

Spain virus death toll surges past 60,000: govt

February 3 2021



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Spain's coronavirus death toll surged passed the 60,000 mark on Wednesday as another 565 people died in the previous 24 hours, health ministry figures showed.

The grim milestone came as officials said Spain appeared to be turning the corner of the third wave, although the [death](#) toll has remained stubbornly high.

The latest deaths pushed the overall toll to 60,370 while confirmed cases rose by 31,596 over 24 hours, taking the total number of infections to 2,883,465.

But the real number of people who have died of COVID-19 is likely to be far higher than the official total.

In December, Spain's National Statistics Institute (INE) said more than 45,000 people had died in the first three months of the epidemic, giving a figure that exceeded the official toll by 18,000.

Unlike the official toll, which only counts those who have formally tested positive for the disease, the INE included those who had died "showing symptoms compatible with the illness".

Seroprevalence studies also suggest the real number of infections is far higher than the official figure, which is now close to 3 million.

On October 21, Spain became the first European country to record a million coronavirus infections but Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said the real [number](#) was three times higher.

Although the numbers have shot up in recent months, prompting most of Spain's 17 regions to increasingly restrictive curbs on public life, the government has refused to impose a new lockdown.

With [infection](#) spreading rapidly across Europe, many countries have been forced into a second or even a third lockdown, but Spain has so far insisted the restrictions put in place under its state of emergency are

sufficient.

In passing the 60,000 mark, Spain now joins the United Kingdom, France and Italy, the countries with the highest [death toll](#) in Europe.

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Citation: Spain virus death toll surges past 60,000: govt (2021, February 3) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-spain-virus-death-toll-surges.html>

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