

# ASPHER Report: COVID-19 Situation Reporting across Europe

## Week of November 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

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*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?*

Europe is the only region among WHO's six regions that is reporting an increasing number of COVID-19 cases since four successive weeks whilst other regions are showing a declining trend ([link](#)). Globally, the Delta variant is the dominant variant with its high level of transmission ([link](#)). 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 about the situation in a few European regions which are reporting a high incidence in recent weeks. The situation has led to the declaration of a state of emergency and lockdown to contain the infection transmission in Latvia ([link](#)) ([link](#)), the reimposition of mask mandates outdoors in Armenia and expansion of mandatory COVID-19 certificate to gain access to events in Ireland. While few countries have chosen to tighten the existing restrictions instead of lockdown. 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-pharmaceutical 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](#).*

It is a new phase in the pandemic for Europe. Return to a state of emergency, tightening of restrictions, mask mandates, entry with the obligation of COVID-19 certificate is seen in few European countries. Authorities should be careful in how they address the pandemic keeping in mind the risk of a new wave during autumn combating an increase in hospitalizations due to COVID-19 and flu, vaccine hesitancy, and mitigation strategies at schools and workplaces.

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 nearly 5million lives to date (4,998,784) and the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases are now above two hundred million (246,594,191). Individual WHO regions confirmed COVID-19 cases are as follows (1).

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

<b>WHO Region</b>	<b>Confirmed COVID-19 cases</b>
Americas	93,650,790
Europe	76,995,605
South-East Asia	43,984,655
Eastern Mediterranean	16,365,479
Western-Pacific	9,442,686
Africa	6,152,212

According to the WHO weekly epidemiological report, the number of newly reported cases and deaths in the Europe region has increased by 6% and 12% respectively compared to the previous week (2).

The following table shows a moving 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 01/11/2021 (table 2) (3) (4) (5).

Table2:

WHO Europe region	Rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed COVID-19 cases/mill people	Rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed COVID-19 deaths/mill people	Share of the population fully vaccinated against COVID-19
Estonia	1300.30	7.65	57.53%
Latvia	1258.83	16.83	54.60%
Slovenia	1133.11	4.33	53.85%
Lithuania	1091.35	13.38	64.10%
Georgia	976.58	10.80	N/A
Serbia	920.81	9.24	43.53%
Croatia	891.41	6.68	44.05%
Montenegro	773.37	8.19	38.76%
Slovakia	737.68	3.35	42.23%
Bulgaria	687.56	20.57	22.03%
Romania	626.68	23.10	33.12%
Armenia	618.24	15.59	N/A
United Kingdom	606.00	2.32	67.05%
Austria	537.87	1.71	62.20%
Ukraine	524.08	13.27	17.34%
Ireland	479.55	1.92	75.21%*
Czech Republic	457.79	2.00	56.85%
Netherlands	433.85	0.86	68.63%*
Belgium	398.50	1.29	73.68%
Greece	376.06	4.24	61.52%
Hungary	357.61	4.66	59.54%
Moldova	348.62	10.40	21.76%
Turkey	306.06	2.49	57.33%
Denmark	296.76	0.44	75.94%
Russia	261.76	7.65	32.68%
Iceland	248.39	0.00	81.16%*
Luxembourg	243.04	0.23	N/A
Germany	227.89	1.18	66.16%
Bosnia And Herzegovina	218.83	9.19	20.90%*
Belarus	209.18	1.75	N/A
Azerbaijan	206.36	2.60	43.06%
Poland	205.12	2.13	52.83%
North Macedonia	192.34	5.69	37.25%
Norway	188.32	0.21	68.48%*
Switzerland	186.69	0.80	63.47%
Albania	175.88	2.54	31.04%
Cyprus	173.31	0.64	63.67%*
Andorra	168.06	0.00	N/A
San Marino	159.62	0.00	N/A
Finland	105.64	0.52	69.99%*
France	88.97	0.38	68.01%*
Kazakhstan	86.75	1.45	39.49%
Portugal	79.96	0.34	87.16%*
Sweden	77.56	0.45	67.85%*
Italy	73.51	0.63	71.49%
Monaco	72.30	0.00	N/A
Israel	67.90	0.67	65.24%
Malta	30.26	0.28	83.80%
Spain	27.29	0.56	79.83%
Kyrgyzstan	15.04	0.37	44.44%
Kosovo	10.38	0.16	40.83%*
Uzbekistan	9.75	0.08	N/A
Tajikistan	0.00	0.00	N/A

