

COMMITTEE: GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TOPIC: Fulfilling the 2030 SDG Agenda in the post COVID-19 world

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

The coronavirus pandemic has shown us a new world; one where the status quo no longer exists. Millions of people are experiencing untold misery and suffering as the virus overwhelms our bodies and economies. Rich and poor, the pandemic has forced us to reconsider almost every aspect of how we live.

And COVID-19's reach is only just beginning to be felt. UNDP estimates global human development—a combination of education, health, and living standards—could fall this year for the first time since 1990, when measurements began. But also the pandemic presents both an enormous challenge and tremendous opportunities for reaching 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

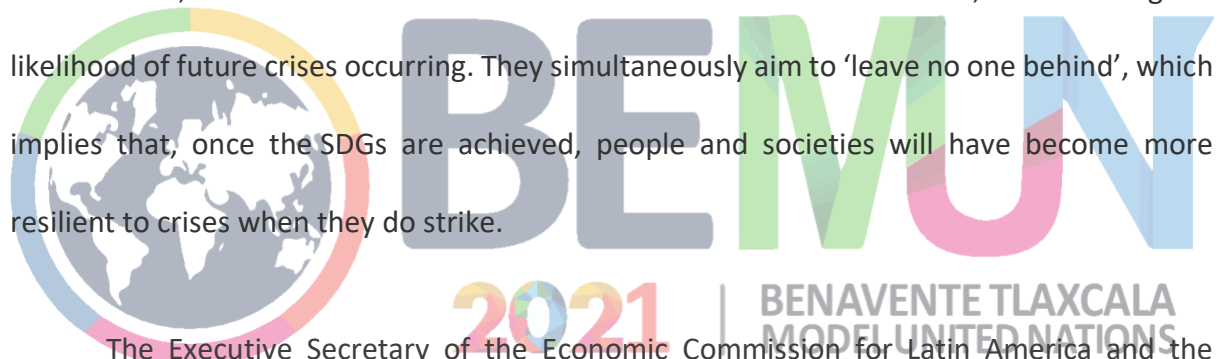
The SDGs provide a realistic approach to navigate societies through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the SDG agenda is not without flaws. Even before the pandemic, progress towards achieving the SDGs has been too slow. It is our mission to re-establish and adapt possible solutions to achieve these goals before it is too late for our planet and our race.

INTRODUCTION

The SDGs were promoted as a “blueprint for shared prosperity in a sustainable world – a world where all people can live productive, vibrant and peaceful lives on a healthy planet”

(UN, 2019). And while the SDGs originated in international public policy, they directly affect the operations of companies. The SDGs translate imminent sustainability risks, societal needs, and global ambitions into ‘business solutions’ for sustainability. In the words of former Unilever CEO Paul Polman: “SDGs provide the world’s long-term business plan by putting people and the planet first. It’s the growth story of our time.”

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, the United Nations raised the stakes for the SDGs. It views the SDGs as “vital for a [COVID-19] recovery that leads to greener, more inclusive economies, and stronger, more resilient societies”. Achieving the SDGs would bring about a safer, more stable world with fewer natural and manmade hazards, thus lowering the likelihood of future crises occurring. They simultaneously aim to ‘leave no one behind’, which implies that, once the SDGs are achieved, people and societies will have become more resilient to crises when they do strike.



The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Alicia Bárcena stated: “The post COVID-19 world necessitates a new global and regional compact to fulfill the 2030 Agenda. Humanity has to provide global public goods such as health, peace, financial stability and climate security,” ECLAC’s Executive Secretary stated. “We need industrial policies that allow for strengthening productive capacities and generating new strategic sectors, and to move towards greater productive, trade and technological integration with technological research networks.”

“We must also strive for a new universal social protection system with a basic income, which creates certainty among citizens, and towards inclusive and sustainable international governance based on the 2030 Agenda,” she emphasized.

TIME LINE

31 DECEMBER 2019 – Wuhan Municipal Health Commission, China reported a cluster of cases of pneumonia in Wuhan, Hubei Province. A novel coronavirus was eventually identified.

