

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 22 May 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 165 784 735 reported cases and 3 437 579 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 9 869 222 cases, which represent about 6% of the global count, with 198 108 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 (2 823 887 cases; 28.6% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (1 164 149; 11.8%) and Pakistan (900 539; 9.1%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (78 381; CFR 2.8%) followed by Pakistan (20 251; CFR 2.2%) and Iraq (16 158; CFR 1.4%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19.6%) followed by Syrian Arab Republic (7.2%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.3%), United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

During epidemiological week 20, the Region reported an increase in cases of 0.2% when compared to the previous week (217 135 cases compared to 216 696 cases). On the other hand, a decrease of 9.9% was observed for associated deaths (4178 deaths compared to 4639 deaths).

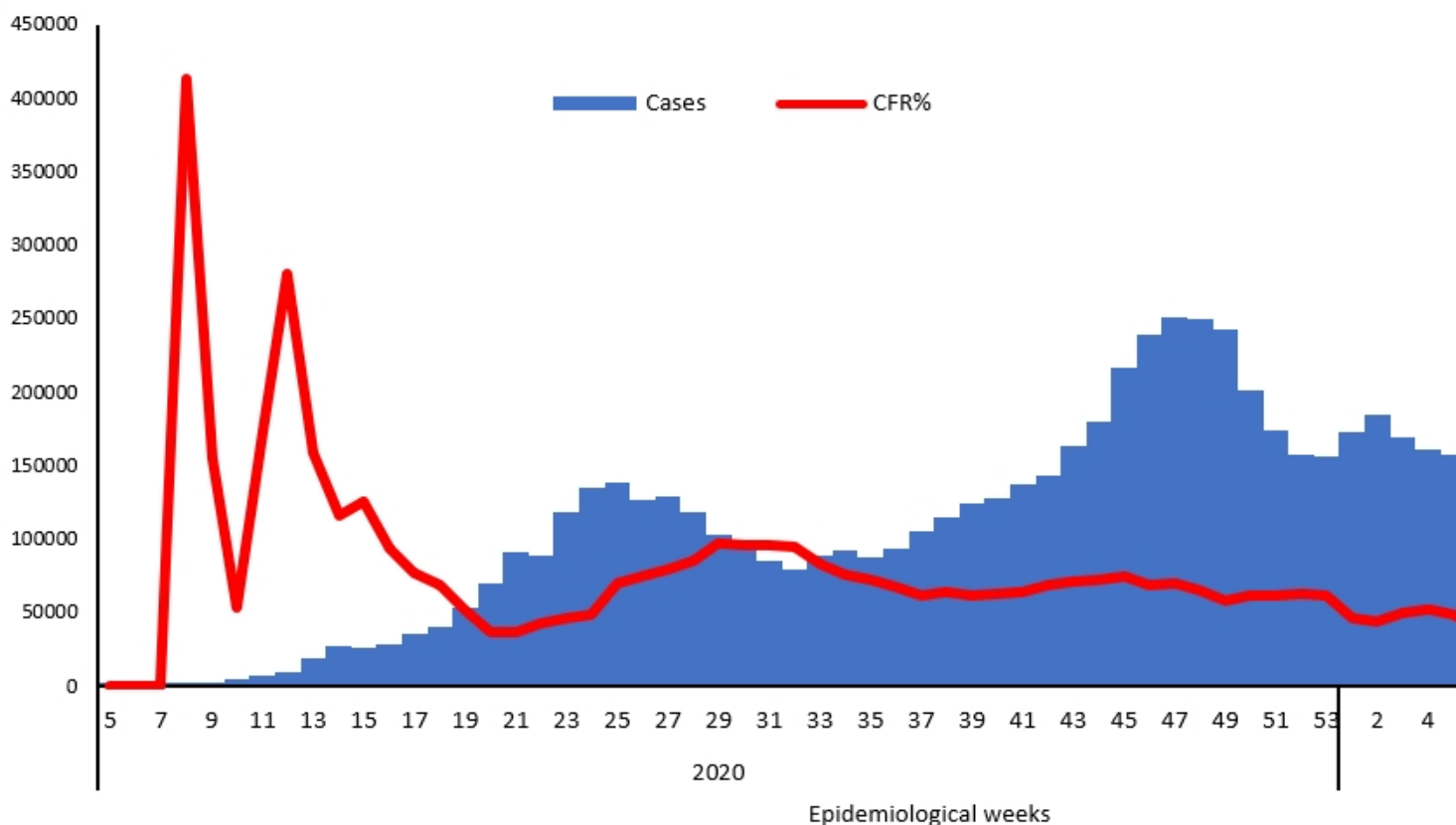
Bahrain, Afghanistan and Egypt reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 20. The cumulative number of cases increased from 199 093 to 214 870 in Bahrain (a 7.9% weekly increase), from 63 598 to 66 275 in Afghanistan (a 4.2% weekly increase), and from 244 520 to 252 690 in Egypt (a 3.3% weekly increase). Bahrain, Pakistan and Oman had the largest relative increase in deaths.

