

France surpasses 1 million confirmed virus cases amid spike

23 October 2020



French President Emmanuel Macron chairs a meeting with the medical staff of the Rene Dubos hospital center, in Pontoise, outside Paris, Friday Oct. 23, 2020. French Prime Minister Jean Castex said Thursday a vast extension of the nightly curfew that is intended to curb the spiraling spread of the coronavirus, saying "the second wave is here." The curfew imposed in eight regions of France last week, including Paris and its suburbs, is being extended to 38 more regions and Polynesia, (Photo by Ludovic Marin, Pool via AP)

French health authorities say France has recorded over 1 million confirmed coronavirus cases since the start of the pandemic, becoming the second country in Western Europe after Spain to reach that number of known infections.

The national [health](#) agency released new figures showing that tests had confirmed at least 1,041,075 cases in France this year, including 42,032 new cases reported in the past 24 hours.

Experts say the real numbers of infections are probably much higher than the ones governments around the world are reporting because of a lack of tests early in the pandemic, asymptomatic cases and other issues.

Like other countries in Europe, France has seen its daily case counts rise sharply in recent weeks as the virus rebounds in Europe. COVID-19 patients now occupy more than 42% of ICU beds nationally, and 64% in the Paris region.

More than 11,000 new COVID-19 patients have been hospitalized in the past week, including 1,714 who are in [intensive care](#), according to the national health agency.

Speaking earlier Friday after visiting a hospital in Pontoise, a suburb north of Paris, French President Emmanuel Macron said "the epidemic is very strongly accelerating."

The French government has expanded an overnight curfew it imposed in eight urban areas of France last week to encompass 38 more regions and Polynesia. The 9 p.m.-6 a.m. curfews and other public health measures will last for "at least six weeks," Macron said.



French President Emmanuel Macron, right, chairs a meeting with the medical staff of the Rene Dubos hospital center, in Pontoise, outside Paris, Friday Oct. 23, 2020. French Prime Minister Jean Castex said Thursday a vast extension of the nightly curfew that is intended to curb the spiraling spread of the coronavirus, saying "the

second wave is here." The curfew imposed in eight regions of France last week, including Paris and its suburbs, is being extended to 38 more regions and Polynesia, (Photo by Ludovic Marin, Pool via AP)

The extension means that 46 million of France's 67 million people will be under curfews that prohibit them from being out and about during those hours except for limited reasons, such as walking a dog, traveling to and from work and catching a train or flight.

France has reported over 34,000 virus-related deaths, one of the highest tolls in Europe.

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APA citation: France surpasses 1 million confirmed virus cases amid spike (2020, October 23) retrieved 3 August 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-10-france-surpasses-million-virus-cases.html>

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