



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

### **Week 36 (September 2nd - September 8th, 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**

In the week of September 2-8th, 2021, 771 people in the CAS and BES islands received a positive test result, a 14% decrease compared to the week before (August 26 to September 1, 2021). Aruba counted the most new infections, with 293 additional people that tested positive in the past week.

In Aruba, the number of new SARS-CoV-2 infections continues to fall. Last week, 234 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a sharp decrease compared to the week before (344/100,000 August 26th to September 1st). Despite this overall decline, there are ongoing reports of breakthrough infections among vaccinated groups. Hospital care remains under pressure, though the alarming numbers of admissions are driven by unvaccinated adults. 60 COVID patients are currently being treated in the hospital, of which 10 in the ICU in Aruba and 24 in the ICU in Colombia. Last week, 7 people on the island died with or due to COVID-19. As of July 1st, 42 people passed from or due to COVID-19 on the island. 35 of whom were unvaccinated. The Mu variant, recently declared a VOI by the WHO, has been on Aruba since at least early May. Through August 16th, the Mu variant has been detected in 87 of the sequenced samples, of which only 9 last month.

With the start of the school year, SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire have risen sharply. Last week, 393 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, compared to 56/100,000 a week earlier (August 26 to September 1). There is 1 COVID-related hospitalization. The share of positive tests has increased in the past week, from 5.5% to 13.6%. Bonaire reports 3 active clusters explaining the recent increase in SARS-CoV-2 infections; 2 clusters within education and the third one from a sports team who traveled to Santo Domingo. Children on Bonaire have been eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine for several weeks, and the island continues to encourage those within the education sector to get vaccinated. Currently, 44% of those aged 12-17 years old have received at least one dose of vaccine. Since the start of the pandemic, 192 SARS-CoV-2 infections have been detected in children under 18 years. There have been no hospitalizations or deaths reported thus far among children. The Mu variant, recently declared a VOI by the WHO, has been on Bonaire since at least early May. Through August 4th, the Mu variant has been detected in 9 (3.6%) of the sequenced samples. The current measures remain in effect until at least October 1st, 2021.

The number of new as well as active SARS-CoV-2 infections in Curaçao has decreased further. Last week, 129 people per 100,000 population received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, compared to 153/100,000 a week earlier (August 26 to September 1). Currently, 38 people are hospitalized, of which 15 are in the ICU. Of the 140 hospitalizations between July 22nd and September 6th, only 4 people were fully vaccinated and 3 were only partially vaccinated. The island also reported 6 COVID-related deaths last week. The Mu variant, recently declared a VOI by the WHO, has been on Curacao since at least end of April. Through August 4th, the Mu variant has been detected in 17 (3.4%) of the sequenced samples.

On Sint Maarten, the number of new infections seems to be slowly decreasing. Last week, 280 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, compared to 315/100,000 a week earlier (August 26 to September 1). COVID-related hospital occupancy remains high. There are currently 12 COVID-related hospital admissions, of which 7 are in the ICU and 1 in the pregnancy/gynecology department. Only 2 of the admitted COVID patients have been fully vaccinated and 1 of the 7 ICU admissions has been intubated. In addition, 1 COVID patient receives care in Colombia and 1 in the US. Four people have died from or with COVID-19 in the past week. Surveillance on circulation of variants on Sint Maarten has detected the first case of the C.37 (Lambda) variant on the island (0.5% of the analyzed samples in week 33). On the French side of the island,

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incidence and positivity rates are declining, although the incidence remains alarming (week 34). The number of new hospital admissions on the French side of the island is decreasing.

No new SARS-CoV-2 infections were reported on Saba and Sint Eustatius last week. Both islands count 1 active case.

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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 8 September 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.

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

The COVID-19 vaccination campaign on the CAS-BES islands started in February 2021. Each island has their own vaccination campaign. The actual implementation of these vaccination campaigns depends on, among other things, the approval, operation, delivery and distribution of the vaccines, and on people's willingness to vaccinate. In this document we report the estimated total number of vaccinated persons and the vaccination coverage on the CAS-BES islands. The current report is based on data on vaccinations administered up to and including 8 September 2021 using monitoring data received from the Dutch Ministry of Health (VWS).

## **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	5
2 SARS-CoV-2 progression over time	9
3 SARS-CoV-2 three week average incidence rate, progression over time	15
4 Number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered on the CAS-BES islands	16
5 Vaccination coverage on the CAS-BES islands	17

# 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>	23-08-2021 - 29-08-2021	5312	462	8.7
	30-08-2021 - 05-09-2021	4465	377	8.4
Bonaire	23-08-2021 - 29-08-2021	236	13	5.5
	30-08-2021 - 05-09-2021	360	49	13.6
Curaçao <sup>2</sup>	23-08-2021 - 29-08-2021	12485	274	2.2
	30-08-2021 - 05-09-2021	11983	222	1.9
Saba <sup>3</sup>	23-08-2021 - 29-08-2021	-	0	-
	30-08-2021 - 05-09-2021	-	1	-
Sint Eustatius	23-08-2021 - 29-08-2021	111	0	0
	30-08-2021 - 05-09-2021	123	0	0
Sint Maarten <sup>4</sup>	23-08-2021 - 29-08-2021	-	-	-
	30-08-2021 - 05-09-2021	-	-	-

<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	14955	848	153	293	7
Bonaire	1850	66	17	91	0
Curaçao	15550	687	151	212	6
Saba	11	1	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	24	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	3921	178	57	175	4
Total	36311	1780	378	771	17

<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 September 2nd and September 8th, 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 COVID-19 patients on general ward	Number of COVID-19 patients in the ICU	Oversees occupancy in Colombia	Oversees occupancy in the USA	Number of COVID-19 patients on OBGYN ward
Aruba	477	26	10	24	0	0
Bonaire	92	1	0	0	0	0
Curaçao	332	23	15	0	0	0
Saba	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	241	4	7	1	1	1
Total	1144	54	32	25	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Number of active SARS-CoV-2 infections is defined as the number of persons with a SARS-CoV-2 infection of which the recovery has not been registered by the local public health department at the time of registration by the RIVM. These numbers can also be delayed if the contact tracing capacity at the public health department is limited.

