

# COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

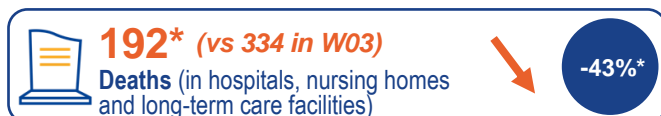
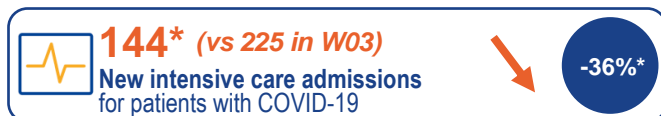
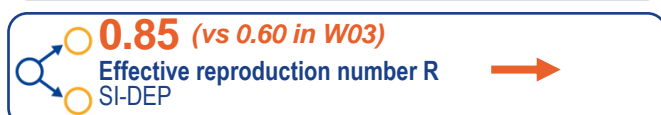
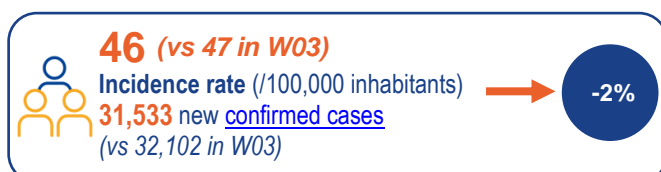
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As part of its surveillance, alert, and prevention missions, Santé publique France analyses and publishes COVID-19 data obtained from its network of partners<sup>1</sup> as well as its own studies and surveys. This report is based on data submitted to Santé publique France up to 31 January 2023.

## Key numbers

In week 4 (23-29 January 2023)

Compared to week 3 (16-22 January 2023)



On 31 January 2023

Compared to 24 January 2023



## Key points

### Epidemiological situation

In week 4, SARS-CoV-2 circulation stabilised at a low level nationwide. The number of hospital admissions and deaths continued to decrease.

- Metropolitan France:
  - Incidence and positivity rates slightly increasing in half of regions, although at low levels; decreasing or stable in other regions
  - Stabilisation of screening rate in all regions
  - Decrease in hospital admission rate in majority of regions
  - Number of deaths in decline
- Overseas France:
  - Incidence and positivity rates falling in all regions; highest rates in Reunion Island

### Variants

- BA.5 omnipresent (78% of sequences in week 3 Flash Survey); among its sub-lineages, BQ.1.1 appears to decrease (60% vs 73% in week 2 Flash Survey)
- All Omicron sub-lineages currently identified present similar characteristics

### Prevention

- Vaccination on 31 January 2023 (Vaccin Covid data):
  - 21.2% of 60-79 year-olds had received a booster dose adapted to the Omicron variant (26.1% among those eligible); 23.9% of 80+ year-olds had equally received this booster dose (27.6% among those eligible);
  - 28.1% of 60-79 year-olds and 20.6% of 80+ year-olds had received their latest dose of vaccine in the last 6 or 3 months, respectively.
- Given that SARS-CoV-2 and winter viruses are still in active circulation, compliance with preventive measures remains recommended:
  - up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination, including a booster dose of bivalent vaccine (protecting against the original strain and the Omicron variant) for eligible individuals already vaccinated with a primary series, and flu vaccination;
  - continued application of precautionary measures, particularly in case of a positive test and/or symptoms.

\*W04: unconsolidated data. Revised values for these indicators will feature in the next Epidemiological Update.

<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.

## In week 4 (23-29 January 2023)

### SITUATION UPDATE

In week 4, the epidemic stabilised at a low level nationwide. The number of hospital admissions and deaths continued to decrease. On 31 January, only 21.2% of 60-79 year-olds and 23.9% of 80+ year-olds had received a booster dose adapted to the Omicron variant. Given that several respiratory viruses remain in active circulation, reinforcing vaccination coverage for COVID-19 and the flu among eligible persons remains necessary. Compliance with other measures for prevention and control is still recommended, particularly in case of symptoms or a positive test, and to protect vulnerable people.

The incidence rate dropped further among 0-9 year-olds with a stable screening rate for the age group. Incidence and screening rates were increasing to a limited extent among 10-19 year olds and stabilising among 20-69 year olds. These indicators continued to decline in the 70+ age group. The positivity rate was stable in all age groups, except for the under-10s, where it decreased. Indicators of healthcare use for suspected COVID-19 in SOS Médecins networks and emergency departments were stabilising. The number of emergency department visits continued to fall, as did new hospital admissions, new intensive care admissions and deaths. In metropolitan France, incidence and positivity rates were slightly increasing at a low level in almost half of the regions. The hospital admission rate was down in the majority regions. In overseas France, incidence and positivity rates were in decline but remained highest in Reunion Island. The number of new hospital admissions was decreasing or stabilising in all overseas regions.

Since the emergence of Omicron in late 2021, significant and rapid genetic diversification has been observed within this variant and its successive sub-lineages. However, all Omicron sub-lineages described so far retain very similar characteristics and therefore remain included within this variant. In metropolitan France, BA.5 (all sub-lineages combined) remained in majority and represented 78% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Survey for week 3-2023 (based on 569 sequences only). Among these sub-lineages, detection of BQ.1.1 (including all further sub-lineages) seemed to stabilise according to the Flash Survey for week 3-2023, with 60% of interpretable sequences compared to 73% for week 2. This downward trend remains to be confirmed, however, as the week 3 Flash Survey is not consolidated. In parallel to BA.5 and its sub-lineages, there was a rise in circulation of BA.2 sub-lineages (12% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Survey for week 3-2023 vs 7% for week 2) and of the recombinant XBB (including further sub-lineages, 10% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Survey for week 3-2023 vs 3% for week 2) but at this stage the results of the week 3 Flash Survey should be interpreted with caution. More information is available in the [risk assessment of 11 January 2023](#).

The level of booster vaccination was still increasing slowly. On 31 January 2023, 21.2% of 60-79 year-olds and 23.9% of 80+ year-olds had received a booster dose adapted to the Omicron variant (26.1% and 27.6% among those eligible, respectively\*). At that date, 28.1% of 60-79 year-olds had received a vaccine dose within the last 6 months\*\*, and 20.6% of 80+ year-olds within the last 3 months\*\*. Vaccination coverage among health professionals for the primary vaccination series, the first booster dose and the booster adapted to the Omicron variant is estimated respectively at 95.6%, 86.3% and 12.5% for those working in nursing homes; 97.7%, 88.9% and 13.7% for those working in private practice; 96.6%, 88.3% and 14.1% for those working in health institutions\*\*\*.

\*Method described in *Epidemiological Update* N° 145. \*\*All COVID-19 vaccines included. \*\*\*Method described in *Epidemiological Update* N° 147.

## Graphs and tables

### [InfoCovidFrance](#)

The dashboard gives direct access to graphs and tables displaying the indicators and a complementary weekly report covering:

- [hospital indicators](#)
- [long-term care facility indicators](#)
- [virological data at national level](#)
- [virological data at regional level](#)
- [data on variants](#)
- [data on vaccination coverage](#)

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](#)