

# Swiss Propaganda Research

Das Medienforschungsprojekt

## Facts about Covid-19

**Published:** March 14, 2020; **Updated:** April 12, 2020

**Languages:** CZ, DE, EN, FR, ES, HBS, HE, HU, IT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RU, SE, SI, SK, TR

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Fully referenced facts about Covid-19, provided by experts in the field, to help our readers make a realistic risk assessment. (Regular updates below)

**“The only means to fight the plague is honesty.” Albert Camus, *The Plague* (1947)**

### Overview

1. According to data from the best-studied countries such as South Korea, Iceland, Germany and Denmark, the overall lethality of Covid19 is in the lower *per mille* range and thus up to twenty times lower than initially assumed by the WHO.
2. A study in Nature Medicine comes to a similar conclusion even for the Chinese city of Wuhan. The initially significantly higher values for Wuhan were obtained because a many people with mild or no symptoms were not recorded.
3. 50% to 80% of test-positive individuals remain symptom-free. Even among the 70 to 79 year old persons about 60% remain symptom-free, many more show only mild symptoms.
4. The median age of the deceased in most countries (including Italy) is over 80 years and only about 1% of the deceased had no serious previous illnesses. The age and risk profile of deaths thus essentially corresponds to normal mortality.
5. Many media reports of young and healthy people dying from Covid19 have proven to be false upon closer inspection. Many of these people either did not die from Covid19 or they in fact had serious preconditions (such as undiagnosed leukaemia).
6. Normal overall mortality in the US is about 8000 people per day, in Germany about 2600 people and in Italy about 1800 people per day. Influenza mortality in the US is up to 80,000, in Germany and Italy up to 25,000, and in Switzerland up to 1500 people per winter.
7. Strongly increased death rates, as in northern Italy, can be influenced by additional risk factors such as very high air pollution and legionella contamination, as well as a collapse in the care of the elderly and sick due to infections, mass panic and lockdown.
8. In countries such as Italy and Spain, and to some extent Great Britain and the US, a serious overload of hospitals, notably by the flu, is not unusual. In addition, up to 15% of doctors and nurses currently have to self-quarantine, even if they develop no symptoms.

9. An important distinction concerns the question of whether people die *with* or indeed *from* coronaviruses. Autopsies show that in many cases the previous illnesses were an important or decisive factor, but the official figures usually do not reflect this.
10. Thus in order to assess the danger of the disease, the key indicator is *not* the often mentioned number of test-positive persons and deceased, but the number of persons who actually and unexpectedly develop or die of pneumonia.
1. The often shown exponential curves of “corona cases” are misleading, since the number of tests also increases exponentially. In most countries, the ratio of positive tests to total tests either remains constant between 5% to 15% or increases only very slowly.
2. Countries *without* lockdowns and contact bans, such as Japan, South Korea and Sweden, have not experienced a more negative course of events than other countries. This might call into question the effectiveness of such far-reaching measures.
3. According to leading lung specialists, invasive ventilation of Covid19 patients is often counterproductive and causes additional damage to the lungs. The invasive ventilation of Covid19 patients is partly done out of fear of spreading the virus through aerosols.
4. Contrary to original assumptions, however, the WHO determined at the end of March that there is no evidence of aerosol dispersal of the virus. A leading German virologist also found no aerosol and no smear infections in a pilot study.
5. Many clinics in Europe and the US have been lacking patients and some have had to introduce short-time work. Numerous operations and therapies were cancelled by clinics, even emergency patients sometimes stay at home out of fear of the virus.
6. Several media have been caught trying to dramatize the situation in clinics, sometimes even with manipulative pictures and videos. In general, many media outlets do not question even doubtful official statements and figures.
7. The virus test kits used internationally are prone to errors. Several studies have shown that even normal corona viruses can give a false positive result. Moreover, the virus test currently in use has not been clinically validated due to time pressure.
8. Numerous internationally renowned experts from the fields of virology, immunology and epidemiology consider the measures taken to be counterproductive and recommend a rapid natural immunisation of the general population while protecting risk groups.
9. The number of people suffering from unemployment, psychological problems and domestic violence as a result of the measures taken has exploded in the US and worldwide. Several experts believe that the measures may claim more lives than the virus itself.
10. NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden warned that the corona crisis is used for the massive and permanent expansion of global surveillance. The renowned virologist Pablo Goldschmidt spoke of a “global media terror” and “totalitarian measures”. Leading British virologist Professor John Oxford spoke of a “media epidemic”.

**See also:** The Open Letter by Professor Bhakdi to German Chancellor Merkel.

Below you will find regular, **but not daily**, updates on medical and political developments.

April 12, 2020

## New studies

- Stanford professor of medicine John Ioannidis concludes in a new study that the risk of death from Covid19 for people under 65 years of age, even in global „hotspots“, is equivalent to the risk of a fatal car accident for daily commuters driving between 9 and 400 miles.
- In a serological pilot study, the German virologist Hendrick Streeck comes to the interim result that the lethality of Covid19 is at 0.37% and the mortality (based on the total population) at 0.06%. These values are about ten times lower than those of the WHO and about five times lower than those of Johns Hopkins University.
- A Danish study with 1500 blood donors found that the lethality of Covid19 is only 1.6 per thousand, i.e. more than 20 times lower than originally assumed by the WHO and thus in the range of a strong (pandemic) influenza. At the same time Denmark has decided to reopen schools and kindergartens next week.
- A serological study in the US state of Colorado comes to the preliminary conclusion that the lethality of Covid19 has been overestimated by a factor of 5 to a factor of 20 and is likely to be in the range between normal and pandemic influenza.
- A study conducted by the Medical University of Vienna concluded that the age and risk profile of Covid19 deaths is similar to normal mortality.
- A study in the Journal of Medical Virology concludes that the internationally used coronavirus test is unreliable: In addition to the already known problem of false positive results, there is also a „potentially high“ rate of false negative results, i.e. the test does not respond even in symptomatic individuals, while in other patients it does respond once and then again not. This makes it more difficult to exclude other flu-like illnesses.
- A Swiss biophysicist has for the first time evaluated and graphically displayed the rate of positive tests in the US, Germany and Switzerland. The result shows that the positive rate in these countries is increasing only slightly and not exponentially.
- Dr. Daniel Jeanmonod, emeritus Swiss professor of physiology and neurosurgery, recommends in an analysis: „Think deep, do good science, and do not panic!,,
- US researchers conclude that local air pollution greatly increases the risk of death from Covid19. This confirms earlier studies from Italy and China.
- The WHO concluded at the end of March that, contrary to earlier assumptions, Covid19 is not transmitted by aerosols („through the air“). Transmission mainly takes place through direct contact or by droplet infection (coughing, sneezing).
- The German-American epidemiology professor Knut Wittkowski argues in a new interview that the Covid19 epidemic is already declining or even „already over“ in many countries. The curfews had come too late and had been counterproductive, Wittkowski argues.

## European Mortality Monitoring

European mortality monitoring now shows a clear projected excess mortality in the over-65 age group in several European countries. In some countries, however, including Germany and Austria, mortality in this age group is still in the normal range (or even below).

The question remains open as to whether the partially increased mortality is due to the coronavirus alone or also due to the sometimes drastic measures taken (e.g. isolation, stress, cancelled operations, etc.), and whether mortality will still be increased in the annual view.

## Switzerland

- According to the latest report of the Federal Office of Public Health, the median age of test-positive deceased is now **84 years**.
- A study by ETH Zurich found that the infection rate in Switzerland fell to a stable value of 1 *several days before* the „lockdown“, presumably due to general hygiene and everyday measures. If this result is correct, it would fundamentally question the sense of a „lockdown“ . (About the study)
- The Swiss magazine *Infosperber* criticizes the information policy of authorities and media: „Instead of informing, authorities conduct a PR campaign,„. Misleading figures and graphics are used to spread at least partly unjustified fear.
- The Swiss consumer protection magazine *Ktipp* also criticises the information policy and media reporting: „Authorities provide misleading information,„.
- A Swiss researcher has analysed the latest Covid19 report of the Federal Office of Public Health and comes to a very critical conclusion: the report is „scientifically unbalanced, patronising and misleading“. In consideration of the facts, the measures taken by authorities are „irresponsible and spreading fear“.
- In an open letter to the Swiss Minister of Health, Swiss doctors speak of a „discrepancy between the threat scenario, which has been fuelled above all by the media, and our reality. The Covid19 cases observed in the general population were few and mostly mild, but „anxiety disorders and panic attacks“ are on the increase in the population and many patients no longer dare to come to important examination appointments. „And this in connection with a virus whose dangerousness, according to our perception, exists in Switzerland only in the media and in our heads.“
- Due to the very low patient workload, several clinics in Switzerland and Germany have now had to announce short-time work. The decrease in patients is up to 80%.
- The Swiss physician Dr. Paul Robert Vogt has written a highly shared article on Covid19. He criticizes a „sensationalistic press“, but also warns that this is not an „ordinary flu“. However, the physician is wrong in some points: lethality rate and median age are very much key variables, differentiation between with/by coronavirus is essential, respiratory masks and respirators are unsuitable in many cases (see below), and curfews are a questionable and possibly counterproductive measure.

## Germany and Austria

- In a paper, German health experts criticise the crisis policy of the Federal Government. They speak of long-term damage to the population caused by the partial shutdown. The figures published by the RKI were „only of limited significance“.
- In a statement, the Federal Association of German Pathologists demands that there must be



autopsies of „corona deaths“ (in order to determine the true cause of death) and thus explicitly contradicts „the recommendation of the Robert Koch Institute“, which spoke out against autopsies, allegedly because they were too dangerous.

- Dr. Martin Sprenger resigned his position in the Corona Expert Council of the Austrian Ministry of Health in order to „regain his civil and scientific freedom of opinion“. Dr. Sprenger previously criticized, among other things, that the government did not sufficiently differentiate the risk of the virus for different population groups and took too sweeping measures: „We must be careful that the loss of healthy life years due to inadequate care for other acute and chronic diseases is not a factor of 10 times higher than the loss of healthy life years caused by COVID-19“.
- In a German nursing home, an 84-year-old man tested positive for Covid19, after which the entire home was quarantined and mass tests were conducted. The initial test result later turned out to be false, however.

## Scandinavia

- The Norwegian Medical Association writes in an open letter to the Minister of Health that they are concerned that the measures taken could be more dangerous than the virus, as normal patients are no longer being examined and treated.
- A Swedish author explains in the British *Spectator*: „It is not Sweden that is conducting a mass experiment. It is all other countries that are doing it.“
- Professor Ansgar Lohse, Director at the Hamburg University Hospital, explains in an interview: „In my opinion, the Swedish measures are the most rational in the world. Of course, the question arises whether this can be kept up psychologically. Initially, the Swedes have to reckon with significantly more deaths, but in the medium to long term these will then be significantly reduced. The bill will be paid in a year – if the Swedes can hold out. Unfortunately, the fear of the virus often forces politicians to take actions that are not necessarily reasonable. Politics is driven also by the images in the media.“
- According to Swedish chief epidemiologist Anders Tegnell, Stockholm may now have reached a „plateau“ with regard to Covid infections. (More news about Sweden)

## US and Asia

- In the US, the authorities now also recommend that all test-positive deaths and even suspect cases *without* a positive test result be registered as „Covid deaths“. An American physician and state senator from Minnesota declared that this was tantamount to manipulation. Furthermore, there would be financial incentives for hospitals to declare patients as Covid19 patients. (Some humour on this topic).
- A Covid19 field hospital near Seattle in Washington State was closed after only three days without admitting any patients. This is reminiscent of the hospitals built at short notice near Wuhan, which were also mostly under-utilized or even remained empty and were then dismantled after a short time.
- Numerous media reported on alleged „corona mass graves“ on Hart Island near New York.

These reports are misleading in two respects: firstly, Hart Island has long been one of the best-known „cemeteries of the poor“ in the US, and secondly the mayor of New York declared that no mass graves are planned, but that „unclaimed“ deceased (i.e. without relatives) are to be buried on Hart Island.

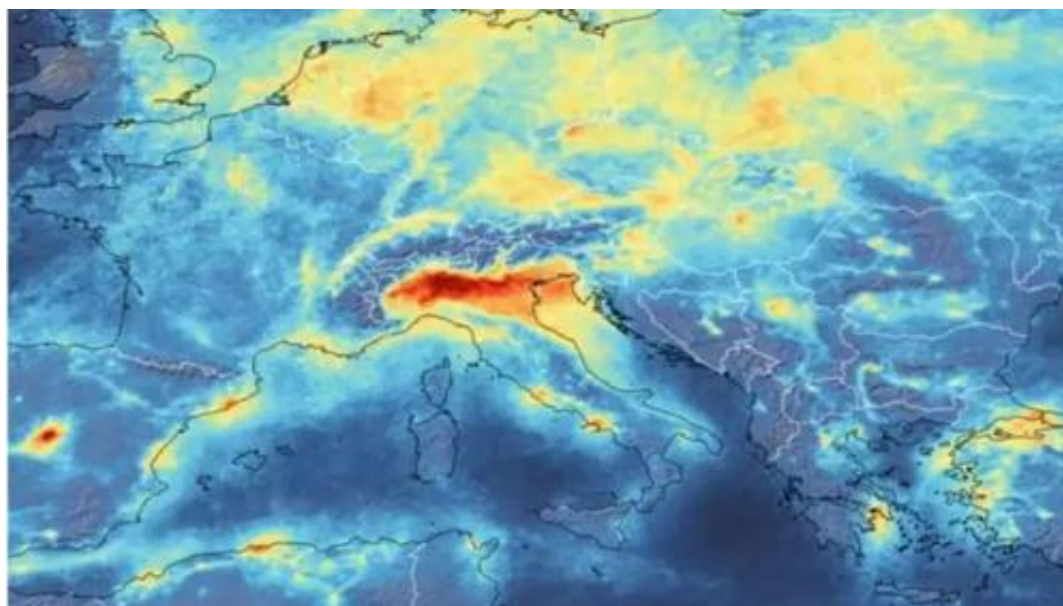
- One of the leading Indian epidemiologists declared, „We cannot run away to the moon“ and recommended the rapid development of a natural immunity in the population.

## Northern Italy

It is true that two major vaccination campaigns against influenza and meningococcus were carried out in Lombardy in the months immediately preceding the outbreak of Covid19, notably in the later hotspots of Bergamo and Brescia. Although it is *theoretically possible* that such vaccinations could interact with coronavirus infections, such a possibility has not been established at present.

It is also true that a high asbestos exposure was present in northern Italy in the past, which increases the risk of *cancerous* lung disease. But here again, there is no *direct connection* with Covid19.

Nevertheless, in general it is true that the lung health of the population in northern Italy has been affected for a long time by high levels of air pollution and other detrimental factors, making it particularly susceptible to respiratory diseases.



Winter smog (NO<sub>2</sub>) in Northern Italy in February 2020 (ESA)

## Chief physician Pietro Vernazza

The Swiss chief physician of Infectiology, Professor Pietro Vernazza, has published four new articles on studies concerning Covid19.

