

# COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

N° 140 / Week 43 / 3 November 2022

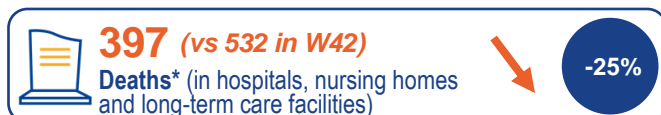
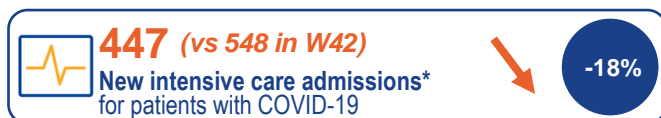
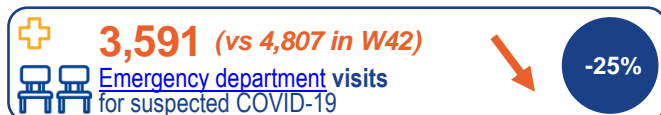
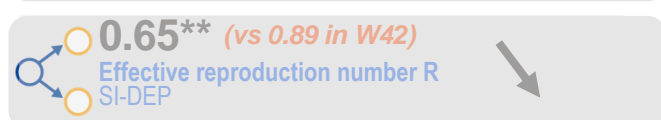
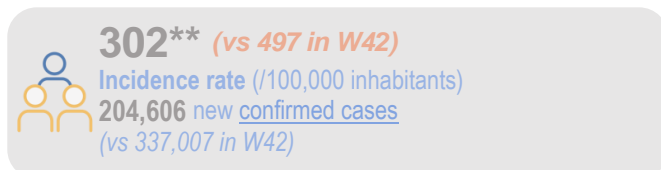
As part of its surveillance, alert, and prevention missions, Santé publique France analyses and publishes COVID-19 data obtained from its network of partners<sup>1</sup> as well as its own studies and surveys. This report is based on data submitted to Santé publique France up to 2 November 2022.

Due to certain private medical laboratories suspending transmission of COVID-19 test results to SI-DEP, the incidence rate and screening rate are underestimated as of 30 October; the values of the positivity rate and the effective R are also affected. Santé publique France remains mobilised to provide continuous monitoring of the epidemic based on the other data sources used for surveillance, which are unaffected.

## Key numbers

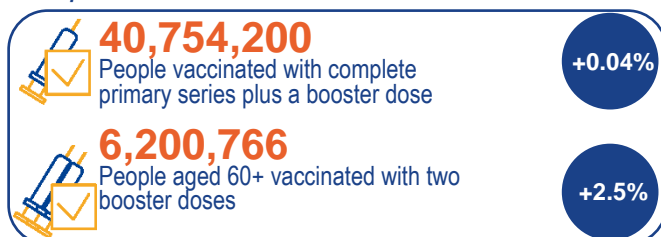
Week 43 (24-30 October 2022)

Compared to week 42 (17-23 October 2022)



On 31 October 2022

Compared to 24 October 2022



## Key points

### Epidemiological situation

In week 43, circulation of SARS-CoV-2 continued to slow, with a decrease in hospital admission rates and the number of deaths.

- Metropolitan France:
  - Drop in positivity rate, which nevertheless remains high
  - Decrease in incidence and positivity rates based on antigen tests
  - Hospital admissions and number of deaths in decline
- Overseas France:
  - Incidence rate based on antigen tests stable or falling in all regions

### Variants

- Omicron sub-lineages: BA.5 omnipresent, accounting for 92% of sequences in the week 42 Flash Survey (17 October)
- Among the BA.5 sub-lineages, BQ.1.1 is increasing (31% vs 20% in the week 41 Flash Survey)

### Prevention

- Vaccination on 31 October 2022 (Vaccin Covid data):
  - 74.5% of the population aged 18+ and 82.6% of the 65+ age group had received at least one booster dose
  - 33.2% of 60-79 year-olds (representing 39.2% of those who are eligible given the date of their last injection) and 39.9% of 80+ year-olds (52.0% of those who are eligible) had received a second booster dose
- In view of the highly active circulation of SARS-CoV-2 with the winter season approaching, compliance with the combined measures remains essential:
  - up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination, particularly via a booster dose of bivalent vaccine (protecting against the original strain and the Omicron variant of Sars-CoV-2) for eligible individuals already vaccinated with a primary course;
  - self-isolation in case of a positive test for COVID-19 and/or symptoms;
  - continued application of precautionary measures, including wearing a face mask, particularly around elderly people or those at risk of complications, as well as in enclosed spaces favourable to transmission (especially public transport) or at large gatherings, frequent hand washing and ventilation of interiors.

