

Weekly COVID-19 Epidemiological Update - Region of the Americas

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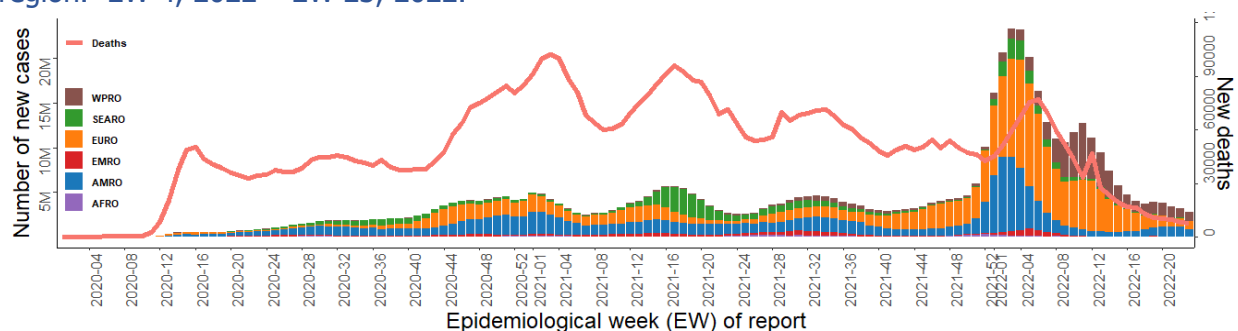
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- Executive summary including global overview
- Regional and sub-regional trends
- Immunisation
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Executive Summary

- **Since the onset of the pandemic** in 2020 and up to June 14, 2022, a cumulative total of approximately 533.4 million COVID-19 cases including about 6.3 deaths were reported from all six WHO regions. During epidemiological week (EW) 23, cases increased in four WHO regions (range: 0.6 – 33.4%) while they declined in the regions of Africa (-5.7%) and Western Pacific (-8.1%). COVID-19 deaths increased in the regions of the Americas (19.4%) and Western Pacific (16.5%) while they decreased in the remaining four WHO regions (range: -31.9 - -11.3%).
- **Globally**, approximately 3,334,244 new COVID-19 cases were reported in epidemiological week (EW) 23 (June 05, 2022-June 11, 2022) - a 2.9% increase compared to EW 22 (May 29, 2022-June 04, 2022) (**Figure 1**). For the same period, 8,923 new COVID-19 deaths were reported globally – a 5.5% relative increase compared the previous week.
- **In the region of the Americas**, 1,269,855 cases and 4,069 deaths were reported in EW 23 - a 12% increase in cases and 19.4% increase in deaths compared to the previous week.
- At the subregional level, COVID-19 cases increased in all subregions (range: 3.7 – 20.3%) with the exception of Central America (-32.3%). COVID-19 deaths increased in two subregions – North America (20%) and South America (33.6%).
- The **overall weekly case notification rate** for the region of the Americas was 125 cases per 100,000 population during EW 23 (110.5 the previous week). Between EW 23 and 22, the 14-day COVID-19 death rate was 7.3 deaths per 1 million population (7.5 the previous two weeks).
- Among 34 countries/territories in the region with available data, **COVID-19 hospitalizations** increased in 15 countries and territories (range: 2% - 100%) during EW 23 compared to the previous week. Among 26 countries/territories with available data, COVID-19 **ICU admissions** increased in 10 countries/territories (range: 4.2% - 400%).

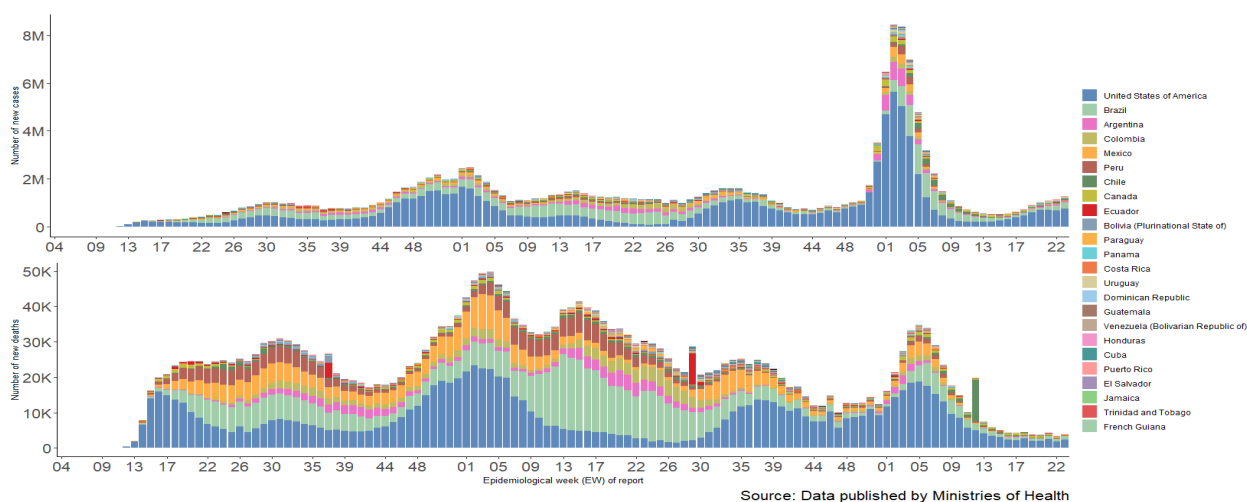
Figure 1: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW) of report and WHO region. EW 4, 2022 – EW 23, 2022.



