

# COVID-19 economic data tracker

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## Trend watch and what's new this week

This week marks the second anniversary of declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic. Thankfully, key virus trends are approaching their mid-2021 lows (slide 3). However, global vaccination trends appear to be stalling (slide 4), as have the pace of U.S. vaccinations (slide 5). Still, about 75% of Americans over 12 years old are fully vaccinated and almost half have received a booster.

Given the stabilization in school-aged new cases for four straight weeks, we will longer highlight this sector of the population but we will continue to monitor the data.

Incoming activity-based data was mixed this past week (slide 2 and slide 7), as hotel occupancy and restaurant reservations slipped. Meanwhile, other indicators—such as air travel, staffing, and rail freight—remain solid.

This week, we highlight U.S. air travel (slide 7). It is hovering near 2 million passengers/day, but business travel has been slow to return. We think business travelers will return as '22 progresses, though it may take until '23 before spending nears pre-pandemic levels.

We also revisited back-to-office trends (slide 8). Office usage broadly is more than 60% below pre-pandemic levels, but there are wide variations by city (select cities listed on slide 2) and by industry.

## Bottom line

It remains too early to tell what impact the Russian invasion of Ukraine is having on the U.S. economy. It hasn't yet appeared in the U.S. economic data. It most certainly has shown up in global energy markets as well as commodity prices.

We remain cautiously optimistic that the impact will be somewhat muted. This is based on the solid momentum coming into March, as evident by most of the activity-based data.

Ultimately, we maintain our view that the risk of a U.S. recession in the next year is low, though has increased from very low odds just a month ago. While there may be short-term pain for consumers with hotter inflation, much of the spillover effects from the Ukraine situation into the energy markets is likely to shift spending from discretionary consumption to the energy sector within the U.S. economy.

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# U.S. COVID-19 economic data tracker matrix

