



Media Report



Overview

Signal AI is one of the leading companies turning the world's data into knowledge and empowering business leaders across a range of industries to make better decisions. The platform's brain, named AIQ, reads and interprets over 5 million documents a day, and surfaces critical media intelligence, in real-time.

The Signal AI 2020 Media Report has been authored by senior analysts at Signal AI using the Signal AI Platform to gather insights on the main news stories of 2020.

INDEX OF KEY STORIES:

WHAT DOMINATED THE NEWS IN 2020?

- Overview: Key Stories of the Year
- The Story of the Year: Coronavirus
- Vaccines
- Language of Hope vs Fear
- George Floyd and Black Lives Matter
- UK Black History Month
- Trump, Biden and the US Election
- Brexit
- Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Insights

OVERVIEW: KEY STORIES OF THE YEAR

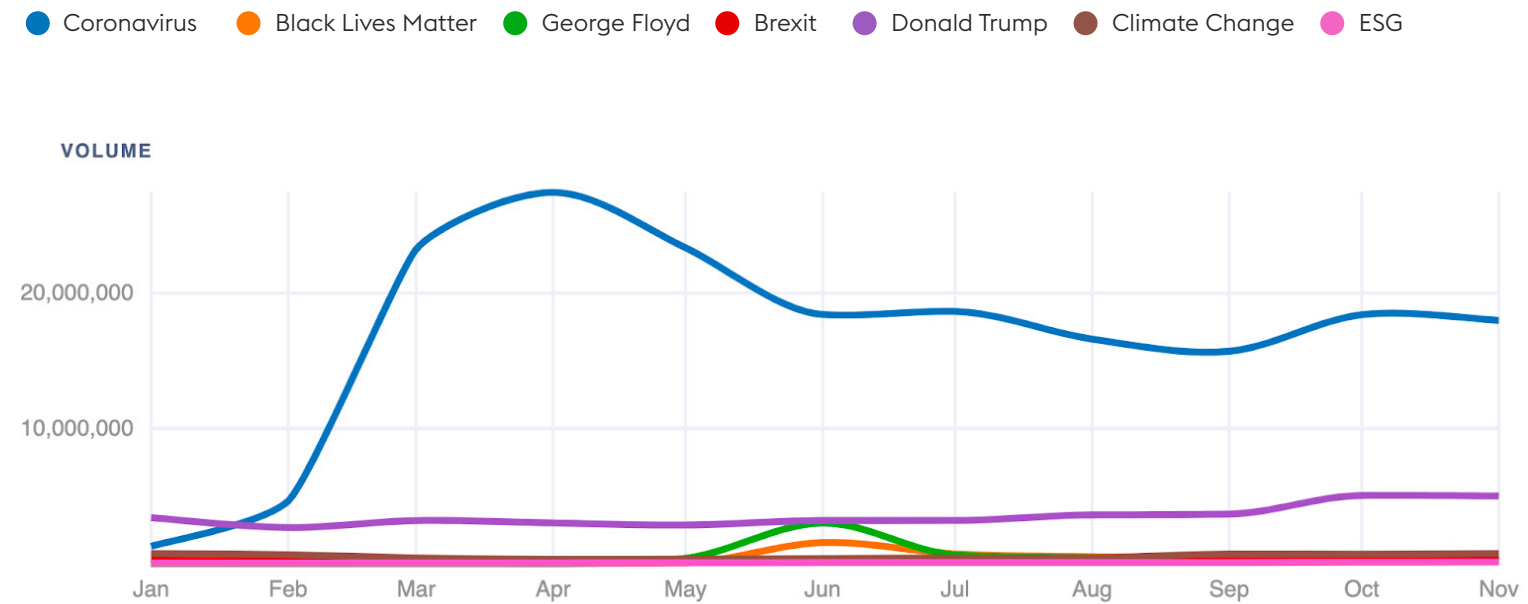
Key Stories of the year driven by volume of coverage included: Coronavirus, Vaccines, George Floyd and Black Lives Matter, US Election, Brexit and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) insights.

CORONAVIRUS - THE STORY OF THE YEAR

Coronavirus was by far the most covered topic of the year – unsurprisingly, it has overshadowed all other key news stories and topics of the year.

Signal AI Insight**How the top stories of 2020 evolved**

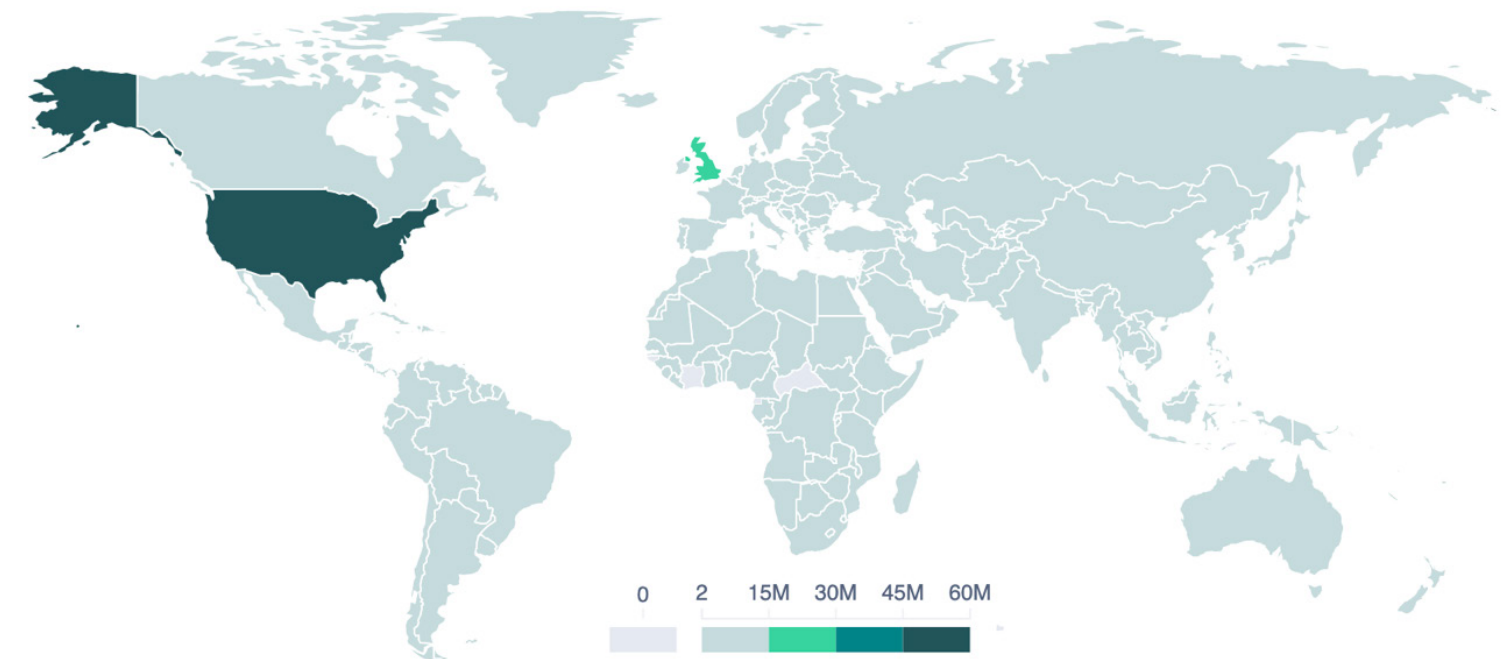
Number of articles over time



Global volume of coverage for key stories of the year
(Jan 1 - Nov 30)

**Signal AI Insight****Between Jan 1 and Nov 30, there were >152M articles on coronavirus.**

Number of articles by source solution



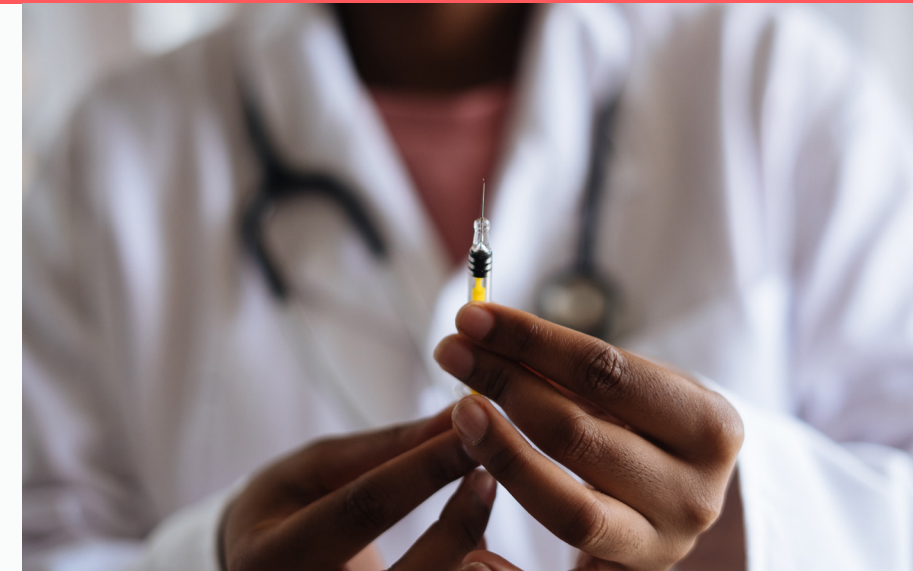
Global media coverage for coronavirus
(Jan 1 - Nov 30) by location



Looking Forward: Emerging vaccines

During November the “first compelling evidence” for an effective vaccine against Covid-19 was published.

Over the last month news of vaccines resulted in mentions for ‘coronavirus’ and ‘vaccine’ nearly doubling in November compared to October.



