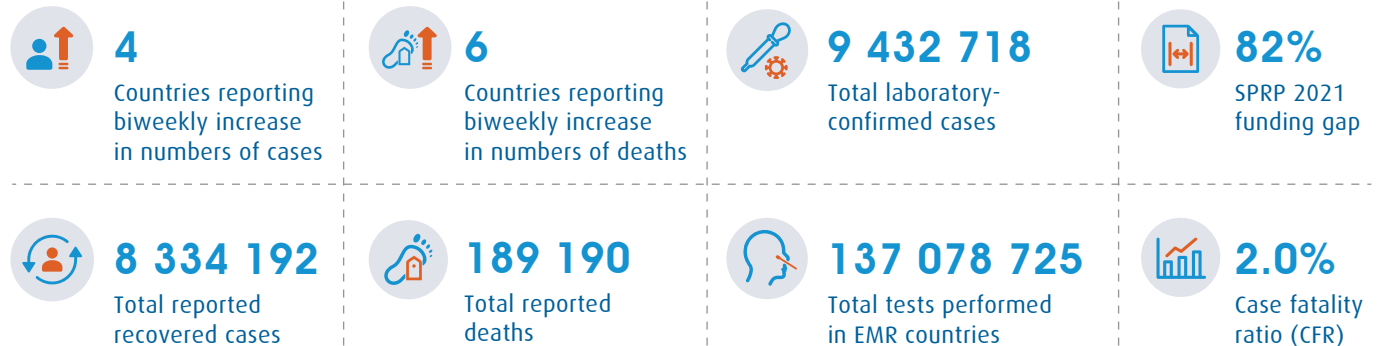


SITUATION IN NUMBERS (As of midnight GMT+2, 8 May 2021)



More than one million doses of the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine were delivered by the COVAX Facility to Pakistan to support vaccination efforts for high-risk groups across the country.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- **COVID-19 cases and deaths:** As of 8 May 2021, the Eastern Mediterranean Region has reported 9,432,718 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 189,190 deaths since the start of the pandemic.
- **Epidemiological trend:** A 21% decrease in the number of reported cases was observed compared to the past two weeks, with 17 countries reporting a decrease in cases, and only 4 reporting an increase. The number of reported deaths in this biweekly period showed stabilization in comparison with the two previous weeks, with 6 countries reporting an increase in deaths, and 12 countries reporting a decrease. However, a 13% decrease in deaths was observed in week 18 compared to week 17.
- **COVID-19 testing:** The total number of tests in the Region has reached 137,078,725 with a median cumulative positivity ratio of 10.7% (range from 1.2% to 30.6%). In comparison with the two previous weeks, regional numbers of tests have shown stabilization, with 14 countries reporting decreases in the numbers of tests conducted.
- **SARS-CoV-2 variants:** To date, 17 countries in the Region have reported the detection of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (VOCs).

Map 1: COVID-19 bi-weekly attack rate per 100,000 population and number of new deaths per country in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

