



Gemeente  
Amsterdam

A large, stylized graphic of a virus particle, resembling a coronavirus, is centered on the page. It has a dark grey circular body with numerous black, T-shaped spikes protruding from its surface. The background is a solid blue color.

# International monitor of urban approaches dealing with COVID-19

Edition 9, 27th of August 2020

A large, stylized graphic of a virus particle, resembling a coronavirus, is positioned in the top right corner of the slide. It features a circular body with several smaller circles inside and a series of protruding spikes or tentacles around its perimeter.

Would you:

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This Monitor aims to provide a general impression of the measures taken by other cities in Europe and around the world following the outbreak of COVID-19. The Monitor addresses various fields; all examples are selected in light of their relevance to cities, particularly to Amsterdam. This document also contains overviews of EU measures and of sources of information that are relevant to cities.

For more information about the way that Amsterdam is dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, go to [this website](#).  
You can find the previous editions of the monitor [here](#).

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# Local and regional lockdowns in the United Kingdom

Local lockdown measures are (or were) in place in four areas of the United Kingdom. These areas are in **Leicester**, **Luton** (not far north of London) and Northern England, which includes **Greater Manchester**. On 22 August, Northampton was added to the list of locations where stricter local measures apply. The measures were relaxed in Luton on 1 August.

To assist local authorities in establishing and managing local lockdowns, the national government has published guidelines, which are designed to help local decision-makers. Local authorities are responsible for planning and implementing local lockdowns and the associated measures. The police are authorised to fine anyone who fails to comply with the measures.

At the end of June, Leicester became one of the first cities in Europe to face a local lockdown. While some measures were relaxed in the rest of the United Kingdom on 4 July, this was not the case in Leicester. A local lockdown was deemed to be required after health workers reported a steep rise in the number of infections in the city. In the two weeks prior to 23 June, **Leicester** City Council reported 944 positive coronavirus tests.

This increase was striking, as the number of infections in Leicester was three times higher than in the city with the second-highest number of coronavirus infections in the United Kingdom. In this period, Leicester accounted for 10 per cent of the total infections in the whole of the United Kingdom.

Due to the fact that the measures taken in schools and workplaces proved not to have been sufficiently successful, more drastic measures were implemented in Leicester in order to reduce the spread of the virus. After having been open for two weeks, shops not selling basic necessities were required to shut their doors again. Restaurants, bars and fitness centres had to stay closed. During the local lockdown, non-essential visits to Leicester are permitted. Residents are also permitted to leave the city.

A striking number of infections were reported among young residents and in a neighbourhood in the east of the city. This is a poor, densely populated neighbourhood, with large families living in small houses, which renders social distancing more difficult. People

with health issues were advised to stay at home (shield) as much as possible and to avoid contact with others. Leicester City Council published [advice](#) on this subject on their website. The local authorities offered people who decided to shield two face masks for if they needed to leave the house.

The [measures in Leicester](#) were relaxed again on 19 August. Beauty salons, tattoo shops and nail studios are all now allowed to reopen. However, services requiring close contact – such as eyebrow and facial treatments – are still not permitted. Fitness centres offering indoor sports activities, indoor swimming pools, casinos and indoor playgrounds are all to remain closed. The local lockdown is in force for the entire city and the surrounding area.

### Greater Manchester

There is a new coronavirus outbreak in parts of Greater Manchester, East Lancashire, Preston and West Yorkshire. The [most significant causes](#)

for the rise in the number of infections are considered to be meetings and parties involving different households and the failure to observe social distancing measures. The national government and local authorities are working together to stop the virus spreading further.

The measures are in force in the following districts and areas:  
Greater Manchester: City of Manchester, Trafford, Stockport, Oldham, Bury, Wigan, Bolton, Tameside, Rochdale and Salford.  
Lancashire: Blackburn together with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Preston and Rossendale.  
West Yorkshire: Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees.

The specific measures can vary per district and area. For example, the measures in [Bradford](#) are stricter than those in the other areas in the Northwest of England. The advice in the Northwest of England is not to

travel outside of your own district or area. Holidays are permitted, but only with people from the same household.

