

# ASPHER Report: COVID-19 Situation Reporting across Europe

## Week of October 11<sup>th</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?*

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 about the situation in Serbia with a high incidence rate and vaccine hesitancy. Existing mitigation strategies to control the speed of transmission should be re-analysed or new strategies should be introduced if the situation demands. Concurrently, efforts to improve vaccine confidence among the public should also be taken into consideration. Vaccine uptake in Serbia has plateaued, despite the efforts of authorities to implement rewards for vaccination, provide greater absolute vaccine supply and make hundreds of walk-in vaccination centres available. Alleviating mistrust of the COVID vaccine through vigorous information campaigns, community outreach and vaccine mandates might help to fight vaccine hesitancy.

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 and Scotland an increase in new infections is linked to school reopening and the infection rate among young age groups has increased. ASPHER emphasizes that it is vital to consider new mitigation measures and/or re-evaluation of the existing to minimize 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-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](#).*

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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 a 4.5 million lives to date (4,846,981) and the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases are now above two hundred million (237,655,302). Individual WHO regions confirmed COVID-19 cases are as follows (2).

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

<b>WHO Region</b>	<b>Confirmed COVID-19 cases</b>
Americas	91,014,944
Europe	72,193,455
South-East Asia	43,429,360
Eastern Mediterranean	16,009,684
Western-Pacific	8,919,283
Africa	6,087,812

According to the WHO weekly epidemiological report, the number of newly reported cases and deaths have declined in all WHO regions except Europe which has seen an increase in number of cases and deaths at 7% and 11% respectively compared to the previous week (3)

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 11/10/2021 (table 2) (4) (5) (6).

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 population fully vaccinated against COVID-19
Serbia	907.39	7.40	42.46%*
Lithuania	783.74	8.55	60.88%
Latvia	777.29	4.82	48.19%
Estonia	695.32	3.23	54.40%
Romania	684.64	14.58	29.00%
Georgia	608.90	7.21	22.10%
Montenegro	575.02	11.15	35.80%
United Kingdom	544.59	1.65	66.29%
Slovenia	382.17	2.47	50.35%
Armenia	367.72	8.57	5.73%
Turkey	349.47	2.45	54.60%
Bulgaria	321.75	12.37	19.79%
Croatia	318.85	3.25	42.57%
Moldova	314.96	6.07	20.20%*
Ukraine	312.15	6.30	14.26%
Ireland	286.55	0.89	74.56%
Slovakia	254.05	1.54	41.64%
Israel	233.58	1.58	64.71%
Greece	216.60	3.04	60.32%
Belarus	209.86	1.57	17.24%*
Austria	194.45	1.14	60.65%
Bosnia And Herzegovina	184.29	10.46	N/A
Russia	183.63	6.33	30.91%
Belgium	180.59	0.77	72.82%
Albania	167.52	3.18	29.05%
North Macedonia	161.06	8.92	35.94%*
Luxembourg	151.90	0.45	N/A
Netherlands	143.11	0.27	67.58%*
Cyprus	138.07	0.96	62.84%
Iceland	118.58	0.00	80.73%
San Marino	109.21	0.00	65.13%
Switzerland	106.13	0.49	59.97%
Kazakhstan	103.65	2.21	36.33%
Denmark	102.45	0.17	75.50%
Finland	99.93	0.41	65.34%*
Germany	99.34	0.72	64.74%
Azerbaijan	89.60	1.30	40.18%
Czech Republic	79.54	0.35	56.01%
France	75.48	0.65	66.80%
Andorra	73.87	0.00	N/A
Norway	71.02	0.26	67.57%
Monaco	68.68	7.23	N/A
Hungary	67.91	1.08	58.98%
Portugal	60.86	0.67	86.38%
Sweden	58.59	0.52	66.46%
Poland	44.43	0.66	57.98%*
Italy	43.04	0.63	69.22%
Malta	38.03	0.00	82.37%
Spain	36.82	0.92	79.02%*
Kosovo	16.09	0.81	35.63%
Uzbekistan	12.30	0.09	14.56%*
Kyrgyzstan	11.96	0.26	10.02%
Tajikistan	0.00	0.00	19.48%*

