

Munich cancels Christmas market over 'dramatic' COVID surge

November 16 2021



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Munich on Tuesday became the first major German city to cancel its upcoming Christmas market, which usually draws some three million visitors, blaming the "dramatic" coronavirus resurgence.

Munich mayor Dieter Reiter called it "bitter news" for the city's

residents and stallholders, but said it would be irresponsible for the event to go ahead.

"The dramatic situation in our hospitals and the exponentially increasing infection figures leave me no other choice: unfortunately, the Munich Christmas market cannot take place this year," Reiter said in a statement.

Many German Christmas markets were called off in 2020 because of the pandemic, but Munich "Christ Child Market" is the first of the larger, more popular ones to be axed this year.

It was due to open on November 22.

Munich is located in Germany's southern Bavaria region, which is grappling with one of the country's highest infection rates amid a ferocious fourth wave of the pandemic.

Bavaria had a weekly incidence rate of 554.2 recorded infections per 100,000 people on Tuesday, according to the Robert Koch Institute, well above the nationwide figure of 312.4—an all-time high for the country.

Germany hosts some 2,500 Christmas markets each year that are popular with visitors who come to savour mulled wine and roasted chestnuts, and shop for seasonal trinkets among clusters of wooden chalets.

In pre-pandemic times, they drew about 160 million domestic and [international visitors](#) annually who brought in revenues of three to five billion euros (\$3.6-5.9 billion), according to the BSM stallkeepers' industry association.

Eyes are now turning to cities such as Cologne, Stuttgart, Nuremberg and Dresden, which are in the midst of preparing their own popular Christmas markets.

Several smaller markets have already been cancelled across Germany, but so far many organisers have said they plan to forge ahead.

Some plan to impose stricter rules barring access to the unvaccinated, while other cities will demand proof of vaccination, recovery or a negative test before allowing visitors into the Christmas [market](#) zones.

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