



**Paladin
Risk Solutions**

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Situational awareness for stakeholders and decision makers.



Report # 20-003

04 December 2020

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1. CURRENT SITUATION

COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate. With a vaccine already approved in the UK, it will not be long before it is approved in Canada and the USA. Although most countries have not indicated that a vaccine will be mandatory, some jurisdictions may take the approach the UK has hinted at wherein the vaccine will not be mandatory. Yet, it is possible that in order to be able to attend specific places, such as theaters or bars, proof of vaccination could be required. For example, Ticketmaster has advised that it will require vaccination proof to attend music concerts. Businesses could also require vaccination status, and some airlines are already suggesting that proof of COVID-19 vaccination will be required prior to flying.

Can employers require their staff to be vaccinated? What other options are there to incentivize compliance, and can anything be done if an employee refuses to become vaccinated? In Canada, it is likely that mandatory vaccinations for employees would not be legal, even in high risk workplaces, due to current Canadian laws which are unlikely to change in the short term.

In the USA, employers are currently waiting for guidance from the government before deciding their own policies, including federal departments such as Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the CDC. Various employer responsibilities are set in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and these may interfere with employers' abilities to demand a vaccination. Furthermore, the vaccine is going to be first approved under an emergency use authorization and not a full FDA license, and as such, it is unclear whether this may also hinder employers' abilities to require a vaccination for their employees. It is likely that once it receives full approval it could be mandated similarly to a flu shot, which is mandated to be taken by healthcare workers. It will, however, come with various exceptions which will likely include having to abide by local laws and providing "reasonable accommodations" for those with disabilities or religious oppositions.

The ADA sees vaccinations as a medical examination and can only be mandated if it is related to the subject, has a businesses necessity or required due to a direct threat. It is also unclear how this will be viewed by trade unions. Businesses are preparing for the possibility of vaccinating their employees; Ford has advised they are making the vaccine available voluntarily to its employees and has even ordered freezers which will be able to store the vaccine. Tyson Foods, who has had many outbreaks in their processing plants, will also be providing the vaccination to its employees. None of the companies have any policies in place and are awaiting regulations.

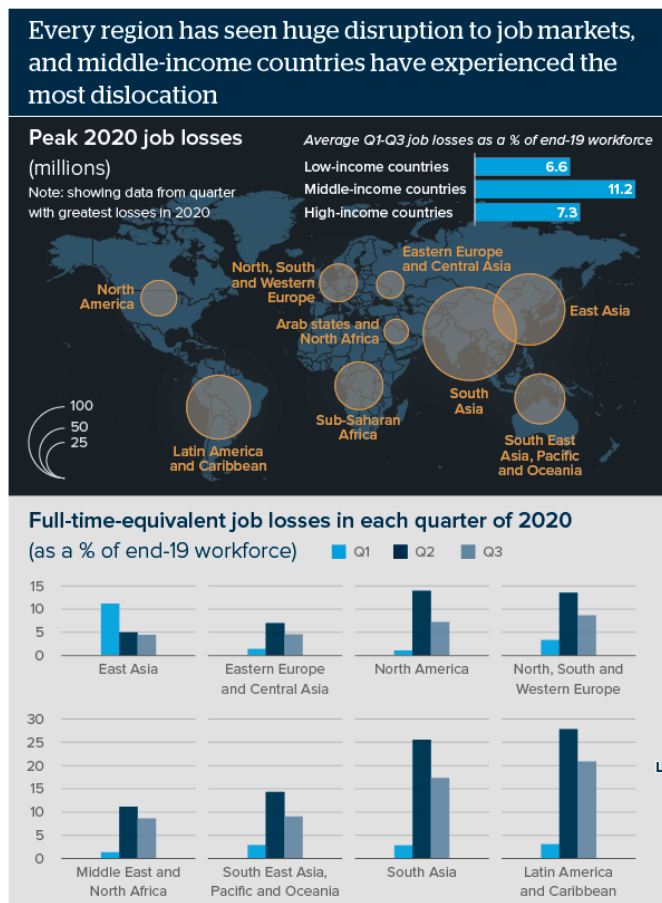
Employers should take into consideration whether employees are willing to take the vaccine and the enforcement of policies. What would happen if a substantial number of employees refuse to take a mandatory vaccine – would your business be able to handle a partial loss of your workforce? Would employers be able to only request a specific group of employees take the vaccine, as they may be working closely with other employees without socially distancing, or for those who work with the public?

It is likely best to provide incentives to employees for voluntarily taking the COVID-19 vaccine. Company wellness programs may provide employees with healthy habit incentives such as discounts on health insurance premiums. Furthermore, inducements may be more effective than mandates, as research has shown that requiring employees to sign forms and explaining the reasons why they do not want to comply may increase the likelihood of conformity.

Employers could form vaccination committees that investigate legalities, requirements, and other aspects of a vaccination program. As no policies have been set by the government, and the fact that it is not likely that the

vaccine will be available for those who are not in a high risk category, with the exception of healthcare personnel who are already mandated to take the flu vaccine, it is likely there will be some time before companies may need to implement these policies. There may be some difficulties with the vaccination having an emergency use authorization, and some healthcare professionals who take the flu vaccine might be worried about the speed at which the COVID-19 vaccine was produced. However, it is also believed that many healthcare workers will take the vaccine out of fear of catching COVID-19, as many have witnessed their colleagues struggling with the disease.

Economic Outlook. Vaccine equity was promised in the G20 summit for low- and middle-income nations, but no commitments were made for broader economic assistance to those countries. Every country has had a different experience with job losses, pandemic stimulus policies, and pandemic assistance. Generally, it appears there is less coordination on stimulus packages during COVID-19 in comparison to policies made in the 2008-2009 economic crisis. While high income countries have implemented wide ranging policies with much money spent on these measures, the lowest income countries may be able to access the Debt Suspension Service Initiative (DSSI), regular loans, and borrowing from various development banks. Meanwhile, middle income countries may borrow bilaterally, but cannot access the DDSI and are usually not in the same position as high-income countries to spend as much. It is believed that more G20 cooperation is needed, together with extensive access to vaccinations.



Unlike in 2008-09, stimulus policies in 2020 have been largely country-specific

Stimulus measures in 2020

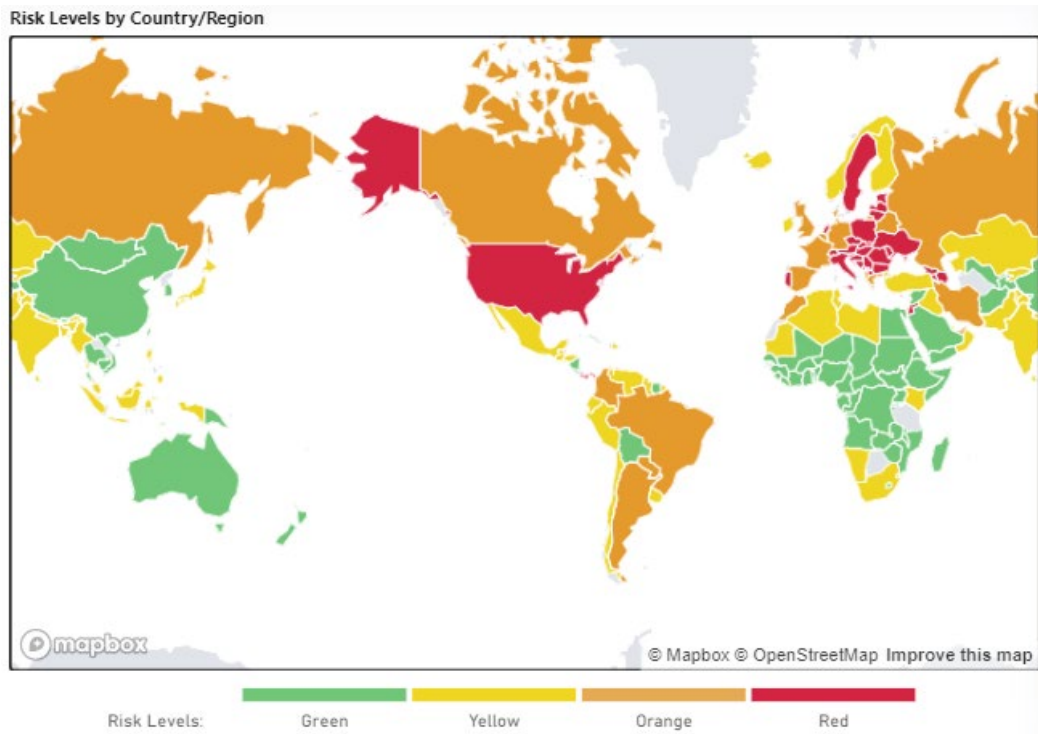
(as a % of GDP, G20 countries, regions and income groups)

