

# Global COVID-19 Cases Top 13 Million; Recent Studies Suggest Antibody Immunity Could be Fleeting



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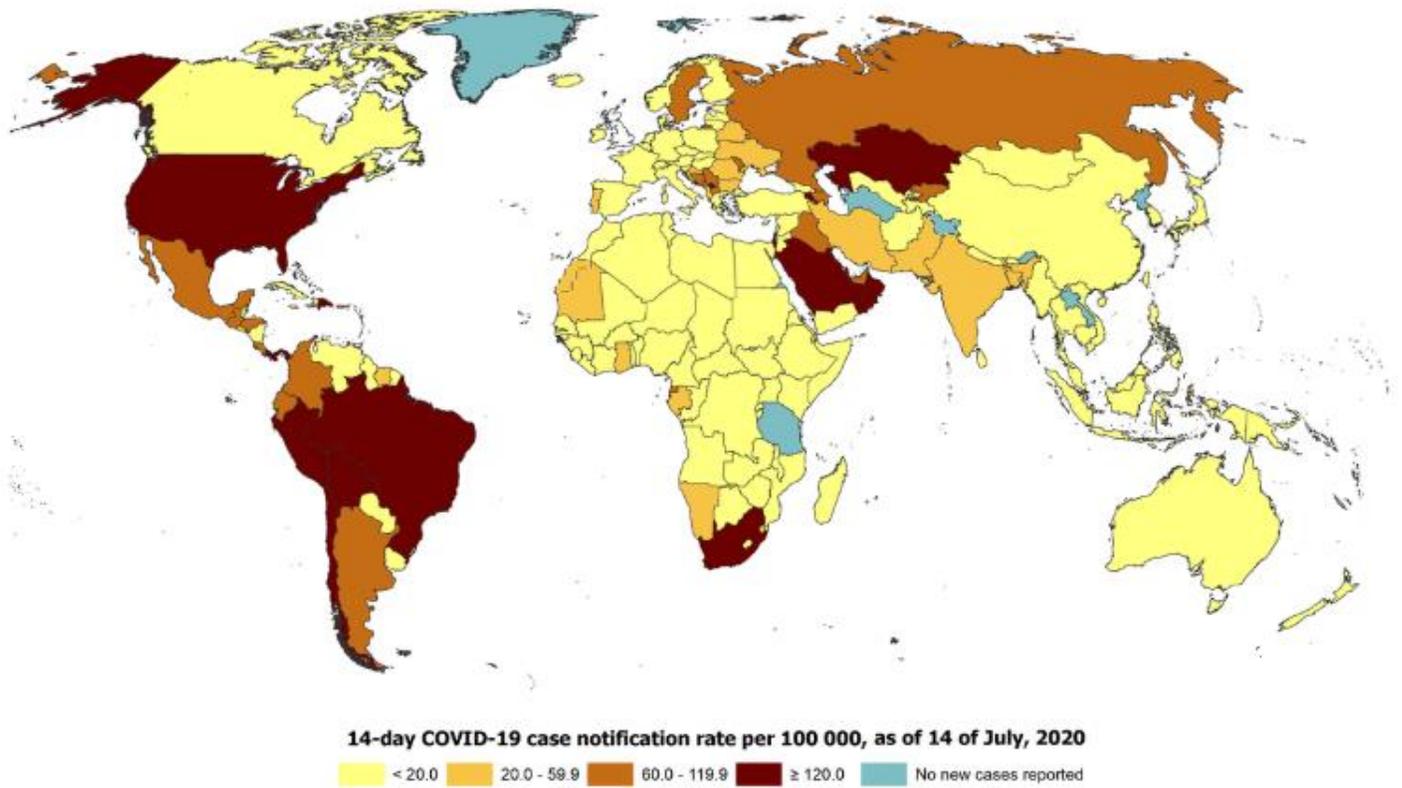
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## OVERVIEW

Johns Hopkins University reports that the worldwide number of COVID-19 cases has surpassed 13.2 million, and that the global death toll has topped 575,000. Although some governments have proven to be more effective than others in curbing the spread of the disease, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that “too many countries are headed in the wrong direction.” WHO leaders contend that inconsistent messaging from elected officials, as well as public non-compliance with anti-infection measures, have served to exacerbate the pandemic. The situation could potentially continue to worsen in many countries in the coming months.

It currently remains unclear how long the COVID-19 pandemic might last. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated on Monday that “there will be no return to the old normal for the foreseeable future.” One factor that might contribute to the longevity of the situation could be related to antibody immunity. Although additional research is required before any definitive conclusions are drawn, a growing number of doctors around the world have reported cases in which patients have contracted COVID-19 more than once. Several recent studies have also suggested that patients appear to lose their COVID-19 antibodies in a matter of weeks or months after being exposed. This could suggest that establishing “herd immunity” could prove to be unfeasible, especially in the short term. The public is advised to continue monitoring the pandemic and to stay abreast of anti-infection policies.

### Fourteen-Day Cumulative Number of Reported COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 People



Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

## Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Worldwide as of Tuesday Morning, July 14

Country/Region	July 14	July 7
<b>United States</b>	3,363,056	2,938,625
<b>Brazil</b>	1,884,967	1,623,284
<b>India</b>	906,752	719,665
<b>Russia</b>	733,699	687,862
<b>Peru</b>	330,123	305,703
<b>Chile</b>	317,657	298,557
<b>Mexico</b>	304,435	261,750
<b>United Kingdom</b>	290,133	285,768
<b>South Africa</b>	287,796	196,750
<b>Iran</b>	259,652	243,051
<b>Spain</b>	255,953	251,789
<b>Pakistan</b>	253,604	234,509
<b>Italy</b>	243,230	241,819
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	235,111	213,716
<b>Turkey</b>	214,001	206,844
<b>Germany</b>	198,963	196,944
<b>Bangladesh</b>	186,894	165,618
<b>France</b>	172,377	168,335
<b>Colombia</b>	154,227	120,281
<b>Canada</b>	108,144	105,923
<b>Qatar</b>	104,016	100,345
<b>Argentina</b>	103,105	77,802
<b>Mainland China</b>	83,605	83,565
<b>Egypt</b>	83,001	76,222
<b>Iraq</b>	79,735	62,275
<b>Indonesia</b>	76,981	64,958
<b>Sweden</b>	75,826	73,061
<b>Ecuador</b>	68,459	62,380
<b>Belarus</b>	65,114	63,804
<b>Belgium</b>	62,781	62,058
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	61,755	49,683
<b>Oman</b>	58,179	47,735
<b>Philippines</b>	57,006	46,333
<b>Kuwait</b>	55,508	50,644
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	55,198	52,068
<b>Ukraine</b>	54,771	49,607

