

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 16 January 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 92 523 735 reported cases and 2 001 924 associated deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 2.2%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 5 341 802 cases, which represent about 5.8% of the global count, with 127 954 associated deaths (CFR 2.4%). 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 (1 324 395 cases; 24.8% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (607 587; 11.4%) and Pakistan (519 291; 9.7%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (56 717; CFR 4.3%) followed by Iraq (12 935; CFR 2.1%) and Pakistan (10 951; CFR 2.1%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (29%) followed by Syrian Arab Republic (6.4%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.2%) followed by United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

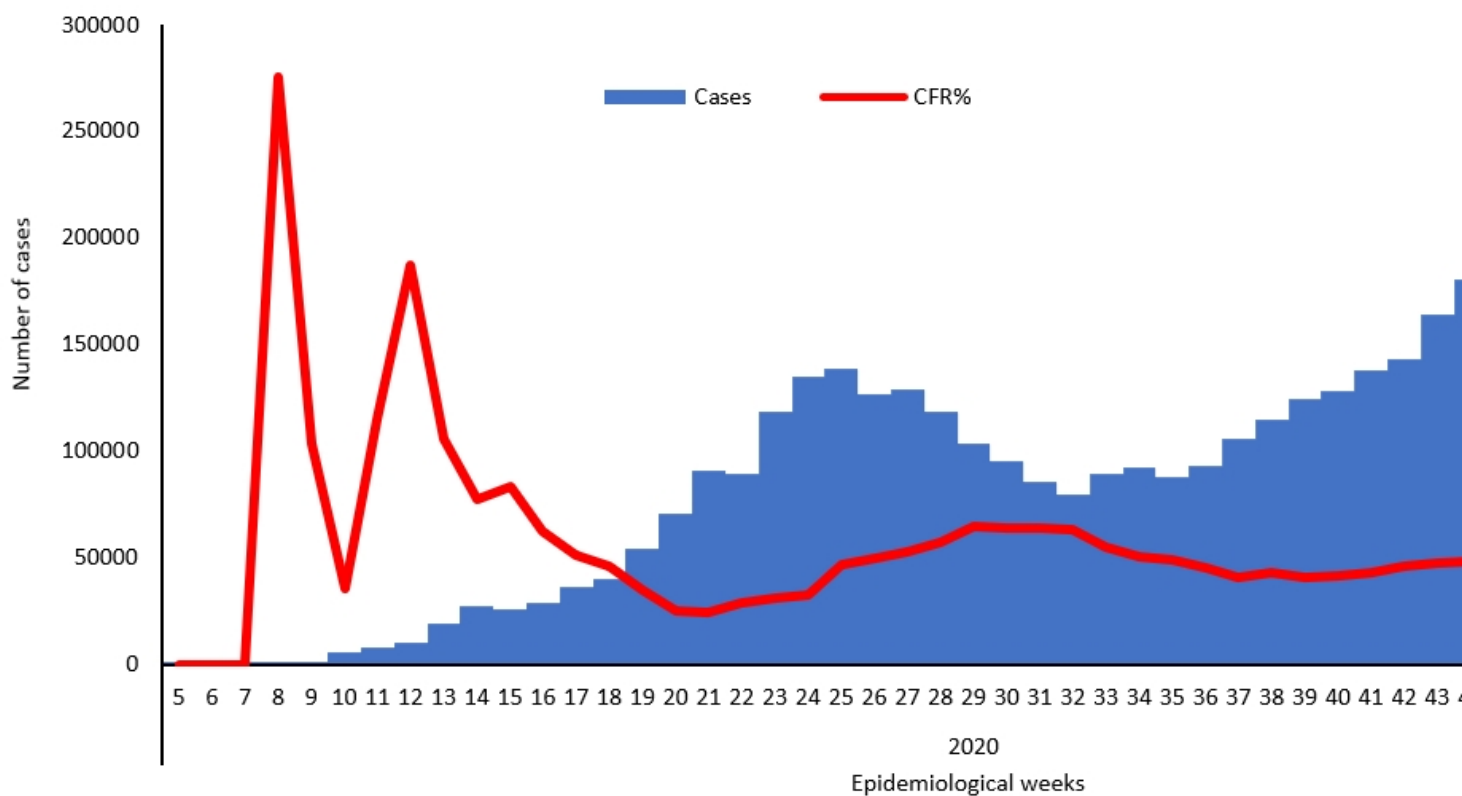
During epidemiological week 2, the Region reported an increase of 7% in cases when compared to the previous week (184 254 cases compared to 172 266 cases). Similarly, a 2.1% increase was observed for associated deaths (2851 deaths compared to 2793 deaths).

