



**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 21 (May 18th - May 24th, 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

Between May 18th and May 24th, 2021, 135 new COVID-19 cases have been reported on the CAS- and BES-islands: 53 on Aruba, 5 on Bonaire, 14 on Curaçao, and 63 on Dutch St Maarten. The number of patients hospitalized due to/with COVID-19 has reduced substantially on the leeward islands. As a result, elective care on these islands has been scaled up. Curaçao has reported 2 COVID-19-related deaths since last week, Aruba 2, and Dutch Sint Maarten 1. Since the start of the epidemic, 122 persons have passed from COVID-19 in Curaçao, 107 in Aruba, 28 in Sint Maarten, and 17 in Bonaire.

In the past week, Aruba reported 52 new SARS-COV-2 infections per 100,000 persons. Currently 10 patients are admitted on the general COVID-ward and 4 patients to the COVID-ICU. This week there are no new results of pathogen surveillance to report. Aruba has relaxed precautionary measures as of May 10th. Elections will be held early summer, during these activities the amount of social interactions are expected to rise sharply. As of May 24th 2021, 13,952 persons have only had their first dose of the vaccine administered and 47,030 persons are fully vaccinated (61.7% of adult population was at least vaccinated once).

Bonaire reports an incidence rate of 44 cases per 100,000 residents, as compared to 92/100,000 a week ago (May 18th, 2021). The positivity rate on Bonaire has decreased from 7.5% to 5.6%. There are currently no COVID-related hospital admissions. There have also not been reports of any new clusters. Surveillance on circulation of variants on Bonaire shows the proportion of VOC B.1.1.7 (UK) was 93% by week 15, more recent updates are not yet available. As of May 24th, 3,501 persons have only had their first dose of the vaccine administered and 10,169 persons are fully vaccinated (72.2% adult population received at least one vaccination). As is the experience on the other islands, recruitment of new people wanting to be vaccinated is becoming increasingly difficult with the rising vaccination coverage.

The number of new SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao has been relatively low in the past two weeks, reporting an incidence rate of 9 cases per 100,000 persons last week. COVID-related hospital admissions and mortality have reduced considerably over the past few weeks. Currently 9 patients are admitted to the general COVID-ward and 12 patients to the COVID-ICU. This week there are no new results of pathogen surveillance to report.

As of May 19th, certain preventative measures were relaxed, but the curfew remains in place (23:00). As of May 24th, 22,040 persons have only received their first dose of the vaccine and a total of 60,431 persons have been fully vaccinated (61.0% adult population).

Dutch Sint Maarten reports an increase in confirmed cases. The incidence rate (139 cases per 100.000 residents) has increased compared to a week earlier (70/100,000 May 18th). Currently 3 patients are admitted to the local hospital and no patients admitted to the ICU. The situation is comparable to the scene on the French side of the island. This week there are no new results of pathogen surveillance to report. As of May 24th, 5,055 persons have only received their first vaccine, and a total of 11,583 persons have been fully vaccinated on the Dutch side of the island (32.1% adult population received at least one vaccination).

On Saba, no active SARS-CoV-2 cases have been reported as of May 11th, 2021. Since May 1st, the borders have been reopened. There are specific rules for incoming travelers, depending on their vaccination status. As of May 24th, 42 persons have only received their first vaccine, and a total of 1,354 persons have been fully vaccinated on the island (89.2% adult population received at least one vaccination).

St Eustatius has not reported any active COVID-19 cases since January 28th. As of May 26th, the island will introduce the second phase of the reopening of its borders. As of this date, Statian residents that would like to return home can re-enter the island. Also visitors from Curaçao, Aruba, St. Maarten, Bonaire and Saba are welcomed to Statia under the condition that the incoming travelers are fully vaccinated. As of May 24th, 118 persons have only received their first vaccine, and a total of 978 persons have been fully vaccinated on the island (45.5% adult population received at least one vaccination).

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 24 May 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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Table of contents

	Page
1 Overview of reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on the CAS- and BES-islands	4
2 SARS-CoV-2 progression over time	9
3 SARS-CoV-2 three week average incidence rate, progression over time	15

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 ¹	10-05-2021 - 16-05-2021	3957	84	2.1
	17-05-2021 - 23-05-2021	3903	63	1.6
Bonaire	10-05-2021 - 16-05-2021	208	16	7.7
	17-05-2021 - 23-05-2021	192	12	6.2
Curaçao ²	10-05-2021 - 16-05-2021	3995	19	0.5
	17-05-2021 - 23-05-2021	4258	17	0.4
Saba ³	10-05-2021 - 16-05-2021	-	0	-
	17-05-2021 - 23-05-2021	-	0	-
Sint Eustatius	10-05-2021 - 16-05-2021	107	0	0
	17-05-2021 - 23-05-2021	71	0	0
Sint Maarten ⁴	10-05-2021 - 16-05-2021	-	-	-
	17-05-2021 - 23-05-2021	-	-	-

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

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

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

⁴ The positivity rate for Dutch St Maarten has been estimated using data of the PCR tests analyzed only. Therefore, estimates presented here may differ from positivity rates reported by Dutch St Maarten (SLS), as those include data of rapid antigen tests as well.

