

Contents

I. Summary 1

II. European Union 6

III. France..... 7

IV. Italy..... 8

V. Germany10

VI. Spain10

VII. United Kingdom.....12

I. SUMMARY

EUROPEAN UNION

Number of cases: 1,585,334 (including the UK)

Number of deaths: 179,433

- On 9 July, the European Commission published the [highlights](#) of the meeting of the Health Security Committee of 3 July, which discussed COVID-19, specifically the EU vaccination plan for COVID-19, exit strategies, deconfinement measures, joint procurement, and testing.
- On 6 July, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) [provided](#) a template and dedicated email address for notifications of exceptional change management process (ECMP).
- On 6 July, the European Public Assessment Report (EPAR) for Veklury (remdesivir), including the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP)'s [assessment report](#), was published on the EMA's website.
- On 6 July, the European Commission and European Investment Bank (EIB) provided CureVac with [€75 million](#) for vaccine development and expanded of manufacturing.
- On 7 July, the European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) launched its COVID-19-related repository of publications and outputs. The repository gathers



publications on testing methods and devices, treatment options, and other public health measures relevant to COVID-19, and includes the first EUnetHTA [Report](#) on COVID-19.

- On 8 July, Ms von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, made a [speech](#) at the European Parliament Plenary on the presentation of the activities of the Germany Presidency of the Council of the EU. She cites the NextGenerationEU programme as key for short-term measures and the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for long-term measures.
- On 8 July, President von der Leyen held a [meeting](#) with the Presidents of the European Parliament, of the Council of the EU and of the European Council. It was agreed that the top priority for the coming weeks is quickly reaching an agreement on the European recovery package.
- On 9 July, the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA) published a [report](#) summarising its second workshop on the development of COVID-19 vaccines.

For more information, please get in touch with **Charline Quill rou, Associate Director EU** at c.quillerou@rpp-group.com

FRANCE



Number of cases: 170,752

Number of deaths: 30,004 (*including retirement homes*)

- The sanitary state of emergency – which was put in place on 11 March – ended on 10 July.
- The transmission rate went above 1 on 9 July, with a national rate at 1.05.
- A significant number of health professionals published a letter in which they call for an obligation to wear masks in every enclosed public area. The Prime Minister Jean Castex declared that an obligation to wear mask is under review by the Government.
- Football stadiums opened on 11 July, with a maximum capacity of 5,000 people, and a strict sanitary protocol.

- The French president Emmanuel Macron will speak on 14 July, during the feasts of national day, to describe precisely the new political directions of his presidency after the Covid-19 crisis.

For more information, please get in touch with **Salomé Chelli-Enriquez, Director RPP France** at s.chelli-enriquez@rpp-group.com

GERMANY



Number of cases: 199,919

Number of deaths: 9,071

- In a press conference on 13 July, Minister of Health Jens Spahn and head of the German public health institute – the Robert Koch Institute – Prof. Lothar Wieler called on the public to pay attention to the COVID-19 protective measures, especially during holidays. Jens Spahn said vacation to Mallorca could not be a second Ischgl (a popular resort). Previously it had become known that a high number of German holidaymakers on Mallorca disregarded the protective measures.
- Spahn further stressed protective measures must be complied with, particularly at airports. Airlines must ensure that aircraft are adequately ventilated and that the minimum distance is observed at check-in.
- On 8 July, the European Commission approved the German economic stability fund. The fund aims to stabilise the German economy in releasing economic stimulus measures.
- German Minister of Economic Affairs Peter Altmaier welcomed the Commission's decision. He explained that the funds will enable the German government to help larger companies, family businesses and small- and medium-sized enterprises to cope even better with the effects of the corona pandemic.

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ITALY



Number of cases: 243,061

Number of deaths: 34,954

- The state of emergency declared in the country will be over as of 31 July 2020. A resolution of the Council of Ministers will decide on the extension of the state of emergency until 31 December 2020, and will establish which measures will remain in force until then, with a focus on measures regarding the health and the tourism sectors.
- The new Prime Ministerial Decree (Dpcm, in Italian) will enter into force on Tuesday 14 July 2020. Through this Decree, the government continues to pursue a prudent approach to containing the pandemic in the country, with a strengthened control on public places (e.g. beach and parks) and closed spaces (e.g. bars and restaurants).
- On 9 July, the Ministry of Health published the order for further urgent measures regarding the containment and management of the pandemic, which includes the extension of the ban on entry for citizens coming from 13 (non-EU) countries.
- On 10 July, the first results of a large study carried out in the region of Lombardy were presented. Researchers indicate that since mid-January there were already two strains of the virus circulating in the region, both of which came from Europe. However, researchers have warned that these two strains do not exclude the possibility of the virus circulating in the country even in previous times.
- On 11 July, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior participated in a concert organised by the Ministry of the Interior to thank the health personnel and to honour the memory of deceased citizens due to COVID-19.

