



**Paladin  
Risk Solutions**

# INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Situational awareness for stakeholders and decision makers.



Report # 21-014

19 February 2021

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## 1. CURRENT SITUATION

A year into the pandemic and it is becoming clearer that COVID-19 will likely be with us for a long time. Even with vaccines the virus is expected to become an endemic. The global spread has ensured that COVID-19 will not soon be eradicated, similar to all other infectious diseases, of whom only smallpox has been fully eradicated. However, the virus will likely no longer be as dangerous of a threat as it is currently. Numbers from various countries suggest the virus is not a significant threat to the majority of individuals, with an average overall case fatality rate of about 2% in developed countries. In comparison, SARS had a case fatality rate of 10%. Currently, new COVID-19 cases are decreasing in many countries including Canada, USA, and India, and vaccinations have been approved and are being administered, factors which are a glimmer of hope on the future of the pandemic.

The transition to the next phase of the pandemic is anticipated to include some sort of herd, or population, immunity achieved naturally and/or through vaccinations. We are likely already seeing the impact the initial stages vaccination is having on the number of new cases in the USA, where vaccinations began in Mid-December. What will COVID-19 look like in the future when we have vaccinated a large portion of the population? Will it look similar to the flu? Influenza and the other four common human coronaviruses, which cause common colds, are also known as endemics. Yet, we have similarly dealt with it by having acquired immunity and/or becoming vaccinated, which meant that society did not require lockdowns, masks or social distancing despite those viruses being fatal to some. The seasonal flu is believed to cause more than 650,000 global deaths but until COVID-19, most people did not think twice about going to work while sick. This is not a comparison of influenza and Covid-19, rather an observation that the pandemic has raised awareness of how dangerous infectious diseases can be.

Even partial immunity through naturally transmitted infections may provide some protection against severe disease. These viruses have been around human society for hundreds if not thousands of years. Childhood infection is often mild for coronaviruses and provides extended protection, although not comprehensive, from ensuring that as adults most do not end up with a severe infection. Covid-19 may not endure as long as influenza has and may not require a booster shot as frequently.

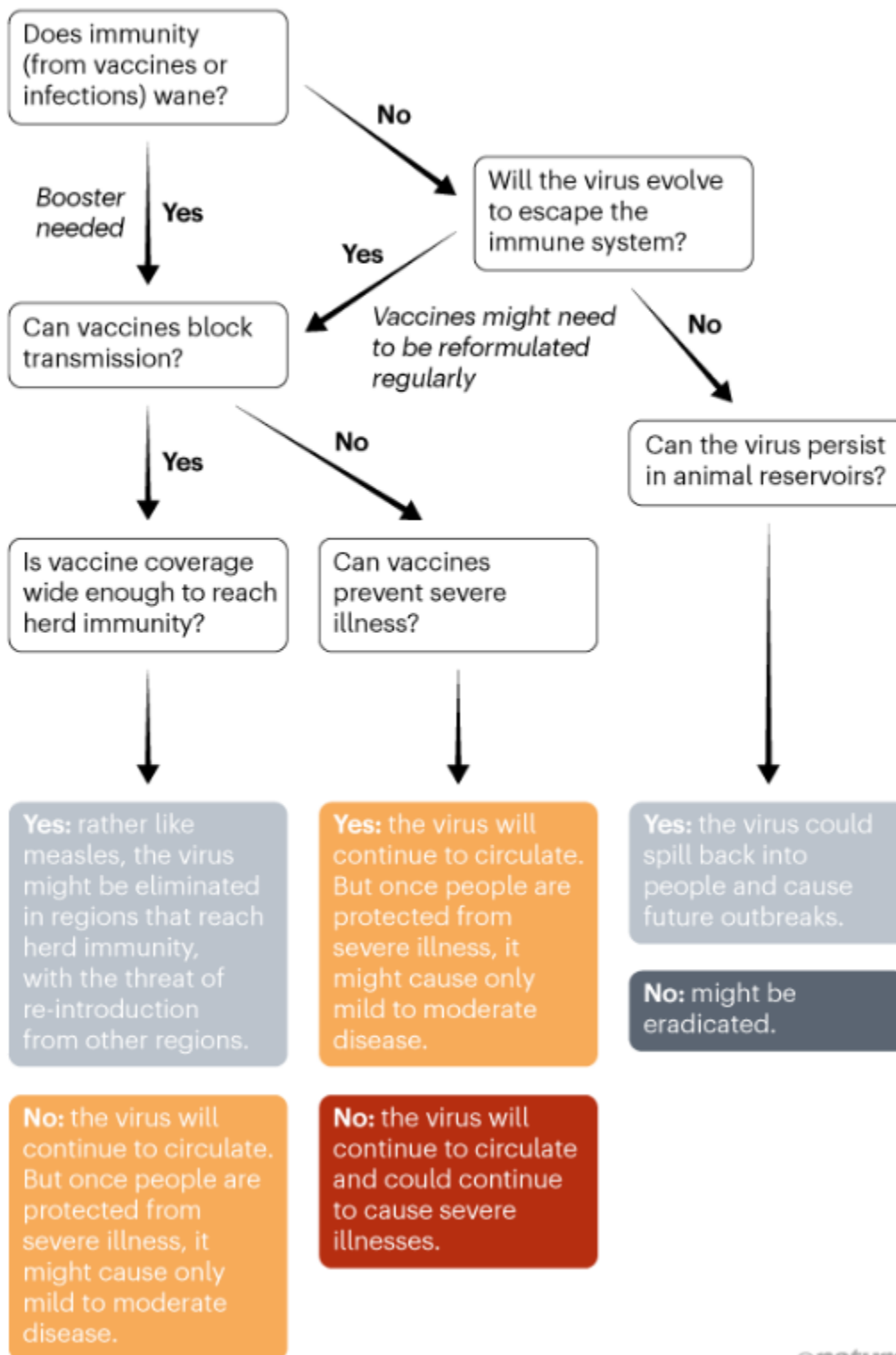
The virus may become like measles, where immunization provides full immunity. Although, there will be groups of people who are not immunized against COVID-19, and those who are not immunized will likely become infected with the virus. Some parts of the globe do not have sufficient measles immunization, and outbreaks do occur that can kill thousands of people. It is believed that the virus may also be established in wild animals, which can then reinfect individuals after it is eradicated in humans. Ebola and Yellow Fever are found in animals, such as insects, which can be transmitted to people even with a perceived eradication of the disease in humans. COVID-19 has been passed from mink to humans, and these types of outbreaks are often hard to mitigate.

Covid-19 will likely continue to kill people in the future, but as we find more and more treatments and reduce the number of people being infected due to vaccinations, it is unlikely that it will do so at the current rate. Experts predict that until at least 2024, we will be dealing with the issues that were brought on by COVID-19, including the mental, social, and economic impacts. As observed with how people reacted after the 1918 Spanish flu, it is likely many will become less social and more risk averse which equates to a propensity for saving their money. With time, these behaviors will likely reverse, but the recovery is dependent on a number of factors, including some outside of our control such as new variations of the virus, or even new viruses.



## CORONAVIRUS: HERE TO STAY?

SARS-CoV-2 has spread so far around the world that it is very unlikely to be eradicated. Here are some of the key factors that are likely to lead to it becoming endemic.