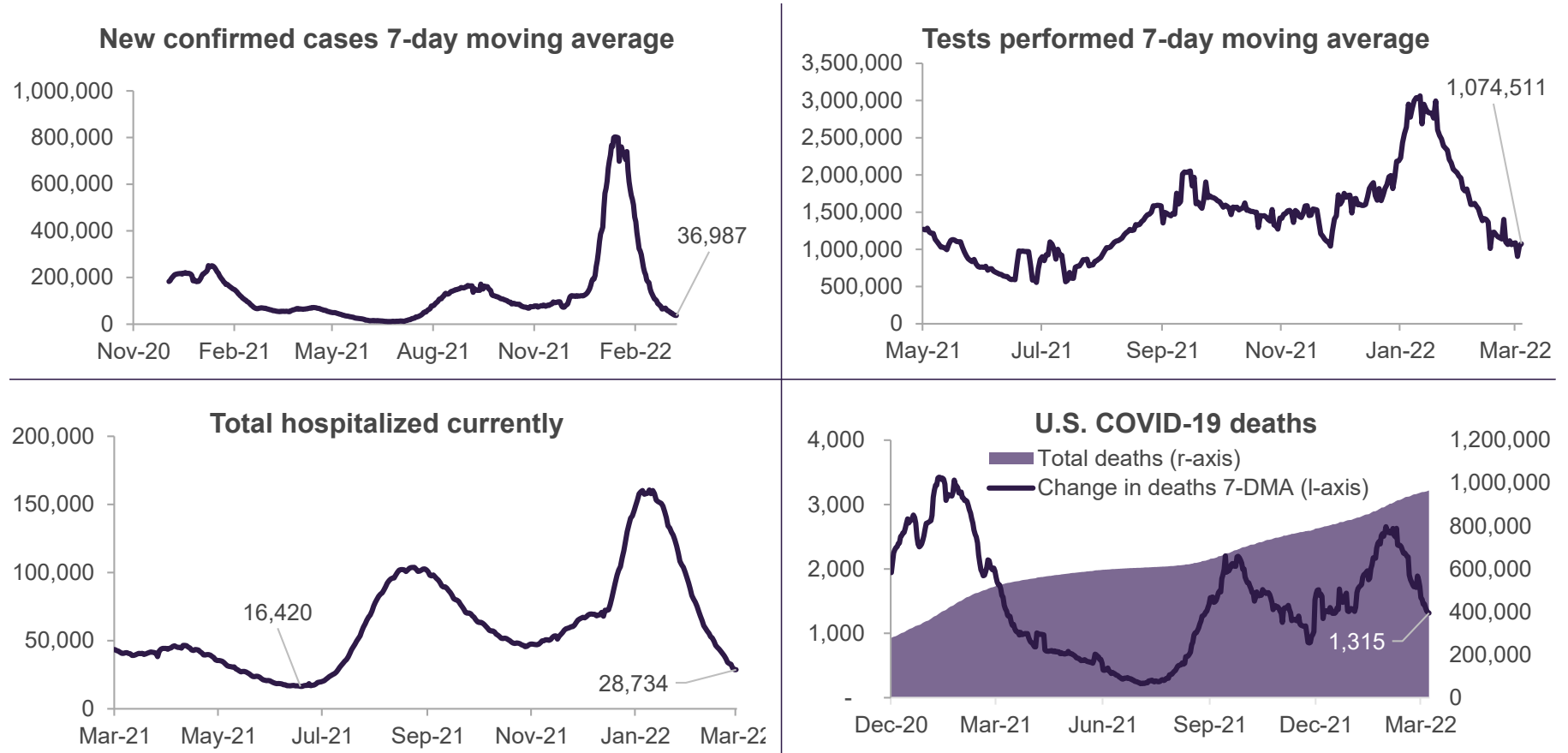
Indicator	Relative trend	What we're watching
Back to office	▼	Increased to 38.0 (pre-pandemic indexed to 100), the highest level since mid-December. Top cities are Austin (54), Houston (52), and Dallas (41); bottom are San Francisco (28) and San Jose (29).
TSA air passenger throughput	▲	Weekly passengers rose 2.7% WoW to 13.8 million, which was -14.1% below the 2019 weekly average of 16.1M. Passenger counts are -14.8% from the same week in March 2019 but 85% above March 2021.
OpenTable restaurant bookings	↔	Slipped to -8.0% compared to pre-pandemic levels, a three-week low. Top positive states were led by Rhode Island (+31%) and Oklahoma (+28%); bottom were New York (-39%) and Maryland (-34%). Top cities were Miami (+35%), Scottsdale (+26%), and Nashville (+23%); bottom were Portland (-62%), Minneapolis (-59%), and Baltimore (-58%).
Google mobility	▲	Activities gradually climbing with the warmer spring weather. 7-day averages relative to 2020: Parks +6%, Transit -24%, Grocery/Pharmacy -5%, Residential +4%, Workplaces -17%, Retail/Restaurant/Recreation -9%.
Hotel occupancy	▲	Occupancy slipped to 61.2% but remains near highest levels since November. The average daily rate fell to \$137.96, up 4.7% from March 2019, while revenue per available room fell to \$84.39, which is 3.8% below March '19.
Freight	▲	Rail carloads rose 4.1% WoW to start March and rose 2.0% MoM in Feb. Container traffic at the top 5 U.S. ports (LA, Long Beach, NY/NJ, Savannah, SeaTac) rose 5.6% MoM in Jan. and 7.7% from January 2019.
Staffing index	▲	Ticked up to 105.2 after its falling last week for the first time in the prior six weeks. We expect it to continue rising in the next few weeks, albeit modestly. The low for this cycle was 59.6 set in April 2020.
Apartment rental prices	↔	Rent index jumped to 1.223 in January, up 3.3% MoM and was the first rise in five months. While the level is significantly above pre-pandemic levels, rents fell 2.6% during the second half of 2021.

