Status, Trends and Recommendations

Covid-19: Stakeholders Update – Week 51

A nine pager

OSM MARITIME

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Global epidemiological situation

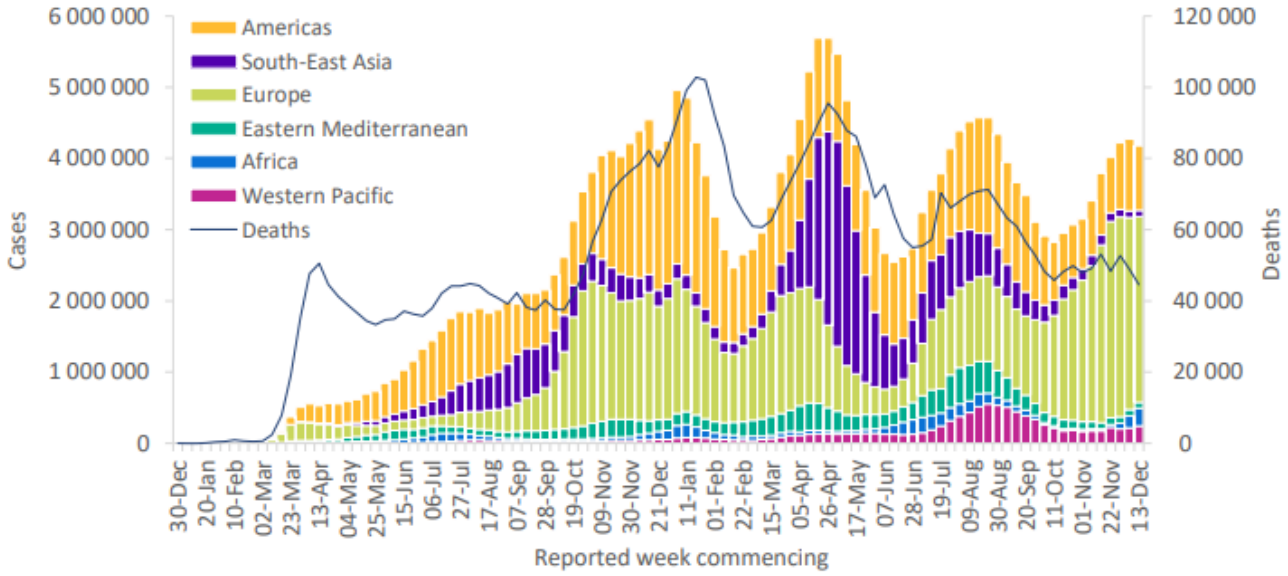
During the week 13-19 December, the global number of new cases remained similar to those reported during the previous week (Table 1); however, the weekly incidence of deaths decreased by 9%. Nonetheless, this corresponds to over 4.1 million new cases and just under 45 000 new deaths. As of 19 December, over 273 million cases and over 5.3 million deaths have been reported globally (Figure 1).

The African Region continued to report the largest increase in new cases in the last week (53%), followed by the Western Pacific Region, which reported an increase of 12%. The South-East Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean regions both reported decreases of 12% and the Region of the Americas reported a 10% decrease. The number of new weekly cases reported by the European Region was similar to the numbers reported in the previous week.

Table 1. Newly reported and cumulative COVID-19 confirmed cases and deaths, by WHO Region, as of 19 December 2021**

WHO Region	New cases in last 7 days (%)	Change in new cases in last 7 days *	Cumulative cases (%)	New deaths in last 7 days (%)	Change in new deaths in last 7 days *	Cumulative deaths (%)
Europe	2 611 478 (63%)	-3%	94 345 936 (35%)	26 802 (60%)	-7%	1 626 294 (30%)
Americas	904 789 (22%)	-10%	99 606 828 (36%)	10 255 (23%)	-15%	2 384 550 (45%)
Africa	256 031 (6%)	53%	6 778 548 (2%)	564 (1%)	15%	154 330 (3%)
Western Pacific	239 159 (6%)	12%	10 823 510 (4%)	3 144 (7%)	-6%	150 683 (3%)
South-East Asia	86 545 (2%)	-12%	44 823 551 (16%)	2 475 (6%)	-6%	716 778 (13%)
Eastern Mediterranean	79 620 (2%)	-12%	17 016 594 (6%)	1 376 (3%)	-12%	313 674 (6%)
Global	**4 177 622 (100%)**	**-2%**	**273 395 731 (100%)**	**44 616 (100%)**	**-9%**	**5 346 322 (100%)**

