

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Situation Report – 147

Data as received by WHO from national authorities by 10:00 CEST, 15 June 2020

Highlights

As the pandemic accelerates in low- and middle-income countries, WHO is especially concerned about its impact on people who already struggle to access health services – often [women, children and adolescents](#). WHO has developed [guidance on maintaining essential services](#).

WHO has also carefully investigated the risks of women transmitting COVID-19 to their babies during breastfeeding. Based on the available evidence, WHO's advice is that [the benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of COVID-19](#). A [Q and A on breastfeeding and COVID-19](#) is also available.

WHO has recently released [a photo story outlining ten actions you can take to protect and improve your sexual and reproductive health during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). At present, there is no evidence of sexual transmission of the virus responsible for COVID-19. The virus can be passed however, through direct contact with saliva, for instance, kissing.

There are also many [things people can do to take care of their own health](#), like staying active, eating a nutritious diet and limiting their alcohol intake.

In today's [Subject in Focus](#), we look at the Solidarity Trials, which are being used to accelerate research on a COVID-19 Vaccine.

Situation in numbers (by WHO Region)

Total (new cases in last 24 hours)

Globally	7 823 289 cases (132 581)	431 541 deaths (3 911)
Africa	175 503 cases (7 937)	4 111 deaths (113)
Americas	3 781 538 cases (69 770)	201 848 deaths (2 596)
Eastern Mediterranean	778 200 cases (19 649)	17 077 deaths (437)
Europe	2 416 920 cases (18 141)	188 350 deaths (349)
South-East Asia	471 392 cases (15 953)	12 927 deaths (401)
Western Pacific	198 995 cases (1 131)	7 215 deaths (15)

Subject in Focus: Accelerating research on a COVID-19 Vaccine

Since the start of the pandemic, there has been an urgent need to accelerate the research and development of a safe and effective vaccine.

To facilitate research and vaccine development, WHO's [R&D Blueprint](#) team convened:

1. A process to develop a core clinical trial study protocol for a global, and globally coordinated, clinical trial for vaccines. The idea is to accelerate research on COVID-19 vaccines through a large, international, randomized controlled clinical trial using a standardized study protocol that enables the agile, simultaneous evaluation of the benefits and risks of multiple candidate vaccines in sites with sufficient COVID-19 attack rates.

To date, more than 120 different candidate vaccines are under development and could be available or suitable to enter the trial at different times. The aim of the Solidarity Trial, is to quickly enrol and individually randomize very large numbers of adult participants in many different populations and settings across the world. By using a shared placebo/control group and a common core study protocol to evaluate multiple candidate vaccines in the trial, resources allocated to the evaluation of each candidate vaccine can be saved while ensuring a high standard of scientific rigor and efficiency.

Following an in-depth review by experts and various consultations, a revised version of the WHO [core protocol](#) was recently published. In addition, WHO has also launched a call for expressions of interest from vaccine trial sites around the world to identify those that would participate in a vaccine Solidarity Trial using this core protocol.

2. A multi-disciplinary group of experts from across the world to discuss, from different perspectives, to develop the concept of Human Challenge Studies. The WHO Advisory Group for "Human Challenges" was tasked with considering the feasibility, potential value and limitations of establishing a closely monitored human challenge model of experimental COVID-19 infection and illness in healthy young adult volunteers.

This Advisory Group included experts with experience in:

- design and performance of many types of volunteer challenge studies,
- SARS-CoV-2 virology,
- measurement of human immune responses to SARS-CoV-2 and to other microbial pathogens,
- clinical management of COVID-19 clinical disease in different geographic settings,
- regulatory considerations associated with testing and emergency pre-licensure use of vaccines and with larger-scale post-licensure deployment,
- and GMP manufacture of virulent viruses under BSL-3 containment.

