



SOLACE GLOBAL

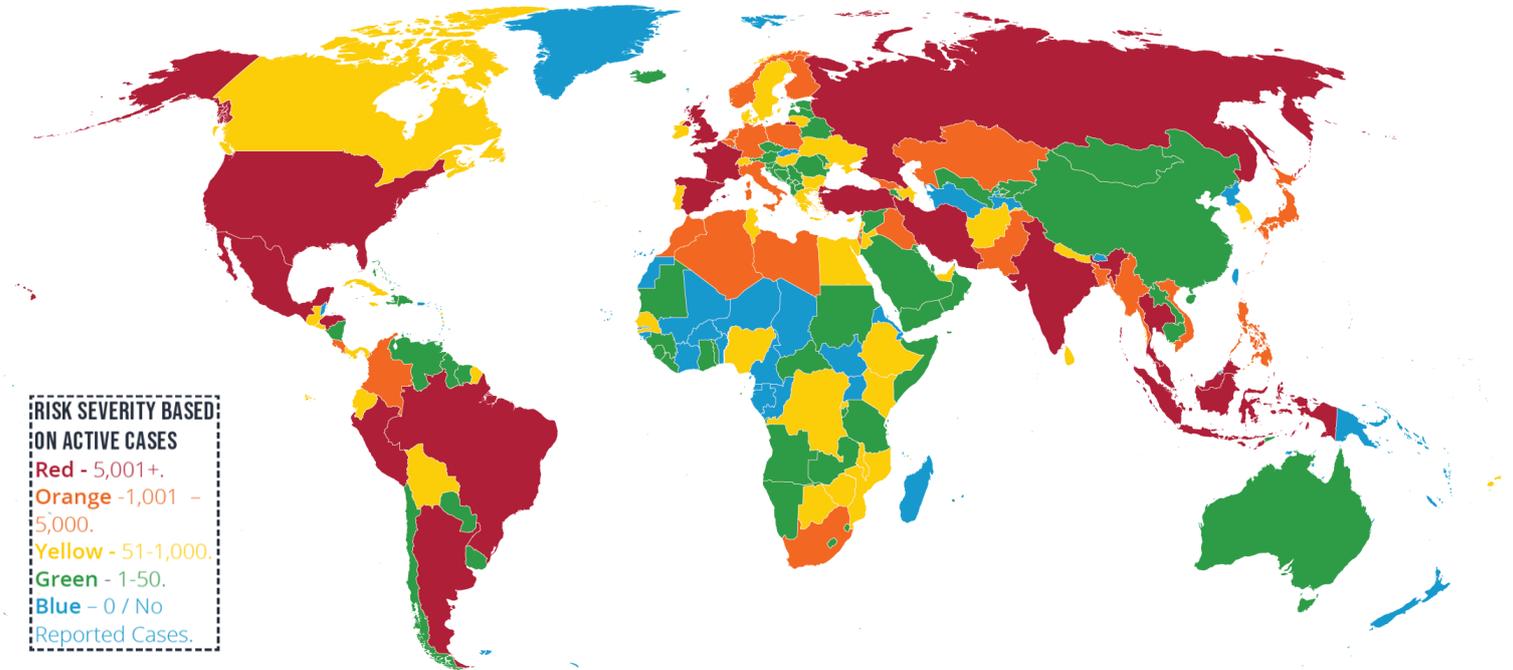
# COVID-19 Weekly Update

19 August

## Executive Summary

The global cumulative caseload has now surpassed 210 million cases with more than 4.4 million deaths since the start of the pandemic. The United States, Iran and India have reported the highest number of new infections in the past week. Notably, too, the UK has also reported more than 200,000 cases in the past seven days.

Despite this, the total number of new weekly cases globally only rose by less than 1 percent, compared to last week's tally. This rate of increase has slowed compared to last week. Between the 11 and 18 August, there were approximately 4.55 million new cases reported worldwide, compared to 4.51 million in the preceding seven days. Additionally, the total number of weekly new COVID-19-related deaths fell by around 1 percent compared to the previous week. There were 66,791 new confirmed deaths in the past 7 days, a drop of 696 compared to the week before.



## Notable Updates

While the world has seen a weekly increase of 1 percent in new cases, South America, Africa and Asia have all seen a decrease in their number of cases, with a respective drop of 15 percent, 5 percent and 2 percent. Elsewhere, North America, inclusive of the Caribbean, has seen an increase of 10 percent. Oceania has seen a 34 percent increase largely driven by cases in French Polynesia as well as in Australia.

Europe has experienced a three percent increase in the weekly number of new cases compared to the preceding week. However, while some countries are seeing heavy increases in cases, others are seeing sharp drops. For example, Spain saw a sharp drop, only recording three quarters as many cases this week when compared to the past one. Germany, however, has seen an increase of around 65 percent.

The drop in cases in Spain has eased fears that travellers from the country would be barred from international travel. It was believed that the UK was set to put the European country on its “red list” due to the increase in infections.

The World Health Organisation has condemned the American government's plan to issue booster shots in the United States. The group says that the priority should be to inoculate those who have yet to receive access to a vaccine, especially in poorer countries. The plan by the Biden administration is designed to give lasting protection to Americans as the Delta variant causes a surge in the country's caseload.

Finally, figures by the British Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest nine in 10 adults would now test positive for COVID-19 antibodies. According to the report 94.2 percent of adults in England possess coronavirus antibodies, compared to 93.5 percent in Scotland and 93.2 percent in Wales. The rate in Northern Ireland is believed to be 89 percent.

## Vaccination Updates

As of 19 August, 31.8 percent of the world population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, with 23.4 percent being fully vaccinated. In total, there have been 4.8 billion COVID-19 doses administered globally, and 34.54 million are now administered each day. Despite this, only 1.3 percent of people in low-income countries have received at least one dose.

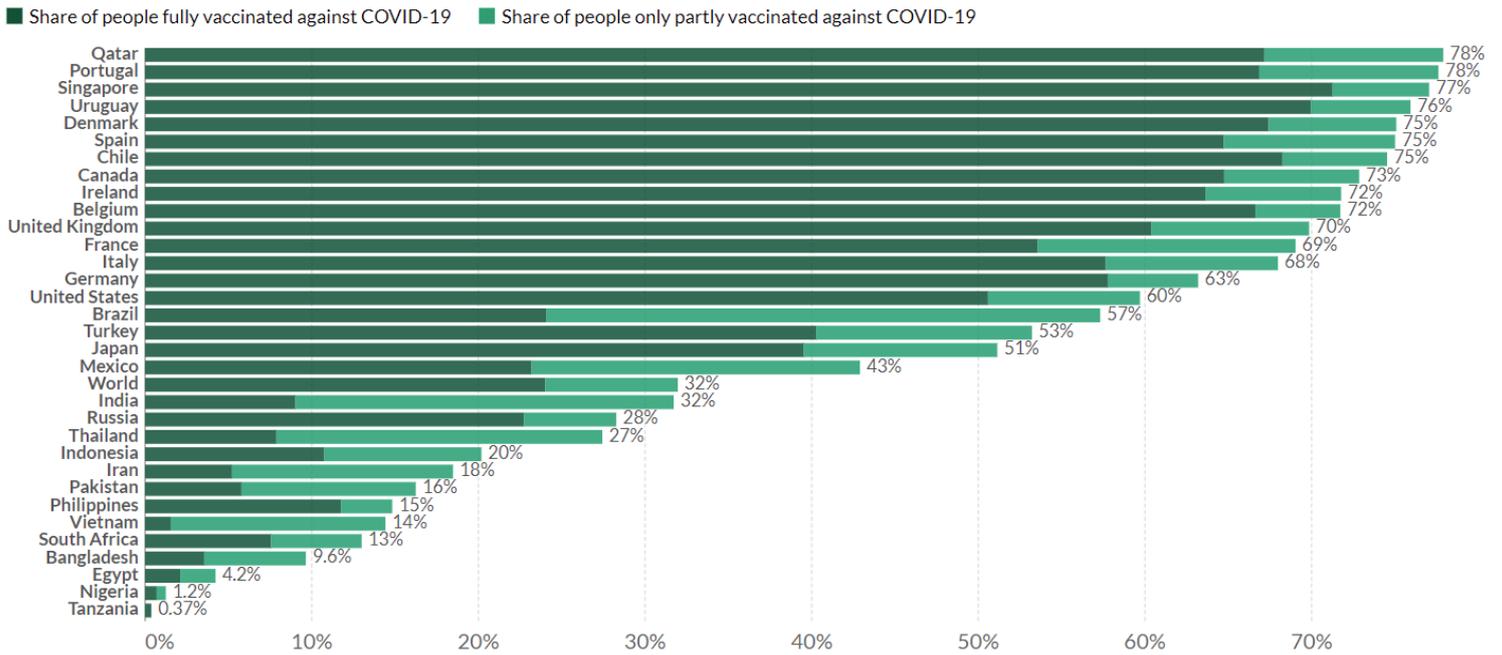
According to research done in the UK, two vaccine doses remain the best way to protect against all variants of COVID-19. The Nuffield Department of Medicine have conducted one of the largest studies of its kind to bring a number of important findings to help medical workers and scientists continue to fight against the pandemic. They found that

despite being initially less effective, the Oxford-AstraZeneca jab offers the same high protection against the Delta variant as the Pfizer-BioNTech after four to five months. Neither are as good at protecting against the Alpha variant. There remains insufficient data for Moderna, though findings thus far suggest that it is just as effective as the other two.

The findings indicate that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine had 93 percent effectiveness against symptomatic infection two weeks after the second dose. For the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, this was 71 percent. However, over time, the effectiveness of the Pfizer vaccine drops to around 70-75 percent, while the drop in Astra Zeneca is slower. Both result in an over 50 percent protection rate several months after inoculation, which greatly helps fight against the pandemic. Regardless of what vaccine individuals have, catching the virus and successfully recovering while also being inoculated gives a high antibody return. Making the individual even more resistant to future infections.

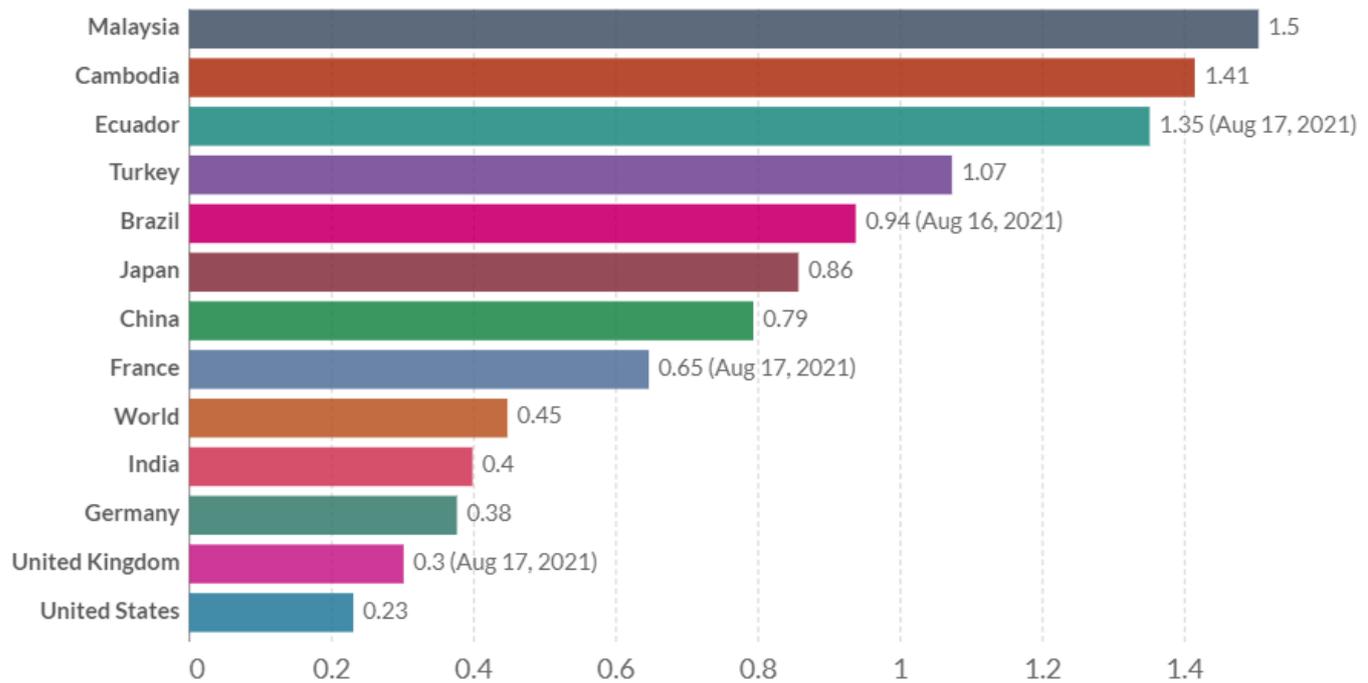
It was also added that time between first and second doses of the vaccine give a negligible impact on the vaccine’s effectiveness. Finally, younger people tend to gain more protection from the vaccines when compared to older generations.

