



Daily

03

AUG

12:35 UTC

MAX - Europe and the Americas Daily Summary - August 3, 2021

The following report reviews current events in the Europe and the Americas region and their possible effect on business continuity and security.

Highlights of the Day

Americas

- **Nicaragua:** Ortega confirms candidacy for general election as EU sanctions eight officials on August 2; likely to be re-elected as President
- **Paraguay:** Two EML members killed in armed confrontation with FTC in Horqueta, Concepcion on August 1; indicates presence of armed groups
- **USA:** One dead, nine injured in shootings in New Orleans, LA on August 1; indicates elevated threat to bystanders amid uptick in gun violence

Europe

- **Europe:** Inclement weather conditions forecast regionwide on August 3; remain cognizant of local authorities' updates
- **Netherlands:** Narcotics lab uncovered by police, one arrested in Nederweert, Limburg on July 31; arrests, raids to continue near term
- **UK:** PM Johnson attributed tanker attack to Iran on August 2; direct military escalation between UK, Iran unlikely

Americas Actionable Items

Americas: Countries revise measures as immunization drives against COVID-19 continue on August 3; remain cognizant of authorities' updates

In the Bahamas, authorities have introduced entry requirements for travelers, effective from August 6. Details regarding the entry requirements can be found [here](#). In Ecuador,

as of August 1, fully vaccinated nationals can access benefits and discounts in more than 2,000 businesses nationwide. Vaccinated individuals will be required to register [here](#) to avail the benefits. In Mexico, Puebla's Governor Miguel Barbosa announced a state-wide shortage of vaccines against COVID-19 and called on the federal government to send more vaccines, per August 2 reports. In the USA, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warned against travel to Andorra, Curacao, Greece, Ireland, Iran, the Isle of Man, Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Libya, Malta, Martinique, Saint Barthelemy, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, due to a surge in the COVID-19 cases in the aforementioned regions, per August 2 reports. In Venezuela, authorities have imposed a week of flexible COVID-19 restrictions, that will remain through August 8. The country will return to strict restrictions for the week of August 9-15.

Those operating or residing in the Americas on August 3 and the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' instructions regarding quarantines and health procedures.

Americas: Inclement weather conditions reported in Bolivia, Canada, USA on August 3; remain cognizant of authorities' updates

Environment Canada has extended warnings for excessive heat for most of Alberta, western British Columbia, southern Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, northern parts of Ontario, and southern Yukon through at least August 9. According to British Columbia (BC) Wildfire Service, there are 249 fires active in the region as of August 3. The US National Weather Service (NWS) has issued flash flood warnings for areas in southern Texas in the Western Zapata County through at least August 3, Colorado through August 4, and for the eastern parts of North and South Carolina through August 5. August 2 reports indicate that heavy rains and the subsequent mudslides in Colorado blocked the Interstate 70 highway near Glenwood Canyon. Meanwhile, Trinity County in California has issued evacuation orders for the town of Wildwood due to the ongoing wildfires in the region as of August 3. In Bolivia, wildfires were reported in the vicinity of the Viru Viru International Airport (VVI) in Santa Cruz de la Sierra on August 2 leading to flight delays and cancellations, and closure of the airport's main access road.

Those operating or residing in the aforementioned regions in the Americas on August 3 and in the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of updates regarding weather-related risks and allot for disruptions to travel and services.

Americas: Lebanese diaspora slated to hold vigils regionwide to mark Beirut port explosion anniversary on August 4; allot for disruptions

Members of the Lebanese diaspora and associated activists are slated to hold vigils in cities in Canada, Mexico, and the USA, marking the one-year anniversary of the explosion at the port in Beirut on August 4. The demonstrations will take place in multiple cities, including Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver in Canada, Mexico City, Mexico, and in Boston, Los Angeles, New York City, and San Francisco in the USA.

Based on social media interest in the vigils, the demonstrations are liable to witness varying turnouts ranging from the mid-to-high dozens. Although the vigils are likely to transpire peacefully, a bolstered security presence can be expected outside governmental buildings such as the Lebanese Consulate in Montreal, City Hall in Los Angeles, and the Lebanese Embassy in Mexico City. Disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic can be expected in the vicinity of the vigil locations for the duration of the event.