Figure 1. COVID-19 cases reported weekly by WHO Region, and global deaths, as of 19 December 2021**

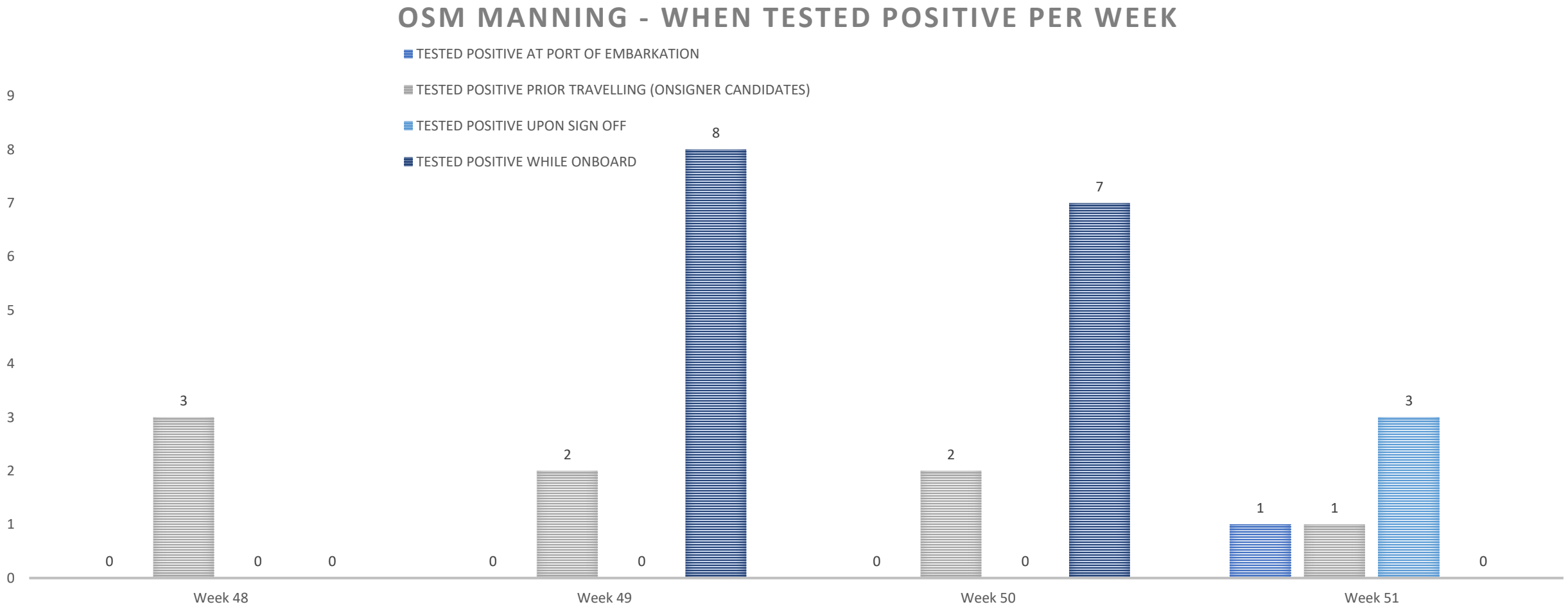


The African Region was the only region to report an increase in the number of new weekly deaths (15%). The Region of the Americas reported the largest decrease (15%), followed by the Eastern Mediterranean Region (12%), the European Region (7%) and the Western Pacific and South-East Asia Regions (both 6%).

