

# Monthly COVID-19 Bulletin

## December 2022

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### Epidemiological Overview

Data as of 31 December 2022

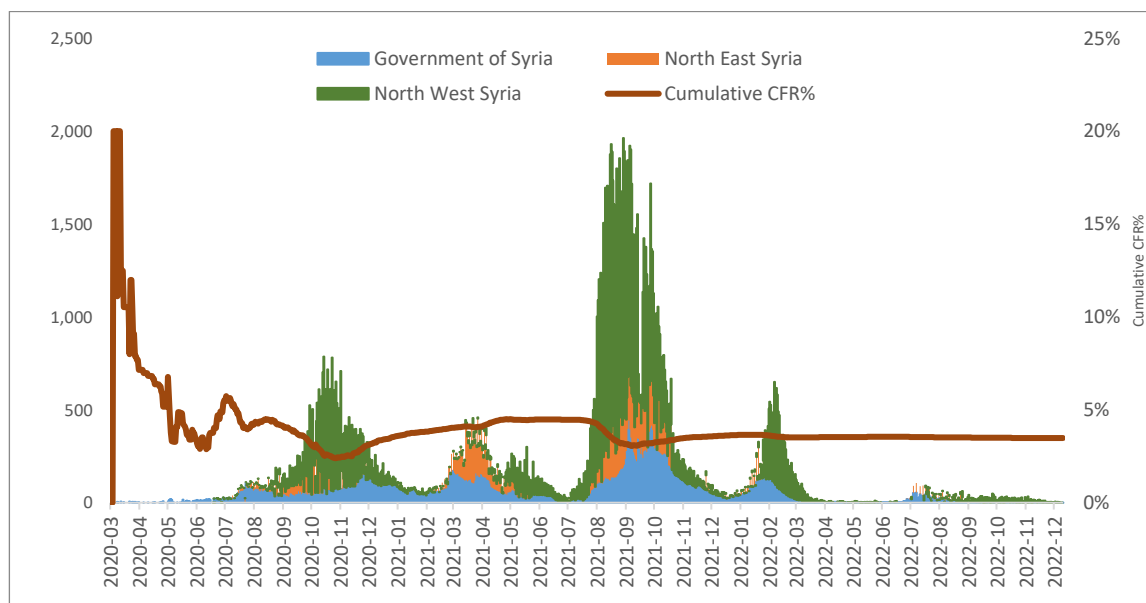
|   |                                     |   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Total cases</b><br><b>201 501</b>      | <b>Total deaths</b><br><b>7 247</b> | <b>Total recovered</b><br><b>158 783</b>            |
| <b>Case Fatality Ratio</b><br><b>3.6%</b> | <b>PCR Tests</b><br><b>749 276</b>  | <b>Total Vaccine Doses used</b><br><b>4 920 813</b> |

#### Analysis of epidemiological data for the Whole of Syria

A total of 201 501 confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Syria between 22 March 2020 and 31 December 2022 of which, 104 787 (52.00%) were reported from north-west Syria (NWS), 57 430 (28.50%) from government-controlled areas (GoS), and the remaining 39 284 (19.50%) from north-east Syria (NES). During the same period, a total of 7 247 related deaths were reported, of which 3 164 (43.66%) were from GoS, 2 505 (34.57%) from NWS, and 1 578 (21.77%) from NES. The overall Case Fatality Rate (CFR) is 3.6% and remains highest in GoS (5.5%), followed by NES (4.0%) and finally NWS (2.4%). The high CFR rates in GoS are attributed to the testing strategy for only severe and critical cases admitted to hospitals for treatment.

In December 2022, 174 new COVID-19 cases were reported across the Whole of Syria – a decrease of 68% compared with 545 cases reported in November with all reporting areas showing a decline in new cases. Across 7 governorates, the number of reported COVID-19 cases and their respective percentage out of the national totals during the month of December is as follows: Aleppo 45.4% (n= 79), Idleb 37.93% (n= 66), Damascus 6.9% (n= 12), Al-Hasakeh 4.6% (n= 8), Rural Damascus 2.3% (n= 4), Tartous 2.3% (n= 4), Lattakia 0.57% (n= 1).

