

# Curated Articles on Work from Home Around the Globe

Produced by The MASIE Center & The Learning CONSORTIUM

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## Introduction:

We have curated articles and reports from around the globe describing the enormous and different patterns of policy and practice of “Work from Home” during the Coronavirus Pandemic. The data is changing rapidly, so please update your sources. We have included links to the originating articles in most cases.



# United States

Source of Article: Derek Thompson

Link: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/03/coronavirus-creating-huge-stressful-experiment-working-home/607945/>

Lockdown Status: Currently under lockdown (as of May 4th).

WFH Number: About 80 million people are working from home since the lockdown began.

**According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 29 percent of Americans can work from home.**

Joining me this week are hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of people taking refuge from the coronavirus. Not all, to be sure. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), only 29 percent of Americans can work from home, including one in 20 service workers and more than half of information workers. So while servers are still manning the restaurants, the technology sector has effectively gone remote. Amazon, Apple, Google, Twitter, and Airbnb have all asked at least some of their employees to stay away from the office.

Even before the pandemic struck, remote work was accelerating in the U.S. The share of the labor force that works from home tripled in the past 15 years, according to the Federal Reserve. Two of the accelerants are obvious: living costs in metros with the highest density of knowledge workers, and technology, such as Slack and Microsoft Teams, that moves collaboration and gossip online.

**How many people will become work-from-home after the dust settles on Covid-19?**

That's the billion-dollar question. To answer it, we have launched a Global Work-from-Home Experience Survey in partnership with Dr. Anita Kamouri, co-founder of Iometrics and several global associations, but here are our current thoughts:

We estimate that 56% of the U.S. workforce holds a job that is compatible (at least partially) with remote work. We know that currently, only 3.6% of the employee workforce works at home half-time or more. Gallup data from 2016 shows that 43% of the workforce works at home at least some of the time. Our prediction is that the longer people are required to work at home, the greater the adoption we will see when the dust settles.

We believe, based on historical trends, that those who were working remotely before the pandemic, will increase their frequency after they are allowed to return to their offices. For those who were new to remote work until the pandemic, we believe there will be a significant upswing in their adoption. My best estimate is that we will see 25-30% of the workforce working at home on a multiple-days-a-week basis within the next two years, here's why:

- Increased demand from employees.
- The demand for flexibility in where and how people work has been building for decades. Before the crisis, surveys repeated showed 80% of employees want to work from home at least some of the time. Over a third would take a pay cut in exchange for the option. While the experience of working at home during the crisis may not have been ideal as whole families sheltered in place, it will give people a taste of what could be. The genie is out of the bottle and it's not likely to go back in.
- Reduced fear among managers and executives.

One of the biggest holdbacks of remote work is trust—managers simply don't trust their people to work untethered. They're used to managing by counting butts-in-seats, rather than by results. That's not managing, that's baby-sitting. What's more, seeing the back of someone's head tells a manager nothing about whether that person is actually working. When clients ask, "How will I know if they're working?" I ask, "How do you know they are working now?" Management experts have been extolling the need to manage by results for over four decades. Micromanagement doesn't work and neither does "managing by walking around" in this global, mobile world. If people are forced to work at home for an extended period, as it appears, they will be, managers will have to learn that it's results that matter.

### **How many employees work from home?**

- 5 million employees (3.6% of the U.S. employee workforce) currently work-at-home half-time or more. [Global Workplace Analytics analysis of 2018 American Community Service (ACS) data]
- Regular work-at-home has grown 173% since 2005, 11% faster than the rest of the workforce (which grew 15%) and nearly 47x faster than the self-employed population (which grew by 4%). [Global Workplace Analytics analysis of 2018 ACS data]
- 43% of employees work remotely with some frequency. [Gallup State of the American Workplace 2016]

### **How many people could work from home?**

- 56% of employees have a job where at least some of what they do could be done remotely. [Global Workplace Analytics analysis of BLS data, 2017]
- 62% of employees say they could work remotely. [Citrix 2019 poll]
- Studies repeatedly show desks are vacant 50-60% of the time.

### **How many people want to work from home?**

- 80% of employees want to work from home at least some of the time. [State of Remote Work 2019, Owl Labs]
- Only 12% of federal employees say they would not want to work from home at least some of the time. [Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey 2018]
- 35% of employees would change jobs for opportunity to work remotely full time (47% of Millennials and 31% of Boomers); 37% would do so to work remotely some of the time (50% of Millennials and 33% of Boomers). [State of the American Workforce, Gallup, 2016]
- Flexibility is one of the highest ranked benefits by Millennials, even higher than student loan or tuition reimbursement. It ranked high for Boomers too although the percentages were 15-20 points lower. [State of the American Workforce, Gallup, 2017]
- More than a third of workers would take a pay cut of up to 5% in exchange for the option to work remotely at least some of the time; a quarter would take a 10% pay cut; 20% would take an even greater cut. [State of Remote Work 2019, Owl Labs]

Source: <https://globalworkplaceanalytics.com/telecommuting-statistics>

### **Some of the Big Companies Work-From-Home Status:**

Over in Austin, Texas, and in the Bay Area, **Indeed** told employees to work from home until the end of March to be cautious of the virus.

**Nike** temporarily closed its headquarters in Oregon and the Netherlands following the first US death from COVID-19 in the neighboring state of Washington and the confirmed infection of an employee at the Netherlands office.

**Oracle** has told employees to avoid non-essential travel and get approval for all business travel, while giving them the option to work from home if their job permits.

**Glassdoor**, also based in California, asked all of its employees to work from home until further notice.

*Source:* <https://www.businessinsider.com/companies-asking-employees-to-work-from-home-due-to-coronavirus-2020#amazon-also-asked-employees-in-its-seattle-headquarters-to-work-from-home-for-the-rest-of-march-there-have-been-10-deaths-from-the-virus-in-washington-state-4>

**Twitter** said working from home is now mandatory for all employees around the world due to COVID-19 concerns. The company said it will help all employees, including hourly workers and contractors, cover expenses for setting up home offices. Contractors, vendors and hourly workers who cannot work from home will continue to be paid for their standard working hours while the work-from-home policy is in effect. Twitter also said it will cover additional daycare expenses parents may have if their usual daycares close due to COVID-19. Twitter's Inclusion and Diversity team will also hold a virtual "#FlockTalk," an employee support program, to discuss how "news around COVID-19 is impacting people in number of different ways—from schools and offices being closed, to serious health concerns, to racism towards communities."

*Source:* <https://techcrunch.com/2020/03/11/twitter-makes-working-from-home-mandatory-for-employees-around-the-world-in-response-to-covid-19/>

## **United Kingdom**

Source of Article: UK Government Guidance for Employer

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Lockdown Status: went into full coronavirus lockdown on March 23.

Government has closed schools, pubs, restaurants, cafes, gyms and other businesses under new lockdown measures.

WFH Number: About 8.7 million

### **The U.K government gives the guideline for business to work from home:**

"During this time of unprecedented disruption, the UK Government is not asking all businesses to shut – indeed it is important for business to carry on. Only some non-essential shops and public venues have been asked to close – see more detailed information on the businesses and venues that must close, and those that are exempt."

A **Chevron** office in London asked its several hundred employees to work from home after an employee was tested for coronavirus. "Our primary concern is the health and safety of our employees and we are taking precautionary measures to reduce their risk of exposure," the company said in a statement shared with Fortune.

**Crossrail**, a new company working on a new public transport system, located in the same building as OMD and Chevron in London, also asked employees to work from home.

Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/companies-asking-employees-to-work-from-home-due-to-coronavirus-2020#amazon-also-asked-employees-in-its-seattle-headquarters-to-work-from-home-for-the-rest-of-march-there-have-been-10-deaths-from-the-virus-in-washington-state-4>

## Japan

Source of Article: Shoko Oda and Bloomberg

Link: <https://fortune.com/2020/03/01/coronavirus-japan-government-remote-work/>

Lockdown Status: Japan Virus Cases Falling, Even as Emergency Extension Weighed Japan is weighing the need to extend the country's state of emergency, balancing a fall in new coronavirus cases with fears that easing restrictions too soon might lead to the very explosion in infections authorities had sought to avoid.

**Panasonic, NEC, and Mitsubishi** are among the growing number of firms that have mandated or recommended remote work for tens of thousands of staff. The change is testing the ability of the nation's companies to embrace a more flexible work style—overturning a workplace culture that dates back decades and values physical presence and endurance of long hours over productivity or efficiency.

Many firms also force employees to use legally mandated vacation days instead of sick days when they're ill, which pressures people to come into work even when they are feeling unwell. That presents a challenge for authorities increasingly desperate to prevent the spread of the disease by keeping those who might be infected at home.

