

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 24 April 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 145 214 047 reported cases and 3 079 236 associated deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 2.1%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 8 831 153 cases, which represent about 6.1% of the global count, with 177 235 associated deaths (CFR 2%). Most countries in the Region are in the community transmission phase.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, the country that has reported the highest number of total cases in the Region is Islamic Republic of Iran (2 377 039 cases; 26.9% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (1 025 288; 11.6%) and Pakistan (795 627; 9%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (69 120; CFR 2.9%) followed by Pakistan (17 117; CFR 2.2%) and Iraq (15 217; CFR 1.5%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19.3%) followed by Syrian Arab Republic (6.9%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.2%) followed by United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

During epidemiological week 16, the Region reported a decrease in cases of 2.5% when compared to the previous week (377 571 cases compared to 387 375 cases). On the other hand, an increase of 14.4% was observed for associated deaths (6354 deaths compared to 5553 deaths).

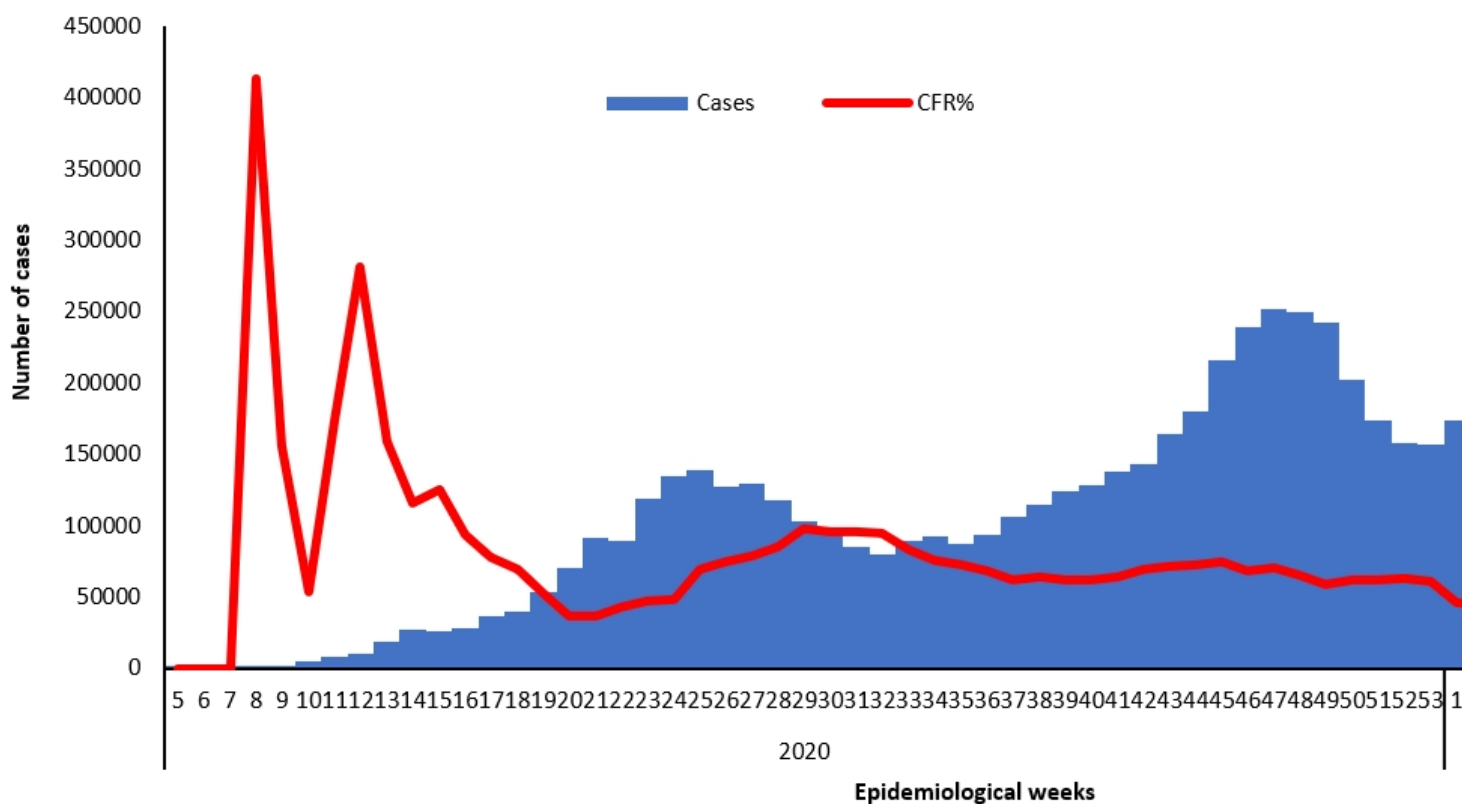
Islamic Republic of Iran, Yemen, and Tunisia reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 16. The cumulative number of cases increased from 2 215 445 to 2 377 039 in Islamic Republic of Iran (7.3% weekly increase), from 5774 to 6109 in Yemen (5.8% weekly increase) and from 285 490 to 300 342 in Tunisia (5.2% weekly increase). Djibouti, Qatar and Syrian Arab Republic had the largest relative increase in deaths.