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Coverage of a potential Covid-19 vaccine

Number of articles and reach over time

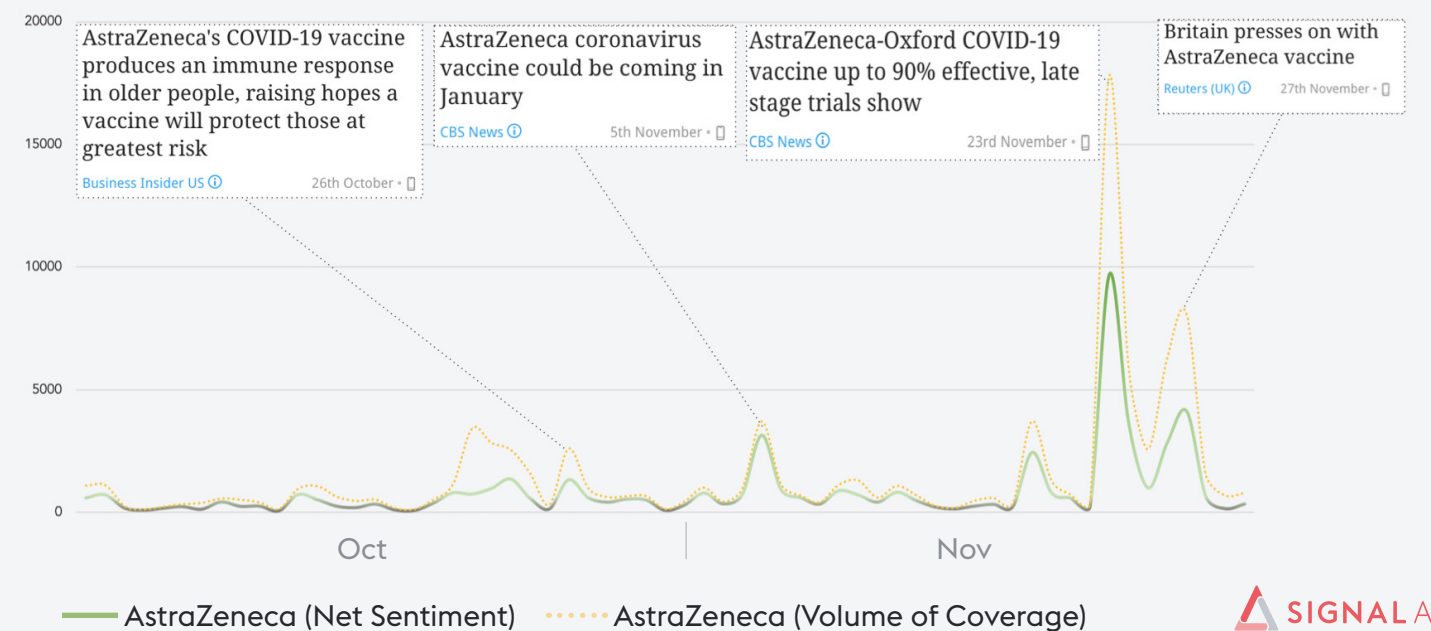


Global volume of coverage for ‘Coronavirus’ and ‘Vaccine’ between March 1-November 30.

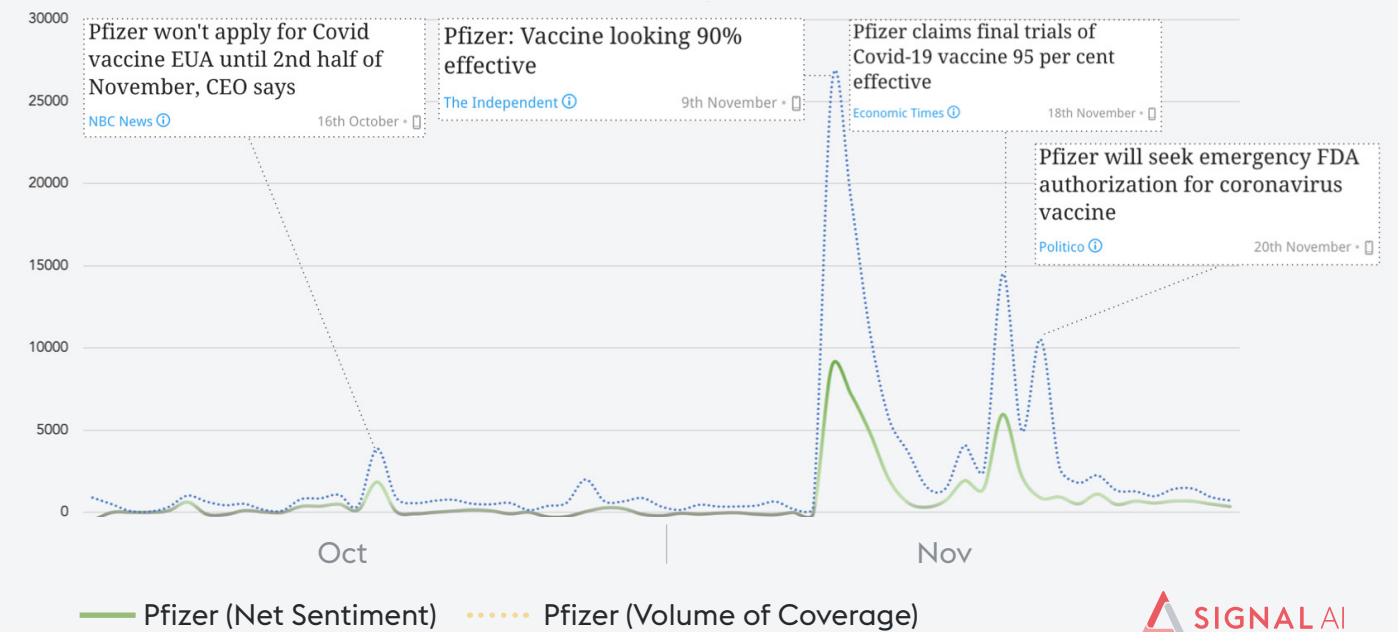


The three key organisations leading the vaccine efforts, Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Moderna, saw huge spikes in positive media sentiment following the release of their vaccine efficacy results.

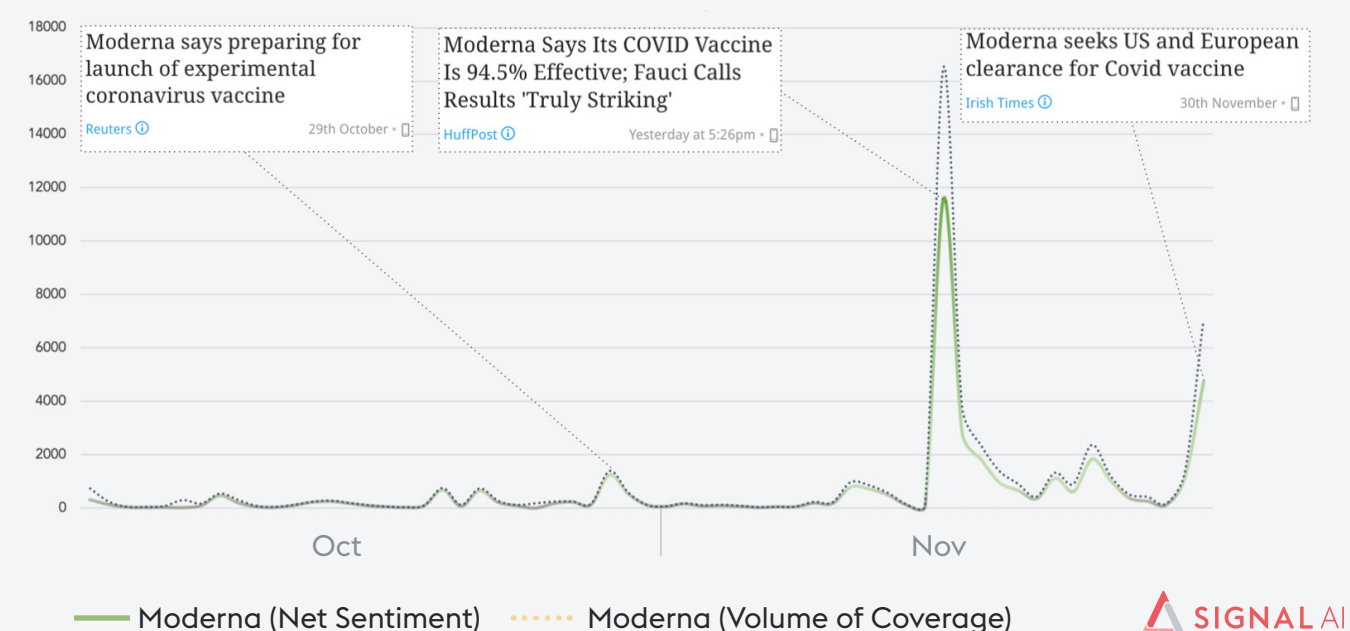
Signal AI Insight AstraZeneca Sentiment Graph

