at baseline levels	-	Decreasing clinical activity
<b>Medium</b>	Usual levels of influenza activity	=	Stable clinical activity
<b>High</b>	Higher than usual levels of influenza activity		
<b>Very high</b>	Particularly severe levels of influenza activity		

Map 2. Geographic spread for week 43/2013



\* A type/subtype is reported as dominant when at least ten samples have been detected as influenza positive in the country and of those > 40 % are positive for the type/subtype.

Legend:

<b>No report</b>	Activity level was not reported	+	Increasing clinical activity
<b>No activity</b>	No evidence of influenza virus activity (clinical activity remains at baseline levels)	-	Decreasing clinical activity
<b>Sporadic</b>	Isolated cases of laboratory confirmed influenza infection	=	Stable clinical activity
<b>Local outbreak</b>	Increased influenza activity in local areas (e.g. a city) within a region, or outbreaks in two or more institutions (e.g. schools) within a region (laboratory confirmed)		
<b>Regional activity</b>	Influenza activity above baseline levels in one or more regions with a population comprising less than 50% of the country's total population (laboratory confirmed)		
<b>Widespread</b>	Influenza activity above baseline levels in one or more regions with a population comprising 50% or more of the country's population (laboratory confirmed)		

**Table 1. Epidemiological and virological overview by country, week 43/2013**

Country	Intensity	Geographic spread	Trend	No. of sentinel specimens	Dominant type	Percentage positive	ILI per 100 000	ARI per 100 000	Epidemiological overview	Virological overview
Austria	Low	No activity	Stable	0	None	0.0	786.5	-	Graphs	Graphs
Belgium	Low	No activity	Stable	14	None	0.0	25.6	1382.4	Graphs	Graphs
Bulgaria	Low	No activity	Stable	0	None	0.0	-	588.6	Graphs	Graphs
Croatia				0	None	0.0	-	-	Graphs	Graphs
Cyprus	Low	No activity	Stable	-	-	0.0	-*	-*	Graphs	Graphs
Czech Republic				15	None	6.7	-	-	Graphs	Graphs
Denmark	Low	Sporadic	Stable	4	None	25.0	24.3	-	Graphs	Graphs
Estonia	Low	No activity	Stable	1	None	0.0	5.2	230.2	Graphs	Graphs
Finland	Low	No activity	Stable	13	None	0.0	-	-	Graphs	Graphs
France	Low	Sporadic	Stable	25	None	0.0	-	1374.1	Graphs	Graphs
Germany	Low	No activity	Stable	45	None	0.0	-	1103.6	Graphs	Graphs
Greece	Low	No activity	Stable	0	None	0.0	97.3	-	Graphs	Graphs
Hungary	Low	No activity	Stable	2	None	0.0	36.1	-	Graphs	Graphs
Iceland				0	-	0.0	-	-	Graphs	Graphs
Ireland	Low	No activity	Stable	6	None	0.0	3.9	-	Graphs	Graphs
Italy	Low	No activity	Stable	-	-	0.0	50.8	-	Graphs	Graphs
Latvia	Low	No activity	Stable	0	None	0.0	0.0	883.0	Graphs	Graphs
Lithuania	Low	No activity	Stable	8	None	0.0	0.6	582.9	Graphs	Graphs
Luxembourg	Low	Local	Stable	2	-	0.0	-*	-*	Graphs	Graphs
Malta	Low	No activity	Stable	-	-	0.0	-*	-*	Graphs	Graphs
Netherlands	Low	No activity	Stable	6	None	0.0	18.1	-	Graphs	Graphs
Norway	Low	Sporadic	Stable	3	None	0.0	23.8	-	Graphs	Graphs
Poland	Low	No activity	Decreasing	4	None	0.0	226.6	-	Graphs	Graphs
Portugal	Low	No activity	Stable	1	None	0.0	9.1	-	Graphs	Graphs
Romania	Low	No activity	Decreasing	5	-	0.0	1.5	623.9	Graphs	Graphs
Slovakia	Low	No activity	Stable	1	None	0.0	127.9	1458.9	Graphs	Graphs
Slovenia	Low	No activity	Stable	8	None	0.0	1.4	796.1	Graphs	Graphs
Spain	Low	No activity	Stable	48	None	2.1	9.8	-	Graphs	Graphs
Sweden	Low	Sporadic	Stable	39	-	2.6	6.7	-	Graphs	Graphs
UK - England	Low	No activity	Stable	70	None	0.0	3.8	176.4	Graphs	Graphs
UK - Northern Ireland	Low	No activity	Stable	-	-	0.0	14.4	349.3	Graphs	Graphs
UK - Scotland	Low	Sporadic	Stable	31	None	0.0	8.4	349.9	Graphs	Graphs
UK - Wales				-	-	0.0	-	-		
<b>Europe</b>				<b>351</b>		<b>1.1</b>			Graphs	Graphs

