

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 6 February 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 104 995 395 reported cases and 2 290 787 associated deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 2.2%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 5 831 977 cases, which represent about 5.6% of the global count, with 137 075 associated deaths (CFR 2.4%). 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 (1 459 370 cases; 25% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (627 416; 10.8%) and Pakistan (554 474; 9.5%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (58 412; CFR 4%) followed by Iraq (13 111; CFR 2.1%) and Pakistan (11 967; CFR 2.2%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (28.9%) followed by Syrian Arab Republic (6.6%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.2%) followed by United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

During epidemiological week 5, the Region reported a decrease of 1.9% in cases when compared to the previous week (158 004 cases compared to 161 098 cases). Similarly, a 7.7% decrease was observed for associated deaths (2739 deaths compared to 2968 deaths).

United Arab Emirates, Lebanon and Libya reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 5. The cumulative number of cases increased from 300 661 to 323 402 in United Arab Emirates (8% weekly increase), from 298 913 to 317 836 in Lebanon (6.3% weekly increase) and from 118 631 to 124 026 in Libya (5% weekly increase). Lebanon, United Arab Emirates and Tunisia had the largest relative increase in deaths.

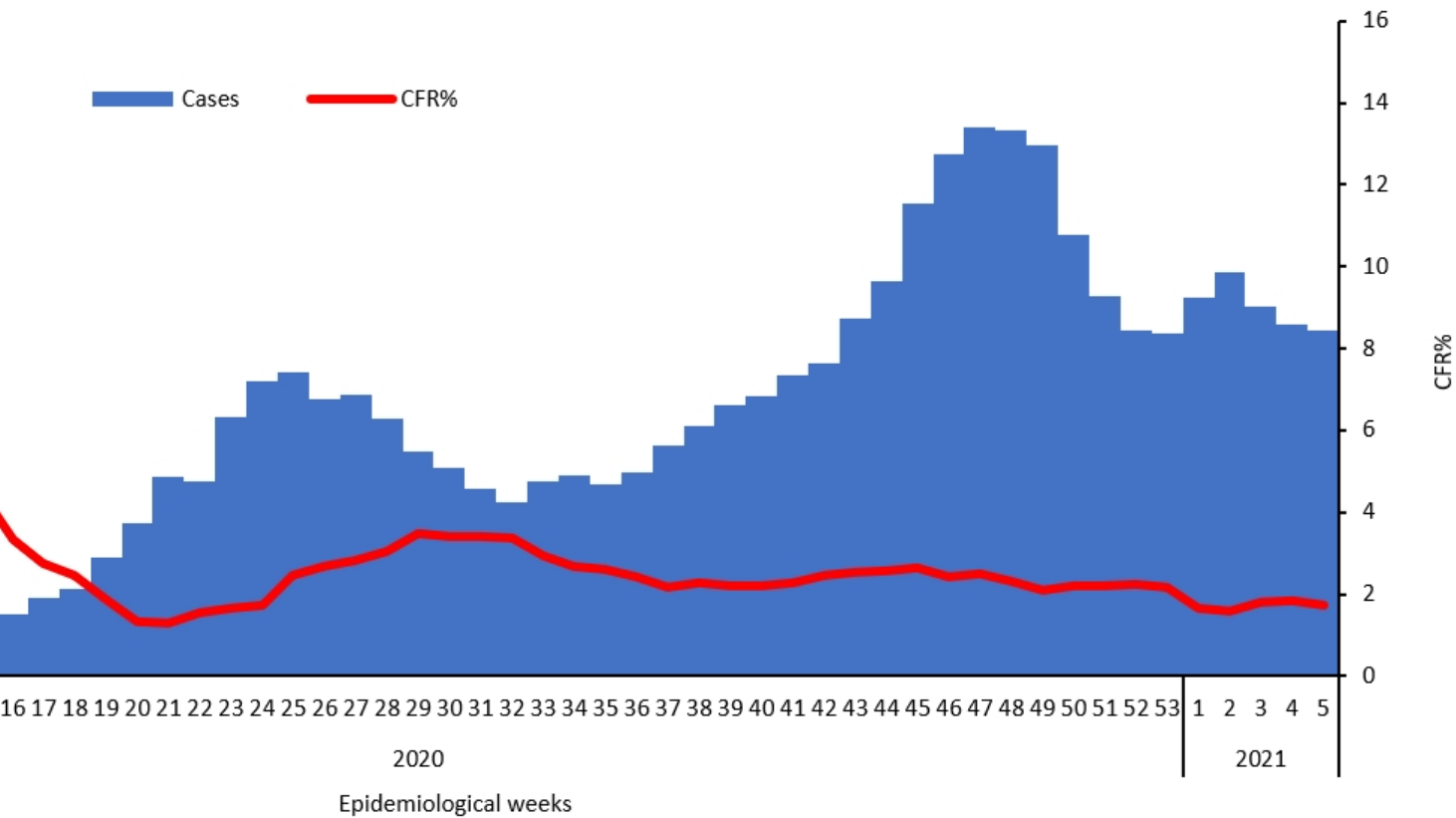
In terms of testing, a total of 87 296 130 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 3 105 157 tests in week 5, which shows a 1% increase compared to the previous week (3 085 980). The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (26.7 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (12.6 million) and Islamic Republic of Iran (9.6 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (2700/1000 and 1641/1000, respectively). The average positivity rate for the Region is 6.7%. 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.