A survey compiled by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in 2018 found that fewer than one in five companies had implemented "telework," as working from home is frequently referred to in Japan, while a Workport poll from August found 90% of staff had no experience of working remotely.

Lack of access to laptops and strict security protocols not designed for remote work make it difficult for firms to open up to the practice.

Bic Camera, one of the country's largest electronics stores, said it saw a 20% increase in laptop sales in February, as inquiries around remote working surged.

And some companies are developing novel responses to workers' ingrained habits. Software developer Asteria said staff with a fever of 37.5 degrees Celsius (99.5 Fahrenheit) or higher will be forbidden even from working from home, the Sankei reported, and will be considered "in attendance" so that staff with little paid leave don't have to worry about struggling in to work.

Source: <https://fortune.com/2020/03/01/coronavirus-japan-government-remote-work/>

Over in Tokyo, a Japanese cosmetic company called **Shiseido** told 8,000 employees to work from home because of growing concerns over the outbreak.

**NTT**, a Japanese system integration company, encouraged 200,000 employees to work from home to keep the virus from spreading.

Japanese conglomerate **Hitachi** also allowed employees to work from home. The company had recently reported a fall in sales by 33% between April 2019 to December 2019 and the CFO said the outbreak "made it even more difficult" for global sales. (Source: Business Insider)

## Singapore

Source of Article: Michael Yong

Link: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/covid-19-work-from-home-singapore-jail-fines-coronavirus-12602224>

Lockdown Status: Closed schools and all nonessential businesses April 7.

### **Jail, fines for employers who do not allow employees to work from home where possible.**

Over in Singapore, an enterprise software company called Industrial and Financial Systems advised all of its employees to work from home indefinitely because of the virus.

Employers who do not make facilities available for members of staff to work from home where reasonable could be jailed or fined, under changes to the Infectious Diseases Act.

An addition to the Act published in the Government Gazette on Wednesday (Apr 1) night lays out the penalties employers face for not directing staff to work from home where possible or not implementing safe distancing measures at work, among others. On Tuesday, Manpower Minister Josephine Teo said companies that do not allow telecommuting wherever possible might face stop-work orders or other penalties. She added that the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) plans to have more than 100 enforcement officers conduct checks on companies. Every company must provide the facilities necessary for every employee to work from home during this period, the addition to the Act read.

They must also direct employees to work from home unless it is "not reasonably practicable to do so". Those who are found guilty of not doing so can be fined not more than S\$10,000, jailed for a maximum of six months or both.

## India

Source of Article: Rica Bhattacharyya, Prachi Verma

Link: [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/work-from-home-going-to-stay-even-after-covid-scare-is-over/articleshow/74956231.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/work-from-home-going-to-stay-even-after-covid-scare-is-over/articleshow/74956231.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

Lockdown Status: Went into full coronavirus lockdown on March 24. It has extended restrictions to May 3.

WFH Number: Technology workers – estimated at 3 million (other industry has no updated data yet).

### **Work-from-home going to stay, even after Covid-19 scare is over**

Mumbai | New Delhi: Covid-19 forced work-from-home on companies. WFH may stay even after the pandemic scare fades. HR heads of major companies say WFH is a "trial run on a big scale" and a "silver lining in the whole calamity". Employers and employees benefit from WFH even in normal times, they say.

For employees, benefits include saving on commute and more flexibility when it comes to work-life balance. For employers, the pluses are establishment cost-savings and enhancements. HR heads see it as a win-win solution helping employees save on commute time and to cut establishment costs, raising productivity. HR heads also say arrangements such as hot-desking will become more common, bringing down establishment costs.

## China:

Source of Article: Tracy Qu

Link: <https://www.techinasia.com/chinas-online-learning-coronavirus>

Lockdown Status: The lockdown policy has been gradually lifted since March 20th, most employees went back to the office.

### **Alibaba's APP Ding Talk Dominated Corporate Remote Work and K-12 Learning.**

By the first week of April, most office workers in China went back to their office and stopped work from home.

With authorities urging businesses to reopen, employees across China are beginning to work from home. More than half of workers in the capital Beijing plan to do so instead of going into the office, according to state-run newspaper China Daily. (CNN)

Starting in February, 2020, over 200 million employees in China used Alibaba's application Ding Talk to work from home. And all the K-12 schools used the same application for virtual classroom and learning management. Many K-12 students realized that if they gave the App a one-star rating, it would be removed from the App Store. So, millions of students gave the app a one-star rating overnight, which created an unprecedented situation.

The health crisis has put the spotlight on China's online education market, which grew 25.7% year on year in 2018 to 251.7 billion yuan (US\$35.9 billion), according to iResearch Consulting Group. The previous forecast of annual growth of between 16% to 24% in the subsequent three to five years may now need to be revised upwards.

For some students, the chance to study from home has other benefits. Xu, who lives in Zhejiang province, used to get up before 5:30 am on school days, but since starting online courses she gets two more hours of sleep each morning. "I like online teaching because I have more freedom at home," said Xu, who began her all-day courses via DingTalk this week.

However, online teaching has its weaknesses compared to face-to-face learning. "My motivation to study is stronger when my classmates are around me and all working very hard," she said. "Sometimes I zone out [when doing online courses]."

### Related Articles:

*Managing HR in China during the Coronavirus Outbreak:* <https://www.china-briefing.com/news/managing-hr-china-coronavirus-outbreak-clarity-work-resumption-leave-entitlements/>

*How China's coronavirus is changing working life in the country:* <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/china-virus-coronavirus-work-economy/>

## Australia

Source of Article: Vanessa Mitchell

Link: <https://www.cmo.com.au/article/672072/report-most-australian-employees-work-from-home/>

Lockdown Status: closed non-essential businesses on March 23. On March 31, the most populous state in the country was put into a stricter lockdown.

### **Most Australian employees to work from home.**

A new survey has found most Australian organizations plan on giving staff access to leave, paid time off, or the ability to work from home in order to ride out the COVID-19 crisis.

A Gartner HR survey reveals 88 per cent of organizations have encouraged or required employees to work from home due to coronavirus.

“Our research shows that only a minority of employers plan to downsize or ask employees to take unpaid leave,” Gartner HR practice chief of research, Brian Kropp, said. “Instead, most organizations are focusing on measures such as more effective use of technology and freezing new hiring to cut costs.”

Nearly half (48 per cent) of employers require employees to use sick leave first, then vacation leave and finally potential paid time off (PTO) for coronavirus absences, the report says. Twenty per cent of organizations increased PTO for individuals who are sick and/or caring for a sick family member; 18 per cent of organizations have granted additional PTO for parents who are caring for children whose schools are closed.

## Italy

Source of Article: Stephanie Brinley, MBA

Link: <https://ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/automakers-announce-workfromhome-policies.html>

Lockdown Status: A nationwide lockdown went into effect on March 10 that restricts virtually all aspects of life for its 60 million citizens, including retail, leisure, worship, imprisonment, and travel. The country will remain in lockdown until May 3, but some businesses — bookstores, stores with children's supplies, and timber companies — could reopen on April 14.

### **With the whole country on lockdown, work-from-home becomes part of life.**

“According to the decree, “All citizens are advised to leave home only for work, health reasons and emergencies.” Written self-declarations must be exhibited, subject to verification by police, and false claims and violations are subject to criminal charges. All forms of gathering are prohibited, indoor as well as outdoor.”

“From March 12, all commercial activities, including restaurants, cafes and shops, with the sole exceptions of grocery stores and pharmacies, must remain closed. Companies and factories that were previously encouraged to allow employees to work from home, have now been ordered to close all departments that are “not indispensable” for production.”

Source: <https://www.healio.com/infectious-disease/emerging-diseases/news/online/%7B17ee5f2b-0152-4de7-90de-da5e2a4461a3%7D/i-stay-at-home-italy-hardens-emergency-covid-19-measures>

Ferrari idles Maranello and Modena, Brembo closes Italian plants for one week:

Ferrari issued a statement on 14 March suspending production at Maranello and Modena (Italy) until 27 March 2020. The statement reads, "The decision has been taken by the Company for its employees' well-being and follows a number of rigorous preventive measures already implemented by the Company to guarantee the highest health standards in light of the Italian Government's decree on COVID-19 issued on March 11, as well as previous decrees. The Company, that had ensured continued production so far whilst placing employees' wellbeing as its main priority, is now experiencing the first serious supply chain issues, which no longer allow for continued production. All non-manufacturing-related activity will continue on a regular basis, leveraging the opportunities provided by smart working." Smart working is the term Ferrari employs for working from home.

