

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

31st Jul 2020

News Highlights

France, Japan see surge in cases as Covid-19 continues its march around the world

[France reported 1,392 new coronavirus infections on Wednesday, their highest daily number in a month](#), and [Japan reported more than 1,000 new daily cases for the first time ever](#), as nations around the world continued to battle the pandemic. The numbers in France are its highest since June 26 and almost double the average daily cases in May, when the country started to lift its lockdown.

New restrictions in place in northern England as coronavirus cases increase

Almost a month after restrictions were eased across Britain, the government announced new lockdown rules for parts of northern England to fight growing Covid-19 cases in the region. [Matt Hancock, the health secretary, said in an overnight order, that people from different households could not gather in private homes and gardens](#), essentially banning home visits.

Victoria struggles to control Covid-19 rates, despite new lockdown

Despite a six-week lockdown imposed on Melbourne, [the state of Victoria reported 723 cases and 13 deaths due to the coronavirus](#), its highest numbers since the pandemic started in Australia. The government blamed the high numbers on sick people breaking isolation rules and going to their workplaces and infecting others.

Lockdown-free Sweden sees drop while cases in Europe spike

Sweden, which never imposed a lockdown and kept schools open, has seen mixed results with its strategy, ranking eighth among countries with the highest number of Covid-19 deaths per 100,000 people. [However, according to a new WHO report, Sweden's fortnightly number of new cases per 100,000 people has dropped by 54 percent](#), compared to the previous period, while other countries have been reporting increases of between 40 and 200 percent.

Lockdown Exit

Sao Paulo streets busy as Brazil's virus death toll surpasses 90,000

Streets are busy with people going about their daily business in Sao Paulo's 25 de Março neighbourhood as the country continues to ease lockdown measures and registers record daily numbers of deaths from COVID-19, surging past 90,000.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/video/watch/sao-paulo-streets-busy-as-brazils-virus-death-toll-surpasses-90000/vi-BB17ncSs>

Brazil Covid-19 death toll surpasses 90,000 as government ends travel ban

Brazil, which has been hit harder than any country except the United States in the pandemic, recorded 69,074 new cases and 1,595 new deaths in the past 24 hours, bringing the figures to a total of more than 2.5 million infections and 90,134 people killed since the start of the pandemic, the health ministry said. Technical issues likely contributed to the high daily figures. The health ministry

had said Tuesday that problems with its online reporting system had delayed figures from Sao Paulo, Brazil's most populous state and the one with the most cases and deaths.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200730-brazil-covid-19-coronavirus-jair-bolosnaro-death-toll>

US surpasses 150,000 deaths amid spike in cases | News

The US passed the grim milestone of 150,000 coronavirus-related deaths yesterday, amid spiralling outbreaks across southern states. Five states in the south and west reported daily records for coronavirus deaths, as health experts warned that other states were on the brink of new outbreaks. Arkansas, Florida, Montana, California and Oregon each had record rises with Florida reporting 216 deaths and California 185, bringing the national daily toll to about 1,267. The US has now recorded 150,447 deaths and more than 4.4 million infections. In Florida, the death toll now stands at 6,333, and a total of 451,423 people have been infected out of a population of 21 million. The state recently overtook New York in terms of total caseload, and is now second only to California.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/coronavirus-record-daily-deaths-in-five-us-states-zlmcfkvjn>

Sweden, Which Never Had Lockdown, Sees COVID-19 Cases Plummet as Rest of Europe Suffers Spike

However, the Scandinavian nation ranks eighth among countries with the highest number of COVID-19 deaths per 100,000 people. It outranks the U.S. and Brazil, which are the world's first and second worst-hit nations in terms of total cases, according to Johns Hopkins University. Last week Anders Tegnell, the chief epidemiologist at Sweden's public health agency, who has led the country's COVID-19 response, said the nation's controversial anti-lockdown strategy has been a success "to a great extent," in an interview with UnHerd. While an official lockdown was never ordered, Tegnell noted: "We have cut down on movement in society quite a lot. We have compared how much we travel in Scandinavian countries, and the decrease in travel is the same in Sweden as in neighbouring countries. In many ways the voluntary measures we put in place in Sweden have been just as effective as complete lockdowns in other countries.

<https://www.newsweek.com/sweden-which-never-had-lockdown-sees-covid-19-cases-plummet-rest-europe-suffers-spike-1521626>

I've eaten at restaurants, gone to a mall and attended concerts. That is life in France.

