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Annex 1 China

Weekly update: 6 – 12 May1

1. Overall strategy

CONTAINMENT AND GRADUAL RETURN TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – suppression of virus transmission rate and state support for businesses.

Critical point: preparedness and capacity and capability-building before the occurrence of a crisis. Swift (centralized) decision-making leveraging a strong national public health systems and a highly developed technology sector.

2. Trend

The trend for China remains largely unchanged from the previous weekly report - **preventing imported cases and domestic resurgence, ensuring rapid response to an epidemic outbreak, providing effective treatment, and ensuring overall recovery of the social and economic order². Lower emergency response to COVID-19 in accordance with reassessed risk (as of 7 May all counties classified as low-risk for COVID-19³). Prevention and control will nevertheless continue, relative to risk levels, to lower the risk of infection from imported cases and thus to avert a rebound of local cases.** The risk of COVID-19 cluster infections caused by sporadic cases remains – 6 newly confirmed (12 May)⁴ domestic transmission cases (China mainland), nevertheless the epidemic is in a generally stable state at the moment.

Special guidelines⁵ on reopening of public spaces - shopping malls, supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, libraries, museums, art galleries, as well as entertainment venues like movie theaters and arcades on the premise of implementing epidemic prevention measures. Outdoor places including parks, scenic spots and sports venues will be opened through appointments and with restrictions on visitor numbers.

¹ Prepared by Gergana VAKLINOVA. Based on publicly available information from online news outlets and official country sources. The current is to be regarded as part of a series of related reports on PR China response to and measures for tackling the spread of COVID-19, produced by the same author, namely: COVID-19 – The Case for China and recommendations for the Republic of Bulgaria (18 Mar 2020).

² Source: Guidelines on regular prevention and control of COVID-19, Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism of the State Council – summary from the National Health Commission: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79992.htm

³ Source: Xinhua in NHC: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/07/c_79949.htm

⁴ Source: National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/13/c_80133.htm

⁵ Source: China Daily: <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202005/09/WS5eb60ee0a310a8b2411546e1.html>

Figure 1: Covid-19 development as of onset of the disease.

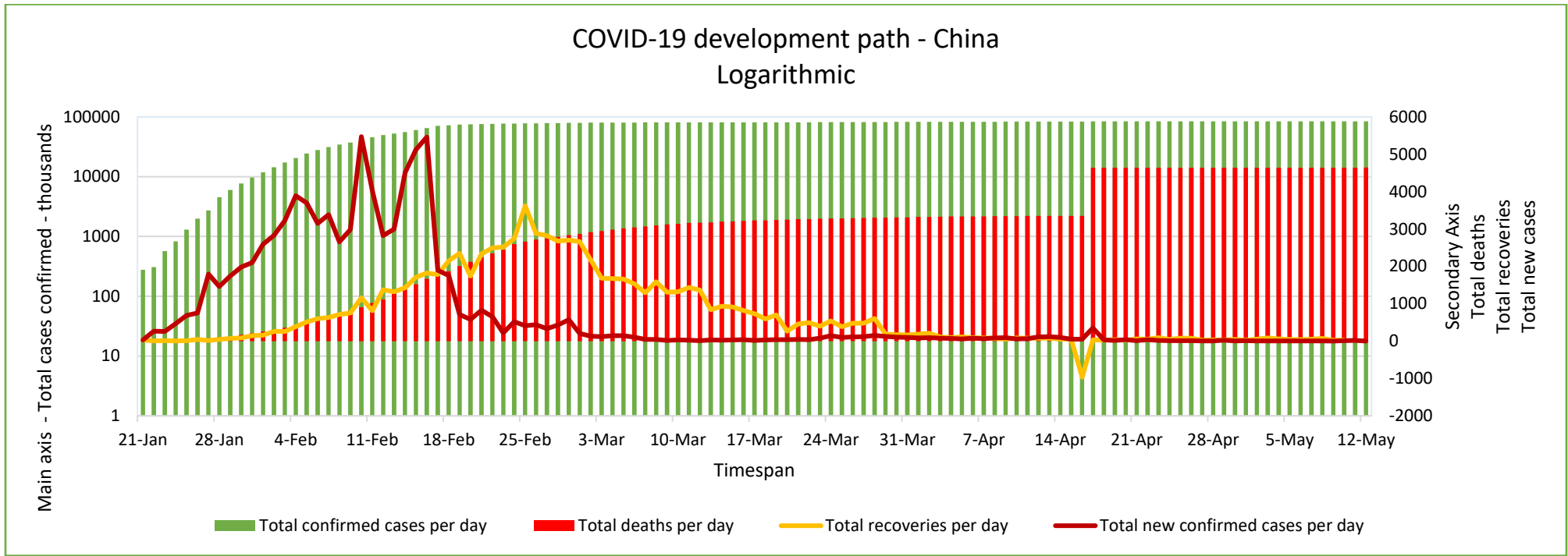
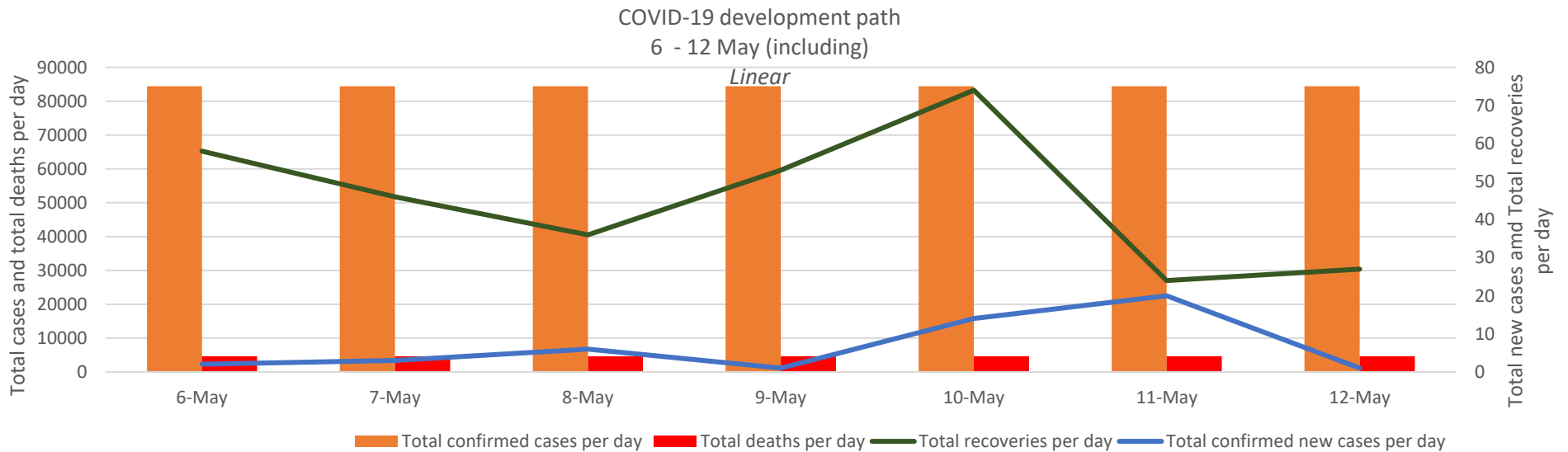


Figure 2: Covid-19 development within the period 6 – 13 May



3. Socio-economic impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 accelerates five key trends shaping Chinese economy⁶:

- a. Digitization, with digital tools becoming increasingly popular solutions;
- b. Declining global exposure, with rising importance of domestic markets, technology and capital;
- c. Growing competitive intensity;
- d. Consumers becoming more prudent and health-conscious;
- e. Growing private and social sectors.

4. Measures

Special attention on ever strengthening cross-sectoral information sharing and regular discussion and assessment of the epidemic trends with clear terms of reference for stakeholder involved in the coordination.⁷ Measures applied in clusters, here-below an update on measures which have reportedly enabled the realisation of China's strategy for tackling COVID-19:

a. Epidemiological

Epidemic prevention measures to be intensified in medical institutions, schools and residential communities as, and given the opening of public spaces, early diagnosis and daily registration and reporting are seen as particularly important for patients and students⁸.

b. Science and research

A study by the faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong shows that COVID-19 more effective than Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in infecting human airways and eyes⁹.

c. Vaccine

Results from the first animal experiment of one Chinese COVID-19 vaccine (PiCoVacc) candidate show that the vaccine induced specific neutralizing antibodies of COVID-19 in mice, rats and non-human primates. These antibodies neutralized multiple novel coronavirus strains, which were representative strains worldwide¹⁰. PiCoVacc did not lead to significant pathological features which indicates the vaccine candidate is safe for rhesus macaques¹¹.

d. Technology and treatment

Encouragement of the application of digital technologies including big data, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing in areas such as epidemic monitoring, contact tracing, epidemic prevention and treatment, and resource allocation¹².

Full inclusion of TCM in COVID-19 treatment.

⁶ Source: McKinsey report cited in: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/09/c_139041744.htm. Original source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/asia-pacific/fast-forward-china-how-covid-19-is-accelerating-five-key-trends-shaping-the-chinese-economy>

⁷ Source: Protocol for Prevention and Control of COVID-19 (Ed..6), China CDC

⁸ Source: NHC: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79992.htm

⁹ Source: Xinhua in NHC: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_80014.htm

¹⁰ Source: NHC: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79996.htm

¹¹ Non-human primates. Ibid.

¹² Source: Xinhua in NHC: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_80006.htm

5. Conclusions

China is implementing targeted measures to prevent the importation of infection while enforcing containment measures for enabling normalization. Raising self-protection awareness among the people to prevent a possible domestic rebound of the outbreak is a major focus¹³. China managed to curb the number of daily new infections to single digits in around two months. The country's response leverages on a people-centered approach in the mobilization of resources to treat infected patients. China has continuously improved testing efficiency, recovery rates and made the utmost efforts to reduce infection and mortality rates (one recorded death in the period 6 – 12 May). COVID-19 has exposed weak links in the emergency response mechanisms and in the healthcare system. Specific focus will be placed on improving the system of disease control and prevention and on building of a new system for the research and development.

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National Health Commission of the PR China

http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79992.htm

http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/07/c_79949.htm

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http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_80014.htm

http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79996.htm

http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_80006.htm

http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79991.htm

China Daily

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202005/09/WS5eb60ee0a310a8b2411546e1.html>

McKinsey report cited in: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/09/c_139041744.htm.

Original source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/asia-pacific/fast-forward-china-how-covid-19-is-accelerating-five-key-trends-shaping-the-chinese-economy>

¹³ Source: National Health Commission: http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2020-05/09/c_79991.htm

Annex 2 Taiwan

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May¹⁴

1. Overall strategy

CONTAINMENT AND GRADUAL RETURN TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – suppression of COVID-19 transmission rate and state support for businesses leveraging on resilient systems (i.e. healthcare) and society. Focus on coordination and interagency cooperation – communication. Leveraging a strong national public health systems and a highly developed technology sector. Stable fiscal position. Sustaining a high degree of trust in governmental institutions through, for instance, transparent and timely risk communication.

2. Trend

Stabilisation and recovery – two imperative: safeguarding lives and safeguarding livelihoods – targeted and precise measures according to the specific risk level (i.e. risk assessment) of the epidemic situation at the local level – phased and cautious initiation of stabilisation and recovery – focus on (virus) *carriers* from abroad and *asymptomatic* cases as possibly rebounding to an outbreak, therefore – travel restrictions and border controls (medical checks). Focus on targeted (cluster) testing and testing of asymptomatic cases. A tendency for stricter distancing measures and bans on mass gatherings. Figure 1 and 2 below trace COVID-19 development path as of outbreak monitoring (16 February) until the current weekly update – 13 May 2020. It is evident that Taiwan is moving with a steady pace on the virus’ curve keeping a total of 440 cases – no new cases of infection reported within the period of monitoring – 7 consecutive days, and one new death within the period 7 – 13 May (including). 349 cases have been classified by CECC as imported and 55 as local infections. 36 cases are from a cluster infection on a Navy vessel that returned in April from a Pacific goodwill mission, and those cases have not yet been classified as either local or imported (Yen 2020).

¹⁴ Prepared by Gergana VAKLINOVA. Based on publicly available information from online news outlets and official country sources. The current is to be regarded as part of a series of related reports on RC Taiwan response to and measures for tackling the spread of COVID-19, produced by the same author.

Figure 3

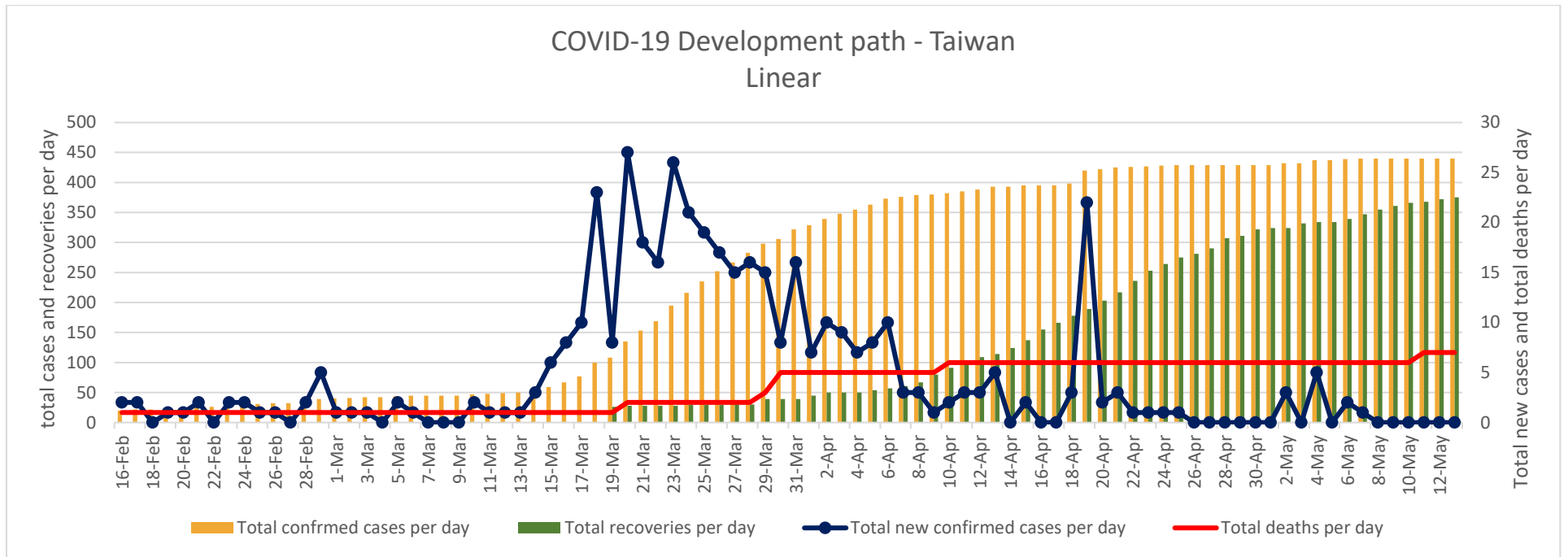
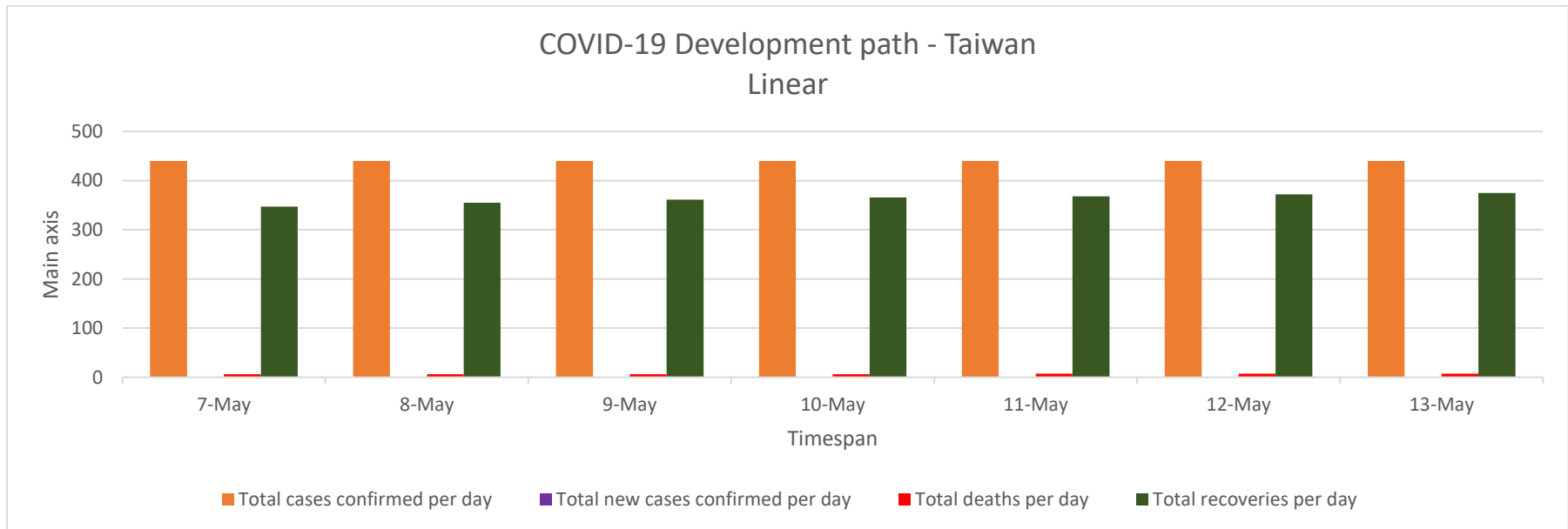


Figure 4



3. Socio-economic impact of COVID-19

Restrictive measures gradually tightening: phase one: less restrictive measure focus on case detection, contact tracing and quarantine – reliance on public understanding of the situation. Phase two – risk of rebounding after containment of transmission rate achieved – more restrictive measures – including ban on public gatherings. Slowdown in economy and production, less than in the case of China and potentially due to the less restrictive (and gradually tightening) measures for distancing, the stable fiscal position of the country and its well-developed tech sector.

