

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

20th May 2020

News Highlights

UK: Cycling and walking seem as key in era of social distancing

As the UK emerges from lockdown, walking and cycling are being backed as alternatives to public transport, as people who are not able to work from home are encouraged back to work. Pedestrian activity in London has soared in the seven days to May 18.

France: top court bans drones, lifts ban on religious meetings

France's highest administrative court ruled Monday that the government must lift a blanket ban on meetings at places of worship imposed as part of the measures to combat the coronavirus. French police have also been banned from using drones to keep an eye on the public during the coronavirus epidemic.

U.S. eases lockdown as Trump criticizes WHO

Some U.S. automakers started production on Monday and workers appeared reassured by the precautions being taken at these factories. Additionally, lockdown restrictions have been eased across several states, as anti-lockdown protests continued. President Trump, though, is threatening to permanently pull funding from the WHO unless it commits to improvements in the next 30 days.

Mexico resists lifting lockdown while clashes erupt in Chile

Local authorities across Mexico are resisting President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's call to lift lockdown measures in municipalities without confirmed Covid-19 cases. In locked down Chile, police clashed with people protesting about food shortages in one of Santiago's poorest neighbourhoods.

Lockdown Exit

Automakers back to work as US eases coronavirus lockdown

Some Detroit automakers started cranking out vehicles Monday, but it will take longer to fully restart other plants. Workers appeared reassured by the precautions. At a Fiat Chrysler pickup truck assembly plant in Warren, outside Detroit, workers entered a giant white tent with a sign reading, "Let's restart and keep each other safe." They had their temperatures checked and answered questions on whether they had COVID-19 symptoms. "I feel safer than being anywhere at any stores,

<https://www.deccanherald.com/international/automakers-back-to-work-as-us-eases-coronavirus-lockdown-839329.html>

Can I go to the beach in lockdown? UK coronavirus rules explained, and the difference between countries

Boris Johnson recently unveiled plans for lockdown restrictions to ease in England over the coming months, as part of phased plans to reopen shops, pubs, restaurants and get kids back to schools. Exercise is now allowed on an unlimited basis, but is a day at the beach allowed? Here's what you need to know.

<https://inews.co.uk/inews-lifestyle/beach-can-go-during-lockdown-uk-coronavirus-rules-explained-england-wales-scotland-differences-2854873>

Coronavirus: Push for cycling despite safety fears

UK towns and cities must be made cycle-friendly if a change to commuting habits is to succeed, campaigners say. Cycling and walking are being backed as alternatives to public transport as people who are not able to work from home, are encouraged back to work. The latest government survey data before lockdown, however, showed three in five people thought cycling on the road was too dangerous - 61%. Campaign groups said infrastructure improvements would be key. The government has released a £250m "emergency active travel fund" aimed at helping towns prevent overcrowding as lockdown is lifted and it has issued guidance to councils. Cycling UK said now was a "golden opportunity" to encourage people.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52708687>

Here's everything you need to know about level 3 of UK lockdown

The UK will soon be able to enter into 'level three' of lockdown, according to Business Secretary, Alok Sharma. Sharma's announcement came at Sunday's (17 May) daily press briefing, where he said such a move was only possible due to the public adhering to the government's social distancing guidelines. He thanked the public saying, "Throughout the period of lockdown we have been at level four. Thanks to you, people across the country, we have collectively helped to bring the R level down. We are now in a position to begin moving to level three, in careful steps."

<https://www.lancasterguardian.co.uk/read-this/heres-everything-you-need-know-about-level-3-uk-lockdown-2857944>

UK lockdown: Pedestrian activity soars 25 per cent as Londoners get back to work

The lag in pedestrian activity suggests employers and staff needed time to ensure safe working conditions and commutes were in place. In the seven days to 18 May pedestrian traffic was up 7.6 per cent to 11.24 points, according to Hoxton Analytics. A reading of 100 represents normal pedestrian levels. Last week the government announced the easing of some lockdown restrictions in England. People have been told to return to work if they cannot work from home and individuals that do not live together are able to meet up outdoors at a distance of two metres. Non-essential shops could reopen from 1 June at the earliest, while pubs and other hospitality venues will be waiting until at least 4 July before opening their doors to the public.

<https://www.cityam.com/uk-lockdown-pedestrian-activity-soars-25-per-cent-as-londoners-get-back-to-work/>

Germany Is Reopening. And Learning a Tough Lesson.

A bitter irony that in the country's brief moment of vindication, all the old conflicts are re-emerging. It makes the early togetherness look shallow, a product of our instincts for survival rather than of humanitarian insight. So instead of solidarity, we have strife. In place of unity, division. It looks like this is Germany's new normal, too.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/opinion/germany-coronavirus-reopening.html>

'I can taste the flavour much more': Italians rediscover eating out

For some, being able to frequent Italy's bars and restaurants on Monday after more than two months of lockdown was akin to ending a strict dietary regime. "I can taste the fullness of the flavour much more," said Sandro Urbani as he drank a glass of white Sangiovese wine outside Caffè Barrique in the Umbrian town of Orvieto. "It's as if I've been on a diet over the past few months and all of a sudden I can eat a slice of salami." Italians have been given another taste of freedom with the reopening of bars, restaurants, hairdressers and all other retailers on Monday as the country tries to revive its economy after the coronavirus emergency.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/18/coronavirus-italians-rediscover-eating-out-italy>