### Northampton

A recent outbreak of coronavirus infections has been linked to the [Greencore](#) factories in the city of Northampton. Greencore, which produces food for stores including Marks & Spencer, decided to close their doors from 21 August after almost 300 of their 2,100 staff tested positive for coronavirus. Staff who had worked in the factory in the two weeks prior were asked to go into quarantine for two weeks. The measures are [focused specifically on the staff](#), their housemates, and their homes. ■

# Local and regional lockdowns in Germany

**Germany is fighting outbreaks of COVID-19 with targeted local and regional restrictions, such as bans on going out in the evenings. Closing down entire neighbourhoods is thought to be impossible and ineffective. Local lockdowns can be introduced when the number of infections rises above 50 per 100,000 inhabitants.**

## Gütersloh

On 23 June, a partial local lockdown was introduced in the German town of Gütersloh. It followed a huge COVID-19 outbreak linked to a meat factory in Rheda-Wiedenbrück. The number of people in the meat factory who contracted the coronavirus rose to 1,553, which was approximately one quarter of the workforce. Some family members of employees also contracted the virus.

During the lockdown, inhabitants of Gütersloh were only allowed out of the house with one other member of their household, and all public buildings, including museums, were closed. Catering establishments were allowed to open but customers were only welcome with a member of their own household. The restrictions applied

to Gütersloh and the neighbouring district of Warendorf. The inhabitants were permitted to leave the district. Restrictions did not apply outside the zone where the lockdown had been imposed. In July, the courts ended this local lockdown, advising 'flexible tailor-made measures' instead.



# Local restrictions in the province of Antwerp

A lot of Dutch people spent part of this summer with their southern neighbours (the Belgians). The borders with Belgium had been open again from 15 June and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs classified the whole of Belgium as a 'code yellow' country. But Dutch tourists in Belgium were soon faced with more stringent measures than they had been used to at home. From 29 July to 26 August, the restrictions that had previously been lifted were tightened up in response to the rising rate of coronavirus infections.

## Restrictions

- Face masks were made mandatory in public areas throughout the province of Antwerp for everyone of 12 years and older. This means that everyone over 12 must wear a face mask on the street, and on the way to the toilet from an outdoor terrace.
- A curfew was imposed. People are banned from public areas between 1.30 and 5.00, except essential or imperative journeys for urgent medical reasons, for essential work or when leaving for/returning from holiday.
- Alcohol may not be sold between 22.00 and 6.00.
- Overcrowding on the Oostende beaches meant that for a long time, people had to reserve a place on the beach.

Extra restrictions were imposed in the hardest-hit areas (in and around the city of Antwerp): all events and parties were strictly forbidden, party venues were closed, gyms were forced to shut their doors.

## Decision-making on crisis measures

These extra restrictions came about after consultations between the governor of Antwerp, the Provincial Crisis Cell and the Director-General of the National Crisis Centre. They came on top of the existing federal measures. Municipalities can refine and tighten the measures after consultation. Mayors were involved in the process, but decisions were largely made at the Provincial Resolution level. The governor is responsible for enforcing public order in the province, i.e. public peace, security and health.

The latest [figures](#) show that the situation appears to be under control since these measures were introduced. Read more about the restrictions in Flanders [here](#).



# Face masks in France

## France makes face masks mandatory at work and in schools

Due to the rising rate of infections in France in recent weeks, as from 1 September, the French must start wearing face masks at work. They may only take their mask off if they are working in an individual, closed-off workplace.

The French government has also made it mandatory for secondary school pupils from the age of 11 to wear face masks when at school. The Ministry of Education is supplying teaching staff with face masks; pupils must provide their own.

## Face masks mandatory throughout Nice, Toulouse and Marseille

Toulouse and Nice are the first major cities to make face masks mandatory throughout the city. The measure

applies to anyone over 11 and has been in force since 21 August. Face masks are also mandatory when riding a bike or scooter, and when carpooling. The general response from residents has been positive because it takes away the uncertainty about when and where face masks should be worn and when not. As from 26 August, face masks will also be mandatory throughout the city of Marseille.

In recent weeks, hundreds of towns and villages decided to make face masks mandatory in busy streets and at markets. Examples are Paris and Lyon, and suburbs such as Saint-Denis, the holiday destination La Rochelle and the industrial city Rouen. Non-compliance can lead to fines of € 135 or more.



## Confined areas

Face masks have been mandatory in confined areas in France for several weeks. This includes public transport, museums, cafés, restaurants, shops, churches, post offices, banks and cinemas. People may only remove their face masks in restaurants while they are eating. They must be worn when arriving at the restaurant, when leaving and when going to the toilet.

