

# New lockdown looming in Portugal with record virus deaths

January 11 2021

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Portugal has suffered record numbers of coronavirus deaths and infections, making a new lockdown unavoidable, Prime Minister Antonio Costa said Monday.

At a cabinet meeting Wednesday, the government will decide restrictions similar to those imposed during the first lockdown last March, Costa

said.

He was speaking after [health officials](#) reported a record 122 deaths over the past 24 hours, bringing Portugal's overall toll to 7,965.

On Friday, officials logged a record 10,176 new cases over a 24-hour period.

A total of 3,983 COVID-19 patients are currently in hospital—a new high—including 567 in [intensive care](#).

"We are certainly facing a third wave" of the virus, Costa told journalists Monday.

Health Minister Marta Temido, blaming the recent surge in cases on the Christmas period and the [cold snap](#), said the only solution is to bring down infection levels.

The government will consult [public health experts](#) on Tuesday before discussing how best to strengthen the restrictions already in place since early November.

President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa said on Saturday that "there's no alternative but a general lockdown." The remark came during a debate ahead of January 24 polls in which Rebelo de Sousa is seeking re-election.

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Citation: New lockdown looming in Portugal with record virus deaths (2021, January 11) retrieved 12 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-01-lockdown-looming-portugal-virus-deaths.html>

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