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	188	508
Bonaire	362	436
Curaçao	104	253
Saba	0	52
Sint Eustatius	0	0
Sint Maarten	234	547

<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 2 september 2021 until 8 september 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 26 augustus 2021 until 8 september 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.

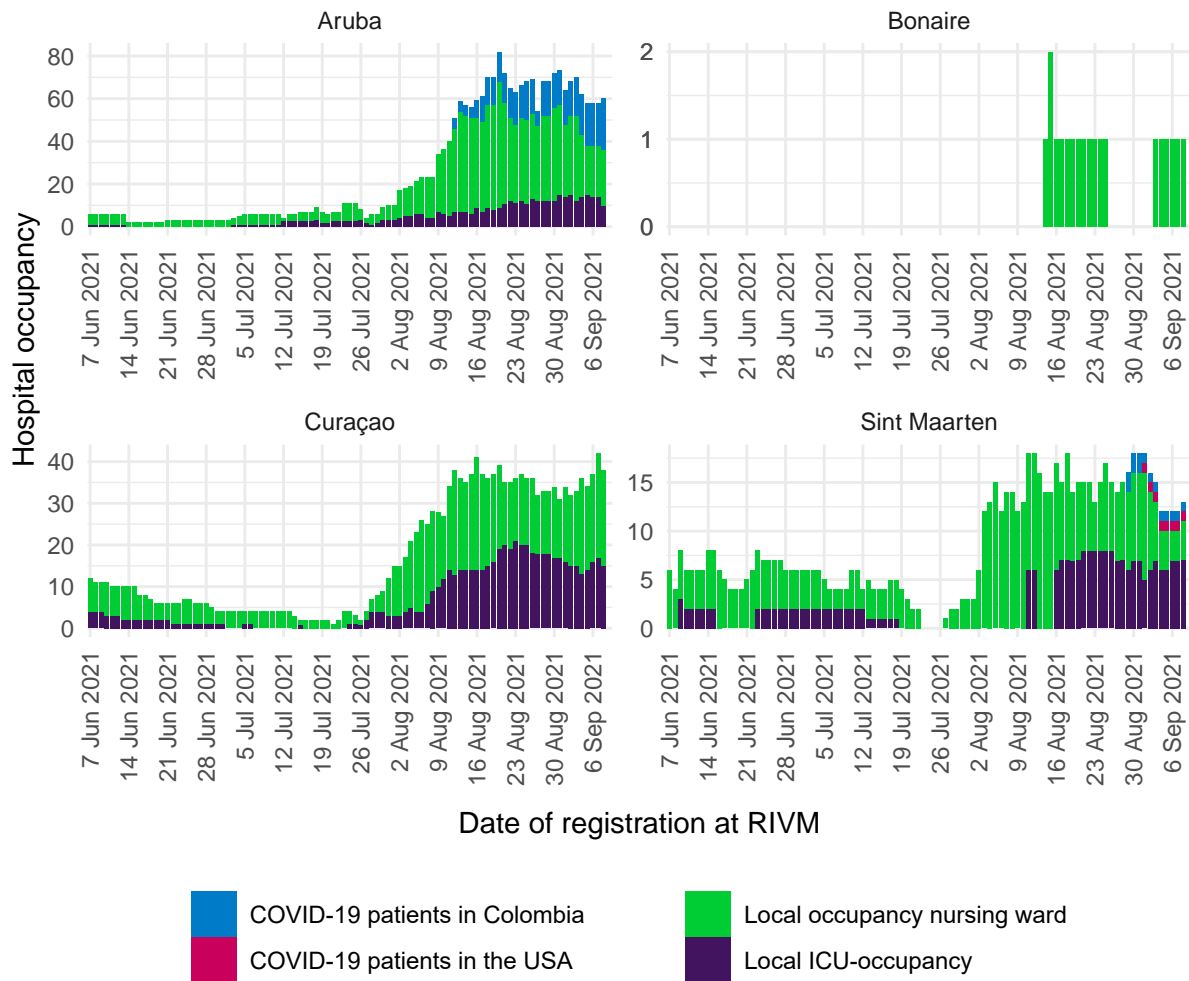


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

<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 purple data represent the ICU-occupation over time, per island. The green 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.