\*W43: unconsolidated data. \*\*Uninterpretable data.

<sup>1</sup>Santé publique France acknowledges the large public health network that contributes to COVID-19 surveillance: healthcare professionals working in private practice and hospitals, emergency departments, hospital and private biology laboratories, learned societies for infectious diseases, resuscitation and emergency medicine, CNAM, INSERM and INSEE.

## SI-DEP indicators

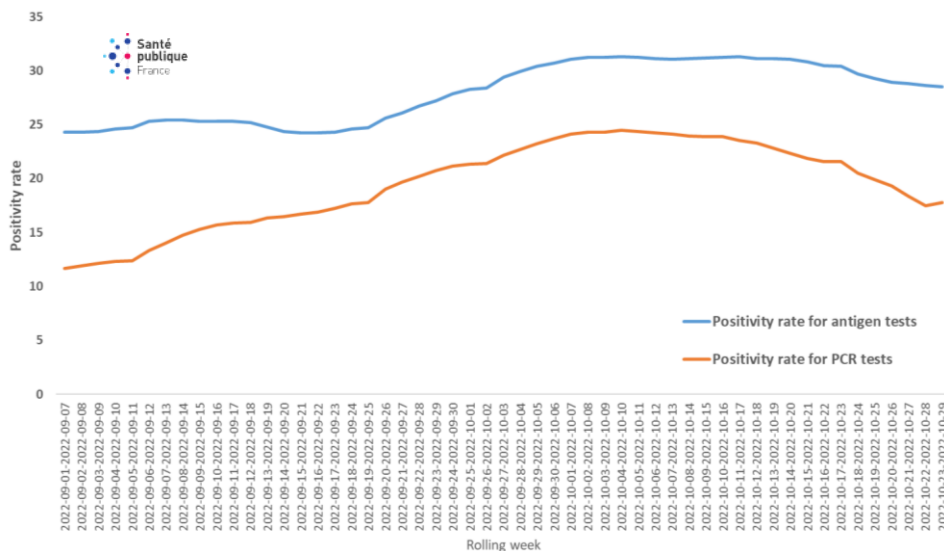
Transmission of COVID-19 test results to the SI-DEP database has been suspended by certain private medical laboratories since 27 October, disrupting the calculation of the virological indicators produced by Santé publique France. The RT-PCR tests (positive or negative results) performed by the laboratories participating in this movement are no longer recorded in the database transmitted to Santé publique France.

As a result, the SI-DEP indicators produced from 28 October onwards are based on antigen tests, mainly performed by pharmacies, as well as on the RT-PCR tests performed by those laboratories that continue transmission.

