



# Weekly report on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland

## Week 4, 2023

- 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 2020-2023.
- Data for this report are based on cases notified on the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) and HSE Positive Antigen Portal up to midnight 28/01/2023. Data were extracted from CIDR system on 31/01/2023. 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](#)

## Key points

### Notified confirmed cases

- In week 4 (between January 22 and January 28 2023) there were 848 new confirmed COVID-19 cases reported on CIDR. This is a decrease of 16.9% compared to week 3 when there were 1,020 confirmed COVID-19 cases notified.
- The highest number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases in week 4 was in the age group of 45-54 years with 14.9% of notified cases in week 4.

### Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

- In week 4, a total of 11,353 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 976 (8.6%) were positive. This is a decrease compared to the previous week, 3, when 9.7% were positive.

### Self-reported antigen positive cases

- In week 4, a total of 1,511 positive antigen test results were registered on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal. This is a decrease of 15.6% reported results compared to week 3 when 1,790 cases were registered.

### Deaths

- Since the start of the pandemic 8,515 COVID-19 deaths among notified COVID-19 cases have been reported on CIDR. Of these, 3 had a date of death in week 4.

**Table 1:** Summary characteristics of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland during week 4, 2023 and 2023 to date

	Week 4, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total number of confirmed cases	848		7,175	
Incidence rate of confirmed cases per 100,000 population	17.8		150.7	
Healthcare workers	n/a**		570	7.94
Healthcare workers where known				23.36
<b>Severe cases</b>				
Number of cases hospitalised	215*	25.35	1,767*	24.63
Number of cases admitted to ICU	1*	0.12	27*	0.38
Number of deaths among confirmed cases	3*	0.35	65*	0.91

\* 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

\*\* Healthcare worker status is not reported this week due to a delay in the uploading of this information to CIDR

## Confirmed cases of COVID-19

Since the start of 2023, 7,175 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been notified on CIDR. In the past week, week 4 2023, 848 confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported on CIDR. This is a decrease of 16.9% compared to week 3 when 1,020 confirmed COVID-19 cases were notified. Figure 1 shows the epidemiological curve of COVID-19 cases notified in Ireland from week 1 2022 to week 4 2023. Data since the start of the pandemic is available on the [Epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland infohub](#).

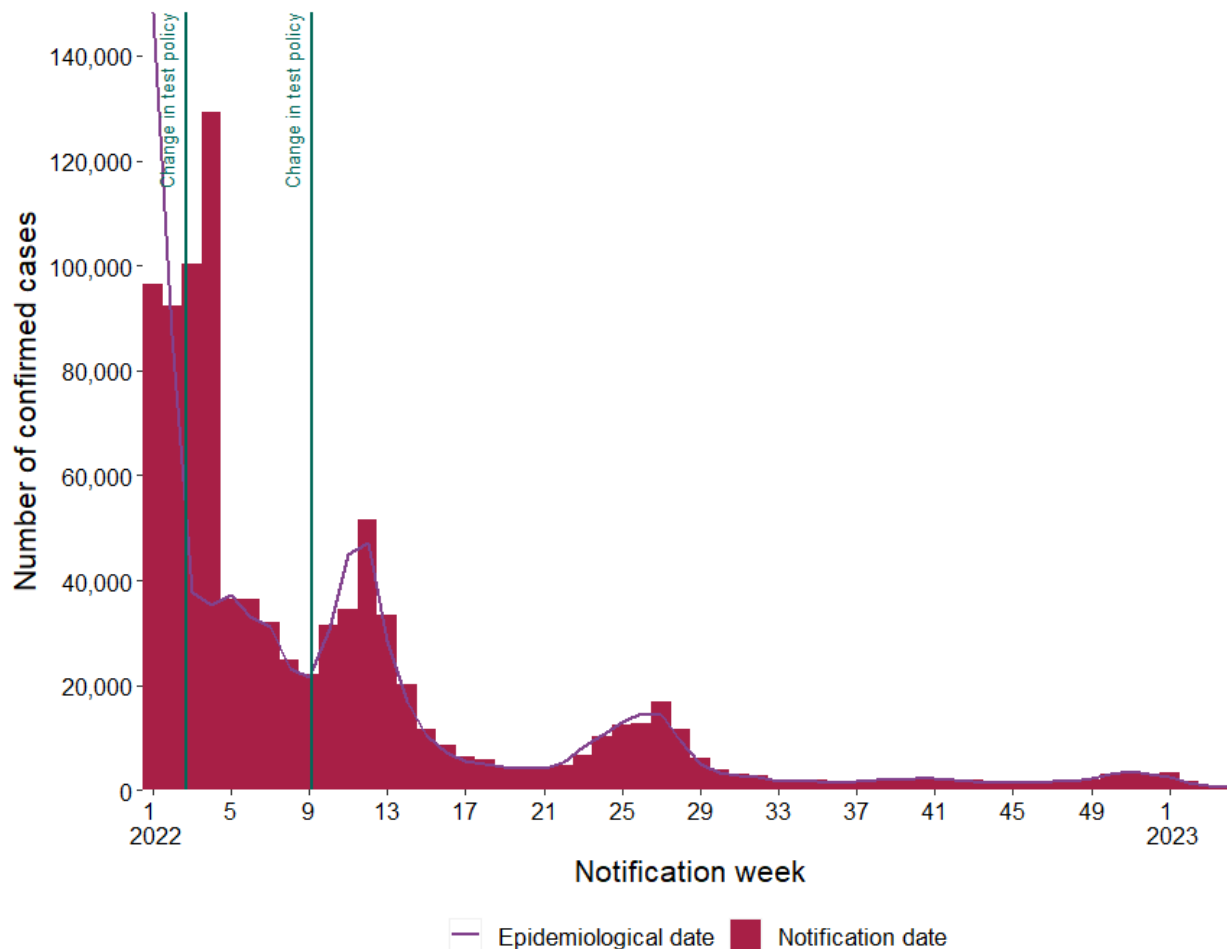


Figure 1a: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 4, 2023. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date. The dark blue horizontal lines indicate a change in test policy<sup>1 2 3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since 14/01/2022 (week 2, 2022), 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.

