



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

### **Week 34 (August 19th - August 25th, 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**

After showing a sharp increase over the past couple of weeks, the number of new SARS-CoV-2 infections has begun to fall on most of the CAS-BES islands. In the week of August 19th to 25th, 2021, an additional 1,197 people received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a decrease of approximately 23% compared to a week earlier (12-18 August, 2021). The greatest decrease was reported on Aruba with 30% less cases in one week's time. Despite the decline in reported cases, the situation in the hospitals remains critical.

On Aruba, 487 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, a sharp decrease compared to the previous week (631/100,000 on August 19th). However, the incidence on the island remains to be considered as alarmingly high. The island reports a large amount of breakthrough infections amongst locals. Possible causes are being explored. Due to the current situation on the island, elective care in Aruba's main hospital (HOH) has been (partially) scaled down and health care personnel from the island's second medical center, IMSAN, have been called to further support the local hospital. There are currently 68 hospital admissions, of which 11 are in the ICU in Aruba and 18 in the ICU in Colombia. However, the numbers of hospitalizations do not reflect the current trend in breakthrough infections: As of July 1st, 2021, only 1 in 5 of the hospitalized cases appear to be fully vaccinated. In addition to the hospitalization rates, the high incidence is also reflected in recent COVID-19 related deaths on the island. In the past week, 11 people have passed due to or with COVID-19. The average age of cases who have died appears to be lower amongst those who were unvaccinated compared to those who were vaccinated; and a large proportion of the unvaccinated cases were younger than 60 years. Due to the alarming situation in the hospital, the island has introduced additional public health measures. As of August 22nd, a mandatory curfew was set in place between 22:00 and 05:00. Other measures include an adjustment of the closing time for local establishments, home visits are no longer allowed, and mass gatherings have been banned.

On Bonaire, 60 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, which is a sharp decrease compared to 112/100,000 from a week earlier. The island reports 1 infection in a minor since last week; since the start of the pandemic there have been 163 SARS-CoV-2 infections detected amongst children younger than 18 years on the island. The proportion of positive tests, however, has doubled from 3,0% to 6,6% in one week's time. This is partially due to a decrease in the testing frequency on the island. The virus is actively circulating amongst some hard to reach unvaccinated groups. Bonaire has implemented stricter measures for travelers due to the high rate of infections on the CAS-islands. All incoming passengers from the CAS-islands must now show a negative PCR test 48 hours prior to arrival. Unvaccinated travelers must additionally undergo an antigen test upon arrival.

The situation on Curaçao seems to have stabilized, however, the island still deals with a critical situation in the local hospital. In the past week, 204 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a decrease compared to a week earlier (247/100,000 on August 19th). Approximately 70 children have tested positive between August 19th and 25th, 2021. The number of COVID-related hospitalizations has been high for various weeks, and remains high in the ICU. There are currently 36 hospital admissions, 20 of which are in the ICU. Of the 105 hospitalizations between July 22nd and August 23rd, only 3 people were fully vaccinated and 2 were only partially vaccinated. Two of the hospitalizations in this period were minors. Last week, 7 people on the island died from or with SARS-CoV-2. The public health measures that were previously taken are currently still in effect.

On Dutch Sint Maarten, the number of SARS-CoV-2 infections continues to rise. The high incidence is still alarming. Last week, 380 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, comparable

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to a week earlier (382/100,000 on August 19th). Approximately 23% of the reported cases in the past week were of persons younger than 18 years old. Additionally, several clusters have been reported within the workforce. The island reports there has been a visible shift in the settings of the clusters in recent weeks, as previously clusters were identified more frequently within the nightlife. There are currently 17 COVID-related hospitalizations on the Dutch side of the island, 8 of which are in the ICU. Last week, 4 people passed from or with COVID-19 on this side of the island, which is an increase compared to a week earlier (1 death reported). The incidence on the French side of the island has increased further (572/100,000 in week 32) compared to a week earlier (538/100,000 in week 31). A further increase in the number of hospital admissions is also reported on this side of the island.

Two new SARS-CoV-2 infection were reported in the past week on Saba. One case concerns an unvaccinated resident who traveled to Sint Maarten as a social companion to a patient on a medical visit to the island. The second case regards a vaccinated person that was also likely infected while visiting Sint Maarten. The two infections do not appear to be connected to each other.

St. Eustatius has reported no new SARS-CoV-2 infections in the past week. As of August 23rd, 2021, there are also no active cases on the island.

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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 25 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.

## **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 August 23, 2021 using monitoring data received from 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 <sup>1</sup>	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	8458	895	10.6
	16-08-2021 - 22-08-2021	7025	653	9.3
Bonaire	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	836	25	3
	16-08-2021 - 22-08-2021	258	17	6.6
Curaçao <sup>2</sup>	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	15041	448	3
	16-08-2021 - 22-08-2021	14224	404	2.8
Saba <sup>3</sup>	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	119	1	0.8
	16-08-2021 - 22-08-2021	-	1	-
Sint Eustatius	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	162	1	0.6
	16-08-2021 - 22-08-2021	315	1	0.3
Sint Maarten <sup>4</sup>	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	-	-	-
	16-08-2021 - 22-08-2021	-	-	-

<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	14231	666	132	610	11
Bonaire	1746	66	17	14	0
Curaçao	15086	629	142	335	7
Saba	10	1	0	1	0
Sint Eustatius	24	0	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	3550	178	46	237	4
Totaal	34647	1540	337	1197	22

<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 August 19th and August 25th, 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	Oversees occupancy in Colombia
Aruba	731	39	11	18
Bonaire	20	1	0	0
Curaçao	476	16	20	0
Saba	1	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	2	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	322	9	8	0
Totaal	1552	65	39	18

<sup>1</sup> Number of active SARS-CoV-2 infecties 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.