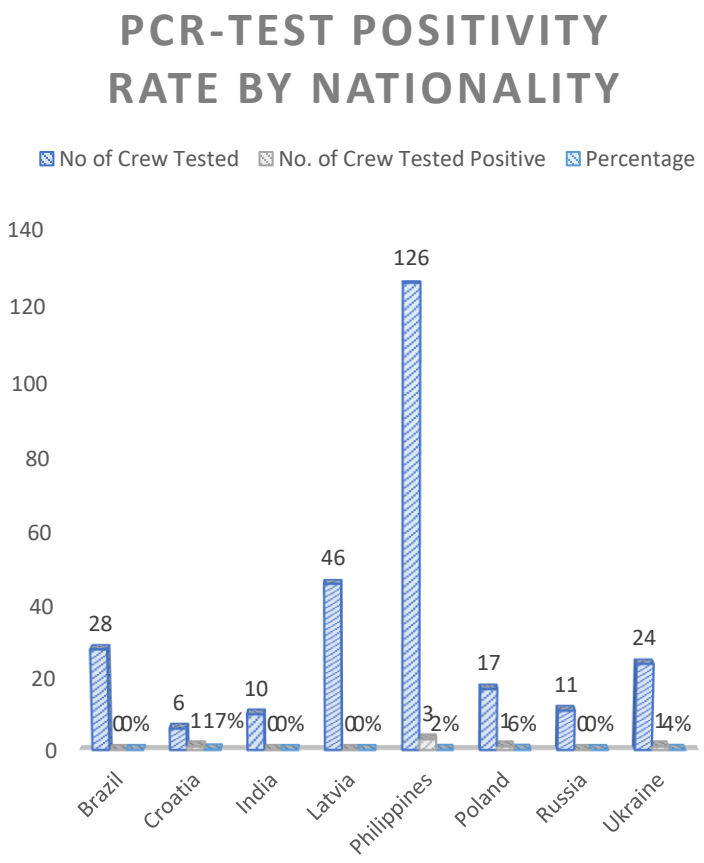
The European Region continued to report the highest incidence of weekly cases (279.9 new cases per 100 000 population), followed by the Region of the Americas (88.5 new cases per 100 000 population). Both regions also reported the highest weekly incidence in deaths of 2.9 and 1.0 per 100 000 population, respectively, while all other regions reported <1 new death per 100 000.

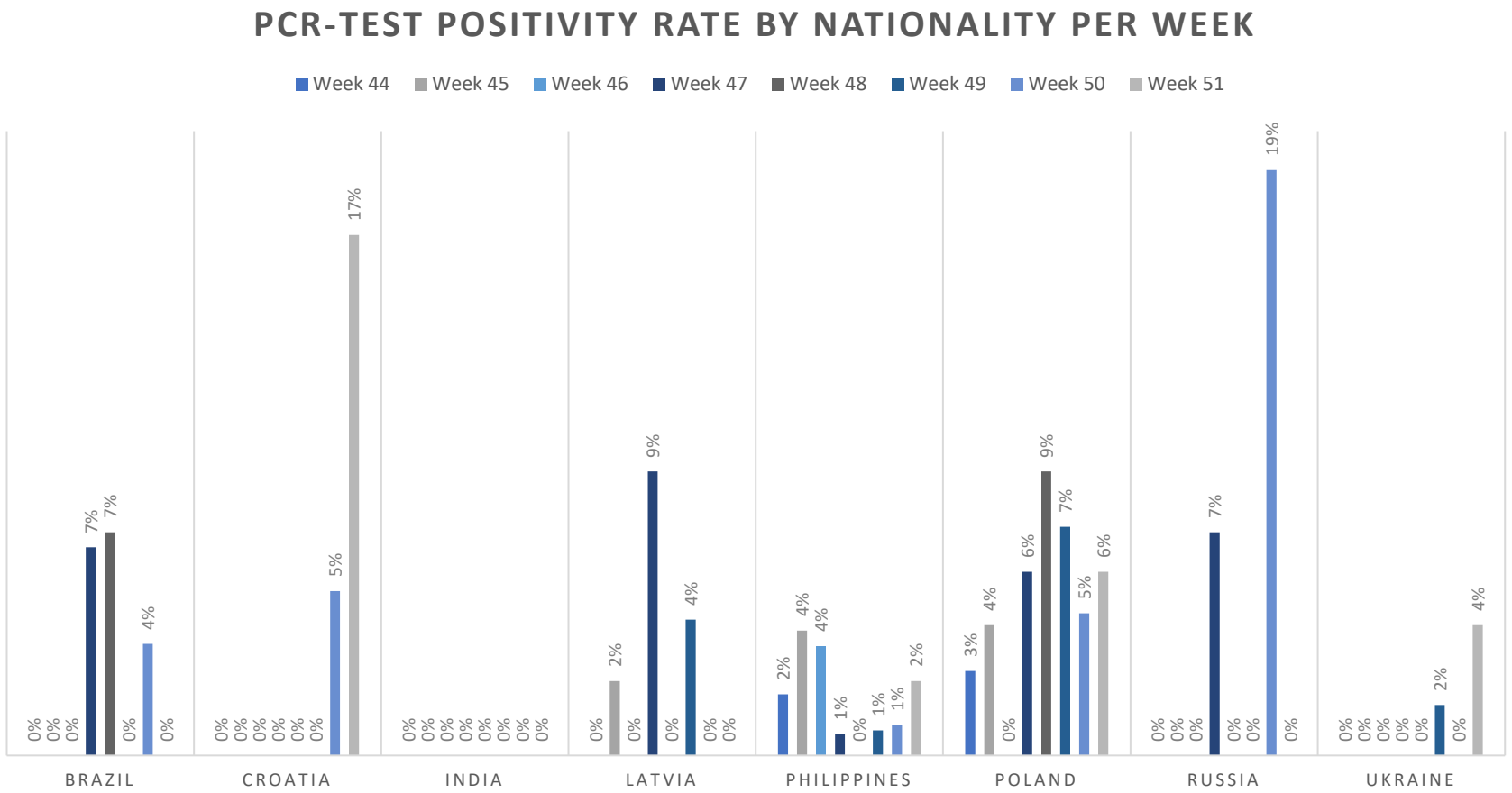
The highest numbers of new cases were reported from the United States of America (725 750 new cases; 12% decrease), the United Kingdom (507 984 new cases; 45% increase), France (358 175 new cases; 7% increase) and Germany (283 673 new cases; 19% decrease).

