Beat: Politics

The masks return to the streets of Spain

Its use is mandatory from this Friday

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USPA NEWS - The mandatory use of masks in the street returns this Friday in Spain. The Government and regional authorities decided on Wednesday to impose the permanent use of the masks, both indoors and on the street, in an attempt to cut the transmission of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus. Other measures are in the hands of regional authorities, which may restrict the capacity of leisure venues or recommend that the number of attendees at family Christmas celebrations be reduced.

The Spanish regions asked for common rules to face the sixth wave of the pandemic, but the Spanish Government limited itself to imposing the mandatory use of a mask on the streets without other restrictions. Regions like Andalusia and Galicia asked for new restrictions; Catalonia, the establishment of the curfew, considering that the night celebrations of Christmas and the New Year can trigger the number of infections. And the Basque Country demanded the limitation of hours and capacity in the hotel business. His requests were not accepted.

In exchange for not adopting new restrictions just 48 hours before Christmas Eve, the President of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sanchez, appealed on Wednesday to common sense and the responsibility of Spaniards. And he announced an acceleration in the rate of vaccinations, with a schedule that seeks to have inoculated the third dose to 80 percent of the Spanish population before next summer.

Six months later

The Spanish Government canceled the obligation to wear masks in open spaces on June 25, when Spain registered an incidence of 95 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. Today, the incidence stands at 768 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. According to Pedro Sanchez, with the return of masks to open spaces, the aim is to ensure the protection of the mucous membranes, the main route of entry for the coronavirus, regardless of whether or not the interpersonal safety distance is kept.

For most regional presidents, the use of masks in the street as the only measure against the sixth wave is insufficient. But only Madrid opposes the obligation to wear a mask in open spaces. The regional president of Madrid, Isabel Diaz Ayuso, conservative, considers that the measure is unnecessary. Díaz Ayuso, one of the leaders of the conservative Popular Party with the greatest political projection, faced the measures decreed by the Socialist Government of Spain during the confinement of 2020. This time, she threatens to disobey the order that requires wearing a mask permanently.

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