7 January 2020 - New Scientist reports on mysterious illness. *New Scientist* reports for the first time about 59 cases of a mysterious pneumonia-like illness in China, linked to a wet market in Wuhan. The affected individuals became ill between 12 and 29 December 2019.

9 January 2020 - A novel coronavirus is identified

11 January 2020 - The world records its first coronavirus death

23 January 2020 - Lockdowns begin. Wuhan is put under a strict lockdown by the Chinese government. All travel in and out of the city is prohibited.

25 January 2020 - The coronavirus makes it to Europe. The first case of coronavirus in Europe is confirmed in France. The UK reports its first case on 31 January.

February 2020

The disease is named. WHO names the disease caused by the coronavirus “covid-19” or “coronavirus disease 2019”, after the year the first cases were reported.

15 February - First death recorded outside Asia

20 February - The Middle East begins to bear the brunt. Iran records its first covid-19 deaths and imposes emergency measures in the affected province. These are the first deaths reported in the Middle East.

21 February - Europe’s lockdowns begin

29 February - The US records its first death

9 March - The start of nationwide lockdowns. Italy becomes the first European country to impose a nationwide lockdown. Sports events are postponed, schools and universities closed and over 60 million people ordered to stay at home.

11 March - WHO declares covid-19 a pandemic. Tedros Ghebreyesus, director general of the WHO, says “WHO has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming levels of spread and severity. We have therefore made the assessment that covid-19 can be characterised as a pandemic.”

13 March - US declares a state of emergency. President Trump declares a national emergency in the US.

17 March - A potential vaccine offers hope. Europe closes its borders. The world’s first human trial of a covid-19 vaccine, an mRNA vaccine developed by US biotechnology company Moderna, begins.

3 April - One million cases. Global cases reach one million as the US records the most daily deaths from covid-19 of any country so far. New York City is particularly hard-hit, with hospitals in the city at capacity

8 April - China begins to return to normal. Lockdown is lifted in Wuhan, China, where the first coronavirus cases were detected.

4 May - Europe begins to ease up

22 May - The situation in the Americas gets worse . In Latin America, and especially in Brazil, cases continue to grow. By the end of the month, daily infections in the region overtake those in both Europe and the US as more than 2 million cases are reported.

28 May - US deaths reach 100,000

25 Jun - Cases begin to rise again. WHO warns cases are starting to rise again in Europe, as a result of the easing of restrictions in many countries.

24 July - Masks become mandatory in England

11 August - Russia approves Sputnik V vaccine

29 September - Deaths reach one million. The world reaches a tragic milestone: 1 million deaths caused by covid-19.

21 October - Lockdowns return. Ireland becomes the first European country to impose a second nationwide lockdown. England follows two weeks later.

9 November - Vaccine trials prove successful. Pfizer and BioNTech announce that results from phase III trials show their mRNA vaccine is more than 90 per cent effective at preventing symptomatic covid-19.

2 December 2020 - Vaccines get their first approvals. The UK government becomes the first in the world to authorise the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine.

8 December 2020 - Mass vaccination begins. The UK's mass-vaccination programme begins as over 50 hospitals in the UK start administering the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine to people aged over 80.

14 December 2020 - New variants. A new variant of the coronavirus, possibly associated with a faster spread, is identified in the county of Kent in the UK.

31 December 2020 - Parts of Africa may have to wait years. A WHO report suggests large parts of Africa may not receive covid-19 vaccines for several years.

