

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

4th Aug 2020

News Highlights

Virus cases soar in Philippines as millions placed under lockdown

Almost a quarter of the population of the Philippines, more than 27 millions people, will go back under lockdown as the country fights a steep increase in coronavirus cases, with confirmed infections surging past 100,000. [President Rodrigo Duterte announced the restrictions on Sunday, saying they apply to the capital Manila and four surrounding provinces.](#)

Eid-Al-Adha celebrated around the world amidst coronavirus restrictions

Muslims around the world celebrated the islamic 'sacrifice holiday' of Eid-Al-Adha, also known as Bakrid, even as celebrations were muted because of coronavirus restrictions meant to discourage crowds. In Egypt, [public gatherings and in-person mosque services were banned and the government mandated that livestock could only be slaughtered by regulated butchers and not in private homes and gardens](#), though not all complied.

Norwegian cruise liner halts operations temporarily after outbreak in ship

Dozens of passengers and crew of the MS Roald Amundsen, a Norwegian cruise ship, have tested positive for Covid-19 and hundreds of passengers are in quarantine and awaiting test results. Hurtigruten, the company the ship belongs to, [has halted all leisure cruises because of the outbreak and the Norwegian government has announced it will stop all cruise ships with more than 100 people on board from disembarking passengers for at least 14 days.](#)

Britons suffer increased insomnia with coronavirus lockdowns

Research conducted by Prof Jane Falkingham at Southampton University has indicated that the number of Britons suffering from insomnia has steeply increased since lockdown restrictions were implemented in the UK on March 23. [Factors such as social isolation, job losses, financial problems, illness, fear of illness and the challenges of juggling work and home-schooling have all contributed to anxiety and resultant sleep problems.](#)

Lockdown Exit

Spanish and Italian manufacturing activity picks up after virus hit

Activity in Spain's manufacturing sector picked up by more than expected in July, an early indication that the country's economy may be experiencing the start of a rebound. Data released last week indicated Spain was the European economy hardest hit by the pandemic in the three months to June. The IHS Markit purchasing managers' index for Spanish manufacturing rose to 53.5 in July, from 49.0 a month earlier — above the 50 threshold which indicates the majority of business managers reported an improvement in activity compared with the previous month. The reading was higher than the 52.0 expected by economists polled by Reuters.

<https://www.ft.com/content/b5a9460a-ad00-4607-8daf-8ccba63c1a25>

How the Pandemic Defeated America

How did it come to this? A virus a thousand times smaller than a dust mote has humbled and humiliated the planet's most powerful nation. America has failed to protect its people, leaving them with illness and financial ruin. It has lost its status as a global leader. It has careened between inaction and ineptitude. The breadth and magnitude of its errors are difficult, in the moment, to truly fathom.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/09/coronavirus-american-failure/614191/>

School is back in Germany — but coronavirus is not gone

All of Germany is looking toward the eastern state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in the coming days. In 2020, the sparsely populated region in northeastern Germany is the first to start the school year this time. Summer holidays are staggered in Germany, so not all 16 federal states go on vacation at the same time, clogging the nation's airports and famed autobahns. This year's return to school can best be described as a large-scale experiment.

<https://www.dw.com/en/german-schools-reopen-despite-coronavirus/a-54415687>

Thousands of students return as schools reopen in Germany

Thousands of children attended classes as northern Germany became the first region in Europe to reopen schools on Monday. In Germany's Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, wearing masks will be mandatory for students and people belonging to different age groups will be taught separately so that if one pupil gets infected, the whole school doesn't need to close.

<https://www.wionews.com/world/thousands-of-students-return-as-schools-reopen-in-germany-317875>

Coronavirus Northern Ireland: Three weeks without Covid-19 death

Northern Ireland has gone three weeks without a death from Covid-19. The latest figures from the Department of Health show it has been 21 days since the last person died from coronavirus, with the death toll remaining at 556. Over the weekend another 40 positive cases of Covid-19 were confirmed bringing the total to 5,988 since the pandemic began. The new cases were detected after 4,632 tests were carried out on 3,206 people. There are currently three Covid-19 patients in Northern Ireland's hospitals with two in intensive care units. In Northern Ireland's care homes there are currently five active outbreaks of the virus with 171 being closed after the virus was found to no longer be present.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/coronavirus-northern-ireland-three-weeks-without-covid-19-death-39418212.html>

Coronavirus: Dozens test positive for Covid-19 on Norwegian cruise ship

At least 41 passengers and crew on a Norwegian cruise ship have tested positive for Covid-19, officials say. Hundreds more passengers who travelled on the MS Roald Amundsen are in quarantine and awaiting test results, the company that owns the ship said. The ship, which belongs to the Norwegian firm Hurtigruten, docked in the port of Tromsø in northern Norway on Friday. Hurtigruten has halted all leisure cruises because of the outbreak. "This is a serious situation for everyone involved. We have not been good enough and we have made mistakes," Chief Executive Daniel Skjeldamsaid in a statement on Monday. "A preliminary evaluation shows a breakdown in several of our internal procedures," he added. "The only responsible choice is to suspend all expedition sailings."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53636854>

