



## **Epidemiological report of SARS-CoV-2 on the Dutch Caribbean CAS- and BES-islands:**

### **Week 31 (July 29th - August 4th, 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 number of SARS-CoV-2 infections and hospitalizations is steadily increasing on the islands; partly due to high circulation of the Delta variant. In recent weeks, we have seen this variant of the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 increase in genomic surveillance. In the week of July 29 to August 4, 2021, 983 people on the Caribbean islands received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, the majority of which were in Curaçao and Aruba. This is probably related to the tourist season that is currently in full swing and has been leading to increased social interaction. The various islands have implemented restrictive measures, but they appear insufficient to prevent this worrying increase in cases.

In Aruba, 382 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, a sharp increase compared to the previous week (183/100,000 on July 28). Numbers rise as the Delta variant becomes the dominant strain (78% in week 28). The local hospital was caring for 19 COVID-19 patients on Wednesday August 4th, 5 of whom required ICU care. That's the highest number reported since May 26th. Where until mid-May more than half of the people admitted were over sixty years of age, this is now only the case in two of the five people. The largest increase is in the group aged 30 to 39 years old. Three recent COVID deaths involved unvaccinated locals and 1 recent COVID death involved a tourist. Up until now, the island has reported 23 SARS-CoV-2 infections among individuals more than 14 days after the first vaccination. Of these, 13% has been reported among individuals aged 65 and over. This is not unexpected in view of the relatively high vaccination coverage and the circulation of the Delta variant. Genomic sequencing of these samples shows the Alpha variant (48%) and B.1.526 Iota variant (30%) appear to be dominant in the reported breakthrough infections.

On Bonaire, 43 persons per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, a decline as compared to the previous week (65/100,000 on July 28). Between July 26 and August 1, 1,718 people were tested (1.0% positive), the week before that was 226 (6.2% positive). The high numbers of tests taken can partly be explained by the entry policy for the Netherlands, which is currently classified as a very high-risk country by the islands. The Delta variant gains prevalence on Bonaire, sequencing data showing it accounted for 94% of cases as of July 12th (week 28). Between March 2021 and now, the island has reported 11 SARS-CoV-2 infections acquired more than at least 14 days after the first vaccination, of which 1 was among a nursing home resident (sample from April 2021). Genomic sequencing of these samples shows the Alpha variant (54.5%) and B.1.621 variant (36.3%), common in Colombia, appear to be dominant in the reported breakthrough infections.

In Curaçao, 236 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, a decrease compared to a week earlier (295/100,000 on July 28). From the second week of July there was a striking increase in positive corona tests and clusters in young adults, the majority of whom have not been (fully) vaccinated. According to the latest data, the Delta variant currently has a share of approximately 93% in genomic surveillance (week 29). In addition, the B.1.621 variant (7%), common in Colombia, is also circulating on the island. The number of hospital admissions has been rising since the beginning of July. Also, 3 COVID-related deaths were reported last week. In addition to people over 60, people between the ages of 40 and 49 are mainly included, a shift from previous outbreaks to the younger age groups. Of the 22 people admitted with or because of COVID-19 between July 22 and August 1, only 1 person was fully vaccinated. Up until now, the island reported 79 SARS-CoV-2 infections acquired at least 14 days after the first vaccination reported by the island. Of these, 43% breakthrough infections have been reported among individuals aged 65 and over.

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Eight of these samples were submitted for genomic sequencing up until now, from which the Alpha variant appears to be the dominant variant in reported breakthrough infections (62.5%).

In Dutch Sint Maarten, 169 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, an increase compared to a week earlier (77/100,000 on July 28). There are currently 13 COVID-related hospital admissions, last week there were only 2. This increase is partly explained by a small outbreak in the hospital itself, a majority of the patients are experiencing relatively mild symptoms. Surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants shows high circulation of the Alpha (55%) and Delta variants (36%) on the island in week 27. About 35% of the adult population in Dutch St Maarten is fully vaccinated. The incidence on the French side of the island is relatively high (175/100,000 inhabitants in week 29) and they reported a slight increase in the number of new hospital admissions.

On August 3rd, a new SARS-CoV-2 infection was reported on Saba. It concerns a mildly symptomatic person who has tested positive at the end of the quarantine period, with a travel history from the Netherlands. The person was fully vaccinated with the Janssen vaccine more than two weeks earlier. Since 28 January 2021, no new persons with a positive SARS-CoV-2 result have been reported on St. Eustatius.

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## 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 4 August 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>	19-07-2021 - 25-07-2021	274	82	29.9
	26-07-2021 - 01-08-2021	11155	440	3.9
Bonaire	19-07-2021 - 25-07-2021	226	14	6.2
	26-07-2021 - 01-08-2021	1718	17	1
Curaçao <sup>2</sup>	19-07-2021 - 25-07-2021	13454	477	3.5
	26-07-2021 - 01-08-2021	11362	417	3.7
Saba <sup>3</sup>	19-07-2021 - 25-07-2021	-	0	-
	26-07-2021 - 01-08-2021	-	0	-
Sint Eustatius	19-07-2021 - 25-07-2021	0	0	-
	26-07-2021 - 01-08-2021	0	0	-
Sint Maarten <sup>4</sup>	19-07-2021 - 25-07-2021	-	-	-
	26-07-2021 - 01-08-2021	-	-	-

<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/desaruba>.

<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 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 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	Number of cases	Deceased
Aruba	12000	605	111	479	2
Bonaire	1686	66	17	10	0
Curaçao	13835	555	130	388	4
Saba	8	1	0	1	0
Sint Eustatius	20	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	2848	178	34	105	0
Total	30397	1405	292	983	6

<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 persons hospitalized due to or with COVID-19 is reported in Table 3.

<sup>2</sup> These have been reported to the RIVM between July 29th and August 4th, 2021.

