

Europe imposes lockdown restrictions as fourth wave of coronavirus surges

With Europe once again the epicentre of the pandemic, Germany, Austria, and Slovakia have introduced restrictions on unvaccinated citizens, with two Austrian states going into full lockdown from next week.



Megan Baynes

News reporter @megbaynes

🕒 Friday 19 November 2021 06:07, UK



Austria has imposed a nationwide lockdown on unvaccinated people. Pic: AP

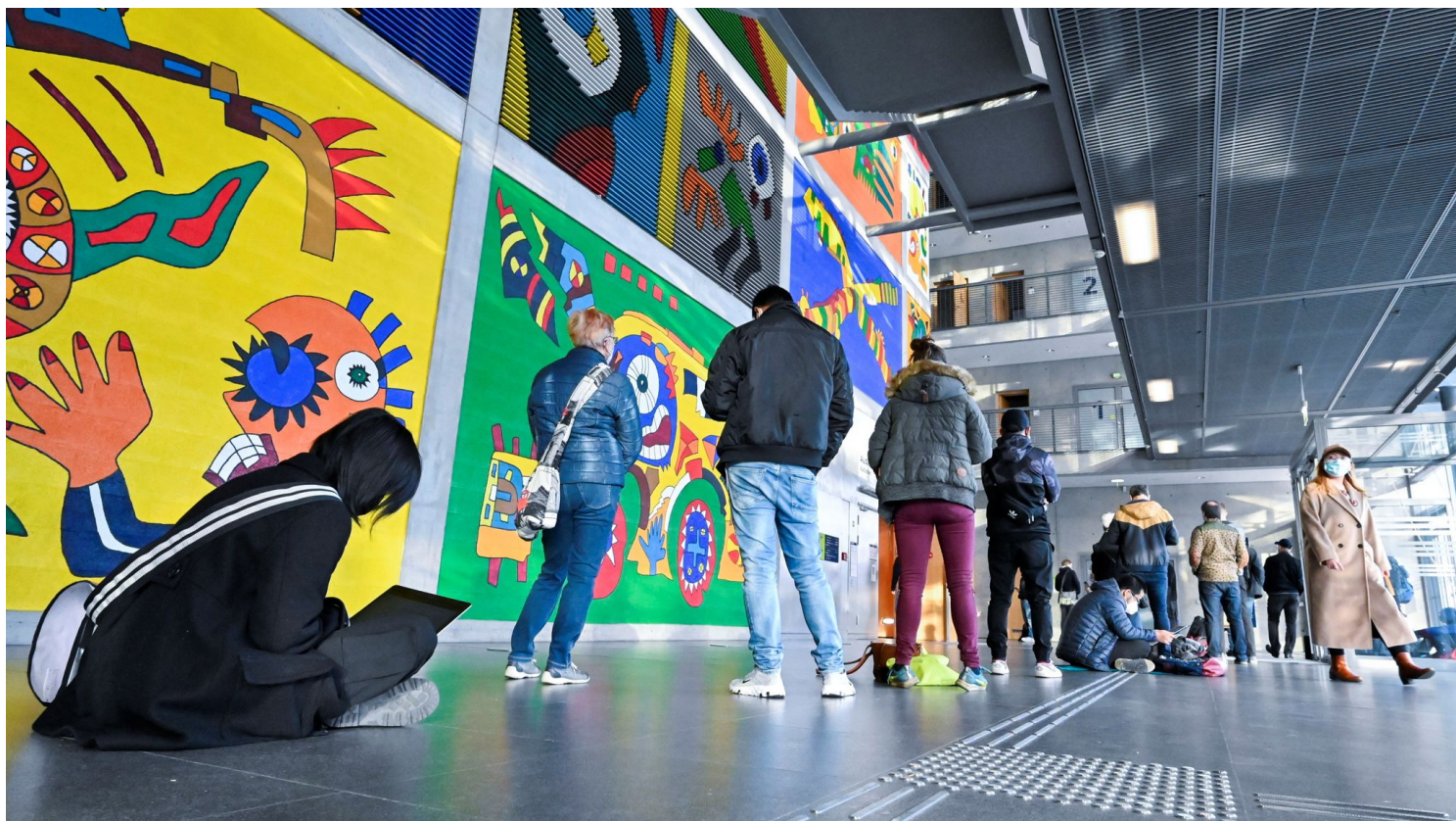


Why you can trust Sky News

Across Europe, sweeping COVID-19 restrictions are being imposed in a bid to tackle a fourth wave of the virus currently surging across the continent.

With **Europe** once again the epicentre of the pandemic, Germany, Austria, and Slovakia have reintroduced restrictions in the run-up to Christmas, amid a debate over whether vaccines alone are enough to tame the coronavirus.

Last week, it accounted for more than half of the seven-day average of infections globally and about half of the latest deaths, according to a tally by Reuters news agency.



People queue up for vaccination at a temporary vaccination centre in Dresden, Germany.

On Thursday, **German** Chancellor **Angela Merkel** announced **curbs on public life** for those who have not had a vaccine in areas where hospitals are filling dangerously fast with coronavirus patients.

Greece has also imposed more restrictions on unvaccinated people following a recent surge in cases - including barring them from all indoor spaces, such as cinemas, museums, and gyms.

Advertisement

Advertisement

The rate of death related to the virus has reached its highest level in six months, as roughly one-third of Greece's population remains unvaccinated.

Austria has imposed a similar lockdown, with two states - Salzburg and Upper Austria - extending measures to vaccinated people as well and entering a full lockdown from next week, with schools shut and a curfew imposed.

MORE FROM WORLD



Fully vaccinated travellers finally able to enter New Zealand from next year without quarantine

Rudy Guede released: Man convicted of British student Meredith Kercher's murder is freed early from prison

Ethiopians prepare for battle to 'save the nation', as men and women head to the front

Roughly a third of Greece's population remains unvaccinated. Pic: AP

The new restrictions will only allow trips to and from work, purchases of essential items, and leaving the house for exercise.

Vaccination uptake levels in **Austria** are among the worst in western Europe.

In the capital of Vienna, one brothel announced last week it would **provide COVID-19 vaccinations in exchange for visitors getting a free 30-minute session** in a "sauna club" with the "lady of their choice".

Officials have also sent unsolicited vaccination appointments to some 340,000 residents who hadn't yet received a jab.

Eyewitness: German doctors 'angry' as COVID cases surge to record levels

On Thursday, several hundred people protested outside the Austrian Embassy in Paris, fearing France may follow suit.

However, President **Emmanuel Macron** has said he will not impose a lockdown on unvaccinated people.

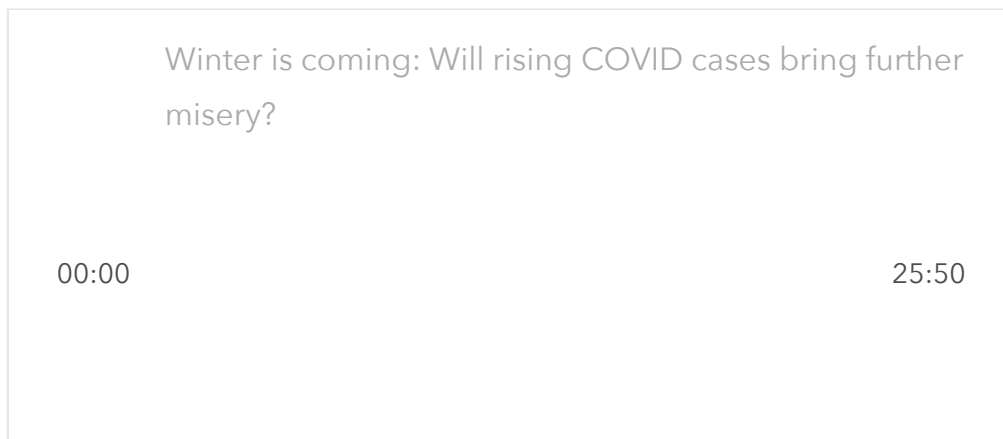
He said the success of the country's health pass has worked to curb the spread of the virus.

Emmanuel Macron has said he will not impose a lockdown. Pic: AP

In **France**, proof of vaccination - or a recent negative COVID-19 test - is required to go to restaurants, cafes, and cinemas, as well as when taking long-distance trains.

"Those countries locking down the non-vaccinated are those which have not put in place the (health) pass.

"Therefore this step is not necessary in France," Mr Macron told La Voix du Nord newspaper.



Follow the Daily podcast on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Spreaker](#).

Meanwhile, in **Hungary**, a third booster shot will become mandatory for all healthcare workers and the public will be required to wear a mask in most indoor places from Saturday.