



COVID-19 Outbreak Update

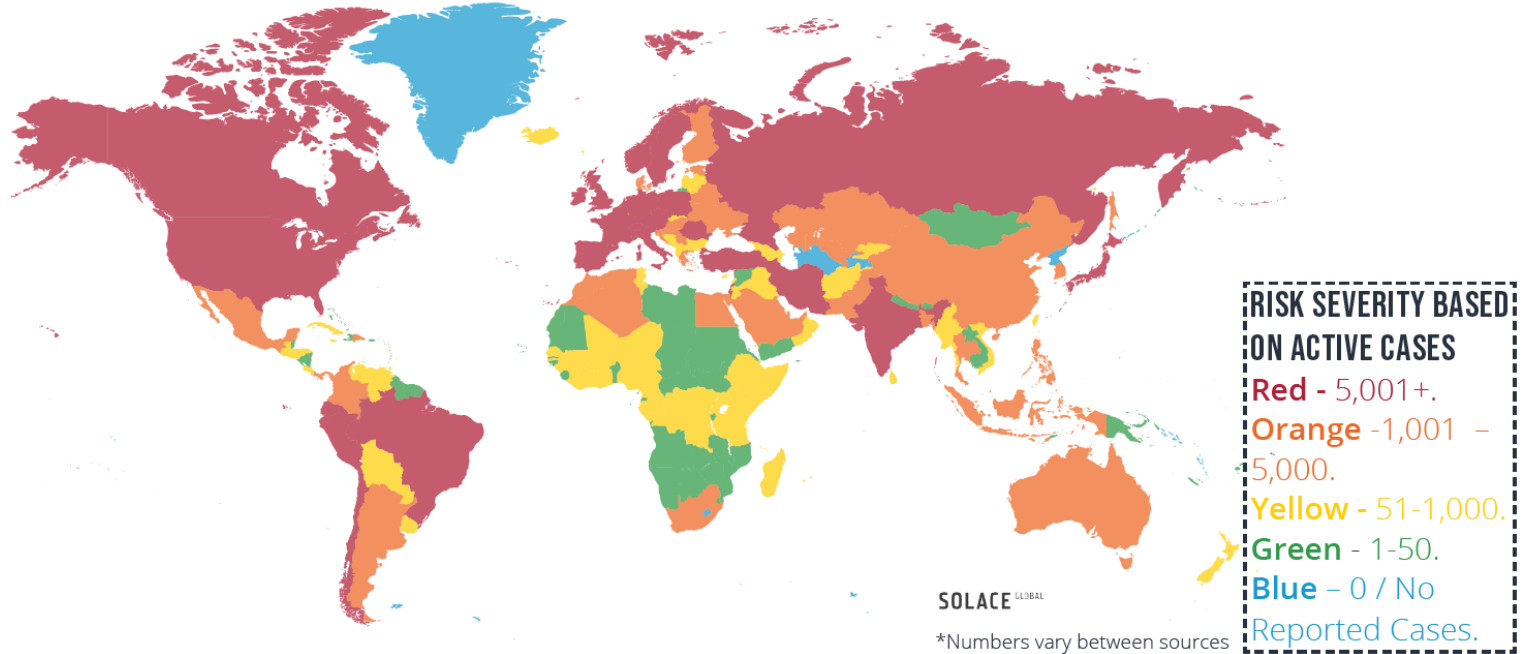
16 April

SOLACE GLOBAL

Executive Summary

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases globally is approaching 2.1 million, with approximately 135,000 deaths and around 515,000 recoveries. Nearly all countries globally have reported at least one case and/or have implemented some form of travel restriction. The situation continues to evolve rapidly, with new travel restrictions, both internationally and domestically, being implemented with little or no notice.

Solace Global advises against all non-essential travel at this time due to the already widespread in-place travel restrictions and the risk of new ones being implemented without notice. Additionally, prior to any and all essential travel, it is advised that you check your relevant government’s travel advice and contact your airline or travel provider for more details. People aged 70 and over, or those with underlying health issues, should also reconsider their need to travel, even domestically, as to limit their chances of exposure.



Latest Updates

The head of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has expressed dismay over the loss of over \$400 million from the organisation’s budget following the United States’ decision to halt its contributions. Media reporting indicates that there was a near-unanimous agreement amongst White House officials that the WHO is too heavily influenced by the Chinese Government. WHO officials have pushed back strongly against accusations of political bias and have indicated that they will explore other options to fill any financial gaps that they may face in the near future.

In the United Kingdom, the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) has announced that thousands of fines have been issued in recent weeks to individuals and groups who breached social distancing measures aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19. Despite these numbers, data suggests that the vast majority of the British public are adhering to current guidelines. Pressure is building on the government over persistent shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the scale of the outbreak in care homes. Despite outbreaks of COVID-19 being reported in over 2,000 care homes, official government figures currently only account for confirmed cases of the virus and related deaths in hospitals. Questions on the issue are likely to continue until the government changes its stance and includes social care statistics in its official figures.