Those operating or residing in the aforementioned cities in Canada, Mexico, and the USA on August 4 are advised to allot for disruptions to travel in the vicinity of the vigil locations.

Brazil: Protest to demand tax-free fuel to be held at Avenida Brasil, Rio de Janeiro at 07:00 (local time) on August 4; maintain vigilance

Reports indicate that the Combustível Sem Imposto movement, a civil society group rallying for tax-free fuel, has organized a protest in Rio de Janeiro on August 4, to demand the elimination of taxes on fuel following a recent surge in fuel prices. Protesters are expected to gather at Avenida Brasil at 07:00 (local time). Traffic will reportedly remain suspended in both directions of the street throughout the day. The protest will be attended by taxi drivers, delivery workers, and truck drivers.

Based on organizers' estimates, the protest is likely to attract a turnout ranging in the low-to-mid thousands. Given heightened anti-government sentiments, the protest carries a latent potential for unrest, with clashes between protesters and security personnel likely to be reported. As such, a bolstered security deployment can be anticipated in the vicinity of the protest location as a precautionary measure and to divert traffic. Significant disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic are likely along Avenida Brasil and in the adjacent thoroughfares throughout August 4. Moreover, taxi services are likely to be severely disrupted for the duration of the protest.

Those operating or residing in Rio de Janeiro on August 4 are advised to maintain vigilance and allot for travel disruptions in the vicinity of Avenida Brasil due to the slated protest.

Dominican Republic: Protests against Penal Code, counter-demonstrations to be held in Santo Domingo from August 3-5; maintain vigilance

Multiple LGBTQ+ groups will hold sit-in demonstrations in front of the Congreso Nacional de la Republica building in Santo Domingo at 10:00 (local time) on August 3, 4, and 5. The demonstrations will be held against alleged discriminatory changes to the Penal Code approved on June 30, which pertain to abortion rights and the LGBTQ+ community. Religious groups have also called for counter-protests outside Congreso Nacional de la Republica from August 3-5 in support of the recent changes.

Based on precedent and the mobilization capabilities of the groups, the LGBTQ+ demonstrations are expected to draw a turnout ranging in the low-to-mid hundreds, with

feminist civil society groups also expected to participate. The counter-protests are likely to see crowds in the high dozens to low hundreds. A bolstered security presence is likely in the vicinity of the Congreso Nacional de la Republica in the capital, as there is a potential for scuffles to ensue between the LGBTQ+ activists and religious groups on the aforementioned days. Disruptions to vehicular movement in the vicinity of the protests can be anticipated from the morning hours.

Those operating or residing in Santo Domingo on August 3, 4, and 5 are advised to maintain vigilance and allot for travel disruptions in the vicinity of Congreso Nacional de la Republica from the morning hours onwards.

USA: Voting rights protest to be held at US Capitol Grounds, Washington, DC, from 12:00 (local time) on August 3; maintain vigilance

Multiple grassroots activists have called for a protest in support of state legislators demanding that Congress stay in session until they pass the For the People Act, which aims to expand voting rights, in Washington, DC on August 3. Protesters will gather at the US Capitol Grounds on First Street SE from 12:00-14:00 (local time). Legislators from more than 20 states have been demonstrating outside the Capitol, with prominent civil rights activists including Jesse Jackson arrested during a protest on August 2.

Based on organizers' estimates, the protest is expected to witness a turnout ranging in the mid-to-high hundreds, with several legislators also partaking in the demonstration. Given heightened sentiments over the issue, the protest carries the potential for unrest in the form of scuffles between protesters and the police. Mass arrests in the event of unrest cannot be ruled out. As such, a bolstered security presence can be expected in the vicinity of the US Capitol Grounds. Disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be anticipated in the vicinity of the US Capitol Grounds during the afternoon hours.

Those operating or residing in Washington, DC, on August 3 are advised to maintain vigilance and allot for traffic disruptions in the vicinity of the US Capitol Grounds during the afternoon hours.

