

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

1st Apr 2021

Overnight News Roundup

Vaccination certificates won't end the lockdown. 'ProSocial' approaches will

- Israel has a Green Pass Programme to help its citizens return to public spaces such as gyms and theatres. [The EU and China have announced similar passport-to-travel ideas, In the United States, the Biden administration is assessing the viability of vaccine certificates.](#)
- On the pro side of the certificate debate are pandemic-injured markets, access to education, mental health problems, and the overall sense of normality, making it paramount to open as fast as possible. On the con side are concerns that a hasty reopening sets the stage for a draconian future; deepening existing inequalities in healthcare, education and employment, a way of short-cutting public debate and consideration around surveillance and the use of personal data.
- Triggering 'ProSocial behaviour' - the desire to get vaccinated because it is personally satisfying to help society as a whole - is a better way to promote large-scale vaccination than vaccine certificates, which favour a select group of people who long to go on vacation, back to the gym and find a new normal.
- The pathway to a ProSocial alternative is based on four challenges:
- **Public officials need to invest in altruistic policies regardless of political risk** - social investment targeted at the most vulnerable needs to turn into lasting support for the many struggling to get vaccinated.
- **Organizational challenges** - employers, schools and other organizations that shun uncertified people because they test positive or refuse vaccination is a punishment-based approach creating resentment and discrimination. There needs to be extended support and security for individuals who choose not to be vaccinated - if you quarantine we will continue to pay you to work from quarantine
- **Interpersonal challenges** - The anti-vaccination protests around the world and the sizeable anti-vax movement will be reinforced and grow larger with harshly imposed certification. The situation requires a softer approach using the psychological concepts of compassion and empathy. ProSocial bonds of support must be built and space given to people to allow them to change their minds when they are ready.
- **Intrapersonal challenges** - The key here is limiting the level of fear people internalize. Fearing a job loss for testing positive or deciding not to be vaccinated, for instance, is a breeding ground for extreme views and counterproductive behaviour. The fear stems from not understanding things out 'of our control.' The sense of power and control can be used to advance a pro-vaccine message in at least three ways: connecting people to ProSocial grassroots movements, by encouraging unions, non-governmental organizations and other advocates to promote trust and reciprocity in society's organizations.
- The new normal is far more complex than a trip to Charlie's Chocolate Factory with your GoldenTicket. The pandemic is a vast systemic problem but one with controllable outcomes. Hoping for a quick fix with vaccine certificates is not a solution. An effective response that intrinsically motivates people at all levels of society towards a common, ProSocial goal is.

Vaccination certificates won't end lockdown. Prosocial approaches will

Vaccination certificates won't end lockdown. Prosocial approaches will

Covid-19 immunity and vaccination certificates are being held up as golden tickets to the new normal. Israel, the country leading the way on vaccination rates, has a green pass program to help its citizens return to public spaces such as gyms and theaters. The European Union and China have announced similar passports to revive travel. In the United States, the Biden administration is assessing the viability of vaccine certificates. These efforts raise serious red flags. Vaccination certificates will likely deepen existing inequalities in health care, education, and employment. And the rush to a new normal via certificates sets the stage for function creep — a way of short-cutting public debates and considerations around surveillance and the use of personal data. Triggering prosocial behaviors — the want to get vaccinated because it is internally satisfying to help society as a whole — is a better way to promote large-scale vaccination than vaccine certificates, which favor a select group of people who long to go on vacation, go back to the gym, and generally find their new normal.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/03/31/vaccination-certificates-wont-end-lockdown-prosocial-approaches-will/>

COVID-19: Digital vaccine certificates to help European travel 'ready in June at latest'

EU digital vaccine certificates will be ready in June at the latest, Spain's foreign minister has said. European Union leaders agreed last month to work on the certificates to try to kickstart the tourism industry. Speaking on Wednesday, Arancha Gonzalez Laya said the scheme would be a good tool for European citizens and "if all goes well, we will have a vaccination certificate in June at the latest". "If it can be in mid-May, better but not later than June," she added. The certificates would not prevent those without the jab from travelling, Ms Gonzalez Laya said, but people who had one would be able to pass through EU borders faster.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-digital-vaccine-certificates-to-be-ready-in-june-at-latest-says-spain-12261459>

Coronavirus: how wealthy nations are creating a 'vaccine apartheid'

Coronavirus: how wealthy nations are creating a 'vaccine apartheid'