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

Island	Number of active cases	Number of persons with COVID-19 on general hospital ward	Number of persons with COVID-19 hospitalized in the ICU
Aruba	630	14	5
Bonaire	16	0	0
Curaçao	548	16	5
Saba	1	0	0
Sint Eustatius	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	132	13	0
Total	1327	43	10

<sup>1</sup> These have been reported to the RIVM between July 29th and August 4th, 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.

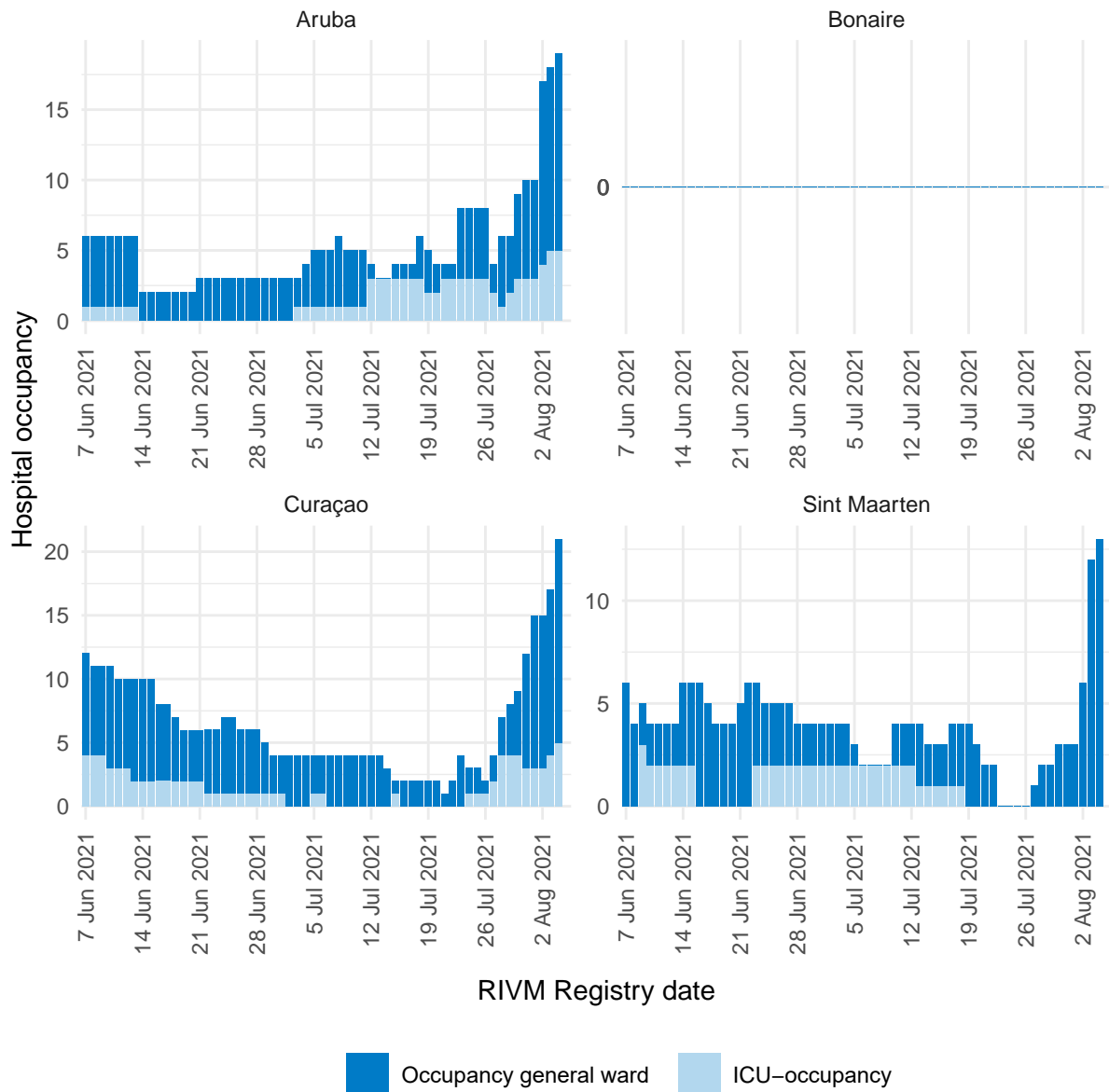


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

<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	332	565
Bonaire	35	99
Curaçao	208	485
Saba	52	52
Sint Eustatius	0	0
Sint Maarten	141	241

<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 29 July 2021 until 4 August 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 22 July 2021 until 4 August 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	125.282	180 km <sup>2</sup>	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Bonaire	Kralendijk	23.173	288 km <sup>2</sup>	Dutch municipality
Curaçao	Willemstad	164.223	444 km <sup>2</sup>	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Saba	The Bottom	1.918	13 km <sup>2</sup>	Dutch municipality
Sint Maarten	Philipsburg	62.323	34 km <sup>2</sup>	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Sint Eustatius	Oranjestad	3.142	21 km <sup>2</sup>	Dutch municipality

<sup>1</sup> These numbers refer to the 2021 population sizes. 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 to be between 8,000 and 20,000 migrants in 2021. On Bonaire the population size is estimated around 1,400 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