- The first article is about the fact that there has never been medical evidence for the efficacy of **school closures**, as children in general do not develop the Covid disease nor are they among the vectors of the virus (unlike with influenza).
- The second article is about the fact that **respiratory masks** generally have no detectable effect, with one exception: sick people *with symptoms* (notably coughing) can reduce the spread of the virus. Otherwise the masks are rather symbolic or a „media hype“.
- The third article deals with the Covid19 **risk groups**. According to current knowledge, these include people with high blood pressure – it is suspected that the Covid19 virus uses cell receptors that are also responsible for regulating blood pressure. However, surprisingly, people with immunodeficiency and pregnant women (who naturally have a reduced immune system) are not at risk. On the contrary, the risk of Covid19 is often an *overreaction* of the immune system.
- The fourth article deals with the question of **mass testing**. The conclusion of Professor Vernazza: „Anyone who has symptoms of a respiratory disease stays at home. The same applies to the flu. There is no added value in testing.“

## Intensive vs. palliative care

A German palliative physician explains in an interview that Covid19 is „not an intensive care disease“, as the severely affected people are typically people of old age who have multiple pre-existing conditions. When these people get pneumonia, they „have always been given palliative care (i.e. accompanying death)“. With a Covid19 diagnosis, however, this would now become an intensive care case, but „of course the patients still cannot be saved“.

The expert describes the current actions of many decision-makers as „panic mode“. At present, intensive care beds in Germany are still relatively empty. Respirators are free. For financial reasons, hospital managers may soon come up with the idea of admitting elderly people. „In 14 days, the wards will be full of unsalvageable, multimorbid old people. And once they are on the machines, the question arises as to who will switch them off again, as that would be a homicide.“ An „ethical catastrophe“ from greed may ensue, warns the physician.

## Ventilation with Covid19

There has been and still is a worldwide rush for ventilators for Covid19 patients. This site was one of the first in the world to draw attention to the fact that invasive ventilation (intubation) may be counterproductive in many cases and may cause additional harm to patients.

Invasive ventilation was originally recommended because low oxygen levels led to the false conclusion of acute respiratory (lung) failure, and there was a fear that with more gentle, non-invasive techniques the virus could spread through aerosols.

In the meantime, several leading pulmonologists and intensive care physicians from the US and Europe have spoken out against invasive ventilation and recommend more gentle methods or indeed oxygen therapy, as already successfully used by South Korea.

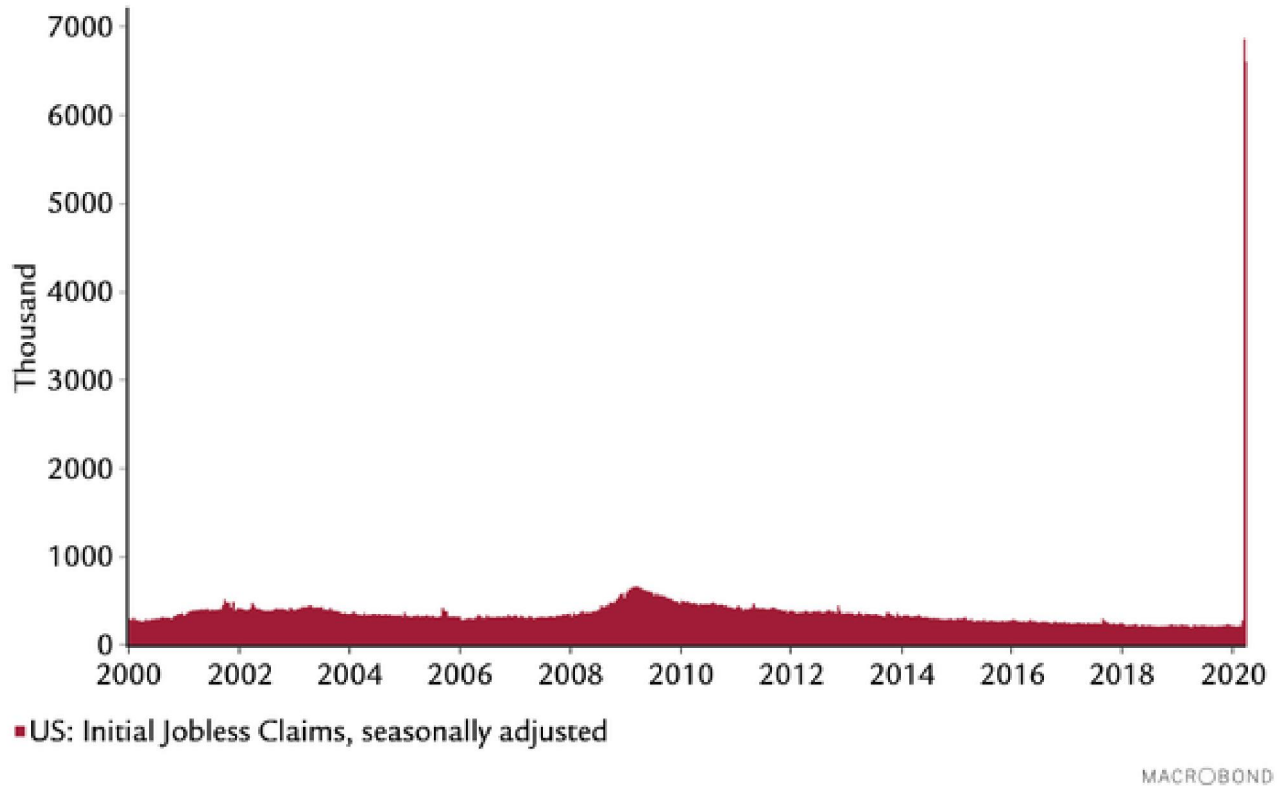
- Why Some Doctors Are Now Moving Away From Ventilator Treatments (TIME)
- Ventilators aren't a panacea for a pandemic like coronavirus (Dr. Matt Strauss)
- With ventilators running out, doctors say the machines are overused for Covid-19
- Covid-19 Does Not Lead to a "Typical" Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ATSJ)
- Do COVID-19 Ventilator Protocols Need a Second Look? (Medscape)
- **German:** „Too often intubation and invasive ventilation is used“ (Dr. Thomas Voshaar)
- **German:** COVID-19: Ventilation – and then what? (DocCheck)

## Political developments

- NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden warns in a new interview that governments are using the coronavirus to build an „architecture of oppression“.
- Apple and Google have announced that they will work with national authorities to incorporate a so-called „contact tracing“ into their mobile operating systems, which will allow authorities to monitor contacts within the population.
- German constitutional law expert Uwe Volkmann said on *ARD* that he knows „nobody“ among his colleagues who considers the Corona measures to be in conformity with the constitution.
- The Italian government has set up a „task force“ to „eliminate“ false reports about Covid on the Internet. However, freedom of expression remains „untouched“, it was said.
- France has extended, due to Covid, the permitted pre-trial detention and suspended the examination by a judge. Complaints by lawyers' associations were rejected.
- Denmark introduced „unprecedentedly tough emergency laws“ at the beginning of April: „The health authorities can now order compulsory tests, compulsory vaccinations and compulsory treatment, and use the military and private security services in addition to the police to enforce their orders.“
- The police in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia are testing drones in „corona missions“, specifically to search for prohibited groups of people.
- The German state of Saxony wants to put quarantine objectors in psychiatric hospitals.
- A Swiss doctor has been arrested and sent to psychiatry for criticizing the corona measures and allegedly making threats against authorities.
- In Germany, an attorney in medical law has filed a constitutional complaint against the Corona measures and published an open letter on the subject, in which she warns against slipping into a police state and called for demonstrations. The public prosecutor's office and the police then started investigations against the lawyer for „calling for a criminal offence“, and the lawyer's website was temporarily shut down. The constitutional complaint has since been rejected.
- In Austria, too, several lawyers have now lodged complaints against the Corona measures with the Constitutional Court. The lawyers argue that fundamental rights and separation of powers have been violated by the measures.
- The mayor of Los Angeles promised a reward for „snitches“ who report their neighbours to

the authorities if they violate the curfews.

- In the US, more than 16 million people are already unemployed due to the lockdown, which is about 10% of the working population. According to the International Labor Organization, 80% of the world's 3.3 billion workers are currently affected by the measures, and 1.25 billion workers could be affected by „drastic or catastrophic“ consequences.



### Weekly new unemployment claims in the US.

April 7, 2020

- The latest figures from a special report by the German Robert Koch Institute show that the so-called positive rate (i.e. the number of test positives per number of tests) is increasing much more slowly than the exponential curves shown by the media and was only around 10% at the end of March, a value that is rather typical for corona viruses. According to the magazine *Multipolar*, there can therefore be „no question of a dangerously rapid spread of the virus“.
- Professor Klaus Püschel, head of forensic medicine in Hamburg, explains about Covid19: „This virus influences our lives in a completely excessive way. This is disproportionate to the danger posed by the virus. And the astronomical economic damage now being caused is not commensurate with the danger posed by the virus. I am convinced that the Corona mortality rate will not even show up as a peak in annual mortality.“ In Hamburg, for example, „not a single person who was not previously ill“ had died of the virus: „All those we have examined so far had cancer, a chronic lung disease, were heavy smokers or severely obese, suffered from diabetes or had a cardiovascular disease. The virus was the last straw

that broke the camel's back, so to speak. „Covid-19 is a fatal disease only in exceptional cases, but in most cases it is a predominantly harmless viral infection.“

In addition, Dr. Püschel explains: „In quite a few cases, we have also found that the current corona infection has nothing whatsoever to do with the fatal outcome because other causes of death are present, for example a brain haemorrhage or a heart attack. Corona in itself is a „not particularly dangerous viral disease“, says the forensic scientist. He pleads for statistics based on concrete examination results. „All speculations about individual deaths that have not been expertly examined only fuel anxiety.“ Contrary to the guidelines of the Robert Koch Institute, Hamburg had recently started to differentiate between deaths „with the“ and „by the“ coronavirus, which led to a decrease in Covid19 deaths.

- The German virologist Hendrik Streeck is currently conducting a pilot study to determine the distribution and transmission routes of the Covid19 pathogen. In an interview he explains: „I took a closer look at the cases of 31 of the 40 people who died in the Heinsberg district – and was not very surprised that these people died. One of the deceased was older than 100 years, so even a common cold could have led to death.“ Contrary to original assumptions, Streeck has *not* been able to prove transmission via door handles and the like (i.e. so-called smear infections).
- The first Swiss hospitals have to announce short-time work due to the very low capacity utilization: „The staff in all departments has too little to do and has reduced overtime in a first step. Now short-time work is also being registered. The financial consequences are severe.“ As a reminder, a study by ETH Zurich based on largely unrealistic assumptions predicted the first bottlenecks in Swiss clinics by April 2. So far this has not happened anywhere.
- In Switzerland, there was a pronounced wave of influenza at the beginning of 2017. At that time, there were almost 1500 additional deaths in the over 65-year-old population in the first six weeks of the year. Normally, around 1300 people die in Switzerland every year as a result of pneumonia, 95% of whom are over 65 years old. By comparison, a total of 762 deaths with (not caused by) Covid19 are currently reported in Switzerland.
- The managing director of a German environmental laboratory suspects that the inhabitants of the northern Italian region of Lombardy are particularly susceptible to viral infections such as Covid19 due to a notoriously high legionella contamination: „If the lungs are weakened by a viral infection, as in the current situation, bacteria have an easy job, can negatively influence the course of the disease and cause complications.“ In Lombardy, regional pneumonia outbreaks had already occurred in the past due to evaporation cooling systems contaminated with legionella.
- On the basis of information from China, medical protocols have been defined worldwide that rapidly provide **invasive artificial respiration by intubation** for test-positive intensive care patients. On the one hand, the protocols assume that a more gentle non-invasive ventilation through a mask is too weak, on the other hand there is the fear that the „dangerous virus“ could otherwise spread through aerosols. As early as March, however, German physicians pointed out that intubation can lead to additional lung damage and has an overall poor chance of success. In the meantime, US physicians have also come forward who describe intubation as „more harm than good“ for patients. Patients often do not suffer from acute lung failure, but rather from a kind of altitude sickness, which is made worse by artificial respiration with increased pressure. In February, South Korean physicians reported that critical Covid19 patients respond well to oxygen therapy without a ventilator. The US

physician mentioned above warns that the use of ventilators must be urgently reconsidered in order not to cause additional damage.

- The official US Covid19 projections so far have overestimated hospitalisations by a factor of 8, ICU beds needed by a factor of 6.4, and ventilators needed by a factor of 40.5.
- Renowned US statistician Nate Silver explains why „coronavirus case counts are meaningless,,, unless you know more about the number and way of testing.

## Further notes

- The website of Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg, one of the earliest and internationally best known critics of the Covid19 panic, was deleted for a few hours today by the German provider Jimdo and only went online again after strong protests. It is not known whether the temporary deletion was due to general complaints or a political instruction.
- The university email address of emeritus professor Dr. Sucharit Bhakdi, who wrote an Open Letter to Chancellor Angela Merkel, was deactivated earlier, but was also reactivated after protests.
- On April 2, the Danish Parliament adopted a new law that allows the authorities to block „fraudulent“ websites on Covid19 without an initial court order and to impose a higher penalty on the operators. It is still unclear what this means for generally critical websites about Covid19 and government policy in this regard.
- The German author and journalist Harald Wiesendanger writes in an article that his profession is completely failing in the current crisis: „How a profession that is supposed to control the powerful as an independent, critical, impartial Fourth Estate can succumb as quickly as lightning to the same collective hysteria as its audience, almost unanimously, and give itself over to court reporting, government propaganda and expert deification: It's incomprehensible to me, it disgusts me, I've had enough of it, I dissociate myself from this unworthy performance with complete shame.
- Currently, more than one third of humanity is in a „lockdown“, which is more people than lived during the Second World War.
- In the US, applications for unemployment benefits have skyrocketed to over six million (see chart), a figure unparalleled since the Great Depression of 1929.
- More than one hundred human rights and civil liberties organizations warn that the world is currently sleepwalking into a surveillance state. On Twitter, the hashtag #covid19 has been partially replaced by the hashtag #covid1984.
- US geostrategist Henry Kissinger writes in the *Wall Street Journal*, „The coronavirus pandemic will forever alter the world order.“ The U.S. must „protect“ its citizens from disease while starting „the urgent work of planning for a new epoch“.

## April 5, 2020

- In a 40-minute interview, the internationally renowned epidemiology professor Knut Wittkowski from New York explains that the measures taken on Covid19 are all counterproductive. Instead of „social distancing“, school closures, „lock down“, mouth



masks, mass tests and vaccinations, life must continue as undisturbed as possible and immunity must be built up in the population as quickly as possible. According to all findings to date, Covid-19 is no more dangerous than previous influenza epidemics. Isolation now would only cause a „second wave“ later.