## 2 SARS-CoV-2 progression over time

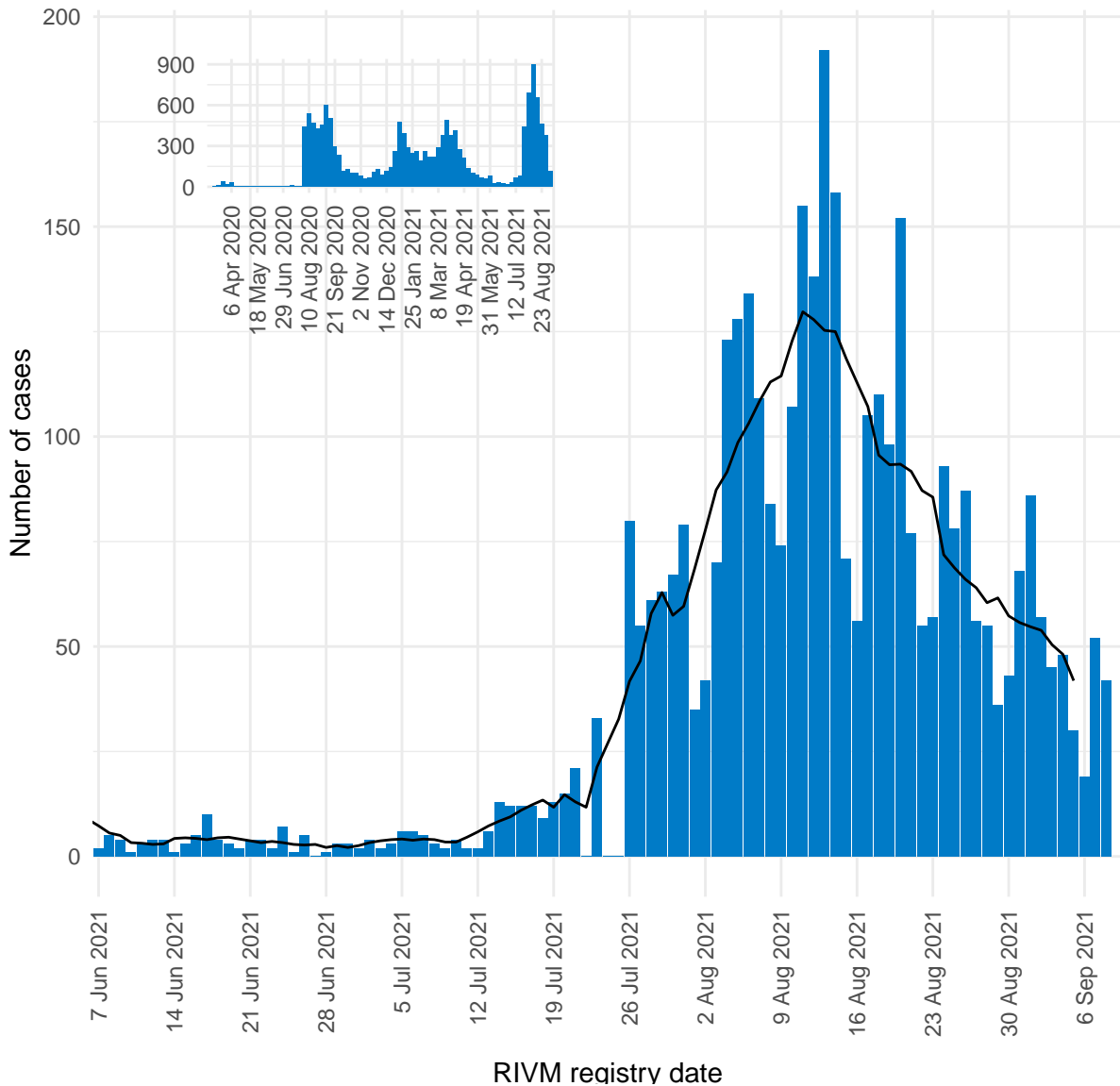


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

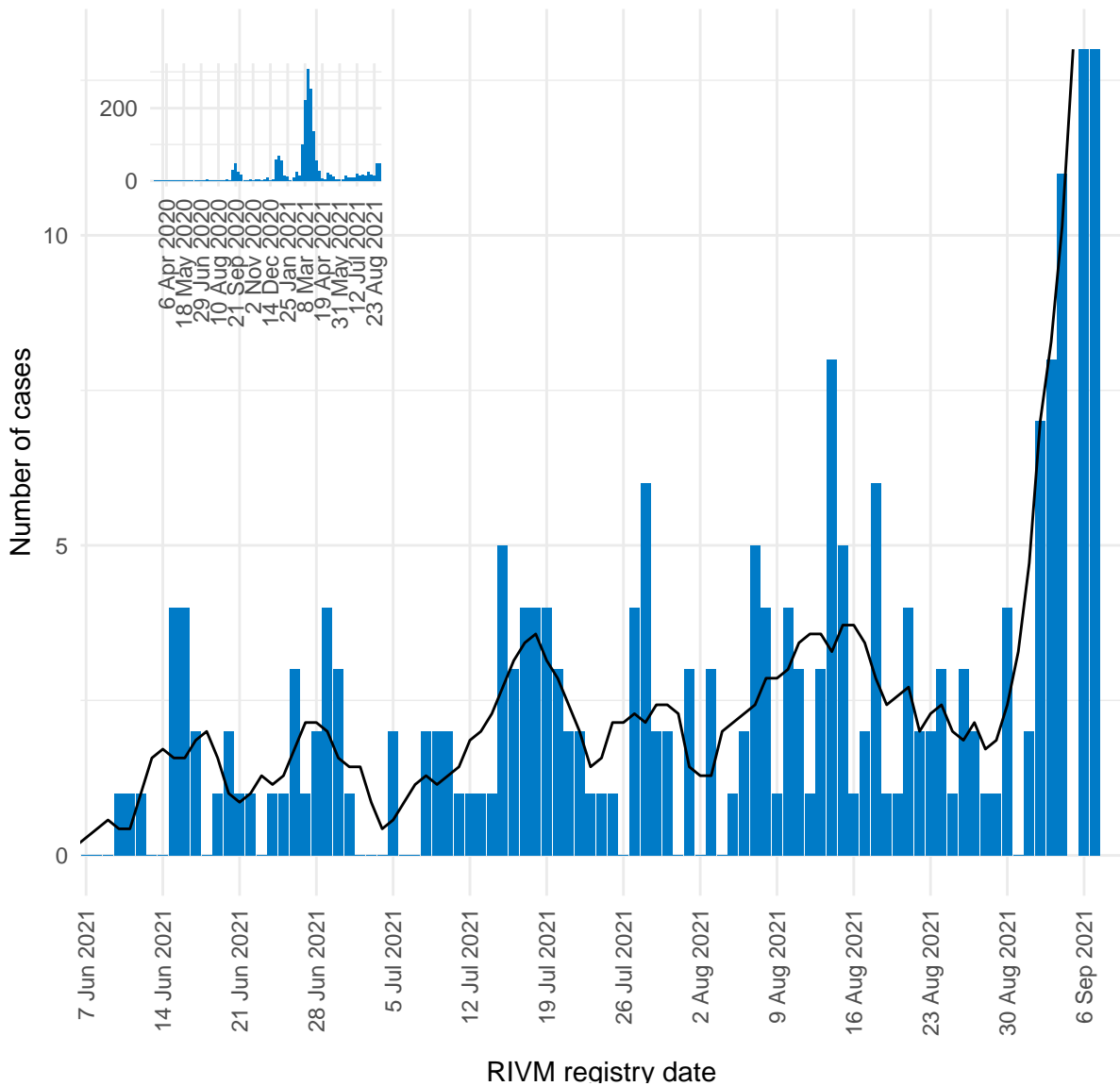


