

# Report on CGTN Think Tank Online Survey



Should the United States be  
investigated by the WHO over  
COVID-19's origins?

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Report on Online Survey  
CGTN Think Tank

During the meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in Kuwait on July 28, Blinken reiterated that the United States fully supports the WHO to conduct virus tracing in multiple places including China and he also emphasized that the next phase investigation on origin tracing should be based on evidence, led by experts, free from interference and conducted in a timely and transparent manner. He also called on the international community to stay united on this issue. In response, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian made it clear on July 29 that China agreed that the investigation should be based on evidence, led by experts and free from interference, but said that's not what the US has been doing. China believes an investigation on origin tracing for phase one should not be repeated, especially as a clear conclusion was reached, and a phase two investigation shall be carried out in multiple countries and places in the world on the basis of extensive consultations among WHO member states.

Should the WHO investigate the United States over the origins of COVID-19? What are the reasons for the United States to use intelligence agencies to trace the virus? Does linking the virus to countries or groups intensify prejudice and discrimination?

CGTN Think Tank has conducted a global survey in Chinese, English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian on social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, VK, Weibo and WeChat. The results are now available.

**Key Points (among all netizens who participated in the poll) :**

- **83.12% of respondents support the WHO investigating the United States over the**

origins of COVID-19;

- **French-speaking netizens (84%) and Spanish-speaking netizens (81%) on YouTube cast higher percentages of affirmative responses to the question, “Do you think the U.S. is using intelligence agencies to investigate the origin of the virus for political reasons?”**
- **88.27% of respondents believe “Discrimination and violence against Asian-Americans are on the rise in the United States”; on Twitter, Arabic-speaking netizens have the highest percentage of votes in agreement, reaching 83%.**

*“In the second half of 2019, 106 samples from the archived samples of routine blood donations in nine states tested positive for novel coronavirus, followed by an outbreak of pneumonia in multiple states caused by electronic cigarettes. Then the Fort Detrick Biological Laboratory was abruptly shut down by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).”*

**Q1: Do you think the WHO should investigate the United States on the origins of COVID-19?**

**Among netizens who participated in the poll, 83.12% wanted the WHO to launch investigations into the United States.**

Q1: Do you think the WHO should investigate the United States on the origins of COVID-19?	Yes	No	Others
cgtnofficial	80%	16%	4%
cgtn en español	81%	15%	4%
CGTN Français	88%	8%	4%
cgtnarabic	82%	13%	5%
CGTN на русском	84%	9%	7%
Total	80.59%	15.3%	4.11%

Table 1: YouTube Q1 Data

Analysis of YouTube data: over 80% of respondents across 5 major languages cast their votes in favor.

Q1: Do you think the WHO should investigate the United States over the origins of COVID-19?	Yes	No	Others
@CGTNOfficial	79%	16%	5%
@cgtnespanol	78%	22%	0
@CGTNFrancais	74%	15%	11%
@cgtnarabic	84%	12%	4%
@CGTN на русском	86.4%	11.4%	2.2%
Total	80.38%	15.13%	4.49%

Table 2: Twitter Q1 Data

Analysis of Twitter data: Spanish-speaking respondents were the most strongly opposed, with 22% of choosing “No.” Russian-speaking respondents were the most in favor, with 86.4% choosing “Yes.”

Q1:Do you think the WHO should investigate the United States over the origins of COVID-19?	Yes	No	Others
CGTN Official	96%	2%	2%
CGTN Spanish	96%	2%	2%
CGTN French	96%	3%	1%
CGTN Russian	99.41%	0.59%	0
China-Russia Headlines	95.87%	3.72%	0.41%
Total	96.53%	1.54%	1.93%

Table 3: Weibo Q1 Data

Analysis of Weibo data: Chinese respondents strongly support the WHO to investigate the United States over the origins of COVID-19, with 96.53% of netizens casting their votes in favor.

