



*AFEW International's*  
COVID-19 situation report in the six countries of  
the Eastern Partnership

Prepared for the COVID-19 Solidarity Programme



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## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Regional overview .....	4
Situation report Armenia .....	5
Situation report Azerbaijan .....	7
Situation report Belarus .....	9
Situation report Georgia .....	10
Situation report Republic of Moldova .....	12
Situation report Ukraine .....	13

## Introduction

In the framework of the EU COVID-19 Solidarity Programme for Eastern Partnership, *AFEW International*, People in Need (PIN) and Netherlands Helsinki Committee (NHC) joined forces to propose a set of interventions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute towards longer-term socio-economic resilience of vulnerable groups.

One of the activities in this project is the collection of information on the epidemiology of COVID-19, the measures taken by local governments to contain the epidemic and information on access to health services. This report doesn't give conclusions or recommendations for the next steps; the report functions as an information resource as support for the development of (new) interventions.

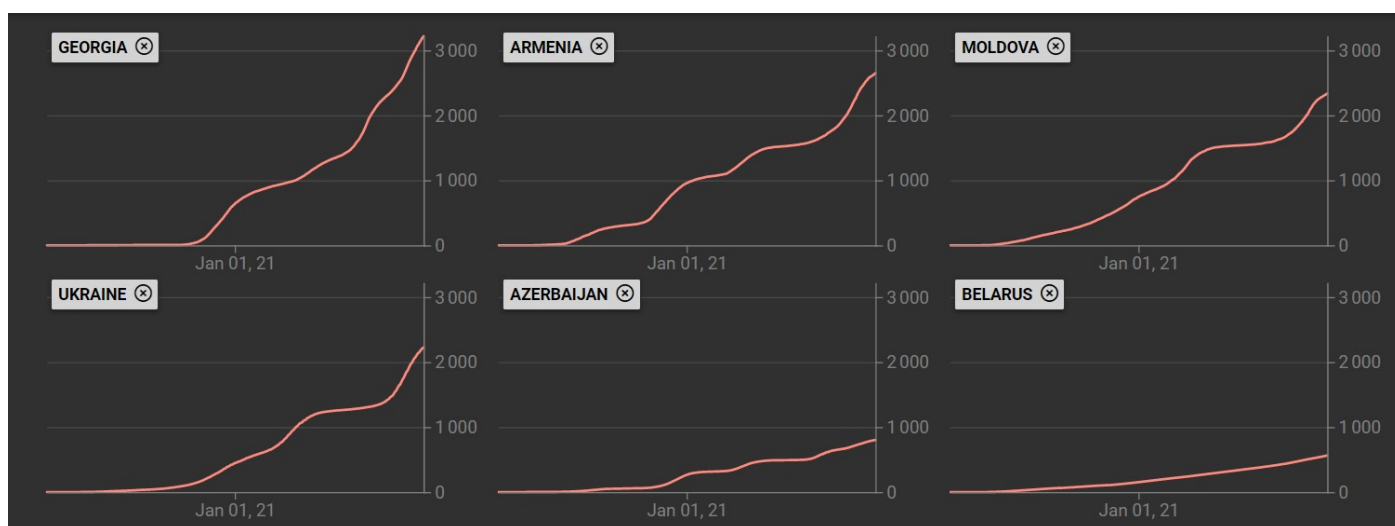
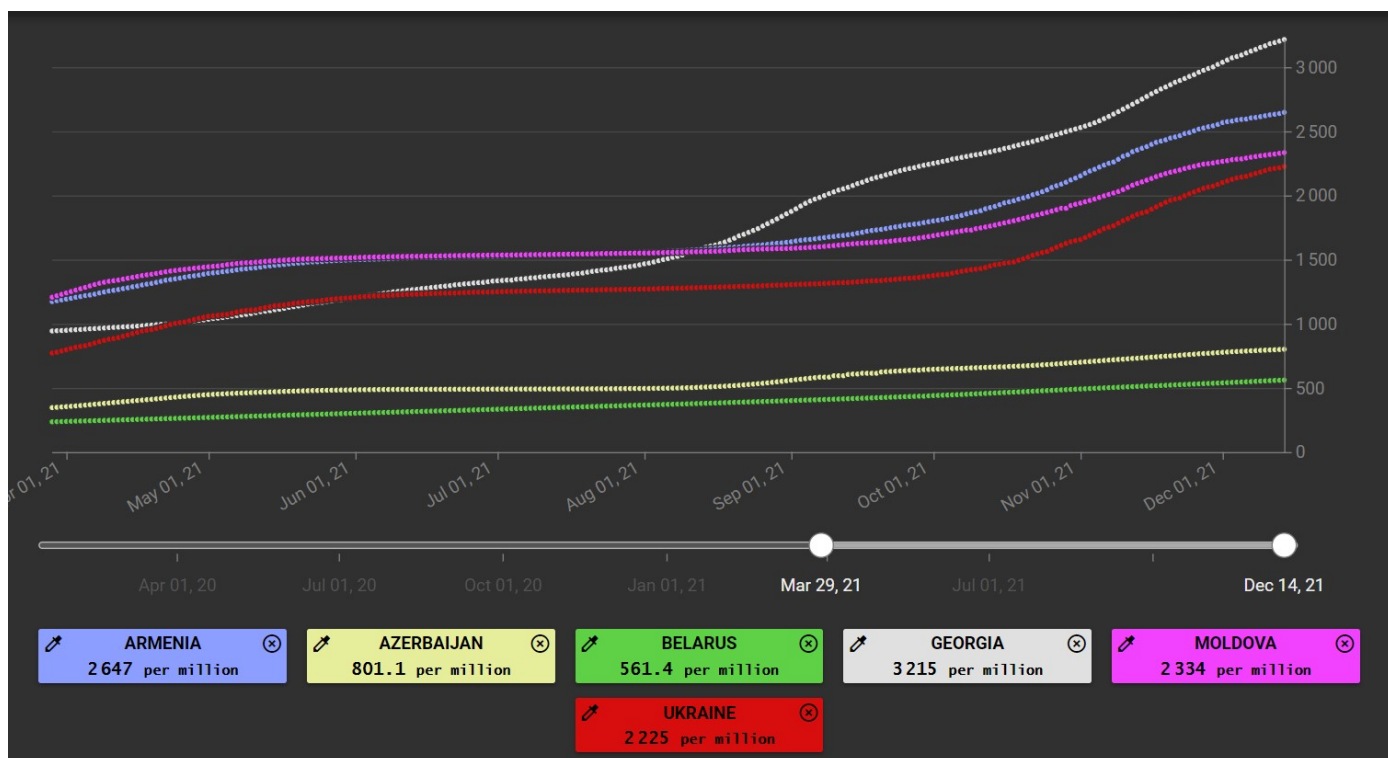
This report gives an overview of the period 1 October – 15 December 2021, the fifth quarter of the implementation period of the project. Such a report will be produced for every quarter of the project duration.

