



Current Situation: COVID-19

April 20th,
2020 Update

Monitoring the Virus

Europe Sees Hopeful Signs

[Italy reports fall of active cases](#) for the first time and [Spain recorded lowest daily death toll](#) in a month.

[Restrictions are being lifted](#) in Germany, Denmark, Norway and Poland.

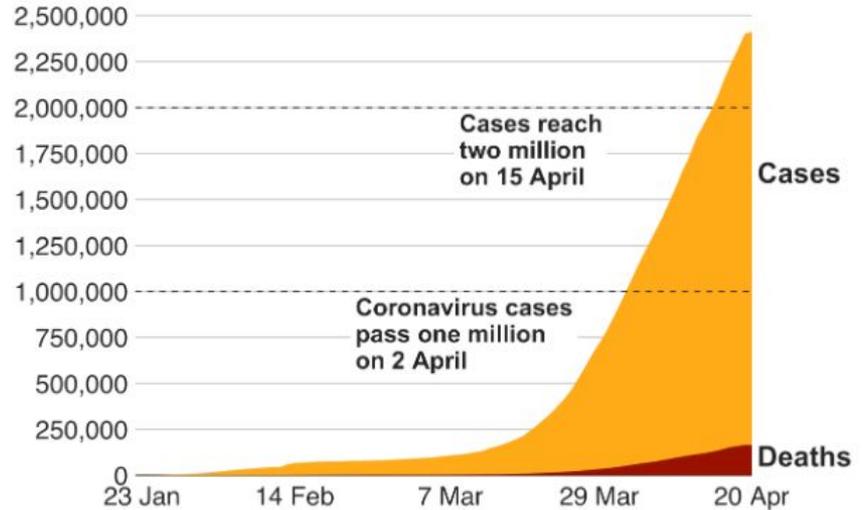
[France becomes fourth nation](#) with more than 20,000 recorded deaths.

Precautions in Asia

[China considers easing border controls](#) to allow business travel to resume while [warning citizens in Russia to stay there](#) to avoid a second wave.

[Hong Kong reports first day with no new cases](#) after second wave.

Global coronavirus cases pass two million



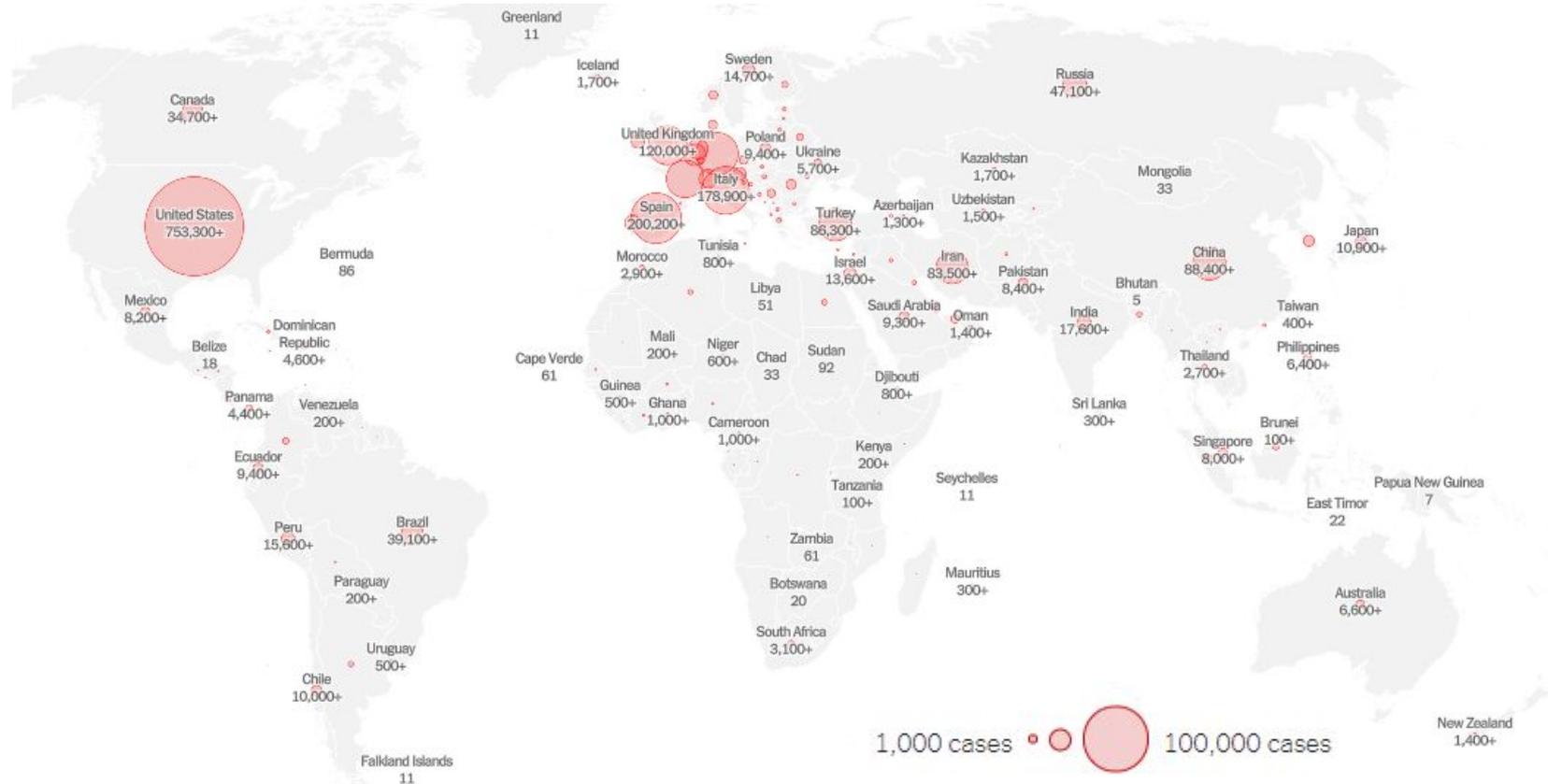
Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated: 20 Apr 10:15 BST



[Source](#)

Confirmed Cases Worldwide

Updated April 20, 2020



COVID-19 in the U.S.

U.S. Lawmakers Close to Deal

Congress hopes to reach a [deal for additional \\$450 billion aid](#) for small businesses by end of the day.

Protests Continue

People continue to gather to [protest the shutdowns](#), yet a [poll shows that most Americans](#) are concerned with opening up too quickly.

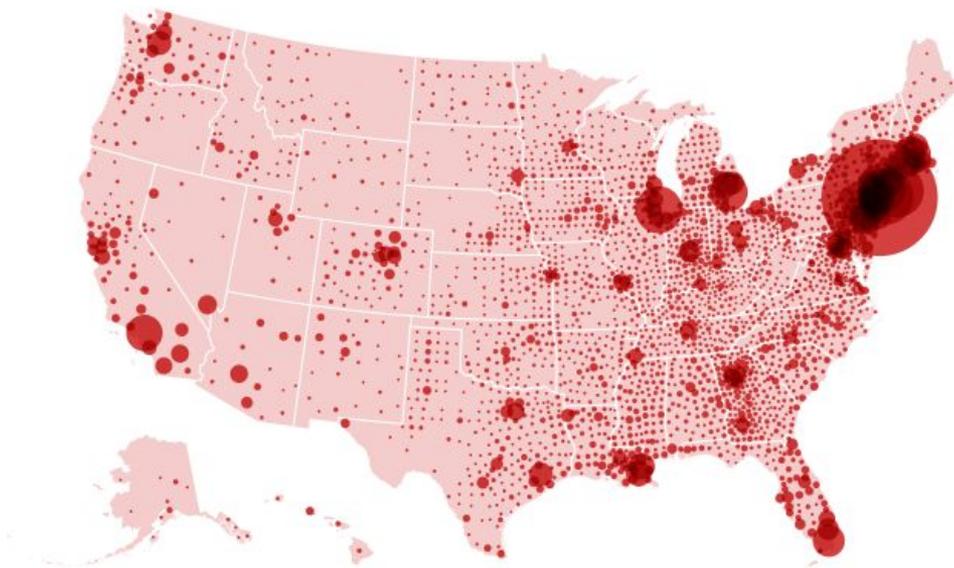
Contact Tracing & Testing

[CDC Director](#) adds that aggressive contact tracing is necessary to reopen and return to normal.

Vice President Pence [to speak with all 50 governors regarding plans for testing](#) to reopen economy.

Confirmed cases
766,046
(Today: +6,960)

Deaths
40,903
(Today: +242)



Last updated 20 Apr 2:25pm EST Source: Johns Hopkins CSSE *Note: The CSSE states that its numbers rely upon publicly available data from multiple sources.

[Source](#)

Concerns over Vulnerable Areas

Latin & South America

Fears over the potential devastation of the [virus' spread in Haiti](#) where there is a severe shortage of doctors and necessary supplies.

There are some [doubts that the numbers being reported in Mexico and Brazil](#) are severely under-reporting deaths from the virus.

