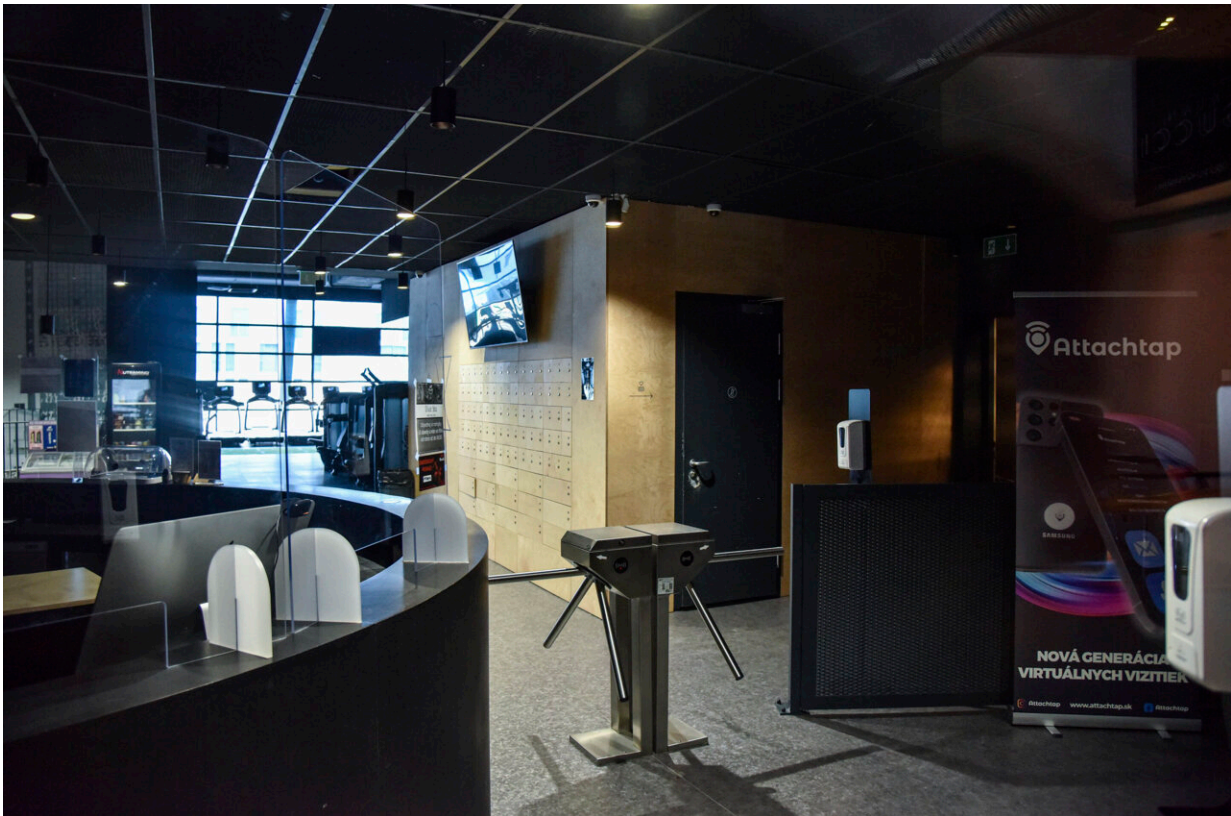


Slovakia to pay people over 60 if they are vaccinated

December 9 2021



A closed fitness center at a shopping center in Bratislava, Slovakia, Thursday, Nov. 25, 2021. The Slovak government approved a two-week national lockdown amid a record surge of coronavirus infections. Prime Minister Eduard Heger said the measures, effective from Thursday, will target all, both unvaccinated and vaccinated. Credit: Pavol Zachar/TASR via AP

Slovakia's Parliament approved a plan on Thursday to give people 60 and older up to 300 euros (\$339) if they are vaccinated against COVID-19.

The measure drafted by Finance Minister Igor Matovic should boost inoculations in the European Union country with one of the bloc's lowest vaccination rates. It should also help the struggling health care system amid a record surge of new infections.

So far, only 46.5% of the nation's 5.5 million [people](#) have been fully vaccinated.

In the 97-13 vote, lawmakers agreed that those who have received at least one primary dose of the vaccine by Jan. 15 will receive 200 euros (\$226) in cash, and those who have received a booster by that date will get 300 euros.

The deal is a compromise because the current four-party ruling coalition in Slovakia was split over the issue.

The original plan had been to give people vouchers worth 500 euros that could be used in certain businesses, but it was opposed by the pro-business Freedom and Solidarity party.

Slovakia has been facing a record surge of infections, making it one of the hardest hit in the world.

The country has been under lockdown since Nov. 25 with citizens allowed to leave their homes only for specific reasons. Those who are unvaccinated and have not recovered from COVID-19 are required to get tested for the virus to attend work. Only stores selling essential goods have remained open.

Starting on Friday, the government has agreed to ease the lockdown for

vaccinated people and those who have recently recovered from COVID-19.

Currently, 3,419 people are hospitalized in Slovakia, putting the health system under pressure. If the number reaches 3,800, the government plans to impose more restrictions.

Slovakia has reported over 757,000 coronavirus cases and 15,179 deaths in the pandemic.

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