



EHRENBERG SØRENSEN
KOMMUNIKATION

Situation in Denmark, Sweden and Germany due to the Corona virus

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Situation in Denmark.....	2
Situation in Sweden.....	4
Situation in Germany.....	6

Situation in Denmark (May 18th)

The scenario in Denmark and all of the world is changing daily due to the Corona virus. In our small part of the world, we took drastic measures to contain the virus, and shut down most of the country. This decision has proven to work in the sense that less and less are hospitalized and the health care system has been able to take care of all patients. The country has gradually started to open again, and we hope to be back on our feet momentarily. Everybody is safe, the office is open, some working from home, some working in office.

General development:

On February 27th, 2020, the new coronavirus was [detected in Denmark](#). The patient was declared healthy again March 5th. Since then, the virus has spread to the entire country. On March 12th, [the first death](#) related to the coronavirus in Denmark was registered.

Since March 11th, the government's efforts to decrease the spread of the virus have been continuously updated. The numbers of hospitalized continues to decrease, resulting in a gradual opening of the country [in several phases](#). See 'most important measures' below for different phases of the opening.

One of the biggest decisions when closing the country in March was that the Danish borders closed (and is still closed) to foreigners who do not have a so-called "recognized purpose" until further notice. Transport of goods, such as food, medicines and necessary means for industrial production, can still access the country. There is still no decision on when the borders will re-open.

Following the Danish government's announcement on March 11, the Danish C25 index [dropped by 8.03 percent](#) affecting a large part of the Danish economy. [The International Monetary Fund](#) predicts a decline in Danish economy on 6,5% this year and an increase in unemployment from 5% to 6,5% this year. The International Monetary Fund also predicts a quick recovery of the Danish economy in 2021.

The Danish state helps companies affected by the situation with economic compensation (see point below), and these help packages has already helped a lot of people to survive the crisis. Also, the Scandinavian airline SAS will receive extraordinary help from both the Danish and Swedish state, who has agreed to provide a [guarantee of DKK 3 billion](#) to the airline. On April 28th SAS announced that they nevertheless have to lay off 1,700 employees in Denmark.

Most important measures (opening of the country):

- **Phase 1:** First phase included that some liberal businesses opened again from April 20th – for instance hairdressers, physiotherapists and beauty and massage clinics – in order to open the have to live up to some hygiene criteria. This phase also included that childcare and schools up until 5th grade opened again from April 14th
- **Phase 2:** Cafes, restaurants, malls, elite sports, some schools, oldest grades and libraries can open on May 11th or May 18th
- **Phase 3:** From June 8th, it will be possible for a number of cultural institutions to open, and in addition, the ban to gather in groups will be raised from 10 people to 30-50 people. No specific dates have yet been set for when the various institutions will open exactly
- **Phase 4:** This phase will begin in mid-August and includes opening of all other educations, discos, venues, nightlife, fitness centers, playgrounds and swimming facilities

Other measures:

- The ban on events, activities or such where there are more than 500 people present, is maintained until at least August 31, the plan states
- The Danish borders are still closed to foreigners who do not have a so-called "recognized purpose". A new decision on this will be announced before June 1st
- All unnecessary travel activity should be cancelled and avoided at least until May 31st

Economic compensation (more information can be found [here](#)):

- The state has implemented temporary salary compensation to employees of all private companies who are exceptionally hard financially affected by Corona virus
- The state has implemented compensation to self-employed
- The state will cover some of the fixed costs that companies no longer are able to cover
- The so-called "countercyclical capital buffer" has been released. As a result, with their current capital stock, banks and institutions all have more financial room to withstand losses without having to limit their lending

Numbers of infected (more information can be found [here](#)):

- At least 10,968 people have been infected
- 133 are hospitalized. 27 of them are in the intensive care unit – 21 of them in the respirator. The decrease in numbers of hospitalized continues
- 547 have died after being infected according to official statistics. COVID-19 is not necessarily the cause of death
- 9,227 are considered to have recovered

Thoughts on the Danish behaviour and mindset:

The vast majority of Danes understand and adhere to the precautions and guidelines knowing that their behaviour has a huge effect on the situation. When the weather started to get warmer, more people forgot about the distance to each other, but the police took action to remind people not to stay too close to each other. In general, most people are positive about the future and the governments measures to get the country safely through the crisis – and now also to open the country gradually again.

