

Slovakia begins new mass virus testing

18 January 2021



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Slovakia on Monday began a new round of nationwide COVID-19 screening—a process aimed at easing curfew restrictions for people who test negative.

Tests will also serve as a basis for new localised restrictions in the country's 73 districts.

"We have decided to combine lockdown with massive testing," Prime Minister Igor Matovic told a press conference on Monday.

"Subsequently, we will intervene in districts where it is necessary to get the situation under control," he said.

The latest tests will end on January 26.

From January 27, Slovaks aged between 15 and 65 will be able to circulate freely with a negative antigen or PCR [test](#).

Health Minister Marek Krajci said that after testing, Slovakia will be divided into 37 worse and 36 better districts.

"In worse districts, the screening will be repeated.

From February 3, it will be necessary to prove a negative test there even when entering your place of work.

"This will be valid until February 7. In better districts, the situation will return to the state it is now.

"Although the situation has finally started to improve, without testing it would take weeks for the measures to begin to be relaxed," Krajci said.

The EU country on Monday reported 1,060 daily infections, bringing the total to 224,385. The [death toll](#) currently stands at 3,526.

Slovakia carried out mass antigen testing in November that covered two-thirds of its population of 5.4 million people.

It found 1.06 percent were positive.

Antigen tests give far quicker results than PCR tests, which involve nasal swabs that have to be sent to a laboratory, but they are less reliable.

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