

Confirmed Cases

233,151 0.93
Change rate (5-
day average)

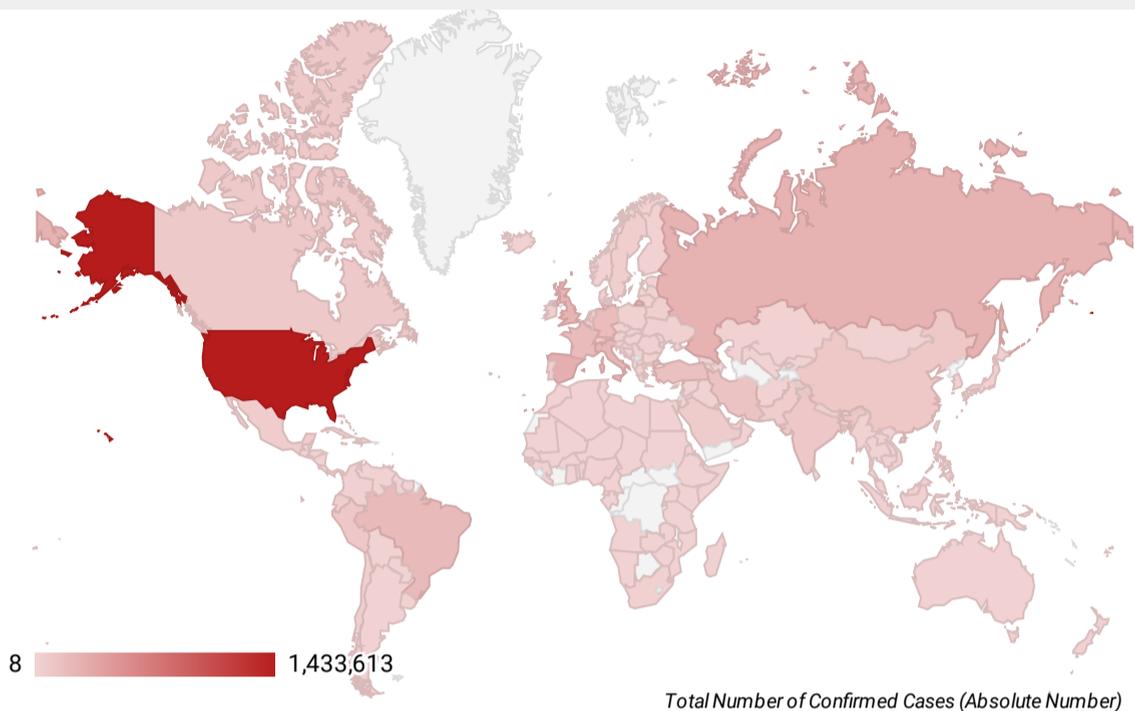
Deaths

33,614 0.9
Change rate (5-
day average)

Deaths as % of cases

14.42

How do COVID-19 Cases compare to other countries?



Key Developments

As of 14 May, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recorded 4,446,031 cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and 298,442 associated deaths. More than 1.6 million people have now recovered from the virus worldwide. WHO emergencies director Dr. Mike Ryan has said this week that the virus “may never go away”, and that efforts must continue to control the spread until a vaccine is found. The UK has carried out more than two million coronavirus tests, averaging approximately 30,849 tests per one million people.

This week, Prime Minister Boris Johnson outlined the government’s steps to gradually ease the lockdown. The government encouraged those who cannot work from home to return to work, and advised people to walk, cycle, or drive to work where possible. The government has suspended driving licence applications for all non-essential workers due to a reallocation of staff resources, meaning people returning to work but not deemed to be essential workers cannot apply for a drivers licence. However, the Prime Minister’s speech has been heavily criticised by health officials for its lack of clarity around what restrictions have now been lifted. The governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have advised their citizens to disregard the PM’s “Stay Alert” messaging and continue to follow the “Stay at Home” messaging instead.

The UK has approved the use of an antibody test created by Swiss pharmaceutical company Roche, which aims to identify those who have previously contracted the virus and determine if they are now displaying signs of immunity. The UK government spent GBP 16 million on similar tests which proved to be ineffective at detecting antibodies. UK Health Minister Edward Argar has said the tests will be rolled out to NHS and care workers first, before moving on to the wider population. Argar has also noted that testing capacity for the virus itself currently remains inadequate, particularly for those working in care home settings, meaning a full rollout of antibody testing is unlikely to take place for several months at least.