Country/Region	July 14	July 7
<b>Netherlands</b>	51,038	50,602
<b>Bolivia</b>	49,250	40,509
<b>Panama</b>	47,173	39,334
<b>Portugal</b>	46,818	44,129
<b>Singapore</b>	46,283	44,983
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	45,506	38,128
<b>Israel</b>	40,632	31,186
<b>Poland</b>	38,190	36,155
<b>Afghanistan</b>	34,455	33,384
<b>Bahrain</b>	33,476	29,821
<b>Nigeria</b>	33,153	29,286
<b>Romania</b>	32,948	29,223
<b>Switzerland</b>	32,861	32,230
<b>Armenia</b>	32,151	28,936
<b>Guatemala</b>	29,742	23,972
<b>Honduras</b>	28,579	24,665
<b>Ireland</b>	25,638	25,531
<b>Ghana</b>	24,988	21,077
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	24,570	20,837
<b>Japan</b>	22,220	19,981
<b>Algeria</b>	19,689	16,404
<b>Moldova</b>	19,439	17,906
<b>Austria</b>	18,859	18,326
<b>Serbia</b>	18,639	16,420
<b>Nepal</b>	16,945	15,964
<b>Morocco</b>	15,936	14,329
<b>Cameroon</b>	15,173	14,037
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	13,872	10,459
<b>South Korea</b>	13,512	13,181
<b>Czech Republic</b>	13,238	12,566
<b>Denmark</b>	13,037	12,878
<b>Cote d'Ivoire</b>	12,872	10,966
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	11,538	8,141
<b>Sudan</b>	10,316	9,767
<b>Kenya</b>	10,294	8,067
<b>Puerto Rico</b>	10,010	8,585

Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and various media outlets

## Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Worldwide as of Tuesday Morning, July 14

Country/Region	July 14	July 7
Australia	9,980	8,586
El Salvador	9,978	8,027
Venezuela	9,707	7,411
Norway	8,981	8,930
Malaysia	8,725	8,668
Senegal	8,198	7,478
North Macedonia	8,197	7,122
Democratic Republic of the Congo	8,074	7,432
Costa Rica	8,036	5,241
Ethiopia	7,766	6,386
Palestine	7,441	4,786
Bulgaria	7,411	5,914
Finland	7,295	7,257
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6,979	5,458
Haiti	6,727	6,371
Tajikistan	6,595	6,262
Guinea	6,141	5,636
Gabon	6,026	5,743
Mauritania	5,355	4,879
Kosovo	5,118	3,508
Madagascar	5,080	3,250
Djibouti	4,977	4,822
Luxembourg	4,956	4,542
Central African Republic	4,321	4,033
Hungary	4,247	4,189
Greece	3,826	3,562
Croatia	3,775	3,220
Albania	3,571	2,964
Thailand	3,227	3,195
Equatorial Guinea	3,071	3,071
Somalia	3,059	3,006
Paraguay	2,980	2,456
Nicaragua	2,846	2,519
Maldives	2,762	2,491
Sri Lanka	2,646	2,078
Malawi	2,430	1,818

Country/Region	July 14	July 7
Cuba	2,428	2,380
Lebanon	2,419	1,885
Mali	2,412	2,331
South Sudan	2,148	2,093
Congo	2,103	1,557
Estonia	2,014	1,994
Slovakia	1,902	1,765
Iceland	1,900	1,866
Zambia	1,895	1,632
Lithuania	1,874	1,841
Slovenia	1,849	1,716
Guinea Bissau	1,842	1,765
Cape Verde	1,722	1,463
Sierra Leone	1,642	1,542
Hong Kong	1,521	1,285
Libya	1,512	1,046
Yemen	1,498	1,290
Eswatini	1,389	1,011
Benin	1,378	1,199
Rwanda	1,378	1,113
Tunisia	1,302	1,199
Montenegro	1,287	841
Mozambique	1,219	1,012
New Zealand	1,195	1,186
Jordan	1,183	1,167
Latvia	1,174	1,127
Niger	1,099	1,093
Burkina Faso	1,036	1,000
Zimbabwe	1,034	734
Uganda	1,029	953
Liberia	1,024	891
Cyprus	1,022	1,004
Georgia	999	958
Uruguay	989	960
Chad	880	872
Namibia	861	485

Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and various media outlets

## Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Worldwide as of Tuesday Morning, July 14

Country/Region	July 14	July 7
Andorra	858	855
Suriname	780	614
Western Sahara	761	519
Jamaica	759	737
Sao Tome and Principe	732	721
Togo	721	680
San Marino	714	713
Diamond Princess Cruise Ship	696	696
Malta	674	672
United Republic of Tanzania	509	509
Angola	506	353
Taiwan	451	449
Syria	417	372
Botswana	399	275
Vietnam	373	369
Mauritius	342	342
Isle of Man	336	336
Myanmar	336	316
Jersey	329	325
Comoros	317	311
Guam	312	303
Guyana	300	278
Burundi	269	191
Guernsey	252	252
Mongolia	243	220
Lesotho	233	91
Eritrea	232	215
United States Virgin Islands	217	116
Cayman Islands	201	201
Faroe Islands	188	187
Gibraltar	180	179
Cambodia	165	141
Bermuda	150	146
Brunei Darussalam	141	141

Country/Region	July 14	July 7
Trinidad and Tobago	133	133
Bahamas	113	104
Monaco	109	108
Aruba	105	105
Barbados	103	98
Seychelles	100	81
Liechtenstein	85	85
Bhutan	84	80
Sint Maarten	78	78
Antigua and Barbuda	74	70
Turks and Caicos islands	72	49
Gambia	64	61
French Polynesia	62	62
Macau	46	46
Belize	37	30
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	35	29
Northern Mariana Islands	33	31
Curaçao	26	25
Fiji	26	19
Timor Leste	24	24
Grenada	23	23
Saint Lucia	22	22
New Caledonia	21	21
Laos	19	19
Dominica	18	18
Saint Kitts and Nevis	17	16
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	13	13
Greenland	13	13
Holy See	12	12
Montserrat	12	11
Papua New Guinea	11	11
British Virgin Islands	8	8
Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba	7	7
Anguilla	3	3

Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and various media outlets

## SPREAD OF COVID-19: LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

As of the morning of Tuesday, July 14th, at least 3,424,503 COVID-19 infections have been reported throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. This amounts to an increase of 15 percent since July 7th, marking a slight decrease from the previous week. Brazil continues to report the highest number of infections in the region with its caseload of 1,884,967. Peru's caseload ranks second at 330,123, followed by Chile (317,657), Mexico (304,435), and Colombia (150,445). The region-wide death toll currently stands at 146,891, which exceeds the number of COVID-19 fatalities that have been recorded in the United States and Canada combined. Currently, the cumulative death toll for Latin America and the Caribbean is second only to Europe, where the total number of COVID-19 deaths has surpassed 202,000.

