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Moscow Launches University Covid-19 Vaccination Drive

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Gavriil Grigorov / TASS

Moscow will launch a coronavirus vaccination drive at universities across the Russian capital, a city official told state media Friday.

"We really want to make vaccinations against Covid-19 convenient and comfortable for as many people as possible, therefore we're regularly updating vaccination points," Deputy Mayor for Social Development Anastasia Rakova told the government-run Rosiiskaya Gazeta newspaper.

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So far 21 universities have agreed to offer vaccinations on-campus, including the prestigious Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), Rakova said.

For months, Muscovites over age 18 have been able to get vaccinated for free at over 100 vaccination points throughout the city, including at shopping malls and food courts.

Elderly Moscow residents are also eligible for at-home vaccination as well as a 1,000 ruble ($14) voucher to spend in grocery stores and pharmacies.

Despite the widespread access, the city's vaccination rate has been slower than hoped with less than 10% of people in Moscow, the epicenter of the pandemic within Russia, vaccinated as of last month, according to Mayor Sergei Sobyanin.

Recent polling by the Levada Center showed a majority of Russians (62%) still not ready to get vaccinated with their country's Sputnik V jab.

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