

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

16th Jul 2020

News Highlights

Lockdown restrictions reimposed in regions around the world

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to gather momentum, [with more than a million new cases reported over the last 5 days](#), countries around the world are reimposing restrictions and lockdowns that were only just lifted. California has shut all bars and indoor dining. [Hong Kong has implemented strict new social distancing measures and the border between the Australian states of New South Wales and Victoria](#), which was scheduled to reopen on July 20, will remain closed for the foreseeable future due to a spike in cases.

Lockdown reduced Covid-19 infections more than initially thought, says study

Research published by British scientists on Wednesday has indicated that the reproductive number of Covid-19 in May could have been lower than the official government figures for that period. While the study is not yet peer reviewed, [it indicates that the lockdown was successful in reducing infections and that the level of adherence to the lockdown also helped reduce transmission of the virus](#).

U.S. retail stores insist on masks in absence of federal regulations

[Walmart and Kroger, which operate more than 8,000 retail stores in the U.S., both said that they will require all shoppers to wear masks in their stores](#). In the absence of any federal requirement to wear masks, a growing number of industries such as airlines are adopting mask requirements to stop the spread of the coronavirus, which has already killed over 136,000 people in the U.S. alone.

Millions back in lockdown as cases surge in India

[Several states in India have put their residents back in restrictive lockdowns, just weeks after removing them, as India added another 29,429 cases to its tally](#). The states of Bihar, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh, with a combined population of 375 million, imposed varying restriction on residents, with Bihar locking down for 15 days, Karnataka for a week and Uttar Pradesh opting for a weekend lockdown.

Lockdown Exit

One million Brits have quit smoking during covid pandemic

One million Brits have quit smoking since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, charity Action on Smoking and Health (Ash) says. Ash has calculated that 1,036,000 smokers and recent ex-smokers had quit or continued their abstinence since coronavirus cases started circulating in the UK in March. The charity surveyed more than 10,000 people across England, Wales and Scotland, including 1,700 smokers and people who had quit in the last four months. It found that younger smokers were more likely to have stopped than older smokers - 17 per cent of smokers and recent ex-smokers aged between 16-29 said they had quit compared to seven per cent of those older than 50. A further 13 per cent of those aged 30 to 49 quit during the pandemic, too.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/health/quit-smoking-coronavirus-uk-a4498586.html>

Over 330000 coronavirus infections reported in Peru

Health authorities of Peru said on Monday that 3,797 more patients have been diagnosed in the country, increasing the total number of COVID-19 infections across the nation to 330,123. The health ministry said that a total of 12,054 coronavirus infected patients have died due to the disease so far in the country. A report released by the ministry said that "of the positive cases, to date 221,008 people have completed their period of quarantine at home or have been discharged from a health center". The country has continued the economic activity in most of its parts, having only seven regions under lockdown over the high numbers of infections

<https://menafn.com/1100480656/Over-330000-coronavirus-infections-reported-in-Peru>

As rowdy tourists flout coronavirus laws, residents in some Spanish resorts fear new surge in cases

Scenes of drunken young tourists cavorting without masks, jumping on cars and chanting aggressively on the streets of a resort town have raised concerns in Spain as the country teeters on the edge of a fresh coronavirus surge. Authorities say such incidents, video of which was shared by a local journalist but hasn't been verified by CNN, are isolated. But locals who endured heavy restrictions to limit the spread of the disease fear that ill-behaved visitors could undermine their earlier sacrifices

<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/majorca-travel-incidents-scli-intl/index.html>

Coronavirus: R number 'lower than thought' before lockdown eased in England

The rate of coronavirus infections in the community in England was significantly reduced before lockdown eased in May, according to a government-commissioned study. Imperial College research showed there were, on average, 13 positive cases for every 10,000 people. This means the R number was lower than thought at 0.57, the study suggests. But the figure does not take into account infections in care homes and hospitals at the time. Calculated using this information, the national overall reproduction number - or R - was estimated to be between 0.7 and 1 during May. The study of 120,000 volunteers also suggested young adults aged 18 to 24 were more likely to test positive. The researchers said this could be due to young people having more social contacts over lockdown. Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the findings showed the impact of lockdown.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-53414363>

China's economy seen growing 2.5% in second quarter as lockdowns end, stimulus kicks in: Reuters poll

China's economy likely returned to modest growth in the second quarter after a record contraction, as lockdown measures ended and policymakers announced more stimulus to combat the shock from the coronavirus crisis, according to a Reuters poll.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-economy-poll/chinas-economy-seen-growing-2-5-in-second-quarter-as-lockdowns-end-stimulus-kicks-in-reuters-poll-idUSKCN24F0M7>

Belgium, once hard-hit, reports zero coronavirus deaths for first time since March

