



**National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment**  
*Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport*

**Epidemiological report of SARS-CoV-2 on the Dutch Caribbean CAS- and BES-islands:  
Week 15 (April 6th - April 12th, 2021)**

Produced by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment of the Netherlands - RIVM  
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For general information on surveillance of COVID-19 on the CAS-BES-islands, see the next page.

### **Summary**

The incidence of SARS-CoV-2 infections has been rising on Aruba. On Bonaire and Curaçao, the daily number of new infections appears to be dropping. Between April 6th and April 12th, 2021, 1,791 new COVID-19 cases have been reported on the CAS- and BES-islands: 395 on Aruba, 53 on Bonaire, 1,319 on Curaçao, and 24 on Dutch St Maarten.

On Aruba, the incidence rate has increased to 311 cases per 100,000 persons. The number of new SARS-CoV-2 infections among tourists has been rising. On April 12th, Aruba reported 516 active cases, of which 81 were tourists. The positivity rate remains high at 27.0%. Surveillance of the circulation of variants on Aruba shows the proportion of VOC has increased (80.8% in week 12).

With 251 cases per 100,000 residents, Bonaire reported a substantially lower incidence rate as compared to the last few weeks. The number of active cases on Bonaire has lowered to 109, however, hospital admissions remain high. Various new clusters have been reported, including two clusters in elementary schools and one in a daycare centre. The positivity rate has decreased to 23.7%. Surveillance of variants on Bonaire shows the proportion VOC has (100% in week 11). On April 12th, schools have been reopened.

The situation on Curaçao continues to be worrying. Surveillance of circulation of variants on Curaçao shows the proportion of VOC B.1.1.7 has increased substantially (97.1% in week 11). The incidence rate has decreased to 760 cases per 100,000 persons, though the number of active infections remains high at 4,472.

COVID-related mortality has increased on Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao. Since last week (April 5th, 2021), Aruba reported 2 new deaths, and Curaçao 16. Since the start of the epidemic, 92 persons have died due to or with COVID-19 in Aruba, 27 in Dutch St Maarten, 68 in Curaçao, and 14 in Bonaire.

With hospital admissions increasing, Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao are seeing a rise in COVID-morbidity. Admitted patients are requiring ICU-care more rapidly, as compared to the first wave last year. Additionally, hospitals are reportedly seeing younger patients than in the first wave, where the majority of COVID-19 patients was 60-plus years old. The situation on Curaçao is currently considered alarming but controllable. Currently there are 77 patients admitted to the general hospital ward, and 41 patients to the ICU. Nine patients are receiving care in Aruba. Logistical capacity for receiving patients has been scaled up and the shortage of medical supplies, including ventilators, is being supplemented by the Dutch government. Additionally, healthcare personnel from Dutch St Maarten and the Netherlands has been brought in temporarily. Aruba has been seeing a larger amount of patients requiring hospitalization in the past few weeks. Currently there are 25 patients on the general ward, and 18 patients admitted to the ICU. In Bonaire, 6 patients are admitted on the general hospital ward, and 4 to the ICU on Bonaire, in this way occupying the total capacity of the local hospital. Due to limited hospital capacity, 2 Bonairean patients are receiving care in Aruba and 5 in Colombia.

Though the incidence rate is relatively low as compared to the leeward islands, the number of new SARS-CoV-2 infections in Dutch St Maarten has been rising steadily. On April 12th, the island reported 37 active cases and an incidence rate of 43 cases per 100,000 residents. Surveillance of the circulation of variants on Dutch St Maarten has detected the first VOC B.1.351 (South Africa) case. The proportion of VOC has increased substantially, though newer results of the surveillance are required to clarify the current circulation (85.7% in week

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11). Additionally, 2 cases of the A.2.5 lineage, often seen in Surinam, have been detected. Both St Eustatius and Saba have not reported active COVID-19 cases since January 28th.

### **Information on surveillance of COVID-19 on the CAS- and BES-islands**

The Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands entails the countries Curaçao, Aruba, and Dutch St Maarten (CAS-islands), as well as the overseas municipalities Bonaire, St Eustatius, and Saba (BES-islands). Surveillance data of SARS-CoV-2 cases is collected on each island in collaboration with local medical professionals, laboratories, and public health departments. These surveillance data are shared by the CAS- and BES-islands through daily updates and stored in the SARS-CoV-2 IHR Daily Overview Dutch Caribbean; an overview of the spread of SARS-CoV-2 on the CAS- and BES-islands.

This report has been generated using surveillance data registered at the RIVM between March 22nd 2020 and 12 April 2021. Sometimes surveillance data is reported to the RIVM one or multiple days later than documented on the islands. The data presented in this report are based on the date of registration at the RIVM. Because islands retrospectively correct surveillance data, the crude estimates in this report may differ slightly from the data shared by each island. The data reported here may lag behind in case more recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM by respective islands.

Everyone with symptoms of COVID-19 can get tested. However, it is plausible that not all individuals with a SARS-CoV-2 infection are tested. The actual numbers of cases can therefore be higher than the numbers reported here. The CAS- and BES-islands also register when individuals with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result have recovered. These data are used to report the current number of active cases in Table 3. The number of active cases refers to the number of individuals who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and who have not yet recovered at the time of producing this report.

### **Disclaimer**

Though this weekly report has been produced with the utmost care, it could possibly contain errors. Feedback on this overview is welcome.