- The British Medical Journal (BMJ) reports that, according to the latest data from China, 78% of new test-positive individuals show no symptoms. An Oxford epidemiologist said that these findings are „very, very important.“ He added that if the results are representative, „then we have to ask, ‘What the hell are we locking down for?’“
- Dr. Andreas Sönnichsen, head of the Department of General and Family Medicine at the Medical University of Vienna and chairman of the Network for Evidence-Based Medicine, considers the measures imposed so far to be „insane“. The whole state is being paralysed just to „protect the few it could affect“.
- In a world first, the Swedish government has announced that it is going to officially distinguish between deaths „by“ and deaths „with“ the coronavirus, which should lead to a reduction in reported deaths. Meanwhile, for some reason, international pressure on Sweden to abandon its liberal strategy is steadily increasing.
- The Hamburg health authority now has test-positive deaths examined by forensic medicine in order to count only „real“ corona deaths. As a result, the number of deaths has already been reduced by up to 50% compared to the official figures of the Robert Koch Institute.
- As early as 2018, the German Doctors Journal reported a „multitude of pneumonia cases“ in northern Italy, which worried the authorities. At the time, contaminated drinking water was suspected to be one of the causes.
- The German Pharmaceutical Newspaper points out that in the current situation, patients often „fall seriously ill, even die, without having developed respiratory symptoms beforehand“. Neurologists suspect in this regard that the corona viruses could also damage nerve cells. Another explanation, however, would be that these patients, who are often in need of care, die due to the very high stress.
- According to the latest figures from Switzerland, the most common symptoms of test-positive patients in hospitals are fever, cough and breathing difficulties, while 43% or about 900 people have pneumonia. Even in these cases, however, it is not *a priori* clear whether it was caused by the coronavirus or by other pathogens. The median age of the test positive deceased is 83 years, the range reaches up to 101 years.
- The British project „In Proportion“ tracks mortality „with“ Covid19 in comparison to influenza mortality and all-cause mortality, which in Great Britain is still in the normal range or below and is currently decreasing.
- In the US state of Indiana, calls to the mental health and suicide hotline have increased by over 2000% from 1000 to 25,000 calls per day due to the lockdown and its economic impact.
- The medical specialist portal Rxisk points out that various drugs can increase the risk of infection with corona viruses by up to 200% in some cases.

## Further notes

- The British journalist Peter Hitchens describes in an article entitled „We love Big Brother“ how even previously critical people were „infected by fear“ despite the lack of medical evidence. In an interview, he explains that criticism is „a moral duty“ as fundamental rights



are under threat

- The German historian René Schlott writes about the „Rendezvous with the police state,,: „Buying a book, sitting on a park bench, meeting up with friends – that is now forbidden, is controlled and denounced. The democratic safeguards seem to be blown. Where and how will it end?“
- Several German law firms are preparing lawsuits against the measures and regulations that have been issued. A specialist in medical law writes in a press release: „The measures taken by the federal and state governments are blatantly unconstitutional and violate a multitude of basic rights of citizens in Germany to an unprecedented extent. This applies to all corona regulations of the 16 federal states. In particular, these measures are not justified by the Infection Protection Act, which was revised in no time at all just a few days ago. () Because the available figures and statistics show that corona infection is harmless in more than 95% of the population and therefore does not represent a serious danger to the general public.“
- The Open Letter from Professor Sucharit Bhakdi to Chancellor Angela Merkel is now available in German, English, French, Spanish, Russian, Turkish, Dutch and Estonian, other languages will follow.
- In a new interview, NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden warns that Covid19 is dangerous but temporary, while the destruction of fundamental rights is deadly and permanent.

## April 3, 2020

**USA:** More videos by citizen journalists show that in hospitals described by US media as „war zones“, it is in fact still very quiet.

**Austria:** In Austria, too, „corona deaths“ are apparently defined „very liberally“, as the media report: „Do you also count as a corona death if you are infected with the virus but die of something else? Yes, say Rudi Anschober and Bernhard Benka, members of the Corona Task Force in the Ministry of Health. „There is a clear rule at present: Died with the corona virus or died from the corona virus both count for the statistics.“ No difference is made as to what the patient actually died of. In other words, a 90-year-old man who dies with a fracture of the femoral neck and becomes infected with corona in the hours prior to his death is also counted as corona death. To name but one example.“

**Germany:** The German Robert Koch Institute now advises against autopsies of test-positive deceased persons because the risk of droplet infection by aerosols is allegedly too high. In many cases, this means that the real cause of death can no longer be determined.

A specialist in pathology comments on this as follows: „Who might think evil of it! Up to now, it has been a matter of course for pathologists to carry out autopsies with appropriate safety precautions even in the case of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, PRION diseases, etc. It is quite remarkable that in a disease that is killing thousands of patients all over the world and bringing the economy of entire countries to a virtual standstill, only very few autopsy findings are available (six patients from China). From the point of view of both the epidemic police and the scientific community, there should be a particularly high level of public

interest in autopsy findings. However, the opposite is the case. Are you afraid of finding out the true causes of death of the positively tested deceased? Could it be that the numbers of corona deaths would then melt away like snow in the spring sun?"

**Italy:** Russian experts have noticed „strange deaths“ in nursing homes in Lombardy: „According to newspaper reports, several cases have been registered in the town of Gromo in which alleged corona virus-infected persons simply fell asleep and never woke up again. *No real symptoms of the disease had been observed in the deceased until then.* () As the director of the nursing home later clarified in an interview with RIA Novosti, it is unclear whether the deceased were actually infected with the coronavirus, because nobody in the home had been tested for it. () In the homes, where medical and nursing teams from Russia are working, corridors, bed rooms and dining rooms are disinfected.“

Similar cases have already been reported from Germany: Nursing patients without symptoms of illness die suddenly in the current exceptional situation and are then considered „corona deaths“. Here again the serious question arises: Who dies from the virus and who dies from the sometimes extreme measures?

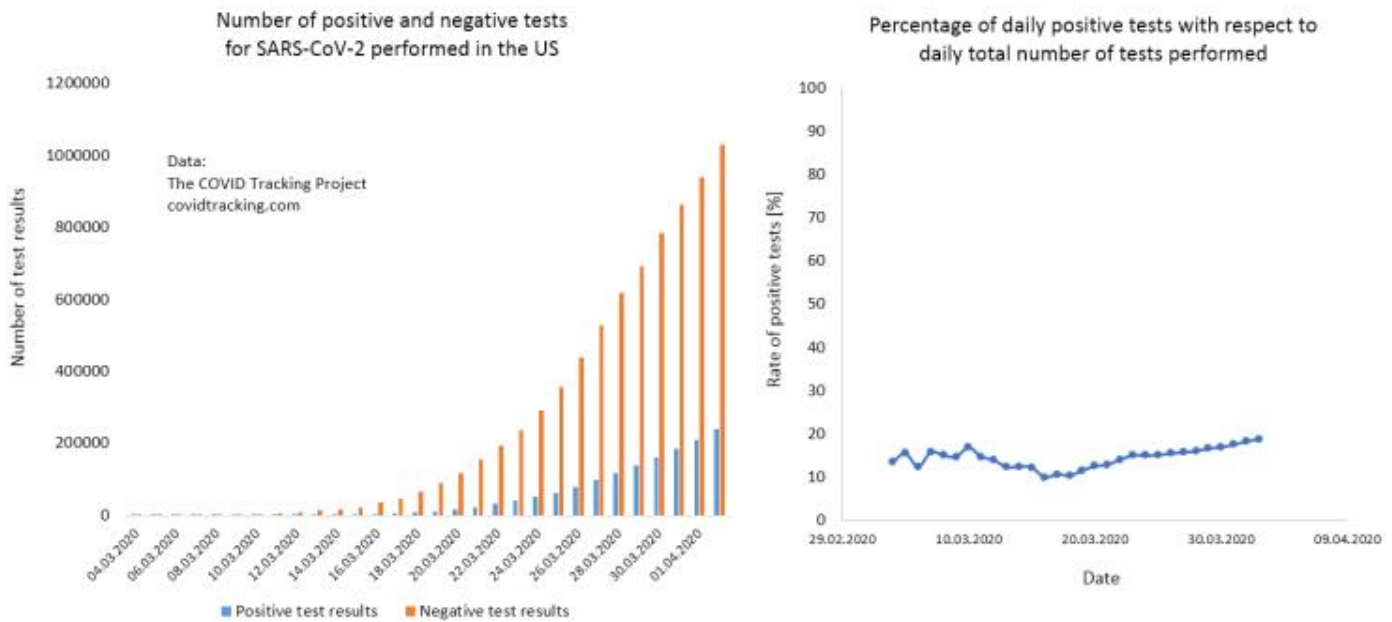
**Nursing staff:** The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reports: „Throughout Europe, the pandemic is endangering the care of elderly people at home because nursing staff can no longer visit them – or have left the respective country in a hurry to return home.“

**Lastly:** Stanford professor of medicine Dr. Jay Bhattacharya gave a half-hour interview in which he questions the „conventional wisdom“ regarding Covid19. The existing measures had been decided on the basis of very uncertain and partly questionable data.

## April 2, 2020 (I)

### USA

A Swiss biophysicist has visualized the fact that in the US (as in the rest of the world), it is not the number of „infected“ people that is increasing exponentially, but the number of tests. The number of test-positive people in relation to the number of tests remains constant or increases slowly.



**Number of positive and negative tests (left) and percentage of positive tests (right) (Scholkmann, US data)**

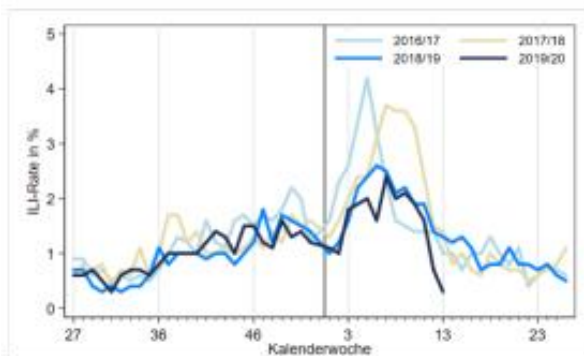
## Germany

According to the latest influenza report of the German Robert Koch Institute, the number of acute respiratory diseases has „fallen sharply nationwide“. The values have „dropped in all age groups“.

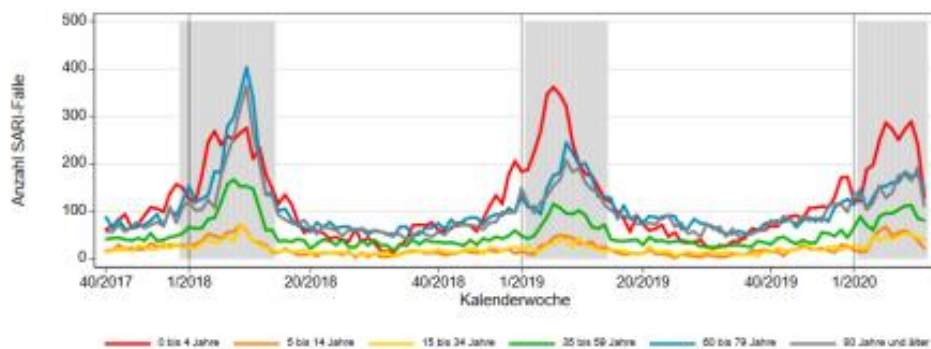
By March 20, the total number of inpatient cases with acute respiratory diseases had also fallen significantly. In the age group from 80 years and older, the number of cases had almost halved compared to the previous week.

In the 73 hospitals examined, 7% of all cases with respiratory diseases were diagnosed with COVID-19. In the age groups 35-59 years it was 16% and in the age group 60-79 years it was 13% who received a COVID-19 diagnosis.

These figures correspond to those from other countries as well as to the typical prevalence of coronaviruses (5 to 15%).



Grippeähnliche Erkrankungen (RKI, KW13)



Akute Atemwegserkrankungen in Krankenhäusern  
 Flu-like diseases in general (left) and acute respiratory diseases in hospitals (right) (Robert-Koch-Institut, weeks 13 and 12)

An article in DIE ZEIT discusses the issue of intensive care patients in Germany:

„At present politicians, experts and many citizens observe with concern the exponentially increasing number of people who are newly infected every day. However, this is not the decisive indicator for assessing how badly the corona crisis is and will hit Germany. For it is distorted above all by the number of tests, which have been increasing for weeks.

In order to measure the burden on the health system, the number of those who are so seriously ill that they need to be ventilated is particularly important. As long as there are enough ventilation places for them, a great many of them can be saved. Only when these beds become scarce does a situation like the one in Italy threaten.

The DIVI register now shows that the situation in the German intensive care units has been relaxed so far. „We are still in a comfortable area,“ says Grabenhenrich. The number of seriously ill patients is not rising as steeply as the number of infected patients and even if it did, it would still be possible to provide a large number of intensive care beds with very good equipment.

## Switzerland

The Swiss Federal Office of Public Health reports that approximately 139,330 Covid19 tests have been carried out so far, of which the result was positive in 15% of cases. This number also corresponds to the typical corona virus value known from other countries and, as far as can be seen, does not seem to be increasing rapidly in Switzerland either.

Only the number of tests often mentioned in the media is increasing exponentially, but not the number of „infected“, sick or even dead.

On March 31, however, a new weekly mortality statistic was published which for the first time forecasts an increase in overall mortality in the 65+ age group in Switzerland for the 12th calendar week (until 22 March) (see chart below). Specifically, total mortality is expected to increase by around 200 deaths *per week*.

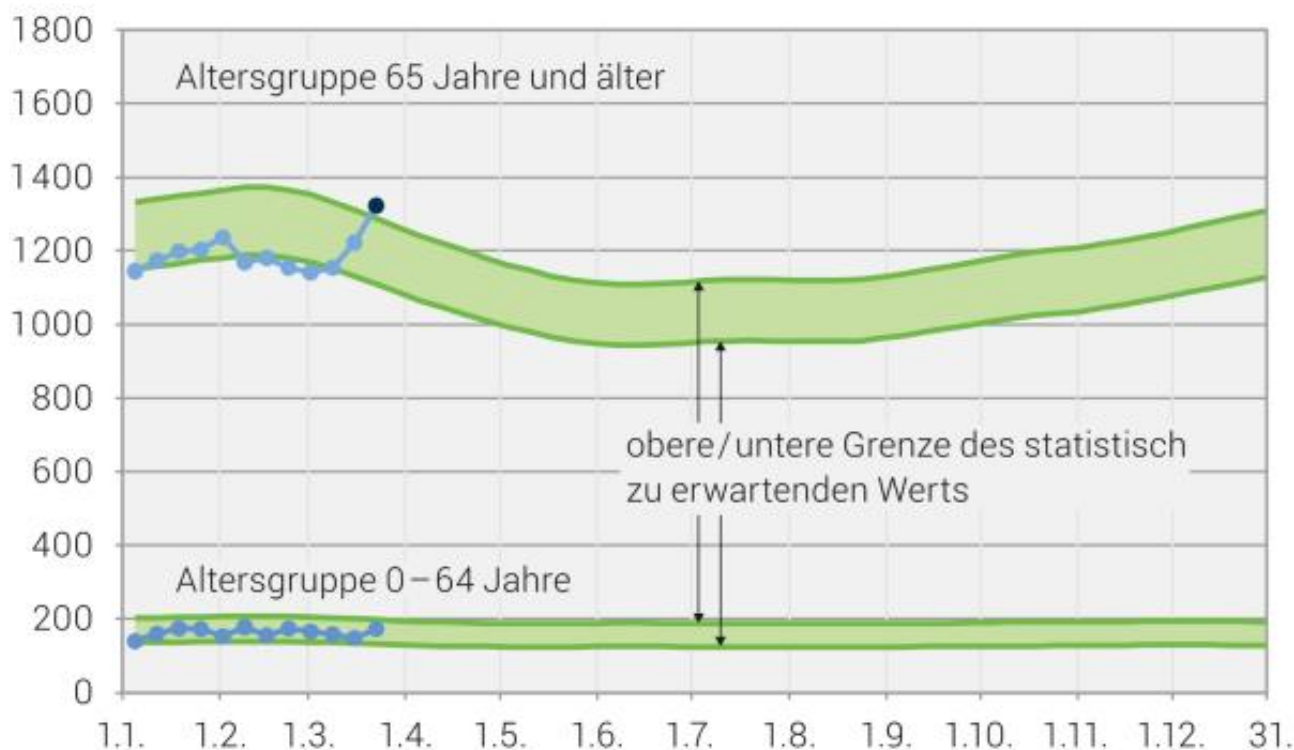
According to the Federal Office, this increase is „an expression of the current pandemic“. The following problem arises here: up to 22 March there were *a total* of 106 test-positive deaths in Switzerland. An increase of 200 deaths *per week* would mean that a large part of the additional mortality is not caused by the virus but by the „countermeasures“.