German Chancellor Angel Merkel has announced plans to ease restrictions in place to fight COVID-19. As per her statement, a limited number of non-essential businesses will be allowed to reopen from 20 April, with schools scheduled to reconvene on 4 May. The majority of social distancing measures, however, will remain in place, with bars and restaurants to remain closed and large gatherings outlawed. Further announcements regarding lockdown measures are expected on or shortly after 30 April. Meanwhile, a ban on large public events will be upheld until August 31 to prevent possible mass transmission of the virus.

In similar news, during a press conference, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced that current restrictions are to remain in place for an additional four weeks, although the relaxing of measures is on the agenda. Australian authorities claim to have one of the highest reported detection rates anywhere in the world and estimate that roughly 92 per cent of all symptomatic cases are being detected nationwide. The country currently has 6457 confirmed cases with only 63 deaths.

Over a third of the sailors on board the French aircraft carrier, Charles de Gaulle, have been tested positive for COVID-19. Approximately 670 of the crew of 2,000 have been found to have the virus, with several dozen crew members receiving treatment in hospital and at least one in intensive care. The battle group which the carrier was leading has been forced to return to port from the Atlantic Ocean. There are also cases of the virus onboard one of the carrier’s escort vessels. The case of the Charles de Gaulle is reminiscent of a similar outbreak on board the American aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt and underlines the ongoing threat that COVID-19 poses to military, particularly naval, capabilities.

Singapore has recorded its largest daily jump in cases of COVID-19, with 447 cases confirmed on 16 April. The country had garnered international praise for its swift action to tackle its initial outbreak but now appears to be suffering a second wave of the virus. Evidence suggests that COVID-19 has spread rapidly in Singapore’s large migrant worker community. There are indications that roughly half of the new cases in Singapore are linked to large dormitories that house

migrant workers. Rights groups, charities and medical experts have flagged the potential for mass infection among the more than 300,000 migrant workers living in often cramped and unsanitary conditions.

Previously dismissed as a conspiracy theory, reports have emerged that COVID-19 may have emerged as a result of poor biosecurity measures at a research facility in Wuhan. Multiple media outlets have revealed that US scientific diplomats conducted several visits to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) in 2018 and sent two official warnings back to Washington regarding inadequate safety measures at the facility, which was conducting risky studies on coronaviruses from bats. Officials noted that there was not enough appropriately trained staff to operate such a facility safely. There is little to no evidence that COVID-19 was specifically engineered, with the majority of scientific opinion stating that it originated in wildlife. However, the emergence of diplomatic cable stating the WIV could pose a threat to public health raises the possibility that the COVID-19 pandemic started due to a lab accident at the facility.

Region Specific Updates and New Restrictions – Be aware these are fluid and subject to change, check for any updates prior to travel.

Asia

Nearly all countries in Asia have implemented some form of restriction on travel. Many Asian countries have limited internal travel and have in-place lockdowns. However, some countries are now easing internal lockdown measures after successfully managing their internal outbreaks, these include China, Taiwan and South Korea.

Countries with a global travel ban on non-citizens/residents include Azerbaijan, Brunei, China (and its SARs), India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, N. Korea, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Turkmenistan. Most other countries also have restrictions in place, though these vary in severity.

Europe

The EU has closed the bloc’s external borders and restrictions have also been implemented inside the majority of countries, with the UK, France, and Italy and many others have extended their lockdowns and restricting people from travelling or gathering, unless for specific reasons.

At this time, the Schengen area has banned all incoming travel other than citizens from countries in the European Union, European Economic Area, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, long-term residents and people with long-term visa or residence permits, family members of EU and EEA citizens, medical personnel and people responsible for the transport of goods for 30 days. Many other European countries have some form of similar restrictions in place.

Austria, Denmark and some other European countries are now seeing an easing of internal restrictions after passing what they believe is the worst of the outbreak in their countries.

Americas

The US is the worst affected country globally currently. The US has implemented a level 4: Do Not Travel global advisory. The Department of State advises US citizens to avoid all international travel due to the global impact of COVID-19 and for those who are currently abroad to return as soon as possible. The United States has also ordered a border closure for all non-essential travel from both Canada and Mexico.

Restrictions within the US are also being implemented extensively. The majority of states now have a “stay-at-home” order of some kind or have closed “non-essential” businesses.

At this time, Argentina, Belize, Bermuda, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Rep., Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, United States, Trinidad & Tobago and Uruguay all have at least some form of restriction on inbound travel. Additionally, restrictions vary on many other Caribbean islands with most banning all inbound travel and implementing some form of lockdown.

Africa

Several countries in Africa have implemented travel restrictions on people arriving from affected countries. At this time, Algeria, Angola, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ghana, Mali, Libya, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Reunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda all have at least some restrictions on inbound travel. Currently, this includes most of Europe, China and the US.

Additionally, a number of countries have already implemented national lockdowns, including South Africa, while others have implemented city wide lockdowns, as with Lagos and Abuja in Nigeria. There have also been reports of looting in some African countries, notably South Africa, as people panic buy certain goods. Alcohol has particularly been targeted in South Africa after the government banned its sale during the lockdown.

