



INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Situational awareness for stakeholders and decision makers.



Report # 22-019

26 March 2021

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1. CURRENT SITUATION

Starbucks has, on average, added two stores a day since 2010 prior to the pandemic, and is still able to grow its earnings, outpacing the competitors in the market. There are many reasons behind the company's success, including streamlined operations, globally recognized branding, and arguably the most important piece - technology. Over the years, the company has recognized that mobile apps are the future of the industry and invested heavily in the Starbucks Rewards mobile app. Customers have grown to love the user-friendly experience, the customization features, and the rewards.

Under the company's loyalty program, customers are allowed to link a credit card, debit card, or mobile wallet to their account and pay directly for purchases. When paying directly with a credit card or other linked payment method, you earn only one star for every dollar spent - as opposed to the two stars when using your digital Starbucks card.

A look at Starbucks' annual Report shows that the coffee giant has found ways to generate revenues without spending additional costs by leveraging their app. Starbucks had \$1.2 billion loaded onto Starbucks cards and the Starbucks mobile app as of the first quarter of 2016, according to data. As of second quarter of 2016, the company had 12 million active loyalty members in the U.S. By 2018, the Starbucks Rewards app became the most popular mobile payment app with 23.4 million users, while the gap between Starbucks and Apple is expected to widen to more than 2.3 million users by 2022.

As of March 29, 2020, customer prepaid balances (which Starbucks calls "Store value card liability and current portion of deferred revenue") totaled just over \$1.4 billion. Starbucks is essentially gaining access to an interest-free line of credit, one that equates to roughly 4% of the company's total liabilities. Whereas a traditional bank is severely restricted on the actions it can take using customer deposits, Starbucks has more leeway; it can reinvest directly back into the business on expansion opportunities. The company's free cash flow is also enhanced, as this phenomenon decreases working capital needs. Based on the current liability balance of \$1.4 billion at the end of Q2 2020, previously mentioned, Starbucks earns interest at a rate of approximately 10% (meaning it borrows at an effective rate of negative 10%).

A company like PayPal for example, which also holds pre-loaded balances to customers' accounts for quicker purchases has a different experience. PayPal allows its users to cash out whenever they want. This means that PayPal must have quick access to a reserve in case of an event which causes people to withdraw en masse. Consequently, it is constrained to bank accounts or government bonds and low returns. Starbucks, however, only ever has to return their customers' cash in the form of coffee.

Additionally, since Starbucks digital and physical gift cards have no expiration date, Starbucks uses historical data to estimate how much the company expects will never be redeemed. The company describes this as "breakage," and, according to the reports, Starbucks generated \$141 million in revenue from breakage in 2019.

It is peculiar to see where the cybersecurity aspect comes into play when dealing with party gift cards and payment apps. A very common type of identity theft involves using a victim's credit card info to buy Starbucks gift cards and sell them for less than "face" value online. The scammers will buy the data for a large number of credit cards, spending only a few dollars from each one every month, in the hopes that the victims will not notice a few additional Starbucks transactions.

In California for example, If the card balance is under \$10 companies are legally required to reimburse it in cash. This means that criminals can obtain credit card information, use it to buy \$10 gift cards with it, spend a little bit of money off each one to make the transaction look legit and then have the rest of the stolen money laundered into clean cash. By 2022, research suggests that the global prepaid card market will be worth \$3.1 trillion.

According to the United States Department of Justice report, prepaid cards provide an ideal money laundering instrument to anonymously move funds associated with all types of illicit activity without fear of documentation, identification, tracking or seizure.

Prepaid cards can be utilized to make payments at outlets that only accept credit cards and they share some similarities with regular debit cards. They can be used to make bill payments, point of sale and online purchases, telephone order merchants, payroll solutions, cross border remittances and money transfers. Two of the most common themes of a money laundering strategy are anonymity and disguise. Prepaid cards allow criminals to connect with monetary value anonymously and completely bypass the more robust risk and monitoring mechanisms of a traditional banking system. Identification requirements for prepaid cards are also relaxed relative to conventional debit or credit card application requirements. Due to the high fees and high level of scrutiny associated with cross border transactions, prepaid cards offer a low-cost alternative and ease of transportability. However, they carry a significant risk of enabling the ease of moving proceeds of crime across borders and evading law enforcement.

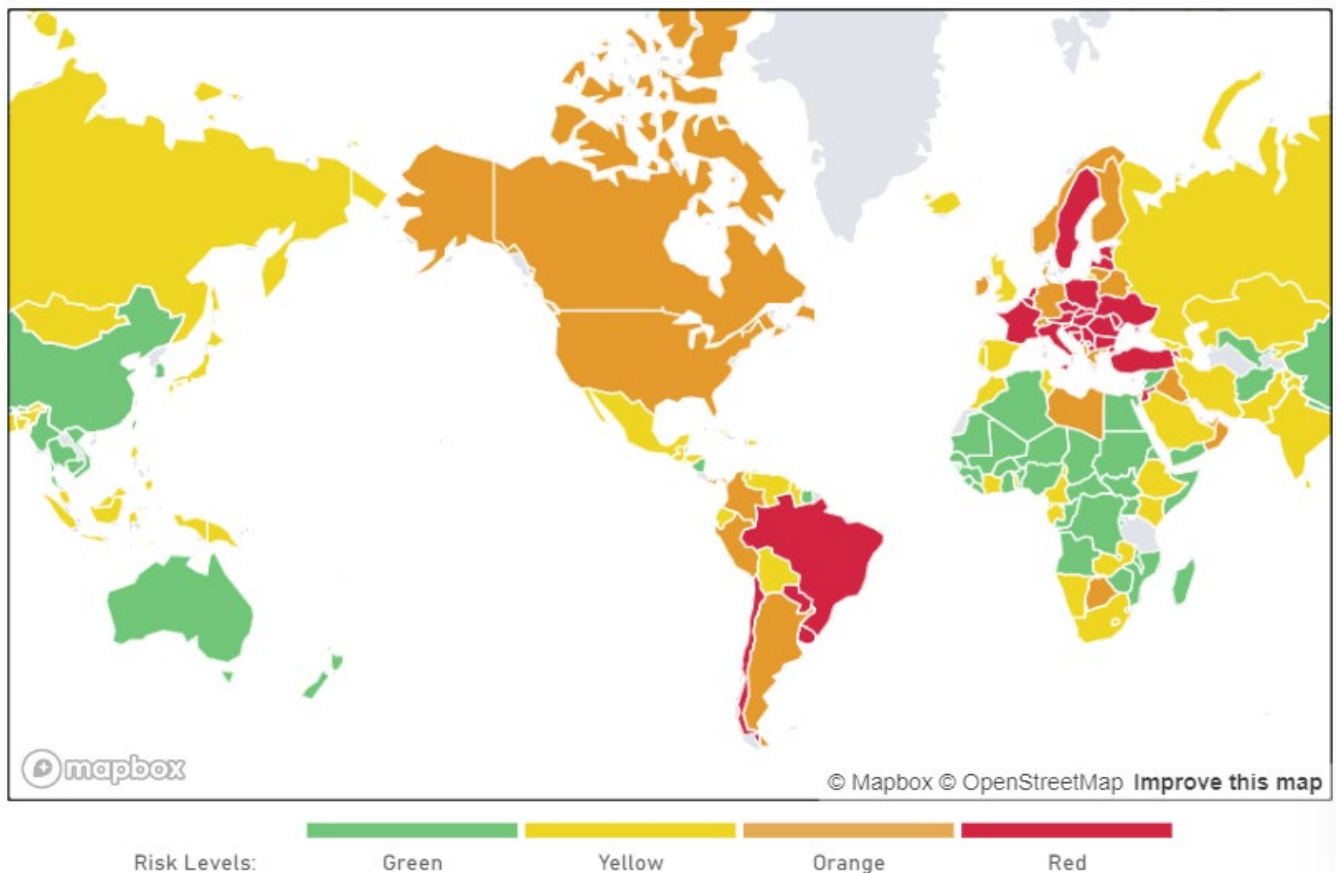
The money laundering risks of prepaid cards mean that financial institutions must be vigilant for specific red flag indicators and ensure their CDD mechanisms are able to spot potential criminal activities.

