

Media in Latin America: Covering the pandemic

Abstract

A combination of three assignments was chosen to introduce students to the media context of a specific Latin American country of their choice. Having the pandemic and its impact in the country as backdrop, students were asked to 1) write a newsletter telling the most important events related to the pandemic, 2) interview a Latin American resident, and 3) produce a multimedia news feature to tell the story of the impact of the coronavirus in Latin America. Students were encouraged to write and produce stories in English, Spanish or Portuguese.

Description of the course

This course introduces students to frameworks for understanding media development and performance in Latin American countries, discusses the role of media in democratic societies, and identifies common patterns in Latin American media ownership, media-state relationships, relations with societal groups and citizens and media content. Students learn to identify and analyze societal and international forces that help explain why these patterns appear, persevere and, sometimes, change. To make the content of the course easier to grasp for students, I always like to focus on one topic or area and the past year provided an excellent topic to analyze media performance: the coronavirus pandemic, which in turn, also facilitated the practice of the skills component.

Description of activities

I developed three assignments to help students get familiar with a country, practice new and traditional reporting and writing techniques, and achieve learning outcomes. At the beginning of the semester, students had to choose one country from Latin America. Students would become the go-to expert in the class about the most important media in the country and current developments related to the pandemic. In order to push them to get familiar with the media as well as with the most important events related to the pandemic in their respective countries, the first assignment consisted in writing a 500-word newsletter focused on the first year of the pandemic. Students had to tell the story of the pandemic in their country starting from the first diagnosed case, the first victim, the initial government measures, their effectiveness, the overall impact of the virus, and how vaccination was progressing if at all. As students wrote their newsletters, they realized the challenges reporters faced in their countries and compared them to the media coverage in the U.S.

For the second assignment, Portrait of a Latin American Resident, students had to conduct an audio interview with a person living in a Latin American country or who had recently spent time in one and had experienced the pandemic in that country. The deliverables were a 400-word web story, a 2-minute non-narrated audio story, and one picture of the source. Students were encouraged to use social media and personal networks to contact Latin American residents. Even students who didn't speak Spanish were able to find sources as there were many US citizens stranded in Latin America in the first months of the crisis. This assignment allowed students to put faces and voices to the stories they read when they were writing their newsletters. Among the sources included there was a pediatrician, a mental health researcher, non-profit staff, entrepreneurs, college students, and journalists among others.

The third and last assignment, Feature Story, asked students to write a news feature where they had to introduce at least five diverse sources including experts. Diversity could be reflected in terms of gender, race, ethnicity but also in terms of political alignment, income, etc. Students wrote stories that focused on the pandemic's impact on mental health in Dominican Republic, economic

measures in Colombia, the impact on journalists in Ecuador and Peru, how the pandemic had pushed Hondurans to migrate, and the vaccination process in Chile, among others.

Individually taken, these assignments are not especially innovative (although I have found that writing newsletters is not a common assignment in journalism classes even though their popularity has been rising considerably in the past five years); however, I think that the combination of the three as part of the class facilitates students' immersion in one country's context and boosts their confidence as they gain experience and knowledge about their country. In addition to that, during class discussions, I made sure to ask them to compare what they have learned about their countries to the U.S. media and media regulations to understand the role of media in democratic (and not so democratic) societies.

Selected learning outcomes

- Identify challenges and opportunities for media professions in Latin America.
- Compare Latin American media regulations to U.S. media regulation.
- Compare media coverage of the same news story in mainstream media vs in alternative/digital/social media.
- Create and produced original content

Please, see included attachments:

Journal Brazil Newsletter

Noe Sandoval

LOS ANGELES, Calif.

Journal Brazil Newsletter is a student-generated newsletter that covers recent news of Brazil. Stationed in the United States, we bring you news from Brazil to the States. We gather news from both national and international newspaper and broadcast companies. Read the latest headlines about the COVID-19 pandemic, politics, sports, and much more

**We publish our content in English, but our sources may be in Portuguese or English.*

Latest News

Covid-19

Brazil is one of the countries that has been hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America. Since the month of January 2021, two COVID-19 vaccines (AstraZeneca and Sinovac) were approved by Brazil's Health Minister Eduardo Pazuello.

The President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro initially showed doubts toward the vaccine, and he has been heavily criticized for the way he has been handling the pandemic.

At the start of the pandemic, President Bolsonaro promoted an unproven treatment and has been against masking-wearing policies and social distancing.

Bolsonaro was reluctant towards the vaccine as he believed he would be a subject under China's science experiment. He also conspired that the vaccine may turn people into alligators.

- [Brazil's Bolsonaro faces probe after hospitals ran out of oxygen](#) (Al Jazeera)

In January 2021, in the city of Manaus, Amazonia there was a shortage of oxygen in the city's hospital. The president received much criticism for the way he handled the situation.

- [Fear of COVID-19 vaccine grows in Brazil's remote Amazon](#) (AP News)

Although much of ideas have been proven reached many This has led to many especially in



Bolsonaro's statements and wrong, his message has communities in the country. people fearing the vaccine, communities in the Amazon.

- [Brazil's wealthy cause a stir trying to score quick vaccines](#) (AP News)



On the other hand, since the vaccine rollout has already begun, many citizens are looking forward to getting vaccinated. An ethical problem has occurred in which many people are willing to pay to get vaccinated, especially those who can afford it. However, health experts advise to wait until it is their turn since vaccines are scarce and at-risk groups are in more need of the vaccine.