Middle East

The Middle East also has some significant restrictions, Saudi Arabia has implemented a ban on all foreign arrivals, including pilgrims, a measure that now looks unlikely to be lifted before Hajj. Strict movement restrictions are in place in most Middle Eastern countries.

Most countries have also closed schools and non-essential businesses, banned large gatherings, including prayers at mosques. Israel, Jordan, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and the UAE all have restrictions on inbound travel by non-citizens/residents. The majority of other countries have varying levels of restrictions.

Australia/ Oceania

Australia and New Zealand have closed their borders to anyone who is not a citizen or resident. Internal restrictions are also coming into force in Australia with many states now under a state of emergency and travel between states in the country.

Most Pacific Island nations have also imposed border control measures and quarantine requirements on travellers arriving from affected countries.

Solace Global Advice

At this time, travellers should **reconsider their need to travel globally, with only business-critical travel being advised**. Otherwise, ensure that you can access the country you intend to travel to and consider deferring journeys to countries with more than 1,000 cases or have travel restrictions already in place. In the coming weeks, extensive travel restrictions are likely to make even business-critical travel difficult – liaise with your relevant government agency for further instructions and information.

Current Statistics (Numbers vary between sources)							
Current Total Cases	2,084,633 (+76,588)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	515,283 (+29,053)	Total Confirmed Deaths	134,677 (+7,532)		
The list below comprises of the top 40 countries in each section, for a complete list please go to Worldometers , Johns Hopkins University or the WHO .							
Countries with the most confirmed cases		Countries with the greatest increase in case numbers yesterday		Countries with the most confirmed deaths		Countries with the most confirmed recoveries	
USA	644,348	USA	+30,206	USA	28,554	China	77,892
Spain	180,659	Spain	+6,599	Italy	21,645	Germany	77,000
Italy	165,155	UK	+4,603	Spain	18,812	Spain	70,853
France	147,863	France	+4,560	France	17,167	Iran	49,933
Germany	134,753	Turkey	+4,281	UK	12,868	USA	48,708
UK	98,476	Russia	+3,388	Iran	4,777	Italy	38,092
China	82,341	Brazil	+3,348	Belgium	4,440	France	30,955
Iran	76,389	Italy	+2,667	Germany	3,804	Switzerland	15,400
Turkey	69,392	Germany	+2,543	China	3,342	Brazil	14,026
Belgium	33,573	Belgium	+2,454	Netherlands	3,134	Canada	8,979
Brazil	28,912	Iran	+1,512	Brazil	1,760	Austria	8,098
Canada	28,379	Canada	+1,316	Turkey	1,518	S. Korea	7,757
Netherlands	28,153	Peru	+1,172	Switzerland	1,239	Belgium	7,107
Switzerland	26,336	Ireland	+1,068	Sweden	1,203	Turkey	5,674
Russia	24,490	India	+883	Canada	1,010	Australia	3,702
Portugal	18,091	Japan	+741	Portugal	599	Peru	3,108
Austria	14,370	Netherlands	+734	Indonesia	469	Chile	2,937
Ireland	12,547	Portugal	+643	Mexico	449	Denmark	2,748
Israel	12,501	Pakistan	+546	Ireland	444	Malaysia	2,647
India	12,456	Saudi Arabia	+493	India	423	Israel	2,563
Sweden	11,927	Sweden	+482	Austria	393	Mexico	2,125
Peru	11,475	Israel	+455	Ecuador	388	Russia	1,986
S. Korea	10,613	Belarus	+447	Romania	372	Pakistan	1,645
Japan	8,626	Singapore	+447	Philippines	349	Thailand	1,593
Chile	8,273	UAE	+432	Algeria	336	India	1,513
Ecuador	7,858	Serbia	+408	Denmark	309	Romania	1,217
Poland	7,582	Switzerland	+400	Poland	286	Iceland	1,077
Romania	7,216	Ukraine	+392	Peru	254	UAE	1,034
Norway	6,798	Mexico	+385	S. Korea	229	Saudi Arabia	931
Denmark	6,681	Poland	+380	Russia	198	Japan	901
Pakistan	6,505	Chile	+356	Dominican Republic	189	Czechia	819
Australia	6,462	Romania	+337	Egypt	183	Iraq	812
Czechia	6,301	Dominican Republic	+328	Japan	178	Ecuador	780
Saudi Arabia	5,862	Indonesia	+297	Czechia	166	New Zealand	770
Mexico	5,847	Argentina	+294	Norway	150	Algeria	708
Philippines	5,453	Qatar	+283	Hungary	142	Poland	668
UAE	5,365	Ecuador	+255	Israel	132	Bahrain	663
Indonesia	5,136	Philippines	+230	Colombia	131	Singapore	652
Malaysia	5,072	Bangladesh	+219	Morocco	127	Argentina	596
Serbia	4,873	Czechia	+190	Pakistan	124	Egypt	589



Solace Global remains available to provide the full range of Travel Risk Management services to clients.

Solace Global is also able to provide comprehensive crisis management, in-country journey management, tracking, response, and evacuation services.

For further details please contact +44 (0)1202 308 810 or email info@solaceglobal.com