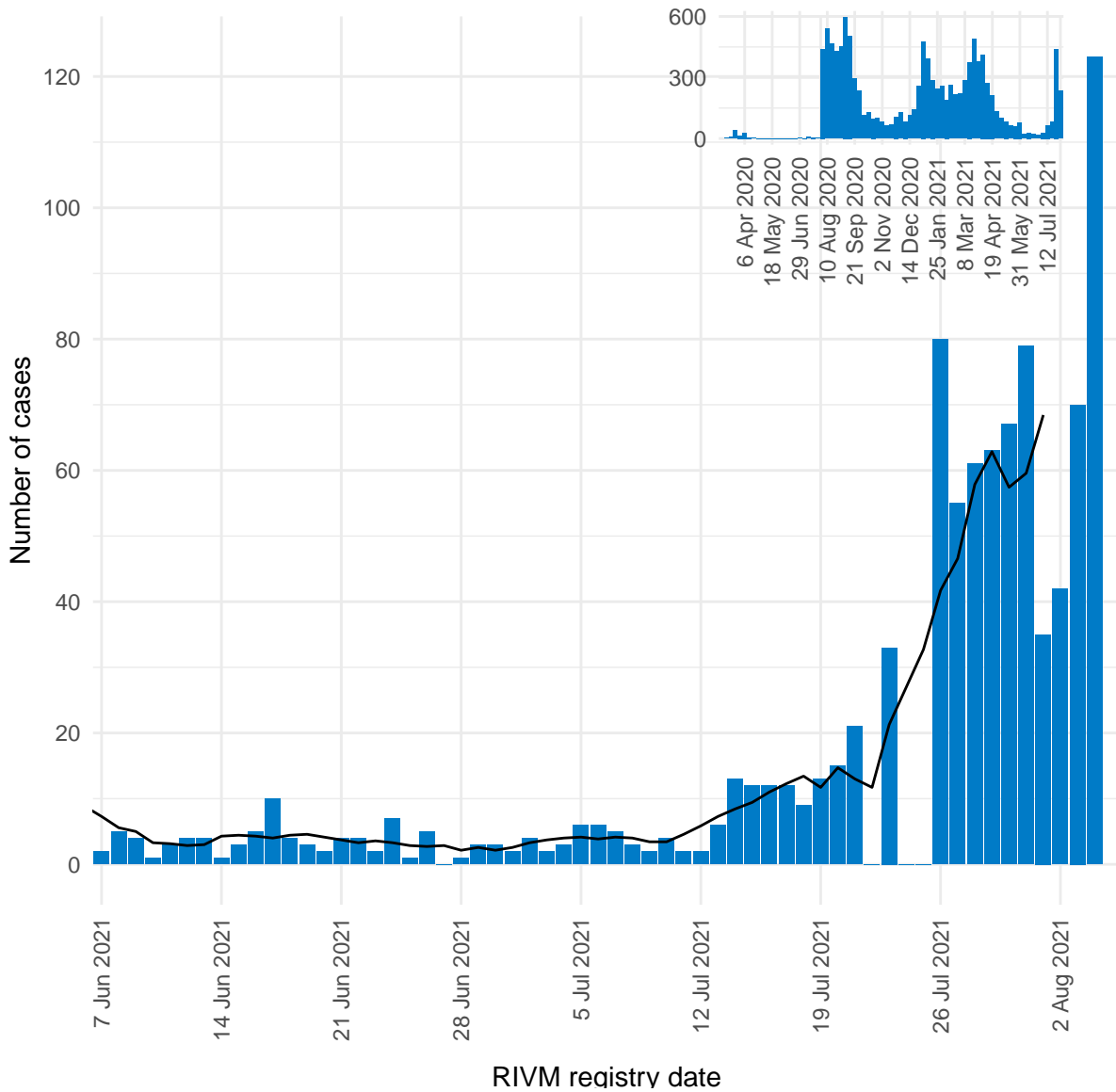


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

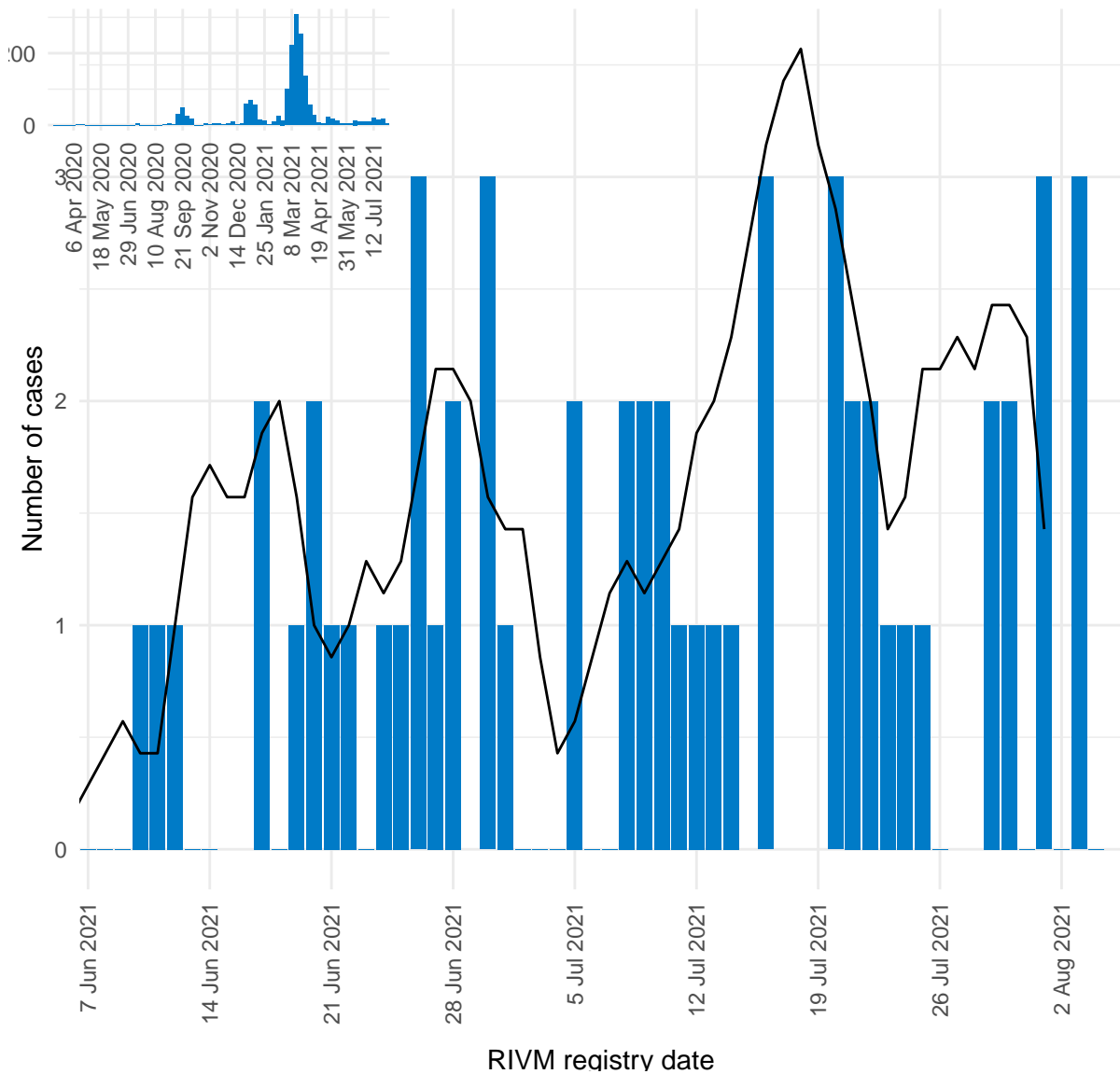


