

# Monthly COVID-19 Bulletin

## November 2021

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## Epidemiological Overview

Data as of 30 November 2021

### *Descriptive analysis of epidemiological data for the Whole of Syria (30 November 2021)*

A total of 177 359 confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Syria between 22 March 2020 and 30 November 2021. Of them, 52% (n=92 229) were reported from north-west Syria (NWS), 27.17% (n=48,170) from areas of Syria controlled by the government (GoS), and the remaining 20.84% (n=36,960) from north-east Syria (NES). During the same period, a total of 6 473 related deaths were reported, of which 42.47% (6 473) from GoS, 34.67% (2 244) from NWS, and 22.86% (1 480) from NES. The overall Case Fatality Rate (CFR) in November was 3.6%.

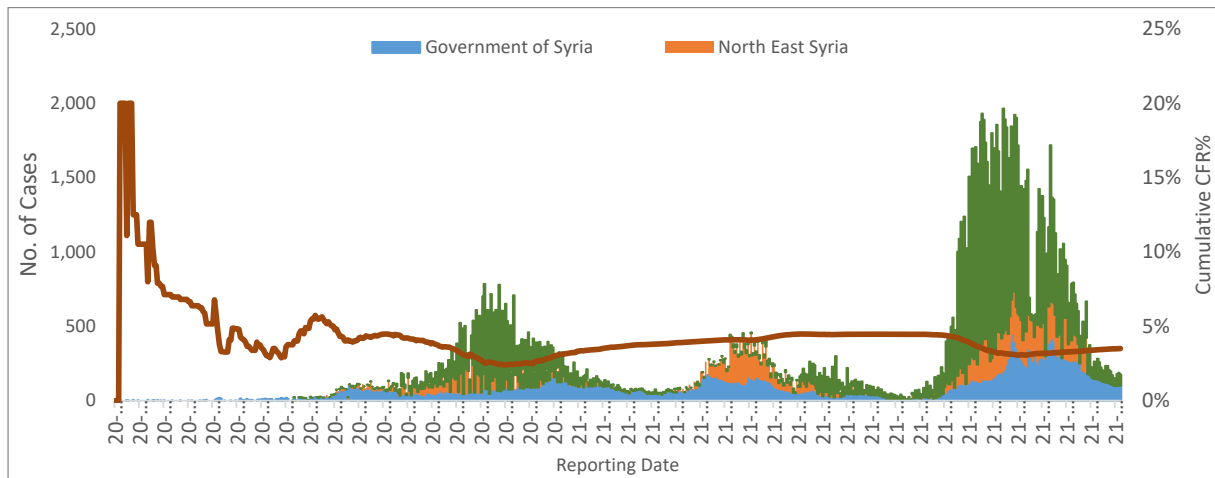
The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported across the Whole of Syria was down 68.41% month on month between November 2021 (n=9 982) and October (n=31 603). The decrease was sharpest in NWS, where cases were down 74.57% in November (n=3 806) compared to October (n= 14 968). Cases reported in GoS were 48.19% fewer in November (n=4 766) compared to October (n=9 199), while in NES case numbers were down 81.04% in November (n=1 410) compared to October (n=7 436). The sharp decrease in NES is attributed to a lack of COVID-19 diagnostic tests.

The monthly incidence rate of COVID-19 in WoS was down to 46.1 per 100 000 in November. The incidence rate in October had been 145.9 per 100 000 and in September was at its highest at 221.4 per 100 000. The monthly incidence rate in GoS is 22.0/100 000 and in NWS is 17.6/100 000.

The number of reported cases of COVID-19, and the percentage of the national total, across all 14 governorates of Syria during the month of November is as follows: Aleppo (2 640) 26.45%, Idleb (1 908) 19.11%, Damascus (953) 9.55%, Al-Hasakeh (723) 7.24%, Dar'a (612) 6.13%, Rural Damascus (484) 4.85%, Ar-Raqqa (461) 4.62%, Homs (460) 4.61%, Lattakia (458) 4.59%, As-Sweida (443) 4.44%, Tartous 324 (3.25%), Hama 236 (2.36%), Deir-Ez-Zor (181) 1.81%, and Quneitra (99) 0.99%.

According to the data received from some governorate during November the occupancy rate of hospital beds, Tartous and As-Sweida reached 100% while in the other governorates the rate was between 70-90%.

