

Monthly COVID-19 Bulletin

October 2022

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Epidemiological Overview

Data as of 31 October 2022

Total cases 200 776	Total deaths 7 246	Total recovered 158 104
Case Fatality Ratio 3.6%	PCR Tests 714 960	Total Vaccine Doses used 4 773 124

Analysis of epidemiological data for the Whole of Syria

A total of 200 776 confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Syria between 22 March 2020 and 31 October 2022, of which 104 160 cases (51.88%) were reported from north-west Syria (NWS), 57 358 cases (28.57%) from government-controlled areas (GoS), and the remaining 39 258 cases (19.55%) were from northeast Syria (NES).

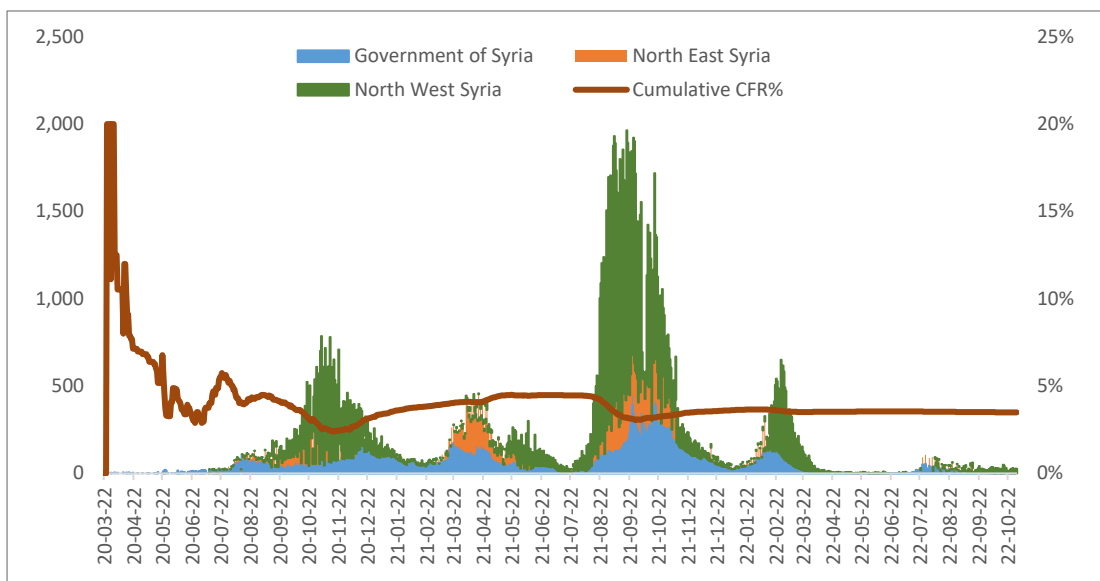
During the same period, a total of 7 246 related deaths were reported, of which 3 163 (43.65%) were from GoS, 2 505 (34.57%) were from NWS, and 1 578 (21.78%) were from NES. The overall Case Fatality Rate (CFR) is 3.6% (no change in the CFR compared with the previous month). The CFR was highest in GoS (5.5%), NES (4.0%) and in NWS the CFR was 2.4%.

The high CFR rates in GoS are attributed to the testing strategy for only severe and critical cases admitted to hospitals for treatment which means mild-to-moderate cases are often not captured in case reporting.

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases reported in October across the Whole of Syria decreased by 1% (n=720) compared with the previous month (n=726) which can be largely attributed to a decrease in overall testing as compared to September. Nevertheless, an increase was noticed in NWS by 104% (n=640) compared to the previous month (n=313) and a decrease in the number of reported cases in GoS by 78% (n=56) compared to September (n=259). Moreover, NES reported a decrease of new cases by 84% with 24 new confirmed cases compared to 154 in the previous month.

The number of reported COVID-19 cases and its percentage out of the national totals across 10 governorates during the month of October is as follows: Idleb 45% (n= 324), Aleppo 44.72% (n= 322), Al-Hassakeh 3.89% (n= 28), Damascus 2.08% (n= 15), Tartous 1.39% (n= 10), Homs 0.97% (n= 7), As-Sweida 0.83% (n= 6), Latakia 0.56% (n= 4), Rural Damascus 0.28% (n= 2), Dar'a 0.28% (n= 2).

Figure 1. The Whole of Syria weekly reported COVID-19 cases up to 31 October 2022