## Restricted opening hours in Marseille

Marseille is the first city in France to force bars and restaurants to close their doors between 23.00 and 6.00. This step was taken when the number of infections rose steeply over the past few days. The measure is currently set to apply until 30 September.



# Impact of COVID-19 on metropolitan regions

COVID-19 also has its impact on a metropolitan scale. This impact is seen in challenges related to mobility, the labour market, sustainability and the recovery phase.

Metropolitan regions in Europe differ in terms of structure, management and democratic content. What they have in common is reflected in the issues dealt with. They are spatial, economic and mobility challenges, which include issues relating to sustainability, affordability and quality of life.

As a result of COVID-19, for example, the use of local and regional public transport systems has sharply declined and public transport companies are sustaining considerable losses on the operation of underground, tram and



bus services. Stations, stops and means of transport need to be arranged differently to facilitate social distancing. In metropolitan regions, the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure has to be developed faster: better connections, more space, better flow of traffic. This presents metropolitan regions with new dilemmas in spatial choices and the use of scarce resources.

As far as sustainability is concerned, many metropolitan regions, including the Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam (MRA), aim to use the momentum created by the recovery from the corona crisis to accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable society. This is prompted by economic and ecological convictions and agreements. It involves accelerated greening of busi-



nesses (reduction of CO2 emissions), the use of circular chains, more clean energy generation, the transition of labour from a 'fossil' economy in which a lot of labour is lost to growing sectors, accelerated improvement of international rail links to replace short-distance flights, the development of heating and cooling solutions, etc. With the Euro-

pean Green Deal and the fight against COVID-19, more policy, knowledge and finance instruments are being made available by the EU.

Metropolitan regions use their networks, such as METREX and the European Metropolitan Authorities (EMA), to exchange knowledge on how to deal

with these issues. The EMA organises webinars in which officials share their experiences, expertise and ambitions. On behalf of the MRA, Haarlemmermeer alderwoman and MRA administrator Marja Ruigrok took part in a webinar with the metropolitan regions of Milan and Oslo, led by Metropolis GZM (Katowice).

These metropolitan regions have similarities with regard to impact and recovery ambitions, each emphasising their own aspects based on their local situation. Alderwoman Ruigrok presented two scenarios for recovery for the MRA. The first scenario concerns a 20-minute metropolis in which housing, work and recreation is accessible within 20 minutes for every resident. The second scenario is the modular metropolis, in which new and existing buildings are developed or redeveloped based on the principles of sustainability and reuse. These scenarios were developed by the Amsterdam Economic Board. ■





*'50 tangerines, 50 days in lockdown' Photography by Hadas Itzkovitch and Anya van Lit*

# In lockdown in Israël

Text and photographs by Hadas Itzkovitch and Anya van Lit

Photographers Hadas Itzkovitch and Anya van Lit flew to Israel at the end of February for a photo project and to visit family. Due to a lockdown, they were stuck in an idyllic living/working community for 3 months. Israel is now experiencing its second wave of COVID-19 cases, this time without a lockdown but with strict measures.

The sky is blue today, bluer than it was yesterday. It is day 50 of our lockdown in the Garden of Eden. Nothing is happening here. There is a snake sunbathing at the entrance to the house. It's a grass snake that has lost its way in the fields around our temporary home.

We came here at the end of February to spend a few weeks visiting family in Israel. We settled into a beautiful house with a swimming pool surrounded by fields and plantations in moshav Haniel, an agricultural cooperative in the Hefer Valley. We had been there just a few days when the first infections were discovered in the Netherlands and Israel, and the virus was spreading all over the world.

Tourists were no longer allowed into the country, but we thought we could still get out. Our flight was cancelled, and Israel closed its airspace to almost all passenger flights.

We were safe, and we were in a nice place. At the time, we had no idea that soon we would no longer be able to step outside the house.

Our friends assured us that we could stay in their house for the time being. We walked into the garden and felt a sense of peace come over us. From then on, we would take everything one day at a time. There was nothing else we could do.

We woke up to the sound of singing birds, with the smell of pure air filled with citrus blossom. We followed the bees to the best fruit trees in the area and at night we listened to the jackals howling nearby. Meanwhile, we were busy working on sketches for a new photography project. The surrounding area became our studio.

