

## **DR MAREK LASKIEWICZ - WRITTEN EVIDENCE (EMP0067)**

### **Employment and COVID-19 inquiry**

The central problem for employment during the Covid-19 pandemic is that the restrictions introduced by first lockdown and now tiers are unnecessarily restrictive. This is because they exceed the scientific guidelines; in addition they do not consider the economic consequences sufficiently, if at all.

This analysis was first presented in a book<sup>1</sup> published in April this year and subsequently summarised and improved in a paper<sup>2</sup>, the latter being recently published by the Science and Technology Committee and the Health and Social Care Committee in its Inquiry "Coronavirus: lessons learnt". In this brief letter the economic aspects for employment are outlined on the basis of that paper.

All activities, hence in this letter all employment activities, should be permitted as long as the Ministry of Health rules, notable the social distancing, cleaning and PPE guidelines, are adhered to constantly, ideally continuously. There should be no difference made between places or types of work.

This is possible because the disease propagation mechanism is known, so there is no need for a medieval lockdown - and never was, so the whole spring lockdown was unnecessarily severe. Moreover even if there were any upsurge in coronavirus cases in some area, it would suffice simply to tighten up locally, but still permit all economic hence employment activity.

This ill-effects of the coronavirus crisis are both direct and indirect. The former is the visible: jobs lost and production foregone. The latter is as deadly: jobs remaining lost and maybe others on top as taxes are raised to pay for the cost of the coronavirus, including furloughing.

Instead what the government, specifically the Ministry of Health, should do is to issue rules including procedures - but cease to ban activities.<sup>3</sup> This is the urgent measure that should be taken to protect and create jobs; this should be recommended by this Inquiry to the government.

For from now on anywhere in the UK: why should a gym not be open if it follows all the guidelines? why should there be a blanket figure for fan attendance for all football stadia irrespective of size and rule-adherence - and why not let in fans in at all elsewhere? why ruin religious services if again rules are being followed?

If this advice were implemented, employment would once again increase as business flourishes, whereupon the tax base is strengthened. Lockdown and the tiers have inflicted some unnecessary employment damage and are still doing

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<sup>1</sup> Laskiewicz, M., Covid-19 Lockdown Analysis, Krzenwic, London, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Laskiewicz, M., Public Health Policy Issues with the Reproductive number R, UK Parliament CLL0033, London, 2020 - this paper is on the epidemiology-economics interface.

<sup>3</sup> This is a new point, not in the previous publications in footnotes 1 and 2.

so, and will continue to do so<sup>4</sup>, - indeed even after the pandemic is declared over as the economic effects carry on unfolding.

This is also true for the world. The IMF estimated the cost of coronavirus to be \$28tn in lost output worldwide<sup>5</sup>, yet some of this was unnecessary.

The conclusion is that the UK should not over-avoid swamping the NHS as this unnecessarily over-damages its economy, which was and is alas the case.

*5 December 2020*

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<sup>4</sup> Secret dossier on coronavirus damage, The Times, London, 1-12-2020.

<sup>5</sup> {5} IMF estimates global Covid cost at \$28tn in lost output, The Guardian, London, 13-10-2020.