

INFLUENZA SITUATION – 2025/2026 SEASON (Nineteenth Week, up to 10.05.2026)

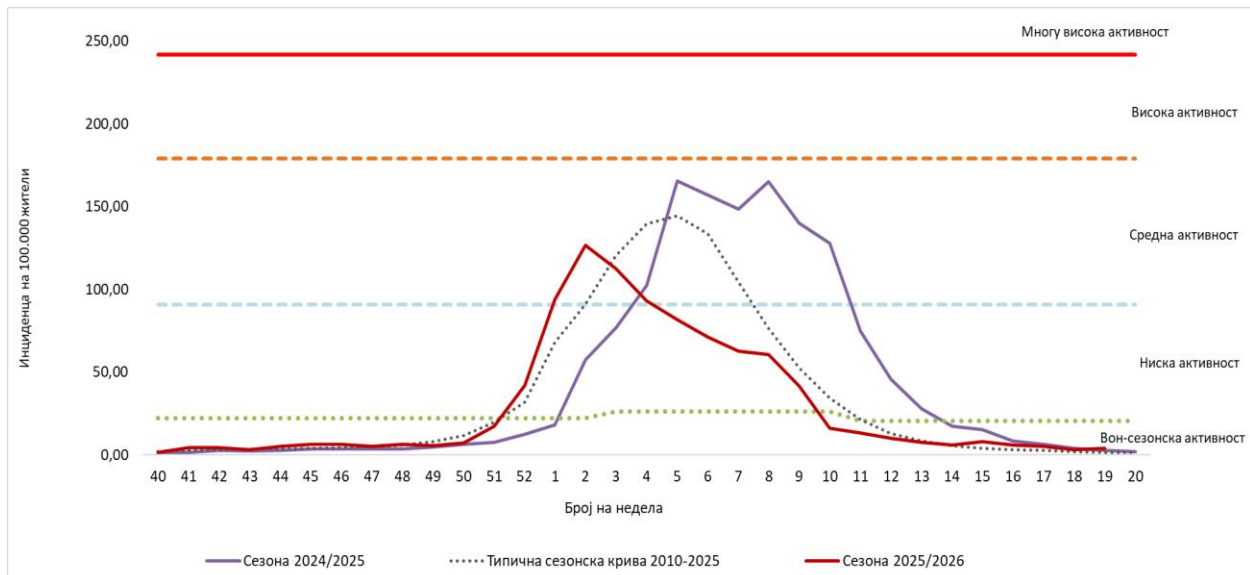
Weekly Data

During the 19th week of 2026 (04–10.05.2026), 69 cases ($I=3.8/100,000$) of influenza/influenza-like illness were reported in Macedonia through group notifications, representing a 23.2% increase compared to the previous week ($n=56$).

Compared to the 19th week of the previous season ($n=50$), the number of reported cases this week increased by 38.0%, while compared to the number for the 19th week of the typical epidemic curve (modeled from the last 15 seasons) ($n=30$), it increased by 2.3 times. (Figure 1)

During the 19th week, the registered incidence remained within the range of off-season activity. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Intensity levels and weekly distribution of influenza/influenza-like illness cases according to the expected epidemic curve for 2010–2025, season 2024/2025, and season 2025/2026.



Regarding the age distribution, 39 cases were reported among persons aged 15–64 years, 16 cases among persons over 65 years of age, while in the remaining age groups the number of cases was ≤ 10 . The highest incidence ($8.3/100,000$) was registered among children aged 0–4 years.

The reported cases originated from 9 Centers for Public Health (CPH/Regional Units): Prilep – 27, Skopje – 18, while in Tetovo, Kumanovo, Shtip, Radovish, Strumica, Gostivar, and Ohrid the number of cases was ≤ 10 . In the remaining CPH/Regional Units, no influenza or influenza-like illness cases were reported.

VIROLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE

During the 19th reporting week of 2026, 41 samples from routine and SARI surveillance were received at the virology laboratory of the Institute of Public Health for laboratory testing, simultaneously tested for Influenza, SARS-CoV-2, and/or RSV.

Out of the total tested samples, one positive influenza case was detected – Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09.

Additionally, one SARS-CoV-2 case and six RSV cases were detected (three RSV-A and three RSV-B).

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE – Cumulative Data

In the 2025/2026 season, the total number of influenza/influenza-like illness cases reached 17,194 (I=936.1/100,000).

Compared to the same period of the previous season (n=26,005), the number of reported cases decreased by 33.9%, while compared to the model based on the last 15 seasons (n=20,784), it decreased by 17.3%.

Cumulatively, cases were reported from all CPH/Regional Units. The highest number of cases (n=5,600) was registered in the territory of Skopje, while the highest cumulative incidence (I=2,754.5/100,000) was recorded in the territory of Debar (n=527). (Table 1 in the Appendix)

Regarding the distribution of cases by age group, the highest number of cases was reported in the age group covering the majority of the population (15–64 years) – 10,007 cases (58.2%), while the highest incidence (2,078.3/100,000) was registered in the 0–4 years age group, followed by the 5–14 years age group (1,348.5/100,000). (Table 1 in the Appendix)

The monthly distribution of influenza/influenza-like illness cases (Table 1 in the Appendix) shows that the largest number of cases were reported in January – 9,315 cases or 54.2%.

