

Weekly COVID-19 Epidemiological Update - Region of the Americas

Issue 20, published June 21, 2022

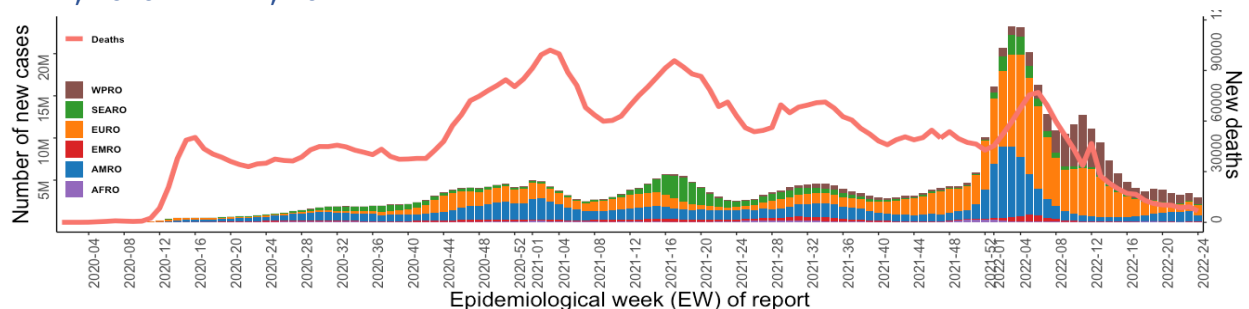
Contents:

- Executive summary including global overview
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- Immunisation
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Executive Summary

- **Since the onset of the pandemic** in 2020 and up to June 21, 2022, a cumulative total of approximately 537 million COVID-19 cases including about 6.3 million deaths were reported from all six WHO regions. During epidemiological week (EW) 24, cases increased in the regions of Europe (5.8%), Eastern Mediterranean (45.2%), and South-East Asia (45.8%) while they decreased in the remaining three WHO regions. COVID-19 deaths decreased in all WHO regions except for the region of South-East Asia (3.4% increase).
- **Globally**, approximately 3,369,753 new COVID-19 cases were reported in EW 24 (June 12, 2022-June 18, 2022) - a -4.3% decrease compared to EW 23 (June 05, 2022-June 11, 2022) (**Figure 1**). For the same period, 7,762 new COVID-19 deaths were reported globally – a -13.6% relative decrease compared the previous week.
- **In the region of the Americas**, 1,179,055 cases and 3,608 deaths were reported in EW 24 - a 8.2% decrease in cases and -7% decrease in deaths compared to the previous week.
- At the subregional level, **COVID-19 cases decreased in all subregions** (range: -17.2% - -4.5%). COVID-19 Deaths increased in two subregions – Central America (20.6%) and Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands (1.8%).
- The overall weekly case notification rate for the region of the Americas was 115.3 cases per 100,000 population during EW 24 (125.6 the previous week). Between EW 24 and 23, the 14-day COVID-19 death rate was 7.3 deaths per 1 million population (7.2 the previous two weeks).
- Among 32 countries/territories in the region with available data, **COVID-19 hospitalizations** increased in 16 countries and territories (range: 1.4% - 100%) during EW 24 compared to the previous week. Among 24 countries and territories with available data, COVID-19 **ICU admissions** increased in 13 countries and territories (range: 4.1% - 300%).

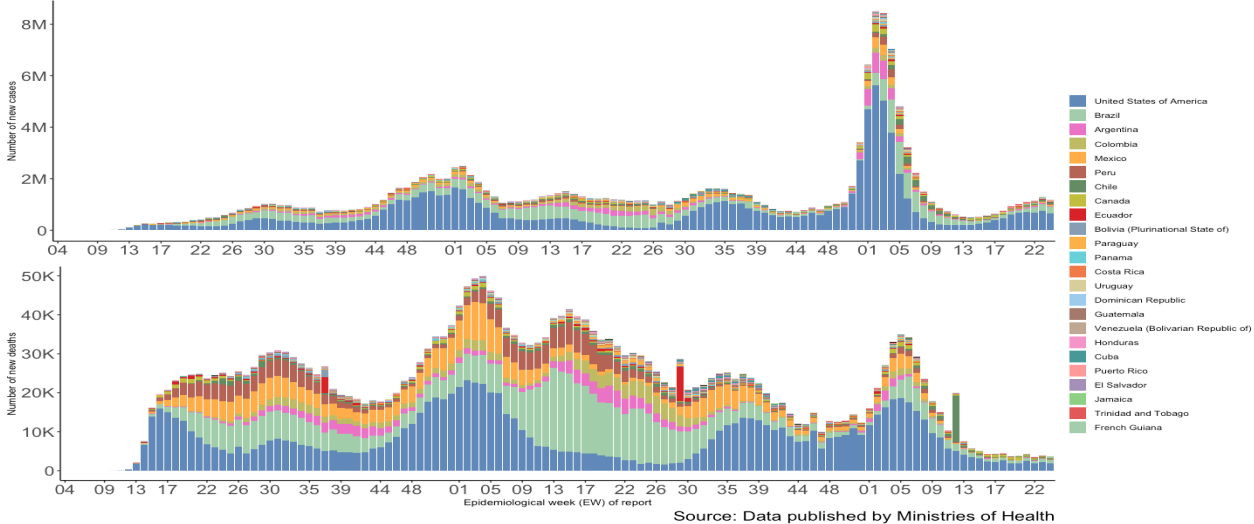
Figure 1: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week(EW) of report and WHO region. EW 4, 2020 - EW 24, 2022



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 3, 2020 - 24, 2022.



