



COMUNICADO

Gobierno de Gibraltar

Actualización de los datos sobre Covid-19 y vacunación a domingo, 1 de enero de 2022

Gibraltar, 1 de enero de 2022

Hoy hay 76 nuevos casos detectados en Gibraltar, 71 residentes y 5 visitantes

Personas vacunadas, 50

- ***1 residente vacunado de entre 15-20 años***
- ***6 residentes vacunados de entre 20-25 años***
- ***4 residentes vacunados de entre 25-30 años***
- ***5 residentes vacunados de entre 30-35 años***
- ***8 residentes vacunados de entre 35-40 años***
- ***7 residentes vacunados de entre 40-45 años***
- ***5 residentes vacunados de entre 45-50 años***
- ***3 residentes vacunados de entre 50-55 años***
- ***4 residentes vacunados de entre 55-60 años***
- ***2 residentes vacunados de entre 60-65 años***
- ***2 residentes vacunados de entre 65-70 años***
- ***2 residentes vacunados de entre 70-75 años***
- ***1 residente vacunado de entre 90-95 años***

Personas no vacunadas, 26

- ***3 residentes no vacunados de entre 0-5 años***
- ***2 residentes no vacunados de entre 5-10 años***
- ***1 residente no vacunado de entre 10-15 años***
- ***4 residentes no vacunados de entre 15-20 años***
- ***5 residentes no vacunados de entre 20-25 años***
- ***2 residentes no vacunados de entre 25-30 años***
- ***1 residente no vacunado de entre 30-35 años***
- ***2 residentes no vacunados de entre 35-40 años***
- ***1 residente no vacunado de entre 40-45 años***
- ***1 visitante no vacunado de entre 15-20 años***
- ***1 visitante no vacunado de entre 20-25 años***
- ***1 visitante no vacunado de entre 35-40 años***
- ***1 visitante no vacunado de entre 50-55 años***
- ***1 visitante no vacunado de entre 70-75 años***

Tests:

Realizados: 450.596

Pendientes de recibir: 163

Recibidos: 450.433



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Casos positivos:

Confirmados desde el comienzo de la pandemia: 8.794 [+93]
 Activos en Gibraltar: 689 [+34] (663 residentes [+29], 26 visitantes [+5])
 En los Servicios de Residencia para la Tercera Edad: 0 [=]
 Recuperados: 7.798 [+56]

Número de personas en **autoaislamiento**: 968 [+26]. Esta cifra incluye a autoaislados por inmunodeficiencias o familiares y convivientes de positivos

Se ha realizado un total de 94.486 tests dentro del muestreo sistemático y focalizado en el personal de primera línea. Dicho número está incluido en la cifra total.

Los casos de visitantes corresponden a otras personas cuya estancia en Gibraltar es temporal (p. ej. tripulaciones, turistas).

Hospitalizados:

En planta Covid-19: 0 [=]

Fallecidos:

Total fallecidos: 100 [=]
 Por coronavirus: 88 [=]
 Con coronavirus: 12 [=]

Vacunación:

Vacunas administradas 1ª dosis: 41.173 [=]
 Vacunas administradas 2ª dosis: 40.065 [=]
 Tercera dosis: 121 [=]
 Vacunas refuerzo administradas 26.964 [=]
 Total vacunas administradas: 108.323 [=]

Desglose de variantes de Covid-19 activas en Gibraltar	Residentes	Visitantes
B.1.1.7 (Alpha)	0	0
B.1.351 (Beta)	0	0
P.1 (Gamma)	0	0
B.1.617.2 (Delta)	30	0
B.1.621	0	0
B.1.1.318	0	0
B.1.1.529 (Ómicron)	88	4
B.1.177	0	0
Sin confirmar	5	0
54	540	22
Total	663	26



INFOGIBALTAR

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN DE GIBALTAR

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Nota a redactores:

Esta es una traducción realizada por el Servicio de Información de Gibraltar. Algunas palabras no se encuentran en el documento original y se han añadido para mejorar el sentido de la traducción. El texto válido es el original en inglés.

