

Coronavirus Disease – COVID-19

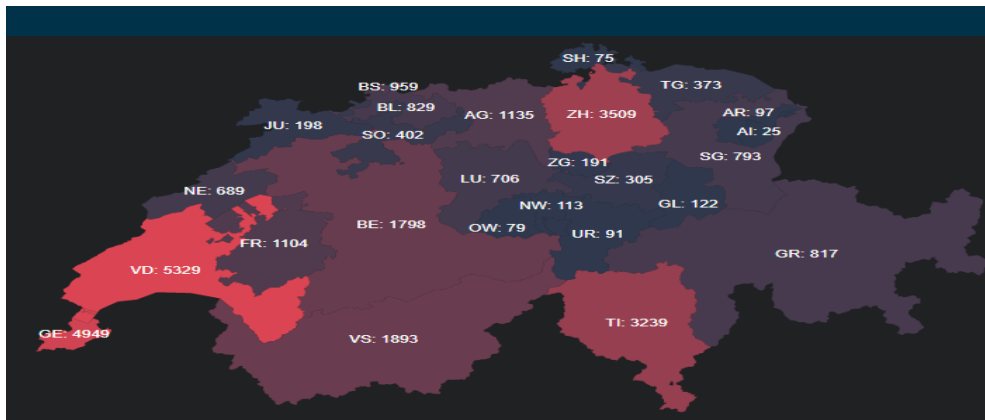
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- The death toll from the coronavirus outbreak is over 255,170 worldwide, with the highest number of deaths in USA (70,761) and UK (29,427). There have been more than 3,690,000 global cases in 210 countries and territories.
- There are 108 potential Covid-19 vaccines in development around the world, according to the World Health Organization. Eight of the potential vaccines are approved for clinical trials.
- US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and German biotechnology company BioNTech have begun testing an experimental coronavirus vaccine on humans in the United States. The companies' coronavirus vaccine program is called BNT162. Study participants in the program in Germany were given doses of the vaccine last week and now the US trial. The program's Phase 1/2 study is designed to test the safety, effectiveness and best dose level of four mRNA vaccine candidates and is to be evaluated in a single, continuous study, the companies said. The first participants in the first stage of the study will be healthy adults ages 18 to 55, according to the announcement.
- A team from the Institute of Virology and Immunology at the University of Bern, led by Professor Volker Thiel, has succeeded in creating a synthetic clone of the virus. This breakthrough could accelerate the development of vaccines and treatments against the Covid-19 disease caused by the novel coronavirus. "We can now modify the virus in targeted ways, such as removing a gene and seeing if it replicates less efficiently. We will then know how important a particular gene is for its replication," explained Volker Thiel. "We are mainly interested in characterizing the virus genes in order to study how it behaves and identify its weaknesses." The research is conducted in a high containment lab in Mittelhäusern, in the canton of Bern. This facility is one of the few in the world where samples of the "real" virus are handled. The Swiss scientists have already received a large number of requests from laboratories around the world to use the virus clones for their own research.
- Hand Hygiene Day is also a reminder that around the world less than 2/3 of health care facilities are equipped with hand hygiene stations and 3 billion people lack soap and water at home. If we are to stop COVID-19 or any other source of infection, and keep health workers safe, we must increase investments in soap, access to water, and alcohol-based hand rubs, tweeted WHO General-Director Dr. Tedros.
- There's new evidence that the coronavirus may have been in France weeks earlier than was previously thought. Doctors at a Paris hospital say they've found evidence that one patient admitted in December was infected with Covid-19. If verified, this finding would show that the virus was already circulating in Europe at that time — well before the first known cases were diagnosed in France or hotspot Italy. "Covid-19 was already spreading in France in late December 2019, a month before the official first cases in the country," the team at Groupe Hospitalier Paris Seine in Saint-Denis wrote in a study published Sunday in the International Journal of Antimicrobial Agents. The first official reports of Covid-19 in France were reported on Jan. 24, in two people who had a history of travel to Wuhan, China.
- The number of positive coronavirus cases in Italy drops 1,513 since yesterday. The country has taken the first delicate steps towards lifting its lockdown, with around 4 million returning to work this week.

