National advice is produced below in English from:

- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Spain
- United Kingdom

The information is current as of 1000 European time Tuesday 24 March 2020 to EMBL’s best knowledge. Check the relevant government website for updates.

France: Official advice from the French Government

https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus

On March 14, 2020, the Prime Minister decided, following the transition to stage 3 of the plan to combat the epidemic and until further notice, to close all schools, kindergartens, universities and non-essential commercial activities. These include restaurants, cafes, cinemas, nightclubs. Pharmacies, food stores, gas stations, banks, tobacco shops and essential public services are still open. Places of worship will remain open, but rallies and ceremonies will have to be postponed. Gatherings of more than 100 people are forbidden.

On March 16, 2020, the President of the Republic decided to take measures to minimize contact and travel. A containment system is in place throughout the territory from Tuesday, March 17 at 12:00 p.m., for a minimum of fifteen days. **Travel is prohibited except in the following cases and only if you have a certificate** for:

- Move from home to work when telework is not possible;
- Make essential purchases in authorised local shops;
- Go to a health professional;
- Travel to take care of your children or to help vulnerable people with the strict condition of respecting barrier gestures;
- Exercise only on an individual basis, around the home and without any gathering.

The certificate necessary to circulate is available at https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus

Violations of these rules will be punished with a fine ranging from 38 to 135 euros.
Only official printed certificates and honour certificates written on plain paper are valid.

Public transport is still running, albeit with a reduced service. People are advised against inter-city travel.

The borders of the Schengen Area will be closed from 17 March at noon for a period of 30 days.

Risk areas are no longer relevant in stage 3, as the virus is actively circulating within France.

**Germany: latest advice from the official Robert Koch Institut**

https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogebiete.html

The overall risk to the health of the population in Germany is currently rated as high. However, this risk varies from region to region. The likelihood of serious illnesses increases with age and existing medical conditions.

Regardless of symptoms, everyone who has been in a risk area identified by the RKI in the past 14 days should avoid unnecessary contact with other people and stay at home.

If acute respiratory symptoms occur, you should follow personal hygiene protocol, and call your local doctor by phone to explain the symptoms and inform them of your past travels.

According to the Ministry of Health website: people who have visited Italy, Austria or Switzerland should stay at home for 14 days (https://www.bmvi.de/SharedDocs/DE/Artikel/LF/coronavirus-anordnung.html)

Persons returning from a risk area may be asked to complete a self-declaration form.

**Risk areas:**

- Egypt
- Italy
- Iran
- In China: Hubei province (including the city of Wuhan)
- In South Korea: Nord-Gyeongsang
- In France: Grand Est Region (this region includes Alsace, Lorraine and Champagne-Ardenne)
- In Austria: State of Tyrol
- In Spain: Madrid
- In the USA: states of California, Washington and New York
On March 17, 2020, Germany issued a Worldwide travel warning for unnecessary tourist trips. Severe and increasing drastic restrictions in international air and travel traffic, as well as worldwide entry restrictions, quarantine measures and restrictions on public life in many countries can be expected. The risk that you will no longer be able to start your return journey due to the increasing restrictions is currently high in many destinations. (https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/ReiseUndSicherheit/covid-19/2296762)

The Federal Government also announced a repatriation program in order to help German citizens to return home. Details of this program can be found here: https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/ReiseUndSicherheit/covid-19/2296762

The borders of the Schengen Area will be closed from 17 March at noon for a period of 30 days. In addition, the Federal Minister of the Interior has extended the temporary border controls to further reduce the risk of infection to intra-European air and maritime traffic. The internal border controls are now also carried out on flights arriving in Germany from Italy, Spain, Austria, France, Luxembourg, Denmark and Switzerland. This also applies to maritime transport from Denmark.

The joint crisis management team of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health recommended that all major events with more than 1,000 expected participants be cancelled. For all events with up to 1,000 expected participants, a risk assessment based on the criteria of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) should be carried out together with the responsible health authority. In addition, the Federal Police will intensify its controls, particularly at the southern borders.

The German government has announced new protection measures against the spread of the coronavirus. The new regulations apply across the entire territory and will be enforced from Monday 23 March 2020. These measures are valid for at least two weeks.

1. Citizens are encouraged to reduce contact with people outside of their own household to an absolute minimum.
2. A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be kept from other people in public spaces.
3. Spending time in public spaces is only permitted alone, with one other person who is not living in your household, or with members of your own household.
4. It is still possible to go to outside for work, emergency care, shopping, doctor visits, participation in meetings, necessary appointments and exams, providing help for others, individual outdoor sports and exercise, as well as other necessary activities.
5. Groups of people celebrating in public places, in apartments, or in private facilities are unacceptable and are prohibited. Violations of the contact restrictions are to be monitored by regulatory authorities and the police, and sanctioned in the event of violations.
6. All restaurants must be closed. This does not apply to the delivery and collection of takeaway meals for consumption at home.

7. Service companies in the field of personal care such as hairdressers, cosmetic studios, massage practices, tattoo studios, and similar companies must be closed (medically necessary treatments remain possible).