25 April - 8 May 2021

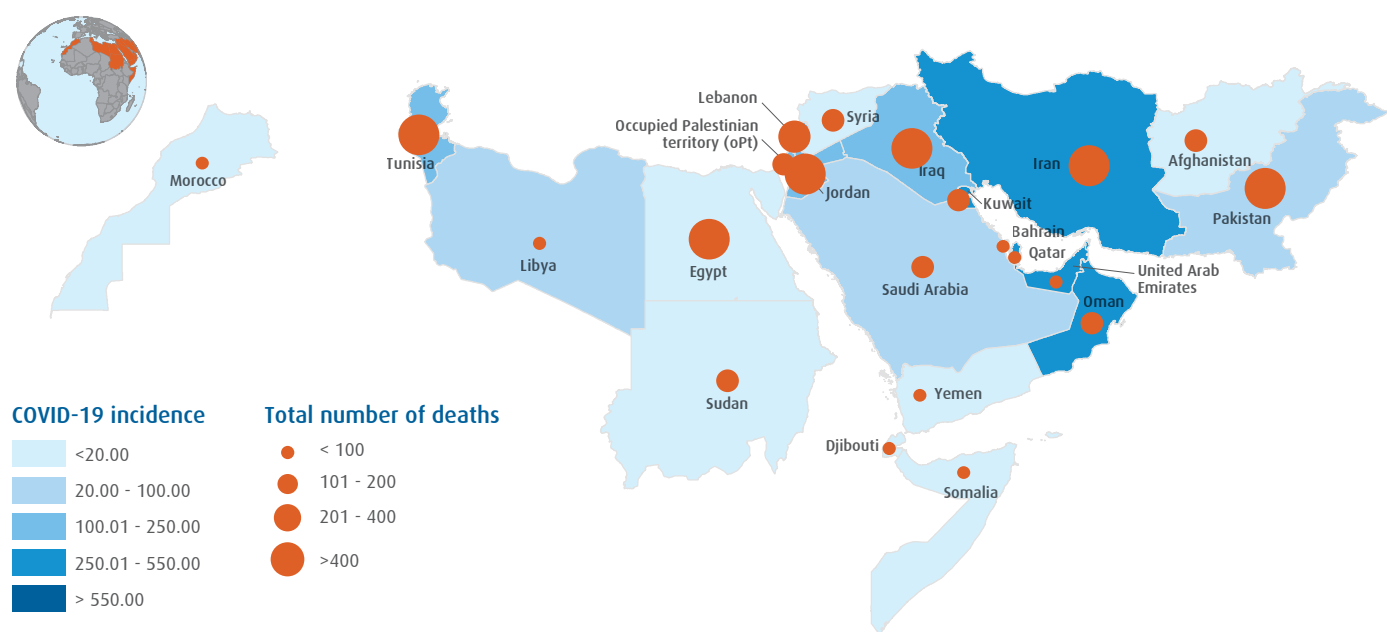


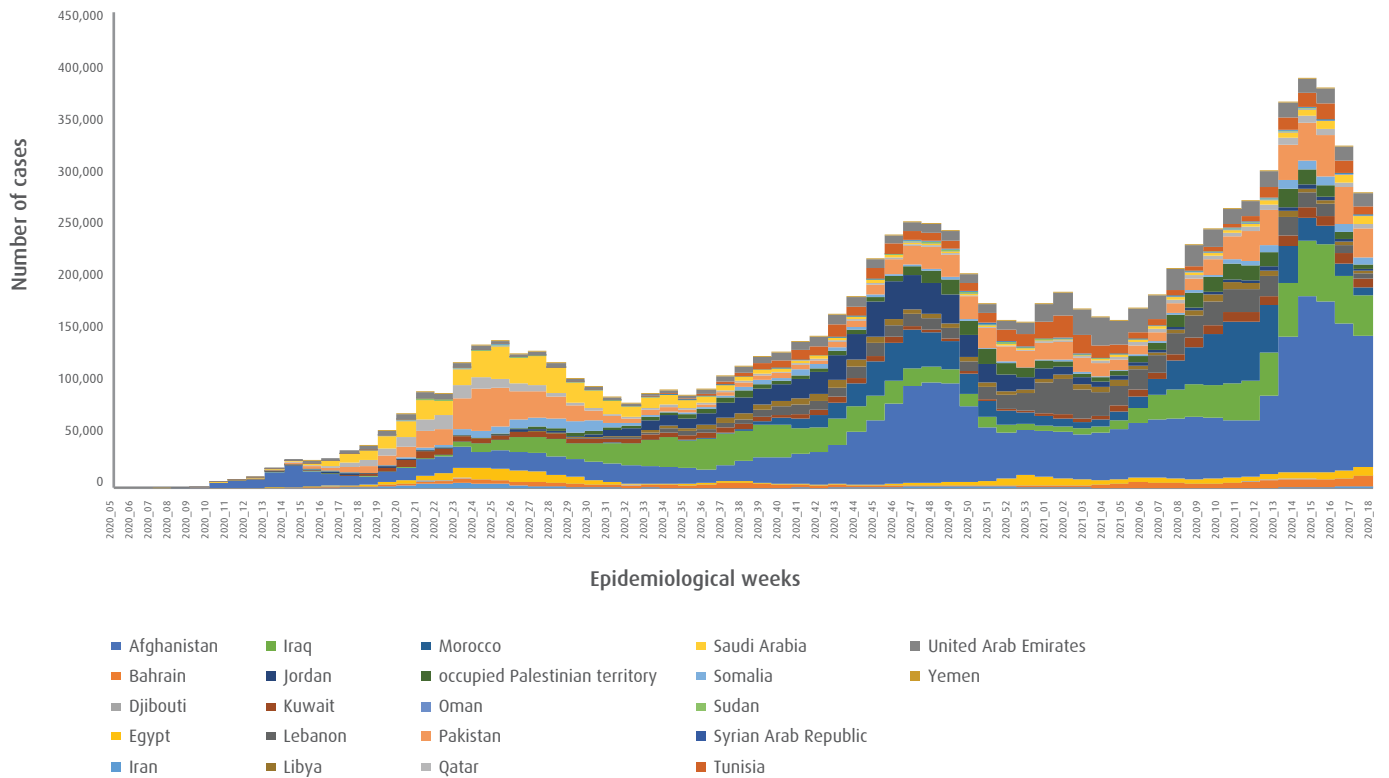
Table 1: Regional Epidemiological Situation

