

Germany expects vaccine deliveries to ramp up in 2nd quarter

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A Corona Drive-In testing station employee stands next to an open car window to take a nasal swab in Osnabrueck, Germany, Monday, April 19, 2021. Appointments can be made online for testing. The result is communicated by email after a short waiting time. With the "citizen test", all residents of Germany have the opportunity to be tested for an infection with the Corona virus free of charge. (Friso Gentsch/dpa via AP)

Germany's health minister on Monday welcomed the announcement by two pharmaceutical companies that they will deliver more coronavirus vaccines during the second quarter than previously predicted.

The Germany company BioNTech, which developed the first widely approved vaccine shot together with U.S. partner Pfizer, will provide Germany with an additional 10 million doses by the end of June. That takes the total expected from the company during the [second quarter](#) to 50.3 million jobs.

Rival Moderna is increasing its deliveries to 6.4 million for Germany during that period.

"The vaccination campaign is gaining speed significantly during the second quarter," Health

Minster Jens Spahn said.

Germany has also approved the vaccine made by AstraZeneca, though it is restricted to people aged 60 and over. Spahn indicated he expects the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine to also be approved by European regulators.

Like most European Union countries, Germany has so far given a first dose of coronavirus [vaccine](#) to about a fifth of its population. Other countries in the 27-nation bloc can expect to also receive more doses in the coming months, as Pfizer announced it would provide an additional 100 million shots to the EU this year, taking the total to 600 million.



Antje, employee at Café Rauschenbach, prepares a Corona quick test at Cafe Rauschenbach in Dresden, Germany, Monday, April 19, 2021. The restaurant offers a rapid antigen test on its premises. (Sebastian Kahnert/dpa via AP)



In an effort to cut the infection rate, the German government has asked parliament to approve a bill that would give [federal authorities](#) greater powers to set pandemic restrictions.

The latest draft of the bill envisages a night-time curfew from 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. with limited exceptions in regions where the number of new weekly infections tops 100 per 100,000 inhabitants. This would currently apply to almost all regions in Germany. Schools would be shut when the rate is above 165 newly confirmed cases a week per 100,000 inhabitants, the German news agency dpa reported.

Students Zeynep, left, and Neele from the Fritz Karsen Community School take a Corona self-test before classes begin in Berlin, Germany, Monday, April 19, 2021. Berlin children must be tested for the Corona virus in schools starting today. (Joerg Carstensen/dpa via AP)

Germany has sought to keep more areas of life—from schools to stores to zoos—open by requiring that people take a rapid coronavirus test before being allowed inside.

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A pupil takes a Corona antigen rapid test before the start of lessons at the Katharina Henoth Comprehensive School in Cologne, Germany, Monday, April 19, 2021. After a week of lessons at home, many children and adolescents in North Rhine-Westphalia have been able to return to their schools for face-to-face lessons since Monday. (Marius Becker/dpa via AP)

The increase in deliveries is welcome news for countries like Germany, which have been seeing a steady rise in new cases lately.

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