

ASPHER Report: COVID-19 Situation Reporting across Europe

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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?

Key messages

- The [WHO weekly epidemiological update](#) highlights that the global number of new weekly COVID-19 cases and deaths declined over the previous week.
- The [ECDC country overview report](#) highlights small decreasing trends in the EU/EEA case rate, the case rate among people aged 65 years and older, and death rates were observed. At the EU/EEA level, hospital and ICU indicators have remained stable in comparison to the previous week. In many EU/EEA countries, the vaccination uptake for the second booster dose remains low in target groups.
- A Foreign Ministerial meeting reviewed the progress of the [COVID-19 Global Action Plan \(GAP\)](#) initiative. Their [statement](#) emphasizes action on the delivery of vaccines, diagnostics and treatment; closing information gaps and addressing misinformation; support to health and care workers; supply chain strengthening; and strengthening global health security.

Selected recent COVID-19 publications

Li, X., et al. (2022). Comparative risk of thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome or thromboembolic events associated with different covid-19 vaccines: international network cohort study from five European countries and the US. In BMJ (p. e071594). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2022-071594>

- In this multinational study, a pooled 30% increased risk of thrombocytopenia after a first dose of the ChAdOx1-S vaccine was observed, as was a trend towards an increased risk of venous thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome after Ad26.COV2.S compared with BNT162b2

Kozlov, M. (2022). Could a nose spray a day keep COVID away? In Nature. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-022-03341-z>

- Unlike vaccines, the [nasal] sprays are short-lived compounds that directly block the virus's ability to enter cells. Multiple research teams have shown that such sprays are effective at warding off SARS-CoV-2 infection in animals. [The] spray would be an important advance, especially in places where few people wear face masks.

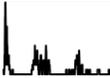
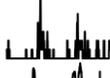
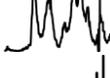
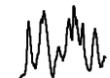
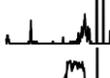
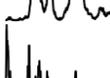
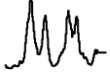
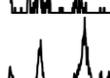
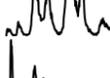
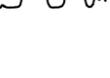
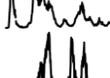
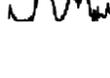
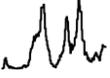
ASPHER statement on the pandemic

ASPHER is concerned about talk of the ‘end of the pandemic’. *Pandemic* is not defined by politicians, or by journalists. The *pandemic* is defined by the World Health Organisation, under strict decision-making process and not as mere opinion. A pandemic is “an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people”. We are still in the midst of the pandemic.

We are concerned with the rapid dismantling of non-pharmaceutical interventions against COVID-19 across Europe. In a [recent opinion paper](#), we advocate for European governments’ continued recommendation for the use of face masks in high traffic public areas like public transport. The reality remains that the future evolution of the pandemic is highly uncertain. Primary health care and social care provision across Europe are not yet restored to pre-pandemic levels due to the burden of ever new variants of the virus. Occupational health services are non-existent in many parts of Europe and therefore unable to address mass sickness absence or support workers in key industries suffering burnout. We urge governments to invest in additional measures to support primary care, social care, and occupational health. Protection of our key service workers is a central concern. We will not come out of the pandemic until we seriously address the problem globally. We need global solidarity, commitment to [international preparedness](#) and [increased global production of vaccines](#).

ASPHER supports the [VACCINE-plus approach](#) to pandemic control; or what we have called ‘[COVID-DO IT ALL](#)’. We recognize the importance of following [non-pharmacological interventions](#) as well as achieving a high level of vaccine uptake. Vaccine hesitancy still needs to be understood and addressed especially in Eastern parts of Europe. We need to protect frontline services, protect children, and protect vulnerable people. Current political moves in Europe are adding to the likelihood of increased transmission, creating more pressures on services, more likelihood of additional sickness absence, economic damage, and social disruption. The mindset of the ‘pandemic is over’ will have the dangerous impact of prolonging it.

Rolling average of latest COVID-19 death and hospitalization rates in the countries of the WHO-Europe region (Source: Our World in Data).

