

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 11 March 2023, the global cumulative incidence reached 760 061 055 reported cases and 6 886 364 associated deaths at a case-fatality ratio (CFR) of 0.91%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 23 271 778 cases, representing about 3.06% of the global count, with 349 712 associated deaths (CFR 1.50%). 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 (7 573 328; 32.54% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (2 465 545; 10.6%) and Jordan (1 746 997; 7.51%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total COVID-19 associated deaths (144 956; CFR 1.91%), followed by Pakistan (30 645; CFR 1.94%) and Tunisia (29 345; CFR 2.55%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (18.07%), followed by Sudan (7.86%) and Syria (5.51%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by United Arab Emirates (0.22%), Bahrain (0.22) and Qatar (0.14%).

During epidemiological week 10, the Region reported an increase in cases by 33% as compared to the previous week (7920 cases compared to 5976 cases). An increase by 24% was also observed for associated deaths (105 deaths in the current week compared to 85 deaths in the previous week).

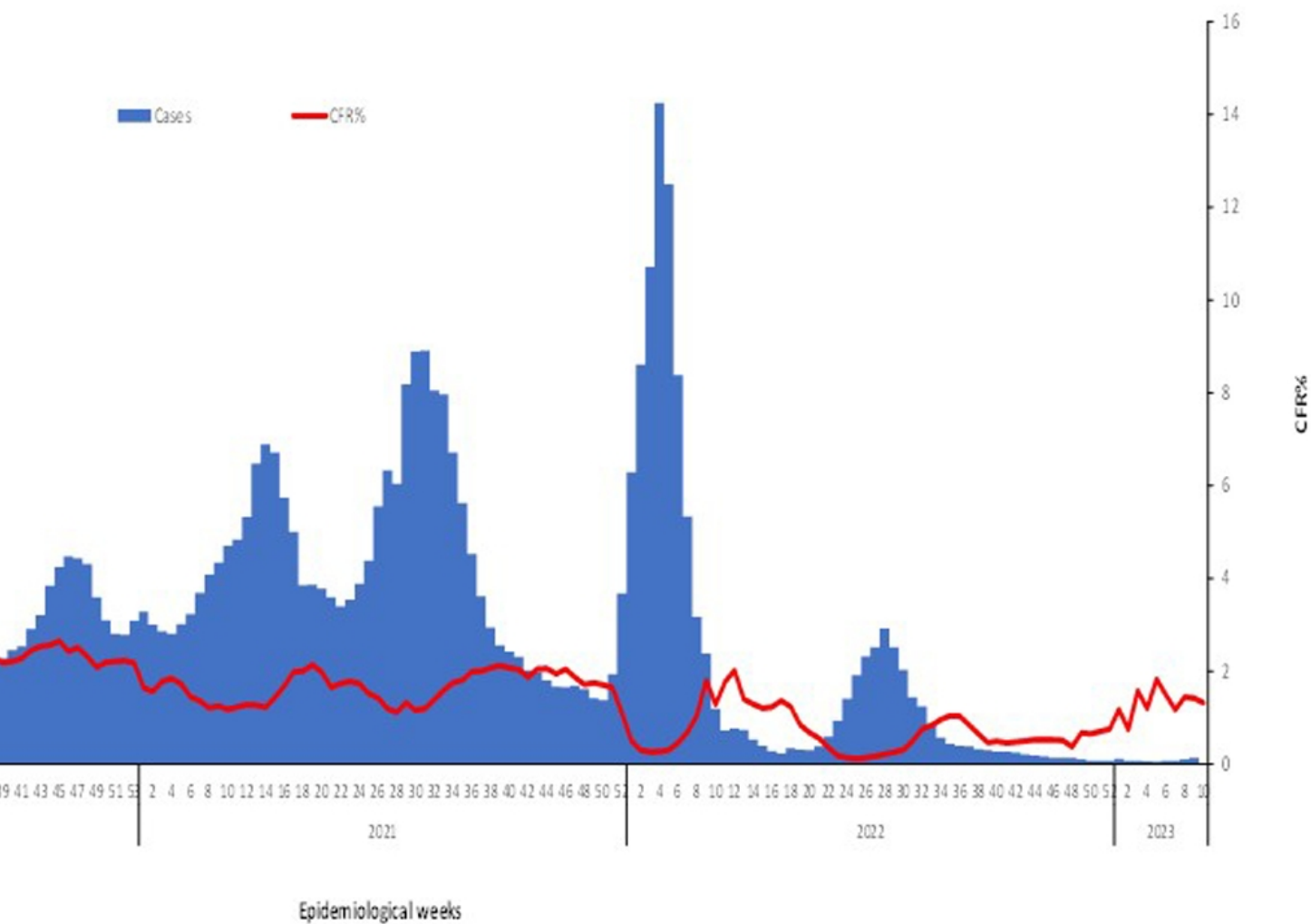
The weekly number of cases have decreased in 12 countries of the Region, while 10 out of 22 countries showed an increase in the number of cases as compared to the previous week. This week the number of COVID-19 associated deaths also decreased in most of the countries of the Region except in 3 out of 22 countries as compared to the previous week.*

