



Weekly report on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland

Week 49, 2022

- The epidemiological weeks in this report, run from Sunday to Saturday. Please refer to the [HPSC website](#) for a complete list of epidemiological weeks with start and end dates for 2020-2022.
- Reference dates:
 - Week 10, 2020 (01/03/2020 to 07/03/2020) – the beginning of the pandemic in Ireland, also the start of the first wave
 - Week 32, 2020 (02/08/2020 to 08/08/2020) – the beginning of the 2nd wave
 - Week 48, 2020 (22/11/2020 to 28/11/2020) – the beginning of the 3rd wave
 - Week 26, 2021 (27/06/2021 to 03/07/2021) – the beginning of the 4th wave
 - Week 51, 2021 (19/12/2021 to 25/12/2021) – the beginning of the 5th wave
 - Week 49, 2022 (04/12/2022 to 10/12/2022) – most recent epidemiological week
- Data for this report are based on cases notified on the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) and HSE Positive Antigen Portal up to midnight 10/12/2022. Data were extracted from CIDR system on 13/12/2022. Data are provisional and subject to ongoing review, validation and update. As a result, figures in this report may differ from previously published figures.
- A confirmed case of COVID-19 is any person for whom SARS-CoV-2 is detected by PCR. At present, antigen testing undertaken outside the governance of the public laboratory service is not recognised for the purpose of notification of COVID-19. For surveillance purposes, a self-administered positive antigen test registered on the HSE Antigen Portal is not considered to be a confirmed COVID-19 case as it is not subject to data validation and linkage to previous or subsequent PCR results is not feasible.
- In this report, confirmed cases notified on CIDR and cases who have registered a positive antigen test result on the HSE Antigen Portal are presented separately.
- Data from both sources (CIDR and the HSE Antigen Portal) should be interpreted in the context of the current testing policy. Testing policies can affect the number and age distribution of confirmed cases notified on CIDR. Information on the current testing policy in Ireland can be found [here](#)
- Data for late December 2021, and January 2022, do not accurately reflect trends. Due to a surge in case numbers the turnaround time for processing notifications increased. Notifications between 19/12/2021 and 15/01/2022 (week 51, 2021 to week 2, 2022) are reduced, while notifications

between 16/01/2022 and 29/01/2022 (weeks 3 and 4, 2022) are inflated compared to cases diagnosed during these weeks.

Key points

Notified confirmed cases

- In week 49 (between December 04 and December 10 2022) there were 1,947 new confirmed COVID-19 cases reported on CIDR. This is an increase of 5.1% compared to week 48 when there were 1,853 confirmed COVID-19 cases notified.
- The highest number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases in week 49 was in the age group of 35-44 years with 19.5% of notified cases in week 49.

Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

- In week 49, a total of 15,794 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 2,357 (14.9%) were positive. This is an increase compared to the previous week, 48, when 14% were positive.

Self-reported antigen positive cases

- In week 49, a total of 5,446 positive antigen test results were registered on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal. This is an increase of 24.6% reported results compared to week 48 when 4,370 cases were registered.

Deaths

- Since the start of the pandemic 8,268 COVID-19 deaths among notified COVID-19 cases have been reported on CIDR. Of these, 9 had a date of death in week 49.

Table 1: Summary characteristics of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 49, 2022

	Number	Percentage
Total number of confirmed cases	1,947	
Incidence rate of confirmed cases per 100,000 population	40.9	
Healthcare workers	274	14.10
Healthcare workers where known		29.20
Severe cases		
Number of cases hospitalised	454*	23.32
Number of cases admitted to ICU	2*	0.10
Number of deaths among confirmed cases	8*	0.41

** The number of cases hospitalised, cases admitted to ICU and deaths described in the above table relate only to COVID-19 cases who were notified during this reporting period, and where the outcome is known at the time of reporting. It does not reflect all hospitalisations, ICU admissions and deaths related to COVID-19 which occurred during the period covered by the report. It also does not reflect the final number of cases hospitalised, admitted to ICU or deaths for these cases notified during this period as the outcome may not yet have occurred, or is yet to be notified*

Confirmed cases of COVID-19

Since the start of the pandemic, 1,683,772 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been notified on CIDR. In the past week, week 49 2022, 1,947 confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported on CIDR. This is an increase of 5.1% compared to week 48 when 1,853 confirmed COVID-19 cases were notified. Figure 1 shows the epidemiological curve of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland from week 1 2021 to week 49 2022.

