Europe now region hardest hit by virus infections

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Europe has become the region with the highest number of registered cases of the new coronavirus, according to a tally by AFP at 1100 GMT on Thursday based on health authority data.

The continent's 52 countries have a combined total of 11.6 million cases including more than 293,000 deaths, ahead of Latin America and the Caribbean which has reported 11.4 million cases with 407,000 deaths.

Europe has again become the epicentre of the pandemic in recent weeks after experiencing a lull during the northern hemisphere summer.

Since the beginning of October, the region has had the highest number of new infections daily in the world.

Last week, 277,000 new cases a day were recorded, more than half of the total number of cases worldwide of 517,000 daily.

And the pandemic continues to accelerate across the continent, with the number of cases detected last week 20 percent higher than the previous week.

In terms of fatalities, the pace is even faster, with almost 50 percent more new deaths—21,500 last week, compared with 14,403 the week before.

The countries in the region with the most new cases in the last seven days are: France (44,000 cases daily on average, up 11 percent over the previous week), Italy (28,600, up 43 percent), the United Kingdom (22,400, up two percent), Spain (21,100, up 13 percent) and Poland (20,000, up 46 percent).

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