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

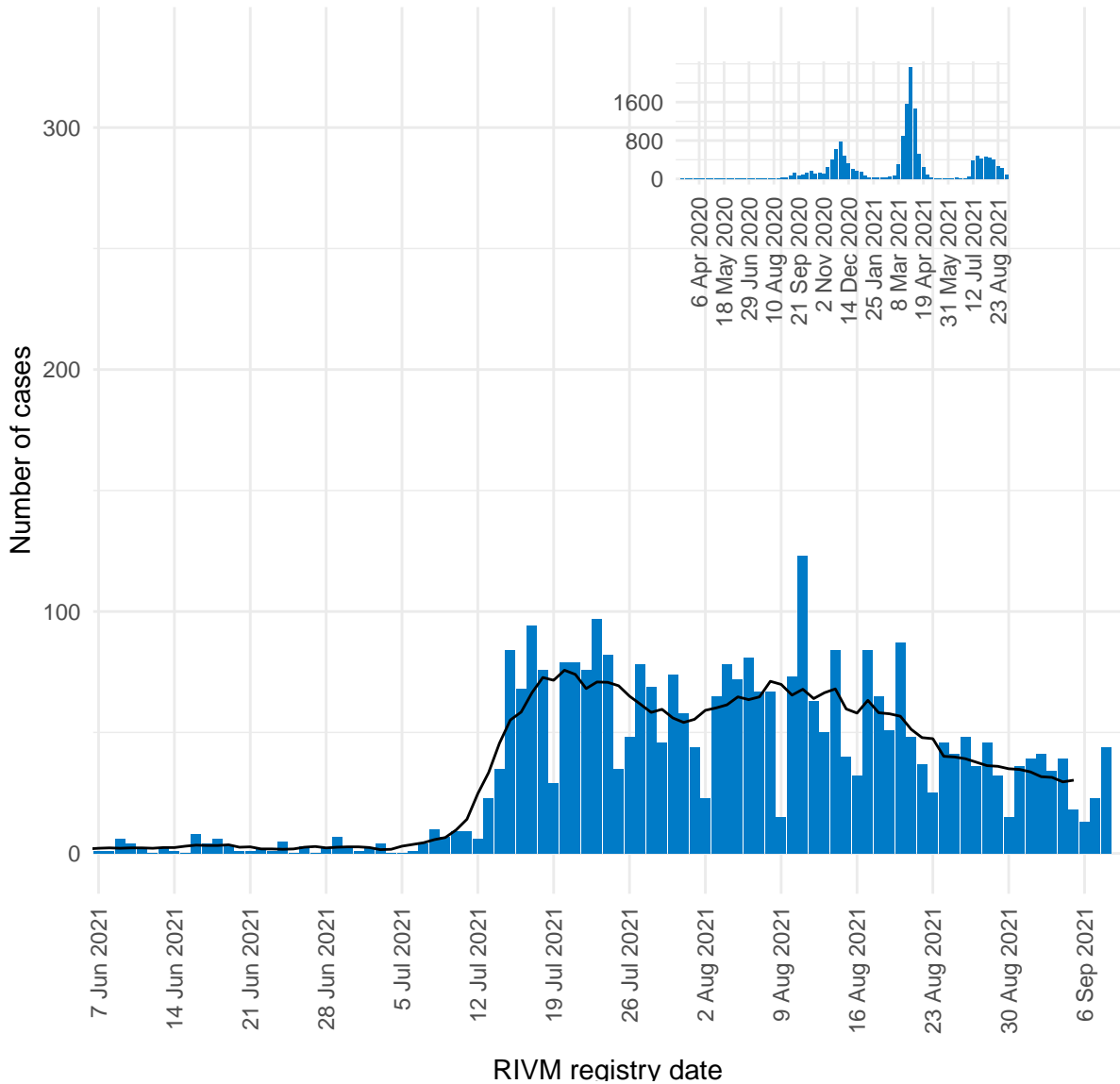


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

