COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

1st Jun 2020

News Highlights

France bans hydroxychloroquine while U.S. sends doses to Brazil

A few days afer the WHO temporarily removed hydroxychloroquine from global testing over safety concerns, France stopped using the drug in clinical trials and banned it as a treatment for Covd-19 patients. However, the U.S. has sent Brazil 2 million hydroxychloroquine doses as a prophylactic for frontline healthcare workers.

Major tourist sites reopen in Italy after lockdown lifts

Iconic tourist sites in Italy, such as The Leaning Tower of Pisa and The Colesseum, opened over the weekend, after being shut for more than three months. All sites will have strict safety measures in place, with visitors having to wear face masks and an electronic device that will ensure social distancing by beeping within one metre of another person

New Zealand: Few deaths but high economic cost

New Zealand is being hailed as a coronavirus success story, with only 22 deaths and 1,504 infections in a country of five million people. However, the country has made payments equal to 20% of its GDP to support welfare, wages, health and tax reductions. The level of quantitative easing by New Zealand is expected to be about 20% of its GDP, as compared to 10% in the UK and Australia.

India loosens lockdown despite consistent rise in cases

Restaurants, hotels, malls and places of worship are set to start opening up in India from June 8 onwards, despite a steady rise in cases that have taken the country's tally to 174,500 cases and close to 5,000 fatalities. Areas with a high number of cases will still be locked down but economic activity in other areas is slowly being encouraged.

Lockdown Exit

Covid-19 clusters emerge as lockdowns ease across Europe

Several European countries a few weeks ahead of the UK on the road out of lockdown have experienced local spikes in coronavirus infections, but all have maintained an overall downward trend in new daily cases of the virus. Most governments, though, continue to warn of the real threat of a second wave of Covid-19 cases and to insist on the importance of physical distancing if the spread of the virus is not to pick up again as restrictions ease further.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/28/covid-19-clusters-emerge-as-lockdowns-ease-across-europe

New Zealand's big bill for 'lockdown we didn't need'

New Zealand's spending on welfare support, and the exte nt of its quantitative easing, are significantly higher as a measure of gross domestic product (GDP), than other countries that have been more affected by Covid-19, Treasury data shows. Treasury's latest Covid-19 economic dashboard shows that New Zealand has made payments in support of welfare, wages, health and tax reductions equal to 20 per cent of GDP. The extent of central bank quantitative easing is

expected to be equal to just under 20 per cent of GDP. That compares to quantitative easing expected to equal 10 per cent of GDP in the United Kingdom, with welfare support at about 5 per cent.
https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/300023771/new-zealands-big-bill-for-lockdown-we-didnt-need

Coronavirus: New Zealand has all but eradicated COVID-19 - but now comes the hard part
New Zealand has all but eradicated the coronavirus, with just one person known to still be infected. The Pacific nation of almost five million people recorded just 22 deaths from COVID-19, which has killed more than 360,000 worldwide. There were 1,504 infections recorded and all but one of the survivors has recovered.
https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-new-zealand-has-all-but-eradicated-covid-19-but-now-comes-the-hard-part-11996826

Australian pubs face a long road back after lockdown
Publican Leisa Wheatland says a large empty pub is a bit like a school with no kids, "it's pretty sad and lonely without patrons." Coffee windows, jam jar cocktails, takeaway dinners and "takeovers" by patrons are keeping Australia's shuttered pubs afloat, but as the industry toasts the lifting of lockdown laws next week, publicans say bouncing back from the brink is not as simple as pouring a pint.
https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/australian-pubs-face-a-long-road-back-after-lockdown-20200528-p54x8r.html

Calm before the storm for Japan suicides as coronavirus ravages economy
Health workers fear the pandemic's economic shock will return Japan to 14 dark years from 1998 when more than 30,000 people took their lives annually. With the grim distinction of the highest suicide rate among G7 nations, Japan adopted legal and corporate changes that helped lower the toll to just over 20,000 last year. Worried the current crisis will reverse that downward trend, frontline workers are urging the government to boost both fiscal aid and practical support. "We need to take steps now, before the deaths begin," said Hisao Sato, head of an NGO that provides counseling and economic advice in Akita, a northern prefecture long known for Japan's worst suicide rate.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-japan-suicides/calm-before-the-storm-for-japan-suicides-as-coronavirus-ravages-economy-idUSKBN2350BE

Post-lockdown holidays in China show how weird summer will be
In China, where coronavirus recovery is further along than anywhere else in the world, anxiety about the virus still affects people's travel decisions. Official data shows only a smattering of new infections over the past month, but even so, 30 per cent of travellers chose destinations near home, confining their travel to within their own province. Becoming infected with coronavirus is one concern. Not knowing what restrictions and measures are in place in other provinces is another — though China's central government in Beijing sets the overall direction, many decisions are left to local governments.
https://www.wired.co.uk/article/china-holidays-uk-coronavirus