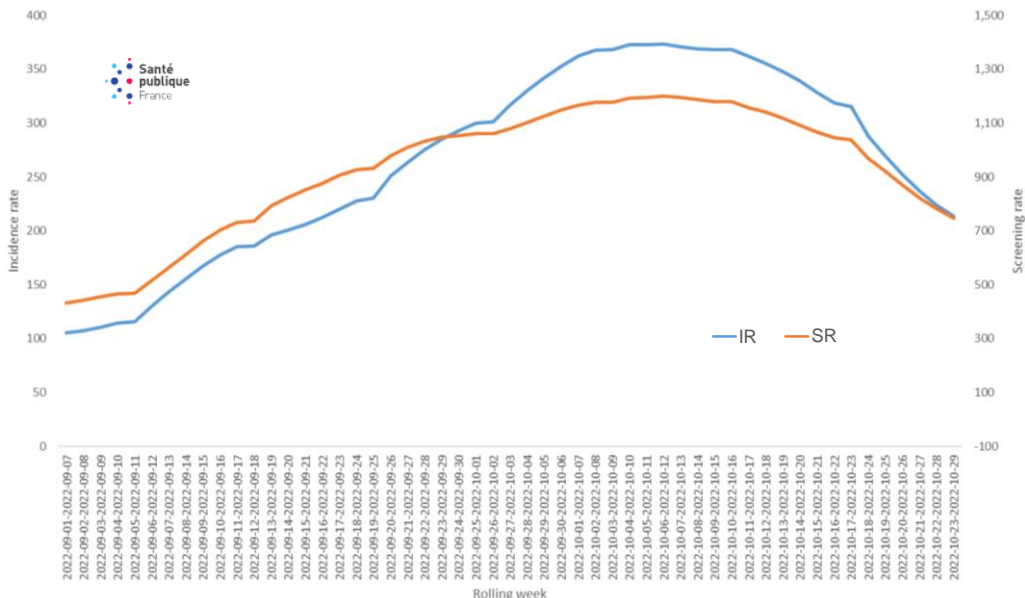
The impact analysis carried out by Santé publique France shows that the dynamics revealed by the antigen tests alone (which represent more than 50% of total tests) largely correlate with the dynamics of all tests and therefore allow us to continue assessing the evolution of the epidemic. On the basis of these data, we present below the evolution of the positivity rate, as well as the incidence and screening rates (for antigen tests alone). In the second figure, only the trends are to be interpreted. In the subsequent analysis, changes in the incidence and positivity rates are calculated from antigen tests over seven rolling days (from Sunday to Saturday) and not by calendar week.

Furthermore, Santé publique France wishes to emphasise that since March 2020, monitoring of the epidemic dynamics of COVID-19 relies on a multi-source surveillance system which allows changes in the epidemic to be assessed using indicators other than those produced solely from laboratory data. These indicators include emergency department visits, SOS Médecins consultations, hospital admissions (SI-VIC), deaths and estimates of vaccination coverage. These indicators are not impacted, guarantee continuity in the monitoring of epidemic trends, and will continue to feed the reports produced by Santé publique France.

### Positivity rate by test type, France



### Evolution of incidence rate (IR) and screening rate (SR) (antigen tests only), France



### SITUATION UPDATE

In week 43, circulation of SARS-CoV-2 slowed further at national level. The incidence rate calculated from antigen tests only was decreasing for the second consecutive week in all metropolitan regions. The downward trend in hospital indicators was confirmed in week 43. In overseas France, the incidence rate according to antigen tests was stable or falling in all regions. On 31 October, among those eligible according to the vaccination schedule, only 39.2% of 60-79 year-olds and 52.0% of 80+ year-olds had received a second booster dose. Given the persistent and highly active circulation of SARS-CoV-2 with the winter season approaching, vaccination coverage must be reinforced, particularly for booster doses of bivalent vaccine (protecting against the initial strain and the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2) among those already vaccinated with a primary course (3 or 6 months after the last injection according to the relevant recommendations). Preventive measures, particularly wearing a mask, remain necessary to protect elderly people and those at risk of complications. Compliance with other recommended measures also remains crucial in the event of symptoms, a positive test or high-risk contacts.

### EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

The incidence rate at national level is not interpretable for week 43 due to the suspended transmission of COVID-19 test results by certain private medical laboratories. The results of RT-PCR tests performed by these laboratories cannot be processed, thereby affecting the usual SI-DEP virological indicators (in particular the incidence and screening rates). The positivity rate, less affected, was 23.4% in week 43 at national level, i.e. -2.3 points compared to week 42. The epidemic trend therefore remained downward in week 43, as confirmed by the indicators (incidence, screening and positivity rates) calculated from antigen tests alone, for which a decrease was observed for the second consecutive week over seven rolling days. The trend was similar for the positivity rate calculated from antigen test data. It was 28.5% this week, i.e. -2 points compared to the previous week.

In week 43, the number of consultations for suspected COVID-19 decreased significantly in SOS-Médecins organisations (2,826 consultations, -25%) and in emergency departments (3,591 visits, -25%). This decline was observed in all age groups.

