

## The Road to One Million

### Our share of the World's Covid Death Toll

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On September 29 the recorded worldwide death toll from Covid-19 reached one million. Six days earlier the U.S. reached 200,000 Covid-related deaths. So how did the U.S. with only 4 percent of the world's population manage to capture 20 percent of the world's deaths in this pandemic?

The 19 countries listed in Figure 1 account for 85 percent of the Covid-related deaths worldwide as reported by the European CDC. Here we can see how the U.S. death toll exceeds all others.

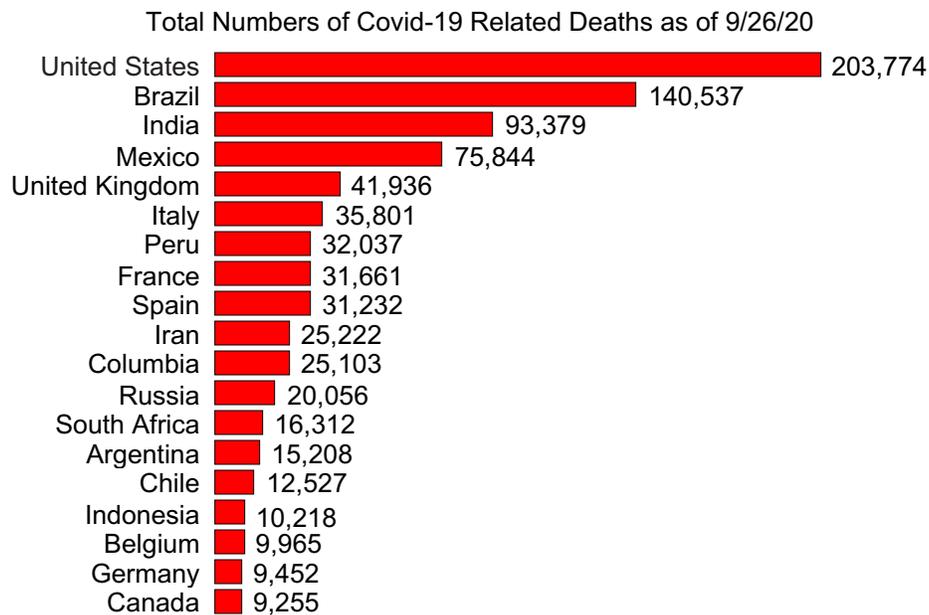


Figure 1: Number of Covid-Related Deaths Reported by 19 Countries as of Sept. 26

The short explanation for this dubious achievement is that between April 1 and the present the U.S. had an average of 27 percent of the worldwide total number of confirmed cases of Covid-19. With that kind of market share the large death toll was sure to follow. But a more detailed answer requires that we look at the number of deaths per capita and the rate at which these death tolls are growing.

Figures 2 and 3 show the per capita Covid-related deaths per million for each of the countries in Figure 1 over the 30-week period from March 1 to September 26. These curves not only allow

us to compare the levels of Covid-related deaths between countries, but to also see how these death tolls are changing over time. Figure 2 compares the U.S. with seven other first-world countries.