Coronavirus: Eight ways lockdown easing has changed the UK

Restrictions on daily life in many parts of the UK - to try to curb the spread of coronavirus - have been eased in recent weeks. Employers in England can bring staff back to the workplace and people can use public transport for non-essential journeys (while wearing face coverings). Many pubs, shops and restaurants have reopened, while most of those who have been shielding are no longer advised to stay at home. There are places where the easing of lockdown measures has been halted -

Leicester and Greater Manchester, for example. But, overall, how have people in the UK responded?
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-52229828>

UK coronavirus hospital deaths up by five in lowest rise since lockdown began

The coronavirus death toll in the UK has risen by nine, bringing the total number of fatalities linked to the disease to 46,210, according to the latest Government figures. A further 938 people were confirmed to have the virus in the 24-hour period to 9am on Monday, the Department of Health said on Monday. Separately figures from the UK's statistics agencies show there have now been 56,400 deaths registered in the UK where Covid-19 was mentioned on the death certificate.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/uk-coronavirus-deaths-hospital-increase-five-lowest-since-lockdown-a4515346.html>

Anger as UK nightclub 6 miles from lockdown area reopens with £200 tickets and huge queues

Switch nightclub in Preston, Lancashire, has been allowed open its doors to punters who paid up to £200 for a ticket after the council gave it the green light - but photos show revellers packed together with no social distancing

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/anger-uk-nightclub-6-miles-22458819>

Coronavirus: 'Relief' for Leicester firms out of lockdown

Owners of restaurants, pubs and hairdressers in Leicester have spoken of their "relief" at being able to open for the first time since March. Businesses due to ease coronavirus restrictions with the rest of England on 4 July were told on 29 June to remain shut under a local lockdown. At the end of last week it was announced some hospitality companies in Leicester could finally reopen. Shop owner Drew Harriman said they now felt "ready for anything".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-53631679>

Exit Strategies

Spain to roll out COVID-19 app twice as effective as human tracers in pilot

Spain aims to roll out a COVID-19 contact-tracing app across the country in September after saying on Monday that a pilot showed it could detect almost twice as many potential infections as human trackers during a simulated outbreak on a tiny island. In the absence of a vaccine or cure, states are deploying Bluetooth wireless technology to log contacts and alert people when someone they have been near tests positive. Spain used a new system developed by Google (GOOGL.O) and Apple (AAPL.O) which holds data on individual devices to ensure privacy, to build an app it tested on La Gomera, an island next to the tourist hotspot of Tenerife in the Canary archipelago, in July.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-apps-spain/spain-to-roll-out-covid-19-app-twice-as-effective-as-human-tracers-in-pilot-idUKKCN24Z1TJ>

We must not wait idly for an elusive Covid-19 vaccine

A package of behavioural and drug-based interventions will save lives and better prepare us for the next crisis. The two lessons to be drawn are that our aspirations in vaccine development are not always realised, and that we can make great progress nonetheless with new drugs and other interventions. Our faith in vaccines against Covid-19 is partly driven by the counter-narrative, which is equally true. Smallpox was eradicated by a vaccine and those against polio, measles and other viral diseases have greatly improved human health. Still, the challenges to developing and deploying a safe and effective Covid-19 vaccine in 2021 are substantial. We do not know whether natural infection confers robust immunity.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a544c0de-7274-4831-b164-6059cd68d15c>

Coronavirus: Sewage testing for Covid-19 begins in England

Sewage testing is being conducted across England in a bid to develop wastewater-based Covid-19

surveillance. Scientists discovered early in the pandemic that infected people "shed" the virus in their faeces. Further research concluded that wastewater sampling could provide a signal of a coronavirus outbreak up to a week earlier than medical testing. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs says this has begun at 44 wastewater treatment sites. A Defra spokesperson said the government was working with scientists, water companies and the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They would "monitor for fragments of coronavirus genetic material".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-53635692>

Coronavirus: Lockdown 'reverse gear' warning after pub cluster

Scotland's national clinical director has said there has to be a "reverse gear" over easing lockdown after 27 Covid-19 cases were linked to a pub. Prof Jason Leitch was speaking after the cluster emerged on Sunday linked to the Hawthorn Bar in Aberdeen. NHS Grampian said contact tracing efforts were continuing to find all those associated with the outbreak and 123 people had now been contacted. The pub said cases were linked to customers who visited on 26 July.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-53631321>

U.K. Reviewing Covid-Fighting Options Including London Lockdown

The U.K. is looking at all options for tackling flare-ups of the coronavirus and will use regional data to target its response, Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick said, following newspaper reports that a London-wide lockdown is being considered if cases spike in the capital.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-02/u-k-reviewing-covid-fighting-options-including-london-lockdown>

Spanish minister claims UK could lift Balearic and Canary Islands quarantine today

Spain's tourism minister has said that Brits returning from the Balearic and Canary islands may soon not have to self-isolate for 14 days after visiting the popular destinations

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/travel/news/breaking-spanish-minister-says-uk-22461648>

Coronavirus: France makes masks mandatory in some outdoor public spaces

Wearing a mask in certain outdoor public spaces has been made mandatory in some French towns and cities. Local state representatives have been given the authority to impose face coverings in outdoor public areas after hundreds of new clusters emerged over the last few weeks. The new measures have been introduced in places many people are likely to gather like parks, markets and city centres, in areas where the virus has surged. In Nice, the mayor has declared that everyone is required to wear a mask in many areas of the southern French city, including parts of the famous Promenade des Anglais.

