

# ASPHER Report: COVID-19 Situation Reporting across Europe

## Week of September 27<sup>th</sup> 2021

**Authors:** Pallavi Chatarajupalli<sup>1,2</sup>, Rok Hrzic<sup>2,3</sup>, Ralf Reintjes<sup>1,4</sup>, Katarzyna Czabanowska<sup>3,4</sup>, John Middleton<sup>4,5,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> HAW Hamburg University, Germany

<sup>2</sup> ASPHER Young Professional

<sup>3</sup> Maastricht University, the Netherlands

<sup>4</sup> ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force

<sup>5</sup> ASPHER President

\* Corresponding Author: [john.middleton@aspher.org](mailto:john.middleton@aspher.org)

*This is ASPHER's weekly surveillance report. We hope it is complementary to other resources such as ECDC and Our World in Data, where the reader can go for more detailed information. Please give us your feedback: is the presentation helpful to you and your colleagues? What other information would you like to see in it?*

The Delta variant is the dominant variant in most of the European region. A high level of protection against morbidity and mortality caused by COVID-19 and its variants can be attained by completing the vaccination schedule as recommended ([link](#)). ECDC emphasizes that the vaccination program in the EU/EEA region should focus on ensuring that all eligible populations are vaccinated ([link](#)). In addition, genomic surveillance is emerging as a vital necessity to achieve containment of the virus in this pandemic. It would facilitate greater early anticipation as well as initiation of effective strategies to mitigate outbreaks of new variants of the COVID-19 virus ([link](#)).

ASPHER is concerned that countries are adopting different policies on rolling out a third vaccine dose. There should be greater international consensus and shared research to determine the vaccine efficacy and to prioritize age groups for the administration of the third jab. In countries such as Turkey, Scotland an increase in new infections are linked to school reopening and the infection rate among the young age group has been increased. ASPHER emphasizes that it is vital to consider new mitigation measures and/or re-evaluation of the existing to minimise school-based transmission and ensure safe learning.

ASPHER recognizes the importance of following [non-pharmacological interventions](#) as well as achieving high levels of vaccination uptake. Also, countries should closely monitor new infection rates among both vaccinated and unvaccinated to understand the efficacy of the vaccine.

*The current situation demands international consensus on a long-term strategy to minimize the transmission of virus variants, not only by rapid vaccination but also by increasing vaccine confidence and improving accessibility to vaccines to prevent further waves. Despite vaccination status, non-pharmacological interventions which complement vaccination must be followed.*

*ASPHER remains concerned that countries are unprepared and complacent about the responses that will be needed by health services and public health authorities this autumn. Read our statement [here](#).*

Europe is currently in [a third wave of the pandemic](#), fuelled by the delta variant. Countries are struggling to find a balance in controlling the virus and going back to the ‘normal’ everyday activity. Countries take several different approaches, with some considering more cautious strategies and others trying to ‘live with the virus’. It is a new phase in the pandemic for Europe and authorities should be careful in how they address the pandemic, keeping in mind the risk of a new wave during autumn (1).

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid spread of the virus in almost all countries has resulted in considerable disruption of public health at a global level. The pandemic has cost more than 4.5million lives to date (4,752,988) and the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases are now above two hundred million (232,075,351). Individual WHO regions confirmed COVID-19 cases are as follows (2).

Table 1: Cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases since 30/12/2019

WHO Region	Confirmed COVID-19 cases
Americas	89,389,837
Europe	69,700,668
South-East Asia	42,913,818
Eastern Mediterranean	15,709,205
Western-Pacific	8,358,506
Africa	6,002,486

As per the WHO weekly epidemiological report, the European region is contributing 30% of cumulative COVID-19 confirmed cases worldwide. In the past 7-days, the number of new cases and new deaths are down by 1% each (3).

