

# Czechs, Slovaks hit virus records, target the unvaccinated

November 17 2021, by Karel Janicek

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In this March 16, 2020 file photo a young man wearing a face mask walks across an empty Charles Bridge in Prague, Czech Republic. The Czech Republic has been hit by a steep rise in COVID-19 infections that have reached the levels unseen since late April, the Health Ministry said on Wednesday Oct. 20, 2021. The Czech Republic has recorded a new record high in coronavirus infections in one day since the beginning of the pandemic. The news was announced by the Health Ministry on Wednesday Nov. 17, 2021, a day before the government is set to approve new restrictions tackle the recent wave. Credit: AP Photo/Petr David Jousek, File

The Czech Republic and Slovakia both reported record daily new coronavirus cases on Wednesday, a day before the governments of the two European Union countries plan to approve new restrictions for unvaccinated people in response to rising infections.

The Czech daily tally soared to 22,479 new cases, eclipsing the previous record set Jan. 7 by almost 5,000 and nearly 8,000 more than just a week ago. The country's infection rate rose to 813 new cases per 100,000 residents over the past seven days, up from 558 a week earlier.

Czech Health Minister Adam Vojtech announced Wednesday he would propose new coronavirus restrictions to be approved by the government on Thursday.

"We find ourselves in a very serious situation," Vojtech said. "There's a real risk that our hospitals will be overwhelmed,"

The key measure being proposed is that most unvaccinated people will no longer be allowed to attend public events, go to bars and restaurants or use hotels based only on coronavirus test results. Only people who are vaccinated and those who have recovered from COVID-19 will remain eligible. Similar restrictions are in place in the German state of Bavaria.

They are expected to become effective on Monday.

"It's motivation for the unvaccinated to get vaccinated," Vojtech said.



in this March 22, 2021 file photo, A woman walks by thousands of crosses that are painted at the Old Town Square, to commemorate the 1-year anniversary of the death of first Czech COVID-19 patient, in Prague, Czech Republic. The Czech Republic has been hit by a steep rise in COVID-19 infections that have reached the levels unseen since late April, the Health Ministry said on Wednesday Oct. 20, 2021. The Czech Republic has been hit by a steep rise in COVID-19 infections that have reached the levels unseen since late April, the Health Ministry said on Wednesday Oct. 20, 2021. The Czech Republic has recorded a new record high in coronavirus infections in one day since the beginning of the pandemic. The news was announced by the Health Ministry on Wednesday Nov. 17, 2021, a day before the government is set to approve new restrictions tackle the recent wave. Credit: AP Photo/Petr David Josek/File

Exceptions include teenagers aged 12 to 18, medical personnel and



visitors at hospitals and nursing homes.

Vojtech also urged companies to cancel their traditional Christmas parties and return to working at home wherever possible.

Slovakia reported 8,342 new virus cases, surpassing the previous record of 7,244 set Friday. The Slovakian government is planning new restrictions on unvaccinated people as the country's hospitals are getting overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients.

Slovakian Prime Minister Eduard Heger said his Cabinet would vote Thursday on recommendations from medical experts. Among the proposals, which would be instituted for three weeks, are banning unvaccinated individuals from nonessential stores, shopping malls, gyms, pools, hotels and mass public gatherings.

Slovakia's Health Ministry said 81% of the country's 2,879 hospitalized COVID-19 patients have not received coronavirus vaccines.

The Czech Republic at 57.9% and Slovakia at 45.3% have vaccination rates below the average of the EU's 27 nations.

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