

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

22nd May 2020

News Highlights

Summer tempts UK beachgoers as lockdown rules are tossed aside

[Locked-down Britons celebrated the hottest day of the year](#) so far, by sunbathing on beaches and travelling to coastal areas, taking advantage of an easing in restrictions. [However, a survey of 90,000 adults showed that more than half of young adults](#) were not completely complying with government social distancing measures and staying at home.

German economy gains ground as U.S. unemployment continues to rise

[Germany's services and manufacturing sectors gained some ground](#), taking advantage of looser lockdown restrictions. However, [U.S. unemployment rose by another 2.4 million, despite all 50 states having loosened lockdown restrictions](#). Close to 39 million people in the U.S. have now lost their jobs, figures that are only comparable to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

India to restart domestic flights; Easyjet to resume UK and France operations

Domestic flight operations are set to recommence in India on May 25, two months after they ground to a halt. [Passengers will need to wear masks and gloves and download a government contact-tracing app](#). In Europe, Easyjet will restart domestic operations [in the UK and France, with on-board safety measures and the mandatory wearing of masks](#).

Italy prepares to open borders but Spain opts for caution

Italy and Spain, both hard-hit by the coronavirus, are opening up their economies gradually. However, while Italy will allow foreign tourists from June 2, [Spanish authorities are focusing more on domestic tourism](#) and have not yet set a date to reopen borders to foreign tourists.

Lockdown Exit

US unemployment rises by 2.4m despite easing of coronavirus lockdowns

Another 2.4 million Americans filed for unemployment insurance last week even as states across the US began opening up for business again, betting that the coronavirus pandemic is now under control. The latest figures from the Department of Labor mean close to 39 million Americans have lost their jobs in just nine weeks. The rate of weekly losses has slowed sharply from its peak of 6.6m at the start of April but remains at levels unseen since the 1930s Great Depression.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/21/us-unemployment-figures-jobs-lost-coronavirus>

Looser lockdown helps Germany's private sector gain some ground: PMI

Germany's private sector recession eased in May as a loosening of lockdown measures in the coronavirus crisis helped services and manufacturers in Europe's largest economy gain some ground, a survey showed on Thursday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-economy-pmi/looser-lockdown-helps-germanys-private-sector-gain-some-ground-pmi-idUSKBN22X0PA>

Germany's economic crash eases as it lifts coronavirus lockdown

The plunge in German business activity eased somewhat in May, survey data has shown, although Europe's biggest economy remained in a dire position even as it eased coronavirus restrictions. IHS Markit's composite purchasing managers' index (PMI), which gauges the health of the private sector, rose markedly to 31.4 in May from 17.4 in April, according to today's early estimate.

<https://www.cityam.com/germanys-economic-crash-eases-as-it-lifts-coronavirus-lockdown/>

Italy's PM announces red tape cutting drive to boost investment

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte told parliament on Thursday his government was preparing a raft of reforms to cut red tape, improve company governance and encourage investment to revive the coronavirus-battered economy. Conte promised a so-called "simplification decree" to attract foreign capital by streamlining bureaucratic procedures, and said Rome would help the recapitalisation of companies hit by the pandemic. "If we do not succeed in simplifying procedures even in a condition of absolute emergency, I say this very frankly, I doubt that it will be possible to do so in the future", he told the Chamber of Deputies. Italy's complex bureaucracy has long been blamed as one of the causes of its anaemic economic growth, and red tape delayed financial aid promised to business and families during a rigid lockdown to try to curb coronavirus contagion.

<https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/italys-pm-announces-red-tape-115743839.html>

As the Coronavirus Lockdown Eases, Italy Confronts an Epidemic of Poverty

Few major economies are likely to fall as far or take longer to recover—leaving millions without money for basics like food

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/as-the-coronavirus-lockdown-eases-italy-confronts-an-epidemic-of-poverty-11590058801>

Italians let their hair down as coronavirus restrictions eased

After months in lockdown, as Italy opens up, there are queues for fresh haircuts. But can the country bounce back?

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/05/italians-hair-coronavirus-restrictions-eased-200520104928014.html>

Beachgoers lie on their towels in roped-off social distancing zones in France

Sunbathers in La Grande Motte can book out spots cordoned off on the beach. Visitors can swim in the sea and sunbathe in their roped-off zone for three hours. Officials warn that beaches will be closed again if people do not observe rules

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8344065/Beachgoers-lie-towels-roped-social-distancing-zones-France.html>

EasyJet to resume domestic flights across UK and France

EasyJet is to resume flights on a small number of routes from 15 June, with increased on-board safety measures including mandatory wearing of face masks, as it returns to the skies after grounding its fleet on 30 March. The airline will restart domestic routes in the UK and France initially, along with flights from four destinations elsewhere in Europe, where it says there is sufficient customer demand to support profitable flying. Further routes will be added in the following weeks, as and when passenger demand rises and lockdown measures ease further across Europe.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/21/easyjet-to-resume-domestic-flights-across-england-and-france>

