COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

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News Highlights

WHO urges countries to do more to fight coronavirus, says travel bans cannot be indefinite

Only weeks after relaxing international travel restrictions, Britain has imposed a quarantine of passengers returning from Spain, citing growing Covid-19 cases in the country. WHO director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, however, said in a briefing that travel bans could not remain in place indefinitely and countries need to do more to contain the spread of the virus, including adherence to social distancing, wearing masks and avoiding crowds.

Germany set to test all travellers from hotspots; Berlin couple spark search

As Covid-19 cases in Germany continue to rise, the Health Minister, Jens Spahn, announced plans to introduce mandatory testing for travellers returning from coronavirus hotspots around the world. Authorities are currently conducting an urgent contact tracing operation on a Berlin couple who returned from holiday in Manchester and ended up infecting 13 people out of the 50 the came into contact with.

Lockdown woes in Britain as people eat more, drink more and exercise less

A study of around 800 British adults has indicated that the pandemic and resultant lockdown has contributed to increased stress and a more unhealthy style of living. Almost half the survey participants said they have been less active during lockdown and were eating more processed foods and drinking more alcohol and many young adults reported that they suffered from sadness and anxiety.

Belgium announces new restrictions to fight surge in cases

Belgium is introducing new restrictions on social contact in an effort to fight a rise in Covid-19 cases without reimposing restrictive lockdowns. Prime Minister, Sophie Wilmes, said that from Wednesday, a Belgian family would only be allowed to meet 5 people from outside the household, down from 15 earlier. People would be encouraged to work from home, consumers would have to shop on their own and capacity at public events would be halved.

Lockdown Exit

Fifteen staff at NHS trust test positive for Covid-19

East Kent Hospitals tested 9,000 members of staff over five days last week and the results were announced on Tuesday. Kent has been under the spotlight after the region recorded some of the highest Covid-19 mortality rates in England last month. The 15 staff who tested positive are isolating in line with national guidance, the trust said. Chief medical officer Dr Rebecca Martin said: “We know that while many people experience mild – or even no – symptoms of Covid-19, they have the potential to carry and pass on the virus without knowing it.

https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/news/uk/fifteen-staff-at-nhs-trust-test-positive-for-covid-19/

Venice becomes first major film festival to return after coronavirus lockdown

Helen Mirren, Shia LaBeouf and Greta Thunberg are among the big names due to be on display at

the 2020 Venice film festival, as it gears up to be the first major festival to stage a physical event in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Inevitably the lineup has a slimmed-down feel, with many films delayed or held back, meaning there is little in the way of Venice's traditional dose of Hollywood glamour.
https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/jul/28/venice-2020-becomes-first-major-film-festival-to-return-after-coronavirus-lockdown

Germans more optimistic about post-lockdown world than French, Spanish and Italians - poll

Germans appear more confident about life post-lockdown than the French, Spanish and Italians, a Euronews-commissioned poll has found. Data from the survey, carried out by Redfield and Wilton Strategies, has found Germans feel a little less cautious than other Europeans as the continent emerges from months of coronavirus restrictions.
https://www.euronews.com/2020/07/28/germany-more-optimistic-about-post-coronavirus-world-than-france-spain-and-italy-poll

The art of contact tracing for the new workplace

I took the step out of curiosity. It was interesting to see a table blocking the entrance of the local temple and unless you enter your name and contact details after removing your shoes, you are not allowed to the almighty – as per NZ government rules. After all, the virus does not care about its creator. It only cares about one thing – reproduction. To its credit, the New Zealand government did try to learn the art of contact tracing during lockdown which reduced its cases to less than 50 in the country. All businesses, temples, churches, gyms, schools have a contact tracing register now. Going to a gym? You are not allowed entry – unless you enter your name and contact number in a register. This level of strictness made the island nation keep its numbers low, which reduced to zero at one point before increasing back to 20s (all in quarantine in government sponsored hotels).
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/the-adroit-human/the-art-of-contact-tracing-for-the-new-workplace/

Germany voices 'great concern' at virus spike, issues Spain warning

Germany's disease control agency voiced "great concern" Tuesday over rising virus numbers in the country as authorities issued a travel warning against parts of Spain. "We must prevent that the virus once again spreads rapidly and uncontrollably," Robert Koch Institute head Lothar Wieler told reporters. "The latest developments in the number of COVID-19 cases are of great concern to me and all of us at the RKI," he said. Germany has fared better than many of its neighbours in suppressing the virus, but Wieler urged citizens not to squander the progress following a spike in numbers in recent weeks. "It's in our hands how the pandemic evolves in Germany," Wieler said, calling on Germans to stick with prevention measures such as washing hands and keeping a safe distance.
https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/germany-voices-great-concern-at-virus-spike-issues-spain-warning.807930

