

ASPHER Report

COVID-19 Situation Reporting across Europe

Week of 23rd February 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 ?

We thank Professors Alena Petrakova and Vladimir Prikazsky for their help in the commentary on Czechia.

Since the beginning of the pandemic COVID-19, the rapid spread of the virus in almost all the countries has resulted in considerable disruption of public health at a global level. The pandemic has cost over two million lives up to the moment (2,475,020) and the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases has surpassed 0.1 billion with the highest number in Americas (49,700,102) followed by Europe (37,812,908), South-East Asia region (13,415,064), Eastern Mediterranean (6,266,689), Africa (2,803,545), and Western Pacific (1,594,530) according to the WHO statistics (1).

As per WHO weekly epidemiological report, the European region is contributing 34% of cumulative covid-19 confirmed cases worldwide. Overall, Europe has seen a declining trend in the number of new cases and new deaths at 7% and 19% respectively in comparison to previous week (2).

The rolling 7 day average of daily new confirmed cases of covid-19 per million population is high in Czechia, Montenegro, Estonia, Israel, Slovakia among 34 European countries. Along with the incidence the estimated reproduction numbers were included to see the progression of the pandemic. Estimation of Reproduction number is a conventional guide to measure the transmissibility of the infectious agent and thus the growth rate of an outbreak also effect of the interventions implemented (3)(4). According to the data collected, the effective estimated reproduction number is high in Hungary at 1.26 and low in Portugal 0.51. Over all, in 17 European countries the reproduction rate is below 1 indicating that the pandemic may control (5).

Recent studies have shown that the transmissibility of the new variants and the secondary attack rates are higher than for the old variants, European countries have seen a declining trend in the incidence and new deaths, but the increase in the number and proportion of new variants is a major concern at the moment (6).