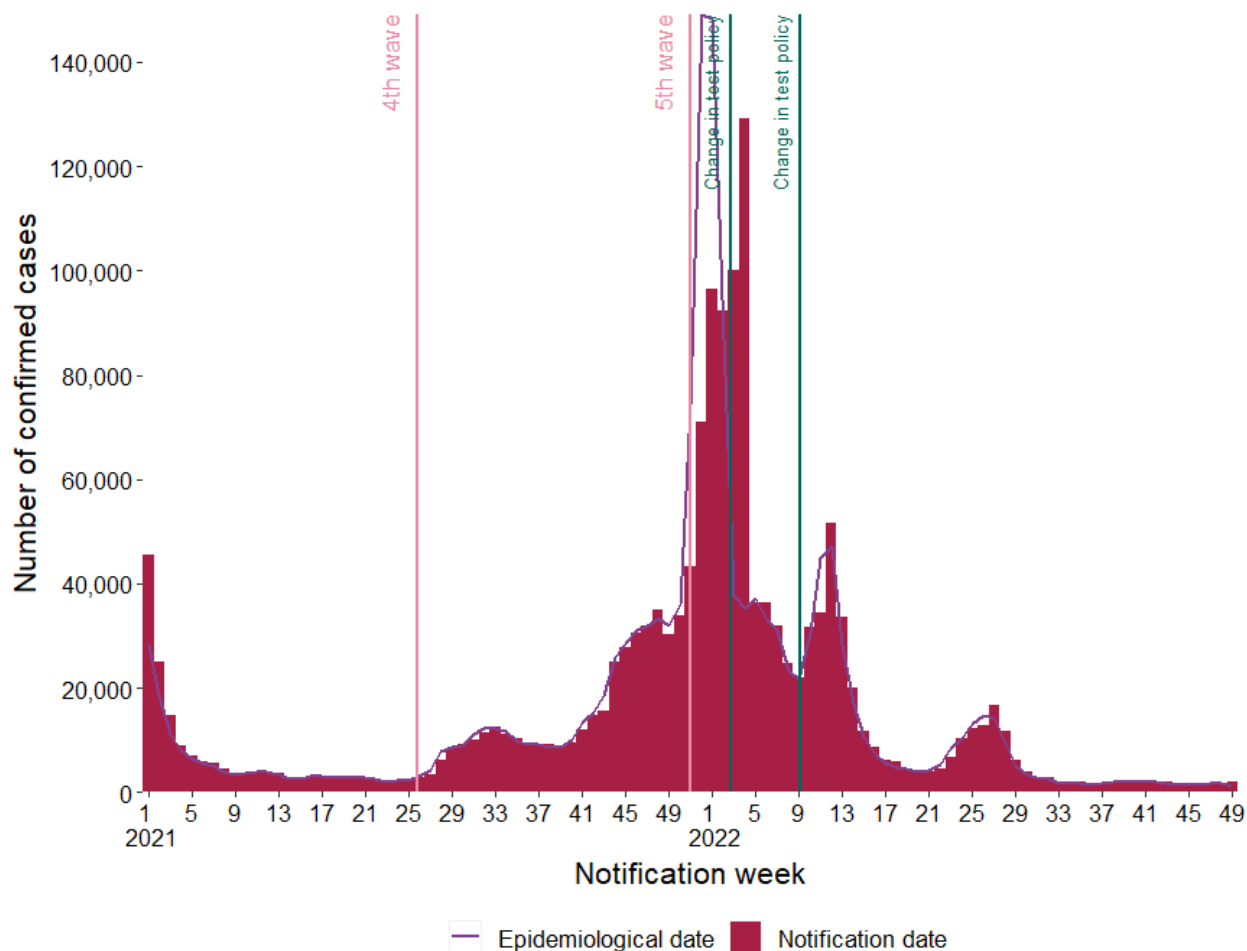


Figure 1a: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland between week 1, 2021 and week 49, 2022. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date. The pink horizontal lines indicate when a new wave starts. The dark blue horizontal lines indicate a change in test policy^{1 2}

¹ Since 14/01/2022 (week 2), a confirmatory PCR test after a positive antigen test was no longer needed for those in the community aged between 4 and 39 years of age outside of a risk group.

² Since 28/02/2022 (week 9), PCR testing is only needed for symptomatic people in the community within certain risk groups: those who have not had booster vaccination and are aged 55 years and older; those with a high-risk medical conditions; those who are immunocompromised; those who live in the same household as a person who is immunocompromised; those who provide care or support for person they know to be immunocompromised; those who are pregnant; Healthcare Workers.

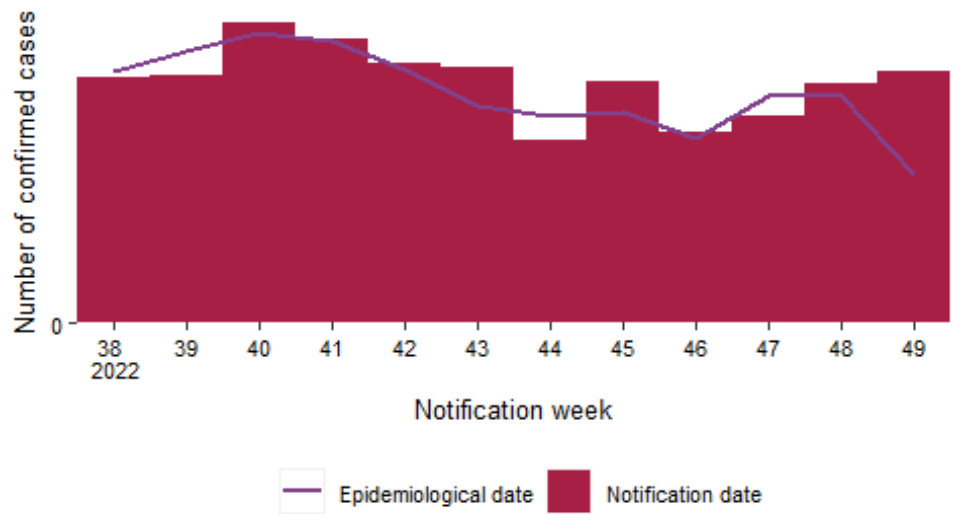
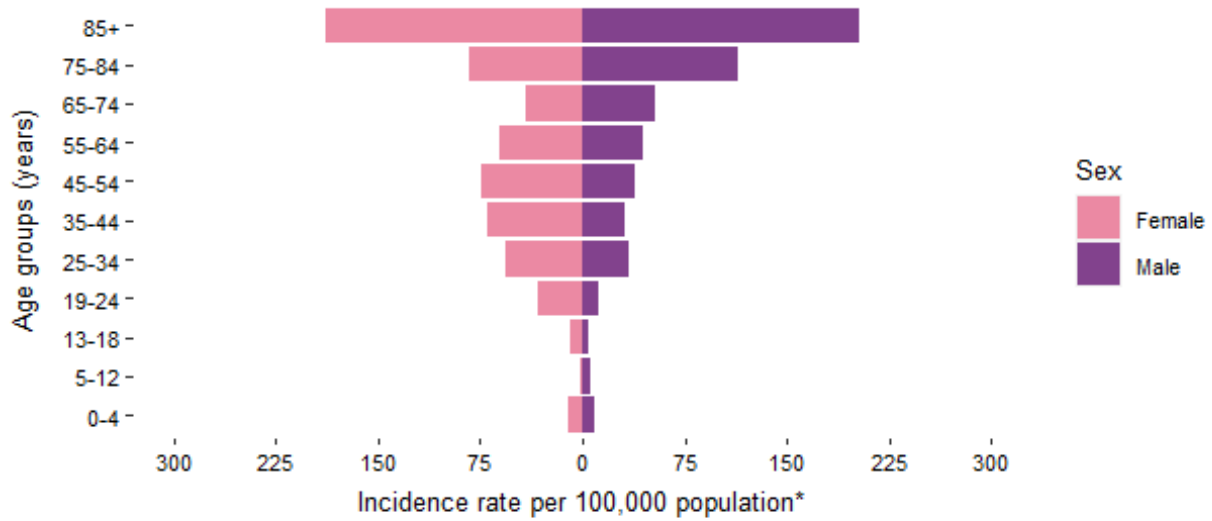


Figure 1b: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland in the last 12 weeks. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date.

