

CHILE COVID-19 PANDEMIC STATUS

Current COVID-19 case burden:

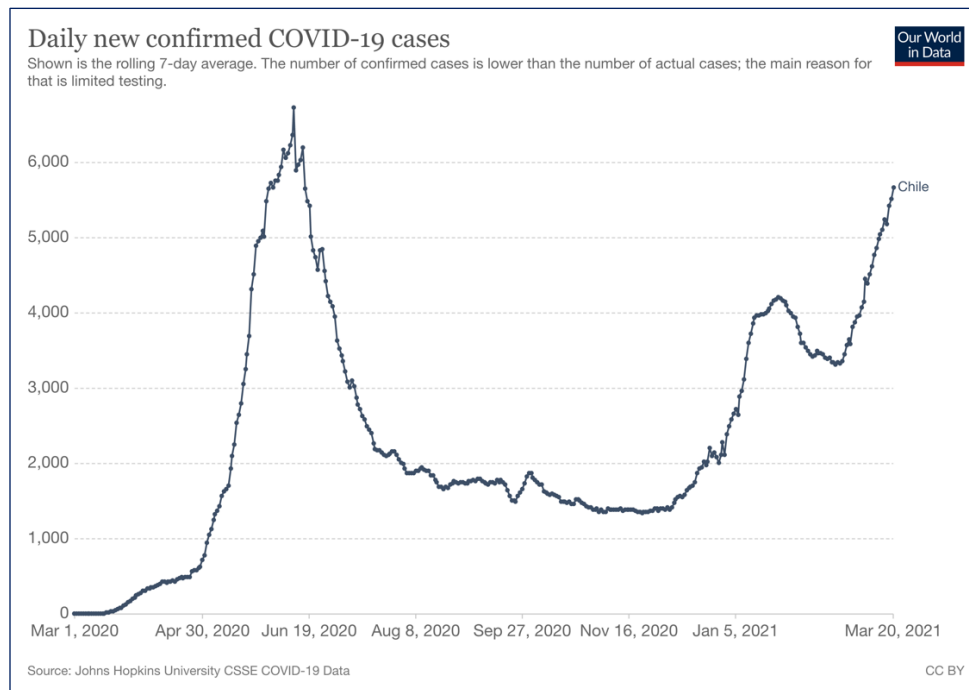


Figure 1: Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases in Chile¹

- As of 21 March 2021, the Ministry of Health has confirmed 931,939 cases of COVID-19 and 22,279 deaths in Chile.²
- More than 5,000 new infections have been reported on average daily in the past seven days (from 17 March 2021), with the Metropolitan region, where the capital city of Santiago is located, accounting for 44% of all cases in the country.³
- Chile is under a daily nationwide curfew from 11:00 pm to 5:00 am. Starting Saturday, 13 March 2021 the curfew will begin at 10:00 pm. Chile remains under a State of Emergency through June 2021.⁴
- ICUs in the capital city of Santiago are full, despite the doubling of ICU capacity in some places. Older patients (>70 y/o) now seldom seen in ICU due to covid-19 as getting vaccinated; instead, beds occupied by younger patients³
- Hospital bed occupancy has reached 94%⁹
- Chile reported Latin America's first detected case of the UK Variant of Concern in December 2020;⁵ only 20 cases of this were reported by 15 January, 2021⁴ Direct flights between Chile and UK have been cancelled since 22 December 2020. Travellers who have been in the UK in the last 14 days have to undergo a mandatory test and quarantine.
- As of 10 March 2021, 6 cases of P.2 Variant Under Investigation (VUI) have been recorded in Chile. ⁶ First identified in Brazil, the P.2 lineage is a descendant of B.1.1.28. This variant was designated VUI on detection and on review re-designated as VUI 202101/01 (P.2) on 13 January 2021.

