



INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Situational awareness for stakeholders and decision makers.



Report # 21-024

09 April 2021

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1. CURRENT SITUATION

While many jurisdictions are seeing a decrease in cases and loosening of restrictions, some employers are already beginning to request their employees return to the office in one form or another. At the beginning of the pandemic many believed, and some still do, that remote work is the future of the employment landscape. After all, it is cheaper for the employer, who save on operating expenses, while reducing commuting time and associated costs for employees.

In a recent poll, a third of Canadians surveyed said they would begin looking for new work if their employer asked them to go back to the office. Half of respondents wanted a hybrid model, while 20% preferred to work full time from the office. Those surveyed also understood that they would impact their relationship with their co-workers and possibly their professional job development. Employees also prefer to set their work hours, have a more casual dress code and a personal workspace which does not have any distractions nearby.

As remote jobs would be more attractive, it is likely that employers providing those types of jobs may get more demand than others, giving them leverage. These employers could possibly pay less than market value for the work, as remote workers could live in more rural areas where living expenses are cheaper than the city. It is likely that at least some of the increase in rural property buying is related to individuals who thought they would not be required to go back to the office, hoping that employers see the benefits of remote work. However, even employers such as Google have begun providing timelines of when people will return to the office. Google will require employees who want to work from home for more than 14 days to apply, and employees are expected to live within commuting distance of Google offices. This was surprising for many, who thought that Silicon Valley companies would be the first to fully support a “new normal” of working from home. Twitter’s founder and CEO even said last year that Twitter “employees can now work from home forever”. Microsoft will be having employees work from home less than 50% of the time, and Amazon also plans to return to a “office-centric culture”.

But what does flexible or hybrid work mean? Is it only needing to go to the office once or twice a week, or only attending for meetings? It is likely that the real balance of allowing employees the flexibility to work from home and still maintaining a company culture and space conducive for collaborations is yet to have been found. Companies must try different methods to see what works best for them and their bottom line, while ensuring their employees are happy as well.

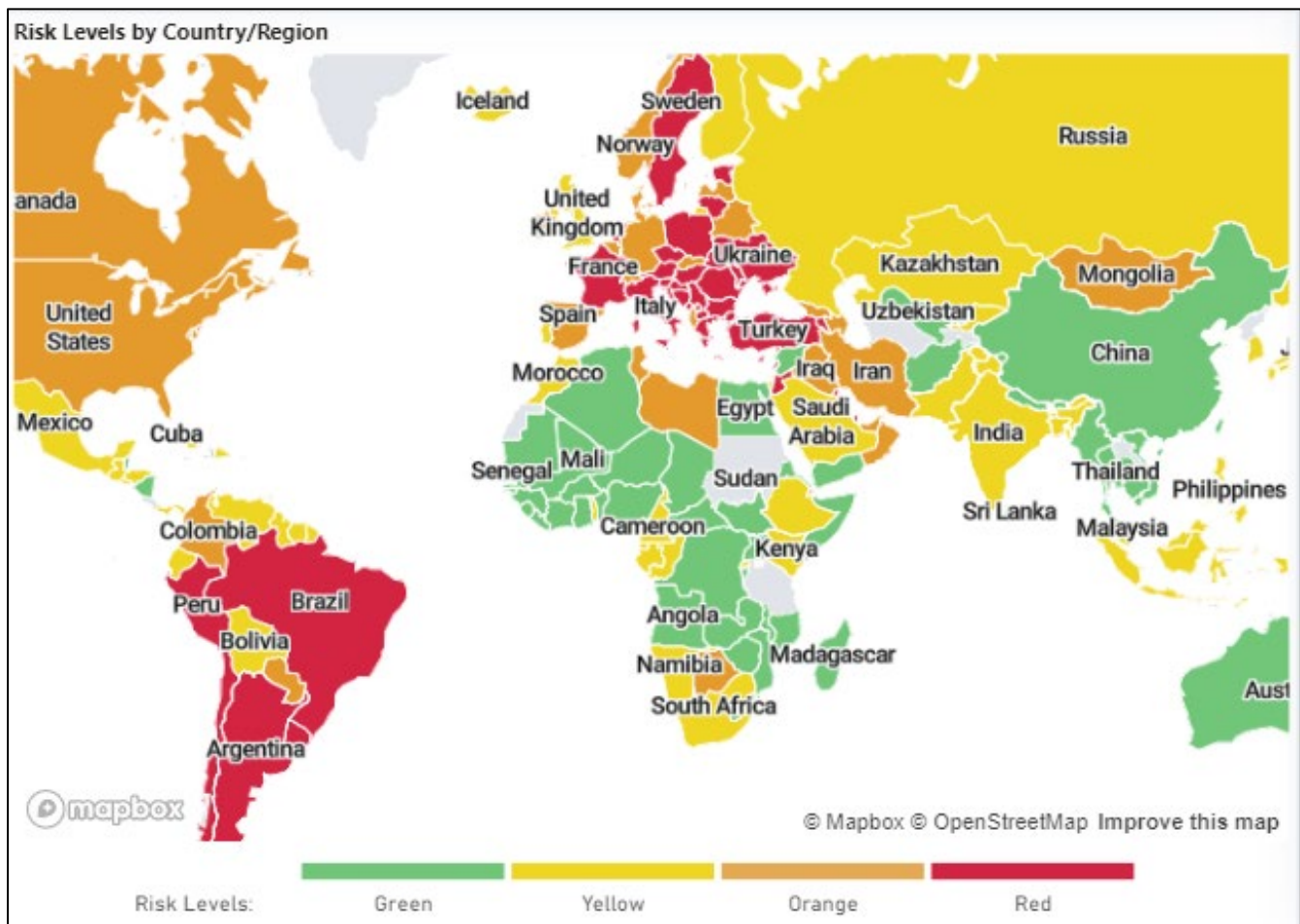
One of the downsides of allowing remote work means that talent can be found anywhere, and job seekers are now going against other candidates who have a different geographical location than them, opening up the pool of candidates to many more than can usually be found in one metropolitan area. As such, it allows companies to pay less and still find appropriate workers who may not be living in the geographical area of the company. This may extend work to people from other countries, who could accept lower pay.

Many employers desire their employees return to business as usual, while most employees desire some sort of work from home option. This may be the time for companies to acknowledge the wishes of their employees, but at the same time encourage a dialogue to see what exactly they want and need the most once it is safe to return to the office. It is likely that the most attractive companies will continue to be those supporting their employees preferences to work wherever they wish - from home, the office, or a hybrid model that includes both.

