Europe tops 100 million COVID cases

January 2 2022

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Europe has recorded over 100 million coronavirus cases, more than a third of all infections worldwide, since the start of the pandemic, an AFP tally Saturday showed.

The continent has once again become the pandemic's epicentre in recent months, and is battling an upsurge of cases spurred on by the highly

transmissible Omicron strain of the virus.

The European region, including 52 countries and territories from the Atlantic coast to Azerbaijan and Russia, has recorded 100,074,753 infections of COVID-19 over the past two years, an AFP tally of official figures showed at 1845 GMT.

That is equivalent to more than a third of the 288,279,803 cases declared worldwide since the outbreak of the pandemic in late 2019 in China.

Of the European infections, more than 4.9 million have been reported over the past seven days alone, with 17 out of 52 countries or territories beating their previous record of most cases in a single week.

France alone has recorded more than one million new cases over the past week, which is equivalent to 10 percent of all positive cases it has announced since the start of the pandemic.

The countries with the highest ratio of infections per 100,000 inhabitants in the world were all in Europe. Denmark scored worst with 2,045, followed by Cyprus with 1,969 and Ireland with 1,964.

AFP's calculations are based on official figures, but some infections could have gone undetected, for example if patients were asymptomatic.

COVID-related deaths are however decreasing in Europe.

Europe recorded on average 3,413 coronavirus deaths a day over the past week, a seven percent drop from the previous week. At its worst, that average saw 5,735 deaths a day in January last year.

People on the European continent are now, on the whole, more vaccinated than the worldwide average.

Sixty-five percent of Europeans are partially vaccinated, while 61 percent are fully vaccinated—more than 58 and 49 percent respectively worldwide, according to the "Our World in Data" website.

Taking into account excess mortality linked to COVID-19, the World Health Organization estimates the overall death toll worldwide could be two to three times higher.

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