

ASPHER Report: COVID-19 Situation Reporting across Europe

Week of September 26th, 2022

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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?

Key messages

- The [WHO weekly epidemiological update](#) highlights that the number of new weekly COVID-19 cases remained stable globally while deaths continued to decline.
- The [ECDC country overview report](#) continues highlights that the sustained decrease in COVID-19 incidence seems to be slowing as nearly half of countries report increases in new cases. Rates of hospital or ICU indicators decreased or remained stable with nine countries reporting increases in at least one indicator (five last week).

Selected recent COVID-19 publications

Sachs, J. D., Karim, S. S. A., Aknin, L., Allen, J., Brosbøl, K., Colombo, F., Barron, G. C., Espinosa, M. F., Gaspar, V., Gaviria, A., Haines, A., Hotez, P. J., Koundouri, P., Bascuñán, F. L., Lee, J.-K., Pate, M. A., Ramos, G., Reddy, K. S., Serageldin, I., ... Michie, S. (2022). The Lancet Commission on lessons for the future from the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Lancet*, 0(0). [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(22\)01585-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)01585-9)

- The Lancet Commission on lessons for the future from the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a number of issues relevant to public health professionals, including that public policies failed to draw upon the behavioural and social sciences, policies and decision-making have not been informed by robust and continuously updated evidence syntheses, and that public policies did not properly address the profoundly unequal effects of the pandemic.

Vivaldi, G., Jolliffe, D. A., Holt, H., Tydeman, F., Talaei, M., Davies, G. A., Lyons, R. A., Griffiths, C. J., Kee, F., Sheikh, A., Shaheen, S. O., & Martineau, A. R. (2022). Risk factors for SARS-CoV-2 infection after primary vaccination with ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 or BNT162b2 and after booster vaccination with BNT162b2 or mRNA-1273: A population-based cohort study (COVIDENCE UK). In *The Lancet Regional Health - Europe* (Vol. 22, p. 100501). Elsevier BV. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanepe.2022.100501>

- ChAdOx1 vaccine (versus BNT162b2), lower socioeconomic status, younger age, and more frequent visits to indoor places increased the risk of breakthrough infection after primary and booster vaccinations.

Motallebi, S., Cheung, R. C. Y., Mohit, B., Shahabi, S., Alishahi Tabriz, A., & Moattari, S. (2022). Modeling COVID-19 Mortality Across 44 Countries: Face Covering May Reduce Deaths. In *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (Vol. 62, Issue 4, pp. 483–491). Elsevier BV. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2021.09.019>

- Face mask mandates were associated with reduced COVID-19 death rates.

ASPHER statement on the pandemic

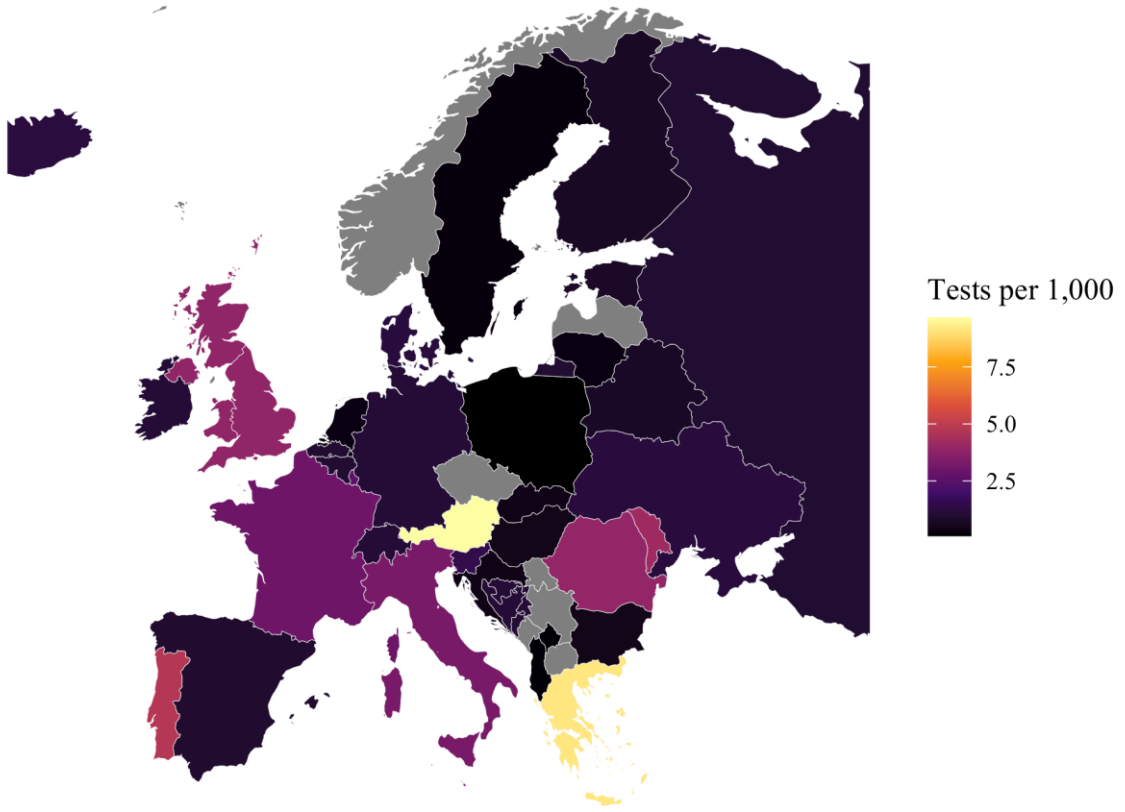
ASPHER is concerned about talk of the ‘end of the pandemic’. *Pandemic* is not defined by politicians, or by journalists. The *pandemic* is defined by the World Health Organisation, under strict decision-making process and not as mere opinion. A pandemic is “an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people”. We are still in the midst of the pandemic.

