

## When Did Other Countries Start to Open Back Up?

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While Ontario is working to vaccinate the majority of its population with a single dose, other countries are much further along in their vaccination rollouts, and things are starting to reopen for good. As more Ontarians are getting vaccinated, there is hope that things will soon start to open back up here, too. But, when? This document aims to provide information on three other countries which started their reopening programs about two months ago.

### Case Study 1: The United States (US)

The US' reopening plan began in early March 2021. Each state is going about reopening differently, but their rationale for lifting business restrictions included high rates of vaccination and decreasing rates of hospitalization. As of April 18th, 2021, 24.8% of the US population had been totally vaccinated, and 39% of its population had received at least one dose of the vaccine, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In contrast, as of April 17th, 2021, 24.2% of Canada's population has received at least one dose, and 2.37% of the population has received two doses. However, the provincial government says it expects 65% of adults in Ontario to have their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by the end of May. Also, data from this past week shows a gradual but consistent decrease in the number of people in Intensive Care Units (ICUs) across the province.

### Case Study 2: The United Kingdom (UK)

The UK's reopening plan also began in early March 2021. According to the UK Government: "The success of the vaccination rollout, alongside falling infections and hospitalisations, is paving the way for the safe and gradual lifting of restrictions." Rather than a province-by-province approach, the Government is easing restrictions at the same time across all of England, treating Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland separately.

The UK's reopening plan has four "steps" for easing restrictions, similar to Ontario's "stages". Before moving onto the next step, the Government has been taking four weeks to reflect on the impact of the previous step, then it gives individuals and businesses one week's notice before they make any changes. So, in total, the roadmap has five weeks of time in between each step.

The UK Government only moves onto the next stage of reopening once the following conditions are confirmed to have been met:

- a. The vaccination program has been continuing successfully.
- b. Evidence shows that vaccines reduce hospitalizations and deaths in vaccinated people.
- c. Infection rates do not present the risk of a surge in hospitalizations, which would put unsustainable pressure on the National Health Service.
- d. The Government's assessment of the risks is not changed by new Variants of Concern.

### Case Study 3: Israel

In late February, Israel had given one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to 50% of its 9.3 million residents, and 35% of its population was fully vaccinated. Note that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are not included in the vaccine drive.

Israel's Health Ministry says that the country's rate of coronavirus infections dropped by 95.8% among people who received both shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

Israel began its reopening plan after their COVID-19 vaccination drive reached almost half of its population. The Health Ministry has an app where vaccinated people can show their Green Pass. A Green Pass is a government-validated certificate showing that they have received both doses of the vaccine more than a week ago or that they have recovered from COVID-19 and are presumed immune. This pass is valid for 6 months.

In conclusion, all of these three countries had vaccinated a significant amount of their population and reduced the number of people in hospital with COVID-19. As a result, their reopening programs have not resulted in a resurgence of the virus.

Things are looking up in Ontario. As of Monday May 3, everyone who is 18 years and older and lives in one of the province's 114 COVID-19 hotspots can book their vaccine appointment. You can find the list of hotspot neighbourhoods [here](#).

Also, as of Thursday, May 6, even more people in Ontario are able to book their vaccination appointment, including:

- people who are turning 50 in 2021 and older
- people with high-risk health conditions
- people who cannot work from home who fall under Group one (including elementary and secondary school workers)
- people who are First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis.

Last Friday, Ontario's Health Minister Christine Elliot announced that the province can accelerate its vaccination timeline so that all adults will be able to register for a first dose by the end of May.

Canada is set to begin receiving more than 2 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine each week as the two pharmaceutical firms ramp up their deliveries and begin shipping shots from the United States.

Pfizer and BioNTech have been consistently delivering around 1 million doses from Brussels each week since mid-March, but those numbers will double over the next month before increasing further in June. Moderna is expected to deliver its next shipment of more than 1 million doses next week. The federal government still has yet to announce when they will release doses of the single-shot vaccine from Johnson and Johnson, after the first 300,000 jabs arrived in Canada last week.