Italian cities reopen after two months of coronavirus lockdowns - video

Italy has started easing coronavirus lockdown restrictions and some shops, restaurants and museums have reopened for the first time in two months. Physical distancing remains but people in Rome were able to enjoy a drink or visit mass. In Venice, stores and restaurants reopened, though without the usual crowds of tourists around

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2020/may/19/italian-cities-reopen-after-two-months-of-coronavirus-lockdowns-video>

The Taliban are joining Afghanistan's fight against covid-19

The official in charge of the Afghan government's response to covid-19 in a rural district near the city of Herat recently received a dressing-down by phone. The caller berated him for the lack of masks at a particular clinic. Local bureaucrats needed to get their act together quickly, the caller instructed. The man delivering the rebuke was not some big cheese from the ministry of health in Kabul, however, but a member of the Taliban, the rebels who have been trying to overthrow the government since 2001, when they themselves were ousted from power by American-backed forces.

<https://www.economist.com/asia/2020/05/09/the-taliban-are-joining-afghanistans-fight-against-covid-19>

Italy Reopens Hair Salons as Coronavirus Crisis Eases

Italy Reopens Hair Salons as Coronavirus Crisis Eases - NYT reports on how Italy's hair salons are re-emerging from the coronavirus crisis

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/world/europe/italys-great-beautification-hair-salons-are-back.html>

France's highest court has banned police from using drones to watch the public in Paris and rest of country during ease of Coronavirus lockdown rules

French police have been banned from using drones to keep an eye on the public during the coronavirus pandemic. The ban will apply until there is a proper legal basis for their deployment or until they have been adapted so that individuals being filmed cannot be identified, the country's highest court, the Conseil d'Etat, has decided. France's Human Rights League announced the news on Monday May 18 saying it was a "real victory." It took the case to the Conseil after its attempt to have the use banned was rejected by a lower court. Some 20 drones have been used by the police in Paris over recent weeks under the control of the Prefecture of Police whose head, the Prefect Didier Lallement is a controversial law and order disciplinarian. He has already had to formally apologise for having said that those in hospital resuscitation wards during the health crisis were people who had disobeyed the rules of the lockdown.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/05/19/frances-highest-court-has-banned-police-from-using-drones-to-watch-the-public-in-paris-and-rest-of-country-during-ease-of-coronavirus-lockdown-rules/>

Volunteers helps Nevis Range prepare for life after lockdown

Volunteers are rallying around to prepare the Nevis Range resort for a return after lockdown and the biggest challenge in its 30-year history. The snowsports, mountain biking and outdoor activities destination near Fort William has organised a bike trail maintenance day and a litter-picking weekend in advance of re-opening when restrictions are lifted. Dates for the events will be scheduled when the lockdown eases and it is safe for staff and local volunteers to work alongside each other. Already more than 50 people have signed up to help and others have expressed interest in getting involved.

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/highlands/2205935/volunteers-helps-nevis-range-prepare-for-life-after-lockdown/>

After the Coronavirus Lockdown Ends, Here is Life in China's Wuhan

For more than two months, the people of Wuhan, China, lived under lockdown as their city buckled beneath the weight of the coronavirus that emerged there. Then, gradually, cases ebbed. On April 8, the lockdown was lifted. Now, the residents of Wuhan are cautiously feeling their way toward an uncertain future, some of the first in the world to do so. There is trauma and grief, anger and fear.

But there is also hope, gratitude and a newfound patience. Here are four of their stories.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/world/asia/wuhan-coronavirus-lockdown.html>

Air pollution is already spiking in China with the virus lockdown lifted

Air pollution in China has already bounced back from astounding lows during the country's coronavirus shutdown to monthly levels exceeding those recorded during the same period last year, data show. Chinese government figures confirm a spike in April, which the Finland-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) warns could herald the beginning of a "dirty" economic rebound from the crisis in China.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-china-lockdown-over-air-pollution-already-spiking-industry-dirty-economic-rebound/>

Managing COVID-19 transmissions in post-lockdown China

COVID-19 emerged in Wuhan in December 2019, a few days before the Chinese Spring Festival. The three billion trips via China's mass transit system during the Spring Festival travel rush may have contributed to its spread across the country. But in late March, China declared its COVID-19 peak over as Wuhan reported zero new cases for seven consecutive days. This was followed by the lifting of Wuhan's lockdown on 8 April. However, a majority of China's new cases are now imported, prompting a two-pronged strategy to control both imported cases and potential domestic transmission after lifting lockdown.