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 23, 2022.



During EW 23, 1,269,855 new **COVID-19 cases** were reported in the region of the Americas - a relative increase of 11% compared to previous week (**Figure 2**). The highest number of COVID-19 cases was reported from the North American subregion (771,319 cases, 11.5% increase) while the largest relative increase was observed in the South American subregion (417,180 cases, 20.3% increase) compared to the previous week. (**Table 1**). At the national level, the highest proportion of weekly COVID-19 cases during EW 23 were reported by the United States of America (743,723 cases, 12.7% increase), Brazil (279,862 cases, 29.4% increase), Chile (69,174 cases, 25.3% increase).

Table 1: Weekly change (%) in cases and deaths between EW 22 and EW 23 by subregion. Region of the Americas

Subregion	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Cases EW 22	Deaths EW 22	Cases EW 23	Deaths EW 23	% Change Cases	% Change Deaths
Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands	3,753,481	33,417	47,746	139	49,523	112	3.7%	-19.4%
Central America	3,326,798	51,057	40,728	169	27,568	107	-32.3%	-36.7%
North America	94,187,565	1,370,539	695,311	2,128	775,584	2,553	11.5%	19.9%
South America	58,202,054	1,297,858	346,792	971	417,180	1,297	20.3%	33.6%

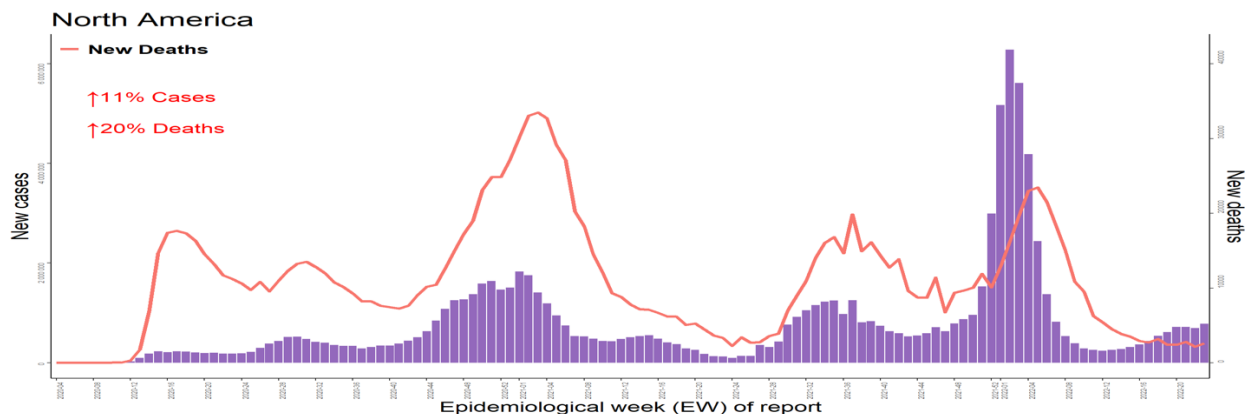
For the same period, 4,069 **COVID-19 deaths** were reported in the region of the Americas - a relative increase of 14.6% compared to previous week (**Figure 2**). The highest number of COVID-19 deaths during EW 23 was reported from the North American subregion (2,390 deaths, 12.3% increase) (**Table 1**). At the national level, the highest proportion of weekly COVID-19 deaths were reported from the United States of America (2,367 deaths, 31.6% increase), Brazil (989 deaths, 51.7% increase), and Mexico (186 deaths, 27.4% increase).

A summary of the COVID-19 trends for EW 23 by subregion is presented below.

North America

During EW 23, **COVID-19 cases** increased by 11.5% in the North American subregion. Due to switching from daily to weekly reporting, the data for EW 23 for Canada was not available, resulting in a data artifact in a percent change in the North American subregion. Both the United States of America and Mexico reported an increase in weekly cases during EW 23 compared to the previous week - the United States of America (743,723 cases, 12.7% increase), and Mexico (31,861 cases, 71.9% increase).

Figure 3: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). North America. Region of the Americas. EW 3, 2020 - EW 23, 2022.



Weekly COVID-19 deaths increased by 20% in North America during EW 23 relative to the previous week, primarily due to the large increase of weekly deaths observed in the United States of America (2,367 new deaths, 31.6% increase), which also accounts for the largest proportion of reported deaths in the region of the Americas. Mexico reported an increase in its weekly deaths (186 new deaths, 27.4% increase) compared to the previous week.

For COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions during EW 23, the United States of America reported a slight increase in both hospitalizations (29,614 hospitalizations, 2% increase) and ICU admissions (3,245 ICU admissions, 4.2% increase) relative to the previous week. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the 7-day daily average in new hospital admissions due to COVID-19 has been steadily increasing, with approximately 4,127 admissions for June 1–7, 2022 – 8 % increase compared to the previous week.¹

The proportion of Omicron variant of concern (VOC) sub-lineage BA.2.12.1 in the United States of America has been increasing since early April 2022, accounting for about 62.2% of the total weekly sequenced samples for the week ending June 4.² For the same time, the BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants of Omicron were estimated to make up nearly 5.4% and 7.6%, respectively, of the coronavirus variants in the United States of America – a relative increase of 80% and 63%, respectively, compared to the previous week.²