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

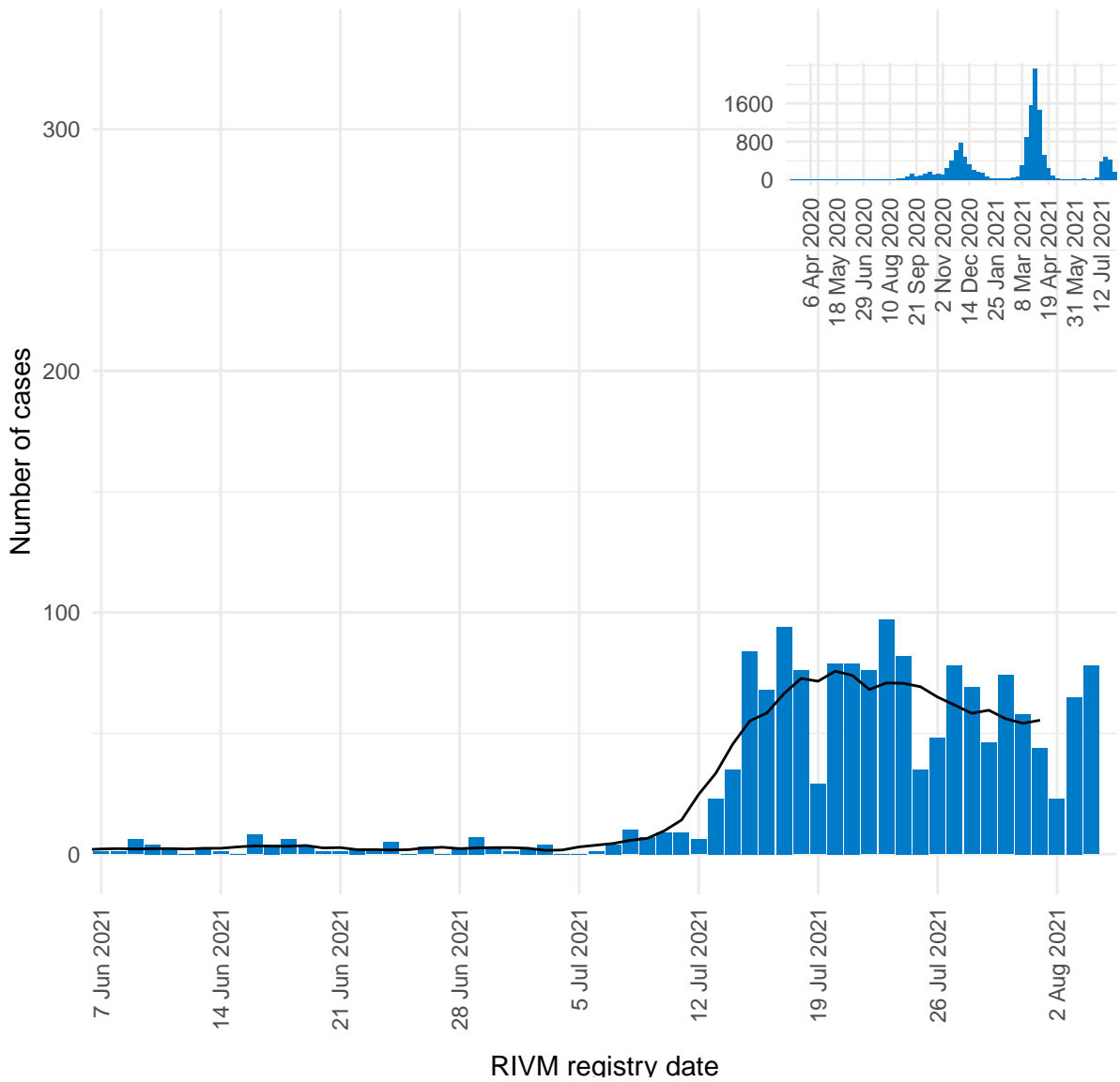


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

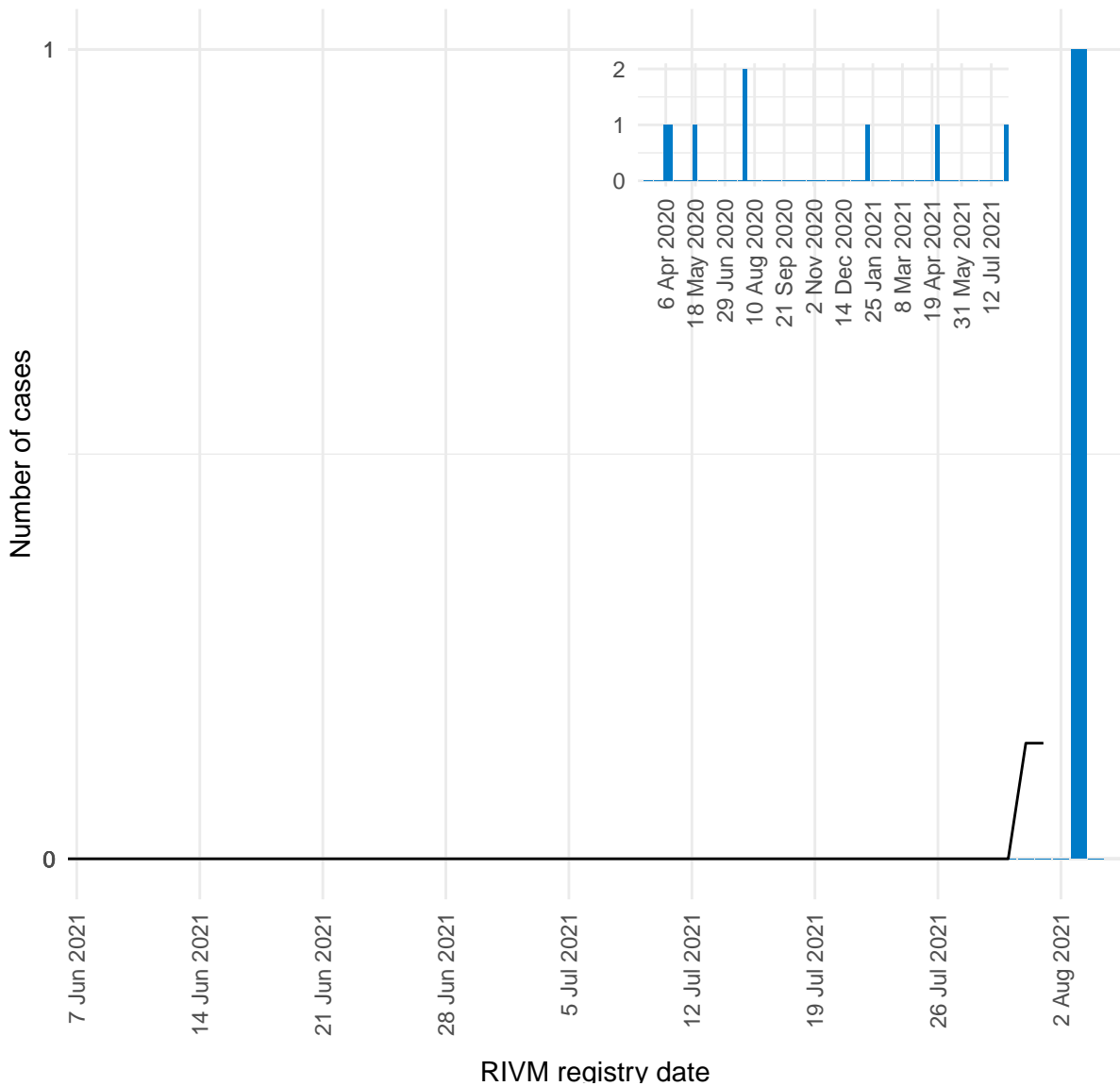