## Germany

Source of Article: Elke Asen

Link: <https://taxfoundation.org/kurzarbeit-germany-short-work-subsidy-scheme/>

Lockdown Status: Shutdown of shops, churches, sports facilities, bars, and clubs in 16 states. It will be lifted on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Short-Time Work Scheme

"During unforeseeable crises—like the current coronavirus outbreak—sales of many businesses plunge, forcing them to either lay off workers or temporarily cut back on their working hours. Through the short-time work scheme, the government partly replaces an employee's lost income from reduced working hours—in the most extreme cases all the way down to zero hours—if the business does not lay off the employee. This helps and encourages businesses to retain their employees instead of laying them off, countering rising unemployment levels.

The German government estimates that 2.35 million employees—about 5.5 percent of the total workforce—will receive the short-work money during this current crisis, compared to 1.4 million at the height of the financial crisis. The additional costs are estimated at €10 billion (US \$11 billion), including €6 billion in social security contribution refunds and €4 billion in short-work money. The Federal Labor Office—financed through worker and employer contributions—has built up reserves of €26 billion that can be drawn upon.

Short-time work schemes can be a powerful tool during the health crisis we currently face. Employees can help prevent the spread of the virus by staying home while continuing to earn part of their income."

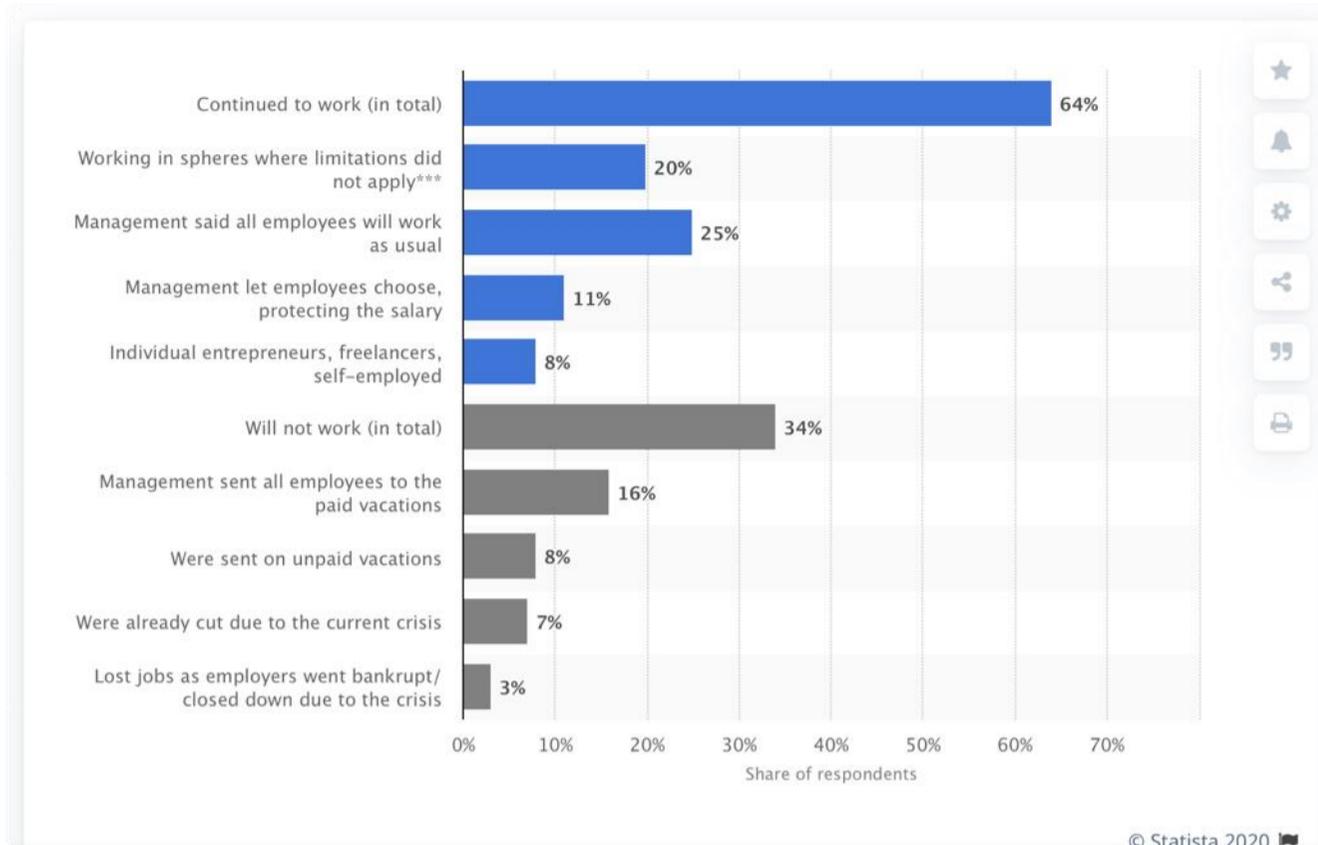
## Russia

Source of Article: Statista Research Department

Link: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1108898/russia-employment-during-covid-19-holiday-week/>

Lockdown Status: On March 30, Moscow residents were ordered to stay at home — they can only leave to go to the grocery store or pharmacy, take out the trash, or walk their pets within 100 meters of their home. At least 27 other regions in Russia have followed Moscow's lead.

## “Survey on the employment situation during the coronavirus (COVID-19) prevention non-working week in Russia from March 30 to April 5, 2020”



“According to survey results, 64 percent of Russians continued to work during the holiday week the country announced as a measure to prevent the mass spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March 30 to April 5, 2020. Furthermore, 16 percent of respondents stated that their employers sent them to paid vacations. “

## Spain

Source of Article: Stephanie Brinley, MBA

Link: <https://ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/automakers-announce-workfromhome-policies.html>

Lockdown Status: Nationwide quarantine on March 14. Some nonessential sectors have reopened, and thousands of workers are returning to work, but everyone else will be in restriction.

### Spain orders non-essential workers to stay home for two weeks

Spain Extends Lockdown as Virus Cases Rise Again in Europe

Renault and Nissan's Spanish plants affected:

Reuters reports that Nissan's two Barcelona (Spain) plants stopped work on 13 March 2020 because of a nearby wheel supplier's COVID-19 virus impact. The Nissan facility does not operate at the weekend, and the closure was expected to run until at least Monday 16 March; between the facilities, about 3,000 employees are affected. In addition, Renault plants in northern Spain will halt production for at least two days during the week of 16 March 2020, also because of a lack of components. A Renault spokesperson is quoted as saying, "[Thursday] we had no problems, and now we have to stop for two days from Monday in Palencia and Valladolid," as result of supply chain setbacks in Catalonia. The Renault sites employ about 6,000 people.

## France

Source of Article: By Steven Erlanger

Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/world/europe/coronavirus-france-macron-travel-ban.html>

**Lockdown Status:** Closed nonessential businesses. On March 16 it implemented a full lockdown, banning public gatherings and walks outside. The country will be under strict lockdown until at least May 11.

On April 8, the presidential palace said that the national lockdown will run beyond April 15 with President Emmanuel Macron set to address the nation next Monday evening.

On March 16, 2020, the Government of France announced measures to minimize contact and travel. A confinement order put into effect throughout France on March 17 has been extended through April 15. All non-essential public services in France remain closed. Open-air markets were recently added to this list.

If necessary, travel is permitted in the following cases: Between home and work when telework is not possible; To make essential purchases in authorized local shops; For health reasons; To care for children or help vulnerable people; Brief movements near or around the home for individual exercise or pet care and without public gathering - all exercise is limited to within one kilometer of each person's residence and can only be for one hour per day, and alone (Note that as of April 8, Paris has also limited sports activities to before 10 a.m. and after 7 p.m.); To respond to a judicial or administrative matter; To participate in an activity at the request of an administrative authority.

If you must travel for one of these reasons, you must carry an attestation, available in electronic format or downloadable for print... For travel to work, you will need an employer certificate. Unnecessary travel may be fined between 135 to 375 euros, with an increase to 1,500 euros for two violations within 15 days, and 3,750 euros and imprisonment for three violations within 30 days. The French Minister of Interior (MOI) and French police have issued warnings regarding fake police checkpoints and individuals impersonating police officers attempting to fraudulently collect a "fine" for not possessing a travel attestation document or for improper documentation. French police always write a report and the requirement to pay a fine is sent to your home of record. Do not pay any "fine" on the scene.

**Travel:** Banned all visitors not arriving from Schengen member state, with limited exceptions; UK citizens will not be affected.

