



Extraordinary situation due to the coronavirus – Saturday march 28

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR ALEC VON GRAFFENRIED

Dear citizens

Ten days ago our public life came to a standstill. When I cycle to my office in Erlacherhof in the morning and back in the evening, I hardly see people on the street and in the alleys. This means that all of you have adapted to the new situation and you consistently follow the recommendations. Great! I thank you for that, only with these measures we can cope with the epidemic. Merci!

We are getting used to our new life, at home, with the children, without children, often alone, more or less locked up. A few freedoms are left to us in Switzerland, in contrast to other countries. I am optimistic that we will get through the crisis with today's measures. However, I estimate that this situation will continue for another 4 to 6 weeks.

And yes, it is a crisis! We are living in an extraordinary situation, this is the highest alert level in Switzerland. And we are going to see a lot more suffering and death. Yes, it is a crisis, and I know it hit many people unexpectedly like a hammer. The immediate losses after the shutdown are heavy, and the outlook is uncertain. All the better that the Confederation and the Canton of Berne have very quickly and unbureaucratically made funds available for everyone, for companies and for the economy. The City of Berne is doing everything to ensure that all those affected receive help as quickly and reliably as possible: The support and information desks are pulling in the same direction. And we are doing everything we can to ensure that the economic and social situation of as many people as possible will continue well afterwards.

We would like to thank all those who are actively supporting us during this time: first of all, really all those committed people in the health care system who are even more burdened than usual. Then also to everyone in the shops who ensure our supply, and of course to everyone else who is more committed than ever.

Dear citizens of Berne

Our lives have changed. It has become slower. Smaller. It could make us depressed, it could make us angry. I really hope that many of us, most of us can handle this situation well.

Because actually we in Bern are almost the best at handling it. Slow down. Stay on the floor. Calm down. This is Bern! And maybe we'll discover some quality in the current slowness. We are moving closer together in this crisis.

I very much hope that, in spite of all the difficulties these days, something positive will come up. The solidarity. We are challenged as a whole society. Don't you think that we have become friendlier? Our society has become friendlier?

Even in the social media there is a different tone: the hatred and disrespect are largely gone. The social media now deserve their name: they help us to stay in touch with each other, because otherwise we have much less contact.

We live in historic times. In 10, 20 or 50 years we will still remember the spring 2020 and tell our grandchildren about it. In spring 2020 when a virus had paralyzed public life halfway around the world.

Do you write a diary? Now it would be the time to record your experiences.

I wish you all the best. And above all: stay healthy! Thank you!