

## COVID-19 EU Briefing 04 October 2021

### Recovery

#### Vaccines

- Chief executive of the BioNTech group, Ugur Sahin has [said](#) a new vaccine is likely to be needed by the middle of next year to protect against the virus as it mutates.
- The EMA [identified](#) a possible link between rare cases of blood clotting in deep veins with Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine and recommended the condition be listed as a side-effect of the shot.

#### Therapeutics

- Pharma company Merck has [said](#) that its experimental pill for people sick with COVID-19 reduced hospitalisations and deaths 50% compared to placebo for patients with mild or moderate COVID-19 in an interim analysis of phase 3 study.

### Member States

#### Germany

- The states of North Rhine-Westphalia, Bavaria and Saarland have [lifted](#) most COVID-19 restrictions. In North Rhine-Westphalia, masks are no longer compulsory in outdoor public spaces, a cap on the number of people allowed to attend soccer matches, stadiums and concerts will have been lifted.
- In Bavaria clubs and discos are open; the "3G rule" will apply; meaning that those going to clubs will have to either be tested, vaccinated or have proof of recovery from COVID. Employees in establishments with customer contact will also have to take PCR tests at least twice a week if they are unvaccinated.
- In Saarland the rules have followed those similar to Bavaria.

#### Belgium

- Face masks are no longer [mandatory](#) in the hospitality sector and in shops, but must still be worn in care homes, on public transport, and some sporting events.

#### Portugal

- Portugal [lifted](#) almost all of its coronavirus restrictions on Friday, including the reopening of its bars and nightclubs that had been closed since March 2020.

### Slovenia

- The Slovenian Constitutional Court [blocked](#) a government plan to make coronavirus vaccines mandatory for public employees, hours before it was due to come into force on Friday.

### The Vatican

- Residents, workers, and visitors must [present](#) the "Green Pass", showing proof of COVID-19 immunity to enter the Vatican.

### Romania

- Romania has made masks [mandatory](#) both in indoor and outdoor public spaces in places where the case incidence exceeds 6 per 1,000 people. Access to restaurants, gyms, theatres, cinemas and other indoor spaces will be enabled at half of capacity and only the fully vaccinated or those with immunity from previous infection. Weekend curfews will be introduced for those who are not vaccinated.

*Source: DeHavillandEU*