4. Measures

Measures applied in clusters, here-below some examples of measures which have reportedly enabled the realisation of Taiwan's strategy for tackling COVID-19:

a. Testing and treatment.

i. A 10-minute antibody test kit for COVID-19, with a 100 % sensitivity and 95% specificity, developed by a local biomedical company has passed clinical trials and is ready for mass production. The method of testing is similar to that of a pregnancy test. Two lines indicate that the test is positive for COVID-19 antibodies, which means tested individuals have had COVID-19. The kit can be used for rapid screening of both symptomatic and asymptomatic carriers. As patients do not produce antibodies during the initial stages of infection, the antibody test can miss the early stages of infection and should be used in conjunction with the COVID-19 antigen rapid testing technology (Hsin-yun and Kao 2020).

ii. The low and almost undetectable level of virus in patients, who test positive after being considered recovered means low risk of communal transmission as patients are considered no longer infectious (Ming-hsuan, Chih-wei and Yeh 2020).

b. Physical distancing.

Local governments could decide whether to reopen hostess clubs and ballrooms, once they implement the CECC's prevention and protection guidelines¹⁵. Taipei is not allowing reopening as physical distancing may be difficult to ensure at such venues. Public facilities such as activity centers, community colleges and senior educational learning centers will reopen 1 June (Jui-chi, Kuo-fan and Lin 2020).

c. Travel.

According to a CECC plan, Taiwanese who contract COVID-19 in another country will be allowed to return home only if they have recovered – having two consecutive negative tests or exhibiting no symptoms of the disease for at least two months since the infection.

5. Conclusions

Taiwan is exhibiting a steady path towards full (local) suppression of COVID-19 and is therefore, directing targeted and tailored efforts towards minimising the risk of *imported* cases and

¹⁵ Space between their customers of 1.5 meters indoors and 1m outdoors; implementing personal hygiene measures, such as requiring patrons to wear masks, checking their temperature and providing hand sanitizers; controlling the flow of people by keeping a register of those entering the premises; regularly disinfecting the environment; and ensuring that fire prevention and security systems are functional.

identifying and tracing asymptomatic cases. It should be noted that this success has been achieved with relatively less strict measure, if compared to China, or Bulgaria for that matter.

References

Hsin-yun, Wu, and Evelyn Kao. 2020. "10-minute COVID-19 antibody test kit developed in Taiwan." *Focus Taiwan*, May 7. <https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202005070013>.

Jui-chi, Wu, Huang Kuo-fan, and Ko Lin. 2020. "Hostess clubs, ballrooms to remain shut amid COVID-19: city officials." *Focus Taiwan*, May 9. <https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202005090010>.

Ming-hsuan, Chang, Hsu Chih-wei, and Joseph Yeh. 2020. "Healed COVID-19 cases who test positive 'almost not contagious': CECC." *Focus Taiwan*, May 6. <https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202005060005>.

Yen, William. 2020. "COVID-19 takes another life in Taiwan but no new infections." *Focus Taiwan*, May 11. <https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202005110012>.

Annex 3 Japan

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

As it is known Japan declared state of emergency on 20200417 for the whole country and now they looking for appropriate date to cancel.

A panel of experts established by the Japanese government is considering numerical targets as some of the conditions for lifting the state of emergency.

The panel says the timing for ending the state of emergency should be decided based on three factors -- the state of the outbreak, medical care availability, and access to coronavirus tests.

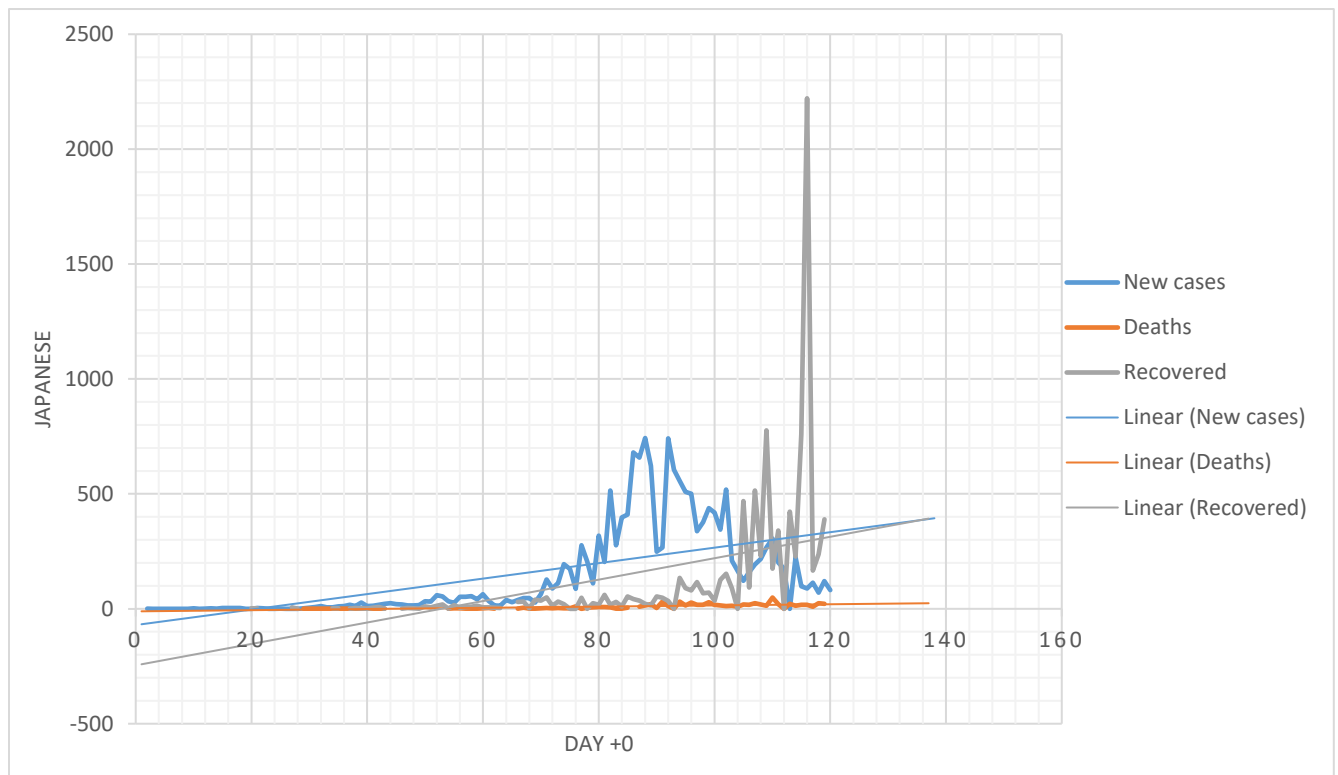
The panel wants new infections over the past seven days, by prefecture, to be lower than the total for the previous week. It also wants to see fewer than 0.5 new infections per 100,000 people.

Other conditions include a decline in the number of patients in serious condition, and a medical care system that could handle a possible surge in the number of patients.

The panel will also consider conditions for declaring a second state of emergency in the event of another wave of infections. It is expected to present its proposals to the government on Thursday 20200514.

Sources:

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20200513_23/



The country has 16,049 registered patients, of which 8,920 are cured, 678 died and 6,451 active cases

Annex 4 South Korea

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

After the restaurants were opened from 01.05. as a step towards loosening social distancing measures, but after providing that they carry out customer temperature checks, record all entrants and wear masks, the South Korean government has been forced to close more than 2,100 nightclubs since the beginning of the week (May 11) Bars and restaurants were closed after a new coronavirus outbreak erupted from one of them.

Healthcare workers are already working hard to track visitors' contacts, searching for about 1,940 people.

Up to 14.05. the COVID-19 situation in South Korea is as follows:

1. COVID-19 cases: 10962
2. Deaths: 259
3. Recovered: 9695.
4. Active cases: 1008

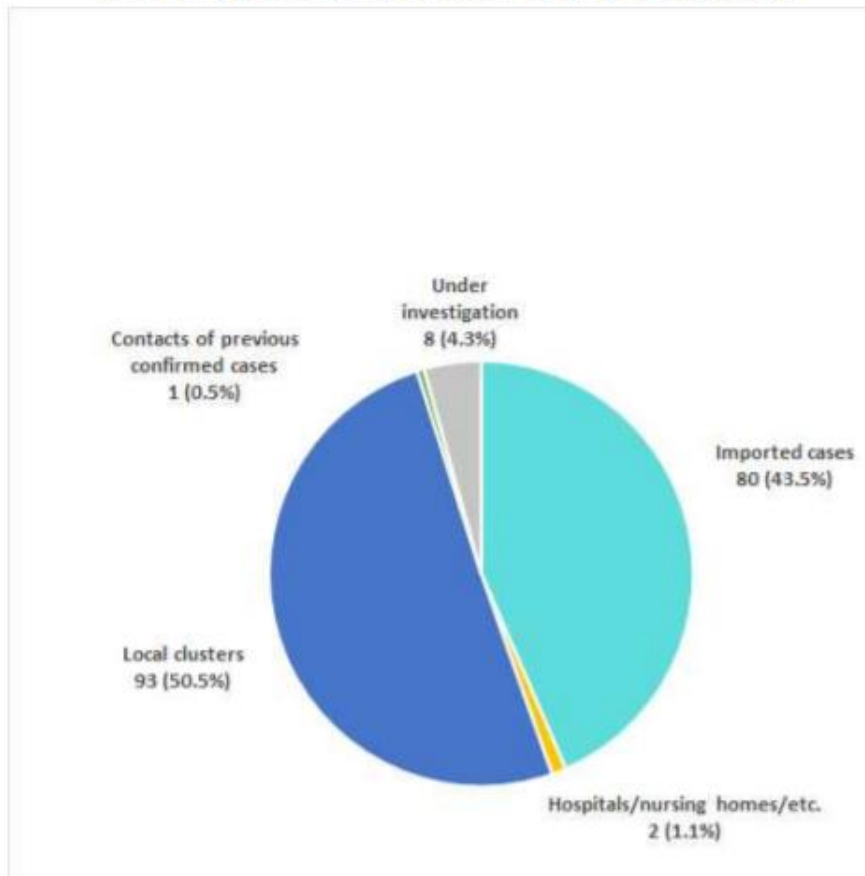
[Table 4: Age distribution of severe cases]

| Age group | Total | Severe (%) | Very severe (%) |
|-------------|-------|--------------|-------------------|
| Total | 22 | 4 (100.0) | 18 (100.0) |
| 80 or above | 8 | 1 (25.0) | 7 (38.9) |
| 70-79 | 8 | 1 (25.0) | 7 (38.9) |
| 60-69 | 3 | 1 (25.0) | 2 (11.1) |
| 50-59 | 1 | 1 (25.0) | 0 (0.0) |
| 40-49 | 2 | 0 (0.0) | 2 (11.1) |
| 30-39 | 0 | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) |
| 20-29 | 0 | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) |
| 10-19 | 0 | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) |
| 0-9 | 0 | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) |

[Table 5: Cases tested positive after discharge]

| | Total | (%) |
|-------------|-------|-----------|
| Total | 393 | (100.0) |
| 80 or above | 32 | (8.1) |
| 70-79 | 26 | (6.6) |
| 60-69 | 41 | (10.4) |
| 50-59 | 66 | (16.8) |
| 40-49 | 52 | (13.2) |
| 30-39 | 50 | (12.7) |
| 20-29 | 93 | (23.7) |
| 10-19 | 25 | (6.4) |
| 0-9 | 8 | (2.0) |

[Figure 2: New cases (for last 2 weeks) by chain of transmission]



Sources:

<http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/en/>

<https://qz.com/1844946/south-korea-keeps-social-distancing-post-covid-19-containment/>

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/south-korea/>

Annex 5 Italy

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

11 May – A peaceful weekend of fear, among families walking around the parks, young people around the city and short escapes to the sea. A few days after the start of phase 2, despite the obvious contraindications, the fears of coronavirus seem to have vanished.

After that period of greatest closure, there are a lot more people out in Italy during last week.

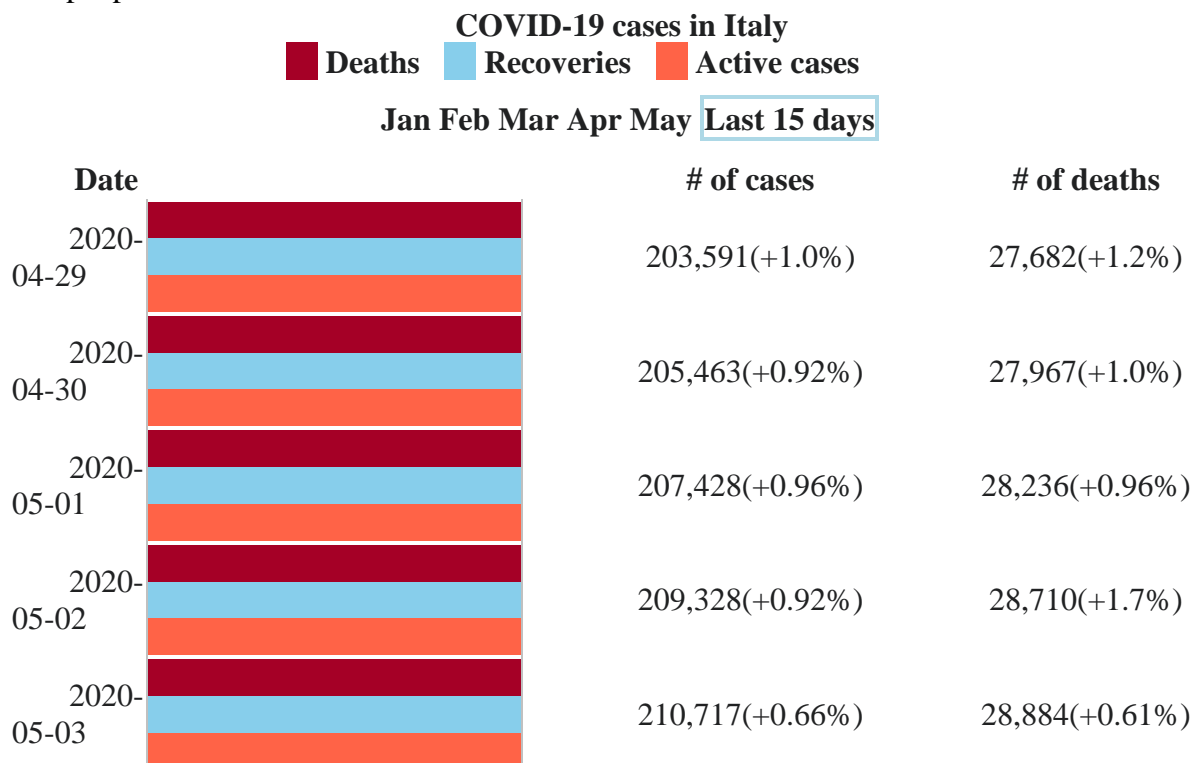
The Minister of Interior said in an interview «For a week, a wider range of movement has been allowed for all of us, but this should not make us forget that the spread of the virus multiplies with gatherings and close contacts.