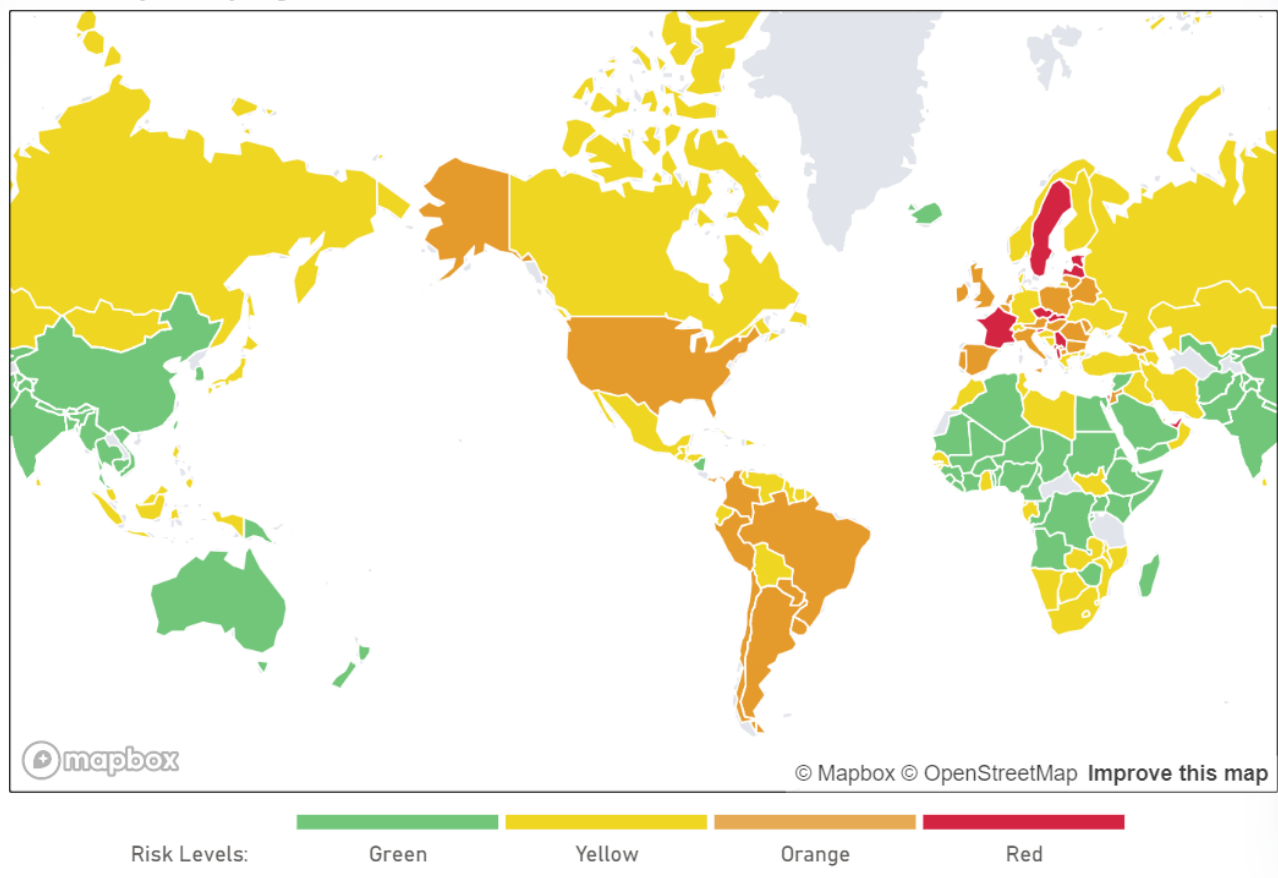


## 2. GLOBAL

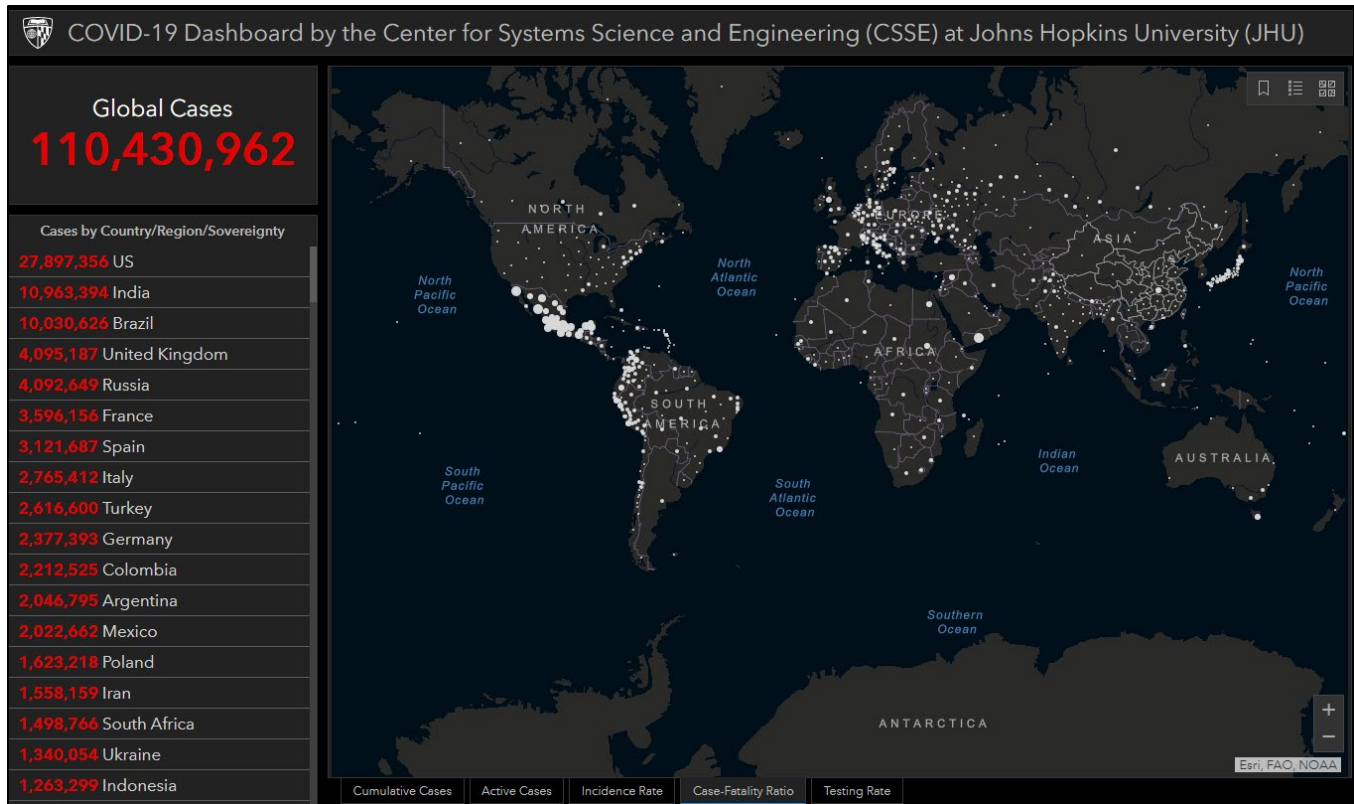
### 2.1 COVID UPDATE

Country/Region	United States	Country/Region	Canada
Daily new cases per 100k people (7d moving avg.)	23.9	Daily new cases per 100k people (7d moving avg.)	7.9
Risk level	Orange	Risk level	Yellow
Total cases	27,376,793	Total cases	831,577
Total deaths	481,624	Total deaths	21,397

Risk Levels by Country/Region



#	Country, Other	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Serious, Critical	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	World	110,958,312	+130,455	2,454,901	+3,389	85,896,210	22,607,201	95,411	14,235	314.9			
1	<a href="#">USA</a>	28,527,033	+3,509	505,329	+20	18,705,269	9,316,435	18,086	85,864	1,521	341,550,894	1,028,038	332,235,623
2	<a href="#">France</a>	3,536,648		83,393		247,127	3,206,128	3,394	54,106	1,276	49,251,253	753,476	65,365,430
3	<a href="#">UK</a>	4,083,242		119,387		2,331,001	1,632,854	2,614	59,948	1,753	84,125,100	1,235,088	68,112,609
4	<a href="#">Brazil</a>	10,030,626		243,610		8,995,246	791,770	8,318	46,978	1,141	28,600,000	133,946	213,518,604
5	<a href="#">Belgium</a>	746,302	+2,420	21,821	+28	51,232	673,249	315	64,216	1,878	9,047,994	778,544	11,621,688
6	<a href="#">Spain</a>	3,121,687		66,704		2,442,795	612,188	3,822	66,751	1,426	37,334,915	798,329	46,766,313
7	<a href="#">Serbia</a>	431,680	+2,632	4,306	+14	31,536	395,838	152	49,534	494	2,824,207	324,066	8,714,906
8	<a href="#">Italy</a>	2,765,412		94,887		2,286,024	384,501	2,045	45,781	1,571	37,204,747	615,920	60,405,145
9	<a href="#">Russia</a>	4,139,031	+13,433	82,396	+470	3,679,949	376,686	2,300	28,355	564	108,300,000	741,911	145,974,320
10	<a href="#">Mexico</a>	2,022,662	+9,099	178,108	+1,047	1,577,838	266,716	4,798	15,584	1,372	5,203,847	40,094	129,791,131
11	<a href="#">Poland</a>	1,623,218	+8,777	41,823	+241	1,365,216	216,179	1,306	42,919	1,106	9,440,073	249,604	37,820,189
12	<a href="#">Ireland</a>	212,647		4,082		23,364	185,201	151	42,763	821	3,377,990	679,304	4,972,724
13	<a href="#">Iran</a>	1,558,159	+8,017	59,341	+77	1,331,162	167,656	3,669	18,402	701	10,274,529	121,343	84,673,327
14	<a href="#">Indonesia</a>	1,263,299	+10,614	34,152	+183	1,069,005	160,142		4,588	124	10,188,747	37,002	275,356,325
15	<a href="#">Argentina</a>	2,046,795		50,857		1,849,451	146,487	3,573	45,025	1,119	7,002,049	154,031	45,458,762



## Global Case to Fatality Ratios

## 2.2 COVID-19 World News

- [How soon will COVID-19 vaccines return life to normal?](#)
- [Latin America vaccines stoke controversy](#) (Oxford Analytica)

**Outlook.** While Chile has thus far proved the region's best performer in securing and rolling out COVID-19 vaccines, most of Latin America continues to struggle with supply, uncertain delivery dates and roll-out; some Brazilian cities have suspended jabs due to shortages. Failure to advance more swiftly will raise serious concerns ahead of the Southern Hemisphere winter. The politics of vaccines also raise concerns over take-up and instability. Ideological considerations are interpreted as underlying some vaccine decisions, while in Peru reports that leading politicians 'jumped the queue' for vaccines have prompted ministerial resignations and may have an impact on April's general elections.