For this report the following sources are used:

- WHO Health System Response Monitor (HSRM);
- Official sources on the coronavirus situation in the countries;
  - Reports on the COVID-19 situation prepared by the UNICEF, UN, OECD, International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR);
- Global news agencies;
- Local independent media.

## Regional overview

Graph 1,2. Total confirmed COVID-19 cases per population ratio since March 29, 2021, in the countries of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) as of 15.12.2021<sup>1</sup>



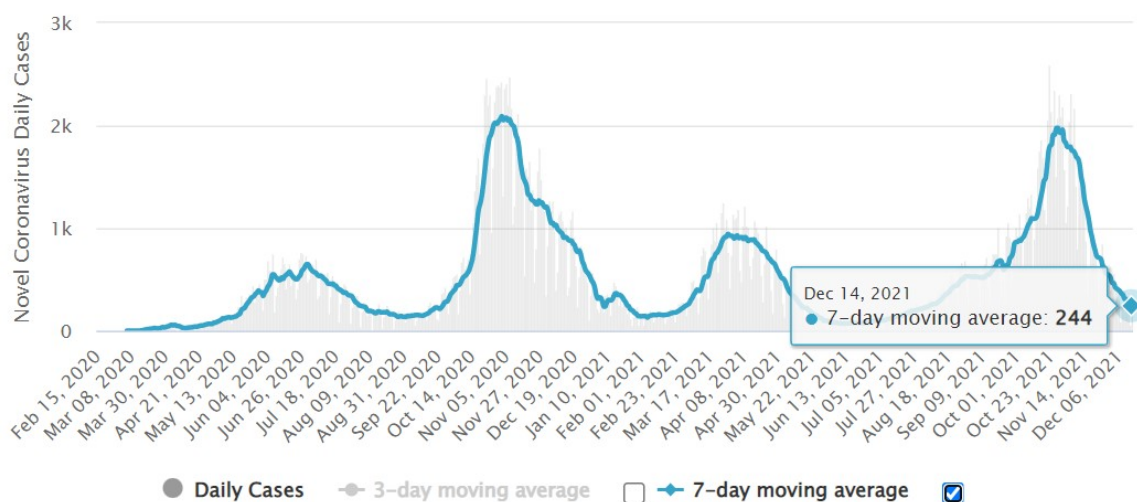
<sup>1</sup> Sciences Po Medialab Coronavirus Country Comparator. <https://boogheta.github.io/coronavirus-countries/> accessed 15-12-2021.