While the outbreak occurred primarily in only two parts of France, French President Emmanuel Macron imposed a severe, nationwide lockdown on March 16. And during that lockdown, the government put extensive testing and contact tracing in place. Almost exactly two months later, France mostly reopened. And for the last two and a half months, the country has functioned in a primarily open status with around 500 new cases per day and only about 450 deaths in the last month.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/30/us-could-learn-frances-response-covid-19/>

Russia Coronavirus Cases Pass 830K Amid Vaccine Race, Lifted Lockdown

Russia confirmed 5,509 new coronavirus infections Thursday, bringing the country's official number of cases to 834,499. Over the past 24 hours 129 people have died, bringing the total toll to 13,802 — a rate considerably lower than in many other countries hit hard by the pandemic. A total of 9,322 people recovered over the last 24 hours.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/07/30/russia-coronavirus-cases-pass-830k-amid-vaccine-race-lifted-lockdown-a69710>

Coronavirus: Hundreds more families homeschooling after lockdown

More families are choosing to homeschool their children since New Zealand came out of the coronavirus lockdown. Ministry of Education figures show a surge in homeschooling applications since alert level 4 in March, with 552 received between then and May. Three hundred applications were received in June – the highest recorded in any month this year. In February, when school

started, only 174 applications were received.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/parenting/122267059/coronavirus-hundreds-more-families-homeschooling-after-lock-down>

Tracking Africa's coronavirus cases

As of July 30, the confirmed coronavirus death toll on the continent stood at 18,884, with deaths including the former president of the Republic of the Congo, Jacques Joachim Yhombi-Opango, and Somalia's former Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein. There are 891,199 confirmed infections and 540,872 recoveries, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Experts warn fragile healthcare systems in many African countries could be overwhelmed in the face of a severe outbreak of COVID-19, the highly infectious respiratory disease caused by the new coronavirus.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/tracking-africa-coronavirus-cases-200401081427251.html>

'Worst phase of pandemic': Brazil hits record daily deaths, cases

Brazil has set daily records for new coronavirus cases and related deaths with nearly 1,600 deaths on Wednesday and a government under President Jair Bolsonaro determined to ease lockdowns designed to quell the outbreak. Brazil is second only to the United States in the number of cases and deaths confirmed from the coronavirus. The 69,074 new confirmed cases and 1,595 additional deaths reported by the Health Ministry pushed the country past 2.5 million cases and a death toll in excess of 90,000 people.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/07/phase-pandemic-brazil-hits-record-daily-deaths-cases-200730023554079.html>

Coronavirus may cost Latin America and Caribbean a decade: ECLAC

The coronavirus crisis could set back Latin America and the Caribbean by a decade as countries endure faltering economies and rising poverty, the U.N. economic commission for the region and the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Thursday. Poverty in the region is forecast to climb 7 percentage points compared with last year to engulf an additional 45 million people, according to a report by the WHO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The number of unemployed people is expected to rise to 44 million, an increase of more than 18 million compared with last year, while the region's economy is projected to shrink 9.1%, the report said. "The Americas are at risk of losing years of health gains in a matter of months. This is tragic," Carissa Etienne, director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), said in a news conference. A presentation with highlights from the report warned that the coronavirus pandemic could cause a "lost decade" if income per capita drops to levels not seen since 2010, as forecast.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-latam/coronavirus-may-cost-latin-america-and-caribbean-a-decade-eclac-idUKKCN24V3FG>

Japan's daily coronavirus tally tops 1000 for first time amid nationwide surge

The total number of coronavirus cases nationwide surged past the 1,000 mark for the first time on Wednesday, with Osaka, Aichi, Fukuoka and Okinawa prefectures setting single-day records for new infections, media reports said. Osaka reported 221 new COVID-19 infections, topping 200 for the first time, while Fukuoka saw at least 101 cases. Aichi recorded 167 cases, 93 of which were reported in Nagoya. Meanwhile, Kanagawa and Chiba prefectures recorded 70 and 49 new cases, respectively, NHK said, both the highest since the state of emergency was called off on May 25.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/29/national/japan-coronavirus-cases-wednesday/>

Exit Strategies

Covid-19: Scottish gyms and stadiums likely to stay closed until September

Scottish sports stadiums, gyms and swimming pools are not likely to reopen until the middle of

September, assuming infection levels are low enough by then, Nicola Sturgeon has announced. In a statement updating MSPs on her plans to ease lockdown, the first minister said outdoor concerts and funfairs were likely to reopen in a little over three weeks time, on 24 August. Sturgeon confirmed Scotland's schools would open full-time from 11 August, with all schools expected to resume by 18 August, without any widespread enforcement of physical distancing among children. Ministers were also releasing another £30m to hire extra teachers, she said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/30/covid-19-scottish-gyms-and-stadiums-likely-to-stay-closed-until-september>

Coronavirus: Self-isolation period for those with COVID-19 symptoms 'to be extended to 10 days'

Chief medical officers announce the new rule as the UK braces for winter amid warnings of a "second wave" brewing in Europe. Self-isolation rules are being changed as scientists warn people with coronavirus may be infectious for longer than previously thought. The chief medical officers of all four UK nations said anyone with symptoms or a positive test result should isolate for 10 days instead of seven. They changed their advice as the country braces for winter and warnings of a "second wave" of COVID-19 brewing in Europe.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-self-isolation-period-for-those-with-covid-19-symptoms-to-be-extended-to-10-days-12038836>

Coronavirus: Virus isolation period extended from seven to 10 days

The change, announced by the UK's chief medical officers, comes as ministers try to avoid a resurgence of the virus. Until now, those showing key symptoms - a new continuous cough, a temperature or loss of taste or smell - have had to self-isolate for at least a week. The new advice is in line with World Health Organization guidance. The chief medical officers said the change is "particularly important to protect those who have been shielding and in advance of the autumn and winter when we may see increased community transmission". Evidence shows that people with Covid-19 have "a low but real possibility of infectiousness" between seven and nine days after falling ill, they said.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53588709>

The latest coronavirus UK lockdown changes, furlough and work rules coming into effect Saturday

A little over four months on from the UK going into lockdown at the end of March, the next round of lifting lockdown measures is set to come into effect from Saturday (1 August). The latest update comes as the UK continues to recover from the pandemic and find our way into what's being called a 'new normal'. These cover everything from reopening of leisure venues and businesses to what going back to work could look like and even the ability for those who have been shielding to go back to a sense of normality.