Confirmed COVID-19 cases by age and sex

Table 2: Summary characteristics by age and sex of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 49, 2022

	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Males	759	39.0
Females	1,188	61.0
M:F ratio	0.64	
Age (years)		
Mean age	51	
Median age	48	
Age range	0 - 104	
Age groups (years)		
0-4	31	1.6
5-12	19	1.0
13-18	24	1.2
19-24	72	3.7
25-34	298	15.3
35-44	379	19.5
45-54	354	18.2
55-64	270	13.9
65-74	178	9.1
75-84	191	9.8
85+	131	6.7
Unknown	0	0.0



*Excluding 0 for whom age is unknown, 0 for whom sex is unknown and 0 for whom both are unknown

Figure 2: Cumulative age and sex specific incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population for current week 49, 2022

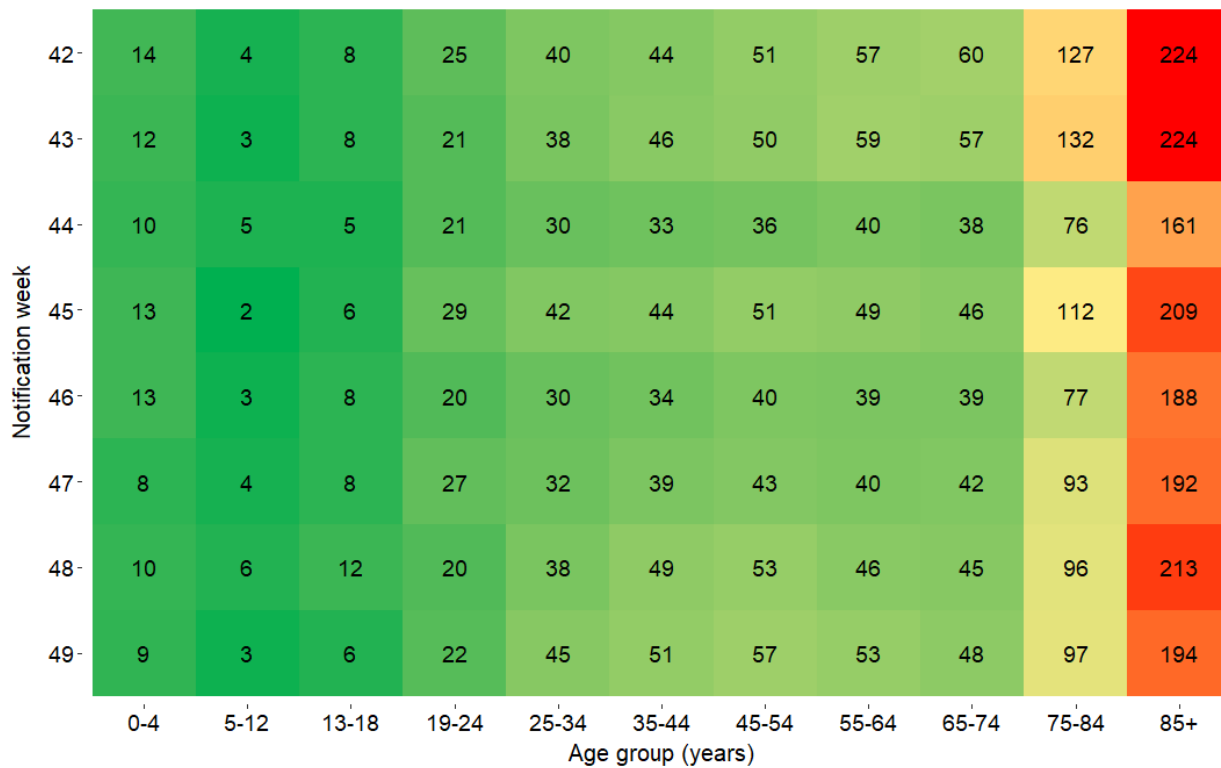


Figure 3: Heat map of weekly age-specific incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

Cases and incidence by county

Table 3: Characteristics of confirmed COVID-19 cases by county and descending incidence rate per 100,000 notified in Ireland, during week 49, 2022

County	Number of cases	Percent	M:F ratio	Median age	Incidence rate per 100,000
Waterford	71	3.6	0.3	48.0	61.1
Wexford	88	4.5	0.7	43.0	58.8
Carlow	30	1.5	0.6	58.0	52.7
Kilkenny	51	2.6	0.5	51.0	51.4
Kildare	114	5.9	0.6	45.5	51.2
Limerick	98	5.0	0.6	46.0	50.3
Cavan	38	2.0	0.4	48.5	49.9
Offaly	37	1.9	0.8	55.0	47.5
Westmeath	41	2.1	0.6	40.0	46.2
Laois	39	2.0	0.9	48.0	46.0
Clare	50	2.6	0.6	52.5	42.1
Tipperary	67	3.4	0.4	51.0	42.0
Cork	222	11.4	0.8	52.0	40.9
Dublin	536	27.5	0.7	48.0	39.8
Wicklow	56	2.9	0.3	46.5	39.3
Kerry	57	2.9	1.1	52.0	38.6
Louth	46	2.4	0.7	51.0	35.7
Mayo	46	2.4	0.4	56.0	35.2
Sligo	22	1.1	0.6	46.0	33.6
Galway	85	4.4	1.0	48.0	32.9
Longford	13	0.7	0.3	48.0	31.8
Donegal	49	2.5	0.7	51.0	30.8
Leitrim	9	0.5	3.5	35.0	28.1
Meath	53	2.7	0.6	43.0	27.2
Monaghan	15	0.8	0.7	52.0	24.4
Roscommon	14	0.7	1.0	54.0	21.7

