

6 September 2021 - With COVID-19 cases rising and hospitals in parts of war-torn Syria struggling to cope, there has been an urgent need to speed up the vaccination programme. This weekend over 358 000 doses were delivered cross-border by WHO Turkey into northwest Syria. WHO is pleased to announce that this is the largest shipment of COVAX into northwest Syria to date.



The incidence rate of COVID-19 in northwest Syria has been increasing since early August, following an increase in cross border movement after the Eid holidays. Movement of the people also caused the transmission of different variants of concern (VoC). Daily cases have been peaking over 1000 daily new cases in the last week of August. Also, there are reports that there has been over a 200% in some internally displaced persons camps and what is also a major concern is that the Delta variant is increasing its reach.



This weekend, at Bab-al-Hawa border crossing, WHO's partners UNICEF and the Syrian Immunization Group received a very welcome 358 000 COVAX doses, which were expected on

10 September but due to the urgency and surge WHO requested GAVI to accelerate the shipping process. This third batch of COVAX arrived in Adana airport Turkey on the 1 September and crossed into northwest Syria on 3 September. WHO's COVID Task Force is working daily with our partners inside Syria to tackle COVID-19 and together we are monitoring the roll out of the ongoing vaccination programme.



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