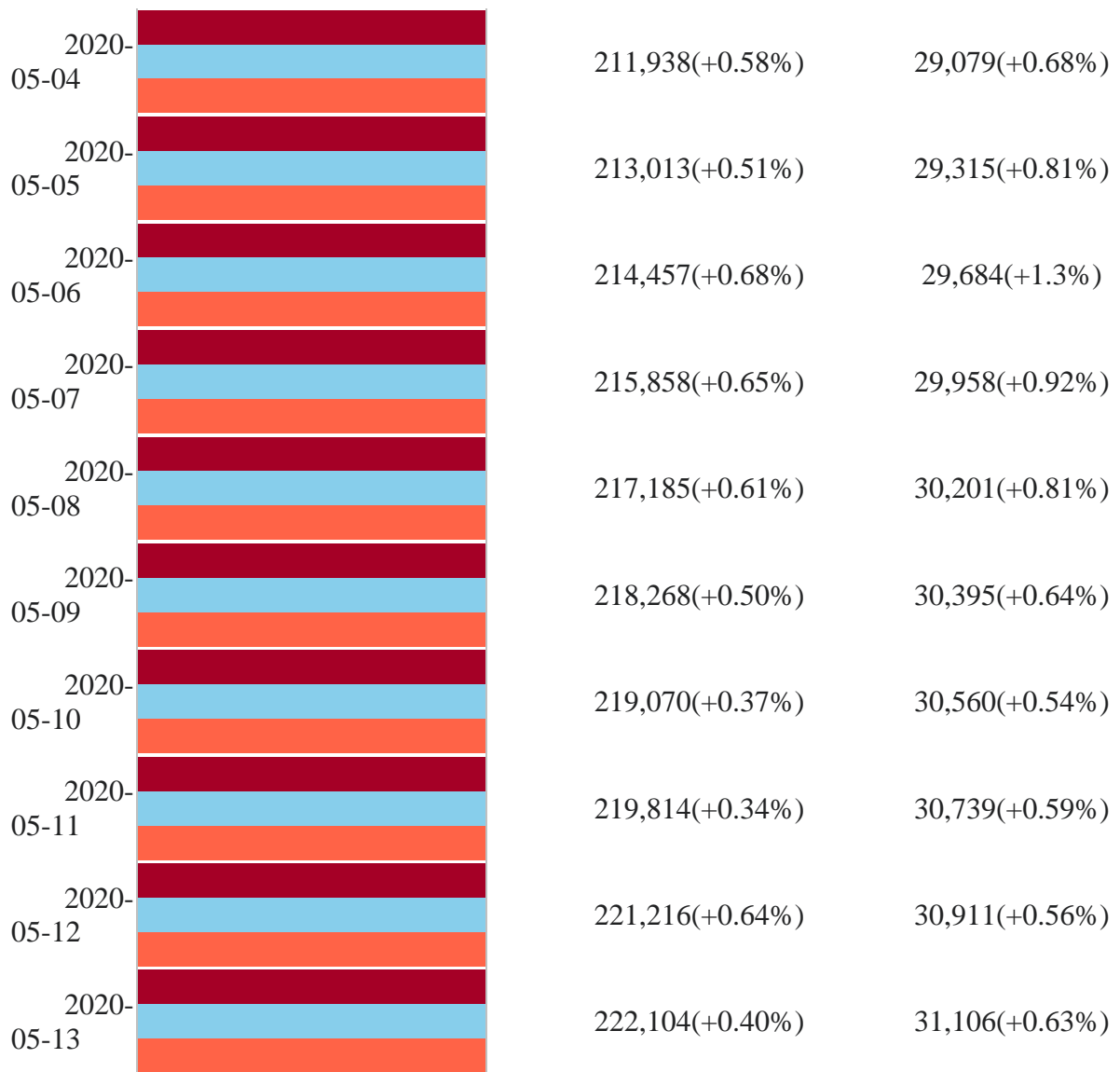
For this second phase of the health emergency we asked citizens to leverage their sense of responsibility. The measures adopted by the government, then, must find their application by identifying a balance between the primary objective of safeguarding public health, to be pursued above all with the ban on gathering, and the need to limit the impact of controls on life citizens' day.

On a national scale, we must continue to pay the utmost attention to public transport, to the neighborhoods of the nightlife of young people and to the shops that sell take-away food and drinks. Then, in the next weekend, the capillary checks will be repeated in the green areas and along the beaches because, unfortunately, we cannot yet resume the lifestyles we followed before the emergency ».

As of **13 May 2020**, Italy has 78,457 active cases, one of the highest in the world. There have been 222,104 confirmed cases and 31,106 deaths (a rate of 509 deaths per million population, while there have been 112,541 recoveries or dismissals. By 13 May, Italy had tested about 1,779,000 people.

people.





Sources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_coronavirus_pandemic_in_Italy;

<https://www.interno.gov.it/it/notizie/covid-19-attenti-virus-digitali-non-scaricare-app-o-software>;

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/05/italy-leads-europe-easing-coronavirus-lockdown-measures-200504101525868.html>

Annex 6 Portugal

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The government has lifted the state of emergency in Portugal which has now been replaced with a state of calamity.

On a basic level, this means that restrictions are easing in Portugal to allow the opening of further businesses and certain activities.

Every 15 days, according to the Government, the impacts of the measures on the evolution of the pandemic will be assessed, “taking into account the permanent updating of data and the assessment of the situation by the health authorities”. If the numbers are looking good then further easing of restrictions will come in to place however, if the number of cases of Covid-19 begin to increase significantly then further restrictions will then be brought back in.

Students returning to the face-to-face classes should be organised into groups and always wear masks and disinfect their hands at the entrance and exit of the school.

In a guideline published on its website, the Directorate-General for Health (DGS) says that each group of students should be assigned a zone of the school and that each classroom should be used by the same group of students, to prevent contamination by covid-19.

The physical distance (1.5 to two metres) should be kept outside and inside the classroom, with the desks arranged as close as possible to the walls and windows, preventing students from facing each other.

The rooms and other interior spaces used by the students must be ventilated, preferably opening windows and doors. If air conditioning is used, the extraction mode should be chosen and never the air recirculation mode.

The DGS also says that spaces not necessary for teaching, such as buffets / bars, support rooms, student social rooms and others, should be closed.

Annex 7 Spain

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The number of daily coronavirus-related deaths in Spain was at 176 on Tuesday (May 12), according to the latest figures from the Spanish Health Ministry. This is the fourth day in a row that Spain has recorded fewer than 200 coronavirus fatalities. The figure was 123 on Monday, 143 on Sunday, and 179 on Saturday. Indeed, Spain has reported fewer than 200 daily coronavirus-related deaths for seven of the past 12 days in May. Only three of Spain's 17 regions reported more than 10 coronavirus fatalities on Tuesday – Catalonia (66), Madrid (37) and Castilla-La Mancha (25). The total number of victims in Spain now stands at 26,920.

In recent weeks, an uptick in the numbers has come to be expected on Tuesdays, given that figures tend to be underreported on weekends due to the lack of personnel. But this rise is in keeping with the overall downward trend of the outbreak.

What's more, for the first time, three Spanish regions – the Balearic Islands, Murcia and La Rioja – as well as the exclave city of Melilla in North Africa, recorded no new coronavirus cases. Another six regions reported fewer than 10 new infections on Tuesday.

In the past 24 hours, 426 new infections were confirmed via PCR tests, up from 373 on Monday, but below Sunday's figure of 621. This brings the total number of cases since the beginning of the crisis to 228,030.

The number of coronavirus hospital admissions also confirmed the downward trend of the outbreak. Only Castilla-La Mancha and Madrid reported more than one intensive care admission, with five and 14 respectively. Since the beginning of the crisis, a total of 138,980 coronavirus patients have been discharged from hospital after recovering from the disease.

The Spanish far-right group Vox has organized protests against the government in all provincial capitals of Spain, as well as in the exclave cities of Melilla and Ceuta in North Africa. The demonstrations are scheduled for May 23, and will be carried out in cars in order to prevent coronavirus contagion, with protesters following a predetermined route in their vehicles.

Vox spokesperson Jorge Buxadé said on Monday that “if [the government] bans them [the protests], it will be proof that they are using the state of alarm to impose a secret state of exception,” in reference to the second of three emergency situations contemplated by the Spanish Constitution: state of alarm, exception and siege.

Vox leader Santiago Abascal, announced last Wednesday in Congress, that he would present his request to organize the protests the following day, but there had been no further news of the demonstrations until now. The date of the protests coincides with the end of the current state of alarm, which is set to expire on May 24, unless it is extended again by Congress.

In recent weeks, Vox has filed a number of complaints against government ministers and public officials. The far-right party has called for three top officials from the health and finance ministry to be charged with alleged corruption in 53 contracts to purchase urgently-needed medical supplies to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Protest in wealthy Madrid neighborhood

Residents of the wealthy Salamanca neighborhood in Madrid held a protest known as a cacerolada – where people bang pots and pans – to demonstrate against the government’s management of the coronavirus crisis. The protest took place at 9pm on Sunday on Núñez de Balboa street, and coincided with an improvised street party. According to the police, up to 100 people had gathered outside a balcony that was playing the Spanish national anthem. When police came to break up the gathering, which was in violation of the coronavirus confinement measures, residents began to shout “freedom” and “the government must resign.”

Annex 8 Belgium

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

Current trends in Belgium remain stable for the reported period. Based on the report by the Group of Experts for an Exit Strategy, the National Security Council has decided to initiate Phase 2 of the exit plan **from 18 May**.

During this phase, schools will gradually reopen for some primary and secondary pupils, under strict organisational conditions. Pre-schools will remain closed at this stage and higher education has already planned through to the end of the academic year in cooperation with the community authorities.

A second aspect in this phase is culture. The National Security Council has decided that museums and cultural attractions, i.e. historic buildings and monuments, castles and citadels, can reopen their doors **from 18 May**, provided they set up an online or phone ticketing system and take the necessary measures to avoid overcrowding. Libraries will remain open, under the same conditions as now.

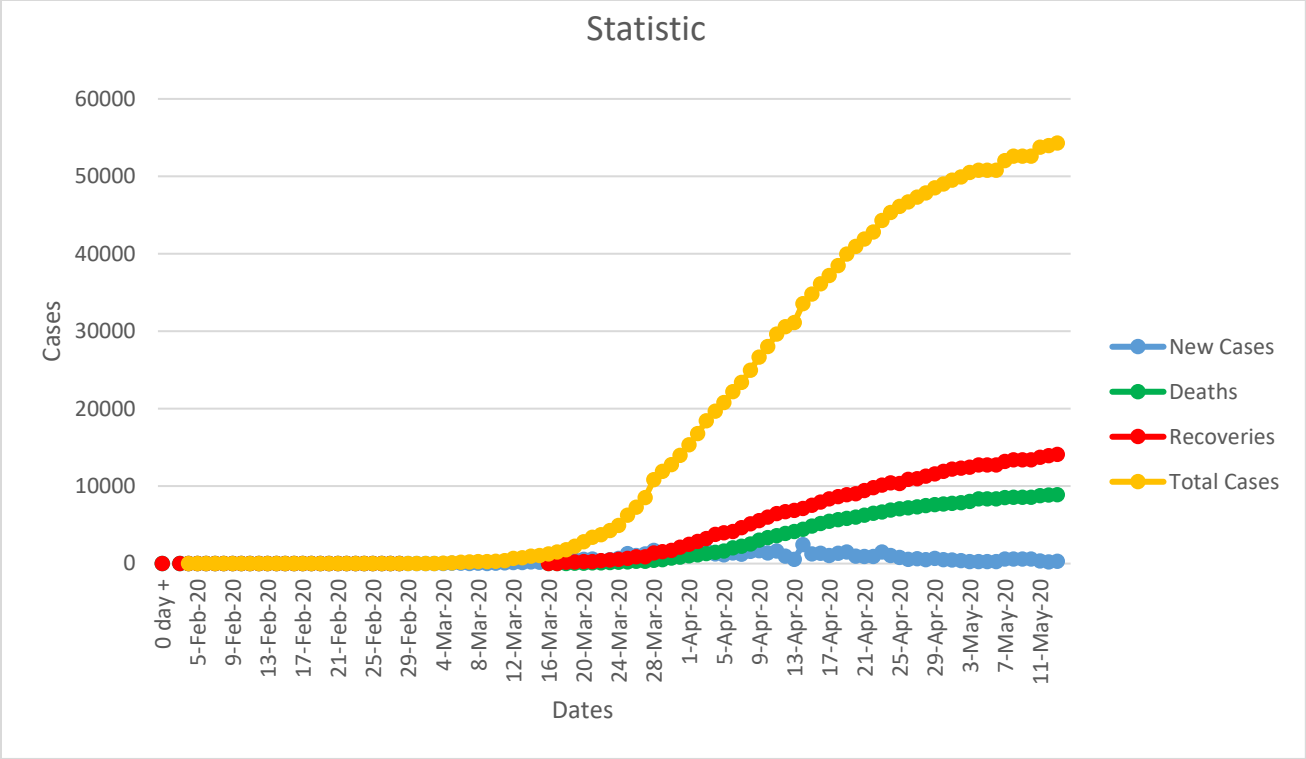
As far as economic life is concerned, it has been decided that professions requiring close contact with customers can resume their activities in this phase, subject to certain conditions. For instance, they must work by appointment, wear a mask or mouth-nose protection (both staff and customers) and respect social distancing between customers. Furthermore, markets may be re-organised with the agreement of local authorities. The markets may have a maximum of 50 stalls, a circulation plan must be drawn up and social distancing must be respected at all times. It is mandatory for vendors and their staff to wear a mask or mouth-nose protection and customers are strongly advised to do the same.

A number of other decisions have been taken with regard to sports and leisure. Nature attractions, such as zoos, will also be allowed to reopen, provided that they introduce an online or phone ticketing system to restrict access to the public.

Finally, Regular outdoor group sports training and lessons may resume, provided social distancing is adhered to and a coach is present. Groups may not exceed 20 persons and sports clubs may re-open only on condition that all possible measures are taken to guarantee the safety of the sportsmen and sportswomen.

The next phase of the exit strategy will not take place before 8 June.

Up to May 13, a total of 53 981 COVID-19 patients were reported in Belgium (Graphic 1). To date, 13 937 of the patients have been recovered, 8 843 have died and 605 237 have been tested. The number of new hospital admissions is gradually decreasing, but remains fairly high.



Graphic 1

Sources:

1. <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/news/>
2. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>
3. <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/news/nsc-13-05/>

Annex 9 Germany

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

As of 13 May, in total, **171,306** COVID-19 cases and **7,634** deaths (fatality rate of **4.5**) due to COVID-19 have been reported. **148,700** persons are estimated to have recovered and **1,539** patients are critical/serious condition. The first confirmed case reported on 28 January 2020 while the first death on 05 March 2020.

Since 15 April the number of people who are recovering is higher than the number of the infected ones.

As of 13 May, Germany has the 8th most coronavirus confirmed cases worldwide, from the 6th a week ago.

New covid-19 infections rose again in the country last week, a few days after leaders loosened social restrictions. According to Robert Koch Institute, as of 13 May, the reproduction number, which indicates how quickly a disease is spreading, has dropped below the threshold to **0.81**, after rising to over **1** for several days. The rise in infections over the weekend sparked concerns over loosening restrictions in the country. On 06 May (last report) the reproduction rate was **0.65**. It demonstrates the difficulties that Germany may face in its attempt to return to some semblance of normalcy without triggering a second wave of infections. It was said that if any communities saw a rise of 50 or more cases per 100,000 people, towns or cities would have to reimpose lockdowns. However, during the last days fewer than 1,000 Germans are becoming infected every day.

On 09 May, thousands of people protested the lockdown measures.

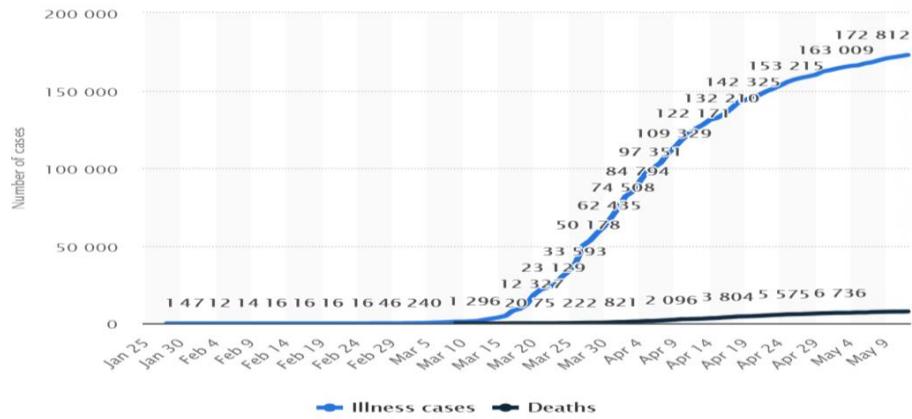
On 11 May, Germany's 16 states rolled back further COVID-19 restrictions, although the news rules depend on the region. Some of restaurants, massage studios, nail parlors and tattoo studios as well as other “physically-close services”, museums and art galleries have reopened. The wearing of (non-medical) face masks in public transport and in shops is obligatory in all federal states.

On 11 May, speaking in Berlin, Chancellor Angela Merkel said that although Germany was entering a "new phase" with its COVID-19 response, it's important the loosening of the measures to keep in pace with compliance with the basic rules.

The German strategy is to return to a semblance of normalcy. The main goal is to continue testing hundreds of thousands of people for covid-19 per week. The country having a widespread testing system and a huge capacity in treating patients spares no efforts in increasing the number of intensive care beds,

Germany had achieved fragile intermediate success slowing the spread of the virus.

German authorities intensify their efforts in order to cope with a possible second wave of covid-19 infection as the country gradually comes out of limitations.