<sup>2</sup> Since 28/02/2022 (week 9, 2022), PCR testing was 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

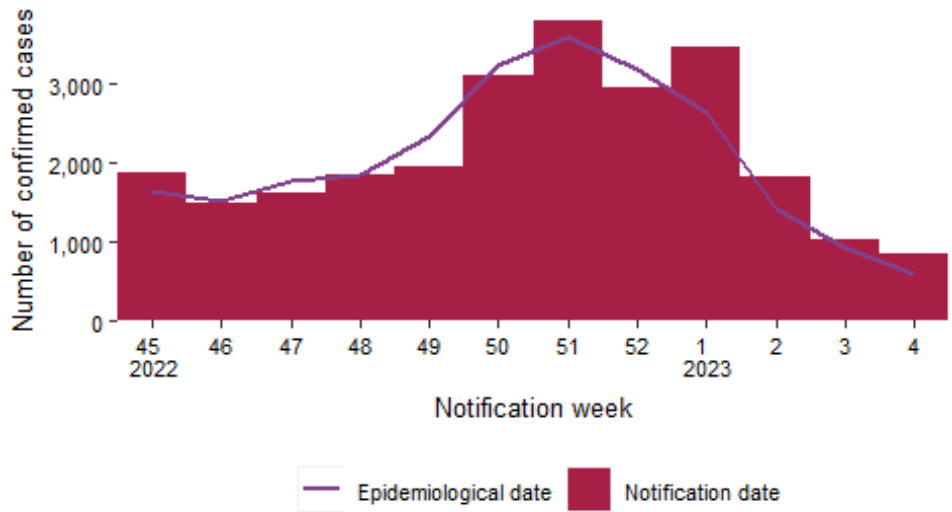
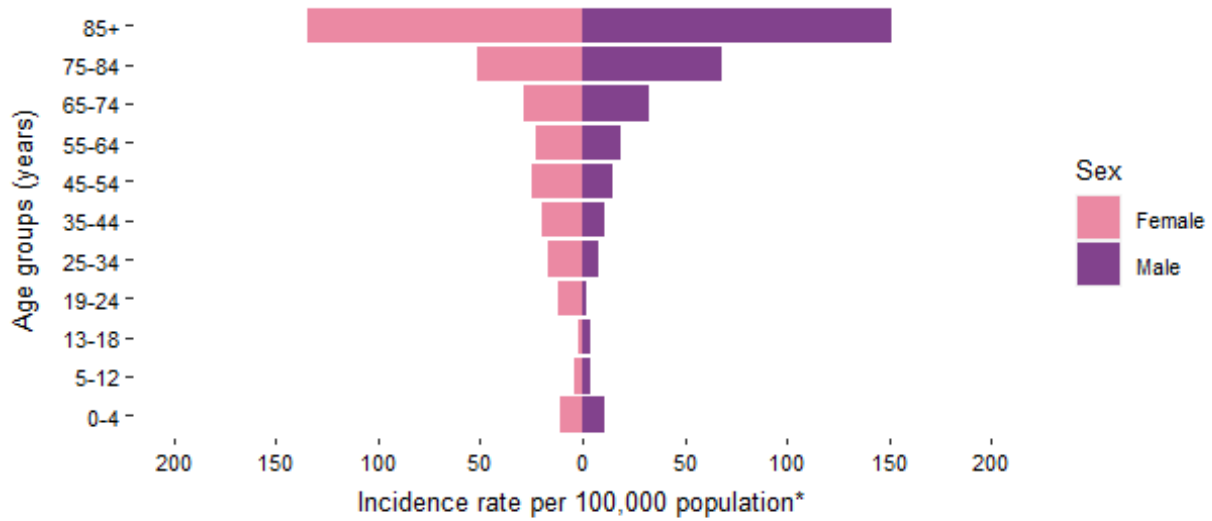


Figure 1b: Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases by notification week and epidemiological date in Ireland in the last 12 weeks. The red bars represent the number of confirmed cases by notification date. The purple line represents the number of cases by epidemiological date.

## 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 4, 2023 and 2023 to date

	Week 4, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>				
Males	356	42.0	2,796	39.0
Females	491	57.9	4,378	61.0
M:F ratio	0.73		0.64	
<b>Age (years)</b>				
Mean age	55		53	
Median age	55		52	
Age range	0 - 99		0 - 101	
<b>Age groups (years)</b>				
0-4	36	4.2	211	2.9
5-12	22	2.6	88	1.2
13-18	11	1.3	94	1.3
19-24	23	2.7	325	4.5
25-34	80	9.4	898	12.5
35-44	117	13.8	1,129	15.7
45-54	126	14.9	1,082	15.1
55-64	106	12.5	958	13.4
65-74	116	13.7	746	10.4
75-84	116	13.7	936	13.0
85+	95	11.2	708	9.9
Unknown	NA	0.0	0	0.0



\*Excluding 0 for whom age is unknown, 1 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 4, 2023

