

COVID-19 slows worldwide but surges in Latin America

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The COVID-19 pandemic slackened its pace around the world over the past week, but Latin America and the Caribbean saw a fresh surge, according to a specialised AFP database.

Here is the state of play worldwide:

Slowdown worldwide

After hitting a peak, the pandemic slowed down this week with 634,200 new cases recorded on average per day, a 12 percent drop over the previous week, according to an AFP tally up to Thursday.

It was only in Latin America and the Caribbean where the number of new cases continued to rise, up six percent with 120,900 new daily cases. This is the second consecutive week the region registered the highest surge.

All other regions saw new infections drop, with 24 percent fewer new cases in the United States and Canada; minus 17 percent in Africa; minus 12 percent in Europe; and minus two percent in Asia and the Middle East.

This week Europe overtook the US/Canada, recording 221,100 new infections per day, against 196,100. The two regions account for two thirds of the new cases recorded this week around the world.

The number of confirmed cases only reflects a fraction of the actual number of infections, as different countries have different counting practices and levels of testing.

Biggest spikes

On a country level, Peru is where the epidemic is gaining most ground, with 56 percent more infections, or 4,900 new cases per day, among the countries which have registered more than 1,000 daily cases over the past week.

Ecuador is next with 34 percent more, or 1,500 cases; Spain 31 percent, 35,000 cases; Mexico (30 percent, 17,600); and Kazakhstan (29 percent, 1,000).

Biggest falls

The biggest decreases were in Ireland with 47 percent less new cases, or 2,700 per day, followed by Hungary with 37 percent less or 1,100; Austria (minus 35 percent, 1,500); Panama (minus 35 percent, 2,100); and Sweden (minus 34 percent, 3,500).

US still has most cases, deaths

The US again had by far the highest number of new cases with 189,900 per day, but saw a daily decrease of 24 percent. It was followed by Brazil (53,300, up three percent) and Britain (40,500, minus 24 percent).

On a per capita basis Portugal had the most cases with 759 per 100,000 inhabitants.

The US also again registered the most deaths over the past week with 3,073 per day on average, before Britain (1,402), Mexico (1,180), Brazil (1,007), and Germany (843).

The number of deaths globally is broadly under-estimated. The toll is calculated from daily figures published by national health authorities and does not include later revisions by statistics agencies.

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