Belgium, which has reined in the coronavirus after becoming the worst-hit mid-sized country in the world, reported zero new coronavirus-related deaths in 24 hours on Tuesday for the first time since March 10. As in many European countries that were hard hit by the pandemic in March and April, Belgium sharply reduced infections by imposing a lockdown, which is now being lifted. The total number of deaths reported by the national public health institute Sciensano remained at 9,787. In the country of 11.5 million people, that works out to around 850 deaths per million, the worst in the world apart from the tiny city state of San Marino. The peak daily death toll was 343 on April 12.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-belgium-idUSKCN24F0U7>

Bastille Day: France honours health workers amid pandemic

France has honoured its health workers at scaled-down events to mark the national celebration Bastille Day, amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Authorities cancelled the traditional military

parade but instead held a tribute to those tackling the virus. Invited audience members included families of French workers who died of Covid-19. The annual events mark the storming of Bastille prison on 14 July 1789, seen as the start of the French Revolution. It is the first time officials have called off the annual military parade through the capital Paris since the end of World War Two in 1945.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53401787>

LA Public Schools Will Start Year Online, as Virus Rises in State

Los Angeles and San Diego public school districts said Monday they will begin the year online, as California grapples with mounting Covid-19 cases and the WHO issued cautionary statements regarding coronavirus and kids.

<https://www.wsj.com/video/la-public-schools-will-start-year-online-as-virus-rises-in-state/E3A5710D-8AB2-4CEA-A7C3-2E1F6E21B83F.html>

Exit Strategies

Vaccine alliance says 75 countries keen to join 'COVAX' access facility

More than 75 countries have expressed interest in joining the COVAX financing scheme designed to guarantee fast and equitable access globally to COVID-19 vaccines, the GAVI vaccines alliance said on Wednesday. The 75 countries, which would finance the vaccines from public budgets, will partner with up to 90 poorer countries supported through voluntary donations to GAVI's COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), the alliance said in a statement. "COVAX is the only truly global solution to the COVID-19 pandemic," Seth Berkley, GAVI's chief executive, said in a statement. "For the vast majority of countries, whether they can afford to pay for their own doses or require assistance, it means receiving a guaranteed share of doses and avoiding being pushed to the back of the queue, as we saw during the H1N1 pandemic a decade ago."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vaccine/vaccine-alliance-says-75-countries-keen-to-join-covax-access-facility-idUSKCN24G24R>

Walmart, Kroger to Require Shoppers to Wear Masks in All U.S. Stores

The retail giants, which operate more than 8,000 stores across the country, said they were adopting their own mask requirements to protect their staff and customers. Walmart said a lack of federal rules had left it with a patchwork of local regulations. "We know this is a simple step everyone can take for their safety and the safety of others," it said. They join major U.S. airlines and a growing number of governors, even those who were initially hesitant to do so, in adopting mask requirements to stop the spread of the respiratory disease, which has killed more than 136,000 in the U.S.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-to-require-face-masks-in-all-u-s-stores-starting-july-20-11594824256>

L.A. teachers demand better technology to avoid remote learning chaos in fall

After being told to return to remote education in the fall, Los Angeles teachers are demanding greater technology support to avoid the chaos they say they faced when the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to abruptly switch to online learning in March. She and other union members said increased funding for better connectivity, equipment and information-technology support - especially for students with disabilities and those from poorer households - was at the top of the list. So, too, is rolling out more age-appropriate online learning programs to ensure children from kindergartners to high schoolers are getting an education tailored for their academic level.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-usa-education/l-a-teachers-demand-better-technology-to-avoid-remote-learning-chaos-in-fall-idUKKCN24G1FC>

Wearing a mask doesn't just protect others from COVID, it protects you from infection, perhaps serious illness, too

The Missouri hair salon case was published in this week's Morbidity and Mortality Report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's an example of the power of face masks to stop the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. On May 12, a hair stylist at a Springfield Great Clips salon developed respiratory symptoms, but kept working for eight days until a COVID-19 test came back positive. Another stylist started getting sick three days later and worked for another seven days before testing positive and staying home. Both colleagues wore masks only when customers were present. Six close contacts of the first stylist ended up coming down with COVID-19. But in the salon, where 98% of clients wore masks, things played out differently. Of the 67 clients exposed to one or both of the stylists and tested for COVID-19, not one tested positive.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/07/15/wearing-mask-may-offer-protection-against-catching-severe-covid-19/5431323002/>

Coronavirus Success Story: How Rwanda Is Curbing COVID-19 : Goats and Soda

Comprehensive contact tracing is a task that has overwhelmed countries with far more resources than Rwanda. Rwanda's per capita income is roughly \$2,000 per year. Yet all testing and treatment for the virus is provided for free. It costs the government between \$50 and \$100 to run a single coronavirus test, Nsanzimana says. In order to test thousands a day, Rwanda has started using a process called "pool testing." Material from 20-25 nasal swabs are all put into one vial and run through the machine. This allows them to test far more samples at once. If they get a positive result, then all the swabs that went into that initial vial are tested individually to pinpoint the person who's infected. Nsanzimana says Rwanda's experience dealing with other infectious disease outbreaks is helping it now during the pandemic.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/07/15/889802561/a-covid-19-success-story-in-rwanda-free-testing-r-obot-caregivers>