Table 2: Number of laboratory confirmed cases with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, number of hospital admissions¹ 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 ²	
	Number of cases	Hospital admissions	Deceased patients	Number of cases	Deceased patients
Aruba	10922	582	107	65	2
Bonaire	1583	41	17	10	0
Curaçao	12271	552	122	15	2
Saba	7	1	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	20	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	2370	124	28	78	1
Totaal	27173	1300	274	168	5

¹ 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.

² These have been reported to the RIVM between May 11th and May 17th, 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^{1,2}

Island	Number of active cases	Number of hospitalized patients on general hospital ward	Number of patients hospitalized in the ICU
Aruba	69	10	4
Bonaire	19	0	0
Curaçao	58	9	12
Saba	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	80	3	0
Totaal	226	22	16

¹ These have been reported to the RIVM between May 11th and May 17th, 2021.

² 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.

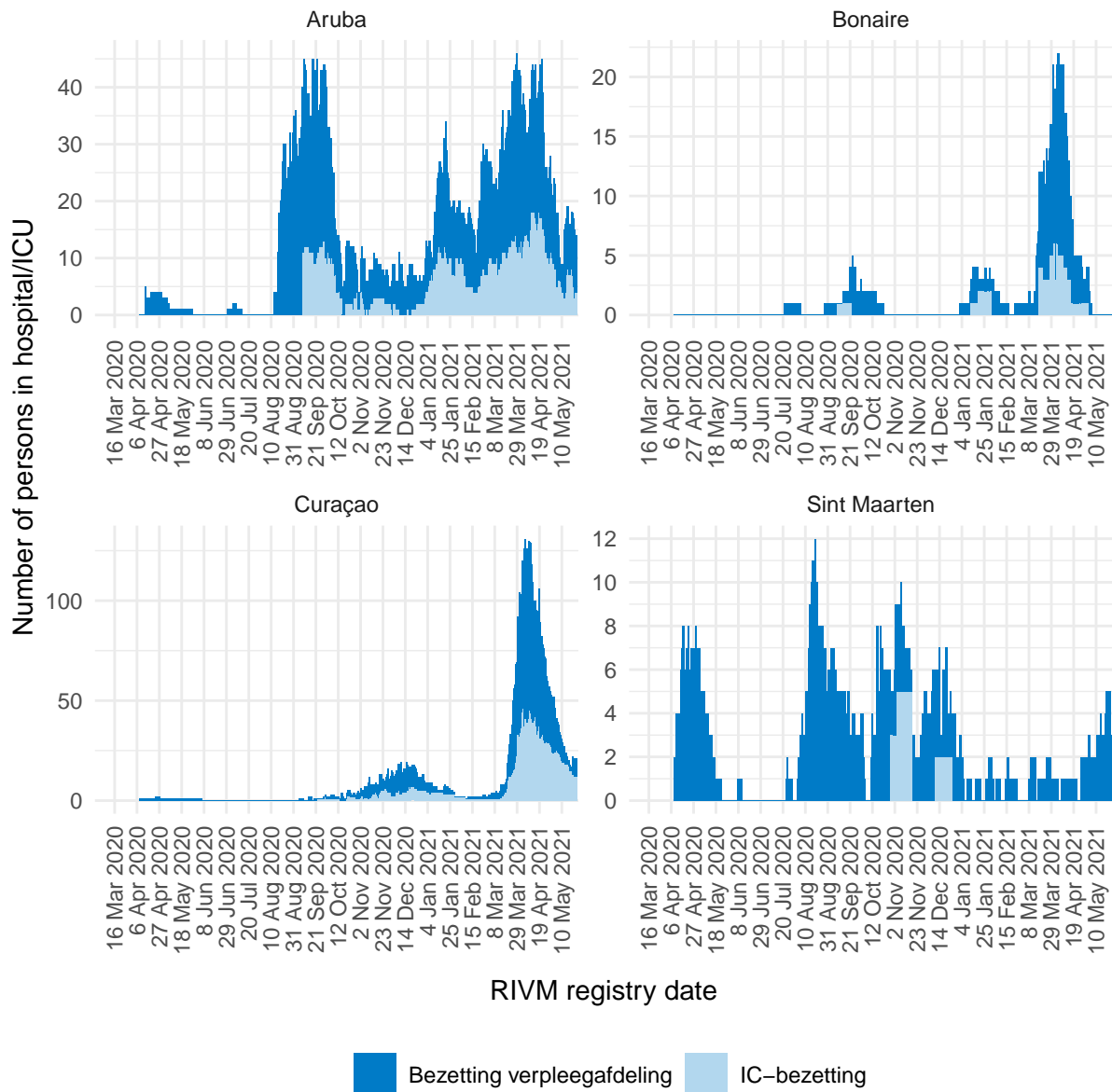


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time ^{1,2,3,4,5}

¹ 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.