\*data available at the latest in October, not corresponding to October 11

**Romania:** Between 12 and 13 October, Romania recorded 15,733 new COVID-19 cases and 309 deaths, an increase compared to last week and the highest number since March 2020 (7) (8). As of 11 October, 29% of the population has been fully vaccinated (9). On 5 October, the government requested international assistance in sourcing Tocilizumabum and 10lt oxygen concentrators via the European Civil Protection Mechanism. The request has since been approved (10). **The state of alert to combat the spread of COVID-19 remains in force until 10 November and includes a mask mandate, a curfew, a reduced capacity for various establishments, limits to public and private gatherings, as well as a recovered, vaccinated, or tested (RVT) requirement for most activities** (11). Starting 11 October, the third vaccine dose is recommended for severely immunocompromised persons over 12 years of age as determined by the attending physician, specialist, or family physician (12).

**Montenegro:** Between 10 and 11 October, Montenegro recorded 448 new COVID-19 cases and 8 deaths, a sizeable drop since the peaks in August and September (13) (14). As of 11 October, 35.8% of the population has been fully vaccinated (13). On 3 October, the National Expert Advisory Body on Immunizations proposed the administration of the third dose of COVID-19 vaccine to the entire adult population (15). **In light of the improved situation, the previous plan to require a digital COVID certificate to enter grocery stores has been abandoned** (16). **The certificate remains a requirement to enter all shopping and business centres** (17).

**Georgia:** Between 10 and 11 October, Georgia recorded 4,837 new COVID-19 cases and 26 deaths, the most since the start of September (18) (19). As of 11 October, 22.1% of the population has been fully vaccinated. (19). **A broad mask mandate is in place, as are limits to public and private gatherings and a requirement to provide proof of RVT, and a full ban on nightclubs, festivals, and other entertainment events** (20). While in-person education resumed on 4 October, the deteriorating situation prompted a switch back to remote learning in Tbilisi and other big cities (21). **On 7 October, the national immunization council recommended vaccination with the third dose of the vaccine for those aged over 50 and those aged 16 and above in a high-risk profession or with a chronic condition** (22) **as well as for children with chronic diseases aged 12-15** (23).

**Slovenia:** Between 10 and 11 October, Slovenia recorded 1,227 new COVID-19 cases and 5 deaths, with the 7-day average showing a sustained decrease in infections since the peak in mid-September (24) (25). As of 12 October, 50.6% of the population has been fully vaccinated (26). On 29 September, the Constitutional Court suspended the emergency ordinance provision, which would require all public administration employees to meet one of the RVT conditions (27) while the rule remains in effect for all service users and those involved in providing services After a widely publicized case of a suspected serious adverse effect, vaccinations using the Janssen vaccine have been temporarily halted on 29 September (28). As of 30 September, the national guidelines recommend vaccination for persons aged 12 and above. **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** (29).

**Israel:** The country has recently **initiated a saliva-based PCR test which will produce results within 45 min**. The sensitivity level of the saliva test is proved to be equal to the swab test. However, the **saliva test is yet to prove its convenience in handling and authenticity compared to the swab test** (30). Isolation requirement for caregivers of children under 12 years old has been withdrawn provided the individual complies with a revised definition of vaccinated or recovered (31). **“Vaccinating Near Home” project was launched on October 10 targeting 12 localities which constitutes half the unvaccinated population**. The project will run for a week in each of the localities and the established “warm rooms” will help to contact every single individual to provide information about the significance of vaccination and reserve appointments to get their jab. Family physicians will offer one to one call with unvaccinated and clarify any matters arising regarding vaccination (32).

**Latvia:** **Latvia has declared a state of emergency for the next three months starting from October 11 (until January 11, 2022) to control the spread of infection**. Public events are accessible to vaccinated or recovered individuals. Indoor entertainment events are prohibited. Cultural events will be conducted in “green mode” up to 60% capacity. Supermarkets will allow only those who are vaccinated or recovered. Wearing a face mask is obligatory in most of the activities (33). **Latvian transport authorities announced**

that from October 18, people who do not hold vaccination or recovered certificates will no longer receive public transport fare reductions (34). By November 15, all employees must get vaccinated (35).

