

Scientists Say Russia Reaches 60% ‘Herd Immunity’ Through Vaccines and Infections

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The Kremlin admitted last month that it won't meet its original target of vaccinating 60% of the population by the fall. **Moskva News Agency**

Scientists believe that Russia has reached 60% [herd immunity](#) through a combination of vaccines and infections as the country struggles to increase vaccination rates amid a deadly Delta variant-driven surge in the pandemic.

The Kremlin [admitted](#) last month that it won't meet its original target of vaccinating 60% of the population by the fall after Russian media reported that unvaccinated people with antibodies would be counted toward herd immunity.

The following week, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin ordered an “[update](#)” to the nationwide vaccination model that did not specify whether infected Russians would be added to the herd immunity column.

Areg Totolian, who heads the St. Petersburg branch of France's Pasteur Institute, a disease and vaccine research foundation, told Russian state television that the 60% threshold has been reached but will not stem the third wave.

“It doesn't make us feel at ease, it allows us to manage the process. In fact, we need to reach 90%” to defeat the pandemic, Totolian told the Rossia broadcaster.

Independent tallies [say](#) 32.3 million — or 22% of Russia's population — have received at least one vaccine dose and 14% were fully vaccinated as of Monday.

Russia is among the world's hardest-hit countries by the pandemic with nearly 6 million coronavirus infections.

Russia has seen multiple days-long streaks of record-breaking Covid-19 deaths in recent weeks as the highly contagious Delta variant spreads throughout the country.

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2