

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 15 January 2022, the global cumulative incidence reached 321 780 854 reported cases and 5 525 679 associated deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 1.7%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 17 765 253 cases, which represent about 5.5% of the global count, with 318 319 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 (6 218 741 cases; 35% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (2 110 683; 11.9%) and Pakistan (1 324 147; 7.5%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (132 044; CFR 2.1%) followed by Pakistan (29 012; CFR 2.2%) and Tunisia (25 803; CFR 3.3%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19.3%) followed by Sudan (6.5%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.21%), United Arab Emirates (0.27%) and Bahrain (0.46%).

During epidemiological week 2, the Region reported an increase in cases of 71% when compared to the previous week (353 783 cases compared to 206 980 cases). Similarly, an increase of 3% was observed for associated deaths (1085 deaths compared to 1053 deaths).

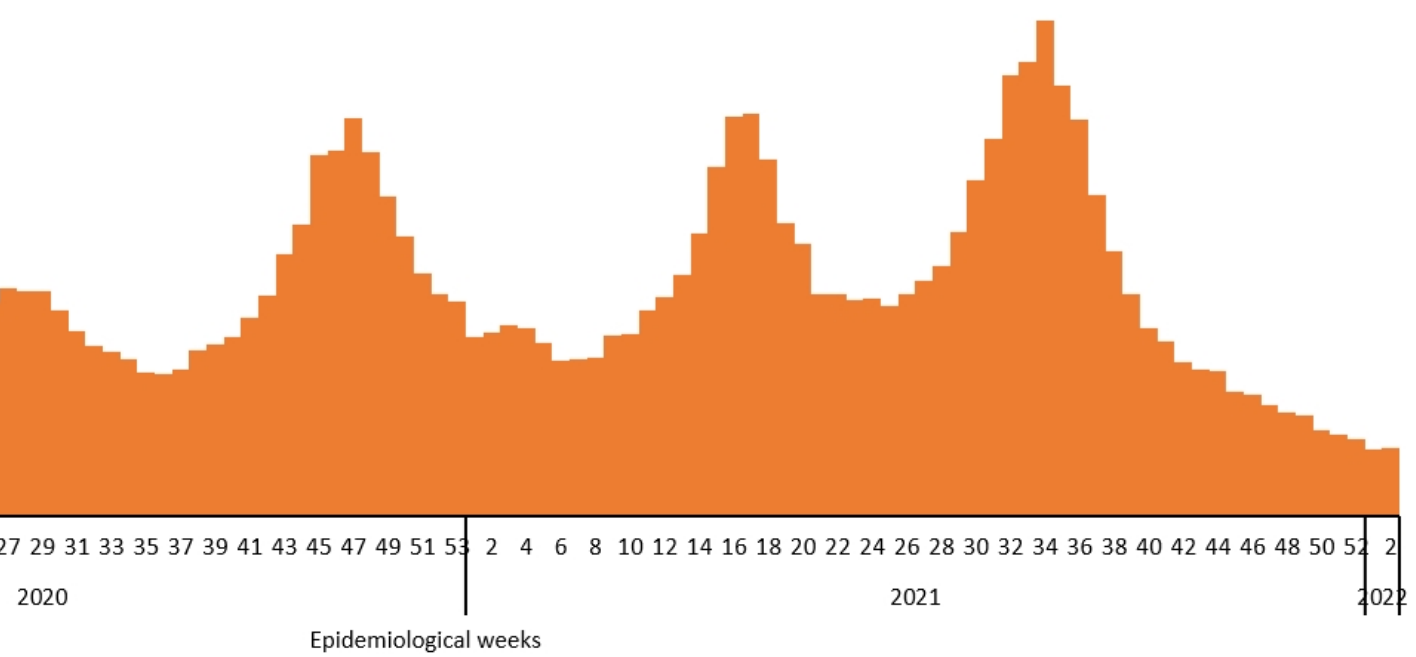
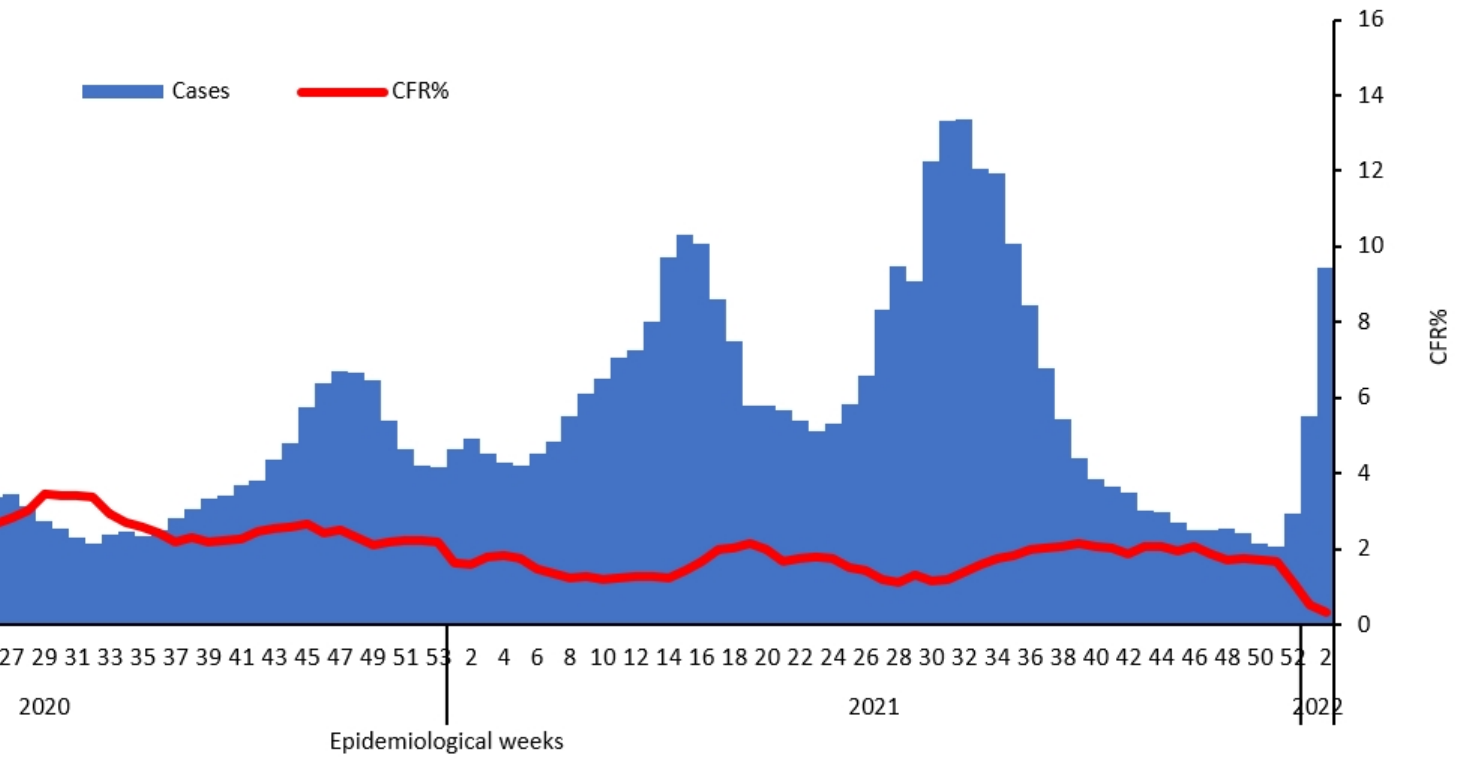
Qatar, Sudan and Kuwait reported the largest relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 2. The cumulative number of cases increased from 266 962 to 295 221 in Qatar (a 10.6% weekly increase), from 48 606 to 52 330 in Sudan (a 7.7% weekly increase) and from 430 920 to 460 828 in Kuwait (a 6.9% weekly increase). Sudan, Lebanon and Jordan had the largest relative increase in deaths.

In terms of testing, a total of 306 944 509 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 5 961 307 tests in week 2, which shows a 0.05% increase compared to the previous week when 5 958 402 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (1117.2 million), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (43.3 million) and Saudi Arabia (35.2 million). The average positivity rate for the Region is 5.8%. 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 56 840 1911. Pakistan has administered the highest number of doses at 166 837 089, followed by Islamic Republic of Iran at 125 500 852 and Egypt at 61 224 838. On the other hand the total number of administrated doses in Sudan is 3 561 058, in Syria is 2 965 870, in Libya is 2 923 738, in Somalia is 1 610 500, in Yemen is 695 355 and in Djibouti is 143 796.*

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 Director of WHO in collaboration with the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, available at [WHO Weekly Epidemiol. Rec. 2022, 25, 1-10](#)