

PEARL

**POLICY, ELECTIONS &
REPRESENTATION LAB**



Weekly COVID Update:

**Cross-National Policy Comparisons and Canadian Trends in
Social Distancing, Social Media Activity, and Government
Support**

November 2, 2020

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Foreword

Canada, like many countries around the world, is beginning to reopen its economy. At the same time, we are still confronting a serious public health threat in the SARS-CoV-2 virus and in COVID-19.

How are we reopening, compared to other countries? And how are we doing as a country at maintaining social distancing and the public support and attention necessary to sustain the fight against COVID-19?

On our Dashboard, we present unique quantitative data on:

- The openness of the economy on nine different dimensions in 52 different jurisdictions: 34 OECD countries, 5 US states, 10 Canadian provinces and 3 Canadian territories.
- Trends in social distancing in Canada.
- Trends in social media attention to COVID-19 and selected other topics.
- Trends in support for federal, provincial, and local government management of COVID-19.

We also provide a weekly qualitative summary of the actions governments are taking and considering taking to reopen their economies and manage the coronavirus.

Our data are updated weekly. You can subscribe to a weekly update by visiting our website: www.reopeningaftercovid.com.

Please direct any questions or comments to peter.loewen@utoronto.ca.

Data Visualizations from Dashboard

Level of Reopening by Sector Among OECD Countries and Selected Canadian Provinces and US States

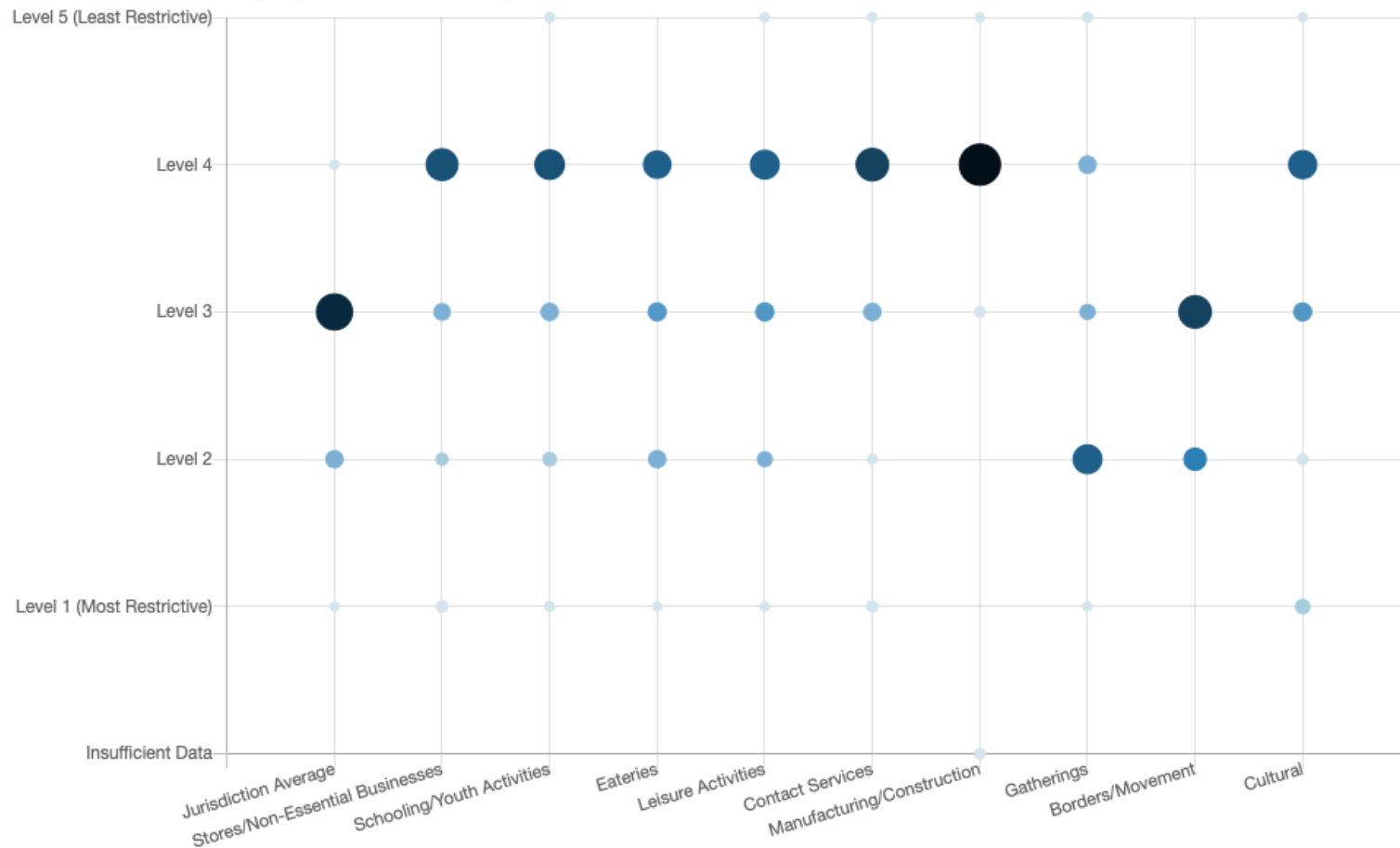


Figure 1 – Level of reopening among 52 different jurisdictions as of November 2. The reopening policies of 52 jurisdictions: 34 OECD countries, 5 US states, 10 Canadian provinces and 3 Canadian territories. For each jurisdiction, we classify a total of 9 different sectors: Stores/Non-Essential Businesses, Schooling/Youth Activities, Eateries, Leisure Activities, Contact Services, Manufacturing/Construction, Gatherings, Borders/Movement, and Cultural. Each sector is assigned a level of reopening from Level 1 (Complete Lockdown) to Level 5 (Unrestricted Access). The larger and darker a dot is, the more jurisdictions are at that level of reopening. For details, see www.reopeningaftercovid.com.

