

'Still plenty of discussion in the cabinet'

Economic Affairs memorandum: opening catering industry leads to fewer infections

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Opening restaurants will decrease rather than increase the number of corona infections. This is stated in an analysis of the corona figures of the RIVM that was made by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (EZK) and that the political editors of RTL Nieuws have seen.

The memorandum will be presented today by Minister Wiebes and State Secretary Keijzer (Economic Affairs and Climate) in the cabinet meeting on the approach to corona. During the Catshuis Council last Sunday they were asked to make this analysis.

Behind the scenes it can be heard that these calculations by EZK are intended for the new year, but according to insiders, some ministers continue to hope that something is possible with the catering industry during the Christmas holidays.

Note

The analysis states that several measures were taken on 14 October. The reproduction number (the r-value, the average number of people infected by someone with corona) was 1.08. After those measures, the r-value dropped to 0.82. But on November 13, the r-value appears to have risen to 1.04.



Also read:

Part of the catering industry threatens to disobey: doors open from 17 January

(<https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/economie/artikel/5200664/horeca-dreigement-deuren-open-coronaregels-lockdown>).

The ministers conclude from this that 'with a dense catering industry the r-number rises again, which suggests that the influence of the catering industry on the r-number is very small and that the decrease and increase since October 14 must be explained differently.'

Next, the analysis states that home visits by family, friends and acquaintances are currently an important source of infection. According to the RIVM, 20 percent of the total number of infections comes from the home situation. Restaurants also only had a limited share in the number of infections before the general catering closure.

Discussion in cabinet

"This memorandum shows that the discussion about the hotel and catering industry is also in full swing in the cabinet", says political reporter Fons Lambie. "You hear frustration about the endless catering industry closure. This will be discussed in the cabinet this afternoon. The question is whether Rutte and De Jonge can give some perspective to the catering industry tonight: perhaps a concrete date or a concrete level of contamination on which the catering industry can open. "

Open safely at Christmas

In the week before the general closure (6 to 13 November), 130 infections came from the catering industry. 27 percent of these were infections in a restaurant. In the same week, 1046 people were infected after visiting acquaintances, family and friends.

The memorandum states that the closure of the catering industry seems to have led to many more visitors at home. The RIVM reports in the picture until December 1 that the number of infections in the home situation has tripled to 3,261 people.



Also read:

More corona infections despite measures, what about?

(<https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/nieuws/nederland/artikel/5201681/coronavirus-besmettingen-tweede-golf-rivm>)

And from this, Wiebes and Keijzer conclude that corona infections cannot be linked to one sector, but to the occurrence of unsafe contact moments. And so opening the restaurant at Christmas could be safe.

Relaxation

"Reopening the controlled environment of the eateries and restaurants will significantly limit unsafe home visits. By means of strict conditions and protocols, reopening eateries will not have a negative effect on the r-value. The above argumentation even shows that it is conceivable that the r-value will decrease. "

With this analysis, Wiebes and Keijzer hope to convince their colleagues Prime Minister Rutte and Deputy Prime Minister De Jonge of the usefulness and necessity of a relaxation of the corona measures for the catering industry. Until now, they resisted easing tooth and nail because it would lead to an increase in the number of infections. Relaxation is sensitive, because the figures are still too bad. You can only relax when the daily IC recordings are around ten, while it is still twice as much as can be heard.

Disclose

GroenLinks leader Jesse Klaver wants the note to be made public by the cabinet. He tweets: "The catering industry is being hit hard and hard. Now it appears from a leaked note that closing the catering industry might be worse for the infections than keeping it open. I want this note to be shared with the House immediately."

 **Jesse Klaver** ✓
@jesseklaver 

De horeca wordt kei- en keihard geraakt. Nu blijkt uit een gelekte notitie dat het sluiten van de horeca misschien wel slechter uitpakt voor de besmettingen dan openhouden.

Ik wil dat deze notitie onmiddellijk met de Kamer wordt gedeeld.

Notitie Economische Zaken: opening horeca leidt tot minder besmettin...
Opening van restaurants zal het aantal besmettingen met corona eerder doen dalen dan stijgen. Dat staat in een analyse van de coronacijfers ...

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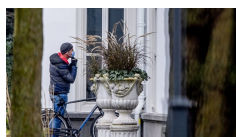
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