

Pandemic spirals, but deaths drop

December 31 2021



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The number of COVID-19 cases spiralled by more than a half across the world this week, while pandemic-linked deaths dropped nine percent.

Here is the global state of play from an AFP database:

1.1 million daily cases

The average number of new daily coronavirus cases passed the symbolic one million mark to 1.18 million, a 57 percent increase over the week before.

The Europe region accounted for 54 percent of the cases, recording 4,490,612 over the week. The United States and Canada zone provided another 32 percent, with 2,636,831 cases.

The confirmed cases only reflect a fraction of the actual number of infections, with varying counting practices and levels of testing in different countries.

Flare ups in Latin America, Oceania

The main flare ups at a regional level took place in Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean, where they more than doubled—by 157 percent and 138 percent respectively.

There was also a big increase of 92 percent in cases in the United States/Canada zone. The number of of infections increased in Europe by 47 percent and in the Middle East by 37 percent. Cases in Africa, where the highly contagious Omicron variant was first detected, increased by just eight percent.

Asia bucked the world trend with its infection numbers down two percent.

Record cases

Some 30 countries from all corners of the world struck record weekly

[infection](#) rates.

They include the countries with the highest number of infections per person, led by Denmark with 1,907 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, Ireland (1,784), Cyprus (1,497), the United Kingdom (1,441), and France (1,260).

Deaths down

At a global level the number of COVID-linked deaths dropped nine percent to 6,330 on average per day.

Europe accounted for more than half, or 53 percent of the deaths, with 23,324 people succumbing over the past week. The United States and Canada made up 24 percent, or 10,433, of the fatalities.

The countries reporting the highest [death](#) rates in proportion to their population were Trinidad and Tobago with 12.08 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, Georgia (11.76), Hungary (8.25), Poland (7.85), and Croatia (7.65).

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