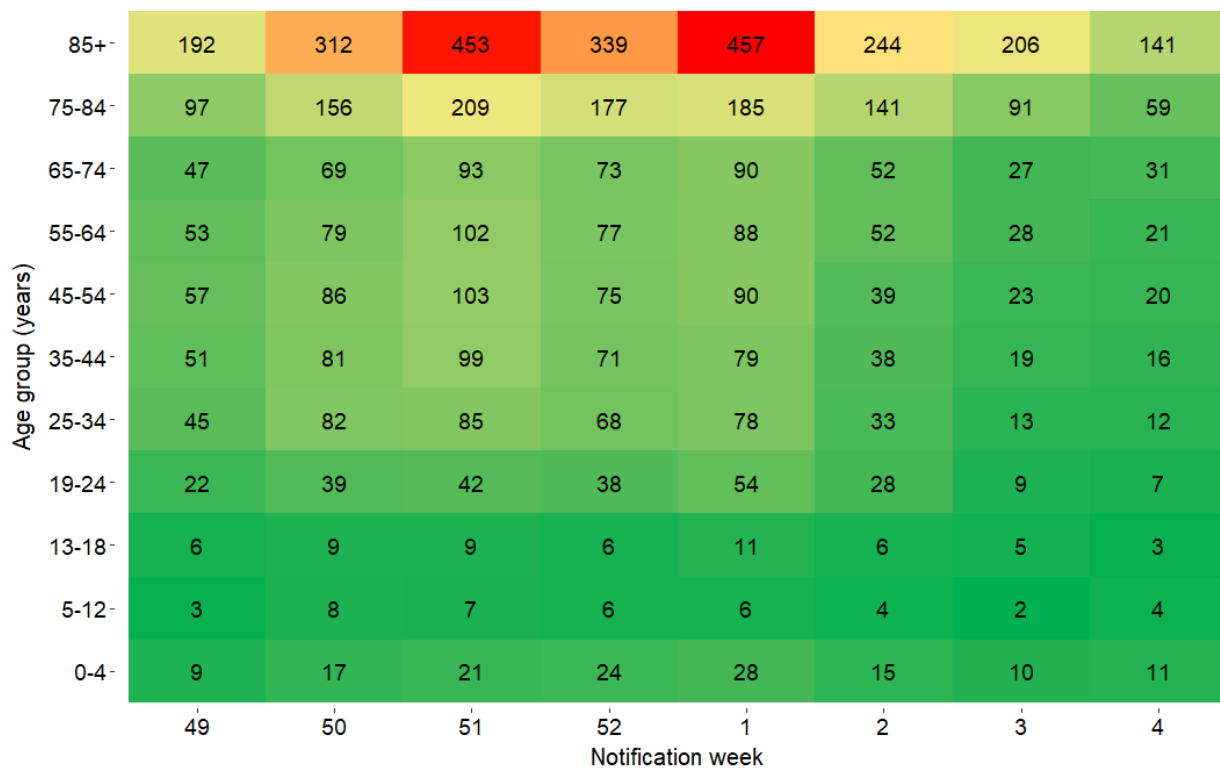


Figure 3: Heat map of weekly age-specific incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in Ireland for the last 8 weeks

## 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 4, 2023\*

County	Number of cases	Percent	Incidence rate per 100,000
Offaly	25	2.9	32.1
Kilkenny	31	3.7	31.2
Tipperary	44	5.2	27.6
Donegal	43	5.1	27.0
Kerry	39	4.6	26.4
Laois	22	2.6	26.0
Westmeath	23	2.7	25.9
Waterford	30	3.5	25.8
Limerick	41	4.8	21.0
Wexford	30	3.5	20.0
Meath	38	4.5	19.5
Carlow	11	1.3	19.3
Cork	103	12.1	19.0
Sligo	11	1.3	16.8
Dublin	216	25.5	16.0
Cavan	12	1.4	15.8
Wicklow	20	2.4	14.0
Roscommon	9	1.1	13.9
Mayo	17	2.0	13.0
Galway	31	3.7	12.0
Kildare	26	3.1	11.7
Louth	13	1.5	10.1
Clare	9	1.1	7.6
Monaghan	3	0.4	4.9
Leitrim	1	0.1	3.1
Longford	0	0.0	0.0

\* County data may not be accurately reflected in the most recent week due to ongoing data validations

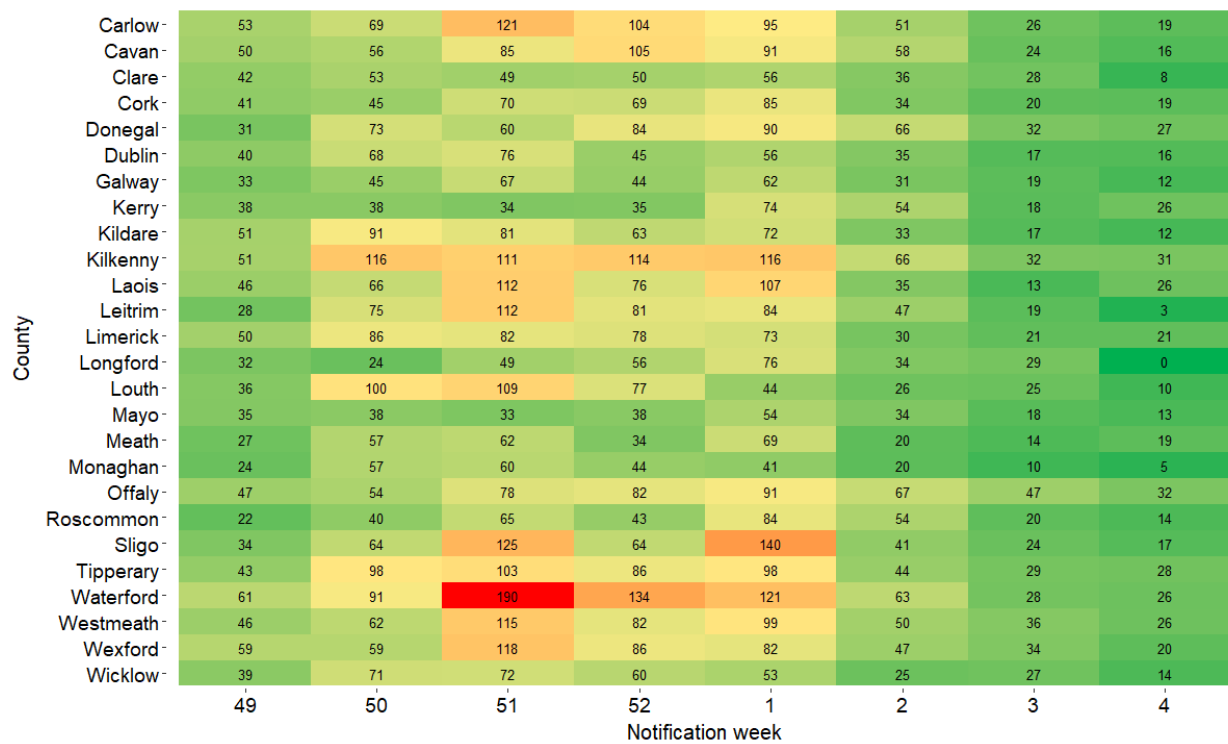


Figure 4: Heat map of weekly incidence rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population, by county, notified in Ireland for the last 8 weeks



## Hospitalisations

A total of 215 hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases were recorded in the latest epidemiological week, week 4 2023.

