

COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

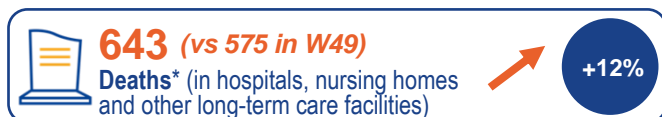
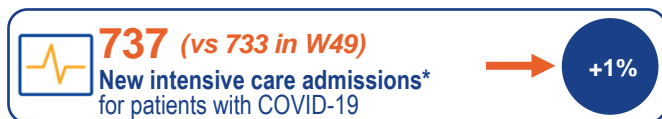
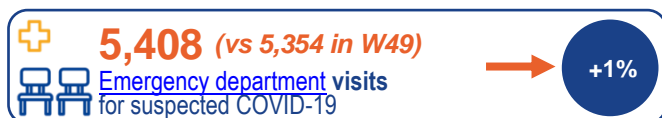
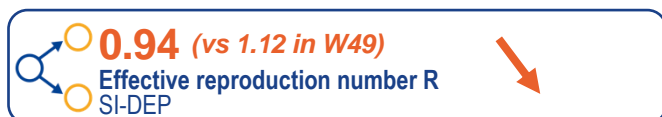
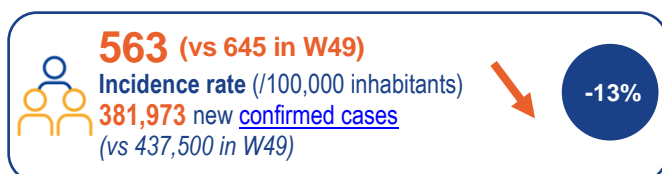
22 December 2022 / N° 147

As part of its surveillance, alert, and prevention missions, Santé publique France analyses and publishes COVID-19 data obtained from its network of partners¹ as well as its own studies and surveys. This report is based on data submitted to Santé publique France up to 21 December.

Key numbers

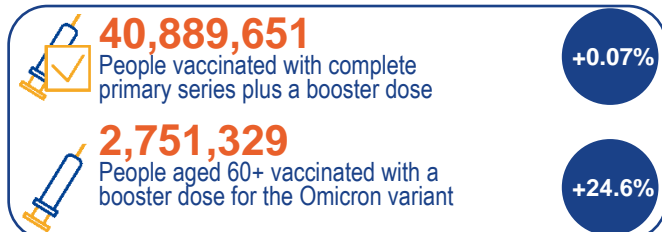
In week 50 (12-18 December 2022)

Compared to week 49 (5-11 December 2022)



On 19 December 2022

compared to 12 December 2022



Key points

Epidemiological situation

In week 50, circulation of SARS-CoV-2 slowed down throughout the country but remained at a high level. A drop in the incidence and positivity rates was observed in almost all regions and age groups. However, the number of new hospitalisations remained high and the number of deaths continued to rise.

Metropolitan France:

- Incidence rate more than 500/100,000 inhabitants in the majority of regions
- Sharp drop in incidence rate among people aged under 20
- Hospital admissions up in part of the country

Overseas France:

- Circulation decreasing in all regions except Reunion Island, where a slight increase was observed

Variants

- Mostly BA.5 with 94% of sequences in the week 49 Flash Survey on 5 December); among its sub-lineages, BQ.1.1 continues to rise (67% vs 63% in the week 48 Flash Survey)

Prevention

CoviPrev wave 36 (5-12 December 2022):

- 26% of participants are less prepared to take preventive measures for the end-of-year holiday season than last year;
- 75% of respondents targeted by the autumn booster dose were in favour of it.

Vaccination on 19 December 2022 (Vaccin Covid data):

- 14.3% of 60-79 year-olds had received a booster dose for the Omicron variant (19.3% of those eligible); this proportion was 17.2% and 21.1% respectively in the 80+ age group;
- 34.9% of 60-79 year-olds and 19.5% of those aged 80+ are considered to be protected by vaccination.

With the end-of-year holiday season approaching, and against a backdrop of active circulation of SARS-CoV-2, combined precautions must be reinforced:

- up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination, including a booster dose with a bivalent vaccine (against the initial strain and the Omicron variant) for eligible individuals vaccinated with a primary series, and flu vaccination;
- self-isolation in the event of a positive test and/or symptoms;
- continued application of preventive measures, including wearing a mask (particularly around vulnerable people and in closed, crowded areas such as public transport), hand-washing and ventilation of closed areas.

Next week, the COVID-19 Epidemiological Update will be replaced exceptionally by an update featuring the key figures published on the COVID-19 page of the website <https://www.santepubliquefrance.fr/>.

In addition, all indicators will be available on the following open data platforms: [InfoCovidFrance](https://www.info-covid.fr/), [Géodes](https://www.géodes.fr/) and [data.gouv.fr](https://www.data.gouv.fr/).

*W50: unconsolidated data ¹ 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.