Politics

In most recent news, Brazilian Congressman Daniel Silveria was arrested on Feb. 16 for publishing a video attacking Supreme Court Justices. The arrest was ordered by Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes

- [Supreme Court Justice Moraes Orders Arrest of Congressman Daniel Silveira after Attacks on Court Justices](#) (Folha De São Paulo)
- [Legal scholars split over legality of pro-Bolsonaro lawmaker arrest](#) (The Brazilian Report)

Silveira is a pro-representative. This Silveira for anti-misinformation.



Bolsonaro Congress case will investigate democratic acts and

Carnaval

Carnaval is a significant event for Brazilian people and culture. Due to the pandemic, Carnaval 2021 has been cancelled. This led to a surge on virtual festivities and celebrations. Instead of parades on the streets, music groups and bands filmed their music which was shared all over social media and the Internet.

- [Brazil Carnival goes online with street parties banned](#) (AP News)



Sports

Sports have been a great part of Brazilian culture, especially soccer or *futebol*. Netflix will be releasing a documentary on the life of Pelé, one of Brazil's soccer legends of all times.

- [Celebração do auge de Pelé, documentário na Netflix também expõe o Rei](#) (Folha De São Paulo)



Moreover, Palmeiras, a soccer team from the state of São Paulo, has been showing recent success in previous matches.

- [Can Brazil's Palmeiras Win The Club World Cup?](#) (Forbes)





Ecuador Today

Keeping Up with COVID-19

Information about COVID-19 impact in Ecuador.



by **Lizette Fuerte** on February 18 2021 California, United States

First COVID-19 Case. One year ago, on February 29th 2020, [the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Ecuador](#). The patient was an elderly woman who landed in Ecuador from a direct flight coming from Madrid two weeks earlier.

First COVID-19 Death. The [first coronavirus death in Ecuador](#) happened on March 13th 2020. The

province of Guayas was the worst hit at the beginning of the pandemic. According to government figures, [14,561 deaths were registered in Guayas from all causes](#) when it's average used to be 2,000 a month.

First Steps to Face Pandemic. On March 11th 2020 [Ecuador declared a national health emergency](#). It was followed by a state of exception on March 16th where there was a [nightly curfew from 9 p.m to 5 a.m. as well as a restriction on vehicular circulation](#). Ecuador [suspended all classes in educational institutions](#) on March 12th and on Mar. 14, [Ecuador closed its borders to foreign travelers due to COVID-19](#).

Coronavirus waves. Ecuador saw its first big wave between? April to May 2020 where the active cases in the country reached about 25,000. It saw a small decline in June 2020 but then the second wave skyrocketed those numbers to about 39,000 active cases in late July. The active cases did not reach those numbers again into the fall season. However, there seems to be a third wave hitting as we saw February 2021 hitting numbers close to 32,000 active cases. The active cases in Ecuador charts are [available here](#).

Social Programs. The government is [offering free coronavirus tests for anyone with symptoms](#). Moreover, the administration has ordered that no one have their utilities cut off for lack of payment. There was also an emergency bonus provided of two monthly [payments of \\$60 to those who earned less than \\$400 per month which would reach about two million Ecuadorians](#).

Update on Movement Restrictions. On [January 2, 2021, Ecuador's Constitutional Court concluded that the nationwide state of emergency declared on December 21, 2020](#) and its associated movement restrictions was unconstitutional. There is still a curfew in some areas, check your provincial or municipal guidelines. There are also no longer restrictions on intercity or interstate travel.

Vaccine Plan. Ecuador has [received 18 million doses of the vaccine enough to treat about 9 million people](#). The [vaccine will be free for all citizens and distributed initially only by the Ministry of Public Health](#). It will not be available for those who have already recovered from COVID-19.

The battle continues for Chileans

By David Ahumada
San Diego, CA

Chile was battling an epidemic of its own right before COVID-19 took over. Students were already restricted from schools, there were fires in the streets and people were forbidden from gathering. However, Chileans were shocked when cases started rapidly rising, and that forced the country to shut down. Now as a vaccination plan arises, Chileans are back on a mission to give more power to the people.

For people living in the capital, they've been in the middle of it all. Juan Urrea is a Chilean immigrant living in the capital of Santiago. Urrea has lived in Chile since he was 3, but was born in Bogota, Colombia. He is a communications student at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, but his studies had been stopped by an epidemic, and now by a pandemic.

At the start of October 2019, Urrea described *El Estallido Social* (The Social Outbreak) as a huge movement for the country. "It was not safe to go from one part of the city to the next in the capital of Santiago," Urrea said. This movement caused protesting, rioting, violence and demonstrations nationwide.

"A lot of people congregated to express our discomfort with the government," Fires in the streets, cops were belligerent and Chileans wanted change in the government. Urrea said that this shut down his hopes of taking public transportation to school and made going outside dangerous.

Chile had a break in the movement when COVID-19 hit. Urrea recalled when news first broke about the pandemic. On March 3, 2020, Chile had its first case appear. “We hoped, at that time, we were like Australia or New Zealand, we hoped that not many people were going to come here and spread the virus,” Urrea said. “But I was wrong, because in a few weeks or more this whole thing was all over the world.” Urrea said he switched to virtual class meetings, competing with his dad and his sister over the Wi-Fi connection and he was limited to his family’s apartment.