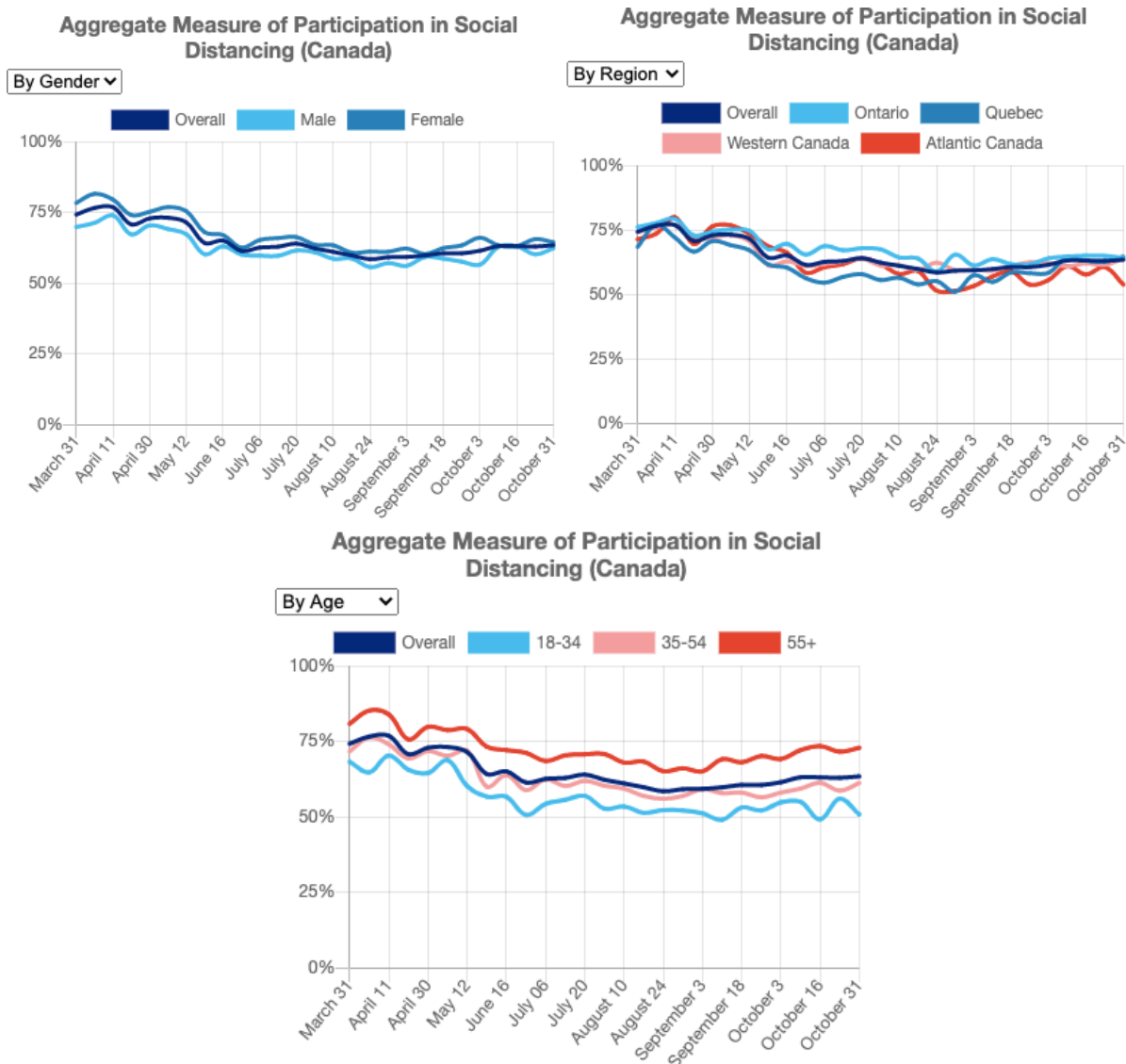


Figure 2 – Aggregate survey measure of participation in social distancing (Canada).

We asked Canadians whether, as a result of the pandemic, they had taken any of the 6 following actions: avoided crowded places; avoided in-person contact with friends, family, and acquaintances; maintained 2 metre distance from others; avoided domestic travel; avoided public transit; and avoided the grocery store at peak times. The graph displays the percentage of these measures taken by the average survey participant. The surveys used to collect these data were run in partnership with the Media Ecosystem Observatory (MEO). Each survey has a sample size of approximately 2,500 people. For each survey, we worked with a leading sample provider to generate a nationally representative, online sample of Canadians. In addition, following data collection, we applied survey weights to each survey so that—within each province—the sample is representative of the population age and gender.

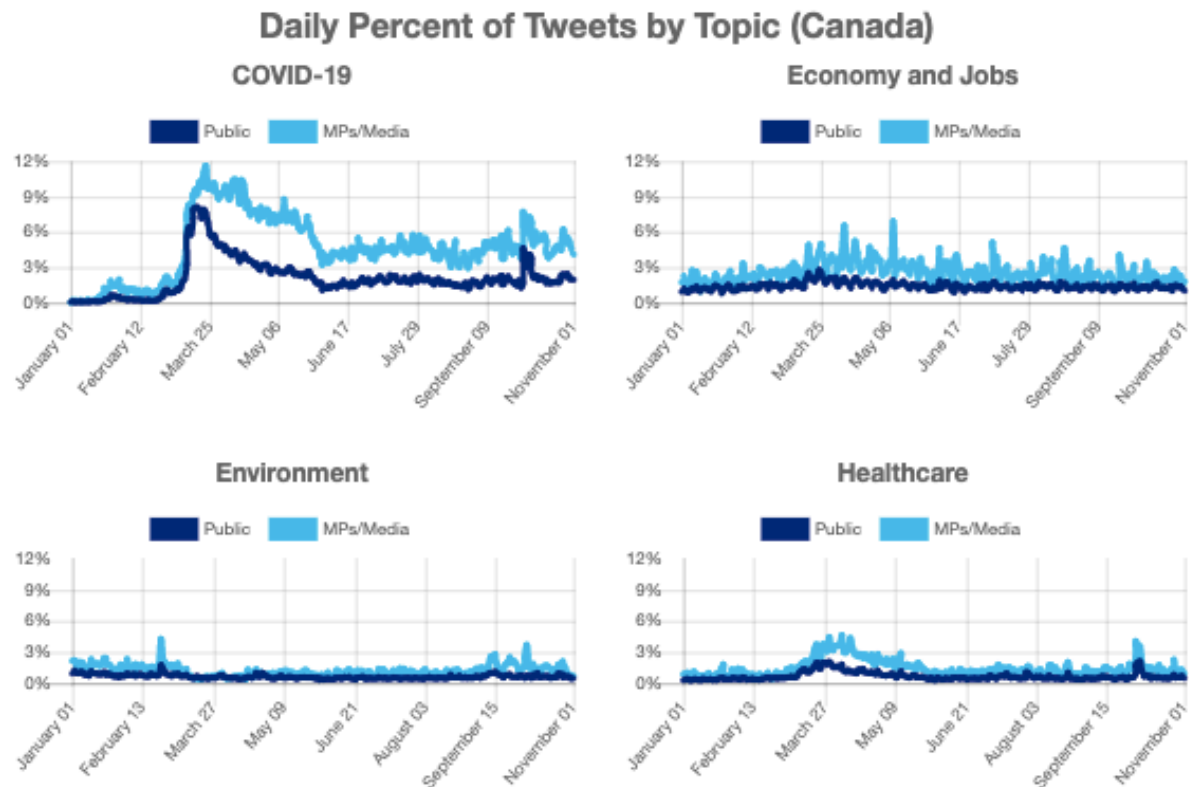
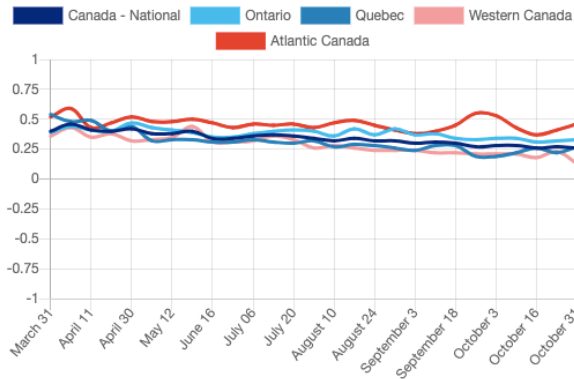