<https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2020/05/19/managing-covid-19-transmissions-in-post-lockdown-china/>

Cinemas start to reopen in Japan, showing Hollywood classics like The Wizard of Oz and Ben Hur

Cinemas across Japan have begun to reopen, after being closed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Without any new blockbuster releases, however, cinemas are resorting to screening old Hollywood classics to draw in crowds. Sword-and-sandal flick Ben Hur and musical fantasy The Wizard of Oz are among the films returning to cinemas.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/coronavirus-cinemas-open-films-wizard-of-oz-ben-hur-t-enet-a9521726.html>

Drive-in concerts to be tested in Australia this week

This Thursday (May 21), singer-songwriter and Australian Idol winner Casey Donovan is set to perform with her band at Sydney's first-ever live theatre drive-in. The performance is organised by Drive-In Entertainment Australia and will be held at the Robyn Webster Sports Centre from 12:00pm to 1:00pm AEST. In accordance with current social distancing rules, patrons will participate in the concert remotely from their vehicles with two options for sound: tuning into an FM radio frequency and/or rolling down their windows. Extra safety restrictions will be enforced to ensure the event complies with government-mandated regulations.

https://www.nme.com/en_au/news/music/drive-in-concerts-to-be-tested-in-australia-this-week-2671446

NZ's economy likely to bounce back faster than Australia's due to stricter lockdown - expert

New Zealand's stricter lockdown and containment measures could lead to an earlier economic recovery than Australia, HSBC Australia's chief economist says.

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/nzs-economy-likely-bounce-back-faster-than-australias-due-stricter-lockdown-expert>

New Zealand becomes the latest country to allow children back to school

Hundreds of thousands of New Zealand children returned to lesson on Monday as schools around the world continue to reopen as coronavirus lockdowns ease. Excited youngsters greeted classmates for the first time in eight weeks in cities such as Wellington and Auckland after parents dropped them

off at 'kiss and go zones' at the gate as part of strict social distancing measures. Schools in Austria, Belgium and Portugal also reopened their doors for the first time in weeks on Monday, while more children were allowed to return to lessons in Greece. Lessons have already resumed for pupils in France, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Australia, parts of Canada and China as the global spread of disease slowed.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8329905/Kiss-Back-school-New-Zealand-kids.html>

Exit Strategies

Mexico begins lifting Covid-19 lockdown despite fears worst is still to come

Local authorities across Mexico have resisted President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's call to lift emergency coronavirus measures in municipalities without confirmed Covid-19 cases, warning that the pandemic is far from over. The decision to resume comes amid questions over the Amlo administration's coronavirus response, which has depended heavily on disease modeling and involved little testing and no contact tracing.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/18/mexico-amlo-coronavirus-covid19-restrictions-reopen>

Coronavirus: think tank ranks council wards in order of Covid risk, as it calls for lockdown to be lifted in low risk areas first

A map ranking the Covid risk for each of Scotland's 354 council wards has been created, with parts of Inverclyde and Clydebank most in danger. Researchers and analysts at new think tank Scotianomics used multiple dataset sets to draw up its Covid-19 Community Risks Index, the most detailed possible picture of which Scottish communities are most under threat.

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18459906.coronavirus-think-tank-ranks-council-wards-order-covid-risk-calls-lockdown-lifted-low-risk-areas-first/>

Spain coronavirus lockdown: what restrictions have been eased - and if travel will be allowed this summer

Residents celebrated their restored freedom on Saturday (2 May) by cycling, walking and running along the streets in Barcelona and Madrid, as the country begins its four-phase plan to lift its nationwide lockdown. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez aims to return the country to a "new normality" by the end of June.

<https://www.scotsman.com/health/coronavirus/spain-coronavirus-lockdown-what-restrictions-have-been-eased-and-if-travel-will-be-allowed-summer-2537352>

Coronavirus: Spain lifts ban on flights from Italy and reopens sea border as lockdown eased

Spain has lifted a ban on all sea and air travel coming from Italy as it looks to further ease lockdown restrictions, officials have confirmed. Travellers from Italy will have to comply, however, with a two-week quarantine like other foreign visitors, while a state of emergency remains in place. Officials in Madrid announced a nationwide lockdown on 14 March in a bid to help stop the spread of the disease, but have begun to loosen measures in recent weeks.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/spain-italy-flight-ban-travel-advice-coronavirus-lockdown-latest-a9521611.html>

Spain says when UK tourists will be able to visit country again after lockdown

The country's transport minister has said that it hopes to restart its travel economy in time for the summer holidays. Currently, travel restrictions mean British holidaymakers cannot enter the country as its strict lockdown restrictions continue until May 24 - despite slight easing of the coronavirus confinement beginning to take place. The Spanish government extended its travel ban, meaning Brits and non-EU travellers will be denied entry, from May 15, up until June 15.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/uk-news/spain-says-uk-tourists-able-18272865>

France, Germany chart 500 bn euro virus rescue as European lockdown eases

France and Germany on Monday laid out plans for a 500-billion-euro (\$544 billion) European fund backed by joint EU borrowing to fight the economic fallout from the coronavirus, as the continent pushed ahead towards normality with major landmarks reopening after a two month-hiatus. St Peter's Basilica and the Acropolis in Athens opened their doors to visitors alongside many European shops, restaurants and churches, as Italy reported that its daily death toll from the virus had fallen below 100 for the first time since early March. More than 4.7 million people have tested positive and 315,270 have been killed by the disease since it emerged in Wuhan late last year, according to an AFP tally. Recent days have seen soaring infections in Brazil, India and South Africa.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/european-landmarks-reopen-virus-hits-hard-elsewhere-084603344.html>

