The image shows the interior of a public transport vehicle, likely a bus or tram. The seats are dark blue and arranged in rows. A person wearing a dark jacket and a blue face mask is seated on the right side, looking down at a device. The vehicle has large windows and overhead handrails. The number '79' is visible on the wall above a window. The overall lighting is somewhat dim, and the image has a slightly desaturated, muted color palette.

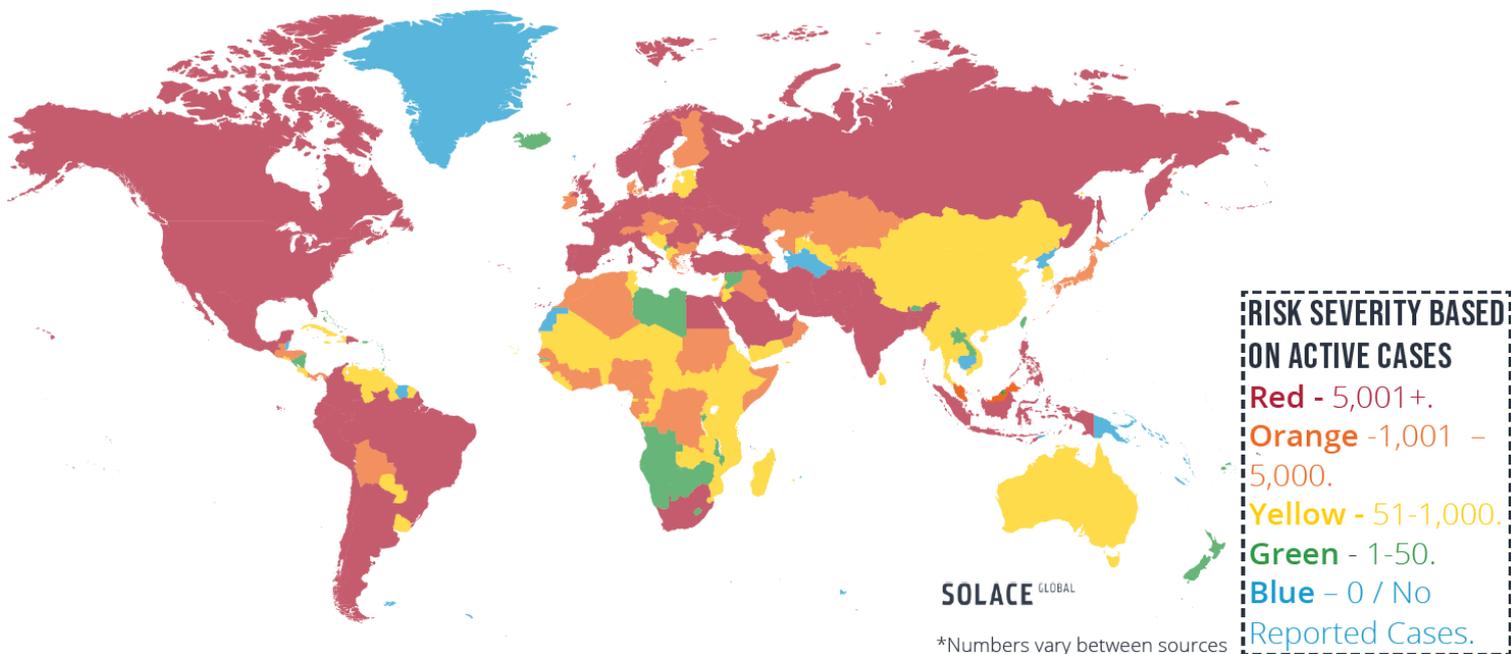
COVID-19 Outbreak Update
18 May

SOLACE GLOBAL

Executive Summary

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases globally have now exceeded 4.8 million, with approximately 317,000 deaths and over 1.86 million 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 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

The UK government has announced its intention to manufacture 30 million doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and begin inoculating the British public by September 2020, if trials are successful. The plans are dependent on a candidate vaccine developed at the University of Oxford proving to be both safe and effective. Speaking at the daily Downing Street press conference, however, Business Secretary Alok Sharma warned that an effective vaccine may never be found.

