

**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 16, 2020**

**Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, University of Toronto  
PEARL (Policy, Elections, and Representation Lab)  
Professor Peter Loewen, Lab Director ([peter.loewen@utoronto.ca](mailto:peter.loewen@utoronto.ca))**

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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.

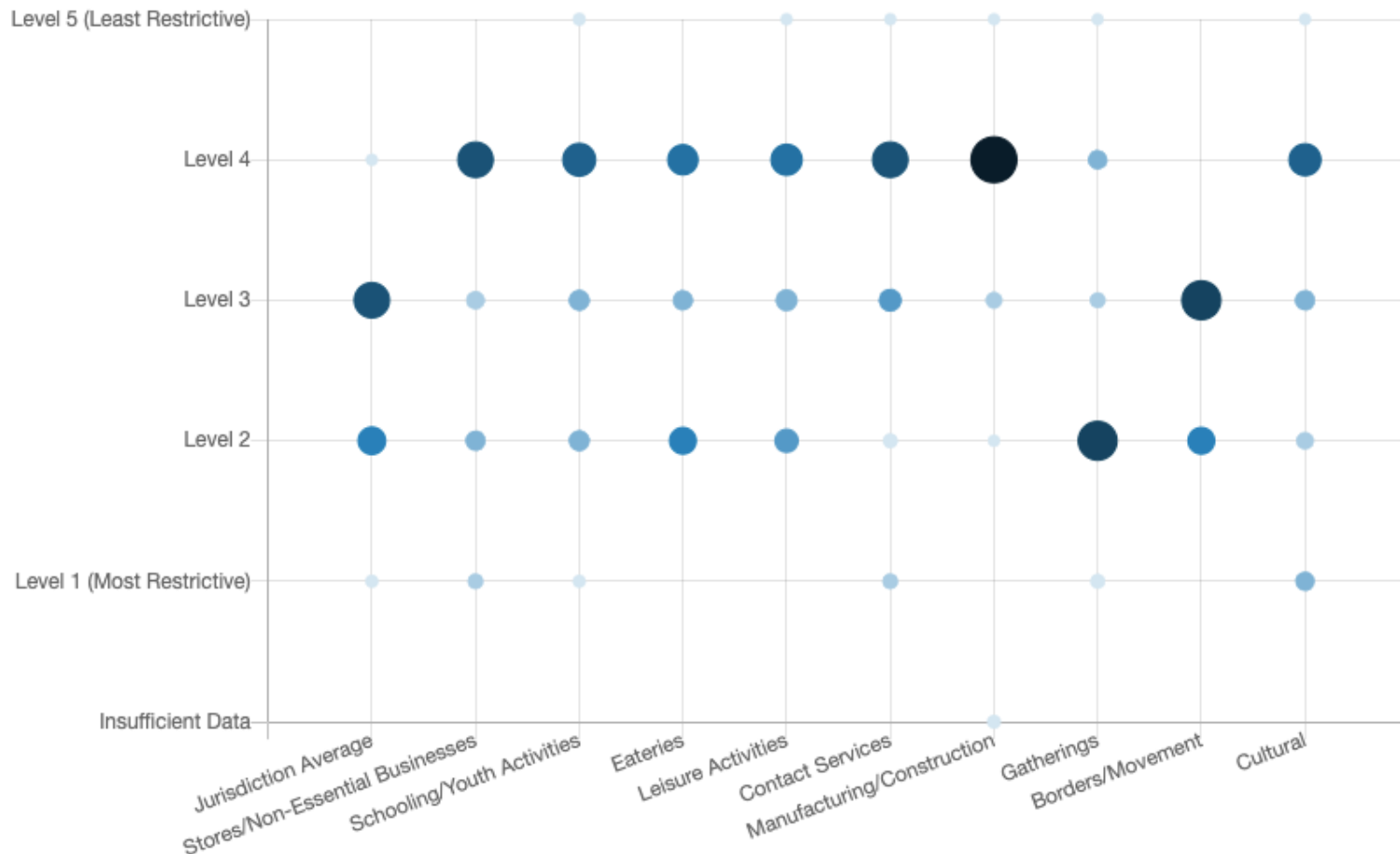
We also provide a weekly qualitative summary of the actions governments are taking and considering taking to reopen their economies and manage the coronavirus.

Our data are updated weekly. You can subscribe to a weekly update by visiting our website: [www.reopeningaftercovid.com](http://www.reopeningaftercovid.com).

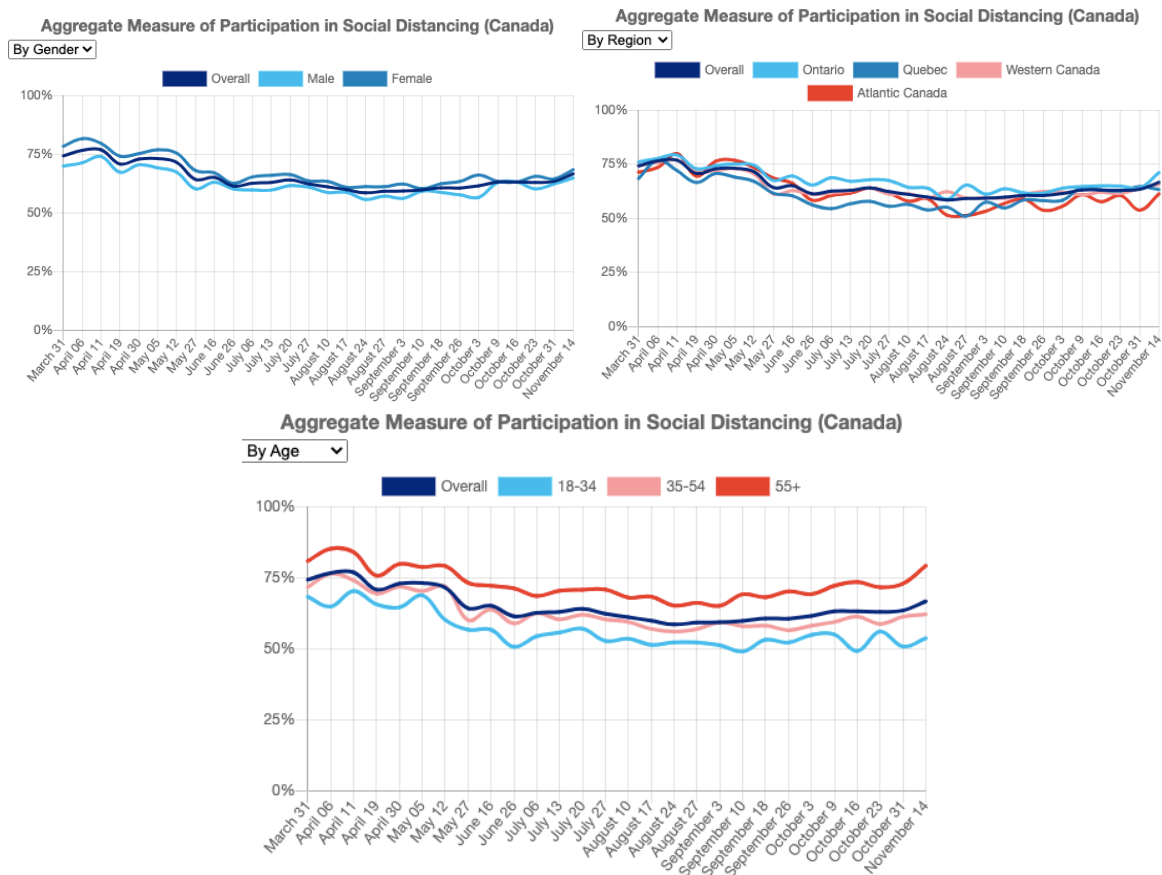
Please direct any questions or comments to [peter.loewen@utoronto.ca](mailto:peter.loewen@utoronto.ca).

