

Italy offers COVID vaccines to everyone over 12

June 3 2021



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Italy, one of the European nations hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic, on Thursday opened vaccinations for everybody over the age of 12.

Each region can adapt the national rules but technically anyone registered with [health authorities](#) can sign up—including teenagers, after the European Medicines Agency approved the Pfizer/BioNTech jab for 12 to 15-year-olds last week.

"It's a beautiful day," enthused Luigi de Magistris, the mayor of Naples, saying it was an "excellent signal for both containing the pandemic and for resuming as soon as possible all forms of... activity."

After a slow start at the beginning of the year, both due to organisational issues and lack of supply, Italy's vaccination programme has been rapidly gaining pace.

More than 35 million doses have been administered, with 12.4 million people—almost 23 percent of the population—now fully vaccinated, according to health ministry figures.

Hailing the widening of the [vaccination programme](#), Health Minister Robert Speranza said: "We can still accelerate our campaign to get through this difficult season."

Italy was the first European nation to face the full force of the coronavirus [pandemic](#) in early 2020 and has so far recorded more than 126,000 deaths—the worst official toll on the continent barring Britain.

However, cases have fallen significantly in recent weeks and many restrictions have been dropped, although a night-time curfew remains alongside limits on inside dining and a requirement to wear masks in public.

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