France says no sign of virus rise after lockdown eased

France on May 11 eased its almost two-month lockdown in a bid to revive an economy clobbered by the epidemic. Health Minister Olivier Veran warned that it was too early to assess the impact of the easing. But he added there was so far no sign that the virus was regaining impetus. "It takes at least 10 to 15 days for us to know if there is an impact on the epidemic," he told reporters after a cabinet meeting, while noting that the numbers in hospitals and intensive care were continuing to fall. "So we are not seeing a revival in the circulation of the virus, but that does not mean that the virus is

not circulating," he added.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-05-france-virus-lockdown-eased.html>

Coronavirus: The Russian republic enduring a 'catastrophe'

Dr Ibragim Yevtemirov still coughs every so often as he talks. A paediatric trauma surgeon in Dagestan, in the Caucasus region of southern Russia, his ward had been full of Covid-19 cases for a couple of weeks when he got infected himself. He says seven colleagues in his town have now died, including nurses, orderlies and laboratory staff, according to a count kept by local medics themselves. "All three doctors on my team got sick. We were replaced by dentists until we recovered," Dr Yevtemirov told the BBC by phone from Khasavyurt, where he's now back at work in the central hospital. "At the peak, there were 10, 11 patients dying a day here," he says.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-52737404>

Coronavirus Australia: Aussies not ready for return to work amid COVID-19 pandemic

Workplaces across Australia are simply not ready to return staff to the COVID-19 frontline and are risking a second wave of infections. A shocking new poll of workers across Australia commissioned has found just one in 10 workplaces has increased basic preventive measures including purchasing hand sanitiser supplies. Only 4 per cent of those still attending the workplace said there was additional cleaning or disinfection occurring at work. A stunning 90 per cent of workers also said there was no plan in place in case they or a co-worker developed symptoms or tested positive. The Australian Council of Trade Unions released the poll on Thursday night to underline its push for paid pandemic leave for workers, particularly casuals who may not have access to any sick leave if they become unwell.

<https://www.news.com.au/finance/work/at-work/coronavirus-australia-aussies-not-ready-for-return-to-work-amid-covid-19-pandemic/news-story/78e0a70c750ea3574087ddf3bcbda2c0>

Italy's lockdown has taken heavy toll on mental health, say psychologists

Covid-19 has killed more than 32,000 people in Italy and wreaked havoc on the healthcare system and economy. But as the country creeps out of lockdown, the toll on mental health is beginning to become apparent. In a recent survey by Italy's order of psychologists (CNOP), eight in 10 Italians said they needed psychological support to overcome the pandemic, a much higher response compared with similar surveys done in the past.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/italy-lockdown-mental-health-psychologists-coronavirus>

Charting recovery after the coronavirus crisis

Australians are heading back out onto the streets, they're driving their cars again and more people are heading back to the shops, schools and offices. That's a snapshot of a collection of datasets collated by the ABC in order to track how we're progressing as the nation rebounds back to life after the easing of coronavirus restrictions.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-21/road-to-recovery-from-the-covid-19-coronavirus-pandemic/12229514?nw=0>

New Zealand goes back to the pub: Bars reopen as country continues its incredible success against coronavirus

The country has so far recorded only 21 deaths due to the coronavirus and has just 1,503 confirmed cases. Pubs reopening marks the final phase of the country entering 'Alert 2' of their coronavirus action plan. The loosening of restrictions on business, gatherings and travel were eased in three stages starting on 14 May

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8343507/New-Zealand-goes-pub.html>

'Could be a bit strange': New Zealand bars to reopen but fun is kept at arm's length

Last week, the prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, moved the country from coronavirus lockdown level 3 to level 2, meaning most shops and restaurants could reopen, as well as schools, workplaces and

public amenities. However, on advice from the Ministry of Health, bars and nightclubs remained closed for an additional week, because people's close proximity meant they were deemed particularly high risk. One of the country's largest outbreaks was spread at a St Patrick's Day gathering at a Matamata pub in the North Island.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/could-be-a-bit-strange-new-zealand-bars-to-reopen-but-fun-is-kept-at-arms-length>

COVID-19: Glass only half full as New Zealand's bars reopen

New Zealand, with a population of five million, has recorded just 21 coronavirus deaths, largely due to its early lockdown. While domestic quarantine has ended, bars must limit numbers to fewer than 100 people, enforce social distancing and record personal details to help contact tracing if there is a COVID-19 outbreak. While pubs catering to older customers such as Hall will be affected, McLaughlin said the biggest impact would be on venues catering to a younger, late-night party crowd. "That business model is totally out the window," he said.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/covid-19-new-zealand-bars-reopen-after-lockdown-12756496>

PH embassy reopens as New Zealand eases lockdown restrictions

The Philippine Embassy in Wellington, New Zealand has reopened its doors to the public after the government announced the easing of lockdown restrictions under New Zealand's alert level 2. The DFA assured that they are ensuring that their workplace remains safe through sanitation, providing protective personal equipment (PPE) to their employees, and setting up contact tracing mechanisms in compliance with the New Zealand Government's safety regulations. The Embassy's office hours are currently still limited and only clients who were able to make prior appointments are being served.

