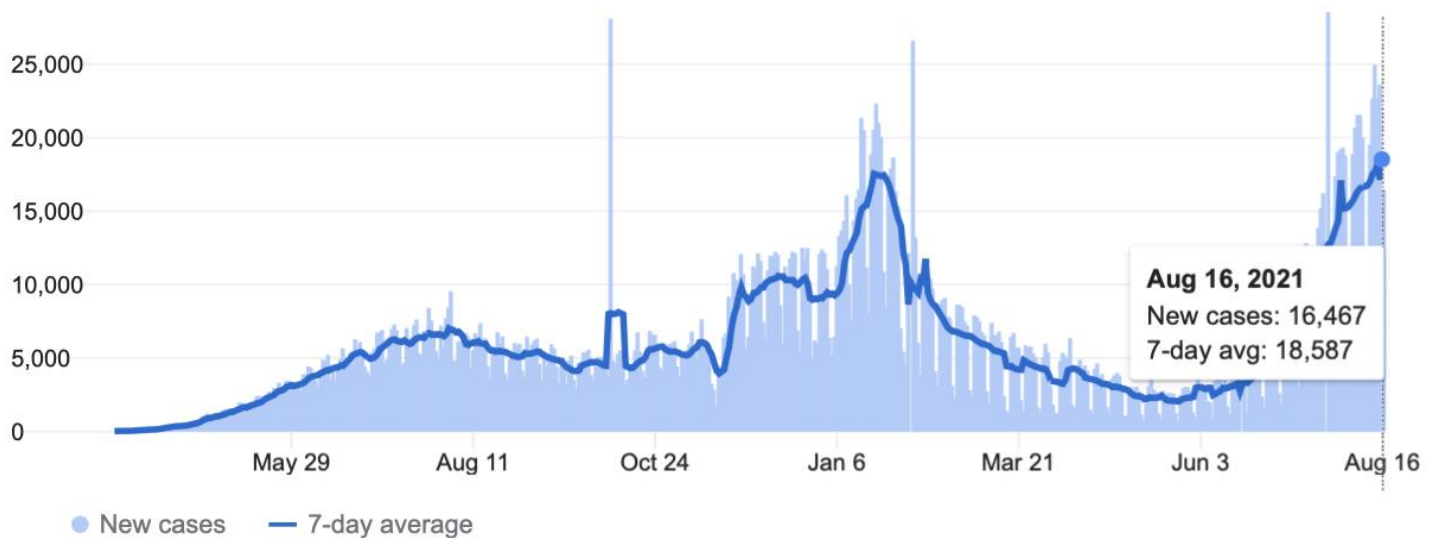


COVID Impacts

August 2021

AN OUTLOOK INTO MEXICO'S COVID-19 WAVES

In July 2021, most headlines began telling the story on how COVID-19's third wave was exploding in Mexico, just as the Delta variant surged around the world (El Universal, 2021a). In order to better understand Mexico's current situation, let's take a look into Mexico's history with the disease: Local authorities were first put on alert during February 2020 as cases increased rapidly. By March 30th, 1094 confirmed cases and 28 deaths prompted the government to declare a "sanitary emergency" and install safe distance protocols (Secretaría de Salud, 2020). It was at this point that the US-Mexico border was partially closed, allowing only US citizens/residents and essential workers (US Embassy, 2021). Despite sanitary protocols, Mexico's first COVID-19 wave peaked by the end of July, with half a million cases and 50,000 deaths (Secretaría de Salud, 2020). The virus continued to spread in such a way that, by the end of 2020, the country had surpassed a million cases and more than 100,000 deaths. The holiday season exacerbated the spread dramatically (Secretaría de Salud, 2020).



A SECOND WAVE THAT NEVER CAME TO BE

It is difficult to pinpoint when, or if a second COVID-19 wave began in Mexico. Mexico's Independence celebrations in September contributed to the peak seen in October. The massive increase in cases after that can be explained by the start of the Holiday season known in Mexico as "Guadalupe-Reyes", beginning in December 12th, when the celebrations of "Our Lady of Guadalupe" take place (Juárez, 2021). Part of this event includes a grand worship session in every Catholic church in the country, food and music festivals as well as daily house parties known as "posadas", which are a prelude to Christmas and New Year's. The season ends on January 6, when the "Day of the Magi/Reyes Magos" occurs with a friends and family gathering in most households. Taking this into account, it becomes hard to determine the end of the first wave and the beginning of a second wave.