Elsewhere in Europe, governments are slowly easing lockdown restrictions. Germany is due to open its borders with Austria, France, and Switzerland from 15 June, while Italy will allow bars, restaurants and hair salons to reopen from next week. A resurgence in case numbers may see restrictions reimposed by the government, and a link discovered by Italian doctors this week between COVID-19 and an inflammatory disorder in children may force governments to reassess plans for the reopening of kindergartens and primary schools. Doctors believe the disorder is triggered by an excessive immune reaction to COVID-19, but further studies are needed to confirm the link.

Outside Europe, we have witnessed a second wave of cases in East Asian countries. In South Korea, a cluster of cases over the past two weeks has been linked to the Itaewon district in Seoul which is home to bars and nightclubs. Under South Korea’s reopening, entertainment venues are required to take contact details for all patrons to facilitate testing in the event of further outbreaks - but many patrons have provided false information, hindering efforts for contact tracing. It is likely that governments throughout Europe will monitor the situation in countries that are further along in the pandemic, potentially impacting the reopening of non-essential services such as entertainment venues in the coming months.

Brent Crude Oil Price
USD 30.20

Global Health Security 2019 Index
Health Sector Index
Rapid Response Index

59.8 91.9

How are European Governments Responding to COVID-19?

Key Domestic and Travel Restrictions

UK

The UK Government has begun to ease lockdown measures in what appears to be an attempt to mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19, as well as the social impacts of the lockdown including on mental health and domestic abuse. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said those who cannot work from home should return to their workplaces but encouraged walking, cycling and the use of private cars rather than public transport. The government has also allowed citizens to travel an unlimited distance in their cars, but Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have said people should not travel from England. Flights to and from the UK continue to operate, and the government has announced plans to impose a 14-day quarantine on arrivals to the UK, but has not yet outlined how it plans to implement this.

Ireland

Flights and ferry services continue to operate between the UK and Ireland. The Republic of Ireland has extended lockdown measures until 18 May but has allowed people to travel 5km from their homes rather than the 2km limit which was previously in place. A gradual easing of restrictions will take place from 18 May, including a phased return of workers and permission for gatherings of up to four people.

Italy

The government eased lockdown measures from 4 May onwards, with phase two of the reopening beginning. People are now allowed to visit their relatives in small numbers. Parks, factories and construction sites have reopened, but schools will not restart classes until September. Bars, restaurants and hair salons are due to open from 18 May, with social distancing measures in place.

Spain

Spain has announced plans to allow the entry of cross-border workers from 15 May, but will impose a 14-day quarantine on all arrivals, including Spanish citizens and residents. The measures are due to remain in place until 24 May. Each region in Spain will begin to relax restrictions at a different pace depending on the severity of its outbreak.

France

Travel certificates are no longer required for journeys of up to 100km, but longer trips will still require a certificate. Employer authorisation is also required for travel within Paris during peak commuting times. Bars and restaurants remain closed. P&O and DFDS are operating with reduced ferry services from cross-Channel routes. The Eurostar is operating limited services between Paris and London.

Germany

Germany has begun easing lockdown restrictions and shops of all sizes have now reopened with social distancing measures in place. Borders with Austria, France, and Switzerland are due to reopen on 15 June and Bundesliga football matches will resume without spectators on 16 May.

Netherlands

Public transport services will resume pre-lockdown schedules this week but facemasks are mandatory for travellers. Bars and restaurants can open outdoor spaces from 1 June.

Sweden

Travel restrictions remain unchanged from the previous week. However, if the number of COVID-19 cases rises sharply the government may choose to impose additional restrictions, despite its current 'herd immunity' strategy. So far, Sweden has recorded more than 3,000 deaths from the virus, higher than other Scandinavian countries.

Hungary

Starting from 4 May, smaller retail outlets have begun to reopen with social distancing measures in place. Over the course of May, a gradual opening of hotels, restaurants, and coffee shops is likely if the number of cases continues to decrease.

