

COVID-19 media surveillance

19 November 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 90 thousand articles per day (in 70 languages, as detected by [EMM/MEDISYS](#)).

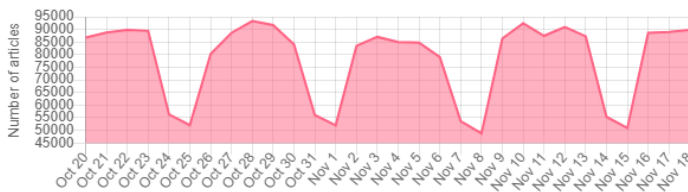


Figure 1 Media reports on Covid-19 (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



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



Headlines

- Vaccine developers [Pfizer/BioNTech](#) and [Moderna](#) reported an efficacy of 95 % in late-stage trials
- US sees [highest Covid-19 death toll in months as deaths exceed 250,000](#); rapid [at-home Covid-19 test got FDA approval](#)
- India nears [9 million Covid-19 cases](#)
- Brazil has [highest increase in deaths since May](#)
- Spain sets [new seven-day record for Covid deaths in second wave](#)
- France reported [21,150 new confirmed cases on Thursday, down from 28,383 on Wednesday as pressure on the hospital system continued to ease](#)
- Germany: [violent anti-lockdown protests in Berlin led to 365 arrests and 77 injured police officers](#)
- Danish [Covid mink variant 'very likely extinct', but controversial cull continues](#)
- Ireland: [Mink farms in talks over plan to cull 120,000 animals](#) as mutated strain of coronavirus could negate efforts to secure effective vaccines
- Hungary [warned against use of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine](#)
- Belgium: Brussels [extends curfew into mid-December](#)
- Luxembourg reported [670 new cases and 6 deaths on Thursday](#)
- Sweden: Nobel scientists [urge face mask rethink as Sweden's Covid-19 cases climb](#); Sweden's health agency stated that a number of [people who work in the mink industry had tested positive](#)
- UK: [Brexit talks suspended after EU negotiator tested positive](#)
- Russia's [case numbers surpassed two million cases](#); coronavirus [mutations are appearing in Siberia](#)
- Covid-19 cases [surge in Iran, Jordan, Morocco](#)
- New Zealand reported [two new cases, both in managed isolation](#)
- South Korea's [new cases top 300 for second consecutive day](#)
- China documents [12 cases of COVID-19 in past 24 hours, all imported while the management of asymptomatic cases is prioritised](#)
- Japan sets another [daily record with 2,388 new cases](#) amid highest alert level in Tokyo



Twitter

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

- "Immunity to the Coronavirus may last years, new data hint. Blood samples from recovered patients suggest a powerful, long-lasting immune response, researchers reported." ([nytimes](#), [biorxiv](#))
- "A new study questions whether masks protect wearers. You need to wear them anyway. Masks prevent people from transmitting the coronavirus to others, scientists now agree. But a new trial failed to document protection from the virus among the wearers." ([nytimes](#))
- "Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Authorizes first Covid-19 test for self-testing at home." ([fda](#))
- "Why every state should adopt a mask mandate, in 4 charts. The latest research suggests mask mandates help control the spread of Covid-19." ([vox](#))

The hashtags [#moderna](#) and [#pfizer](#) were trending following press releases about the efficacy of their vaccines in late-stage trials.

The most mentioned English sources were the New York Times, CNN, AP News, Yahoo and the Washington Post.

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



Fact Check

- Fact checkers continue to debunk several claims contained in a *World Doctors Alliance* video, including claims denying that the pandemic exists and calling the virus “normal flu” ([afpfactcheck](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that US hospitals are falsely attributing deaths to COVID-19 in order to acquire more funding, reporting that in some cases hospitals do receive extra federal funding, but on the basis of treated COVID-19 patients, not COVID-19 deaths ([misbar](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that chokeberry and pomegranate juice “destroys the coronavirus in 5 minutes” ([factcheck.cz](#)).
- American fact checkers debunk claims that a member of Joe Biden’s COVID-19 task force recommends “withholding food stamps and rent assistance from those who refuse coronavirus vaccines”, reporting that such claims mischaracterise recommendations made over the summer by a working group of medical experts and scholars ([politifact](#)).
- Fact checkers address what is said to be a claim by Jim Carrey, that is, that COVID-19 is being used to manipulate the world through fear, reporting that there is no evidence to suggest that the American actor made the purported comment ([aapfactcheck](#)).
- Dutch fact checkers focus on a series of images showing the same person in different coronavirus-related situations, circulating on social media accompanied by claims that they prove that the pandemic is planned and/or being used to frighten people. Fact checkers report that the images in question are stock images intended to illustrate the situation, not exaggerate it ([afpfactchecknederland](#)).