COVID-19: WHO EMRO Biweekly Situation Report #20

Epi Weeks 39-40 (As of midnight GMT+2, 9 October 2021)

World Health Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Eastern Mediterranean

SITUATION IN NUMBERS (As of midnight GMT+2, 9 October 2021)

5
Countries reporting biweekly increase in numbers of cases

7
Countries reporting biweekly increase in numbers of deaths

15 971 917
Total laboratory-confirmed cases

14 987 105
Total reported recovered cases

293 619
Total reported deaths

239 573 994
Total tests performed



WHO Director General, Dr Tedros Adhanom accompanied by Dr Ahmed Al Mandhari, Regional Director for the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region visited the COVID-19 vaccination venue in Oman.

Photo credit: WHO Oman.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- **COVID-19 cases and deaths:** As of 9 October 2021, the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) has reported 15,971,917 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 293,619 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

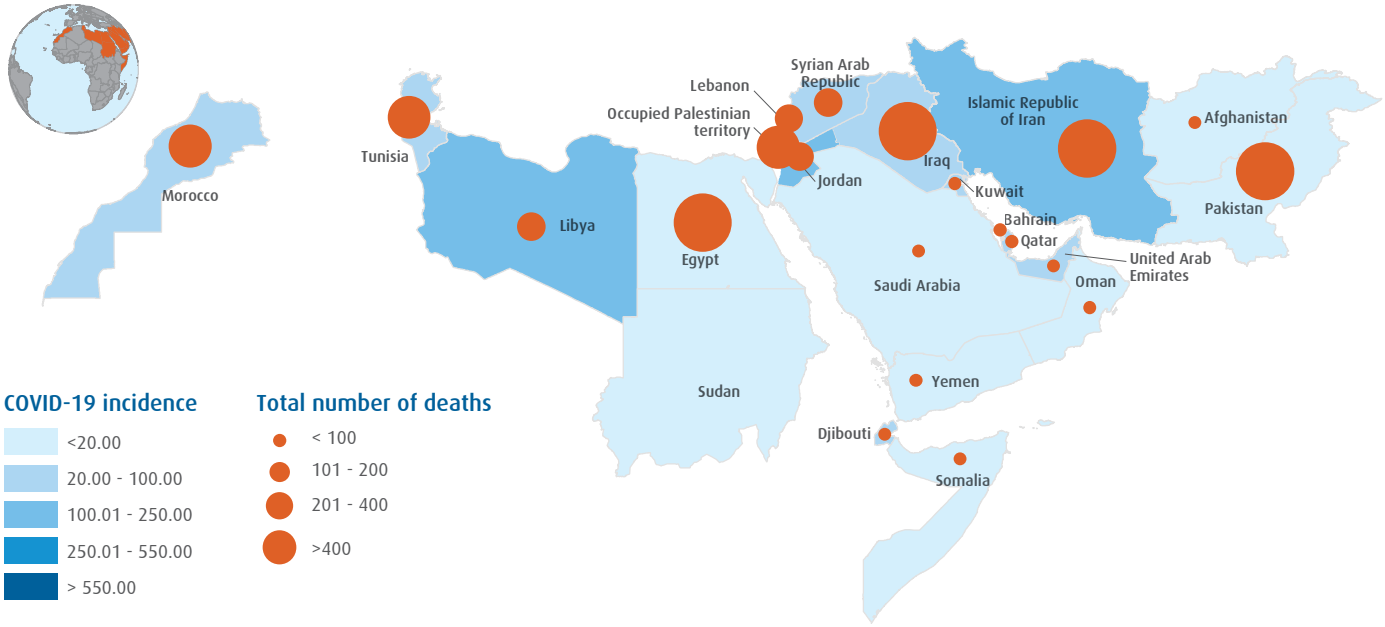
- **Epidemiological trend:** during the reporting period, in comparison with the previous two weeks:
  - The number of reported cases has decreased by **32%**
  - Deaths have decreased by **30%**
  - Testing rates have decreased by **6%**
  - **5** and **7** countries have reported an increase in cases and deaths respectively
  - A decrease in both cases and deaths was reported by **12** countries

- **COVID-19 testing:** The total number of tests in the Region has reached 239,568,551, with a median cumulative positivity ratio of 8.9% (range from 0.9% to 30.8%).

