



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

Week 39 (September 23rd - September 29th, 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 23-29, 608 people in the CAS and BES islands received a positive test result, an decrease of 14% compared to the week before (September 16-22, 2021). Bonaire reported the largest increase in the number of new SARS-CoV-2 infections (94), with a relative increase of 141% in positive SARS-CoV-2 test results compared to last week (39 reported cases in week 38). The Delta variant remains the dominant strain on the islands. The Mu variant continues to be detected sporadically.

Last week, 111 people per 100,000 inhabitants in Aruba received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a further decrease from 142/100,000 a week earlier (September 16-22, 2021). These mainly concern infections among residents. The turnout among residents aged 12 years old is currently approximately 75% for at least one vaccination and 69% of all residents aged 12 years old are fully vaccinated, both have increased by 5% since last month (week 35). Hospital ICUs, both local and in Colombia, remain under substantial pressure despite the recent fall in COVID cases. Since mid-July we have seen an increase in hospital and ICU admissions and occupancy, which seems to be decreasing once again since the end of August. 31 patients are currently hospitalized, of whom 8 on the general nursing ward, 4 on the local ICU, and 19 on the ICU in Colombia; a substantial decline compared to an occupancy of 68 patients a month ago (week 35). The island has reported 20 COVID-related deaths this month, which are approximately 12% of all COVID-related deaths since the start of the pandemic.

Last week, 406 people per 100,000 inhabitants on Bonaire received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a sharp increase compared to 168/100,000 a week earlier (September 16-22, 2021). The share of positive tests has increased slightly from 9.1% to 9.5% in the past week. Some of these new cases have a recent travel history or are close contacts from previously reported infections. Most newly detected infections concern unvaccinated adults. The recent increase in the number of infections is not causing extra pressure on curative care capacity for the time being. Currently 81% of residents aged 12 years old have gotten at least one vaccination and 71% of all residents aged 12 years old are fully vaccinated, an increase of 1% since last month (week 35).

Last week, 152 people per 100,000 inhabitants in Curaçao received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a decline compared to 213/100,000 a week earlier (September 16-22). The turnout among the residents aged 12 years old is currently 69% for at least one vaccination and 63% of all residents aged 12 years old are fully vaccinated, both an increase of 2% respectively since last month (week 35). In addition to the large group of not (fully) vaccinated people, it is now mainly young people and school-age children who test positive. The public health measures in force will be extended by three weeks, until mid-October. Similar to Aruba, hospital occupancy on this island has been high for some time. Since mid-July, we have seen an increase in hospital admissions and ICU admissions. 31 patients are currently hospitalized (13 ICU), slightly less than the 33 patients reported a month ago (week 35). The island reported 18 COVID-related deaths this month, which are approximately 11% of all COVID-related deaths reported since the start of the pandemic. Fifteen of the 18 COVID-related deaths this month occurred in hospitals and the remainder in the home setting. Of the 181 hospital admissions between July 22 and September 27, 2021, only 7 people (3.9%) appeared to be fully vaccinated and 4 (2.2%) partially vaccinated. 93.4% of the infections detected between July 22 and September 27, 2021 were among unvaccinated people.

The number of new infections on Sint Maarten is decreasing; last week, 196 people per 100,000 inhabitants on Sint Maarten received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, compared to 225/100,000 a week earlier (September 16-22). The turnout among residents aged 12 is currently 46% for at least one vaccination and 42% of all residents aged 12 are fully vaccinated, both have increased by 1% since last month (week 35). There are

currently 11 active clusters: seven local schools, a hotelier, a telecommunications enterprise, a restaurant, and a local store. The number of hospital admissions is decreasing although deaths remain relatively high. There are currently 6 COVID patients admitted locally (3 ICU). Two patients are still receiving care abroad; 1 in Colombia and 1 in the United States of America. The island has reported 15 COVID-related deaths this month, accounting for approximately 23% of all COVID-related deaths reported since the start of the pandemic. 76% of deaths reported this month were hospitalized cases. On the French side of the island, the incidence has continued to fall (156/100,000 at week 37). The number of COVID-related hospitalizations and deaths on the French side of the island also decreased further in week 37.

No new SARS-CoV-2 infections were reported on Saba last week. The turnout among the residents aged 12 years old is currently 93% for at least one vaccination and 90% of all residents aged 12 years old are fully vaccinated, an increase of 1% and 3% respectively since last month (week 35).

Last week, 3 new SARS-CoV-2 infections were reported on St. Eustatius; all concern travelers who tested positive during the quarantine period. The risk of further local transmission is considered to be low. The turnout among the residents aged 12 years old is currently 55% for at least one vaccination and 53% of all residents aged 12 years old are fully vaccinated, an increase of 1% and 3% respectively since last month (week 35), but low in comparison to Aruba and Bonaire.

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 29 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 29 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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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	13-09-2021 - 19-09-2021	4568	173	3.8
	20-09-2021 - 26-09-2021	5341	167	3.1
Bonaire	13-09-2021 - 19-09-2021	444	40	9
	20-09-2021 - 26-09-2021	482	46	9.5
Curaçao ²	13-09-2021 - 19-09-2021	12380	343	2.8
	20-09-2021 - 26-09-2021	11533	317	2.7
Saba ³	13-09-2021 - 19-09-2021	-	0	-
	20-09-2021 - 26-09-2021	-	0	-
Sint Eustatius	13-09-2021 - 19-09-2021	113	0	0
	20-09-2021 - 26-09-2021	99	1	1
Sint Maarten ⁴	13-09-2021 - 19-09-2021	-	-	-
	20-09-2021 - 26-09-2021	-	-	-

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	Number of cases	Deceased
Aruba	15472	854	166	139	6
Bonaire	2047	66	19	94	1
Curaçao	16465	734	162	249	4
Saba	11	1	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	28	0	1	4	0
Sint Maarten	4283	178	66	122	5
Totaal	38306	1833	414	608	16

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

² These have been reported to the RIVM between September 23rd and September 29th, 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^{1,2}

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	Number of COVID-19 patients on pediatric ward
Aruba	241	8	4	19	0	0	0
Bonaire	118	1	1	0	0	0	0
Curaçao	411	18	13	0	0	0	0
Saba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	180	3	3	1	1	0	0
Totaal	954	30	21	20	1	0	0

¹ 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.