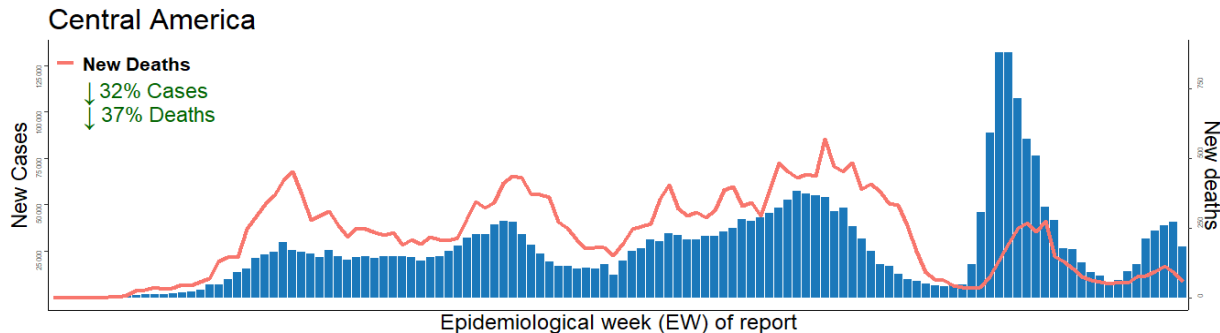
1 United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). COVID-19 Data Tracker Weekly Review. Interpretive Summary for June 10, 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3s2MKi3>

2 United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Variant Proportions. Accessed 14 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3Obz8cT>

Central America

In Central America, there was a large decrease (27,568 new cases, -32.3% decrease) in **COVID-19 incidence** during EW 23 compared to the previous week, which is the first time since approximately seven weeks of an increasing trend in weekly cases. Please note that data for EW 23 for Costa Rica was not publicly available, which may result in a data artifact in percent change of COVID-19 cases/deaths in the subregion. (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **Central America. Region of the Americas.** EW 6, 2020 - EW 23, 2022.



In the subregion, the largest relative increase in cases during EW 23 was observed in Belize (1,075 cases, 45.5% increase), followed by Guatemala (6,050 cases, 41.2% increase), and Nicaragua (39 cases, 30% increase). Two countries in the subregion reported a decline in weekly cases during EW 23 – Honduras (184 cases, -48.6% decrease) and Panama (18,841 cases, -12% decrease) compared to the previous week.

For the same period, **COVID-19 weekly deaths** decreased by approximately -36.7% in Central America relative to the previous week (**Figure 4**). Approximately 95% of weekly deaths in the subregion was contributed by two countries – Guatemala (74 deaths, -33.9% decrease) and Panama (28 deaths, 21.7% increase). The remaining four countries/territories reported no significant changes in their number of weekly deaths – an increase was observed in El Salvador (n=2; 100% increase) and in Honduras (n=2; 100% increase), and a decrease was observed in Belize (n=0; -100% decrease). Nicaragua reported no change (1 death, 0% change) in its weekly deaths during EW 23 compared to the previous week.

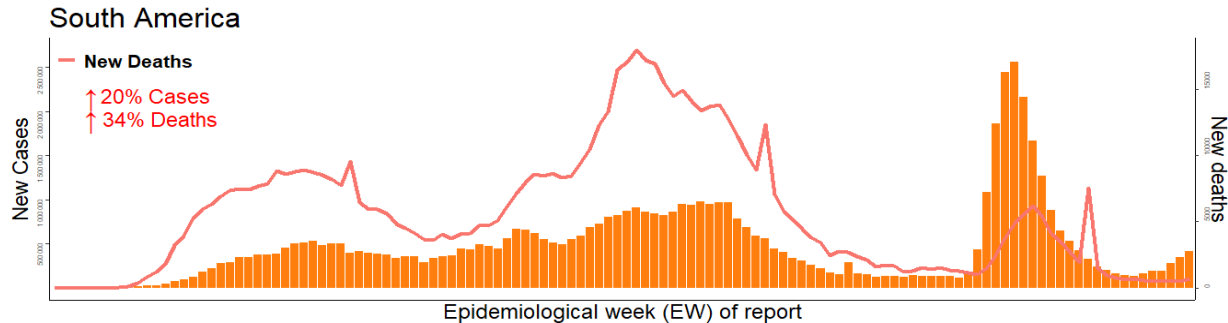
Among three countries/territories with available data on **weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations** in the Central American Subregion, two countries/territories reported an increase in their weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations – Belize (n=9; 80% increase) and Panama (n=338; 13.8% increase), while Honduras observed a 32% decline (17 hospitalizations). Similarly, two countries/territories with available data for **weekly COVID-19 ICU admissions** reported a decline during EW 23 – Honduras (1 ICU admission, -75% decrease) and Panama (37 ICU admissions, -21.3% decrease) relative to the previous week.

Severity trends in the subregion for EW 23 have increasing in Panama where there has been a rising trend in weekly deaths (28 deaths, 21.7% increase) for the past six consecutive weeks, along with a sustained increase observed in weekly hospitalizations (338 hospitalizations, 13.8% increase).

South America

In the South American subregion, there has been an increasing trend in COVID-19 incidence for the past three weeks, with a total of 417,180 new COVID-19 cases being reported during EW 23 – a 20.3 % increase compared to the previous week, primarily due to a surge in cases observed in Brazil and Chile (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **South America. Region of the Americas.** EW 3, 2020 - EW 23, 2022.