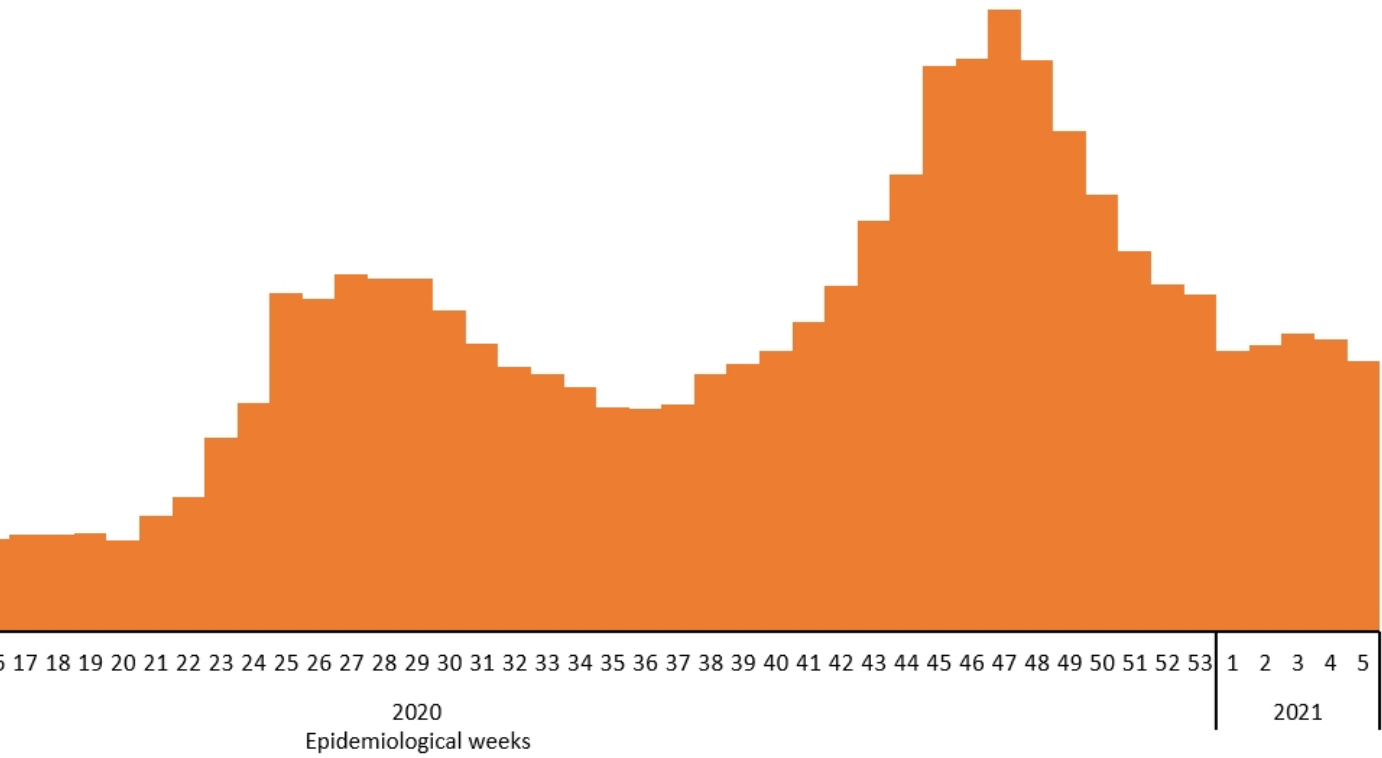
Meanwhile, COVID-19 vaccination has started in six countries of the Region. The total number of doses administered so far include 4 413 649 in United Arab Emirates, 191 406 in Bahrain, 443 153 in Saudi Arabia, 37 045 in Oman, 38 545 in Jordan, 1315 in Egypt, 550 149 in Morocco, 50 000 in Qatar, and 35 000 in Kuwait.

### 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.

Activities this week included the release of WHO updated guidance on “Contact tracing in the context of COVID-19: Surveillance, case investigation and epidemiological protocols”.





to the monthly infectious hazard preparedness newsletter of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme or [visit the COVID-19 dashboard](#). For more info from the Region please visit the [Regional COVID-19 dashboard](#).