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PRESS RELEASE

No: 955/2021

Date: 23rd December 2021

Chief Minister's Script - Live Statement from No 6 Convent Place

My dear fellow Gibraltarians and residents of Gibraltar,

It is eight months since I last addressed you live from the seat of Government here at No6 Convent Place.

Today, I do so in order to explain the approach we are taking to the recent rise in cases of COVID-19 in Gibraltar and around us.

I will also deal with the very fast increase in the new Omicron variant of COVID-19.

Before I start to address these issues, I will start by sharing the latest data with you.

I very much look forward to the day when we will no longer be providing such statistics, but for now, here we go.

The total number of cases of COVID-19 in Gibraltar today is 488.

However, of these, only three are in hospital.

One case is a baby who has had COVID-19 detected on admission for another condition as part of the testing we do when patients are admitted.

The child has therefore been admitted not as a result of a COVID infection.

One case in the COVID ward is steadily improving.

That person was vaccinated.

One case is in the ICU has been ventilated, has improved and is no longer ventilated.

That person was unvaccinated.

Since we started testing we have carried out over 441-thousand PCR tests.

We have carried out 1,427 such tests overnight.



Of the 488 live cases in question, 397 are residents, 78 are non-residents and 13 are visitors.

Of the 488 where we have variant data for;

149 are DELTA variant and 114 are OMICRON variant with the balance still being sequenced.

Because of the three-day lag in getting results of genomic sequencing we believe that the OMICRON variant will now have increased its prevalence in our community even further.

It is therefore now very likely that the Omicron variant is already the dominant variant in Gibraltar.

With Omicron as the dominant variant in Gibraltar, it is important for us to address how to deal with its increased infectivity to ensure that the GHA is not overwhelmed by cases.

Omicron is 70 times more infectious than Delta.

The new evidence about the virulence of Omicron, however, is more positive.

Omicron appears to be more infectious but less threatening to life.

But we must still ensure that we keep all strains of the virus under control in Gibraltar.

For that reason, the Cabinet decided on Monday that we should once again convene the top echelon of the civil contingency command structure for the pandemic, COVID PLATINUM.

COVID PLATINUM met this morning to assess the picture as we head into the Christmas holidays.

The advice from the Director of Public Health, Dr Helen Carter, is clear:

Although we already have community transmission, the curve of infections is flat.

We are already reaping the benefits and rewards of having maintained a very precautionary approach this autumn.

I know many of you will be watching UK and international news channels and you will be seeing nations around the world IMPOSING conditions and rules and cancelling events and celebrations.

You may ask yourselves why your Government is not doing that here.

The answer is that we, in Gibraltar, took those decisions and announced them some time ago.

As far back as September and October we took the decision to cancel our large scale public events.

We did that, NOT because we knew that we were going to face Omicron, which only arose later.

We did it because we were not confident we could safely go ahead with those events.



We therefore proceeded with caution to avoid expense and last minute cancellations.

The same is true of mask wearing in shops and on public transport.

So the reason you are not hearing us re-imposing those conditions today is simply because we never lifted the requirement in the first place.

The reason we are not cancelling events today is because, this year, we simply did not organize them in the first place.

We recognize that the prudence we have called for has affected some businesses this year too, although certainly not like last year when we shut down our catering industry.

This year catering and hospitality may not be as busy as in other pre-pandemic years, but there is no shut-down as in last year.

As we did last year, however, we will work with the businesses that are having problems making ends meet these months to assist where possible.

We will meet with the Federation of Small Businesses who have written asking us to consider how to help.

And we will meet in the New Year with the Catering Association to properly calibrate how we can help in this new scenario in which businesses are open and operating but the take up is slower than in other years.

But the reality is that the main reason we are seeing fewer hospitalisations in Gibraltar is plain and simply our very high vaccination rates.

We have administered over 41,000 first doses and over 40,000 second doses of the Pfizer vaccine.

