

German virus case growth stable but numbers 'still too high'

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Germany's partial coronavirus lockdown is having a positive effect but the daily number of new coronavirus cases remains too high, health officials said Thursday.

The country introduced restrictive measures in early November to curb a surge in cases, closing bars, restaurants and other leisure venues but keeping schools and shops open.

The number of new infections has since plateaued, with 22,609 reported on Thursday—roughly the same number as a week ago.

"The number of cases has stabilised at a high level in the last two weeks and is not rising any further," said Lothar Wieler, head of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) disease control centre, adding that he was "optimistic" the numbers would soon start to fall again.

"We can see that (the measures) are working and that we are on the right track," added the RKI's Uta Rexroth.

However, the situation remains "very serious" with the numbers "still very high, much too high," Wieler said.

"Because of the high case numbers, it is possible that some hospitals will reach their limits and it will no longer be possible to care for patients in an optimal way," he said.

The number of COVID-19 patients in [intensive care](#) in Germany has soared from just over 360 in early October to more than 3,500 currently.

Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday failed to push through additional curbs to combat the virus, despite numbers falling more slowly than hoped.

She said state premiers did not yet have any appetite to up the ante and introduce tougher curbs to not only stabilise but also bring down [infection](#) numbers.

Speaking after talks with the leaders of Germany's 16 states, Merkel also said the country had managed to "break the dynamic of new infections".

Germany has registered a total of 855,916 [coronavirus](#) cases and 13,370 deaths, according to the RKI.

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