IHME policy briefs show that in the WHO Europe region, the **divergent trend in the Delta surge transmission is continuing**. In Central and countries in the Western region, the Delta surges are declining after peaking. Whereas in the Russian Federation, the opposite trend is seen where an increasing number of new infections after a period of decline. In Scotland, a double peaking is noted which is attributed to the school reopening. Vaccination and history of infection are the two factors maintaining the immunity against the Delta variant in the western and eastern region respectively. The level of immunity will keep up with ongoing vaccination and the infection through the Delta variant. However, the level of infection rate would be constant until mid-October and increase later on with seasonality. The contributing factors to the current epidemic trend in the region are waning immunity acquired through vaccination and infection, emerging variants, adherence to non-pharmacological interventions such as wearing a face mask, social distancing (4).

The following table shows a 7-day average of daily newly confirmed coronavirus cases, deaths and proportion of people fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in the countries of the WHO-Europe region reported on 27/09/2021 (table 2) (5) (6) (7).

Table2:

<b>WHO Europe region</b>	<b>Rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed COVID-19 cases/mill people</b>	<b>Rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed COVID-19 deaths /mill people</b>	<b>Share of population fully vaccinated against COVID-19</b>
Serbia	959.27	6.07	42.39%*
Montenegro	751.99	10.69	33.30%
Israel	571.54	2.10	63.94%
Lithuania	528.92	6.37	59.70%
United Kingdom	496.82	2.05	65.68%
Slovenia	425.06	2.82	47.71%
Estonia	407.92	1.94	45.71%
Georgia	403.07	9.66	19.75%
Romania	356.32	6.41	27.85%
Latvia	331.10	3.37	44.78%
Turkey	322.09	2.63	51.52%
Croatia	275.10	3.22	41.56%
Ireland	263.87	0.86	73.63%
Moldova	262.46	3.83	19.24%
Armenia	243.78	5.82	N/A
Albania	237.88	3.28	27.02%
Bulgaria	224.77	9.78	19.03%
Greece	209.15	3.06	58.57%
Belarus	208.47	1.30	N/A
Bosnia And Herzegovina	203.90	9.67	N/A
North Macedonia	201.05	9.26	N/A
Austria	185.90	1.26	59.66%
Belgium	165.46	0.63	72.08%
Ukraine	157.22	2.98	12.67%
Switzerland	153.62	0.74	54.23%*
Cyprus	152.19	0.96	62.21%
Slovakia	148.78	0.60	41.18%
Russia	142.35	5.46	28.65%
Luxembourg	132.77	0.23	N/A
Netherlands	132.22	0.40	63.83%*
Kazakhstan	127.55	2.72	33.74%
Norway	122.19	0.23	66.21%
Azerbaijan	110.98	2.08	35.57%
Iceland	104.43	0.00	N/A
Germany	91.84	0.77	63.57%
Andorra	90.49	0.00	N/A
France	88.14	1.73	65.47%
Finland	88.08	0.31	61.23%*
Portugal	68.21	0.58	84.93%
Denmark	64.14	0.39	75.05%
Sweden	62.22	0.65	N/A
Italy	55.78	0.92	67.37%
Kosovo	54.55	2.51	26.14%
Spain	49.22	1.21	78.09%
Monaco	46.99	0.00	N/A
Hungary	44.93	0.52	58.50%
Czech Republic	43.37	0.31	55.43%
San Marino	37.80	4.20	71.85%
Malta	30.26	0.56	81.71%
Poland	20.24	0.32	51.29%
Uzbekistan	14.96	0.14	N/A
Kyrgyzstan	11.57	0.26	9.12%
Tajikistan	0.00	0.00	N/A

\*data available at the latest on 26.09.2021

**Latvia:**

Between September 27 and 28, Latvia has recorded 804 new COVID-19 cases and 11 new deaths, which were 205, 5 cases and deaths respectively on the day before (8). 77.9% of new infections (626) are attributed to those who have not been vaccinated and 22.1% (178) to vaccinated (9). By September 27, Latvia has vaccinated 44.78% of its population (10). **The Republic of Latvia has endorsed new regulations with a focus on mandatory vaccination and COVID-19 certificate which enter into force from October 11.** All students (at college and universities) and employees (both academic and non-teaching staff) at educational institutions are required to get vaccinated. Employers should confirm the vaccination status of their employees, particularly if the job involves direct contact with colleagues and customers. At all indoor services, it is mandatory to show a valid Covid-19 certificate or a negative Covid-19 test. The new ruling does not apply for gatherings (of 20 people indoor and 50 outdoor) and retail service providers (11).

