The image shows the interior of a public transport vehicle, likely a bus or tram. The seats are 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 mobile device. The vehicle has large windows and overhead handrails. The number '797' is visible on the wall above the windows. The overall atmosphere is quiet and somewhat somber due to the pandemic context.

# **COVID-19 Outbreak Update**

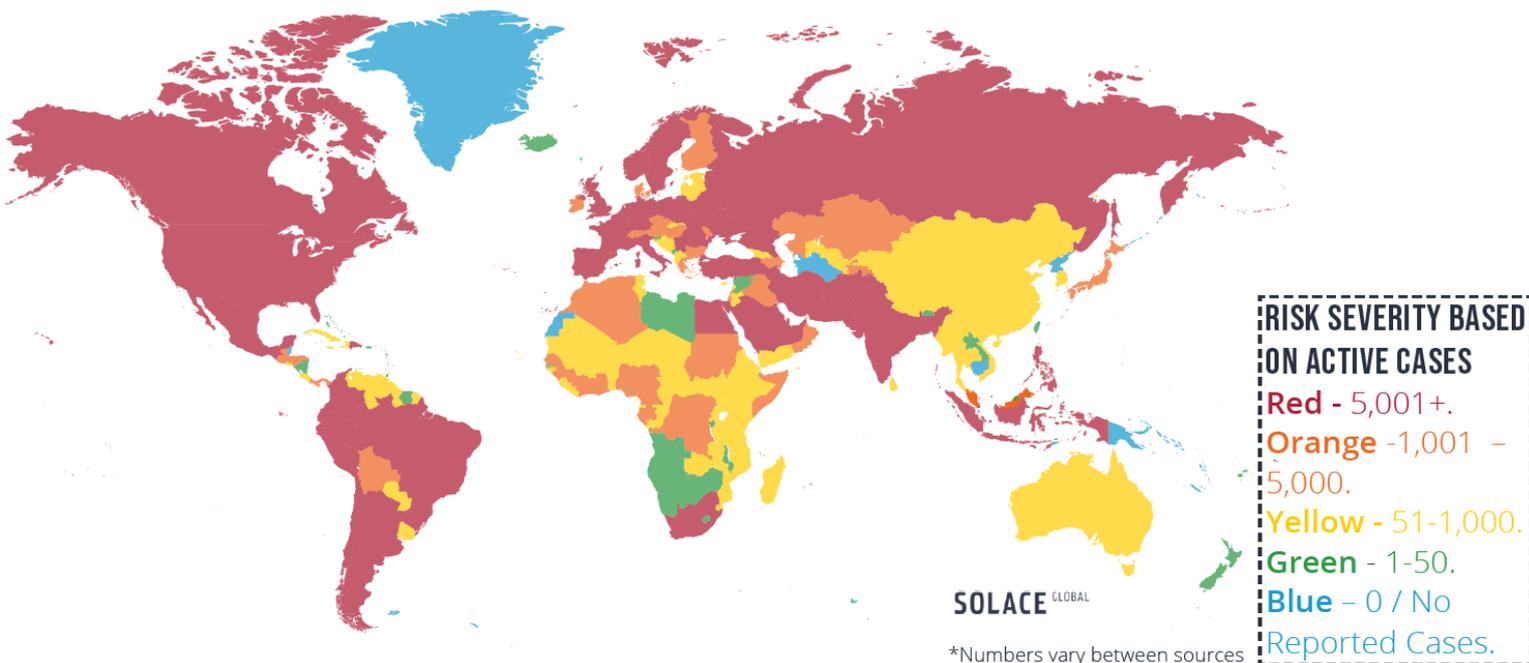
## **19 May**

**SOLACE** GLOBAL

**Executive Summary**

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases globally have now exceeded 4.9 million, with approximately 320,000 deaths and over 1.9 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 Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has pledged an independent evaluation of the global coronavirus response would be launched as soon as possible. Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus made the promise during a virtual meeting of the WHO’s decision-making body, the World Health Assembly (WHA). In an apparent reversal of his previous position, Chinese leader Xi Jinping has backed the investigation following pressure from dozens of countries demanding an investigation into the origins of the virus.

United States President Donald Trump has told White House reporters that he has been taking antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine for several weeks in order to defend against COVID-19. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), however, has warned that the drug should not be used for that purpose because it could cause irregular heartbeats and other cardiac trauma. Trump has previously promoted the drug as an effective treatment for COVID-19, despite little to no evidence that it has a positive effect. White House medical staff have indicated that the potential benefits of the president taking hydroxychloroquine outweigh the relative risks.

Elsewhere, the president has threatened to permanently withdraw funding from the WHO in a hostile letter sent to the director general. The letter outlined a 30-day deadline for the agency to show commitment to “substantive improvements” in its ability to demonstrate independence from the Chinese government. Finally in the US, the governors of New York and California have cleared the way for sporting events to resume, without crowds, in June.

In Chile, around half of the 50-member Senate and four ministers have self-quarantined after coming into contact with at least three colleagues infected with COVID-19. The country has recently recorded a 60 per cent increase in confirmed cases of the virus despite implementing countermeasures for over six weeks. The government has recently imposed a total lockdown in the capital Santiago, which has recorded more than 80 percent of the country’s 46,000 cases. Chile is likely to see further rises in numbers of COVID-19 cases due to ongoing anti-government protests.

An in-depth media investigation has alleged that COVID-19 deaths in Mexico may be five times higher than official government figures. Monitoring of morgues and crematoriums in Mexico City has revealed that there has been a significant increase in the rate of deaths as compared with mortality rates in pre-pandemic times. Additionally, figures in the government have indicated anonymously that it is government policy to undercount mortality figures, perhaps to avoid mass panic in large cities. However, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has reacted angrily to the reports, accusing media outlets of trying to undermine his administration. Despite evidence that the virus is spreading rapidly in Mexico, where social distancing has proven impossible in some urban areas, hundreds of municipalities have lifted restrictions aimed at curbing the effects of COVID-19. López Obrador’s administration has relied heavily on modelling to track the spread of the virus and has conducted very little testing.

Children in the Australian state of New South Wales will return to school from 25 May, Premier Gladys Berejiklian has announced. Unlike in other municipalities in developed nations, there will be no phased return, with all pupils due to return to five-day a week tuition. Teachers unions have reacted with scepticism to the

plan and have raised a number of issues that need to be addressed. Berejikian has warned that temporary school closures would likely be necessary in the future to contain sporadic outbreaks of the virus. The issue demonstrates how governments around the world will likely face opposition from trade unions over plans to restart normal life, with strikes over safety fears a realistic possibility.

**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. South Africa and Egypt are both seeing a strong increase in case numbers with Cameroon and Sudan also seeing a rise in the increase in confirmed cases  
 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	4,908,200 (+102,570)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	1,916,923 (+56,697)	Total Confirmed Deaths	320,430 (+3,677)
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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	1,550,539	USA	+22,630	USA	91,985	USA	356,383
Russia	299,941	Brazil	+14,288	UK	34,796	Spain	196,958
Spain	278,188	Russia	+8,926	Italy	32,007	Germany	155,700

Brazil	255,368	India	+4,630	France	28,239	Italy	127,326
UK	246,406	UK	+2,711	Spain	27,709	Turkey	111,577
Italy	225,886	Peru	+2,660	Brazil	16,853	Brazil	100,459
France	179,927	Saudi Arabia	+2,593	Belgium	9,108	Iran	95,661
Germany	177,289	Iran	+2,294	Germany	8,123	China	78,241
Turkey	150,593	Chile	+2,278	Iran	7,057	Russia	76,130
Iran	122,492	Mexico	+2,075	Canada	5,842	France	61,728
India	101,261	Pakistan	+1,974	Netherlands	5,694	India	39,233
Peru	94,933	Bangladesh	+1,602	Mexico	5,332	Canada	39,228
China	82,960	Qatar	+1,365	China	4,634	Mexico	35,388
Canada	78,072	Turkey	+1,158	Turkey	4,171	Peru	30,306
Saudi Arabia	57,345	Canada	+1,070	Sweden	3,698	Saudi Arabia	28,748
Belgium	55,791	Belarus	+922	India	3,164	Switzerland	27,600
Mexico	51,633	South Africa	+918	Russia	2,837	Chile	20,165
Chile	46,059	Kuwait	+841	Ecuador	2,799	Ireland	19,470
Netherlands	44,141	UAE	+832	Peru	2,789	Belgium	14,687
Pakistan	43,966	Colombia	+721	Switzerland	1,886	Austria	14,614
Qatar	33,969	Germany	+638	Ireland	1,547	Israel	13,299
Ecuador	33,582	Egypt	+535	Portugal	1,231	Pakistan	12,489
Switzerland	30,597	Indonesia	+496	Indonesia	1,221	Japan	11,564
Belarus	30,572	Spain	+469	Romania	1,124	Belarus	10,130
Sweden	30,377	Italy	+451	Poland	941	S. Korea	9,938
Portugal	29,209	Cameroon	+424	Pakistan	939	Romania	9,930
Singapore	28,794	Dominican Republic	+411	Philippines	837	Singapore	9,835
Bangladesh	25,121	Afghanistan	+408	Japan	749	UAE	9,577
Ireland	24,200	Ecuador	+400	Egypt	645	Denmark	9,301
UAE	24,190	France	+358	Austria	629	Poland	7,903
Poland	19,080	Poland	+356	Colombia	592	South Africa	7,298
Ukraine	18,876	Armenia	+351	Algeria	555	Dominican Republic	6,613
Indonesia	18,496	Ukraine	+325	Ukraine	548	Portugal	6,430
Romania	17,036	Singapore	+305	Denmark	548	Australia	6,413
Israel	16,650	Argentina	+303	Chile	478	Panama	6,081
South Africa	16,433	Sudan	+302	Hungary	467	Malaysia	5,646
Japan	16,305	Kazakhstan	+283	Dominican Republic	434	Czechia	5,641
Colombia	16,295	Belgium	+279	Argentina	382	Ukraine	5,632
Austria	16,269	Bolivia	+262	Bangladesh	370	Finland	5,000
Kuwait	15,691	Sweden	+234	Saudi Arabia	320	Bangladesh	4,993



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.

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