25 April – 8 May 2021

Country	New Confirmed Cases	Total Confirmed Cases	New Deaths	Total Deaths	CFR	Total recovered	Total Tests
Afghanistan	3,048	62,063	106	2,698	4.3%	54,222	420,135
Bahrain	17,570	187,905	58	678	0.4%	174,357	4,222,173
Djibouti	589	11,335	17	149	1.3%	11,071	151,807
Egypt	14,702	236,272	847	13,845	5.9%	176,363	2,744,517
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	263,631	2,640,670	5,404	74,524	2.8%	2,092,381	16,929,609
Iraq	83,270	1,108,558	524	15,741	1.4%	998,626	9,639,337
Jordan	18,810	719,233	513	9,076	1.3%	701,191	6,824,502
Kuwait	18,672	284,076	124	1,635	0.6%	268,316	2,396,532
Lebanon	12,654	532,269	342	7,460	1.4%	481,968	4,250,832
Libya	4,684	179,970	74	3,070	1.7%	166,340	993,234
Morocco	4,591	513,628	76	9,064	1.8%	500,540	5,816,715
Occupied Palestinian territory	11,178	330,278	200	3,619	1.1%	314,148	1,772,464
Oman	14,066	199,344	141	2,083	1.0%	181,696	1,613,116
Pakistan	62,399	858,026	1,798	18,915	2.2%	757,281	12,190,671
Qatar	9,107	210,603	84	502	0.2%	200,467	1,941,171
Saudi Arabia	14,179	425,442	172	7,059	1.7%	408,676	17,459,285
Somalia	956	14,415	58	747	5.2%	6,191	162,437
Sudan	1,092	34,889	113	2,446	7.0%	27,949	371,994
Syrian Arab Republic	1,320	23,319	122	1,648	7.1%	18,457	72,547
Tunisia	19,170	319,512	1,046	11,350	3.6%	276,198	1,356,375
United Arab Emirates	25,520	534,445	41	1,610	0.3%	514,769	45,667,425
Yemen	357	6,466	95	1,271	19.7%	2,985	81,847
Total	601,565	9,432,718	11,955	189,190	2.0%	8,334,192	137,078,725

