

Epidemiological Situation of COVID-19 in Cabo Verde



Maria da Luz Lima
President of the Nacional
Institute of Public Health

Editorial

The COVID-19 pandemic is increasing in numbers, leading some countries to return to the state of national emergency, a measure widely used in the first wave of the pandemic. In Cape Verde, the situation is evolving in a manageable manner, especially the slight increase in cases seen in the last ten days. This change is believed to be due to some “relaxation” of preventive measures during the festive season. Health authorities continue to make a strong call to the population to rigorously implement preventive measures to prevent a possible second wave. The good news is there is an effort by the Government of Cape Verde to create all the conditions for identifying the circulating virus and any mutation that may come to circulate.

The introduction of the vaccine against COVID-19 is gaining strength with the elaboration of the vaccination plan led by the National Directorate of Health and with the involvement of several national partners and WHO.

With all these activities, it is expected that the year 2021 will be more peaceful and that the archipelago of Morabeza can quickly open its arms again to receive tourism.

Current Situation

At the end of the first epidemiological week of 2021, Cape Verde registered 12 433 accumulated cases of COVID-19. On that day, the country reported 520 active cases, 11793 cumulative recovered cases, and 115 cumulative deaths from COVID-19. In the last 14 days, no cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection have been reported on the islands of São Nicolau and Brava.

During the epidemiological weeks 53 of 2020 and 1 of 2021 (28/12/2020 to 10/01/2021), the country recorded 709 new cases and three (3) deaths from COVID-19.

Table 1. Number of cases and incidence rate of cases reported in the last 14 days of COVID-19 per 100 thousand inhabitants, 28/12/2020 to 10/01/2021

Island	Population	Nº of cases notified	14-day incidence rate per 100 000 inhabitants
Santo Antão	37658	73	194
São Vicente	84964	318	374
São Nicolau	12031	0	0
Sal	41121	1	2
Boa Vista	19879	3	15
Maio	7525	72	957
Santiago	313460	175	56
Fogo	34815	67	192
Brava	5405	0	0
Cabo Verde	556857	709	127

Sources: National Institute of Statistics* and the Surveillance and Response Department, National Directorate of Health, Ministry of Health as of 27/12/20**

Between 28/12/2020 to 10/01/2021, the cumulative incidence rate of notified COVID-19 cases at the national level was 127 cases per 100 000 inhabitants. The island of Maio reported the highest incidence rate of 957 cases per 100 000 inhabitants, followed by the islands of São Vicente (374) and Fogo (192). The cumulative incidence rate remains under 25 cases per 100 000 inhabitants on the islands of Sal, Boa Vista, São Nicolau, and Brava (*Table 1*).

During the epidemiological week 1 of 2021, a total of 2758 samples were processed using *RT-PCR and GeneXpert®* diagnostic methods, and 2499 were performed using rapid antigen tests (*AG-RDT*) nationwide. In this week, the country registered a positivity rate of 9% and a testing rate of 944 tests per 100 000 inhabitants. The islands of São Vicente, Boavista, Santo Antão, and Maio reported the highest positivity rates during the epidemiological week 1, with 14%, 9%, 8%, and 8%, respectively (*Table 2*).