To date we have already provided almost 27,000 third doses.

We must continue to see the vaccines as the life-line that the United Kingdom has provided and that has enabled us to start to navigate our way back to normality.

In fact, it is incredible to think it was just earlier this year that all our eyes were on the airport as we started to receive vaccines from the United Kingdom.

We have never been closer to the United Kingdom or luckier to be part of the UK family of Nations.

We have really reaped the reward of our British status this year and during this pandemic.

As an aside, let me say that you should not let anything or anyone even suggest that any of us in Government would be prepared to gamble with that uniquely and exclusively British status in the ongoing UK/EU negotiations.



As a result of the vaccination programme, I fully expect we will now be able to enjoy Christmas with our loved ones without the need for any further restrictions.

Today I am therefore relieved to be able to tell you that I am announcing no further restrictions at all.

There is today no requirement to restrict your civil liberties in order to protect life or the GHA's ability to protect life.

Because we must neither fail to act nor overreact.

We understand the impact that our decisions can have on other elements of life in Gibraltar.

We understand the potential negative impacts of measures we might take to mitigate risks stemming from the pandemic.

We understand that our decisions have an effect on our ability to get on with our lives.

And to get on with the diagnosis and treatment of other life-threatening conditions.

But to keep it that way in the face of the Omicron variant, we do need to see continued and full take-up of our booster vaccines.

As of today, with those almost 27,000 having had a booster jab, we have approximately 70% of those who had the initial two doses now boosted.

Of the resident population 80% of over 50-year-olds who had the second dose have now been boosted.

This is very good of course, but it is not excellent.

It is not where we need to be.

We have a way to go to ensure that everyone who had a second vaccine has a third booster.

The GHA has pulled out all of the stops to get as many of you, who wanted to be, boosted before Christmas.

I'm certain many of you will be taking your vaccine just as soon as you can.

I am certain that we will continue to see a steady take-up in the New Year when the programme resumes.

As we steer Gibraltar through what we hope, but cannot guarantee, will be a muted wave of hospitalisations, we are each making choices for ourselves that have consequences for ourselves and each of our fellow Gibraltarians.



Because choices have consequences.

Freedom of choice does not equal freedom from consequence.

In the vaccine, and in the help we have had from the United Kingdom Government in 2021, we are fortunate enough to have the choice that can keep us safe.

We have the one weapon that works better than anything against COVID.

We have a way out of this pandemic which thousands of you have taken as part of the community-wide effort to get us out of this.

I know many of you will have taken the vaccine DESPITE some reservations that you may have had.

Despite those, you have balanced the needs of this community, your personal needs and the needs of your family and you have made the right choice.

The consequence of this choice is that you join in with the community effort and we strengthen our hand against this threat when every one of us takes a moment to get boosted.

Some have been advised by their doctors not to have the vaccine.

There are many however, who have CHOSEN not to have the vaccine.

There are many reasons why you may have CHOSEN not to take the vaccine - some sensible, others less so.

There are those who, in addition to refusing to take a vaccine, are also taking a stand against doing literally anything whatsoever that is recommended or suggested or, in some instances unfortunately, demanded or required for the protection of those around the unvaccinated.

The choice is yours, of course.

The consequence of that choice however, will also run to your account.

Let me tell you that the two adults in hospital are of the same sex and of exactly, the same age.

Both are men.

They are in exactly the same age in their seventies.

One is in the COVID ward and has only required some basic attention.

He is vaccinated.

The other patient, exactly the same age, and the same sex is in the ICU.



He is not vaccinated by choice, not as a result of any medical advice.

He has had to be intubated and ventilated, a highly invasive and dangerous procedure.

Happily, he is today improving and we hope he will live to tell the tale of his battle with COVID.

But it is very, very, very likely, that if he had been vaccinated he would not have required intubation and ventilation.

That would have saved our health professionals a huge amount of stress, time and expense on his care.

And so our booster vaccination programme has been successful, but I have to emphasise that we have not yet had the same uptake of boosters as we did on the first and second doses.

