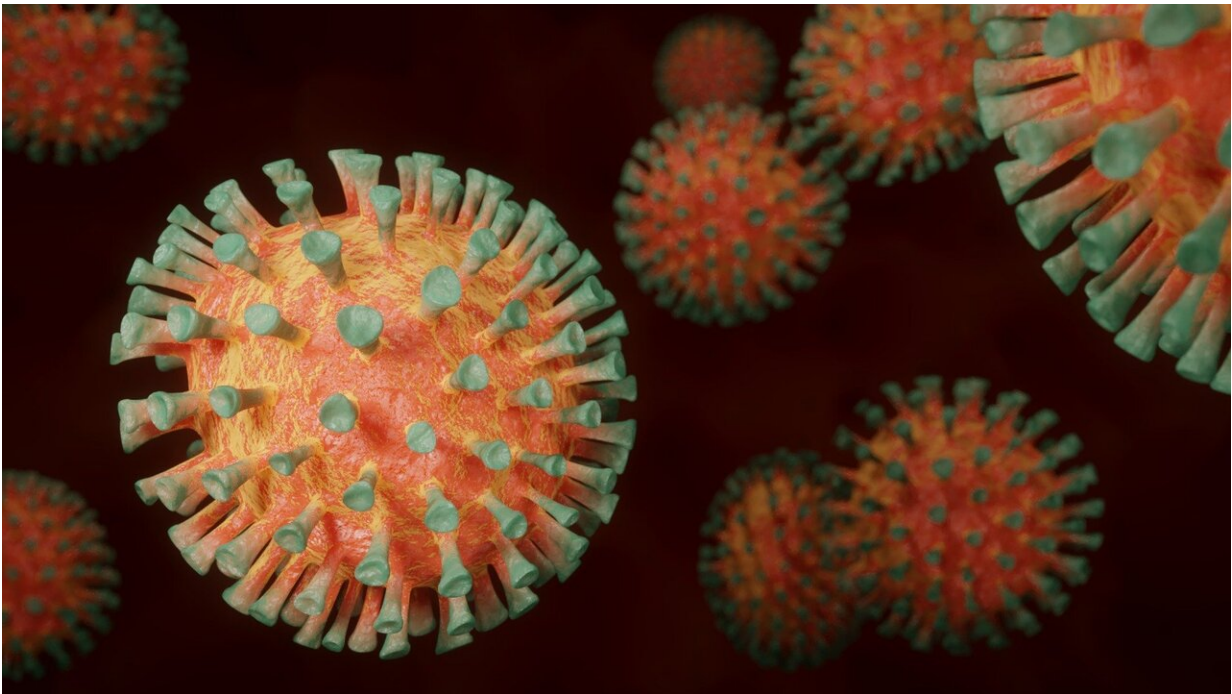


Pandemic fades with a fifth fewer cases in a week

February 18 2022



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The COVID-19 pandemic continued its retreat this week, with fewer deaths and the number of new cases decreasing in most regions of the world.

Here is a state of play based on AFP's database.

22 percent drop

After a surge which lasted for three-and-a-half months, the average number of global daily cases dropped for a third week in a row, falling back by 22 percent to 1.97 million, according to an AFP tally to Thursday.

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

Let up in most regions

The situation improved in most regions of the world over the past seven days.

The number of daily cases dropped by 43 percent in the United States/Canada zone, by 35 percent in the Middle East, by 23 percent in Europe and the Latin America/Caribbean area and by 22 percent in Africa.

The situation remained almost stable in Asia, with a one percent fall in cases. They increased by the same amount in Oceania.

Main spikes

South East Asia and Oceania saw the biggest spike in the number of new cases this week.

New Zealand registered the biggest increase of 239 percent, followed by Hong Kong (192 percent increase), Malaysia (111 percent more), Vietnam (plus 78 percent) and South Korea (up 66 percent).

Main drops

Sweden saw the biggest drop of the week with 78 percent fewer cases, followed by Kazakhstan (minus 59 percent), Kosovo (minus 57 percent), Colombia (minus 55 percent) and Suriname (minus 54 percent).

Russia overtakes US

Russia this week overtook the US to register the highest number of new cases with an average of 187,500 infections a day, an increase of six percent.

The US fell to third place, with 119,600 cases per day—a 44 percent drop—well behind Germany with 180,900 cases, a decrease of six percent.

On a per capita basis, the country with the most new cases over the week was again Denmark with 5,026 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Latvia with 3,635, the Netherlands (2,877), Georgia (2,851) and Estonia (2,777).

Deaths start to drop

The number of COVID-linked deaths declined by seven percent globally, with an average of 10,355 per day, after an increase for five weeks in a row.

Even though the highly contagious Omicron variant led at its peak to four times more daily infections than previous waves, daily deaths remain far lower than their record high in January 2021 when they skirted 15,000.

The US again mourned the most deaths this week with an average of 2,300 per day, ahead of Brazil (841) and Russia (726).

The countries reporting the highest [death](#) rates in proportion to their population were all in the Balkans or the Caucasus with Bulgaria and Bosnia mourning nine deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Croatia on 8.5, Georgia (8.1) and Northern Macedonia (7.9).

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