

COVID-19 media surveillance

24 April 2020; 09:30

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is dominating the news, with over 160 thousand articles per day on Thursday (in 70 languages, as detected by [MEDISYS](#)).

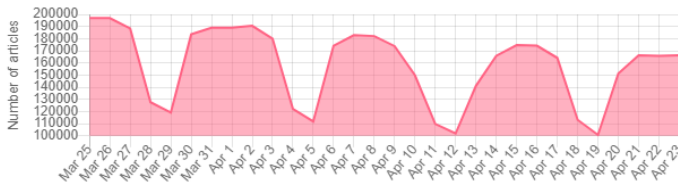


Figure 1 Media reports on coronavirus (source: EMM/MEDISYS)

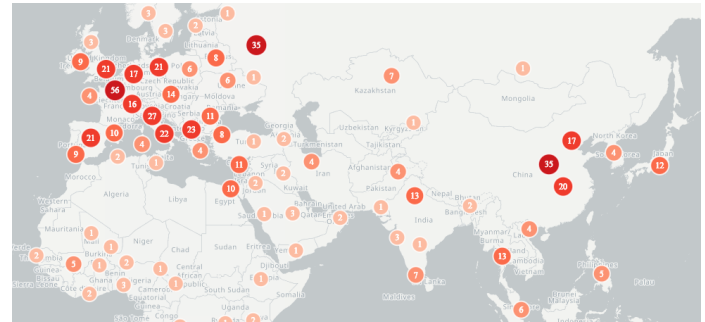


Figure 2 Geolocations mentioned in coronavirus media reports showing large clusters of media reports on Italy, France, Spain, Germany, the UK, Russia, China, South Korea and Japan (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



Headlines

- USA: Outcry after [Trump suggests injecting disinfectant and irradiating patients with UV light as treatment; the pandemic will kill more Americans than died in Vietnam](#)
- Spain: daily coronavirus [deaths in Spain remain stable with 440 deaths in the last 24 hours](#); genetic analysis suggests that the [coronavirus was already circulating in Spain by mid-February](#) with at least 15 entries
- Italy's [daily virus recoveries surpass cases for first time](#)
- France reports [516 coronavirus deaths, lowest toll in four days](#); [nicotine patches to be tested on coronavirus patients](#); the [2020 European Athletics Championships in Paris were cancelled](#)
- German Chancellor Angela Merkel has [cautioned that, despite positive developments, the pandemic has only just begun](#)
- UK: [616 deaths reported](#); the UK [economy could shrink 13% this year](#) if the lockdown persists
- Sweden: the Public Health Agency recorded [16,755 confirmed cases and 2,021 deaths](#)
- Belgium: [Brussels region will provide at least one face mask per resident](#)
- Luxembourg reported [three further deaths](#)
- Russia: [human rights group call for expanding surveillance measures to be legal, proportionate and temporary in nature](#)
- India recorded [1684 new cases with the state of Maharashtra most affected](#)
- In the Philippines, the [strict lockdown in Manila is extended until 15 May](#)
- Brazil reports a [surge in cases with more than 400 deaths in 24 hours](#)
- Ecuador's [coronavirus case total is twice as high as confirmed](#)
- South Korea: [new virus cases surely on downward trend, no additional death reported](#)
- Japan: [91 cases among crew members onboard cruise ship Costa Atlantica docked in Nagasaki](#)
- China will [give 30 million USD to WHO](#) after US funding halt
- Science: [Remdesivir failed to have any effect in the first full trial; hydroxychloroquine, combined with or without azithromycin, not only may not help mitigate the virus' effect, it also may increase overall mortality](#); study of more than 300 outbreak clusters in China reveals that the majority of the outbreaks were [fueled by indoor transmission of the disease, while outdoor transmission was scarce](#)



Twitter

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

- Trump suggests 'injection' of disinfectant to beat coronavirus and 'clean' the lungs ([nbcnews](#))
- First patients injected in UK vaccine trial ([bbc](#))
- Study: Elderly Trump voters dying of coronavirus could cost him in November ([politico](#))
- Number of starvation victims may increase rapidly due to coronavirus ([thewirehindi](#))

The hashtag [#merkel](#) was trending after Chancellor Merkel's speech in the Bundestag ([reuters](#)).

The hashtag [#ramadan](#) continues to appear more frequently in covid-19-related tweets as ramadan starts today.

The most mentioned English sources were the New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN, Reuters and the Boston Globe.

Infobae, El Confidencial, El País, CNN (Spanish version) and RT (Spanish version) and Le Parisien and Le Monde were among the most mentioned Spanish and French sources, respectively.

” *Extracted Quotes*

Angela Merkel (Germany, Chancellor):

"It is precisely because the figures give rise to hope that I feel obliged to say that this interim result is fragile. We are on thin ice, the thinnest ice even"; "We are still far from out of the woods"; "We are not living in the final phase of the pandemic, but still at the beginning."



Fact Check

Fact checked: fear mongering

- Fact checkers debunk a video claiming to show hundreds of Nigerians scrambling for food as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, noting that while it is true that the lockdown has cut Nigerians off from their only source of income and local authorities are providing relief packages to help, the video in question is old; they also share a current video, where Nigerians wait for aid in a more orderly fashion ([afp](#)).

Fact checked: health claims

- Fact checkers debunk claims that gargling with Betadine - a topical antiseptic - can prevent COVID-19, warning that the act could harm the mouth, tongue, lips and throat ([fatabyano](#), [vistinomer](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that skin colour can prevent COVID-19, reporting that medical professionals are adamant that skin colour makes no difference ([bbc](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that steam inhalation can cure COVID-19, warning that while high temperature steam-cleaning of surfaces is used to kill viruses in places like hospitals, any attempt to inhale industrial steam would be incredibly dangerous ([bbc](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that Arbidol, a Soviet-era drug, can prevent and cure COVID-19, noting that the drug has not been approved for use in Europe or in the United States and that in 2007, the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences found this substance to be "obsolete with unproven effectiveness" ([open](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that vaccines to COVID-19 are already available, reporting that the WHO says products claimed to be a vaccine, often found on unregulated websites, should be considered fake and may pose a significant risk to public health ([bbc](#)).

Fact checked: conspiracy theories

- Fact checkers debunk claims that 5G mobile networks transmit coronavirus ([bbc](#)).