Hinkley Point concrete supplier closed by Covid-19 outbreak

A concrete-making plant supplying the construction of the Hinkley Point C nuclear power station has been closed after 22 employees tested positive for Covid-19. Balfour Beatty said the Avonmouth site in Bristol was closed until further notice to reduce the virus's spread. It said the plant was deep cleaned over the weekend and the NHS Test and Trace procedure had been initiated. It said this had "so far shown no impact" on the Hinkley Point C site. "We continue to engage with all those affected and remain committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all those who work with and for us, as well as the general public," a spokesman added.
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-53555062

Exit Strategies

Covid-19 app launch in Northern Ireland is imminent – Health Minister

A smartphone app aimed at tracking the spread of coronavirus is set to be launched in Northern Ireland "imminently". Health Minister Robin Swann told the Stormont Assembly that the app will help to break transmission chains and reduce the reproductive rate of Covid-19. He said it will be "interoperable" with the equivalent app in the Republic of Ireland, and is also "highly likely" to be compatible with apps introduced in future across the UK and Europe. "This will be the first instance of such a solution worldwide and we'll be the first example of such apps operating in an interoperable manner," he told MLAs. "The Stop Covid NI app is due to go live imminently but the date that it will be released for download will be subject to the review process undertaken by the (Apple) App Store and Google Play.

https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/covid-19-app-launch-in-northern-ireland-is-imminent-health-minister-39404298.html

WHO says travel bans cannot be indefinite; countries must fight coronavirus

Bans on international travel cannot stay in place indefinitely, and countries are going to have to do more to reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus within their borders, the World Health Organization said on Monday (July 27). A surge of infections has prompted countries to reimpose some travel restrictions in recent days, with Britain throwing the reopening of Europe's tourism industry into disarray by ordering a quarantine on travellers returning from Spain. Only with strict adherence to health measures, from wearing masks to avoiding crowds, would the world manage to beat the Covid-19 pandemic, WHO's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said at a virtual news briefing in Geneva.

https://www.straitstimes.com/world/who-says-covid-19-by-far-its-worst-global-health-emergency

No lockdown as China rolls out virus-testing blitz

Beijing is responding to coronavirus cases flaring up in Xinjiang and Liaoning with tactics proven to have helped the Chinese capital squash a viral resurgence in June and swiftly return to normal. Xinjiang officials say they found 41 new infections on Monday, bringing the overall tally to 254 since the first Covid-19 patient in more than five months in the far western region was identified and segregated on July 15. The re-emergence of cases in the vast and still restive border region has mainly hit Xinjiang's capital Urumqi, but the city of more than four million residents has never been placed under a sweeping lockdown. Rather, within a fortnight, two million locals were said to have been tested as cadres scrambled to roll out mandatory yet free testing schemes covering each neighborhood.

https://asiatimes.com/2020/07/no-lockdown-as-china-rolls-out-virus-testing-blitz/

Kuwait to lift lockdown in Farwaniya on Sunday

Kuwait will end the strict lockdown imposed in Farwaniya governorate from 5 a.m (0200 GMT) on Sunday, the centre for government communication announced on Twitter on Saturday. Farwaniya was the last area to be effectively isolated in a country which has reported 63,309 coronavirus cases and 429 deaths.

https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-kuwait/kuwait-to-lift-lockdown-in-farwaniya-on-sunday-idUKKCN24Q0Q6

Berlin couple test positive for coronavirus after Manchester visit

An urgent track and trace operation is under way in Berlin after a couple tested positive for coronavirus after returning from a holiday to visit friends in Manchester. Fifty people who have had contact with the couple since their return are in quarantine, of whom 13 have so far tested positive for Covid-19. The Turkish couple, a 50-year-old taxi driver and his 45-year-old wife, arrived home on a Ryanair flight on 16 July. They were not diagnosed until six days after their return. The whole family is now infected, including the couple's four children, aged nine to 21, and their grandmother.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/28/berlin-couple-test-positive-for-coronavirus-after-manchester-visit?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Tweet

Germany set to test all travellers from Covid-19 hotspots

Germany is to introduce obligatory testing for all travellers returning from regions considered to be coronavirus high risk hotspots, its health minister has said. Jens Spahn said he would introduce mandatory testing as soon as legislation was in place to do so. The move has broad cross-party support amid a rise in Germany's own coronavirus rates, which have been at least in part put down to hundreds of thousands of Germans returning from foreign holidays. Currently 130 regions are on Germany's list of high risk areas.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/27/bavaria-rolls-out-coronavirus-mass-testing-for-returning-holidaymakers

Partisan Exits

Andrea Bocelli tells Italians to stop wearing masks and says country's lockdown measures left him 'humiliated'