During EW 24, 1,179,055 new **COVID-19 cases** were reported in the region of the Americas - a relative decrease of -8.2% compared to previous week (**Figure 2**) and with all four subregions reporting a decline. The highest number of COVID-19 cases in EW 24 was reported from the subregions of North America (712,046 cases, 9.9% decrease) and South America (398,266 cases, 4.5% decrease) (**Table 1**). During EW 24, the highest proportion of weekly COVID-19 cases were reported by the United States of America (652,217 new cases, 12.1% decrease), Brazil (256,034 new cases, 8.5% decrease), Chile (73,455 new cases, 6.2% increase).

Table 1: Weekly change (%) in cases and deaths between EW 23 and EW 24 by subregion. Region of the Americas

Subregion	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Cases EW 23	Deaths EW 23	Cases EW 24	Deaths EW 24	% Change Cases	% Change Deaths
Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands	3,802,517	33,533	49,568	109	45,919	111	-7.4%	1.8%
Central America	3,351,309	51,205	27,568	107	22,824	129	-17.2%	20.6%
North America	94,946,804	1,372,828	790,442	2,368	712,046	2,083	-9.9%	-12.0%
South America	58,622,870	1,299,253	417,180	1,297	398,266	1,285	-4.5%	-0.9%

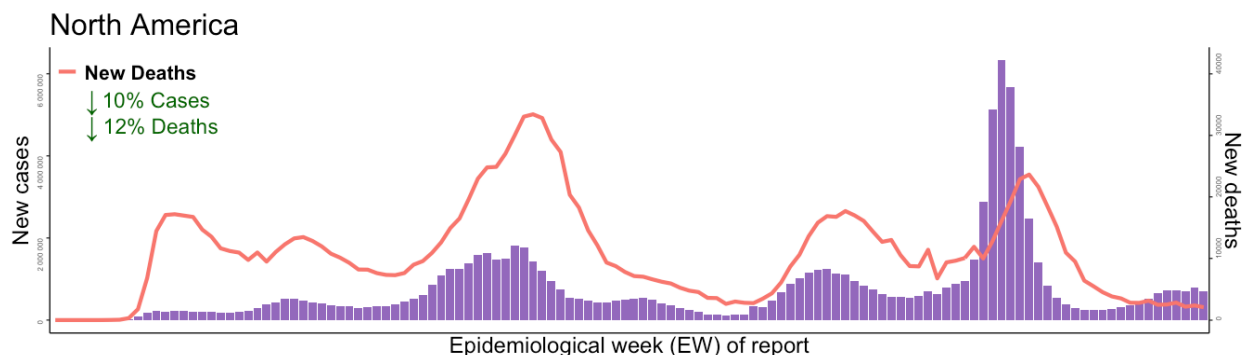
For the same period, 3,608 **COVID-19 deaths** were reported in the region of the Americas - a relative decrease of 7% compared to previous week (**Figure 2**). The highest number of COVID-19 deaths during EW 24 was reported from the North American subregion (2,083 deaths, 12% decrease) (**Table 1**). At the national level, the countries/territories with the highest proportion of weekly COVID-19 deaths were the United States of America (1,858 deaths, 13.1% decrease), Brazil (956 deaths, 3.3% decrease), and Canada (173 deaths, 14.8% decrease).

A summary of the COVID-19 trends for EW 24 by subregion is presented below.

North America

During EW 24, **COVID-19 cases** decreased by 9.9% in the North American subregion. Please note that due to a change from daily to weekly reporting as of June 10, 2022, there is a one-week reporting lag for Canada's COVID-19 data. During EW 24, Mexico observed a 36.6% increase in weekly cases (44,102 cases) compared to the previous week, while the remaining two countries in the subregion reported a decline. The largest decline in cases was observed in the United States of America (652,217 cases, 12.1% decrease), followed by Canada (15,727 cases, 3.4 % decrease).

Figure 3: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). North America. Region of the Americas. EW 3, 2020 - EW 24, 2022.



During the same period, **weekly COVID-19 deaths** decreased by 12.0% in North America relative to the previous week. Similar to weekly cases, Mexico reported a large increase in weekly deaths during EW 24 (52 deaths, 85.7% increase) while Canada and the United States of America reported a decline compared to the previous week – Canada (173 deaths, -14.8% decrease) and the United States of America (1,858 deaths, -13.1% decrease).

Among two countries with data available for **COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions**, Canada continued to report a decline in both weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations (n=3,400; -3.7% decrease) and ICU admissions (n=232; -2.9% decrease). In the United States of America, weekly hospitalizations and ICU admissions have been steadily increasing over the past two months – a 2.9% increase in weekly hospitalizations (n=30,466) and a 4.1% increase in ICU admissions (n=3,378; 4.1% increase) during EW 24 compared to the previous week, with increases being observed in populous states such as California and Florida¹. The proportion of Omicron variant of concern (VOC) sub-lineage BA.2.12.1 in the United States of America has decreased after an increasing period of about two months, accounting for about 56% of the total weekly sequenced samples for the week ending June 18. For the same time, the BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants of Omicron were estimated to make up nearly 35% of the coronavirus variants - 11.4% and 23.5% respectively². In Canada, similar trends are occurring with BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants of Omicron increasing in proportion since the last three weeks in May 2022, and the proportion of Omicron sub-lineage BA.2.12.1 declining during the same period.³

