

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 28 May 2022, the global cumulative incidence reached 526 245 264 reported cases and 6 302 494 associated deaths at a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 1.2%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 21 770 461 cases, representing about 4.16% of the global count, with 343 204 associated deaths (CFR 1.58%). 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 (7 231 387 cases; 33.22% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (2 327 837; 10.69%) and Jordan (1 696 937; 7.79%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total COVID-19-associated deaths (141 306; CFR 1.95 %) followed by Pakistan (30 379; CFR 1.99%) and Tunisia (28 641; CFR 2.75 %). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (18.18%) followed by Sudan (7.93%) and Syria (5.64%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.18%), United Arab Emirates and Bahrain (0.25% for both).

During epidemiological week 21, the Region reported a decrease in cases by 2% when compared to the previous week (17 334 cases compared to 17 645 cases). A decrease of 19% was also observed for associated deaths (97 deaths in the current week compared to 120 deaths in the previous week).

The weekly number of cases have decreased or stabilized in all countries of the Region except in Morocco (increased from 824 to 1 202), Sudan (increased from 81 to 106) and Somalia (increased from 4 to 13) as compared to the previous week. This week the number of COVID-19-associated deaths also decreased in all countries of the Region except in Bahrain (increased from 1 to 7), and Tunisia (increased from 4 to 9) as compared to the previous week.*

In terms of testing, a total of 393 008 386 laboratory tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 2 282 064 tests in week 21, which shows a 4% increase compared to the previous week when 2 198 610 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (161 910 079), followed by Islamic Republic of Iran (52 175 630) and Saudi Arabia (42 476 760). The average positivity rate for the Region is 5.54%. 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 735 855 170. Pakistan has administered the highest number of doses 256 289 705, followed by Islamic Republic of Iran at 149 357 848 and Egypt at 83 988 166. On the other hand, Somalia (2 765 147), Yemen (838 621), and Djibouti (196 516) 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.