Chile’s vaccination program is giving citizens like Urrea hope. “The government said that we are going to have 85% of the Chilean population with the vaccine by June or July,” Urrea said. Adding that the government is allowing people to have small gatherings of five people out in the public.

For now, Urrea is focused on sharpening his mental health in order to prepare for the semester. His involvement with communications and journalism have him reading stories about COVID-19 daily, and he said he’s tired of hearing about Coronavirus. “I don’t want to write about this anymore,” Urrea said. “I like to focus on political and financial news.” Urrea said a constitution convention is going to take place soon. “The (current) constitution was written during a dictatorship,” Urrea said. “In April, we are going to elect constituents to write our constitution.”

But while the pandemic may be ending soon, the social movements in Chile are starting again. But Urrea just wants no violence in this emerging process, he said he “doesn’t want any

more violence because that will make him depressed” when he can see it right outside his window. And as Chile will take a vote soon to make changes and to rewrite its constitution, Urrea has hope. “We have a lot of examples in Latin America of what not to do,” he said. “I believe in this process, and hope that it’s peaceful.”



A Peruvian doctor reflects on the changes of the past year

By: Nina Blanc

San Diego, CA -“Don’t touch your face, wash your hands, no touching. Don’t touch your face, wash your hands, no touching.”

Dr. Gabriela La Torre repeats this reminder in her head all day.

While shopping for groceries, she keeps her hands to her chest and stays distanced from others. Her mask stays on at all times outside of her home and her work clothes never enter her house.

Dr. La Torre is a pediatric neurologist at Hospital Nacional Guillermo Almenara Irigoyen in Lima, Peru where she has worked for about 14 years. She spoke highly of her work and expressed how committed she is to her patients amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I enjoy my job; I really like my job. I wanted to be a doctor since I was 3 years old” La Torre said.

When her unit slowed down as the spread of COVID-19 sped up, she offered to go to critical areas, like the newborn unit, to help while other hospital personnel tried to work from home.

Some of Dr. La Torre’s day-to-day work has changed since the pandemic. La Torre said she used to participate in medical testing for children with neurological issues, treat her young patients and help in the emergency room. She said she continues to help these patients and helps with COVID-19 patients as well when needed.

La Torre said that in the beginning, the hospital was not prepared with the materials doctors needed to stay safe while treating patients. Personal protective equipment, also known as PPE, is not easily accessible for every doctor.

The hospital provided the healthcare personnel with one mask and anticipated it to be used for about 15 days, according to La Torre. The additional masks have to be paid for out of pocket by the doctors.

La Torre said that 3M and N-95 masks, which protect the most against the transmission of COVID-19, cost about \$25. Face shields cost around \$15 and eye goggles are another \$5.

The doctors at the hospital have been assigned to COVID or non-COVID areas. Dr. La Torre continues to work with her young patients, some of whom have COVID-19, while much of the previous neurological testing has stopped.

One of her most memorable moments from the last year was the day she got her vaccine. She says it has made a difference in her life.

“The hardest thing has been the fear, we all have as doctors, of being in the bed,” La Torre said.

While getting sick is her biggest fear, the vaccine offers her a sense of security as she continues to work in the hospital and live outside of her job.

“It’s not a passport to take the mask off,” La Torre said.

The vaccine is a step in the right direction for La Torre, but she still worries about her access to protective equipment and keeping herself healthy.

“I have to be thankful I have a job. Most people have lost their jobs. I have a job, I have health and I can help,” La Torre said,

La Torre continues to treat her patients, support her colleagues and remain grateful for her situation as the disease continues to spread all across the world.

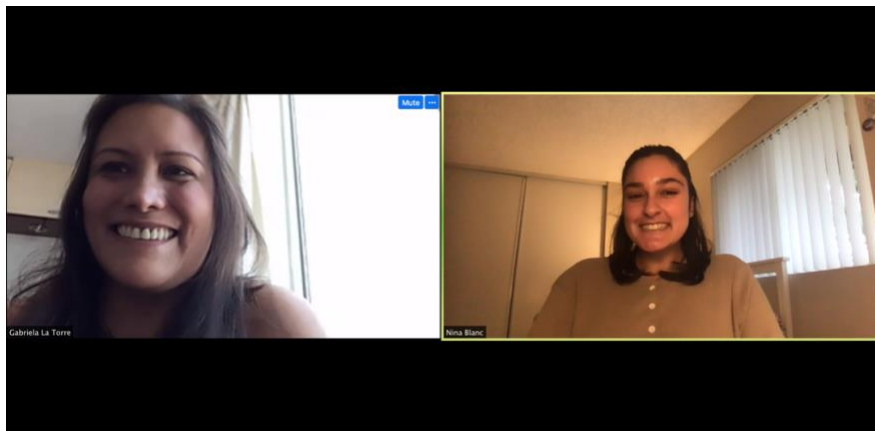


Figure 1: Screenshot of Dr. La Torre and Nina Blanc during the interview on March 14, 2021.



Figure 2 and 3: Dr. La Torre with marks from her mask after a six hour shift at the hospital.