- **SARS-CoV-2 variants:**
  - **21** countries in the Region have officially reported the detection of the **Alpha variant of concern (VOC):** Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the occupied Palestinian territory, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.
  - **18** countries in the Region have officially reported the detection of the **Beta VOC:** Bahrain, Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.
  - **5** countries in the Region have officially reported the detection of the **Gamma VOC:** Bahrain, Jordan, Pakistan, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates.
  - **16** countries in the Region have officially reported the detection of the **Delta VOC:** Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the occupied Palestinian territory, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates.

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

26 September- 9 October 2021



Map 2: Countries reporting SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (VOCs) and variants of interest (VOIs) in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

26 September- 9 October 2021

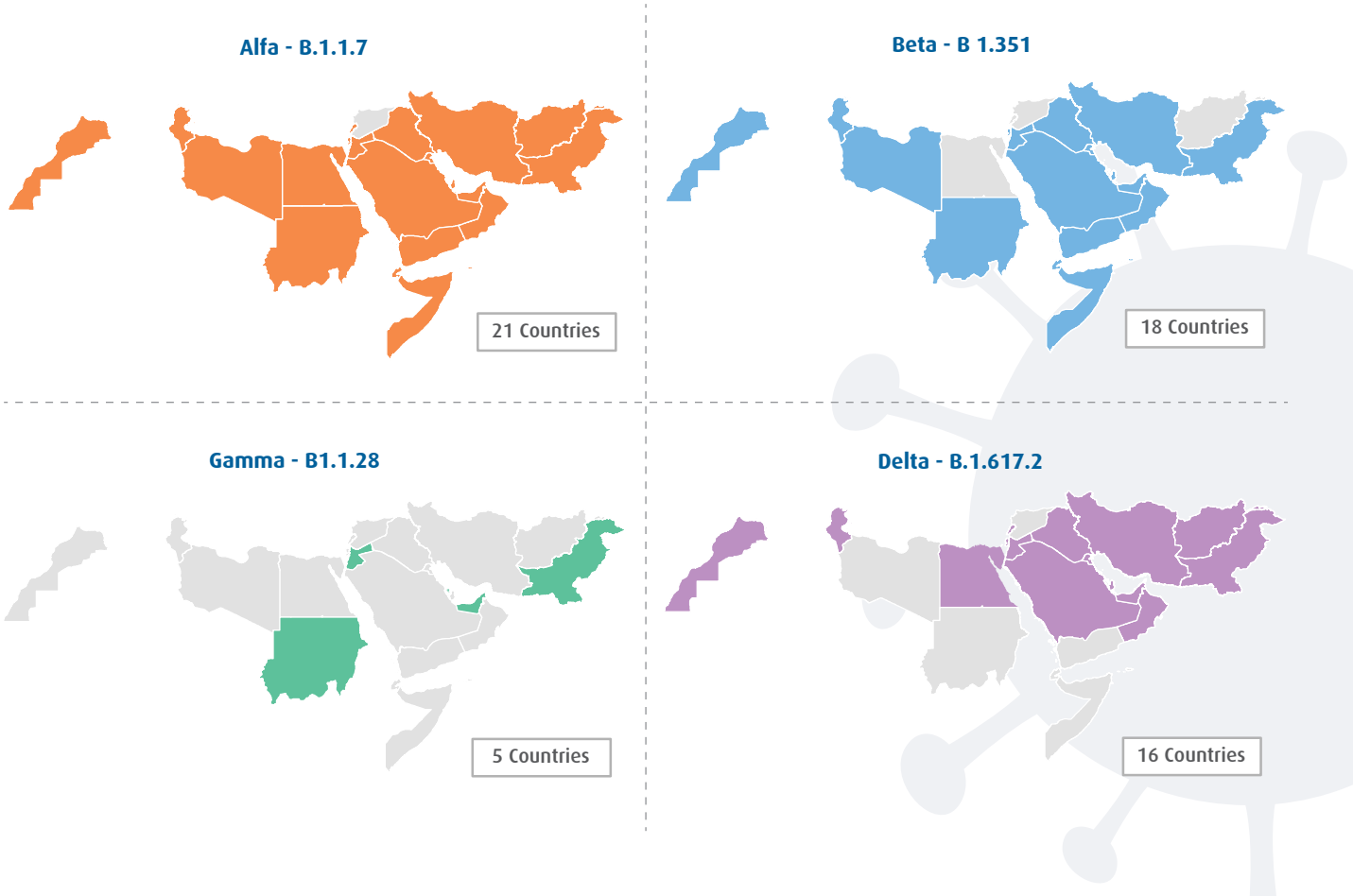


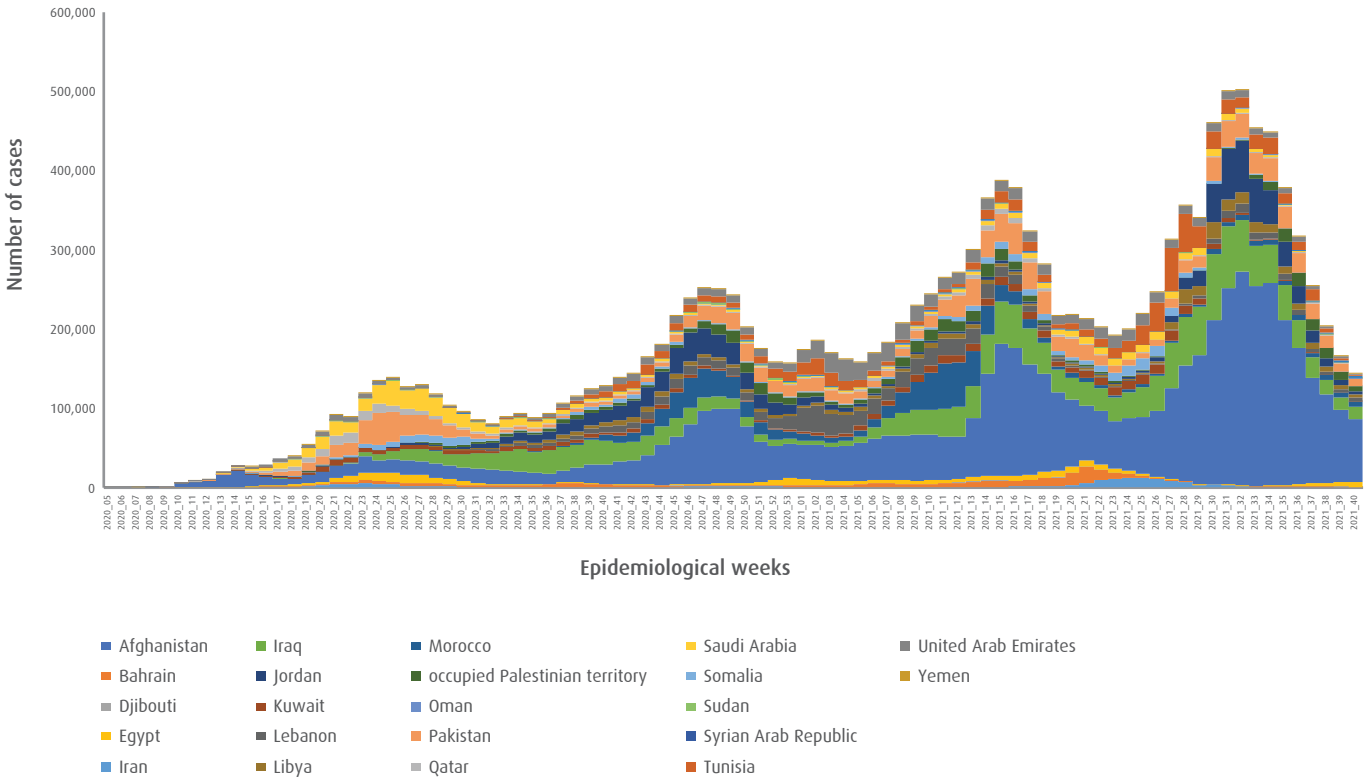
Table 1: Epidemiological situation in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

26 September- 9 October 2021

Country	New Confirmed Cases	Total Confirmed Cases	New Deaths	Total Deaths	CFR	Total recovered	Total Tests