**Impacts.** Despite relative vaccine successes, Chile may see a return to widespread protests as restrictions ease. Cuba is the only country developing its own vaccines, with roll-out likely in the second quarter. Supply issues will limit the extent of vaccination campaigns, with new virus surges likely as economies seek to reopen. A new COVID-19 wave in mid-2021 would see another year of economic havoc and a rise in poverty.



- [What's behind the drop in COVID-19 cases in Canada and other parts of the world?](#)

Canada, India, and the USA have seen a substantial drop in COVID-19 cases since mid-January, with over 7,000 cases reported on January 3 in Canada, compared to just over 2,600 cases on Wednesday. In Canada, vaccination programs have stalled and the number of those vaccinated has not been as high as in the USA, so why the significant drop in cases? Some specialists are suggesting that the drop can be attributed to a number of factors, including Canadians following COVID-19 measures. Ontario saw a strict lockdown in the past several weeks, and people wearing masks can also be a factor. However, these factors are not new, and therefore, cannot be necessarily be the cause of the reduction. American researchers suggest that some level of



population immunity has been reached. This is not the same as herd immunity, but rather region-specific immunity. It is interesting to note that it is possible that COVID-19 has a seasonality which may make it more transmissible during specific seasons.

- [UK approves first-of-its-kind study to infect young people with Covid](#)

The UK has approved a study that will expose healthy and young volunteers to COVID-19 in an effort to understand how the immune system reacts to the virus. Approximately 90 volunteers aged 18 to 30 will be exposed to the virus in a safe and controlled environment. They will be monitored 24/7 in quarantine until they are able to go home after a minimum of 17 days and no longer being infectious. The study is trying to understand what the smallest number of virus is required in order to cause infection. A follow up study is looking into exposing vaccinated individuals to the virus to best understand how the vaccine works and to accelerate its development. Rarely are such studies allowed as it is not ethical to give study subjects a lethal virus, but it is now clear that the virus is not a concern for the vast majority of young people, which is possibly why this study was approved in the first place. It is likely that if this study goes well, similar studies will continue to be conducted in an effort to better understand the virus.

- [Israeli study finds 94% drop in symptomatic COVID-19 cases with Pfizer vaccine](#)

The largest healthcare provider in Israel has stated that amongst 600,000 Israelis that received both doses of the vaccine, a 94% reduction in symptomatic COVID-19 infections was seen. Just a week after receiving the second dose, the group was 92% less likely to develop severe illness when compared to a group of the same size of people who have similar medical histories but did not receive the vaccine.

- [Eroding trust, spreading fear: The historical ties between pandemics and extremism](#)

- ['Wildly unfair': UN says 130 countries have not received a single Covid vaccine dose](#)

## 2.3 Global Awareness

- [The coronavirus is here to stay — here's what that means](#)

- [It's only 'the end of the beginning.' COVID-19 will be with us for years](#)

- [North Korea tried to steal Pfizer coronavirus vaccine information, South says](#)

South Korea's intelligence officials have reported that North Korea had tried to hack into the servers of Pfizer to steal information about the COVID-19 vaccine, as well as its treatment protocol. North Korea continues to report that the virus has not spread in the country and that no problems have been detected with the pandemic. It is unclear whether the attack was successful or when it occurred, but in November, Microsoft also reported that hackers from North Korea and Russia have tried stealing data from pharmaceutical companies, and that the Chinese government also targeted vaccine manufacturers. North Korea has been known for attempting to conduct cyber operations and hacks and has been associated with cyber crime, including the theft of \$281 million in cryptocurrency assets from an exchange, and has tried to steal nuclear program information.

- [COVID-19 conspiracy shows vast reach of Chinese disinformation](#)

Internet rumors spread at the beginning of 2020 caused misinformation to be believed by people, with one in three Americans believing the virus was created in a lab while one in four believed it was intentionally engineered. Powerful countries have tried to control the narrative about the origin of the virus, and Iran, China, Russia, and the USA have been implicated in spreading disinformation. A study looking at millions of posting on various social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, WeChat, YouTube and more have



found that China was the most active at spreading foresing disinformation. China stated that it is trying to promote facts while defending itself against the “lies” spread by other countries who are looking to politicize the pandemic. Russia also chose to promote the theory that the USA engineered COVID-19 as a bioweapon, and China relied on Russia’s disinformation campaign which further spread the lies. Although it appears that China and Russia stopped overtly stating the lies, but China continued. During the WHO’s investigation team trip to China, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson said that the USA should allow WHO investigators to conduct origin tracing in the USA.

- [Diane Francis: By unfriending Australia, Facebook proves it is 'dangerously under-regulated'](#)

The conflict between Australia and Facebook took a surprising turn this week, with Facebook blocking news content from Australia publishers on Facebook. It also blocked anyone in Australia from posting news content. Australia was to put a law into place which would require Facebook to pay news publishers for sending traffic to the social media platforms, which would be reached via commercial deals or arbitration. Facebook instead argues that it provides free marketing for the news companies. Facebook not only blocked news content, but also pages by the Australian government and charities, advising that the Australian government did not clearly define news content. A backlash was faced by Facebook by politicians in many countries, who see this as Facebook putting pressure on Australia while other government are considering similar measures. It is becoming clear that Big Tech companies have too much power over the internet and are beginning to act as if government rules do not apply to them. Furthermore, not only do they not care about government rules, but they are also freely able to make their own, without any repercussions from government or other organizations due to being private companies who are globally run. Government regulations over technology companies should be implemented, which would reduce the ability of the companies to make arbitrary decisions affecting the lives of millions.

- [1 in 3 adults are depressed or anxious due to COVID-19](#)

## 2.4 Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism

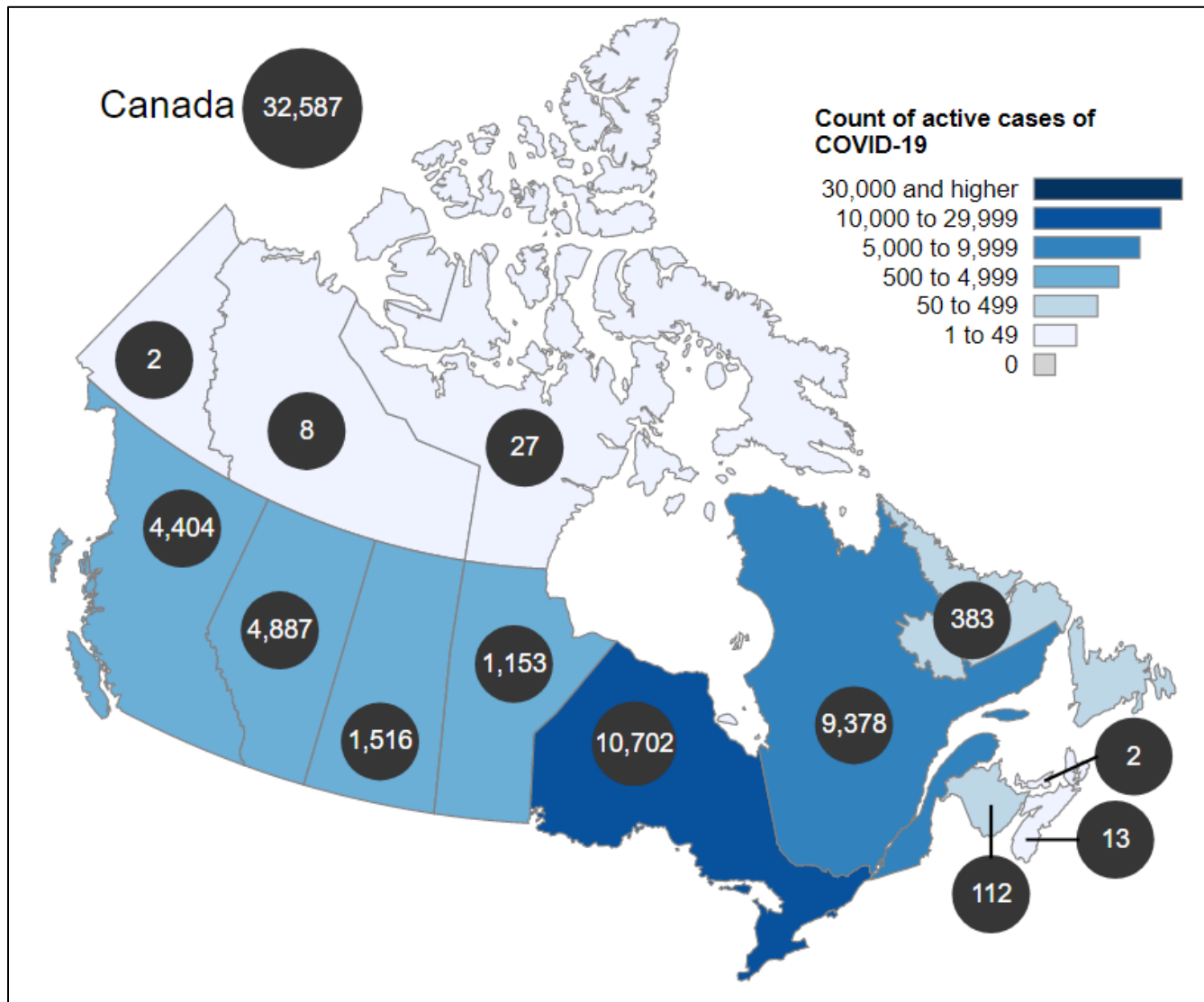
- [You Are Not Alone’: Spanish Rapper’s Arrest Sparks Free Speech Protests](#)


Spain is seeing large demonstrations after the government arrested Pablo Hasel, a rapper who voiced his criticism against the monarchy and the state in his music lyrics. He expressed his support for a separatist group whose campaign was seen as one of Europe’s longest terrorism campaign, and also compared judges to Nazis and accused the police of brutality. His arrest and 2018 conviction for a two-year sentence, which was reduced to nine months, have caused thousands to protest on the streets against the restrictive laws. For the Spanish art community, it is unfathomable that an artist could go to prison over a song or comments on Twitter. Spain is known for prosecuting people who make comments on social media, based on a law that forbids glorification of terrorism. Previously, another rapper also sentenced to prison for his lyrics. He fled to Belgium, a country which will not extradite him as the charges are not a crime in Belgium. The protests became violent with stones thrown, with protestors marching towards the Parliament building. Police officers were mildly injured and even a Reuters journalist injured by police fired rubber bullets. Spain has stated that it will be looking into changing the criminal code to reduce the sentences associated to speech violations.

- [Protesters out again in Myanmar to denounce military coup, police use water cannon in capital](#)

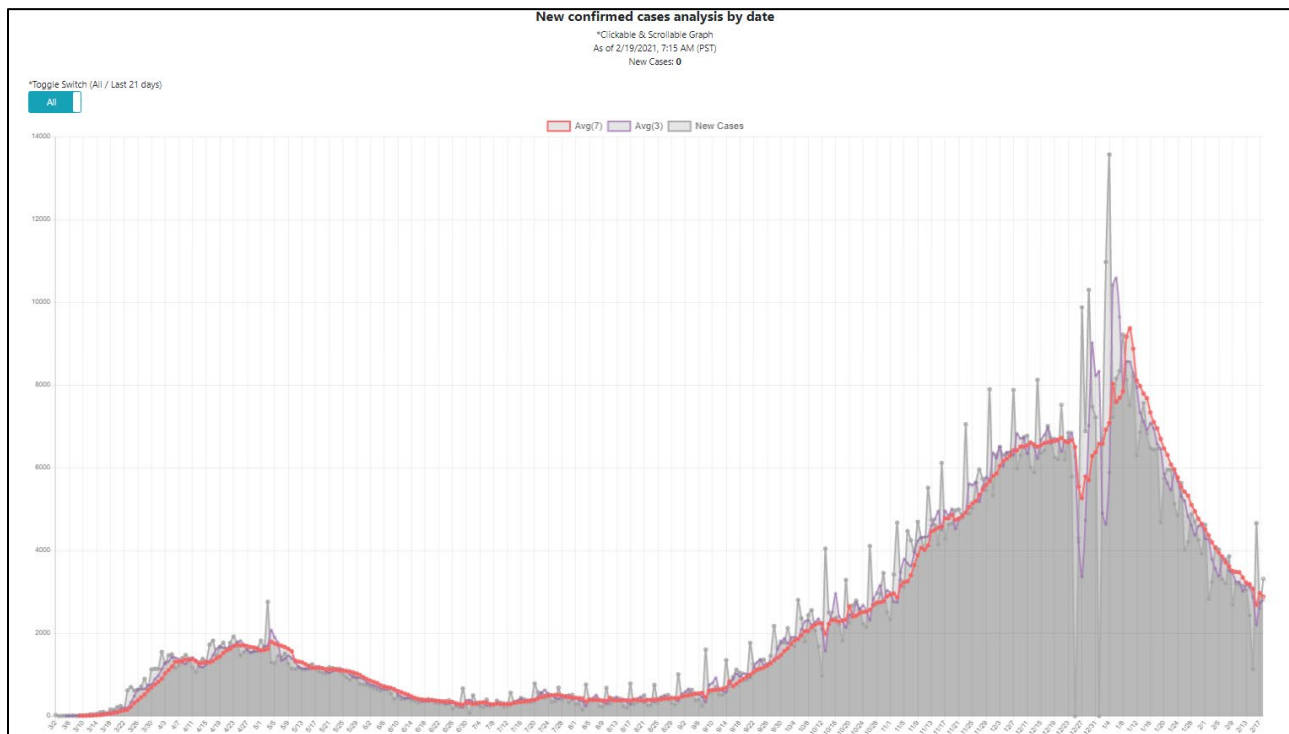
### 3. CANADA

#### 3.1 COVID UPDATE



Prov.	Total Confirmed	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Total Active
<b>Total</b>	<b>837,501</b>	<b>21,498</b>	<b>783,416</b>	<b>32,587</b>
BC	75,327	1,321	69,602	4,404
ON	289,621	6,773	272,146	10,702
QC	279,887	10,264	260,245	9,378
AB	130,030	1,805	123,338	4,887
MB	31,145	878	29,114	1,153
NB	1,411	24	1,275	112
SK	27,099	362	25,221	1,516
PEI	114	0	112	2
NL	803	4	416	383
NS	1,602	65	1,524	13
YT	72	1	69	2
NT	47	0	39	8
NU	330	1	302	27
	13	0	13	0
Rate of change	↑ 0.0%	↑ 0.0%	↑ 0.0%	0.0%

Prov.	Total Test	Total Waiting	Total Hosp	Total ICU
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,902,620</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
BC	1,851,860	-	224	60
ON	10,523,414	44,532	758	277
QC	6,385,172	-	747	129
AB	3,331,372	-	362	55
MB	506,511	-	84	12
NB	220,912	-	5	1
SK	551,283	-	174	23
PEI	94,306	-	-	-
NL	100,639	-	1	0
NS	308,855	-	1	1
YT	7,942	49	-	-
NT	13,665	30	0	0
NU	6,689	370	0	0
Rate of change	↑ 0.0%	-	-	-



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

### 3.2 COVID-19 Canada News

- [14.5M Canadians to be immunized by June, updated vaccination timeline shows](#)

New government figures released on Thursday suggest that 14.5 million Canadians are poised to receive the vaccine by the end of June. If Canada approves the AstraZeneca or Johnson & Johnson vaccines, it is possible that 24.5 million Canadian could be fully vaccinated by the end of June. By the end of September, the government is promising that 42 million Canadians can be vaccinated using only the two already approved vaccines. By the end of March, it is still believed that three million Canadian will be vaccinated, which adds up to about 8% of the population. Projections can be wrong, with factors such as not receiving vaccine doses from the manufacturers, vaccine hesitancy and inability to logistically vaccinate everyone even if there were enough doses. It is unclear how Canada plans to vaccinate almost three million people within a month and a half, and with the government's previous mishandling of vaccine efforts, it is likely this information is to change, with a reduction in the projected numbers of vaccinated instead of increase.

