

Su Pollard
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I feel
ageless'**

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The Guardian

Italy in chaos as thousands race to escape quarantine

Chancellor expected to loosen Javid's rules

Rowena Mason
Deputy political editor

The chancellor, Rishi Sunak, is expected to move towards looser constraints on spending and borrowing in this week's budget as he sets out plans to help the economy withstand the impact of the coronavirus.

Giving his first budget on Wednesday, one of Sunak's flagship announcements will be confirmation of a £5bn investment in faster broadband across the country - a policy from the Tory manifesto.

The chancellor, who is just a few weeks into the job, will also spell out measures to help businesses survive the impact of the coronavirus, such as delayed payments and bridging financing, and has promised to give the NHS "whatever it needs" to cope with the outbreak.

He is likely to deliver a much less radical budget than first planned as the government accepts the need to be cautious in the wake of the unfolding coronavirus crisis. However, senior Tories are expecting Sunak at the very least to announce a review of the government's spending rules or find a way of making them easier to meet. The rules, II →



**Fears of virus spread
after leak of lockdown
plan prompts exodus**

Angela Giuffrida Rome
Lorenzo Tondo Palermo

Italy was plunged into chaos yesterday after details of a plan to quarantine more than 16 million people were leaked to the press, sending thousands into panic as they tried to flee.

The whole of Lombardy, including the financial capital of Milan, and 14 provinces across the worst-affected northern regions have been shut down until 3 April as Italy grapples to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

Yesterday deaths in Italy rose from 233 to 366, an increase of more than 50% in 24 hours, the country's highest

day-on-day rise yet, with 6,387 current cases overall.

Thousands crowded railway stations or jumped into their cars after details of a draft decree banning people from leaving or entering the region were leaked on Saturday afternoon.

In a dramatic day of developments:
● The UK Foreign Office faced a backlash over its lack of clear advice for travellers.

● France reported 1,126 cases of coronavirus and 19 deaths, a five-fold increase in a week, and Spain confirmed 589 cases and 17 deaths.

● British cases rose from 209 to 273, with more than 23,513 people tested, and some supermarkets and retailers rationing high-demand items.

In Italy's south, dozens of police officers and medics wearing masks and hazmat suits waited in Salerno, Campania, for passengers who had boarded overnight trains from Lombardy as

▲ A man's temperature is checked at Juventus' stadium in Turin yesterday, before a game against Inter Milan that was played behind closed doors

fears mounted over the virus's spread.

"What happened with the news leak has caused many people to try to escape, causing the opposite effect of what the decree is trying to achieve," warned Roberto Iurioni, a professor

'Do not bring the epidemic to Puglia. You are carrying the virus into the lungs of your parents'

Michele Emiliano
President of Puglia

of microbiology and virology at the Vita-Salute San Raffaele University in Milan. "Unfortunately some of those who fled will be infected with the disease."

The northern regions of Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna and Veneto account for 85% of the cases and more than 90% of the deaths. Puglia in the south has had 26 cases, while the provinces of Basilicata and Calabria have had just three and four cases.

Michele Emiliano, the president of Puglia, signed an order yesterday obliging all those arriving from the north to go into quarantine.

"Get off at the first railway station, don't take planes to Bari and Brindisi, go back by car, get off the bus at the next stop," he wrote on Facebook, in remarks mostly addressing people from the southern region who are now living in the north. II →

Big dealer
The quiet
rise of
Rishi Sunak

Page 10 →



In Italy, Coronavirus Books Rush to Publication

Doctors, novelists and other writers are exploring, as quickly as they can, the pandemic's impact on a country that was among its earliest victims.

By Anna Momigliano

April 9, 2020

MILAN — On Feb. 29, Paolo Giordano went to a dinner party in Rome. He didn't shake hands or kiss anyone's cheek, a serious breach in Italian etiquette.

A week earlier, Covid-19 cases had begun to surge in two of the country's northern provinces. Giordano, a physicist who became one of Italy's most prominent writers after the publication of his award-winning debut novel "The Solitude of Prime Numbers," understood that the epidemic was going to grow exponentially.

"This is the last one," he told himself. Then he began to write.

On March 26, Giordano's new book, an essay chronicling his thoughts and angst about the coronavirus outbreak, was published in Italy. "How Contagion Works" is slated for release in the U.S. next week, as an audiobook by Penguin Random House and in paperback and e-book by Bloomsbury. It has been already translated in more than 20 languages and released in Britain.

Italy has been in a nationwide lockdown since March 9, and the coronavirus has already become something of a book genre.

On March 10, Roberto Burioni, a celebrity doctor and author, published "Virus. The Great Challenge," an examination of how epidemics work, shaping and sometimes outsmarting civilizations. In an interview, he said the book was already in progress and scheduled to go on sale in the fall when he learned about the outbreak in China. He asked his publisher to release it as soon as possible, with two quickly written chapters on coronavirus.

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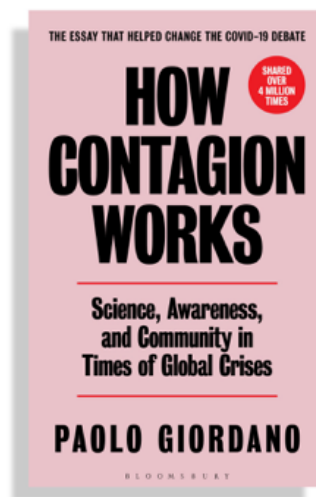
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"This book was needed now, not in October," Burioni said.

Giulio Tremonti, Italy's former finance minister, updated a book he wrote on globalization and its weaknesses in light of the pandemic. A major publishing house, Garzanti, earlier this week published an anthology of 26 quarantine short stories and essays by writers including Jhumpa Lahiri, an American novelist who also writes in Italian, and the best-selling children's author Elisabetta Gnone.

Some expect other countries to follow. "Italy is a laboratory. Think of the singalongs from the balconies or the celebrities' concerts on Zooms — they started here and spread to other countries," said Andrea Minuz, a film and book critic at the newspaper *Il Foglio*. "We were the first to have coronavirus books and will export that, too."



Like many Italians, Giordano is glued to the country's 6 p.m. civil protection briefings, in which the facts and figures around infections, recoveries and deaths are shared daily. "All we can focus on during this epidemic is numbers," he writes.

So it makes sense that math, which he sees as a tool to understand an invisible enemy, plays a key role in his new book. "Epidemics are mathematical emergencies," he writes. Each outbreak, he explains, has at its heart a basic reproduction number, or R_0 (pronounced "R-nought"), the number of susceptible individuals that are expected to contract the virus from each infected. When R_0 is greater than one, and when most individuals are susceptible, we have an epidemic.

We have the power to change that number by staying home and practicing social distancing, Giordano adds. "Lowering R_0 is the mathematical reason behind our self-sacrifice."

Self-sacrifice, or the idea of putting someone else's needs ahead of our desires, is also a central theme in the book. In times of contagion, the young and healthy must protect the old and the weak, he writes. "What we do or don't do is no longer just about us. This is the one thing I wish for us never to forget, even after this is over."

The quick publication of some of these books has prompted criticism that it's too early for coronavirus literature or that the authors are exploiting tragedy. Burioni in particular was called out on social media, even though proceeds from his books, like those of Giordano's and the Garzanti anthology, are going to hospitals and medical research.