\*data available after 24<sup>th</sup> October

**Estonia:** In Estonia, the level of risk for the COVID-19 spread is very high based on the two parameters-the **7-day average of the number of new infections and hospitalizations which are above 1000 and 60 respectively** (6). **The current R value is 1.13**. As of November 1, 549 patients are in hospital being treated for COVID-19, of which 29 are on ventilator support (7). To date, **57.5% of the population in Estonia have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19** (8). The authorities have endorsed new measures to limit the spread of the virus such as face mask mandates indoors and in public meetings, sports activities. It is mandatory for people aged 12 to 17 to provide vaccinated or tested certificates to gain access to services. Public indoor services are restricted between 23hrs and 6 am (7). From the beginning of November, **to limit the outbreaks at schools, rapid testing for teachers and pupils, simplified quarantine measures (according to the level of risk at individual regions) have been introduced** (9).

**Ireland:** The rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed cases in Ireland is 479.55/million people (10). Between November 1 and 2, **90 patients are in ICU out of 493 hospitalized COVID-19 patients** (11). **Restrictions have been relaxed in Ireland on October 22**. Employees can return to the workplace. However, the ruling applies to those employees with specific business needs and should take place in phages (12). **Access to indoors services has been reopened**. It is mandatory to show a vaccinated or recovered certificate for indoor dining. Nightclubs, indoor sports, trade fairs are resumed to full capacity if the attendees show proof of immunity. **Wearing a face mask in public transport, shops is still mandatory**. Entry into Ireland for non-essential reasons is possible and individuals who are vaccinated or recovered are exempted from pre-departure testing. **All of the existing regulations are valid until November 9, 2021** (13).

**Netherlands:** From October 26 to November 2, **the number of people with COVID-19 test, hospitalizations and ICU admissions rose by 39%,31%, and 20% respectively. Positive COVID-19 tests also the number of deaths among nursing home residents have been increased dramatically in October** (14). By the end of October, 82.1% of the above 12 years age group have been fully vaccinated and more than 60,000 immune-compromised individuals have had their third vaccine dose (15). **With the increase in the number of new cases, the government has expanded the mandatory coronavirus entry pass rule at more locations (cultural locations and events, business events, food caterings) from November 6**. Wearing a facemask is mandatory where a corona entry pass is not required such as supermarkets, libraries, airports etc. A similar ruling will apply for pupils at vocational and higher education institutions while moving between classrooms. **Health care workers will be given a third vaccine dose from December and from January 2022, the age group 60 to 80 will be offered a booster dose** (16).

**Armenia:** Since early October, Armenia is reporting more than 1000 daily new cases (17). By late October, school holidays have been extended until November 7 and online teaching was adopted by the universities. **Mask mandates outdoors have been reintroduced** from November 1. **More anti-epidemic measures will be introduced in November which will affect both unvaccinated and those who are late to receive their second vaccine jab. However, there is no plan to impose lockdown** (18) (19).

**Slovenia:** Between 1 and 2 November, Slovenia recorded 3,456 new COVID-19 cases and 18 deaths, with the 7-day average in new cases reaching the highest recorded since March 2020 (20) (21). As of 2 November, 53.9% of the population has been fully vaccinated (21). **On 1 November, the government introduced bi-weekly self-testing for all primary and secondary school pupils and students, the obligation to wear masks despite the fulfilled recovered/vaccinated rule for health, education, and social care activities, and increased the frequency of testing for those not meeting the recovered/vaccinated rule to 48 hours** (22). A third dose of the vaccine is recommended for elderly home residents, persons aged over 70, and persons with chronic illnesses; however, the booster shot is made available to all who request it (23).