China's PMI to show gradual factory recovery from lockdown paralysis - Reuters poll
China's factory activity likely rose for a third straight month in May as the economy recovered from strict lockdowns implemented to contain the coronavirus outbreak, which has hammered global business activity. The official manufacturing Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI), due for release on Sunday, is forecast to rise to 51.0 in May, from 50.8 in April, according to the median forecast of 23 economists polled by Reuters. A reading above 50 indicates an expansion in activity. Recent PMIs in many other economies have plummeted to previously unimaginable lows.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-china-economy-pmi-poll/chinas-pmi-to-show-gradual-factory-recovery-from-lockdow

n-paralysis-reuters-poll-idUKKBN2350SJ

French bistros turn on their stoves as lockdown eased

France was promised a return to an “almost normal life” yesterday as the prime minister authorised restaurants to reopen and city dwellers to start planning trips to the seaside. Édouard Philippe unveiled a battery of decisions to ensure “freedom will become the rule and restrictions the exception” in the second phase of the government’s lockdown exit strategy. Chefs will be able to turn on their stoves again, the Mona Lisa will once more greet visitors to the Louvre and tourists will be able to return to the Eiffel Tower. Mr Philippe said France wanted Europe’s internal borders reopened on June 15, but insisted that if Britain went ahead with its plan to quarantine people arriving from France for 14 days, Paris would impose a similar quarantine period

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/french-bistros-turn-on-their-stoves-as-lockdown-eased-tc2q9jqbw

No room for complacency as France's strict lockdown lifts

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe presented a new map for easing lockdown restrictions on Thursday, dividing the country into green and orange zones. "Things are looking good, but not good enough to return everything back to normal," Philippe announced Thursday as he unveiled the new map for easing lockdown restrictions. All of France went green, with the exception of Ile-de-France, Guiana and Mayotte where there is still cause for concern. The new orange classification takes Ile-de-France, Guiana and Mayotte out of the previous red danger zone.

https://uk.news.yahoo.com/no-room-complacency-frances-strict-112609811.html

Older Italians Warily Eye Young Crowds, Fearing 2nd Coronavirus Wave

After months of living under a strict lockdown in Italy, a closely gathered group of teenagers welcomed a warm evening this week at a verdant park in Milan, gazing at phone screens, embracing and forming a small circle around a playful dog. No one wore a mask. Pinuccia Ciancalloni, 59, who was taking her daily walk through the park on Tuesday, pointed at the group with dread. To her, the expressions of young love and healthy sociability amounted to a profound threat. She complained that the dozen teenagers lacked civic sense and could potentially drive up the curve of coronavirus infections just as things had started to improve in the region of northern Italy that is the heart of Italy’s epidemic.

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/29/world/europe/italy-young-people-coronavirus.html

Coronavirus: Germans cautious dining out despite lockdown easing

Although Germany started easing lockdown measures earlier this May, it has yet to see a significant spike in infections, which experts say is because of the continuing cautiousness of Germans even after rules have eased. Germany’s Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for disease control has recorded only 300 to 600 new daily coronavirus cases in the past few days. Local authorities have also agreed to pull an "emergency brake" and reimpose social curbs if the infection rate rises above 50 cases per 100,000 residents over a week.

https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/coronavirus-germans-cautious-dining-out-despite-lockdown-easing-1.1026305

Leaning Tower of Pisa among sites in Italy to reopen after lockdown

Some of Italy’s most famous cultural sites are coming back to life after being closed for more than three months as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The Leaning Tower of Pisa reopened on Saturday, the Colosseum and Vatican Museums will welcome visitors again from Monday and Florence’s Uffizi gallery from Tuesday. A huge exhibition marking the 500th anniversary of the death of the Renaissance painter Raphael will open at Le Scuderie del Quirinale in Rome on Monday. All sites and museums are reopening with strict safety measures in place. The Leaning Tower of Pisa, which usually attracts 5 million visitors a year, is only permitting 15 people in at a time. They have to wear face masks and an electronic device that warns them if they are less than a metre of anyone

else.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/31/leaning-tower-of-pisa-among-sites-italy-to-reopen-after-lockdown-colosseum-visitors-coronavrius

Exit Strategies

Chile surpasses 1,000 coronavirus deaths, almost 100,000 cases confirmed
More that 1,000 people have died from the coronavirus in Chile, the health ministry reported on Sunday, with 827 of the deaths occurring in May alone as the pandemic spreads quickly in the South American mining powerhouse.The country has had 99,688 confirmed cases of the disease so far, 1,054 of them fatal, the ministry said. “We know we are in the most difficult weeks,” Undersecretary of Health Paula Daza said in a televised address. “We are making decisions and taking measures every day to contain the spread,” Daza added.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-chile/chile-surpasses-1000-coronavirus-deaths-almost-100000-cases-confirmed-idUKL1N2DD07U