But Burioni said that books about the epidemic are needed now. "They provide people with the cultural means to understand something that is uprooting their existence," he said. Gnone, the children's author who contributed to the Garzanti anthology, added that "stories have a healing power, for those who read and for those who write."

The urgency behind Giordano's book is of a different kind, stemming more from the need to preserve the present than to explain it.

He is afraid of the coronavirus, like everyone else, and of what it can change in our society. He is even more afraid of the opposite, that everything we're learning will be forgotten, he said in an interview. "Some thoughts need to be written down now, from within the emergency, otherwise they will get lost in the desire to go back to normality as soon as possible."

Much like Sigmund Freud wrote down his dreams when he woke, before they faded, Giordano sought to document, in real time, his experience of the pandemic. "Once the emergency is over, any temporary awareness will also disappear," he writes. "I don't want to lose what the epidemic is revealing about ourselves."

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The Coronavirus Outbreak >

Frequently Asked Questions and Advice

Updated April 11, 2020

• When will this end?

This is a difficult question, because a lot depends on how well the virus is contained. A better question might be: "How will we know when to reopen the country?" In an American Enterprise Institute report, Scott Gottlieb, Caitlin Rivers, Mark B. McClellan, Lauren Silvis and Crystal Watson staked out four goal posts for recovery: Hospitals in the state must be able to safely treat all patients requiring hospitalization, without resorting to crisis standards of care; the state needs to be able to at least test everyone who has symptoms; the state is able to conduct monitoring of confirmed cases

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Italiaanse arts: 'Nederland neemt groot risico met deze aanpak'



Door **MAARTEN VAN AALDEREN**

Updated Vandaag, 12:02

Gisteren, 20:40 in BINNENLAND
DE TELEGRAAF

ROME - De vermaarde Italiaanse professor in microbiologie en virologie Roberto Burioni, verbonden aan de San Raffaele universiteit in Milaan, kraakt de Nederlandse aanpak van de coronacrisis. „De Nederlandse regering neemt een heel groot risico.”



Dat zegt Burioni in reactie op de toespraak die Rutte maandagavond hield. Rutte legde uit dat een groot deel van de Nederlandse bevolking met het virus besmet zal raken. De meeste mensen krijgen alleen lichte klachten. Als iemand het virus heeft gehad, is deze persoon daarna meestal immuun, zoals ook met de mazelen het geval is. Uiteindelijk raken steeds meer mensen immuun, zodat de kans kleiner wordt dat het virus overspringt op ouderen en mensen met een kwetsbare gezondheid. „Met groepsimmunititeit bouw je als het ware een beschermende muur om hen heen”, aldus Rutte.

BEKIJK OOK:

[Lees hier de volledige tekst van televisietoespraak premier Rutte](#)

Onderschatten crisis

Burioni is verbaasd over die bewering. „Er is geen enkele wetenschappelijke basis om te spreken over groepsimmunititeit”, stelt de Italiaanse arts. „Het is een heel groot risico dat de Nederlandse regering neemt. We weten namelijk nog helemaal niet of er wel immuniteit voor dit virus kan ontstaan. Dat is nog onbekend. Bovendien is er nog geen vaccin.”

Burioni waarschuwt Nederland om de crisis absoluut niet te onderschatten. „Het coronavirus is ontzettend besmettelijk en zorgt

bij heel veel mensen voor problemen met de ademhaling. In Lombardije zijn ziekenhuizen die kunnen concurreren met de beste Europese ziekenhuizen, maar ze kunnen de aantallen patiënten niet aan.”

BEKIJK OOK:

Toespraak premier kan staatsmanschap vergroten

Het dodental door het coronavirus in Italië is in de afgelopen 24 uur gestegen met 349 tot 2158, een stijging van 19,3 procent, zei het Bureau voor Burgerbescherming maandag. Het totale aantal besmettingsgevallen in Italië, het Europese land dat het hardst door het virus is getroffen, steeg van 24.947 tot 27.747, een stijging van 13 procent. Het is het laagste stijgingspercentage sinds de besmetting van het virus voor het eerst aan het licht kwam op 21 februari.

Ook Harvard-epidemioloog William Hanage is zeer kritisch op de aanpak van landen als Nederland en Groot-Brittannië. Het idee van groepsimmunitet is levensgevaarlijk, schrijft hij in de Britse krant The Guardian. Daarvoor is nog veel te weinig bekend over het huidige coronavirus.

Tot 11,9 miljoen Nederlanders besmet

Viroloog Ab Osterhaus voorspelt dat door de huidige Nederlandse aanpak, mits iedereen de afgekondigde maatregelen opvolgt, 40 tot 70 procent van de bevolking besmet raakt met het virus en immuniteit opbouwt. Omgerekend zou dat betekenen dat tussen de 6,8 miljoen en 11,9 miljoen mensen besmet raken. „Het merendeel van hen zal alleen milde klachten krijgen.”

„Als er een bepaalde groepsbescherming komt, dooft het virus uit. Dat is per virus verschillend”, zegt Osterhaus. „Bij mazelen moet zeker rond de 90% van de groep beschermd zijn en dan wordt niemand meer besmet. Bij corona weten we nog niet hoe hoog die groepsbescherming moet zijn.”

Op slot

„De vraag is ook: wat is er in China gebeurd? Is daar sprake van groepsimmunitet waardoor het virus er niet meer is? Of zijn er andere draconische maatregelen genomen die we niet kennen?”

Dat Rutte niet kiest voor scenario twee, waarbij we ongecontroleerd het virus laten gaan, vindt Osterhaus een goede keuze.

„Dan krijg je de piek in de zorg in één keer en dat kunnen we niet aan. Die capaciteit is er niet. Met de keuze voor scenario 1 vertraag je de besmetting. En het mooie is: als het virus weer terugkomt dan hebben de meesten al weerstand opgebouwd. En is er mogelijk een vaccin.” Over het scenario waarin Nederland volledig op slot zou gaan, laat Osterhaus zich liever nog niet uit. „In andere landen zien we dat het virus dan zeker dooft. Maar daar is niet voor gekozen.”

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

Coronavirus

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Italy's new coronavirus cases are slowing. How soon until normal life returns?

By **Chico Harlan** and **Stefano Pitrelli**

March 26, 2020 at 6:33 p.m. GMT+1

ROME — Italy's nationwide lockdown is showing the first small signs of payoff. The number of coronavirus cases is still rising, but at the lowest day-on-day pace since the outbreak began. The World Health Organization calls the slowdown encouraging. The health chief in the hardest-hit region says there's "light at the end of the tunnel."

The temptation, for a cooped-up and stressed-out country, is to embrace the first sign that the crisis may be easing at last.

But while President Trump has talked about revving up the U.S. economy by Easter, Italy has set no such timetable — and experts say the nation, if it loosens its guard, is still at risk of the virus resuming its extraordinary, deadly trajectory.

AD

Italy was the first Western country to contend with a mass-scale outbreak and order a lockdown. But it is now at the forefront of a more delicate calculation, in trying to figure out how long the restrictions should last.

“If we loosen [restrictions] too early, we risk to jeopardize all the results,” said Roberto Burioni, a professor of microbiology and virology at Vita-Salute San Raffaele University in Milan. “My recommendation is: Don’t go after wishful thinking. You have to face the reality” of an extended lockdown.

Officially, Italy’s lockdown — which restricts people’s movement outside their homes and includes the closure of restaurants and retail stores — is supposed to end on April 3. But the government has signaled that the measures will surely be extended, something of little surprise to most people in the country.