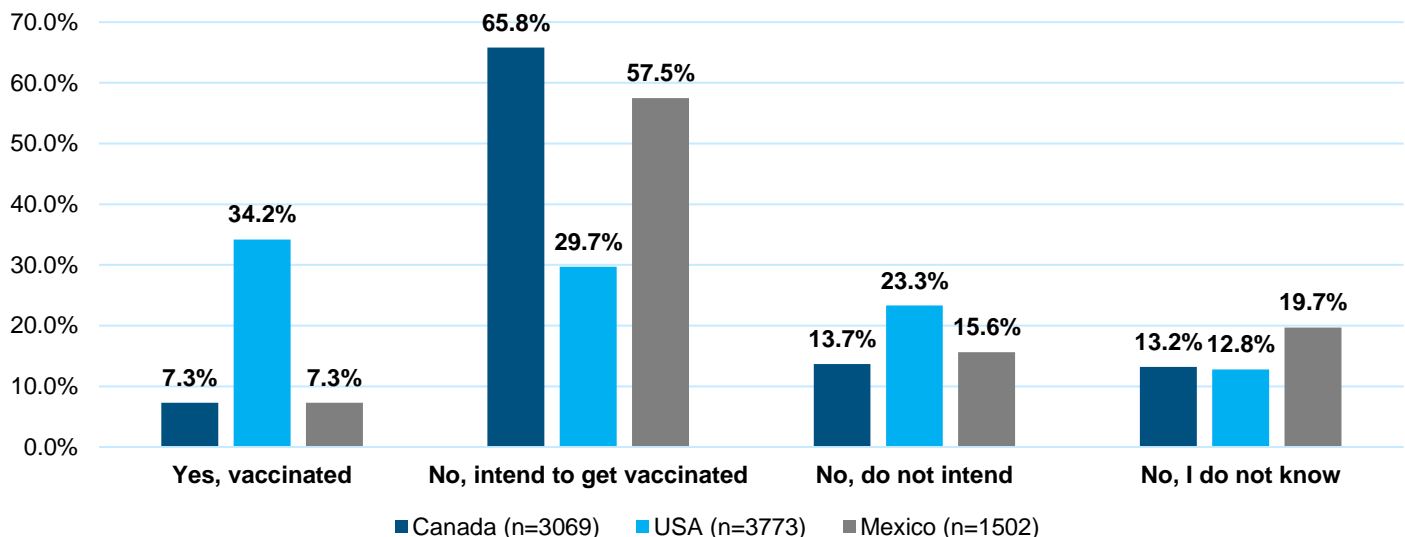
PERCEPTION OF THE PANDEMIC

By April 2021, Mexican survey participants indicated that 35.6% has been tested for COVID-19 with three quarters stating they were “very or somewhat afraid” of catching the coronavirus themselves. Eighty-five percent of people surveyed also reported that they were afraid of their close family or friends catching the virus. When asked whether or not the threat posed by COVID-19 was exaggerated, 83.2 percent reported that they believed the threat of COVID-19 was real and public health measures were necessary.