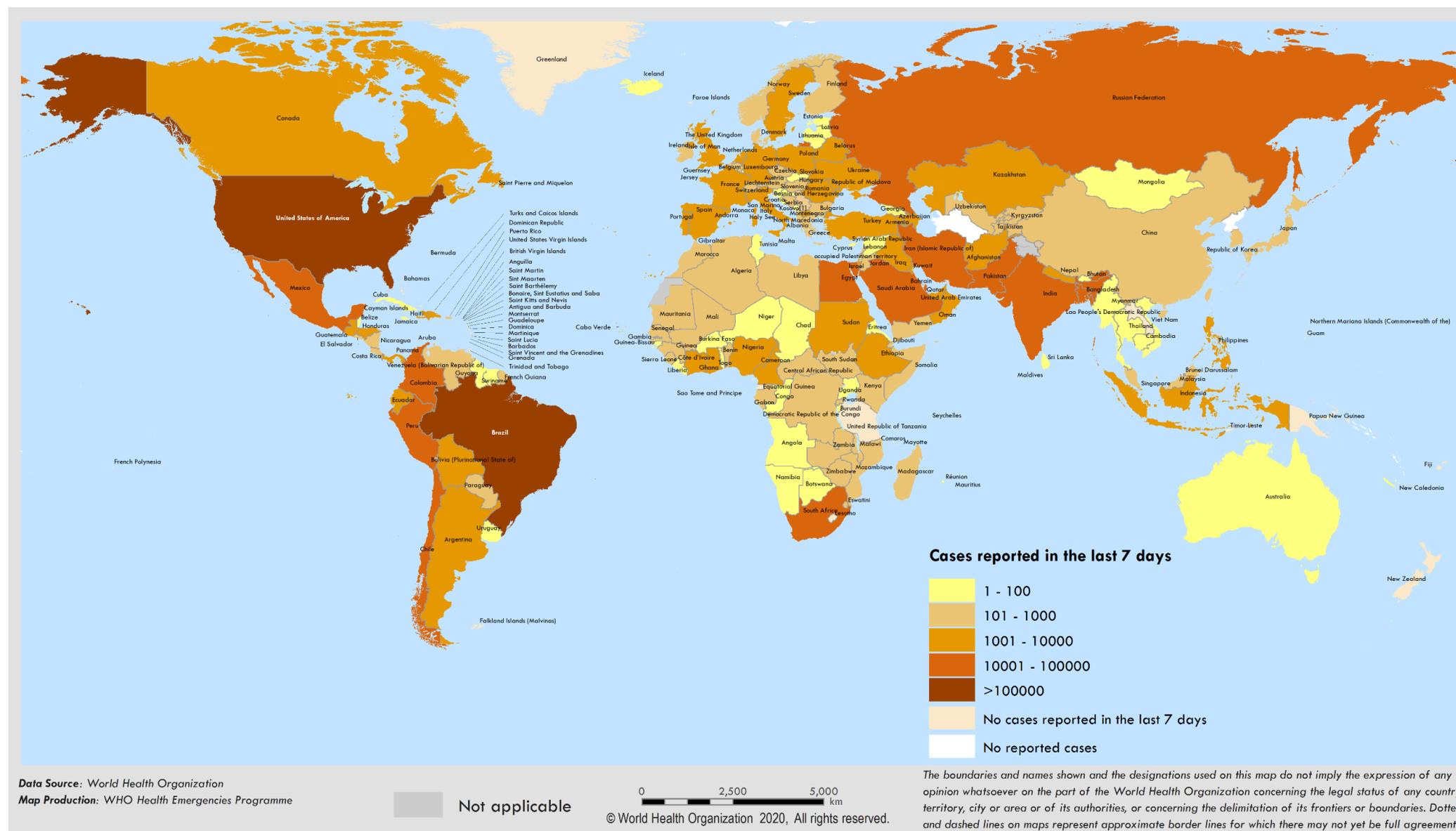
The Working Group was sub-divided into four subgroups to address: Clinical Trials Issues, Challenge Virus Strain Issues, Measurement of Immune Responses Pre- and Post-Challenge, and Detection of SARS-CoV-2 in Clinical Specimens Post-challenge.

Since its constitution, the Advisory Group has convened several times to deliberate on this question and to make recommendations. A full report of this Advisory Group will be available shortly on the R&D Blueprint and COVID-19 webpage. This complements the 6 May 2020 document outlining [the key criteria for the ethical acceptability of Covid-19 human challenge studies](#).

Further information on WHO's work relating to vaccine research can be found on the [R&D Blueprint and COVID-19 webpage](#).