1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). COVID-19 Data Tracker – New hospital admissions. Accessed 20 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3IXeRMh>

2 United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Variant Proportions. Accessed 21 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/30bz8cT>

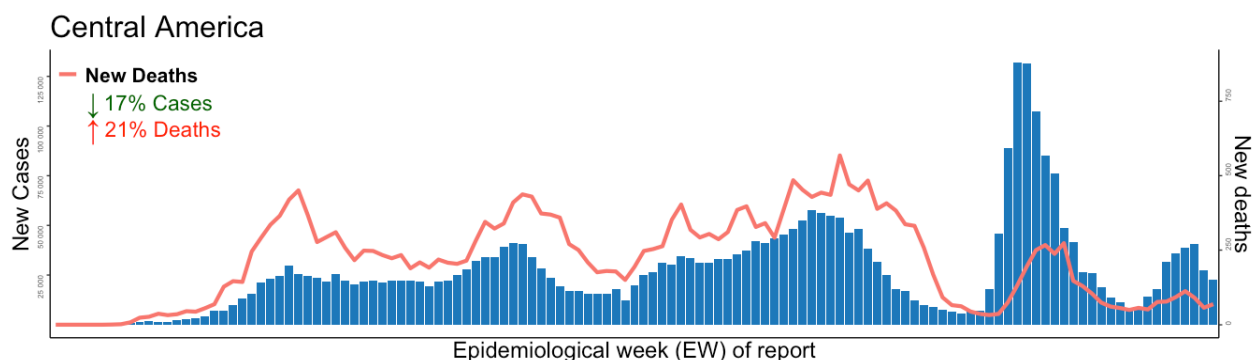
3 Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). COVID-19 Epidemiological Update. Accessed 21 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3bbFRFr>

Mexico has been experiencing a surge in cases for the past consecutive nine weeks. According to the daily technical report of Mexico, most of the estimated cases are present in the groups of 18 to 29 years, followed by the group of 30 to 39 years and 40 to 49 years in the past five weeks⁴. During EW 24, there was an 85.7% increase (n=52) in weekly deaths in Mexico compared to the previous week. However, the COVID-19 national bed occupancy as well as bed occupancy with mechanical ventilators remained stable – approximately 4% and 1% during EW 24, respectively⁵.

Central America

In Central America, a decline in COVID-19 incidence has been observed for the past two consecutive weeks, with a total of 22,824 new cases being reported during EW 24 – a -17.2% decrease compared to the previous week. Please note that data for EW 23 and 24 for Costa Rica were not publicly available, resulting in a data artifact in percent change of COVID-19 cases and 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 24, 2022.



During EW 24, three countries/territories reported an increase in weekly cases with the largest increases being observed in Honduras (275 cases, 49.5% increase), Guatemala (8,756 cases, 44.7% increase), and Nicaragua (42 cases, 7.7% increase). COVID-19 cases declined in Panama (12,696 new cases, 32.6% decrease) and Belize (1,055 new cases, 1.9% decrease) compared to the previous week.

During EW 24, **weekly deaths** increased by approximately 20.6% relative to the previous week **(Figure 4)**, with two out of the six countries/territories with available data reporting an increase – Guatemala (101 deaths, 36.5% increase) and El Salvador (3 deaths, 50% increase). The remaining four countries/territories either reported a decline – Panama (23 deaths, 17.9% decrease) and Honduras (1 death, 50% decrease) – or remained the same (Nicaragua and Belize).

Among three countries/territories with available data for **weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations** in the Central American Subregion, Honduras is the only country reporting an increase in their weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations (n=24; 41.2% increase) in the subregion, while Panama reported a 10.1% decline (304 hospitalizations) during EW 24 compared to the previous week. Belize reported no change in hospitalizations (n=9). Similarly, two countries with available data

4 Secretaría de Salud. Gobierno de México. Informe Técnico Diario COVID-19 MÉXICO. Available at: <https://bit.ly/308PbZu>
 5 Secretaría de Salud de México. COVID-19 Technical Statement. 16 June 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3y5CXew>

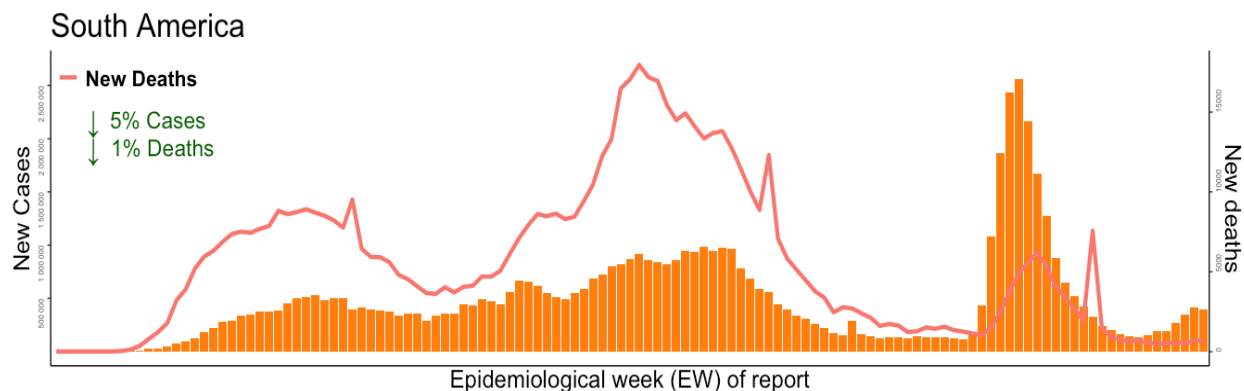
for **weekly COVID-19 ICU admissions** observed an increase – Honduras (4 ICU admissions, 100% increase) and Panama (39 ICU admissions, 5.4% increase).