It is important to understand that because our vaccination programme was so successful earlier this year the effect of the double vaccine is waning and it needs to be topped up with a third vaccine to boost our protection against the virus.

It is very important that everyone has the COVID vaccine booster shot.

Vaccines are humanity's shield against disease and infection.

By having them, we act in community and we show we care for each other.

By having them, we protect ourselves and we protect each other.

I would ask that those who haven't yet had the booster should therefore please make arrangements to do so as soon as possible.

The vaccine will keep you safe.

More importantly it will also keep others safe.

The higher the number of people in our community and our cross-frontier population who are vaccinated, the safer it makes it for all of us as a nation.

Remember that, as with all vaccination programmes, taking a vaccine is an altruistic gesture.

Our next vaccination clinic is on the 29th December and this is by appointment.

The clinic after that will be dependent on the further numbers who have registered.

Online registration is available at <https://www.gha.gi/pfizerbooster/> and you will be called by the GHA with the details of your appointment.



We have to be mindful that the GHA and colleagues who are supporting them have been working flat out to keep you safe throughout this year.

The booster vaccination clinic has largely been undertaken after hours so as to minimize the impact on ordinary services.

We made the clinic available full time for a couple of weeks to be able to meet with the demand of the booster ahead of the Christmas break.

This means that those who have brought this service to you have been there for you to give you the booster injection after a full day's work and they also need to rest over this important period.

We are conscious that our students will be returning to the UK soon as we of course want to ensure that they are boosted, so we have made special arrangements for them to ensure that they are given an appointment for their booster jabs as soon as possible.

Any student who has not yet registered for the vaccination should do so via this link <https://www.gha.gi/booster-registration-for-university-students/> which I will post on my Social Media feed.

As a final point on vaccinations, if you have to decide what to do because you are unsure, don't just listen to me.

Don't take legal advice from a scientist and don't take scientific advice from a lawyer.

Ask your doctor.

Don't ask Facebook, Google or YouTube.

Please, do not take your advice from the internet or social media where the person giving you advice may not be qualified and may not even be the person that they say they are.

More and more countries are introducing the need to have a Covid Digital Pass to gain access to venues including bars and restaurants.

I can report that we launched our Covid Pass on the 8th November having worked on this with NHSx since the 1st July.

It is totally EU compatible and works perfectly.

However, we were removed from the EU Digital COVID Pass network by the UK when it became apparent that the EU had not been informed that Gibraltar was included with the United Kingdom's NHSx COVID Pass.

As I have previously said, I have raised this with the Foreign Secretary and we are seeking to expedite administrative approval with the European Commission at the earliest opportunity.



In the interim, the GHA's Covid Pass has been modified to enable users to download the PDF Certificate, if they wish to print them out, or request a Certificate on the official GHA/HMGOG letterhead which will be emailed to you.

Given increased demand and the upcoming Christmas holiday break, this is expected to take at least 7 working days

For all those of you who have now had the booster, I am pleased to tell you that these certificates are being updated to include the details of your booster by no later than 24 hours after you have had that vaccination.

I will report to you further as soon as we have resolved the administrative issues with the European Commission.

All of that of course is about convenience to travel and to access leisure.

But, in the end, we must not forget that 2021 has been a year when we have lost 93 Gibraltarians to COVID.

7 more were lost in 2020.

The COVID inquiry will begin as soon as possible in the New Year to enable us to learn the lessons of this pandemic and how to avoid such levels of casualties in the future.

So as we head into the Christmas period, I ask you to spare a thought or a prayer for each of those we have already lost and for their friends and families as they face this season without their loved ones.

I have written to the next of kin of all those who have succumbed to COVID.

Today, I have also written to all public servants thanking them for their efforts this year and last.

It has been as difficult for the public sector in 2021 as it was in 2020.

I have extended my gratitude to all who have provided public services throughout.

I have singled out those in health and care in particular, but all our public servants deserve recognition for the work done in this period.

