

We've analyzed thousands of COVID-19 misinformation narratives. Here are six regional takeaways | Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

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Five days after the World Health Organization classified COVID-19 as a pandemic, the Empirical Studies of Conflict Project at Princeton University began cataloging misinformation efforts surrounding the spread of the coronavirus in collaboration with Microsoft Research. Our initial goal was to support industry efforts to limit the spread of false narratives about the pandemic, and we realized that categorizing the stories we found in a systematic way and making the data public could contribute to a much broader understanding of trends in COVID-19 misinformation.

Led by Jacob Shapiro, a professor at Princeton, and research specialists Samikshya Siwakoti and Jan Oledan, our team of undergraduate students from Princeton tapped into their language skills to scour the internet and social media the world over to identify, record, and track COVID-19 misinformation narratives. We eventually recruited an international network of 28 research assistants from six universities across 10 countries, covering misinformation stories in every region of the world, from Europe and the Middle East, to Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the United States.

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