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/05/21/ph-embassy-reopens-as-new-zealand-eases-lockdown-restrictions/>

Covid 19 coronavirus: Stranded work visa holders' heartbreaking plea to return to New Zealand

The group who made the video, migrants stuck outside New Zealand, started from a small WhatsApp group of stranded temporary work visa holders in Brazil who eagerly waited for news from the Government after the border closure announcements. But after a few weeks passed, they were disheartened to receive no updates and decided they needed to take things into their own hands and raise awareness. Using the power of social media, they were able to connect with other stranded migrants and their group expanded.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12333855

Kiwis Should Be Concerned If Lockdown Broke The Law, NZ Initiative Report Shows

Even in emergencies, democratic governments must comply with the law, according to a new report The rule of law or the law of rulers by the New Zealand Initiative. As legal challenges emerge to question the lawfulness of the Government's restrictions, courts will decide whether the lockdown was illegal. New Zealand Initiative chairman Roger Partridge said it is crucial for the sanctity of the country's institutions that New Zealand is governed according to the rule of law, not the law of rulers. "Alert Level 4 deprived Kiwis of many of their fundamental freedoms - to visit friends and family, including those unwell or dying, to undertake everyday recreational activities and to perform paid work. The restrictions caused immeasurable hardship, and Kiwis should be able to rely on the Government to restrict their freedoms lawfully," he said.

<https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO2005/S00304/kiwis-should-be-concerned-if-lockdown-broke-the-law-nz-initiative-report-shows.htm>

Is this the future of clothes shopping in the UK? Australian stores insist on face masks, temperature checks and limits on customers as economy adapts to new normal after lockdown

The government will issue new advice about which stores will be able to open their doors to customers again. Australians are having to adapt to new changes at shopping centres amid reduction in COVID-19 restrictions. Temperature checks are a must at makeup giants Sephora and Mecca and anyone with a fever can not enter. Hand sanitiser is readily available and social distancing measures are compulsory - resulting in long queues. Apple is also carrying out fever checks as well as handing out compulsory masks which shoppers must wear

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8341253/Is-future-clothes-shopping-UK.html>

Japanese pub aims to clean up with disinfectant spray machine

The pub in Tokyo's normally bustling Shinjuku district has installed a machine that sprays customers with hypochlorous acid water as they enter. Customers are first greeted by a hostess on a monitor, of course, who instructs them to disinfect their hands and check their temperature with a thermometer provided. They then step into a machine that looks like an airport security scanner, or a car-wash for humans, to get sprayed with a fine mist of the chlorine-based disinfectant for 30 seconds. Customers then pick up a map that guides them to their seat where they order with smartphones. Throughout the process they have not come into contact with a single person.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-japan-pub/japanese-pub-aims-to-clean-up-with-disinfectant-spray-machine-idUSKBN22W0K4>

Exit Strategies

Scotland's lockdown to be eased from May 28 but Nicola Sturgeon says schools won't return until August

Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has unveiled a "careful relaxation" of lockdown measures from Thursday, May 28. The gradual easing of restrictions will allow non-contact sports, such as golf and tennis, and meeting people from "one other household" outside and while social distancing will be permitted. But schools will not return until August 11 - with the start of a new school year. Garden centres and waste and recycling facilities will also be allowed to open as part of phase one of the route map.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-05-21/first-minister-nicola-sturgeon-scotland-coronavirus-lockdown-route-map/>

Coronavirus: New rules for flyers as India looks to start domestic flights

India is set to resume domestic flights on Monday, two months after a lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus. However, the "new normal" will also see new rules for flyers - passengers will need to have downloaded a government contact-tracing app, and they will also be subject to thermal screening. Flyers will also need to wear masks and gloves while inside airports. Civil aviation minister Hardeep Puri said all airports and airlines had been told to prepare for operations.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52750255>

The Road to Recovery: How Targeted Lockdowns for Seniors Can Help the U.S. Reopen

The choice between protecting lives and economic recovery is complex and difficult-not least because politicians and the public alike disagree on the trade-off between excess deaths from the pandemic and the economic damages. But our study shows, no matter what the priorities are, targeted policies bring both public-health and economic benefits.

<https://time.com/5840194/targeted-lockdowns-coronavirus/>

Massachusetts and Connecticut join rest of US in lifting COVID-19 lockdowns

Connecticut and Massachusetts both lifted COVID-19 restrictions this week. It means all 50 states have now at least partially reopened following weeks-long shutdowns to stop the spread of coronavirus. Connecticut on Wednesday allowed the reopening of outdoor dining areas, offices, retail shops, museums and zoos, and outdoor recreation businesses. Massachusetts on Monday allowed manufacturing and construction to start. Offices, personal care services and retail

businesses can start from next week. Currently, there are more than 1.5 million infections in the US and over 92,000 deaths.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8341879/Massachusetts-Connecticut-join-rest-lifting-COVID-19-lockdowns.html>

Scotland lockdown route map explained: How each phase of the Scottish exit plan to lift coronavirus rules will work

The Scottish Government has published its route map for exiting the coronavirus lockdown, which will be done in four phases. Here is a summary of its main points.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/scotland-lockdown-route-map-scottish-exit-plan-coronavirus-rules-when-end-explained-2860824>

Coronavirus: Scottish lockdown easing to begin next week

Lockdown restrictions in Scotland are likely to be relaxed slightly from 28 May, Nicola Sturgeon has confirmed. The first minister made the announcement as she unveiled a four-phase "route map" aimed at restarting society while suppressing the virus. The first phase will include allowing people to meet outside with people from one other household. Schools will reopen on 11 August - meaning many will return a week earlier than planned after the summer holiday. But the first minister said children will return to a "blended model" where they will do a mix of school and home learning

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-52745643>

Will summer holidays go ahead in 2020? When might tourism in the UK and abroad start after lockdown?