\*Incidence per 100 000 is not calculated for these countries as no population denominator is provided. Liechtenstein does not report to the European Influenza Surveillance Network.

## Description of the system

Surveillance is based on nationally organised sentinel networks of physicians, mostly general practitioners (GPs), covering at least 1 to 5% of the population in their countries. All EU/EEA Member States (except Liechtenstein) participate. Depending on their country's choice, each sentinel physician reports the weekly number of patients seen with ILI, ARI, or both to a national focal point. From the national level, both numerator and denominator data are then reported to the European Surveillance System (TESSy) database. Additional semi-quantitative indicators of intensity, geographic spread, and trend of influenza activity at the national level are also reported.

# Virological surveillance

## Weekly analysis – virology

In week 43/2013, 21 countries tested 351 sentinel specimens, of which four (1.1%) were positive for influenza virus. One of the three type A viruses was not subtyped, one was subtyped as A(H1)pdm09 and one as A(H3); one was a B virus for which the lineage is unknown (Tables 1–2).

In addition, 24 non-sentinel source specimens (e.g. specimens collected for diagnostic purposes in hospitals) were positive for influenza virus, 21 type A and three type B. All five subtyped influenza A viruses were A(H1)pdm09 (Table 2).

Since week 40/2013, no antigenic characterisations of influenza viruses have been reported. Six viruses have been genetically characterised: one A(H1)pdm09 group 6 representative A/St Petersburg/27/2011, four A(H3) clade repr. A/Victoria/208/2009 – A/Texas/50/2012 subgroup (3C) and one B(Yam)-lineage clade 2 representative B/Massachusetts/02/2012.

More details on viruses circulating between 1 January and 31 May 2013 can be found in the [September report](#) prepared by the European Reference Laboratory Network for Human Influenza (ERLI-Net) coordination team.

Since week 40/2013, no antiviral susceptibility against neuraminidase inhibitors has been reported.

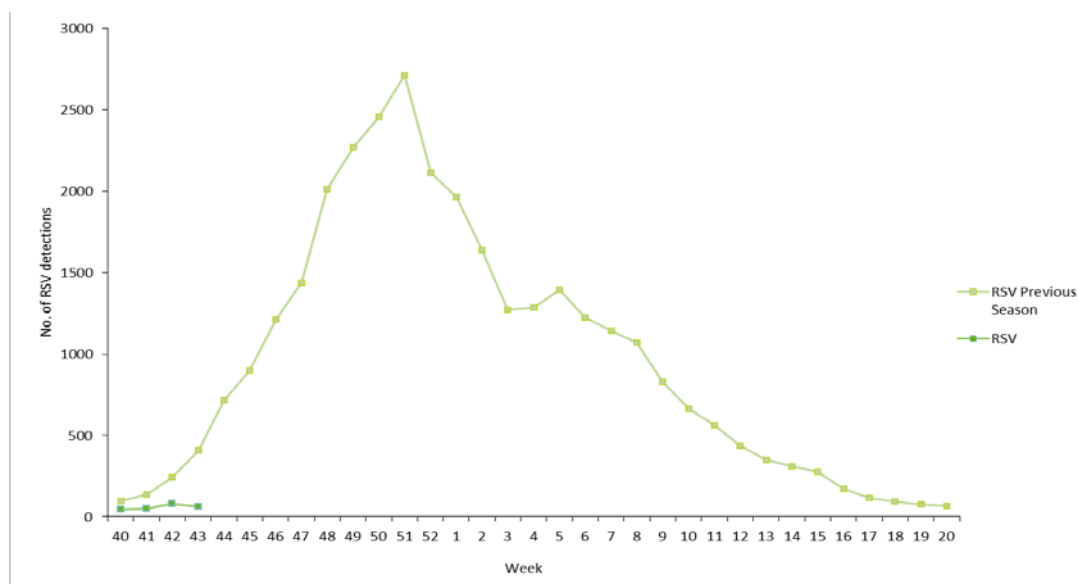
For week 43/2013, six countries reported 63 respiratory syncytial virus detections. In comparison with the previous season, when 408 RSV detections were reported in week 43/2012, the RSV detections are still at a low, baseline level (Figure 1).

