

Spain's virus death toll tops 18,000

14 April 2020



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Spain's death toll from the novel coronavirus topped 18,000 on Tuesday, as the rise in new infections dropped to its lowest level since the country imposed a nationwide lockdown last month.

The 567 new deaths reported by the health ministry were slightly up from Monday's [death toll](#) and they take the total number of fatalities to 18,056 — officially third in the world behind the United States and Italy.

The number of new infections rose by just over 3,045, or 1.8 percent, to 172,451, the smallest increase since the country of around 47 million people imposed a nationwide lockdown on March 14 to curb the spread of the virus.

Health authorities say Spain has overcome the peak of the coronavirus, after registering its highest [death](#) toll of 950 people on April 2.

"The trend is good, in line with what we have seen in recent weeks," the [health ministry's](#) emergencies coordinator, Fernando Simon, told a press conference to discuss the latest coronavirus figures.

But while the fall in the number of new cases means hospitals in hard-hit regions like Madrid and Barcelona are no longer overflowing with people, "beds in intensive care units remain in a situation of high stress," he added.

Spain tightened its lockdown on March 30 by freezing all non-essential activities like construction and manufacturing for two weeks—a measure that was lifted on Monday despite warnings from some quarters that removing it too soon could trigger a fresh outbreak.

But shops, bars, restaurants and other businesses considered non-essential remained closed and people are only allowed to leave their homes to work if they can not do their jobs from home, or to buy food or medicine or walk their dog.

Transport Minister Jose Luis Abalos said Monday that about two-thirds of people were strictly following the lockdown and "practically do not go outside at all".

The [lockdown](#) is expected to remain in place at least until April 25.

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