<https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/coronavirus-lockdown-rules-august-reopen-18687300>

Nicola Sturgeon to announce final decision on schools reopening today

Scotland will not move to phase four in the near future, Nicola Sturgeon has said - but there is some good news on the horizon for parents, with confirmation that schools can return in August. The First Minister is required by law to provide updates on the current lockdown situation every three weeks, and the latest falls on today's coronavirus briefing from the Scottish Parliament chamber. The FM provided the latest statistics for Scotland, as well as providing more information on yesterday's confirmed 'cluster' of cases in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde health board area. Eight confirmed cases have been traced to M&D Pharmacy in Port Glasgow and an Amazon warehouse in Gourrock.

<https://www.glasgowlive.co.uk/news/coronavirus-scotland-nicola-sturgeon-schools-18685520>

Coronavirus: Airport testing and a royal lockdown

We've heard from Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden, who's said testing is not a "silver bullet" to stop the need for quarantine for people returning from Spain. Heathrow boss John Holland-Kaye wants tests at airports, and again a few days later, as an alternative. While Conservative MP Crispin Blunt thinks a more targeted use of quarantine measures would get more public support than a blanket rule for the whole of Spain. You can read more on why the UK isn't testing travellers on their return home here.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53582288>

Government to Announce Lifting of Lockdown in Lleida Spain

Lleida and six municipalities of the region of Segriá in Spain are counting the hours to the relaxation of the lockdown restrictions. The local government will announce the lifting of restrictions shortly, starting at four o'clock this afternoon, the mobility ban will be officially lifted. Shops will be allowed to reopen at 50 per cent capacity, as are bars and restaurants, but food can only be eaten on the terraces until 12 midnight. Meetings are limited to only 10 people because, although the contagion curve has been cut in half, authorities want to keep the pressure up. These same restrictions will apply to Barcelona and its metropolitan area.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/07/30/government-to-announce-lifting-of-lockdown-in-lleida-spain/>

Cramped Palestinian refugee camps fear coronavirus surge

A second wave of coronavirus infections sweeping the Israeli-occupied West Bank is fueling fears of a surge in overcrowded Palestinian refugee camps where social distancing is next to impossible. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, the Palestinian Authority quickly imposed a lockdown as it sought to contain infections. But after Israel and later the PA eased restrictions in late April and May, the number of cases rose again, exacerbated by breaches of limits on public assembly and movement. One major driver has been Palestinian workers going to and from jobs in neighboring Israel, according to the PA. The Jewish state went into lockdown in mid-March, but after easing restrictions it started reporting 1,000 to 2,000 new coronavirus infections a day and re-imposed some restrictions

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/30/world/social-issues-world/palestinian-camps-fear-coronavirus/>

More Than One Million Chileans Seek to Withdraw Pensions Amid Pandemic

More than 3 million Chileans on Thursday asked to withdraw a portion of their pension funds as a controversial law took effect allowing citizens to tap into retirement savings to buffer the economic impacts of the coronavirus. Long lines formed in Santiago outside the offices of Pension Fund Administrators (AFP) as Chileans sought to take advantage of the new law. The emergency measure allows those with savings to withdraw up to 10% of their pensions. Chile's Superintendent of Pensions said in a statement 3,024,347 people had asked to withdraw their share by 5 p.m. local time. The websites of several of the fund administrators collapsed Thursday amid the deluge of requests, prompting an apology from the companies.

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/07/30/business/30reuters-health-coronavirus-chile-pensions.html>

Wisconsin Mandates Masks, Declares Public Health Emergency

Wisconsin's governor on Thursday ordered residents wear masks when indoors and not in a private residence, joining dozens of other U.S. state leaders mandating face coverings to slow the spread of coronavirus. In a statement, Governor Tony Evers said Wisconsin was seeing an increase in significant community spread and rise in COVID-19 cases which required he declare a new public health emergency and require face coverings statewide.