COVID-19) illness cases and deaths in Germany since January 2020 (13/05/2020 12:00 AM)

Sources:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/10/global-report-covid-19-cases-rise-in-germany-as-wuhan-reports-first-infection-in-weeks>

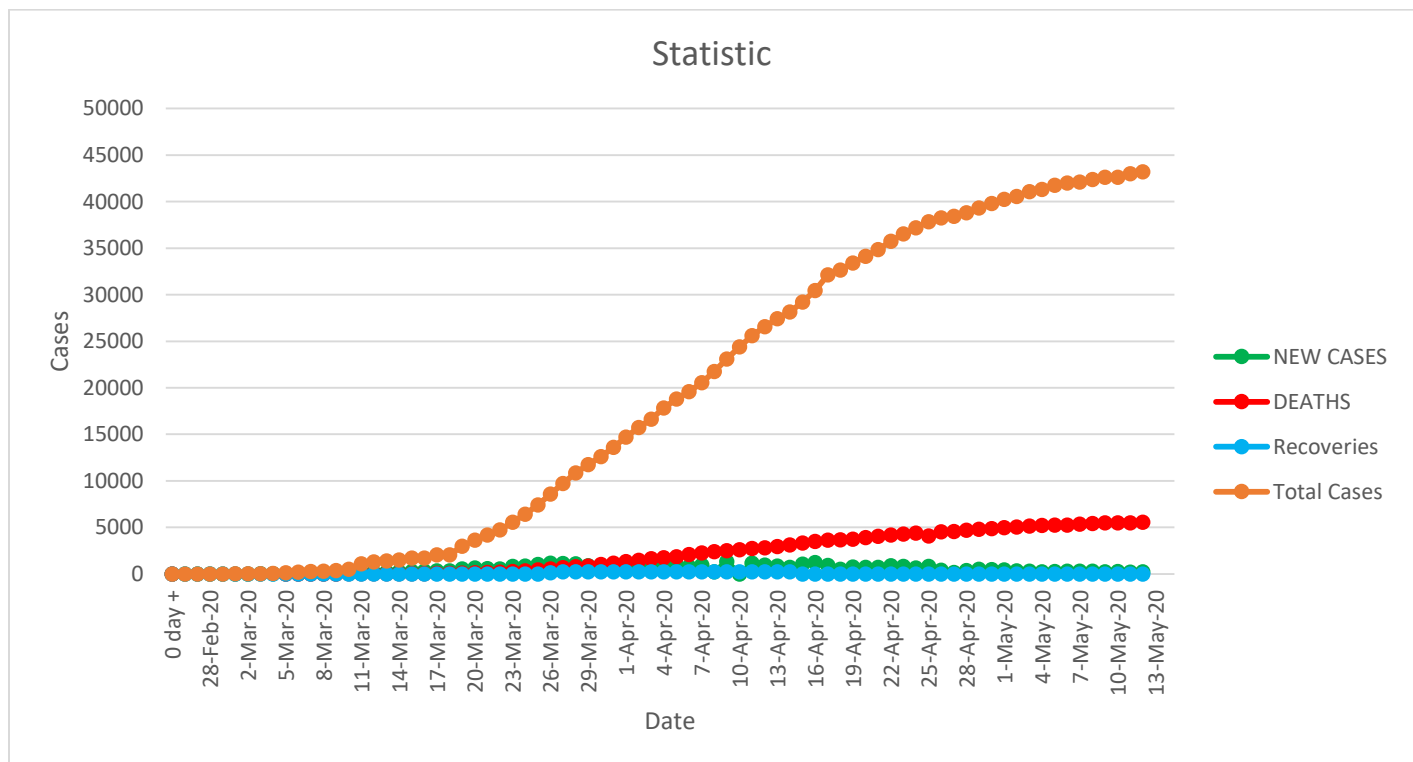
https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Situationsberichte/20-05-13-de.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

Annex 10 The Netherlands

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The Dutch government started to relax some of the prevention measures. From 11 May primary schools and childcare reopened. Children aged 12 are allowed to play sports and take part in other activities together outdoors under supervision. Young people aged 13 to 18 are allowed to play sports together outdoors under supervision, but must stay 1.5 meters apart. So-called "contact jobs" such as hairdressers and beauty salons, reopened again. This includes driving instructors, medical and paramedical professionals, and alternative medicine practitioners (acupuncturists, homeopaths, etc.). Minister Hugo de Jonge indicates in a letter that large-scale events will not be possible until a vaccine is found.

The ministers of Home Affairs of Belgium, of Germany, and the Netherlands are working together intensively and continuously to slow down the spread of COVID-19, by keeping in close contact and regularly exchanging critical information, proposals and solutions. In their most recent discussions, the ministers have spoken about the ways forward, since the transition to the next phase of this crisis must be planned carefully. Bearing in mind the common interest of a controlled exit and recovery, especially in the areas with shared borders, the ministers are determined to come to well-coordinated plans to ensure a successful exit and recovery of both the individual and the combined Member States.



Graphic1

Up to and including May 13, a total of 43 211 COVID-19 patients were reported by National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) in the Netherlands (Graphic 1). The DUTCH GOVERNMENT IS NOT REPORTING ON COVID-19 RECOVERY CASES EXPLAINING THAT GETTING RECOVERED FROM THE VIRUS IS A LONG AND HARD PERIOD NOT ALWAYS EASY TO TRACK. To date, 5 562 have died. RIVM monitors the distribution of COVID-19 in the Netherlands.

Sources:

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

<https://www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/news/2020/05/08/statement-netherlands-belgium-and-germany-on-slowing-down-the-spread-of-covid-19>

Annex 11 France

23 APRIL

Total Cases – 158,183
New Cases – 2,239
Active Cases – 94,239
Total Deaths – 21,856
New Deaths – 516
Total Recoveries – 42,088
New Recoveries – 1,431

28 APRIL

Total Cases – 165,911
New Cases – 2,638
Active Cases – 95,365
Total Deaths – 23,660
New Deaths – 367
Total Recoveries – 46,886
New Recoveries – 1,373

COVID-19 cases and the effect of the measures for the period

On 23 April the French Government again corrected the case numbers for the country after a quality and verification process of data from EMS and EPHAD. This is the third time that there has been made corrections and adjustments of the COVID-19 statistics in France.¹⁶

The country is being very optimistic about the way the pandemic evolves during the recent week. On 26 April France reported a big fall in its coronavirus death toll, with 242 deaths in 24 hours, a drop of more than a third on the previous day. The deaths in hospitals - 152 - was the lowest daily toll in five weeks, they said, while 90 people died in nursing and care homes. The numbers of people leaving intensive care units (ICUs) has also outpaced the numbers of those entering those units.¹⁷

Meanwhile, analysts from the French School of Public Health (EHESP) made a study regarding the effect of the lockdown measures since 17 March. They concluded that because of the undertaken by the government measures 60,000 deaths in France were prevented. Without these measures, more than 100,000 ICU (intensive care unit) beds would have been needed by 20 April. And the capacity of French hospitals, which was doubled in preparation for the arrival of the epidemic, is only 10,000 beds.¹⁸ More than 7,500 people are now being treated in the intensive care units across France - which is 50 percent more than the country's total capacity before the epidemic struck.¹⁹

The world has not yet provided a vaccine for the virus and though that many experts dismiss the idea that the anti-malarial drug chloroquine is effective against COVID-19, on Friday (24 April) the France's armed forces ministry said that it had bought a consignment of the drug from China as a precaution in case it becomes an approved medication for the coronavirus.²⁰

While the government struggles to provide enough masks for the population in order to limit at a maximum level the spread of the virus after 11 May, the French police has seized 140,000 face masks intended for the black market since the start of the pandemic. In March, 32,500 masks from China were seized from a warehouse near Paris and 28,800 masks were discovered in a shop in a district of Chinese wholesalers, also in the Paris region. On 26 April the police announced that two individuals were arrested while they were unloading boxes in Saint-Denis, just north of Paris.

¹⁶ <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/france/>

¹⁷ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200426-covid-19-france-records-242-new-deaths-marking-a-major-drop-in-its-daily-toll>

¹⁸ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200424-lockdown-saved-as-many-as-60-000-lives-in-france-study-shows>

¹⁹ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200425-covid-19-france-records-369-new-deaths-to-bring-its-total-toll-to-22-614>

²⁰ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200425-french-military-bought-chloroquine-from-china-as-precaution>

One of them said he was a business owner and had bought the masks, including 5,000 high protection FFP2 masks, in the Netherlands for a total of 80,000 euros (\$87,000). The masks were to be sold to construction workers for a large profit, according to police.²¹

Strengthening the economy measures

On April 24, 2020, the Minister of Economy and Finance announced the continuation and strengthening of the measures to support the economic emergency plan in favor of hotels, cafes, restaurants, companies in the tourism sector, events, sport and culture, as such:

- the possibility of resorting to partial activity after resumption of activity for these sectors;
- maintaining the opening of the solidarity fund to companies in these sectors beyond May. Its access conditions will be extended to companies in the sectors concerned with up to 20 employees and 2 million euros in turnover, and the ceiling for grants that may be paid under the second part of the fund will be raised to 10 000 euros.
- an exemption from social security contributions to VSEs and SMEs in these sectors during the closure period, from March to June, whether or not they have already paid their contributions. Mid-cap companies and large companies in these sectors which do not benefit from automatic exemption will be able to obtain long spreads of deferred social and tax charges and, on a case-by-case basis, request debt cancellations according to their financial situation.
- on the fiscal level, the Government will discuss with local authorities on the modalities of deferral of the business property tax (CFE) and exemption from the flat rate of the tourist tax for the year 2020. Cancellation of rents and public sector occupancy fees due to national lessors (State and operators) for VSEs and SMEs for the period of administrative closure. A practical guide will be drawn up for local authorities who would like to do the same.²²

Expectations and reality – the national strategy for emerging from the pandemic after 11 May

For the last week the main focus related to the COVID-19 situation in France is the partial lift of the lockdown measures in the country from 11 May. Before the official presentation of the national strategy for emerging from the coronavirus lockdown by the French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe at 1300 PM on 28 April, there has been some official announcements about the main elements of it. Prime Minister Philippe's presentation will be followed by a two-and-a-half hour debate in France's lower house of parliament, followed by a vote on the "national strategy of the de-confinement plan". According to an Ifop poll for the Journal du Dimanche, only 39 percent of the French public have confidence in the government's ability to deal effectively with the virus, seven points lower than last week. Seventeen priorities have been identified for gradually bringing the country out of lockdown from May 11. These include reopening schools, companies returning to work, getting public transport back to normal, the supply of masks and sanitiser, testing policy and support for the elderly.²³ French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe shared that the government plan would centre on six key areas - public health, schools, businesses, public transport and public gatherings. But leaders and experts remain divided on how quickly to revive shuttered economies while maintaining a delicate balance between freedom and safety.²⁴

²¹ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200427-french-police-seize-14-000-face-masks-bound-for-black-market>

²² <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>

²³ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200425-french-pm-set-to-present-plan-to-unwind-covid-19-lockdown-on-tuesday>

²⁴ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200427-europe-prepares-to-roll-back-covid-19-restrictions>

On 24 April the French RATP boss Catherine Guillouard said that the transport authorities were working towards having 70% of the Paris transport network operational by May 11 up from 30% now, ready for when France exits its lockdown. Making sure 70% of the transport network was running would be equivalent to delivering about eight million trips a day, she told France Inter radio. The system is currently at 4 percent capacity, or 500,000 trips a day.²⁵

The clarity about the presented national strategy for easing the lockdown from 11 May includes the following:

- The government's target is 700,000 tests per week starting from May 11. France would aim to test everyone who has been in contact with someone infected by the coronavirus.
- Enough masks will be available for all from May 11. The government is calling on all companies to provide workers with masks and will help small firms obtain them if needed. Masks will also be for sale on the post office's website and five million will be made each week to the most vulnerable people.
- All shops excepts cafés and restaurants will be allowed to open after May 11.

The prime minister added the caveat that the lockdown will not be lifted on May 11 if the number of new cases is higher than 3,000 per day – as well as underlining the need for the French to be “disciplined” before that date. People who can work from home will still be expected to do so. On the grounds that “circulation of the virus isn't the same throughout the country”, France will unveil on May 7 a list of regions keeping a strict lockdown. The Paris region and Alsace-Lorraine in the east of the country have been hit particularly hard by Covid-19.²⁶

In conclusion

At present, there is a lot of unclearness about the way the pandemic would vanish and our life will go back to the normal way we are used to. And is it going to be the old way or would the current impact of the pandemic on every level of our lives lead to some sustainable and positive changes that will be transferred to our after-pandemic reality? The answers are yet to be revealed. One thing is certain – the history has proven that even something small can lead and had led to big changes for the world. Now we face a situation that had influenced in depth the lives of almost every country on our Planet. So maybe the right question is what positive and what negative effect would remain and continue to develop within our reality after that.

²⁵ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200424-paris-transport-chief-hopes-to-be-running-at-70-capacity-when-lockdown-ends-in-may>

²⁶ <https://www.france24.com/en/20200428-live-pm-philippe-unveils-france-s-plan-to-ease-covid-19-lockdown>

Annex 12 Finland

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

Social encounters in Finland have decreased dramatically as a consequence of the instructions and restrictions issued to slow down the spread of the new coronavirus. Finns have come into contact with 75 per cent fewer people than usual during the state of emergency and consequently the reproduction number of the coronavirus was below one in Finland in April. The director of HUS, has expressed his doubts about activity in the service sector recovering as long as the use of services entails a risk of contracting the new coronavirus. According to him smothering the epidemic would thereby be the economically less costly option for Finland.

Prime Minister Sanna Marin (SDP) reiterated that the government does not believe it is possible to weed out the virus completely and re-affirmed her support for the hybrid strategy of gradually lifting the restrictions while dedicating further resources to testing and tracing of infections.

One of the first major concrete steps in the strategy is resuming in-person instruction for children in early-childhood and basic education on 14 May.

Assessment:

Confidence and predictability are crucial preconditions of economic growth. Businesses and consumers alike, are currently forced to weigh up the risk of a surge in coronavirus infections when considering investments. It is likely the government to reconsider its position on the possibility of eradicating the disease, pointing to the results yielded in Australia, Austria, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, New Zealand and Taiwan. It is likely that containing the epidemic as much as possible would make it possible to return to “close to normal life” sooner than the hybrid strategy

Annex 13 Norway

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

For two months now, everyday life in Norway has been severely restricted with the aim to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

A plan to take back everyday life and to reopen Norway has been presented.

Groups in private: The recommended size of groups in private contexts is increased from five to a maximum of 20 people. However, they must keep at least one metre distance from each other. Organised sports activities can be carried out for up to 20 people with the distance requirements in place.

Sports halls: Can open, but changing facilities must be kept closed.

International travel: It is still not advised. However, the ban on foreign travel for health professionals is lifted. People who return from abroad must still undergo quarantine.

Home quarantine: The home quarantine requirement is reduced from 14 to 10 days. This applies to those returning from abroad, and also those who have been in close contact with a confirmed positive case. Those who have already been infected will be exempt from quarantine for six months.

Employment: The government continues its recommendation for employees to work from home wherever possible. When this isn't possible, employers must ensure staff can keep a distance of at least one metre from each other during working hours.

Football training: Organised training sessions for professional football can be held.

The new timetable

11 May: All schools will be permitted to reopen. Municipalities have the power to decide to delay this if necessary. Adult education centres can also reopen, including integration programs for refugees.

15 May: New advice for leisure travel will be announced, which will come into force on 1 June.

17 May: It was confirmed that the new rule on private events will apply for Norway's National Day celebrations. Private gatherings of 20 will be permitted as long as social distancing is maintained. Public events will be limited to 50 people.

1 June: Amusement parks can reopen. Serving places without food can reopen, with a one metre social distancing rule applied.

15 June: Most other things will be permitted to reopen. This includes a change on the limit of small events from 50 to 200 people. This change will allow the Norwegian football season to begin, albeit without spectators. Water parks and swimming pools can reopen, if suitable infection control measures can be agreed.

There is no news yet on when the border will reopen for international visitors. However, the Prime Minister indicated this is unlikely to happen soon.

Future planning

Norway's Health Minister Bent Høie said that the government believes it will take up to two years for a vaccine to arrive. For this reason, the government has “created a separate strategy and plan for how we can live with the virus, while also opening society.”

As part of this week, the government considers three different scenarios. The first assumes we have control over the spread of infection, while the second considers a sharp increase in those becoming ill, putting pressure on the health service. The final scenario is much more extreme, involving the breakdown of international cooperation

Assessment:

Based on the statistics, diagrams and researches (exposed below) it could be assumed Norway is on the right track to get through the crisis with minimum negative social, financial and political consequences. Despite the above announcement, it is highly likely people will continue to comply with the measures to prevent infection. For a long time to come, they will have to keep a metre away from one another, wash hands and not hug each other. Reopening of social structures could be considered risky but will inevitably lower the social pressure and will further provide conditions for returning to normal daily routine.

Annex 14 Denmark

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

On the basis of advice from the expert group of Statens Serum Institut (SSI) as well as the economic expert group, the parties in the Danish parliament have agreed on phase 2 of the reopening.

The reopening rests on five elements:

- An offensive testing strategy with testing in both a health track and a community track, infection detection and isolation of infected. Representative testing of the population is carried out at fixed time intervals and on the basis of a clear plan.
- Use of protective equipment, including to protect the vulnerable groups
- Physical distance guidelines by health authorities
- Health authorities guidelines on good hygiene
- Avoid super-proliferation

Initiatives in Phase 2:

1. Full retail opening (May 11)

Retail - including major centers - can reopen under the guidelines agreed in the sector partnership - 'Guidelines on responsible design of sample goods stores in retail, etc. in light of the outbreak of COVID-19'.

2. Restaurant and cafés commences (May 18)

Restaurants, cafes and the like. can serve under more detailed guidelines including regarding opening hours, physical distance, etc.

Denmark to lift most remaining lockdown measures on June 8

The nine political parties have agreed on a comprehensive reopening plan, which is based on trust in the people's basic common sense and their willingness to keep their distance and stick to a high hygiene standard. However the government is empowered to amend the plan if the level of infections starts to increase dramatically.

Before the June 8 reopening goes ahead, an expert group from Denmark's infectious diseases agency, SSI, will submit a report calculating the current level in infection, allowing the government to hold back from lifting some of the restrictions, and even to reimpose those that have already been removed. The agreement suggests raising the maximum number of people who can gather to 50 on June 8, that threshold could be raised higher, allowing for packed theatre performances. But the agreement stresses that the ban on events involving 500 people or more will stay until at least August 31.

Phase 3 on June 8 will see the reopening of:

- Museums, theatres, art galleries, cinemas, aquariums
- Outdoor amusement parks
- Zoos and botanical gardens
- Summer activities for children and young people
- Public sector organisations facing bottle necks

- Full opening of public research activities
- Adult education sectors for the unemployed
- Language schools
- Indoor sports and other group activities (such as evening classes)

If infection rates are low, Phase 3 will also see:

- increased physical presence in public workplaces
- the full opening of the television broadcasters DR and TV2

Phase 4, in 'early August', will see the following reopen:

- Nightclubs and discos
- Gyms, waterparks and swimming pools
- Universities and all other educational institutions

Assessment:

The Danes have quickly adapted to new habits, new ways of being together, and have exhibited an extraordinary sense of society. Those habits will be crucial in making sure they can still have the infection under control as we now open up further. They still have to stand together by keeping our distance.