French government ordered to lift coronavirus lockdown ban on religious meetings

France's highest administrative court ruled Monday that the government must lift a blanket ban on meetings at places of worship imposed as part of measures to combat the coronavirus. After receiving complaints from several individuals and associations, the Council of State said that such a ban on freedom of worship caused "a damage that is serious and manifestly illegal". It told the government to lift the ban within the next eight days. The latest government decree on measures to combat the coronavirus -- even after the lockdown in France was eased from May 11 -- bans all gatherings in places of worship except funerals which are limited to 20 people.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200519-french-government-ordered-to-lift-coronavirus-lockdown-ban-on-religious-meetings>

Lockdown and release: Ontario's imperfect wall against COVID-19 is about to be severely tested

On Tuesday, the Ontario government begins the first stage of a gradual reopening of one of the country's worst-hit provinces after almost two months of emergency lockdown. Mass physical distancing did little to prevent more than a thousand lonely deaths in long-term care across the province. It failed to prevent outbreaks among the homeless. It has still not brought the daily count of new COVID-19 cases in Ontario below 300. But as a first, imperfect, layer, physical distancing worked. It bought the province time: to shore up hospitals, to secure protective equipment, to expand testing and contact tracing. It gave the province space to prepare for what experts believe will be an 18-24-month fight against the virus in the community. It gave them time to build that imperfect wall.

<https://nationalpost.com/news/lockdown-and-release-how-ontarios-imperfect-wall-against-covid-19-is-about-to-be-tested>

Gujarat Lockdown 4.0 Guidelines Update: No relaxation in COVID-19 Containment Zones; Shops, offices to open

In a major relief to people affected due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, the Gujarat government on Monday announced several relaxations, including opening of markets and shops in non-containment zones, from Tuesday. While there will be no relaxations in containment zones, shops and offices in non-containment zone can remain open between 8 am and 4 pm, said Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. However, such business and commercial establishments need to follow odd-even formula, wherein only 50 per cent establishments can remain open on any given day. Moreover, the government has also allowed reopening of barber shops and salons in non-containment zones besides shops selling paan masala.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/health/gujarat-lockdown-4-0-guidelines-shops-offices-allowed-to-open-no-relaxation-in-covid-19-containment-zones/1963159/>

Are New Zealand's new COVID-19 laws and powers really a step towards a police state?

Reaction to the New Zealand government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant

lockdown has ranged from high praise to criticism that its actions were illegal and its management chaotic. Partly in response to the concerns, and to put the continued containment of the disease on a firmer legal footing, the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act was passed under urgency on May 14. It was quickly met with another wave of discontent.

<https://theconversation.com/are-new-zealands-new-covid-19-laws-and-powers-really-a-step-towards-a-police-state-138114>

Up to 1,500 English primary schools to defy 1 June reopening plan

Up to 1,500 primary schools in England are expected to remain closed on 1 June after a rebellion by at least 18 councils forced the government to say it had no plans to sanction them. As the backlash escalated over the government's policy of lifting the coronavirus lockdown on schools in a fortnight, a number of new local authorities said on Tuesday they would not force primary schools in their area to follow the plan. Councils joining those already in opposition included Birmingham, Calderdale council in Yorkshire, and Conservative-controlled Solihull. In total they represent more than 1,500 maintained primaries.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/19/up-to-1500-english-primary-schools-to-defy-1-june-reopening-plan?utm_term=Autofeed&CMP=tw_t_gu&utm_medium&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1589918431

Breaking: All University lectures to be online-only in 2020-21

A leaked email seen by Varsity outlines plans for all lectures in the 2020-21 academic year to be conducted virtually. Head of Education Services, Alice Benton wrote to Senior Tutors today (19/05) to inform them that the 'General Board's Education Committee' has 'agreed that, since it is highly likely that rigid social distancing will be required throughout the next academic year, there will be no face-to-face lectures next year.' Benton writes that the 'decision has been taken to provide a degree of certainty to facilitate Faculties and Departments when planning for educational delivery next academic year' and proposes that the move is 'in line with thinking across the sector'.

<https://www.varsity.co.uk/news/19258>

Coronavirus: Security flaws found in NHS contact-tracing app

Wide-ranging security flaws have been flagged in the Covid-19 contact-tracing app being piloted in the Isle of Wight. The security researchers involved have warned the problems pose risks to users' privacy and could be abused to prevent contagion alerts being sent. GCHQ's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) told the BBC it was already aware of most of the issues raised and is in the process of addressing them. But the researchers suggest a more fundamental rethink is required.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-52725810>

Spain's King and Economy Minister at Event Over Lockdown Limit

Spain's King Felipe gave a speech at a conference in Madrid on Monday attended by the economy minister and others in an audience over the size authorised for public events under the capital's strict coronavirus lockdown rules. Pictures on the Spanish Royal House's Twitter account showed at least 20 people at the event held by innovation foundation Cotec at the headquarters of telecom firm Telefonica. Spain is easing restrictions and regulations vary according to regions, but gatherings of more than 10 people are still prohibited in Madrid, Spain's health ministry press office said in an email to Reuters.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-spain-lockdown/spains-king-and-economy-minister-at-event-over-lockdown-limit-idUKL8N2D04YD>

