

LIVE UPDATES Updated 3 minutes ago

Coronavirus Live Updates: C.D.C. Says Case Numbers Could Be 2-13 Times Higher Than Reported in Parts of U.S.

A landmark stimulus deal in the European Union would issue grants to hard-hit members of the bloc. A temporary hospital in New York City that cost \$52 million treated only 79 virus patients.

RIGHT NOW The Justice Department accused a pair of Chinese hackers of targeting vaccine development on behalf of the country's intelligence service as part of broader campaign of cybertheft.

Here's what you need to know:

- The C.D.C. says the number of people infected 'far exceeds the number of reported cases' in parts of the U.S.
- The European Union agrees to a groundbreaking stimulus package to fight the pandemic recession.
- Senate Republicans outline their opening proposal for the next round of relief.
- Pharmaceutical executives tell Congress a vaccine might be ready within six months.
- China is using a visit by the World Health Organization to extol its response to the pandemic.
- Covid-19 patients are prone to problems with blood clots, a study finds.
- In a hard-hit Texas county, stay-at-home orders are issued, but they have no teeth.

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A mobile testing site in Miami on Tuesday. Saul Martinez for The New York Times

The C.D.C. says the number of people infected ‘far exceeds the number of reported cases’ in parts of the U.S.

The number of people infected with the coronavirus in different parts of the United States was anywhere from two to 13 times higher than the reported rates for those regions, according to data released Tuesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The findings suggest that large numbers of people who did not have symptoms or did not seek medical care may have kept the virus circulating in their communities. The study is the largest of its kind to date, although some early data was released last month.

“These data continue to show that the number of people who have been infected with the virus that causes Covid-19 far exceeds the number of reported cases,” Dr. Fiona Havers, the C.D.C. researcher who led the study, said in an email. “Many of these people likely had no symptoms or mild illness and may have had no idea that they were infected.”

The researchers analyzed samples from people who had routine clinical tests, or were inpatients at hospitals, in 10 cities and states for evidence of prior coronavirus infection. The team released early data for six of the sites in June, and for all 10 locations Tuesday in the journal JAMA. They also released data from later times for eight sites to the C.D.C.’s website on Tuesday.

About 40 percent of infected people do not develop symptoms, but they may still pass the virus on to others. The United States now tests roughly 700,000 people a day. The new results highlight the need for much more testing to detect infection levels and contain the viral spread in parts of the country.

For example, in Missouri, the prevalence of infections as of May 30 was 2.8 percent or 171,000, 13 times the reported rate of 12,956 cases, suggesting that the state missed most people with the virus who might have contributed to its outsized outbreak.

In some regions, the gap between estimated infections and reported cases decreased as testing capacity and reporting improved. New York City, for example, showed a 12-fold difference between actual infections and reported cases in early April, but by early May the difference was down to tenfold.

The study indicates that even the hardest-hit area in the study — New York City, where nearly one in four people has been exposed to the virus — is nowhere near achieving herd immunity, the level of exposure at which the spread of the virus would start to dwindle on its own. To reach that level, experts believe at least 60 percent of people in a particular place would have had to be exposed to the virus.

“These figures suggest that the U.S. is nowhere near herd immunity,” said Carl Bergstrom, an infectious diseases expert at the University of Washington in Seattle.

The European Union agrees to a groundbreaking stimulus package to fight the pandemic recession.



President Emmanuel Macron of France and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany after European leaders reached a deal in Brussels on Tuesday. Pool photo by John Thys

European Union leaders early on Tuesday stepped up to confront one of the gravest challenges in the bloc’s history, agreeing to a landmark spending package to rescue their economies from the ravages of the pandemic.

The 750 billion euro (\$857 billion) stimulus agreement, spearheaded by Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and President Emmanuel Macron of France, sent a strong signal of solidarity even as it exposed deep new fault lines in a bloc reshaped by Britain’s exit.

The deal was notable for its firsts: Countries will raise large sums by selling bonds collectively, rather than individually; and much of that money will be handed out to member nations hit hardest by the pandemic as grants, not loans.

“Europe has shown it is able to break new ground in a special situation. Exceptional situations require exceptional measures,” Ms. Merkel said in a news conference at

dawn. “A very special construct of 27 countries of different backgrounds is actually able to act together, and it has proven it.”

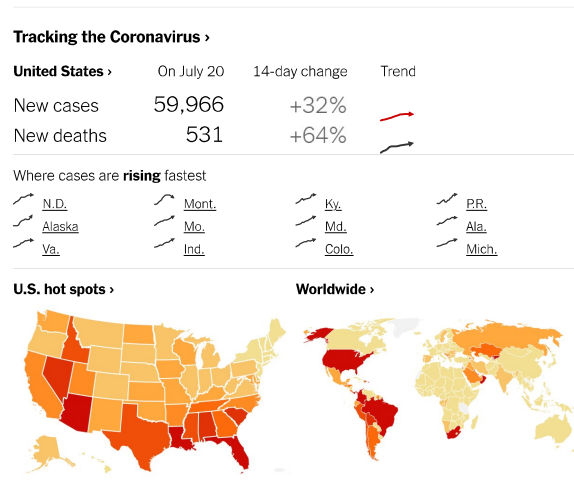
The talks were defined by shifting roles among members now jostling to make their voices heard and for leadership in the absence of Britain, which had often played the part of the thrifty contrarian, fastidious about rules, in past summits.