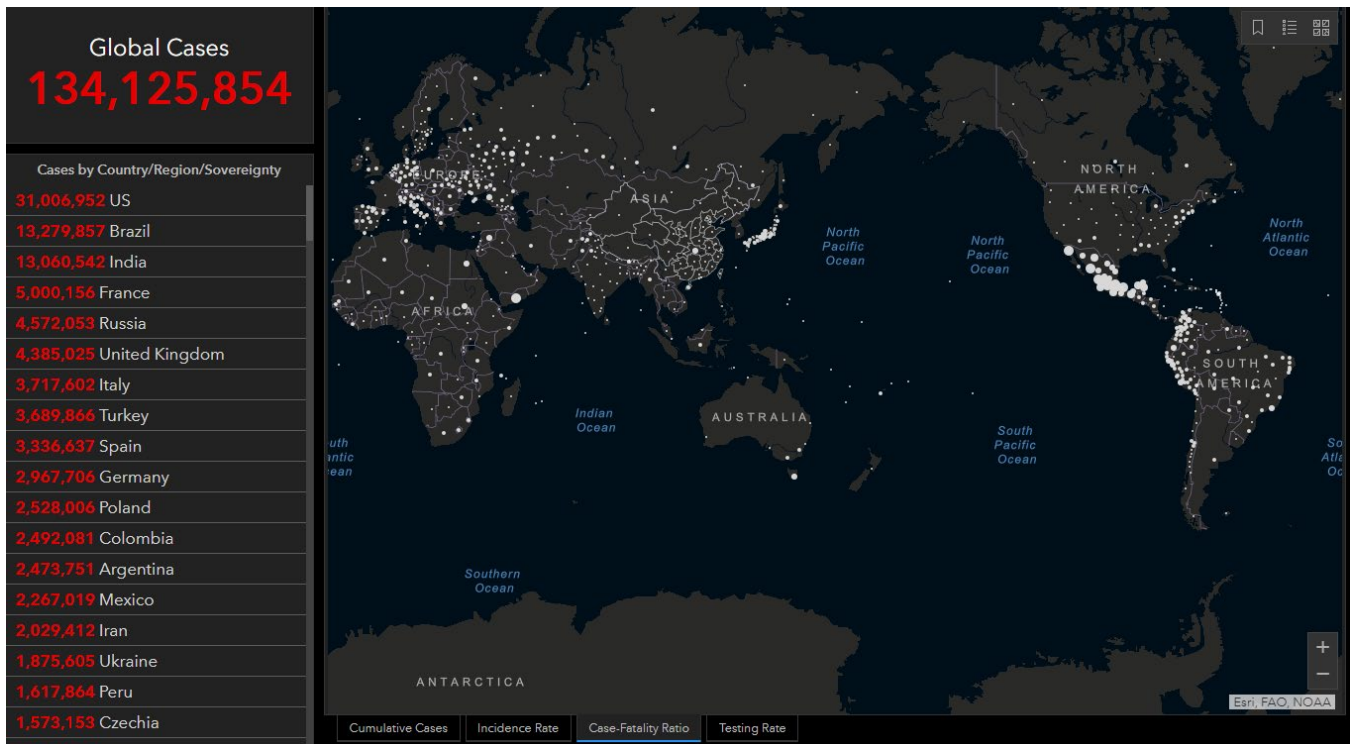
2. GLOBAL

2.1 COVID UPDATE

Country/Region	United States	Country/Region	Canada
Daily new cases per 100k people (7d moving avg.)	20.2	Daily new cases per 100k people (7d moving avg.)	16.8
Risk level	Orange	Risk level	Orange
Total cases	30,943,899	Total cases	1,020,893
Total deaths	558,591	Total deaths	23,141



#	Country, Other	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Serious, Critical	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	World	134,839,658	+327,661	2,919,422	+5,090	108,504,054	23,416,182	101,854	17,299	374.5			
1	USA	31,729,532	+12,128	573,988	+132	24,273,615	6,881,929	9,124	95,429	1,726	415,292,004	1,249,017	332,494,997
2	France	4,939,258		98,065		303,639	4,537,554	5,729	75,541	1,500	68,007,540	1,040,114	65,384,711
3	Brazil	13,286,324		345,287		11,732,193	1,208,844	8,318	62,167	1,616	28,600,000	133,820	213,720,582
4	India	13,164,235	+106,281	168,203	+509	11,964,985	1,031,047	8,944	9,468	121	254,041,584	182,709	1,390,419,871
5	Belgium	913,057	+4,845	23,348	+47	58,902	830,807	908	78,519	2,008	11,571,305	995,088	11,628,425
6	Italy	3,717,602		112,861		3,060,411	544,330	3,663	61,557	1,869	52,117,901	862,975	60,393,289
7	Turkey	3,689,866		33,201		3,232,892	423,773	2,615	43,392	390	40,689,742	478,503	85,035,491
8	Ukraine	1,823,674	+19,676	36,381	+419	1,395,104	392,189	177	41,894	836	8,568,004	196,826	43,530,905
9	Poland	2,528,006	+28,487	57,427	+768	2,107,776	362,803	3,376	66,853	1,519	12,807,584	338,694	37,814,661
10	UK	4,370,321		126,980		3,945,354	297,987	440	64,118	1,863	133,233,062	1,954,703	68,160,254
11	Russia	4,623,984	+9,150	102,247	+402	4,248,700	273,037	2,300	31,675	700	123,000,000	842,566	145,982,669
12	Iran	2,029,412	+22,478	64,039	+155	1,693,005	272,368	4,278	23,927	755	13,494,296	159,098	84,817,252
13	Hungary	705,815	+7,325	22,966	+285	420,275	262,574	1,364	73,206	2,382	4,861,310	504,210	9,641,434
14	Mexico	2,267,019	+5,140	206,146	+548	1,802,033	258,840	4,798	17,442	1,586	6,216,314	47,828	129,972,374
15	Germany	2,965,672	+13,843	78,620	+147	2,647,600	239,452	4,439	35,310	936	51,559,277	613,873	83,990,125



Global Case to Fatality Ratios

2.2 COVID-19 World News

- [Covid-19 reinfections are rare — but without better data, we don't how rare](#)
Despite an increase in COVID-19 infections in the USA, it is not believed that reinfections are responsible for the high numbers. The country and its states are not in a place to be able to determine how many people have gotten infected as its viral surveillance network does not collect data in a way that would easily analyze this information. With the new, more transmissible, variants it is possible that reinfection may become more common than thought, as has been reported in other areas such as Brazil. It is likely that due to it being a respiratory virus, immunity will not last forever, similar to the flu. It is believed that the second infection would be milder, if not asymptomatic, as the immune system has some memory of the pathogen, allowing the body to rid of it quicker. However, for those who had a very mild first infection, it is likely that the immune response was not strong and they may be more susceptible than those with a more severe episode. Previous research did find that those who were reinfected generally had no symptoms, and it is unclear whether they are able to still transmit the virus.
- [Pfizer Begins Human Trials of New Pill to Treat Coronavirus](#)
Pfizer, who has created a successful COVID-19 vaccine, is now beginning to clinically test a new pill it made for COVID-19. The pill is to be taken at the first sign of an illness, which blocks viral replication before individuals get very sick. The drug binds to an enzyme (protease), which stops the virus from replicating in the cell. This type of treatment using protease has been successful in treating other viruses including Hepatitis C and HIV. This is likely an important step as the virus is mutating and the vaccinations may no longer be fully relied upon to ensure the pandemic is kept at bay, thus therapeutic options for the disease are even more important than ever. The clinical trials in humans are expected to last a few weeks, and is the second protease inhibitor that Pfizer is testing on humans, with the other provided intravenously to those who are hospitalized. There are various types of treatments for the virus, including some which is used for those who are at a high risk for the disease but have not yet been hospitalized. However, these are required to be infused at the hospital or a doctor's office, reducing their availability for those who cannot make it to the office. Once the Pfizer trial is successful, it is likely that the company will continue and will combine its phase 2 and three trials into one, which may allow it to request emergency use authorization as early as the end of the year.
- [Brazil in crisis with 4,000 coronavirus deaths recorded in a single day](#)
Despite Brazil having seen the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is now recording its highest single day record for death, with over 4,195 deaths in one day. The total deaths have now been brought to 337,000 people, the second highest number of deaths after the USA. Brazil is currently battling the P.1 variant, which is believed to be more contagious and possibly more deadly, and it is likely that the fate which is being suffered by Brazil may be similarly seen in other countries with little vaccination efforts or other measures, should the strain begin to spread there as well.
- [EU Regulator: AstraZeneca Vaccine Effective, Blood Clots May Be A Rare Side Effect](#)
- [Many Children With Serious Inflammatory Syndrome Had No Covid Symptoms](#)
- [Study suggests vaccines may improve symptoms for some COVID-19 long-haulers](#)

2.3 Global Awareness

- [U.S. military cites rising risk of Chinese move against Taiwan](#)
The USA military believes that in the near future, China is going to try to capture control Taiwan, with recent actions such as sending more military planes to Taiwan's air defense zones. Taiwan is an Island nearby China

which is officially seen as part of the People's Republic of China, but the island maintains its democracy and has been one of the main conflicts between the USA and China. Taiwan is politically autonomous but is not formally independent of China. Chinese military planes fly over the island almost daily in order to instill fear and also gain intelligence. It is believed that China will soon try to compel Taiwan to reunite with the mainland, similarly moving on their Hong Kong recently. Chinese officials have informed the USA that it should "abandon zero-peace thinking" and instead build mutual trust. It called any attempt to military intervention to assist in Taiwan's independence as a "dead end". Furthermore, it is possible that China will also try to make a move against the Philippines, as its exclusive economic zone is seeing increase "maritime militia" presence with over 200 Chinese boats. Due to the USA-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty, if an armed attack was to happen against the Philippines, the USA is obliged to assist the country. It is believed that China will not be deterred by the USA's possible actions should it try to invade Taiwan or the Philippines, and should the USA jump into action as is expected of it due to its treaties, it is likely that a large conflict will occur in Asia, with the USA attempting to receive support from other countries in an effort to protect Taiwan and the Philippines.