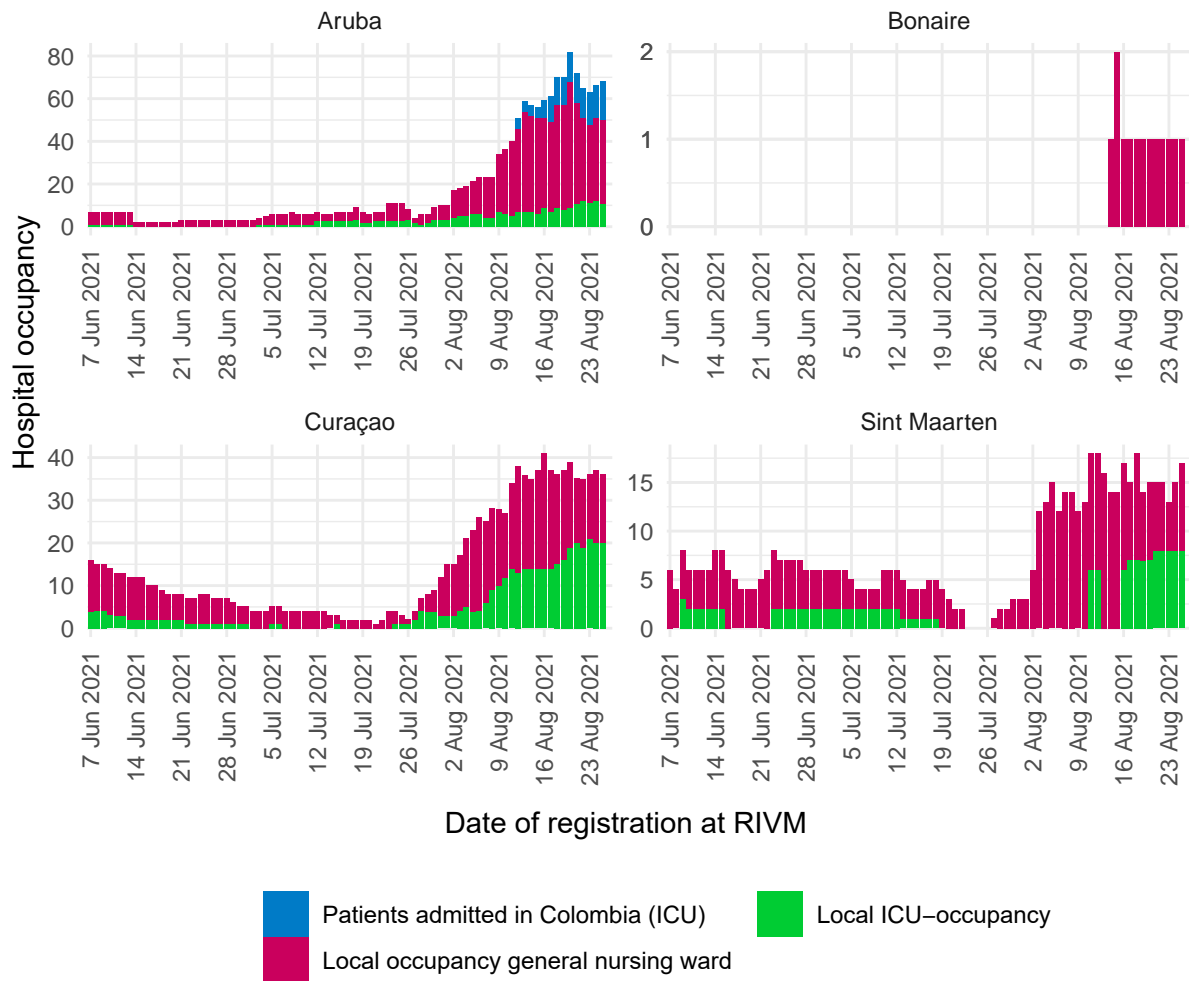


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

<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	409	1039
Bonaire	56	168
Curaçao	173	420
Saba	0	104
Sint Eustatius	0	32
Sint Maarten	295	677

<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 19 augustus 2021 until 25 augustus 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 12 augustus 2021 until 25 augustus 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