Increased severity trends are observed in Guatemala where there has been a 36.5% increase in its weekly deaths (101 deaths) during EW 24 compared to the previous week, along with a steady increase in cases being observed over the last four weeks.

South America

In South America, **COVID-19 incidence** decreased slightly for the first time after six-weeks of an upward trend, with a total of 398,266 new COVID-19 cases being reported during EW 24 – a 4.5% decrease compared to the previous week (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). South America. Region of the Americas. EW 3, 2020 - EW 24, 2022.



Out of the 10 countries and territories the sub-region, seven experienced an increase in **weekly cases** during EW 24 (range: 6.2 – 78.4%). The largest relative increase in cases was reported from Paraguay (1,384 cases, 78.4% increase), followed by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (566 cases, 59.4% increase), and Colombia (13,810 cases, 58% increase). Three countries/territories in the subregion reported a decline in cases during EW 24 – Brazil (256,034 cases, 8.5% decrease), Argentina (28,039 cases, 23.9% decrease), and Uruguay (8,071 cases, 9.5% decrease).

During EW 24, there was no substantial changes in the **weekly COVID-19 deaths** in the subregion, with a total of 1,285 COVID-19 deaths being reported – a 0.9% decrease compared to the previous week. Six countries/territories experienced a decrease (range: -50% - 3.3% decrease), and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) reported no change in weekly deaths (1 death) during EW 24 relative to the previous week. The largest proportion of reported deaths were reported by Brazil (956 deaths, 3.3% decrease), followed by Chile (150 deaths, 24% increase), and Peru (66 deaths, 17.5% decrease).

For the same period, among five countries/territories with available data for **COVID-19 weekly hospitalizations**, all countries/territories experienced an increase in their weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations (range: 0.93% - 34.6% increase), with the highest relative increase being observed in Ecuador (105 hospitalizations, 34.6% increase) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (312 hospitalizations, 30% increase). Among six countries/territories with data available for

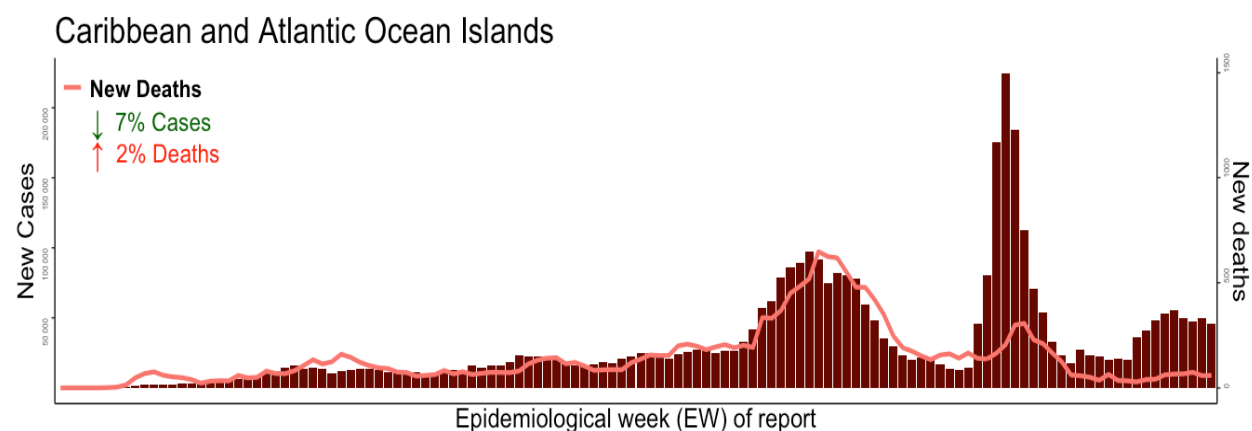
COVID-19 ICU admissions, three reported an increase in their ICU admissions during EW 24 (range: 8.4% - 29.6% increase).

Severity trends remained elevated in Colombia and Chile in the subregion during EW 24. Colombia observed a large increase in hospitalizations (n=1,138; 20.3% increase) including ICU admissions (n=254; 29.6% increase) during EW 24 compared to the previous week accompanied with a steady increase in cases being observed for the six consecutive weeks. Similarly, Chile has been observing an increase in its weekly hospitalizations for the past four weeks with a 14.1% increase (1,540 hospitalizations) being reported during EW 24 compared to the previous week.

Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands

In the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands sub-region, **COVID-19 weekly cases** decreased by 7.4% and weekly deaths increased by 1.8% compared to the previous week (**Figure 6**). At the national level, cases increased in 11 out of the 34 countries and territories in the subregion (range: 0.9% - 141.7%) while they declined in the remaining 23 countries and territories (range: -100% - -1.7%).

Figure 6: COVID-19 cases and deaths by epidemiological week (EW). **Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands.** Region of the Americas. EW 6, 2020 - EW 24, 2022.