The Italian opera singer Andrea Bocelli has revealed that he felt "humiliated and offended" by lockdown measures in Italy. The opera star was seen as a symbol of national unity during the country's strict lockdown period. He performed in an empty cathedral on Easter Sunday as part of a live streamed concert titled Music for Hope. However, speaking at a conference in Italy's senate, Bocelli, 61, revealed that he disobeyed lockdown rules and felt that Covid-19's impact had been exaggerated.

https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/andrea-bocelli-italy-lockdown-mask-music-for-hope-concert-a9641891.html

Tenor Andrea Bocelli gives Italy government earful over coronavirus

Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli on Monday issued a scathing criticism of the Italian government's handling of the coronavirus, saying he was humiliated by a recent lockdown, and urged people to disobey rules still in place.

https://www.msn.com/en-au/news/world/tenor-andrea-bocelli-gives-italy-government-earful-over-coronavirus/ar-BB17fx8A

British tourists still flying to Spain say it is dealing with Covid-19 better than the UK

Tourists heading to Spain were today determined to continue with their travels despite the PM's warning. Those leaving from Manchester said Spain was dealing with Covid better and they could not get refunds. Boris Johnson today defended move and said there was 'second wave' in Europe.

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8568659/British-tourists-flying-Spain-say-dealing-Covid-19-better-UK.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ito=1490&ns_campaign=1490

Coronavirus: Why do UK and Spain disagree over quarantine?

Spain has had 272,421 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic began, according to Johns Hopkins University. That makes it the 12th highest country by number of infections in the world - four places below the UK. Lockdown measures initially brought rates down, but fears are growing of a resurgence in Spain as the two-week infection rate is now 39.4 per 100,000 people - a rise of 260%. The country's foreign ministry insists outbreaks are "localised, isolated and controlled".

https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-why-do-uk-and-spain-disagree-over-quarantine-12037791

Spain slams UK, Germany for advising tourists to stay away

Spain reacted angrily on Tuesday to recommendations from Britain and Germany that their citizens avoid its islands and beaches because of an increase in coronavirus cases during what should be the height of the tourism season. With advisories piling up on top of a quarantine order from Britain for returning travellers, Spain, which depends on summer visits by sun-seeking northern Europeans, is

facing a major blow to any hopes of reviving its economy. Tourism accounts for just over 12% of Spain's GDP and nearly 13% of jobs. The country lost one million jobs between April and June, its biggest ever quarterly decline, and fears steeper losses as the summer season crashes. "It's very unfair because it's not based on any sanitary criteria," Francina Armengol, the head of the key tourist Balearic region, told Cadena Ser radio of the travel advisories.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-europe/spain-slams-uk-germany-for-advising-tourists-to-stay-away-idUKKCN24T1M4

End of UK-Spain air bridge as much about politics as hard data
It was also down to lessons learned the hard way about slow v speedy decision-making over the course of the pandemic – the decision-making was as much about politics and messaging as hard data. Advisers studying the figures at the end of last week say they were deeply concerned about the rate of the rise in Spain, and the potential for thousands of cases to be imported by tourists. Though low in number, the coronavirus cases detected in holidaymakers returning from Spain are believed to be the first from a country which had been previously deemed to be safe to visit.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/28/coronavirus-end-of-uk-spain-air-bridge-as-much-about-politics-as-hard-data

Covid-19 outbreak in Xinjiang prompts fears of spread inside China's camps
Rising numbers of Covid-19 cases in the Xinjiang region has sparked fears the outbreak could reach the secretive internment camps where China is believed to have detained more than a million Muslim minority people. On Monday, Chinese health authorities reported 68 new cases of Covid-19, including 57 in the far western region of Xinjiang, bringing the area's reported total to 235. After a reported five-month streak of no infections in Xinjiang, the outbreak that began almost two weeks ago has appeared to take hold in the capital city of Urumqi, and spread to Kashgar about 300km away.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/28/covid-19-outbreak-in-xinjiang-prompts-fears-of-spread-inside-chinas-camps

Continued Lockdown

North Korea steps up coronavirus prevention after first possible infection
North Korea introduced tougher curbs against the coronavirus on Tuesday, state media reported, after it locked down the town Kaesong, on the border with the South, to tackle what could be its first publicly confirmed infection.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-northkorea/north-korea-steps-up-coronavirus-prevention-after-first-possible-infection-idUKKCN24T0ST

UK lockdown life: Binge eating, more alcohol, less exercise
People have been binge eating, drinking more, exercising less and suffering increased anxiety during COVID-19 lockdowns, according to preliminary findings of a UK study on Monday, with knock-on impacts likely on rates of obesity and mental illness. An online survey of around 800 adults in England who were asked about their health and habits during late June and early July found a stark rise in negative mental health, coupled with unhealthy eating and drinking, poor sleep and less exercise. Younger adults appeared to be disproportionately suffering from sadness and anxiety, while 46% of survey participants said they had been less active during lockdown. Many also reported binge eating or said they were eating more unhealthy, processed snacks and drinking more alcohol.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-britain-life/uk-lockdown-life-binge-eating-more-alcohol-less-exercise-idUKKCN24S1BJ