Figure 3 – Daily Percent of Tweets by Topic (Canada). The graphs report the percentage of daily tweets containing one or more keywords associated with the particular topic. The results are presented separately for MPs, senators, and journalists, on the one hand, and for the Canadian public, on the other. The Twitter data are provided by the Media Ecosystem Observatory (MEO). It aims to capture the entire Canadian Twitter conversation. To do so, MEO identified a set of politicians, political journalists, public intellectuals, and Canadian-specific hashtags and collected every Twitter user that touched one of these themes or individuals. MEO then evaluated each individual, looking at their follower or friending behaviour, biographies, self-identified location, and hashtag use and included them in the sample if they were determined to be algorithmically likely to be Canadian. The dataset contains approximately 200,000 tweets a day. The analysis uses a 10% sample of the public's daily tweets and the full set of daily tweets from MPs, senators, and journalists.

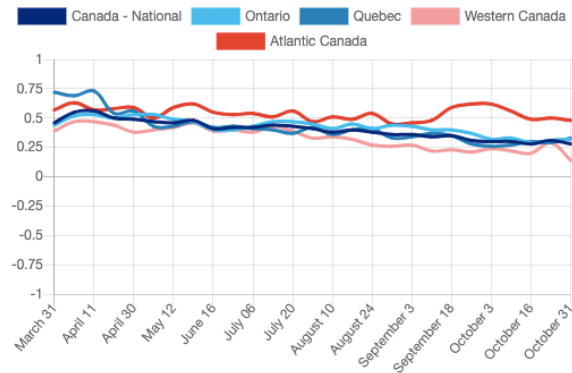
Net Approval of Government Handling of the Pandemic - By Region

Choose Level of Government Rated: **Local**



Net Approval of Government Handling of the Pandemic - By Region

Choose Level of Government Rated: **Provincial**



Net Approval of Government Handling of the Pandemic - By Region

Choose Level of Government Rated: **Federal**

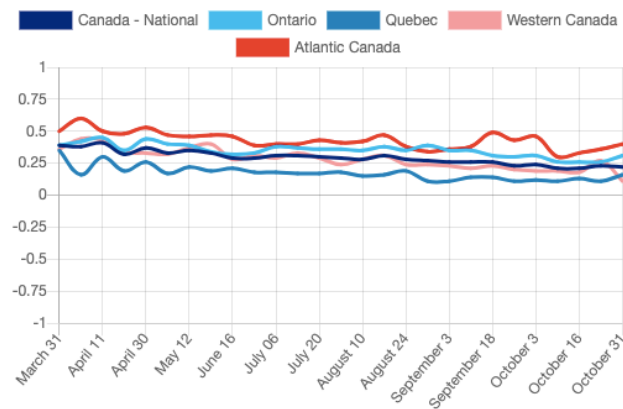


Figure 4 – Net approval of government handling of the pandemic by region. We asked Canadians whether they approved of how each level of government (the federal government, their provincial government, and their local government) was handling the coronavirus pandemic so far. To obtain a net approval score, participants' answers were coded as follows: strongly approve (1); somewhat approve (0.5); neither approve, nor disapprove (0); somewhat disapprove (-0.5); and strongly disapprove (-1). The graph displays the average score. The surveys used to collect these data were run in partnership with the Media Ecosystem Observatory (MEO). Each survey has a sample size of approximately 2,500 people. For each survey, we worked with a leading sample provider to generate a nationally representative, online sample of Canadians. In addition, following data collection, we applied survey weights to each survey so that—within each province—the sample is representative of the population age and gender.

Individual OECD Country Profiles

THE AMERICAS

Canada

→ *Alberta*

On October 30, Alberta reported “622 new daily cases, reaching record numbers everyday over the past week.”¹ There is a high number of new cases among young people, especially among people 10-19 years old, despite a decline in the number of young people being tested.² In Edmonton and Calgary, a new mandatory limit of 15 people came into effect on private social gatherings, including weddings and funerals.³ “The province is also recommending voluntary measures in both cities which include wearing non-medical masks in all indoor work settings.”⁴

→ *British Columbia*

The number of daily new cases in British Columbia has approached 300 over the past week. The provincial state of emergency has been extended through November 10. A new provincial health officer order was put in place on October 26 to limit gatherings in private homes to a maximum of the immediate household plus six others.⁵ The provincial health officer also granted powers to regional medical health officers to issue stricter public health orders for their jurisdictions.⁶ The Fraser Health Authority, the region which has seen the most cases in the province, is recommending against gatherings of any kind if they involve people who do not live in the same household.⁷ B.C. is still at Phase 3 of its reopening plan. Most businesses are open subject to restrictions.

→ *Manitoba*

On October 30, Manitoba announced 480 new cases of COVID-19, which has been the highest number recorded since the reopening of the province.⁸ Effective November 2, the province went into Code Orange, and Winnipeg moved to Code Red, or critical level. In Code Red, all elective, non-urgent, and diagnostic surgeries will be suspended. Movie theatres, concert halls, sports facilities, restaurants and bar dining rooms will close down, with restaurants only allowed to offer takeout and delivery services. Visitation at hospitals will be suspended, with case-by-case exceptions for patients receiving end-of-life care, in labour, and pediatric patients. Retail stores in the region would be required to limit capacity to 25% or five people, whichever is lower. No changes will be made to schools in the Winnipeg area. Across Manitoba, the orange-level restrictions will reduce capacity at restaurants, bars, retail stores, museums, galleries and libraries to 50%. These new measures will be in place for at least two weeks.⁹

→ *New Brunswick*

New Brunswick reported one new case of COVID-19 on November 1, bringing the province’s total active cases up to 35.¹⁰ Most of the province’s active cases are still located in the Campbellton region, which has 23 active cases as of November 2.¹¹ As a result, the Campbellton region has remained in the “orange phase,” while Moncton has been moved back to the “yellow phase.”¹² Orange-level restrictions include the closure of all personal services, gyms, fitness facilities, casinos, cinemas and large performance venues.¹³ Outdoor gatherings in orange-level regions must be limited to 10 people or fewer, while some indoor events, including weddings, funerals and religious services, will be permitted with 10 or fewer.¹⁴

→ *Newfoundland and Labrador*

Newfoundland and Labrador remains at COVID-19 Alert Level 2. Currently, there are 3 active cases of COVID-19 in the province.

→ *Northwest Territories*

There are 2 active cases in the Northwest Territories as of November 1. The territory-wide public health emergency has been extended again until November 10. NWT is still at Phase 2 of its reopening plan and is not expected to move on to Phase 3 for the foreseeable future.

→ *Nova Scotia*

As of November 1, most hockey arenas and sports venues in the Halifax region have been allowed to increase their spectator capacity from 50 to 100.¹⁵ Nova Scotia reported two new cases of COVID-19 on October 31, bringing the province's total active cases up to 13.¹⁶ Health officials reported on November 2 that among the province's 1,111 confirmed cases since March, 1,033 of them have been resolved.¹⁷ There have been 65 deaths as a result of COVID-19 in Nova Scotia.¹⁸ Health officials have indicated there are no hospitalizations due to the virus at this time.¹⁹

→ *Nunavut*

The two presumptive cases of COVID-19 at the Meliadine gold mine have been confirmed following additional testing at a public health lab in Quebec.²⁰ Another presumptive case at the mine was also discovered, and the individual and all their close contacts have been flown out-of-territory. There is minimal risk of community transmission from the site at this time.²¹ The territorial government has extended their public health emergency order another two weeks until November 12.²² The health minister said that an isolation period at home and rapid testing will not replace stints at isolation hubs in southern Canada, despite rising demand due to the upcoming holidays.²³ Plans to eliminate tuberculosis in the territory have been scaled back due to the pandemic.²⁴

→ *Ontario*

Ontario's 7-day rolling average has climbed to 918 cases per day, but the figure appears to be plateauing.²⁵ This plateau was expected given the public health measures put in place three weeks ago. Toronto, Peel Region, Ottawa and York Region are currently in a modified Stage 2, which forces indoor dining, movie theatres, some personal care services, bingo halls and gyms to close.²⁶ The 28-day period for these restrictions in Toronto, Peel and Ottawa is set to expire at 11:59 p.m. on November 6, and in York a week later. Consequently, the premier has asked public health experts to advise him on a plan to begin easing restrictions in a way that safely allows businesses to start reopening without negatively impacting Ontario's epidemiological situation. The premier is facing fierce internal backlash over his modified Stage 2 restrictions after a detailed sector-by-sector breakdown pointed to schools, daycares, long-term care and retirement homes, which have remained open, as the primary source of outbreaks.

→ *Prince Edward Island*

Prince Edward Island remains in the "new normal" COVID-19 alert level and has no active cases of COVID-19. In the province, there are no hospitalizations, deaths, or evidence of community spread. "Schools remain COVID-19 free, but teachers are experiencing increased workloads and pandemic-related stress."²⁷

→ *Quebec*

Quebec reported 952 new cases and 18 additional deaths on October 30.²⁸ The premier said that Quebec had plateaued at approximately 1,000 daily new cases.²⁹ The partial lockdown in red zones, including Montreal, Laval and Quebec City, was extended to November 23. The lockdown banned some indoor and outdoor gatherings, and closed bars, gyms, entertainment venues and in-person dining.³⁰ Beginning October 28, patrons can be fined up to \$6,000 for visiting venues that were required to close.³¹ Beginning November 2, all of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and Chaudiere-Appalaches regions entered red, or the maximum, alert level.³² There were two outbreaks in long term care homes where 40 people have died so far.³³

→ *Saskatchewan*

Saskatchewan reported 82 new cases of COVID-19 on October 29 in the province's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic.³⁴ As of November 1, there are 798 active cases in the province, with 33 hospitalizations. Most cases are concentrated in the Saskatoon area.³⁵ As a result, the provincial government announced that nightclubs in Saskatoon must stop the sale of alcohol by 10 pm, and must close by 11 pm. Customer registration is recommended for all bars and restaurants in the province.³⁶ The new public health order has caused some confusion over the definition of a nightclub, as bars are not affected by the restrictions.³⁷ The Saskatchewan Party won a resounding victory in the provincial election on October 26, giving them their fourth consecutive majority government. Voters had largely approved of their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁸

→ *Yukon*

As of November 1, there are 5 active cases in Yukon. The territory's first COVID-19 death was reported on October 30. The territorial state of emergency has been extended. No new restrictions are currently expected. Yukon is now in Phase 3 of its reopening plan, with no significant changes to restrictions announced in the past week.

The United States

→ *California*

On October 27, California's COVID-19 test positivity rate was 2.9%, new ICU admissions increased by 5.9% and hospitalizations increased by 4.7%.³⁹ On October 29, the weekly average of COVID-19 deaths fell to its lowest point since April.⁴⁰ On October 27, seven counties progressed in reopening; one county entered yellow, four entered orange and two entered red.⁴¹ On October 27, California's governor refused a request to allow large amusement parks to reopen. According to recently released regulations, large theme parks can reopen at 25% in the yellow tier, meaning fewer than 1 new case daily per 100,000 people in the county and a weekly average of positive cases lower than 2%.⁴² Smaller theme parks with a capacity of up to 15,000 people, can reopen at 25% or with 500 visitors in the orange tier. Counties in the orange have fewer than 4 new daily cases per 100,000 people and a weekly positive COVID-19 test rate under 5%.⁴³ Sacramento County schools are now permitted in person.⁴⁴ A new PCR testing facility that opened in Valencia can process over 150,000 tests daily and at a faster processing rate than before.⁴⁵

→ *Illinois*

On November 1, Illinois confirmed 6,980 new cases of COVID-19 and reported a statewide positivity rate of 8%.⁴⁶ This percentage is the standard that the government is using to enforce resurgence mitigation, which includes a ban on indoor dining and drinking at restaurants and bars in various regions.⁴⁷ Consequently, all regions in the Illinois reopening plan, including Chicago, will be under these tighter restrictions by November 4.⁴⁸ Despite the rising metrics, many suburbs and restaurants are pushing back on the governor's new COVID-19 mitigation restrictions, with some even taking legal action — arguing that the restaurant industry is one of the most regulated and safe industries.⁴⁹

→ *Michigan*

Michigan's seven-day moving average has climbed to 2,900 new cases per day.⁵⁰ Accordingly, the governor, through the power of Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) director, introduced new restrictions to fight the surge.⁵¹ These include restaurants keeping records of the names and phone numbers of customers who buy and eat food on premises, no more than six diners at a table at a bar or restaurant, and capping gatherings in venues at 50 people.⁵² These restrictions, along with the older ones, will continue to be enacted by the director of the DHHS.

→ *New York*

New York's positivity rate is 3.10% in "focus zone" areas, and 1.36% outside those areas.⁵³ New York had the highest positivity rate in the nation at the peak of the first wave, and now it has the third lowest. The "Red Zone" micro-cluster focus area of Orange County has met the metrics required to shift it to the "Orange Warning Zone." Orange County's micro-cluster zone positivity rate has gone from 12% to 2% in three weeks and the rate of new daily hospital admissions has flattened.⁵⁴ The governor released guidelines for schools reopening in a red or orange micro-cluster zone. To reopen, schools must remain closed for at least four calendar days after the zone designation is announced, and ensure that no person, including staff, faculty and students, may attend in-person on the campus without first receiving a negative test result.⁵⁵

→ *Texas*

On October 29, Texas reported their highest daily increase in COVID-19 deaths in three weeks, and the number of hospitalizations decreased for the first time in six days.⁵⁶ On October 28, Texas' number of hospitalizations fell from 5,650 to 5,587.⁵⁷ On October 29, Texas reported their weekly average of cases as 6,122.⁵⁸ As of October 30, Texas had over 100,000 active COVID-19 cases.⁵⁹ After an increase in COVID-19 cases and in the positivity rate, El Paso officials requested that residents stay home and imposed a curfew from 10 pm to 5 am on October 29.⁶⁰ Officials also forced nonessential businesses to close for two weeks.⁶¹ With the lockdown, in-person dining, bars, gyms, and personal care services must close.⁶² Texas' attorney general and some restaurants in the county are suing the county to prevent the closure —arguing that County Judge Samaniego did not have the authority to impose the restrictions.⁶³ Houston public health experts are warning of a possible third wave of infections.⁶⁴

Mexico

On October 30, Mexico reported 6,000 additional COVID-19 cases and 516 additional deaths bringing the cumulative totals to 918,811 cases and 91,289 deaths.⁶⁵ The Director of the National Centre for Preventive Programs and Disease Control said that there were probably 50,000 more COVID-19 deaths than the official figures reported.⁶⁶ The Mayor of Mexico City said that additional restrictions would be put into place if hospitalizations continue increasing. The restrictions would reduce business hours and capacity limits.⁶⁷ Additional hotels are reopening, some with maximum occupancy, in Quintana Roo. The state is currently in yellow on the government's stoplight indicator or phase three.⁶⁸ Seven human trials for COVID-19 vaccines are being conducted in Mexico.⁶⁹ Ahead of the Day of the Dead, the government asked people to social distance and limit crowds.⁷⁰ The Mexican president criticized Europe's lockdown and curfews by suggesting that they were authoritarian and treated people like children.⁷¹

Chile

On October 29, the daily new number of COVID-19 cases was 1,519 and 86 new deaths — making the total number of cases 507,050 and the total number of deaths 14,118.⁷² On October 30, the Chilean PCR test positivity rate for the past 24 hours was 4% after 36,880 PCR tests were conducted.⁷³ Over 4,269,503 total tests have been conducted throughout the pandemic.⁷⁴ Over the last week, the number of new cases fell 9% and fell 6% over the last two weeks. The number of daily new cases also decreased in twelve regions this week.⁷⁵ Although Chile is slowly reopening, the nationwide nightly curfew remains. By the end of October, approximately 6% of schools had opened or were opening.⁷⁶ The government released the National Tourism Plan to share protocols and health recommendations for the tourism sector to reopen.⁷⁷ The goals of the plan are reactivating the sector using protocols and health recommendations, economically supporting small business and promoting national tourism.⁷⁸ The

government also presented a plan that focused on securing enough hospital beds for COVID-19 patients.⁷⁹

WESTERN EUROPE

France

France's 7-day moving average of new cases increased again by 10,000 cases to 41,000 cases per day.⁸⁰ The second wave is poised to overwhelm hospitals in a matter of days. The president admitted that curfews imposed during this last month have been ineffective in stopping the spread.⁸¹ Accordingly, as of October 30, all bars, restaurants and non-essential businesses (including hairdressers) are forced to close, and written statements are required for people to leave their homes. People are only allowed to leave home for work, school, visiting a dependent relative, grocery shopping, or jogging for an hour.⁸² Unlike the two-month lockdown imposed last spring, students up to high-school level will continue to go to school. However, all students aged 6 and above must wear masks at all times. Universities will have online classes only. Factories and farms will be allowed to operate, and some public services will function, to limit the economic damage that would come from shutting down the country completely.⁸³ Defying government orders, mayors of 50 cities and towns plan to bring in local edicts allowing some shops, such as florists, toy shops and bookstores, to remain open.⁸⁴

Germany

Germany's 7-day R-value decreased to 1.13, but Germany is grappling with a record breaking 7-day moving average of 15,000 new cases per day.⁸⁵ Numerous clusters are connected to private gatherings, celebrations, religious events, educational settings, and nursing and long-term care homes, but authorities are currently unable to trace the source of three-quarters of infections.⁸⁶ A deal struck between Chancellor Merkel and the premiers of all states will put Germans under "lockdown light."⁸⁷ As of November 2, all restaurants and bars will be closed, meetings in public will be restricted to less than ten people from two households, and all recreational centers, such as pools and gyms, will be shut. Unlike spring, schools, non-essential shops and hairdressers will remain open, churches will be allowed to hold services, and protests will not be banned.⁸⁸ Germans have been asked to refrain from making non-essential journeys and hotels are barred from accommodating people on tourist trips. Despite the restrictions, the majority of Germans allegedly support the measures.⁸⁹

Belgium

On October 29, the government reported 21,048 daily new COVID-19 cases.⁹⁰ Effective November 1, the government imposed a second national lockdown due to rising infections, hospital admissions, and deaths.⁹¹ At home, visitors have been limited to 1-2 close contacts and outdoor gatherings have been capped at 4 people. Funerals are limited to a maximum of 15 people. Non-essential shops and contact services, such as hairdressers and aestheticians, closed down. Teleworking has been made mandatory where possible. However, primary students will return to class after November 15. While only the first year of secondary students will return for in-person classes, the remainder of students would be split between in-person and distance learning. At higher education institutions, all schooling has been moved online. Curfews are in place but vary between Belgium's major regions: Brussels, Flanders, and Wallonia.⁹² Health workers at hospitals who test positive for COVID-19 in northern Wallonia have been asked to continue working if they're asymptomatic due to staff shortages.⁹³ Due to ICU constraints, Belgium has transferred some patients to German hospitals.⁹⁴