**Figure 1. The Whole of Syria daily reported COVID-19 cases up to 31 December 2022**

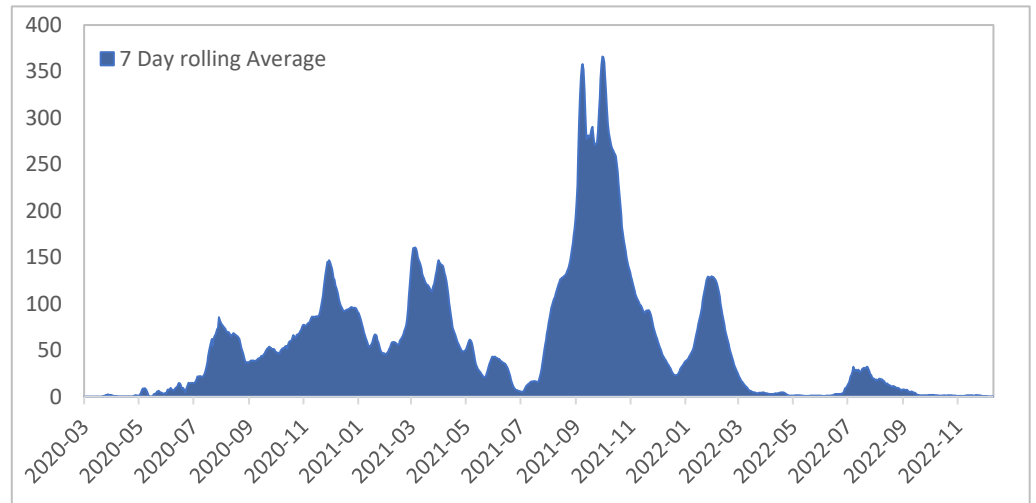


*Analysis per region*

**Government of Syria**

COVID-19 cases in GoS areas decreased by 21% (n=31) compared to the previous month (n=39) while the 7-day average of new cases was 1 in December 2022.

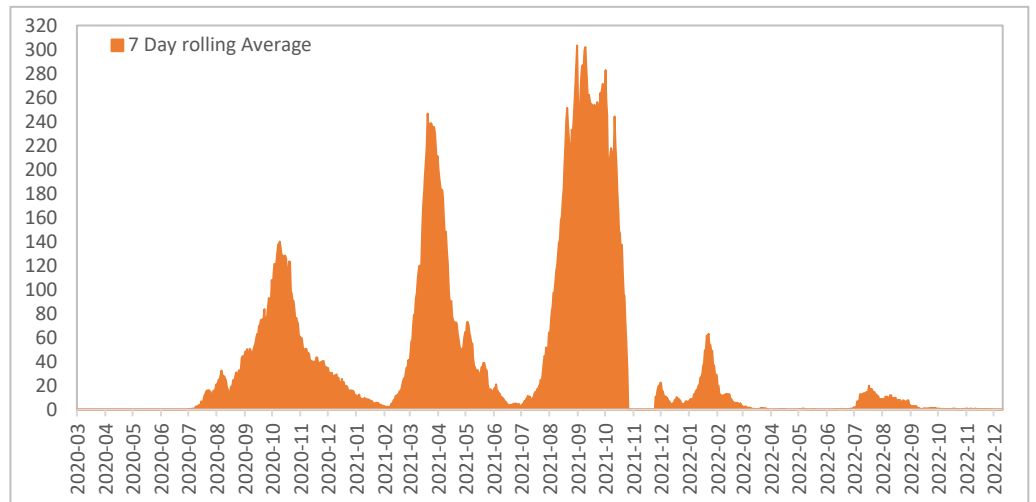
**Figure 2** The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 cases in GoS



**North-east Syria**

During December, NES reported 53% fewer new cases (n=7) compared to the previous month (n=15). The current 7-day average is 1 case as of 31 December.