Partisan Exits

Coronavirus: Right-wing anti-lockdown protest hailed by Trump featured disturbing 'hang Fauci' sign

"People can't get enough of this. Great people!" Mr Trump tweeted on Saturday in support of the

protesters, many of whom were the president's supporters. Though the sign calling for the execution of Dr Anthony Fauci did not feature in the social media video, it appeared in a TV report by Mr Vesey for News 12 Long Island.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/coronavirus-us-protest-trump-fauci-gates-lockdown-nw-york-suffolk-county-a9519761.html>

'Great people!' Trump backs anti-lockdown protesters filmed harassing reporter in Long Island

Donald Trump has backed a group of anti-lockdown protesters in Long Island, New York, who were filmed harassing and insulting a journalist who had turned up to cover their demonstration. The president retweeted a video by journalist Kevin Vesey talking about what he called "alarming" levels of anger from the people he spoke to but pledging to cover their story fairly. Mr Trump added the comment: "People can't get enough of this. Great people!"

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-lockdown-protest-twitter-video-reporter-journalist-a9518296.html>

The UK was late going into lockdown and is now coming out too fast

Children spread Covid-19 less than adults, but it is unclear how much less. I have complete sympathy with those unions advising their members not to trust this government with decisions about their health. Eton and other private schools attended by the children of Conservative MPs seem certain to stay shut till September. If the return goes ahead, then schools need PPE & training in its use; hand washing stations throughout the school; staggered arrivals and departures; very reduced class sizes; constant cleaning of all surfaces; frequent testing of staff for infection; transport to the school that is safe (not a crowded bus); a locally run contact tracing & isolation plan in place for outbreaks and parents taking their children's temperature testing before they get to school.

<https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/the-uk-was-late-going-into-lockdown-and-is-now-coming-out-too-fast>

UK Minister sidesteps question on relaxed lockdown rules in England undermining virus control measures in North Wales

The Foreign Secretary sidestepped a question about whether relaxing the lock down in England was undermining efforts to control Covid-19 infection rates in North Wales. Dominic Raab, speaking at 10 Downing Street's daily coronavirus meeting, said there had been "good collaboration" between his Government and the devolved powers. He also said the UK Government "recognised" nations may go at different speeds but claimed there had been a "UK-wide approach" to tackling the virus. On the specific question of whether he thought relaxed lock down rules in England undermined attempts in Wales to keep Covid-19 infection rates down he was less forthcoming.

<http://www.deeside.com/foreign-secretary-sidesteps-question-on-relaxed-lockdown-rules-in-england-undermining-virus-spread-measures-in-north-wales/>

Britain Doesn't Want to Come Out of Lockdown

On the question of whether to prioritize the economy or the well-being of older people, Brits are much more bothered about the latter. After four years of Brexit divisions, the U.K. is conditioned to expecting intergenerational divides (older people tended to vote for Brexit while younger ones wanted to stay in the European Union). But that split hasn't been apparent during the pandemic. Lockdown support has spanned all age groups, even though retirees are 34 times more likely to die from Covid-19 than working-age Britons.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-05-19/coronavirus-why-britain-doesn-t-want-to-come-out-of-lockdown>

Spain's 1% Revolt Against Continued Coronavirus Lockdown

After enduring one of the longest and strictest lockdowns in the world, Spain is beginning to ease its coronavirus restrictions — but the efforts have not come without controversy. Since last week,

millions of people have been allowed to visit friends and family, and sit outside at bars and cafes, in parts of the country where the epidemic is sufficiently under control. In response, after first banging pots and pans each night from their balconies, hundreds of protesters have taken to the streets in Madrid's wealthy Salamanca neighborhood over the past week. Waving Spanish flags and crying "Viva España!" some protesters have denounced Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's leftist government as communists who are ruining the country.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/spain-madrid-protests-coronavirus_n_5ec3a81fc5b61486e5865b6a

Leaked Pentagon memo warns coronavirus pandemic could last until summer 2021: report | TheHill

A leaked Pentagon memo on Tuesday revealed that top Department of Defense (DOD) officials have been planning for the possibility that the military could be dealing with a "globally-persistent" coronavirus pandemic well into 2021. The memo, obtained by Task & Purpose, also warned of the "real possibility" that a vaccine for COVID-19 won't be available until "at least the summer of 2021." "We have a long path ahead, with the real possibility of a resurgence of COVID-19. Therefore, we must now re-focus our attention on resuming critical missions, increasing levels of activity, and making necessary preparations should a significant resurgence of COVID-19 occur later this year," it read.

