



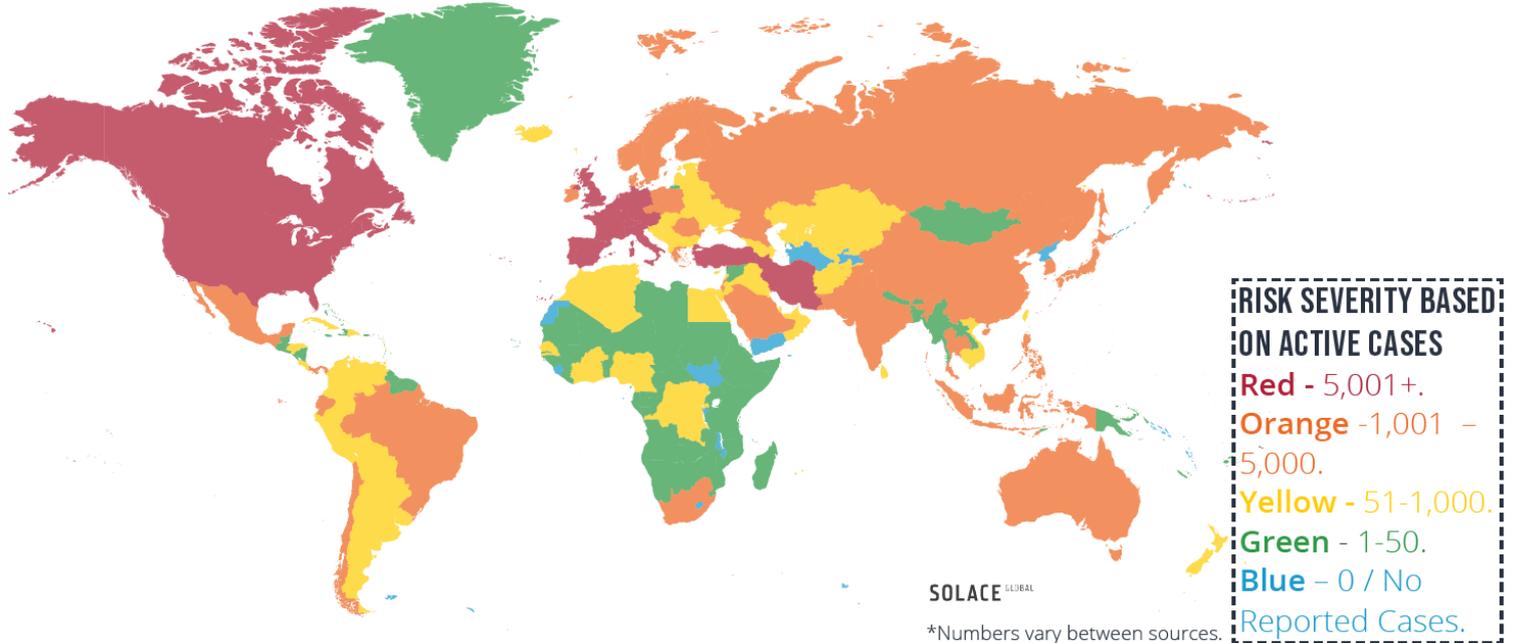
COVID-19 Outbreak Update

31 March

Executive Summary

There are now just over 800,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally, with approximately 39,000 deaths and around 170,000 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

At the time of writing, the global total of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has just exceeded 800,000. The United States remains the epicentre of the pandemic, with at least 164,000 of these confirmed cases. The US government has deployed navy hospital ships to New York City and Los Angeles, two of the worst affected cities, to help ease the pressure on the cities’ healthcare systems. However, despite the arrival of these vessels, it is thought that the cities, particularly New York, will struggle to cope with the large amount COVID-19 patients that are anticipated in the coming weeks. New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo has indicated that the state has a dangerous shortage of mechanical ventilators and has criticised the current procurement system, which leads to competition between different states and unit price rises.

In the United Kingdom, a leading expert has cautiously stated that the outbreak has shown early signs of slowing. Epidemiologist Neil Ferguson, whose modelling has informed government decision-making, has pointed to a fall in the numbers of new hospital admissions. The UK is set to open a number of temporary hospitals in the coming weeks. The “Nightingale hospitals” will open in exhibition centres, sports stadiums and concert halls in London, Cardiff, Glasgow, Birmingham and Manchester to relieve pressure on the National Health Service hospitals. Shortages of vital personal protective equipment (PPE) continue to be a major issue, despite the armed forces aiding in the distribution efforts in recent days.

Elsewhere in Europe, the Swedish Government has come under increasing criticism for its reluctance to impose social distancing measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has asked all citizens to avoid non-essential travel and for those who feel ill or are over the age of 70 to stay home, but has so far stopped short of implementing many of the strict measures that have been seen in other European countries. Cafes, bars and restaurants have, on the whole, remained open, despite Sweden having a comparable number of cases to its Nordic neighbours, who have mandated strict measures aimed at tackling the virus.

In Hungary, parliamentarians have voted to give the government extraordinary power to help combat the COVID-19 outbreak. As such, Prime Minister Viktor Orban has been granted the power to rule by decree, with no time limit for a return to normalcy. The powers that have been granted include strict controls on the press, with possible jail terms for those work for media outlets who are not politically aligned with the government. Over 100,000 people have signed a petition against the move, with prominent opposition figures condemning the motion as extreme. The move has also received negative backlash abroad, with the former Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi tweeting that the move needs to be “beaten down” or Hungary “driven out” of the European Union. The Hungarian government will likely face further backlash over the measures clash with the European Union in the near term.

In Italy, the total number of COVID-19 cases has surpassed 100,000; however, the number of new cases recorded in the country has fallen for the fifth successive day to its lowest rate in two weeks. The government has indicated that it will extend lockdown measures until at least Easter Sunday (12 April). Officials have stated that though they believe the county to be on the right track, an easing of restrictions will not take place until a significant and sustained fall in new cases is observed.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro continues to deny the seriousness and scale of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bolsonaro has indicated that he opposes measures that have been imposed to slow the spread of the virus, citing the economic impact of social distancing measures. His comments put him at odds with his own health minister, who has urged Brazilians to maintain maximum social distance to avoid pressure on the country's fragile health infrastructure. Though much of the measures to tackle the outbreak have been imposed by individual state governments in Brazil, pressure from the President could cause politically aligned governors to ease restrictions before it is safe to do so.

The British airline British Airways has announced that it will suspend services from its second-largest hub, London Gatwick, a day after EasyJet announced the grounding of its fleet. Elsewhere in the industry, in the UAE, it has been announced that Emirates will receive an equity infusion from the Dubai government. This comes as Australian airlines and American Airlines have asked for state aid to survive the coming months. Indeed, Virgin Australia has even raised the prospect that it could end up in government hands if needed.

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.

China has announced that it plans to lift the travel restrictions on Hubei province after months of lockdown, with the exception of the city of Wuhan. Since 26 March, transport services have gradually begun resuming operations. Reports also indicate that Wuhan will resume some commercial flights on 8 April; however, these are likely to only be domestic. China is set to curb access back into the country with updated reports indicating that China will temporarily suspend entry for foreign nationals from midnight local time on 28 March.

In Hong Kong, all non-residents have been banned (the measure began on 25 March) from entering or transiting through the Special Administrative Region.

Thailand has implemented a state of emergency after previously ordering the closure of malls in Bangkok and now requires all travellers to acquire a health certificate before entering the country. Malaysia is due to deploy its military on Sunday to aid in enforcing a national movement control order, which is scheduled to last until the end of March. The Philippines have implemented a complete lockdown.

India has also now implemented a lockdown, with people being banned from leaving their homes, the closure of non-essential shops, businesses and places of worship, suspension of all schools and non-essential public transport as well as the cessation of all social, political entertainment and sports activities.

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, Vietnam, Turkmenistan. The majority of other countries also have restrictions in place, though these vary in severity.

Europe

Italy remains the hardest-hit country by the virus in terms of fatalities. However, Spain, Germany and France are all seeing strong new case growth. Nearly all travel to and from, as well as inside Europe has been curbed. The EU has closed the bloc's external borders. The UK has advised all its citizens against all but essential travel abroad.

Restrictions have also been implemented inside the majority of countries, with the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Spain and many others imposing a lockdown 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. The majority of other European countries have some form of restrictions in place.

Americas

The United States is now the epicentre of the pandemic, with the most cases compared to any other country, overtaking China.

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. In countries where commercial departure options remain available, US citizens who live in the United States should arrange for an immediate return, unless they are prepared to remain abroad for an indefinite period. US citizens who live abroad should avoid all international travel. Repatriation flights do still continue for the time being. 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. On 29 March, President Trump announced that the social distancing measures that are designed to slow the virus's spread will stay in place until at least 30 April.

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

Africa

A number of countries in Africa have implemented travel restrictions on people arriving from affected countries. Currently, this includes most of Europe, China and the US. South Africa will enter a national lockdown this week.

At this time, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Libya, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Reunion, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan and Tunisia have all barred all inbound travel. Algeria, Angola, Congo, Djibouti, Mali, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda all have at least some restrictions on inbound travel.

Middle East	<p>The Middle East also has some significant restrictions, Saudi Arabia, has implemented a ban on all foreign arrivals, including pilgrims (a measure they hope will be lifted prior to Hajj). Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE are also imposing strict internal movement restrictions.</p> <p>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.</p>
Australia/Oceania	<p>Australia and New Zealand have closed their borders to anyone who is not a citizen or resident. The lockdown in Australia had been considered quite lenient when compared to France, Italy or the UK; however, the government has announced stricter restrictions</p> <p>Most Pacific Island nations have also imposed border control measures and quarantine requirements on travellers arriving from affected countries.</p>

Current Statistics (Numbers vary between sources)

Current Total Cases	800,049 (+62,471)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	169,995 (+13,700)	Total Confirmed Deaths	38,721 (+3,721)
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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.

Statistics

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	164,359	USA	+20,353	Italy	11,591	China	76,052
Italy	101,739	Spain	+7,846	Spain	8,189	Spain	19,259
Spain	94,417	Germany	+4,450	China	3,305	Iran	14,656
China	81,518	France	+4,376	USA	3,173	Italy	14,620
Germany	67,051	Italy	+4,050	France	3,024	Germany	13,500
Iran	44,605	Iran	+3,186	Iran	2,898	France	7,927
France	44,550	UK	+2,619	UK	1,408	USA	5,507
UK	22,141	Turkey	+1,610	Netherlands	864	S. Korea	5,408
Switzerland	15,922	Canada	+1,128	Belgium	705	Switzerland	1,823
Belgium	12,775	Switzerland	+1,093	Germany	650	Belgium	1,698
Netherlands	11,750	Belgium	+1,063	Switzerland	359	Canada	1,114
Turkey	10,827	Netherlands	+884	Turkey	168	Austria	1,095
Austria	9,851	Austria	+830	Brazil	165	Diamond Princess	603
S. Korea	9,786	Israel	+448	S. Korea	162	Malaysia	537
Canada	7,474	Portugal	+446	Sweden	146	Japan	424
Portugal	6,408	Brazil	+374	Portugal	140	Thailand	342
Israel	4,831	Sweden	+328	Indonesia	136	Australia	337
Brazil	4,661	Chile	+310	Austria	128	Bahrain	295
Australia	4,557	Russia	+302	Canada	92	Netherlands	250
Norway	4,495	Australia	+297	Philippines	88	Argentina	228
Sweden	4,028	Ireland	+295	Denmark	77	Singapore	228
Czechia	3,002	Romania	+294	Romania	69	Romania	220
Ireland	2,910	India	+227	Ecuador	62	Israel	163
Denmark	2,815	Poland	+193	Japan	56	Turkey	162
Malaysia	2,766	Czechia	+184	Ireland	54	Iceland	157
Chile	2,449	Denmark	+182	Greece	46	Chile	156
Russia	2,337	Norway	+161	Iraq	46	Iraq	152
Romania	2,245	Malaysia	+156	Malaysia	43	Egypt	150
Poland	2,132	Saudi Arabia	+154	Dominican Republic	42	UK	135
Philippines	2,084	Mexico	+145	Egypt	41	Hong Kong	128
Luxembourg	1,988	Thailand	+136	Algeria	35	Brazil	127
Ecuador	1,966	Indonesia	+129	Norway	34	Russia	121
Japan	1,953	Philippines	+128	Morocco	33	Saudi Arabia	115
Pakistan	1,865	Pakistan	+120	India	32	India	102
Thailand	1,651	Finland	+112	Poland	31	Indonesia	81
Indonesia	1,528	Peru	+98	Mexico	28	Luxembourg	80
Saudi Arabia	1,453	Colombia	+96	Panama	27	Pakistan	76
Finland	1,418	Japan	+87	Czechia	25	New Zealand	74
South Africa	1,326	Panama	+86	Pakistan	25	Faeroe Islands	74
India	1,251	Iraq	+83	San Marino	25	Kuwait	73



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