

The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 8 May 2021, the global cumulative incidence reached 156 507 181 reported cases and 3 264 357 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 9 434 019 cases, which represent about 6% of the global count, with 189 269 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 (2 640 670 cases; 28% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (1 108 558; 11.8%) and Pakistan (858 026; 9.1%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (74 524; CFR 2.8%) followed by Pakistan (18 915; CFR 2.2%) and Iraq (15 741; CFR 1.4%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (19.4%) followed by Syrian Arab Republic (7%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.2%) followed by United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

During epidemiological week 18, the Region reported a decrease in cases of 13.2% when compared to the previous week (280 126 cases compared to 322 740 cases). Similarly, a decrease of 12% was observed for associated deaths (5634 deaths compared to 6400 deaths).

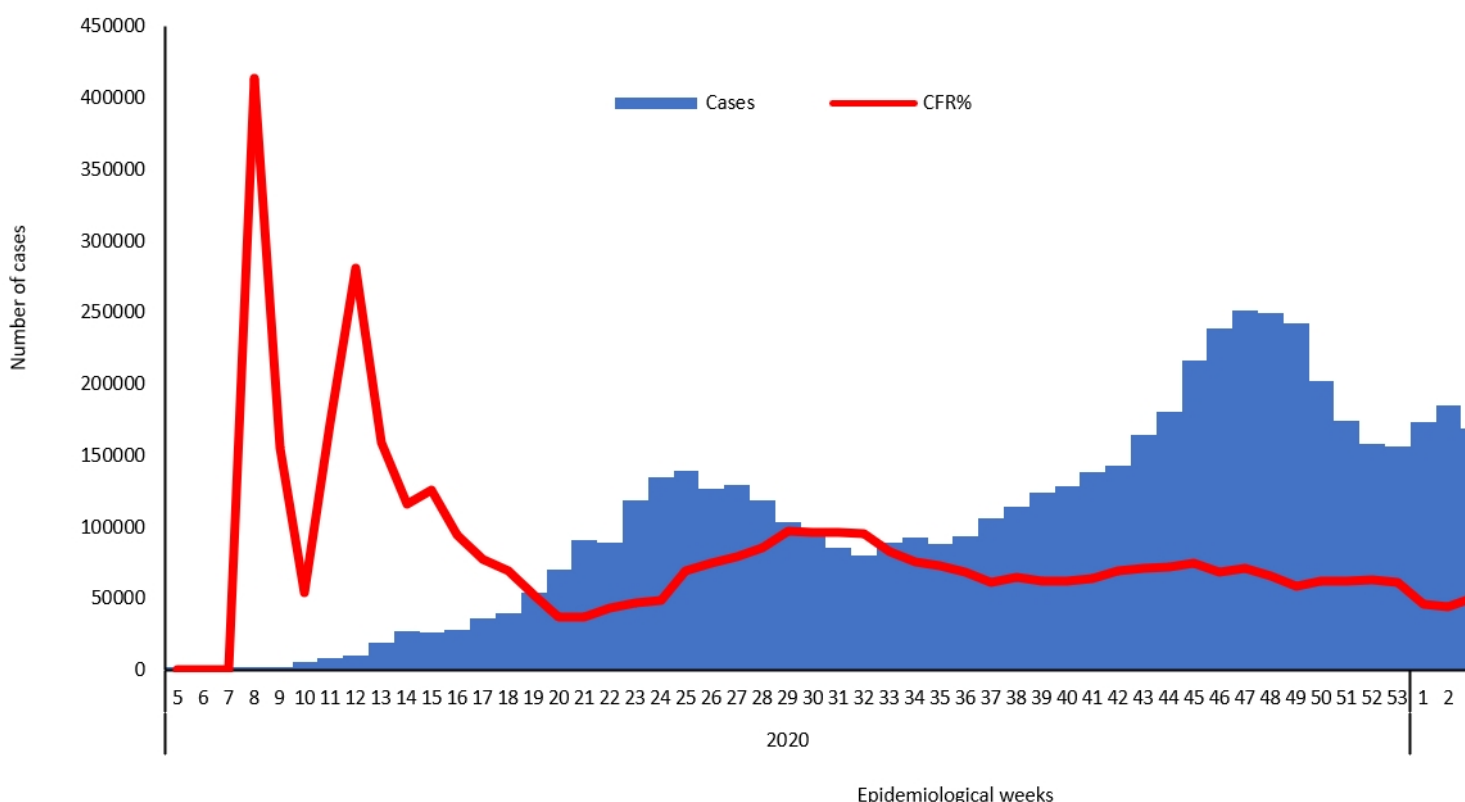
Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Somalia reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity in week 18. The cumulative number of cases increased from 177 997 to 187 905 in Bahrain (5.6% weekly increase), from 2 516 157 to 2 640 670 in Islamic Republic of Iran (4.9% weekly increase), and from 13 915 to 14 415 in Somalia (3.6% weekly increase). Qatar, Tunisia, and Somalia had the largest relative increase in deaths.