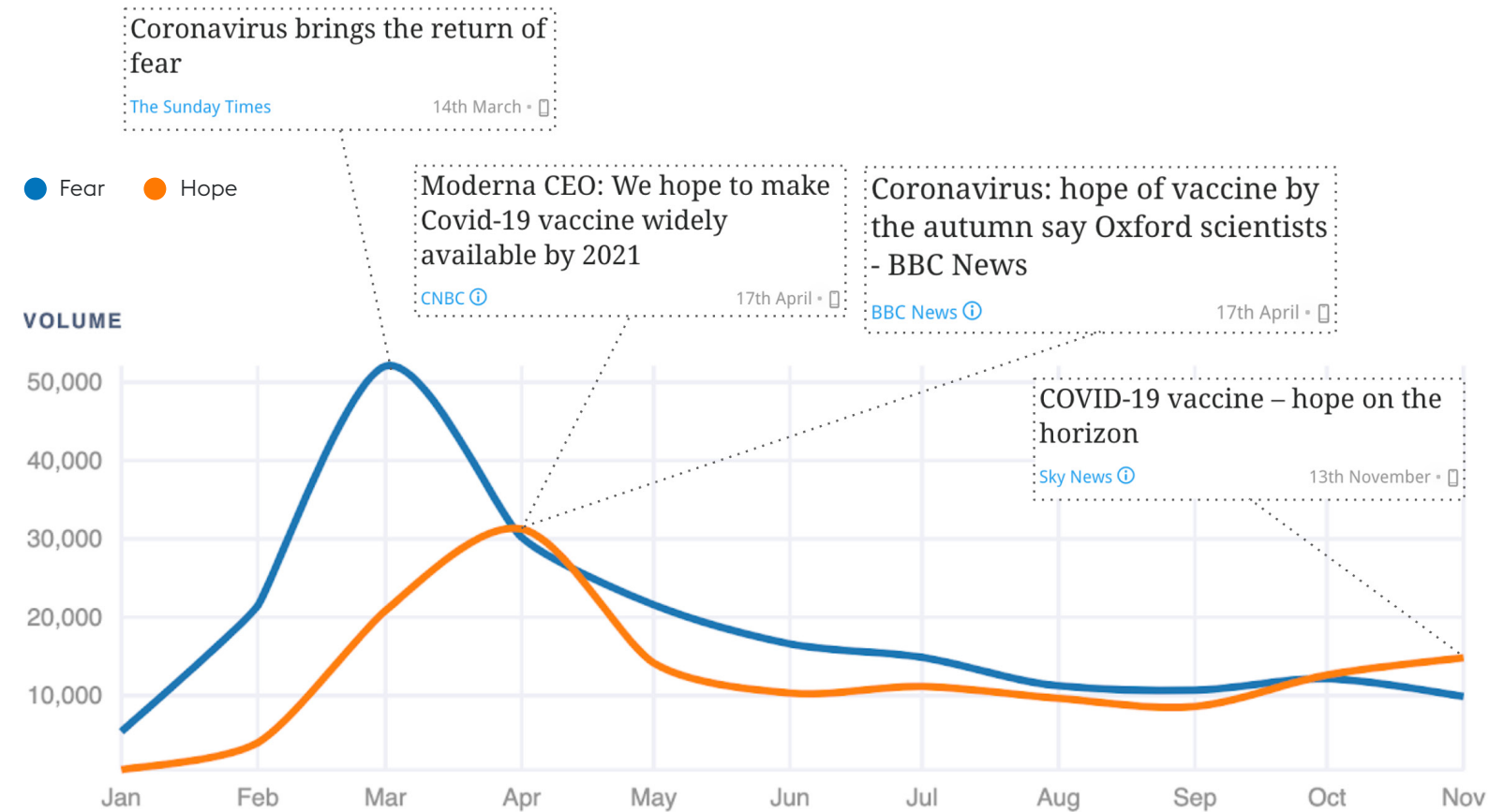


Signal AI Insight Pfizer Sentiment Graph



Signal AI Insight Moderna Sentiment Graph



Signal AI Insight**Hope vs Fear: How both terms were used in media coverage of Coronavirus**

As Covid-19 cases rose and global lockdowns loomed, the use of the word “fear” in news headlines spiked in March. However, as early as April, the first glimmer of “hope” started to shine as humanity turned towards science and vaccine development.

- The first news of vaccine development caused “hope” to overtake “fear” in news headlines for the first time.

- Since then, “fear” once again became more prominent than “hope”, until now.
 - Recent vaccine efficacy results from Moderna, AstraZeneca and Pfizer caused “hope” to overtake “fear” once more – this trajectory appears to be continuing, in-line with vaccine news offering a potential path to a post-pandemic world.

Key Themes of the Year

George Floyd and Black Lives Matter

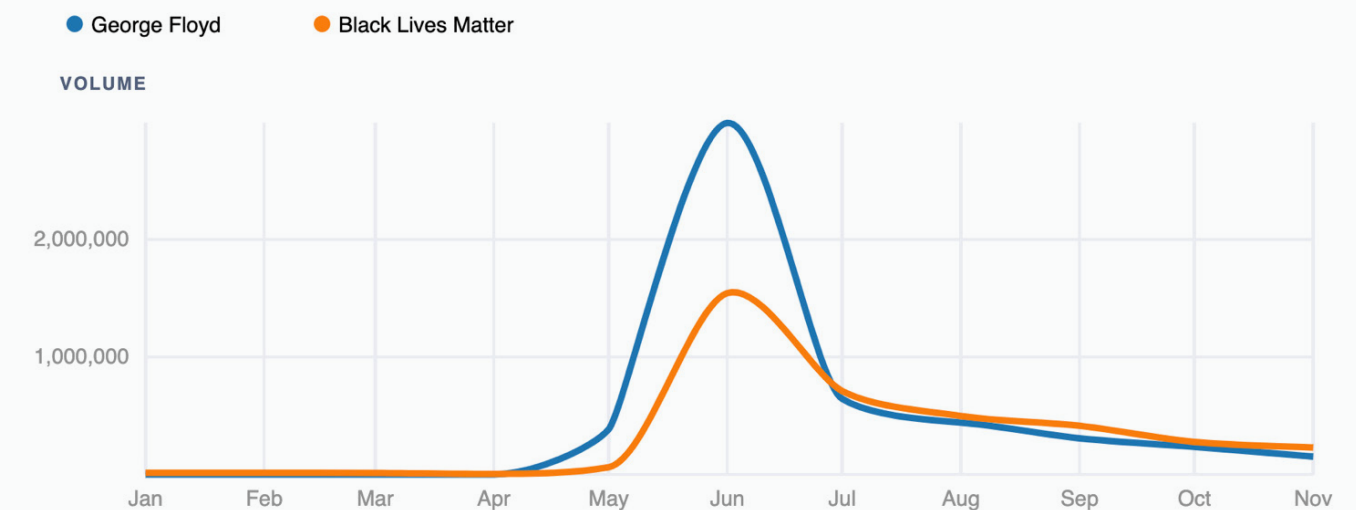
One of the biggest stories this year has been the killing of George Floyd by US police officer Derek Chauvin.

Between May 25 and June 8, 1,880,507 news items featured “George Floyd” by name. For context, this is more news than Donald Trump received (1,668,210) during the same period, and roughly 20% of the number of news items that mentioned coronavirus across the world (8,802,632).

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How did the conversation grow?

Number of articles over time



The killing of George Floyd, and the protests that followed, sparked a huge increase in the volume of coverage for Black Lives Matter.

- 3,738,775 articles reported on Black Lives Matter from Jan 1 - Nov 30.
- 5,156,962 articles reported on George Floyd from Jan 1 - Nov 30.



How did the media report the story?

Through work conducted earlier this year, **Signal AI** analysed nearly 2 million news pieces that mentioned George Floyd in the two weeks following his killing.

This work uncovered discrepancies in how language was used by different outlets. In particular, this difference was felt unevenly across political lines.

Key Findings: Influential Broadcaster coverage

We looked at five of the most influential US broadcasters: Bloomberg TV, CNN, CNBC, Fox News, and MSNBC.

	Total	Antifa (%)	Arrest (%)	Crime (%)	Curfew (%)	Loot (%)	Police Brutality/ Violence (%)	Protest (%)	Racism (%)	Riot (%)
CNN	1740	1.7	32.6	18.6	18.3	22.2	12.1	75.6	27.3	14.3
MSNBC	1587	2.3	30.7	20.3	18.8	19.1	15.6	76.9	24.7	13.7
Fox News	1451	11.2	37.1	26.7	24.5	42.4	10.1	79.2	18.1	42.0
Bloomberg TV	239	5.9	15.1	6.3	24.3	19.7	7.1	82.4	16.3	21.3
CNBC	134	1.5	11.9	7.5	13.4	23.9	6.0	70.9	26.9	11.2

Broadcast coverage on George Floyd’s killing. The results are formatted such that, in each category, the most likely to relate the killing to a topic are red, and the least likely are green.



Of the most frequently commenting outlets, CNN, Fox News and MSNBC, the results are telling, if unsurprising.

Of the three major outlets, Fox News proved the least likely to mention either police brutality or racism. Whilst CNN mentioned racism most often, it still only linked Floyd's death to racism around a quarter of the time.

In news segments that mention George Floyd, Fox was approximately three times more likely to mention riots and approximately twice as likely to talk about looting. Of the 1451 segments that Fox News has run, only 595 have not mentioned rioting or looting.

That means close to 60% of all coverage by Fox News has linked George Floyd's death to these topics. 60% of Fox News' coverage on the killing of an unarmed black man has linked his death to rioting and looting.

The distinction between Fox and the other outlets goes beyond this. Fox has been far more likely to link the protests to Antifa (4.9 times more likely than MSNBC and 6.6 times more likely than CNN), and was most likely to mention arrests, and curfew impositions by a notable margin.

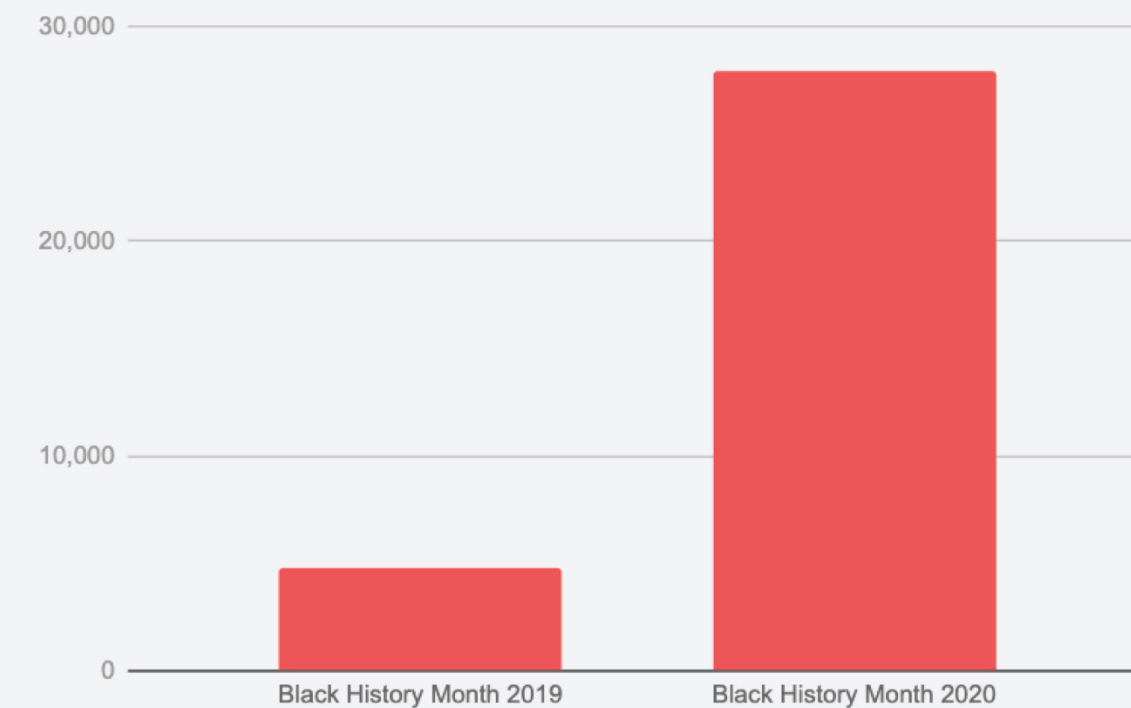
The complete report can be found [here](#).



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How has UK Black History Month coverage changed?

