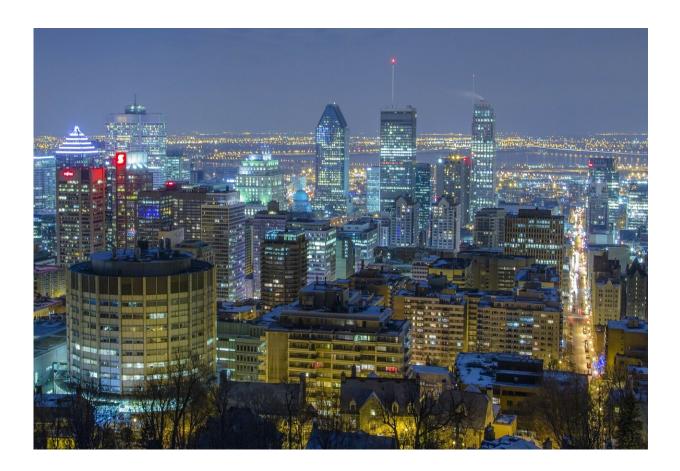# Canada PM 'worried' about situation in Montreal

May 9 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called Saturday for caution and expressed concern about loosening lockdown measures in Montreal, the epicenter of Canada's coronavirus outbreak.

"We need to make sure that we go progressively, and slowly and gradually on any reopening," Trudeau said, reminding reporters that he is himself a Quebecer.

"Of course, I'm worried," Trudeau said.

While several Canadian provinces, including Quebec, are preparing reopening measures and a gradual revival of their economies, Trudeau stressed prudence and said that the country is not yet out of danger.

"Our focus right now is on recognizing that we are not in the recovery phase yet. We are not even fully into the restarting phase yet. We are still in the emergency phase," Trudeau said.

"Being very careful, step by step, is going to be so important," he said.

Quebec is the worst-hit province in Canada, with more than half of both the country's 67,000 cases of coronavirus and 4,700 deaths.

Montreal and its surroundings have suffered an elevated number of cases, especially at care homes for the elderly.

Authorities in Quebec on Thursday delayed the reopening of Montreal's schools and shops for a second time, pushing the date to May 25.

Canada's elderly have paid a particularly heavy price for the disease, the country's chief public health officer, Theresa Tam, said Saturday, calling the scale and impact "nothing short of a national tragedy."

She said that 20 percent of coronavirus cases in Canada were linked to long-term care homes and that 80 percent of deaths are "in seniors in these settings."

"We've got to do better as a nation," she said, reiterating that issues with [retirement homes](link) should be addressed following the pandemic.

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