COVID-19 Stakeholders Update – Week 51



Comment: In week 51 we have a decrease of total figures compared to the week before. Of the 5 cases seen during this week 2 have occurred prior boarding (the ones before climbing up the gangway or even before travelling) what regarding virus avoidance onboard has been the goal. Then there were 3 cases tested positive upon sign off. Of these 3 cases there are no details available yet and hence will be reported later at this place

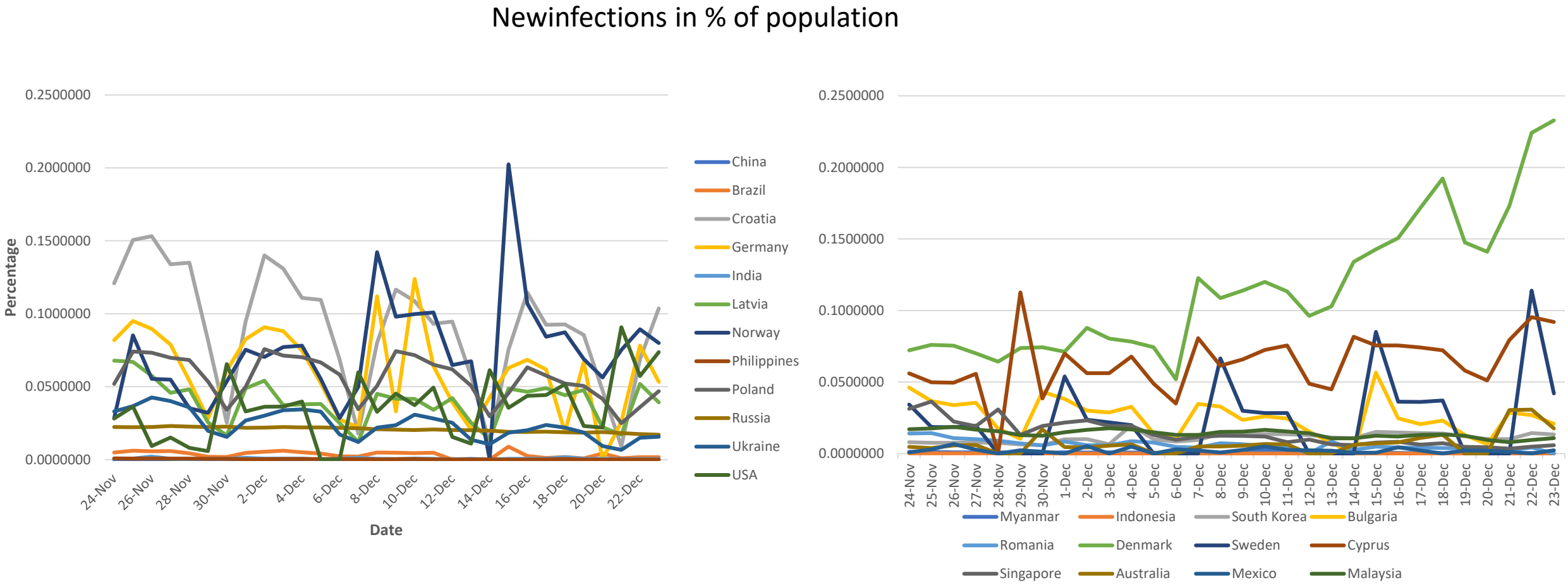




Positivity Rate:

For the respective week we have calculated the whole number of tested OSM seafarers and compared it with the number of positive results. If there was a multiple testing of a person, it was counted as one with respective outcome. We have pictured it by showing the different local percentages. E.g. Ukraine had 1 positive case out of 24 tested which equals to 4%.