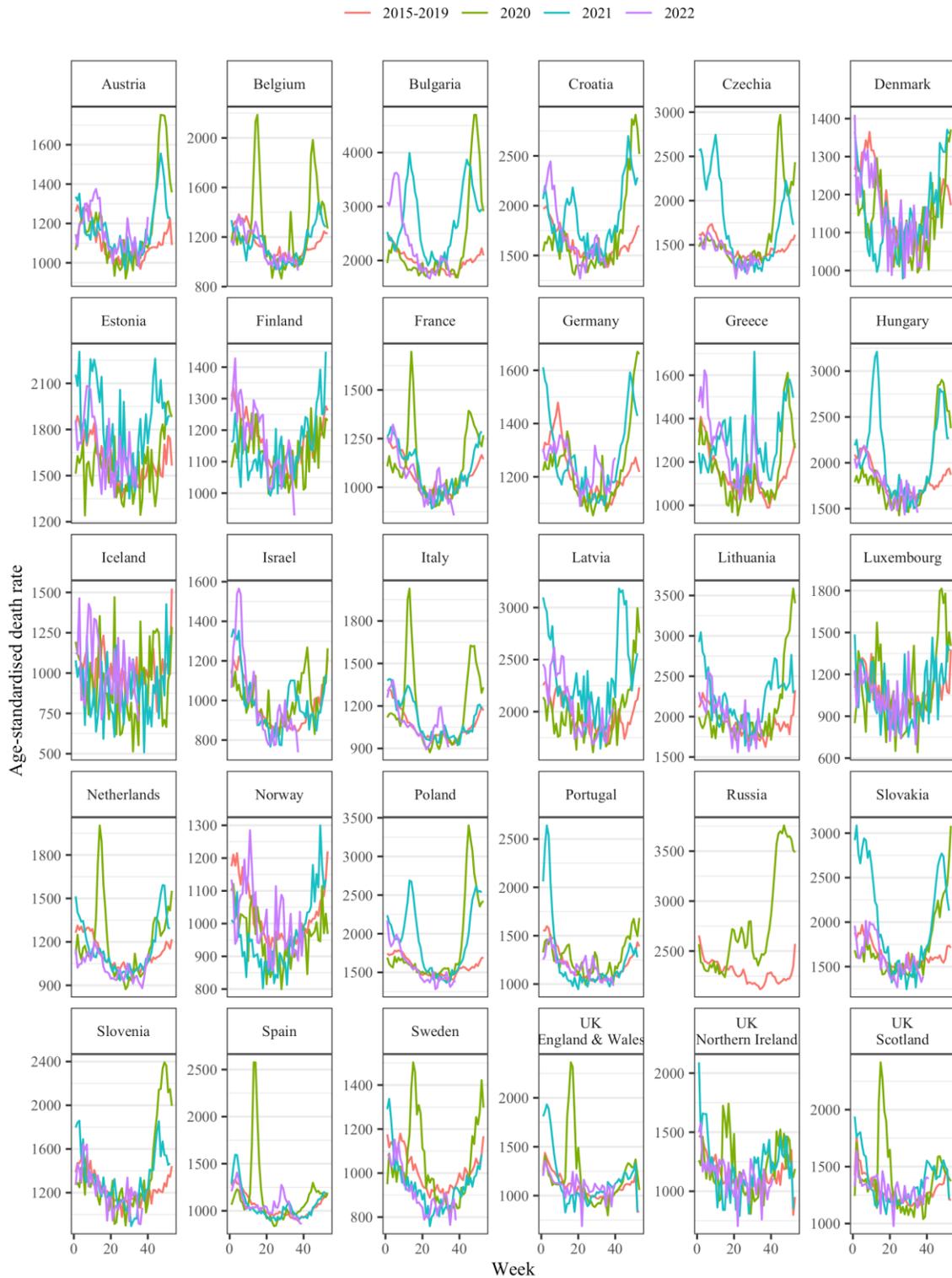
WHO Europe region	Daily newly confirmed COVID-19 deaths/million people	30-day trend in deaths	Weekly hospital admissions/million	30-day trend in weekly hospital admissions
San Marino	4.24			
Finland	4.15			
Monaco	3.92			
Greece	2.42		121.18	
Iceland	2.30		24.40	
Belarus	2.10			
Hungary	2.01			
Croatia	1.81		127.84	
Andorra	1.79			
Denmark	1.43		68.68	
Germany	1.40		78.05	
Portugal	1.39			
Italy	1.35		60.86	
Sweden	1.31			
Austria	1.09			
Czechia	1.06		65.47	
Serbia	1.06			
France	1.02		89.98	
Estonia	0.97		142.10	