2. GLOBAL

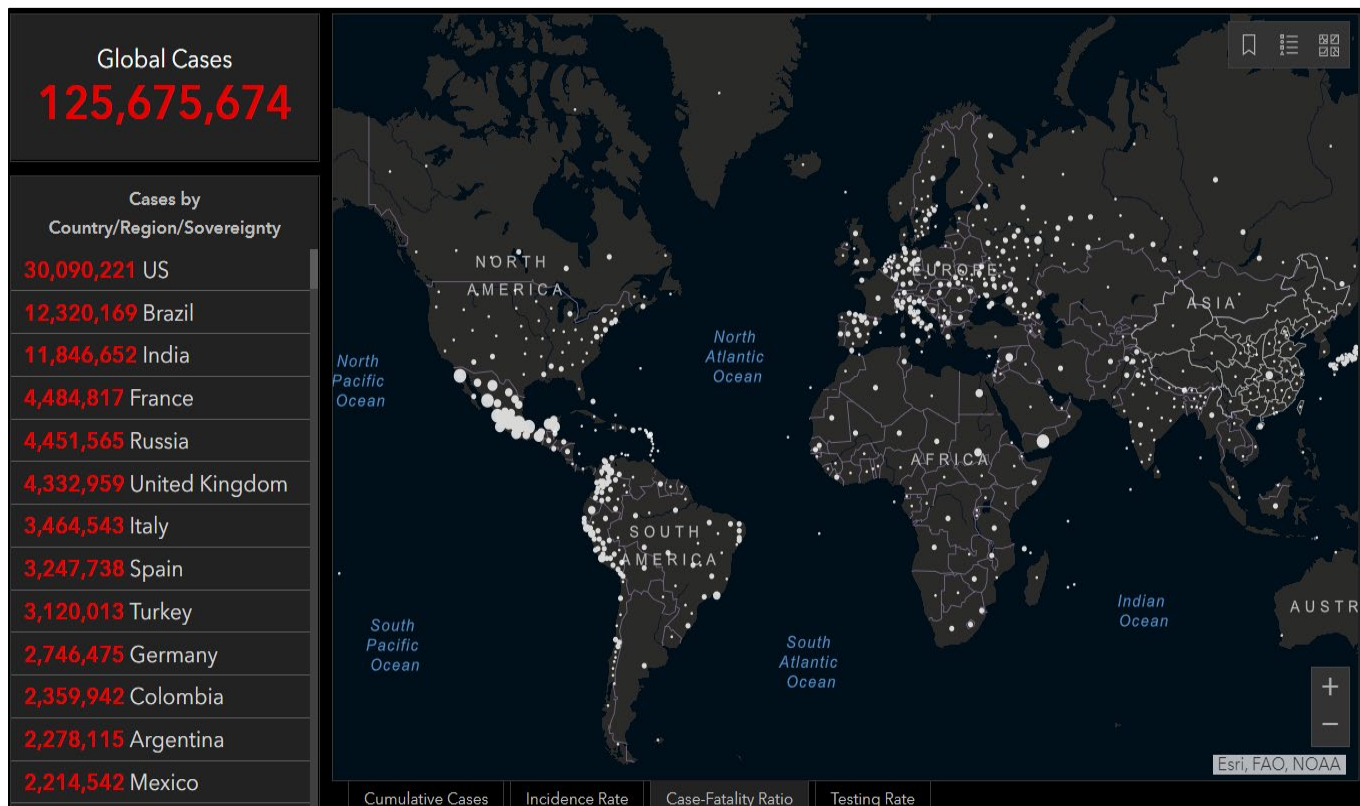
2.1 COVID UPDATE

Country/Region	United States	Country/Region	Canada
Daily new cases per 100k people (7d moving avg.)	17.8	Daily new cases per 100k people (7d moving avg.)	10.0
Risk level	Orange	Risk level	Orange
Total cases	30,034,057	Total cases	942,320
Total deaths	545,088	Total deaths	22,735

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	126,053,303	+628,838	2,766,752	+10,387	101,715,771	21,570,780	92,192	16,171	354.9			
1	USA	30,774,033	+67,046	559,744	+1,165	23,196,209	7,018,080	8,696	92,576	1,684	395,353,300	1,189,315	332,420,890
2	France	4,424,087	+45,641	93,378	+225	286,607	4,044,102	4,709	67,668	1,428	61,448,493	939,878	65,379,203
3	Brazil	12,324,765	+97,586	303,726	+2,639	10,772,549	1,248,490	8,318	57,683	1,422	28,600,000	133,856	213,662,874
4	Belgium	849,090	+6,315	22,786	+23	55,928	770,376	601	73,031	1,960	10,693,594	919,760	11,626,500
5	Italy	3,464,543	+23,696	106,799	+460	2,794,888	562,856	3,620	57,363	1,768	48,108,527	796,543	60,396,676
6	UK	4,319,128	+6,220	126,445	+63	3,748,042	444,641	683	63,380	1,855	120,074,421	1,762,001	68,146,641
7	India	11,846,082	+59,069	160,983	+257	11,262,503	422,596	8,944	8,523	116	237,503,882	170,878	1,389,901,307
8	Poland	2,154,823	+34,153	50,862	+522	1,722,856	381,105	2,620	56,981	1,345	11,503,034	304,182	37,816,240
9	Russia	4,492,692	+9,221	96,612	+393	4,109,281	286,799	2,300	30,776	662	118,500,000	811,753	145,980,284
10	Ukraine	1,596,575	+16,669	31,135	+362	1,283,020	282,420	177	36,668	715	7,836,049	179,970	43,540,902
11	Mexico	2,208,755	+5,714	199,627	+579	1,748,317	260,811	4,798	17,001	1,537	5,957,631	45,856	129,920,591
12	Ireland	232,758	+594	4,631	+3	23,364	204,763	75	46,757	930	3,896,983	782,842	4,977,996
13	Germany	2,732,130	+22,258	76,116	+205	2,456,200	199,814	3,209	32,533	906	48,979,281	583,226	83,979,904
14	Iran	1,830,823	+7,506	62,142	+97	1,569,697	198,984	3,889	21,596	733	12,349,804	145,675	84,776,131
15	Hungary	603,347	+9,637	19,224	+272	387,570	196,553	1,467	62,572	1,994	4,403,317	456,663	9,642,369



Global Case to Fatality Ratios

2.2 COVID-19 World News

- [Brazil sets new COVID deaths record as health minister sworn in](#)

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has confirmed his fourth health minister since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Brazil registered 3,251 additional coronavirus-deaths on Tuesday – a new record – as the country continues to grapple with a surge in infections that has pushed hospitals and other healthcare facilities to their limits.

Critics say the government in Brasilia could have avoided the situation by insisting upon nationwide prevention and protection measures. But President Jair Bolsonaro refused to even consider the idea. He scoffed at the notion of face masks as irrelevant and is repulsed by the idea of lockdown measures because they could further weaken the country's already ailing economy. Even though he is said to have recently considered getting vaccinated himself, nothing has changed about his publicly expressed view that the coronavirus is no worse than the common flu.

Still, Bolsonaro's supporters seem willing to follow him through any crisis. A survey conducted in mid-March by the polling outfit Datafolha found that despite 44% of Brazilians saying the government was doing a "poor" or "very poor" job, and 79% saying the coronavirus pandemic is out of control, 30% still said they thought Bolsonaro was doing a "good" or even a "very good" job.

- [EU export restrictions on COVID shots would be 'lose-lose' situation: Pfizer executive](#)
- [Germany to require COVID tests on all flight arrivals](#)
- [Coronavirus digest: AstraZeneca corrects 'outdated' trial results](#)
- [EU attacks call into question AstraZeneca vaccine pricing, warns Oxford's Sir John Bell](#)
- [Europe tightens Covid restrictions as 'third wave' takes hold](#)

Belgium and France have tightened restrictions in an effort to curb a surge of Covid-19 cases, as a third wave of the pandemic takes hold across Europe. In Belgium, the government announced on Wednesday that schools, non-essential shops and hairdressers will be closed for four weeks from Saturday. In the last week confirmed cases have risen by 40% and hospitalizations by 28%.