**Montenegro:** Between 1 and 2 November, Montenegro recorded 622 new COVID-19 cases and 6 deaths, the highest 7-day average in new cases since mid-September 2021. As of 2 November, 38.9% of the population has been fully vaccinated. The daily vaccine doses administered are declining since September. More than 13700 third vaccine doses have been administered to date (24) (25). **Official sources exclude reintroducing lockdowns at this stage** (26). Since 3 October, the National Expert Advisory Body on Immunizations recommends the administration of the third dose of COVID-19 vaccine to the entire adult population (27).

**Serbia:** Between 1 and 2 November, Serbia recorded 7,111 new COVID-19 cases and 60 deaths, a decrease in new cases since last week but an all-time high for deaths (28) As of 2 November, the share of persons who have received a full vaccine course is 43.5% (29). Since 23 October, covid passes have been required to enter restaurants, cafés, and bars (30). **This complements previous measures, which includes retail stores operating without restrictions, mandatory masks indoors, indoor venues operating with limited capacity, and restricted public gatherings** (31) (32). The government had authorized a third vaccine dose in mid-August, which 14% of the population had received by mid-October (33) (34).

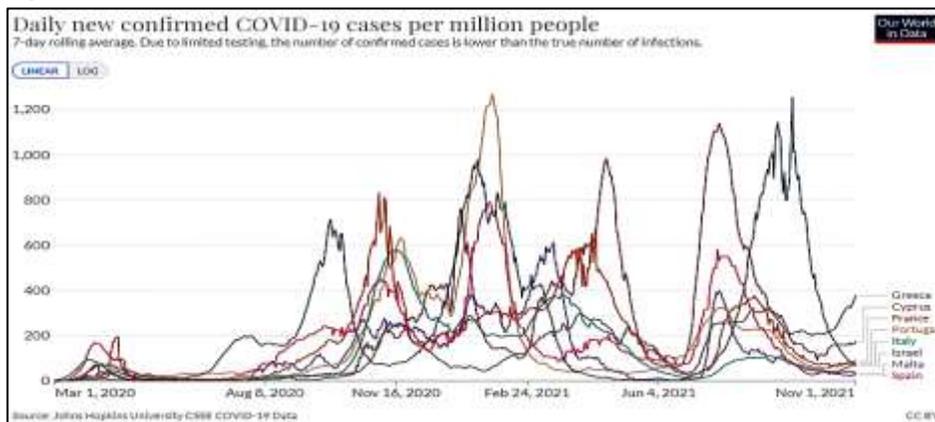
**Croatia:** Between 2 and 3 November, Croatia recorded 4,573 new COVID-19 cases and 41 deaths, with both having increased since last week (35) (36). On 2 November, 44% of the population has been fully vaccinated (37). On 4 and 5 November, all schools and classes in the country will temporarily switch to remote education while the school holiday weekend was extended to include 2 and 3 November (38). **Since 12 October, the third vaccine dose is recommended to immunocompromised persons and their households, healthcare workers, all persons over 65, and residents and employees of homes for the elderly** (39).

**France: The incidence of COVID-19 is increasing in France. The effective reproduction rate is above 1.** Sequencing of the positive samples (until end of October) shows that the **Delta variant is the dominant variant circulating in France**. By the end of October, 16.9% of age olds 65years and above have received their third vaccine jab (40). From November 8, **wearing face mask is compulsory for elementary school students in 39 metropolitan departments which reported an incidence more than 50/100 thousand inhabitants** (41).