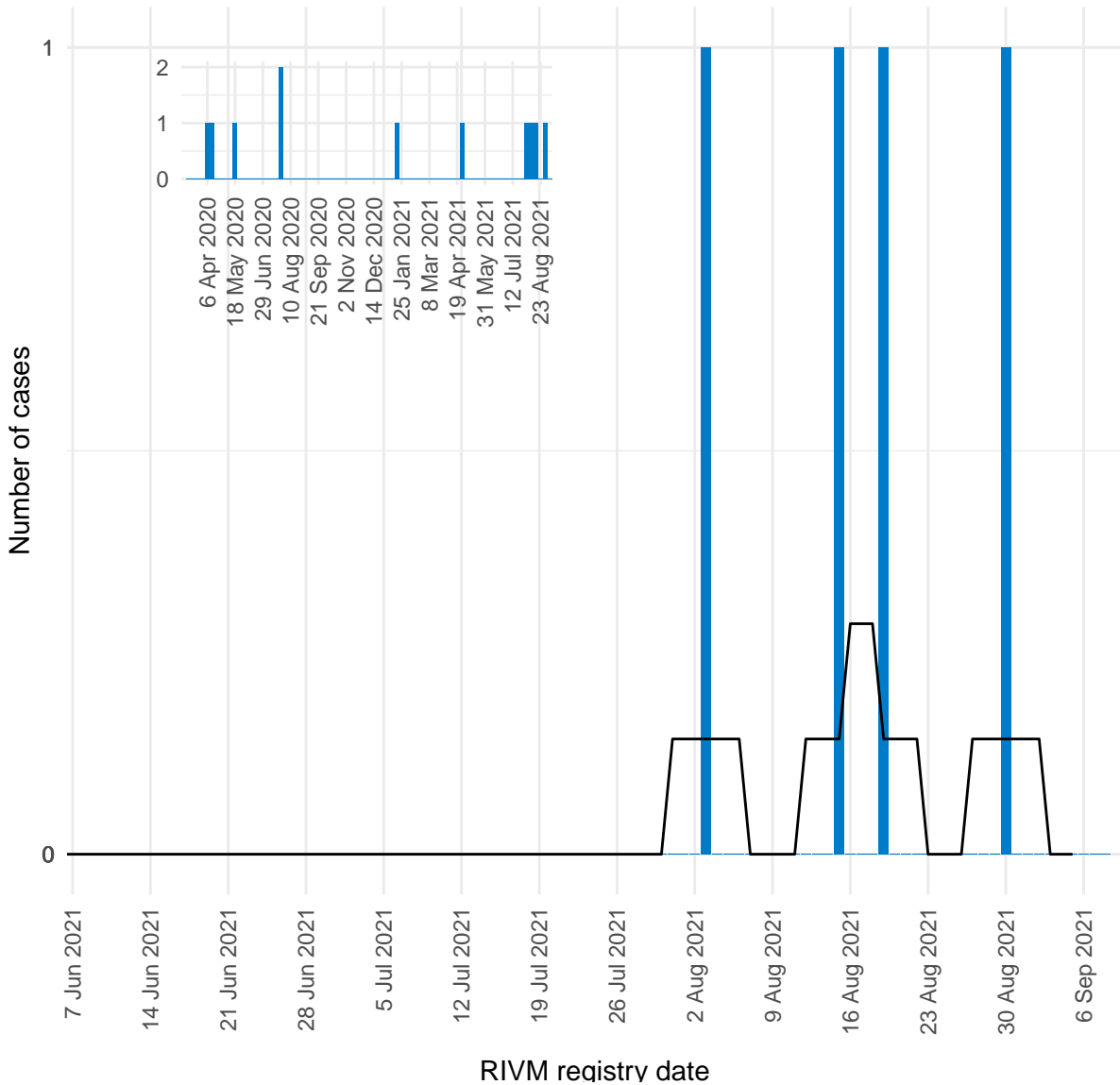


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

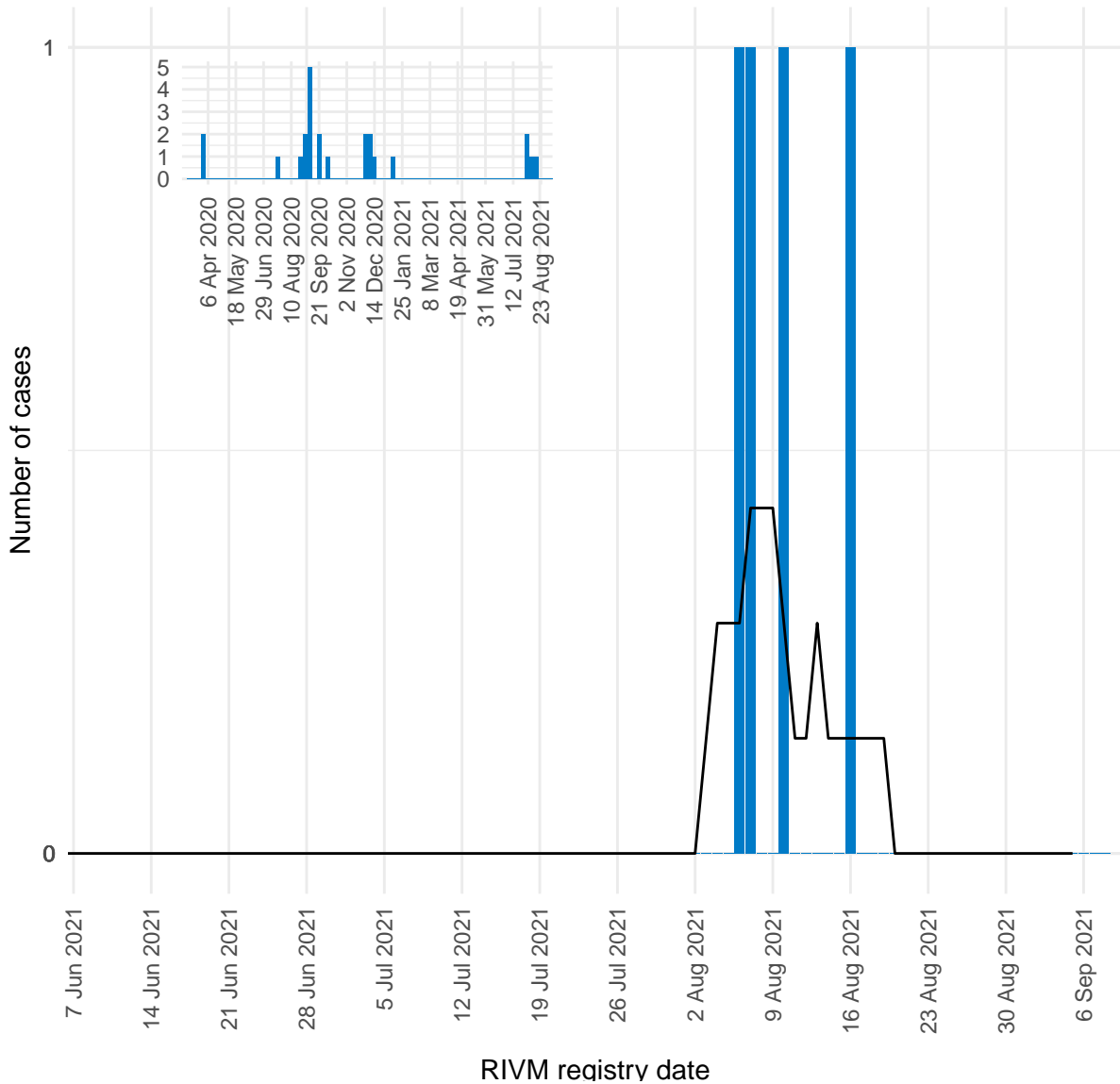


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