Afghanistan	437	155,509	26	7,226	4.6%	126,217	764,235
Bahrain	852	275,597	1	1,390	0.5%	273,594	6,580,669
Djibouti	892	13,216	15	177	1.3%	12,714	226,508
Egypt	10,631	311,576	509	17,658	5.7%	262,654	3,880,254
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	171,906	5,691,634	3,298	122,370	2.1%	5,201,515	33,144,555
Iraq	30,481	2,022,109	465	22,537	1.1%	1,941,835	15,395,889
Jordan	13,603	832,399	133	10,802	1.3%	807,994	10,313,951
Kuwait	601	412,048	9	2,454	0.6%	408,967	4,440,173
Lebanon	7,826	629,561	105	8,382	1.3%	602,715	6,920,259
Libya	9,196	346,176	169	4,775	1.4%	270,140	1,729,500
Morocco	10,230	938,801	311	14,443	1.5%	917,169	8,893,715
Occupied Palestinian territory	17,183	443,216	209	4,495	1.0%	418,457	2,533,893
Oman	342	303,955	7	4,101	1.3%	299,181	1,986,264
Pakistan	19,287	1,257,955	540	28,106	2.2%	1,187,308	19,867,632
Qatar	1,128	237,359	3	607	0.3%	235,758	2,713,874
Saudi Arabia	650	547,532	49	8,743	1.6%	536,585	29,341,462
Somalia	1,177	20,900	49	1,152	5.5%	9,815	293,901
Sudan	626	38,827	112	2,953	7.6%	30,867	475,025
Syrian Arab Republic	4,133	36,713	134	2,332	6.4%	24,435	79,630
Tunisia	4,539	709,834	240	25,028	3.5%	682,353	2,994,047
United Arab Emirates	3,059	737,655	24	2,113	0.3%	730,922	86,668,966
Yemen	454	9,345	93	1,775	19.0%	5,910	329,592
Total	**309,233**	**15,971,917**	**6,501**	**293,619**	**1.8%**	**14,987,105**	**239,573,994**

