



# ONE COUNTRY

“COVID-19”

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

June 14 – 21, 2020

# Rural Citizens



47,000 original posts



20,000 unique authors

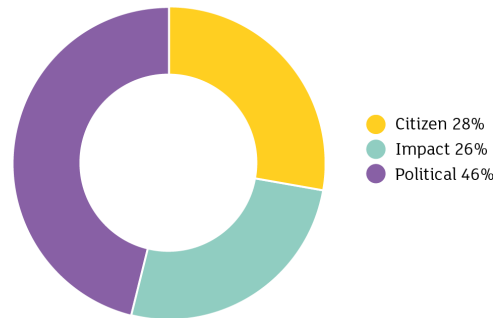
## Overview

Insecurity is impacting the minds of employees, employers, and the unemployed alike. Changes in lifestyles are also having an impact on relationships and even personalities with some feeling they have become more introverted.

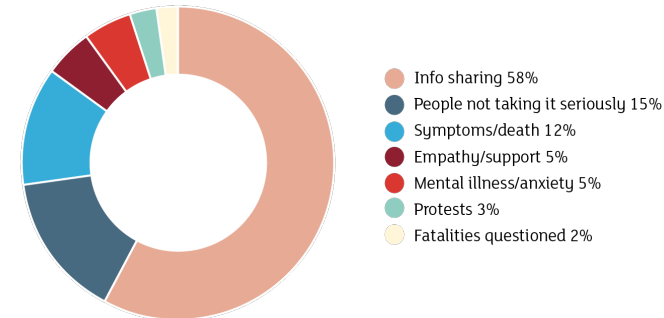
Tension seems to be rising between groups who have opposing views about the seriousness of COVID-19. Those who are scared berate those who deny its existence or do little to prevent its spread.

Last week's analysis suggested the conversation against the president with regards to COVID-19 was abating as the attention of rural people was being taken elsewhere. However Trump's Tulsa rally and speech content has brought his handling of the coronavirus back into full focus.

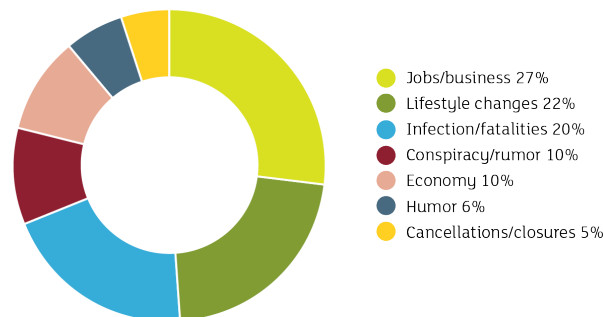
## DISCUSSION SPLIT



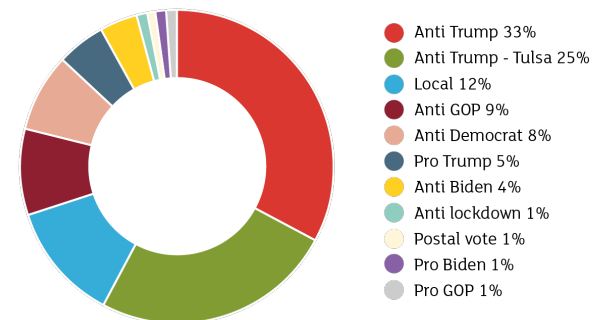
## CITIZEN DISCUSSION



## IMPACT DISCUSSION



## POLITICAL DISCUSSION



ONE COUNTRY

# Analysis: Key Takeaways

## Citizen Discussion

- Confusion is still dominating the conversation on COVID-19. Treatments, testing and social distancing are all being spoke of. However face masks seem to be causing quite a debate – to wear, not to wear or even where to wear. Their effectiveness, infringement on liberty, and even mask etiquette is all being discussed throughout the pandemic.
- There is clearly a dividing line between those who feel a mask is a necessity in disease prevention and those who don't, which is causing friction within communities. This situation is being exacerbated by conflicting messages between CDC and Dr. Fauci and much of the rural public health community.
- Tensions are further fuelled by people who simply deny the existence of COVID-19 especially among those who have been sick due to the virus or lost family members.
- Mental illness continues to be a persistent topic of conversation during the pandemic with many rural people clearly in need of help.



