

Weekly COVID-19 Epidemiological Update - Region of the Americas

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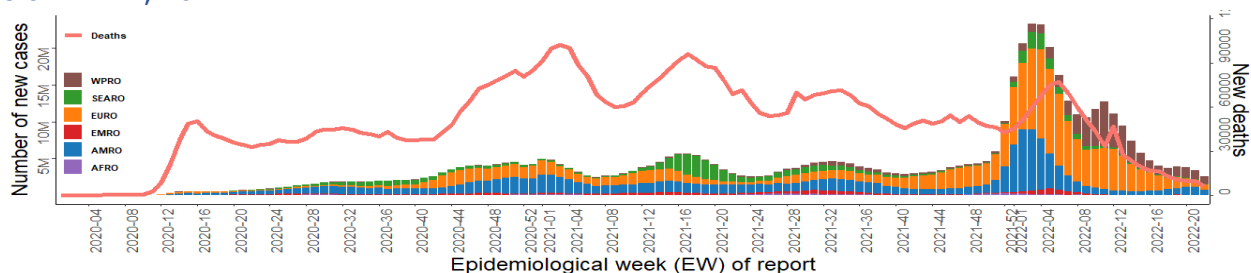
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- Executive summary including global overview
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Executive Summary

- **Since the onset of the pandemic** in 2020 and up to June 07, 2022, a cumulative total of approximately 530 million COVID-19 cases including about 6.3 million deaths were reported from all six WHO regions. During epidemiological week (EW) 22, cases increased in the regions of Europe (18.7%), the Americas (3.7%), and South-East Asia (1.2%) while they decreased in the remaining three WHO regions. COVID-19 deaths decreased in all WHO regions (range: -26.5 - -12.8%) except for the Western Pacific region (7.2% increase) compared to the previous week.
- **Globally**, approximately 3,113,507 new COVID-19 cases were reported in EW 22 (May 29, 2022-June 04, 2022) - a -8.2% decrease compared to EW 21 (May 22, 2022-May 28, 2022) (**Figure 1**). For the same period, 7,992 new COVID-19 deaths were reported globally – a -18.7% relative decrease compared the previous week.
- **In the region of the Americas**, 1,124,932 cases and 3,304 deaths were reported in EW 22 - a 3.7% increase in cases and -21.8% decrease in deaths compared to the previous week.
- At the subregional level, **COVID-19 cases increased in two subregions** - South America (26.5%) and Central America (4.7%) while they decreased in North America (-4.4%) and the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands (-5.7%). COVID-19 deaths declined in all but one subregion - Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands (11.2%) during EW 22 compared to the previous week.
- The **overall weekly case notification rate** for the region of the Americas was 110 cases per 100,000 population during EW 22 (106.1 in the previous week). Between EW 22 and 21, the 14-day COVID-19 death rate was 7.4 deaths per 1 million population (7.7 in the previous two weeks).
- Among 33 countries/territories in the region with available data, **COVID-19 hospitalizations** increased in 20 countries and territories (range: 0.3% - 100%) during EW 22 compared to the previous week. Among 28 countries and territories with available data, COVID-19 **ICU admissions** increased in 15 countries and territories (range: 2.2% - 200%).

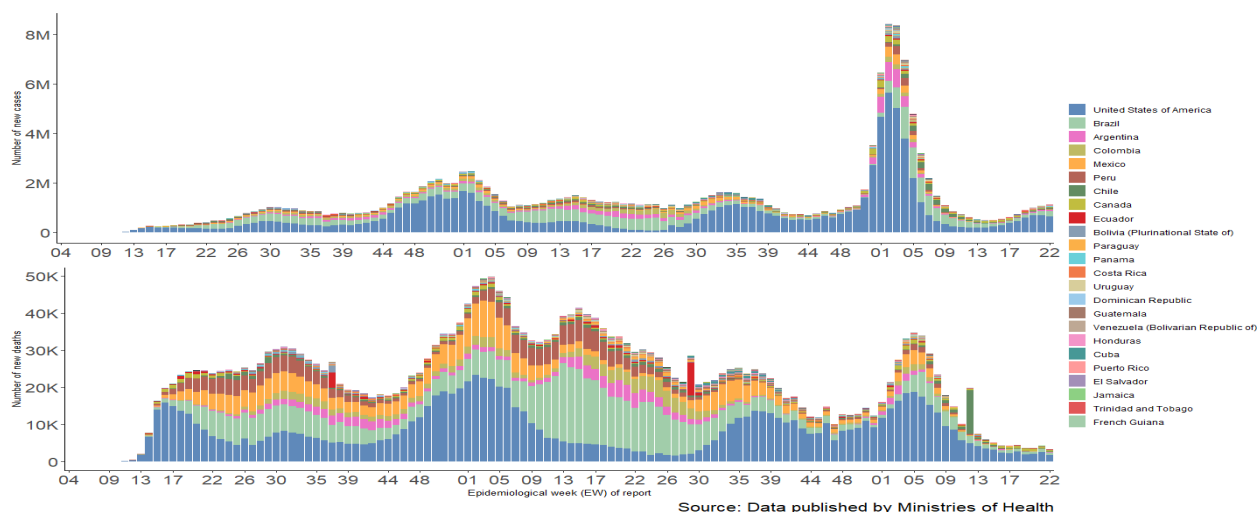
Figure 1: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW) of report and WHO region. As of EW 22, 2022.