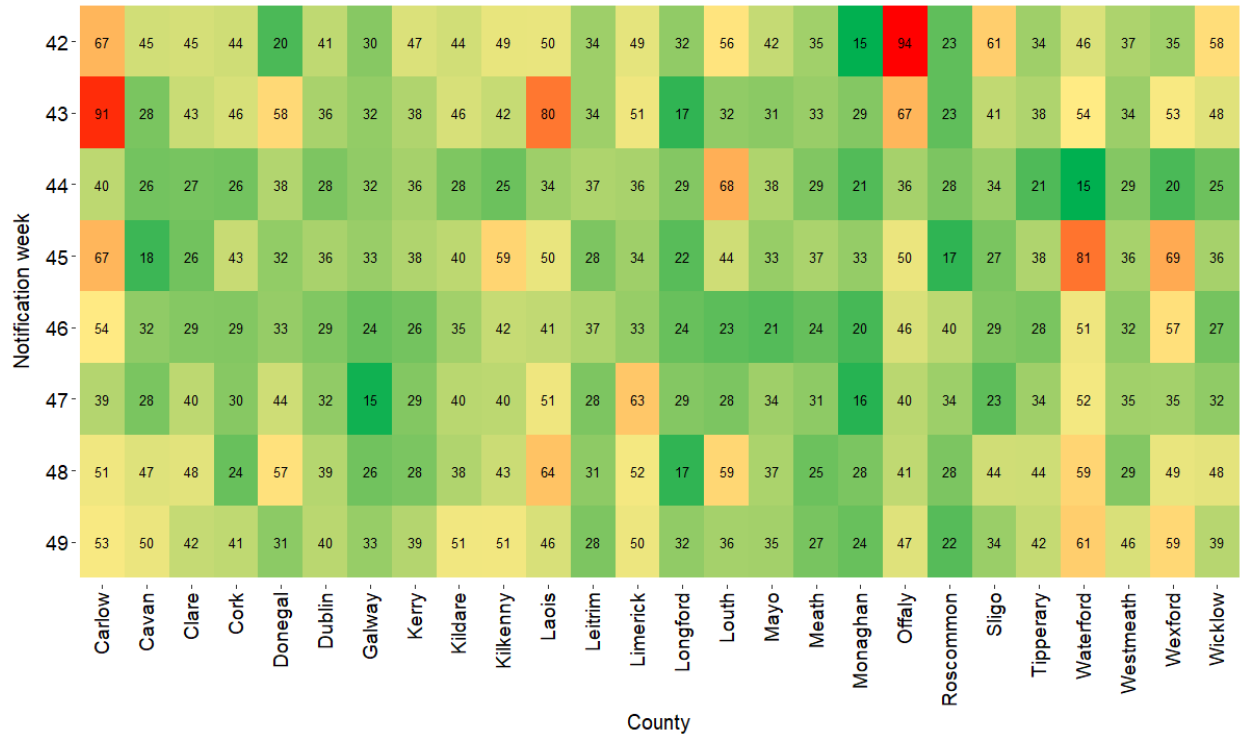


Figure 4: Heat map of weekly incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population, by county, notified in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

Hospitalisations

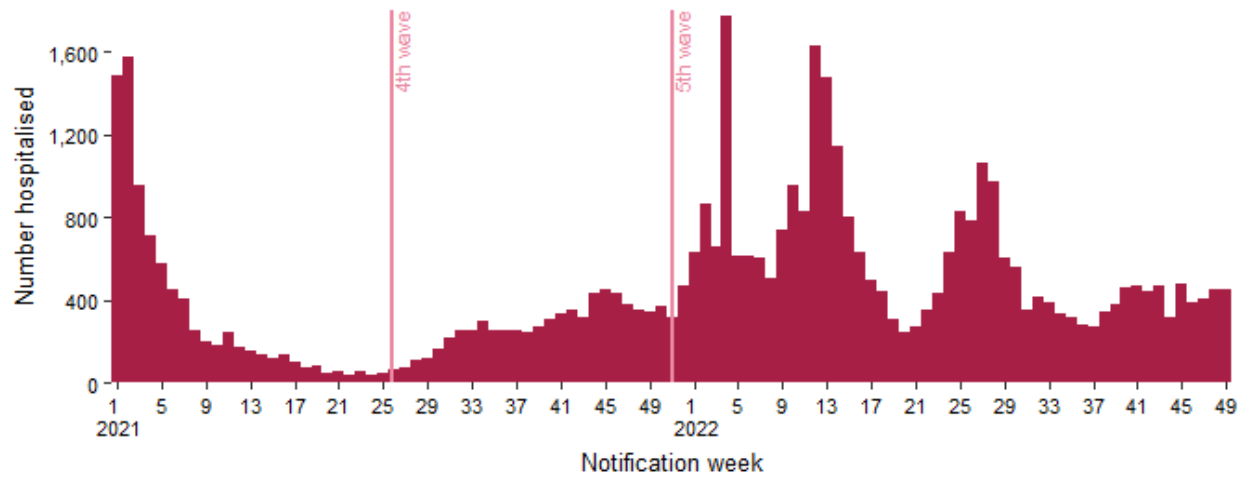


Figure 5: Hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 1, 2021 and week 49, 2022

Table 4: Number of COVID-19 cases and hospital admissions by age group in Ireland for week³ 49, 2022 based on week of notification⁴

Age group	Total cases		Hospitalised cases	
	Number of cases	Number of cases	Percentage	
0-4	31	17	54.8	
5-12	19	6	31.6	
13-18	24	2	8.3	
19-24	72	10	13.9	
25-34	298	32	10.7	
35-44	379	27	7.1	
45-54	354	35	9.9	
55-64	270	52	19.3	
65-74	178	85	47.8	
75-84	191	106	55.5	
85+	131	82	62.6	
Unknown	0	0	0.0	

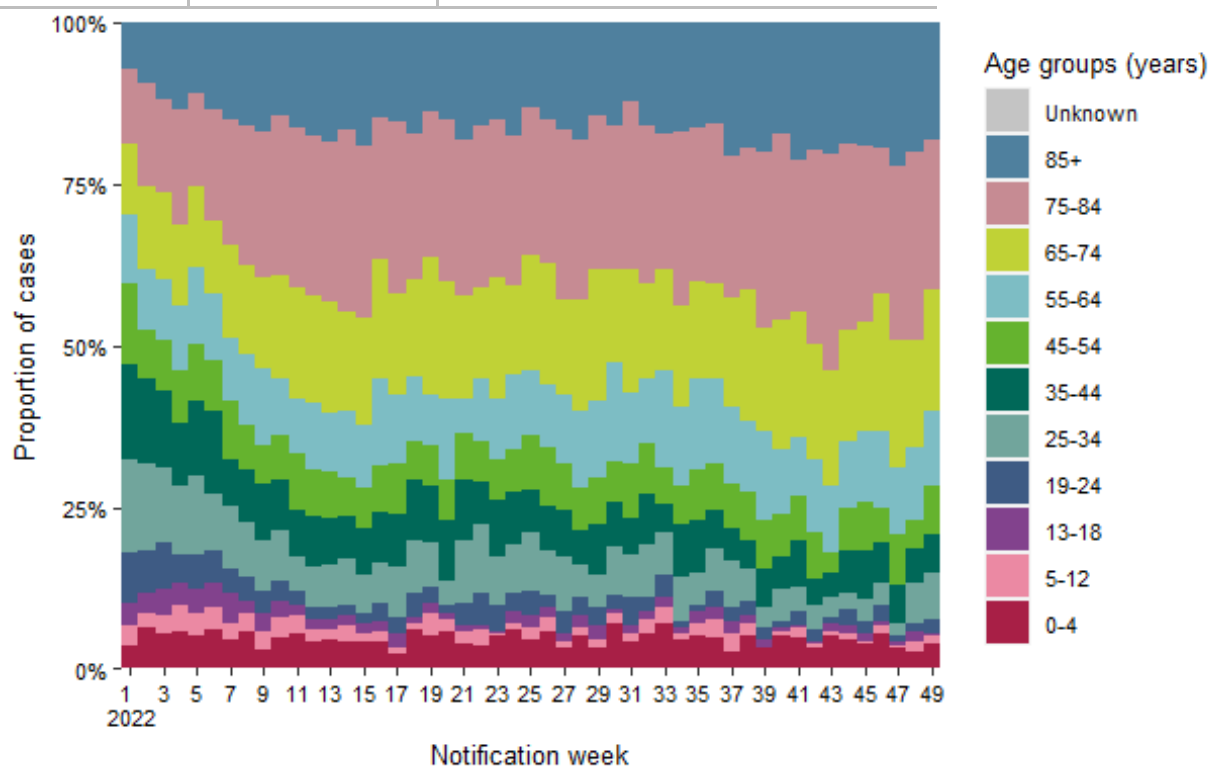


Figure 6: Age distribution of hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 49, 2022

