

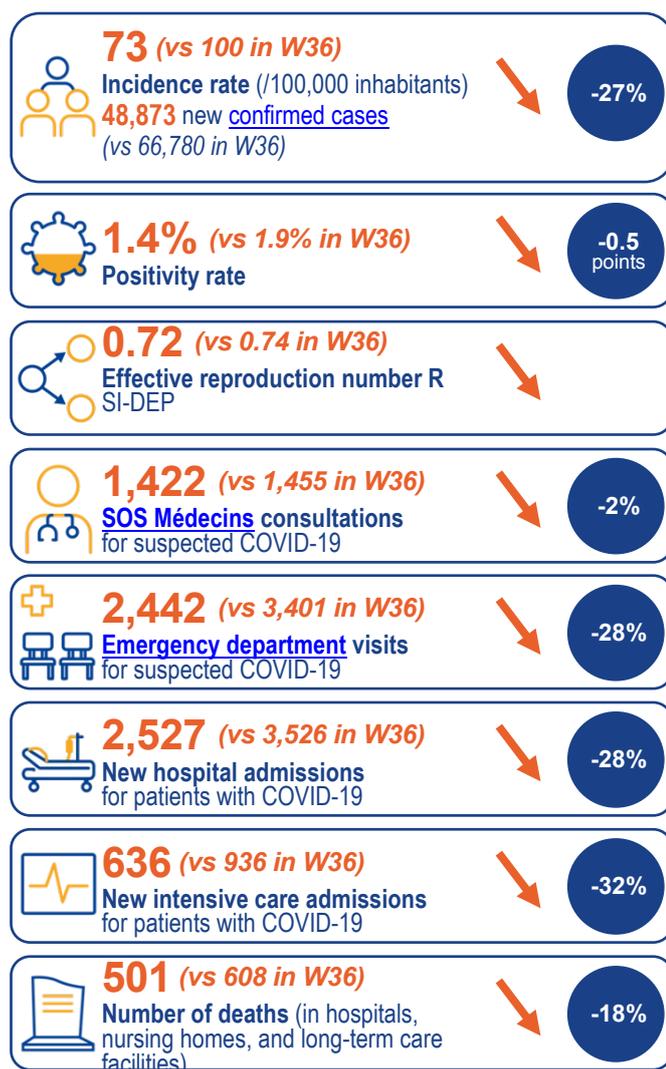
COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

Weekly report / Week 37 / 23 September 2021

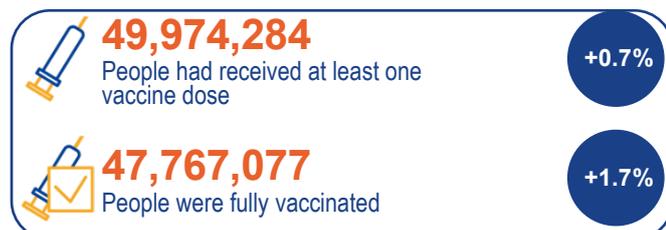
As part of its surveillance, alert, and prevention missions, Santé publique France analyses and publishes COVID-19 data obtained from its network of partners as well as its own studies and surveys. This report is based on data reported to Santé publique France up to 22 September 2021.

Key numbers

Week 37 (13-19 September 2021)
Compared to week 36 (6-12 August 2021)



On 21 September 2021
Compared to 14 September 2021



Key points

Epidemiological situation

In week 37, all the epidemiological indicators continued to improve in metropolitan France. Nevertheless, the situation remained very concerning in French Guiana.

- Metropolitan France:
 - Improvement in the epidemiological indicators in all regions
- Overseas France:
 - French Guiana: incidence rate and hospital indicators high and on the rise
 - Martinique and Guadeloupe: incidence rate and hospital indicators on the decline

Variants

- Delta variant identified in more than 99% of interpretable sequenced samples in Flash Surveys from 24 and 31 August 2021

Contact tracing

- Slight increase in the average number of contacts per case:
 - Continued decline in the number of cases not reporting any contacts
 - Rise in the number of cases reporting more than five contacts

Prevention

- Vaccination coverage on 21 September: 74.5% with at least one dose and 71.9% fully vaccinated
- CoviPrev Survey from 31 August to 7 September:
 - Increased anxiety and sleep problems compared to the previous wave
- Importance of combining different measures: vaccination in addition to contact tracing and preventive measures, especially in the current context marked by a lower adherence to preventive measures