In other news, the UK government has backed calls from Australia to establish an independent inquiry into the origins of COVID-19. A draft World Health Organisation (WHO) resolution has been cosponsored by 62 countries, including India, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Indonesia, Russia and all 27 EU member states. Growing support for the investigation has reportedly enraged Chinese officials, who are threatening trade sanctions against nations who express support for the investigation.

In Brazil, the mayor of Sao Paulo has indicated that the city’s health system is on the brink of collapse as demand grows for intensive care beds due to rising numbers of COVID-19 cases. Bruno Covas said the city’s public hospitals had reached 90% capacity and could run out of space within a fortnight. Brazil has recently overtaken Italy to become the fifth worst-affected nation in terms of total confirmed cases, with over 241,000. Health experts, however, have warned that the real number of cases in the country may be far higher than the official records, due to a lack of testing capacity. Meanwhile, President Jair Bolsonaro has again attended an anti-lockdown protest, flouting social distancing guidelines.

The provincial government of the Canadian province of British Columbia has announced that some children will start to return to schools on a part-time, voluntary basis from 1 June. The gradual reopening will apply to children of all ages, with schools having to implement enhanced cleaning schedules and social distancing measures in the classroom. Additionally, the number of pupils in a class will be limited alongside staggered start and break times. Elementary schools will be limited to 50 per cent in-class instruction, while middle and secondary schools will be limited to 20 per cent in-class instruction, or one day a week. The steps will pave the way for a full-time restart of education in British Columbia in September following the summer holidays.

The Indian government has extended the country’s lockdown for a further two weeks in an attempt to curb the spread of COVID-19. It is the fourth time that the nationwide lockdown has been extended. Some measures, however, have been eased. Restaurants will now be allowed to operate takeaway services, while sports complexes and stadiums can host events without spectators. There has also been a loosening of restrictions regarding the use of private vehicles and public transport.

The Nepalese Government has also extended the country’s lockdown until at least 2 June. However, the government has also decided that some sectors of the economy, such as agriculture and construction, should restart with social distancing measures in place. Officials have indicated that the government is seeking to procure large amounts of ‘immunity boosting’ medicines and encourage citizens to conduct more physical exercise in the coming days.

In Japan, the government has announced that it has entered into its first recession since 2015 due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Official

data released on 18 May revealed the world’s third-largest economy contracted by 0.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2020 while the cabinet office reported a drop of 3.4 per cent annual pace in seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product (GDP), the total value of the country’s good and services, for the period between January and March, compared to the previous year.

In Nigeria, authorities have impounded an aircraft operated by a UK company for allegedly contravening flight rules designed to limit the spread of COVID-19. Passenger flights into the country, except for evacuation or repatriation services, are currently prohibited in Nigeria. Aviation Minister Hadi Sirika has indicated that the UK company had been given permission to conduct humanitarian flights but was operating a commercial passenger service. The UK company, a private charter operator, has indicated that it is working with Nigerian authorities to resolve the situation.

The Egyptian Government has indicated that it will impose a curfew and halt all public transport from 24 May to stop the spread of COVID-19 over the Eid holiday. Shops, restaurants, parks and beaches will be closed for the extended holiday at the end of Ramadan, and restrictions on citizens’ movements will remain in place for at least two weeks afterwards. Officials have, however, indicated that there could be a gradual reopening of some venues including sports clubs and restaurants from mid-June.

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 to curb 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 mid-June. Airlines, however, continue to operate limited flights to and from the majority of EU countries.

European countries are now seeing an easing of internal and international restrictions after overcoming what the peak of the outbreak in their countries. Most recently, Italy has announced that it will allow travel to and from abroad from 3 June.

Americas

The US continues to be the worst affected country globally. The majority of states have imposed restrictions or have ‘stay-at-home’ orders in place. However, in recent days and weeks, many states have begun to ease measures and have allowed businesses to resume limited operations as part of phased reopening plans.

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.

The majority of countries in the Americas have some form of restriction on both internal and international travel.

Africa

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 Oceania. However, the risk that the pandemic poses to 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.

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.

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.

Middle East

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.

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. Additionally, Kuwait announced a ‘total curfew’ from 10 May for 20 days.

Australia/ Oceania

All states in Australia appear to have contained the spread of the coronavirus. Most states and territories including Queensland, Western Australia, New South Wales, Northern Territory and Victoria have eased restrictions.

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. Updated reports indicate that New Zealand also lifted the nationwide state of emergency and entered the Level 2 phase. The new phase allows public spaces such as restaurants and gyms to reopen.

Solace Global Advice

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.

Current Statistics (Numbers vary between sources)							
Current Total Cases	4,805,630 (+71,772)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	1,860,226 (+42,208)	Total Confirmed Deaths	316,753 (+3,353)		
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	1,527,664	USA	+19,891	USA	90,978	USA	346,389
Russia	281,752	Russia	+9,709	UK	34,636	Spain	195,945
Spain	277,719	Brazil	+7,938	Italy	31,908	Germany	154,600
UK	243,695	India	+5,050	France	28,108	Italy	125,176
Brazil	241,080	Peru	+3,732	Spain	27,650	Turkey	109,962
Italy	225,435	UK	+3,534	Brazil	16,122	Iran	94,464
France	179,569	Saudi Arabia	+2,736	Belgium	9,052	Brazil	94,122
Germany	176,651	Chile	+2,353	Germany	8,049	China	78,238
Turkey	149,435	Mexico	+2,112	Iran	6,988	Russia	67,373
Iran	120,198	Iran	+1,806	Canada	5,782	France	61,213
India	96,169	Qatar	+1,632	Netherlands	5,680	Canada	38,550
Peru	92,273	Turkey	+1,368	Mexico	5,177	India	36,824
China	82,954	Pakistan	+1,352	China	4,634	Mexico	33,329
Canada	77,002	Bangladesh	+1,273	Turkey	4,140	Peru	28,621
Belgium	55,280	Spain	+1,214	Sweden	3,679	Switzerland	27,500
Saudi Arabia	54,752	South Africa	+1,160	India	3,029	Saudi Arabia	25,722
Mexico	49,219	Canada	+1,138	Ecuador	2,736	Ireland	19,470
Netherlands	43,995	Kuwait	+1,048	Peru	2,648	Chile	19,213
Chile	43,781	Belarus	+969	Russia	2,631	Belgium	14,630
Pakistan	42,125	UAE	+731	Switzerland	1,881	Austria	14,563
Ecuador	33,182	Singapore	+682	Ireland	1,543	Israel	12,942
Qatar	32,604	Italy	+675	Portugal	1,218	Pakistan	11,922
Switzerland	30,587	Colombia	+635	Indonesia	1,148	Japan	11,153
Sweden	30,143	Egypt	+510	Romania	1,107	Belarus	9,932
Belarus	29,650	Indonesia	+489	Poland	925	S. Korea	9,904
Portugal	29,036	Sweden	+466	Pakistan	903	Romania	9,890
Singapore	28,038	Ukraine	+433	Philippines	824	Singapore	9,340
Ireland	24,112	Ecuador	+419	Japan	744	Denmark	9,227
UAE	23,358	Germany	+407	Egypt	630	UAE	8,512
Bangladesh	22,268	Nigeria	+338	Austria	629	Poland	7,451
Ukraine	18,616	Kazakhstan	+307	Colombia	574	South Africa	7,006
Poland	18,529	Belgium	+291	Algeria	548	Australia	6,392
Indonesia	17,514	Poland	+272	Denmark	547	Panama	6,081
Romania	16,871	Argentina	+263	Ukraine	535	Dominican Republic	5,847
Israel	16,617	Afghanistan	+262	Chile	450	Malaysia	5,571
Japan	16,285	Bolivia	+249	Dominican Republic	428	Czechia	5,462
Austria	16,242	Portugal	+226	Argentina	373	Ukraine	5,276
Colombia	15,574	Bahrain	+209	Bangladesh	328	Finland	5,000
South Africa	15,515	Philippines	+208	Saudi Arabia	312	Sweden	4,971
Kuwait	14,850	France	+204	Czechia	298	Serbia	4,713



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.