Bubbles sized by total stimulus as a % of GDP (total includes 'above the line' health and non-health measures, and 'below the line' measures)

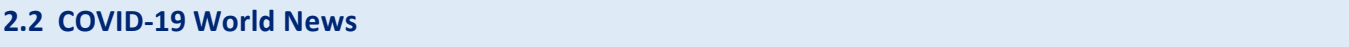


2. GLOBAL

2.1 COVID UPDATE



#	Country, Other	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Active Cases	Serious, Critical	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Population
	World	65,807,097	+283,636	1,516,681	+5,535	18,685,232	106,288	8,442	194.6	
1	USA	14,570,674	+35,478	283,337	+508	5,716,701	26,201	43,910	854	331,828,037
2	India	9,606,810	+35,030	139,700	+473	410,442	8,944	6,933	101	1,385,752,793
3	Brazil	6,496,050	+8,534	175,432	+125	595,608	8,318	30,469	823	213,201,210
4	Russia	2,402,949	+27,403	42,176	+569	472,021	2,300	16,463	289	145,961,200
5	France	2,257,331		54,140		2,036,251	3,425	34,550	829	65,335,131
6	Spain	1,693,591		46,038		N/A	2,440	36,217	985	46,762,516
7	UK	1,674,134		60,113		N/A	1,315	24,606	884	68,037,738
8	Italy	1,664,829		58,038		759,982	3,597	27,553	961	60,423,775
9	Argentina	1,447,732		39,305		133,752	3,916	31,908	866	45,371,596
10	Colombia	1,343,322		37,305		72,902	2,376	26,282	730	51,112,494
11	Mexico	1,144,643	+11,030	108,173	+608	193,239	3,377	8,839	835	129,506,321
12	Germany	1,139,772	+11,030	18,426	+166	300,746	3,957	13,585	220	83,898,137
13	Poland	1,041,846	+13,239	19,359	+531	356,074	1,961	27,541	512	37,828,876
14	Iran	1,016,835	+13,341	49,695	+347	259,034	5,824	12,041	588	84,447,157
15	Peru	968,846		36,104		31,198	957	29,212	1,089	33,165,694



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2.3 Global Awareness

- [Crime gangs threaten COVID-19 vaccine campaigns, Interpol warns](#)
INTERPOL has advised that criminal gangs are likely going to take advantage of falsifying, theft and illegal advertising, and administration of the COVID-19 and the flu vaccines. INTERPOL is suggesting people be extra vigilant when searching for medical supplies or medicine online, especially in relation to COVID-19. Fake website selling “cures” and other treatments have surged since the pandemic started. Scammers will also use the billing information provided by buyers, or the website may possibly contain phishing or spam malware.
- [Iran opposition suspected alongside Israel in scientist's killing](#)
After the killing of one of the top Iranian nuclear scientists, Iran officials are now suspecting Israel and Iran’s opposition. Israel has denied any responsibility. The weapon used to kill the scientist reportedly bore the logo of the Israeli military industry; however, it is not believed that Israel, who did not take responsibility, would leave their logo and not take responsibility for the event. This will likely aggravate already strained relations between the two countries. Moreover, with the change in powers in the USA, it is unclear how President Elect Biden will deal with the conflict between the two countries considering President Trump was notably opposed to Iranian nuclear ambitions, specifically ongoing clandestine efforts toward nuclear weapons programs.
- [Exploring the onshore networks behind illegal, unreported, & unregulated fishing](#)
The value generated from illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is estimated to be between \$10 billion and \$36.4 billion annually, making it the third most lucrative natural resource crime, following timber and mining. It continues to pose one of the greatest threats to the world’s marine ecosystems while destabilizing the food and job security of billions around the world. Actors engaging in IUU fishing also depend on other criminal conduct to continue operating at sea and launder illicit catch into the supply chain. These activities can include document fraud, the trafficking of persons, money laundering, and more. Despite the scale of IUU fishing and its links to other crime types, IUU operators continue to exploit weak enforcement and a lack of transparency in the global fishing industry as they operate under a veil of secrecy. Current enforcement and regulatory approaches to IUU fishing prioritize the at-sea activity of fishing vessels. Yet this approach has failed to address IUU activity and its associated offenses and crimes as part of a larger onshore system that poses risks to sovereignty, national security, and economic development. Therefore, effective maritime domain awareness requires both at sea and onshore scrutiny to establish a link between IUU fishing vessels and the financial activity of onshore corporations that facilitate IUU fishing. By framing IUU fishing as a problem linked to onshore crimes and facilitators, governments and law enforcement can rely on additional authorities to pursue the networks that sustain vessel activity at sea.
- [Tracing sanctions evasion through Dubai’s luxury real estate market](#)
Illicit actors, whether narcotics traffickers, nuclear proliferators, conflict financiers, kleptocrats, large-scale money launderers, or terrorists, all share a common need: they must move the proceeds of their criminal endeavors from the illicit marketplace into the licit financial system in order to use them effectively. Luxury real estate has become a significant pathway for this conversion, facilitated by imperfect information regarding ownership and the details behind these substantial financial transactions. This vulnerability affects major real estate markets around the world, including, but not limited to, London, Toronto, Hong Kong, New York, Singapore, Doha, Sydney, and Paris. Dubai, the largest city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has become a favorable destination for these funds due in part to its high-end luxury real estate market and lax

regulatory environment prizing secrecy and anonymity. While the UAE has taken steps to address this issue, its response thus far has failed to fully confront the underlying drivers enabling the manipulation of its real estate market. The permissive nature of this environment has global security implications far beyond the UAE. In an interconnected global economy with low barriers impeding the movement of funds, a single point of weakness in the regulatory system can empower a range of illicit actors. Our research shows that lax regulatory and enforcement environments –in Dubai, but also in other financial centers – have attracted criminal capital from around the world and offered a pathway into the international financial system for illicit actors and funds. In this report, we examine seven individuals and organizations, their associated corporate networks, and their real estate holdings. We identify 44 properties worth approximately \$28.2 million directly associated with sanctioned individuals, as well as 37 properties worth approximately \$78.8 million within their expanded networks. Each of these people has been sanctioned by the United States (US), and many have also been designated by the European Union (EU) and EU member states. These networks are, therefore, deserving of particularly intense regulatory scrutiny. However, our research reveals that they have invested millions of dollars in luxury UAE real estate while continuing to engage in illicit activity within the last few years.

- [NATO must focus more on challenge of rising China, report to say](#)
NATO is advising that they must have a technological advantage over china’s capabilities, as it is becoming more than a “benign trade partner” and instead a rising power presenting its own challenges.
- [China’s Monster Fishing Fleet](#)
- [Trump to add China's SMIC and CNOOC to defense blacklist – sources](#)
- [Employers start preparing for the coronavirus vaccine with a question: Can we require it?](#)

2.4 Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism

- [Tens of thousands of farmers swarm India's capital to protest deregulation rules](#)
In India, tens of thousands of farmers have arrived in New Delhi to protest the country’s new agriculture rules. The rules allow farmers to have more autonomy in setting prices and selling directly to businesses; however, farmers believe that the new rules make it easier for corporations to take advantage agricultural workers, which account for half of India’s entire workforce. Police have attempted to stop the protestors from arriving in the city, using tear gas and water cannons. The protestors retaliated by throwing stones at police cars and damaging public property. As New Delhi is currently a hot spot for COVID-19, it is believed that this protest may bring the virus from the city to smaller towns as the demonstrators return to their home towns. Additionally, as 58% of the workforce is in agriculture, such protests may have a bigger reach than believed, and could affect the country’s poverty levels should farmers struggle to receive a proper return on their crops. Canada’s Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, has expressed concern over the protest but did not express concerns about any other protests occurring in other areas such as Thailand and Poland, casting a light on his intentions and targets. India called Trudeau’s comments “unwarranted”, suggesting the event may cause diplomatic strains. Furthermore, the protests have appeared to go global, with many joining protests in solidarity with the farms.
- [Uganda campaign clashes presage post-election unrest \(Oxford Analytica\)](#)
A heated electoral contest has already produced multiple episodes of serious violence.