A Resurgence of the Virus, and Lockdowns, Threatens Economic Recovery

Failure to suppress a resurgence of confirmed infections is threatening to choke the recovery and push the country back into a recessionary spiral — one that could inflict long-term damage on workers and businesses large and small, unless Congress reconsiders the scale of federal aid that may be required in the months to come. The looming economic pain was evident this week as big companies forecast gloomy months ahead and government data showed renewed struggles in the job market. A weekly census survey on Wednesday showed 1.3 million fewer Americans held jobs last week than the previous week. A new American Enterprise Institute analysis from Safegraph.com of shopper traffic to stores showed business activity had plunged in the second week of July, in part from renewed virus fears.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/business/economy/economic-recovery-coronavirus-resurgence.html>

Coronavirus in Scotland: Biggest relaxation of rules take place

Scotland has begun its most significant relaxation of coronavirus measures since the country went into lockdown in March. Hairdressers and barbers, bars and restaurants, cinemas, tourist attractions, places of worship and childcare settings can now all reopen. Nicola Sturgeon said it is "the biggest step so far" in exiting lockdown. But she warned she would "not hesitate" to close bars and restaurants again if the coronavirus starts to spread. The reopening of indoor spaces requires anti-virus precautions to be in place and all customers will be asked to provide their name and a phone number, as part of the NHS Test and Protect scheme. The first minister warned it was now more important than ever to stick to public health measures.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-53403280>

England's Covid-19 frontlines: the race to prevent local lockdowns

At the end of last week, the race was on. Blackburn with Darwen council was identified as an area of "concern" by Public Health England. With the number of infections rising, an emergency meeting of

the Local Resilience Forum, which brings together NHS, councils across Lancashire, emergency services and other agencies, was called last Thursday to devise a plan. After the meeting, Blackburn's public health director, Prof Dominic Harrison, told the Guardian he was determined to stop the outbreak without resorting to a Leicester-style lockdown. "A lockdown of the whole borough would be entirely inappropriate and wouldn't be a solution to the problem we've got," he said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/15/englands-covid-19-frontlines-the-race-to-prevent-local-lockdowns>

Most Brits just won't wear face masks — here's why

According to YouGov data just 38% of Britons said they wear masks in public places. By comparison, 88% of people in Spain and 83% in Italy said they do so. Meanwhile, 90% of people in Singapore wear masks in public, as do 82% in China.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/15/most-brits-just-wont-wear-face-masks-heres-why.html>

Coronavirus NSW, Victoria: What happens if COVID-19 does not go away?

Experts have painted a grim picture of what life could look like in NSW and Victoria if the coronavirus is not brought under control. The resurgence of the virus has led to increasing calls for authorities to adopt an elimination strategy rather than a suppression strategy. All of Australia's states and territories have managed to effectively eliminate the virus except for NSW and Victoria. NSW got close before Victoria's outbreak spread north, resulting in an increasing number of cases of community transmission in Sydney. Both states would have to get active cases down to zero for at least two weeks before the virus is considered to be eliminated. While some experts have noted that it's unlikely the virus will be completely eliminated, if the number of cases was brought to zero, it means authorities can jump on any small outbreaks as they appear.

<https://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/coronavirus-australias-yoyo-future-if-covid19-is-not-eliminated/news-story/690564091b0b2a246bb1c56d5be71ae8>

Hipkins urges use of contact tracer app - 'Step up your efforts'

Health Minister Chris Hipkins has appealed to New Zealanders to use the contact tracer app, saying he believes there is a degree of complacency in this country, even as the risk grows every day. Speaking at today's press conference, where it was revealed there were two new cases in managed isolation facilities, Hipkins said contact tracing was a core public health response, and the Ministry was training its staff to do case investigation. He said the contact tracer app was one part of a whole system of contact tracing that required everyone to take part, and about 596,000 New Zealanders have so far done this. The information provided is only used by the Ministry and only for contact tracing, he said. "Please step up your efforts, scan wherever you go and keep a record of your movements."

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/421263/hipkins-urges-use-of-contact-tracer-app-step-up-your-efforts>

Masks part of the Melbourne look for a long time to come

Melburnians may need to wear masks on public transport and in other busy public spaces until there is a widely available vaccine for coronavirus. As another person died and Victoria recorded 238 new infections on Wednesday, University of NSW epidemiologist Mary-Louise McLaws said wearing face masks would be a significant cultural shift for Victorians, but a necessary means of protection in the battle against COVID-19.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/masks-part-of-the-melbourne-look-for-a-long-time-to-come-20200715-p55c5i.html>

Morocco timidly re-opens borders after Covid-19 lockdown

Morocco cautiously re-opens its borders to the outside world as from 15 July, but only to Moroccan nationals and foreign residents of the kingdom. Only two airlines are authorised to carry out flights between Morocco and some selected destinations, including France, but at a prohibitive price.