A chorus of activists are calling for changes to intellectual property laws in hopes of beginning to boost Covid-19 vaccine manufacturing globally, and addressing the gaping disparity between rich and poor nations' access to coronavirus vaccines. The US and a handful of other wealthy vaccine-producing nations are on track to deliver vaccines to all adults who want them in the coming months, while dozens of the world's poorest countries have not inoculated a single person. Activists have dubbed the disparity a "vaccine apartheid" and called for the world's largest pharmaceutical companies to share technical know-how in an effort to speed the global vaccination project.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/30/coronavirus-vaccine-distribution-global-disparity>

Coronavirus surge could be worse than the last for the Americas: PAHO

Coronavirus surge could be worse than the last for the Americas: PAHO

Countries in the Americas could see a worse surge in coronavirus cases than the previous surge last year, with Brazil, Uruguay and Cuba already suffering more, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) said on Wednesday. Director Carissa Etienne said the end of the Southern Hemisphere summer, following holidays where people grouped together and spread cases, had prompted spikes. She urged citizens to stay at home and governments to think hard before lowering movement restrictions. So far this year, over 19.7 million COVID cases and 475,000 related deaths have been reported in the Americas, she said. Vaccines are rolling out - 124 million people have received one dose and 58 million have received two, PAHO said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-americas/coronavirus-surge-could-be-worse-than-the-last-for-the-americas-paho-idUSKBN2BN2TQ>

Covid in Brazil 'completely out of control,' says Sao Paulo-based reporter

"We have people dying because of lack of oxygen, people are literally suffocating," Patricia Campos

Mello, a reporter for Folha de Sao Paulo, told CNBC's "The News with Shepard Smith." "The situation is completely out of control," Campos Mello added. Campos Mello comments came after Brazil registered on Tuesday a daily record tally of Covid deaths, recording more than 3,700 deaths.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/30/covid-in-brazil-completely-out-of-control-says-sao-paulo-based-reporter.html>

The FDA could authorize Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for 12 to 15 year olds 'in time for the fall school year,' former FDA commissioner says

The FDA could authorize Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for 12 to 15 year olds 'in time for the fall school year,' former FDA commissioner says

Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine could get FDA approval for 12 to 15 year olds "in time for the fall school year," the former FDA commissioner said. Scott Gottlieb was asked on CNBC on Tuesday when he thought the FDA could approve the vaccine for that age group. Gottlieb is also a member of Pfizer's board. His comments come after Pfizer announced on Wednesday that its vaccine was highly effective at preventing COVID-19 infection in kids aged 12 to 15 in a late-stage trial of more than 2,000 participants. Pfizer said it plans to submit the data to the US Food and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency to request for emergency authorization of the vaccine

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/fda-could-authorize-pfizers-covid-121724598.html>

Pfizer Covid-19 jab '100% effective' in younger teenagers, research suggests

The Pfizer Covid-19 jab is "100% effective and well tolerated" among children aged 12 to 15, a new study suggests. Pfizer said it now plans to seek approval for use of the vaccine in this age group from regulators around the world and hopes youngsters will start to receive the jab before the next school year. The pharmaceutical company said it plans to submit the data to the UK regulator - the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency - within the next couple of months. Researchers examined the use of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in a trial of 2,260 teenagers in the US.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/pfizer-inc-oxford-university-public-health-england-fda-b927283.html>

Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine found safe and 100% effective in 12- to 15-year-olds, company says

Pfizer announced Wednesday that its COVID-19 vaccine is safe and strongly protective in kids as young as 12, a step toward possibly beginning shots in that age group before they head back to school in the fall. Most COVID-19 vaccines being rolled out worldwide are for adults, who are at higher risk from the coronavirus. Pfizer's vaccine is authorized for ages 16 and older. But vaccinating children of all ages will be critical to stopping the pandemic - and helping schools, at least the upper grades, start to look a little more normal after months of disruption. In a study of 2,260 U.S. volunteers aged 12 to 15, preliminary data showed there were no cases of COVID-19 among fully vaccinated adolescents compared to 18 among those given placebo shots, Pfizer reported.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/pfizer-covid-vaccine-safe-effective-adolescent-12-15-year-olds/>

Pfizer says its COVID-19 vaccine protects younger teens

Pfizer announced Wednesday that its COVID-19 vaccine is safe and strongly protective in kids as young as 12, a step toward possibly beginning shots in this age group before they head back to school in the fall. Most COVID-19 vaccines being rolled out worldwide are for adults, who are at higher risk from the coronavirus. Pfizer's vaccine is authorized for ages 16 and older. But vaccinating children of all ages will be critical to stopping the pandemic — and helping schools, at least the upper grades, start to look a little more normal after months of disruption. In the vaccine study of 2,260 U.S. volunteers ages 12 to 15, preliminary data showed there were no cases of COVID-19 among fully vaccinated adolescents compared to 18 among those given dummy shots, Pfizer reported.