³ Hospitalisations may be underestimated for recent weeks as the outcome may not yet have occurred or may not yet have been reported to CIDR

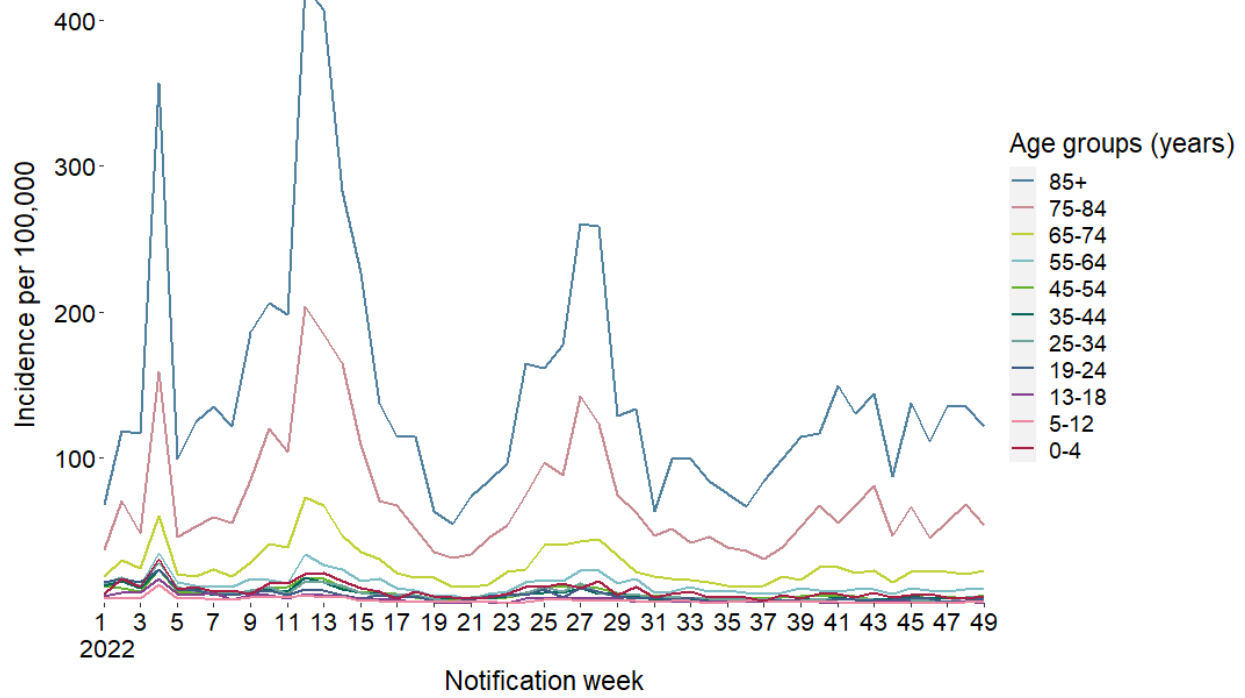


Figure 7: Incidence rate by age group of hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases on CIDR in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 49, 2022

⁴ Data are based on the date the case was notified on CIDR, and not the date of hospital admission

ICU admissions

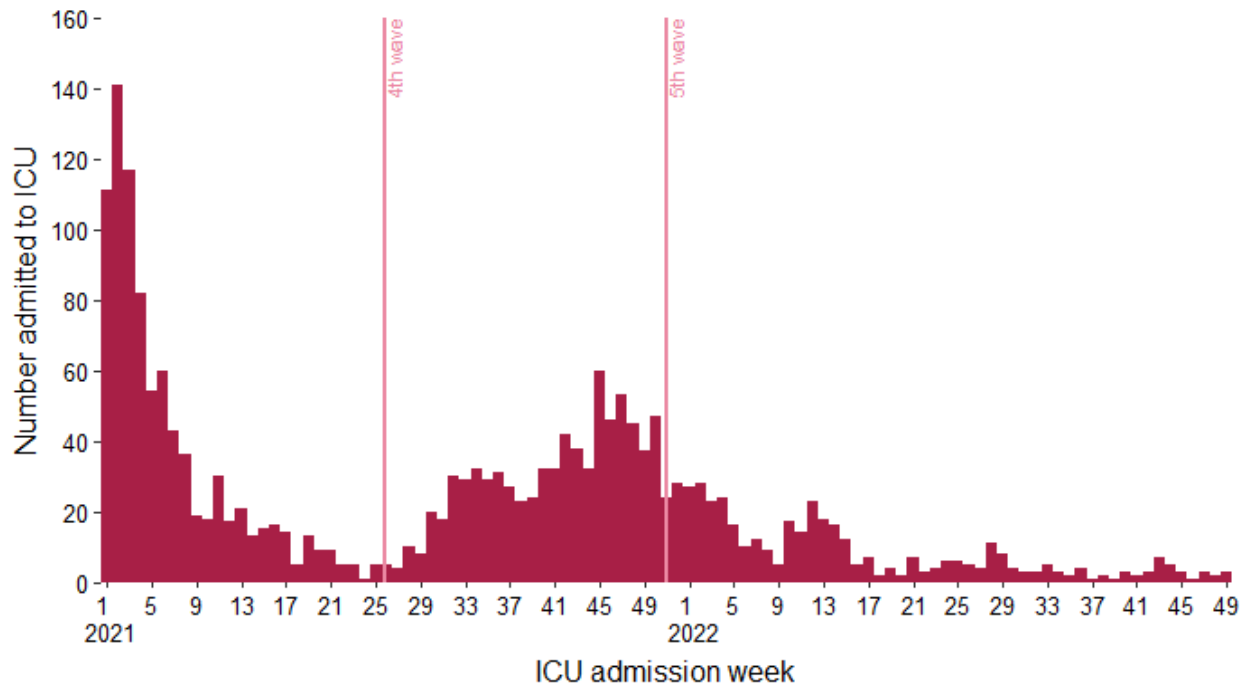


Figure 8: Number of ICU COVID-19 ICU admissions in Ireland by week of ICU admission, between week 1, 2021 and week 49, 2022⁵