Source: Data from WHO COVID-19 Dashboard

Region of the Americas - An overview

Figure 2: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW) of report and country/territory. Region of the Americas. EW 4, 2022 – EW 22, 2022.



During EW 22, 1,124,932 new **COVID-19 cases** were reported in the region of the Americas - a relative increase of 3.7% compared to the previous week (**Figure 2**). The highest number of COVID-19 cases was reported from the North American subregion (689,886 cases, -4% decrease) while the largest relative increase in cases was observed in the South American subregion (346,792 cases, 26.5% increase) compared to the previous week (**Table 1**). At the national level, the highest proportion of weekly COVID-19 cases during EW 22 were reported by the United States of America (657,268 new cases, -5.2% decrease), Brazil (216,334 new cases, 36.3% increase), Chile (55,211 new cases, 27.3% increase).

Table 1: Weekly change (%) in cases and deaths between EW 21 and EW 22 by subregion. Region of the Americas

Subregion	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Cases EW 21	Deaths EW 21	Cases EW 22	Deaths EW 22	% Change Cases	% Change Deaths
Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands	3,707,572	33,313	50,407	125	47,526	139	-5.7%	11.2%
Central America	3,302,700	50,966	38,890	211	40,728	169	4.7%	-19.9%
North America	93,431,419	1,367,592	721,575	2,804	689,886	2,025	-4.4%	-27.8%
South America	57,794,947	1,296,549	274,208	1,083	346,792	971	26.5%	-10.3%

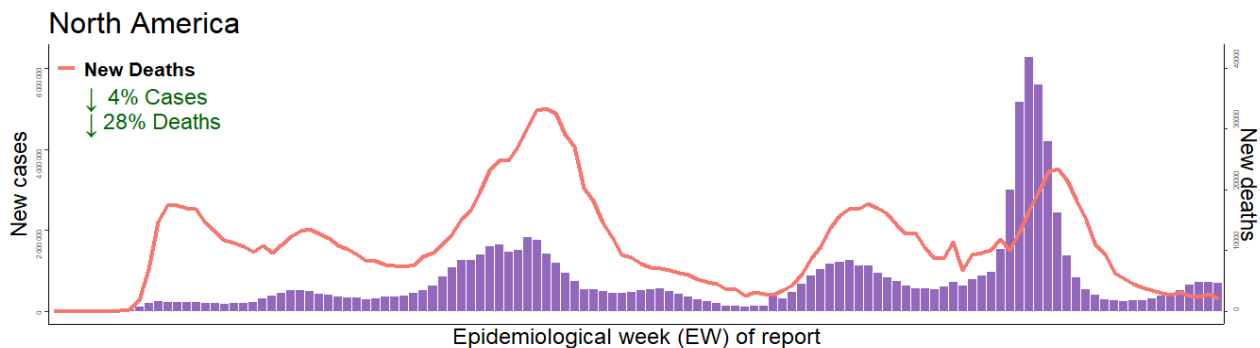
For the same period, 3,304 **COVID-19 deaths** were reported in the region of the Americas - a relative decrease of -21.8% compared to the previous week (**Figure 2**). The highest number of COVID-19 deaths during EW 22 was observed in North American subregion (2,804 deaths, -27% decrease) (**Table 1**). At the national level, the highest proportion of weekly COVID-19 deaths were reported from the United States of America (1,703 deaths, -31.2% decrease), Brazil (652 deaths, -21.1% decrease), and Canada (304 deaths, 2.7% increase).

A summary of the COVID-19 trends for EW 22 by subregion is presented below.

North America

During EW 22, **COVID-19 cases** in the North American subregion observed a decline for the first time after about 10 weeks of an increasing trend. During EW 22, increased weekly cases were observed in Mexico (15,592 cases, 37.3 % increase) where there has been a sustained increasing trend over the last four weeks. The United States of America reported a decline in cases (657,268 cases, -5.2 % decrease), and Canada reported no substantial change in weekly cases (17,026 cases, 1% increase).

Figure 3: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **North America.** Region of the Americas. EW 3, 2020 - EW 22, 2022.



Weekly COVID-19 deaths decreased by -27.8% in North America during EW 22 relative to the previous week, primarily due to the large decline of weekly deaths observed in the United States of America (1,703 deaths, -31.2% decrease). However, the largest percent decrease in the subregion was observed in Mexico where there has been a 43.8% decrease observed in weekly deaths (18 deaths) during EW 22 compared to the previous week. Canada reported a slight increase in its weekly deaths (304 new deaths, 2.7% increase) compared to the previous week.

Among two countries with data available for **COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions**, the United States of America continued to observe an increase in their weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations (29,023 hospitalizations, 8.5% increase) as well as ICU admissions (3,115 ICU admissions, 6.8% increase), while weekly hospitalizations and ICU admissions in Canada remained stable – a slight decrease observed in hospitalizations (5,107 hospitalizations, -3.5% decrease) including ICU admissions (364 ICU admissions, 0% change).

