

COVID-19 media surveillance

29 October 2020; 20:30 weekly brief

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) remains a mayor news topic, with over 90 thousand articles per day (in 70 languages, as detected by [EMM/MEDISYS](#)).

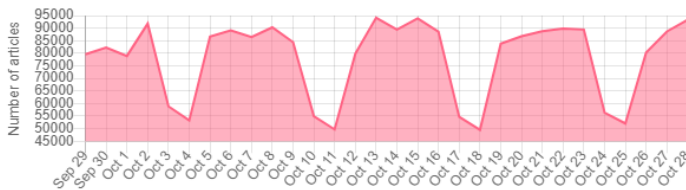


Figure 1 Media reports on Covid-19 (source: EMM/MEDISYS)



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



Headlines

- The U.S. surpassed [9 million cases with more than 20 states in a dangerous surge](#)
- India's Covid-19 cases [cross 8 million mark, behind US](#)
- Brazil's [first wave isn't over yet as cases are spiking again in the country's north](#)
- Spain has been introducing [increasingly tough restrictions in a bid to contain the second wave of the pandemic](#); nearly all regions [set to close their borders ahead of long weekend](#)
- France: Emmanuel Macron announced [national lockdown amid soaring cases](#)
- Germany: Angela Merkel announced [new measures from 2nd of November to curb the spread of the pandemic](#)
- Italy's daily cases total [26,831, a new record with Lombardy region most affected](#)
- Belgium reported [that some Covid-positive health workers are being asked to keep working](#)
- Luxembourg: [new measures were approved in Parliament including a curfew starting on Friday](#)
- Austria: [new measures are to be announced on Saturday while the country as a whole is considered a red zone](#)
- Greece will impose [regional lockdowns on its second-largest city of Thessaloniki and two other regions from Friday](#)
- Sweden sets [new daily COVID-19 case record as infections surge](#)
- Swiss hospitals are [bringing back retired staff to replace sick frontline workers and closing other wards as officials warn they could reach breaking point in 10 days](#)
- UK: Swab tests on more than 85,000 people across England have shown an [increase in R and that infections are growing nation-wide](#)
- Russia seeks [accelerated WHO registration for Sputnik V vaccine](#)
- New Zealand reported [six new cases, all in managed isolation](#)
- South Korea: [sporadic outbreaks continue in Greater Seoul area](#)
- China: Officials in the northwestern region of [Xinjiang say they believe they have contained China's latest coronavirus outbreak](#)
- Taiwan achieves record [200 days with no local Coronavirus cases](#)
- Japan: Experts raise alarm over [slight rise in COVID-19 cases in Japan with upticks continuing in Tokyo, Hokkaido and elsewhere](#); a bill was approved to [pay all vaccination costs for all residents in Japan and to compensate suppliers in the event any serious side effects occur](#).



Twitter

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

- "A room, a bar and a classroom: how the coronavirus is spread through the air" ([elpais](#))
- "France and Germany have announced second national lockdowns. Emmanuel Macron said his country and its European neighbours were being 'submerged' by the rapid pace of COVID-19." ([sky](#))
- "Virus cases are spiking just when they could hurt Trump most" ([bloomberg](#))
- "Jared Kushner bragged in April that Trump was taking the country 'back from the doctors'" ([cnn](#))
- "How teenagers ended up operating crucial parts of England's test and trace system" ([theguardian](#))

The hashtag #confinement2 has been trending in France ([europe1](#)) following Emmanuel Macron's announcement of further lockdown measures.

The most mentioned English sources were CNN, the New York Times, El País (English Version), Washington Post and the Independent.

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

Fact checked: downplaying COVID-19 / anti-lockdown/anti-mask claims

- Fact checkers debunk claims by the World Doctors Alliance that COVID-19 is a type of flu and not a pandemic and only 98 COVID-19 related deaths have been reported in Ireland, reporting that COVID-19 is not a type of flu as they are caused by different viruses belonging to different families and Ireland has recorded more than 1,800 deaths, according to official statistics ([polygraph](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk American footballer Tom Brady's claim that there have been "more suicide deaths than coronavirus death [in] past two months", reporting that in an average month, about 4,000 Americans die from suicide while in the past 30 days, nearly 22,000 people died of COVID-19 ([politifact](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that Dr Anthony Fauci had written in a 2008 study that mask use for the majority of deaths during the 1918 flu pandemic, reporting that the paper in question does not even mention masks ([snopes](#)).

Fact checked: anti-vax claims

- Fact checkers debunk claims that a volunteer in the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine trial died, reporting that the volunteer who died did not receive the COVID-19 vaccine. However, certain articles which reported the incident did not include this information, which misled some readers into believing the death is related to the vaccine ([healthfeedback](#)).

Fact checked: conspiracy theories

- Fact checkers debunk yet again claims that the coronavirus was created in the Wuhan Institute of Virology, reporting that the consensus of the scientific community and international public health organisations is that the coronavirus emerged from bats and later jumped to humans ([politifact](#)).
- Fact checkers debunk claims that a testing method for COVID-19 was patented by Richard Rothschild in 2015 and 2017 and it is evidence that the coronavirus pandemic has been planned ([reuters](#)).