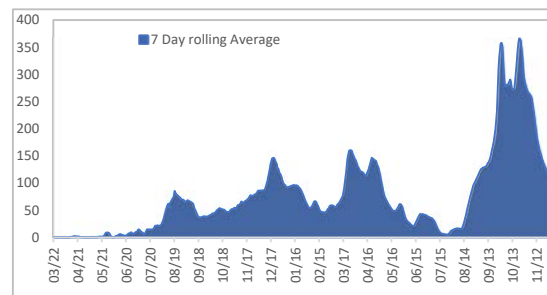
**Figure 1. Cases of COVID-19 reported each week in areas controlled by the government (GoS), north-east Syria (NES) and north-west Syria (NWS) up to 30 November 2021**



*Descriptive analysis per region*

**Government of Syria**

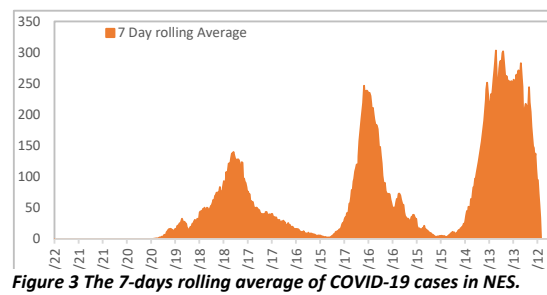
The highest monthly incidence rate reported for GoS since the start of the outbreak was in October 2021, when the rate was 42.5 new cases per 100 000 of the population. The 7-days moving average of daily new cases peaked at 366 on 21 October and has since declined to 103 in November, indicating a regression in the fourth wave of COVID-19 in GoS areas. The number of new cases of COVID-19 reported in November (n= 4 766) was down by 48.19% compared to October (n= 9 199).



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

**North-east Syria**

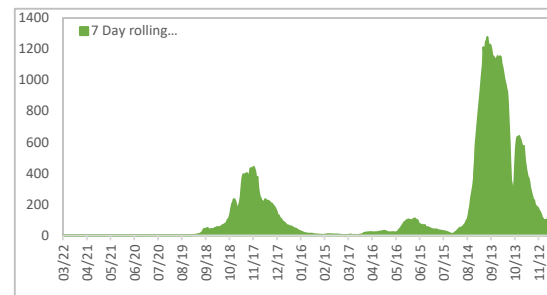
The number of cases reported per month in NES peaked in September 2021. The 7-days moving average of daily new cases peaked at 303 on 21 September and has significantly declined in November, attributed to an ongoing shortage of lab supplies for PCR diagnostic testing that began on 9 November 2021.



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

**North-west Syria**

The number of cases reported per month in NWS also peaked in September 2021. The 7-days moving average of daily new cases peaked on 8 September at 1 278. The current 7-days rolling average in NWS is 369. A remarkable decrease in monthly cases in November also indicates a regression of the fourth COVID-19 wave. The number of new COVID-19 cases in November (n= 3 806) was down 74.57% compared to October (n= 14 968).



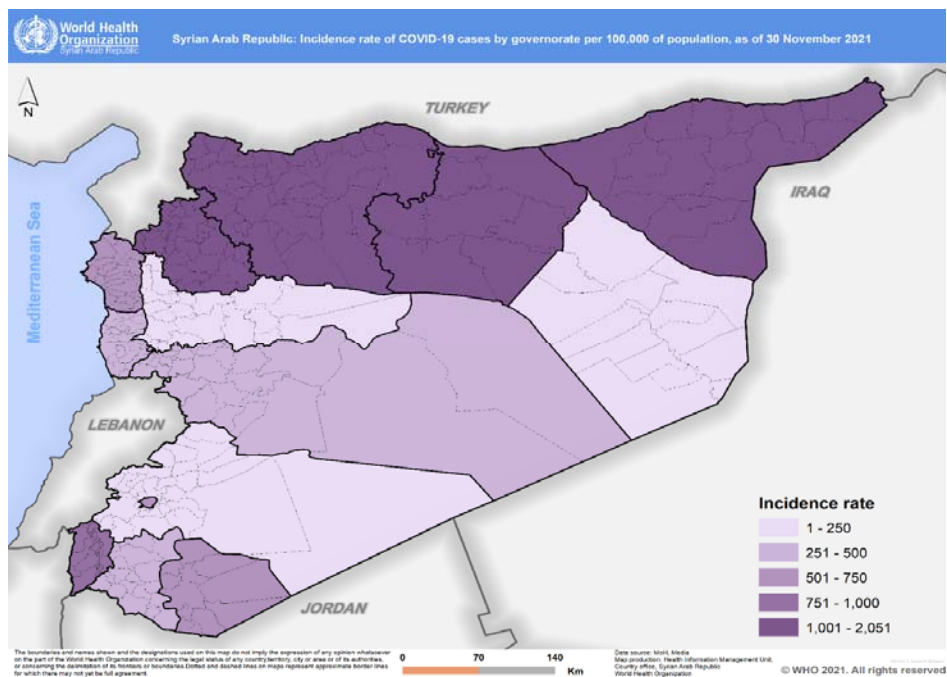
**Figure 4 The 7-days rolling average of COVID-19 cases in NWS.**

