

Coronavirus Disease – COVID-19

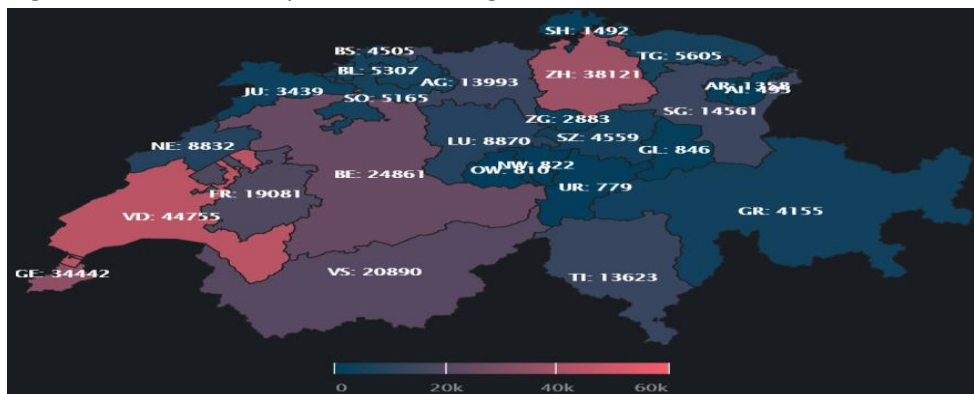
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- The death toll from the coronavirus outbreak is over 1,369,062 worldwide, with the highest number of deaths in USA (258,433) and Brazil (168,141). There have been more than 57,437,989 global cases in 210 countries and territories. [1]
- “A vaccine will complement the other tools we have, not replace them,” director general Dr. Tedros said. “A vaccine on its own will not end the pandemic.” The WHO’S figures for Saturday showed that 660,905 coronavirus cases were reported to the UN health agency, setting a new high water mark. The US alone surpassed 11 million coronavirus cases Sunday, adding one million new cases in less than a week. Tedros said that supplies of the vaccine would initially be restricted, with “health workers, older people and other at-risk populations (to) be prioritised. “That will hopefully reduce the number of deaths and enable the health systems to cope.” But he warned: *“That will still leave the virus with a lot of room to move. Surveillance will need to continue, people will still need to be tested, isolated and cared for, contacts will still need to be traced... and individuals will still need to be cared for.”* [2]
- News from global pharma firms that their coronavirus vaccine candidates are highly effective is welcome, but work needs to be done to ensure they reach everyone around the world, the WHO’s Europe chief said Thursday. *“I firmly believe that there is more hope ahead of us than despair behind us,”* Dr. Hans Kluge, WHO regional director for Europe, said as he discussed the latest vaccine news. He added that it would not be a *“silver bullet”* as access to the vaccine would be limited at first. The comments follow trial data from pharmaceutical giants Pfizer and Moderna, showing that their respective vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing Covid-19. More good news came Thursday as preliminary findings from a peer-reviewed phase two trial showed the vaccine from AstraZeneca and Oxford University is safe and triggers a similar immune response among all adults. Kluge cautioned that *“any Covid vaccine should be a global, public good”* with equal access for all. *“In the last few days we have received good news with two particularly promising vaccines. However, this promise will never be realized unless we ensure that all countries have access to the vaccine market, that it is delivered equitably, that it is effectively deployed and that countries address pockets of vaccine hesitancy,”* he said. [3]
- Pfizer and BioNTech said they will request an emergency use authorization for their coronavirus vaccine from the US Food and Drug Administration today. This is the first coronavirus vaccine to seek a regulatory OK in the United States. The companies said in a statement that their vaccine candidate, known as BNT162b2, will potentially be available for use in high-risk populations in the United States by the middle to end of December. [4]
- The WHO has updated its ongoing guidance on Covid-19 medications to advise against using the antiviral drug remdesivir to treat hospitalized patients, no matter how severe their illness may be. According to the update, published in the medical journal the BMJ on Thursday, current evidence does not suggest remdesivir affects the risk of dying from Covid-19 or needing mechanical ventilation, among other important outcomes. WHO’s new update comes about a month after the company Gilead Sciences, the maker of remdesivir, announced that the US FDA approved remdesivir for the treatment of coronavirus infection. The drug became the first coronavirus treatment to receive FDA approval. [5]