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

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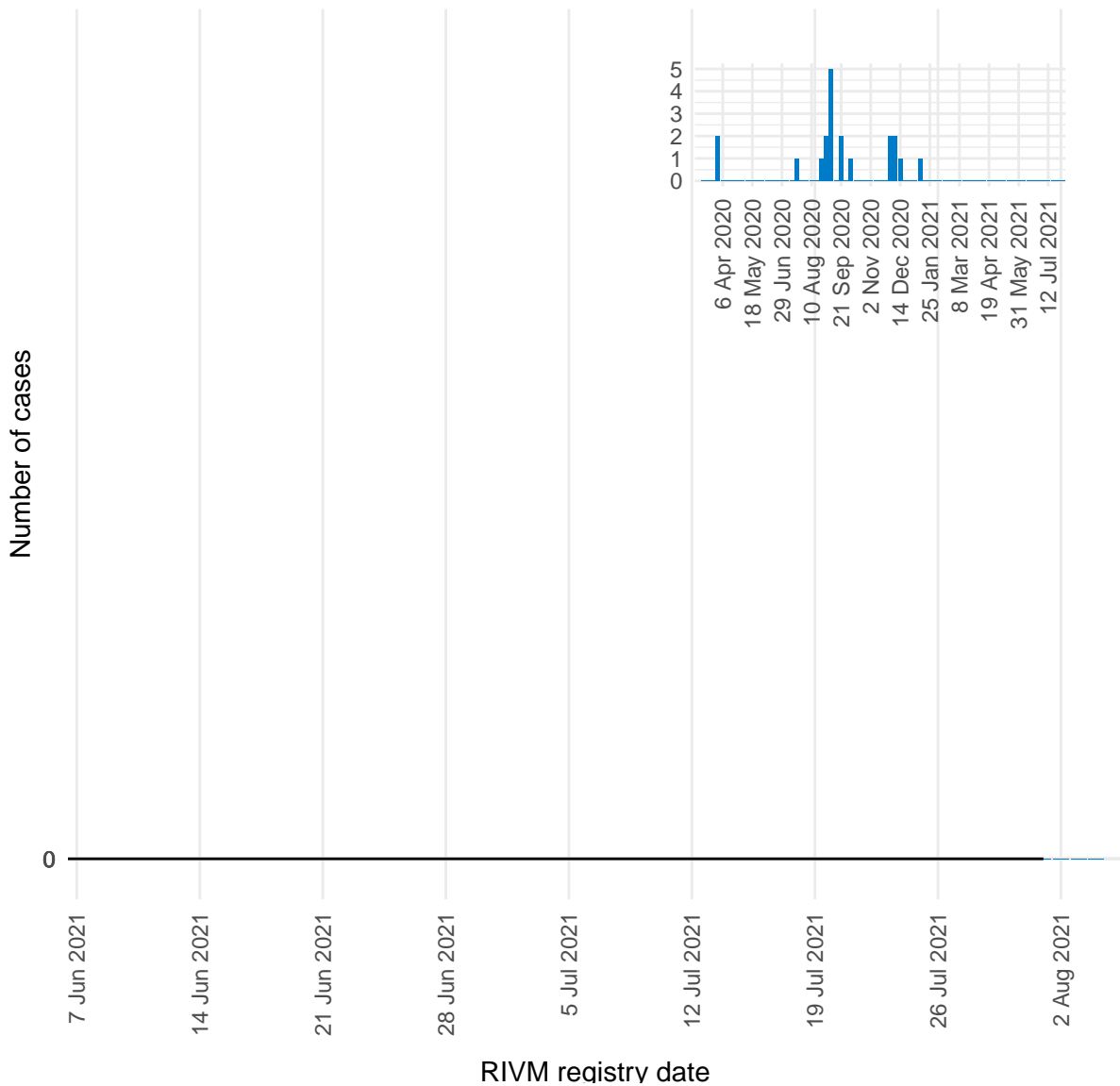