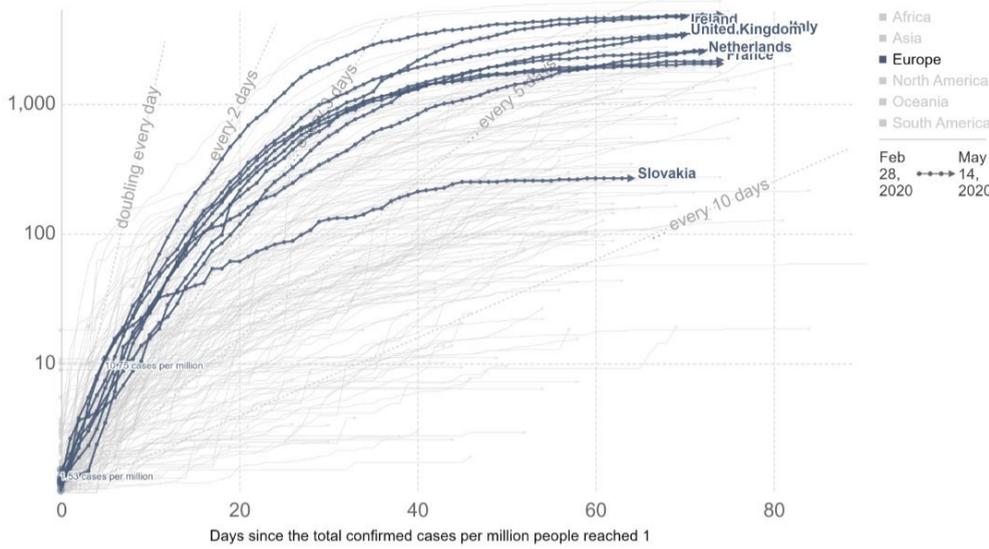
Slovakia

Slovakia has eased lockdown measures, but mandatory quarantine for at least five days at a state-run facility remains in place for Slovak citizens and residents returning to the country. This will likely move to a home quarantine in the coming weeks, but may be dependent upon returnees agreeing to install a tracking app on their smartphone, according to the Health Minister.

COVID-19 Cases per million population in the UK and Europe

Total confirmed COVID-19 cases per million: how rapidly are they increasing?

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 is lower than the number of total cases. The main reason for this is limited testing.



Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 14th May, 13:00 (London time) OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

	Country	Deaths (per 1M people)
1.	San Marino	1,208
2.	Belgium	768
3.	Andorra	634
4.	Spain	584
5.	Italy	514
6.	United King...	495
7.	France	415
8.	Sweden	349
9.	Netherlands	326
10.	Ireland	303

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UK Government Response

The UK government has responded to the COVID-19 outbreak by implementing a series of prevention measures aimed at slowing the spread of the virus, as well as economic stimulus packages to assist businesses and protect the income of millions of citizens. These measures have changed gradually over the past two months, with the government now beginning its plan to emerge from the lockdown and restart the economy. The government continues to review the measures every three weeks, and for now, the lockdown remains in place until 28 May. However, the government has encouraged those who cannot work from home to return to their workplaces and has changed restrictions to allow for unlimited daily exercise instead of one hour, and car journeys of any distance within England. The authorities in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales continue to advise their citizens to remain at home.

Preventative Measures

The UK government is gradually easing restrictions and has now encouraged citizens who cannot work from home to return to their workplaces, but has advised people to travel by foot, bicycle or car to limit the risk of infections on public transport. The government has said it intends to increase funding for local authorities to widen pavements, increase the number of cycle lanes and close roads. The City of London has announced plans to ban cars on some roads within the Square Mile to allow additional space for pedestrians and cyclists to social distance while commuting. If the number of cases continues to decline, pubs and restaurants may begin to open from early July, while non-essential shops could open from early June with social distancing measures in place.

Those deemed as vulnerable to the virus, such as those over the age of 70 and individuals with immune disorders, should continue to isolate and minimise contact with others. This advice will likely remain in place for a further 12 weeks at least.

Health Protection Support

The provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) continues to be an issue in health settings such as care homes, with some facilities continuing to source their own PPE due to distribution delays from the government scheme. Supplies of hospital gowns continue to be limited, with PPE orders focused on gloves and masks, despite the virus transmitting via clothing. Birmingham City Council has issued a complaint about receiving expired PPE from the government scheme.

In March, the government announced a free one-year visa extension for key workers including doctors, nurses, paramedics, radiographers, and social workers. Immigration campaigners have called for the government to extend the scheme to hospital cleaners and porters who are also essential front line workers and the issue of immigration will likely remain a key topic in the coming months.

Food retailers continue to implement social distancing measures and restrictions on the number of people in the store at one time, a one-way system around the store, two-metre distance markers for queues and protective screens at checkouts.

UK Government Response

Economic Support

The government has extended its furlough scheme until October 2020. Furloughed workers receive 80 percent of their salary from the government. From August, employees will be allowed to return to work part-time, with employers paying a portion of their wages, according to government advice.

