

Norway scraps most COVID curbs despite Omicron surge

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Norway on Tuesday announced it would scrap most of its COVID restrictions despite an Omicron-fuelled surge in infections, saying society must "live with" the virus.

The Omicron variant has caused case numbers to soar in Norway, but hospital admissions for severely ill COVID patients have not increased in a population with wide vaccine coverage.

"We have finally reached the point where we can lift lots of the health measures we have had to live with this winter," Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store told a press conference.

"We are going to have to live with a high level of infections—we can live with a high level of infections," he added.

Norwegians will not have to quarantine if they are a contact of an infected person, although daily testing is recommended for five days, and the isolation period for COVID cases will fall from six to four days.

Remote working will no longer be obligatory and an unlimited number of people can visit other households and attend sporting events.

Travellers entering the Scandinavian nation will no longer have to undergo testing.

Restrictions on [alcohol sales](#) in bars and restaurants will also end.

The measures come into effect at 11 pm (2200 GMT) Tuesday.

Masks will remain mandatory in settings like [public transport](#) and shops where it is impossible to follow the recommended social distancing guidelines of one metre.

Norway will therefore not go as far as neighbouring Denmark, which on Tuesday became the first European Union country to remove all of its domestic COVID curbs.

More than 781,000 cases and 1,440 virus-related deaths have been recorded in Norway, where almost 91 percent of the population is fully vaccinated.

Norway's public health institute estimates that three to four million people from a population of 5.4 million could have been infected by this summer.

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