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

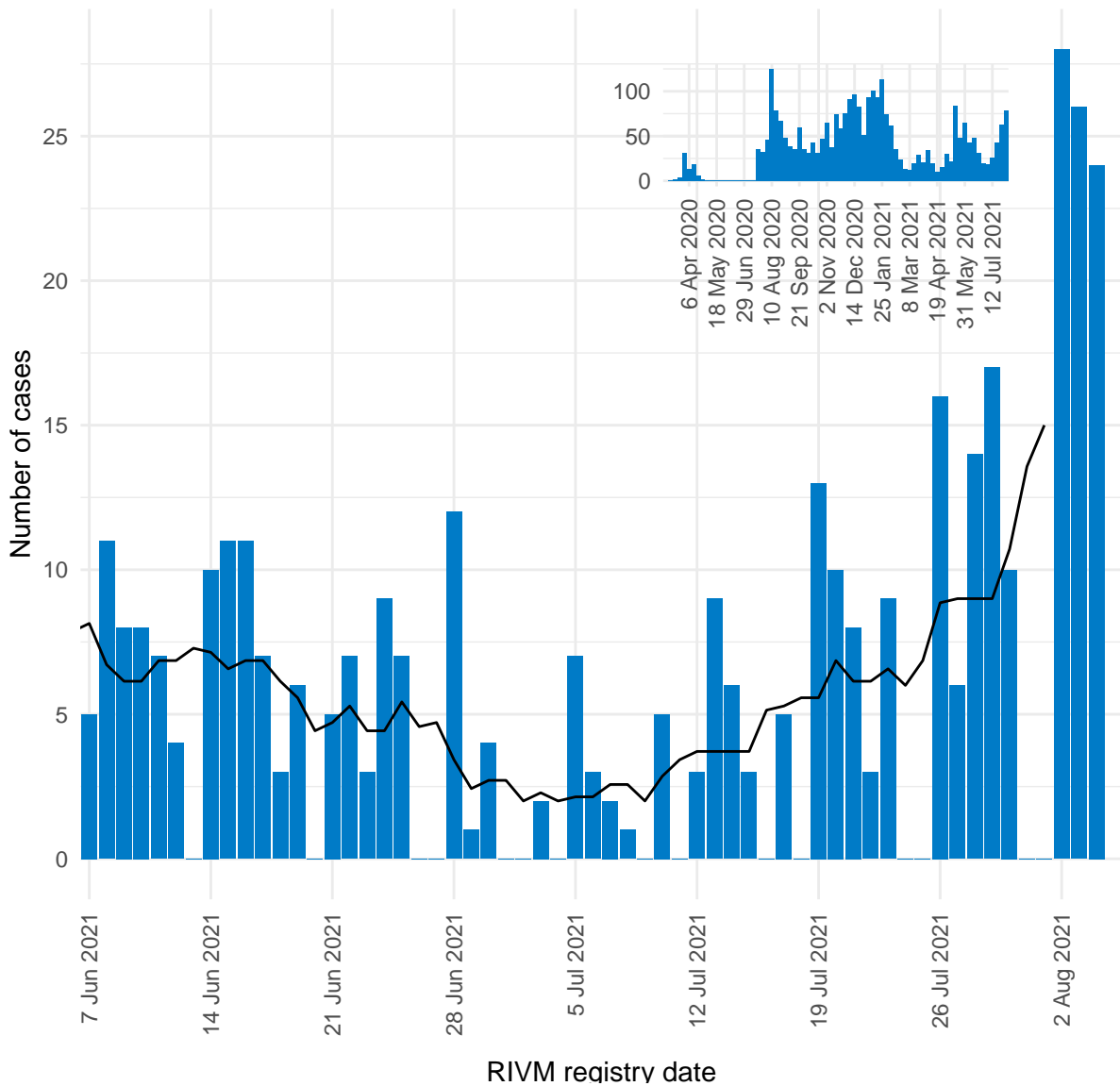


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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