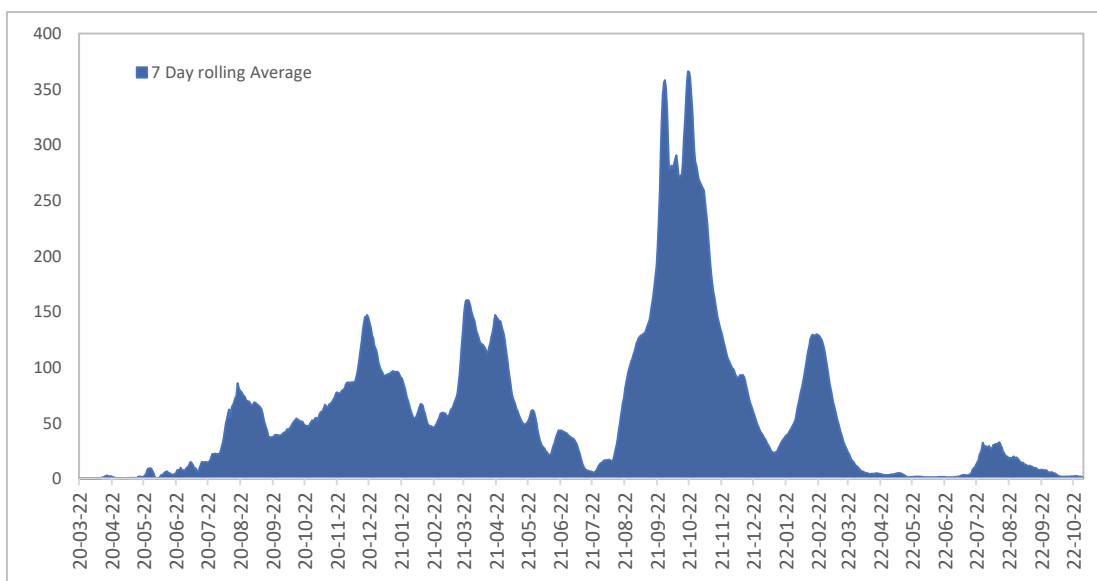


Analysis per region

Government of Syria

COVID-19 cases in GoS areas continue to decrease during October by 78%, the 7-day average of new cases was 1 compared to 5 cases in September 2022.

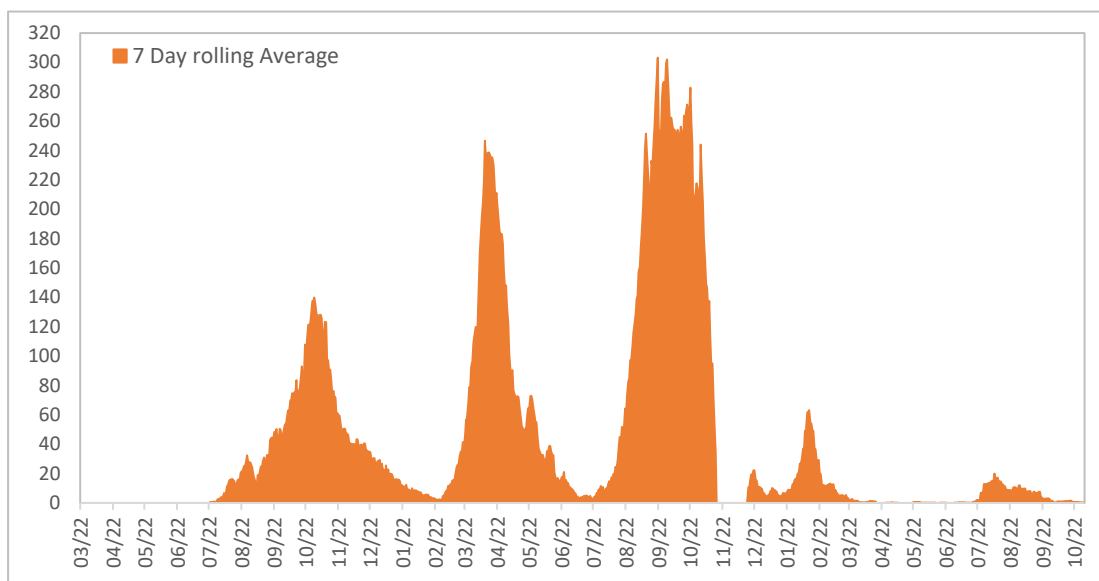
Figure. 2 The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 cases in GoS



North-east Syria

There is a sharp decrease in the number of COVID-19 reported cases in NES during October. The current 7-day is 1 case by 31 October 2022.

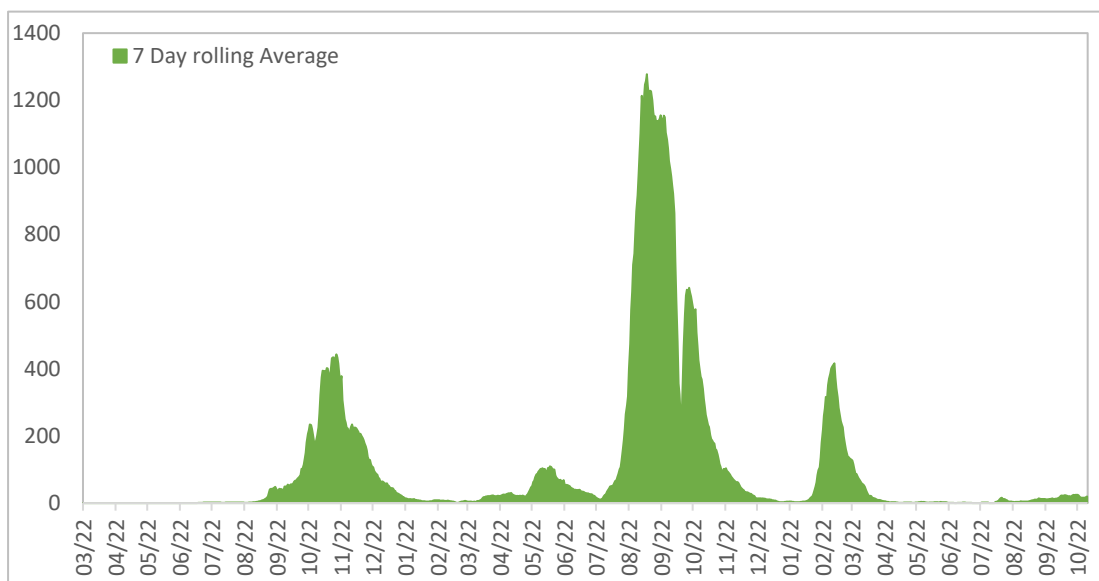
Figure 3. The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 cases in NES



North-west Syria

The number of confirmed cases in NWS increased in October 2022 by 104%, the 7-day average of new cases by 31 October is 20 cases.