**Percentage of People Vaccinated in Select Countries**



Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data. This data is only available for countries which report the breakdown of doses administered by first and second doses in absolute numbers. CC BY

**Daily COVID-19 vaccine doses administered per 100 people**



Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data – Last updated 19 August 2021, 10:00 (London time) OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

**Select Country Updates****Saudi Arabia**

The Saudi Arabian authorities have announced that daily new COVID-19 cases in the country have remained below the 700 cases a day mark for the last five days as of 17 August. The Riyadh region is still the national epicentre of it, with consistently posting the newest daily cases, whilst a number of regions are now posting daily new infection rates of 10 or less.

The authorities state that one reason the Kingdom's daily case rates have continued to drop is due to the success of the national inoculation drive. At the time of writing, 59.9 percent of the population have been vaccinated, whilst around one in three of the population have now had both doses.

Despite the success of the vaccination drive, and the low case count, the country is still maintaining strict quarantine measures, due to a fear of the transmissible delta variant. As a result of these measures, 71 people were arrested by police in the Mecca region for violating quarantine arrangement. Punishment for those caught violating quarantine are harsh. Up to two years in prison, a fine of 53,000 USD and, if you are an expat, deportation with a permanent ban from the country.

**France**

The country recorded 111 deaths from COVID-19 in hospitals on 17 August, the first time since 1 June that the 100-daily-death barrier has been breached.

This metric was breached as the country continues to see widespread and large-scale protests against rules compelling them to show a COVID-19 health pass for daily activities. Cities such as Paris, Nice, Montpellier and Marseille all see large protests against the Pass Sanitaire. The protests have united a number of the former disparate opposition factions to France's government, including the long-aggrieved French who belong to the Yellow Vest movement which rocked France with weekly regular protests and riots for almost a year between 2018 and 2019.

**Ghana**

On 18 August the country received a shipment of 249,000 UK-donated AstraZeneca vaccines. These will be used to vaccinate Ghana's front line health workers and vulnerable people. Meanwhile the government's inoculation campaign continues, as they are also using 177,000 Johnson & Johnson single dose vaccinations. These have been received through the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust.

Ghana's two main epicentres remain the capital, Accra, and the Ashanti region. These have been the epicentres in the country since the first outbreak in the country.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a knock-on effect on the wider health of the population in Ghana. The esteemed medical journal, the Lancet, has a new study showing that the pandemic has resulted in reducing the availability of antimalarials in pharmacies and over the counter medicine outlets across the

country. This shows that the long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health of the Ghanaians could be far reaching and may lead to a resurgence of malaria. This trend could also be replicated across the wider continent. Pre-pandemic, malaria was estimated to cost Africa 12 billion USD in lost GDP a year.

**Cuba**

Doctors in Cuba have taken to social media to protest against shortages of oxygen, essential medicines, PPE, and vaccines, as the country's COVID-19 case count continues to rise. The nation's fragile health system has according to health workers effectively collapsed. The oxygen shortages meanwhile come as the nation's main oxygen generating plant has broken down, whilst the army stepped in with portable oxygen generators to try and maintain the necessary flow of the critical gas. Cuba's recent COVID-19 wave has been driven by the more transmissible delta variant.

Whilst the country reels from the COVID-19 wave it is also trying to effectively vaccinate itself out of the situation. Authorities are aiming to inoculate the entire population with Cuba's two locally produced vaccines, both of which the government claim have above 90 per cent efficacy. At the time of writing the country states that around 3.2 million residents have been fully vaccinated and they are on course to fully vaccinate 95% of the entire country before the end of 2021.

**United States**

President Joe Biden has told nursing homes that do not require their staff to be fully vaccinated that they would lose federal funding if they did not vaccinate their staff. The measure was announced Wednesday alongside a number of other actions aimed at combating the resurgence of the virus as a result of the Delta variant.

The country is currently struggling with a renewed outbreak, which is especially impacting states with low vaccination rates that are largely led by Republican governors. Despite this many, including the governors of Texas and Florida, are rejecting a mask mandate. The president added that he would not stand by whilst governors against the mask mandate "intimidate local officials". Adding that the 85 million unvaccinated Americans should get the jab.

**New Zealand**

A snap lockdown was announced after an individual tested positive for Covid, the first case in six months. Auckland, where the case was detected, and Coromandel, a coastal town where the individual had visited, will be in lockdown for seven days. The rest of the country would see a three-day lockdown. There are at least 23 other potential sites of transmission.

Whilst New Zealand does report around 50 cases a week, these are largely discovered at border checkpoints, in recent arrivals/airport workers or with other obvious links to external infection. The recent case had no clear link to the border or quarantine facilities.



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