## United Arab Emirates

Source of Article: Gulf News Report

Link: <https://gulfnews.com/uae/coronavirus-most-of-dubais-private-sector-employees-asked-to-work-from-home-1.1585143475049>

**Lockdown Status:** Dubai went into a two-week lockdown on April 4, while the rest of the United Arab Emirates have been under an overnight curfew since March 26.

Most of Dubai's private sector employees asked to work from home. Dubai has directed all private sector establishments to start a work-from-home scheme for 80 per cent of their employees on Wednesday.

The businesses exempt from the decision have also been announced. Pharmacies, grocery stores, supermarkets and cooperative societies are exempt from the directive according to the Dubai Economy.

## Thailand

Source of Article: James Henderson

Link: <https://www.cio.com/article/3526341/how-cios-in-se-asia-are-combating-coronavirus-through-business-continuity.html>

Lockdown Status: Began a 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. curfew on April 3. The country was already on a weeklong nationwide state of emergency. The only exceptions to the curfew will be for those seeking medical care or transporting goods. The state of emergency is active until April 30 but could be extended; there's no date on when the curfew will end. Violators of the curfew face up to two years in jail, a \$1,200 fine, or both.

### **Internet connectivity becomes more critical.**

As internet connectivity becomes more critical since more people started to work from home.

“Whether it is due to environmental disruption or the migration to cloud services, there is more demand on the size, quality and redundancy of internet links,” he said. “We might think that the size of internet links is the most critical aspect but being able to prioritize traffic, load balance or failover to redundant links, all bring important performance benefits.

“We are also gaining benefits from cloud services which provide additional security and monitoring features that boosts confidence to an operating mobile workforce. The use of two-factor authentication is possibly the most important improvement we have seen in securing our mobile and remote users.”

## South Africa

Source of Article: Fadia Arnold

Link: <https://www.golegal.co.za/coronavirus-sa-employment/>

Lockdown Status: Went into a 21-day lockdown on March 26. On April 9, the lockdown was extended through the end of April.

What only just recently seemed to be a concern to be watched from afar with no real effect on the day to day employment of a working South African or business owner is officially a past tense scenario. In the past few days we have received several enquiries from both Employees and Employers alike in respect of what the Virus or potential risk of the Virus infiltrating a workplace or work environment will be in respect of issues such as compliance with South African labor laws; whether it be sick leave benefits, implementation of working from home or remote work indulgences as well as compliance with health legislation in the workplace or working

## New Zealand

Source of Article: Zane Small

Link: <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/politics/2020/04/coronavirus-lockdown-in-new-zealand-to-end-in-a-week-as-nation-will-shift-into-covid-19-alert-level-3.html>

Lockdown Status: Enacted a mandatory 14-day quarantine for all individuals entering the country. The country went on full lockdown on March 25. On April 27<sup>th</sup> Coronavirus lockdown in New Zealand to end in a week as nation will shift into COVID-19 alert level 3.

BusinessNZ estimates at least 10 percent of the county's workforce will start working from home today because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This will include thousands of public servants.

The government is encouraging anyone who can work remotely to do so. BusinessNZ has crunched the numbers and come up with a figure of about 200,000 people working from home out of 2 million. Its chief executive Kirk Hope said the 10 percent of workers who are able to work remotely reflects how many jobs in this country require face-to-face contact with customers. "Where as the people we are talking about are essentially the people who will be supporting those businesses in the background or their business is essentially a knowledge-based business which makes it easier for them to be able to transact remotely."

Source: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/412359/coronavirus-estimated-10-percent-of-workers-at-home>

## Saudi Arabia

Source of Article: N.P. Krishna Kumar, Al Arabiya English

Link: <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/gulf/2020/03/18/Coronavirus-Saudi-private-sector-staff-told-to-work-from-home-for-15-days>

Lockdown Status: Locked down its capital and two holy cities on March 25. On March 29, it locked down the city of Jeddah. On April 6, it locked down all major cities. Saudi Arabia already suspended international flights and closed mosques, schools, and restaurants; it also imposed a curfew. Nationwide, a curfew from 3 p.m. to 6 a.m. has been extended.

Saudi Arabia announced on Wednesday new rules for private sector businesses to tackle the coronavirus pandemic, in an update to the "remote-work" guideline issued on Monday.

The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development instructed private sector establishments to suspend work for 15 days, and instead activate remote work procedures, according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

The measures also include reducing the number of employees in offices to essential staff immediately for the smooth conduct of work and the availability of supply chains, while ensuring they abide by the precautionary measures set by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health.

## Argentina

Source of Article: VOA News

Link: <https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/argentina-extends-coronavirus-lockdown>

Lockdown Status: Went into a "preventative and compulsory" lockdown on March 21. Argentina is extending its coronavirus lockdown until May 10, excluding towns of under 500,000, where the question is up to provincial authorities.

Argentina has been on lockdown since March 20, and the government has told people only to leave their homes to buy essentials like food and medical supplies. Peralta got the last plane from Abu Dhabi to Argentina before Emirates, the largest airline in the Middle East, suspended flights.

With no income, Peralta is thinking about teaching online to make ends meet. But she also worries about the economic fallout from the pandemic in Argentina, which was already suffering from rampant inflation and a devalued currency.

## Israel

Source of Article: Amitai Ziv

Link: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/business/.premium-work-at-home-israeli-startups-offer-host-of-solutions-1.8681369>

Lockdown Status: On March 19, went into partial lockdown — foreigners were already banned from entering the country. On March 25, restrictions tightened further. Several neighborhoods in Jerusalem have gone into lockdown.

### **Work at Home: Israeli Startups Offer Host of Solutions**

The sudden spurt in remote working due to the coronavirus creates many challenges, not least cyber hacking. In Israel, the move to working from home is a particularly great challenge. Before the pandemic, only about 4% of the workforce worked at home, a low rate compared to other developed economies.

But only around 9% of Israelis work in high-tech, and even in that sector some companies don't have that kind of flexibility.

In some job categories, working from home simply isn't an option, for example, in manufacturing, construction and agriculture. Those sectors account for 15% of Israel's workforce, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. Also companies in the defense industry, including high-tech companies, can't allow employees to work from home for security reasons.

In between are many professions where it might be difficult to work from home, but it is possible. It's worth it for businesses in these areas to attempt now to get used to the new situation, and to begin having at least some of their employees work from home. It's not only to get through the coronavirus crisis, it's an investment in the future of work.

## **Belgium**

Source of Article: BBC News

Link: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52421723>

Lockdown Status: Went on lockdown on March 17. Belgian Prime Minister Sophie Wilmès has announced a detailed plan to gradually lift the country's coronavirus restrictions.

Under new rules, all shops will be allowed to open their doors again from 11 May, with schools reopening the following week - albeit with a cap on pupil numbers in each class. Under new rules, all shops will be allowed to open their doors again from 11 May, with schools reopening the following week - albeit with a cap on pupil numbers in each class.

### **Belgium advises working from home in bid to contain coronavirus.**

Belgians are advised to avoid public transport during rush hour so buses and trains are less packed, and greeting each other by shaking hands or kissing is now officially a no-go. "Even though that clashes with our habits," said the French-speaking Wilmès.

Source: <https://www.politico.eu/article/belgium-bans-events-with-over-1000-people-due-to-coronavirus/>

# European Union

Source of Article: BBC News

Link: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52355721>

**Lockdown Status:** On March 16, banned non-essential travel into the region for 30 days. And now, the lifting of Europe's lockdown measures is not at all coordinated. EU member states have 27 different healthcare systems, 27 different infection rates and 27 different priorities as regards kickstarting their coronavirus-battered economies. Measures even differ within countries. The north Italian region of Lombardy resisted reopening small, non-essential shops last week, while neighboring Veneto welcomed the opportunity.

There are noticeable differences of opinion within governments too. Last week, the Austrian prime minister promoted "staycations", where people remain at home for the holidays. His tourism minister then promoted the idea of bilateral agreements between European countries to open borders during the summer season.

Governments face a challenging balancing act - juggling economic, social and health risks - until a coronavirus vaccine can be found.

Denmark has reopened primary schools. Spanish children haven't been allowed outside for over five weeks now. Who's right and who's wrong? No-one can be sure until more is known about Covid-19.

- [Germany relaxes coronavirus shop closures](#)
- [Hairdressers to reopen as Denmark loosens lockdown](#)

In Europe, corporate emergency plans are forcing employees to work remotely, and other businesses are refining their protocols for when the illness arrives on their doorstep.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/26/business/coronavirus-businesses.html?auth=login-google>

In some sectors, specifically digital-based companies, the change in workplace environment has been seen as a positive experience, and many are considering making it a permanent option going forward. It has also been welcomed by parents who find that working from home makes it easier to take care of children.