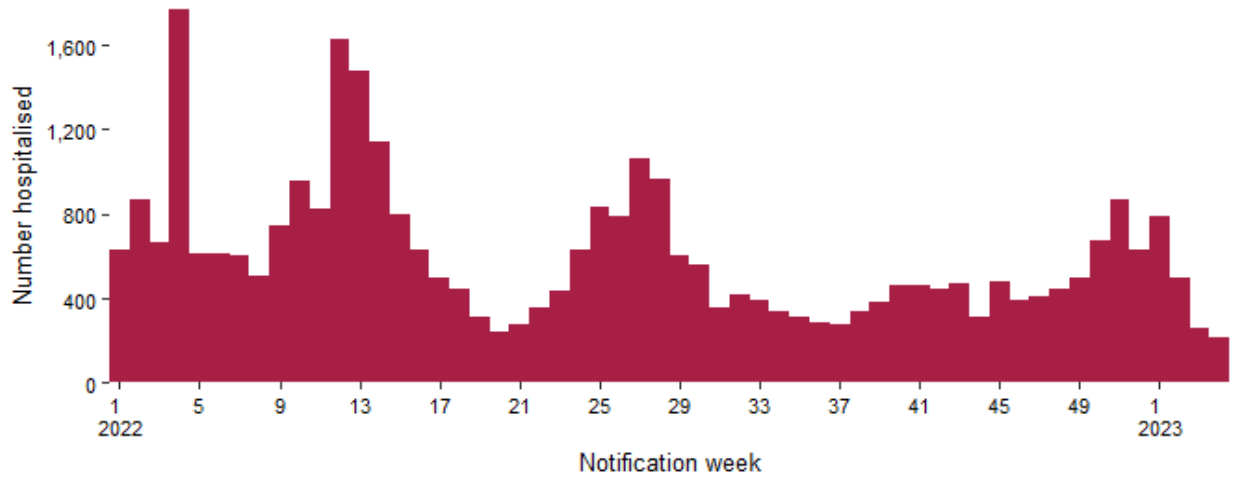


Figure 5: Hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 4, 2023

**Table 4:** Number of COVID-19 cases and hospital admissions by age group in Ireland for week<sup>4</sup> 4, 2023 based on week of notification<sup>5</sup>

Age group	Week 4, 2023			Total 2023		
	Total cases	Hospitalised cases		Total cases	Hospitalised cases	
	Number of cases	Number of cases	Percentage	Number of cases	Number of cases	Percentage
0-4	36	10	27.8	211	91	43.1
5-12	22	6	27.3	88	19	21.6
13-18	11	3	27.3	94	17	18.1
19-24	23	3	13.0	325	35	10.8
25-34	80	4	5.0	898	85	9.5
35-44	117	7	6.0	1,129	84	7.4
45-54	126	15	11.9	1,082	103	9.5
55-64	106	26	24.5	958	180	18.8
65-74	116	43	37.1	746	330	44.2
75-84	116	57	49.1	936	497	53.1
85+	95	41	43.2	708	326	46.0
Unknown	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0

<sup>4</sup> Hospitalisations may be underestimated for recent weeks as the outcome may not yet have occurred or may not yet have been reported to CIDR

<sup>5</sup> Data are based on the date the case was notified on CIDR, and not the date of hospital admission

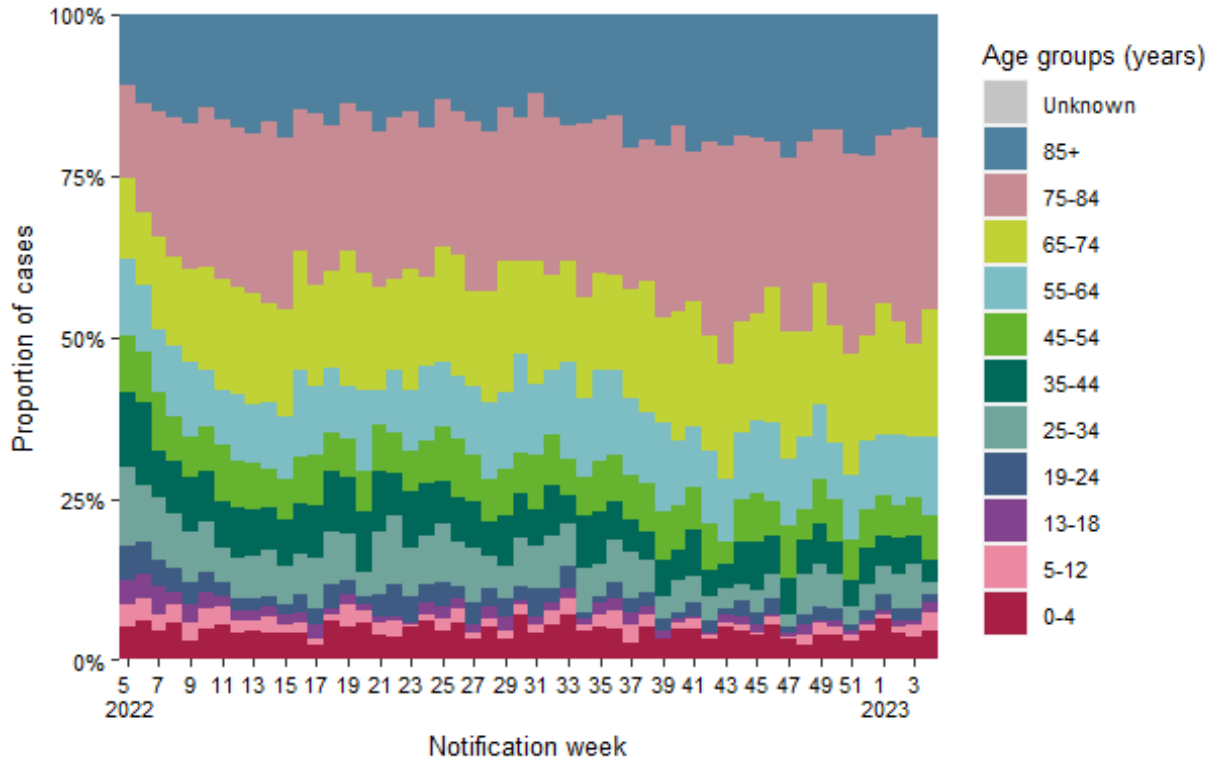


Figure 6: Age distribution of hospitalised confirmed COVID-19 cases notified on CIDR in Ireland between week 5, 2022 and week 4, 2023

