

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 21st Oct 2021

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- [Moscow orders unvaccinated over-60s to stay home for 4 months as Russia's Covid-19 crisis deepens](#)
- [Poland considers drastic steps to tackle COVID 'explosion'](#)
- [The UK has more new Covid-19 cases than France, Germany, Italy and Spain combined](#)
- [Without Covid-19 jab, 'reinfection may occur every 16 months'](#)
- [South African regulator rejects Russia's COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Sex of the fetus influences the mother's response to Covid-19 infection, new research shows](#)
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### Lockdown Exit

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#### **Novavax Shares Plunge on Report of Covid-19 Vaccine Manufacturing Problems**

A new report in Politico cast further doubt on the Novavax vaccine's effectiveness. Politico said the methods the company uses to test the purity of its vaccine have fallen short of regulators' standards, with the publication citing multiple people familiar with Novavax's difficulties. Novavax issued a statement Wednesday saying it expects to complete ongoing regulatory submissions over the next few weeks in the U.K., Europe and Canada. It said it has already filed for authorization in India and for emergency use with the World Health Organization. The company said it plans to file its vaccine for emergency-use authorization in the U.S. by the end of 2021.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/novavax-shares-plunge-on-report-of-covid-19-vaccine-manufacturing-problems-11634732939>

#### **As U.K. Covid Cases Surge, Israel Offers Lesson in Boosters**

As Covid-19 cases soar again in the U.K., officials could look to a country that's moved past a similar crisis for a possible roadmap. The search for answers in Israel may be useful, health experts say, because both countries were among the fastest in the world with their vaccination programs, yet were similarly quick to lift lockdown restrictions. And just as Israel experienced a spike in cases in June, so the U.K. is now, having just reported the biggest single daily jump in infections in three months. Israel's response to its renewed outbreak was to roll out an aggressive booster program, a decision that appears to have quelled the worst of the outbreak within weeks.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-20/as-u-k-covid-cases-surge-israel-offers-a-lesson-in-boosters>

#### **U.K. Rules Out Another Lockdown Even With Cases on the Rise**

The U.K. will not yet be bringing back restrictions to help curb Covid cases, Health Secretary Sajid Javid said, despite a surge in infections and a rise in hospitalizations and deaths. Javid put the onus on the general public to get vaccinated and behave responsibly, such as by wearing masks in crowded spaces, to avoid the need for further restrictive measures in the winter. He made the plea as he warned that new daily virus cases could rise to 100,000.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-20/u-k-rules-out-another-lockdown-even-with-cases-on-the-rise?srnd=prognosis>

### **U.S. readies plan to vaccinate kids ages 5-11 against COVID-19**

The Biden administration on Wednesday outlined its plan to vaccinate millions of U.S. children ages 5 to 11 as soon as the COVID-19 shot is authorized for them, readying doses and preparing locations ahead of the busy holiday season. Unlike the mass vaccination centers used in the initial COVID-19 vaccine rollout, the White House said it is working to set up clinics in more than 100 children's hospital systems nationwide as well as doctor's offices, pharmacies and potentially schools.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/white-house-lay-out-plan-vaccinate-kids-ages-5-11-nbc-news-2021-10-20/>

### **Canada to require COVID-19 vaccinations for federal lawmakers, some MPs to miss out**

Canada's House of Commons will require all 338 lawmakers to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 when they return to work next month, potentially locking out some members of parliament from the official opposition Conservatives. Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau narrowly won re-election last month, saying he would insist on vaccine mandates for federal workers, people traveling domestically, and his own candidates.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/canada-require-covid-19-vaccinations-federal-lawmakers-2021-10-20/>

### **UK cases may hit 100000 a day, no contingency measures for now, minister says**

Britain's COVID-19 infection numbers could rise to 100,000 a day, but the government will not implement its so-called "plan B" contingency measures at this time, health minister Sajid Javid said on Wednesday. "We're looking closely at the data, and we won't be implementing our plan B of contingency measures at this point, but will be staying vigilant, preparing for all eventualities," he told a news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-cases-may-hit-100000-day-no-contingency-measures-now-minister-says-2021-10-20/>

### **Restricting travel over vaccine type could be discrimination, PAHO warns**

Countries should grant entry to vaccinated travelers regardless of which shot they received to prevent discrimination and facilitate business, a top official of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) said on Wednesday. With vaccination rates on the rise, countries are facing fresh questions about how to contain the spread of COVID-19 while easing pandemic travel restrictions. The United States last week said it would reopen the land border with Mexico - the busiest in the world - but only allow people who have been inoculated with vaccines authorized by the World Health Organization (WHO), leaving out two shots heavily used in Mexico - Russia's Sputnik V and one from China's Cansino Biologic

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/41-latam-caribbean-residents-have-been-vaccinated-against-covid-19-paho-2021-10-20/>

### **Premier League reveals 68% of players are fully vaccinated against Covid**

The Premier League says that 68% of its players are fully vaccinated against Covid-19 after concerns over a lack of take-up. Estimates had earlier placed the number of double-jabbed players at less than 50%, with a number of managers, including Pep Guardiola and Jürgen Klopp, calling on top-flight players to comply. The Premier League has released official figures for the first time, which show 81% have had at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine. The league said it would "continue to work with clubs to encourage vaccination among players and club staff".

