

# *Health official warns Germany is approaching third wave of COVID*

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Berlin, March 17 (RHC)-- A health official at Germany's Robert Koch Institute for Infectious Diseases (RKI) has warned the country is experiencing an undisputed third wave of COVID, as eased restrictions have sped up the "exponential growth" of cases.

Coronavirus cases spiked by 20% in the past week, as the government began to ease lockdown measures in response to growing political pressure to reopen the country, allowing some schools' in-person classes to resume and certain shops to begin trading again.

Speaking to German broadcaster ARD, RKI epidemiologist Dirk Brockmann warned that, "at this point, we have eased the restrictions and that is speeding up the exponential growth."

The RKI official laid out how the eased restrictions had allowed for the quick-spreading Kent variant of the virus to infect individuals in Germany, "fueling the exponential growth", and said it had been "totally irrational to loosen up here."

The epidemiologist's comments follow a call from intensive care doctors for an "immediate return" to at least a partial lockdown if Germany is to avoid a coronavirus resurgence. "With the spread of the British mutation, we would argue strongly to return immediately into a lockdown to avoid a strong third wave," stated the director of Germany's intensive care register, Christian Karagiannidis.

Since the start of the pandemic, Germany has reported 2,575,849 confirmed cases of the virus and 73,418 deaths from the disease, having experienced two spikes – one in March 2020 and one at the start of 2021.

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