

Russia's Ex-PM Medvedev Backs Mandatory Vaccination

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The European Court of Human Rights ruled last month that compulsory vaccination can be “necessary in a democratic society.” **Peter Kovalev / TASS**

Russia’s former Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has [expressed](#) support for compulsory vaccinations Wednesday as the country grapples with slower-than-hoped-for coronavirus vaccine uptake.

Medvedev, who was demoted to deputy chief of Russia’s Security Council in a major cabinet reshuffle last year, described mandating vaccinations as a tradeoff between individual choice and protecting the population from disease.

“Vaccination itself presupposes a person’s consent. ... But sometimes these decisions can be binding in the public interest and the interest of protecting the vast majority of the population,” he said.

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“The relationship between voluntary and mandatory can be changed in favor of mandatory, though this is a question of proportionality of values: On the one hand, the value of individual life and on the other, the value of protecting the entire population,” Medvedev added.

Nearly 14 million Russians, or almost 10% of the population, have received at least [one dose](#) of one of Russia’s three approved Covid-19 jabs, according to a comprehensive analysis by the RBC news website. Slightly more than 9 million (over 6% of the population) have received both doses as Russia grapples with entrenched vaccine skepticism that impedes the domestic vaccination campaign.

Russia is on track to vaccinate 70% of its population to reach herd immunity by October 2022 at its current pace.

Medvedev, speaking at a St. Petersburg legal online forum, also called on countries to recognize each others’ vaccines to make global travel easier.

His comments came a month after the European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that compulsory vaccination can be “necessary in a democratic society.” Euronews reported that the ruling, which concerned events that took place long before the current pandemic, could set a legal precedent in the current debate on whether Covid-19 vaccination should be made compulsory.

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