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/07/30/us/30reuters-health-coronavirus-wisconsin.html>

Dutch government will not advise public to wear masks - minister

The Dutch government on Wednesday said it will not advise the public to wear masks to slow the spread of coronavirus, asserting that their effectiveness has not been proven. The decision was

announced by Minister for Medical Care Tamara van Ark after a review by the country's National Institute for Health (RIVM). The government will instead seek better adherence to social distancing rules after a surge in coronavirus cases in the country this week, Van Ark said at a press conference in The Hague. "Because from a medical perspective there is no proven effectiveness of masks, the Cabinet has decided that there will be no national obligation for wearing non-medical masks" Van Ark said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-netherlands/dutch-government-will-not-advise-public-to-wear-masks-minister-idUSKCN24U2UJ>

Partisan Exits

Exclusive: Chinese-backed hackers targeted COVID-19 vaccine firm Moderna

Chinese government-linked hackers targeted biotech company Moderna Inc, a leading U.S.-based coronavirus vaccine research developer, earlier this year in a bid to steal valuable data, according to a U.S. security official tracking Chinese hacking activity. Last week, the U.S. Justice Department made public an indictment of two Chinese nationals accused of spying on the United States, including three unnamed U.S.-based targets involved in medical research to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The indictment states the Chinese hackers "conducted reconnaissance" against the computer network of a Massachusetts biotech firm known to be working on a coronavirus vaccine in January. Moderna, which is based in Massachusetts and announced its COVID-19 vaccine candidate in January, confirmed to Reuters that the company had been in contact with the FBI and was made aware of the suspected "information reconnaissance activities" by the hacking group mentioned in last week's indictment.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-moderna-cyber-excl/exclusive-chinese-backed-hackers-targeted-covid-19-vaccine-firm-moderna-idUKKCN24V38M>

The U.S. Can Control Covid Without a Second Lockdown

It's also time to stop blaming each other — which is tearing us apart. As Sandman pointed out, "all public health failures are policy failures." If people don't follow a policy, it's because it's the wrong policy or was badly communicated. This is what policy makers are supposed to think through. A few brave souls in the public health community, trying to help people find a level of much-needed balance, have come forward to say that some activities are relatively low risk. Being around other people outdoors is safer than indoors, and short exposures are safer than long ones. If everyone wears a mask, getting a haircut is OK. Getting exercise outdoors is reasonable. Outdoor restaurant tables are safer than indoor ones.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/gadfly/a-smart-u-s-coronavirus-plan-can-avoid-a-second-shutdown>

Split over Japan's virus law between cities and government widens

The power of words is being tested in Japan, where efforts to fight the novel coronavirus — bound by a law tailored to a different disease — remain strictly voluntary. But that may soon change, after a nationwide surge in new infections triggered debate at all levels of government on not only how the law should be changed but when. "Revising the law is necessary for our intended results to become reality," Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike said during an interview with The Japan Times. "Legal authority and financial resources — the central government needs to define and clarify these things."

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/30/national/politics-diplomacy/disagreement-widens-cities-central-government-japans-virus-law/>

Australian Covid-19 conspiracy theorist arrested for flouting Melbourne's lockdown rules

An Australian coronavirus conspiracy theorist was arrested after refusing to give police her details at a checkpoint for a second time. Eve Black last week boasted in a video posted to Facebook about passing through a roadblock in Melbourne without informing officers of where she was headed to. After the video went viral, the 28-year-old tried again to evade officers' questions when she was

stopped on Wednesday in the inner-city suburb of Carlton.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/eve-black-australian-covid19-conspiracy-theorist-arrested-in-melbourne-a4511546.html>

Australians can't 'lockdown and hide' from coronavirus forever

The latest record number of coronavirus infections to come from Victoria are worrying, but the “alarmism and the hysteria is often over the top” by some politicians and many in the media says Sky News host Chris Kenny. Victoria has recorded 13 deaths and 732 new COVID-19 in the past 24 hours. Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said the fatalities included three men and three women in their 70s, three men and two women in their 80s and two men in their 90s. The Premier also said 913 active cases were from the state’s aged care sector. Mr Kenny said while the latest deaths are terrible, people “can’t stay in lockdown forever”. He said they will “resist (and) then change their behavior”.

https://www.skynews.com.au/details/_6176529662001

Continued Lockdown

Community Circles: The lockdown lifesavers connecting hundreds across Lancashire

When you’re an organisation dedicated to helping people connect and come together to explore hobbies, interests, and experiences together, a global pandemic resulting in lockdown and social distancing can safely be described as a bit of an issue.

<https://www.lep.co.uk/news/people/community-circles-lockdown-lifesavers-connecting-hundreds-across-lancashire-2928110>

Coronavirus: Why some people want to keep working from home

Bedrooms, kitchen counter-tops and dining tables became the new way of working for millions of people. According to the ONS, 30% of adults in the UK were exclusively working from home at the start of July. From 1 August, employers in England can allow staff back into offices at their own discretion when they feel it's safe to do so. But now it's time to return to those communal workplaces, research from Eskenzi suggests that 91% of the UK's office workers would like to work from home at least part of the time. So why are so many office staff keen to keep working from home?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53580656>

Scientific Viewpoint

This Is Where We're At With Treatments For Covid-19 Right Now

With a vaccine not looking likely this side of Christmas, scientists and health experts are scrabbling to find existing drugs that can help fight against the worst effects of Covid-19. The Recovery trial in the UK has already unearthed one game-changing drug, dexamethasone, and has crossed two other treatments off the list after they didn’t show any clinical benefits. The first is hydroxychloroquine, the drug fiercely advocated for by Donald Trump despite studies showing it’s not effective; the other is lopinavir-ritonavir, a drug commonly used to treat HIV.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/treatments-for-covid-19-explained_uk_5f202daec5b638cfec4a41a3