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# 1 Overview of reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on the CAS- and BES-islands

Table 1: Number of laboratory confirmed cases with a positive test result for SARS-CoV-2 over the past 2 weeks, as reported to the RIVM by the CAS- and BES-islands

Island	Date: from-until	Number of performed tests	Number of laboratory confirmed tests with positive test result	Positivity rate %
Aruba <sup>1</sup>	29-03-2021 - 04-04-2021	5979	379	6.3
	05-04-2021 - 11-04-2021	5807	412	7.1
Bonaire	29-03-2021 - 04-04-2021	371	137	36.9
	05-04-2021 - 11-04-2021	233	57	24.5
Curaçao <sup>2</sup>	29-03-2021 - 04-04-2021	10634	2332	21.9
	05-04-2021 - 11-04-2021	7139	1465	20.5
Saba <sup>3</sup>	29-03-2021 - 04-04-2021	-	0	-
	05-04-2021 - 11-04-2021	-	0	-
Sint Eustatius	29-03-2021 - 04-04-2021	37	0	0
	05-04-2021 - 11-04-2021	109	0	0
Sint Maarten <sup>4</sup>	29-03-2021 - 04-04-2021	-	-	-
	05-04-2021 - 11-04-2021	1737	34	2

<sup>1</sup> This estimate concerns a crude positivity rate for Aruba. The Directie Volksgezondheid Aruba reports a corrected positivity rate through: <https://www.facebook.com/desparuba>.

<sup>2</sup> The Public Health Department on Curaçao estimates a corrected positivity rate. Therefore, estimates presented here may differ from positivity rates reported by Curaçao.

<sup>3</sup> A '-' value indicates insufficient data was reported to the RIVM to report in this table.

<sup>4</sup> The positivity rate for Dutch St Maarten has been estimated using public data of the weekly number of tests analyzed. Therefore, estimates presented here may differ from positivity rates reported by Dutch St Maarten.

Table 2: Number of laboratory confirmed cases with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, number of hospital admissions<sup>1</sup> and number of deceased cases, cumulative and for the previous week, on the CAS- and BES-islands, as reported to RIVM

Island	Cumulative			Previous week <sup>2</sup>	
	Number of cases	Hospital admissions	Deceased patients	Number of cases	Deceased patients
Aruba	10076	492	92	395	2
Bonaire	1495	35	14	53	0
Curaçao	11385	390	68	1319	16
Saba	6	1	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	20	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	2188	140	27	24	0
Totaal	25170	1058	201	1791	18

<sup>1</sup> The number of hospital admissions cannot be displayed for the previous week due to a delay in reporting these data. The current number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients is reported in Table 3.

<sup>2</sup> These have been reported to the RIVM between April 6th and 12th, 2021.

Table 3: Current number of active SARS-CoV-2 cases and status of COVID-19 hospital admissions on the CAS- and BES-islands, as reported to RIVM<sup>1,2</sup>

Island	Number of active cases	Number of hospitalized patients on general hospital ward	Number of patients hospitalized in the ICU
Aruba	516	25	18
Bonaire	109	13	4
Curaçao	4472	77	41
Saba	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	37	1	0
Totaal	5134	116	63

<sup>1</sup> These have been reported to the RIVM between April 6th and 12th, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The number of active cases is defined as the number of COVID-19 infected persons who have not been confirmed to have recovered from COVID-19 infection at the time of reporting these data to RIVM. These data may lag behind when islands have limited public health capacity to confirm recovery among infected cases.

