

The objective of the bulletin is to report new health events occurring outside and inside EpiSouth area that have potential implications on EpiSouth population. It does not aim to provide an exhaustive review of international alerts. Since 2006, The French public health Institute (InVS) is issuing an online epidemic intelligence bulletin (Bulletin hebdomadaire International - BHI). In order to limit duplication and to make this already verified information available to a larger audience, information relating to health events of interest for EpiSouth population are translated and integrated in the relevant e-web sections. Despite all verifications, WP6 team would not be responsible for potential errors. The recipient is responsible for the cautious use of this information. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is liable for the use that may be made of the information contained in this report. Data maps and commentary used in this document do not imply any opinion of EpiSouth countries or its partners on the legal status of the countries and territories shown or concerning their borders.

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- **A(H5N1) Human influenza – none**
- **A(H5N1) Avian influenza – none**
- **“OUTSIDE” Events:**
 - **Melamine milk contamination – China**
- **“INSIDE” Events – none**
- **World – Pandemic A/H1N1/2009 influenza**

Location: World	Event: A(H5N1) – Human	<u>Comments</u>
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No human cases of A(H5N1) reported this week

Location: South Korea	Event: A(H5N1) – Epizootic	<u>Comments</u>
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No avian influenza outbreak reported this week

REPORT OF NEW HEALTH EVENTS OCCURRING OUTSIDE THE EPISOUTH AREA (not occurring in one or several EpiSouth countries)

Area: China	Event: Melamine (contaminated milk)	<u>Comments</u>
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Background

In 2008, in Mainland China, fraudulent milk contamination with melamine caused the hospitalisation of more than 50,000 children under the age of 3 yrs (for urolithiasis) and 6 deaths ([cf thematic note on melamine-China](#)). Cases were also reported in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

Current Status:

- On 2nd December 2009, Chinese health authorities discovered 5.2 tons of powder milk contaminated with melamine.
- The milk originated from the "Jingqiao" company located in the province of Shaanxi, where it had been kept illegally since September 2008.

According to the Chinese authorities:

- The 5.2 tons were sold in September 2009, to the “Nanning Yueqian Food Additive Company” in the southern province of Guangxi.
- The contaminated stocks were seized before being market release.
- To date, no case of urolithiasis associated with the consumption of milk has been reported.

- According to authorities, these contaminated lots are those from previous contaminated stocks which were held illegally since 2008. This event is not a new episode of fraudulent contamination.
- However, the recent discovery of large stockpiles of contaminated milk dating of 2008, suggests that all inventory has not been destroyed despite measures implemented at that time by Chinese authorities.
- Further releases of contaminated milk stocks cannot be excluded and the situation should be followed up.

Location: World Event: Pandemic A/H1N1/2009

EpiSouth region

As of 14 December 2009, a total of 1 313 deaths among biologically confirmed A/H1N1/2009 cases have been reported in the EpiSouth region. 354 new A(H1N1)2009 related deaths were reported since 07 December 2009 (by more than 2/3 of EpiSouth countries):

16 in Algeria, 4 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3 in Croatia, 2 in Cyprus, 17 in Egypt, 24 in Mainland France, 1 in FYROM, 7 in Greece, 1 in Israel, 7 in Italy, 1 in Montenegro, 18 in Morocco, 7 in Palestine, 6 in Romania, 11 in Serbia, 53 in Syria, 39 in Spain, 6 in Tunisia and 115 in Turkey.

Some countries have recorded their highest weekly numbers of deaths since the beginning of the pandemic in recent weeks.