Trend relative to whether it is favorable for economic growth:

▲ Positive   ▼ Negative   ↔ Neutral / Mixed

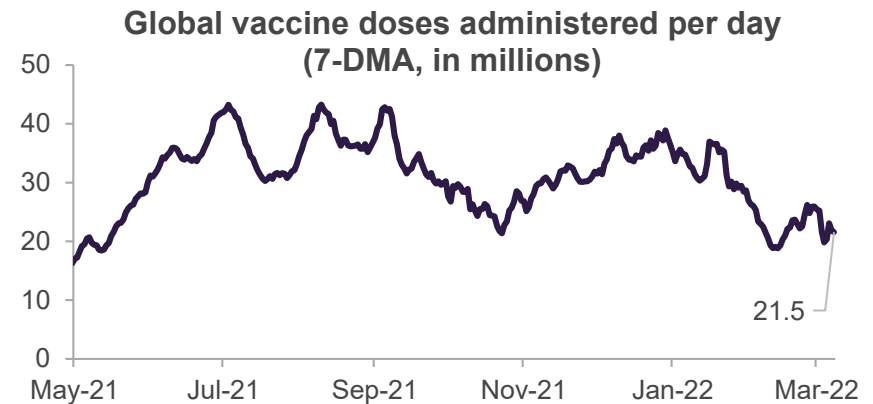
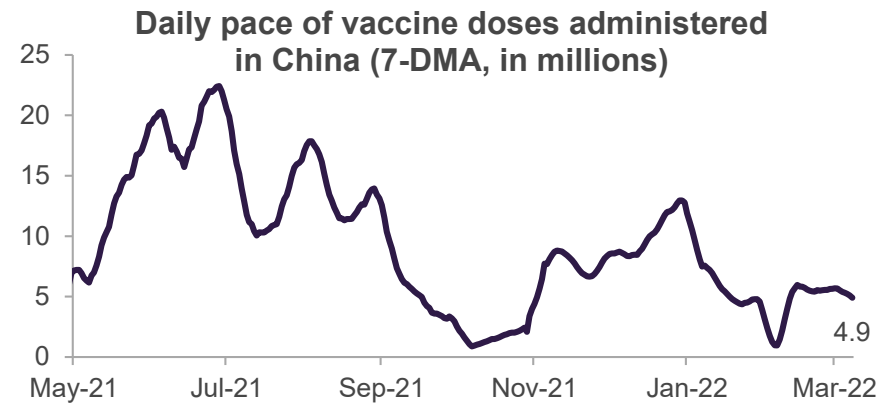
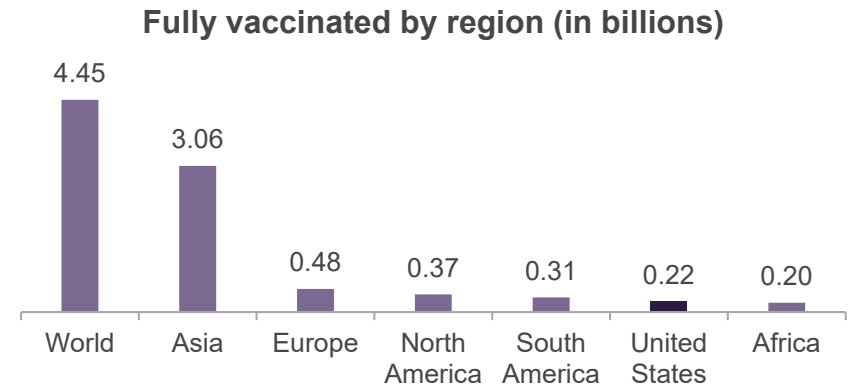
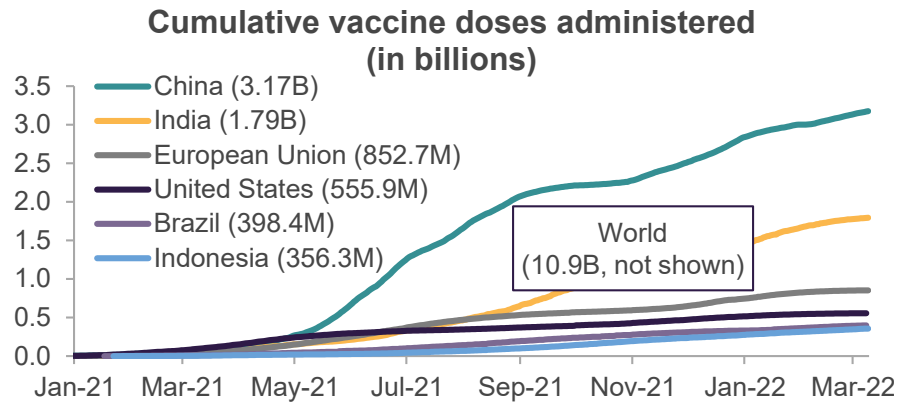
Data sources: Truist IAG, Bloomberg, Kastle Back to Work Barometer, Transportation Security Administration, OpenTable, Google COVID-19 Community Mobility Report, STR/CoStar, American Staffing Association, Zillow. Week-over-week and year-over-year change are abbreviated as WoW and YoY, respectively.