² 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.

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

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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-islands¹, as reported to RIVM

Island	Incidence per 100,000 residents	
	Previous week ²	Previous two weeks ³
Aruba	42.3	101.4
Bonaire	22.0	114.3
Curaçao	8.2	20.4
Saba	0.0	0.0
Sint Eustatius	0.0	0.0
Sint Maarten	112.3	181.8

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

² The incidence rate per 100,000 persons, for the previous week, has been calculated from 18 mei 2021 until 24 mei 2021.

³ The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 11 mei 2021 until 24 mei 2021.

Table 5: Number of residents and acreage of the CAS- and BES-islands¹

Island	Capital city	Residents	Acreage	Political status
Aruba	Oranjestad	112.182	180 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Bonaire	Kralendijk	21.745	288 km ²	Dutch municipality
Curaçao	Willemstad	155.223	444 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Saba	The Bottom	1.918	13 km ²	Dutch municipality
Sint Maarten	Philipsburg	41.109	34 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Sint Eustatius	Oranjestad	3.142	21 km ²	Dutch municipality

¹ 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

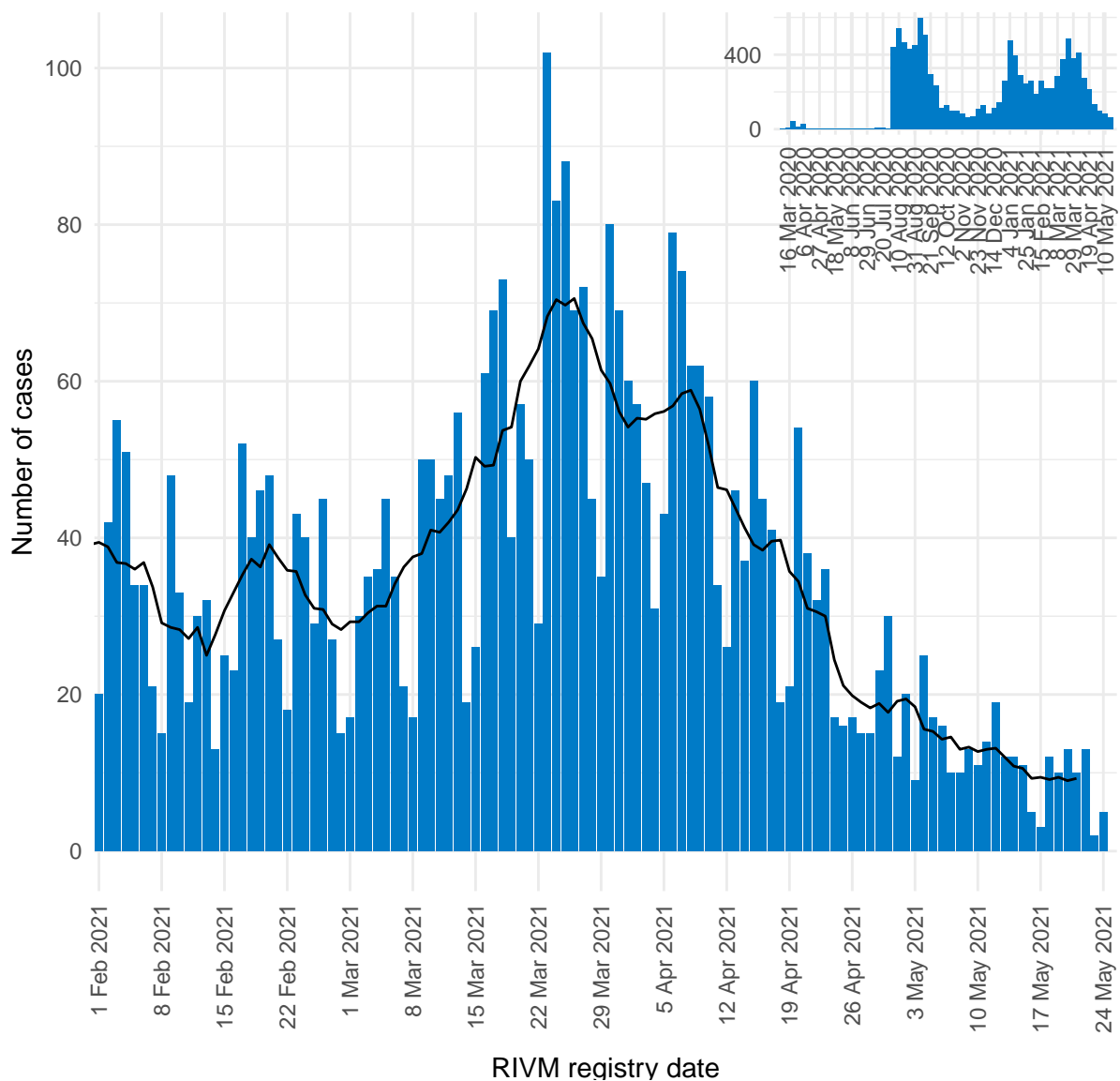


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

² 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.