Out of the 10 countries and territories the subregion, seven experienced an increase in cases during EW 23 relative to the previous week (range: 5.1 – 60.2% increase). The largest proportion of weekly cases was reported from Brazil (279,862 new cases, 29.4% increase), followed by Chile (69,174 new cases, 25.3% increase), and Argentina (36,835 new cases, -20% decrease). The highest relative increase in weekly cases during EW 23 was observed in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) (2,002 cases, 60.2% increase), followed by Colombia (8,742 cases, 54.7% increase), and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (355 cases, 38.1% increase) compared to the previous week.

During EW 23, similar to the cases, seven countries/territories experienced an increase in weekly deaths (range: 9.6 – 107.7% increase) with a total of 1,297 COVID-19 deaths being reported in South America – a 33.6% increase compared to the previous week. The largest proportion of reported deaths was reported by Brazil (989 deaths, 51.7% increase), followed by Chile (121 deaths, 55.1% increase), and Peru (80 deaths, 9.6% increase).

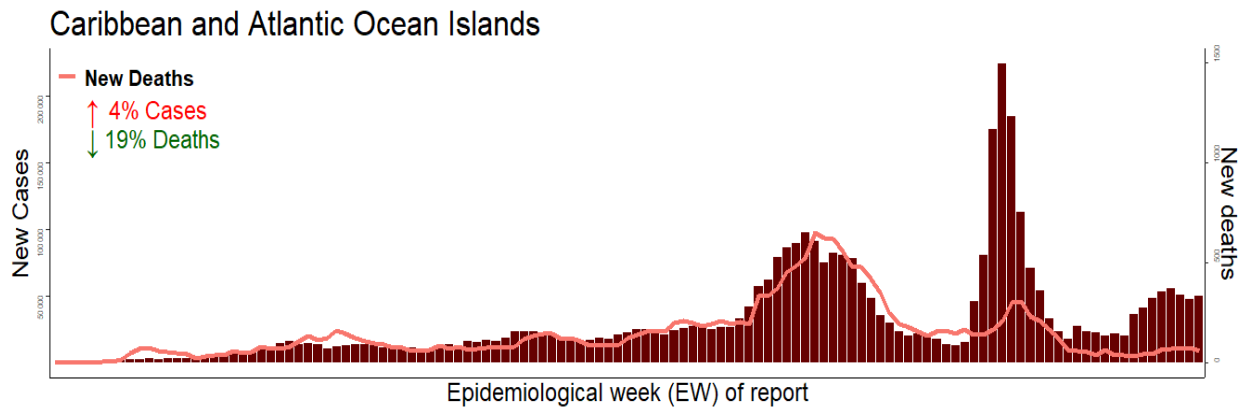
For the same period, among five countries and territories with available data for **COVID-19 weekly hospitalizations**, two countries/territories reported an increase in their weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations – Chile (n=1,305; 25.1% increase) and Peru (n=753; 4% increase) – while the remaining three countries/territories observed either a decline – Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (n=223; -13.9% decrease) – or no change (Colombia and Ecuador) compared to the previous week. Among six countries/territories with data available for **COVID-19 ICU admissions**, four reported an increase in their ICU admissions during EW 23 (range: 4.3 – 10.1% increase) compared to the previous week.

Important increases in severity trends were observed in Chile where weekly deaths increased by 55.1% (121 deaths), accompanied by a 29.4% increase in weekly hospitalizations (n=1,350) including a 7.7% increase in ICU admissions (n=168). Similarly, severity trends remained elevated in Brazil where there has been a large increase in weekly deaths (n=989; 55.1% increase) during EW 23 along with an upward trend in cases observed for the third consecutive week (n=279,862 for EW 23; 29.4% increase compared to the previous week).

Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands

In the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands subregion, **COVID-19 weekly cases** increased by 3.7% and weekly deaths decreased by -19.4% compared to the previous week (**Figure 6**). At the national level, COVID-19 cases increased in 13 out of the 34 countries/territories in the subregion (range: 3.8% - 100%) during EW 23 while they declined in the remaining 21 countries/territories (range: -100% - -2.3%) compared to the previous week.

Figure 6: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands.** Region of the Americas. EW 6, 2020 - EW 23, 2022.



During the same period, a total of 112 **COVID-19 weekly deaths** (-19.4% decrease) were reported in the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands subregion compared to the previous week. 11 countries/territories observed a relative increase in their weekly deaths in EW 23 (range: 20.8 – 100% increase). Weekly deaths declined in eight countries/territories of the subregion (range: -100 – -14% decrease) and they remained the same in Guadeloupe (1 death, 0% change).

Among 22 countries/territories with available data, 9 countries and territories reported an increase in their **weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations** (range: 4.5 – 100% increase). The largest relative increases in hospitalizations were observed in Antigua and Barbuda (n=8; 100% increase), Guyana (n=2; 100% increase) and Anguilla (n=2; 100% increase). Among 14 countries/territories with data available for **COVID-19 ICU admissions**, four reported an increase in their ICU admissions (range: 33.3 – 400% increase), four reported no major change, and the remaining six countries/territories reported a decline (range: -100 - -20% decrease) during EW 23 compared to the previous week.