EU warns of risk of syringe shortages for possible COVID-19 vaccine

The European Union has warned member states of the risk of shortages of syringes, wipes and protective gear needed for potential mass vaccinations against COVID-19 and urged them to consider joint procurement, according to an EU document. The bloc has also asked EU governments to consider jointly buying more shots against influenza and increase the number of people vaccinated to reduce the risk of simultaneous flu and COVID-19 outbreaks in the autumn. No vaccine against COVID-19 has yet been fully developed or approved, but countries around the world are seeking to secure supplies of potential shots so that, if and when vaccine candidates prove effective,

immunisation campaigns can start quickly. Some countries hope that may be as early as this year. Should a shot prove effective, manufacturing and distribution issues could become hurdles.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-eu-syringes/eu-warns-of-risk-of-syringe-shortages-for-possible-covid-19-vaccine-idUKKCN24V1XK>

J&J Covid-19 vaccine performs well in early tests

A single dose of Johnson & Johnson's experimental coronavirus vaccine elicited "robust" protection against Covid-19 when tested on animals, with clinical human trials now under way in the US and Belgium. The pre-clinical data, published in Nature magazine, show the drugmaker's dose successfully prevented subsequent infection in non-human primates, spurring so-called "neutralising antibodies". It also provided complete or near-complete protection against Covid-19 in their lungs. "The findings give us confidence as we progress our vaccine development and upscale manufacturing in parallel," said Paul Stoffels, J&J's chief scientific officer.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a983341f-4066-4ace-8b0a-43f4c82d63a9>

After the surge, the psychological impact of Covid-19 is hitting home

Having dealt with the months-long terror of crammed ICUs, unavailable PPE and the fear of getting infected, the coronavirus crisis is taking its toll on healthcare workers' mental health

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/coronavirus-ptsd-doctors-nurses-mental-health>

Scotland expected to have Covid-19 tracker app by autumn

Scotland is at an "advanced stage" in developing a coronavirus proximity tracing app to be available by the autumn, the First Minister has said. Nicola Sturgeon revealed she hopes to give more details about the software soon after a question from Gillian Martin MSP on Thursday.

<https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/news/scotland/scotland-expected-to-have-covid-19-tracker-app-by-autumn/>

Hancock: NHS needs to 'double down' on tech advances after Covid-19

Speaking about the future of healthcare at a Royal College of Physicians event, Hancock told the audience better technology was needed for better healthcare. "We want to double down on the huge advances we've made in technology within the NHS and social care, because it's not really about technology, it's about people," he said. The health secretary also said in his speech that digital services should be used to keep patients out of hospital when appointments aren't essential, free up clinicians time, and better connect people with their care. Referencing difficulties in developing new technology, Hancock added they don't make it "any less valuable". "To promote collaboration and change we need more transparency, better use of data, more interoperability and the enthusiastic adoption of technological innovation that can improve care," he said. "This crisis has shown that patients and clinicians alike, not just the young, want to use technology.

<https://www.digitalhealth.net/2020/07/hancock-nhs-needs-to-double-down-on-tech-advances-after-covid-19/>

As a Covid-19 survivor, I don't have blind faith in health experts. Here's why

When WHO officials walked back their statement that asymptomatic transmission was "very rare", Andy Slavitt, a former acting administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, tweeted that WHO officials should "stop expressing certainty when you don't have it.". It is equally important that the media and public retain a critical eye when seeking to understand information from WHO officials. Scientists have been criticized before for being bad communicators, but as Slavitt points out, "public health communication isn't ancillary to public health. It is the central component in battling it." Unfortunately, a knowledge gap still exists between scientists, public health officials and the public they are supposed to serve.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jul/30/as-a-covid-19-survivor-i-dont-have-blind-faith-in-health-experts-heres-why>

Wellbeing levels fell during the pandemic but improved under lockdown, new research

shows

From June 2019 to June 2020, YouGov surveyed a nationally representative sample of around 2,000 respondents each week across Great Britain. It asked them to report on 12 mood states: happiness, contentment, inspiration, optimism, energy levels, sadness, apathy, stress, boredom, frustration, loneliness and fear. Data from the survey suggests that the pandemic had a strong negative effect on people's mood, but that this quickly returned to baseline after the introduction of lockdown. Boredom, loneliness, frustration and apathy increased with the introduction of lockdown, but so did happiness, optimism, contentment and even inspiration. Meanwhile, sadness, fear and stress all fell. <https://theconversation.com/wellbeing-levels-fell-during-the-pandemic-but-improved-under-lockdown-new-research-shows-143367>

