

Overall strategy

The World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) encourages countries to improve detection of COVID-19 transmission, to respond to detection with quick and targeted measures, and to focus efforts on preventing transmission among the vulnerable.

Key highlights

- New cases of COVID-19 were reported in 18 Western Pacific Region (WPR) countries or areas within the past fourteen days (Australia 300, Brunei Darussalam 20, Cambodia 20, China 1 129, Fiji 3, French Polynesia 678, Guam 107, Japan 49 204, Republic of Korea 13 268, Malaysia 25 452, Mongolia 302, New Caledonia 2, New Zealand 58, Northern Mariana Islands 7, Papua New Guinea 38, Philippines 16 878, Singapore 288, and Viet Nam 84).
- Six countries or areas in the WPR that had reported cases in the past have reported no new cases within the past seven days (Fiji, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna).
- American Samoa, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Niue, Palau, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, and Tuvalu have not reported a case to date.

Epi update

COVID-19

Member States

18

countries or areas reporting cases in the past 14 days

Cases

107 842

past 14 days

Deaths

1 422

past 14 days

17

countries or areas reporting ZERO cases for more than 14 days

1 135 606

cumulative cases

20 628

cumulative deaths

Deployments

COVID-19 response

283

total deployments

236

deployments completed

27

actively supporting country offices

11

actively supporting regional office

9

currently supporting remotely

Supplies and logistics

Personal protective equipment for health workers shipped to 21 countries or areas (as of 6 January 2020)