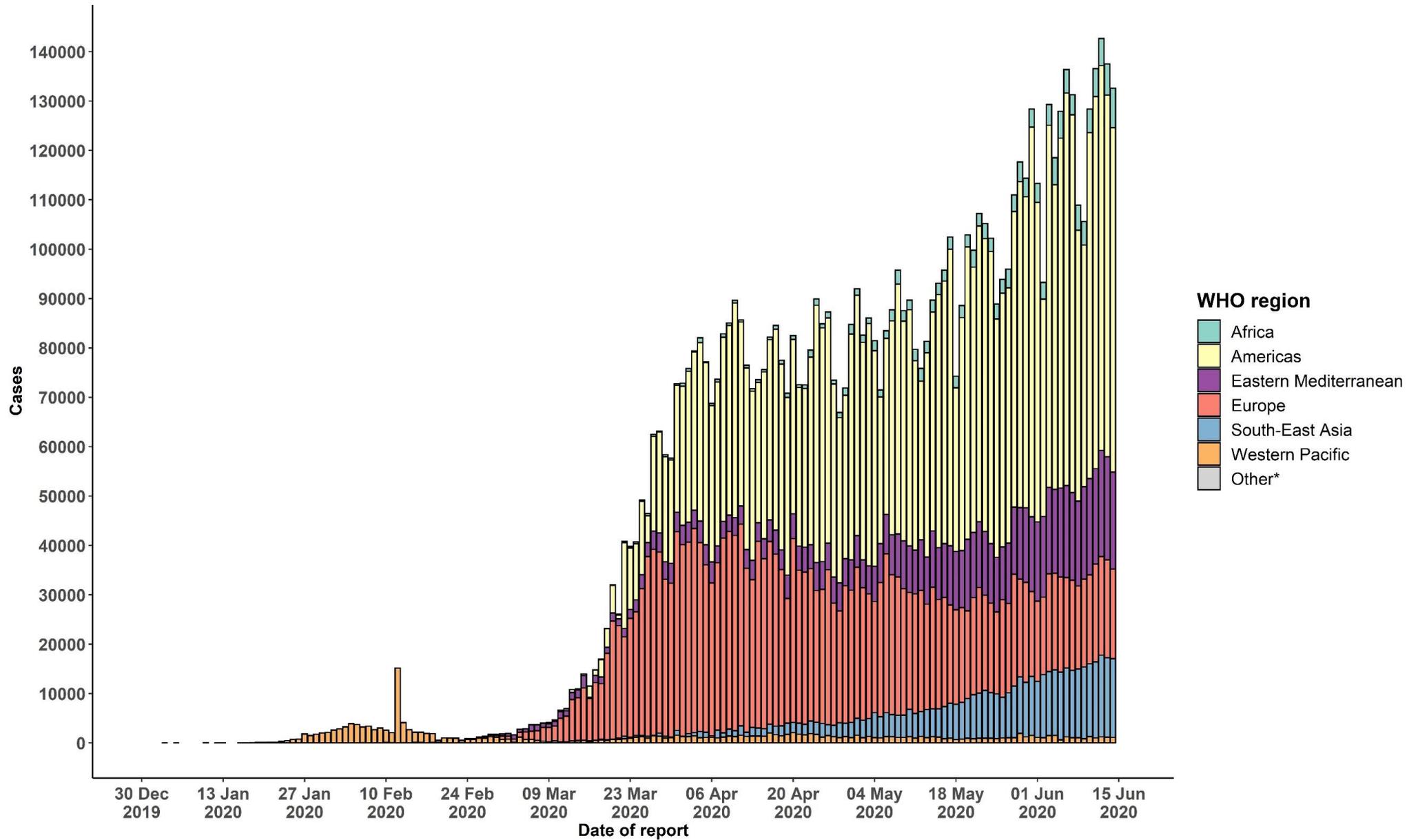
Surveillance

Figure 1. Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases reported in the last seven days by country, territory or area, 09 June to 15 June**



**See [Annex 1](#) for data, table and figure notes.

Figure 2. Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, by date of report and WHO region, 30 December through 15 June**



**See [Annex 1](#) for data, table and figure notes.

Table 1. Countries, territories or areas with reported laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths, by WHO region. Data as of 10 AM CEST, 15 June 2020**