<https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20200714-morocco-timidly-re-opens-borders-after-covid-19-lockdown-france>

NZ could go into regional lockdown if Covid-19 re-emerges in community, says PM

New Zealand would move to regionalised lockdowns, rather than the the whole country in the first instance in the event of re-emergence of Covid-19 cases in the community. PM outlines next steps in case of Covid-19 community outbreak

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/nz-could-go-into-regional-lockdown-if-covid-19-re-emerges-in-community-says-pm>

Partisan Exits

Coronavirus: Matt Hancock rejects face masks and coverings for offices

There are no plans to make face coverings mandatory for office workers in England, Matt Hancock has said. The health secretary told the BBC people working in offices would not need to cover up, despite a newspaper report suggesting they would. "It is something we've looked at and rejected," he said, but added masks would be worn elsewhere by the public "for the foreseeable future". Face coverings in shops will become mandatory in England on 24 July. Those who fail to comply with the new rules on wearing face coverings in England's shops will face a fine of up to £100. Children under 11, those with certain disabilities, and people working in shops will be exempt

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53415030>

UK PM Johnson commits to coronavirus inquiry, but not yet

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson committed on Wednesday to holding an inquiry into the country's handling of the coronavirus crisis but said now was not the time as the battle to combat the pandemic was ongoing. Opposition lawmakers have been pressing for an inquiry after ministers were criticised for being too slow to lock down, to introduce mass testing and to deliver protective equipment. Johnson has repeatedly said his government took the right decisions at the right time but also admits that lessons will have to be learned after the pandemic which has left Britain as one of the worst affected countries. "We will seek to learn the lessons of this pandemic in the future and certainly we will have an independent inquiry into what happened," he told parliament. His spokesman declined to comment further on the inquiry, but said further details would be set out "in due course".

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-pm-inquiry/uk-pm-johnson-commits-to-coronavirus-inquiry-but-not-yet-idUSKCN24G1MB>

Extended Lockdown May Not Be Best Strategy Against Covid-19; We Need Scientific Approach

India has now become the third worst-hit nation by the Covid-19 pandemic. Only the US and Brazil are ahead of India in terms of total coronavirus infections. In just three weeks, India went from being the sixth worst-affected country to the third. It's mid-July and the Covid cases are expected to rise further in the coming weeks. In my earlier column, I had recommended a phased re-opening of activities across the country from April 15 based on the risk profiling. Now, after analysing global Covid data till June 30, things are becoming increasingly apparent. We, perhaps, went too far without scientific evidence-based planning, and maybe, it is time to go back to the drawing board and rework our strategies.

<https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/opinion-extended-lockdown-may-not-be-best-strategy-against-covid19/356765>

Trump administration takes control of COVID-19 data in US

Concerns raised as hospital, testing info will be sent to a central database in Washington, DC, instead of to the CDC.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/07/trump-administration-takes-control-covid-19-data-200715162413657.html>

Continued Lockdown

Colombian cartels killing those who don't obey their Covid-19 lockdowns

Human Rights Watch calls on government to do more to protect civilians after at least eight murdered by armed groups

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jul/15/colombia-cartels-rebel-groups-coronavirus-lockdown-human-rights-watch>

Online tutoring improves disadvantaged school pupils performance and wellbeing in lockdown

A Bocconi University and Harvard program also raised disadvantaged pupils' aspirations, wellbeing and socio-emotional skills, showing that the educational gap can be addressed even with limited resources

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-07/bu-oti071420.php

Scientific Viewpoint

Fearing autumn COVID wave, EU urges earlier, broader flu vaccination

The European Union executive urged member states on Wednesday to launch earlier and broader vaccination campaigns against flu this year to reduce the risk of simultaneous influenza and COVID-19 outbreaks in the autumn. To avoid what the Commission's vice president, Margaritis Schinas, called "a cocktail of risks," it said EU governments this year should buy more shots against influenza and increase the number of people who are vaccinated. They should also, the Commission said, begin vaccinating people this month, instead of waiting until October, when flu vaccination drives traditionally begin in Europe. Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides said governments should fight "vaccine hesitancy" to achieve these results, referring to people's growing scepticism about vaccinations which led to the resurgence of certain diseases, such as measles, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-eu/fearing-autumn-covid-wave-eu-urges-earlier-broader-flu-vaccination-idUSKCN24G17J>

Positive news on Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine could come Thursday - report

Early-stage human trial data on a vaccine being developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University will be published on July 20, The Lancet medical journal said on Wednesday. The vaccine candidate is already in large-scale Phase III human trials to assess whether it can protect against COVID-19, but its developers have yet to report Phase I results which would show whether it is safe and whether or not it induces an immune response. "We expect this paper, which is undergoing final editing and preparation, to be published on Monday, July 20, for immediate release," a spokeswoman for the journal said. The Lancet's statement came after reports earlier on Wednesday that the Phase I data could be released as soon Thursday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-oxford-vaccine-itv/positive-news-on-oxford-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-could-come-thursday-report-idUKKCN24G1BW>

Coronavirus is a 'pandemic of historic proportions,' expert says, as cases climb in South and Southwest