Scientific Viewpoint

Monkey Data Support Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

The mRNA vaccine co-developed by Moderna and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) protected both the upper and lower airways of non-human primates against SARS-CoV-2 infection. Rhesus macaques receiving low or high doses of mRNA-1273 vaccine (10 or 100 µg, two injections 4 weeks apart) were then challenged with the virus via both the nose and the lungs a month after the second injection. Seven of eight vaccinated monkeys in both dosing groups had no detectable virus in the lungs two days afterwards, whereas viral RNA was found in lungs of all eight monkeys receiving placebo, according to Barney Graham, MD, PhD, of NIAID, and colleagues.
https://www.medpagetoday.com/infectiousdisease/covid19/87788

Evaluation of the mRNA-1273 Vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 in Nonhuman Primates
The mRNA-1273 vaccine candidate induced antibody levels exceeding those in human convalescent-phase serum, with live-virus reciprocal 50% inhibitory dilution (ID50) geometric mean titers of 501 in the 10-µg dose group and 3481 in the 100-µg dose group. Vaccination induced type 1 helper T-cell (Th1)–biased CD4 T-cell responses and low or undetectable Th2 or CD8 T-cell responses. Viral replication was not detectable in BAL fluid by day 2 after challenge in seven of eight animals in both vaccinated groups. No viral replication was detectable in the nose of any of the eight animals in the 100-µg dose group by day 2 after challenge, and limited inflammation or detectable viral genome or antigen was noted in lungs of animals in either vaccine group.
https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2024671

Coronavirus: Thousands of COVID-19 survivors could be diagnosed with sepsis, charity warns
People are being warned to familiarise themselves with the symptoms of sepsis after a study found that as many as 20,000 COVID-19 survivors could be diagnosed with the condition within a year. One in five people who receive hospital treatment for the coronavirus are at risk, according to the UK Sepsis Trust. Sepsis is triggered when the body overreacts to an infection, causing the immune system to turn on itself - leading to tissue damage, organ failure and potentially death. If spotted quickly, it can be treated with antibiotics before it turns into septic shock and damages vital organs.
https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-thousands-of-covid-19-survivors-could-be-diagnosed-with-sepsis-charity-warns-12037944

COVID-19 outbreak in hard-hit U.S. states may be peaking, Fauci says
A coronavirus surge in Florida, California and a handful of other hard-hit states could be peaking while other parts of the country may be on the cusp of growing outbreaks, the top U.S. infectious diseases official said on Tuesday. A spike in cases in Florida, along with Texas, Arizona and California this month has overwhelmed hospitals, forced a U-turn on steps to reopen economies and stoked fears that U.S. efforts to control the outbreak are sputtering. “They may be cresting and coming back down,” Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told ABC’s “Good Morning America” program regarding the state of the outbreak in several Sunbelt states.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-usa/covid-19-outbreak-in-hard-hit-us-states-may-be-peaking-fauci-says-idUKL2N2EZ16I

Midwest Could See Surge In COVID-19 Cases Unless States Are More Careful, Fauci Warns
The Midwest could be the next area to see a big surge in coronavirus cases, the top U.S. infectious disease specialist warned Tuesday. But there's still time to stop the upswing, he said, if states follow the national guidelines on reopening safely. While the Southern United States has been seeing the fastest rise in cases, that now appears to be on the downswing, Fauci told George Stephanopoulos on ABC's Good Morning America. Fauci's concern is that states including Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky are showing signs of impending danger. Based on the number of positive coronavirus tests in those states, they "are starting to have that very early indication" of a surge, he said. "That's a surefire

sign that you've got to be really careful."
https://www.npr.org/2020/07/28/896152597/midwest-could-see-surge-in-covid-19-cases-unless-states-are-more-careful-fauci-w

Loss of smell from Covid-19 is not permanent, scientists say
Loss of smell caused by the coronavirus has baffled scientists. Now, it has been discovered that it's not the crucial sensory neurons affected. Instead, the cells the provide structural support are infiltrated by the virus. These can be repaired, offering hope that anosmia is not permanent
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8567523/Loss-smell-Covid-19-not-permanent-scientists-say.html

Reopening the Office? Here's How to Stymie Transmission of Covid-19.
Work that requires physical interactions — construction, retail, food service, entertainment, sports, medical care, education, and salons – will require significant changes to the physical environment and individual behaviors. In designing those changes, leaders should aim for a path-breaking strategy: creating behavioral protocols and built environments that break transmission paths. In other words, effective re-opening strategies focus on breaking up connecting paths rather than just reducing number of connections. Two workplaces might have equal numbers of potential connections through which the virus can spread; but if one workplace disrupts more pathways, it will be doing more to stop the spread of the virus.
https://hbr.org/2020/07/reopening-the-office-heres-how-to-stymie-transmission-of-covid-19