Severity trends remained elevated in the United States of America where there has been a steady increase in weekly hospitalizations (8.5% increase) as well as in ICU admissions (6.8% increase) for the past seven weeks, despite a decline in weekly deaths (-31.2% decrease) being observed during EW 22 compared to the previous week. According to the Coronavirus Disease 2019-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the overall rates of COVID-19 hospitalizations in the United States of America have increased since early April 2022, and the sharpest increase was observed among adults ≥ 65 years of age - 3.6 times higher on May 14, 2022 (24.3 per 100,000 population) compared to April 2, 2022 (6.7 per 100,000 population)¹. Among this age group, older adults ≥ 85 years of age observed the

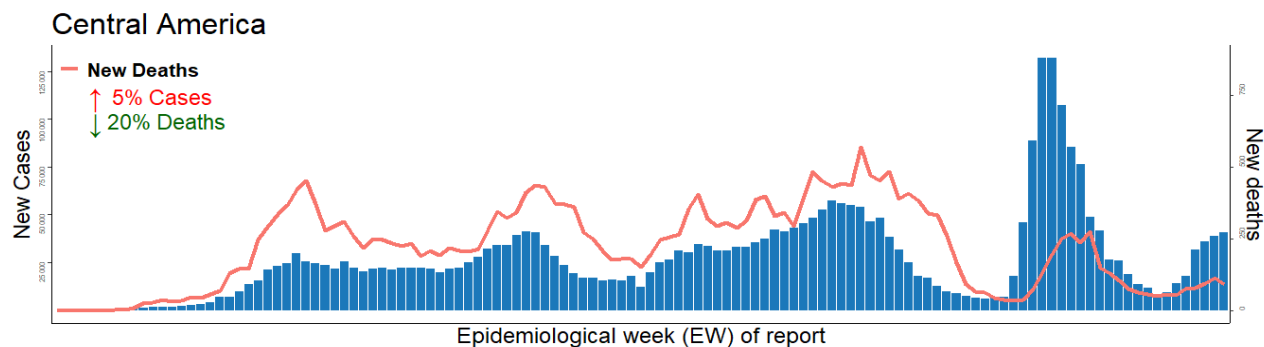
¹ United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review. Interpretive Summary for June 3, 2022. Accessed 3 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3s2MKi3>

largest increase in hospitalization rates, increasing from 14.8 per 100,000 population on April 2, to 68.7 per 100,000 population on May 14¹. Of the total COVID-19 hospitalizations in the United States of America, the percentage of adults aged above 65 years is about 55.2% as of May 28, 2022².

Central America

In Central America, the **overall COVID-19 incidence** for the sub-region continues to be on an upward trend for the seventh consecutive week with 40,728 new cases reported during EW 22 – a 4.7% increase compared to the previous week (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **Central America. Region of the Americas. EW 6, 2020 - EW 22, 2022.**



Out of the seven countries and territories in the subregion, while two countries/territories reported a decline - Nicaragua (30 cases, -14.3% decrease) and El Salvador (0 case, -100% decrease), five countries/territories reported an increase in their **weekly COVID-19 cases** (range: 2.9 – 40.9% increase). The largest relative increase compared to the previous week was observed in Honduras (358 cases, 40.9% increase), followed by Guatemala (4,284 cases, 22.1% increase) and Belize (739 cases, 17.3% increase). However, the largest proportions of reported cases during EW 22 were observed from Panama (21,421 cases, 5.6% increase) and Costa Rica (13,896 cases, 2.9% increase). Please note that the decrease in cases in El Salvador is a result of a data artifact since there was no new cases reported during EW 22, 2022.

During EW 22, **COVID-19 weekly deaths** decreased by approximately -19.9% relative to the previous week (**Figure 4**), with three out of the seven countries/territories reporting an increase (range: 4.5% – 100%) – Belize (1 death, 100% increase), Costa Rica (30 deaths, 30.4% increase), and Panama (23 deaths, 4.5% increase). While Nicaragua and El Salvador remained the same, Guatemala and Honduras reported a decline of 30.4% and 66.7%, respectively, in weekly deaths during EW 22 compared to the previous week.

Among four countries/territories with available data on **weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations** in the Central American Subregion, three countries/territories reported an increase in their weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations (range: 11.3 – 31.6% increase) while Belize observed a 44.4% reduction in its hospitalizations (n=5) during EW 22 compared to the previous week. Similarly, all three

² United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). COVID-NET Laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations. Assessed 3 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3mprkZc>

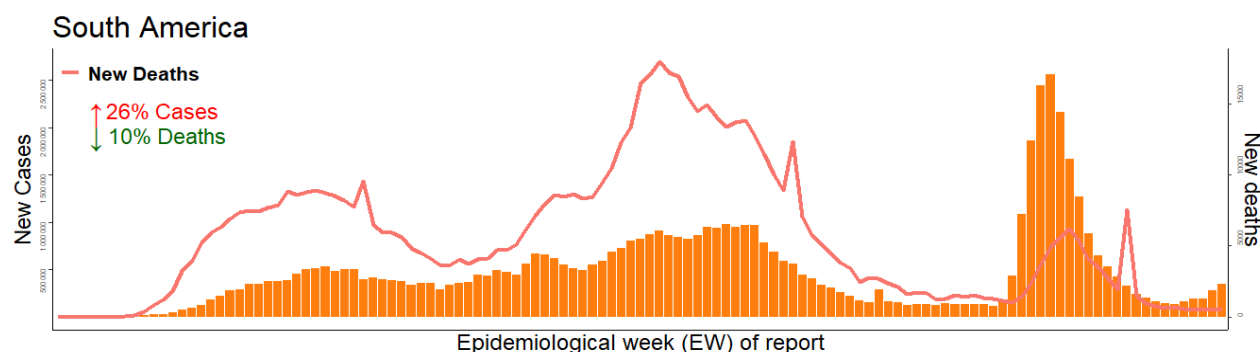
countries/territories with available data for **weekly COVID-19 ICU admissions** reported an increase (range: 15.6 – 25%) during EW 22 compared to the previous week.