Annex 15 Sweden

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

Ten takeaways from Sweden's controversial approach to the coronavirus pandemic

In the worldwide campaign to stamp out death and illness from the coronavirus pandemic, Sweden is clearly an outlier. The country's soft approach was devised by scientists and backed by the government. Although Sweden has been widely condemned around the world for the strategy, its own citizens largely embrace it.

1. Sweden caught the virus early, and started testing early.

the Swedish health-care system has not been overwhelmed because it spotted cases early on. Other countries became overwhelmed because they did not see the slow beginning and only noticed when there were already too many cases.

2. Higher infection and fatality rates are cause for concern.

One of the main reasons the death rate in Sweden is high is because of the spread of the virus in homes for the elderly.

3. Achieving 'herd immunity' is not Sweden's goal.

The country's goal is to keep the level of spread down while society functions. The immunity that many have acquired from those infected with the coronavirus, however, will help keep the spread down to a reasonable level until there is a vaccine.

4. We don't know how long this immunity will last

the level of antibodies a person has varies from cases to case. So far, not one person from Sweden has had COVID-19 twice.

5. Wearing masks in public is not mandatory

here are two main reasons why Sweden has not required citizens to wear masks: First - the science behind it is murky. Secondly the Swedish government does not want sick people to go out in public.

6. There is no financial incentive for sick people in Sweden to go to work

Sweden made it possible for sick people to stay home by giving them sick pay from the very first day they miss work. This has also helped the country control the spread of the virus.

7. Why younger children still attend school, while high school and college students do not

distance learning works quite well in high schools and universities, allowing students to still get their education. But there is no evidence of big spreads of the virus among children under 16, and there's no evidence of spread from children to adults.

8. The pandemic has disproportionately affected migrant communities

This is mostly because of socioeconomic conditions. Migrant families tend to live close together and share living quarters among different generations.

9. Disinformation has not been a huge problem

there is a high level of trust between the population and governmental agencies. rumors do swirl around in social media, but it doesn't affect the majority of the population who feel they are "well-informed and not afraid, the biggest fear people have is about losing their jobs.

10. Physical distancing is a critical part of keeping the economy open

Assessment:

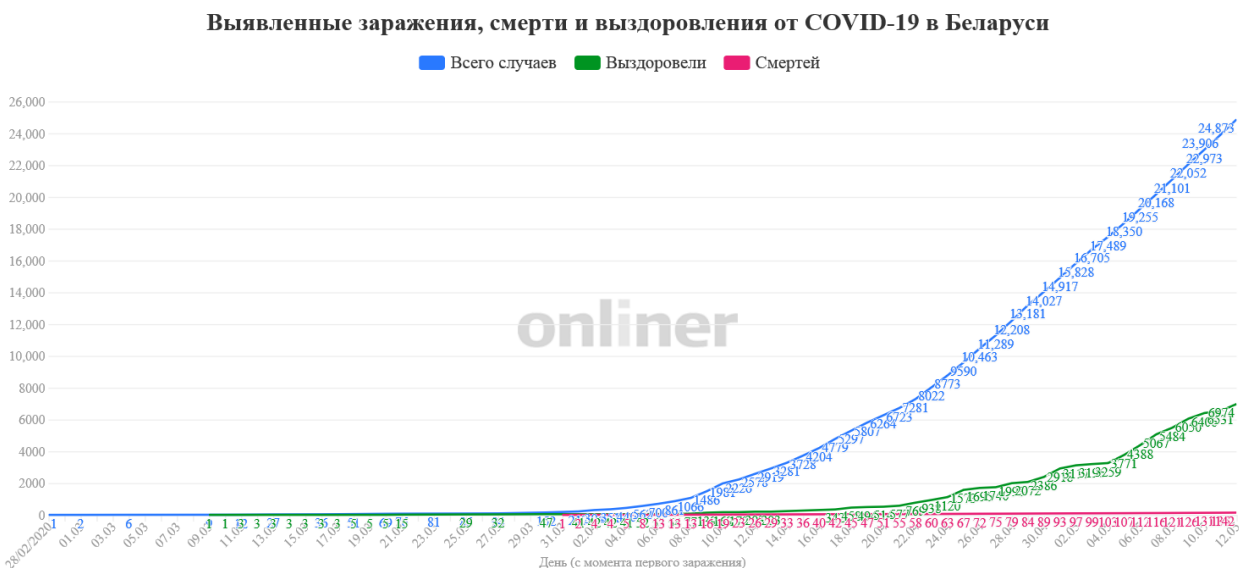
Some consider Sweden's approach as a success because people were good about isolating themselves. Social distancing is still the most important thing one can do to prevent spread of the coronavirus.

Annex 16 Belarus

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

In the period, between 07-13 May, cases of coronavirus in Belarus are increasing. The number of infected during the reporting period increased almost by 1.2 times.

As of May 12, in Belarus were registered, the total number cases 24873, deaths are 142 and 6974 are recoveries.



While Europe is in isolation to stop the coronavirus pandemic, life in Minsk, in general, continues - the Belarusian authorities do not envisage a general quarantine despite the concern among the population. The government of the country does not impose requirements for social distance or restriction of public activities. The traditional Saturday cleaning in Belarus continues despite the pandemic.

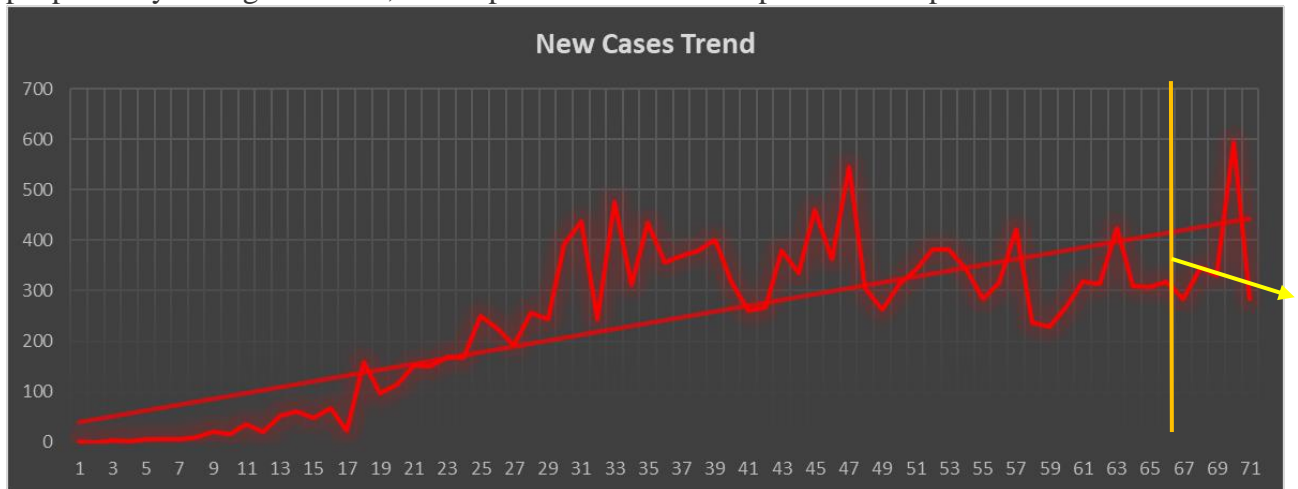
Despite WHO recommendations, Alexander Lukashenko rejected calls for quarantine measures to stop the spread of Covid-19.

Thousands of soldiers marched in Belarus on May 9 to mark World War II Victory Day. Belarus is an exception among European countries, with its heavy car traffic, overcrowded buses, crowded subways, open restaurants, shops and cafes, and in terms of sports - the football championship is played in stadiums in front of the public.

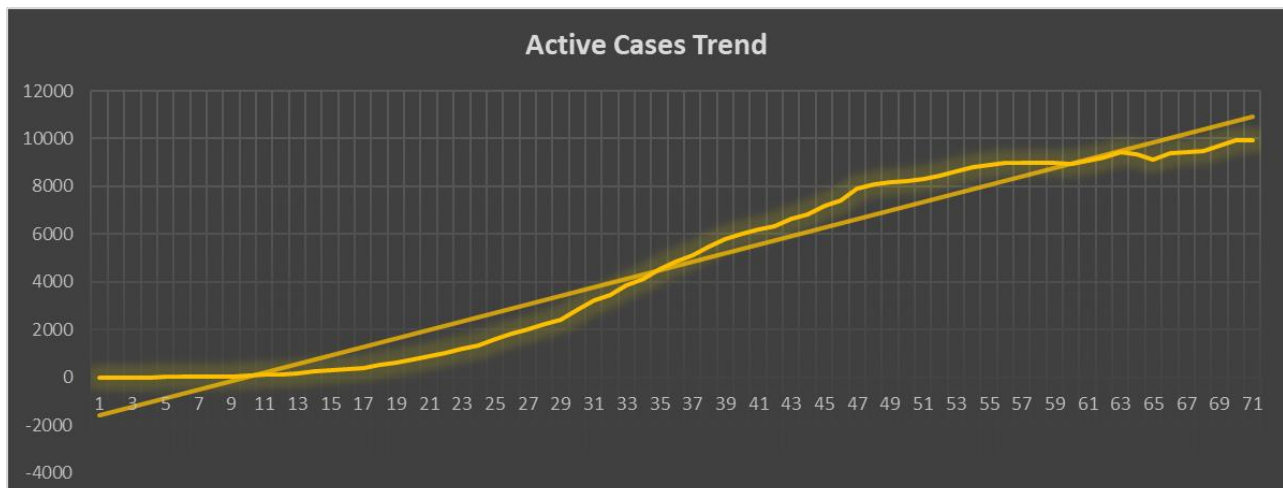
Annex 17 Poland

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

✓ From the beginning of pandemic number of infected people is still growing and reached **17 204 (+ 2 464)**, disease growth rate is almost on the same level like week ago and is still below linear trend line. However, average number of infected grown and is **352** (recently **300**) people a day during last week, which placed Poland on 8th place in Europe and 24th on the world.



✓ Active cases trend line is slightly below linear, however still very close. This is due lower number of new confirmed cases but also slowly growing number of cured people and bigger number of tests done.

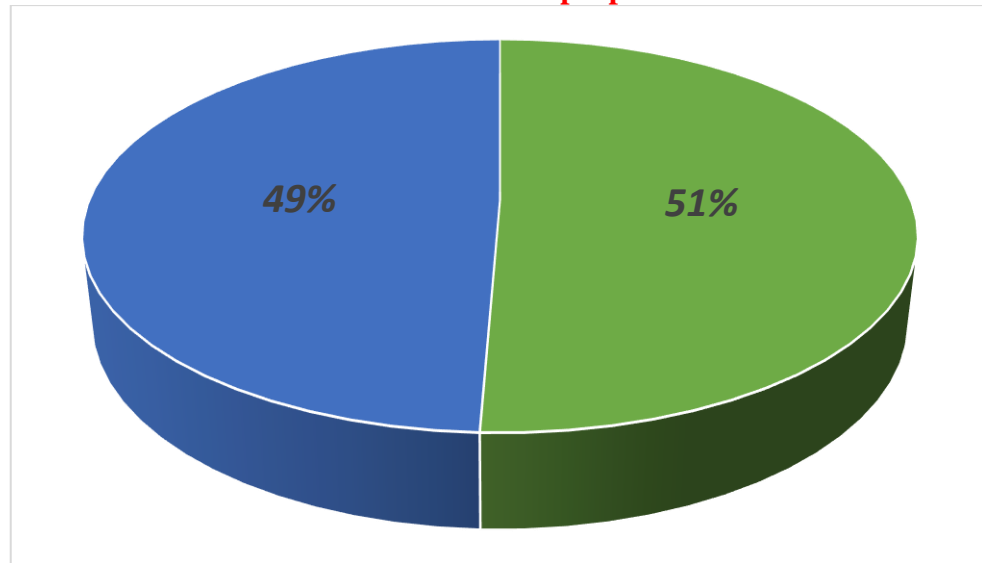


✓ number of tests done so far is **528 122 / +117 654** from last report;
✓ reported number of people cured from coronavirus so far – **6 410 / +1 755** from last report
✓ **861** people died so far (436 men and 425 women), average age of died person is **75 years**, the youngest persons who died was 18th years young man who died in Kędzierzyn Koźle Hospital. The patient had cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

Age structure of died people in Poland

| -9 | 0-19 | 0-29 | 0-39 | 0-49 | 0-59 | 0-69 | 0-79 | 0+ |
|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----|
| | | | 3 | 4 | 8 | 60 | 46 | 69 |
| % | % | % | % | % | % | 9% | 9% | 3% |

Gender structure of died people in Poland

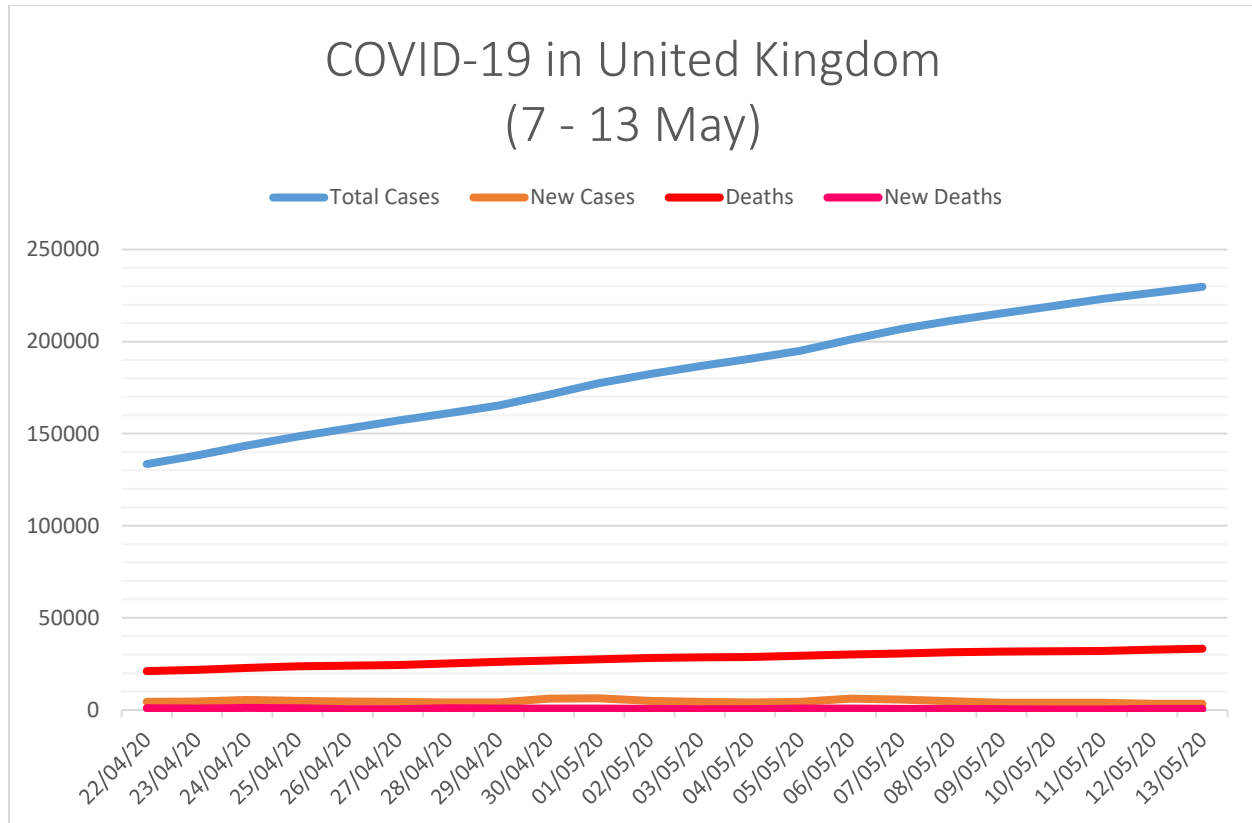


Silesia District is still the most affected region in Poland with almost 4500 confirmed cases. Main source of infection are coal mines located in this area where virus is transfer among miners and their families.

Prime Minister announced that from 18th of May Poland will start 3rd stage of easing restrictions connected with pandemic. Hairdressing and cosmetics can operate, restaurants, cafes and bars can be opened, full-size football fields and organization of classes inside facilities.

Annex 18 UK

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May



The COVID-19 spreading in UK is slowing down last week. The positive trends (total number of infected increased only with 10% and reached 229,705 people in the last week) allowed UK to stay on the 4th place on the world chart by the total COVID-19 cases just behind Russia, Spain and US. The United Kingdom registered **33,186 death cases (again 10% increase rate for the period)** which is still the highest official death toll in Europe and the second highest in the world (Annex 4).

The number of people with coronavirus in hospitals had fallen from 13,168 to 11,141, over the past week - a decrease of 15%. The death cases in care homes is also slowing.

From the beginning of COVID-19 outbreak till now, 1,921,770 tests has been conducted in the UK. More than 100K tests were conducted on Monday, 10-May but the 100,000-a-day target has been reached only in couple of days so far. Missing the 100,000-a-day target for tests is becoming a bit of a recurring theme. The government has always said it does not have to hit the target every day - what matters is whether people who need a test get one.