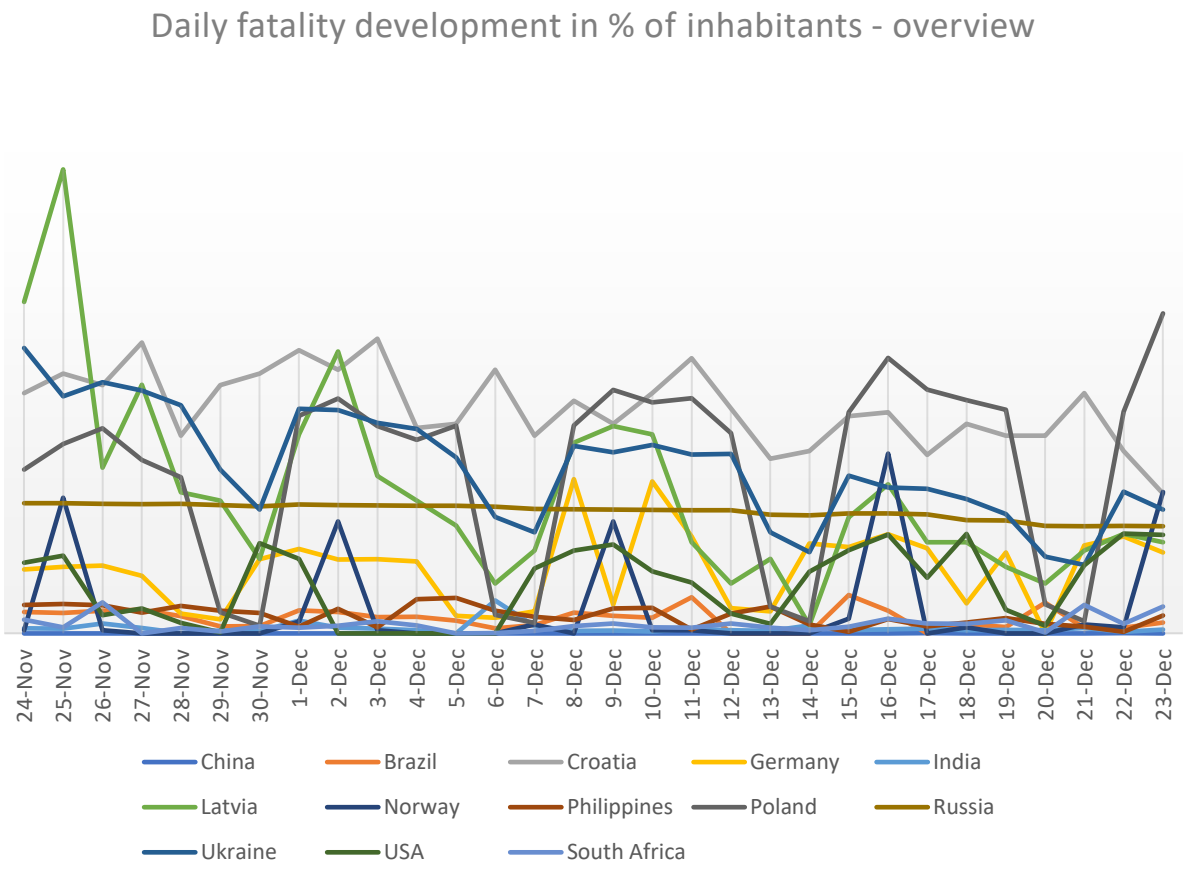
Covid-19: Newinfection ratio

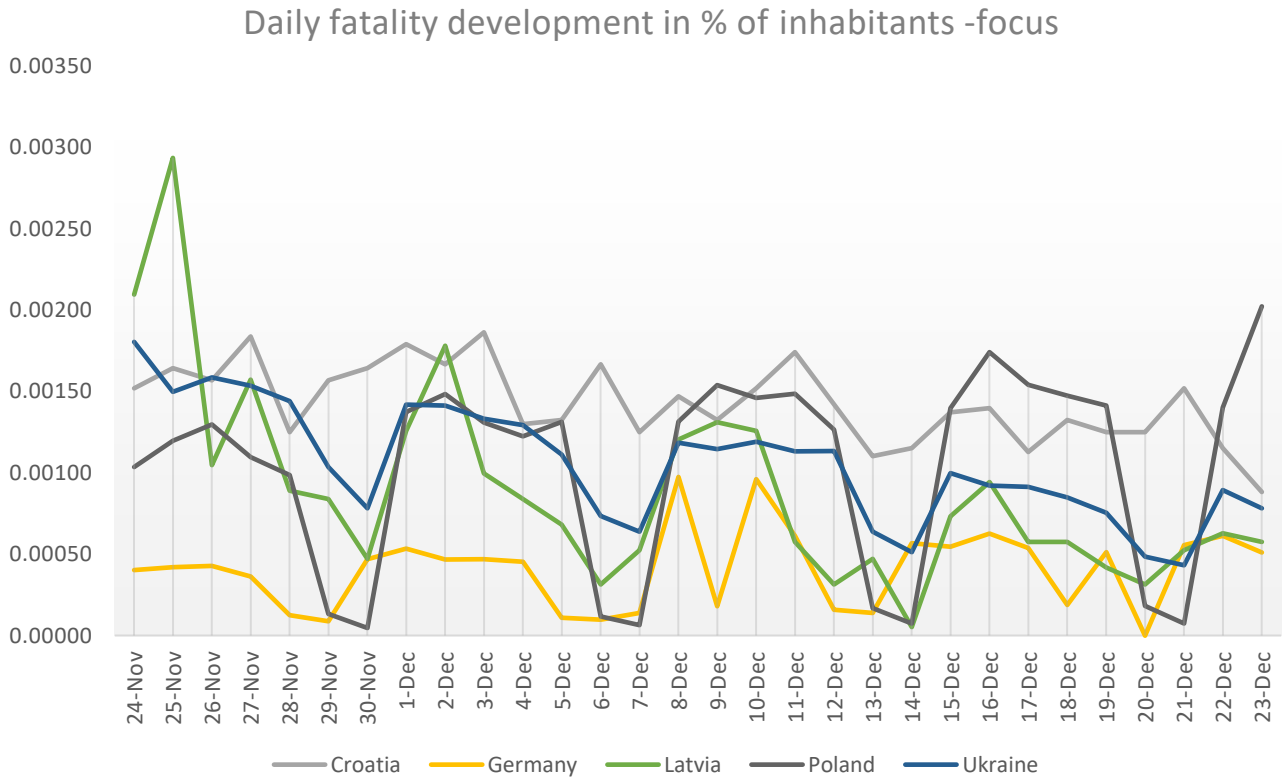


Looking at the home countries of our seafarers we want to give an overview about trends and threats. In order to have a comparable base the number of daily newinfections has been put in relation to the number of inhabitants – resulting in a percentage figure. It has to be considered that infection figures are also increasing in case a country decides to go for a higher testing frequency due to the extremely high dark figure of infections without symptoms. We see in the graphs the following trend: Particularly Croatia, Germany, USA, Poland and Norway are showing extremely high infection figures but we have now also very high figures at Denmark and Cyprus.

Sources: WikipediaThe New York TimesJHU CSSE COVID-19 DataEuropäisches Zentrum für die Prävention und die Kontrolle von Krankheiten