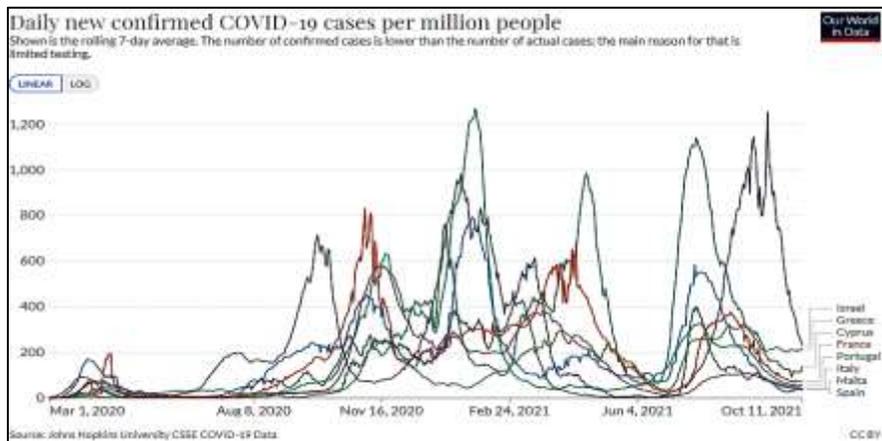
**Lithuania:** 14 day incidence rate in Lithuania rose to 998.5 per 100 thousand population (36) (656.3/100,000 on September 29) (37). **At the end of September, the government has reimposed face mask mandates at all indoor gatherings irrespective of vaccination status (37).** By October 11, 60.9% of the population in Lithuania were fully vaccinated (38).

**Estonia:** The rolling 7-day average of daily newly confirmed COVID-19 cases in Estonia is 695.32/mill people which was the highest since March this year. As of October 11, 54.4% of the population in Estonia were fully vaccinated (39). **R-value is 1.2.** Unlike the incidence rate, the hospitalization rate is increasing slowly and the situation is manageable (40). By October 13, **272 people are being treated for coronavirus infection. Of them, 32.6% have been vaccinated and 67.4% are unvaccinated (41).** The authorities have agreed to pay €120 for care home personnel who have completed the vaccination schedule provided the whole care home staff vaccination rate reaches 90% (42).

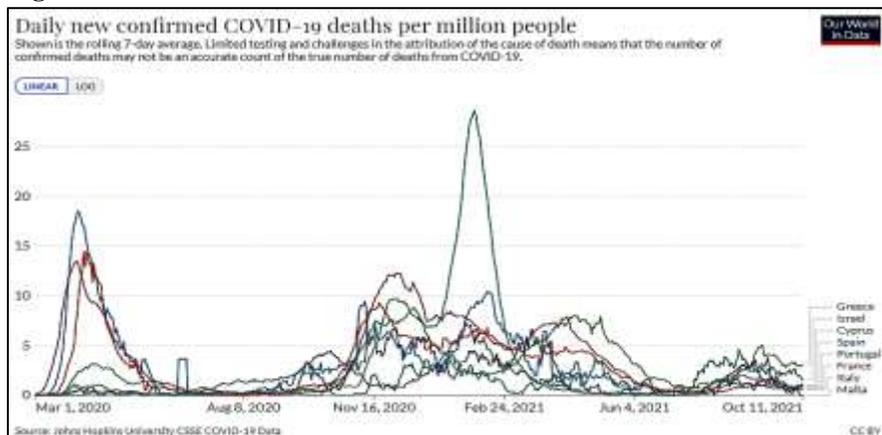
**United Kingdom:** From October 6 to 12, a total of 270,585 people tested positive for COVID-19, which is an increase of 13.5% compared to the previous 7days (from September 29 to October 5). **The number of deaths also rose by 2.3% during the same period (43).** NHS is recommending that pregnant women receive their vaccine jab based on the recent data which shows that approximately one-fifth of the critically ill patients due to COVID-19 are unvaccinated pregnant women (44). To date, more than 4 in every 5 of adult age group have been fully vaccinated (45).