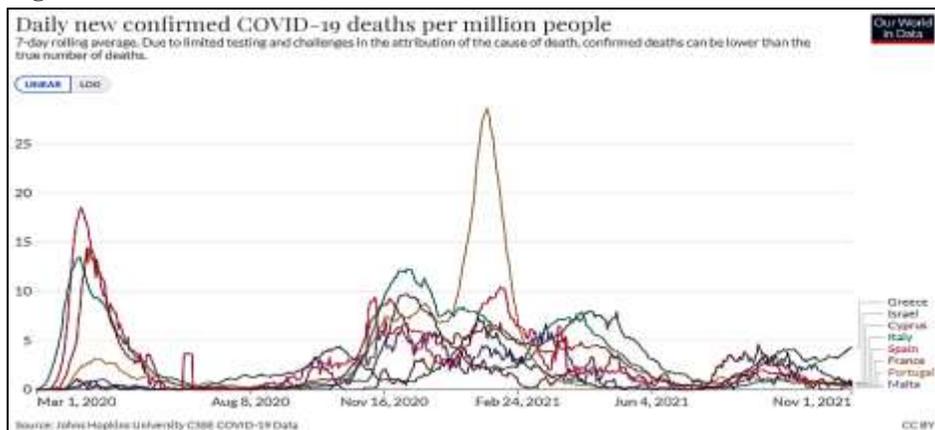
**Set of graphs: Rolling 7day average of daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases and daily new confirmed COVID-19 deaths in sub-regions of Europe from the beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 until 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021:**