During EW 24, there was no substantial change in **COVID-19 weekly deaths** with a total of 111 (1.8% increase) being reported in the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands subregion compared to the previous week. Nine countries/territories observed a relative increase in their weekly deaths in EW 24 compared to the previous week (range: 18.9% - 200% increase). The largest proportion of weekly deaths was reported from Puerto Rico (44 deaths, 19% increase), followed by Trinidad and Tobago (17 deaths, 41.4% decrease). Weekly deaths either remained the same (Aruba and the United States Virgin Islands, 0% change) or declined in the remaining countries and territories of the subregion (range: -100 – -12.5%).

Among 22 countries/territories with available data, nine countries and territories reported an increase in their **weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations** (range: 0.9 – 100% increase). The largest relative increases in hospitalizations were observed in Cayman Islands (n=9; 50% increase), the Dominican Republic (n=211; 33.5% increase), and Guadeloupe (n=95; 25% increase). Among 14 countries/territories with data available for **COVID-19 ICU admissions**, seven reported an increase in their ICU admissions (range: 10.9 – 300% increase), four reported no major change,

and three countries/territories reported a decline (range: -50 - -20% decrease) during EW 24 as compared to the previous week.

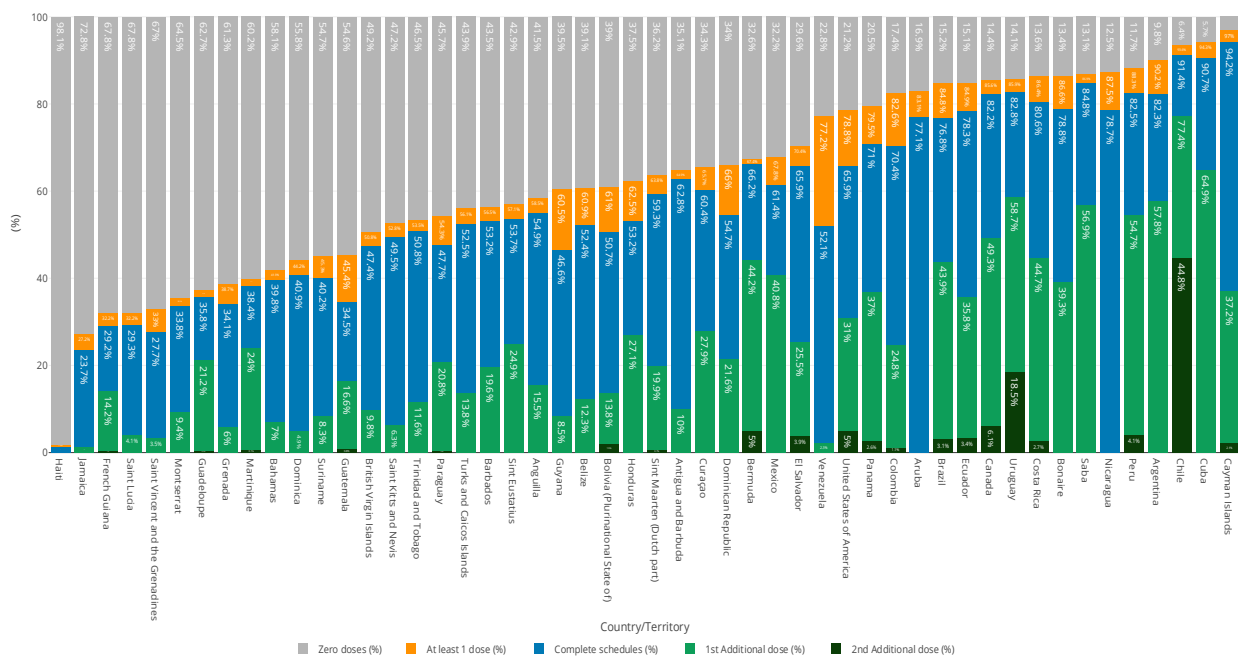
Significant increases in weekly cases during EW 24 were observed in Turks and Caicos Islands (29 cases, 141.7% increase), Saint Kitts and Nevis (73 cases, 87.2% increase), and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (23 cases, 43.8% increase).

For the same period, **increasing severity trends** were observed in Puerto Rico where there has been a 18.9% increase in weekly deaths (n=44). Weekly hospitalizations and ICU admissions in Puerto Rico have been increasing and remained elevated for the past four consecutive weeks – 0.9% increase in hospitalizations (n=449) and 10.9% increase in ICU admissions (n=51) compared to the previous week. Similarly, Guadeloupe has been experiencing a steady increase in its weekly hospitalizations and ICU admissions over the past four weeks – a 25% and a 41.7% increase during EW 24, respectively, compared to the previous week.

Immunization

Figure 7 shows the COVID-19 vaccination coverage grouped by countries/territories in the region of the Americas as of EW 24, 2022.

Figure 7. COVID-19 vaccination coverage grouped by countries/territories. The region of the Americas. As of EW 24, 2022



In October 2021, WHO set the global target of 70% vaccination coverage rate for all countries in the world by 30 June 2022. One week before this date, there still is great disparity in COVID-19 vaccination coverage rates* between countries of the Americas. At one end of the spectrum, 4 countries/territories achieved ≥90% population coverage with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and a total of 17** countries/territories reached the 70% threshold for primary series coverage (i.e., administration of 2 doses). At the other end, there are 9 countries/territories where

≥60% of the population have yet to receive the first dose of a vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Also, 11 countries/territories have not yet achieved the previous WHO global target of 40% coverage by 31 December 2021.