**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 11th October 2021:**

**Mediterranean Region:  
Figure 1:**

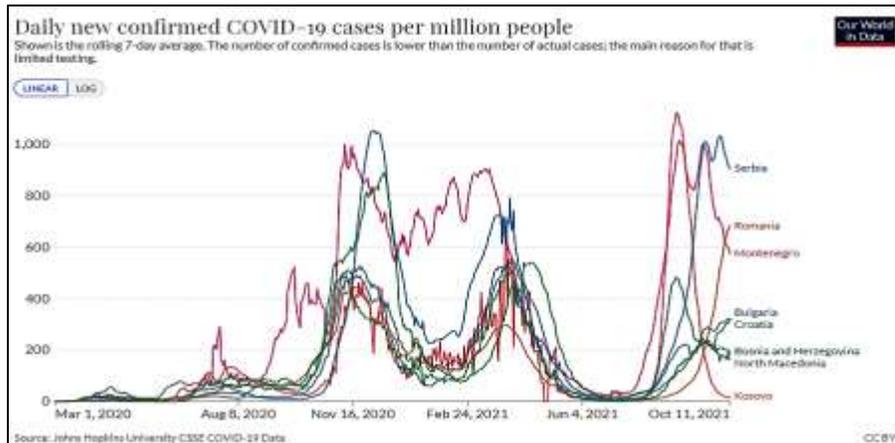


**Figure 2:**

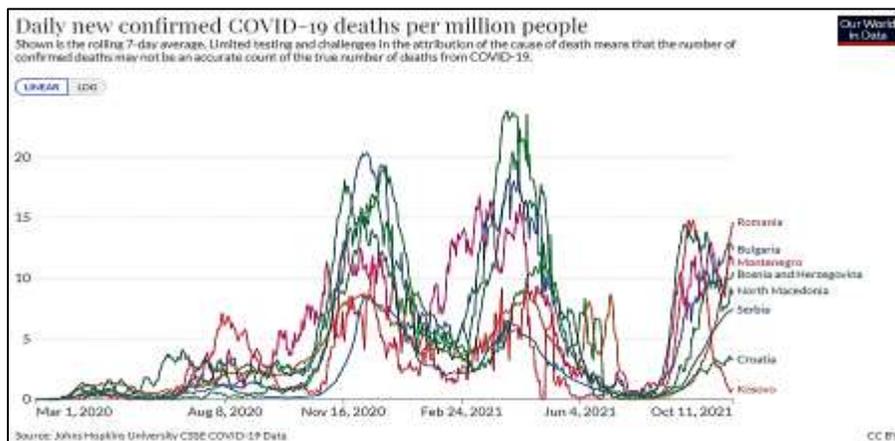


**South-East region:**

**Figure 3:**



**Figure 4:**



**Central Europe:**

**Figure 5:**

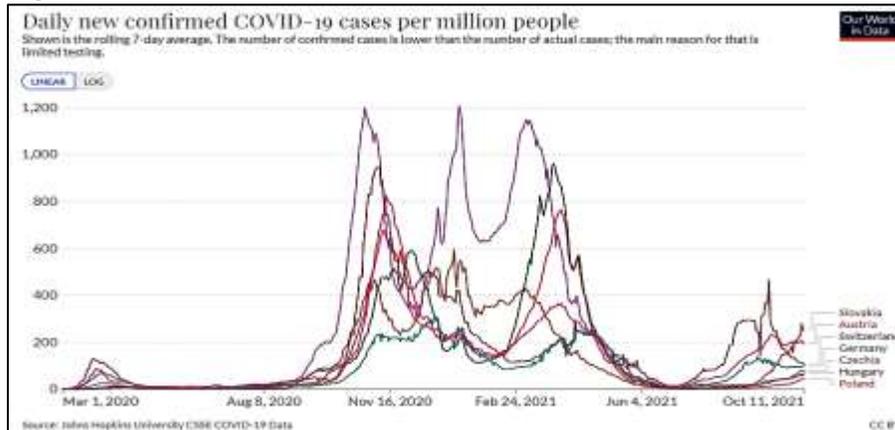
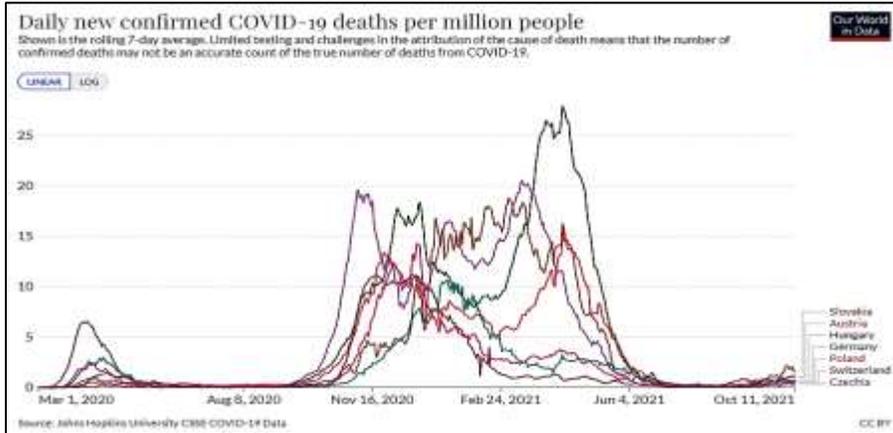