Americas Notable Events

Brazil: TSE to probe Bolsonaro for attacking electronic voting system per August 2 reports; could potentially result in candidacy ban

On August 2, the Tribunal Superior Eleitoral (TSE) announced that it will investigate President Jair Bolsonaro for his attacks on the electronic voting system, claiming future fraud in the 2022 general elections. The Supremo Tribunal Federal (STF) will also investigate whether Bolsonaro committed a crime by spreading misinformation on social media by claiming fraud in the previous two elections. On August 1, Bolsonaro supporters held nationwide demonstrations against electronic voting.

Bolsonaro's repeated verbal attacks on electronic voting, claiming the system is vulnerable to fraud, indicate that he is capitalizing on such allegations to pave the way for him not to accept possible defeat in the 2022 general elections. That Bolsonaro's popularity is at a record-low amid various probes and he accused TSE members of complicity in assisting former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's return to power supports this. TSE's inquiry could potentially lead to evidence for an action by the Ministerio Publico Eleitoral, which in turn could result in a ban on presidential candidacy, or removal of the mandate to form a government in case of re-election moving forward.

Nicaragua: Ortega confirms candidacy for general election as EU sanctions eight officials on August 2; likely to be re-elected as President

On August 2, the ruling Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN) party confirmed President Daniel Ortega's candidacy for the general elections in November. Meanwhile, the EU imposed sanctions on eight Nicaraguan officials, including Vice-President Rosario Murillo, on grounds of "serious human rights violation and undermining the rule of law". The recent sanctions follow the detention of seven presidential candidates, journalists, and alleged dissidents.

Given Ortega's candidacy and the heightened crackdown on political opponents, especially presidential candidates, Ortega is likely to be re-elected for a fourth consecutive term, thereby potentially remaining in power until 2027. The new EU sanctions, although symbolic, reiterate the bloc's denunciation of the sustained crackdown on dissenters and opponents of the Ortega-led government ahead of the elections. With this, international observers are additionally likely to highlight their concerns over the scope of free and fair elections in Nicaragua amid the ongoing crackdown. However, the EU is unlikely to impose severe economic sanctions in the near term, given the prolonged time period required for processing it. That said, such sanctions cannot be ruled out in the long term.

Paraguay: Two EML members killed in armed confrontation with FTC in Horqueta, Concepcion on August 1; indicates presence of armed groups

On August 1, an armed confrontation between the La Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta de Paraguay (FTC, Joint Task Force), and the members of the Ejercito de Mariscal Lopez (EML), a splinter group of the Ejercito del Pueblo Paraguayo (EPP) insurgent group, took place in Horqueta, a city in the Concepcion Department. Two members of the EML were killed, including Antonio Alejandro Ramos Ramirez, the son of the leader of the group. Additionally, the EPP was involved in an explosive attack that killed three FTC soldiers in San Pedro on July 29.

The incident highlights the continued presence of the EPP and splinter groups in Concepcion and neighboring departments, considering the region's important position within drug trafficking. Given that a prominent member of the EML was killed, the potential for attacks targeting security forces is likely to remain elevated going forward, although such attacks are liable to be small and sporadic in nature. With that, the FTC is

expected to carry out additional operations targeting guerilla groups in the near-to-medium term, increasing the risk of further confrontations between the two sides.

USA: One dead, nine injured in shootings in New Orleans, LA on August 1; indicates elevated threat to bystanders amid uptick in gun violence

A shooting took place on Bourbon Street in New Orleans, LA on August 1, leaving five injured. Reports indicate that multiple gunshots were heard at the crime scene, leading to panic among bystanders in the popular tourist area. Another shooting broke out in the adjacent Iberville neighborhood, killing one and injuring four. Approximately 250 shootings and 100 homicides have been recorded in 2021, marking a 63 percent increase in homicides since 2019 in New Orleans.