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps recently said he would certainly not be booking a summer holiday at present. Speaking to BBC Radio 4's Today programme in April, Mr Shapps said that "clearly people will want to see what the trajectory of this disease is in the next few weeks". "I won't be booking a summer holiday at this point, let's put it that way."

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/health/will-summer-holidays-go-ahead-2020-when-might-tourism-uk-and-abroad-start-after-lockdown-2853458>

As Italy prepares to open borders to tourists, Spain opts for caution

While Italy has reactivated almost all business activity in the country and will open its borders to tourists on June 3, the Spanish government has decided on a more cautious route. Under Spain's deescalation plan, travel within the country will not be allowed until at least the end of June. Health authorities have indicated that the summer holiday season will start later this year and be focused on domestic - not international - tourism. Indeed, Spain has not set a date to reopen its borders to tourists, and just recently introduced a 14-day quarantine for international travelers, which will be in place until at least June 7, when the current state of alarm is set to end.

<https://english.elpais.com/society/2020-05-21/as-italy-prepares-to-open-borders-to-tourists-spain-opts-for-caution.html>

In Spain, Valencia stands alone in not requesting looser lockdown

The Valencia region has become the first area of Spain to voluntarily slow down its coronavirus deescalation process. The eastern territory will wait one more week before requesting a transition to Phase 2 of the four-phase plan introduced by the central government to slow the spread of Covid-19. The decision comes after regional health authorities detected a slight spike in contagion figures. "We don't have any outbreaks, but we want to wait out this week," said the regional health chief, Ana Barceló. "We will remain in Phase 1 for another seven days."

<https://english.elpais.com/society/2020-05-21/in-spain-valencia-stands-alone-in-not-requesting-looser-lockdown.html>

Cyprus ends virus lockdown but airports stay shut

The Cypriot government ended a strict coronavirus lockdown Thursday, reopening outdoor

restaurants, barber shops and beaches, but keeping the Mediterranean resort island's vital airports and hotels closed for now. After two months of living in self-isolation, Cypriots are allowed to move around freely again. Some 32,000 more people went back to work as part of the government's second stage out of lockdown.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200521-cyprus-ends-virus-lockdown-but-airports-stay-shut>

Maryland offering coronavirus tests to asymptomatic people to support lockdown being lifted

Maryland governor Larry Hogan said on Tuesday that people who have been exposed to the novel coronavirus but show no symptoms can get tested at state-run sites, an expansion that follows complaints from local leaders that a lack of testing has made it more difficult to ease shutdown restrictions. Although hospitalisations and deaths have mostly flattened across Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, dozens of fatalities are still reported each day, including the death over the weekend of a 15-year-old girl from Baltimore County.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/coronavirus-testing-us-maryland-lockdown-lifted-larry-hogan-a9524366.html>

Immunity passports could help end lockdown, but risk class divides and intentional infections

If you've already recovered from the coronavirus, can you go back to the workplace carefree? This is the question governments including in the UK, Chile, Germany and Italy are trying to answer by considering immunity passports. These would be physical or digital documents given to people who've recovered from COVID-19 and are immune from the disease for a period of time. This would enable them to return to the workplace or even travel. But there are serious concerns that immunity passports could create two classes of citizen and provide a perverse incentive to contract the virus deliberately.

<https://theconversation.com/immunity-passports-could-help-end-lockdown-but-risk-class-divides-and-intentional-infections-138513>

Coronavirus: Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore have had no Covid deaths in care homes - so what can they teach us?

It is hard to fathom, given what we know now, that as recently as March care home operators were being told that they were "very unlikely" to experience an outbreak of Covid. The Public Health England guidance, first issued on February 25 and adopted UK-wide, twice states that people receiving care in the community or in residential homes were "very unlikely" to become infected. The document was finally withdrawn on March 13 – coincidentally the same date that Scotland's first Covid patient died – though the majority of care home providers in Scotland had already closed their doors to visitors two days earlier as the scale of the potential threat became clear.

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18463765.coronavirus-hong-kong-south-korea-singapore-no-care-home-covid-deaths---can-teach-us/>

South Korea shows what "world-beating" coronavirus tracing programme looks like

This story from South Korea shows just how far they have to go to get a system which is truly "world-beating". Having thought they had beaten coronavirus completely, officials detected a coronavirus outbreak centred on a nightclub in the Itaewon district in Seoul. Their contact tracing system kicked into gear and tracked down and tested a remarkable 65,000 people who had been to the clubs in the area or been in contact with those who had. Results came back the next day and 170 tested positive for Covid-19 and were put into quarantine. 89 of those had been to the clubs and bars in Itaewon, while the rest had caught the disease from these people.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/politics/the-news-explained/south-korea-shows-what-world-beating-coronavirus-t/>

Why China and India shouldn't let coronavirus justify walking back climate action