In France, a government spokesman warned that the coronavirus situation is worsening in every region of the country and urged people to work from home to curb the virus.

The government also looks set to widen localized Covid-19 restrictions currently in place in Paris to three other high-risk zones, including the Rhone region which houses the major city of Lyon.

In Poland, where a record 29,978 cases were detected on Wednesday, local media has reported that the government will tighten measures imposed last week ahead of Easter - which is usually marked by packed church services and family gatherings in the deeply Catholic country.

- [Why are more young people getting sick with Covid-19 in Brazil?](#)

2.3 Global Awareness

- [China Makes It A Crime to Question Military Casualties On The Internet](#)

When China acknowledged this year that four of its soldiers had died fighting Indian forces on the two countries' disputed mountain border eight months prior, the irreverent blogger Little Spicy Pen Ball had questions.

"If the four [Chinese] soldiers died trying to rescue their fellow soldiers, then there must have been those who were not successfully rescued," he wrote on Feb. 19 to his 2.5 million followers on Weibo, a Chinese social media site. "This means the fatalities could not have just been four." The day after, Qiu Ziming, the 38-year-

old former newspaper journalist behind the blog, was detained and criminally charged. If convicted, he faces a sentence of up to three years.

When China acknowledged this year that four of its soldiers had died fighting Indian forces on the two countries' disputed mountain border eight months prior, the irreverent blogger Little Spicy Pen Ball had questions. Russian state news agency reported that there were 45 Chinese servicemen dead in the conflict, while U.S intelligence confirmed that there were 35 casualties.

- [North Korea tells China they should team up against "hostile forces" as both face Biden](#)
- [First strike of Amazon workers in Italy](#)

Between 30,000 to 40,000 Amazon workers were staging a one-day strike on Monday to demand better conditions from the online retail giant. It is the first such strike in Italy to involve the whole Amazon supply chain, including its hubs and its delivery drivers. The strike was called by the Filt Cgil, Fit Cisl and Ultrasporti unions. The striking workers have called on Italian consumers to show solidarity by not making purchases from Amazon on Monday. The Italian protest comes after an e-commerce surge, with goods sold online in 2020 rising by a record 31% to 23.4 billion euros, data from Milan's Politecnico University shows.

A spokeswoman for Amazon, which has over 40 logistics centers in Italy, said fewer than 10% of its employees and around 20% of third-party workers had joined the strike. Mariangela Marseglia, country manager for Amazon in Italy, said in a letter to customers that the company put workers first, whether its own or contractors, and offered a safe and inclusive work environment, competitive pay as well as benefits.

- [Saudi Oil Giant Aramco Reports 44% Profit Slump In 2020 Amid Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- [China denies incursion as 200 ships dock at Philippine reef](#)
- [Top Saudi official issued death threat against UN's Khashoggi investigator](#)
- [Ikea France Goes On Trial For Spying On Staff](#)

The French branch of Swedish retailing giant Ikea goes on trial Monday accused of running an elaborate system to spy on staff and job applicants using private detectives and police officers.

French investigative publications Le Canard Enchaîné and Mediapart uncovered the surveillance scheme in 2012, and prosecutors got on the case after the Force Ouvrière union lodged a legal complaint.

Prosecutors say Ikea France set up a "spying system" across its operations across the country, collecting information about the private lives of hundreds of staff and prospective staff, including confidential information about criminal records. Since the media revelations, the company has sacked four executives, but Ikea France, which employs 10,000 people, still faces a fine of up to 3.75 million euros (\$4.5 million).

- [Japan mulling order to deploy military if China attacks Taiwan](#)
- [Bulgaria exposes massive Russian spy ring](#)
- [Massive container ship stuck in Suez Canal, blocking world's busiest shipping route](#)

2.4 Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism

- [Niger: Suspected jihadi attack kills 'at least 137'](#)

Gunmen, believed to be jihadis, have raided villages near Niger's border with Mali shooting "at everything that moved," local officials have said. Armed men on motorbikes struck the villages of Intazayene, Bakorat and Wistane near the border with Mali, shooting "at everything which moved," a local official said.

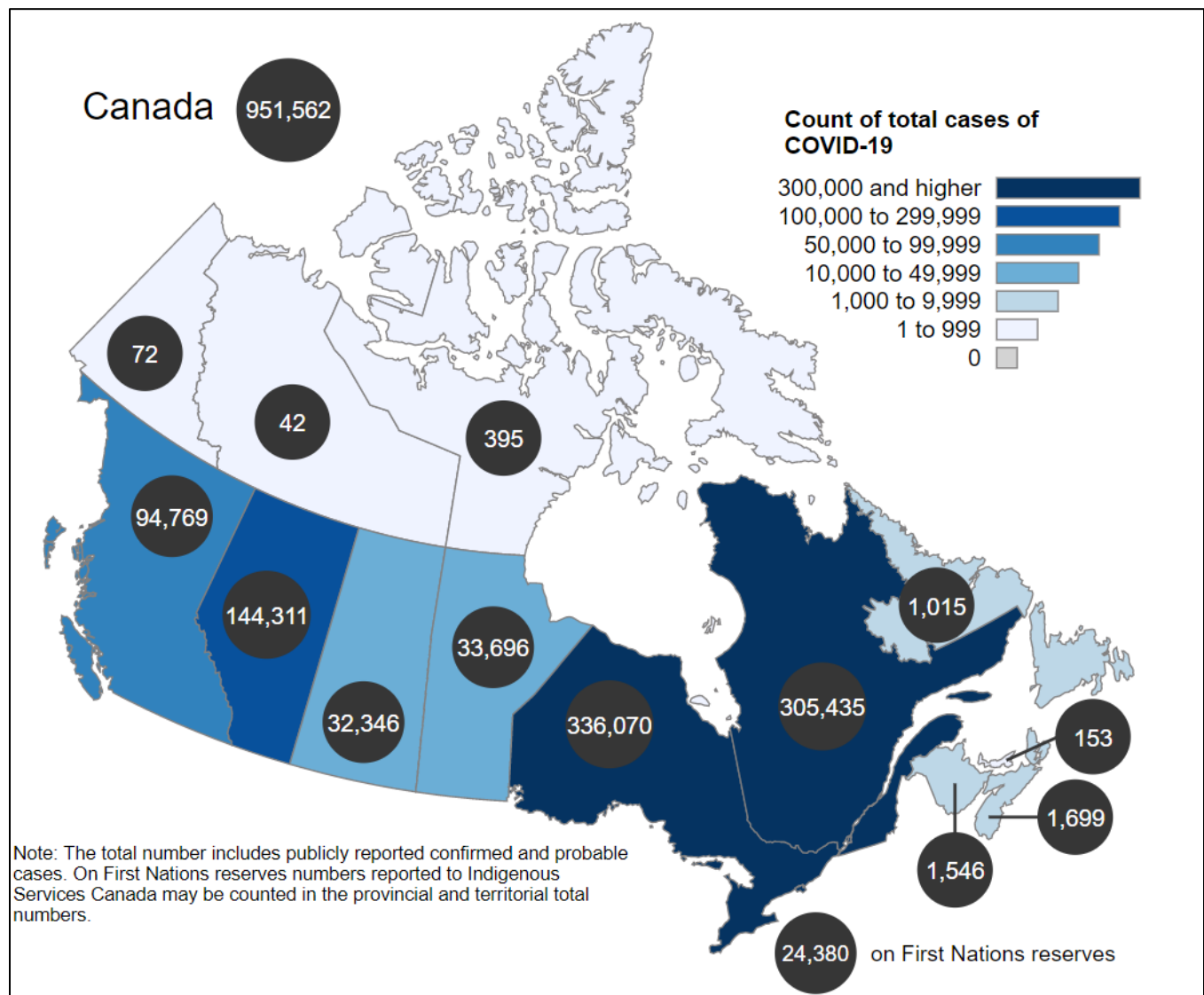
"The government condemns these brutal acts perpetrated by individuals who know neither faith nor the law," the government spokesman said. He also announced three days of national mourning starting Tuesday, adding


that the government vowed to reinforce security in the region and bring "the perpetrators of these cowardly and criminal acts" to justice.