Throughout the country, people show what is called a great "social mind" or "sense of community" taking care and helping each other out in this unusual situation – and supporting local stores and take-away places to prevent them from closing permanently. Many Danes expect to stay in Denmark for the summer holiday and have started booking summer cabins and camping spots around the country.

As in so many other countries around Europe, people sing and clap from balconies, and great respect is given to those who have the critical job to fight the virus and take care of our society, such as health care staff.

People might have expected a faster opening of the country when the government presented the gradual opening in the different phases, and some expected other institutions and businesses should open before those in the plan. Despite some disappointment, most accept the governments' decision and that it is necessary to gradually open the country and thereby choose some institutions and businesses over others.

Sources:

All information about the Corona virus situation in Denmark can be found at: <http://coronasmitte.dk>, and the Danish Broadcasting Corporation continuously update with the latest news and numbers on: <https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/live-seneste-nyt-om-coronavirus>.

Situation in Sweden (May 18th)

Most important info and measures

- The risk of the coronavirus spreading in Sweden is considered to be very high.
- Swedes are urged not to travel further than 2h from their home by car over the summer.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs extends its recommendation from unnecessary travel to all countries until 15 July 2020.
- Swedes' e-commerce increased by 32 percent in March compared with February.
- One in every eighth employed in Stockholm is laid off or notified (14th of May)
- The Swedish and Danish state now guarantees billion loans to SAS, according to a press release on the airline's website.
- The government proposes a temporary change of law on the basis of covid-19, with the purpose is to temporarily increase the government's ability to quickly take coronary-related measures.
- Sweden's R-figure has been below 1.0 since April 21. "The R-number talks about how quickly the infection spreads. If it is below 1.0, then every patient does not even infect a person, which means that the pandemic will gradually ease", says state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell to SVT News.
- National ban on visiting elderly homes and increased sampling for covid-19.
- The government guarantees important flights, a temporary public service obligation on a number of routes to and from Norrland and Gotland.
- Prohibition of public gatherings or public events with more than 50 participants.

Sources: <https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/regeringens-arbete-med-anledning-av-nya-coronaviruset/strategi-med-anledning-av-det-nya-coronaviruset/>

<https://www.krisinformation.se/detta-kan-handa/handelser-och-storningar/20192/myndigheterna-om-det-nya-coronaviruset/restriktioner-och-forbud>

<https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/tegnell-det-betyder-att-pandemin-successivt-kommer-ebba-ut>

Numbers of infected (18th of May):

- A total of 30 377 people has been found infected with covid-19 in Sweden
- In total, 1 853 intensive care patients with laboratory-confirmed covid-19.
- 3 698 of the Swedish covid-19 cases have been reported deceased.
- Sweden are not doing mass testings. As of March 13th 2020, health care prioritizes sampling of people in need of hospital care and staff in healthcare and elderly care with suspected covid-19.

Source: <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/smittskydd-beredskap/utbrott/aktuella-utbrott/covid-19/bekraftade-fall-i-sverige/>

General information:

Compared to other Scandinavian countries, Sweden has decided not to close down borders inside the country. To counteract the spread of covid-19 in Sweden, people are urged to keep a social distance and to stay home when showing symptoms. Elderly and people in risk groups are advised to isolate in their homes, and of 31th of March the government announced a national ban on visiting elderly homes and increased sampling for covid-19. People that can work from home are urged to do so. Gatherings of up to 50 people are allowed in Sweden, many shops, restaurants and pubs are keeping open. Swedens strategy is more about slowing the virus spread than stopping it.

- **Systembolagets sales increased during 2020 Q1**– Sales volume increased by 7 percent and amounted to 110.6 (103.6) million liters during the first quarter of 2020.
- **Swedes debate on alcoholism and domestic violence** Since the beginning of April numbers and news on the increase of alcohol abuse and domestic violence in homes around the world has been circulating on the news in TV, print and social media in Sweden.