<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/498637-leaked-pentagon-memo-warns-coronavirus-pandemic-could-last-until-summer-2021>

Coronavirus: Donald Trump threatens to permanently cut off World Health Organisation funding

Donald Trump has threatened to permanently pull funding from the World Health Organisation (WHO) unless it commits to improvements within 30 days. The US president said he would also reconsider the country's WHO membership, previously saying the global health body did a "very sad job" in handling the coronavirus pandemic. Mr Trump suspended US contributions to the WHO last month, accusing it of promoting China's "disinformation" about the virus outbreak.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-donald-trump-threatens-to-permanently-cut-off-world-health-organisation-funding-11990731>

US and UK 'lead push against global patent pool for Covid-19 drugs'

Efforts to dilute world health assembly resolution on open licensing decried as 'appalling.' "In general, it is a disappointment, appalling really. There was better text that was rejected," said Jamie Love, the director of the NGO Knowledge Ecology International. "The US, UK, Swiss and some others pushed against the WHO taking the lead in pushing for open licensing of patents and know-how for drugs and vaccines. "In a global crisis like this, that has such a massive impact on everyone, you would expect the WHO governing body to have the backbone to say no monopolies in this pandemic. It's one thing for a country to use its economic clout to buy preferential access to drugs or vaccines. It's another to prevent others from manufacturing and expanding global supply."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/17/us-and-uk-lead-push-against-global-patent-pool-for-covid-19-drugs>

Continued Lockdown

'Don't Come': Hawaii Enforces Strict Lockdown Measures

Being thousands of miles from the nearest continent and reachable almost exclusively by air travel puts Hawaii in a unique position to not just contain the virus, but potentially eradicate it there, said Dr. Eric Toner, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security. "By every metric that we follow they've done a terrific job in being able to stop the spread," he said. "If you can get the community spread under control and you can implement strict screening of passengers, you really can stop the epidemic in their state." Ige has signaled he plans to maintain the tough stance on arriving travelers, even as several parts of the mainland U.S. begin to reopen their economies.

While the state has already begun to reopen recreational draws including some state parks, beaches and golf courses with social distancing measures, Ige last week said he planned to extend the travel quarantine through the end of June.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/travel/news/dont-come-hawaii-enforces-strict-lockdown-measures/ar-BB14i52i>

Coronavirus: UK lockdown sparked steepest drop in working hours in a decade

Britain's coronavirus lockdown triggered the steepest drop in working hours in a decade, according to official figures. The new figures lay bare the economic cost of the country's efforts to control the virus, with millions of workers' jobs and incomes taking a heavy hit. Total hours worked in the final week of March plummeted by 25% compared to the average over the previous three months. Prime minister Boris Johnson ordered Britain to go into lockdown on 23 March, leading many firms to temporarily shut up shop.

<https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/coronavirus-lockdown-working-hours-unemployment-rate-uk-jobs-furlough-how-many-072533335.html>

UK unemployment claims soar amid coronavirus lockdown

UK unemployment claims soared by more than 69% in April after the coronavirus lockdown gripped the labour market, official figures revealed. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) said that jobless claims under Universal Credit surged by 856,000 to 2.1 million in April, compared with the previous month. Official statisticians also said that early estimates for April 2020 indicate that the number of paid employees fell by 1.6% compared to March, as firms began to feel a greater impact from the lockdown.

<https://www.scotsman.com/health/coronavirus/uk-unemployment-claims-soar-amid-coronavirus-lockdown-2857517>

Lockdown Stringency Has Largest Impact in Spain, France, U.S.

A 10-point increase in lockdown stringency leads to a 4% drop in economic activity on average, according to Bloomberg Economics analysis of data from the Oxford Covid-19 Government Response Tracker. Yet the headline result masks differences between countries. In Spain, France and the U.S., unit increases in the stringency of lockdown appear to have a larger impact on activity, while in Canada, Australia, and Sweden, the impact seems to be smaller.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-05-19/lockdown-stringency-has-largest-impact-in-spain-france-chart>

Digital schooling is no 'great leveller' - education in lockdown is more divided than ever

Private school students are twice as likely to attend online classes than those in comprehensives, Shadim Hussain says. Suddenly democratising the internet doesn't sound so far-fetched

<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/voices/schools-home-teaching-lockdown-teachers-union-education-bame-social-divide-a9520331.html>

Coronavirus: The number of 'excess deaths' in care homes and hospitals compared with normal times is revealed

More than 20,000 more deaths have been recorded in care homes in England and Wales this year compared with the average.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-the-number-of-excess-deaths-in-care-homes-and-hospitals-compared-with-normal-times-is-revealed-11991080>

Wild protests break out in Chile over Covid-19 lockdown food shortages

Police and protesters clashed in Santiago on Monday amid a city-wide lockdown meant to stem the spread of the coronavirus as local officials warned that food shortages had hit one of the Chilean capital's poorest neighborhoods. A group of protesters threw rocks, shouted and burned piles of wood along a street in the destitute neighborhood on Santiago's southern fringe. Images on social media and local television showed police spraying tear gas and water cannons to disperse the growing crowd. The municipality said in a statement that families were going hungry in the poorest

sectors of El Bosque, a neighborhood where many work informally, or not at all. The city district has been under quarantine since mid-April, city officials said in a statement.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200519-wild-protests-break-out-in-chile-over-covid-19-lockdown-food-shortages>

Scientific Viewpoint

Coronavirus: UK risks fresh pandemic by easing lockdown further before ‘test-and-trace’ scheme, health chief warns

Government plans to further ease the lockdown before the ‘test-and-trace’ scheme to catch infections finally starts risks a fresh pandemic, a health chief is warning. Greg Fell, the director for Public Health Sheffield, hit out after No 10 suggested more restrictions could be lifted on 1 June – including schools reopening – even if the programme is hit by further delays. “I think we need to have the test and trace system working before we start to fundamentally reopen society,” Mr Fell said.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/coronavirus-uk-lockdown-test-trace-matt-hancock-public-health-a9521376.html>

Study projects US COVID-19 deaths to triple by end of year

"COVID-19 infection is deadlier than flu — we can put that debate to rest," said Anirban Basu, a health economist at the University of Washington who authored the study. If the infection fatality rate is accurate, and if the coronavirus continues spreading at current rates even before most states open their economies and relax social distancing restrictions, COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, could claim between 350,000 and 1.2 million American lives by the end of this year, Basu found. "This is a staggering number, which can only be brought down with sound public health measures," Basu said in a press release announcing the study, which appears in the journal Health Affairs.