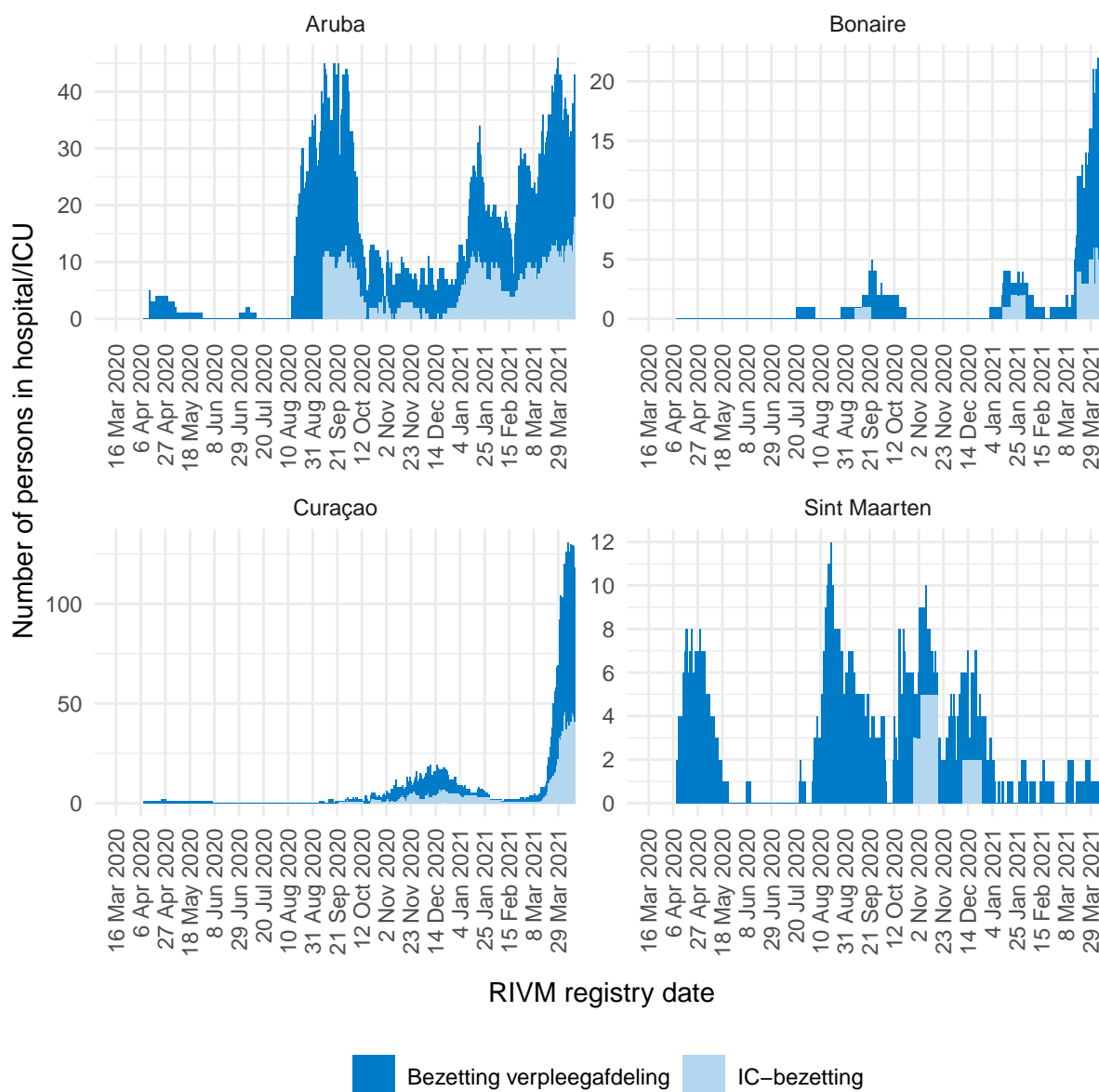


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This figure presents the number of reported persons who have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 during or before admission on the general hospital ward and/or ICU.

<sup>2</sup> The light blue data represent the ICU-occupation over time, per island. The dark blue data represent the occupation of the general hospital ward over time, per island.

<sup>3</sup> Due to the low number of hospitalised patients on Saba en St Eustatius, these islands have not been included in this graph.

<sup>4</sup> Based on the most recent data registered for Bonaire, the admission status is unknown for 234 persons who have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 since January 1st, 2021. These cases have not been included in this graph.

<sup>5</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

Table 4: SARS-CoV-2 incidence rate per 100,000 residents on the CAS- and BES-islands<sup>1</sup>, as reported to RIVM

Island	Incidence per 100,000 residents	
	Previous week <sup>2</sup>	Previous two weeks <sup>3</sup>
Aruba	248.4	551.9
Bonaire	203.8	725.0
Curaçao	691.0	2007.9
Saba	0.0	0.0
Sint Eustatius	0.0	0.0
Sint Maarten	42.8	85.5

<sup>1</sup> The calculated incidence rates include the estimated number of undocumented migrants on each island, see Table 5.

<sup>2</sup> The incidence rate per 100,000 persons, for the previous week, has been calculated from 6 april 2021 until 12 april 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 30 maart 2021 until 12 april 2021.

Table 5: Number of residents and acreage of the CAS- and BES-islands<sup>1</sup>

Island	Capital city	Residents	Acreage	Political status
Aruba	Oranjestad	112.190	180 km <sup>2</sup>	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Bonaire	Kralendijk	20.104	288 km <sup>2</sup>	Dutch municipality
Curaçao	Willemstad	158.665	444 km <sup>2</sup>	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Saba	The Bottom	1.915	13 km <sup>2</sup>	Dutch municipality
Sint Maarten	Philipsburg	41.109	34 km <sup>2</sup>	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Sint Eustatius	Oranjestad	3.138	21 km <sup>2</sup>	Dutch municipality

<sup>1</sup> Each island counts a substantial population of undocumented migrants. The reported incidence rates include the estimated population of undocumented migrants. On Aruba, Curaçao, and Dutch St Maarten the population size is estimated around 15,000 migrants. On Bonaire the population size is estimated around 1,000 migrants. These data are relevant to include as these populations are difficult to reach for local public health services and often have less access to curative care.