<https://www.theguardian.com/football/2021/oct/19/premier-league-68-per-cent-of-players-fully-vaccinated-against-covid>

### **Kenya Lifts COVID-19 Curfew as Infection Rates Ease, President Says | World News | US News**

Kenya lifted a nationwide curfew on Wednesday that has been in place since March 2020 to curb the spread of the coronavirus, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced. The East African nation, which has a population of 54 million, has recorded 252,199 infections since the pandemic erupted and 5,233 COVID-19 deaths, health ministry data shows.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-10-20/kenyas-president-kenyatta-lifts-coronavirus-curfew>

### **Melbourne welcomes vaccinated Sydney residents without quarantine**

Travel restrictions between Sydney and Melbourne, Australia's largest cities, eased on Wednesday as Victoria opened its borders to fully vaccinated residents from New South Wales amid a rapid rise in immunisation levels. With cases trending lower in New South Wales, including Sydney, residents will be allowed quarantine-free entry into Victoria for the first time in more than three months. Travellers from Melbourne who wish to enter Sydney, however, must undergo a two-week home quarantine.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/melbourne-welcomes-vaccinated-sydney-residents-without-quarantine-2021-10-19/>

### **Iran braces for new COVID wave despite accelerated jab rollout**

Iran is bracing for a sixth major wave of COVID-19 infections even as its nationwide vaccination efforts have accelerated in recent weeks. Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said on Tuesday it is "certain" the worst-hit country in the Middle East will face another surge in cases next month. "But we're fully prepared to fight the disease in the sixth wave, and hospitals are now ready in terms of medicine and oxygen equipment so we can fight it," he said. The virus has so far killed close to 125,000 people while more than 5.8 million cases have been reported in Iran since February 2020, according to health ministry figures. Daily deaths are significantly down from the peak of 709 registered in late August, but still more than 150 Iranians are falling victim to the virus as more than 10,000 new cases are detected each day.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/20/iran-braces-for-sixth-covid-wave-despite-speedy-vaccine-rollout>

### **UK hospitals on the edge as government resists fresh COVID measures**

British hospitals are on the edge and people should wear masks and come forward for vaccines to stop them being overwhelmed by a rising wave of COVID-19 cases, senior medical figures said on Wednesday, as the government resisted calls for new measures. Britain has the eighth biggest death toll globally from COVID-19, with nearly 139,000 fatalities. But it also had a quick start to its vaccine programme and Prime Minister Boris Johnson has lifted almost all COVID-19 restrictions in England, ending social distancing measures and mask mandates.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/edge-uk-health-service-facing-growing-winter-pressure-2021-10-20/>

## **Exit Strategies**

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### **NHS Chair Says Young May Be Infecting Old in U.K. Covid Surge**

Amid concern that a new twist on the delta variant could be driving the current U.K. coronavirus surge, National Health Service chair David Prior said it's more likely that school-aged children are infecting older people whose vaccine-induced immunity is on the wane. "It's too early to say, but that's what we think is the most likely explanation," Prior said Tuesday evening in an interview at a Boston health conference. Former U.S. Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb tweeted on Sunday that "urgent research" was needed to determine if the new delta variant AY.4 -- which represents 8% of recently sequenced cases in the U.K. -- was more transmissible and better at evading immune defenses.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-20/nhs-chair-says-young-may-be-infecting-old-in-u-k-covid-surge>

### **Roche raises 2021 outlook as COVID-19 tests continue powering sales**

Swiss drugmaker Roche raised its 2021 sales forecast after posting an 8% rise in nine-month

revenues, powered by demand for COVID-19 tests and strength in the overall business due to newly launched diagnostics platforms and medicines. Group sales in the nine months to September rose to 46.68 billion Swiss francs (\$50.54 billion) from 43.98 billion Swiss francs a year earlier, the Basel company said on Wednesday, as diagnostics division sales jumped 39%. "The demand for coronavirus tests remained high in the third quarter due to the Delta variant," Chief Executive Severin Schwan said, adding that there have also been signs of recovery in the pharmaceuticals unit since the summer.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/finance/companies/roche-raises-2021-outlook-as-covid-19-tests-continue-powering-sales/ar-AAPJujh>

### **Novavax tumbles after report on COVID-19 vaccine production delay**

Shares of Novavax Inc fell 16% after a report from Politico said the company faces significant hurdles in proving it can manufacture its experimental COVID-19 vaccine that meets regulators' quality standards, resulting in production delays. The methods Novavax used to test the efficacy of its vaccine have fallen short of U.S. regulators' standards, according to the Politico report, citing people familiar with the matter. The production delays are likely to affect deliveries to the COVAX facility, which aims to provide equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for low- and middle-income countries, the report added. Novavax and India's Serum Institute, the world's largest vaccine producer, had together committed to providing more than 1.1 billion doses to COVAX.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/novavax-tumbles-after-politico-report-covid-19-vaccine-production-delay-2021-10-20/>