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David Ahumada

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When the Vaccination Plan Goes South

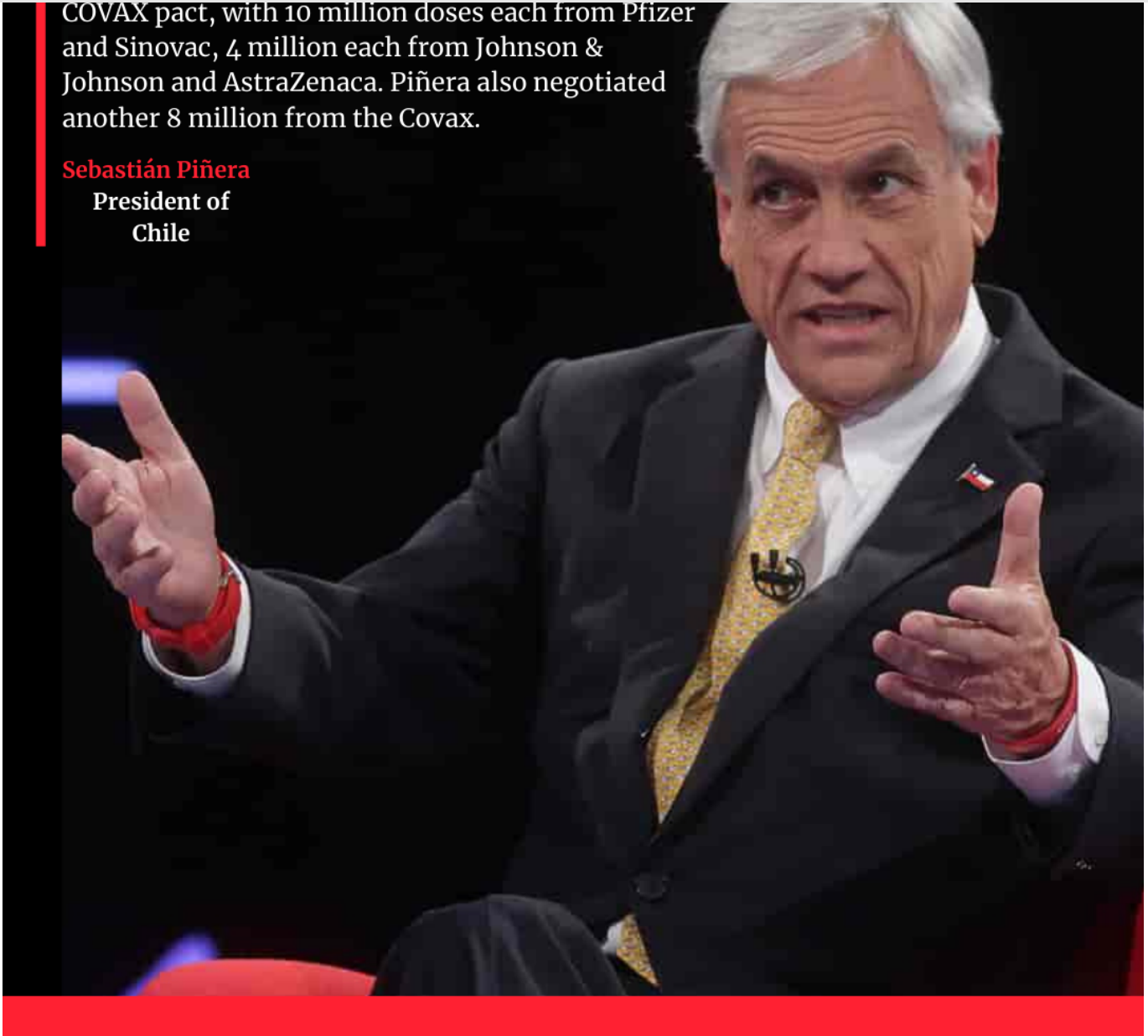


David Ahumada Apr 29 · 7 min read



COVAX pact, with 10 million doses each from Pfizer and Sinovac, 4 million each from Johnson & Johnson and AstraZenaca. Piñera also negotiated another 8 million from the Covax.

Sebastián Piñera
President of
Chile



SAN DIEGO, CALIF. — Chile shocked the world when President Sebastián Piñera announced a plan on Nov. 10, 2020 saying that the country secured enough vaccines to vaccinate its 19 million people and twice by the end of the year. The country seemed to be winning the vaccine race, the race to normalcy.

After participating in phase 3 clinical trials with SinoVac and Johnson & Johnson, Chile secured 36 million vaccines from multiple countries: Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, China and Canada. These weren't all delivered to the country immediately, but healthcare workers received doses of the vaccines in early December,



into vaccination centers. The #YoMeVacuno program kicked off on Feb. 3, 2021.



