



*XIX National Congress of Science and Technology (APANAC), Panama City, 28 September 2023*

# **Pandemic response in Italy and prospects for public health**

## **the perspective of the Italian institute for public health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità)**

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[www.iss.it/malattie-infettive](http://www.iss.it/malattie-infettive)

Img Source: <https://pixabay.com/vectors/virus-corona-covid-19-coronavirus-5182547/>



Buen día, agradezco mucho a los organizadores de esta prestigiosa conferencia por la oportunidad de estar hoy aquí con ustedes para compartir la experiencia del Instituto Superior de Salud de Italia sobre la respuesta a la pandemia en Italia y las perspectivas de la salud pública.

Pido disculpas por el hecho de que no hablo español.

# COVID-19 in Italy

26.3

**Milion cases of**  
laboratory confirmed  
SARS-CoV-2 infection

191

**Thousand related  
deaths**  
(CFR 0.7%)

- The outbreak in Italy started abruptly in a context of widespread local circulation
- First country detecting local transmission in the EU



- Evolving strategies (different response phases) and the role of applied research



## What now?

Data updated as of 20 September 2023

# First phase – unprecedented impact

## *Italy's Health Care System Groans Under Coronavirus — a Warning to the World*

The New York Times

In less than three weeks, the virus has overloaded hospitals in northern Italy, offering a glimpse of what countries face if they cannot slow the contagion.



FEATURED NEWS TOPICS COVID-19 Ebola MERS-CoV Chronic Wasting Disease

### Doctors: COVID-19 pushing Italian ICUs toward collapse

Filed Under: COVID-19

Mary Van Deusen | News Writer | CIDRAP News | Mar 16, 2020 [f](#) Share [t](#) Tweet [in](#) LinkedIn [e](#) Email [p](#) Print & P

Hospital systems everywhere should activate emergency intensive care unit (ICU) networks and reserve beds to prepare for a "massive" increase in COVID-19 patients, doctors in hard-hit Lombardy, Italy, said in a [commentary](#) published on Mar 13 in *JAMA*.

The Milan-based authors used data gathered since Mar 7 to create linear and exponential models to project regional ICU demand to Mar 20. They said that their linear model predicted that 869 patients



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'Hospitals are overwhelmed': Italian doctors describe the struggle of fighting the coronavirus outbreak

The Local  
[news@thelocal.it](mailto:news@thelocal.it)  
[@thelocalitaly](https://www.thelocalitaly.com)  
11 March 2020  
11:22 CET



Coronavirus, Cuba in soccorso dell'Italia: 52 medici e infermieri in arrivo a Crema

Speedtest.nl  
PCR-test: nergens goedkoper

OPEN



[www.iss.it/malattie-infettive](http://www.iss.it/malattie-infettive)





# Disproportionate impact on HCW



## 'They weren't supposed to be heroes' — Italy's lost doctors

Many of the first victims of coronavirus were those charged with responding to it.



= TIME

SPOTLIGHT STORY THE MOVEMENT WORKING TO CURB DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS

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WORLD • COVID-19

## Italy's Doctors Were Praised for Their COVID-19 Response in the Spring. Now They Are Burning Out



[www.iss.it/malattie-infettive](http://www.iss.it/malattie-infettive)

Image sources: [RAI news](#); [Huffington Post](#); [Politico](#)

# First Acute Phase: Early transmission of COVID-19 in Italy in 2020

No known local SARS-CoV-2 circulation

Undetected local SARS-CoV-2 circulation

Known local SARS-CoV-2 circulation

22/01 Surveillance of COVID-19 among severe cases of acute respiratory infection with epidemiological links  
Laboratory network with confirmation capacity set up

27/02 Shift to case based enhanced surveillance of all SARS-CoV-2 laboratory confirmed cases

20-21/01

WHO mission to Wuhan suggest for the first time human to human transmission of SARS-CoV-2

ECDC Risk Assessment : low risk of secondary transmission in the EU/EEA

23/01

1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the COVID-19 IHR Emergency Committee **does NOT declare** a Public Health Emergency of International concern (PHEIC)

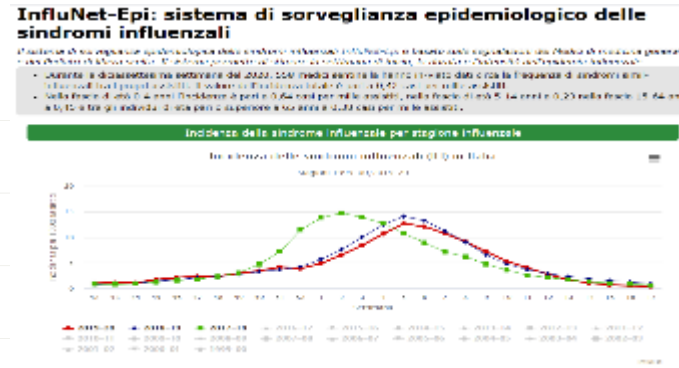
22/01 Italy nominated a national task force to address SARS-CoV-2

27/01 Direct flights to and from China suspended

30/01

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the COVID-19 IHR Emergency Committee **declares a PHEIC**

31/01 COVID-19 Italy declared a national health emergency



04/03 First **national level** strict physical distancing measures including school closures

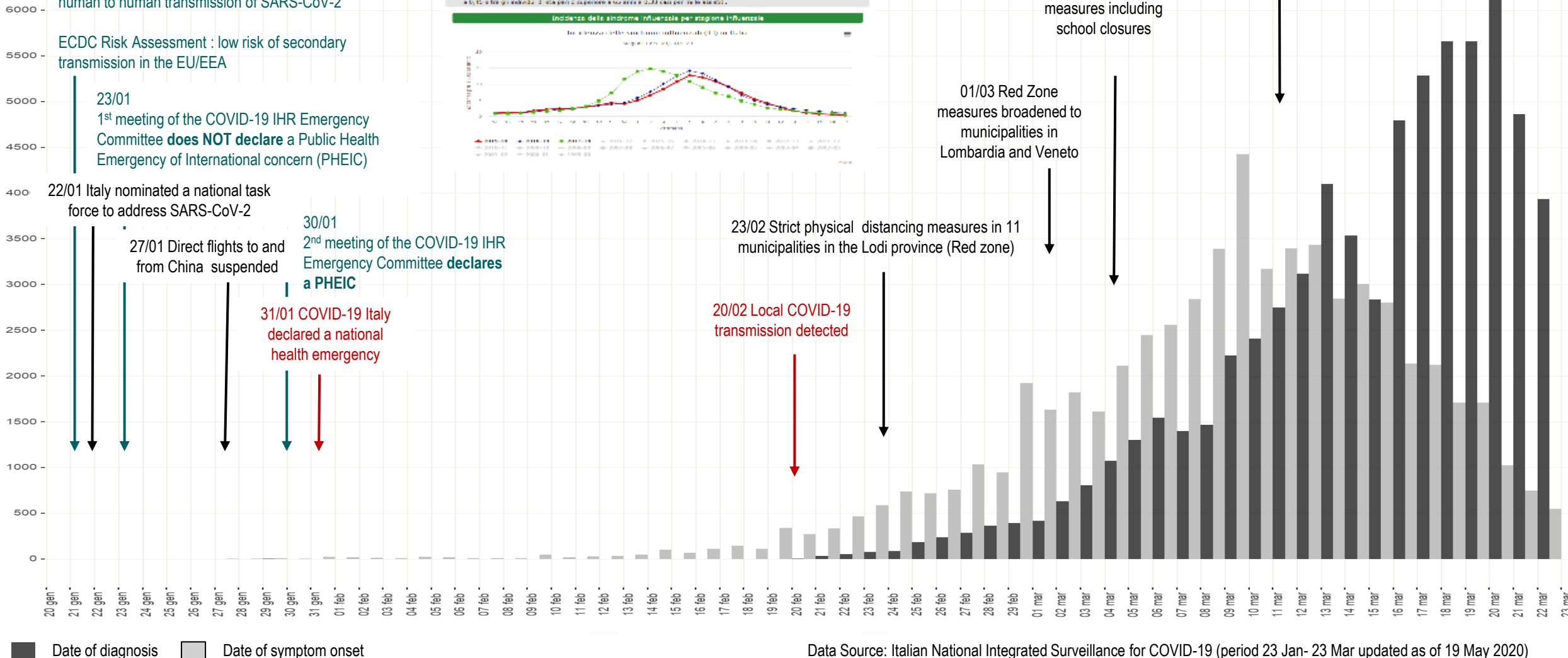
01/03 Red Zone measures broadened to municipalities in Lombardia and Veneto

23/02 Strict physical distancing measures in 11 municipalities in the Lodi province (Red zone)

20/02 Local COVID-19 transmission detected

11/03 first **Lock down**

Progressive **Lock down** tightening



# InfluNet-Epi: sistema di sorveglianza epidemiologico delle sindromi influenzali

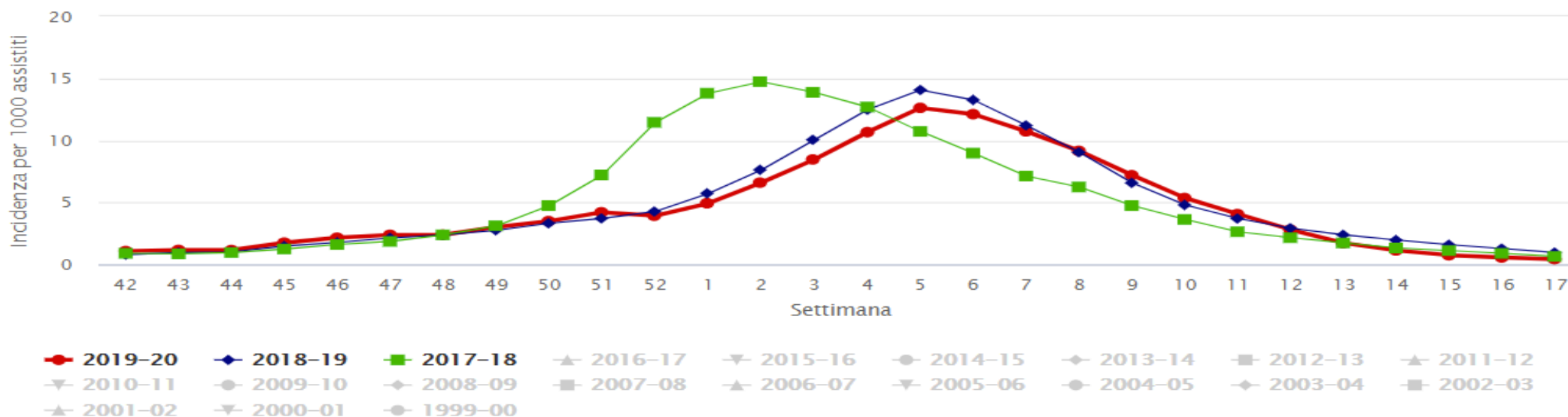
Il sistema di sorveglianza epidemiologica delle sindromi influenzali [InfluNet-Epi](#) è basato sulle segnalazioni dei Medici di medicina generale e dei Pediatri di libera scelta. Il sistema permette di stimare la settimana di inizio, la durata e l'intensità dell'epidemia influenzale.

- Durante la diciassettesima settimana del 2020, 558 medici sentinella hanno in-viato dati circa la frequenza di sindromi simil-influenzali tra i propri assistiti. Il valore dell'incidenza totale è pari a 0,42 casi per mille assistiti.
- Nella fascia di età 0-4 anni l'incidenza è pari a 0,64 casi per mille assistiti, nella fascia di età 5-14 anni a 0,23 nella fascia 15-64 anni a 0,45 e tra gli individui di età pari o superiore a 65 anni a 0,38 casi per mille assistiti.

## Incidenza della sindrome influenzale per stagione influenzale

### Incidenza delle sindromi influenzali (ILI) in Italia

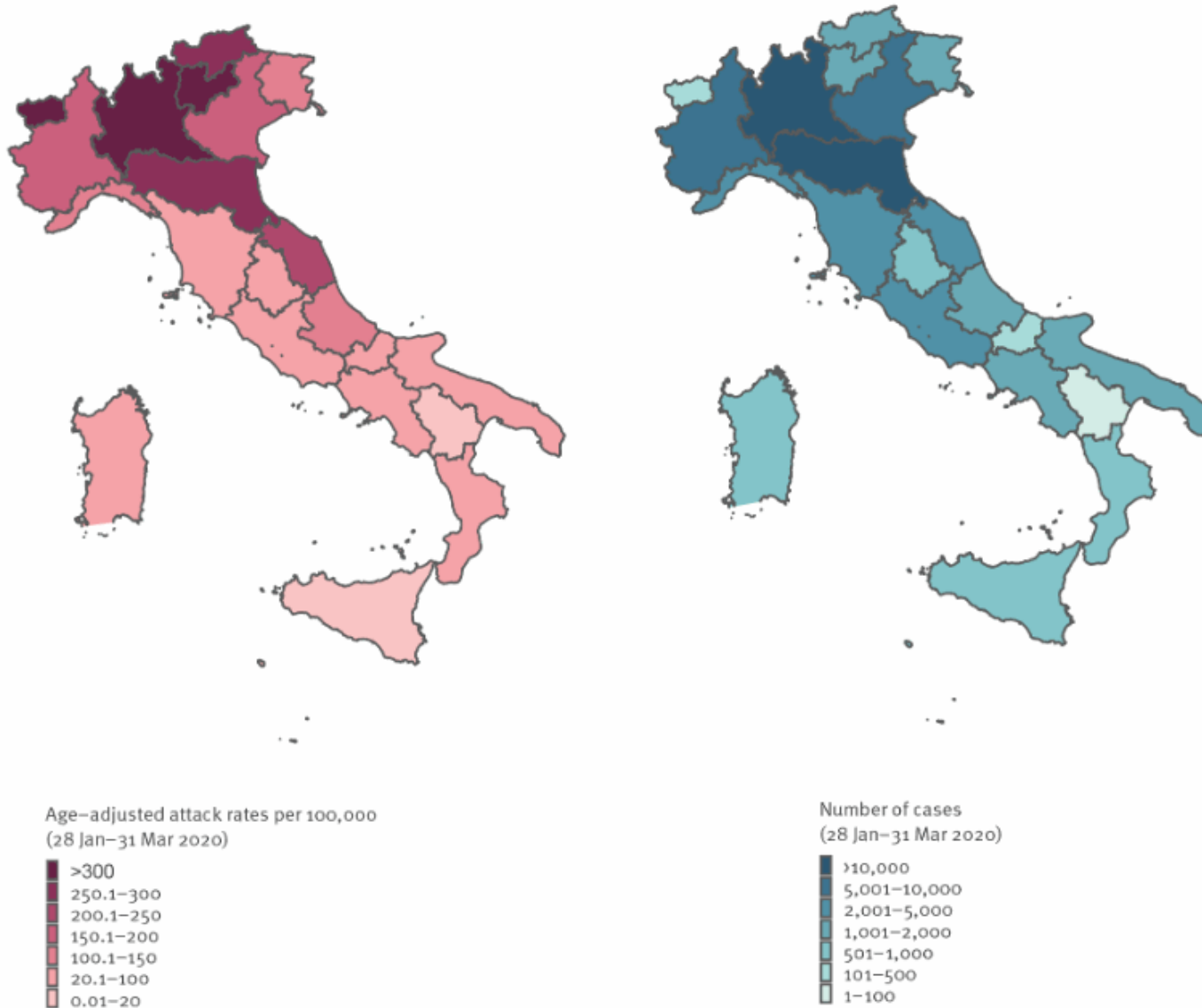
Stagioni 1999-00/2019-20



InfluNet

# First acute phase - different impact in different parts of the country

addressed with a national lockdown



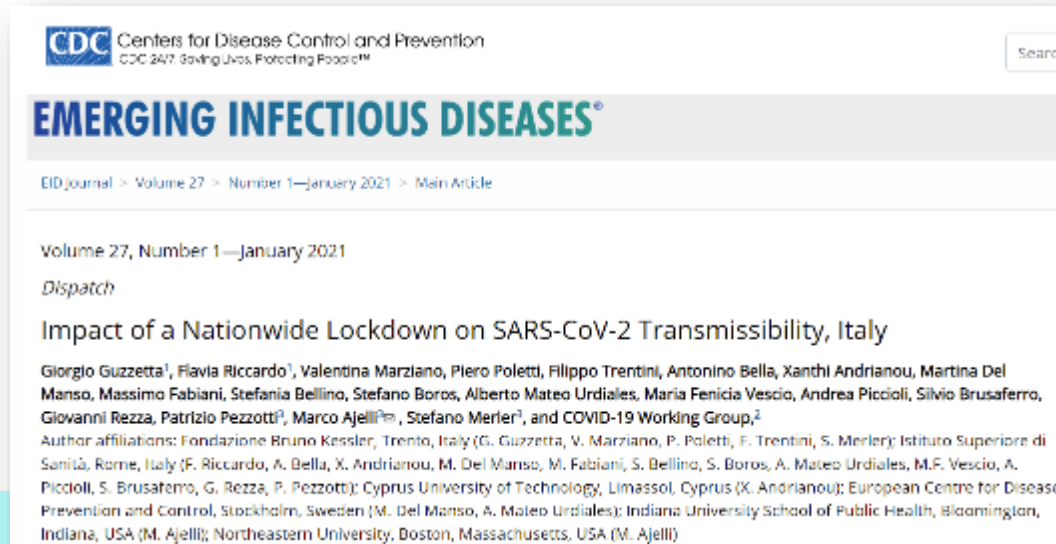
COVID-19 attack rates per 100,000 population (age-adjusted) by region/AP of diagnosis and number of cases by region/AP of diagnosis (n = 98,716), Italy, 28 January–31 March 2020





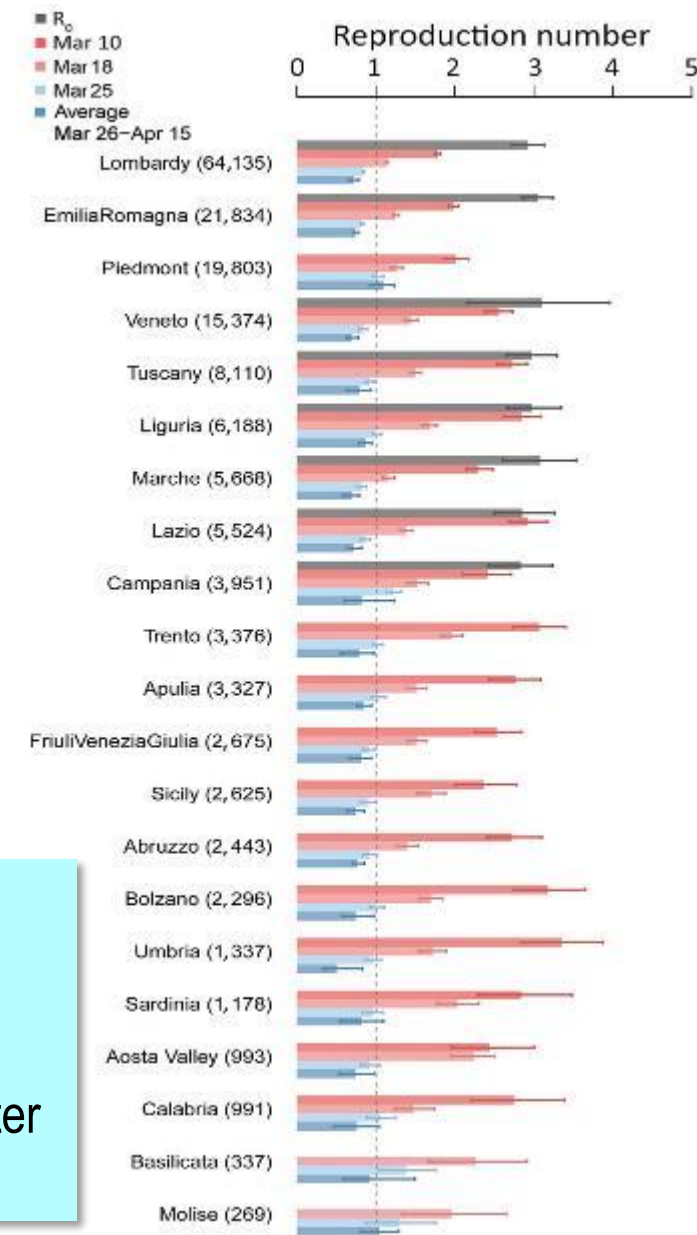
# Impact of early containment efforts on SARS-CoV-2 transmissibility

The national lockdown put in place as of March 11 to limit the spread of SARS CoV-2 in Italy brought  $R_t$  below 1 in most regions and provinces within 2 weeks.