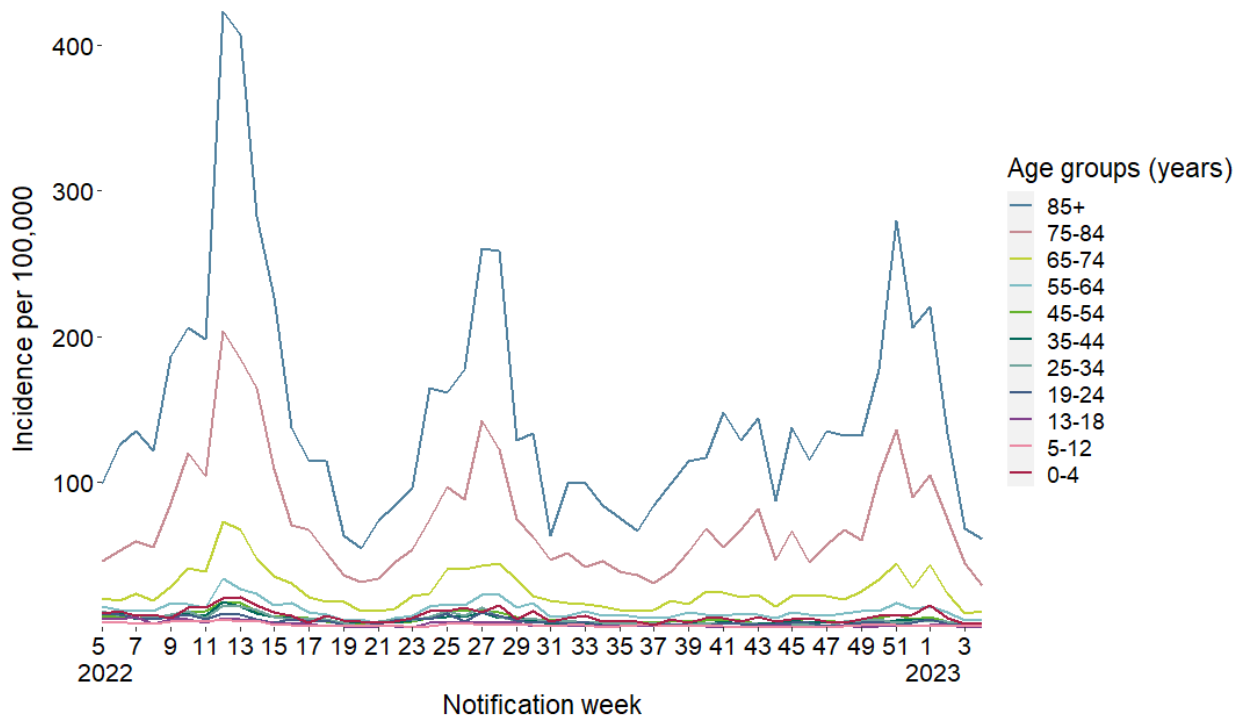


Figure 7: Incidence rate by age group of hospitalisations among confirmed COVID-19 cases on CIDR in Ireland between week 5, 2022 and week 4, 2023

## ICU admissions

A total of 1 COVID-19 cases were admitted to ICU in the latest epidemiological week<sup>6</sup>, week 4 2023.

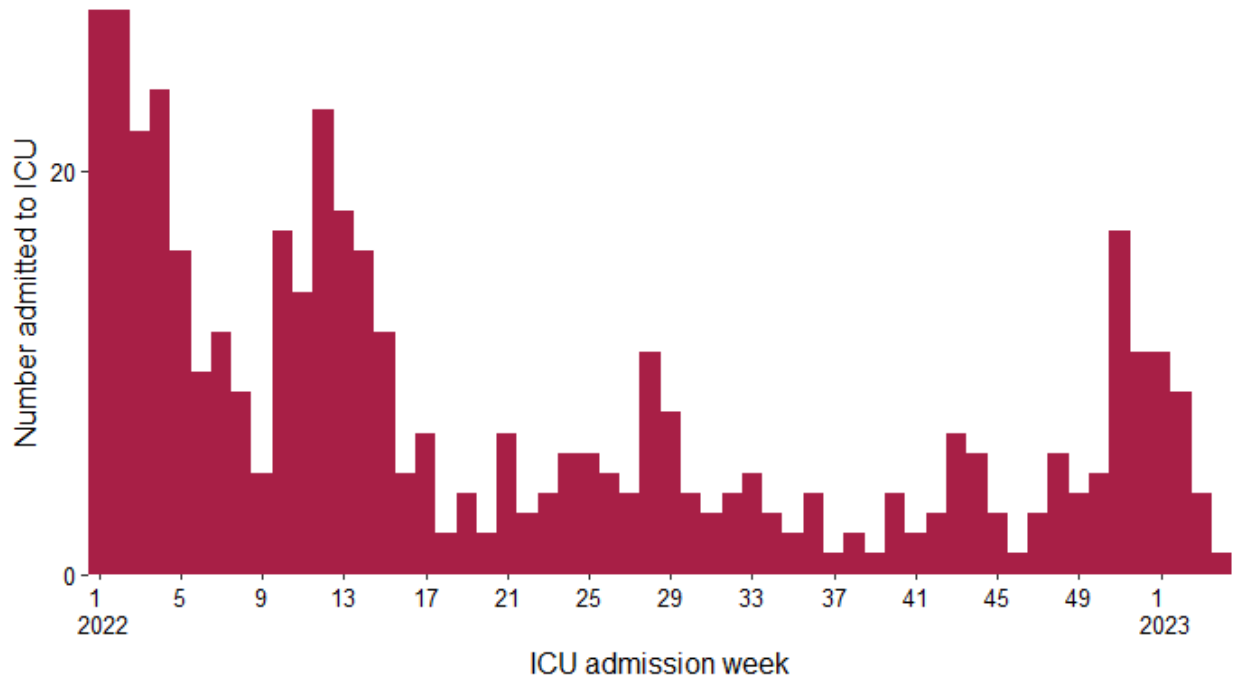


Figure 8: Number of ICU COVID-19 ICU admissions in Ireland by week of ICU admission, between week 1, 2022 and week 4, 2023<sup>6</sup>