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ¹	Days since last reported case
Africa						
South Africa	70 038	4 302	1 480	57	Community transmission	0
Nigeria	16 085	904	420	21	Community transmission	0
Ghana	11 422	304	51	3	Community transmission	0
Algeria	10 919	109	767	7	Community transmission	0
Cameroon	9 572	829	275	5	Community transmission	0
Senegal	5 090	94	60	0	Community transmission	0
Côte d'Ivoire	5 084	236	45	0	Community transmission	0
Democratic Republic of the Congo	4 777	54	106	1	Community transmission	0
Guinea	4 534	50	25	0	Community transmission	0
Kenya	3 594	137	103	3	Community transmission	0
Gabon	3 463	0	23	0	Community transmission	3
Ethiopia	3 345	179	57	2	Community transmission	0
Central African Republic	2 222	165	7	0	Community transmission	0
Mali	1 809	33	104	0	Community transmission	0
Mauritania	1 783	210	87	6	Clusters of cases	0
South Sudan	1 693	9	27	2	Clusters of cases	0
Guinea-Bissau	1 460	0	15	0	Community transmission	1
Zambia	1 358	1	11	1	Community transmission	0
Madagascar	1 272	20	10	0	Clusters of cases	0
Sierra Leone	1 169	37	51	0	Community transmission	0
Equatorial Guinea	1 043	0	12	0	Community transmission	22

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ¹	Days since last reported case
Niger	980	2	66	1	Community transmission	0
Burkina Faso	894	2	53	0	Community transmission	0
Chad	850	2	73	1	Community transmission	0
Uganda	823	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	1
Congo	779	0	25	0	Community transmission	1
Cabo Verde	750	24	6	0	Clusters of cases	0
Mozambique	583	30	2	0	Clusters of cases	0
Rwanda	582	41	2	0	Sporadic cases	0
Malawi	547	18	6	1	Clusters of cases	0
Togo	530	5	13	0	Community transmission	0
United Republic of Tanzania	509	0	21	0	Community transmission	38
Eswatini	490	4	4	1	Clusters of cases	0
Benin	470	58	7	1	Community transmission	0
Liberia	458	12	32	0	Community transmission	0
Sao Tome and Principe	388	0	10	0	Clusters of cases	4
Zimbabwe	383	27	4	0	Sporadic cases	0
Mauritius	337	0	10	0	Clusters of cases	9
Comoros	176	0	2	0	Community transmission	1
Angola	140	2	6	0	Clusters of cases	0
Eritrea	96	31	0	0	Sporadic cases	0
Burundi	94	0	1	0	Clusters of cases	3
Botswana	60	0	1	0	Clusters of cases	2
Namibia	32	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	1

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ⁱ	Days since last reported case
Gambia	28	0	1	0	Sporadic cases	6
Seychelles	11	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	69
Lesotho	4	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	11
Territoriesⁱⁱ						
Mayotte	2 282	0	29	0	Clusters of cases	1
Réunion	495	6	1	0	Clusters of cases	0
Americas						
United States of America	2 057 838	25 314	115 112	646	Community transmission	0
Brazil	850 514	21 704	42 720	892	Community transmission	0
Peru	225 132	4 383	6 498	190	Community transmission	0
Chile	174 293	6 938	3 323	222	Community transmission	0
Mexico	142 690	3 494	16 872	424	Community transmission	0
Canada	98 410	467	8 107	58	Community transmission	0
Colombia	48 746	1 888	1 592	47	Community transmission	0
Ecuador	46 751	395	3 896	22	Community transmission	0
Argentina	30 295	1 531	819	17	Community transmission	0
Dominican Republic	22 962	390	592	15	Community transmission	0
Panama	20 059	848	429	8	Community transmission	0
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	17 842	913	585	26	Community transmission	0
Guatemala	9 491	509	367	16	Community transmission	0
Honduras	8 455	323	310	4	Community transmission	0
Haiti	4 165	224	70	6	Community transmission	0
El Salvador	3 720	117	72	0	Community transmission	0
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2 904	25	24	1	Community transmission	0

