



# ONE COUNTRY

**“COVID-19”**

**Snapshot of Online and Social Media Analysis in Rural  
Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire,  
Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin**

**April 27 – May 4, 2020**

# Rural Citizens



82,000 original posts



29,000 unique authors

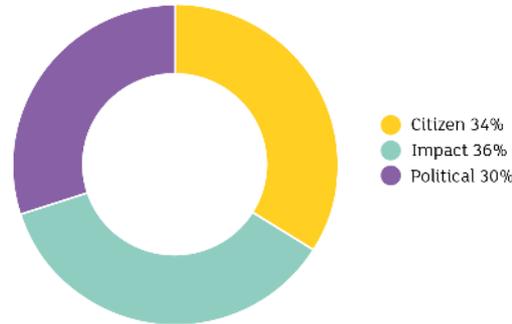
## Overview

Rural people are starting to look to the future and consider what their world will look like over the next 12 months. The longevity of the disease and its wider impact on health and the economy leave many with no illusions as to the tough times ahead.

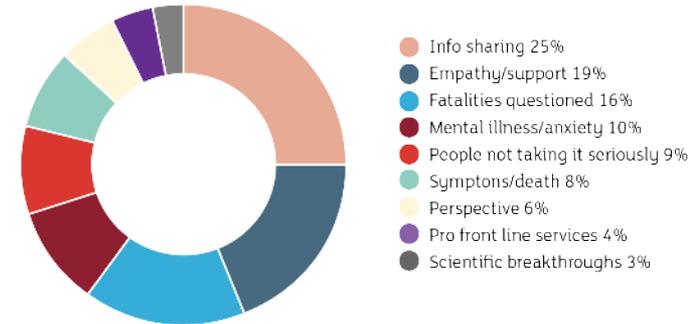
The fatality rate of COVID-19 is increasingly being brought into question. Politicians and the media are accused of inflating the figures for their own gain.

President Trump enjoyed an increase in his net sentiment for the second week running as he made less controversial statements. This owes in part to the overall volume of conversation dropping at the same time Trump supporters remained vocal and engaged.

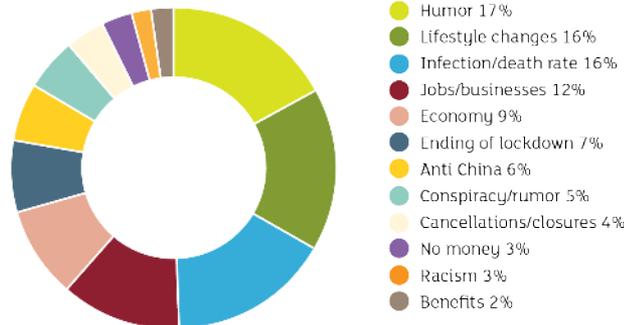
## DISCUSSION SPLIT



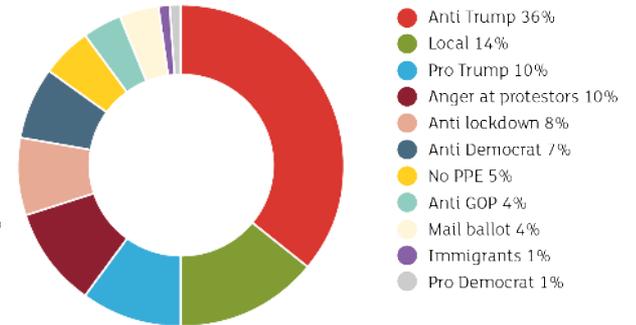
## CITIZEN DISCUSSION



## IMPACT DISCUSSION



## POLITICAL DISCUSSION



# Analysis: Key Takeaways

## Citizen Discussion

- An increasing number of people simply do not believe the fatality rate of COVID-19. They claim that people are being wrongly classified as dying from COVID-19 when underlying health conditions were the real cause.
- They feel strongly they are being lied to either by the authorities or the media who look to gain politically or economically from the crisis.
- Others vent to fellow citizens who continue to show blatant disregard for the lockdown measures. They highlight the selfish behavior of those who are unlikely to be harmed by the disease towards those who are not so fortunate.
- Mental illness and anxiety continues to plague many citizens for whom the end of lockdown cannot come soon enough.
- Meanwhile the warm outreach of neighbors to one another continues to bring people together in defiance of the disease.