* Coverage based on 2021 U.N. Population/U.S. Census Bureau for countries with less than 100,000 inhabitants.

** Although only 16 countries/territories are shown, Puerto Rico has also achieved ≥70% primary series coverage.

Genomic Surveillance

Through PAHO's Genomic Surveillance Regional Network and the work from the Member States, 370,762 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 21 June 2022.

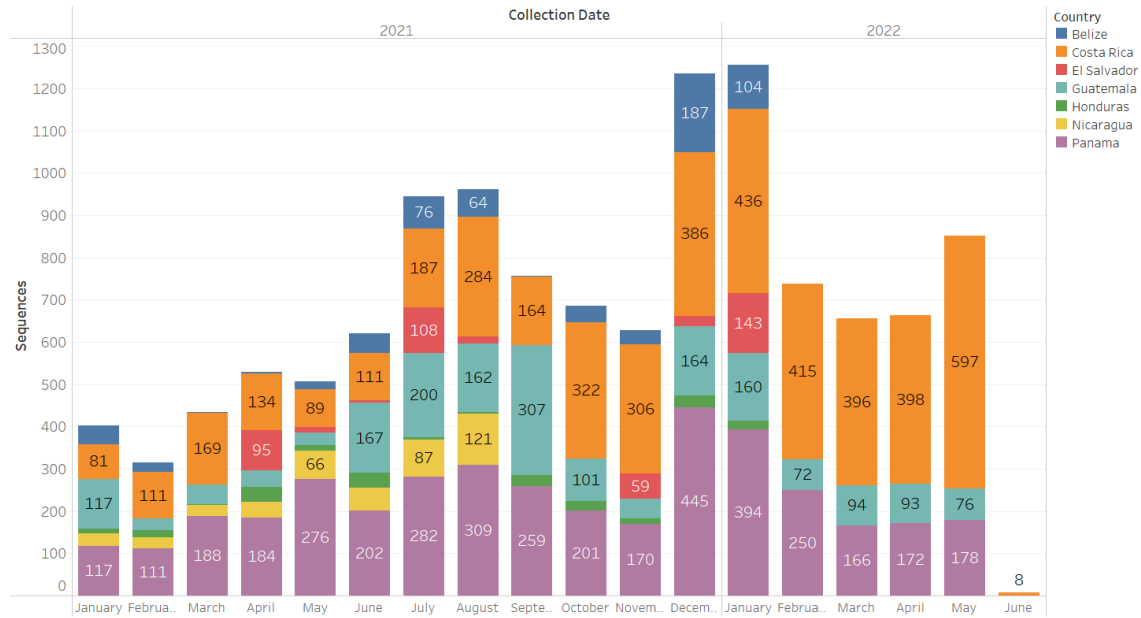
After the introduction of the Omicron VOC in the Americas at the end of 2021, it has rapidly increased in prevalence and has been officially reported by 54 countries or territories. Omicron is now predominant in all PAHO countries with the BA.1 and BA.1 sub lineages identified in more than 72% of the characterized samples from the Americas and BA.2 and BA.2 sublineages in 27% of the samples. The BA.3, BA.4, and BA.5 sub-lineages account for <0.01%, 0.28%, and 0.35% 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 at the Central American subregion

During the last 18 months (January 2021 to 13 June 2022), 11,474 whole genome sequences from Central American countries have been generated as part of the genomic surveillance systems (**Figure 8**). The “previously circulating” VOCs (**Alpha** - last detected 17 September 2021; **Beta** - last detected 8 July 2021; **Gamma** - last detected 14 November 2021; **Delta** - last detected 13 February 2022) and the “currently circulating” VOC Omicron have been detected in the subregion, in addition to “previously circulating” VOIs (**Lambda** - last detected 24 October 2021 and **Mu** - last detected 10 November 2021) and other lineages/variants (**Figure 9, 10**).