For more information, please get in touch with **Daniela Lemme, Associate Director Italy** at d.lemme@rpp-group.com

SPAIN



Number of cases: 253,908 (PCR-based test)

Number of deaths: 28,403

- As Spain is experiencing an increase of COVID-19 cases across the territory, the Ministry of Health has released a contingency plan aimed at ensuring regions are prepared to face a potential second wave of the coronavirus pandemic.
- As well as the plan at national level, autonomous communities are putting in place prevention measures in light of COVID-19 spikes, such as the compulsory use of a face mask even if the security distance can be respected, or setting up local lockdowns for most-hit cities and towns.
- Galicia and the Basque Country held regional elections on 12 July under atypical security conditions, resulting in a low turnout. Both regions saw government forces winning, which translates into continuity for the People's Party and the Basque National Country.
- The Committee for Social and Economic Reconstruction approved its conclusions on 9 July which included ad hoc measures to improve the healthcare system. The final resolution will be voted and approved in plenary session in the Congress of Deputies next week.
- The government has launched a EUR 1.06 billion Plan for Science and Innovation aiming at strengthening research and innovation, including in healthcare, in 2020 and 2021.

For more information, please get in touch with **Kit Greenop, Director RPP Spain** at k.greenop@rpp-group.com

UNITED KINGDOM



Number of cases: 289,603

Number of deaths: 44,819

- The UK Government has announced a fresh wave of lockdown easing, supplemented by a shift in its core COVID-19 message to encourage people to return to work. From 25 July,

leisure facilities including gyms will be able to reopen across most of England, and on Friday (10 July) Prime Minister Boris Johnson urged people to ‘go back to work’ if possible.

- More stringent lockdowns persist in tens of COVID-19 hotspots in England. Health Secretary Matt Hancock has indicated ‘targeted action’ is being taken against over 100 local flare-ups – testing and contact tracing and restrictive lockdown measures are being focussed on local COVID-19 hotspots.
- Public health measures in Scotland were greatly eased on Friday (10 July) as the devolved nation moved into Phase 3 of its ‘lockdown route-map’. Non-essential shops have been permitted to reopen and quarantine measures on arrivals from 57 countries have been lifted, though a controversial two-week quarantine may be imposed on arrivals from England.
- The UK Government has indicated it will not take part in the EU’s COVID-19 vaccine initiative to collaborate and drive down the cost of bulk vaccine purchases. The UK is instead supporting domestic vaccine development, and has agreed to buy up to 100 million doses from AstraZeneca and its research team in Oxford.

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II. EUROPEAN UNION

- On 9 July, the European Commission published the [highlights](#) of the meeting of the Health Security Committee of 3 July, which discussed COVID-19. Items discussed included a blueprint for the EU vaccination plan for COVID-19, the ECDC rapid assessment, exit strategies, impact of deconfinement measures, superspreading events, an update on joint procurement, and testing.
- On 6 July, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) provided a template and dedicated email address for notifications of exceptional change management process (ECMP), as described in the [Q&A](#) on regulatory expectations for medicinal products for human use during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 6 July, the European Public Assessment Report (EPAR) for Veklury (remdesivir), including the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP)’s [assessment report](#), was published on the EMA’s website.
- On 6 July, the European Commission and European Investment Bank (EIB) provided CureVac with [€75 million](#) for vaccine development and expansion of manufacturing. This is financed under the

Infectious Diseases Finance Faculty of Horizon 2020, and will target large-scale production of vaccines, including one candidate vaccine against SARS-CoV-2.

- On 7 July, the European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) launched its [COVID-19-related repository of publications and outputs](#). This follows the Commission [guidelines](#) on COVID-19 in-vitro diagnostic tests and their performance, and is linked to the [database](#) set up by the joint research centre (JRC) devoted to testing devices. The repository gathers publications on testing methods and devices, treatment options, and other public health measures relevant to COVID-19. It also includes the first EUnetHTA [report](#) on COVID-19, the ‘Rapid Collaborative Review on the role of antibody tests for novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in the management of the current pandemic’.
- On 8 July, Ms von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, made a [speech](#) at the European Parliament Plenary on the presentation of the activities of the Germany Presidency of the Council of the EU. Ms von der Leyen referred to the social and economic questions raised by the current crisis, and that the EU should draw lessons from this in order to strengthen our systems. She cites the NextGenerationEU programme as key for this but asked the German presidency not to neglect the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) over the NextGenerationEU.
- On 8 July, President von der Leyen held a [meeting](#) with the Presidents of the European Parliament, of the Council of the EU and of the European Council. This meeting discussed progress regarding the next MFF, as well as NextGenerationEU; the coming recession; and the need for social measures. It was agreed that the top priority for the coming weeks is quickly reaching an agreement on the European recovery package.
- On 9 July, the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA) published a [report](#) summarising its second workshop on the development of COVID-19 vaccines. The report highlights key considerations and data requirements for the design and conduct of phase 3 clinical trials.