### Updates in Worst-Affected Countries

#### Brazil

- COVID-19 cases have soared throughout the capital of Brasília after lawmakers began to scale back anti-infection measures.
  - The city now has 2,133 confirmed infections per 100,000 residents. Brasília's per capita infection rate has grown higher than any of the country's other major cities and is now more than double that of Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo.
- Employees at multiple hospitals across the country have reported shortages of medical staff. Clinics and facilities located in predominantly indigenous areas have been hit especially hard.
- Disinformation regarding COVID-19 remains rampant and is commonly being spread both by elected public officials and via social media.

#### Peru

- The southern region of Arequipa has experienced a spike in new COVID-19 cases in recent weeks. Its capital, Arequipa City (the second largest city in the country), has emerged as a new hot spot. Intensive care units (ICUs) have been overwhelmed, and tents are reportedly being used to house overflow patients.
- Shortages of medical oxygen persist in Arequipa and throughout much of the country.
- Media sources report that anti-infection measures have exacerbated mid-project abandonment among public works projects.

- In Cajamarca and a number of smaller towns and villages across the country, local militias known as *rondas* have succeeded in enforcing sanitary cordons and stemming outbreaks.
- In some rural areas, there are insufficient numbers of healthcare professionals to adequately care for the number of COVID-19 patients. Media sources report that in the city of Huánuco, for example, there is only a single intensive care doctor for COVID-19 treatment between three hospitals.

## Chile

- The second-stage quarantines that have been implemented throughout the Santiago Metropolitan Region appear to have produced the desired effect, as the number of new infections in the capital has declined by 40 percent over the last two weeks.
  - On Monday, Chile recorded a 0.8 percent increase in new nationwide COVID-19 cases, marking the smallest increase since the pandemic first began.
  - Policymakers are reportedly considering phased reopening options for the capital, but are keen to avoid repeating the mistake of lifting restrictions too quickly.
- Several new hot spots have emerged in recent weeks, including the port city of Arica and the mining centers of Antofagasta and Calama. Arica and the town of Rengo are slated to begin a second-stage quarantine on Tuesday night, and further lockdowns are expected to be announced in other cities in the coming days.
- The southern regions of Los Ríos and Aysén will begin to gradually ease lockdown measures this week following a sustained drop in new infections. The U.S. Embassy in Santiago compiles information regarding the latest quarantines and COVID-19-related restrictions at this [webpage](#).

## Mexico

- With over 35,000 COVID-19 fatalities now on record, Mexico's cumulative death toll recently surpassed that of Italy, making it the fourth highest in the world (after the United States, Brazil, and the United Kingdom).
- Greater Mexico City remains the epicenter of the outbreak in the country.
  - 34 neighborhoods have been designated as COVID-19 hotspots across 13 of the capital's 16 boroughs. Benito Juárez, Cuajimalpa, and Iztacalco are the only three boroughs without any current hotspots.
  - Municipal authorities plan to ratchet up intervention in Mexico City's worst affected neighborhoods in the coming days. Open air markets will be prohibited in such areas, and families will be provided with medical assistance, financial aid, and food.

- On Tuesday, the Mexican Foreign Ministry announced that the prohibition of non-essential traffic across the border with the United States will be extended for a third time, until August 21st. Cargo transportation will remain exempt.
- Media sources report that Ford’s engine plant in Chihuahua has only been able to resume operating at 50 percent of its normal capacity due to state regulations aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. As factories in the U.S. are operating at full capacity, concerns have been raised that the supply chain disruptions could potentially impact production in the United States.
- The Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) reports that 83,311 formal sector jobs were lost across the country in June. This marks a slight improvement, as monthly job losses averaged roughly 343,000 between March and May.
- In the southwestern state of Guerrero, beaches reopened to tourists on July 2nd. COVID-19 infections soared over the ensuing days, leading the governor to announce on July 12th that his administration was considering returning the state to its former “red level” designation, entailing the most stringent level of lockdown. Rebounding infection rates could potentially prompt similar “second-round” lockdowns in other states and municipalities.

## Colombia

- Bogotá and Medellín (Colombia’s two largest cities, respectively) have each reinstated partial lockdowns due to mounting strain on their healthcare systems.
  - ICUs throughout Bogotá have reached 87 percent occupancy. Consequently, the mayor declared a [series of staggered, localized quarantines](#) for 15 specific neighborhoods between July 13th through August 23rd.
    - While the quarantines are in effect, some 550,000 low-income families throughout the capital will receive guaranteed basic income. This measure will likely help to mitigate the potential for protest activity and rioting among hard-hit families.
  - In Medellín, COVID-19 cases increased 110 percent between June 30th and July 10th, as restrictions were initially eased. Consequently, ten neighborhoods throughout the city’s central borough of La Candelaria have reinstated compulsory quarantines from July 13th through July 26th.

## Other Updates Around the Region:

- **Argentina’s** COVID-19 caseload recently surpassed the 100,000 mark, with the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area remaining the epicenter of the country’s outbreak. A strict quarantine will remain in place through July 17th, at which point policymakers plan to enact a more “flexible” lockdown. New cases have steadily

risen throughout the suburbs of the capital, (in the region locally known as the *conurbano*), where public health officials claim community transmission has recently reappeared.