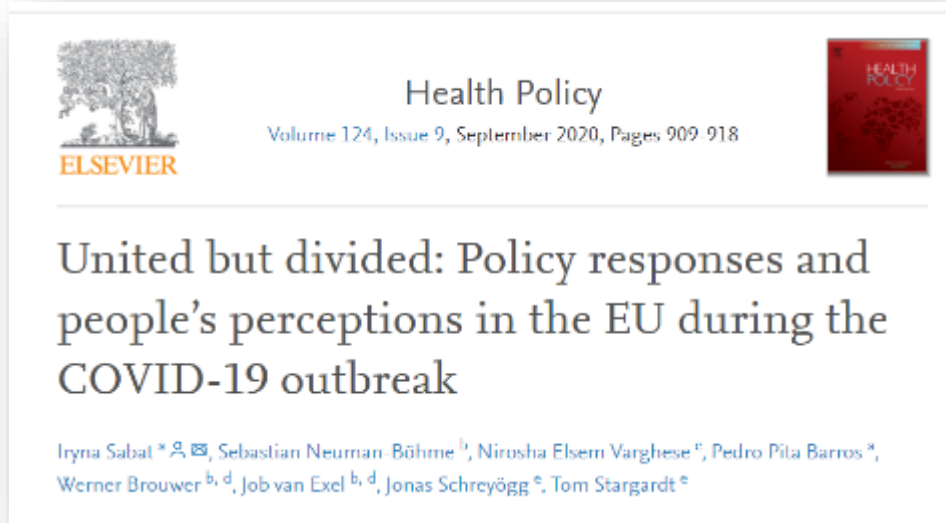


“

Lockdown was fundamental to prevent an explosion in the number of cases in other regions in which transmission had started weeks later compared with the outbreak epicenter (Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna).



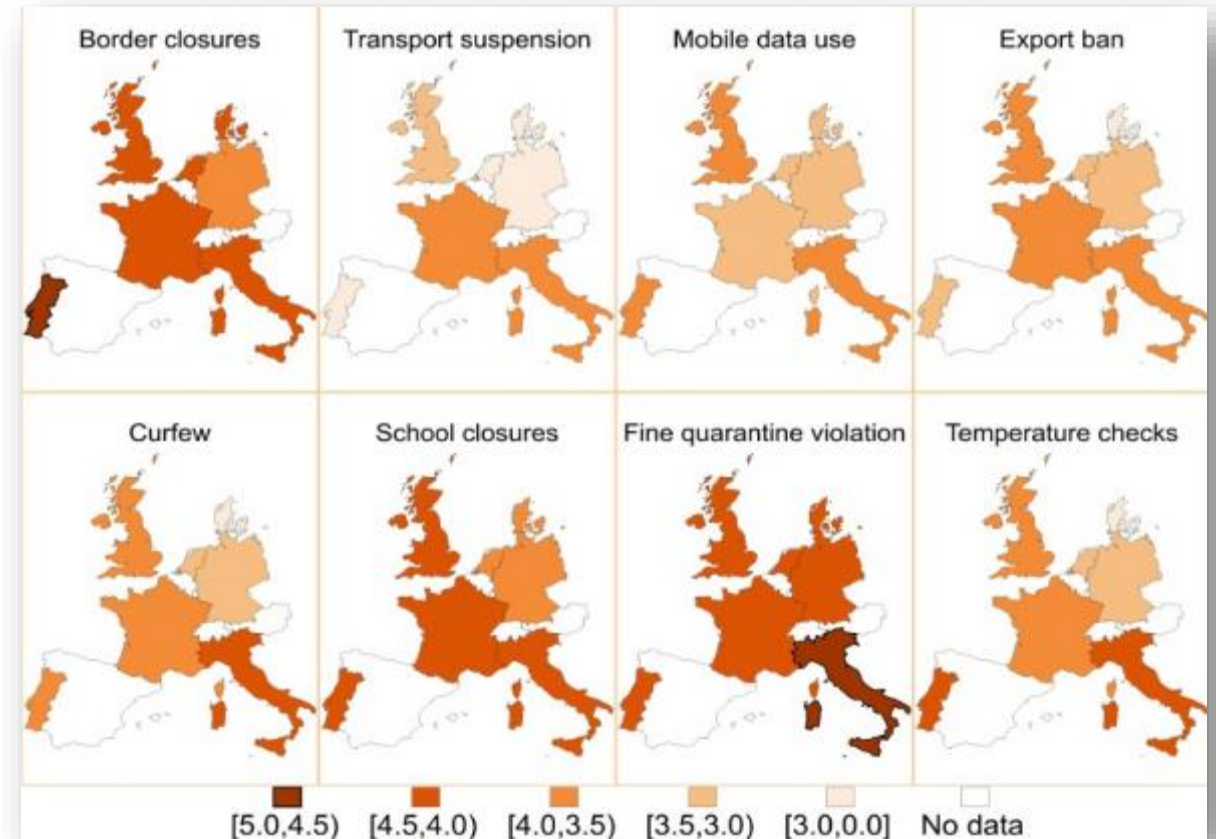
# Impact of early containment efforts - acceptability



First two weeks of April 2020 (Italy was in full lock-down)

Grade of approval of specific measures in 7 EU countries (Likert scale from 1-strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree).

Darker colours show higher consensus



The study team did not find significant differences in policy support between Lombardy and the rest of Italy.

## WHO

- Need to be «Icebreakers»
- Proof of concept
- Institutional synergy
- Strong, fast coherent response
- Population and context resilience
  - Acceptability



Italy showed the epidemic's trajectory could be turned around through commitment, coordination and communication across government and communities, a resilient public health system and by following a science-based response.

▶ ▶ 🔊 4:20 / 4:32 ⏮ ⏭ ⚙ 📺 📱 🔍

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDeSCVGi-pM>



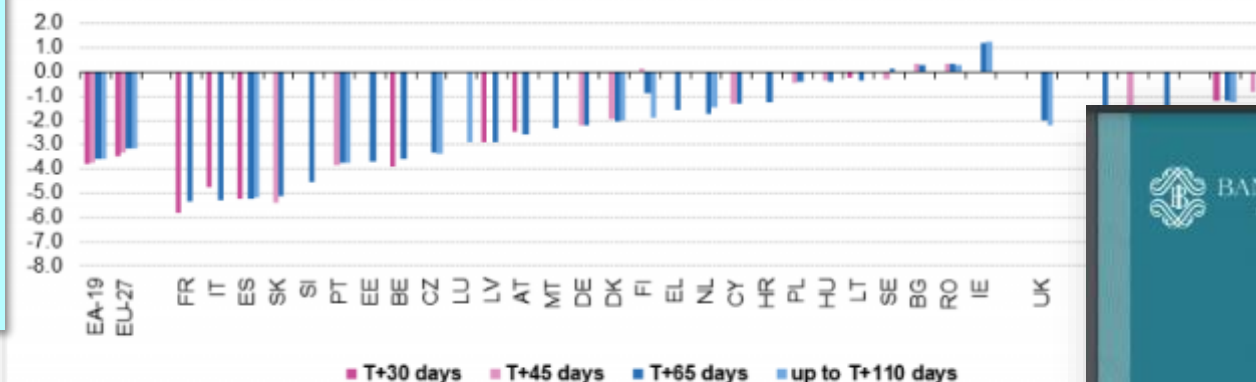
# Some negative impact dimensions of early containment efforts

“ ...the impact of COVID-19 was largest in France and Italy (-5.3%), followed by Spain and Slovakia (-5.2%).

Source: [EUROSTAT](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&code=namq_10_gdp)

## GDP growth rates published for 2020Q1

% change to the previous quarter, based on seasonally adjusted data



Source: Eurostat (online data code: namq\_10\_gdp and (naidq\_10\_gdp) for US, JP data)

## scientific reports

OPEN

### Depressive symptoms in response to COVID-19 and lockdown: a cross-sectional study on the Italian population

Marco Delmastro<sup>1</sup> & Giorgia Zamariola<sup>2</sup>

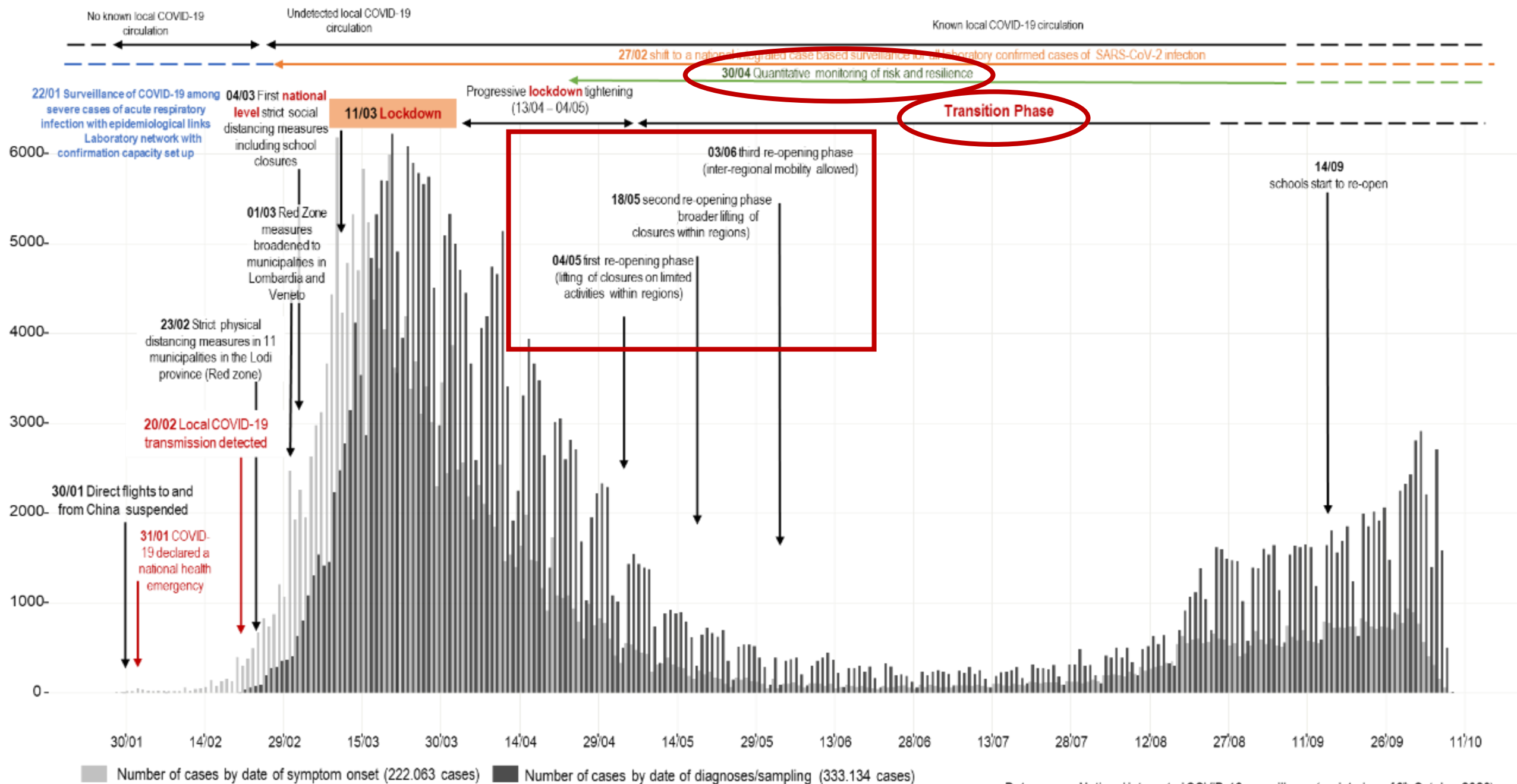


## Collateral damage



**UN report finds COVID-19 is reversing decades of progress on poverty, healthcare and education**



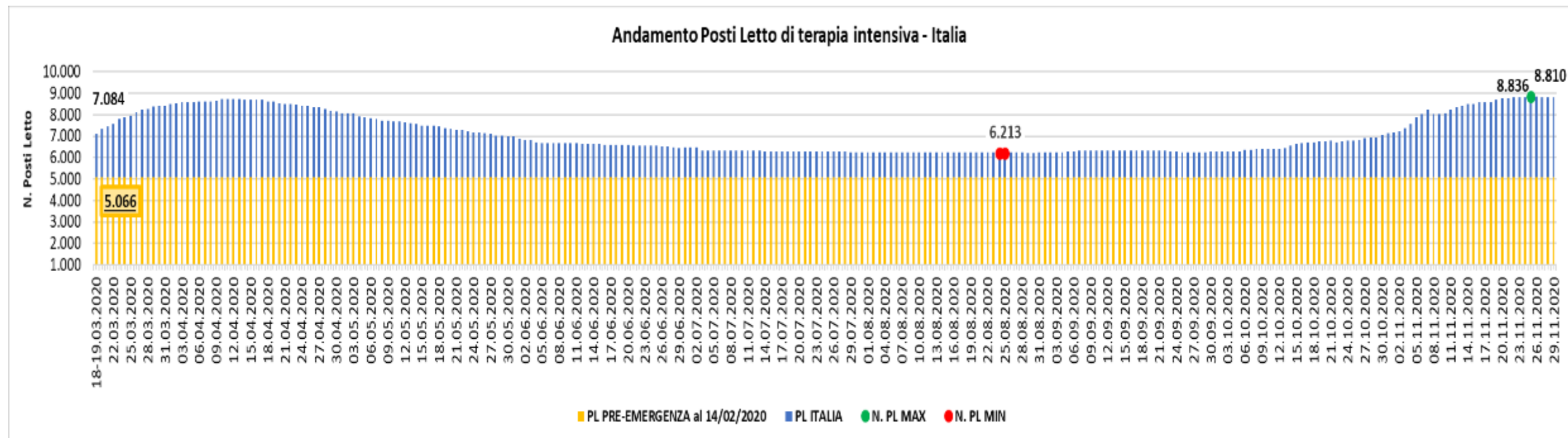


# First acute phase: take-home points

- Re-modelling of health care system
- Unsustainability of prolonged national lockdown policies



# Flexible emergency increase hospital bed availability - ICU



Source: MoH "COVID-19 Rilevazione giornaliera posti letto attivati"

# Early warning function of risk assessment Innovative approach

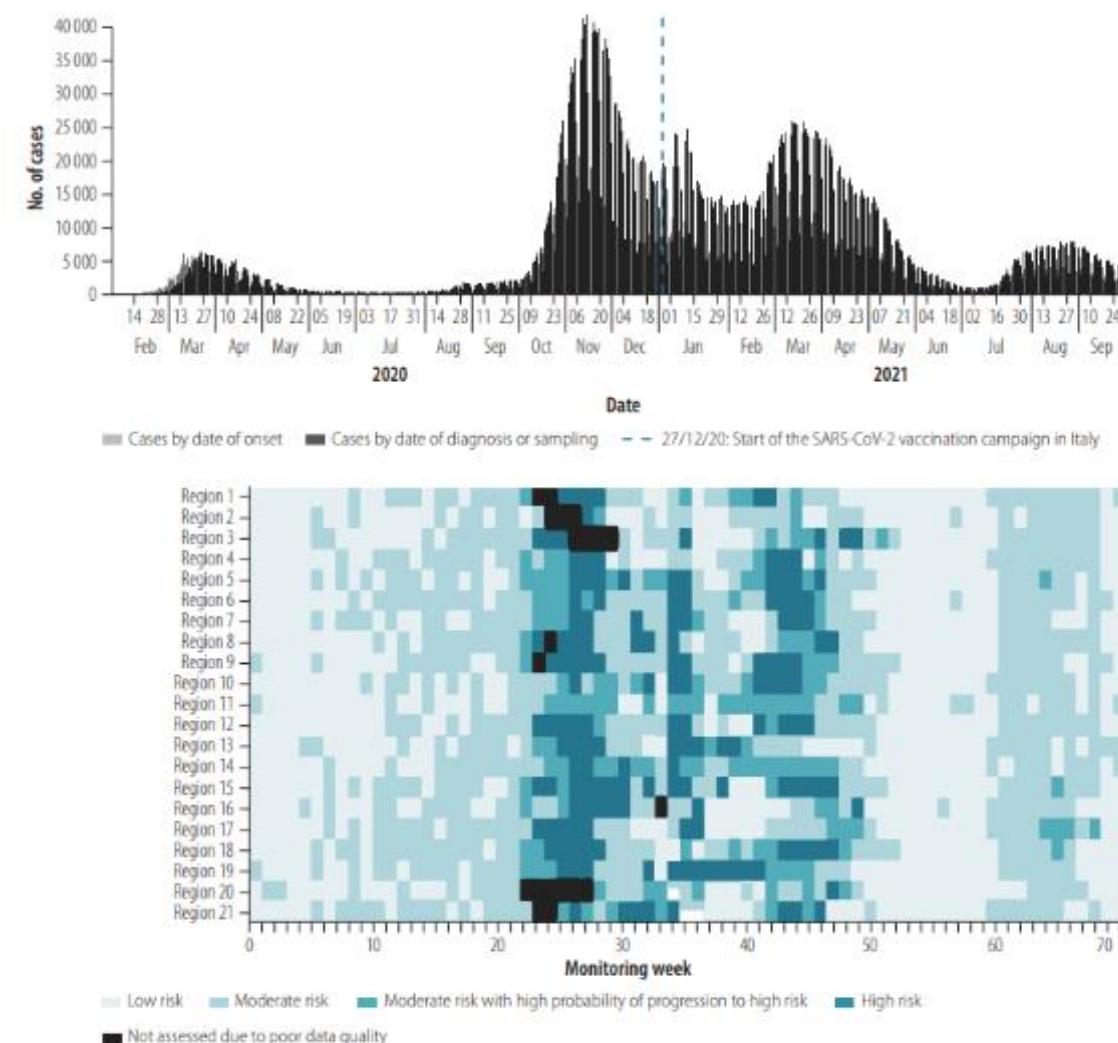
> Bull World Health Organ. 2022 Feb 1;100(2):161-167. doi: 10.2471/BLT.21.286317.  
Epub 2021 Nov 25.

## COVID-19 response: effectiveness of weekly rapid risk assessments, Italy

- Mixed method epidemic intelligence approach (IBS and EBS)
- Continuous and timely (looking at data from the previous week)
- **Reliable anticipation of severe outcomes (> incidence of hospitalization and death) in the three following weeks if no additional measures were taken**
- Resource intensive

Riccardo F et al. COVID-19 response: effectiveness of weekly rapid risk assessments, Italy. Bull World Health Organ. 2022 Feb 1;100(2):161-167. doi: 10.2471/BLT.21.286317. Epub 2021 Nov 25. PMID: 35125541; PMCID: PMC8795855. Supplementary materials with in depth data in [https://zenodo.org/record/5638454#.Yg\\_FnOiZM2w](https://zenodo.org/record/5638454#.Yg_FnOiZM2w)

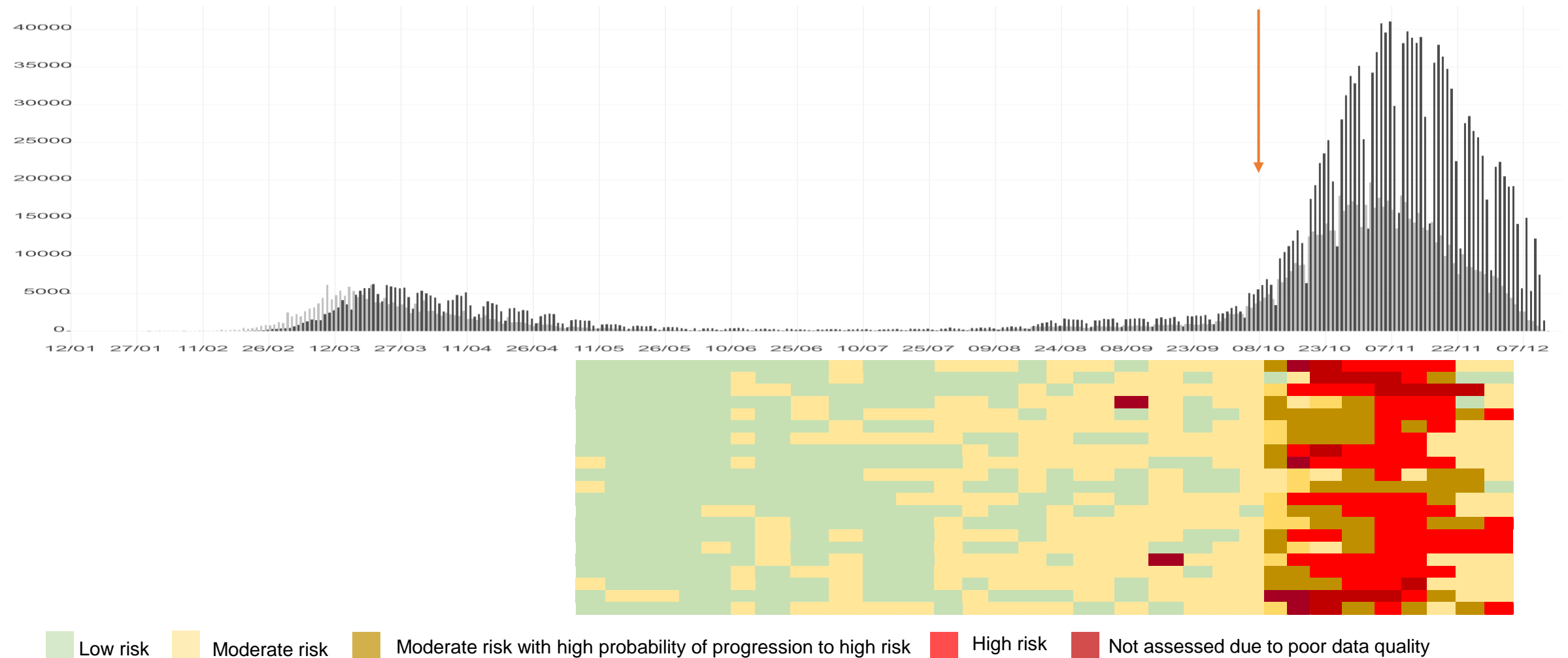
Fig. 1. Epidemic curve and weekly risk assessment of the COVID-19 epidemic by region and autonomous province, Italy, 4 May 2020 to 27 September 2021



COVID-19: coronavirus disease 2019; SARS-CoV-2: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2.  
Note: Cases refer to people with a laboratory confirmed diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection notified to the national integrated case-based SARS-CoV-2 surveillance system. Regions include both regions and autonomous provinces of Italy.