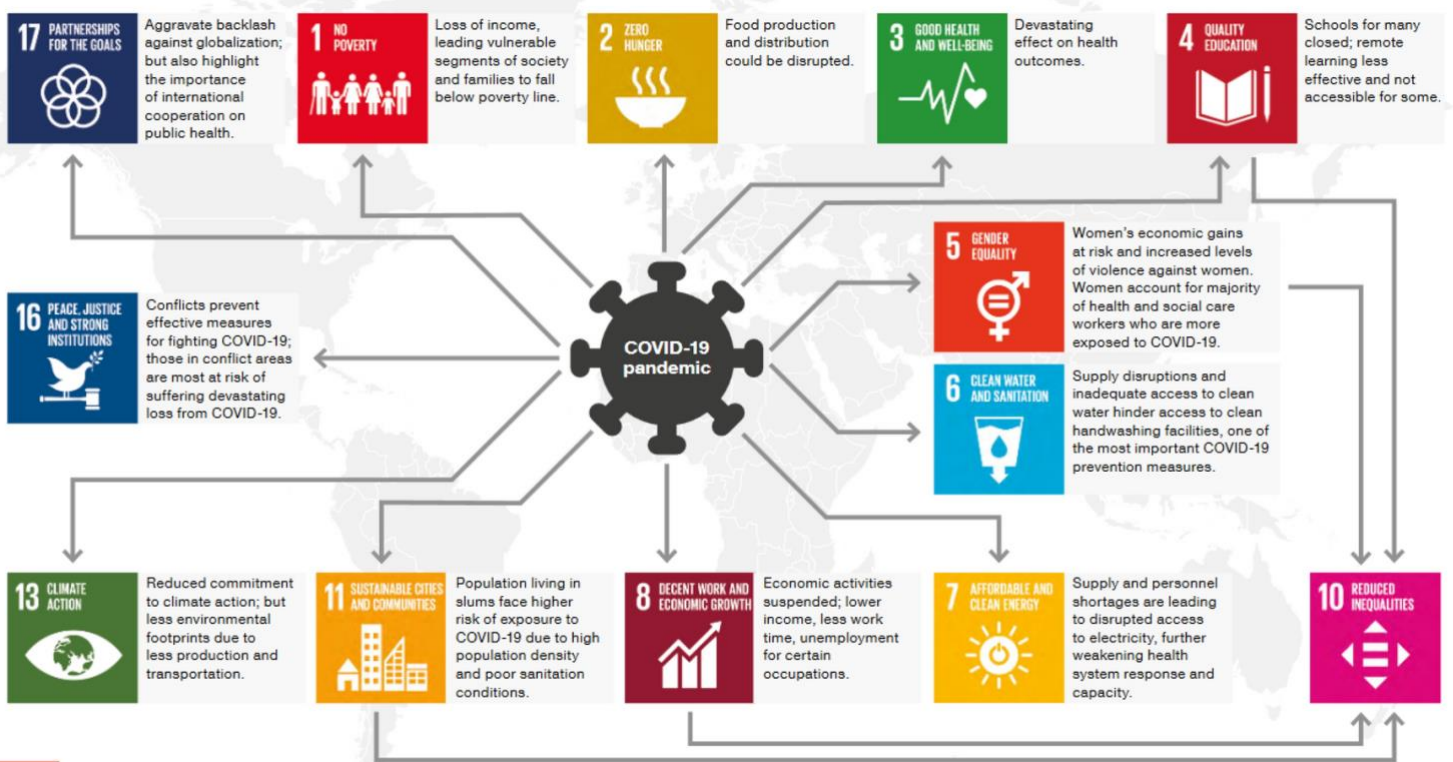
15 January 2021 - 2 million deaths. 2 million people are reported to have died from covid-19 since the pandemic began.

16 February 2021 - Worldwide vaccination. More than 216 million people have now received their first dose worldwide.

1 March 2021 - Staying ahead of the virus. 6 people in the UK test positive for the P.1 coronavirus variant first detected in Brazil. Five of those six had either returned or had close contact with people returning from Brazil. One of several variants, along with the B.1.1.7 and B.1.351 that may be more transmissible, vaccine developers are already modifying existing vaccines to stay ahead of the virus.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROBLEM

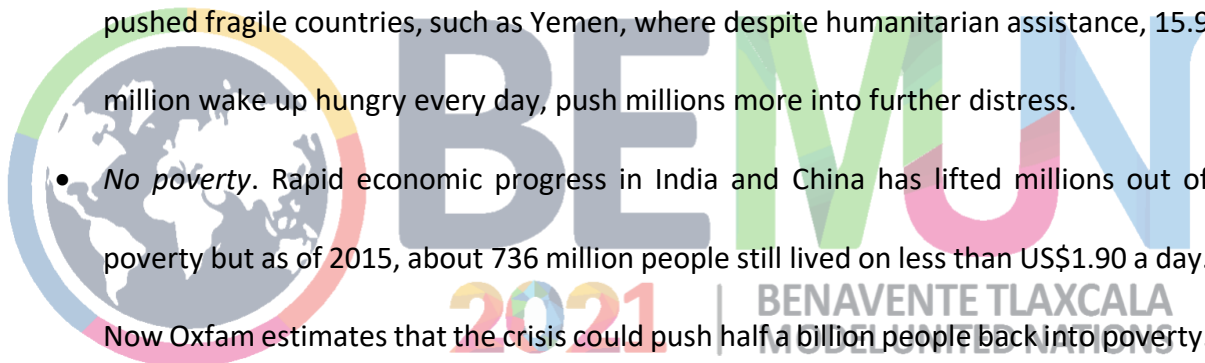
- The historic \$ 16 trillion in stimulus and recovery funds that countries have put in to overcome the coronavirus crisis helped avoid the worst effects, but less than 20% of that sum was spent in developing countries. In January of this year, of the 38 countries that launched vaccination campaigns, only 9 were not developed countries.
- The global economy has experienced the worst recession in 90 years, and the most vulnerable segments of societies are disproportionately affected. More than 60 international agencies ask that funds be dedicated to rebuilding a more just world after the crisis caused by the coronavirus. For this, a higher collection is needed.



- The growing gap between rich and poor countries is worryingly regressive and requires immediate course correction.

CONTROVERSIAL POINTS

- *Good health.* Even before the crisis, the world was off track to ensuring healthcare for everybody by 2030. Now, the impressive gains made in recent years – declining infant and maternal mortality rates, turning the tide on HIV/AIDS and halving malaria deaths – are threatened, and we face possibly alarming setbacks, not just from the disease itself, but the knock-on effects of breaks in vaccination campaigns.
- *No hunger.* The number of undernourished people has dropped by almost half in the past two decades. Central and East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean have all made huge progress. Still, as of 2017 there were 821 million people chronically undernourished. COVID-19 has exposed weaknesses in global supply chains. And it has pushed fragile countries, such as Yemen, where despite humanitarian assistance, 15.9 million wake up hungry every day, push millions more into further distress.
- *No poverty.* Rapid economic progress in India and China has lifted millions out of poverty but as of 2015, about 736 million people still lived on less than US\$1.90 a day. Now Oxfam estimates that the crisis could push half a billion people back into poverty.
- *Decent work.* About 1.6 billion people work in the informal economy – that's about half the global workforce. The International Labour Organization reports that they are in immediate danger of having their livelihoods destroyed. ILO reports that more than one in six young people have lost their jobs since the pandemic began and those that are still at work have seen their hours reduced. It is estimated 114 million jobs have been lost and around 120 million people have undercome in extreme poverty.
- *Quality education.* UNESCO estimates about 1.25 billion students are affected by lockdowns. UNDP estimates 86% of primary school children in developing countries are not being educated. The pandemic has re-emphasized the 'digital divide' and the right to internet access, particularly for those in rural areas. UNDP estimates that



closing the digital divide would reduce by more than two-thirds the number of children not learning because of school closures.

- *Strong institutions.* At least 18 national elections and referendums have already been postponed. Sometimes this can lead to increased risk of unrest. Governments, particularly in fragile contexts are under paralleled pressure to deliver digital services and social protection, and to function in ways that advance social cohesion, while upholding human rights and the rule of law.