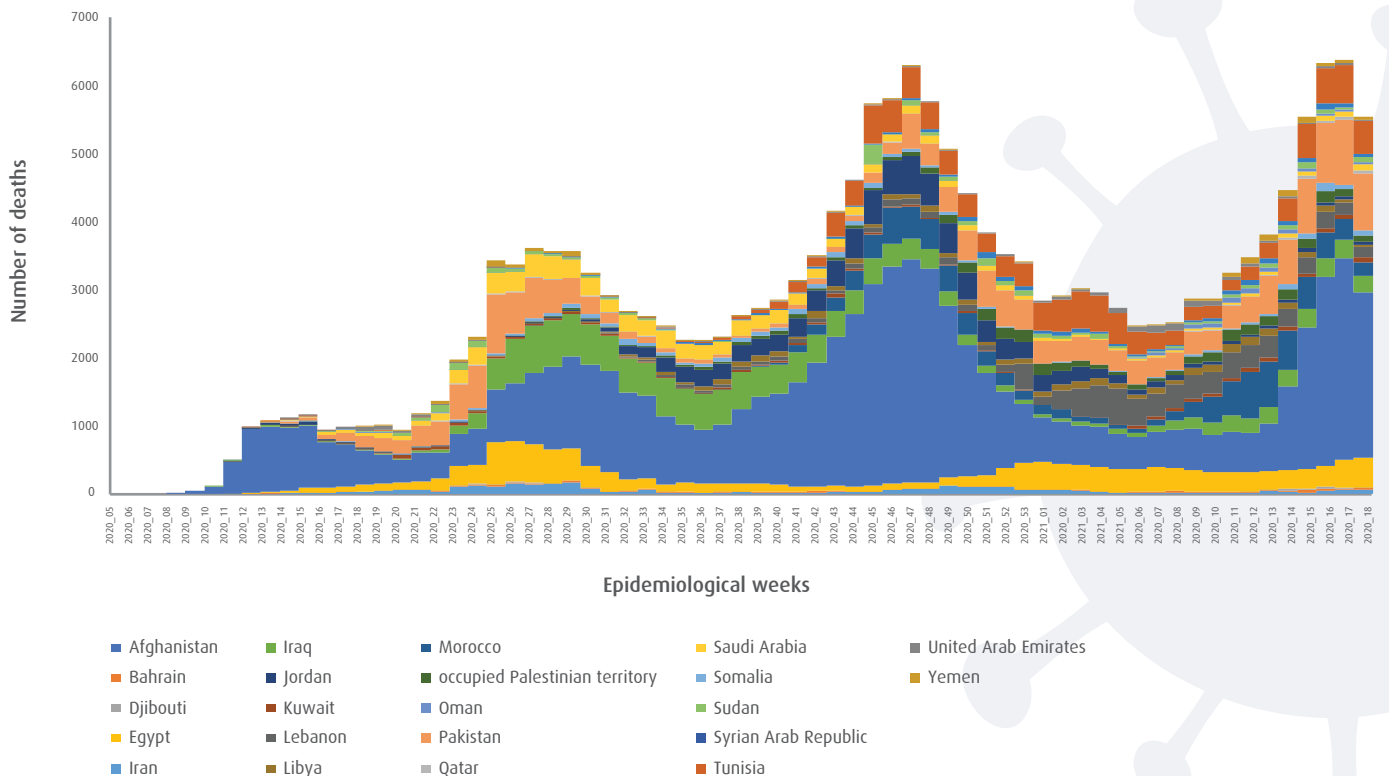
Graph 1: Weekly distribution of COVID-19 cases in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

26 January 2020 – 8 May 2021



Graph 2: Weekly distribution of COVID-19 deaths in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

26 January 2020 – 8 May 2021



IN FOCUS: COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION

- Pakistan received its first batch of COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX Facility on 8 May 2021, bringing the number of countries in the Region that have received their first shipments of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility to 16.
- All 22 countries in the Region are conducting vaccination campaigns. Around 45 million doses have been administered in the Region so far, covering approximately 5.8% of the total population.

IN FOCUS: NEW SARS-CoV-2 VARIANTS

- 17 EMR countries have officially reported the detection of VOCs: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the occupied Palestinian territory, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.
- 4 EMR countries (Bahrain, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan and Morocco) have officially reported the detection of the B.1.617 variant of interest (VOI), first identified in India.
- On 8 May, Egypt uploaded 12 genome sequence samples matching B.1.1.7 (first identified in the United Kingdom) on the GISAID website tracking SARS-CoV-2 variants.
- On 27 April, the Islamic Republic of Iran officially announced the detection of the B.1.351 variant, first identified in South Africa.

