

Measles cases surge amid Venezuela's crisis

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Venezuela, devastated by economic and political crises, accounted for 85 percent of cases of measles reported across Latin America and the Caribbean over the past year, the Pan-American Health Organization reports.

Of the 11 countries that reported [cases](#), Venezuela had the overwhelming majority of cases, but also 35 deaths since mid-2017, the international organization said.

More specifically, "there were eleven countries that reported 1,685 confirmed [measles](#) cases across the region," of which 1,427 were in Venezuela, a PAHO report released Saturday found.

The disease is on the rise in the South American nation led by leftist President Nicolas Maduro; the trend has continued this year where cases have been reported in 17 out of 23 states, and in the capital.

In neighboring countries, where Venezuelans have migrated due to grim economic conditions, many of the reported cases have been among Venezuelan immigrants, the report said.

Venezuela says it does not have 85 percent of the basic medical supplies it needs even including vaccines. Maduro's government blames US sanctions for the woes.

The government on April 6 launched a new vaccine campaign against 14 diseases including measles and TB.

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