During the influenza season, four influenza-associated deaths were registered.

VIROLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE – Cumulative Data

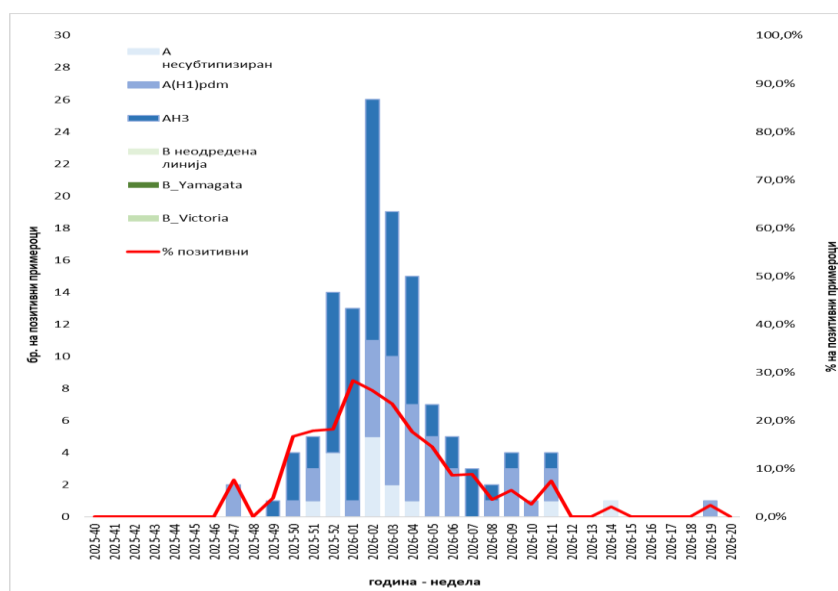
Since the beginning of the 2025/2026 season, up to week 19/2026, a total of 1,377 samples from routine and sentinel SARI surveillance were received at the virology laboratory of the Institute of Public Health of the Republic of North Macedonia. All received samples were tested for the presence of influenza viruses, SARS-CoV-2, and/or RSV.

A total of 127 positive influenza cases were detected:

- Influenza A – 127
- Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 – 42 (33.1%)
- Influenza A(H3N2) – 70 (55.1%)
- Influenza A – unsubtype – 15 (11.8%)
- Influenza B – 0

A total of 29 positive SARS-CoV-2 cases were registered. In addition, 167 positive cases of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) were detected (RSV unsubtype – 5, RSV-A – 49, and RSV-B – 113). Furthermore, 5 other respiratory viruses were detected among the tested samples.

Figure 3. Weekly distribution of the number and percentage of positive influenza samples, routine and sentinel surveillance, Republic of North Macedonia, 2025/2026.



EPIDEMIOLOGICAL COMMENT

The reported weekly incidence remains within the range of off-season activity. The results obtained from virological influenza surveillance indicate that there is currently no influenza virus activity. The positivity rate has remained below the 10% threshold for fourteen consecutive weeks.

According to these data, Macedonia is experiencing a low intensity of influenza virus circulation.

INFLUENZA VACCINATION

Vaccination against seasonal influenza is the most effective protection against this disease. The Institute of Public Health recommends vaccination for the entire population, especially for individuals belonging to the so-called high-risk groups (in accordance with WHO recommendations): older adults (over 65 years), children aged 6–59 months, persons older than 6 months with chronic diseases, pregnant women, and healthcare workers.

- For the 2025/2026 season, the Ministry of Health provided free quadrivalent influenza vaccines in a total quantity of 80,000 doses intended for priority population groups.

According to data from the Administration for Electronic Health, a total of 77,281 individuals from high-risk population categories were vaccinated with free vaccines.

- An additional 2,400 doses of commercial vaccines were procured by the Centers for Public Health for the remaining population not included in the above-mentioned groups.

According to data from the Administration for Electronic Health, a total of 1,843 individuals were vaccinated with commercial vaccines.

As of week 19, a total of 79,124 individuals in Macedonia have been vaccinated with either free or commercial vaccines.

EUROPEAN REGION

Source: ERVISS

According to the ERVISS report published for week 10 of 2026 regarding influenza virus activity across the WHO European Region:

- Rates of influenza-like illness and/or acute respiratory infection were above baseline levels in 1 out of 27 countries in the WHO European Region.
- Influenza circulation remains at interseasonal levels across the region, with influenza type B most frequently detected in primary healthcare surveillance, while type A predominates in sentinel surveillance in secondary healthcare.
- Regional indicators for SARS-CoV-2 activity remained at baseline levels.
- RSV circulation is returning to interseasonal levels in both primary and secondary healthcare settings, although it remains elevated in several countries. Children under 5 years of age continue to account for the largest proportional burden of RSV infections.