

Austrian chancellor threatens lockdown for unvaccinated

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Austria's Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg arrives for an EU summit in Brussels, Friday, Oct. 22, 2021. European Union leaders conclude a two-day summit on Friday in which they discuss issues such as climate change, the energy crisis, COVID-19 developments and migration. Credit: Olivier Hoslet, Pool Photo via AP

Unvaccinated people in Austria could face new lockdown restrictions if coronavirus case numbers continue to rise, Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg said.

The news came after a Friday evening meeting between Schallenberg and state-level leaders to discuss their response to rapidly increasing case numbers.

"The pandemic is not yet in the rearview mirror," Schallenberg said. "We are about to stumble into a pandemic of the [unvaccinated](#)."

Schallenberg announced that if the [number](#) of COVID-19 patients in intensive care units reaches 500, or 25% of the country's total ICU capacity, entry into businesses such as restaurants and hotels will be limited to those who are vaccinated or recovered from the virus.

If the number reaches 600, or one-third of total ICU capacity, the government plans to impose restrictions on [unvaccinated people](#). In this case, they would only be allowed to leave their homes for specific reasons.

Currently, the number of COVID-19 patients in ICUs stands at 220.

In the past week, Austria has reported 20,408 new cases of the virus, according to [health authorities](#), bringing the seven-day average to 228.5 per 100,000 inhabitants. A week earlier, that figure was at 152.5 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Although Austria's government has encouraged citizens to get vaccinated, the effort has slowed in recent months. About 65.4% of the [total population](#) has received one dose of the vaccine, and 62.2% are fully vaccinated.

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