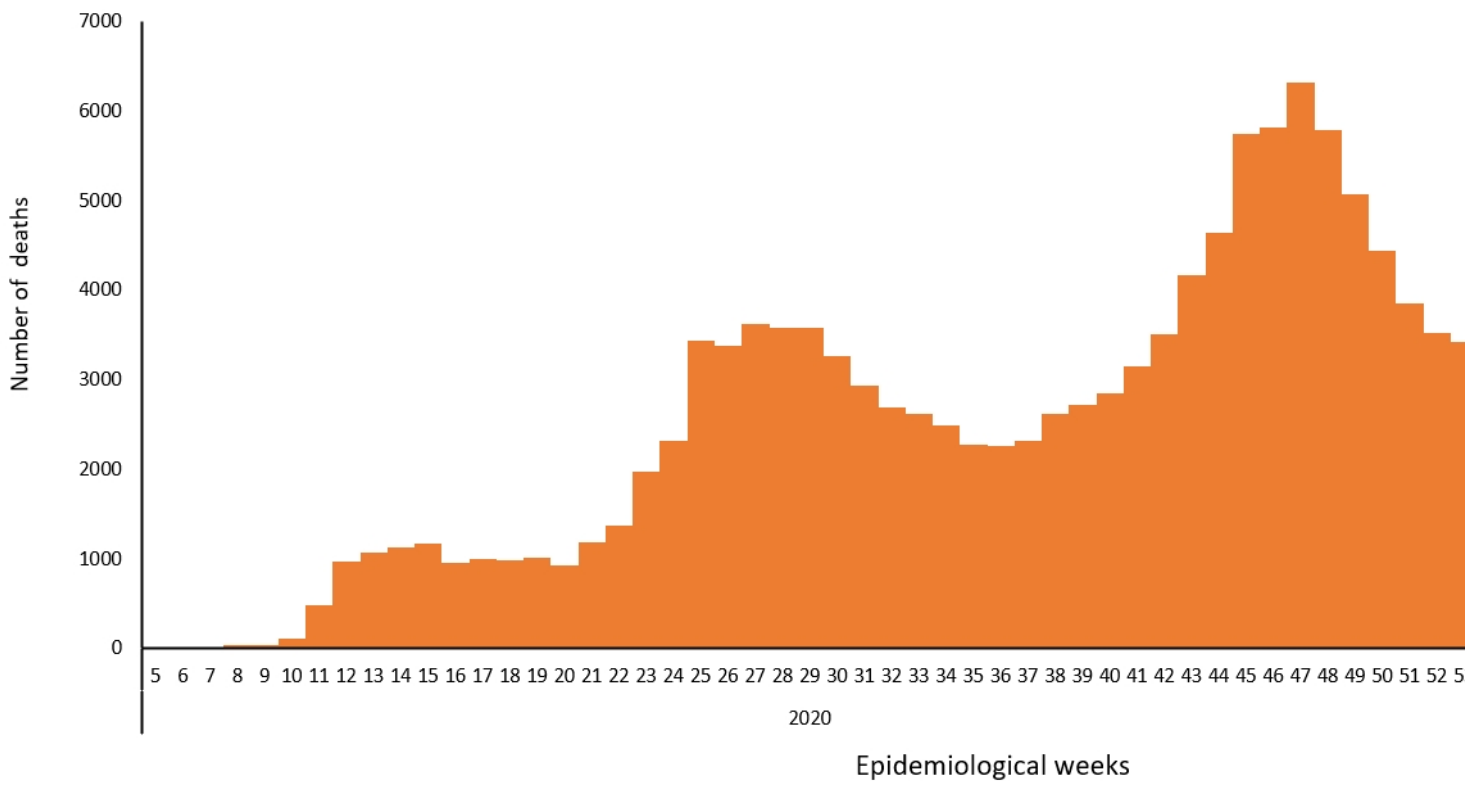
In terms of testing, a total of 137 084 020 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 3 970 422 tests in week 18, which shows a 0.1% decrease compared to the previous week when 3 973 446 tests were conducted. The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (45.7 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (17.5 million) and Islamic Republic of Iran (16.9 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rates of testing per capita (4617/1000 and 2481/1000, respectively). The average positivity rate for the Region is 6.9%. 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 45 682 963. The United Arab Emirates has administered the highest number of doses at 11 145 934, followed by Saudi Arabia at 10 514 148 and Morocco at 9 864 561. On the other hand, the total number of administrated doses in Sudan is 290 500, in Somalia is 123 570, in Libya is 81 632, in Djibouti is 13 042, in Yemen is 5132, and in Syria is 2500.*

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.





[Source: Data from the Region of the Eastern Mediterranean, COVID-19 dashboard, WHO. Data and Country, 2020. \[https://emro.who.int/emis-dashboard/covid-19\]\(#\)](#)