**Table 1. Newly reported and cumulative cases of COVID-19 and associated deaths, by region, up to 30 Nov 2021**

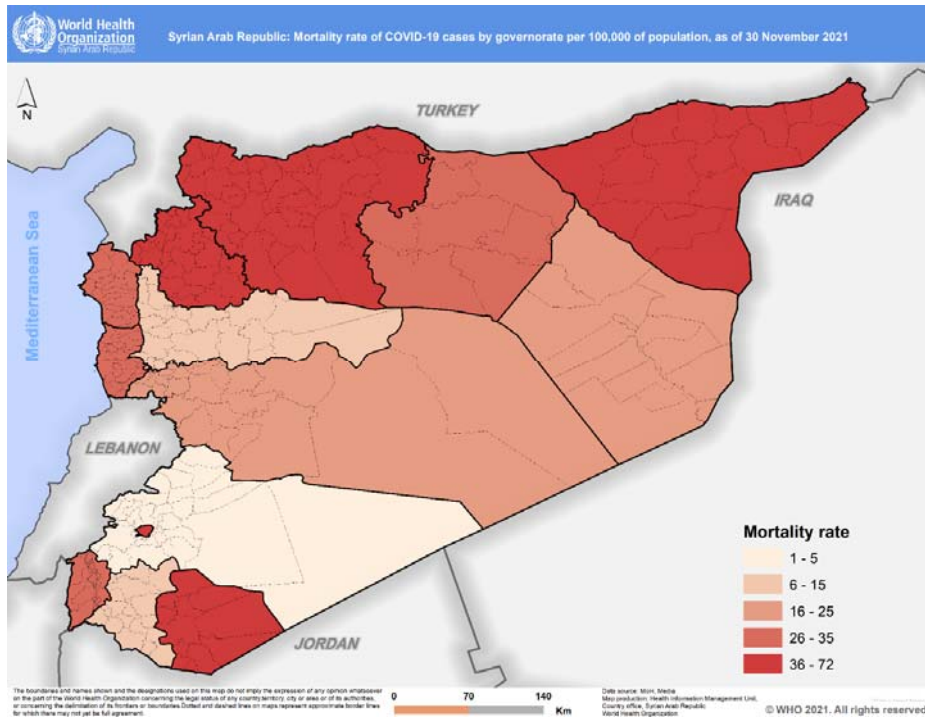
Area	New cases in November 2021(%)	Change in new cases last 31 days*	Cumulative cases (%)	New deaths in October	Change in new deaths in last 31 days *	Cumulative deaths (%)
<b>Government of Syria</b>	4 766 47.7%	-48.19%	48 170 27.28%	183 25.81%	-42.6%	2 749 42.5%
<b>North-east Syria</b>	1 410 14.1%	-81.04%	36 960 20.78%	111 15.65%	-73.7%	1 480 22.9%
<b>North-west Syria</b>	3 806 38.1%	-74.57%	92 229 51.94%	415 58.53%	-28.3%	2 244 34.7%
<b>Whole of Syria</b>	<b>9 982</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>-68.41%</b>	<b>177 359</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>709</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>-46.28%</b>	<b>6 473</b> <b>100%</b>

\* Percentage change in the number of newly confirmed cases and deaths during the past 30 days compared to the previous month

**Figure 2. Total number of COVID-19 cases per 100 000 of the population reported in each governorate, as of 30 Nov 2021**



