



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Cabinet Office

Covid-19 International Comparators: Social Distancing

7 December 2020
ICJU(20)116

International Comparators Joint Unit
icju@fco.gov.uk

Executive summary

Prevention measures (slides 5 to 9)

- All comparators considered require face coverings in all indoor public spaces. This is in contrast to the UK where face coverings are not required schools.
- Since the last report, Italy has suspended all public gatherings and most comparators have reduced the number of people allowed to gather in any setting.
- Belgian, French, German and Dutch bars and restaurants closed.
- Belgium, France, Italy and Spain have introduced curfews.
- All comparators limit the sale of alcohol by reducing the hours which it is allowed to be sold. No comparators are following the same model as the UK and requiring alcohol to be paired with a substantial meal.
- Places of worship open in all comparators; all bar Belgium are also allowing services to take place.
- Italy has introduced distance learning for all senior school students.
- All comparators advise extra ventilation in schools; some issue specific guidance e.g. ventilate classrooms every 20 minutes in Germany.

Containment measures (slides 11 and 12)

- Most comparators require those who test positive to isolate for at least 10 days.
- Denmark, France, Italy and Spain require negative result before arrival from abroad.
- All comparators, bar the Netherlands and Spain, offer some form of testing at the airport.

The festive period (slide 14)

- All comparators, apart from Denmark and the Netherlands, have specific plans in place for the holidays.
- Belgium, France, Germany & Spain have eased some restrictions:
 - France is lifting curfew restrictions and Spain extending it to 1.30am on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve.
 - Germany doubling numbers allowed at private gatherings from 5 to 10.
- But majority of measures across comparators will remain in place.
- Italy is the only comparator to tighten measures, including banning travel between regions from 21 December to 6 January.

Background to the paper

New topics in this edition

- Places of worship
- Curfews and alcohol sales
- Latest planning for the holidays

Comparators for this paper

- Belgium
- Denmark
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Spain

Confidence Level:	High	Rationale:
		<p>This paper predominantly contains factual policy information, which can be corroborated from multiple open sources.</p> <p>However this is a dynamic crisis where information may be, or quickly become, out of date, or not fully reflect regional variation.</p>

Most recent work in this area

International NPI Comparisons 20 – Trends	ICJU(20)123	4 December
Covid-19 Transmission – international responses	ICJU(20)117	27 November
Lessons from first wave excess deaths	ICJU(20)122	25 November
Lockdown case studies and lessons	ICJU(20)121	20 November
Autumn 2: Autumn developments, holiday season preparation	ICJU(20)114(b)	17 November
Social distancing	ICJU(20)112	30 October
Autumn interventions	ICJU(20)107	20 October
School and university returns	ICJU(20)104	9 October
Super-spreading events and clusters	ICJU(20)012	6 October
Communication of, and compliance with, non-pharmaceutical interventions	ICJU(20)101	18 September









Throughout this report, changes since the last version of this paper from 30 October 2020, are highlighted blue.

1 | Prevention measures

Denmark and Netherlands have introduced face covering requirements at school, aligning with most other comparators who already require them

Highlights represent changes since last version of this paper on 30 October.

Face covering requirements

Country	Public transport	Schools	Shops	Indoor venues	Outside
 Belgium	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
 Denmark	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
 France	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Germany	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
 Italy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Netherlands	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
 Spain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 UK	✓	X	✓	✓	X








Commentary

- All comparators require face coverings on public transport, in schools and indoor venues.
- **UK** is the only country that does not require face coverings in any school settings.
- There is a mixed picture in comparators about the age to require mask wearing - see next slide
- **France** and **Germany** fine €50, **Italy** between €400 and €1,000, **Netherlands** €95, **Spain** €100 (certain regions) and the **UK** £200 for non-compliance in any setting.
- **France, Italy** and **Spain** have the most stringent measures, with face coverings required in all public settings.
- **Italy** and **France** also advise citizens to wear masks in their homes if they have visitors.
- All comparators require face masks in restaurants and bars, except when seated and eating or drinking.

All comparators require face coverings in school but at varying ages; all advise extra ventilation and some issue specific guidance

New slide for this edition









Comparators' NPIs in schools

Country	Class sizes	Social distancing / face coverings	Start/end of day	Ventilation
 Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divided into bubbles, which continue throughout day, including breaks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face coverings for 13+. Strong emphasis on ventilation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant and primary schools normal timings. Secondary schools operate a rota with half remote learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be guaranteed by opening windows or installing ventilation system.
 Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divided into bubbles, which continue throughout day, including breaks. Teachers must stay in bubbles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No distancing required for pupils. 2m between teacher and front row. Face coverings for 12+. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding lessons outside where possible. Must ensure classroom ventilation.
 France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limit on class sizes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distancing not compulsory if it would prevent a school being able to fit all pupils in. Face coverings for 6+. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise schools ventilated every 2 hours. Outdoor extracurricular sports activities resumed on 28 Nov.
 Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set seating plan in classrooms to help track and trace. Bubbles applied to each year group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must ensure 1.5m social distance. Where not possible, face coverings must be worn by 12+. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staggered start / finish / break times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise ventilating classrooms every 20 minutes. Bavaria spending €50 million on ventilation in schools.
 Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance learning for all senior school students until 7 January. Class years divided into bubbles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face coverings for 6+, which can be removed when at desk. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must keep windows open to ensure good ventilation.
 Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No class size limit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5m for teachers, no restrictions for pupils. Face coverings for 13+. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windows must be opened during each break to ventilate the school.
 Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divided into bubbles, which continue throughout day, including breaks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5m for all. Face coverings for 6+. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise 30-50% of air is replaced by keeping windows open.