Volume of Coverage (Oct 1 - Oct 31)



An increase in coverage on BLM in 2020 appeared to have a knock-on effect on the media's reporting of UK Black History Month.

- During the month itself, there were nearly 6x more articles that mentioned Black History Month in 2020 compared to 2019.

US Election: Deciding the Leader of the Free World

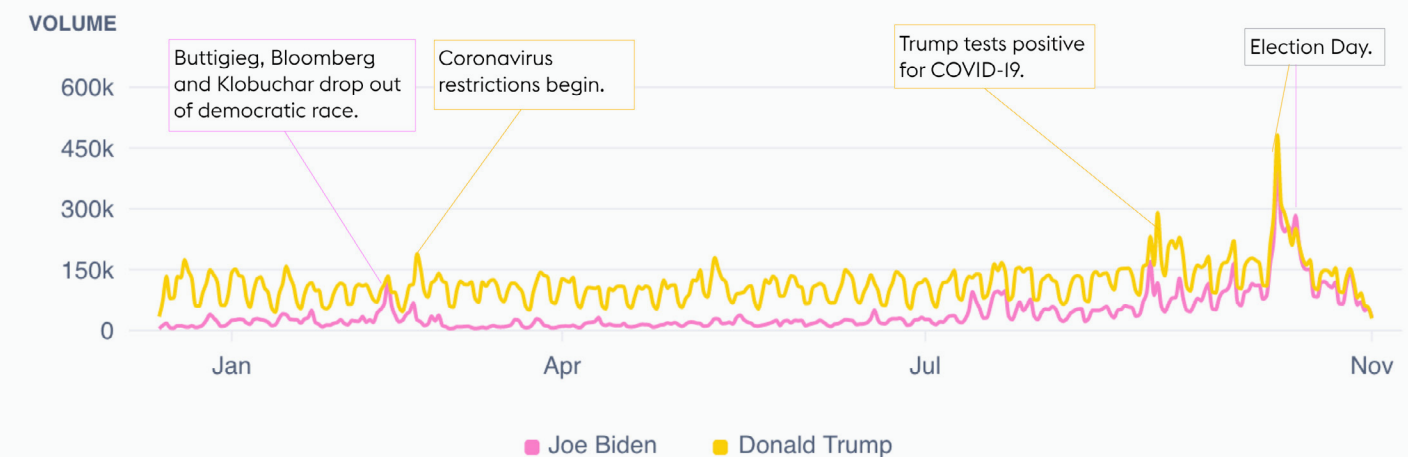
The US Election has undoubtedly grabbed the world's attention this year. The mounting pressure of a global pandemic, and the president's handling of this in the US, appeared to drastically impact his public perception throughout the year.

44% of all coverage for Donald Trump (between Jan 1 - Nov 30) also mentioned coronavirus.

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Trump and Biden Coverage Comparison

Competitors comparison



Total global coverage for Donald Trump and Joe Biden (between Jan 1 - Nov 30)



- In terms of total coverage, Trump was mentioned in 38.7M articles this year, while Biden received 14.3M mentions.
- Biden's coverage superseded Trump's only once throughout the year, when he outperformed the (ex) president on election day.

Trump and Biden Sentiment Comparison

Through analysing media in US tier one outlets, we tracked how sentiment towards both Trump and Biden has changed throughout the year, and why.

The handling of the coronavirus pandemic appeared to drastically impact Trump's perception in the media, and sentiment followed a downwards trend as the year went on.

- Negative media coverage for Trump was further accelerated by Trump's Covid-19 diagnosis, with some outlets suggesting that it "threatened the stability" of the US.

Biden's sentiment also appeared to slope downwards during the year, yet at a much subtler gradient.

- Positive peaks in sentiment for Biden were also more extreme, and correlated to successful performances in primaries and polls.
- Sentiment in media coverage for Biden became more negative than Trump's only twice during the year.

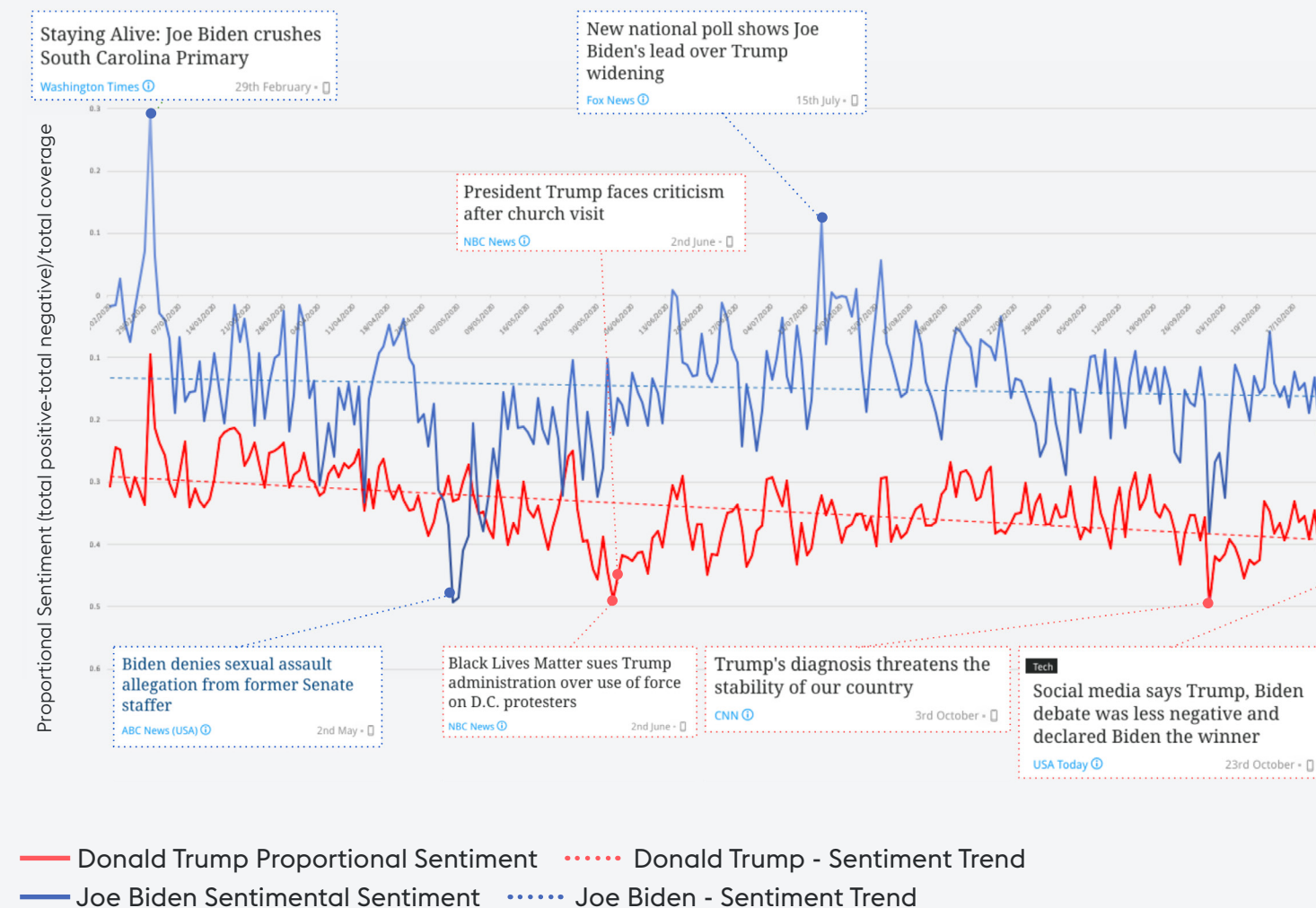
This was driven mainly by the sexual assault allegations made against Biden from a former senate staffer, Tara Reade.



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Donald Trump and Joe Biden

Media Sentiment over Time - Feb 2020 to Oct 2020

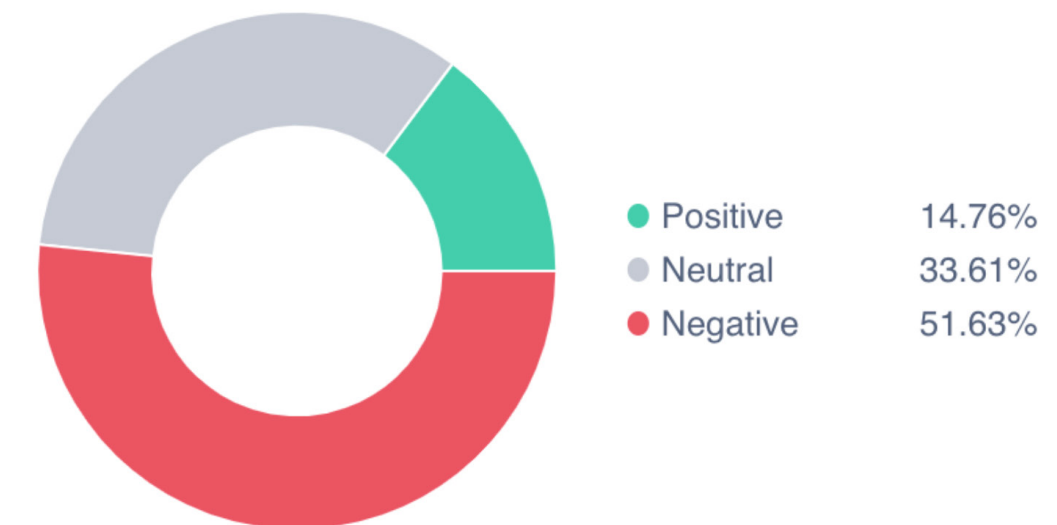


Global media sentiment for Donald Trump and Joe Biden
in US Tier One media (Jan 1 - Oct)



Further evidence for Covid-19's contribution to Trump's downfall is evidenced by the sentiment in Trump's media coverage that specifically mentions coronavirus.

The statistics for articles carrying positive, neutral, or negative sentiment towards Trump can be seen below.



The proportion of articles (that mention Trump + coronavirus) carrying negative, neutral, or positive sentiment towards Trump.





Brexit: the story that didn't go away

Coverage for the prime minister, in relation to Brexit, has become increasingly negative over the last 3 months:

- In the first four months of the year, only 9.4% of coverage for Johnson in relation to Brexit was negative.
 - Comparatively, between August and November (2020), negative Brexit coverage for Johnson saw a huge increase to 47% of total coverage.