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



Deaths

In October, there were zero newly reported deaths associated with COVID-19, the same as in September 2022. The cumulative mortality rate is 33.5 deaths per 100 000 cases while the cumulative case fatality rate is 3.6%. CFR remained the highest in Deir-ez-Zor at 8.8%, Damascus at 8.1%, and As-Sweida at 8.5%. Compared to the Eastern Mediterranean region CFR of 1.05%¹, the high CFR for Syria is attributed to limited testing which focuses on severe COVID-19 cases admitted to hospitals, while testing of mild and moderate cases through the Ag-RDTs is only available in some PHCs. Furthermore, high mortality rates early in the response when case management capacity was limited have had a lasting effect on CFR for Syria even although zero deaths were recorded in September and October 2022.

¹ WHO EMRO COVID-19 situation updates for week 43 (23–29 October 2022) accessed 14 November 2022 at <https://www.emro.who.int/pandemic-epidemic-diseases/covid-19/covid-19-situation-updates-for-week-43-2329-october-2022.html>

Figure 5. The 7-day rolling average of COVID-19 deaths

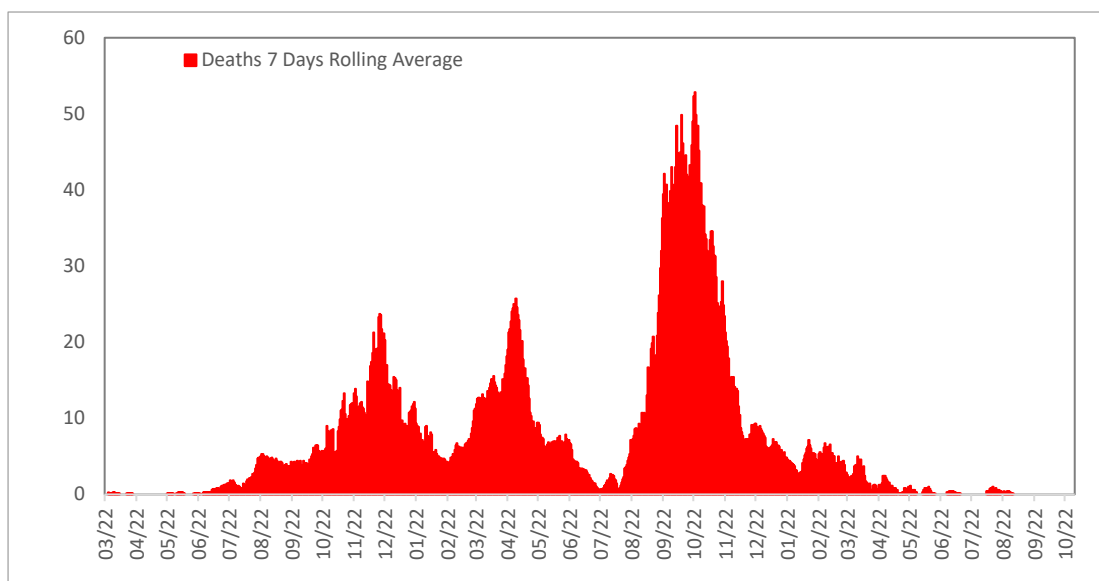


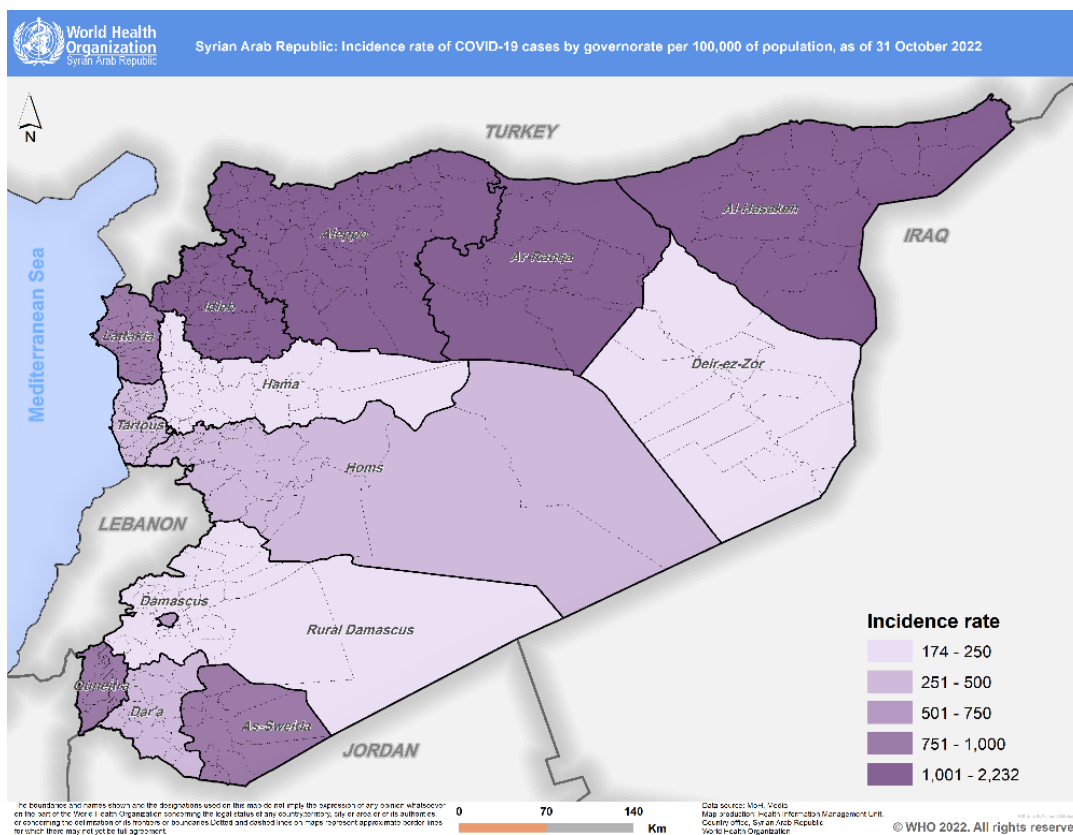
Table 1. Number of deaths increase/decrease since last month