WHO Europe region	Daily newly confirmed COVID-19 deaths/million people	30-day trend in deaths	Weekly hospital admissions/million	30-day trend in weekly hospital admissions
Ireland	0.94		89.29	
Slovakia	0.91		62.64	
Slovenia	0.88		40.78	
Bulgaria	0.86		695.43	
Belgium	0.69		49.93	
Spain	0.66		142.08	
Russia	0.52		54.95	
Cyprus	0.48			
Georgia	0.42			
Lithuania	0.36			
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.35			
Netherlands	0.33		48.74	
Moldova	0.31			
Poland	0.29			
Malta	0.27		19.38	
Switzerland	0.24		27.69	
Montenegro	0.23			
Luxembourg	0.22		61.44	
North Macedonia	0.20			
Romania	0.20			

WHO Europe region	Daily newly confirmed COVID-19 deaths/million people	30-day trend in deaths	Weekly hospital admissions/million	30-day trend in weekly hospital admissions
Armenia	0.15			
Israel	0.14		18.10	
Azerbaijan	0.11			
United Kingdom	0.11		58.67	
Kosovo	0.08			
Albania	0.05			
Turkey	0.04			
Kyrgyzstan	0.02			
Ukraine	0.02			
Kazakhstan	0.01			
Tajikistan	0.01			
Uzbekistan	0.01			

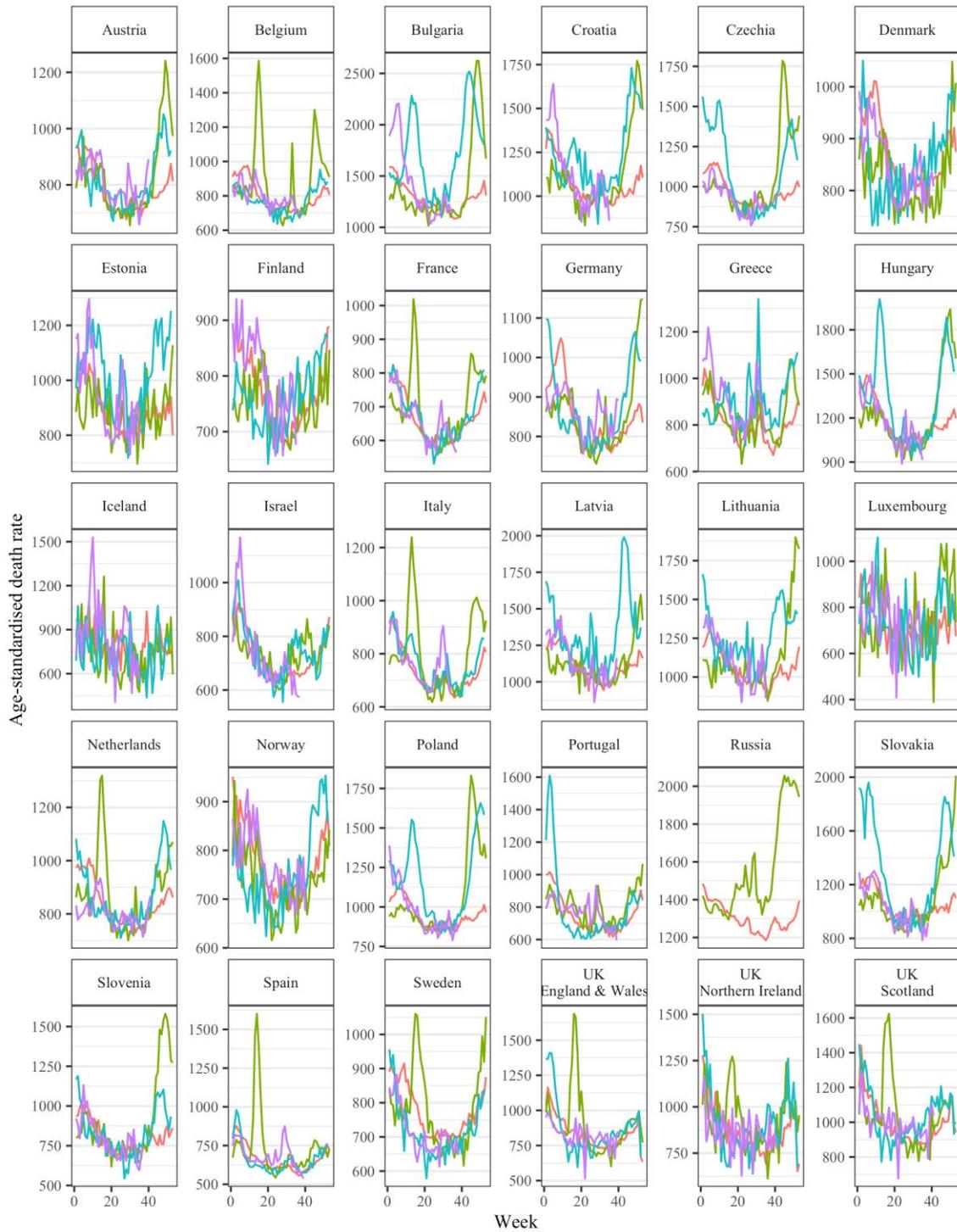
The age-standardised all-cause death rates in 2020, 2021 and 2022, and the 2015-2019 average by week and sex in selected countries of the WHO-Europe (Source: Human Mortality Database).