**Georgia:**

The daily number of new infections is declining gradually in Georgia (12). Around 20% of the population in Georgia is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by 27 September (13). Though the academic year started in mid-September, in-person classes were postponed due to the epidemic situation. **With a declining number of new cases, the country is planning to resume face to face teaching from 4<sup>th</sup> October which applies to kindergartens, children entertainment centres, high school and vocational institutions** (14).

**Israel:**

By 27 September, the rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed cases in Israel is 571.5 per mill people, which was 829.06 a week before (15). 76.4% of people aged between 80 and 89 years have received a third vaccine dose (16). **The Ministry of Health announced that antigen test is not required to attend school (reopen on September 30) for children aged 3 to 12 years, who recovered from coronavirus** (17). Considering the diminishing effect of the vaccine, policy for vaccinated and/or recovered has been amended which enter into force from October 3. Those who tested positive on serological tests and received at least one dose of vaccine are considered as vaccinated/protected and those who are infected after vaccination and vaccinated/recovered individuals. The definition of vaccinated includes- those individuals who have received three doses of vaccine and those who received two doses of vaccine and not elapsed six months (18).

**Turkey:**

Between 27 and 28 September, 28,892 new infections and 239 new deaths were reported in Turkey (19). By September 28, 43.9mill people have been fully vaccinated and 53.6mill people have received at least one dose of vaccine (20). **The authorities are planning to make mandatory vaccine cards instead of HES** (Turkish contact tracing) to access services at public places as the first phase of the winter plan against COVID-19. The Aboriginal vaccine campaign is set to be the second phase of the winter plan to combat vaccine hesitancy (21).

**Slovenia:**

Between 27 and 28 September, Slovenia recorded 1037 new COVID-19 cases, 419 hospitalizations, and 9 deaths (22). As of 28 September, the share of the population who have received a full vaccine course is 48% (23). No major changes occurred in the government response over the last week. The recovered/vaccinated/tested rule remains in effect for all service users and those involved in providing services (24) **while the recovered/vaccinated rule will come into effect for the state administration as of 1 October** (25).

**Serbia:**

Between 27 and 29 September, Serbia recorded 8,467 new COVID-19 cases and 45 new deaths (26) As of 26 September, the share of persons who have received a full vaccine course is 42% (27) **The model of education provided in Serbia since 1 September depends on the epidemiological situation in the respective municipality and includes fully in-person classes and hybrid classes with in-person classes combined with distance learning on alternate days** (28). According to the official source, the overall government response seems unchanged since 14 June, which includes retail stores operating without restrictions, indoor venues operating with limited capacity, and public gatherings allowed for up to 500 people (29).

### Montenegro:

Between 27 and 28 September, Montenegro recorded 510 new COVID-19 cases and 8 new deaths (30). As of 26 September, the share of persons who have received a full vaccine course is 33.5% (30). As of 25 September, the national digital COVID certificate (awarded to fully vaccinated individuals and those with recent negative tests) is required to enter all shopping and business centres and large facilities engaged in the trade of non-food goods, the number of persons at private gatherings is limited to 50 individuals with the COVID certificate. **As of 8 October, the certificate will also be required to enter large facilities that sell food and food products (31). Education is provided in-person, but classes are shortened (30 minutes), all participants are required to wear face masks and submit to temperature checks on entry as well as random testing (32).**

