

## **The social and economic impact of coronavirus in a globalised world**

A global virus that keeps us imprisoned in our homes – maybe for months – has already started to change our relationships towards each other, public spaces and even the government.

Coronavirus massively shapes our day to day life at the moment. What started in Wuhan, China has now evolved into a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

We all suffer from the consequences of this virus, that is spread from person to person. Schools around the world are closed, numerous people have lost their jobs and a normal life seems to be impossible in these times of crisis. But how will it affect our future?

First of all, it is important to note that the coronavirus presents the biggest danger to the global economy since the 2008 financial crisis. Multiple countries have to endure a slowdown of economic growth. With the lockdown of large parts of China, the world's second largest economy came to a standstill. Businesses are dealing with lost revenue and disrupted supply chains due to China's factory shutdowns. Weeks after China imposed travel restrictions on millions of its people, Italy placed quarantine measures on its entire population, with France and Spain imposing similar measures and many other European countries restricting movement and business activity. It will take time for the economy to recover from this recoil.

But besides the economic effect coronavirus brings with it, there are countless more examples on how it affects our lives. A large number of countries closed their borders to prevent the virus from spreading, almost every event is cancelled, public gatherings are forbidden and people have started panic shopping causing shortages of food and other essential grocery items.

Furthermore, many experts are of the opinion, that all these causes will change our behaviour permanently. Will national borders stay closed? Will touch become taboo? What will become of restaurants? Many of these things are not predictable and how we choose to behave today could shape our future dramatically.

On the one hand this situation could teach us to live in a more solidary way, to support each other and rethink our health and care system. The coronavirus pandemic has revealed gaping holes in the care infrastructure of many nations, as for example millions of American families have been forced to navigate this crisis without a safety net. They are left without health insurance, without support of the government and feel left alone in this time of crisis. Their president keeps to downplay the seriousness of the situation and many experts are in deep concern over the readiness of Trump's administration to handle the crisis. This crisis should unleash widespread political change. We have to be aware that we can only decrease the death rate and the amount of people that get infected, if we act as a whole. Coronavirus could lead to a decline of polarisation and help us to change course toward greater national solidarity and functionality.

Moreover, it shows us how important it is to think globally and to be aware of the consequences one's behaviour could have on society.

In addition to the enhanced sense of solidarity and togetherness, coronavirus could also contribute to a revived appreciation for the outdoors and life's other simple pleasures. In times of crisis it is important to remember that there is more to life and that the dark days will end.

On the other hand, coronavirus could cause an economic collapse, that could cost the jobs of many of us. It could lead us to an authoritarian future, where the government watches every one of our steps to prevent something similar to happen again.

No matter which turn the current situation takes, we are all in this together and should find a way to support and help each other in every possible way. In my opinion, it is important to stand together and to make the best out of this time of crisis. We should stay at home and give the earth, our doctors and nurses a break.