

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 17 April 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 139 516 018 reported cases and 2 992 322 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 8 451 675 cases, which represent about 6.1% of the global count, with 170 750 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 (2 215 445 cases; 26.2% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (970 987; 11.5%) and Pakistan (756 285; 9%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (66 327; CFR 3%) followed by Pakistan (16 243; CFR 2.1%) and Iraq (14 948; CFR 1.5%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19.4%) followed by Syrian Arab Republic (6.8%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.2%) followed by United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

During epidemiological week 15, the Region reported an increase in cases of 5.7% when compared to the previous week (385 468 cases compared to 364 639 cases). Similarly, an increase of 21% was observed for associated deaths (5422 deaths compared to 4475 deaths).

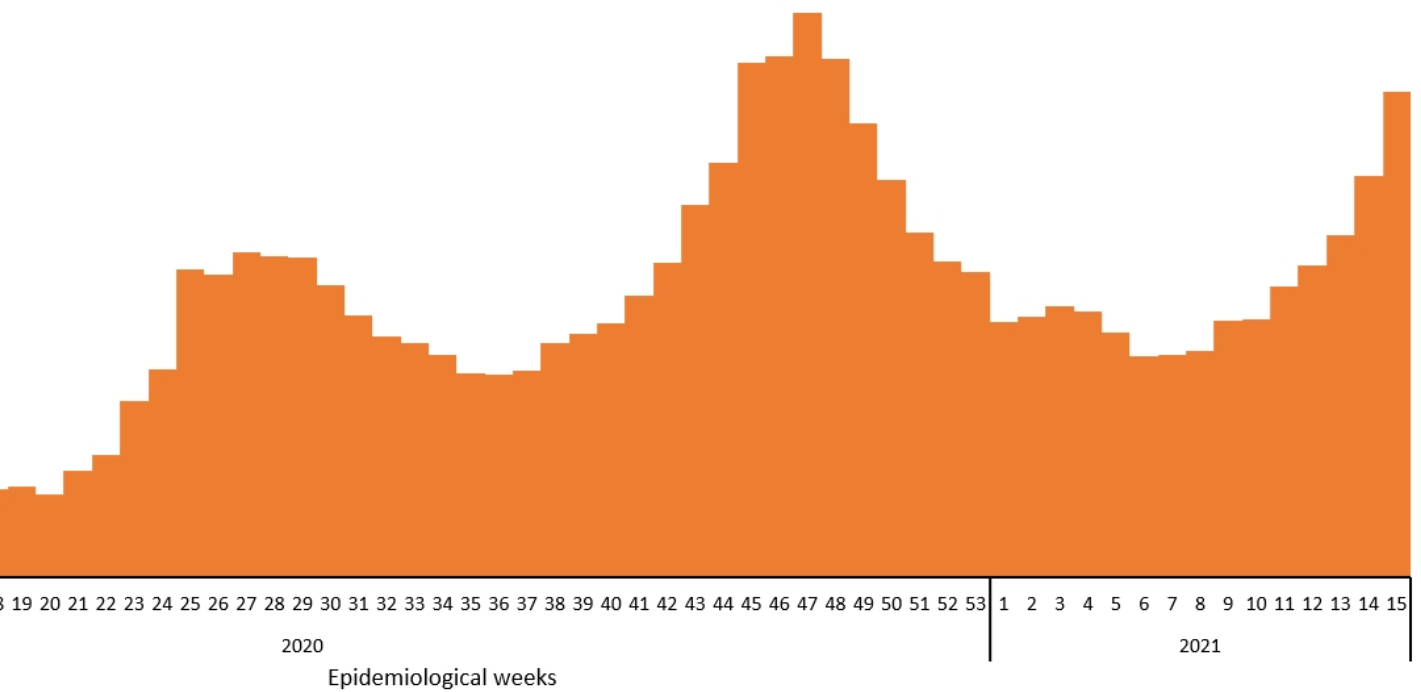
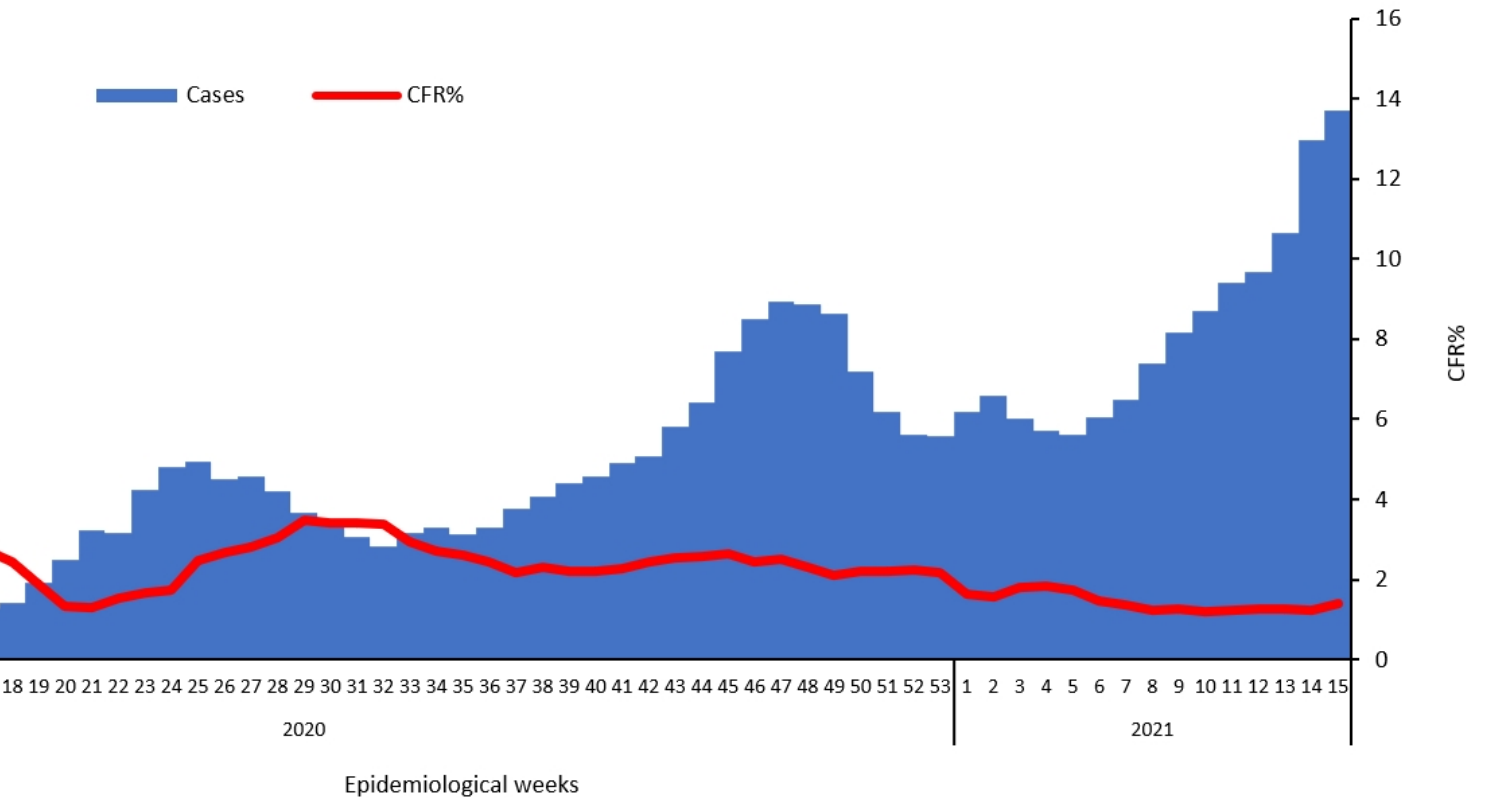
Yemen, Islamic Republic of Iran and Djibouti reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 15. The cumulative number of cases increased from 5280 to 5774 in Yemen (9.4% weekly increase), from 2 049 078 to 2 215 445 in Islamic Republic of Iran (8.1% weekly increase) and from 9722 to 10412 in Djibouti (7.1% weekly increase), and Djibouti, Qatar and Yemen had the largest relative increase in deaths.

In terms of testing, a total of 124 674 910 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 4 076 294 tests in week 15, which shows an 6% decrease compared to the previous week when 4 355 514 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (41.6 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (16.1 million) and Islamic Republic of Iran (14.3 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (4202/1000 and 2284/1000, 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 is 32 496 045 in 21 countries where United Arab Emirates has the highest number of administered doses at 9 630 200, followed by Morocco at 8 841 456 and Saudi Arabia at 7 127 109. On the other hand, the total number of administered doses in Libya is 750, in Syria is 2500, in Djibouti is 10 246, in Sudan is 49 932 and in Somalia is 117 567.*

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.



to the monthly infectious hazard prepared by the Center for Health Situation and Response of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. For more information, please visit the [WHO EMRO COVID-19 dashboard](#).