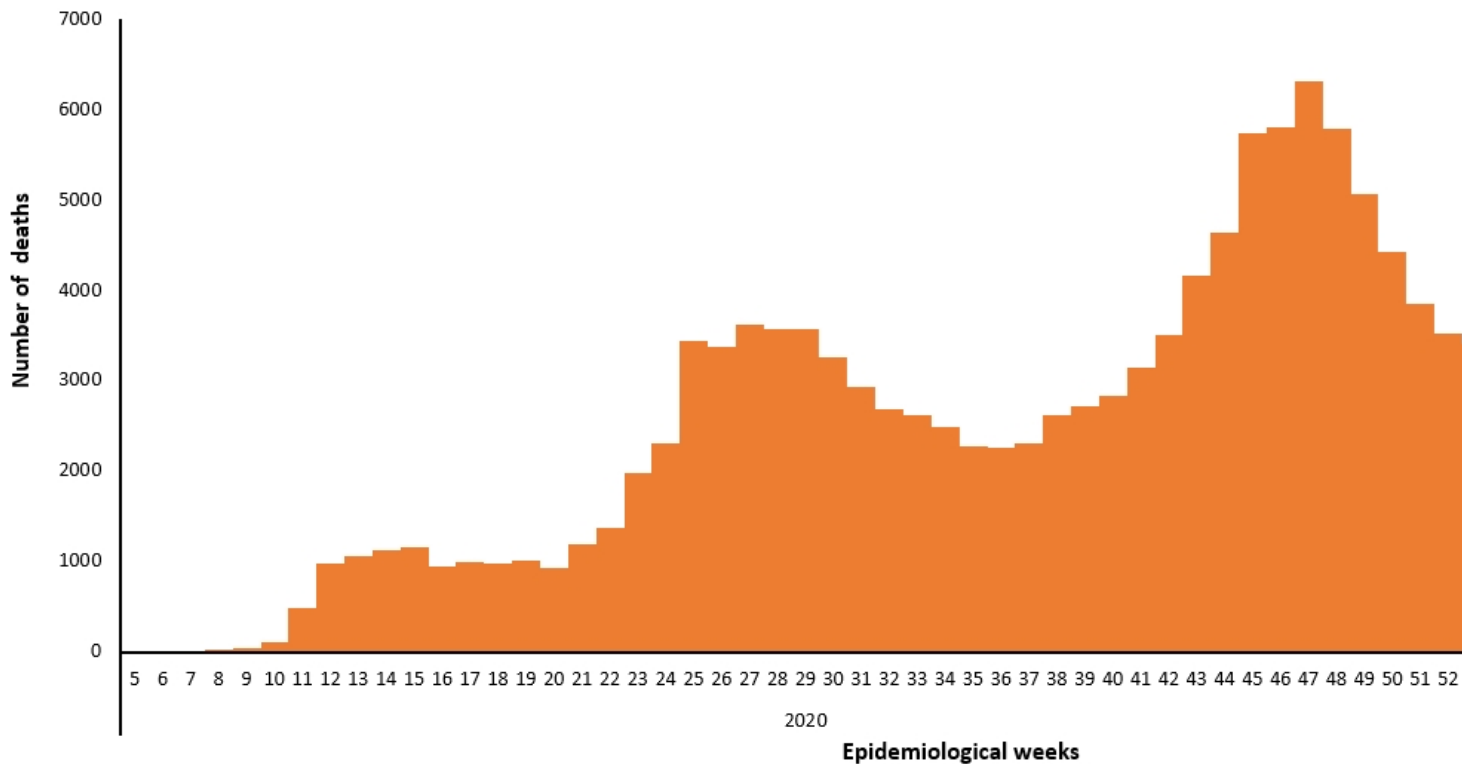
In terms of testing, a total of 128 604 177 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 3 924 519 tests in week 16, which shows a 4% decrease compared to the previous week when 4 081 042 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (42.9 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (16.5 million) and Islamic Republic of Iran (15.1 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (4339/1000 and 2349/1000, respectively). The average positivity rate for the Region is 6.9%. WHO recommends a positivity rate of around 3–12% as a general benchmark indicating adequate testing, which was achieved in most countries of the Region.

Meanwhile, COVID-19 vaccination continues across the Region. The total number of doses administered so far in the 22 countries is 36 344 907. The United Arab Emirates has administered the highest number of doses at 10 215 846, followed by Morocco at 8 941 120 and Saudi Arabia at 8 212 569. On the other hand, the total number of administered doses in Sudan is 140 227, in Somalia is 117 567, in Libya is 15 821, in Djibouti is 11 343, and in Syria is 2500. Yemen started its vaccination campaign this week using doses provided by the COVAX facility, however no data is yet available.

Supporting countries in the Region

The regional incident management support team continues to coordinate the response and provide technical support to countries and partners in the Region in the areas of coordination and partnership, surveillance, laboratory capacity, clinical management, infection prevention and control, risk communication and community engagement, points of entry according to the International Health Regulations (2005), research, health systems, and essential health services among others.





For more data from the Region, please visit the [COVID-19 dashboard](#).

*The data on vaccination is obtained from a number of sources including media reports and country websites for ministries of health.

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