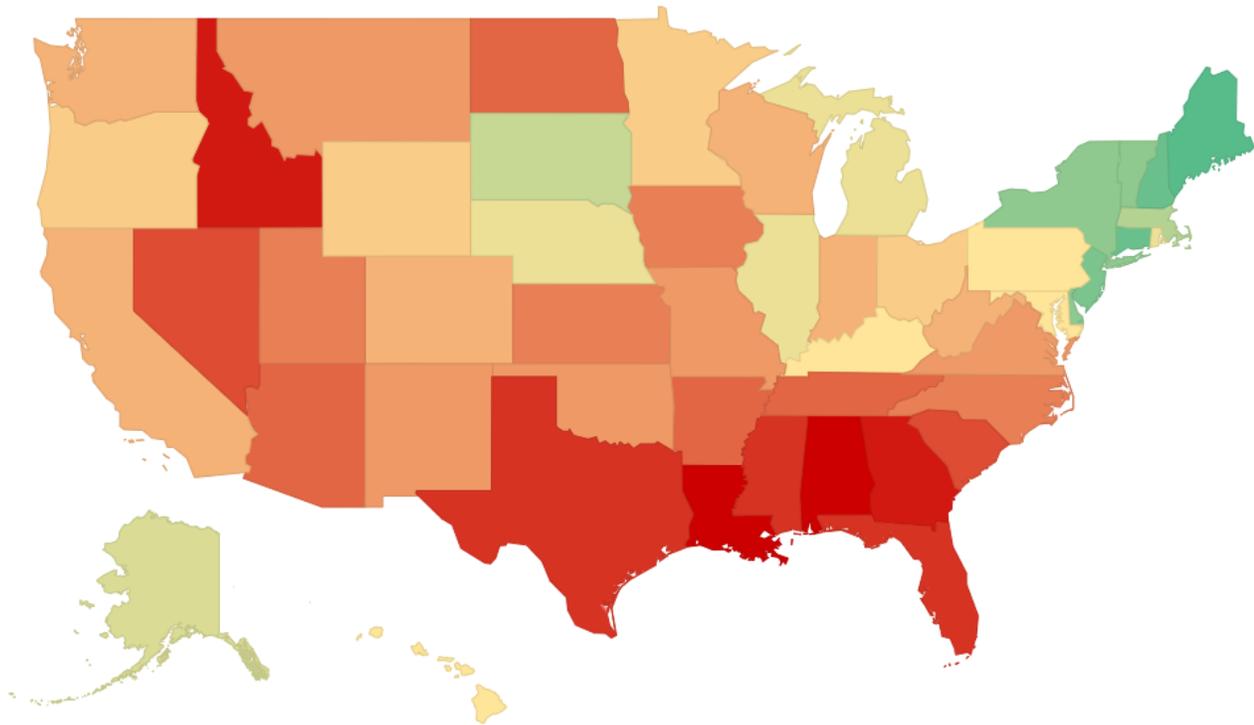
- The interim president of **Bolivia**, Jeanie Añez Chavez, became the latest head of state in the region to contract COVID-19. She has claimed she feels well and is continuing to work under medical isolation. Bolivia’s minister of health, minister of mines, and head of the armed forces have also tested positive for the disease in recent days.
- Hospitals across the **Dominican Republic** are currently at 83 percent occupancy overall. The country reopened its borders to tourism on July 1st. New daily cases have increased in recent days, despite the fact that casinos, night clubs, and cinemas remain closed, and large public gatherings remain prohibited.
- The **Guatemalan** government has announced plans to implement a new, tiered system of health alerts for the country’s various municipalities beginning on July 27th. Specific restrictions on mobility, commerce, and/or other activities might be enacted with each particular level, although no definitive details have been made public at this time.
- In response to sharp upticks in COVID-19 cases, on Sunday **Paraguayan** authorities declared new “health emergencies” in the municipalities of Luque and Santa Rita, which will respectively last for 90 days and 60 days. Tighter regulations will be enacted for businesses and public spaces, and enforcement will be boosted.

## SPREAD OF COVID-19: NORTH AMERICA

### United States

In the United States, the COVID-19 outbreak has continued to worsen on a national scale. The seven-day daily case average has risen over 62,000, an increase of over 10,000 cases since last week. During that time the U.S. has set multiple single-day record case numbers, including on Friday when over 70,000 cases were reported for the first time. Notably, the past week has seen a national rise in daily deaths with the seven-day average increasing from around 550 to over 750. Several of the worst affected states, including Arizona, Florida, Texas, and California, have reported significant increases in deaths over the past few weeks. Hospitalizations have also continued to increase nationally with several areas, including the metro areas of Houston, TX, and Miami, FL, reporting that healthcare systems and ICUs have started to become overwhelmed. In response to the worsening situation, a handful of states, namely California and Oregon, have stopped reopening plans and reintroduced restrictions. These have mainly focused on closing indoor facilities such as restaurants and bars, which have proven to be vectors for transmission of the spread of COVID-19. As of Tuesday, there have been at least 3,366,800 COVID-19 cases and 135,635 deaths across the United States.

## RIMC COVID-19 Risk Score



Data sources: Johns Hopkins University and Medicine, The COVID Tracking Project

The risk score is displayed as colors, ranging from red (poor/deteriorating situation), to yellow (neutral/relatively stable situation), to green (good/improving situation). The colors generally represent if the situation is deteriorating or improving, the change in the risk of exposure, and the strain on state resources over the past two weeks. The score is comprised of multiple factors, which are weighted according to their relative importance in the status and trend of the outbreak. This includes the number of new cases per one million people in a state (high weight), the percent change in new cases from week to week (moderate weight), the level to which a change in new cases can be correlated with a change in testing (moderate weight), the percent of tests returning positive (high weight), and the percent change in hospitalizations (high weight). The result is an approximation of these trends and factors.

### Canada

In Canada, the daily incidence of COVID-19 cases remains stable, with daily death tolls decreasing. The seven-day daily death average has dropped to around 15, with multiple days of less than ten deaths due to the virus. In response to the improving situation, Canadian provinces have stopped reporting daily updates of cases, a move which has somewhat skewed daily numbers. Regardless, the seven-day daily average has remained steady at just below 300 cases. Recovered cases continue to outpace new cases and at least 71,800 recoveries have been reported in total while just 27,500 active cases remain. Reopening plans continue to move forward throughout the country, with Ontario, one of the hardest hit provinces, expected to begin its Phase 3 of reopening this Friday. As of Tuesday, at least 108,155 COVID-19 cases and 8,790 deaths have been reported within Canada.

## Recent Developments

- The current border restrictions between the U.S. and Canada were scheduled to end on July 21; however, as of Tuesday, officials with both countries expect the restrictions to be extended through at least August 21.
- The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), which gives financial support to Canadians who have had their employment affected by COVID-19, has been extended through December 2020. As of July 6, the program has paid out approximately CAN \$18.01 billion. Full details on the program can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>.
- On Friday, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) amended and expanded current guidelines for airlines to carry cargo on passenger planes. The FAA extended previous guidelines that airlines could carry cargo within seats on passenger planes through at least July 10, 2021. The FAA also gave airlines permission to remove seats to transport cargo through at least July 10, 2021 on cargo-only flights. Full guidance can be viewed at the following link: [https://www.faa.gov/coronavirus/regulatory\\_updates/media/18584.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/coronavirus/regulatory_updates/media/18584.pdf).
- As of Monday, face coverings are now required on all public transit across the province of Quebec. A two-week grace period will be in effect, and beginning July 27, passengers will be prohibited from using any public transportation without a face covering. Children under the age of 12 are not required to wear a face covering.
- Companies in both the U.S. and Canada have continued to announce layoffs related to the ongoing pandemic. Recently, Via Rail, in Canada, announced it would be laying off approximately 1,000 employees. In the United States, United Airlines announced it would be laying off approximately 4,700 employees and has warned it may end up cutting as many as 36,000 jobs. U.S. media sources have estimated as many as 66,000 businesses have closed since March.
- On Tuesday, the Trump administration rescinded a new rule that had been issued by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) last week barring international students from entering the country if their schools were holding online-only classes due to COVID-19. The rule received widespread criticism and a number of colleges and universities had filed a suit claiming the new rule was illegal.

## SPREAD OF COVID-19: EUROPE

Outbreaks in the Balkans and Central Asia are of continuing concern, while countries in much of Central and Western Europe use localized measures to address hotspots and clusters. Border control policies by each country in the European Union and Schengen zone remain varied and evolving based on developments in outbreaks abroad. Leaders of EU countries will meet in the coming days to negotiate a potential coronavirus recovery fund, though disagreements persist heading into the talks in Brussels. While economic recoveries are an ongoing process in many European countries that have largely reopened from earlier lockdowns, economies that are heavily reliant upon international tourism and exports (particularly exports outside the EU) may have recoveries hindered by ongoing COVID-related disruptions and reduced demand in other parts of the world. Furthermore, countries are taking steps to prepare for potential resurgences of COVID-19 in the fall and winter, in conjunction with the typical flu season, to mitigate the risk of overcapacity healthcare systems.

- The Italian government is reportedly preparing a stimulus package of more than US \$22 billion to support temporarily laid-off workers, expand existing furlough programs, and provide about US \$1 billion of incentives for purchasing more less-polluting vehicles.
- Retail sales in the UK returned to growth last month, driven by online shopping, groceries, and furniture purchases considered to have represented accumulated demand from the lockdown period.
- A US \$360 billion investment plan by the Russian government announced two years prior has been postponed by six years due to the pandemic, raising questions of the limited extent of planned government spending to reinvigorate the economy.
- Germany's economy minister recently said the country is expected to return to economic growth from October or November, though an overall 6.3 percent economic contraction has been predicted by the government for 2020.
- Despite the resumption of some travel, the CEO of Heathrow Airport said the reopening of all terminals at one of Europe's busiest airports is not planned before 2021.
- While retail spending in many European countries has rebounded post-lockdown, industrial production has largely stayed below levels pre-lockdown and exports have also remained lower than pre-crisis volumes.
- A European Central Bank survey of lenders has indicated that banks are preparing to scale back loans to businesses in the eurozone in conjunction with anticipated government loan guarantee programs tapering off during the third quarter of 2020.
- Following the halt of Norwegian salmon imports to China over COVID-19 fears, salmon producers in Norway have indicated that exports and sales have resumed at a pace still well below normal volumes.
- Although Greece has been keen to restart the country's tourism sector, the country's Foundation of Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE) has forecast a 2020 economic contraction of 7.5-10.5 percent, a further challenge after the last prolonged economic crisis.

## Updates Around the Region

Despite an uptick in new cases, on July 14, **Belgium** had its first day with no reported COVID-19 deaths since the first half of March. Officials are convening on July 15 to assess whether current restrictions will be further eased in the near future or maintained due to the increase in transmission.

**French** President Emmanuel Macron said that wearing masks in enclosed public spaces will become required in the coming weeks in order to mitigate a resurgence of COVID-19. Daily cases in July have remained largely stable despite increased travel with the easing of border restrictions. The French government finalized an agreement with unions on Monday for pay increases to healthcare workers totaling about US \$9 billion. Despite the agreement, some clashes broke out between protesting healthcare workers and police as the former demonstrated in Paris on Bastille Day (July 14).

**German** officials are considering local travel bans in the event of unexplained spikes in COVID-19 cases as part of a package of options to mitigate the risk of a large second wave of transmission. Germans have been encouraged to remain vigilant to avoid a second wave, including while on holiday within or outside of Germany.

**Irish** Deputy Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said on July 14 that it seems likely the country will move to the fourth and final phase of reopening next week. The progress is expected despite an increase in recent new cases, but Varadkar does not consider the increase prohibitive. The fourth phase includes bars and nightclubs being able to reopen. Up to 100 people can convene indoors during phase four, and non-essential office employees may increasingly opt to return to places of work, potentially only part-time at first. Irish officials also indicated that they are considering bolstering measures at airports to ensure compliance with the mandatory 14-day quarantine period for international arrivals.

**North Macedonia** is having an election on July 15 despite a growing outbreak in the country. Officials have sought to address concerns of transmission related to voting, with masks and distancing being required at polling stations while election personnel have gone to the residences of those quarantining to enable them to cast their ballot without going to a polling station.

**Serbia's** outbreak appears to remain uncontrolled amidst public anger over the government's handling of the crisis. Although participation has declined, protests have continued following clashes last week and the government's walk back from curfews. Despite unrest abating, the flareup in protests underscores the potential for further spontaneous action in response to extensive restrictions. Furthermore, the country's healthcare infrastructure continues struggling to cope with the recent surge in cases.

Catalonia continues to be a hotspot of outbreaks in **Spain**, with restrictions in Segria (inclusive of Lleida) and multiple neighborhoods of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, which borders Barcelona. More than 60 percent of recent cases in Segria have been asymptomatic, and the virus had been spreading among temporary agricultural workers as well as younger people. The government in Catalonia has sought to reinforce the

judicial basis of the latest restrictions, which stop short of a full lockdown with confinement, after a judge said recent efforts to reimpose restrictions were disproportionate, and that ordering home confinement was a power of the federal government. Legal challenges to local and regional measures could cause confusion or exacerbate divisions among the general public over mitigation measures, and may pose difficulties in taking swift and cohesive action to tamp down clusters or hotspots.

Despite **Turkmenistan** maintaining that it has not had cases of COVID-19, officials have urged the public to wear medical masks when outside due to “high concentrations of dust.” Passenger trains are being suspended for unspecified reasons July 16-23. A WHO team is nearing the conclusion of a mission in the country focused on assessing the country’s status and consulting with officials on mitigation measures.

In the **United Kingdom**, conflicting messaging continues to challenge reopening efforts, with England still under official guidance for people to work from home when possible despite Prime Minister Boris Johnson increasingly urging people to return to workplaces. Johnson has been keen to revitalize activity within cities that has remained lower while people work from home. Downing Street plans to introduce a mask requirement in England from July 24 for public indoor spaces as part of the effort to facilitate reopenings and economic recovery while still mitigating the risk of transmission.

## SPREAD OF COVID-19: ASIA/PACIFIC

The number of COVID-19 cases across the Asia-Pacific region increased by 20 percent to more than 1.4 million and deaths increased by 14 percent to more than 37,000. The vast majority of new cases were reported in India (187,000 over the past week), although increases of more than 15 percent were also seen in places like Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia, Sri Lanka, and Hong Kong. Major cities in India like Bengaluru are imposing new shutdowns of all nonessential activities, along with Bihar State and multiple other areas across the country. Hong Kong, which has seen a 27 percent increase in new cases, has imposed new restrictions in order to prevent a “third wave” of the virus, with nonessential businesses being closed and Hong Kong Disneyland shut down. Other areas, such as New Zealand, Mainland China, and South Korea appear to still have their COVID-19 situations largely under control, but are remaining vigilant to quickly contain any new outbreaks.

### East Asia

#### *Hong Kong*

Due to a rising number of COVID-19 cases, the Hong Kong government is tightening restrictions again, such as requiring face masks on public transportation, shutting down venues like bars, movie theaters, and gyms, and banning in-restaurant dining between 6:00 PM and 5:00 AM. There were 48 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, with 40 of them being locally transmitted and 24 cases where the source of transmission was unknown. In total, more than 1,500 cases of COVID-19 have been reported, up from 1,280 last week.

Gatherings in public places, which was previously capped at 50 people, will now be limited to four people. The new restrictions will go into effect from 12:00 AM on Wednesday, July 15, and can be viewed here: <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202007/14/P2020071400010.htm>. Hong Kong Disneyland will also be shut down from July 15 in accordance with these restrictions. Supermarkets also began limiting the sale of essential items to prevent panic buying.

### *Japan*

Tokyo reported four straight days of over 200 new COVID-19 cases, although this fell to 119 on Monday and rose slightly to 143 on Tuesday. Many of the recent cases have been linked to nightlife districts in the capital, although there have been other clusters at childcare centers. The areas surrounding Tokyo, including Saitama, Kanagawa, and Chiba, are also seeing an increase of COVID-19 infections. The economy minister said that the country needed to remain on high alert.

### **Southeast Asia**

#### *The Philippines*

The Philippines has seen a 20 percent increase in cases and deaths over the past week, with most of the new cases still being reported in the Metro Manila area. Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said that it was unlikely that the quarantine level for the Metro Manila area would be downgraded in the coming weeks. Additional quarantine information is expected to be announced on July 15 by President Rodrigo Duterte. Navotas, a city in Metro Manila with 250,000 residents, is imposing a 14-day lockdown due to a spike in COVID-18 cases. Around 70 percent of ICU beds set aside for COVID-19 patients across the country are currently being occupied, although only around 25 percent of 70,000 beds set up in field hospitals are currently in use.

### **South Asia**

#### *India*

India reported over 28,700 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, setting another single-day record and representing the fourth consecutive day where over 26,000 cases have been reported. Bengaluru in Karnataka State has imposed a lockdown until July 22 due to rising cases. Under the lockdown, no new flights or trains will be operated, although already scheduled ones will still operate. All nonessential services will also be suspended. Almost a dozen states have reimposed lockdown measures in parts of their jurisdictions due to the rising number of cases across the country. This includes a complete shutdown of nonessential services in Bihar State from July 16 to July 31.

#### *Bangladesh*

COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh continue to rise rapidly, with more than 3,000 new cases reported on Monday. Many people are avoiding hospitals due to concerns about the standard of care, resulting in 70 percent of beds being empty. This could result in increased infections and deaths, as those testing positive for COVID-19 could infect more people outside a hospital setting, and those waiting until symptoms become severe may

have higher mortality rates. Bangladesh is also dealing with widespread flooding that has affected millions of people. Crowded evacuation shelters housing those displaced also increases the risk of additional COVID-19 outbreaks.

As a reflection of the improved COVID-19 situation in China, the government also ended its policy of quarantining Chinese cargo vessels for 14 days, which is expected to improve cargo transportation and reduce shipping costs.

## **Oceania**

### *Australia*

Victoria State continues to be the epicenter of the new outbreak in Australia, with 270 cases reported on Tuesday. Victoria State Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton said that the peak of cases may not have been reached yet and wanted to see a week of decreasing numbers before reaching any conclusion. The number of new cases across the country has exceeded 50 every day since June 28, which was preceded more than two months of daily cases below 50.

There are growing concerns about a potential outbreak affecting New South Wales State, with more than 20 cases linked to the Crossroads Hotel in Sydney. New restrictions on large-capacity venues were also implemented, with those holding over 250 people requiring a full-time monitor to ensure compliance with safety regulations. Queensland State also effectively closed its borders to residents from 77 Sydney suburbs, with potential jail sentences for those lying about their movements.

## **SPREAD OF COVID-19: MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

As of this writing, 1,569,096 cases of COVID-19 have been reported across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, along with 38,054 deaths attributed to the virus. The overall rate of infection only increased by approximately nine percent over the past seven days, suggesting the spread of the virus across the MENA is continuing to slow, a trend that has been evident throughout the region over the past five weeks. Despite the overall rate of infection decreasing, a minority of countries have reported worsening outbreaks, including Israel, Lebanon, and Iraq. However, the majority of MENA nations that seem to have their outbreaks under control are in the midst of at least partial, if not complete, reopenings of economic sectors, with some seeming to prioritize reopening border crossings and resuming bilateral trade with regional neighbors, as this could help stimulate economic activity. That said, several countries that have witnessed increased infections in coronavirus hotspots continue to implement localized lockdowns. A few countries, namely Pakistan and Morocco, have also begun to outline precautionary measures in anticipation of the upcoming Eid al Adha holiday, expected from July 30-August 3, as the previous Eid al Fitr holiday at the end of May led to a spike in cases in many Muslim-majority countries. Security measures have generally been tailored to specific activities and locations, as officials are acutely aware that reimposing nationwide quarantines could exacerbate already

fragile economic conditions. Despite officials attempting to avoid reimposing sweeping lockdown measures, the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic has stoked social unrest in many countries as poverty and unemployment continue to rise. The financial effects of the pandemic are likely to be long-lasting, increasing the probability of further demonstrations, labor actions, and security incidents in the coming weeks.

**Although the overall COVID-19 curve maintains an upward trajectory, the rate of infection continues to slow, suggesting the region may be close to a plateau if this trend should continue in the coming weeks. Despite the overall rate of infection decreasing, a minority of states have reported worsening outbreaks.**

- COVID-19 cases in the MENA have increased by 9.45 percent since July 7, a drop of approximately two percent compared to the period from June 30-July 6, reflecting a continuous—albeit slow—flattening of the coronavirus curve across the region.
- The majority of MENA countries have witnessed a decrease in the rate of infection over the past week, with Jordan (1.37%), Turkey (3.46%), the United Arab Emirates (4.94%), Qatar (3.55%), and Afghanistan (4.06%) recording the smallest increases.
- Though the rate of infection decreased somewhat in the Palestinian territories (66.43%) over the past seven days, the outbreak in this area continues to spread, with a sharp increase in deaths attributed to the virus recorded in recent days.
- Pakistan has continued a downward trend in daily incidence since its peak last month, falling to number 13 globally in terms of daily incidence, according to a July 13 report by Johns Hopkins. The country's rate of infection decreased to 8.14% from July 7-13.
- Though the rate of infection has decreased in Syria (18.01%) over the past week, the first case of COVID-19 was detected in Idlib on July 9, threatening a more widespread outbreak, as the virus will likely be difficult to control if it reaches the area's displacement camps. Due to low testing capabilities and a weak healthcare system, the full extent of the virus outbreak in Syria remains unclear.
- Israel (31.86%), Lebanon (28.33%), and Iraq (31.28%) are among the few nations to continue to report increasing rates of infection.