The shortage of hospital beds for coronavirus patients in some areas of the US has officials looking at where they will put people when more come in. In one Texas city, the federal government is going to turn a hotel into what is called a surge hospital. In Georgia, the governor said the state is working unceasingly to prevent hospital bed shortages. The head of a hospital system in hard-hit Miami-Dade County, Florida, told CNN that they plan to convert some regular rooms into ones that can handle the most serious coronavirus patients should the growth in cases continue. Carlos Migoya said the situation is "very, very tight" at Jackson Health System, but they have stopped doing elective surgeries to help save beds. "This room is not going to last forever," if the numbers keep rising, he said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/15/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

Covid-19 pandemic: the need for second-generation vaccines

It is astounding how quickly Covid-19 vaccines have progressed into and through clinical trials. However, there are concerns that these vaccines may not be particularly effective at preventing Covid-19 infections in the long-term, leading to the need for improved, next-generation vaccines against this novel coronavirus. One pair of companies working on the next phase of vaccine development are sister biotechs NantKwest and ImmunityBio.

<https://www.pharmaceutical-technology.com/features/covid19-vaccines/>

Can mental health services cope with the devastating effects of Covid-19?

More staff are badly needed as a 'tsunami' of referrals looms in the UK – but myths that the sector is dangerous to work in puts many off

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jul/15/can-mental-health-services-cope-with-the-devastating-effects-of-covid-19>

Fauci warns young of Covid-19 risks and says crisis could match 1918 flu

"We have a serious situation here in the United States," Fauci, director of the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Disease, said at the online event. The US has so far witnessed more than 3.4m cases of Covid-19 and more than 136,000 deaths, with cases now rising in 37 states; record numbers of new cases in Florida, Arizona and Texas; and California shutting down many businesses statewide after recent reopenings. Fauci warned students at Georgetown that young people must not be "part of the problem". Fauci has maintain a higher approval rating among the public than members of the administration. A New York Times poll, for example, found that 67% of respondents trusted Fauci's handling of the coronavirus outbreak compared with only 26% who trusted Trump.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/14/fauci-covid-19-risks-coronavirus-trump-white-house>

Rate of decline in Covid-19 deaths in England and Wales slows in latest ONS data

Covid-19 deaths in England and Wales have dropped steadily for the past seven weeks, but the rate of decline slowed in the most recent week of data. The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics showed 532 deaths related to Covid-19 in the week ending 3 July. This was the lowest death toll since the week ending 27 March. Lockdowns were introduced in England, Wales and Scotland on 26 March. The latest fatality figures showed a 12% decline from the previous week, when 606 deaths were reported. In the three weeks prior this, the number of deaths had dropped by between 20% and 30%, but this may be due to natural fluctuation rather than a significant change in the pace of decline.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/15/coronavirus-infection-rate-in-england-fell-sharply-month-before-lockdown-lifted>

More than 150 countries engaged in COVID-19 vaccine global access facility

Seventy-five countries submit expressions of interest to COVAX Facility, joining up to 90 further countries which could be supported by the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC). The COVAX Facility, and the AMC within it, is designed to guarantee rapid, fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for every country in the world, rich and poor, to make rapid progress towards slowing the pandemic. Interest from governments representing more than 60% of the world's population offers 'tremendous vote of confidence' in the effort to ensure truly global access to COVID-19 vaccines, once developed.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/15-07-2020-more-than-150-countries-engaged-in-covid-19-vaccine-global-access-facility>

'There's a direct relationship': Brazil meat plants linked to spread of Covid-19

Brazilian meat plants helped spread Covid-19 in at least three different places across the country as

the virus continues to migrate from big cities to the country's vast interior, experts have said. At the beginning of this week the country was second only to the US with 1.88 million confirmed Covid-19 cases and 72,833 deaths. Its powerful agribusiness sector is allied with the country's far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro, who has dismissed the pandemic as a "little flu". The beef sector is worth \$26bn (£20.7bn), according to the Brazilian Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock (CNA), while its chicken industry is worth another \$8bn.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jul/15/brazil-meat-plants-linked-to-spread-of-covid-19>

Schools have low coronavirus infection rate, German study finds

A study of 2,000 children and teachers at schools in the German state of Saxony has found very few antibodies among them. The study was carried out in May by the Medical Faculty of the TU Dresden and University Hospital Carl Gustav Carus. The results of the first test phase were released Monday.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/14/schools-coronavirus-infection-rate-low-german-study-finds.html>

Experts against relaxation of lockdown restrictions

Moving towards a Covid-19-free island requires a strong political will — clinicians and scientists. A group of national and international medical and scientific experts have launched a campaign to reduce the incidences of Covid-19 across the island of Ireland to zero. With the Government due to decide this evening (July 15) whether to move to phase four of the easing of coronavirus restrictions, the Zero-Covid Island group stated that the priority at this stage was to eliminate the disease rather than to open up the economy.