Opposition presidential candidate Robert Kyagulanyi (better known as ‘Bobi Wine’) returned to the campaign trail yesterday wearing a bulletproof vest and helmet, a day after security forces fired on his campaign vehicle, injuring several people. Wine’s arrest on November 18 sparked two days of protests and a heavy-handed security response that killed at least 54 people. Tensions remain high, and recurrent standoffs between police and opposition supporters are raising fears of more violence.

Eleven candidates are running for president, but the main contest is between long-standing incumbent President Yoweri Museveni and Wine, a popular musician whose meteoric rise has severely rattled the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM). Although Museveni and the NRM enjoy numerous structural advantages that make it unlikely they will lose, the opposition’s growing stature will make the race unusually competitive and could produce sustained post-election unrest.

Subsidiary Impacts include:

- Crackdowns on media will increase as the government seeks to limit negative coverage.
- Relations with donors may face strains amid growing condemnation of the government’s tactics.
- Heavy campaign spending and election-related unrest may combine to tip Uganda into recession.

Museveni's administration enjoys all the advantages of an incumbent semi-authoritarian regime: easy access to state resources, loyal security forces and a pliant electoral commission. More recently, it has been aided by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has justified stringent restrictions on public assembly

Together, these dynamics tilt the playing field strongly in the NRM's favour and make an electoral defeat unlikely. Nevertheless, the opposition has become stronger since Wine's entry into politics, which could dramatically improve its electoral performance and pose a potent threat to the NRM's hold on power even after the elections.

- [After historic meeting, Cuba slams protesters, dashes hopes for dialogue](#)

Artists protested in Cuba over the weekend, with artists demonstrating against the imprisonment of a rapper for contempt after insulting a police officer. The Vice Minister of Culture has met with the activists, considered a historic meeting as the Communist government does not usually meet with dissenters, and has advised it would work with the artists and have acknowledged their right to express themselves. Cuba’s President then advised the protests are a “farce” and expressed belief that the USA is responsible for orchestrating the protests.

- [Signs of dissent within Thai military as protests grow](#)

As Thai protests continue to grow, it has been reported that some Thai military personnel have shown sympathy to the protestors and are concerned about how the protestors are being treated. It is unclear how many are dissatisfied and whether personnel will be insubordinate should they be called upon to police the protests.

- [Mass resignations reconfigure Hong Kong opposition \(Oxford Analytica\)](#)

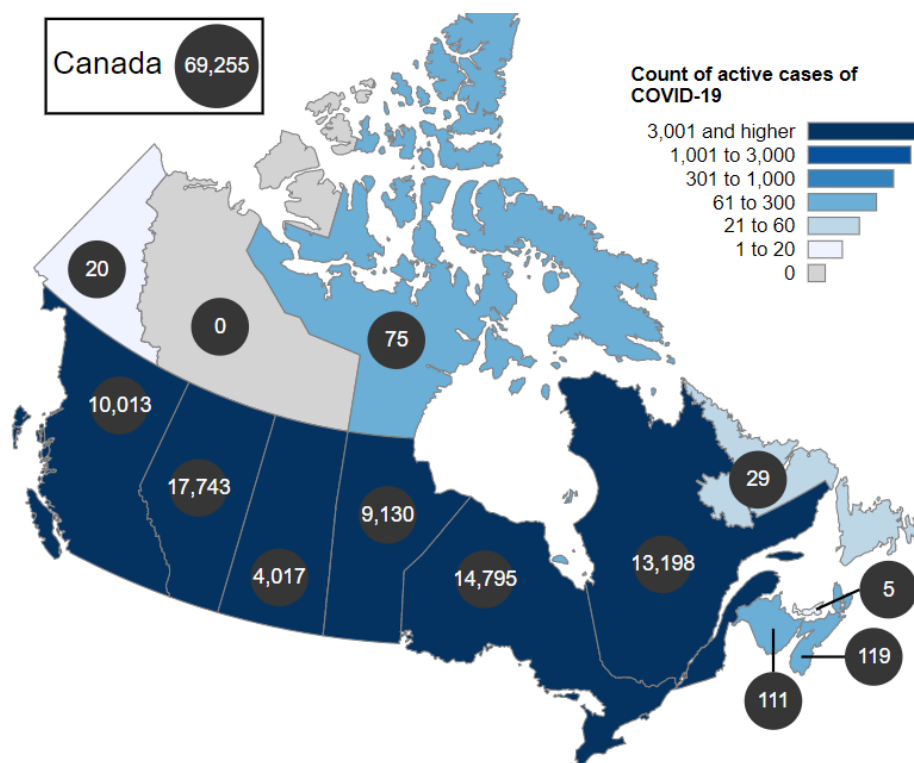
Four opposition lawmakers have been ejected from the legislature, and nearly all the others have resigned in protest. On November 11, 15 members of Hong Kong's pan-democrat opposition in the Legislative Council (LegCo) resigned en masse to protest the unseating of four lawmakers, leaving just two lawmakers in the Council unaffiliated with the establishment camp. The resignations will end the gridlock and obstructionism of the past few years, when opposition lawmakers blocked legislation supported by the government and establishment politicians.

In theory, the government is now empowered to move forward on large and controversial initiatives, such as the Lantau Tomorrow Vision and further 'national security' measures. However, reduced fiscal space due to the coronavirus pandemic and uncertainty around the future of Chief Executive Carrie Lam's administration stemming from the reluctance of other politicians to back the deeply unpopular chief executive wholeheartedly, may mean less change in practice, at least until the next LegCo and chief executive elections. Contested politics will for now shift to the democratically elected (but legally powerless) District Councils and the independent judiciary. A refreshed, more moderate opposition bloc may emerge at the LegCo election next year. Hong Kong is unlikely to pass further economic assistance packages, despite new social distancing requirements amid a new wave of COVID-19. Absent a crisis or dramatic rise in repression, Western governments are unlikely to go much further in changing how they treat Hong Kong.

The ejection of the four lawmakers ends a legal quandary that emerged from the government's twelve-month postponement of an election due in September this year. The four had already been barred from running for re-election due to a determination that they had invited "foreign interference" in Hong Kong's affairs, but there was an understanding that they would be allowed to serve until the delayed election next year. In response to efforts by these four legislators to obstruct legislation, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Beijing issued a decision that these actions constituted a violation of their oath of office, and empowered the Hong Kong government to remove them.