- [Biden Eyes Russia Retaliation After Review of Meddling, Hacking](#)

Reports suggest that the Biden administration is compiling an intelligence review of Russia's recent actions such as election interference, poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny, the report of Russian bounties on USA soldiers in Afghanistan, and the SolarWinds hack. The report is likely in preparation for retaliatory actions in the near future. Retaliatory measures possibly on the table include the expulsion of Russian intelligence officers in the USA which have diplomatic immunity, and also sanctions against people who are close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, as well as other agencies that have been linked to the election interference. Last month, sanctions were announced against Russian officials in the treatment of Alexey Navalny. The USA government will have to balance punishing Russia while at the same time requesting the country's help with rejoining the Iran nuclear deal and fighting climate change. It is also possible that private talks will occur between Russia and the USA in regards to what actions the USA may be prepared to take as a future deterrence for events such as cyber-attacks.

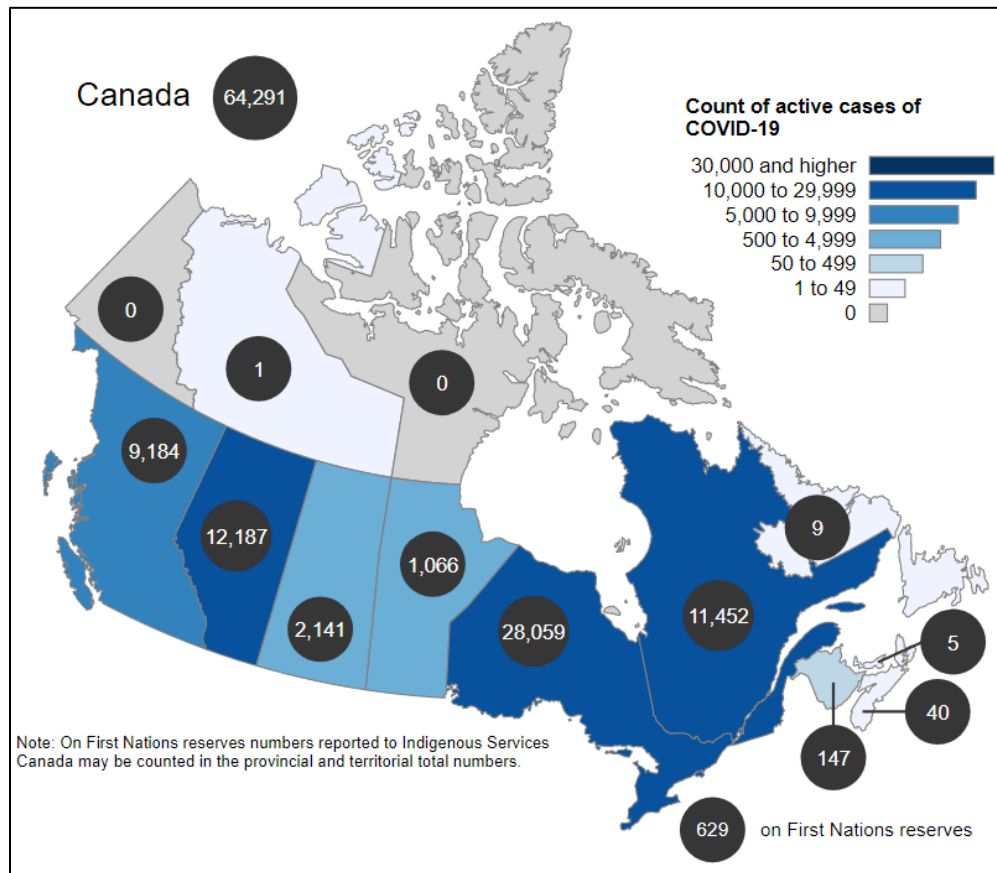
- [After alleged coup attempt, Jordan's King Abdullah signals end to royal feud](#)
- [The US is prepared to lift sanctions on Iran that are 'inconsistent' with the 2015 nuclear deal](#)
- [Remote working: Is Big Tech going off work from home?](#)


2.4 Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism

- [Myanmar security forces kill 15 protesters, junta leader says opposition aims to "destroy" country](#)
- [Russian police detain Navalny's doctor over prison protest](#)
- [Families of Pakistani 'missing people' continue sit-in demonstration](#)