INVOLVED COUNTRIES

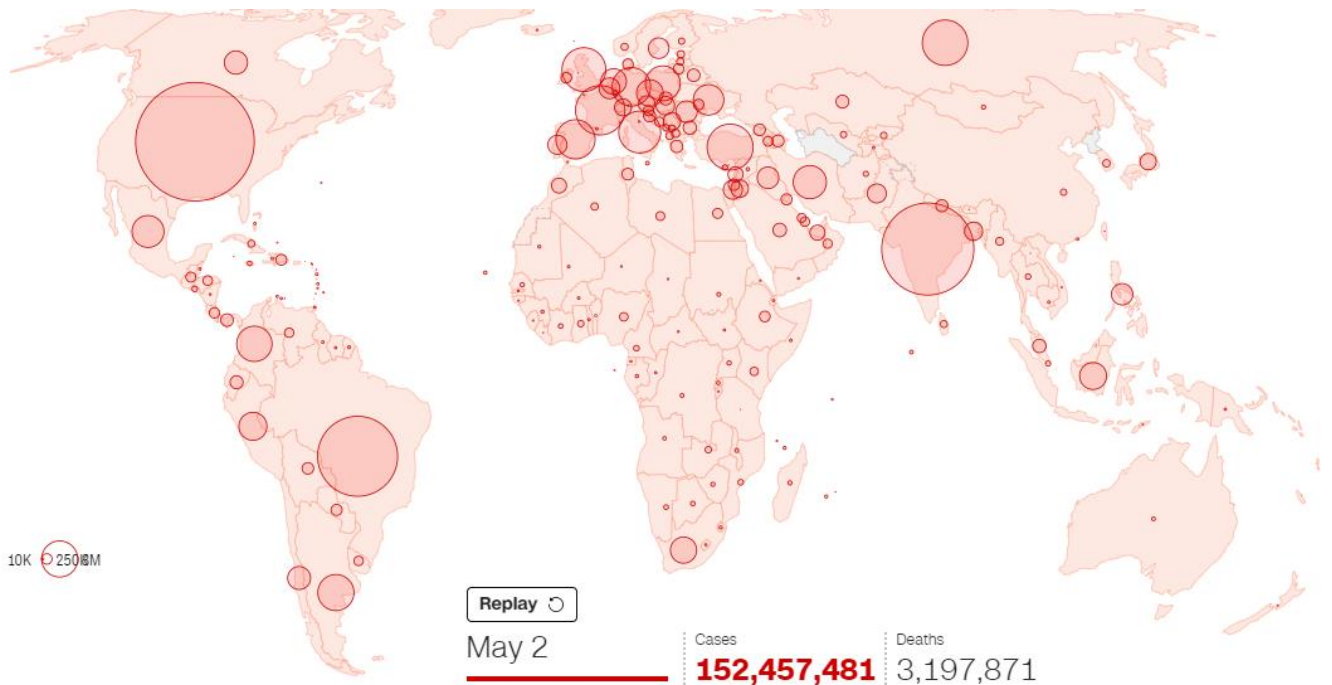


Reported cases and deaths

The figures below are based on data from the [Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering](#). These numbers are updated every 15 minutes but may differ from other sources due to differences in reporting times. For up-to-the-minute updates, [follow our live coverage](#).

Location ↕	Cases ↕	...per 100K people ↕	Deaths ↕	...per 100K people ↕
United States	32,420,079	9,877	577,029	176
India	19,557,457	1,431	215,542	16
Brazil	14,754,910	6,991	407,639	193
France	5,605,532	8,359	104,093	155
Turkey	4,875,388	5,844	40,844	49
Russia	4,768,476	3,303	109,011	76
United Kingdom	4,420,205	6,614	127,538	191
Italy	4,044,762	6,708	121,177	201
Spain	3,524,077	7,486	78,216	166
Germany	3,425,865	4,121	83,215	100
Argentina	3,005,259	6,687	64,252	143
Colombia	2,877,746	5,717	73,992	147
Poland	2,803,233	7,383	68,068	179
Iran	2,534,855	3,057	72,484	87
Mexico	2,347,780	1,840	217,168	170
Ukraine	2,137,959	4,817	46,447	105
Peru	1,804,915	5,552	61,789	190
Indonesia	1,677,274	620	45,796	17
Czech Republic	1,634,114	15,315	29,343	275
South Africa	1,584,064	2,705	54,417	93

Table with reported cases and deaths by coronavirus until May 02, 2021.