Age-standardised death rate (men)



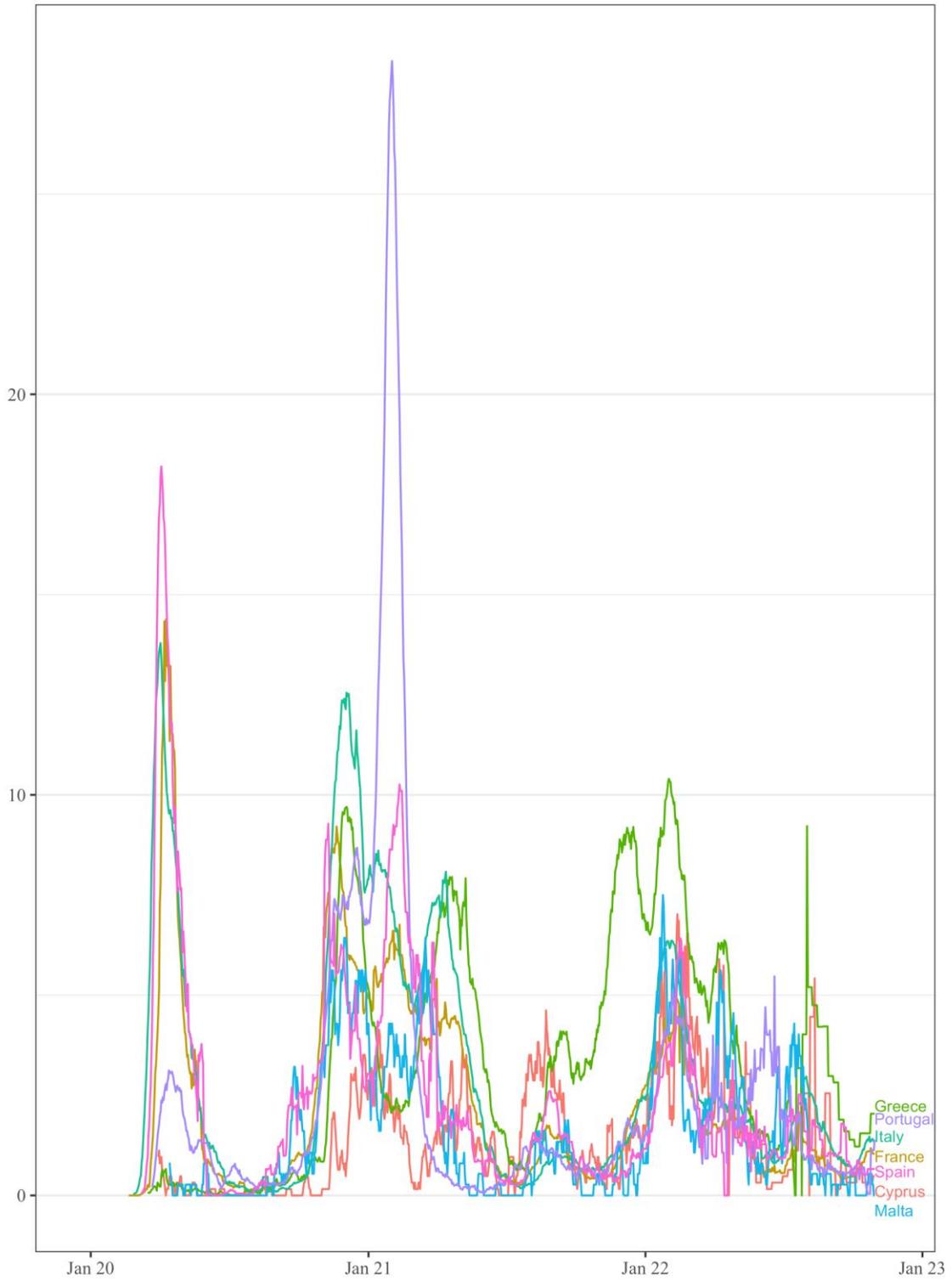
Age-standardised death rate (women)