## 2 SARS-CoV-2 progression over time

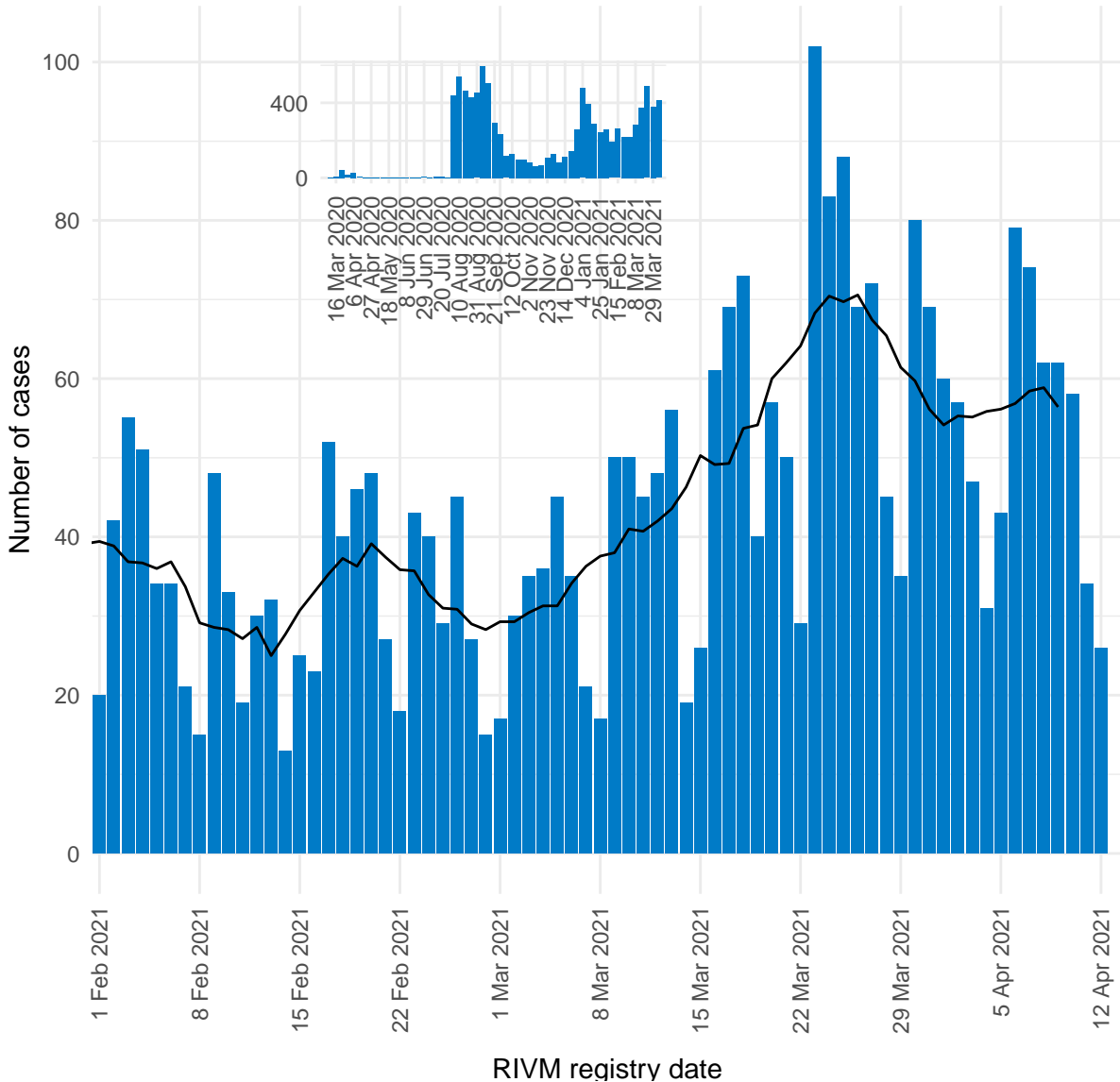


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

<sup>2</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

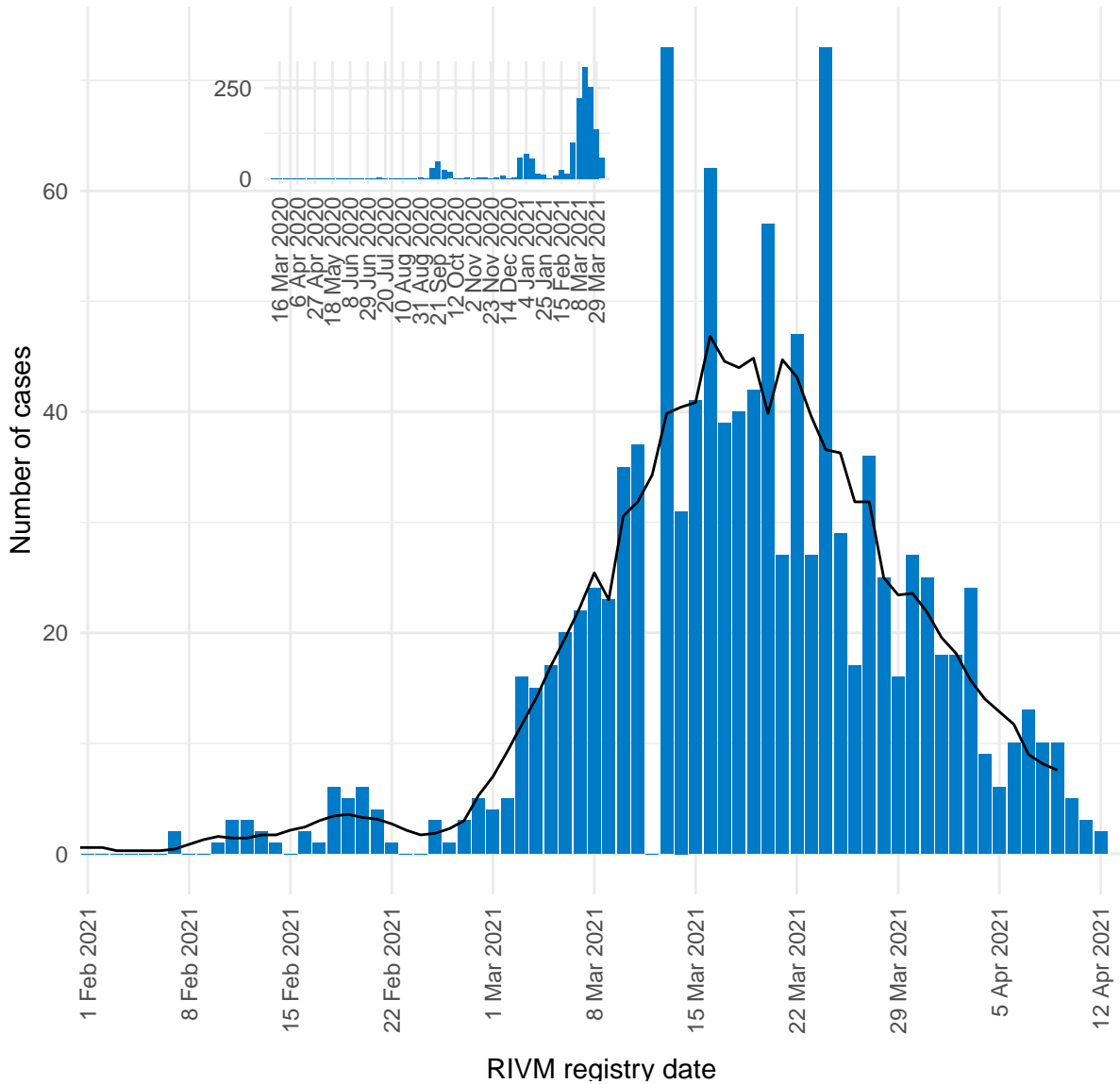


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

<sup>2</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