Last updated: May 2, 2021 at 7:45 p.m. ET
 Source: Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering

Number of confirmed cases and comparison of infected by country



Daily reported deaths by country

This timeline of new reported deaths shows how countries and regions have been affected so far.

Based on 7-day rolling averages | ↑ Trend in rolling average

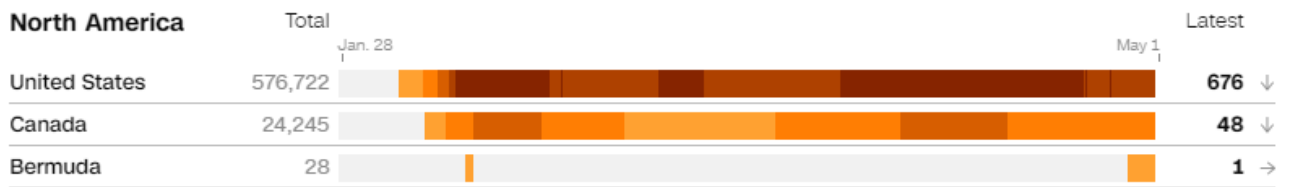


Region	Total	Jan. 28	May 1	Latest
Asia				
India	215,542			3,319 ↑
Iran	72,090			424 ↓
Indonesia	45,652			165 ↓
Turkey	40,504			356 ↑
Pakistan	18,070			153 ↓

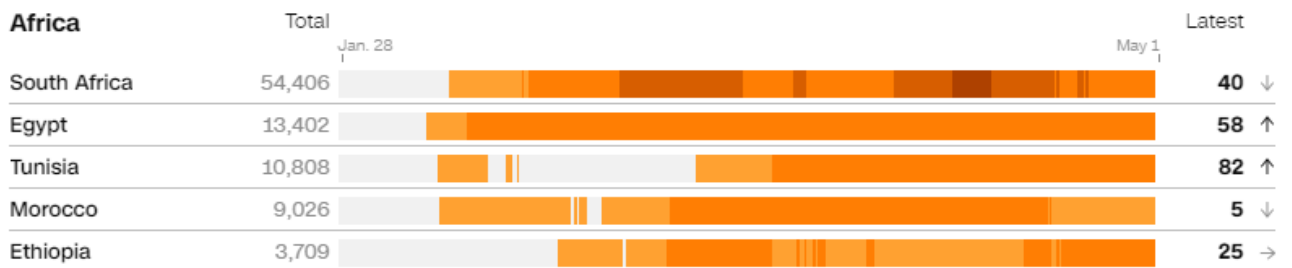
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Region	Total	Jan. 28	May 1	Latest
Europe				
United Kingdom	127,524			15 ↓
Italy	121,033			287 ↓
Russia	108,675			367 →
France	104,007			280 ↓
Germany	83,207			228 ↓

