

Commonwealth Fund's International Symposium panel The COVID-19 Experience: An International Roundtable.

5.1.2e, 11 dec 2020

Below is an outline for the panel. We request that you prepare to speak for **no more than three minutes** about your country's response to COVID-19. Some questions to consider addressing in your response include : 1) What were the successes and shortcomings in your country's COVID-19 response? 2) How has your country informed preparedness for future waves? 3) What lessons about your country's health care system and structure have resulted from its COVID-19 response? After all panelists have had an opportunity to present we will move to an audience Q&A.

Our response can be characterized as a partial lockdown, which in the first wave was labeled *intelligent lockdown*. Key elements were closing of schools, restaurants etc. and a appeal to work at home. At the same time, nearly all firms and shops, and public transport has remained open.

This partial lockdown has been accompanied with a generous economic support program.

The impact on health, in terms of number of hospital visits and deaths has been quite similar to several other EU countries.

The impact on the economy has, however, be modest, with a much smaller impact on gdp than in other eu countries. GDP has fallen 4%; unemployment has increased from 3 to 4% (expected 6 in 2021)

This approach has been extended to the second wave. The peak is lower than in the first wave, but the duration longer. The impact on the economy is still modest. The lessons learned are that a partial lockdown is still a sufficient strategy to cope with the coronavirus. What could have been better is an earlier response to the second wave and a more aggressive upscaling of test facilities.

High on the agenda for the future are the optimal size of intensive care. In the peak of the crisis, we have moved patients to Germany; moreover regular care has been replaced by covid care.

The crisis has also shown limitations to the decentral organization of health care, in particular in crisis situations. The NL has a system where many responsibilities are decentralized, ranging from health insurance to the organization of hospitals. In normal times, this process is quite well organized. In crisis times, it puts a limitation on quick and forceful national interventions.