A person wearing a blue protective suit and a light blue surgical mask is using a smartphone. They are standing behind a metal grid barrier. Another person's hand is visible on the other side of the barrier, holding a smartphone. The person in the suit is pointing at the screen of their phone, which is being held up towards the other person's phone. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the metal barrier and some indistinct shapes.

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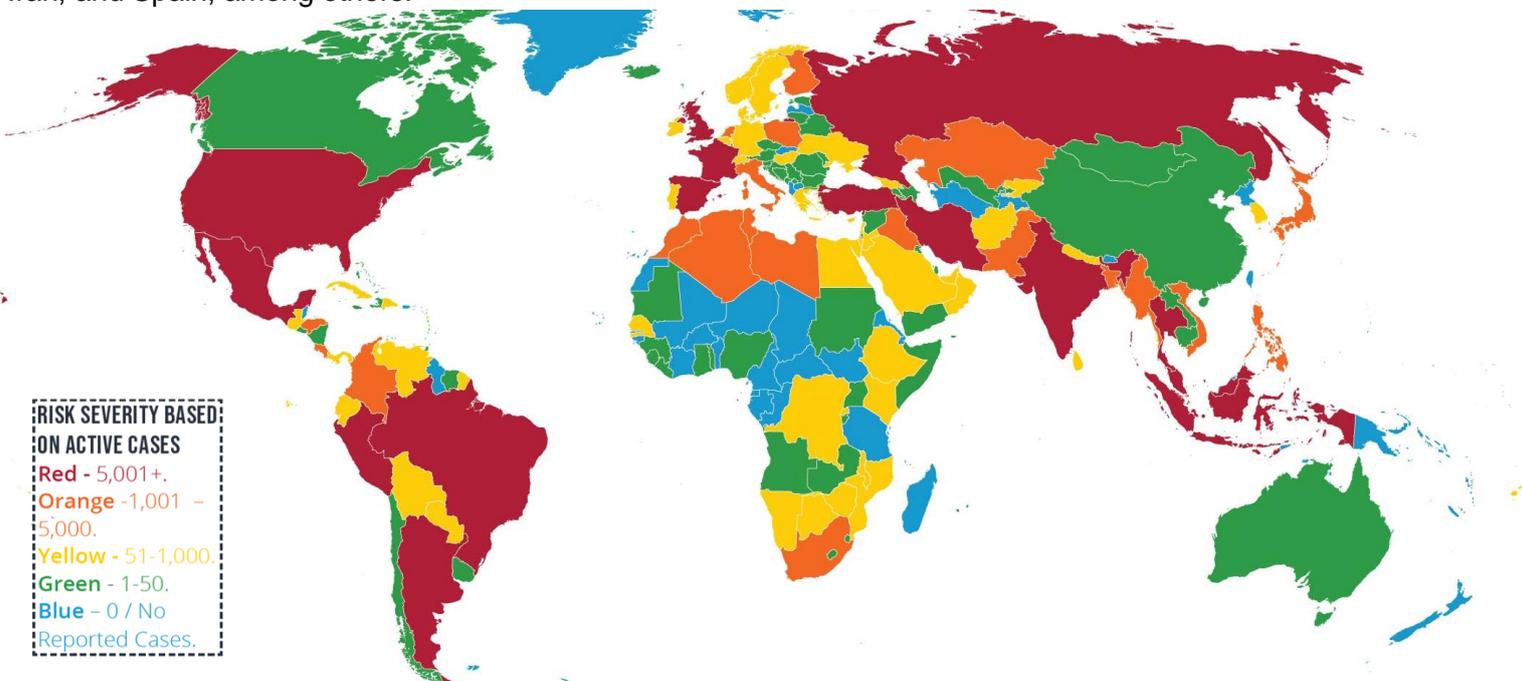
COVID-19 Weekly Update
5 August

Executive Summary

The global cumulative caseload has now surpassed 200 million cases with more than 4.25 million deaths since the start of the pandemic. The United States, India, Indonesia, and Brazil have reported the highest number of new infections in the past week, with all except Indonesia and Brazil seeing increases in their respective weekly caseloads.

The total number of weekly cases has risen by around 12 per cent compared to last week's tally, continuing a weeks-long upward trend. In the seven days up to 4 August, there were approximately 4.2 million new cases reported worldwide, compared to 3.7 million in the preceding seven days. Similarly, the total number of weekly COVID-19-related deaths has also risen by around 8 percent compared to the previous week.

The rise in weekly cases continues to be driven largely by high numbers of new infections in just a handful of countries. Indeed, roughly half of all cases in the past week are attributed to just ten countries, including the United Kingdom, Iran, and Spain, among others.



Notable Updates

The confirmed total of COVID-19 cases has now passed the milestone of 200 million. It took half the time for the total case count to reach 200 million as it did 100 million, demonstrating just how embedded the virus has become throughout the globe. Despite the negatives, countries that have advanced widespread vaccination programs are now beginning to see a decrease in new case numbers, despite the lifting of restrictions and more contagious variants.

In spite of worldwide vaccination efforts and what is fast-approaching two years of varying restrictions, the latest figures suggest the pandemic is showing no signs of ending in the near-term. Almost all continents, with the exceptions on Europe and South America who saw drops of 5 percent and 14 percent respectively, have seen an overall uptick in new infections. Globally, in the past seven days, the number of new cases is now up by 9 percent. North America's total weekly caseload increased by approximately 33 percent compared to last week, closely followed by Asia (up 13 percent), and Africa (up 7 percent).

The continent with the largest increase, however, has been Oceania, up 47 percent in the past seven days. While the actual numbers of new cases are significantly lower both in positive cases and when compared to population, the rise has forced a number of new measures. The state of Victoria has entered a snap seven-day lockdown. Cases in the state are largely linked to a cluster at Melbourne's Al-Taqwa College. According to the state's government, there was no alternative to introducing a lockdown after unlinked cases had been detected.

There is growing concern over a COVID-19 variant. The Lambda variant is reported to be more resistant to existing vaccines compared to other variants of COVID-19. The variant was first discovered in Peru and is responsible for about 81 percent of the infections in Latin America since April 2021. By July, the variant has been reported in at least 30 countries. The majority of these are in Latin America; however, cases have been reported in Europe, including the UK. As a result, experts have urged precautions and investigations into cases in countries. They have also added the importance of mask usage, travel restrictions and quarantining.

While many countries are seeing large events restart, including football matches and other regular sporting events, many are still being postponed. For example, the New York auto show was cancelled for the second straight year over concerns of the spread of the Delta variant of COVID-19. Additionally, the Rugby League World Cup, due to be held in the UK in October/November has been postponed after the withdrawals of Australia and New Zealand.

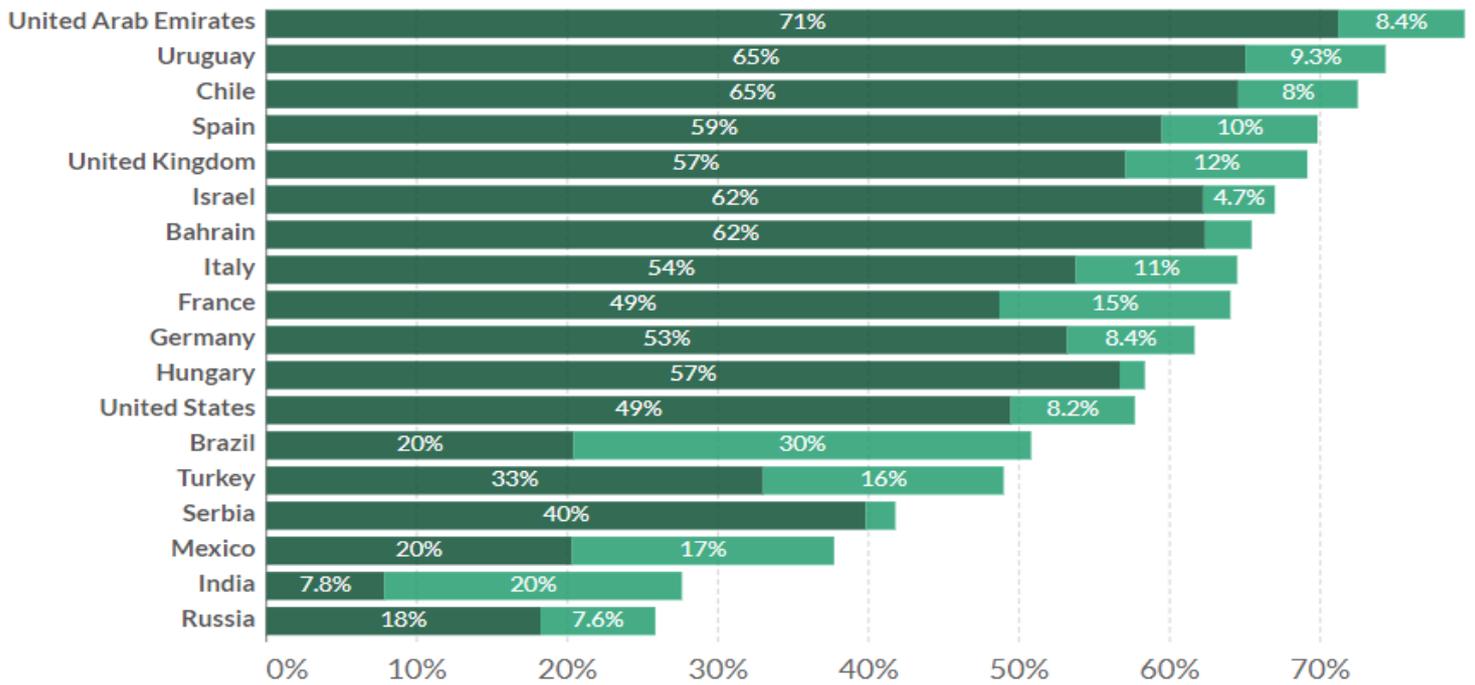
Vaccination Updates

On 5 August, 29.3 percent of the global population had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, while 15 percent have now been fully vaccinated. In total, 4.31 billion doses have been administered with 41.3 million now administered per day. China remains the world-leader in terms of the total number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered, having provided more than 1.67 billion. China is followed by India (472 million), the United States (347 million), and Brazil (143 million).

Meanwhile, at the other end of the rankings, dozens of countries are yet to administer 100,000 total vaccinations – underscoring the issue of vaccine inequality. The WHO recently published an article on the subject in which it said, “inequality will have a lasting and profound impact on socio-economic recovery in low- and lower-middle income countries without urgent action to boost supply and assure equitable access for every country,” Moreover, the Director-General of the WHO, Tedros Ghebreyesus, went further by saying, “Vaccine inequality is the world’s biggest obstacle to ending the pandemic and recovering from COVID-19”.

Share of People Vaccinated Against COVID-19

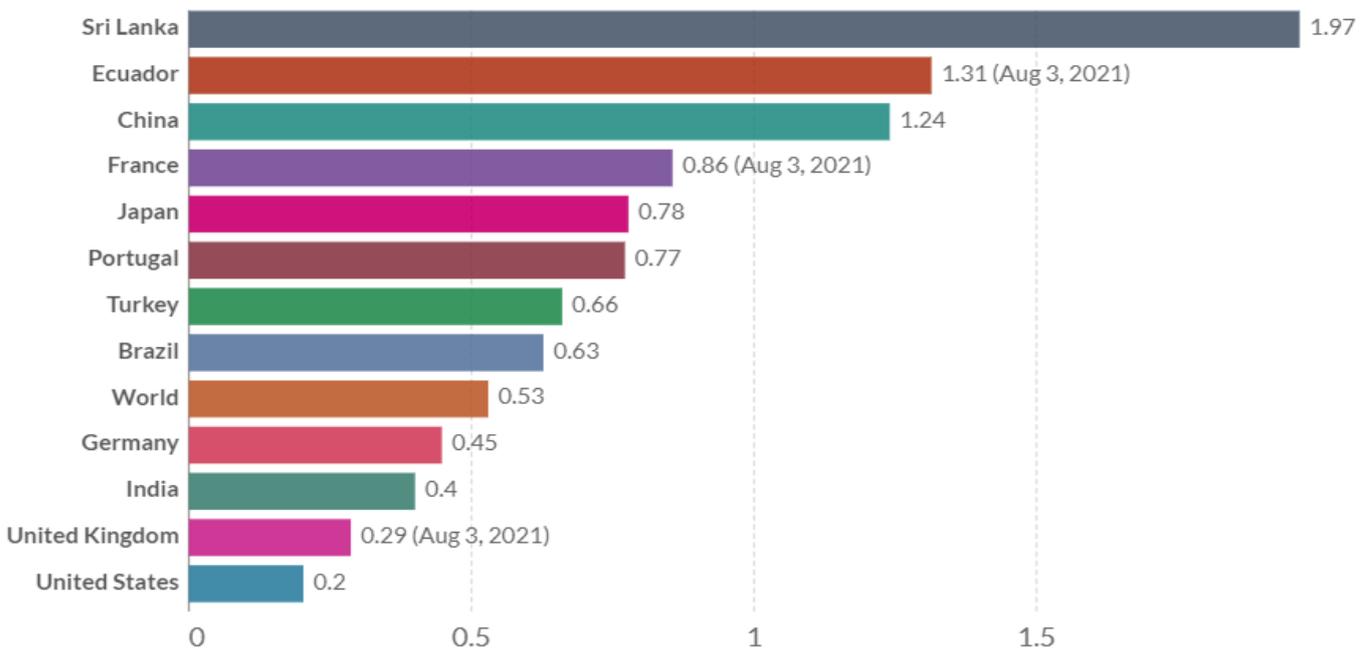
■ Share of people fully vaccinated against COVID-19 ■ Share of people only partly vaccinated against COVID-19



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.

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Vaccination Rate Per 100 People for Select Countries



Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data – Last updated 5 August 2021, 09:10 (London time)

OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

Select Country Updates**Italy**

Lazio's regional government announced on 1 August that hackers had attacked and shut down the IT systems of the company that manages COVID-19 vaccination appointments for the region. The cyber attack deactivated all systems, including the region's health and vaccination portal, according to an official social media post. The cyber attack is being investigated by Italy's Postal and Communications Police.

Germany

Despite a ban on demonstrations, thousands of people took to the streets in Berlin on 1 August to protest the German government's COVID-19 restrictions. The protests resulted in sporadic clashes with security forces and saw at least 600 people detained.

In addition, a 49-year-old man died after being detained by police officers amid the unrest; an investigation has been opened into the man's death. Meanwhile, the Berlin police department, which had deployed some 2,000 officers across the city, said officers were harassed and attacked by protesters, prompting their use of batons and irritants.

Poland

Authorities in Poland have announced they will be stepping up security at vaccination centres following recent arson attacks and other incidents. The announcement came after two overnight attacks in the town of Zamosc on 1-2 August, which saw a mobile vaccination centre and an office used by the local epidemiological agency set alight by perpetrators from "anti-vaccine circles".

Bulgaria

On 29 July, the Bulgarian government extended the nationwide COVID-19 emergency by an additional month, until at least 31 August. The COVID emergency was first declared in May last year. Although daily case numbers in Bulgaria are very low (less than 100 on 1 August), the country's vaccination programme is lagging with only around 15 per cent of the population having received at least one dose of a COVID vaccine.

United Kingdom

Last week the UK government announced that passengers arriving from amber countries who have been fully vaccinated in Europe (EU Member States, European Free Trade Association countries and the European microstate countries of Andorra, Monaco and Vatican City) and the United States will no longer be required to quarantine when entering England.

The new rules came into effect at 04:00 local time on 2 August. However, fully vaccinated arrivals from amber countries are still required to complete a pre-departure test, as well as a PCR test on or before day two after arriving in England.

Further changes were announced on 5 August, these included the dropping of France's "Amber Plus" status. This has allowed the government to simplify the system

into two categories, though a watchlist for Green listed countries will continue.

China

Authorities in Wuhan have ordered all of the city's 11 million residents to be tested for COVID-19 after new infections were reported for the first time in over one year. On 2 August, health officials said eight new cases had been detected in the city. Meanwhile, 76 new cases were reported across the country over 24 hours on Monday.

As a result of the recent uptick in cases, albeit very low, millions of people in cities across the country, including Beijing, were confined to their homes, and tested for the virus. In Beijing, rail, bus, and air links were suspended to areas where COVID-19 cases had been detected while only "essential travellers" were permitted to enter with proof of a negative test.

India

Researchers who accurately predicted the tapering of India's deadly wave of infections earlier this year have warned the country may see a new wave beginning in August. According to a mathematical model produced by researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology in Hyderabad and Kanpur, India's next wave could see a best-case scenario of 100,000 infections per day, or up to 150,000 in the worst-case scenario. While the next wave is likely to be far less severe than the country's second wave that peaked at around 400,000 per day in May, the model has underscored the need for health authorities to remain vigilant and accelerate vaccination efforts.

Thailand

Thailand is in the midst of a surging wave of infections that has threatened to overwhelm health care facilities as capacity dwindles. Consequently, health officials announced this week that they will increase the number of COVID-19 patients required to isolate at home to 100,000. At the start of the pandemic, all COVID-19 patients were admitted to inpatient facilities, but in July as infections surged, authorities introduced home isolation for more than 30,000 asymptomatic patients or those suffering only minor symptoms. According to a health official, all patients isolating at home are provided with necessary medical equipment, medicines, meals and telephone consultations.

Malaysia

Malaysia's health ministry on 1 August reported 219 COVID-19 related deaths, setting a new daily record and bringing the nation's total number of deaths to more than 9,400. The rising number of cases and deaths has increased pressure on the government in recent months, with opposition lawmakers criticising its handling of the pandemic and calling for Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's resignation.

Japan

Notably, on 5 August, it was reported that Tokyo, where the Olympics are entering the final few days, 5,000 new

cases had been reported for the first time. The country itself reported over 15,000 cases on 5 August.

On 3 August, the head of the Japan Medical Association called for a nationwide state of emergency in order to contain the current surge in COVID-19 infections, including in Olympics host city Tokyo. While the nationwide emergency was dismissed by the country's PM on 5 August, eight additional prefectures were put under emergency measures. This came after Osaka and three other prefectures were placed under a state of emergency on 2 August. Tokyo and Okinawa were the only two before this.

The country has also shifted its hospital admissions policy for COVID-19 patients. This new policy means that only seriously ill patients or those likely to develop serious symptoms are to be admitted to hospital. The previous policy had focused on hospitalising a broader range/category of patients. Prime Minister Suga did insist that people isolating at home would receive adequate medical care and would be hospitalised if necessary.

Australia

The Australian government released modelling by the Doherty Institute on 3 August that will be used to determine what level of COVID vaccination is required to relax restrictions. The modelling suggests the country's vaccination strategy should focus on young adults – considered “peak spreaders” – as opposed to older people who are most at risk of serious illness or death.

Meanwhile, authorities in Queensland extended a lockdown as the state attempts to contain a rising number of locally acquired cases. The state's south-east corner was placed under a three-day lockdown on Saturday, which was due to end at 16:00 on 3 August; however, the lockdown will now continue through 16:00 on 8 August. Millions of Queensland residents are affected by the current lockdown with people asked to work from home if possible while home learning has been implemented for state schools as of 3 August.

Tanzania

Tanzania's President Samia Suluhu Hassan received her first COVID vaccine last week live on television, marking the start of the nation's vaccination drive. The move represents a massive reversal from the policies of her predecessor, who warned citizens against COVID vaccines and dismissed the threat posed by the virus.

During the event, President Hassan said: “We will make sure our country has enough vaccines for those who are willing to be vaccinated.”. As part of the country's efforts to combat misinformation and vaccine scepticism, Health Minister Dorothy Gwajima pledged to launch a comprehensive public education campaign. It will remain to be seen how much of an impact such efforts

will have on increasing vaccine uptake in the country.

Kenya

In a televised address on 30 July, Health Minister Mutahi Kagwe suspended all public gatherings and in-person meetings of nationwide, including all government and “intergovernmental meetings and conferences”. The country has also extended a nationwide curfew between 22:00 and 04:00 local time until further notice.

The measures have been implemented as the country struggles with rising infections caused by the Delta variant. As a result, Mr Kagwe said that hospitals were under increasing strain, adding that efforts were being made to upscale the number of intensive care beds.

Morocco

Morocco extended its night-time curfew from 3 August, beginning two hours earlier at 21:00 local time, in a bid to counter a recent surge in COVID-19 infections. Meanwhile, the business and tourist centres of Casablanca, Agadir and Marrakech are closed except for essential travel or those in possession of a vaccine certificate/pass. Daily cases in the North African country have ranged between 9,000 and 4,000 in the past week.

Brazil

In the past week, Brazil's seven-day rolling average of COVID-19 related deaths dropped below 1,000 for the first time since January. The country was hit by a devastating fourth wave of infections in June that saw daily cases rise well above 100,000 cases per day. However, since late June daily infections and deaths have steadily declined to less than 40,000 and 500 respectively in the past week.

Colombia

The mayor of Sucre, in northern Colombia, on 2 August issued a stay-at-home order for eight days for people who have not yet been vaccinated. During an interview on a local radio station, Mayor Elvira Julia Mercado said “we have to take a strong stance as leaders...Everyone has to be vaccinated, if not, they cannot circulate in the municipality of Sucre.” Under the decree, non-vaccinated residents can only leave their homes to access health services or to be vaccinated. Anyone caught breaking the order will face a fine equivalent to 260 US Dollars.

United States

The Delta variant has been blamed for a high number of new cases and hospitalisations in the southern states of Florida and Louisiana, with both at/near their highest hospitalisation rates since the pandemic began, as of 2 August. The Chief Medical Officer of a health facility in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, described the current situation as “the darkest days of this pandemic,” and warned the medical center was “no longer giving adequate care to patients.”



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