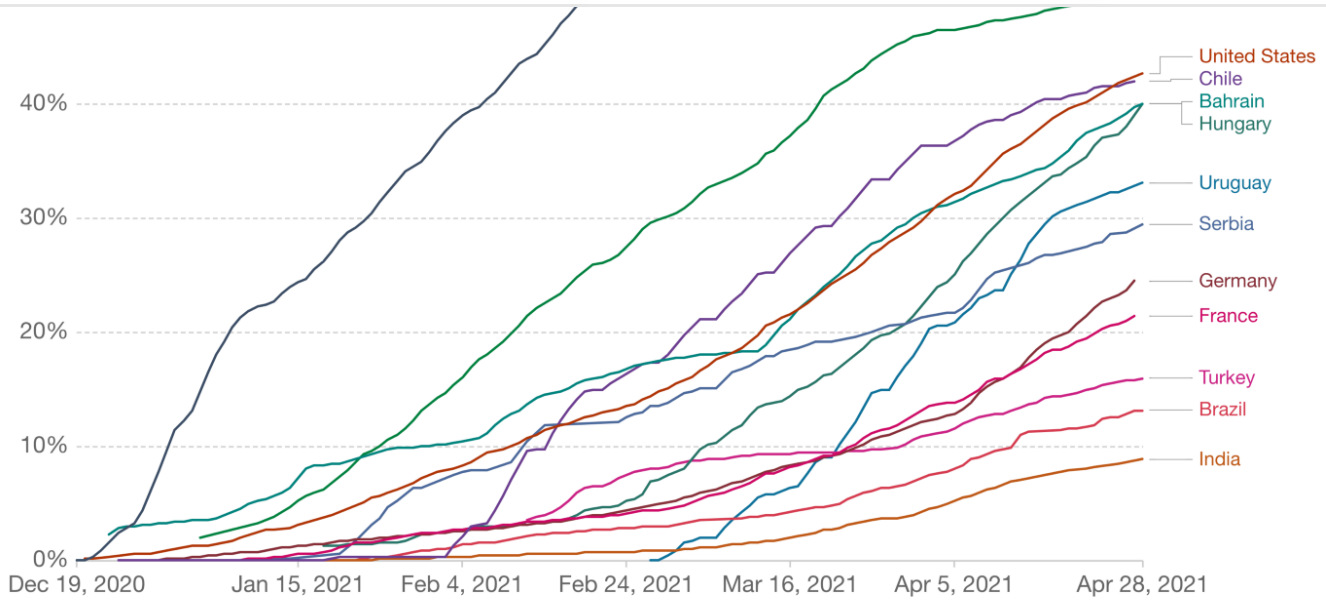
The Ministry of Health set a goal at the beginning of the year to, at least, deliver a single dose to 15 million Chileans by the end of June.

Our World in Data reported on April 26, 2021 that Chile inoculated 14 million people with a first dose, and 6 million have received two doses or are considered fully vaccinated, about 33.4% of its population.

Share of people who received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine

Share of the total population that received at least one vaccine dose. This may not equal the share that are fully vaccinated if the vaccine requires two doses.





Source: Official data collated by Our World in Data

CC BY

Chile is facing a resurgence.

However, starting in early March 2021, the daily new case rate of COVID-19 started to rise again. On April 15, 2021, it spiked at 7,302 new cases, according to Our World in Data. Currently, Chile has about 6,000 new cases per day, with about 100 deaths per day.

COVID-19 Data Explorer

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ourworldindata.org

“COVID isn’t going anywhere,” Dr. Lauge Farnaes, infectious disease specialist at Rady’s Children Hospital in San Diego, said. “If you don’t get vaccinated then you’re gonna be at risk of all the severe adverse effects we know happen from COVID. I think there’s still a lot of hope that COVID is going to go away, but it’s not.”



Santiago resident and Universidad Catolica de Chile Communications student Juan Urrea was optimistic by June or July about having “inmunidad de rebaño” (herd immunity). “That’s the thing that they say in the media and the doctors and all,” Urrea said.

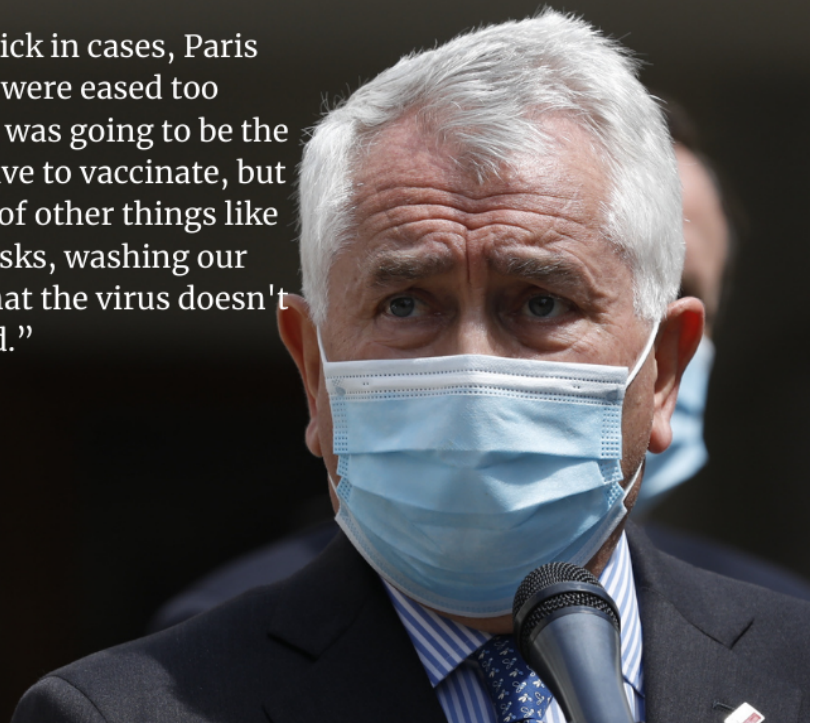
“They say over 80%, we have inmunidad de rebaño, and that means that we are good. So, by July, in like three or four months later, we are going to have a lot of people with the vaccine... we have to wait for our turn.” At this time, Urrea’s mother, a dentist, was the only person in his family to be vaccinated.