**Figure 3. COVID-19 related deaths per 100 000 of the population reported in each governorate, as of 30 Nov 2021**

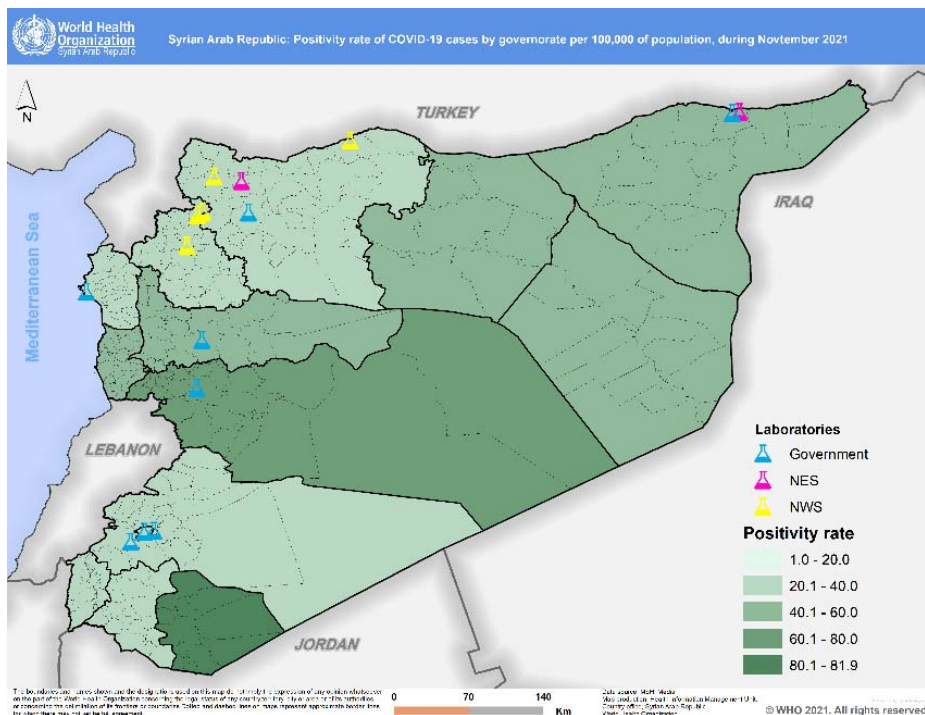


## Testing

The percentage of samples testing positive for COVID-19 has decreased from 51.57% in October to 28.0% in November, reflecting an actual decrease in the number of cases, as the testing strategy has not changed. The number of tests conducted in November 2021 was 35 648, down from 61 270 in October.

**546 648 - Total number of tests conducted in WoS up to 30 November**

**Figure 4. COVID-19 Laboratory Positivity Rate by governorate, as of 30 November 2021**



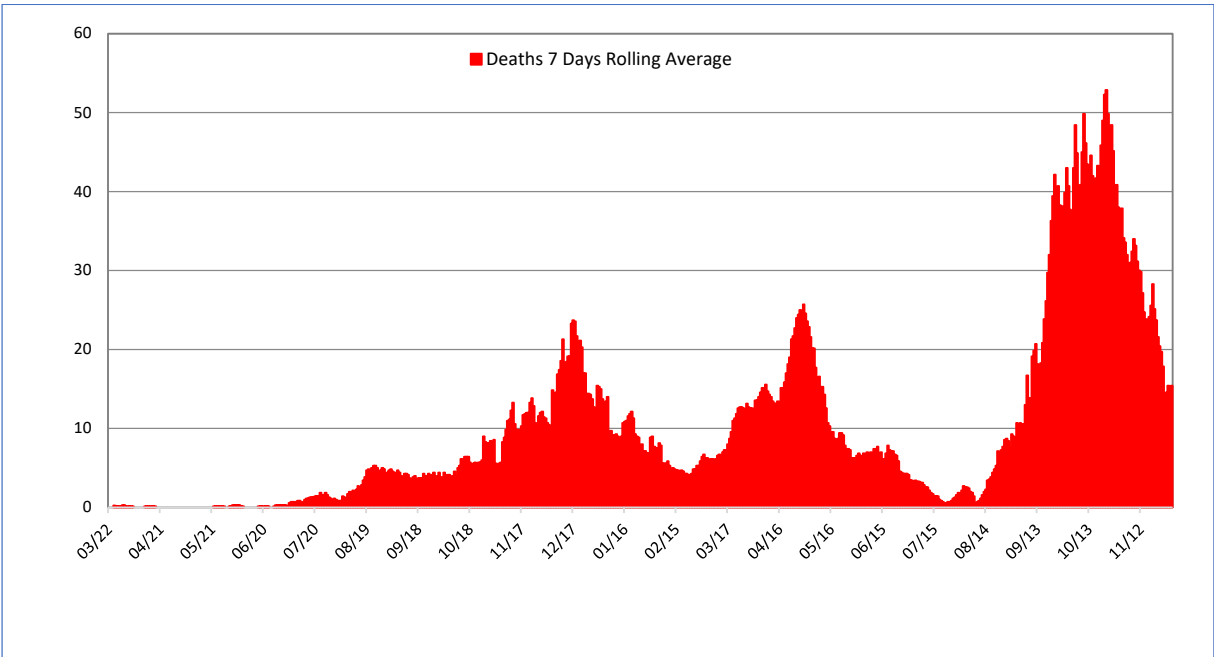
<b>35,648</b> Number of tests conducted in November 2021	<b>28.0 %</b> Testing positivity rate in November 2021
<b>51.57%</b> Previous average positivity rate	<b>45%</b> Decrease in average positivity rate since last month