### **As COVID-19 engulfs Romania, funeral homes struggle to keep up**

As an unprecedented surge in COVID-19 fatalities engulfs Romania, funeral home owner Sebastian Cocos is struggling to source coffins and keep up with a faster pace of burials. But for him, nothing brings home the scale of what is currently the world's deadliest epidemic more than the mourners who keep returning. "There were families who buried up to four people in two weeks, and that is not easy," he told Reuters. Based in the central city of Ploiesti, Cocos is also president of a national funeral home association.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/covid-19-engulfs-romania-funeral-homes-struggle-keep-up-2021-10-20/>

### **Lockdowns, record COVID-19 deaths hit Russia, Eastern Europe as region spurns vaccines**

Russia will shut workplaces for a week, Latvia went back into lockdown for a month and Romanian funeral homes are running out of coffins, as vaccine-sceptic countries across ex-communist Eastern Europe face record-setting disease and deaths. Russia, which boasted of developing one of the earliest COVID-19 vaccines, has been unable to persuade large swathes of the population to take it, and is now facing its highest daily death rates of the pandemic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/lockdowns-record-covid-19-deaths-hit-russia-eastern-europe-region-spurns-2021-10-20/>

### **Booster shots could soon be recommended for people as young as 40, source says**

Booster protection could soon expand to a much broader population, as a source says the US government likely will soon recommend additional doses to people as young as 40 who received a Moderna or Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine. "I believe it will happen," the source familiar with the plan told CNN's Elizabeth Cohen. There is "growing concern within the FDA" that US data is beginning to show more hospitalizations among people under age 65 who have been fully vaccinated, the source said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/20/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

### **U.S. workers face job losses as COVID-19 vaccine mandates kick in**

Thousands of unvaccinated workers across the United States are facing potential job losses as a growing number of states, cities and private companies start to enforce mandates for inoculation against COVID-19. In the latest high-profile example, Washington State University (WSU) fired its

head football coach and four of his assistants on Monday for failing to comply with the state's vaccine requirement. The coach, Nick Rolovich, had applied for a religious exemption from the mandate earlier this month.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-workers-face-layoffs-us-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-kick-2021-10-19/>

### **Tokyo aims to lift COVID-19 curbs on restaurants as cases fall - media**

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is aiming to ease COVID-19 restrictions on bars and restaurants next week as infections continue to decline, the Jiji news service said on Wednesday. The easing will be announced as early as Thursday and would apply to businesses that are certified as following anti-infection measures, Jiji reported, citing informed sources. Representatives for the Tokyo government did not immediately respond to a request for comment by Reuters.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/tokyo-aims-lift-covid-19-curbs-restaurants-cases-fall-media-2021-10-20/>

### **New Zealand's daily COVID-19 cases fall, some classrooms to reopen**

Daily COVID-19 cases in New Zealand fell on Wednesday after a record jump the day before, with most infections still in Auckland as the Delta variant of the coronavirus continues to affect the country's biggest city. Authorities reported 60 new COVID-19 infections on Tuesday, of which 56 were in Auckland, taking the total number of cases in the current outbreak to 2,158. There have been 28 deaths in total since the pandemic began and 43 people are currently hospitalised because of the virus.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/new-zealands-daily-covid-19-cases-fall-some-classrooms-reopen-2021-10-20/>

### **All Australians to be offered Covid-19 booster jabs - as nation reaches 70% double dose rate**

Mr Hunt would not confirm whether or not Australians will need to prove they've had a third jab in order to travel internationally. 'I will follow medical advice on that and I won't speculate on passports. That is very much medical question with the science to flow over the coming months,' he said. It comes as Australia achieves the 'key milestone' of a 70 per cent double vaccination rate in over 16s. Professor Kelly said he would wait for further scientific advice before deciding the timeframe between second and third doses.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10109719/All-Australians-offered-Covid-19-booster-jabs-nation-reaches-70-double-dose-rate.html>

### **White House details plan to roll out Covid-19 vaccines for children ages 5 to 11**

The White House on Wednesday unveiled its plans to roll out Covid-19 vaccines for children ages 5 to 11, pending US Food and Drug Administration authorization. The Biden administration has secured enough vaccine supply to vaccinate the 28 million children ages 5 to 11 who would become eligible for vaccination if the vaccine is authorized for that age group and will help equip more than 25,000 pediatric and primary care offices, hundreds of community health centers and rural health clinics as well as tens of thousands of pharmacies to administer the shots, according to the White House. "We know millions of parents have been waiting for Covid-19 vaccine for kids in this age group. And should the FDA and (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) authorize the vaccine, we will be ready to get shots in arms," White House Covid-19 response director Jeff Zients told reporters at a White House Covid-19 briefing on Wednesday.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/20/politics/white-house-covid-vaccines-for-children-rollout/index.html>

### **Serbia introduces COVID-19 passes for indoor cafes and restaurants**

Serbia will make a COVID-19 "health pass" mandatory for access to restaurants, cafes and bars in the evenings, Prime Minister Ana Brnabic said on Wednesday, as the country struggles with persistently high numbers of coronavirus infections. As of Oct. 23, people who want to visit indoor cafes, hotels and restaurants after 10 p.m., will need to show a pass - a digital or paper certificate

showing someone has been vaccinated, tested negative or recovered from the virus. Serbia, which has a population of 6.7 million, is struggling with a daily average of around 6,000 cases of COVID-19. So far, it has reported over 1 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 9,214 deaths.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/serbia-introduces-covid-19-passes-indoor-cafes-restaurants-2021-10-20/>