**As most countries continue efforts to resume economic activity, travel, and tourism, a handful of countries are prioritizing the reopening of border crossings, which stands to increase bilateral trade, and help revive struggling economies.**

- Morocco's borders were reopened to citizens and foreign residents on July 14. Maritime crossing points were also permitted to reopen from the ports of Sete, France, and Genoa, Italy.
- Dubai-based Emirates Airlines announced on July 10 that it will resume flights to six cities in the coming weeks, including Geneva, Los Angeles, Dar es Salaam, Prague, Sao Paulo, and Boston.

- Afghan exports to India, through the Pakistan-India Wagah border crossing, are expected to resume on July 15. Pakistan’s foreign ministry stated that it had restored bilateral trade and Afghan transit trade at all border crossings to pre-COVID-19 status.
- The Kharlachi border crossing and the Angor Adda border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan were reopened for traffic on July 11, and July 10, respectively.
- The UN voted on July 11 to extend cross-border humanitarian aid to Syria through the Bab al Hawa border crossing with Turkey for another twelve months.
- Iraq partially reopened the Mandali border crossing with Iran on July 11, following a three-month closure due to the pandemic. The crossing, the third to reopen following the Basra and Wasit border crossings, will reportedly be operational for two days a week for trade exchange.
- Pakistan is expected to resume its nationwide anti-polio campaign next week, though a specific date has not been provided, following months of suspension due to the coronavirus pandemic.

**Although most MENA nations continue plans to reopen economies, local clusters and outbreaks remain a concern, prompting authorities to remain vigilant and reimpose localized lockdown measures in COVID-19 hotspots. A few countries have also begun to outline precautionary measures in anticipation of the upcoming Eid al Adha holiday. Security measures have generally been tailored to specific activities and locations, as officials are acutely aware that reimposing nationwide quarantines could exacerbate already fragile economic conditions.**

- On July 12, the Jordanian government announced that commercial international flights will remain suspended through at least July 24.
- Morocco extended its medical state of emergency until August 10, the country’s fourth such extension, though it continues its phased deconfinement plan.
- On July 13, Iraqi authorities extended the suspension on all scheduled flights to and from Iraq through July 22. The measure has been in effect since March 17.
- On July 13, Moroccan officials announced the suspension of all trains to and from Tangier following an emergence of COVID-19 hotspots across the city.
- On July 9, Algerian officials banned all movement between its 29 wilayas (provinces) still under lockdown for one week beginning on July 10. The measure is expected to remain in effect until at least July 16. Additionally, several wilayas, where the COVID-19 outbreak has worsened, were placed under stricter lockdowns, including the El Tarf, Ouargla, Tipaza, M’sila, and Setif wilayas.
- President Rouahni announced on July 11 the closure of all wedding venues and funeral homes in Tehran until further notice.

- On July 12, the Palestinian Authority (PA) reimposed a curfew across the West Bank from 8:00 PM to 6:00 AM local time until at least until July 26. Under the new measure, all cities, villages, and refugee camps where COVID-19 cases are reported will be locked down. All gatherings are also banned, and all travel between Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Nablus is prohibited.
- On July 9, Israeli officials announced they would impose seven-day lockdowns on Jerusalem, Beit Shemesh, Lod, Ramle, and Kiryat Malakhi beginning on July 10. The lockdowns are expected to last until 8:00 AM local time on July 17.
- Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan warned the public on July 9 of “careless” behaviors during the upcoming Eid al Adha holiday, expected from July 30-August 3, as the previous Eid al Fitr holiday at the end of May led to a spike of cases in the country.
- On July 8, officials in Morocco outlined security measures around the health and hygiene of livestock and markets in anticipation of Eid al Adha.

**Despite governments avoiding nationwide lockdowns, the economic fallout due to the COVID-19 pandemic has seen poverty and unemployment rise in the region, which has stoked social unrest in many countries, particularly as movement restrictions are lifted. As the financial situation is unlikely to improve in the near future, further demonstrations, labor actions, and security incidents are likely in the coming weeks.**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned on July 13 that the MENA region’s economy will contract by 5.7 percent this year, 2.4 points percentage points lower than its April forecast. This projection is the lowest in over 50 years, according to World Bank Data.
- Iranian President Hassan Rouhani stated on July 11 that the country’s economy cannot afford to shut down, even as the country’s outbreak worsens with record-high death tolls in recent days, as lockdown measures would lead to widespread protests.
- Workers at the Iranian Haft Tappeh Sugarcane factory in Shush, began an ongoing strike on June 12 after going nearly three months without wages. Associated protests have been reported.
- Over 280 migrant workers for the Lebanon’s waste management company, RAMCO, went on strike for the third consecutive day on July 14, over failure to pay wages in US dollars. The strike action has been accompanied by nationwide anti-government protests denouncing the country’s worsening economic situation amid a plummet in the value of the Lebanese pound.
- Protest activity has increased throughout Israel in the past week, with sentiment centering around perceived corruption leading to the government’s failure to successfully address the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the Knesset approved an economic plan proposed by Netanyahu on Monday, July 13, which includes expanding eligibility for unemployment benefits, and financial assistance to those that are self-employed, protests are unlikely to abate in the short term.

- Protests were recorded in the southern Tunisian city of Remada on July 11 against high unemployment. Protests in Remada follow weeks of demonstrations in Tataouine for similar reasons.

## SPREAD OF COVID-19: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

On Tuesday, July 14, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in sub-Saharan Africa rose to over 490,000. The number of fatalities also increased to more than 8,000. The overall pace of new infections has remained steady in recent weeks, though this has varied considerably from country to country. The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has also warned that the pandemic is just reaching “full speed,” indicating that the number of cases is likely to continue growing for the foreseeable future. New hotspots for transmission have emerged, notably fishing vessels, and healthcare systems in a few locations are close to reaching capacity. Although many countries and territories have continued to lift their anti-infection measures, including resuming international commercial flights, a few have strengthened them citing a surge in new cases. This includes South Africa, the worst-affected country in the region, which re-introduced a curfew over the weekend. While the relaxing of restrictions and resumption of business activities are expected to help the region recover economically, they could lead to a surge in new infections and deaths over the coming weeks and months, which could further burden the region’s fragile healthcare systems. This could prompt additional countries to re-introduce anti-infection measures, but these are likely to be more localized and less stringent than previous measures.