Vaccination strategy:

- More than 33% of Chileans (total population 18 million) has had one or both jabs (as of 21 March 2021)² (29% with one dose).
- Chile ranks third globally, behind Israel and the United Arab Emirates, for most doses administered per population.¹ (See figure 2)
- Chile participated in several clinical trials, negotiating contracts with AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer and Sinovac. As of 15 February 2021, Chile had ordered some 88.4 million doses – enough to fully vaccinate its population twice. The national immunisation registry has facilitated this process.⁷
- Aggressive vaccine campaign – aiming to inoculate 5 million by end of March 2021 and 15 million by end of June 2021.⁸

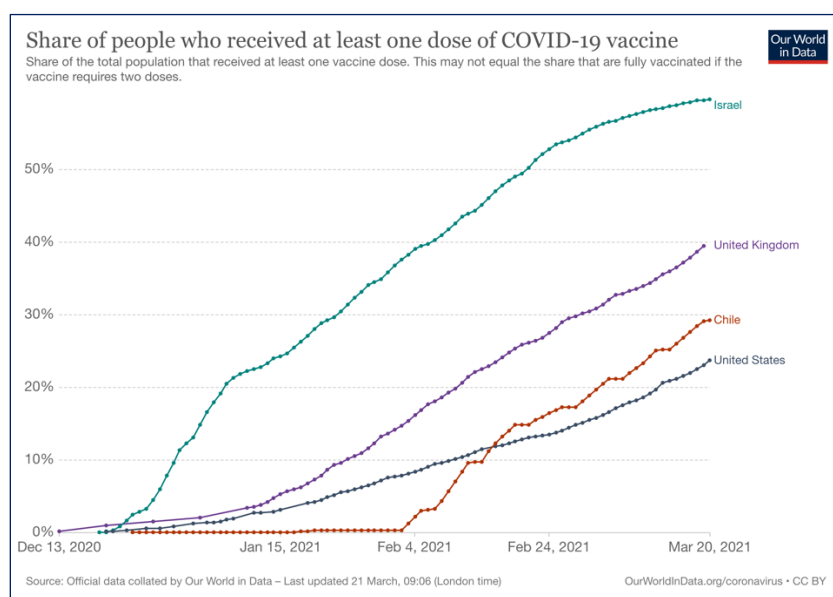


Figure 2: Proportion of population who received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine in Chile¹

What could be the possible factors for the recent surge in cases and hospitalisations?

- Vaccine-induced immune protection may be inferior to emerging variants that have spike protein mutations.¹⁰
- Herd immunity is not reached at ~33% vaccination rate, especially when a large proportion of vaccinated people in Chile have only received 1 of 2 doses; 80% is the herd immunity target in Chile,³ and if lockdown measures are relaxed or people become complacent about infection prevention before this target is reached, widespread transmission can still occur, especially in the context of vaccine-refractory variants.
- The regions of the country are listed as being in 1 of 4 Phases (Pasos), with Phase 1 having the most stringent restrictions such as staying at home all times and traveling locally only for essential purposes, to phase 4 allowing the public face to face interaction with nighttime curfew.¹¹
- On 30 December 2021, the government announced a special “vacation permit” for municipalities in Paso (Phase) 2.¹² The permit allowed residents of these comunas (neighbourhoods) to leave once, to a single destination, for vacation between 4 January and 31 March 2021. The vacation permit can only

be used once per person and is valid for travel to a single destination outside of the region of residence. Travelers must indicate the destination and the dates of travel on the permit. It cannot be used to travel to/from any comuna (neighborhood) in Paso 1 (quarantine). Travelers must still fill out the Pasaporte Sanitario (Sanitary Passport).

- Authorities suspect that holiday infections (decline in the stringency of gov't measures implemented to curtail covid-19 transmission in the week prior to Christmas, per Oxford Covid-19 Government Response Tracker Stringency Index¹³), the arrival of more contagious variants of the virus, and a relaxation of sanitary measures amid the successful vaccination program have prompted a vicious second wave.¹⁴

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