7 246	0 The 30-day average number of deaths (during the reported month)
Total COVID-19-related deaths reported up to date	
0	
The 30-day average number of deaths (during the previous month)	

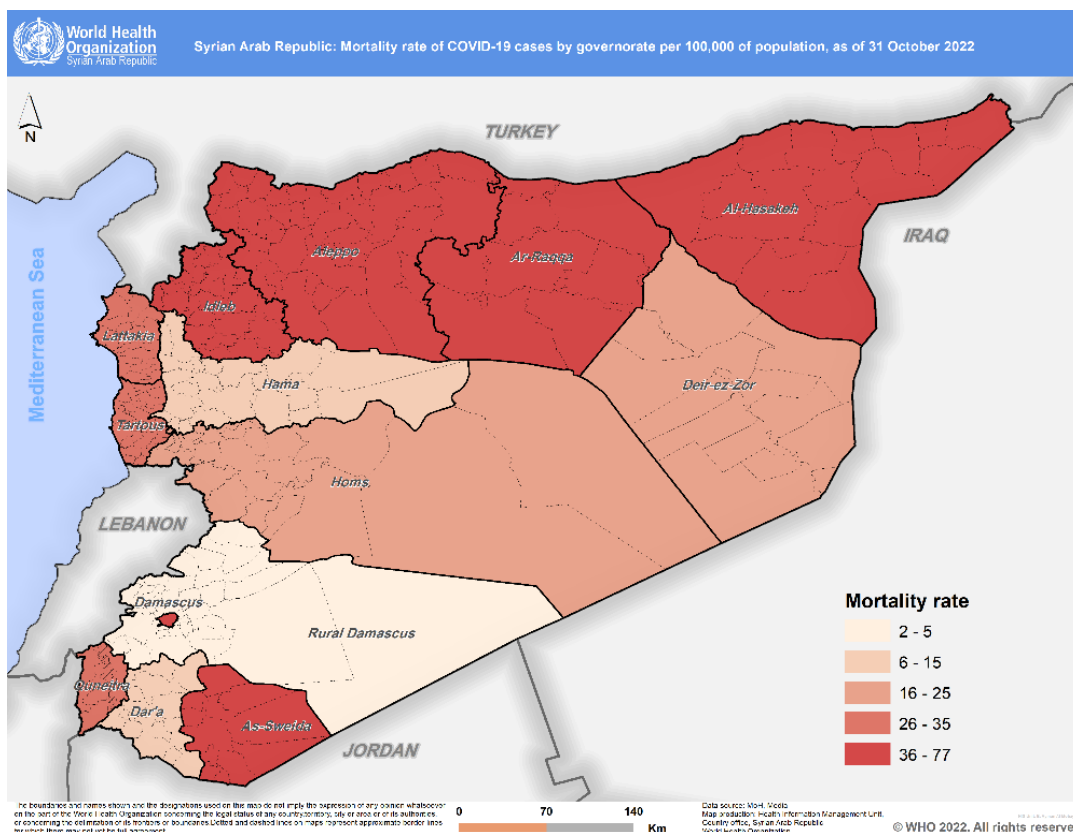
Table 2. Newly reported and cumulative cases of COVID-19 and associated deaths, by region, up to 31 October 2022

Area	New cases in reported month 2022 (%)	Change in new cases Last month	Cumulative cases (%)	New deaths in the reported month	Change in new deaths compared to last month	Cumulative deaths (%)
Government of Syria	56 (7.78%)	-78.4%	57,358 (28.57%)	0	0%	3,163 (43.65%)
North-east Syria	24 (3.33%)	-84.4%	39,258 (19.55%)	0	0%	1,578 (21.78%)
North-west Syria	640 (88.89%)	104.5%	104,160 (51.88%)	0	0%	2,505 (34.57%)
Whole of Syria	720	-0.8%	200,776 (100.0%)	0	0%	7,246 (100.0%)

