

United Kingdom fenced-in

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The new strain of COVID in the UK is creating major problems in the EU.

The discovery of a new strain of COVID-19 in the United Kingdom -- up to 70% more contagious than those known so far -- has raised concern in several European Union member countries to the extent of suspending land, sea and air communications with the UK.

Numerous posters warn British citizens that the Eurotunnel, which connects to the European mainland by rail, will be temporarily closed due to the French government's decision.

This new route under the waters of the English Channel, considered one of the modern wonders of engineering, begins its journey in the English town of Folkestone, near the port of Dover, to the coast of the French department of Paso de Calais.

Its suspension could end when thousands of drivers take the COVID-19 test, but it means the cessation of a significant flow of goods that, if prolonged, will generate scarcities.

British Health Minister Matt Hancock said that the new SARS-CoV-2 mutation is no more deadly than the others, but has got out of control for its rapid contagion capacity, hence, no preventive measure should be considered extreme.

Actually, the change in RNA, as the genetic material of viruses is known, is a very common characteristic, and occurs when they multiply and pass from one body to another, giving rise to mutations and later to different varieties from the original. Indeed, this is one of the difficulties in manufacturing an effective and safe vaccine to neutralize them.

In Italy, at least one patient was detected carrying this new mutation highly spread in the United Kingdom, which accelerated the implementation of measures.

So far, 13 of the 27 countries of the European Union and some South American nations including Colombia and Argentina have suspended transfers to and from the British territory.

This new scenario adds to the crisis generated by the lack of a trade agreement that would diminish the negative effects of the separation of London and the European continental block, a process known as "Brexit."

This is an unprecedented event, formalized in January and to be completed on the last day of the year, but all the negotiations to find commercial, customs and migratory alternatives have failed.

Since most of the merchandise arrives from the European Union, families are increasingly concerned about a temporary scarcity... and now even more. When it rains, it pours.

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