# Analysis: Key Takeaways

## Impact Discussion

- People are increasingly beginning to look to the future and discuss what impact the virus will have in many different areas of their lives. Very few of these conversations appear hopeful or optimistic.
- Alongside the usual discussions about comparable death rates and what it means for their state, citizens are also exchanging views about the impact of the lockdown on general health.
- There is an emerging conversation surrounding the end of the lockdown. In particular, people seem fearful as to whether their fellow citizens will simply revert back to their old ways and ignore the need for social distancing and personal hygiene.
- The future of the economy weighs heavy on the mind as realization dawns that government bailouts cannot last forever and at some point they will need to find work or to resurrect their business.
- Lifestyles have been disrupted in so many ways, but people continue to give themselves and others a break due to changes which have been forced upon them by the lockdown.
- Humor continues to be shared widely as an effective weapon against the disease.



# Analysis: Key Takeaways

## Political Discussion

- Donald Trump's net sentiment jumped favourably over the past week due to a.) less people criticizing his initial handling of the disease and b.) making fewer statements which make him vulnerable to criticism.
- This outcome was further enhanced by the right rallying around Trump - highlighting the positives actions he has taken while attempting to remind people that not every outcome is the responsibility of the president.
- Conversations regarding local/state politics are becoming increasingly important as people look to their governors for a way out. Much of this conversation centers on Governor Whitmer (MI) who continues to receive warm praise. However, having soaked up much of the lockdown spotlight over the last few weeks, Whitmer's Michigan exit strategy is being subjected to increasing levels of scrutiny.
- Meanwhile, both the left and right continue to exchange barbs with each side 100% convinced as to the wrongheadedness of the other.



# Sample Posts

## Impact Discussion

💡 *When people start commit suicide because of job loss or depression will that be counted as a Covid death? That is coming. The death caused from keeping people locked down will be 10x worse then the virus itself.*

💡 *What about others who aren't getting treatment cuz the government shut down almost anything that not COVID related There are people dying from not getting treatment of other things clearly, the hospital are not overrun they are lay off staff the are not good things*

💡 *How can you not open up outpatient services? Covid patients aren't the only sick people in Michigan ! Women need their mammograms etc..time is essential! A lot of surgeries today are outpatient.*

💡 *There are people home in pain that need medical care in outpatient centers.*

💡 *Now that the COVID laws are being lifted in some states, doesn't mean that it's gone, I hope that you all learned some things out of this & keep practicing it. Wash your hands regularly, try to keep 6 feet apart, and be nice towards everyone.*

💡 *Remote learning in a pandemic is not homeschooling. This is unexpected and unprecedented. Let's have a little grace for everyone. Parents, teachers, students...*

💡 *I wonder if Donald Trump ever asked Dr. Fauci if the five second rule still applies during this pandemic.*



# Sample Posts

## Citizen Discussion

💡 *Virus Death Counts are high bec we count anyone who died of a Pre conditioning disease if Covid involved - we do not separate them out - this is huge. Further, NY added thousands & I believe Philly have added people to Death counts who were not even tested for Virus.*

💡 *COVID mortality rate is 0.1 -0.3 .. Media is the reason for the outrage*

💡 *The governors of New York Illinois California and Michigan have added numbers to their death toll that were caused by heart attack Strokes car accidents anything other than Coronavirus so they can get funds from the government*

💡 *I feel like if people don't see the dead bodies of there loved ones in the streets they don't think it's a big deal. This isn't just about you this is about the people which you might give Covid. It's like someone is saying "If you're not healthy it's your fault if you die".*

💡 *So done with this pandemic. Just let it take me out or something.*

💡 *I know people are getting so stressed out and so tired of staying home bc of this Corona virus pandemic, and the governor extended her stay at home order till May 15th but if we all work together and try to get thru this difficult time then we all got this!*



# Sample Posts

## Political Discussion

🗨️ *The president of the United States doesn't understand the difference between the actual number of tests versus per-capita numbers. Also, does his overall number of tests done include Pence's daily test, since he is too stupid to wear a mask on a COVID19 ward? #BloodOnTrumpsHands*

🗨️ *You mean the way the left blames him for EVERYTHING! He shut down flights from China. Left calls him a racist. Now Pelosi says he didn't do enough. Plenty of blame to go around. While Covid headed to US Dems were busy with phony impeachment.*