As announced, on 10-May, the PM Boris Johnson revealed the Government's three phased plan to rebuild from the lockdown. First step, in effect from 13-May, is based on the R-factor (the number of people an infected COVID-19 contaminate). Step two marks the phased reopening of shops and allowing primary pupils back into school. Step three will happen in July the earliest and its implementation will be subject to all conditions and scientific advice. That phase will see more children being sent back to school and the opening of some hospitality services.

The governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have kept the stay-at-home message. They have decided to wait until the R number is lower before easing their measures, so that they have more headroom if the number of cases increase.

Sources:

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-52642895>
2. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/884760/Our_plan_to_rebuild_The_UK_Government_s_COVID-19_recovery_strategy.pdf
3. <https://www.euronews.com/2020/05/10/uk-prime-minister-boris-johnson-keep-that-r-down>

Annex 19 Hungary

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

Life outside Budapest slowly returned to “normal” over the weekend as the easing of coronavirus-related restrictions drew many to tourist spots and restaurant terraces as much as physical distancing rules allowed - reopened playgrounds, parks, sports grounds and zoos in many of the major cities, while young people mainly gathered in downtown areas. Most cities have reported satisfactory compliance with safety regulations on the public’s part, with most residents wearing face masks and keeping a distance of at least 1.5 meters from each other. Some cities and towns, however, are remaining cautious with their lifting of restrictions. According to local government officials, most hotels in the spa town will re-open between mid-May and the second week of June, strictly keeping to coronavirus-related rules and regulations.

Assessment:

Based on the statistics, diagrams and researches (exposed below) it could be assumed Hungary continues with a steady pace its strategy to get through the crisis with minimum negative social, financial and political. It is considered the epidemic is far from over but several restrictions have been and additional may soon be eased in a cautious and gradual manner, while monitoring the rate of virus transmission and the number of patients in a serious condition would be the main factors in determining any easing of restrictions

Annex 20 Austria

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The schools will continue with homeschooling until mid-May. For students, the current semester will probably be completely digital, and examinations and research at universities will continue to take place, as long as it remains possible. The issue of freedom to travel has become a particularly hotly debated topic and Kurz caused a stir at the weekend with a broadcast message announcing that freedom to travel will only be granted once a vaccine is ready for use.

Travel restriction

➤ Travelers landing in Austria are now given a test for coronavirus and are either free to enter or facing a 14-day quarantine depending on their results. It's a small step towards getting the nation back to work and a possible example for other countries.

Economic stimulus measures

➤ Sectorial support measures:

Austria is introducing support measures for sectors heavily affected by the outbreak, such as tourism and air transportation, and uses existing measures to reduce hours worked (Kurzarbeit). EUR 100 million are available for loans to hotels that suffer more than 15% losses in sales. The maximum is 80% of the loan or EUR 500 000.

➤ Loan guarantees:

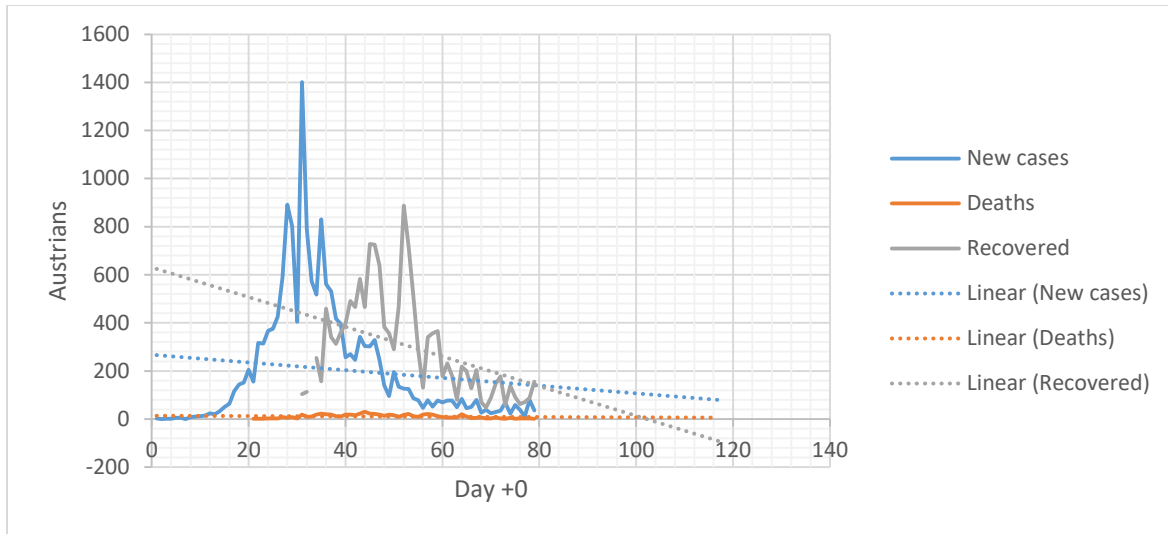
The Austria Wirtschaftservice (AWS) is providing new guarantees for SMEs worth EUR 10 million up to 80% of the loan amount or EUR 2,5 million for 5 years. The guarantees will have a one-time processing fee starting with 0.25 % of the amount to be financed and a guarantee fee, starting with 0.3 % p.a. (variable to risk) of outstanding liability

➤ Crisis management fund:

EUR 9 billion in guarantees and warranties;

EUR 15 billion in emergency aid;

EUR 10 billion in tax deferral.



On the graph, we can clearly analyze Austria's situation and trends in the fight against the virus. We have a pandemic peak, a gradual decrease in the number of infected and increasing number of cured. The country has 15,997 registered patients, of which 14,304 are cured, 624 died and 1069 active cases.³

Sources:

<https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/austria-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html>

<https://www.bmi.gv.at/news.aspx?id=314A5A707A4547684D55733D>

<https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/austria-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html>

Annex 21 Romania

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The lockdown measures are reducing demand for social consumption and durable goods and services. Social consumption, which involves face-to-face services and includes spending on recreation and restaurants, is particularly impacted, as well as spending on some durable categories, such as clothing, furniture, or cars. The two together account for about 30% of consumer spending in Romania, which is somewhat lower than in the peer EU countries (around 45% in Slovenia). The difference between the two is that social consumption will be foregone – as nobody would go to the cinema 10 times more to compensate for the time spent in lockdown – but some of the spendings on durables may just be postponed. At the same time, losses in these two categories may be somewhat compensated for by an increase in food spending.

The number of employment contracts terminated in Romania since the state of emergency came in force on March 16 reached nearly 350,000 on May 13. On top of those, some 350,000 Romanians returned from abroad are expected to look for employment at home.

Some investments are likely to be postponed due to the evolution of the pandemic. In addition to the containment measures in place, increased uncertainty about the timeline of the crisis combined with market sentiment will delay investment decisions, while liquidity pressure may interrupt ongoing investment projects

Annex 22 Turkey

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Turkey on 11 March. According to the Ministry of Health/Worldometer, as of 14 May 1,135,367 people have been tested nationwide, 144,749 cases have been confirmed, 4,007 people have died, and 104,030 people have recovered. The outbreak emerged amidst the backdrop of a protracted and complex humanitarian crisis that has already significantly strained basic infrastructure and services: four million refugees are registered in Turkey, including 3.6 million Syrians and 1.7 million children—the largest registered refugee population in the world. The Government of Turkey activated its National Response Plan for Pandemics. All 1,200+ public and private hospitals across the country have been mobilized and 114 laboratories are certified to test suspected cases. The government is working to increase this capacity while also expanding treatment and quarantine spaces for infected patients. As part of social distancing and confinement measures aimed at preventing and containing the spread of COVID-19, all schools (including pre-schools) and universities are shuttered until 31 May, after which date the measure will be re-evaluated. Public gatherings, social, cultural and sport events are also suspended or postponed, and all public places are closed—including restaurants and bars, sport and recreation facilities and cultural institutions. Virtually all international and domestic flights have been cancelled until 28 May, with exceptions for foreign citizens as well as Turkish citizens living abroad who can benefit from special flights. Public and private transport was also banned in 31 provinces, affecting 76% of the total population in Turkey. Grocery stores and supermarkets remain open and are well-stocked, while other basic services (such as electricity, water and gas) continue to function normally. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 outbreak is putting the most vulnerable children in Turkey—refugees and migrants, children with disabilities, children of agricultural workers and others living in poor or marginalized households—at risk due to the interruption or significant reduction of essential non-health services like education, child protection and social protection. The effects of prolonged social distancing and confinement measures are also likely to result in increased unemployment and fewer livelihood opportunities for vulnerable families, making it more difficult for them to meet their basic needs and leading to increased negative coping strategies such as child labour and early marriage.

Annex 23 Greece

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

1. As of 13 May, in total, **2,760** COVID-19 cases and **155** deaths (fatality rate of **5.6%**) due to COVID-19 have been reported. **1,374** persons are estimated to have recovered and **28** patients are critical/serious Condition.

2. As of 13 May, each disease carrier infects significantly less than other person. The reproduction number, which indicates how quickly a disease is spreading, is significantly under **0,5** according to Greek National Health Organization.

3. Intensive care unit (ICU) cases, considered a good indicator of where a country stands on the curve, appear to have peaked on 5 April at **93** patients and have been gradually declining ever since In 1 month, the numbers of hospitalized persons dropped from **365** to **162** while the ones in ICU from **91** to **28**.

4. The 11th May 2020 signaled the transition from the first stage of phase 2 (first wave of easing the lockdown restrictions) to the second stage of phase 2 (second wave of easing the lockdown restrictions). The main goal of this stage is to gradually and safely return to somehow a kind of “normalcy”.

5. The second stage represents the resumption of operation of many retail stores and 225.000 employees back at work or **33%** of the total whose operation had been suspended. Similarly, the second wave of reopening, **35%** of the total closed businesses by the state, reopened.

6. As of 11 May, schools have been reopened for the last year students.

7. The country prolonged until 21 May the lockdown imposed in March on migrant camps and reception centers, which had been expected to be lifted from 11 May.

8. Greece took strict but necessary measures timely. The first measures were taken just one day after the first confirmed case and quite before the first death. Actions such as the lockdown and fully-quarantine vulnerable towns and villages have protected the national health system and eliminated the number of deaths. The lockdown was imposed much earlier than in most countries in the western world while Greeks reacted to the lockdown with full compliance. The intensive tracing system was also a key factor of controlling the virus spread. The key to further success remains the individual responsibility and disciplined alongside collective maturity

9. The use of face mask usage is mandatory in all means of public transport, taxi and health premises. Highly recommended into supermarkets and stores.

10. The likelihood of serious local disease spread still exists in close structures such as refugee and Roma camps.

11. Since Greece base almost 30% of its total GDP on tourism, there are a lot of concerns and debates about what is going to happen taking into consideration the decade-long economic crisis which struck the country. It is believed that travelers arriving overland may mitigate the consequences to tourism this season as traditional markets remain closed due to restrictions.

12. The German newspaper” Bild am Sonntag” listed Greece as the first among destinations keen to see German tourists this summer.

13. The overall situation is assessed as positive and optimistic. However, can quickly get out of hand continued vigilance is vital.

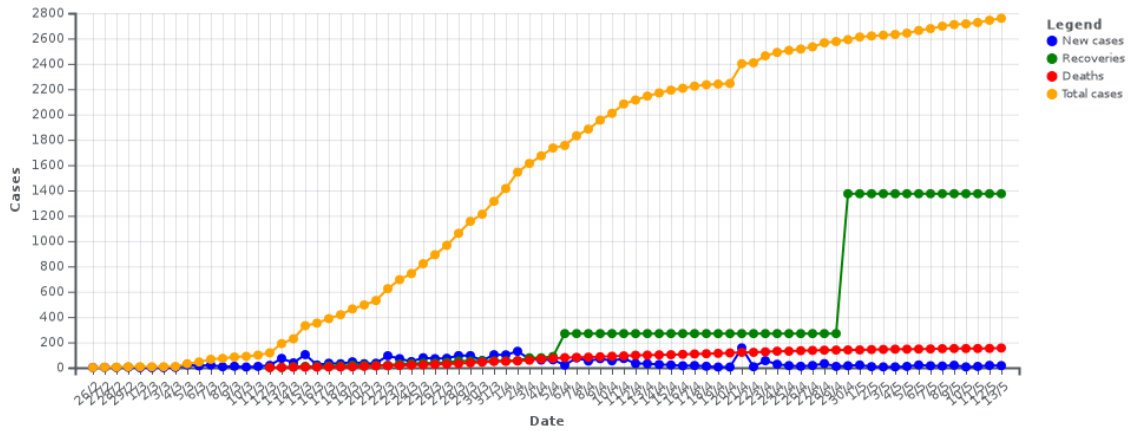


Figure 1: COVID-19 total confirmed cases, deaths, recoveries in Greece (13/05/2020 18:00 AM)

Sources:

<https://www.amna.gr/en/article/456446/Greece-to-launch-second-wave-of-shop-and-business-reopening-on-Monday>

<https://www.amna.gr/en/article/456466/>

<https://www.coronatracker.com/country/greece/>

Annex 24 Serbia

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The measures will change from week to week, in line with the number of newly discovered cases of coronavirus. Both crisis response teams continue their work, and also continue to operate over the summer, to respond to the second wave in the fall, if there is one²⁷.

The Serbian government appealed all citizens to adhere to protective measures throughout the entire duration of the risk of spreading infectious disease COVID-19.

The suspension of teaching at the premises of the institutions of higher education, all schools, as well as the suspension of work of these institutions is in force as long as the danger of the spread of COVID-19 lasts. Certain educational activities can be organized at the premises of these institutions, with the application of all protective measures.

When visiting parks and public areas intended for recreation, citizens are obliged to maintain a distance of two metres from each other.

The employers engaged in retail trade activities, the establishments serving food and beverages and the owners of shops in shopping malls are required to take all preventive measures to combat COVID-19. This implies a limited number of people in the same space, disinfection of facilities, use of protective equipment, and disinfectants²⁸.

The Republic of Serbia showed its willingness to help others by donating €2 million at the Global Coronavirus Response, and also, maintains a good relationship with the US²⁹.

The government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Conclusion on the allocation of approximately RSD 212 million from the state budget as financial assistance to independent artists in Serbia³⁰.

²⁷ (<https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/en/155796/appeal-to-citizens-to-adhere-to-all-prevention-precautionary-measures.php>, 2020)

²⁸ (<https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/en/155751/all-citizens-obliged-to-adhere-to-protective-measures.php>, 2020)

²⁹ (<https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/en/155763/cooperation-during-pandemic-indicator-of-good-relations-with-united-states.php>, 2020)

³⁰ (<https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/en/155784/government-approves-financial-assistance-to-freelance-artists.php>, 2020)

Annex 25 North Macedonia

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

1. The national authorities report that from the beginning of the week (11.05.) people from risk groups, such as those working in kindergartens, hospitals, old nursing homes, patients with chronic diseases and public transport employees, will start mass testing. The measure is imposed as one of the most successful in the fight against the virus.

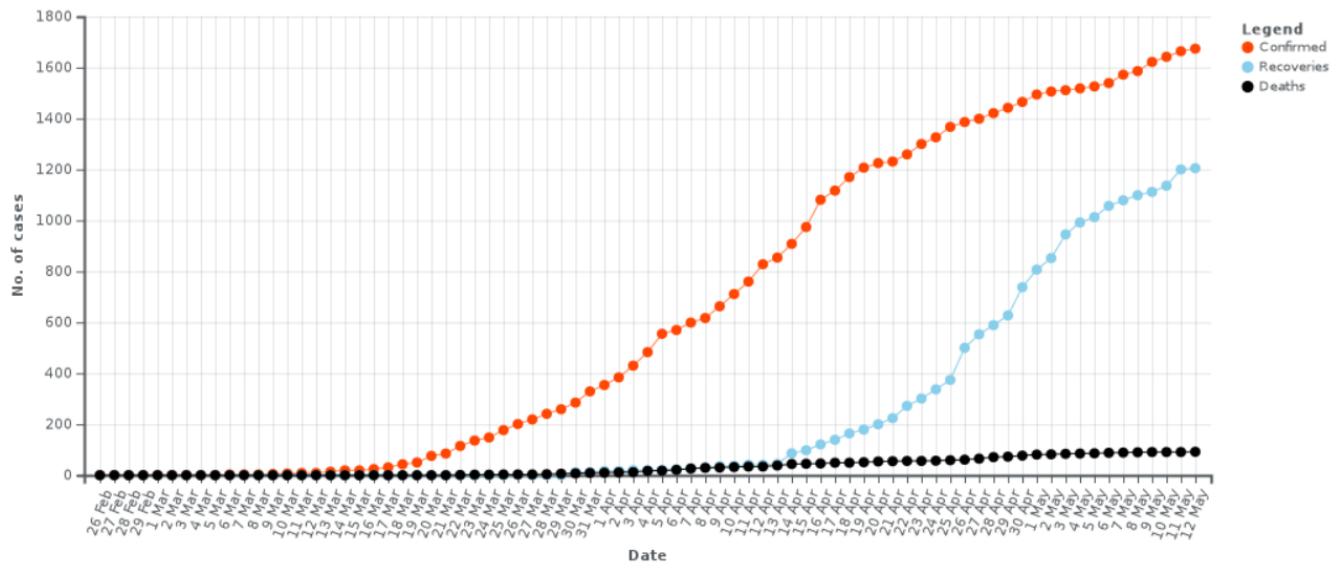
2. Up to 14.05. the COVID-19 situation in North Macedonia is as follows:

3. COVID-19 cases: 1694

4. Deaths: 95

5. Recovered: 1229

Total confirmed cases [edit]



Sources:

