

## Coronavirus Disease – COVID-19

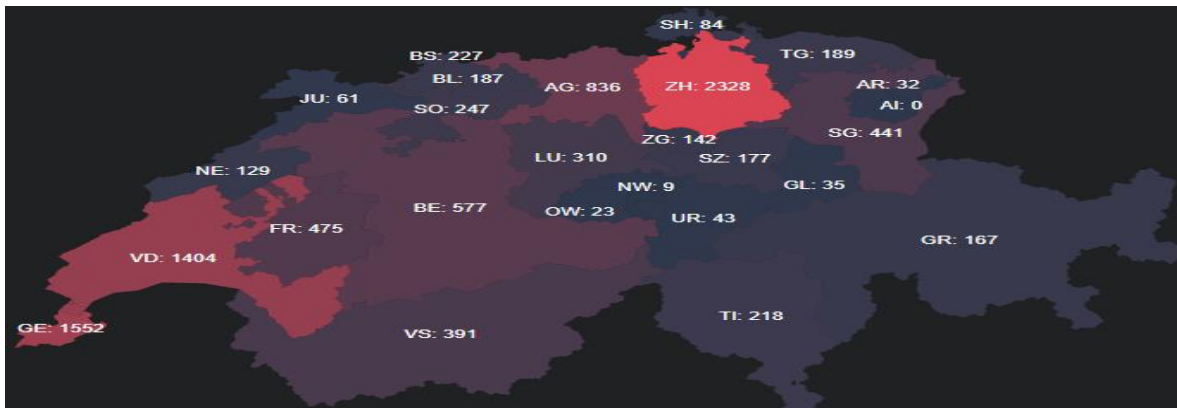
### 28.08.2020

- The death toll from the coronavirus outbreak is over 836,704 worldwide, with the highest number of deaths in USA (184,927) and Brazil (118,726). There have been more than 24,678,778 global cases in 210 countries and territories. [1]
- The WHO said it would set up a committee to review the rules on declaring an international health emergency, following criticism of its Covid-19 pandemic response. The global health body declared a public health emergency of international concern for coronavirus on 30 January. [2]
- The spread of coronavirus to patients in hospitals is being investigated by a safety watchdog to try to help the NHS protect patients and prepare for winter. The independent Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch has launched a national inquiry after identifying multiple instances of patients contracting Covid-19 within hospitals. New research by King's College London has found at least an eighth of Covid-19 hospital patients were infected while already in hospital. The study looked at 1,564 Covid-19 patients admitted to 10 hospitals in the UK and in Italy during April. In a statement, HSIB, which was set up in 2017 to investigate systemic safety risks the NHS, said: *"We have identified a number of incidents where people go into hospital without signs of coronavirus and by the time they are discharged, or soon after, have developed symptoms."* Its investigation has been designed to help hospitals reduce the risks of spreading the virus. Investigators plan to interview senior national and regional NHS bosses as well as hospital leaders and frontline staff and patients who believe they may have contracted the virus during their stay. They will also examine national guidance to hospitals and whether the guidance reflects the international scientific evidence as cited by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies. [3]
- 172 economies are now engaged in discussions to potentially participate in COVAX, a global initiative aimed at working with vaccine manufacturers to provide countries worldwide equitable access to safe and effective vaccines, once they are licensed and approved. COVAX currently has the world's largest and most diverse COVID-19 vaccine portfolio - including nine candidate vaccines, with a further nine under evaluation and conversations underway with other major producers. COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the World Health Organization (WHO) – working in partnership with developed and developing country vaccine manufacturers. It is the only global initiative that is working with governments and manufacturers to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are available worldwide to both higher-income and lower-income countries. [4]
- The risk of severe illness and death to children from Covid-19 is "vanishingly rare", according to the biggest study yet of those admitted to hospital, which the researchers say should reassure parents as they return to school. The study included two-thirds of all patients admitted to hospitals across England, Scotland and Wales with Covid-19. Of these, 651 – less than 1% – were children and young people under 19. Six of these patients – less than 1% – died. All had severe underlying health conditions. [5]
- Swiss pharmaceutical firm Novartis has rowed back on earlier predictions that a drug to combat coronavirus could be on the horizon. CEO Vas Narasimhan says it is now more "realistic" to expect the pandemic to continue to haunt the world well into next year. [6]

