

# *Omicron reportedly spreads like lightning across Europe*

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**Italy reported 228,179 COVID-19-related cases on Tuesday?**

Rome, January 19 (RHC)-- Italy reported 228,179 COVID-19-related cases on Tuesday, the Health Ministry said, while the number of deaths rose to 434. The country has registered 141,825 deaths linked to COVID-19 since its outbreak emerged in February 2020.

The Southern European country has the second-highest toll in the continent after Britain and the ninth-highest in the world. The country has reported 9.02 million cases to date.

Officials say the highly-transmissible Omicron variant of the coronavirus is spreading across Europe like “lightning” and causing “chaos.” According to the Health Ministry of the Czech Republic, the country recorded on Tuesday more than 20,000 new cases of COVID-19, the biggest single-day rise since December 1st. The ministry also on Monday recorded 20,270 new coronavirus infections, up from 7,342 a week earlier. The central European country is bracing for a new wave of the pandemic as the Omicron variant of the coronavirus begins pushing up cases.

Last week, the World Health Organization warned that over half of the people in Europe were on track to contracting the Omicron variant of the coronavirus in the next two months. The new variant has so far been detected in 89 countries, and the cases of infections caused by Omicron are doubling every 1.5 to 3 days in places with community transmission.

The resurgent variant has forced Europe to reimpose tougher measures such as mandatory vaccinations and lockdowns.

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