— 2015-2019 — 2020 — 2021 — 2022

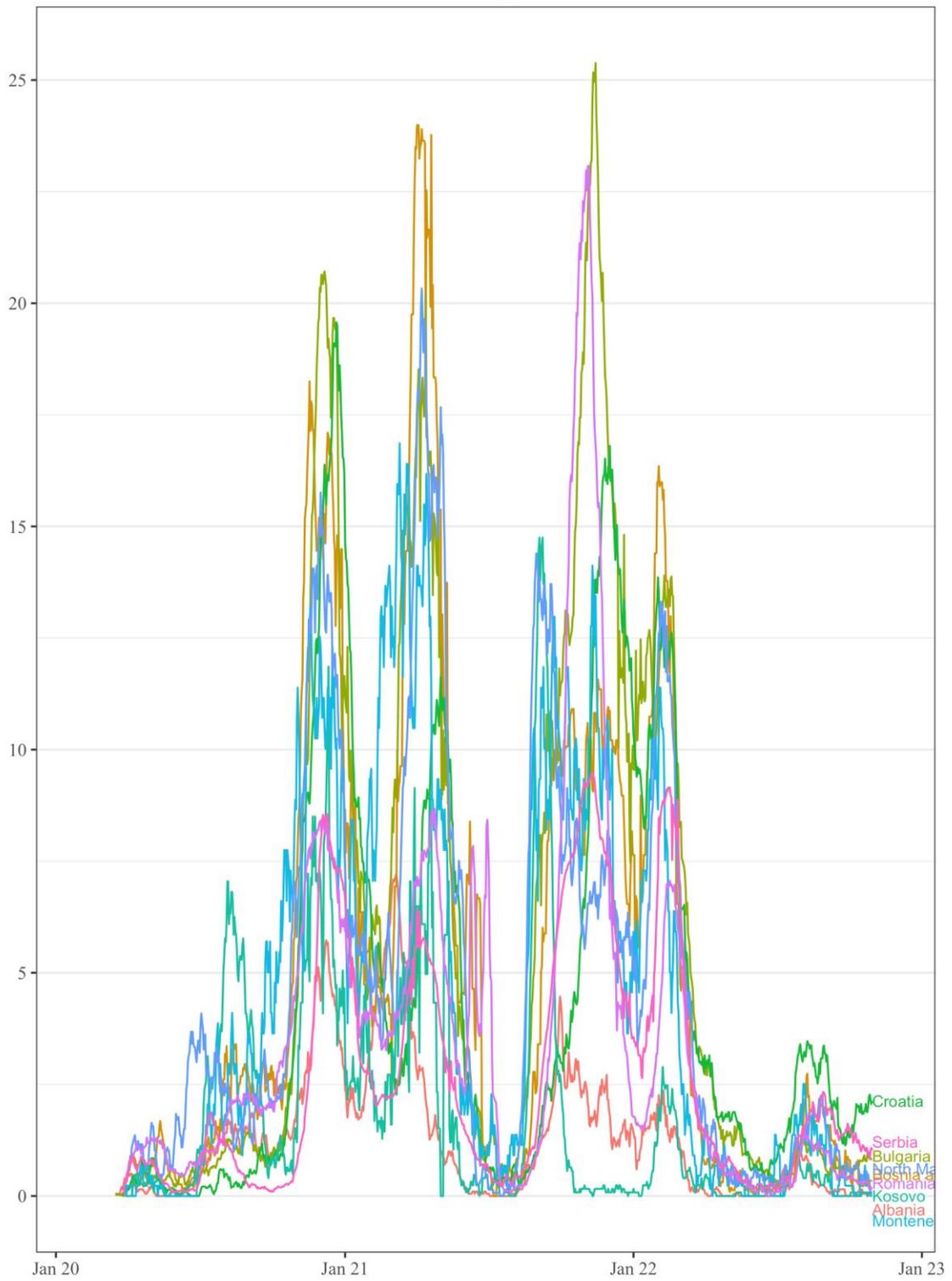


Rolling 7-day average of daily confirmed COVID-19 death rates (per million) in