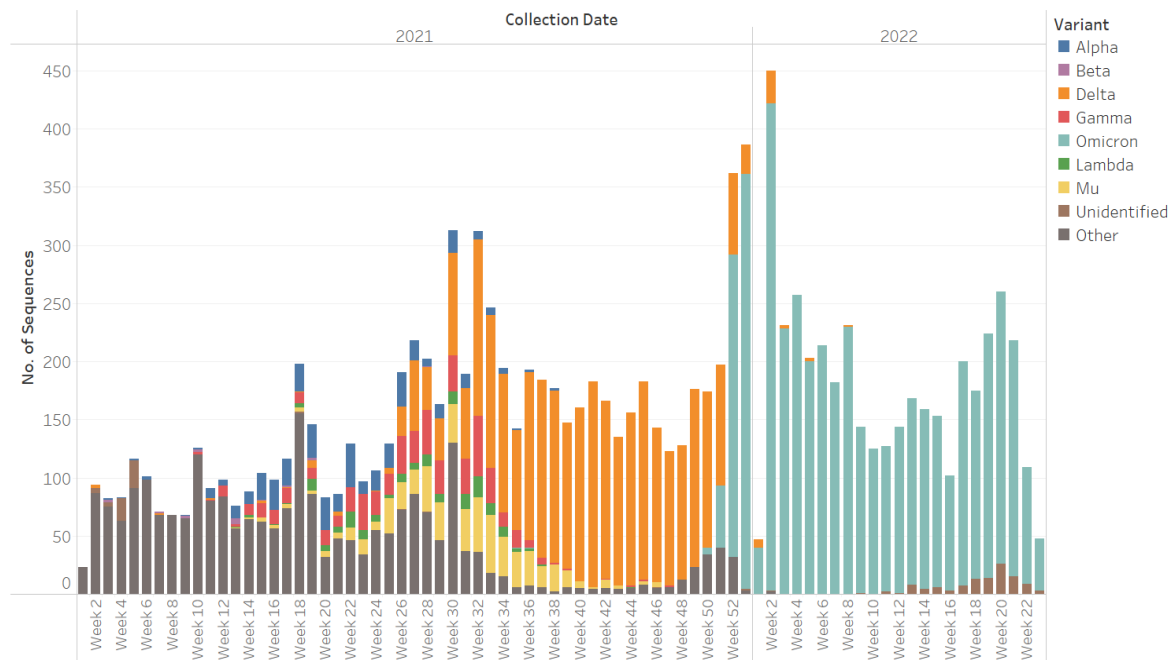
After replacing Delta, Omicron has been predominant in the subregion, being detected in 792 samples (92.2%) sequenced and reported to GISAID during the last 8 weeks of available data (1 May to 13 June). Since Omicron's first detection, BA.1 and BA.1 sublineages represent the majority (68.2%) of sequences, while BA.2 and BA.2 sublineages represent 31.4% of the sequences. No samples of BA.3 have been detected while BA.4 and BA.5 represent 0.3% and 0.09% of sequences respectively. However, the proportion of sequences identified as BA.2 (and BA.2 sublineages) has been increasing for the past 17 weeks (23 February 2022 – 13 June 2022) where data is available and BA.2 (and BA.2 sublineages) is now predominant in the subregion. In EW 23-2022, BA.2 and its sublineages represented 86.7% of sequences submitted (**Figure 11**).

Figure 8. Number of sequences generated monthly by countries in the Central American subregion (January 2021-June 2022)



Source: GISAID

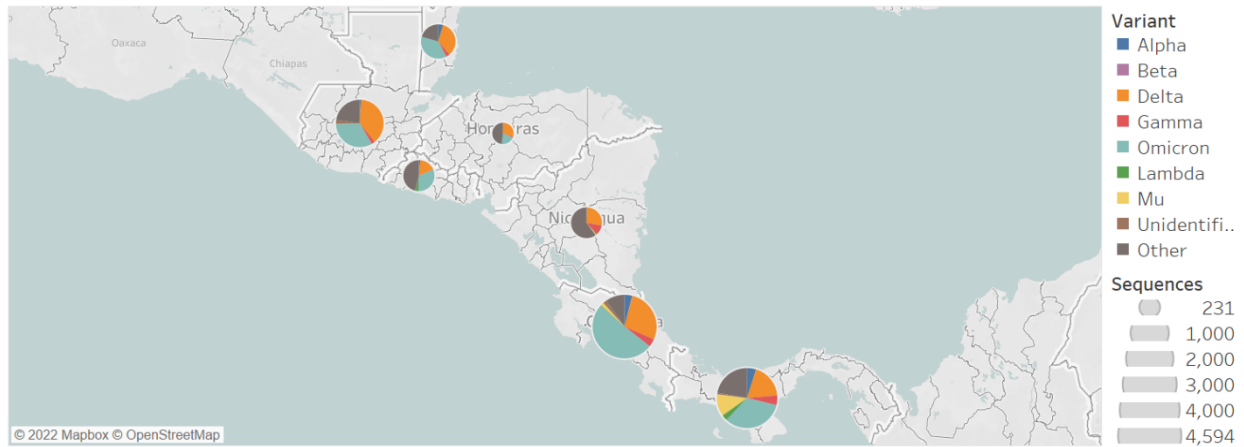
Figure 9. Variants detected and reported by countries in the Central American subregion (January 2021-June 2022)



Source: GISAID

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

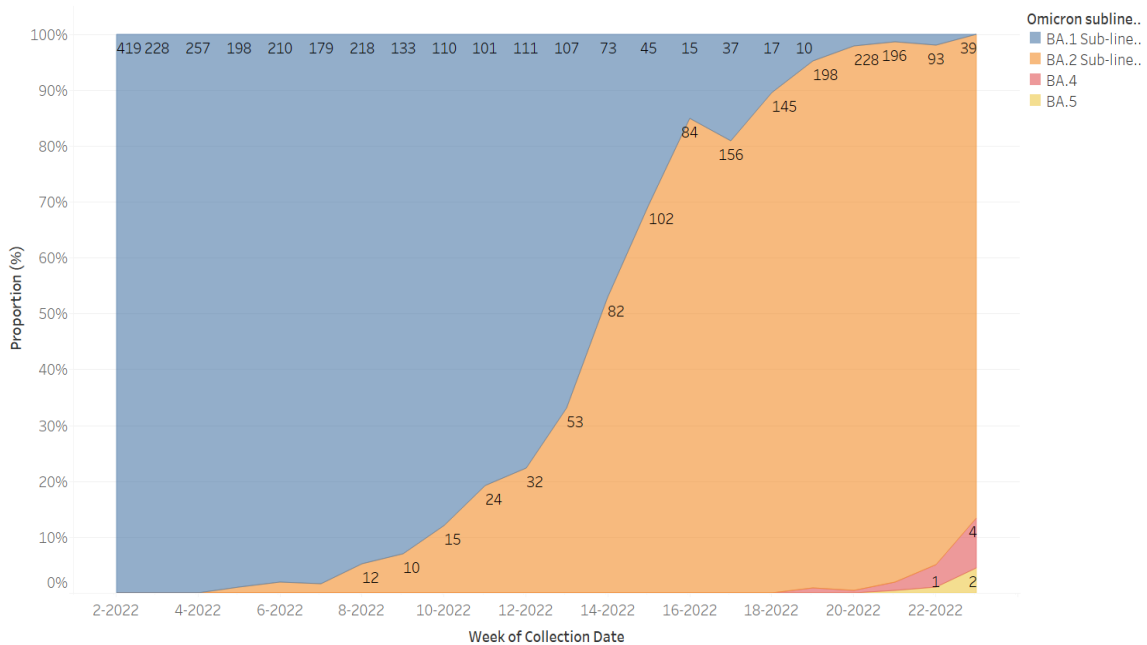
Figure 10. Distribution of VOC and VOI identified by countries in the Central American subregion (January 2021-June 2022)



