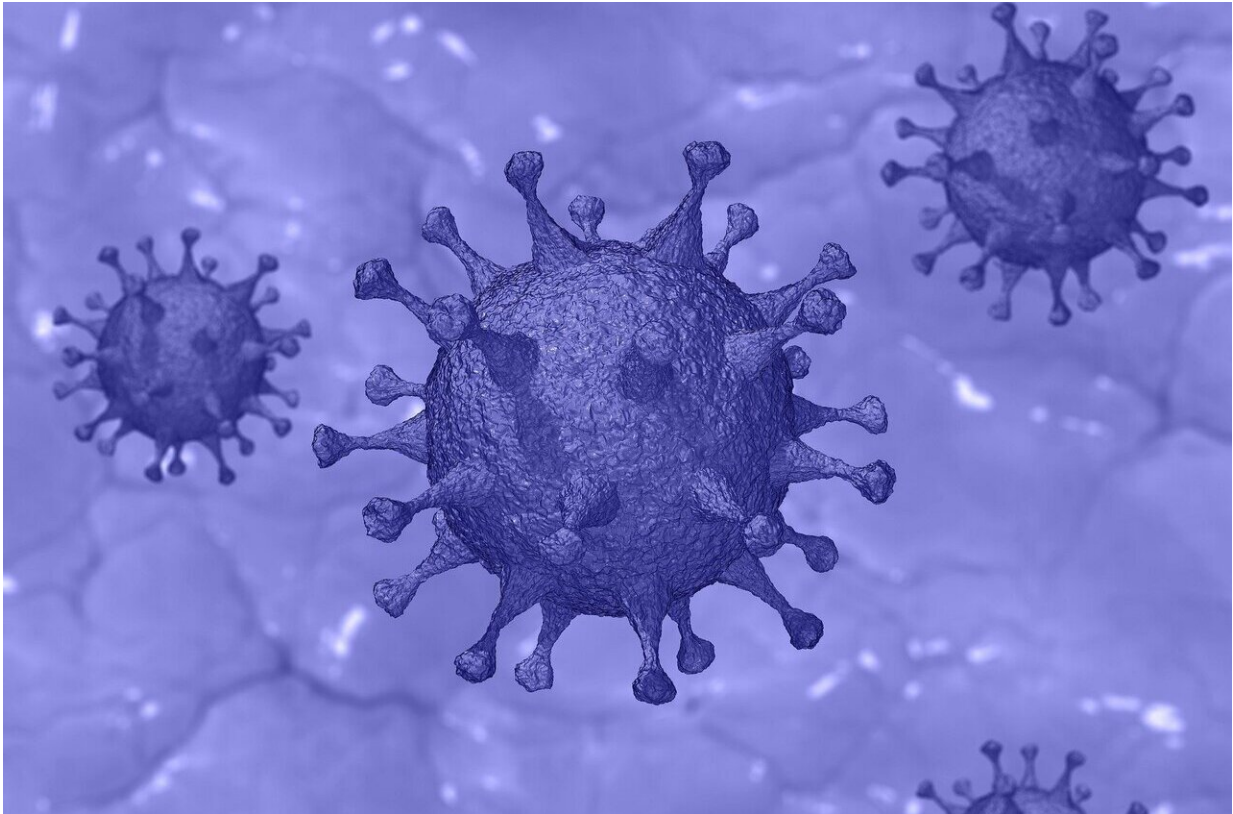


Sweden passes 10,000 virus deaths

January 14 2021



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Sweden on Thursday said it had passed 10,000 deaths associated with COVID-19, as it reported a record number of 351 deaths in a day.

The latest tally of deaths reported by the country's Public Health agency brings the total to 10,185 deaths related to COVID-19 in the country of

some 10.3 million inhabitants.

The daily deaths reported have not necessarily occurred in the last 24 hours and are often several days old.

Sweden is currently one of the worst hit countries in Europe, and last week surpassed its spring peak in terms of deaths, with an average of 101 COVID-related deaths per day, according to official data compiled by AFP.

On Thursday, the country saw the daily average deaths over the last seven days hit 132.

According to health officials the number of deaths was also likely to continue rising.

"We unfortunately expect that the increase will continue as we have widespread transmission in the country," Karin Tegmark Wisell, head of microbiology at the Public Health Agency, told a press conference.

On Thursday, the agency said it had registered another 6,580 cases of COVID-19 bringing the total to 518,783 since the start of the pandemic.

"It seems that we have reached a plateau. We are not seeing an increase but there is still a large number of cases being reported in Sweden," Tegmark Wisell said.

Sweden has made headlines around the world for its decision to combat the spread of the virus with mostly non-[coercive measures](#) and never imposing the type of lockdown seen elsewhere around Europe.

However, faced with a strong second wave, the country has tightened [preventative measures](#) in recent months.

As cases multiplied, authorities urged people to limit social interactions to immediate family or a few friends.

A ban on public gatherings of more than eight people took effect in November and as of last week the country recommended the use of face masks on public transport, which it has refrained from throughout the pandemic.

Last week the country's parliament also passed a special pandemic law giving the government wider powers to impose virus curbs.

This meant many recommendations for places like sports halls, swimming pools, shopping centres and other shops became binding with violators risking a fine.

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