

# EU says moving out of 'emergency mode' on COVID pandemic

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EU officials said Wednesday the 27-nation bloc needed to keep focused on vaccination, testing and surveillance as it transitions out of the "acute" phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are entering a new phase of the pandemic, as we move from emergency mode to a more sustainable management of COVID-19. Yet, we must remain vigilant," European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said in a statement.

"We know the way forward. We need to further step-up vaccination and boosting, and targeted testing—and we need to continue to coordinate our responses closely in the EU."

Brussels said the bloc's nations should use current low levels of infections "to strengthen their surveillance, healthcare systems, and overall [pandemic preparedness](#)" ahead of a possible fresh wave in the autumn.

The recommendations called for stepping up booster jabs and continuing to sequence sufficient samples to detect any new variants.

It said [surveillance](#) no longer needed to focus on mass reporting of all COVID cases "but rather on obtaining reliable and representative estimates".

"New variants are not a question of if but rather a question of when. Improvisation and fragmentation are not an option," said Commission vice president Margaritis Schinas.

"Vigilance and preparedness remain as essential as ever and we must continue our work without respite."

Widespread vaccinations across the bloc and the less deadly Omicron variant have seen the levels of people being hospitalised or dying from the virus drop dramatically.

That fall has seen COVID-related restrictions eased or entirely dropped

around the 27 nations.

The pandemic has seen the EU ramp up its vaccine production capacity to 3-4 billion jabs a year.

As part of its push unveiled on Wednesday, the commission said it wanted to help maintain the bloc's role as a major [vaccine](#) powerhouse over the longer term to help face future health crises.

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