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How has the conversation changed?
Number of articles and reach over time

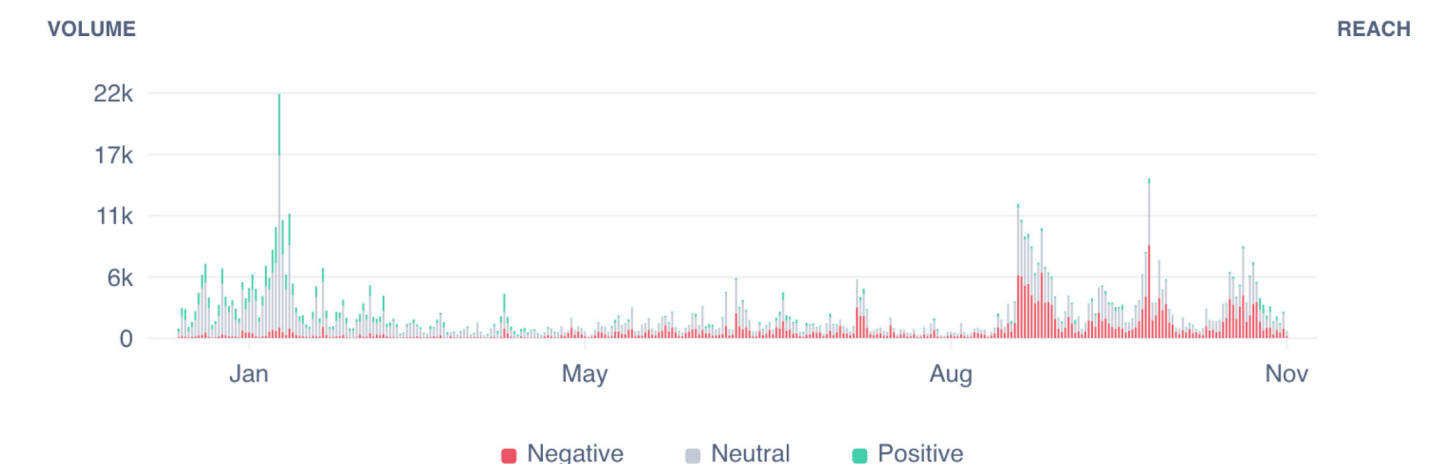


Volume of global coverage for 'Brexit' between Jan 1 - Nov 30



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How has Brexit impacted sentiment towards Boris Johnson?



Positive, negative, and neutral articles for Boris Johnson in relation to Brexit (2020)



ESG Insights

2020 has seen a linear growth in media coverage for Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) in-line with mounting pressure on companies to be more responsible.

Signal AI is capable of identifying the ‘most covered’ topics in ESG and analysing how companies are perceived in relation to them.

You can learn more about Signal AI's ESG Insights capabilities [here](#).



Signal AI Insight

The continued growth of ESG in 2020

Number of articles and reach over time



Volume of global coverage for 'ESG' (Jan 1 - Nov 30)



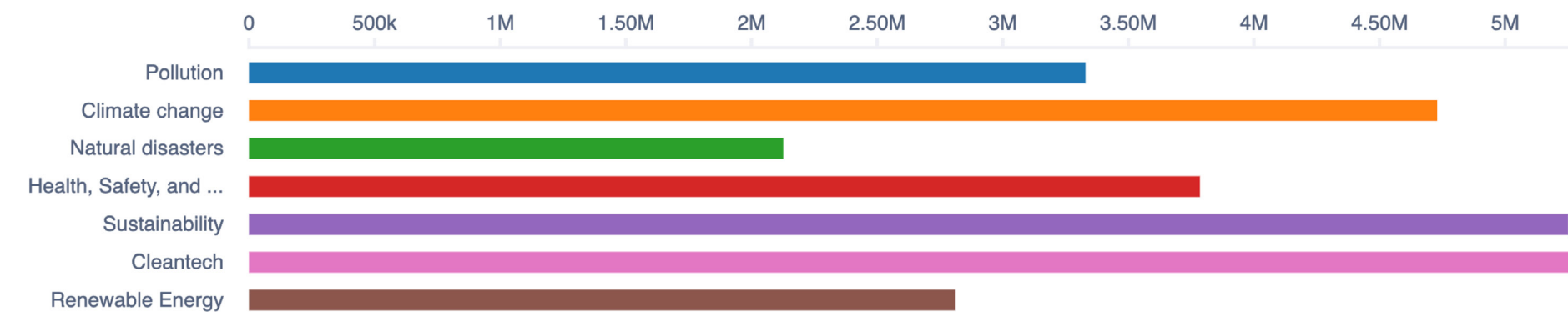
ESG Environmental

Sustainability, cleantech, and climate change have been the most covered environmental topics this year. Nevertheless, all have been entirely overshadowed by coronavirus.

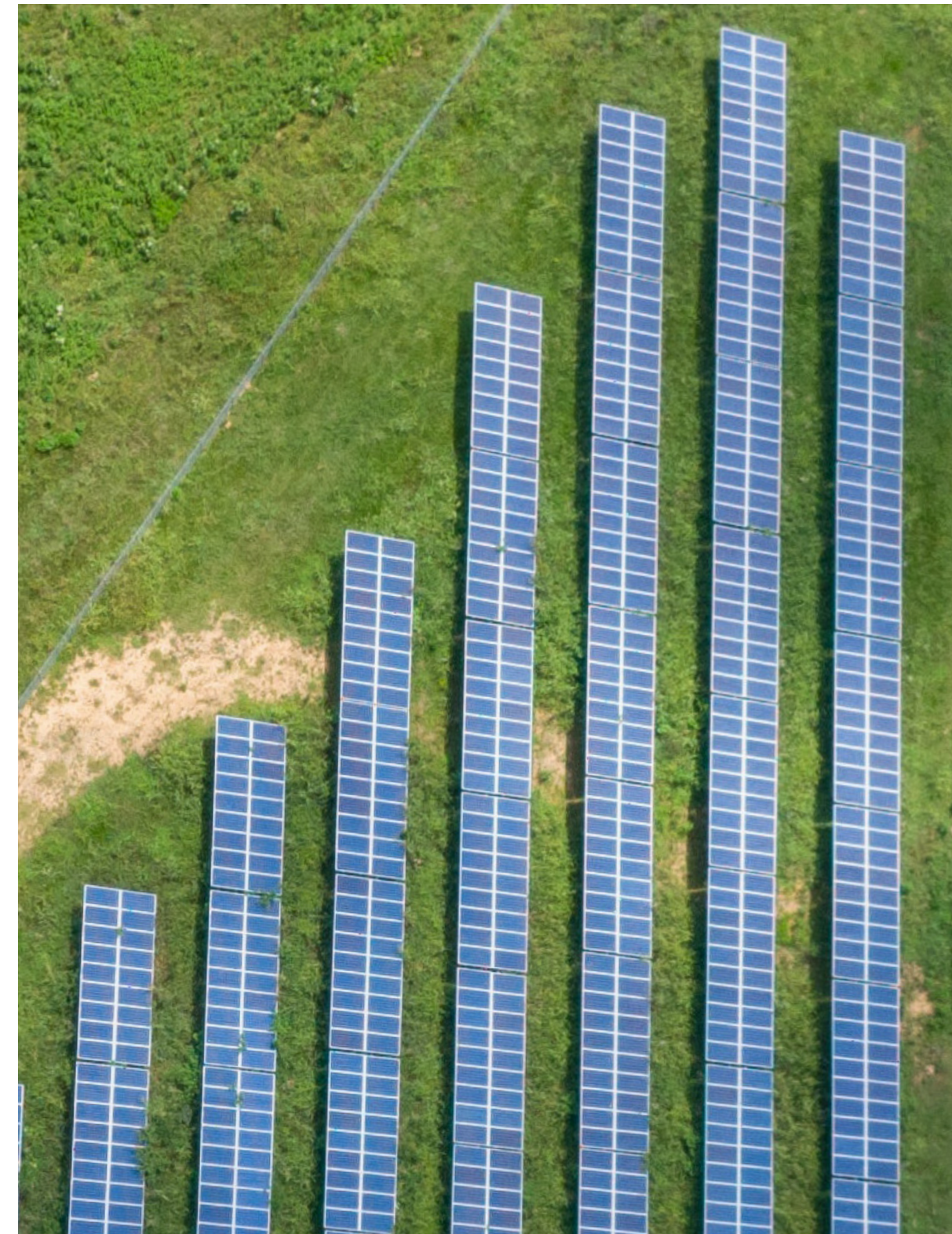
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The most important environmental topics of 2020

Number of articles and reach over time



Global volume of coverage for Signal AI 'Environmental' ESG topics (Jan 1 - Nov 30)



Climate change

There have been huge stories regarding climate change in 2020.

For example, the US formally [withdrew](#) from the Paris Agreement on November 4, 2020.

Additionally, there have been prevalent natural disasters attributed to climate change including a global pandemic, [record-breaking](#) australian bushfires, and an [Atlantic hurricane](#) season so severe that it has had the most named storms ever (those reaching tropical storm strength at minimum).

Regardless of these notable stories, the global coverage for climate change saw a sizable dip between the months of March and August, likely due to the sheer dominance of coronavirus in global media.

Additionally, treatment and vaccine news likely contributed to media attention shifting slightly back onto climate change as the world sees a path back to normality for the first time.

Signal AI Insight

Climate change: the topic that never went away

Number of articles and reach over time



Global volume of coverage for 'Climate Change' between Jan 1 - Nov 30.



