

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 25 December 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 278 280 486 reported cases and 5 390 333 associated deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 1.9%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 17 095 095 cases, which represent about 6.1% of the global count, with 314 972 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 (6 182 905 cases; 36.2% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (2 092 312; 12.2%) and Pakistan (1 293 440; 7.6%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (131 348; CFR 2.1%) followed by Pakistan (28 907; CFR 2.2%) and Tunisia (25 532; CFR 3.5%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19.6%) followed by Sudan (7.1%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.25%), United Arab Emirates (0.29%) and Bahrain (0.5%).

During epidemiological week 51, the Region reported a decrease in cases of 3% when compared to the previous week (77 295 cases compared to 79 665 cases). Similarly, a decrease of 6.5% was observed for associated deaths (1275 deaths compared to 1364 deaths).

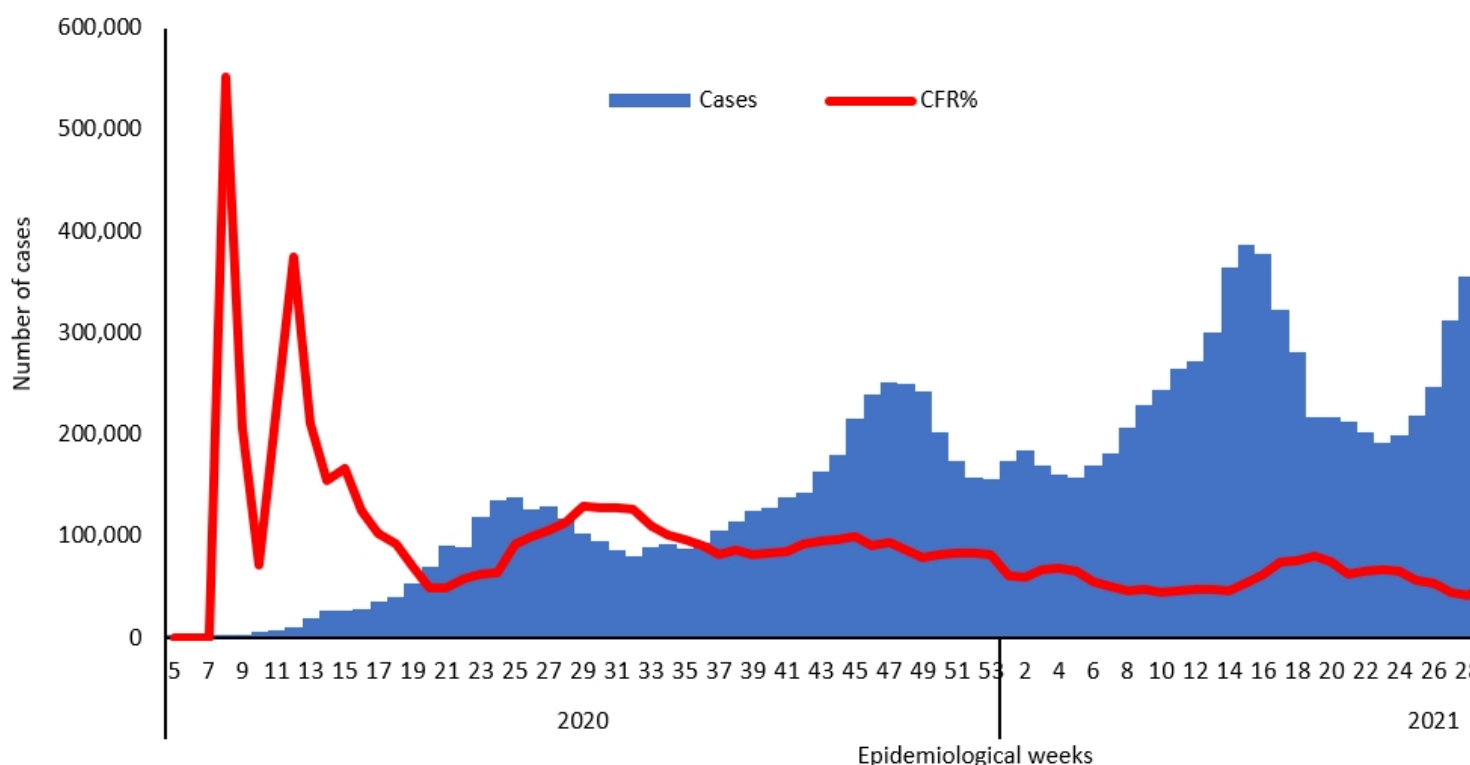
Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 51. The cumulative number of cases increased from 1 033 469 to 1 051 421 in Jordan (a 1.7% weekly increase), from 699 464 to 711 259 in Lebanon (a 1.7% weekly increase) and from 374 411 to 380 520 in Egypt (a 1.6% weekly increase). Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon had the largest relative increase in deaths.

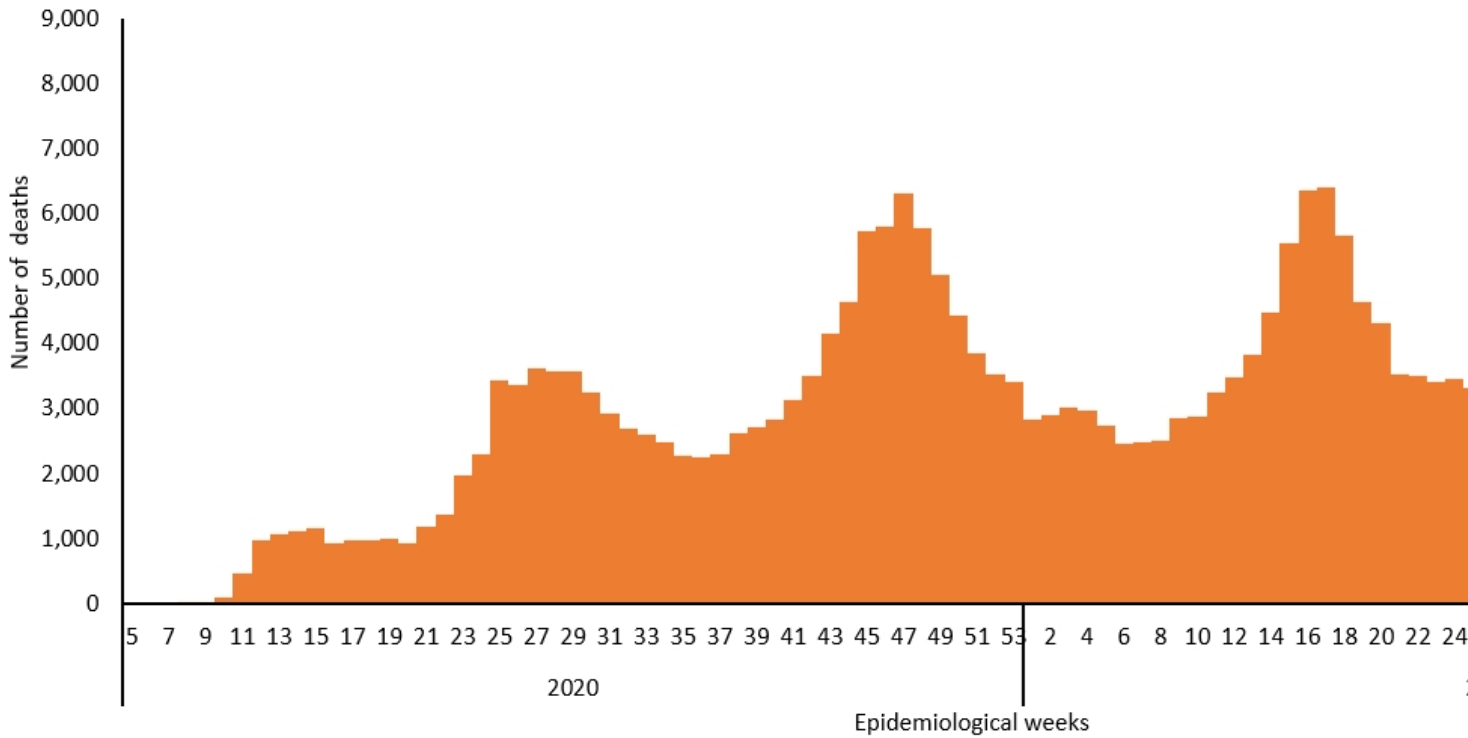
In terms of testing, a total of 289 455 186 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 5 053 882 tests in week 51, which shows a 9.8% increase compared to the previous week when 4 601 799 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (108.9 million), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (41.4 million) and Saudi Arabia (32.7 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (10 905/1000 and 4517/1000, respectively). The average positivity rate for the Region is 5.9%. 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 512 174 491. Pakistan has administered the highest number of doses at 142 517 744, followed by Islamic Republic of Iran at 116 210 697 and Egypt at 52 819 190. On the other hand the total number of administrated doses in Sudan is 3 157 227, in Libya is 2 648 959, in Syria is 1 742 974, in Somalia is 1 453 959, in Yemen is 622 994 and in Djibouti is 126 786.*

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, as reported in the weekly WHO COVID-19 situation reports. \[WHO COVID-19 Dashboard\]\(#\) and \[WHO COVID-19 Dashboard\]\(#\)](#)