sub-regions of Europe
(Source: [Our World in Data](#)).

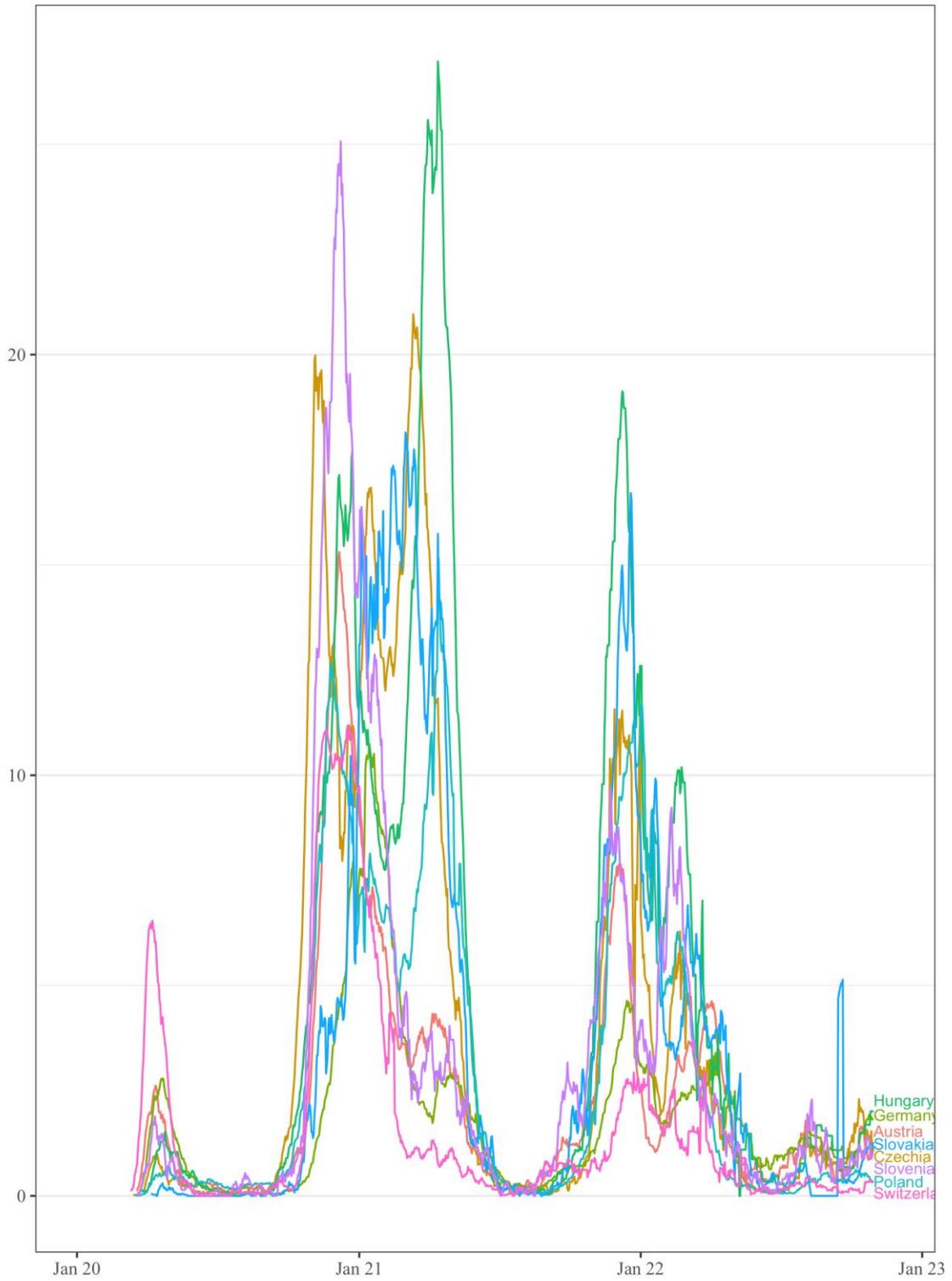
COVID-19 death rate in the Mediterranean region