<https://apnews.com/article/pfizer-covid-19-vaccine-protect-younger-teens-43b33e2b90ee8660c5a4d9d161331f9e>

Pfizer, BioNTech: COVID vaccine effective in teens

Pfizer and BioNTech today announced that their COVID-19 vaccine was 100% effective and triggered a robust antibody response in a phase 3 US trial involving 2,260 adolescents 12 to 15 years old. The immune responses in that age-group, the companies said, exceeded those recorded previously among 16- to 25-year-olds. The companies say they plan to submit the data to the US Food and Drug Administration for emergency use authorization of the vaccine in this age-group. "The initial results we have seen in the adolescent studies suggest that children are particularly well protected by vaccination, which is very encouraging given the trends we have seen in recent weeks regarding the spread of the B.1.1.7 UK variant," BioNTech CEO Ugur Sahin said in the companies' press release.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/03/pfizer-biontech-covid-vaccine-effective-teens>

Pfizer and BioNTech say vaccine prevents Covid-19 in adolescents

Pfizer and BioNTech said Wednesday that their Covid-19 vaccine prevented symptomatic disease and was well-tolerated in a Phase 3 study of adolescents ages 12 to 15. The companies say they will submit the data to the Food and Drug Administration as an amendment to the vaccine's emergency use authorization, and will also submit the results to other regulators around the world. Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said in a press release that the companies hope it will be possible to begin vaccinating adolescents in this group before the beginning of the next school year.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/03/31/pfizer-covid19-vaccine-adolescents-data/>

A dangerous coronavirus variant is wreaking havoc in parts of Europe. Experts fear US could be next

A dangerous coronavirus variant is wreaking havoc in parts of Europe. Experts fear US could be next

A dangerous coronavirus variant is wreaking havoc in other parts of the world, so the US must stick with safety measures over the next few months to prevent that kind of damage as the variant takes more of a hold stateside, an expert says. The B.1.1.7 variant, first spotted in the UK, is more contagious, may cause more severe disease and is rapidly infecting younger populations, epidemiologist Michael Osterholm told CNN on Tuesday night. Recent research suggests the strain may also be more deadly. "If we can just hold out, if we can just get enough vaccine between now and the summer, we can actually beat this one," Osterholm said.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/31/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

AstraZeneca COVID vaccine 70% effective vs B117 variant

Data from a UK phase 2/3 clinical trial suggest the AstraZeneca-Oxford COVID-vaccine is 70.4% effective against symptomatic COVID-19 caused by the B117 variant, which was identified in the United Kingdom in late 2020. The data, published in The Lancet yesterday, also showed it was 28.9% effective at preventing asymptomatic infections or cases with unknown symptoms. Overall efficacy was 61.7% against the B117 variant and 77.3% against other variants, according to the study. The vaccine was 81.5% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 caused by non-B117 strains.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/03/astrazeneca-covid-vaccine-70-effective-vs-b117-variant>

This wave of COVID-19 is coming for the 30-somethings — because politicians won't protect them

"I always say we have the brightest, smartest people right here in Ontario," Premier Doug Ford said at a news conference on Wednesday. It's too bad he doesn't listen to them. Because it's a simple fact that the brightest, smartest people in the province — front-line physicians and epidemiologists for example — would want to lock it down right now, institute paid sick leave for Ontarians, and vaccinate younger essential workers. They've said as much recently and at various points in the pandemic. But there's no time like the present to say it again, when highly contagious and more

virulent variants of concern account for nearly 70 per cent of COVID-19 infections in the province.

<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/star-columnists/2021/03/31/this-wave-of-covid-19-is-coming-for-the-30-somethings-because-politicians-wont-protect-them.html>

Governments, Sanofi unveil nearly \$1B for vaccine-manufacturing site

Governments, Sanofi unveil nearly \$1B for vaccine-manufacturing site

Three levels of government unveiled funding for a nearly \$1 billion expansion of drug-maker Sanofi's vaccine manufacturing facility in Toronto to support future domestic production of influenza and coronavirus vaccines. The funding, announced at a joint news conference Wednesday, will allow French pharmaceutical company Sanofi S.A. to build an "end-to-end bulk vaccine manufacturing facility" at the firm's North York campus in Toronto, Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne said. The project, which is expected to be fully operational by 2026, is meant to prepare Canada for vaccine self-sufficiency during future pandemics. When complete, it will enable "state-of-the-art" product formulation, filling, inspection and packaging of vaccines. "This project of nearly \$1 billion is one of the largest-ever bio-manufacturing investments that has been (made) in Canadian history," Champagne said.