We are concerned with the rapid dismantling of non-pharmaceutical interventions against COVID-19 across Europe. In a [recent opinion paper](#), we advocate for European governments’ continued recommendation for the use of face masks in high traffic public areas like public transport. The reality remains that the future evolution of the pandemic is highly uncertain. Primary health care and social care provision across Europe are not yet restored to pre-pandemic levels due to the burden of ever new variants of the virus. Occupational health services are non-existent in many parts of Europe and therefore unable to address mass sickness absence or support workers in key industries suffering burnout. We urge governments to invest in additional measures to support primary care, social care, and occupational health. Protection of our key service workers is a central concern. We will not come out of the pandemic until we seriously address the problem globally. We need global solidarity, commitment to [international preparedness](#) and [increased global production of vaccines](#).

ASPHER supports the [VACCINE-plus approach](#) to pandemic control; or what we have called ‘[COVID-DO IT ALL](#)’. We recognize the importance of following [non-pharmacological interventions](#) as well as achieving a high level of vaccine uptake. Vaccine hesitancy still needs to be understood and addressed especially in Eastern parts of Europe. We need to protect frontline services, protect children, and protect vulnerable people. Current political moves in Europe are adding to the likelihood of increased transmission, creating more pressures on services, more likelihood of additional sickness absence, economic damage, and social disruption. The mindset of the ‘pandemic is over’ will have the dangerous impact of prolonging it.


















































Latest COVID-19 test rates in the countries of the WHO-Europe region ([Source: Our World in Data](#)).













New COVID-19 tests per 1,000 population



Rolling average of latest COVID-19 test, case, and hospitalization rates in the countries of the WHO-Europe region ([Source: Our World in Data](#)).