### Romania:

Between 27 and 28 September, Romania recorded 11,049 new cases, of which 182 are from reinfected patients who tested positive for more than 180 days after the first infection. The number of deaths was 208 (33). The proportion of the population who have received a full vaccine course is 28% (34). **The state of alert to combat the spread of COVID-19 remains in force, and since 23 September includes a curfew prohibiting the movement of persons outside the household between 20.00 and 5.00 in areas with where the cumulative incidence at 14 days exceeds 7.5 / 1,000 inhabitants, while in areas where the cumulative incidence at 14 days is greater than 6 / 1,000 inhabitants the curfew is limited to weekends.** Fully vaccinated persons and necessary travel (e.g., medical purposes and travel to work) are exempted (35).

**Set of graphs: Rolling 7-day average of daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases and daily new confirmed COVID-19 deaths in sub-regions of Europe from the beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 until 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021:**

### Mediterranean Region:

Figure 1:

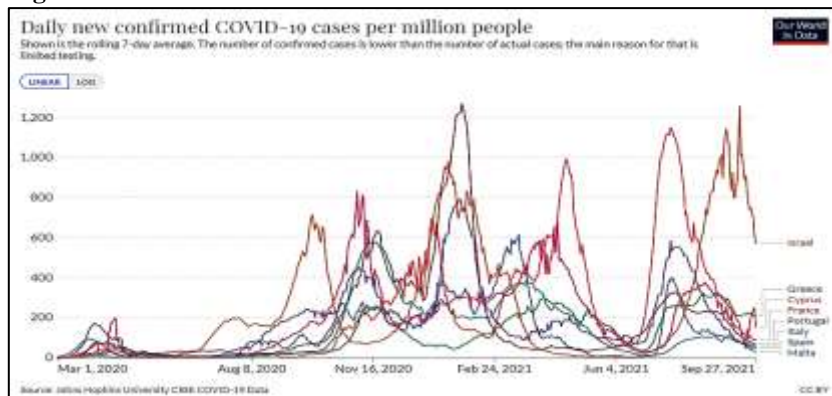
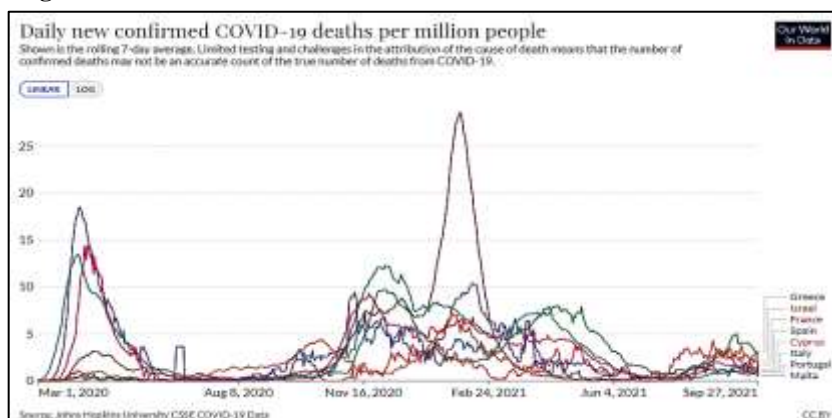


Figure 2:



### South-East region:

Figure 3:

