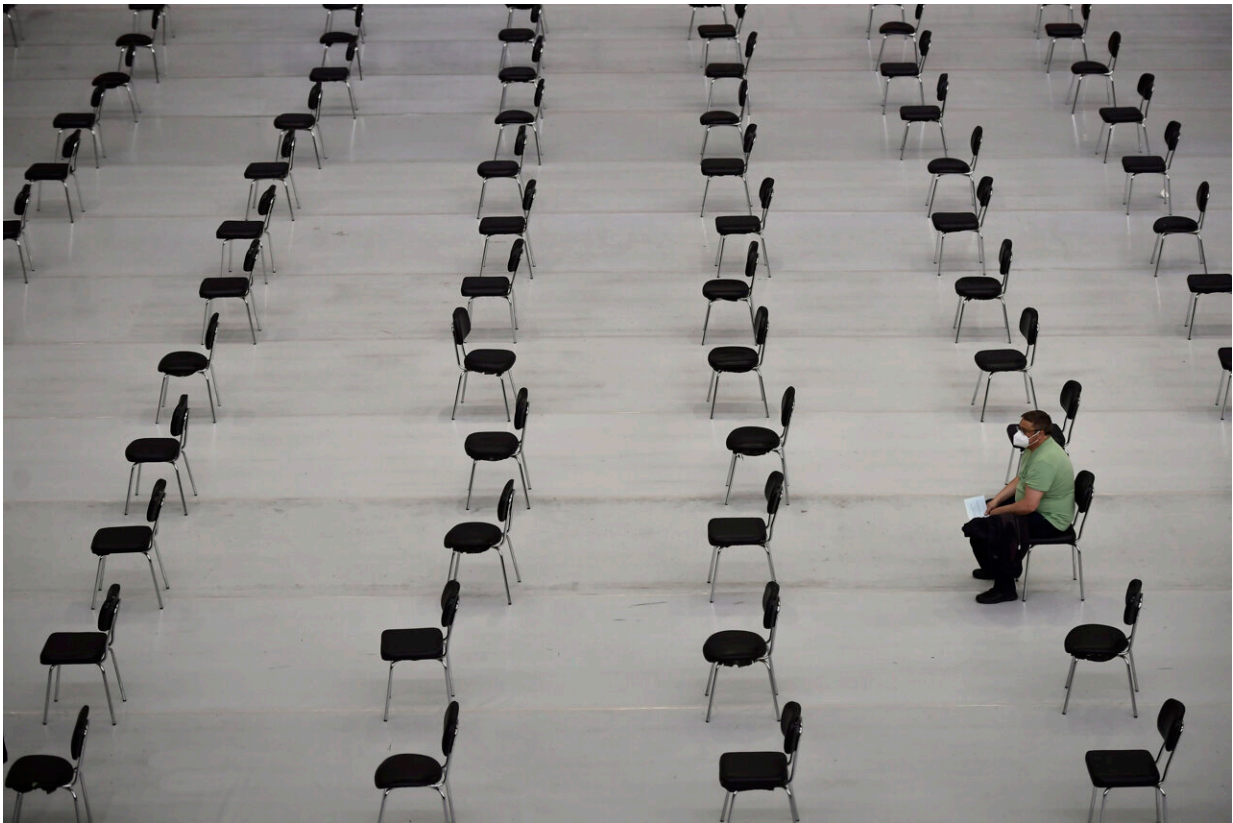


Spanish regions eye COVID-19 passports amid infection surge

November 16 2021



A man waits after receiving the Pfizer vaccine, during a COVID-19 vaccination campaign, in Pamplona, northern Spain, May 11, 2021. The pandemic is again roaring across parts of Western Europe, a prosperous region with relatively high vaccination rates and good health care systems but where lockdown measures to rein in the virus are largely a thing of the past. Spain—once one of Europe's hardest hit nations—now has vaccinated 88% of its population aged 12 years and over. Credit: AP Photo/Alvaro Barrientos, file

Worried by a rise in COVID-19 infections, some of Spain's regional governments are asking courts to authorize the introduction of virus passports that can help control the pandemic's spread.

The governments of the Basque Country, Valencia, Navarra and Catalonia say they are ready to be the first autonomous regions of Spain to introduce COVID-19 passports for people to enter nightclubs, bars, restaurants and some public events. But first they need [court](#) permission.

The Basque [government](#)'s minister of health, Gotzone Sagardui, said Tuesday the administration will file an official petition at court this week. If approved, the measure will apply to people 12 and over who want to enter nightlife establishments featuring music or dancing or restaurants with more than 50 diners.

"The trend shows that the pandemic is advancing at a worrying rate of growth," Sagardui told a press conference. "More than 50% growth in (infection) rates in the past two weeks suggests an accelerated growth of the pandemic."

The head of Valencia's regional government, Ximo Puig, announced a similar decision on Monday.

A COVID-19 [passport](#) shows that a person has been vaccinated against the virus.



A man wearing a face mask to protect against the spread of coronavirus checks his smartphone at the Corral de la Moreria "tablao," or live flamenco venue in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021. Some of Spain's regional governments are asking courts to authorize the introduction of virus passports that can help control COVID-19's spread. Credit: AP Photo/Manu Fernandez



People enjoy a flamenco show at the Corral de la Moreria "tablao," or live flamenco venue in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021. Some of Spain's regional governments are asking courts to authorize the introduction of virus passports that can help control COVID-19's spread. Credit: AP Photo/Manu Fernandez



People enjoy a flamenco show at the Corral de la Moreria "tablao," or live flamenco venue in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021. Some of Spain's regional governments are asking courts to authorize the introduction of virus passports that can help control COVID-19's spread. Credit: AP Photo/Manu Fernandez

On Monday, Spain officially reported 82 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. The regions with the highest incidence are Navarra, with 203 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, and the Basque Country, with 174.

Over the past seven days, 85 people have died from COVID-19 in Spain. Overall, the country has recorded 87,716 deaths in the pandemic.

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