Countries	Deaths	Cases	Recovered
USA	70,761	1,221,655	189,164
UK	29,427	194,990	N/A
Italy	29,315	213,013	85,231
Spain	25,613	250,561	154,718
France	25,201	169,462	51,371
Belgium	8,016	50,509	12,441
Brazil	7,367	108,620	45,815
Germany	6,993	166,490	135,100
Iran	6,340	99,970	80,475
Netherlands	5,168	41,087	N/A
China	4,633	82,881	77,853
Canada	3,918	61,165	26,305
Turkey	3,520	129,491	73,285
Sweden	2,854	23,216	4,074
Mexico	2,271	24,905	15,938
Switzerland	1,790	30,009	25,200
India	1,571	46,476	12,849
Ecuador	1,569	31,881	3,433
Russia	1,451	155,370	19,865
Peru	1,344	47,372	14,427
Ireland	1,319	21,772	13,386
Portugal	1,074	25,702	1,743
Indonesia	872	12,071	2,197
Romania	841	13,837	5,454
Poland	716	14,431	4,280
Philippines	637	9,684	1,408
Austria	606	15,650	13,462
Japan	536	15,078	4,156
Pakistan	514	22,048	5,801
Denmark	503	9,821	7,296
Algeria	470	4,838	2,067
Egypt	452	7,201	1,730
Hungary	363	3,065	709
Colombia	358	7,973	1,807
Dominican Republic	354	8,480	1,905
Ukraine	316	12,697	1,875
Chile	275	22,016	10,710
Argentina	260	4,887	1,442
S. Korea	254	10,804	9,283
Czechia	254	7,878	3,999
Finland	246	5,412	3,500
Israel	237	16,268	10,223
Norway	215	7,928	32
Panama	203	7,387	726
Saudi Arabia	200	30,251	5,431
Serbia	200	9,677	1,723
Bangladesh	183	10,929	1,403
Morocco	181	5,219	1,838
UAE	146	15,192	3,153
Greece	146	2,642	1,374
South Africa	138	7,220	2,746
Moldova	136	4,363	1,544
Belarus	107	18,350	3,771
Malaysia	106	6,383	4,567
Iraq	102	2,431	1,571
Slovenia	98	1,445	244
Australia	96	6,849	5,889
Luxembourg	96	3,840	3,412
Afghanistan	95	3,224	421
Nigeria	93	2,802	417
North Macedonia	86	1,526	1,013
Croatia	83	2,112	1,560
Honduras	83	1,178	122
Bolivia	82	1,681	174
Bulgaria	80	1,704	342
Bosnia and Herzegovina	79	1,946	911
Cuba	69	1,668	876
Cameroon	64	2,104	953
Estonia	55	1,711	261
Thailand	54	2,988	2,747
Lithuania	46	1,423	678
Burkina Faso	46	672	545

Sudan	45	778	70
Andorra	45	750	499
Tunisia	43	1,018	406
San Marino	41	589	92
Channel Islands	41	544	406
Kuwait	40	5,804	2,032
Armenia	40	2,619	1,111
Somalia	38	835	75
Niger	37	755	534
DRC	34	705	90
Mali	32	612	228
Albania	31	820	570
Kazakhstan	29	4,179	1,264
Azerbaijan	26	2,060	1,508
Slovakia	25	1,421	741
Lebanon	25	741	206
Kenya	24	535	182
Isle of Man	23	325	271
New Zealand	20	1,486	1,302
Guatemala	19	730	79
Singapore	18	19,410	1,519
Ghana	18	2,719	294
Liberia	18	166	58
Ivory Coast	17	1,432	693
Latvia	17	896	348
Uruguay	17	657	447
Tanzania	16	480	167
Cyprus	15	878	296
Martinique	14	181	83
Diamond Princess	13	712	645
El Salvador	13	587	201
Sint Maarten	13	76	44
Qatar	12	17,142	1,924
Oman	12	2,735	858
Guadeloupe	12	152	98
Senegal	11	1,329	470
Kyrgyzstan	11	843	600
Sierra Leone	11	199	43
Haiti	11	100	10
Bahamas	11	83	25
Uzbekistan	10	2,204	1,501
Iceland	10	1,799	1,733
Paraguay	10	415	130
Venezuela	10	361	158
Mauritius	10	332	319
Congo	10	236	26
Chad	10	117	39
Guinea	9	1,710	450
Sri Lanka	9	765	213
Georgia	9	604	240
Jamaica	9	471	49
Jordan	9	471	375
Togo	9	128	74
Guyana	9	92	27
Bahrain	8	3,679	1,762
Montenegro	8	324	253
Trinidad and Tobago	8	116	102
Bermuda	7	115	54
Barbados	7	82	46
Costa Rica	6	742	399
Mayotte	6	686	352
Taiwan	6	438	334
Gabon	6	367	93
Myanmar	6	161	49
Malta	5	482	403
Tajikistan	5	293	0
Nicaragua	5	15	7
Hong Kong	4	1,041	920
Ethiopia	4	145	91

- Spain's control of the coronavirus pandemic cannot be pinned on hopes of a vaccine, a top health official told the government today. The Director for Health Emergencies Dr. Fernando Simón, said while it is his belief there will be a vaccine at some point, “other tools allow us to control the epidemic and reduce the impact on public health.” Daily numbers of recoveries outweigh the new infections rate by two and a half times, so “the figures are favorable, indicating a good process toward transition” said Simón, referring to Spain’s confinement de-escalation strategy toward a so-called new normality.
- Germany has recorded another low increase of coronavirus cases over the past 48 hours, with the number of transmitting cases continuing to fall.
- Hong Kong will begin to relax some social distancing measures from Friday, as the city records fewer cases of coronavirus. The city will increase the number of people permitted to gather at one time from four to eight. Businesses including beauty salons and fitness centers will also be allowed to open



- **Funding opportunity for researcher**

Fast Funding for COVID-19 Science

- <https://fastgrants.org/>

The US Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program - a call for proposals on COVID-19

- <https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/ProgramFY.htm?programFYid=256400>

SNF - NRP 78 "Covid-19"

- <http://www.snf.ch/en/funding/programmes/nrp78-covid-19/Pages/default.aspx>

A new COVID-19 calls

- <https://intern.unibe.ch/dienstleistungen/forschung/covid/open/>

Anyone submitting to US (NIH, DoD) or EU Horizon 2020 calls can contact the Grants Office for support: grantsoffice@research.unibe.ch. The Grants Advisors responsible for the ISPM are Aline Schögler (aline.schoegler@research.unibe.ch) and Leah Witton (leah.witton@research.unibe.ch).

Sources

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