I also want to acknowledge, of course, that through our concentration on COVID and, in my case, also the Brexit negotiations, we will have failed to deal with some matters.

I trust that as we get through 2022, we will be able to turn our attention again to many matters we have been unable to address during the pandemic.



This is particularly true also of the GHA which has borne the brunt of the trauma of COVID and I am very pleased that Samantha Sacramento has shown the courage of leading a restart and recover programme in our health services.

As a result, as we announced last month, from the 10th January the GHA will be run by a new Director General, answerable to a new GHA Board.

All of this, in particular all employment matters and industrial relations for the health services, will be run by the Director General and not by any politicians.

So as we turn our attention to the next few days, please remember the message every year from the RGP when they implore us not to Drink and Drive.

Every year some people ignore this advice and so they put their own lives, and the lives of all other Gibraltarians at risk.

This week, already 5 people have been arrested for Drink Driving offences and all of these drivers were way over the limit.

This year, our free bus service is operating on every day of the holiday period and taxis are also available.

Quite simply, there is NO excuse for anyone to drive home after they have had a few drinks.

Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be told, on the 4th of January, that there were no Drink Driving arrests over the holiday period.

Alcohol also has a role to play in many of the cases of Domestic Abuse that are reported to the RGP and we cannot pretend that Domestic Abuse is not a problem not arising here in Gibraltar.

To anyone who suffers in this way, I would say, 'Call the RGP - they have experts who are available 24/7 to provide you with the support that you need.'

And if you see abuse taking place at a neighbour's house or with your relatives, I would implore you to let the RGP know about it.

Better to be safe than sorry.

The RGP also continue to play a part in our efforts to minimise the spread of the latest Covid variants.

In particular, they are working hard to ensure that everyone who arrives by air is tested immediately after their arrival and that people who have tested Positive are, indeed, self-isolating rather than spreading their infection amongst their friends and family.

Only yesterday, 2 people were issued with £300 Fixed Penalty Notices for being in breach of the Government's COVID-19 testing regulations.



A local woman was also reported after she'd been seen irresponsibly socialising despite knowing full well that she had tested positive for COVID-19.

We do not need such irresponsibility making it harder for the rest of us in the community.

Please remember that, whether they are responding to Road Traffic incidents, cases of Domestic Abuse or of people breaking the Covid regulations, RGP officers are out there, keeping our community safe, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

I thank them on behalf of all of us, as I do all our law enforcement, essential and emergency services for their continued service this festive season as the rest of us enjoy time away from our places of work.

Christmas is also a stressful time for some.

It can be overwhelming and I remind everyone that the GHA's mental health crisis line - 111 - is available 24 / 7 over the Christmas period.

If you find yourself or a loved one in a mental health crisis, do not hesitate to call 111.

Leading Gibraltar through these past 22 months has been the hardest thing I will ever do in public life.

The past 22 months have been the hardest in the modern political history of Gibraltar and our people.

For the whole Cabinet, the Deputy Chief Minister and for me, leading Gibraltar through these difficulties has never been a burden.

It has always been a pride.

Thank you for your fulsome continued support and confidence throughout this period.

There are challenges to come, but none like this, with such great risk to so many of our precious people's lives.

We look forward to a better year next year.

To a more positive balance sheet in every respect.

For now, before I take questions from the journalists assembled here, I want to wish all of my fellow Gibraltarians and residents of Gibraltar a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

If you are going away, as I hope to do for a few days, familiarise yourself with the rules in whatever destination you are headed for.



Please enjoy the festivities with family and friends in a prudent and sensible way.

Merry Christmas Gibraltar and a very happy and healthy start to the New Year.

FINAL REMARKS

So all that is left is for me to thank you very much for joining us again live from Convent Place.

Please be careful and prudent as you enjoy the Christmas festivities.

Have a great start to the year, or 'Buen Principio' as we say in Spanish.

I hope to address you again on the 10th of January in my New Year's Message as we look forward to 2022 and the year to come.

ENDS