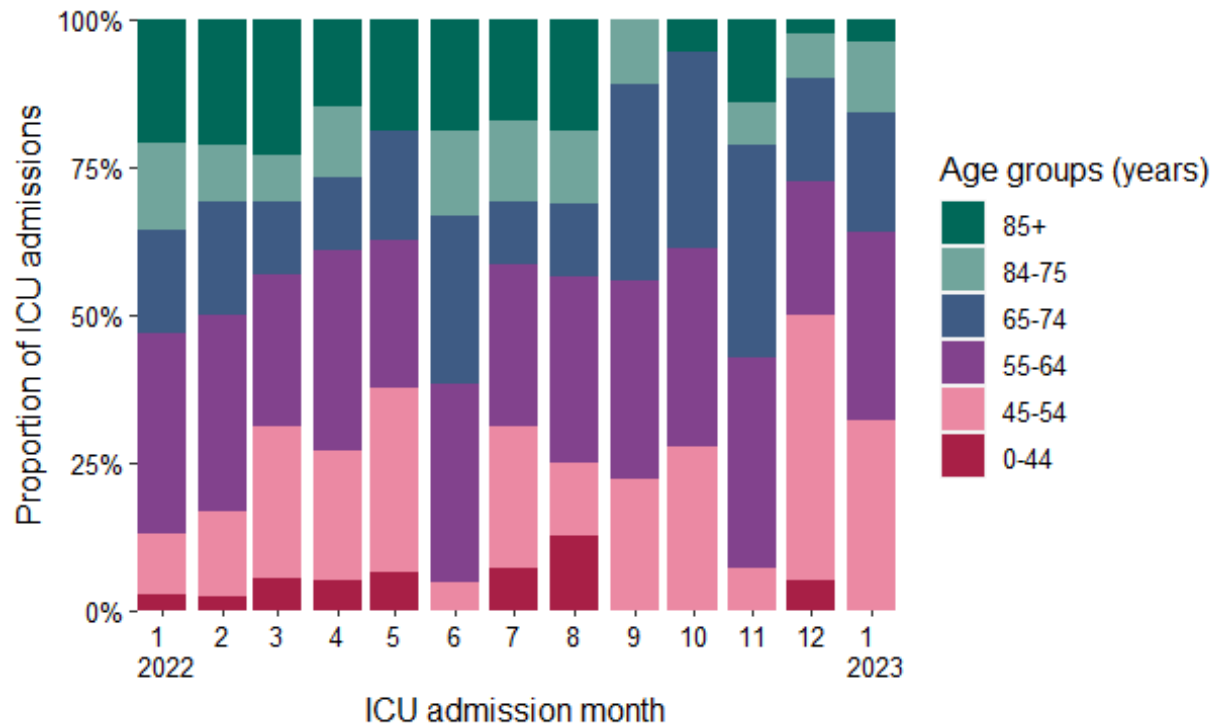


Figure 9: Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases admitted to by month of admission January, 2021 and January, 2023

<sup>6</sup> 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 3 cases had a date of death in the latest epidemiological week, 4. The mean and median age of those who died in the previous epidemiological week was 89 and 89 years respectively.

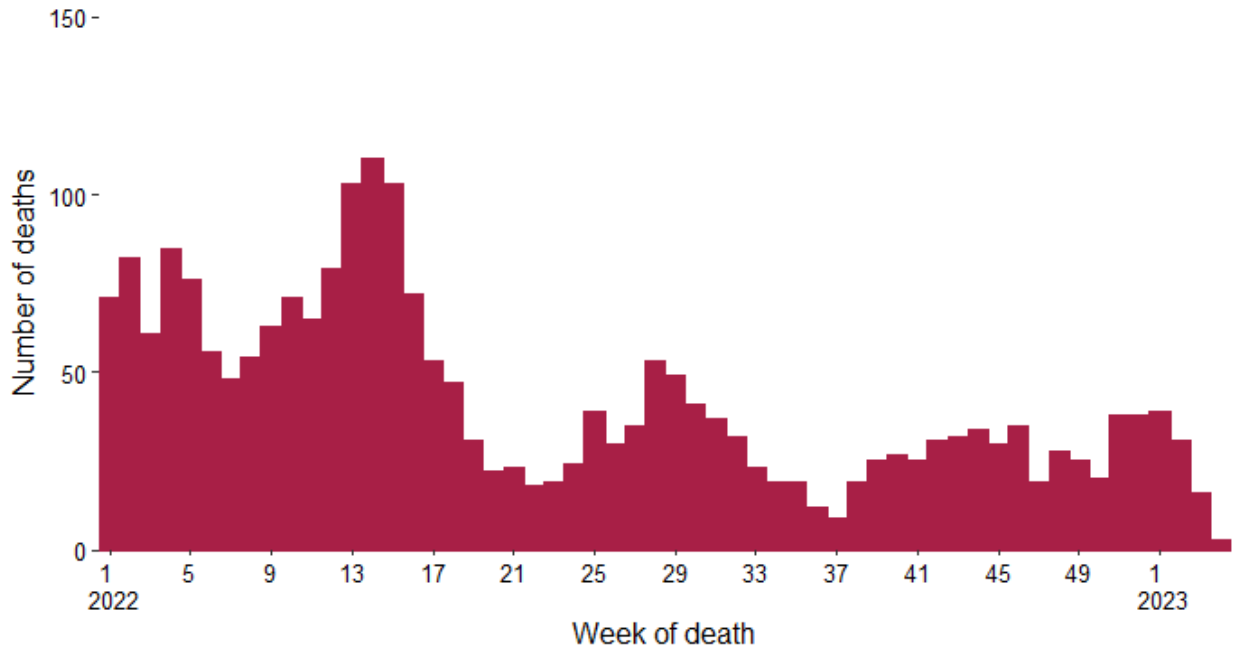


Figure 10: Total number of COVID-19 deaths notified by week of death, cases with a date of notification from week 1, 2022 to 4, 2023<sup>7</sup>. Date of death missing for 0 of the reported deaths