## Situation report Armenia

as of 15.12.2021



Confirmed	Recovered	Deaths
342,977	326,559	7,856



Graph 3. Daily confirmed coronavirus cases in Armenia<sup>2</sup>

### Cases of COVID-19

— Two months after [Armenia](#) introduced strict COVID-19 restrictions on October 1 that made vaccinations near-mandatory amid record death rates, daily case numbers have dropped significantly, but the country is still battling a strong vaccine denial movement.

— New reported infections [remain relatively high](#) at more than 500 a day but have dropped from more than 2,000 in late October.

### Measures to contain the epidemic

— Since October 1, most unvaccinated public and private sector employees are required to take a PCR test twice a month at their own expense, with prices amounting to roughly \$20 each time – a significant sum considering the average monthly salary is little more than \$400.

— New restrictions will be introduced to stop the spread of the omicron Covid-19 variant in Armenia. To prevent this new, so-called African strain from entering the country, the entry of citizens of African countries will be temporarily restricted. In addition, toughening of antiviral measures inside Armenia is expected.

— From January 1, 2022, Armenians will not be able to visit theaters, museums, restaurants and cafes without a vaccination certificate or a negative coronavirus test.

<sup>2</sup> Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/armenia/> accessed 15-12-2021.

### *Vaccination*

- Armenia [remains](#) the country with the lowest vaccination rates in the Caucasus region country, with its deaths from coronavirus averaging more than 30 a day – a big number considering it has a population of just three million. It has one of the world’s highest per capita death tolls, according to Our World in Data website.
- About [15 percent](#) of the population has now been doubly vaccinated, compared with five percent when new restrictions were brought in on October 1.

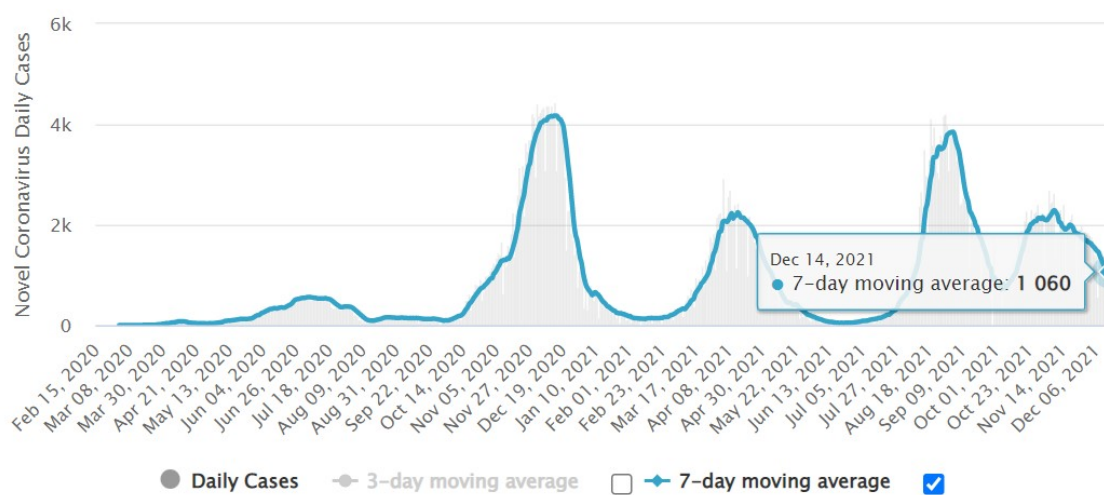
## Situation report Azerbaijan

as of 15.12.2021



Confirmed	Recovered	Deaths
605,920	578,756	8,123

Graph 4. Daily confirmed coronavirus cases in Azerbaijan<sup>3</sup>



### Cases of COVID-19

— Community spread of COVID-19 [is occurring](#) in Azerbaijan, and COVID-19 infections are present in all regions the country.

### Measures to contain the epidemic

— The special quarantine regime will remain in effect until January 1, 2022, according to an October 29, 2021 decision by Azerbaijan's [Cabinet of Ministers](#).