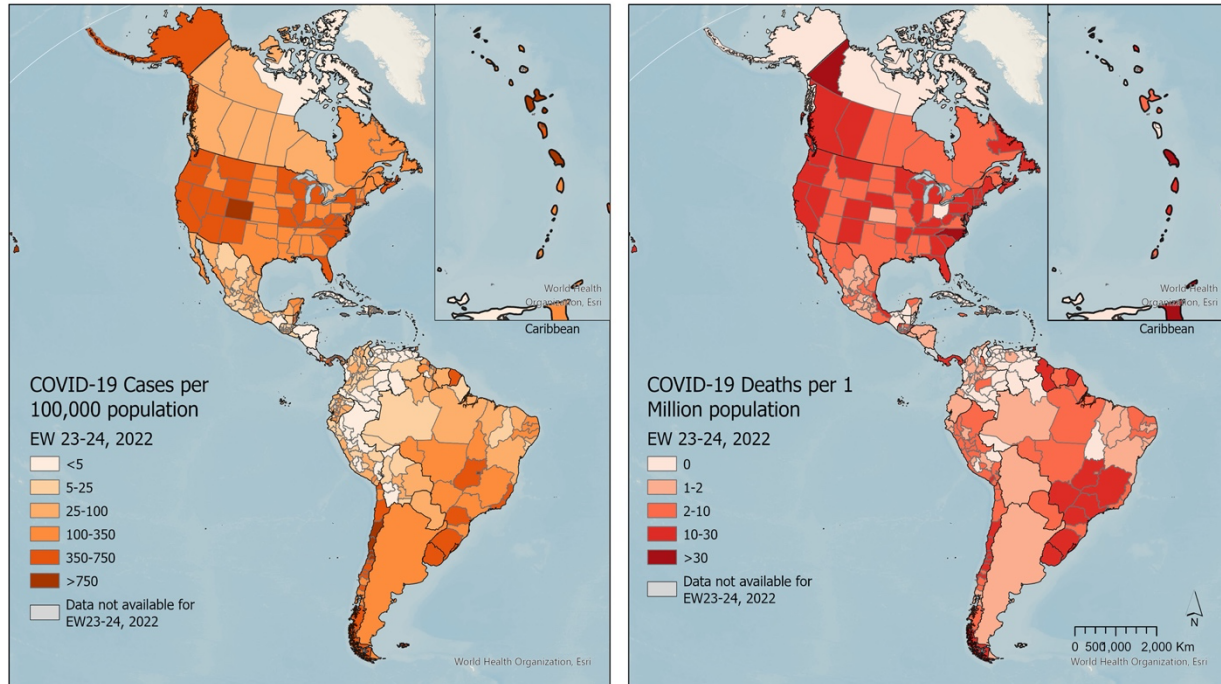
Country	Alpha	Beta	Delta	Variant Gamma	Omicron	Lambda	Mu
Belize	+		+	+	+		
Costa Rica	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
El Salvador	+		+	+	+	+	
Guatemala	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Honduras	+		+	+	+		
Nicaragua	+	+	+	+		+	+
Panama	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

**Nicaragua has also officially reported Omicron detection and circulation. Nevertheless, sequences are not available yet at GISAID.*

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



Annex 1. COVID-19 incidence rate per 100,000 population and COVID-19 mortality rate from per 1 million population. Region of the Americas. Between EW 23 and 24, 2022.



The maps (**Annex 1**) represent the COVID-19 incidence rate per 100,000 population and the mortality rate from COVID-19 per 1 million population in the Region of the Americas reported in EW 23 and 24, 2022. At the regional level, slight increases were observed in incidence and mortality compared to the previous two weeks. However, at the sub-regional level, some relative decreases in incidence and mortality were observed in Central America and the Caribbean subregion. Over the past two weeks, highest incidence rates (>350 cases per 100,000 people) were observed in the U.S., Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Panama, Belize, French Guiana, and several Caribbean territories including Barbados, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Puerto Rico. Highest mortality rates (>30 deaths per 1 million people) were observed in Canada, Brazil, the U.S., Chile, Guatemala, Guyana, French Guiana, Trinidad and Tobago, Martinique, Barbados, Puerto Rico, Aruba, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Largest increases in COVID-19 incidence compared to the previous two weeks were observed in South America (especially Colombia, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Venezuela), the Caribbean (mostly Sint Eustatius and Dominica), and in Mexico. Largest increases in mortality were observed in the Caribbean (mostly in Curacao, Aruba, Saint Lucia, Saint Martin, Dominican Republic), as well as in El Salvador, French Guiana, and Mexico.