The Swedish economy

The Swedish economy is strong. The government has introduced several packages to help Swedish businesses to survive during the crisis. The current situation will probably have severe long-term consequences for the Swedish economy. The government has among other measures introduced a state credit guarantee for loans to companies, temporarily reduced social security contributions, temporary discount for fixed rental costs, postponement with tax payments and a possibility of short-term leave to reduce labour costs. The Government has also proposed that airlines should be able to receive credit guarantees in 2020 amounting to a maximum of SEK 5 billion, of which SEK 1.5 billion is intended for SAS. The Swedish economy may decline by ten per cent and the number of unemployed will rise to over 700,000 this year if the effects on the economy become more prolonged. This shows the government's worst alternative scenario. However, the main scenario earlier was that Swedish GDP will fall by 4.0 per cent this year and then turn up and grow by 3.5 per cent next year, according to the forecast submitted in connection with the Government spring budget. On 24 April, the Swedish Minister of Finance declared that situation probably is worse than the main scenario. The minister has announced that the unemployment projection probably will be adjusted from 9 to around 11 per cent and the GDP fall projection from 4 to 7 per cent. The Minister of Finance, however, believes that the uncertain situation affects the accuracy of the forecasts. The forecasts should be seen rather as snapshots. The number of corporate bankruptcies between 1 March – 12 April has increased by 49 per cent compared to last year. The Government will, therefore, discuss new measures to support Swedish businesses. The Government will, for example, consider the possibility of so-called solvency support for companies in crisis, where the state could go in and buy newly issued shares in crisis-hit companies, and also some form of direct liquidity support for companies that have lost revenue.

Source: <https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/regeringens-arbete-med-anledning-av-nya-coronaviruset/foretag/>
<https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/regeringens-arbete-med-anledning-av-nya-coronaviruset/regeringens-beslut-och-initiativ-med-anledning-av-nya-coronaviruset/#ekonomianchor>

The Swedish household economy

- One in every eighth employed in Stockholm is laid off or notified (14th of May).
- Swedes' e-commerce increased by 32 percent in March compared with February.
- The grocery trade is among the e-commerce winners, thanks to bunkering and fewer restaurant visits, with an estimated increase of 75 percent in March compared to February.
- 24 percent who are worried about their livelihood over the next year.
- Half of the Swedish households predict that their finances will deteriorate during the year and many plans for increased savings.
- Households' uncertainty about how long the corona crisis will last means that many people believe in reduced consumption.
- In Svensk Handel's consumer survey, just over every third household indicates that they have reduced the consumption of consumer goods in physical stores (36 per cent) and almost as many are planning to increase their savings (35 per cent).
- Above all, it is the elderly who have reduced their consumption.
- The unemployment is rising at a rapid rate and is now 8.0 percent. However, the number of people who are notified of dismissal has been muted during the past week, says Arbetsförmedlingen.

Sources: <https://www.svenskhandel.se/nyhetscenter/press/2020/okad-osakerhet-far-hushallen-att-halla-hart-i-pengarna/>
<https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/arbetsformedlingen-presenterar-nya-siffror-over-varsel>
<https://www.kantarsifo.se/rapporter-undersokningar/allmanhetens-tillit-tankar-och-beteende-under-coronakrisen-8-maj>

Situation in Germany (May 18th)

Latest update

The national minister for foreign affairs, Heiko Maas, has initiated discussions with several EU-member states about the possibility of traveling during the summer across the EU. Maas is keen on phasing out the world-wide travel warning which is currently valid until June 15th, 2020. The aim is to avoid further prolonging beyond that date. Moreover, the travel warning shall then be turned into travel guidelines. The premise is the continuation of the current decrease of the numbers of infections. Nevertheless, Heiko Maas emphasizes that traveling this summer will not be the same. More information on the travel warning can be found [here](#).

The German Bundesliga has had their first games after almost two months. The re-start was quite heavenly criticized before.

After a research of a public broadcast station and a newspaper, the national government faces the accusation to have acted too late in order to contain the Corona-virus and having underrated the danger of the virus. According to the research, the first warning reached Germany on December 31st, 2019. Measurements were then introduced 78 days later. The summary of the report can be found [here](#).

The head of the chancellery, Helge Braun, has emphasized that the vaccination against the Corona-virus will not be mandatory. More and more people have stated that Germany will introduce the obligation to get vaccinated.

Since May 15th, 2020, Germany and several neighboring countries are not doing strict border controls anymore. Until June 15th, 2020 Germany wants to take down all of its border controls.

In accordance with the loosening of the border controls, Germany has also decided that there will be no mandatory 14-days quarantine for people arriving in Germany from other EU-member states, from within the Schengen area or Great Britain anymore. The federal states are working on concrete rules.

Germany continues with easing the restrictions as the numbers of infections are continuously decreasing.