* 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 37, the circulation of SARS-CoV-2 decreased for the fifth consecutive week. Epidemiological indicators improved in all regions of metropolitan France. In overseas France, the situation continued to be very concerning in French Guiana, with an increase in the incidence rate and hospital indicators. At the national level, the incidence rate fell in all age groups but was the highest among young adults and children under 18 years. The number of contacts reported by cases was still low, indicating the incomplete identification of contact persons, which limits the ability to identify and control transmission chains. On 21 September 2021, 74.5% of the French population had received at least one vaccine dose, and 71.9% were fully vaccinated. Given the lower adherence to preventive measures, vigilance is required to maintain the current favourable dynamics of the epidemic. Vaccination should continue to be combined with other preventive measures, notably by respecting protective measures, limiting contacts at risk, and respecting self-isolation in the case of symptoms, confirmed infection, or contact with a confirmed case.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

At the national level, the incidence rate continued to fall, reaching 73 cases per 100,000 inhabitants (-27%) in week 37, which corresponds to 6,982 diagnosed cases per day on average. The incidence rate decreased in all age groups. The screening rate based on antigenic and PCR tests (excluding self-testing) remained very high at 5,053 per 100,000 inhabitants (-4%). It was on a stable or downward trend in all age groups, except for children under 10 years among whom it continued to rise (+59%). The positivity rate also fell to 1.4% (-0.5 points), with a more marked decline among children under 10 years, which can be explained by the higher screening rate in this age group.

The number of consultations for suspected COVID-19 decreased in emergency departments (2,442, -28%) and remained stable in SOS Médecins organisations (1,422, -2%).

In terms of hospital indicators, new admissions continued to fall, with 2,527 new hospital admissions (-28%) and 636 new intensive care admissions (-32%). On 21 September, 8,655 infected patients were hospitalised, including 1,757 in intensive care. Sentinel surveillance of severe cases hospitalised in intensive care resumed in all regions on 31 August 2021. Compared to the first semester of 2021, patients were younger and with similar comorbidities. In terms of vaccination status, initial (unconsolidated) data indicate that almost three-quarters of severe patients in metropolitan France were not vaccinated.

The number of reports and confirmed cases reported by social and medical establishments has decreased in recent weeks.

In metropolitan France, the incidence rate fell in all regions and was less than 100/100,000 inhabitants, except in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (152). The screening rate remained high in all regions. The hospital admission rate was down in all regions.

In overseas France, both the incidence rate (496, +18%) and hospital admissions increased in French Guiana.

However, the circulation of the virus continued to decline in Martinique (incidence rate 220, -23%) and Guadeloupe (171, -34%). Hospital admissions were also down, although [excess mortality](#) persisted.

VARIANTS OF CONCERN

The Delta variant represented nearly all viruses circulating in metropolitan France, corresponding to more than 99% of interpretable sequences in Flash Surveys #21 and #22 on 24 and 31 August, respectively.

CONTACT TRACING

In week 37, the number of new cases and new [contacts](#) continued to fall at the same rate (-29% and -13%, respectively).

Participation in sport and physical activities increased, especially among children under 12 years, an age group not yet eligible for vaccination or the health pass. Consequently, preventive measures should be reinforced specifically in this age group. The proportion of contacts aged 12 years and older with a complete primary vaccination schedule increased from 49% to 54%, while the proportion of contacts who became cases diminished by 2 points.

PREVENTION

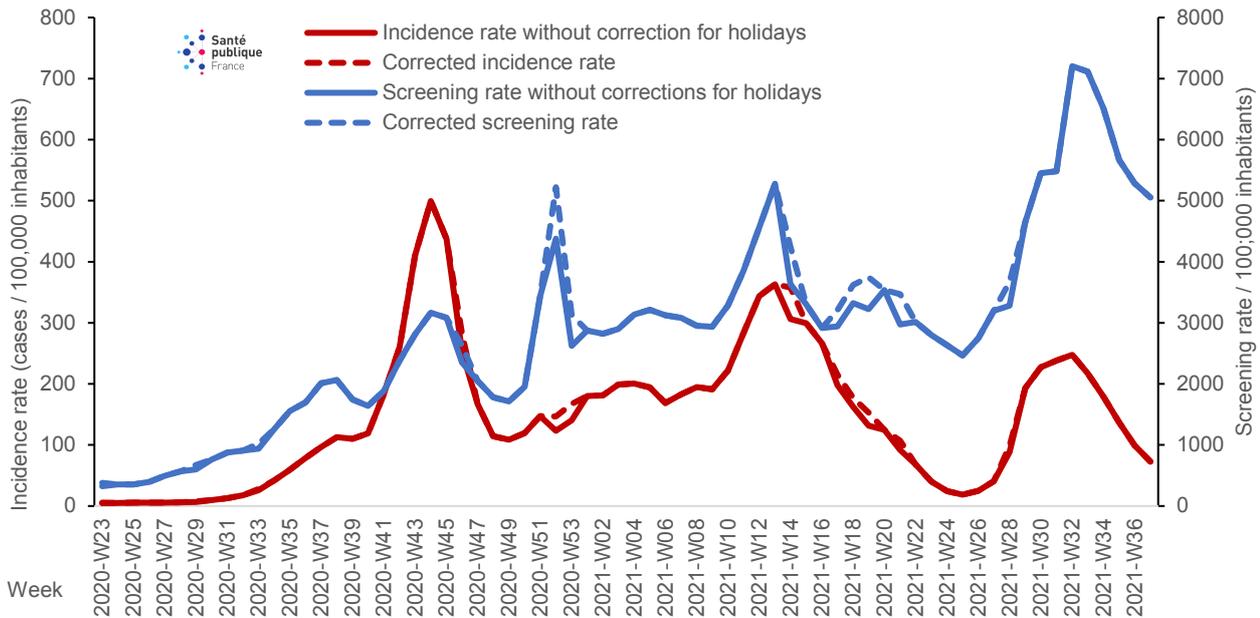
In France, on 21 September 2021, 74.5% of the population had received at least one vaccine dose, and 71.9% were fully vaccinated. Vaccination coverage of healthcare professionals was high, with differences according to their place of work.