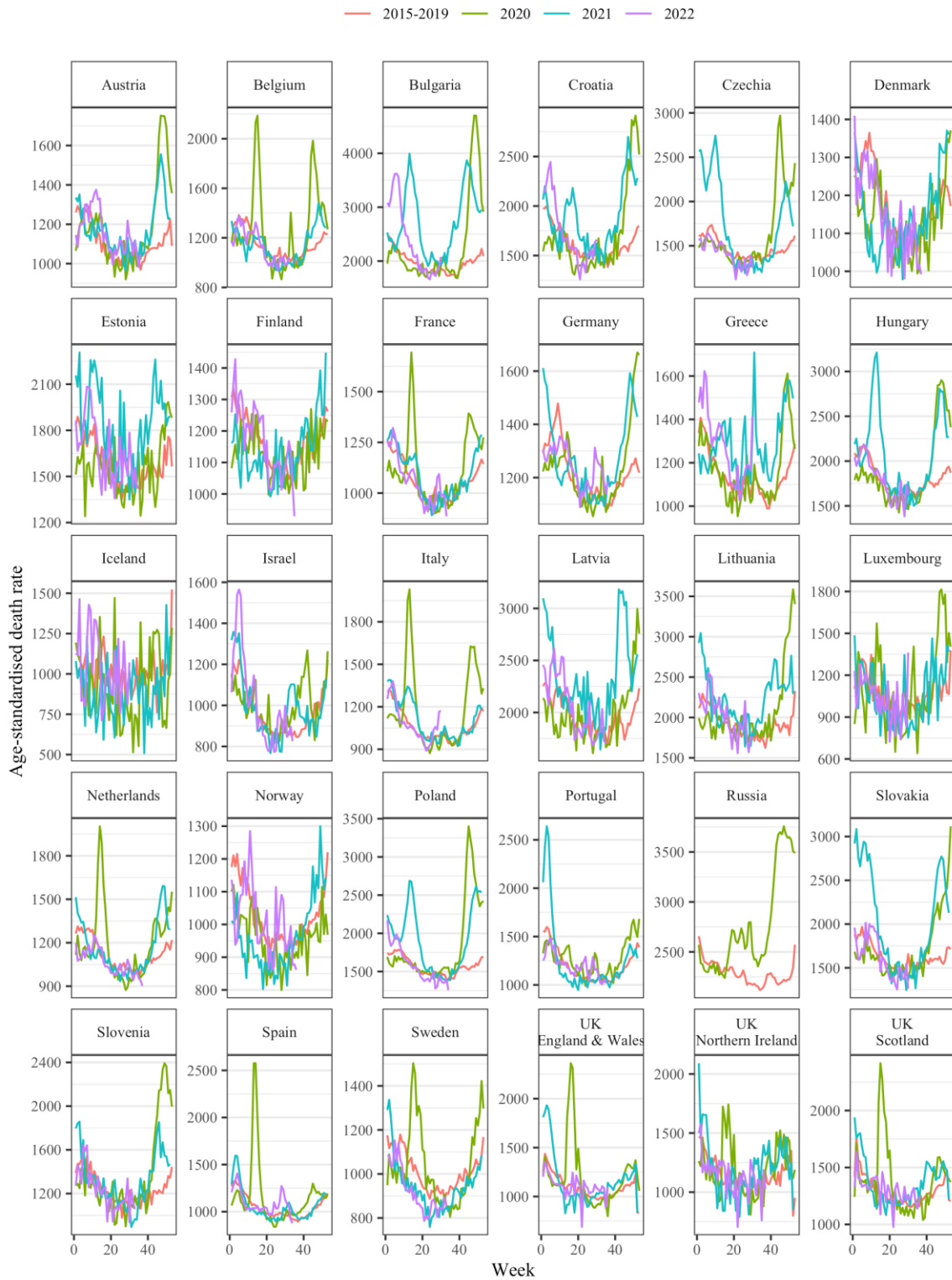
WHO Europe region	Daily new tests/thousand people	30-day trend in tests	Daily newly confirmed COVID-19 cases/million people	30-day trend in cases	Weekly hospital admissions/million people	30-day trend in weekly hospital admissions
Slovenia	1.50		975.00		42.20	
Austria	9.66		905.57			
Georgia	0.93		702.70			
Greece	9.12		615.13		76.88	
Germany	1.06		582.05		65.77	
France	2.99		564.31		55.98	
Cyprus	75.00		467.47		47.99	
Lithuania	0.27		420.52			
Italy	3.26		387.84		27.60	
Russia	0.96		326.58		155.73	
Serbia	0.92		320.97			
Czechia	0.35		294.23		88.58	
Luxembourg	2.55		290.49		15.76	
Switzerland	1.05		277.32		16.45	
Belgium	0.98		266.47		44.09	
Finland	0.72		246.98			
Portugal	4.74		214.07			
Hungary	0.45		181.07			
Denmark	1.23		177.70		77.21	

WHO Europe region	Daily new tests/thousand people	30-day trend in tests	Daily newly confirmed COVID-19 cases/million people	30-day trend in cases	Weekly hospital admissions/million	30-day trend in weekly hospital admissions
Belarus	0.74		166.60			
Croatia	0.38		147.95		127.84	
Ukraine	1.21		130.03			
Slovakia	0.39		129.47			
Estonia	0.75		115.36		99.24	
Moldova	4.17		115.30			
Poland	0.09		102.50			
Netherlands	0.28		100.10		30.28	
Israel	2.82		91.73		17.11	
Bulgaria	0.45		81.24			
United Kingdom	3.85		77.81		58.55	
Armenia	0.53		73.25			
Iceland	1.24		70.59		24.40	
Sweden	0.23		66.18			
Romania	3.92		62.23			
Andorra	1.15		61.46			
Spain	0.92		57.36		37.04	
Malta	2.73		43.94		15.50	
Ireland	1.04		39.34		48.74	
Turkey	1.59		36.08			

