



**Key figures of COVID-19 as of 25 April 2021**

	Weekly (WK 16)	Weekly (WK 15)	Cumulative Since 24 February 2020
<b>Tested</b>	311,123	296,754	9,116,609
<b>Confirmed</b>	54,147	52,215	1,031,322
<b>Active</b>	5,102	10,268	110,764
<b>Cured</b>	48,769	41,679	905,301
<b>Death</b>	276	268	15,257

**Highlights**

- During Week 16 (WK16), WHO and the Ministry of Health assessed the COVID-19 epidemiology, including the community transmission, health system capacity, and performance, by calculating nine primary and essential indicators in the past seven days. Results indicate that the transmission level for COVID-19 at the national level and 12 selected Governorates is substantial; it is of moderate transmission in two governorates and high transmission in four governorates.
- During WK16, the Iraq Ministry of Health reported 54,147<sup>1</sup> new confirmed cases of COVID-19, representing 3.7% increase compared with WK15 and 12% of the total number of confirmed cases in 2021. The reported deaths in WK16 were 276 deaths representing 3% increase compared with WK15 and 11% of the total deaths reported in 2021. The Case fatality rate during WK16 was 0.5%, while the death rate among hospitalized patients was 2%.
- This week's positivity rate is 17% down from 20% reported on WK15; all governorates maintained a positivity rate of above 5% continuing to mark community transmission<sup>2</sup> COVID-19 pandemic.
- As of 24 April 2021, a total of 240,527 COVID-19 vaccine doses had been administered countrywide; this means that 1.04% of the target population in Iraq has so far received at least one dose of the vaccine. Of the total number vaccinated, 225,156 have received the first dose, while 15,371 have received the second dose.

Graph 1: COVID-19 confirmed cases by epidemiological week 2020 to 2021



Graph 2: Epi-curve showing confirmed COVID-19 cases by Governorate



Data source: Ministry of Health, Iraq

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the COVID-19 figures, visit WHO Iraq dashboard on: <https://covid19.who.int/region/emro/country/ig>

<sup>2</sup> Community transmission is defined (when the positivity rate of the COVIDS19 PCR tests are above 5%)

# 1) Disease Epidemiology

- During this reporting period (WK16), 1,930 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported compared to WK15. For the past three epidemiological weeks, 51,378 (WK14), 52,215 (WK15), and 54,147 confirmed COVID-19 cases were recorded this week, indicating slow flattening of the epi-curve.
- As the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases continue to rise, deaths are also increasing. During the past three epidemiological weeks, a total of 250 (WK14), 268 (WK15), and 276 deaths were reported this week
- The number of hospitalized patients seems to be going down since WK14 (28,250), WK15 (19,146), and 16,848 this week, confirming the beginning of the flattening of the epi-curve.
- Over the past three epidemiological weeks, the percentage of COVID-19 patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) was about 18%, while 26% of patients in ICU were on ventilators reflecting no change in the severity of the disease.
- The epidemic indicators for community transmission (cases per 100,000, death per 1 million, and Positivity Rate) indicate that all governorates are at moderate transmission, except for death per 1million. Nevertheless, the Kurdistan Region and Missan Directorate of Health show comparatively high transmission and case fatality. Al-Anbar, Ninewa, and Salah-Al-Din show low transmission.

- Health care providers continue to be affected by the ongoing pandemic. During this reporting period, 421 health care workers were confirmed with COVID-19; 48% of the cases were reported among nurses and paramedical staff, followed by the administration and support staff at 38% and medical staff at 14%.
- The overall case fatality rate this week was 0.6%. Twenty-nine percent of deaths were reported among 60-69-year-olds, followed by 70-79-year-olds at 22%. About 60% of them had at least one co-morbidity.