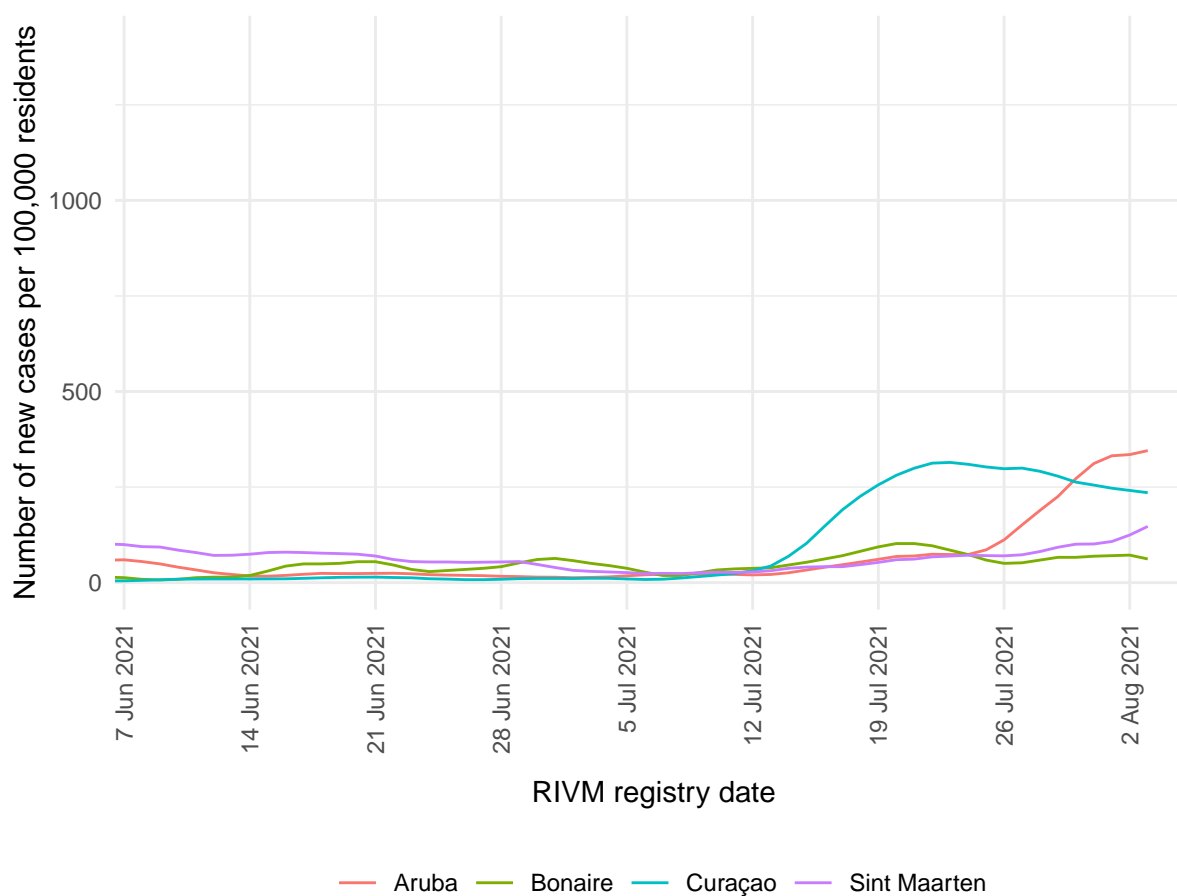


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

## 4 Number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered on the CAS-BES islands

Table 6: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered until 2 August 2021<sup>1</sup>.

	Aruba	Bonaire	Curaçao	Saba	Sint Eu- statius	Sint Maarten <sup>2</sup>
Number of persons who have received their first dosis (aged 12+ years)	71984	15735	92683	1466	1352	24638
Number of persons who have received their first and second dosis (aged 12+ years)	65556	13343	82446	1439	1262	21673
Number of fully vaccinated persons (aged 12+ years) <sup>3</sup>	66125	13343	83494	1439	1262	21673
Number of high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) who have received their first dosis <sup>4,5</sup>	3897	-	9015	-	-	4445
Number of fully vaccinated high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) <sup>5</sup>	3707	-	8229	-	-	2796

<sup>1</sup> The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to VWS on a weekly basis. These data may lag behind from the vaccination coverage data presented by the island officials.

<sup>2</sup> These data refer to the numbers of vaccinated persons on the Dutch side of St Maarten. Vaccination coverage on the French side of St Martin is reported by Santé Publique France on a weekly basis.

<sup>3</sup> The number of fully vaccinated persons is defined as the number of completed vaccinations. This also includes persons who only require one dose of vaccine to be considered as fully vaccinated, due to having a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Both Aruba and Curaçao are reporting these data separately from the number of persons who have received two doses of vaccine. Dutch St Maarten and the BES-islands are currently not reporting these data. The number of completed vaccinations on those islands may therefore be an underestimation.

<sup>4</sup> For the BES islands, no information was collected about high- and low-risk groups, because all residents within this age group could register for a vaccination at the same time.

<sup>5</sup> Vaccination data for persons aged 60+ cannot be displayed here because these data are not reported to RIVM.