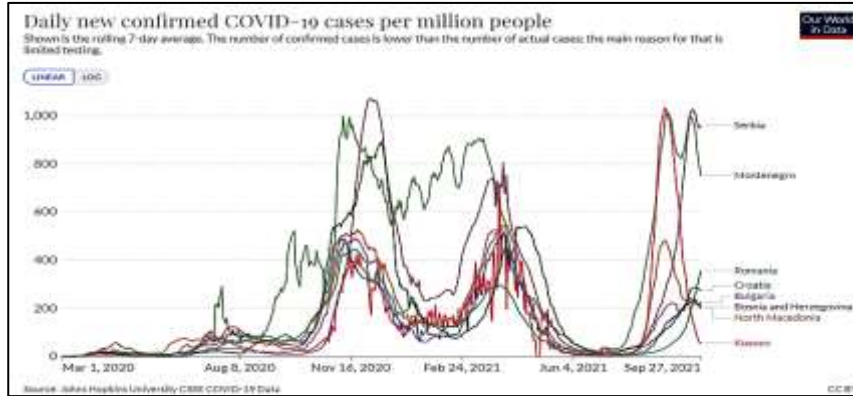
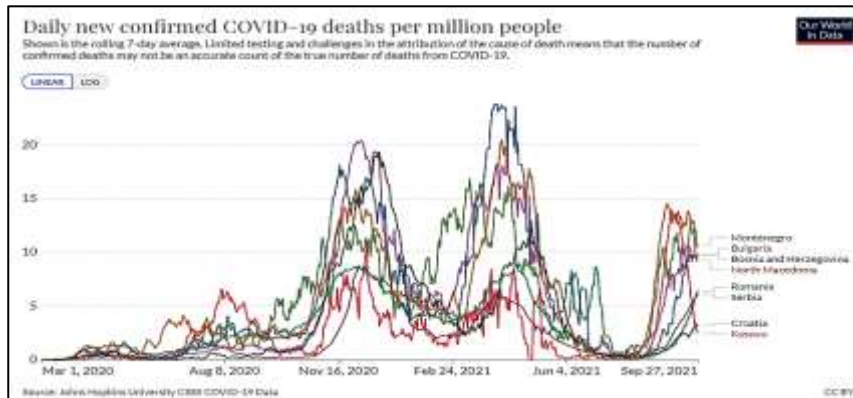


Figure 4:



### Central Europe

Figure 5:

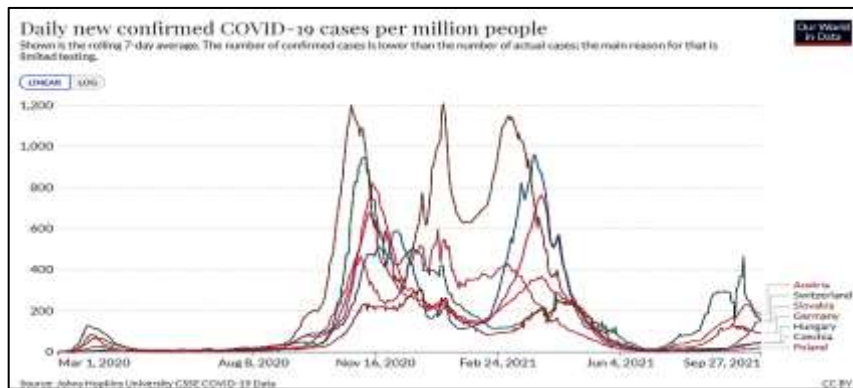
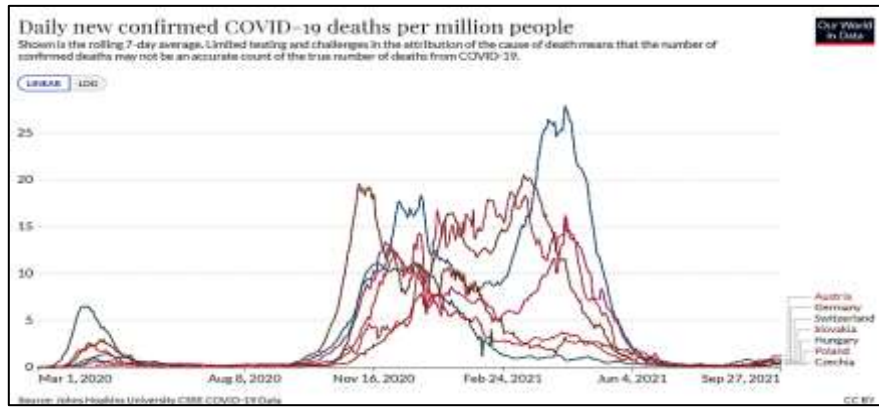