### Deaths

In November, the number of newly reported deaths associated with COVID-19 (n=709) was down 46.28% compared to October 2021 (n= 1 320). The cumulative mortality rate has increased to 29.9 deaths per 100 000 cases, and the case fatality rate is 3.6%. The highest number of COVID-19 associated deaths reported in November were in NWS (n=415) where deaths accounted for 58.53% of the national total. A total of 183 deaths (25.81%) were reported in GoS, and 111 deaths (15.65%) were reported in in NES.

<b>6 473</b> Total COVID-19 related deaths reported to date	<b>25</b> 30-day average (November)
<b>44</b> 30-day average number of deaths (October)	<b>43.1%</b> Decrease in 30-day average since last month

Figure 5. COVID-19 deaths reported across the Whole of Syria up to 30 November 2021



## Vaccinations

Vaccination activities continue across Syria at both fixed health facilities and through mobile medical teams in rural areas. An additional 1 971 200 doses were delivered to MoH warehouses during November 2021.

- 5 November: 1 356 000 doses of Sinovac vaccines, through COVAX mechanism.
- 5 November: 500 000 doses of Sinopharm vaccines, through bilateral agreement.
- 6 November: 115 200 doses of AZ/AZD1222, a third donation from Sweden, through the COVAX mechanism.

More than 668 000 doses of the AZ/AZD1222 vaccine are expected to be delivered in December through COVAX.

### Vaccination per region:

#### Government of Syria

<b>1 192 077</b>	
<b>Vaccines Administered</b>	
<b>827 240</b>	<b>576 205 People who are fully vaccinated*</b>
<b>People who received at least one dose</b>	
<b>5.1 %</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
<b>Percentage of the population that has received at least one dose</b>	<b>Percentage of the population that has been fully vaccinated*</b>
<b>+1.1 %</b>	<b>+0.8%</b>
<b>Percentage point increase from last month</b>	<b>Percentage point increase from last month</b>

#### North-west Syria:

<b>283 548</b>	
<b>Vaccines Administered</b>	
<b>194 002</b>	<b>89 546</b>
<b>People who received at least one dose</b>	
<b>4.5%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>Percentage of the population that has received at least one dose</b>	<b>Percentage of the population that has been fully vaccinated*</b>
<b>2.1%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>Percentage point increase from last month</b>	<b>Percentage point increase from last month</b>

#### Whole of Syria:

<b>1 475 625</b>	
<b>Vaccines Administered</b>	
<b>1 021 242</b>	<b>665 751</b>
<b>People who received at least one dose</b>	
<b>5%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
<b>Percentage of the population that has received at least one dose</b>	<b>Percentage of the population that has been fully vaccinated*</b>
<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Percentage increase from last month</b>	<b>Percentage increase from last month</b>

#### North-west Syria:

A total of **194 002** people received at least one dose of the vaccine, of which **89 546** received two doses. To date, **4.5%** of the population of NWS is vaccinated.

During November, 108 000 doses of AstraZeneca were delivered to NWS through COVAX.

## WHO Syria operational updates by other pillars

### Risk communication and community engagement

To build the national capacity of health care workers and community health workers to strategically manage vaccine hesitancy and misinformation, a workshop was held between 10 and 15 November, engaging over 70 Syrian health care workers as well as key players in vaccine demand generation from governorates across Syria. The interactive training of trainers workshop, which was led by a WHO RCCE regional consultant, was held in cooperation with MoH, UNICEF, IFRC and SARC to: encourage health care workers to identify and manage varying levels of vaccine acceptance; enhance skills used to respond to COVID-19 concerns; and explore approaches used to generate vaccine demand among different community groups. Participants were also encouraged to discuss the mental health challenges they have been encountering during the pandemic.