III. FRANCE

- The sanitary state of emergency – which was put in place on 11 March – ended on 10 July. As a result, the government is no longer authorized to take all the necessary actions by issuing decrees to deal with the pandemic. The measures will now have to be approved by the Parliament.
- The transmission rate went above 1 on 9 July, with a national rate of 1,05. This increase indicates the virus is still present and infecting people. As a result, the government called for a strict adherence to sanitary rules.

- A big gathering (5,000 people) took place on Saturday 11 July in Nice through of a concert organised by the Nice municipality. However, videos showing a lack of respect of sanitary rules sparked an outcry over the weekend. As a result, Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi announced that wearing masks will become mandatory in every enclosed area.
- A significant number of health professionals published a letter in which they call for an obligation to wear masks in every public enclosed area. They also acknowledged the necessity to respect sanitary rules to avoid a second wave. Prime Minister Jean Castex declared that an obligation to wear mask is under review by the Government.
- As of 12 July, virological tests are now available freely in the Paris airport for every traveller coming from abroad, according to the spokesman of the Government, Gabriel Attal.
- Football stadiums opened on 11 July, with a maximum capacity of 5,000 people, and a strict sanitary protocol.
- The Ségur de la Santé – a 7 week-long organized discussion with worker unions – ended on an agreement concerning wages revalorisation – every health worker will receive an additional wage of EUR183 every month, tax-exempted.
- As the white plan for hospitals was triggered in Guiana last week, the Prime Minister Jean Castex and the Minister of Overseas Territories Sébastien Lecornu visited on 12 July. This visit aimed to open the newly created crisis centre, and to decide whether sanitary evacuations are possible.
- The French president Emmanuel Macron will speak on 14 July, during the feats of national day, to describe precisely the new political directions of his presidency after the Covid-19 crisis. The day after, on 15 July, the new Prime Minister Jean Castex will speak before the National Assembly to present his political priorities.

IV. ITALY

- The [state of emergency](#) in Italy that was first declared by the government on 31 January 2020 is set to expire on 31 July 2020; it is, however, expected to continue as long as the COVID-19 cases continue to be active in the country. The state of emergency represents a preventive measure that allows the president of the board to issue the Prime Minister Decree (Dpcm, in Italian), which is a set of legislative instruments that do not need to pass through the Parliament for their approval.
- With a new prolongation decree of the state of emergency in Italy, it will be possible to sign a new Dpcm, giving a central role to the government to decree measures in the health sector and for the supply of health devices, while ordaining the new "red areas" in the country. It will also allow smart

working for state employees to be scheduled for another six months. The extension provides coverage in case of a second wave of Covid-19. This means that the resolution of the Council of Ministers will decide on the extension of the state of emergency in the country until 31 December 2020. It will then be necessary to establish which measures will remain in force (i.e. social distancing or other health measures) even after 31 July.

- The new Dpcm will come into force on Tuesday 14 July, and the Health Minister Roberto Speranza will outline the new measures at the Italian Parliament. The new Dpcm comes with an extension of the ban for citizens coming from some "at risk" countries and will give clearer rules to avoid gatherings. The line of the Minister of Health is that of maximum precaution. The use of masks remains mandatory in enclosed places where social distancing cannot be guaranteed. However, the use of gloves is not mandatory as they may present an additional risk due to their incorrect use. The reopening of pubs was scheduled for Tuesday 14 July, but the government is oriented towards keeping locals closed at least until the end of the month following the new cases registered in the country.
- On 9 July, the Ministry of Health published the [order](#) for further urgent measures regarding the containment and management of the epidemiological emergency from COVID-19. As of 15 July, most travelers within Europe can travel freely to and from Italy without having to justify their reasons for travel or quarantining upon arrival. However, the ban on entry for citizens coming from the following 13 countries will be extended: Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Kuwait, Oman, Bosnia Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Moldova, Brazil, Chile, Panama, Peru and the Dominican Republic. This means that the Italian government keeps adopting a prudent approach with regards to visitors from non-EU countries.
- On 10 July, the first results of a large [study](#) carried out between the research teams of the Niguarda Hospital in Milan and the San Matteo Polyclinic in Pavia were presented. The study analyses the genomic sequences of the virus of around 350 patients coming from different areas of Lombardy. The initial results of the study presented indicate that since mid-January there were already two strains of the virus circulating in the region, and that they did not come from China but from Europe. The researchers have warned that the presence of these transmission chains from the second fortnight of January does not exclude the circulation of the virus in the country even in previous times.
- On 11 July, the Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, and the Minister of Interior, Luciana Lamorgese, participated in the [concert](#) by the Music Band of the State Police, organised by the Ministry of the Interior to thank, on behalf of the Italy, the health personnel who continue to work in first line during the pandemic, and to honor the memory of deceased citizens due to COVID-19.