<https://www.euronews.com/2020/08/03/coronavirus-france-makes-masks-mandatory-in-some-outdoor-public-spaces>

Governor says California getting a grip on virus

Gov. Gavin Newsom said California appears to be getting a grip on a resurgence of the coronavirus, though he warned the state is a long way from reopening some of the businesses it shuttered for a second time last month because of rising infections and hospitalizations. The average weekly number of positive tests is down by a fifth, to 7,764 from its peak of nearly 9,900 a week ago. The seven-day rate of tests coming back positive statewide had peaked at nearly 8% late last month but has fallen to 6.1%, he said Monday, though the rate remains much higher in some hard-hit counties.

<https://apnews.com/bf4c1b6018a458f99b90a876f54247d6>

New Zealand axes travel bubble plans with Australia

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern says a trans-Tasman travel bubble with Australia is now a "long way off", given Australia's new position in the fight against COVID-19. After Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews declared a "state of disaster" including harsh new restrictions, Ms Ardern said the

country was no longer in a position to be thinking about a corridor across the ditch. Speaking on The AM Show on Monday, the New Zealand Prime Minister said it will likely be “several months” before a trans-Tasman bubble will even be considered, let alone put into practice between both nations given the number of coronavirus cases in Victoria.

<https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/health-safety/new-zealand-axes-travel-bubble-plans-with-australia/news-story/d192f76983641bc3d279f400200fa047>

Over-50s could be told to stay at home to avoid another lockdown

Millions of people over the age of 50 could be asked to stay at home under Boris Johnson’s plan to avoid the ‘nuclear’ option of a second nationwide lockdown. The targeted approach to deal with a potential second wave of coronavirus infections reportedly emerged in a ‘war game’ session with Chancellor Rishi Sunak this week. Under the proposal, people aged between 50 and 70 could be given ‘personalised risk ratings’ – based on factors such as age and health conditions – and asked to shield themselves in the event of an outbreak, the Times reported. During lockdown, more than two million were deemed to be most at risk and asked to shield themselves from the deadly virus at home.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/08/02/millions-50s-told-stay-home-uk-hit-second-wave-13071328/>

Coronavirus: Test and Trace needs 'scaling up' for schools to reopen safely

The NHS Test and Trace programme needs to be scaled up in order to reopen schools safely, researchers have said. A new modelling study has suggested reopening schools across the UK in September must be combined with a high-coverage test-trace-isolate strategy to avoid a second wave of coronavirus later this year. Researchers warned in a worst-case scenario, a second wave could be 2.3 times higher than the first, according to the study published in The Lancet Child And Adolescent Health. The study comes as Australian research found there were “low” levels of Covid-19 transmission in schools and nurseries.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-08-03/coronavirus-test-and-trace-needs-scaling-up-for-schools-to-reopen-safely-and-to-avoid-a-second-wave-study-finds>

Millions could be told to stay home in bid to avoid second UK lockdown

Boris Johnson has ordered officials to work-up a plan for avoiding a second national lockdown, according to reports, which could see millions told to stay at home again. The prime minister is considering asking the elderly to shield once again and is mulling lockdown-like conditions for London should there be a second wave of coronavirus infections, The Sunday Telegraph and The Sunday Times said. Under the proposals, a greater number of people would be asked to take part in the shielding programme, based on their age or particular risk factors that have been identified since March, reports the Telegraph. It could even see those aged between 50 and 70 given “personalised risk ratings”, said the Times, in a move that would add to the 2.2 million who were deemed most vulnerable and asked to shield themselves from society during the spring peak.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-08-02/boris-johnson-orders-preparations-to-avoid-second-national-lockdown>

Partisan Exits

'Masks make us slaves': thousands march in Berlin anti-lockdown protest - video

Up to 17,000 people, including libertarians and anti-vaccination activists, have marched in Berlin to protest against Germany's coronavirus regulations. Many flouted guidance on wearing masks and physical distancing as they accused the government of 'stealing our freedom'. While Germany had initial success in containing the virus, infections are rising and its R number has risen above one.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2020/aug/01/masks-make-us-slaves-thousands-march-in-berlin-anti-lockdown-protest-video>

The government is playing a very dangerous game over its lockdown strategy

The UK's planning vacuum has been obvious for months. Blaming the public for not sticking to the rules simply won't wash

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/coronavirus-lockdown-manchester-deaths-boris-johnson-hancock-second-wave-a9650981.html>

Critics are accusing the Philippines government of using the coronavirus lockdown to crack down on dissent

Questioning the world's toughest coronavirus restrictions can be a risky business in the Philippines. In mid-March, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte ordered parts of the country to go into a quarantine that would eventually last up to 80 days, and become one of the world's longest and strictest lockdowns. Protests against job losses and food shortages during that period were met with a strong police response and mass arrests. In April, Duterte publicly said police should "shoot ... dead" anyone who violated virus restrictions. "I will not hesitate. My orders are to the police, the military and the barangays: If they become unruly and they fight you and your lives are endangered, shoot them dead," Duterte said during a speech.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/03/asia/philippines-coronavirus-duterte-intl-hnk/index.html>