In week 43, records show 4,418 new hospital admissions (-34% compared to week 42), including 447 (-18%) to intensive care units. The downward trend in hospital indicators was therefore confirmed, with consolidated data from the previous week showing a drop of -12% for hospital admissions and -13% for intensive care admissions. In addition, the number of deaths in hospitals and long-term care facilities also fell for the first time this week (397, i.e. -25%, unconsolidated data).

In metropolitan France, hospital admission rates have decreased in all regions. Intensive care admission rates were also down, except in Centre-Val de Loire and Grand Est, where they stabilised.

In overseas France, the incidence rate according to antigen tests decreased in Martinique and remained stable in Guadeloupe and Reunion Island, as well as in French Guiana, where the numbers were low. Furthermore, hospital admission rates were decreasing in Guadeloupe and Reunion Island, and stable at low levels in French Guiana and Martinique.

### VARIANTS

Omicron circulates almost exclusively in France and its BA.5 sub-lineage remains omnipresent. In metropolitan France, BA.5 (all further sub-lineages combined) represented 92% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Survey for week 42 (17 October; unconsolidated data due to the low number of sequences). Among the sub-lineages of BA.5, detection of BQ.1.1 continues to increase. However, the rate of increase has stabilised, with 2%, 10%, 16%, 20% and 31% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Surveys for weeks 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42, respectively. The sub-lineage BA.4 (all further sub-lineages combined) continues circulating but at low levels, with 3% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Survey for week 42 (vs 6% in week 41). The detection of mutations at position L452 in screening tests remains stable at high levels (93% in weeks 43 and 42), in line with the circulation of BA.4 and BA.5 observed in sequencing. Further information is available in the [risk assessment of 26 October 2022](#).

### PREVENTION

On 31 October, 82.6% of people aged 65 years and older had received at least one booster dose. Meanwhile, among those eligible (according to the date of their last injection), 39.2% of 60-79 year-olds, 52.0% of 80+ year-olds, and 57.4% of nursing-home residents had received a second booster dose.

## Where to find the graphs and tables on InfoCovidFrance

Since 14 July 2022, the COVID-19 Epidemiological Update is produced in a condensed, 3-page format that provides an overview of the COVID-19 epidemic situation in France.

The graphs and tables presenting the indicators are available directly on [InfoCovidFrance](#), where a weekly report is published to supplement the dashboard:

### HOSPITAL INDICATORS

- Weekly figures for COVID-19 patients newly admitted to hospital and intensive care units are available in the “Key numbers” tab under “Consultations / Hospital”. The different rates for these indicators are also presented in the “Hospital” tab.
- Weekly rates of COVID-19 patients newly admitted to hospital and intensive care, by age group, are available as two separate graphs in the “Hospital” tab.

### LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY INDICATORS

The “Long-term care facilities” tab provides information on the following indicators:

- vaccination coverage among residents and staff of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- the weekly number of new confirmed cases among residents and staff of long-term care facilities;
- weekly deaths among residents of long-term care facilities.

### VIROLOGICAL DATA AT NATIONAL LEVEL

- The graph “Incidence and screening corrected for public holidays” is available in the “Incidence” tab.
- The heat map “Weekly evolution of the incidence rate by age group” is available in the “Incidence” tab.

### VIROLOGICAL DATA AT REGIONAL LEVEL

- The table “Evolution of the incidence, positivity, and screening rates by region” is presented in the form of regional and departmental-level graphs in the “Incidence” tab.

### VARIANTS

- The graph “Evolution of the proportions for each classified variant in the Flash Surveys” is available in the “Variants” tab.

### VACCINATION COVERAGE

- The graph “Vaccination coverage by age group” is available in the “Vaccination” tab.

For more information on COVID-19, the surveillance systems in place, and vaccination, consult the websites of [Santé publique France](#) and [Vaccination Info Service](#)  
For more information on the regional data, see the [Regional Epidemiological Updates](#)  
Find all the data in open access on [Géodes](#)

### Dashboard

#### [InfoCovidFrance](#)

Key figures and evolution of COVID-19 in France and worldwide