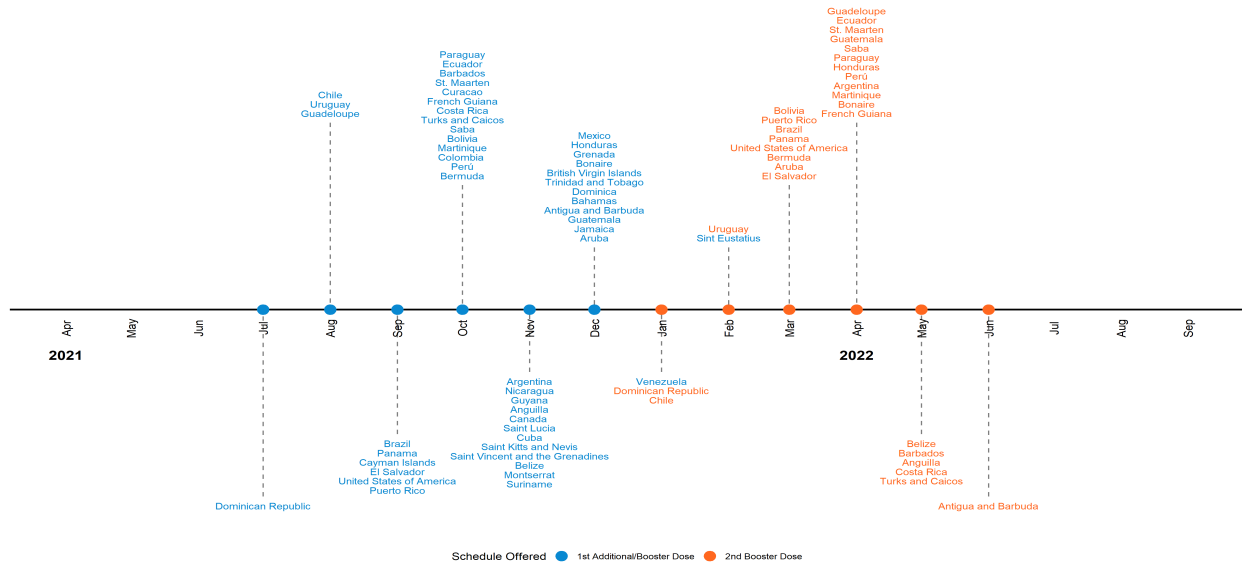
During EW 23, **significant increases in weekly cases** were reported from Saint Martin (74 cases, 94.7% increase), followed by British Virgin Islands (137 cases, 82.7% increase) and Saint Barthélemy (32 cases, 60% increase).

For the same period, severity trends in hospitalizations remained elevated in the Dominican Republic (158 hospitalizations, 47.7% increase) and the Bahamas (25 hospitalizations, 47.1% increase) although their weekly deaths remained stable - Dominican Republic (3 deaths, 100% increase) and the Bahamas (2 deaths, 100% increase).

Immunization

Figure 7 reports the date of first introduction of the first additional/booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine (blue) and the date first introduction of the second additional/booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine (orange).

Figure 7. Timeline of initial dates for a first/booster dose and a second booster dose for COVID-19 vaccination by country/territory. The region of the Americas. As of EW 23, 2022.



The Dominican Republic was the first country to introduce a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose in its national program (July 2021). Other countries/territories followed between August 2021 and February 2022, when 50 of the 51 countries and territories included this option in their vaccination schedule. Furthermore, the 2nd additional/booster dose option was introduced in two countries in January 2022 (Dominican Republic and Chile). Since then, another 27 countries/territories have begun offering this additional dose in their schedule. As noted in previous PAHO Weekly Updates, this progressive introduction of additional doses underscores the renewed focus that countries/territories have placed on strengthening the immunity of persons who already received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine. However, as the world approaches the 30 June deadline set for the WHO’s global target of 70% vaccination coverage rate in all countries, it is paramount that countries continue to focus on reducing the number of zero-dose persons, thus increasing their national coverage rate and minimizing the risk of increased viral transmission and COVID-related mortality.

Genomic Surveillance

Through PAHO's Genomic Surveillance Regional Network and the work from the Member States, 365,710 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 13 June 2022.

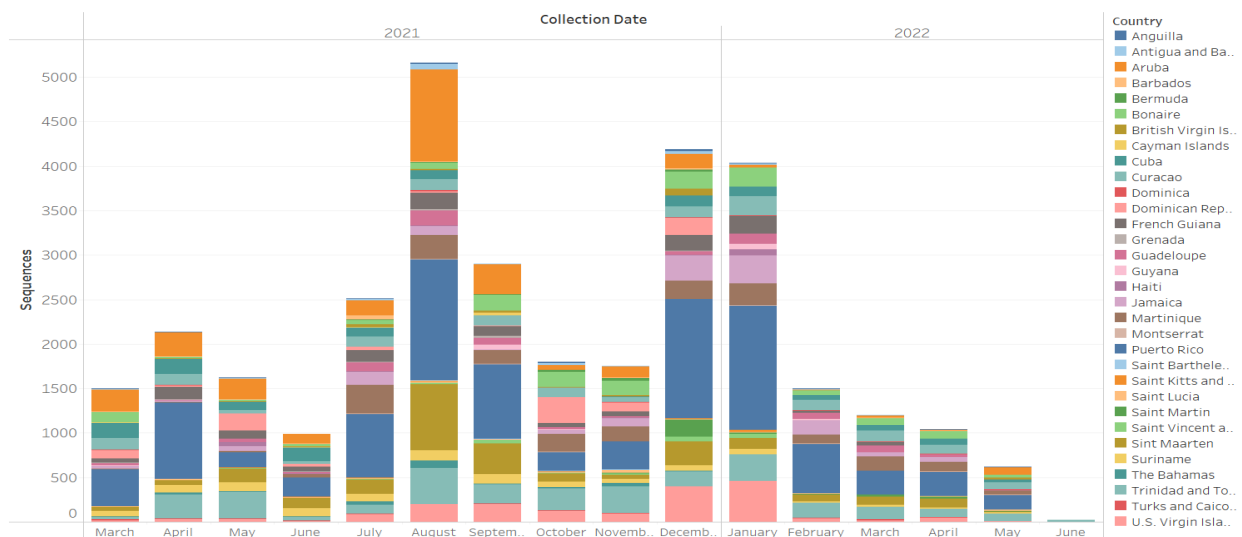
After the introduction of the Omicron VOC in the Americas at the end of 2021, it has rapidly increased in prevalence and has been officially reported by 54 countries or territories. Omicron is now predominant in all PAHO countries with the BA.1 and BA.1 sub lineages identified in more than 74% of the characterized samples from the Americas and BA.2 and BA.2 sublineages in 25% of the samples. The BA.3, BA.4, and BA.5 sub-lineages account for <0.01%, 0.17%, and 0.18% respectively of samples detected. Beyond Omicron, few lineages are currently detected in the Region. In fact, the last documented detection of Delta was on 2 June 2022 in North America.