Figure 6:



Baltics and Nordic Countries:

Figure 7:

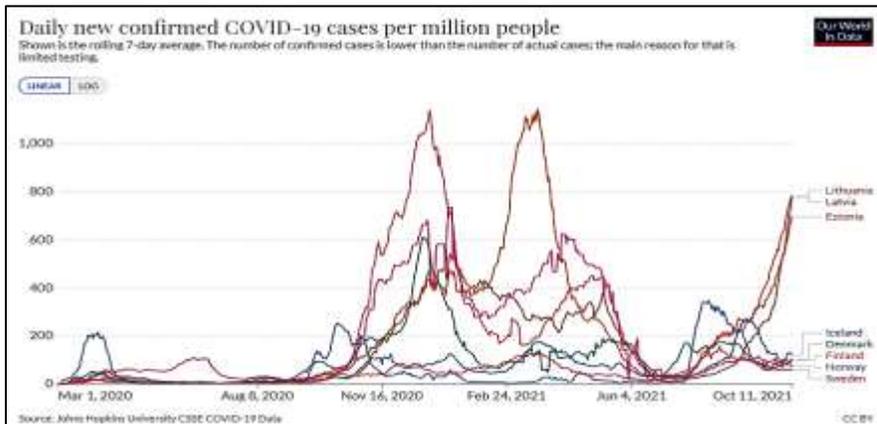
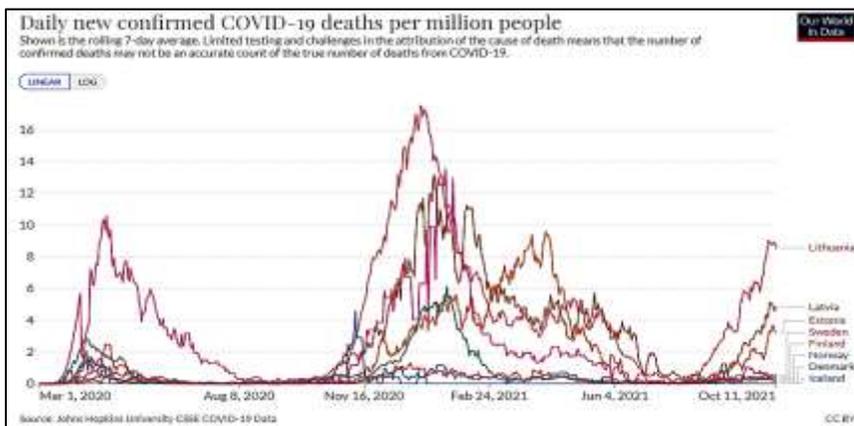
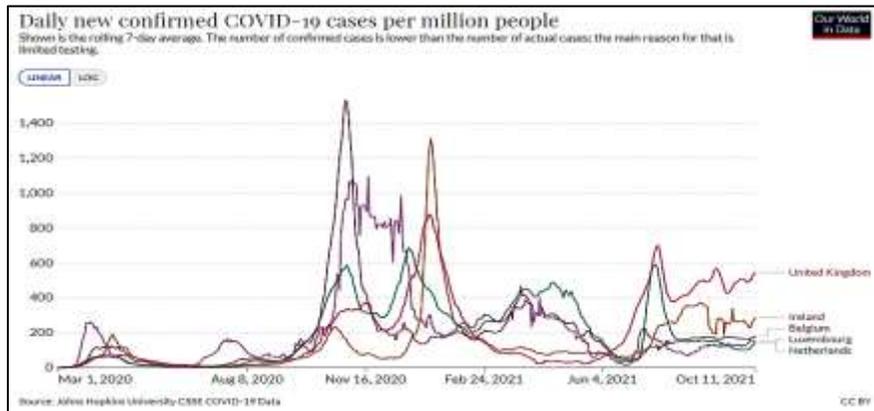