Severity trends in the subregion for EW 22 remained elevated in Panama where there has been an upward trend in its weekly deaths (n=23; 4.5% increase) for the past five weeks along with a sustained increase in hospitalizations (n=286; 7.9% increase) and ICU admissions (n=47; 17.5% increase). Similarly, Costa Rica reported a sharp increase in its weekly deaths (n=30; 30.4% increase) as well as its weekly hospitalizations (n=385; 11.3% increase) including its ICU admissions (n=52; 15.6% increase) during EW 22 compared to the previous week.

South America

In South America, there has been a large increase in COVID-19 weekly cases during EW 22 with a total of 346,792 new COVID-19 cases being reported – a 26.5% increase compared to the previous week (**Figure 5**), primarily due to a surge in cases observed in Brazil.

Figure 5: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **South America. Region of the Americas.** EW 3, 2020 - EW 22, 2022.



Out of the 10 countries and territories in the sub-region, seven experienced an increase in **COVID-19 weekly cases** (range: 14.2 – 282.2% increase) while three observed a decline (range: -11.1 - -2.2% decrease) during EW 22 compared to the previous week. The highest relative increase in weekly cases during EW 22 was observed in Ecuador (7,215 cases, 282.2% increase), followed by Peru (5,039 cases, 84.1% increase), and Paraguay (607 cases, 60.6% increase). However, reported weekly cases in Ecuador during EW 22 include historical cases that the ministry of health published retroactively for the period between 2020 and 2022, resulting in a data artifact in its weekly percent change³. During EW 22, the largest proportion of cases was reported by Brazil (216,334 new cases, 36.3% increase), followed by Chile (55,211 new cases, 27.3% increase), and Argentina (46,045 new cases, -11.1% decrease).

For the same period, a total of 971 **COVID-19 deaths** were reported in South America – a -10.3% decrease compared to the previous week. During EW 22, six out of 10 countries/territories reported an increase (range: 4 – 237.5% increase). Among those, relative increases in deaths of Ecuador

³ COMUNICADO. MSP actualiza datos de contagios y decesos de COVID-19 de 2020 a la fecha. June 03, 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/38U60rA>

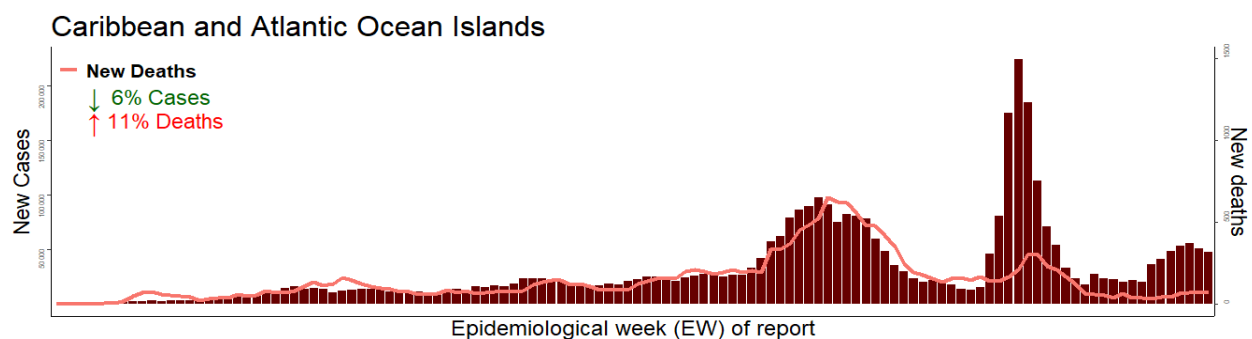
(27 deaths, 237.5% increase) and Paraguay (17 deaths, 88.9% increase) should be interpreted with caution due to the inclusion of historical deaths that the respective ministries of health published retroactively during EW 22. The remaining four countries/territories in the subregion reported a decline in weekly deaths (range: -75 - -21% decrease) compared to the previous week. The largest decline in deaths were reported by Bolivia (Plurinational State of) (1 death, -75% decrease), Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (2 deaths, -50% decrease), and Colombia (13 deaths, -38.1% decrease).

During EW 22, among five countries/territories with data available for **COVID-19 weekly hospitalizations**, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) is the only country reporting a decline in weekly hospitalizations (n=259; -8.2% decrease) while the remaining four countries/territories reported an increase (range: 0.3 – 36.8% increase) compared to the previous week. Among six countries/territories with data available for **COVID-19 ICU admissions**, four reported an increase during EW 22. Uruguay reported the highest relative increase in their weekly ICU admissions (n=41; 41.4% increase), followed by Chile (n=156; 9.9% increase), Argentina (n=346; 7.1% increase), and Colombia (n=178; 3.5% increase).

Important increases in severity trends were observed in Uruguay where its weekly deaths increased by 118% (24 deaths) along with a 41.4% increase in weekly ICU admissions. Similarly, severity trends remained elevated in Argentina, where there has been a large increase in weekly deaths for the last consecutive two weeks, along with increased ICU admissions (n=346; 7.1% increase) during EW 22 compared to the previous week.

Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands

Figure 6: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands.** Region of the Americas. EW 6, 2020 - EW 22, 2022.



