

Virus outlier Sweden passes grim COVID-19 milestone

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Sweden which has stood out among European nations for its comparatively hands-off response to the pandemic, has passed the threshold of 15,000 deaths with COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, according to official figures released Tuesday.

Thomas Linden of the National Board of Health and Welfare, told

Swedish public radio that it was difficult to say whether Sweden has an unusually high excess mortality due to the virus.

"Internationally, Sweden has not had a higher mortality rate. But if you compare with the other Nordic countries, we are significantly higher," Linden told SR.

In comparison, Denmark has recorded 2,703 deaths, Norway 895 and Finland nearly 1,150. Each of those countries has slightly over half as many people as Sweden.

According to the Public Health Agency of Sweden, 15,002 people—6,793 women and 8,209 men—have died with COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic.

Sweden had opted for keeping large sections of society open. It has not gone into lockdowns or closed businesses, relying instead on citizens' sense of civic duty to control infections.

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