— Effective May 31, 2021 masks are no longer required in outdoor spaces, but remain obligatory indoors, subject to fines. Most public transportation, including the Baku Metro, reopened on May 31 for weekday operations, and resumed weekend operation beginning October 1, 2021. As of June 10, 2021, beaches, sport and health centers, places of religious worship, malls, and shopping centers are reopened, subject to COVID-related restrictions.

— On September 2, 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers [announced](#) that foreigners may use their COVID-19 passport (or a document confirming full vaccination against COVID-19 or immunity to COVID-19) issued abroad to enter restaurants, hotels, large shopping centers, and other facilities that require a COVID-19 passport.

— The Cabinet of Ministers also [announced](#) that, beginning October 1, 2021 recreation and entertainment venues, cultural facilities, and cinemas will be allowed to operate at fifty percent capacity; proof of vaccination will be required for those 18 and over. Schools are open for a mix of in-person and remote learning.

<sup>3</sup> Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/azerbaijan> accessed 15-12-2021.

### *Vaccination*

- More than 4.5 million people in Azerbaijan, which is slightly less than half of the country's population of ten million, have now been vaccinated against Covid-19 by receiving both doses within vaccination program administered by the government.
- According to the latest data compiled by the Operative Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan, more than 10.3 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been administered in the country since the start of the mass inoculation in January 2021. The number of receivers of the first dose is 5.05 million.
- In the meantime, around 740,961 people have been given a Covid-19 vaccine booster shot, an extra dose that helps improve the protection created by the previous two doses.

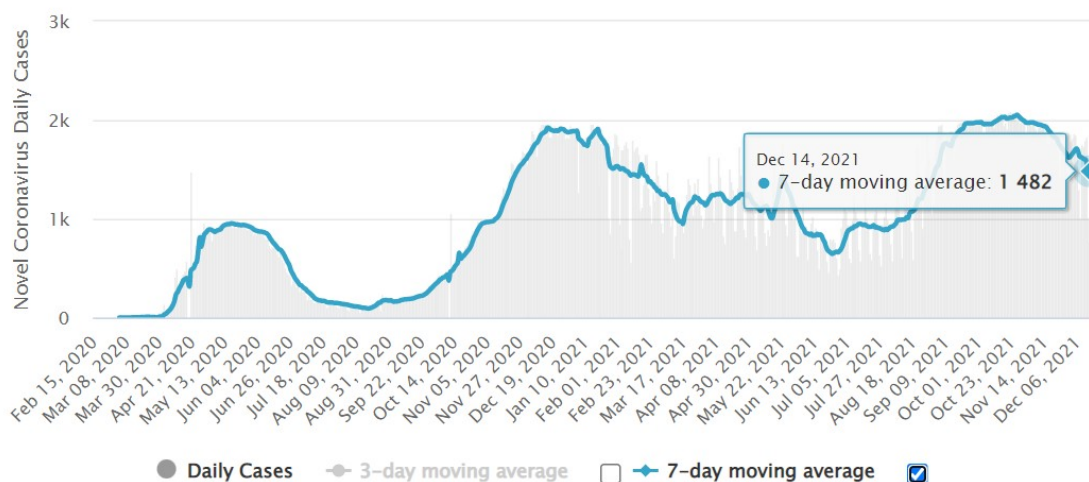


## Situation report Belarus

as of 15.12.2021



Confirmed	Recovered	Deaths
678,277	669,068	5,322



Graph 5. Daily confirmed coronavirus cases in Belarus<sup>4</sup>

### Cases of COVID-19

— Coronavirus morbidity and mortality rates [on the rise](#) in Belarus.

### Measures to contain the epidemic

— [On October 22](#), Belarusian government abolished face masks mandate completely.

### Vaccination

— The vaccination rate in Belarus remains very low: only about a [quarter of the population](#) is estimated to have received a double dose of the available vaccines.

