

Russia marks another daily coronavirus death high

October 27 2021, by Vladimir Isachenkov



An employee of the Federal State Center for Special Risk Rescue Operations of Russia Emergency Situations disinfests an area near a station chapel inside Savyolovsky railway station in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, Oct. 26, 2021. The daily number of COVID-19 deaths in Russia hit another high Tuesday amid a surge in infections that forced the Kremlin to order most Russians to stay off work starting this week. Credit: AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko

Russia hit another record for daily COVID-19 deaths on Wednesday as authorities across the country moved to keep most people off work in line with a Kremlin order aimed at stemming the spread.

The government coronavirus task force registered 1,123 deaths in 24 hours, the largest daily toll since the pandemic's start. The number brought the country's official coronavirus death toll to 233,898, by far the highest in Europe.

The pace of infection remained high at 36,582, just slightly less than an all-time peak reported over the weekend.

Moving to curb contagion, Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered a nonworking period from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7 when most [state organizations](#) and private businesses are to suspend operations. Most stores, kindergartens, schools, gyms and entertainment venues will be closed, while restaurants and cafes will only be open for takeout or delivery. Food stores, pharmacies and companies operating key infrastructure can stay open.

Access to museums, theaters, concert halls and other venues will be limited to people holding digital codes on their smartphones to prove they have been vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19, a practice that will remain in place after Nov. 7.

Putin has also instructed local officials to order unvaccinated people older than 60 to stay home and to close nightclubs and other entertainment venues. He has encouraged the worst-affected regions to start the off-work period earlier and possibly extend it beyond Nov. 7. Moscow is to suspend work for most people on Thursday.



A medical worker administers a shot of Russia's Sputnik Lite coronavirus vaccine at a vaccination center in the GUM, State Department store, in Red Square with the St. Basil Cathedral in the background, in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, Oct. 26, 2021. The daily number of COVID-19 deaths in Russia hit another high Tuesday amid a surge in infections that forced the Kremlin to order most Russians to stay off work starting this week. Credit: AP Photo/Pavel Golovkin

Russian authorities expect the time off will help limit the spread of contagion by keeping people out of offices and public transportation, but many Russians sought to take advantage of the time for a seaside vacation ahead of the long winter season. Air fare sales and hotel bookings at Russia's Black Sea resorts boomed, prompting local authorities to shut down entertainment venues and limit access to

restaurants and bars to prevent a spike in infections. The sales of package tours to Egypt also soared.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov admitted on Wednesday that the travel boom has drawn the concern of medical experts but added that there are no plans to restrict travel.

The government has blamed the soaring contagion and deaths on the slow pace of vaccination. Only about 49 million Russians—about a third of the country's nearly 146 million people—are fully vaccinated.

Russia was the first country in the world to authorize a coronavirus vaccine, launching Sputnik V in August 2020, and has a plentiful vaccine supply. But widespread public skepticism blamed on conflicting signals from authorities has stymied the uptake.

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Citation: Russia marks another daily coronavirus death high (2021, October 27) retrieved 14 August 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-10-russia-daily-coronavirus-death-high.html>

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