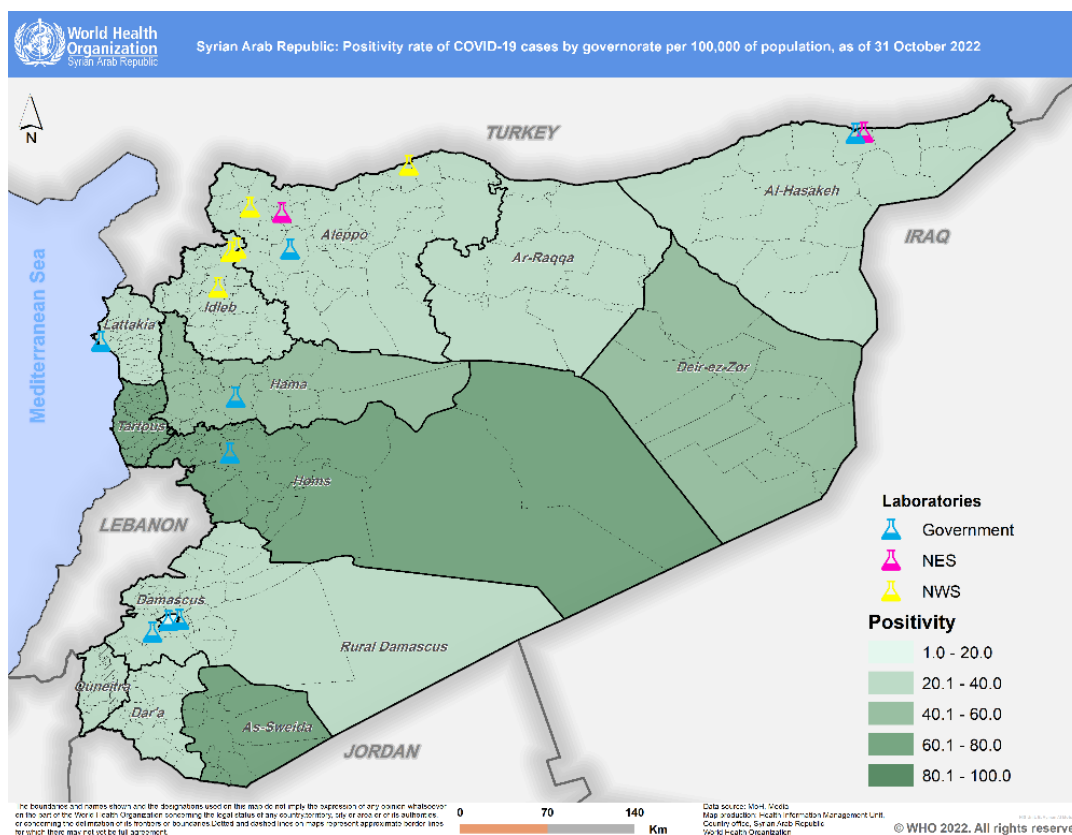
Map 1: Total number of COVID-19 cases per 100 000 of the population reported in each governorate, as of 31 October 2022



Map 2: COVID-19-related deaths per 100 000 of the population reported in each governorate, as of 31 October 2022



Map 3: COVID-19 Laboratory Positivity Rate by governorate, as of 31 October 2022



Syria had a low incidence level of community transmission with 3.3 cases/100,000 population/month during October 2022. The cumulative incidence rate in WoS since the start of the outbreak is 927 cases/100 000 as of 31 October 2022. The incidence rates are underestimated due to the low number of tested cases.

Testing

The number of PCR tests conducted in October 2022 decreased by 61.6% (n= 9 961) compared to 25 926 tests in September 2022. A decline in testing was observed in parts of NWS and NES while testing increased in GoS areas. The total number of PCR tests conducted in WoS up to 31 October 2022 is 714 960. During October 2022, a total of 742 Ag-RDTs were performed at MoH/PHCs, MoE/school health directorate centers, and NGOs medical points. The total number of PCR and AG-RDTs tests in October was 10 703 and the monthly testing positivity rate is 6.7%, more than twice the rate in September 2022 (2.8%).

Table 3. Positivity Rate increase/decrease since last month

10 703 Number of tests conducted during the reporting month (PCR and Ag-RDTs)	6.7% Testing positivity rate in the reporting month
2.8% The previous average positivity rate	

COVID-19 Vaccinations

Vaccination activities continue across Syria at both fixed health facilities and through mobile medical teams in rural areas. 46 287 new doses were administered across Syria during October 2022, and 42 214 individuals took their first dose during the same period.

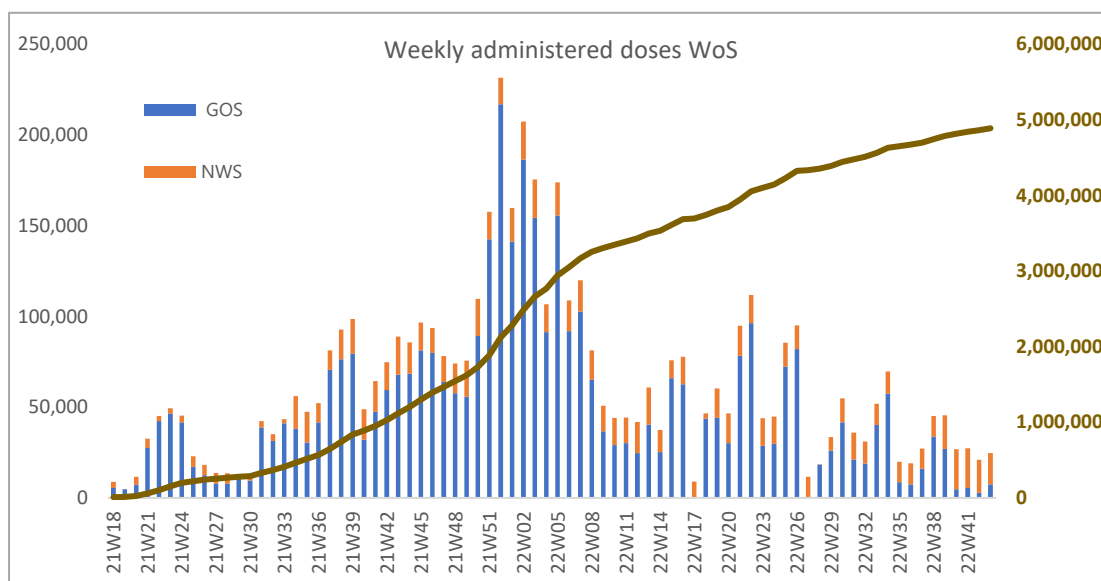
MoH has conducted a mass vaccination campaign from 30 October – 3 November 2022 targeting the population above 18 years old. Full results will be reported in the November 2022 Bulletin. The next round of COVID-19 vaccination is planned in mid-December 2022.