However, not all sectors of the economy have adapted well. Teachers have found it a struggle to teach classes remotely, and are using a variety of different tools to adapt to the lack of a classroom environment.

Factories and shipping companies, which cannot fully function with employees working from home, also struggle.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/International/Coronavirus-lockdown-results-millions-in-Asia-working-from-home-617707>

# Malaysia

Source of Article: FMT News

Link: <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2020/04/23/mco-extended-2-weeks-to-may-12/>

**Lockdown Status:** The government announced on March 16 that all business operations will be closed except essentials like markets, utilities, broadcasting, banking, and healthcare. The movement control order (MCO)

implemented to curb the spread of Covid-19 in the country has been extended a further two weeks until May 12.

### **Covid-19 pandemic is changing employers' perception of remote-work policies.**

Employees believe that their productivity when working from home is as high as at the office, or if not, even higher.

The Coronavirus pandemic is affecting every facet of our daily lives, including the way we work. A rapidly increasing number of employers across the world are requiring their people to work from home as part of the efforts to mitigate the spread of Covid-19. But this may not be an isolated shift.

According to a new Lenovo research completed in mid-March 2020, 77 per cent of employees surveyed across five countries (US, Italy, Germany, China, and Japan) believe this may have a long-lasting impact on how employers view remote-work policies going forward. There is a sense that companies will be more open to or even encourage letting workers work from home once things return to normal.

Enabled by the increasing sophistication and affordability of mobile smart technologies, the global workforce has largely been untethered from the desk. Productivity levels at home have always been a concern for employers. Surprisingly, nearly half of the respondents say that their work-from-home (WFH) productivity is on par with at the office (46 per cent), with 15 per cent saying it even increases when at home.

## **Czech Republic**

Source of Article: ABSL

Link: <https://www.absl.cz/absl-survey-almost-90-percent-of-employees-in-business-services-work-from-home-due-to-pandemic-onboarding-of-newcomers-continues-according-to-plans-in-the-majority-of-centres/>

Lockdown Status: Closed most shops and restaurants and banned foreign travel starting March 16. Some non-essential stores were allowed to reopen on April 9. The country has closed schools and banned many public events. Some stores that sell non-essential goods were allowed to reopen on April 9, and some sports facilities were also reopened. Restrictions on exercise have also been lifted.

Since the lockdown imposed mid of March due to the spreading of the coronavirus pandemic, up to 96% of business service centers have recommended to their employees to work from home. Currently 90% of employees working in the business services sector that employs around 120 000 people in the Czech Republic are now working remotely from home. More than half of the centers managed to deploy work from home for all their employees, 93% of centers has more than 80% of their employees working from home and 7% of centres with just three quarters of employees working from home.

## **Morocco**

Source of Article: Ahmed Eljechimi

Link: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-morocco/morocco-asks-people-to-stay-home-over-coronavirus-fears-idUSKBN2153SK>

Lockdown Status: Suspended international flights on March 15 and has closed mosques, schools, and restaurants.

RABAT (Reuters) - Morocco asked its citizens not to leave their homes except to buy essential goods, seek medical treatment, or go to work, as a precautionary measure against the spread of the coronavirus, the interior and the health ministries said on Wednesday. The pandemic is expected to hit the Moroccan economy hard, with the pivotal tourism sector, which last year attracted 13 million visitors and represented nearly 11% of GDP, standing to lose 34 billion dirhams (\$3.5 billion) in revenue this year, said Abdellatif Kabbaj, head of Morocco's tourism association.

## Kenya

Source of Article: Njeri Kinyanjui

Link: <https://theconversation.com/how-the-covid-19-pandemic-will-affect-informal-workers-insights-from-kenya-134151>

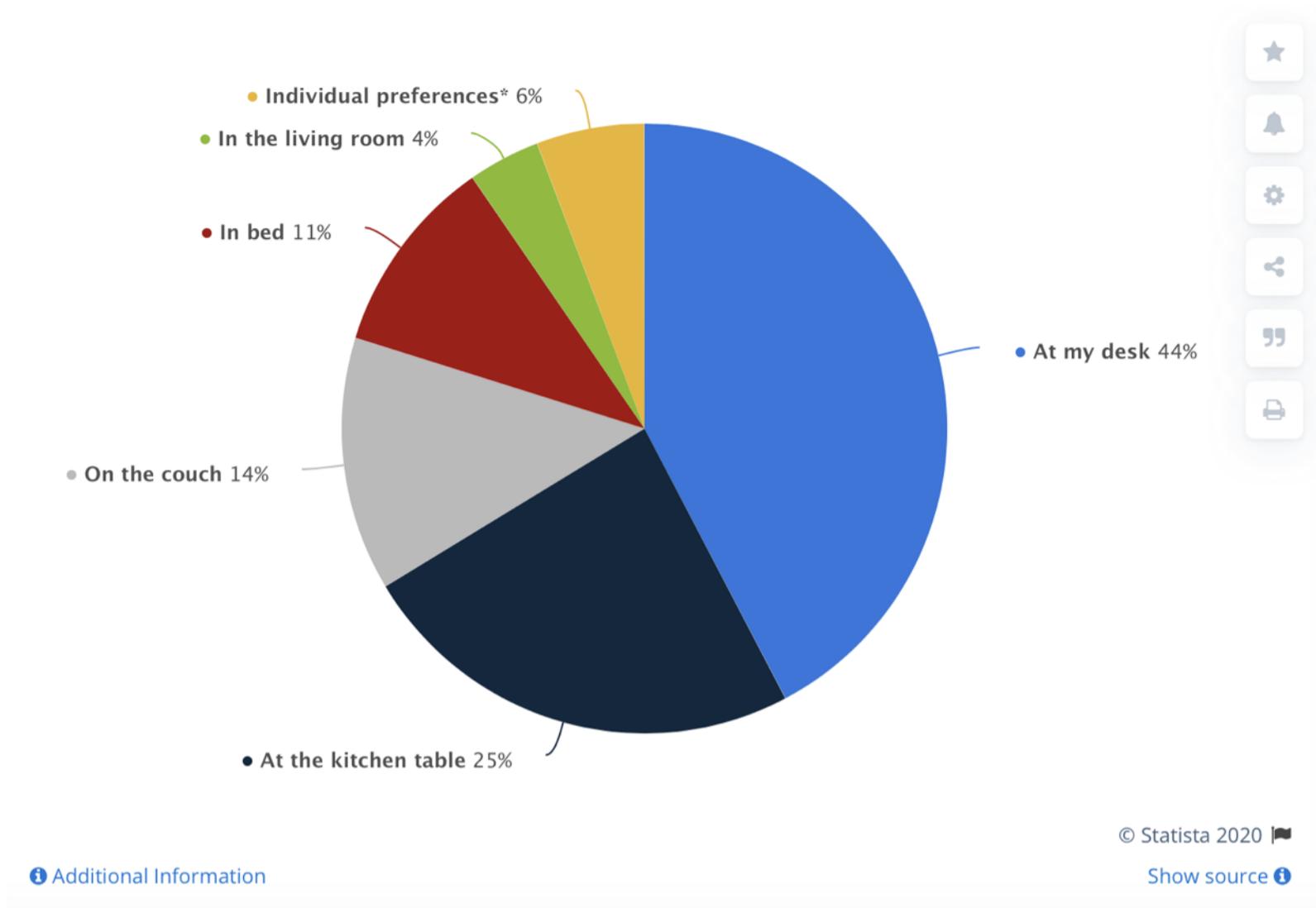
**Lockdown Status:** On March 15, closed schools and blocked non-residents from entering the country, and has closed pubs and restaurants. On April 6, banned travel in and out of four impacted regions for three weeks, including capital Nairobi.

The informal sector thrives in Kenyan rural and urban centres. According to 2015 estimates there were 11.8 million people employed in the informal economy, against 2.4 million working in the formal sector. By 2018 the informal sector accounted for 83.6% of total employment. Working from home is also difficult. Most informal workers live in informal settlements in single rooms or bedsitters. They do not have enough space to work from. For others, their jobs require them to be on-site, where they're in contact with their customers. The informal economy operates in agglomerations in different parts of the city. In Kenya these are known as jua kali (hot sun) sites.

## Poland

**Lockdown Status:** Shutter businesses and prohibit international travel from March 13. People from abroad entering the country will be subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine. Schools and businesses will remain locked down until April 19, and the border will stay closed until May 3.

Where in the house people sit when working remotely due to COVID-19 in Poland 2020



Due to

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, many employees were working remotely as of March 2020. When working from home, they preferred to sit at their desk (44 percent of respondents) or the kitchen table (25 percent).