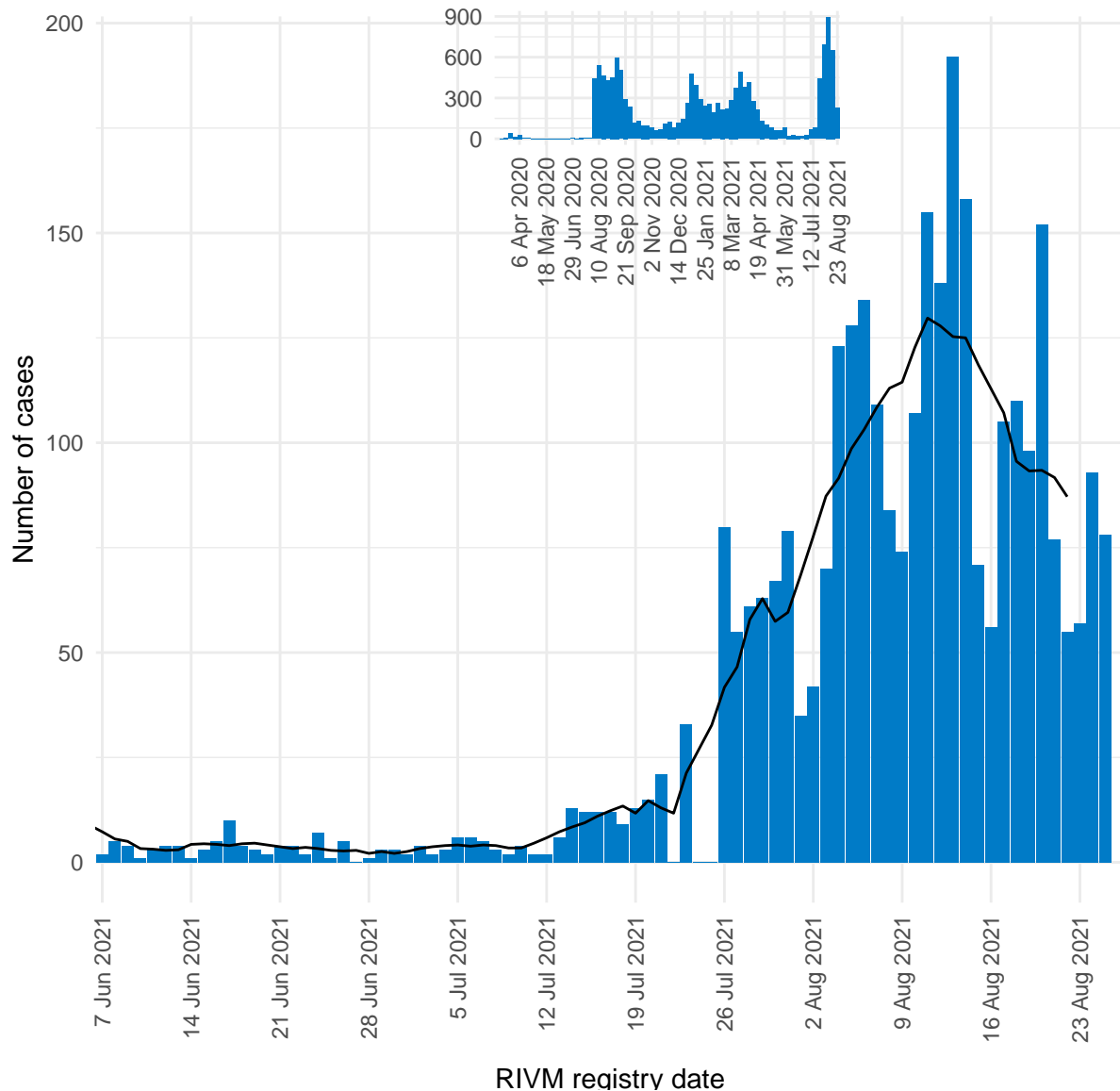


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

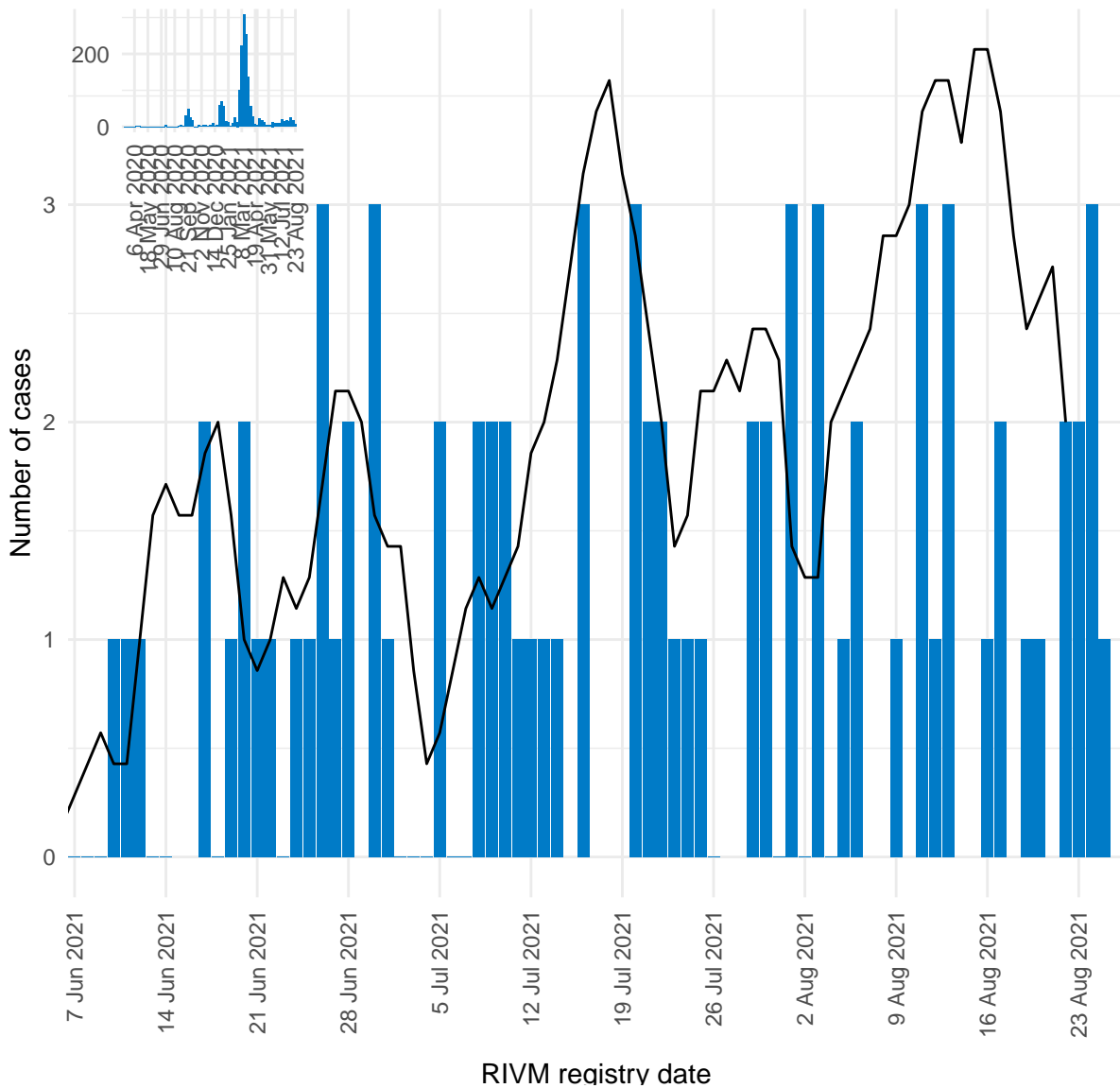