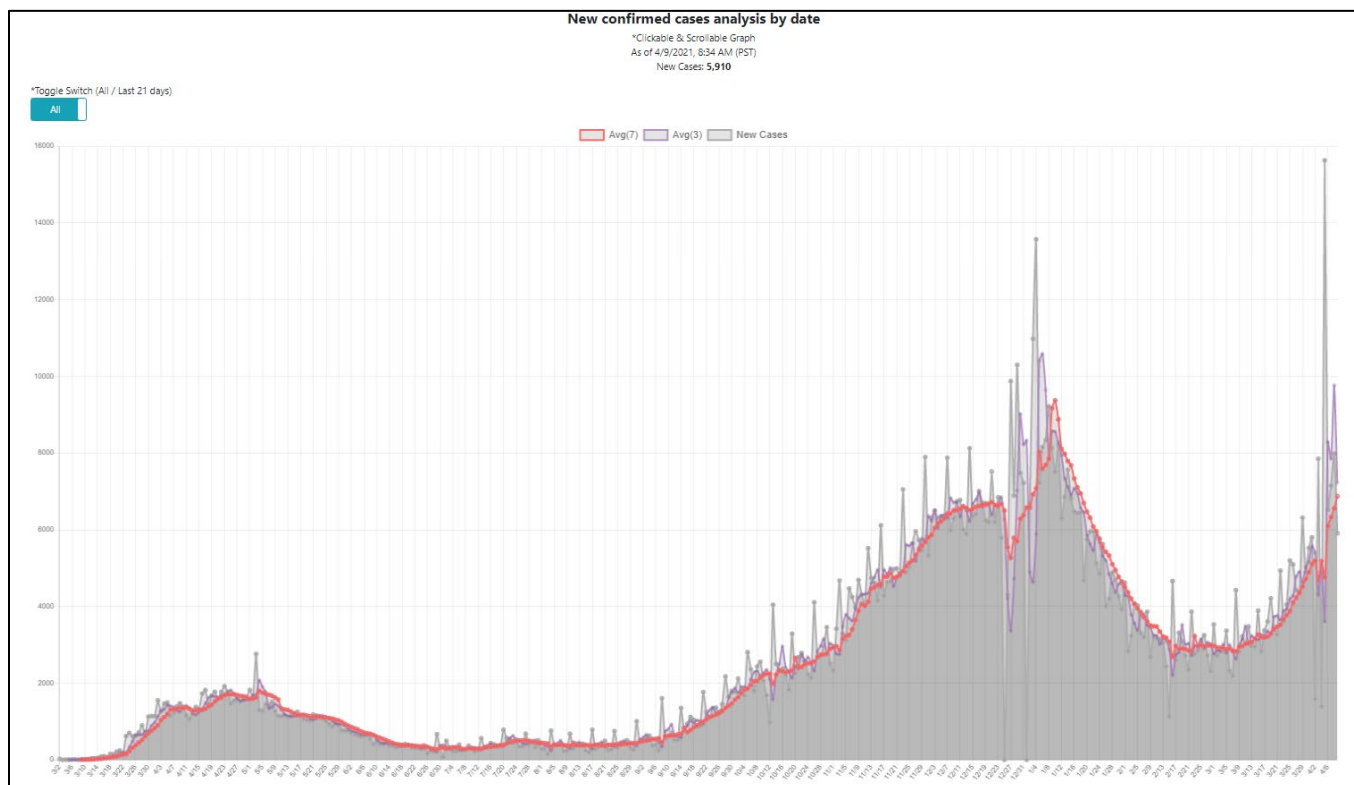
3. CANADA

3.1 COVID UPDATE



Prov.	Total Confirmed	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Total Active
Total	1,041,939 (↑5,910)	23,237 (↑26)	952,255 (↑3,871)	66,447 (↑2,013)
BC	108,278	1,493	97,462	9,323
ON	378,339 (↑4,227)	7,512 (↑18)	341,200 (↑2,641)	29,627 (↑1,568)
QC	323,094 (↑1,683)	10,726 (↑8)	300,471 (↑1,230)	11,897 (↑445)
AB	156,905	2,005	142,713	12,187
MB	34,793	946	32,781	1,066
NB	1,686	31	1,508	147
SK	35,376	447	32,788	2,141
PEI	161	0	152	9
NL	1,022	6	1,007	9
NS	1,754	66	1,648	40
YT	74	1	73	0
NT	49	0	48	1
NU	395	4	391	0
	13	0	13	0
Rate of change	↑ 0.6%	↑ 0.1%	↑ 0.4%	↑ 3.1%

Prov.	Total Test	Total Waiting	Total Hosp	Total ICU
Total	29,185,755 (+61,410)	-	-	-
BC	2,279,811	-	336	101
ON	13,030,542 (+61,410)	42,572 (+168)	1492 (+75)	552 (+27)
QC	7,786,799	-	569 (+3)	134 (+2)
AB	3,804,181	-	340	83
MB	596,872	-	58	13
NB	264,084	-	20	13
SK	693,601	-	206	41
PEI	124,796	-	-	-
NL	126,025	-	0	0
NS	444,086	-	1	0
YT	8,552	21	-	-
NT	16,449	20	0	0
NU	9,957	221	0	0
Rate of change	↑ 0.2%	-	-	-



Source: <https://www.covid-19canada.com>

3.2 COVID-19 Canada News

- [Want to get ahead of COVID-19 variants? Vaccinate young people, experts say](#)
With the new variants causing more young people to become hospitalized and require critical care, experts are suggesting that vaccinations should be offered to essential workers of all ages, calling them the new vulnerable population. As the variants are now overtaking the regular strain, little is known about them but they are clearly more transmissible and appear to be causing more severe consequences. The UK variant may be 40 to 70 percent more deadly, in Ontario, cases of the virus are not highest among those who are 20 to 39 years old. Health experts are saying that it is not due to the personal decisions of these young individuals, but many of them appear to be catching it at work where many young people are essential workers. Quebec has now expanded the vaccination rollout to include the chronically ill and essential workers, while the Ontario government which is also trying to provide early access to essential workers will not allow them to be vaccinated until at least May. Furthermore, young people who may get COVID-19 from work may be more likely to spread it to the community, thus vaccination of young essential worker people is likely an important measure to reduce community spread.
- [Canada is losing the race between vaccines and variants as the 3rd wave worsens](#)
Despite Canada's vaccine rollout, it appears that most of the country is seeing its third wave worsen. Canada has reported over 15,000 new cases of the more transmissible and deadly variants, with over 90% being the UK variant. However, the new variant first discovered in Brazil is also increasing in Canada, namely in BC, Ontario and Alberta. Its cases have more than doubled in one week to almost 1,000. It is likely that some areas loosened restrictions too quickly, allowing for the variants to spread while vaccinations, which have increased but have not kept up to pace with the variants. Unfortunately, variants such as the one found in Brazil have not yet been understood in terms of how effective the vaccine is against them, and therefore Canada's data may be useful in producing some of this analysis. The three variants have one specific common mutation, called E484K, which allows the virus to evade the immune response, possibly making it easier for someone to become infected with COVID-19 twice. The next month or so is of importance to ensure that the variants are not spreading uncontrollably in the community. As the weather gets better and many are tired of COVID-19 restrictions, it is likely the variants will only continue to be transmitted as many have not been well informed or may not even believe that the new variants are of more concern than the original strain.
- [B.C. premier says it's 'outrageous' people are travelling to Vancouver Island, but has no plans to stop it](#)
- ['We must defeat these variants,' says Kenney as Alberta returns to tighter COVID-19 restrictions](#)
- [Canada adds over 7K new COVID-19 cases as provinces struggle to contain variants](#)
- [B.C. shatters records with 1,293 new COVID-19 cases, pushing average over 1,000 per day](#)
- [Ontario imposes stay-at-home order as COVID-19 cases surge but stops short of instituting paid sick days](#)

3.3 Canada Awareness

- [CSIS confirms director has COVID-19, amid debate over workplace safety at intelligence agency](#)
Canada's Intelligence service, CSIS, has advised that its Director, David Vigneault has tested positive for COVID-19 and is now working from home. CSIS employees have continued to work in the office, despite concerns that physical distancing cannot be maintained at the headquarters, as staff have not been provided with a remote work option. As such, CSIS has "limited and contained" outbreaks at some of its offices, but did not specify locations. Sick employees are directed to recover at home. CSIS states that its mandate is covert and

that the employees cannot work from home, despite a department similar to CSIS, CSE, Communications Security Establishment, has been able to provide secure options for working from home, while the RCMP has a “high percentage” of its employees employed from home. Reportedly, in February over 200 CSIS employees have signed a mass grievance letter over the concern, reporting lack of physical distancing or policies regarding mask wearing. A source expressed an argument reportedly made by CSIS which suggests employees should accept a higher level of personal risk than other federal employees due to the nature of the work.

- [Variants are driving rise in younger, sicker patients needing specialized care to receive oxygen: doctors](#)
- [Federal Liberals set to start 3-day convention, focusing on COVID-19 and upcoming budget](#)
- [Canadian economy added 303,000 jobs in March as COVID-19 restrictions eased](#)

3.4 Canada – Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism



welund

During the week of 1-8 April 2021, the majority of activity in Canada noted by Welund focused on the government sector (70%), followed by education (9%). Protests made up the majority of activity (53%), followed by webinars, car caravans, critical commentary, and organizing (6% each).

Rising covid-19 cases, the reimplementing of increased restrictions, and campaign fatigue from recently executed actions, have constrained activist campaigns over the past week and likely contributed to the decrease in identified protest activity. The rise in activism in the education sector was largely attributed to opposition against recently announced provincial education budgets, structures, and curriculum changes in provinces such as Alberta and Manitoba.

Protests:

Campaign groups in Alberta and Manitoba executed a series of in-person protests and car caravans to oppose newly announced education bills in each province. In Manitoba, a cohort of activists drove vehicles around the Manitoba Legislature Building in Winnipeg to oppose replacing the province’s elected education board with a “central authority”. In Alberta, activists held online protests as well as in-person protests in Calgary and Edmonton to oppose the newly proposed curriculum for kindergarten to Grade 6 students, as well as budget cuts to post-secondary institutions throughout the province.

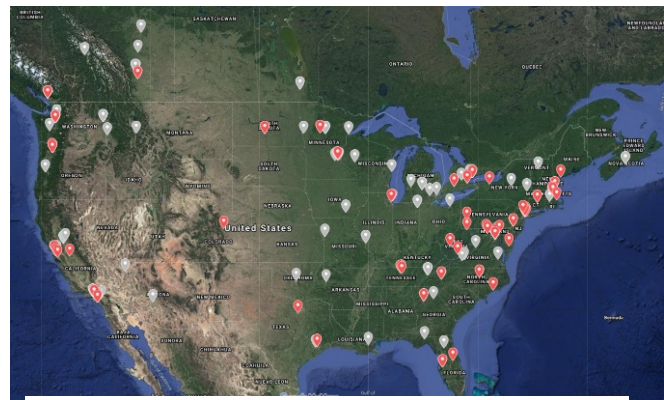


Figure 1: Past and upcoming protest activity as noted by Welund between 1-14 April 2021

Anti-TMX activists continued ongoing campaigns. In BC, Indigenous activists chained themselves to heavy equipment at the Blue River TMX pumping station. Campaigners also executed a banner drop in Vancouver in solidarity with activists opposing the project along the construction route. Activists in Manitoba called on supporters to “take action” in solidarity with anti-TMX groups in BC by sending letters to the government, sharing ‘tree love’ on social media, and participating in a ‘tree vigil’ in Winnipeg.

Anti-racism activists held additional protests to oppose racist acts against members of the Asian community.

The reintroduction of covid-19 restrictions will likely suppress activist activity in Canada in the near future. However, the restrictions may be the source of increased opposition by anti-lockdown groups, especially among small business and restaurant owners. Organizers for the 'Worldwide Rally for Freedom' have called for a second series of anti-lockdown protests globally on 15 May.

Fossil fuel divestment groups have called for a 'month of action' targeting all five major Canadian banks during their respective Annual General Meetings.

Extinction Rebellion Vancouver's 'Spring Rebellion' is scheduled to launch on 1 May. The group has already announced multiple occupations (Granville Street and Georgia Street, Granville Street Bridge, and Lion' Gate Bridge) as part of the rebellion. The group will also march from Vancouver to Victoria on 16-19 April to advertise the event.

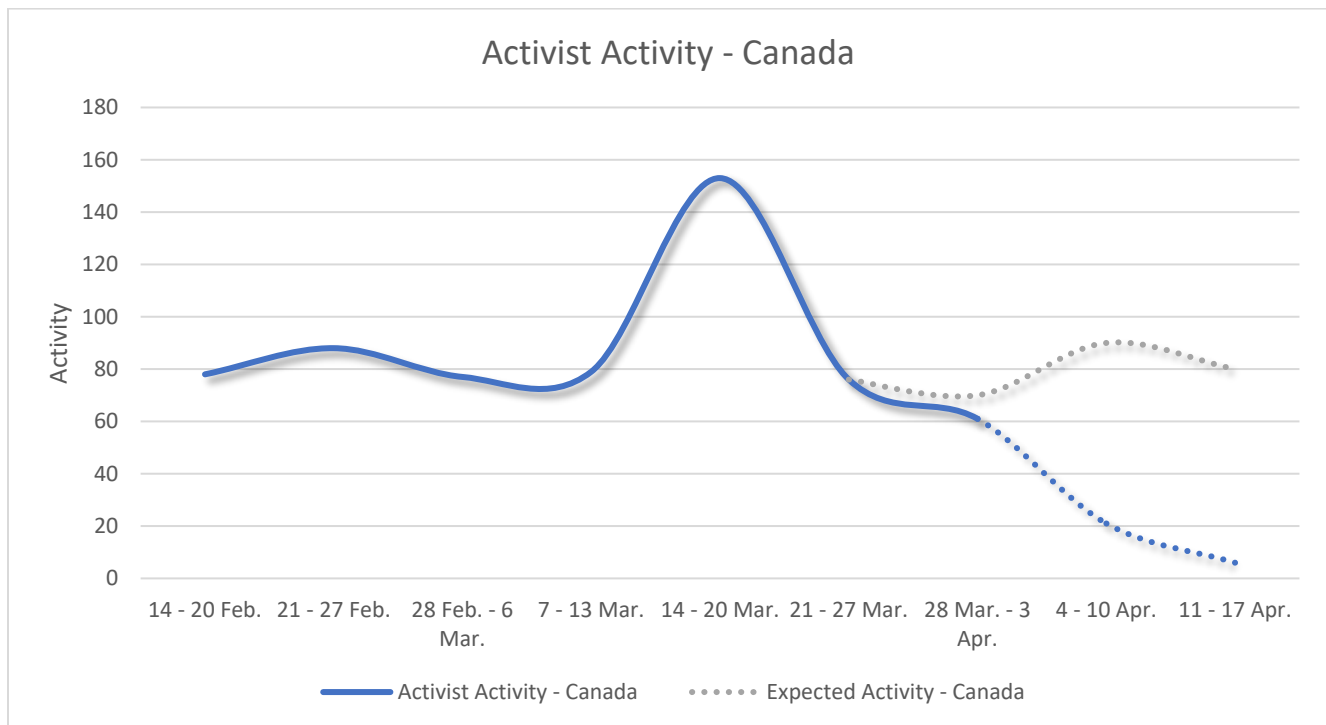


Figure 2 Total activist activity in Canada as noted by Welund.

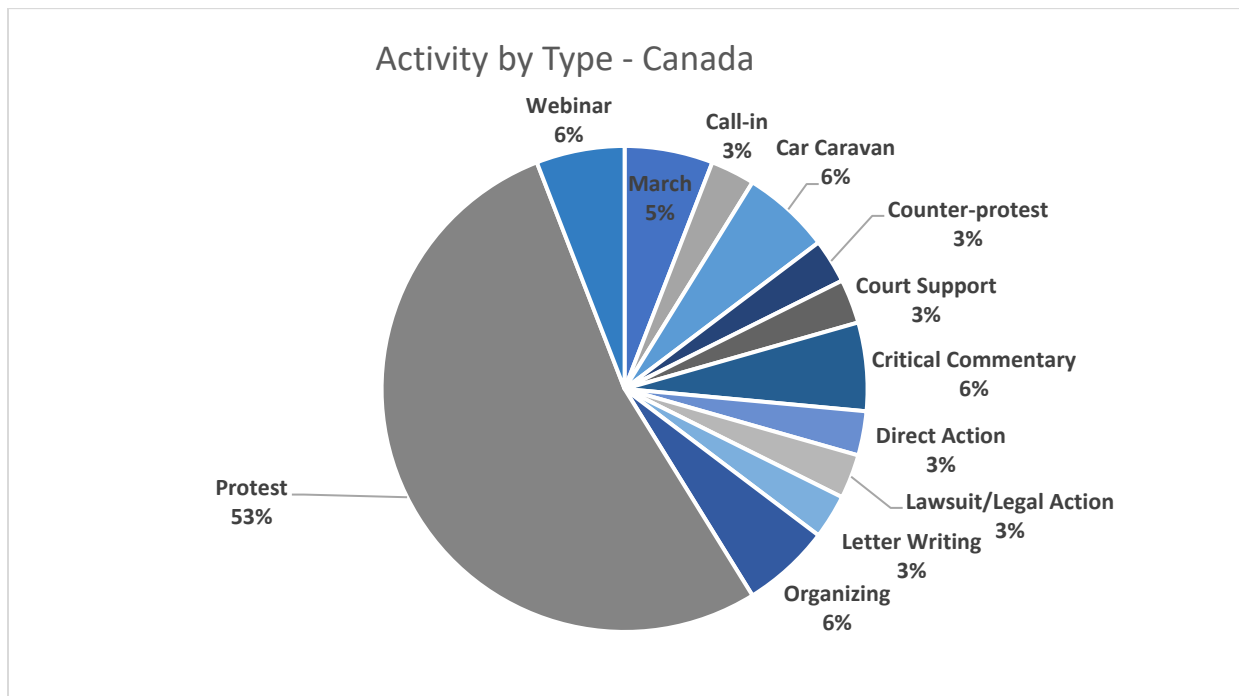


Figure 3 Activist activity in Canada by type as noted by Welund

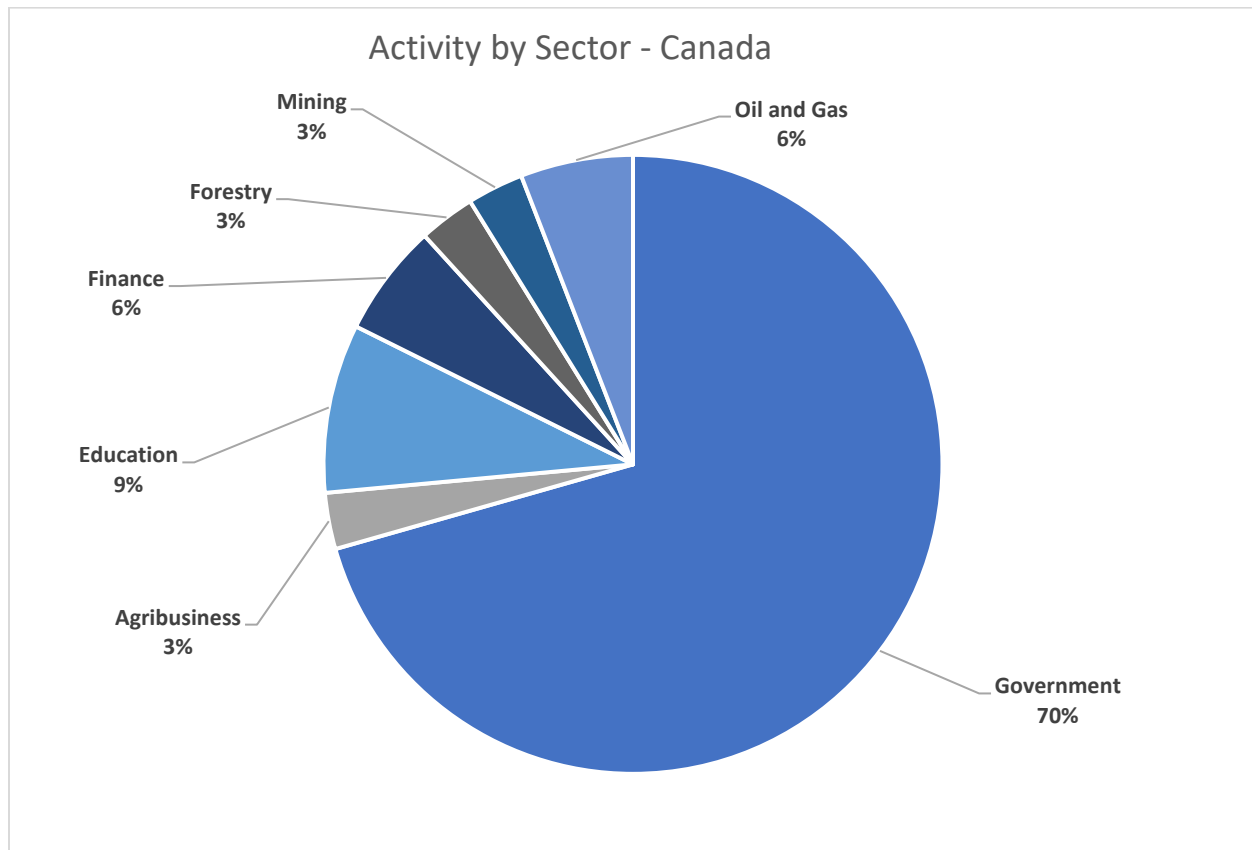
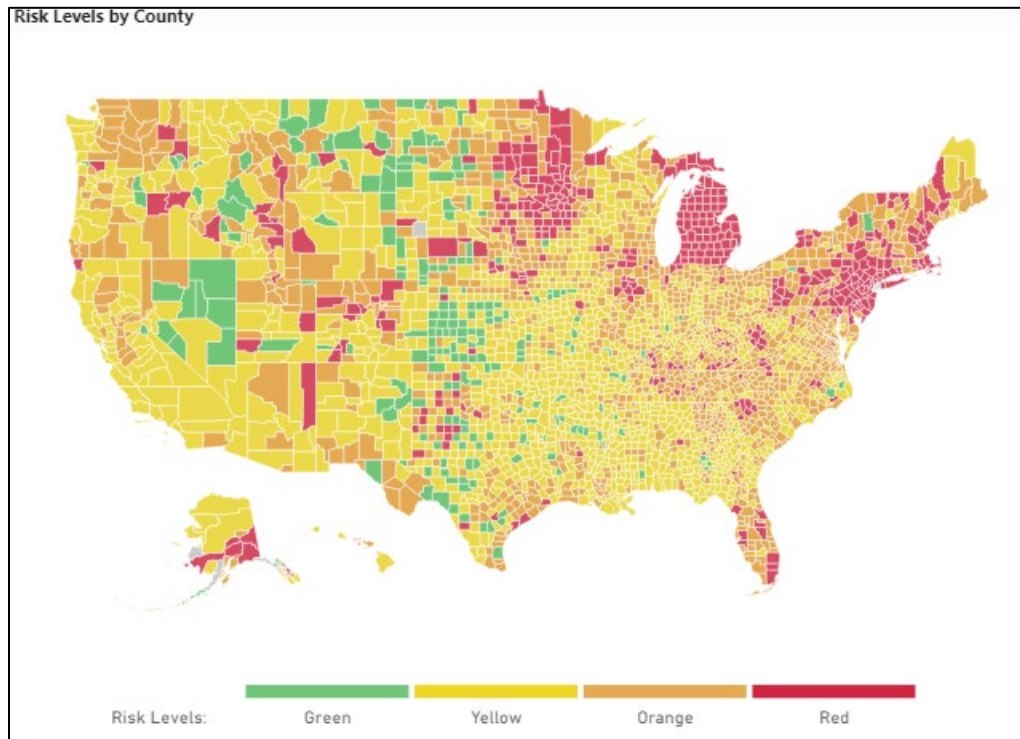


Figure 4 Activist activity in Canada by sector as noted by Welund.

4. USA

4.1 COVID UPDATE



#	USA State	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	USA Total	31,729,532	+12,128	573,988	+132	24,273,615	6,881,929	95,859	1,734	415,292,004	1,254,649	
1	California	3,690,538		60,127		1,956,332	1,674,079	93,402	1,522	55,610,191	1,407,417	39,512,223
2	New York	1,976,935		51,177		1,243,523	682,235	101,623	2,631	46,678,571	2,399,487	19,453,561
3	Virginia	632,625	+1,542	10,451	+15	52,161	570,013	74,117	1,224	8,667,590	1,015,473	8,535,519
4	Florida	2,104,686		33,922		1,611,231	459,533	97,994	1,579	25,985,405	1,209,876	21,477,737
5	Maryland	423,663	+1,840	8,424	+14	9,989	405,250	70,077	1,393	9,046,422	1,496,345	6,045,680
6	Kentucky	431,487		6,214		50,195	375,078	96,580	1,391	5,141,706	1,150,869	4,467,673
7	Georgia	1,069,689		19,374		767,701	282,614	100,748	1,825	8,439,359	794,859	10,617,423
8	Michigan	804,031		17,450		577,141	209,440	80,509	1,747	12,414,644	1,243,098	9,986,857
9	New Jersey	942,311		24,783		716,159	201,369	106,090	2,790	12,518,703	1,409,416	8,882,190
10	Washington	375,725		5,368		181,984	188,373	49,341	705	6,075,300	797,818	7,614,893
11	Alabama	518,234	+318	10,686	+11	320,581	186,967	105,693	2,179	2,563,010	522,723	4,903,185
12	Rhode Island	140,534		2,636		8,470	129,428	132,659	2,488	3,657,685	3,452,728	1,059,361
13	Colorado	474,053		6,294		350,628	117,131	82,319	1,093	2,774,396	481,772	5,758,736
14	Missouri	581,890		9,196		460,270	112,424	94,810	1,498	6,393,360	1,041,700	6,137,428
15	Texas	2,823,439		49,236		2,677,917	96,286	97,374	1,698	26,382,198	909,860	28,995,881

