

COVID-19 Outbreak Update

3 May

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SOLACE GLOBAL

Executive Summary

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases globally are approaching 3.5 million, with approximately 245,000 deaths and around 1,124,000 recoveries. Nearly all countries globally have reported at least one case and/or have implemented some form of travel restriction. The situation has stabilised somewhat in the past weeks with many travel restrictions, both internationally and domestically, in place for the foreseeable future. Some countries worldwide are beginning to ease their restrictions; however, this process will be slow, with restrictions on international travel likely to be one of the last measures to be lifted.

Solace Global continues to advise against all non-essential travel at this time due to the widespread travel restrictions. However, if conducting essential travel, it is advised that you check your relevant government’s travel advice and contact your airline or travel provider for more details. Be aware that it is likely that many destinations globally will have some form of quarantining measure in place upon arrival. At this time, Solace Global still advises that 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

In the US, the Trump administration has blocked a senior health official from testifying to a congressional committee examining the country’s response to COVID-19. A White House spokesperson has indicated that it would have been counter productive for Dr Anthony Fauci to testify whilst the outbreak is ongoing. Fauci’s testimony was being sought for a hearing on 6 May by a House Appropriations subcommittee that oversees health programs. Senior Democratic figures have, in recent days, begun to call for a wide-ranging inquiry into the government’s handling of the pandemic, which has killed nearly 68,000 Americans at the time of writing. However, it is unlikely that such an investigation will take place in the near-term.

The Spanish government has announced that the wearing of face coverings will be mandated on public transport as the country gradually eases lockdown measures. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has indicated that millions of masks will be distributed to the public, mainly at transport locations. Residents in Spain have been allowed to exercise outside for the first time following 48 days of confinement in their homes. Some non-essential businesses such as bookshops, hardware shops or garages, will be able to reopen but will only be allowed to accept customers who make an appointment. Some small Spanish islands will see further loosening of restrictions due to low levels of COVID-19. In Formentera, El Hierro, La Graciosa and La Gomera, markets, terrace bars, libraries and outdoor cultural events will be permitted to restart operations, albeit with limits on capacity.

In Australia, the government will review lockdown measures earlier than expected, with a view that some may be lifted. Officials were due to review the restrictions on 11 May but this will now be brought forward to 8 May. Several states have already lifted some restrictions, with fewer than 20 new cases of COVID-19 reported nationwide every day since 20 April. Officials remain wary of loosening restrictions too quickly, especially as fewer than 3.5 million out of Australia’s near 25 million population have downloaded the government’s contact tracing smartphone app.

In Venezuela, a prison riot triggered by COVID-19-related restrictions has killed over 40 people. Inmates at Los Llanos jail, near Guanare, were reportedly angry at a lack of food and water; provisions that are often brought in by family visitors. Prison riots in Latin America have become increasingly common in recent weeks as restrictions have exacerbated the already poor living conditions. The UN’s Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is calling for an investigation into the incident.

Pharmaceutical giant Roche has received emergency approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for an antibody test to help determine if people have ever been infected with COVID-19. The Swiss company claims that its test is 99.8 percent accurate and can deliver results within 20 minutes. However, the test is lab-based and therefore requires people to attend a specific location to give a blood sample. Governments across the world are seeking effective antibody testing that can be conducted at home, without the need for people to travel and potentially expose themselves to the virus.

In similar news, European leaders have pledged to raise billions of euros in funding to support the development of vaccines and treatments for COVID-19. An online pledging conference due to take place on Monday is reportedly aiming to raise around 7.5 billion euros in funding to support the global response to the pandemic. In a jointly written newspaper article, penned by Giuseppe Conte, Emmanuel Macron, Angela Merkel, Charles Michel, Erna Solberg and Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European commission, the political leaders wrote: “The funds that we raise will kickstart an unprecedented global cooperation between scientists and regulators, industry and governments, international organisations, foundations and healthcare professionals.”. In addition, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Wellcome Trust were said to be participating in the venture.

Region Specific Updates and New Restrictions – Be aware these are fluid and subject to change, check for any updates prior to travel.	
Asia	While restrictions across the region remain extensive, some countries are now easing their internal lockdown measures after successfully managing their outbreaks, these include China, Taiwan and South Korea. International travel restrictions will, however, likely remain in place for the time being. China, for example, has implemented a limit on the number of flights to the country and are denying entry to foreigners with previously issued visas and residence permits.
Europe	The EU Commission has invited all Schengen Member States and Schengen Associated States to prolong the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU until at least 15 May. Airlines, however, do continue to operate limited flights to and from the majority of EU countries. Austria, Denmark, Germany, Norway 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. Most recently, France, Italy, Spain and Switzerland have also announced

	plans to ease their containment measures. In Italy, businesses are set to start reopening gradually in May.				
Americas	<p>The US continues to be the worst affected country globally. The majority of states now have a “stay-at-home” order of some kind or have closed “non-essential” businesses. However, some states are now looking to ease restrictions, with protests also occurring in response to the lockdowns. In some cases, the demonstrators have attended these rallies armed.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The majority of countries in the Americas have some form of restriction on both internal and international travel.</p>				
Africa	<p>African countries have, thus far, not been as severely impacted by the outbreak, with the continent’s case numbers lower than all other continents except that of Oceania. However, the risk that the pandemic poses to the Africa cannot be understated. As such, many countries implemented lockdown measures very early, when only a handful of cases had been recorded. Indeed, many countries announced restrictions before any confirmed cases.</p> <p>While the majority of countries have some form of restrictions in place, especially on major cities, some, including Ghana, have been able to start relaxing their lockdowns. The DRC is also relaxing restrictions on the capital Kinshasa, which had been struck relatively hard before the outbreak. South Africa has also begun to ease restrictions since 1 May.</p> <p>International travel is likely to remain limited for the foreseeable future. For example, Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, closed its land borders and banned all international flights in late March.</p>				
Middle East	<p>The Middle East has some significant lockdowns in place, most countries are also now looking to ease restrictions. Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Jordan, among others, have all eased the restrictions on people’s movements.</p> <p>Notably, Saudi Arabia has eased restrictions nationwide, with the exception of Mecca, with malls, wholesale and retail shops, also being allowed to reopen from the sixth day of Ramadan. Mecca remains under a 24-hour curfew with calls for the kingdom to postpone Hajj in July.</p>				
Australia /Oceania	<p>All states in Australia appear to have contained the spread of the coronavirus. Some states and territories including Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory will start to ease their restrictions from 1 May. Variations on restriction rules apply between states.</p> <p>Additionally, New Zealand’s Prime Minister announced that the country has stopped the transmission of the virus. As such, some of the lockdown restrictions were eased from 11.59 local time on 27 April. New Zealand also lifted its level 4-lockdown that has been in effect for more than 4 weeks. The level 3 phase, which is reportedly in effect for two weeks, allows non-essential businesses such as retailers, schools and restaurants to reopen.</p>				
Solace Global Advice	<p>At this time, we continue to advise that only business-critical travel is conducted. Otherwise, ensure that you can access the country you intend to travel to. Extensive travel restrictions are making even business-critical travel difficult, as such, it is important that travellers are aware of the restrictions that are in place, including any potential mandatory quarantining, and are prepared for travel to be postponed or disrupted at short notice. It is likely that restrictions will continue to be eased in the coming weeks and months; however, these will remain fluid, with spikes in new cases likely resulting in renewed lockdowns and travel restrictions.</p>				
Current Statistics (Numbers vary between sources)					
Current Total Cases	3,496,707 (+93,161)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	1,126,134 (+41,402)	Total Confirmed Deaths	244,870(+5,212)
<p>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.</p>					

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	1,160,838	USA	29,744	USA	67,448	USA	173,725
Spain	245,567	Russia	9,623	Italy	28,710	Spain	146,233
Italy	209,328	UK	4,806	UK	28,131	Germany	130,600
UK	182,260	Brazil	4,450	Spain	25,100	Italy	79,914
France	168,396	Spain	2,588	France	24,760	China	77,713
Germany	164,967	India	2,442	Belgium	7,765	Iran	77,350
Russia	134,687	Peru	2,075	Germany	6,812	Turkey	58,259
Turkey	124,375	Turkey	1,983	Brazil	6,761	France	50,562
Brazil	97,100	Italy	1,900	Iran	6,156	Brazil	40,937
Iran	96,448	Canada	1,653	Netherlands	4,987	Switzerland	24,200
China	82,877	Mexico	1,515	China	4,633	Canada	23,801
Canada	56,714	Chile	1,427	Canada	3,566	Russia	16,639
Belgium	49,517	Saudi Arabia	1,362	Turkey	3,336	Mexico	13,447
Peru	42,534	Ecuador	1,128	Sweden	2,669	Ireland	13,386
Netherlands	40,236	France	1,050	Mexico	2,061	Austria	13,180
India	39,980	Pakistan	930	Switzerland	1,762	Peru	12,434
Switzerland	29,817	Belarus	911	Ecuador	1,371	Belgium	12,211
Ecuador	27,464	Germany	890	India	1,323	India	10,819
Saudi Arabia	25,459	Iran	802	Ireland	1,286	Israel	9,634
Portugal	25,190	Qatar	776	Russia	1,280	Chile	9,572
Mexico	22,088	Sweden	562	Peru	1,200	S. Korea	9,183
Sweden	22,082	UAE	561	Portugal	1,023	Denmark	6,889
Ireland	21,176	Bangladesh	552	Indonesia	831	Australia	5,814
Pakistan	19,103	Ukraine	550	Romania	780	Pakistan	4,817
Chile	18,435	Belgium	485	Poland	664	Romania	4,547
Singapore	18,205	Singapore	447	Philippines	603	Malaysia	4,326
Israel	16,193	Netherlands	445	Austria	596	Saudi Arabia	3,765
Belarus	15,828	South Africa	385	Denmark	475	Poland	3,762
Austria	15,558	Ireland	343	Japan	474	Czechia	3,461
Qatar	14,872	Egypt	298	Algeria	459	Luxembourg	3,318
Japan	14,571	Indonesia	292	Pakistan	440	Japan	3,205
UAE	13,599	Dominican Republic	290	Egypt	415	Belarus	3,117
Poland	13,375	Colombia	279	Hungary	340	Finland	3,000
Romania	12,732	Poland	270	Dominican Republic	326	Thailand	2,739
Ukraine	11,913	Japan	266	Colombia	324	UAE	2,664
Indonesia	10,843	Kazakhstan	260	Ukraine	288	South Africa	2,549
S. Korea	10,793	Cameroon	245	S. Korea	250	Ecuador	2,132
Denmark	9,407	Kuwait	242	Chile	247	Algeria	1,872
Serbia	9,362	Nigeria	218	Czechia	245	Iceland	1,706
Philippines	8,928	Portugal	203	Argentina	237	Kuwait	1,703



Solace Global remain available to our clients, organisations and individuals throughout this time and are able to provide our full range of Travel Risk Management services. We understand that during such unprecedented times, remaining BAU can be complex. Whether you require customised reports, training, comprehensive crisis management, in-country journey management, tracking, response, evacuation or a service more specific, we are able to tailor our services to your exact requirements enabling you to make appropriate decisions going forward.

For further details, please email risk@solaceglobal.com or give us a call on +44 (0) 1202 308 810.