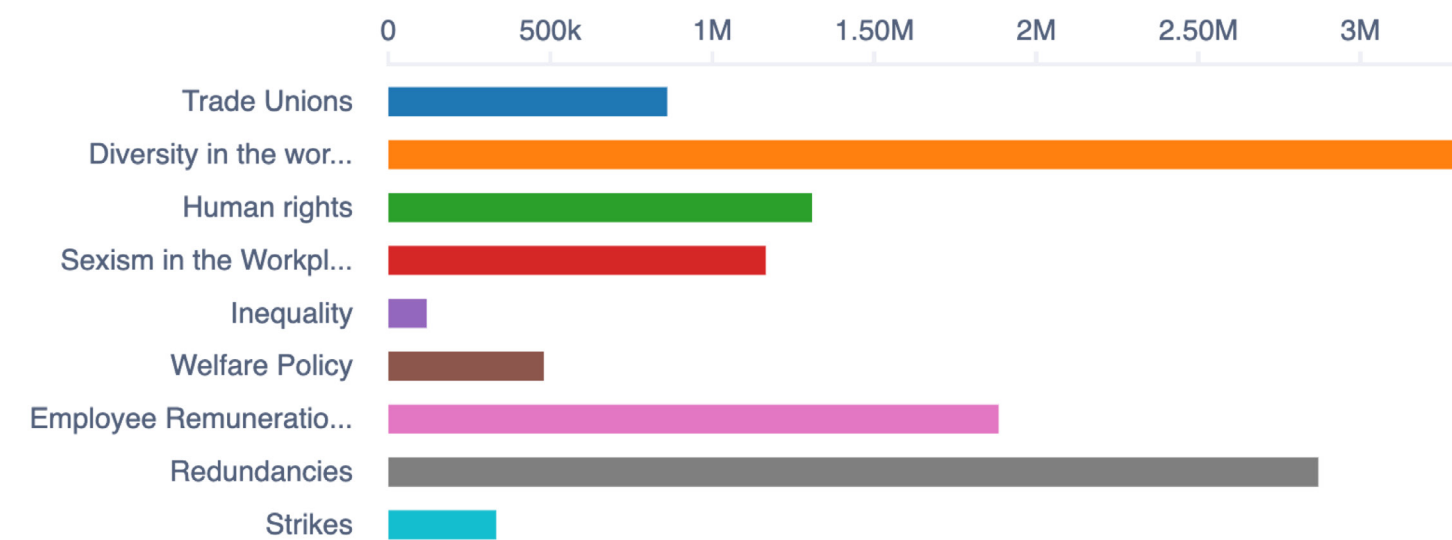
ESG: Social

For **Signal AI**'s set of 'Social' ESG topics, 'Diversity in the Workplace' and 'Redundancies' have received the most coverage so far this year.

Signal AI Insight

The most important social topics of 2020

Number of articles by search



Global volume of coverage for Signal AI 'Social' ESG topics (Jan 1 - Nov 30)



Redundancies

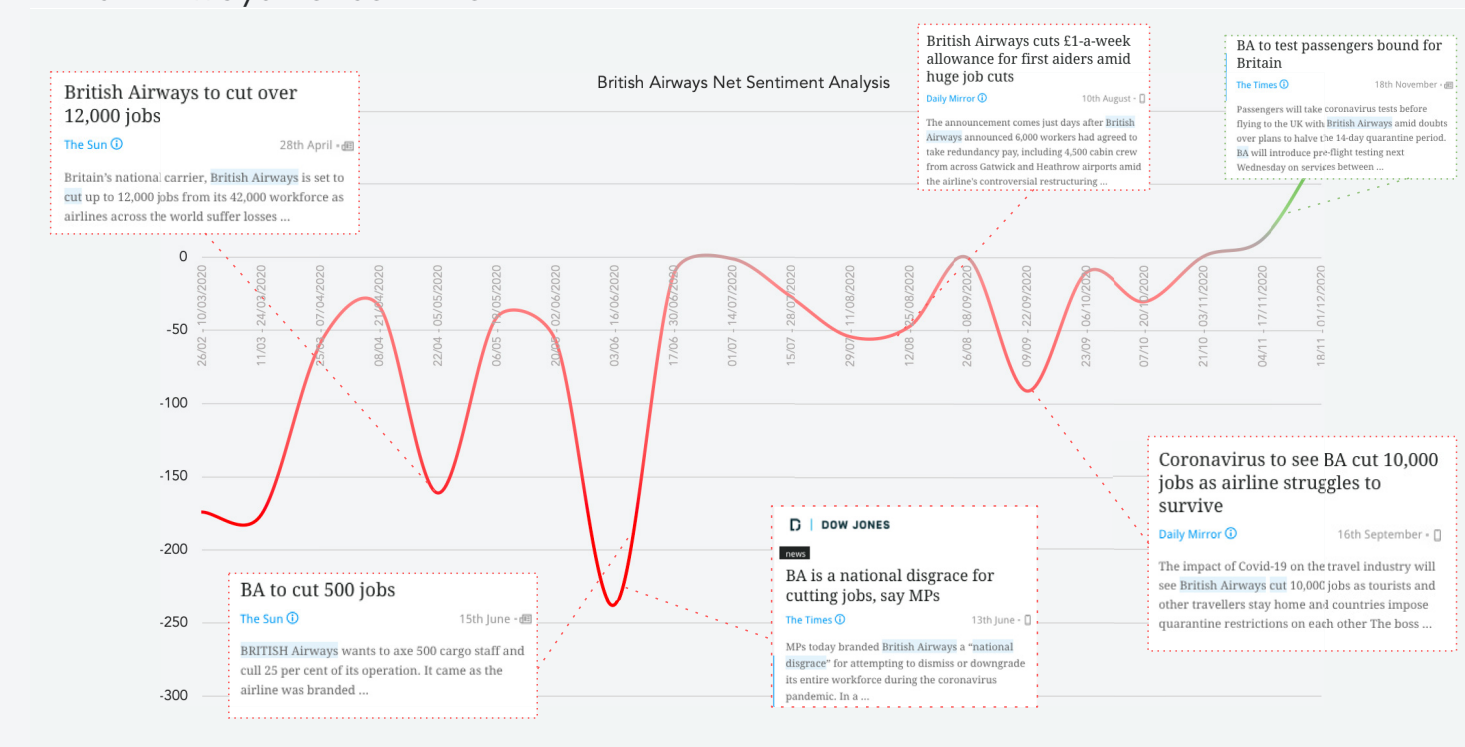
During the pandemic many organisations have suffered huge economic losses, and many have announced large-scale redundancies. Through **Signal AI**'s platform we can analyse how job cuts can impact organisational public perception.

British Airways has received substantial bouts of negative press in-line with announcements relating to redundancies, and due to a lack of support for its staff during challenging times.

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Evolving sentiment towards British Airways amid redundancies

British Airways net sentiment



Media sentiment towards British Airways in UK National media (March - November, 2020)



Female Leadership

With diversity in the workplace a hot topic this year, **Signal AI** analysed how organisational moves towards improved diversity can positively impact public perception.

Two notable stories regarding diversity, more specifically female leadership, include that of Harley-Davidson and Citigroup who appointed women to top positions for the first time.



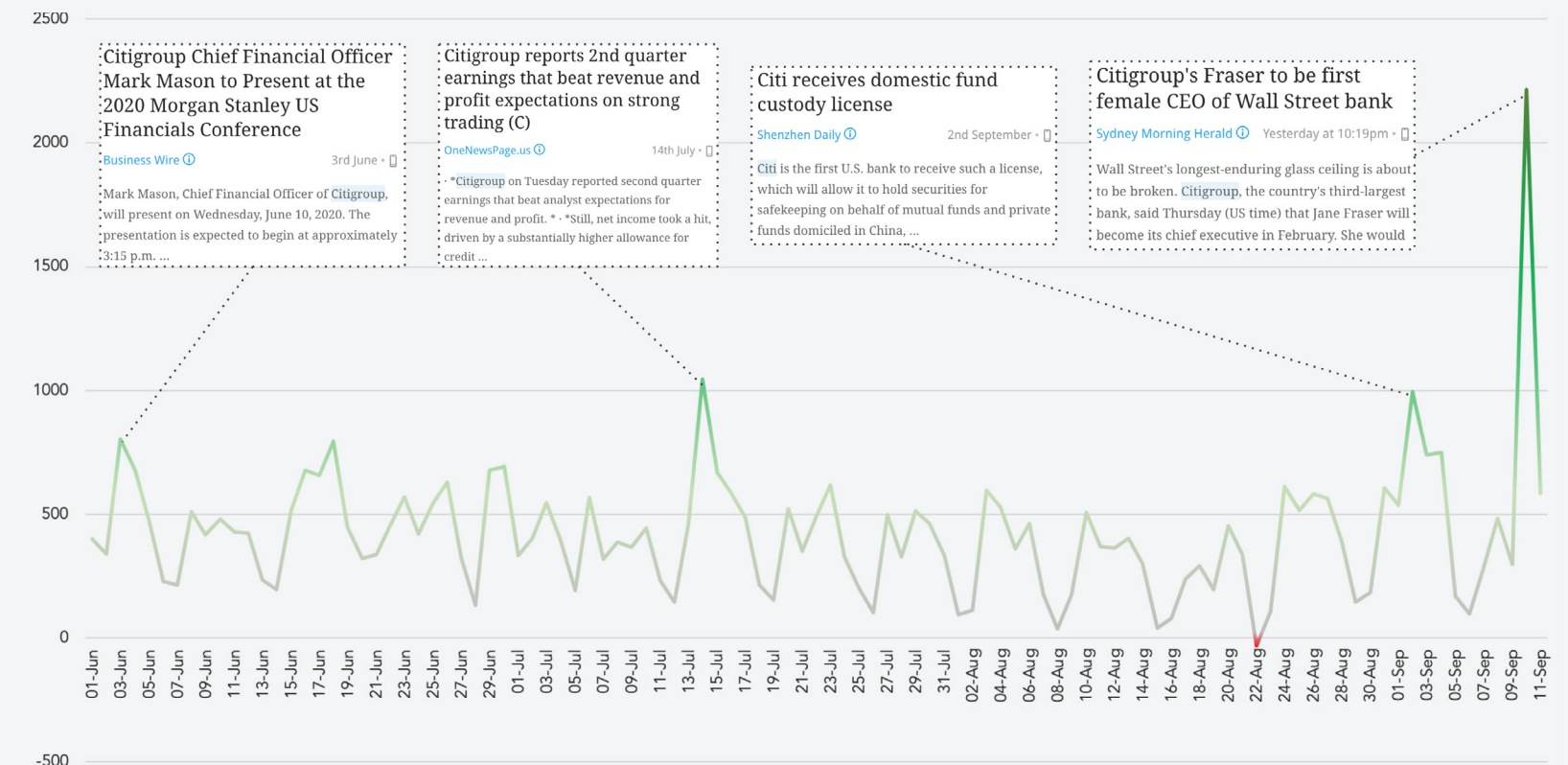
- Positive news coverage for Citigroup more than doubled following Fraser's appointment.
- Jane Fraser was appointed as CEO of Citigroup – she is the first woman to lead a big Wall Street bank.

