

Russia reports record daily virus deaths

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Russia on Friday recorded its highest daily coronavirus death toll following a spurt in cases linked to the Delta variant and a lacklustre vaccination drive.

A government tally reported 828 fatalities over the past 24 hours a day

after Russia matched its previous record of 820.

The new figures bring Russia's total deaths from COVID-19 to 202,273—the highest toll in Europe.

Authorities have been accused of downplaying the severity of the outbreak.

Under a broader definition for deaths linked to the coronavirus, statistics agency Rosstat reported in late August that Russia had seen more than 350,000 fatalities.

Russia, the world's fifth worst-hit country with more than seven million infections, has seen cases climb since last month as vaccinations stall.

Moscow—the epicentre of Russia's outbreak—has seen a spike over the past week with officials warning of rising hospital admissions.

Deputy mayor Anastasia Rakova said this week that the highly contagious Delta variant now accounted for all of the cases in the Russian capital.

The Kremlin initially set a goal of fully inoculating 60 percent of Russia's [population](#) by September, but later dropped that target even though free jabs have been available since early December.

Authorities face a vaccine-sceptic population, with independent polls showing that a majority of Russians do not plan to get jabbed.

As of Friday, only 28 percent of the population had been fully vaccinated, Gogov website, which tallies COVID data from the regions.

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