🗨️ *Dr. Fauci didn't lie. Clearly, though, he was wrong many times. In Jan/Feb he said corona virus was no worse than the flu. In March he supported use of the models that showed huge numbers dying. And there's more.*

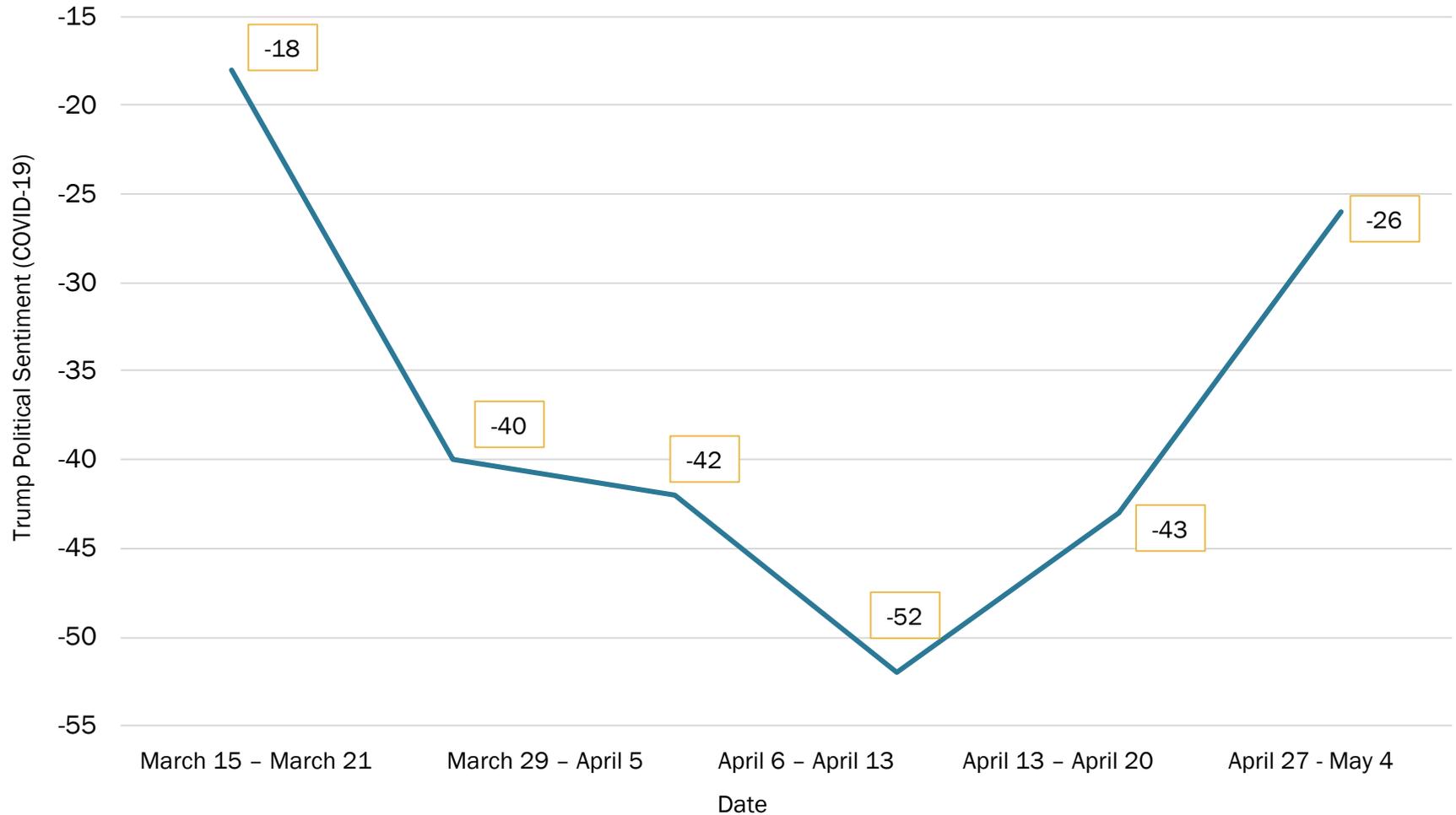
*#ExpertsAreNotAlwaysCorrect*

🗨️ *The fact we are polarizing this pandemic so politically is disgusting our case numbers and deaths have been dropping in Michigan because swift action was taken. Whitmer is doing the right things.*