² Per September 1, 2021, admissions to the OB/GYN and pediatric wards are reported separately for St Maarten. The other islands are currently not reporting these data separately.

³ Covid patients admitted to the Special Care unit on Bonaire are mentioned under the column ICU-local.

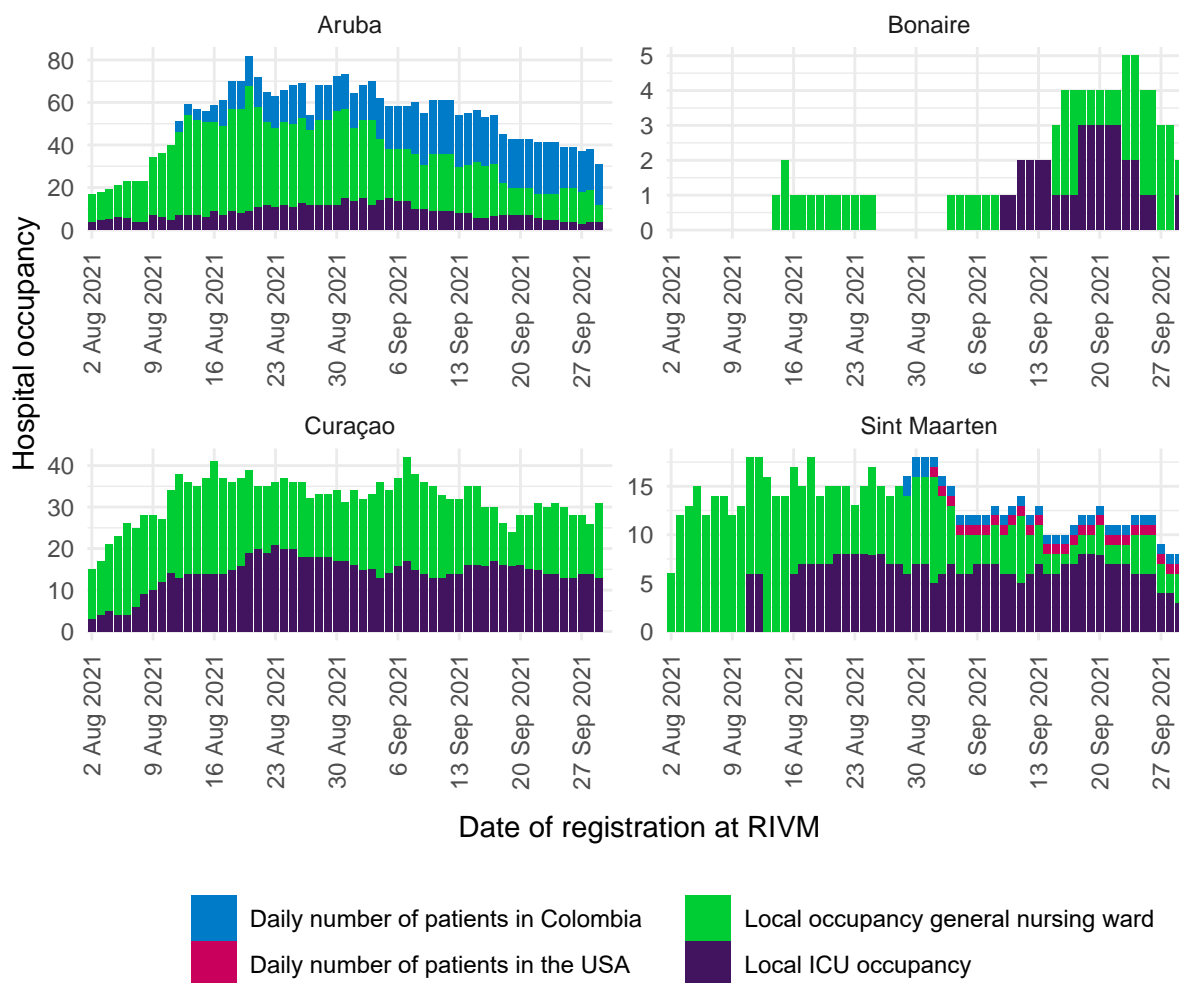


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time ^{1,2,3,4,5}

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 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.

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 rate per 100,000 residents	
	Previous week ²	Previous two weeks ³
Aruba	97	235
Bonaire	362	544
Curaçao	128	329
Saba	0	0
Sint Eustatius	95	127
Sint Maarten	168	369

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 23 September 2021 until 29 September 2021.

³ The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 16 September 2021 until 29 September 2021.