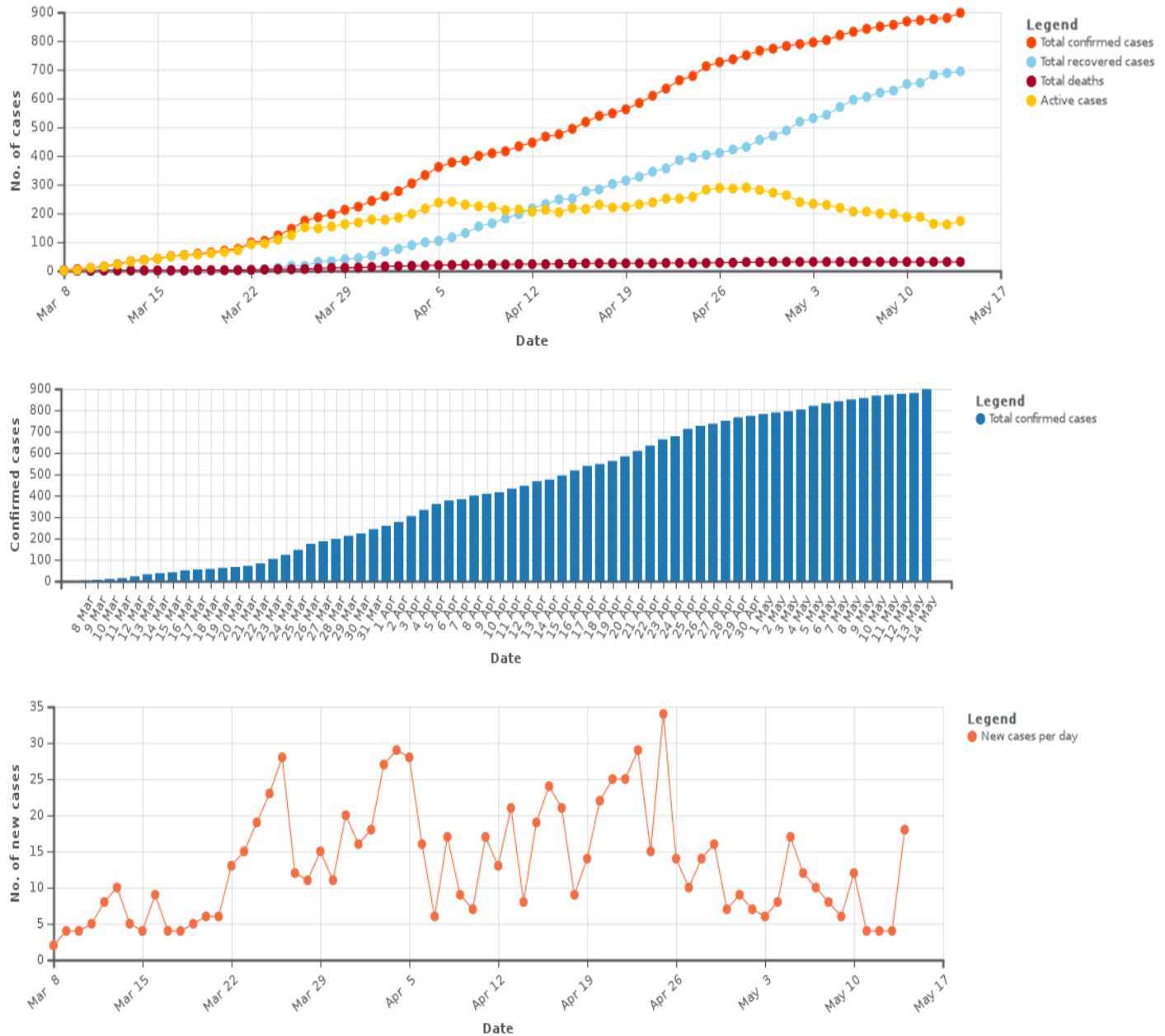
6. <http://zdravstvo.gov.mk/korona-virus/>

7. <https://novini.bg/sviat/balkani/595389>.

Annex 26 Albania

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

On **11 May**, the Green Zones were expanded to include every municipality except Tirana, Shkodër, Krujë, Durrës, Kurbin, Kamëz and Fier, also labeled "Red Zones". Intercity travel from and to these municipalities was also prohibited.



As of **14 May** the total confirmed cases in Albania are **900** with only **33** deaths and 694 recovered. Within the period there is no change in the death rate compared to the last period.

Sources:

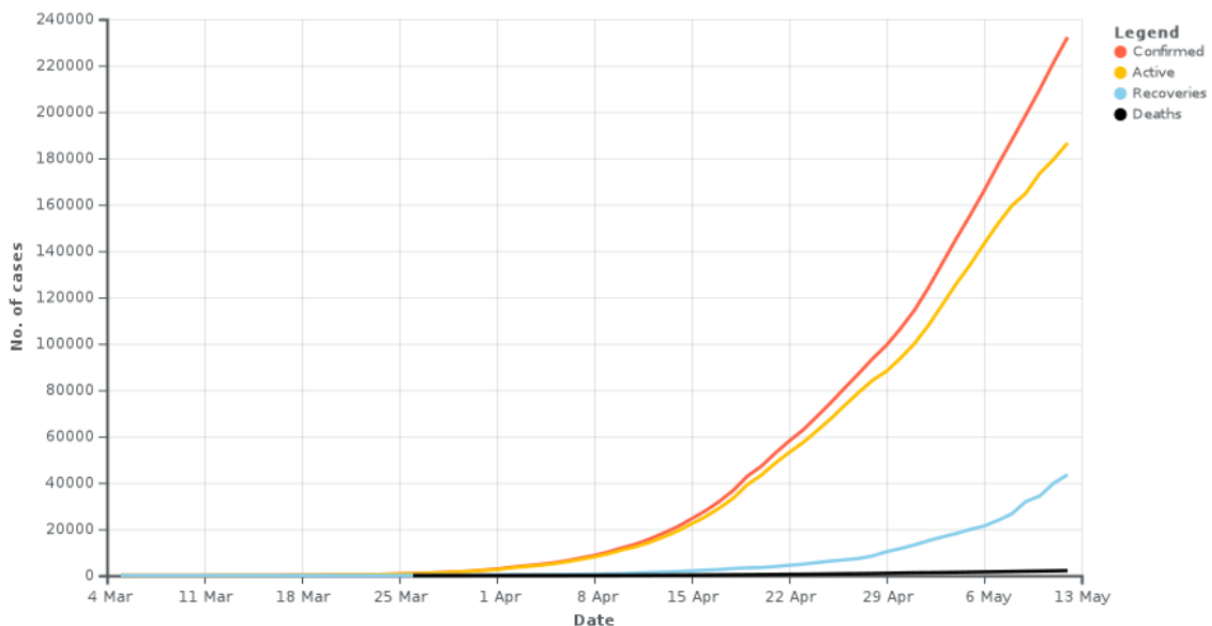
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_coronavirus_pandemic_in_Albania.

Anex 27 Russia

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

Russia has overtaken Spain and ranked second in the world in the number of officially confirmed cases of coronavirus infection, based on data provided by authorities in both countries. The number of registered infected in Russia according to the latest data of the operational headquarters for the fight against coronavirus reached 232,243, and in Spain they are 227,436. On Sunday, Russia ranked fifth in the world in the number of infected, but the next day climbed two places higher, ahead of Britain and Italy.

Charts [\[edit\]](#)



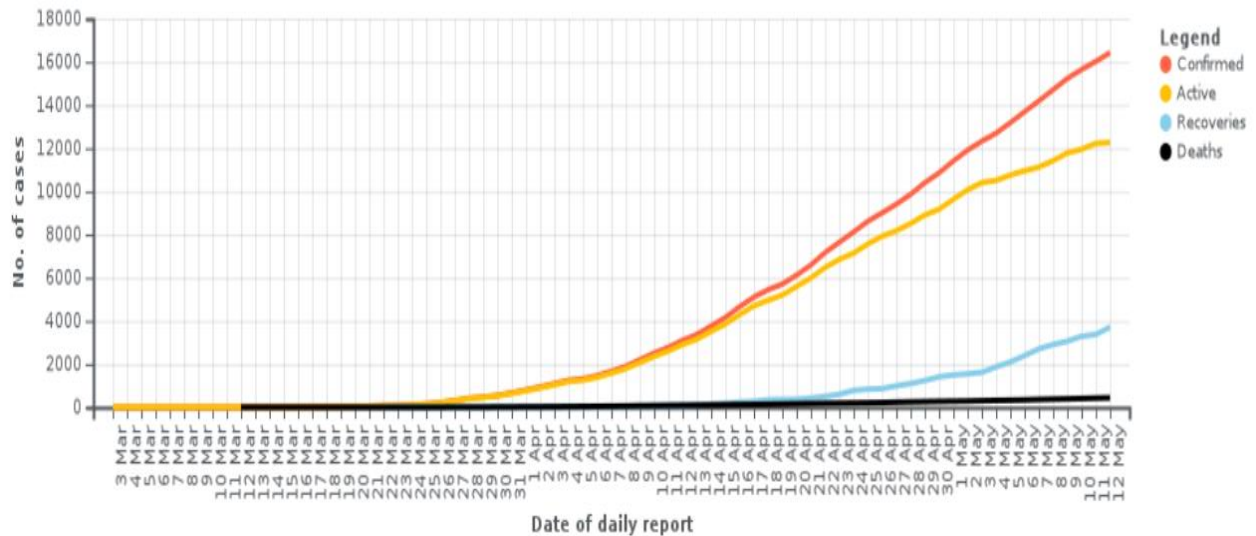
The President of Russia announced in a special address to the nation that from May 12 the non-working days decided until May 11 will be terminated and the measures will be gradually relaxed, starting with the opening of enterprises in sectors such as construction, industry, agriculture, extraction of minerals because they do not have direct contact with many people, as in the case of services, for example.

Everyone over the age of 65, as well as people with chronic illnesses, must stay in their homes.

According to data from the Russian Operational Headquarters as of May 13, the spread rate of the infection in the capital Moscow has dropped to its lowest level of 0.94, while the same average for the whole of Russia has been kept at a minimum of 1.04 for three days now. The prevalence rate is calculated according to a formula given in a recommendation from the authorities to the regions to mitigate the restrictive measures put in place to limit the spread of the virus. To move to the first phase of easing the restrictions in each region of the Russian Federation, the indicator should not exceed 1.

Annex 28 Ukraine

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May



New cases, active cases, recoveries and deaths per day

From May 11, Ukraine eased the restrictive isolation measures imposed in connection with the coronavirus and Ukrainians can visit the open terraces of restaurants, as well as beauty salons, dental clinics, parks and public gardens. In Ukraine, about 500 new cases of coronavirus are registered every day, according to the health ministry. As of May 13, there were more than 16,425 confirmed cases of the disease in Ukraine, and 439 people died from COVID-19. New sanitary rules have been introduced in the country: waiters serve only in disposable containers, and customers are forbidden to touch the menus. The tables are for a maximum of two people and should be at a distance of one and a half meters from each other. Wearing a mask is mandatory.

Annex 29 Moldova

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The number of people infected with the new coronavirus reached 5,406 cases.

Of the total number of cases on this day, 23 are medical workers: doctors - 5, nurses - 13, support staff - 5.

All hospital entrants and staff are tested, the results must be presented.

The Ministry takes daily measures to protect public health, such as: strict monitoring of the temperature entering hospitals and employees; placing suspects in solitary confinement; establishing contacts between the authorities and employees, providing health monitoring; organizing shifts of staff activities; strengthening the sanitary and disinfection regime of premises and equipment.

A total of 2,176 people were cured of COVID-19 and 185 died.

Annex 30 USA

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The continued spread of the virus, and the continued rise in the death toll, comes as political leaders reopen parts of the country. But stay-at-home orders remain in effect in many states, Americans have been told to wear face coverings in public and true normalcy remains a distant vision.

In much of the country, case numbers remain high and improvement has been elusive. In Nebraska, cases have more than doubled since April 29. New cases and deaths are stubbornly high in Los Angeles and Chicago.

But there are locally encouraging signs. In New York, reports of new cases and deaths have been trending downward. In San Francisco, officials have succeeded in reducing case growth to the dozens each day. And in New Orleans, where hundreds of infections were being announced each day in early April, only a few dozen per day are being reported now.

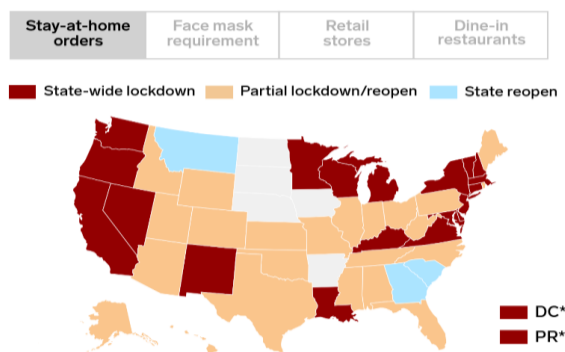
Across much of the country, African-Americans and Hispanics have been infected with the coronavirus at disproportionate rates. In Illinois, about 60 percent of Hispanic people who were tested for the virus were positive, three times the average for other Illinoisans.

As of May 8, 21 US states, as well as Guam, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico have stay-at-home orders in place, asking residents to shelter in place. Some cities and counties in states that don't have these policies have issued similar orders. Twenty-six states have loosened their restrictions to allow some businesses to reopen. The reopening plans still have social-distancing measures in place, however; in Alaska, restaurants are reservation-only and can only operate at 25% capacity. South Carolina's retail stores are permitted to operate at just 20% capacity, and workers in Georgia will be screened for fevers before their shifts and still have to stay 6 feet apart.

The state and city populations currently affected by some kind of stay-at-home order total to about 199 million people, or about 60% of the US population. Stay-at-home orders issued by states to stem the spread of the virus have frozen the economy. More than 33 million Americans have filed for initial unemployment benefits in the past seven weeks, a burst that economists say is unprecedented.

Current statewide orders are represented on the maps below.

Status of US stay-at-home and re-opening orders

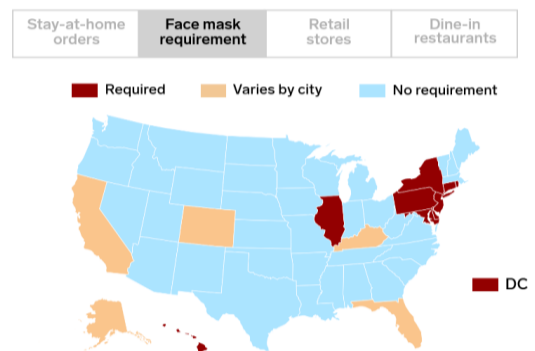


*Puerto Rico and Washington DC issued "stay-at-home" orders that went into effect March 30 and March 27, respectively.

Updated as of May 12, 2020 at 12:00 pm ET.

INSIDER

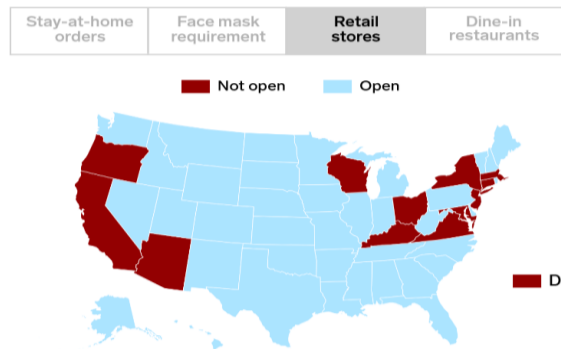
Status of US stay-at-home and re-opening orders



Updated as of May 12, 2020 at 12:00 pm ET.

INSIDER

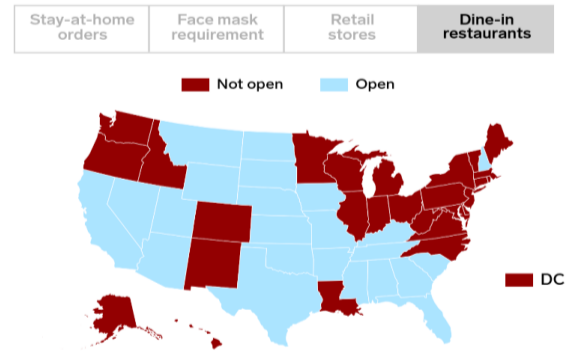
Status of US stay-at-home and re-opening orders



Updated as of May 12, 2020 at 12:00 pm ET.

