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The Coronavirus pandemic has introduced to an already polarized American society a new set of political, economic, and social/ethical fissures. Politically, there is controversy over whether or not the Trump Administration had delayed in preparations to meet an oncoming health crisis. This controversy carries strong implications for the president's reelection prospects. Differences have also arisen over the right balance between the need for highly restrictive health measures and fears that they may do lasting damage to the American economy. Views split on when to begin to open up the country to more normal economic activity. And a third area of disagreement, resulting from an overwhelmed American health system, is over how to value human life. It involves whether to prioritize saving certain categories of patients over others. To some extent the three areas of controversy also align along the familiar cleavage between the country's liberals and conservatives.



**Prof. Dr. Oktay F. TANRISEVER**  
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"The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have an enormous impact on international relations both at the global and regional levels: The pandemic itself demonstrated that countries need to cooperate globally and act in solidarity with the rest of the world since the state weakness in any part of the world could make all countries more vulnerable to such pandemics. Although the US could recover from its currently very severe crisis of healthcare and federalism somehow in the medium-term, the EU is likely to suffer more seriously since some of its Southern members could opt for exiting the Union or demanding potentially very divisive structural reforms in the foreseeable future. China's relative success both in responding to the crisis and in helping other states have propped up its claims for global leadership considerably. The Global South — from Latin America to Africa and from Middle East to South East Asia — could engage in processes of greater regionalization in order to cope with the challenges of intra-regional fragmentation. The global decline in state capacity, the shrinking size of global economy and the popularity of xenophobic attitudes leave very little room for optimism about the future. Still, think tanks, like ISSI, and intellectuals from all over the world should keep hope for a better world alive by proposing sustainable solutions to the structural problems of the world (dis-)order."



**Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel,**  
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As of April 5, 2020, life in Germany is restricted. If possible, people work from home. All gatherings of more than two people are banned. We can go out and buy our provisions or medicine; most other shops are closed. As a federal state, responsibilities to some extent rest with the 16 Laender (states). Those more affected imposed more restrictions.

In the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, people can leave the house for physical exercises, but not in groups of more than two, except families. Travelling has been discouraged. People had to vacate second homes, access to the islands, the coasts and popular tourist resorts no longer is possible. Travelling to neighboring countries has become very difficult. Rules are more or less followed, despite the sunny spring weather.

Some sectors have come to a grinding halt, especially tourism, travel, hospitality. Industry has resorted to short time. Millions of self-employed are without income. The government is providing some financial assistance. Within days millions applied (via the internet). The first already received money. Workers on short time are compensated by unemployment insurance.

Restrictions will be reviewed after April 18th. At the moment the number of infected doubles every seven days or so. Once it has slowed down to ten days, restrictions may be loosened.

International comparisons are difficult for known reasons. The more you test, the more positive cases you find, and statistically it lowers lethality. Our reporting system is a little slow, especially on weekends. The low fatality has raised the discussion of a German exception. There is a new article in the NYT (see the link) <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/04/world/europe/germany-coronavirus-death-rate.html> that describes well the situation in my area.

It is too early for an assessment of the situation, government policy or prospects for the future, especially since some figures seem to be too good to be believed. But, as in any crisis, structural weaknesses show, especially in the areas of health and social security. Worse, if economic or political interests prevail over health concerns.



**Dr. Claude Rakisits,**  
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Although it's too early to make a complete assessment of the long-term impact of this pandemic, one can say that for Australia it will mean a fundamental rethink of the country's excessive over-reliance on China for most of its manufactured imports and as its most important export market, particularly for iron ore, coal, education and tourism. It will also increase the momentum on developing further the Quadrilateral network between Australia, Japan, India and the USA. It will have a positive impact on increasing further Australia's relationship with the region. There will also be a public push to perhaps roll back globalization and be less dependent on the outside world for Australia's economic well-being, which as we have seen can be very quickly disrupted once production lines cease to function properly upstream, particularly in China.