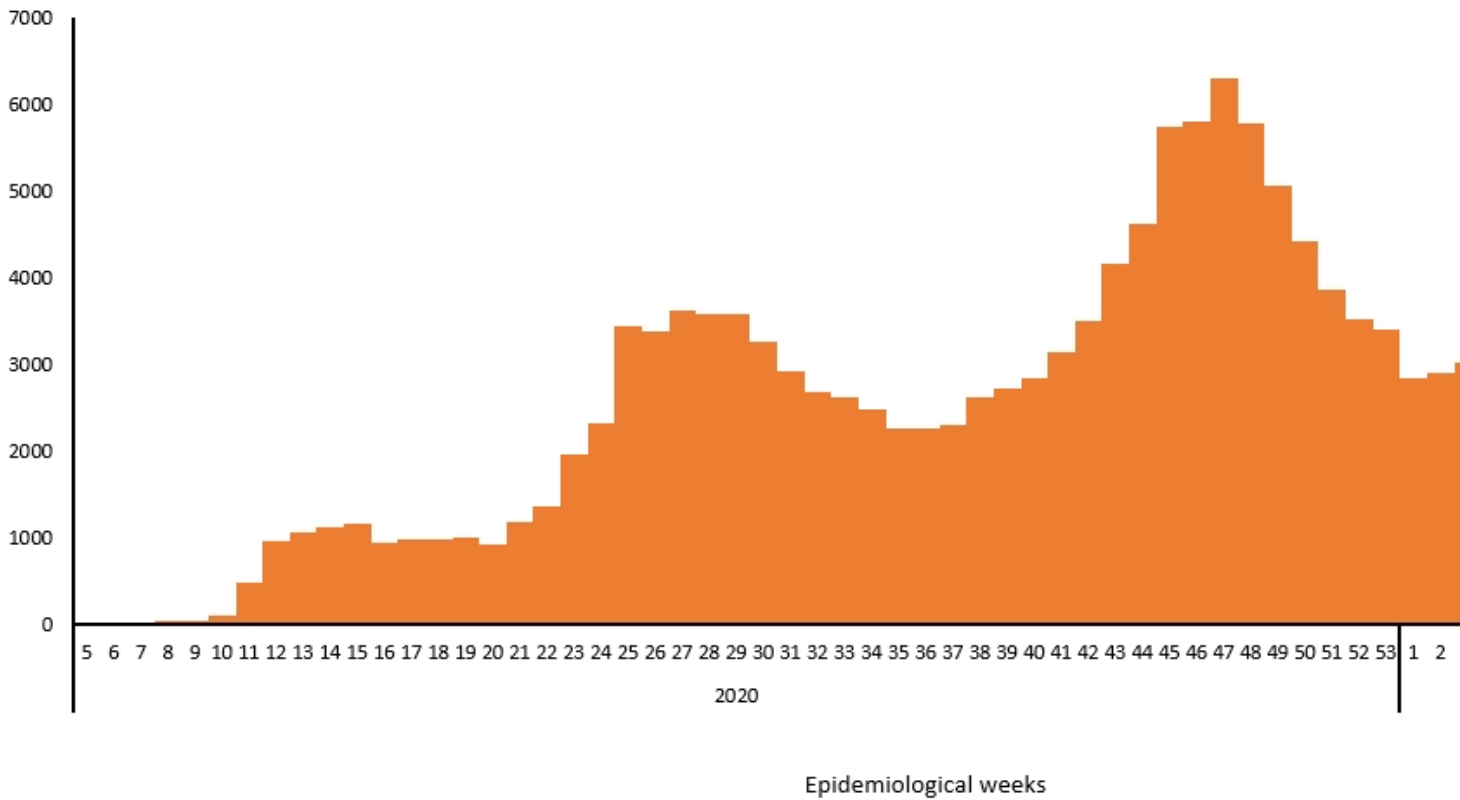
In terms of testing, a total of 144 811 162 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 4 173 412 tests in week 20, which shows an 17.4% increase compared to the previous week when 3 553 730 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (48.2 million), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (18.5 million) and Saudi Arabia (18.8 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (4876/1000 and 2626/1000, respectively). The average positivity rate for the Region is 6.8%. 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 59 028 849. Saudi Arabia has administered the highest number of doses at 12 984 329 followed by Morocco at 12 707 952, and United Arab Emirates at 12 165 848. On the other hand, the total number of administrated doses in Sudan is 290 500, in Somalia is 125 205, in Libya is 106 559, in Yemen is 18 555, in Djibouti is 13 042, and in Syria is 2500.\*

### 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.





[Georgia data from the Public Health Institute](#) and [COVID-19 in the WHO Region of the Eastern Mediterranean](#)