The state governments of Baden-Württemberg and Hamburg have implemented additional measures to contain the virus. The full list of measures is available here:

- Hamburg: https://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/13746348/7eef22271b3da0fae6a0edabe4d365be/data/2020-03-22-sk-download-allgemeinverfuegung.pdf

Italy:

information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/ministero/normativaonline/normativa-altre-amministrazioni.html

March 17, 2020 – In light of the numerous requests for return to Italy by many citizens who are abroad, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport has signed a decree together with the Minister of Health, which obliges people to self-isolate for 14 days following their return, even if asymptomatic. The Decree concerns all people who return to Italy by any means of transport. It is also mandatory to notify the Prevention Department of the local health authority of their entry into Italy in order to initiate health surveillance. (http://www.mit.gov.it/comunicazione/news/coronavirus/coronavirus-de-micheli-firma-decreto-su-autoisolamento-chi-rientra)

Risk areas: Italy is relying on WHO advice, which defines ‘affected areas’ as those countries, provinces, territories or cities experiencing ongoing transmission of COVID-19, in contrast to areas reporting only imported cases.

The Italian Government has imposed a nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of the virus, it also announced the closure of non-essential commercial activities (basic necessities and pharmacies).

Teaching activities in schools and universities are suspended until 3 April.
Spain: latest advice from the Health Ministry in Spain


On 14th March 2020, Spain has declared State of Emergency in the whole territory during 15 days

The measures are the following:

During this period, people will only be allowed to leave home for the following:

    a) Purchase of food, medication and staple products
    b) Appointments in health centres and facilities
    c) Commute to work
    d) Returning home
    e) Assistance to the elderly, children dependent, disabled people or people especially vulnerable
    f) Going to the bank and insurance offices
    g) Situations of force majeure
    h) The abovementioned situations will have to be performed individually, unless this is done to accompany disabled people or the elderly or for another justified situation.

Measures in the educational field:

    a) Suspension of face-to-face teaching activity at all educational levels (Universities, Baccalaureate, Secondary Education, Primary and Infant Education, Kindergartens, Vocational Training and others)
    b) Suspension of complementary educational activities

Measures in commercial establishments, business, cultural facilities, restaurants, etc.

    a) All shops will be closed except supermarkets, pharmacies, health centres, hygiene products shops, press, dry cleaning, telecommunications, online shopping and laundry services.
    b) Crowds shall be avoided. Customers will have to respect the safety distance of at least one meter
    c) All museums, libraries, monuments, sport pavilions, theatres, cinemas and any other leisure centres will remain closed
    d) All restaurants, bars, caterer services will remain closed, being only allowed delivery services
    e) Popular celebrations and other events will be cancelled
Recommendations in the workplace (Working is permitted except in activities in section3)

a) Teleworking and VC meetings are encouraged whenever possible
b) If possible, shifts should be staggered to reduce worker concentrations

On 16th March 2020, the Government closed the land borders of Spain. Only Spanish nationals, residents, merchandise and people in case of force majeure will be allowed to enter the country by land. Airports and ports remain open.

In case of symptoms (fever, cough, feeling like you can’t breath): stay at home and phone the emergency numbers 061 or 112, and the new numbers 010 and 012. The health services will come to your home and evaluate your health status.

Risk areas are no longer listed by the Spanish government.

United Kingdom: official advice from the Department of Health and Social Care, and Public Health England


The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) now advises British people against all non-essential travel worldwide. This advice takes effect immediately (17 March 2020) and applies initially for a period of 30 days (https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

Essential travel does not include visits to second homes, camp sites, caravan parks or similar, whether for isolation purposes or holidays. People should remain in their primary residence. Not taking these steps puts additional pressure on communities and services that are already at risk.

The risk to the UK has been raised to high.

On 23 March, the UK government introduced three new measures to contain the virus:
   1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes
   2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces
   3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.
These measures are effective immediately (23 March). The government will look again at these measures in three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

Stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

- if you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus illness (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for 7 days from when your symptoms started. See ending isolation section for more information
- if you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus, then you must stay at home for 7 days, but all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill
- for anyone else in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14-day isolation period. See ending isolation section for more information
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
- if you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period
- if you cannot move vulnerable people out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible
- if you have coronavirus symptoms:
  - do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital
  - you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you’re staying at home
  - testing for coronavirus is not needed if you’re staying at home
  - plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home and consider what can be done for vulnerable people in the household
  - ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
  - wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
  - if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999
  - In Scotland call your GP or NHS 24 on 111 out of hours.
  - In Wales call 111 (if available in your area) or 0845 46 47.

The government has also urged the public to take further steps to protect themselves and the wider population from the coronavirus, including:

- Everyone to stay at home unless they need to get essential supplies such as food and medicines.
- All those able to work from home to do so, unless their work is essential.
- Only traveling if absolutely necessary – while public transport won’t stop, this should only be used for essential travel – for example by key workers to travel to and from work.