In the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands sub-region, **COVID-19 weekly cases** decreased by -5.7% and weekly deaths increased by 11.2% compared to the previous week (**Figure 6**). At the national level, cases increased in 15 out of the 34 countries/territories in the subregion (range: 0.3% - 500%) while they declined in the remaining 19 countries/territories (range: -100% - -3.8%).

During the same period, a total of 139 **COVID-19 weekly deaths** (11.2% increase compared to the previous week) were reported in the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands subregion. Eight countries/territories observed a relative increase in their weekly deaths in EW 22 (range: 19 – 400% increase). Weekly deaths either remained the same – Guadeloupe (1 death, 0% change) – or declined in the remaining countries/territories of the subregion (n=5) (range: -100 – -17.3% decrease).

Among 23 countries/territories with available data, 11 countries/territories reported an increase in their **weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations** (range: 3.5 – 100% increase). The largest increase in weekly hospitalizations during EW 22 was observed in Aruba (10 hospitalizations, 150% increase), followed by Sint Maarten (2 hospitalizations, 100% increase), Anguilla (1 hospitalization, 100% increase), and French Guiana (16 hospitalizations, 77.8% increase). For 17 countries/territories with data available for **COVID-19 ICU admissions**, seven reported an increase in their weekly COVID-19 ICU admissions – Saint Lucia (n=3; 200% increase), Aruba (n=1; 100% increase), and Suriname (n=2; 100% increase), four reported a decline (range: -100 - -16.7% decrease), and six remained the same during EW 22 as compared to the previous week.

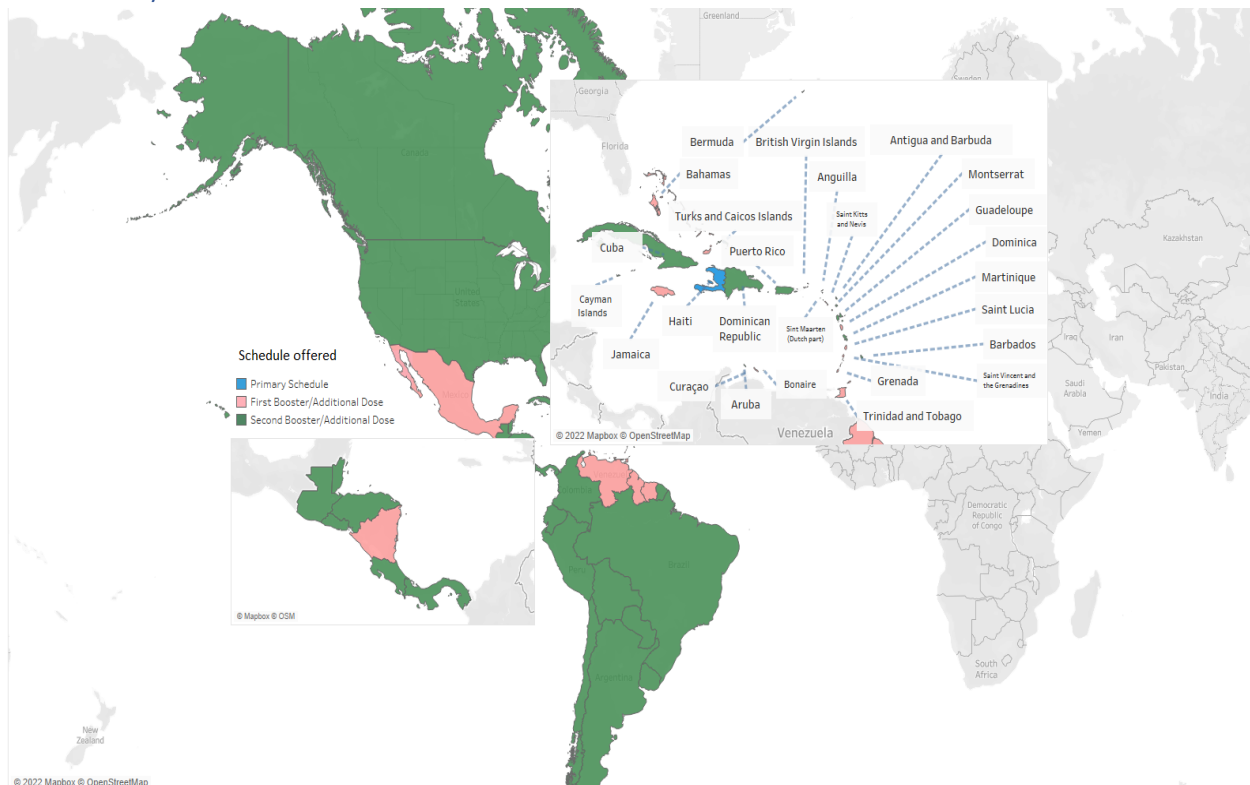
During EW 22, **significant increases in weekly cases** were reported from Saint Pierre and Miquelon (12 cases, 500% increase), Haiti (74 cases, 155.2% increase), and Guyana (627 cases, 109.7% increase).

For the same period, **severity trends in hospitalizations** remained elevated in French Guiana (16 hospitalizations, 77.7% increase), the Bahamas (17 hospitalizations, 41.7% increase), and Dominican Republic (87 hospitalizations, 27.9% increase) although their weekly deaths remained stable compared to the previous week. Moreover, Suriname has been observing elevated severity trends for the past four consecutive weeks with a 23.2% increase in weekly hospitalizations (n=69) observed during EW 22 relative to the previous week.