Spotlight: Sequencing and genomic surveillance in the Caribbean

During the last 18 months (January 2021 through 8 June 2022), 34,640 whole genome sequences from the Caribbean countries and territories have been generated as part of the genomic surveillance systems (**Figure 8**). The “previously circulating” VOCs (**Alpha** - last detected 15 December 2021; **Beta** - last detected 9 June 2021; **Gamma** - last detected 17 December 2021; **Delta** - last detected 17 February 2022) and the “currently circulating” VOC **Omicron** have been detected in the subregion, in addition to “previously circulating” VOIs (**Lambda** - last detected 2 November 2021 and **Mu** - last detected 19 October 2021) and other lineages/variants (**Figure 9,10**).

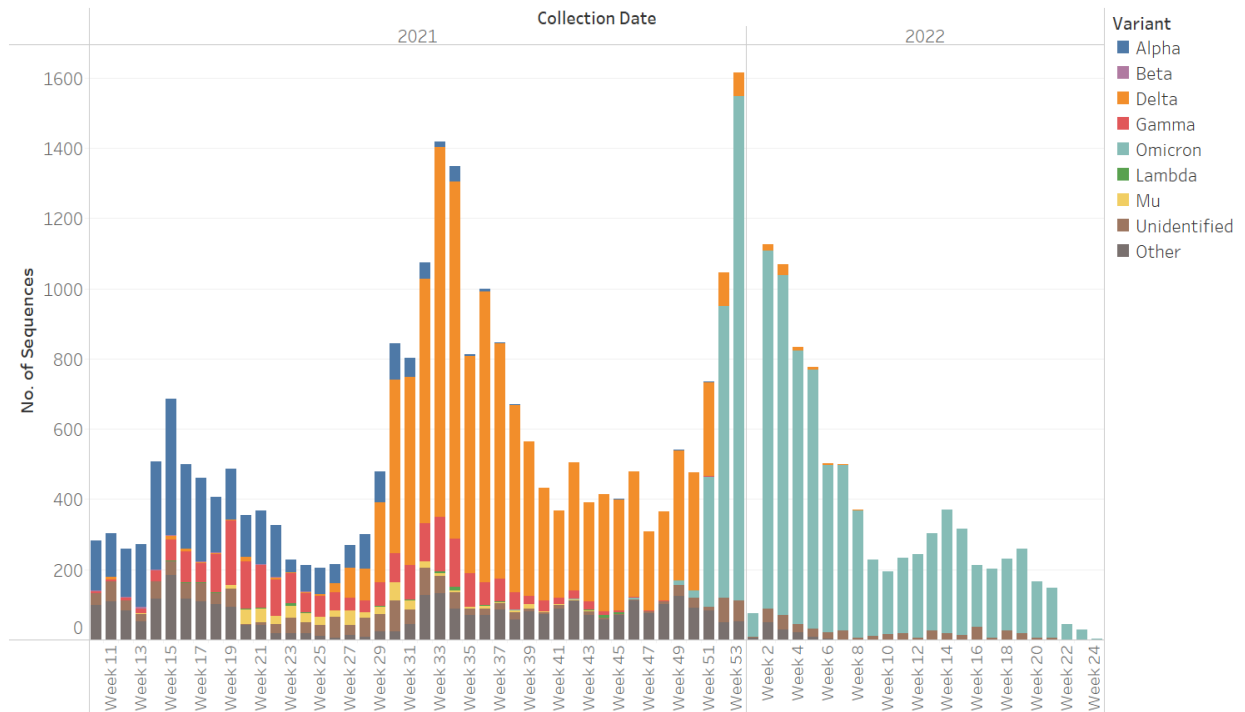
VOC Omicron was first detected in the subregion on 12 September 2021 by Bermuda. After replacing Delta, Omicron has been predominant in the subregion, being detected in 820 samples (93.7%) sequenced and reported to GISAID during the last 8 weeks of available data (24 April to 11 June). Since Omicron’s first detection, BA.1 and BA.1 sublineages represent the majority (78.1%) of sequences, while BA.2 and BA.2 sublineages represent 21.7% of the sequences. No samples of BA.3 have been detected while BA.4 and BA.5 represent 0.07% and 0.14% of sequences respectively. However, the proportion of sequences identified as BA.2 (and BA.2 sublineages) has been increasing for the past 16 weeks (23 February 2022 – 8 June 2022) where data is available and BA.2 (and BA.2 sublineages) is now predominant in the subregion.

