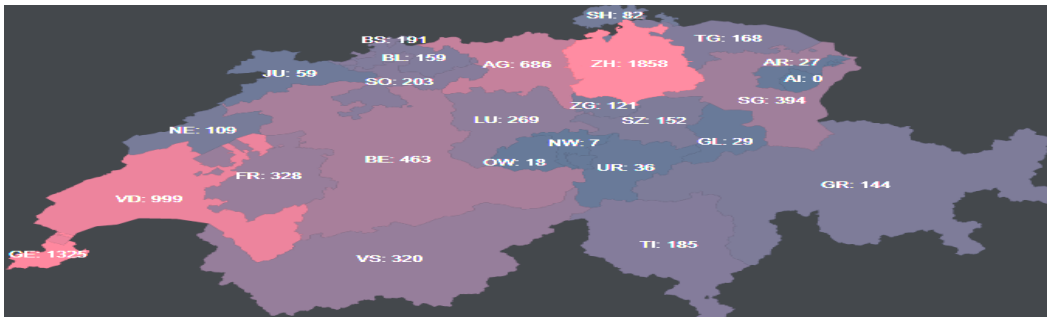# Coronavirus Disease – COVID-19
21.08.2020

- The death toll from the coronavirus outbreak is over 797,990 worldwide, with the highest number of deaths in USA (177,477) and Brazil (112,423). There have been more than 22,914,406 global cases in 210 countries and territories.

- As part of the MicroCoVSens project, researchers are developing a new portable device designed to simplify testing for coronaviruses. The University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Italian Switzerland (SUPSI), the University of Italian Switzerland (USI), and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL) are all participating in this project. The new portable coronavirus testing device developed by the researchers is designed to deliver a result within the space of just ten minutes, as detailed by a press release issued by USI. This is set to replace lab-based testing processes that require a great deal of time and manpower. According to information in the press release, the device should also be able to be operated by people without any specialist professional training. The aim is to use this device at airports, train stations and other similar locations.

- Mass testing of Russia's first potential Covid-19 vaccine to get domestic regulatory approval will involve more than 40,000 people and will be overseen by a foreign research body when it starts next week, backers of the project said. These were the first details on the shape and size of the upcoming late-stage trial of the vaccine given by its developers, who are aiming to allay concerns among some scientists about the lack of data provided by Russia so far.

- The WHO is in discussions with Russia to obtain more information about its experimental Covid-19 vaccine – named Sputnik V - even as Russia plans to give it to some 40,000 people next week for further testing. Catherine Smallwood, a senior emergency official at WHO/Europe, said the agency had begun direct discussions with Russia and that WHO officials have been sharing the various steps and information required for the WHO to take assessments. *"We're not going through a rushed job of trying to jump to conclusions here. We want to take our time to really understand where the vaccine is at and to get as full information as possible on the steps that have already been taken,"* Smallwood said. Hans Kluge, director of WHO/Europe, said the agency welcomed all advances in vaccine development but that every vaccine must submit to the same clinical trials.

- Sitting squeezed between a number of strangers on board an aircraft might feel like a risky position during these uncertain times. But according to some experts who point to the very few documented cases of in-flight transmission, the chances of catching Covid-19 while on board a flight are actually relatively slim. Fear of flying during the pandemic has drastically reduced global air traffic, which has also been restricted due to border closures. If new scientific claims are borne out, the perceived heightened risk of boarding an airplane could be unfounded. In one case, about 328 passengers and crew members were tested for coronavirus after it was learned that a March 31 flight from the US to Taiwan had been carrying 12 passengers who were symptomatic at the time. However, all the other passengers tested negative, as did the crew members. And while there have certainly been cases of infected passengers passing the virus on to an airplane's crew or fellow travelers in recent months, the transmission rates are low.

Countries	Deaths	Cases	Recovered
USA	177,477	5,749,371	3,096,525
Brazil	112,423	3,505,097	2,653,407
Mexico	59,106	543,806	371,638
India	55,174	2,925,337	2,175,492
UK	41,403	322,280	N/A
Italy	35,418	256,118	204,686
France	30,480	229,814	84,065
Spain	28,813	404,229	N/A
Peru	27,034	567,059	380,730
Iran	20,376	354,764	305,866
Russia	16,189	946,976	761,330
Colombia	16,183	513,719	339,124
South Africa	12,618	599,940	497,169
Chile	10,671	391,849	366,063
Belgium	9,976	80,178	18,131
Germany	9,325	231,389	205,800
Canada	9,054	123,873	110,288
Netherlands	6,195	65,589	N/A
Pakistan	6,219	291,588	273,579
Indonesia	6,500	149,408	102,991
Ecuador	6,200	105,508	87,660
Turkey	6,058	254,520	234,797
Sweden	5,810	86,068	N/A
Iraq	6,208	192,797	137,200
Argentina	6,567	320,884	239,806
Egypt	5,212	97,025	63,462
China	4,634	84,917	79,792
Bolivia	4,305	106,065	41,111
Bangladesh	3,861	290,360	172,615
Saudi Arabia	3,580	305,186	277,067
Romania	3,196	76,355	34,523
Philippines	2,940	182,365	114,519
Guatemala	2,506	65,983	54,351
Ukraine	2,207	100,643	51,078
Switzerland	2,000	39,332	33,900
Poland	1,938	60,281	41,029
Ireland	1,776	27,676	23,364
Portugal	1,792	55,211	40,473
Panama	1,844	83,855	59,174
Honduras	1,619	52,819	8,082
Kyrgyzstan	1,498	42,703	35,831
Dominican Republic	1,505	89,010	57,734
Afghanistan	1,385	37,894	28,016
Algeria	1,411	40,258	28,281
Kazakhstan	1,415	104,071	87,920
Japan	1,144	58,501	45,266
Nigeria	992	50,964	37,569
Moldova	929	32,484	22,683
Armenia	842	42,477	35,693
Sudan	812	12,623	6,476
Austria	730	24,762	21,260
Serbia	692	30,378	28,275
Israel	795	99,599	74,579
Denmark	621	16,127	13,944
Hungary	611	5,098	3,681
Belarus	632	70,111	68,256
El Salvador	646	24,200	11,781
Morocco	775	47,638	32,806
Oman	609	83,769	78,386
North Macedonia	557	13,308	9,977
Yemen	541	1,899	1,058
Azerbaijan	512	34,921	32,682
Kuwait	511	79,269	71,264
Bulgaria	532	14,962	10,087
Ethiopia	620	35,836	13,536
Bosnia and Herzegovina	526	17,396	11,157
Kenya	516	31,441	17,869
Cameroon	408	18,762	16,540
Czechia	406	21,045	15,886
Australia	472	24,407	18,460