Italy has suspended all gatherings, while Belgium, Germany, Netherlands and UK have tightened limits on the number of people allowed to meet in public

Highlights represent changes since last version of this paper on 30 October.

Rules on gatherings

Country	Inside	Outside	Home	Funerals	Weddings	Social distance	Commentary
 Belgium	1	4	1	15	5	1.5m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One person can be invited into each family home. Children up to 12 not included in numbers for funerals and weddings.
 Denmark	10	10	10	50	10	1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New rules on gatherings extended until 2 January 2021.
 France	Suspended	Suspended	Suspended	30	6	1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures introduced on 1 November.
 Germany	5	5	5	10	10	1.5m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures introduced on 1 December. Up to 5 people can only include yours and one other household.
 Italy	Suspended	Suspended	Suspended	15	10	1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced a 3 tier system on 6 November. Restrictions listed here apply across the whole country.
 Netherlands	3	4	3	100	30	1.5m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New measures introduced on 19 November.
 Spain	6	6	6	15	15	1.5m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The central government declared a "state of emergency" on 25 October to unilaterally implement measures.
 UK	Varies	6	Varies	30	15	1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 tier system introduced on 2 December. Information shown based on Tier 2 measures. Inside can only be with members of household or 'support bubble'.

Belgian, French, German & Dutch bars and restaurants closed; places of worship open in all comparators, majority allow services

Highlights represent changes since last version of this paper on 30 October.





Sector specific measures

Country	All venues – capacity limit	Restaurants & bars	Entertainment, culture	Places of worship	Sports & gyms
Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed apart from specific capacities stated here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed until mid-January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museums opened on 1 December. All other venues closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No services. Prayer houses open to groups up to 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gyms closed. Swimming pools opened on 1 December. Children up to 12 can do in and outdoor sport.
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 people max if seated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All open. Must ensure free floor area of at least 4sqm per customer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nightclubs closed. Cinemas, museums and theatres are open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and services can take place. Maximum of 10 people and must follow distancing rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gyms and swimming pools open. Group activities allowed for up to 10 people.
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed apart from specific capacities stated here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed until 20 January 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All venues closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and services can take place. Maximum of 30 people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gyms and swimming pools closed. Individual outdoor exercise allowed.
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed apart from specific capacities stated here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed until at least 20 December. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All venues closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and services can take place (up to 10 people) with social distancing rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All facilities closed from 2 November.
Italy¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on size of venue and following social distancing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cinemas, museums and Theatres are closed. Shopping centres closed at weekends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and services can take place with social distancing rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gyms and swimming pools closed. Team sports prohibited.
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 people max if seated and mainly stay in one place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cinemas, museums and theatres open but must be pre-booked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and services can take place with social distancing rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports allowed if no more than 4 people per group. Under 18s may play team sports.
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally 50% indoors and 75% outdoors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All open but must be seated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cinema, theatres and museums open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and services can take place at 1/3 of capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pools and outdoor facilities open (50% capacity). Gyms open (30% capacity).

National curfew in place in Belgium, France, Italy and Spain; all countries restrict hospitality opening hours and sale of alcohol

Highlights represent changes since last version of this paper on 30 October.

Comparators' national, all sector rules









Country		Curfew (stay at home)	Restaurant and bar closing times		Alcohol sale restrictions
 Belgium	✓	12am - 5am until at least 13 December.	All closed. Allowed to serve takeaways until 10pm.	✓	Banned after 8pm.
 Denmark	X		Bars, cafes and restaurants must close at 10pm until 2 January 2021.	✓	Banned after 10pm.
 France	✓	9pm – 7am.	All closed until 20 January 2021.	✓	Banned from 10pm to 6am.
 Germany	X		All closed until at least 20 December.	✓	Banned from 11pm to 6am in Berlin.
 Italy ¹	✓	10pm to 5am.	Bars, cafes and restaurants must close at 6pm and are allowed to serve takeaways until 10pm.	✓	Banned after 10pm.
 Netherlands	X		All closed. Allowed to serve takeaways until 1am.	✓	Banned from 8pm to 7am.
 Spain	✓	11pm – 6am.	Bars, cafes and restaurants must close at 9.30pm (in Barcelona, varies regionally).	✓	Banned from 8pm to 8am in Basque Country, after 10pm in La Rioja, 9pm to 8am in Navarra and 10pm to 8am in Valencia.