Local lockdowns could be used if coronavirus cases rise, says Raab
The government could impose geographically targeted measures to combat coronavirus such as locking down specific cities if an easing of restrictions in England brings about a rise in new cases, Dominic Raab has said. The foreign secretary defended the decision to allow bigger outdoor gatherings and other new freedoms, which has prompted alarm from some government scientific advisers, but said he accepted it was a “delicate and dangerous moment”.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/31/local-lockdowns-could-be-used-coronavirus-cases-rise-says-raab

Coronavirus: India to loosen lockdown despite record cases
India has announced plans to further ease a strict national lockdown even as the country reported a record daily rise in new coronavirus cases. From 8 June, restaurants, hotels, shopping centres and places of worship will be allowed to re-open in many areas in the first stage of a three-phase plan. Weeks later, probably in July, schools and colleges will resume teaching. But areas with high numbers of Covid-19 cases will remain under tight lockdown. The plan comes after India registered a new record single-day rise in confirmed infections, with nearly 8,000 cases reported on Saturday. In total India has recorded some 174,500 cases and nearly 5,000 deaths. The nation of 1.3 billion has been hit less hard by the coronavirus than many other countries.
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52862160

How to use the toilet at a friend's house under new lockdown rules for England
Lockdown rules in England will change from Monday allowing you to have up to six people at a time visit your home. But there are strict rules that go along with the changes - including no physical contact,
https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/how-use-toilet-friends-house-18328208

South Korea postpones school reopening due to new outbreak
South Korea has postponed the planned reopening of more than 800 schools as it battles a renewed outbreak of the coronavirus, with cases now at their highest level for almost two months. The country’s easing of lockdown measures has gone into reverse, with museums, parks and art galleries closed again on Friday for two weeks. Kindergarten pupils, and some primary and secondary school students were due back from Wednesday, in the last phase of school reopenings. According to the education ministry, however, 838 schools out of 20,902 nationwide remain shut. They are located in areas hard hit by the latest wave of infections, including the capital, Seoul, and the cities of Bucheon and Gumi.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/29/global-report-philippines-opens-up-despite-record-cases-as-asia-struggles

What a post-lockdown lockdown bar could look like - including thermal imaging cameras and some staff in visors

Thermal imaging cameras, bar staff in visors and orders on an app: this is how one of Manchester's most popular bars plans to finally reopen. Albert's Schloss has today revealed the measures it's putting in place to keep staff, customers and the venues performers safe. It could be a taste of things to come at hospitality venues across Greater Manchester and the rest of the UK. Before being seated or served, customers will face a temperaturescreening from a thermal imaging camera which alerts staff to anyone with an elevated temperature. If staff suspect anyone on site is unwell - customer or otherwise - they are likely to be asked to leave and seek medical attention.

https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2020-05-29/what-a-post-lockdown-lockdown-bar-could-look-like-including-thermal-imaging-cameras-and-some-staff-in-visors/

UK lockdown rules: what are the key changes?

The prime minister announced on Thursday that groups of up to six people could meet outdoors in England from Monday, permitting what he described as "a long-awaited and joyful moment" as family and friends reunite after 10 weeks in lockdown. He set out the next stage in the easing of restrictions with a caveat that "there may still be some anomalies, or apparent inconsistencies, in these rules". The UK government was yet to publish the promised guidance on the new rules on Friday afternoon but here is what has been announced so far.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/29/uk-lockdown-rules-what-are-the-key-changes

'It's going to get wild': Scotland begins to ease coronavirus lockdown

As Nicola Sturgeon used her daily press briefing to urge the public to "err on the side of caution" and avoid flocking to beauty spots, the anticipated exodus to lochsides and beaches took time to gather momentum. And if some appeared relaxed in their interpretation of guidance to remain within five miles of home, the practical limitations of barricaded car parks and insufficiently robust bladders had their effect. It is the first time in more than two months that Scots have been able to socialise beyond their immediate households. The relief was palpable for Barry Gillies, watching his 6-year-old son paddling at Duck Bay Marina, on the west shore of Loch Lomond, as jetskiers roared across the water. "I'm a single dad, so it's good to get out and talk to adults," he said.

https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/29/scotland-begins-to-ease-coronavirus-lockdown-national-parks

UK public is getting used to living in lockdown as government moves to lift restrictions

As restrictions in the UK start to loosen from 1 June, over a third of the public say they're getting used to living in lockdown conditions, which allow them to work flexibly from home. An Ipsos Mori poll found that more than a third – 38% of 2,254 respondents – said the restrictions will not become "extremely difficult" to cope with, up by more than 10 points at the beginning of April.

https://www.fnlondon.com/articles/uk-public-is-getting-used-to-living-in-lockdown-as-government-moves-to-lift-restrictions-20200529

UK lockdown rules: what you are allowed to do from Monday

The prime minister announced on Thursday that groups of up to six people could meet outdoors in England from Monday, permitting what he described as "a long-awaited and joyful moment" as family and friends reunite after 10 weeks in lockdown. He set out the next stage in the easing of restrictions with a caveat that "there may still be some anomalies, or apparent inconsistencies, in these rules". The UK government was yet to publish the promised guidance on the new rules on Friday afternoon but here is what has been announced so far.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/29/uk-lockdown-rules-what-are-the-key-changes