V. GERMANY

- In a press conference on 13 July, Minister of Health Jens Spahn and head of the German public health institute – the Robert Koch Institute – Prof. Lothar Wieler called on the public to pay attention to the COVID-19 protective measures, especially during holidays. Jens Spahn said vacation on Mallorca could not be a second Ischgl (a popular holiday destination). Previously it had become known that a significant number of German holidaymakers on Mallorca disregarded the protective measures. Spahn further stressed that protective measures had to be complied with, particularly at airports. Airlines must ensure that aircraft are adequately ventilated and that the minimum distance is observed at check-in.
- On 8 July, the European Commission approved the German economic stability fund. The fund aims to stabilise the German economy in releasing economic stimulus measures. German Minister of Economic Affairs Peter Altmaier welcomed the Commission's decision. He explained that the funds will enable the German government to help larger companies, family businesses and small- and medium-sized enterprises to cope even better with the effects of the corona pandemic.
- The German government has published the so-called bridging aid on 8 July. This can be applied for by small- and medium-sized enterprises in the period from 10 July to 31 August. The financial aid is based on the sales losses of the respective companies and covers 80 percent of the fixed costs in the event of a sales slump of more than 70 percent, 50 percent in case of a loss of between 50 and 70 percent and 40 percent in the event of a loss of between 40 and under 50 percent.
- In the context of the German EU Council Presidency, Chancellor Angela Merkel held her first speech during the Council presidency in the European Parliament on 8 July. Regarding the program of the Council Presidency, Chancellor Merkel declared the need for sustainable investments and the importance of unity and solidarity in the EU against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic. While promoting the 500 billion Euro recovery plan, she points out that the economically stronger countries should not be over-burdened. With respect to the pandemic, Merkel outlined that there are lessons to learn on how to strengthen the sovereignty of the European health sector. As such, she pointed out the necessity of digital transparency while fighting misinformation.

VI. SPAIN

- In light of the COVID-19 cases spikes across Spain, the Ministry of Health has published an [early response plan for autonomous communities](#). The plan gathers prevention measures against the virus in the current situation and in future scenarios. Before its final approval within the

Interterritorial Council of the National Healthcare System, regions will be able to send contributions to the document. By releasing the plan, the government is preparing for a potential second wave of the coronavirus pandemic during autumn. The objective of the plan is therefore to ensure regions are ready to face a second wave and that the regional healthcare systems have been strengthened enough to implement contingency plans.

- As well as measures being taken at the central level, regional governments are establishing prevention measures to face the spikes. In several regions, such as Andalusia, Aragon, the Balearic Islands, Catalonia, Extremadura, Murcia, La Rioja and Navarra, wearing a mask is compulsory even if the security distance can be respected. The Ministry of Health will however not make it mandatory in the whole territory. In territories where cases have grown considerably, local lockdowns have been implemented and cities in regions such as Aragon have returned to phase 2, limiting mobility and total capacity in establishments.
- On 12 July Galicia and the Basque Country held regional elections under severe security measures, especially in A Mariña, in Lugo, Galicia, where 200 COVID-19 cases are currently active. Turnout was low, as expected, since voters were reluctant to vote in such atypical elections. In Galicia turnout was 58.84%, as low as in 1985 and in the Basque Country 52.87%, the lowest since 1994. In both regions government forces won the most votes, providing continuity to the respective governments, both right-wing: the People's Party (PP) in Galicia, resulting in Alberto Núñez Feijóo being re-elected regional president, and the Basque National Party (PNV) in the Basque Country, headed again by Íñigo Urkullu. Although the elections were initially planned to be held in April, due to the health crisis they had to be postponed. Regional elections could also be taking place in Catalonia in the upcoming months.
- The Committee for Social and Economic Reconstruction of the Spanish Congress of Deputies saw its [conclusions](#) approved last week on 9 July. The Working group for Health and Public Health gathered over 30 pages of proposals to strengthen the national and regional healthcare systems. The final resolution will be voted in plenary session later in July and will guide the government's future actions related to healthcare.
- The government has launched a [Plan for Science and Innovation](#) aiming at developing innovation projects related to COVID-19 but also to pave the way for improvements in cutting-edge technology companies. The plan foresees EUR 1.06 billion for 2020 and 2021 of which EUR 215.9 million will be aimed at research and innovation in health.