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ⁱ	Days since last reported case
Cuba	2 248	10	84	0	Clusters of cases	0
Costa Rica	1 662	50	12	0	Clusters of cases	0
Nicaragua	1 655	0	55	0	Community transmission	4
Paraguay	1 289	28	11	0	Community transmission	0
Uruguay	847	0	23	0	Clusters of cases	3
Jamaica	615	1	10	0	Clusters of cases	0
Suriname	187	0	3	0	Clusters of cases	1
Guyana	159	0	12	0	Clusters of cases	1
Trinidad and Tobago	117	0	8	0	Sporadic cases	14
Bahamas	103	0	11	0	Clusters of cases	8
Barbados	96	0	7	0	Clusters of cases	4
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	27	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	6
Antigua and Barbuda	26	0	3	0	Clusters of cases	1
Grenada	23	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	19
Belize	21	1	2	0	Sporadic cases	0
Saint Lucia	19	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	9
Dominica	18	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	2
Saint Kitts and Nevis	15	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	55
Territoriesⁱⁱ						
Puerto Rico	5 811	121	147	1	Community transmission	0
French Guiana	1 255	94	3	1	Clusters of cases	0
Martinique	202	0	14	0	Clusters of cases	8
Cayman Islands	187	0	1	0	Clusters of cases	1
Guadeloupe	171	0	14	0	Clusters of cases	2

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ¹	Days since last reported case
Bermuda	144	2	9	0	Clusters of cases	0
Aruba	101	0	3	0	No cases	40
Sint Maarten	77	0	15	0	Sporadic cases	9
United States Virgin Islands	72	0	6	0	Clusters of cases	4
Saint Martin	41	0	3	0	Sporadic cases	15
Curaçao	22	0	1	0	Sporadic cases	4
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	13	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	50
Turks and Caicos Islands	12	0	1	0	Sporadic cases	48
Montserrat	11	0	1	0	Sporadic cases	62
British Virgin Islands	8	0	1	0	Sporadic cases	30
Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba	7	0	0	0	No cases	20
Saint Barthélemy	6	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	76
Anguilla	3	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	72
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	1	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	68
Eastern Mediterranean						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	187 427	2 472	8 837	107	Community transmission	0
Pakistan	144 478	5 248	2 729	97	Clusters of cases	0
Saudi Arabia	127 541	4 233	972	40	Clusters of cases	0
Qatar	79 602	1 186	73	3	Community transmission	0
Egypt	44 598	1 618	1 575	91	Clusters of cases	0
United Arab Emirates	42 294	304	289	1	Pending	0
Kuwait	35 920	454	296	7	Clusters of cases	0
Afghanistan	25 527	761	476	5	Clusters of cases	0
Oman	23 481	1 404	104	5	Clusters of cases	0

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ⁱ	Days since last reported case
Iraq	20 209	1 259	607	58	Clusters of cases	0
Bahrain	18 544	317	43	4	Clusters of cases	0
Morocco	8 793	101	212	0	Clusters of cases	0
Sudan	7 220	213	459	12	Community transmission	0
Djibouti	4 465	16	43	2	Clusters of cases	0
Somalia	2 595	16	88	1	Sporadic cases	0
Lebanon	1 446	4	32	0	Clusters of cases	0
Tunisia	1 096	2	49	0	Community transmission	0
Jordan	961	8	9	0	Clusters of cases	0
Yemen	732	23	165	4	Pending	0
Libya	418	0	8	0	Clusters of cases	1
Syrian Arab Republic	177	7	6	0	Community transmission	0
Territoriesⁱⁱ						
occupied Palestinian territory	676	3	5	0	Clusters of cases	0
Europe						
Russian Federation	537 210	8 246	7 091	143	Clusters of cases	0
The United Kingdom	295 893	1 514	41 698	36	Community transmission	0
Spain	243 928	323	27 136	0	Community transmission	0
Italy	236 989	338	34 345	44	Community transmission	0
Germany	186 461	192	8 791	4	Community transmission	0
Turkey	178 239	1 562	4 807	15	Community transmission	0
France	152 767	307	29 343	8	Community transmission	0
Belgium	60 029	111	9 655	5	Community transmission	0
Belarus	53 973	732	308	5	Community transmission	0