Coronavirus: Lockdown eased across UK and calls to extend self-employed support

In the latest small step towards a return to normality, people from two different households in Scotland can now meet outdoors after 66 days in full lockdown. Similar measures are to be

announced for Wales later, coming into force on Monday - which is also when up to six people from different homes in England will be able to gather. Northern Ireland, meanwhile, looks ahead to 8 June for the reopening of retail parks and even outdoor weddings with 10 guests.
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52845630

Coronavirus: Scotland begins to ease out of lockdown
People in Scotland are now able to meet friends and family again as the country begins to ease its lockdown after 66 days. The new rules mean that people from two households can meet outside so long as they keep at least two metres apart. Groups of no more than eight should meet at a time, and you should not go into anyone else's house. At her daily media briefing, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon called for "caution" as the new rules take effect. She also stressed that people should still stay at home as much as possible.
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-52837564

Extra legroom and no interval: Germany plans for post-lockdown theatre
Berliner Ensemble unveils auditorium with most chairs ripped out, but some left in pairs, for a socially distanced audience who can visit the toilet during the play
https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2020/may/29/theatre-post-lockdown-spaced-seating-berliner-ensemble-germany

Spain will open gradually to tourism, beginning with European countries
Spain usually welcomes more than 80 million visitors each year, making it one of the most visited countries in the world, with tourism a key part of its economy. But it has been hard hit by the coronavirus crisis and wants to be cautious as it opens to visitors from Jul 1, Gonzalez Laya said. “In this very atypical year of 2020, we will not be able to behave as usual,” she said. “It's health. It's making sure that we do not import cases as we are trying to control the cases we have in the country. It's very prudent management on our side to make sure we put COVID under control.” Much remains to be decided as to who will be able to travel where and on what criteria, with talks going on first with European countries on when a territory can be deemed safe, Gonzalez Laya said.
https://en.mercopress.com/2020/05/29/spain-will-open-gradually-to-tourism-beginning-with-european-countries

Spain continues to relax lockdown measures
Spain will continue to relax its containment measures from Monday, authorities announced on Thursday. Andalusia, the Valencia region, a large part of Catalonia and the archipelagos of the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands will be able to move on to phase 2 of deconfinement.
https://www.brusselstimes.com/all-news/114090/spain-continues-to-relax-lockdown-measures-from-monday/

Iconic sites stay shut as France lifts lockdown restrictions
The Eiffel Tower is shown lit with the word 'merci,' French for 'thank you,' in Paris in late March. The famed tower, the Louvre museum and the Palace of Versailles will remain off-limits for the immediate future, as France lifts most of its remaining coronavirus lockdown restrictions next week
https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/eiffel-louvre-remain-closed-france-1.5589882

French, Germans and Italians divided on pace of lockdown easing says Euronews poll
A survey commissioned by Euronews shows that people in Italy, France and Germany have different views on the pace of easing restrictions. The poll, carried out by Redfield & Wilton Strategies, involved 1,500 participants from each of the three EU countries. While 45 per cent of Italians surveyed say lockdown measures are being eased at the right pace, 42 per cent of Germans think things are moving too fast. In contrast, the prevailing view in France is that the pace is too slow. The question of social distancing is also divisive. It's not only difficult to maintain in urban settings, it's alien to cultures where shaking hands and greeting others with kisses are a reflex.
https://www.euronews.com/2020/05/29/french-germans-and-italians-divided-on-pace-of-lockdown-easing-says-euronews-poll

Coronavirus rules: Scotland's sedate stroll out of lockdown

People across Scotland have been heading out into the sunshine to take advantage of the relaxation of some the lockdown restrictions. And it seems that those gathering in parks and beaches have been keeping their distance and adopting a cautious approach to their new freedoms.

https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-52850892

Kazakhstan to ease lockdown next week

Kazakhstan will take down police checkpoints between its regions next week and reopen kindergartens and gyms as it moves to ease its coronavirus lockdown, the government said on Friday. The Central Asian republic, which has reported 9,932 cases of the new coronavirus and 37 deaths, plans also to restart railway transport in big cities and regional centres from June 1, as well as long-distance bus routes. Sports and cultural facilities will also reopen, but spectators will not yet be allowed, the prime minister's website said.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-kazakhstan/kazakhstan-to-ease-lockdown-next-week-idUSKBN23526L

Contact tracing may help avoid another lockdown. Can it work in the US?