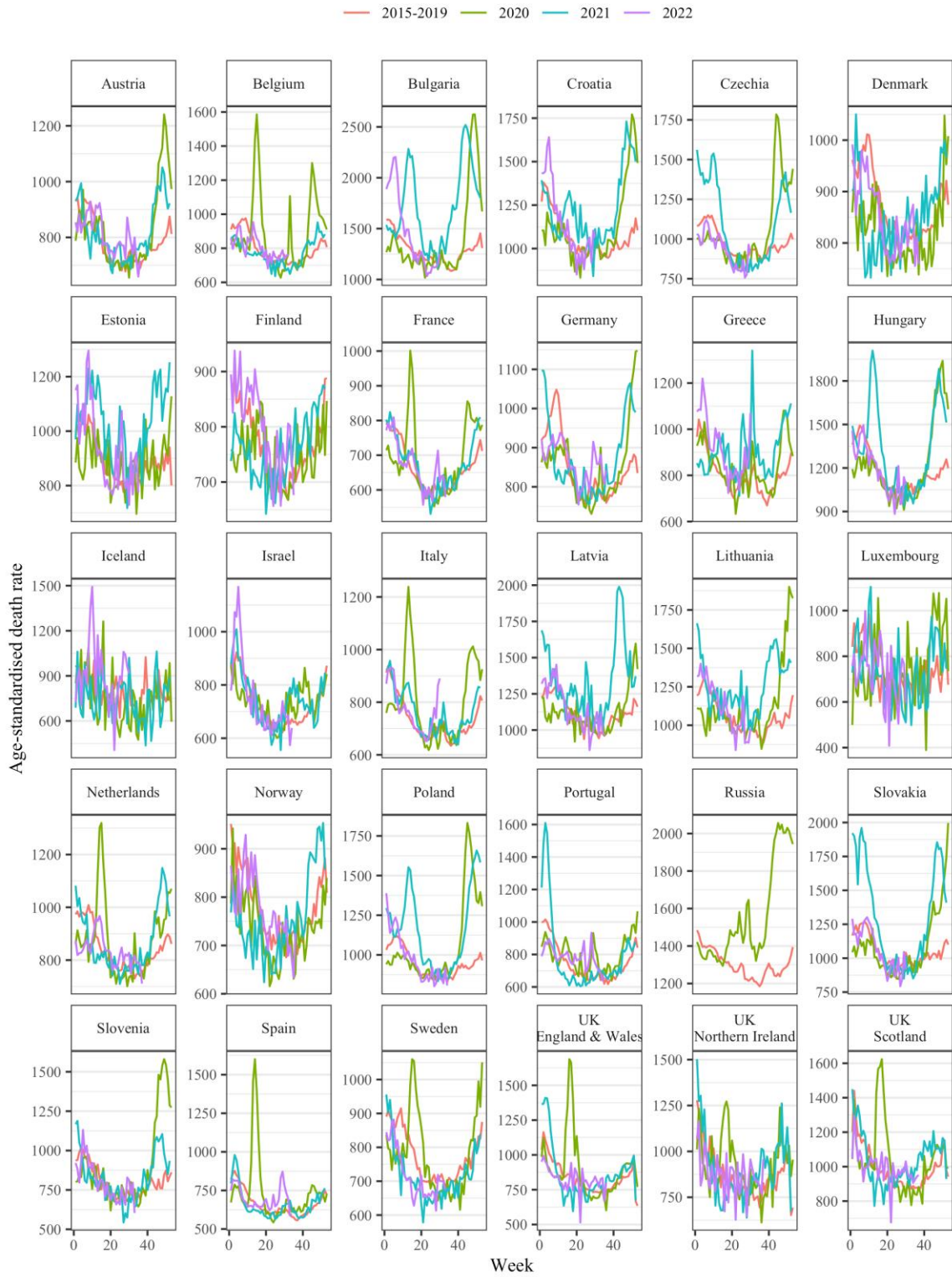
WHO Europe region	Daily new tests/thousand people	30-day trend in tests	Daily newly confirmed COVID-19 cases/million people	30-day trend in cases	Weekly hospital admissions/million hospital admissions	30-day trend in weekly hospital admissions
North Macedonia	0.38		25.33			
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1.07		24.33			
Albania	0.13		17.57			
Azerbaijan	0.23		15.94			
Kazakhstan	2.08		5.10			
Kosovo	0.12		3.69			

The age-standardised all-cause death rates in 2020, 2021 and 2022, and the 2015-2019 average by week and sex in selected countries of the WHO-Europe (Source: Human Mortality Database).

Age-standardised death rate (men)