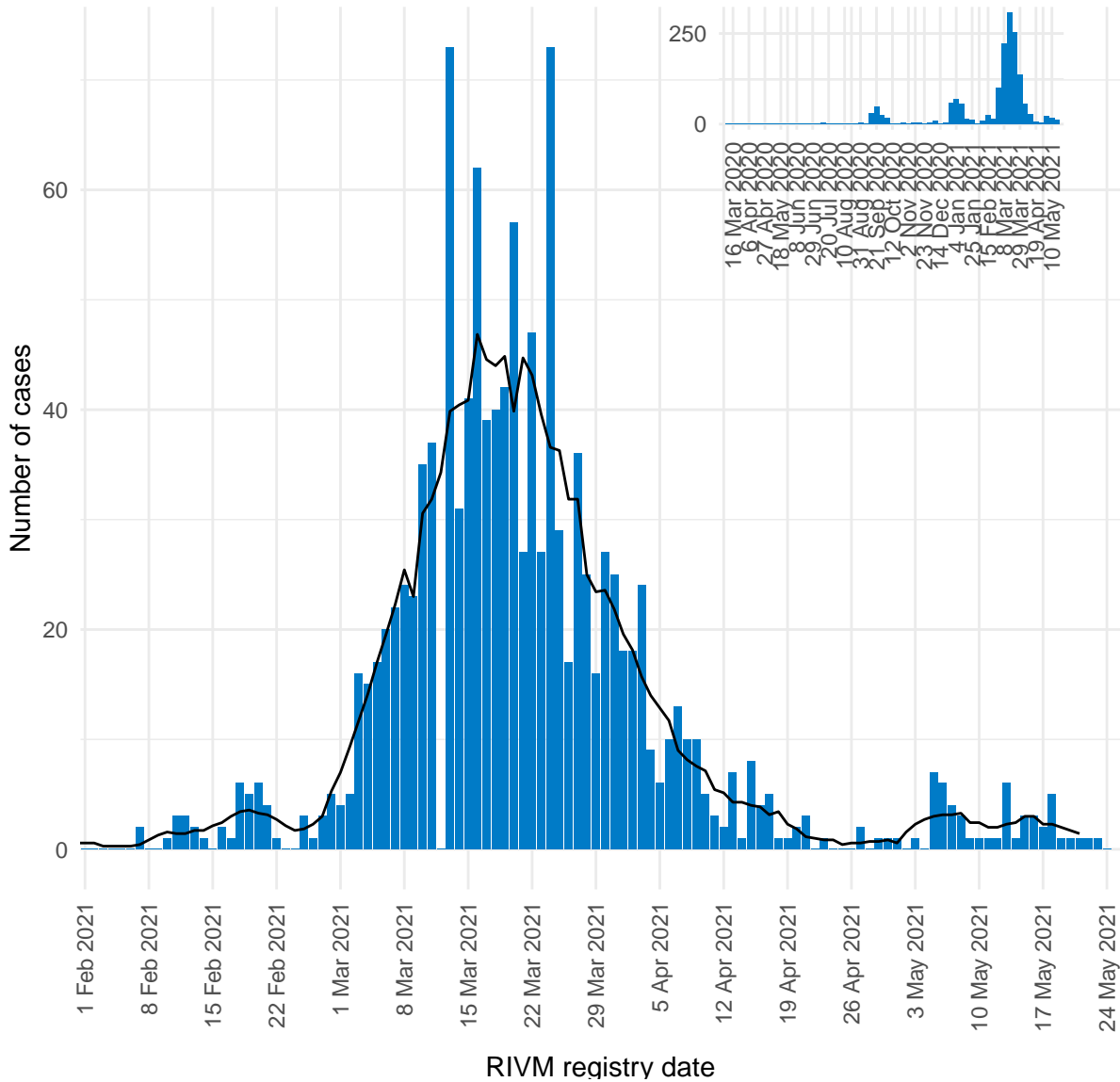


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