Another explanation would be that the approximately 200 test-positive deaths of the *following week* (week 13) have already been included. This would mean that all test-positive deaths are assumed to be *additional* deaths. However, in view of the age and disease profile as well as international experience, this would be a very doubtful assumption.

In fact, the report adds the following disclaimer: „These initial estimates are still very uncertain, so that no exact figures can be published“.

If it turns out that a large proportion of test-positive deaths (median age: 83 years) are not additional deaths, either the overall mortality would not be increased, or it would be increased mainly because of the drastic measures, as some experts fear.

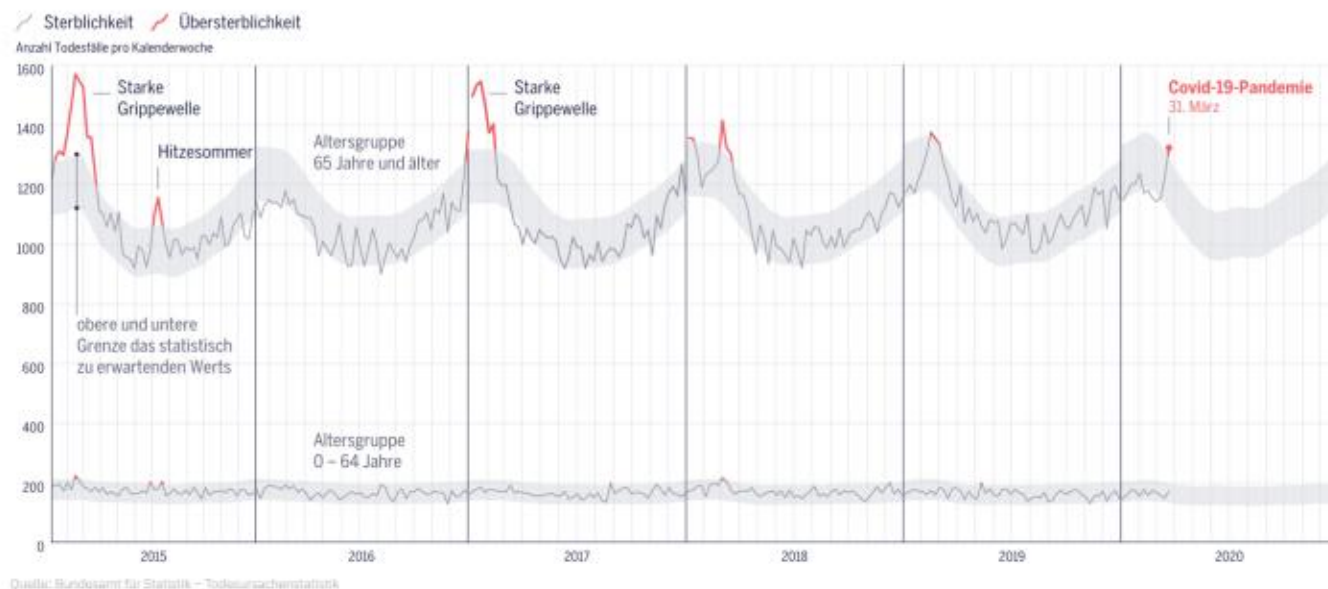
Anzahl Todesfälle pro Kalenderwoche



### Weekly mortality until 22 March 2020 (BFS, data status 31 March 2020)

A Swiss newspaper has presented the current total mortality in comparison with previous years (see graph below). This illustrates that, even *if* actually increased, the current mortality rate is still below the stronger flu winters of recent years.

## Wöchentliche Todesfälle in der Schweiz



**Weekly mortality during the year. End date is March 22, not March 31 (TA)**

## Further information

- Virus test kits destined for Great Britain had to be recalled because they already contained corona virus components.
- The British Imperial College study, which predicted hundreds of thousands of additional deaths but was never published in a journal or reviewed, was based on largely unrealistic assumptions, as has now been shown.
- The BBC asks, „Is coronavirus causing the deaths?,,, and replies, „It could be the major cause, a contributory factor or simply present when they are dying of something else.“ For example, an 18-year-old man was reported as the „youngest Corona victim“ after a positive test the day before his death. However, the hospital later reported that the young man had died of a serious pre-existing condition.
- The European health authority ECDC has published very strict guidelines for handling test-positive or „presumed test-positive“ corpses. In view of the very low mortality rates to date, such guidelines appear questionable from a medical point of view; however, they significantly increase the burden on the health and funeral services, and at the same time have a high media impact.
- A German state media outlet has published a critical commentary on Professor Sucharit Bhakdi's Open Letter to Chancellor Merkel.
- The ARTE documentary „Profiteers of Fear“ from 2009 shows how the mainly privately financed WHO „upgraded“ a mild wave of influenza (the so-called „swine flu“) to a global pandemic so that vaccines worth several billion dollars could be sold to governments around the world. Some of the protagonists of that time are again prominently represented in the current situation.
- The former judge at the British Supreme Court, Jonathan Sumption, declared in a BBC



interview on the British measures: „This is what a police state is like“.

## April 2, 2020 (II)

- Already in 2018, the Guardian wrote that „Pollution and flu bring steep rise in lung-related illnesses,,: Shortage of specialists adds to worries that surge in respiratory diseases is putting pressure on A&Es.
- Professor Martin Haditsch, specialist in microbiology, virology and infection epidemiology, sharply criticises the Covid19 measures. These are „completely unfounded“ and would „trample on sound judgment and ethical principles“.
- Even representatives of German nursing homes are now complaining about the restrictive measures and inappropriate media coverage of Covid19: „Even before the coronavirus in the winter months, it often happened that many guests died in a relatively short time, but the television crew did not stand behind the door and did not show people in protective suits heroically exposing themselves to the risk of infection.“
- Figures from the northern Italian city of Treviso (near Venice) show that, despite 108 test-positive deaths by the end of March, overall mortality in municipal hospitals remained roughly the same as in previous years. This is a further indication that the temporarily increased mortality in some places is more likely to be due to external factors such as panic and collapse than due to the coronavirus alone.
- Professor John Oxford of Queen Mary University London, one of the world’s leading virologists and influenza specialists, comes to the following conclusion regarding Covid19: „Personally, I would say the best advice is to spend less time watching TV news which is sensational and not very good. Personally, I view this Covid outbreak as akin to a bad winter influenza epidemic. In this case we have had 8000 deaths this last year in the ‘at risk’ groups viz over 65% people with heart disease etc. I do not feel this current Covid will exceed this number. We are suffering from a media epidemic!“

## April 1, 2020

### On the situation in Italy

Italian doctors reported that they had already observed severe cases of pneumonia in northern Italy at the end of last year. However, genetic analyses now show that the Covid19 virus only appeared in Italy in January of this year. „The severe pneumonia diagnosed in Italy in November and December must therefore be due to a different pathogen,“ a virologist noted. This once again raises the question what role the Covid19 virus, or other factors, actually play in the Italian situation.

On March 30, we mentioned the list of Italian doctors who died „during the Corona crisis“, many of whom were up to 90 years old and didn’t actively participate in the crisis at all. Today, all years of birth on the list have been removed (see however the last archive version). A strange procedure.

We have also received the following message from an observer in Italy, who gives further details about the dramatic situation there, which is obviously due to far more than a virus:

„In recent weeks, most of the Eastern European nurses who worked 24 hours a day, 7 days a week supporting people in need of care in Italy have left the country in a hurry. This is not least because of the panic-mongering and the curfews and border closures threatened by the „emergency governments“. As a result, old people in need of care and disabled people, some without relatives, were left helpless by their carers.

Many of these abandoned people then ended up after a few days in the hospitals, which had been permanently overloaded for years, because they were dehydrated, among other things. Unfortunately, the hospitals lacked the personnel who had to look after the children locked up in their apartments because schools and kindergartens had been closed. This then led to the complete collapse of the care for the disabled and the elderly, especially in those areas where even harder „measures“ were ordered, and to chaotic conditions.

The nursing emergency, which was caused by the panic, temporarily led to many deaths among those in need of care and increasingly among younger patients in the hospitals. These fatalities then served to cause even more panic among those in charge and the media, who reported, for example, „another 475 fatalities“, „The dead are being removed from hospitals by the army“, accompanied by pictures of coffins and army trucks lined up.

However, this was the result of the funeral directors' fear of the „killer virus“, who therefore refused their services. Moreover, on the one hand there were too many deaths at once and on the other hand the government passed a law that the corpses carrying the coronavirus had to be cremated. In Catholic Italy, few cremations had been carried out in the past. Therefore there were only a few small crematoria, which very quickly reached their limits. Therefore the deceased had to be laid out in different churches.

In principle, this development is the same in all countries. However, the quality of the health system has a considerable influence on the effects. Therefore, there are fewer problems in Germany, Austria or Switzerland than in Italy, Spain or the USA. However, as can be seen in the official figures, there is no significant increase in the mortality rate. Just a small mountain that came from this tragedy.“

## Hospital situation in the US, Germany and Switzerland

- The US television station CBS was caught using footage from an Italian intensive care unit in a piece on the current situation in New York. In fact, dozens of recordings by citizen journalists show that it is currently very quiet in the hospitals on the US East and West Coast, described as „war zones“ by the media. Even the „corpse refrigerator trucks“ prominently shown in the media are unused and empty. (Note: Some of these authors may draw unverified conclusions.)
- Contrary to media reports, the register of German intensive care units also shows no increased occupancy. An employee of a Munich clinic explained that they had been „waiting for weeks for the wave to hit“, but that there was „no increase in patient numbers“



- . He said that the politicians' statements did not correspond with their own experience, and that the „myth of the killer virus“ could „not be confirmed“.
- o Also in Swiss clinics, no increased occupancy has been observed so far. A visitor to the cantonal hospital in Lucerne reports that there is „less activity than in normal times“. Entire floors have been closed for Covid19, but staff „are still waiting for patients“. The hospitals in Bern, Basel, Zug and Zurich have also been „cleaned out“. Even in Ticino, the intensive care units are not working to capacity, but patients are now being transferred to the German-Swiss departments. From a purely medical point of view, this makes little sense.

## Other medical notes

- o The director of the University Medical Center Hamburg, Dr. Ansgar Lohse, demands a quick end to curfews and contact bans. He argues that *more people should be infected with corona*. Kitas and schools should be reopened as soon as possible so that children and their parents can become immune through infection with the corona virus. The continuation of the strict measures would lead to an economic crisis, which would also cost lives, said the physician.
- o In Spain, 15% of test-positives are doctors and nurses. Although many of them show no symptoms, they have to go into quarantine, causing the Spanish healthcare system to collapse.
- o Dr. John Lee, professor emeritus of pathology, is writing about the highly misleading definition and communication of „corona deaths“ in the British *Spectator*.
- o The latest data from Norway, evaluated by a PhD in environmental toxicology, again show that the rate of test-positives does not increase – as would be expected in the case of an epidemic – but fluctuates in the normal range for coronaviruses between 2 and 10%. The average age of the test-positive deceased is 84 years, the causes of death are not publicly reported, and there is no excess mortality.
- o Sweden, which has so far managed without radical measures and has not reported increased mortality (similar to Asian countries such as Japan or South Korea), is remarkably put under pressure from the international media to change its strategy.
- o Data from New York State show that the hospitalization rate of test-positive individuals could be more than twenty times lower than originally assumed.
- o An article on the specialist portal DocCheck deals with the problem of ventilating test-positive patients. In test-positive patients, simple ventilation through a mask is officially advised against, among other things to prevent the coronavirus from spreading through aerosols. Therefore, test positive intensive care patients are often intubated directly. However, intubation has poor chances of success and often leads to additional damage to the lungs (so-called ventilator-induced lung damage). As with medication, the question arises as to whether a more gentle treatment of patients would not be medically more sensible.

## Reports on political developments

- A German state minister has called on the population to „be vigilant and report violations of the rules for containing the corona epidemic to the police“. „Eagerly reported“ are, for example, „prohibited group formation, children in playgrounds, parties“ and hikers.
- German constitutional law experts are raising the alarm for „serious encroachments on fundamental rights“. Constitutional law expert Hans Michael Heinig warns that the „democratic constitutional state could turn into a fascist-hysterical hygiene state in no time“. Professor Christoph Möllers of Berlin’s Humboldt University explains that the infection protection law „cannot serve as a basis for such far-reaching restrictions of citizens’ rights of freedom“. According to the former president of the German Federal Constitutional Court, Hans Jürgen Papier, „emergency measures do not justify the suspension of civil liberties in favour of an authoritarian and surveillance state“.
- Online petitions have been launched in several countries to end curfews and other encroachments on basic rights. At the same time, critical video contributions, even by doctors, are increasingly being deleted. In Berlin, a registered event on fundamental rights, at which the German constitution was distributed, was terminated by the police.

## March 31, 2020 (I)

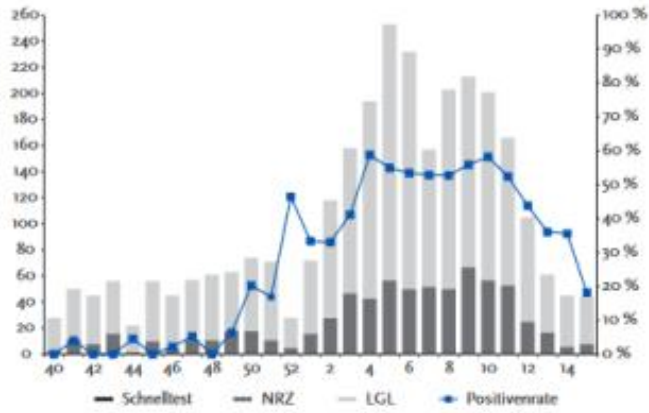
Dr. Richard Capek and other researchers have already shown that the number of test-positive individuals in relation to the number of tests performed *remains constant* in all countries studied so far, which speaks *against* an exponential spread of the virus and merely indicates an exponential increase in the number of tests.

Depending on the country, the proportion of test-positive individuals is between 5 and 15%, which corresponds to the usual spread of corona viruses. Interestingly, these constant numerical values are not actively communicated (or even removed) by authorities and the media. Instead, exponential but irrelevant and misleading curves are shown without context.

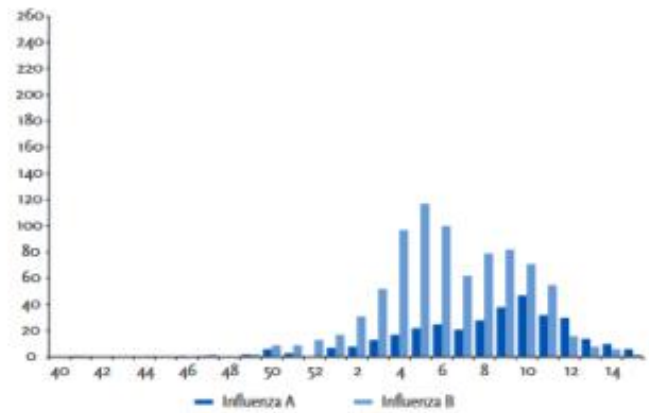
Such behavior, of course, does not correspond to professional medical standards, as a look at the traditional influenza report of the German Robert Koch Institute makes clear (p. 30, see chart below). Here, in addition to the number of detections (right), the number of samples (left, grey bars) and the positive rate (left, blue curve) are shown.