- [U.S. and Britain blacklist Myanmar military-controlled companies](#)
- [Myanmar military junta frees hundreds of anti-coup protesters amid silent strike](#)
- [Polish writer Jakub Zulczyk charged for calling President Duda a 'moron'](#)

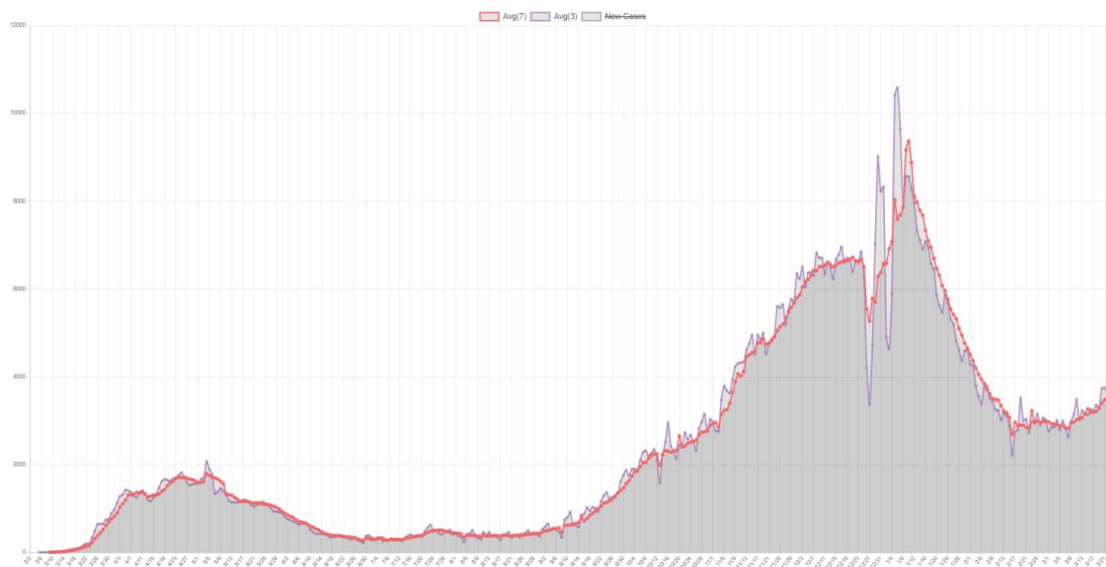
3. CANADA

3.1 COVID UPDATE



Prov.	Total Confirmed	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Total Active
Total	954,687 ([±] 3,119)	22,809 ([±] 19)	892,282 ([±] 2,427)	39,596 ([±] 673)
BC	94,769	1,446	87,351	5,972
ON	338,239 ([±] 2,169)	7,292 ([±] 12)	314,384 ([±] 1,675)	16,563 ([±] 482)
QC	306,385 ([±] 980)	10,637 ([±] 7)	288,384 ([±] 732)	7,364 ([±] 191)
AB	144,311	1,976	135,500	6,835
MB	33,696	929	31,658	1,109
NB	1,546	30	1,426	90
SK	32,346	422	30,301	1,623
PEI	153	0	144	9
NL	1,015	6	1,004	5
NS	1,699	66	1,608	25
YT	73	1	71	1
NT	47	0	47	0
NU	395	4	391	0
	13	0	13	0
Rate of change	↑ 0.3%	↑ 0.1%	↑ 0.3%	↑ 1.7%

Prov.	Total Test	Total Waiting	Total Hosp	Total ICU
Total	27,568,142 ([±] 53,438)	-	-	-
BC	2,140,088	-	306	79
ON	12,311,868 ([±] 83,436)	37,364 ([±] 448)	913 ([±] 19)	359 ([±] 27)
QC	7,328,431	-	496	117
AB	3,639,307	-	294	55
MB	571,588	-	61	14
NB	248,551	-	3	0
SK	643,629	-	154	22
PEI	117,555	-	-	-
NL	123,065	-	0	0
NS	410,154	-	0	0
YT	8,396	22	-	-
NT	15,784	15	0	0
NU	9,726	281	0	0
Rate of change	↑ 0.2%	-	-	-



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

3.2 COVID-19 Canada News

- [B.C. accelerates vaccine timeline for extremely clinically vulnerable, seniors](#)
- [Undocumented workers worry that getting the COVID-19 vaccine could lead to unwanted immigration woes](#)
- [WestJet resuming regional routes suspended due to COVID-19](#)
- [Alberta expands rapid testing program as province reports 197 new variant cases](#)
- [Government says COVID-19 vaccine shipments to Canada won't be affected by possible EU restrictions](#)

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said today he is "concerned" by the threat of export restrictions being imposed by the European Union but insisted his government would work hard to ensure vaccine doses continue to flow into Canada. "We are concerned with the new reports of restrictions out of the EU — or potential restrictions out of the EU — and we will be continuing to work with our counterparts, including direct contact from me to the highest levels of the European Commission, in order to ensure that Canada's supply of vaccines is not in danger, is not interrupted," Trudeau told the House of Commons today.

The prime minister was responding to the Commission's plans to strengthen existing export controls that would require evaluation of export licences for vaccines based on two factors: the destination country's vaccination rates and their willingness to export vaccines, or the raw materials to produce them, to the EU.

The proposed new measures will be discussed Thursday by EU leaders and will come into effect unless they are opposed by a "qualified majority" of member states — 55 per cent of EU member states representing 65 per cent of the EU's population.

"Pfizer is deeply concerned by any legislation that threatens our ability to manufacture in, or export from, the European Union," said Christina Antoniou, Pfizer's director of corporate affairs.

- [Manitoba hits pause on expanding vaccine eligibility as appointments fill up](#)
- [Friends and family can visit loved ones in long-term care in B.C. as of April 1](#)

Friends and family of people in long-term care facilities in B.C. will be able to visit their loved ones again as of next Thursday. Provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said that all residents can have frequent and routine opportunities for social visitation, starting April 1. Visits of over one hour are permitted and can occur without

staff monitoring. Physical touch is allowed, subject to appropriate infection prevention and control measures like mask-wearing. However, a visit must be limited to two adults and one child at a time and must be booked in advance. These visits will be permitted within a resident's room.

Earlier this week Vaccine timeline moved up for B.C. residents with serious existing medical conditions. The British Columbia government says it is accelerating the timeline for the COVID-19 vaccine once again, allowing people who are "extremely clinically vulnerable," as well as some seniors, to book their shots earlier than expected. The release says the new timeline means that about 200,000 people in B.C. aged 16 years or older who are clinically extremely vulnerable will receive their first dose of vaccine in the coming weeks.

- [Ontario tops 2,000 COVID-19 cases for first time since Jan. 30](#)

3.3 Canada Awareness

- [Thousands march in Montreal to denounce the rise of anti-Asian hate crime](#)
- [Homeless shelter future fuels simmering dispute between province, Penticton council](#)
- [The Supreme Court rules Canada's carbon price is constitutional](#)

In a landmark decision for climate action in Canada, the Supreme Court ruled Thursday that Ottawa has the power to impose a carbon price across the country as a "matter of national concern."

The majority ruling from Canada's top court marks a major victory for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government, which staked the success of its climate plan on Ottawa's authority to ensure there is a minimum price on greenhouse gas emissions in every province and territory. Provinces that resisted and maligned the policy as a "job-killing tax on everything" will now have to follow Ottawa's lead as the Liberal government prepares to raise Canada's carbon pricing floor from the current \$30 per tonne to \$170 per tonne in 2030.

In a statement Thursday, Conservative party leader O'Toole repeated his promise to craft a "comprehensive" climate plan but stuck to his pledge to scrap "Justin Trudeau's Carbon Tax" if his party wins the next federal election.