4.2 COVID-19 USA News

- [Biden makes all U.S. adults eligible for a vaccine on April 19](#)

The USA has been making strong headway with the COVID-19 vaccinations, putting it at the top of the five countries alongside Israel and UK and others. However, it is likely that the USA is not yet out of the woods despite the fast pace of vaccinations by the country. USA President Biden's goal of distributing 200 million doses of during his 100 days is reportedly on schedule, and Biden would like to open all American adults to sign up for a vaccine by April 19. Since January 20, 2021, inauguration day, over 150 million doses of the vaccine have made their way to people's arms, through Operation Warm Speed, originally put together by the previous administration. For those who are currently eligible for the vaccine but have not received it, it is recommended they do so soon as the lines will become much longer once everyone becomes eligible. Overall, over 40% of Americans have received at least one dose, and almost 25% are fully vaccinated.

- [CDC says risk of COVID-19 transmission on surfaces 1 in 10,000](#)

The USA CDC has updated its guidelines on COVID-19 transmission from surfaces to be 1 in 10,000, suggesting that although it is possible to get infected from surfaces or objects, the risk is considered to be very low. Some critics have named the focus on surface transmission the "hygiene theater" where companies and individuals put effort into reducing surface transmission by sanitizing surfaces and utilizing hand sanitizer, instead of focusing on the more likely transmission method of exposure to respiratory droplets. Schools and public transportation have been closed at times for deep cleaning, and gyms insisting on strict sanitization protocols; however, evidence as early as last spring that transmission did not occur through surfaces but through airborne transmission. Furthermore, some strategies used such as fogging, fumigation and electrostatic spraying do not used as primary methods of disinfection. However, the CDC does recommend disinfecting indoor settings where a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 had been in the last 23 hours, and overall the low likelihood of surface transmission can be reduced by proper mask wearing and hand washing.

- [US rules out federal vaccine passports](#)
- [UK variant has become most dominant COVID strain in US, CDC says](#)
- [As Variants Have Spread, Progress Against the Virus in U.S. Has Stalled](#)
- [Almost 80 percent of teachers, childcare workers have gotten at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose](#)
- [Five states account for 43% of the country's new Covid-19 cases in the past week](#)
- [U.S. begins study assessing allergic reactions to Pfizer and Moderna Covid vaccines](#)

4.3 USA Awareness

- [California aims to fully reopen its economy June 15](#)

The State of California has promised that should COVID-19 cases continue to reduce and hospitalization numbers are low, and the vaccination supply is stable. It will remove all its COVID-19 restrictions with the exception of mask wearing. California is warning that even if the restrictions are removed, an increase in numbers of new cases or hospitalizations could reinstate restrictions. It also added that large scale indoor events including conventions and sports events would be allowed with "testing or vaccination verification requirements". The state will likely begin pushing individuals of all ages to start getting vaccinated to ensure full protection by the June date, which was chosen as it is two months after the vaccine eligibility opens to all ages.

- [Biden will press U.S. companies to pay 'acceptable' level of tax](#)

USA President Biden's new infrastructure bill includes an increase in corporate taxes, from 21% to 28%. Biden advised that he is willing to negotiate the corporate tax, but also finds it unacceptable that 91 of the largest corporation did not pay any federal taxes in 2019. The plan will also increase auditing and enforcement of tax payments, and despite some pushback of Republicans on the bill, the increase of corporate taxes has been accepted by many, including Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, who advised that he supports the hiking of corporate taxes. The statement however, did not fully endorse Biden's tax plan. The US Chamber of Commerce has shown its concern that the bill would actually "slow economic recovery" and will decrease the USA's competitive edge globally.

- [U.S. President Joe Biden announces executive actions aimed at gun violence](#)
- [Justice Breyer warns against calls to expand the Supreme Court](#)
- [White House set to release first sketch of budget proposal on Friday](#)
- [China builds advanced weapons systems using American chip technology](#)
- [Manchin: 'No circumstance in which I will vote to eliminate or weaken the filibuster](#)

4.4 USA – Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism (Provided by Welund)



welund

During the week of 1 -8 April, the majority of activist activity in the US noted by Welund took place in the government sector (56%), followed by oil and gas (15%) and Law Enforcement (9%). Protests made up most activity (53%), followed by webinars (9%) and meetings/gatherings (8%).

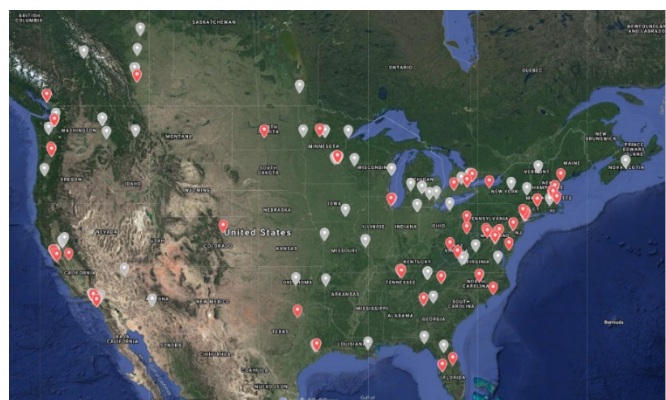
There was an overall decline in activist activity this week. The decrease can be attributed 'spring break' and the Easter holiday. Shareholder season has continued to attract activist attention. Events have been organized to prepare for upcoming shareholder meetings.

On 1-9 April, the Build Back Fossil Free (BBFF) campaign held a 'week of action' to "escalate the demand for President Joe Biden to be a real Climate President."

The situation on the US-Mexico border continues to motivate activism against the Biden administration. Immigrant rights activists have called on the Biden administration to address the crisis and the detention of immigrants.

Protests: Despite the pandemic, activists continue to organize in-person protests to broadcast their campaigns and demands. Many organizers have incorporated physical distancing and mask-wearing adaptations to limit the risk of gathering for protests. California, New York, and Minnesota saw the most protests this week.

On 1 April, activists affiliated with the BBFF campaign held an action in Washington, DC to demand that the Biden Administration "shut down" Line 3 and the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). Protesters first



Past (grey) and upcoming (red) protest activity as noted by Welund between 1-14 April.

gathered at the US Army Corps of Engineers headquarters and delivered '400,000+' petitions demanding the agency 'Stop Line 3' and 'No DAPL'. Hundreds of protesters then marched to the White House to demand President Biden 'Build Back Fossil Free'. Participants displayed a makeshift '300-foot black snake' which was "symbolically killed" at Black Lives Matter Plaza in view of the White House. At the White House, two protesters erected tripods.

Outlook: In the aftermath of the two mass shootings in Atlanta and Boulder, Welund expects continued activity from left-leaning campaigners focused on gun control in the US.

On 4-11 April, the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) is hosting a week of action to "hold banks accountable through personal divestment." Supporters were encouraged to "ditch Main Street banks like Chase, Wells Fargo, Bank of America or Citi, and open accounts in credit unions that align with our values." The action coincides with the BBFF 'week of action'.

On 11 April 2021, anti-fascist groups have called for counter-protests in the US against proposed actions by white supremacists. The 'White Lives Matter' day of action has attracted interest from far-right and far-left groups after the event was announced on Telegram.