Immunization

Figure 7 shows the currently offered COVID-19 vaccination schedule information for the region of the Americas as of EW, 2022.

Figure 7. COVID-19 vaccination offered schedule by country/territory. The region of the Americas. As of EW 22, 2022.



The map (**Figure 7**) shows that:

- 1 country is offering only primary series vaccination (i.e., first two doses) to its population.
- 17 countries/territories are offering a booster/first additional dose (following application of the primary series). Of these, 14 are in the Non-Latin and Latin Caribbean region.
- 33 countries/territories are offering a second booster/additional dose (also named “fourth dose” in some countries). Of these, 17 of these are in the Non-Latin and Latin Caribbean region, while the remaining are located across the rest of the continent.

Genomic Surveillance

Through PAHO's Genomic Surveillance Regional Network and the work from the Member States, 349,520 full genome sequences of SARS-CoV-2 from Latin America and the Caribbean have been uploaded to the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID) platform up to 7 June 2022.

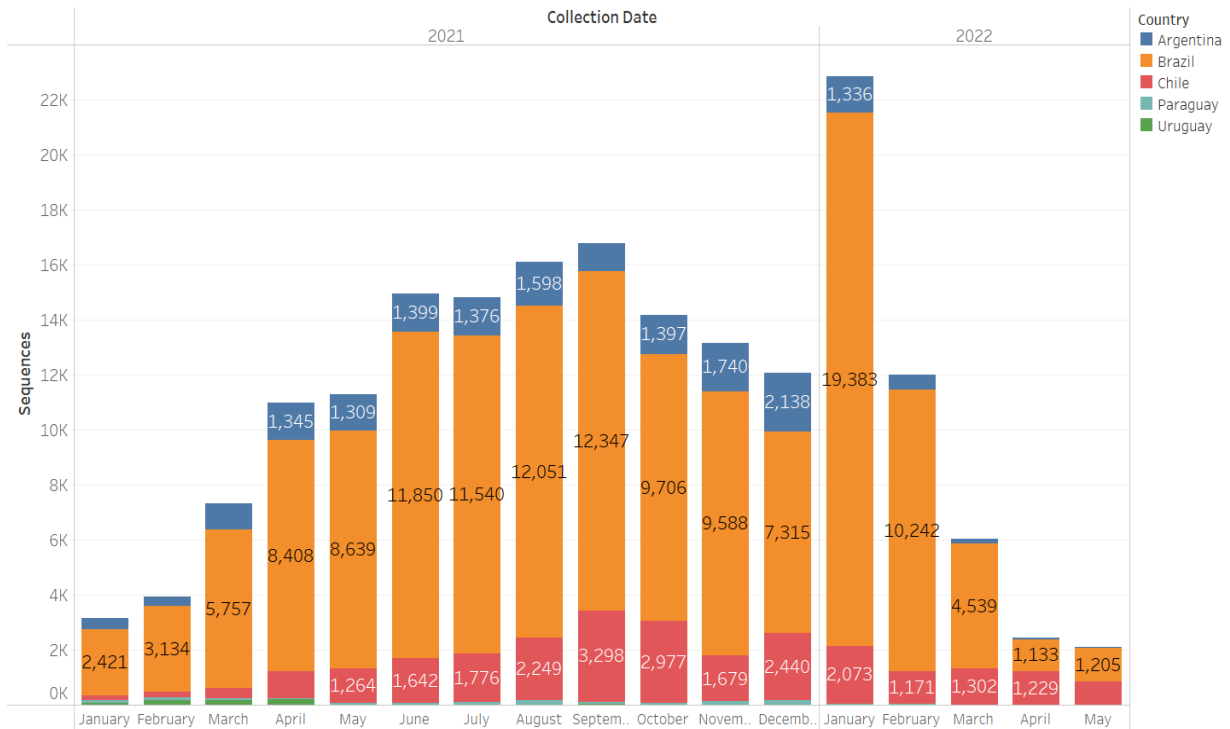
After the introduction of the Omicron VOC in the Americas at the end of 2021, it has rapidly increased in prevalence and has been officially reported by 54 countries or territories. Omicron is now predominant in all PAHO countries with the BA.1 and BA.1 sub lineages identified in more than 77% of the characterized samples from the Americas and BA.2 and BA.2 sublineages in 22% of the samples. The BA.3, BA.4, and BA.5 sub-lineages account for <0.01%, 0.08%, and 0.07% respectively of samples detected. Beyond Omicron, few lineages are currently detected in the Region. In fact, the last documented detection of Delta was on 15 May 2022 in North America.

Spotlight: Sequencing and genomic surveillance in the Southern Cone

During the last 17 months (January 2021 through 28 May 2022), 183,941 whole genome sequences from the Southern Cone countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) have been generated as part of the genomic surveillance systems (**Figure 8**). The “previously circulating” VOCs (**Alpha** - last detected 5 January 2022; **Beta** - last detected 12 August 2021; **Gamma** - last detected 30 December 2021) and the “currently circulating” VOCs (**Delta** - last detected 22 March 2022; and **Omicron**) have been detected in the subregion, in addition to “previously circulating” VOIs (**Lambda** - last detected 29 January 2022 and **Mu** - last detected 19 December 2021) and other lineages/variants (**Figure 9, 10**).