VII. UNITED KINGDOM

- The UK Government has announced a fresh wave of lockdown easing, supplemented by a shift in its core COVID-19 message to encourage people to return to work. From 25 July, leisure facilities including gyms will be able to reopen across most of England, and on Friday (10 July) Prime Minister Boris Johnson urged people to ‘go back to work’ if possible to buoy ailing railway franchises and businesses targeting office workers. The broad easing of lockdown measures will be supported by a new ‘mini budget’ of stimulus measures announced by Chancellor Rishi Sunak last week. Key measures include the acceleration of infrastructure projects, a VAT cut on hospitality, accommodation and attractions from 20 percent to 5 percent, and grants for energy-saving home improvements.
- More stringent lockdowns persist in tens of COVID-19 hotspots in England. Health Secretary Matt Hancock has indicated ‘targeted action’ is being taken against over 100 local flare-ups, including the quarantining of 200 farm workers in Herefordshire. Restrictions in Leicester, the centre of the first significant local lockdown, will be reviewed this week, concurrent with new reactive, focussed test and trace schemes focussed on hotspots across England.
- Public health measures in Scotland were greatly eased on Friday (10 July) as the devolved nation moved into Phase 3 of its ‘lockdown route-map’. Groups of up to five households and a maximum of 15 people may now meet outdoors per day, while organised outdoor activities are able to resume from today (13 July). Non-essential shops have been permitted to reopen, while the hospitality sector will be able to reopen indoor areas from Wednesday (15 July).
- Following a corresponding move south of the border two weeks ago, quarantine measures for new arrivals into Scotland will be eased for 57 countries of low COVID-19 infection levels, and further countries will be included subject to a review next week. Quarantine measures have proved controversial, and practical unenforceable, across the UK – only three people in England have been fined under the measures, all of whom for breaches at the airport on arrival. More controversial still is a prospective two-week quarantine for English arrivals in Scotland as Scotland continues to see a significantly lower infection rate. Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has stressed the move would not be ‘political’, though English commentators have decried the prospective hard border as nationalistically motivated.
- Quarantine changes similarly came into effect in Northern Ireland on Friday (10 July). People arriving in Northern Ireland from over 50 countries including Germany and France are now no longer required to self-isolate for 14 days. Lifestyle restrictions in Northern Ireland have also been eased – as of last week, indoor venues including cinemas, indoor weddings, and gyms are have been reopened, depending on a risk assessment carried out by the venue. Northern Ireland has

led the devolved UK nations in more liberally easing lockdown restrictions, although First Minister Arlene Foster has indicated that liberal easing may be rolled back across the devolved nation if infections spike.

- Having pursued a stringent approach to lockdown measures through the pandemic, Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford has announced lockdown measures will progressively be rolled back from this week. From today (13 July), the hospitality sector will be able to open, and groups of up to 30 people will be able to meet outdoors under supervision, in a more liberal move than the other UK nations. From next week, community centres and outdoor spaces including playgrounds will reopen, and indoor spaces will reopen around the turn of August.
- Critically in Wales, the controversial and restrictive ‘5-mile travel restrictions’ ended last week to reboot the travel sector as tourism businesses such as camping sites reopen this week, and the two-metre distancing rule will be reviewed ahead of the reopening of indoor venues. Similar moves will be implemented in Northern Ireland – from Friday (10 July), people on public transport in Northern Ireland have now been required to don face coverings. Spot checks and fines will ensure compliance, in a scheme similar to Scotland; physical distancing of two metres will remain the law in Scotland, though in retail settings, on public transport and in hospitality venues exceptions will be allowed to enable such spaces to reopen.
- In-line with its broader diverging political priorities, the UK Government has indicated it will not take part in the EU’s COVID-19 vaccine initiative to collaborate and drive down the cost of bulk vaccine purchases. The UK Ambassador to the EU Sir Tim Barrow indicated the UK will now not pursue parallel negotiations with vaccine suppliers, meaning if the EU were to launch negotiations with a supplier, the UK would have to suspend talks. The UK Vaccines Task Force is instead supporting domestic vaccine development; the Government has already agreed to buy up to 100 million doses from the research team in Oxford, which is currently proceeding with human trials across the world.