To enhance continuity of information sharing and address rumours and misinformation, WHO continued to produce and deliver IEC materials both online and offline. WHO Syria produced a set of messages addressing employees and employers about measures required to ensure safety in the workplace. WCO also continued to amplify messaging through its social media platforms, addressing public fears and rumours related to COVID-19 through posts and videos.

To ensure collaboration on the national and regional levels, the WCO RCCE team conducted regular meetings with regional counterparts to discuss latest advances in RCCE in different countries and shed light on effective methods in addressing hesitancy and generating vaccine demand. WCO has also been an active member in the local Health Coordination Group meeting which is regularly held with sister UN agencies to coordinate the efforts of different partners on the ground.

### Points of entry, international travel and transport

WHO Syria, in partnership with MOH, organized a two-day workshop on the COVID-19 strategic preparedness and response plan in the Syrian Arab Republic. It was held on 7-8 November in Damascus and attended by 35 MoH officials, including senior management and WHO staff, who together reviewed the plan for 2022-23 and drafted the operational plan and procurement plan for 2022. Plans were developed following a review of the current situation and the achievements and gaps experienced since 2020. The operational plan for 2022 is to be reviewed across different departments of MOH and finalized for implementation from January 2022.

### Laboratories and diagnostics

With the support of WHO, a new COVID-19 laboratory in Tartous that was rehabilitated by UNDP has been functional as of 24 November. WHO has equipped the laboratory with a Real Time PCR machine, biosafety cabinet, autoclave, ultra-low temp freezer and all necessary equipment and supplies. Newly designated laboratory technicians were trained to perform PCR testing with a capacity of 180 tests per shift.

A PCR machine freezer and an autoclave machine were delivered to Al-Hasakeh in November. More equipment is planned for delivery during the rehabilitation phase of a new laboratory that is set to start testing in Q1 2022.

### Case management, clinical operations and therapeutics

300 health workers from Deir Al Zour, Damascus, As-Sweida, Homs, Hama and Daraa were trained on "Management of ICU patients", "Risk management and evacuation of buildings", "Hospital Major Incident Medical Management and Support", "Advanced Children and Adults Life Support", "Immediate Life Support and Ventilator Management". The targeted groups for those courses are health professionals (doctors, nurses, and anesthesia technicians) working in isolation centers and ICU and emergency departments.

### Infection prevention and control

WCO dispatched 969 813 pieces of IPC /PPE to health partners in Damascus, Homs, Aleppo and Lattakia. They included 868 750 surgical masks, 68 700 gloves of different sizes, 30 400 gowns, 200 face shields, 200 protective goggles, 1 518 bottles of 75% alcohol hand rub, and 45 bottles of 1000ml alcohol-based surface sterilizer. The IPC/PPE supplies were delivered to the Central Public Health Lab, the MOH and MOHE central warehouses, the Homs, Aleppo and Lattakia hubs, and nine NGOs in Lattakia (Childcare Association, SYC, SACS, Mosaic, Al-Ekhaa, Ayadina, Kebarona, Breast Cancer Campaign, Al-Twahoud).

In coordination with the directorate of hospitals, WHO conducted six workshops on quality control at hospitals that addressed completion of medical records, infectious disease surveillance, AMR and patient safety. The workshop was attended by 140 professionals from DOH Damascus, Tartous and Lattakia.

### Logistics and operations

During November 51.7 tons of medical supplies (mostly medicines, health kits and medical equipment and consumables) were distributed to central MOH, governorates (DOH) health facilities affiliated to MOHE, non-governmental HF, NOGs, INGOs and SARC.

Additional deliveries include three extra-large shipments to NES, two of which were airlifted and included routine supplies and COVID-19 vaccines, and one of which was delivered over land in a convoy of five trucks (50 tons) to the WHO warehouse in Quamishli on 25 November. The supplies will support delivery of 96 199 courses of treatment.

## Technical guidance and other resources

- WHO Syria
- WHO
- [WHO technical guidance](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
- [WHO Weekly Operational Updates on COVID-19](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 case definitions](#)
- [COVID-19 Supply Chain Inter-Agency Coordination Cell Weekly Situational Update](#)
- [Research and Development](#)
- [OpenWHO courses on COVID-19](#) in official UN languages and in [additional national languages](#)
- [WHO Academy COVID-19 mobile learning app](#)
- [The Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan \(SPRP\)](#) outlining the support the international community can provide to all countries to prepare and respond to the virus
- Recommendations and advice for the public:
  - [Protect yourself](#)
  - [Questions and answers](#)
  - [Travel advice](#)
- [EPI-WIN: tailored information for individuals, organizations and communities](#)

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