# U.S. cases, hospitalizations, and death rate approaching mid-2021 lows



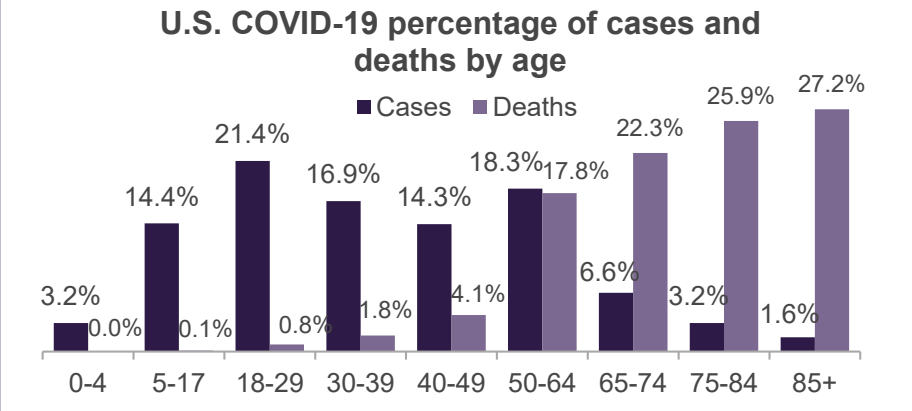
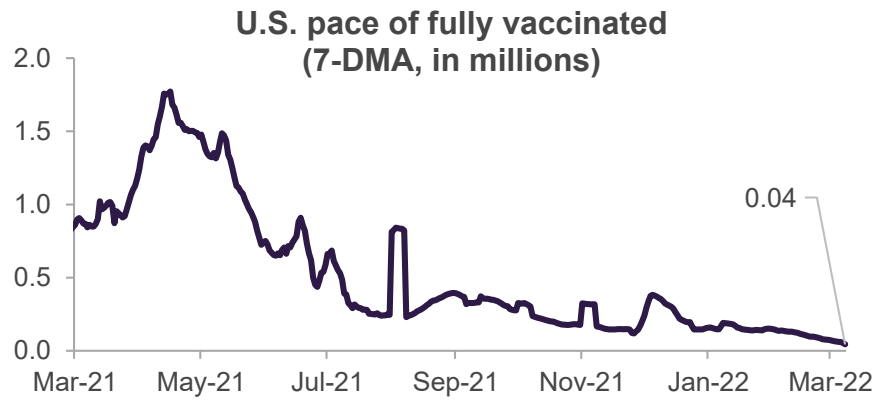
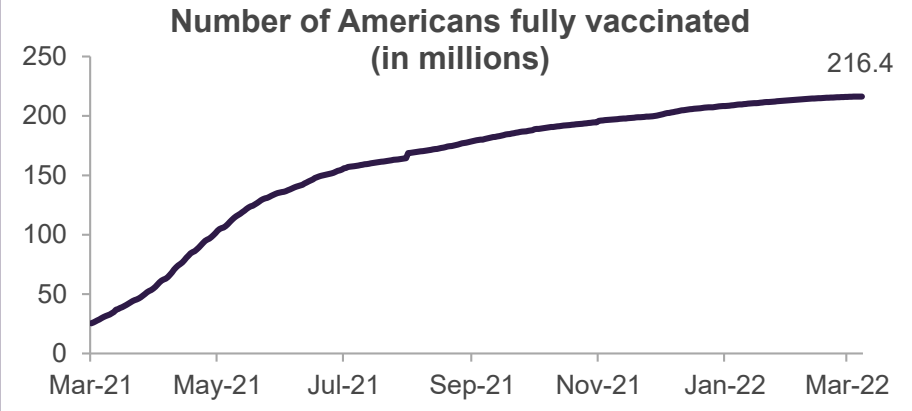
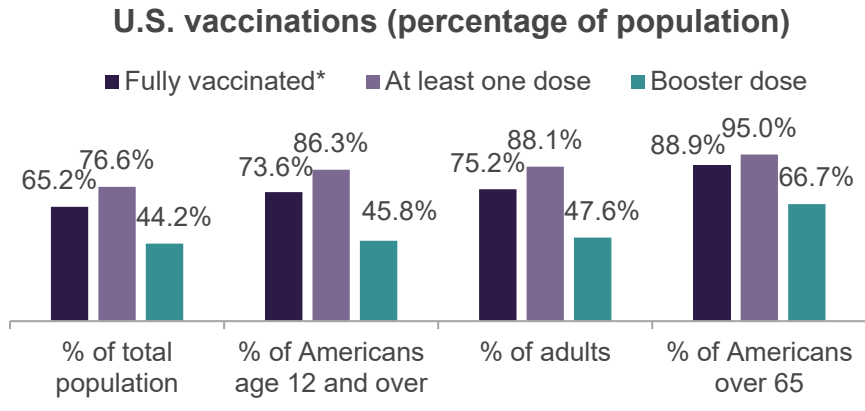
Data sources: Truist IAG, Bloomberg, Johns Hopkins University through March 10, 2021. Data for 50 U.S. states plus American Samoa, Washington D.C., Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. 7-day moving average (DMA).

