

Germany vows no more lockdowns for vaccinated people

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Germany's health minister on Friday said people who are vaccinated against COVID will not have to go into full lockdown again and will enjoy more freedoms than unvaccinated people in case of another virus

resurgence.

"As long as there are no mutations that impact the protection from vaccines... then being fully vaccinated means that restrictions of the kind we saw last winter will not be necessary, needed or legally appropriate," Jens Spahn told reporters in Berlin.

Germany currently has very low infection numbers and has relaxed most of its virus curbs, but concerns are growing about the spread of the more contagious Delta variant and the likelihood of cases climbing again because of summer travel.

Spahn reiterated pleas for Germans to roll up their sleeves to prevent a fourth pandemic wave this autumn.

"The more people get vaccinated this summer, the better the autumn will be," Spahn said.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's chief of staff, Helge Braun, said earlier Friday that scientists agree fully vaccinated people "are not really at risk and don't pose a danger to others".

Vaccinated people should therefore be allowed to do things like go shopping or attend concerts, Braun told broadcaster MDR.

"For this large part of the population, many sectors that were completely shut down in the past will not have to close again," he said.

Unlike at the start of Germany's [vaccine](#) drive, there are now enough doses available for anyone who wants one, Health Minister Spahn said.

More than 55.1 percent of German adults, or 45.8 million people, have had at least one COVID shot. Over 37 percent are fully vaccinated,

according to government data.

Germany recently also opened up the BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine to 12-15 year olds, although the country's vaccine commission has officially recommended it only for adolescents with pre-existing conditions.

Some 400,000 over-12s have so far received the first of the two-dose vaccine, Spahn said.

Germany recorded 649 new coronavirus cases over the past 24 hours and 69 deaths on Friday, according to the Robert Koch health institute, bringing the total to just over 3.7 million cases since the start of the pandemic and 91,000 deaths.

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