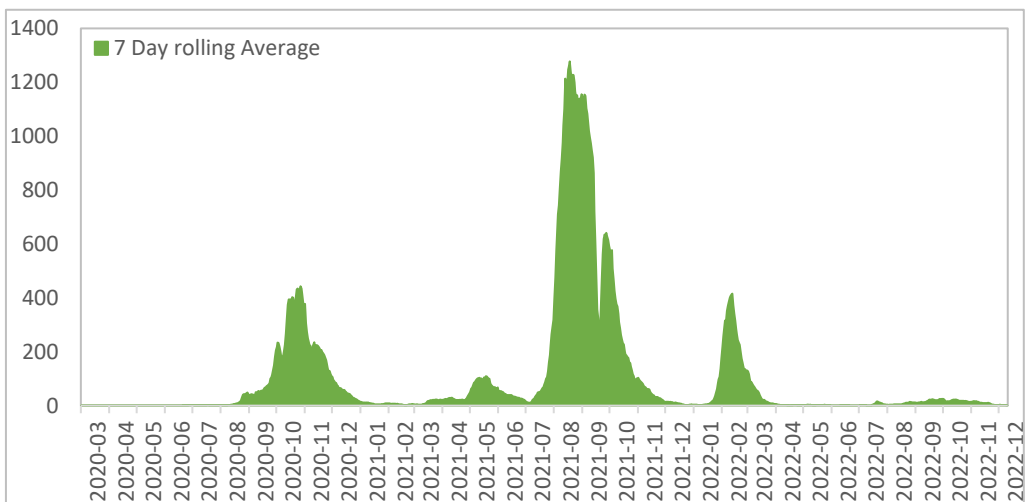
**Figure 3.** The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 cases in NES



**North-west Syria**

The number of confirmed cases in NWS decreased in December by 72% (n=136) compared to the previous month (n=491) while the 7-day average of new cases as of 31 December is 2 cases.

**Figure 4.** The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 cases in NWS



## Deaths

In December 2022, there is one newly reported death associated with COVID-19. The cumulative mortality rate is 33.5 deaths per 100 000 cases. The cumulative case fatality rate is 3.6%. CFR remained the highest in Deir-ez-Zor - 8.8%, followed by Damascus - 8%, and As-Sweida - 8.5%. The high CFR is attributed to the practice of testing only severe COVID-19 cases admitted to hospitals, while testing of mild and moderate cases through antigen-detection rapid diagnostic tests (Ag-RDTs) is only available in some PHCs. Furthermore, high mortality rates early in the response when case management capacity was limited have had a lasting effect on CFR for Syria even though zero deaths were recorded in October and November 2022.

Figure 5. The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 deaths

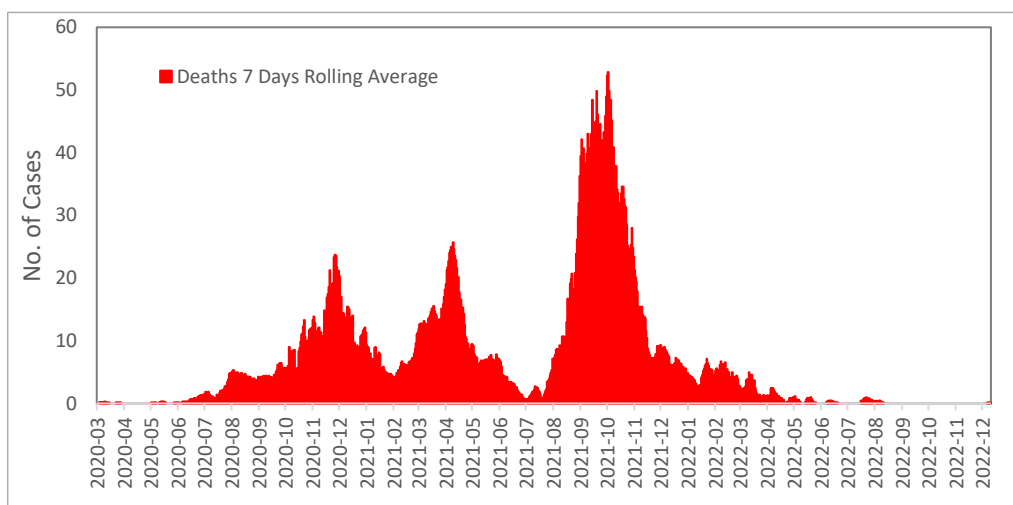


Table 1. Number of deaths increase/decrease since last month

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>7 247</b><br>Total COVID-19-related deaths reported up to date              | <b>1</b><br>The 30-day average number of deaths<br>(during the reported month) |
| <b>0</b><br>The 30-day average number of deaths<br>(during the previous month) |  |