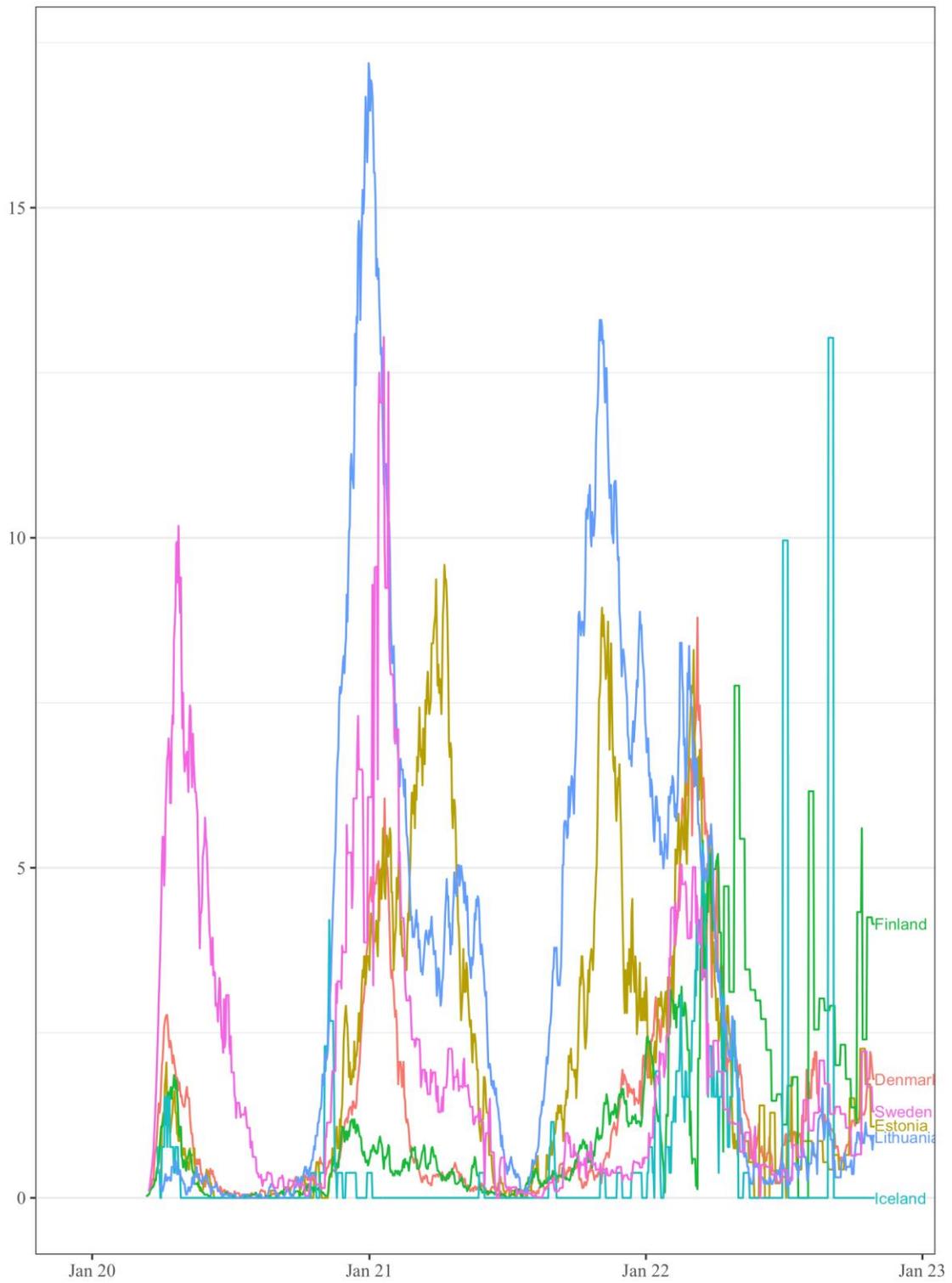
COVID-19 death rate in the South-East region