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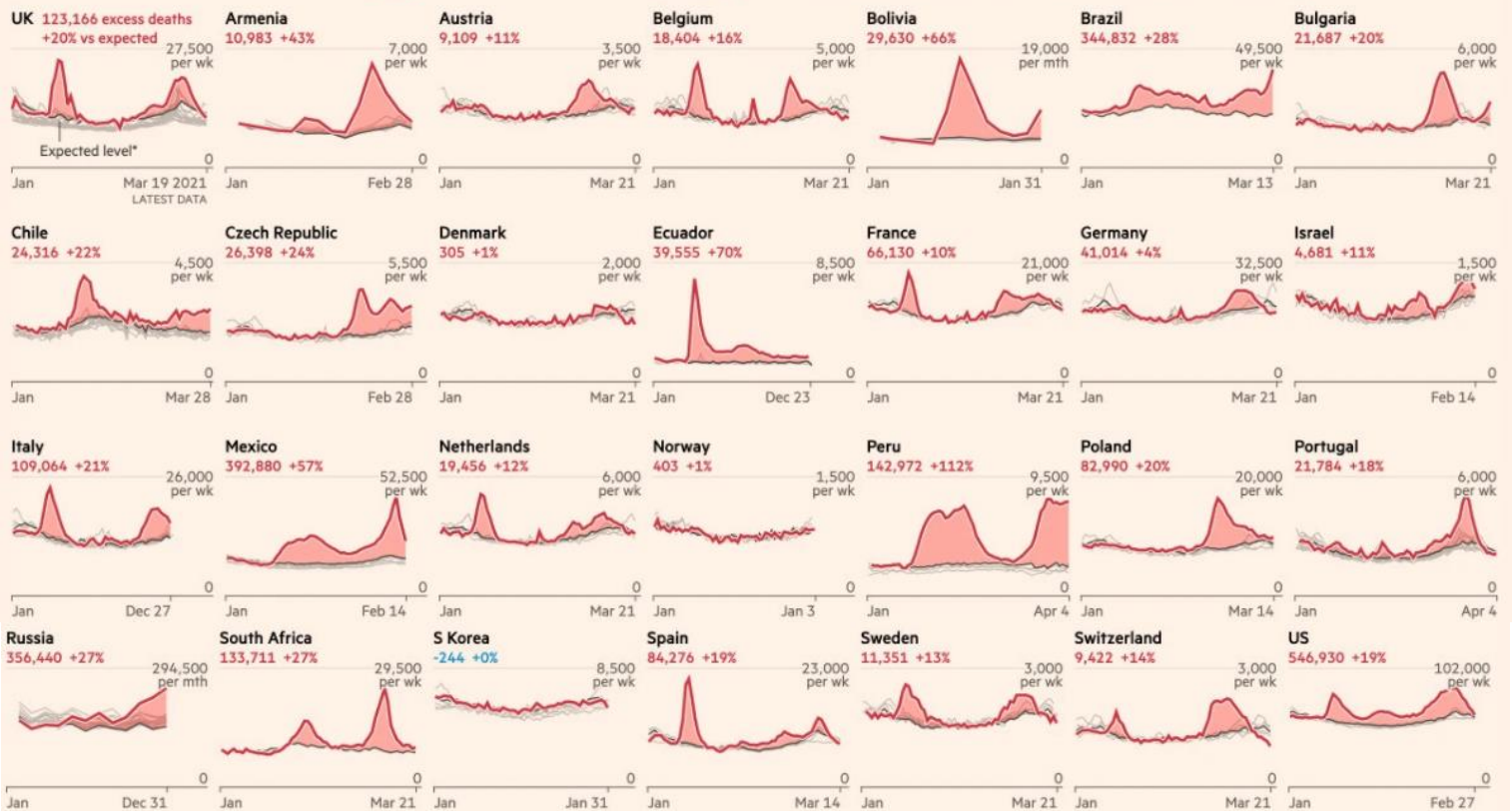
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Europe's average count of coronavirus-related deaths overtook Asia's in early March 2020. From mid-April, focus shifted to the US, where the number of deaths has remained consistently high, although the focus of the epidemic has shifted from the northeast to other regions of the country. Latin America became the epicentre of the pandemic in the summer of 2020, with the region accounting for almost a half of deaths each day. However, the surge in Europe since the autumn means Covid-19 remains a global pandemic. With several vaccines approved for use, the race is now on for countries to vaccinate their populations.

Death rates have climbed far above historical averages in many countries that have faced Covid-19 outbreaks

Number of deaths per week from all causes, 2020 vs recent years: Shading indicates total excess deaths since 100 confirmed cases in the country



*Adjusted for trend over recent years
Sources: FT analysis of national mortality data, CONASS and Karlinsky & Kobak's World Mortality Dataset. Data updated April 6
FT graphic: John Burn-Murdoch / @burnmurdoch
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