# Analysis: Key Takeaways

## Impact Discussion

- A mixed conversation is taking place with regards to jobs and businesses as local economies try to revive. Some are in despair whereas others are more optimistic. Overall, there is a sense of insecurity as to what the future holds.
- People's change in lifestyles are having some major impacts on the way people behave. They talk of newfound hobbies, relationships, changes in their personality and even confidence.
- Talk of infection and death rates have dropped considerably during this period.
- Furthermore, there is less discussion regarding local statistics which is replaced by chatter about other US states and countries overseas
- While COVID-related conspiracy theories continue to flourish, they are joined by dangerous rumors regarding the demise of COVID. This is partly due to a failure of local and federal officials to send out clear and consistent messaging which has allowed confusion and misinformation to thrive among the populous.
- Meanwhile, optimism on the economy seems in short supply.



# Analysis: Key Takeaways

## Political Discussion

- The general anti-Trump discussion is similar to other periods as people continue to accuse the president of being negligent in his handling of the COVID crisis, leading to thousands of unnecessary deaths.
- As the weeks have gone by other issues have emerged which, combined with COVID-19, have increasingly led Trump's leadership credentials being called into question. However, the overall number of posts against the president had recently started to trend downwards.
- Trump's decision to press ahead with a rally in Tulsa – regardless of the impact of the pandemic on his supporters – has re-ignited much of the anger against him.
- This situation was made even worse by Trump's suggestion during the rally that he asked his staff to slow down COVID-19 testing to prevent an increase in the infection rate figures.
- Whilst remaining quiet on the Tulsa rally, Trump supporters instead turned their attention to local Democratic governors and continued to blame them for the disproportionate number of deaths in nursing homes.



# Sample Posts

## Impact Discussion

💡 *Business owners are finding a side effect to the financial relief people are receiving during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some say they can't get employees to come back to work*

💡 *I Lost my job due to the covid19 and we need this help To buy groceries and medicines for my mom that she is a cancer patient. Any help will be good for us*

💡 *I will be wearing a mask in public until COVID is no longer a threat. I also plan on wearing a mask during all cold/flu seasons going forward as well. Many times I have wanted to throw on a mask before entering a store or doctors office but was too embarrassed. Not anymore!*

💡 *Must not be any COVID there in NYC. Didn't see anything on ABC denouncing it. Seems weird since NYC was the hardest hit city!*

💡 *We appear to be living in the era of the supertroll. Just this weekend, my wife passed a store with a sign announcing a sale celebrating the fact that "COVID-19 is over!!" What do we do in the face of that?*

💡 *We still have 'many miles to go,' likely not until after next summer, before the economy returns to its pre-COVID-19 growth levels*



# Sample Posts

## Citizen Discussion

💡 *I hate when people pull down there mask to talk to me and I tell them “you can leave it up I can hear you just fine” and they respond with “I can’t breathe though” like it’s gonna be a lot harder to breathe if you get COVID-19 just suck it up for the 40 minutes your in the store.*

💡 *This mf Dr.Fauci has made the pandemic worse in America. How many fucking times has the CDC gone against what he said on wearing masks? He’s a big pharma stooge. No doubt it(so is Trump but they have to act like they don’t like eachother)*

💡 *This pandemic is making me lose more faith in humanity everyday. I had little to begin with. Went to a restaurant to pickup my takeout order and not one person working there was wearing a mask. I’ll never be back to that place ever.*

💡 *I will be sure to tell the people that I know that died of COVID that they are not dead.*

💡 *Really, Still Depression is the biggest pandemic .Much more worse than CORONA. Just...why why & why??*

*@sushantsinghrajput Just...a word now i can write in his favor RIP RIP 🙏🙏 Lot of condolences to his family.*

💡 *Here are tips to helping your kids cope during the pandemic from mental health expert*