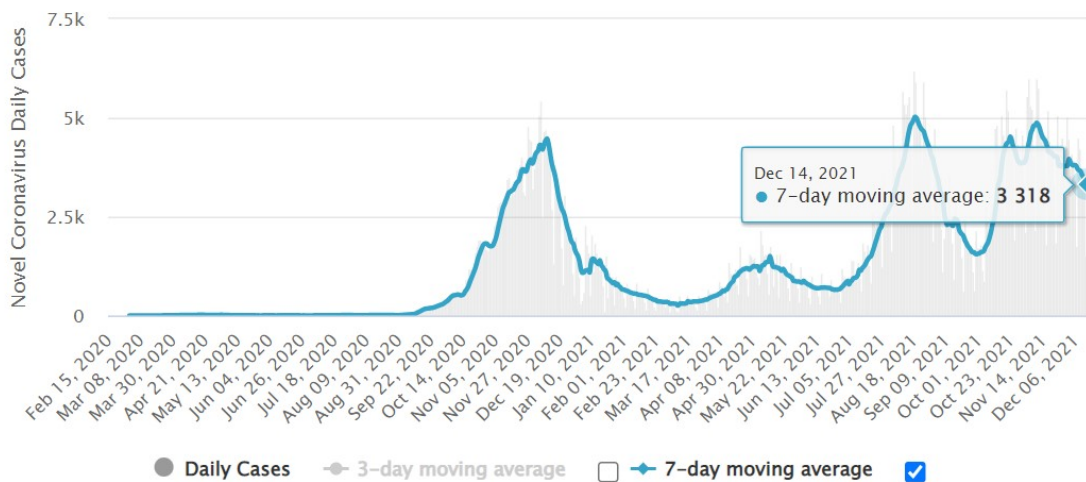
<sup>4</sup> Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/belarus> accessed 15-12-2021.

## Situation report Georgia

as of 15.12.2021



Confirmed	Recovered	Deaths
898,079	844,875	12,879



Graph 6. Daily confirmed coronavirus cases in Georgia<sup>5</sup>

### Cases of COVID-19

— COVID-19 infections are decreasing in Georgia, with 3,181 new infections reported on average each day. That's 63% of the peak — the highest daily average reported on August 18.

### Measures to contain the epidemic

— Covid-19 'green' passes have come into force in Georgia on December 1, obliging the public to present proof of vaccination, testing or recovery from Covid-19 when entering certain establishments.

### Vaccination

— A total 35.6 percent of the adult Georgian population is fully vaccinated, according to the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC).

— The number of fully vaccinated individuals stands at 1,017,374, while those who have received their first shots stands at 1,196,371.

— To boost the vaccination rate, the Georgian government has carried out a vaccination marathon by sending medical workers to rural areas of the country to talk to locals about the benefits of vaccination.

<sup>5</sup> Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/georgia> accessed 15-12-2021.

— Moreover, pensioners who are vaccinated against COVID-19 before January 1, 2022, will receive [200 GEL](#) (about \$63.29 / €54.71) pension bonuses.

— Booster shots of the Covid-19 vaccine will be permitted five months after getting the second shot of the Pfizer vaccine, down from the initially recommended six, the Georgian Health Ministry [reported on December 5](#).

#### *Education*

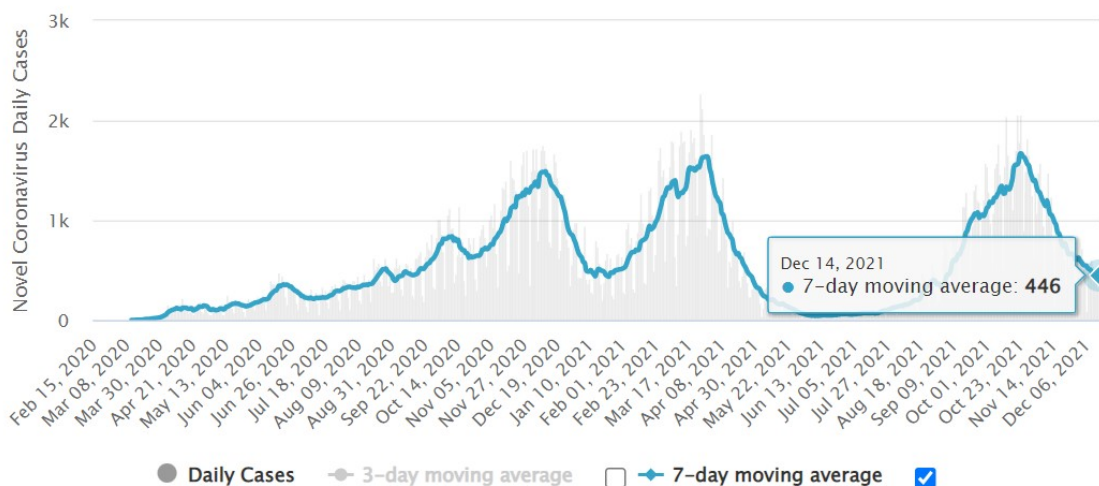
— Kindergartens in eastern Georgia's Gurjaani municipality did not resume operation on December 6 as scheduled due to rising coronavirus cases, the Association of Gurjaani Preschool Institutions reports. The acting head of the association, Shorena Frodiashvili, says that kindergartens are expected to open on January 15, 2022, RFE/RL's Georgian service [reports](#).