<https://www.imt.ie/news/experts-relaxation-lockdown-restrictions-15-07-2020/>

Rules once lifted are reimposed to try to curb new outbreaks

Virus restrictions once lifted are being reimposed, shutting businesses and curbing people's social lives as communities try to curb a disease resurgence before it spins out of control. Residents of Australia's second-largest city were warned on Wednesday to comply with lockdown regulations or face tougher restrictions. Melbourne's 5 million people and part of the city's semi-rural surroundings are a week into a new, six-week lockdown to contain a new outbreak there.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-07-reimposed-curb-outbreaks.html>

English lockdown might have reduced COVID-19 infections more than thought, scientists say

The reproductive number of COVID-19 in England may be lower than previously thought in May, research published by British scientists said on Wednesday, suggesting the government's COVID-19 lockdown worked to reduce infection rates. The study - which is a "pre-print", meaning it has yet to be peer-reviewed - found there were on average 13 positive cases for every 10,000 people, with an overall reproduction number of 0.57. That is lower than the government's official figures for that time, estimating a so-called "R" number of 0.7-0.9 when lockdown was eased. An R number of less than 1 indicates an epidemic is shrinking. "Our level of adherence in the UK, and the overall average behaviour was very effective at reducing transmission of the virus," Steven Riley, Professor of Infectious Disease Dynamics, Imperial College London, told reporters.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-prevalence/english-lockdown-might-have-reduced-covid-19-infections-more-than-thought-scientists-say-idUKKCN24G1BK>

How children in the UK are coping with the coronavirus lockdown

Since lockdown began in the UK, Cathy Creswell at the University of Oxford and her colleagues have been surveying thousands of families to find out how they are affected by the covid-19 pandemic. The Co-SPACE Study has now published its first findings from a longitudinal study that questioned people over several months. More than 10,000 people have now taken part. Our first report was at the beginning of April, looking at the first 1500 people.

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24732913-700-how-children-in-the-uk-are-coping-with-the-coronavirus-lockd>

[own/](#)

Which U.S. States Meet WHO Recommended Testing Criteria?

If a positivity rate is too high, that may indicate that the state is only testing the sickest patients who seek medical attention, and is not casting a wide enough net to know how much of the virus is spreading within its communities. A low rate of positivity in testing data can be seen as a sign that a state has sufficient testing capacity for the size of their outbreak and is testing enough of its population to make informed decisions about reopening. Which U.S. states are testing enough to meet the WHO's goal? The graph below compares states' rate of positivity to the recommended positivity rate of 5% or below. States that meet the WHO's recommended criteria appear in green, while the states that are not testing enough to meet the positivity benchmark are in orange.

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity>

Oxford's Covid-19 Vaccine Is the Coronavirus Front-Runner

The University of Oxford candidate, led by Sarah Gilbert, might be through human trials in September. AstraZeneca has lined up agreements to produce 2 billion doses. Could this be the one?

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-07-15/oxford-s-covid-19-vaccine-is-the-coronavirus-front-runner>

Coronavirus antibodies may not help with cure, after Dutch study sees harmful effect in ICU patients

A research team led by Professor Menno de Winther from the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands said they might have found an important clue that may answer why the IgG appears only when patients are ill enough to be admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU). The scientists found that the blood from Covid-19 patients struggling for their life on ventilators was highly inflammatory. They observed during a series of experiments that it could trigger an overreaction of the immune system, destroy crucial barriers in tissues and cause water and blood to spill over in the lungs. When Winther and his colleagues compared the blood from Covid-19 patients to those battling other diseases in the ICU, they discovered that Covid-19 patients had a disproportionately large amount of Sars-CoV-2-specific IgG. These antibodies "strongly amplify pro-inflammatory response", they said in a non-peer-reviewed paper posted on preprint platform bioRxiv.org on Monday

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3093162/coronavirus-antibodies-may-not-help-cure-after-dutch-study-sees>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Are stage 4 Covid-19 lockdown restrictions coming to Victoria?

Sutton and Andrews have made it clear their goal is to maintain stage three restrictions, under which Victorians can only leave their homes to shop for food and essential items, provide care, do outdoor exercise and work or study. They are in place for a period of six weeks. However, Andrews said whether tougher measures could be brought in before then depends on the behaviour of individuals over the coming days and weeks.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jul/15/is-stage-4-covid-19-lockdown-rules-restrictions-coming-vic-victoria-melbourne-what-is-would-four-mean-date-victorian-premier-daniel-andrews>

Blackburn facing 'rising tide' of coronavirus cases

Blackburn with Darwen is facing a "rising tide" of coronavirus cases centred on terraced houses with high numbers of occupants, the area's public health director has said. The Lancashire town brought in extra restrictions on Tuesday following a spike in infections. Prof Dominic Harrison said the majority of new cases were in the south Asian community. He said a phased lockdown could happen if the rise was not halted by 27 July. For the next month, the 148,000 people who live within the Lancashire authority have been told to observe the new rules in a bid to avoid a Leicester-style local

lockdown.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-53414937>

Global surge in coronavirus cases is being fed by the developing world — and the U.S.