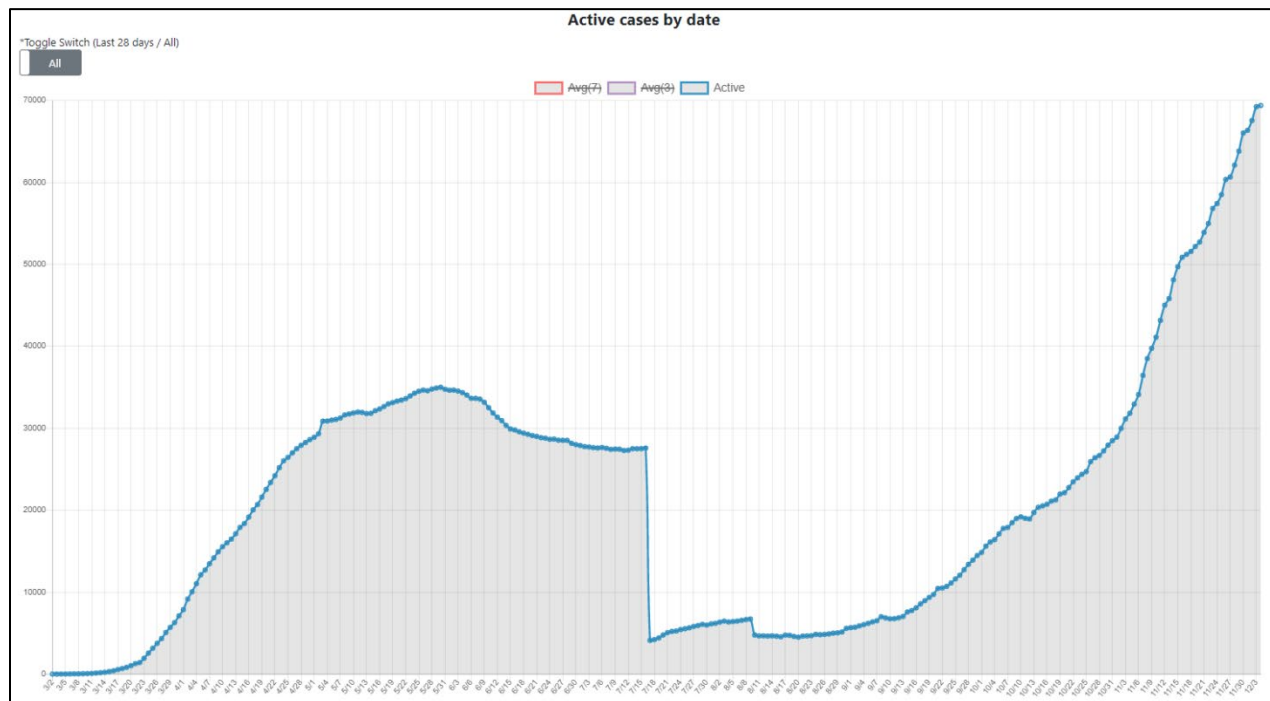
3. CANADA

3.1 COVID UPDATE



Prov. ⬆	Total Confirmed ⬆	Total Deaths ⬆	Total Recovered ⬆	Total Active ⬆
Total	399,395 (↑3,125)	12,460 (↑53)	317,541 (↑2,923)	69,394 (↑149)
BC	35,422	481	24,928	10,013
ON	123,526 (↑1,780)	3,737 (↑25)	104,792 (↑1,553)	14,997 (↑202)
QC	147,877 (↑1,345)	7,183 (↑28)	127,549 (↑1,370)	13,145 (-53)
AB	63,023	575	44,705	17,743
MB	17,751	353	8,268	9,130
NB	520	7	402	111
SK	9,244	54	5,173	4,017
PEI	72	0	68	4
NL	340	4	307	29
NS	1,343	65	1,159	119
YT	51	1	39	11
NT	15	0	15	0
NU	198	0	123	75

Prov. ⬆	Total Test ⬆	Total Waiting ⬆	Total Hosp ⬆	Total ICU ⬆
Total	15,102,672 (+91,112)	-	-	-
BC	1,186,096	-	325	80
ON	6,462,656 (+56,001)	62,403 (+4,083)	674 (+8)	207 (+12)
QC	4,014,319 (+35,111)	-	761 (+24)	97 (-2)
AB	2,309,153	-	511	97
MB	362,973	-	351	51
NB	129,970	-	0	0
SK	353,638	-	128	24
PEI	58,409	-	-	-
NL	63,527	-	0	0
NS	143,672	-	0	0
YT	5,488	111	-	-
NT	7,807	20	0	0
NU	4,964	724	0	0



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

3.2 COVID-19 Canada News

- [Canada PM Trudeau indicates U.S. border restrictions to last a long time](#)
 Prime Minister Trudeau advised that it is unlikely the Canada-USA border will be reopened soon, with restriction lasting sometime into 2021. Various industries including tourism are dependent on cross border travel. Trade between the two countries continues.
- [TransLink shuts down credit card payments on Compass Card machines after 'suspicious activity' reported](#)
 TransLink has advised that parts of its Information Technology system has been affected by 'suspicious activity', and that some of its functions including paying by credit card are not functioning. It was Ransomware communicated through a printed message was indicated to be the culprit. The system was down while TransLink worked with police on this matter. TransLink uses a third-party payment service and does not store payment data on the system. Businesses, which perceive their services to not require much beyond payment systems which are often provided by a third party, may believe they are less likely to be targeted by hackers. As such, they may not have as robust of security measures which is likely why they are targeted.
- [COVID-19: Staff at Calgary hospitals told to 'engage in oxygen conservation' as cases rise](#)
 Three Calgary hospitals are requesting staff pay close attention to the use of oxygen in acute care settings "due to limitations of the bulk oxygen systems" and "the expected increase in demand due to the COVID-19 pandemic." This oxygen conservation directive does not include patients in ICU, pediatric or neonatal care, and does not necessarily order healthcare professionals to withhold oxygen should it be required by the patient. It is believed that similar directive may be issued pertaining to medications and sedatives, as seen in NY and Spain.
- [Ontario reports more than 1,700 new COVID-19 cases amid spike in deaths](#)
- [Quebec reports highest single-day increase with 1,514 new COVID-19 cases](#)

- [Canada's coronavirus cases surge past 380K while daily death toll average stands at 87](#)
- [Coronavirus therapeutics: A look at COVID-19 treatments in Canada](#)
- [B.C.'s COVID-19 surge strongest in areas outside Lower Mainland](#)

3.3 Canada Awareness

- [CSIS accuses Russia, China and Iran of spreading COVID-19 disinformation](#)
A Canadian Security Intelligence Services report suggests that China, Russia and Iran have been linked to spreading lies and conspiracy theories about COVID-19 to discredit the west and reduce confidence in the government. Conspiracy theories, such as COVID-19 being linked to 5G, increase suspicion in the government and have been used by state actors through hybrid warfare that include disinformation campaigns which are often easier than other forms of warfare. Tactics include falsifying photographs and propagating counterfeit stories which are now being used against countries and are often completed by computer bots. These falsehoods may reduce the probability of vaccination programs being effective.
- [Special Report: Burner phones and banking apps: Meet the Chinese 'brokers' laundering Mexican drug money](#)
Early next year, a Chinese businessman named Gan Xianbing will be sentenced in a Chicago courtroom for laundering just over \$530,000 in Mexican cartel drug money. The cell, one of many operating in North America, route cartel drug profits from the United States to China then back to Mexico with a few clicks of a burner phone and Chinese banking apps – and without the bulky cash ever crossing borders. The launderers pay small Chinese-owned businesses in the United States and Mexico to help them move the funds. Most contact with the banking system happens in China, a veritable black hole for U.S. and Mexican authorities. Alleged conspirator, Long Huanxin, was arrested in February at Vancouver International Airport by Canadian law enforcement acting on a warrant from U.S. authorities, according to Canadian court transcripts from Long's detention hearing. This type of activity is well documented in Canada, mainly in Vancouver and Toronto.
- [Government quietly made 'back door' agreement with U.S. that could undermine treaty on plastic waste](#)

3.4 Canada – Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism



welund

Overview. During the week of 25 November - 2 December 2020, the majority of activist activity noted by Welund took place in the government sector (36%), followed by oil and gas (28%). Protests made up the majority of activity (41%), followed by webinars (11%), and call-ins (10%). Anti-lockdown protests continued to see an increase in activity as more municipalities and provinces reinstated public health measures to combat the rising number of positive covid-19 cases and hospitalizations.

Indigenous rights campaigns also saw an increase in activity as groups organized to participate in the 'WeAreOne' week of action (23-29 November). The week featured [multiple](#) rail blockades in [Quebec](#) and [British Columbia](#), as well as [direct actions](#) in Toronto and outside the home of Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister MP Carolyn Bennett. These campaigns are part of the ongoing 'Land Back' movement, that has recently included [anti-KXL protests](#) in South Dakota.

Protests. Despite the reimplementing of covid-19 restrictions, activist groups continue to organize in-person protests and direct actions. Most organizing websites will often include reference to covid-19 policies, which

usually consist of mask wearing and abiding by 2-metre social distancing. Anti-lockdown protests are the exception, and do not make any covid-19 safety recommendations.

A notable direct action from the past week occurred on 1 December. Activists launched the '[Holmes Creek Protection Camp](#)' in New Westminster, BC as part of blockades against the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion (TMX) project. The camp included a 25-metre 'treehouse' above the main camp on the ground.