# Global vaccination trends stalling



Data sources: Truist IAG, Our World in Data, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), through March 9, 2021. U.S. figures includes all 50 states plus Washington D.C., U.S. military installations and territories. Figures for the United Kingdom are not included in the European Union. 7-day moving average (DMA).

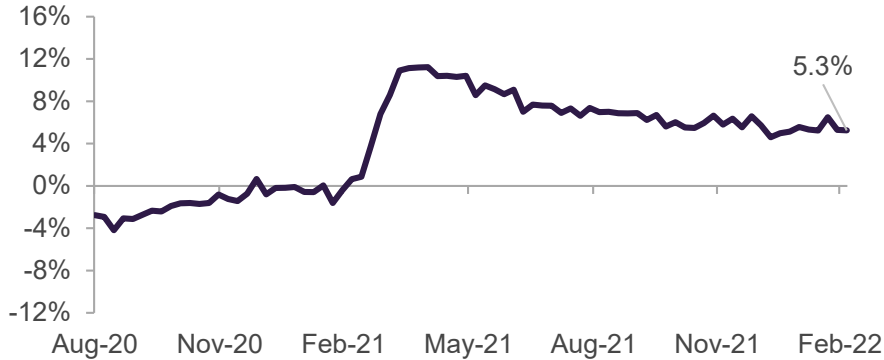
# Nearly 75% of Americans over 12 years old are fully vaccinated and almost half have received a booster



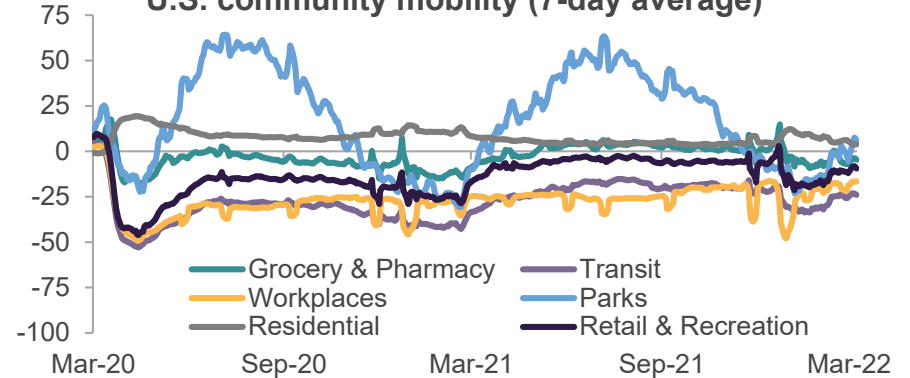
Data sources: Truist IAG and the following additional sources respectively: Top left, bottom right: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), through March 9, 2021. Top right, bottom left: Our World in Data, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), through March 9, 2022. U.S. figures includes all 50 states plus Washington D.C., U.S. military installations and territories. \*Fully vaccinated is defined as receiving two doses on different days (regardless of time interval) of the two-dose mRNA series or receiving a single-dose vaccine regimen.

# Strong rebound in activity-based trends from early January slowdown

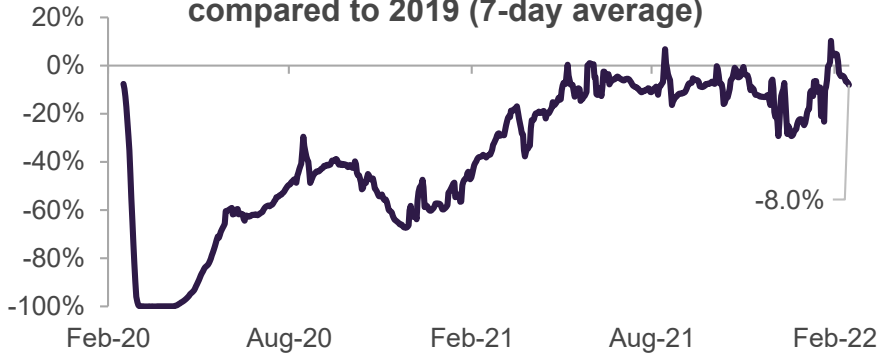
**NY Fed weekly economic index**



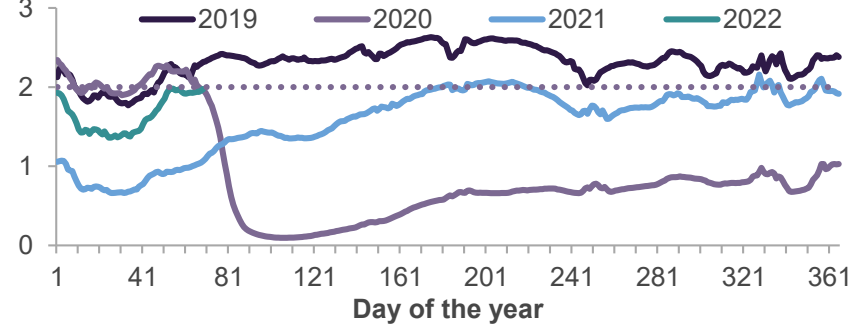
**U.S. community mobility (7-day average)**



**OpenTable bookings % change compared to 2019 (7-day average)**



**TSA checkpoint traveler throughput (7-day average, in millions)**

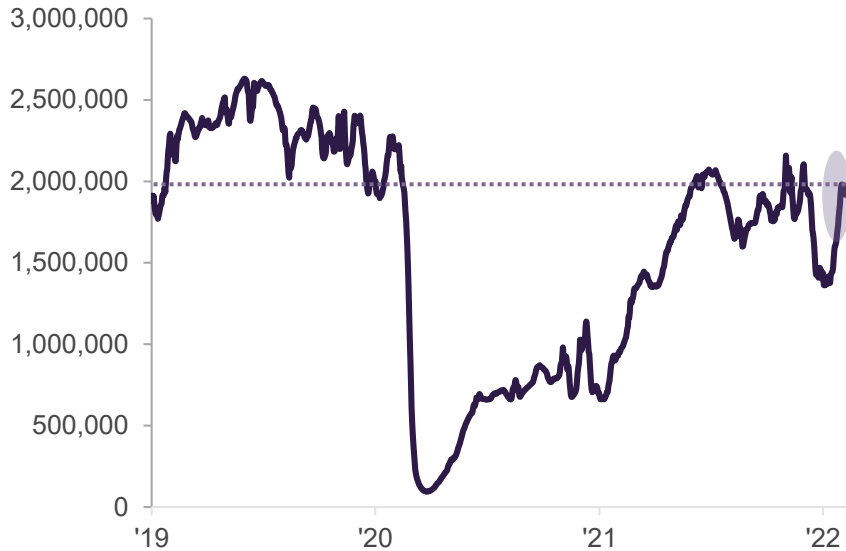


Data sources: Truist IAG and the following additional sources respectively: Top left: Bloomberg, NY Federal Reserve Weekly Economic Index through March 5, 2022. Top right: (U.S. Community Mobility) Google COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports 7-day average through March 8. Bottom left: Bloomberg, OpenTable 7-day average through March 10. Bottom right: Bloomberg, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) 7-day average through March 10.

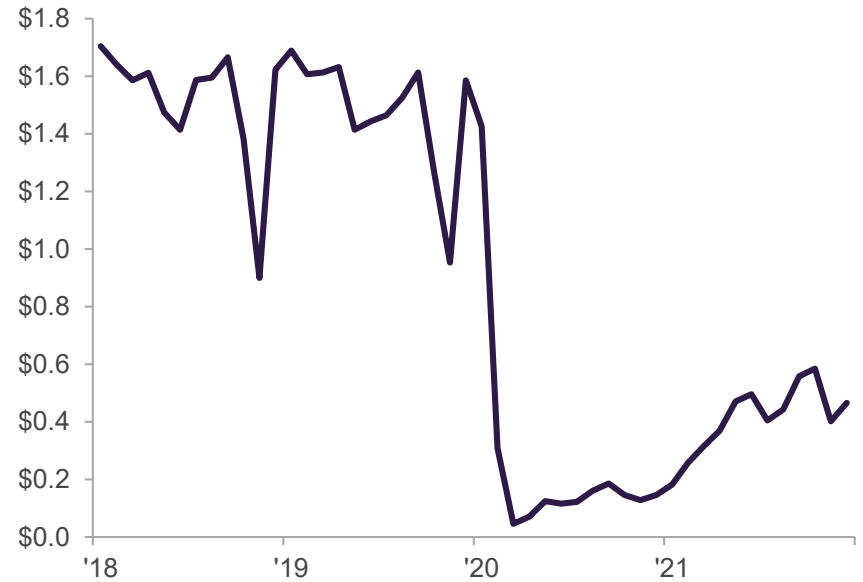
# U.S. air travel hovering near 2M/day but business travel slow to return

Air passengers are once again at roughly 2 million per day. Passenger counts are -14.8% from the same week in March 2019 but 85% above March 2021. The missing piece appears to be business travelers as air booking by corporate travel agencies is down 71% compared to the same month in 2019. We expect business travel to continue ramping higher in 2022 as in-person sales calls, industry meetings, and large conferences return.