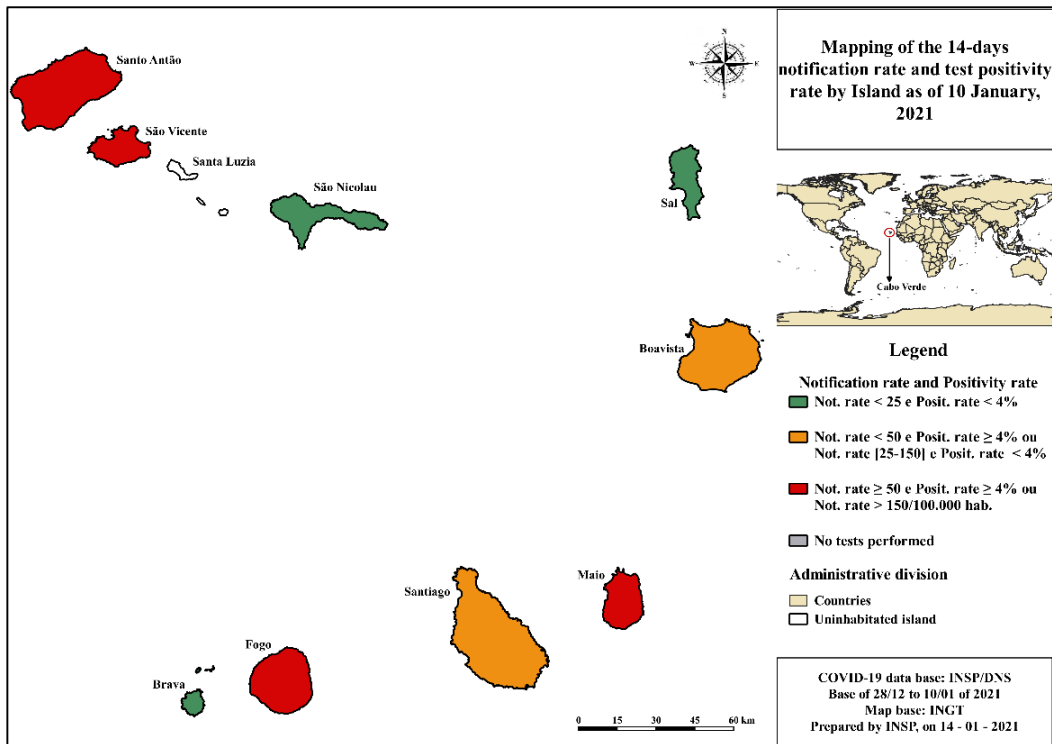


Figure 1. Incidence rate of cases reported in the last 14 days per 100 thousand inhabitants (28/12/2020 to 10/01/2021) and testing rate in the previous week (03/01/20 to 10/01/21) by island¹.