Outlook. Welund expects overall activist activity to remain relatively low in December in comparison to previous months, as historically analysts have recorded less activity in the weeks leading into Christmas. With lockdown measures still in effect, it is likely that there could be an increase in car caravan-style protests.

Despite the lower activity, anti-lockdown and anti-mask groups have planned the latest series of weekly protests in large municipalities, including in Toronto, Calgary, and Edmonton. This week, protesters have organized car-caravan protests in solidarity with Punjabi Farmers in India. The largest of these protests has been planned on 5 December in Toronto and will target the Indian Consulate General. There has also been an increase in protest activity surrounding the 'Defund the Police' campaign in Hamilton and Toronto. Hamilton campaigners have continued [direct actions](#) at City Hall, while Toronto activists have planned a secondary '[phone-zap](#)' action.

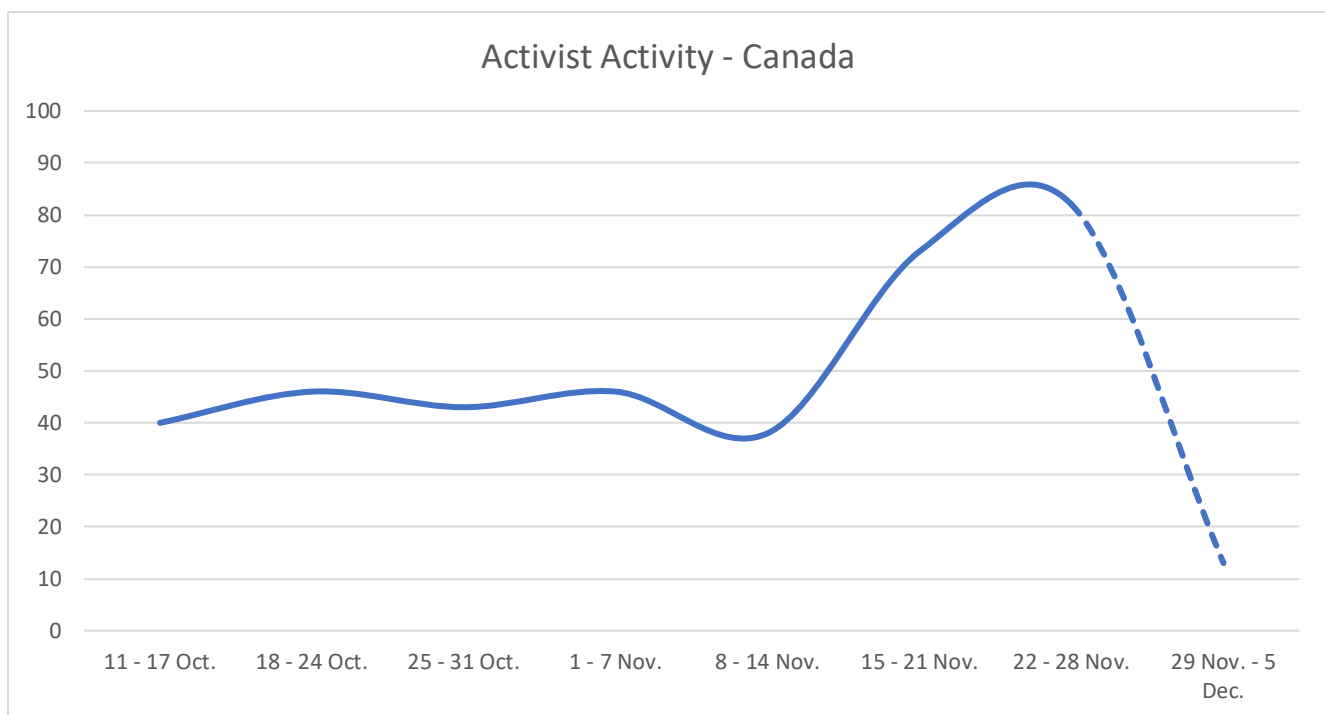


Figure 1 Total activist activity in the US as noted by Welund North America.