🗨️ *The people of Michigan. Our economy is dying. Last night she hinted she may have to raise taxes to pay for Covid Issues. Decreased sales People need to remember, you're likely to eventually contract #coronavirus at some point. The lockdown was to help medical services time to ramp up. We must #OPENAMERICANOW tax and the like. That's ballsy when her actions put a million people out of work.*



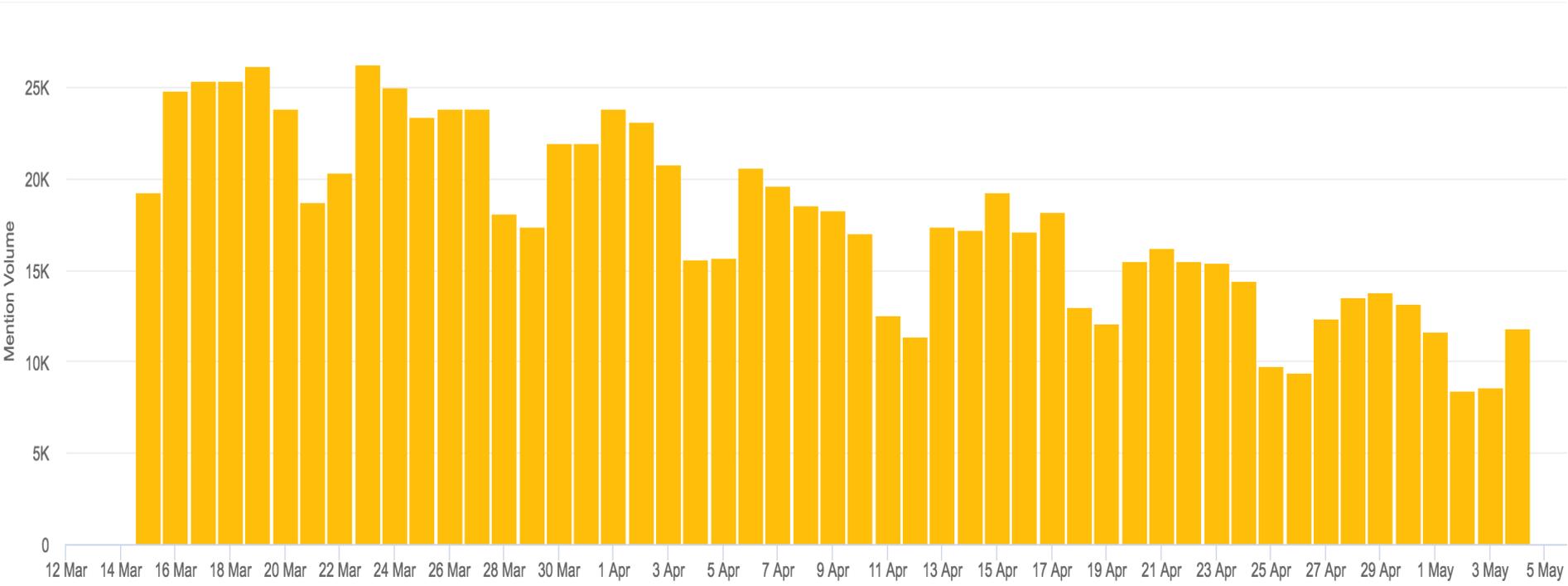
# Trump Net Sentiment



**Notes on the data:** The line chart above tracks net sentiment on Trump in relation to COVID-19. It will show shifts in the perception of how the president is dealing with the pandemic and how this plays out within rural social media discussions over time.



CORONAVIRUS RURAL CONVERSATION – DISCUSSION VOLUME (BY DAY)



# Prepared for One Country Project

by  **impact**Social



# Methodology

This analysis is based on collected, publicly available, online data, geo-located to rural populations in the six states from April 27 – May 4, 2020 related to COVID-19. In total, 82,000 posts from 29,000 authors were collected across the six states.

Randomized, representative samples of these conversations were analyzed after removing shares, retweets, repetition, media, and influencers from the dataset to focus solely on the views of local citizens. These conversations were then scored – positive, negative, or neutral.