In week 49, influenza activity was

- increasing in **Algeria**,
 - high and increasing in **Serbia** and **Tunisia**,
 - high and stable in **Albania**, **France**, **Greece**, **Slovenia** and **Turkey**,
 - medium and decreasing in **Bulgaria**, **Croatia**, **Israel**, **Italy**, **Spain** and **Romania**,
- In **Algeria**, the epidemic has amplified over the past weeks. A(H1N1)2009 death toll reached 24 and A(H1N1)2009 was largely predominant among consultations for influenza-like illness. The systematic confirmation of cases (only based on consultations at reference hospitals) was stopped on December 3rd.
 - In **Morocco** (as of 13 December 2009), the country reported 23 A(H1N1)2009 deaths and 2 461 confirmed cases, of which 985 (40%) were recorded in schools.
 - In **Tunisia** since mid-November 2009, all regions have been affected. For 4 consecutive weeks, an increasing trend has been observed. High viral circulation has been reported for weeks 49-50 through the national sentinel surveillance system (200 sites nationwide). Extrapolations made by the national reference laboratory estimated the A(H1N1)2009 new cases' at 36 692 for week 50, and the cumulative number of cases since the beginning of November at 107 785, representing 1,1% of the population.
 - In **Italy** for week 49, the sentinel surveillance system of community health physicians (Influnet) reported a sharp decrease in the incidence of influenza like illness (3.7 per 1,000 inh. in week 49 versus 9.6 per 1,000 the previous week).
 - In week 50, (7-13 December 2009), A(H1N1)2009 influenza virus circulation remains high and stable across **Mainland France**. 722 000 consultations for ARIs were reported in week 50 by the sentinel surveillance system for influenza-like illness and acute respiratory infections (ARIs). A(H1N1)2009 was identified in 54 % of samples tested. It accounted for the great majority of influenza viruses isolated. Visits to emergency departments for influenza are declining in most regions and the weekly numbers of deaths and severe cases stabilised (41 severe cases for week 50). Of the 150 deaths reported since the beginning of the pandemic, 25 did not present underlying conditions. In week 50, French health authorities reported 3 new cases of resistance to oseltamivir (5 detected to date). The occurrence of sporadic cases of oseltamivir resistance does not constitute an unexpected event.

Global trends (outside the EpiSouth region)

- As of 14 December 2009, **10 863 deaths** related to A/H1N1/2009 have been reported worldwide (including EpiSouth countries).
- Since 07 December 2009, the following trends have been observed:
- **Europe (non-EpiSouth countries):** In week 49, **Eastern** and **Central European** countries experienced the highest influenza activity in the region (*Euroflu* network). It was very high but decreasing in **Lithuania**, high and stable in **Estonia**, high and decreasing in **Latvia, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland** and **Sweden**, moderately increasing in **Hungary** and **Slovakia** and moderate and decreasing in the remaining countries. According to the European network for influenza (*Euroflu*), positivity rates of influenza viruses decreased in week 49 (32% versus 38% the previous week). The positivity rate of A(H1N1)2009 among influenza viruses was 92% versus 91% the previous week.
- In **Russia**, influenza activity remains intense but decreasing.
- In the **Middle-East** (excluding EpiSouth countries)
 - **10 new deaths** were notified since 07 December: 8 deaths in **Iraq** and 2 in **Oman**.
 - To date, **363 A/H1N1/2009 related deaths** have been reported among **non-EpiSouth countries** of the region.
- In the **United States**, influenza activity decreases across all States including New York. The number of consultations for influenza-like illness remains over the national seasonal threshold (2.3%) despite the decrease (2.7% versus 3.7% the week before). Mortality attributable to influenza and pneumonia has been over the seasonal threshold for 10 weeks. A(H1N1)2009 death toll reached 2000 since the beginning of the pandemic, for a cumulative mortality rate of 6.3/ million inh.
- In **Canada**, influenza activity remains high and continues to decrease across all regions and territories. Hospitalisations and admissions to intensive care units continue to decrease. The total number of deaths since the beginning of the pandemic reaches 375 in week 50, for a cumulative mortality rate of 11.1/million inh.
- In **Mexico**, Acute respiratory infections and ILI decreased but influenza activity remains high. The numbers of confirmed cases and deaths are 2 to 2.5 times higher than those recorded during the peak observed during the summer. The A(H1N1)2009 confirmed death toll reaches 735, for a cumulative mortality rate of 6.7/million inh.
- In the **Caribbean** and **Central America**, influenza activity remains weak to moderate with stable to decreasing trends.
- Influenza activity remains low in most **South American** countries.
- In **Asia**, A(H1N1)2009 virus circulation is heterogeneous. In the South (tropical region including **Thailand** and **Indonesia**) virus circulation is low. However, it increases in certain countries such as **Sri Lanka** and **India** without any significant impact on health infrastructure. In the North, it is more intense, except in **Hong-Kong** where the epidemic declines after a first peak in September 2009.
- In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, data available suggest virus circulation is ongoing across the continent except **South Africa**. According to WHO, A(H1N1)2009 predominates in the **South and East Africa** and virus circulation continues to be reported in **Madagascar**.
- In the **Pacific region**, influenza activity remains low in most countries.