

Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants of interest and variants of concern

Geographic spread and prevalence of VOCs

Globally, from 26 August to 26 September 2022, 106 735 SARS-CoV-2 sequences were shared through GISAID. Among these, 106 686 sequences were the Omicron variant of concern (VOC), accounting for 99.9% of sequences reported globally in the past 30 days.

There continues to be increased diversity within Omicron and within its descendent lineages. A number of these Omicron descendent lineages are under monitoringⁱ. Globally, and as of the epidemiological week 36 (5 to 11 September 2022), BA.5 descendent lineages continue to be dominant accounting for 81.2% of sequences, followed by BA.4 descendent lineages (including BA.4.6) which account for 8.1%, and BA.2 descendent lineages (including BA.2.75) which account for 2.9% of sequences. During the reporting week (5 to 11 September), unassigned sequences (presumed to be Omicron) account for 7.8% of sequences submitted to GISAID.

For more information on the assessment of SARS-CoV-2 variants and the WHO classification, refer to Annex 2.

Additional resources

- [Tracking SARS-CoV-2 Variants](#)
- [COVID-19 new variants: Knowledge gaps and research](#)
- [Genomic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2: a guide to implementation for maximum impact on public health](#)
- [VIEW-hub: repository for the most relevant and recent vaccine data](#)

ⁱ WHO tracking SARS-CoV-2 variants