Itzika Siches, the president of “Colegio Médico de Chile” (Medical College of Chile), the biggest medical association in the country, has been critical of the government’s response to the pandemic, saying to CNN Chile in April, “allowing people to travel during the holidays, mixed messages from the top and a lack of resources in local clinics compound the problem.”

With cases growing rapidly, 13 million Chileans were forced to go into lockdown again by the end of March, with schools that had finally reopened were forced to shut down again.

When discussing the sharp uptick in cases, Paris mentioned that restrictions were eased too soon. “We never said vaccination was going to be the only answer,” Paris said. “We have to vaccinate, but we also have to remain mindful of other things like reduced mobility, wearing masks, washing our hands and social distancing so that the virus doesn't get disseminated.”

Enrique Paris
Health Minister
of Chile





Health Minister of Chile Enrique Paris said in a press conference on April 15 that the country may have relaxed some measures too early in December, but that he never told anyone to stop following preventative measures.

“We never said vaccination was going to be the only answer,” Paris said. “We have to vaccinate, but we also have to remain mindful of other things like reduced mobility, wearing masks, washing our hands and social distancing so that the virus doesn’t get disseminated.”

In Chile, ICU capacity is currently at 95%. The daily case rate has grown to 6,124, after spiking at over 7,000 new cases per day, according to Our World in Data. Chile is administering 225,000 vaccinations per day, but residents like Magdalena Ganderats have noticed a slowing in vaccine administration due to a lack of supplies. SinoVac is the most popular vaccine administered in the country right now. New sanitization practices are in place, according to Enrique Paris.





Applying lockdowns has helped, the daily case rate dropped by over 1,000 new cases since the middle of April, but Chileans are still worried.

Magdalena Ganderats, 35, is a Santiago native and she's witnessed the vaccination process in the country slow down. "They're trying their best, and it's a matter of time," Ganderats said. "They cannot do it faster if the vaccines don't arrive in the country. Chile was doing really good in the first few months, but then after the first month, the speed decreased because they said we don't have enough vaccines to speed it up."

While the speed of the vaccines are decreasing for the moment, Ganderats is worried about her daughter returning to school while the case rate is still high. The quarantine period is ending in her area of Santiago, and her daughter's school is opening back up.

"It's scary, I know it's important for her relationship with other kids, but if something happens to her, then there are no (ICU) beds for the kids," Ganderats said. "So, we are still thinking about it."

Ganderats has some time before she receives her vaccine, and her husband will be vaccinated within the next two months. Currently, the Ministry of Health's site is currently vaccinating ages 45 and up.

To reach herd immunity, Chile still has some time to go. 80% of the population will need to receive the vaccine, and a recent survey by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, 72% of Chilean respondents said they would get a COVID-19 vaccine. However, the vaccination schedule is going week-by-week to different age groups, so residents like

When the pandemic is over, Chile will have to resolve its first epidemic.

The social movement that started in 2019 has been placed on pause due to the pandemic. In October 2019, Chileans voted to rewrite the constitution that was previously written under a dictatorship. Now, the process is still moving slowly until Chile can have a safe election to vote for the people who will be writing it. President Piñera recently announced that it's on hold until May for now. Chileans are eagerly waiting for the virus to end and to finish what started in 2019.



Currently, Chile's social movement from October 2019 has been on pause. After a 30% increase to the Santiago Metro prices, Chileans took to the street to protest, riot, and fight for the working-class people. One of the demands of the Chilean population that



The country held an election that asked two questions: “do you want a new constitution?; who do you want to write it?” 78% of the 7.5 million people voted in favor of rewriting the constitution, with officials writing 100% that are elected by popular vote. This was supposed to take place during the early months of 2020.

It got placed on pause due to the Coronavirus, resumed as cases lightened up during the months of September, October and November of 2020. In October of 2020, President Piñera announced that another election would take place to figure the elected officials to represent Chileans in rewriting the country’s constitution in April.