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ¹	Days since last reported case
Sweden	51 614	683	4 874	0	Community transmission	0
Netherlands	48 783	143	6 059	2	Community transmission	0
Portugal	36 690	227	1 517	5	Community transmission	0
Ukraine	31 810	656	901	12	Community transmission	0
Switzerland	31 034	23	1 676	0	Community transmission	0
Poland	29 392	375	1 247	10	Community transmission	0
Ireland	25 303	8	1 706	1	Community transmission	0
Romania	21 999	320	1 410	19	Community transmission	0
Israel	19 008	132	300	0	Pending	0
Armenia	17 064	397	285	16	Community transmission	0
Austria	17 038	24	677	0	Community transmission	0
Kazakhstan	14 809	313	77	4	Clusters of cases	0
Serbia	12 310	59	254	1	Pending	0
Denmark	12 193	54	597	0	Community transmission	0
Republic of Moldova	11 740	281	406	7	Community transmission	0
Czechia	10 024	33	329	0	Clusters of cases	0
Azerbaijan	9 957	387	119	4	Clusters of cases	0
Norway	8 606	0	242	0	Clusters of cases	2
Finland	7 104	17	326	1	Pending	0
Uzbekistan	5 103	109	19	0	Clusters of cases	0
Tajikistan	5 035	64	50	0	Pending	0
Hungary	4 076	12	563	4	Community transmission	0
Luxembourg	4 070	7	110	0	Clusters of cases	0
North Macedonia	4 057	155	188	9	Clusters of cases	0

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ⁱ	Days since last reported case
Bulgaria	3 290	24	174	2	Clusters of cases	0
Greece	3 121	9	183	0	Clusters of cases	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3 001	109	163	1	Community transmission	0
Kyrgyzstan	2 372	87	27	0	Clusters of cases	0
Croatia	2 252	1	107	0	Sporadic cases	0
Estonia	1 973	0	69	0	Sporadic cases	1
Iceland	1 810	2	10	0	Community transmission	0
Lithuania	1 768	5	75	0	Community transmission	0
Albania	1 590	69	36	0	Clusters of cases	0
Slovakia	1 548	3	28	0	Clusters of cases	0
Slovenia	1 495	3	109	0	Clusters of cases	0
Latvia	1 097	0	28	0	Clusters of cases	1
Cyprus	983	3	18	0	Clusters of cases	0
Georgia	879	15	14	0	Community transmission	0
Andorra	853	0	51	0	Community transmission	2
San Marino	695	0	42	0	Community transmission	10
Malta	646	0	9	0	Sporadic cases	1
Montenegro	325	1	9	0	Clusters of cases	0
Monaco	99	0	1	0	Sporadic cases	8
Liechtenstein	83	0	1	0	Pending	50
Holy See	12	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	39
Territoriesⁱⁱ						
Kosovo ^[1]	1 443	6	23	- 9	Community transmission	0
Isle of Man	336	0	24	0	Pending	24

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ¹	Days since last reported case
Jersey	313	0	30	0	Community transmission	5
Guernsey	252	0	13	0	Community transmission	43
Faroe Islands	187	0	0	0	Pending	52
Gibraltar	176	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	6
Greenland	13	0	0	0	Pending	17
South-East Asia						
India	332 424	11 502	9 520	325	Clusters of cases	0
Bangladesh	87 520	3 141	1 171	32	Community transmission	0
Indonesia	38 277	857	2 134	43	Community transmission	0
Nepal	5 760	425	19	1	Sporadic cases	0
Thailand	3 135	0	58	0	Clusters of cases	1
Maldives	2 035	22	8	0	Clusters of cases	0
Sri Lanka	1 889	5	11	0	Clusters of cases	0
Myanmar	262	1	6	0	Clusters of cases	0
Bhutan	66	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	1
Timor-Leste	24	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	52
Western Pacific						
China	84 778	49	4 645	0	Clusters of cases	0
Singapore	40 604	407	26	0	Clusters of cases	0
Philippines	25 930	538	1 088	14	Community transmission	0
Japan	17 502	73	925	0	Clusters of cases	0
Republic of Korea	12 121	36	277	0	Clusters of cases	0
Malaysia	8 453	8	121	1	Clusters of cases	0

Reporting Country/ Territory/Area	Total confirmed cases	Total confirmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths	Transmission classification ⁱ	Days since last reported case
Australia	7 320	18	102	0	Clusters of cases	0
New Zealand	1 154	0	22	0	Clusters of cases	24
Viet Nam	334	0	0	0	Clusters of cases	1
Mongolia	197	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	2
Brunei Darussalam	141	0	2	0	Clusters of cases	38
Cambodia	128	2	0	0	Sporadic cases	0
Lao People's Democratic Republic	19	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	63
Fiji	18	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	55
Papua New Guinea	8	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	53
Territoriesⁱⁱ						
Guam	177	0	5	0	Clusters of cases	1
French Polynesia	60	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	40
Northern Mariana Islands (Commonwealth of the)	30	0	2	0	Pending	5
New Caledonia	21	0	0	0	Sporadic cases	5
Subtotal for all regions	7 822 548	132 581	431 528	3 911		
Other*	741	0	13	0	Not applicable	-
Grand total	7 823 289	132 581	431 541	3 911		