<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/498533-study-projects-us-covid-19-deaths-to-triple-by-end-of-year>

Coronavirus: Dundee medical expert believes UK lockdown has saved almost one million lives

It is only a month since we were seeing 1,000 coronavirus deaths a day in the UK, with the numbers doubling every four days. If that had continued we would probably be around the peak of the epidemic by now, and have hundreds of thousands of bodies to bury. While 30,000 deaths is awful, the difference is a huge achievement and this is largely due to changes in our behaviour.

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/dundee/1322775/dundee-medical-expert-thinks-uk-lockdown-has-saved-almost-one-million-lives/>

Italian doctor at ARI shares experience of watching UK enter lockdown, a fortnight after Italy

An Italian doctor working in Aberdeen says she felt “calm and prepared” as the coronavirus crisis loomed in Scotland, having learned about the hardship from quarantined family and friends in her homeland. She said although there are a number of differences between how Italy and the UK has handled the pandemic, the situation has been managed admirably by staff at the north-east’s flagship hospital. She added: “I had really hoped we would be prepared, and certainly I must say that Aberdeen Royal Infirmary has been very prepared.”

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeenshire/2205994/italian-doctor-at-ari-shares-experience-of-watching-uk-enter-lockdown-a-fortnight-after-italy/>

To prevent a second coronavirus wave, we need to look beyond the R number

In Germany, where shops and restaurants have tentatively reopened, the reproduction number R has risen to 1.1. In Seoul, a recent outbreak of at least 170 infections has been linked to five bars and nightclubs. Even in South Korea, one of the most successful countries at controlling the virus,

there's no room for complacency. As a veterinary epidemiologist, I study how viruses spread between animals and animal populations. The principles of viral transmission are much the same in humans (indeed, many scientists work on both). The concept of a second wave in public health is often linked to factors outside of human control. This might include the birth of infants who are susceptible to a particular disease causing the wavelike patterns we see in childhood illnesses, or environmental factors that influence the seasonality of influenza. But for Covid-19, the anticipation of a second wave has more to do with actions within our control.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/may/19/second-coronavirus-wave-r-number-uk-test-and-trace-masks-gatherings-travel>

China's Top Medical Advisor Warns The Country May Now Face a Second Wave of COVID-19

"The majority of... Chinese at the moment are still susceptible of the COVID-19 infection, because (of) a lack of immunity," Zhong Nanshan, the public face of government's response to the pandemic, told CNN. "We are facing (a) big challenge," Zhong added. "It's not better than the foreign countries I think at the moment." Zhong, who helped expose the scale of the 2003 outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), also said authorities in ground-zero Wuhan had under-reported cases during the early days of the pandemic. "The local authorities, they didn't like to tell the truth at that time," said Zhong, who was part of a team of experts sent to Wuhan to investigate the outbreak.

<https://www.sciencealert.com/senior-medical-advisor-warns-china-may-now-face-a-second-wave-of-covid-19>

Coronavirus: Parliament told there is 'no evidence' virus came from Wuhan laboratory

An expert says there is "really no evidence" the virus was engineered in a laboratory, But speaking to the House of Lords science and technology committee on Tuesday, Professor David Robertson dismissed the conspiracy theory as "unlikely".

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-parliament-told-there-is-no-evidence-virus-came-from-wuhan-laboratory-11990952>

Coronavirus will 'settle into human population and become normal', expert says

COVID-19 is "so successful" that it will never be eradicated, a virus expert has claimed, as fears of a second spike continue to grow. Professor David Robertson, head of viral genomics and bioinformatics at the University of Glasgow, believes the highly infectious respiratory infection is "almost uncontrollable". "It is so transmissible, it's so successful, we're so susceptible, that actually it's a little bit of a red herring to worry about it getting worse, because it couldn't be much worse at the moment in terms of the numbers of cases," he told the House of Lords Science and Technology committee on Tuesday.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-is-so-successful-it-will-never-be-eradicated-expert-claims-11991024>

World faces risk of 'vaccine nationalism' in COVID-19 fight, says CEPI chair

It's a problem Jane Halton, a former WHO board member, calls "vaccine nationalism." "I worry that some countries will see that there is strategic advantage in the use of any developed vaccine, if they are successful. I also think that there is, in some cases, a need to deal with domestic concerns," Halton said. "And I understand that being able to balance a need for domestic distribution, particularly for the vulnerable, but at the same time acknowledging that all countries are in this together — I think there's a middle line to be struck here." Halton, who is chair of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and former head of Australia's health and finance departments, tells The World's host Marco Werman that vaccine production should be globally distributed and initially target the most vulnerable in all nations.