**TSA checkpoint traveler throughput  
(7-day average)**



**Corporate travel agency air bookings  
(\$ in billions)**



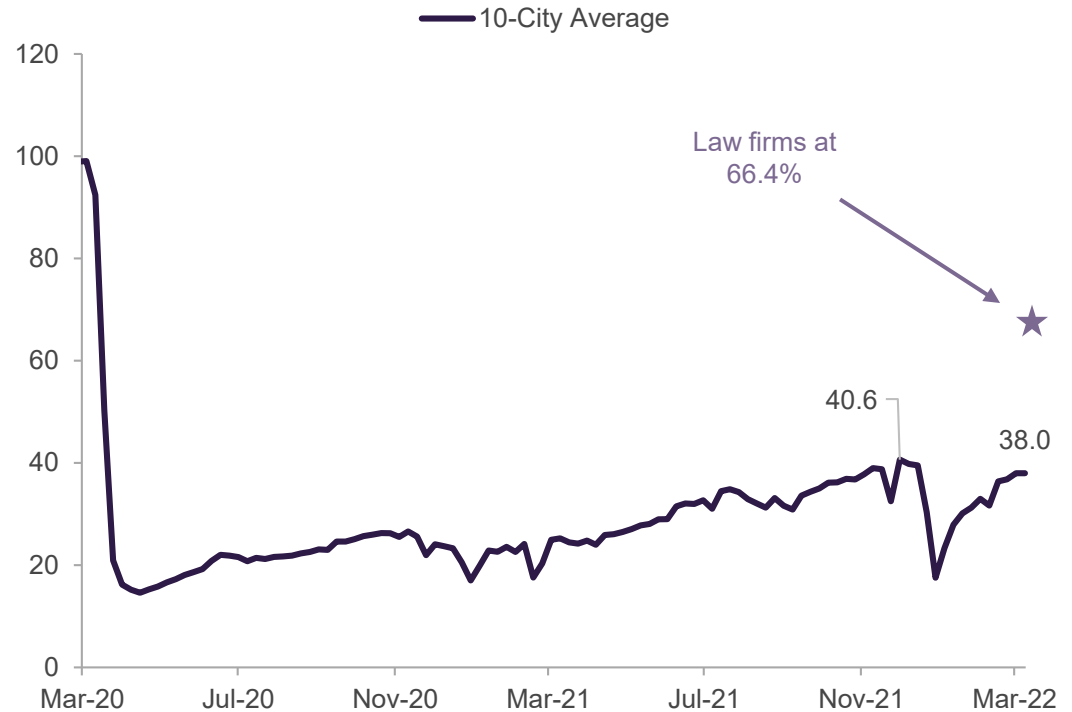
Sources: left chart: Truist IAG, Bloomberg, Transportation Security Administration; 7-day average based on daily data through March 10, 2022. Right chart: Truist IAG, Bloomberg, Airlines Reporting Corporation; monthly data through January 2022.

# White collar workers gradually coming back into the office

Workers are slowly returning to offices. The national average for the index reached 38 in the most recent week, which is approaching the 40.6 reading during the first week of December 2021, which was the highest level since the pandemic. Still, that is a far cry from pre-pandemic activity.

We note, though, that office usage in cities such as Austin (53.9) and Houston (51.7) are considerably higher. Furthermore, office use in certain industries are considerably higher, such as law firms, which are at 66.4% nationally.

**U.S. Back to Work Barometer Index**



Sources: Truist IAG, Bloomberg, Kastle Systems based on building access control systems data relative to a pre-COVID baseline, averaged weekly; weekly data through March 2, 2022



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