The results of the [CoviPrev Survey](#) conducted from 31 August to 7 September showed that the mental health of the interviewed people remained poor. Despite the overall decline in depression rates since late April, the percentage of people reporting anxiety and sleep problems has increased since the previous survey (15-21 July).

Confirmed cases, incidence, and screening

Nationally, the [incidence rate](#) was 73 per 100,000 inhabitants in week 37 (vs 100 in week 36, -27%), while the [screening rate](#) was 5,053 per 100,000 inhabitants (vs 5,285 in week 36, -4%). The [positivity rate](#) fell by 0.5 points (1.4% vs 1.9% in week 36). Among tested individuals who provided information about the presence of symptoms, 92% were asymptomatic, which was stable compared to week 36. The positivity rate decreased among the 238,137 tested symptomatic individuals (8% vs 14% in week 36) and, to a lesser extent, among the 2,884,751 tested asymptomatic individuals (0.8% vs 1% in week 36). Overall, 45% of cases were symptomatic (stable compared to week 36).

Weekly trends in the incidence and screening rates, with or without correction for the effect of public holidays, since 1 June 2020, France (up to 22 September 2021)

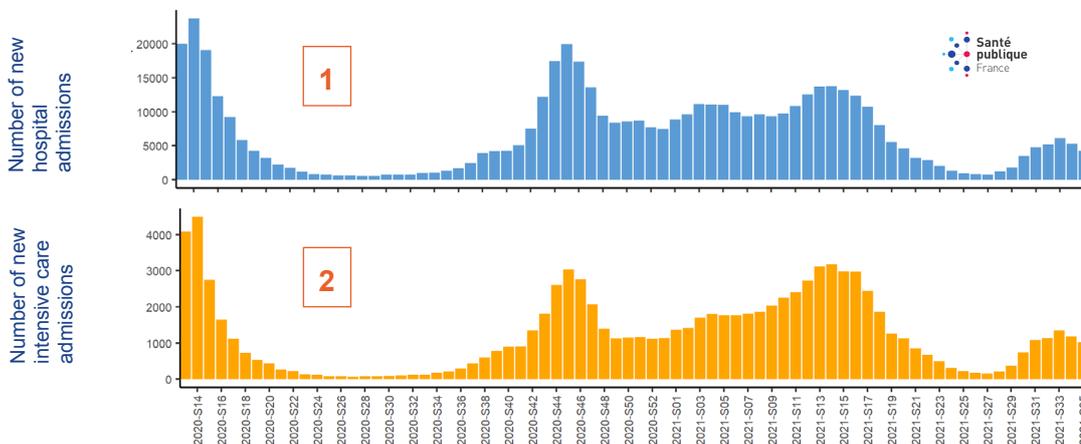


Source: SI-DEP, data processing by Santé publique France

Hospitalisations, intensive care admissions, and deaths

On 21 September 2021, **8,655** COVID-19 patients were hospitalised in France (vs 9,800 on 14 September, -12%), including **1,757** in intensive care (vs 2,013 on 14 September, -13%). At the national level, hospital indicators based on the date of declaration were down, with **2,527** [new hospital admissions](#) (-28% from week 36) and **636** [new intensive care admissions](#) (-32%).

Weekly number of new hospital (1) and intensive care (2) admissions for COVID-19 patients since 23 March 2020, France (up to 19 September 2021)



Source: SI-VIC, data processing by Santé publique France

Week of declaration to Santé publique France

At the national level, there were 458 [deaths](#) in hospital in week 37, down from week 36 (-21%), as well as 43 deaths in long-term care facilities (vs 26 in week 36 and 61 in week 35). Data from long-term care facilities in week 37 are not consolidated.