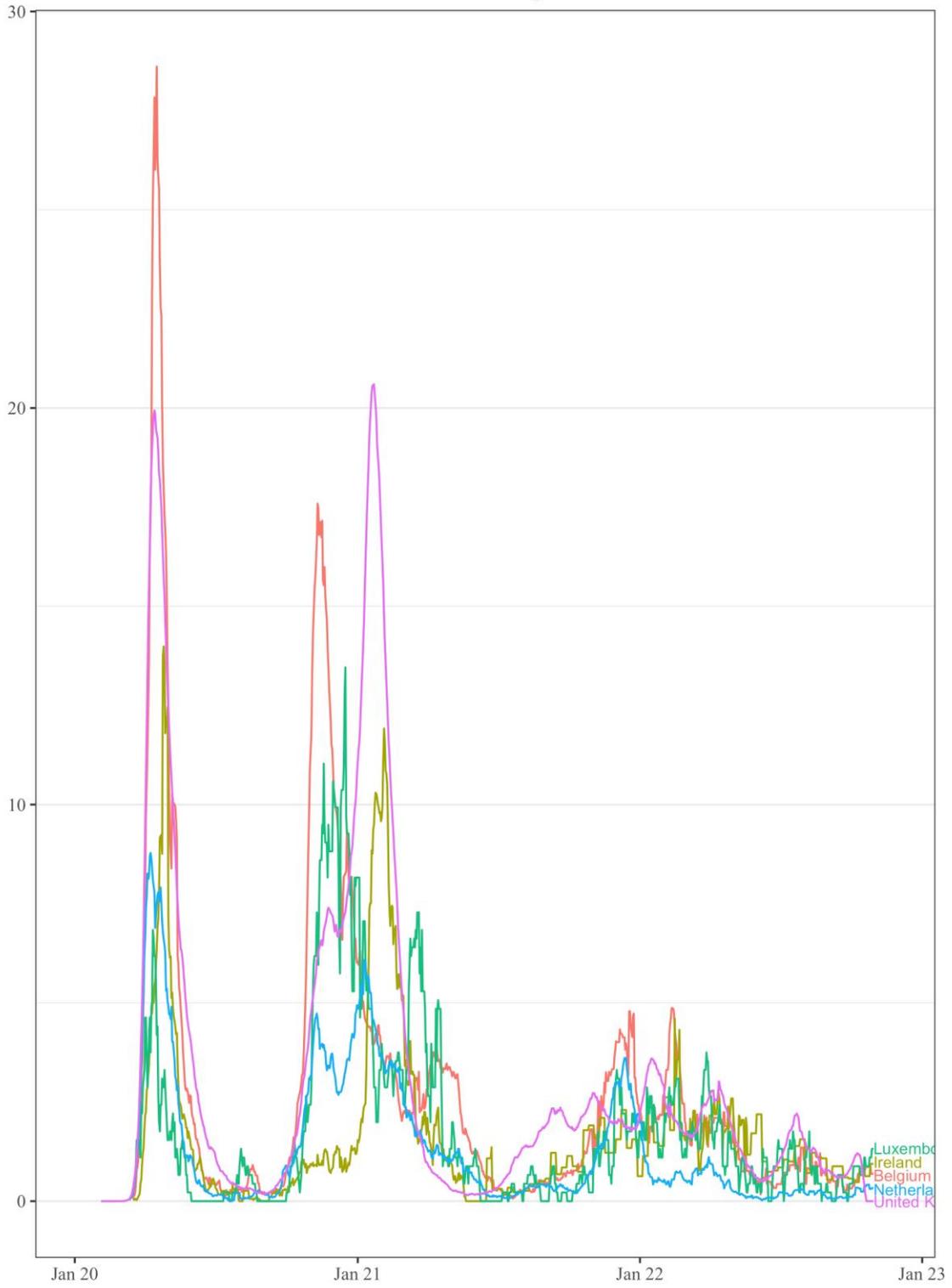
COVID-19 death rate in Central Europe



COVID-19 death rate in Baltics and Nordic Countries



COVID-19 death rate in North-Western Europe



COVID-19 death rate in Central Asia