Before the coronavirus pandemic hit, India and China were positioning themselves as global climate leaders. While virus lockdowns have provided temporary blue skies from Delhi to Beijing, and beyond, as China and India prepare to resuscitate their economies experts warn doing so without environmental regard could wind back their previous good work on climate. That could have devastating effects on the health on billions of people. Air pollution already kills 7 million of us every year, damages our children's health and development, causes serious breathing and lung problems, and even affects babies in the womb.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/20/business/coronavirus-recovery-climate-india-china-intl-hnk/index.html>

Every US state eases lockdowns as Trump slams China for 'mass killings'

All 50 American states have now partially emerged from coronavirus lockdowns as President Donald Trump lashed China over global 'mass killings'. Connecticut has become the final state to begin lifting restrictions, allowing retail shops and restaurants to reopen their doors. Despite the reopening milestone, health officials say, Americans remain at risk of catching the highly transmissible and sometimes deadly virus. As of Tuesday, at least 17 states had registered an upward trend in average daily cases -- a rise of at least 10 per cent - over the previous seven days, according to an analysis of Johns Hopkins University data.

<https://www.9news.com.au/world/all-us-states-ease-coronavirus-lockdown-trump-in-mass-killings-tweet/55ee3cd5-48e3-45fe-8034-ba31435ee8e6>

Japan to ease coronavirus emergency in Osaka, nearby areas

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday lifted the state of emergency in the western Japanese prefectures of Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo, as the spread of the novel coronavirus has slowed enough to justify the gradual easing of curbs on economic activity. The Tokyo metropolitan area and Hokkaido in northern Japan will remain under the state of emergency but Abe said they may see it lifted as early as Monday after a review by health experts. The coronavirus emergency has ended in 42 of the country's 47 prefectures. In rejuvenating a recession-hit economy, the remaining five prefectures -- Tokyo, Chiba, Kanagawa, Saitama and Hokkaido -- play an integral part as they make up about a third of national gross domestic product.

<https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2020/05/a504e2ad8e15-japan-set-to-ease-coronavirus-emergency-in-osaka-near-by-areas.html>

The Latest: Japan ending state of emergency in 3 prefectures

Japan's economy minister says experts have approved a government plan to remove a coronavirus state of emergency in Osaka and two neighboring prefectures in the west where the infection is deemed slowing, while keeping the measure in place in the Tokyo region and Hokkaido. Economy Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura told reporters that experts at the meeting approved the plan to lift the measure in Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo. The measure will be kept in place in Tokyo and three neighboring prefectures, as well as Hokkaido, where the infections have slowed but need further improvement.

<https://kttc.com/2020/05/21/the-latest-philippine-police-raid-illegal-hospital/>

Borders remain shut to avoid 'disastrous' return to lockdown

Cornerstone Group Senior Director James Cullen says it "makes sense" for state borders to remain shut in order to avoid a return to strict lockdown measures. He told Sky News it would be a "complete disaster for the economy and business" if the nation was forced to re-enter lockdown, but reiterated the national cabinet and leaders were "very reluctant to go backwards".

https://www.skynews.com.au/details/_6158122323001

Nicola Sturgeon lockdown announcement LIVE as First Minister reveals plan to lift restrictions

Nicola Sturgeon has outlined how Scotland will start the gradual process of easing coronavirus

lockdown restrictions across the country. The First Minister's government has taken a very measured approach so far compared to England which has already begun to loosen the lockdown. Scots have been forced to stay indoor as much as possible in an attempt to prevent the spread of the deadly virus which has already killed more than 3,500 people. The SNP leader announced that restrictions will start to be eased from May 28. Earlier this week, the Daily Record exclusively revealed that school in Scotland will start to go back on August 11 under plans drawn up by the Scottish Government. And teachers would return in June to prepare for a new system of “blended” learning - with children spending half their school time in class and half at home.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/nicola-sturgeon-lockdown-announcement-briefing-21901268>

New Zealand's Covid-19 Tracer app won't help open a 'travel bubble' with Australia anytime soon

New Zealanders finally have access to the government's new tracing app to help people monitor their movements as lockdown continues to ease. As businesses can now open, the NZ COVID Tracer app allows people to keep a register of the places they visit. This “digital diary” can be used to contact people if it finds they have been in the same place as someone infected with COVID-19. But the app has some significant shortcomings. These won't be addressed until at least June, which raises questions about whether it has been released too soon.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/technology/apps/121582852/new-zealands-covid19-tracer-app-wont-help-open-a-travel-bubble-with-australia-anytime-soon>

Partisan Exits

Anti-lockdown protesters in US state of Michigan hold 'Operation Haircut'

After mass rallies featuring armed protesters, those angry over the restrictive anti-virus lockdown in the US state of Michigan launched "Operation Haircut" Wednesday, with barbers using their scissors and clippers outside the state capitol.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200521-usa-coronavirus-covid-19-lockdown-michigan-operation-haircut-protest>

UK's economic recovery requires move to sensible risk-taking, ministers told

Sensible risk-taking must replace the “draconian” Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, Conservative peers have told ministers. Tory Baroness Noakes warned the coronavirus is causing “massive damage” to the economy as she pressed for the existing “risk aversion” approach to be replaced to aid the recovery. Party colleague Lord Dobbs also argued “lockdown means poverty” and workplaces must begin to open up, acknowledging there are risks in such an approach but that these fell on both sides of the equation.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/uks-economic-recovery-requires-move-to-sensible-risk-taking-ministers-told-39224071.html>

