The reality of life in the United States

How has the U.S., the richest country in the world, handled the COVID-19 pandemic?

- At the time of writing this, the United States is weeks away from reaching a record 1 million deaths from COVID-19. (Source)
- Scientific American estimates that around 243,000 children have lost a single caregiver while 194,000 children have lost both parents.
- Due to improper public education and government distrust, the U.S. has plateaued at only 66% of adults being fully vaccinated while many countries in Latin America have reached over 80% of adults being fully vaccinated in less time.
- As the U.S. normalizes continued spikes of COVID-19 variants, 102 of the largest private health insurance providers across the U.S. (the top two for each state and D.C.) almost two-thirds (73) of those plans are no longer waiving out-of-pocket costs for COVID-19 treatment. (Source)

What does it take to own a home or find shelter in the U.S.?

- According to Housing and Urban Development, on any given night in 2021, more than 326,000 were experiencing sheltered homelessness in the United States. “Sheltered” refers to people who are staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, or safe havens. Due to disruptions by the pandemic, HUD only has estimates of “sheltered” individuals. (Source)
- Meanwhile, occupancy rates of emergency shelter and transitional housing centers declined in 2021. (Source)
- The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that the 2017 required housing wage is $21.21/hour, which is $5.00/hour more than the $16.38/hour an average renter makes. It is three times more than $7.25/hour, which is the average federal minimum wage. (Source)
- According to Zillow, the United States now has almost 150 cities where the average cost of a home is $1 million. (Source)

How does the U.S. protect the health of its citizens?

- According to the 2020 Census, 8.6% of people in the United States, or 28 million Americans did not have health insurance at any point during the year. (Source)
- Uninsured rates for children under the age of 19 in poverty rose to 9.3%. (Source)
- 40% of Americans are one missed paycheck away from poverty, meaning one single emergency health crisis is enough to bankrupt a significant portion of the population. (Source)
● 90% of counties in the United States do not have a provider, such as a hospital, clinic or physician's office where abortions can be performed. (Source)

In the richest country in the world, how do its people access food and nutrition? (Source, Source)

● In 2019-2020, 10.8% of households in the United States experienced food insecurity. That is around 38.3 million people living in food-insecure households.

● Households with a Black or non-white Latinx reference person have higher rates of food insecurity, 21.7% and 17.2% respectively.

● Low-income households spend less than a third of what high-income households spend on food each year, yet food expenditures account for a disproportionate share (36%) of their disposable income. (Source)

● In ranking countries based on the parameters of whether there was enough to eat, if people could afford to eat, the quality of food, and unhealthy eating, Oxfam found that the United States only ranks 21st overall and 120th in the category of healthy eating out of 125 countries. (Source)