"The Supreme Court recognized that policies related to emission reduction touch on federal and provincial jurisdiction. Conservatives prefer a collaborative approach to tackling climate change to make progress while also helping maintain a strong economy," O'Toole's statement said.

- [Canada announces new sanctions on Russia, Kremlin vows response](#)

Canada's foreign ministry says it is imposing new sanctions on nine Russian officials over "gross and systematic violations of human rights in Russia", prompting the Kremlin to vow a response against Canada.

Global Affairs Canada said on Wednesday the sanctions were part of a diplomatic effort to pressure senior Russian officials over "the attempted murder" and detention of prominent critic Alexey Navalny, and the treatment of citizen protesters.

Canada said its sanctions were in line with actions previously taken by the European Union and the United States. The Kremlin said on Wednesday that Moscow would respond to Canada's decision to impose what it described as illegal sanctions on Russia, the RIA news agency reported.

Russia's main exports to Canada are: fuels and oils, rubber, fertilizer products, precious metals, isotopes, wood, iron, steel, copper, nuclear reactors, machinery and electronic equipment. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the sanctions illegal and said Putin had no plans to speak by phone to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

- [RBC Calls for Policy Response as Canadian Housing Market Becomes “National Concern”](#)
- [21-year-old and 15-year-old charged with first-degree murder in death of B.C. woman](#)
- [Quebec tables \\$12.3-billion deficit budget, says balance will take another 6 years](#)

3.4 Canada – Political Extremism, Civil Unrest and Activism

Activist Activity in Canada: 18 -25 March

Overview:

During the week of 18-25 March 2021, activist activity in Canada noted by Welund increased from the previous week, with the majority of activity taking place in the government sector (73%), followed by forestry (8%). Protests made up the majority of activity (70%), followed by critical commentary (8%).

Anti-lockdown groups in Canada participated in the ‘Worldwide Rally for Freedom and Democracy’ global day of action on 20 March. Coordinated solidarity events were held in major cities and townships in every province. Some events attracted crowds of over a thousand protesters who marched through, or assembled at, city halls, federal buildings, central parks, or high traffic public spaces.

Environmental and climate groups also participated in a day of action on 19 March in solidarity with the Fridays for Future ‘Climate Strike’. Activists participated in the event with a series of in-person and virtual events focused on a variety of campaigns such as fossil fuel divestment, anti-oil and gas infrastructure, and the creation of climate change mitigation legislation at all levels of government.

Protests:

The ‘Worldwide Rally for Freedom and Democracy’ opposing covid-19 restrictions in Canada accounted for more than half of the protests noted by Welund this week. The majority of these protests were held in Quebec, followed by Ontario and BC. Nearly every major city across the country had a planned solidarity action, some of which attracted a large number of anti-lockdown activists due to the partnership between the movement and already-established anti-lockdown groups.

Event organizers in Calgary claimed more than 3,000 individuals from across Alberta attended a rally at Prince’s Island Park. In Kelowna, BC, a group of approximately 700 anti-lockdown activists were met by a smaller group of counter-protesters, who accused the main group of rallying in support of ‘white supremacy’ and racism, rather than just to oppose covid-19 restrictions. In Mississauga, anti-lockdown activists held a ‘mock trial’ of Mayor Bonnie Crombie. Organizers explained that the group gathered to ‘arrest’ the Mayor; they attempted to serve her with a summons to appear at the mock ‘common law court’ being held in the plaza across from city hall.

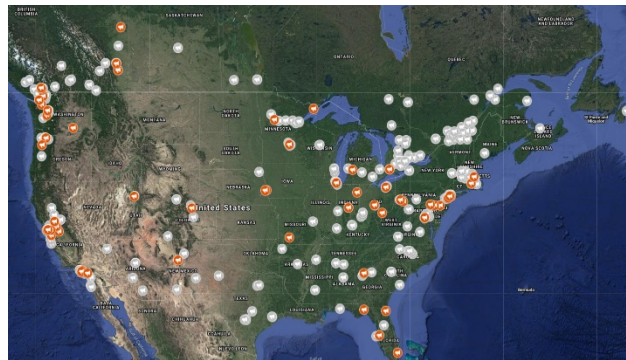


Figure 1: Past and upcoming protest activity as noted by Welund between 17-31 March 2021

The Fridays for Future ‘Climate Strike’ also attracted a series of in-person and virtual direct actions across Canada. The Toronto chapter of Fridays for Future blockaded an intersection near City Hall for approximately 2 hours. Activists held banners and signs, hosted speakers, and wrote climate legislation demands in chalk on the street. In Vancouver, campaigners used the day of action to protest in solidarity with Indigenous activists opposing the Trans Mountain (TMX) pipeline project. The protest was held outside of Environment Canada’s downtown office.

Anti-TMX activists in Burnaby have also welcomed a new activist at the anti-TMX tree-sit at the Holmes Creek Camp. Maureen Curran temporarily replaced long-time tree-sit occupant Timothee Govare. Activists continued their heavy presence at the camp, despite TMX workers continuing with tree-cutting and other construction preparation activities.

Outlook:

Extinction Rebellion Vancouver will host its ‘Spring Rebellion’ starting on 1 May 2021. The event will include a week of “major direct action” in the Vancouver area, although specific details have yet to be released. Its members and supporters intend to march from Vancouver to Victoria on 16-19 April to advertise the ‘Spring Rebellion’ event. XR Vancouver also intends to engage in a bridge occupation on 27 March. It executed a banner drop on 24 March to raise awareness for its plan to occupy the Cambie Bridge to oppose logging in BC’s old growth forests and demand climate action from the Canadian government.

Indigenous activists have planned a march in Calgary on 27 March to oppose mining projects on the Eastern Slopes. Organizers explained that the group would meet at Reconciliation Bridge but have yet to announce a protest route.

Anti-lockdown groups in Canada have asserted that they will return to their weekly protest schedule after participating in the Worldwide Rally for Democracy and Freedom actions.