**Mediterranean Region:**

**Figure 1:**

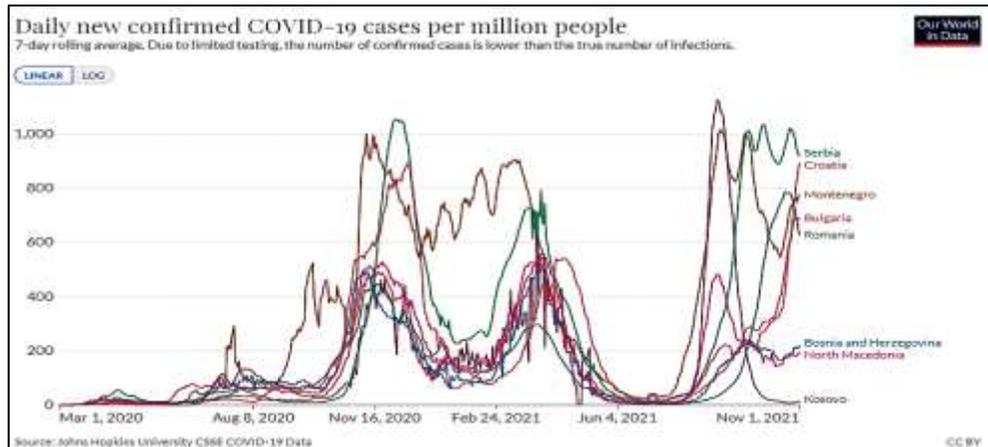


**Figure 2:**

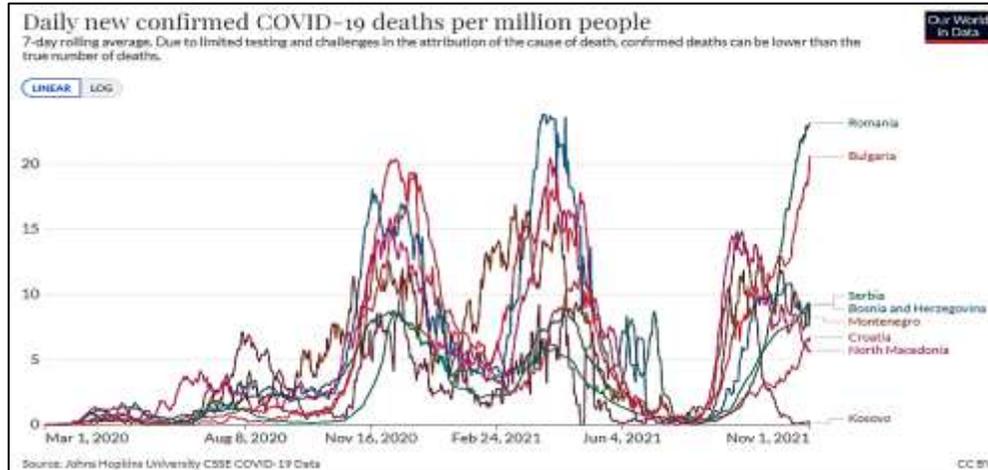


**South-East region:**

**Figure 3:**



**Figure 4:**



**Central Europe:**

**Figure 5:**

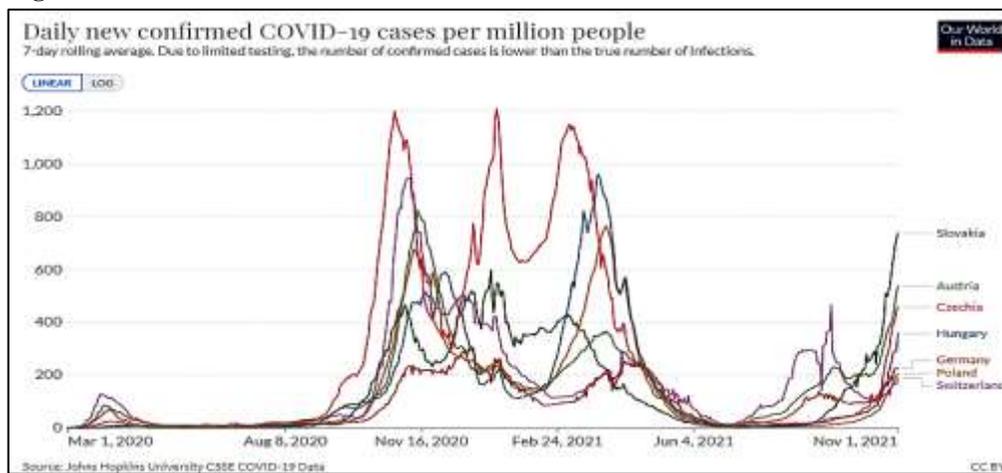
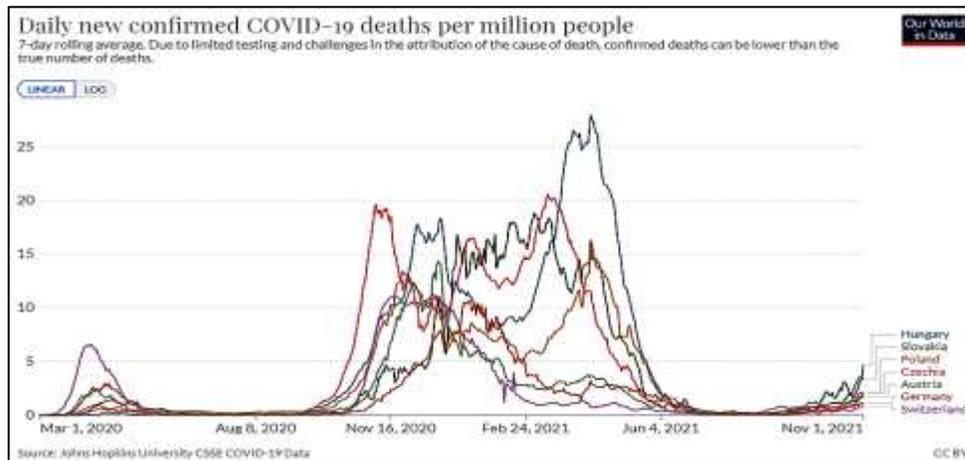


Figure 6:



**Baltics and Nordic Countries:**

Figure 7:

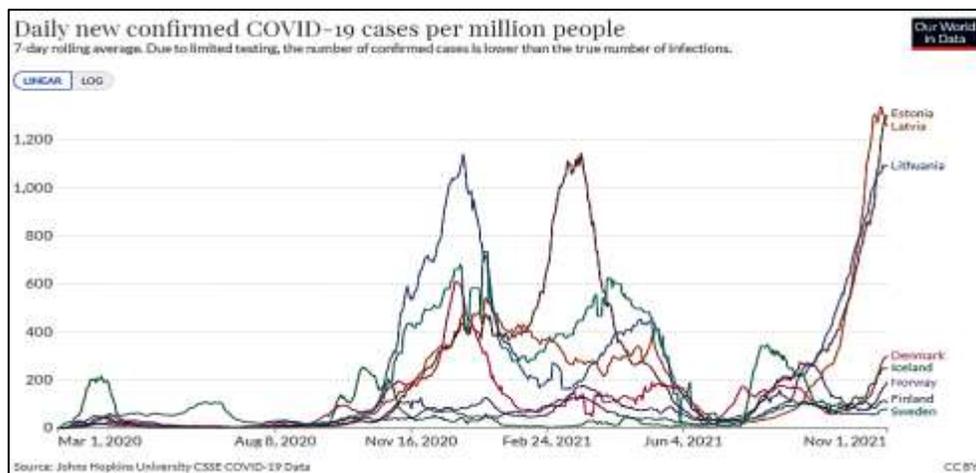
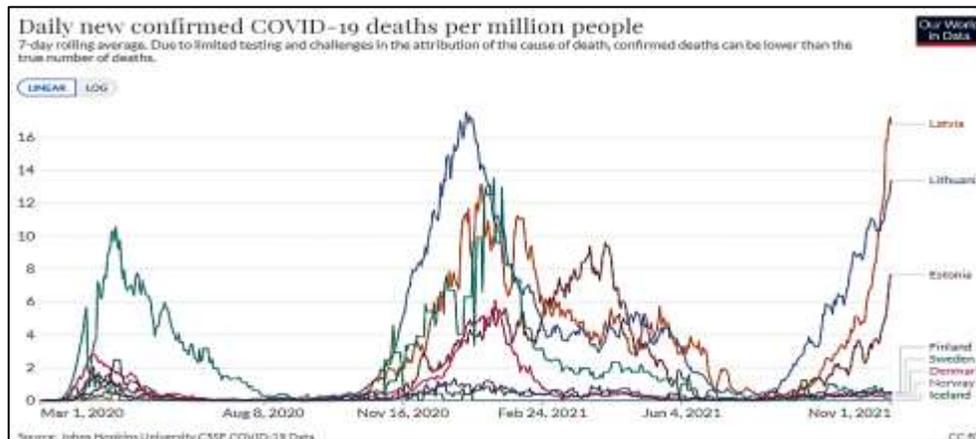
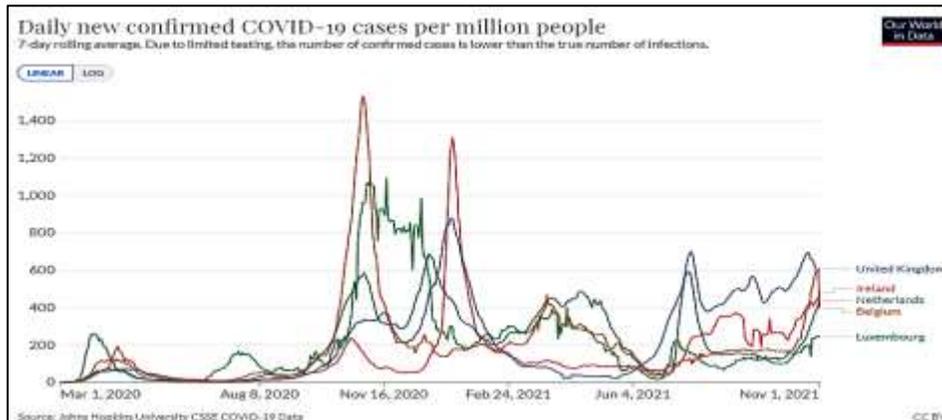