Among others, following things are allowed:

- Meeting of two households
- Opening of all shops, regardless of their size but with strict hygienic and distance concept
- Opening of restaurants and cafés, possible differences in the decision of opening of indoor and outdoor and opening hours
- Opening of hotels with strict hygienic and distance rules,
- Opening of hairdresser, with strict hygienic rules
- Sports: resumption of practice, possible differences in the decision of indoor and outdoor sports, no sports with physical contact
- Return to school for all students before the big summer holiday
- Reboot of tourism, re-allowance of tourists on the islands, re-allowance in several federal states
- Opening of museums, zoos, playgrounds
- Going back to school and kindergarden, strict hygienic and distance rules, very different rules in the federal states
- Allowance of visiting people in care facilities, strict hygienic and distance rules

However, please note that the current rules differ from state to state as it the specific configuration is upon them. The rules and guidelines can further differ in its date of enactment. So please check the homepage of the respective state you are interested in. Such as: [Schleswig-Holstein](#), [Hamburg](#) or [Mecklenburg-Vorpommern](#). More and packaged information for the national state as well as the federal states can be found on the websites of the [national government](#).

General information

The individual action by the federal states has led to criticism as Germany now might appear as a patch work rug. Despite the German federal system and that the fact the federal states in Germany have their own extensive competences, decisions were mostly made coordinated which was widely well received.

People returning to Germany from abroad have to be in quarantine for at least two weeks regardless of where they are coming from. However, as the first federal state, Niedersachsen has decided that they will not have a general quarantine obligation anymore. People will only be send into a two-weeks quarantine if they have spend time in risk areas or if there is suspicion of Corona.

Germany is treating numerous foreign people in their hospitals as many hospitals still have the capacity in their intensive care unit.

Numbers of infected (May 18th):

- 174.355 reported cases in total
- 20.955 current cases of Corona
- 7.914 people have deceased from Corona
- 153.400 are considered to be healed from Corona

Economic measures

Germany finds itself in the greatest recession since WW2. According to the ifo-Institute (Leibniz-Institut for economic research), about 1/5 of all German companies will have a reduction in staff, about 50% of the companies postpones bigger investments and 50% of the companies will introduce short-time work. German CEOs expect having restrictions in public life for about four months.

Germany has introduced extensive state aid programs. All programs amount to 750 bn. EUR. For that, the national government agreed on a supplementary budget, making new debts with an amount of 156 bn. EUR. The debt limit is currently suspended. The state aid programs are the biggest in post-war Germany.

Concrete Measures (More information [here](#) on small, medium and big enterprises and [here](#) for self-employed and small business up to ten employees):

- *Kurzarbeitergeld* (short-time work compensation)
- *direct financial support*
- *Wirtschaftsstabilisierungsfonds* (economic stability fund)
- *tax deferral*
- each federal state has also individual *aid programs* for its companies
- each federal state also offers *state bonds*
- *KfW-Schnellkredit 2020* (quick loans)

Thoughts on the German behavior and mindset

Conspiracy theories

As the current situation continues, more and more people of public interest, such as actors, influencers, singer, hold the opinion that the Coronavirus is a human invention and the restrictions are used to cut basic rights and to introduce "health dictatorship". Even demonstrations with over 1.000 have taken place and brutality against teams of the public broadcast stations have taken place. Political stakeholders fear the rise of anti-democratic tendencies.

Solidarity/ neighborly help

Germany experiences a big wave of solidarity. Several platforms were created where people could register willing to help (walking the dog, taking care of grocery shopping, picking up medicine, etc.) and people asking for help in case they belong to a risk group.

Support local shops/restaurants/ etc.

Similar to the neighborly help, several platforms were created in order to help smaller, local businesses to survive. Many of them -restaurants but also other shops- offer delivery service.

Digitalization/ New Work

Germany has always been rather conservative in the area of new and digital forms of working. However due to the current circumstances, many companies are faced with the challenge of digitalization and home office. This is also considered to be a chance for Germany and its work environment.

Further Sources:

- <https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/coronavirus/chronik-coronavirus.html>
- https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/covid-19-aktuelle-zahlen-zum-coronavirus-in-deutschland.1939.de.html?dm:news_id=1123903
- <https://www.tagesschau.de/newsticker/liveblogcoronavirus-freitag-101.html>
- <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/seehofer-grenzen-101.html>
- <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/corona-demos-reax-101.html>
- <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/quarantaenepflicht-corona-101.html>