Impacts Throughout Africa

[Ethiopia plans to close Eritrean refugee camp](#) despite concerns about risks of COVID-19 exposure.

In [Burkina Faso, the coronavirus curfew creates a water shortage](#) for the nation's poorest.



WHO Forecast in Africa

Provisional modeling shows coronavirus cases in Africa could shoot up from [thousands now to 10 million within three to six months](#).



“We are concerned that the virus continues to spread geographically, within countries,” [said Matshidiso Moeti](#), director for WHO’s Africa region, which comprises 46 sub-Saharan nations and Algeria.

Economic Impact

Historic Drops Across the Globe

[U.S. oil trades below zero](#) for the first time in history.

[China's economy shrank 6.8% in the first three months of 2020](#) compared with a year earlier, the first such contraction since Beijing began reporting quarterly gross domestic product in 1992.

Attempts to Mitigate Damage

[World Bank will pay out pandemic bonds](#) to poorest nations hit by coronavirus. Some are concerned that this measure comes too late.

WTI Oil for May Delivery



[Source: FactSheet](#)

Global Responses

Various Efforts to Reopen

[Chile is set to become the first country to issue "immunity cards"](#) to those who recover from the virus despite concerns about evidence.

[Pakistan to lift limits](#) on congregations at mosques in preparation for Ramadan.

Informal Economy Workers at Risk

[Sex workers in Japan](#) fight for government aid during shutdown. In Thailand, sex workers are eligible for unemployment benefits for the first time through the government's pandemic relief package.

Similar issues arose when brothels in Bangladesh were shutdown, there [workers were given rice and aid](#) as long as ban in place.





Humanitarian Challenges

Global Responses

New Challenges

Concerns over [food insecurity in Northern Triangle countries](#) due to coronavirus outbreak heightened as NGOs mobilize to provide access to food.

UN report [says 74 million in Arab world lack hand-washing facilities](#), including 31 million people in Sudan, more than 14 million in war-torn Yemen and 9.9 million in Egypt. An estimated 26 million refugees and displaced people are at greater risk of contracting the illness region-wide, as they lack adequate access to water and hygiene services.

Long-Term Impacts

[Advocates for long-term water, sanitation and hygiene programming are worried](#) that while the global pandemic has highlighted the importance of these measures, responses to the coronavirus will not materialize into long term investments.

Antibody Tests

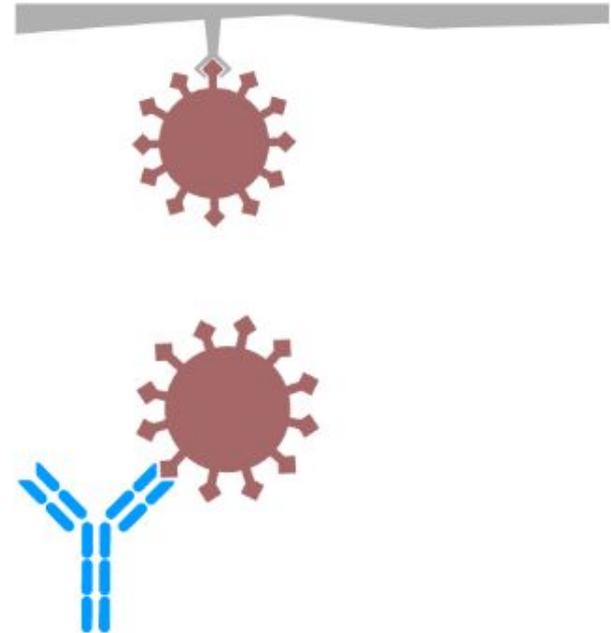
Mixed Signals

Antibody tests have been credited as the key to [opening up the economy](#), while also being criticized for [lack of evidence on immunity](#) and usefulness to diagnosis, causing [confusion on how to proceed](#).

The novel coronavirus uses a series of spikes on its outside layer to attach to cells and infect them.

The body's white blood cells respond creating ...

uniquely shaped antibodies that bind to the spikes, disabling the virus.



Statements from Official Agencies



[WHO statement said](#), “They should not be used in any other setting, including for clinical decision-making, until evidence supporting use for specific indications is available.”

[CDC remarks](#), “The CDC’s serologic test is designed and validated for broad-based surveillance and research that will give us information needed to guide the response to the pandemic and protect the public’s health. The test is not currently designed to test individuals who want to know if they have been previously infected with COVID-19.”

[U.S. FDA](#) “does not expect that an antibody test can be shown to definitively diagnose or exclude SARS-CoV-2 infection.”

This information is current as of April 20th, 2020.
Further updates will be sent in future briefings.



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