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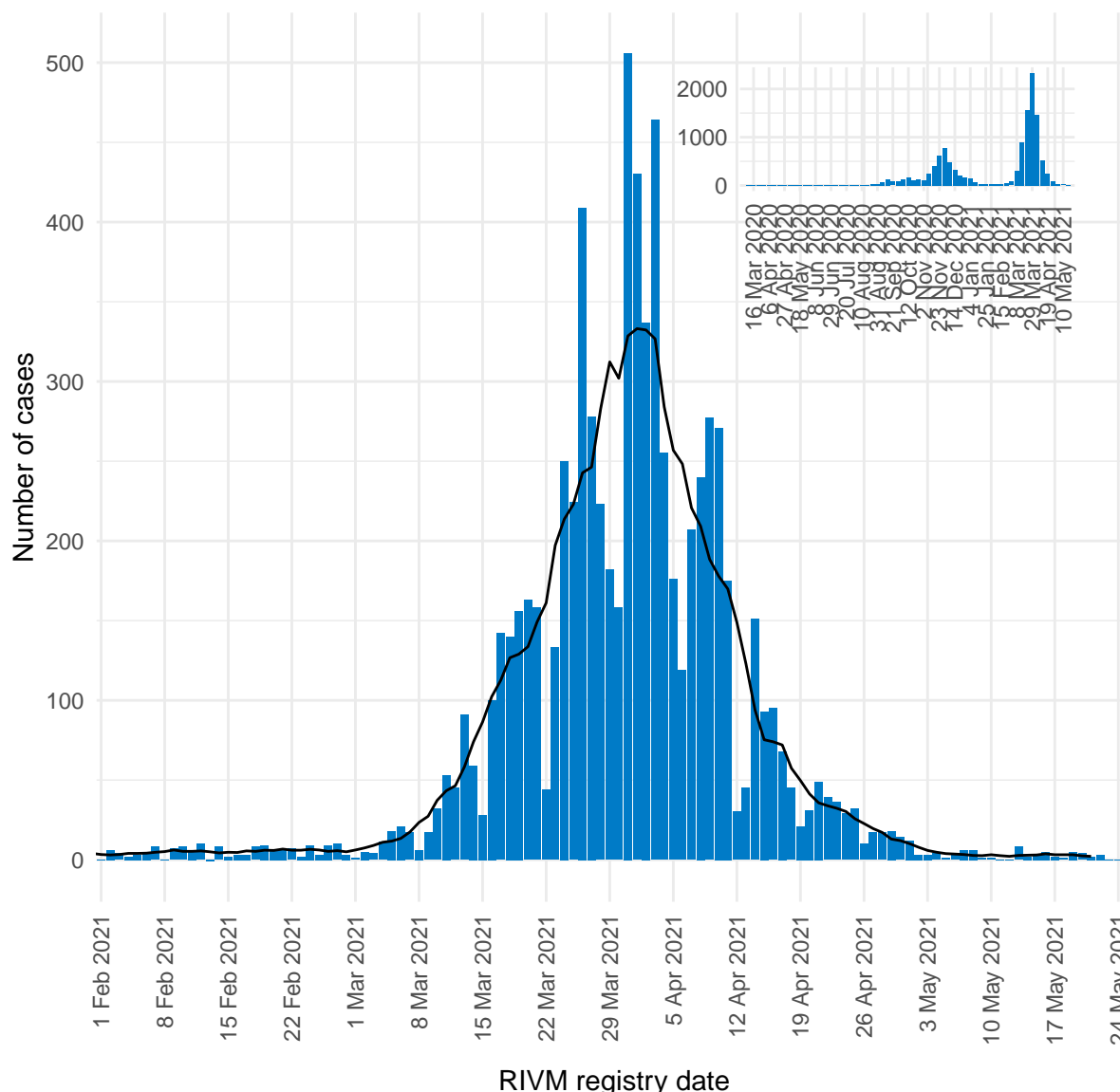