Coronavirus: Labour calls for urgent Government review amid concerns UK lockdown exit plan will widen inequality

The Government has been urged to immediately publish a review of how its coronavirus lockdown plan will impact women, BAME people and those living with disabilities amid warnings the policies could exacerbate inequalities. There are concerns the strategy of easing lockdown measures while reducing financial support from the Government could have a detrimental impact on the health or financial stability of some groups and communities.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/coronavirus-uk-lockdown-exit-plan-government-labour-review-inequality-2860331>

Coronavirus: Easing the UK out of lockdown is a confidence game and the PM is losing

The 50-page strategy he published on the same day was meant to be our route map towards a new normal. But so far, the public don't seem to have much confidence in the manual or the message. A YouGov poll over the weekend showed support for the government's handling of the virus dropping

sharply. Over half of those polled thought the changes went too far and nearly three out of four wanted clearer guidance from the government about what they can and cannot do as they come out of lockdown.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-easing-the-uk-out-of-lockdown-is-a-confidence-game-and-the-pm-is-losing-11991899>

Protesters demand 'freedom' as lockdown extended in Spain

Protesters bang pots and wave Spanish flags in the streets of Madrid to demand "freedom" and Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's resignation. Sanchez won parliamentary backing to extend the coronavirus lockdown for another two weeks.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/protesters-demand-freedom-lockdown-extended-033022908.html>

Spain to extend lockdown to June 6 despite outcry from protesters and right-wing opposition

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez won parliamentary backing to extend the lockdown for another two weeks Wednesday, despite opposition from his rightwing opponents and protests against his minority coalition government.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200521-spain-coronavirus-lockdown-pedro-sanchez-covid-19>

NHS leaders warn time is running out to establish track and trace strategy

PM said a 25,000-strong army of trackers had been recruited to identify the contacts of infected victims. Government's scientific advisers insist the system must be in place before any more restrictions are lifted. Rules limiting social contact could also be relaxed at that point, with a decision due at the end of next week. Ministers have admitted a tracking app being tested on the Isle of Wight will not be ready at the start. Security minister James Brokenshire said tracing system for 10,000 people can be launched before the app. Fears are mounting that the lockdown is eroding after thousands of sunseekers flocked to beaches and parks

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8342951/NHS-leaders-warn-time-running-establish-track-trace-strategy.html>

Another lockdown 'inevitable' unless test, track and trace is in place

The Shadow Chancellor has suggested a second lockdown is 'inevitable' unless the UK can 'sort out' its test, track and trace strategy. Anneliese Dodds claimed the Government is a 'very, very long way away from having the right infrastructure', branding the issue a 'major problem' amid an easing of coronavirus restrictions. Speaking exclusively to Metro.co.uk, Ms Dodds also warned that the UK is facing an unemployment problem bigger than anything seen in 'many hundreds of years'. She said: 'The absolutely critical issue to us returning to at least approaching normal levels of economic activity [...] is to get test, track and trace right. Until we have that infrastructure we will inevitably see reimpositions of lockdowns and, or, a longer lockdown.'

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/05/20/another-lockdown-inevitable-unless-test-track-trace-place-12733753/>

Poll: Public support for lockdowns in US wavers along party lines

Most Americans fear a second wave of coronavirus cases as US begins efforts to reopen and kick-start a stalled economy.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/05/poll-public-support-lockdowns-wavers-party-lines-200520203842158.html>

Continued Lockdown

Compliance with UK lockdown rules has dropped to 60 per cent

More than half of young adults are no longer sticking strictly to the lockdown rules, according to a new survey. Researchers who questioned over 90,000 adults have found that "complete" compliance with Government safety measures, such as social distancing and staying at home, has dropped in the past two weeks from an average of 70% of people to under 60% who said they act this way. Less than 50% of younger adults are "completely" complying with lockdown rules,

according to the University College London (UCL) study which looked at how adults are feeling about a range of issues during the pandemic. These include the lockdown, Government advice, their overall wellbeing and mental health.

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/compliance-uk-lockdown-rules-dropped-18286491>

Coronavirus: No more changes to NI lockdown restrictions yet

Stormont ministers have decided there will not be any further changes yet to lockdown measures in Northern Ireland. The executive met on Thursday to discuss its response to easing restrictions. Earlier this week, Arlene Foster said ministers would revisit whether relatives who do not live together could meet indoors. It is included in step one of the recovery plan, but the executive has not agreed to allow it to go ahead. Their decision comes as a further seven Covid-19 related deaths have been recorded by Northern Ireland's Department of Health, bringing its total to 501

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-52757184>

UK weather: Crowds hit beaches despite lockdown as Met Office confirms hottest day of the year

The UK has recorded its hottest day of the year so far - with people across the country journeying to jam-packed beaches and beauty spots to make the most of the sunshine for the first time since social distancing rules were eased. Temperatures hit a peak of 27.8C near Heathrow, up from the previous 2020 high set the day before when the mercury rose to 26.2C. And with the government having eased rules on trips outside - including those that once barred people looking to drive to far flung areas of natural beauty - thousands took to the nation's shores with many of England's top coastal areas appearing rammed with sunbathers.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-weather-hottest-day-beaches-coronavirus-lockdown-social-distancing-a9525126.html>