### **Covid-19: More visits allowed to Northern Ireland care homes**

Covid-19 visiting restrictions in care homes in Northern Ireland are being eased from Wednesday. Up to four people from no more than two households can now visit, with a maximum of four such visits per week allowed. However, the easing of restrictions may not fully apply if the care home has an active Covid-19 outbreak. The arrangements are set out in the Department of Health's Visiting With Care - A Pathway document. More clarity has been provided around visits from clergy, and further advice added around how residents can be facilitated to leave their care home.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-58973544>

### **Bulgaria makes COVID 'health pass' obligatory for leisure activities**

Bulgaria will make a COVID-19 "Green Certificate" mandatory for indoor access to restaurants, cinemas, gyms and shopping malls, the health minister said on Tuesday, as the country struggles with a rising number of coronavirus infections. The health pass - a digital or paper certificate showing someone has been vaccinated, tested negative or recently recovered from the virus - was originally conceived to ease travel among European Union states. As of Oct. 21, people who want to visit indoor public spaces including cafes, hotels, concert halls, museums and swimming pools should show such a health pass, interim Health Minister Stoicho Katsarov told reporters

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/bulgaria-makes-covid-health-pass-obligatory-leisure-activities-2021-10-19/>

### **Covid-19 Vaccine for Kids Ages 5-11 to Be Given at Pediatric Offices, Schools Once Authorized**

In a step to extend the reach of its Covid-19 vaccination drive, the Biden administration is preparing to distribute shots to children at doctors' offices, pharmacies and schools should federal regulators clear the inoculations for kids ages 5-11. The Biden administration said it has procured enough doses to vaccinate the nation's children and will begin shipping supplies if and when the shots are cleared for use. Officials aim to have a plan in place as soon as young children are eligible in hopes of getting as many as possible vaccinated quickly. Rates of hospitalization among children are higher than earlier in the pandemic due to the highly transmissible Delta variant, and public-health authorities plan to offer shots in settings more familiar for children than the mass sites used for many adults. Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE submitted data to the Food and Drug Administration this month seeking emergency authorization of their vaccine.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/white-house-says-once-covid-19-vaccine-for-children-ages-5-11-is-approved-it-will-be-available-at-pediatric-offices-primary-care-sites-pharmacies-11634735235>

### **NYC requiring vaccine for cops, firefighters, city workers**

New York City will require its entire municipal workforce to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or be placed on unpaid leave, Mayor Bill de Blasio said Wednesday, an ultimatum that ensures a fight with some unions representing employees, including police officers and firefighters, who have refused the shots. The Democrat gave approximately 46,000 unvaccinated city employees until Nov. 1 to get their first vaccine dose, and he offered an incentive: City workers who get a shot by Oct. 29 at a city-run vaccination site will get an extra \$500 in their paycheck. "My job as your mayor is to keep this city safe, keep this city healthy. And vaccination is the way," he said.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-health-police-new-york-new-york-city-9b0f72ad57fc9264794fcd45eb10dde2>

### **As deaths rise, Russian doctors despair at low vaccine rate**

Dr. Georgy Arbolishvili doesn't need to see government statistics or hear about the records being

broken every day for infections and deaths to know that Russia is struggling through a particularly alarming phase of the coronavirus pandemic. He simply looks around his filled-to-capacity intensive care unit at Moscow's Hospital No. 52. With only about a third of Russia's 146 million people vaccinated against COVID-19, the country has hovered near 1,000 reported deaths per day for weeks and surpassed it on Saturday — a situation that Arbolishvili says "causes despair."

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-business-europe-pandemics-moscow-b844be49c2811a454440d4e84d5e5338>

### **US expected to authorize mix-and-match COVID booster shots**

Federal regulators are expected to authorize the mixing and matching of COVID-19 booster doses this week in an effort to provide flexibility as the campaign for extra shots expands. The upcoming announcement by the Food and Drug Administration is likely to come along with authorization for boosters of the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson shots and follows the OK for a third dose for the Pfizer vaccine for many Americans last month. The move was previewed Tuesday by a U.S. health official familiar with the matter who was not authorized to speak publicly ahead of the announcement.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-health-4e59c84da515da1b2977e6064512f158>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **U.S. workers face layoffs as U.S COVID-19 vaccine mandates kick in**

Thousands of unvaccinated workers across the United States are facing potential job losses as a growing number of states, cities and private companies start to enforce mandates for inoculation against COVID-19. In the latest high-profile example, Washington State University (WSU) fired its head football coach and four of his assistants on Monday for failing to comply with the state's vaccine requirement. The coach, Nick Rolovich, had applied for a religious exemption from the mandate earlier this month.