# Official declaration of the second acute epidemic phase with increased epidemic risk in Italy

Second acute epidemic phase officially declared (9<sup>th</sup> October 2020 on previous week data)



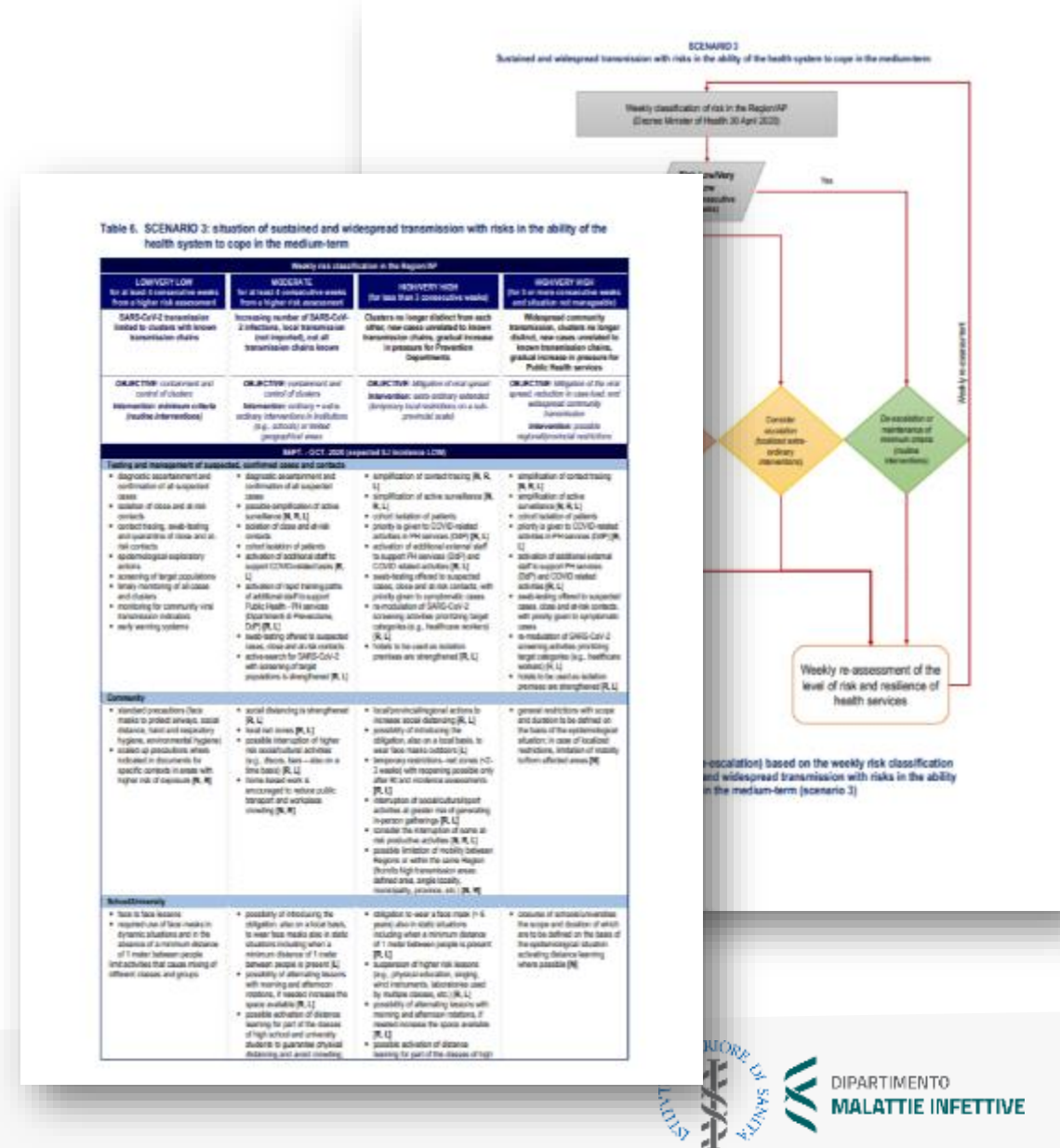


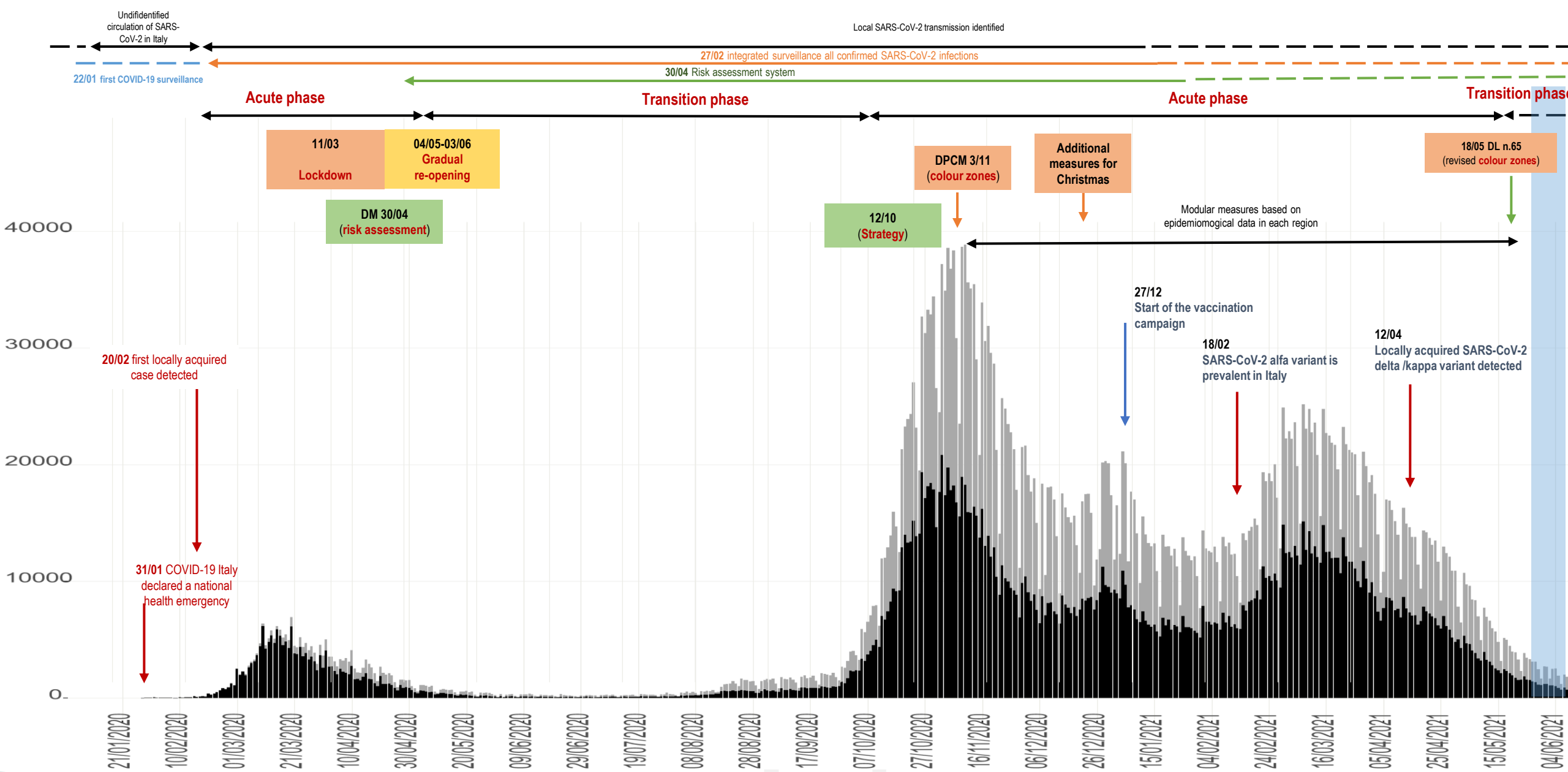
# Readiness (early October 2020)



Actions identified depending on ILI expected prevalence by COVID-19 scenario and regional risk level

[Available online](https://www.iss.it/malattie-infettive)





Source: Sorveglianza nazionale integrata per COVID-19 (updated 23 June 2021)



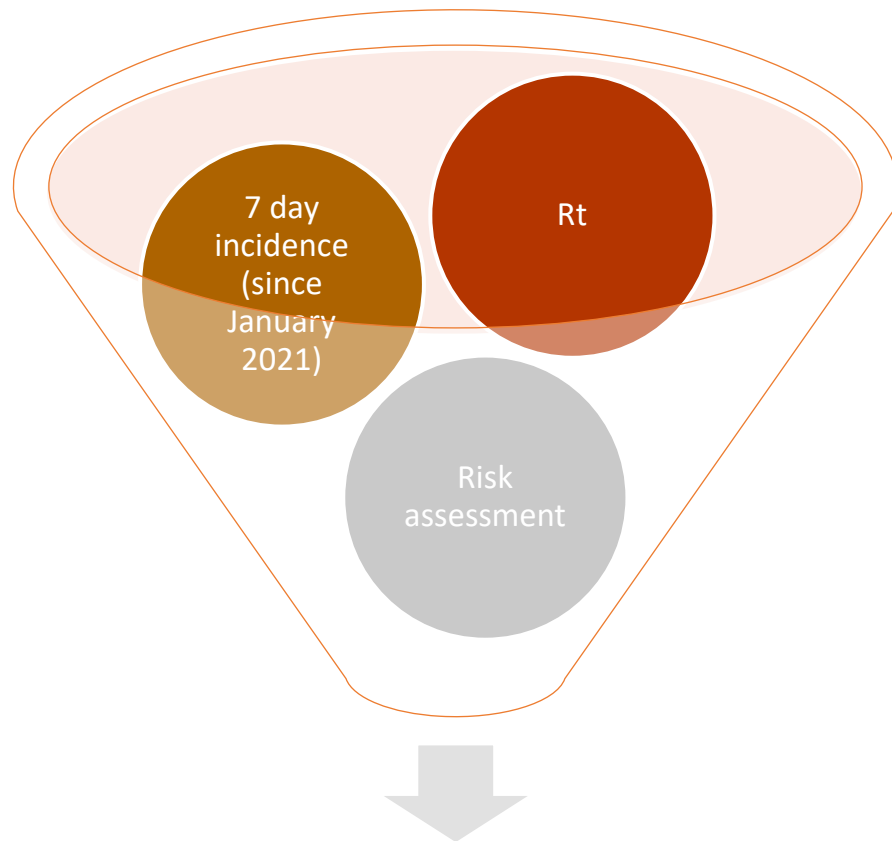
[www.iss.it/malattie-infettive](http://www.iss.it/malattie-infettive)

Cases by date of symptom onset

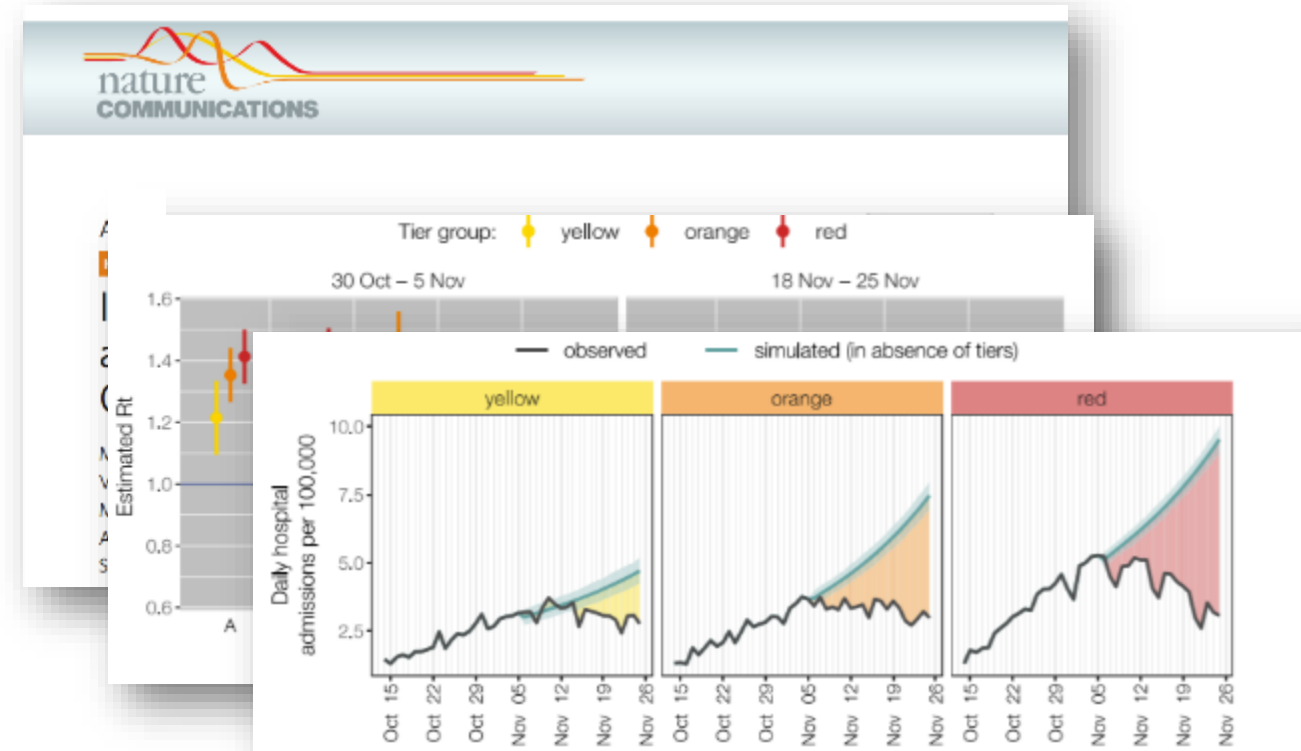
Cases by date of diagnoses/testing



# Change in strategy → the «colour zone» system for suppression



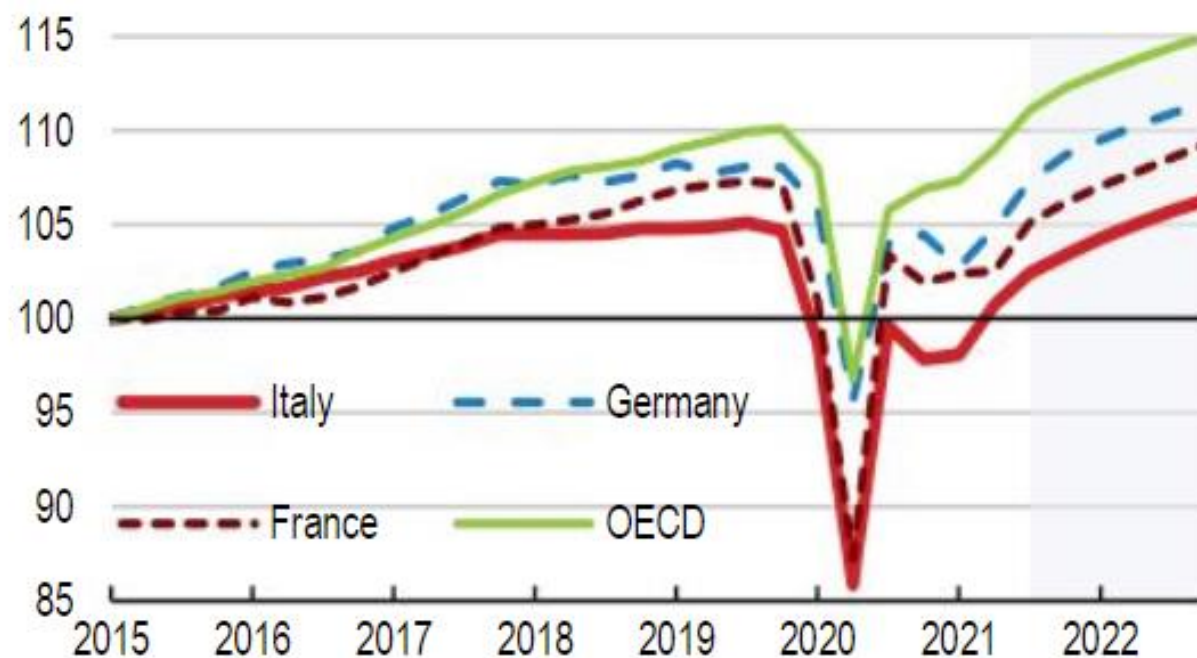
«colour code» of measures (yellow, orange red) from 5 November 2020 – 17 May 2021



«...the activity reduction in all locations outside of the home was far from that observed during the nationwide lockdown imposed to counter the first wave, even in the strictest tier where a stay-home mandate was in place.

# Mitigated negative impact on GDP (OECD, 2021)

Real GDP, index Q1 2015 = 100



Note: Shaded area indicates projections.

Source: OECD (2021), OECD Economic Outlook 109 (database) and provisional projections.