**The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in sub-Saharan Africa has continued to rise, but the overall pace of new infections has remained steady since June.**

- As of the morning of Tuesday, July 14, at least 491,632 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been recorded in the region, including 8,215 fatalities.
- Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for less than 4% of all cases globally and less than 2% of all fatalities.
- The overall number of confirmed cases increased by 28% compared to last Tuesday, July 7. The weekly percentage increase in confirmed cases has remained steady at between 27% and 30% since June.

**The pace of new infections continues to vary considerably by country and territory. This suggests that while the pandemic is worsening in some locations, it is improving or stabilizing in others.**

- The largest increases in cases over the past week occurred in Lesotho (169%), Namibia (60%), Madagascar (56%), and Angola (49%).
- The World Health Organization continues to record no new cases in Tanzania and Equatorial Guinea, fueling concerns regarding under-reporting and a lack of transparency. However, it is important to note that the Africa CDC has recorded 3,071 cases in Equatorial Guinea, including 51 deaths.
- More than a dozen countries and territories (Mauritius, Niger, Chad, Sao Tome and Principe, Mayotte, Comoros, South Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Gabon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Reunion, and Cameroon) recorded

less than 5% increases in cases over the past week, indicating that the situation is likely improving in these locations.

- South Africa remains the worst-affected country in the region accounting for approximately 59% of all cases and 51% of all fatalities. The top five worst-affected countries in the region (including Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, and Cote d'Ivoire) account for over 76% of all cases and around 70% of all deaths.

**Fishing vessels have emerged as new hotspots for virus transmission. Other lingering hotspots include mine sites, trucking corridors, and prisons.**

- A fishing vessel was denied entry at the port of Walvis Bay, Namibia, last week after more than 40 crewmembers tested positive for COVID-19. This occurred after the Seychelles' recent resurgence in COVID-19 was blamed on seafarers who had recently entered the country for a crew exchange.
- Outbreaks of COVID-19 have also been reported at the largest ruby mine in the world, Gemfield Plc's Montepuez mine in northern Mozambique, and at Glencore's Kamoto Copper Mine in the southeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Neither mine has shut down at this point, but there are concerns that if the number of cases continues to rise at mine sites, the risk of disruptions to mining operations could increase.
- Congestion has been reported along the border between Cameroon and the Central Africa Republic, as the latter has required that all Cameroonian truck drivers must undergo COVID-19 testing. Shortages of testing kits at border crossings and officials' refusal to accept tests conducted in Cameroon have exacerbated the issue, leaving drivers stranded for weeks.
- Hundreds of inmates released from prisons in Cameroon have tested positive for the virus, suggesting that it could be rampant in detention centers across the country. Outbreaks have also been reported at prisons in Togo, South Africa, Kenya, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

**The pandemic is close to overwhelming healthcare systems in several locations.**

- Health officials have warned that all hospital beds in South Africa could be filled within a month if the outbreak continues to grow at the current rate. The country's new epicenter of Gauteng Province has already reported a shortage of oxygen.
- Health workers in Ghana have complained of shortages of protective gear and delays in processing test results.

**A majority of countries and territories across sub-Saharan Africa have continued to relax their lockdowns, curfews, and other anti-infection measures.**

- Sudan and Sierra Leone became the latest countries to lift their lockdowns and/or restrictions on movement over the past week, but both have maintained their nighttime curfews.

- This brings the total number of countries and territories that have lifted their restrictions on internal movement, at least partially, to nearly 30. Only 11 countries have maintained internal restrictions on movement, while 15 have maintained nighttime curfews.

**An increasing number of countries have also allowed commercial flights to resume or announced plans to do so over the coming weeks. Some are requiring negative COVID-19 tests in order to enter the country.**

- Sudan, Mauritania, and Niger reopened their airspaces to international commercial flights over the past week. Senegal, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, and Ghana plan to do so by the end of the month.
- Some countries, including Sudan, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea, are requiring that all travelers must have a negative COVID-19 test within days of their plans to enter or exit.
- However, international commercial flights remain suspended in over 30 countries and territories in the region and U.S. embassies and other diplomatic missions are continuing to organize repatriation flights for those seeking to return to their countries of origin.

**Conversely, several additional countries have strengthened their anti-infection measures over the past week, citing an uptick in cases.**

- South African President Cyril Ramaphosa reintroduced a nighttime curfew beginning on July 13, citing a “surge” in new infections and deaths. South Africa has also re-imposed a ban on alcohol sales and made the failure to wear a mask in public a criminal offense.
- Angola has introduced more stringent punishments for those violating anti-infection measures, including imposing fines for those who do not wear face masks in public and businesses that remain open past 3:00 PM local time. It has also extended the cordon sanitaire (confinement) to Cazengo.

## ASSESSMENT

In recent weeks, a growing number of doctors in the United States and around the world have reported cases in which patients who had previously been infected with COVID-19 have contracted the disease for a second time. A recent study conducted at King’s College London concluded that patients that have recovered from the disease can lose their immunity within a matter of months. A similar investigation conducted by the Spanish government reached comparable conclusions, finding that patients began to lose COVID-19 antibodies within weeks after exposure. Although further research is required before any definitive conclusions are drawn, some virologists have cautioned that such findings might indicate that establishing “herd immunity” could prove to be unfeasible, especially in the short term. Instead, it is possible that COVID-19 could reinfect patients like the common cold or seasonal influenza. The fact that antibodies for the disease can dissipate so soon after exposure could mean that the protection offered by any eventual vaccine might also be short-lived. Booster shots or a recurring inoculation akin to the yearly flu shot could conceivably be required.

As of this writing, it remains unclear how long the COVID-19 pandemic could potentially last. The head of the WHO's emergencies program, Dr. Mike Ryan, stated last Friday that "In the current situation it is unlikely we can eradicate this virus." WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus echoed this sentiment on Monday, stating that "there will be no return to the old normal for the foreseeable future." The organization's leaders have argued that inconsistent messaging from governments and widespread public non-compliance with anti-infection measures are exacerbating the spread of the disease. Moreover, Ghebreyesus claimed that "too many countries are headed in the wrong direction," and warned that the pandemic could potentially continue to worsen. Some public health officials in the Northern Hemisphere have already begun to express concern about the onset of winter, noting that the season will likely bring an even steeper increase in new infections and greater challenges for healthcare systems, largely owing to overlap with the flu.