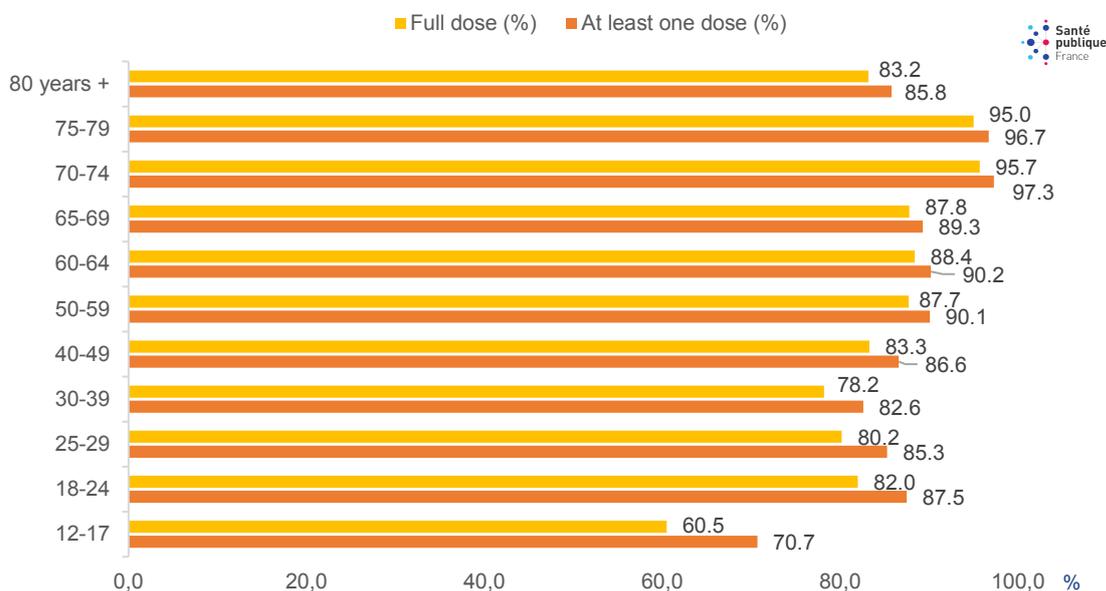
Variants of concern

The L452R mutation (primarily driven by the Delta variant) was detected in 95.5% of screened positive samples in week 37 (vs 95.3% in week 36). [Sequencing data](#) confirm the prevalence of the Delta variant among the circulating variants. Delta was identified in more than 99% of interpretable sequences in metropolitan France in Flash Surveys #21 (24 August) and #22 (31 August, unconsolidated data). In overseas France, Delta was identified in more than 75% of interpretable sequences in Flash Survey #20 (17 August) (at present, data from Flash Surveys #21 and #22 are uninterpretable). The proportion of other variants decreased, namely Alpha in Martinique, Beta in Reunion Island, and Gamma in French Guiana.

Vaccination

On 21 September, [vaccination coverage](#) in France based on Vaccin Covid was estimated at 74.5% (n=49,974,284) for at least one dose and 71.9% (n=47,767,077) for full vaccination. Among the eligible population aged 12 years and older, 49,955,297 had received at least one dose (86.6%), and 47,755,201 (82.8%) were fully vaccinated.

Vaccination coverage by age group in France on 21 September 2021 (in %)



On 21 September, 93.0% of residents of aged care homes and long-term care facilities had received at least one dose (90.8% for full vaccination). Vaccination coverage continued to progress among healthcare professionals: 90.1% of healthcare workers in health facilities, 90.4% of professionals in aged care homes and long-term care facilities, and 95.5% of professionals in private practice had received at least one dose.

Vaccination coverage of healthcare professionals in France

	At least one vaccine dose (%)		Full vaccination (%)	
	21 September	14 September	21 September	14 September
Professionals in aged care homes and long-term care facilities	90.4	89.8	87.4	86.1
Professionals in private practice	95.5	95.0	93.2	92.3
Healthcare workers in health facilities	90.1	89.3	87.3	86.1

Sources: Data from Vaccin Covid, Cnam, data processing by Santé publique France

For more information on COVID-19, the surveillance systems in place, and vaccination consult the websites of [Santé publique France](#) and [Vaccination Info Service](#).

Check out the surveys of the week

Update on the circulation of variants with [Flash Survey #20](#)

Update on [Mental health](#)

Update on [Vaccination coverage of healthcare professionals](#)

For more information on the regional data, see [Regional Epidemiological Updates](#).

Find all the open access data on [Géodes](#).