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

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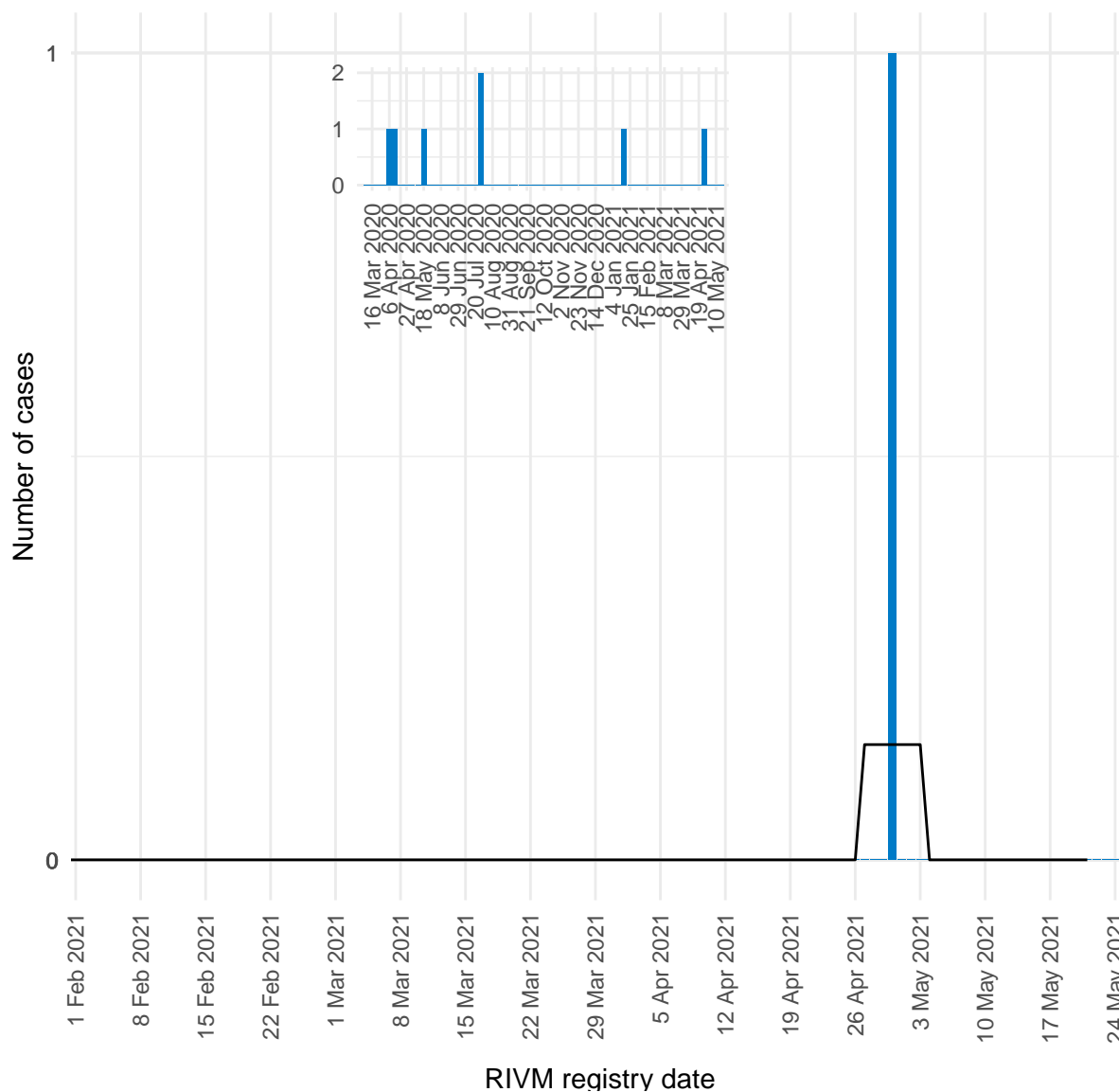


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

² 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.