But this paradise contrasted sharply with Israel's harsh reality. The government made the lockdown stricter and stricter. Everyone had to wear a mask in public, all shops were closed except supermarkets and pharmacies. You had to stay within a hundred metres of your house. No family visits; parks and beaches were closed. The government set up a special army unit to help the police monitor the roads. The Israeli secret service, Shin Bet, tracked the residents through the mobile phone network. We instinctively turned off all of our phones. Only to turn them back on again half an hour later, because we can't live without them.

When we decided to drive to Hadas' parents to deliver groceries, we almost drove into a barricade. After showing the soldiers the full bag on the back seat we were allowed to continue our journey. But it felt as if we were under siege.

The rigorous lockdown is slowly containing the virus, with 208 people killed so far. In the Netherlands, the

death toll had already risen to more than 3,000. After just over 3 months, we flew back to Amsterdam in a crowded plane.

The sky is blue today. From our window, in the centre of Amsterdam, we watch lines of tourist following their guide across the Torensluis bridge. The outdoor cafés are still open after 1 a.m.. As soon as the sun shines, people sit close together, slightly inebriated, in small boats. In the hustle and bustle of Amsterdam it seems like the virus never existed. It's difficult to keep a distance from whole groups of unmasked people in the narrow streets.

Israel appeared to have defeated the virus. Public life opened up again there too, and people were able to meet up in groups again. As a result, a second wave, with more than 1000 infections a day, is now flooding the country. Our visit in October, to finish a photography project, seems like a far-fetched reality. ■





*'Hold your breath for 50 seconds' Photography by Hadas Itzkovitch and Anya van Lit*



# Focus on the nights during coronavirus

In many cities across the globe, night-time culture is facing its greatest challenge ever: clubs, venues and other cultural places where people gather are likely to be the last places allowed to reopen. A balance needs to be found between health, public order and security, the economy, employment, public space, culture, events and enforcement.

## Examples from practice: Berlin, Vilnius

Research into this balance is also being conducted in the international sector, in the '[Global Nighttime Recovery Plan](#)' report, for example. This report offers a practical guide for cities trying to determine ways and strategies to safely reopen their creative and night-time economies. It

was compiled in cooperation with an international panel, including night mayors, academics and people from the music industry, among others, and is intended as an interactive platform for cities to share strategies, tools and lessons learned. Chapters of the plan will be published over the course of the year.

The [first chapter](#), published in July, focuses on the use of open-air space. Due to the ongoing restrictions on the use of indoor spaces and the increasing desire to socialise, the demand for open-air space has increased significantly over recent months. The report lists the advantages and challenges of open-air hospitality, outdoor events and 'free gatherings'. It discusses case studies including open-



air festivals in Berlin which, according to the report, did lead to a great deal of criticism but not to a rise in infections. The pavement café policy in Vilnius resulted in more space but, just as in Amsterdam, also met with criticism from local residents.

The Global Nighttime Recovery Plan conducted research in several cities and reached the following findings:

1. In cities where there are no alternative social activities, dangerous illegal social activities are found.
2. In cities where lockdown easing takes place too soon, people quickly relax and are less inclined to adhere to the rules, increasing the risk of a second lockdown.
3. In cities where infection rates are low, a false sense of security develops, leading people to act as if the virus no longer exists and the economic problems have disappeared. This can affect vigilance and moreover leads politicians to ignore struggling businesses (in the night-time culture, for example).



These issues are also prevalent in Amsterdam. There is close coordination with the sector in that respect. Close contact is also maintained with fellow governments of various cities in the Netherlands, Europe and the rest of the world to share policies, strategies and experiments.

The above findings reveal that local governments and authorities which are close to their people and communicate clearly with their residents will come out of this crisis better and be better able to cope with a future one. More info on the Global Nighttime Recovery Plan is available via [vibe-lab.org](https://vibe-lab.org).

# Tourism

## during and post COVID-19

**Amsterdam** has asked the city administrations of **Barcelona, Cologne, Genova, Florence, London** and **Venice** about their tourism policies during and after COVID-19 crisis and whether they change their policies in order to prevent a second wave of COVID-19 and to prevent over-tourism in the near and further future. The cities were asked how they deal with tourism in the recovery phase in order to prevent a second wave of COVID-19 infections and potentially a second lockdown of the city, but also how they view tourism in the longer term. Furthermore, the cities were asked how they involve both the citizens and representatives of the tourism sector in making the policy plans.

The cities **Barcelona, Florence** and **Venice** indicate they suffered from

over-tourism before the pandemic took place and closed down all tourism activities. For **Cologne, Genua** and **London** over-tourism was not really an issue before the pandemic. From all the cities it becomes clear tourism is an important part of their economy and that they are all looking into how tourism can be re-started.