# Sample Posts

## Political Discussion

🗨️ *If you're implying you've been a leader through the #COVID19 and current civil rights/ #BlackLivesMatter situation, you're entirely off your rocker. A leader is what America needs, you are promoting division and chaos. Get bent!*

🗨️ *It wasn't enough that trump killed so many by ignoring the COVID-19 threat. He's eager to add to the numbers by holding #MAGA Rallies. Oh, by the way, participants must sign a disclaimer*

🗨️ *You lost my support for having your Tulsa rally in a pandemic. This shows you don't care about people by putting them at risk. From PA, a swing state, you lost my support from a long time republican*

🗨️ *Of course it's more infections! You guys were spiking with CoronVirus and reopened... what did your idiot governor @GovRonDeSantis think was gonna happen? It should be illegal for him to be so stupid as our @POTUS too. They're super spreaders of Corona, stay away from rally!*

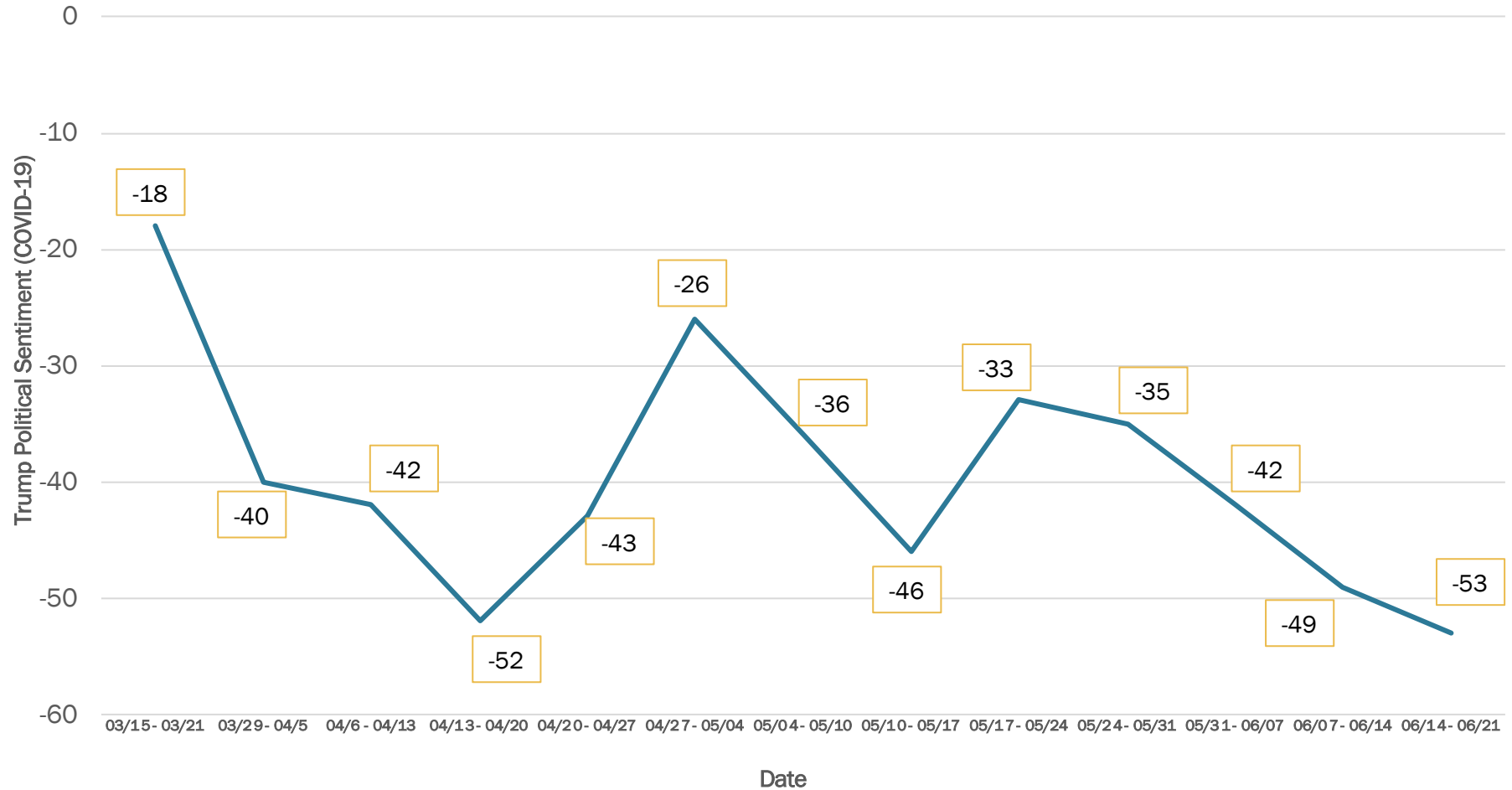
🗨️ *He's the one that saved the initial pandemic unemployment assistance, moron. He also didn't delay PUA & the payroll protection program for a week like the ass-fvck Dems. Get outta here with this non-fact-based sheet, moron.*