The incidents continue to highlight the elevated threat of gun violence in New Orleans, especially to bystanders in popular tourist areas. This was evidenced in a recent shooting that took place at the Louisiana Mud Fest music festival on July 30. Although investigations are ongoing as of writing, the Bourbon Street incident may be linked to inter-gang violence as one of the suspects was also reported to be shot by another assailant. With other major cities also recording a surge in shootings in 2021, the threat of gun violence is expected to remain elevated nationwide, prompting calls to tighten gun control measures.

Europe Actionable items

Europe: Countries revise entry requirements as vaccination drives continue regionwide on August 3; remain cognizant of authorities' updates

In the Czech Republic, authorities created new COVID-19 country risk classifications effective August 2. Countries will now be categorized as green, orange, red, dark red, and black with restrictions tightening as risk classification increases. In Luxembourg, travelers from the UK are not required to undergo a seven-day quarantine upon arrival. In Spain, access to indoor nightlife venues in Andalusia will be permitted only with a digital COVID-19 certificate or a negative PCR/antigen test result, effective from August 5. In the UK, the NHS COVID-19 application in England and Wales will be edited to notify fewer contacts who will be advised to self-isolate following close contact with a COVID-19 positive patient, as per August 2 reports. In Ukraine, all nonresident foreign travelers are required to submit proof of full vaccination, a negative PCR, or an antigen test result taken within 72 hours prior to arrival. Additionally, travelers should also possess health insurance that covers treatment for COVID-19. Unvaccinated nonresident foreign travelers will have to undergo 10-day mandatory quarantine which can be shortened by a second COVID-19 negative test result.

Those operating or residing in Europe on August 3 and in the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' instructions regarding quarantines, travel restrictions, and health procedures.

Europe: Inclement weather conditions forecast regionwide on August 3; remain cognizant of local authorities' updates

According to the Fire Risk Forecast Map issued by the Ministry of Civil Protection of Greece, the country is under risk category four, highest in the four-tier system, for heatwaves on August 3. The alerts are in effect in East Macedonia, Central Macedonia, Thessaly, Ionian Islands, and Epirus. Temperatures in northern Greece will range between 41-44 degrees Celsius while the temperature in Epirus and Thessaly will range from 43-45 degrees Celsius. Reports suggest that wildfires are expected to cause local disruptions to transport and business operations in rural areas of southern Europe including France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain through at least the end of September. Additionally, the Hydromet Center of Russia has issued orange alerts, the second highest in the three-tier system, for forest fires and high temperatures in the southern districts of Russia through August 5.

Those operating or residing in the aforementioned areas in Europe on August 3 and the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding weather conditions and allot for disruptions to travel and services.

Europe: Lebanese diaspora slated to hold vigils regionwide to mark Beirut port explosion anniversary on August 4; allot for disruptions

Members of the Lebanese diaspora and associated activists are slated to hold vigils regionwide marking the one-year anniversary of the explosion at the port in Beirut on August 4. The demonstrations are to be held in multiple countries in Europe including Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK. The gatherings will be held in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Geneva, London, Lyon, Oslo, Paris, and Toulouse.

Based on social media interest in the vigils, the demonstrations are liable to witness varying turnouts ranging from the mid-to-high dozens. Although the vigils are likely to transpire peacefully, a bolstered security presence can be expected outside governmental buildings such as the Lebanese Embassy in Berlin as a precautionary measure. Disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic can be expected in the vicinity of the protest locations for the duration of the vigils.

Those operating or residing in the aforementioned cities in Europe on August 4 are advised to allot for disruptions in the vicinity of the vigil locations for the duration of the demonstrations.

France: Healthcare workers to carry out indefinite nationwide strike from August 4; allot for disruptions

Reports indicate that trade unions have called on healthcare workers to carry out an

indefinite strike beginning August 4. The strike has been organized to protest the mandatory requirement for healthcare workers to be vaccinated by September 15. Based on precedent, the labor action is likely to be largely adhered to, causing temporary disruptions to healthcare services in the coming days. More severe disruptions can be anticipated if trade unions postpone lifting the strike notice. However, emergency services will remain unaffected.

