

# Slovaks expand restrictions, plan more amid record surge

November 8 2021, by Karel Janicek

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Doctor Peter Sabaka, right, and Slovakia's Health Minister Vladimir Lengvasky attend a press conference in Bratislava, Slovakia, on Monday, Nov. 8, 2021. Slovakia has expanded tight coronavirus restrictions to almost a half of the country amid a record surge of infections. The government is expected to discuss further measures on Monday as the country's health minister joined the medical personnel who treat COVID-19 patients in hospitals to call on the Slovaks to get vaccinated. Credit: Pavel Neubauer/TASR via AP

Slovakia on Monday expanded strict coronavirus restrictions including hotel, bar and restaurant closures to almost a half of the country amid a record surge of infections.

The government is expected to discuss additional measures as the country's [health minister](#) joined medical personnel who treat COVID-19 patients in urging Slovaks to get vaccinated.

"Only vaccination can take us through the pandemic," Health Minister Vladimir Lengvasky said.

The measures will affect 36 of the country's 79 counties. Indicative of how fast infections are spreading, only five counties had imposed the measures three weeks ago, and another five a week later.

On top of the hotel, bar and restaurant closures, people will be allowed to only buy takeout meals. Fitness, wellness and aquatic centers also have been shuttered.

The maximum number allowed at public gatherings has been reduced to 100 fully vaccinated people. Face masks are compulsory indoors and outdoors.

Slovakia, which has a population of nearly 5.5 million people, is one of the countries in the European Union that have been hardest hit by the pandemic. It has registered around 457,431 cases and 12,917 deaths.

Daily infections have set three new records within last week, with the most recent of 6,805 cases being set on Thursday.



Slovakia's Health Minister Vladimir Lengvarsky speaks during a press conference in Bratislava, Slovakia, on Monday, Nov. 8, 2021. Slovakia has expanded tight coronavirus restrictions to almost a half of the country amid a record surge of infections. The government is expected to discuss further measures on Monday as the country's health minister joined the medical personnel who treat COVID-19 patients in hospitals to call on the Slovaks to get vaccinated. Credit: Pavel Neubauer/TASR via AP

The government's advisory group of [health](#) experts has proposed new restrictions such as limits on the movements of the unvaccinated in a bid to forestall a potential collapse of the health system.

About 80% of the 2,108 people who currently need hospitalization in Slovakia were either partially vaccinated or haven't received a shot at all.

Many hospitals have started to only treat COVID-19 patients.

Slovakia has one of the lowest vaccination rates in the EU. Less than half, or 2.41 million people, have been fully vaccinated.

"The vaccination could have prevented most of the deaths," a petition signed by some 1,300 medical personnel and the health minister said. "Amid worries that the worst is yet to come, we are asking you to get vaccinated."

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