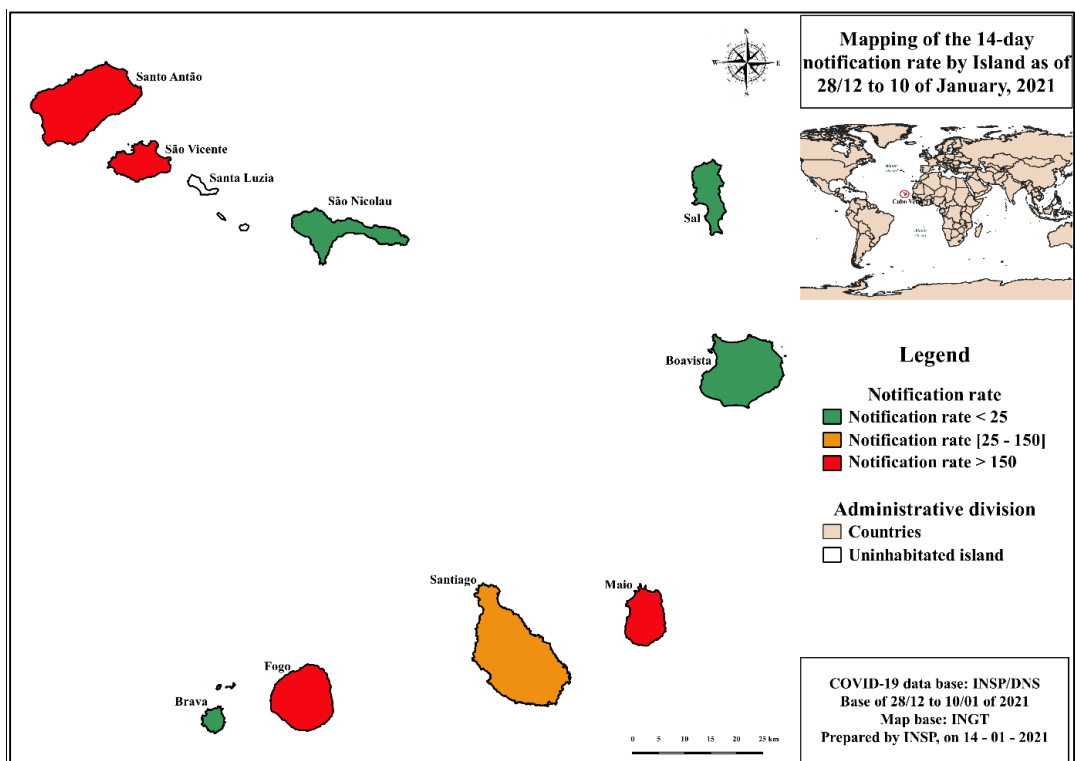


Figure 2. Incidence rate of cases reported in the last 14 days per 100 thousand inhabitants

¹ Map elaborated in accordance with resolution nº 169/2020. Cabo Verde, *BOLETIM OFICIAL*, Cabo Verde: Boletim Oficial I serie, numero 132 de 19 de novembro de 2020, 2020, p. 2945.

(28/12/2020 to 10/01/2021) by island²

Table 2. Number of cases, positivity rate, and testing rate per 100,000 populations in epidemiological week 53 (28/12/20-03/01/20) by island

Ilha	Nº of tests performed*	Positivity rate (%)	Testing rate/100 000 inhabitants
Santo Antão	632	8	1678
São Vicente	1629	14	1917
São Nicolau	3	0	25
Sal	141	3	343
Boavista	32	9	161
Maio	794	8	10551
Santiago	1461	7	466
Fogo	565	6	1623
Brava	0	-	0
Cabo Verde	5257	9	944

*Total number of RT-PCR and Ag-RDT performed

Sources: Virology laboratories of the National Institute of Public Health, Surveillance and Response Department, National Directorate of Health, Ministry of Health as of 03/01/21

Measures

Government lowers the fixed price of PCR tests for Covid-19 diagnosis for international travel According to Joint Ordinance No. 77/2020, of the 30 of December, the Government of Cape Verde determined that the PCR test's fixed price for identifying SARS-CoV-2 for international trips, from now on, costs 6500 escudos. This value must be applied in public health services. (Ordinance Number 77/2020, 30 of December).

The Cape Verdean government has authorized the presentation of a negative Antigen Test result (Ag-RDT) for crew and passengers traveling to Cape Verde. Crew and passengers traveling by air or sea and intending to disembark in Cape Verde are required to present a negative RT-PCR test result (Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction by Reverse Transcription) or a negative result from an antigen rapid test or any other molecular test validated by the health authorities, carried out within a maximum period of 72 hours, before departure, under penalty of being refused entry into the country. (Resolution Number 166/2020, 14 of December).

² Map elaborated in accordance with resolution nº 156/2020. Cabo Verde, *BOLETIM OFICIAL, SUPLEMENTO*. Cabo Verde: Boletim Oficial I serie, numero 135 de 14 de dezembro de 2020, 2020, p. 10.

Technical Team

National Health Observatory of the
National Institute of Public Health
National Directorate of Tourism and Transport

- Dr. Maria da Luz Lima Mendonça
- Mr. Francisco Martins
- Dr. Ngibo Fernandes
- Dr. Janilza Silva
- Mr. Jonas Gomes
- Mrs. Janice Soares

Editing and Publication:

- Mrs. Catarina Veiga
- Mr. Adnilson Medina



Ministério da Saúde e
da Segurança Social
Direção Nacional da Saúde



Ministério do
Turismo e Transportes
Direção Geral de Turismo e Transportes