

## Corona Update: Latest Information

Date: March 16, 2021

Dear AIS-Salzburg Community Members;

In the latest high-level governmental meeting in Vienna, a number of issues were discussed which are of concern at this time in Austria:

1. The rising numbers of positive infections in certain areas.
2. The rising 7-day incidence rate per 100,000 population nation-wide.
3. The problems associated with vaccine distribution and inoculations
4. The easing of some regulations and the continuation of most

### 1. Current Situation

There have been only a few changes to the present situation since my last update. All hotels and restaurants, cafes, etc. remain closed and travel restrictions (2-week quarantine for all who enter the country) are being maintained as previously. Masking and distancing requirements remain in place. Here are the latest numbers:

Number of pos. infections nationwide in the past 7 days:	@ 2,850+ per day/average
Nationwide incidence rate per 100,000 over the past 7 days:	207.6 (was 161.0 on 02.03)
Population group with highest infection rate:	Ages 15-24
Incidence rate: Salzburg (province) per 100,000 over past 7 days:	276.7 (was 181.8 on 02.03)
Incidence rate: Salzburg (city) per 100,000 over past 7 days:	258.7
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Vaccination doses received in Austria:	1,370,085 (was 685,957 on 02.03)
Registered vaccinations in Austria (total)	1,079,144 (was 670,208 on 02.03)
Registered double vaccinations for immunization	278,549 (was 235,497 on 02.03)
Total vaccine-eligible population (over 16)	7,757,564
Percentage of total vaccine-eligible population vaccinated	10.63% (was 5.6% on 02.03)
Registered vaccinations in Salzburg (province)	47,144 (8.44%)

#### Commentary:

##### A. Increased Numbers of Infections

Increases in infections, which have raised the 7-day incidence rate nation-wide to over 200 are not due to increased Covid-19 testing alone. It is spreading at an increasing rate because of the various mutations now present across Austria. To counter this, the Austrian government is presently identifying 'hot spots' and closing these areas off whereby only those with a recent, negative Covid test may leave or enter for periods of up to two weeks. At this time, there are several of these 'hot spots' in Salzburg province which have been restricted including Bad Gastein, Radstadt and most of the Pongau region (with a 7-day incidence rate of 465+). The authorities hope that by restricting movement in or out of these areas, alongside more frequent testing will help bring the number of infections down.

### *B. Incidence Rate Nation-wide*

Because Austria has now passed the 200 mark nation-wide, many are concerned that not enough is being done to stop a third 'wave' of infections that put the health system and hospitals at risk. Government officials are watching the numbers in hospitals very carefully in the coming days and weeks.

### *C. Problems with Vaccinations*

Most recently, the government has had to push back previously-announced targets for vaccinations due to lack of sufficient delivery and other problems associated with logistics. It now appears that the date after which all those over 80, at high risk, or in the health profession needs to be adjusted and pushed back into late April or May, 2021. On top of these problems, the AstraZeneca vaccine has been withdrawn from most European nations' inoculation plans due to the number of those suffering from Thrombosis following the vaccination with this product. Austria invested heavily in this particular vaccine in 2020. In short, the number of new positive infections is not being affected by the numbers presently vaccinated.

### *D. Easing of Restrictions and Delays*

The government did announce that the province of Vorarlberg in the far west, could open up restaurants and cafes on a limited basis with negative test results required of all guests. This is due to the low 7-day incidence rate there (63.2). Additionally, it was announced that youth sports teams and individuals could meet again for training in groups of 10 or less with two coaches provided no contact sports were practiced and 2-meter distancing was in place throughout such practices. The hopes that restaurants, theaters, etc., would perhaps be allowed to open under conditions in March were, however, put off until after the Easter holidays (mid-April).

## **2. AIS-Salzburg and Present Conditions**

All present restrictions that have been in place since the students' return remain in place on our campus and we will continue to carry out testing, masking and distancing as required. To date all tests taken by students and staff have been negative and we hope that this remains so through the coming weeks.

## **3. Spring Break**

The school's Spring Break will be from Friday afternoon, April 2, 2021 until Sunday evening, April 11, 2021. Most students have informed the staff of their travel plans over the break and approximately a dozen students will remain here on campus, taking up our offer for accommodation because of the present conditions. A program of activities, meals, and other resources will be expended to care for these students over the break and we are in the midst of planning the week presently.

The travel restrictions presently in place for those returning to Austria are problematic. The border authorities are requiring a 14-day quarantine for all those entering the country at this time and apparently without exception. As you are aware, the quarantine of our students is only partially possible in that they would be required to remain indoors on campus for the first 10 days of such a quarantine and then get tested before release. We will carry this out for all those who are directed to submit to a quarantine following the break and this may cause some difficulties. If you are planning on your child departing Austrian and then returning as of April 11th, please check your local travel restrictions and be aware that the following remain in place in order to enter Austria:

1. A Pre-Travel Clearance form (PTC) will need to be filled out and available upon arrival.
2. A recent, negative PCR Covid-19 test will need to be presented.
3. A letter from the school to the authorities will again be sent out to help explain the status of the student in our school and enrollment/residency at AIS-Salzburg.

If there are any necessary changes of travel plans in the coming days, please communicate these with our office staff as soon as possible at either [office@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:office@ais-salzburg.at) or [cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at).

#### **4. Winter Excursion**

For some time, we thought that the Fall Excursions to Athens/Greece and Venice, Italy would be possible from April 21 to 25, 2021—the only possible place we could still fit it into the calendar. Unfortunately, we are now cancelling this excursion and regret that it will not be made up this year. A refund will be granted to all those whose tuition rate includes the excursion. With this cancellation, both excursions have suffered the same fate and fall victim to the pandemic.

#### **5. Refunds and Re-enrollment**

AIS-Salzburg will carry out the previously-mentioned refunds for various aspects of the tuition package that were cancelled or otherwise not held due to the Corona pandemic this year. Although we assume at present, that there will not be another period of online instruction and learning, we cannot exclude this possibility and will therefore, figure in total refunds individually at the end of the school year. I thank you for your patience on this point. All those who would like any refunds to be applied to the 2021-2022 school year should contact the school front office or accounting office and express their wishes as we will soon be sending out re-enrollment information in order to renew visas (if necessary) in a timely manner before they expire. Please contact either [office@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:office@ais-salzburg.at) or [accounting@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:accounting@ais-salzburg.at) for further information or if you have questions.

The refunds include the following:

Fall Excursion	€500
Junior Community Service Trip	€500
Winter Excursion	€350
Reduction of weekly tuition for full-boarders reduced to day-student rate for any weeks online.	
Refund of meals for day students during online instruction and learning periods at €5 per meal.	

Thank you again for your attention and your support. We hope that with the next updates, the situation will be showing some improvement due to increased numbers of vaccinations and that by early summer, the situation will be getting back to normal.

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Yours,



Paul McLean  
Headmaster  
AIS-Salzburg