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/us-workers-face-layoffs-us-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-kick-2021-10-19/>

### **Hundreds protest against Bulgaria's COVID health pass**

Hundreds of anti-vaccine protesters joined some political leaders in Sofia on Wednesday to demonstrate against Bulgaria's decision to make a COVID-19 "Green Certificate" mandatory for access to restaurants, theatres and shopping malls. The interim health ministry announced the move on Tuesday to try to slow a surge in infections and deaths in the European Union's least vaccinated country.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/hundreds-protest-against-bulgarias-covid-health-pass-2021-10-20/>

### **Poland facing COVID-19 'explosion' says health minister**

Poland has seen an explosion of the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two days and if the current trend continues drastic steps will be needed, the health minister said on Wednesday, after the country reported over 5,000 daily cases for the first time since May. "Over the last two days we have seen an explosion of the pandemic," Adam Niedzielski told a news conference, adding that next week daily cases could be "well above" 5,000.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/poland-facing-covid-19-explosion-says-health-minister-2021-10-20/>

### **They take an oath to do no harm, but these doctors are spreading misinformation about the Covid vaccine**

She was a frequent guest on The Oprah Winfrey Show -- an Ivy League-educated OB-GYN who often spoke about women's health and holistic medicine. She was a media darling, and in 2013 made Reader's Digest's annual list of 100 most trusted people in America. If you go to Dr. Christiane Northrup's Facebook page, her posts dispensing advice on health and aging to her 558,000 followers seem consistent with that persona of several years ago. But Northrup also uses her Facebook page

to direct followers to Telegram, where another side of her is apparent. Here, on this platform with lax moderation, lies a miasma of misinformation and conspiracy theories. "Best Explanation I've Seen About Why the Covid Jabs Are Killer Shots," reads one post that she shared.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/19/us/doctors-covid-vaccine-misinformation-invs/index.html>

### **Senate report recommends Bolsonaro face murder charge over handling of Covid-19**

A draft report by lawmakers in Brazil has recommended that president Jair Bolsonaro be indicted on criminal charges for his handling of the Covid-19 pandemic that led to thousand of deaths. More than 600,000 people have died due to the coronavirus or related complications in Brazil since the beginning of the pandemic. The country has had the second-highest death toll in the world, second only to the US. The 1,200-page Senate draft report said that Mr Bolsonaro was "principally responsible for the government's errors committed during the Covid-19 pandemic" and accused him of acting against the advice of the health ministry.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/brazil-bolsonaro-murder-charge-covid-b1941692.html>

### **COVID-19: Minister rules out another lockdown as PM is urged to enforce 'Plan B' to avert winter crisis**

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng has insisted there will not be another national lockdown after an NHS leader warned the PM that 'Plan B' coronavirus restrictions must be enforced immediately to prevent the UK "stumbling into a winter crisis". NHS Confederation chief executive Matthew Taylor has urged the government to bring back certain measures, including mandatory face coverings in public places, telling Sky News: "The overwhelming evidence is that we do need to act."

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-enforce-plan-b-restrictions-immediately-or-uk-risks-stumbling-into-winter-crisis-pm-warned-12438888>

### **A UK COVID lockdown would be wrong right now, business minister says**

Another COVID lockdown would be completely wrong right now as Britain is learning to live with the novel coronavirus, Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said on Wednesday. "I absolutely think that it would be completely wrong for us to go back into a lockdown," he told Times Radio. He said the critical indicators were hospitalisations and death rates - and that those were much lower. "And we are learning, I think, to live with the virus," Kwarteng said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-covid-lockdown-would-be-wrong-right-now-business-minister-says-2021-10-20/>

### **Bolsonaro should face charges over pandemic: Senate inquiry**

Brazil's Senate formally presented a report calling for President Jair Bolsonaro to be indicted on criminal charges for allegedly mishandling the country's response to the coronavirus pandemic - pushing Brazil into second place in the number of global COVID-19 deaths. The nearly 1,200-page report presented on Wednesday by opposition Senator Renan Calheiros is based on six months of work. It calls for Bolsonaro to be indicted on 10 charges, including crimes against humanity.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/20/brazils-bolsonaro-should-face-homicide-charge-over-covid-report>

## **Continued Lockdown**

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### **Singapore extends COVID-19 curbs for a month as cases spike**

Singapore will extend its social curbs to contain the spread of COVID-19 for around a month in order to ease the pressure on the healthcare system, the government said on Wednesday. The city-state in late September reimposed curbs that include limiting social interactions and dining out to two people in order to slow virus transmission. However, daily cases have continued to rise and hit a record 3,994 on Tuesday. While Singapore has vaccinated more than 80% of its 5.45 million population, asymptomatic or mild cases have been rising steadily, spreading the virus and mounting pressure on hospitals and medical staff.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/singapore-extends-covid-19-curbs-nov-21-health-ministry-2021-10-20/>

## Scientific Viewpoint

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### **Gates Foundation to spend \$120 mln to speed access to generics of Merck COVID-19 pill**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation said on Wednesday it would spend up to \$120 million to kick-start development of generic versions of Merck & Co's (MRK.N) oral COVID-19 treatment to help ensure lower-income countries have equal access to the drug. The aim is to reduce the gap between when wealthy countries have access to the antiviral medicine, molnupiravir, and when the rest of the world can benefit from it. "To end this pandemic, we need to ensure that everyone, no matter where they live in the world, has access to life-saving health products," Melinda French Gates, co-chair of the Gates Foundation, said in a statement