Table 1: Additional figures of COVID-19, as of 25 April 2021

Key figures	2020		2021		WK16
Total Confirmed cases	597,774		433,548		54,147
National Incidence rate <sup>3</sup> /100000/week	37		67		135
Top 5 DoHs with the highest incident rate	DAHUK	62	NAJAF	121	106
	WASSIT	55	BASRAH	113	201
	BAGHDAD	53	BAGHDAD	112	241
	KIRKUK	47	WASSIT	107	212
	ERBIL	46	KERBALA	97	91
National Case fatality rate <sup>4</sup>	2.1		0.56		0.51
Top 5 DoHs with the highest case fatality rate	SULYMANIYAH	5	ERBIL	1.5	0.011
	THI-QAR	3	SULAYMANIYAH	1.3	0.013
	BABYLON	3	DAHUK	1.2	0.013
	ERBIL	3	KIRKUK	1	0.022
	MISSAN	2	THI-QAR	0.9	0.010
Percentage of deaths <48 hours of hospitalization	53%		21%		14%
Percentage of active cases	7%		11.74%		NA
Percentage of cured cases	90%		83%		NA
No. PCR tests	4,547,545		4,562,110		311,123
Overall PCR test Positivity rate <sup>5</sup>	13%		10%		17%
Percentage inpatient	78%		52%		31%
Percentage of cases treated in ICU	10%		9%		6%
No. Health care providers infected	24,283		6,064		421
No. Health care providers dead	270		13		0
No. IDPs and refugees reported with COVID-19	IDPs = 285		IDPs = 79		9
	Refugee = 278		Refugee = 107		5

Table 2: Shows transmission levels at Governorate levels

Transmission level	Ranging Scores			
Low transmission	≤9			
Moderate transmission	10 to 18			
Substantial transmission	19 - 27			
High transmission	28 - 36			
Very High transmission	> 36			
Transmission / Healthcare capacity				
Governorate	Total/Score	WK# 14	Total/Score WK# 15	Total/Score WK# 16
IRQ	24	24	23	23
DAHUK	25	22	28	28
ERBIL	23	19	21	21
SULAYMANIYAH	27	28	19	19
AH	17	14	18	18
ANBAR	22	22	23	23
BABYLON	25	22	22	22
BAGHDAD	25	22	22	22
BASRAH	20	21	20	20
DIWANIYA	22	25	21	21
DIYALA	24	27	28	28
KERBALA	20	18	22	22
KIRKUK	25	24	19	19
MISSAN	24	23	22	22
MUTHANNA	30	28	28	28
NAJAF	24	30	22	22
NINEWA	19	18	13	13
SALAH AL-DIN	21	23	29	29
THI-QAR	24	22	21	21
WASSIT	26	25	22	22
Grand Total	24	24	23	23

<sup>3</sup> The incidence rate refers to the frequency with which some event, such as a disease or accident, occurs over a specified time period.

<sup>4</sup> Case Fatality Rate is the proportion of fatalities from a specified disease among all individuals diagnosed over a certain period of time.

<sup>5</sup> PCR positivity rate is the percentage of all PCR tests confirmed positive for COVID19 among all the PCR tests performed over a period of time.

## 2) WHO preparedness and Response

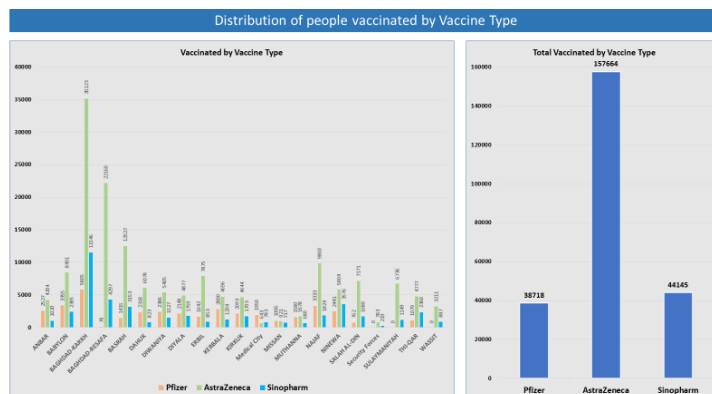
### a) COVID-19 Response

- As a follow up to an earlier camp visit to Shikhan IDPs camp in Week 14, a multisectoral mission including WHO, UNOCHA, Duhok Directorate of Health, Duhok Directorate of Migration and Crisis Response Office, Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster, and Lutheran World Federation, visited the camp during this reporting period. The visit was meant to inspect the Quarantine/Isolation site inside the camp and discuss the project's necessity with the camp residents as a reassurance. It was agreed that a new location within the camp is designated for quarantine/isolation following the resident's refusal of the initial location. All partners also decided to make another follow-up in the coming weeks.