**Table 2. Weekly and cumulative influenza virus detections by type, subtype and surveillance system, weeks 40–43/2013**

Virus type/subtype	Current period Sentinel	Current period Non-sentinel	Season Sentinel	Season Non-sentinel
Influenza A	3	21	8	59
A(H1)pdm09	1	5	5	14
A(H3)	1	0	2	16
A(subtype unknown)	1	16	1	29
Influenza B	1	3	4	15
B(Vic) lineage	0	0	0	0
B(Yam) lineage	0	0	0	2
Unknown lineage	1	3	4	13
<b>Total influenza</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>74</b>

Note: A(H1)pdm09 and A(H3) include both N-subtyped and non-N-subtyped viruses.

**Figure 1. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) detections, sentinel and non-sentinel, weeks 40-43/2013**



## Description of the system

According to the nationally defined sampling strategy, sentinel physicians take nasal or pharyngeal swabs from patients with ILI, ARI or both and send the specimens to influenza-specific reference laboratories for virus detection, (sub-)typing, antigenic or genetic characterisation and antiviral susceptibility testing.

For details of the current virus strains recommended by WHO for vaccine preparation [click here](#).



# Hospital surveillance – severe influenza disease

## Weekly analysis of hospitalised laboratory-confirmed influenza cases

For week 43/2013, three hospitalised laboratory-confirmed influenza cases were reported by the UK. One of the cases was infected with influenza A (not subtyped), one with A(H1N1)pdm09 and one with type B influenza virus (Table 3).

Since week 40/2013, nine hospitalised laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported by Ireland, and the UK. Four patients were infected with influenza B virus, and of five type A viruses detected in the other patients, two were A(H1)pdm09 and three were not subtyped (Table 3).

**Table 3. Number of hospitalised laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by influenza type and subtype, week 43/2013 and cumulative for the season**

Pathogen	Number of cases during current week	Cumulative number of cases since the start of the season
Influenza A	2	5
A(H1)pdm09	1	2
A(H3)		
A(subtyping not performed)	1	3
Influenza B	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>

## The EuroMOMO mortality monitoring system

Week 43: All-cause mortality has been within the normal range for all reporting countries.

Further details are available on <http://www.euromomo.eu/>.

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*This report was written by an editorial team at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC): Cornelia Adlhoch, Eeva Broberg, Julien Beauté and René Snacken. The bulletin text was reviewed by European Reference Laboratory Network for Human Influenza (ERLI-Net) coordination team: Adam Meijer, Rod Daniels, John McCauley and Maria Zambon. On behalf of the EISN members, the bulletin text was reviewed by Maja Sočan (Inštitut za varovanje zdravja), Allison Waters (University College Dublin) and Tyra Grove Krause (Statens Serum Institut, Copenhagen). In addition, the report is reviewed by experts of WHO Regional Office for Europe.*

*Maps and commentary published in this Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview (WISO) do not represent a statement on the part of ECDC or its partners on the legal or border status of the countries and territories shown.*

*All data published in the WISO are up-to-date on the day of publication. Past this date, however, published data should not be used for longitudinal comparisons as countries tend to retrospectively update their database.*

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