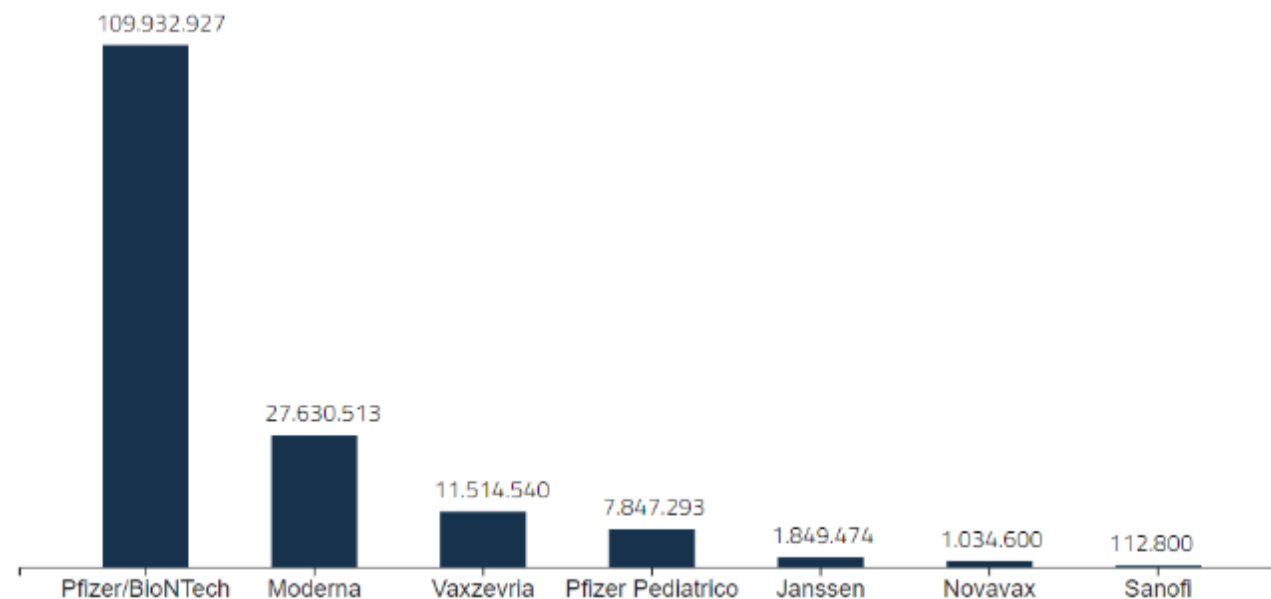




# Vaccination as an epidemiological game-changer







**Con almeno una dose**  
**49.556.896**

91,78 % della popolazione over 12  
(persone con almeno una somministrazione)

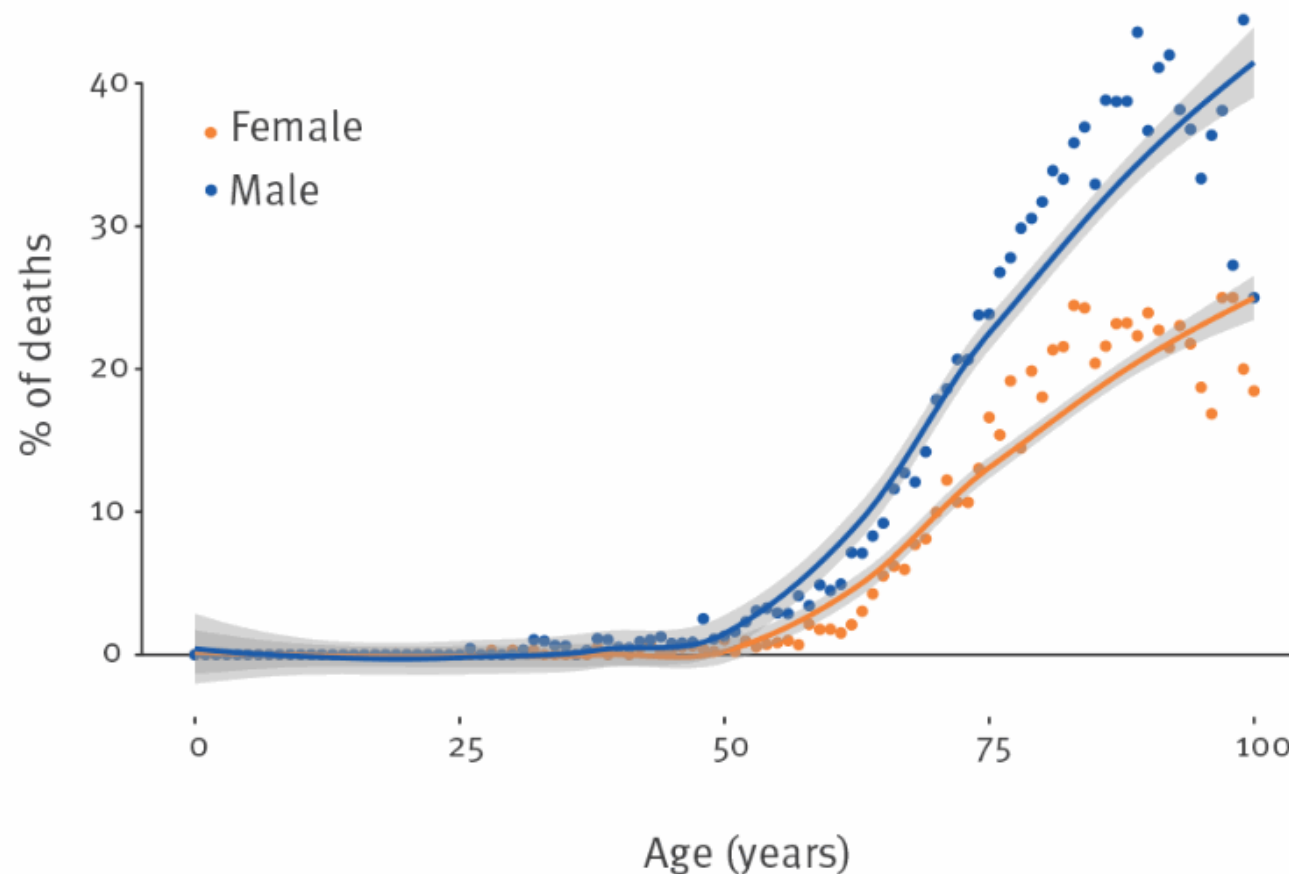
**Ciclo vaccinale**  
**48.729.558**

90,25 % della popolazione over 12  
(persone che hanno completato il ciclo vaccinale)

**Dose aggiuntiva/richiamo (booster)**  
**40.492.537**

84,88 % della popolazione potenzialmente oggetto di  
dose aggiuntiva o booster che ha ultimato il ciclo vaccinale  
da almeno 4 mesi

# COVID-19 case fatality ratio by age at diagnosis and sex, Italy, 28 January–31 March 2020 (n = 10,940)



Riccardo et al. Epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19 cases and estimates of the reproductive numbers 1 month into the epidemic, Italy, 28 January to 31 March 2020. Euro Surveill. 2020 Dec;25(49):2000790. doi: 10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2020.25.49.2000790. PMID: 33303064; PMCID: PMC7730489.

# Deaths averted thanks to vaccination: a measure of impact



- Between 53.209–148.756 avoided hospitalization
  - Between 6.434–16.276 avoided ICU admissions
  - Between 13.571–48.026 avoided deaths
- Italy, population aged >12yrs, Jan-Sept 2021

“ A new study by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) published in Eurosurveillance estimates that 470 000 lives have been saved among those aged 60 years and over since the start of COVID-19 vaccination rollout in 33 countries across the WHO European Region. ([WHO-EURO](https://www.who-euro.org/))

## WHO Regional Office for Europe: Nearly half a million lives saved by COVID-19 vaccination in less than a year



Copenhagen, 25 November 2021

A new study by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) published in Eurosurveillance estimates that 470 000 lives have been saved among those aged 60 years and over since the start of COVID-19 vaccination rollout in 33 countries across the WHO European Region.

This estimate does not include lives saved by vaccinating people under 60 nor lives saved from the indirect effect of vaccination because of a reduction in transmission.

Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe says, "COVID-19 has exacted a devastating death toll in our region, but we can



Video: Lives saved by COVID-19 vaccination

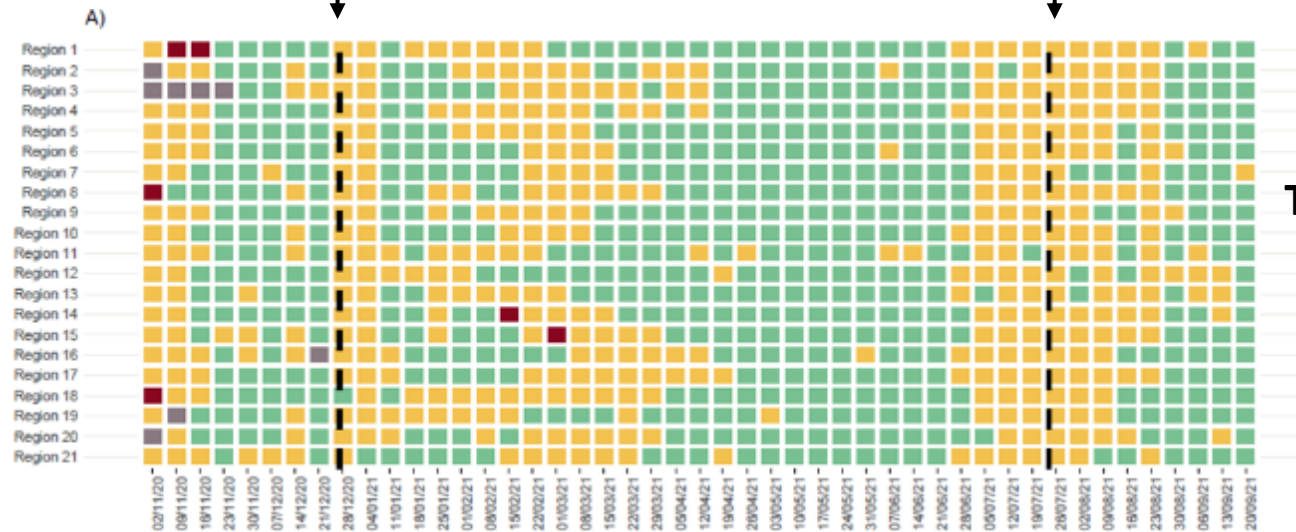
For further information, contact:

Bhanu Bhatnagar  
Press and Media Relations Officer

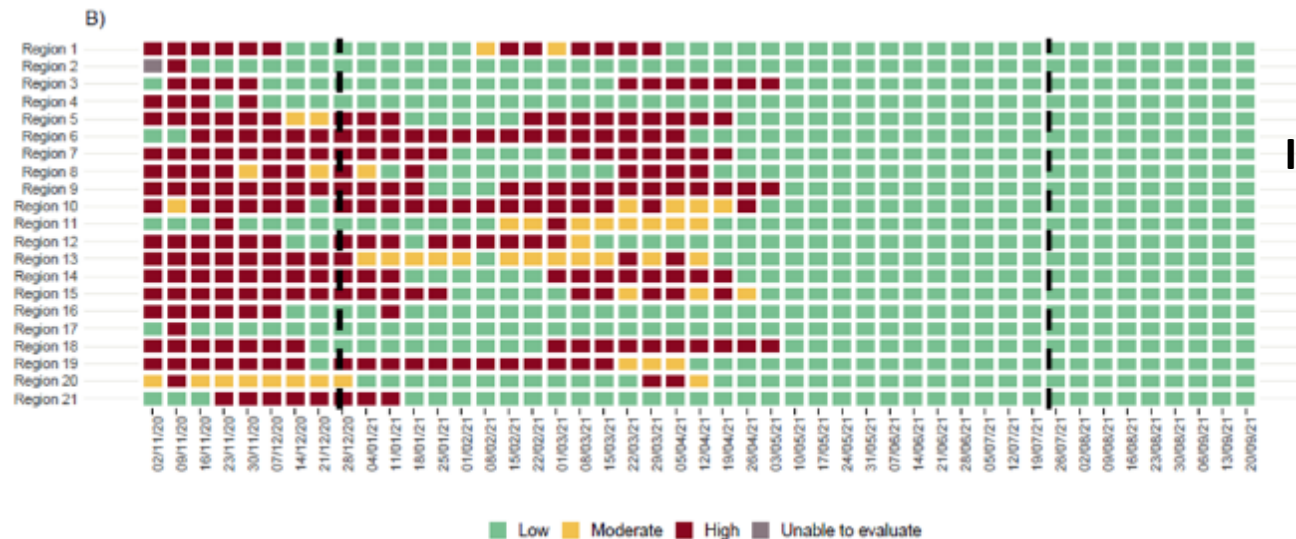
Beginning of the vaccination  
campaign

50% of vaccine coverage against  
SARS-CoV-2

## What changed with mass vaccination?



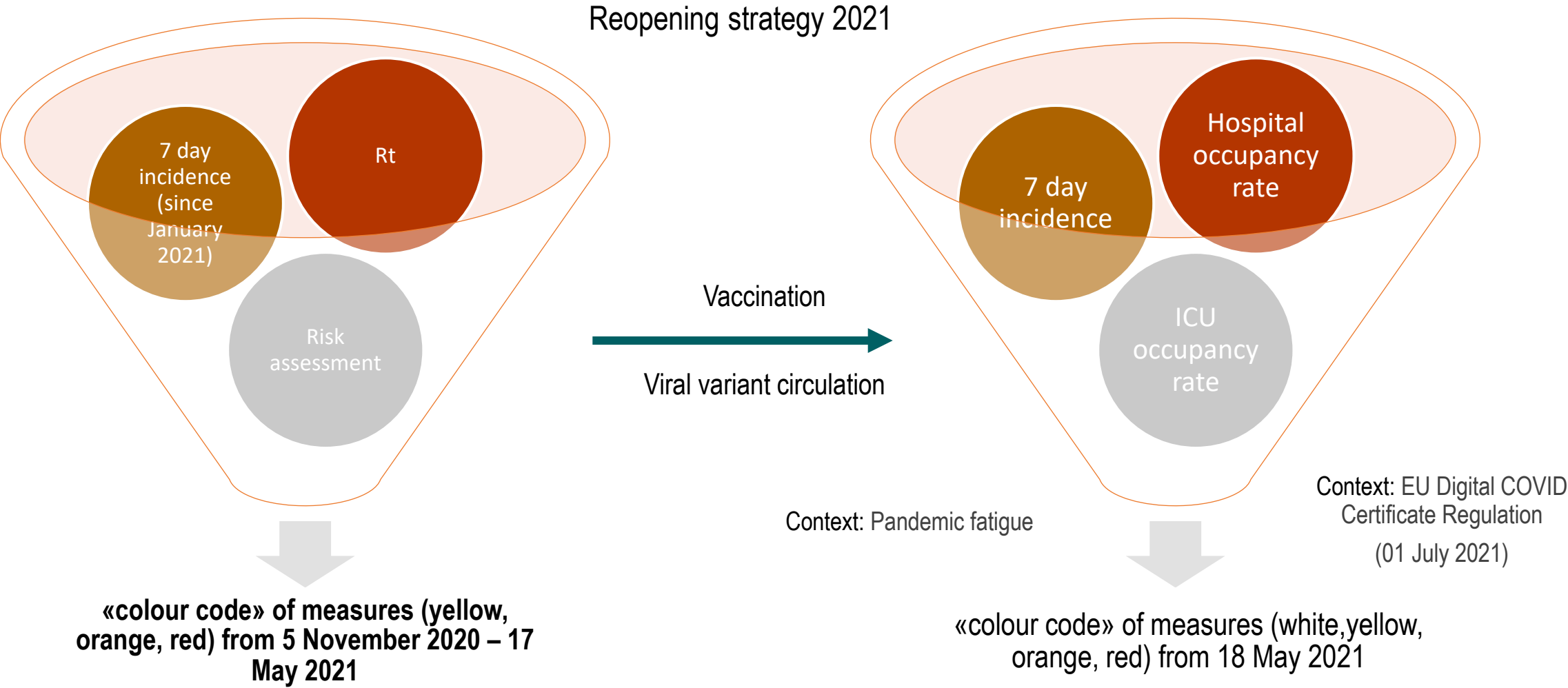
Transmission indicators (number of new cases,  $R_t$ , clusters)



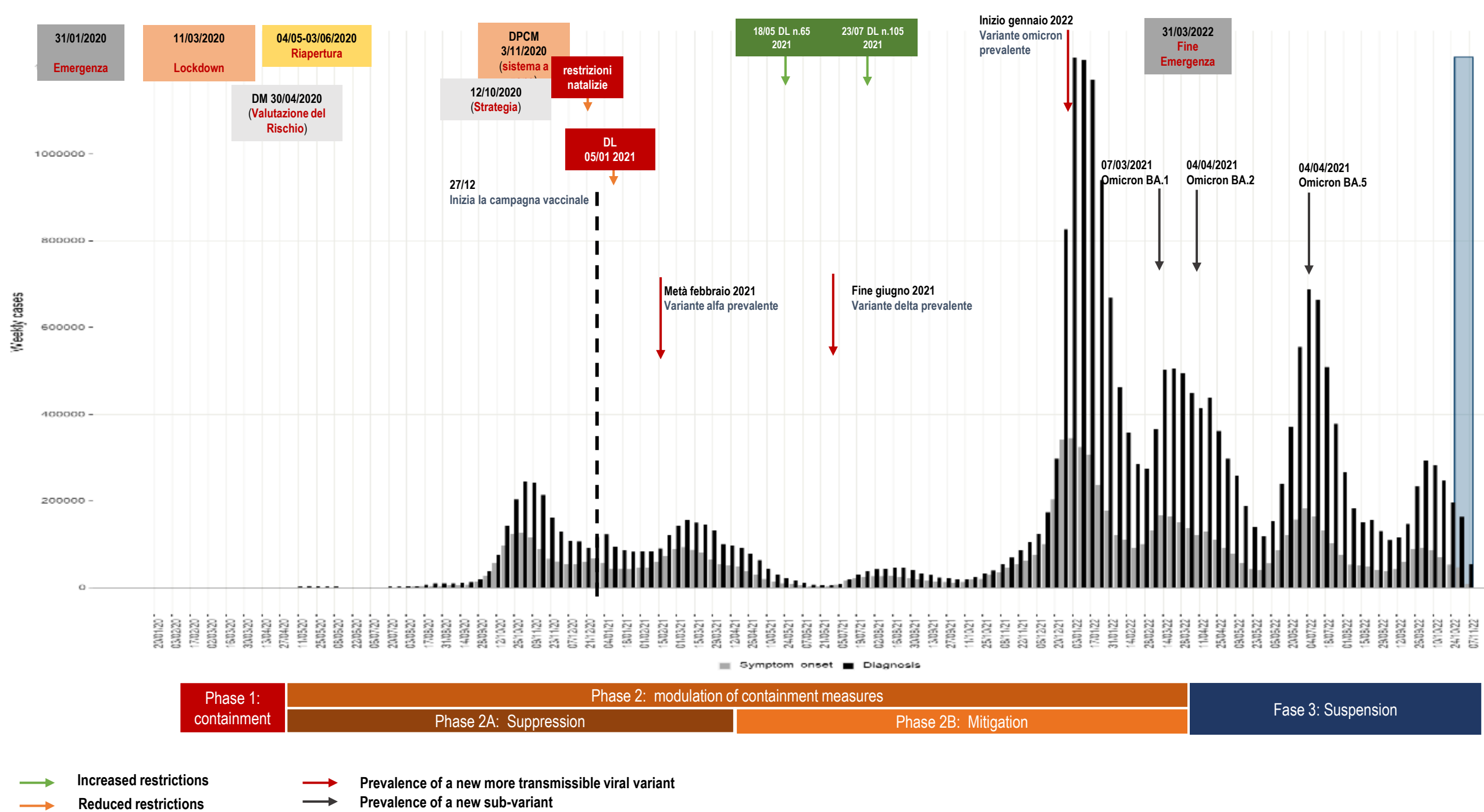
Impact indicators (hospital overload)

Riccardo F et al. Bull World Health Organ. 2022 Feb 1;100(2):161-167.  
doi: 10.2471/BLT.21.286317. Epub 2021 Nov 25. PMID: 35125541;  
PMCID: PMC8795855. Supplementary materials with in depth data in  
[https://zenodo.org/record/5638454#.Yg\\_FnOiZM2w](https://zenodo.org/record/5638454#.Yg_FnOiZM2w)

Change in strategy → the «colour zone» system for mitigation







# «Conceptual framework for understanding pandemics»

## Four kinds of COVID-19 control regime:

- **Uncontrolled scenario:** no control measures transmission levels similar to  $R_0$ .
- **Mitigation strategy:** limited control with transmission reduced compared with  $R_0$  but still above 1 (exponential growth but less rapid than in the absence of measures). During the COVID-19 pandemic, this strategy was often referred to as flattening the curve of the epidemic.
- **Suppression strategy:** through the implementation of combinations of layered control measures  $R$  decreases to less than 1, so the epidemic declines, but transmission is not completely eliminated
- **Containment strategy:** by means of aggressive testing, contact tracing, and isolating,  $R$  is kept near 0 (known in China as a zero-COVID strategy)