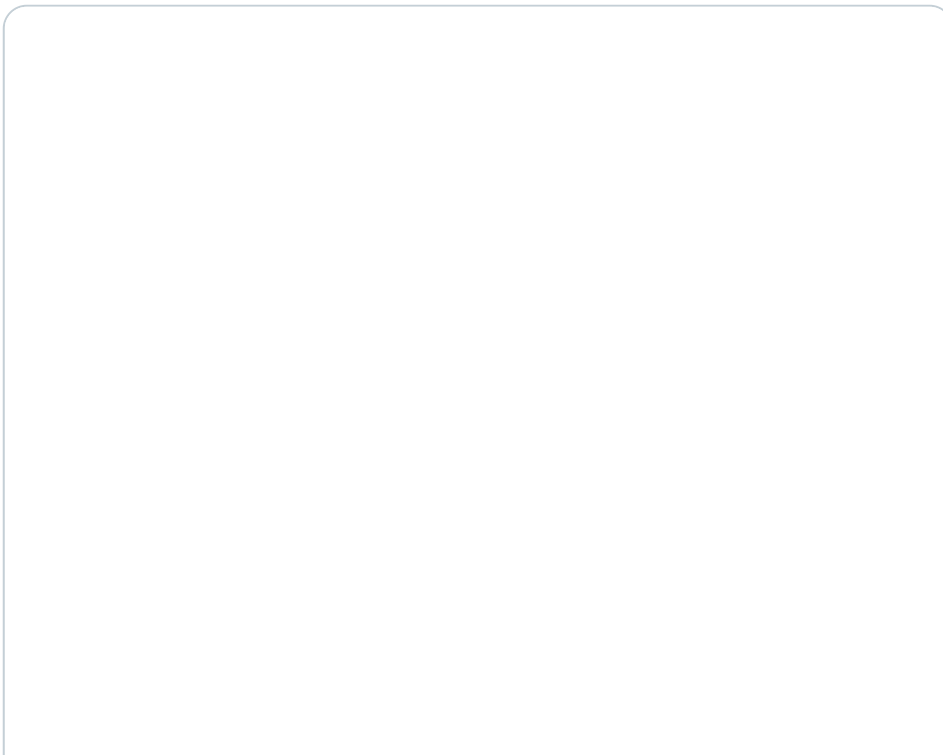


Sebastian Piñera 
@sebastianpinera



Proteger la salud de todos nuestros compatriotas ha sido siempre nuestra primera prioridad. Y proteger la salud de nuestra Democracia, cumplir compromiso y asegurar un proceso electoral democrático, participativo y seguro lo es también.

Comparto con Uds información importante:





“Because we are Latin Americans, we have a lot of examples on what not to do,” Urrea said. “I really hope that it’s not violent because I don’t want to see that, so I hope that it’s all peaceful. The Constitution is supposed to be something for all of the Chileans, so we are not going to have our perfect constitution because you have to get an agreement from everyone.”

President Pinera announced on Twitter on March 28, 2021 that the election is going to be postponed until May due to the uptick in cases. Throughout this entire time period, Chile hasn’t been in favor of him and his response to the pandemic and the social movement. In 2019, Statista reported an approval rating of 24%, the news outlet Telesur reported 7% in 2020, and another report from a wire news service showed an approval of 14% in 2021 due to the vaccination program.

Overall, there’s a light at the end of the tunnel for Chile. As the vaccination program stays on schedule, vaccines distributors and producers should start to speed things up, especially as the U.S. is beginning to share with other countries. The Chilean population hasn’t forgotten about the social movement currently taking place, and Chile is expected to start making progress on that by June at the latest.



because the virus is still here.”

CHILE

Facing a
Resurgence in
COVID-19
Cases



6.3 million people of the 19 million are considered fully vaccinated in Chile through the #YoMeVacuno program in Chile. Currently, 14 million people have received a single dose, and Chile is on its projected target to vaccinated at least 15 million people by June with a single dose.

Source: [Our World in Data](#) and [Chile Ministry of Health](#).



"We may have relaxed some measures too soon."

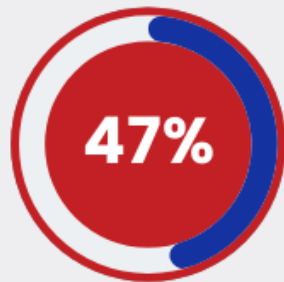
Chile's Minister of Health Enrique Paris on April 15, 2021.

The current daily case rate recorded was 6,124 new cases of COVID-19.



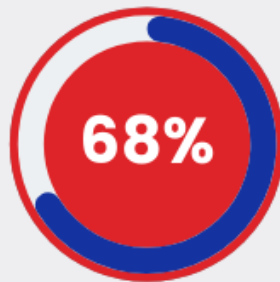
Chile Itzika Siches credits this due to mixed messages from leaders, allowing people to travel for the holidays and a lack of resources in local clinics.

Sources: Our World in Data and Itzika Siches.



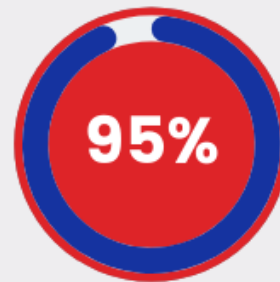
UNTIL HERD IMMUNITY

47% of the population must be fully vaccinated until group immunity is reached by vaccines.



LOCKDOWNS

13 million people are still in lockdown, with a nation wide curfew of 9 p.m. to 5 a.m.



ICU CAPACITY

Hospital beds are crucial at this time for Chileans.



The SinoVac vaccine is the most popular in Chile at the moment, the country is administering 225,000 vaccines per day, according to Our World in Data. During Chile's summer from December to March, young people, loosened travel restrictions and increases of mobility are what officials are saying that caused this.

"keep wearing your mask, keep washing your hands and think about other people because the virus is still here," Magdalena Ganderats, a Santiago resident, said.



Chile might be seeing an uptick in cases, but things are slowly but surely getting better.

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Journey of a Honduran Migrant



Aaron Velasquez Apr 29 · 13 min read

By Aaron Velasquez 4/28/2021

In recent years, the United States has seen an increase in migration from Central American countries such as Honduras. Caravans that number in the thousands make international headlines when they head north seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Both of the recent Presidential administrations of President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden highlighted immigration as one of the many issues their administration would tackle. Party politics aside, both Presidents have been working under immense pressure as the rise in Central American migration brought new challenges to the border.

According to the Pew Research Center, “Non-Mexicans accounted for 80% of apprehensions in fiscal 2019, marking the fourth consecutive year in which they outnumbered Mexicans.”

While our headlines may be focused on the caravans, there are still many other ways Hondurans are making it to the U.S. but the motivating factors behind their journey still remain.

