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(COVID-19) : Are countries bending the curve?

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The virus causing the current outbreak is called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, shortened to SARS-CoV-2. The disease is called coronavirus disease, shortened to COVID-19. These names have been assigned by the World Health Organization and the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses.



This chart here is looking at the *daily* number of deaths.

To bring the pandemic to an end countries have to bend the curve – they have to achieve that the number of daily cases is plateauing and then declining.

This chart shows whether countries have achieved this.

Are cases growing at different rates in different countries?

The COVID-19 outbreak started in different countries at different times, and now those countries are at different stages. For instance, on 25 March, Italy had reported 74,386 confirmed cases, while the UK had only reported 8,077.

But it would be useful to know whether cases in the UK now are growing faster, slower, at the same speed as cases did in Italy when it had a similar number.

This chart is designed to allow these comparisons, by showing how quickly the number of cases in each country has grown since the 100th confirmed case. That gives a standard starting place for each line on the graph. The line is called a “trajectory”.

China had a particular fast rise. Just 10 days after the 100th confirmed case the country already confirmed the 10,000th case.

The straight grey lines show trajectories for a doubling time of 2 days, 3 days, 5 days and 10 days. If a country’s line on the chart is higher than those lines, then its number of cases is doubling faster than that.

The trajectory of China and South Korea shows that the speed at which cases rise is not necessarily constant over time. Both countries saw a rapid initial rise but then implemented severe countermeasures (see here), and the trajectory became flatter, meaning that the spread of the disease has slowed down.

Other countries saw a much slower increase. The speed at which the number of confirmed cases increased in Singapore and Japan was much slower than in other countries.

We also show the trajectory of confirmed cases adjusted for population size – here presented as the number of confirmed cases per million people. This is shown from the day that a given country reached 1 confirmed case per million people.

Relative to the size of the population: This chart shows the trajectories for cases per million.

Source : Our World In Data