

Norway introduces new anti-Covid measures in Oslo

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Norway introduced new anti-COVID measures in greater Oslo on Thursday after a suspected cluster of Omicron cases emerged among dozens of vaccinated people.

Face masks will be mandatory in public transport, shopping centres,

shops and taxis when social distancing is not possible. People will have to work from home if possible and the number allowed to gather at private indoor events will be limited to 100, the government said.

The announcement came after the Omicron variant was detected in at least one of "50 to 60" people who tested positive for COVID after a Christmas dinner in Oslo last week.

That represents about half of the 120 people—all vaccinated—who attended the event organised by solar energy producer Scatec.

Analyses were still ongoing to determine if more of the positive cases concerned the Omicron variant—which [local authorities](#) said they expected.

"The situation is worrying," Health Minister Ingvild Kjerkol told reporters.

"This indicates that the virus is transmitted very easily and that the vaccine doesn't protect well against infection," she said.

"We hope and believe that it protects against serious forms of infection but we don't know to what extent," she added.

If the Omicron strain is confirmed among all of those infected after the Christmas party, it would be Europe's largest known cluster of the new variant.

According to EU health agency ECDC, a total of 79 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected so far in the European Economic Area (EU plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

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