🗨️ *Actually that would be the governors fault. Governors forced covid positive patients into nursing homes. Highest number of fatalities come from nursing homes in states. So it would be their fault.*





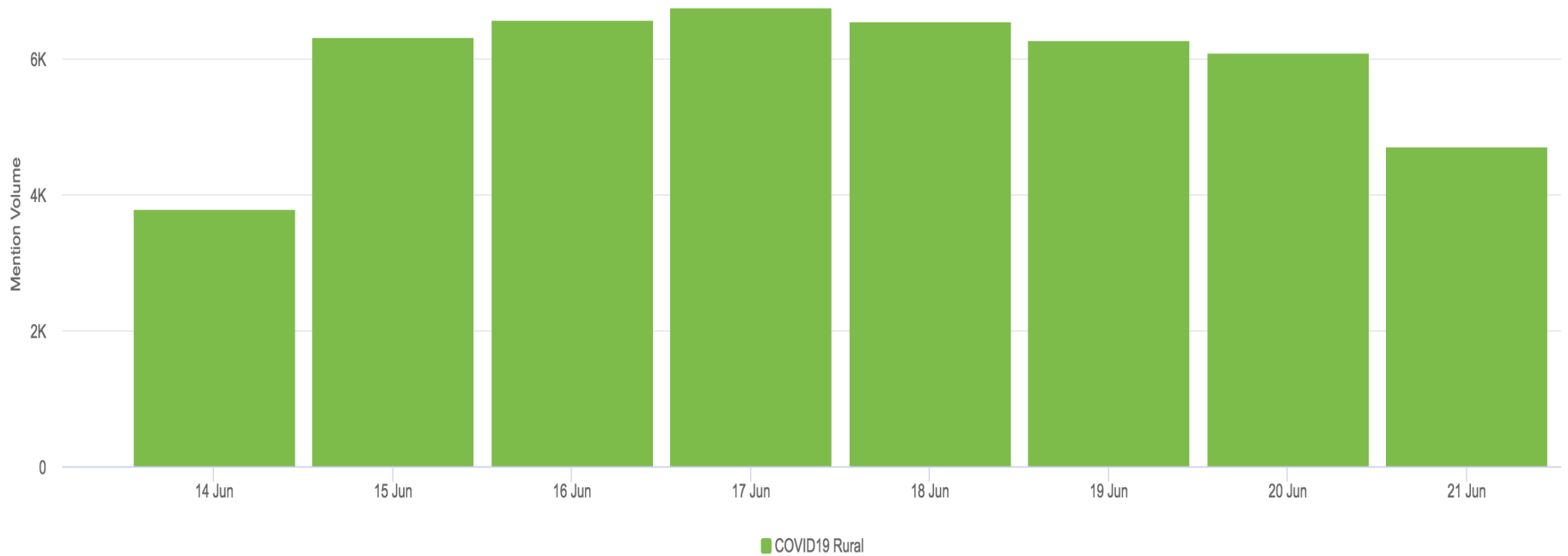
# Trump Net Sentiment



**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 June 14 – 21, 2020, related to COVID-19. In total, 47,000 posts from 20,000 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.