Figure 1

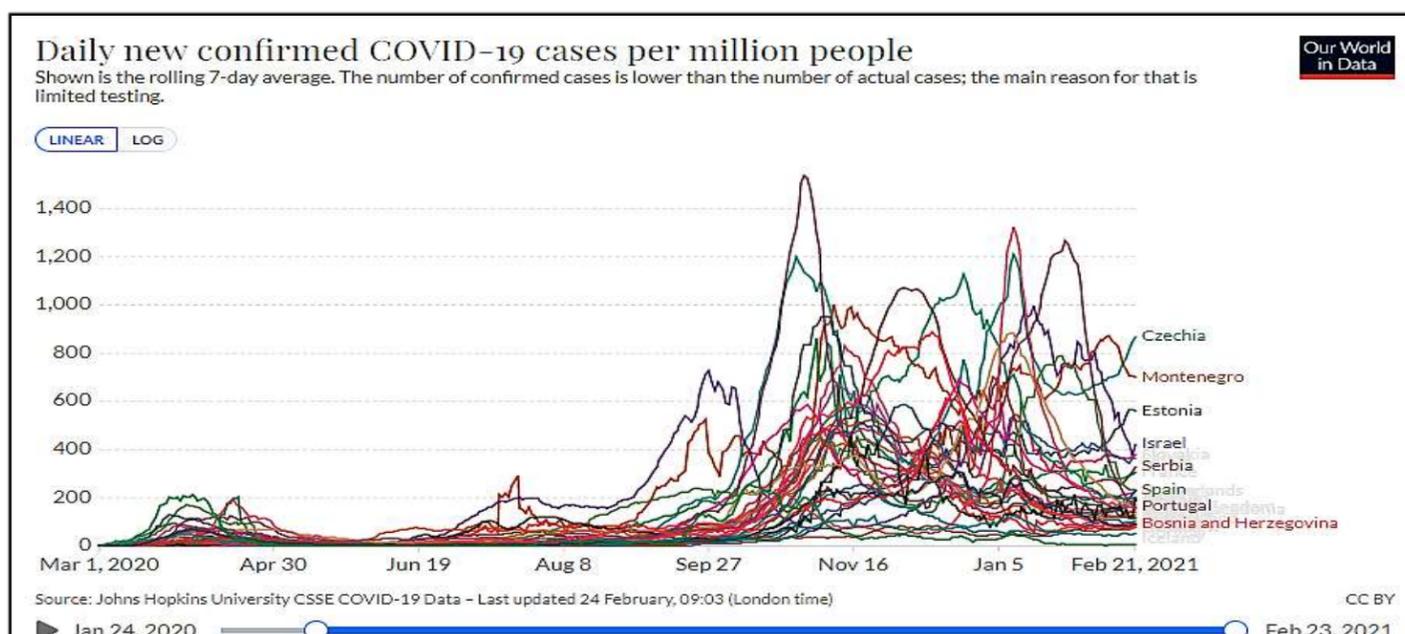
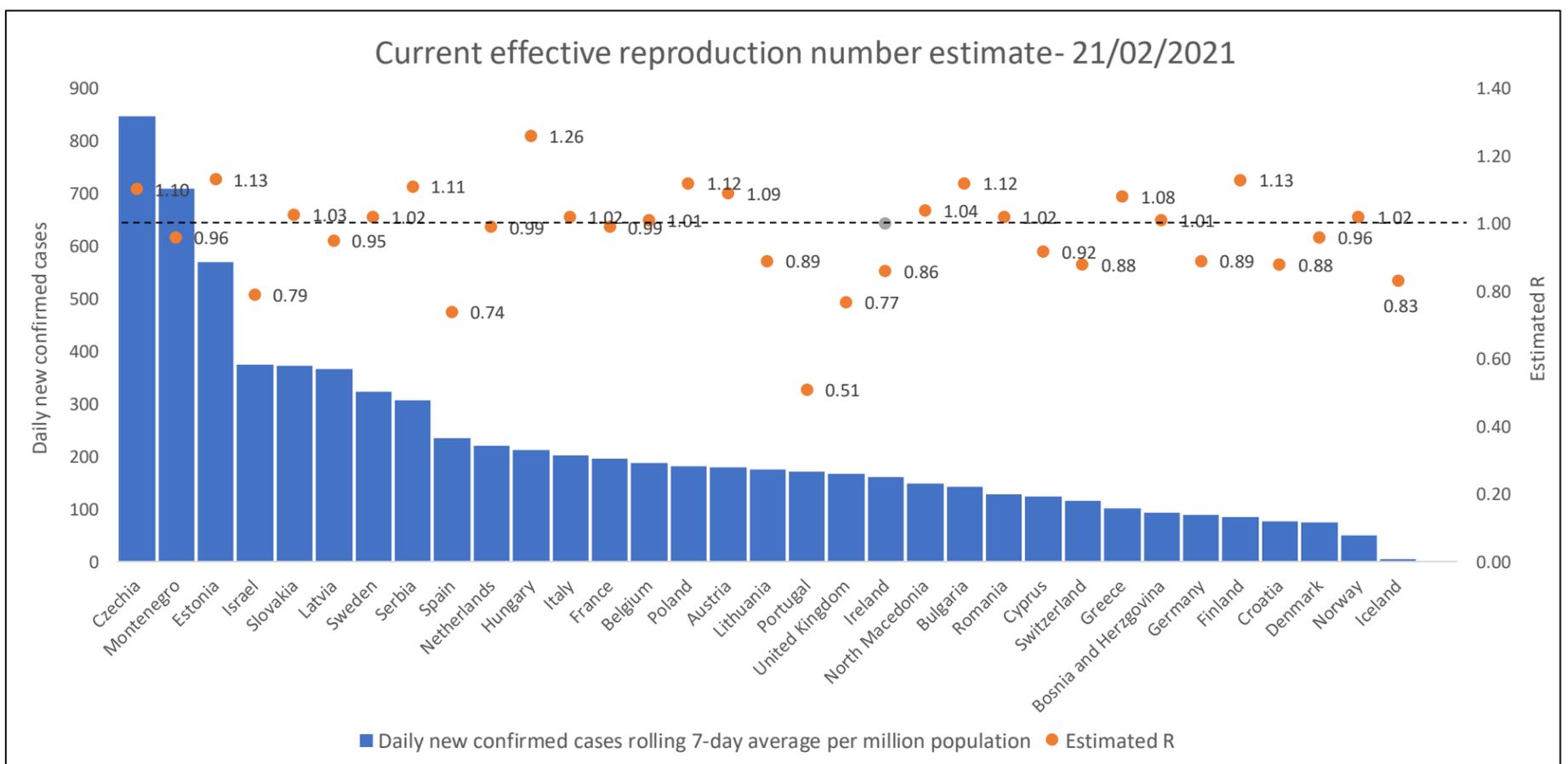


Table 1

S. No	Country	Daily new confirmed cases rolling 7-day average	Estimated R
1	Czechia	846.71	1.10
2	Montenegro	708.98	0.96
3	Estonia	569.04	1.13
4	Israel	374.11	0.79
5	Slovakia	372.16	1.03
6	Latvia	365.59	0.95
7	Sweden	321.88	1.02
8	Serbia	307.12	1.11
9	Spain	235.54	0.74
10	Netherlands	220.54	0.99
11	Hungary	212.30	1.26
12	Italy	200.78	1.02
13	Kosovo	197.92	N/A
14	France	195.24	0.99
15	Belgium	188.15	1.01
16	Poland	181.58	1.12
17	Austria	178.17	1.09
18	Lithuania	174.28	0.89
19	Portugal	171.76	0.51
20	United Kingdom	165.85	0.77
21	Ireland	161.49	0.86
22	North Macedonia	148.04	1.04
23	Bulgaria	142.33	1.12
24	Romania	127.61	1.02
25	Cyprus	124.44	0.92
26	Switzerland	116.34	0.88
27	Greece	102.14	1.08
28	Bosnia and Herzegovina	92.96	1.01
29	Germany	87.84	0.89
30	Finland	84.52	1.13
31	Croatia	77.46	0.88
32	Denmark	74.36	0.96
33	Norway	50.67	1.02
34	Iceland	5.02	0.83