### The respondents in 5 key languages besides Chinese - comment analysis

Keywords: WHO/ Investigation/ Laboratory/ Origin Tracing/Hiding

By analyzing comments from netizens who participated in the survey in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Russian, **we found:**

**Some English-speaking netizens support** the WHO to investigate the United States on the origins of COVID-19; think the WHO should not use double standards as it represents

the world, not just the United States; say those who keep blaming others always have more to hide.

**Some Spanish-speaking netizens believe** it is necessary to trace the origin of the virus. Especially for those major powers in the world.

**Some French-speaking netizens believe** there is no doubt Fort Detrick has secrets. But no country has been brave enough to investigate it.

**Some Arabic-speaking netizens think** the WHO should not focus on tracing the origin of COVID-19, no matter whether in the United States, China or anywhere else. The WHO should spare no efforts to contain the pandemic and coordinate with experts from around the world to develop a more effective vaccine to defeat the pandemic. COVID-19 has become an enemy of all mankind.

**Some Russian-speaking netizens think** if U.S. health departments had taken a closer look at the death cases sweeping across the United States caused by e-cigarettes, they would have found the novel coronavirus and perhaps stopped the spread of the virus.

*“On May 26, 2021, U.S. President Joe Biden ordered U.S. intelligence agencies to ‘redouble their efforts’ on virus tracing and report back within 90 days. “*

**Q2: Do you think the U.S. is using intelligence agencies to investigate the origin of the virus for political reasons?**

**Among all netizens who cast their votes on YouTube, 84% of French-speaking netizens and 81% of Spanish-speaking netizens said the U.S. is investigating the origin of the virus via intelligence agencies for political reasons.**

Q2: Do you think the U.S. is using intelligence agencies to investigate the origin of the virus for political reasons?		Yes	No	Others
	cgtnofficial	76%	21%	3%
	cgtn en español	81%	16%	3%
	CGTN Français	84%	13%	3%
	cgtnarabic	78%	14%	8%
	CGTN на русском	78%	17%	5%
Total		80.7%	15.23%	4.07%

Table 4: YouTube Q2 data

Q2: Do you think the U.S. is using intelligence agencies to investigate the origin of the virus for political reasons?	Yes	No	Others
@CGTNOfficial	68%	28%	4%
@cgtnenespanol	73%	23%	4%
@CGTNFrancais	66.0%	29.5%	4.5%
@cgtnarabic	75%	20%	5%
@CGTN на русском	70.1%	26.7%	3.2%
Total	71.3%	23.42%	5.28%

Table 5: Twitter Q2 Data

Q2: Do you think the U.S. is using intelligence agencies to investigate the origin of the virus for political reasons?	Yes	No	Others
CGTN Official	85%	12%	3%
CGTN Spanish	84%	11%	5%
CGTN French	96%	4%	0%
CGTN Russian	82.05%	11.54%	6.41%
China-Russia Headlines	88.89%	8.73%	2.38%
Total	85.59%	11.01%	3.4%

Table 6: Weibo Q2 Data

## The respondents in 5 key languages besides Chinese - comment analysis

Keywords: Political means / WHO/ Manipulation

In this survey, through the analysis of the comments in English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian, **we found** that more than 10,000 English-speaking respondents voted on the above question on YouTube, and 76 percent of them believed that “the U.S. is using intelligence agencies to investigate the origin of the virus for political reasons.” French and Spanish-speaking respondents led the way, with 84% and 81% in favor respectively.

Messages from various platforms include:

**An English-speaking netizen said** that “for the U.S. intelligence community to conduct the probe into the origin-tracing of the virus is political manipulation to shift the blame for the U.S. failure in response to COVID-19, rather than an intelligence investigation.”

**A Spanish-speaking netizen commented** that “if the U.S. really wants to investigate the origins of the virus, it should invite the WHO to investigate the cases of pneumonia and influenza in the U.S. in 2019 and the reasons for the closure of Fort Detrick.”