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

Island	Capital city	Residents	Acreage	Political status
Aruba	Oranjestad	125.282	180 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Bonaire	Kralendijk	23.173	288 km ²	Dutch municipality
Curaçao	Willemstad	164.223	444 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Saba	The Bottom	1.918	13 km ²	Dutch municipality
Sint Maarten	Philipsburg	62.323	34 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Sint Eustatius	Oranjestad	3.142	21 km ²	Dutch municipality

¹ 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

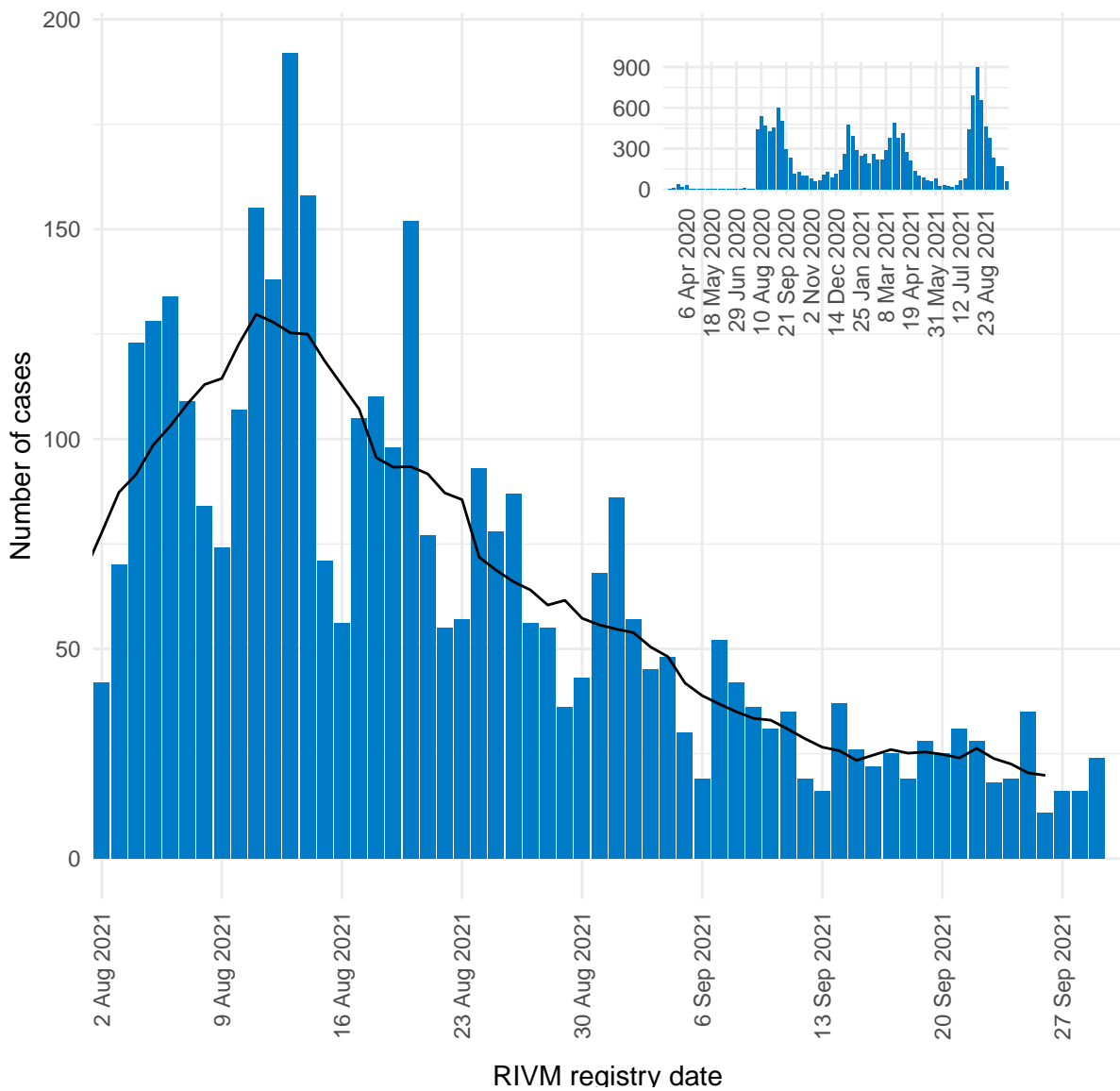


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

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 2-7 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.