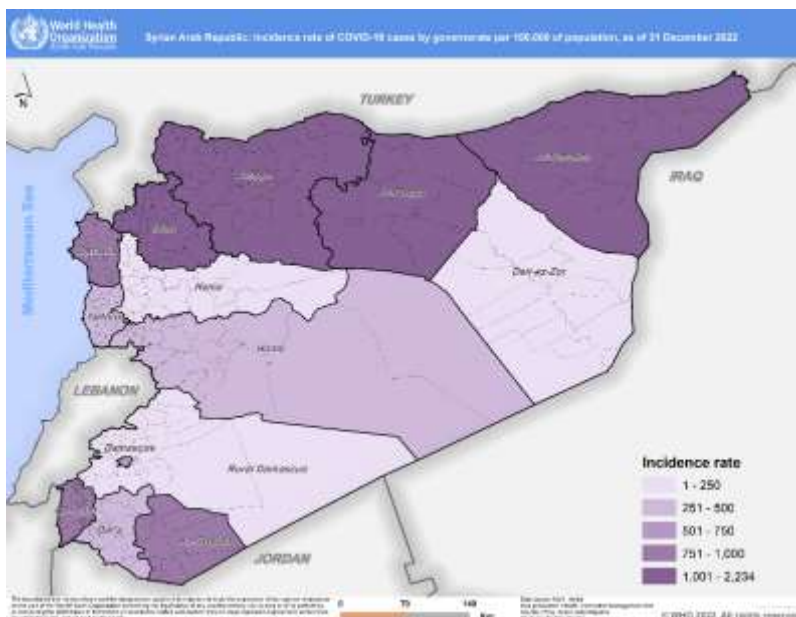
Table 2. Newly reported and cumulative cases of COVID-19 and associated deaths, by region, up to 31 December 2022

| Area                | New cases in reported month 2022 (%) | % Change in new cases compared to last month | Cumulative cases (%) | New deaths in the reported month (%) | % Change in new deaths compared to last month | Cumulative deaths (%) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Government of Syria | 31 (17.82%)                          | -20.5%                                       | 57,430 (28.50%)      | 1 (100%)                             | 100%  | 3,164 (43.66%)        |
| North-east Syria    | 7 (4.02%)                            | -53.3%                                       | 39,284 (19.50%)      | 0 (0%)                               | 0%  | 1,578 (21.77%)        |
| North-west Syria    | 136 (78.16%)                         | -72.3%                                       | 104,787 (52.00%)     | 0 (0%)                               | 0%  | 2,505 (34.57%)        |
| Whole of Syria      | 174                                  | -68.1%                                       | 201,501 (100.0%)     | 1 (100%)                             | 100%  | 7,247 (100.0%)        |

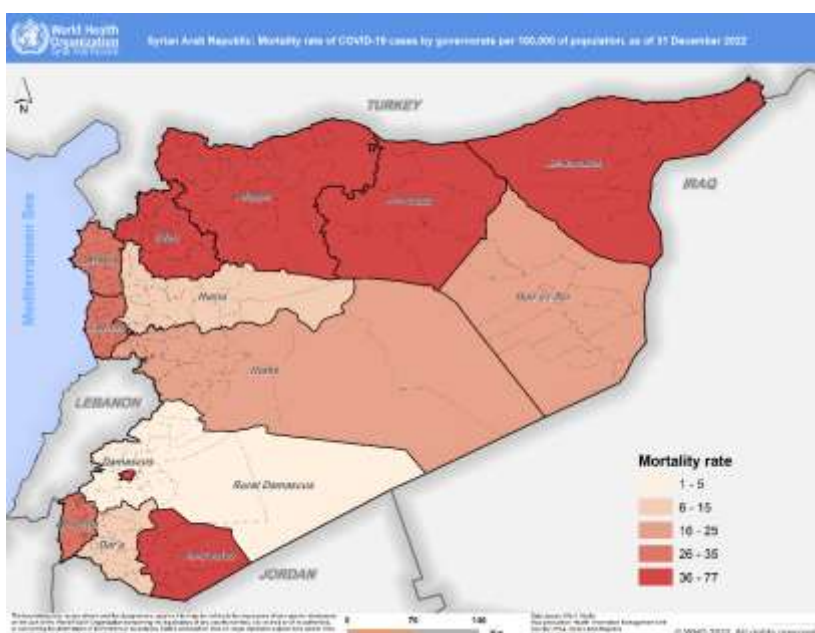
## Incidence

Syria had a low incidence level of community transmission with 0.8 cases/per 100,000 population during the month of December 2022. In WoS, the cumulative incidence rate since the start of the outbreak is 931/100 000 (as of 31 December). The incidence rates are underestimated due to the low number of tested cases.