REGIONAL RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

Operations Support and Logistics

- Deployed two staff members from the Dubai Logistics Hub to the WHO Country Office in Sudan to support contracting and inventory management.
- Dispatched Unity Studies diagnostics across 24 countries and six WHO Regions to support serological studies.
- Dispatched antigen testing kits and personal protective equipment to the WHO Country Office in Sudan.
- Prepared a charter flight containing diagnostics and biomedical equipment to Aden and Sana'a, Yemen, scheduled for late May.

Health Operations and Technical Expertise

- Disseminated guidance on oxygen storage to countries.
- Supported the safe use of biomedical and oxygen equipment in Iraq.

Health Information Management and Surveillance

- Started modelling analysis for Tunisia, presenting preliminary results to the WHO Country Office in Tunisia and the Ministry of Health.
- Deployed a consultant to Pakistan to support COVID-19 surveillance and integrated disease surveillance.
- Trained fifteen EMRO participants over four days on the WHO-approved DHIS2 Health Data Toolkit and ten EMRO participants in an advanced training on DHIS2.
- Analyzed best practices of COVID-19 responses in Australia, China, New Zealand, and Singapore to adapt lessons learned to the EMR.

International Health Regulations and Social Measures

- Supported countries in promoting mask-wearing through policy guidance and risk communication.
- Developed a tool to follow up on mission recommendations following review and assessment missions for the COVID-19 response in countries.

Research and Knowledge Management

- Set targets for Research and Knowledge Management monitoring indicators.
- Developed research protocol for a post-COVID-19 study.
- Communicated with Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, and Somalia regarding seroprevalence studies.
- Provided support on protocol for Egypt's vaccine effectiveness study.

Essential Health Services and Systems

- Finalized a set of performance indicators for the safety of health workers and prepared pilot in Egypt, Pakistan, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia.
- Supported countries on World Hand Hygiene Day, with the theme 'Achieving hand hygiene at the point of care' and the slogan 'Seconds save lives – clean your hands'.
- Published "Maintaining Essential Nutrition Services to Under-five Children in Yemen: A Programmatic Adaptation Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic".
- Held introductory meeting for the second phase of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation project on maintaining essential reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child, and adolescent health services during the COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan, Sudan, and Yemen.

COVID-19 Vaccine

- Supported countries in accessing data on Janssen, Moderna and new AstraZeneca manufacturing sites for the issuance of Emergency Use Authorization.
- Held preliminary discussions with Iran and Tunisia on vaccine production, including COVID-19 vaccines.
- Published "Efforts to deploy COVID-19 vaccine in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region within the first 100 days of 2021" in the Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal.
- Organized regional visibility on Pakistan receiving first consignment of COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX Facility.

COUNTRY SITUATION HIGHLIGHTS - FROM THE FIELD

How a gloomy night brought a bright light in the fight against COVID-19 in Somalia

On 2 March 2021, as Somalia was facing its second wave of COVID-19, Dr Abdirizak Yusuf, the Federal Ministry of Health and Human Service (FMoH)'s National Incident Manager for the COVID-19 response in Somalia and the Director of the De Martino Hospital, had to work tirelessly around the clock with his team of doctors to keep infected patients alive. Oxygen supply needs were immense. Beds in the intensive care unit were occupied, and Somali patients were in dire need of oxygen. This second wave of COVID-19 was more severe than the one the country faced in 2020, causing a more devastating and heavier toll on lives than had previously been seen.

Continue reading:

<http://www.emro.who.int/somalia/news/how-a-gloomy-night-brought-a-bright-light-in-the-fight-against-covid-19.html>



Regional COVID-19 website: <http://www.emro.who.int/health-topics/corona-virus/index.html>

For more information, contact emrgonCoV@who.int