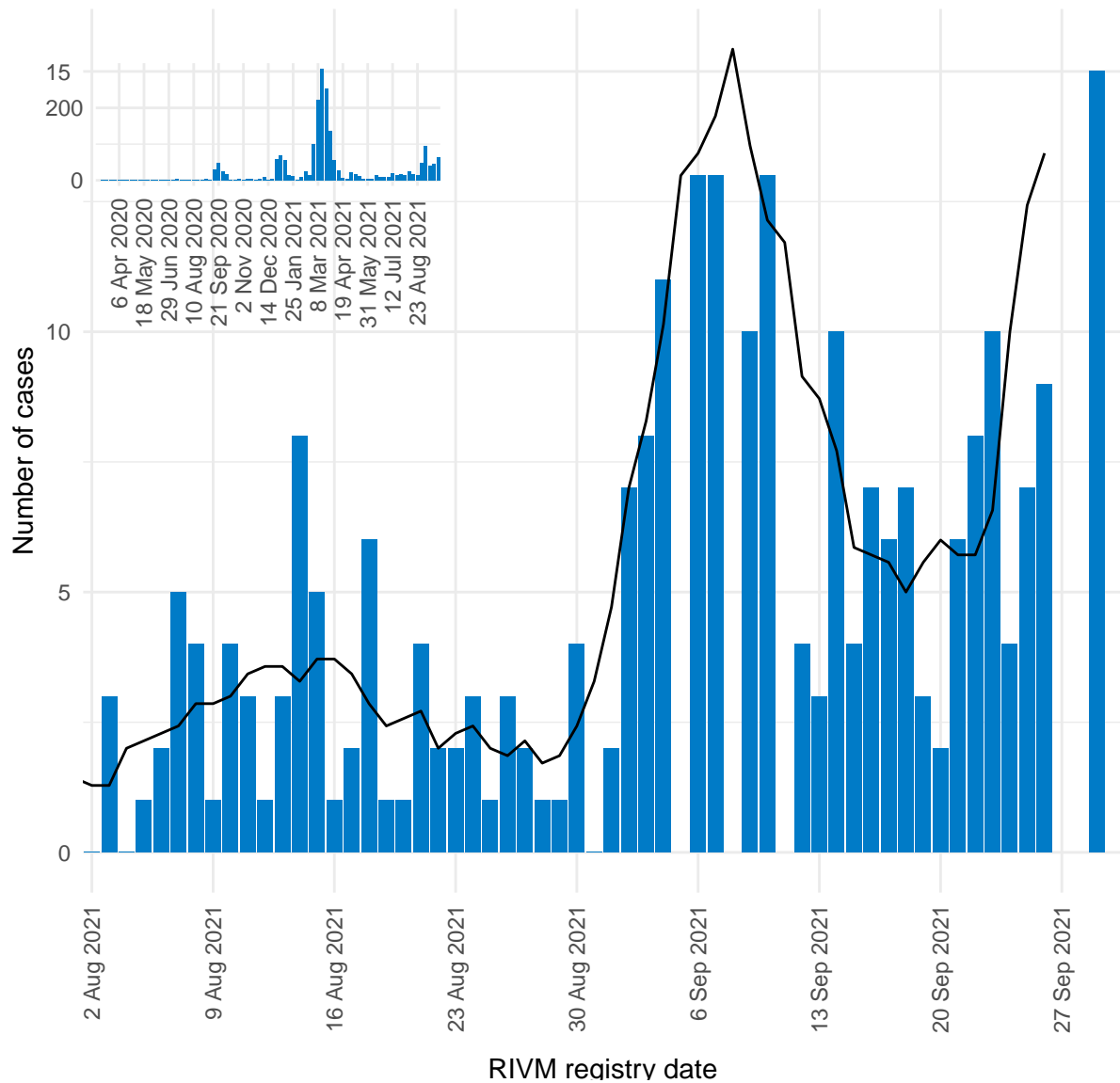


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

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 2-7 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.

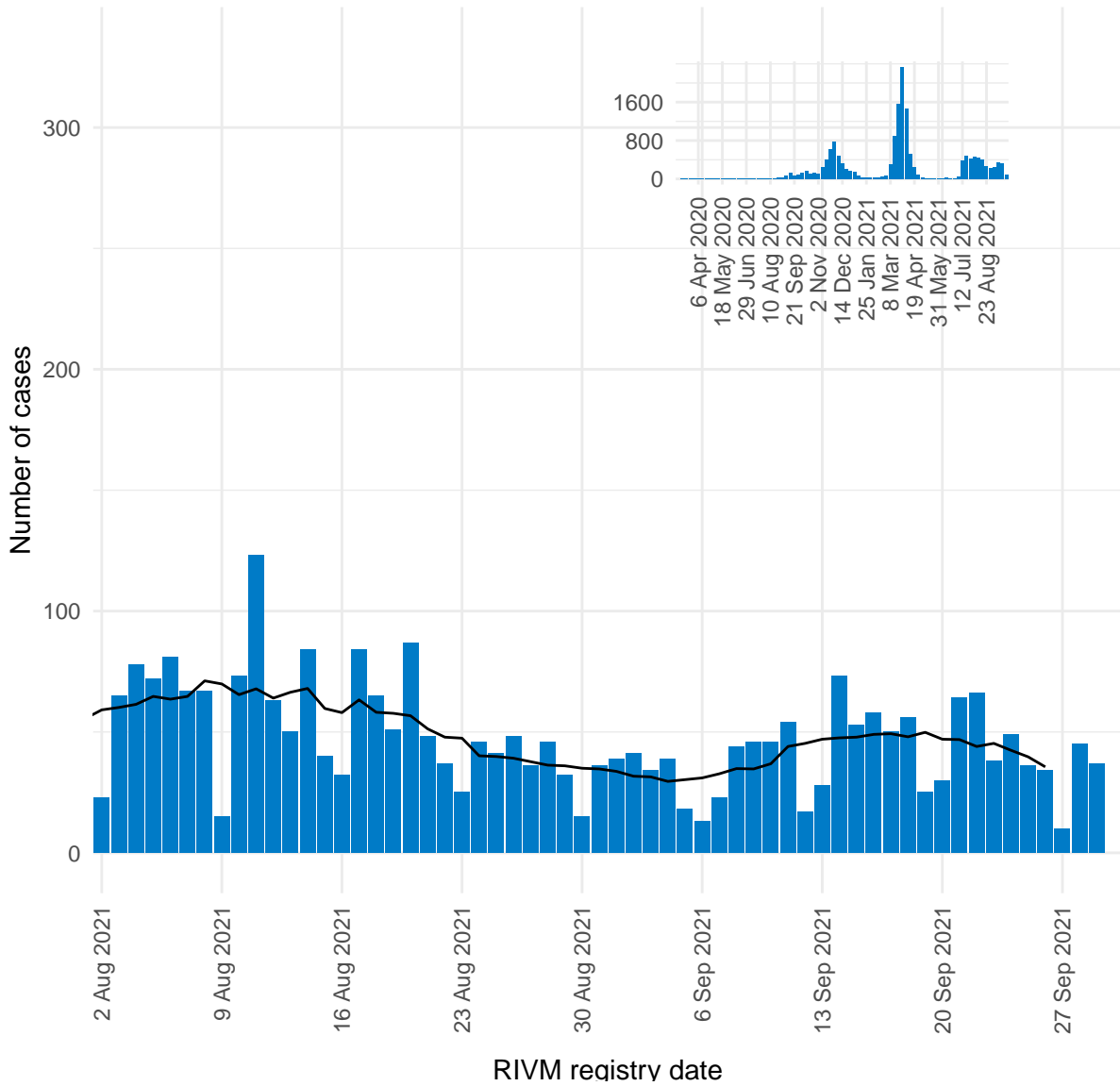


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

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 2-7 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.