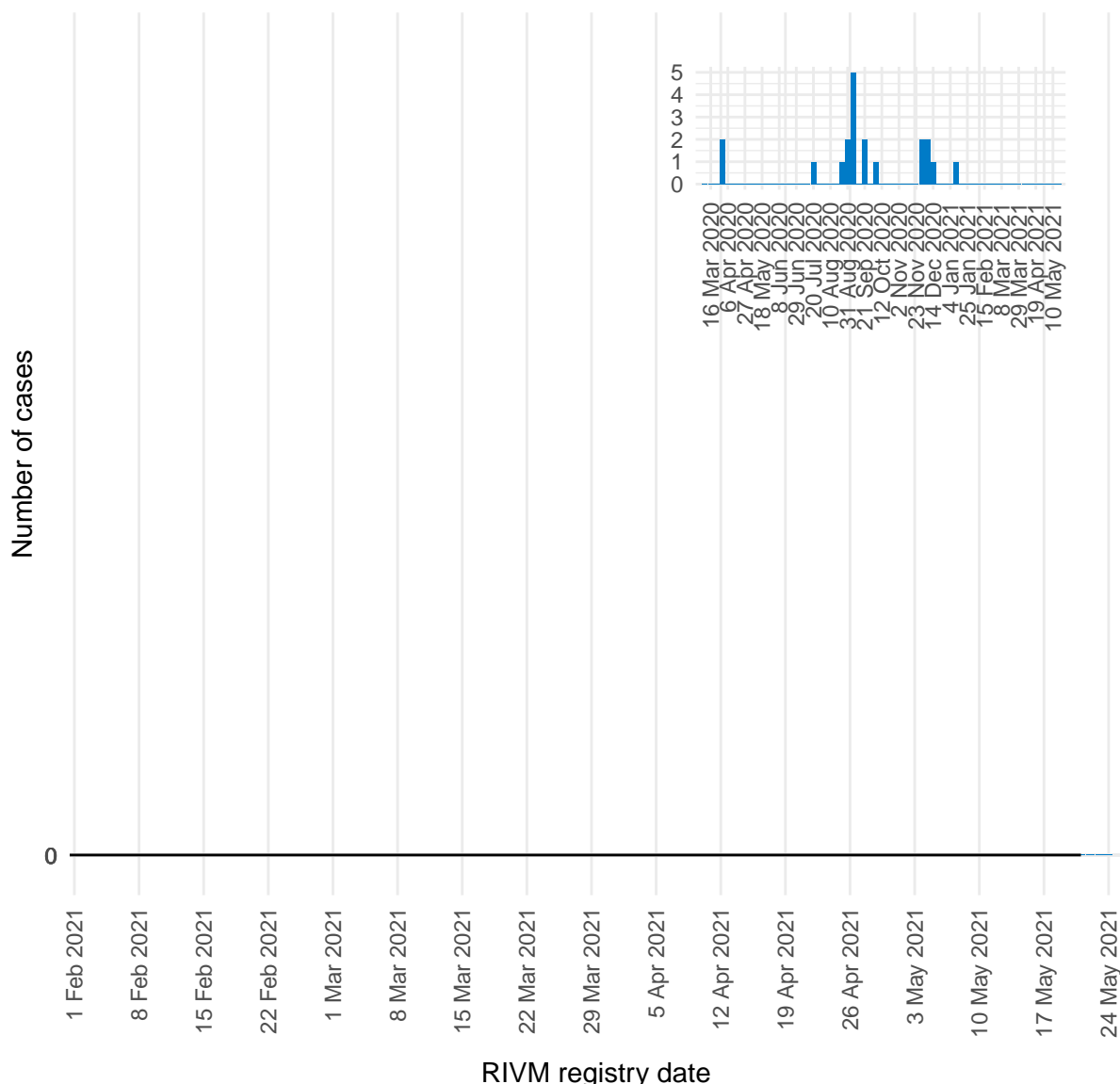


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

² 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.