7 796 428
surgical masks



1 682 507
particulate respirators



546 049
medical gowns



400 542
goggles



824 124
face shields



20 565
bottles (100mL)
alcohol-based
hand rub



3 443 370
pairs of gloves

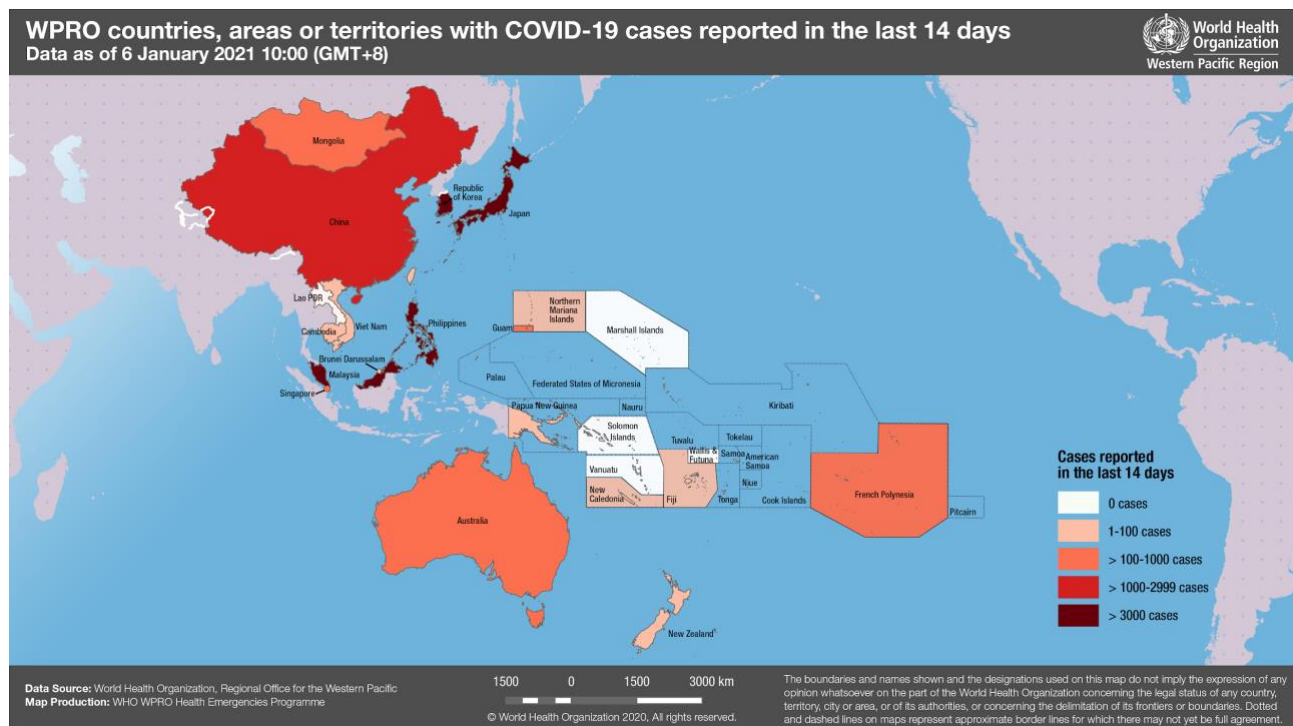


333 792
laboratory tests shipped

Weekly situation updates

- In the WPR, 23 countries or areas have reported COVID-19 cases since December 2019. Between 23 December 2020 to 5 January 2021, a total of 107 842 cases with 1 422 deaths have been reported, for a cumulative 1 135 606 cases with 20 628 deaths (proportion of fatal cases (PFC) 1.8%) as of 6 January 2021, 10:00 (GMT+8). Available data indicate most countries or areas in the WPR have identified imported cases¹ or localized community transmission. Daily cases continue to increase in the Republic of Korea and Malaysia. Data from French Polynesia, Guam, and Papua New Guinea indicate large-scale community transmission, and there is evidence of widespread transmission in some parts of the Philippines (National Capital Region, Region III, and Region IV-A), and large-scale transmission in some parts of Japan (Tokyo). Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of cases reported in the last seven days.
- Globally, 84 474 195 COVID-19 cases with 1 848 704 deaths have been reported in 220 countries or areas or territories (2.2% PFC) as of 5 January 2021 17:47 CEST. New cases continue to increase in countries or areas of the African Region, plateauing after an increase in the European Region and Eastern Mediterranean Region, decreasing in the South-East Asian Region, and fluctuating in the Region of Americas.

Figure 1. Countries or areas with reported confirmed cases of COVID-19, covering the period from 23 December 2020 to 5 January 2021, as of 6 January 2021 10:00 (GMT+8)



¹ 0-No cases—no cases detected and no clear signals of transmission for at least 28 days (or two incubation periods); 1-Imported cases—cases reported in the past 28 days are imported or linked to importation within 3 generations, and there are no clear signals of local transmission; 2-Localized community transmission—cases reported in the past 28 days are localized and cannot be linked to importations, though most are linked to a cluster, and there are no clear signals of large-scale community transmission; 3-Large-scale community transmission—most cases reported in the past 28 days have no known link to a cluster and are spread across the area, and there are clear signals of increasing transmission and severe outcomes.

Figure 2. Epidemic curve of confirmed COVID-19 cases in countries or areas with >5 000 cases, covering the period from 23 December 2020 to 5 January 2021, as of 6 January 2021 10:00 (GMT+8)

Epidemic curve of COVID-19 cases in 7 countries with large number of cases in WPR

Excluding clinically-diagnosed cases in China

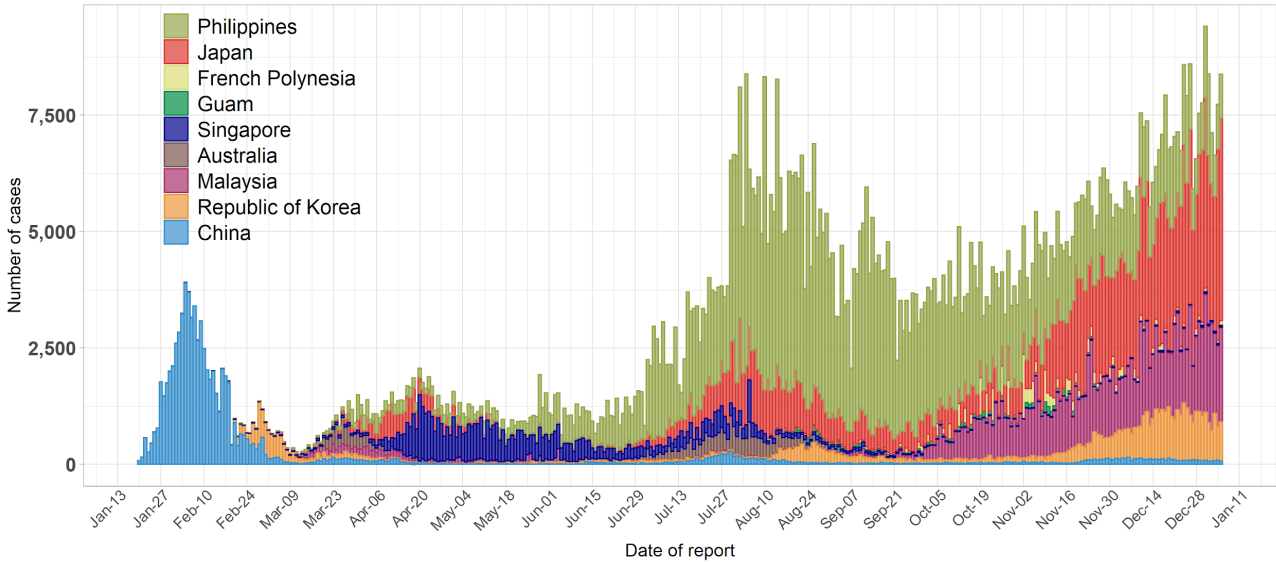


Figure 3. Epidemic curve of confirmed COVID-19 cases in countries or areas with <5 000 cases, covering the period from 23 December 2020 to 5 January 2021, as of 6 January 2021 10:00 (GMT+8)