## Data Visualizations from Dashboard

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

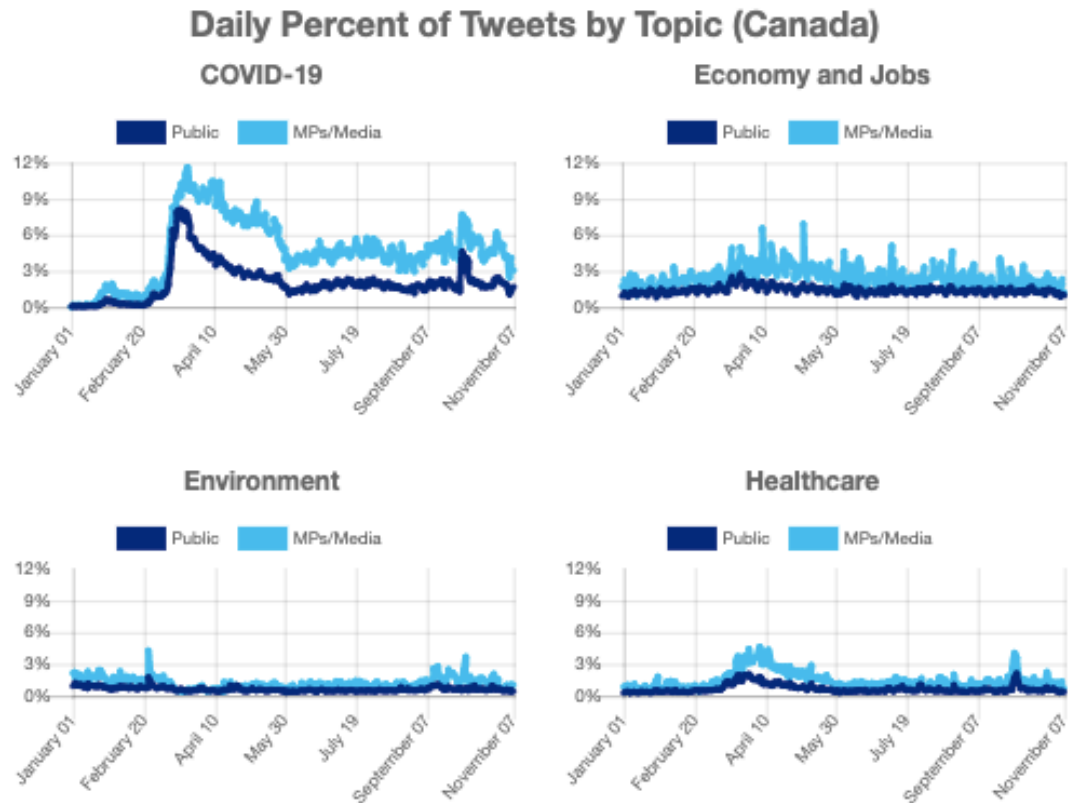


**Figure 1 – Level of reopening among 52 different jurisdictions as of November 16.** The reopening policies of 52 jurisdictions: 34 OECD countries, 5 US states, 10 Canadian provinces and 3 Canadian territories. For each jurisdiction, we classify a total of 9 different sectors: Stores/Non-Essential Businesses, 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](http://www.reopeningaftercovid.com).



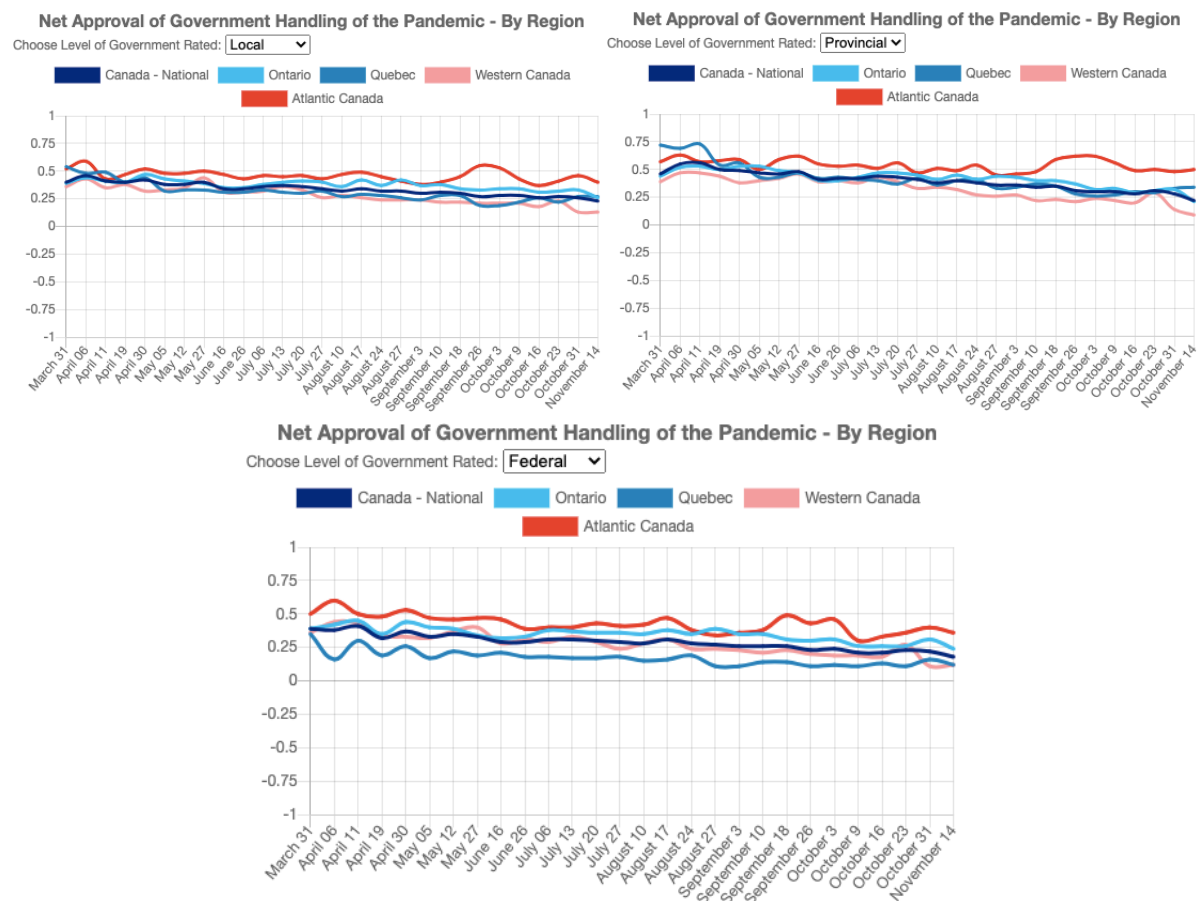
**Figure 2 – Aggregate survey measure of participation in social distancing (Canada).**