Table 4. Overall delivered vaccines from April 2021 till 31 October 2022:

	Type of Allocation	Manufacturer of vaccine	Quantity
GOS	COVAX	AZ Covishield	1 203 500
		AZ/AZD1222	1 318 340
		Sinovac	3 307 200
		Janssen	3 458 400
		Total	9 287 440
	Bilateral	AZ/AZD1222	368,640
		Sinopharm	1 995,000
		Sputnik light	250 000
		Sputnik V	100 000
		Soberana	120 000
		Abdala	120 000
Total	2 953 640		
GOS Total			12 241,080
NWS	COVAX	AZ Covishield	53 800
		AZ/AZD1222	350 400
		Sinovac	823 200
		Janssen	832 800
	Total	2 060 200	
WOS Total			14 311,280

The available vaccines are sufficient to reach 38.7% of the population. As per the above table, vaccines received from bilateral agreements represent 20% of the total received, and the remaining 80% were delivered through COVAX. More intensification of COVID-19 vaccination is sought through vigorous RCCE and mobile vaccination teams.

Figure 5. The average weekly administered doses

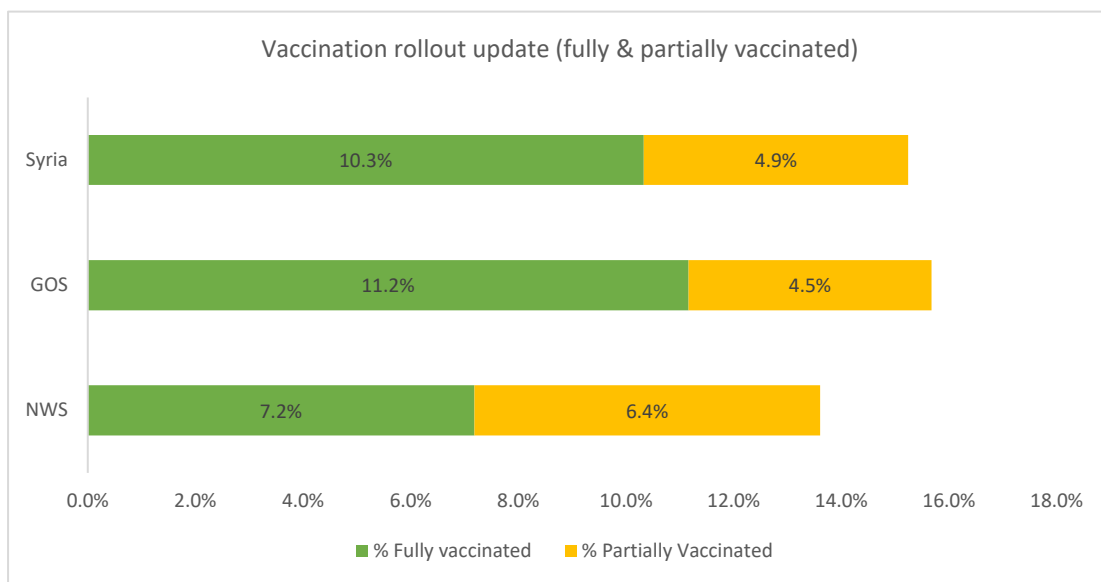


There is a 62% decrease in the administered doses of vaccines during October (n= 46,287) compared to the previous month (n= 122,544).

Vaccination coverage as of 31 October 2022:

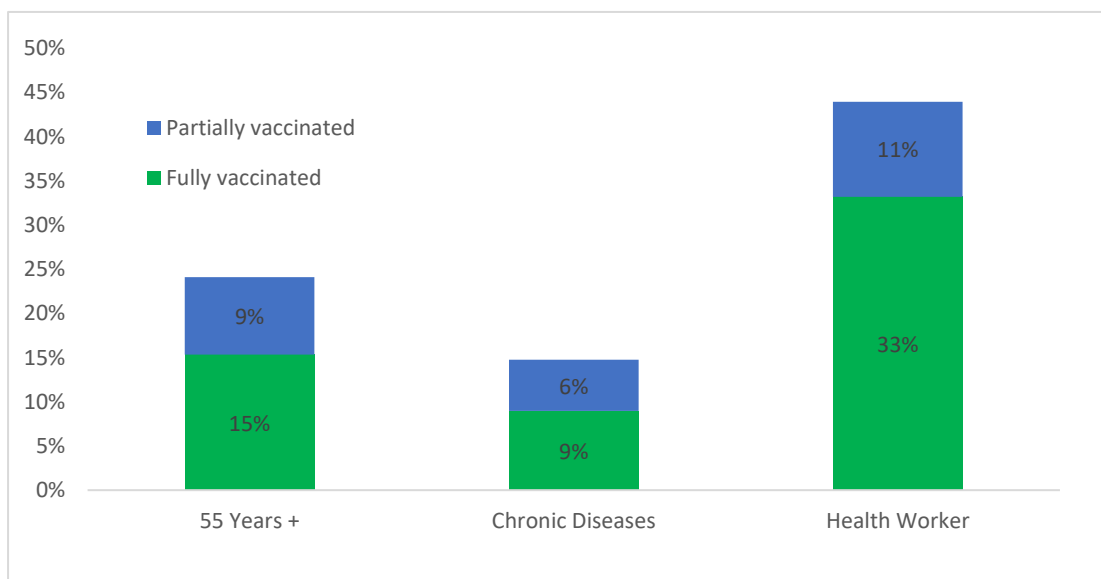
- 15.2% of the total population received at least one dose of the vaccine, and only 10.3% are fully vaccinated.
- A total of 4 773 124 doses of different vaccines were administered and the total number of vaccinated people is 3 134 401.