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

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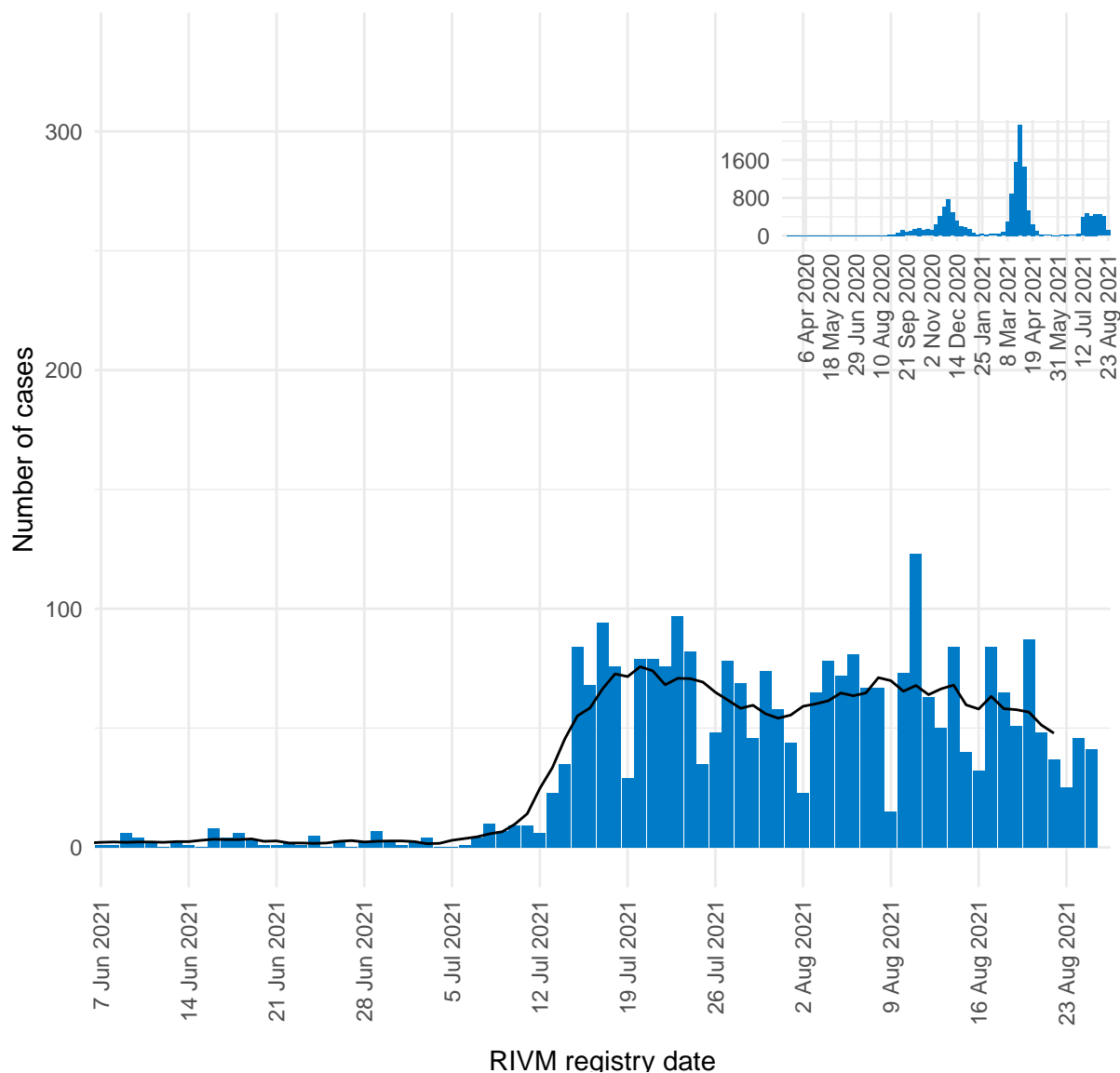