To contain the spread of Covid-19, Alaska is planning to triple its number of contact tracers. Utah has retrained 150 state employees. And New York and other states are hiring thousands of people. And that, health experts say, might not be enough. To suppress their epidemics to manageable levels, countries around the world have turned to contact tracing — tracking down people who might have been exposed to the coronavirus to ensure they don't pass it to others, a way of stalking routes of viral spread and severing them before they reach more people. And, to varying degrees, it has worked. But, for it to succeed in the United States, experts are cautioning that it's going to take more people, more money, and more cooperation than the country has in place.

https://www.statnews.com/2020/05/29/contact-tracing-can-it-help-avoid-more-lockdowns/

Indonesians return to mosques, at a distance

Muslims in some parts of Indonesia attended Friday prayers as mosques closed by the coronavirus for weeks were allowed to start reopening in the world's most populous Muslim nation. The guidelines for worship facilities released by religious affairs minister Fachrul Razi on Friday change many traditions in mosques. Worshippers usually pray shoulder to shoulder, and they huddle, hug and shake hands once the prayer ends, with cheek-to-cheek kisses common. Muslims in the Jakarta satellite city of Bekasi were expected to stay at least one meter (yard) apart with no handshaking, and heard shorter sermons. No children were allowed to join the prayers, and police and soldiers ensured health protocols such as social distancing and mask wearing were observed.

https://uk.news.yahoo.com/asia-today-duterte-easing-lockdown-020830267.html

Small outdoor gatherings permitted as UK eases lockdown

Six people will be allowed to gather outdoors in the United Kingdom after the prime minister announced an easing of restrictions. Boris Johnson praised the public for its efforts in the fight against the coronavirus, saying the government's five requirements were being met – including a consistent fall in the death rate and ensuring the health system could cope.

https://www.skynews.com.au/details/_6160143054001

Western Australia to finally relax lockdown laws with gyms to open and 300 people allowed in pubs

Western Australia will enter stage 3 of eased lockdown restrictions on June 6. The relaxed laws will increase gathering limits and allow up to 300 people. Patrons must be seated at all times inside pubs, restaurants and food courts. Gyms, health clubs and beauty services will be able to operate as normal

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8368601/Western-Australia-finally-relax-lockdown-laws-gyms-open-300-peo

ple-allowed-pubs.html

What is phase 2 of lockdown? New rules for England explained, and how the rest of the UK is easing measures

While lockdown measures have slowly begun to ease, a further lifting of restrictions will soon be implemented across England. The UK government must review lockdown measures every three weeks, with the next update due to take place on 28 May. Any amendments made to the current rules will then come into force a few days later, from 1 June.

https://inews.co.uk/news/phase-2-lockdown-uk-new-rules-england-what-coronavirus-explained-measures-2865221

New Zealand close to coronavirus eradication, despite grim global figures

New Zealand has all but eradicated coronavirus from its shores, with just one person in the nation of five million known to be still infected. The development is in stark contrast to the global outlook, however, where the spread of the pandemic generally remains grim - with India reporting another record increase in cases, and deaths reaching a new peak in Pakistan.

https://www.itv.com/news/2020-05-29/new-zealand-close-to-virus-eradication-despite-grim-global-figures/

France's PM Édouard Philippe cautiously lifts most of Covid-19 lockdown measures

France will allow most restaurants, parks and schools to progressively reopen from June 2, French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe. "The results are good regarding the health plan... Good, but not sufficiently good for everything to return to normal," Philippe said. He called for everyone to remain alert. Parks and gardens will open, but meeting in groups of more than 10 people are still prohibited. Parks and gardens will once again be open as Parisians cooped up in small apartments will be able to enjoy the outdoors. Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo had repeatedly called on the government to open the parks for Parisians.

http://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20200528-france-s-pm-%C3%A9douard-philippe-cautiously-lifts-most-of-covid-19-lockdown-measures

Partisan Exits

Coronavirus updates: EU asks U.S. to reconsider cutting ties with WHO as India extends lockdown in 'containment zones'

President Donald Trump announced Friday that he is "terminating" the country's relationship with the World Health Organization after repeatedly criticizing the group for its response to the coronavirus crisis and accusing the agency of being "China-centric." Trump's strained relationship with the WHO could bring complications as scientists around the world race for a Covid-19 cure and treatment.

https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/30/coronavirus-live-updates.html

The rushed easing of lockdown measures could devastate Italy

With more movement and contact, an increase in infections is expected. But will the current set up, with the regions in the driving seat, allow for a swift containment of potential hotspots, or is there a risk of another wave of uncontrolled infections? At this stage, nobody knows, but a more orderly and nationally coordinated reopening of the economy with mass testing, a contact tracing app, a significant increase in the number of contact tracers, and stricter measures for the isolation of confirmed cases, would certainly reduce the risks.

https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/rushed-easing-lockdown-measures-devastate-italy-200526112110970.html

Coronavirus: As we head out of lockdown, Government assurances the 'five tests' have been met are on shaky ground

To the relief of some and the concern of others, the Government has announced a significant drawing back of the strict social distancing rules the country has been following. From Monday,

schools and some shops will open and people will no longer be consigned to meeting just one person from outside their household – groups of six can gather and guests can be invited to private gardens.
https://inews.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-as-we-head-out-of-lockdown-government-assurances-the-five-tests-have-been-met-are-on-shaky-ground-2868591