Figure 6. Vaccination status in the Whole of Syria as of 31 October 2022



Vaccination coverage in priority groups:

The vaccination in priority groups is low in WoS. Only 33% of health workers, 15% of the elderly, and 9% of people with comorbidities are fully vaccinated (defined as at least 2 doses received).



Vaccination coverage per region since April 2021:

Government of Syria

3 879 901 Vaccines administered	
2 549 876 People who received at least one dose	1 815 579 People who are fully vaccinated
15.68% Percentage of the population who received at least one dose	11.16% Percentage of the population who are fully vaccinated
0.40% Percentage point increase from the last month	0.34% Percentage point increase from the last month

North-west Syria

893 223 Vaccines administered	
584 525 People who received at least one dose	308 698 People who are fully vaccinated
13.61% Percentage of the population who received at least one dose	7.19% Percentage of the population who are fully vaccinated
0.77% Percentage point increase from the last month	0.02% Percentage point increase from the last month

Whole of Syria

4 773 124 Vaccines administered	
3 134 401 People who received at least one dose	2 124 277 People who are fully vaccinated
13.61% Percentage of the population who received at least one dose	7.19% Percentage of the population who are fully vaccinated
0.21% Percentage point increase from the last month	0.06% Percentage point increase from the last month

COVID-19 Response Activities

Pillar One: Coordination

- WHO continued updating the health sector on the situation of COVID-19 and related vaccination.
- National and sub-national health sector coordination meetings were conducted (Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Deir- ez-Zor, and Qamishli) addressing COVID-19 among other issues.

Pillar Two: Risk Communication and Community Engagement

- Participated in the WHO-UNICEF Regional Meeting on Strengthening RCCE in Eastern Mediterranean Region. The meeting focused on building the RCCE capacity at the country level through enhancing awareness of the core component of a functioning RCCE system, increasing knowledge of the role and application of social and behavioural insights, and developing functional skills for managing misinformation and infodemics.
- The workshop included on-job training and group discussions on different important health issues like the COVID-19 RCCE lessons learned for systemic responses to all hazards in the region, mapping of RCCE stakeholders, country examples on how social and behavioural data are being used to drive responses for health emergencies.

- Community health workers continued to convey messages on the importance of adhering to COVID-19 public health and social measures to maintain a low count of COVID-19 infections and mitigate further virus mutations.

Pillar Four: Points of entry, international travel, and transport

- To strengthen IHR capacities at points of entry (POE) and within the joint WHO-UNHCR project to establish 7 medical points at the ground crossing. WHO handed over the newly constructed medical point to the Ministry of Health in Jdeidet Yabous area. In addition, WHO started the procurement process of medical, IT equipment, and furniture for those medical points.
- As of 29 Sep, MoH released the entry measures for COVID-19, as no PCR nor vaccination certificates are required for Syrian and Lebanese nationals entering Syria.

Pillar Five: Laboratories and diagnostics

- To be provided in the coming issue.

Pillar Six: Infection prevention and control

- On 17 October 2022, facilitated MOH participation in the online regional consultation meeting on the Development of Global IPC Strategy.
- Conducted a 3-day capacity-building training for 25 healthcare workers and front liners from Zaid Al Sharety Public Hospital in As-Sweida governorate on IPC and patient safety standards to prevent and manage health-care-associated infections.

Pillar Seven: Case management, clinical operations, and therapeutics

- 125 health workers from the isolation centers, Directorate of Emergency and Ambulance Services, ICU, and Emergency Departments from the governorates of Tartous, Damascus, Rural Damascus, As-Sweida, Dara'a, and Qunitera received training on "Immediate Life Support and Ventilator Management for COVID-19 patients and Management plan for COVID-19 patients/ treatment of respiratory infections".
- Over 39 000 treatments of life-saving medicines and different types of medical equipment (including oxygen concentrators, and patient monitors) were delivered to health partners in Damascus, Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, and Lattakia. These deliveries are part of enhancing the capacity of public health facilities to deliver timely response and life-saving interventions.

Pillar Eight: Logistics and operations

- In October 2022, WHO provided approximately 35 tonnes of medical and lab supplies, kits, and equipment to 13 governorates with a total value exceeding USD 374 000. They were distributed to the Ministry of Health directorates of health in different governorates, Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Education-affiliated health facilities, INGOs, NGOs, NGHs, NGPHCs, SARC, KRC, and camps.
- Three crossline shipments (2 road convoys consisting of six trucks and one airlift) have been delivered to the WHO warehouse in Qamishli to be distributed to health facilities and partners with a total weight of 51 tonnes, sufficient to provide around 142 000 treatment courses. The shipments included COVID-19 vaccines, routine immunization vaccines, and essential medicines, as well as cholera response items including oral rehydration salts (ORS), chlorine NaDCC for water treatment, cholera kits, and other medical supplies.
- WHO participated in the Inter-Agency convoy Sarmada-8 to support the health needs of NWS delivering around 1.2 tonnes of medical supplies sufficient to provide 8 955 treatment courses and 20 trauma cases.
- On 27 October, WHO jointly with UNICEF and UNDSS conducted the first crossline mission to the Ras Al-Ain area in NES since 2019. The mission included assessing the health situation on the ground as well as delivering a 3.8 tonnes shipment of health aid enough to provide 14 160 treatment courses.

