

Spain govt inks deal for partial lockdown across capital

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The Spanish government said Wednesday it had reached an agreement to impose a partial lockdown on the entire city of Madrid where coronavirus cases are spreading like wildfire.

"This agreement has been approved by a broad majority," said Health

Minister Salvador Illa after consultations with Spain's 17 autonomous regions, who are responsible for public healthcare and managing the pandemic.

The central government consulted with all the regions over imposing restrictions in areas with more than 100,000 residents within their jurisdiction if three conditions were met.

The area must have reported more than 500 cases per 100,000 inhabitants over the previous 14 days; it must have 35 percent or more intensive care beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and positive results in at least 10 percent of PCR tests.

At this stage, Madrid is the region that has areas which fulfil such criteria, with a situation which is "complex and worrying," Illa told reporters.

"Today it has registered 4,810 new cases which is the second-largest daily increase since the start of the second wave of the pandemic."

Restrictions include a limit on mobility and on the opening hours of bars and restaurants which will also have their seating capacity reduced, and restricting social gatherings to six people.

Over the past 24 hours, Spain has diagnosed 11,016 new cases of COVID-19, of which nearly 44 percent were in the region of Madrid, Illa said.

"This is the situation in Madrid.. that's why we have agreed to adopt these measures but we're aware that hard weeks lie ahead.

"We must all have the same objective: to flatten the curve."

In a sign of tensions with the central government, Madrid's regional chiefs voted against the measures. But they were outvoted by other regional leaders.

Full details of the new measures are to be published in the official state bulletin in the coming days.

Spain is currently struggling with the highest number of new cases within the EU with a rate of around 300 per 100,000 inhabitants—but in the Madrid [region](#), the rate currently stands at more than 780 per 100,000.

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