

COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

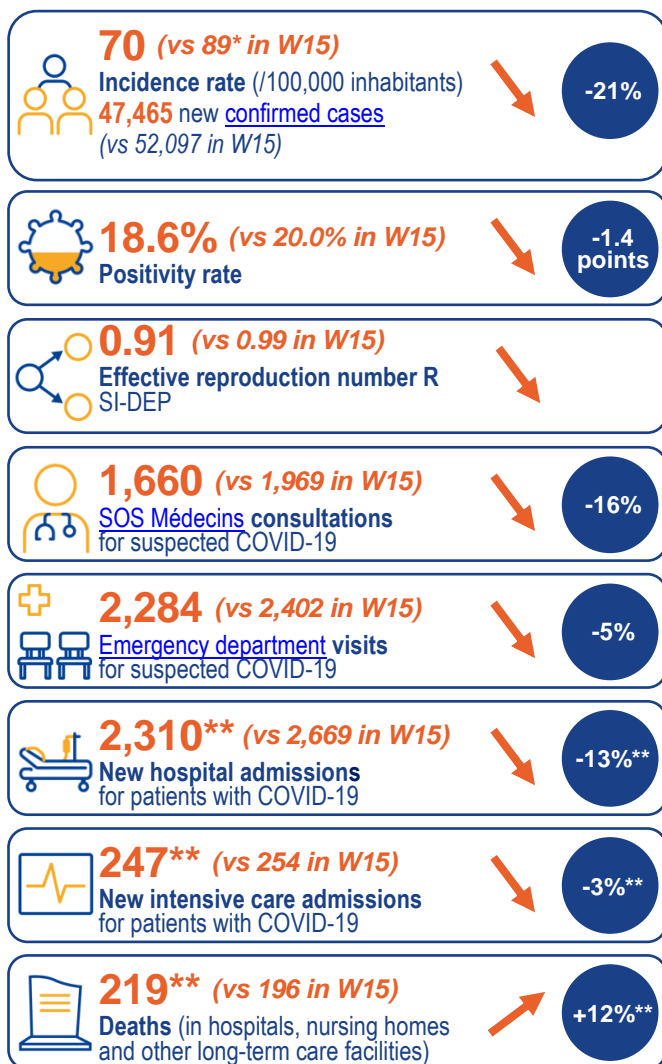
26 April 2023 / N° 164

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 26 April 2023.

Key numbers

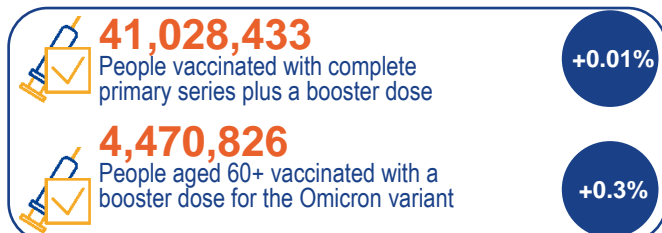
In week 16 (17-23 April 2023)

Compared to week 15 (10-16 April 2023)



On 25 April 2023

Compared to 17 April 2023



Key points

Epidemiological situation

In week 16, the positivity rate (based on SI-DEP virological data) was decreasing in a context of very low screening rates. Emergency department visits were down, as were new hospital admissions. The number of deaths was slightly up for the third week in a row.

- Metropolitan France:
 - Incidence rate in decline
 - Positivity rate falling in most age groups and regions
 - Hospital admission rate decreasing in majority of regions
- Overseas France:
 - Incidence rate increasing or stable
 - New hospital admissions still very low

Variants

- The recombinant XBB.1.5 maintained a stable majority with 58% of sequences in the week 14 Flash Survey (vs 56% in week 13)
- The BQ.1 sub-lineage continued to decrease (4% in the week 14 Flash Survey vs 6% in week 13)

Prevention

- Vaccination on 25 April 2023 (Vaccin Covid data):
 - 23.6% of 60-79 year-olds and 26.4% of 80+ year-olds had received a booster dose adapted to the Omicron variant
 - 21.8% of 60-79 year-olds had received a dose of vaccine in the last 6 months and 3.1% of 80+ year-olds in the last 3 months
- Given that SARS-CoV-2 remains in active circulation, continued compliance with preventive measures is 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;
 - continued application of precautionary measures, particularly in case of a positive test and/or symptoms, to protect vulnerable individuals.

*Incidence and screening rates for the week of 10 April have been corrected to account for the effect of the public holiday on screening activity.

**W16: unconsolidated data. Updated values for these indicators will feature in the next Epidemiological Update.

¹Santé 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.

Week 16 (17 to 23 April 2023)

SITUATION UPDATE

In week 16, the positivity rate decreased (based on SI-DEP virological data) in a context of very low screening rates*. Consultations in SOS Médecins networks and emergency department visits were decreasing in number, as were new hospital admissions, which continued to fall in the majority of regions. Given the insufficient level of booster vaccination and the persistent circulation of SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19 vaccination within target groups remains necessary. Compliance with protective precautions and other preventive measures remains recommended, particularly in case of symptoms or a positive test, in order to protect vulnerable people.

Nationally, incidence and positivity rates were decreasing in week 16 while the screening rate was at a very low level (375/100,000 inhabitants). The incidence rate remained lowest in the under-20 age group. The positivity rate remained lowest among children aged 0-9 years. This indicator was decreasing in all age groups except among 0-9 year-olds. The screening rate was also down in all age groups. Consultations for suspected COVID-19 were decreasing in emergency departments and across the SOS Médecins network of general practitioners. In metropolitan France, a drop in the positivity rate was observed in most regions. New hospital admissions also continued to decrease in the majority of regions. The incidence rate remained low in the majority of metropolitan regions and was slightly increasing or stable in overseas France. The number of new hospital admissions remained at a very low level.

The classification system for SARS-CoV-2 variants has been updated. All changes are detailed in the [risk assessment of 22 March 2023](#). In metropolitan France, the recombinant XBB.1.5 retains a stable majority with 58% of interpretable sequences in the week 14 Flash Survey of 3 April 2023 (vs 56% in week 13). Among all variants classed VUM, the BQ.1 sub-lineage continued to decrease, falling from 6% in the week 13 Flash Survey to 4% in week 14. CH.1.1, a sub-lineage of BA.2, is detected at low levels, with 3% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Surveys for weeks 13 and 14.

Vaccination coverage for booster doses adapted to the Omicron variant remained insufficient. On 25 April 2023, 23.6% of 60-79 year-olds and 26.4% of 80+ year-olds had received this booster dose. At that date, 21.8% of 60-79 year-olds had received a vaccine dose within the last 6 months** and 3.1% of 80+ year-olds within the last 3 months**. Vaccination coverage among health professionals for the booster adapted to the Omicron variant is estimated at 13.8% for those working in nursing homes, 14.8% for those working in private practice and 15.2% for those working in health institutions***.

**Modifications in the screening strategy since February 2023 could affect how people use testing, meaning these indicators should be interpreted with caution.*

***All COVID-19 vaccines combined. *** Method described in Epidemiological Update N° 147.*

Graphs and tables

[InfoCovidFrance](#)

The dashboard gives direct access to the indicators presented as graphs and tables 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](#)