Figure 6:



Baltics and Nordic Countries:

Figure 7:

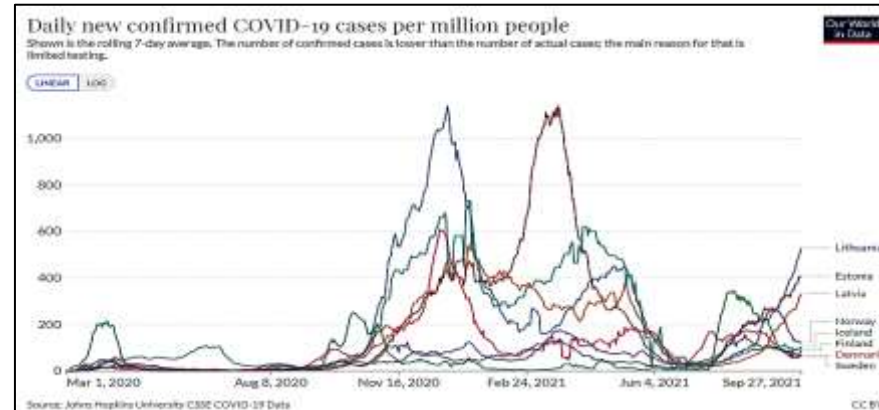
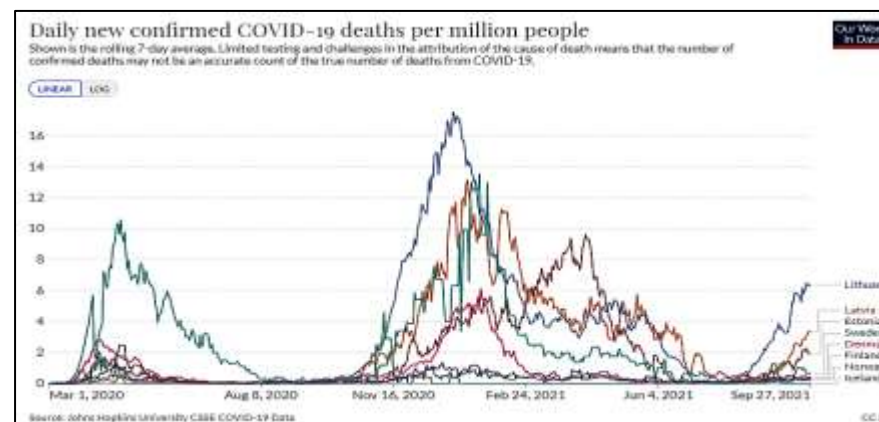
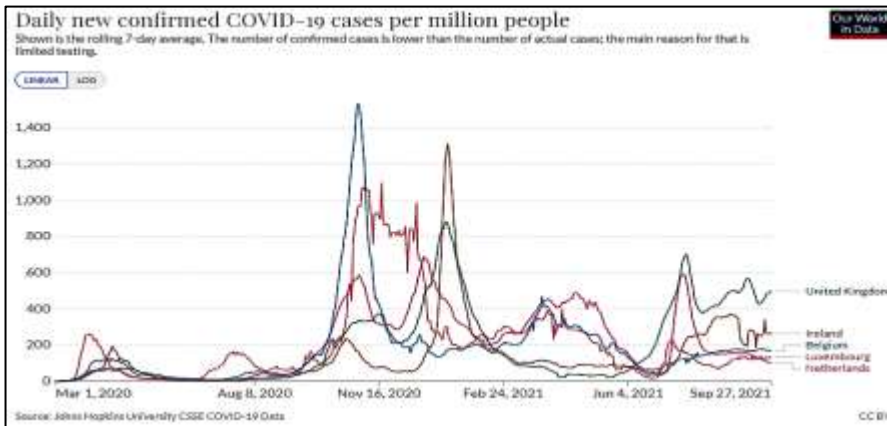


