

U.K. has biggest 1-day jump in confirmed coronavirus cases

November 13 2020, by Danica Kirka



One shopper walks away with a full cart as others queue outside a major supermarket in Leicester, England, Sunday Nov. 1, 2020. The British government announced on Saturday a four-week public lockdown in response to the latest coronavirus surge, and government lawmaker Michael Gove on Sunday acknowledged that the lockdown could be extended. (Joe Giddens/PA via AP)

The United Kingdom posted its biggest one-day jump in laboratory-

confirmed coronavirus infections Thursday as the government reported 33,470 new cases.

That was 10,520 more than the number of positive tests reported Wednesday and pushed the total number of cases in the U.K. since the pandemic began to almost 1.3 million. More than 50,000 people have died from COVID-19 in the country, which is Europe's deadliest toll.

Professor Stephen Powis, medical director for the National Health Service in England, said the seven-day average for positive tests is much lower at 23,668 cases and is a more accurate way to assess the national trend. Public health officials also say current figures aren't comparable to those in the first surge of the pandemic because testing capacity was much lower in the spring.

"It's important not to look at a single day because of the way test and trace works," Powis said at a news conference. "But it's clear that infection rates have been going up as I've shown you, and what's really important is to get those infection rates down. That's what will reduce deaths, it's what will reduce pressure on hospitals, and it's what will prevent the long-term effects of COVID."

The [government](#) on Wednesday reported 595 deaths related to COVID-19, up from 532 the previous day. The figures for Thursday hadn't been released yet.

The government has imposed a one-month national lockdown on England that is scheduled to end Dec. 2. A 17-day "fire break" lockdown in Wales ended this week, and similar rules in Northern Ireland are scheduled to end Friday. Scotland has a five-tiered system of local restrictions designed to slow the spread of the [coronavirus](#).

In other efforts to control the virus, the government extended its ban on

travel from Denmark for two weeks amid continuing concern about an outbreak of cases on mink farms that spread to some nearby communities.

The restrictions, which were imposed Nov. 7, allow only British citizens and residents of the U.K. to enter from Denmark, but they have to self-isolate for 14 days after arrival. However, the British government on Thursday announced an exception for Danish and Icelandic professional soccer players and staff who need to travel for international matches.

Many travelers returning to the U.K. from Greece will also have to self-isolate as of 4 a.m. Saturday after most of that country was removed from the government's safe list. Only the islands of Corfu, Crete, Rhodes, Zakynthos and Kos are still considered safe destinations and require no quarantine upon return.

The government also said the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Turks & Caicos Islands, Laos, Iceland, Cambodia, Chile and Bahrain have been added to the safe list of countries. Starting at 4 a.m. Saturday, passengers traveling to the U.K. from those places will no longer need to self-isolate as long as they haven't been to or transited through non-exempt countries in the 14 days preceding their arrival.

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