

Madrid deaths jumped 41 percent in 2020 as pandemic hit

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The number of deaths from all causes in the Madrid region, the epicentre of the coronavirus pandemic in Spain, jumped 41 percent in 2020 over the previous year, official figures showed Thursday.

The region, which is home to around 6.7 million people, recorded a total of 66,683 deaths last year, up from 47,165 in 2019, Spain's national statistics agency INE said in a statement.

Deaths in all of Spain totalled 492,930 in 2020, an increase of 74,227 or 17.7 percent over 2019 and the biggest [number](#) of annual deaths since records began in 1941.

The Madrid region accounts for 14.3 percent of Spain's population of around 47 million but it saw some 20 percent of the country's total COVID-19 deaths.

It was especially hard hit by the first wave of the pandemic in March when officials used an ice-skating rink in the Spanish capital as a temporary mortuary for COVID-19 victims and set up a [field hospital](#) in the city's conference centre.

Spain, one of Europe's worst hit countries, recorded around 50,000 deaths from COVID-19 in 2020, according to [health ministry](#) figures.

But the actual number of infections and fatalities is likely significantly higher because only seriously ill patients were tested during the first

months of the pandemic because of a limited testing capacity.

COVID has killed more than 80,000 people in Spain since the start of the pandemic, according to the health ministry.

The numbers of deaths and cases have fallen steeply in recent weeks as Spain's vaccination programme has picked up.

Just over one in four people, 28 percent, in Spain have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

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