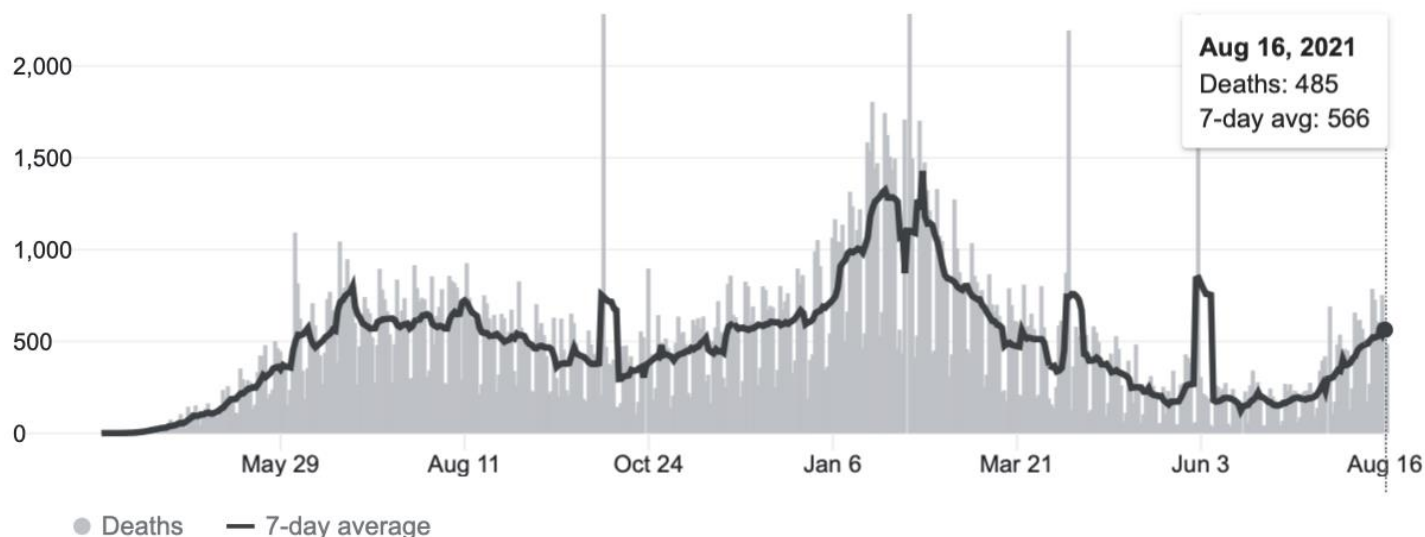
VACCINATION, THE THIRD WAVE AND THE DELTA VARIANT

In Mexico, vaccination began for first responders towards the end of December 2020, with Pfizer being the main provider (El Financiero, 2020). By January 2021, the Mexican government had struck a deal with AstraZeneca (El Universal, 2021b). In February 2021, the Russian vaccine, Sputnik V began to be implemented (El Universal, 2021c). A few weeks later, Chinese vaccines (CanSino and Sinovac) started to be applied to the elderly population (El Universal, 2021d). By April 2021, the government began the vaccination of those involved in the educational field, mainly teachers and administrative personnel. Figure 1 illustrates the vaccination status, intentions and hesitancy in all three North American countries during April 2021. At the time, vaccination rates were highest in the USA, but vaccine hesitancy was also highest in the USA (23.3%), with uncertain intentions being the highest amongst Mexican participants (19.7%).

Figure 1: Vaccine status, Canada, USA, Mexico
(April 2021, N=8344)



Motivated by midterm elections and the vaccination push, most states in the country relaxed their lockdowns completely, in part because the authorities and the general population thought that the pandemic had been controlled successfully (Expansión Política, 2021); these perceptions, coupled with the summer season and the emergence of the Delta variant increased the confirmed cases and the death toll to a point in which a third wave could indeed be identified, as the previous graph shows. As of August 15th, Mexico has 3.11 million total cases and 249,000 total deaths. Regarding fully vaccinated people there are 29,402,096 people, roughly 23% of Mexico’s population (Expansión 2021).



From JHU CSSE COVID-19 Data/Google

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The researchers: A cross-national team of over 30 researchers led by Dr. Lori Wilkinson, Dr. Kiera Ladner and Dr. Jack Jedwab, received funding from CIHR for this study *COVID-19's differential impact on the mental and emotional health of Indigenous Peoples and Newcomers: A socioeconomic analysis of Canada, US and Mexico.*

The study: The team has been collecting data in Canada since March 9 and the United States since March 27, 2020. Ongoing survey waves now include Mexico. Our goal is to measure and follow the changes in attitudes, behaviours, health and socioeconomic outcomes among persons living in all three countries using a mixed methodology of surveys and unstructured interviews.

Fact sheet prepared by Carlos S. Ibarra (El Colegio de la Frontera Norte)

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:

COVIDIMPACTS.CA

REFERENCES

- El Financiero (2020). ¡Llegó la vacuna! Aterrizó en México primer lote de vacuna contra COVID-19 de Pfizer.
- El Universal (2021a). Hospitalización en jóvenes a la alza por COVID-19.
- El Universal (2021b). México autoriza la vacuna de AstraZeneca contra Covid.
- El Universal (2021c) Cofepris autoriza uso de vacuna Sputnik V.
- El Universal (2021d) Cofepris autoriza uso de vacunas CoronaVac y CanSino
- Expansión Política (2021) 19 de los 32 estados quedan en verde en el nuevo semáforo COVID.
- Expansión (2021) Datos Macro. Vacunas administradas COVID-19.
- Juárez, M. (2021). COVID-19 en México: Análisis de su comportamiento espacio-temporal a partir de los Condicionantes Socioespaciales de la Salud. *Persona y Sociedad*, 35(1), 15-40.
- Secretaría de Salud de México (2020). Comunicado Técnico Diario Nuevo Coronavirus en el Mundo (COVID-19), 30 de Marzo. Gobierno de México.
- US Embassy & Consulates in Mexico (2021). Travel Restrictions Fact Sheet El Universal (2021). <https://mx.usembassy.gov/travel-restrictions-fact-sheet/>