Countries	Deaths	Cases	Recovered
USA	258,433	12,078,961	7,246,555
Brazil	168,141	5,983,089	5,407,498
India	132,310	9,021,020	8,443,553
Mexico	100,104	1,019,543	766,361
UK	53,775	1,453,256	N/A
Italy	47,870	1,308,528	498,987
France	47,127	2,086,288	147,569
Iran	43,896	828,377	589,025
Spain	42,291	1,574,063	N/A
Argentina	36,532	1,349,434	1,167,514
Peru	35,446	943,917	871,534
Russia	35,311	2,039,926	1,551,414
Colombia	34,761	1,225,490	1,132,393
South Africa	20,671	759,658	702,544
Indonesia	15,678	488,310	410,552
Belgium	15,196	550,264	34,792
Chile	15,003	537,585	512,927
Germany	13,858	885,539	579,100
Ecuador	13,073	183,246	160,639
Poland	12,714	819,262	381,800
Turkey	11,943	430,170	364,573
Iraq	11,883	531,769	460,394
Canada	11,265	315,754	252,294
Ukraine	10,598	598,085	274,324
Romania	9,756	403,123	278,676
Bolivia	8,889	143,756	118,691
Netherlands	8,822	473,190	N/A
Philippines	8,025	415,067	375,237
Pakistan	7,284	368,665	327,542
Czechia	6,874	481,755	379,380
Egypt	6,508	111,955	101,564
Sweden	6,406	208,295	N/A
Bangladesh	6,322	443,434	358,431
Saudi Arabia	5,745	354,813	342,404
Morocco	5,090	311,554	257,992
China	4,634	86,398	81,453
Guatemala	4,050	117,066	106,305
Switzerland	3,962	290,601	180,700
Portugal	3,701	243,009	157,924
Hungary	3,568	165,901	38,074
Panama	2,922	151,089	131,315
Honduras	2,839	103,488	45,082
Israel	2,742	327,435	316,239
Bulgaria	2,649	114,435	33,327
Tunisia	2,611	84,995	59,334
Dominican Republic	2,301	136,183	111,527
Austria	2,224	235,351	156,483
Algeria	2,224	71,652	46,962
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,209	77,994	42,916
Moldova	2,091	93,961	75,530
Jordan	2,053	169,395	100,280
Ireland	2,010	69,473	23,364
Kazakhstan	1,945	123,888	111,483
Japan	1,922	122,966	106,954
Armenia	1,900	123,646	90,754
Myanmar	1,695	76,414	56,601
Afghanistan	1,661	44,443	35,370
Paraguay	1,636	74,495	53,060
Ethiopia	1,607	104,427	64,983
Costa Rica	1,599	128,231	78,851
North Macedonia	1,423	51,213	30,204
Oman	1,365	121,360	112,406
Greece	1,347	85,261	9,989
Kenya	1,330	74,145	50,658
Nepal	1,298	216,965	191,002
Croatia	1,257	96,837	77,387
Kyrgyzstan	1,223	68,702	59,789
Sudan	1,179	15,299	9,670
Nigeria	1,165	65,839	61,573
Serbia	1,140	110,351	31,536