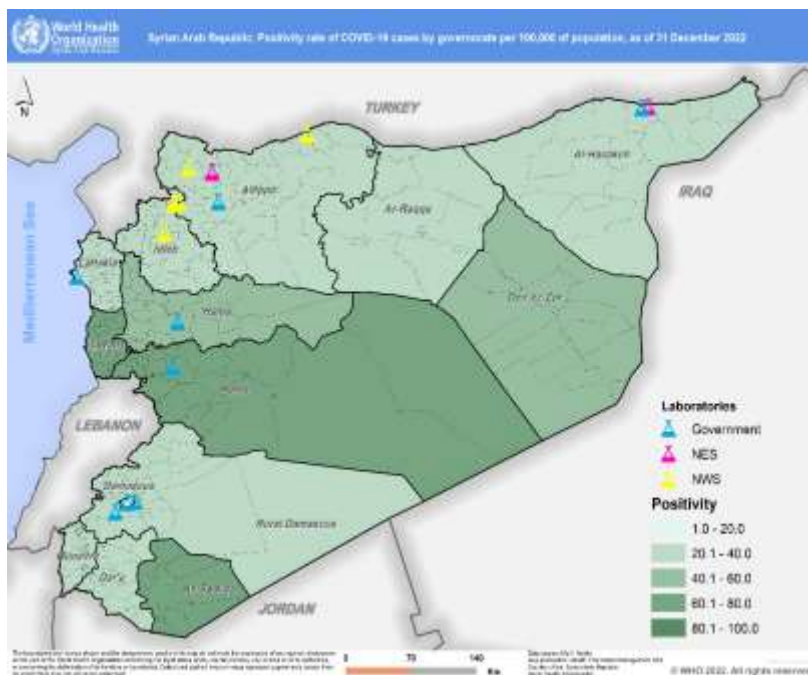
Map 1: Total number of COVID-19 cases per 100 000 of the population reported in each governorate, as of 31 December



Map 2: COVID-19-related deaths per 100 000 of the population reported in each governorate, as of 31 December



Map 3: COVID-19 Laboratory Positivity Rate by governorate, as of 31 December



## Testing

The total number of PCR tests conducted in WoS up to 31 December 2022 is **749 276**. Largely due to the current fuel shortage and transportation problems, the number of PCR tests conducted in December decreased by 49% (n=11,459) compared to November (n=22,857). 585 Ag-RDTs were performed at Ministry of Health (MoH) primary healthcare centers (PHCs), Ministry of Education (MoE) school health directorate centers, and NGOs medical points. The total number of PCR and Ag-RDTs tests in December was 12,044 and the monthly testing positivity rate was 1.4%.