Netherlands

As of October 30, approximately 11,141 people have tested positive for COVID-19.⁹⁵ The total is 11% higher than last week's total. The public health minister stated that no additional measures are currently needed, beyond the partial lockdown in place. Strict measures will be adopted if the number of cases continues to rise.⁹⁶ The Dutch general election has been scheduled to take place over three days in order to spread out voting and prevent crowds. According to the government, early voting and postal voting for people unable to cast their vote in person for medical reasons will also be an option by the next general election on March 17.⁹⁷

Spain

On October 30, Spain's daily COVID-19 case count was 25,595, the highest number of daily new cases since the pandemic started; the number of new deaths was 239.⁹⁸ The cumulative number of cases is 1,185,678 cases and 35,878 deaths.⁹⁹ The Prime Minister said that the actual number of COVID-19 cases was probably higher than 3 million.¹⁰⁰ The Spanish Parliament authorized a six-month state of alert.¹⁰¹ This will grant the federal government emergency powers to respond to the pandemic.¹⁰² The Spanish Canary Islands is requiring tourists to have a negative COVID-19 test to come.¹⁰³ Several autonomous regions implemented inter-regional lockdowns to limit the spread; some regions like the Basque Country, Seville and Granada are only allowing people to enter and leave the region for essential reasons.¹⁰⁴

The United Kingdom

The UK's 7-day rolling average increased marginally to 23,000 new cases per day.¹⁰⁵ The government's regional tier system for local lockdowns failed to decrease transmission of COVID-19, and scientific advisers predict that the demand for hospital beds will exceed their capacity by the first week of December, even if temporary hospitals are set up again.¹⁰⁶ As of November 4, bars and restaurants can only offer takeout, non-essential shops must close, and people will only be able to leave home for a short list of reasons, including exercise and essential shopping. Haircuts, domestic tourism, and going to the gym will be put on hold. Unlike the first lockdown earlier this year, schools, universities, construction sites and manufacturing businesses will stay open.¹⁰⁷ Currently, Northern Ireland, Wales and England have a similar lockdown strategy; Scotland's first minister will need to make a decision this week to further lockdown her jurisdiction.¹⁰⁸

Ireland

As of October 30, health officials have confirmed 772 new cases of COVID-19 and 6 new deaths in the Republic of Ireland.¹⁰⁹ On November 2, schools will reopen as planned, despite a large cohort of secondary-school teachers threatening to go on strike. The government has said that they would do everything possible to support teachers and special-needs assistants to keep them safe in schools.¹¹⁰

Luxembourg

On October 29, 778 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Luxembourg.¹¹¹ From October 30, a curfew will be imposed nationally that will require residents to stay home from 11 pm to 6 am,¹¹² but exceptions have been granted for people who work or travel home from work during those hours or in other specific cases, such as health emergencies. Additional measures have also been put into place until December 31. Restaurants must close by 11 pm and there is a limit of four people per table, unless guests are from the same household. A maximum of four people are permitted at private home gatherings and for group sports activities. When outdoor gatherings exceed four people, masks are

mandatory. At malls and supermarkets, a new "10 square meters per customer" rule has been put in place to limit the density of customers. To ensure strict adherence, the government has decided to increase the minimum fine for infractions related to the COVID law from 25 to 100 euros.¹¹³

Portugal

On October 28, Portugal recorded 3,960 new cases, more than double any other number registered between March and September. Portugal had re-entered a state of calamity on October 14 and has since introduced new measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. As of October 30, people are not permitted to move between municipalities from the hours of midnight to 6:00 am. On October 28, masks were made mandatory in public spaces.¹¹⁴ The government is also looking to introduce a COVID-19 map that will differentiate regions according to infection rates. This is intended to address the possibility of municipal lockdowns, as is currently the case with three northern cities.¹¹⁵

CENTRAL EUROPE

Austria

On October 30, Austria reported 5,627 new daily COVID-19 cases.¹¹⁶ On October 31, new restrictions were announced that will come into effect on November 3. A curfew will be put in place from 8:00 pm to 6:00 am and eateries will close but may offer takeaway services.¹¹⁷ Restrictions on private indoor gatherings will remain in place. The government has said it wants to avoid a second national lockdown at all cost.¹¹⁸

Greece

The government reported 1,678 daily new cases on November 2, with the majority of cases related to travel from abroad or from an already known case.¹¹⁹ The government has divided the country into two zones: high risk and under surveillance. The Attica region is being considered a high-risk zone, which includes Athens. On October 30, the government added its second-largest city, Thessaloniki, and two northern regions to the high-risk zone.¹²⁰ In high risk zones, bars, restaurants, museums, theatres, and gyms are closed. Schools and shops will remain open but masks are mandatory indoors and outdoors, with a curfew in place between 12:30 am and 5:00 am.¹²¹ On November 3, new measures will come into effect across the entire country — include the use of masks both indoors and outdoors, daily curfews from midnight to 5:00 am, and distance learning at universities.¹²²

Italy

On October 29, Italy reported 24,991 new daily cases — with Lombardy and Piedmont the hardest hit regions.¹²³ “Gyms, cinemas, and theatres are closed, and bars and restaurants must close at 6:00 pm. People are allowed to host up to 6 guests in their homes, while masks are deemed mandatory outdoors and in public buildings.”¹²⁴ Demonstrations were held in multiple cities after the national government’s order took effect closing or partially closing eateries, cinemas, and gyms;¹²⁵ in response, “the government approved a financial aid package for businesses and workers affected by the restrictions.”¹²⁶

Slovenia

On October 28, Slovenia reported an average daily case number of 2,488.¹²⁷ To combat COVID-19 infections, autumn holidays have been extended an additional week for primary schools and remote

learning to resume for secondary schools. COVID-19 measures do not apply to construction, maintenance, and installation work involving minimal customer contact.¹²⁸ Contact tracing efforts are no longer possible due to the increase in COVID-19 cases, prompting the launch of a web portal. The portal will enable confirmed patients to receive a code that will activate the exposure notification app.¹²⁹

Switzerland

On October 30, Switzerland reported 9,207 daily new cases of COVID-19.¹³⁰ Switzerland imposed new national measures on October 29, which include the closure of nightclubs and an extension on mandatory mask rules. Masks are mandatory in public indoor and outdoor spaces, which includes workspaces, public transport, and busy pedestrian zones. Restaurants and cafes must close from 11:00 pm to 6:00 am and are only permitted to seat 4 people per table, with exceptions for families with small children. At higher education institutions, face to face teaching is no longer permitted. Private gatherings have been limited to 10 people and public events have been limited to 50 people, with exceptions for organized political gatherings. Travellers arriving from Belgium, Czech Republic, Andorra, Armenia, and several French regions are being considered high risk and must quarantine for 10 days upon arrival. The government is no longer limiting business and medical travel to 5 days. Other measures vary between regions since cantons have autonomy over health matters in Switzerland.¹³¹

EASTERN EUROPE

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic reported 6,542 new cases of COVID-19 on November 1, less than half of the country's single-day record of 15,663 new cases on October 27.¹³² Having already closed schools, restaurants, and most non-essential businesses, the Czech Republic closed its borders on October 22.¹³³ The travel ban applies to most foreigners, tourists, and other non-essential travellers, and will remain in effect until at least November 3.¹³⁴ The Czech health minister resigned after visiting a Prague restaurant on October 22¹³⁵, resulting in the country's third minister of health in just six weeks.¹³⁶ More than half of the Czech Republic's 297,013 confirmed cases have been reported since Prymula's appointment.¹³⁷ The state of emergency was extended on October 30 until at least November 20.¹³⁸

Hungary

Hungary reported another single-day record of 3,908 new cases of COVID-19 on October 31, followed by an increase of 3,878 new cases the next day.¹³⁹ This comes just one week after setting the country's previous single-day record of 3,149 new cases on October 26.¹⁴⁰ Entry restrictions for travellers from abroad remain in force.¹⁴¹ In addition to shops and public transport, masks remain mandatory in cinemas, theatres, shopping malls, health and social institutions, and in most public venues, while public offices and clubs are required to close by 11 pm.¹⁴² Further ongoing restrictions include a ban on visiting hospitals and elderly care homes.¹⁴³ Despite the recent surge in cases and deaths due to COVID-19, Hungary has not announced a state of emergency, or any plans for a second lockdown.

Latvia

Latvia reported 242 new cases of COVID-19 on November 1, one day after setting a new single-day record of 284.¹⁴⁴ Latvian residents have been obligated to wear protective face masks in most public places since October 14.¹⁴⁵ Since October 17, no more than 30 people have been allowed to gather indoors for private events, and no more than 300 outside.¹⁴⁶ On October 29, two days after the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers met to discuss the government's strategy for limiting the spread of COVID-19,

Latvia's government approved the enforcement of fines of up to 50 Euros for failing to wear personal protective equipment in public places, as stipulated by current restrictions.¹⁴⁷ Latvia's government also decided to extend mandatory remote learning for students in grades 7 to 12 until at least November 16.¹⁴⁸

Lithuania

Lithuania reported a single-day record of 1,001 new cases of COVID-19 on October 31, followed by an increase of 895 the next day.¹⁴⁹ On October 21, the Lithuanian Government approved a three-tiered classification system for individual municipalities based on their respective epidemiological indicators.¹⁵⁰ The green zone indicates that the risk of COVID-19 is low, and includes municipalities with less than 25 cases per 100,000 population,¹⁵¹ whereas the yellow zone includes municipalities with less than 50 cases per 100,000 population.¹⁵² Municipalities in the red zone will be subject to a decision regarding the introduction of a local lockdown, which may include restrictions on public activity, events, and education, and the mandatory use of personal protective equipment.¹⁵³ The red zone includes municipalities with more than 50 cases per 100,000 population.¹⁵⁴ Twenty Lithuanian municipalities are currently under lockdown in the red zone, seven more than in the previous week.¹⁵⁵

Poland

Poland's Health Ministry reported a record 21,897 new cases of COVID-19 on October 31, followed by 17,171 new cases on November 1.¹⁵⁶ There have been over 10,000 new infections in Poland every day since October 21, and over 15,000 every day since October 27.¹⁵⁷ The entirety of Poland moved to the red zone on October 24, which means that all Polish Powiats are now subject to the same restrictions.¹⁵⁸ All secondary, post-secondary, and primary school students above grade 3 have moved to remote learning.¹⁵⁹ All sporting events must be organized without spectators.¹⁶⁰ Cultural events must take place with fewer than 25 people, provided that they are able to maintain at least 1.5 meters of distance between each other.¹⁶¹ All restaurants and catering establishments are prohibited from operating, except for take-out and delivery services.¹⁶² Swimming pools, theme parks, spas, and fitness facilities are prohibited from operating.¹⁶³ Public gatherings are limited to 5 participants.¹⁶⁴ Wedding and funeral services are prohibited.¹⁶⁵ Masks must be worn at all times outside of home.¹⁶⁶ Contact services are allowed to continue, subject to a strict hygienic regime and staggered appointments.¹⁶⁷

Slovakia

Slovakia's government has tested two thirds of its population — 3.625 out of 5.5 million people — for COVID-19 using rapid antigen tests. The country plans to test at least another 1 million people in the coming week.¹⁶⁸ The tests are voluntary and free of charge.¹⁶⁹ Just over 1% — or 38,000 — of the tests administered so far have come back positive.¹⁷⁰ A single-day record of 3,363 new cases of COVID-19 were confirmed on October 30, followed by 2,573 the next day.¹⁷¹ The government declared a state of emergency earlier this month in response to this surge in infections.¹⁷² Secondary schools have switched to remote learning, all mass events, including church services, are banned, fitness centres and pools are closed, and restaurants can only serve clients outdoors.¹⁷³

NORTHERN EUROPE

Denmark

Denmark reported 1,191 new cases of COVID-19 on October 30 in the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic. There was a record-high level of testing conducted on the same

day, with a positivity rate of 1.7%. There are 144 hospitalizations in the country as of October 30, and the worst affected areas are in the Copenhagen region.¹⁷⁴ The prime minister has said that the government is willing to implement further restrictions if the infection rate does not fall following the introduction of new restrictions last week.¹⁷⁵

Estonia

Estonia reported 134 new cases of COVID-19 on October 31 in the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic.¹⁷⁶ As of November 2, the 14-day average of new cases is 72.31 per 100,000 people. There are 907 active cases and 47 hospitalizations. The positivity rate of testing has reached 4.5% in the past two weeks and is even higher in the Tallinn area, where most recent cases have been concentrated.¹⁷⁷ The government agreed to shorten the quarantine requirement for incoming travellers and close contacts of infected persons to 10 days, effective October 30.¹⁷⁸ Only travellers from Finland may enter the country without quarantining from November 2, though exemptions apply for travellers from Latvia and Lithuania.¹⁷⁹ A prominent public health official said that strict nationwide restrictions are not yet necessary despite the rising infection rate because Estonia still has one of the lowest per capita rates in Europe.¹⁸⁰

