

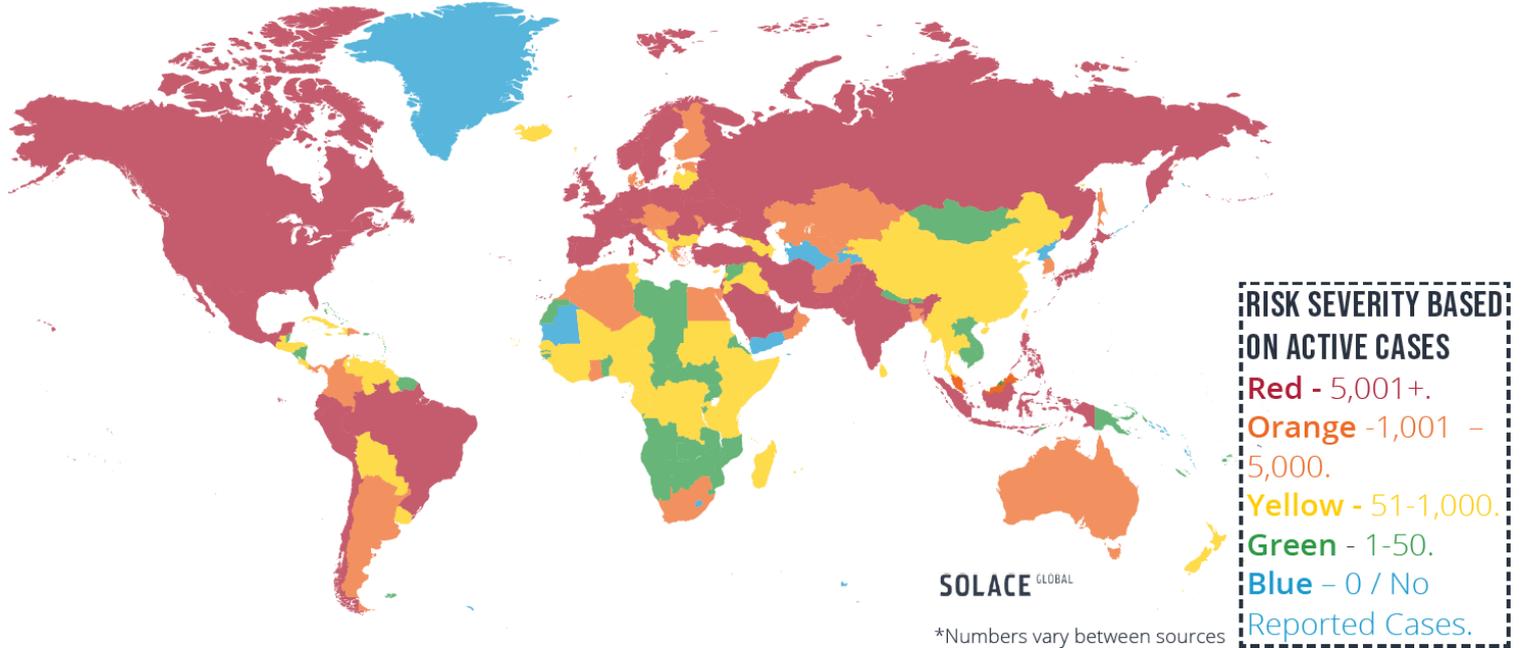
COVID-19 Outbreak Update
24 April

SOLACE GLOBAL

Executive Summary

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases globally has exceeded 2.7 million, with approximately 191,000 deaths and around 750,000 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 continues to advise 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 US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has launched a fresh attack on the World Health Organisation (WHO), indicating that the US may never restore recently withdrawn funding. Additionally, Pompeo mooted the possibility of the US working to establish an alternative to the UN body. The acting head of the US Agency for International Development indicated that the administration would assess if the WHO was being run properly and may look for alternative partners. Plans for an alternative to the WHO would likely hinge on President Donald Trump securing re-election in November 2020, with Democratic nominee Joe Biden likely to adopt a more internationalist approach and restoring WHO funding should he become President.

Recent days have seen a rise in the number of anti-lockdown protests that have taken place in the US, with dozens planned across the nation in the coming weeks. Right-wing groups, some with conspiracist elements, appear to be behind the demonstrations. The fledgeling movement has acquired some influential support, with Attorney General William P. Barr expressing concerns about state-level restrictions potentially infringing on constitutional rights. Additionally, President Trump has expressed support for protesters via his social media accounts.

In the UK, Human trials have commenced for a COVID-19 vaccine candidate developed at Oxford University. The vaccine, which was developed in under three months, has received millions in funding from the UK Government. The vaccine is made from a weakened version of a common cold, known as ChAdOx1, that has been modified so it doesn't cause symptoms in humans while containing some genetic material as COVID-19. Researchers are said to have a high degree of confidence in the efficacy of the vaccine, which uses similar technology as those used to treat MERS and Ebola. It is hoped that the vaccine could be approved with millions of doses available as early as September 2020. However, UK chief medical adviser Chris Whitty has said neither a vaccine nor a drug to treat COVID-19, is likely to be available in 2020.

In similar news, researchers in France are investigating whether nicotine use could protect people from contracting COVID-19. Trials using nicotine patches, usually used for smoking cessation, are due to begin in the coming weeks and will seek to determine whether the substance could be used to prevent infection or treat the virus. The researchers are looking into whether nicotine could help to prevent "cytokine storms", a rapid overreaction of the immune system that scientists think could play a key role in fatal COVID-19 cases. The research has been triggered by several studies conducted internationally that indicate that a disproportionately low number of people treated for the virus have been smokers.

The UK government continues to come under pressure to reveal how it will ease current lockdown measures, a so-called 'exit strategy.' Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon outlined how her government will seek to end the current lockdown, with some restrictions likely to remain in place for months to come. The Scottish Government publication has further increased pressure on the administration in London to reveal its thinking on the issue. Thus far, UK ministers have been reluctant to outline the government's plan to allow citizens to return to work once the initial wave of COVID-19 has been suppressed. Senior officials are likely nervous of making major policy decisions whilst Prime Minister Boris Johnson remains disengaged as he recovers from a severe case COVID-19.

In Australia, the cruise ship Ruby Princess has left Port Kembla, south of Sydney. The vessel, which became Australia's largest single source of COVID-19

infections, is the subject of a criminal investigation after thousands of passengers were allowed to disembark in an uncontrolled manner despite suspected, and subsequently confirmed, cases of COVID-19 on board. The vessel has been linked to 21 deaths in Australia and the United States. Authorities in the state of New South Wales have banned further cruise ship arrivals until new health protocols are agreed with the federal government.

In addition, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has called for an international and independent review into the origins of COVID-19. The move has been widely seen as a rebuke of China, with whom Australia has had increasingly strained relations. The Chinese foreign ministry has dismissed the prospect of an investigation, urging Morrison to give up on ideological prejudice. As yet, a potential enquiry has only found favour in the United States. However, the idea may gain traction amongst other Western governments once the pandemic is under control.

The governors of Nigeria’s 36 states have announced a two-week ban on interstate travel in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 until at least 7 May, with only essential journeys permitted. Whilst many states had already banned entry and exit, a nationwide strategy has been agreed at the Nigerian Governors Forum. As yet, it is unclear whether President Muhammadu Buhari has agreed to the restrictions.

Finally, Brazil has suffered its highest death toll from COVID-19, recording 407 deaths on 23 April. Despite the rapidly rising death toll, President Jair Bolsonaro has continued to express his impatience with restrictions imposed by the state governors to slow the spread of the virus. Newly installed Health Minister Nelson Teich has inferred that the surge in deaths cannot be attributed to a rise in COVID-19 infections, suggesting instead that it can be attributed to an increase in testing. A number of states in Brazil are currently working on plans to restart their economies and lift restrictions.

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

<p>Asia</p>	<p>Nearly all countries in Asia have implemented some form of restriction on travel. Many Asian countries have also limited internal travel and have in-place lockdowns. However, some are now easing internal lockdown measures after successfully managing their internal outbreaks, these include China, Taiwan and South Korea.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Europe</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Americas</p>	<p>The US is the worst affected country globally. 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>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. However, some states are now looking to ease restrictions, with protests also occurring in response to the lockdowns, some of the protesters have attended the rallies armed.</p> <p>The majority of countries in the Americas have some form of restriction on inbound travel.</p>
<p>Africa</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 as well as Ogun State in Nigeria, Algiers and Blida in Algeria to name a few. 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.</p>
<p>Middle East</p>	<p>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.</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>
<p>Australia/Oceania</p>	<p>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. However, Australia has looked to relax some</p>

restrictions in the past days, with people being allowed to visit beaches. Measures remain stringent in New Zealand.

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	2,732,702 (+84,292)	Total Confirmed Recoveries	750,864 (+26,572)	Total Confirmed Deaths	191,150 (+6,536)
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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	886,709	USA	+31,900	USA	50,243	Germany	106,800
Spain	213,024	Russia	+4,774	Italy	25,549	Spain	89,250
Italy	189,973	Spain	+4,635	Spain	22,157	USA	85,922
France	158,183	UK	+4,583	France	21,856	China	77,257
Germany	153,129	Brazil	+3,735	UK	18,738	Iran	64,843
UK	138,078	Turkey	+3,116	Belgium	6,490	Italy	57,576
Turkey	101,790	Italy	+2,646	Germany	5,575	France	42,088
Iran	87,026	Germany	+2,481	Iran	5,481	Brazil	26,573
China	82,804	France	+2,239	China	4,632	Switzerland	20,600
Russia	68,622	Canada	+1,920	Netherlands	4,177	Turkey	18,491
Brazil	50,036	India	+1,669	Brazil	3,331	Canada	14,761
Belgium	42,797	Peru	+1,664	Turkey	2,491	Austria	11,694
Canada	42,110	Saudi Arabia	+1,158	Canada	2,147	Belgium	9,800
Netherlands	35,729	Mexico	+1,043	Sweden	2,021	Ireland	9,233
Switzerland	28,496	Singapore	+1,037	Switzerland	1,551	S. Korea	8,501
India	23,502	Iran	+1,030	Mexico	1,069	Peru	7,422
Portugal	22,353	Pakistan	+981	Portugal	820	Chile	5,804
Peru	20,914	Ireland	+936	Ireland	794	Israel	5,685
Ireland	17,607	Belgium	+908	India	722	Russia	5,568
Sweden	16,755	Netherlands	+887	Indonesia	647	Denmark	5,384
Austria	15,002	Sweden	+751	Russia	615	Australia	5,129
Israel	14,882	Belarus	+741	Peru	572	India	5,012
Saudi Arabia	13,930	Qatar	+623	Ecuador	560	Malaysia	3,542
Japan	12,368	Ukraine	+578	Romania	545	Mexico	2,627
Chile	11,812	UAE	+518	Austria	522	Pakistan	2,527
Mexico	11,633	Chile	+516	Philippines	462	Thailand	2,490
Ecuador	11,183	Japan	+418	Poland	454	Romania	2,478
Singapore	11,178	Bangladesh	+414	Algeria	407	Czechia	2,186
Pakistan	11,155	Romania	+386	Denmark	394	Finland	2,000
S. Korea	10,708	Portugal	+371	Japan	328	Poland	1,944
Poland	10,511	Indonesia	+357	Egypt	287	Saudi Arabia	1,925
Romania	10,096	Poland	+342	Dominican Republic	265	UAE	1,637
UAE	8,756	Ecuador	+333	Hungary	250	Iceland	1,509
Denmark	8,073	South Africa	+318	S. Korea	240	Japan	1,494
Belarus	8,022	Israel	+305	Pakistan	237	South Africa	1,473
Indonesia	7,775	Philippines	+271	Colombia	215	Algeria	1,355
Qatar	7,764	Dominican Republic	+243	Czechia	213	Ecuador	1,328
Ukraine	7,647	Egypt	+232	Norway	194	Portugal	1,201
Norway	7,401	Switzerland	+228	Israel	193	Iraq	1,171
Serbia	7,276	Colombia	+205	Ukraine	193	Bahrain	1,082



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.