Cummings trips damaged UK lockdown unity, study suggests

The scandal over Dominic Cummings' trips to and around Durham during lockdown damaged trust and was a key factor in the breakdown of a sense of national unity amid the coronavirus pandemic, research suggests. Revelations that Cummings and his family travelled to his parents' farm despite ministers repeatedly imploring the public to stay at home - as exposed by the Guardian and the Daily Mirror in May - also crystallised distrust in politicians over the crisis, according to a report from the thinktank British Future. The findings emerged in a series of surveys, diaries and interviews carried out over the first months of the pandemic as the public got to grips with profound changes to their habits, relationships and lifestyles.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jul/30/cummings-saga-damaged-uk-unity-covid-19-study-suggests>

Coronavirus: UK lockdown solidarity 'starting to fray'

The restrictions of lockdown have fostered a new community spirit in Britain, but there are signs feelings of solidarity and togetherness are already beginning to fragment and fray. That is the warning from a campaign called Together, which includes the NHS, charities, media groups and employers among its founders. The organisation helped organise the birthday clap for the health service this month and is launching a national public consultation on how to avoid new community divisions opening up.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53584856>

Britain's lockdown blitz spirit 'is starting to fray' as togetherness in early stages of pandemic is replaced by anger at those not following rules, says study

Britons were brought together in the first weeks after lockdown both within their communities and nationally. Clap for Carers also played a major role in community spirit with nearly seven in ten people taking part by May. But unity began to dissipate by mid-May amid a perception that young people were not socially distancing. Support for Black Lives Matter was 'tempered by concerns about public health and violence on the protests.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8575379/Britains-lockdown-blitz-spirit-starting-fray-says-study.html>

Russia plans 'world's first approved' COVID-19 vaccine by Aug. 12

Russia plans to register a vaccine for the novel coronavirus by Aug. 10-12, clearing the way for what its backers say would be the world's first official approval of an inoculation against the pandemic. The drug, developed by Moscow's Gamaleya Institute and the Russian Direct Investment Fund, may be approved for civilian use within three to seven days of registration by regulators, according to a person familiar with the process, who asked not to be identified because the information isn't public. The Gamaleya vaccine is expected to get conditional registration in August, meaning trials will still need to be conducted on another 1,600 people, Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova said in a televised meeting of officials with President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday. Production should begin in September, she said.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/30/world/science-health-world/russia-worlds-first-approved-vaccine/>

Mumbai's slums test lockdown logic

The study is credible, with municipal authorities partnering with the respected Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and others. The randomised sample of nearly 7,000 covers folks from three areas of the city. It's evidence that crowding speeds transmission and that low-income groups are more vulnerable to infection. Just 16% of people sampled in more affluent parts of the same three areas of Mumbai were found to have the antibodies. Encouragingly, the study suggests an infection mortality rate of between 0.05% and 0.01% based on official death numbers - that's low and would remain so, relative to many other estimates, even if the numerator is under-reported.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-breakingviews/breakingviews-mumbais-slums-test-lockdown-logic-idUSKCN24V09Z>

Coronavirus: Under-5s spread infection as easily as older kids

Researchers looked at 145 patients in three groups: children younger than age five, children between ages five and 17 years and adults from ages 18 to 65. Children kindergarten-age or younger had viral loads between 10-fold and 100-fold greater in their upper respiratory tract. This implies that young children can spread the virus just as easily as teenagers. However, they only develop mild illness compared to older children and adults.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8576665/Children-younger-five-spread-coronavirus-just-easily-older-kids.html>

Coronavirus: England highest level of excess deaths

The UK saw some of the biggest rises in death rates in Europe in the months until the middle of June, official analysis shows. England saw the largest increase in death rates in Europe, with Scotland seeing the third largest increase. The Office for National Statistics says that Spain saw the highest peak in rates of death in Europe. But the UK had the longest period of above-average deaths and so overall saw higher death rates.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53592881>

Coronavirus: Hydroxychloroquine ineffective says Fauci

US President Donald Trump has again defended the use of hydroxychloroquine to ward off coronavirus, contradicting his own public health officials. He said the malaria medication was only rejected as a Covid-19 treatment because he had recommended its use. His remarks come after Twitter banned his eldest son for posting a clip promoting hydroxychloroquine. There is no evidence the drug can fight the virus, and regulators warn it may cause heart problems. On Wednesday Dr Anthony Fauci, a leading member of the White House coronavirus task force, told the BBC that hydroxychloroquine was not effective against the virus. "We know that every single good study - and by good study I mean randomised control study in which the data are firm and believable - has shown that hydroxychloroquine is not effective in the treatment of Covid-19," he said.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-53575964>

Coronavirus Resurgence

After Ecuador eased its lockdown, the virus surged in Quito

Struggling to breathe, Luis Gualotuña arrived before dawn Wednesday at a coronavirus testing site in the Ecuadorian capital of Quito, which has experienced an alarming surge in COVID-19 cases since the government started to reopen the economy last month. Hours later, Gualotuña was still in a long line, waiting. "My throat hurts, my body hurts. I have general discomfort and I came here to find out if I have COVID. There is nothing left to do but wait," said Gualotuña, a 34-year-old unemployed carpenter.