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/gates-foundation-allots-120-mln-poor-nations-get-covid-19-drug-2021-10-20/>

### **Poland to make COVID booster shots available to all adults**

Poland is planning to make third doses of the coronavirus vaccine available to all adults "over the next few weeks", Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said on Wednesday. "Those over 18 who had their last dose at least six months ago will be able to get another dose," Morawiecki said in a Facebook post. The country reported more than 5,000 daily new infections on Thursday for the first time since May amidst a surging fourth wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/poland-make-covid-booster-shots-available-all-adults-2021-10-20/>

### **'Vital' at-home Covid pills could be given to vulnerable people this winter**

Antiviral drugs that help to cut the risk of hospitalisation and death from Covid could be made available to vulnerable people this winter. It's hoped the pills will be made available to the elderly and those with weakened immune systems who have recently tested positive for the virus or come into contact with an infected individual. Patients would take the drug at home, ideally before they fall ill. The antivirals, provided by Merck and Pfizer, have been secured in a government deal. But they will need to be approved for use by the UK's medicines regulator before they are offered to patients via the NHS. Eddie Gray, chair of the antivirals taskforce, said the pills would help to support the NHS and the UK's vaccination programme over the coming months, with infections and hospitalisations expected to further rise.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/antiviral-drugs-covid-molnupiravir-ritonavir-b1942090.html>

### **Waning vaccine immunity helping drive up UK infections, suggesting herd immunity unreachable, say scientists**

Waning immunity from vaccines is a key cause of rising infections – but it is not the only factor, scientists say. The number of new Covid infections recorded in the past week has increased by 16 per cent against a backdrop of falling immunity among those who received their second jab a few months or longer ago. A growing number of studies have found that immunity begins to fall within a few months, although jabs continue to provide good protection, especially from more severe cases.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/science/covid-cases-uk-infections-resistance-waning-herd-immunity-myth-zoe-vaccine-1257453>

### **South African regulator rejects Russia's COVID-19 vaccine**

The South African drug regulator has rejected the Russia -made coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V, citing some safety concerns the manufacturer wasn't able to answer. The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority, or SAHPRA, said in a statement Tuesday that the request for Sputnik V to be authorized could "not be approved at this time," referring to past failed HIV vaccines that used a similar technology. A late-stage study published in the journal Lancet last year in more than 20,000 participants found that Sputnik V was safe and about 91% effective in preventing people from becoming severely ill with COVID-19.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/hiv-johannesburg-covid-russia-south-african-b1941391.html>

### **Deaths among the double vaccinated: what is behind the Australian statistics?**

On Tuesday, there were 356 Covid-19 patients being treated in intensive care wards throughout Australia. Of those, 25 were fully vaccinated. While the data points to the extraordinary efficacy of Covid-19 vaccines in preventing people from becoming severely unwell, being hospitalised and dying, it does raise the question: why do a small number of people become seriously ill and, in rare cases, die, despite being fully vaccinated? An intensive care unit staff specialist at Nepean hospital in Sydney, Dr Nhi Nguyen, said those who are fully vaccinated and die tend to have significant underlying health conditions. Being treated in intensive care, where people may be on a ventilator and unable to move, added to any existing frailty, especially in elderly people, she said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/oct/20/deaths-among-the-double-vaccinated-what-is-behind-the-australian-statistics>

### **Without Covid-19 jab, 'reinfection may occur every 16 months'**

As Covid-19 infections surge in England, people are increasingly reporting catching Sars-CoV-2 for a second or even third time. New analysis has suggested that unvaccinated individuals should expect to be reinfected with Covid-19 every 16 months, on average. With winter approaching, scientists are warning that such reinfections could add to the burden on the NHS, some calling for the vaccination programme to be extended to all schoolchildren, including two doses for teenagers. "If you've got high-level prevalence, and frequent exposure to the virus, as you have in schools, you are going to see more and more people getting reinfected despite having been double vaccinated," said Stephen Griffin, associate professor of virology at the University of Leeds.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/19/without-covid-19-jab-reinfection-may-occur-every-16-months-say-scientists>

### **Trials find no benefit of interferon, colchicine in COVID hospital patients**

New clinical trials detail the failure of two COVID-19 treatments—a combination of interferon beta-1a and remdesivir and the drug colchicine—to reduce death by 28 days, length of hospital stay, or risk of requiring invasive mechanical ventilation or dying in hospitalized adults.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/10/trials-find-no-benefit-interferon-colchicine-covid-hospital-patients>

### **Gates Foundation will provide \$120 million to ensure generic production of Merck's Covid-19 pill**

As concern mounts over access to Covid-19 remedies, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is committing up to \$120 million to accelerate production of generic versions of an experimental Merck (MRK) pill to treat Covid-19 that would be available to dozens of low-income countries. But the effort was greeted with mixed reactions by patient advocates. The Gates Foundation plans to provide different types of incentives so that eight generic manufacturers, all of which have already signed voluntary licensing deals with Merck, will be positioned to produce a sufficient quantity of the drug, called molnupiravir, as quickly as possible. The goal is to convince the generic companies to ready their facilities rather than wait to gauge demand for the pill — which early data suggests could reduce hospitalizations and deaths — before ramping up.