AD

As a way to guard against potential restlessness, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said this week that he is increasing fines, from 400 euros to 3,000 (from about \$440 to about \$3,300 in U.S. currency), for people who left their apartments or houses without a valid reason. Fines are steeper still for people in vehicles who violate the lockdown. People who go outside after testing positive for the coronavirus could face up to five years in prison.

Conte did not specify how long the lockdown might last, although he batted down rumors in the Italian media that it might be extended through the end of July.

“We are actually confident that, well before this hypothetical deadline, we can truly go back to our life habits,” he said.

AD

Some virologists say that, rather than an end date, Italy and other countries will have to release the brakes gradually — as China is now trying to do. Still, there are many uncertainties that could influence when to begin letting up the pressure, including whether the virus will wane during hotter and more humid months.

Even the size of Italy's outbreak is unknown. Government officials and experts have said that, because of limitations on testing, the spread of the virus could be significantly larger than the official data suggest. Andrea Crisanti, a virologist advising the Veneto region, said the country would have to conduct granular testing for the virus — in several geographic areas — to better gauge the true size of the outbreak and then determine more accurately how it is changing.

“You aggressively sample a big part of the population in a few infected areas” before you can consider changing the lockdown, Crisanti said. “Then, you maybe start to open some factories, test all people. I don't think the lifting of the quarantine will be in one go.”

AD

In the 4½ weeks since Italy experienced the first signs of the outbreak, the country has lost more than 8,000 people to the virus. And even as the total number of documented cases has slowed — reaching 8.3 percent daily growth Thursday — the toll has been staggering, with 662 people reported dead over the previous 24 hours.

Although most of those deaths have taken place in the north, a nationwide sense of horror has helped with the enforcement of the restrictions. The lockdown has had widespread support: Between 76 and 90 percent approve of the measures, according to various polls.

And although some Italian politicians, such as the mayor of Milan, encouraged people in the early days of the outbreak to stay calm and socialize responsibly, that messaging has stopped cold. Italian politicians have not embraced Trump's argument that the economic price of fighting the virus may be worse than the virus itself.

AD

The main opposition, the far-right League, has its stronghold in the north, the area hit hardest by the virus. League regional governors in the north have criticized Conte for ordering the lockdown too late, and for initially allowing too many loopholes.

Politically, that means Conte does not face much pressure to relieve the restrictions prematurely. But Italians, under de facto house arrest for more than two weeks, have a natural desire to get back to normal.

“If at the first signs improvement we break ranks, we could have another peak on our hands in two to four weeks,” said Paolo Setti Carraro, an Italian doctor who was also involved in the global response to Ebola.

AD

The temptation to get out of the house at the first chance was evident last weekend in Tokyo, when cherry blossoms were blooming, and people packed together in parks and restaurants, dropping the restrictions of social distancing. Japan has had a far smaller outbreak than Italy, but experts there worried that the impulse to socialize as they did before could allow the virus to rapidly spread.

Elsewhere, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan appeared to have controlled the spread of the virus, but they are again experiencing an increase in infections.

“The risk is for the emotional feeling to prevail and to have people say, ‘Things are going better, let’s get rid of all this anguish,’” said Paolo Cruciani, a retired professor of psychology and a former deputy head of the psychologists’ association in Italy’s Lazio region. “Then, boom — the virus comes back. The way to prevent this is a carefully considered mass communication to strengthen their rational vision. It’s a delicate moment: people can’t wait for all of this to end.”

AD



International Journalism Festival / CC BY-SA

The coronavirus chaos gave a man the opportunity to emerge within the Italian public opinion: Roberto Burioni

A 2019 Eurobarometer survey revealed that the majority of European citizens think that vaccines are effective, but the extent of agreement varies considerably across the 27 countries. If in the Netherlands 76% of the population think they are “definitely” effective, in Italy this share falls to 49%, and in Austria to 32%. Moreover, 48% of the respondents at the European level believe that “vaccines can often produce severe side effects.”

Do Europeans trust science?

The issue of how science should be communicated is becoming hotter during these coronavirus days, where multiple sources of information overlap and contradict themselves. Notwithstanding the declarations made by official authorities such as the World Health Organization and the national health ministries, newspapers, blog, social media and word-of-mouth are flooding public opinion with contradicting data and information.

Interestingly enough, this chaos gave a man the opportunity to emerge within the Italian public opinion: Roberto Burioni. Back in 2018, he was already known for his engagement against the “no-vax” (anti-vaccination) movement, when he replied to a statement made by the former Interior Minister Matteo Salvini about the presumed uselessness of vaccination. As soon as the coronavirus spread to Italy, Burioni promptly declared that the virus was much more serious than a common flu, and that quarantine represented an appropriate measure for infected persons — contrary to what some sources of information were arguing. Through his Facebook page and his blog *Medical Facts*, Burioni and his team provide accurate scientific information about a variety of topics, such as vaccination, but also food habits, children, etc. Information is always short, clear and precise and thus accessible to the general public, but also accompanied by reliable scientific sources.

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Who is Roberto Burioni

In the fake news time we are living in, checking sources of information is always a good idea. Roberto Burioni, born 1962, is professor of medicine specialized in microbiology and virology at the University Vita-Salute San Raffaele in Milan. He combines his professional activity of doctor and researcher with scientific dissemination, as he also authored the book “*Il vaccino non è un’opinione*” (Vaccination is not an option), in which he tries to make the arguments in support of

vaccination, but understandable to the general public. This week Burioni is publishing his new book: “*Virus, la grande sfida. Dal coronavirus alla peste: come la scienza può salvare l’umanità*” (Virus, the great challenge. From Coronavirus to plague: how science can save humankind).

His unexpected fame began in 2016, when he was invited to a popular Italian TV show in an episode about vaccination, together with two celebrities from the Italian show business. The two celebrities got much of the attention, while Burioni only the last five minutes of the show. Given the short time left to his intervention, he released only this statement: “The Earth is round, gasoline is flammable, vaccines safe and effective. Everything else is just dangerous lies.” The day after, Burioni complained on his Facebook page about the episode and, especially, about the dangerous space left to vaccination opponents in the Italian television. From that moment on, he was invited to many other TV shows, interviewed by the most read Italian newspapers and his Facebook page has reached more than 570 thousands likes. His book made the rest.

Now, the spread of coronavirus to Italy drew the public attention to scientific issues such as the way in which the COVID-19 virus passes from one person to another, which are the symptoms, who is more at risk etc. Burioni is trying to answer these questions in the most objective way possible through his videos, blog posts and interviews. In particular, Burioni strongly backed the measures taken by the Italian government to limit contagion such as school closures and the suspension of public events, trying to convince people it is the only way to get out of this situation. Notwithstanding the alarm level and the invitation to stay at home, many Italians were still going on ski trips on the mountains until the lockdown, seeming to ignore what is at stake.

Should science be “pop” to reach the general public?

Burioni has many supporters, but also many opponents. Criticism ranges from conspiracy hypotheses, according to which he would detain some patents and thus would have a personal interest to promote vaccination, to scepticism about his communication style, too simplistic and paternalistic. Scientific research is *per se* probabilistic, especially when it concerns something new such as the Coronavirus. However, doubt and probability are hard to convey to the general public, who would prefer to know what is black and what is white, leaving scientific debate aside. Lastly, one might wonder if Burioni wants to provide scientific information for its own sake or if he is seeking notoriety and personal returns. Let’s give him the benefit of the doubt.