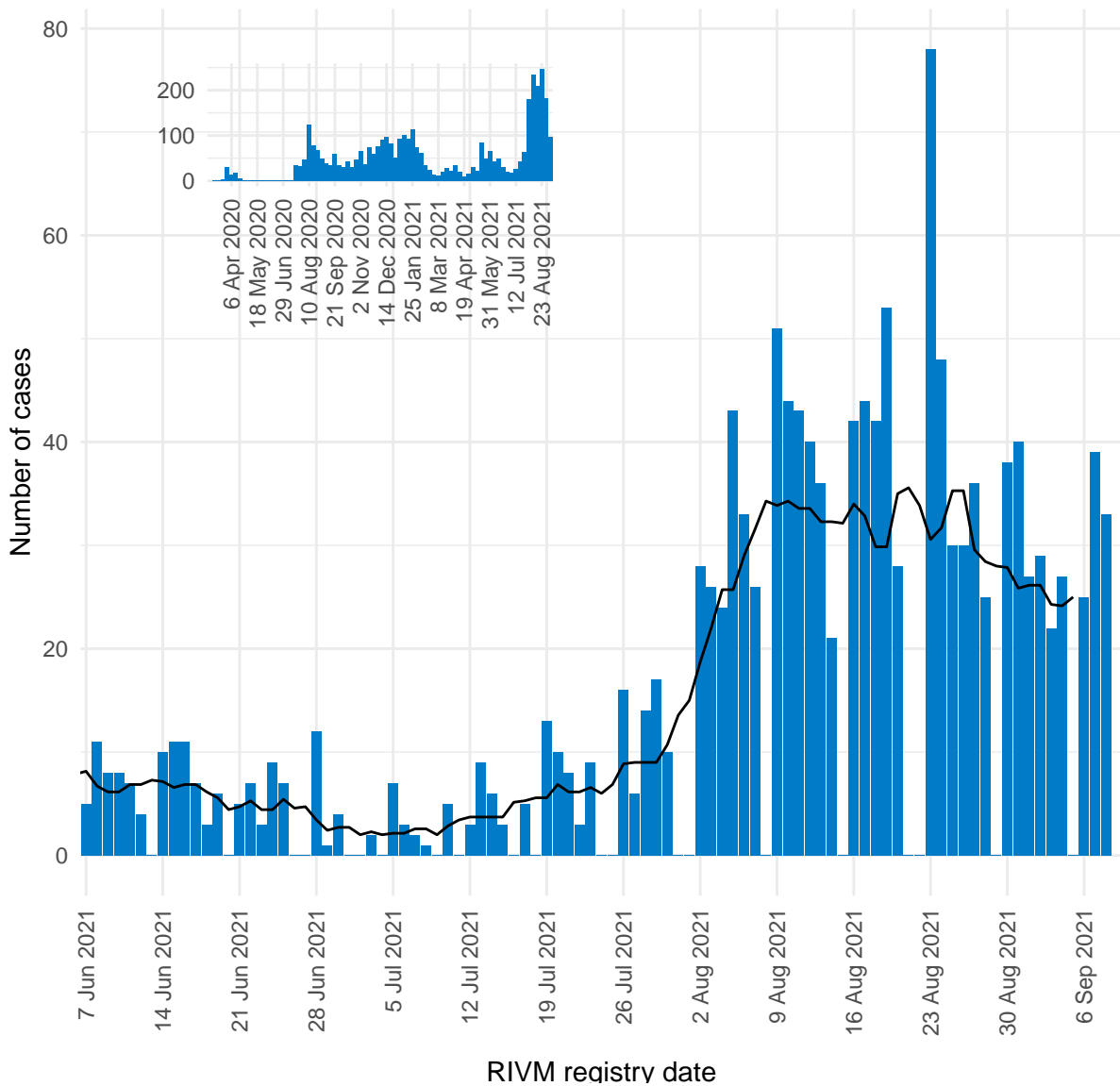


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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

