

COVID-19 media surveillance

13 August 2020; 20:30 weekly brief

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) remains a major news topic, with over 80 thousand articles per day on Wednesday (in 70 languages, as detected by [MEDISYS](#)).

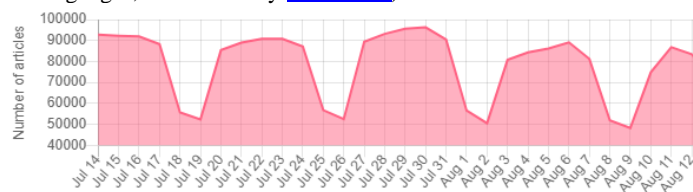


Figure 1 Media reports on Covid-19 (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



Figure 2 Geolocations mentioned in coronavirus media reports showing clusters of media reports on Italy, France, Spain, Germany, the UK, Russia, India, China, South Korea and Japan (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



Headlines

- US [reports nearly 1,500 daily deaths, reflecting continued toll of summer surge](#)
- Brazil registered [more than 104,000 deaths and 3.1 million cases](#)
- Spain: [Spanish regions ban smoking over Covid-19 risk](#)
- Italy: number of [new cases up again on Thursday, crossing the 500 mark for the first time in weeks](#)
- France: [2,669 new cases reported in 24 hours, highest number since end of lockdown](#)
- Germany sees [highest level of confirmed cases since May](#) with 1,226 new cases on Wednesday
- Belgium: [Face masks now obligatory in all of Brussels](#) after the number of confirmed infections over the past seven days passed the threshold of 50 cases per 100,000 inhabitants
- Luxembourg [reported 58 new cases on Wednesday](#)
- Russia's [cases surpass 907,000](#) while the [Sputnik V vaccine received regulatory approval](#)
- UK sees [biggest daily increase of cases since June](#)
- Israel [surpasses China in total cases](#)
- South Africa's [health minister says outbreak may have reached its peak](#)
- India: [cases yet to peak or plateau in India according to All India Institute of Medical Sciences](#)
- Australia: [numbers in Victoria state cause for cautious optimism that restrictions are working](#)
- New Zealand has [17 cases of community transmission](#) after 100 days without local transmission
- South Korea: [schools under rising COVID-19 threat as more students catch virus](#)
- China's [new confirmed cases fell into single digits, while Hong Kong saw another 33 cases](#)
- Japan reported [over 970 new cases](#)



Twitter

The following news were found among the most mentioned/retweeted items:

- "The Trump Pandemic. A blow-by-blow account of how the president killed thousands of Americans" ([slate](#))
- "97,000 children test positive for coronavirus in just two weeks as US schools re-open" ([themirror](#))
- "States have authority to fine or jail people who refuse coronavirus vaccine, attorney says" ([abc15](#))
- "Government hired firm with links to Dominic Cummings to track tweets by UK citizens" ([theneweuropean](#))
- "Russia registers world's first coronavirus vaccine, President Putin's daughter vaccinated" ([dnaindia](#))
- "Argentina in the world's top 10 for daily deaths and about to surpass Sweden" ([clarin](#))

The hashtags [#russia](#), [#putin](#) and [#russianvaccine](#) were trending due to the announced Sputnik V vaccine ([sputnikvaccine](#)).

The most mentioned English sources were the New York Times, CNN, justthenews and the Guardian.

RT (Spanish Version), Clarin, Infobae, CNN (Spanish Version) and El Pais, and Le Monde and Le Parisien were among the most mentioned Spanish and French sources, respectively.

” *Extracted Quotes*

Tony Blakely (University of Melbourne, Professor of Epidemiology):

"New Zealand gives a perfect example of what you do when a mystery case pops up and you want to maintain elimination or get to elimination — you go hard and you go early"; "Because you need to hit it that hard to get ahead of the virus and stop transmission and stamp out all cases, including both the ones you've been able to find where they come from as well as the silent mystery cases."

Fact Check

Fact checked: health-related claims

- Fact checkers debunk legislation approved by the Bolivian Chamber of Deputies, "Citizens, and residents of the Bolivian territory, may use the Chlorine Dioxide Solution, as an alternative means, to prevent or treat the infection and the consequences caused by the Coronavirus (COVID-19)", reporting that public health officials worldwide warn of the dangers and life-threatening consequences of drinking chlorine dioxide ([polygraph](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that masks are ineffective in preventing coronavirus infections given that the virus can pass through the fibers of the mask ([liberationchecknews](#)).

Fact checked: downplaying COVID-19

- Fact checkers debunk claims that COVID-19 tests cannot distinguish between COVID-19, the flu and common cold ([aapfactcheck](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that COVID-19 can be easily cured with aspirin ([snopes](#)).

Fact checked: anti-vax claims

- Fact checkers debunk claims that the COVID-19 vaccine will introduce a 5G nanochip into people's bodies ([afpcheccamos](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that flu vaccines make children more vulnerable to coronavirus infections ([afpfactcheck](#)).

Fact checked: conspiracy theories

- Fact checkers continue to debunk a video interview in which conspiracy theorist David Icke claims, among other things, that the coronavirus does not exist and the pandemic is staged ([faktograf](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that only 10 per cent of doctors believe the coronavirus is natural ([observador](#)).