### b) Vaccination

- As of 24 April 2021, a total of 240,527 vaccine doses had been administered countrywide; this means that 1.04% of the target population in Iraq has so far received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Of the total number vaccinated, 225,156 have received the first dose, while 15,371 have been fully immunized with both doses.
- Gender disparity continues to be displayed during the ongoing COVID-19 vaccinations in Iraq. As of 24 April, more males than females had continued receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Sixty-nine percent (69%) males against 31% females have been vaccinated using the first dose while 61% males against 39% females have received their second dose of Sinopharm. The low turnout among women could be associated with how most females stay home attending to families and the rumors associated with vaccines.
- Further analysis shows that 39% of the priority groups vaccinated are over 50 years of age, followed by health workers at 32% and people with at least one or more co-morbidities at 23%. Vaccination in IDP and refugee camps is yet to commence.
- Governorates with the highest number of people vaccinated using the first dose include Baghdad- Karkh at 2.5%, followed by Najaf with 1.69%, Diwaniya with 1.2%, Dahuk at 1.28%, and Babylon at 1.1%. Medical City and Missan have the lowest number of people vaccinated.

Graph 2: number of people vaccinated by governorate and vaccine type



### c) Logistics and supply management

- During this reporting period, WHO provided Salah-Al-Din Pediatric Hospital with medical devices to enhance its management of COVID-19 cases and other medical conditions. Among the things provided are:
  - One Infant warmer.
  - One Neonatal Resuscitation device with consumables.
  - Three Vital Signs Monitors with extra accessories and consumables.
  - Two Mobile Suction pumps.
  - Three Infusion pumps with mobile stand.
  - Two alternating pressure pumps and pad system.
  - One Warming blanket.
  - Four Oxygen cylinders with 40 liters capacity.
  - Two Neonatal Ambubags.
- WHO also provided assistive devices to Salah-Al-Din Rehabilitation Centre to ease the movement of patients with mobility challenges. The items donated included 30 Adult wheelchairs and 15 Pediatric wheelchairs.

- To cover the gaps in essential mental health medicines among Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) partners, WHO provided one pallet containing different types of psychotropic medications to VIYAN NGO and CORDAID NGO.

#### d) Risk Communication and Community Engagement

- WHO, UNICEF, and other partners in the Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE) Working Group, in liaison with the MOH, continue to mobilize communities through traditional and social media and health workers as well as community leaders to go for COVID-19 vaccination and adhere to public health measures like mask-wearing and social distancing.
- WHO and UN colleagues are collaborating with prominent Iraq personalities to boost the COVID-19 vaccination campaign and build more community confidence in the vaccines to increase its uptake. The following week the President of Iraq, His Excellency Barham Saleh, top religious leaders Moqtada Alsader and Rasheed Alhusaini, and actor Sami Qaftan will be vaccinated.
- UNOCHA and the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) partners are joining the national RCCE efforts through coordination with Health Cluster. The group undertook the promotion of the vaccination key Messages (in English, Arabic, and Kurdish) among partners and end-users and patients presenting at supported facilities

### 3) Urgent needs & requirements

- Ensure a steady supply of COVID19 vaccines through the COVAX facility and bilateral agreements so that people who have received the first dose get the second to build adequate immunity among a large proportion of the eligible population as soon as possible.
- Maintain Risk Communication and Community Engagement campaigns to increase uptake of the vaccine
- Seek additional funding to support the vaccination campaign both through RCCE as well as through adequate evaluation and timely field monitoring

### 4) Challenges

- Vaccine hesitancy among the communities, especially women, towards AstraZeneca continues to affect vaccination efforts.
- Funding constraints to sustain and support COVID-19 interventions like Risk Communications and Community engagement

### 5) Recommendations

- Intensify community sensitizations and engagement to encourage population adherence to public health measures and COVID-19 vaccine demand and uptake in the population.
- Continue to strengthen community mobilization, sensitizations, and engagement campaigns at the community level and media engagement to encourage people to continue wearing masks and adhere to the COVID-19 guidelines.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Iraq is made possible with the generous contributions from WHO Iraq's long-term partners:



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