Coronavirus: WHO warns of 'no silver bullet' amid vaccine search

The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) has said that while there is hope for a vaccine against Covid-19, one might never be found. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a news briefing there was "no silver bullet at the moment - and there might never be". Mr Tedros implored people around the world to comply with measures such as social distancing, hand-washing and mask-wearing, saying: "Do it all." Globally, more than 18 million Covid-19 infections have been recorded. The death toll stands at 689,000, with both figures given by the US-based Johns Hopkins University.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-53643455>

An incoherent approach to controlling Covid-19

The recent approach to controlling Covid-19 transmission in England seems particularly boneheaded: the recent local "spikes" were entirely preventable by a proper system of testing, tracking and tracing, identifying contacts of individual cases and locking them down; this system is just not in place, and no macro-statistic of total tests undertaken will substitute for it. This is what "local measures" should mean, not targeting huge swathes of the urban population. Second, the measures recently adopted are incoherent to the point of absurdity - I can go out with friends for dinner, but not visit my mother? The danger here is lack of credibility, exacerbated by a complete inability to enforce such parochial restrictions.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/02/an-incoherent-approach-to-controlling-covid-19>

Thousands of anti-lockdown rail against coronavirus lockdown measures in Berlin

Thousands of anti-lockdown protesters marched through central Berlin on Saturday in a show of growing opposition to distancing measures. The demonstration, titled "The End Of The Pandemic - Freedom Day", saw huge crowds of people waving flags and chanting as they processed past the famous Brandenburg Gate. Protesters held placards with messages saying "Corona, false alarm", "We are being forced to wear a muzzle" and "Natural defence instead of vaccination".

<https://inews.co.uk/news/thousands-anti-lockdown-protesters-end-coronavirus-measures-berlin-569181>

Architect of UK's coronavirus lockdown Neil Ferguson says he has never met Boris Johnson

The former government adviser whose modelling is credited with finally convincing Downing Street to impose a coronavirus lockdown has revealed he has never met Boris Johnson. Imperial College London epidemiologist and former Sage adviser Neil Ferguson became nicknamed "Professor Lockdown" after his team's report in mid-March suggested 510,000 people could die from Covid-19 in the UK without any government intervention, and that the NHS would be overwhelmed regardless.

The dramatic modelling is widely reported to have been the catalyst for the UK's lockdown, after crucial weeks of governmental indecision over a herd immunity strategy versus the lockdown restrictions springing up across Europe

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/neil-ferguson-architect-coronavirus-lockdown-boris-johnson-a9648576.html>

Continued Lockdown

Less than half of people in England understand current lockdown rules

Levels in Scotland and Wales have also fallen but are higher than those in England, with reported levels of understanding at 75% and 61% respectively. Complete understanding has fallen even further, with only 14% of adults in England reporting understanding the rules completely as lockdown eased, compared to 18% in Wales and 27% in Scotland.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-08-people-england-current-lockdown.html>

Scientific Viewpoint

COVID-19 rapid antibody test to be rolled out in August

This milestone means the rapid test, for detection of IgG antibodies to the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) is now available for distribution for professional use. It will be mass produced and tests will be rolled out from the end of August. The test can be administered by healthcare professionals, such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists and healthcare workers. Following production of tens of thousands of tests across multiple production scale batches the test has been shown to be 99.40% accurate. Testing was performed at Ulster University and at the laboratories of Abingdon Health. The test will be named the "AbC-19 Rapid Test". It uses a small drop of blood from a finger-prick, and shows results in 20 minutes, without the need to send a sample to a lab.

<https://www.med-technews.com/news/covid-19-rapid-antibody-test-to-be-rolled-out-in-august/>

COVID-19 long-term toll signals billions in healthcare costs ahead

Late in March, Laura Gross, 72, was recovering from gall bladder surgery in her Fort Lee, New Jersey, home when she became sick again. Her throat, head and eyes hurt, her muscles and joints ached and she felt like she was in a fog. Her diagnosis was COVID-19. Four months later, these symptoms remain. Gross sees a primary care doctor and specialists including a cardiologist, pulmonologist, endocrinologist, neurologist, and gastroenterologist. "I've had a headache since April. I've never stopped running a low-grade temperature," she said. Studies of COVID-19 patients keep uncovering new complications associated with the disease.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-fallout-insight/covid-19-long-term-toll-signals-billions-in-healthcare-costs-ahead-idUKKBN24Z1C5>

Hyperglycaemia and insulin treatment highlighted as poor outcome indicators for COVID-19

People with diabetes treated with insulin to get their blood glucose under control while in hospital with COVID-19 had particularly high rates of poor outcomes, Chinese research has found. It comes as another study from China has suggested uncontrolled blood sugar levels on admission to hospital for coronavirus is a risk factor for poor COVID-19 outcomes in people without diabetes.

<https://www.diabetes.co.uk/news/2020/aug/hyperglycaemia-and-insulin-treatment-highlighted-as-poor-outcome-indicators-for-covid-19.html>

COVID-19: Pharma on the frontline

Pharma stepped up to support the NHS, the country and the World during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some examples of pharma on the frontline of COVID-19. On the frontline - medical affairs to ICU doctor George Godfrey, AstraZeneca UK

https://pharmafield.co.uk/in_depth/covid-19-pharma-on-the-frontline/

Dozens of COVID-19 vaccines are in development. Here are the ones to follow.

More than 150 coronavirus vaccines are in development across the world—and hopes are high to bring one to market in record time to ease the global crisis. Several efforts are underway to help make that possible, including the U.S. government's Operation Warp Speed initiative, which has pledged \$10 billion (£7 billion) and aims to develop and deliver 300 million doses of a safe, effective coronavirus vaccine by January 2021. The World Health Organisation is also coordinating global efforts to develop a vaccine, with an eye toward delivering two billion doses by the end of 2021.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/science-and-technology/2020/08/dozens-of-covid-19-vaccines-are-in-development-here-are-the-ones-to>

WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 3 August 2020

On Friday, the Emergency Committee on COVID-19 met and reviewed the current pandemic. It was a sobering moment coming six months on from when the Committee advised, and I agreed, that the outbreak constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. At the time, 30 January, there were fewer than 100 cases and no deaths outside of China. When the Committee met three months ago, three million cases of COVID-19 had been reported to WHO, and more than 200,000 deaths. Since then, the number of cases has increased more than fivefold to 17.5 million, and the number of deaths has more than tripled, to 680,000. In addition to the direct toll COVID-19 is having, the Committee noted the health impact that disrupted services are having on a range of other diseases.

<https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---3-august-2020>

Coronavirus: New 90-minute tests for Covid-19 and flu 'hugely beneficial'

New 90-minute tests that can detect coronavirus and flu will be rolled out in hospitals and care homes from next week. The "on-the-spot" swab and DNA tests will help distinguish between Covid-19 and other seasonal illnesses, the government said. The health secretary said this would be "hugely beneficial" over the winter. Currently, a third of tests take longer than 24 hours to process. The announcement comes as the government pushed back a July target to regularly test all care home staff and residents - a key move to identify so-called silent spreaders, those who are infected but do not show symptoms. This is unlikely to be achieved until September because the number of testing kits has become more limited.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53632043>

COVID-19 has “devastating” effect on women and girls

Natalia Kanem, executive director of the UN Population Fund, is among experts warning about disrupted health services and a surge in gender-based violence. Sophie Cousins reports. As the COVID-19 pandemic accelerates, fears are increasing about the effect of the pandemic on women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and their access to care. In response to COVID-19, in March, WHO issued interim guidance for maintaining essential services during an outbreak, which included advice to prioritise services related to reproductive health and make efforts to avert maternal and child mortality and morbidity.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31679-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31679-2/fulltext)

The Americas Account For 50% Of Top Countries Hardest Hit By Covid-19

Of the top 10 countries that have reported the greatest number of cases, five of them are in the Americas, based on Johns Hopkins University's Covid-19 map. Important U.S. states are seeing a spike in the infection curve. Perhaps our over-reliance on case loads rather than hospitalizations makes it worse than it is. But for those in the government taking their cues from positive SARS-CoV-2 test results, even if the patient is not in need of hospitalization, then the spike in California,

Texas and Florida is a headwind in every sense of the word — bad for markets, bad for business, bad for schools, bad for society.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2020/08/03/the-pandemic-has-wreaked-havoc-on-all-of-the-americas-from-the-us-to-argentina/>

Coronavirus: WHO warns of 'no silver bullet' amid vaccine search

The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) has said that while there is hope for a vaccine against Covid-19, one might never be found. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a news briefing there was "no silver bullet at the moment - and there might never be". Mr Tedros implored people around the world to comply with measures such as social distancing, hand-washing and mask-wearing, saying: "Do it all." Globally, more than 18 million Covid-19 infections have been recorded. The death toll stands at 689,000, with both figures given by the US-based Johns Hopkins University.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-53643455>

Covid test: 'An entire laboratory in this cartridge'

New 90-minute tests that can detect coronavirus and flu will be rolled out in care homes and laboratories from 10 August in the UK. Currently, three-quarters of test results are returned within 24 hours and a quarter can take up to two days. The government says almost half a million of the new rapid swab tests, called LamPORE, will be available in adult care settings and laboratories, with millions more due to be rolled out later in the year. Additionally, thousands of DNA test machines, which can analyse nose swabs, will be rolled out across NHS hospitals from September. The "on-the-spot" swab and DNA tests will help distinguish between Covid-19 and other seasonal illnesses, according to the government. Professor Chris Toumazou, CEO of DnaNudge, showed the BBC how the new test works.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/video_and_audio/headlines/53637993/coronavirus-testing-demonstrating-a-90-minute-test

Testing, Tracking Can Keep Students' Virus Risk Low, Studies Say

Only 1.2% of people caught the virus after they were in contact with 27 children or teachers who were infectious, according to a study of schools and nurseries in New South Wales, Australia, where track, trace and isolation measures were used. Further analysis of seven sites found the disease was less likely to spread from child to child than from staff to staff, researchers said Monday in The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health journal. Concerns over resurgent infections have grown as countries struggle to re-open schools and childcare centers full-time. Federal data show that children account for more of total infections than previously thought in some U.S. states, spurring those such as California to reverse course and continue with online classes. While children account for a very small proportion of Covid deaths, researchers still aren't sure of their overall role in the pandemic.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-03/testing-tracking-can-keep-students-virus-risk-low-studies-say>

Coronavirus lockdown caused sharp increase of insomnia in UK

The number of Britons suffering sleep loss caused by worrying rose from one in six to one in four as a direct result of the huge disruption to people's social and working lives after the restrictions began on 23 March. Social isolation, loss of employment, financial problems, illness, fear of getting infected with coronavirus and the pressures of juggling work and home-schooling all contributed to the trend. Prof Jane Falkingham, from the Economic and Social Research Council-funded Centre for Population Change at Southampton University, which undertook the research, said: "Sleep loss affected more people during the first four weeks of the Covid-19 related lockdown than it did before. We observed a large increase in the number of Britons, both men and women, suffering anxiety-induced sleep problems.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/08/02/coronavirus-lockdown-increase-insomnia-uk-sleep-mothers>

Switzerland should tighten coronavirus restrictions again, government advisor says

Switzerland should tighten restrictions to curb the coronavirus again following a recent spike in cases, in order to prevent the need for much harsher lockdown measures in future, the new head of the country's coronavirus taskforce said. Switzerland has seen the number of new cases of COVID-19 surge to more than 200 a day recently after an average of 35 per day in June. Martin Ackermann, who heads the body that provides scientific advice to the Swiss government, said the country was on the brink of a big increase in infections and had little room to manoeuvre. "We should intervene early to prevent exponential growth," Ackermann told newspaper SonntagsZeitung. "Otherwise there's a risk of drastic and expensive restrictions. This must be prevented under all circumstances."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-swiss/switzerland-should-tighten-coronavirus-restrictions-again-government-advisor-says-idUSKBN24Y0C5>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Top US official urges 'really hard' lockdown as coronavirus outbreak enters 'new phase'

The US economy could benefit if the nation were to "lock down really hard" for four to six weeks, a top Federal Reserve official has said, as a senior White House official warned America was entering a new phase in which the coronavirus was "extraordinarily widespread" in rural areas as well as cities. The US economy, which in the second quarter suffered its biggest blow since the Great Depression, would be able to mount a robust recovery, but only if the virus were brought under control, Neel Kashkari, president of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank, told CBS' Face the Nation.

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/north-america/top-us-official-urges-really-hard-lockdown-as-coronavirus-outbreak-enters-new-phase-20200803-p55hws.html>

Spain's new wave of infections hits the young, middle-aged

Like most Spaniards, Emma Gaya thought the worst of the pandemic was behind her. Spain's government had ended a three-month lockdown after an COVID-19 onslaught that claimed at least 28,400 lives in the European Union nation. To kickstart its stalled economy, Spaniards were encouraged to cautiously resume their lives under a "new normality" based on wearing face masks, washing hands and social distancing.

<https://cbsaustin.com/news/coronavirus/spains-new-wave-of-infections-hits-the-young-middle-aged>

Coronavirus Australia: Call for stage 3 lockdown in Sydney

An epidemiologist has suggested Sydney may need to go into stage three lockdown in order to stay on top of the growing COVID-19 clusters. Professor Tony Blakely aired his "unpopular" opinion while speaking with Sunrise on Monday morning. "I'm going to be unpopular in saying this but I certainly think Sydney should be sitting a stage three lockdown because you don't want to let the virus get ahead of you," he told the program. "New South Wales is on the edge at the moment." A stage three lockdown would see Sydney residents only allowed to leave their homes to shop for essentials, exercise, to go to work or school or for care or caregiving.

<https://www.news.com.au/world/coronavirus/coronavirus-australia-call-for-stage-3-lockdown-in-sydney/news-story/68ce5c42fc3f1c9f9ff4c5284b28f8cf>

Vietnam says early August 'decisive' in containing coronavirus

Vietnam is in the midst of a "decisive" fight against the novel coronavirus, its premier said on Monday, focusing on the city of Danang where infections have appeared in four factories with a combined workforce of 3,700. Vietnam, widely praised for its mitigation efforts since the coronavirus appeared in late January, is battling several new clusters of infection linked to Danang after going more than three months without detecting any domestic transmission. "We have to deploy full force to curb all known epicentres, especially those in Danang," official broadcaster Vietnam Television quoted Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc telling government officials. "Early August will be the decisive time within which to stop the virus from spreading on a large scale."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vietnam/vietnam-says-early-august-decisive-in-containing-coronavirus-idUSKBN24Z0FO>

Vietnam says it has no plans for widespread lockdown

Vietnam has no plans for a widespread lockdown and will only put areas considered epicentres under strict quarantine, the government's spokesperson said on Monday. "We will only implement social distancing in areas considered virus epicentres, and will not pursue a widespread lockdown," Mai Tien Dung, the government's spokesman, told a monthly press conference on Monday. Dung said selective lockdown measures would allow the government to achieve the dual goals of containing the virus and boosting the economy at the same time. "If there's an infection in a hamlet, we will lock down that hamlet only, not the whole district or the whole province," he said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vietnam-lockdown/vietnam-says-it-has-no-plans-for-widespread-lockdown-idUSKBN24Z1G7>

Philippine economy fears as coronavirus curbs reintroduced

Tens of millions of people in and around the Philippine capital will go back to a strict lockdown from Tuesday, threatening incomes and hopes for reviving a once dynamic economy as authorities take drastic measures to halt surging virus cases. Before the coronavirus pandemic, the Philippines was one of Asia's fastest growing economies, but tough restrictions from mid-March to May pushed it to the brink of recession, and hopes for a swifter recovery are looking bleak with the return of measures set to squeeze commerce. The lockdown in Manila and nearby provinces is being reinstated for an initial two weeks after a prominent medical group warned the healthcare system could collapse from soaring COVID-19 cases that scaled new records on four straight days until Monday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-philippines/philippine-economy-fears-as-coronavirus-curbs-reintroduced-idUKKBN24Z0D7>

Philippines to reimpose stricter coronavirus lockdown in capital as cases spike

The Philippines will reimpose a stricter coronavirus lockdown in and around the capital for two weeks from Tuesday, authorities said on Sunday, as the country struggles to contain infections that have jumped to more than 100,000 cases. President Rodrigo Duterte has approved placing Metro Manila and nearby provinces such as Laguna, Cavite, Rizal and Bulacan under so-called "Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine" (MECQ) until Aug. 18, his spokesman Harry Roque told reporters. Some businesses and public transport are expected to be closed in the capital, which is currently under the less restrictive General Community Quarantine classification.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-philippines/philippines-to-reimpose-stricter-coronavirus-lockdown-in-capital-as-cases-spike-idUKKBN24Y0KJ>

Testing 'may not prevent new coronavirus wave' when schools reopen

Current testing and contact tracing is inadequate to prevent a second wave of coronavirus after schools in the UK reopen, scientists have warned. Increased transmission would also result from parents not having to stay at home with their children, they say. Researchers said getting pupils back to school was important - but more work was needed to keep the virus in check. The government said plans were in place to ensure schools can fully reopen at the start of the new school year. "Local health officials, using the latest data, will be able to determine the best action to take to help curb the spread of the virus should there be a rise in cases," a statement said. Schools have been shut around the world as countries used lockdowns to control the spread of Covid-19. It is estimated 1.6 billion children have been kept out of the classroom.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53638083>

New Lockdown

Northern England lockdown: Why you can go to the pub, but not sit in a friend's garden

Inconsistencies have led to sharp criticism of the government. Since the restrictions were imposed in Greater Manchester and parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire on Friday: Wigan MP and shadow foreign secretary Lisa Nandy said "the way the government has announced this has been an absolute shambles and made it harder to follow advice" Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham criticised the government for not publishing the exact rules immediately after the announcement was made on Thursday night - Francis Crick Institute director Sir Paul Nurse suggested the government is not treating the public like adults

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/northern-england-lockdown-pubs-gardens-134534729.html>

Spain locks down two more towns after new coronavirus outbreaks

Two towns just three miles apart in north-west Spain went back in lockdown on Sunday, following a new outbreak of coronavirus. At least 49 people have tested positive following an outbreak at a slaughterhouse. Now around 10,000 residents in Iscar and Pedrajas de San Esteban, in Valladolid, must remain in their homes unless they have to go outside for an 'unavoidable' reason. Travel will be allowed between the towns but residents are not allowed to leave otherwise. Citizens face tough fines after officials warned that some people had not been taking the rules on face masks and social distancing seriously enough. Extra police patrols are being drafted in, as well as a helicopter to ensure the new rules are followed

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/travel/news/spain-locks-down-two-more-22459929>

Millions return to lockdown in Philippines as virus cases soar

More than 27 million people in the Philippines -- about a quarter of the population -- will go back into lockdown Tuesday after overwhelmed health workers warned the country was losing the battle against the coronavirus. Since the beginning of June, when much of the country emerged from one of the world's longest stay-at-home orders, confirmed infections in the archipelago have increased fivefold, surging past 100,000. The new restrictions announced by President Rodrigo Duterte late Sunday apply to the capital Manila and four surrounding provinces on the main island of Luzon.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200803-millions-return-to-lockdown-in-philippines-as-virus-cases-soar>

Manila returning to lockdown as coronavirus cases surge

The Philippine president has agreed to place the capital and outlying provinces back under a lockdown after medical groups warned that the country was waging "a losing battle" against the coronavirus amid an alarming surge in infections. Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said Monday that metropolitan Manila, the capital region of more than 12 million people, and five densely populated provinces will revert to stricter quarantine restrictions for two weeks starting Tuesday. The move, which finance and economic officials oppose, will again prohibit non-essential travel outside of homes.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/08/03/asia-pacific/manila-coronavirus-lockdown-again/>

Melbourne lockdown: Business owners await COVID workplace restrictions

Meat products are in short supply and customers are growing increasingly frustrated as Melburnians queue outside supermarkets to stock up on essentials. There was a 15-minute wait as shoppers lined up outside Woolworths in Mill Park on Monday morning. Shopper Amanda Cunningham said the wait wasn't as nearly "as bad" as Sunday's, moments after the Premier announced Melbourne would plunge into a strict stage four lockdown. "All hell seemed to break loose yesterday," she said. "Today isn't so bad, but I mean if we have to queue every time we need milk and bread, it's going to make things difficult." Inside the store, Thomastown's Hanna Knowles vented her frustration at not being able to find chicken two times in the past 24 hours. "It's good that there are buying limits for meat now, but yesterday people were going nuts and every store I go to there are meat shortages. Everyone's saying people are scared abattoirs will be shut."

<https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/melbourne-business-owners-await-more-bad-news-as-premier-daniel-andrews-set-to-announce-further-workplace-restrictions/news-story/59c9d58c78c0c9d596915d541b91e054>

Australia's job recovery is losing momentum as Victoria enters stage four lockdown. Economists are urging the federal government to do more.