| Countries              | Deaths  | Cases     | Recovered |
|------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| USA                    | 184,927 | 6,049,462 | 3,348,824 |
| Brazil                 | 118,726 | 3,764,493 | 2,947,250 |
| Mexico                 | 62,594  | 579,914   | 400,479   |
| India                  | 61,857  | 3,403,555 | 2,596,273 |
| UK                     | 41,477  | 330,368   | N/A       |
| Italy                  | 35,463  | 263,949   | 206,554   |
| France                 | 30,576  | 259,698   | 85,984    |
| Spain                  | 28,996  | 451,792   | N/A       |
| Peru                   | 28,277  | 621,997   | 429,662   |
| Iran                   | 21,249  | 369,911   | 318,270   |
| Colombia               | 18,468  | 582,022   | 417,793   |
| Russia                 | 16,914  | 980,405   | 798,466   |
| South Africa           | 13,628  | 618,286   | 531,338   |
| Chile                  | 11,072  | 404,102   | 377,922   |
| Belgium                | 9,884   | 83,500    | 18,360    |
| Germany                | 9,360   | 241,257   | 215,495   |
| Canada                 | 9,102   | 126,848   | 112,825   |
| Argentina              | 8,129   | 380,292   | 280,165   |
| Indonesia              | 7,169   | 165,887   | 120,900   |
| Iraq                   | 6,740   | 219,435   | 161,009   |
| Ecuador                | 6,471   | 111,219   | 95,202    |
| Pakistan               | 6,283   | 295,053   | 279,937   |
| Netherlands            | 6,220   | 69,131    | N/A       |
| Turkey                 | 6,209   | 263,998   | 240,792   |
| Sweden                 | 5,821   | 83,958    | N/A       |
| Egypt                  | 5,342   | 98,062    | 69,612    |
| Bolivia                | 4,791   | 113,129   | 52,521    |
| China                  | 4,634   | 85,013    | 80,091    |
| Bangladesh             | 4,174   | 306,794   | 196,836   |
| Saudi Arabia           | 3,813   | 312,924   | 287,403   |
| Romania                | 3,507   | 84,468    | 37,056    |
| Philippines            | 3,325   | 209,544   | 134,474   |
| Guatemala              | 2,685   | 71,856    | 59,641    |
| Ukraine                | 2,451   | 114,497   | 55,083    |
| Poland                 | 2,018   | 65,480    | 44,785    |
| Switzerland            | 2,004   | 41,346    | 34,800    |
| Panama                 | 1,948   | 89,982    | 63,996    |
| Portugal               | 1,815   | 57,074    | 41,556    |
| Honduras               | 1,803   | 57,669    | 9,586     |
| Ireland                | 1,777   | 28,453    | 23,364    |
| Dominican Republic     | 1,630   | 92,964    | 64,347    |
| Kazakhstan             | 1,523   | 105,408   | 95,253    |
| Algeria                | 1,475   | 43,016    | 30,157    |
| Afghanistan            | 1,402   | 38,140    | 29,059    |
| Japan                  | 1,226   | 64,668    | 52,823    |
| Kyrgyzstan             | 1,057   | 43,587    | 37,726    |
| Morocco                | 1,011   | 57,085    | 41,901    |
| Nigeria                | 1,011   | 53,317    | 40,726    |
| Moldova                | 977     | 35,546    | 24,156    |
| Israel                 | 891     | 111,493   | 90,158    |
| Armenia                | 869     | 43,451    | 37,264    |
| Sudan                  | 823     | 13,045    | 6,594     |
| Ethiopia               | 745     | 46,407    | 16,829    |
| Austria                | 733     | 26,590    | 22,594    |
| Serbia                 | 709     | 31,207    | 29,802    |
| El Salvador            | 702     | 25,415    | 13,570    |
| Belarus                | 667     | 71,346    | 69,887    |
| Oman                   | 650     | 85,005    | 79,608    |
| Denmark                | 624     | 16,700    | 14,877    |
| Hungary                | 614     | 5,511     | 3,759     |
| Bulgaria               | 594     | 15,908    | 11,044    |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 591     | 19,214    | 12,733    |
| North Macedonia        | 590     | 14,163    | 10,933    |
| Australia              | 583     | 25,448    | 20,633    |
| Kenya                  | 567     | 33,389    | 19,368    |
| Yemen                  | 562     | 1,933     | 1,098     |
| Kuwait                 | 525     | 83,578    | 75,320    |
| Azerbaijan             | 524     | 35,844    | 33,364    |
| Czechia                | 418     | 23,300    | 17,190    |
| Cameroon               | 411     | 19,142    | 17,651    |
| Costa Rica             | 397     | 37,292    | 14,471    |
| UAE                    | 379     | 68,901    | 59,861    |