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.





**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*

Alberta has one of the highest active case rates in Canada, with record numbers of new cases, active cases, and hospitalization occupancy rates. New restrictions have been put in place for the next two weeks in Edmonton, Calgary, Grand Prairie, Lethbridge, Fort McMurray, and Red Deer. Indoor group fitness, team sports and group performances have been suspended and weddings and funerals cannot exceed 50 people. Restaurants, bars, and pubs must close by 11:00 pm and liquor sales must stop by 10:00 pm. The opposition leader criticized the government for waiting too long to introduce restrictions and the minimal measures being added.<sup>1</sup>

#### → *British Columbia*

The number of daily new cases in British Columbia has stayed above 500 over the past week, with the highest hospitalization numbers since the spring. The provincial state of emergency has been extended through November 24. No additional restrictions have been introduced so far. Police and other enforcement officers have been granted the ability to issue tickets for restriction violations in the Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health regions, which are under the enhanced restrictions announced last week.<sup>2</sup> The other regions in B.C. remain at Phase 3 of the provincial reopening plan.

#### → *Manitoba*

As of November 13, Manitoba surpassed more than 10,000 cases of COVID-19.<sup>3</sup> The province entered code red restrictions on November 12, restricting travel to and from northern Manitoba, with non-essential travel discouraged. Retail businesses listed as critical services are allowed to remain open at 25% capacity, with non-critical services only able to provide e-service, curbside pickup, and delivery. All personal services businesses, fitness centres, sport facilities, museums, casinos, galleries, libraries, movie theatres, and concert halls are closed. In-person dining at restaurants is prohibited but delivery and takeaway services are permitted. Group gatherings restricted to less than five people. No changes have been made to childcare services, kindergarten, primary, or secondary education. Therapeutic care services that are self-regulated, including massage therapists, can also continue to provide services. These measures will stay in effect for four weeks.<sup>4</sup>

#### → *New Brunswick*

New Brunswick reported 6 new cases of COVID-19 on November 14, the province's largest single-day increase since September -- and another 3 the following day, leaving the province with a total of 22 active cases.<sup>5</sup> Most of the province's active cases remain in the Fredericton and Campbellton regions, each of which has six active cases as of November 16.<sup>6</sup> The entire province is currently at the "yellow" alert level, which includes the reopening of most personal services, fitness facilities, casinos, cinemas and large performance venues under strict hygienic regimes and limits on capacity.<sup>7</sup> New Brunswick also loosened its travel restrictions on November 13, aligning its entry rules with federal standards.<sup>8</sup> People from around the world can now enter New Brunswick in order to visit immediate family members, a privilege which had previously been limited to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.<sup>9</sup>

#### → *Newfoundland and Labrador*

In Newfoundland and Labrador, there are ten active cases of COVID-19.<sup>10</sup> The province remains at Alert Level 2. The chief medical officer of health said that non-essential travel will not be expanded for the holiday season due to the second wave hitting other provinces.<sup>11</sup>

#### → *Northwest Territories*

Five new cases were reported in the Northwest Territories last week. All cases are connected to travel outside the territory, and no close contact with other NWT residents has been identified. As a result, authorities said that the risk of further transmission is believed to be very low. The territory-wide public health emergency has been extended again through November 24. A temporary day shelter will be established in Yellowknife to address “ongoing capacity limitations due to the pandemic.”<sup>12</sup> NWT is still at Phase 2 of its reopening plan, with no changes to restrictions announced over the past week.

→ *Nova Scotia*

Nova Scotia reported six new cases of COVID-19 on November 15, the province’s largest single-day increase since May -- followed by another two new cases the following day, leaving the province with a total of 21 active cases.<sup>13</sup> Nova Scotia Health has followed up on these reports by issuing multiple advisories of potential COVID-19 exposure around the province, while the premier has expressed concern over the possibility that “people are going about their lives as if we are not still in the midst of a pandemic.”<sup>14</sup> Nova Scotia health officials have reported that, of the province’s 1,142 confirmed cases to date, 1,056 of them have been resolved.<sup>15</sup> There have been 65 deaths as a result of COVID-19 in Nova Scotia.<sup>16</sup>

→ *Nunavut*

After Nunavut reported its first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 last week, six others have been diagnosed in Rankin Inlet and Arviat -- both in the Kivalliq region.<sup>17</sup> The cases appear to be connected to the Winnipeg isolation hub, where Nunavut community members who have travelled out-of-territory must stay for two weeks before returning home. The Kivalliq region has gone into lockdown, with only essential services remaining open and travel between communities prohibited. Residents must wear a mask if they leave their home; indoor gatherings are banned and outdoor gatherings are limited to five people.<sup>18</sup> Restrictions were also introduced in Iqaluit out of caution: eateries and bars are limited to 50% capacity, mandatory mask policy for visitors to long-term care homes, a public gathering limit of 50 people, and a private gathering limit of 5 people.<sup>19</sup> Schools in Iqaluit have moved to stage 2 of the territory’s plan, with staggered attendance for middle and high school students.<sup>20</sup>

→ *Ontario*

Ontario’s 7-day rolling average has reached a record high of 1400 cases per day, as the figure continues to exponentially increase.<sup>21</sup> On November 3, the government introduced a colour-tiered system that places regions in different sector-specific zones: Green (Prevent and Standard Measures), Yellow (Protect and Strengthened Measures), Orange (Restrict and Intermediate Measures), Red (Control and Stringent Measures), and Lockdown (Maximum Measures).<sup>22</sup> The government has been heavily criticized for its framework, with many health experts saying it does not go far enough to protect Ontarians. In an update on November 13, the province lowered its COVID-19 framework threshold, adding York, Halton and Hamilton to the Red Zone. Even though the Red Zone allows indoor dining with a maximum of ten customers, many municipalities are adding restrictions of their own, such as banning indoor dining.<sup>23</sup>

→ *Prince Edward Island*

Prince Edward Island has four active cases of COVID-19. There is no evidence of community spread and the risk of transmission remains low. So far, all cases in the province have been related to travel. P.E.I. is aiming to begin COVID-19 vaccinations in early 2021.<sup>24</sup>

→ *Quebec*

Based on the past two weeks, the rate of COVID-19 cases in Montreal was 175.2 per 100,000 cases.<sup>25</sup> On November 13, Quebec reported 1,301 daily new cases and 30 daily new deaths, meanwhile hospitalizations were 583 and ICU occupancy was 85.<sup>26</sup> Out of all of the provinces, Quebec reports the

most cases per capita; Montreal reports the most cases in Quebec.<sup>27</sup> The lockdown in red zones including Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Lanaudiere except around Joliette, Mauricie, Centre-du-Quebec, Gaspesie is expected to continue until November 23 due to the number of cases.<sup>28</sup> In response to the rising number of cases in schools, the premier may close schools temporarily.<sup>29</sup> There have been over 10,000 cases linked to schools.<sup>30</sup> In elementary school, masks are only required for grade five and up and students do not need to wear the mask in the classroom and instead only in the halls.<sup>31</sup> High school students must wear masks all day.<sup>32</sup> Authorities have signaled concerns about Christmas gatherings.<sup>33</sup>

#### → *Saskatchewan*

Saskatchewan reported 308 new cases of COVID-19 on November 14 in the province's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic.<sup>34</sup> Big River First Nation has gone into lockdown after reaching 82 confirmed cases, an extremely high per-capita infection rate for a community of just 2,000 people.<sup>35</sup> The provincial government is recommending that high schools with more than 600 students reduce their amount of in-person learning, but each school continues to set their own guidelines.<sup>36</sup> A mandatory mask policy will be implemented at all indoor public places in all communities close to an urban centre or larger than 5,000 people. Effective November 16, licensed liquor establishments in the province must stop serving alcohol at 10 pm.<sup>37</sup>

#### → *Yukon*

One new case was recorded in Yukon last week. While the travel bubble with British Columbia remains in place, the chief medical officer encouraged Yukoners to exercise caution over their travel plans.<sup>38</sup> Students in grades 10 to 12 in Whitehorse will stay on their half in-person, half-remote schedule for the second semester. Additional support for the second semester will be determined through feedback from students, staff and families via a survey that will be available later in November.<sup>39</sup> The requirement of two metres distance between students in the classroom has been reduced for grades K to 12. Masks are now mandatory in common areas outside of the classroom.<sup>40</sup>

### *The United States*

#### → *California*

On November 12, California passed 1 million COVID-19 cases.<sup>41</sup> Over the past week, the state's COVID-19 positivity rate increased to 4.2%. This is the first time since September that the state's positivity rate has exceeded 4%. Over the past two weeks, California had a 31% spike in hospitalizations.<sup>42</sup> Eleven counties regressed in reopening. Sacramento, San Diego and Stanislaus joined LA in purple, which is stage one and prohibits indoor dining and in-person church, for example.<sup>43</sup> No counties reopened further this week.<sup>44</sup> Schools in Sacramento, San Diego and Stanislaus that are already in person may continue in person, but schools that have not already reopened must stay closed.<sup>45</sup> Elementary schools may obtain a waiver from their county's department of health to reopen in person.<sup>46</sup> Museums have joined amusement parks, like Disney, in requests to reopen.<sup>47</sup>

#### → *Illinois*

Illinois' seven-day average test positivity rate reached 12.8% on November 15, up from 8% at the start of the month.<sup>48</sup> With a daily average of 12,000 new daily cases across the state, the Mayor of Chicago said that 1 in 18 Chicagoans have active COVID-19 infections as of November 13.<sup>49</sup> Over the next 30 days, those who live in the Chicagoland area are urged to go out only when necessary, which includes leaving for work, school, medical appointments, groceries, take-out food and pharmaceuticals. There's also a mandatory 10-person cap on social gatherings. Last week, the governor warned that another mandatory stay-at-home order for the whole state could be on its way if the epidemiological situation worsens.<sup>50</sup>

→ *Michigan*

Michigan's seven-day moving average has once again climbed this week to 6,300 new cases per day; it was 1,200 one month ago.<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, the governor announced new restrictions on November 15, by using the power vested in Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) director during a public health emergency. The new restrictions include suspending in-person dining at bars and restaurants, moving high school and college-level classes online, and closing movie theaters, bowling alleys and other entertainment venues.<sup>52</sup> Retail stores are permitted to keep their doors open for the next three weeks, but must operate at 30% capacity and enforce face coverings. Personal services, including hair salons and barbershops, can still welcome customers by appointment with safety precautions. The new restrictions will last for three weeks, ending December 9. President Trump's COVID-19 advisor criticized Michigan's new restrictions, urging people to "rise up" against the new public health measures.<sup>53</sup>

→ *New York*

New York's positivity rate is 4.05% in "focus zone" areas, and 2.45% outside those areas.<sup>54</sup> On November 13, the state reported over 200,000 COVID-19 test results, a new record.<sup>55</sup> The governor announced that Rockland County's orange warning zone will transition to a yellow precautionary zone. New York City's positivity rate is still below the school closure threshold, which is 3%; the total statewide positivity rate is 2.74%.<sup>56</sup>

→ *Texas*

On November 13, Texas passed 1 million COVID-19 cases and, while this is similar to the number of cases reported in California, Texas has approximately 10 million fewer residents.<sup>57</sup> As of November 12, there were approximately 7,000 people hospitalized with COVID-19. This is the most hospitalizations in the past three months.<sup>58</sup> In El Paso, businesses began reopening on November 13 after a court of appeal stopped the county judge's shutdown order, and alternatively residents and businesses must follow state orders where masks are mandatory, bars and restaurants are closed in the area and non-essential businesses can operate at 50% capacity but must close by 9 pm.<sup>59</sup> On November 14, 512 new cases and 15 new deaths were reported in El Paso.<sup>60</sup> The Harris County Judge wants to bar additional reopening in the area due to the number of COVID-19 cases.<sup>61</sup>

*Mexico*

Mexico recently passed 1 million COVID-19 cases and is nearing 100,000 COVID-19 related deaths.<sup>62</sup> As of November 16, Mexico City, the epicenter of the pandemic in Mexico, imposed additional COVID-19 health restrictions in the region due to rising hospitalizations.<sup>63</sup> The daily number of new hospitalizations in Mexico City had jumped from 20 to 100 in five days.<sup>64</sup> In Mexico City, which is now in orange or stage two on the country's reopening traffic light system, bars and cantinas must close for two weeks, non-essential services like gyms, museums, bowling, and theaters must close by 7 pm instead of 10 pm, large gatherings like concerts and conferences are prohibited and professional sports cannot have spectators.<sup>65</sup> Jalisco eased restrictions on November 13; shopping centres, department stores, markets and restaurants can remain open until 11 pm, regular public transit resumed, religious places can operate in person at reduced capacity, and town squares reopened and most businesses can stay open past 7 pm.<sup>66</sup>

*Chile*

As of November 11, the COVID-19 positivity rate in Chile was 4.08% nationally and 2% in the capital of Santiago and the Metropolitan region.<sup>67</sup> As of November 14, Chile's health ministry reported that the number of cases had decreased in seven regions over the past week and that the number of cases

had fallen in ten regions over the past two weeks.<sup>68</sup> The daily number of new cases on November 14 was 1,644 with 39 new deaths.<sup>69</sup> In December, Chile will reopen to non-essential travel tourists after an eight month long closure.<sup>70</sup> Visitors can fly into Santiago's Arturo Merino Benitez International Airport provided they have a negative PCR test within 72 hours of arrival.<sup>71</sup> If tourists satisfy health standards and do not have COVID-19 symptoms, they do not have to quarantine. All travelers must provide their location, will be monitored for two weeks, must follow curfews, and must wear a mask when in cities.<sup>72</sup> Chile's Deputy Minister for International Economic Relations and the UK's Minister for the Americas hosted a seminar on access to vaccines in Latin America and the Caribbean on November 11.<sup>73</sup>

## **WESTERN EUROPE**

### *France*

After two weeks of an intense national lockdown, France's 7-day moving average of new cases has drastically decreased to 27,000 cases per day -- half of what it was a week ago.<sup>74</sup> However, daily deaths remain constant at around 550 per day. Although France now has more patients hospitalized with COVID-19 than during the April peak of the initial wave, there are about 2,000 fewer in intensive care. Experts attribute this to healthcare workers having more information about the virus now than in April.<sup>75</sup> Despite the improving situation, the prime minister announced that the lockdown measures would remain in place until December as scheduled. Any loosening of restrictions after December 1 would be "strictly limited" to certain businesses to facilitate Christmas shopping, and would exclude bars, restaurants and sports halls.<sup>76</sup> A nation-wide survey showed that 60% of people had flouted the rules at least once, either by giving a false reason for going out on their self-signed permission slip or by meeting up with family and friends. The proportion of rule-breakers stood at 40 percent during the first wave.<sup>77</sup>

### *Germany*

Germany's 7-day R-value has slightly increased to 1.03; however, the country's 7-day moving average of new cases has plateaued at around 18,500 cases.<sup>78</sup> Although for a large proportion of cases the transmission setting remains unclear, numerous clusters are connected to private gatherings in households and in community institutions, such as nursing and long-term care homes.<sup>79</sup> The Chancellor is due to meet with state premiers on November 16 to discuss additional restrictions, such as dramatically reducing the number of people at household gatherings and compulsory mask wearing for school students.<sup>80</sup> Currently, bars and restaurants are closed, while schools and shops remain open. The federal minister of health thinks that it's "too early to say" whether the country will extend its partial lockdown beyond the month of November.<sup>81</sup>

### *Belgium*

In Belgium, the number of new infections and hospitalizations continue to decrease, but the average number of deaths have risen.<sup>82</sup> Last week, Belgium entered its second national lockdown.<sup>83</sup> The Brussels Health Inspectorate called on the government to adapt and expand the current COVID-19 testing strategy to include all high-risk contacts -- even those without symptoms.<sup>84</sup>

### *Netherlands*

On November 13, 6,109 new cases have been reported in the Netherlands. On average, the number of positive tests are decreasing. The government indicated that if the number of new infections goes down

sufficiently by mid-January, trials can begin with larger audiences at football matches, concerts, and in cinemas. The events and entertainment sector has developed a plan to allow testing to see whether larger events can be organized safely, and the junior economic affairs minister has agreed to three trials if the infection rates go down to the lowest risk level.<sup>85</sup>

### *Spain*

On November 10, there were 411 new deaths and 17,395 new COVID-19 cases. This number of new daily cases is lower than last week, when the daily case numbers were in the 20,000s.<sup>86</sup> EU and EEA citizens can visit Spain -- but, as of November 23, citizens from high risk EU and EEA countries must present a negative PCR test to enter the country.<sup>87</sup> These high risk countries include Belgium, France, Germany, some parts of Greece, Hungary and other countries.<sup>88</sup> Visitors from some other countries, like Australia and New Zealand, are also permitted into Spain. Quarantines are not mandatory for travellers, but authorities ask that visitors are residents from the approved countries, not just citizens.<sup>89</sup> Spain anticipates receiving Pfizer vaccines for approximately 10 million people in April-May 2021.<sup>90</sup> Central and regional governments will use medical criteria to determine vaccine priority and the government will try to promote the virus to Spaniards, some of whom are unsure about trusting the vaccine.<sup>91</sup>

### *The United Kingdom*

The UK's 7-day rolling average has increased slightly to 25,000 new cases per day.<sup>92</sup> On November 5, a nationwide lockdown began in England, which closed pubs, restaurants and stores selling items deemed to be non-essential such as books, clothing and sneakers until at least December 2.<sup>93</sup> Unlike the spring lockdown, schools and universities, as well as construction sites and factories, remain open. Eight days into the lockdown on November 13, tentative signs emerged to suggest that the UK's COVID-19 resurgence is levelling off.<sup>94</sup> The prime minister has vowed to lift the national lockdown on December 2 and move back to regional tiers, where parts of the country could be placed into rolling 'circuit breaker' lockdowns if infection rates bounce back.<sup>95</sup>

### *Ireland*

On November 11, 270 new COVID-19 cases have been confirmed in Ireland. There has been a significant drop in infection rates over the past two weeks, which Ireland's chief medical officer described as "encouraging." Ireland is in the middle of a six-week lockdown after the government imposed its highest level of COVID-19 restrictions on October 21.<sup>96</sup> The government has discouraged Irish citizens abroad from booking flights back home during Christmas time. New travel rules come into effect on November 29 that will allow people arriving in Ireland from red listed regions to move freely around the country after receiving negative test results. The test must be taken five days after arriving in the Republic. The government also plans to bring the country in line with the EU's traffic light system in the upcoming days.<sup>97</sup>

### *Luxembourg*

On November 13, 713 new cases have been confirmed by the ministry of health in Luxembourg. The death rate has decreased from 2.12% in the spring to 0.48% now.<sup>98</sup> Luxembourg is eager to avoid a new lockdown, despite being Europe's second-worst hit country in the pandemic. Surrounding countries have imposed much tougher measures -- leading French and Belgian residents to flock to Luxembourg restaurants and hotels, which remain open. The government plans to expand its aid programs for businesses and extend a furlough scheme in which the government takes on the salaries for employees so that they can keep their jobs.<sup>99</sup>



## *Portugal*

On November 11, Portugal has recorded 82 more deaths related to COVID-19 -- the highest number in a single day since the beginning of the pandemic. On the same day, the country reported 4,935 new cases.<sup>100</sup> The government announced that 191 municipalities are now deemed high risk areas for COVID-19 transmission. In the previous evaluation, 121 municipalities were on this list. Effective November 15, seven will be removed and 77 will be added. In these municipalities, a curfew will be imposed between 11 pm and 5 am on weekdays and between 1 pm and 5 am on weekends. On weekends, shops will be open from 8 am to 1 pm -- with exceptions for pharmacies, clinics, offices, and gas stations. After 1 pm, restaurants can only offer delivery services.<sup>101</sup>

## **CENTRAL EUROPE**

### *Austria*

On November 14, the government announced a tightening of its partial lockdown. The new measures included closure of all non-essential stores and a shift of classes to online learning. Hairdressers, sports facilities, and libraries also closed. The chancellor said that the measures were necessary due to 550 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the past week. Effective November 17, a curfew will prohibit people from leaving their homes for non-essential purposes.<sup>102</sup>

### *Greece*

On November 14, Greece reported 2,835 new daily cases. A three-week national lockdown took effect on November 7.<sup>103</sup> Nurseries and primary schools are closed in Greece until the end of November.<sup>104</sup> Hospital workers held protests demanding more staff be hired as an increase in the number of people in ICU beds has put pressure on Greece's health system.<sup>105</sup> The opposition leader accused the prime minister of shifting blame to citizens rather than acknowledging his poor handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>106</sup>

### *Italy*

On November 14, Italy reported 37,249 new daily cases of COVID-19. Unlike the first wave, infections are no longer confined to the northern regions -- putting strain on hospitals throughout the country. More than half of Italy's regions fall under the red (high-risk) or orange (medium-high risk) categories. Both categories impose limitations on movement and the scope of opening. Due to rising infections and deaths, doctors are calling for another national lockdown to ease pressures on the healthcare system.<sup>107</sup> Many citizens are not willing to follow new restrictions, leading to rising tensions between the national government and local governments.<sup>108</sup>

### *Slovenia*

Due to rising COVID-19 cases, the government has decided to tighten its lockdown restrictions for an additional two weeks. All non-essential stores, public transport, schools, and kindergartens will be closed. All gatherings, with exceptions for people within the same household, will be banned. The government has implemented a legislative package to help alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on business and residents.<sup>109</sup>

### *Switzerland*

Switzerland has become Europe's top COVID-19 hot spot with a test positivity rate of 27.9%. COVID-19 hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths have doubled in Switzerland each week -- with hospitals projected to run out of ICU capacity by November 13.<sup>109A</sup> Several cantons have introduced their own measures that go beyond the federal framework, especially in the harder hit west and south of the country. Cantons may adopt additional measures, but are required to follow the federal policies.<sup>109B</sup> Western cantons, including Geneva, Bern, and Vaud, will receive military support to help relieve the burden on ambulance workers and provide basic care to patients at hospitals.<sup>109C</sup>

## **EASTERN EUROPE**

### *Czech Republic*

The Czech Republic reported just 1,887 new cases of COVID-19 on November 15 -- the country's lowest single-day tally since October 4 and a dramatic reduction from the single-day record of 15,731 new cases reported on November 4.<sup>110</sup> The Czech Republic will remain in a state of emergency until at least November 20 and national lockdown restrictions -- including a curfew, limited movement outside the home, and broad economic closures -- will also remain in effect during this time.<sup>111</sup>

### *Hungary*

As new cases of COVID-19 continue to rise, Hungary's government has been forced to introduce several highly restrictive measures aimed at curbing the spread of the virus. As of November 11, Hungary's curfew has been extended to the hours of 20:00 and 5:00.<sup>112</sup> All gatherings are now forbidden, including all cultural and sporting events, while families can privately gather in groups of up to 10 people.<sup>113</sup> All restaurants and catering establishments have been ordered to close except for take-out and delivery services.<sup>114</sup> All non-essential businesses must close by 19:00.<sup>115</sup> All leisure facilities, including swimming pools, gyms, and spas, have been ordered to close.<sup>116</sup> All secondary and post-secondary students have moved to remote learning.<sup>117</sup> Hungary's government announced a state of emergency on November 4, when none of the above restrictions had been put in place. Hungary's government has previously focused primarily on enforcing hygienic standards such as mandatory mask-wearing and distance requirements.

### *Latvia*

A national state of emergency was declared in Latvia on November 9, which will remain in effect until at least December 6.<sup>118</sup> Under the renewed state of emergency, all in-person public events are cancelled and banned.<sup>119</sup> No more than 10 people may participate in private meetings, and no more than 50 people may participate in public gatherings.<sup>120</sup> Gambling venues and bars, skating rinks, entertainment and amusement centres, and playgrounds will be closed.<sup>121</sup> Public natural paths will be available for individual visits, and museums, exhibitions, libraries and other cultural venues will remain open.<sup>122</sup> No sporting events will be allowed to take place and no more than 10 people may participate in outdoor sport practice.<sup>123</sup> The use of change rooms will be prohibited, and all athletic venues and sports clubs must close by 22:00.<sup>124</sup> Food service venues may only offer take-out.<sup>125</sup> Beauty, piercing and tattoo parlors will be closed, while hairdresser services will be allowed subject to prior appointment.<sup>126</sup> Teaching for Year 1-6 pupils will remain in person.<sup>127</sup>

### *Lithuania*

All Lithuanian municipalities were moved to the red “quarantine” zone on the country’s three-tiered risk classification system on November 4, effectively putting the country in a state of lockdown and emergency.<sup>128</sup> From November 7 until November 29, all commercial and non-commercial cultural, entertainment and sporting events in open and closed public places will be prohibited in the country -- with the exception of high-level professional sports competitions (without spectators) and funerals with a maximum of 10 participants.<sup>129</sup> Visits to cultural, leisure, entertainment, and sports facilities are also prohibited, with the exception of libraries and individual physical activity sessions provided by a physical activity or sports trainer.<sup>130</sup> Catering establishments will not be able to serve visitors on site, but will be able to provide takeaway or delivery food.<sup>131</sup> It is forbidden to gather in public places in groups of more than five people, except for family members, and it is mandatory to keep a distance of at least two metres from other people or groups of people.<sup>132</sup> Pre-school children and primary school pupils will be able to continue attending educational establishments, while older students will begin remote learning.<sup>133</sup>

### *Poland*

Poland's Health Ministry reported a record 21,854 new cases of COVID-19 on November 11.<sup>134</sup> There have been over 10,000 new infections in Poland every day since October 21, and over 15,000 every day since October 27.<sup>135</sup> 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.<sup>136</sup> All secondary, post-secondary, and primary school students above grade 3 have moved to remote learning.<sup>137</sup> All sporting events must be organized without spectators.<sup>138</sup> Cultural events must take place with fewer than 25 people, provided that they are able to maintain at least 1.5 metres distance between each other.<sup>139</sup> All restaurants and catering establishments are prohibited from operating, except for take-out and delivery services.<sup>140</sup> Swimming pools, theme parks, spas, and fitness facilities are prohibited from operating.<sup>141</sup> Public gatherings are limited to 5 participants.<sup>142</sup> Wedding and funeral services are prohibited.<sup>143</sup> Masks must be worn at all times outside of home.<sup>144</sup> Contact services are allowed to continue, subject to a strict hygienic regime and staggered appointments.<sup>145</sup>

### *Slovakia*

While many European countries continue to lockdown as COVID-19 infections continue to rise, Slovakia’s government reopened theatres, cinemas and churches at half capacity on November 15. The country is also allowing fitness centres and pools to operate with limited capacity as of the same date.<sup>146</sup> Slovakia’s ice hockey and soccer leagues will also restart, without spectators, on November 20. Slovakia reported 2,024 new infections on November 12 -- down from a record daily tally of more than 3,000 in late October.<sup>147</sup>

## **NORTHERN EUROPE**

### *Denmark*

The number of hospitalized patients in Denmark has reached 243, the most in more than six months.<sup>148</sup> The government is facing mounting pressure over its decision to cull all of the country’s minks due to a mutated strain of COVID-19 after it was revealed that the government did not have the legal authority to issue the order in most areas. Authorities have issued an apology to fur farmers for not specifying that the euthanization was a recommendation, not a legal mandate.<sup>149</sup> Some prominent Danish virologists are questioning data indicating that the mutation would affect the efficacy of a future vaccine -- indicating that, while the strain is less sensitive to antibodies than other variants, there is limited

evidence to suggest that a vaccine would be completely ineffective against it.<sup>150</sup> Negotiations with opposition parties are ongoing over a legal framework for a compensation package for mink-fur farmers.<sup>151</sup>

### *Estonia*

Estonia reported 374 new cases of COVID-19 on November 12 in the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic. However, a representative from the government's scientific council later said that some of the cases reported were from a lab backlog from the days prior.<sup>152</sup> As of November 16, the two-week average of new cases is 210.7 per 100,000 people.<sup>153</sup> The government re-introduced their "2+2" rule (two people in a group and two meters of distance from others) and issued a mask recommendation for all indoor public places. The social distancing rule does not apply at seated cultural events and schools and groups of up to 10 may sit together at restaurants. Restaurants and entertainment venues must close for visitors between 12 am and 6 am, though they may still sell food and beverages during that time.<sup>154</sup>

### *Finland*

Finland has reported around 1,700 new cases of COVID-19 over the past week, around 450 more than the week before. There are currently 80 hospitalizations in the country, with 13 in the ICU.<sup>155</sup> Public health officials in Helsinki have issued a recommendation that masks be worn at all times in schools.<sup>156</sup> The government is considering allowing travel from countries with up to twice the infection rate of Finland, though this would not take effect until at least the spring. No European countries would currently meet this criteria.<sup>157</sup> In the meantime, Finnish officials are likely to extend their tough travel restrictions, including border checks for all arrivals.<sup>158</sup> The minister of agriculture said that there is no need for additional restrictions on foreign agricultural workers -- despite a recent outbreak that infected 64 people at a farm in Pieksämäki.<sup>159</sup> Public health officials said that they are considering three vaccine candidates, which will be free for all residents upon its release.<sup>160</sup>

### *Iceland*

The number of active cases in Iceland has dropped precipitously over the past week and the two-week average of new cases now sits at 66.8 per 100,000 people.<sup>161</sup> Iceland will ease restrictions on November 18, with contact services allowed to reopen in Reykjavik, children's sports allowed to resume nationwide, and up to 25 students will be permitted in each classroom in secondary schools.<sup>162</sup> The gathering limit will remain at 10 people. Iceland will issue a colour-coded warning system (red, orange, yellow, grey) in order to increase the predictability of restrictions. Authorities said that they chose grey to represent the new normal rather than green because they did not want the public to ignore hygiene guidelines even if infection rates are low.<sup>163</sup>

### *Norway*

As of November 16, Norway has a two-week average of 139.5 new cases per 100,000 people.<sup>164</sup> The government has asked all travellers who have arrived from Denmark in the past two weeks to quarantine for 10 days and get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible due to concerns over the mink-borne mutation of the virus.<sup>165</sup> Authorities in Oslo are expected to introduce further restrictions on schools in the coming days -- including a reduction in class size for students in lower secondary school, varying attendance times, and moving some classes online.<sup>166</sup> Local officials in Bergen are urging residents to follow the current restrictions as the R0 number in the city has risen to 1.6.<sup>167</sup>

### *Sweden*

Sweden reported 5,674 new cases of COVID-19 on November 12 -- the country's largest daily increase since the beginning of the pandemic.<sup>168</sup> Hospitalizations have been rapidly increasing in each of the five most populated regions in the country.<sup>169</sup> Twenty of the 21 regions in Sweden have now introduced local recommendations to avoid high-risk activities, to stay home as much as possible and to avoid crowded indoor public places.<sup>170</sup> The public gathering limit will be lowered to eight people on November 24 due to the rising infection rate.<sup>171</sup> The government will introduce a ban on serving alcohol after 10 pm -- one of the few legal restrictions put in place since the beginning of the pandemic. The restriction will be in place until at least February 28, 2021.<sup>172</sup> Local officials in Stockholm and Gothenburg are expected to ban visits to long-term care homes once again after the nationwide restriction was lifted in October.<sup>173</sup>

## **ASIA/PACIFIC**

### *Japan*

The number of new cases in Japan continues to rise, staying above 1,500 a day since the middle of last week. The country is now "on the highest alert." In order to cope with the surge in cases, the national government has promised to help conduct large-scale testing and dispatch experts and healthcare personnel across the country.<sup>174</sup> The government advisory panel on COVID-19 has called for tougher measures to curb social and economic activities, especially at places such as bars, nightclubs, communities of foreign residents, and universities. The panel also advised authorities to disclose a country-by-country analysis of test results at airport quarantine stations.<sup>175</sup> Major events held at large venues (can hold more than 10,000 people) can have up to 50% capacity.<sup>176</sup> A bill to make the COVID-19 vaccination free is being considered by Japanese lawmakers. The government has agreed with three foreign pharmaceutical firms to receive a total of 290 million doses of a potential vaccine.<sup>177</sup>

### *South Korea*

After weeks of stability, the number of new cases in South Korea seems to be rising again -- topping 200 over the past weekend. Health authorities are worried about further growth due to increased contact and the colder weather keeping people in enclosed spaces.<sup>178</sup> Although Level 1 social distancing is continuing at the national level, several city and provincial governments are moving up to Level 1.5 and increasing caution regarding mass gatherings.<sup>179</sup> Local officials in Seoul are launching a temporary 24-hour response system to handle queries about mask wearing regulations.<sup>180</sup> The Busan government is developing a system to prevent transmission of infectious diseases from ships arriving from overseas. The "port-through" system uses drones to conduct tests and analyzes droplets left on the masks instead of using nasal swabs to detect COVID-19.<sup>181</sup> With the national college entrance exam nearing, the government will ramp up their inspection of cram schools and study facilities to ensure that they comply with antiviral measures.<sup>182</sup>

### *New Zealand*

Only a few new community cases have been identified in New Zealand over the past week. In order to guard against potential community transmission, starting on November 19, masks will be mandatory on all domestic flights nationwide and on public transport in Auckland. Taxi and Uber drivers are also required to wear masks in Auckland.<sup>183</sup> One hundred additional rooms will be available at government-managed isolation facilities between December 13 and 23 to guard against a spike in demand.<sup>184</sup> It has been reported that some government-managed isolation facilities do not have "a good supply and

distribution of the high-quality N95 masks.” Nurses working at those facilities are threatening to stop working if access to the equipment cannot be guaranteed.<sup>185</sup>

### *Australia*

After a cluster of locally acquired cases were reported in Adelaide over the past weekend, the South Australian government has reintroduced a series of restrictions from November 17: private gatherings are capped at 10 people per residence and 50 people at licensed venues, while pubs, clubs and restaurants can accommodate up to 100 patrons. Gyms are closed, community sports are cancelled, and personal care service providers are required to wear a mask. Masks are also mandatory for long-term care facilities, with visitors capped at two per day. All inbound international flights to Adelaide have been cancelled.<sup>186</sup> Almost all the other states have reintroduced border restrictions targeting South Australia, jeopardizing the national agreement aimed at reopening all domestic borders by Christmas.<sup>187</sup> A number of restrictions will be eased in Queensland on November 17: the gathering limit will be raised to 50 people and capacity limits will be raised at multiple venues.<sup>188</sup> The federal vaccine strategy has been released; it includes a national system to monitor immunization levels and individual vaccination status.<sup>189</sup>

### *Turkey*

The number of daily COVID-19 patients in Turkey reached 3,000 on November 13. The data compiled by the health ministry showed that an additional 3,045 patients have tested positive for the virus.<sup>190</sup> While Turkey has avoided resorting to the strictest measures, the increasing number of infections forced the government to reinstate restrictions. On November 10, the Istanbul and Ankara governorates announced a curfew for citizens aged 65 and above -- only allowing them to go outside from 10 am to 4 pm. A ban on smoking in crowded outdoor spaces came into force on November 12, as a senior health official warned that cigarette smoke helps spread COVID-19.<sup>191</sup>

### *Israel*

The number of daily new cases in Israel has remained stable over the past week. After rounds of meetings of the so-called coronavirus cabinet, no further reopening or tightening of restrictions has been announced.<sup>192</sup> The education ministry released its return-to-school proposal on November 11, subject to cabinet approval. The proposal suggests full-sized in-person classes for the first two grades, capsules of up to 20 students for grades 3 and 4, and alternate-mode learning (with limited days of in-person classes) for grades 5, 6, 11 and 12.<sup>193</sup> A rapid COVID-19 testing center at Israel’s major international airport opened on November 9, allowing travelers to get onsite tests and diagnosis.<sup>194</sup> Israel signed a deal with Pfizer on November 13 that could enable the vaccination of 4 million Israelis.<sup>195</sup> After months of struggle with political leaders to push for his COVID-19 response strategy, the appointed “coronavirus czar” was replaced by a military officer on November 12. Without much power to achieve substantial progress, the outgoing official blamed the leaders for politicking.<sup>196</sup>

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## **Partnerships and Contributors**

The Media Ecosystem Observatory – a joint effort of Peter Loewen (Toronto), Taylor Owen (McGill), and Derek Ruths (McGill) – is responsible for the social media and behavioural data on our dashboard. The leads on these projects are Eric Merkley (Toronto) and Aengus Bridgman (McGill).

Reopening data and summaries are produced by a team at PEARL (The Policy, Elections, and Representation Lab) at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy: Mitchell Anderson, Haobo Chen, Jad El Tal, Kulsoom Khalid, Blake Lee-Whiting, Anthony Moniuszko, Erika Porco, and Sapphira Thompson-Bled.

Web development and JavaScript data visualizations by PEARL Research Associate Nicholas Thompson.

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The overall Project Lead is John McAndrews.

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### *Links*

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