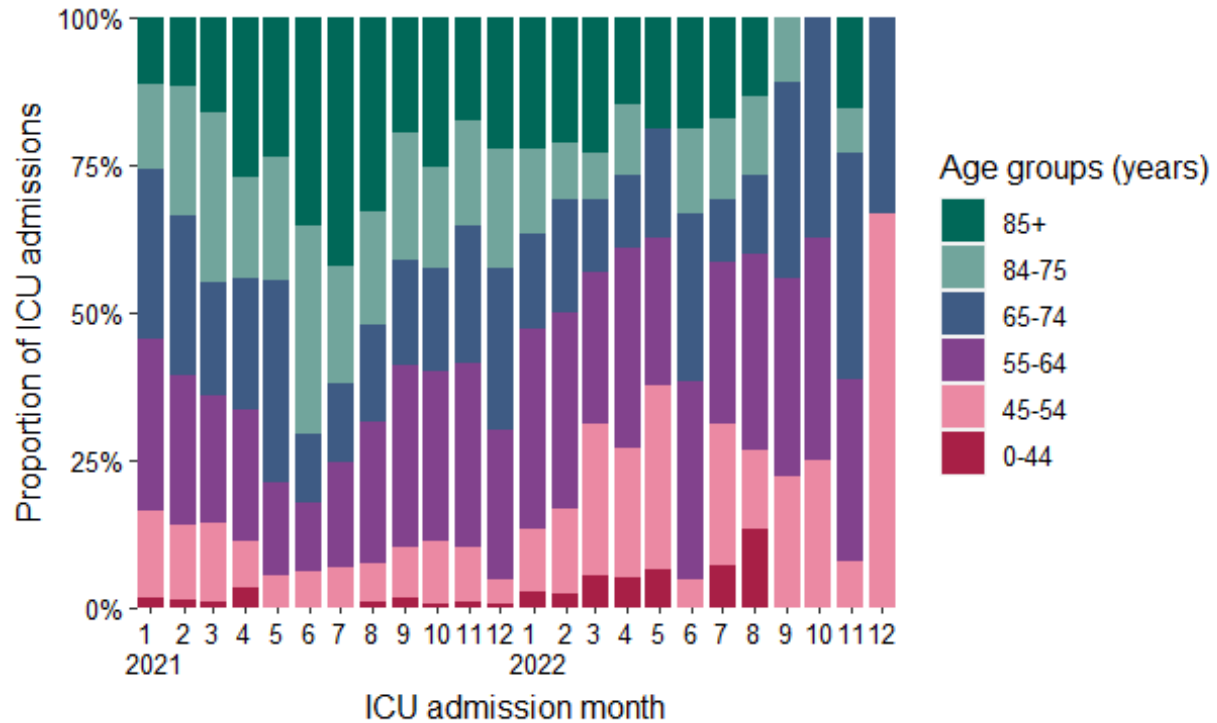


Figure 9: Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases admitted to by month of admission January, 2021 and December, 2022

⁵ Please note that most recent weeks may not yet reflect all admissions

Deaths

Please note the below figures and tables include all cases (confirmed, probable and possible) who have died.

A total of 9 cases had a date of death in the latest epidemiological week, 49. The mean and median age of those who died in the previous epidemiological week was 84 and 86 years respectively.

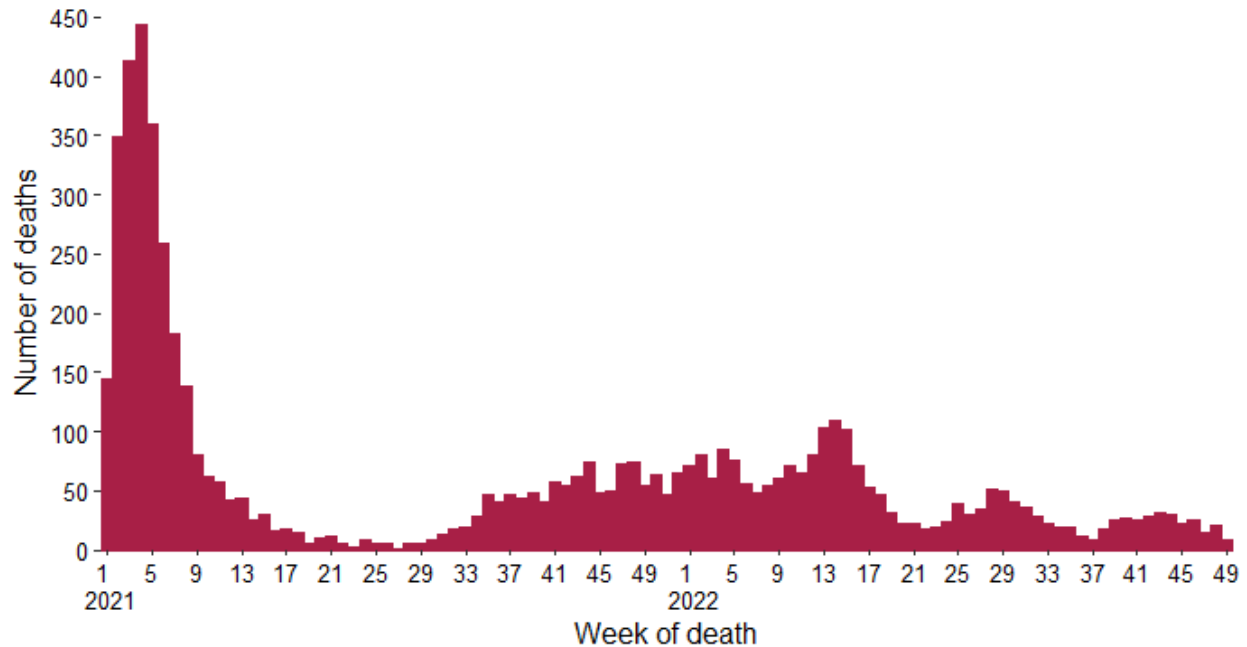


Figure 10: Total number of COVID-19 deaths notified by week of death, cases with a date of notification from week 1, 2021 to 49, 2022. Date of death missing for 0 of the reported deaths