Covid-19: Fatality ratio I



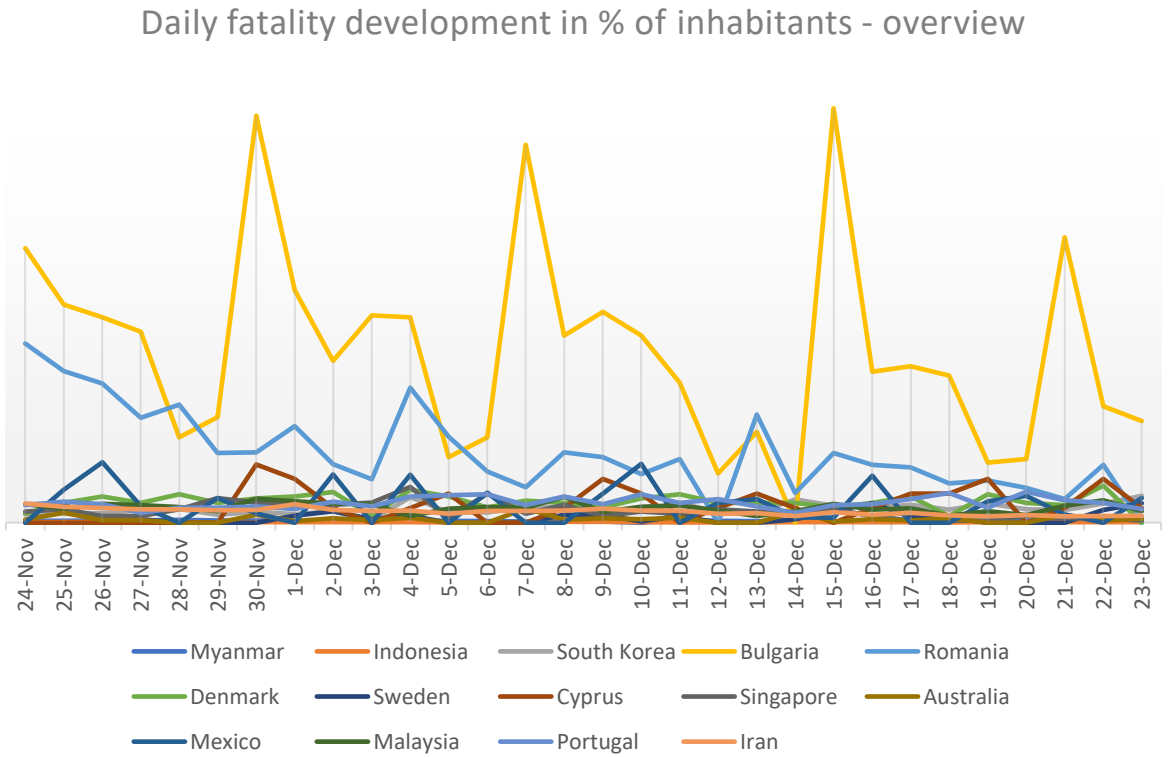


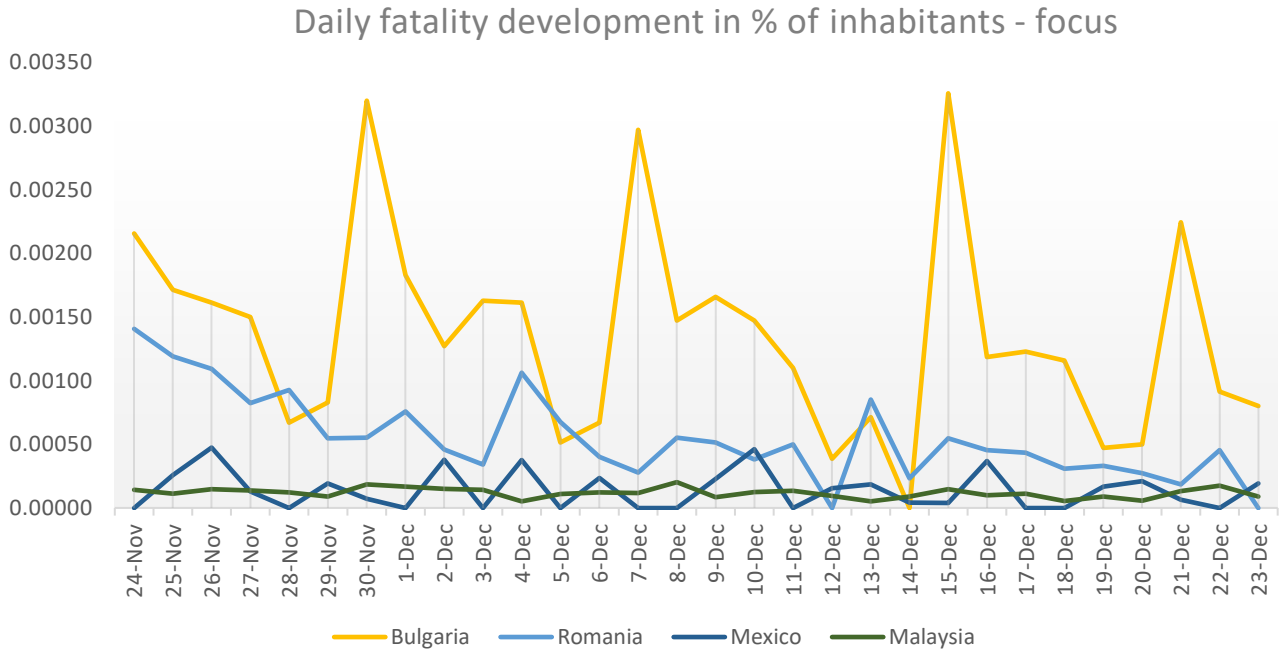
We are observing that the level of new infections is not any longer a suitable “fever thermometer” for the situation of this pandemic – at least not as the only one. This particularly is the case in countries with a high percentage of vaccinated inhabitants. In most of these countries people have been vaccinated already who are the most vulnerable, like the ones having health issues or elderly people. In turn if infections are occurring then it will more affect people who –in average- are younger and/or less sick. Accordingly infections there (only in the mentioned countries of high vaccination ratios!) are leading less likely to hospitalization or even fatalities. Consequently if an increasing number of fatalities has to be noted then most likely