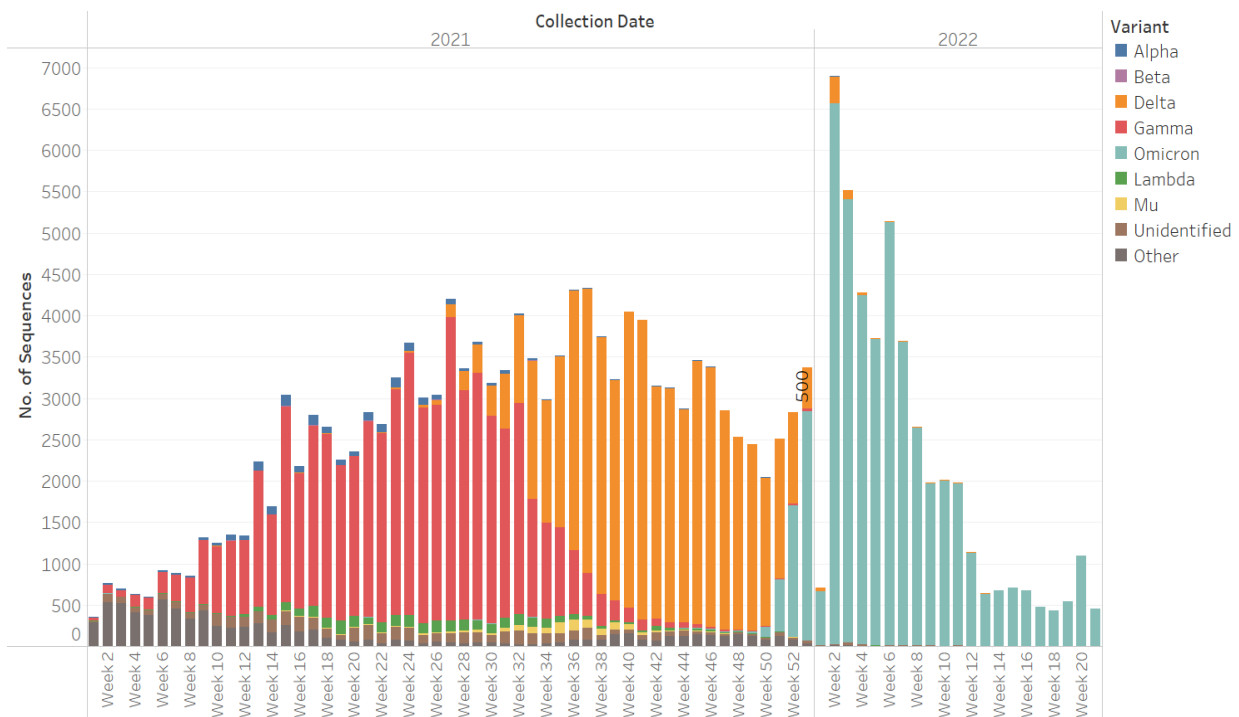
VOC Omicron was first detected in the subregion on 22 November 2021 in Colombia. After replacing Delta, Omicron has been predominant in the subregion, being detected in 3,670 samples (99.8%) sequenced and reported to GISAID during the last 8 weeks of available data (10 April to 28 May). Since Omicron's first detection, BA.1 and BA.1 sublineages represent the majority (91.2%) of sequences, while BA.2 and BA.2 sublineages represent 8.7% of the sequences with no samples of BA.3 detected while BA.4 and BA.5 represent 0.05% and 0.03% of sequences detected. However, the proportion of sequences identified as BA.2 (and BA.2 sublineages) has been increasing for the past 10 weeks where data is available and BA.2 (and BA.2 sublineages) is now predominant in the subregion. In addition, four sequences of the XE recombinant (a BA.1 / BA.2 recombinant) have been detected in Brazil. Nevertheless, no additional impact on public health or further spread have been demonstrated.

Figure 8. Number of sequences generated monthly by countries in the Southern Cone (January 2021-May 2022)



Source: GISAID

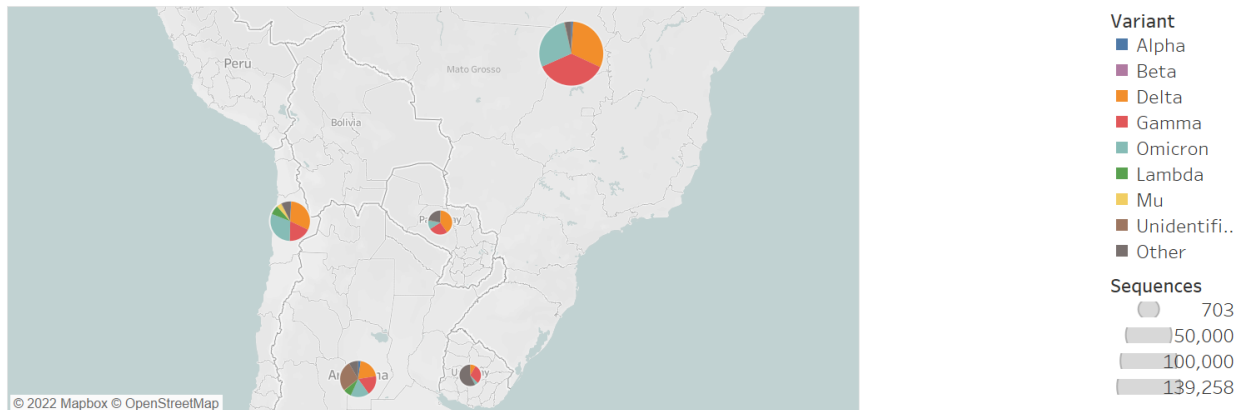
Figure 9. Variants detected and reported by the Countries in the Southern Cone (January 2021-May 2022)



