

Finland's virus curbs to end once 80% vaccinated

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Finland's last coronavirus restrictions will be lifted once 80 percent of over-12s have been fully vaccinated, the government said Monday, a target it expects to reach by October.

"Our aim is to open up society and keep it open," Prime Minister Sanna Marin told reporters in Helsinki after a cabinet meeting on the country's

coronavirus strategy.

"The advancing vaccination coverage is our key to achieving that," Marin said, adding that restrictions will be lifted gradually as the virus situation improves.

The EU's most sparsely populated nation, Finland has maintained some of the bloc's lowest levels of infection throughout the pandemic, though cases have risen sharply in recent months, particularly among unvaccinated groups such as the young.

The public health authority, THL, reported over 130,000 total infections and 1,036 COVID-related deaths on Monday in the Nordic country of 5.5 million, and said 53.2 percent of the population had been fully vaccinated.

Restaurants and bars in areas of higher transmission currently face reduced opening hours and capacity limits, while some [local authorities](#) recommend people work remotely and wear masks in indoor public spaces.

Earlier on Monday the government proposed an end to the two-metre social distancing rule which currently applies to large gatherings and cultural events, with the change likely to be approved by parliament in the coming days.

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