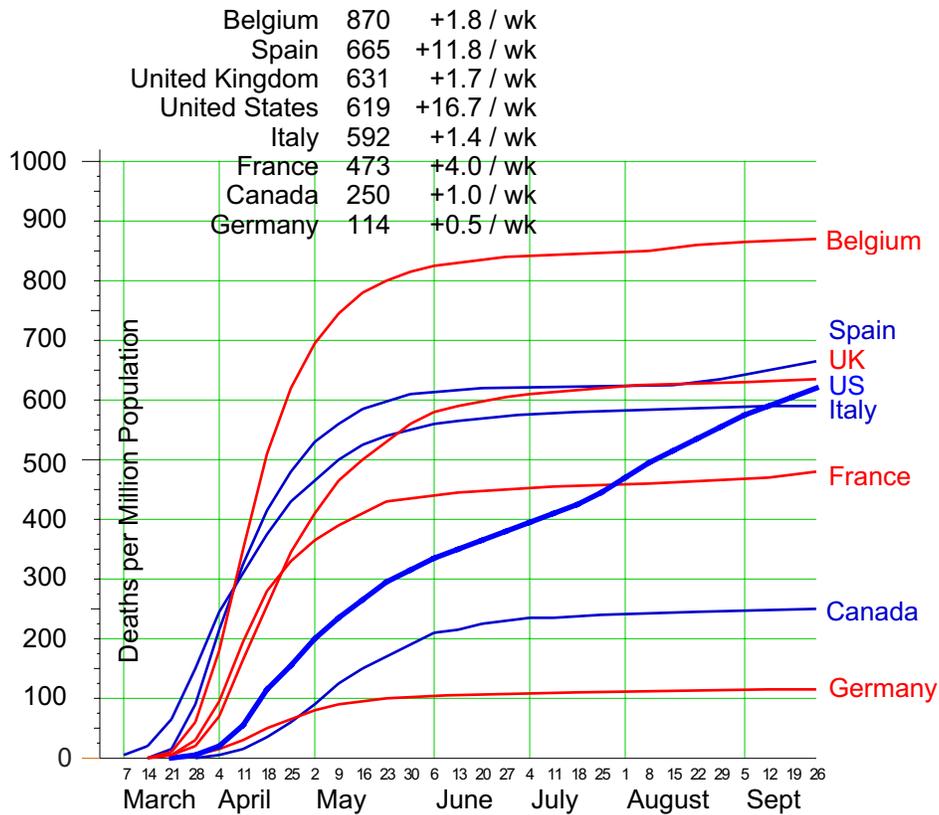


Figure 2: Covid-Related Deaths Since March 1 for Eight Countries

Since June, all but one of these curves have been basically flat. Yet the U.S. curve never really flattened out. It simply continued to climb throughout June, July, August, and September.

The table included in Figure 2 shows both the per capita death tolls as of Sept. 26 (deaths per million population) and the amount by which these death tolls were growing each week (additional deaths per million per week).

For example, the U.S. per capita death toll was 619 per million as of September 26, and this was growing by an additional 16.7 deaths per million each week. So by October 3 we would predict a per capita death toll of about 636 per million for the U.S. (The growth rates listed for each country are the average growth in the per capita death toll based on the four-week period from August 30 to September 26.)

So how fast are the per capita death tolls growing among these first-world countries? Germany had a growth rate of 0.5 additional deaths per million per week. Canada, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Belgium had growth rates between +1.0/week and +1.8/week. France had a growth rate of +4.0 deaths per million per week. And only Spain, with its recent resurgence of Covid, had a growth rate that approached that of the U.S. Thus, among these first-world countries, the U.S. stands out as the one country that has not been able to “flatten the curve” of

Covid-related deaths.

Figure 3 compares the U.S. with the eleven other countries from Figure 1.

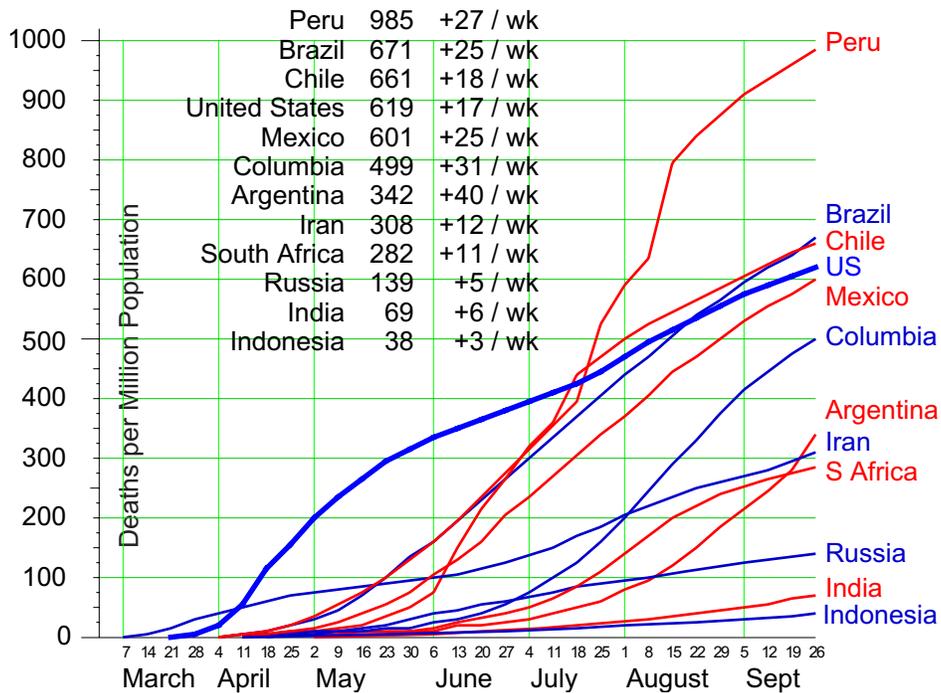


Figure 3: Covid-Related Deaths Since March 1 for Eleven Countries

Among these 12 countries, the U.S. per capita death rate of 619 Covid-related deaths per million sits in fourth place, while the U.S. growth rate of 17 additional deaths per million per week is near the median value.

When we compare the U.S. with Iran, South Africa, Russia, India, and Indonesia we find that the U.S. has over twice the per capita death rate and a higher growth rate. Thus, to date, the U.S. has done a poorer job of handling this pandemic than has Iran, South Africa, Russia, India, and Indonesia.