<https://ipolitics.ca/2021/03/31/governments-sanofi-unveil-nearly-1b-for-vaccine-manufacturing-site/>

Analysis: In mutant variants, has the coronavirus shown its best tricks?

Analysis: In mutant variants, has the coronavirus shown its best tricks?

The rapid rise in different parts of the world of deadly, more infectious coronavirus variants that share new mutations is leading scientists to ask a critical question - has the SARS-CoV-2 virus shown its best cards? Although it will continue to mutate, immunologists and virologists said they suspect this coronavirus has a fixed number of moves in its arsenal. The long-term impact for the virus' survival, and whether a limit on the number of mutations makes it less dangerous, remains to be seen. "It is plausible that this virus has a relatively limited number of antibody escape mutations it can make before it has played all of its cards, so to speak," said Shane Crotty, a virologist at the La Jolla Institute for Immunology in San Diego.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-evolution-analysis-idUSKBN2BN0L3>

University scientists deconstruct Covid-19 vaccines and publish 'recipe' on open web

University scientists deconstruct Covid-19 vaccines and publish 'recipe' on open web

Scientists have determined the "recipes" for two Covid-19 vaccines using leftovers in vials bound for the trash and published the mRNA sequences on Github, the online repository for software code. The group of scientists from Stanford University were able to determine the sequences of both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, and included the mRNA sequences in a post they published on Github last week, tech news site Motherboard first reported. Experts say the publication will help researchers around the world better identify when testing samples whether they are looking at sequences from the Covid-19 virus or vaccines to treat the virus, because they can give false positives.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/30/university-scientists-deconstruct-covid-19-vaccines-and-publish-recipe-on-open-web>

Amid rollout imbroglio, AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine has at least one fresh start: A new brand name

Amid rollout imbroglio, AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine has at least one fresh start: A new brand name

AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine has an official name, Vaxzevria, now approved in Europe. But is a new name enough to hurdle its rollout communication glitches and now wavering vaccine confidence? Probably not on its own. However, some do see another hope on the horizon for AstraZeneca's vaccine—the FDA. AZ plans to apply for FDA emergency use authorization in the first

half of April, its executives have said, and the U.S. regulatory body may represent the company's best chance to improve public opinion of its shot. The agency's endorsement "will go a good way to restoring confidence" Ann Falsey, M.D., a vaccine scientist and investigator on the U.S. clinical trial, told Nature in an article published after AZ restated its efficacy data last week. She reiterated that the "final story is, the results for the final analysis are great. They look very similar to the interim analysis."

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/marketing/astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-gets-new-vaxzevria-name-but-it-enough-to-overcome-rollout>

New COVID-19 wave sweeping Europe

Macron to make COVID address as third wave overloads hospitals

French President Emmanuel Macron is to address the nation on Wednesday and is expected to announce that schools will close in April as he seeks to change the course of a third wave of COVID-19 infections that risk overwhelming hospitals. A government official said an extension of the April school holidays was an option. An operation to transfer intensive care patients from overloaded hospitals to lesser-hit regions and a full lockdown in the hardest-hit parts of France had also been discussed, the source said. BFM TV reported a four-week shutdown of schools was under consideration, with one week of remote learning and three weeks of holiday instead of the planned fortnight.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france/macron-to-make-covid-address-as-third-wave-overloads-hospitals-idUSKBN2BN0RJ>

Mounting COVID-19 deaths dim Hungary's hopes of reopening

Hungary on Wednesday reported coronavirus fatalities reaching a new high and doctors described hospitals filling beyond capacity, signalling the government may be forced to postpone a reopening scheduled to begin in mid-April. The central European country of 10 million recorded 302 coronavirus deaths on Tuesday, its highest daily toll of the pandemic, and 6,700 new COVID-19 cases, the government said. Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who faces an election in a year, is walking a tightrope between a lockdown to tame the COVID-19 surge and the need to reopen the economy to avoid a second year of deep recession. Hungary has had the highest daily per capita fatalities in the world for several days, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-hungary/mounting-covid-19-deaths-dim-hungarys-hopes-of-reopening-idUSKBN2BN1JC>