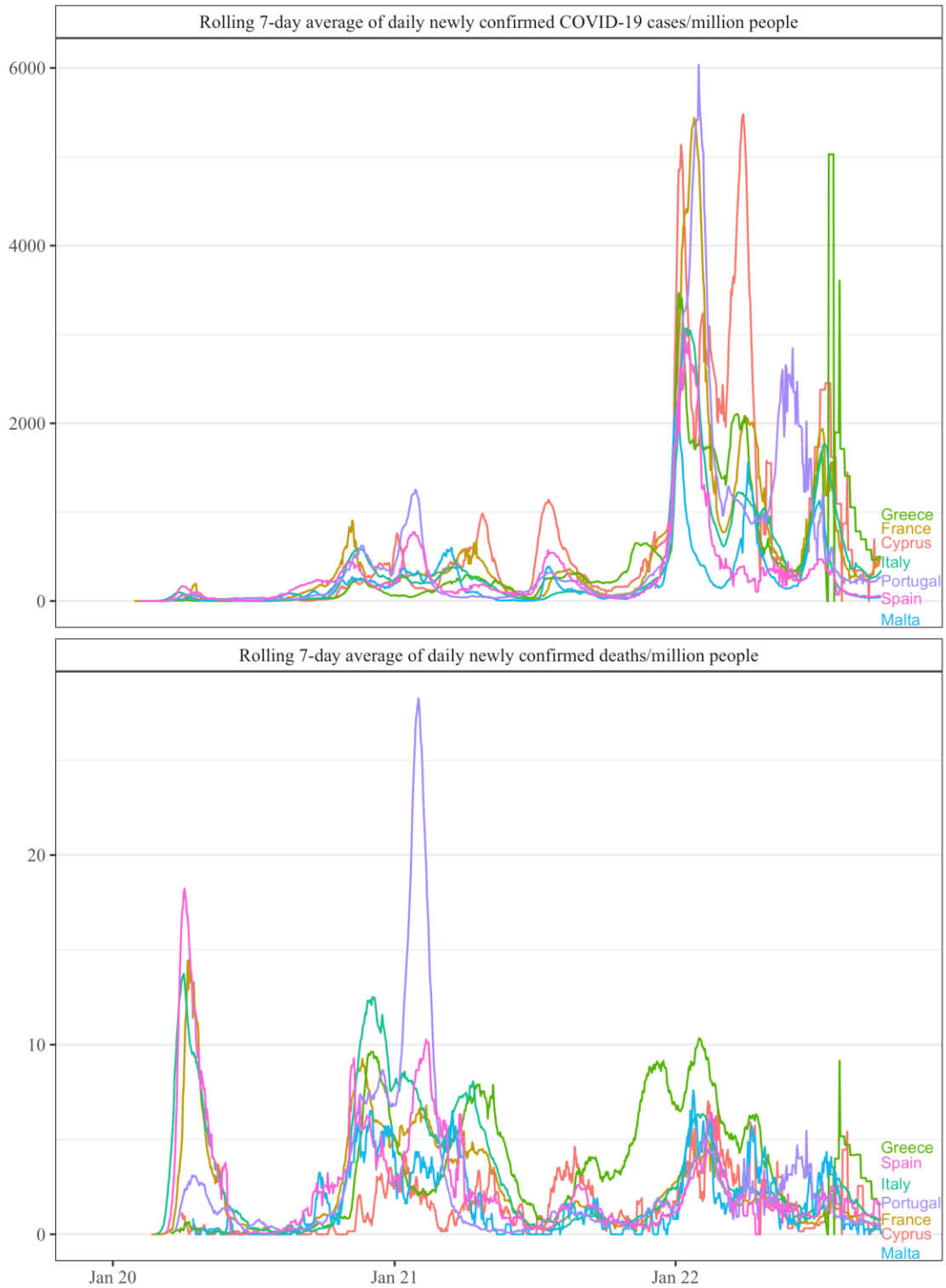


Age-standardised death rate (women)