**A French-speaking netizen believed** that “the United States insists on the lab leak theory, which is nothing more than a distraction from the domestic epidemic. In terms of the number of COVID-19 deaths, the U.S. is breaking all records, so it tries to divert the attention while blaming China on its own multiple mistakes in order to demonize China. Obviously, China is not perfect, but I don’t believe it could create this virus at all.”

**An Arabic-speaking netizen commented** that “ordering the U.S. intelligence agencies to investigate the origins of the virus is be driven by political reasons. What is the focus of the U.S. intelligence community on the virus issue, purely from the medical and scientific fields? Is this something that the U.S. intelligence services should be involved in?”

**A Russian-speaking netizen mentioned** that the U.S. lied about its investigation into Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

**Q3: Do you think that the incidents of discrimination and violence against Asians in the United States have sharply increased in the wake of ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?**

**Among the participants, 88.27% agreed with this statement; Arabic-language respondents had the highest percentage of affirmative votes on Twitter with 83%.**

Q3: Do you think that the incidents of discrimination and violence against Asians in the United States have sharply increased in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?	Yes	No	Others
cgtnofficial	84%	13%	3%
cgtn en español	86%	7%	7%
CGTN Français	70%	25%	5%
cgtnarabic	82%	10%	8%
CGTN на русском	72%	21%	7%
Total	83.83%	12.28%	3.89%

Table 7: YouTube Q3 data

Analysis of YouTube data: the question “Do you think that incidents of discrimination and violence against Asians in the United States have sharply increased in the wake of ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?” was the topic with the highest number of respondents in five languages.

Q3: Do you think that the incidents of discrimination and violence against Asians in the United States have sharply increased in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?	Yes	No	Others
@CGTNOfficial	79%	16%	5%
@cgtnespanol	74%	16%	10%
@CGTNFrancais	77%	18%	5%
@cgtnarabic	83%	15%	2%
@CGTN на русском	70.2%	14%	15.8%
Total	78.61%	15.09%	6.3%

Table 8: Twitter Q3 data

Analysis of Twitter data: the Arabic-language respondents were the group with the highest percentage of affirmative votes with 83%.

Q3: Do you think that the incidents of discrimination and violence against Asians in the United States have sharply increased in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?	Yes	No	Others
CGTN Official	93%	3%	4%
CGTN Spanish	92%	4%	4%
CGTN French	90%	5%	5%
CGTN Russian	93.25%	2.11%	4.64%
China-Russia Headlines	95.48%	2.01%	2.51%
Total	93.35%	2.21%	4.44%

Table 9: Weibo Q3 data

## The respondents in 5 key languages besides Chinese - comment analysis

Keywords: Persecution / Discrimination / Racism / Ugly / China-phobia

In this survey, by analyzing the comments made by respondents in 5 key languages, namely English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian, **we found that** this question had the most engagement among Facebook users. Among these 5 languages, the Spanish-speaking participants on Facebook left the most comments with as high as 85% of votes in favor. Comments from various platforms include:

**An English-speaking netizen said** “it's not fair, but it is indeed (the incidents of discrimination against Asians) on the rise. It saddens me to see someone who did nothing wrong get hurt in this situation.”

**A Spanish-speaking netizen commented** that “racism has always existed in the U.S. As for the (novel) coronavirus, I don't think China should be responsible for it. The U.S. looked for and found a scapegoat, so it could blame its own mistakes on China. Anti-



Asian racism has spread almost all over the world. It has certainly happened in the United States for a long time and will continue after the pandemic.”

**A French-speaking netizen stated** that “this (discrimination and violence against Asians) is not unique to the U.S. Sinophobia is found in many countries, and those people who do not think with their minds are with this sentiment. What we need to really think about is how we treat the planet, people and nature, rather than taking advantage of this situation to speculate in the market and destroy freedom.”

**An Arabic-speaking netizen commented** “I think that it is not just that discrimination and violence against Asians in the United States have worsened in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. Racism is a dirty, ideological epidemic that exists in any time and space, just in varying degrees.”

**A Russian-speaking netizen said** that “the U.S. system is hypocritical and conducts harmful propaganda campaigns against the rest of the world.”