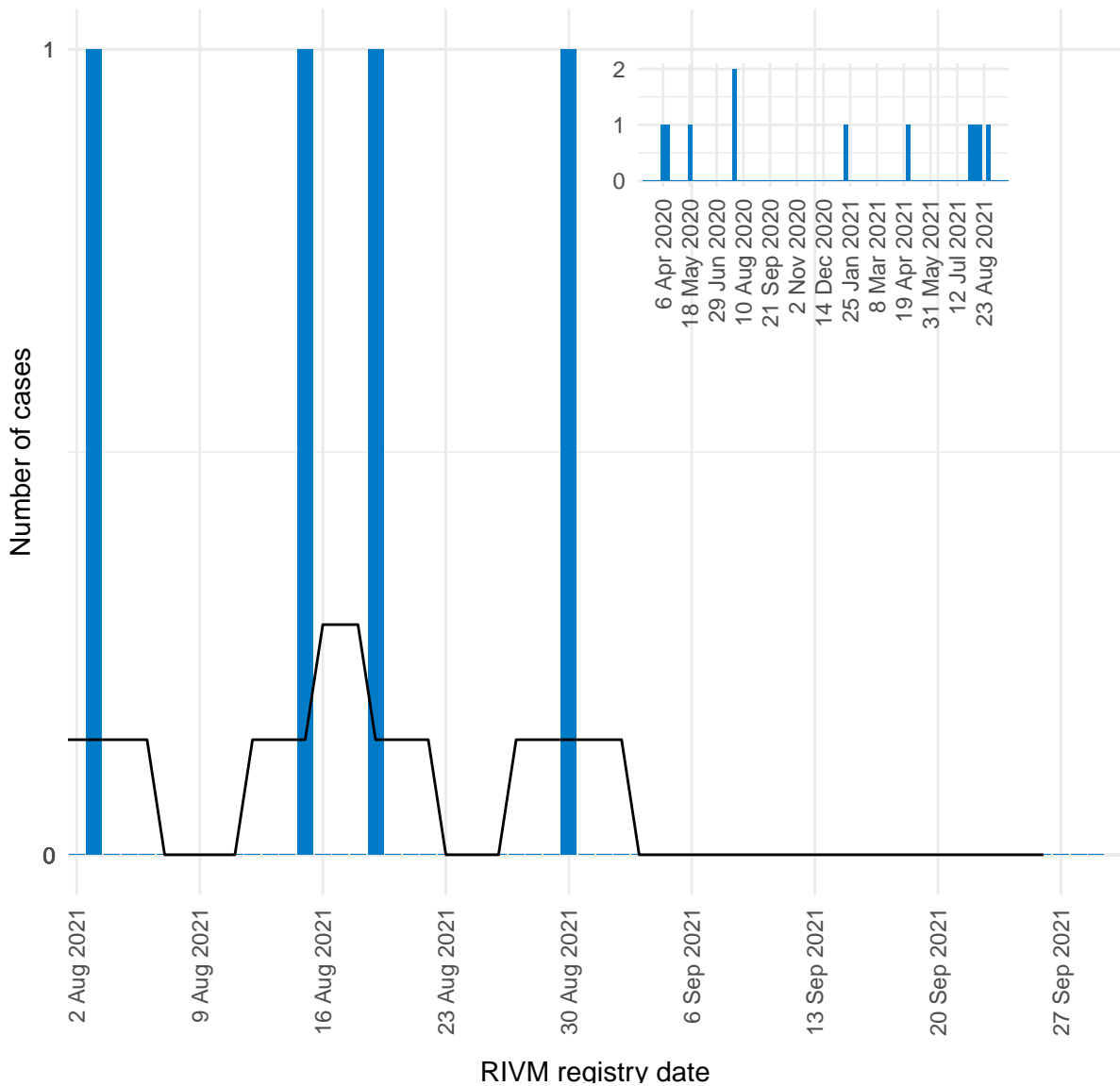


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

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 2-7 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.