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

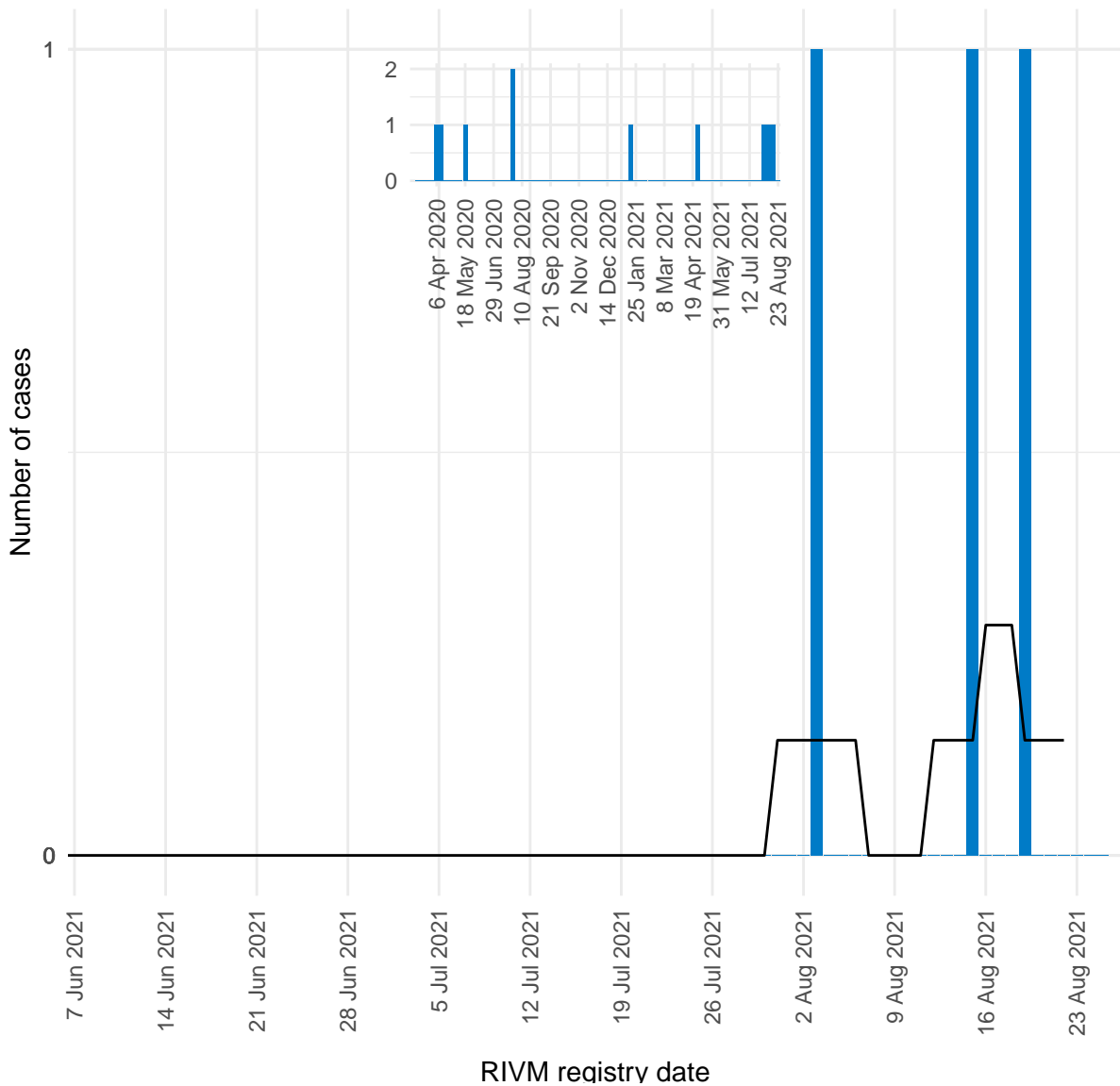


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

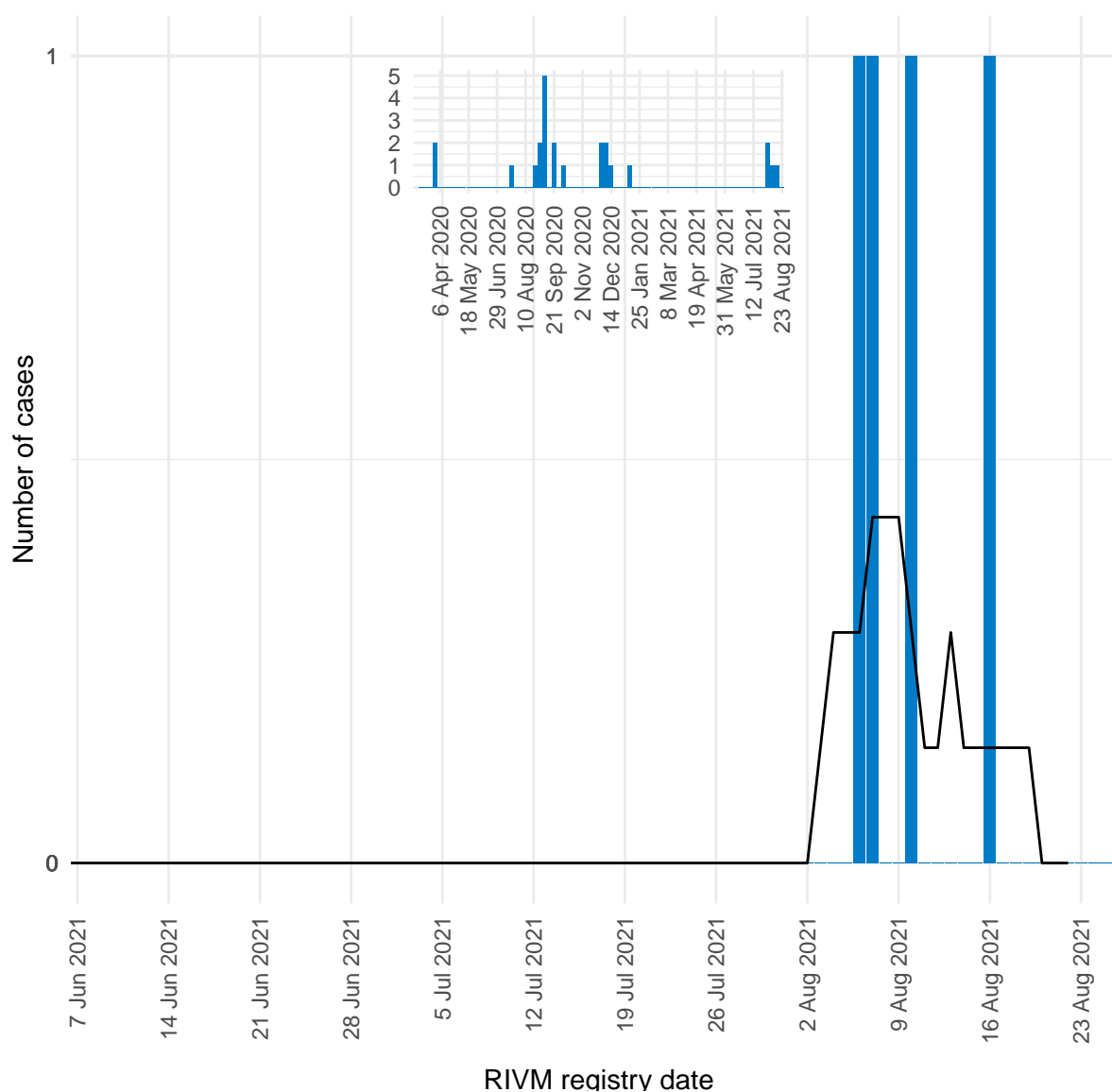