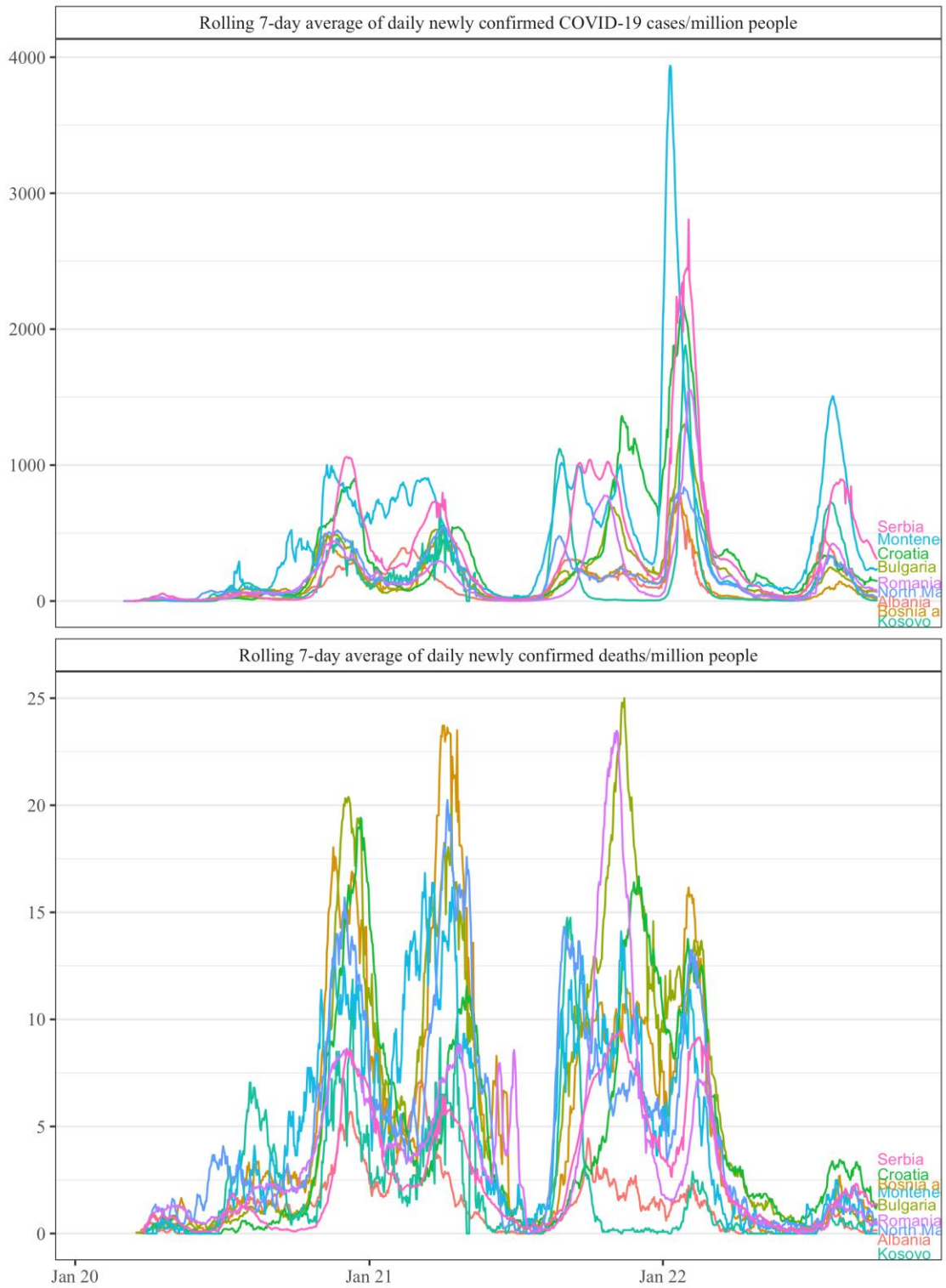


Rolling 7-day average of daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases and daily new confirmed COVID-19 