Global Media Sentiment over the past 3 months of Citigroup's Global Media Coverage showing major peak in Positive Sentiment as **Fraser is announced as the first woman to lead a big Wall Street bank.**

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Evolving sentiment toward Citigroup when appointing Jane Fraser as CEO

Number of articles by search



Global media sentiment towards Citigroup from Jan 1 - Sep 13.



* Data extracted from news items mentioning Citigroup in headline and/or summary from over 3 million potential sources.

Female Leadership

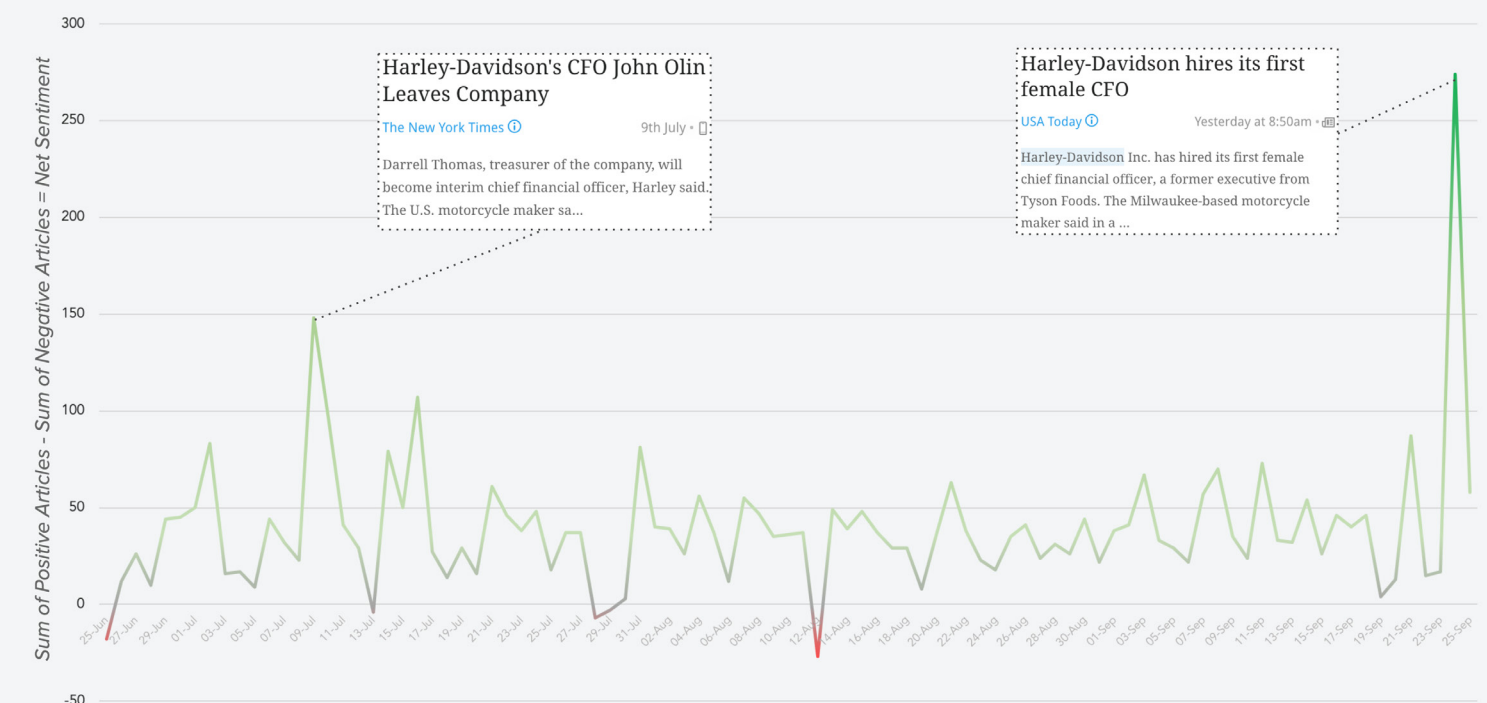


- Harley-Davidson's appointed their first female Chief Financial Officer, Gina Goetta.

* Global Media Sentiment over the past 3 months of Harley-Davidson's Global Media Coverage showing a major peak in Positive Sentiment as Goette is announced as the first woman Chief Financial Officer.

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Evolving sentiment toward Harley Davidson when appointing Gina Goette as CEO
Number of articles by search



Global media sentiment towards Harley Davidson from June 25 - Sep 27.

Human Rights

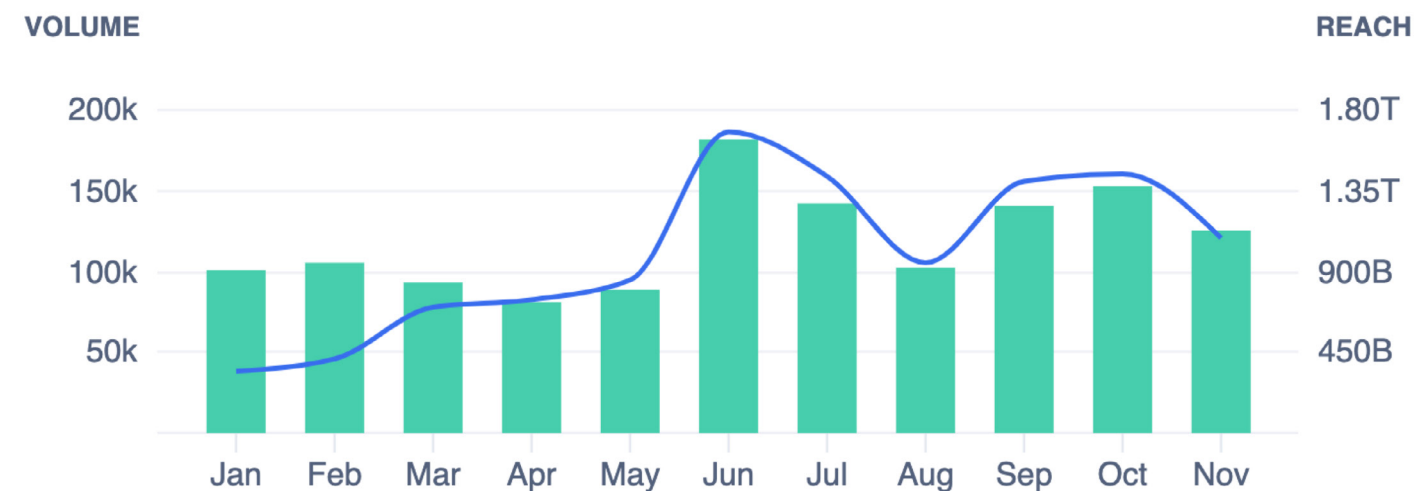
In addition to redundancies and diversity in the workplace, human rights has received growing attention.

- News on human rights peaked in June - 27% of this coverage was attributed to the killing of George Floyd.
- Other news included controversy for various companies found to be abusing labour and human rights standards, such as Boohoo.

Signal AI analysed how this news not only impacted public perception of Boohoo in the media, but also acted as a catalyst for a drop in share price.

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Number of articles and reach over time



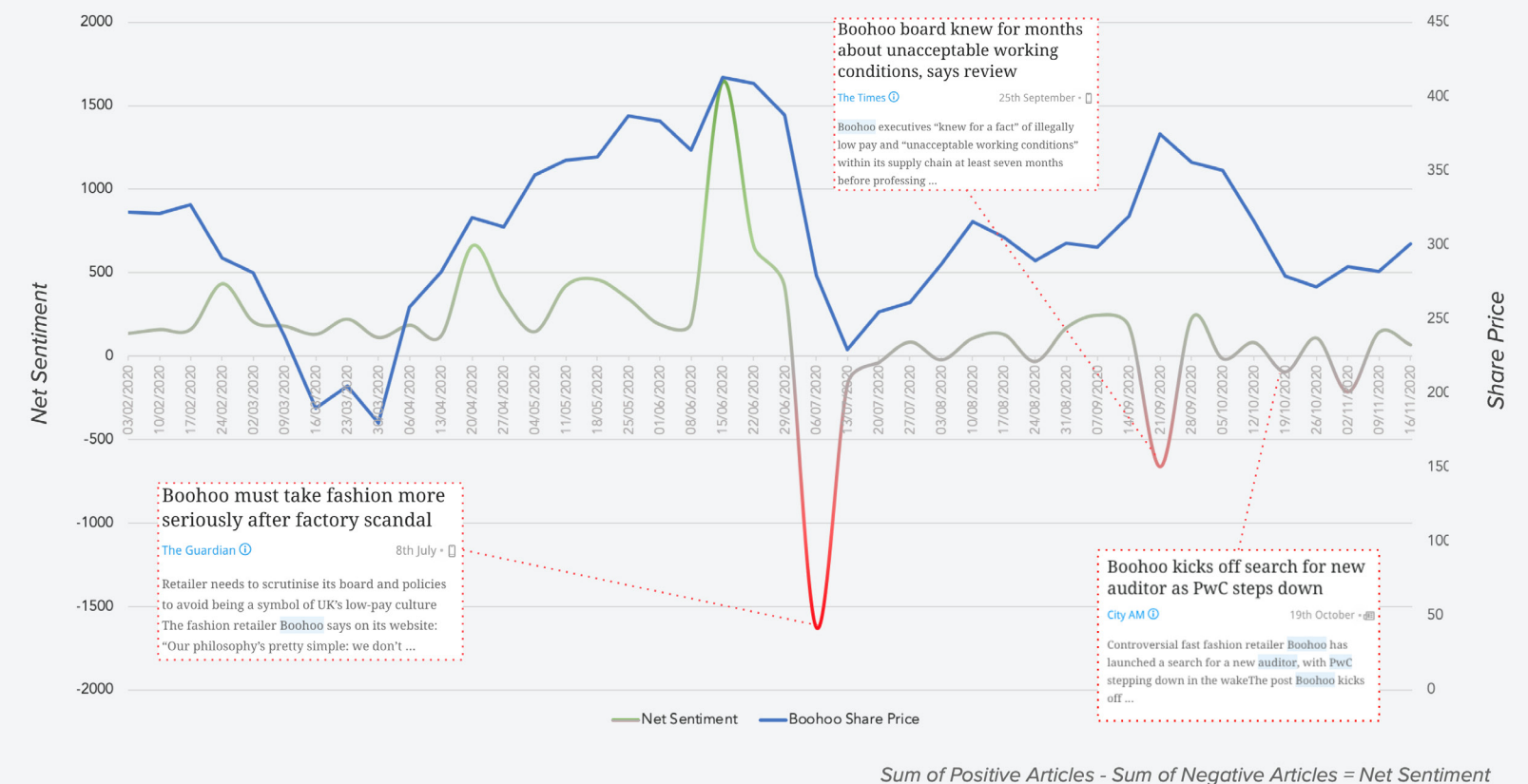
Global Volume of Coverage for 'Human Rights'
(Jan 1 - Nov 30)