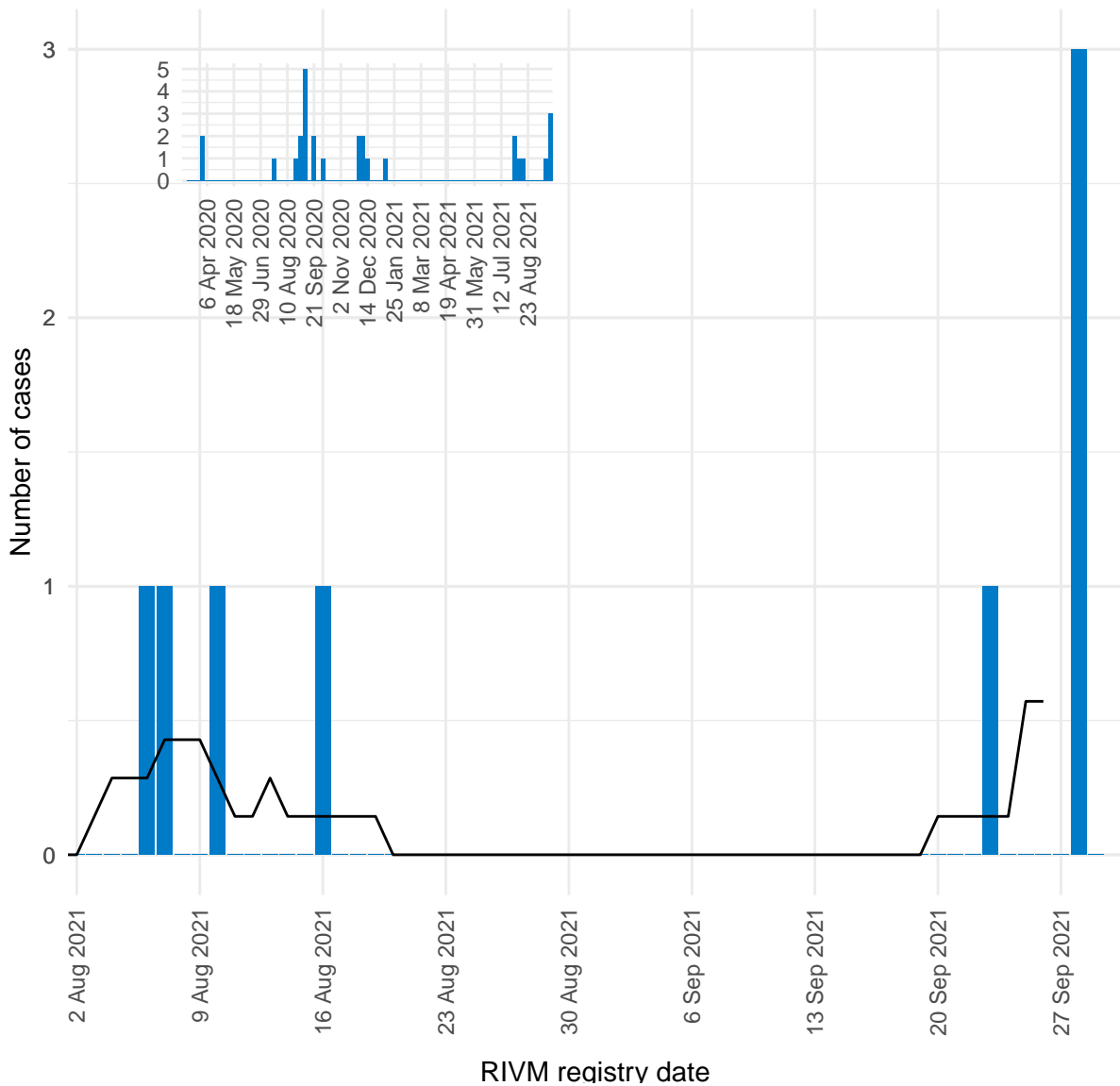


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

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 2-7 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.

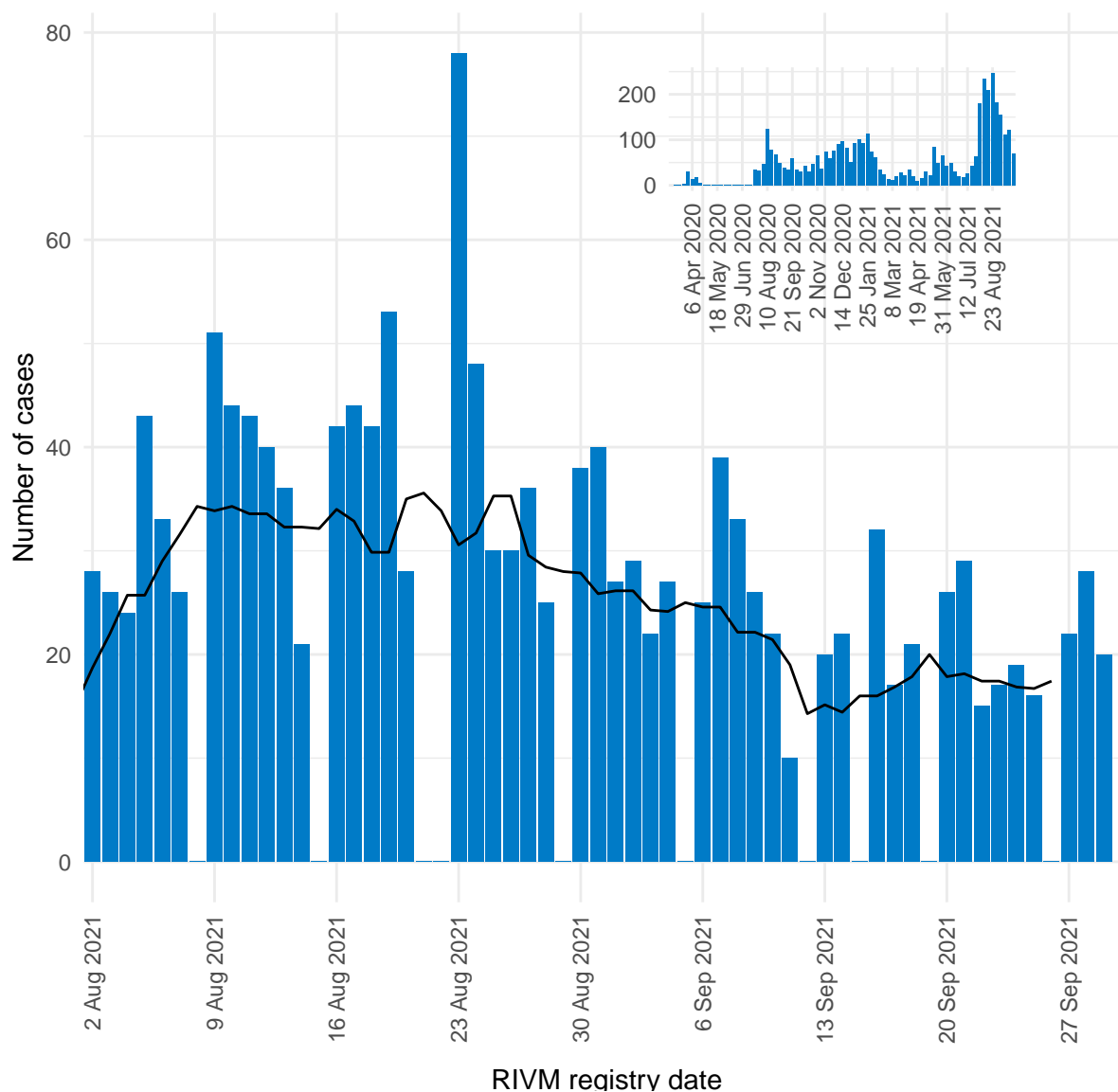


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

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 2-7 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