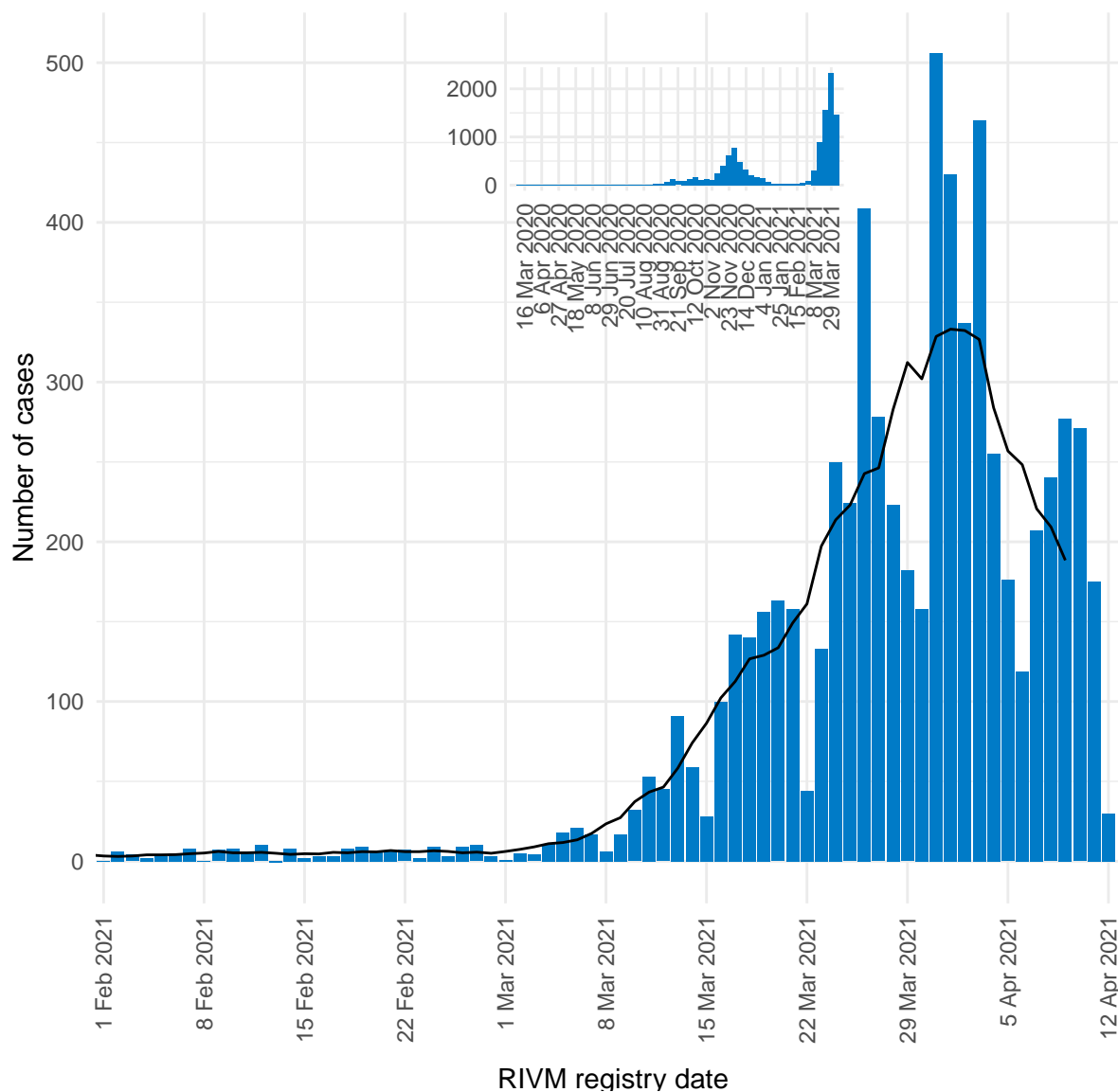


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

<sup>2</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

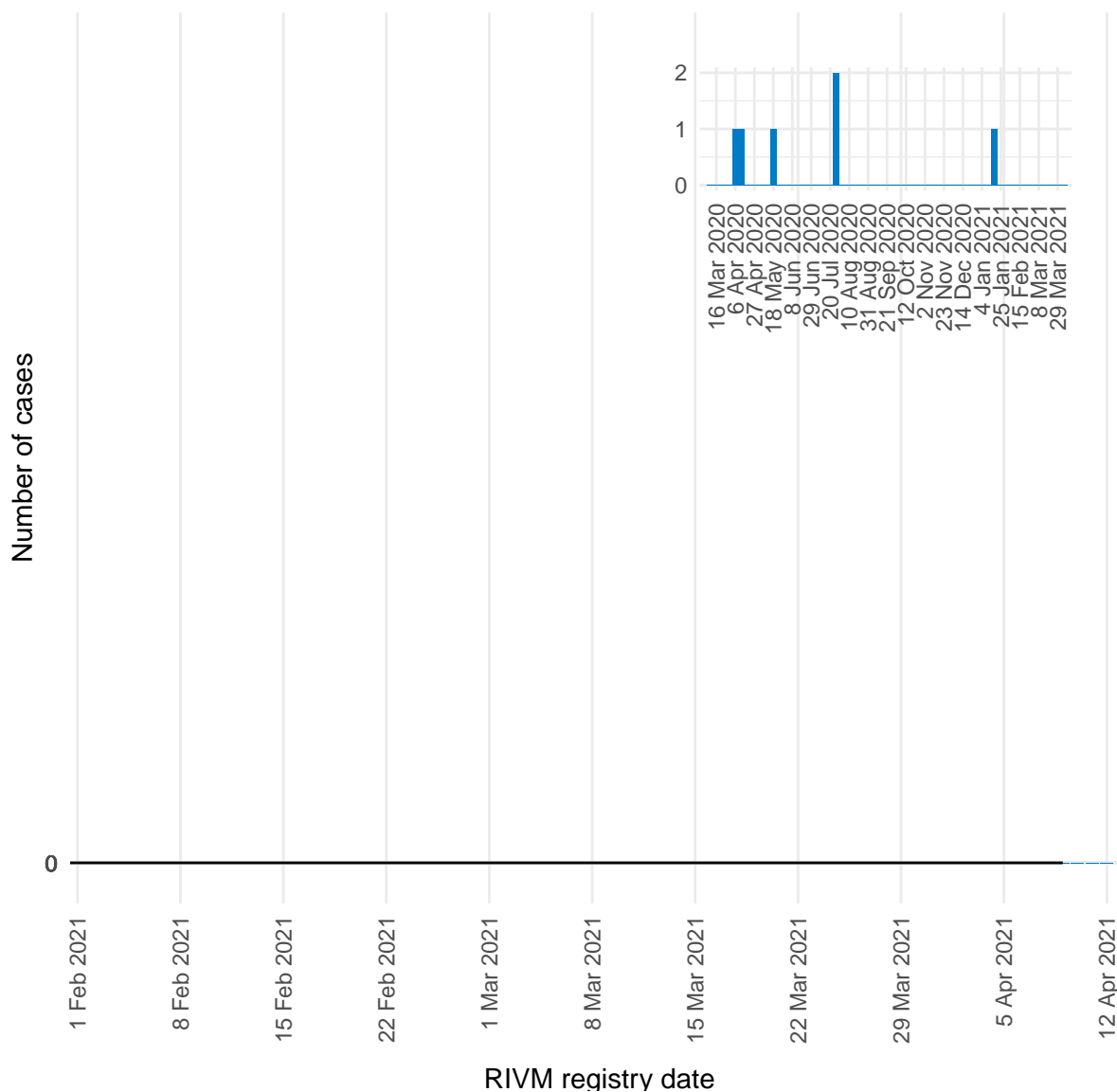


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

<sup>2</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

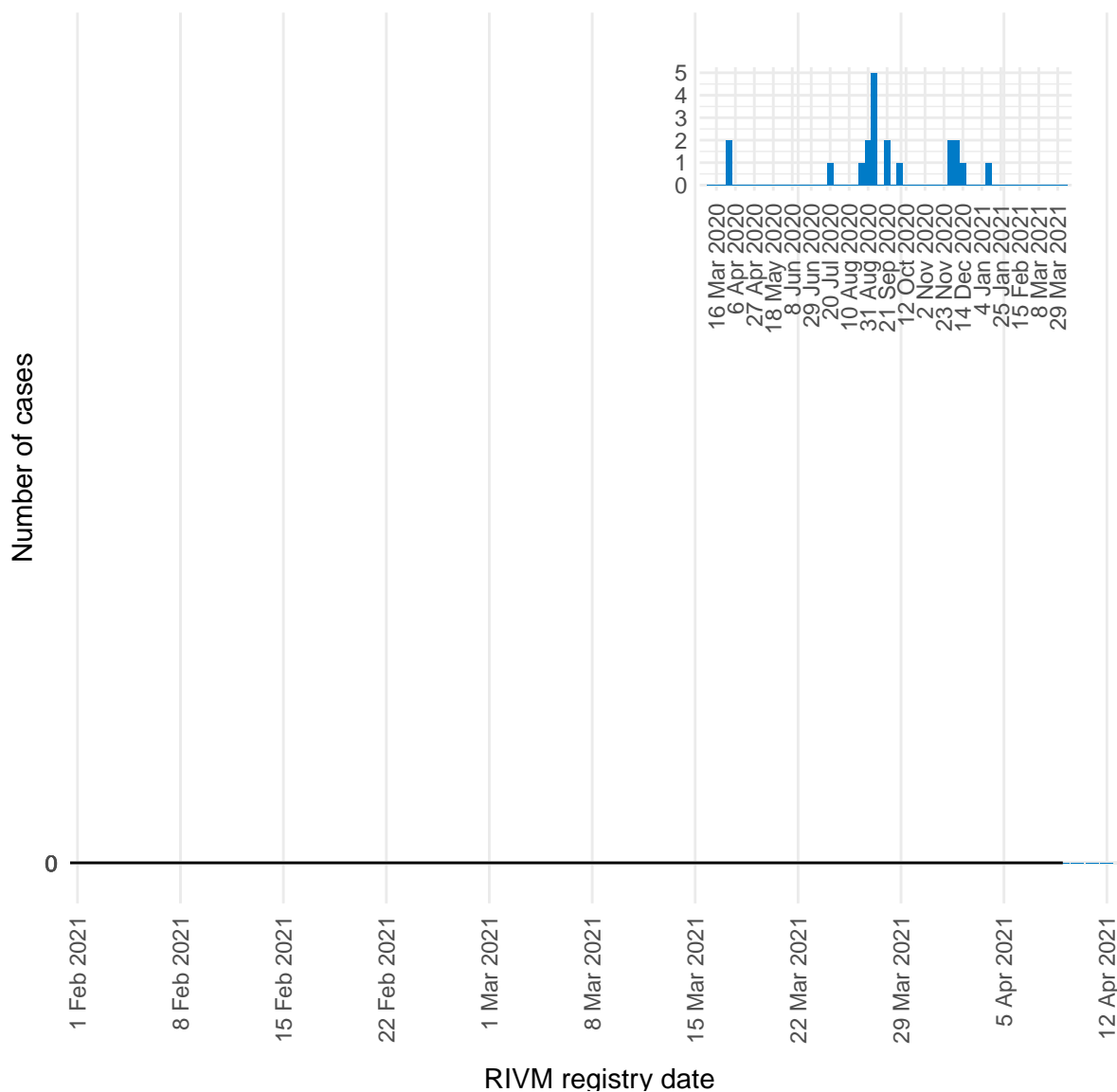