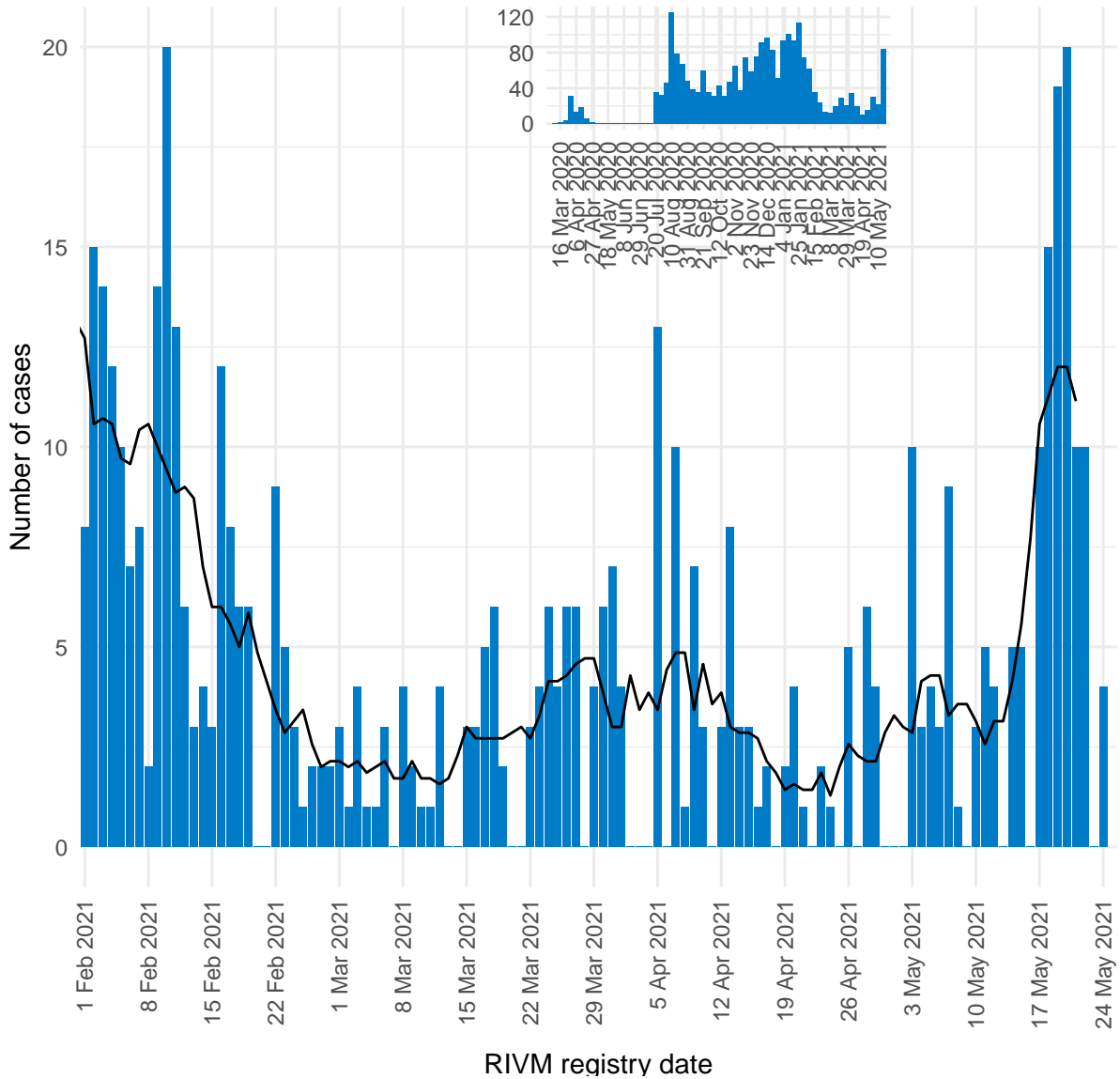


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

² 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

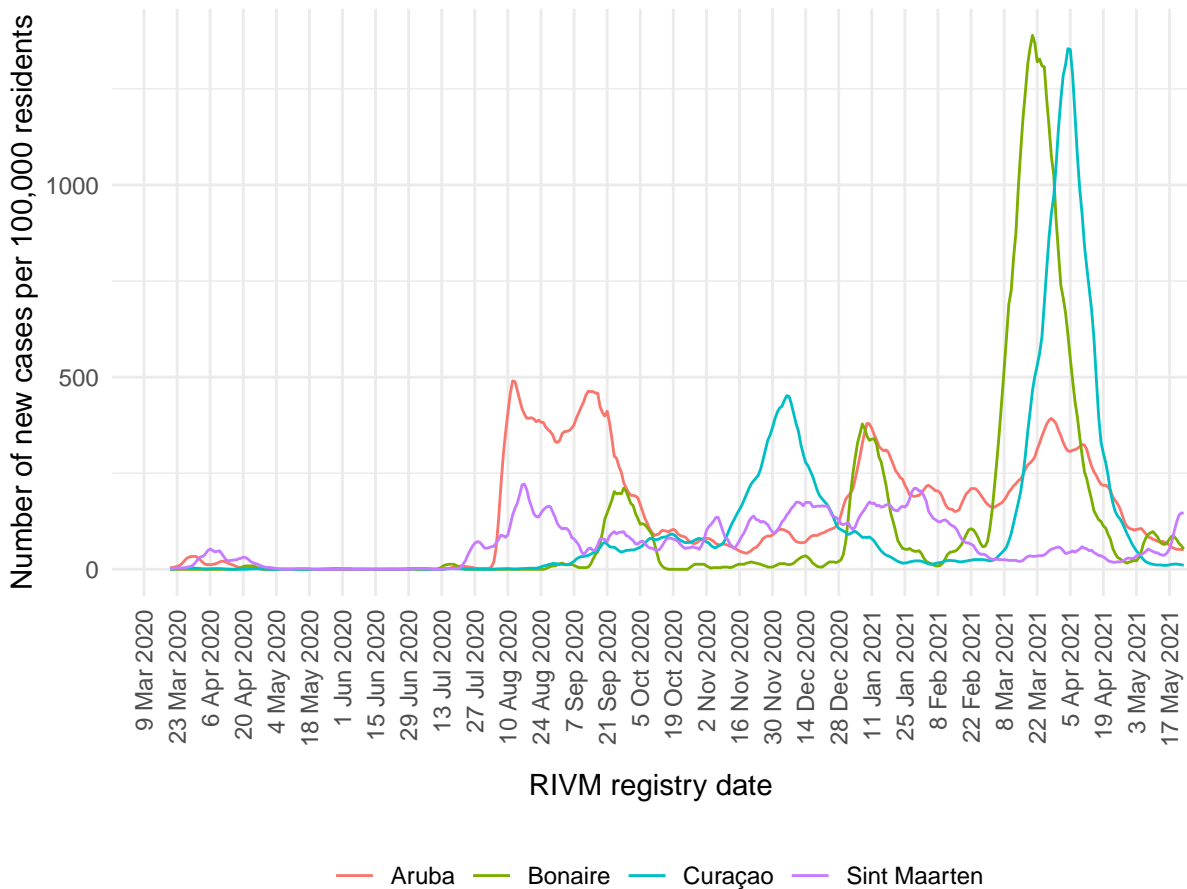


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire^{1,2}.

¹ 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.

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