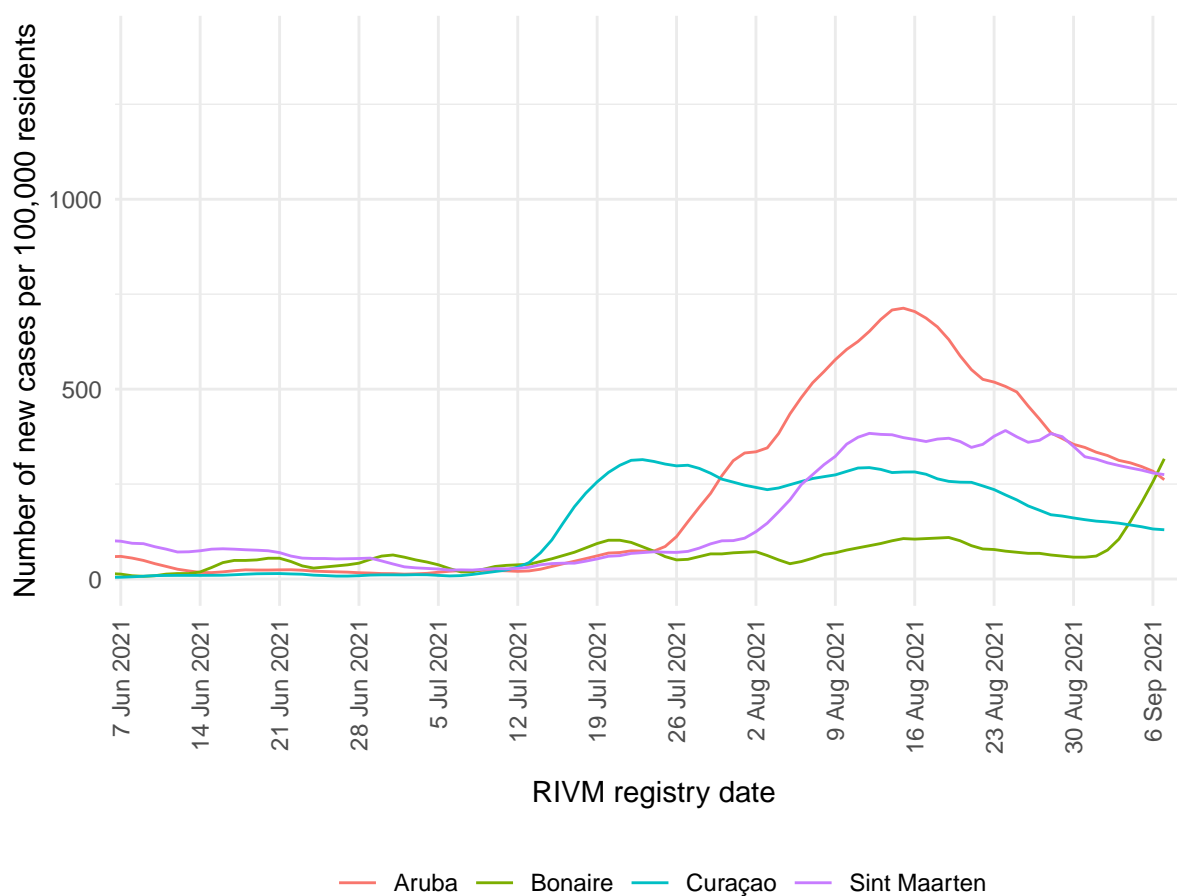


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

## 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 6 september 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)	78939	16171	96529	1563	1450	25619
Number of persons who have received their first and second dosis (aged 12+ years)	70210	14053	87041	1515	1320	23168
Number of fully vaccinated persons (aged 12+ years) <sup>3</sup>	71149	14053	88028	1515	1320	23168
Number of high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) who have received their first dosis <sup>4,5</sup>	4137	-	9096	-	-	4523
Number of fully vaccinated high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) <sup>5</sup>	3874	-	8408	-	-	2907

<sup>1</sup> The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to the Dutch Ministry of Health (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.