- [Here's why some coronavirus vaccine suppliers say they aren't selling to provinces](#)

According to some vaccine manufacturers, they are not selling vaccines to provincial governments as the contract with the federal government forbids the companies from going into deals with separate provinces. However, it is unclear whether the response suggests a ban or whether the companies would rather deal with one entity per country. Manitoba has tried to bypass the federal government and provincially order vaccines, but the province is blocked from ordering any until the companies fulfill the federal contract.

- [PHAC monitoring reports of 2 COVID-19 variants merging into heavily mutated hybrid](#)

According to New Mexico researchers, COVID-19 is recorded in a "recombination event" in which a variant from the UK merged with another variant from California. This is commonly found in coronaviruses, and don't

not necessarily mean that the new recombinant virus will be more lethal or antibody resistant. Nonetheless, this discovery is being monitored by scientists as a more infectious virus combined with a virus that resist antibodies can be a serious threat. It may also be that the virus will not be stronger than the two combined, but rather be a weaker version of the virus. It is being continuously monitored, and a fear is that individuals may be infected with more than one variant at once.

- [Health Canada not ready yet to greenlight AstraZeneca vaccine](#)

Despite suggesting two weeks ago that a final decision on the approval of the AstraZeneca vaccine was “imminent”, Health Canada has not yet made a decision regarding that vaccine. This week, WHO approved the vaccine and should Canada also approve it, half a million doses may arrive in March. Vaccine review was complicated due to an issue during clinical trials when the size of the doses was mixed up, which made an impact on trials results. Furthermore, its clinical trials did not involve enough older individuals to see how it protects them, although antibody testing showed similar response in young people as in those over 65. Canada’s vaccination numbers are low due to

- [More infected Albertans ghosting contact tracers as province adds variant cases](#)
- [Canadian COVID-19 vaccine maker says it can produce 50 million doses this year](#)

### 3.3 Canada Awareness

- [Canada creates coalition with 57 countries to declare arbitrary detentions immoral](#)
- [Feds dig in on support for cities looking to ban handguns, despite provincial pushback](#)

The federal government is allowing municipal governments to create handgun bans and has introduced new gun legislation which will have a government buyback program for ‘assault style’ weapons. Handgun bans by municipality seem arbitrary. It is unclear whether the gun cannot be transported through the city or stores within city jurisdiction. What occurs to gun owners who require travel through a city which bans handguns, or chooses to move, even temporarily, to the municipality for purposes such as work? Would they have to sell their gun? Provinces have pushed back against the federal plan, with Alberta indicating that cities fall under provincial jurisdiction and that cities should not be able to bypass provincial regulations on firearms. A private member’s bill in Alberta is being expedited to limit the ability of municipalities to bypass the law, and Saskatchewan has already passed similar legislation which banned cities in that province from banning firearms through bylaws. The preoccupation for the federal government with a firearm ban appears to be a knee jerk reaction to American news, where gun ownership is much different and less regulated than in Canada, as well as a reaction to the Nova Scotia shooting. However, the shooting in Nova Scotia involved unregistered weapons, and banning ‘assault style’ guns that are sometimes no different than guns which have not been labeled as ‘assault style’. The Canadian government in the same week, removed minimum sentences for some minor firearms charges, citing systemic racism as the cause for the changes. As such, this move is only a façade for those who do not understand firearm laws in Canada to make the government appear to be doing something that the public is believed to care for, although most surveys suggests that Canadians are happy with the current Canadian gun legislation.

- [CRA locks online accounts amid investigation, leaving users worried](#)
- [Canada’s annual inflation rate climbs to 1% in January](#)

### 3.4 Canada – Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism



welund

During the week of 11-18 February 2021, the majority of activist activity noted by Welund in Canada took place in the government sector (64%), followed by mining (13%) and oil and gas (11%). Protests made up the majority of activity (43%), followed by letter writing (11%).

Cold weather conditions have restricted the majority of in-person protesting for most campaigns. Anti-lockdown campaigns were the exception, as a series of individually organized in-person protests were scheduled for the same weekend in multiple cities. Activists continued to capitalize on the momentum for perceived victories over coal mines in Alberta to mobilize against other fossil fuel infrastructure projects.

**Protests:** The Government of Alberta was the target of a series of direct actions and protests regarding its position on coal mining permits and proposed cuts to public sector jobs. Activists targeted the offices of local MLAs in Calgary and Edmonton as part of the ‘Stand Up to Kenny’ campaign to oppose proposed cuts to public sector jobs while pushing for new fossil fuel infrastructure projects such as coal mines.

Anti-lockdown activists scheduled a series of in-person protests in multiple cities across Canada to oppose continued covid-19 restrictions. Extreme cold weather in western Canada forced protesters to move actions indoors, protesting inside of large malls. Campaigners in Ottawa held a protest at Parliament Hill demanding the federal government end all lockdown restrictions. In addition to the weekly marches, anti-lockdown campaign groups focused specifically on reopening small businesses. The ‘We Are All Essential’ campaign compiled a list of hundreds of businesses across Canada who operated for a day without enforcing masks, social distancing, or capacity restrictions. While these campaigns were scheduled around the same weekend, the majority of them were planned independently and not as a coordinated effort.

Divestment campaigners in Canada have announced their solidarity with the ‘Defund Line 3’ campaign, which officially started on 16 February 2021. This multi-week campaign will feature targeted actions against financial institutions and insurance providers for their support of the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline. Specifically, anti-Trans Mountain expansion (TMX) groups stated they would attempt to link their campaign with ‘Defund Line 3’ to pressure Canadian banks to divest from fossil fuel projects.

**Outlook:** With the official start of the ‘Defund Line 3’ campaign, Canadian divestment, climate change, and environmental activist groups will likely target major Canadian banks with solidarity actions demanding divestment from all current and future fossil fuel infrastructure projects. Activists have suggested a multi-faceted strategy targeting CEOs, executive members, offices, and individual branches with a series of online and in-person actions.

Anti-TMX protests and actions will likely increase in activity after an injunction was filed against the tree-sit in Burnaby and the protest at the home of Ledcor CEO Dave Lede in Vancouver.

Covid-19 related protests will continue with weekly scheduled actions. A nation-wide anti-lockdown solidarity protest is expected on 20 February in multiple cities. Workers across Canada have also started new campaigns demanding higher minimum wage and paid sick days amid the pandemic, which will likely see further support with future protest events.

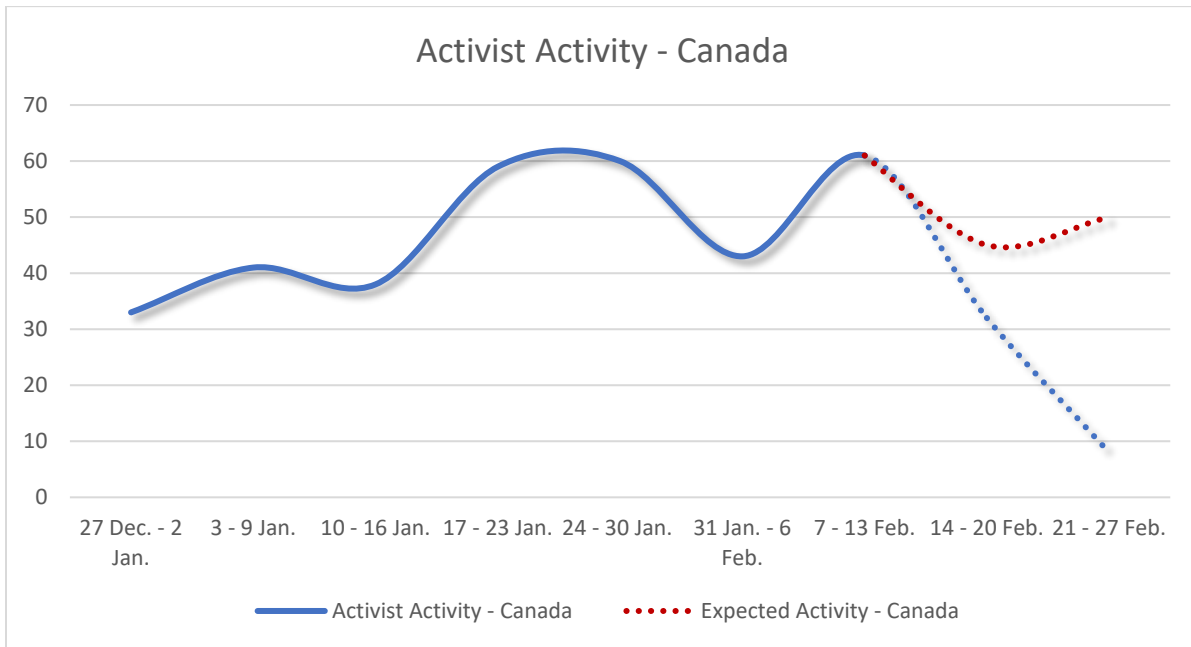


Figure 1 Total activist activity in Canada as noted by Welund.