<https://wtop.com/latin-america/2020/07/after-ecuador-eased-its-lockdown-the-virus-surged-in-quito/>

Tokyo Won't Rule Out State of Emergency If Virus Spread Worsens

Tokyo will ask bars, restaurants and karaoke stores to shorten their business hours as officials race to stop a resurgent spread of the coronavirus in the Japanese capital, with Governor Yuriko Koike threatening to declare a state of emergency if the situation doesn't improve. Shops will be asked to shut at 10 p.m. from August 3 until the end of the month, restrictions since the capital lifted all limits in June. Tokyo reported 367 cases on Thursday, one higher than the previous record.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/onweb/japan-mulls-virus-restrictions-as-tokyo-braces-for-higher-cases>

Australian state makes masks compulsory as COVID-19 spreads

Australia's coronavirus hot spot, Victoria state, will make wearing masks compulsory after reporting a record 723 new cases on Thursday, mostly among the vulnerable residents of aged care homes. Masks have been compulsory for the past week in the state capital, Melbourne, Australia's second-largest city with 5 million people, and a neighboring semi-rural district. Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews said masks or similar face coverings will become compulsory across the state starting late Sunday. Residents around the city of Geelong will not be allowed to have visitors in their homes from late Thursday in a second measure aimed at slowing the spread of the virus from the city.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/australian-state-makes-masks-compulsory-082906401.html>

Coronavirus: Australia's Victoria records huge case jump

Australia's virus-hit state of Victoria has reported its worst death toll and case rise, prompting fears that a six-week lockdown of state capital Melbourne is not working. The state confirmed 13 new deaths and 723 new cases on Thursday - a 36% jump on the case record set on Monday. There are fears now that Melbourne's lockdown, which began on 7 July, will need to be extended. The spike meant Australia overall had its deadliest day in the pandemic. A 14th person died late on Thursday but his death will be included in Friday's figures as it was announced after the government's briefing. Officials in Victoria renewed appeals for people with symptoms to get tested quickly.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-australia-53589817>

Australia Sets Virus Record as Melbourne Lockdown Struggles

Australia has suffered its worst day of coronavirus infections with Victoria state recording 723 new cases, dashing hopes that a lockdown in the city of Melbourne was bringing the outbreak under control. Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews told reporters that 13 more people had died, bringing the state's death toll to 105. Infections had gradually decreased earlier this week, with the state recording 295 new cases on Wednesday, raising hopes the six-week lockdown of the city of 5 million people was working.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-07-30/australia-braces-for-virus-record-as-second-lockdown-struggles>

Australia sets Covid-19 record as Melbourne lockdown struggles

PM said mask-wearing would be mandatory across the state, extending the order from just Melbourne. Residents in several regional centers, including Geelong, would not be allowed to have visitors in their homes from midnight. Australia has suffered its worst day of coronavirus infections with Victoria state recording 723 new cases, dashing hopes that a lockdown in the city of Melbourne was bringing the outbreak under control.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/australia-sets-covid-19-record-as-melbourne-lockdown-struggles/story-pXseRWwgSRC2oeKQYTOCiM.html>

UK worried about second wave in Europe, more quarantine measures possible

Britain reported its highest number of new COVID-19 infections in more than a month on Thursday, as ministers fretted about a second wave of cases in Europe and warned more quarantine restrictions were possible. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said COVID-19 was under some measure of control in Britain, but a resurgence in some European countries showed the pandemic was not over. "It is absolutely vital as a country that we continue to keep our focus and our discipline, and that we don't delude ourselves that somehow we are out of the woods or that that is all over, because it isn't

all over," he said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain/uk-worried-about-second-wave-in-europe-more-quarantine-measures-possible-idUKKCN24V0PL>

Explainer: COVID-19 strikes back in virus-free Vietnam

Vietnam has had one of the world's best records in containing the coronavirus despite bordering China, its biggest trading partner, where the virus was first reported. But after more than three months with no reports of local transmission, new cases have now been reported in six cities and provinces in the past week and authorities in the communist-ruled country are scrambling to contain the new outbreak. Vietnam, with more than 95 million people, is the most populous country in the world to record no coronavirus deaths so far. It has had a total of only 459 cases, far fewer than most other large countries in Southeast Asia and reported no local transmissions of the virus for 100 days until July 25.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-vietnam-response-e/explainer-covid-19-strikes-back-in-virus-free-vietnam-idUKKCN24V116>

Poland may reimpose some curbs as daily COVID-19 cases jump

Poland may have to reimpose quarantine for travellers from countries such as Spain to contain the coronavirus, its prime minister said on Thursday after the country reported its highest daily number of infections so far. Poland has reported fewer cases of COVID-19 than some other European countries, but in recent days the number of new infections has climbed, with the health ministry blaming outbreaks in coal mines and social gatherings.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-poland/poland-may-reimpose-some-curbs-as-daily-covid-19-cases-jump-idUSKCN24V1GN>

France sees highest daily increase in cases for over a month

The number of new coronavirus infections in France rose by 1,392 on Wednesday, the highest daily tally in a month and a figure likely to fuel fears of a second wave of the disease despite officials downplaying such a scenario. The increase took France's total number of confirmed cases to 185,196. In a statement, health authorities said that, leaving aside the continuous decline of people in ICU units, all COVID-19 indicators showed "an increase of the viral circulation". The reproduction rate, on an upward trend since the beginning of the month, is now "higher than 1.3", which marks a rise over 24 hours, they said. The figure for new cases, the highest since the June 26 total of 1,588, is above the past week's daily average of 980 and almost double the 715 average seen in May, when France started to lift its lockdown.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-france-casualties/frances-new-covid-19-cases-hit-one-month-peak-idUKKCN24U2W4>