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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.

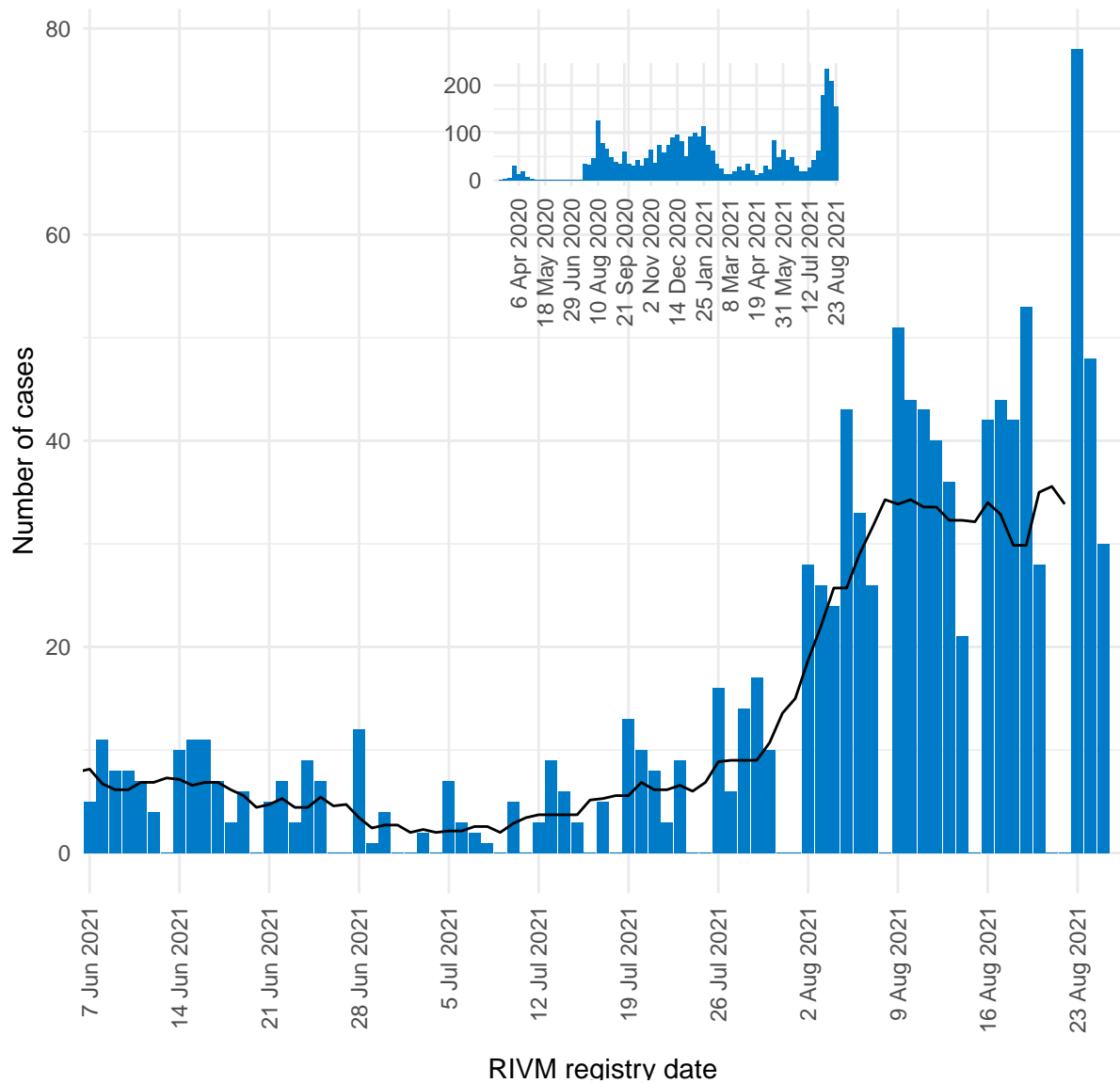


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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

