

# The infodemic wave was faster than the epidemic wave

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**Study by FBK researchers that assessed the COVID-19 related infodemic published today in Nature Human Behaviour**

A wave of potentially unreliable information on the COVID-19 disease spread to various countries around the world before the epidemic itself did. This is what emerges from the study conducted by the researchers at **Trento-based Fondazione Bruno Kessler** entitled **“Assessing the risks of ‘infodemics’ in response to COVID-19 epidemics”** published today in the scientific journal ***Nature Human Behavior***.

**Researchers Riccardo Gallotti, Francesco Valle, Nicola Castaldo, Pierluigi Sacco and Manlio De Domenico** analyzed over one hundred million Twitter texts posted (in English) in 127 countries around the world in the early stages of the spread of the pandemic (from January 22 to March 10, 2020 ) and classified the information conveyed based on the reliability of the sources, developing an infodemic risk index.

When the epidemic started to spread from China to different countries, at first we saw the sharing of a high percentage of potentially fake news and therefore a situation of high infodemic risk. As soon as the epidemic started to spread within countries, the sharing of news from reliable sources increased and consequently the infodemic risk dropped.

“This has been observed all over the world and in a very marked way in Italy”, FBK researcher **Manlio De Domenico** said, “where in a short time the infodemic risk dropped from 30% to 5%. We measured the phenomenon, the explanation can only be assumed. Probably, when the disease started to spread in various countries, people were more careful to receive information and share news from increasingly reliable sources ”.

The results of the analysis can be accessed publicly via an [online digital platform](#) that enables users to get specific details on the country and time frame of interest.

**You can see the study published today in Nature Human Behaviour at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-020-00994-6>**

**PERMALINK**

<https://magazine.fbk.eu/en/news/the-infodemic-wave-was-faster-than-the-epidemic-wave/>

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