|                   |     |         |         |
|-------------------|-----|---------|---------|
| Venezuela         | 358 | 42,898  | 34,147  |
| Finland           | 335 | 8,042   | 7,200   |
| S. Korea          | 316 | 19,077  | 14,551  |
| Uzbekistan        | 302 | 40,720  | 37,873  |
| Zambia            | 283 | 11,779  | 10,945  |
| Senegal           | 279 | 13,384  | 9,091   |
| Ghana             | 270 | 43,841  | 42,246  |
| Albania           | 266 | 9,083   | 4,791   |
| Paraguay          | 265 | 15,290  | 8,348   |
| Norway            | 264 | 10,542  | 9,348   |
| DRC               | 255 | 9,994   | 9,035   |
| Greece            | 254 | 9,531   | 3,804   |
| Libya             | 226 | 12,629  | 1,310   |
| Haiti             | 200 | 8,151   | 5,743   |
| Qatar             | 196 | 118,196 | 115,017 |
| Nepal             | 195 | 36,456  | 20,242  |
| Bahrain           | 189 | 50,756  | 47,370  |
| Zimbabwe          | 189 | 6,292   | 5,010   |
| Madagascar        | 187 | 14,696  | 13,709  |
| Croatia           | 180 | 9,549   | 6,809   |
| Malawi            | 173 | 5,496   | 3,121   |
| Mauritania        | 158 | 6,993   | 6,381   |
| Lebanon           | 146 | 14,937  | 4,133   |
| Palestine         | 143 | 21,251  | 14,291  |
| Nicaragua         | 137 | 4,494   | 2,913   |
| Slovenia          | 133 | 2,797   | 2,236   |
| Mali              | 126 | 2,730   | 2,054   |
| Malaysia          | 125 | 9,306   | 9,030   |
| Luxembourg        | 124 | 7,928   | 7,140   |
| Ivory Coast       | 115 | 17,702  | 16,139  |
| Angola            | 105 | 2,415   | 1,335   |
| Syria             | 100 | 2,504   | 569     |
| Somalia           | 95  | 3,275   | 2,443   |
| Gambia            | 93  | 2,743   | 638     |
| Cuba              | 92  | 3,806   | 3,195   |
| Montenegro        | 89  | 4,558   | 3,606   |
| Eswatini          | 89  | 4,433   | 3,115   |
| Lithuania         | 86  | 2,810   | 1,816   |
| Hong Kong         | 84  | 4,769   | 4,249   |
| Equatorial Guinea | 83  | 4,928   | 3,798   |
| Liberia           | 82  | 1,298   | 832     |
| Congo             | 78  | 3,979   | 1,742   |
| Chad              | 77  | 1,004   | 875     |
| Tunisia           | 73  | 3,323   | 1,504   |
| Sierra Leone      | 70  | 2,013   | 1,581   |
| Niger             | 69  | 1,173   | 1,084   |
| Tajikistan        | 68  | 8,481   | 7,276   |
| Suriname          | 66  | 3,793   | 2,893   |
| Estonia           | 64  | 2,343   | 2,076   |
| CAR               | 61  | 4,698   | 1,782   |
| Namibia           | 60  | 6,712   | 2,776   |
| Djibouti          | 60  | 5,383   | 5,307   |
| Guinea            | 58  | 9,213   | 8,180   |
| French Guiana     | 58  | 8,982   | 8,508   |
| Thailand          | 58  | 3,410   | 3,237   |
| Burkina Faso      | 55  | 1,352   | 1,058   |
| Gabon             | 53  | 8,468   | 7,066   |
| Andorra           | 53  | 1,098   | 893     |
| Bahamas           | 48  | 1,923   | 733     |
| Channel Islands   | 48  | 623     | 545     |
| South Sudan       | 47  | 2,514   | 1,290   |
| Uruguay           | 43  | 1,551   | 1,333   |
| San Marino        | 42  | 710     | 658     |
| Mayotte           | 40  | 3,301   | 2,964   |
| Benin             | 40  | 2,145   | 1,738   |
| Cabo Verde        | 38  | 3,699   | 2,749   |
| Guinea-Bissau     | 34  | 2,205   | 1,127   |
| Latvia            | 34  | 1,375   | 1,163   |
| Slovakia          | 33  | 3,728   | 2,225   |
| Guyana            | 32  | 1,140   | 616     |
| Lesotho           | 31  | 1,051   | 526     |
| Vietnam           | 30  | 1,038   | 663     |
| Maldives          | 28  | 7,329   | 4,691   |
| Uganda            | 28  | 2,756   | 1,288   |
| Singapore         | 27  | 56,666  | 55,139  |