The Lancet Commissions

14 September 2022

### The Lancet Commission on lessons for the future from the COVID-19 pandemic

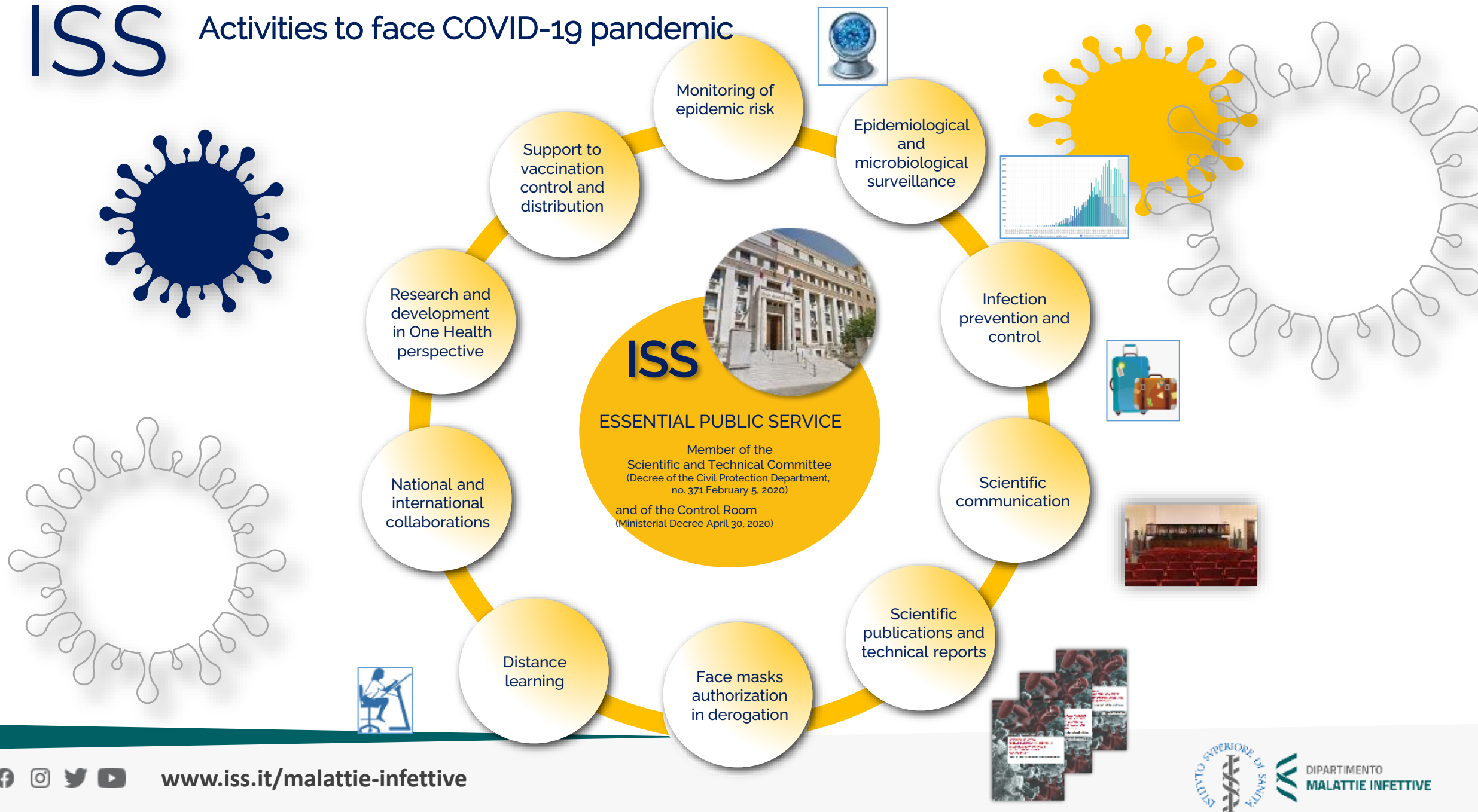


Jeffrey D Sachs, Salim S Abdool Karim, Lara Aknin, Joseph Allen, Kirsten Broszel, Francesca Colombo, Gabriela Cuevas Barron, Maria Fernanda Espinosa, Vitor Gaspar, Alejandro Gaviria, Andy Haines, Peter J Hotez, Phoebe Koundouri, Felipe Larraín Bascuñán, Jong-Koo Lee, Muhammad Ali Pate, Gabriela Ramos, K Srinath Reddy, Ismail Serageldin, John Thwaites, Valira Vike-Freiberga, Chen Wang, Miriam Khamadi Were, Lan Xue, Chandrika Bahadur, Maria Elena Bottazzi, Chris Bullen, George Laryea-Adjel, Yanis Ben Amar, Ozge Karadag, Guillaume Lafortune, Emma Torres, Lauren Barredo, Juliana G E Bartels, Neena Joshi, Margaret Hellard, Uyen Kim Huynh, Shweta Khandelwal, Jeffrey V Lazarus, Susan Michie

**Stratified implementation of non-pharmaceutical measures:** widespread testing, contact tracing, and isolating; proper use of face masks; physical distancing; limitations on mass gatherings; and improved ventilation systems at workplaces

# ISS

## Activities to face COVID-19 pandemic



# Response pillars – data for action

Integrated surveillance

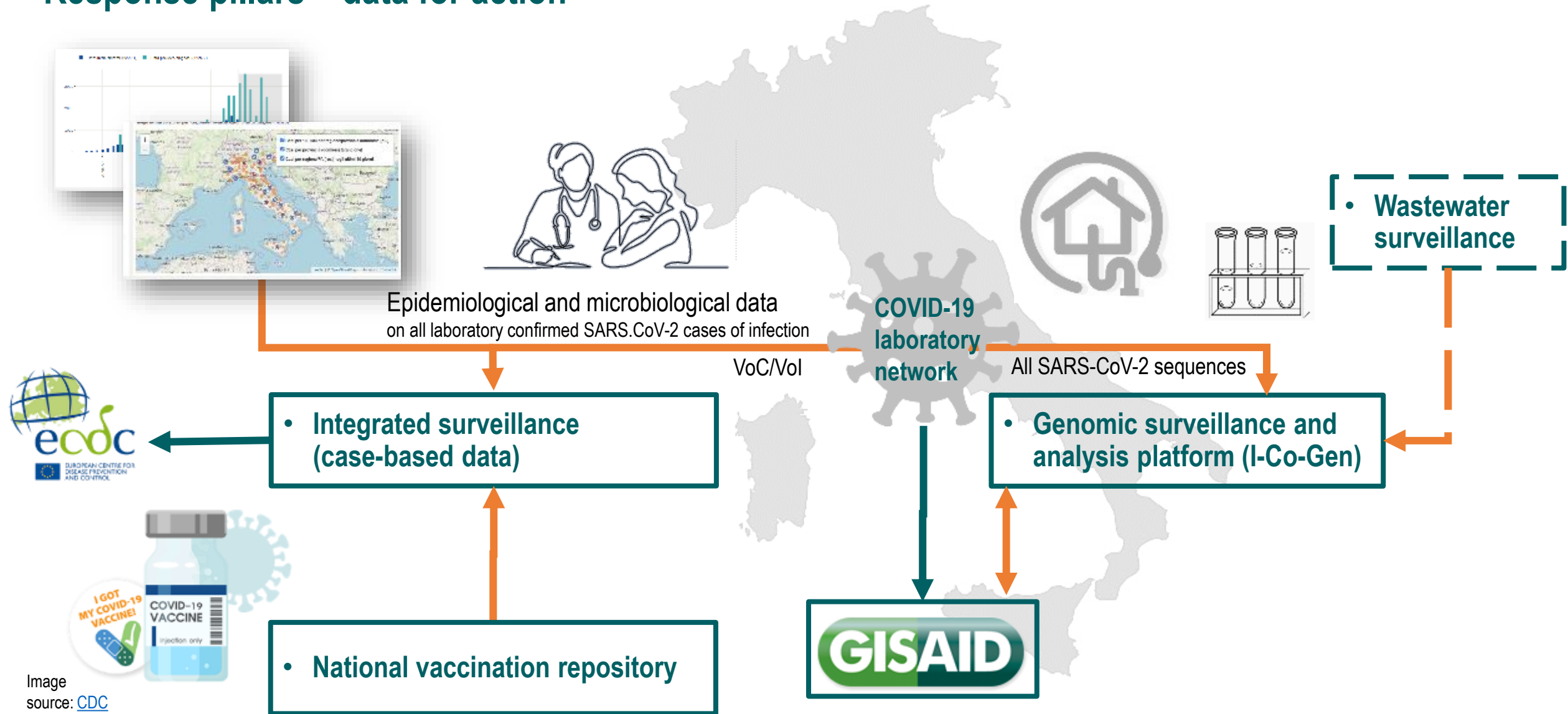
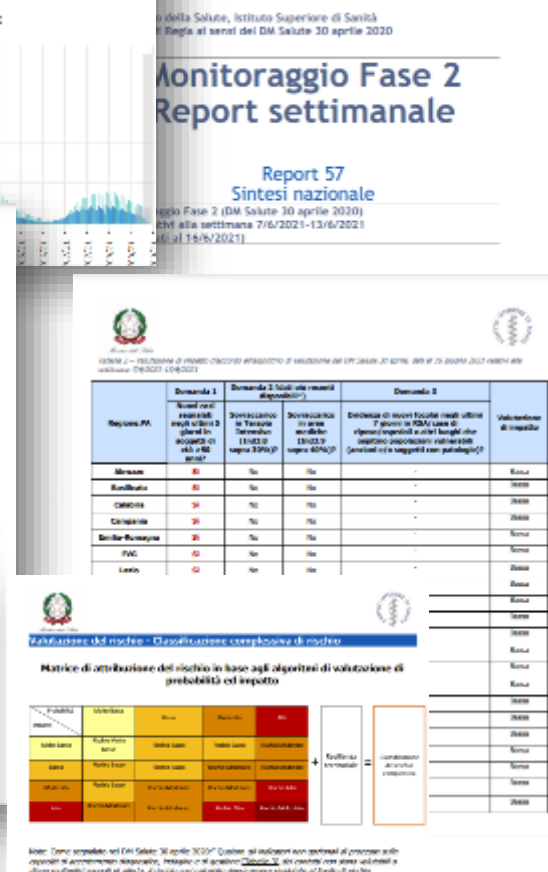
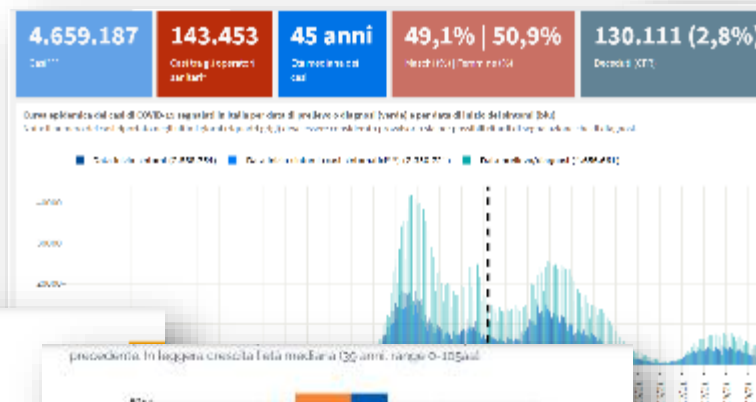
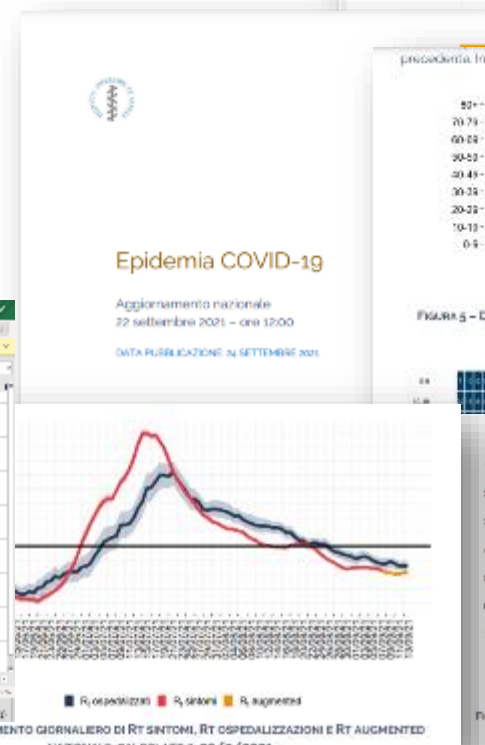
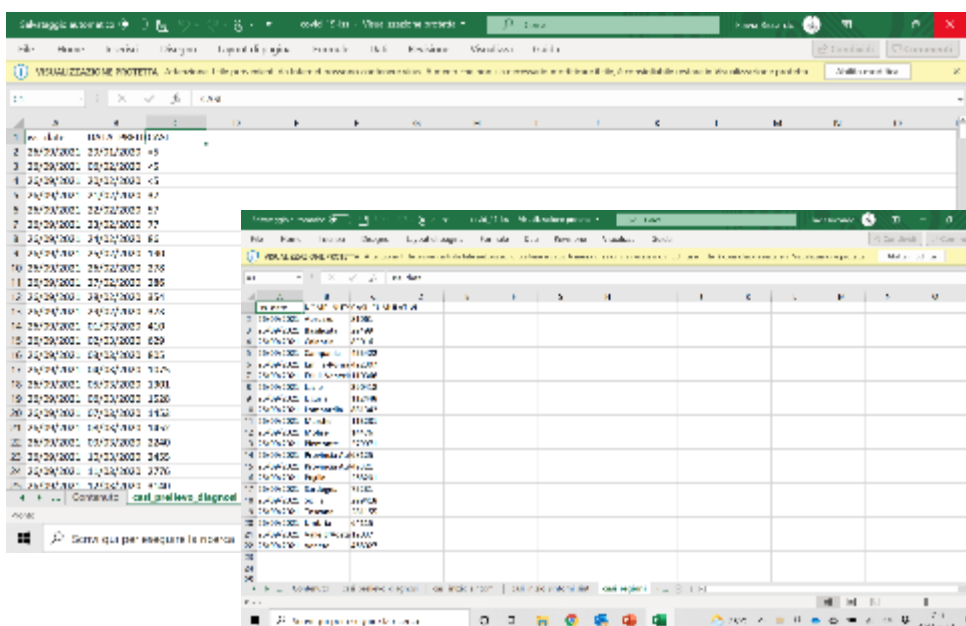


Image source: [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/)

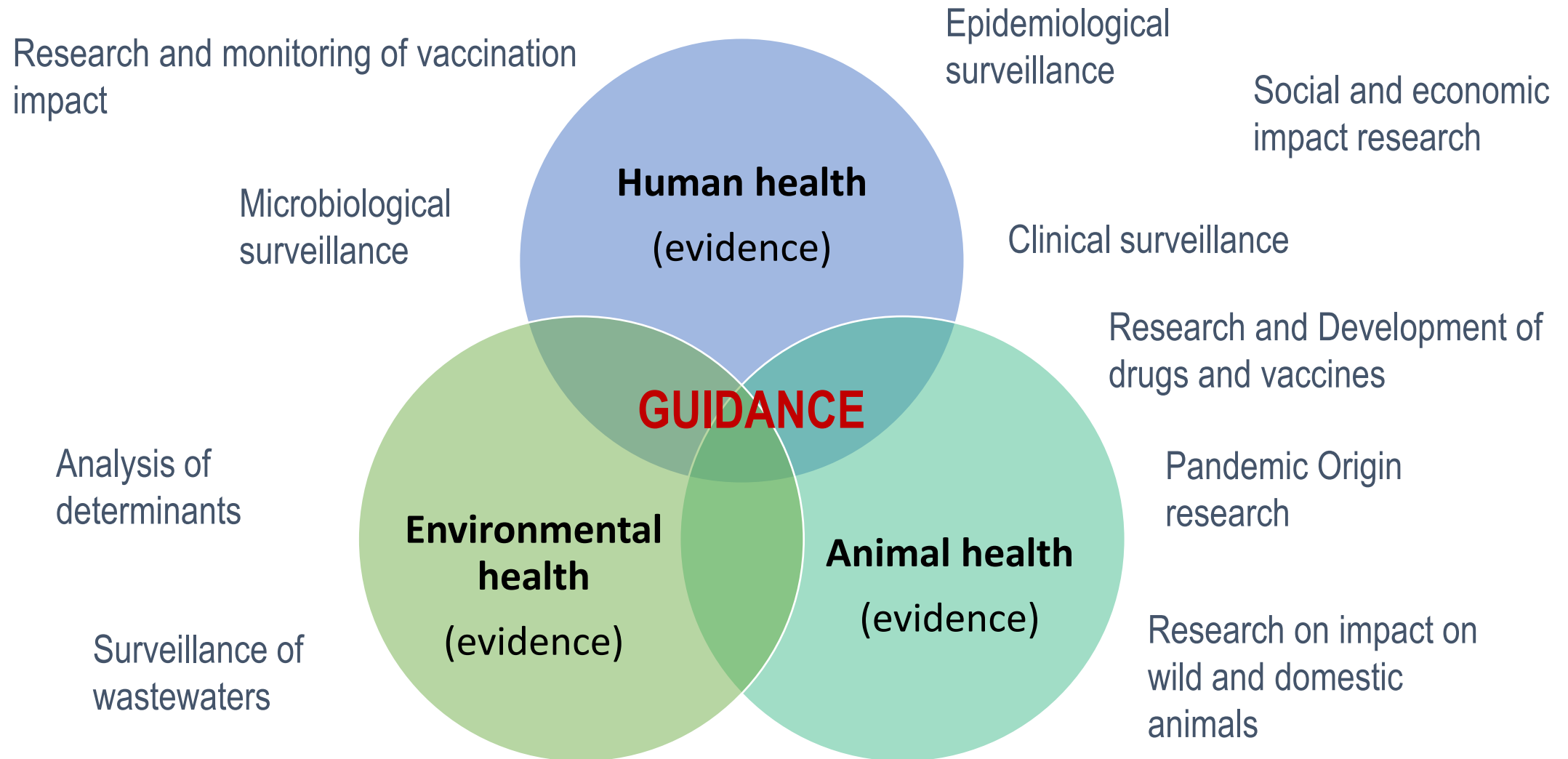
# Data and information hub

Including open data





# Multi-disciplinary research collaborations

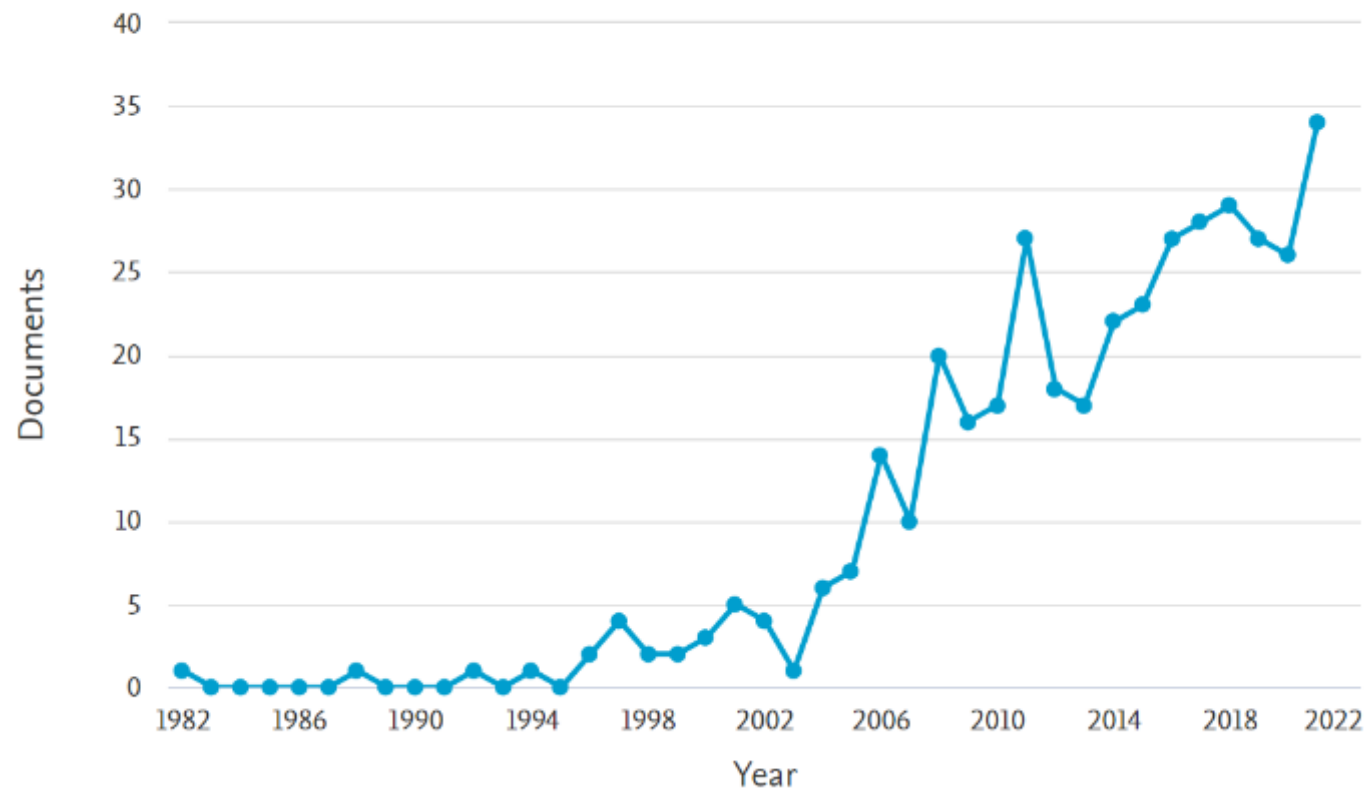


>1000 scientific papers published in the past 5 years in th Department of ID alone (PubMed)