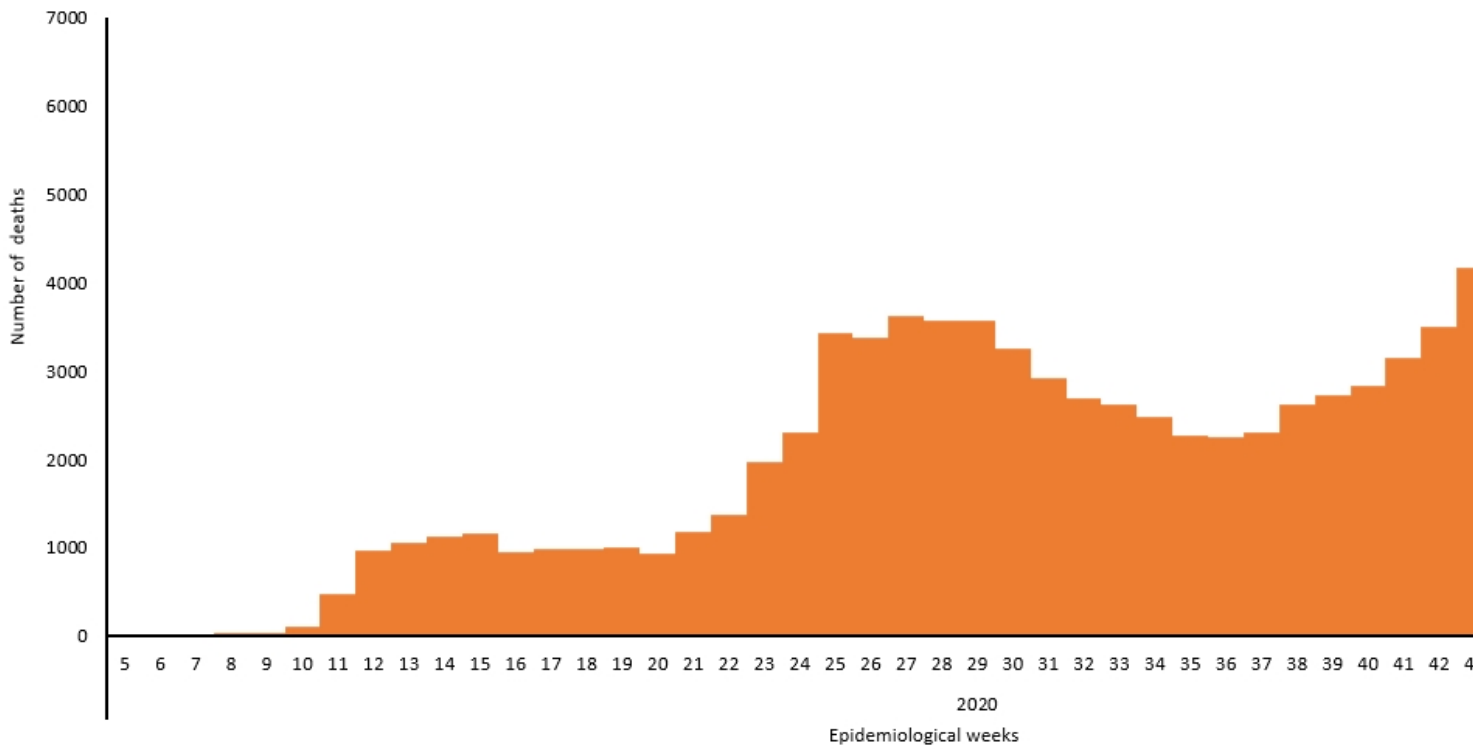
Lebanon, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 2. The cumulative number of cases increased from 215 553 to 249 158 in Lebanon (15.6% weekly increase), from 159 276 to 180 090 in Tunisia (13.1% weekly increase), and from 227 702 to 249 808 in United Arab Emirates (10% weekly increase). Lebanon, Tunisia, and Syrian Arab Republic had the largest relative increase in deaths.

In terms of testing, a total of 77 171 570 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 3 593 910 tests in week 2, which shows a 23% increase compared to the previous week (2 923 921). The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (23.2 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (11.6 million) and Islamic Republic of Iran (8.5 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (2350/1000 and 1494/1000, 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.

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](#) or [WHO EMRO dashboard](#).