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Italics Magazine was born less than two years ago in Rome, from the idea of two friends who believed that Italy was lacking a complete, in-depth, across-the-board source of information in English. While some publications do a great job, writing about the latest news or focusing on specific areas of interest, we do believe that other kinds of quality insights are just as needed to better understand the complexity of a country that, very often, is only known abroad for the headlines that our politicians make, or for the classic touristic clichés. This is why Italics Magazine is quickly becoming a reference for foreign readers, professionals, expats and press interested in covering Italian issues thoroughly, appealing to diverse schools of thought. However, we started from scratch, and we are self-financing the project through (not too intrusive) ads, promotions, and donations, as we have decided not to opt for any paywall. This means that, while the effort is bigger, we can surely boast our independent and free editorial line. This is especially possible thanks to our readers, who we hope to keep inspiring with our articles. **That's why we kindly ask you to consider giving us your important contribution, which will help us make this project grow — and in the right direction. Thank you.**

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Nuevas prohibiciones en Italia que cambian el estilo de vida para evitar contagios

Saludarse de lejos, nada de besos y abrazos ni apretón de manos, distancia de seguridad entre uno y dos metros, ancianos en casa, eventos a puerta cerrada

[Coronavirus: últimas noticias en directo](#)

Un turista lleva mascarilla en Roma - EFE



Ángel Gómez Fuentes **SEGUIR**

ENVIADO ESPECIAL A MILÁN - Actualizado: 06/03/2020 11:13h

 GUARDAR

«Italia en cuarentena voluntaria por un mes». Esta es la medida que tiene previsto adoptar hoy mismo el gobierno a propuesta del comité científico creado expresamente por el primer ministro, Giuseppe Conte, para recibir recomendaciones que permitan luchar contra el contagio del **coronavirus** y contener la epidemia.

A la vista de la [rápida difusión del Covid-19](#), con 2.263 infectados y 79 muertos, según el último balance de ayer por la tarde, el comité científico aconseja ahora

NOTICIAS RELACIONADAS

Prosigue la rápida expansión del coronavirus en Italia: 2.502 infectados, 79 muertos y 160 personas curadas

El Gobierno italiano endurece las medidas para contener el virus: un metro de distancia en todo el país

Coronavirus, últimas noticias en directo | El coronavirus se cobra su primera víctima en Valencia

a **todos los italianos**, sin distinción de zona roja, amarilla o verde, como se había hecho hasta ahora, nuevas reglas para que se metan en «**cuarentena voluntaria**» para los próximos 30 días. Se pide mantener una distancia de seguridad de al menos un metro entre personas.

Esta es la norma establecida el domingo por la noche por el gobierno, pero además ahora se indica que sería mejor respetar una **distancia de dos metros en algunos casos** o lugares particularmente concurridos o entre personas que no se conocen. Esta medida se justifica por el llamado «droplet» –hoy palabra clave-, es decir, las gotitas de saliva que se dispersan en el aire al toser, estornudar o incluso hablar, lo que constituye el primer vehículo de transmisión del Covid-19.

Se recomienda a los **mayores de 65 años**, y en particular a los que superen los 75, **permanecer en casa**, sobre todo si sus condiciones de salud no son buenas, evitando ver a personas no conocidas. La

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Menú



Se dispone que todos los **eventos deportivos**, incluidos los partidos del campeonato de fútbol, se disputen a «**puerta cerrada**». No se permitirá al público asistir a los entrenamientos de los equipos.

Deben **aplazarse encuentros públicos, convenios y congresos**, en particular aquellos que afectan al sector de sanidad, para permitir a médicos y personal sanitario en general estar con plena disposición en sus centros de trabajo. Entre los aplazamientos destacados figura el de Vinitaly de Verona, una feria del vino muy importante porque es uno de los sectores punta de la economía «made in Italy»; estaba prevista entre el 19 y 22 de abril, y se pospone dos meses, del 14 al 17 de junio.

Evitar la paralización del país

Quienes tienen la fiebre deben permanecer en casa, evitando contactos y vida social. Para **evitar que el país se paralice** el comité científico recomienda a «municipios, regiones, asociaciones culturales y deportivas, y a los medios de comunicación que ofrezcan **actividades recreativas** individuales alternativas que promuevan o favorezcan las actividades al abierto -sin reunirse la gente- o en el propio domicilio».

Se había pensado en la hipótesis que la distancia de seguridad entre personas fuera siempre de dos metros, y no un metro como se establece para la mayoría de los casos. **Recomendar dos metros hubiera supuesto la clausura inmediata de escuelas, universidades y oficinas públicas.** De todas formas, el gobierno se plantea incluir en el decreto también el cierre de las escuelas en todo el país.

1 Un médico italiano y un paciente infectados: Desde Italia un médico cuenta su infierno y vuelta a la vida



2 Coronavirus España en directo | España registra 9.191 casos y 309 fallecimientos



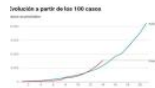
3 Mapa del coronavirus en tiempo real



4 Coronavirus: últimas noticias y cifras: España roza los 10.000 casos y ya hay 342 fallecidos



5 Los casos y muertos por coronavirus en España avanzan más rápidamente que en Italia



El gobierno estudia la posibilidad de establecer nuevas zonas rojas, en particular en Bérgamo, dado el número de contagiados en ese área de Bérgamo. Sería la tercera del país, tras las situadas en las provincias de Lodi (Lombardía) y de Padua (Véneto).

Aislamiento para evitar efecto dominó

El objetivo de esta serie de medidas, que cambiaran el estilo de vida de los italianos, es buscar el aislamiento social, la única arma que en estos momentos cuenta el gobierno para frenar la epidemia, según el profesor Roberto Burioni, el más célebre virólogo italiano, del hospital San Rafael de Milán: «Para afrontar el coronavirus no tenemos todavía vacunas, así que solo nos quedan **dos armas: El diagnóstico y, algo más importante, el aislamiento social**».

Los expertos coinciden en que **estas nuevas prohibiciones «son justas»** para evitar mayor número de contagio. Con el aislamiento y el freno de la epidemia el gobierno busca otro objetivo fundamental: Evitar el colapso del sistema sanitario. Se quiere evitar a toda costa el efecto dominó, es decir, que tras las regiones del norte, donde se encuentra la gran mayoría de los afectados, el contagio llegue de igual manera al sur de Italia, lo que podría ser un desastre sanitario. Por fortuna, el norte de Italia, en particular la región de Lombardía, que más de la mitad de los contagiados de todo el país (1.520), tiene un excelente nivel sanitario, entre los mejores de Europa, muy lejos de lo que sucede en el sur de Italia.

Estamos al comienzo, no al final

La gran pregunta que se hacen hoy los italianos es cuánto tiempo puede mantenerse la incertidumbre. La respuesta de los expertos es que aún pronto para saber la evolución de la epidemia. Según el virólogo Burioni, «**estamos al inicio y no al final de la epidemia, faltan aún días para saber cómo evolucionará la epidemia**».

En su opinión, cabe esperar que el número de infectados se mantenga alto: «Los números que vemos son siempre los contagiados de hace 10 días, cuando erróneamente pensábamos que el coronavirus en italiano no estuviera», afirma Roberto Burioni. En realidad, el coronavirus llegó a Italia a comienzos de enero, según coinciden varios virólogos.

