

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 18 September 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 227 028 447 reported cases and 4 667 971 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 15 459 579 cases, which represent about 6.1% of the global count, with 282 908 associated deaths (CFR 1.8%). 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 (5 408 860 cases; 35% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (1 972 705; 12.8%) and Pakistan (1 223 841; 7.9%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (116 791; CFR 2.2%) followed by Pakistan (27 206; CFR 2.2%) and Tunisia (24 527; CFR 3.5%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19%) followed by Sudan (7.5%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.26%), United Arab Emirates (0.28%) and Bahrain (0.51%).

During epidemiological week 37, the Region reported a decrease in cases of 19.6% when compared to the previous week (254 537 cases compared to 316 448 cases). Similarly, a decrease of 19% was observed for associated deaths (5104 deaths compared to 6302 deaths).

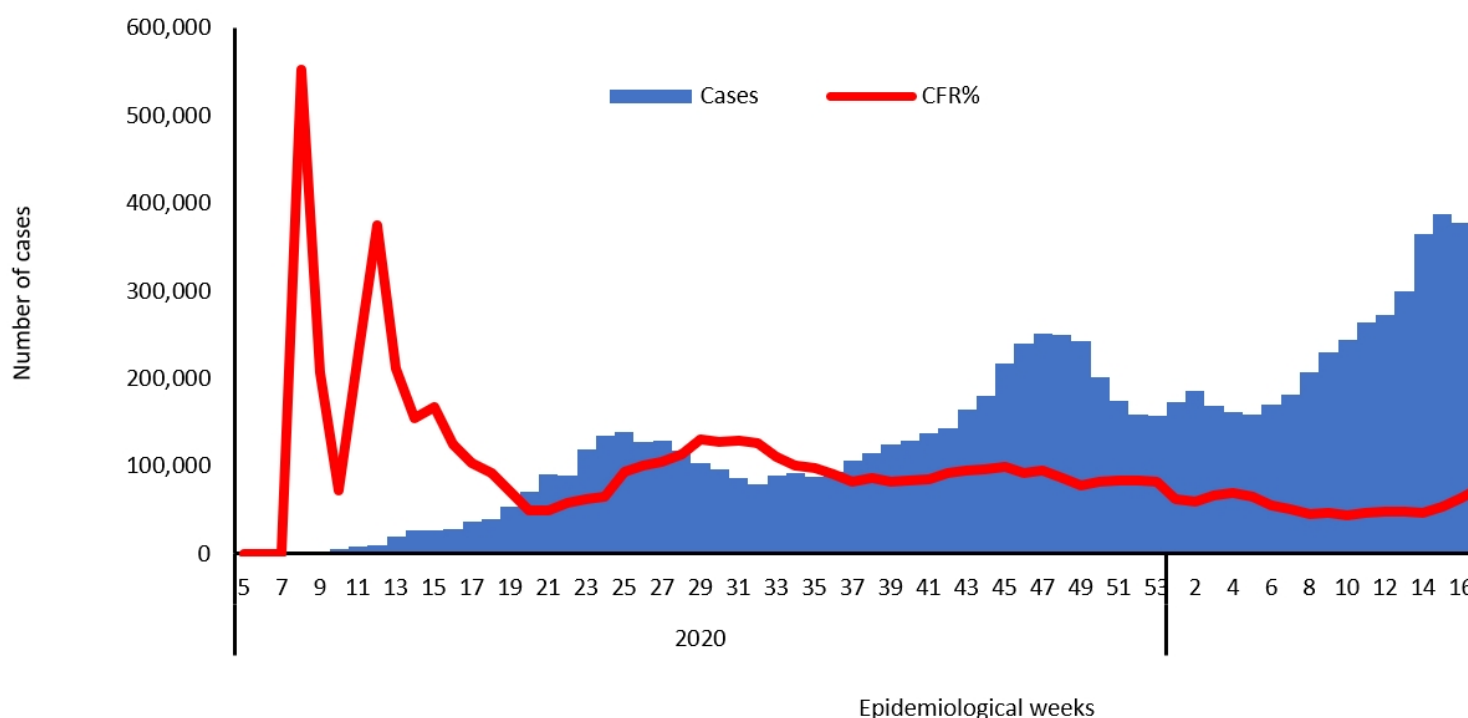
Syrian Arab Republic, occupied Palestinian territory, and Somalia reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 37. The cumulative number of cases increased from 29 358 to 30 519 in Syrian Arab Republic (a 4% weekly increase), from 397 573 to 412 442 in occupied Palestinian territory (a 3.7% weekly increase) and from 18 373 to 19 004 in Somalia (a 3.4% weekly increase). Yemen, Somalia and Morocco had the largest relative increase in deaths.

