

Positive virus tests reach weekly high in the Netherlands

November 16 2021



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The Netherlands recorded its highest weekly number of positive coronavirus tests over the last seven days, and lawmakers discussed legislation as cases continued to soar Tuesday to limit unvaccinated

people from using the country's COVID pass system.

The country's public health institute reported Tuesday that the number of positive tests rose by 44% to 110,558, the highest weekly total since the pandemic began. Hospital admissions for COVID-19 patients rose 12% and admissions to intensive care units by 3%, it said.

The institute said 173 people died of COVID-19 during the past week, bringing the Netherlands' [death toll](#) in the pandemic to 18,785.

Cases rose sharply among children ages 4-12 years, most of whom have yet to be vaccinated against the coronavirus. Vaccines made by Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech have been cleared for use in children ages 12 to 17 in Europe; the European Medicines Agency is evaluating whether to authorize them for 5 to 11 year olds.

A new partial lockdown came into force Saturday across the Netherlands, with bars, restaurants and supermarkets ordered to close at 8 p.m., masks mandated in more places and people urged to work from home as much as possible.

The Dutch government wants to make its COVID passes mandatory in more places and to empower employers to check the passes of their staffs. The government also wants to allow businesses that are required to check the passes of customers the option of limiting access to only people who have been fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19.

A similar system is in use in Austria and parts of Germany.

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Citation: Positive virus tests reach weekly high in the Netherlands (2021, November 16)
retrieved 7 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-positive-virus-weekly-high-netherlands.html>

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