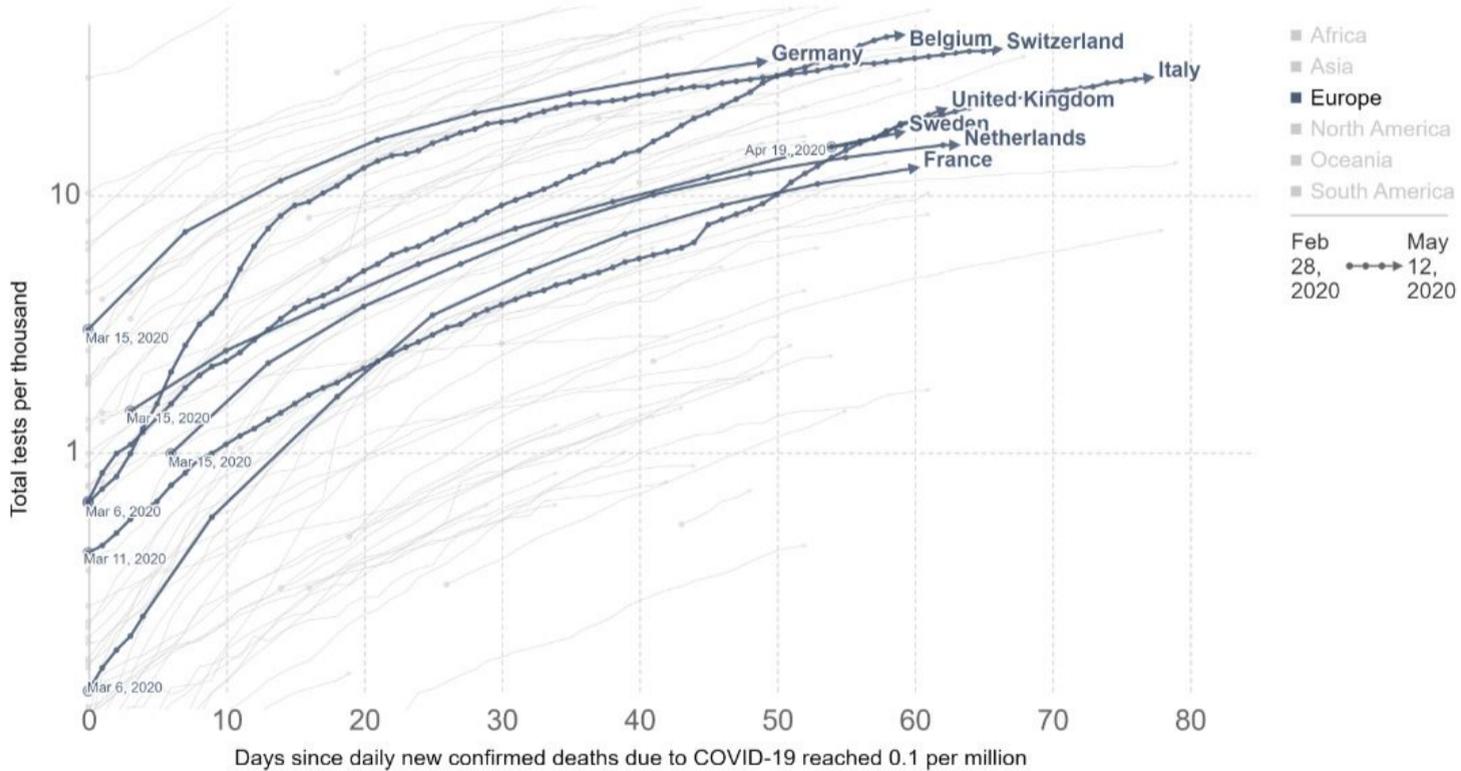
So far, the furlough scheme has protected 7.5 million workers. The scheme applies to all regions of the UK, despite devolved governments taking a different approach to other aspects of the COVID-19 situation. Nonetheless, the UK will likely face a significant recession in the second half of 2020.

The government also announced plans this week to underwrite trade credit insurance to ensure the viability of the insurance market. The move will support businesses that would be unable to afford large premium increases.

Total COVID-19 tests per 1,000: how are testing rates changing?



Total tests for COVID-19 per thousand people of the country's population since the daily new confirmed deaths reached 0.1 per million people.



Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data, European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 14th May, 13:00 (London time)
 Note: For testing figures, there are substantial differences across countries in terms of the units, whether or not all labs are included, the extent to which negative and pending tests are included and other aspects. Details for each country can be found at the linked page.
 OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY