

COVID-19 media surveillance

28 January 2021; 22:30 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 85 thousand articles per day (in 70 languages, as detected by [EMM/MEDISYS](#)).

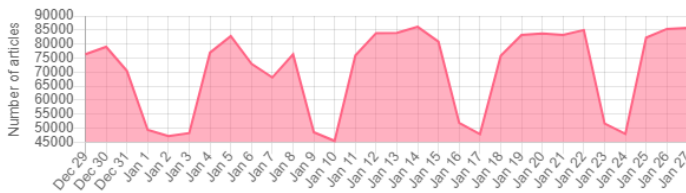


Figure 1 Media reports on Covid-19 (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



Figure 2 Geolocations mentioned in coronavirus media reports showing clusters of media reports (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



Headlines

- US: [Variant B.1.351 found in South Carolina](#) and [variant P.1 found in Minnesota](#)
- EU will instruct its [customs authorities to block vaccine exports unless they have a prior authorization](#)
- Belgian health authorities visited [Novasep's plant to determine if expected delays in the deliveries of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine](#) to the EU are related to production issues
- UK: [Novavax vaccine proves 89.3% effective in large-scale UK trials](#)
- Spain: [Variant B.1351 found in Galicia](#) as [Portugal closed land border with Spain](#)
- Portugal's [hospitals on brink as COVID cases surge](#)
- France: [B.1.1.1.7 variant found in 10% of French COVID-19 cases](#)
- Germany: [vaccine commission advises against AstraZeneca vaccine for over-65s](#)
- Luxembourg: Coronastep program shows [decrease of virus in wastewater](#)
- Denmark may [extend its current restrictions to February 28 to curb spread of variants](#)
- Hungary [extends lockdown measures until March 1](#)
- Israel: Preliminary results show a [significant drop in infections and hospitalizations after just one dose, and very few cases after two](#)
- Brazil's [confirmed COVID-19 cases pass 9 million amid collapse of health system in state of Amazonas](#)
- India: [Dramatic drop in Covid cases gives India hope of return to normal life](#)
- Australian states [lift travel restrictions after outbreak in Sydney contained](#)
- New Zealand: two people in Auckland have [tested positive for Covid-19 despite twice testing negative while in managed isolation](#)
- South Korea to [begin mass vaccination with medical workers next month](#)
- China [warns against presumptions over COVID-19 origin as WHO experts begin probe in Wuhan](#)
- Japan: [AstraZeneca to produce 90 million COVID-19 vaccine shots in Japan](#)



Twitter

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

- "Pascal Soriot: "There are a lot of emotions on vaccines in EU. But it's complicated" ([larepubblica](#))
- "Sanofi to help produce 100 million Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine doses" ([reuters](#))
- "Madrid intervenes in private health to treat coronavirus patients due to the saturation of public hospitals" ([eldiario](#))
- "China rolls out anal swab coronavirus test, saying it's more accurate than throat method" ([washingtontimes](#))
- "Time to double or upgrade masks as coronavirus variants emerge, experts say. Better face coverings are needed to curb more-transmissible strains as vaccine rollout is underway" ([washingtontimes](#))
- "Dutch police clash with anti-lockdown protesters in 2 cities" ([apnews](#))

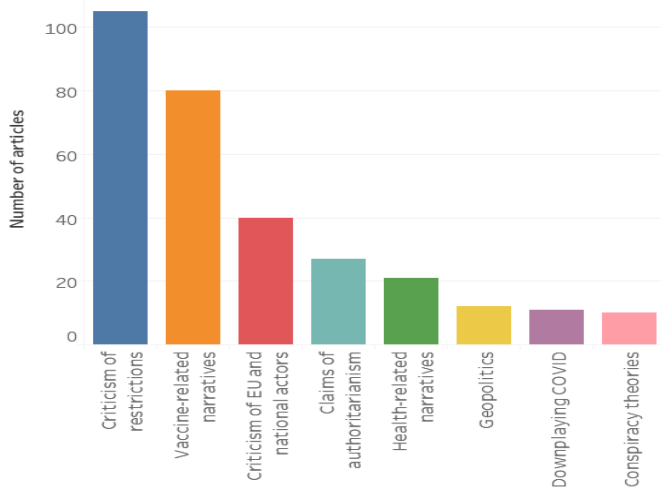
The most mentioned English sources were Yahoo News, the New York Times, AP, the Washington Post and Reuters.

El Diario, El País, Latinus, and Infobae, and Le Monde and Le Parisien were among the most mentioned Spanish and French sources, respectively.

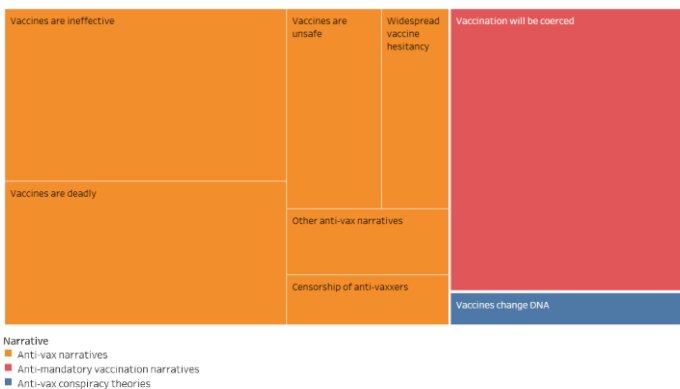


Misinformation

306 articles from unverified sources were selected forming 8 supernarratives over the last week:



The treemap shows the narratives and subnarratives associated with anti-vax articles. The colours represent the narratives, while the text indicates each subnarrative. The bigger the size of the box, the higher the number of articles tagged as that narrative and subnarrative.



Fact Check

- Fact checkers address a highly viewed Facebook video that distorts a CNN interview with Dr Anthony Fauci to falsely suggest that the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine does not “protect you from COVID”, reporting that the vaccine does protect against COVID-19 - the disease caused by the coronavirus - but Fauci was cautioning that it may not prevent someone from contracting the virus ([factcheck](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk a social media post claiming that 23 Norwegians died from taking the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, reporting that officials from both the Norwegian Medicines Agency and Norwegian Institute of Public Health said they had so far found no evidence of a direct link between the vaccine and the deaths ([aap](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that the presentation of vaccines as the solution to COVID-19 is a “huge propaganda lie” and that COVID-19 is like the flu and should be treated in the same way ([afp](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that circulated on social media in the past and resurfaced at the end of December - that COVID-19 is a bacteria, not a virus, and that Ecuador has found a cure for it ([afp](#)).