

Narratives on face mask wearing from members of Navigating Knowledge Landscapes Network - the contribution No. 25

Country: **UKRAINE**

Rostyslav Bilyy

Danylo Halytsky Lviv National Medical University, Pekarska Str. 69, 79010, Lviv, Ukraine

E-mail: r.bilyy@gmail.com

Received May 11th, 2020

Quarantine in Ukraine was announced on March 11 to start on March 12, this was day 9 after the first and the only COVID case was reported, at March 12, 2 more confirmed cases were reported. Thus such proactive measures stopped people's mobility at a very early stage of disease progression. All interpersonal communication, appearance on public, etc during quarantine should be in face masks. During the early stages of disease progression, mask-wearing was not a common practice, mainly due to the complete absence and highly inflated prices in stores.

To give the complete picture of disease specificity we need to admin that very big population of Ukrainian citizens is working abroad, in Poland, Italy, and Spain, and due to government decision to close borders at March 16, many of them returned to the home country, usually bringing disease to a local community (village/big families to see after the long absence). This greatly increased COVID incidence till mid of April, but surprisingly also the population awareness and mask-wearing. After April 6 a person to be in the "public place" without a mask was subject to a fine of 580-1170 EUR. Thus after April 6 most people in building/shops were wearing masks, on the street situation was different, and during our work trip we counted people wearing masks on streets using the same morning time and route, counting 50 people thus having a very approximate idea about the general situation:

date	Cases in UA	Cases in Lviv region	% wearing mask correctly	% of having masks on faces but not wearing correctly	% of not wearing masks
March 30	942	6	46	18	36
April 6	1462	28	28	10	62
April 29	10406	405	74	10	16

As we can easily deduce, government fines and increase in COVID cases greatly increased amount of people on the streets wearing masks. Personally, I agree that in “public places” we should wear a mask, however the need for such action in the empty spring streets full of sunshine and wet air is also questionable for me since the mask gets wet, makes walking and physical activity complicate, interfere with glasses.

Literature:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_Ukraine

Information about early cases:

Analysis of disease by regions:

<https://www.pravda.com.ua/cdn/covid-19/cpa/>