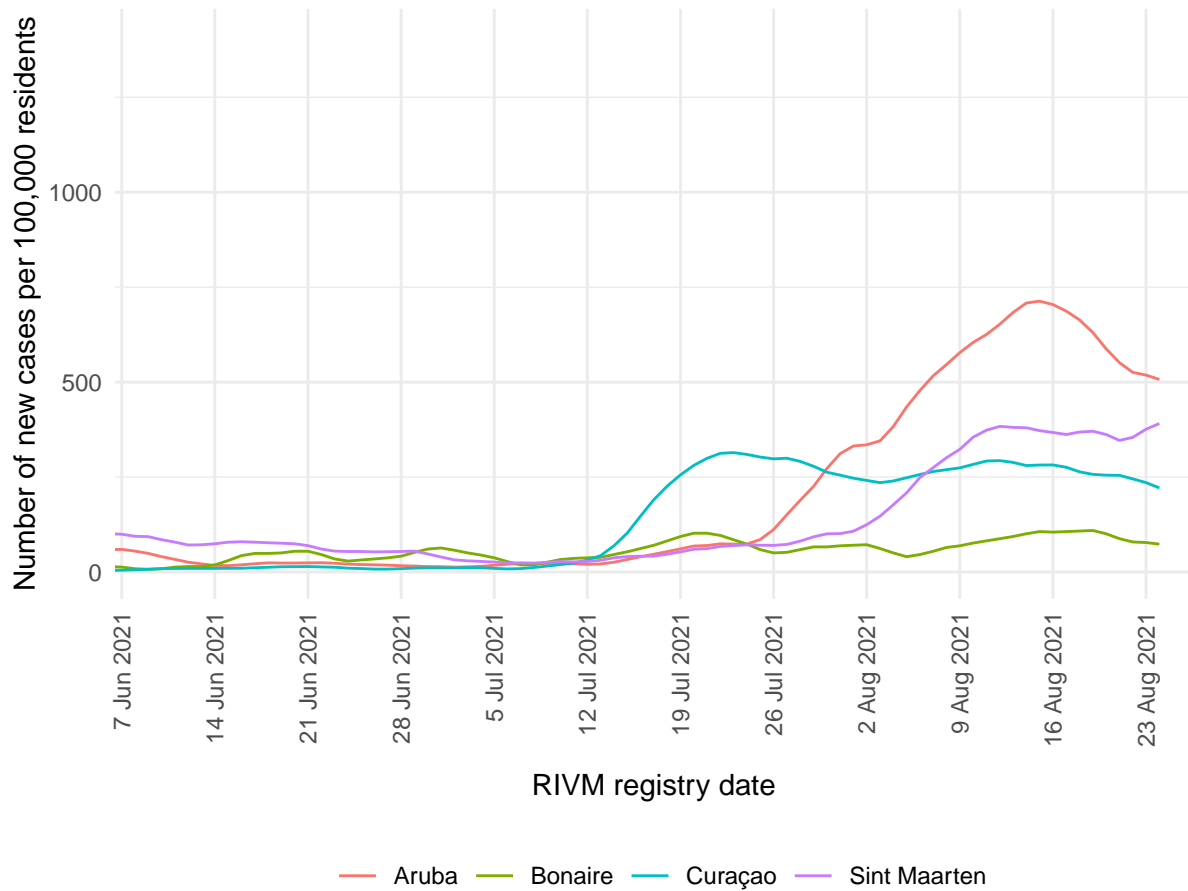


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire<sup>1,2</sup>.

<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 23 augustus 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)	76089	16005	95205	1548	1450	25270
Number of persons who have received their first and second dosis (aged 12+ years)	68512	13852	85438	1455	1320	22713
Number of fully vaccinated persons (aged 12+ years) <sup>3</sup>	69055	13852	86440	1455	1320	22713
Number of high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) who have received their first dosis <sup>4,5</sup>	4019	-	9063	-	-	4490
Number of fully vaccinated high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) <sup>5</sup>	3796	-	8363	-	-	2849

<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.