This immediately shows that during a flu season the positive rate rises from 0 to 10% to up to 80% of the samples and drops back to the normal value after a few weeks. In comparison, Covid19 tests show a constant positive rate in the normal range (see below).

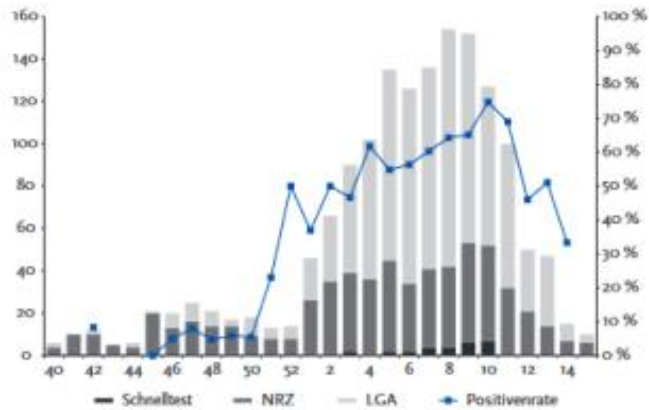
Bayern: Anzahl Proben



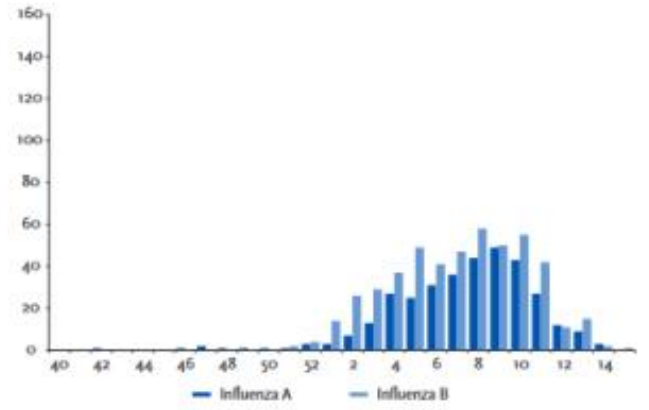
PR Bayern: Anzahl Nachweise



Baden-Württemberg: Anzahl Proben

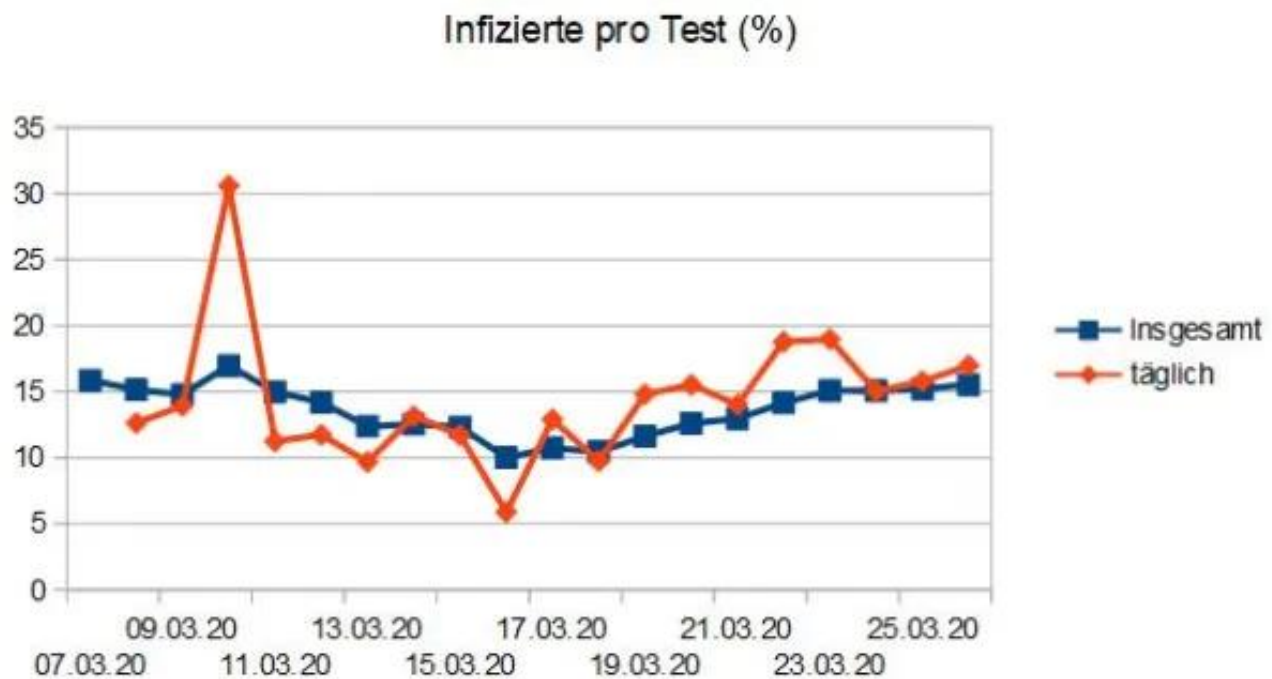


PR Baden-Württemberg: Anzahl Nachweise



**Left: Number of samples and positive rate; right: number of detections (RKI, 2017)**

Constant Covid19-positive rate using US data (Dr. Richard Capek). This applies analogously to all other countries for which data on the number of samples is currently available.



**Covid19 positive rate (Dr. Richard Capek, US data)**

## March 31, 2020 (II)

- A graphical analysis of the European monitoring data impressively shows that, irrespective of the measures taken, overall mortality throughout Europe remained in the normal range or below by March 25, and often significantly below the levels of previous years. Only in Italy (65+) was the overall mortality rate somewhat increased (probably for several reasons), but it was still below previous flu seasons.
- The president of the German Robert Koch Institute confirmed again that pre-existing conditions and actual cause of death *do not play a role* in the definition of so-called „corona deaths“. From a medical point of view, such a definition is clearly misleading. It has the obvious and generally known effect of putting politics and society in fear.
- In Italy the situation is now beginning to calm down. As far as is known, the temporarily increased mortality rates (65+) were rather local effects, often accompanied by mass panic and a breakdown in health care. A politician from northern Italy asks, for example, „how is it possible that Covid patients from Brescia are transported to Germany, while in the nearby Verona two thirds of intensive care beds are empty?“
- In an article published in the *European Journal of Clinical Investigation*, Stanford professor of medicine John Ioannidis criticizes the „harms of exaggerated information and non-evidence-based measures“. Even journals had published dubious claims at the beginning.
- A Chinese study published in the *Chinese Journal of Epidemiology* in early March, which indicated the unreliability of the Covid19 virus tests (approx. 50% false-positive results in asymptomatic patients), has since been withdrawn. The lead author of the study, the dean of a medical school, did not want to give the reason for the withdrawal and spoke of a „sensitive matter,,,“ which could indicate political pressure, as an NPR journalist noted. Independent of this study, however, the unreliability of so-called PCR virus tests has long been known: In 2003, for example, a mass infection in a Canadian nursing home with SARS

corona viruses was „found“, which later turned out to be common cold corona viruses (which can also be fatal for risk groups).

- Authors of the *German Risk Management Network RiskNET* speak in a Covid19 analysis of a „blind flight“ as well as „insufficient data competence and data ethics“. Instead of more and more tests and measures a *representative sample* is necessary. The „sense and ratio“ of the measures must be critically questioned.
- The Spanish interview with the internationally renowned Argentinian-French virologist Pablo Goldschmidt was translated into German. Goldschmidt considers the measures imposed to be medically counterproductive and notes that one must now „read Hannah Arendt“ to understand the „origins of totalitarianism“.
- Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, like other prime ministers and presidents before him, has largely disempowered the Hungarian parliament under an „emergency law“ and can now govern essentially by decree.

## March 30, 2020 (I)

- In Germany, some clinics can no longer accept patients – not because there are too many patients or too few beds, but because the nursing staff have tested positive, although in most cases they hardly show any symptoms. This case illustrates again how and why health care systems are getting paralysed.
- In a German retirement and nursing home for people with advanced dementia, 15 test-positive people have died. However, „surprisingly many people have died **without showing symptoms of corona.**“ A German medical specialist informs us: „From my medical point of view, there is some evidence that some of these people may have died as a result of the measures taken. People with dementia get into high stress when major changes are made to their everyday lives: isolation, no physical contact, possibly hooded staff.“ Nevertheless, the deceased are counted as „corona deaths“ in German and international statistics. In connection with the „corona crisis“, it is now also possible to die of an illness without even having its symptoms.
- According to a Swiss pharmacologist, the Swiss Inselspital in Bern has forced staff to take leave, stopped therapies and postponed operations due to the fear of Covid19.
- Professor Gérard Krause, head of the Department of Epidemiology at the German Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research, warns on German public television ZDF that the anti-corona measures „could lead to more deaths than the virus itself,“.
- Various media reported that more than 50 doctors in Italy have already died „during the corona crisis“, like soldiers in a battle. A glance at the corresponding list, however, shows that most of the deceased are retired doctors of various kinds, including 90-year-old psychiatrists and pediatricians, many of whom may have died of natural causes.
- An extensive survey in Iceland found that 50% of all test-positive persons showed „no symptoms“ at all, while the other 50% mostly showed „very moderate cold-like symptoms“. According to the Icelandic data, the mortality rate of Covid19 is in the *per mille* range, i.e. in the flu range or below. Of the two test-positive deaths, one was „a tourist with unusual symptoms“. (More Icelandic data)
- The British journalist Peter Hitchens writes, „There’s powerful evidence this great panic is foolish. Yet our freedom is still broken and our economy crippled.“ Hitchens points out that

in parts of the UK, police drones monitor and report „non-essential“ walks in nature. In some cases, police drones are calling on people via loudspeaker to go home in order to „save lives“. (Note: Not even George Orwell had thought that far ahead.)

- The Italian secret service warns of social unrest and uprisings. Supermarkets are already being looted and pharmacies raided.
- Professor Sucharit Bhakdi has meanwhile published a video (German/English) in which he explains his Open Letter to German Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel.

## March 30, 2020 (II)

In several countries, there is increasing evidence in relation to Covid19 that „the treatment could be worse than the disease“.

On the one hand, there is the risk of so-called nosocomial infections, i.e. infections that the patient, who may only be mildly ill, acquires in hospital. It is estimated that there are approximately 2.5 million nosocomial infections and 50,000 deaths per year in Europe. Even in German intensive care units, about 15% of patients acquire a nosocomial infection, including pneumonia on artificial respiration. There is also the problem of increasingly antibiotic-resistant germs in hospitals.

Another aspect is the certainly well-intentioned but sometimes very aggressive treatment methods that are increasingly used in Covid19 patients. These include, in particular, the administration of steroids, antibiotics and anti-viral drugs (or a combination thereof). Already in the treatment of SARS-1 patients, it has been shown that the outcome *with* such treatment was often worse and more fatal than without such treatment.

## March 29, 2020

- Dr Sucharit Bhakdi, Professor Emeritus of Medical Microbiology in Mainz, Germany, wrote an Open Letter to German Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel, calling for an urgent reassessment of the response to Covid19 and asking the Chancellor five crucial questions.
- The latest data from the German Robert Koch Institute show that the increase in test-positive persons is proportional to the increase in the number of tests, **i.e. in percentage terms it remains roughly the same**. This may indicate that the increase in the number of cases is mainly due to an increase in the number of tests, and not due to an ongoing epidemic.
- The Milan microbiologist Maria Rita Gismondo calls on the Italian government to stop communicating the daily number of „corona positives“ as these figures are „fake“ and put the population in unnecessary panic. The number of test-positives depends very much on the type and number of tests and says nothing about the state of health.
- Dr. John Ioannidis, Stanford Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, gave an in-depth one-hour interview on the lack of data for Covid19 measures.
- The Argentinean virologist Pablo Goldschmidt, who lives in France, considers the political reaction to Covid19 as „completely exaggerated“ and warns against „totalitarian

measures". In parts of France, the movement of people is already monitored by drones.

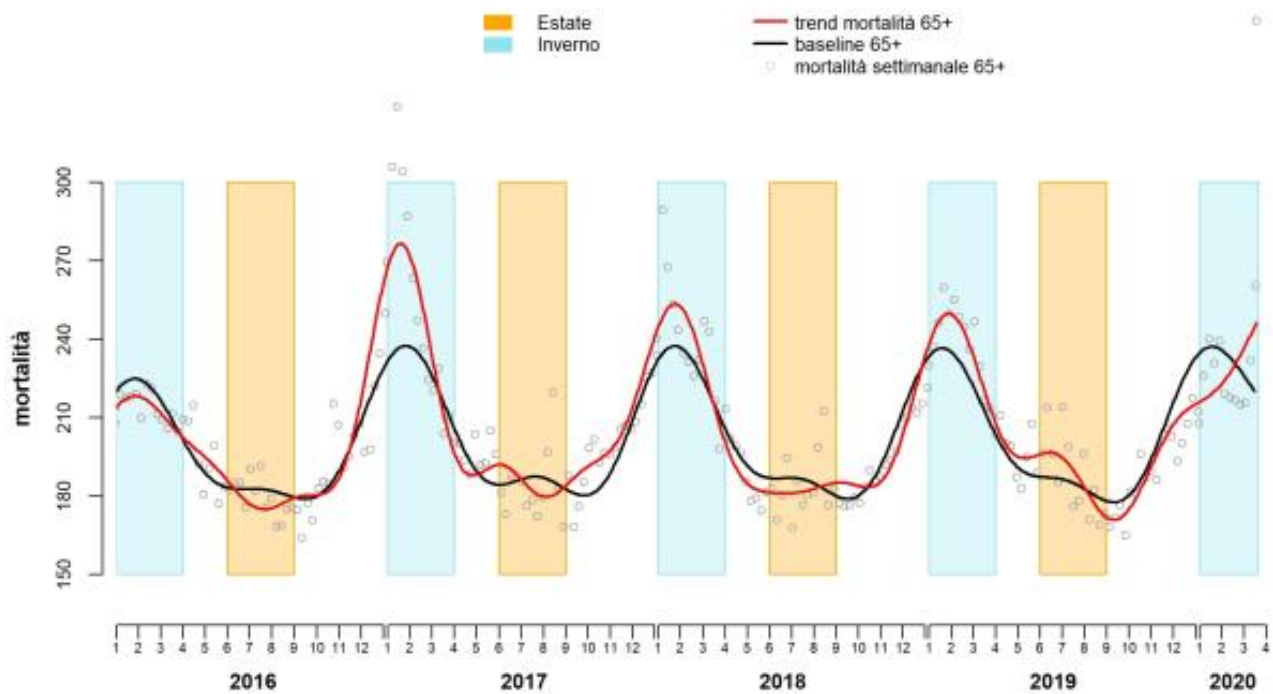
- Italian author Fulvio Grimaldi, born in 1934, explains that the state measures currently implemented in Italy are „worse than under fascism“. Parliament and society have been completely disempowered.