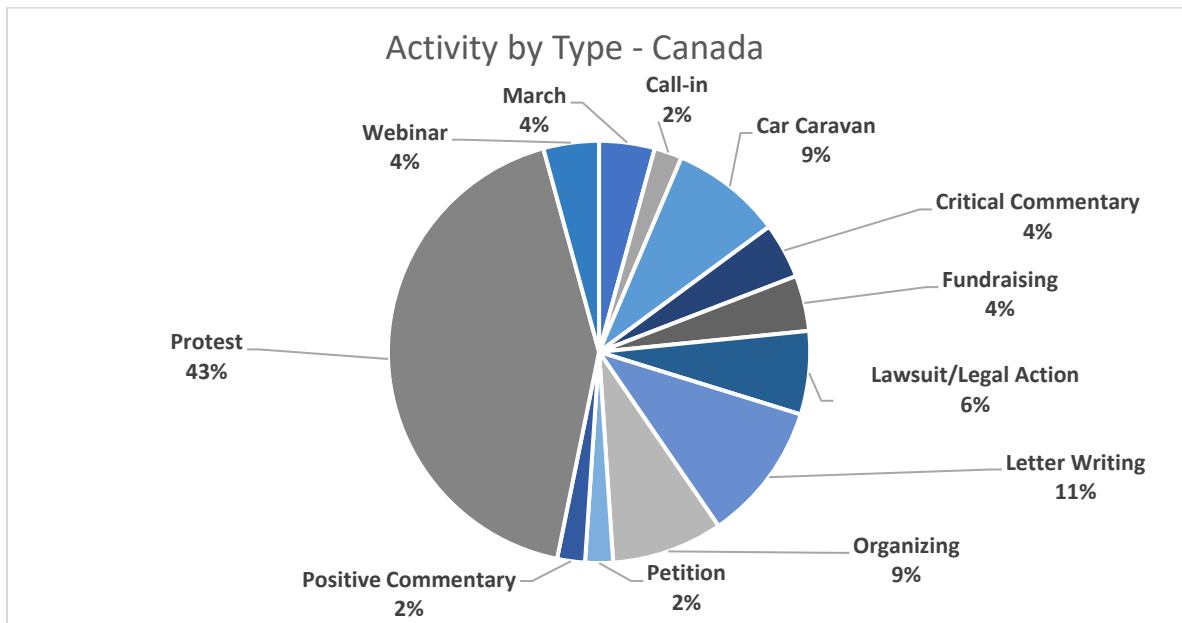
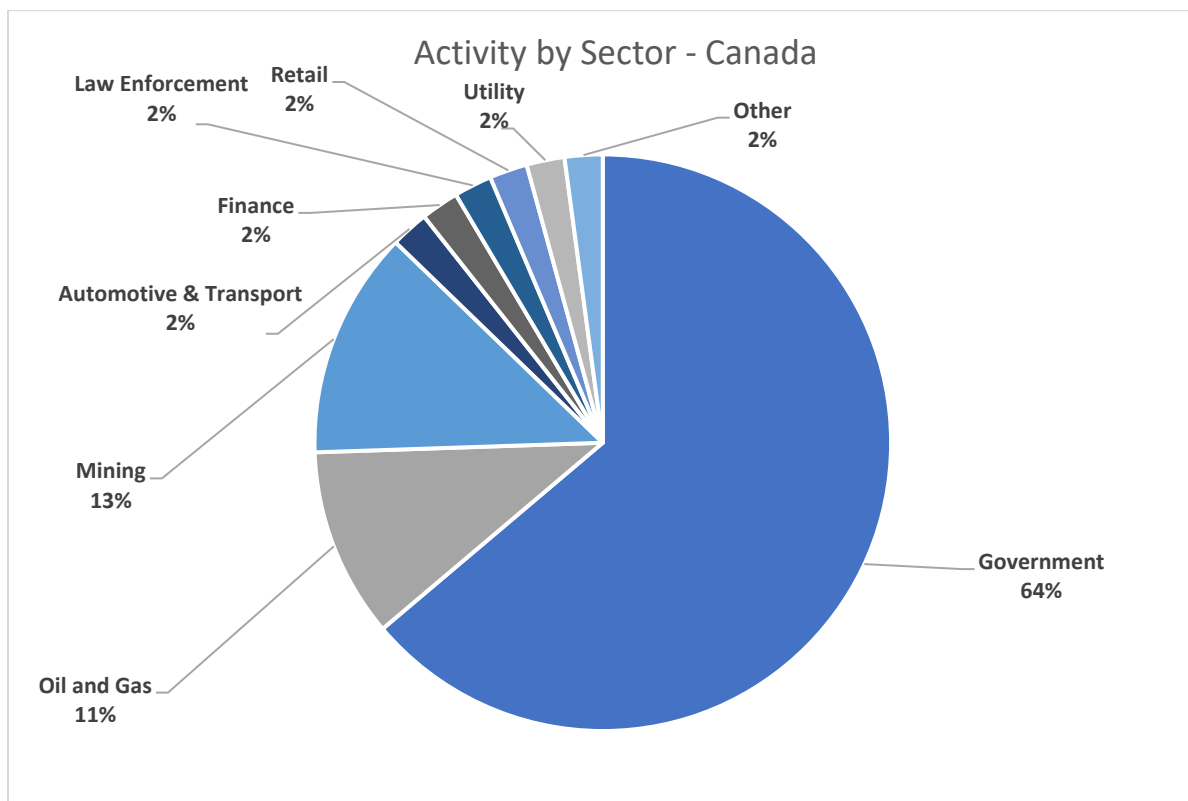


Figure 2 Activist activity in Canada by type as noted by Welund

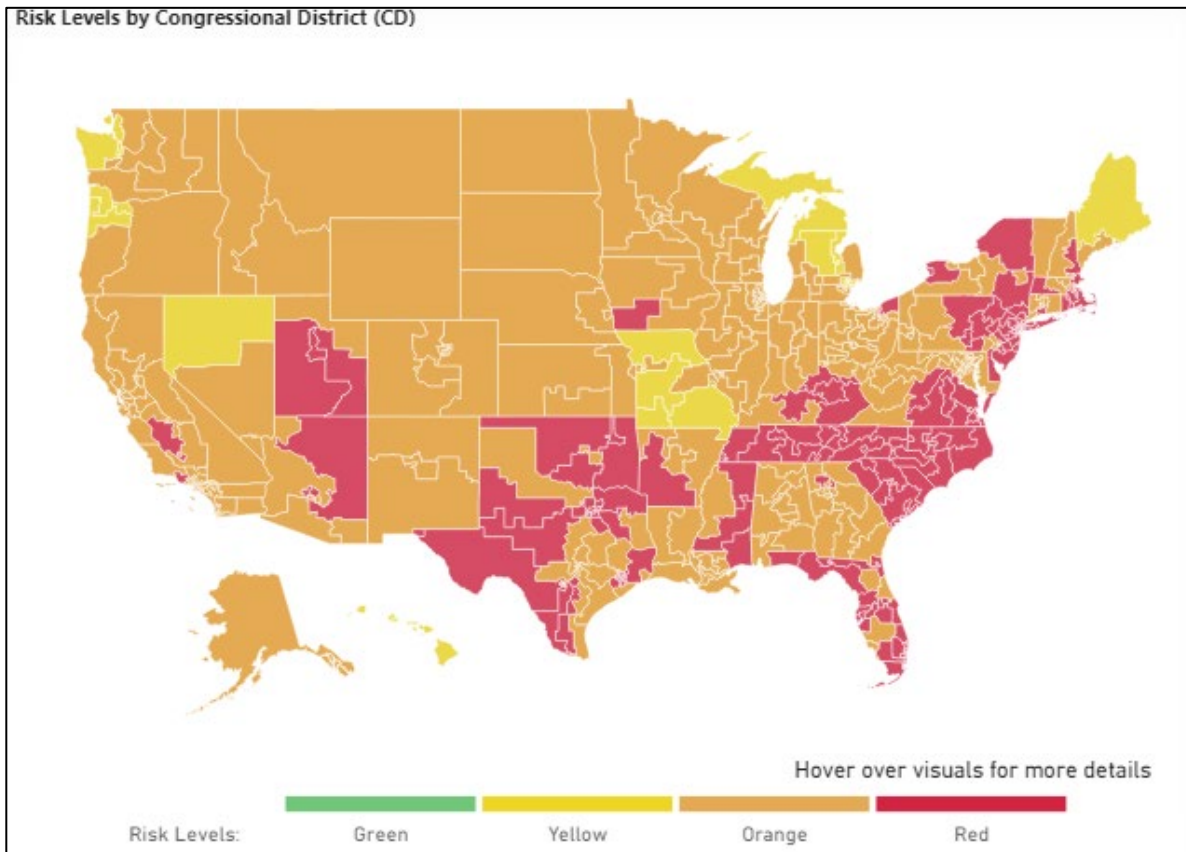




*Figure 3 Activist activity in Canada by sector as noted by Welund.*

## 4. USA

### 4.1 COVID UPDATE



#	USA State	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	USA Total	28,527,033	+3,509	505,329	+20	18,705,269	9,316,435	86,184	1,527	341,550,894	1,031,868	
1	<a href="#">California</a>	3,499,152		48,347		1,790,981	1,659,824	88,559	1,224	46,504,255	1,176,959	39,512,223
2	<a href="#">New York</a>	1,603,701		46,676		650,613	906,412	82,437	2,399	35,739,542	1,837,172	19,453,561
3	<a href="#">Florida</a>	1,849,744		29,476		1,028,503	791,765	86,124	1,372	20,843,123	970,452	21,477,737
4	<a href="#">Arizona</a>	802,198		15,276		113,271	673,651	110,211	2,099	4,085,719	561,324	7,278,717
5	<a href="#">Georgia</a>	976,732		16,403		447,681	512,648	91,993	1,545	7,429,571	699,753	10,617,423
6	<a href="#">Virginia</a>	559,930	+2,034	7,098	+8	45,524	507,308	65,600	832	7,204,657	844,080	8,535,519
7	<a href="#">Maryland</a>	373,966		7,661		9,587	356,718	61,857	1,267	7,555,013	1,249,655	6,045,680
8	<a href="#">Kentucky</a>	392,729		4,373		46,254	342,102	87,905	979	4,335,650	970,449	4,467,673
9	<a href="#">South Carolina</a>	495,044		8,155		225,005	261,884	96,149	1,584	5,604,519	1,088,528	5,148,714
10	<a href="#">New Jersey</a>	758,451		22,721		481,961	253,769	85,390	2,558	10,082,370	1,135,122	8,882,190
11	<a href="#">Texas</a>	2,586,166		41,883		2,296,420	247,863	89,191	1,444	21,999,298	758,704	28,995,881
12	<a href="#">Missouri</a>	516,719		8,253		271,887	236,579	84,191	1,345	5,278,931	860,121	6,137,428
13	<a href="#">Colorado</a>	417,415		5,864		185,210	226,341	72,484	1,018	2,516,358	436,964	5,758,736
14	<a href="#">Indiana</a>	652,210		12,281		426,507	213,422	96,879	1,824	7,650,673	1,136,427	6,732,219
15	<a href="#">Alabama</a>	484,365		9,424		275,245	199,696	98,786	1,922	2,357,202	480,749	4,903,185

## 4.2 COVID-19 USA News

- [States now seeing similar Covid improvements with different approaches to lockdowns](#)  
California and Florida, states which took completely opposing approaches when dealing with COVID-19, saw very similar results. Florida's governor did not close down many shops and told Floridians to 'use common sense' to reduce the transmission of the virus, with schools remaining open and no mask mandates, while California closed down bars, indoor dining, and many non-essential services. Masks were mandated and schools were shut. However, both states, when controlled for population, have seen a similar curve and case and hospitalization numbers. Hospitalization rates in California are 24 per 100,000, while Florida has seen 22. Both states are currently reporting about 200 to 4000 cases per million people, and 10 to 20 deaths per million, and historical numbers indicate that Florida had 8,306 cases and 117 deaths per 100,000 while California's numbers are 8,499 cases and 130 deaths per 100,000 people. These numbers may suggest that lockdowns are not as effective as first thought, which are also not necessarily promoted by WHO without a complimentary testing and quarantine system. It is likely that lockdowns are not as necessary as they were when little was known about the virus and are no longer necessary as many people have a natural immunity to the virus, while others are gaining immunity via vaccinations. It is also likely that individuals who are under lockdown will undergo stress and may also not be able to work, a factor which may bring down morale and cause individuals to slip from following COVID-19 measures.
- [COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations continue massive drop since January peak](#)
- Since the USA's peak numbers for hospitalizations and cases of Mid-January, a sharp drop has been seen. The seven-day average of new cases has decreased by over 64% since January 12 and the number of those hospitalized has decreased by half. The majority of states (40) are seeing a decline in new cases, while eight have not changed, and only three states (South Dakota, Nebraska, and Alaska) have seen an increase. It is likely this decrease is seen due to the number of vulnerable Americans that have received a vaccination.
- [Scientists Call on C.D.C. to Set Air Standards for Workplaces, Now](#)
- [Almost One-Third of US Troops Are Refusing COVID Vaccines, Officials Say](#)
- [Federal agents seize roughly 10 million phony N95 masks in Covid-19 probe](#)

## 4.3 USA Awareness

- [Millions of jobs probably aren't coming back, even after the pandemic ends](#)  
Economics warn that millions of Americans currently without jobs may not be rehired as the positions are no longer required. Business plans appear to focus on at least 20% of workers working from home, having less travel for business, and automating positions or replacing them with robots. It is likely that this will cause a reduction in hotel workers, restaurants and downtown stores. Companies are investing in automation, a capital investment which is not usually reversed, and many office or retail jobs are also being automated.
- [FBI, U.S. attorney in Brooklyn probing Cuomo administration on nursing homes](#)  
An investigation has been launched by the FBI into the handling of New York Governor Cuomo's coronavirus taskforce, in relation to the handling by senior taskforce members of nursing homes and long-term care facilities during the pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, the taskforce ordered long term care homes to accept COVID-19 positive residents who have been discharged from the hospital, as long as the care home can provide proper care. Within two months, this directive was changed and in January a report came out that

has associated the directive with a high number of deaths in long term care homes. Furthermore, it is reported that thousands of long-term care home deaths were under reported, as they occurred in the hospital and not in the care home. Cuomo replied suggesting that there was nothing to investigate and that New York was transparent of all deaths which have occurred.

- [Donald Trump sued by senior Democrat congressman Bennie Thompson over Capitol riot](#)
- [Texas grid was 'minutes' from failing, lawmaker says](#)

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



During the week of 11-18 February 2021, the majority of activist activity in the US noted by Welund took place in the government sector (41%), followed by oil and gas (18%) and utility (11%). Protests made up most activity (42%), followed by critical commentary (15%) and webinars (9%).

Overall, campaigners are still focused on commentary to push the Biden administration to take action on policies to support their causes. The adverse weather across much of the country may be a factor in keeping overall activity low, as several states in the US are experiencing record breaking low temperatures and winter weather.

Stop the Money Pipeline (STMP) coalition launched its 'defund Line 3' campaign targeting the financial institutions invested in Enbridge and the Line 3 pipeline. It hosted a 'launch party' and webinar to promote the fossil fuel divestment campaign. The webinar outlined the multi-week divestment campaign against financial institutions (JPMorgan Chase, Citi, Bank of America, TD Bank, and Union Bank/MUFG were identified as the primary targets).

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

There has been continued opposition, direct actions, and protests against Enbridge's Line 3 in Minnesota. On 12 February 2021, activists from Collective for Another World gathered near the home of Teresa Madden in Boulder, Colorado, to stage a 'die-in' against the Line 3 pipeline. Madden sits on Enbridge's Board of Directors. On 16 February, three anti-Line 3 activists were arrested after they locked on inside a pipe segment in Wadena, Minnesota.

On 11 February, MVMT Catalyst protested at the headquarters of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Washington, DC as part of Build Back Fossil Free (BBFF) campaign's week of action. The week of action called on President Biden to "build back fossil free" and hold him "accountable to his promises for bold climate action."

On 16 February, workers at fast-food restaurant chains in 15 US cities went on strike to demand that the minimum wage be raised to \$15 an hour.

**Outlook:** Welund continues to monitor covid-19 cases across the US for indications that additional lockdown measures may inspire protests and demonstrations, similar to those that attracted nationwide media attention in April and May 2020 and those currently taking place in Canada. On 20 February, Amazon opponents will host a 'national day of action' in solidarity with the union vote in Alabama. Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama are voting to unionize at the company's BHM1 fulfillment center. If successful, they would become the first of Amazon's United States employees to unionize.