Sources: WikipediaThe New York TimesJHU CSSE COVID-19 DataEuropäisches Zentrum für die Prävention und die Kontrolle von Krankheiten

Covid-19: Fatality ratio II

this needs to be seen as a sign that -beside the most obvious reason that not vaccinated people are affected- the vaccination level is not sufficient any more due to expiry of immunization triggers or/and (much more important!) the influence of new virus strains.
Hence presently it looks like the sickness is affecting less elderly and “vulnerable” people but is turning towards the not vaccinated ones and is more and more finding its victims in this circle. This change is not visible while looking at the numbers of new infections only. The threat of Covid-19 then is recognizable only in numbers of hospitalization and fatalities. The worldwide rate of hospitalization is not available but the one of fatalities is. Hence for time being we will picture new infections and fatalities – both calculated in percentage of inhabitants in order to have a comparable base even between countries of completely different population size.





Sources: WikipediaThe New York TimesJHU CSSE COVID-19 DataEuropäisches Zentrum für die Prävention und die Kontrolle von Krankheiten

Covid-19: Research – Percentage of Asymptomatic Infections

Research published 14th of December 2021 – share of asymptomatic cases among tested population and among confirmed positive cases

Question: What is the percentage of asymptomatic individuals with positive test results for SARS-CoV-2 among tested individuals and those with confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis?
Review: End of January 2021 worldwide there have been 100.455.529 confirmed Covid-19 cases including 2.166.440 deaths
Proceeding I: Meta-analysis used results of 95 studies covering 29.776.306 tested individuals among the tested population and found among these 11.516 persons with asymptomatic infections ➔ pooled percentage 0.25%
Proceeding II: Meta-analysis used results of 77 studies covering 19.884 individuals with confirmed Covid-19, among those 11.069 were the individuals without symptoms ➔ pooled percentage 40.50 % with following specific segments of **asymptomatic** infections:
Individuum related:
54.11 % in pregnant women
52.91 % in air or cruise travelers
47.53 % in nursing home residents or staff
39.74 % in community residents
30.01 % in health care workers or in hospital patients
Area related:
46.32 % in North America
44.18 % in Europe
27.58 % in Asia

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2787098

Evaluation I: In these studies huge parts of population have been tested and only 0.25% have been found positive at that time

Evaluation II: If caught at all by the virus, best chance not to get symptoms is for pregnant women in North America

Conclusion I: More than 40 % of the positives have no symptoms but do have the infection and are spreaders. Almost every second of the positives might not even feel and know that they are a threat for others
Conclusion II: As we don`t know where the threat is coming from for protection we need to wear masks in public and we need to be vaccinated

Covid-19: How to protect crew member and vessel

Recommendations

In case of significant Covid-19 activity in specific home countries of on- signing seafarers and at same time knowing that PCR testing in many cases cannot find the virus we strongly recommend following procedure to be kept at least:

	Not or only incompletely vaccinated	**Fully vaccinated (with 2 weeks after 2nd dose of Covid vaccine - if J&J/Sputnik Light then 2 respectively 4 weeks after one jab) and joining a vessel with fully vaccinated crew**
1. Self isolation of the seafarer at home for 10 days	Fully applicable	None
2. Transfer of the seafarer by usage of a single passenger car	Fully applicable	None
3. Company facilitated quarantine location realized in a hotel with complete separation of the person including meals served at the room	Fully applicable	Fully applicable
4. Quarantine for a timespan	Between 8 days and 14 days	Between 5 days and 7 days
5. First PCR testing at beginning of the quarantine	Day 1 of quarantine	Day 1 of quarantine
6. Second PCR testing ealiest at	8th day of quarantine	5th day of quarantine
7. Transfer and leaving of quarantine earliest when result of second PCR test is received and negative	Fully applicable	Fully applicable
8. PCR test at country of boarding the vessel	Fully applicable	Fully applicable
9. Strict usage of covid-19 PPE for transfers, flights and for any other occasion potentially contact can occur with third parties	Fully applicable	Fully applicable