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2020-05-18/world-faces-risk-vaccine-nationalism-covid-19-fight-says-cepi-chair>

Coronavirus Resurgence

France reports 70 coronavirus cases after schools reopened

Around 70 cases of Covid-19 have been linked to schools in France just one week after they reopened. A third of French children have gone back to school in an easing of the coronavirus lockdown. Some schools were opened last week and a further 150,000 junior high students went back to the classroom on Monday. The move initially led to relief: The end of homeschooling for hundreds of thousands of exhausted French parents, many of whom were also working from home.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/05/19/france-reports-70-coronavirus-linked-reopening-schools-12725091/>

Chinese Lockdown Redux

Remember those graphs showing that Beijing's draconian lockdown of Wuhan and other parts of China had beaten the coronavirus more effectively than any other public-health measures anywhere? Well, the virus didn't stay beaten, to judge by new cases emerging in Jilin province that have prompted another lockdown. Jilin, in the country's northeast, had reported around 120 new Covid-19 cases by this weekend. It's not clear how this cluster started—officials initially suggested the disease re-entered China from nearby Russia—but local transmission also has occurred. Cue another general shutdown, as the govern

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/chinese-lockdown-redux-11589843868>

Positive coronavirus tests in aged care residents close two more nursing homes in Melbourne

Deputy Chief Health Officer Annaliese van Diemen said seven new cases of the virus had been recorded in the state since Monday, including two in separate aged care homes. Dr van Diemen said one of the aged care cases was a resident at Lynden Aged Care in Camberwell in Melbourne's east. "The resident is being treated in isolation in a metropolitan hospital," Dr van Diemen said. "Residents and families have been informed by the facility." She said cleaning and contact tracing was already underway.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-19/coronavirus-victorian-government-universities-support-package/12261664>

Coronavirus Spike in Russia, Brazil, India and Others Show Pandemic is Far From Over

Coronavirus cases are spiking from India to South Africa and Mexico in a clear indication the pandemic is far from over, while Russia and Brazil now sit behind only the United States in the number of reported infections. The surges come as much of Asia, Europe and scores of U.S. states have been easing lockdowns to restart their economies as new infections wane. U.S. autoworkers, French teachers and Thai mall workers are among hundreds of thousands of employees back at work with new safety precautions.

<https://time.com/5838835/coronavirus-case-spike-globe/>

New Lockdown

Fears of new coronavirus outbreak in Chinese region of 100million people after two cities went into Wuhan-style lockdown

Fears of a possible new outbreak in a Chinese region of over 100 million residents have been fuelled after two cities from the area went under Wuhan-style lockdown. Officials from Jilin province of north-eastern China appointed two hospitals today as designated coronavirus facilities to deal with the overwhelming spike of suspected COVID-19 patients. Chinese officials have imposed strict quarantine measures on two cities in the province of Jilin amid fears of a local infection cluster continuing to spread and threaten neighbouring areas.

<https://www.msn.com/en-my/news/world/fears-of-new-coronavirus-outbreak-in-chinese-region-of-100million-people-after-two-cities-went-into-wuhan-style-lockdown/ar-BB14isJH>

São Paulo Tops China's Death Toll, Doria Could Decree Lockdown

The state records nearly 4,700 deaths from coronavirus, and the health system is close to collapse

in the capital.

<https://riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/sao-paulo/sao-paulo-tops-chinas-death-toll-doria-could-decree-lockdown/>

China puts city of Shulan under Wuhan-style lockdown after fresh Covid-19 cases

China brings back strict coronavirus lockdown for 5 million people as two cities sealed off after new spike
The Sun
Millions of Chinese back in lockdown as fears grow over second coronavirus wave
Mirror
Online
Over 100 Million in China's Northeast Face Renewed Lockdown
Bloomberg
China forces millions of people back into lockdown again amid fears of second outbreak
Express.co.uk
View Full coverage on Google News

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/19/china-puts-city-of-shulan-under-wuhan-style-lockdown-after-fresh-covid-19-cases>

Coronavirus Australia: More lockdowns after fresh outbreak

Two aged care homes in Victoria have been placed in lockdown following the detection of new positive cases. It comes after the nation's death toll reached 100 on Tuesday after a 93-year-old woman became the 19th person to die at Newmarch House aged care home in Sydney's west, a facility that accounts for almost a fifth of all known coronavirus deaths in Australia. Earlier today Qld's Health Minister Stephen Miles said authorities were preparing for thousands of positive cases every day following a case at a nursing home in Rockhampton. Remarkably, none of the hundreds of residents and staff from the centre have returned positive tests since the drama emerged last week, but Mr Miles said it's too early to feel relieved as testing continues.

<https://www.news.com.au/world/coronavirus/australia/coronavirus-australia-live-updates/live-coverage/18a3537c3f8165e4d0d409dedc66b79e>

Shulan locked down as fears grow over China's northeast virus cluster

Villages and residential compounds sealed off and only one person per household can go out every two days to buy supplies. At least 34 infections in Jilin province and neighbouring Liaoning are linked to a case in the small city

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3084928/coronavirus-shulan-goes-lockdown-fears-grow-over-chinas>