

Another 3,000 COVID-19 deaths likely in Sweden: health agency

21 July 2020

Swedish health officials said Tuesday that another 3,000 deaths from the novel coronavirus were likely in the country, known for its controversial softer approach to curbing the spread and much higher death toll than its neighbours.

The projection comes from one of three potential scenarios presented in a report from the country's Public Health Agency on Tuesday.

In the worst scenario, where COVID-19 was expected to follow a traditional pandemic trajectory, over 5,800 more deaths related to the virus could follow.

That would be more than double the 5,646 deaths, out of 78,166 confirmed cases, so far recorded since the start of the pandemic.

However, they said a more likely scenario would see clusters of new cases around the country which would then quickly subside.

That is a scenario "we've seen now in different parts of the world, and which seems like something that COVID-19 is creating more than most other diseases," state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell told a press conference.

In the report the agency noted that this was a possible scenario where "infectivity increases quickly due to people for example socialise more frequently," but would then decrease "when people become aware of the outbreak and follow recommendations on distancing."

The added [death toll](#) from this scenario was estimated at around 3,200.

Despite the grim projections, the Public Health Agency said there were positive signs of the epidemic slowing down.

"In Sweden, the positive trend with a fairly quick

decline in cases continues," Tegnell said, noting that especially serious cases in need of intensive care were down to a handful a day.

In the mildest scenario presented, in which the spread of the virus follows [current trends](#), just over 200 additional deaths were expected.

Unlike most European nations, Sweden never imposed a lockdown and made headlines for having one of the highest per capita [death](#) tolls in the world.

It has kept schools for under-16s open and has not shuttered cafes, bars, restaurants and most businesses. Masks have been recommended only for healthcare personnel.

Swedish officials have argued that lockdowns only work temporarily and that drastic short-term measures are too ineffective to justify their impact.

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