**Table 3. Positivity rate increase/decrease since last month**

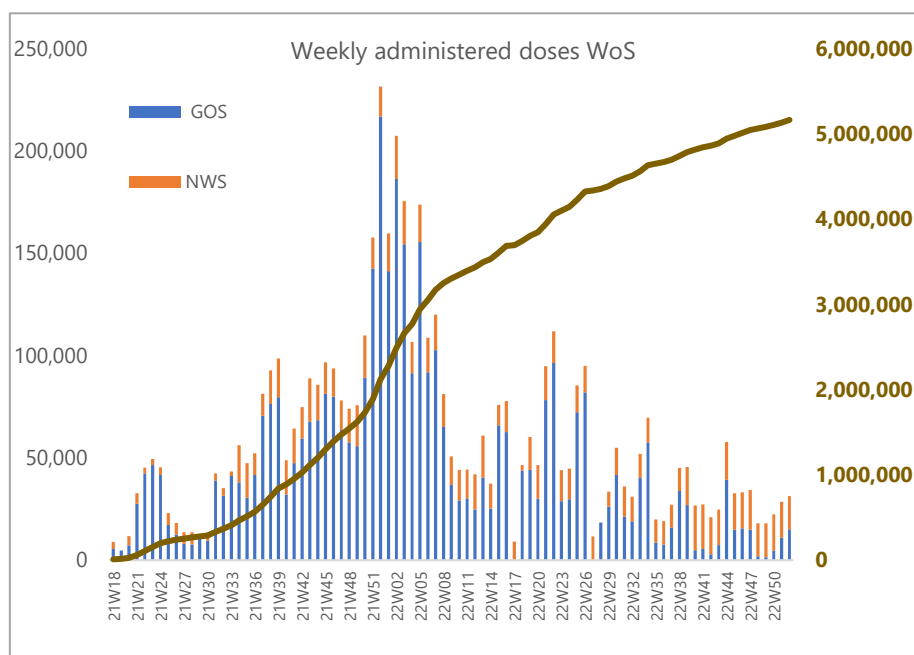
|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>12 044</b><br>Number of tests conducted during the reporting month<br>(PCR and Ag-RDTs) | <b>1.4%</b><br>Testing positivity rate in the reporting month |
| <b>2.3%</b><br>The previous average positivity rate  |   |

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

Vaccination activities continue across Syria at both fixed health facilities and through mobile medical teams in rural areas. One round of mass COVID-19 vaccination campaign was conducted 11-15 December 2022.

49 104 new doses were administered across Syria during December 2022, and 40 969 individuals took their first dose during the same period. Overall, there is a 60% decrease in the administered doses of vaccines during December (n=49,104) compared to the previous month (n=122,237).

**Figure 6. The average weekly administered doses**



**Table 4. Overall delivered vaccines from April 2021 till 31 December 2022:**

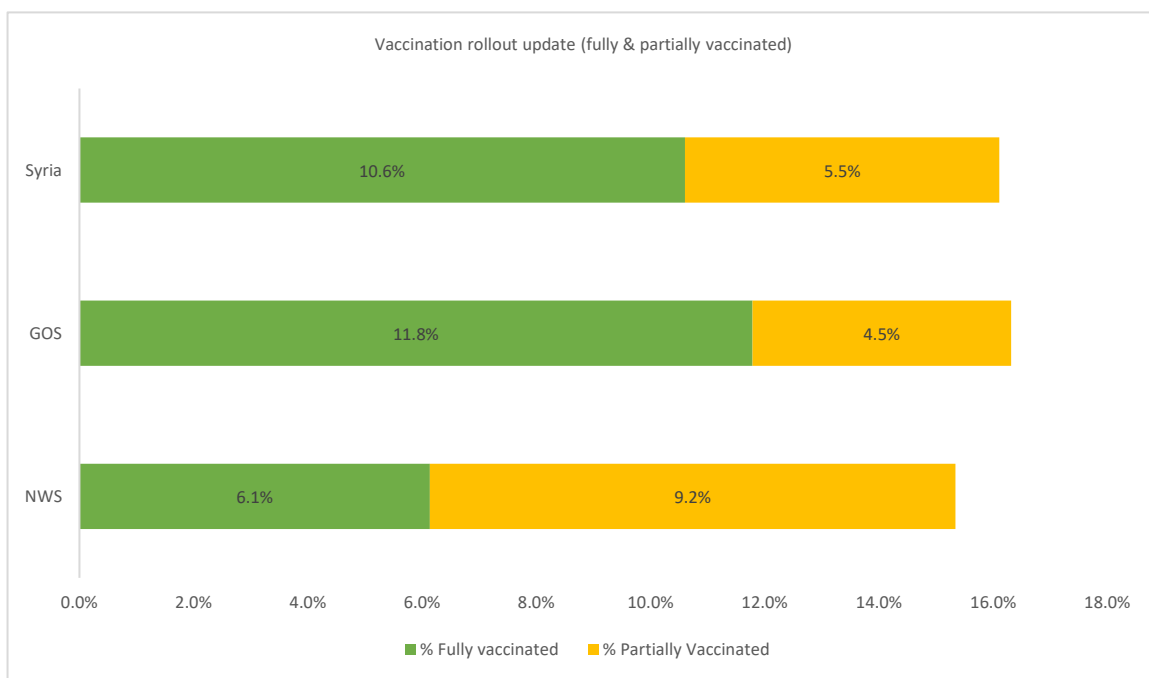
|                  | Type of Allocation | Manufacturer of vaccine | Quantity          |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>GOS</b>       | COVAX              | AZ Covishield           | 1 203 500         |
|                  |                    | AZ/AZD1222              | 1 318 340         |
|                  |                    | Sinovac                 | 3 307 200         |
|                  |                    | Janssen                 | 3 458 400         |
|                  |                    | <b>Total</b>            | <b>9 287 440</b>  |
|                  | Bilateral          | AZ/AZD1222              | 368,640           |
|                  |                    | Sinopharm               | 1 995,000         |
|                  |                    | Sputnik light           | 250 000           |
|                  |                    | Sputnik V               | 100 000           |
|                  |                    | Soberana                | 120 000           |
|                  |                    | Abdala                  | 120 000           |
|                  |                    | <b>Total</b>            | <b>2 953 640</b>  |
| <b>GOS Total</b> |                    |                         | <b>12,241,080</b> |
| <b>NWS</b>       | COVAX              | AZ Covishield           | 53 800            |
|                  |                    | AZ/AZD1222              | 350 400           |
|                  |                    | Sinovac                 | 823 200           |
|                  |                    | Janssen                 | 832 800           |
|                  |                    | <b>Total</b>            | <b>2 060 200</b>  |
| <b>WOS Total</b> |                    |                         | <b>14,311,280</b> |