<https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2021/10/20/covid19-merck-gates-pill-patents-who/>

### **Sex of the fetus influences the mother's response to Covid-19 infection, new research shows**

In two studies published Tuesday in Science Translational Medicine, the Boston-based research teams found that pregnant and lactating women mount robust antibody responses to both vaccination and infection. The encouraging data also came with some twists that offer intriguing new clues to one of the pandemic's enduring mysteries: why Covid-19 hits male adults, children, and infants harder than females. "What's striking here is that the mothers who are carrying male babies

have much lower levels of antibodies to the coronavirus,” said Akiko Iwasaki, a virologist and immunologist at Yale University who was not involved in the study. “What’s interesting about that is it means that the sex of the baby can dictate how the mother responds to a viral infection.”

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/10/19/sex-of-the-fetus-influences-the-mothers-response-to-covid-19-infection-new-research-shows/>

### **Covid Cases Are Soaring in Britain Again. Why?**

Once again Britain has one of the highest rates of Covid infection anywhere. The U.K. just reported its biggest single day Covid case increase in three months and a 16% increase in confirmed cases in the week to Oct. 18. The government has warned of a bad winter. Even in the era of vaccines, the risks aren’t trivial. While deaths from Covid are now mercifully low, some of those who get infected will end up hospitalized. They will suffer, and occupy beds and health service resources that are already overstretched and coping with a gargantuan backlog of cases. Families will step in; productivity will be lost. Others will end up with Long Covid, whose symptoms last for weeks or months after the virus has cleared. High levels of infection will also increase the risk of new vaccine-resistant strains of the virus.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-10-19/covid-cases-are-soaring-in-britain-again-more-than-in-europe-why>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **Russia Orders People Not to Go to Work as Covid-19 Deaths Mount**

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered people to stay off work for at least a week while Latvia has introduced a monthlong Covid-19 lockdown as deaths climb, driving renewed fears of another wave of infections as winter sets in. Mr. Putin signed a decree Wednesday approving a period of nonworking days, as the government calls them, beginning Oct. 30 and stretching to Nov. 7 to encourage people to stay home and slow the spread of the virus. Regional governments where infection rates are especially virulent can speed up or prolong the measures, with employers continuing to pay their staffs as they stay home. Latvia, which until recently had outperformed other European countries in containing the virus, on Monday announced a slate of strict measures, including a nationwide 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew and closures of schools and nonessential retail after the seven-day average of deaths in the tiny Baltic state more than doubled last week.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/russia-orders-people-not-to-go-to-work-as-covid-19-deaths-mount-11634750559>

### **New Covid Restrictions Cast Doubt on Bigger Russia Rate Hike**

The Kremlin’s new stay-at-home order to curb surging cases of Covid-19 has raised questions about whether the Bank of Russia will deliver a big interest-rate increase at its meeting Friday. “There is a new uncertainty with those non-working days,” said Oleg Vyugin, a former senior central bank official. “I used to think they will raise by 50 basis points, but now, with the new circumstances, I began to have doubts. It could be 25 basis points as well.” President Vladimir Putin Wednesday approved a government plan to declare Oct. 30 to Nov. 7 as “non-working days” nationally -- with some hard-hit regions starting a week earlier -- as new cases and deaths reach records. The restrictions would be the most sweeping since at least May and could be extended further.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-20/new-covid-restrictions-cast-doubt-on-bigger-russia-rate-hike>

### **Expert blames reliance on AstraZeneca jab, waning immunity for UK case coronavirus rise**

Waning immunity provided by coronavirus vaccines combined with the U.K.’s early reliance on the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine has contributed to the current spike in cases, which are close to reaching the 50,000-per-day mark, one of the country’s top epidemiologists said Tuesday. The U.K.’s speedy rollout of vaccines has meant that those vaccinated early on are now experiencing waning immunity, Neil Ferguson, director of Imperial College London’s MRC Centre for Global Infectious

Disease Analysis, told the BBC's Today program. "How early we were means we were a little bit more vulnerable," he said. The country's reliance on the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine that "protects slightly less well than Pfizer against infection and transmission" is another factor in the increase in cases being seen in the country.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/expert-blames-reliance-on-astrazeneca-jab-waning-immunity-for-uk-case-coronavirus-rise/>

### **Number of patients with Covid-19 in ICUs increases**

The chair of the National Public Health Emergency Team's Irish Epidemiological Modelling Advisory Group has said there has been a very large number of admissions to intensive care. At a NPHEAT briefing, Professor Philip Nolan said 14 people were admitted to ICU in the last day, bringing the total number to 86. He said there has been a slow increase in the number in intensive care from 60 four weeks ago, to 74 on average over the last week. Case counts have continued to grow, with the seven-day moving average increased from around 1,100 coming into October, to 1,889 today.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/coronavirus/2021/10/20/1254785-covid-ireland/>