The novel coronavirus — once concentrated in specific cities or countries — has now crept into virtually every corner of the globe and is wreaking havoc in multiple major regions at once. But the impact is not being felt evenly. Poorer nations throughout Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia and Africa are bearing a growing share of the caseload, even as wealthier countries in Western Europe and East Asia enjoy a relative respite after having beaten back the worst effects through rigorously enforced lockdowns.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/global-surge-in-coronavirus-cases-is-being-fed-by-the-developing-world--and-the-us/2020/07/14/1e9ca48e-c605-11ea-8ffe-372be8d82298_story.html

Catalonia adopts more restrictions as Covid-19 cases surge

The Catalan regional government has introduced new lockdown measures in a bid to control the rising number of coronavirus cases in the northeastern Spanish region. The number of weekly infections in the territory jumped to 2,489 between July 6 and 12 – double the figure recorded in the previous week. The new restrictions will affect the comarca of Segrià – a traditional administrative division that comprises 38 municipalities – and another six municipalities in the province of Lleida, and the municipality of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, located southwest of Barcelona.

https://english.elpais.com/spanish_news/2020-07-15/catalonia-adopts-more-restrictions-as-covid-19-cases-surge.html

France reports new coronavirus clusters amid concerns over laxity

France has identified 372 coronavirus clusters since May officials have said, with the number of hospital admissions notably in Paris on the increase. More than half of the new infections were detected through mass testing efforts to identify early outbreaks of the illness. "The virus continues to spread in the territory, as shown by the number of new clusters," France's public health agency warned Monday, saying that it had identified 372 coronavirus cases since 9 May. A third of these clusters remain active, and are situated in zones such as the Ile de France region and Nouvelle Aquitaine, which regroups 12 departments.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/france-reports-coronavirus-clusters-amid-151601648.html>

Australia weighs further coronavirus curbs as outbreak grows

Australia's most populous states will impose harsher restrictions on movement if a COVID-19 outbreak is not quickly brought under control, state premiers said on Wednesday. Australia has been heralded as a global leader in containing COVID-19, its total death toll lower than what Florida reported on Tuesday alone. Even so, it has seen a surge in new cases, culminating with 10 days of triple-digit gains as of Wednesday. Victoria state reported another 238 cases in the past 24 hours, even after reimposing a lockdown last week on about five million people in Melbourne, Australia's second-biggest city. Victoria state Premier Daniel Andrews singled out a minority of people for defying lockdown orders – which require people to stay home except for a small number of permissible activities – warning restrictions could be extended. "If, however, people do not do the right thing, then we will have to move to additional restrictions being put in place and potentially prolong ... these restrictions," Andrews told reporters in Melbourne

<https://japantoday.com/category/world/australia-weighs-further-coronavirus-curbs-as-outbreak-grows>

The new lockdown restrictions set to be imposed on Victoria as state battles second wave

Victoria saw an alarming outbreak in coronavirus cases, forcing tougher rules. Melbourne and Mitchell Shire were forced back into lockdown last week. COVID-19 cases continued to soar with more than 1,800 active cases on Tuesday Premier Daniel Andrews warned further restrictions could soon be imposed

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8523279/The-new-lockdown-restrictions-set-imposed-Victoria-state-battles-second-wave.html>

Coronavirus: The countries re-entering lockdowns amid wave of new Covid-19 cases

Life in New Zealand is relatively back to normal at Covid-19 Alert Level 1. But overseas, the coronavirus pandemic is wreaking havoc. Many countries are having to re-introduce local or state-wide lockdowns as Covid-19 case numbers drastically rise. On Wednesday, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern outlined how local lockdowns would work here if we were to have community transmission in the future. Here's a look at which countries are being hit the hardest by Covid-19, and what officials are doing to get their outbreaks under control.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/122136764/coronavirus-the-countries-reentering-lockdowns-amid-wave-of-new-covid19-cases>

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<https://in.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia/australia-weighs-further-coronavirus-curbs-as-outbreak-grows-idINKCN24GOEA>

New Lockdown

Coronavirus: Leicester cases 'still well above' rest of UK as government prepares to review lockdown

The number of Covid-19 cases in Leicester remains too high, health secretary Matt Hancock has warned, as government officials prepare to review the city's current lockdown measures. Restrictions were tightened across the East Midlands city on Monday 29 June following a spike in infections, with all non-essential shops and schools closed as part of the government's "whack-a-mole" strategy for dealing with localised outbreaks. The city's seven-day infection count has since fallen from 159.1 cases per 100,000 people to 119.9, according to the most recently available data, but Mr Hancock has said the number of positive cases in Leicester remains "well above" the rest of the UK.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/leicester-lockdown-coronavirus-cases-level-eased-review-latest-a9618496.html>

Coronavirus: New cases force 160,000 back into localised lockdown in Spain

Spain's national lockdown ended on 21 June, but it has since seen more than 170 clusters of COVID-19 spring up, leading to localised lockdown measures like the one seen in Leicester in the UK.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-new-cases-force-160-000-back-into-localised-lockdown-in-spain-12029108>