2 | Containment measures

All comparators bar Germany require isolation of at least 7 days when in contact with someone who has tested positive

Highlights represent changes since last version of this paper on 30 October.








Isolation rules when testing positive, and interacting with those testing positive

Country	Ending self-isolation: when testing positive	Ending self-isolation: when in contact with someone who has tested positive
 Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 7 days after receiving positive test result, including no symptoms for 3 days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-isolate for 10 days with an additional 4 days of increased vigilance.
 Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With symptoms, 48 hours after symptoms end. Without symptoms, 7 days after receiving positive test result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-isolate, take first test on 4th day after contact and second test on 6th day (24hr for results). If either tests are positive then follow quarantine rules.
 France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 days after receiving positive result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 days after contact.
 Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No set time-frame. Managed by local responsible authority based on severity of disease. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No set time-frame. Managed by local responsible authority based on severity of disease.
 Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With symptoms, 10 days with at least 3 days without symptoms and a negative test. Without symptoms, 10 days and a negative test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 days or 10 days and negative test.
 Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 days after receiving positive result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 days if no symptoms. If symptoms, then take test and follow quarantine rules if positive.
 Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 days and after having no symptoms for 72 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 days (reduced from 14 to increase compliance).
 UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After 10 days (subject to symptoms). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 days (subject to symptoms).

Denmark, France, Italy and Spain require negative test result for entry from high risk countries; all comparators, bar Netherlands and Spain, offer testing at airport

Highlights represent changes since last version of this paper on 30 October.

Quarantine and testing of arrivals at border











Country	Quarantine		Testing at airport	
 Belgium	Mandatory	10 days and 4 days increased vigilance for arrivals from red zones if abroad for >48 hours.	✓	Free through Belgian health insurance but chargeable if not. Results in 24 hours.
 Denmark	Not required	No quarantine but must have negative test result taken within 72 hours of arrival from high risk countries.	✓	Offered to all arrivals free of charge. Also offering antigen test for £35.
 France	Not required	No quarantine but must have negative test result taken within 72 hours of arrival from high risk countries.	✓	Voluntary free tests for arrivals from high risk countries.
 Germany	Mandatory	10 days for high risk countries. May reduce to 5 days with a negative test.	✓	Voluntary free tests for arrivals from high risk countries.
 Italy	Mandatory	14 days for all arrivals between 21 December and 6 January, even with a negative test result.	✓	Voluntary free tests for all arrivals. Can use these instead of pre-testing 72 hours before arrival but must self-isolate until result received.
 Netherlands	Mandatory	10 days for high risk countries.	X	Not available.
 Spain	Not required	No quarantine. Travellers from high risk countries must have a negative test result taken within 72 hours of arrival. All travellers must complete a Health Form and are subjected to temperature screenings and visual health assessments.	X	Not available.

3 | The festive period

Germany & Spain have eased restrictions for the holidays; Italy has tightened restrictions; Denmark and Netherlands are yet to formalise plans

New slide for this edition

Comparators' latest plans for the holidays

Country	Gatherings	Commercial, entertainment and culture	Observations	Overall posture for the holidays
 Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential shops allowed to re-open. Restrictions for single people relaxed for 24 and 25 December, permitting two visitors. Fireworks ban over Holiday period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain in near lockdown until mid-January. Bars, restaurants, cafes and cultural venues closed over Holidays. Public compliance may be a challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving figures but will not risk third wave. Leaders cite example of Canada, which relaxed restrictions for Thanksgiving and had increased Covid-19 cases. 	 Some minor easing
 France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationwide 9pm-7am curfew will be lifted on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve. Small private gatherings permitted but must observe strict social distancing rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential shops opened 26 November. Places of worship open, with 30 person limit. Bars, restaurants and cafes closed until at least 20 January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> President of Covid Scientific Council said lifting of curfew did not make sense from public health perspective. Government decision to ease restrictions is political. 	 Some minor easing
 Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationwide 10pm curfew will remain in place on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve. Only family members will be allowed to visit each other for festive gatherings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Churches not allowed to hold midnight mass due to curfew. Bars and restaurants closed by 6pm. Sale of alcohol banned after 10pm. Ski resorts closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 21 December and 6 January, there will be an almost total ban on international travel and travel between regions. 	 Tightening on travel
 Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gatherings of up to 10 people allowed from 23 December to 1 January. Public firework displays banned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bars and restaurants closed until at least 20 December. Some states to permit overnight hotel stays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining stringent NPIs but allowing more contact over the Holidays. 	 Easing on gatherings
 Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curfew pushed back to 1.30am on 24 and 31 December. Increasing gatherings limit from 6 to 10 people for 24, 25, 31 December and 1 January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bars and restaurants open with current restrictions. Three Kings Parades cancelled, which would normally take place on 5 January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each region will close its borders between 23 December and 6 January. People in residential homes allowed to spend Christmas at one family member's home. 	 Easing on gatherings