- National statistics show that just under half of new Covid-19 cases are already in quarantine when they test positive. Regional figures suggest the number could be even lower. The NZZ am Sonntag reports that the most recent numbers provided by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) show that 44% of people testing positive since May 11 were already in isolation as a result of precautions taken after contact tracing. The FOPH's numbers are based on medical questionnaires filled out by patients – forms which since May include the question of whether the patient is already in quarantine. [6]
- The voluntary mass testing of citizens for coronavirus in Hong Kong will begin on September 1, the city's top official said on Friday. Tests will be free of charge for residents of the city, home to around 7.5 million people, which has been grappling in recent weeks with a third wave of Covid-19 infections, said Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Any Hong Kong resident with no symptoms, except children under the age of 6 and people with bad throat or nasal conditions, can join the testing program. [5]
- US company Johnson & Johnson has said it will extend trials of its vaccine candidate against Covid-19 to Chile and Argentina. The vaccine will undergo Phase 3 trials in eight countries altogether, involving some 60,000 adult volunteers. The participation of Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Mexico had already been announced. "This study is scheduled for September, subject to review by the health authority," the company said in a statement. The countries have been chosen because they have some of the highest infection rates worldwide. "The current prevalence of the disease, the demographics of the population and the requirements of the health authorities were taken into account to ensure that the study can be carried out properly and provide relevant data," the company said. [5]



Newly reported cases since 01.06 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](mailto:grantsoffice@research.unibe.ch). The Grants Advisors responsible for the ISPM are Aline Schöglger ([aline.schoegler@research.unibe.ch](mailto:aline.schoegler@research.unibe.ch)) and Leah Witton ([leah.witton@research.unibe.ch](mailto:leah.witton@research.unibe.ch)).

## Sources

- [1] <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>
- [2] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2020/aug/28/>
- [3] <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/covid-19-news/20200827>
- [4] <https://www.who.int/news-room>
- [5] <https://edition.cnn.com/world/live-news/coronavirus-pandemic-08-28-20-intl/index.html>
- [6] <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/in-depth/coronavirus>
- [7] <https://www.corona-data.ch/>