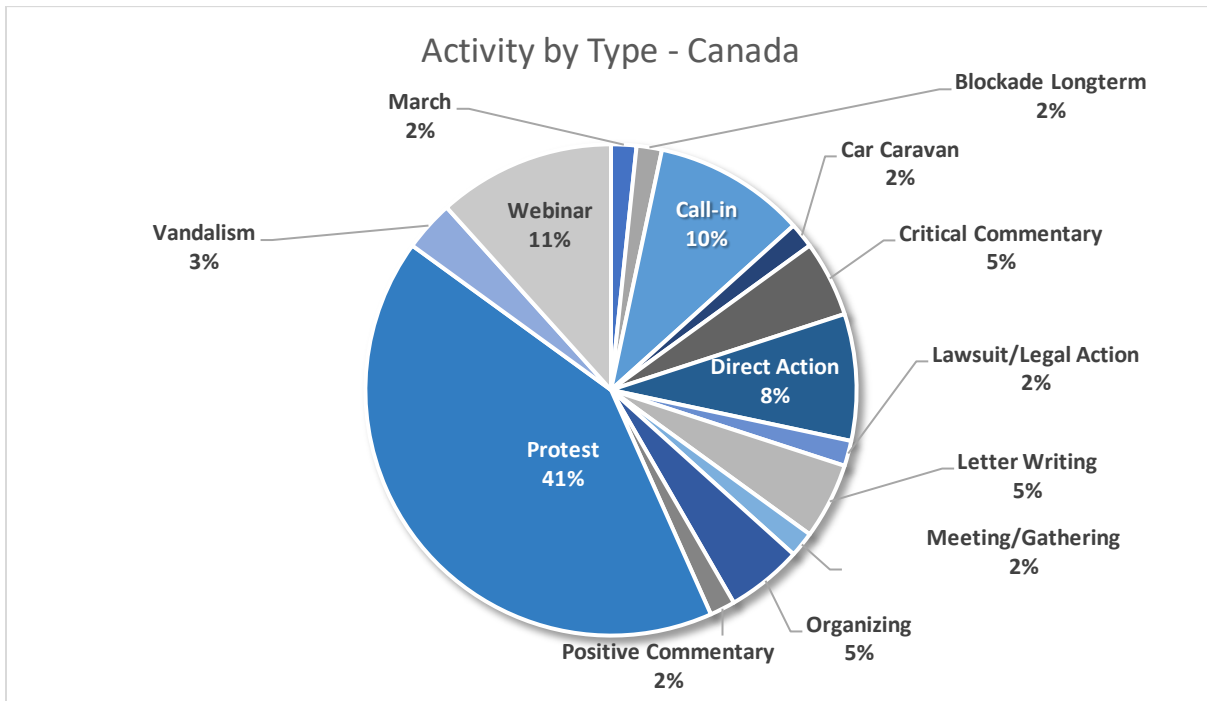


Figure 2 Activist activity in the US by type as noted by Welund

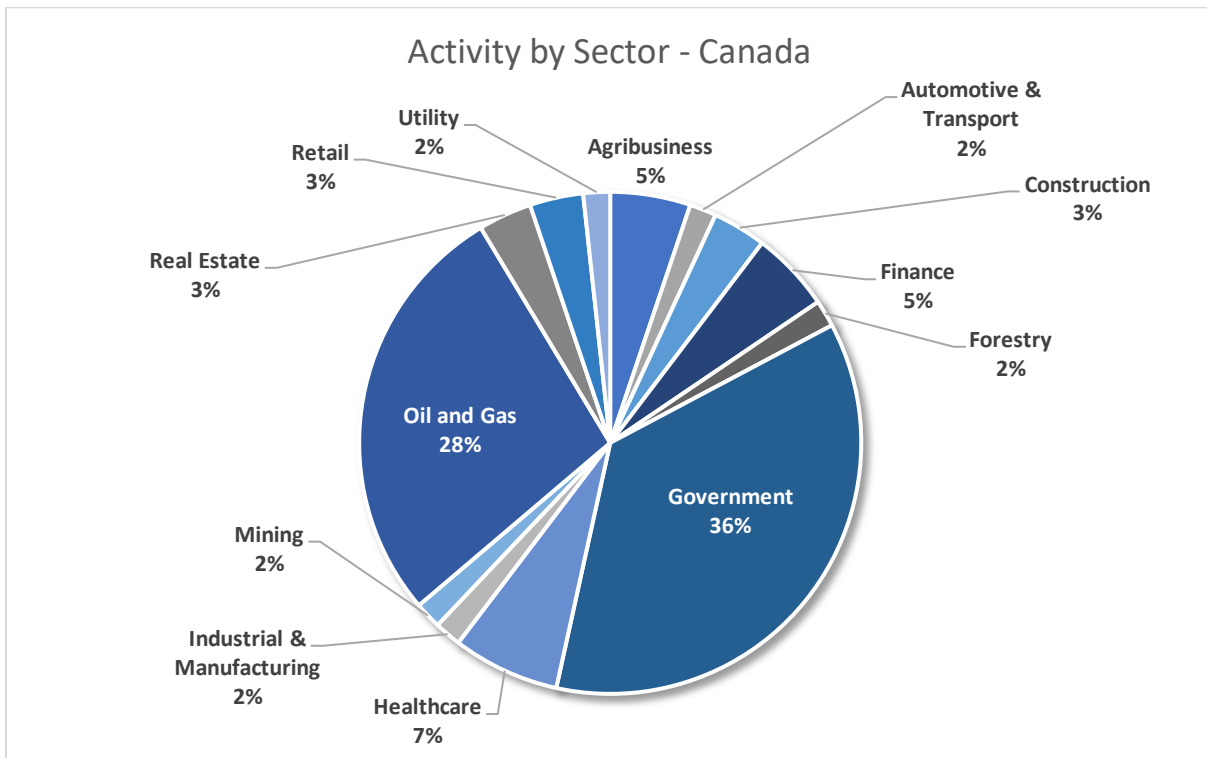
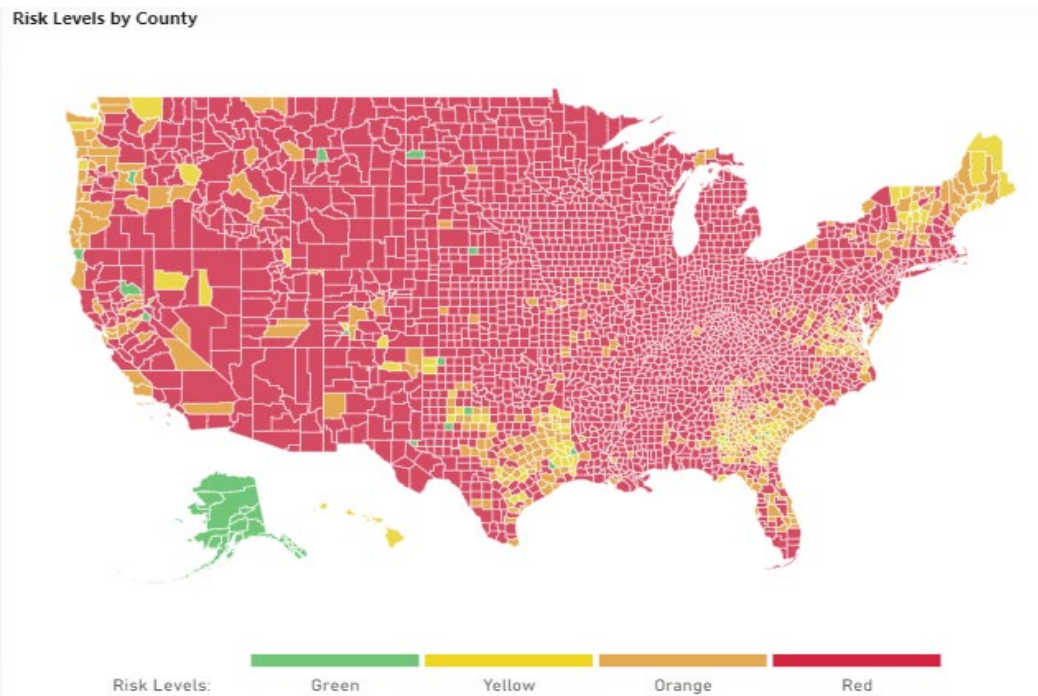


Figure 3 Activist activity in the US by sector as noted by Welund North America.

4. USA

4.1 COVID UPDATE



#	USA State	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	USA Total	13,266,819	269,692	7,852,415	5,144,712	40,081	815	187,262,875	565,744	
1	California	1,174,707	19,034	554,779	600,894	29,730	482	23,096,745	584,547	39,512,223
2	Illinois	697,489	12,596	358,349	326,544	55,043	994	10,212,093	805,890	12,671,821
3	Florida	961,676	18,255	643,824	299,597	44,775	850	11,949,292	556,357	21,477,737
4	Arizona	314,326	6,568	50,352	257,406	43,184	902	2,539,969	348,958	7,278,717
5	Texas	1,231,253	21,785	972,380	237,088	42,463	751	11,533,142	397,751	28,995,881
6	Missouri	303,186	4,033	80,333	218,820	49,400	657	3,183,066	518,632	6,137,428
7	Virginia	230,444	4,044	23,858	202,542	26,998	474	3,738,545	437,999	8,535,519
8	Michigan	352,433	9,170	152,267	190,996	35,290	918	6,821,979	683,096	9,986,857
9	New York	658,637	34,389	439,560	184,688	33,857	1,768	18,743,407	963,495	19,453,561
10	Maryland	192,858	4,569	8,569	179,720	31,900	756	4,335,442	717,114	6,045,680
11	Georgia	461,517	9,336	289,837	162,344	43,468	879	4,586,509	431,979	10,617,423
12	Colorado	216,683	2,957	54,785	158,941	37,627	513	1,689,657	293,408	5,758,736
13	Kentucky	166,139	1,835	27,349	136,955	37,187	411	2,682,493	600,423	4,467,673
14	Ohio	382,743	6,274	242,146	134,323	32,744	537	5,835,768	499,249	11,689,100
15	Pennsylvania	347,738	10,314	203,253	134,171	27,163	806	3,476,956	271,595	12,801,989

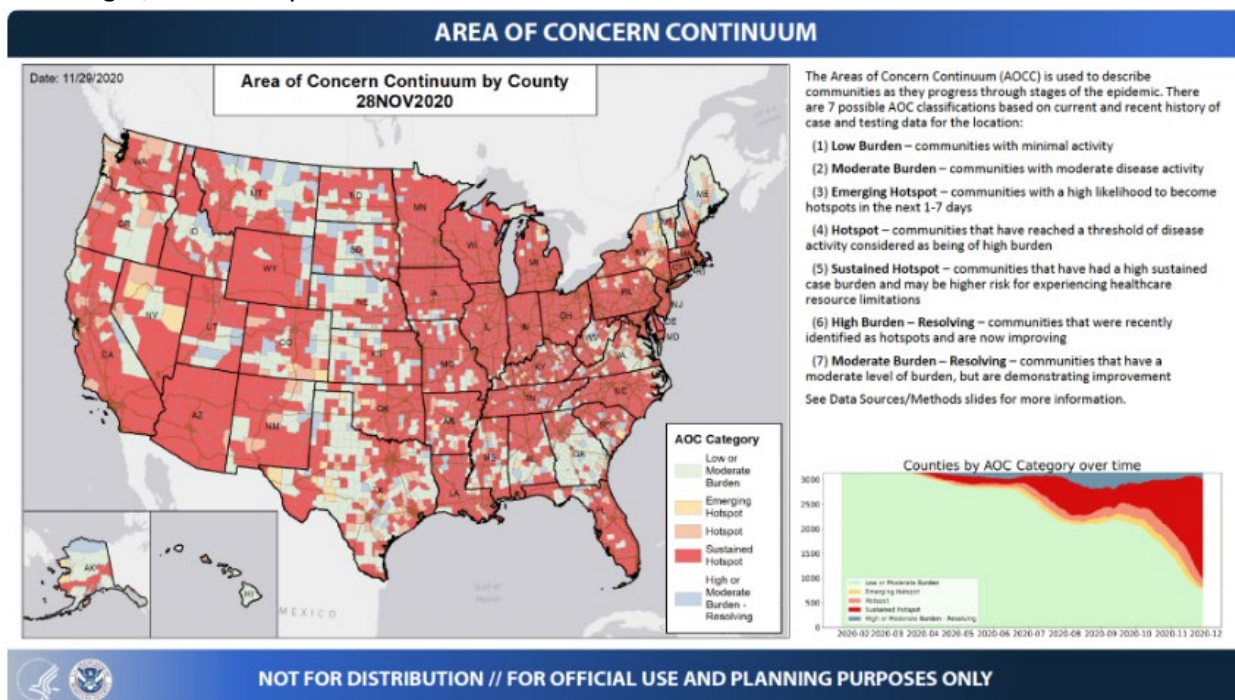
4.2 COVID-19 USA News

- [CDC Shortens Recommended Covid Quarantine Period to Seven to 10 Days](#)

The American CDC has reduced the quarantine time for those exposed to COVID-19 from 14 to 10 days. If a person has tested negative, the quarantine would be reduced to 7 days.