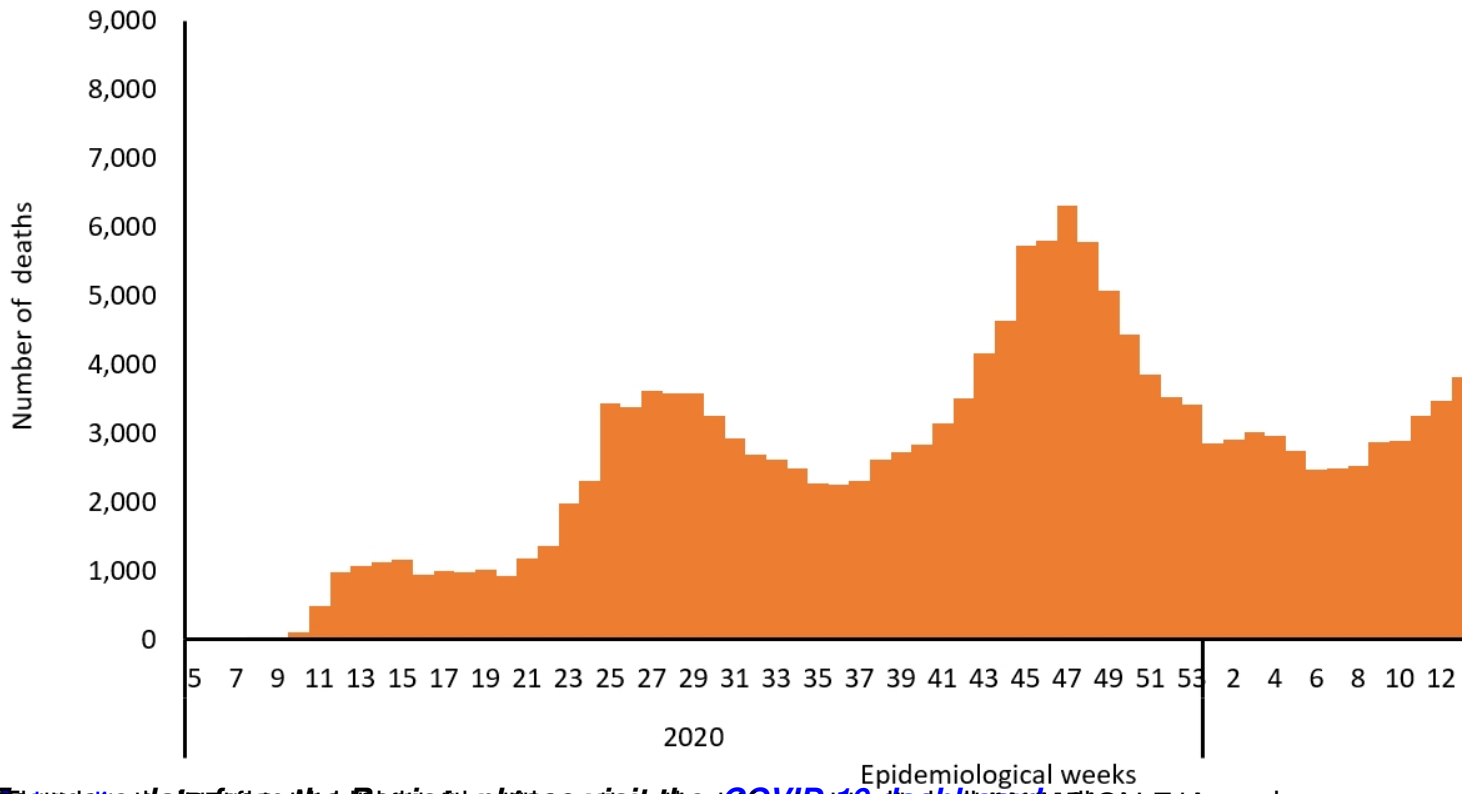
In terms of testing, a total of 225 835 100 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 5 011 094 tests in week 37, which shows a 3.8% increase compared to the previous week when 4 828 101 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (80.3 million), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (30.9 million) and Saudi Arabia (28.34 million). United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (8035/1000 and 3576/1000, 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 263 299 771. Pakistan has administered the highest number of doses at 72 986 511, followed by Saudi Arabia at 40 691 717 and Morocco at 37 238 088. On the other hand the total number of administrated doses in Sudan is 1 423 327, in Libya is 1 393 696, in Syria is 533 949, in Somalia is 351 305, in Yemen is 322 934 and in Djibouti is 66 010.\*

### 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.





[Source: data from the Region of the Eastern Mediterranean, COVID-19 dashboard WHO EMRO](#)