## Kuwait

Source of Article: Ismaeel Naar, Al Arabiya English

Link: <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/coronavirus/2020/04/20/Kuwait-expands-coronavirus-curfew-during-Ramadan-extends-public-sector-suspension>

Lockdown Status: Kuwait announces it is extending the suspension of work across all state institutions until May 28 and expanding its nationwide curfew to 16 hours as part of the country's efforts to combat the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Initially, the suspension was supposed to last until April 26 when it was announced last month.

"The work should be resumed on May 31 and considered as rest days, as part of the precautionary measures to confront the COVID-19 coronavirus," the statement from Kuwait's Council of Ministers read.

## Ireland

Source of Article: Karlin Lillington

Link: <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/technology/remote-working-why-did-it-take-a-pandemic-to-sell-an-obviously-good-idea-1.4200028>

Lockdown Status: On March 27, went into a two-week lockdown. It has now been extended to May 5.

In Ireland, even before that, both Google last week and Apple this week had shifted thousands of employees to remote work after each company had an employee self-isolate due to coronavirus.

Universities, from Trinity College Dublin here to Harvard and Stanford in the US, have cancelled in-class general lectures and switched to online broadcasting of at least some classes. Smaller companies and organisations everywhere are also moving to online meetings or group phone calls.

## Norway

Source of Article: Agnete Lundetræ Jürgensen

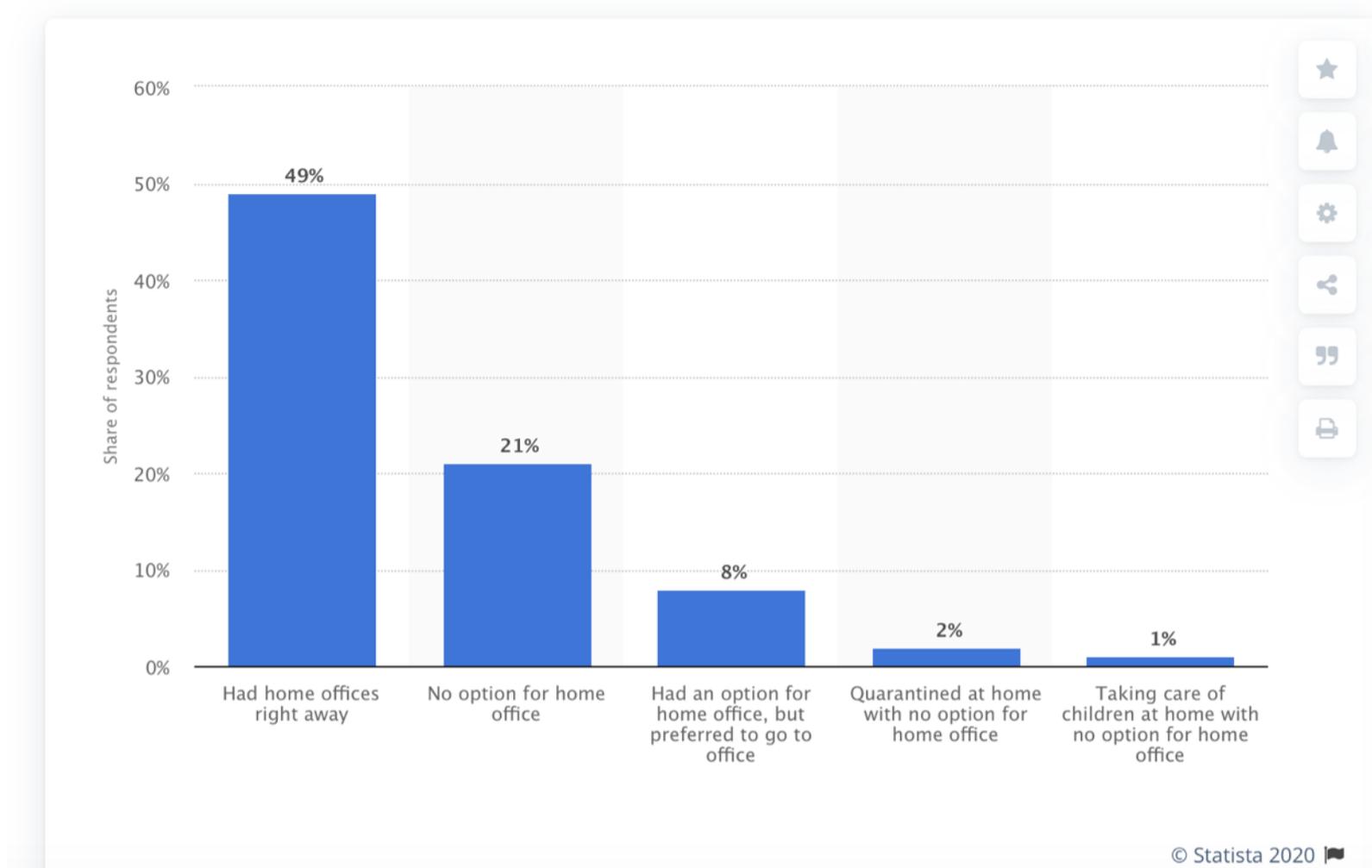
Link: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1107292/working-from-home-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-norway/>

Lockdown Status: Went into a two-week lockdown on March 12, and on March 24 the government decided to extend the lockdown through Easter. Schools are closed except for children of citizens in essential roles, like healthcare and transportation. Buffet restaurants remain closed, although regular restaurants can seat patrons at least one meter apart. On April 20, kindergartens will reopen, and first through fourth grade will reopen the following week. However, major events will be banned through June 15.

Nearly half of the respondents in a survey conducted in March 2020 in Norway reported they have worked from home due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Survey in Norway: Working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic in Norway 2020

Do you have the option to work from home during the current situation?



## El Salvador

Source of Article: El Salvador

Link: <https://www.garda.com/crisis24/news-alerts/325621/el-salvador-president-announces-nationwide-lockdown-march-22-update-8>

**Lockdown Status:** Announced an orange alert on March 11. Measures include a national quarantine on the country's 6.4 million citizens. President Nayib Bukele announced a nationwide lockdown beginning Sunday, March 22, during which residents are required to observe a home quarantine amid the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The government took prompt action with its stay-at-home order and the closing of its land borders and airports.

But critics weighed in on social media to say that distribution of the subsidy has caused chaos and confusion, especially among people who do not have bank accounts or mobile phones.

Mauricio Funes, a government opponent and the country's former president, said the initiatives to provide aid had been "improvised" and rendered social distancing impossible.

"Home quarantine is to prevent contagion in concentrations of people in their workplaces," Funes tweeted.

“Today it turns out that people must be crowded together to claim the offered voucher.”

In response, the government closed the offices handling the subsidies and urged people to go home and call a free hotline or official website for information.

## Denmark

Source of Article: Michael Birnbaum

Link: <https://www.thelocal.dk/20200311/denmark-to-shut-all-schools-and-universities-to-fight-virus>

Lockdown Status: Enacted a lockdown on March 11. Both Austria and Denmark plan to lift restrictions in stages. In Austria, small shops are slated to reopen April 14, with larger stores to follow on May 1. Restaurants, hotels and schools may be able to reopen in mid-May — though that decision will be assessed at the end of April. Strict rules about masks, social distancing and the number of people allowed into a store at any one time will remain in place, but public events may resume in July.

All public sector employees who do not perform critical functions will also be sent home on paid leave.

"This will have huge consequences, but the alternative would be far worse," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said at a press conference announcing the tough new measures on Wednesday evening, according to the Ekstra Bladet newspaper. Frederiksen said that measures to help soften the blow would be announced in due course.

"We will not get through this as a country without a cost. Businesses will close. Some will lose their jobs. We will do what we can to mitigate the consequences for employees," she said.

At the press conference Frederiksen advised everyone in Denmark who is in a position to work from home to do so. The government has also banned all indoor events with 100 or more participants.

## Canada

Source of Article: Alexandra Mae Jones & John Vennavally-Rao

Link: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/canada-s-workforce-having-to-adjust-to-working-from-home-1.4855835>

Lockdown Status: Has shut its borders to anyone who isn't a citizen, a permanent resident, or a US citizen; while the country is not on full lockdown, Nova Scotia has gone into a state of emergency, and health officials are urging citizens to stay home.

### **Canada's workforce is having to adjust to working from home.**

TORONTO -- As public community spaces, restaurants and bars temporarily shut their doors amid warnings from health officials trying to slow the spread of COVID-19, many Canadian workplaces are telling their employees to do their job from home.

It's a scary prospect for some. For those who have never had to work from home before, it may be hard to adjust and stay productive in what is typically a leisure setting. Some workplaces are instigating only partial work-from-home requirements.