This time, Ms. Merkel, who holds the E.U.’s rotating presidency, put her finger on the scale on behalf of hard-hit southern countries and did battle with the nations she once championed, the northern members that have been less affected by the virus and are wary of the vast sums being thrown around.

Economists predict a recession in Europe far worse than anything since World War II. France, Italy and Spain, the bloc’s second-, third- and fourth-largest economies, are expected to suffer the most, clocking in contractions of around 10 percent this year.

Greece and other smaller economies that are still recovering from the last recession will also be badly affected by the downturn.

The package now goes to the European Parliament for ratification, where it is expected to face a serious challenge on the grounds that it does not tackle concerns about how Poland and Hungary’s governments violate the bloc’s standards for democracy and the rule of law.



Senate Republicans outline their opening proposal for the next round of relief.

Republicans’ opening proposal for the next coronavirus relief package will include \$105 billion for schools, additional funding for a popular federal loan program for small businesses and another round of direct payments to American families, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the majority leader, said on Tuesday.

Sketching out the contours of what is expected to be a \$1 trillion plan, Mr. McConnell doubled down on his insistence that the package also include liability protections for businesses, medical workers and schools and businesses navigating the pandemic — a proposal that Democrats fiercely oppose.

Time is of the essence for lawmakers, given that expanded jobless benefits of an additional \$600 per week are set to expire at the end of this month.

But privately, officials working on the package cautioned colleagues that the coming negotiation, a wide-ranging election-year brawl, was likely to stretch into August, leaving tens of millions of unemployed Americans without the extra help as Congress hammers out the latest recovery plan and the virus surges.

On Tuesday, Republicans faced the added challenge of coming to terms with their own president on the details of their legislation.

Mr. McConnell did not say whether the education aid in his bill would be conditioned on schools holding in-person classes in the fall, in line with President Trump’s demands, and made no mention of a payroll tax cut that the president has pressed to include, which has little support in either party. Nor did he mention how his proposal would address the expiration of enhanced unemployment benefits set to expire at the end of July, which Republicans have made clear they intend to scale back.

Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury secretary, and Mark Meadows, the White House chief of staff, were to attend a party luncheon and then meet with leading Democrats, who have already laid out their own, far more expansive, \$3 trillion plan.

Speaking with House Democrats Tuesday morning on a private call, Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she hoped their side could resolve its differences with Republicans and produce a bill by the end of next week, according to an official on the call who described it on the condition of anonymity.

Pharmaceutical executives tell Congress a vaccine might be ready within six months.

Executives from four companies in the race to produce a coronavirus vaccine told lawmakers on Tuesday that they are optimistic their products could be ready by the end of 2020 or the beginning of 2021. All four companies — AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Moderna Therapeutics and Pfizer — are testing proprietary vaccines in various phases of human clinical trials.

Three of the firms have received federal government funding for their vaccine development efforts. AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson, two of the recipients, pledged to the lawmakers that they would produce hundreds of millions of doses of their vaccines at no profit to themselves. Moderna, however, which has received \$483 million from the government for its coronavirus research, said it would not be selling its vaccine at cost.

Pfizer, which has so far not received any federal funding for its vaccine, has also said it would seek profit for its product.

The testimony in front of the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s oversight panel was punctuated by notes of optimism from representatives from each company, several of whom referenced promising early results from ongoing studies in people. On Monday, AstraZeneca and Pfizer released data indicating that their vaccines

produced strong immune responses with only minor side effects.

Still, the actual effectiveness and durability of these responses against the virus has yet to be determined. No vaccine candidates have been proven effective for preventing infection by the coronavirus, or for protecting people from its severe effects.

A fifth contender, Merck, painted a far less rosy picture of the vaccine development landscape. Dr. Julie Gerberding, the company's executive vice president and chief patient officer, made no promises about when its product would be ready, citing concerns about safety should the process be rushed.

"We do not expect to be able to accelerate the safety assessment," Dr. Gerberding said.

China is using a visit by the World Health Organization to extol its response to the pandemic.



Workers in March outside the Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan, China, where many of the first reported infections were traced. Hector Retamal/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

Chinese officials are hailing a visit by a team of experts sent to Beijing by the World Health Organization to investigate the source of the coronavirus as evidence that the country is a responsible and transparent global power. But the investigation by the W.H.O. is likely to take many months and could face delays.

For starters, there are logistical headaches. China has placed the advance team of experts who are laying the groundwork for a broader investigation under a standard 14-day quarantine, forcing them to do some of their detective work from a distance.

"Obviously the arrival and quarantine of individuals and working remotely is not the ideal way to work, but we fully respect the risk-management procedures put in place," Mike Ryan, the W.H.O.'s chief of emergency response, said at a news conference on Friday. He said it would take weeks before a full team would be able to visit China.

The W.H.O.'s investigation comes as China faces intense global backlash, including from the United States, for initially downplaying and failing to contain the virus, which emerged in December in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

For weeks, China had fiercely resisted demands from other nations that it allow independent investigators onto its soil to study the origin of the pathogen. Beijing has also tried to deflect blame by suggesting, without evidence, that the virus could have originated elsewhere.

Now, officials are trumpeting Beijing's response to the outbreak as a model for the world and attacking the United States for "shirking its responsibilities" in the global fight against Covid-19.

The Trump administration, which has repeatedly attempted to distract from its own response to the pandemic, has criticized the W.H.O.'s inquiry. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently said that he expected it to be a "completely whitewashed investigation."

Covid-19 patients are prone to problems with blood clots, a study finds.