Germany's virus 'guru' in crosshairs of lockdown critics
The Bild row centres around preliminary results from a study by Drosten's Charite team that claimed children can spread COVID-19 as easily as adults. The issue is key as millions of parents hope to see schools completely reopen. A Bild reporter gave Drosten just an hour to respond to a list of critical comments on the study from other scientists, provoking him to post an angry response on Twitter. "I have better things to do," he said, publicly shaming the reporter by posting a screenshot of the email including the journalist's phone number. The scientists cited by Bild have distanced themselves from the article, saying their comments were simply made in the spirit of critical feedback aimed at improving research.
https://www.france24.com/en/20200529-germany-s-virus-guru-in-crosshairs-of-lockdown-critics

Critics say lockdowns will be more damaging than the virus. Experts say it's a false choice
These arguments are unconvincing, say economists. To fix the global economy, fix the global pandemic, they add. Survey data shows the US economy was winding down even before US states were mandating stay-at-home policies. Fear of the virus mean people were shopping less, small businesses were closing and cutting employment.
https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/29/europe/lockdown-skeptics-coronavirus-intl/index.html

Continued Lockdown

Clacton-on-Sea: 'British common sense is saving us from Covid, not the government'
Sunbathers in seaside town say if lockdown works, it won't be because of 'confusing and hypocritical' official advice
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/31/clacton-on-sea-british-common-sense-is-saving-us-from-covid-not-the-government

Coronavirus lockdown: UK faces 'very sensitive moment' as rules ease despite high number of new cases
Britain faces a "very sensitive moment" as new lockdown rules come in to force in England and Wales on Monday, ministers and leading scientists have warned. Dominic Raab said the Government was prepared to reimpose strict lockdown measures at a local level if cases of coronavirus are seen to start rising again. Many leading experts, including some of those who advise ministers, believe that the UK is lifting its lockdown too quickly while Covid-19 continues to exact a heavy toll.
https://inews.co.uk/news/britain-faces-very-sensitive-moment-as-lockdown-rules-ease-despite-high-number-of-coronavirus-cases-2870106

Nearly 17,000 fines issued in England and Wales for alleged lockdown breaches
Nearly 17,000 fines for alleged breaches of coronavirus lockdown rules have been issued by police in England and Wales, latest figures show. The provisional data from the National Police Chiefs' Council shows a total of 16,947 fixed penalty notices (FPNs), including 15,552 in England and 1,395 in Wales, were recorded by forces up to May 25. But since lockdown measures were eased on May 13, the number of penalties have plummeted with a total of 841 fines handed out by forces in England.
https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/fines-lockdown-breaches-latest-figures-17000-how-many-a4454676.html

Government rejected radical lockdown of England's care homes
An 11-point plan proposing "a further lockdown of care homes" was submitted to Downing Street on

28 April by officials at Public Health England (PHE), as fatalities peaked in care homes and the virus spread to half of homes in the worst-affected areas. They urged ministers to “use NHS facilities and other temporary accommodation to quarantine and isolate residents”, and to “consider whether staff can move into the care home for the next four weeks”. But neither of the proposals, recommended as “high impact”, were included in a subsequent action plan on infection control announced by the health secretary, Matt Hancock, last week.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/28/government-rejected-radical-lockdown-england-care-homes-coronavirus

Coronavirus: Lockdown rules 'unfair on many families'
The changes to the coronavirus lockdown rules in Wales are not fair on people living away from their families or in rural communities, some of those affected have said. From Monday, two households will be allowed to see each other outside but will be asked to stay local - within five miles as a "general rule". Some families told BBC Wales this makes it impossible for them to meet up. First Minister Mark Drakeford said some unfairness was inevitable.
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-52848124

Coronavirus: only half of UK adults 'strictly' sticking to lockdown rules
The ongoing UCL Covid-19 study, launched in the week before lockdown, now shows that "complete" compliance of following government recommendations, such as social distancing and staying at home, has decreased in the past two weeks - declining from an average of 70 per cent of people who were "completely" adhering to just over 50 per cent. Compliance levels among younger adults were even lower, with only 40 per cent "completely" complying with lockdown rules.
https://inews.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-half-uk-adults-strictly-sticking-lockdown-rules-ucl-2868110

Moscow court jails journalist for one-person protest during coronavirus lockdown
A Moscow court on Thursday jailed a prominent anti-Kremlin journalist for a one-person protest during the city’s coronavirus lockdown, sentencing him to 15 days in prison. Ilya Azar, a journalist at the Novaya Gazeta newspaper, which is critical of the Kremlin, was detained by police on Tuesday as he stood alone outside the Russian capital’s police headquarters to protest against the criminal prosecution of a popular blogger. Such one-person protests are usually legal in Russia, but Sergei Sobyanin, the city’s mayor, has banned public events during the coronavirus epidemic and said that people only have the right to leave their homes for specific tasks, which do not include political protests. A court on Thursday found Azar guilty of repeatedly breaking protest legislation and ordered him jailed for 15 days.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-politics-journalist/moscow-court-jails-journalist-for-one-person-protest-during-coronavirus-lockdown-idUSKBN2342VP