Figure 8:

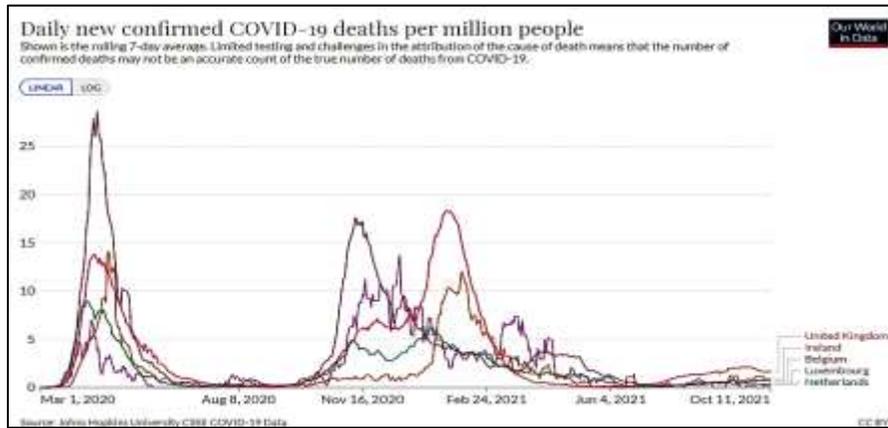


**North-western Europe:**

**Figure 9:**



**Figure 10:**



**Central Asia:**

**Figure 11:**

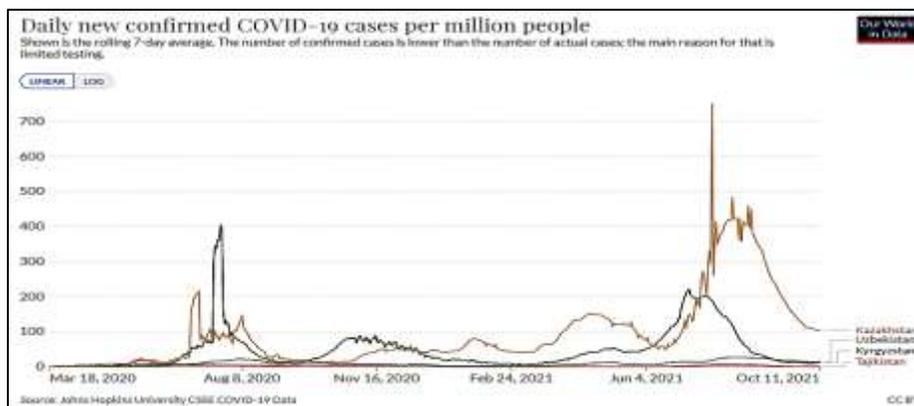
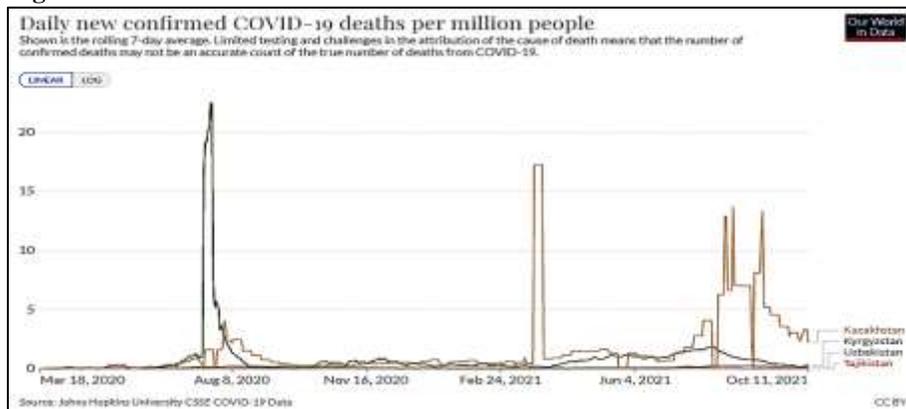


Figure 12:



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