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

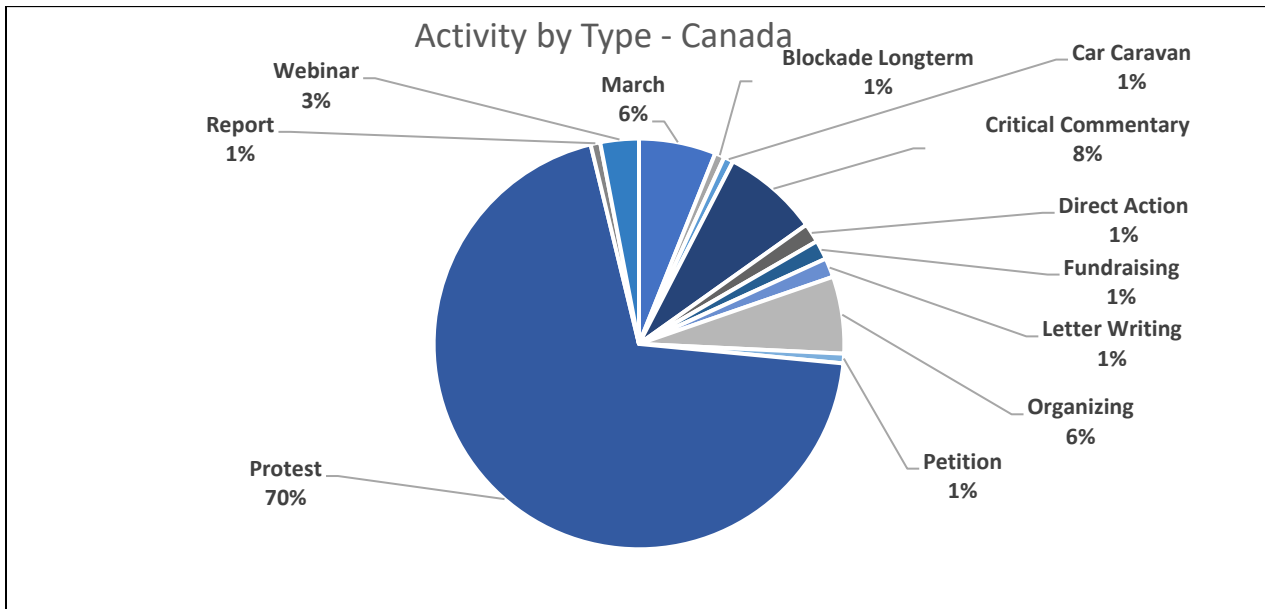


Figure 3 Activist activity in Canada by type as noted by Welund

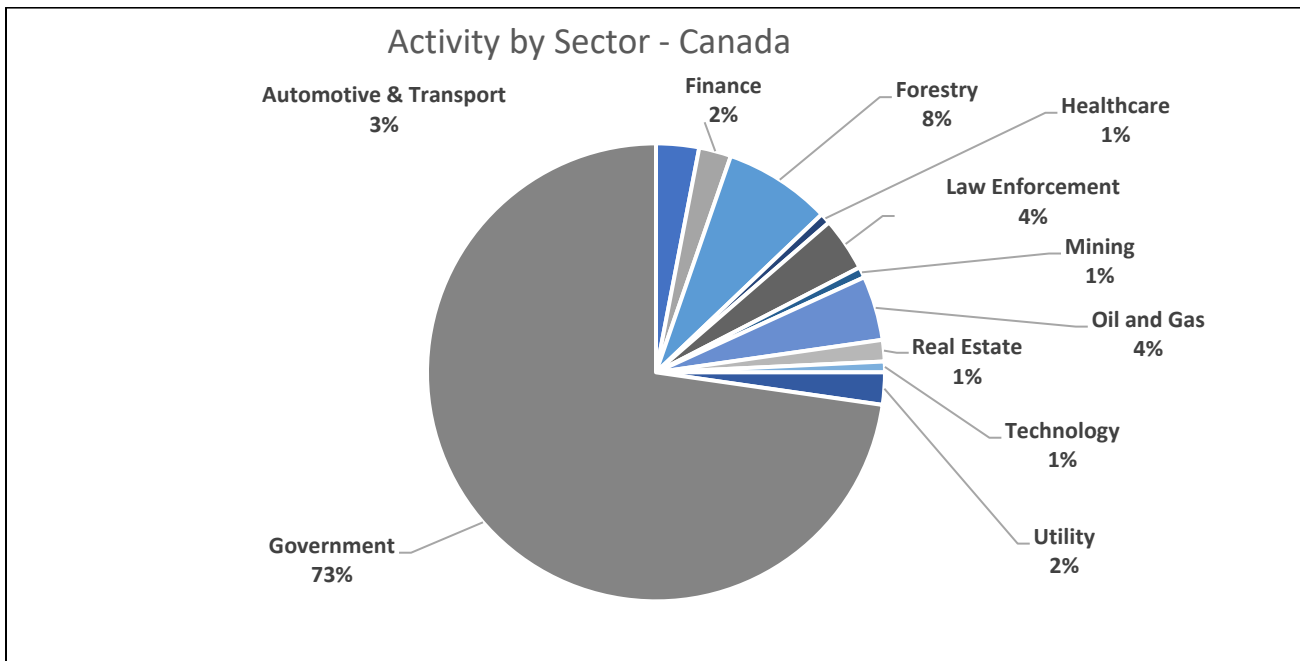
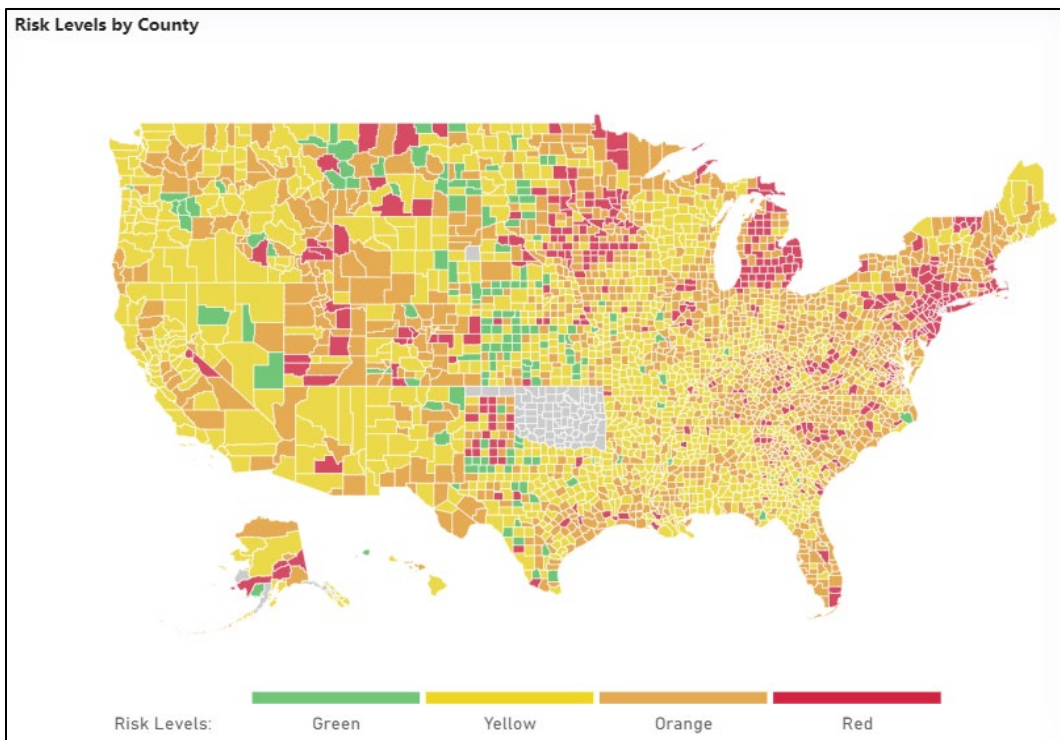
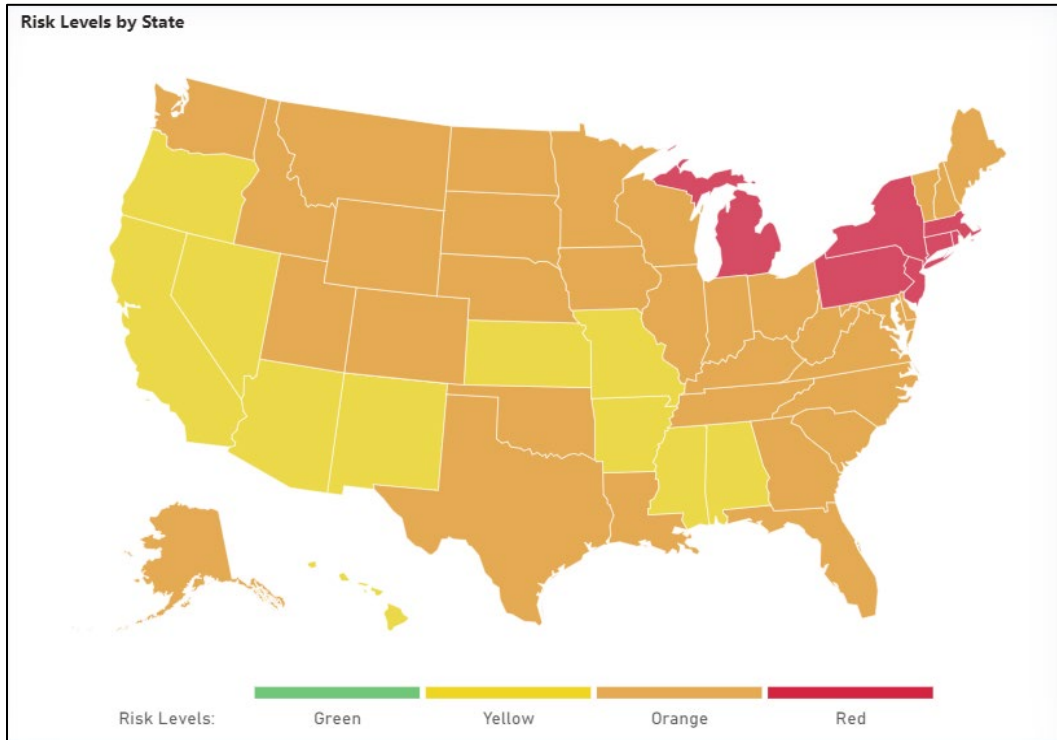


Figure 4 Activist activity in Canada by sector as noted by Welund.