Cooperación internacional

Las autoridades sanitarias italianas están manteniendo contactos con otros países para intercambiarse información sobre la propagación del Coronavirus. El representante italiano en el Comité ejecutivo de la OMS, Walter Ricciardi, asesor también desde hace unos días del gobierno italiano, ha manifestado que esta epidemia «solo se vencerá con cooperación internacional».

Anoche en un programa especial sobre el coronavirus, en la Radiotelevisión italiana (RAI), el doctor Ricciardi afirmó que los contactos sanitarios de Italia se extienden a Francia, Alemania y Reino



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Unido. Ricciardi ha indicado que se registrará un aumento de los contagiados durante los próximos días en esos países y ha citado también expresamente a España.

Conte: «Situación muy seria»

El primer ministro, Giuseppe Conte, considera que **no se puede bajar la guardia** porque «la situación es muy seria». Conte se verá hoy con sus ministros para terminar de limar el decreto de medidas del gobierno. Además de las reglas de aislamiento, el Ejecutivo aprobará un nuevo paquete de medidas económicas para ayudar a empresarios, autónomos y trabajadores, y a los sectores más afectados por la epidemia.

El ministro de Sanidad, Roberto Speranza, ha destacado que **es necesario escuchar las opiniones de los científicos**, que prevén un aumento de la difusión global del coronavirus todavía por algunas semanas.

Todos los medios italianos destacan hoy con gran relieve las nuevas prohibiciones del gobierno, con diversos testimonios de expertos que las apoyan, al tiempo que subrayan el **delicado momento** que vive el país. Por ejemplo, «La Stampa», un diario moderado y equilibrado, titula a toda plana: «Italia en cuarentena por un mes».

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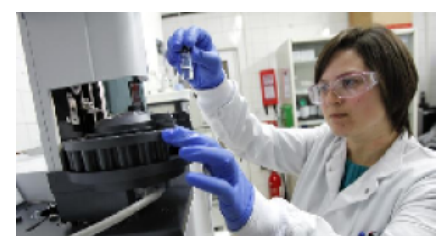
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Health

How Italy became the ground zero of Europe's coronavirus crisis

Italy has more cases of Covid-19 and more deaths than anywhere outside of China, despite being one of the first countries in Europe to institute a travel ban. What went wrong?

By **ALESSIO PERRONE**

3 days ago



WIRED

Credit **Getty Images**

On January 29, when Italy detected and isolated its first [coronavirus](#) cases – two Chinese tourists – authorities were sure they had put together the safest protection system in Europe.

The following day, Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte immediately declared a state of emergency for six months, and made Italy the first country to block flights from China. “We can reassure all the citizens, the situation is under control,” he said. “We expected cases in Italy too.”

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he second-highest number of infections outside China. In a press conference
as limited to prevent the spread of the virus, the head of the Italian Civil
: the latest figures. Barely twenty days after the first locally transmitted case,
ases, 827 people had died and 1,028 were in intensive care units.

reading to other European countries – France, Germany and the UK have
ly’s experience is serving as a case study and a warning for other governments
they need to act. But how did this happen? Why did Italy have so many deaths
this have been prevented?

n, there is growing consensus among scientists that fatal cases of coronavirus
”. Scientists we’ve spoken to believe that the virus circulated unnoticed in the
country from at least mid-January – thriving because so many of the infected had no symptoms at all, or only
mild symptoms like a cough and a mild temperature. This is consistent with recent research suggesting that the
virus can be spread by people who do not yet show any symptoms.

“At the moment, it looks like the outbreak already started in early January, so it had time to grow to a
considerable size,” says Christian Althaus, a computational epidemiologist at the University of Bern. “The initial
infected cases can be missed and the virus can spread freely.”

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There could be different reasons why these initial contagions were not spotted, says Nino Cartabellotta, a prominent health researcher and president of the GIMBE foundation. “One, it could be that some suspected pneumonia cases were not tested [for coronavirus],” he says. For example, reports emerging in Italian media suggest that hospitals in the outbreak area observed unusually high numbers of pneumonia cases one month before the outbreak. (These have not been confirmed as coronavirus cases yet.)

“Two, it could be that there weren’t any severe cases, that they only emerged in a clinically mild way,” says Cartabellotta. “And three, it depends on the level of attention that health policies place on [finding] the coronavirus.”



Health

The problem with using herd immunity to fight coronavirus

The coronavirus resurfaced on 18 February, when a 38-year-old man went to the A&E of the hospital in the sleepy northern town of Codogno. He reported high temperature for two days, his parents said, but the medical staff did not diagnose him with coronavirus and after the visit he was allowed to return home.

When his symptoms got worse and he returned to the hospital, he was [confirmed](#) to be the first locally transmitted case in Italy. At this point, Italy still only had four imported cases, but this patient could have enabled the virus to spread within the hospital, infecting medical workers and patients with already fragile health. (He is recovering, but still in a hospital in nearby Pavia.)

On February 23, After more cases and the first two deaths were detected, authorities put about 50,000 people in Codogno and 10 other towns under lockdown. More measures were imposed on nearby Milan, Italy's economic engine, including the closure of schools and a 6PM curfew for bars and restaurants.

But the alarming thing for other countries is that there doesn't seem to be anything that Italy did particularly wrong. It seems to have been down to chance. “There is nothing special about Italy in reference to this virus, other than the fact that its health service reacted very quickly and that it was the first western country to react,” says Ilaria Capua, a virologist specialising in zoonotic diseases – infectious diseases spreading from animals to humans – and director of the One Health Centre of Excellence at the University of Florida.

Others suggest that Italy was the first to detect the coronavirus, but not necessarily the first country where the coronavirus arrived. Stefano Rusconi, an associate professor of Infectious Diseases at DIBIC Luigi Sacco, University of Milan, says that other countries did not do a better job of spotting undetected cases. “On the contrary, Italy, or rather, Lombardy, carried out a very considerable number of coronavirus tests that allowed it to quickly discover many more cases of infected people.”

He says it looks unlikely that Italy could have done anything to completely prevent the virus from entering. “The only thing we could have done is introducing the current lockdown on 30 January, a decision that was impossible and unthinkable at the time,” he says. Even stopping flights from China might have had no influence at all, he says – new, provisional [research](#) suggests that the coronavirus reached Italy from Germany.

Even after the first measures, Italy's already weak economy took a sharp hit. The tourist industry faced waves of flight and holiday cancellations, while Milan's stock market lost 6.8 per cent between February 21 and February 25 and people took to supermarkets to stock up on food.

Faced with a choice between public health and the economy, but with only a few hundred confirmed cases in the country's north, politicians across the spectrum tried to keep their feet in both shoes. Many sought to mitigate the economic downturn, sending mixed messages to the population.

Lombardy governor Attilio Fontana (of the far-right League) told the regional parliament the coronavirus was "just a little more than normal flu" on February 25. The next day, the region relaxed restrictions on bars and restaurants only three days after passing them. The leader of the centre-left Democratic Party (PD) Nicola Zingaretti went to a public aperitivo in Milan, warning the country to be careful but avoid "destroying life or spreading panic" and to "give signs of recovery and rebounding". The mayor of Milan Giuseppe Sala (also of the PD) launched a campaign called "Milan doesn't stop", encouraging the Milanese not to be afraid.

Meanwhile, the epidemic slowly reached the very politicians making these decisions. Just a few hours after Lombardy eased rules for bars, Fontana confirmed one of his assistants had been infected. He announced he would work in "a kind of self-isolation". Days later, on March 7, Zingaretti announced he had the coronavirus.