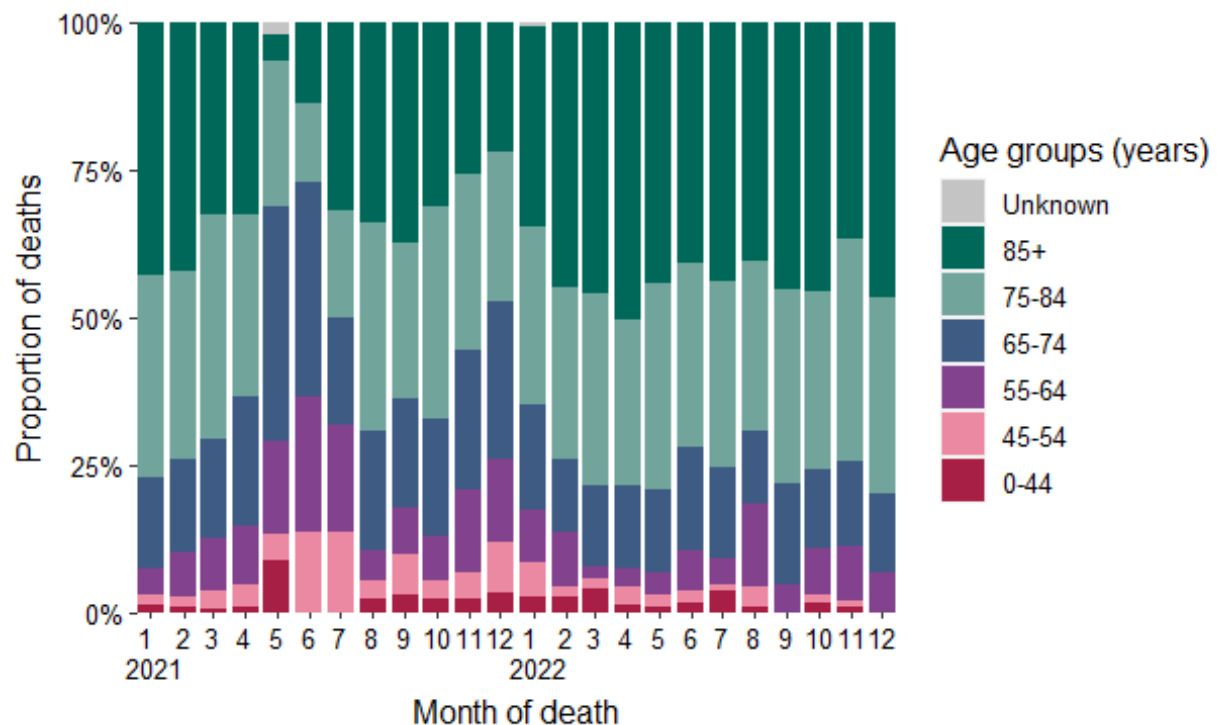


Figure 11: Age distribution of COVID-19 deaths notified on CIDR in Ireland between January, 2021 and December, 2022

Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

In week 49, a total of 15,794 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 2,357 (14.9%) were positive.

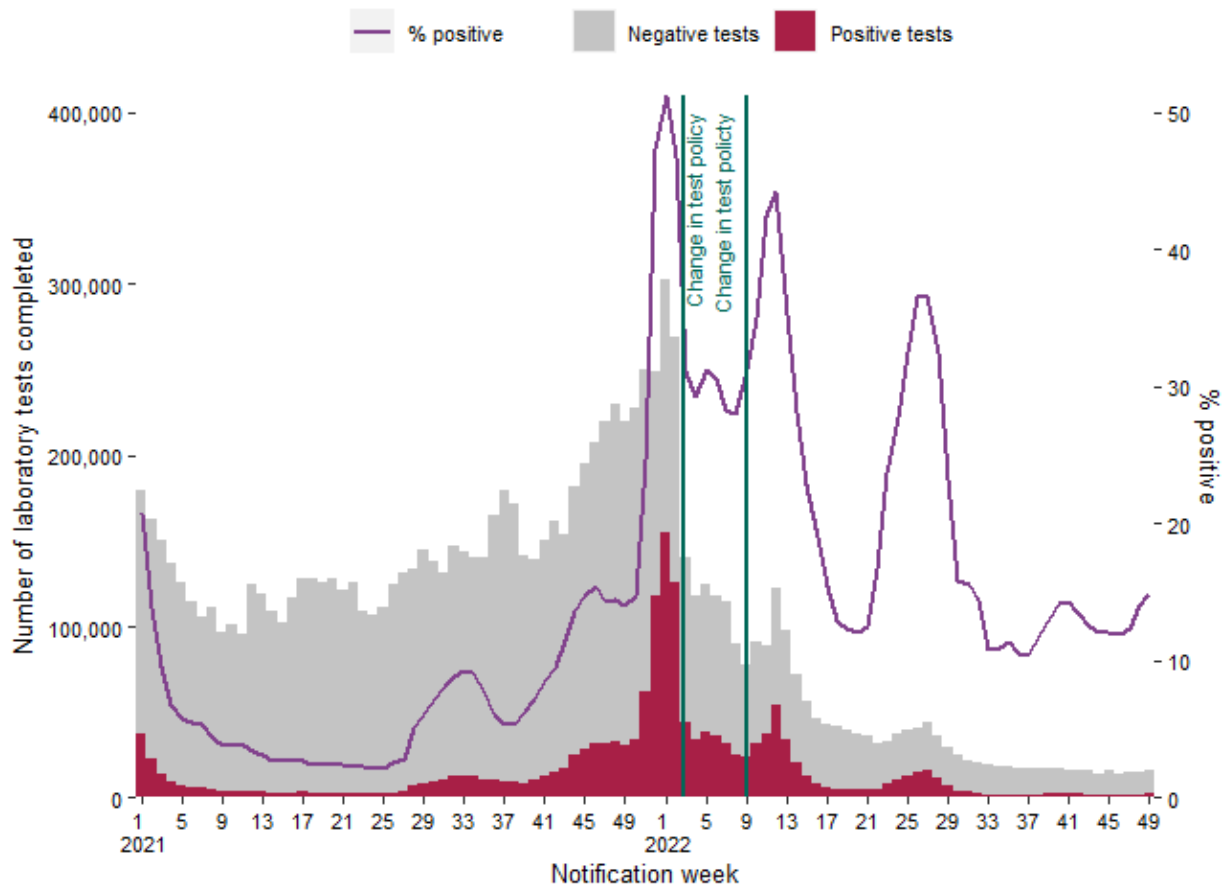


Figure 12: Number of completed laboratory tests by result and % positive tests⁶ in Ireland between week 1, 2021 and week 49, 2022. Data source: Deloitte Ireland LLP^{7, 8}

⁶ Positive tests refer to all positive specimens and includes duplicates and individuals who were retested.

⁷ Since 14/01/2022 (week 2), a confirmatory PCR test after a positive antigen test was no longer needed for those in the community aged between 4 and 39 years of age outside of a risk group.

⁸ Since 28/02/2022 (week 9), PCR testing is only needed for symptomatic people in the community within certain risk groups: those who have not had booster vaccination and are aged 55 years and older; those with a high-risk medical conditions; those who are immunocompromised; those who live in the same household as a person who is immunocompromised; those who provide care or support for person they know to be immunocompromised; those who are pregnant; Healthcare Workers.

Self-reported antigen positive cases

The following figures and tables are based on cases who registered a self-administered positive antigen test on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal. They are not considered confirmed cases and have undergone no data validation.