**Cologne** has for example started a conversation with hotels, restaurants and bars about putting measures into place to prevent the virus from spreading. Also **Florence** is actively informing the public about health measures to prevent spreading of the virus. Furthermore, most cities are looking into spreading tourists over the city and to prevent overcrowding in the usually popular city centres.





In general, all cities are looking for more quality tourism, which means attracting tourists that look at more sustainable, greener options but also who stay for a longer period of time in the city and choose more activities to do and places to visit.

None of the cities mentioned specific measures aimed at preventing over-tourism. It seems more focussed on changing the type of activities on offer and places to visit to change the type of tourists coming to the cities and to increase the length of time spent in the city.

The **Italian cities** and **Barcelona** all consult the tourism sector about new plans and initiatives concerning tourism via a so-called tourism council. The process used in **Florence** seems quite extensive with several online meetings and public presentations. In **Cologne** and **London** this consult seems less organised through councils but seem to be more direct.

**Florence** also consulted the citizens of Florence in a participatory approach about the new tourism policy plans. In **Genova**, the citizens of the city centre are made part of the new tourism plans.

In **Venice**, where there is a stark contrast between the interests of the tourism sector and the citizens, there is currently no involvement with the citizens as the local government favours the tourism sector by claiming that tourism provides jobs and supports the local economy. **Cologne** and **London** do seem to suffer less from stark interest contradictions between the tourism sector and the citizens of the city. ■



# Housing market

## an exodus from cities due to the corona crisis?

The impact of the coronavirus on the housing market appears to vary around the world. While the housing market is seemingly unaffected in the Netherlands (except for the fact that more people are looking for a house with a garden), the United Kingdom has seen more people wanting to leave the cities than those wanting to move to one. People want more space and, with so few social activities – if any – being able to take place now, there are fewer and fewer advantages to living in the city.

This trend in the housing market has led to a fear that the inequality in the country will increase. Only wealthy white-collar workers are able to afford to move away from the cities, in addition to which small, poor quality

housing, mostly in larger towns and cities, is often found to be the cause of coronavirus infections

The effect of the coronavirus on the Berlin housing market is such that there are currently very few changes in ownership or tenancy. There are no signs of an exodus out of the city, as there is in London. The advantage of Berlin is that there is a lot of green space and relatively much outdoor space.

In the United States we again see that, given the possibilities of working remotely, people are increasingly looking for a home in a less expensive area. There was also a rise in the number of home sales over the past months, despite the crisis. For the



coming months, however, house prices in the US are expected to fall as a result of the high unemployment rates the country has experienced and will continue to experience.

# Overview of relevant resources

If you would like to know more about an example in this monitor or have a question, please let us know: [internationaloffice@amsterdam.nl](mailto:internationaloffice@amsterdam.nl)

- **New in this overview:** An overview of the [infection rates](#) at sub-national (regional) level in Europe.
- The **OECD** has launched a website containing [policy analyses and figures](#) relating to COVID-19, focusing in particular on the economy, health, and social affairs
- The **National Association of City Transportation Officials** has relevant information for and by [transport professionals](#).
- **Politics of COVID-19** weekly gives the most [relevant highlights and webinars](#) on COVID-19
- The World Economic Forum, the Resilient Cities Network, Friends of Europe and UCLG also regularly facilitate webinars.
- The **Global Parliament of Mayors** has an [overview of best practices](#) and a forum for questions from directors.
- The **City Innovators Forum** has designed a comprehensive [toolbox](#) for urban policy during the time of the coronavirus.
- The **European Commission's** Joint Research Centre has an '[overview of overviews](#)'
- The **European Committee of Regions** has an [interactive map](#) on measures in different European regions
- **CEMR** (Council of European Municipalities and Regions) has recommendations for [waste collection](#) during the coronavirus crisis.
- This **handbook** examines [research methods and forecasting](#) relating to the coronavirus.
- **Eurocities** has a [website](#) containing urban best practices and organises webinars on a variety of topics.
- **UNESCO** has compiled a [list](#) of useful tools and tips to facilitate distance learning.
- **Smart Cities World** mainly looks at [AI, ICT and the future](#) in relation to the coronavirus.
- **C40** also provides information on various themes and there are board and expert level discussions. In addition, C40 has a specialised [Knowledge Hub](#).