Lockdown breach fines plummet as restrictions ease
The number of fines for breaches of lockdown rules has plunged since measures were eased, with just 841 handed out by police in England, new figures show. A total of 16,947 fixed penalty notices (FPNs), including 15,552 in England and 1,395 in Wales, were recorded by forces up to May 25, according to provisional data released by the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC). There were 1,019 issued in England during the latest two-week period, between May 12 and 25 – although the figure is likely to be revised upwards as more fines are reported – compared to 4,967 during the previous fortnight.
https://uk.news.yahoo.com/lockdown-breach-fines-plummet-restrictions-134914273.html

Online child abuse rising during lockdown warn police
Reports of obscene online material more than doubled globally to more than four million between March and April. The US-based Center for Missing and Exploited Children said some of that rise related to one especially horrific and widely-circulated video. In the UK, where 300,000 people are

considered a threat to children, there were nearly nine million attempts in the last month to access child sexual abuse websites which had been previously blocked by the Internet Watch Foundation. The anti-child abuse charity which reports sites to internet service providers, says that since the lockdown began there has been an 89% drop in site deletions by the tech companies.
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-52773344

How to stop people going to crowded beaches this weekend
With over 24,000 confirmed cases, weeks of restrictions on movement and a crippled economy in need of revival, Ireland is emerging from lockdown. As the numbers of daily infections and mortalities decrease, and we move tentatively towards easing restriction measures, there is the ever-present risk that complacency, fatigue and lack of compliance could rebound and force us back into extensive lockdown again. The welcome announcement by Chief Medical Officer Tony Holohan that "we have effectively extinguished the virus from the community,' was accompanied by the risk requirement that there is "no certainty we can keep this virus suppressed."
https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2020/0528/1143159-crowded-beaches-complacency-fatigue-lockdown-coronavirus-risk-communication/

Scientific Viewpoint

Coronavirus update: United States sends Brazil 2 million hydroxychloroquine doses, UK brushes aside criticism of early reopening
The United States has sent Brazil millions of doses of hydroxychloroquine as a prophylactic for frontline health workers and a treatment for patients with COVID-19, even though scientific evidence has not backed up those uses.
https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-01/coronavirus-updates-uk-defends-easing-lockdown/12305848

UK govt advisors sound warning on easing virus lockdown
Senior advisors to Boris Johnson's government on Saturday warned it was too early to lift the lockdown, just two days before the UK further relaxes coronavirus restrictions. As people revelled in soaring temperatures by flocking to beaches and parks, several members of the government's own Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) told ministers they risked a second wave of infection. One -- epidemiologist Professor John Edmunds -- said the move was "a political decision". Another prominent scientist, Sir Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust and also a member of Sage, warned explicitly on Twitter that the government's was wrong on its timing. Covid-19 spreading too fast to lift lockdown in England," wrote Farrar.
https://uk.news.yahoo.com/uk-govt-advisors-sound-warning-easing-virus-lockdown-182740443.html

Covid-19 spreading too fast to lift UK lockdown – Sage adviser
Government advisers have voiced unease over the decision to lift England’s lockdown while thousands of people a day are still becoming infected with the coronavirus, warning that loosening restrictions could easily lead to a second wave. “We cannot relax our guard by very much at all,” said John Edmunds, a professor of infectious disease modelling at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine who attends meetings of Sage, the scientific advisory group on emergencies. There are still 8,000 new infections every day in England without counting those in hospitals and care homes, Edmunds said. “If you look at it internationally, it’s a very high level of incidence.” World Health Organization statistics suggest it is the fifth highest in the world.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/29/covid-19-spreading-too-fast-to-lift-uk-lockdown-sage-adviser

Coronavirus: Germany 'can avoid second wave'
One of Germany's top virologists, Christian Drosten, says the country could avoid a second wave of coronavirus infections. With more known about the virus, it may be possible to keep COVID-19 limited to local flare-ups.

https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-germany-can-avoid-second-wave/a-53621681

Coronavirus: Early testing and swift lockdowns prevented 'up to 100000 deaths' in Germany

Germany's early response to the virus in terms of developing and deploying coronavirus tests at the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, and the government's quick response to scientists' recommendations has prevented thousands of deaths in the country, according to a leading virologist. In an interview with Der Spiegel magazine (link in German), Christian Drosten, director of the Virology Institute at Berlin's Charité hospital, said that without his lab's work developing a coronavirus diagnostic test in January, Germany would have been less well-prepared for the outbreak. "In mid-February we were able to routinely test for Sars-CoV-2 in Germany," Drosten said. "If we hadn't been able to test so early, if we scientists hadn't informed politicians, I believe we would now have 50,000 to 100,000 more deaths in Germany."

https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/coronavirus-early-testing-and-lockdown-prevented-up-to-100000-deaths-in-germany-111918215.html

'We are losers in this crisis': research finds lockdowns reinforcing gender inequality

Life during the coronavirus lockdown has reinforced gender inequality across Europe with research emphasising that the economic and social consequences of the crisis are far greater for women and threaten to push them back into traditional roles in the home which they will struggle to shake off once it is over. Throughout the continent, campaign groups are warning that the burdens of the home office and home schooling together with additional household duties and extra cooking, has been unequally carried by women and that improvements made in their lives by the growth in equality over the past decades are in danger of being rolled back by the health crisis.

https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/may/29/we-are-losers-in-this-crisis-research-finds-lockdowns-reinforcing-gender-inequality

Can we apply these lessons from South Korea to vanquish COVID-19?

South Korea is a standout in the current battle against COVID-19, largely due to its widespread testing and contact tracing; however, key to its innovation is publicly disclosing detailed information on the individuals who test positive for COVID-19. These measures prove more effective at reducing deaths among than comprehensive stay-home orders, according to new research from University of California San Diego, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Chicago.

https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-05-lessons-south-korea-vanquish-covid-.html

France Bans Malaria Drug for Coronavirus Treatments

France on Wednesday revoked the authorization allowing hydroxychloroquine as a treatment for Covid-19 patients, a day after halting the use of the malaria drug in clinical trials. Both steps come on the back of moves by the World Health Organization to temporarily remove the drug from global trials over safety concerns.

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/world/coronavirus-world-global.html

What these medical experts want you to know about Australia's coronavirus response — and the dangers of complacency

A team of health and medical experts assembled on The Drum on Thursday night had a clear message: Australia made the right choice. The consequences, they warned, could have been far worse. "There is no doubt we had to do serious things, because even without the modelling, it was obvious what was happening in other countries already," said the Australian National University's Peter Collignon.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-29/the-drum-did-australia-get-its-coronavirus-response-right/12299632

Coronavirus Resurgence

Spanish tourism minister says UK must 'improve' its Covid record before Brits will be allowed in

Spain's tourism minister Maria Reyes Maroto said UK must improve Covid-19 rate. The prospect of Brits returning to Spanish beaches in next two weeks dashed German and Nordic countries most likely to be involved in tourism 'test-run'. Tourists arriving at Balearic Islands to be tested and isolate at airport for 6 hours. Comes after pressure on British government to scrap new quarantine rules

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8373929/Spanish-tourism-minister-says-UK-improve-Covid-record-Brits-allowed-in.html

South Korea reimposes some social distancing after COVID cases spike

South Korea reported 79 cases Thursday, its largest single-day rise in weeks. Majority of infections are linked to an outbreak at a warehouse near Seoul. Health minister has said the country will now reimpose social distancing rules. South Korea has been widely-praised for one of the world's best virus responses

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8364525/South-Korea-reports-largest-single-day-rise-coronavirus-cases-April.html

Coronavirus: South Korea shuts hundreds of schools amid spike in cases

South Korea has shut hundreds of schools and re-imposed strict lockdown measures following a spike in Covid-19 cases, sparking fears of a new wave of infections. Health officials recorded 79 coronavirus cases on Friday – the biggest daily increase since 5 April, when 81 infections were logged. The rise in cases led authorities to close more than 200 schools just days after they had reopened, with students returning to online lessons.

https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/south-korea-shuts-schools-spike-coronavirus-cases-deaths-spike-a9538441.html

Hundreds of South Korea schools close again after reopening

More than 500 schools closed again Friday to students after briefly reopening, as South Korea moves to stamp out a resurgence of the coronavirus in the capital, Seoul, and its surrounding metropolitan area. Parks, art galleries, museums and theaters operated by the government in the Seoul metropolitan area -- home to about half the country's population of nearly 52 million -- have also been closed to the public for the next two weeks. Government hosted events in the metropolitan area will be canceled or postponed as well, Health Minister Park Neung-hoo said Thursday. The authorities have recommended that private academies and internet cafes there close too until June 14

https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/29/asia/south-korea-coronavirus-shuts-down-again-intl/index.html

Asia Today: Virus cases jump again in South Korea, India

South Korea on Thursday reported its biggest jump in coronavirus cases in more than 50 days, a resurgence that health officials warn is getting harder to track and risks erasing some of the nation’s hard-won gains. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 67 of the 79 new cases reported were from the Seoul metropolitan area, where about half of South Korea’s 51 million people live. Following an emergency meeting, the government decided to shut public facilities such as parks, museums and state-run theaters in the metropolitan area over the next two weeks to slow the spread of the virus.

https://apnews.com/d69354bfec8c29de9ad73877e2ffc1fa

Coronavirus Spread Speeds Up, Even as Nations Reopen

The coronavirus pandemic’s pace is quickening worldwide, with nearly 700,000 new known infections reported in the last week after the pathogen found greater footholds in Latin America and the Gulf States. The virus has infected more than 5.7 million people around the world and killed at least 357,000, according to data compiled by The New York Times. It was only last Thursday that the

world crossed the dispiriting threshold of 5 million cases, after it took nearly two weeks for a million more infections to become known.
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/28/world/coronavirus-live.html