Those operating or residing in France on August 4 and the coming days are advised to allot for disruptions to healthcare services due to the slated nationwide strike.

Europe Notable Events

Netherlands: Narcotics lab uncovered by police, one arrested in Nederweert, Limburg on July 31; arrests, raids to continue near term

On July 31, police uncovered a drug laboratory in the Limburg town of Nederweert, a municipality in the southeast located close to the Belgian border. The location of the lab was acquired through an investigation of encrypted messages. A Polish man was detained in the raids, and chemicals and other equipment were also seized. Information regarding the operational duration of the lab is yet to be determined but the lab comprised of two big storage units and was capable of producing 100 kilograms of drugs per day that had a commercial value of one million EUR.

That the lab was described as the country's largest and most professional setup by the police, indicates that the criminal group behind it is likely well-resourced. Given police statements and that the investigation is ongoing, further raids and arrests are expected in Limburg. With this, bolstered police surveillance and patrolling are likely in the municipalities along the Belgium-Netherlands border, with Belgian police likely to assist in the investigation going forward given the possibility of criminal affiliates operating there to facilitate cross-border drug trafficking.

Poland: COVID-19 vaccination center targeted in arson attack in Zamosc on August 2; security measures to be bolstered

On August 2, a mobile COVID-19 vaccination unit was targeted in an arson attack in the southern city of Zamosc. Reports indicate that the fire was set by an unknown perpetrator and destroyed the COVID-19 vaccines stored in the unit. Damages were also reported to the local public health station. PM Mateusz Morawiecki announced that the government will implement strict measures against groups attacking COVID-19 vaccination centers. In late July, anti-vaccination protesters tried to raid a vaccination center in Grodzisk Mazowiecki town, near Warsaw.

The latest incident highlights the heightened anti-vaccination sentiments prevalent in the eastern and southeastern regions of Poland, evidenced by a series of similar attacks, assaults on healthcare workers, protests, and the low vaccination rate. Given this and PM

Morawiecki's statements, authorities are likely to deploy additional security across vaccination and healthcare centers to curtail the uptick in violence linked with anti-vaccine groups. With that, the government is likely to introduce legislation to provide special legal protection to healthcare staff, propose strict punishment for perpetrators of the attacks, and possibly restrict anti-lockdown demonstrations in the near term.

UK: PM Johnson attributed tanker attack to Iran on August 2; direct military escalation between UK, Iran unlikely

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson criticized Iranian actions as "outrageous" on August 2, after Israel, the UK, and the USA confirmed that Iran was behind the attack on the Mercer Street tanker off the coast of Oman during the night hours (local time) on July 29 in which one British and one Romanian national were killed. Both the UK and Iran summoned the other's ambassador at their respective foreign ministries. Mercer Street is operated by a London-based company owned by an Israeli citizen.

Although the attack has led to strongly worded responses from UK and US officials, it is unlikely that either will take direct overt military action against Iran in the near term but rather resort to reconnaissance or intelligence support in a potential Israeli-led operation. Additionally, the UK is expected to initiate diplomatic pressure at the UN and attempt to introduce further sanctions against Iran. With that, a wider conflict between the UK and Iran is not expected as the attack is liable to be primarily perceived to be within the ongoing Iran-Israel tensions.

Notable Dates

August 4

- **British Virgin Islands:** August Festival

August 5

- **Croatia:** Victory & Homeland Thanksgiving Day

August 6

- **Bolivia:** National Day
- **El Salvador:** Celebracion del Divino Salvador del Mundo
- **Jamaica:** Independence Day

August 7

- **Colombia:** Battle of Boyaca Day

August 8

- **Ecuador:** National Day Holiday

August 9

- **Ecuador:** National Day Holiday
- **Suriname:** Indigenous People's Day

August 10

- **Nicaragua:** Dejada de Santo Domingo de Guzman
- **Romania:** Protest in Bucharest

August 13

- **Germany:** Strike in Frankfurt

August 15

- **Regionwide:** Assumption Day

August 16

- **Colombia, Holy See, Monaco, Spain:** Assumption Day
- **Dominican Republic:** Restoration Day