New virus lockdown another burden for cash-strapped Palestinians

For Palestinians already hit financially by the coronavirus pandemic, a new round of restrictions has added to their woes as infections in the occupied West Bank spike again. When the Palestinian Authority decreed the new 14-day lockdown on Sunday, some businessmen took to the streets of Hebron, the city with the territory's highest infection rate, in defiance of a curfew. The next day in Ramallah, where the PA is based, about 50 merchants rallied to voice their anger and demand the reopening of their shops, some of which had been shuttered for days before the curfew went into effect.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200715-new-virus-lockdown-another-burden-for-cash-strapped-palestinians>

Coronavirus surge forces 375m Indians back into strict lockdown

Panicked Indian states and cities have sent 375 million people back into lockdown to stem a surge of coronavirus infections. The northeastern state of Bihar, one of India's poorest, said that its 125 million residents would face restrictions again for two weeks from tomorrow. The decision underscores the sense that the response to the pandemic is unravelling, weeks after the lifting of a strict three-month lockdown imposed by Narendra Modi, the prime minister.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/coronavirus-surge-forces-375m-indians-back-into-strict-lockdown-t8kb76m0j>

India sends 375million people back into lockdown as country suffers record spike of 29,429 new coronavirus cases with total infections nearing one million

India has ordered 375million people back into lockdown as the country suffered another record spike in coronavirus cases today. Health officials announced 29,429 new cases this morning, bringing the total from 906,752 to 936,181 with India on the brink of becoming the third country after the US and Brazil to pile up a million infections. The death toll jumped by 582, rising from 23,727 to 24,309, with nearly half of all fatalities recorded in the state of Maharashtra which includes Mumbai.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8524707/India-sends-375million-people-lockdown.html>

Police crackdown on people flouting ACT lockdowns

Federal Police in the Australian Capital Territory have been cracking down on lockdown measures in a bid to limit the spread of COVID-19. The nation's capital currently has five active cases. There have been 113 infections in the territory since March, with 105 of those recovered. As part of the lockdown measures, police have been conducting regular checks on people in self-isolation, often asking them to come out to the balcony and present their driver's licenses for identification. DOMA Hotels Director Patrick Lonergan said the territory has people quarantining in serviced apartments so hotels can continue to run as usual. While the serviced apartments aren't monitored by security guards, the apartments have cameras on every floor, Mr Lonergan said.

https://www.skynews.com.au/details/_6171719943001

Lockdown restrictions reimposed in California, Hong Kong and Australia as virus cases spike

California has reimposed sweeping lockdown restrictions ordering all bars and indoor restaurant dining to shut amid a surge in coronavirus cases. Most indoor religious services, gyms and hair and nail salons have also been told to close after experts warned of the extent to which the virus can be transmitted doors. Governor Gavin Newsome has repeatedly implored people to refrain from social gatherings and expressed frustration that many are not following the guidance.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/california-hong-kong-australia-lockdown-coronavirus-a4497461.html>

Venezuelan capital to go into lockdown - as it happened

Venezuela's government on Tuesday decided to reimpose strict lockdown measures in the capital Caracas and the central state of Miranda, after a recent spike in the number of COVID-19 cases. "President Nicolas Maduro communicated the decision to take the capital district and Miranda state to level one of strict lockdown, starting tomorrow July 15, to the presidential commission on COVID-19, due to the rise in cases and for the sake of the people's health," Vice President Delcy Rodriguez said on Twitter. The government is confident that the measure can "sever the chains of transmission from the outbreak these central regions are undergoing," said Rodriguez.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-07/15/c_139212848.htm

Thousands of Catalans return to lockdown as Spain fights new virus clusters

Barcelona may bring back some restrictions on daily life after the number of coronavirus cases tripled in a week, its mayor said on Wednesday, as around 160,000 people in another part of

Catalonia went back under lockdown to stem a new surge in cases. Just weeks after a nationwide lockdown was lifted and life returned largely to normal as infection rates dropped, Spain's second-most populous region reported on Tuesday three deaths and 938 new coronavirus cases. Some 63% of those new cases were detected in Barcelona and its surroundings, stirring fears the regional capital and popular tourist destination might again become an epicentre of the virus.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain/thousands-of-catalans-return-to-lockdown-as-spain-fights-new-virus-clusters-idUKKCN24GOUR>

As Bihar Goes Into A 15-Day Lockdown, A List Of What's Open, What's Not

Bihar will go into a complete lockdown from Thursday as coronavirus cases in the highly populated state saw an "alarming surge" in the last three weeks. Detailed guidelines have been released by the state government setting down strict rules of what can remain open and what cannot. The 15-day lockdown in the state from July 16 to July 31 was confirmed by Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi saying the Nitish Kumar government had ordered that "all city municipalities, district headquarters, block headquarters will stay under lockdown".

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/bihar-lockdown-as-bihar-goes-into-a-15-day-lockdown-a-list-of-whats-open-whats-not-2262709>