Jobs continued to bounce back in July, but its trajectory upwards has slowed considerably in the latest report from ANZ Bank. "The second wave of COVID-19 cases and return to Stage 3 restrictions in Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire have undoubtedly weighed on the recovery in labour demand so far," senior economist Catherine Birch said. With Victoria moving to stage four at the beginning of August, the federal government will need to do even more to support a jobs recovery, Birch noted.

<https://www.businessinsider.com.au/australia-jobs-recovery-victoria-stage-four-2020-8>

Victoria lockdown: NSW considers harsher border restrictions

Only those authorised under the public health order may enter NSW if they have been in Victoria in the last 14 days, the Premier said that could be strengthened to impact NSW residents if COVID-19 cases don't start to slow down. South Australia hardened its borders last week, meaning anyone – including SA residents – would not be able to enter the state if they had been anywhere in Victoria. "There are various checks in place, and if we need to do more, we will," Ms Berejiklian said on Monday.

<https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/health-safety/victoria-lockdown-nsw-considers-harsher-border-restrictions/news-story/e599a37da3c3dc3706eb60ab66fdb010>

Australia Orders Six-Week Closure of Melbourne Businesses Amid Outbreak

Australia is ordering non-essential businesses in Melbourne, its second-largest city, to close for six weeks starting Wednesday as authorities try to control an outbreak that accounts for nearly all of the country's new coronavirus cases. Health officials reported Monday 429 new COVID-19 infections and 13 deaths in Victoria state, which includes Melbourne. In addition to closing most stores, other industries such as construction and meat production will have to limit their operations starting Friday. The Victoria government declared a COVID-19 disaster in Melbourne on Sunday, and with the new restrictions going into effect, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Monday that workers in Victoria who do not have paid sick leave and have to isolate themselves will be eligible to receive a payment of about \$1,000.

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/australia-orders-six-week-closure-melbourne-businesses-amid-outbreak>

'A gargantuan task': The mistakes Victoria made in Stage Three lockdown

Melbourne residents are facing a difficult six-week period as harsh Stage Four restrictions including a nightly curfew have been imposed on the Victorian city. The drastic move was announced by Premier Daniel Andrews on Sunday in the face of stubbornly high virus cases persisting in the state. Despite referring to the introduction of a face mask mandate as "essentially Stage Four" last week, new cases continued to mount and health authorities were forced to tighten the screws even further. After more than three weeks of Melbourne under Stage Three restrictions, it was deemed that more restrictions were needed.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/coronavirus-mistakes-victoria-made-in-stage-3-lockdown-101409030.html>

Coronavirus: How Melbourne's stringent new lockdown compares to NZ's

Melbourne is under a strict new lockdown following a second wave of coronavirus sweeping the city. Premier of Victoria Daniel Andrews announced the tougher restrictions on Sunday, in response to the rapidly rising Covid-19 cases which officials are desperately trying to get on top of. The latest lockdown bears resemblance to New Zealand's level 4 restrictions, but aren't quite as severe. Before the latest rules were announced, Australian experts had been calling for tougher measures for some

time, including the mandatory use of face masks. Here's a look at Melbourne's latest stringent measures, and how it compares to New Zealand's successful response.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/122326712/coronavirus-how-melbournes-stringent-new-lockdown-compares-to-nzs>

What Victoria can learn from New Zealand's drastic lockdown

You can tell a bit about a collective mood from internet memes. Berlin-based author Konstantin Richter, who was stranded in New Zealand during its drastic seven-week coronavirus lockdown, wrote in Politico of a joke doing the rounds: "God was spotted in New Zealand. 'What are you doing in Aotearoa, God?' 'Working from home, bro!'" Melbourne lockdown memes are comparatively glum: "COVID and Australia is like the Spice Girls. Everyone is doing their bit but Victoria is ruining it for everybody." Support for New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is stratospheric following the country's elimination of the virus from the community. With just weeks until the September election, Labour has soared to 60.9 per cent in polls under Ms Ardern's leadership, the highest in polling history.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/what-victoria-can-learn-from-new-zealand-s-drastic-lockdown-20200803-p55i5n.html>

Factbox: Australia's Victoria state imposes new lockdown measures

** For the next six weeks, a daily curfew from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. bars nearly five million Melbourne residents from leaving their houses except for work or to receive or give care. ** Melbourne residents are not allowed to move any further than 5 kms (3 miles) away from their homes with limited exceptions. ** Only one person per household can spend up to one hour away from home to shop within the 5 kms radius. ** Recreational activities and most home visits are no longer allowed and residents may only spend one hour exercising outdoors in groups not exceeding two. ** All schools will move to remote learning from Wednesday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia-restrict/factbox-australias-victoria-state-imposes-new-lockdown-measures-idUKKBN24Z0Q2>

Egyptians Celebrate Eid Al-Adha With Coronavirus Restrictions

During this year's Eid al-Adha celebrations in Egypt, worshippers watched and listened to last year's prayers on TV and the radio. Public gatherings and in-person mosque services were banned. The government mandated that people who wished to slaughter livestock — the mainstay of the Islamic "sacrifice holiday" — should bring their animals to specific, regulated butchers. Some people followed the new rules, others did not. Gardens, small butcher shops and sidewalk celebrations ran with the blood of sheep, goats and cows sacrificed in honor of the holiday.

<https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/egyptians-celebrate-eid-al-adha-coronavirus-restrictions>