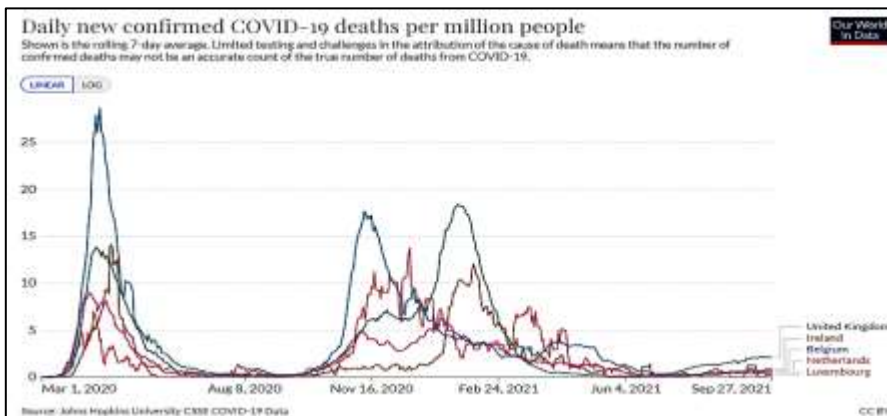
Figure 8:



**North-western Europe:**  
**Figure 9:**



**Figure 10:**



**Central Asia:**  
**Figure 11:**

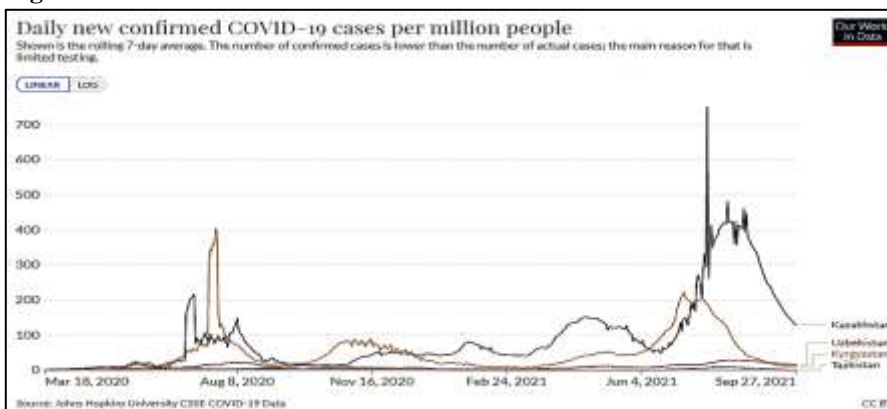
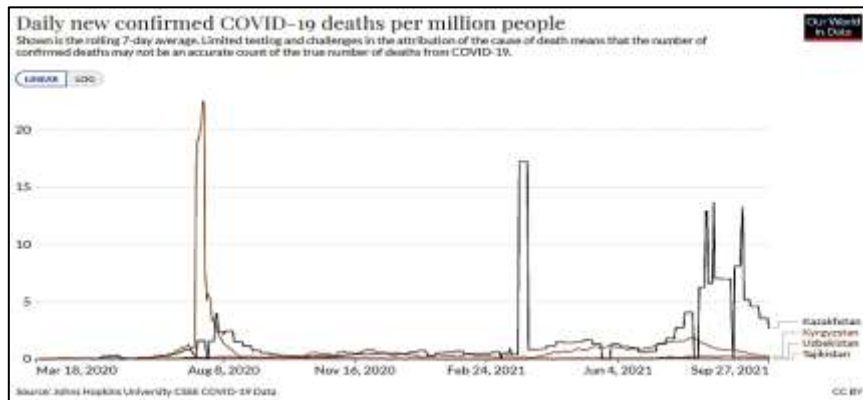




Figure 12:



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