Survey suggests aerosol is significant form of COVID-19 transmission
Early results from a survey of 2000 people in the UK and US has suggested that the COVID-19 transmitted through aerosol transmission is materially significant. The survey analysed by a team of data scientists in the UK, Norway and the US is one of the first to examine a wide range of personal and work-related predictors of transmission. Taking both samples together, being tall more than doubled the probability of having a COVID 19 medical diagnosis or positive test for people over 6ft. The data in both countries, argue the researchers, could suggest that aerosol transmission is very likely, with taller individuals at higher risk – something that would not be expected if transmission was exclusively through droplets. And that, they say, something that would not have been observed if downward droplet transmission was the only transmission mechanism.
https://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/news/survey-suggests-aerosol-is-significant-form-of-covid-19-transmission/

Clapped out of ICU, dead days later: the secondary impact of Covid-19
On 19 June, three days after he left the ICU, his daughter visited him for the first time since he was admitted to the hospital. She remembered him telling her he was looking forward to coming home. But later that evening, he had a stroke. “It kind of knocked us out. We weren’t expecting it,” Neha said. On 26 June, 10 days after that celebratory clapping, her father died. Rudresh Pathak’s story of slow, hopeful recovery followed by a stroke and rapid deterioration highlights concerns about the extensive and enduring impact of coronavirus in some patients, his daughter said. A study published last month points to associated brain complications, including strokes, that require being admitted to hospital. Of the 125 patients in the study, 77 had a stroke.
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/28/clapped-out-of-icu-dead-days-later-secondary-impact-of-covid-19-stroke-clots-coronavirus

Negligence to blame for coronavirus infection spike in Germany, says health chief
Negligence is to blame for Germany’s steady rise in new coronavirus infections, one of its senior health officials has said. Lothar Wieler, the head of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), the government agency responsible for disease control, said Germans had become careless about social distancing. His warning came as several European countries experienced COVID-19 spikes. Wieler said on Tuesday: “The new developments in Germany make me very worried. The rise has to do with the fact that we have become negligent.”

https://uk.news.yahoo.com/negligence-coronavirus-infection-spike-germany-135918698.html

Coronavirus-linked hunger tied to 10000 child deaths each month

The lean season is coming for Burkina Faso's children. And this time, the long wait for the harvest is bringing a hunger more ferocious than most have ever known. That hunger is already stalking Haboue Solange Boue, an infant who has lost half her former body weight of 5.5 pounds (2.5 kilograms) in the last month. With the markets closed because of coronavirus restrictions, her family sold fewer vegetables. Her mother is too malnourished to nurse her. "My child," Danssanin Lanizou whispers, choking back tears as she unwraps a blanket to reveal her baby's protruding ribs. The infant whimpers soundlessly. All around the world, the coronavirus and its restrictions are pushing already hungry communities over the edge, cutting off meager farms from markets and isolating villages from food and medical aid. Virus-linked hunger is leading to the deaths of 10,000 more children a month over the first year of the pandemic, according to an urgent call to action from the United Nations shared with The Associated Press ahead of its publication in the Lancet medical journal.

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/28/world/coronavirus-hunger-10000-child-deaths/

Lockdown led to happiness rebound after wellbeing plunged with onset of pandemic

The coronavirus outbreak caused life satisfaction to fall sharply, but lockdown went a long way to restoring contentment—even reducing the "wellbeing inequality" between well-off professionals and the unemployed, according to a new study. Researchers from Cambridge's Bennett Institute for Public Policy used a year's worth of data taken from weekly YouGov surveys and Google searches to track wellbeing in the British population before and during the pandemic. They say it is one of the first studies to distinguish the effects of the pandemic from those of lockdown on psychological welfare, as it uses week-by-week data, rather than monthly or annual comparisons. The proportion of Britons self-reporting as "happy" halved in just three weeks: from 51% just before the UK's first COVID-19 fatality, to 25% by the time national lockdown began.

https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-07-lockdown-happiness-rebound-wellbeing-plunged.html

Coronavirus: WHO director general says New Zealand's apt Covid-19 response prevented a large-scale outbreak

New Zealand's Covid-19 response has once again been put on a pedestal by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO's director general, noted New Zealand was one of the countries that followed advice from WHO around physical distancing, hand hygiene, testing, contact tracing and quarantining. "Where these measures are followed, cases go down. Where they're not, cases go up. "Countries and communities that have followed this advice carefully and consistently have done well, either in preventing large-scale outbreaks – like Cambodia, New Zealand, Rwanda, Thailand, Vietnam, and islands in the Pacific and Caribbean – or in bringing large outbreaks under control – like Canada, China, Germany and the Republic of Korea," he said at Monday's Covid-19 media briefing.