## Situation report Republic of Moldova

as of 15.12.2021



Confirmed	Recovered	Deaths
370,459	355,447	9,414



Graph 7. Daily confirmed coronavirus cases in the Republic of Moldova<sup>6</sup>

### Cases of COVID-19

— COVID-19 infections are decreasing in Moldova.

### Measures to contain the epidemic

— Upon entering Moldova, rapid tests for coronavirus will be carried out to everyone, without exception, right at the border.

— Moldovan authorities established new public health measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 infection at all public events and gatherings, both indoor and outdoor. Anyone over the age of 18 eating in a restaurant or café or attending any show, concert, festival, theater, cinema, concert hall, nightclub, dance floor, etc., must present one of the following documents: 1) a negative PCR COVID-19 test (taken in the last 72 hours) or an antigen test (taken in the last 48 hours); 2) a COVID-19 vaccine certificate (valid 14 days after the second dose); 3) a medical certificate attesting the person had COVID-19 in the previous 6 months; 4) a COVID-19 antibodies certificate valid for 90 days from the exam date.

### Vaccination

— Citizens of Moldova who have been vaccinated in the country or abroad have the opportunity to receive either an additional or a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

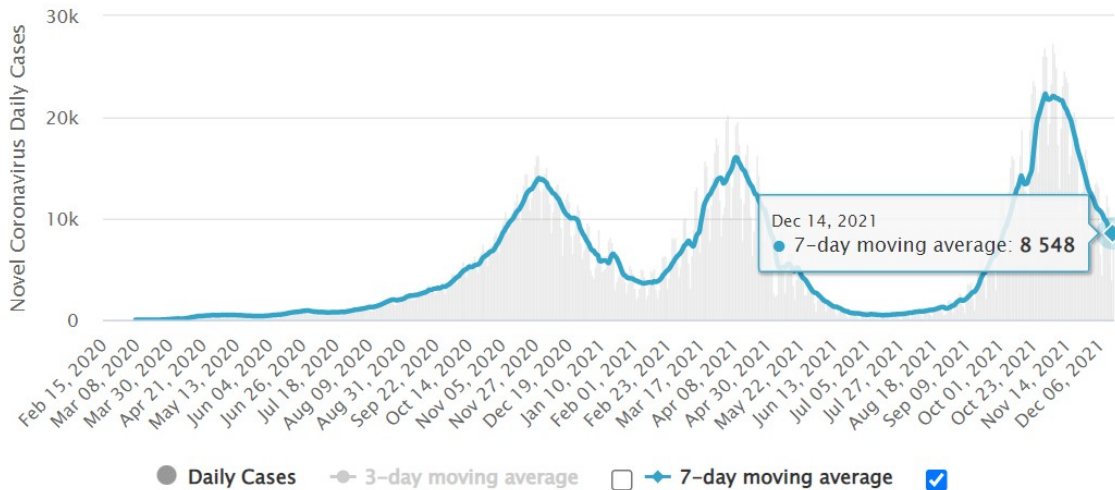
<sup>6</sup> Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/moldova> accessed 15-12-2021.

## Situation report Ukraine

as of 15.12.2021



Confirmed	Recovered	Deaths
3,578,557	3,259,316	91,958



Graph 8. Daily confirmed coronavirus cases in Ukraine<sup>7</sup>

### Cases of COVID-19

— COVID-19 infections [are decreasing](#) in Ukraine, with 8,548 new infections reported on average each day. That's 38% of the peak — the highest daily average reported on October 30.

### Measures to contain the epidemic

— Ukraine's government [will extend](#) COVID-19 restrictions for another three months, to March 31 from end-December, because of low levels of vaccination, Prime Minister Denys Shmygal said on December 15. "Until the level of vaccination in Ukraine reaches 70% of the population, we must adhere to all imposed restrictions," Shmygal said at a televised government meeting.

— [According to Ukrainian health ministry data](#), 12.6 million people have received two shots of COVID-19 vaccines out of a population of 41 million, while 3.6 million cases of infection and about 92,000 deaths have been registered.

### Vaccination

— Ukraine's health ministry [to approve](#) "additional shot" of COVID-19 vaccine for vulnerable groups.

<sup>7</sup> Worldometers. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/ukraine> accessed 15-12-2021.