Authorities took additional measures. On 1 March, when cases numbered 1,577, they imposed limited restrictions on social life in northern regions. Three days later (with 2,706 cases) schools and universities were shut nationwide.

But some argue these decisions were not enough. Cartabellotta has been a critic of the decision not to take stricter measures at this time – like extending social restrictions to the whole country or even emulating China's lockdown. "Waiting strategies have always favoured the spread of the virus," he says.

Roberto Burioni, a virologist at the San Raffaele University Hospital in Milan and a prominent medicine communicator, has explained the importance of social distancing measures by arguing that the coronavirus crisis is not a sudden event like "a meteor arriving on our head". Rather, he said, it's like "being in a car that is going against a wall, just press the brake and we are safe. But the pedal we must press all together, 60 million Italians."

In early March, hospitals in Lombardy began to be overwhelmed. Doctors on the frontline [began](#) saying they had been hit by a "tsunami" of patients. Some reported working 25 additional hours per week, others had worked for over 14 hours a day, for 24 days in a row. Some medical workers were infected, making shifts harder and longer and working conditions tougher.

"It's a pathology that puts pressure on the health service locally," says Francesco Longo, director of the Centre for Research on Health and Social Care Management at the Bocconi University of Milan. "A particular hospital might be used to treating two or three cases of pneumonia per day – then suddenly it has to treat 40 per day. Nobody can deal with demand ten times higher than normal."

But Longo says that the underfunding of the Italian health service might have made the crisis worse. "National health services should work at 80 or 90 per cent of their capacity, leaving the rest to deal with emergencies and peaks of demand," he says. "The Italian health service has been working at, let's say, 95 per cent for some time. Ordinary stress was already high when the coronavirus hit."

But without full-blown lockdowns, Italians continued to be on the streets. Every day, pictures surfaced of packed ski resorts, free cultural events or people enjoying drinks in crowded places. "These people must have thought they were on the Titanic, and so spent their time drinking and dancing the waltz while the ship sank," says Rusconi.

Disease Control Expert Debunks Coronavirus Myths | WIRED UK



By the time the government decided to put first Lombardy, then the whole country under partial lockdown (it's not as strict as China, with industrial production, agriculture and the transport of goods still continuing) on March 8, contagions and burden on the health service had grown exponentially. Hundreds had died across the country, with the death rate appearing to reach eight per cent in Lombardy, much higher than the one recorded until now.

Italy's high average age could be a factor in this. The elderly are more likely to have pre-existing conditions, and almost a quarter (22.6 per cent) of Italy's population is aged 65 or higher – the highest number in the EU and among the highest in the world. Capua says there are differences in how the data is gathered and presented in different countries, so comparing deaths could be misleading.

On February 27, Italy took the decision to only test people with symptoms, meaning that the official data only detects a fraction of the infected. “[Since then] we are only observing the tip of the iceberg,” says Cartabellotta. “In other words, if we could know all the positive cases, the lethality rate would decrease.”

This means the spread is likely to be much larger than it appears, and that Italy does not currently have 15,113 cases – but probably many thousands more. The same could be happening in other European countries, which seem to be following Italy's curve of contagions. “They will have a similar number of cases,” Cartabellotta says. “We think there might be an explosion within a week.”

Updated 16.03.20, 13:10 GMT: The article has been updated to clarify the Roberto Burioni referred to social distancing measures, not lockdowns.

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It's not the 12 or 14 hours a day working in the hospital that bothers Pierluigi Viale. What hurts Prof Viale most is not being able to give his best to everyone.

The director of infectious diseases at Sant'Orsola-Malpighi Polyclinic in Bologna says: "In the 40 years that I have done this job, I have never experienced the drama of saying 'him yes' or 'him no'. Our standard practice is to intubate [for oxygen] all those who need it. Now we risk having to choose who has the most chance of surviving."

It pains Viale to think back to a few days ago, when they decided not to bring an 85-year-old patient suffering from Covid-19 and other pathologies to the intensive care unit (ICU). "He probably wouldn't have lived, but we couldn't even try because there are no beds, and we have to ration our resources. It kills me."

A few hours later, the man died.

All of the people interviewed for this article use the word "war" at least once.

There is an ambitious project to make 500 new spots in intensive care which, however, can only be done if the civil protection manages to get 500 respirators

The medical emergency – now a global pandemic – started on February 21st, in Codogno, a town in the province of Lodi, near Milan, where a 38-year-old was hospitalised with serious interstitial pneumonia; this was Italy's first known case of coronavirus. There were 17 cases that day; a week later the country could count 252. Now, the number exceeds 12,000, and it is still not clear when the cases will peak.

Marisa Marzella, a general practitioner in the province of Milan, has seen elements of her work increase fivefold. “More than 100 people call me a day, before the coronavirus I received about 20 calls.”

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Marzella is the first link in the chain, available 24/7, an important part of the system to reassure people and direct them to proper care. Her job is to prevent those who don't really need care ending up in the hospital. “I have several patients who have the coronavirus, two are hospitalised.”

In this state of emergency there is a severe shortage of equipment, including masks, gowns and – above all – respirators: “The number of masks available is not sufficient,” says Giulio Gallera, health and welfare regional minister in Lombardy. “There is an ambitious project to make 500 new spots in intensive care which, however, can only be done if the civil protection manages to get 500 respirators.”

The more the numbers rise, the more people die, and the more doors close. On Wednesday, March 11th, Italy's prime minister Giuseppe Conte tightened measures that were already restrictive: in addition to closing schools, cinemas, museums and churches, cancelling football matches and other events, encouraging remote working and staying home, now all shops, bars and restaurants were also to close.

Only supermarkets, pharmacies, news stands and some other businesses can operate – and these under precise rules. “If we all respect [these measures], we will get out of this emergency faster,” said Conte. “The country needs the responsibility and sacrifice of 60 million Italians. We must stay apart today, to have warmer hugs and run faster together tomorrow.”

We have converted entire wards to accommodate infected patients. Nearly all of the

specialist doctors have been reassigned to manage the emergency

TESTING SWABS
FOR
CORONAVIRUS IN
MILAN.
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EMANUELE
CREMASCHI/GETTY

In February, when Italians saw videos of deserted Chinese cities whose shops and schools had closed, they viewed them as they might an exotic film – a distant story that did not concern them. People continued to go to work, to travel, to have their aperitivos.

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They washed their hands a few more times, but little more. Over a month and a half, they learned the hard way that this virus moves relentlessly, and that closing everything is the only medicine against its unstoppable propagation.

Coronavirus - Protect Yourself

Wash Hands

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water

Why: Scrubbing your hands for more than 20 seconds at a time kills the viruses that may be lurking there

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Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the used tissue immediately

Why: Droplets spread the virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect yourself and others around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19

 A Flourish data visualisation

“Stay home. We are close to collapse, our health system is in danger of exploding,” a cardiologist working in a hospital in Milan tells The Irish Times. The doctor, who has just finished a 12-hour shift, asks to remain anonymous because they have not been authorised to speak to the press. “It’s a war . . . The hospital I work for, now is mostly dedicated to Covid-19 cases. We have converted entire wards to accommodate infected patients. Nearly all of the specialist doctors have been reassigned to manage the emergency. The emergency room is always full. There is an increasing need for beds.”