Pillar Nine: Maintaining essential health services and systems

- As part of maintaining the continuity of essential health services at the primary healthcare level and improving the quality of health services provided to patients in need, especially within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and cholera outbreak, WHO has delivered more than 3 818 treatments to PHCs located in the governorates of Damascus, Al-Hassakeh and Hama.

COVID-19 key performance indicators for September 2022



COVID-19 key performance indicators

September 2022



National Coordination, planning and monitoring

- 0: No. of transmission classification and capacity assessment
- 1: No. of monthly operational and epidemiological update disseminated
- 30: No. of daily situation update disseminated
- 0: No. of preparedness and response plan for COVID-19
- 0: No. of activate PHEOC

Point of Entry

- 16: No. of PoE implement entry measurement
- 25: No. of officers at PoE training on entry measurement and IHR
- 2: No. of coordination meeting with health authorities or partners conducted
- Annual: No. of National emergency contingency plan reviewed and updated
- 1: No. of established and equipped health control offices at PoE

Maintaining Essential Health Services

- 121,606: No. of PHC treatment provided (including NCD)
- 826,307: No. of Public PHCs consultations
- 543,182: No. of Public hospitals consultations
- 1,972: No. of health facility assessment conducted on minimum service availability
- 63%: % of DFT3 coverage rate (under 1 y)
- 497: No. of health & community facilities providing MHPSS services

Vaccination

- 64,851: No. of people received at least one dose of Covid vaccine
- 55,800: No. of people who are fully vaccinated.
- 82,903: Total number of doses utilized.
- 0: No. of capacity building (Training sessions of COVID 19 vaccination in different areas)
- 1,641: No. of mobile and fixed teams supported
- 0: No. vaccination deployment plan produced and updated
- 0: No. of supplied reporting and registration forms.
- 0: No. of supplied ICT equipment procured to support vaccination
- 0: No. of HR supported to ensure providing COVID-19 vaccination services.
- 0: No. of coordination meeting with health authorities or partners conducted

Surveillance, RRT and Case Investigation

- 101: No. of total RRT established and functional in all districts across the country
- 100%: % of samples collected from suspected cases
- 1,487: No. of SARS-CoV2 (Ag RTd) performed and result reported by surveillance team
- 2: No. of weekly COVID-19 surveillance bulletins
- 1: No. of NGOs contributing in COVID-19 surveillance
- 100%: % of SARI cases tested for influenza and COVID-19 through the integrated surveillance of influenza and COVID-19
- Annual: No. of updated and printed protocol related to the surveillance of COVID-19 and influenza



COVID-19 key performance indicators

September 2022



Risk communication and community engagement

- 0: No. of health workers, media reporters, and community volunteers trained on communication and RCCE
- 0: No. of awareness campaigns conducted for targeted groups on COVID-19
- 0: No. of IEC materials disseminated through MoH and partners
- 31,564: People reached with messages on COVID-19 preventive measures and access to health care
- 1: No. of national risk communication and community engagement plan for COVID-19

Cases 2021-2022

Case management

- 44,527: No. of treatments provided (for COVID-19 response purposes)
- 179: No. of medical equipments distributed (for COVID-19 response purposes)
- 0: No. of supplied ICU beds
- 0: No. of supplied oxygen cylinders
- 125: No. of HCWs trained on case management
- 12: No. of hospitals supported with ICU equipped with necessary supplies and equipment
- 1: No. of coordination meeting with health authorities or partners conducted
- 0: No. of supplied patient ventilators
- 0: No. of supplied oxygen generating station
- 35: No. of supplied oxygen concentrators

National laboratory

- 45: No. of laboratory staff trained and retrained on COVID-19 lab techniques or biosafety and biosecurity measures
- Annual: No. of RT-PCR and Cepheid Xpert system machines distributed
- 0: No. of provided SARS-CoV-2 cartridges (Cepheid Xpert system)
- 0: No. of provided RT-PCR kits and consumables
- 11: No. of laboratories supported
- 0: No. of provided COVID-19 antigen-based rapid diagnostic tests (RDt)
- 0: No. of swabs and medium provided
- Annual: No. of coordination meeting with health authorities or partners conducted

Confirmed cases per Districts

184

Confirmed cases

380

Recovered cases

0

Deaths

Infection prevention and control

- 25: No. of Health staff trained on IPC Infection Prevention Control
- 0: No. of PHC health staff trained on COVID19 (Essential Health Services)
- 1,550,100: PPEs (No. Gloves)
- 1,059,200: PPEs (No. Surgical Masks)
- 24,000: PPEs (No. Gowns)
- 1,700: No. Coverall, Aprons, head cover and dis...
- 950: No. Alcohol hand rub sanitizer 75% and S...
- 33: No. Thermometers (non-contact & clinic...)
- 20: PPEs (No. Face Shield)
- 0: PPEs (No. Goggles)
- 0: PPEs (No. Mask 95)