Finland

Finland reported 344 new cases of COVID-19 on October 31 in the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic. Despite the record-setting daily increase, the number of new cases over the past week has remained relatively stable compared to the last few weeks.¹⁸¹ Public health officials said that the stability is encouraging, as testing has been ramped up and contact tracing has improved. Finland's contact tracing app has reached 2.5 million downloads, approximately 45% of the Finnish population.¹⁸² Restrictions will be implemented in five regions this week, including a ban on the sale of alcohol after 10 pm. Bars and nightclubs will be limited to half-capacity and restaurants are limited to 75% capacity.¹⁸³ Regional officials in Helsinki have mandated the use of masks at all indoor sports facilities, though they are not required during physical activity or for those under the age of 15, and health exemptions apply.¹⁸⁴

Iceland

As of November 2, the 14-day average of new cases in Iceland is 221.5 per 100,000 people.¹⁸⁵ The number of new domestic cases has fallen over the past week, though hospitalizations have reached a record-high.¹⁸⁶ Public health officials announced a number of new restrictions set to take effect due to a rise in community transmission across the country. The gathering limit was lowered to 10 people, all athletic activities and cultural performances are cancelled, swimming pools are closed, bars must close indefinitely, and restaurants must close by 9 pm. Up to 50 people may enter a store, and up to 30 people may attend a funeral.¹⁸⁷ Students in grades 5 and above will be required to wear masks and maintain social distancing while at school. Younger students are exempt from the new rules, a move which the teachers' union has asked the government to reconsider.¹⁸⁸

Norway

Norway reported 433 new cases of COVID-19 on October 27 — the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic.¹⁸⁹ The government announced that the gathering limit would be lowered to 50 people and they are introducing a quarantine requirement for incoming work-related travellers.¹⁹⁰ The government has asked residents to refrain from seeing more than 5 other people each week, though this is not a legal limit.¹⁹¹ Local officials in Oslo also introduced new restrictions: masks are mandatory at all indoor public places, gatherings are limited to 20 people, and no new guests will

be permitted at bars after 10 pm.¹⁹² Local officials in Bergen have implemented tighter restrictions as well: a public gathering limit of 50, a private gathering limit of 10, mandatory masks at all indoor public places and on public transit, customer registration at all restaurants, and a ban on alcohol sales after midnight.¹⁹³

Sweden

Sweden reported 3,396 new cases of COVID-19 on October 29 in the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic.¹⁹⁴ Skåne, Stockholm, Västra Götaland and Östergötland have joined Uppsala as regions with new recommendations for their residents. All have recommended avoiding public transit, indoor public places, sports matches, meetings, cultural performances, and physical contact with people outside one's immediate household. The recommendations will last in all regions for at least the next few weeks, and the gathering limit for public events remains at 50 people in all of them.¹⁹⁵ Sweden has also restricted travel from Canada, Tunisia, and Georgia after previously exempting them from their entry ban on non-EU/EEA travellers.¹⁹⁶

ASIA/PACIFIC

Japan

Japan has experienced a slight increase in its number of daily new cases over the past week. Four prefectures, including Tokyo, are seeing pressure on hospital capacity. The government has been testing a movement tracking and high precision camera system which checks mask wearing in large crowds.¹⁹⁷ The national cabinet has endorsed a bill to offer free COVID-19 vaccinations and free medical care for any health problems the vaccines may cause.¹⁹⁸ To encourage people to pay for their own COVID-19 tests, the health minister is considering disclosing their cost and accuracy, and what recipients should do if they test positive.¹⁹⁹ Confirmation documents are no longer required for all foreign nationals with residency status and a valid re-entry permit looking to enter Japan from November 1. A negative test conducted within 72 hours of departure from their country of origin is still needed.²⁰⁰

South Korea

South Korea continues to record a limited level of daily new cases. In response to the surging infection rate abroad, public health authorities will toughen health checks at the border by narrowing the range of acceptable body temperatures and expanding testing.²⁰¹ A new social distancing scheme has been released, breaking the original three tiers into five: Level 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, and 3. Level 1 allows for ordinary lives with mask wearing and social distancing, while Level 3 will see a nationwide lockdown. Regions and facilities are also divided to facilitate tailored local responses. The new system will take effect on November 7.²⁰² The drug safety agency is reviewing whether to grant fast-track approval of a vaccine candidate developed by AstraZeneca.²⁰³ The national discount coupon program aimed at revitalizing domestic travel and food service industries, which was suspended due to the resurgence of COVID-19, has resumed.²⁰⁴

New Zealand

There have been no new community cases in New Zealand. Due to a possible link to the latest community cases, mandatory testing of all international maritime workers will begin this week.²⁰⁵ A week-long trial of a Bluetooth-enabled contact tracing card will start on November 9 to test its real-world functionality and its compatibility with existing contact tracing methods.²⁰⁶ All of New Zealand is at Alert Level 1, with no restrictions on movement, gathering, businesses, or activities.

Australia

Australia has reported limited numbers of community cases in recent days. The situation in Victoria is highly promising, with zero new cases in the past several days. All retail businesses will resume, and hospitality venues will be allowed to seat patrons again, subject to density limits. The mandatory mask policy is set to remain in place until at least the end of the year.²⁰⁷ In order to bring the Northern Territory in line with other jurisdictions, the government has announced enhanced contact tracing regulations that will come into effect on November 30. Hundreds of venues will be required to record the names, phone numbers and time of entry of the people who visit and stay for more than 15 minutes. Businesses have to review and update their COVID-19 safety plans every six months, which will be overseen by “an in-house COVID safety supervisor.”²⁰⁸

Turkey

As of October 29, Turkey reported 2,319 new COVID-19 cases.²⁰⁹ Human vaccine trials have begun. The country has charted a road map for mass vaccinations; if the trials prove successful, the country plans to treat 2.5 million people with CoronaVac. Health care workers, members of law enforcement, and people working in crowded places will be prioritized for the first mass vaccination — which is scheduled for early 2021. Thousands of volunteers have received the vaccine.²¹⁰

Israel

As of November 1, the number of active COVID-19 cases in Israel has fallen below 10,000. The health minister announced a pilot program to shorten the mandatory 14-day quarantine to 12 days, which would remain in place until the end of 2020.²¹¹ Another pilot program has been launched to analyze sewage “for signs of the coronavirus” in 14 cities and a university.²¹² Due to their high infection rates, two northern Israeli Arab towns face a week-long local lockdown until November 5.²¹³ The reopening process continues elsewhere: houses of worship, beauty salons, and vacation rental homes were allowed to reopen on November 1. On the same date, students in grades 1-4 can return to the classroom in cohorts of up to 18 children, while street stores have to remain closed. The health ministry’s lockdown exit plan has been shortened from nine to six stages.²¹⁴ Due to the rising infection rate across Europe, Israel has added Italy, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, and others to the list of high-risk countries where travellers must quarantine upon their arrival in the country.²¹⁵

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Partnerships and Contributors

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Links

<https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/>

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