SITUATION UPDATE

In week 50, circulation of SARS-CoV-2 slowed down nationwide, but remained high throughout most of the country. The incidence and positivity rates both declined, and this trend was observed in almost all regions and age groups, in particular among the under 20 age group. SOS Médecins consultations for suspected COVID-19 were also down and the number of emergency department visits stabilised. In hospitals, the number of new admissions remained high and the consolidated indicators from week 49 continued to show an upward trend. On 19 December, only 14.3% of people aged 60-79 and 17.2% of those aged 80+ had received a booster dose for the Omicron variant. Within this context, and given the active circulation of several respiratory viruses, increasing vaccination coverage for COVID-19 (particularly through a booster with a bivalent vaccine adapted to the initial strain and to Omicron) and for the flu in targeted populations remains necessary. With the end-of-year festivities approaching, preventive measures, including mask-wearing, must also be stepped up, particularly to protect the most vulnerable, all the more since around one in four people (26%) are less likely to comply with protective measures this year than last. Compliance with other recommended measures also remains necessary in the event of symptoms or a positive test.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

In week 50, the incidence rate dropped nationwide (-13%), but remained high, with 563 cases for 100,000 inhabitants. This decrease was observed across all age groups with the exception of the 90+ age group, where this rate remained highest (995, +1%). The lowest rates and the sharpest decreases were observed among 0-9 year-olds (109, -28%) and 10-19 year-olds (261, -36%). The screening rate fell slightly (2,231/100,000, -4%) ranging from 1,236 (-7%) among 0-9 year-olds to 3,951 (+5%) among 90+ year-olds. The positivity rate was also down (25.2%, -2.6 points), particularly in the under-60 age group. The under-20 age group showed the lowest rates: 8.8% among 0-9 year-olds (-2.5 points) and 12.8% among 10-19 year-olds, where the decline was sharpest (-6.0 points).

The number of consultations for suspected COVID-19 were decreasing in SOS Médecins organisations (3,247 consultations, -16%) and stabilised in emergency departments after 4 weeks of increases (5,408 visits, +1%).

The number of hospital admissions remained high in week 50, with 8,354 new hospitalisations (-4%, unconsolidated data), including 737 to intensive care (+1%, unconsolidated data). The previous week, the consolidated indicators showed that admissions had continued to climb in week 49 (+14% and +11% respectively). The number of deaths in hospitals and in long-term care facilities continued to rise in week 50 (643, +12%; unconsolidated data).

In metropolitan France, the incidence rate dropped in all regions, with the exception of Brittany, where a slight increase was again observed (579, +4%). This rate was lowest in Île-de-France (295, -8%) and highest in Occitanie (758, -14%). The hospital admission rate was still rising in part of the country. The increase was sharpest in Brittany, where it was also highest after Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. In overseas France, the incidence rate was up slightly in Reunion Island (221, +5%), but the hospital admission rate was falling.

VARIANTS

Omicron is almost the only variant present in France and its BA.5 sub-lineage remains omnipresent. In metropolitan France, BA.5 (all sub-lineages) represented 94% of interpretable sequences in the week 49 Flash Survey (5 December, based on 1,296 interpretable sequences). Among these sub-lineages, detection of BQ.1.1 (including its sub-lineages) continues to rise steadily, with 67% of interpretable sequences in the week 45 Flash Survey (vs 63% for the week 48 Flash Survey). More information is available in the [variants risk analysis of 14 December 2022](#).

PREVENTION

In the CoviPrev survey from 5 to 12 December, 2022 (wave 36), 26% of participants declared being less prepared to take preventive measures for the holiday season than last year (vs 12% at end of 2021). 94% declared that they had isolated following their latest positive test, and 75% of respondents targeted by the autumn booster dose were in favour of it (30% had already received it).

On 19 December, 14.3% of 60-79 year-olds and 17.2% of those aged 80+ had received a booster dose for the Omicron variant (19.3% and 21.1% of those eligible, respectively*). In total, 34.9% of the population aged 60-79 are considered to be protected by vaccination (as they received their most recent primary or booster injection in the last 6 months), as are 19.5% of those aged 80+ (who received their most recent primary or booster dose in the last 3 months). These proportions do not take into account people infected with SARS-CoV-2 during this time.

Vaccination coverage among health professionals for the complete primary vaccination series, the first booster dose and the booster for the Omicron variant are estimated respectively at 95.6%, 86.1% and 9.0% for employees of nursing homes, 97.7%, 88.8% and 10.1% for those working in private practice, and 96.6%, 88.2% and 10.3% for those working in health institutions**.

*Method previously described in issue N° 145. **Vaccination coverage is estimated for health professionals working in nursing homes, in hospitals and in private practice through the pairing by CNAM in September 2021 of the Shared Directory of Professionals Working in the Healthcare System (Répertoire Partagé des Professionnels intervenant dans le système de Santé) and ADELI (Automatisation DEs Listes) directories with the Vaccin Covid database. Only physicians, pharmacists, midwives, physiotherapists, dentists and nurses are identified in these directories.

Where to find the graphs and tables on InfoCovidFrance

Since 14 July 2022, the COVID-19 Epidemiological Update is produced in a condensed 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.

This week's survey

Update on [adhesion to preventive measures against winter viruses among the French public \(CoviPrev survey, wave 36, 5-12 December 2022\)](#)

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 open access data on [Géodes](#)

Dashboard

[InfoCovidFrance](#)

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