The available vaccines are sufficient to reach 38.7% of the population. As per the above table, vaccines received from bilateral agreements represent 20% of the total received, and the remaining 80% were delivered through COVAX. More intensification of COVID-19 vaccination is sought through vigorous RCCE and mobile vaccination teams.

**Vaccination coverage as of 31 December**

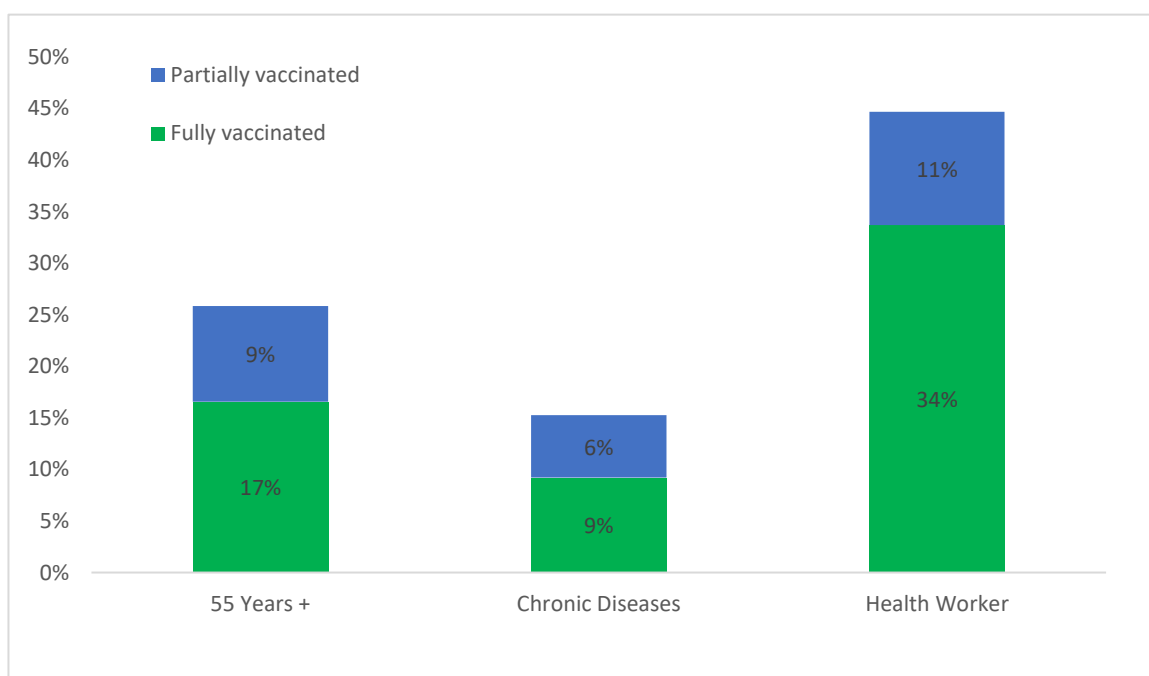
- 16.1% of the total population received at least one dose of the vaccine, and only 10.6% are fully vaccinated.
- A total of 4 920 813 doses of different vaccines were administered, and the total number of vaccinated people is 3 312 290.