Table 5: Characteristics of COVID-19 cases who registered a positive antigen test to the HSE Positive Antigen Portal

	Week 2, 2022 - 49, 2022		Week 49, 2022	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total number of registered cases	724,660		5,446	
Incidence rate of registered cases per 100,000 population	15,218		114	
Gender				
Males	299,192	41.3	1,771	32.5
Females	406,710	56.1	3,605	66.2
M:F ratio	0.74		0.49	
Age (years)				
Mean age	34		40	
Median age	34		40	
Age range	0 - 105		0 - 93	

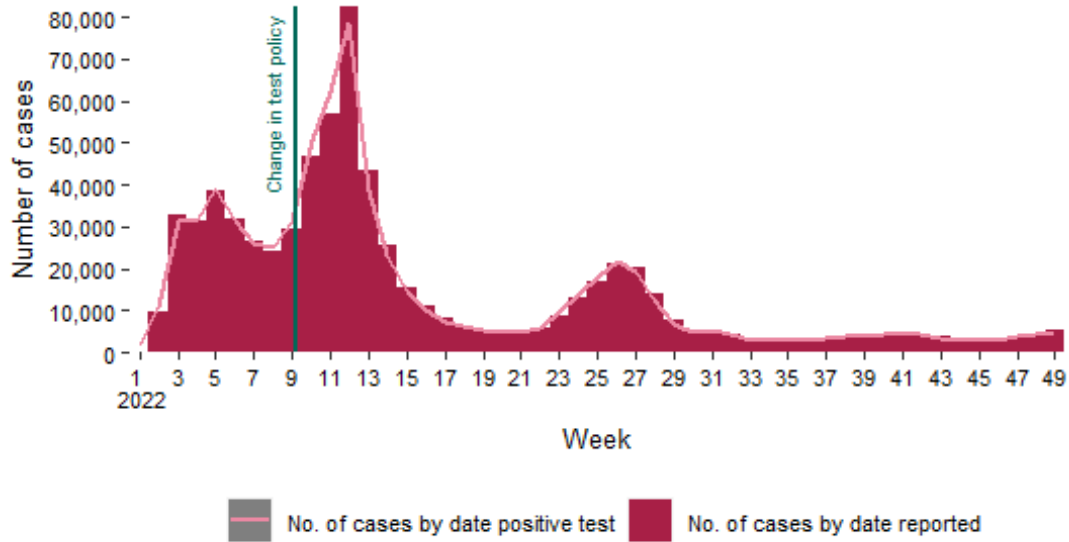


Figure 13: Number of COVID-19 cases who registered a positive antigen test on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal by week of registration⁹, and week of epidemiological date in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 49, 2022¹⁰

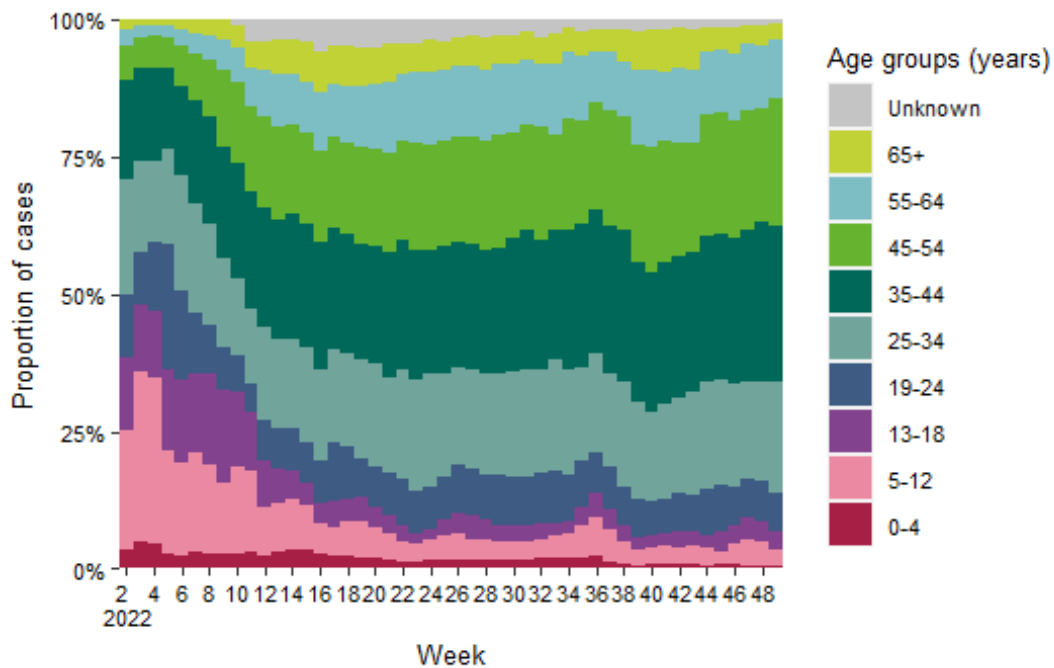


Figure 14: Age distribution of COVID-19 cases who registered a positive antigen test on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal by week of registration¹¹ in Ireland between week 2⁸, 2022 and week 49, 2022

⁹ Reporting to the HSE Positive Antigen Portal commenced on Friday 14th January 2022, and therefore week 2 only includes 2 days.

¹⁰ Some cases reported a date of positive test much earlier than the date it was registered in the portal. Dates of positive test earlier than week 1, 2022 are not shown in the number of case by date of positive test. Dates of positive test which erroneously were reported to be later than the current epi week are excluded.

¹¹ Please note, the week of registration on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal may differ from the week the positive test was obtained.

Notes

Technical Notes

1. Data Source

Data are based on statutory notifications and were extracted from Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) system and the HSE COVID care tracker. Data are provisional and subject to ongoing review, validation and update. As a result, figures in this report may differ from previously published figures. Slide with Laboratory testing for SARS-CoV-2 data provided by Deloitte Ireland LLP

2. Epidemiological date

Epidemiological date is based on the earliest of dates available on the case and taken from date of onset of symptoms, date of diagnosis, laboratory specimen collection date, laboratory received date, laboratory reported date or event creation date/notification date on CIDR. By using this date rather than event creation/ notification date, adjusts for any delays in testing/notification. Further information on epidemiological dates and weeks can be found on the [HPSC website](#).

3. Population data

Population data were taken from Census 2016. Data were aggregated into the following age groups for the analysis: 0-4 years, 5-12 years, 13-18 years, 19-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, 65-74 years, 75-84 years and ≥ 85 years.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are extended to all those who are participating in the collection of data and reporting of data used in these reports. This includes the HSE COVID-19 Contact Management Programme (CMP), staff in ICU units, notifying clinicians, laboratory staff, public health doctors, nurses, surveillance scientists, microbiologists and administrative staff.

Please refer to the Health Protection Surveillance (HPSC) website for

- [Epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland infohub](#)
- [Outbreaks/clusters in Ireland COVID-19 weekly report](#)
- [Monthly report on COVID-19 deaths reported in Ireland](#)
- [SARS-CoV-2 wastewater surveillance programme weekly reports](#)
- [Virus variants in Ireland COVID-19 summary report](#)
- [Epidemiology of intensive care admissions in cases of COVID-19 in Ireland](#)