

Attempt to view in perspective the health hazard posed by the COVID-19 pandemic:

Mortality

between February and the end of May 2020 in Spain

and January and the end of April in Germany

compared to the general death rate

in both countries



Reinhard Wagner, Tenagua, 12 June 2020

"Everyone has the right to clear, accessible, timely and meaningful information about the nature and extent of the threat to their health".
(Esteban Beltrán, Director of Amnesty International's Spanish Section, before the Economic and Social Reconstruction Commission of the Spanish Parliament, European Union Group, 12 June 2020)

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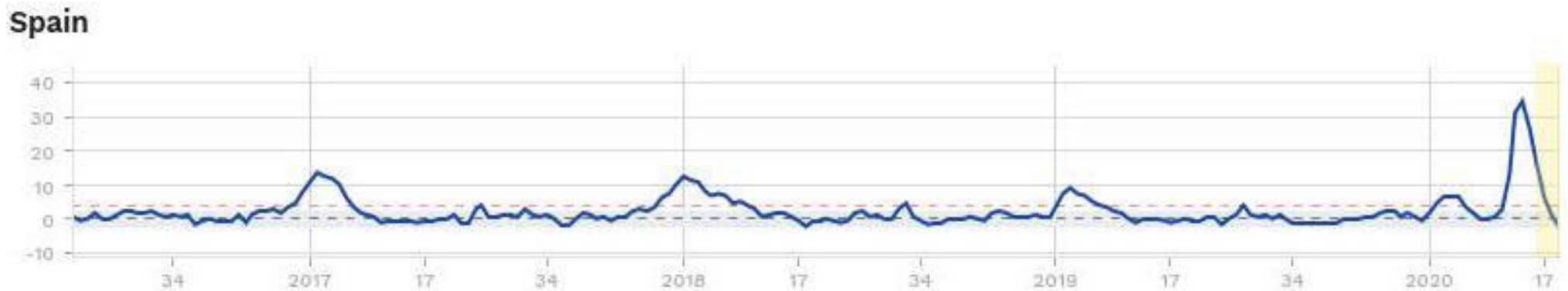
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*I am grateful for hints on errors and suggestions for improvement:
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1. Summary



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The death rate in *Spain* is significantly higher during the period mentioned. This is also confirmed if we look

not only at specific regions or periods of time, but at the entire country and at a period of four months, usual for an influenza epidemic.

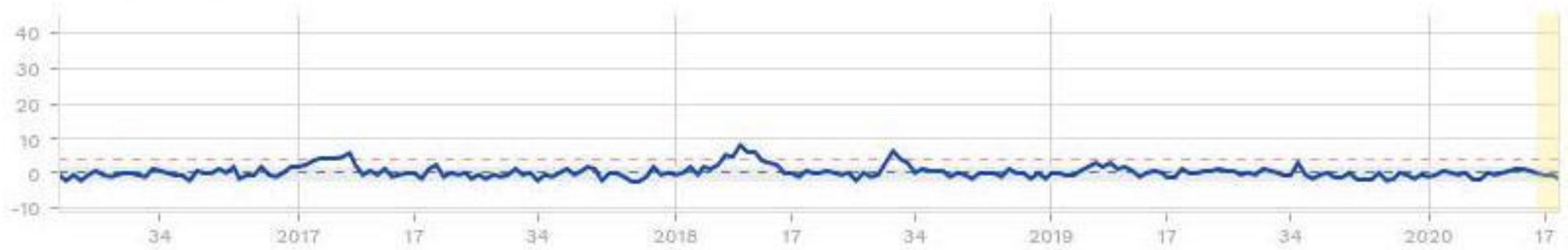
Regardless of the way it is viewed or presented, it is an unusual phenomenon in terms of the severity of its course and its timing in the year.

In purely quantitative terms, it is no longer within the range of deaths during the 2017/18 flu epidemic - after the delayed reporting of around 12,000 deaths at the end of May 2020 - but 6 % above it, with no extraordinary measures taken at the time of flu in 2017/18.

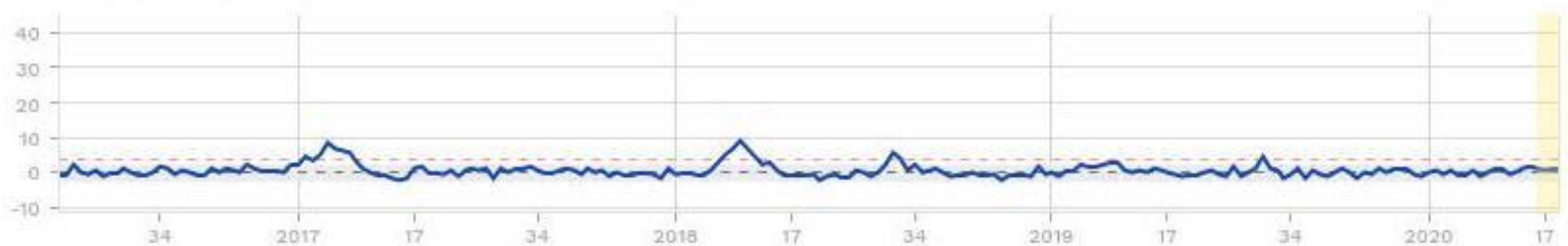
There was a direct temporal coincidence of excess mortality with the emergence of the new virus and a significantly increased number of deaths with* laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection. This suggests a causal relationship.

While an average of 526 people officially died every day with* COVID-19 from 17 March to 3 May 2020, the 48 days of excess mortality or "first wave", simultaneously 787 people continued to die daily from the usual circulatory system diseases, tumours and other respiratory diseases.

Germany (Berlin)



Germany (Hesse)



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In *Germany*, the death rate during the period from January to the end of April 2020 is unchanged and below what happened in previous strong influenza epidemics when no extraordinary measures were taken.

The new virus did not develop statistical significance. Thus, for the deaths with* laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection,

- either the new virus was not the cause
- or the measures taken have led to an overall reduction in mortality, thus statistically offsetting the possible additional COVID-19 deaths

- or a combination of both.

When, from 17 March to 3 May 2020 (the 48 days with excess mortality in Spain, chosen here only for reasons of comparability), an average of 139 people officially died daily in Germany with* COVID-19, simultaneously 1,770 people continued to die daily from the usual diseases of the circulatory system, tumours and other respiratory diseases.

*I present the official data here for reasons of comparability, even though I know that a death **with** a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection does not mean that it **caused** the death. The death could have been caused by a different disease or hastened by the infection. Both probably happened in cases where one or more pre-existing conditions were present.