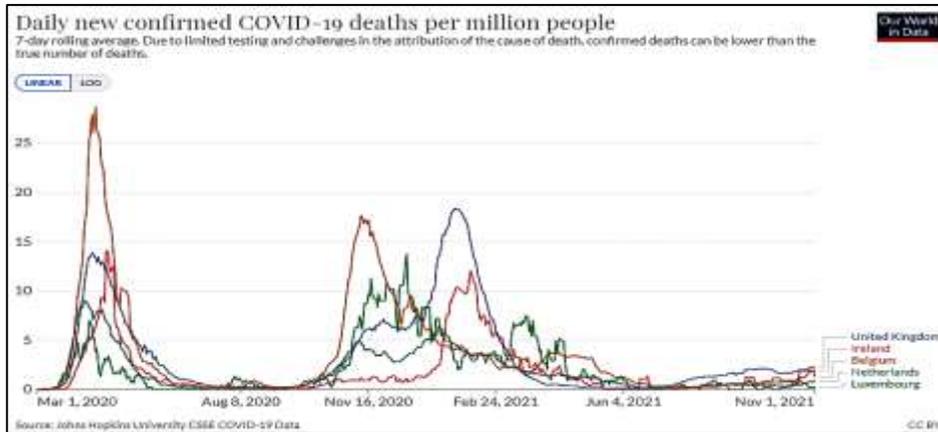
Figure 8:



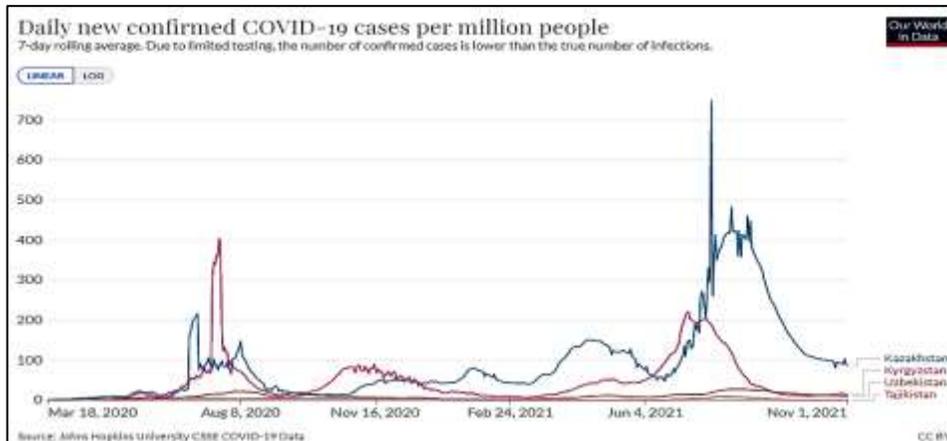
**North-western Europe:  
Figure 9:**



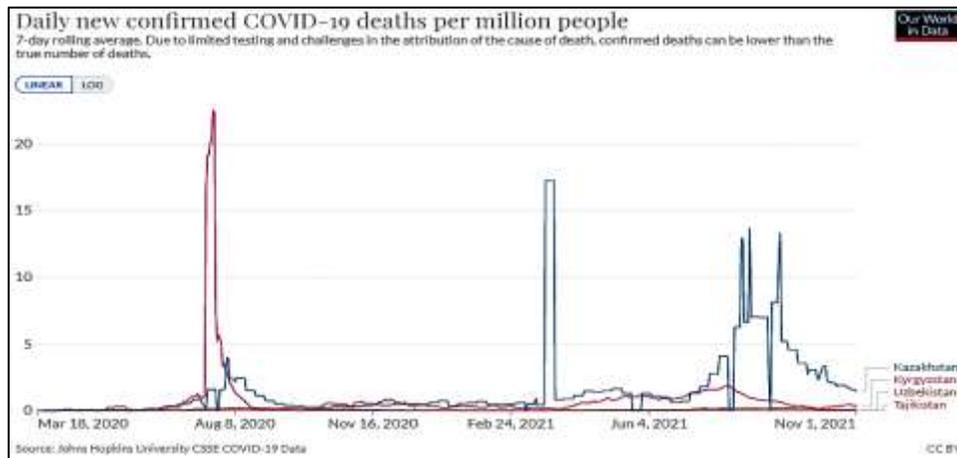
**Figure 10:**



**Central Asia:  
Figure 11:**



**Figure 12:**



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