COVID-19 media surveillance

1 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 180 thousand articles per day on Tuesday (in 70 languages, as detected by MEDISYS).
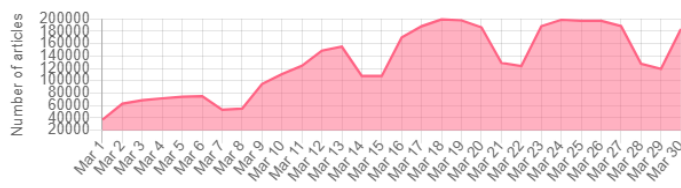

Figure 1 Media reports on coronavirus, data shown till 30 March (source: EMM/MEDISYS)

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

Headlines

- USA: White House has predicted 100,000 to 240,000 deaths from coronavirus despite mitigation measures; Obamacare special enrollment period amid pandemic rejected; bidding war over ventilators; cruise ships Zaandam and Rotterdam headed to Florida; growing number of cases aboard US aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt
- Italy: 105,792 cases and 15,729 deaths reported on 31 March 18:00; growth curve of new infections is flattening; Chinese community in Prato helps beat coronavirus
- Spain: highest death toll so far with 849 deaths in 24 hours; new measures to cushion economic blow
- France: highest death toll so far with 499 deaths in 24 hours; production of face masks and ventilators ramped up
- Germany: city of Jena introduces mandatory wearing of face masks; production of protective equipment and ventilators to be increased
- Cases in the vicinity of EU institutions: 12,775 confirmed cases and 705 deaths reported in total in Belgium while Belgian girl becomes Europe's youngest coronavirus victim; 2,178 cases and 23 deaths in total in Luxembourg
- Hungary: ongoing debate on rule by decree in Hungary
- UK: number of deaths rises by 27 %; 13-year old youngest UK victim
- Russia: doctor who met with Putin tested positive as record daily rise in cases reported
- India: 1,3 billion people under lockdown leading to decreasing pollution levels
- Indonesia plans to mobilize volunteers to fight the spread of coronavirus in coastal villages and the vast hinterlands of the archipelago
- South Korea: mandatory 14-day isolation on all arrivals takes effect; cluster of cases at a major hospital in Uijeongbu
- Japan: highest increase in new cases so far; state of emergency and school closures until May discussed
- China starts reporting asymptomatic cases; 36 cases of which 35 were imported cases

Twitter

The following news were found among the most retweeted items:
- Bill Gates: Here's how to make up for lost time on covid-19 (washingtonpost)

- McConnell: Impeachment distracted government from coronavirus threat (thehill)

- Impeachment didn't distract from coronavirus preparations. Trump did. (washingtonpost)

- Trump rejects Obamacare special enrollment period amid pandemic (politico)

- Mexico receives 50 million COVID-19 test kits from China (eluniversal)

The most retweeted English sources were the New York Times, CNN, the Washington Post and Youtube

Okdiario, Russia Today (Spanish Version) and El Diario and Le Monde and Le Parisien were among the most retweeted Spanish and French sources, respectively.

Fact Check

Fact checked: anti-EU narratives
- It is not true that Huawei stopped sending masks to Spain because of an article by High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell (newtral).

Fact checked: fear mongering
- It is not true that the WHO has decreed the "suspension of any and all medical activities" (newtral).

Fact checked: prevention and treatment
- Helicopters are not spraying disinfectants to try to eradicate coronavirus (teyit).
- Inhaling hot water, blasting your nose and mouth with hot air from a hair dryer and drinking tea do not cure COVID-19 (factcrescendo, verificado, teyit).
- It is not true that Trump announced that millions of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine will be marketed in the next few days (newtral). A vaccine against the novel coronavirus has not been found yet (lasillavacia).

Fact checked: conspiracy theories
- There is no scientific connection between the coronavirus outbreak and the implementation of 5G technology (boomlive).
- The coronavirus pandemic was not predicted in a Matt Damon movie (maldita).

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