Ismael Cruceta from International Organization for Migration (I.O.M) spoke about the other ways of immigrating to the U.S. including the aforementioned caravans, traveling

alone or in small groups or coming into the U.S. legally by plane through acquiring visas.

Those who come with visas and choose to remain here are reported as expected overstays. In the [2019 Fiscal year report](#) from the Department of Homeland Security, there was an expected in-country overstay of 294,946 people in the non-VWP countries visitors. Meaning nearly 300,000 people from non-VWP countries (which includes Honduras) are expected to overstay their visas and remain in the U.S.

Meanwhile, in 2019 and 2020, Customs and Border Patrol recorded 851,508 and 400,651 Southwest Land Border Encounters. The large drop in encounters is reflective of the change of migration patterns due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These migration patterns are something that Cruceta and I.O.M. work towards recognizing. From the routes migrants choose to take, to when they choose to migrate, I.O.M hopes to use this knowledge to protect migrants' human rights from over-policing and the abuse that they might face on their journey.

While the motivations for immigrating to the United States differ for every person, Cruceta believes that 90% of those who immigrate do so for economic reasons.

According to the World Bank, 48.3% of Hondurans live in poverty and the country experiences a high 38 homicides per 100,000 citizens.

Héctor Alexander Amador Zelaya, an immigrant from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, spoke about how a lack of job opportunities was one of the motivating factors behind his choice to emigrate.

“Unfortunately, here in our country, there is no work for one to get ahead,” Zelaya said.

Zelaya also detailed the harrowing journey of immigrating to the U.S. by train.

“Well, as we all go out with an illusion, we have to walk a lot, endure cold, hunger, many times rejections from other people. However, we continue to go ahead even if we suffer. It is very difficult to travel by train, you endure cold, rain, and hunger,” Zelaya said.

The challenges do not stop for migrants when they reach the U.S.

Renee Garcia, Communications and Development Manager at Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef) spoke about how her clients struggle with mental health during the immigration process.

“Arrested, detained, and deported clients lose hope, are afraid, become depressed, and their health begins to fail.” Garcia said, “Many of our detained clients became depressed and suffered from a medical condition over time or if they already had one it got worse while detained.”

While on the journey they face the dangers of organized crime, kidnappings, assaults, and even death.

“Being a constant target for abduction, being held for ransom, rape, sexual assault.” Garcia said when explaining the dangers of being a woman and child migrating, “For children, that they are seeing truly horrific things at such a young age including disgusting treatment from CBP and dealing with family separation in their formative years leading to a life-long struggle of trauma.”

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic also highly affected the migrant community.

“There are nearly 23 million essential immigrant workers in the United States, representing nearly 1 in 5 individuals within the total U.S. essential workforce,” Garcia said.

The Mayo Clinic cites data provided by the CDC which states that “COVID-19 hospitalization rates among non-Hispanic Black people and Hispanic or Latino people were both about 4.7 times the rate of non-Hispanic white people.”

As migrants continue to face the challenges that come with their journey, Garcia wants everybody to remember one thing.

“What we must remember is that we are talking about people — mothers, daughters, sons, fathers, aunts, uncles, children whose parents were killed,” Garcia said.

At the end of the day, these are people who have given up every sense of normalcy in their daily lives for the opportunity to better themselves and their families in the United States.

Even after facing deportation twice, learning a new language and job to adjust to in the United States, Hector Zelaya still says that he will continue to fight to reach a better life for himself and his son in the United States.

Qualitative

14 *What were the instructor's strengths?*

- A: [REDACTED] is great at understanding the course material. She made it digestible for students through lectures. She really understands Latin America and is an expert. She is great at putting together assignments, quizzes, and reading materials that can assist the students in learning the material. She just wants students to succeed and shows that in the coursework she's created.
- A: Knowledge, readings, class structure, flexibility
- A: Lectures full of interesting material, clearly defines how the history of each country can be reflected in their media, very approachable.
- A: Went into depth every class meeting, really gave us the full breakdown on each Latin American country.
- A: great lectures
- A: Lectures
- A: Very knowledgeable on the subject she teaches. Works well with students to make sure assignments get done, and that they are understanding the material.
- A: Very approachable, fun, caring class/environment.

2 student(s) did not respond to this question.

15 *In what ways might the instructor improve this course?*

- A: Speedier grading on bigger assignments, a little more assistance for those bigger assignments, and a slower pacing of the course. The pacing wasn't a big issue, but if we got to spend a little more time on the countries we were studying, then it'd be really helpful.
- A: Get critiques back faster so we can learn from our mistakes for future assignments
- A: No answer
- A: This professor blocked us from viewing our grades so none of us have any idea how we are doing in this course.
- A: n/a
- A: Perhaps with more time in future classes, she can cover more material that she wants to.
- A: Not applicable

3 student(s) did not respond to this question.

16 *What advice would you give future students taking this course with this instructor?*

- A: Take good notes, read the reading material and pick a Latin American country to travel to because you'll fall in love. [REDACTED] also has connections to graduating professionals and you need to do a lot of research for your country so get started.
- A: Don't be afraid to ask questions, Professor [REDACTED] is very informed on the content of the class so make sure to communicate with her when working on assignments and in class.
- A: Long lectures, and not willing to keep students up to date with their grades.
- A: Give yourself enough time for interviews
- A: Show up to class, take notes.
- A: Go to lecture and do the readings