

Russia Reports Record Covid Deaths and Cases

By [AFP](#)

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A healthcare worker checks on a patient in the red zone at a Covid hospital in the southern city of Volgodon. **Erik Romanenko / TASS**

Russia on Saturday reported a record 1,075 Covid deaths in 24 hours as Europe's hardest hit country with dramatically low vaccination rates braces for nationwide curbs from next week.

Despite multiple pleas from President Vladimir Putin and the availability of the home-grown Sputnik V vaccine, only 36% of Russians are fully vaccinated.

According to fresh government figures, the country saw a record 37,678 new virus cases on Saturday.

This brings the official death toll to 229,528 — the highest on the continent — even as authorities are accused of vastly downplaying the effects of the pandemic.

Figures by statistics agency Rosstat paint a far darker picture, suggesting that more than

400,000 people had died from coronavirus by the end of August.

Moscow — the epicenter of Russia's outbreak — will shut non-essential services between Oct. 28 and Nov. 7.

Putin also ordered a nationwide paid week off starting Oct. 30 to curb fast spreading infections.

The Kremlin said the 69-year-old will have no in-person meetings during the non-working period.

Putin this week linked Russia's high death rates to what he called an "unfortunately" low vaccination rate and urged Russians to show "responsibility" and get the jab.

Although it is being used in dozens of countries, Sputnik V is not approved by the EU or by the World Health Organization.

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