

# Israel plans 2 million vaccinated by end of January

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Israel said Sunday two million people will have received a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination by the end of January, a pace Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu boasts is the world's fastest.

Starting on December 19, when Netanyahu got his first jab, Israel launched an aggressive push to administer the vaccine made by US-German pharma alliance Pfizer-BioNTech.

Health Ministry Director General Hezi Levy said that because of the enthusiastic takeup, Israel would be easing the speed of vaccination to eke out stocks.

The [vaccine](#) must be given in two separate jabs, administered three weeks apart.

"We are slowing the pace of vaccinations of the first dose, so that we can keep reserved stock for a second dose for all those who got a first shot," Levy told public broadcaster KAN.

But he added that around a fifth of Israel's people, starting with [health workers](#) and those over 60, would have had both shots by the end of this month.

"By the end of January, we shall have innoculated two million residents, most of them elderly," he said.

As of Friday, one million people had received their first injection.

"We are breaking all the records," Netanyahu said Friday, during a visit to the Israeli Arab city of Umm Al-Fahm, where the millionth jab was reported administered.

"We are ahead of the entire world," the premier said.

The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics said in a year-end statement that Israel's population stood at 9.29 million.

The figure includes annexed east Jerusalem, where Israeli sovereignty is not recognised by most of the [international community](#).

The health ministry said on Sunday that 435,866 people in Israel had so far tested positive for the virus since the first confirmed case was reported in February. Almost 3,400 people have died, it said.

The ministry said on Friday that it had confirmed 18 local cases of a new strain of [coronavirus](#) first detected in Britain.

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