Welund is monitoring three upcoming events for protest organizing: the trial of Derek Chauvin and related protest activity; Earth Day on 22 April; and May Day on 1 May.

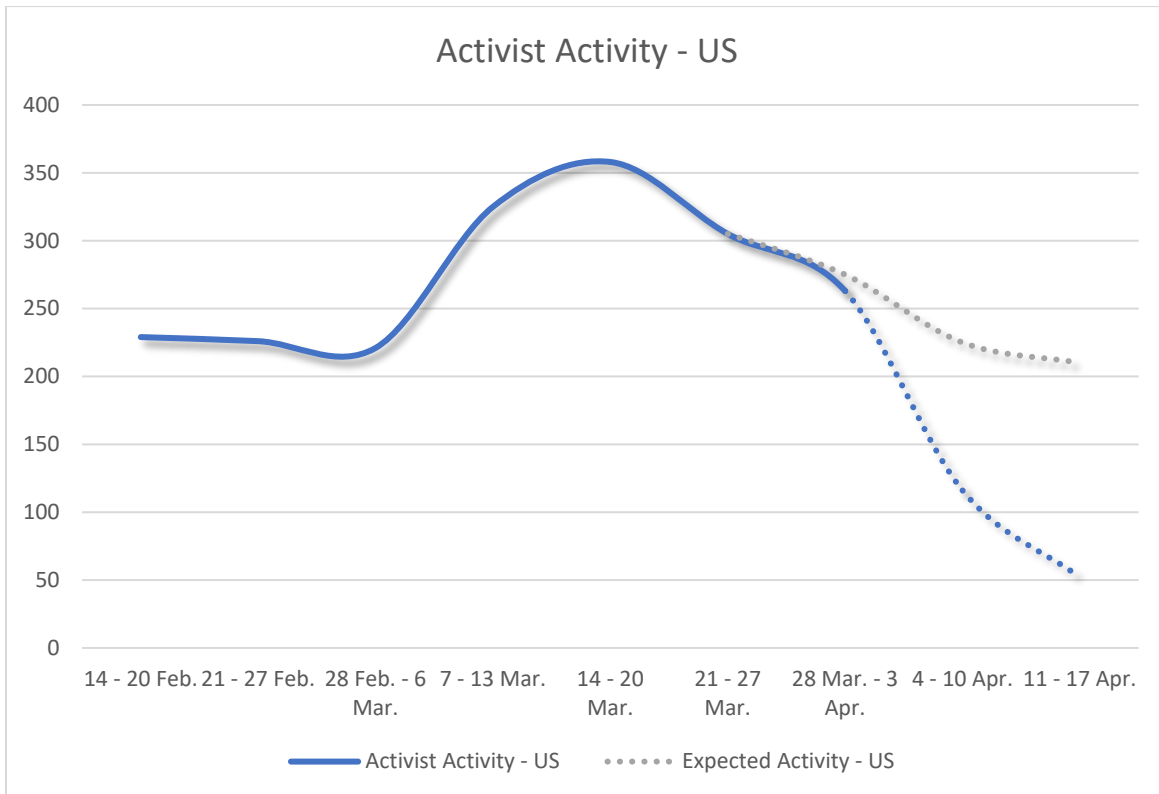


Figure 5 Total activist activity in the US as noted by Welund.

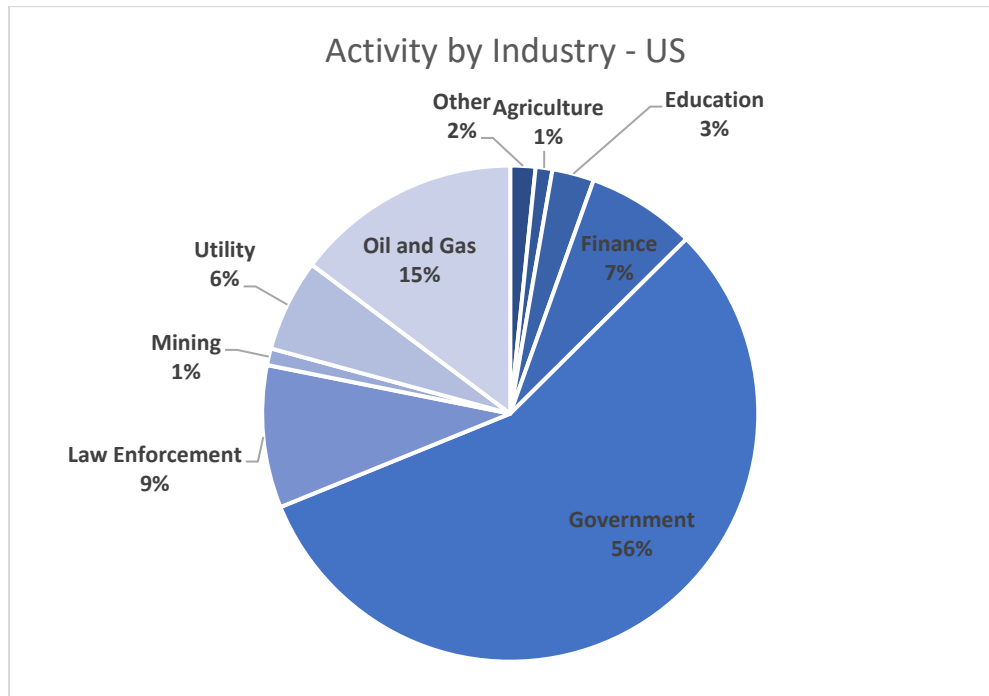


Figure 6 Activist activity in the US by industry as noted by Welund

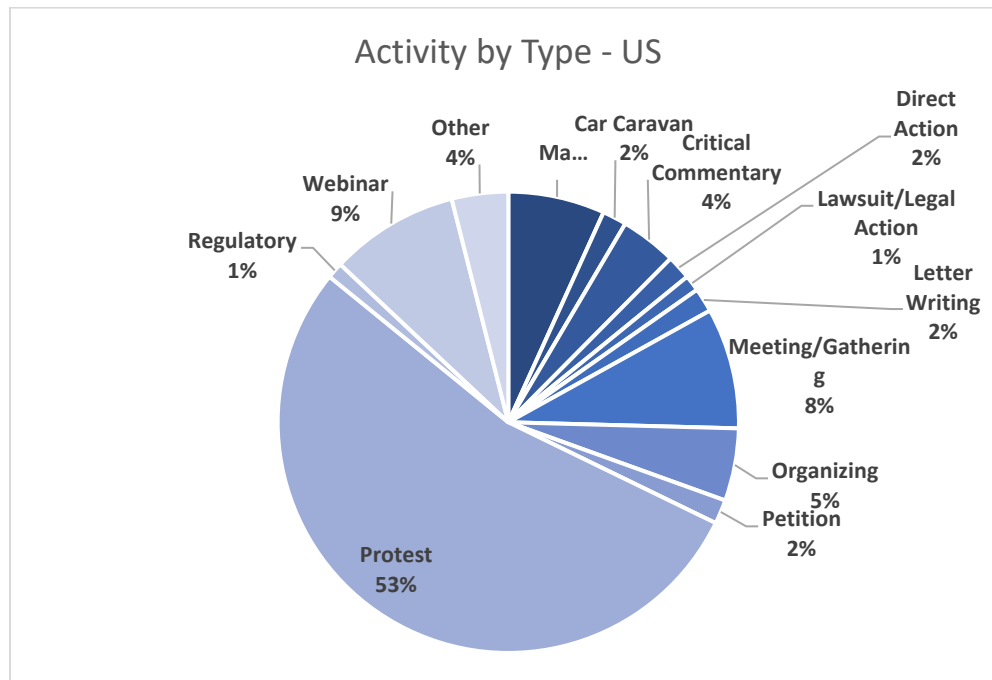


Figure 7 Activist activity in the US by type as noted by Welund.

End Report

Please submit feedback to:



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