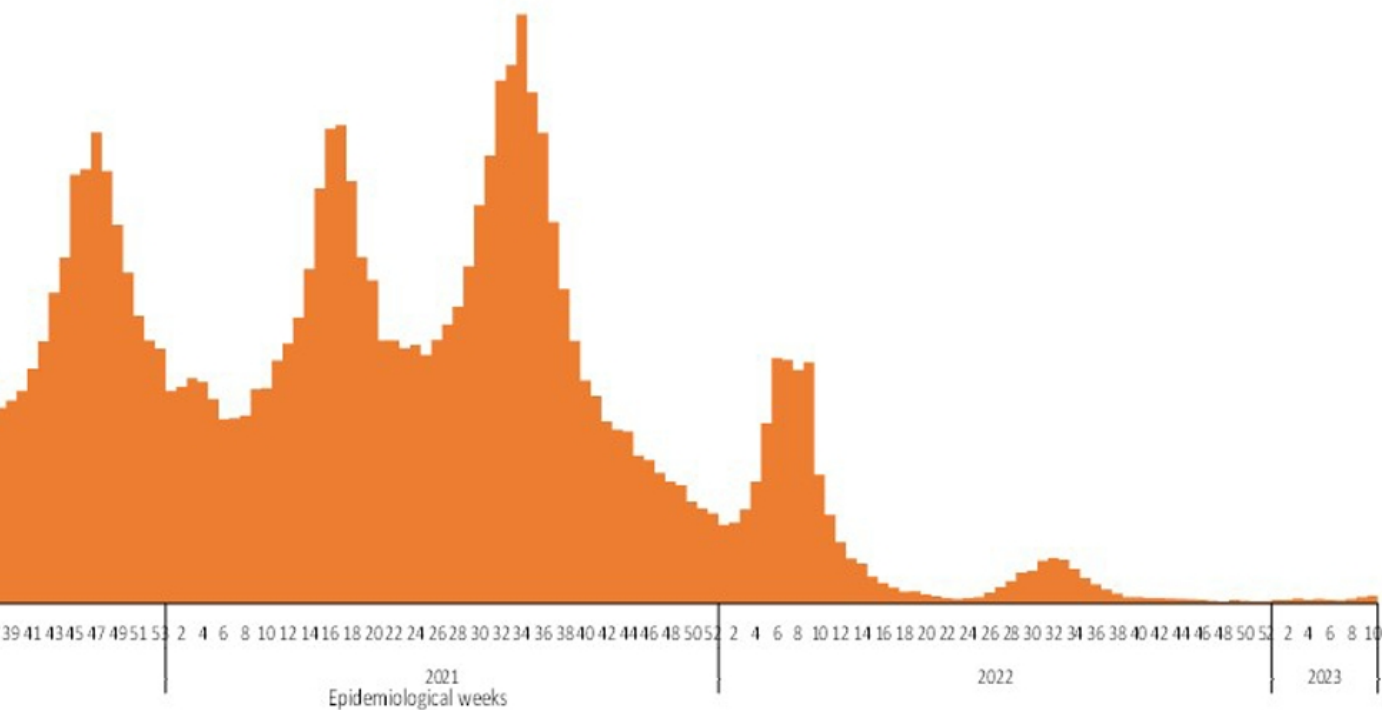
In terms of testing, a total of 445 532 550 laboratory tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 331 941 tests in week 10, which shows a 3% decrease as compared to the previous week when 343 248 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (199 448 570), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (55 439 391) and Saudi Arabia (45 175 083). The average positivity rate for the Region is 5.22%. WHO recommends a positivity rate of around 3% to 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 879 224 431. Pakistan has administered the highest number of doses at 334 507 258, followed by Islamic Republic of Iran at 157 785 811 and Egypt at 105 493 060. On the other hand, Bahrain (3 476 633), Yemen (1 256 288) and Djibouti (388 484) administrated the lowest number of COVID-19 doses in 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.





* Reporting of weekly notified COVID-19 cases in the Eastern Mediterranean Region is based on data from the Regional COVID-19 Situation Reports, which are available at <https://www.emro.who.int/covid-19/situation-reports>.