Figure 2



Source: 1. https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus-data-explorer?zoomToSelection=true&time=2020-03-01_latest&country=GBR-DEU-ITA-AUT-BEL-BIH-BGR-HRV-CZE-DNK-EST-FIN-FRA-GRC-HUN-ISL-IRL-ISR-OWID-KOS-LVA-LTU-MNE-NLD-MKD-NOR-ROU-POL-PRT-SRB-SVK-ESP-SWE-CHE-CYP®ion=World&casesMetric=true&interval=smoothed&perCapita=true&smoothing=7&pickerMetric=location&pickerSort=asc daily new confirmed cases
2. <http://epidemicforecasting.org/country-rt-estimates-estimated-R>

Czechia:

The pandemic in Czechia is showing an increasing trend. The current number of people with laboratory confirmed covid-19 in Czechia is 127,240 and the transmission of new variant is at community level. To date the case fatality rate is 1.7% (7)(8). The effect of these growing numbers has impacted capacity of the health care system. 6,543 patients are hospitalized and 1,328 patients are in Intensive care unit as on 23rd February. By means of National Inpatient Care Dispatch the Ministry of Health is moving patients to health care facilities with existing capacity (9).

In order to contain the rapid spread of the covid-19, the Ministry of Health has put forward an extraordinary measure of wearing a respirator FFP2/ KN 95 masks or two medical masks folded on top of each other in all publicly accessible places and is applicable for all above 15 years of age (10). The current state of emergency will be in force until 28th February (11). The total number of people who received at least one dose of covid-19 vaccine are 360,618 and the share of the population fully vaccinated is 2.1% (12).

Montenegro:

Since 24th January 2021 Montenegro is an area of high incidence (reporting more than 200 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants over 7days) (13). As on 23rd February 574 new cases were identified with COVID-19 and number of people hospitalized is 482 (14). The Institute of Public Health in Montenegro has confirmed the presence of 7 cases of the more infectious British variant (B.1.1.7) (15).

In response to the rising number of infections certain measures were embraced by Ministry of Health such as prohibition of gatherings both indoors and outdoors, restriction of movement from 21:00 until 5:00 the next morning, organized online classes at educational institutions, food stores and trade involving non-food products and other services can be open with regulations from 7:00 to 20:00 and 7:00 to 18:00 respectively. All measures are in place until 25th February (16).

Slovakia:

From 8th February Slovakia is in its *Black phase* (4th degree protection). Until 19th March 2021 curfew will be in place from 5:00 am to 1:00 am the following day (17) (18). To date the total number of people with who diagnosed to have corona virus disease has reached 298,337 and a total of 6,775 deaths were caused by COVID-19. The incidence is 5464.40 per 100,000 people and the case fatality ratio is 2.27% on 24th February (19). The analysis of samples from second half of 2020 revealed the presence of new variant B.1.258 in Slovakia and Czechia which is independent of the British variant by virology website (20). A total of 286,408 people have received the first dose of vaccine against COVID-19 (21) and the share of the population that has been fully vaccinated is 2.0% (22).

Estonia:

In Estonia the number of infections and hospitalizations with coronavirus has increased by 21.2 and 12% respectively compared to the previous week (23). The total number of people infected with COVID-19 in past 14 days is 814,99 per 100,000 population and as on 23rd February 478 patients are hospitalized with 41 patients in intensive care unit. There are 12,799 active cases according to the statistics by Johns Hopkins University and the case fatality ratio is 0.96% (24)

Israel:

The incidence of coronavirus is 8798.42 per 100,000 people (24). The country has eased lockdown restrictions since 7th February when the daily new cases number fell below 5000. Takeaway services from restaurants, hairdressers and cosmeticians are allowed to operate. In areas with low infection rate per capita (Green and Yellow zones) kindergartens and lower elementary schools are reopened (25). The country's Health Ministry has also introduced green passport program to resume life to normal by issuing Green passports (which is valid for 6months) to the citizens who have completed two doses of vaccination. Registered gyms, hotels, ad entertainment venues such as theaters, concerts are open to admit people with the green passport (26). The share of population that has received full vaccination is 36.4% (27).

New weekly reports from The Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) University of Washington

IHME, the Gates Foundation funded health information service has started producing weekly *Executive COVID-19 Briefing Summaries for the European region* to best support decision-makers, hospital associations, researchers, and any other relevant organizations working towards the COVID-19 response in their country. There is a European summary report and country specific reports. We strongly recommend these for more an in depth look at country and European data. If you are interested in receiving regular, weekly updates and policy-relevant summaries on the COVID-19 trends and projections for their countries/regions can sign up for the mailing list via the following link: https://uwhealthmetrics.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b1b0Qlx2J6DAQdL

Report for the week of February 25th 2021 [Here:](#)

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