Figure 8. Number of sequences generated monthly by countries in the Caribbean subregion (March 2021 – 8 June 2022)



Source: GISAID

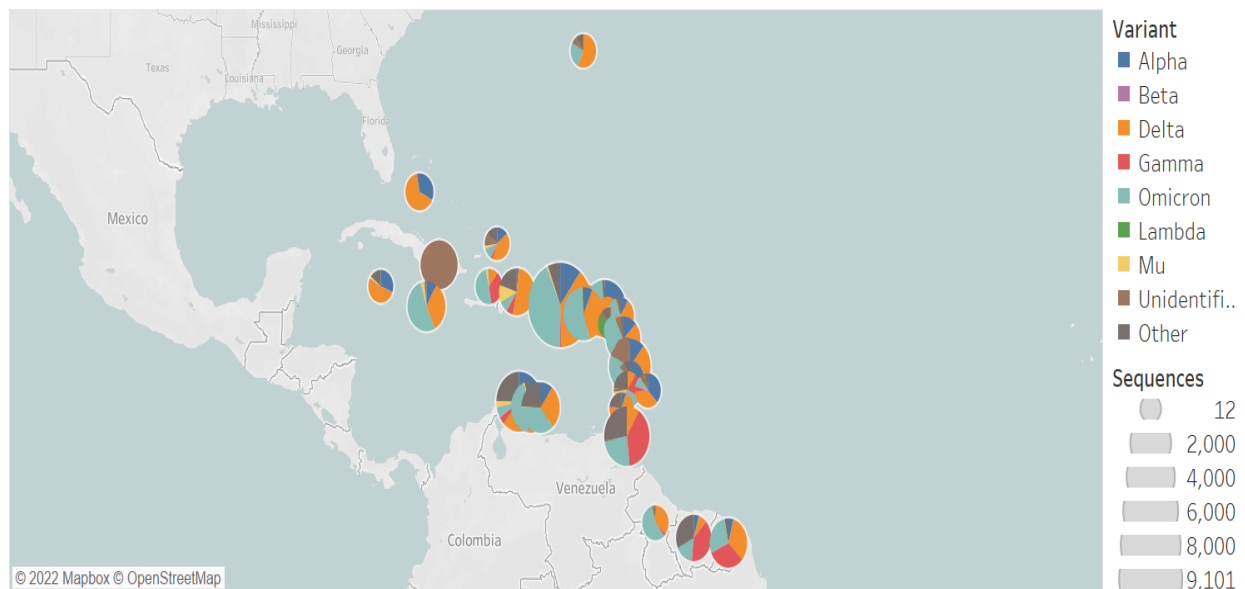
Figure 9. Variants detected and reported by the Countries in the Caribbean Subregion (March 2021 - 8 June 2022)



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 Caribbean Subregion (March 2021 – 8 June 2022)