<sup>7</sup> Please note that most recent weeks may not yet reflect all deaths

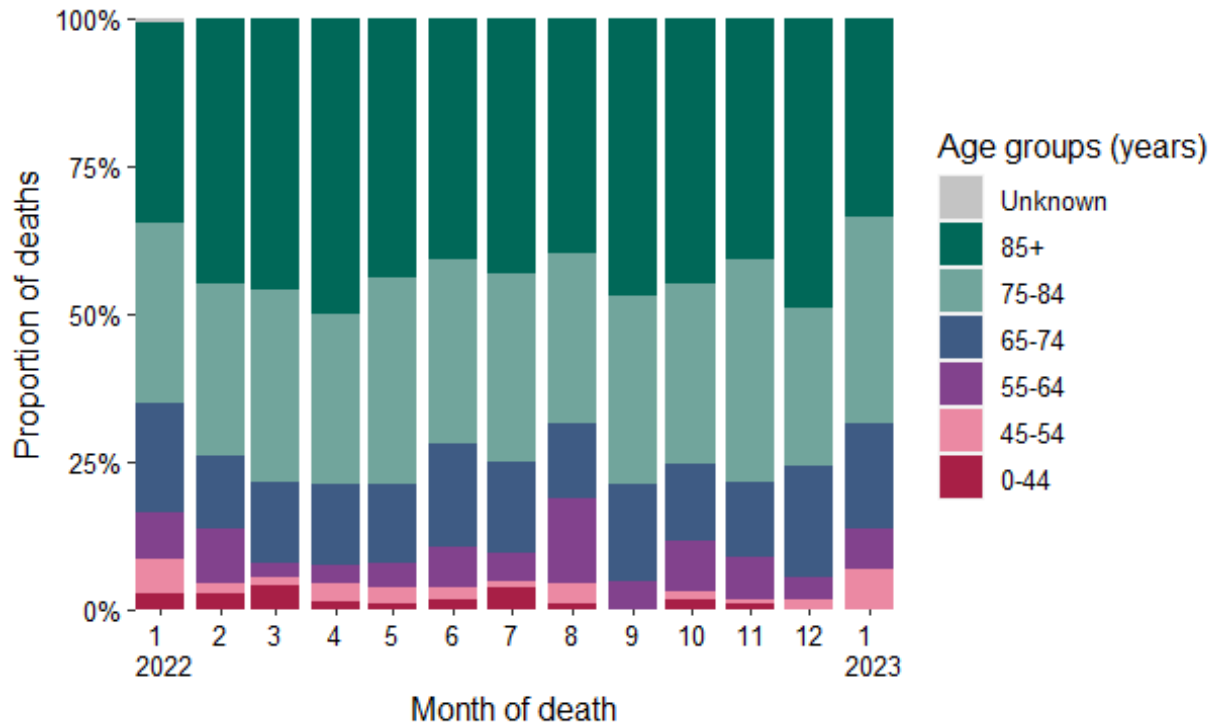


Figure 11: Age distribution of COVID-19 deaths notified on CIDR in Ireland between January, 2022 and January, 2023

## Laboratory data of SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests

In week 4, a total of 11,353 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, of which 976 (8.6%) were positive.