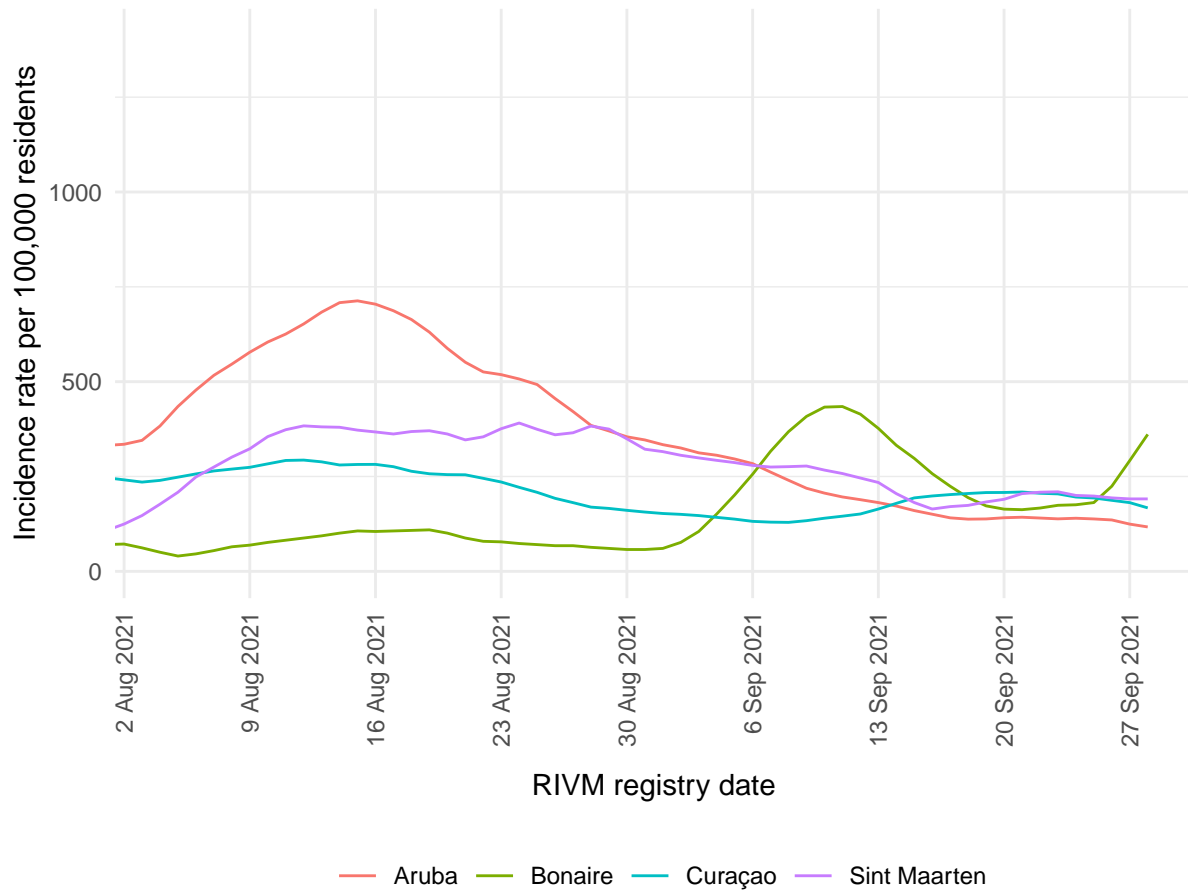


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire^{1,2}.

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.

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 27 September 2021¹.

	Aruba	Bonaire	Curaçao	Saba	Sint Eu- statius	Sint Maarten ²
Number of persons who have received their first dosis (aged 12+ years)	80850	16352	97724	1563	1467	26060
Number of persons who have received their first and second dosis (aged 12+ years)	74373	14317	89069	1515	1420	23718
Number of fully vaccinated persons (aged 12+ years) ³	75149	14317	90035	1515	1420	23718
Number of high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) who have received their first dosis ^{4,5}	4155	-	9156	-	-	4565
Number of fully vaccinated high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) ⁵	3960	-	8476	-	-	2937

