



Written by [Dennis Behreandt](#) on January 17, 2021

Citizens Move Against Virus Restrictions in Austria, Switzerland

As world governments flail about attempting to appear to do something against the coronavirus, generally choosing to institute damaging lockdowns, citizens are losing patience and demanding freedom.

In Austria, protesters gathered in Vienna to demand an end to lockdown measures.

"Thousands of people marched through Vienna on Saturday to protest against restrictions on public life designed to curb the coronavirus pandemic, just as Chancellor Sebastian Kurz's government held talks about extending the measures," [Reuters reported](#).



AP Images

According to Reuters, Austria, with a population of 8.9 million, has had 7,000 deaths.

For general comparison purposes, the population of New York City at 8.3 million is nearly the same as that of the entire nation of Austria. Compared to Austria, New York has had 25,970 deaths and 514,000 confirmed cases. Austria, meanwhile, has reported 390,000 Covid cases.

Agence France Presse reported that at least one protestor did not believe the official statistics.

"The numbers of deaths we're being given, that's rubbish. I don't want to end up like China where you don't have any right to do anything," a female protestor, only identified as "Gabi," [told AFP](#).

A left-wing counterprotest failed to muster much support.

"A counter-demonstration organised by the far-left comprising a crowd of around 500, according to police estimates, also took place, denouncing 'anti-mask lunacy,'" AFP reported.

Despite the protest, the government of Sebastian Kurz announced that it would extend the country's lockdown until February 7. Under the extended lockdown, the "goal is to let shops, museums and personal services like hairdressers reopen from Feb. 8, while the catering and tourism sectors will stay shuttered until at least March," [Reuters reported](#).

"We have two to three hard months ahead of us," Chancellor Kurz warned, suggesting that the lockdown might be extended further.

"At a time of a pandemic there are no guarantees," Kurz said, according to Reuters.

[In Switzerland](#), meanwhile, according to the English-language news source *The Local*, citizens have collected enough signatures to force a referendum on ending that nation's lockdowns.

"The association 'Friends of the Constitution' filed a referendum against Switzerland's Covid-19 legislation at the Federal Chancellery in Bern on Tuesday," [The Local reported](#) on Friday, January 15.

To launch the referendum, the group collected almost 90,000 signatures, a figure that was 40,000



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signatures more than required.

According to *The Local*, the Friends of the Constitution organization “believes that the Covid-19 law, passed by the parliament in September 2020, is unnecessary, because it mainly deals with financial services that the government can regulate by federal decrees, even without emergency powers.”

Significantly, the referendum has repercussions for the Swiss vaccination program.

“The success of the referendum would be a call on the authorities to exercise the utmost caution in the vaccination campaign and even impose a moratorium on it,” group spokesman Christoph Pfluger said, according to *The Local*.

Just don’t expect a quick vote: “The vote on the Covid-19 Act will take place in June 2021 at the earliest, when the law will already be in force for nine months,” *The Local* reported.



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