deaths in sub-regions of Europe (Source: Our World in Data).

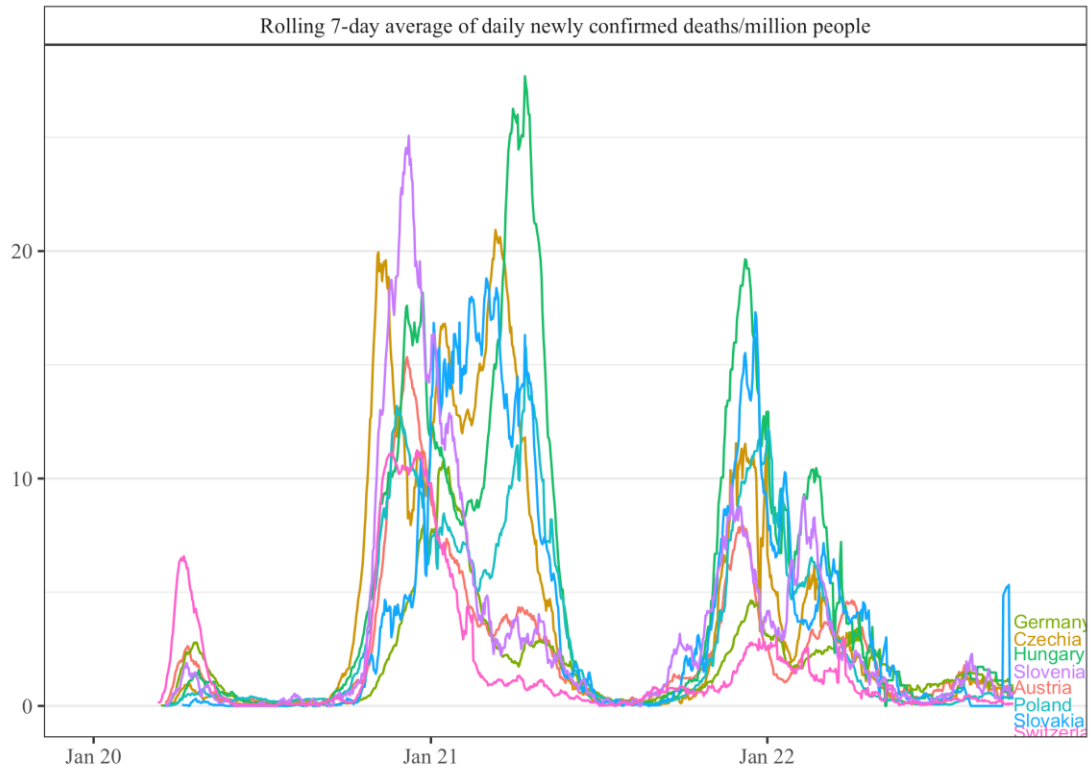
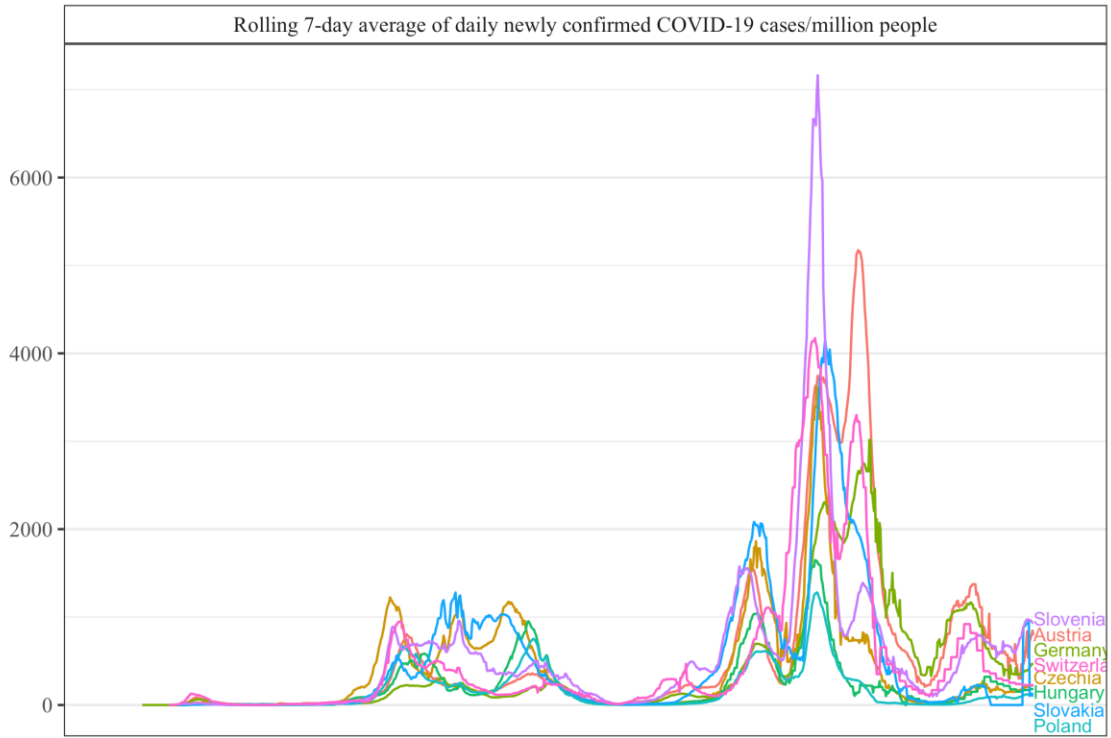
Mediterranean region