Toronto-based real estate law firm Grechi Carter says that as of tomorrow, they will be keeping just two or three workers in the actual office, and having the rest work from home. To make it fair, they will rotate the staff every few weeks.

## Lithuania

Source of Article: Tamar Lapin

Link: <https://nypost.com/2020/04/28/lithuanian-city-will-become-big-open-air-cafe-as-lockdown-is-lifted/>

Lockdown Status: Shut its borders on March 16 to prevent nearly all foreigners from entering. The lockdown lifted on April 27<sup>th</sup>

As soon as the quarantine was announced, employees of Statistics Lithuania consistently started teleworking. Currently, over 400 employees work from home. Both the central office in Gedimino Ave. in Vilnius and the territorial divisions are closed. The employees are allowed to visit the work premises only when necessary, e.g. to ensure the performance of information systems and communication.

All of our services and services which were provided directly (consulting, statistical literacy training, etc.) are now provided only remotely. Nonetheless, we remain open to the public: you can contact us during our regular working hours by phone and emails provided on the Official Statistics Portal or via Statistics Lithuania profile on Facebook.

Source: [https://www.stat.gov.lt/en\\_GB/home/-/asset\\_publisher/lbrXvLVHX2ln/content/covid-19-lietuvos-statistika-dirba-karantino-rezimu?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.stat.gov.lt%2Fen\\_GB%2Fhome%3Fp\\_p\\_id%3D101\\_I\\_NSTANCE\\_lbrXvLVHX2ln%26p\\_p\\_lifecycle%3D0%26p\\_p\\_state%3Dnormal%26p\\_p\\_mode%3Dview%26p\\_p\\_col\\_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p\\_p\\_col\\_count%3D1](https://www.stat.gov.lt/en_GB/home/-/asset_publisher/lbrXvLVHX2ln/content/covid-19-lietuvos-statistika-dirba-karantino-rezimu?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.stat.gov.lt%2Fen_GB%2Fhome%3Fp_p_id%3D101_I_NSTANCE_lbrXvLVHX2ln%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p_p_col_count%3D1)

## The Maldives

Source of Article: Jim Dobson

Link: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jimdobson/#2cf693484122>

Lockdown Status: Subjecting all passengers travelling to the country by air to a 14-day quarantine — with the exception of tourists checking in to resorts. Some tourists have found themselves under lockdown in resorts.

In late February and early March, after the virus began spreading through China, many wealthy travelers started descending on the Maldives in private jets and charters as well as a few superyachts prior to the country shutting down on March 12. They immediately began the long isolation process on many of the areas stunning private islands, all completely removed from the rest of the world.

Minister of Tourism Ali Waheed announced this week that there are currently around 1,000 tourists in the Maldives, staying at 27 resorts that are still open. He also noted that most of the tourists currently in Maldives did not wish to return to their own country, and wanted to remain there in isolation from the rest of the world. With daily resort rates often over \$3,000 per day, this is an expensive isolation period for many of them. Many of the islands offer private doctors, and mini-hospitals should any medical need arise.

## North Korea

Source of Article: Juliana Kaplan, Lauren Frias and Morgan McFall-Johnsen

Link: <https://www.businessinsider.com/countries-on-lockdown-coronavirus-italy-2020-3>

Lockdown Status: Shut down airline flights and train service with neighboring countries, and established quarantines for recent travelers. It told WHO that it has no reported cases, but 500 people are in quarantine.

People still go to work.

## Qatar

Source of Article: Arabs News

Link: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1651256/middle-east>

Lockdown Status: Stopped all incoming flights to the country and shut down shops in main commercial areas. On April 1, it extended the flight suspension.

### **Work from home to curb coronavirus, Qatar tells private firms.**

DUBAI: Qatar's cabinet on Wednesday told private sector companies in the state to direct 80 percent of their staff to work from home to help reduce the spread of coronavirus.

Effective on Thursday for an initial two weeks, the step allows exceptions in some vital sectors, state news agency QNA reported. These include the military and security, the ministry of foreign affairs and diplomatic missions, health care, oil and gas, plus some government employees and workers on national flagship projects.

The working day will be cut to six hours, from 7:00a.m. to 1:00p.m., excluding grocery stores, pharmacies and restaurants. Household cleaning services will be suspended, QNA reported, and the number of workers transported by bus halved.

## Slovakia

Source of Article: Mazars News

Link: <https://www.mazars.sk/Home/News/Publications/Newsletters/Labour-law-information-the-COVID-19-pandemic>

Lockdown Status: Closed its borders to non-residents on March 15 and banned public events.

The opportunity to work from home is considered the most desirable employee benefit. In connection with the spreading of diseases caused by a coronavirus, the possibility of "home office" is used not only as a corporate benefit but also as a protective measure (primarily if the type of work that the employee performs allows this).

We shall note that the "home office" (as opposed to home-work/telework) has an occasional nature and is based on an agreement between the employer and the employee; i.e., typically, the employer is not entitled to authoritatively / unilaterally order to work from home. However, this rule does not apply in emergencies, e.g., in times of persistent threat of pandemics. In such a case, both contracting parties may decide 'unilaterally' to perform work from home. According to the occupational health and safety at work regulations, the employee shall have a right to refuse to perform work, or leave the workplace and go to a safe place if he/she reasonably presumes that his/her life or health, or the life or health of other persons is under immediate and serious threat.

## Ukraine

Lockdown Status: Closed its borders for foreign citizens on March 17, after the first death from the virus within the country. The government has closed public institutions and limited transportation.

The work is still underway to release Ukrainian citizens held in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas, in the temporarily occupied Crimea and in Russia, but this process is currently complicated by the spread of coronavirus in the world, as stated by Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Andriy Yermak.

“This process is ongoing. It is complicated by the pandemic situation. That is why today the lists are being finalized, they are being updated,” Andriy Yermak said during an online briefing at the President's Office.

## Croatia

Source of Article: Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Link: <https://www.karanovicpartners.com/news/remote-work-during-covid-19-croatia/>

Lockdown Status: On partial lockdown and have been told to avoid public areas, even amidst a strong earthquake.

Croatian Labour Act already provides the possibility for employers to agree to remote (home) work with their employees, following certain requirements (specific content of employment agreements, in addition to standard provisions – such as working hours, required equipment, compensation of work-related costs, etc).

Employees working remotely are entitled to the same rights as regular employees in terms of salary, daily and weekly breaks, annual leave, etc. On the other hand, employees are required to perform all their duties with due care, to respect working hours and to take specific care of their health and safety.

## Sweden

Source of Article: The Economist

Link: <https://www.economist.com/europe/2020/04/04/why-swedes-are-not-yet-locked-down>

Lockdown Status: Notable for its "low-scale" lockdown. Gatherings of more than 50 people are banned and high schools and universities are closed — but primary schools, restaurants, and many businesses are still open.

### **Sweden Is Open for Business During Its Coronavirus Outbreak**

While Sweden's fellow Scandinavians and nearly all other Europeans are spending most of their time holed up at home under orders from their governments, Swedes last weekend still enjoyed the springtime sun sitting in cafés and munching pickled herrings in restaurants. Swedish borders are open (to EEA nationals), as are cinemas, gyms, pubs and schools for those under 16. Restrictions are minimal: the government recommends frequent hand washing for all, working from home for those who can, and self-isolation for those who feel ill or are older than 70.

## Turkey

Source of Article: Ankara

Link: <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/civil-servants-work-remotely-amid-covid-19-153186>

Lockdown Status: 48-hour curfew in major cities to curb virus. Restrictions placed in 31 provinces across the nation but bakeries, pharmacies and health facilities to remain open.

Turkey is allowing civil servants to work from home and in shifts as part of measures to address the novel coronavirus outbreak, according to an announcement published on March 22 in the Official Gazette. The flexible work arrangements apply to employees of public institutions and organizations, said the statement. The decision for state workers, who were previously being considered for administrative leave, will be valid until a new one is made, it added.

## Brazil

Source of Article: Angelica Mari

Link: <https://www.zdnet.com/article/when-its-impossible-to-work-remotely-how-brazilian-businesses-are-dealing-with-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Lockdown Status: President Jair Bolsonaro, who has called the virus a “measly cold,” is the sole major world leader continuing to question the merits of lockdown measures to fight the pandemic.

### **When it's impossible to work remotely: how Brazilian businesses are dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.**

Lack of technology readiness and fears of increased precariousness in working relations are among the factors Brazilians keep coming into the office - even when they could be working from home. According to Dirceu Santa Rosa, a specialist in digital law and partner at Brazilian law firm Montauray Pimenta, Machado & Vieira de Mello, the absence of a legal framework for remote working on Brazil is also unhelpful. "We are seeing masses of people who were mainly working under desk-based, traditional arrangements now having to work from home, which was until recently associated mainly with freelance activities", he noted. "The Brazilian legislation is not prepared to account for situations like that."