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Contrary to popular belief, the disease is not only an older person’s illness, says Viale. “There is certainly a higher incidence among older people, but the young population is not immune. Even in our intensive care there are some,” says Viale. The numbers speak for themselves: 5.6 per cent of patients with Covid-19 are aged between 30 and 39; 10.7 per cent are 40-49; 17.4 per cent are 50-59; 17.7 per cent are 60-69; 21.4 are 70-79; and 18.4

per cent are aged over 80.

And Viale points out also that tumours, heart attacks, strokes, accidents, and broken legs do not go on vacation for the coronavirus. “With hospitals so troubled, it becomes difficult for us to take care of everything else.”

According to a report by the ministry of health, in 2017, in Italian public hospitals, there were 151,646 beds dedicated to ordinary hospitalisation, and 40,458 in private hospitals. There were approximately 5,100 ICU places.

To cope with the Covid-19 emergency, the government is preparing a plan to increase the number of ICU beds by 50 per cent. Some 10 per cent of those who fall ill need respiratory support and a complex treatment.

In Lombardy, the most affected region, there are 724 beds with breathing machinery. There are currently 440 patients in ICU and the number is increasing every day. The region has also increased the number of beds for those patients who do not yet need assisted respiration and do not yet require a tube to take oxygen to their lungs.

The government has also approved the extraordinary recruitment of 20,000 healthcare professionals.

DONATIONS, REORGANISATION OF HOSPITALS and the fast-tracking of graduation for medical and nursing students are measures that have helped keep northern Italy going, but the situation remains critical.

Lombardy, Emilia Romagna and Veneto have been hit hardest by the virus, but they are also the wealthiest regions with the best healthcare systems. “If Covid-19 were to spread the same way to the south, it would be a disaster,” says anaesthesiologist Giuseppe Sofi.

The management of Italian healthcare is in the hands of each of the regions. “Due to bad investments and errors protracted over time, those of the south would not be able to withstand the impact of the virus . . . [But] by containing the south too, perhaps we can escape tragedy.”

OTHER REGIONS AND OTHER COUNTRIES, including Ireland, can learn lessons from northern Italy.

Viale describes the situation of those who have been hospitalised in northern Italy: “They are afraid, they feel very bad. They feel they are suffocating. Suffocation is one of the worst deaths. We do everything to help these people heal, but we don’t have many weapons yet: only closed doors and intensive care. If we want everyone to have the opportunity to be treated better, if we want to avoid having to choose who to save, everyone must respect the rules.”

The cardiologist who speaks to The Irish Times is also angry with people who do not respect the rules – and with those who introduced those rules too late. “If people took too long to understand that we were not kidding, it is the politicians’ fault. They downplayed the situation 10 days ago. ‘It’s a bad flu, nothing more,’ they said. I would have liked to invite them to the hospital wards, to look into the eyes of the frightened people who cannot breathe.”

Roberto Burioni, professor of microbiology and virology at the Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, says that other countries are “10 to 15 days behind us”. “The virus will behave for them as it is behaving here. If they apply our same measures, they would be able to contain the spread and avoid the disaster that we are experiencing.”

France – which has just announced the closure of schools – is roughly at the point Italy was at 10 days ago. Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States are slightly behind. Spain is a little ahead in diffusion.

“They look like us two weeks ago,” adds Viale, “the doctors know the right thing to do, we are in contact with many international colleagues. The problem is politics and economy. It is not easy to convince a nation to sacrifice. I am sure that in a few days they too will start moving, they have no choice. Sooner is better than later”.

MANY ITALIANS WONDER ALOUD how it is possible that in just three weeks everything changed so radically: with now more than 1,000 deaths. The country has lived in peace since the end of the second World War. Now it is afraid, its people closed in their homes watching motionless cities from their windows.

Emanuela Celant is one of a number of people now emerging from quarantine (they include the 38-year-old “Patient One” in Codogno). A Facebook post by Celant recounting her experience has “gone viral” in recent days. “My name is Emanuela, I am 42 years old, I am getting out of preventive quarantine now, I was closed up for 15 days at home with my seven-year-old son and my 76-year-old mother.

“My husband is in intensive care, intubated since February 24 due to coronavirus, my father is in intensive care, intubated because of coronavirus. I have a duty to make you understand that it is not a joke: the virus can affect anyone.”

But if there is one thing this dangerous, aggressive virus has done, it has united Italy a little more. The heroic actions of the health personnel, the generosity of the young people who shop for the elderly and the many donations to hospitals, are stories we will remember.

A SIGN
THANKING
HOSPITAL STAFF
IN ROME.
PHOTOGRAPH:
SIMONA
GRANATI/CORBIS
VIA GETTY

It's not just doctors who deserve our thanks, but all medical workers – and often their families too. “I usually work in the emergency room, I take care of swabs. I took a lot of them,” says a young nurse working in Milan.

“I am protected by a suit, gloves, mask and glasses. I don't know if the person I am dealing with is positive or not. I do my job with the utmost care and I hope not to get sick.” She is afraid. Many doctors and nurses get sick. On March 10th, Roberto Stella, president of Medical Guild of Varese, died in the city of Como from respiratory failure linked to coronavirus.

“My parents are over 60,” says the nurse. “I haven't seen them in three weeks because I don't want to risk getting them sick. But I chose this job because it is my passion, and we will overcome this too.”

“I'll never forget the call of a woman who, a few days ago, was crying on the phone because her father had just died in our ward,” Viale says, “she was devastated because he had died alone in an aseptic room, with no one nearby because they were all in quarantine. I had meetings and many things to do, but listening to her seemed like the most important thing I could do”.

And amid the warlike conditions, GP Marisa Marzella remains optimistic. “I'm positive if we stick together, we'll get out of it.”

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COVID-19

Séptima víctima mortal por coronavirus en Italia

Es el cuarto fallecimiento de este lunes después de que murieran dos hombres de 88 y 84 años esta mañana

ANNA BUJ | ROMA, CORRESPONSAL 24/02/2020 09:09 | Actualizado a 24/02/2020 23:11

El **Covid-19** se ha cobrado hoy **cuatro víctimas mortales** más, ascendiendo el número de **fallecidos por coronavirus a siete** en el país transalpino. Se trata de una mujer de 62 años de Castiglione d'Adda. La paciente ha fallecido este lunes en el hospital de Como.

Del mismo lugar, de Castiglione d'Adda, también provenía la víctima número seis, que fallecía horas antes en el hospital Sacco de Milán. Este segundo, fue llevado al hospital en Lodi por un ataque cardíaco, el mismo día que el primer paciente dio positivo por el virus. El anciano fue hospitalizado en reanimación y luego, tras dar positivo por el virus, fue transferido al Sacco en Milán.

A estas dos víctimas hay que sumarle dos hombres, de 88 y 84 años, de los que se conocía su muerte esta mañana. El primero de ellos era de Caselle Lanne, de la provincia de Lodi, mientras que el segundo, de 84, estaba ingresado en el hospital Juan XXIII de Bérgamo (Lombardía).

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Los tres fallecidos anteriores a las tres víctimas de hoy eran una mujer que padecía un cáncer avanzado y falleció en la provincia de Cremona, un hombre de 78 años de Vo' Euganeo, en la provincia de Padua (Véneto) y una mujer de 77 años que estuvo en Codogno y que dio positivo al virus en una prueba realizada tras su muerte. En todos los casos el virus no provocó directamente la muerte sino que le agravó las patologías previas que padecían.