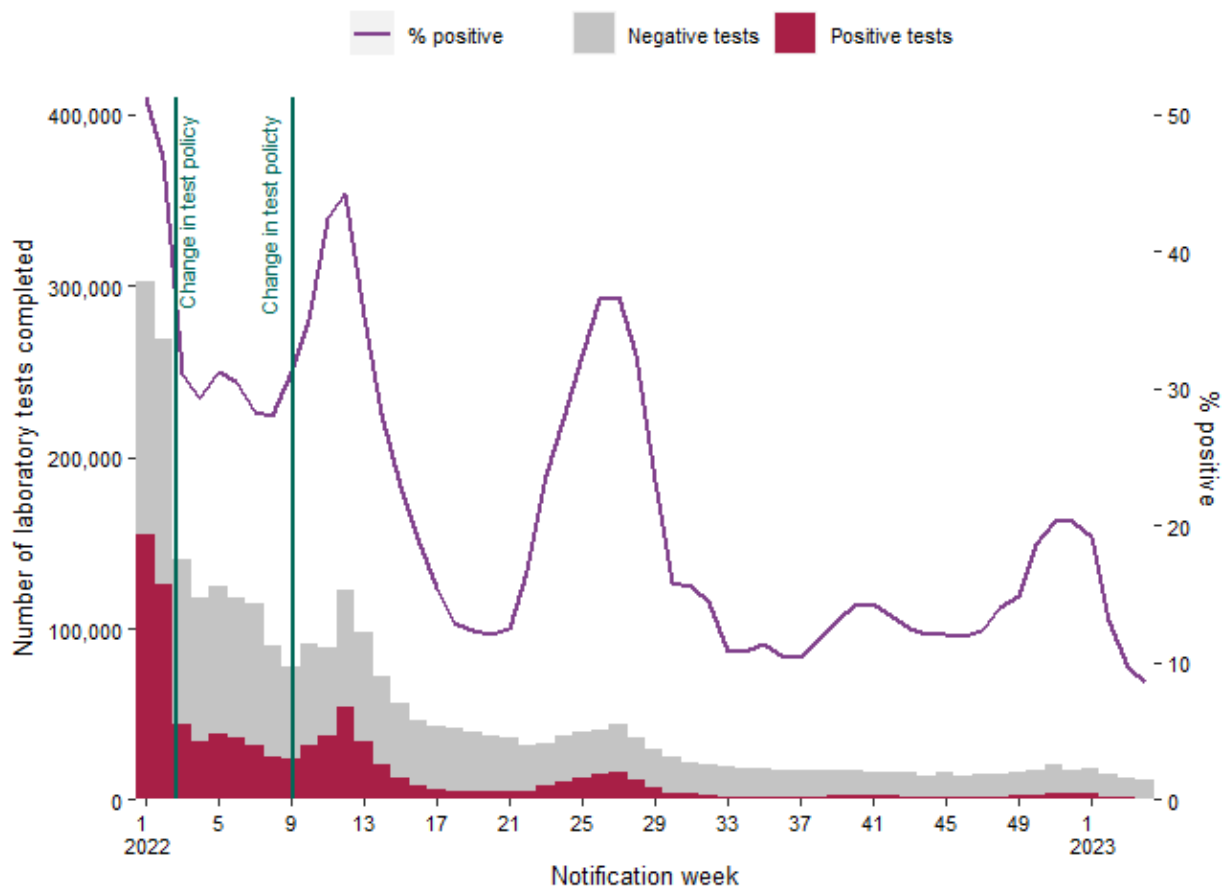


Figure 12: Number of completed laboratory tests by result and % positive tests<sup>8</sup> in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 4, 2023. Data source: Deloitte Ireland LLP<sup>9, 10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Positive tests refer to all positive specimens and includes duplicates and individuals who were retested.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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 4, 2023		Total 2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total number of registered cases	1,511		13,270	
Incidence rate of registered cases per 100,000 population	32		278.7	
<b>Gender</b>				
Males	488	32.3	4,311	32.5
Females	978	64.7	8,737	65.8
M:F ratio	0.5		0.49	
<b>Age (years)</b>				
Mean age	39		40	
Median age	40		40	
Age range	0 - 81		0 - 101	



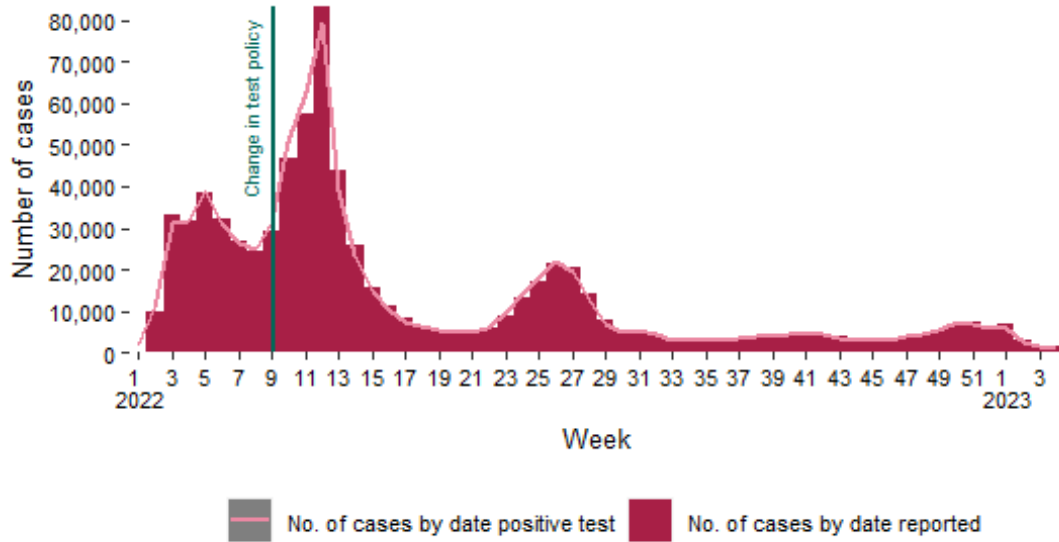


Figure 13: Number of COVID-19 cases who registered a positive antigen test on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal by week of registration<sup>11</sup>, and week of epidemiological date in Ireland between week 1, 2022 and week 4, 2023<sup>12</sup>

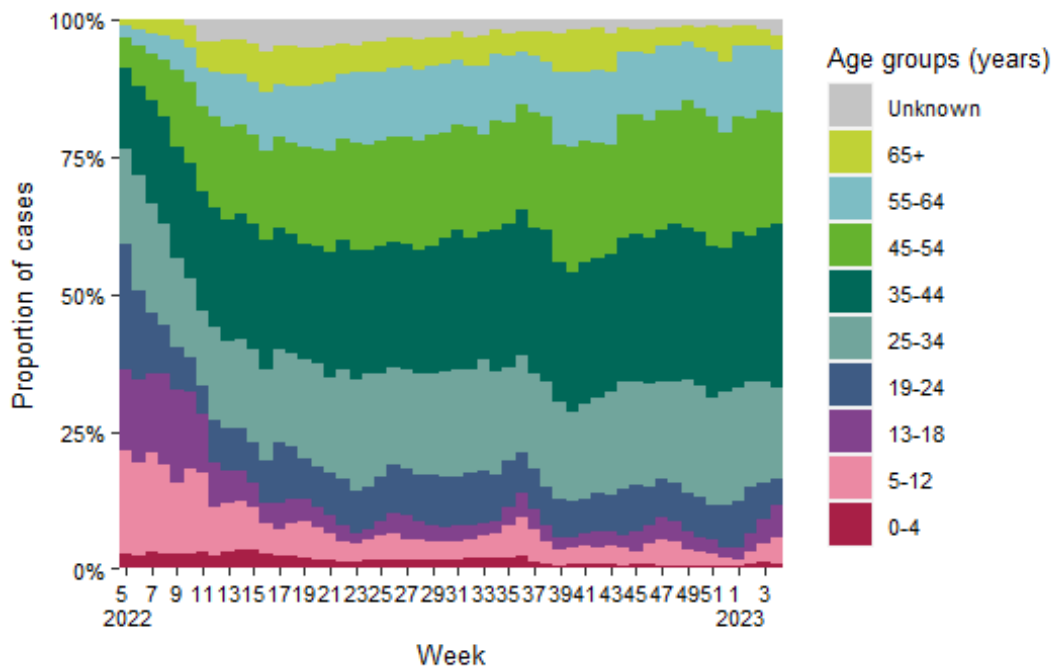


Figure 14: Age distribution of COVID-19 cases who registered a positive antigen test on the HSE Positive Antigen Portal by week of registration<sup>13</sup> in Ireland between week 2<sup>8</sup>, 2022 and week 4, 2023

<sup>11</sup> Reporting to the HSE Positive Antigen Portal commenced on Friday 14th January 2022, and therefore week 2 only includes 2 days.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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  $\geq 85$  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](#)