**See [Annex 1](#) for data, table and figure notes.

Technical guidance and other resources

- To view all technical guidance documents regarding COVID-19, please go to [this webpage](#).
- Updates from WHO regional offices
 - [WHO AFRO](#)
 - [WHO EMRO](#)
 - [WHO EURO](#)
 - [WHO PAHO](#)
 - [WHO SEARO](#)
 - [WHO WPRO](#)
- [Research and Development](#)
- [Online courses on COVID-19](#) and in [additional national languages](#)
- [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
- [WHO Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Dashboard](#)
- [Weekly COVID-19 Operations Updates](#)

Recommendations and advice for the public

- [Protect yourself](#)
- [Questions and answers](#)
- [Travel advice](#)
- [EPI-WIN](#): tailored information for individuals, organizations and communities

Case definitions

WHO periodically updates the [Global Surveillance for human infection with coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#) document which includes surveillance definitions.

Definition of COVID-19 death

A COVID-19 death is defined for surveillance purposes as a death resulting from a clinically compatible illness in a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case, unless there is a clear alternative cause of death that cannot be related to COVID-19 disease (e.g. trauma). There should be no period of complete recovery between the illness and death.

Further guidance for certification and classification (coding) of COVID-19 as cause of death is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Annex 1: Data, table and figure notes

Caution must be taken when interpreting all data presented. Differences are to be expected between information products published by WHO, national public health authorities, and other sources using different inclusion criteria and different data cut-off times. While steps are taken to ensure accuracy and reliability, all data are subject to continuous verification and change. Case detection, definitions, testing strategies, reporting practice, and lag times differ between countries/territories/areas. These factors, amongst others, influence the counts presented, with variable underestimation of true case and death counts, and variable delays to reflecting these data at global level.

The designations employed, and the presentation of these materials do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WHO concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. Countries, territories and areas are arranged under the administering WHO region.

The mention of specific companies or of certain manufacturers' products does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by WHO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. Errors and omissions excepted, the names of proprietary products are distinguished by initial capital letters.

[1] All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). In the map, number of cases of Serbia and Kosovo (UNSCR 1244, 1999) have been aggregated for visualization purposes.

Counts reflect laboratory-confirmed cases and deaths, based on [WHO case definitions](#), unless stated otherwise (see Country, territory, or area-specific updates and errata), and include both domestic and repatriated cases.

Other*: includes cases reported from international conveyances.

Due to the recent trend of countries conducting data reconciliation exercises which remove large numbers of cases or deaths from their total counts, WHO will now display such data as negative numbers in the "new cases" / "new deaths" columns as appropriate. This will aid readers in identifying when such adjustments occur. When additional details become available that allow the subtractions to be suitably apportioned to previous days, graphics will be updated accordingly. Prior situation reports will not be edited; see covid19.who.int for the most up-to-date data.

Additional table notes

ⁱ Transmission classification is based on a process of country/territory/area self-reporting. Classifications are reviewed on a weekly basis and may be revised as new information becomes available. and. Differing degrees of transmission may be present within countries/territories/areas; classification is based on the highest category reported within a country/territory/area. Categories:

- No cases: with no confirmed cases
- Sporadic cases: with one or more cases, imported or locally detected
- Clusters of cases: experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures

- Community transmission: experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to: large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains; large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance; and/or multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area
- Pending: transmission classification has not been reported to WHO

ii “Territories” include territories, areas, overseas dependencies and other jurisdictions of similar status.

Country, territory, or area-specific updates and errata

- Erratum 15 June 2020, Kosovo^[1]: The Situation Report from 14 June 2020 included an additional 9 deaths. To align with the national authorities, counts have been corrected.
- Note: 15 June 2020, Beijing, China: The investigation of a cluster of COVID-19 cases in Beijing associated with a wholesale market continues. As of 15 June, 12PM CEST, Chinese authorities have reported a total of 105 cases since 11 June, including 2 linked cases in Liaoning Province. WHO is closely monitoring the situation and is in close contact with national authorities in China.