En un momento dado, se han llegado a contar siete víctimas. Sin embargo, las autoridades han acabado rectificando e informando de que una paciente de cáncer que estaba ingresada en un hospital de Brescia no ha fallecido por el virus.

Ya son más de 220 infectados

Los últimos balances oficiales de este lunes hablan de **222 casos diagnosticados** por **Covid-19** en la península itálica, la mayoría de ellos (más de 150) en Lombardía, pero también una veintena en Véneto y algunos en Piamonte, dieciséis en Emilia-Romaña y una en Lacio. Hay 101 pacientes ingresados, 27 en terapia intensiva y otros 94 están en aislamiento domiciliario.

“El número de infectados está aumentando. Estamos a 150 en la región, según los datos que nos han comunicado hace algunos minutos. Esperemos que las medidas que hemos tomado ayuden a frenar el contagio”, explicó el gobernador de la Lombardía, Attilio Fontana. Fontana ha reconocido que nadie podía pensar “que fuese tan agresiva la difusión” del virus. Italia es ya el tercer país del mundo, por detrás de China y Corea del Sur, en número de infectados

50.000 personas aisladas

Al Gobierno de Giuseppe Conte no le ha quedado más remedio que emitir un decreto ley para **prohibir las entradas y salidas de la llamada zona roja**, los diez pueblos en la provincia lombarda del Lodi más cercanos a Codogno, el epicentro del brote, y en Vo' Euganeo, el pequeño municipio del Véneto donde se registró el primer muerto italiano, un hombre de 78 años que jamás había estado en China. Quien se salte estas prohibiciones en los puntos de control podría enfrentarse a hasta **tres meses de cárcel y 200 euros de multa**.

Hay más de 50.000 personas completamente aisladas. Es precisamente la falta de piezas clave en la cadena transmisora lo que más preocupa a los expertos. Si bien en un principio se pensaba que el primer paciente ingresado en Codogno, Mattia, un hombre de 38 años, había sido contagiado por un amigo suyo que había estado días antes en China y que no presentaba síntomas, los análisis definitivos lo han descartado. Por lo tanto, Italia sigue

buscando al llamado paciente cero . El gobernador Fontana dijo que ahora necesitan “mirar a otras partes”. “Estamos siguiendo dos hipótesis, e intentaremos entender si una de las dos es correcta”, precisó.

Medidas extraordinarias

La psicosis ha comenzado a paralizar el país. Las clases se han suspendido por lo menos durante una semana en cuatro regiones enteras, la Lombardía, el Véneto, el Piamonte y la Emilia-Romaña. El **carnaval de Venecia**, uno de los eventos más importantes del año que debía terminar el martes, acabó de golpe por órdenes del gobernador del Véneto, Luca Zaia.

Allí es habitual ver a gente disfrazada con una máscara de pico para emular al doctor de la peste que azotaba Europa durante la edad media y el Renacimiento, pero ayer los turistas paseaban por la ciudad de los canales con las populares mascarillas de papel que se han agotado en toda Italia. Zaia, un popular político de la Liga que lleva diez años al frente de la región, confesó que jamás se había enfrentado a una crisis de tanta gravedad.

“Es una locura. Parece que estemos en Bagdad. No podemos reponer los estantes con suficiente rapidez”

Las colas en el supermercado no son ya algo exclusivo de los pueblos aislados. En Milán, la capital económica italiana, además de cerrar las aulas, se han cancelado los espectáculos teatrales y no se puede ir al cine. Continúan repitiéndose imágenes de esta ciudad **estanterías vacías** ante el miedo de que pronto pueda cerrarse la ciudad entera.

“Es una locura. Parece que estemos en Bagdad. No podemos reponer los estantes con suficiente rapidez”, dijo a Reuters una vendedora en el supermercado Esselunga Solari. En toda Italia se han agotado las mascarillas y los geles desinfectantes, y los precios en los portales de venta por Internet ya son desorbitados.



Un tren vacío en hora punta en esta mañana en Milán (CLAUDIA TOMATIS / EFE)

Algunas madres milanesas decidieron irse al campo con sus hijos durante unos días. Se han cancelado viajes de esquí por la semana blanca. El Duomo de Milán está cerrado y la famosa plaza estaba completamente vacía, una imagen extraña en un domingo. También ha bajado el telón el Teatro de la Scala hasta nuevo aviso. Todas las ferias y congresos que se iban a celebrar en esta gran ciudad han sido aplazados.

La semana de la moda femenina continuó, aunque con cambios: los diseñadores Laura Biagiotti y Giorgio Armani decidieron hacer sus pasarelas a puerta cerrada para “salvaguardar el bienestar de todos sus invitados”. Armani presentó sus colecciones, pero lo hizo con las modelos caminando en una sala vacía y mostrándolo en las redes sociales. Se pospusieron cuatro partidos de la Serie A y se han terminado las excursiones escolares dentro y fuera de Italia.

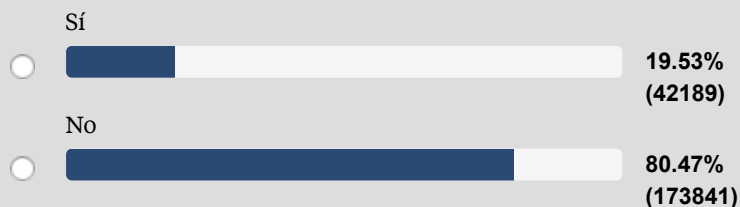
“Ha aparecido un virus muy contagioso y se debe hacer de todo para evitar la propagación”

ROBERTO BURIONI Profesor de microbiología y virología en la universidad San Raffaele de Milán

“Ha aparecido un virus muy contagioso y se debe hacer de todo para evitar la propagación”, contó a *La Vanguardia* Roberto Burioni, profesor de microbiología y virología en la universidad San Raffaele de Milán, que también está cerrada. “Todas las personas que han estado en contacto con alguien enfermo deben ser aisladas. El resto, deben evitar los lugares con mucha gente y lavarse mucho las manos, pues hemos detectado que el virus se contagia por el contacto de las manos en más del 50% de los casos”.

Otra experta, Maria Rita Gismondo, al frente de la sección de microbiología, virología y diagnósticos en el hospital Luigi Sacco de Milán, que está llevando a cabo las pruebas por coronavirus, cree que todo es desmesurado. “Parece una locura. La gente está confundiendo una infección que es levemente más seria que la gripe con una pandemia letal. No es así. Mirad los números”, escribió en su cuenta de Instagram.

¿Se está actuando bien para evitar la propagación del coronavirus?

**VOTAR**

Han votado 216030 personas

¡Participa!

Explícanos tu historia

Si vives en China, Italia, Corea del Sur o en algún otro país con coronavirus, te invitamos a explicarnos y a compartir con el resto de lectores tu experiencia ante esta crisis sanitaria. Escríbenos relatando tu historia, adjuntando tus datos personales, a nuestro correo: participacion@lavanguardia.es. Indica en el asunto del e-mail “Coronavirus”.

**EPIDEMIA DE
CORONAVIRUS**

Qué hacer y qué no si eres contacto, confinado o aislado por el coronavirus

Las medidas de distanciamiento social, menos o más rigurosas, buscan reducir los contagios

Última hora del Coronavirus: Pedro Sánchez y el Estado de alarma en España, en directo

Pedro Sánchez declara el estado de alarma: “Este virus lo pararemos unidos”

Reino Unido se declara impotente ante el coronavirus y da prioridad a la economía