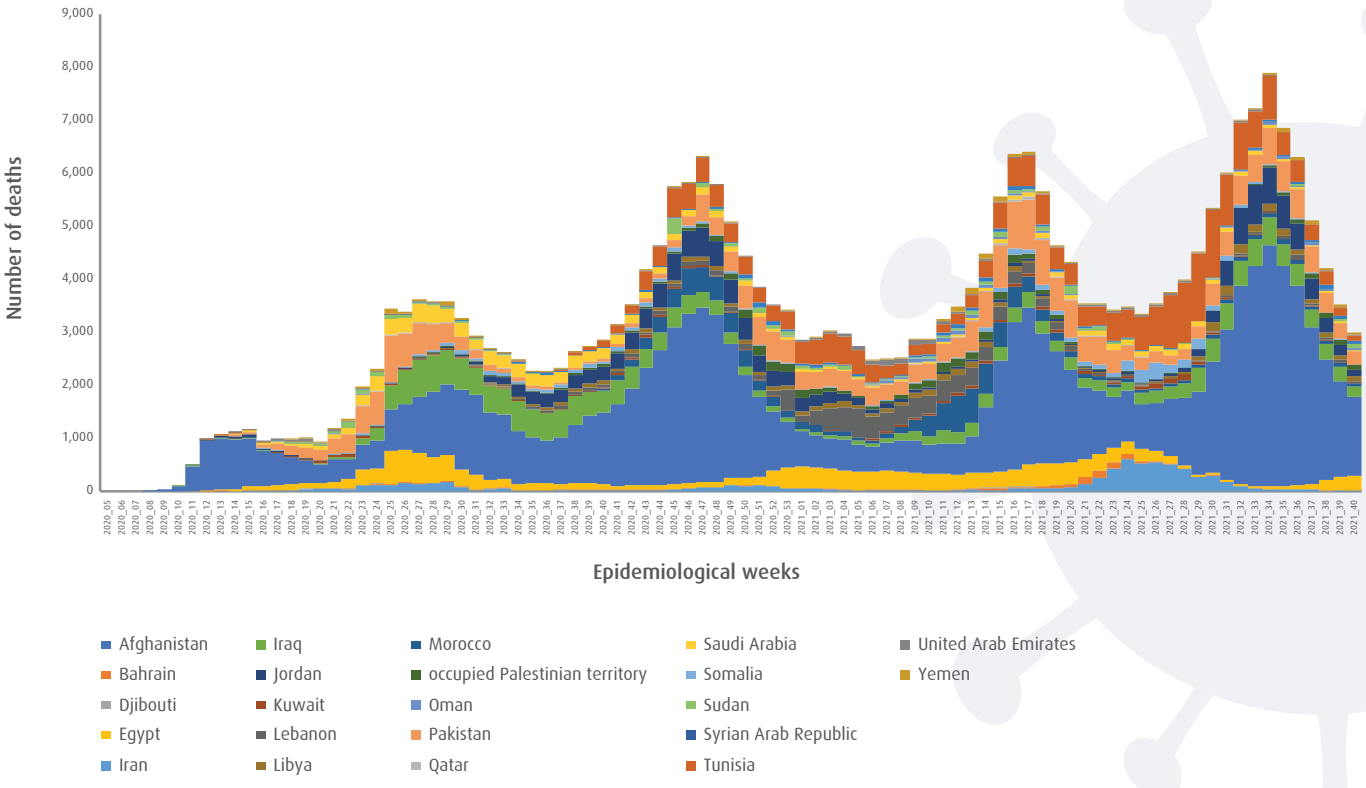
Graph 1: Weekly distribution of COVID-19 cases in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