- [Nearly the entire U.S. has become a COVID hot spot, government map shows](#)

According to an internal government map, virtually all of the USA is now a COVID-19 emerging or elevated hotspots as the USA hit a new record of over 200,000 daily new cases last week. Some improvements have been seen with a slight decrease in mortality rates and test positivity rates, but not enough to be significantly adding to the future reduction of cases, especially considering the anticipated upcoming Thanksgiving “surge upon a surge”, as stated by Dr. Fauci.



Source: DHHS

- [As Hospitals Fill With COVID-19 Patients, Medical Reinforcements Are Hard To Find](#)

With the USA approaching 100,000 hospitalizations, a new concern has emerged beyond beds and space for those that are hospitalized. Staff shortages may soon become an issue, with doctors, nurses and specialists burning out or having COVID-19 themselves. In some areas, such as North Dakota, nurses that have tested positive for the virus and who were asymptomatic, were requested to continue to work.

- [COVID-19 was silently infecting Americans before first cases emerged in Wuhan: CDC study](#)

The CDC found that blood samples from December 13, 2019 and January 17, 2020, found 106 had antibodies for COVID-19. 84 of those samples had specific antibodies that neutralize the COVID-19 virus, not just other coronaviruses. The first official USA case was reported on January 19, 2020, and this alongside evidence from other countries, including France, where a patient is believed to have contracted the virus in late December, despite official information suggesting the virus was first seen in late January in France after individuals travelled from Wuhan. Italy has also found that COVID-19 was possibly circulating as early as September.

These findings cast a shadow on the origins of the virus, which has not been seriously investigated as the world is trying to contain the virus first.

- [Ambulance companies at 'a breaking point' after receiving little Covid aid](#)

The American Ambulance Association advised the USA government that the emergency 911 system is “at a breaking point”. While the focus on the medical system has been concentrated on hospitals, emergency medical technicians are unable to handle the surge in calls due to COVID-19. In some rural areas, where calls are generally rare, private ambulance services are reporting increases of 20 to 30% in emergency calls. The association is calling for further relief funds, above the \$350 million already provided from the federal government. Although appearing to be a high number for relief assistance, it is similar to what dentists have received and is only a fraction of the costs and the losses that have been incurred by these companies.

- [Why health officials are terrified of a pandemic Christmas](#)
- [U.S. ready for 'immediate mass shipment' of COVID-19 vaccines: agency](#)
- [Nearly 10 Million People Flew Over Thanksgiving, According to TSA](#)

4.3 USA Awareness

- [US investor blacklist creates new barriers for China \(Oxford Analytica\)](#)

Washington has put China's largest chipmaker on a blacklist for alleged military links. The US Defense Department put Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC), China's largest chipmaker, on a blacklist of firms deemed 'Communist Chinese military companies' and off limits to US investors, along with China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and two other state-owned firms. The blacklist is created under an executive order taking effect on January 11. SMIC delisted from the New York Stock Exchange last year but is also listed in Hong Kong and reportedly has US investors, who now have until November 2021 to divest. SMIC has already been hit by separate US restrictions on the export of technology for semiconductor production and expects a 10-12% fall in revenue quarter-on-quarter in the fourth quarter of this year. The immediate impact of the investment blacklist looks likely to be relatively small, but in the long run it will deter Chinese firms from the US capital market. Export controls are a more serious immediate threat to SMIC. Other Chinese firms are at risk from both, but a comprehensive decoupling is not on the horizon. Rather, the US government will target its policies carefully to maximise the strategic damage to China's technology sector while limiting wider financial and economic disruption.

- [Police in Jackson, Mississippi, want access to live home security video, alarming privacy advocates](#)

Privacy advocates are concerned after the police department of Jackson, Mississippi, to allow residents and businesses to provide police access to their security camera live feeds, including doorbell cameras such as Ring. Other small cities who also do not have the resources to start their own police surveillance programs, but critics suggest that this may lead to police scrutinizing people's activities and possibly arresting more individuals for low level offences. Cameras owners can decide how much access the police may have; whether it can be monitored live, triggered by alarms, or provided after the fact.

- [Justice Department investigating potential presidential pardon bribery scheme, court records reveal](#)
- [Big Companies Urge Biden, Congress to Address Climate Change](#)

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



Overview. During the week of 25 November - 2 December 2020, most of the activist activity noted by Welund took place in the government sector (63%), followed by oil and gas (13%). Protests made up the majority of activity (53%), followed by marches (6%), and call ins (5%). Overall activity has continued to decline since a peak around the election. Thanksgiving has likely contributed to this decline, a trend that is typical of many holidays.

There has been increased activity against the Line 3 replacement project in Minnesota. This activity was in response to the state [issuing permits](#) for the pipeline to proceed with construction. There were several [protests](#) as well as [legal challenges](#) opposing the decision. Anti-Line 3 activists have continued to site concerns over an influx of pipeline workers [exacerbating the spread](#) covid-19. The US and Canada have both seen an increase in 'Land Back' campaigns. On 30 November, anti-KXL activists [protested against the pipeline](#) outside a pump station in Haakon County, South Dakota. Activists shut down work for the day and held a flag calling for 'Land Back'.

Protests. Despite the pandemic, activists continue to organize in-person protests to broadcast their campaigns and demands. Organizers have incorporated physical distancing and mask-wearing adaptations to limit the risk of gathering for protests. Minnesota (15) Washington (15), New York (12) and California (9) saw the most protests. Notable protests from the past week occurred on 26 November. Activists in the US held a [series of anti-colonial direct action protests](#) during the Thanksgiving holiday. The actions targeted statues and financial institutions in cities including Portland, Chicago and Minneapolis.

Outlook. Welund expects overall activist activity to remain relatively lower than in previous months, as analysts have typically recorded less activity between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Although activism against the Trump administration has declined since the election, the continued actions of President Trump regarding the outcome of the election may further increase tensions between the left and right and spark protest activity between now and Inauguration Day on 20 January 2021.

This week, DC Youth Liberation Front (DCYLF) [issued a report](#) reflecting on anti-fascist counter-protests against the Proud Boys and supporters of President Trump in Washington, DC on 13 and [14 November](#) 2020, which saw [arrests](#) and [violence](#). DCYLF promoted the report, noting that the Proud Boys and 'MAGA chuds' were planning on returning to Washington, DC on [12 December](#). The upcoming protest has the potential to also see arrests and violence.

On 3-10 December, the Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement (RAM) has encouraged supporters to participate in a ['Week of Action'](#) to 'avenge' Michael Reinoehl – the man who shot and killed Trump supporter Aaron 'Jay' Danielson in Portland, Oregon on 29 August. Reinoehl has been labelled by anti-fascists as being an 'Anti-Fascist Revolutionary'.

