

Russia Becomes World Leader in Weekly Covid Deaths

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Petr Kovalev / TASS

Russia became the world leader in coronavirus deaths last week for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

With 8,311 deaths registered by the World Health Organization (WHO) during the week of Nov. 1-7, Russia passed the United States in absolute figures.

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The U.S. registered 8,101 Covid deaths during the same period, representing a 15% drop-off from the previous week.

Russia's figures from last week risk repeating or even rising this week as the country marked a new record of 1,211 virus deaths on Tuesday.

Russia has Europe's fifth-highest total coronavirus death toll with an official count of

249,215.

A Moscow Times analysis of the most recently available official statistics placed Russia's excess death toll since the start of the pandemic — and before the latest and deadliest wave of the virus — at 723,350.

And though the infection growth rate slowed during last week's paid nationwide vacation for non-essential workers, Russia still counted its highest number of new coronavirus infections since the start of the pandemic on Saturday.

The Kremlin, which has grappled with rampant vaccine hesitancy despite several widely available shots including Sputnik V, said Monday that it is too early to assess the effect of Russia's "non-working period."

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