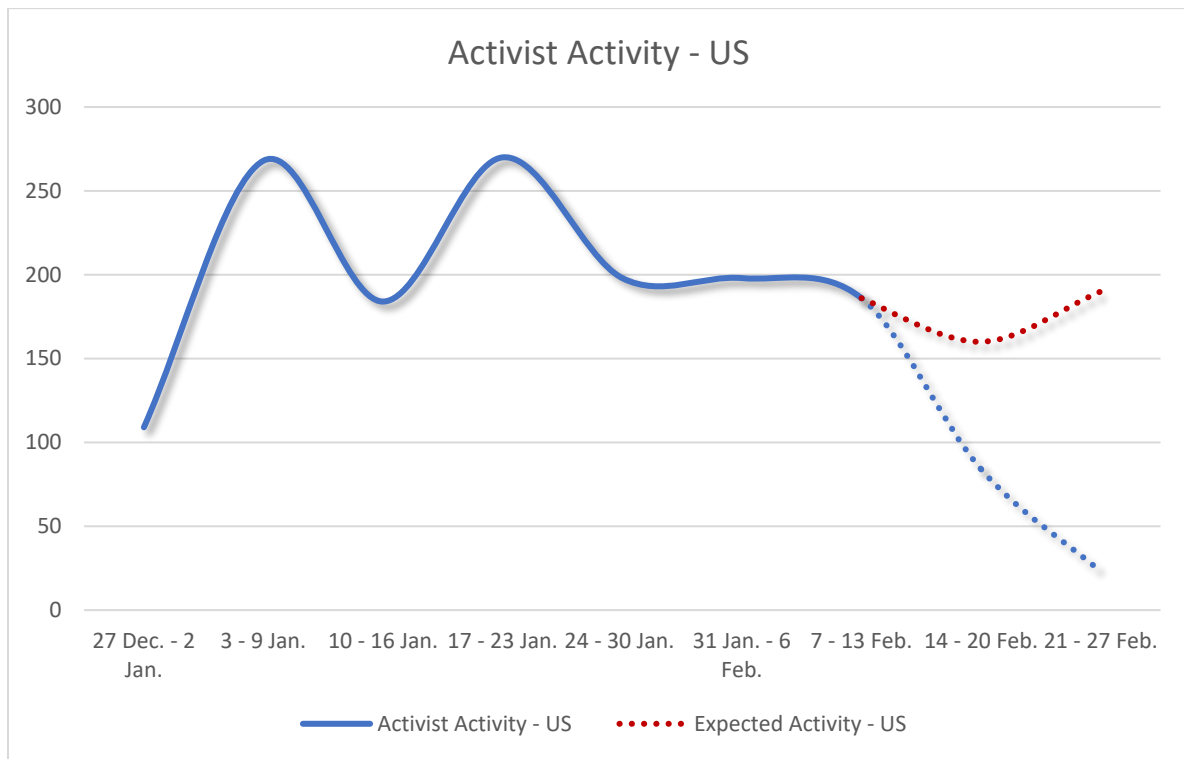


Figure 4 Total activist activity in the US as noted by Welund.

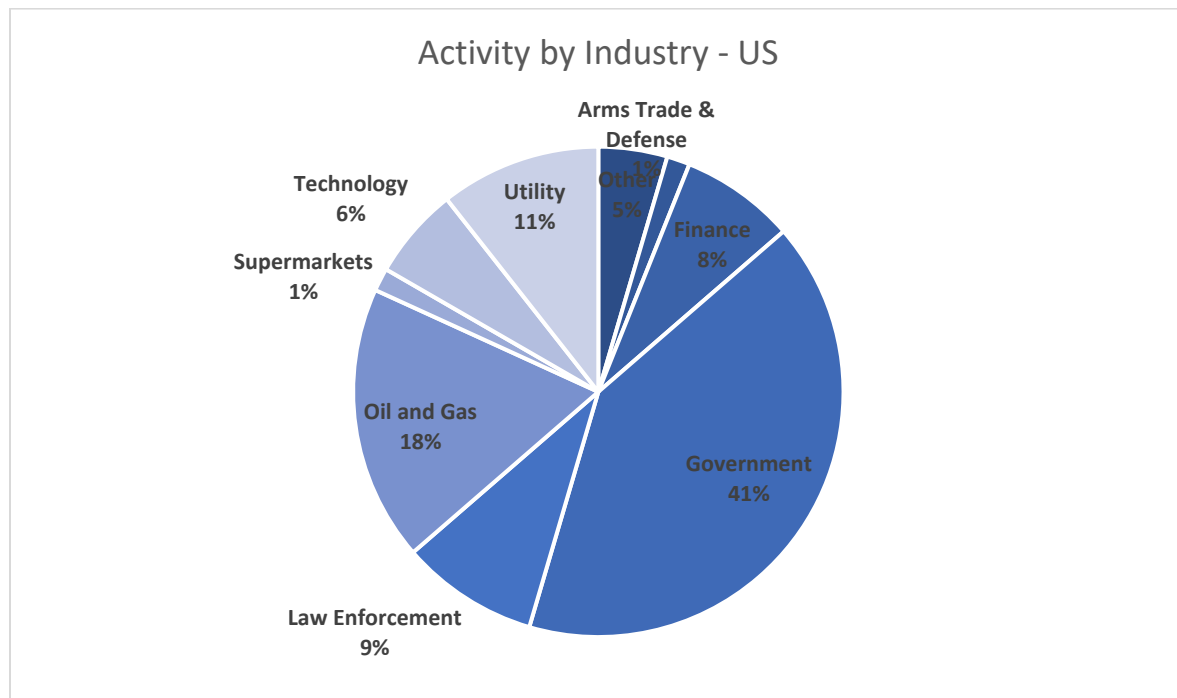
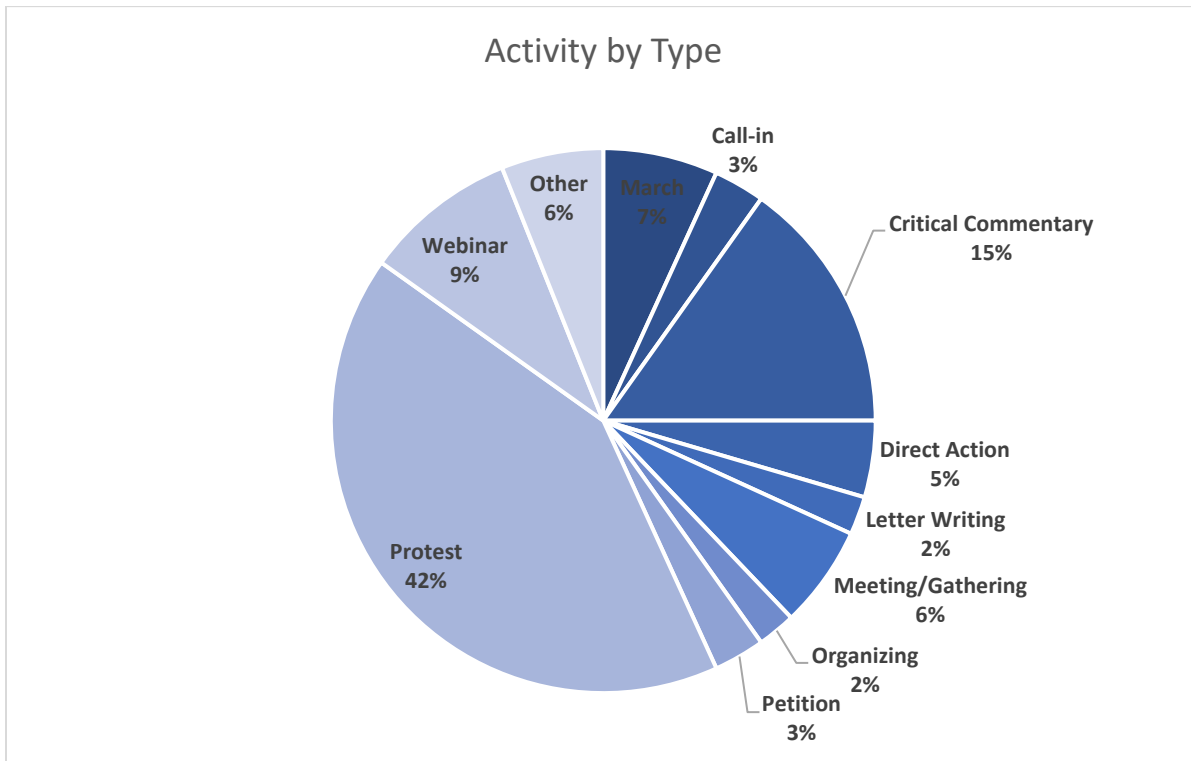


Figure 5 Activist activity in the US by industry as noted by Welund



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

## End Report

Please submit feedback to:

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## 5. PALADIN RISK SOLUTIONS - SERVICES



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