

City: Gent (BE)

This series of fact sheets only includes measures taken by the above-mentioned city authorities during the first wave of the pandemic to strengthen public health security, adapt various aspects of city life to new reality, support vulnerable populations and support the local economy. The fact sheet has been prepared based on official sources and media reporting. However, given the variegated degrees of online communication efficiency from the part of various city authorities, and the risks associated with collecting information from non-standardised online sources (including media), please note that the information in the table may not be comprehensive.

Contextual information

Territory concerned by measures

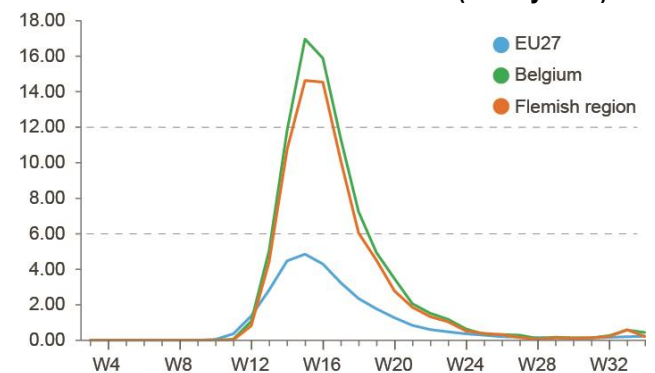
Measures described below have been taken by municipal authorities of Gent.

General information¹

Type of territory	City
City population (2019)	262 000
FUA population (2019)	618 000
Level of COVID-19 mortality*	High

*COVID-19 deaths / 100 000 inhabitants shown at the corresponding NUTS1 level (Flemish Region).

COVID-19 deaths / 100 000 inhabitants (weekly data)



Policy answers at local level - Measures²

Health security	Date	Perspective ³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mouth masks distributed among the county population. 	27-Apr	ST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washing basins installed for the reopening of shops. 	8-May	MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mouth mask mandatory in shopping walking area, some busy streets and at events 	24-Jul	ST
Daily way of life and work		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing all schools with support through the Ghent Education Center. 	3-Apr	ST/ MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All associations and organizations (sports and youth associations, cultural organizations, social organizations and associations of ethnic-cultural minorities) that are housed in a building of the City of Ghent, SoGent and Farys receive a rent waiver. 	3-Apr	ST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support for cultural events that were cancelled. 	17-Apr	ST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More space for cyclists and pedestrians along the waterfront 	23-Apr	ST/ MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra space for pedestrians and cyclists at 45 school gates. 	5-May	MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra, shortened procedure for applying for a play street. 	15-May	MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 13,500 euros for those who organize summer activities for children or young people. 	11-Jun	ST
Support to vulnerable populations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a Labor Pact steering group to support people that have lost their job and need to be guided to a good job as quickly as possible. 	3-Apr	ST/ MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional budget available for the shelter of homeless people and for organizations that provide material assistance 	3-Apr	MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New system of additional financial aid and crisis support for the most vulnerable families and housing allowances. 	3-Apr	MT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100,000 euros in material aid, and support for about 1,000 families on a living wage in case of a crisis. 	17-Apr	ST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor park is available (upon reservation) for residents who do not have a garden. 	26-May	ST

Support to economic actors & recovery

• Online trading initiatives bundled on one website: kooplokaal.gent	27-Mar	MT/ LT
• Exemption for market fees and itinerant trade.	3-Apr	ST
• Tax exempt from the terrace tax or the tourist city tax.	3-Apr	ST
• Extra support for tenants who are in trouble to pay for their rent (advance rent or provide an intervention).	3-Apr	ST
• Go-getter contract: self-employed people and small businesses that saw their turnover fall due to corona receive help to adapt their business model to the 'new normal'.	10-Jul	MT

Policy answers at local level - Overall strategy

	Mitigating	Compensating	Circumventing	Exploit
Health security	✓			
Daily way of life and work	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support to vulnerable populations	✓			
Support to economic actors & recovery	✓		✓	

¹ Data source: EUROSTAT (*urb_lpop1* and *urb_cpop1*), and ESPON COVID-19 database for mortality levels. Thresholds for COVID-19 mortality levels: low (0-6 deaths/100,000 inh.), moderate (6-12 deaths/100,000 inh.) and high (>12 deaths/100 000 inh).

² Source used: <https://stad.gent/nl/over-gent-en-het-stadsbestuur/nieuws-evenementen/samen-tegen-corona-zo-pakt-gent-het-aan>

³ ST = short term, MT = medium term, LT = long term.