## March 28, 2020

- A new study by the University of Oxford concludes that Covid19 may already have existed in the UK since January 2020 and that half of the population may already be immunised, with most people experiencing no or only mild symptoms. This would mean that *only one in a thousand people* would need to be hospitalised for Covid19. (Study)
- British media reported on a 21 year old woman „who died of Covid19 without any previous illnesses“. However, it has since become known that the woman did not test positive for Covid19 and died of a heart failure. The Covid19 rumor had arisen „because she had a slight cough“.
- The German media scientist Professor Otfried Jarren criticized that many media provide uncritical journalism that emphasizes threats and executive power. According to Professor Jarren, there is hardly any differentiation and real debate between experts.

## March 27, 2020 (I)

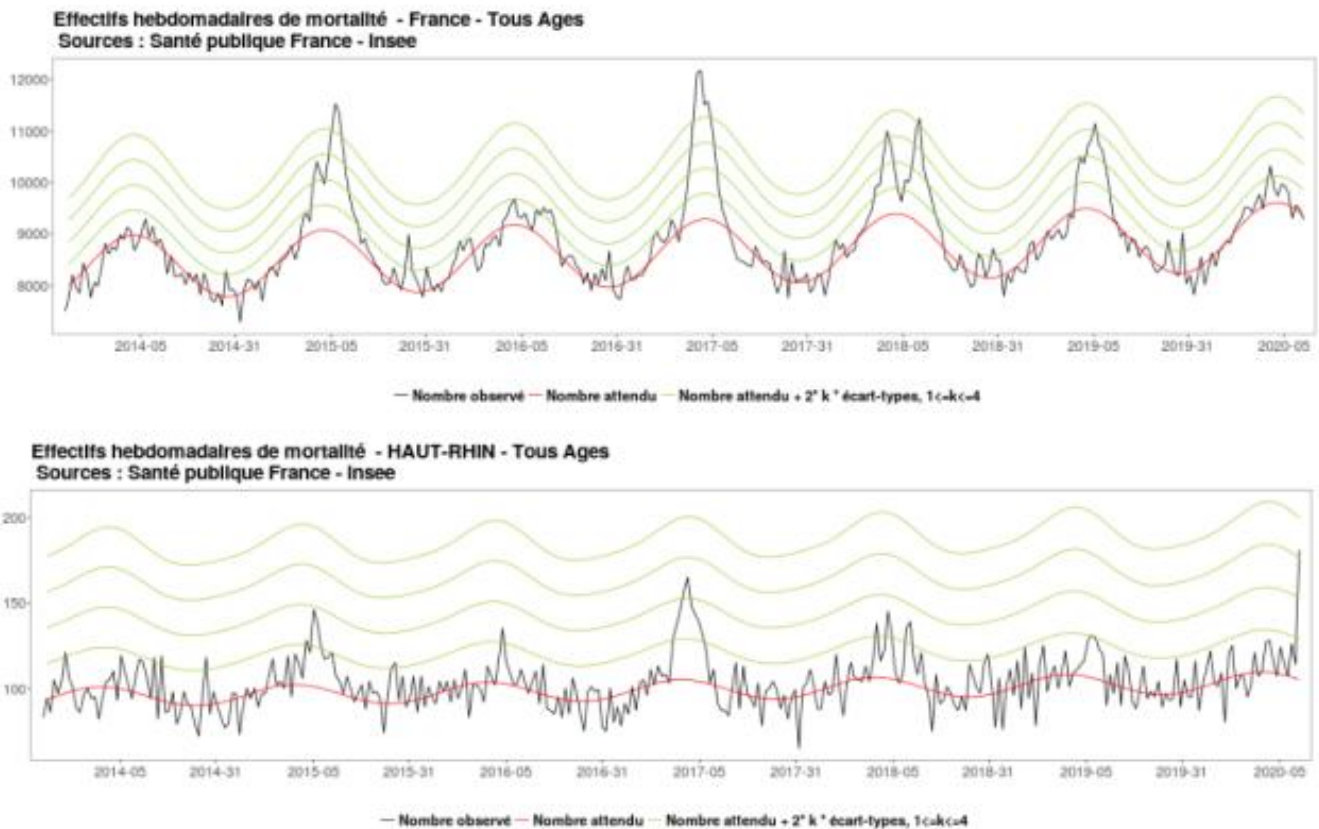
**Italy:** According to the latest data published by the Italian Ministry of Health, overall mortality is now significantly higher in all age groups over 65 years of age, after having been below average due to the mild winter. Until March 14, overall mortality was still below the flu season of 2016/2017, but may have already exceeded it in the meantime. Most of this excess mortality currently comes from northern Italy. However, the exact role of Covid19, compared to other factors such as panic, healthcare collapse and the lockdown itself, is not yet clear.



**Italy: Total mortality 65+ years (red line) (MdS / 14 March 2020)**

**France:** According to the latest data from France, overall mortality at the national level remains within the normal range after a mild influenza season. However, in some regions, particularly in the north-east of France, overall mortality in the over-65 age group has already risen sharply in connection with Covid19 (see figure below).



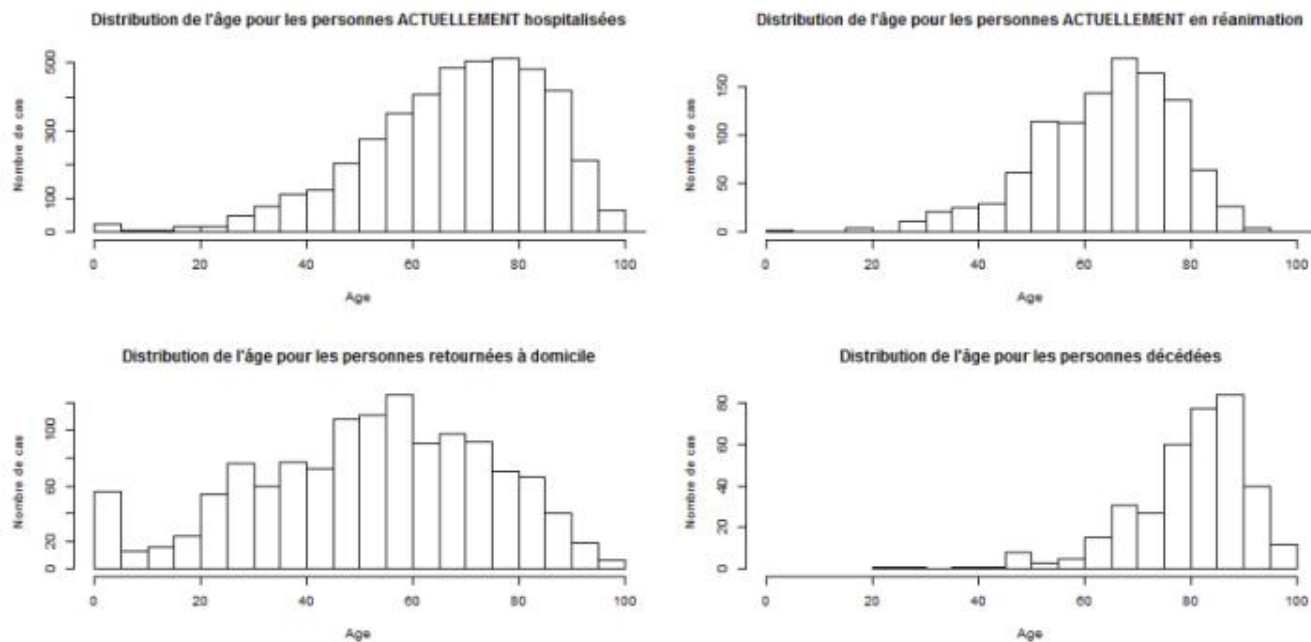


### France: Total mortality at national level (above) and in the severely affected Haut-Rhin department (SPF / 15 March 2020)

France also provides detailed information on the age distribution and pre-existing conditions of test-positive intensive care patients and deceased patients (see figure below):

- The average age of the **deceased** is 81.2 years.
- 78% of the deceased were over 75 years old; 93% were over 65 years old.
- 2.4% of the deceased were under 65 years of age and had no (known) previous illness
- The average age of **intensive care patients** is 65 years.
- 26% of intensive care patients are over 75 years old; 67% have previous illnesses.
- 17% of intensive care patients are under 65 years of age and have no previous illnesses.

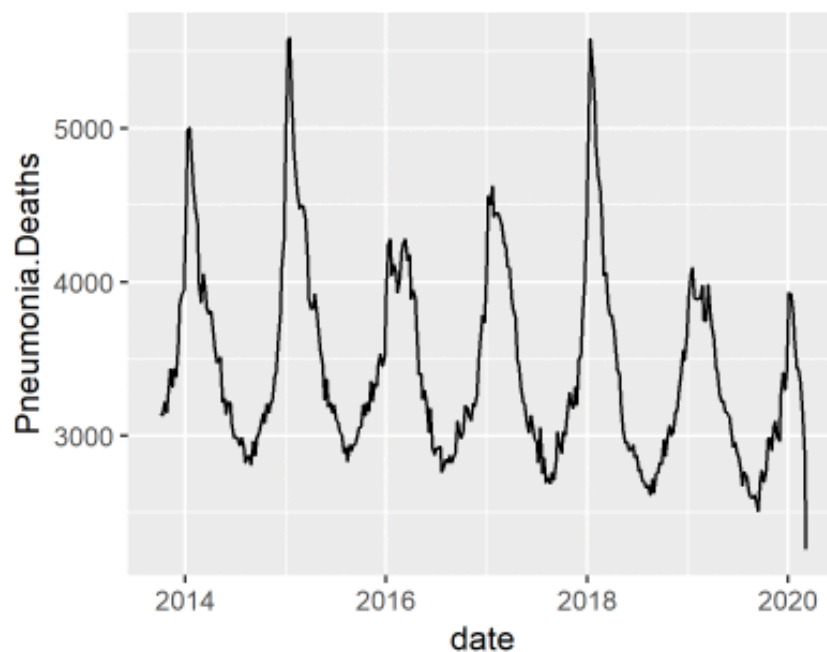
The French authorities add that „the share of the (Covid-19) epidemic in overall mortality remains to be determined.“



**Age distribution of hospitalized patients (top left), intensive care patients (top right), patients at home (bottom left), and the deceased (bottom right). Source: SPF / 24 March 2020**

USA: Researcher Stephen McIntyre has evaluated the official data on deaths from pneumonia in the US. There are usually between 3000 and 5500 deaths *per week* and thus significantly more than the current figures for Covid19. The *total number* of deaths in the US is between 50,000 and 60,000 per week. (Note: In the graph below, the latest figures for March 2020 have not yet been fully updated, so the curve is slumping).

**U.S. Pneumonia Deaths, Weekly To March 6, 2020 (week 10)**



## USA: Deaths from pneumonia per week (CDC/McIntyre)

### Great Britain:

- Neil Ferguson of Imperial College London now assumes that the UK has sufficient capacity in intensive care units to treat Covid19 patients.
- John Lee, Professor Emeritus of Pathology, argues that the particular way in which Covid-19 cases are registered leads to an overestimation of the risk posed by Covid19 compared to normal flu and cold cases.

### Other topics:

- A preliminary study by researchers at Stanford University showed that 20 to 25% of Covid19-positive patients tested additionally positive for other influenza or cold viruses.
- The number of applications for unemployment insurance in the US skyrocketed to a record of over three million. In this context, a sharp increase in suicides is also expected.
- The first test-positive patient in Germany has now recovered. According to his own statement, the 33-year-old man had experienced the illness „not as bad as the flu“.
- Spanish media report that the antibody rapid tests for Covid19 only have a sensitivity of 30%, although it should be at least 80%.
- A study from China in 2003 concluded that the probability of dying from SARS is 84% higher in people exposed to moderate air pollution than in patients from regions with clean air. The risk is even 200% higher among people from areas with heavily polluted air.
- The German Network for Evidence-Based Medicine (EbM) criticises the media reporting on Covid19: „The media coverage does not in any way take into account the criteria of evidence-based risk communication that we have demanded. () The presentation of raw data without reference to other causes of death leads to an overestimation of the risk“.

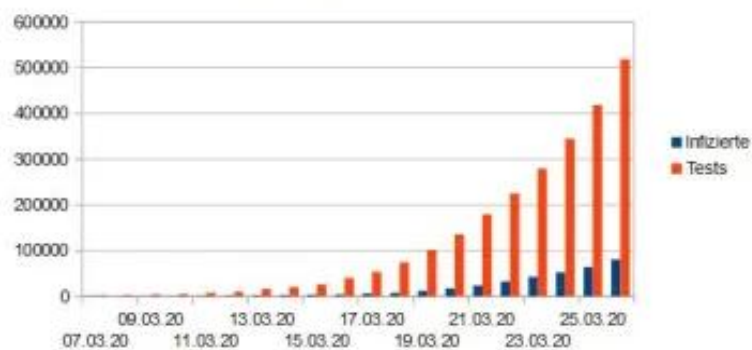
### March 27, 2020 (II)

- German researcher Dr. Richard Capek argues in a quantitative analysis that the „Corona epidemic“ is in fact an „epidemic of tests“. Capek shows that while the number of tests has increased exponentially, the proportion of infections has remained stable and mortality has decreased, which speaks *against* an exponential spread of the virus itself (see below).
- German Virology professor Dr. Carsten Scheller from the University of Würzburg explains in a podcast that Covid19 is definitely comparable with influenza and has so far even led to fewer deaths. Professor Scheller suspects that the exponential curves often presented in the media have more to do with the *increasing number of tests* than with an unusual spread of the virus itself. For countries like Germany, Italy is less of a role model than Japan and South Korea. Despite millions of Chinese tourists and only minimal social restrictions, these countries have not yet experienced a Covid19 crisis. One reason for this could be the wearing of mouth masks: This would hardly protect against infection, but would limit the spread of the virus by infected people.
- The latest figures from Bergamo (city) show that total mortality in March 2020 increased

from typically 150 people per month to around 450 people. It is still unclear what proportion of this was due to Covid19 and what proportion was due to other factors such as mass panic, systemic collapse and the lockdown itself. Apparently the city hospital was overrun by people from the whole region and collapsed.

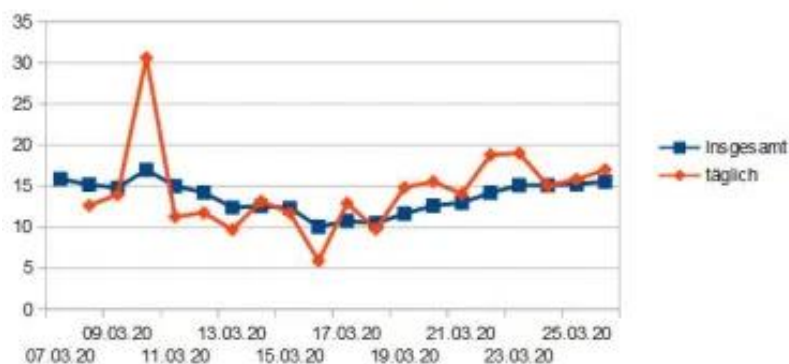
- The two Stanford professors of medicine, Dr. Eran Bendavid and Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, explain in an article that the lethality of Covid19 is overestimated *by several orders of magnitude* and is probably even in Italy only at 0.01% to 0.06% and thus below that of influenza. The reason for this overestimation is the greatly underestimated number of people already infected (without symptoms). As an example, the fully tested Italian community of Vo is mentioned, which showed 50 to 75% symptom-free test-positive persons.
- Dr. Gerald Gaß, President of the German Hospital Association, explained in an interview with the Handelsblatt that „the extreme situation in Italy is mainly due to the very low intensive care capacities“.
- Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg, one of the early and vocal critics of a „Covid19 panic“, was provisionally excluded by the board of *Transparency International Germany*, where he headed the health working group. Wodarg had already been severely attacked by the media for his criticism.
- NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden warns that governments are using the current situation to expand the surveillance state and restrict fundamental rights. The control measures currently put in place would not be dismantled after the crisis.