Coronavirus lockdown: Inspectors called to 20 water pollutions 'from DIY'

Inspectors have been called out to 20 incidents of water pollution caused by lockdown DIY in recent weeks. Staff from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency have investigated incidents caused by waste water linked to painting and decorating being disposed of incorrectly. It is believed the bulk of the problems occur when people use the wrong drain to get rid of material. There have been a number affecting the River Lagan at Dromore, County Down. The plumes of pollution are particularly hard to trace back to their origin as they are short-lived in nature.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-52747943>

Coronavirus: Maximum lockdown penalties rise to £1,920 in Wales

Maximum penalties in Wales for breaching lockdown will rise to £1,920, the Welsh Government has confirmed. First Minister Mark Drakeford has faced calls to raise the penalties to deter breaches. Initial fixed penalties will stay the same at £60, but will double for each time someone is caught. But the police and crime commissioner (PCC) for Dyfed-Powys Police said the changes to penalties do not go far enough.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-52737374>

Online casino searches at 'all-time high' during lockdown

Search interest in online casinos has hit an all-time high in the UK since lockdown began, data show. Google Trends shows gambling has moved online amid the closure of physical gambling venues and cancellation of sports events. Problem gamblers told the BBC lockdown measures were a "recipe for disaster". Watchdog the Gambling Commission said there had been a rise in some online gambling, but there was no evidence yet of a rise in problem gambling.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-52633355>

Fewer young adults sticking to lockdown rules, UK study shows

More than half of young adults are no longer sticking strictly to UK lockdown rules, according to a survey. Researchers who questioned more than 90,000 adults found “complete” compliance with government safety measures, such as physical distancing and staying at home, had dropped in the past two weeks from an average of 70% of people to less than 60%.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/fewer-young-adults-sticking-uk-lockdown-rules-study-coronavirus>

What is it like to live on UK borders during lockdown?

After Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland refused to adopt the British government’s new “stay alert” slogan, instead opting to continue the original advice to “stay home”, the four nations’ approaches to coronavirus has begun to fracture. For those living on the UK’s borders, this division has left them grappling with conflicting guidelines. We’d like to hear from those living on the borders about what the differing advice has meant for them.

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/may/21/what-is-it-like-to-live-on-uk-borders-during-lockdown>

'It's been life-changing': Ramadan during UK lockdown

As an intensive care doctor, Usman Ahmed is spending much of Ramadan looking after patients. But working night shifts with other Muslim colleagues makes the experience easier, he says. At the start of each shift, Ahmed and his colleagues break their fasts together with food brought from home or donated by charities. Just before sunrise, they take another break to have breakfast and prepare for another day of fasting. “This Ramadan has been an emotional time for me and I have had to observe unwell patients in intensive care and an increased number of deaths in hospital,” says Ahmed, 34, who works at Whittington hospital in Archway, London. “This has an emotional strain and I have been reflecting upon this during Ramadan.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/its-been-life-changing-ramadan-during-uk-lockdown>

Spain MPs vote to extend lockdown until June 6

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez won parliamentary backing to extend the lockdown for another two weeks Wednesday, despite opposition from his rightwing opponents and protests against his minority coalition government. It was the fifth time the state of emergency has been renewed, meaning the restrictions will remain in force until June 6 in a measure passed by 177 votes in favour, 162 against and 11 abstentions. The measure has allowed the government to impose a strict lockdown on Spain's nearly 47 million population, significantly limiting the freedom of movement to fight the epidemic which has now claimed 27,888 lives. But the government's management of the crisis has drawn a barrage of criticism from rightwing parties who have denounced its "brutal confinement", while several hundred protesters have hit the streets demanding "freedom" and Sanchez's resignation.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/spain-mps-vote-extend-lockdown-until-june-6-175921727.html>

Scandal of Spain’s Children Suffering from Depression Especially in Struggling Lockdown Families

Spain's children are suffering increased levels of depression caused by the coronavirus lockdown according to a leading children’s charity. Statistics have been published which say that 17 per cent of youngsters in Spain have felt low during the Covid-19 pandemic, with a larger percentage in economically-struggling families. The stark figures come from a survey conducted by Save the Children in April, at the height of Spain’s State of Alarm lockdown.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/05/21/scandal-of-spains-children-suffering-from-depression-especially-in-struggling-lockdown-families/>

Spain's PM asks parliament for 2 more weeks of lockdown

Spain’s government extended the country’s state of emergency for two more weeks despite criticism from opposition parties. The country’s lockdown, which started on March 14, will now last at least until June 7. The government argued that at least one more two-week extension will be needed

to complete a cautious return of centralized control over health policy to the governors of its 17 regions. The parliament on Wednesday approved the extension request by 177 votes to 161, with 11 abstentions. The main opposition conservative Popular Party and the far-right Vox party voted against an extension to the state of emergency, which gives the government the power to restrict constitutional rights such as free movement and assembly. "The path we are on is the only one that can possibly beat the virus. Thanks to all the parliament members who have supported the state of emergency because with their vote they have saved thousands of lives", prime minister Pedro Sánchez told parliament.