## 5 Vaccination coverage on the CAS-BES islands

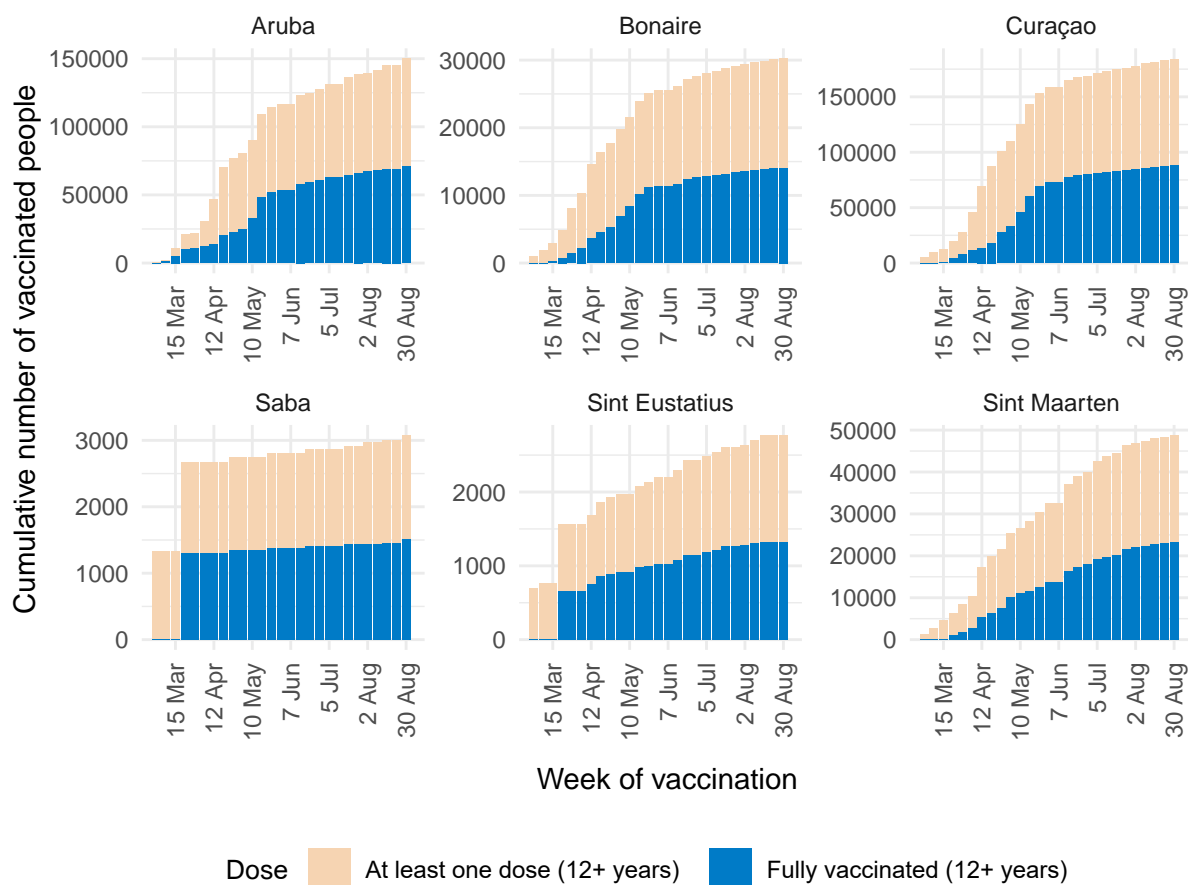


Figure 9: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered, cumulative by vaccination date, until 6 september 2021<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

<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.

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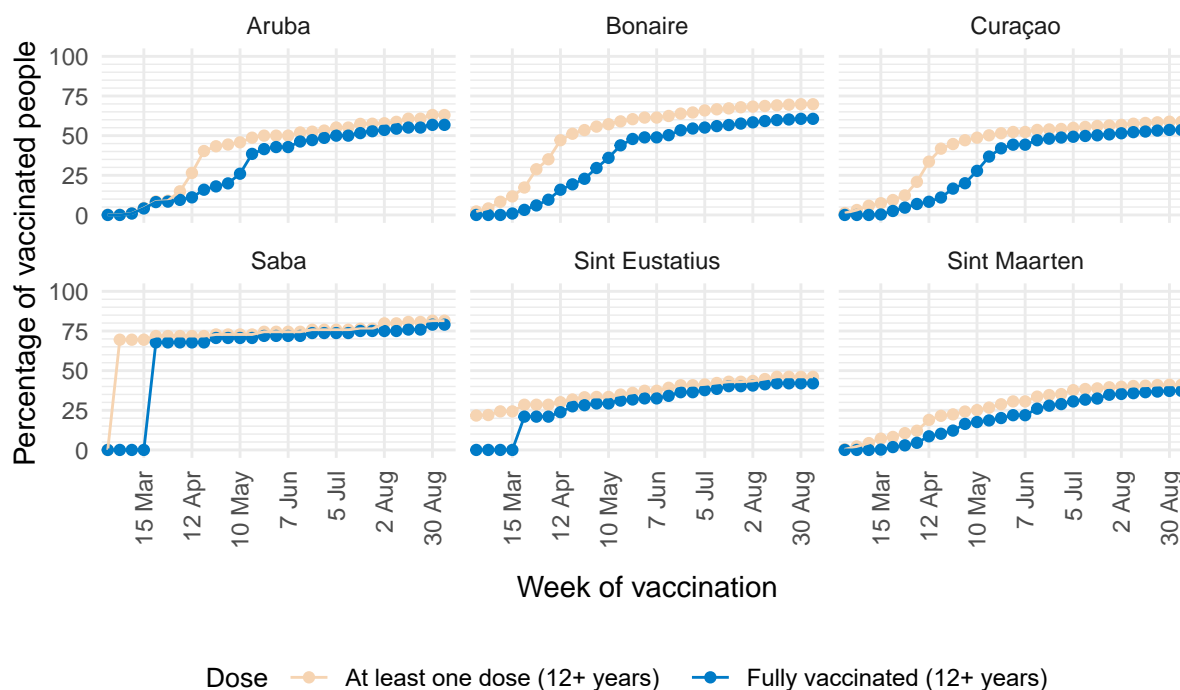


Figure 10: Percentage of residents aged 12 years or older who have received at least one vaccination dose and the percentage of residents aged 12 or older who have been fully vaccinated according to the current vaccination schedule of the vaccines used<sup>1-4</sup>.

<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.