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

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

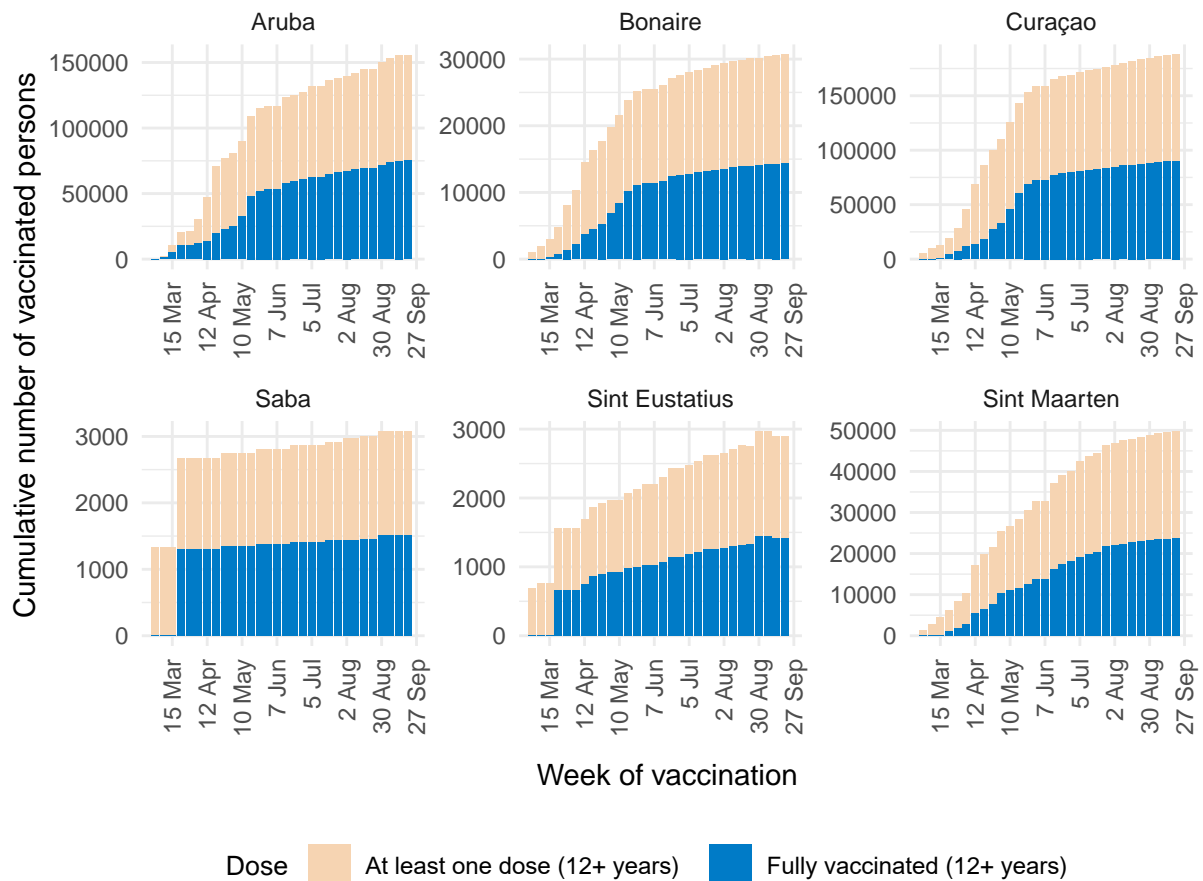


Figure 9: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered, cumulative by vaccination date, until 27 September 2021^{1,2,3}.

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ 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

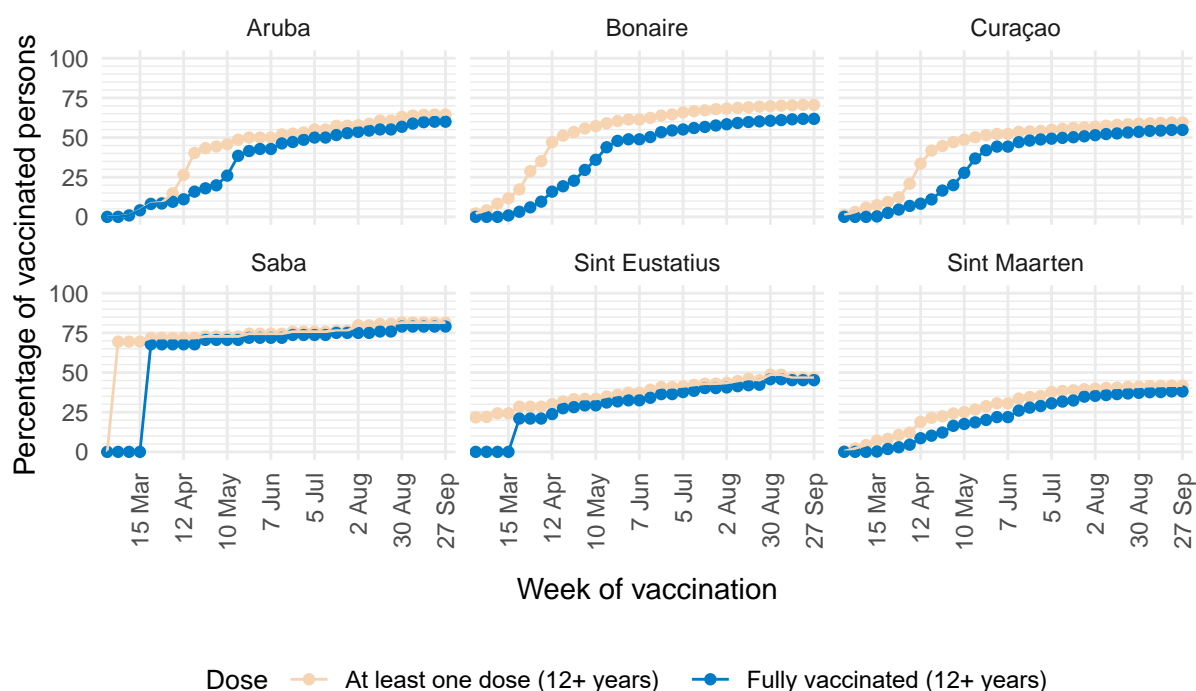


Figure 10: Percentage of residents aged 12 years or older who have received at least one vaccination dose and the percentage of residents aged 12 or older who have been fully vaccinated according to the current vaccination schedule of the vaccines used¹⁻⁴.

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.