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

<sup>2</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

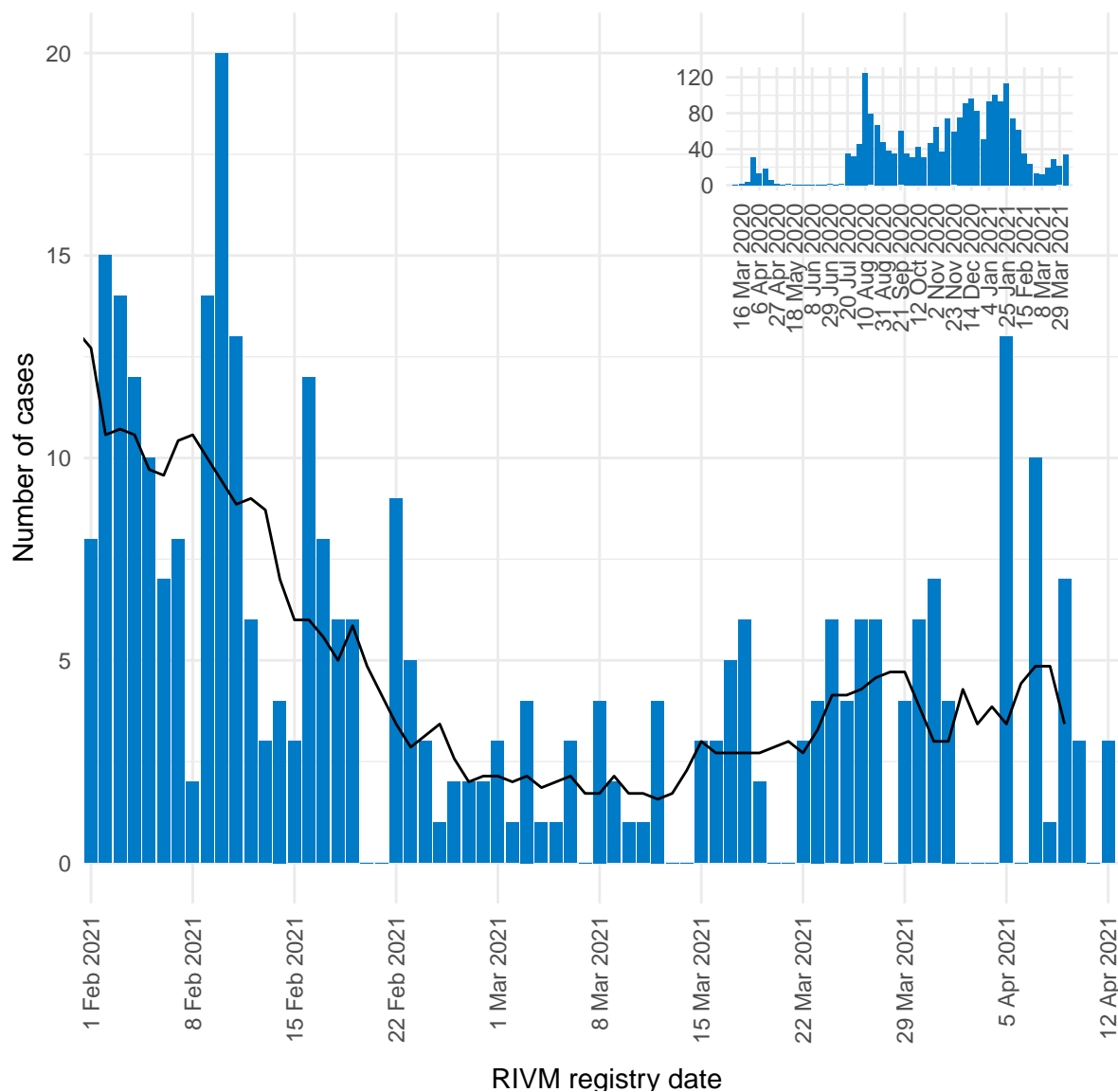


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

<sup>2</sup> The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

### 3 SARS-CoV-2 three week average incidence rate, progression over time

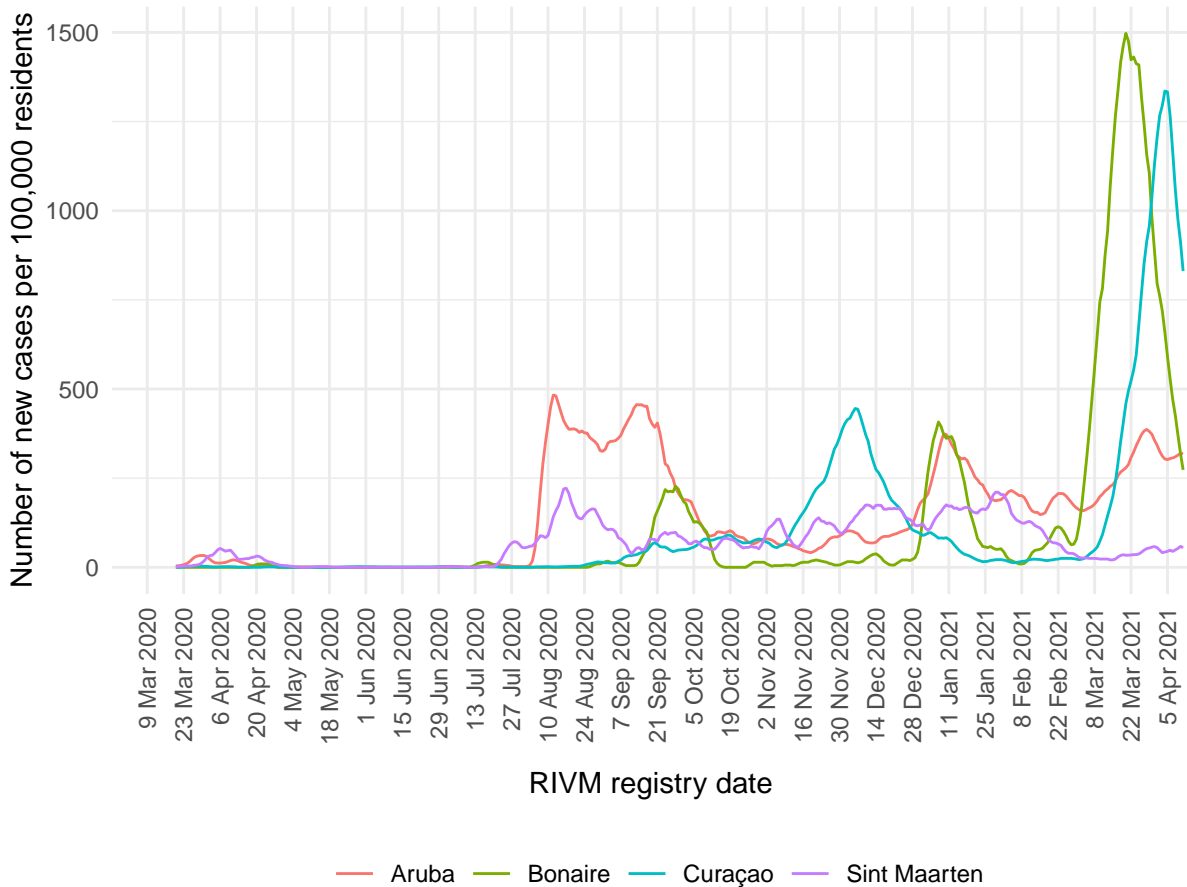


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure displays the 3-week average incidence rate per island per 100,000 residents, including the population of undocumented migrants on each island. Each line on the vertical axis indicates a weekly average of the incidence rate (defined as the number of new cases per 100,000 persons per week, over the total population) over a period of three weeks. For example: the reported value on January 4th 2021, is the weekly average of the incidence rate between December 28th, 2020 and January 11th, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the small number of reported cases on Saba and St Eustatius, these islands have not been included in this figure.