

Current major event

COVID-19 case count passes 3 million in WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region

The COVID-19 situation in the Region is alarming as the number of cases witness a sharp increase. During epidemiological week 44, the Region crossed the 3 million mark for reported cases with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 2.5%. Additionally, some countries have broken their record of daily cases reported since the beginning of the pandemic.

Editorial note

As of 31 October, 45 428 731 confirmed cases including 1 185 721 deaths have been reported to WHO globally. For the last few weeks, a record increase in the global weekly incidence has been reported, with the highest reporting Region in the Americas, followed by Europe then South-East Asia. The Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) contributes 6.8% of global COVID-19 cases. (See table)

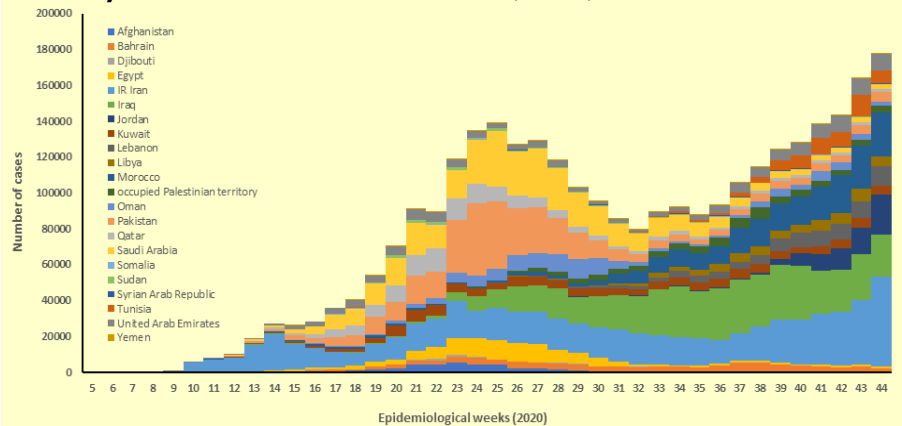
COVID-19 was introduced for the first time to EMR in late January. Since then, two peaks have been observed. The first peak occurred in mid-June when a high number of cases was reported from Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

Starting from August there has been a regular increase in the weekly number of new cases reported from the EMR that has reached a new peak during the current epidemiological week and crossed the three million mark (3 092 037) with 78 599 associated deaths (CFR 2.5%). The current resurgence of cases is attributed to the late introduction of outbreaks in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, oPt and Tunisia accompanied with rebounds in Bahrain, Iran, Oman and United Arab Emirates.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, Islamic Republic of Iran, followed by Iraq and Saudi Arabia have reported the highest cumulative number of reported cases in the Region. While the highest number of associated deaths was reported from Iran, Iraq and Pakistan.

Iran, Syria and United Arab Emirates showed a rebound in the number of reported cases starting around August with an increase in mortality in Iran and Syria while the death rate in United Arab Emirates has stabilized at very low level

Weekly distribution of COVID-19 cases, EMR, week 5/2020 to 44/2020



Distribution of COVID-19 cases by WHO regions till 31 October 2020

WHO Regions	Cases	% of cases
Region of the Americas	20 311 678	44.7%
European Region	10 803 232	23.8%
South-East Asia Region	9 196 384	20.2%
Eastern Mediterranean Region	3 092 037	6.8%
African Region	1 319 279	2.9%
Western Pacific Region	730 379	1.6%

with a CFR of 0.4%. Reported cases in Bahrain and Oman started to decline after a noticeable resurgence, while maintaining the number of associated deaths at the same level. Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia are showing a sharp rise in confirmed cases and deaths, while Saudi Arabia and oPt are experiencing a gradual decline during the past weeks. Kuwait shows a continued high level of transmission with a gradual increase in mortality data.

The majority of countries in the Region continue to self-characterize their current transmission pattern as community transmission (n=14, 64%), with 5 countries reporting clusters of cases and sporadic cases being reported in Djibouti, Saudi Arabia and Somalia. During the past weeks, Tunisia updated their classification from clusters of cases to community transmission.

WHO is continuing to support countries in scaling up their response to COVID-19 by strengthening surveillance, case management and diagnostic capacities. Risk communication and community engagement efforts are being enhanced to encourage informed decision making, positive behavior change and the maintenance of trust.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

Current public health events of concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR%]

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2020

Afghanistan	[41 425 (1536), 3.7%]
Bahrain	[81 645 (321), 0.4%]
Djibouti	[5561 (61), 1.1%]
Egypt	[107 555 (6266), 5.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[612 772 (34 864), 5.7%]
Iraq	[472 630 (10 910), 2.3%]
Jordan	[72 607 (829), 1.1%]
Kuwait	[125 926 (779), 0.6%]
Lebanon	[81 228 (637), 0.8%]
Libya	[61 095 (857), 1.4%]
Morocco	[219 084 (3695), 1.7%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[65 262 (555), 0.9%]
Oman	[114 434 (1208), 1.1%]
Pakistan	[332 993 (6806), 2%]
Qatar	[132 556 (232), 0.2%]
Saudi Arabia	[347 282 (5402), 1.6%]
Somalia	[3941 (104), 2.6%]
Sudan	[13 804 (837), 6.1%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[5728 (288), 5%]
Tunisia	[59 813 (1317), 2.2%]
United Arab Emirates	[132 629 (495), 0.4%]
Yemen	[2067 (600), 29%]