26 January 2020 – 9 October 2021



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

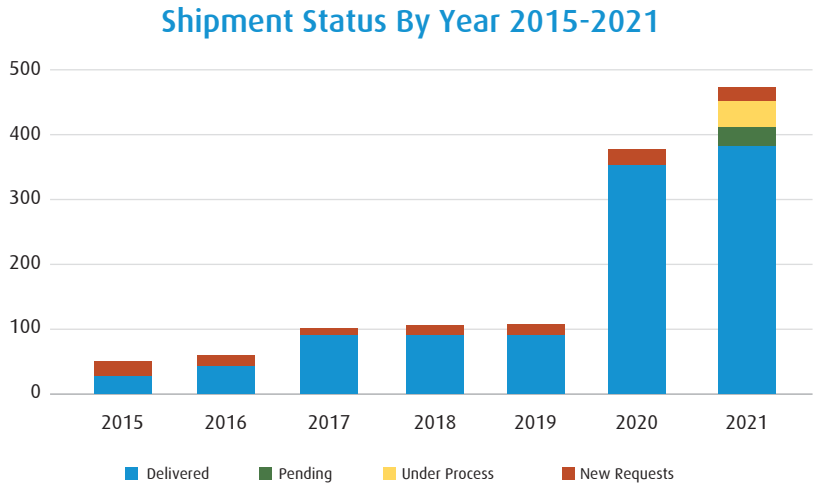
26 January 2020 – 9 October 2021



REGIONAL RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

Operations Support and Logistics

- Dispatched over US$ 148-worth of biomedical supplies (primarily oxygen consumables) to Syria.
- Supported ongoing health emergency responses in Afghanistan and Yemen.
- The Dubai logistics hub operation is on track to reach 500 shipments in 2021, representing a 46% increase compared to 2020.



Health Operations and Technical Expertise

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

- Reviewed and updated Libya's national IPC guidelines in the context of COVID-19.
- Reviewed IPC protocols and guidelines within the COVID-19 response during a Regional mission to Somalia between 26 and 30 September 2021.

Clinical Management

- Reviewed the clinical management of COVID-19 cases in communities, hospitals, and intensive care units as well as scale up of oxygen supply during the COVID-19 review mission to Somalia (26 to 30 September 2021).
- Communicated to countries the definition of post-COVID-19 condition published on 6 October 2021: "Post COVID-19 condition occurs in individuals with a history of probable or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, usually 3 months from the onset of COVID-19 with symptoms that last for at least 2 months and cannot be explained by an alternative diagnosis." For more information: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Post_COVID-19_condition-Clinical_case_definition-2021.1.
- Disseminated the conditional recommendation to use a combination of neutralizing monoclonal antibodies (casirivimab and imdevimab) in non-severe COVID-19 patients at the highest risk of severe disease, and the conditional recommendation for this in severe and critically ill COVID-19 patients with seronegative status (published on 24 September 2021). For more information: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-therapeutics-2021.3.

Research and Knowledge Management

- Held technical meetings with Egypt, Lebanon and Oman to discuss potential vaccine effectiveness studies.
- Developed a checklist of minimum criteria for countries to conduct vaccine effectiveness studies.
- Received the protocol for the next sero-prevalence study in Afghanistan.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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13 EMR countries achieved full vaccination coverage among 10% of their populations by September 2021, and 9 countries covered more than 40% of their population with at least one dose.

In focus: Reviewing the Response to COVID-19 in Somalia

Between 26 and 30 September 2021, a WHO mission was conducted to Somalia by experts from WHO's Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. The mission aimed to review Somalia's national and subnational COVID-19 response and identify lessons learnt for response strengthening. Case management and clinical operations, Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), laboratory diagnostics, and COVID-19 vaccines were among the response pillars reviewed by the mission. Mission members conducted desk reviews and traveled to Mogadishu (Banadir Region), Dhusamareb (Galmudug State), and Garowe (Puntland State) for field visits and interviews with key informants. Recommendations generated from mission findings will allow strengthening of the health response and services beyond the COVID-19 response.



Dr Amal Barakat, WHO Regional laboratory diagnostics lead, discusses laboratory diagnostics for COVID-19 during a visit to the National Public Health Reference Laboratory in Mogadishu, Banadir Region, Somalia, on 26 September 2021.

Photo credit: WHO EMRO

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

For more information, contact emrgonCoV@who.int