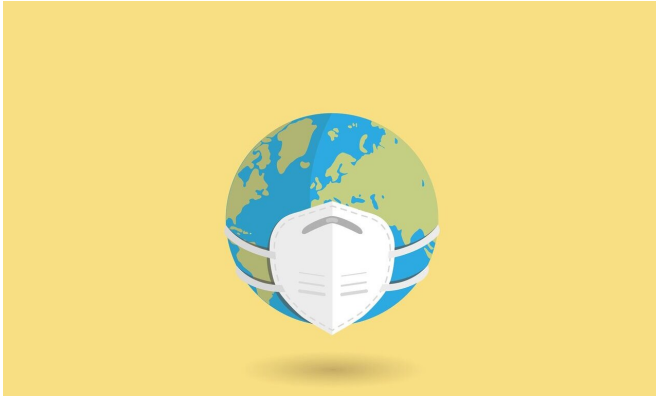


Germany extends coronavirus lockdown in hard-hit district

29 June 2020



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Germany's North Rhine-Westphalia state on Monday extended a coronavirus lockdown on a district hit hard by an outbreak at a slaughterhouse, but lifted the restrictions on a neighbouring area.

The districts of Guetersloh and Warendorf last Tuesday became the first in Germany to go back into lockdown since the [coronavirus](#) shutdowns began easing in May, affecting over 600,000 people.

It was the country's first big setback in tackling the pandemic.

The western state's premier Armin Laschet said Guetersloh would remain on lockdown until July 7 "as a precaution", even if testing showed only a limited spread of the virus from the slaughterhouse to the wider population.

The neighbouring district of Warendorf however will be able to exit lockdown as planned on June 30, Laschet told a journalists in Duesseldorf.

For Warendorf, "from tomorrow the same rules will

apply as elsewhere in North Rhine-Westphalia", he said. That means cinemas, swimming pools, bars and gyms will be allowed to reopen just as the summer holidays get going.

Laschet, a leading candidate to succeed Angela Merkel as the conservative CDU party's chancellor candidate in next year's election, added that the COVID-19 outbreak that started at the Toennies meat processing plant in Guetersloh was "under control".

Swift containment measures

More than 1,500 out of some 7,000 employees at the abattoir have tested positive for the virus so far. Many of them are from Romania and Bulgaria and live in shared housing near the plant.

The cluster pushed the area's infection rate up past a nationwide agreed threshold of 50 new infections per 100,000 residents, forcing the state to pull the "emergency brake".

Guetersloh's rate remained very high on Monday, at 112.6 infections per 100,000 people over the past seven days, according to the Robert Koch Institute for disease control.

But Warendorf district's infection rate has fallen to 22 per 100,000.

If the abattoir employees are taken out of the calculations, both districts are below the agreed threshold.

Laschet said the regional government's swift containment measures had succeeded in keeping the cluster localised and in preventing the virus from jumping over to the [general population](#).

Germany has recorded nearly 194,000 coronavirus cases and 8,961 deaths to date, giving it one of the lowest fatality rates in Europe.

It has however suffered several slaughterhouse outbreaks, raising questions about the industry's health and safety conditions and fuelling calls for reform.

© 2020 AFP

APA citation: Germany extends coronavirus lockdown in hard-hit district (2020, June 29) retrieved 25 May 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-germany-coronavirus-lockdown-hard-hit-district.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.