INSIDER

Status of US stay-at-home and re-opening orders



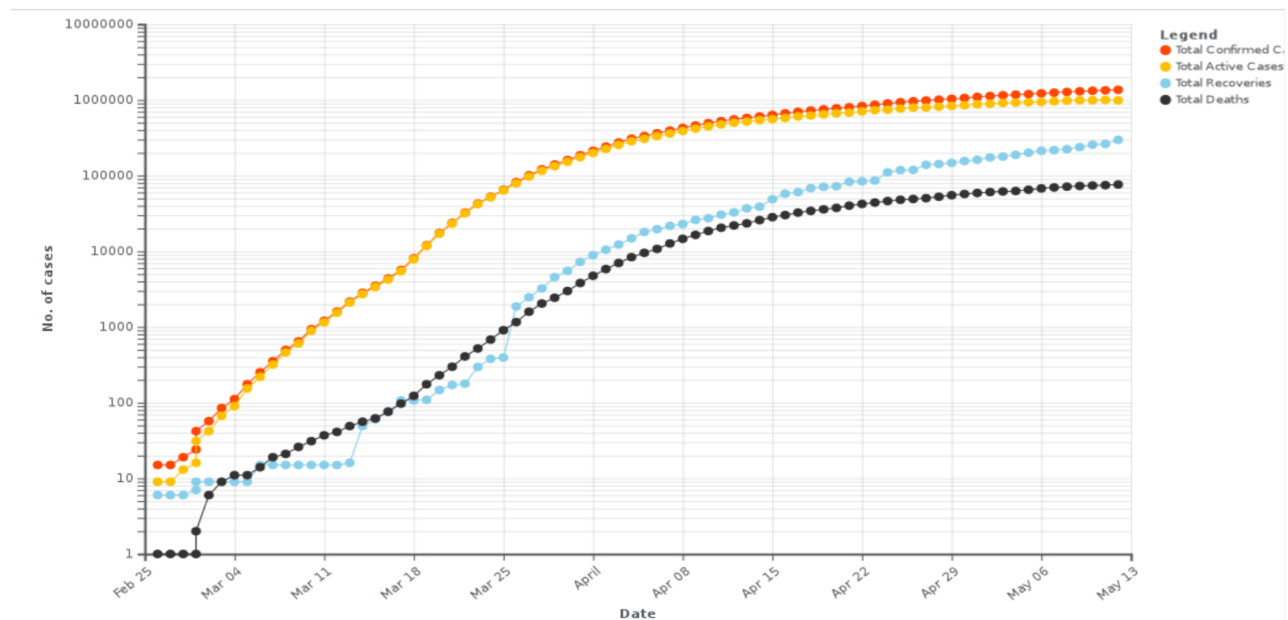
Updated as of May 12, 2020 at 12:00 pm ET.

INSIDER

Moderna Inc. -- the first vaccine maker to start clinical trials in the United States -- announced May 07 it would soon begin a phase 2 study after getting approval from the US Food and Drug Administration.

The leading US model on the impact of the coronavirus now estimates 147,000 deaths by August — almost double the estimate predicted 15 days ago. On April 27, for comparison, the model estimated a little over 74,000 deaths, as Business Insider previously reported.

The death toll in the US continues to surge with 83,301 deaths and 1,407,284 cases and more than 280,509 patients have recovered. The US continues to lead worldwide cases and deaths from the virus. As of May 13, 2020, the U.S. has the most confirmed active cases and deaths in the world; and its death rate was 206 per million people, the tenth-highest rate globally.



Sources:

1. <https://www.statista.com/study/71515/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-in-the-us/>

2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020 coronavirus pandemic in the United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_coronavirus_pandemic_in_the_United_States)
[#cite_note-7](#)
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>
4. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>
5. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/coronavirus-ihme-us-death-toll-total-projections-white-house-a9498806.html>
6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/coronavirus-vaccine-trump-us-who-leaders-conference-cure-a9498716.html>
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8. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-us-cases.html>
9. <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-map-stay-at-home-orders-lockdowns-2020-3>
<https://www.usnews.com/news/economy/articles/2020-05-07/more-than-33-million-americans-have-filed-for-unemployment-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

Annex 31 Canada

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

Some significant steps will be taken in the slow process of lifting restrictions imposed to limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada.

Quebec, which accounts for more than half of the country's novel coronavirus cases, is reopening elementary schools and daycares outside the Montreal area. Students will be subject to physical distancing and frequent handwashing while school officials follow public health guidelines for cleaning and disinfection. Attendance, however, is not mandatory, and two school boards have told The Canadian Press that most of their students will be staying home for now. Quebec is also allowing most retail stores outside Montreal to open today, but pushed back the opening date for schools and other businesses in the hard-hit metropolis to May 25 as case numbers there remained high.

It came to light on 8 May that 60% of COVID-19 fatalities were in Quebec, which has around 20% of the nation's population. Montreal was called "the epicenter of the pandemic in Canada.

Similar measures are being taken by other provinces and territories of Canada to relax the imposed restrictions and to reopen their economies.

Restrictions put in place to try and slow the spread of the virus have had major financial consequences for families and for businesses of all sizes. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said May 8 that the 12-week Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) would be available past its original end date in early June, with details to come next week.

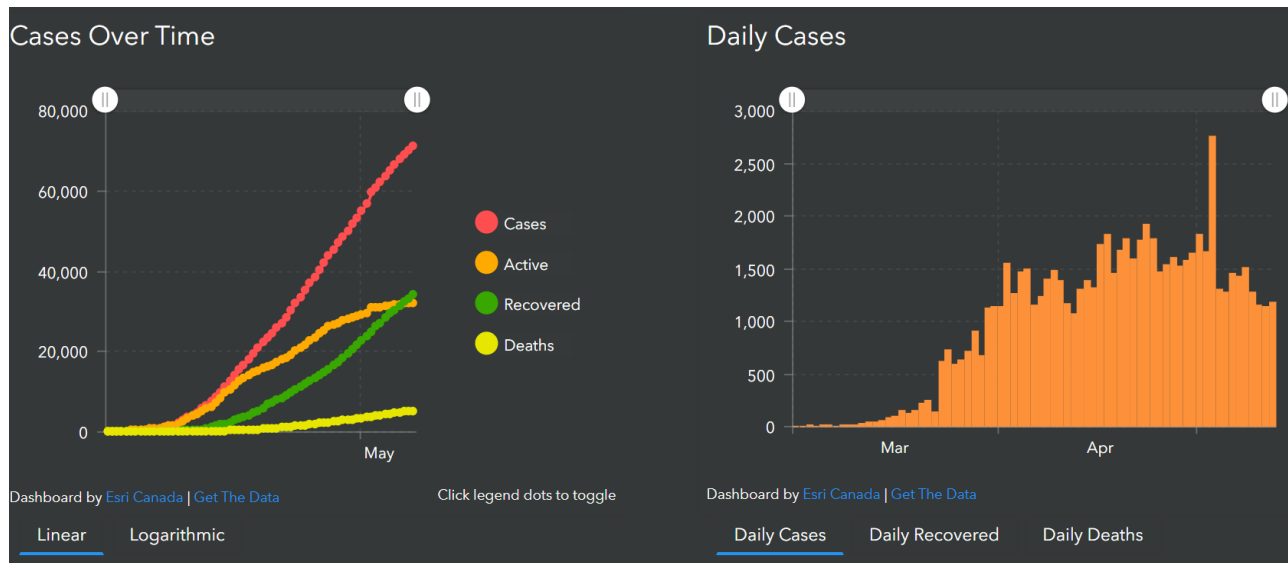
A new \$77 million fund for food processors of various sizes were announced on May 06. The money can be used to buy personal protective equipment for workers, adapt to health protocols and support other social distancing measures. The government is also adding \$125 million to the AgriRecovery fund, a federal-provincial-territorial program aimed at helping farmers during disasters.

\$50 million for a purchase program for surplus food also were announced, similar to what's available for some farmers in the U.S. The government also wants to expand the Canadian Dairy Commission Act to allow it to buy and store more surplus dairy products — like cheese and butter — to avoid more instances of milk dumping, a move welcomed by the Dairy Farmers of Canada.

On May 11, the federal government said it will provide loans and financing to the country's largest employers to help them weather the COVID-19 economic crisis. The Liberals said the government will offer bridge financing to companies whose financial needs aren't being met by conventional credit so they can stay open and keep employees on their payrolls.

By mid-May 1,350 Canadian Forces soldiers will be deployed to 25 Quebec long-term care homes hard hit by COVID-19.

Data provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada shows that most cases are the result of community spread, while a little less than a quarter are the result of travelling or close contact with a traveler.



More than a million people in Canada have been tested for the novel coronavirus, with over 71,000 positive tests including 5,169 deaths and 34,042 cases recovered.

Although cases and death tolls continue to climb, there are continual signs that undertaken public health measures have slowed the growth of COVID-19 overall in Canada.

Sources:

1. <https://www.covid-19canada.com/graphs>
2. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/canada/anada/>
3. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/canadas-reponse/government-canada-takes-action-covid-19.html>
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6. <https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/more-covid-19-restrictions-being-lifted-across-the-country/ar-BB13TFF5?li=AAggXBV>
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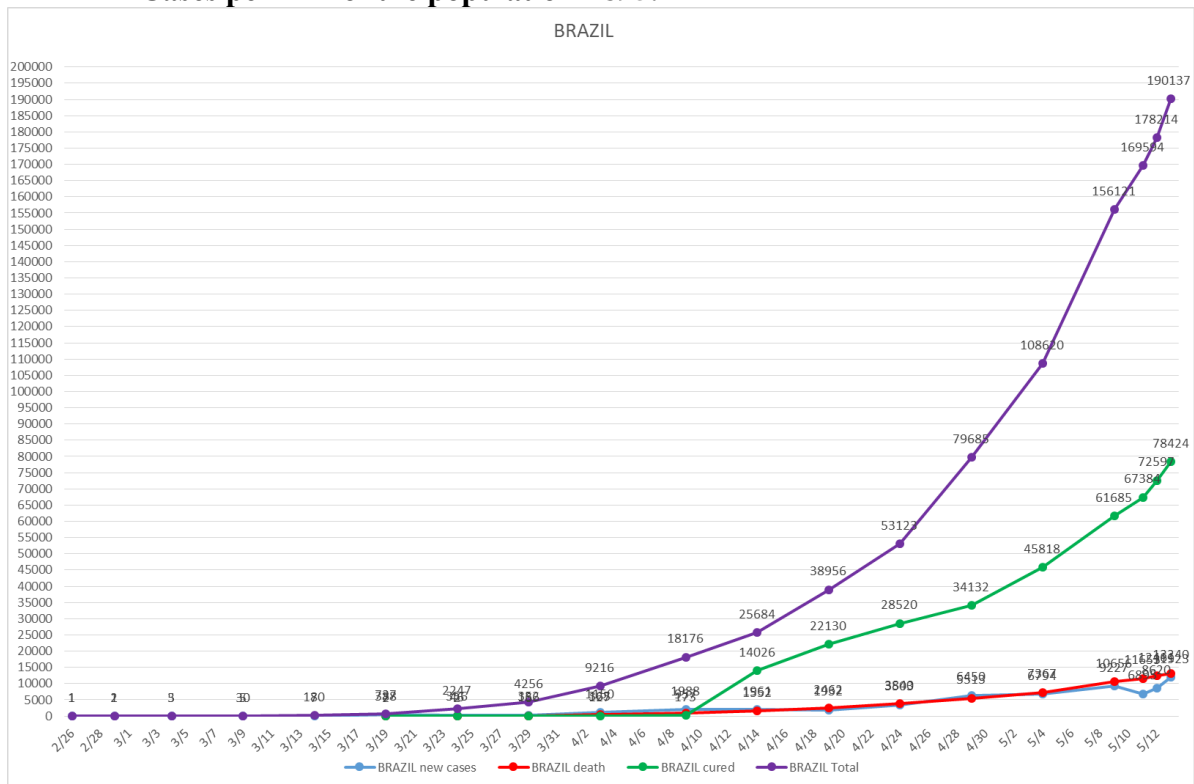
Annex 32 Brasil

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The coronavirus pandemic was confirmed to have spread to Brazil on February 25, 2020 after a 61-year-old man from São Paulo, who returned from Lombardy, Italy, tested positive.

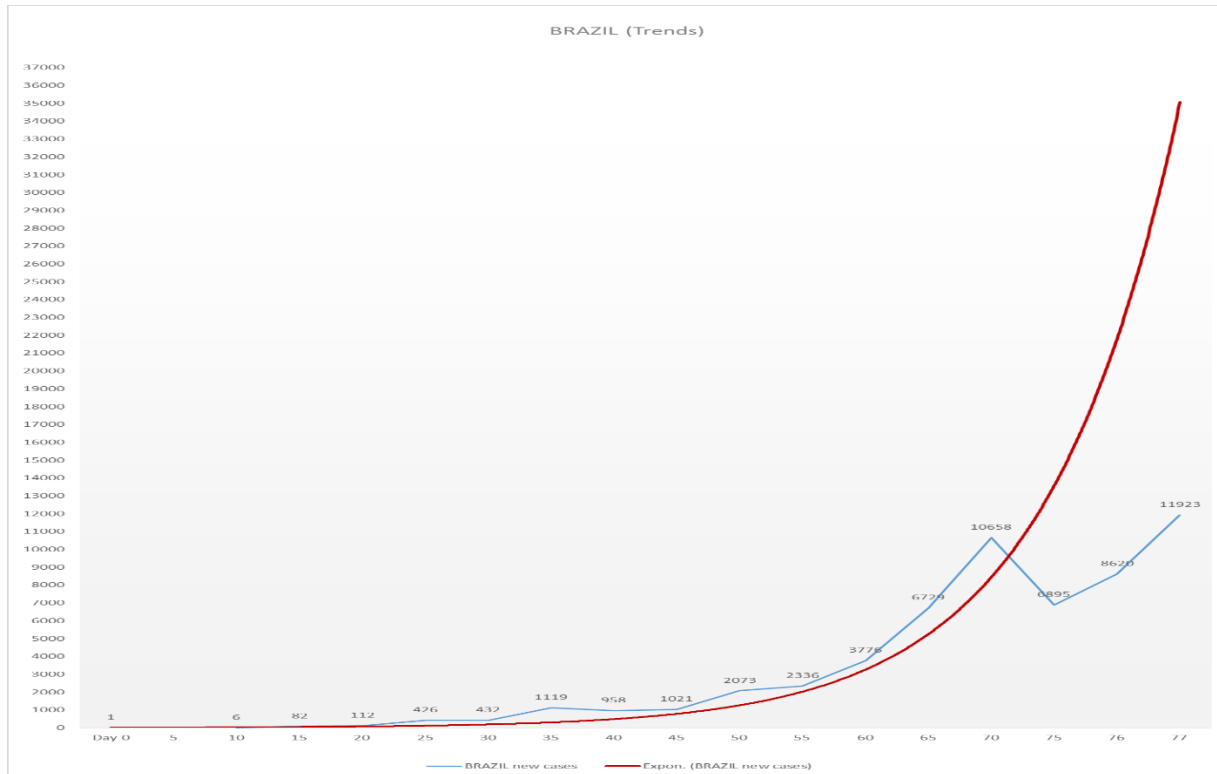
1. The total number of infected, deaths, new cases and recoveries is as follows:

- Infected – 190 137;
- Coronavirus deaths – 13 240 (7 %);
- New cases for the last 24 hours as of 13.05.2020 – 11 923;
- Recovered after illness – 78 424 (41 %);
- Cases per 1 M of the population - 895.



2. Trends.

The number of new cases is growing exponentially and uncontrollably at the moment.



To date, there are no indications of a peak or approaching a peak in the coronavirus spread in Brazil.

The number of deaths doubled in less than two weeks.

3. Measures taken.

No changes in already established measures.

The situation to date shows the ineffectiveness of the measures. The negative tendencies continue.

5. Measures that could be implemented effectively in Bulgaria.

Given the different approaches of the governments of Brazil and Bulgaria, in response to the developing pandemic, measures applicable in Bulgaria to deal with the spreading exponential contagion cannot be determined

Annex 33 Australia

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

As at **3:00pm on 5 May 2020**, a total of 6,849 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Australia, including 96 deaths and 5,889 have been reported as recovered from COVID-19.

- Over the past week, there has been an average of 17 new cases reported each day. Of the newly reported cases, the majority have been from Victoria.

- COVID-19 cases were reported across all ages.

- The median age of all cases is 48 years (range: 0 to 101 years).

- The median age of deaths is 80 years (range: 42 to 96 years).

- There is a relatively equal ratio of male-to-female cases across most age groups.

- There has been a steady and so far sustained decline in cases following a peak in cases at the end of March.

- Of cases with a reported place of acquisition, 64% have recent international travel history, including over 1,200 cases associated with cruise ships.

- The overall proportion of cases under investigation in each state and territory is relatively low, indicating that public health actions, including case identification and contact tracing, is occurring in a timely manner.

- To date, over 664,000 tests have been conducted nationally. Of those tests conducted 1.0% have been positive.

- The ‘cases in aged care services’ table presents the number of cases that have been reported among care recipients in Australian Government subsidised Residential and In Home Care settings in each state and territory.

On 30 April 2020, the ACT became the first Australian jurisdiction to be free of all known cases of COVID-19.

Annex 34 Africa

Weekly update: 7 – 13 May

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak continues to evolve in the WHO African Region since the first case was reported on 25 February 2020 in Algeria. Since then, all Member States have reported COVID-19. While there are variations among countries, the overall numbers of reported cases and deaths have been increasing exponentially in recent weeks and over a half of the countries in the region are experiencing community transmission. There are also increasing incidents of cross border transmission of COVID-19 between countries in the continent, mainly through long-distance truck drivers and illicit transboundary movement.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve in the WHO African Region, with the number of new confirmed cases and deaths increasing every week. **Lesotho reported its first confirmed case on 13 May 2020**, bringing in all countries in the African continent. More than a half of the countries in the region are experiencing community transmission and cross-border spread of COVID-19 between countries is still ongoing, mainly attributed to open transport corridors for goods and illicit activities along borders.

Recent analyses of the evolution of the outbreak in Africa show that the disease has largely affected urban populations, with most rural communities relatively unaffected or only reporting sporadic cases. This means that the outbreak can still be controlled by aggressive implementation of both containment and mitigation measures. The critical control measures include active case finding, testing and isolation of cases, contact tracing, physical distancing and promotion of good personal hygiene practices. These measures must be implemented diligently and comprehensively in all communities. Governments, Ministries of Health and other national authorities, WHO and partners need to put in place stronger systems to monitor effective implementation of these critical interventions as well as proper accountability systems. Communities also need to own their role as responsible citizenry.

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