

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 1 April 2023, the global cumulative incidence reached 761 406 866 reported cases and 6 901 441 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 23 309 647 cases, representing about 3.06% of the global count, with 350 200 associated deaths (CFR 1.5%). 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 (7 591 621; 32.57% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (2 465 545; 10.58%) and Jordan (1 746 997; 7.50%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total COVID-19 associated deaths (145 369; CFR 1.91%), followed by Pakistan (30 649; CFR 1.94 %) and Tunisia (29 362; CFR 2.55%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (18.07%), followed by Sudan (7.88%) 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 13, the Region reported an increase in cases by 11% as compared to the previous week (14 184 cases compared to 12 799 cases). An increase by 8% was also observed for associated deaths (193 deaths in the current week compared to 179 deaths in the previous week).

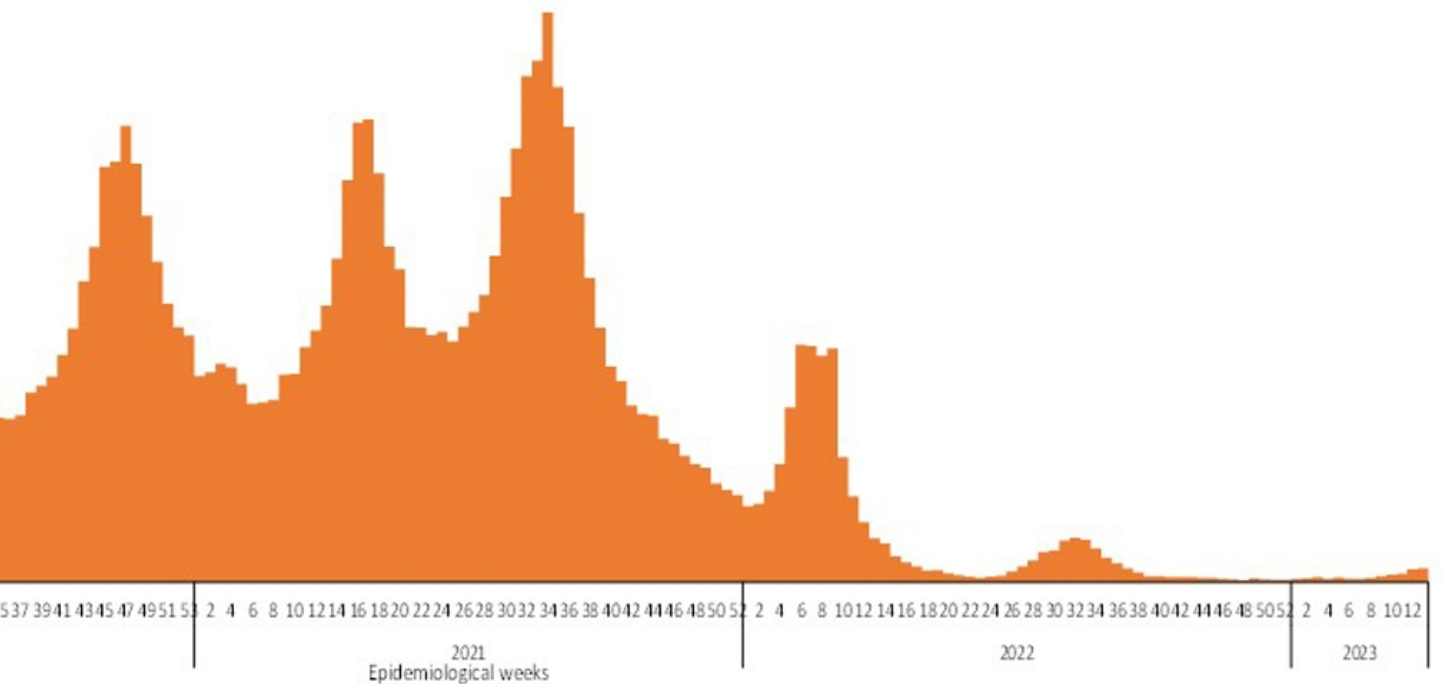
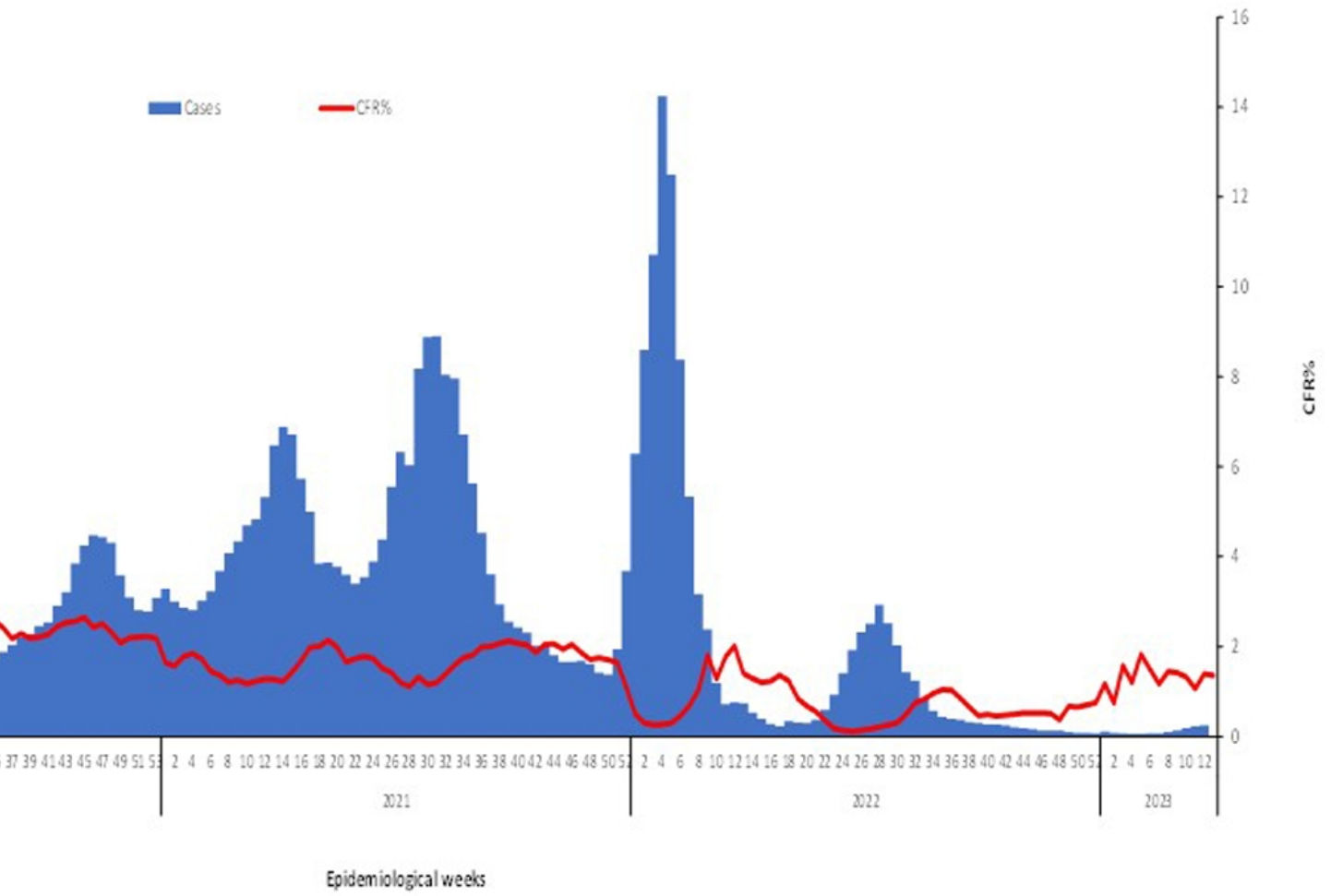
The weekly number of cases have decreased in most countries of the Region except in 4 out of 22 countries as compared to the previous week. This week the number of COVID-19 associated deaths also decreased in most countries of the Region except in 3 out of 22 countries as compared to the previous week.*

In terms of testing, a total of 446 644 921 laboratory tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 376 835 tests in week 13, which shows 4% increase as compared to the previous week when 361 470 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (199 855 193), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (55 883 082) and Saudi Arabia (45 287 895). 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 884 669 867. Pakistan has administered the highest number of doses at 334 682 801, followed by Islamic Republic of Iran at 157 785 811 and Egypt at 110 505 666. On the other hand, Bahrain (3 476 633), Yemen (1 258 021) and Djibouti (389 670) administrated the lowest number of COVID-19 vaccine 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 health data from the epidemiological week 52 of 2021 to the week 12 of 2022 is based on the data received from the Region, also via the [WHO COVID-19 Dashboard](#).