https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/122265072/coronavirus-who-director-general-says-new-zealands-apt-covid19-response-prevented-a-largescale-outbreak

Pfizer Says Covid Could Endure, Sees Long-Term Need for Shot

Pfizer Inc. is preparing for the novel coronavirus to endure, leading to long-term demand for a seasonal shot to protect against Covid-19. The New York pharmaceutical giant and its German partner BioNTech SE are front-runners in the race to develop a Covid-19 vaccine, employing a technology known as messenger RNA that can quickly advance through clinical studies. The companies dosed their first U.S. patient in a late-stage trial Monday, and they could be ready to seek approval from regulators as early as October. There has been a growing sense that a one-time vaccine regimen may not be enough to ward off Covid-19 forever. It isn't clear how long coronavirus

antibodies can protect people from the disease, and early trials haven't yet yielded proof that a shot could prevent infection for an extended period of time. Pfizer said it expects that a Covid-19 vaccine could, like the flu shot, be an inoculation that is needed regularly to be effective.
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-07-28/pfizer-says-covid-could-endure-sees-long-term-need-for-shot

Coronavirus Resurgence

Oldham takes measures to avoid full coronavirus lockdown

People in Oldham have been told to stop visiting friends and family to avoid a full local lockdown after the number of coronavirus cases more than quadrupled in a week. Health officials in the Greater Manchester town imposed new restrictions on Tuesday after the confirmed number of Covid-19 cases rose from 26 to 119 in the week to 25 July. Oldham council urged residents not to have social visitors beyond those in their support bubble and said clinically vulnerable people would now have to shield for a further two weeks, until 14 August. Care homes in the town will no longer relax visiting restrictions.
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/28/oldham-greater-manchester-takes-measures-to-avoid-full-coronavirus-covid-19-lockdown

German And U.K. Officials Warn Of A Possible New COVID-19 Wave In Europe

The European Union successfully flattened the curve of COVID-19 cases in the spring – but a second wave could be building in parts of the EU, according to both British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and the head of Germany's disease agency. "I'm afraid you are starting to see, in some places, the signs of a second wave of the pandemic" in Europe, Johnson said Tuesday. "We don't know yet if this is the beginning of a second wave, but of course it could be," said Lothar Wieler, head of Germany's infectious disease agency, the Robert Koch Institute. His remarks were reported by Deutsche Welle.
https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/07/28/896135038/german-and-u-k-officials-warn-of-a-possible-new-covid-19-wave-in-europe

Coronavirus: German officials 'very concerned' by rising cases

The head of Germany's public health agency has said he is "very concerned" by rising infections in the country. "We are in the middle of a rapidly developing pandemic," Lothar Wieler, head of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), told reporters. Mr Wieler said Germans had become "negligent" and urged people to wear masks and respect social distancing and hygiene rules. In the past week the country has recorded 3,611 new infections.
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53566880

The conditions for a coronavirus spike in Spain were clear. Yet no one saw it coming

Spaniards were prepared to pardon. But, just as Americans cannot forgive Trump for leading the United States into a double-bump pandemic, so a sense of anger is building as Spain's triumphant "defeat" of coronavirus threatens to become merely a brief holiday. New daily cases here have jumped to three times the level in Britain and show a steep progression. In the worst-hit areas, partial lockdowns are being reinstated, with the Catalan regional premier, Quim Torra, talking of a "critical situation" and threatening the harshest lockdown measures available to him within days. "I don't want another 7,000 deaths," he said. Community contagion – when nobody knows who is infecting who – is reportedly back in some parts.
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jul/28/coronavirus-spike-spain-pandemic-mistakes

What Spain Is Telling Us About Second Wave of Coronavirus

A new flare-up in infections on the continent is a grim reminder of the more immediate epidemiological threat. While it's not a second wave yet, it's a serious test of government strategies intended to avoid one. Cases are rising across the region at the fastest pace since tough lockdown measures were lifted, although overall infections remain much lower than the outbreak's April peak.

In Spain, new daily cases hit almost 1,000 last week, driven by local spikes in areas such as Aragon and Catalonia, where nightclubs are now being closed and curfews applied on bars. In Belgium, an increase in infections has forced the government to roll out tougher social-distancing measures, such as limiting face-to-face interactions.
https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-07-28/what-spain-is-telling-us-about-second-wave-of-coronavirus

Belgium tightens Covid-19 restrictions to avoid another lockdown amid rise in cases
Belgium's prime minister on Monday put the brakes on the country's coronavirus exit plan, unveiling a set of drastic social distancing measures aimed at avoiding a new general lockdown amid a surge of COVID-19 infections. Speaking after an urgent meeting of the national security council, Prime Minister Sophie Wilmes said that from next Wednesday contacts outside every household will be limited to the same five people over the next four weeks, as the so-called “social bubble” now applies to a house and its occupants and not to individuals. Belgian residents are currently allowed to meet with 15 different people per week. The measures don’t apply to children under the age of 12.
https://www.france24.com/en/20200727-belgium-tightens-covid-19-restrictions-to-avoid-another-lockdown-amid-rise-in-cases