France Reports 2021 High of 5072 People in Intensive Care With COVID-19

France's health ministry said on Tuesday that the number of people in intensive care units (ICUs) with COVID-19 increased by 98 to 5,072 people, the highest this year. The last time France had more than 5,000 people in ICUs for coronavirus-related disease was on April 23, 2020 during the first lockdown, when the number of people in ICU peaked at 7,148 on April 8.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-03-30/france-reports-2021-high-of-5-072-people-in-intensive-care-with-covid-19>

Kyiv sets strict lockdown amid record COVID-19 death toll

Ukraine's capital Kyiv will impose a strict lockdown from April 5 amid a gloomy prediction for a further surge in infections and a record daily number of coronavirus-related deaths, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Wednesday. Ukraine's Health Minister Maksym Stepanov said there were 407 coronavirus-related deaths recorded in the country over the past 24 hours, and warned infections were likely to rise further over the next one to two weeks.

<https://www.metro.us/kyiv-sets-strict-lockdown/>

Covid: France schools to close under third lockdown

French schools will close for at least three weeks as part of new national restrictions to fight rising Covid cases, President Emmanuel Macron says. Mr Macron said that schools would move to remote learning from next week. Lockdown measures, introduced in some areas of France earlier this month, are also being extended to other districts. All non-essential shops are to close from Saturday and there will be a ban on travelling more than 10km (six miles) from home without good reason. The country is facing a peak of over 5,000 people in intensive care.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-56597319>

Ireland eyes May retail reopening as lockdown eased slightly

Ireland hopes to reopen all shops for the first time this year in May and hotels in June, Prime Minister Micheál Martin said on Tuesday, as the government announced a minor easing of one of Europe's toughest and longest-running national lockdowns. Ireland shut most shops, building sites and hospitality in late December after a brief reopening led to an enormous spike in COVID-19 infections. A steady fall in infection rates since then has stalled in the last two weeks

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-ireland/update-1-ireland-eyes-may-retail-reopening-as-lockdown-eased-slightly-idUSL1N2LS204>

'We are a laughing stock': Covid-19 and Germany's political malaise

Steffen Bockhahn does not mince his words when it comes to Germany's Covid-19 vaccination campaign. "We are the laughing stock of the world," he says. "Germany was supposed to be world champion at organising things, and look at us." Bockhahn heads the social affairs department of Rostock, a north-eastern port which has set up a massive vaccination centre housed in an exhibition hall on the outskirts of the city. The complex has the capacity to administer 2,100 jabs a day. A shortage of vaccine doses means it's currently doing less than half of that. Germans have been grumbling about the slow pace of inoculations for weeks now: so far, only 11 per cent of the population have received at least one dose, compared with 45 per cent in the UK, 29 per cent in the US and 60 per cent in Israel, according to the latest Our World in Data figures.

<https://www.ft.com/content/bc5a3b02-a90d-4206-a441-1bada29feba2>

Hungarian journalists accuse gov't of censoring COVID reporting

Hungarian journalists accuse gov't of censoring COVID reporting

Hungarian journalists have accused the government of putting lives at risk by barring the media from covering the full extent of what is now the world's deadliest COVID-19 outbreak. In an open letter published by most of the country's independent news outlets on Wednesday, reporters said they had been blocked from hospitals and barred from speaking to medics, making it impossible to alert the public to the crisis.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/31/hungarian-journalists-accuse-govt-of-censoring-covid-reporting>

Some Johnson & Johnson Covid Vaccine Doses Delayed in US by Factory Mix-Up

Some Johnson & Johnson Covid Vaccine Doses Delayed in US by Factory Mix-Up

Workers at a Baltimore plant manufacturing two coronavirus vaccines accidentally conflated the vaccines' ingredients several weeks ago, ruining about 15 million doses of Johnson & Johnson's vaccine and forcing regulators to delay authorization of the plant's production lines. The plant is run by Emergent BioSolutions, a manufacturing partner to both Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca. Federal officials attributed the mistake to human error. The mixup has halted future shipments of Johnson & Johnson doses in the United States while the Food and Drug Administration investigates. Johnson & Johnson has moved to strengthen its control over Emergent BioSolutions' work to avoid further quality lapses.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/world/johnson-and-johnson-vaccine-mixup.html>