

Ukraine capital imposes new curbs as virus cases surge

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The mayor of Ukraine's capital Kiev, Vitali Klitschko, imposed new coronavirus restrictions on Thursday as the country struggles to contain a surge in infections.

Ukraine reported 26,071 new COVID cases in 24 hours Thursday—a

record for the ex-Soviet country since the pandemic began.

Kiev schools will work remotely when they resume classes after a holiday break on Monday, Mayor Klitschko announced at a last-minute press conference.

He also imposed restrictions on the city's public transport system, saying vaccination certificates or negative tests will be required to use the network.

While passengers will not be checked when boarding buses or trains, Klitschko said special police units will be doing random checks.

From Monday, staff and visitors in public venues such as cinemas and gyms will be required to be vaccinated or have a negative PCR test.

The restrictions are intended to "save people's health and lives" and "to prevent the collapse of the medical system", Klitschko said.

The new anti-COVID measures in the capital followed similar restrictions in several other hard hit regions in the country, which has an under-resourced health service.

Authorities in the country of around 41 million initially struggled to source [vaccine doses](#) and have since fought to convince vaccine-sceptic Ukrainians to get inoculated.

But new restrictions requiring vaccinations have seen people flock to vaccine centres in recent days.

According to a government tally, 291,985 people were vaccinated over the past 24 hours—the highest figure since the beginning of the country's vaccination drive in February.

Kiev registered 1,451 new virus cases in the last 24 hours, with 39 COVID-related deaths.

Ukraine has recorded more than 2.8 million coronavirus cases and 66,000 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

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