## Portugal

Source of Article: Fair Wear News

Link: <https://www.fairwear.org/covid-19-dossier/covid-19-guidance-for-production-countries/covid-19-impact-and-responses-portugal/>

Lockdown Status: Portugal has declared the state of emergency, based on the verification of a situation of public calamity per March 18th, in effect until 2nd of April. (Source: [www.portugal.gov.pt](http://www.portugal.gov.pt)) The country's officials follow the World Health Organization guidelines and have issued a decree covering the entire national territory. Portugal's lockdown ended on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

**The Portuguese government calls on all employees to work from home as much as possible.**

Textile and garment factories are currently working with 20 or 30% of their total capacity, contributing to the slowdown of the spreading of the virus. This means that the majority of factory workers are being sent home. Travel is very restricted, meetings are banned and all schools are closed.

Portugal has over 12,000 textile and clothing companies, with 140,000 employees. Many textile companies are facing bankruptcy as revenues fall sharply in this time of crisis. Customers are cancelling orders and capacity is brought back to a minimum. Several factories are switching their business over to the production of safety masks and overalls for medical staff.

## Netherlands

Source of Article: Janene Pieters

Link: <https://nltimes.nl/2020/04/20/dutch-expect-work-home-even-coronavirus-crisis>

**Lockdown Status:** The Dutch are among the few who began by openly embracing the contentious idea of group or herd immunity. It's an approach characterized by one Dutch global health expert as cold and calculated.

Having shunned the stricter measures of neighboring states the government has pursued an "intelligent" or "targeted" lockdown. It wants to cushion the social, economic and psychological costs of social isolation and make the eventual return to normality more manageable.

### **Dutch expect to work from home more, even after coronavirus crisis.**

Many Netherlands residents expect that the coronavirus crisis will permanently affect their commute behavior and the way they work. A quarter of those who started working from home due to the crisis expect they will continue to do so in the future, and a third think they'll hold remote meetings more often, according to a study by the Knowledge Institute for Mobility Policy, NOS reports.

About 44 percent of Netherlands residents started working from home or started doing so more often due to the coronavirus crisis. They mostly experience this as positive. Most students and pupils now forced into distance learning, on the other hand, do not find it pleasant.

Netherlands residents are currently avoiding public transport - 88 percent prefer to take the car or bicycle when they do have to go out. But the vast majority expects to go back to the same means of transport they used before Covid-19 when the crisis is over. About 20 percent expect to walk and cycle more. And about 25 percent said they expect to fly less.

## Luxembourg

Source of Article: Hrone Lu

Link: <https://www.hrone.lu/actualites/recent-measures-luxembourg-relating-covid-19>

### **Lockdown Status: Luxembourg Enforces Use of Masks as Lockdown Eases (Updated on April 27th)**

Luxembourg began easing coronavirus restrictions on Monday along with an order that the public cover their mouths when entering confined spaces such as public transport or shops.

## Home-Based Working (HBW)

### **Working from home can be imposed as a preventive measure for employees whose nature of work allows it.**

It is in compliance with the legal obligation (art 312-1 of Labour Code) for the employer to ensure the safety and health of employees in all aspects related to work.

When it comes to HBW, it is recommended to have a HBW policy or amendment to the employment contract in place. In the specific context of the coronavirus, HBW may be an occasional practice to address an unusual situation. In that context, completing your manual of procedures with relevant HBW rules while consulting with your Staff Delegation (or co-deciding for enterprises of more than 150 employees) can be a pragmatic approach.

In this context, an employer cannot force employees to take holidays, or unpaid leave, or use their time savings account, out of fear that the virus may spread across the organization. When an employer asks his employees to stay home from work, then it is considered as a time-off without loss of pay. Employers have to maintain their salary.

## Cuba

Source of Article: WPR Editors

Link: <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/28671/how-the-covid-19-pandemic-is-revitalizing-cuba-s-medical-diplomacy>

**Lockdown Status:** Work at home is encouraged as much as possible and some Internet access fees have been reduced.

Cuba is handling the coronavirus outbreak well, largely because of its traditions of social discipline, experience with natural disasters such as flooding and hurricanes, and extensive civil defense capability. Almost all flights to and from the island have been stopped. Strict measures are in place to enforce social isolation, while schools are shuttered, and workers have been told to stay home. Two areas with high infection rates, in Havana and the western city of Pinar del Rio, have been locked down. So far, there have been 515 confirmed cases and 15 deaths from COVID-19.

## Iran

Source of Article: Associates Press

Link: <https://time.com/5824109/iran-opens-economy-coronavirus/>

**Lockdown Status:** Iran Begins to Open its Economy Despite Fears of Second Wave of Infection

Iran on April 20 began opening intercity highways and major shopping centers to stimulate its sanctions-choked economy, gambling that it has brought under control its coronavirus outbreak — one of the worst in the world — even as some fear it could lead to a second wave of infections.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says two-thirds of government employees to return to their offices from April 11.

# Pakistan

Source of Article: Aamir Latif

Link: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/pakistan-extends-covid-19-lockdown-until-may-9/1817438>

Lockdown Status: Pakistan on Friday extended until May 9, 2020 the ongoing lockdown aimed at stemming the fast-increasing coronavirus cases in the country.

## Is work from home here to stay?

One way to do this, according to experts, is to identify key performance indicators to measure employees against. They said good organizations set clear goals for their employees, and that instead of buying employees 'time, managers should simply ensure these goals are met.

This is a two-way street, however. The experts said employees would need to understand that working from home is not a paid vacation. Still, they stressed building capacity for employees to work from home is a worthwhile investment for employers. Speaking to The Express Tribune, Jazz CEO Ibrahim said work from home will not make offices completely obsolete. Some jobs, according to him, would still need an office.

He also believed productivity would be slow at first when instituting the new work culture, but stressed that it is only natural to take some time to familiarize with a new practice. "Any massive change brings decline in productivity at first but over time, things normalize and even improve."

That said, he stressed the only way to ensure efficiency is if employees dedicate office hours at home to their jobs only. Otherwise, he felt the option is best only used in situations that require flexibility.

# Mexico

Source of Article: Ronald Buchanan

Link: <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/covid-19-legal-obligations-regarding-employment-matters-mexico>

Lockdown Status: Mexican authorities have ordered a loosely defined lockdown closing all but essential services, such as pharmacies and supermarkets, through April 30.

"Stay home, where possible," foreign secretary Marcelo Ebrard said Monday, urging especially the elderly, the infirm, pregnant women and young children to follow the stay-at-home order.

## Employees working remotely (home office):

If an employer allows or instructs its employees to cease attending the employer's premises or working centers in order to work from their homes or any other place, this will not affect the terms of the employment relationship. The rights and obligations between them will remain unaltered, the employees will continue to be obligated to render their services in the same manner, although now remotely, and the employer will continue to be obligated to pay them their salary and benefits as usual.

Employees in quarantine – that cannot work remotely:

If due to prophylactic reasons – preventive quarantine – an employer decides to suspend the work and office attendance of employees who have yet to be issued with a disability by IMSS for COVID-19, but who cannot work remotely for any reason, for example for not having the technical capabilities that allow such work to be done (due to lack of the necessary equipment or the grid for it) or else, because their work activities are not susceptible of being carried out remotely but only at the premises of the employer (i.e. cleaning and kitchen duties), the employer must continue paying the salary and benefits of such employees as this unilateral decision from the employer does not qualify as a reason to suspend the employment relationship under the FLL.

## Switzerland

Source of Article: DW News

Link: <https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-latest-swiss-look-to-easing-lockdown/a-53054837>

Lockdown Status: Swiss look to easing lockdown.

Switzerland is hoping to start lifting coronavirus restrictions before the end of the month as the government fears a sharp recession.

### **Swiss want to work from home more frequently after pandemic.**

In response to the pandemic, most countries have put in place restrictions on citizens' movements, as well as closed schools and certain businesses, forcing many people around the world to work from home. Many companies have also established work from home policies to limit the spread of the virus.

This mass experiment in remote working has been a huge challenge and a strain on resources, human and technological, often causing many parents to simultaneously work from home and look after their children.

Despite the challenges, a survey of 1,000 Swiss residents carried out by Columbus Consulting published this week found that the majority of people questioned had so far found homeworking a positive experience.

Around 70% said remote working was an effective option and 65% said the Swiss education system was well prepared for distance learning or that it would adapt sufficiently.