Infizierte und Tests (kumuliert)



Number of tests and test-positives (proportional)

Infizierte pro Test (%)

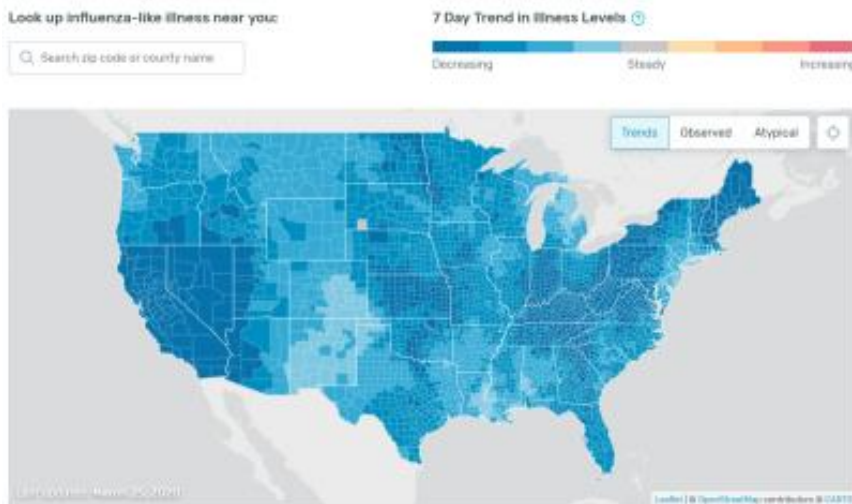


Test-positives per number of tests (constant)

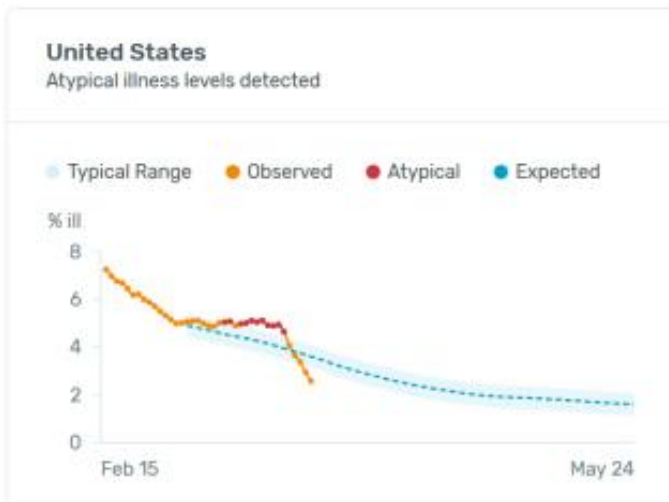
The increasing number of tests is finding a *proportional* number of infections, the ratio stays *constant*, speaking *against* an ongoing viral epidemic (Dr. Richard Capek, US data)

## March 26, 2020 (I)

- **USA:** The latest US data of March 25 shows a decreasing number of flu-like illnesses throughout the country, the frequency of which is now well below the multi-year average. The government measures can be ruled out as a reason for this, as they have been in effect for less than a week.



US Influenza Trend (March 25, 2020)

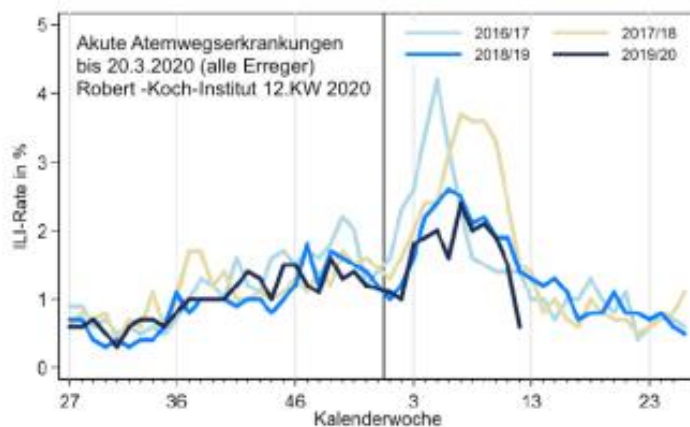


US Influenza Trend (March 25, 2020)

USA: Decreasing flu-like illnesses (March 25, 2020, KINSA)

- **Germany:** The latest influenza report of the German Robert Koch Institute of March 24 documents a „nationwide decrease in activity of acute respiratory diseases“: The number of influenza-like illnesses and the number of hospital stays caused by them is below the level of previous years and is currently continuing to decline. The RKI continues: „The increase in the number of visits to the doctor cannot currently be explained either by influenza viruses circulating in the population or by SARS-CoV-2.“





Deutschland: Atemwegserkrankungen 2019/2020 ggü. Vorjahren

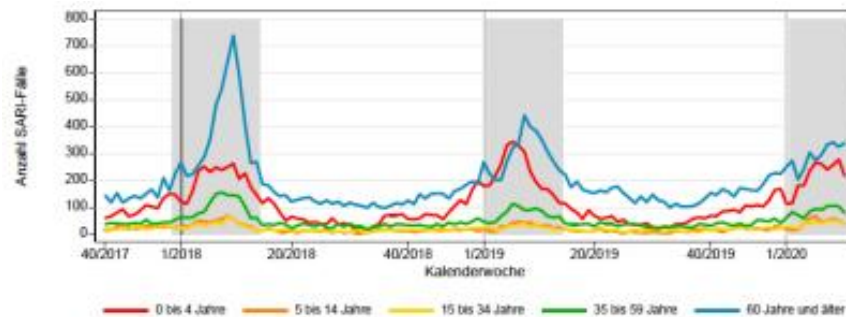


Abb. 5: Wöchentliche Anzahl der SARI-Fälle (ICD-10-Codes J09 – J22) mit einer Verweildauer bis zu einer Woche von der 40. KW 2017 bis zur 11. KW 2020, Daten aus 72 Sentinelkliniken. Die senkrechte Linie markiert jeweils die 1. KW des Jahres, der Zeitraum der Grippewelle ist grau hinterlegt.

Deutschland: Krankenhausaufenthalte durch Atemwegserkrankungen nach Altersgruppen  
Germany: Decreasing flu-like illnesses (20 March 2020, RKI)

- **Italy:** The renowned Italian virologist Giulio Tarro argues that the mortality rate of Covid19 is below 1% even in Italy and is therefore comparable to influenza. The higher values only arise because no distinction is made between deaths with and by Covid19 and because the number of (symptom-free) infected persons is greatly underestimated.
- **UK:** The authors of the British Imperial College study, who predicted up to 500,000 deaths, are again reducing their forecasts. After already admitting that a large proportion of test-positive deaths are part of normal mortality, they now state that the peak of the disease may be reached in two to three weeks already.
- **UK:** The British Guardian reported in February 2019 that even in the generally weak flu season 2018/2019 there were more than 2180 flu-related admissions to intensive care units in the UK.
- **Switzerland:** In Switzerland, the excess mortality due to Covid19 is apparently still zero. The latest „fatal victim“ presented by the media is a 100-year-old woman. Nevertheless, the Swiss government continues to tighten restrictive measures.

## March 26, 2020 (II)

- **Sweden:** Sweden has so far pursued the most liberal strategy in dealing with Covid19, which is based on two principles: Risk groups are protected and people with flu symptoms stay at home. „If you follow these two rules, there is no need for further measures, the effect

of which is only marginal anyway,” said chief epidemiologist Anders Tegnell. Social and economic life will continue normally. The big rush to hospitals has so far failed to materialize, Tegnell said.

- German criminal and constitutional law expert Dr. Jessica Hamed argues that measures such as general curfews and contact bans are a massive and disproportionate encroachment on fundamental rights of freedom and are therefore presumably „all illegal“.
- The latest European monitoring report on overall mortality continues to show normal or below-average values in all countries and all age groups, but now with one exception: in the 65+ age group in Italy a currently increased overall mortality is predicted (so-called delay-adjusted z-score), which is, however, still below the values of the influenza waves of 2017 and 2018.

## March 25, 2020

- German immunologist and toxicologist, Professor Stefan Hockertz, explains in a radio interview that Covid19 is no more dangerous than influenza (the flu), but that it is simply observed much more closely. More dangerous than the virus is the fear and panic created by the media and the „authoritarian reaction“ of many governments. Professor Hockertz also notes that most so-called „corona deaths“ have in fact died of other causes while also testing positive for coronaviruses. Hockertz believes that up to ten times more people than reported already had Covid19 but noticed nothing or very little.
- The Argentinean virologist and biochemist Pablo Goldschmidt explains that Covid19 is no more dangerous than a bad cold or the flu. It is even possible that the Covid19 virus circulated *already in earlier years*, but wasn't discovered because no one was looking for it. Dr. Goldschmidt speaks of a „global terror“ created by the media and politics. Every year, he says, three million newborns worldwide and 50,000 adults in the US alone die of pneumonia.
- Professor Martin Exner, head of the Institute for Hygiene at the University of Bonn, explains in an interview why health personnel are currently under pressure, even though there has hardly been any increase in the number of patients in Germany so far: On the one hand, doctors and nurses who have tested positive have to be quarantined and are often hard to replace. On the other hand, nurses from neighbouring countries, who provide an important part of the care, are currently unable to enter the country due to closed borders.
- Professor Julian Nida-Ruemelin, former German Minister of State for Culture and Professor of Ethics, points out that Covid19 poses no risk to the healthy general population and that extreme measures such as curfews are therefore not justified.
- Using data from the cruise ship Diamond Princess, Stanford Professor John Ioannidis showed that the age-corrected lethality of Covid19 is between 0.025% and 0.625%, i.e. in the range of a strong cold or the flu. Moreover, a Japanese study showed that of all the test-positive passengers, and despite the high average age, 48% remained *completely symptom-free*; even among the 80-89 year olds 48% remained symptom-free, while among the 70 to 79 year olds it was an astounding 60% that developed no symptoms at all. This again raises the question whether the *pre-existing diseases* are not perhaps a more important factor than the virus itself. The Italian example has shown that 99% of test-positive deaths had one or more pre-existing conditions, and even among these, only 12% of the death certificates

mentioned Covid19 as a causal factor.

## March 24, 2020

- The UK has removed Covid19 from the official list of High Consequence Infectious Diseases (HCID), stating that mortality rates are „low overall“.
- The director of the German National Health Institute (RKI) admitted that they count all test-positive deaths, *irrespective of the actual cause of death*, as „coronavirus deaths“. The average age of the deceased is 82 years, most with serious preconditions. As in most other countries, excess mortality due Covid19 is likely to be near zero in Germany.
- Beds in Swiss intensive care units reserved for Covid19 patients are still „mostly empty“.
- German Professor Karin Moelling, former Chair of Medical Virology at the University of Zurich, stated in an interview that Covid19 is „no killer virus“ and that „panic must end“.

## March 23, 2020 (I)

- A new French study in the Journal of Antimicrobial Agents, titled SARS-CoV-2: fear versus data, concludes that „the problem of SARS-CoV-2 is probably overestimated“, since „the mortality rate for SARS-CoV-2 is not significantly different from that for common coronaviruses identified at the study hospital in France“.
- An Italian study of August 2019 found that flu deaths in Italy were between 7,000 and 25,000 in recent years. This value is higher than in most other European countries due to the large elderly population in Italy, and much higher than anything attributed to Covid-19 so far.
- In a new fact sheet, the World Health Organization WHO reports that Covid-19 is in fact spreading *slower, not faster*, than influenza by a factor of about 50%. Moreover, pre-symptomatic transmission appears to be much lower with Covid-19 than with influenza.
- A leading Italian doctor reports that „strange cases of pneumonia“ were seen in the Lombardy region *already in November 2019*, raising again the question if they were caused by the new virus (which officially only appeared in Italy in February 2020), or by other factors, such as the dangerously high smog levels in Northern Italy.
- Danish researcher Peter Gøtzsche, founder of the renowned Cochrane Medical Collaboration, writes that Corona is „an epidemic of mass panic“ and „logic was one of the first victims.“

## March 23, 2020 (II)

- Former Israeli Health Minister, Professor Yoram Lass, says that the new coronavirus is „less dangerous than the flu“ and lockdown measures „will kill more people than the virus“. He adds that „the numbers do not match the panic“ and „psychology is prevailing over science“. He also notes that „Italy is known for its enormous morbidity in respiratory



problems, more than three times any other European country.”

- Pietro Vernazza, a Swiss infectious disease specialist, argues that many of the imposed measures are not based on science and should be reversed. According to Vernazza, mass testing makes no sense because 90% of the population will see no symptoms, and lockdowns and closing schools are even „counterproductive“. He recommends protecting only risk groups while keeping the economy and society at large undisturbed.
- The President of the World Doctors Federation, Frank Ulrich Montgomery, argues that lockdown measures as in Italy are „unreasonable“ and „counterproductive“ and should be reversed.
- In Switzerland, despite media panic, excess mortality is still at or near zero: the latest test-positive „victims“ were a 96-year-old in palliative care and a 97-year-old with pre-existing conditions.
- The latest statistical report of the Italian National Health Institute is now available in English.

## March 22, 2020 (I)

**Regarding the situation in Italy:** Most major media falsely report that Italy has up to 800 deaths per day *from the coronavirus*. In reality, the president of the Italian Civil Protection Service stresses that these are deaths „with the coronavirus and *not from the coronavirus*“ (minute 03:30 of the press conference). In other words, these persons died while also testing positive.

As Professors Ioannidis and Bhakdi have shown, countries like South Korea and Japan that introduced *no lockdown measures* have experienced near-zero excess mortality in connection with Covid-19, while the Diamond Princess cruise ship experienced an extrapolated mortality figure in the *per mille range*, i.e. at or below the level of the seasonal flu.

Current test-positive death figures in Italy are still less than 50% of normal daily overall mortality in Italy, which is around 1800 deaths per day. Thus it is possible, perhaps even likely, that a large part of *normal* daily mortality now simply counts as „Covid19“ deaths (as they test positive). This is the point stressed by the President of the Italian Civil Protection Service.

However, by now it is clear that certain regions in Northern Italy, i.e. those facing the toughest lockdown measures, are experiencing markedly increased daily mortality figures. It is also known that in the Lombardy region, 90% of test-positive deaths occur *not* in intensive care units, but instead mostly at home. And more than 99% have serious pre-existing health conditions.

Professor Sucharit Bhakdi has called lockdown measures „useless“, „self-destructive“ and a „collective suicide“. Thus the extremely troubling question arises as to what extent the increased mortality of these elderly, isolated, highly stressed people with multiple pre-existing health conditions may in fact be caused by the weeks-long lockdown measures still in force.

If so, it may be one of those cases where the treatment is worse than the disease. (See update below: only 12% of death certificates show the coronavirus as a cause.)