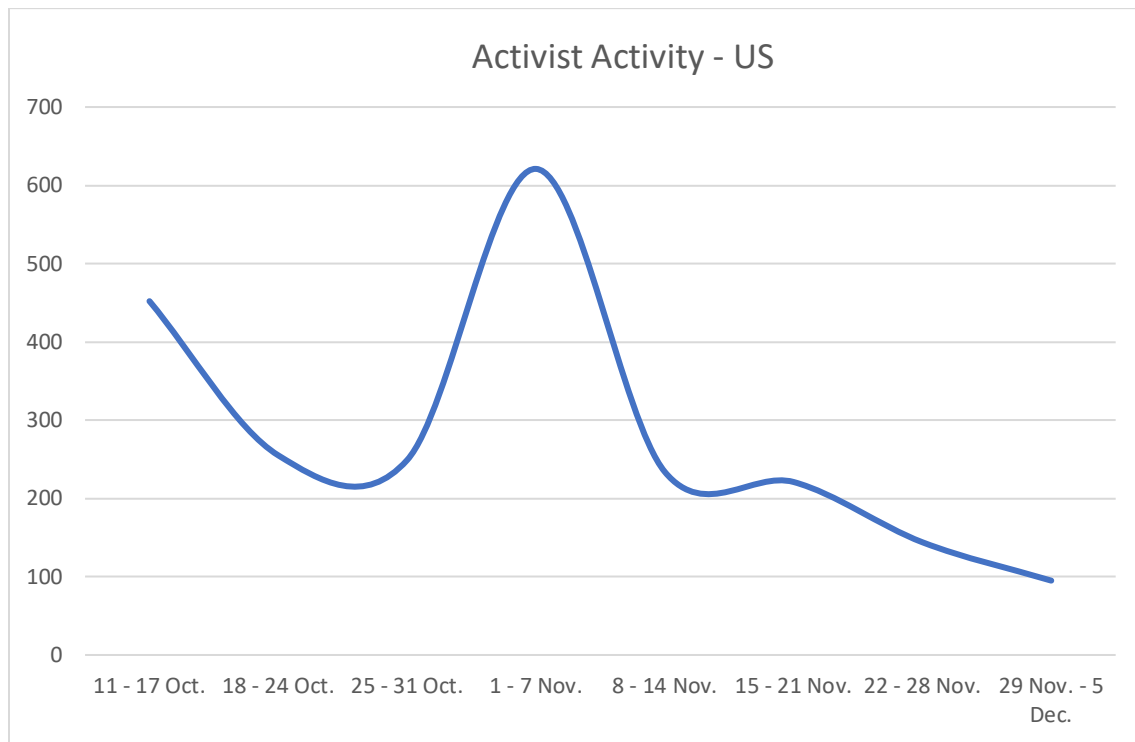


Figure 4 Total activist activity in the US as noted by Welund North America.

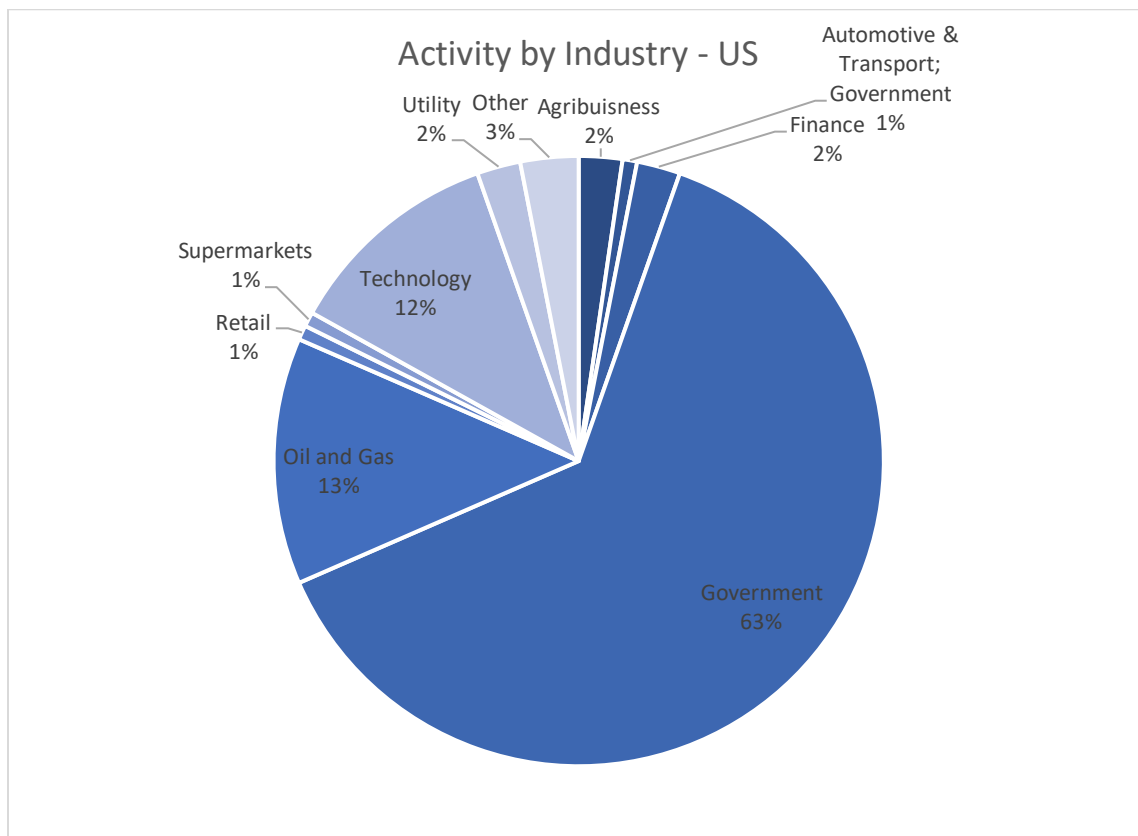


Figure 5 Activist activity in the US by industry as noted by Welund

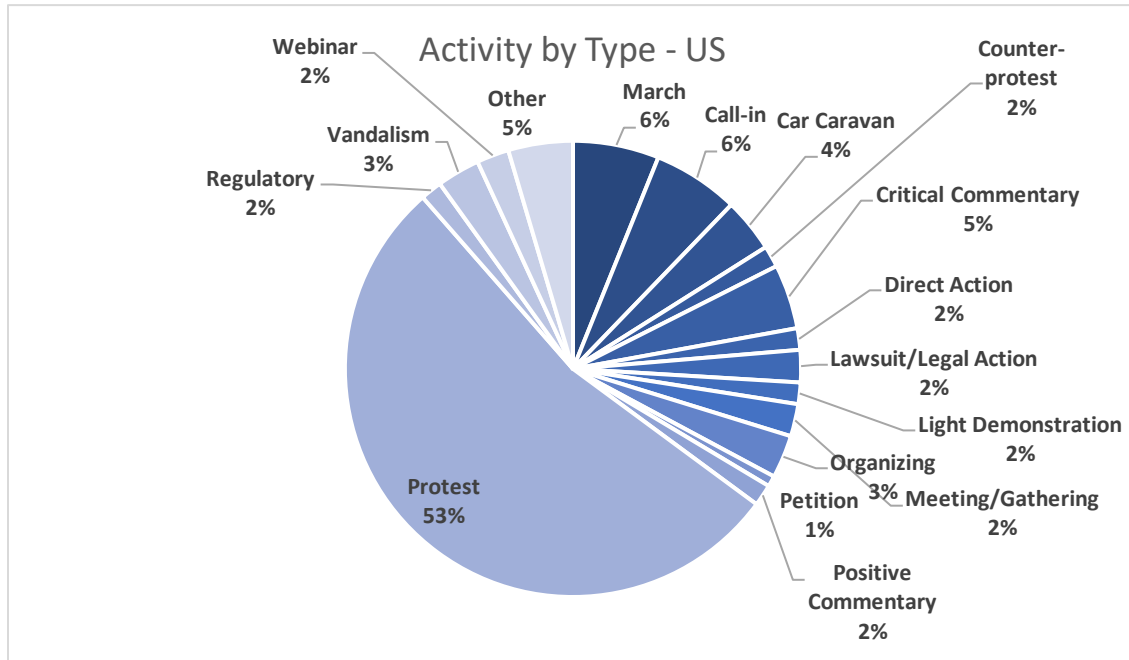


Figure 6 Activist activity in the US by type as noted by Welund North America.

End Report

Please submit feedback to:

Scott McGregor

Head of Intelligence

Paladin Risk Solutions Inc.

604-910-7781

smcgregor@paladinrisksolutions.com

201-3001 Wayburne Drive, Burnaby, BC V5G 4W3

paladinrisksolutions.com



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