4. USA

4.1 COVID UPDATE



#	USA State	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
	USA Total	30,774,033	+67,046	559,744	+1,165	23,196,209	7,018,080	92,972	1,691	395,353,300	1,194,411	
1	California	3,653,628	+2,491	58,060	+242	1,930,366	1,665,202	92,468	1,469	52,765,254	1,335,416	39,512,223
2	New York	1,865,527	+8,379	50,093	+78	1,027,693	787,741	95,896	2,575	43,570,161	2,239,701	19,453,561
3	Florida	2,027,429	+5,773	32,975	+101	1,438,338	556,116	94,397	1,535	24,831,158	1,156,135	21,477,737
4	Virginia	610,263	+1,559	10,147	+4	50,937	549,179	71,497	1,189	8,244,242	965,875	8,535,519
5	Georgia	1,051,361	+1,964	18,751	+91	641,965	390,645	99,022	1,766	8,188,435	771,226	10,617,423
6	Maryland	403,982	+1,382	8,217	+3	9,800	385,965	66,822	1,359	8,591,384	1,421,078	6,045,680
7	Kentucky	423,414	+720	5,970	+19	49,349	368,095	94,773	1,336	4,821,543	1,079,207	4,467,673
8	New Jersey	881,882	+3,946	24,330	+38	664,017	193,535	99,287	2,739	11,779,921	1,326,241	8,882,190
9	Alabama	513,138	+427	10,504	+17	315,743	186,891	104,654	2,142	2,517,043	513,349	4,903,185
10	Washington	361,629	+1,081	5,266	+15	178,066	178,297	47,490	692	5,777,929	758,767	7,614,893
11	Missouri	573,487	+1,340	8,987		409,324	155,176	93,441	1,464	6,044,720	984,895	6,137,428
12	Michigan	712,393	+5,843	17,003	+54	562,775	132,615	71,333	1,703	11,829,990	1,184,556	9,986,857
13	Colorado	454,893	+1,373	6,191	+8	316,999	131,703	78,992	1,075	2,696,981	468,329	5,758,736
14	Rhode Island	135,290	+483	2,607	+1	8,240	124,443	127,709	2,461	3,417,515	3,226,015	1,059,361
15	Texas	2,775,010	+3,280	48,060	+133	2,620,463	106,487	95,704	1,657	25,120,308	866,341	28,995,881

4.2 COVID-19 USA News

- [Miami Beach declares state of emergency over spring break crowds](#)
- [Covid: AstraZeneca vaccine 79% effective with no increased blood clot risk – US trial](#)
- [Top Fox Business Producer Eric Spinato Dies Of COVID-19](#)
- [California to open vaccinations to everyone 16 and older](#)
- [New York City looks to reopen Broadway in September; city launches vaccine, testing plan](#)
- [National Guard troops ambushed at gunpoint while transporting coronavirus vaccine, police say](#)

A man in Texas, armed with a loaded pistol, allegedly barreled down the highway in pursuit of Texas National Guard members, furious about the imagined cargo. The soldiers were transporting coronavirus vaccine to a town 80 miles away, authorities said. But Larry Harris, a 66-year-old Arizona man, later told police he thought the three unmarked white vans were involved in the kidnapping of a woman and child.

Harris tried to run the vans off the road, then swerved into oncoming traffic to stop them before ordering 11 soldiers out at gunpoint, culminating in a bizarre moment that left them shaken on the side of a small-town highway road, said Idalou Police Chief Eric C. Williams.

It appeared Harris pursued the soldiers almost as soon as they left an armory in Lubbock. They stopped at a gas station across the highway for drinks, Williams said, and Harris followed the convoy from there.

After he stopped the vans, Harris pointed a .45-caliber pistol at one of the soldiers, said he was a detective and ordered the soldiers out of the vehicles, Williams said. One of the soldiers called 911, and Idalou officers arrived a few minutes later and arrested Harris without incident. Harris had another pistol magazine in a pocket and a third magazine in his truck, along with more ammunition. None of the soldiers was armed, Williams said, which is typical for domestic responses, such as coronavirus-related missions.

4.3 USA Awareness

- [U.S., allies announce sanctions on China over Uyghur 'genocide'](#)

The United States and its allies in Canada, Britain and the European Union on Monday announced sanctions on several Chinese officials alleged to have links to what U.S. officials say is a genocidal campaign against Uyghur Muslims. "Amid growing international condemnation, the [People's Republic of China] continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity" in the Xinjiang region, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement. The U.S. sanctions targeted two individuals: Wang Junzheng, the secretary of the Party Committee of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, and Chen Mingguo, director of the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau. China immediately sanctioned several EU members including 5 MEPs and 2 NGOs.

- [New York makes complaint records of 83,000 police officers available to public](#)

- [Suspect in Colorado grocery store shooting faces 10 counts of murder, police say](#)

- [U.S. SEC begins roll-out of law aimed at delisting Chinese firms](#)

- [Biden to unveil multitrillion-dollar infrastructure plan in Pittsburgh next week](#)

- [Biden holds 1st formal news conference, faces questions on agenda, migrant surge](#)

President Joe Biden held his first formal news conference Thursday -- much later than his last 15 predecessors and one that looked sharply different because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While previous news conferences saw rooms packed with the White House press corps, Biden's had only 30 reporters socially distanced in the White House East Room. He began by announcing he's now set a new goal of 200 million vaccine doses by the end of his first 100 days in office, after passing his original goal of 100 million doses last week on Day 58.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection has struggled to handle the influx of unaccompanied minors crossing the border, which is only expected to increase in coming months, and news media access to the facilities housing children has been extremely limited and tightly controlled. When asked whether his and his administration's messaging was leading to the migrant surge, Biden pushed back, saying the influx happens every year. He also contended many of the current problems were prompted by the failures of former President Donald Trump. Also asked about was the politically fraught issue of gun control, after a mass shooting in Atlanta left eight people dead last week and 10 were killed during a shooting in a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado, on Monday. Biden has called on Congress to take action, but has yet to put forward his own legislation on gun control -- despite a campaign pledge to send a bill to Congress on his first day in office to repeal liability protections for gun manufacturers and close background check loopholes.

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

Activist Activity in the US: 18 -25 March

Overview:

During the week of 18-25 March 2021, the majority of activist activity in the US noted by Welund took place in the government sector (59%), followed by oil and gas (9%), and finance (5%). Protests made up most activity (65%), followed by webinars (6%) and organizing (6%).

The overall increase in activity this week can be attributed to an increase in protests related to the ongoing Defund Line 3 campaign, protests in solidarity with Amazon workers in Alabama, the Worldwide Rally for Freedom, and the 19 March global climate strike.

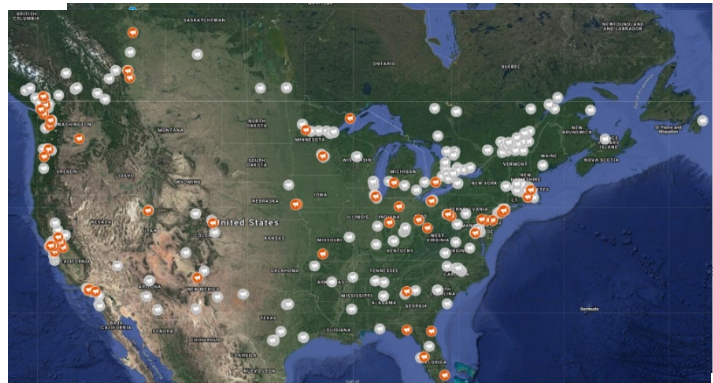
Stop the Money Pipeline's (STMP) 'Defund Line 3' campaign continues to target the financial institutions invested in Enbridge and the Line 3 pipeline. On 19 March, STMP held a webinar to build support for anti-Line 3 pipeline campaigns in Minnesota. A fundraiser circulated during the webinar raised over \$10,000 in the first hour. Over 400 individuals participated in the webinar.