New Lockdown

Libya to impose full lockdown as pandemic cases grow

Libya's internationally recognised government in Tripoli will impose a full lockdown in areas of the country it controls, it said on Thursday, after a sharp rise in coronavirus cases, Reuters reports. Libya, split since 2014 between areas held by the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli and a rival administration in the east, managed to avoid an early surge of the pandemic. However, the disease has been spreading more quickly this month and Libya's National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), one of the few bodies that operates across the country despite the conflict, has confirmed 3,222 cases. Libya's health system is in tatters after nearly a decade of chaos and war that has fragmented the state, destroyed infrastructure and left many people living in crowded conditions after fleeing their homes.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200730-libya-to-impose-full-lockdown-as-pandemic-cases-grow/>

Coronavirus: Too soon for Bradford lockdown easing

It is "too soon" for further easing of lockdown measures in Bradford, the city's council leader has said. Susan Hinchcliffe's warning comes as coronavirus infection rates in the city rose to 48 per 100,000 of population for the week ending 25 July. Ms Hinchcliffe is in talks with the government about if the city should move forward with an easing of restrictions on 1 August. She said holding back could help avoid the imposition of a city-wide lockdown. Venues such as bowling alleys and boxing gyms are due to reopen from 1 August, while those extremely vulnerable people who have been shielding will no longer need to

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-53594031>

Australia PM Scott Morrison says strict Victoria lockdown is not getting its desired results

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Victoria's strict lockdown was not achieving its desired results after the nation's coronavirus hotspot reported another record-breaking day for deaths and new infections. Victoria experienced its worst day since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic with 723 new cases and 13 deaths recorded on Thursday. Morrison expressed great concern for the state and said the weeks it's been back in lockdown after a surge in infections in the last month has been necessary but will come at an impact to the economy.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/world/australia/300070235/australia-pm-scott-morrison-says-strict-victoria-lockdown-is-not-getting-its-desired-results>

Victoria has worst death toll as fears that rise Melbourne lockdown failing

Victoria has reported its worst daily coronavirus death toll and the highest rise in infections amid fears that a six-week lockdown of the state capital, Melbourne, is failing. The state reported 723 new cases today — a 36 per cent rise on the case record set on Monday. It also reported another 13 deaths — the largest number in a single day since the pandemic took hold in Australia. There are fears that Melbourne's lockdown, which began on July 8, will need to be extended. The Victoria government said that sick people breaking isolation rules by going to their workplaces were responsible for the rising number of infections. "If you've got symptoms, the only thing you can do is get tested," said the state premier, Daniel Andrews.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/victoria-has-worst-death-toll-as-fears-that-rise-melbourne-lockdown-failing-gq36b253s>

'7000 cases': The dire reality if Victoria coronavirus lockdown was lifted today

An eerie prediction has revealed what Victoria could look like if state's current six-week lockdown was to be lifted. On Thursday an additional 723 coronavirus cases were reported in Victoria and a record 13 deaths. The deaths mean the state has recorded 44 fatalities in just five days, the majority of which are aged care related. The fatalities mean Victoria is the first state to reach 100 deaths. The state has recorded 105 deaths, more than double NSW's 51 since the pandemic began.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/dire-reality-if-victoria-coronavirus-lockdown-was-lifted-today-060901059.html>

Lebanon virus cases peak ahead of new lockdown

Lebanon on Wednesday reported 182 new coronavirus cases, its highest single-day infection tally since the country's outbreak began in February, ahead of fresh lockdown measures that go into effect at midnight. The new cases bring the total number of COVID-19 infections in Lebanon to 4,202, including 55 deaths, according to health ministry figures cited by the state-run National News Agency (NNA). New nationwide lockdown measures were announced this week following a rise in cases after previous restrictions were gradually lifted.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/07/30/lebanon-virus-cases-peak-ahead-of-new-lockdown-.html>

Coronavirus: Home visits banned in parts of northern England

The new lockdown rules for parts of northern England come nearly four weeks after restrictions were

eased across the country, and people were allowed to meet indoors for the first time since late March. More than four million people in Greater Manchester, Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees will be affected by the tightening of restrictions. The measures, which came into force at midnight, mean different households will not be allowed to meet in homes or private gardens, but individual households will still be able to go to pubs and restaurants.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53602362>

China toughens travel rules for Xinjiang capital

China is tightening travel restrictions in the capital of the Xinjiang region amid a COVID-19 outbreak in the northwestern city. People arriving in Urumqi from regions considered to have high infection risk must undergo a two-week quarantine. Others arriving from less risky areas must show proof of good health. Locals “in principle” must stay in the city or show proof of health to be allowed to leave.

<https://www.islandpacket.com/news/business/article244592982.html>