# A growing scientific effort

Trend of publication in a subset of 395 publications (Scopus)

Documents by year

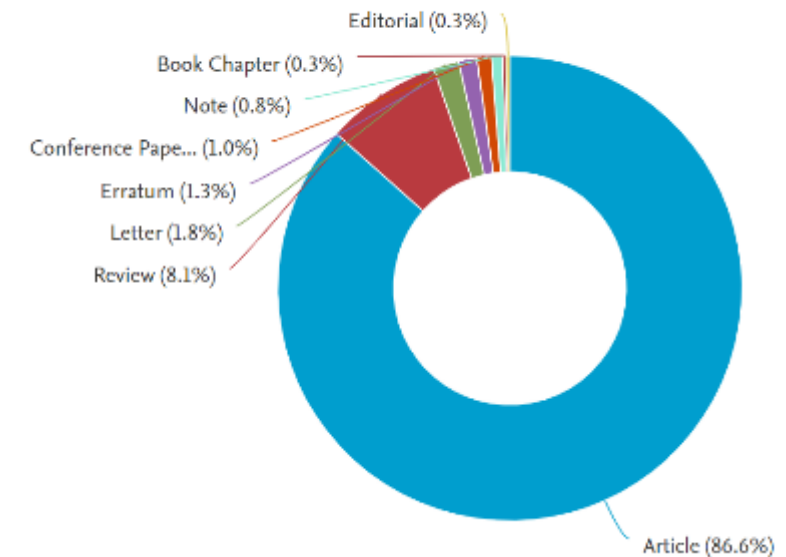


AFFILORG ( infectious AND disease AND department AND istituto AND superiore AND di AND sanità )



Scopus

Documents by type



# COVID-19 related research

## Studies characterizing the virus and its diagnostic tools

Infection, Genetics and Evolution 96 (2021) 105108

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

**Infection, Genetics and Evolution**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/megid](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/megid)

ELSEVIER

Identification and characterization of SARS-CoV-2 clusters in the EU/EEA in the first pandemic wave: additional elements to trace the route of the virus

Giovanni Faggioni<sup>a,\*</sup>, Paola Stefanelli<sup>b</sup>, Francesco Giordani<sup>a</sup>, Silvia Fillo<sup>a</sup>, Anna Anselmo<sup>a</sup>, Vanessa Vera Fain<sup>a</sup>, Antonella Fortunato<sup>a</sup>, Giancarlo Petralito<sup>a</sup>, Filippo Molinari<sup>a</sup>, Alessandra Lo Presti<sup>b</sup>, Angela Di Martino<sup>b</sup>, Stefano Palomba<sup>c</sup>, Riccardo De Santis<sup>a</sup>, Giovanni Rezza<sup>d</sup>, Florio Lista<sup>a</sup>

frontiers in Public Health

BRIEF RESEARCH REPORT  
published: 15 April 2021  
doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2021.620045

**Genomic Analysis and Lineage Identification of SARS-CoV-2 Strains in Migrants Accessing Europe Through the Libyan Route**

Fabio Tramuto<sup>1,2</sup>, Stefano Reale<sup>3,4</sup>, Alessandra Lo Presti<sup>5,6</sup>, Francesco Vitale<sup>1,2</sup>, Claudio Pulvirenti<sup>5</sup>, Giovanni Rezza<sup>7</sup>, Fabrizio Vitale<sup>8</sup>, Giuseppe Purpani<sup>9</sup>, Carmelo Massimo Maida<sup>1,2</sup>, Salvatore Zichichi<sup>10</sup>, Silvia Scibetta<sup>11</sup>, Walter Mazzucco<sup>1,2,12</sup> and Paola Stefanelli<sup>1</sup>

Home / Eurosurveillance / Volume 26, Issue 16, 22/Apr/2021 / Article

Rapid communication

Characteristics of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern B.1.1.7, B.1.351 or P.1: data from seven EU/EEA countries, weeks 38/2020 to 10/2021

Tjede Funk<sup>1</sup>, Anastasia Pharris<sup>1</sup>, Gianfranco Spiteri<sup>1</sup>, Nick Bundle<sup>1</sup>, Angeliki Melidou<sup>1</sup>, Michael Carr<sup>2,3</sup>, Gabriel Gonzalez<sup>2,3</sup>, Alejandro Garcia-Leon<sup>4</sup>, Fiona Crispie<sup>5</sup>, Lois O'Connor<sup>5</sup>, Niamh Murphy<sup>6</sup>, Joël Mossong<sup>7</sup>, Anne Vergison<sup>7</sup>, Anke K. Wienecke-Baldacchino<sup>8</sup>, Tamir Abdelrahman<sup>8</sup>, Flavia Riccardo<sup>9</sup>, Paola Stefanelli<sup>9</sup>, Angela Di Martino<sup>9</sup>, Antonino Bella<sup>9</sup>, Alessandra Lo Presti<sup>9</sup>, Pedro Casaca<sup>10</sup>, Joana Moreno<sup>10</sup>, Vitor Borges<sup>11</sup>, Joana Isidro<sup>11</sup>, Rita Ferreira<sup>11</sup>, João Paulo Gomes<sup>11</sup>, Liidia Dotsenko<sup>12</sup>, Heleene Suijs<sup>12</sup>, Jevgenia Epstein<sup>12</sup>, Olga Sadikova<sup>12</sup>, Hanna Sepp<sup>12</sup>, Niina Ikonen<sup>13</sup>, Carita Savolainen-Kopra<sup>13</sup>, Soile Blomqvist<sup>13</sup>, Otto Helve<sup>13</sup>, Joana Gomes-Dias<sup>1</sup>, Cornelia Adlhoeh<sup>1</sup>, on behalf of COVID study groups<sup>14</sup>

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The Dual/Global Value of SARS-CoV-2 Genome Surveillance on Migrants Arriving to Europe via the Mediterranean Routes

CLAUDIA NAROTTA<sup>1</sup>, PAOLA STEFANELLI<sup>2</sup>, FABIO TRAMUTO<sup>3</sup>, ULRICO ANGELONE<sup>4</sup>, CARMELLO MASSIMO MAIDA<sup>5</sup>

The Journal of Infectious Diseases

MAJOR ARTICLE

**Multiplex Real-Time Reverse-Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction Assays for Diagnostic Testing of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 and Seasonal Influenza Viruses: A Challenge of the Phase 3 Pandemic Setting**

Fabiola Muscisi<sup>1</sup>, Fabrizio Barberis<sup>1,2</sup>, Maria Scatena<sup>1,2</sup>, Stefano Fontana<sup>1</sup>, Angela Di Martino<sup>3</sup>, Giulia Marsili<sup>3</sup>, Simona Pozzelli<sup>3</sup>, Laura Calzotetti<sup>3</sup>, Merzia Facchini<sup>1,4</sup>, Alessandra Ciervo<sup>1</sup>

Home / Eurosurveillance / Volume 25, Issue 13, 02/Apr/2020 / Article

Rapid communication

Whole genome and phylogenetic analysis of two SARS-CoV-2 strains isolated in Italy in January and February 2020: additional clues on multiple introductions and further circulation in Europe

Paola Stefanelli<sup>1</sup>, Giovanni Faggioni<sup>2</sup>, Alessandra Lo Presti<sup>1</sup>, Stefano Fiore<sup>1,3</sup>, Antonella Marchi<sup>1,3</sup>, Eleonora Benedetti<sup>1,3</sup>, Concetta Fabiani<sup>1,3</sup>, Anna Anselmo<sup>2</sup>, Andrea Ciannamurconi<sup>2</sup>, Antonella Fortunato<sup>2</sup>, Riccardo De Santis<sup>2</sup>, Silvia Fillo<sup>2</sup>, Maria Rosaria Capobianchi<sup>4</sup>, Maria Rita Gismondo<sup>5</sup>, Alessandra Ciervo<sup>1</sup>, Giovanni Rezza<sup>1</sup>, Maria Rita Castrucci<sup>1</sup>, Florio Lista<sup>2</sup>, on behalf of ISS COVID-19 study group<sup>6</sup>

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Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease

Volume 43, September–October 2021, 102142

**First detection of SARS-CoV-2 A.23.1 sub-lineage in migrants arriving to Italy via the Libya route: implications for travel medicine and public health**

Daniela Di Naro, Giulia Randazzo, Paola Stefanelli, Maria Rita Castrucci, Teresa Barone, Carlo Cesari, Claudio Pulvirenti, Giovanni Rezza, Francesco Vitale, Walter Mazzucco

frontiers in Public Health

Volume 9, September 2021, 754842

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# COVID-19 related research

## Immunological studies



International Journal of  
Molecular Sciences



Review

### Innate Immune Response to SARS-CoV-2 Infection: From Cells to Soluble Mediators

Daniela Ricci <sup>†</sup>, Marilena Paola Etna <sup>†</sup>, Fabiana Rizzo <sup>‡</sup>, Silvia Sandini <sup>§</sup>, Martina Severa and Eliana Marina Coccia <sup>\*§</sup>

Diagnostic Microbiology and Infectious Disease 105 (2023) 115539



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Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Diagnostic Microbiology and Infectious Disease

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/diagmicrobio](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/diagmicrobio)

Original Article

### Early IgG / IgA response in hospitalized COVID-19 patients is associated with a less severe disease

Giorgio Fedele <sup>a,\*</sup>, Gianluca Russo <sup>c-1</sup>, Ilaria Schiavoni <sup>a</sup>, Pasqualina Leone <sup>a</sup>, Eleonora Olivetta <sup>b</sup>, Valentina Perri <sup>c</sup>, Maria Antonella Zingaropoli <sup>c</sup>, Maria Rosa Ciardi <sup>c</sup>, Patrizia Pasculli <sup>c</sup>, Claudio Maria Mastroianni <sup>c</sup>, Paola Stefanelli <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department Infectious Diseases, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy

<sup>b</sup> National Centre for Global Health, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy

<sup>c</sup> Department of Public Health and Infectious Diseases, Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy



## PLOS PATHOGENS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Differential plasmacytoid dendritic cell phenotype and type I Interferon response in asymptomatic and severe COVID-19 infection

Martina Severa <sup>1,2</sup>, Roberta A. Diotti <sup>2,3</sup>, Marilena P. Etna <sup>1,2</sup>, Fabiana Rizzo <sup>1</sup>, Stefano Fiore <sup>1</sup>, Daniela Ricci <sup>1</sup>, Marco Iannetta <sup>3</sup>, Alessandro Sinigaglia <sup>4</sup>, Alessandra Lodi <sup>3</sup>, Nicasio Mancini <sup>2</sup>, Elena Criscuolo <sup>2</sup>, Massimo Clementi <sup>2</sup>, Massimo Andreoni <sup>3</sup>, Stefano Balducci <sup>5</sup>, Luisa Barzon <sup>4</sup>, Paola Stefanelli <sup>1</sup>, Nicola Clementi <sup>2†</sup>, Eliana M. Coccia <sup>1†\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Infectious Diseases, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy, <sup>2</sup> Laboratory of Medical Microbiology and Virology, Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Milan, Italy, <sup>3</sup> Infectious Disease Clinic, Policlinico Tor Vergata, Rome, Italy, <sup>4</sup> Department of Molecular Medicine, University of Padova, Padua, Italy, <sup>5</sup> Metabolic Fitness Association, Monterotondo, Rome, Italy

† These authors contributed equally to this work.

[Clin Infect Dis.](https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/ciaa1933) 2021 Jan 4 : ciaa1933.

PMCID: PMC7799260

Published online 2021 Jan 4. doi: [10.1093/cid/ciaa1933](https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/ciaa1933)

PMID: [33395482](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33395482/)

### SARS-CoV-2 encephalitis is a cytokine release syndrome: evidences from cerebrospinal fluid analyses

Andrea Pilotto, MD, <sup>1,2</sup> Stefano Masciocchi, MD, <sup>1</sup> Irene Volonghi, MD, <sup>1</sup> Valeria De Giuli, MD, <sup>3</sup> Francesca Caprioli, MD, <sup>3</sup> Sara Mariotto, MD, <sup>4</sup> Sergio Ferrari, MD, <sup>4</sup> Silvia Bozzetti, MD, <sup>4</sup> Alberto Imarisio, MD, <sup>1</sup> Barbara Risi, MD, <sup>1</sup> Enrico Premi, MD, <sup>1</sup> Alberto Benussi, MD, <sup>1</sup> Emanuele Focà, MD PhD, <sup>5</sup> Francesco Castelli, MD PhD, <sup>5</sup> Gianluigi Zanusso, MD PhD, <sup>4</sup> Salvatore Monaco, MD PhD, <sup>4</sup> Paola Stefanelli, MD, <sup>6</sup> Roberto Gasparotti, MD, <sup>7</sup> Anastasia Zekeridou, MD, PhD, <sup>8</sup> Andrew McKeon, MD, <sup>8</sup> Nicholas J Ashton, PhD, <sup>9,10,11,12</sup> Kaj Blennov, MD PhD, <sup>9,13</sup> Henrik Zetterberg, MD PhD, <sup>9,13,14,15</sup> and Alessandro Padovani, MD PhD <sup>1</sup>



[www.iss.it/malattie-infettive](http://www.iss.it/malattie-infettive)



DIPARTIMENTO  
MALATTIE INFETTIVE

# COVID-19 related research

## Sero-epidemiology studies

Comar et al. *Italian Journal of Pediatrics* (2021) 47:131  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13052-021-01074-9>

Italian Journal of P

### COMMENTARY

Open

## Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 infection in Italian pediatric population: a regional seroepidemiological study

Manola Comar<sup>1,2</sup>, Simone Benvenuto<sup>2\*</sup>, Marzia Lazzerini<sup>1</sup>, Giorgio Fedele<sup>3</sup>, Egidio Barbi<sup>1,2</sup>, Alessandro Amaddeo<sup>1</sup>, Francesco Maria Risso<sup>1</sup>, Tamara Strajn<sup>1</sup>, Paola Di Rocco<sup>1</sup>, Paola Stefanelli<sup>3</sup> and Giovanni Rezza<sup>3</sup>

Clinical Microbiology and Infection 27 (2021) 633.e1–633.e7



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Clinical Microbiology and Infection

journal homepage: [www.clinicalmicrobiologyandinfection.com](http://www.clinicalmicrobiologyandinfection.com)



Original article

### Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 IgG antibodies in an area of northeastern Italy with a high incidence of COVID-19 cases: a population-based study

Paola Stefanelli<sup>1,\*,†</sup>, Antonino Bella<sup>1,†</sup>, Giorgio Fedele<sup>1</sup>, Serena Pancheri<sup>2</sup>, Pasqualina Leone<sup>1</sup>, Paola Vacca<sup>1</sup>, Arianna Neri<sup>1</sup>, Anna Carannante<sup>1</sup>, Cecilia Fazio<sup>1</sup>, Eleonora Benedetti<sup>1</sup>, Stefano Fiore<sup>1</sup>, Concetta Fabiani<sup>1</sup>, Maurizio Simmaco<sup>3</sup>, Iolanda Santino<sup>3</sup>, Maria Grazia Zuccali<sup>2</sup>, Giancarlo Bizzarri<sup>2</sup>, Rosa Magnoni<sup>2</sup>, Pier Paolo Benetollo<sup>2</sup>, Stefano Merler<sup>4</sup>, Silvio Brusaferro<sup>5</sup>, Giovanni Rezza<sup>6</sup>, Antonio Ferro<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy

<sup>6</sup> Health Prevention Directorate, Ministry of Health, Rome, Italy

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# COVID-19 related research

# Epidemiology

Health & Place 71 (2021) 102642



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Health and Place

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/healthplace](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/healthplace)



## Socioeconomic patterns and COVID-19 outcomes before, during and after the lockdown in Italy (2020)

Alberto Mateo-Urdiales<sup>a,b</sup>, Massimo Fabiani<sup>a</sup>, Aldo Rosano<sup>c</sup>, Maria Fenicia Vescio<sup>a</sup>, Martina Del Manso<sup>a,b</sup>, Antonino Bella<sup>a</sup>, Flavia Riccardo<sup>a</sup>, Patrizio Pezzotti<sup>a</sup>, Giovanni Rezza<sup>a</sup>, Maria G. Dente<sup>b</sup>, Silvia Declich<sup>b</sup>, Patrizio Pezzotti<sup>a</sup>, Flavia Riccardo<sup>a</sup>

Clinical Epidemiology

Dovepress

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ORIGINAL RESEARCH

## Survival of Hospitalized COVID-19 Patients in Northern Italy: A Population-Based Cohort Study by the ITA-COVID-19 Network

This article was published in the following Dove Press journal:  
Clinical Epidemiology



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Vaccine

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/vaccine](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/vaccine)

Short communication

## Initial impact of SARS-Cov-2 vaccination on health in Italy– Update on the 28th of March 2021

Alberto Mateo-Urdiales<sup>a,b</sup>, Martina Del Manso<sup>a,b</sup>, Xanthi Andrianou<sup>a,c</sup>, Matteo Spuri<sup>a,d</sup>, Fortunato D'Ancona<sup>a</sup>, Antonietta Filia<sup>a</sup>, Maria Cristina Rota<sup>a</sup>, Daniele Petrone<sup>a,d</sup>, Maria Fenicia Vescio<sup>a</sup>, Flavia Riccardo<sup>a</sup>, Antonino Bella<sup>a</sup>, Patrizio Pezzotti<sup>a,c</sup>, Massimo Fabiani<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Infectious Diseases, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy

<sup>b</sup> European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden

<sup>c</sup> Cyprus International Institute for Environmental and Public Health, Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

<sup>d</sup> Department of Statistics, La Sapienza University, Rome, Italy



vaccines



Article

## Association of Influenza Vaccination and Prognosis in Patients Testing Positive to SARS-COV-2 Swab Test: A Large-Scale Italian Multi-Database Cohort Study

Marco Massari<sup>1,†</sup>, Stefania Spila-Alegiani<sup>1,\*,†</sup>, Massimo Fabiani<sup>2</sup>, Valeria Belleudi<sup>3</sup>, Gianluca Trifirò<sup>4,5</sup>, Ursula Kirchmayer<sup>3</sup>, Francesca Romana Poggi<sup>3</sup>, Pamela Mancuso<sup>6</sup>, Francesca Menniti-Ippolito<sup>1</sup>, Rosa Gini<sup>7</sup>, Claudia Bartolini<sup>7</sup>, Olivia Leoni<sup>8</sup>, Michele Ercolanoni<sup>8</sup>, Filippo Da-Re<sup>9</sup>, Stefano Guzzinati<sup>10</sup>, Nicoletta Luxi<sup>11</sup>, Flavia Riccardo<sup>2</sup> and Paola Chiara Bassoli<sup>1</sup>

DOI: 10.1002/jmv.26788

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

JOURNAL OF  
MEDICAL VIROLOGY WILEY

## Clinical characteristics of individuals under 40 years of age who died with COVID-19 in Italy

RESEARCH

## Epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19 cases and estimates of the reproductive numbers 1 month into the epidemic, Italy, 28 January to 31 March 2020

Flavia Riccardo<sup>1,2</sup>, Marco Ajelli<sup>2,3,4,5</sup>, Xanthi D Andrianou<sup>1,6</sup>, Antonino Bella<sup>1</sup>, Martina Del Manso<sup>1,7</sup>, Massimo Fabiani<sup>1</sup>, Stefania Bellino<sup>1</sup>, Stefano Boros<sup>1</sup>, Alberto Mateo Urdiales<sup>2,7</sup>, Valentina Marziano<sup>2</sup>, Maria Cristina Rota<sup>1</sup>, Antonietta Filia<sup>1</sup>, Fortunato D'Ancona<sup>1</sup>, Andrea Siddui<sup>1</sup>, Ornella Punzo<sup>1</sup>, Filippo Trentini<sup>3</sup>, Giorgio Guzzetta<sup>3</sup>, Piero Poletti<sup>3</sup>, Paola Stefanelli<sup>1</sup>, Maria Rita Castrucci<sup>1</sup>, Alessandra Ciervo<sup>1</sup>, Corrado Di Benedetto<sup>1</sup>, Marco Tallon<sup>1</sup>, Andrea Piccoli<sup>1</sup>, Silvio Brusaferro<sup>1</sup>, Giovanni Rezza<sup>1</sup>, Stefano Merler<sup>1</sup>, Patrizio Pezzotti<sup>1</sup>, the COVID-19 working group<sup>8</sup>

1. Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy

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5. Laboratory for the Modeling of Biological and Socio-technical Systems, Northeastern University, Boston, United States

6. Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

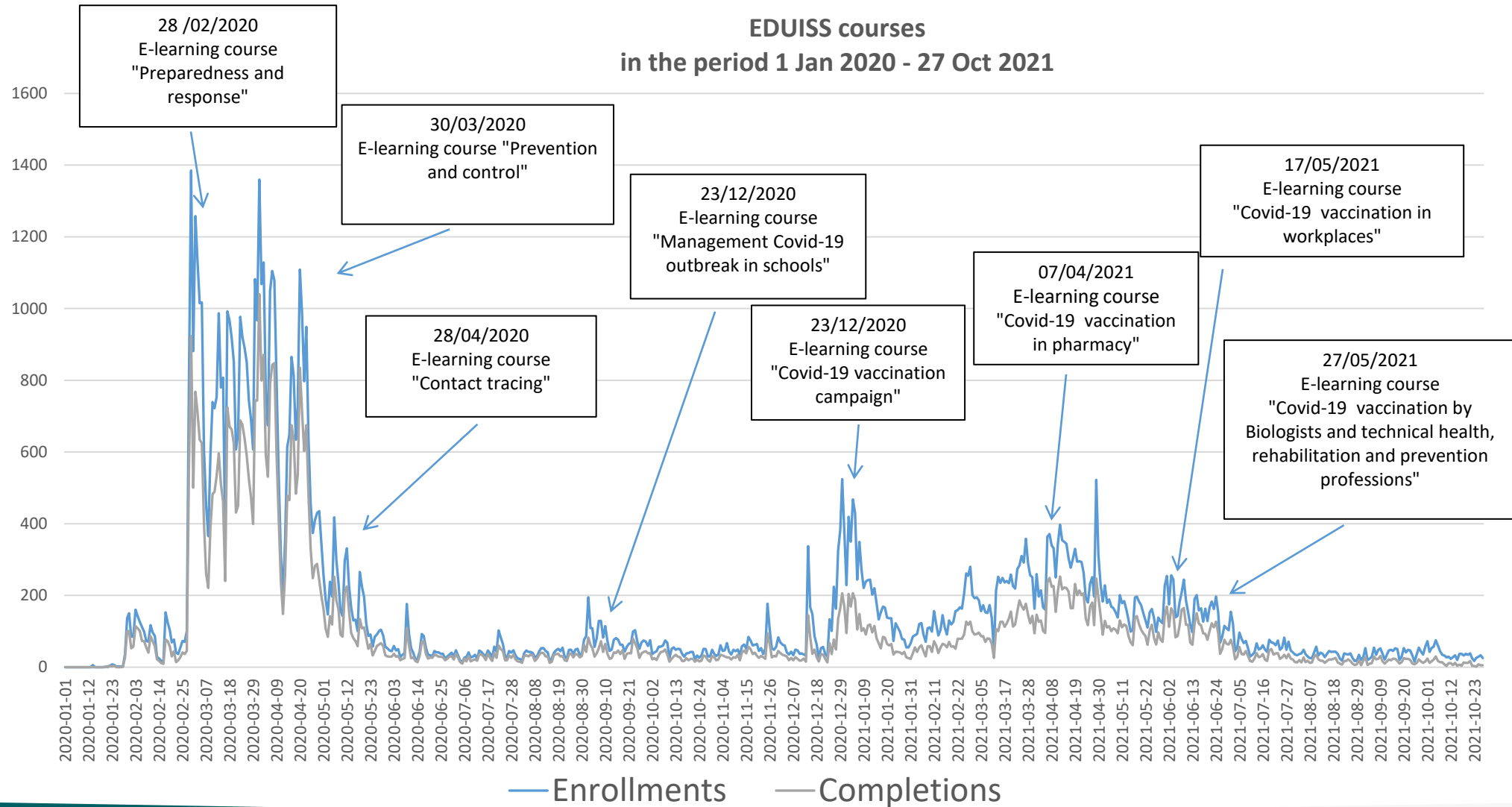
7. European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden

Correspondence: Flavia Riccardo ([flavia.riccardo@iss.it](mailto:flavia.riccardo@iss.it))



# ISS: Provider of national guidance and advice in accordance with the MoH





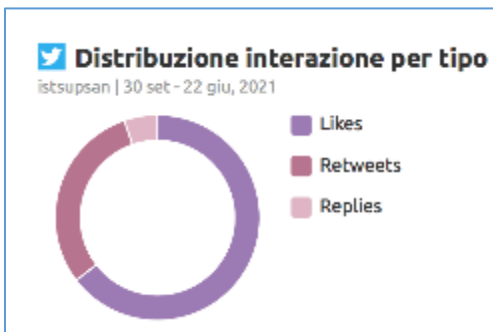
# 'Traditional' press office activities

Since the beginning of the pandemic

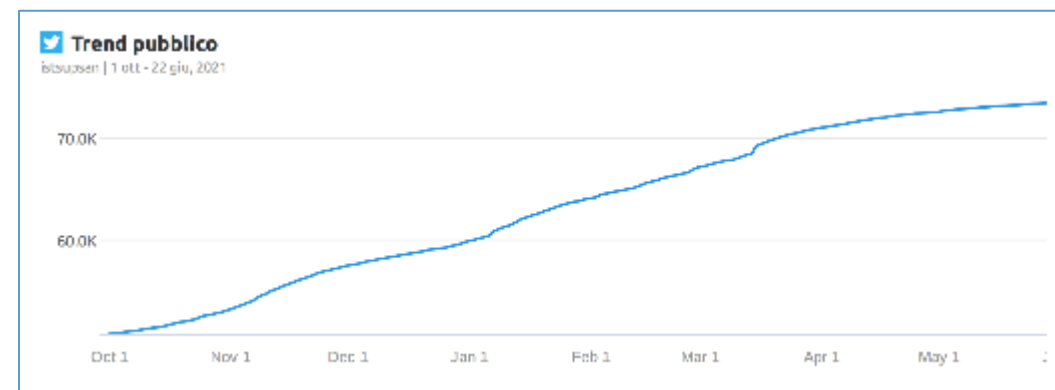
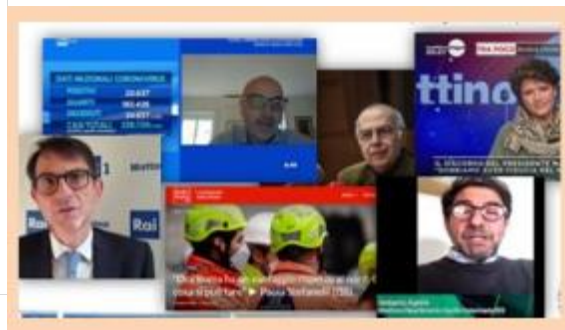
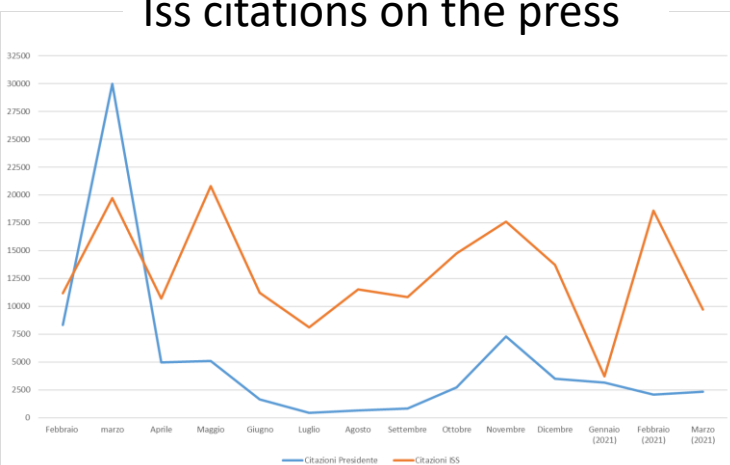
- More than 400 press releases
- More than 200K citations on the press
- More than 500 interviews (given by the President or Iss experts)
- Press conferences (weekly)

# Social media - Trend Follower e interactions

- 80K follower on Twitter
- 25K on Facebook
- 8K on Instagram



Iss citations on the press





# Design and implementation of a rapid mixed method risk assessment system

ai sensi dell'articolo 30 comma 1 del DL n. 149 del 9 novembre 2020



# Preparedness and Readiness

## Government support in pandemic strategic planning

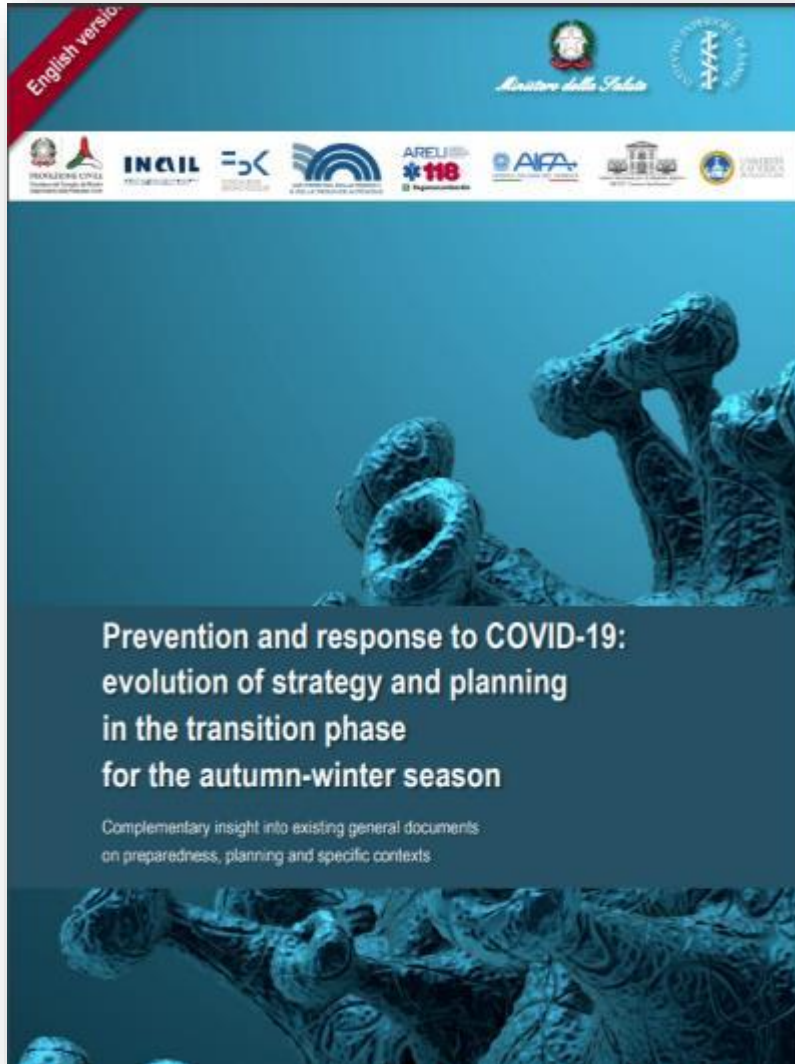
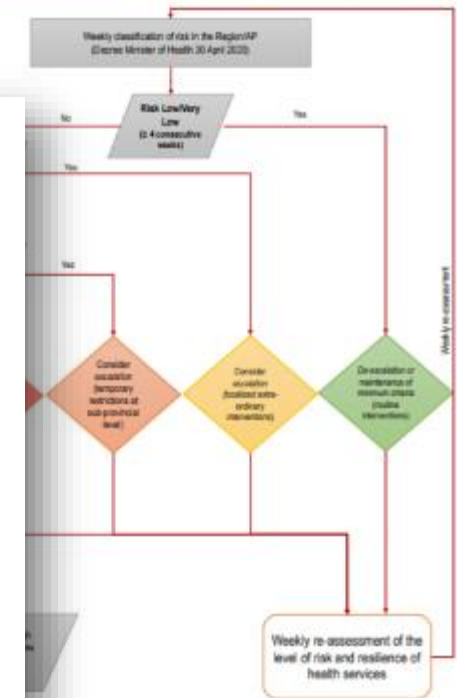


Table 6. SCENARIO 3: situation of sustained and widespread transmission with risks in the ability of the health system to cope in the medium-term

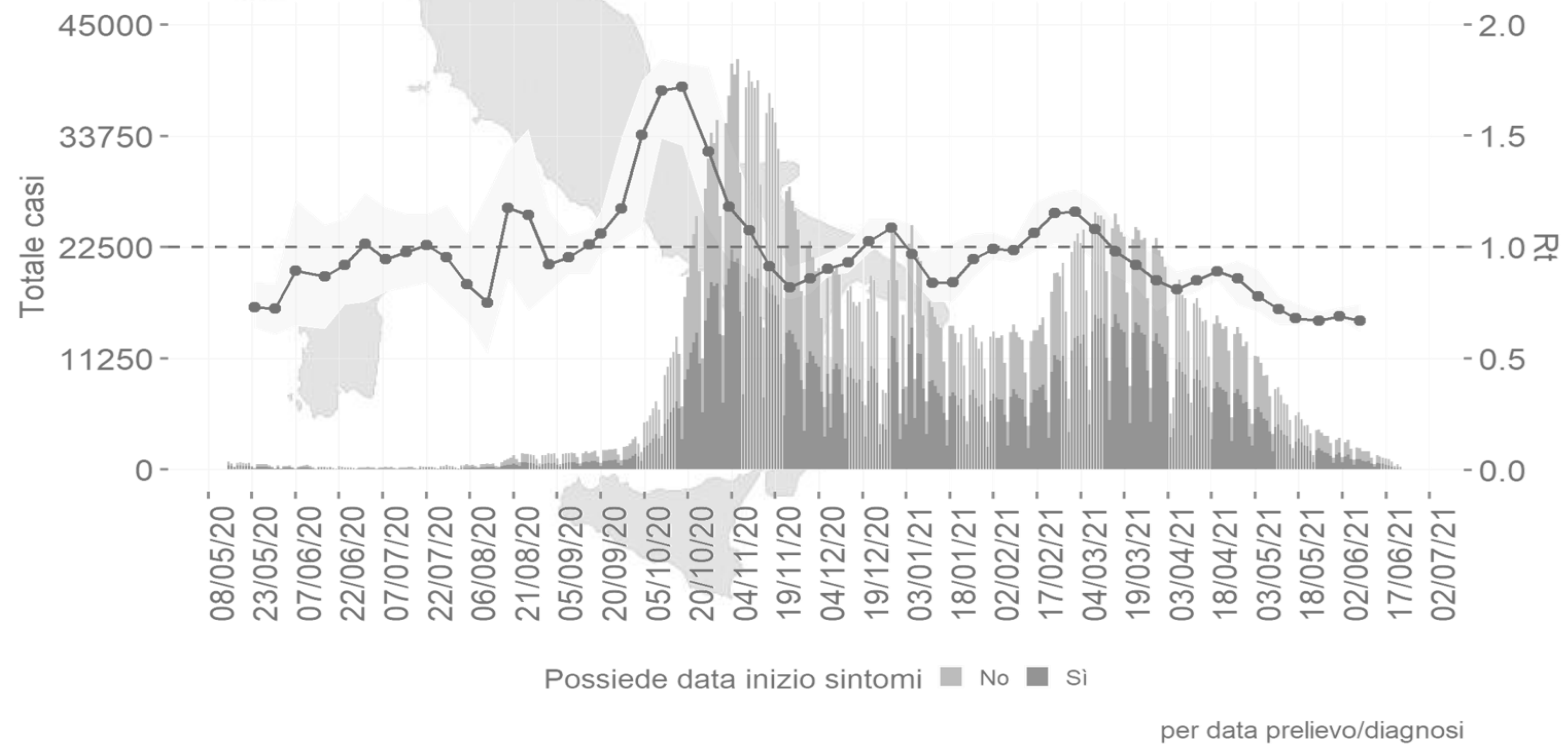
Weekly risk classification in the Region/AP			
LOW/VERY LOW (for at least 3 consecutive weeks from a higher risk assessment)	MEDIUM (for at least 3 consecutive weeks from a higher risk assessment)	HIGH/VERY HIGH (for less than 2 consecutive weeks)	HIGH/VERY HIGH (for 2 or more consecutive weeks and situation not manageable)
SARS-CoV-2 transmission limited to clusters with known transmission chains	Increasing number of SARS-CoV-2 infections, local transmission not important, not all transmission chains known	Clusters no longer distinct from each other, new cases unrelated to known transmission chains, gradual increase in pressure for Prevention Departments	Widespread community transmission, clusters no longer distinct, new cases unrelated to known transmission chains, gradual increase in pressure for Public Health services
<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> containment and control of clusters <i>Intervention: intensive efforts (positive interventions)</i>	<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> containment and control of clusters <i>Intervention: ordinary + extra ordinary interventions in institutions (e.g., schools) or in high geographical areas</i>	<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> mitigation of viral spread <i>Intervention: extra ordinary sustained temporary local restrictions on a sub- provincial level</i>	<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> mitigation of the viral spread, reduction in case load, and sustained community suppression <i>Intervention: possible regional/provincial restrictions</i>
<b>MMPT - GCT 2020 (updated 6.2 September 1, 2020)</b>			
<b>Testing and management of suspected, confirmed cases and contacts</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>diagnostic assessment and confirmation of all suspected cases</li> <li>isolation of cases and at-risk contacts</li> <li>contact tracing, active testing and quarantine of cases and at-risk contacts</li> <li>epidemiological exploratory actions</li> <li>screening of target populations</li> <li>early warning systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>diagnostic assessment and confirmation of all suspected cases</li> <li>possible amplification of active surveillance (R, L, I)</li> <li>isolation of cases and at-risk contacts</li> <li>contact tracing of patients</li> <li>activation of additional external staff to support PH services (GPI) and COVID-related activities (R, L, I)</li> <li>activation of rapid testing paths of additional staff to support Public Health - PH services (Department of Prevention, DPI) (R, L, I)</li> <li>active search for SARS-CoV-2 with screening of target populations in at-risk areas (R, L, I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>amplification of contact tracing (R, L, I)</li> <li>amplification of active surveillance (R, L, I)</li> <li>contact isolation of patients</li> <li>priority is given to COVID-related activities in PH services (DPI) (R, L, I)</li> <li>activation of additional external staff to support PH services (GPI) and COVID-related activities (R, L, I)</li> <li>early testing offered to suspected cases, close and at-risk contacts, with priority given to symptomatic cases</li> <li>re-modulation of SARS-CoV-2 screening activities prioritizing target categories (e.g., healthcare workers) (R, L, I)</li> <li>tools to be used as needed: premises are strengthened (R, L, I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>amplification of contact tracing (R, L, I)</li> <li>amplification of active surveillance (R, L, I)</li> <li>contact isolation of patients</li> <li>priority is given to COVID-related activities in PH services (DPI) (R, L, I)</li> <li>activation of additional external staff to support PH services (GPI) and COVID-related activities (R, L, I)</li> <li>early testing offered to suspected cases, close and at-risk contacts, with priority given to symptomatic cases</li> <li>re-modulation of SARS-CoV-2 screening activities prioritizing target categories (e.g., healthcare workers) (R, L, I)</li> <li>tools to be used as needed: premises are strengthened (R, L, I)</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>standard precautions (face masks to protect airways, social distance, hand and respiratory hygiene, environmental hygiene)</li> <li>screening of populations, areas included in documents for specific controls in areas with higher risk of exposure (R, L, I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>social distancing is strengthened (R, L, I)</li> <li>hand and face masks (R, L, I)</li> <li>possible interruption of higher risk social/cultural activities (e.g., events, bars – also on a time basis) (R, L, I)</li> <li>home based work is encouraged to reduce public transport and workplace crowding (R, L, I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local/provincial/regional actions to increase social distancing (R, L, I)</li> <li>possibility of introducing the obligation after on a local basis, to wear face masks outdoors (L)</li> <li>temporary restrictions: not strict (R, L, I) with reporting possible only after HC and incidence assessments (R, L, I)</li> <li>interruption of social/cultural activities at greater risk of generating in-person gatherings (R, L, I)</li> <li>consider the interruption of some at-risk productive activities (R, L, I)</li> <li>possible limitation of mobility between Regions or within the same Region (highly high transmission areas defined area, single locality, municipality, province, etc.) (R, L, I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>general restrictions with scope and duration to be defined on the basis of the epidemiological situation in case of local/regional restrictions, limitation of mobility between affected areas (R)</li> </ul>
<b>Subcommunity</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>face to face lessons</li> <li>reopening of face masks in dynamic situations and in the absence of a minimum distance of 1 meter between people</li> <li>limit activities that cause mixing of different classes and groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>possibility of introducing the obligation, after on a local basis, to wear face masks also in static situations including when a minimum distance of 1 meter between people is present (R, L, I)</li> <li>possibility of alternating lessons with morning and afternoon sessions, if needed increase the space available (R, L, I)</li> <li>possible activation of distance learning for part of the classes of high school and university students to guarantee physical distancing and avoid crowding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>obligation to wear a face mask (if 6 years) also in static situations including when a minimum distance of 1 meter between people is present (R, L, I)</li> <li>substitution of higher risk lessons (e.g., physical education, singing, choir rehearsals, laboratories used by multiple classes, etc.) (R, L, I)</li> <li>possibility of alternating lessons with morning and afternoon sessions, if needed increase the space available (R, L, I)</li> <li>possible activation of distance learning for part of the classes of high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>closure of schools/universities the scope and duration of which are to be defined on the basis of the epidemiological situation, activating distance learning where possible (R)</li> </ul>

SCENARIO 3  
Sustained and widespread transmission with risks in the ability of the health system to cope in the medium-term



of measures (escalation/de-escalation) based on the weekly risk classification  
of sustained and widespread transmission with risks in the ability  
of the health system to cope in the medium-term (scenario 3)

# What next?



# Building on lessons learned

- Lesson 1: Decisive leadership is essential
- Lesson 2: We need a plan
- Lesson 3: An early warning system linked to effective governance mechanism is essential
- Lesson 4: A trained, motivated and equipped workforce is essential
- Lesson 5: A strong society underpins a strong pandemic response



# Building on a One Health approach



“OH preparedness can enhance our understanding of risk factors of complex global health threats at the human-animal-environment interface.