Source: GISAID

Country-specific data is available at: https://ais.paho.org/phi/viz/SARS_CoV2_variants_regional.asp

Figure 10. Distribution of VOC and VOI identified by the Countries in the Southern Cone (January 2021-May 2022)

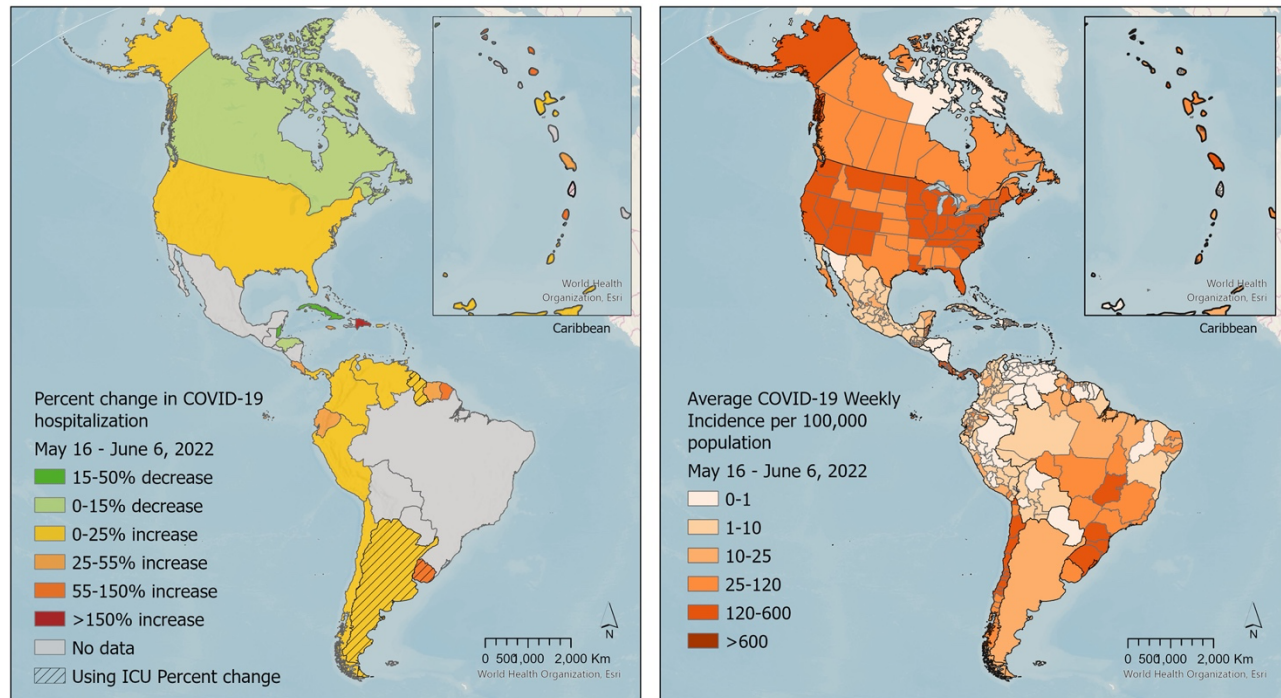


Country	Alpha	Beta	Delta	Gamma	Omicron	Lambda	Mu
Argentina	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Brazil	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Chile	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Paraguay	+		+	+	+		
Uruguay			+	+	+	+	

****Uruguay has also officially reported Alpha and Beta detection and circulation. Nevertheless, up to June 6, sequences were not yet available at GISAID.***

Source: GISAID

Annex 1. Percent change in COVID-19 Weekly Hospitalizations and Average COVID-19 Weekly Incidence between May 16 and June 6, 2022. The region of the Americas.



The maps (**Annex 1**) compare the percent change in COVID-19 weekly hospitalization (left) with the average weekly COVID-19 incidence (right) over the past three weeks between May 16 and June 6, 2022. Note that a change in hospitalizations was obtained by comparing maximum values on a weekly basis, and for countries/territories with no hospitalization data available but with ICU data available, the maximum value for ICU was used instead, represented with the hashed symbol. The left map indicates that most countries/territories with available hospitalization data reported either a slight decrease or an increase for up to 25% in hospitalizations. Increases between 0-25% were seen in the United States of America, Panama, Venezuela, Guyana, Colombia, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Guadeloupe, Puerto Rico as well as Trinidad and Tobago. Corresponding incidence rates for those countries/territories were between 0 and 120 cases per 100,000 except for the US and Chile who reported over 120 cases per 100,000 for most of their territories.

Larger increases (>55%) in hospitalization were seen in numerous Caribbean islands including the Dominican Republic, Aruba, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Saint Lucia. Overall, those countries/territories reported moderate to high incidence rates (over 25 cases per 100,000), except for the Dominican Republic with most territories reporting below 10 cases per 100,000. Uruguay and French Guyana also reported increases above 55%, along with incidence rates above 25 cases per 100,000. Decreases in hospitalization over the last 3 weeks were observed in Canada, Belize, Honduras, Cuba, and the Virgin Islands (both U.S. and U.K.). Incidence rates in those countries were low to moderate except for the U.S. Virgin Islands, reporting over 600 cases per 100,000.