

WEEKLY COVID-19 UPDATE

The latest news summarized by Jennifer Teale



European Union & Global

MERKEL URGES GERMAN REGIONS TO ADHERE TO LOCKDOWN MEASURES

IN FRANCE, THE NUMBER OF COVID PATIENTS IN INTENSIVE CARE HAS RISEN TO 4,872.

SERBIA INOCULATING CITIZENS OF NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Österreich

ANSCHÖBER ANNOUNCES MASSIVE INCREASE OF VACCINATIONS FOR THE SECOND QUARTER.

VIENNA TO EXTEND EASTER CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN

EASTERN AUSTRIA'S POST-EASTER REOPENING WILL INCLUDE MANDATORY TESTING IN SHOPS.

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Confirmed infected: 542,542

Confirmed recoveries: 497,816

Deaths: 9,308

Hospitalized: 2,321

In Intensive Care: 544

New Infections This Week: 3,001

Total Number of PCR Tests Administered: 6,474,269

Total Vaccinations: 1,569,086*

*Vaccinations recorded in the e-vaccination card

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Vienna plans to extend an Easter coronavirus lockdown by five days until the following Sunday, Anschober said on Monday (March 29), while two nearby provinces introducing the same restrictions are still undecided on prolonging them.

Anschober also announced a massive increase of Covid-19 vaccinations for the second quarter. Due to the tripled delivery volume compared to the first quarter and longer intervals between the first and the second vaccination, the number of vaccinated Austrians will increase rapidly in the near future.

Eastern Austria's post-Easter reopening will include mandatory testing in shops. If shops open again on 7th April following the Easter lockdown in Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland (from 1st April to 6th April), a test will be needed to go shopping, according to the latest plans of the Ministry of Health. Some retail outlets, such as those providing vital services, shall be exempt from this necessity.

EUROPEAN UNION

Chancellor Angela Merkel has urged German regions to adhere to lockdown measures agreed with her government. Areas with more than 100 new infections per 100,000 people are asked to impose curfews. But a strict five-day lockdown over Easter, which Merkel wanted, will not now happen. The national rate in Germany is now 134 per 100,000 people. The eastern city of Weimar is launching a three-day trial project aimed at unlocking the economy, with the help of increased testing. Saarland and the cities of Rostock and Tübingen are also easing Covid rules, defying the federal government.

Serbia has been inoculating citizens of neighbouring countries, amid a surplus of vaccines and a reluctance among many Serbs to be injected. Queues were reported on the borders with North Macedonia and Bosnia, and migrants also receive vaccines at a camp near Belgrade.

In France, the number of Covid patients in intensive care has risen to 4,872, close to a November peak, though last April the figure was about 7,000. Paris doctors have warned they may soon have to choose between emergency patients, as bed space runs out. Paris and 18 other regions are under partial lockdown.

GLOBAL

Kenya is facing an acute shortage of oxygen in hospitals across the country, the ministry of health says. This has been caused by a rising number of Covid-19 cases as the country experiences a deadly third wave - with some Kenyans and private institutions stocking up on the commodity.

Brazil's daily Covid-19 death toll has passed 3,000 for the first time. Experts report the situation is virtually out of control. President Jair Bolsonaro, who has opposed lockdowns and criticised face masks, defended his actions on Tuesday.

Mexico has published revised figures indicating that the number of deaths caused by coronavirus is 60% higher than previously reported. More than 321,000 people are now believed to have died from Covid-19 in the country. The revised toll places Mexico with the second highest number of Covid-related deaths in the world, after the US.

Niger has started its vaccination campaign against Covid-19 with China's Sinopharm vaccine. Health workers, vulnerable people over 60, members of the defence and security forces, refugees and migrants, are among groups being prioritised.