As of April 24, 2.55% of Canada's population has been fully vaccinated, and 26.76% of Canadians have received only one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

### Sources:

Comparing countries that are ahead of Canada in lifting public health measures:

[https://www.mcmasterforum.org/docs/default-source/covidend/rapid-evidence-profiles/covid-19-rep-26\\_lifting-public-health-measures\\_2021-03-18.pdf?sfvrsn=b9a259d5\\_4](https://www.mcmasterforum.org/docs/default-source/covidend/rapid-evidence-profiles/covid-19-rep-26_lifting-public-health-measures_2021-03-18.pdf?sfvrsn=b9a259d5_4)

The US Reopening Plan:

1. The number of vaccinated people in the US as of April 18th: [https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/nearly-one-fourth-us-population-fully-vaccinated-against-covid-19-121041800133\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/nearly-one-fourth-us-population-fully-vaccinated-against-covid-19-121041800133_1.html)
2. The number of vaccinated people in Canada as of April 17th: <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/vaccination-coverage/>
3. The Ontario government estimating 65% of adults in the province will get their first dose by the end of May: <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/more-groups-eligible-to-book-covid-19-vaccine-appointments-in-ontario-today-1.5416353>
4. Fewer people in Intensive Care Units (ICUs) across the province: <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/covid-19-cases-in-ontario-shoot-back-up-past-3-400-as-icu-admissions-trend-downward-1.5416571>

The UK Reopening Plan:

1. The UK Government Roadmap: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021#roadmap>

Israel's Reopening Plan:

1. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Coronavirus/Israel-starts-to-reopen-as-Pfizer-BioNTech-jab-stops-COVID-spread>
2. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Coronavirus/Coronavirus-Free-to-read/Coronavirus-Week-of-Feb.-21-to-Feb.-27-UN-Security-Council-calls-for-ceasefires-to-allow-vaccinations>

Canada's Vaccine Rollout:

1. More groups are eligible to book an appointment for their first dose in May:
  - <https://globalnews.ca/video/7820342/ontario-opens-covid-19-vaccine-booking-eligibility-to-adults-55-april-30-adults-18-end-of-may>
  - <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontarians-18-in-114-hot-spots-can-book-their-covid-19-vaccine-starting-monday-1.5410910>
2. Ontario's Vaccination Plan:  
[https://covid-19.ontario.ca/ontarios-covid-19-vaccination-plan?utm\\_campaign=%2Fen%2Frelease%2F1000052%2Fontario-expands-covid-19-vaccination-booking-for-more-people&utm\\_source=newsroom&utm\\_term=media&utm\\_medium=email#hot-spots](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/ontarios-covid-19-vaccination-plan?utm_campaign=%2Fen%2Frelease%2F1000052%2Fontario-expands-covid-19-vaccination-booking-for-more-people&utm_source=newsroom&utm_term=media&utm_medium=email#hot-spots)
3. Vaccine deliveries: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/when-might-the-wait-time-between-shots-of-two-dose-covid-19-vaccines-be-reduced-1.5407708>

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If you or someone you know uses Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), and requires resources related to COVID-19, please contact Sarah ([sarah.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.nydp@gmail.com)) and she can assist you in accessing and/or creating various communication tools.

If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, take the self-assessment at [www.ontario.ca/coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus). Follow all directions from your medical provider or your local health unit at the following phone numbers:

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

Toronto Public Health: 416-338-7600

Peel Public Health: 905-799-7700

Durham Region Health Department: 905-668-7711

York Region Public Health: 1-877-464-9675

Please refer back to previous updates as lots of important information has been provided that may still be relevant. If you have any questions or require more information on how you can protect yourself and those around you from the COVID-19 virus, please contact our Outreach

Communication Facilitator Sarah, at 416-222-4448 or

[sarah.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.nydp@gmail.com)