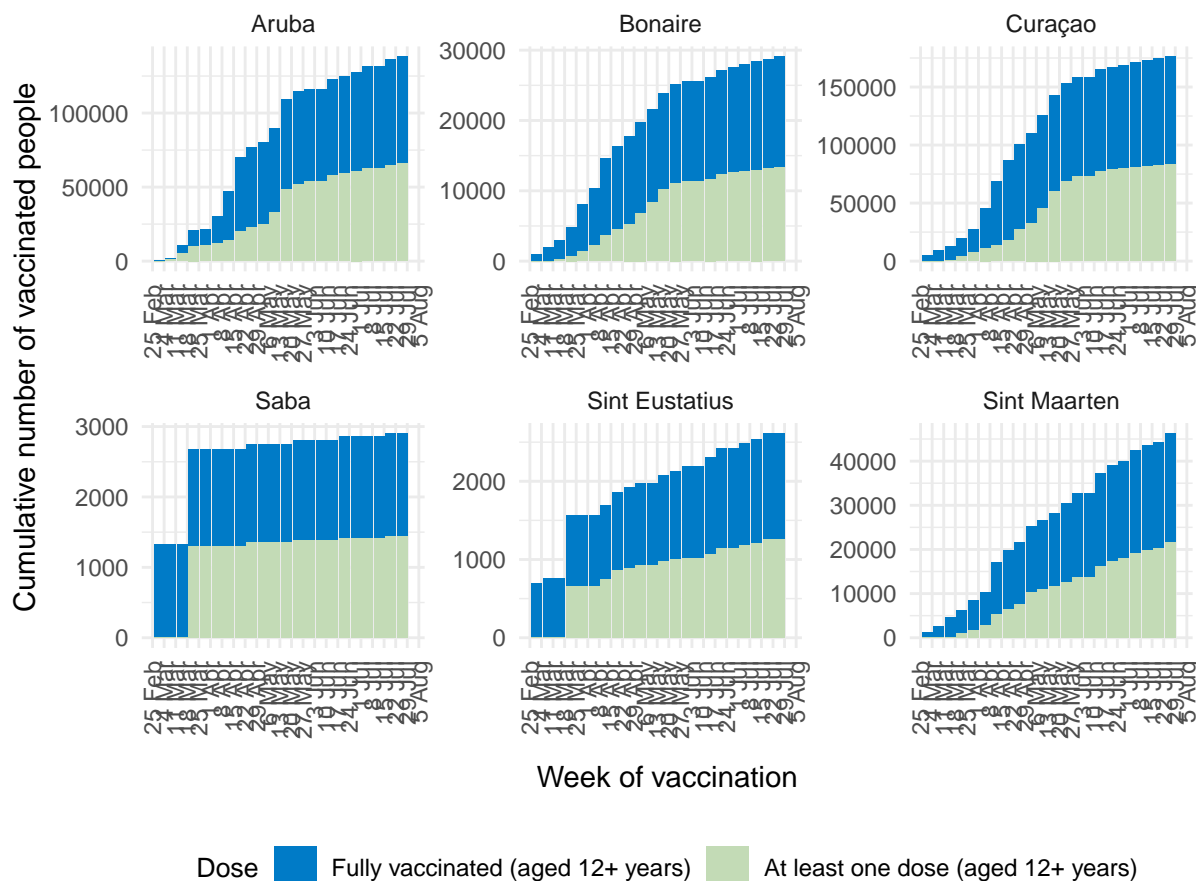


Figure 9: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered, cumulative by vaccination date, until 2 August 2021<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to VWS on a weekly basis. These data may lag behind from the vaccination coverage data presented by the island officials.

<sup>2</sup> These data refer to the numbers of vaccinated persons on the Dutch side of St Maarten. Vaccination coverage on the French side of St Martin is reported by Santé Publique France on a weekly basis.

<sup>3</sup> The number of fully vaccinated persons is defined as the number of completed vaccinations. This also includes persons who only require one dose of vaccine to be considered as fully vaccinated, due to having a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Both Aruba and Curaçao are reporting these data separately from the number of persons who have received two doses of vaccine. Dutch St Maarten and the BES-islands are currently not reporting these data. The number of completed vaccinations on those islands may therefore be an underestimation.

## 5 Vaccination coverage on the CAS-BES islands

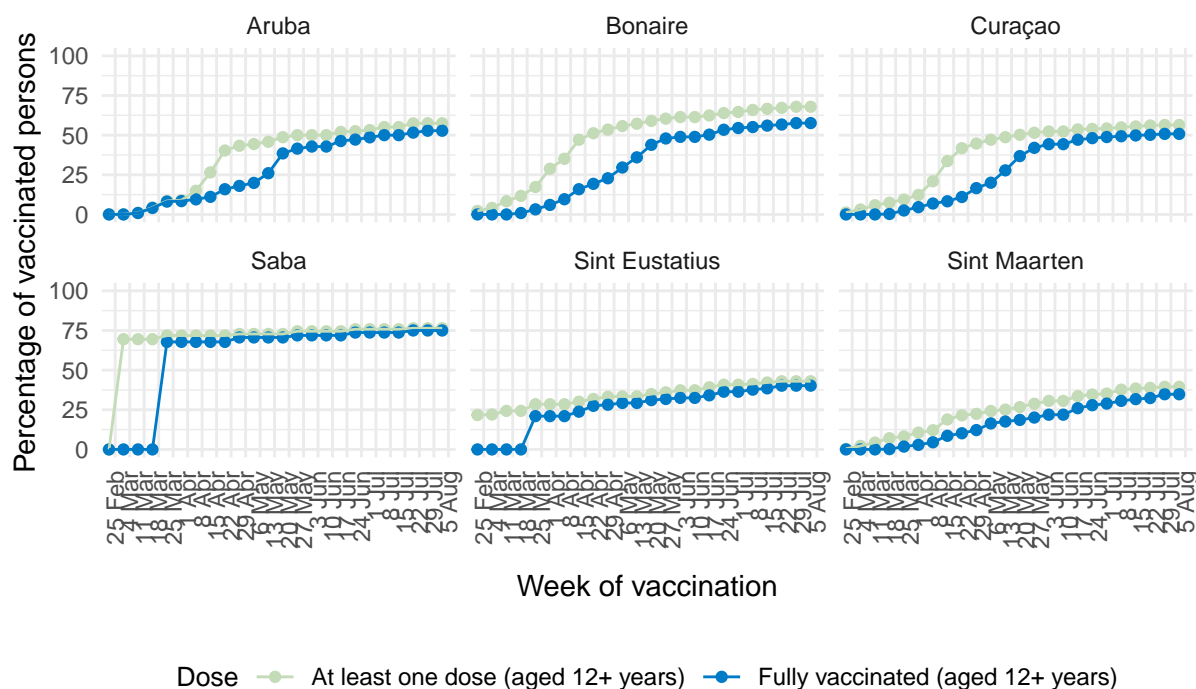


Figure 10: Percentage of residents aged 12 years or older who have received at least one vaccination dose and the percentage of residents aged 12 or older who have been fully vaccinated according to the current vaccination schedule of the vaccines used<sup>1-4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to VWS on a weekly basis. These data may lag behind from the vaccination coverage data presented by the island officials.

<sup>2</sup> These data refer to the numbers of vaccinated persons on the Dutch side of St Maarten. Vaccination coverage on the French side of St Martin is reported by Santé Publique France on a weekly basis.

<sup>3</sup> The vaccination coverage is defined as: Persons aged 12+ who have received at least one dose. A one-dose schedule is sufficient for persons who have indicated that they have demonstrably experienced COVID-19 in the past six months. They are included in the 'fully vaccinated' percentages presented in this figure. These numbers are reported separately per week 21 by Curaçao and week 22 by Aruba.

<sup>4</sup> The number of fully vaccinated persons is defined as the number of completed vaccinations. This also includes persons who only require one dose of vaccine to be considered as fully vaccinated, due to having a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Both Aruba and Curaçao are reporting these data separately from the number of persons who have received two doses of vaccine. Dutch St Maarten and the BES-islands are currently not reporting these data. The number of completed vaccinations on those islands may therefore be an underestimation.