

# Germany plans 'freedom day' as COVID-19 curbs to be lifted from March 20

Germany will start rolling back most of its coronavirus restrictions in three stages as falling infection rates suggest the Omicron-fuelled wave has peaked, Chancellor Olaf Scholz says. Media-dubbed "freedom day" is slated for March 20.

The country will ease COVID-19 restrictions, as a wave of infections from the Omicron coronavirus variant seems to have passed its peak, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said on Wednesday, but he warned that the pandemic was not over yet.

"We can look into the future with more optimism than we could in the last few weeks," he said.

The three-point plan agreed on Wednesday envisages a stage-by-stage lifting of restrictions for private gatherings, retail outlets and restaurants and hotels.

From 20th March, all of the more far-reaching protective measures are to be dropped.

After a meeting with the heads of the federal states earlier on Wednesday, Scholz said Germany was ready to look forward with more confidence regarding COVID-19.

"After these long two years, we deserve that things somehow improve again and it looks a bit like that's exactly what we have in front of us," Scholz told reporters after the meeting.

On Wednesday, Germany reported 219,972 new daily coronavirus cases, down 6% compared to the same day last week. The seven-day infection incidence per 100,000 people also dropped to 1,401 from 1,438 on Tuesday.

In a three-stage plan, the government agreed to lift restrictions on private indoor meetings for those vaccinated or recovered from the virus in coming days. Checks at non-essential stores for a proof of vaccination or a negative test result will end but masks will still be required.

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Source:

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