**Angelo Borrelli, head of the Italian Civil Protection Service, emphasizing the difference between deaths *with* and *from* coronaviruses.**

## March 22, 2020 (II)

- In Switzerland, there are currently 56 test-positive deaths, all of whom were „high risk patients“ due to their advanced age and/or pre-existing health conditions. Their actual cause of death, i.e. from or simply with the virus, has not been communicated.
- The Swiss government claimed that the situation in southern Switzerland (next to Italy) is „dramatic“, yet local doctors denied this and said everything is normal.
- According to press reports, oxygen bottles may become scarce. The reason, however, is not a currently higher usage, but rather hoarding due to fear of future shortages.
- In many countries, there is already an increasing shortage of doctors and nurses. This is primarily because healthcare workers testing positive have to self-quarantine, even though in many cases they will remain fully or largely symptom-free.

## March 22, 2020 (III)

- A model from Imperial College London predicted between 250,000 and 500,000 deaths in the UK „from“ Covid-19, but the authors of the study have now conceded that many of these deaths would not be in addition to, but rather part of the normal annual mortality rate, which in the UK is about 600,000 people per year. In other words, excess mortality would remain low.
- Dr. David Katz, founding director of the Yale University Prevention Research Center, asks in the New York Times: „Is Our Fight Against Coronavirus Worse Than the Disease? There

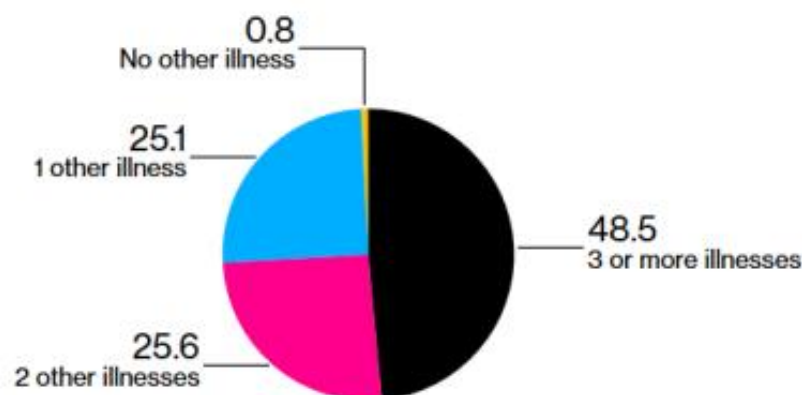
may be more targeted ways to beat the pandemic.“

- According to Italian Professor Walter Ricciardi, „**only 12% of death certificates have shown a direct causality from coronavirus**“, whereas in public reports „all the people who die in hospitals with the coronavirus are deemed to be dying of the coronavirus“. This means that Italian death figures reported by the media have to be reduced by *at least a factor of 8* to obtain actual deaths *caused by* the virus. Thus one ends up with at most a few dozen deaths per day, compared to an overall daily mortality of 1800 deaths and up to 20,000 flu deaths per year.

## March 21, 2020 (I)

- Spain reports only three test-positive deaths under the age of 65 (out of a total of about 1000). Their pre-existing health conditions and actual cause of death are not yet known.
- On March 20, Italy reported 627 nationwide test-positive deaths in one day. By comparison, normal overall mortality in Italy is about 1800 deaths per day. Since February 21, Italy has reported about 4000 test-positive deaths. Normal overall mortality during this time frame is up to 50,000 deaths. It is not yet known to what extent normal overall mortality has increased, or to what extent it has simply turned test-positive. Moreover, Italy and Europe have had a very mild flu season in 2019/2020 that has spared many otherwise vulnerable people.
- According to Italian news reports, 90% of test-positive deceased in the Lombardy region have died *outside of* intensive care units, mostly at home or in general care sections. Their cause of death and the possible role of quarantine measures in their deaths remain unclear. Only 260 out of 2168 test-positive persons have died in ICUs.
- Bloomberg highlights that „99% of Those Who Died From Virus Had Other Illness, Italy Says“

### Italy Coronavirus Deaths By prior illnesses (%)



Source: ISS Italy National Health Institute, March 17 sample

### Italy test-positive deaths by prior illnesses (ISS / Bloomberg)

## March 21, 2020 (II)

- The Japan Times asks: Japan was expecting a coronavirus explosion. Where is it? Despite being one of the first countries getting positive test results and having imposed no lockdown, Japan is one of the least-affected nations. Quote: „Even if Japan may not be counting all those infected, hospitals aren't being stretched thin and there has been no spike in pneumonia cases.“
- Italian researchers argue that the extreme smog in Northern Italy, the worst in Europe, may be playing a causative role in the current pneumonia outbreak there, as in Wuhan before.
- In a new interview, Professor Sucharit Bhakdi, a world renowned expert in medical microbiology, says blaming the new coronavirus alone for deaths is „wrong“ and „dangerously misleading“, as there are other more important factors at play, notably pre-existing health conditions and poor air quality in Chinese and Northern Italian cities. Professor Bhakdi describes the currently discussed or imposed measures as „grotesque“, „useless“, „self-destructive“ and a „collective suicide“ that will shorten the lifespan of the elderly and should not be accepted by society.

## March 20, 2020

- According to the latest European monitoring report, overall mortality in all countries (including Italy) and in all age groups remains within or even below the normal range so far.
- According to the latest German statistics, the median age of test-positive deaths is about 83 years, most with pre-existing health conditions that might be a possible cause of death.
- A 2006 Canadian study referred to by Stanford Professor John Ioannidis found that common cold coronaviruses may also cause death rates of up to 6% in risk groups such as residents of a care facility, and that virus test kits initially falsely indicated an infection with SARS coronaviruses.

## March 19, 2020 (I)

The Italian National Health Institute ISS has published a new report on test-positive deaths:

- The median age is 80.5 years (79.5 for men, 83.7 for women).
- 10% of the deceased was over 90 years old; 90% of the deceased was over 70 years old.
- At most 0.8% of the deceased had no pre-existing chronic illnesses.
- Approximately 75% of the deceased had two or more pre-existing conditions, 50% had three more pre-existing conditions, in particular heart disease, diabetes and cancer.
- Five of the deceased were between 31 and 39 years old, all of them with serious pre-existing health conditions (e.g. cancer or heart disease).
- The National Health Institute hasn't yet determined what the patients examined ultimately

died of and refers to them in general terms as *Covid19-positive deaths*.

## March 19, 2020 (II)

- A report in the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* points out that Italian intensive care units already collapsed under the marked flu wave in 2017/2018. They had to postpone operations, call nurses back from holiday and ran out of blood donations.
- German virologist Hendrik Streeck argues that Covid19 is unlikely to increase total mortality in Germany, which normally is around 2500 people *per day*. Streeck mentions the case of a 78-year-old man with preconditions who died of heart failure, subsequently tested positive for Covid19 and thus was included in the statistics of Covid19 deaths.
- According to Stanford Professor John Ioannidis, the new coronavirus may be no more dangerous than some of the common coronaviruses, even in older people. Ioannidis argues that there is no reliable medical data backing the measures currently decided upon.

## March 18, 2020

- A new epidemiological study (preprint) concludes that the fatality of Covid19 even in the Chinese city of Wuhan was only 0.04% to 0.12% and thus *rather lower* than that of seasonal flu, which has a mortality rate of about 0.1%. As a reason for the overestimated fatality of Covid19, the researchers suspect that initially only a small number of cases were recorded in Wuhan, as the disease was probably asymptomatic or mild in many people.
- Chinese researchers argue that extreme winter smog in the city of Wuhan may have played a causal role in the outbreak of pneumonia. In the summer of 2019, public protests were already taking place in Wuhan because of the poor air quality.
- New satellite images show how Northern Italy has the highest levels of air pollution in Europe, and how this air pollution has been greatly reduced by the quarantine.
- A manufacturer of the Covid19 test kit states that it should only be used for research purposes and not for diagnostic applications, as it has not yet been clinically validated.

## SARS-CoV-2 Coronavirus Multiplex RT-qPCR Kit

Regulatory status: For research use only, not for use in diagnostic procedures.

### Datasheet of Covid19 virus test kit

## March 17, 2020 (I)

- The mortality profile remains puzzling from a virological point of view because, in contrast to influenza viruses, children are spared and men are affected about twice as often as women. On the other hand, this profile corresponds to natural mortality, which is close to zero for children and almost twice as high for 75-year-old men as for women of the same age.
- The younger test-positive deceased almost always had severe pre-existing conditions. For example, a 21-year-old Spanish soccer coach had died test-positive, making international headlines. However, the doctors diagnosed an unrecognized leukemia, whose typical complications include severe pneumonia.
- The decisive factor in assessing the danger of the disease is therefore *not* the number of test-positive persons and deceased, which is often mentioned in the media, but the number of people actually and unexpectedly developing or dying *from pneumonia* (so-called excess mortality). So far, this value remains very low in most countries.
- In Switzerland, some emergency units are already overloaded simply because of the large number of people who want to be tested. This points to an additional psychological and logistical component of the current situation.

## March 17, 2020 (II)

- Italian immunology professor Sergio Romagnani from the University of Florence comes to the conclusion in a study on 3000 people that 50 to 75% of the test-positive people of all ages remain completely symptom-free – significantly more than previously assumed.
- The occupancy rate of the North Italian ICUs in the winter months is typically already 85 to 90%. Some or many of these existing patients could also be test-positive by now. However, the number of additional unexpected pneumonia cases is not yet known.
- A hospital doctor in the Spanish city of Malaga writes on Twitter that people are currently more likely to die from panic and systemic collapse than from the virus. The hospital is being overrun by people with colds, flu and possibly Covid19 and doctors have lost control.

## March 14, 2020

According to the latest data of the Italian National Health Institute ISS, the average age of the positively-tested deceased in Italy is currently about 81 years. 10% of the deceased are over 90 years old. 90% of the deceased are over 70 years old.

80% of the deceased had suffered from two or more chronic diseases. 50% of the deceased had suffered from three or more chronic diseases. The chronic diseases include in particular cardiovascular problems, diabetes, respiratory problems and cancer.

Less than 1% of the deceased were healthy persons, i.e. persons without pre-existing chronic diseases. Only about 30% of the deceased are women.

The Italian Institute of Health moreover distinguishes between those who died *from* the coronavirus and those who died *with* the coronavirus. In many cases it is not yet clear whether the persons died from the virus or from their pre-existing chronic diseases or from a combination of both.

The two Italians deceased under 40 years of age (both 39 years old) were a cancer patient and a diabetes patient with additional complications. In these cases, too, the exact cause of death was not yet clear (i.e. if from the virus or from their pre-existing diseases).

The partial overloading of the hospitals is due to the general rush of patients and the increased number of patients requiring special or intensive care. In particular, the aim is to stabilize respiratory function and, in severe cases, to provide anti-viral therapies.

(**Update:** The Italian National Institute of Health published a statistical report on test-positive patients and deceased, confirming the above data.)

### **The following aspects should also be taken into account:**

Northern Italy has one of the oldest populations and the worst air quality in Europe, which had already led to an increased number of respiratory diseases and deaths in the past and is likely an additional risk factor in the current epidemic.

South Korea, for instance, has experienced a much milder course than Italy and has already passed the peak of the epidemic. In South Korea, only about 70 deaths with a positive test result have been reported so far. As in Italy, those affected were mostly high-risk patients.

The few dozen test-positive Swiss deaths so far were also high-risk patients with chronic diseases, an average age of more than 80 years and a maximum age of 97 years, whose exact cause of death, i.e. from the virus or from their pre-existing diseases, is not yet known.

Furthermore, studies have shown that the internationally used virus test kits may give a false positive result in some cases. In these cases, the persons may *not* have contracted the new coronavirus, but presumably one of the many existing human coronaviruses that are part of the annual (and currently ongoing) common cold and flu epidemics. (1)

Thus the most important indicator for judging the danger of the disease is *not* the frequently reported number of positively-tested persons and deaths, but the number of persons actually and unexpectedly developing or dying *from pneumonia* (so-called excess mortality).

According to all current data, for the healthy general population of school and working age, a mild to moderate course of the Covid-19 disease can be expected. Senior citizens and persons with existing chronic diseases should be protected. The medical capacities should be optimally prepared.



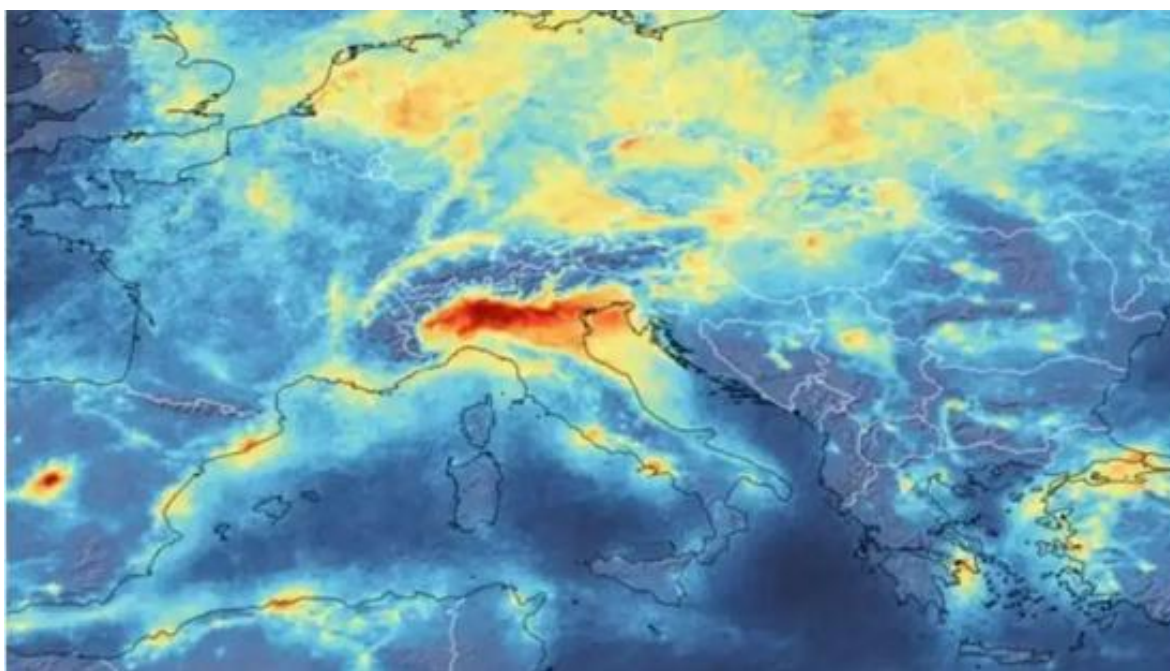
## Medical literature

- (1) Patrick et al., An Outbreak of Human Coronavirus OC43 Infection and Serological Cross-reactivity with SARS Coronavirus, *CJIDMM*, 2006.
- (2) Grasselli et al., Critical Care Utilization for the COVID-19 Outbreak in Lombardy, *JAMA*, March 2020.
- (3) WHO, Report of the WHO-China Joint Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019, February 2020.

## Reference values

Important reference values include the number of annual flu deaths, which is up to 8,000 in Italy and up to 60,000 in the US; normal overall mortality, which in Italy is up to 2,000 deaths *per day*; and the average number of pneumonia cases per year, which in Italy is over 120,000.

Current all-cause mortality in Europe and in Italy is still normal or even below-average. Any excess mortality due to Covid-19 should become visible in the European monitoring charts.



**Winter smog (NO<sub>2</sub>) in Northern Italy in February 2020 (ESA)**

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