Signal AI Insight

Evolving sentiment towards Boohoo after slavery allegations

Net sentiment and share price - Boohoo



Global news sentiment towards Boohoo
(between Feb - September, 2020)



ESG Governance

Regulatory changes

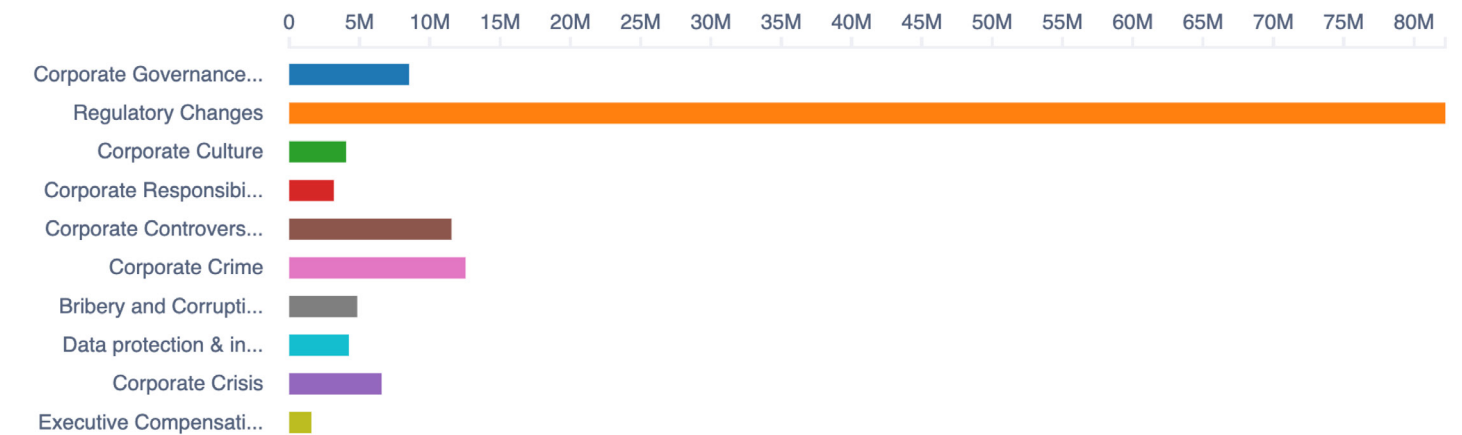
'Regulatory Changes' was by far the most covered ESG Governance topic this year – 81.6M articles related to this topic.

- 30% of all news on regulatory changes originated from the US, followed by the UK (6.7%).



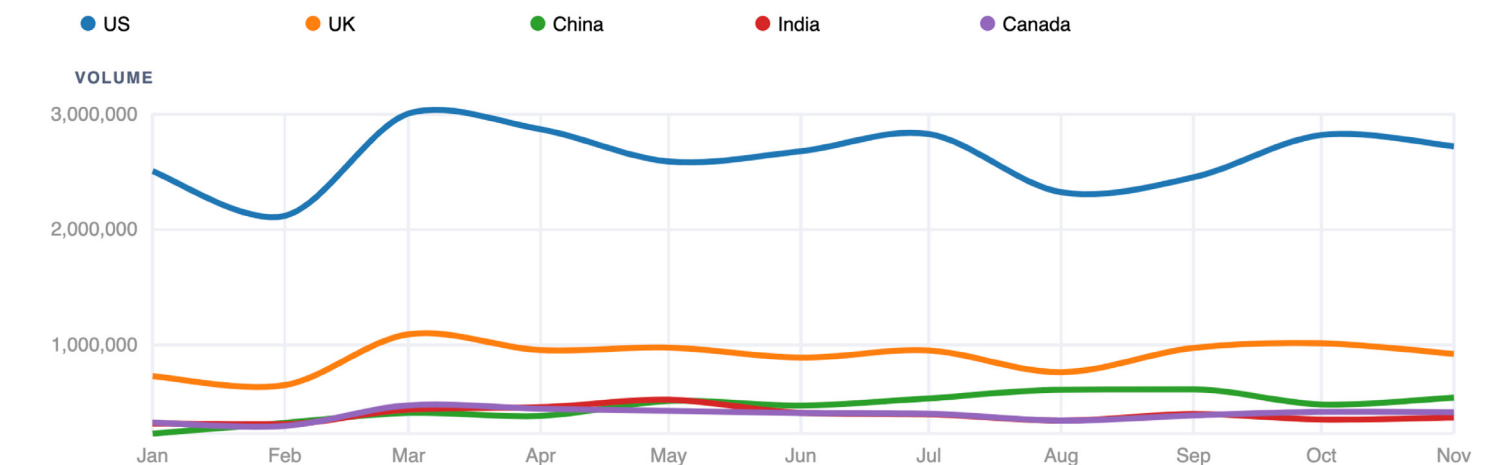
Signal AI Insight

Number of articles by search



Signal AI Insight

Number of articles over time



Global volume of coverage for 'Regulatory Changes' ESG topic (Jan 1 - Nov 30) for the top 5 countries by source location.

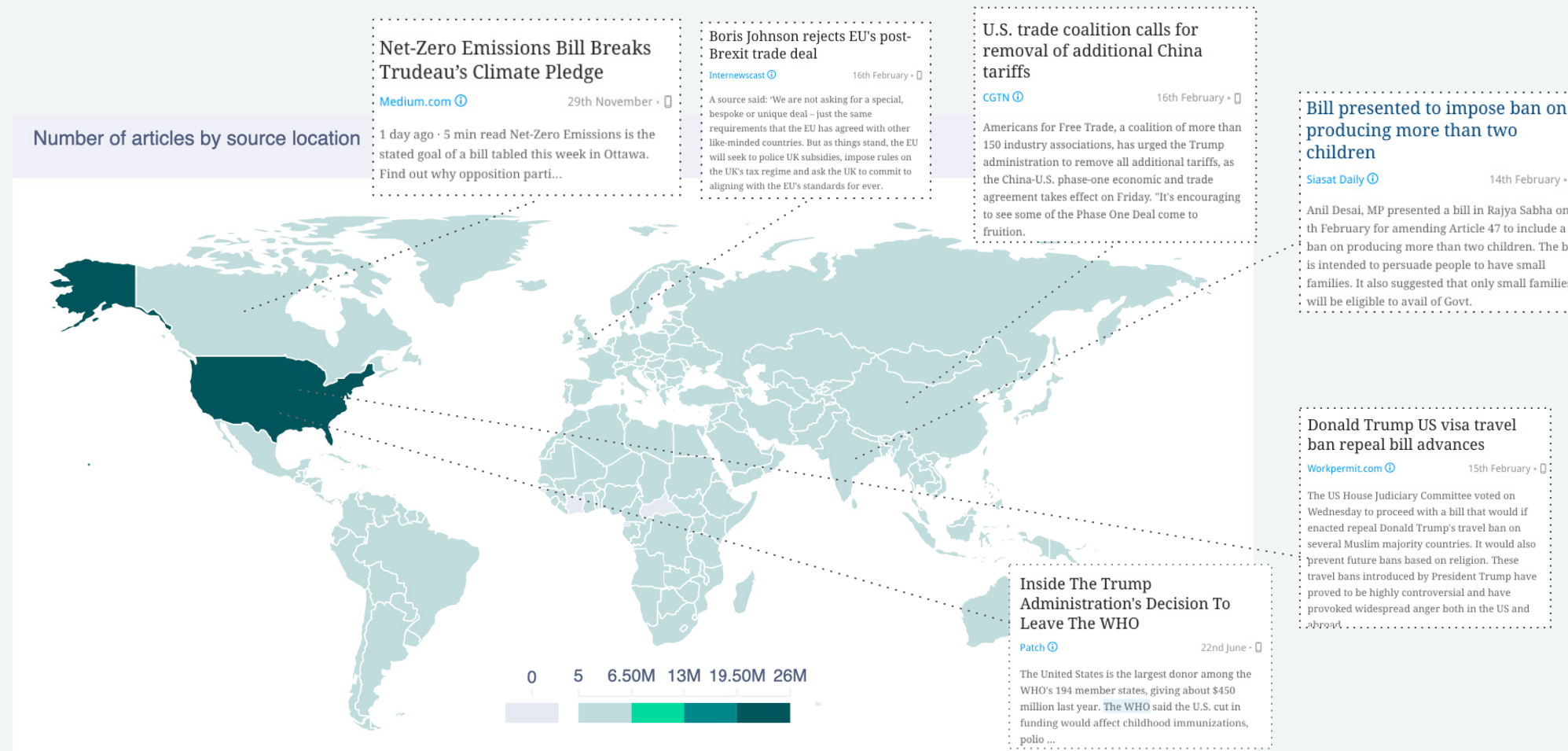
This year has seen substantial regulatory changes that will change the world as we know it.

- From the US revoking its relationship with the WHO to the ongoing Brexit trade deal debacle in the UK, this year has been far from uneventful.

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Global coverage for 'Regulatory Changes'

Top 5 countries in terms of coverage (January-November, 2020)



Notable stories for 'Regulatory Changes' in the top 5 countries by source location (Jan - Nov, 2020)





About Signal AI

Signal AI is one of the leading companies turning the world's data into knowledge and empowering business leaders across a range of industries to make better decisions. Signal AI customers include banks, law firms, governments, and NGOs.

It was recently nominated 23 on the Sage Sunday Times Tech Track 2020 and was the second fastest growing AI company on the list.

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More about Signal AI Dashboards, powering this report

Signal AI's Dashboards help you understand the data that matters to you. With a whole new set of AI-powered real time data visualization insight tools and analytics available at the click of a button, **Signal AI Dashboards** arm you with a new way to plan and strategize, horizon scan, and report, and is being used now in many sectors including Reputation Management, ESG Performance, Supply Chain Risk, Tax Compliance, and many others.

The platform's brain, named **AIQ**, can read and interpret over 5 million documents a day, and surface critical media intelligence in real time.