UAE	370	66,193	58,296
Finland	334	7,871	7,100
S. Korea	309	16,670	14,120
Costa Rica	333	31,075	9,939
Norway	264	10,197	9,150
Venezuela	311	37,567	26,330
Senegal	262	12,689	8,165
Zambia	274	10,372	9,126
DRC	248	9,802	8,920
Ghana	261	43,260	41,276
Greece	235	7,934	3,804
Uzbekistan	256	37,825	33,442
Albania	238	7,967	3,986
Haiti	196	7,997	5,447
Qatar	193	116,481	113,216
Bahrain	179	48,303	44,628
Madagascar	178	14,218	13,206
Croatia	169	7,594	5,584
Mauritania	158	6,848	6,123
Malawi	165	5,282	2,883
Libya	173	9,707	1,047
Slovenia	130	2,574	2,079
Zimbabwe	151	5,745	4,525
Nicaragua	133	4,311	2,913
Malaysia	125	9,249	8,945
Mali	125	2,667	1,993
Luxembourg	124	7,637	6,903
Ivory Coast	112	17,249	14,611
Palestine	121	18,313	11,102
Nepal	137	30,483	18,214
Paraguay	170	11,817	6,783
Somalia	93	3,265	2,396
Lebanon	113	10,952	3,040
Cuba	88	3,565	2,894
Equatorial Guinea	83	4,892	2,713
Liberia	82	1,284	803
Lithuania	83	2,564	1,755
Angola	93	2,044	742
Chad	76	972	869
Montenegro	81	4,229	3,186
Sierra Leone	69	1,969	1,536
Niger	69	1,169	1,082
Hong Kong	75	4,632	3,900
Eswatini	81	4,110	2,643
Tajikistan	66	8,241	7,040
Estonia	63	2,244	2,011
CAR	61	4,679	1,755
Congo	77	3,850	1,625
Djibouti	59	5,374	5,216
Thailand	58	3,390	3,219
Syria	82	2,008	460
Burkina Faso	55	1,297	1,034
Tunisia	63	2,543	1,397
Andorra	53	1,024	875
French Guiana	54	8,743	8,189
Gabon	53	8,319	6,614
Guinea	53	8,876	7,628
Gambia	81	2,401	435
South Sudan	47	2,494	1,290
Channel Islands	48	614	545
San Marino	42	704	657
Suriname	55	3,366	2,383
Mayotte	39	3,160	2,964
Benin	39	2,095	1,705
Uruguay	41	1,506	1,242
Cabo Verde	37	3,368	2,462
Latvia	33	1,330	1,093
Slovakia	33	3,225	2,045
Guinea-Bissau	33	2,149	1,015
Singapore	27	56,216	53,119

- France plans to make masks compulsory in almost all workplaces and Finland will ration common medicines in anticipation of a second wave this autumn as new coronavirus infections continue to rise around Europe. Amid evidence from several countries that the increase on the continent is being driven mainly by younger people, the WHO said 20- to 50-year-olds were also the main spreaders of the virus in the western Pacific region.

- Voluntary mass testing of citizens for coronavirus will begin in Hong Kong on September 1, Chief Executive Carrie Lam said on Friday. Tests will be free of charge. Any Hong Kong citizens with no symptoms -- except children under the age of six and people with bad throat or nasal conditions -- can join the testing program. The testing will last for seven days.

- The novel coronavirus epidemic is "out of control" in parts of Spain, according to the director of the country's Center for Health Emergencies. *"Currently the epidemic is not out of control at a national level, but it is in some concrete places. It's true that the characteristics of the cases are different, it's true that hospitalizations and the data from the pressure on the [health] system are different, but we are having an important transmission,"* director added. Spain currently has the highest infection rate of any country in Europe according to the European Center for Disease Control (ECDC).

- Switzerland: The number of new positive cases has increased in recent weeks. On August 16, the 7-day average reached 208.3 new cases per day, which is a 43% increase from the previous week. In addition, Basel City has become the first German-speaking canton to require customers to wear face masks in shops to combat the spread of the coronavirus. To keep the risk of coronavirus spreading as low as possible, everyone will be required to wear a facemask as soon as they enter any ETH building. This measure already applies from 24 August.

Newly reported cases since 01.06 in Switzerland.

- **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
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