

Taiwan records first omicron case in traveler from Africa

December 11 2021



People wear face masks to help protect against the spread of the coronavirus in Taipei, Taiwan, Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021. Taiwan has recorded its first case of the omicron variant in a passenger who returned from Eswatini, the southern African kingdom, on Dec. 8, according to the island's health officials. Credit: AP Photo/Chiang Ying-ying, File

Taiwan has recorded its first case of the omicron variant in a passenger who recently traveled to the southern African country of Eswatini, health officials said Saturday.

The [passenger](#), a Taiwanese woman in her 30s who returned on Dec. 8, is now in quarantine in hospital, according to the Central Epidemic Command Center, which is in charge of the island's pandemic response. Passengers who sat near her on the plane have tested negative so far.

Taiwan reported 10 new coronavirus cases on Saturday, all of which were identified in travelers entering from abroad.

The self-ruling island has a strict two-week quarantine on arrival and has sealed its borders off to all but residents and citizens, with few exceptions. There is little community transmission within its borders of the disease and there has been few restrictions on movement internally in recent months. Mask wearing is nearly universal.

While the [omicron variant](#) is called a "variant of concern" by the World Health Organization, scientists are still working to determine how it may compare with the predominant delta variant in terms of transmissibility and severity.

Taiwan has reported 16,731 COVID-19 cases in total and 848 deaths.

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