

Brazil has S.Hemisphere's highest overall COVID-19 death rate

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Brazil, the country with the world's second-highest COVID-19 death toll after the United States, also leads the Americas and the entire southern hemisphere in terms of its overall recorded death rate.

With 176 deaths per 100,000 since the beginning of the outbreak, the country of 212 million has recently overtaken Peru (174 per 100,000), the United States (172 per 100,000) and Mexico (165 per 100,000) according to data gathered by AFP from official country reports.

Overall, the country has had nearly 375,000 deaths, after the United States' nearly 568,000.

Hit hard by a more infectious new strain dubbed P1, Brazil may surpass Britain (187 per 100,000) and Italy (194 per 100,000)—two of the countries hit hardest at the start of the outbreak—in less than a month, said demographer Jose Eustaquio Alves.

"Brazil broke all the [death](#) records in March and April and made a leap in the rankings... to reach the worst mortality rate in the Americas and the Southern Hemisphere," he told AFP.

Last week, Brazil's averaged about 3,000 deaths per day.

Things could get worse still, said Alves, as Brazil enters the Southern Hemisphere winter "and with the relaxation of restriction measures" by mayors and state governors.

The two countries in the world with the highest overall death rates are the Czech Republic (267 per 100,000) and Hungary (265 per 100,000).

Belgium and several Eastern and Central European countries also exceed 200 deaths per 100,000 of their populations.

Many of these are cold-climate countries with aging populations thought more vulnerable to the virus, contrary to warm Brazil, with less than 10 percent of its [population](#) over the age of 65, said Alves.

Yet, a recent study showed that more than half of Brazilians in [intensive care](#) this March were younger than 40, compared to 14.6 percent at the start of the epidemic a year ago.

Brazil's vaccination campaign has had a slow start, and 13 percent of the population have so far received a first dose, five percent two shots.

A parliamentary commission will next week start examining possible "omissions" by the government of far-right President Jair Bolsonaro in its handling of the crisis.

The P1 virus variant has also started hammering Brazil's neighbors.

Uruguay, with its population of 3.5 million, in the last two weeks recorded the world's highest infection rate per 100,000 and surpassed Brazil's two-week death rate per 100,000.

In terms of infections, Brazil has recorded the

world's third-highest number of nearly 14 million,
behind the United States and India.

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