Belarus	1,081	120,847	100,749
Azerbaijan	1,079	87,163	60,869
Libya	1,068	76,808	47,587
El Salvador	1,064	37,250	33,984
Slovenia	995	62,580	41,691
Australia	907	27,790	25,509
Georgia	894	96,860	77,932
Lebanon	868	111,946	63,404
Venezuela	863	98,665	93,691
Kuwait	861	139,308	131,049
Denmark	778	68,362	53,470
Albania	657	30,623	14,565
Slovakia	614	93,396	40,816
Yemen	608	2,086	1,428
Palestine	606	68,768	57,879
Uzbekistan	602	71,147	68,327
UAE	547	156,523	147,309
S. Korea	501	30,017	26,263
Cameroon	435	23,528	22,177
Montenegro	420	29,577	18,744
Finland	375	20,747	15,300
Syria	363	6,991	2,924
Lithuania	357	42,757	10,498
Zambia	356	17,373	16,606
Bahrain	337	85,317	83,244
Angola	333	14,134	7,062
Senegal	330	15,848	15,452
Malaysia	329	52,638	39,088
Ghana	323	50,631	49,103
DRC	323	12,008	11,215
Norway	305	31,441	20,956
Zimbabwe	265	9,046	8,195
Luxembourg	254	29,243	19,231
Madagascar	250	17,310	16,592
Qatar	235	136,888	133,914
Jamaica	235	10,088	5,407
Haiti	232	9,208	7,820
Malawi	185	6,002	5,435
Mauritania	168	8,034	7,554
Bahamas	163	7,348	5,516
Nicaragua	159	5,725	4,225
Uganda	158	17,148	8,426
Latvia	146	12,102	1,557
Guadeloupe	144	8,225	2,242
Guyana	143	4,976	3,965
Mali	142	4,093	2,997
Namibia	141	13,662	13,182
Cuba	131	7,725	7,201
Ivory Coast	129	21,083	20,729
Gambia	122	3,706	3,578
Mozambique	120	14,723	12,849
Eswatini	119	6,156	5,831
Suriname	116	5,284	5,161
Trinidad and Tobago	113	6,233	5,531
Malta	108	8,681	6,406
Hong Kong	108	5,518	5,239
Somalia	108	4,382	3,384
Cabo Verde	104	10,082	9,557
Belize	102	5,018	2,743
Chad	101	1,620	1,463
Congo	93	5,632	3,887
Estonia	87	9,076	5,296
Tajikistan	86	11,815	11,188
Equatorial Guinea	85	5,121	4,975
Liberia	82	1,539	1,331
Andorra	76	6,066	5,127
Guinea	75	12,743	11,789
Sierra Leone	74	2,397	1,823
Sri Lanka	73	19,061	13,271
French Guiana	70	10,950	9,995
Niger	70	1,335	1,153
Uruguay	69	4,377	3,479

- The daily number of new coronavirus cases across Switzerland reached more than 10,000 at the beginning of November. The spread of the virus has since slowed but the burden for hospitals remains high. The progression in new cases in November has slowed. The seven-day average of new positive cases last week is down slightly to 5,262 - 26% less than the previous week. Aid for companies hit especially hard by the pandemic is set to be boosted to CHF1 billion. [6]
- As the WHO assembles international experts to study the origin of the novel coronavirus by first focusing on China, a study shows that the virus had existed in Italy months before it was first detected in China. The study by the Milan-based National Cancer Institute, published last week in its scientific magazine Tumori Journal, shows that 11.6 percent of 959 blood samples from healthy volunteers enrolled in a lung cancer screening trial between September 2019 and March 2020 had developed novel coronavirus antibodies well before February. Another study, conducted by scientists at the University of Siena in Italy, has supported the finding. Its paper, by 16 authors, was published in the same magazine with the title "Unexpected detection of SARS-COV-2 antibodies in the pre-pandemic period in Italy". SARS-COV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19 disease. The study showed that four cases dating to the first week of October 2019 were positive for antibodies. *"This study shows an unexpected very early circulation of SARSCOV-2 among asymptomatic individuals in Italy several months before the first patient was identified, and clarifies the onset and spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic,"* the authors wrote. *"Finding SARS-COV-2 antibodies in asymptomatic people before the COVID-19 outbreak in Italy may reshape the history of the pandemic."* The UN health agency on Monday said it was reviewing the results from Italy and was seeking clarification. [2]



Cases in Switzerland. [7]

• Funding opportunity for researchers

PRACE (Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe) Fast Track Call for Proposals

- <https://prace-ri.eu/prace-support-to-mitigate-impact-of-covid-19-pandemic/>

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

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

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

[1] <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

[2] <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/covid-19-news/details>

[3] <https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/19/coronavirus-vaccines-must-be-a-global-public-good-who-says.html>

[4] <https://edition.cnn.com/world/live-news/coronavirus-pandemic-11-20-20-intl/index.html>

[5] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2020/nov/20/coronavirus-live-news-china-has-given-1m-people-sinopharm-vaccine-us-cdc-warns-against-thanksgiving-travel>

[6] <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/in-depth/coronavirus>

[7] <https://www.corona-data.ch/>