



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on April 21, 2020

## Sweden's "Quarantine Lite": Even Without a Strict Lockdown, Nation Stabilizes COVID-19 Cases

Dr. Anders Tegnell, the state epidemiologist of Sweden, recently told the Swedish news agency TT that the Scandinavian country's more relaxed approach to fighting the coronavirus pandemic is beginning to yield results. Tegnell said the latest figures on infection rates and fatalities indicate the crisis is starting to stabilize.



"We're on a sort of plateau," Tegnell told the Swedish news agency TT.

A report in the U.K. newspaper *The Sun* on April 20 noted that Sweden recorded just 40 coronavirus deaths and 392 cases that day "as the country continues to avoid lockdown restrictions."

*The Sun* observed that Sweden is the only country in Europe not to have implemented lockdown measures on the public.

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The 392 new confirmed cases is the smallest jump since April 12 and takes Sweden's total confirmed cases to 14,777, observed *The Sun*.

We compared Sweden's coronavirus statistics to Portugal's since both countries have nearly identical populations. (Portugal: 10,252,000; Sweden: 10,236,000) A report from Statistica.com showing the number of COVID-19 cases in Europe by country, as of Apr 21, 2020, revealed that Portugal had 20,863 cases, compared to Sweden's 14,777.

Sweden's neighbor, Norway, with half Sweden's population at 5,333,000, also had half the number of cases at 7,113, as might be expected. So even with its more relaxed restrictions. Sweden is faring as well as its neighbor, on a per capita basis.

*The Sun* reported that government ministers in Sweden have promised a huge increase in COVID-19 testing so that frontline workers can be screened for the virus.

The report quoted Swedish Health Minister Lena Hallengren, who said: "We are talking about testing and analysis capacity of 50,000, perhaps as many as 100,000, a week."

A report in Britain's *Daily Mail* on April 20 observed that the Swedish government maintains that its strategy is right because people need to "understand and accept" measures over the long term rather than be forced into obeying them.

"If everyone takes their responsibility, together we will overcome it," the report quoted Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The report cited Swedish officials who say that "people in Sweden have a high level of trust in government agencies," with the result that advisory measures are widely followed.

Sweden's pandemic strategy has been described as trusting the public to act responsibly. Rather than imposing wide-ranging bans and restrictions, authorities have advised people to maintain good hand



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hygiene, work from home, and practice social distancing. In other words, the same as all other countries, only without the heavy hand of the state.

One point that might be worth considering in view of Sweden's approach to handling the COVID-19 pandemic is — if less draconian measures produce results as effective as shutting down a nation's economy, then why not take the less-intrusive approach?

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