Immigrant rights activists have increased pressure on the Biden administration to take action on the crisis at the border and the detention of immigrants. Recently, this has been overshadowed by two mass shootings in Atlanta, Georgia and Boulder, Colorado.

Protests:

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

Protests and direct actions have continued in northern Minnesota where construction of Line 3 is underway. Jane Fonda's attendance at an anti-Line 3 gathering has continued to garner publicity and focus attention to the fight against the pipeline.



Past (grey) and upcoming (red) protest activity as noted by Welund between 17-31 March.

On 19 March 2021, climate activists held protests around the world as part of a 'global climate strike'. The protests focused on local, state, and federal government buildings. On 20 March, Support Alabama Amazon Union (SAAU) held an international day of action to support Amazon workers voting to unionize at the company's BHM1 Fulfillment Center in Bessemer, Alabama. Protest actions took place in several cities across the US, at Amazon warehouses and distribution facilities, as well as at Amazon-owned Whole Foods. Also, on 20 March, prominent anti-lockdown campaign groups from around the world partnered with the 'Worldwide Rally for Freedom' (WRF) day-of-action against covid-19 restrictions.

Complete details on upcoming protests as of 25 March can be requested [here](#).

Outlook:

On 27 March, Answer Coalition and other groups have called for a 'national day of action' in the US to protest against racism against Asian Americans. Welund has observed an increase in activity from Asian American activist campaigns in response to the 16 March shooting in Atlanta.

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

On 1-9 April the Build Back Fossil Free (BBFF) campaign will host a 'week of action' to "escalate the demand for President Joe Biden to be a real Climate President." Actions, including "banner drops and virtual lobbying, to murals and projections," will take place across the US during the week.

Welund expects additional actions against banks to continue throughout the month of March as part of the Defund Line 3 campaign.



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

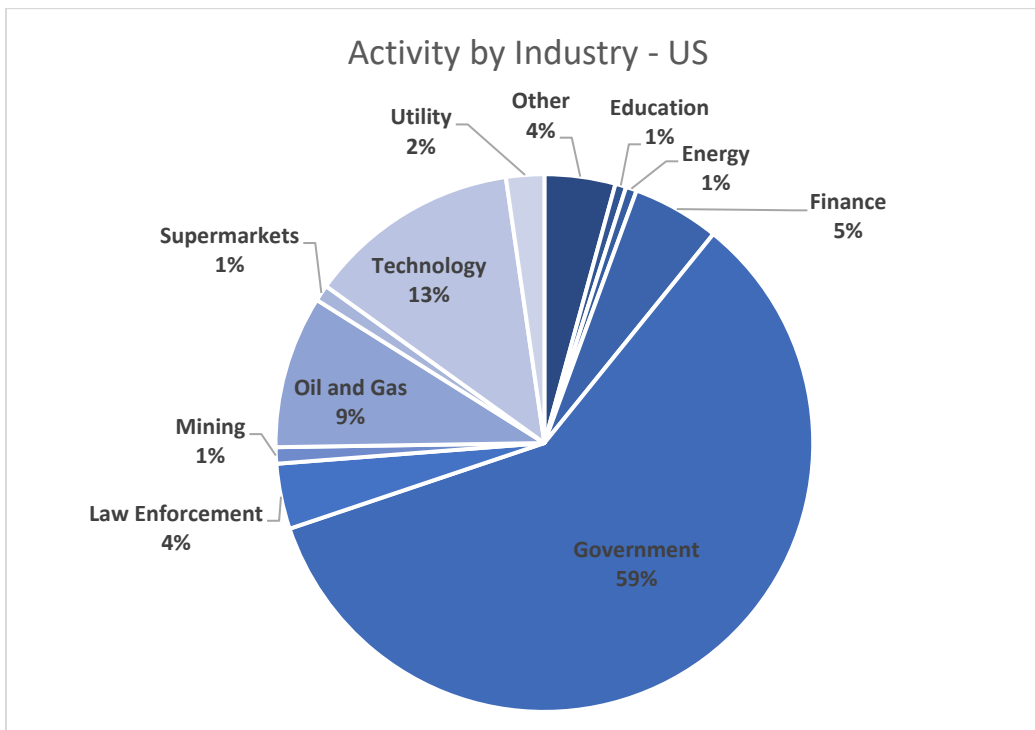


Figure 6 Activist activity in the US by industry as noted by Welund

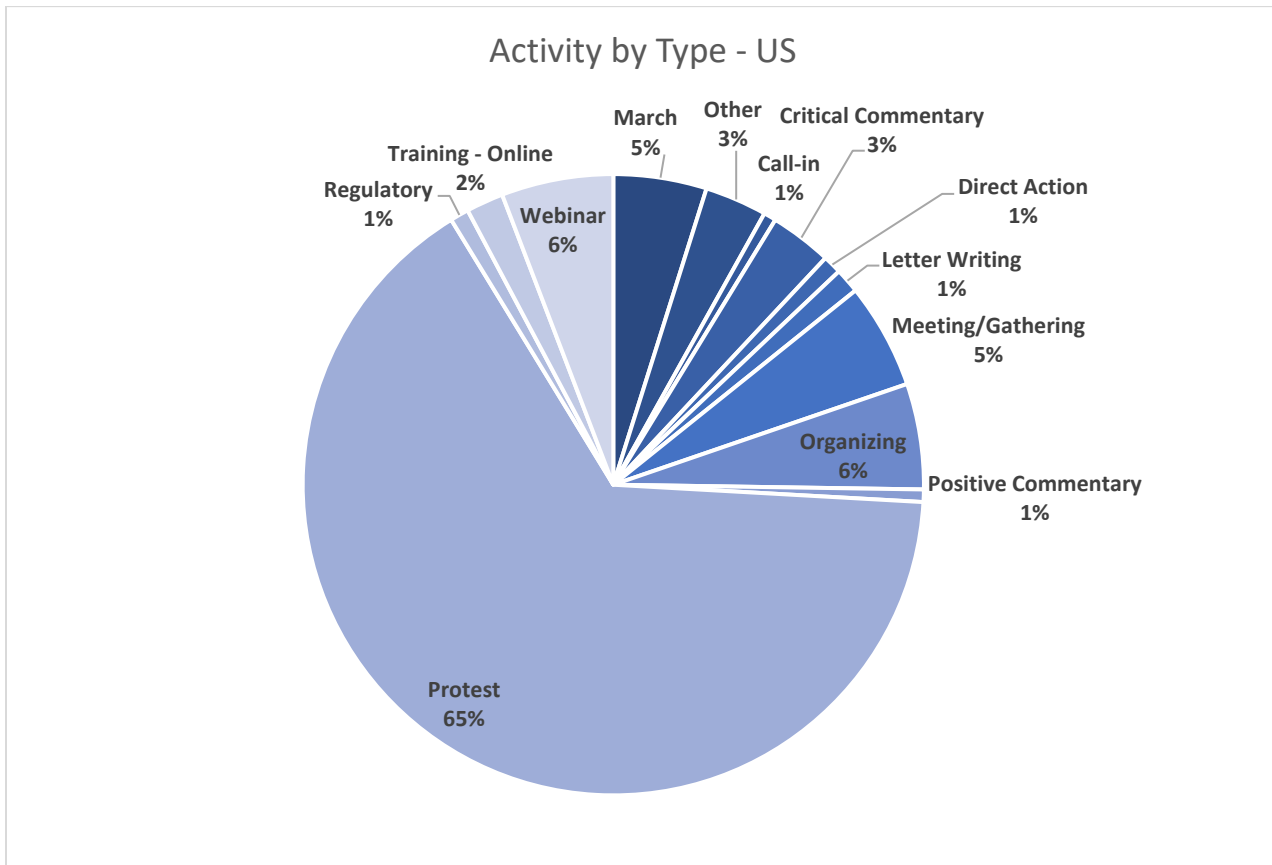



Figure 7 Activist activity in the US by type as noted by Welund.

End Report

Please submit feedback to:

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