

# Influenza monthly update | March 2018

In the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, influenza activity continue to decrease in the month of March in many countries reporting data to FluNet and EMFLU namely, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian territory, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia.

## Influenza activity by sub-type

- In March 2018, no new cases of human influenza A(H5N1) were reported in Egypt.
- In the northern Africa influenza transmission zone, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt reported co-circulation of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, A(H3N2) and influenza B
- In the Western Asia influenza transmission zone, influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 was detected with A(H3N2) and influenza B virus in Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Jordan reported A(H3N2) and influenza B; Iraq reported circulation of A(H1N1)pdm09; while oPt reported circulation of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and influenza B virus.
- In southern Asia transmission zone, Afghanistan reported circulation of A(H1N1)pdm09 and influenza B; while Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan reported co-circulation of all seasonal influenza viruses.

### Source of transmission zones:

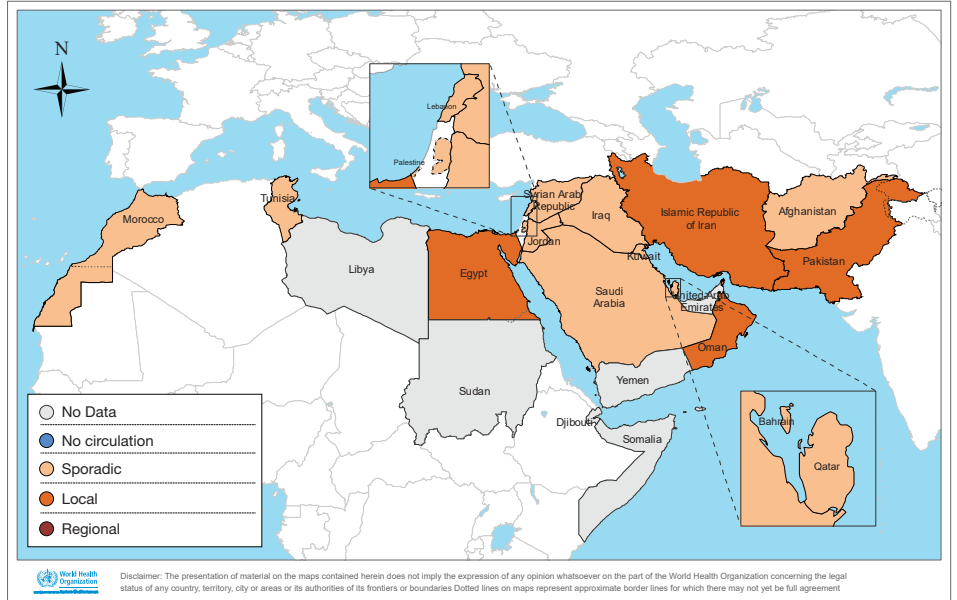
[http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/transmission\\_zones/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/transmission_zones/en/)

- Figure 2 shows the weekly distribution of influenza subtypes.

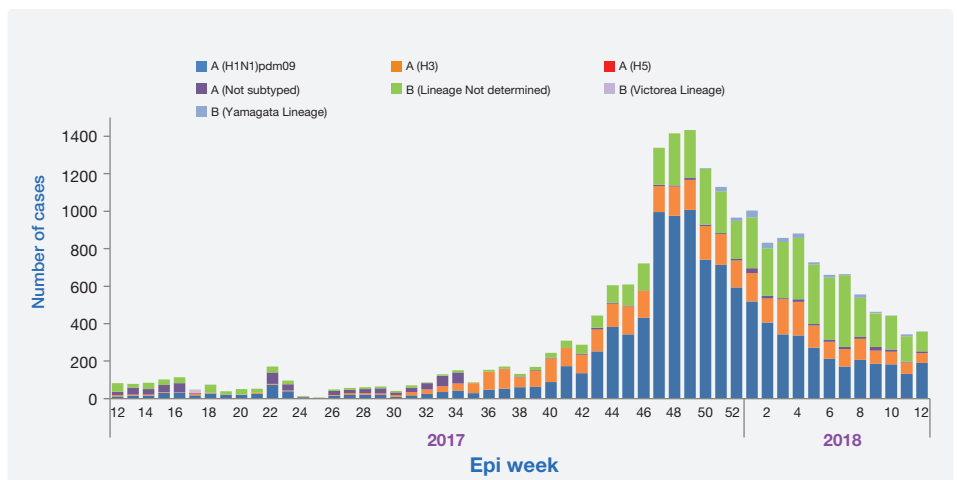
## Circulating influenza viruses by subtype

- During March 2018, national influenza centres and influenza laboratories in the Region tested a total of 9357 specimens for influenza viruses of which 2314 tested positive (25%).
- The average percentage of positivity rates is 25%, with highest positivity rate recorded in Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, oPt and Tunisia.
- Of the viruses tested, 1031 (45%) were influenza A viruses, including 749 (32%) influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus and 242 (11%) influenza A(H3N2) virus. Influenza B virus accounted for 1282 (55%) including 1231 (53%) influenza B (Lineage Not determined) and 51 (2%) B (Yamagata Lineage) (Figure 3).

**Figure 1. Influenza geographic spread in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, March 2018**

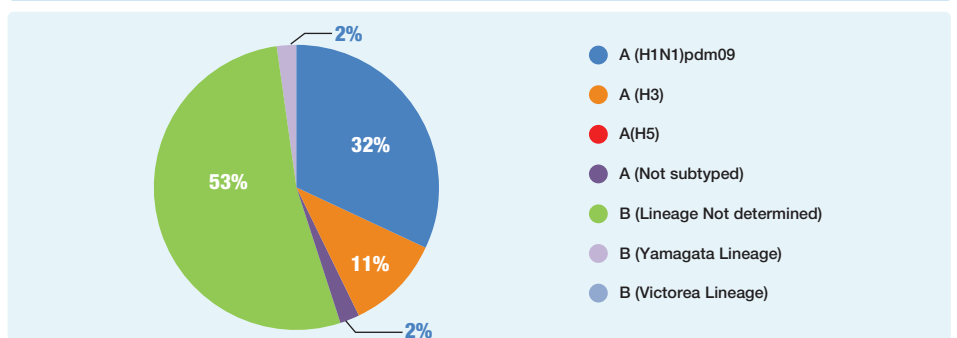


**Figure 2. Positive cases of influenza by subtype, Epi week 12/2017–2018**



Source: [Flunet](#) and [EMFLU](#)

**Figure 3. Circulating influenza viruses in the Eastern Mediterranean Region by subtype, Epi week 9-12, 2018**



Source: [Flunet](#) and [EMFLU](#)