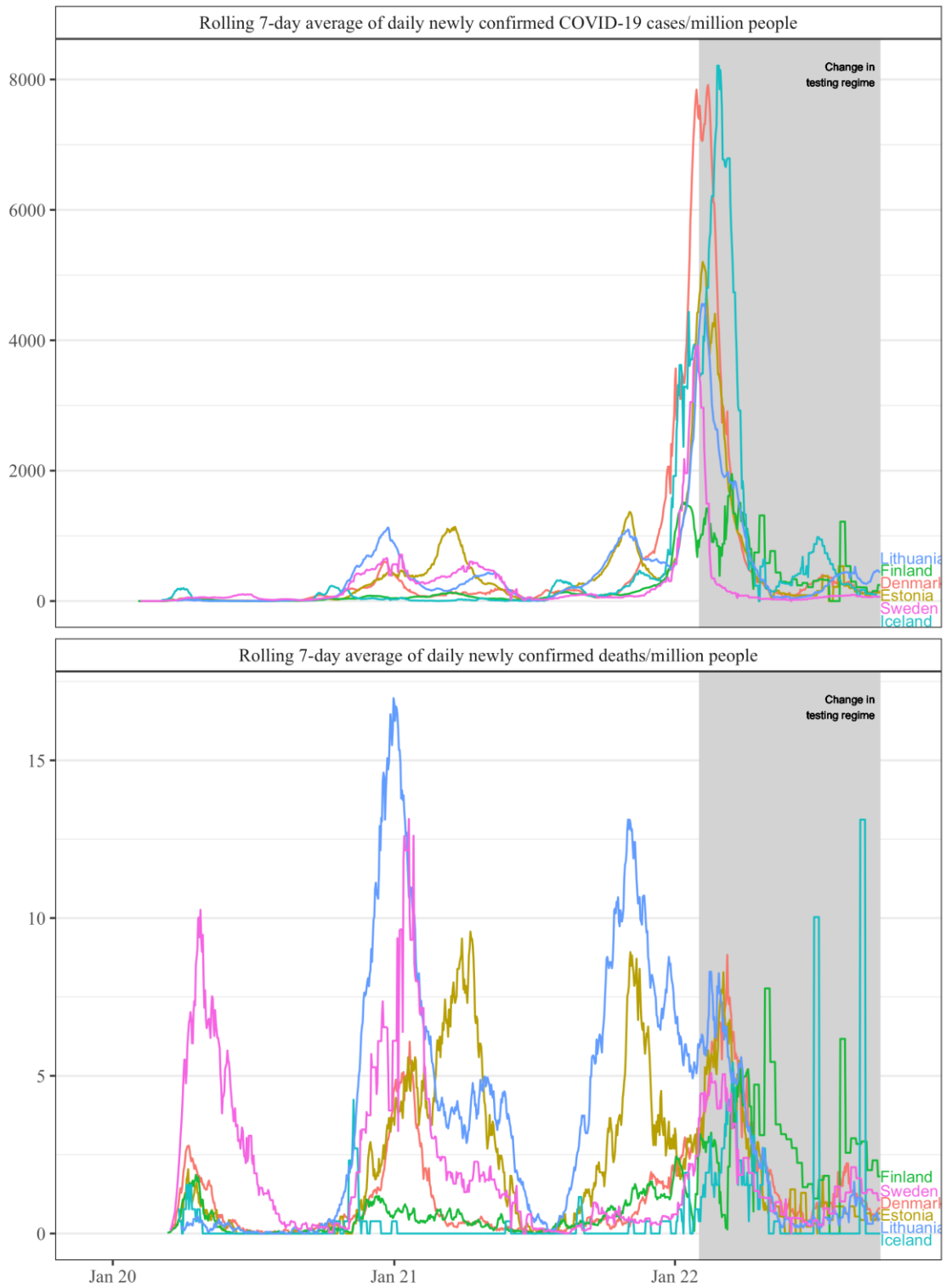
South-East region



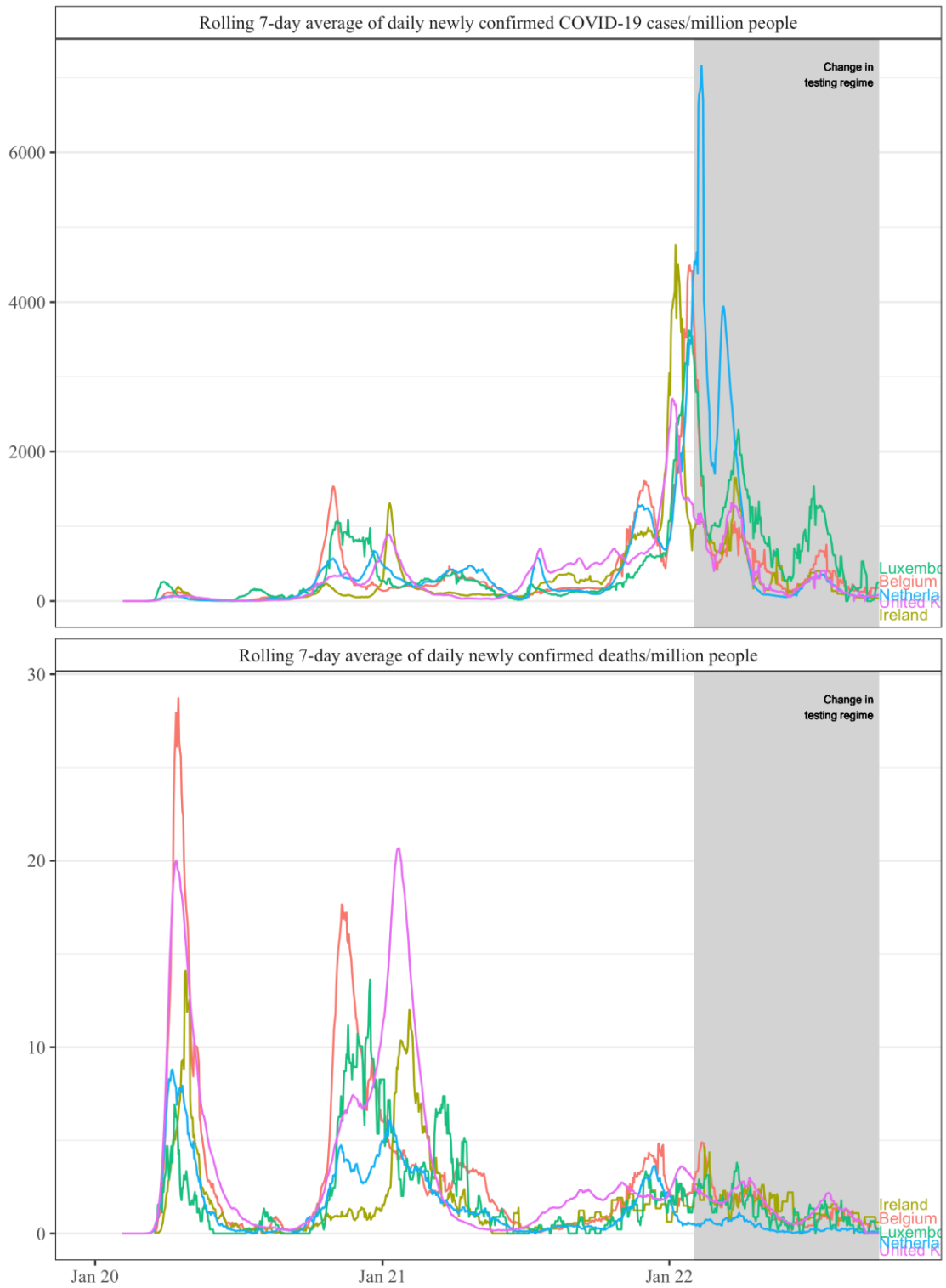
Central Europe



Baltics and Nordic Countries



North-Western Europe



Central Asia

