



Officials said that fewer people used London's **subway** and buses after the government asked people to work from home last week.

The reason the government said this was the big increase in numbers of the omicron **variant** of COVID-19. Many businessmen traveled to London's financial center, called the City, and companies asked them to start working from home again. Some people already were doing it, because they did not want to be ill before Christmas.

The number of people in the subway dropped by 18% last week. The number of people on the bus dropped only by 6%. More children used buses to go to school, and schools did not close because of the coronavirus.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that he would not make stricter rules. Some members of his **party** said that if he did, they would not support him in the future.

Difficult words: **subway** (a system of underground trains in a city), **variant** (another type of something; a virus variant can be dangerous), **party** (a group of people in a government who have the same opinions and ideas).

**Discussion Questions****Topic Talk**

1. Define the following words: *subway*, *variant* and *party*
2. What is the reason behind the decrease in the number of people who use London's subway?
3. Why did the government ask people to work from home again instead of going to their offices?
4. Why was there a bigger drop in the number of people who use the subway than the number of people who use the bus?
5. How likely is Prime Minister Boris Johnson going to implement stricter rules?

Express Your Thoughts

1. Did the government in your country retighten restrictions since the spread of the new omicron variant of COVID-19?
2. Did the number of people using public transport in your country, like buses and trains, fall due to the omicron variant of COVID-19?
3. Did people have to work from home again due to the rapid increase of infection?