Epidemic curve of COVID-19 cases in 13 countries with small number of cases in WPR

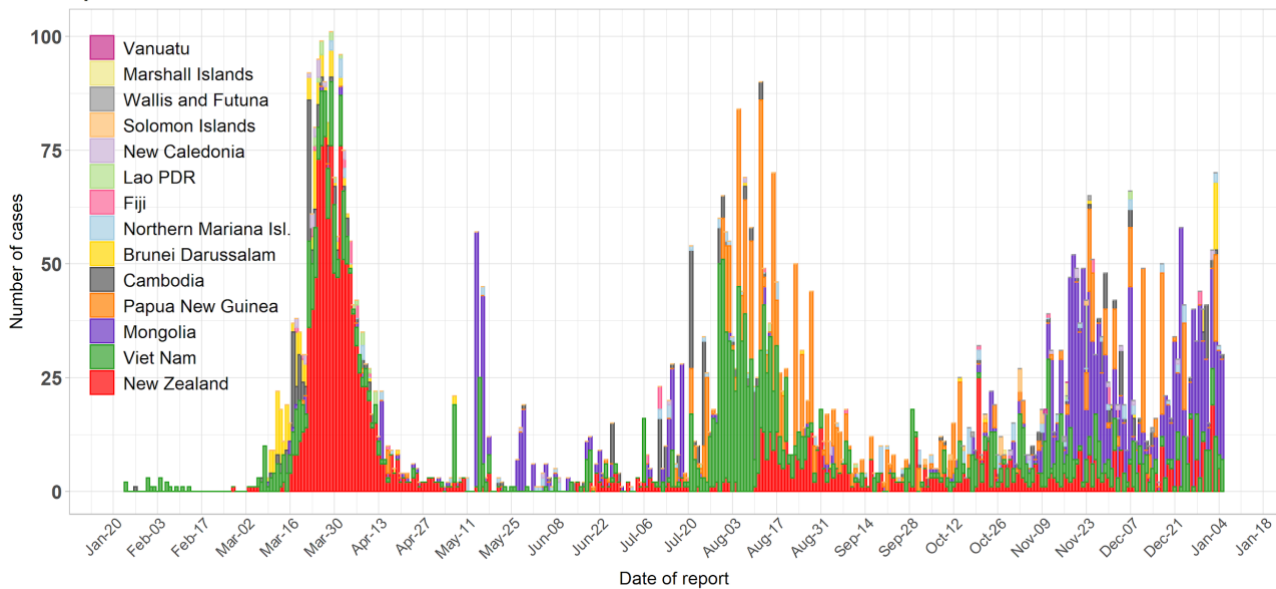


Table 1. Countries or areas with reported laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths, covering the period from 23 December 2020 to 5 January 2021, as of 6 January 2021 10:00 (GMT+8) (n =1 135 606)

Country or area	New cases (cumulative)	New deaths (cumulative)	Change in 14-day average	Days since last reported case
American Samoa	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Australia	300 (28519)	1 (909)	4.86	0
Brunei Darussalam	20 (172)	0 (3)	1.43	2
Cambodia	20 (383)	0 (0)	0.79	0
China	1 129 (97 127)	21 (4 794)	-26.36	0
Cook Islands	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Fiji	3 (49)	0 (2)	0.07	7
French Polynesia	678 (17 088)	15 (121)	-28.57	0
Guam	107 (7 173)	2 (123)	-4.93	0
Japan	49 204 (25 2317)	725 (3 719)	852.21	0
Kiribati	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Korea, Republic of	13 268 (65 818)	288 (1 027)	10.71	0
Lao PDR	0 (41)	0 (0)	0.00	29
Malaysia	25 456 (122 845)	70 (509)	240.93	0
Marshall Islands	0 (4)	0 (0)	0.00	49
Micronesia, Federal States of	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Mongolia	302 (1 308)	0 (0)	13.14	0
Nauru	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
New Caledonia	2 (40)	0 (0)	0.00	3
New Zealand	58 (1 830)	0 (25)	1.29	1
Niue	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands	7 (125)	0 (2)	0.14	1
Palau	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Papua New Guinea	38 (799)	0 (9)	-2.79	2
Philippines	16 878 (479 693)	300 (9 321)	-225.14	0
Pitcairn Islands	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Samoa	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Singapore	288 (58 749)	0 (29)	8.00	0
Solomon Islands	0 (17)	0 (0)	0.00	43
Tokelau	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Tonga	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Tuvalu	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	-
Vanuatu	0 (1)	0 (0)	0.00	56
Viet Nam	84 (1 504)	0 (35)	2.93	0
Wallis and Futuna	0 (4)	0 (0)	-0.7	22

