The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Majority of Russians Still Not Ready for Covid-19 Vaccination – Poll

July 05, 2021



Moscow residents are now required to show a QR code proving their vaccination status, recent recovery from Covid-19 or negative test results in order to dine indoors. **Sergei Karpukhin / TASS**

A majority of Russian (54%) are still not ready to get vaccinated against the coronavirus despite a mounting surge driven by the highly contagious Delta variant, according to an independent poll published Monday.

Russia set new records for coronavirus deaths for five consecutive days from June 29-July 3 as infections reached levels not seen since the peak of the country's second wave in early January. The spread of the Delta variant, which Moscow officials say accounts for 90% of the city's cases, has prompted several Russian regions to order compulsory vaccination for certain workers.

Related article: Russia Posts Highest Number of Virus Cases Since Early January

Among the Levada Center polling agency's respondents who are not ready to get any Covid-19

vaccine, 41% said they won't get a jab under any circumstances, while 24% would be ready once all trials guaranteeing the vaccine's safety are completed.

Seven percent said they would only get vaccinated under duress.

The most popular reason for refusing vaccination was fear of side effects (33%). Another 20% said they want to wait until the end of clinical trials and 16% said there is no point in getting vaccinated at all, Levada said.

Additionally, a majority of Russians (58%) do not support compulsory vaccination, Levada said. The policy was most popular among Russians aged 55 and older, with 48% of this age group supporting compulsory vaccination compared to 26% of those aged 25-39 who support it.

The Levada Center's latest results also revealed a majority of Russians (57%) aren't afraid to catch Covid-19 versus 41% who are afraid.

Among those who said they were afraid of getting Covid-19, 37% are ready to be vaccinated and 20% have already been vaccinated. Among those who were unafraid of getting Covid-19, only 19% have been vaccinated and 16% said they were ready to get the jab.

While interim Phase 3 trial results published in The Lancet in January showed Russia's Sputnik V vaccine to be safe and 91.6% effective, Russia hasn't yet published final Phase 3 results for Sputnik V or any of its other three homegrown vaccines.

Russia is currently seeking authorization of Sputnik V from the World Health Organization and the EU's medicines regulator, the EMA. Both regulators have conducted inspections of the jab's manufacturing sites as part of the application. Neither the WHO nor the EMA have yet published results from those inspections.

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