It can also prove a new point of view from which we can hypothesize future potential scenarios and adapt national and regional prevention and preparedness strategies, to counteract the current megatrends that are damaging our entire planet



# We need to **bridge the Gap** between One Health Research and Public Health





# Challenges



World Business Markets Breakingviews Video More

WORLD NEWS NOVEMBER 30, 2020 / 6:30 PM / UPDATED 3 YEARS AGO

## WHO worried COVID 'amnesia' will lead to another pandemic

By Reuters Staff

3 MIN READ

GENEVA (Reuters) - The World Health Organization's top emergency expert on Monday that the world risked future pandemics if it suffered "amnesia" and did not learn from the current coronavirus crisis.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-who-origins-idINKBN28A2IG>



The screenshot shows the WHO website with a blue header containing navigation links: Health Topics, Countries, Newsroom, Emergencies, Data, and About WHO. Below the header, three large, colorful cards are displayed:

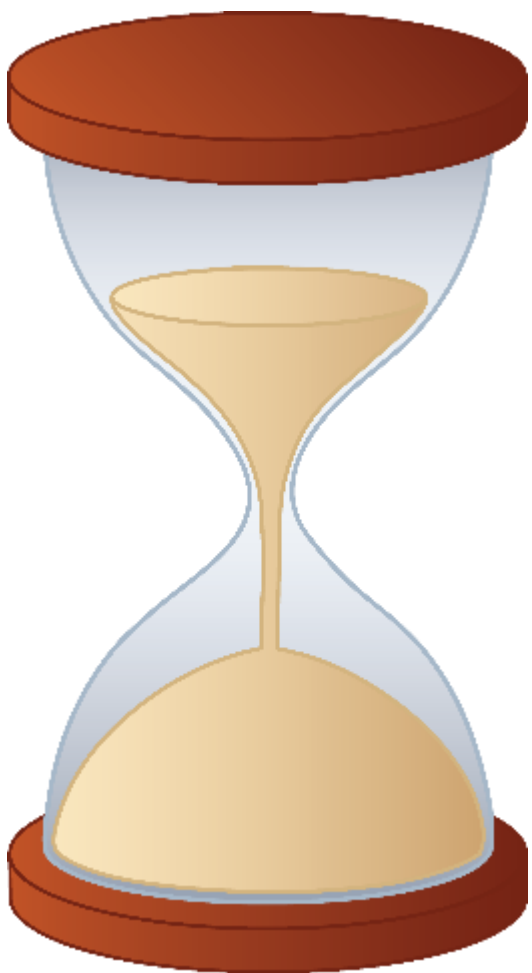
- COVID-19 pandemic:** Features a blue background with virus particles. Text includes "COVID-19 pandemic" and an orange button labeled "All information".
- Monkeypox:** Features a dark background with a cluster of orange virus particles. Text includes "Monkeypox" and an orange button labeled "Learn more".
- Ukraine emergency:** Features a background image of a crowd of people. Text includes "Ukraine emergency" and an orange button labeled "Access latest information".

**What Data for which Action when**

# Having to make decisions...

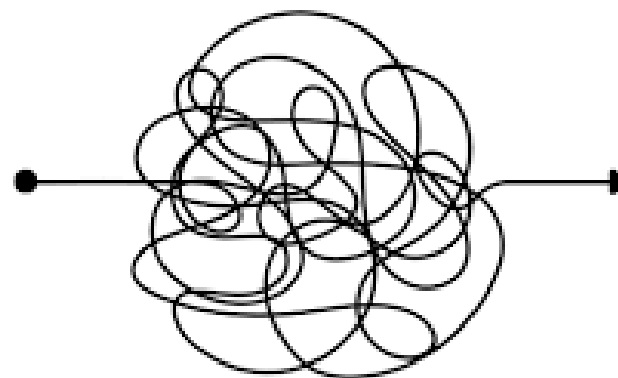


.... With little scientific evidence and many uncertainties



“The COVID-19 pandemic—caused by SARS CoV-2—is a typical *wicked problem*—we did not see it coming, we experience its effects, and it challenges our entrained ways of thinking and acting.

*J.P. Strumberg, C.M. Martin. J. Eval. Clin. Pract. 2020*



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**EDITORIAL**

Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice  
International Journal of Public Health Policy and Health Services Research

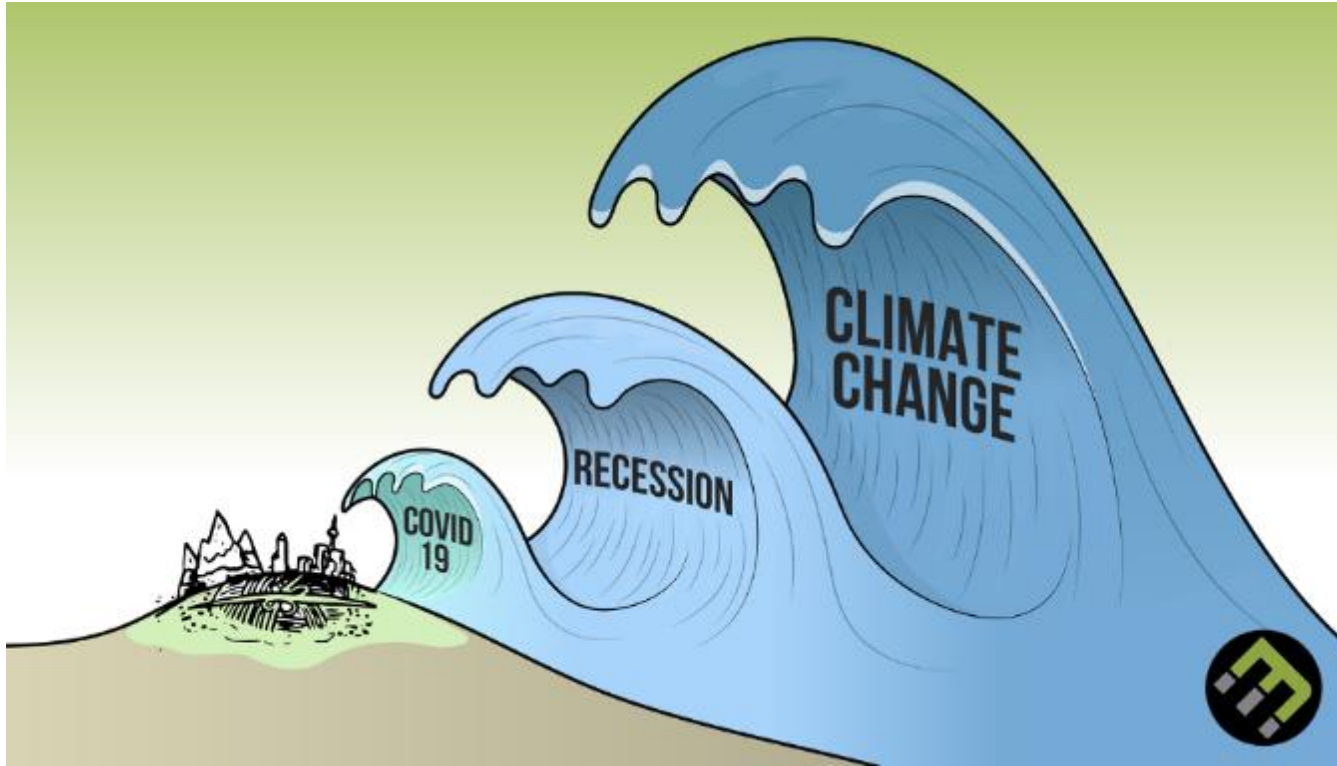


WILEY

**COVID-19 – how a pandemic reveals that *everything is connected to everything else***



# Not the only «wicked» problem on our plate

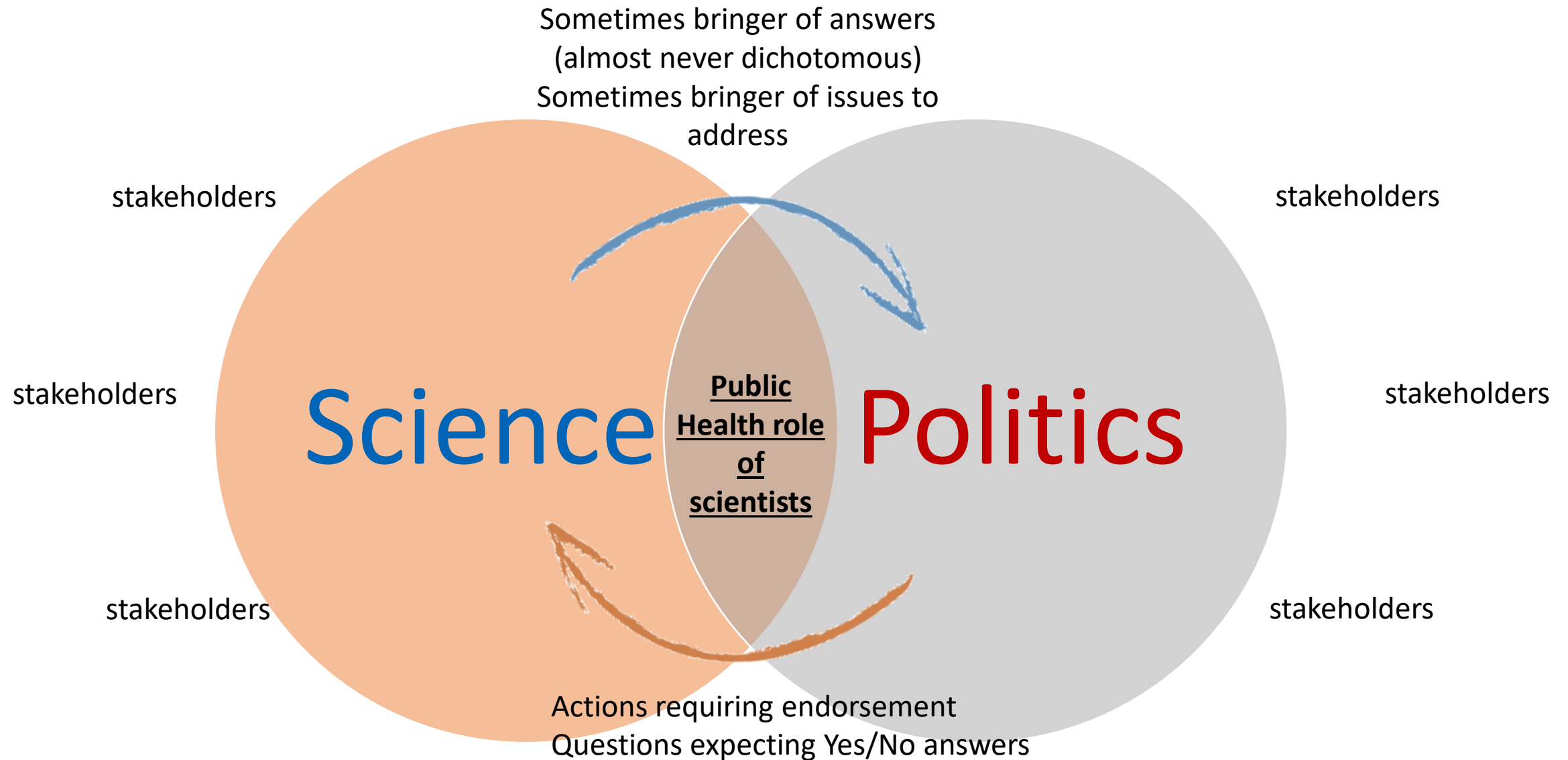


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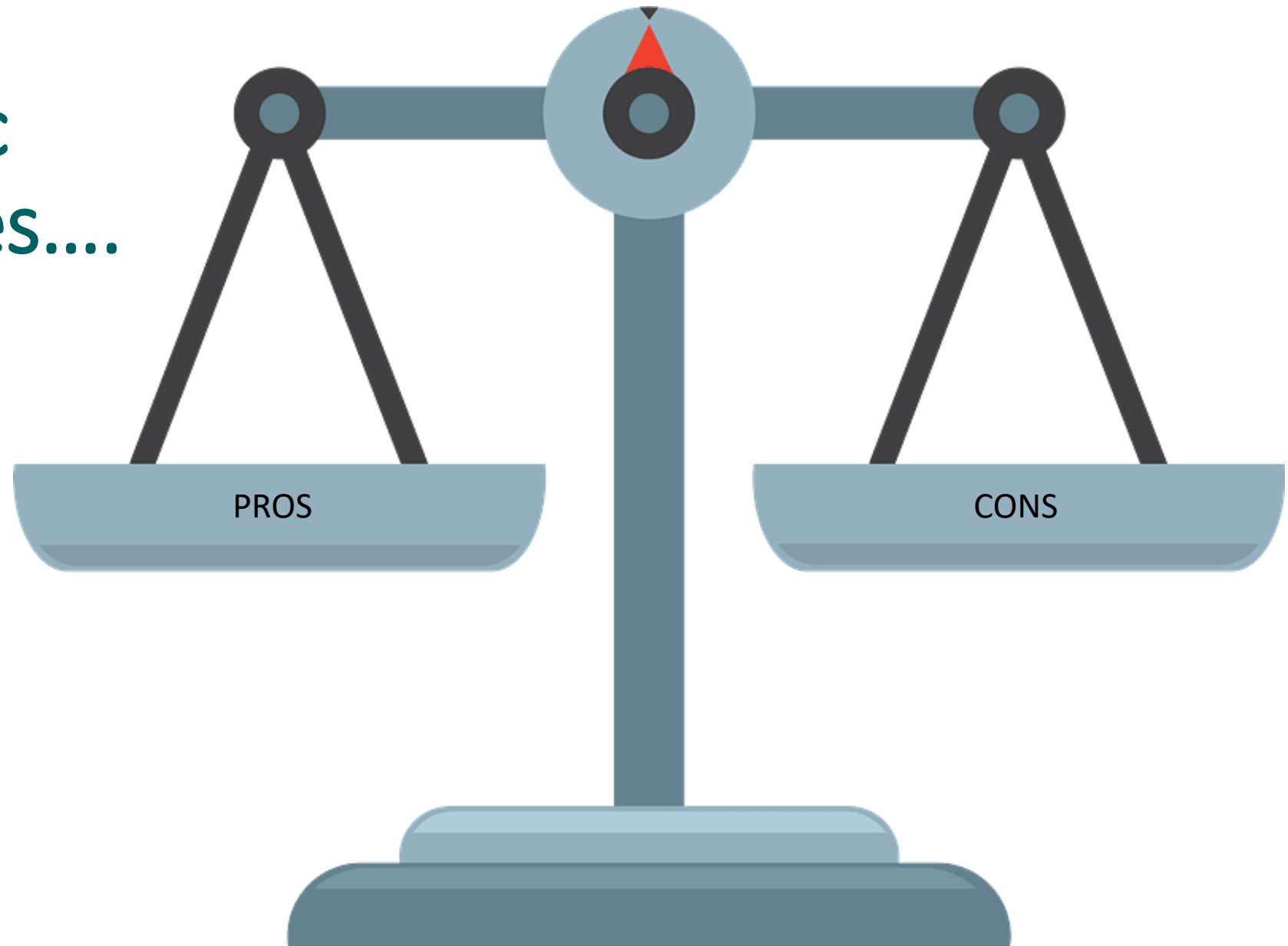
**“Super Wicked Problems” – The  
Coronavirus Pandemic as an Analogy for  
Future Sustainability Challenges**

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# Relationship between science and politics



# Balancing Public Health Strategies....

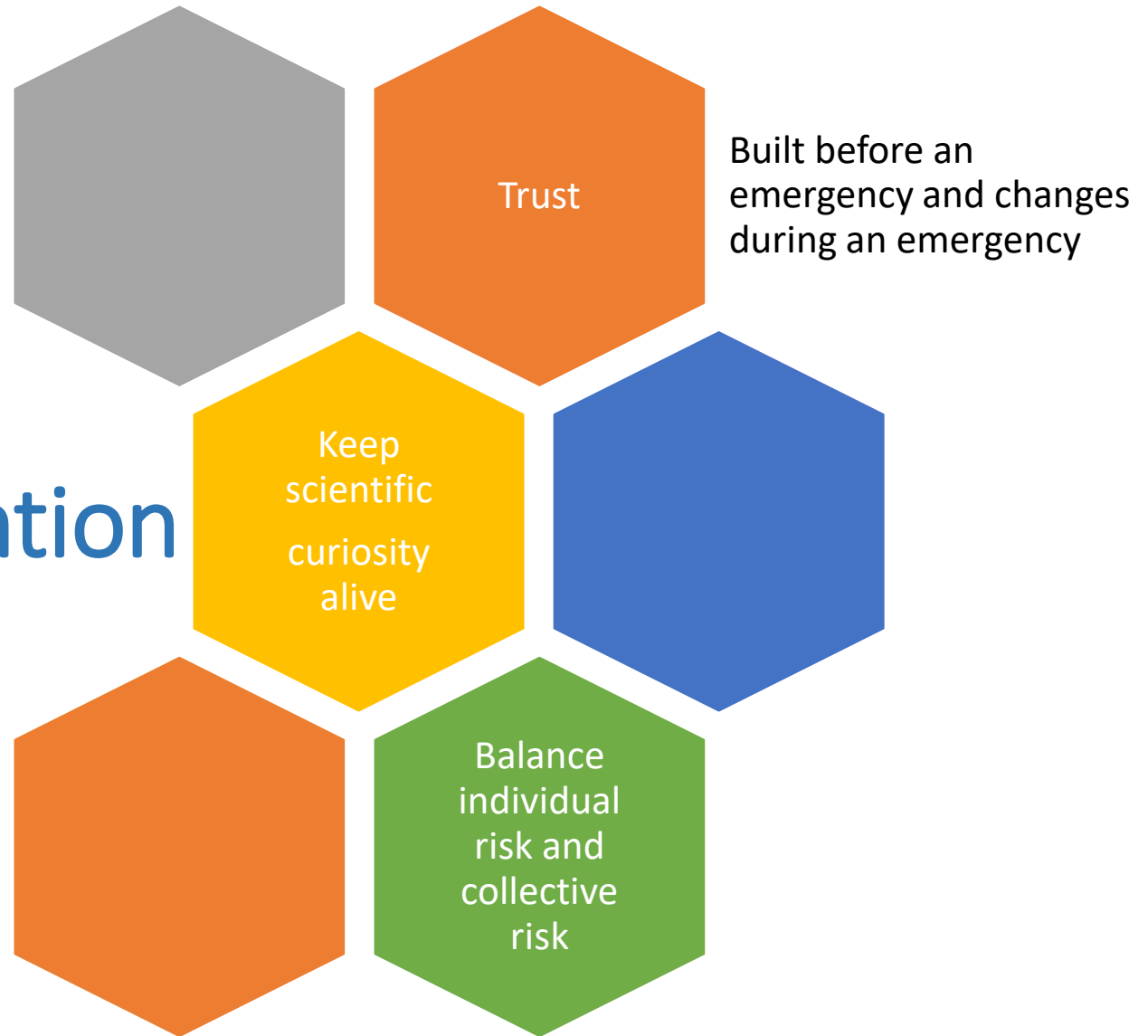


# ... in the midst of communication complexity





# Thanks for your attention



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