**Figure 7. Vaccination status in the Whole of Syria as of 31 December**



**Vaccination coverage in priority groups:**

The vaccination in priority groups is low in WoS. Only 34% of health workers, 17% of the elderly, and 9% of people with comorbidities are fully vaccinated.



## Vaccination coverage per region since April 2021:

|  | Government of Syria | Northwest Syria | Whole of Syria |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Vaccines administered  | 3,998,422           | 922,391         | 4,920,813      |
| People who received <b>at least one dose</b>                       | 2,653,383           | 658,907         | 3,312,290      |
| Percentage of the population who received <b>at least one dose</b> | 16.31%              | 15.34%          | 15.34%         |
| Percentage point increase from the last month                      | 0.40%               | 0.77%           | 0.21%          |
| People who are <b>fully vaccinated</b>                             | 1,916,599           | 263,484         | 2,180,083      |
| Percentage of the population who are <b>fully vaccinated</b>       | 11.78%              | 6.13%           | 6.13%          |
| Percentage point increase from the last month                      | 0.34%               | 0.02%           | 0.06%          |

## COVID-19 Response Activities

### Risk Communication and Community Engagement

- During the 1-week COVID-19 vaccination campaign, conducted from 18-22 December 2022, community health workers continued to disseminate messages regarding the essential measures to be taken to prevent, not only COVID-19 but respiratory diseases in general.
- In addition, community health workers conducted group sessions and household visits to generate vaccine demand.

### Laboratories and diagnostics

- Delivered 100 automated extraction kits of the Ministry of Health enough to cover 48 000 tests. The kits will be distributed in 5 COVID-19 labs in Damascus, Homs, Aleppo, Tartous, and Deir-ez-Zor governorates.

### Infection prevention and control

- To sustain safe healthcare service delivery, personal protection equipment (PPE), and Infection, Prevention, and Control (IPC) supplies, were dispatched to different health partners including the Ministry of Health across the country. Overall, 472 300 masks, 62 500 FFP2 masks, 2 187 500 Examination Gloves, and 24 500 bottles of Alcohol hand rub sanitizer with presser were distributed.

### Case management, clinical operations, and therapeutics

- Over 93 237 treatments of life-saving medicines and 24 TESK kits in addition to different types of medical equipment/supplies (126 oxygen concentrators, 5 patient beds, 100 pulse oximeters, and 1 134 venturi masks with percent O2) were delivered to health partners in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Ar-Raqqa, Al-Hasakeh, and Deir-ez-Zor. These deliveries are part of enhancing the capacity of public health facilities for a timely and appropriate response for life-saving interventions.
- 11 training courses were delivered in 6 governorates (As-Sweida, Quneitra, Hama, Latakia, Damascus, and Rural Damascus) through which over 275 midwives and gynaecologists were trained on the vaccination of pregnant women and the management of COVID-19 during pregnancy.

### Logistics and operations

- In December 2022, WHO provided approximately 191 tonnes of medical and lab supplies, kits, and equipment to 14 governorates with a total value of nearly 1,7 M USD. They were distributed to the Ministry of Health directorates of health in different governorates, Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Education-affiliated health facilities, INGOs, NGOs, NGHs, NGPHCs, SARC, KRC, and camps.
- Two crossline shipments (23 tonnes) of medical equipment (2 road convoys consisting of 2 trucks) were delivered to the WHO warehouse in Qamishli to be distributed to health facilities and partners.

## Maintaining essential health services and systems

- Cutaneous Leishmaniasis (CL) is endemic in Syria. Between 2017 and 2021, 346 940 cases of CL were treated in Syria. Through the generous support of its donors, WHO has continued to support the national leishmaniasis programme by securing the related essential medicines and finalizing the leishmaniasis guideline which has enabled the programme to deliver the services through PHCs and treat 67 152 cutaneous leishmaniasis cases during 2022 till the end of November.

## COVID-19 key performance indicators for November 2022