### **Senegal logs zero new COVID-19 cases for first time since pandemic began**

Senegal recorded zero new COVID-19 cases on Wednesday for the first time since the pandemic began, the health ministry said. The West African country had its worst wave of coronavirus in July, when it was recording more than 1,000 new cases a day. The health ministry has registered 73,875 cases and 1,873 deaths since the outbreak began. Sixteen patients are still under treatment, the ministry said. Senegal has been seen as a positive example of a country managing COVID-19 well despite limited resources.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/senegal-logs-zero-new-covid-19-cases-first-time-since-pandemic-began-2021-10-20/>

### **The UK has more new Covid-19 cases than France, Germany, Italy and Spain combined**

The UK's attitude towards Covid-19 has changed beyond recognition. Virtually all of England's restrictions were lifted in July, with the events and hospitality sectors returning to full capacity as Johnson urged Britons to "begin to learn to live with this virus." But the Delta variant -- more transmissible still than the Alpha strain which wrecked last year's festivities -- has not gone away. The country has quietly endured stubbornly high cases, hospitalizations and deaths when compared to the rest of Europe. Britain has registered nearly half a million cases in the past two weeks -- and almost 50,000 on Monday -- more than France, Germany, Italy and Spain combined. The UK reported 223 deaths on Tuesday, the highest daily figure since early March.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/20/uk/uk-europe-covid-infections-cmd-gbr-intl/index.html>

### **WHO: Europe the only region with rise in COVID-19 last week**

The World Health Organization said there was a 7% rise in new coronavirus cases across Europe last week, the only region in the world where cases increased. In its weekly assessment of the pandemic released late Tuesday, the U.N. health agency said there were about 2.7 million new COVID-19 cases and more than 46,000 deaths last week, similar to the numbers reported the previous week. Britain, Russia and Turkey accounted for the most cases. The biggest drop in COVID-19 cases were seen in Africa and the Western Pacific, where infections fell by about 18% and 16%, respectively. The number of deaths in Africa also declined by about a quarter, despite the dire shortage of vaccines on the continent. Other regions including the Americas and the Middle East, reported similar numbers to the previous week, WHO said.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/covid-europe-who-russia-london-b1941721.html>

### **Another lockdown is possible if Government continues to ignore UK's rising Covid cases, Sage scientist warns**

The UK could be heading for another lockdown if ministers keep "ignoring Covid" and don't put

further restrictions in place, a Government adviser has warned. Stephen Reicher, professor of psychology at the University of St Andrews and a member of the Government's Sage subcommittee advising on behavioural science – the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling operational sub-group (SPI-M-O) – slammed the Government's current policy to fight Covid-19 as new daily infections reached 49,156 on Monday. He accused the Government of watching Covid "rage" in the UK as ministers "do nothing about it".

<https://inews.co.uk/news/another-lockdown-possible-if-government-ignores-covid-cases-sage-scientist-warns-1257386>

### **Poland considers drastic steps to tackle COVID 'explosion'**

Poland is facing an explosion of COVID-19 cases that may require drastic action, the health minister said on Wednesday, after more than 5,000 daily new infections were reported for the first time since May. Central Europe has suffered a surge in COVID-19 cases over recent days, fuelling fears that vaccination rates that are lower than in the west of the continent could fan a damaging fresh wave of infections. About 61% of adult Poles are fully vaccinated, below an EU average of just over 74%.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/polands-daily-covid-cases-exceed-5000-first-time-since-may-2021-10-20/>

### **UK hospitals on the edge as government resists fresh COVID measures**

Britain's health minister Sajid Javid on Wednesday resisted calls from doctors for a return of restrictions to halt a rising wave of COVID-19 infections, but gave a stark warning they would be brought back if people did not take up vaccination offers. Britain reported 223 new deaths from COVID-19 on Tuesday, the highest daily figure since March, and cases are the highest in Europe, with nearly 50,000 new infections reported on Wednesday. The government's plan is to rely on vaccines and drugs to limit the impact of the virus this winter, instead of bringing in restrictions or any more lockdowns, having already shut the economy three times

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/edge-uk-health-service-facing-growing-winter-pressures-2021-10-20/>

## **New Lockdown**

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### **Moscow orders unvaccinated over-60s to stay home for 4 months as Russia's Covid-19 crisis deepens**

Millions of Russians face strict new Covid-19 restrictions from this week after a slow vaccination drive, an overwhelmed health care system and widespread mistrust in government combined to plunge the country into its most deadly phase of the pandemic to date.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/10/20/europe/russia-elderly-stay-home-order-record-deaths-intl/index.html>

### **Putin approves week-long Russian workplace shutdown as COVID-19 surges**

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday approved a government proposal for a week-long workplace shutdown at the start of November to combat a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases and deaths. Coronavirus-related deaths across Russia in the past 24 hours hit yet another daily record at 1,028, with 34,073 new infections. Speaking at a televised meeting with government officials, Putin said the "non-working days" from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7, during which people would continue to receive salaries, could begin earlier or be extended for certain regions.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russian-healthcare-system-feels-strain-daily-covid-19-deaths-break-record-2021-10-20/>