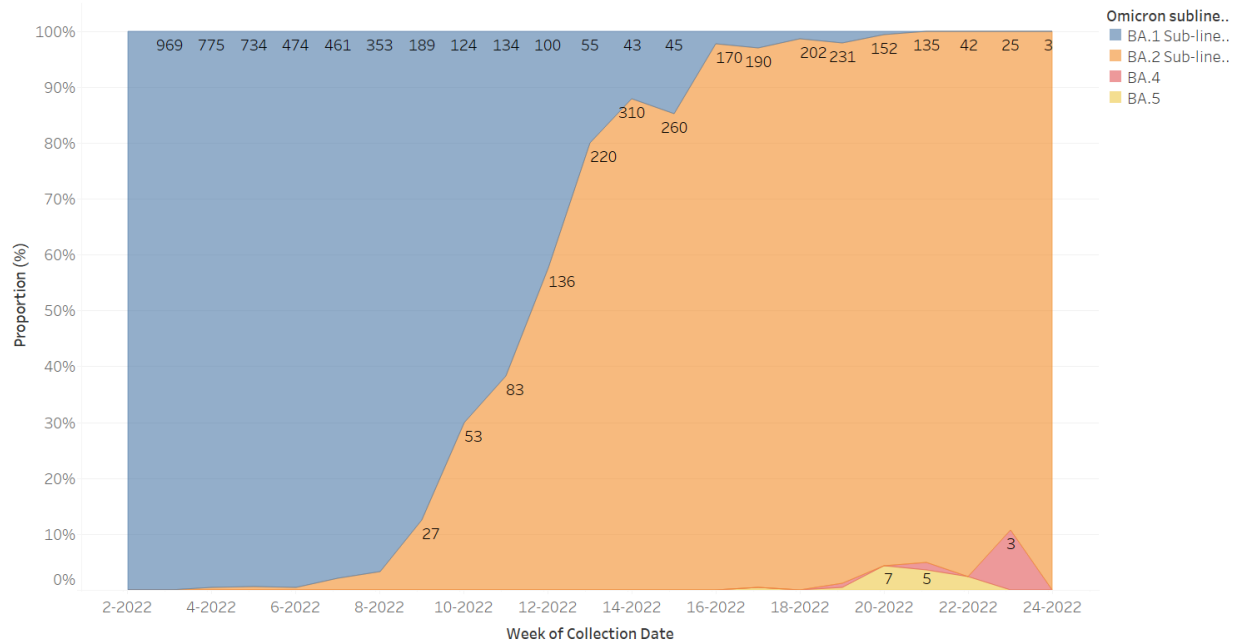


Country	Alpha	Beta	Delta	Variant Gamma	Omicron	Lambda	Mu
Anguilla	+		+		+	+	
Antigua and B..	+	+	+	+	+		
Aruba	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Barbados	+		+	+	+		+
Bermuda	+		+	+	+		
Bonaire	+		+	+	+		+
British Virgin I..	+		+	+	+		+
Cayman Islands	+	+	+	+			+
Cuba		+	+				
Curacao	+		+	+	+		+
Dominica	+		+		+		
Dominican Rep..	+		+	+	+	+	+
French Guiana	+	+	+	+	+		
Grenada	+		+	+			
Guadeloupe	+	+	+		+		
Guyana	+		+	+	+		
Haiti	+		+	+	+		+
Jamaica	+		+		+		+
Martinique	+	+	+	+	+		
Montserrat	+		+	+	+		
Puerto Rico	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Saint Barthele..			+				
Saint Kitts and..			+		+	+	
Saint Lucia	+		+		+		
Saint Martin			+		+		
Saint Vincent a..			+	+	+		+
Sint Maarten	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Suriname	+	+	+	+	+		
The Bahamas	+		+	+	+		
Trinidad and T..	+		+	+	+		
Turks and Caic..	+		+	+	+		+
U.S. Virgin Isla..	+		+	+	+		+

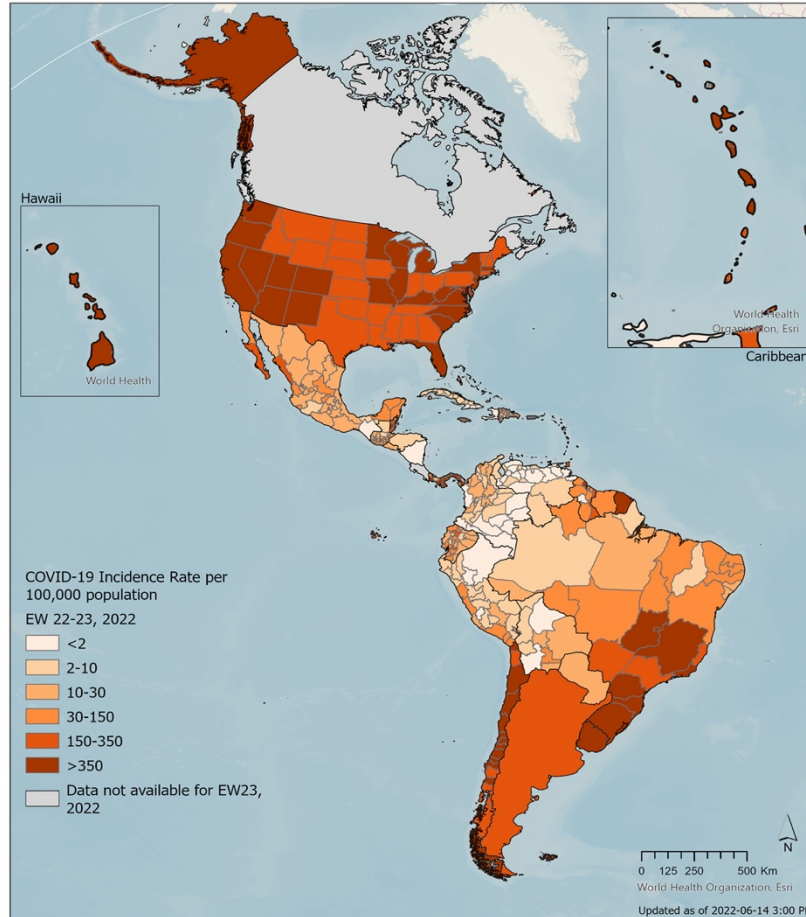
***Cuba has also officially reported Alpha, Beta, Delta and Omicron detection and circulation. Nevertheless, up to June 14, whole sequences were not yet available at GISAID.**

Source: GISAID

Figure 11. Distribution of VOC Omicron sublineages identified by the countries in the Caribbean subregion (January-June 2022)



Annex 1. The map of incidence rates of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population reported in EW 22 and EW 23. Region of the Americas. As of EW 23, 2022.



The map (**Annex 1**) represents the incidence rate of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the Region of the Americas reported in EW 22 and 23, 2022. Note that incidence data for EW 23 was not available for Costa Rica and Canada. Overall, during the last two weeks highest incidence rates were seen in the United States of America (especially on the West Coast and in the Midwest, with over 350 cases per 100,000), in Chile, Uruguay, Belize, Panama, French Guiana, southern Brazil and numerous Caribbean Islands including Puerto Rico, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Barbados and Aruba. In the Caribbean, incidence have been relatively high and stable overall for the past few weeks. In the United States of America, all states reported above 150 cases per 100,000 population. In Mexico, reported incidence was lower, with most States reporting below 150 cases per 100,000 people. In Central America, rates were highest in Panama and Belize, with most provinces in Panama reporting above 350 cases per 100,000. In South America, incidence rates were relatively lower in Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru, and this trend has been stable or decreasing over the last few weeks.