<https://www.neweurope.eu/article/spains-pm-asks-parliament-for-2-more-weeks-of-lockdown/>

What does Switzerland's lockdown look like? Iain Dale discovers

Switzerland shares a border with Germany, France, Austria and Italy - reporter Harriet Hadman told Iain that the southern part that borders with Italy was "very badly hit" and the virus was spreading over the border from mid-February. "Many of the hospitals along the border are staffed by hospitals that have to commute over every single day so that's made it incredibly difficult to close those borders completely. They've had to keep those healthcare workers going across," Ms Harman said. There has been a high rate of cases in Switzerland and the country has been "hit quite hard" - the top 10 country in the world for cases, though "way behind" the neighbouring countries. There have been over 1,300 cases out of eight million people - fortunately there are a high number of ICU beds, good hospitals and extremely good healthcare.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/iain-dale/what-does-switzerlands-lockdown-look-like-iain-dal/>

Scientific Viewpoint

At Least 54,000 U.S. Deaths Could Have Been Avoided If Lockdown Had Come Two Weeks Earlier

Around 54,000 coronavirus-linked deaths in the U.S. could have been avoided by early May if states issued coronavirus restrictions on March 1, 2020, according to a new Columbia University model that starkly demonstrates how early action might have curtailed the growth of the virus.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/isabeltogoh/2020/05/21/at-least-54000-us-deaths-could-have-been-avoided-if-lockdown-came-two-weeks-earlier/>

Coronavirus: 'Tackle harmful lockdown drinking,' BMJ editorial warns

Tackling harmful drinking during the lockdown will be "an integral part of the nation's recovery", an editorial in the BMJ says. With supermarket sales of alcohol having risen, it warns cases of alcoholic liver disease could increase too. And the writers fear drinking could be fuelling a rise in calls to domestic violence charities. They say greater investment in alcohol treatment services is needed. "Many people reacted to the closure of pubs and restaurants by stocking up to drink at home in isolation," says the article, by Prof Sir Ian Gilmore, who chairs Alcohol Health Alliance UK, and Ilora Finlay, who chairs the House of Lords Commission on Alcohol Harms.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52743849>

36K Lives Could Have Been Saved If US Implemented Lockdown Earlier: Researchers

Thousands upon thousands of lives lost to the coronavirus could have been saved had the United States implemented a lockdown just a week before it did, according to new data by Columbia University researchers. As of Wednesday, May 20, more than 91,000 Americans died from COVID-19, but researchers estimate that nearly 36,000 fewer people would have died by early May if social distancing rules had been announced a week earlier. Some 54,000 people would've been saved if measures were taken two weeks earlier, the New York Times first reported.

<https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/coronavirus/36k-lives-could-have-been-saved-if-us-implemented-lockdown-earlier-researchers/2274883/>

How can countries know when it's safe to ease coronavirus lockdowns?

It is unlikely that any country exiting lockdown will return to how things were before the outbreak. Social distancing, regular handwashing and, in some places, face masks may become a new normal. "There's an assumption that we can get to a point and then relax," says Paul Hunter at the University of East Anglia, UK. "That's a false assumption."

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2244056-how-can-countries-know-when-its-safe-to-ease-coronavirus-lockdowns/>

Lockdown Delays Cost at Least 36,000 Lives, Data Show

And if the country had begun locking down cities and limiting social contact on March 1, two weeks earlier than most people started staying home, the vast majority of the nation's deaths — about 83 percent — would have been avoided, the researchers estimated. Under that scenario, about 54,000 fewer people would have died by early May.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/20/us/coronavirus-distancing-deaths.html>

Inactivity due to the coronavirus lockdown is putting vulnerable people with obesity, hypertension and lung disease at risk of further health complications, study shows

Brits with obesity, lung disease and hypertension have increased their risk of suffering from chronic conditions by cutting down on exercise during lockdown. UK scientists fear people who are already vulnerable to COVID-19 due to pre-existing conditions are in a 'no win' situation as they cut down on vital exercise and stay indoors. People with medical conditions who perceived themselves or others in their home to be at risk had more frequently changed towards a more inactive lifestyle, they found.

<https://www.msn.com/en-au/news/science/inactivity-due-to-the-coronavirus-lockdown-is-putting-vulnerable-people-with-obesity-hypertension-and-lung-disease-at-risk-of-further-health-complications-study-shows/ar-BB14o7VK>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Australia records six new coronavirus cases almost a week after lockdown measures were eased

Two new cases in NSW and four new cases in Victoria recorded on Wednesday. Northern Territory became the second jurisdiction to become coronavirus-free. Several premiers announced or hinted at easing restrictions in coming weeks

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8342961/Australia-records-six-new-coronavirus-cases-week-lockdown-measures-eased.html>

New Lockdown

New Coronavirus Outbreak in China Prompts Limited Lockdown

The emergence of dozens of new coronavirus cases around a northeastern Chinese city has prompted authorities to lock down the area and replace some officials, a limited return to strict controls at a time when the government is trying to spur economic activity.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-coronavirus-outbreak-in-china-prompts-limited-lockdown-11590009192>

New Coronavirus Outbreaks Push China to Impose Wuhan-Style Lockdown in the Northeast

Infections in the northeast have led officials to sequester hundreds of thousands at home. "China doesn't want to take any chances," one expert said.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/21/world/asia/coronavirus-china-lockdown.html>