Malaysia township under lockdown as Sarawak state to reimpose restrictions after spike in coronavirus cases
Malaysia's state of Sarawak has put a township on lockdown as it considers reimposing further travel restrictions and shorter business hours following a surge of Covid-19 cases. The state disaster management committee declared Kota Sentosa and its vicinities in the state capital Kuching an "active case detection area", it said in a statement after a meeting chaired by state Chief Minister Abang Johari Tun Openg on Sunday (July 26). Under the lockdown, nobody would be allowed to leave or enter Kota Sentosa, The Malaysian Insight reported.
https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysia-township-under-lockdown-as-sarawak-state-to-reimpose-restrictions-after-spike

Coronavirus Is Back With a Vengeance in Places Where It Had All but Vanished
Australia reported only a handful of new coronavirus cases in early June, while Hong Kong went three weeks without a single locally transmitted infection that month. Japan had already lifted a state of emergency in May after the number of new cases dropped to a few dozen nationwide. All three reported new high-water marks in daily infection numbers in the past week, showing how difficult it can be to keep the virus at bay, even in places lauded for taking early and decisive action. The number of infections in all three places are still small in comparison to the world’s hardest hit countries, but the fresh waves demonstrate the tricky balancing act authorities face as they attempt to reopen their economies. One misstep can quickly undo the gains from weeks of closures, and public-health experts say some complacency and fatigue with social-distancing restrictions is inevitable in a long pandemic
https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus-is-back-with-a-vengeance-in-places-where-it-had-all-but-vanished-11595842202

Australia’s hardest-hit state Victoria posts new daily record of coronavirus cases amid spikes in Hong Kong and China
Australia's hard-hit Victoria state on Monday posted a new daily record of 532 new Covid-19 cases as infections also spiked in China and Hong Kong. Victoria's state capital Melbourne is almost half way through a six-week lockdown aimed at curbing community spread of coronavirus. Mask-wearing in Australia's second-largest city became compulsory last week. The new cases and six deaths reported on Monday surpass a previous record of 484 new infections reported last Wednesday.
https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/australia-hong-kong-a4509466.html

China records biggest one-day rise in coronavirus cases since March

A record number of coronavirus infections in Xinjiang, the Chinese region where authorities have been accused of widespread human rights abuses, has prompted concerns the country faces another wave of the pandemic. China's National Health Commission on Tuesday announced 64 locally transmitted Covid-19 cases, marking the country's biggest one-day rise since March. Of those, 57 were found in Urumqi, Xinjiang's capital. In the past two weeks, 280 cases have been confirmed nationwide. The latest outbreak in China — where Covid-19 was first reported earlier this year — comes as countries across the region suffer resurgences in infections.

https://www.ft.com/content/7370497b-03df-45ba-9cc1-c50fa8070ecb

Belgium curbs social contact after COVID-19 cases surge

Belgium announced sharp curbs on social contact on Monday after a surge of coronavirus infections in the past three weeks. Prime Minister Sophie Wilmes told a news conference that from Wednesday, a Belgian family or those living together would only be able to meet five other people over the next four weeks, sharply down from 15 now. The numbers allowed to attend public events will be halved to 100 for inside and 200 for outside. Consumers will have to shop on their own and Wilmes also said people should work from home as much as possible. "We are acting again today to keep the situation under control and to prevent a general lockdown," Wilmes said, adding those infected appeared to be more contagious than when the country went into lockdown in mid-March.

https://uk.reuters.com/article/healthcoronavirus-belgium/update-1-belgium-curbs-social-contact-after-covid-19-cases-surge-idUKL5N2EY4I6

Lebanon reimposes COVID-19 restrictions as infections spike

Lebanon reimposed severe COVID-19 restrictions on Monday for the next two weeks, shutting places of worship, cinemas, bars, nightclubs, sports events and popular markets, after a sharp rise in infections. Shops, private companies, banks and educational institutions would be permitted to open, but only on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with a near total lockdown in place Thursday through Monday until Aug 10. This week's lockdown coincides with the Eid al-Adha holiday when Muslims normally hold large gatherings. Officials said they were alarmed by a spike in cases in recent days, with at least 132 new infections and eight deaths confirmed in the last 24 hours. Lebanon has recorded just 51 deaths from the coronavirus since February. "We have to go back a step back and work with determination as though the pandemic has now begun," Minister of Health Hamad Hassan was quoted in state media as saying. "We have to work more seriously to avoid a medical humanitarian catastrophe."