New science

Vaccine Development

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the United States of America has granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for two messenger RNA vaccines and will most likely issue full biologics licenses in the coming months. Anticipating vaccine scarcity, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) published guidance on vaccine priorities. Data for the vaccines granted an EUA reportedly demonstrate 95% efficacy, but even highly effective vaccines will not be able to curb the pandemic without high population coverage and maintenance of other mitigation strategies. Recent data from 1,676 adults surveyed between 30 November to 8 December 2020, found that when a COVID-19 vaccine is approved and widely available: 34% would get it as soon as possible; 39% would wait; 9% would only get it if required for work or school; 15% would definitely not get it. Black persons, at high risk of infection and hospitalization, are less likely to report vaccine intent with only 20% reporting they would get the vaccine soon and 52% intending to wait. Intent to vaccinate has changed substantially over time and is likely to continue to evolve. In this viewpoint, it examines whether vaccine mandates would be lawful and ethical and whether they could boost vaccine uptake. ⁽²⁾

New guidance

- On 23 December 2020, WHO Headquarters published interim guidance on [Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) and considerations during severe shortages](#). This document summarizes WHO recommendations for the rational use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in health care settings and temporary strategies during acute supply shortages. This document also contains two Annex sections describing updated PPE use recommendations for health workers based on the transmission scenario, setting, and activity in the context of COVID-19 (Annex 1), and updated considerations for the decontamination or reprocessing of PPE (Annex 2). This guidance is intended for public health authorities, organizations, and focal persons involved in decisions regarding PPE distribution, management, and use by health workers.

² References

Gostin L.O., et al (2020). [Mandating COVID-19 Vaccines](#). *JAMA*. Published 29 December 2020. doi:10.1001/jama.2020.26553

New Communications materials



Tips for leaders

Five ideas to spark your thinking on how people can live their lives while staying safe from COVID-19

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Region

6 Protective Behaviours

Here are five innovative (and sometimes fun!) ideas which are allowing people to get on with life while staying safe from [#COVID19](https://bit.ly/37Bnoho):
<https://bit.ly/37Bnoho>
#COVID19ProtectionTips

Key information and announcements

Finance and administration

- A total of 283 deployments have been made in the WPR since the onset of the pandemic. At present, 27 experts are supporting WHO Country Offices, 11 experts are supporting the WHO Regional Office from Manila, and 9 experts continue to provide remote support.

Health Service Delivery

- WPR Member States to tighten the surveillance of emerging new variants of SARS-COV-2 virus potentially through two-way transmissions between human and susceptible animals, longer-term persistent infection in people with immune suppression, or influenced by global introduction of vaccination against COVID-19. WHO WPRO is in close collaboration with six COVID-19 reference laboratories in the Region located in Australia, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong special administrative region, Japan, and Singapore. In addition, nine additional countries share SARS-COV-2 genetic sequences with [GISAID](#). To download latest update of full genome tree and receptor binding surveillance of complete genomes of SARS-COV-2 virus: click [here](#)

Information and Planning

- WHO WPRO is continuing to monitor incidence of and new events related COVID-19 and transmission levels within countries and areas across the region. Updated information is available on the [WPRO dashboard](#).

Strategic Communication

- A 'Short guide to communicating about vaccine-related crises and adverse events following immunization (AEFIs)' was developed in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) East Asia and Pacific Regional Office. The short guide was developed to help Member States and WHO and UNICEF Country Offices to communicate about potential COVID-19 vaccine-related crises and AEFIs. It was designed to be used in conjunction with the COVID-19 vaccine communications planning checklist and template that was previously shared.
- On 1 January, Nikkei Asia published an op-ed by the WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific Region on [what we must do to contain COVID-19 in 2021](#). The piece highlighted ongoing response efforts while also reflecting on the lessons learnt throughout 2020 and what we can take forward into 2021.
- WHO WPRO published a web story on [5 innovative ideas for people to live their lives while staying safe from COVID-19](#).
- Ahead of the festive season, a package of communication resources was developed and shared on a variety of topics:
 - Celebrations/festivals package: This package includes public health advice and tips to stay healthy and safe before, during and after holiday festivities.
 - [Leader Tip Sheets](#): This resource provides ideas and suggestions for leaders in government, workplaces and businesses, religious centres, long-term care facilities, schools and universities, households, and restaurants and cafés to be able to keep those who they are responsible for safe.
 - Mental health package: This package includes a 4-week campaign that includes messages and content that focuses on positive mental health and encourages an optimistic outlook for the coming year.

Please contact your local WHO office if you wish to access any tools and adaptable materials that are listed in this update.