When we compare both the levels and the slopes in Figure 3 we find that the U.S. is performing much more like Brazil, Chile, and Mexico than any of the first-world countries back in Figure 2.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The European CDC tracks the Covid cases and deaths for 208 countries and territories. When we rank these regions in terms of Covid-related deaths from those with the fewest deaths to those with the most deaths, the U.S. comes in at the bottom of the list in 208th place. (This is like turning Figure 1 upside down.)

When we compute the per capita Covid-related death tolls reported for these 208 countries and rank them from those with the fewest deaths per million to those with the most deaths per million we find the U.S. near the bottom in 198th place. Only ten countries have higher per capita death tolls. In Figure 2 we found three of these countries were Belgium, the United Kingdom,

and Spain. In Figure 3 we found that three more of these countries were Peru, Brazil, and Chile. The four remaining countries that are lower in the list because they have higher per capita Covid death tolls than the U.S. are Ecuador, Bolivia, Andorra, and San Marino. Figure 5 summarizes these eleven countries that have the lowest rankings, and the highest per capita death tolls, in the world.

Rank 198	United States	619 deaths / million	+16.7 / week
Rank 199	United Kingdom	631 deaths / million	+1.7 / week
Rank 200	Ecuador	643 deaths / million	+68.5 / week
Rank 201	Chile	661 deaths / million	+17.9 / week
Rank 202	Spain	665 deaths / million	+11.8 / week
Rank 203	Brazil	671 deaths / million	+25.2 / week
Rank 204	Bolivia	671 deaths / million	+65.3 / week
Rank 205	Andorra	696 deaths / million	+0.0 / week
Rank 206	Belgium	870 deaths / million	+ 1.8 / week
Rank 207	Peru	985 deaths / million	+ 27.4 / week
Rank 208	San Marino	1219 deaths / million	+0.0 / week

Figure 5: Countries with Highest Per Capita Covid Death Tolls

It is interesting to note the dichotomy of growth amounts in Figure 5. Five of the ten countries have growth rates that exceed the U.S. value of 16.7 additional deaths per million each week, and five countries have lower growth rates. (The small countries of Andorra and San Marino have zero growth rates because they had no covid-related deaths during the past four weeks.) This dichotomy suggests ranking the 208 countries from smallest to largest according to how rapidly the per capita death tolls are increasing. In this ranking the U.S. is found in 191st place. Only seventeen countries have per capita death tolls that were growing faster than that of the U.S. These are the countries listed in Figure 6.

Rank 191	United States	619 deaths / million	+16.7 / week
Rank 192	Paraguay	103 deaths / million	+17.0 / week
Rank 193	Moldova	308 deaths / million	+17.1 / week
Rank 194	Kosovo	343 deaths / million	+17.2 / week
Rank 195	Chile	661 deaths / million	+17.9 / week
Rank 196	Costa Rica	155 deaths / million	+19.6 / week
Rank 197	Panama	540 deaths / million	+21.1 / week
Rank 198	Sint Maarten	495 deaths / million	+23.6 / week
Rank 199	Brazil	671 deaths / million	+25.1 / week
Rank 200	Mexico	601 deaths / million	+25.2 / week
Rank 201	Montenegro	243 deaths / million	+25.3 / week
Rank 202	Bahamas	205 deaths / million	+25.7 / week
Rank 203	Peru	985 deaths / million	+27.4 / week
Rank 204	Columbia	499 deaths / million	+31.5 / week
Rank 205	Argentina	342 deaths / million	+39.8 / week
Rank 206	Aruba	235 deaths / million	+40.0 / week
Rank 207	Bolivia	672 deaths / million	+65.3 / week
Rank 208	Ecuador	643 deaths / million	+68.5 / week

Figure 6: Countries Where the Per Capita Covid Death Tolls Are Growing the Fastest

Here we see that the U.S. is doing a better job of restricting the growth of Covid-related deaths than Mexico, the Bahamas and two Caribbean countries, three former Eastern Bloc countries, and ten countries from Central and South America. Such is the company we keep.

## SUMMARY

Given the same warnings as the rest of the world, given the same access to medical and scientific knowledge, and given abundant resources to use in response, what has the U.S. done?

Every country in the world has a smaller total number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 than does the U.S. (Rank 208 out of 208.)

Every country in the world has far fewer Covid-related deaths than does the U.S. (Rank 208 out of 208, Figure 1.)

Ninety-five percent of the countries in the world (197 out of 208) have a lower per capita Covid death rate than the U.S. (Figure 5.)

Ninety-one percent of the countries in the world (190/208) have per capita Covid death tolls that are growing more slowly than that of the U.S. (Figure 6.)

So what should be written in the comments section of this report card? By turning a public health issue into a political issue, and by taking an all-or-nothing approach, the U.S. has found its way to the bottom.