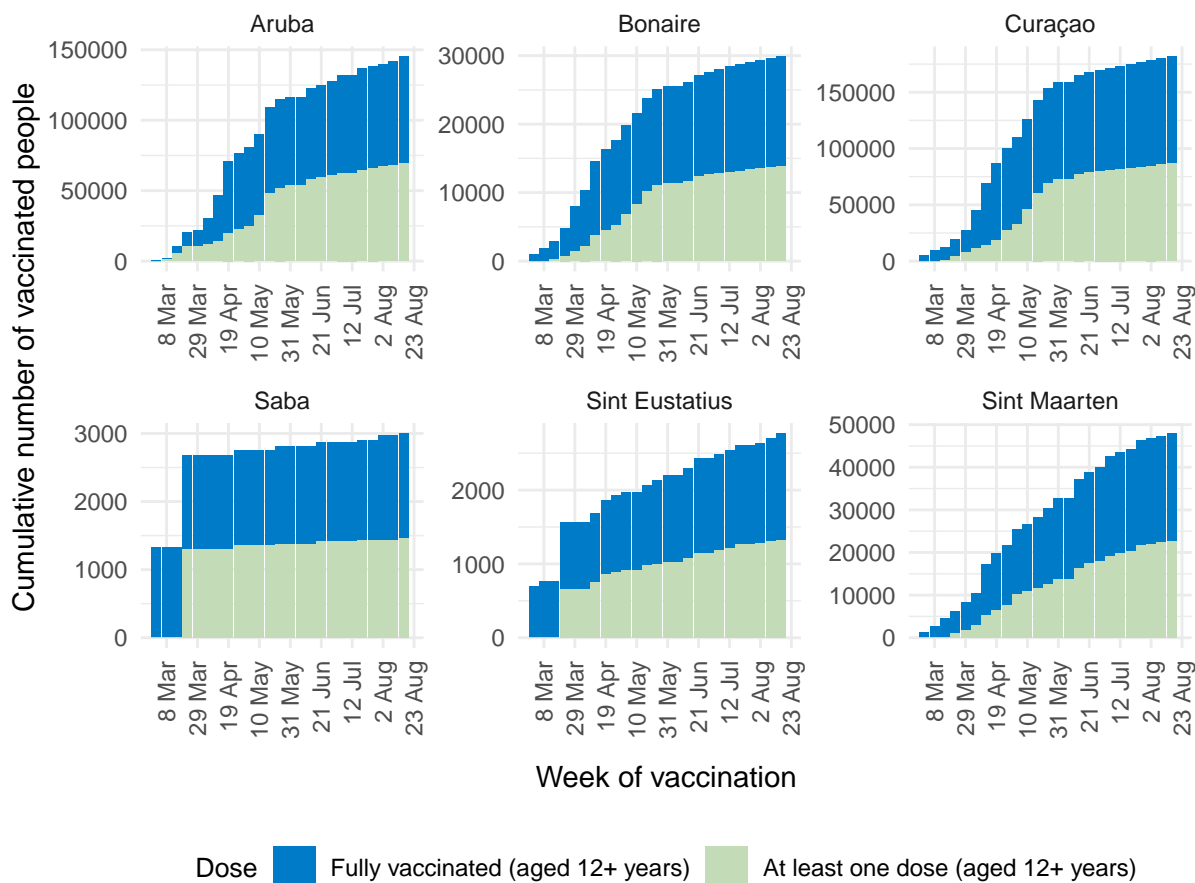


Figure 9: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered, cumulative by vaccination date, until 23 august 2021<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

<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

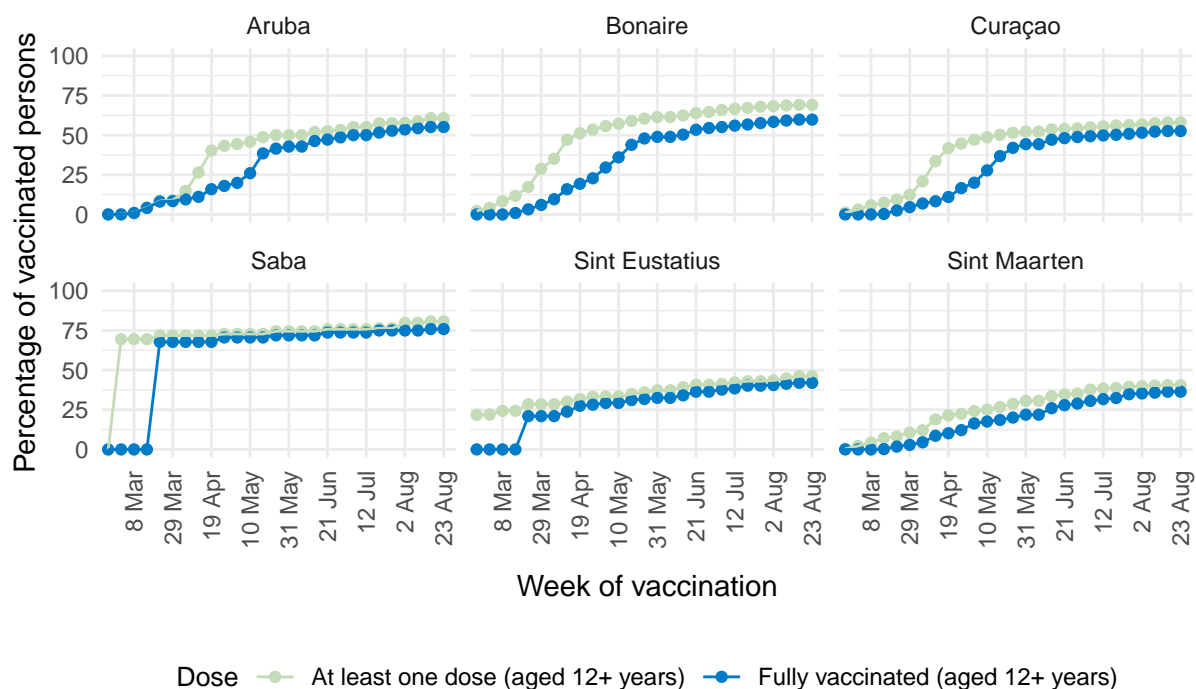


Figure 10: Percentage of residents aged 12 years or older who have received at least one vaccination dose and the percentage of residents aged 12 or older who have been fully vaccinated according to the current vaccination schedule of the vaccines used<sup>1-4</sup>.

<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.