

# WEEKLY COVID-19 UPDATE

*The latest news summarized by Pia Zekay*



## European Union & Global

**MALTA ANNOUNCED HERD IMMUNITY**

**JANSSEN VACCINE RE-AUTHORIZED**

**WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

## Österreich

**AUSTRIA STOPS INCOMING FLIGHTS FROM THE UK**

**VACCINATIONS FOR ADOLESCENTS**

**HEALTH INSURANCE INDUSTRY EXPECTS MINUS**

# ÖSTERREICH

Confirmed infected: 638,131

Confirmed recoveries: 623,668

Deaths: 10,547

Hospitalized: 601

In Intensive Care: 231

New Infections This Week: 351

Total Number of PCR Tests Administered: 10,111,548

Total Vaccinations: 4,592,818\*

\*Vaccinations recorded in the e-vaccination card

# ÖSTERREICH

Starting on the 1st of June, Austria will impose a landing ban for incoming flights from the United Kingdom due to the fast spread of the Indian Covid variant on the island. Additionally, Great Britain will be classified as a virus variant area, allowing only Austrian citizens or permanent residents to enter the country.

On Friday 28th of May, the European Medicine Agency (EMA) is expected to approve the BioNTech/ Pfizer vaccine for children and adolescents between twelve and fifteen years. The vaccine has already been authorized by the US Federal Drug Agency for expanded use of the respective age groups two weeks ago, making it likely for the EMA to follow.

The Austrian health insurance industry predicts a minus of 318 million Euro for this year, as insurees are expected to catch up on treatments which were delayed last year due to the pandemic. Until 2025 the annual deficit is estimated to rise up to 717 million Euro. However, usually, the actual numbers come out better than the forecasts.



# EUROPEAN UNION

The Maltese health ministry announced it has achieved herd immunity, being the first country within the European Union that vaccinated 70 percent of its adult population with at least one shot. Almost 42 percent are already fully vaccinated and among those aged 60 and above 95% received two jabs.

A recently published paper from experts across the European Union, predicts a new wave of Covid cases this fall due to gaps in the vaccination campaigns. Some people can not or do not want to get a jab and for some - especially people suffering from chronic diseases - the vaccine is not fully effective. Thus, it will be necessary to implement Covid restriction once again.

The Janssen vaccine from Johnson & Johnson will be available again in Austria from Wednesday on. After some rare cases of complications subsequently to a jab, the use of the Janssen vaccine was paused. According to the European Medicine Agency (EMA), the benefits outweigh the risks and after a reassessment, the vaccine is once again authorized for use.

# GLOBAL

This year's annual session of the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organisation, will take place in Geneva from the 24 of May until 1st of June. The main priority will be the fight against the pandemic and "preventing the next one by building a healthier, safer and fairer world" according to a press release. "This year's World Health Assembly will play a vital role in shaping the global health architecture of the future [...]" WHO Director-General Dr. Ghebreyesus said.

Russia and the US are cool to talks on the creation of a pandemic treaty and are stalling efforts to bring forward a decision at the World Health Assembly. The treaty would aim to formalize cooperation on future health pandemics however, Brazil and Jamaica also criticised the idea as there is no time for negotiation while they are still dealing with the pandemic.

The US requested another investigation on the origins of the coronavirus through a team of international experts. During the World Health Assembly US minister of health Xavier Becerra called for a comprehensive, transparent and scientific examination of the beginning of the pandemic. The theory that the virus originated in a lab in Wuhan is considered to be unlikely despite the lack of cooperation from China.