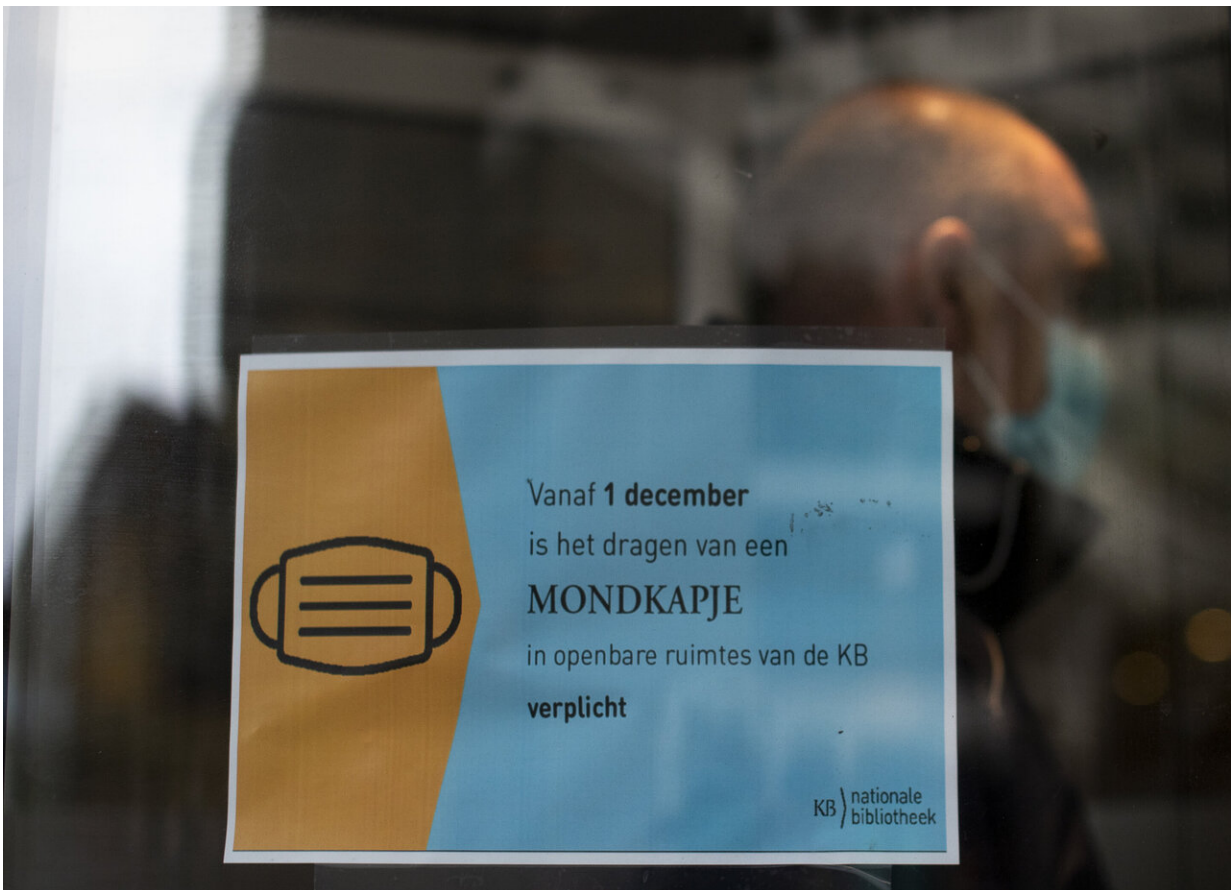


# Dutch health authority reports 'worrying rise' in infections

December 8 2020

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A man entering the national library in The Hague, Netherlands, Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020, passes a sign informing visitors to wear mandatory face masks. Wearing face masks in publicly accessible indoor venues such as libraries, museums became obligatory in the Netherlands on Dec. 1, 2020, when a new temporary law underpinning existing government coronavirus restrictions came into force. (AP Photo/Peter Dejong)

The Dutch public health institute on Tuesday reported a "worrying rise" in the number of coronavirus infections in the last week, as the government prepared to announce whether it will allow any relaxations over the Christmas holidays of its partial lockdown.

The health institute said the number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases rose by more than 9,000 to 43,103 in a week. More people were tested in the last week due to a change in the rules for access, but the percentage of positive tests also rose from 11.1% to 11.6%.

In the same week, the number of confirmed COVID-19 deaths dropped from 406 to 338. The nationwide death toll since the pandemic first swept into the Netherlands is approaching 10,000.

The number of nursing homes with at least one confirmed COVID-19 case also rose, with 100 homes recording a confirmed case over the last week, up from 77 the week before.

The Netherlands has been in a partial lockdown since mid-October, when the country was recording some of Europe's highest infections rates. The closures of all bars and restaurants along with restrictions on the [number](#) of people who could gather at home and outdoors brought the [infection](#) rate down, but the decline has stagnated in recent weeks.

Schools in the Netherlands have remained open.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte is holding a press conference Tuesday evening to give an update on his government's [coronavirus](#) measures over the Christmas holiday period.

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Citation: Dutch health authority reports 'worrying rise' in infections (2020, December 8)  
retrieved 27 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-12-dutch-health-authority-infections.html>

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