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-lebanon/lebanon-reimposes-covid-19-restrictions-as-infections-spike-idUSKCN24S2FV

Vietnam suspends flights to and from Danang due to virus outbreak

Vietnam has suspended all flights to and from Danang for 15 days after at least 22 cases of the novel coronavirus had been detected in or around the city, the government said on Tuesday. The Southeast Asian country is back on high alert after authorities on Saturday confirmed the first community infections since April, and another three cases on Sunday, all in or around Danang. A further 11 cases linked to a Danang hospital were reported late on Monday, and seven in Danang and nearby Quang Nam province on Tuesday. All bus and train services to and from Danang have also been suspended from Tuesday, a government statement said.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vietnam/vietnam-suspends-flights-to-and-from-danang-due-to-virus-outbreak-idUSKCN24T07T

Second COVID-19 wave forces new travel curbs around the globe

Nations in Asia imposed new restrictions on Monday, while an abrupt British quarantine on travellers from Spain threw Europe's summer reopening into disarray, as the world confronted the prospect of

a second wave of COVID-19 infections. In the United States, still dealing with its first wave as infection rates have climbed since June, President Donald Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, became the most senior official to test positive. The White House said Trump had not interacted with him in days and was not at risk. Surges were reported in several countries that previously appeared to have the virus under control.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-idUSKCN24S0HH

Germany's new virus cases fell to below 500 a day for weeks. Now they've topped 800
Germany is a perfect example; its center for disease control, the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), on Monday said that a recent spike in cases was "very disturbing." The country was held up as a poster-child for how to handle the pandemic, with its rapid response, mass testing capacity, and Chancellor Angela Merkel's calm and clear communication all winning praise. While more than 4% of patients with coronavirus died worldwide in March, Germany's Covid-19 mortality rate was just 0.4% -- despite a high number of reported cases.
https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/28/europe/europe-coronavirus-resurgence-intl/index.html

Coronavirus: Hong Kong bans gatherings of more than two people after spike in cases
Hong Kong has banned gatherings of more than two people as countries across the world try to control new coronavirus outbreaks. The Chinese territory has also banned restaurant dining and introduced rules making it mandatory to wear masks in public places after a spike in locally-transmitted coronavirus cases over the past three weeks. Authorities reported 145 cases on Monday, a new daily record, of which 142 were locally-transmitted cases.
https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-hong-kong-bans-gatherings-of-more-than-two-people-after-spike-in-cases-12037290

New Lockdown

Australia's Covid-19 lockdown rules and coronavirus restrictions explained
Australians had been slowly emerging from Covid-19 lockdowns since the federal government announced a three-stage plan in May to ease restrictions across the country, but from 8 July the Melbourne metropolitan area and Mitchell shire immediately to the north returned to a stage three lockdown for six weeks. Here we try to answer some of the most common questions people have about the laws, based on the information current as of 28 July.
https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jul/28/australia-covid-19-lockdown-rules-coronavirus-restrictions-how-far-can-travel-interstate-border-social-distancing-nsw-victoria-vic-queensland-qld-wa-sa-act-how-many-people-over-house

Coronavirus Australia: Victoria faces Stage Four of lockdown
Victoria's coronavirus cases surge by 532 - the state's worst increase yet Doctors call for Stage Four lockdown to get Victoria's numbers down fast Never-before-seen Stage Four would be like NZ's tough Level Four restrictions Would mean no takeaway coffee or food, shops closed, construction sites shut Young adult Victorians have been identified as having highest infection rate
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8564085/Stage-Four-looms-Victoria-close-businesses-bar-pharmacies-medical-clinics-grocery-stores.html

The five reasons why Victoria's second lockdown ISN'T working as the state records 532 cases
Victoria reported a record number of 532 new coronavirus cases on Monday Health experts have revealed why Melbourne's second lockdown isn't working Reasons included behavioural changes and feeling pressured to attend work The full effect of wearing mandatory face masks has also not yet been seen
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8566181/The-five-reasons-Victorias-second-lockdown-ISNT-working-state-re

cords-532-cases.html

Calls for 'New Zealand-style' stage-four coronavirus lockdown in Victoria

As daily cases of coronavirus surged beyond 500 for the first time in Victoria on Monday, a growing number of experts are urging the state government to enforce a stricter lockdown. The president of Victoria's Australian Medical Association, Associate Professor Julian Rait, believes if a similar lockdown that was rolled out in New Zealand was implemented across metropolitan Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire, it could provide a quicker route out of the current crisis. "What New Zealand did for a month is that they closed pretty much all businesses other than pharmacies, medical clinics, grocery stores, petrol stations and really curtailed a lot of retail shopping, and a lot of businesses," he told Melbourne radio station 3AW. "That's the model that I would look to and clearly they were able to achieve elimination through that with a month of such measures."

https://au.news.yahoo.com/coronavirus-victoria-calls-new-zealand-style-lockdown-221105532.html