

Robotics in the News, 2019-2026: Volume, Geography and Tone of Global Robotics Coverage, and How It Compares with Research and Invention

Fliar BI · Prism Research Layer · Working paper, October 2026 · Dataset and code: github.com/fliarbi/prism-news-api · Licence CC BY-NC 4.0

Abstract

We measure how robots and robotics were covered in a global news index from January 2019 to July 2026, using 285,504 de-duplicated robotics articles, and set that coverage beside 227,037 research papers (2015-2025) and 311,246 patent families (2015-2024) on robotics. Six results stand out:

1. **Growing attention.** Robotics rose from 18.17 to 22.39 articles per 10,000 news articles between 2019 and 2025, a 23.2% increase in share, after a low of 14.34 in 2020.
2. **A January peak.** January carries 10.23% of a typical year's robotics news, the largest share of any month. It is the month of the annual Consumer Electronics Show.
3. **Geography.** Robotics is most over-represented in the news of Denmark (4.56) and Taiwan (3.9), and, among large sources, China (3.44), Germany (3.33), Japan (3.18) and South Korea (2.81). The United States holds nearly half of located robotics news (47.75%) at a lift of 0.99, and India is under-represented (0.49). Within India, Karnataka (2.43), Telangana (2.43) and Kerala (2.35) lead; within the United States, Nevada (4.3), Massachusetts (3.01) and California (2.2). China's attention to robotics rose 2.06-fold from 2023 to 2025.
4. **Tone and urgency.** 92.9% of robotics articles are positive in tone (all news: 56.8%), and 54.9% are rated critical priority (all news: 42.6%). Robotics news from Ukraine and Russia is the exception, at more than 40% negative.
5. **Measurement.** 23.7% of raw matches for robot vocabulary were templated pages, shopping deals, market-report advertisements, entertainment items or office-software automation. Counting them would inflate coverage and would distort its geography.
6. **Research and invention.** Robotics papers grew from 21.61 to 46.99 per 10,000 papers between 2015 and 2025 (2.17 times). Robotics patent families grew 4.46-fold from 2015 to 2024, and 77.4% of them were filed in China.

Findings stated for citation

- **F1.** Robotics rose from 18.17 to 22.39 articles per 10,000 news articles between 2019 and 2025 (23.2%).
- **F2.** January carried on average 10.23% of each year's robotics news (2019-2025), against 8.33% for an even spread.
- **F3.** 92.9% of robotics articles were positive in tone, 1.64 times the all-news share.
- **F4.** Household service robots were the most frequent theme (7.25% of themed articles).

- **F5.** Denmark (4.56) and Taiwan (3.9), and among large sources China (3.44), Germany (3.33), Japan (3.18) and South Korea (2.81), were the most over-represented countries; the United States sat at 0.99 and India at 0.49.
- **F6.** Robotics as a share of China's news rose 2.06-fold from 2023 to 2025, and Germany's 1.45-fold.
- **F7.** Within India, Karnataka (2.43), Telangana (2.43) and Kerala (2.35) had the most over-represented robotics coverage; Uttar Pradesh (0.65) had the least.
- **F8.** Within the United States, Nevada (4.3), Massachusetts (3.01) and California (2.2) had the most over-represented robotics coverage; New Jersey (0.1) had the least.
- **F9.** Robotics news from Ukraine (42.8%) and Russia (40.8%) was far more often negative than from the United States (7.7%).
- **F10.** Robotics papers rose 2.17-fold as a share of all papers between 2015 and 2025.
- **F11.** Robotics patent families published per year grew 4.46-fold between 2015 and 2024.
- **F12.** 77.4% of robotics patent families (2015–2024) were filed in China.

1. Introduction

Robots have moved from factory floors into warehouses, hospitals, homes and public spaces. News is one of the main ways the public learns about them: which machines exist, who builds them, and what they are used for. News coverage also shapes how robots are perceived, as helpers, as threats to jobs, or as weapons. Yet coverage is rarely measured as data in its own right. Industry surveys count installed robots. Bibliometric studies count research. Few sources count attention, meaning how much of the news robotics takes and when, where and in what tone.

This paper and its dataset do that. They combine three records for one topic: a global news index, research papers and patents. Each comparison uses a denominator, so that growth in the index or in publishing is not mistaken for growth in interest. The companion dataset publishes an article-level sample (71,393 rows) and full coverage tables, so every figure here can be re-derived. The [Prism News API](#) serves the full history.

2. Data and methods

News. The Prism news index holds articles from outlets worldwide; non-English articles are indexed in English translation. Each article carries its opening text (the first few sentences), a primary location, a graded tone label, an editorial priority rating (1–9), themes, keywords and named organisations. We count unique article identifiers; repeated rows for the same article are removed. When this release was built, 92.88% of the index was readable, so all counts are lower bounds.

Matching. An article is about robotics when its opening text contains *robot*, *robots*, *robotic*, *robotics*, *humanoid robot(s)*, *cobot(s)* or *roboticist(s)* as whole words. Several families of matches are excluded:

- office-software "robotic process automation" and chatbots;
- shopping deals ("robot vacuum on sale at its lowest price") and market-report advertisements;

- film, television and game items, and figurative uses ("like a robot");
- author bylines and newsletter boilerplate;
- a handful of templated pages that the index holds many thousands of times each, mostly digest pages repeated under new identifiers.

Together these removed 88,799 of 374,303 raw matches (23.7%). One reviewer read 40 randomly drawn matched openings, and an independent reviewer re-checked 15 of them. 31 referred to physical robots, robotic systems or the robotics industry (precision 77.5%), and in 20 (50%) robotics was the main subject. The false positives were passing mentions of robotics in lists of technologies or applications, robotic spacecraft or stage lighting in unrelated stories, a video game, a virtual "robot" influencer, figurative use in sports commentary, and a headline digest.

Measures. Coverage over time is expressed per 10,000 articles in the index that month or year, because the index grew from 11,807,177 articles in 2019 to 26,990,006 in 2025. Seasonality uses each year's within-year month shares, averaged over the complete years 2019–2025. Geography, tone, priority and themes use January 2023 – July 2026. Geography is expressed as lift: a country's share of robotics articles divided by its share of all located articles. Within India and the United States, a state's lift is its share of the country's located robotics articles divided by its share of all located news from that country. Place tags derived from ordinary words ("Congress", "Earth", "Winter", "Cloud", "Mobile") were treated as unlocated in every location field (15.3% of city-tagged articles).

Research and patents. Research papers are de-duplicated articles and reviews (2000–2025) with a robotics term in the title. Repository deposits and other senses (office-software automation, web robots, trading robots and an aerosol monitoring network) are excluded. Patent families (2006–2024) use the same title rule and are counted once per filing office.

3. Results

3.1 How much and when

The index holds 285,504 robotics articles from January 2019 to July 2026. Raw counts rose from 21,455 in 2019 to 60,421 in 2025, but the index also grew. As a share of all news, robotics fell from 18.17 per 10,000 in 2019 to 14.34 in 2020, 21.1% lower, and then rose every year to 22.39 in 2025 (Table 1). The 2025 share is 1.23 times the 2019 share.

Year	Robotics articles	All articles in index	Per 10,000
2019	21,455	11,807,177	18.17
2020	23,267	16,230,014	14.34
2021	28,437	17,281,220	16.46
2022	33,346	19,115,515	17.44
2023	37,037	20,484,506	18.08
2024	48,658	23,311,896	20.87
2025	60,421	26,990,006	22.39

Table 1. Robotics articles per year and as a share of the index. 2026 (January–July) is partial and omitted.

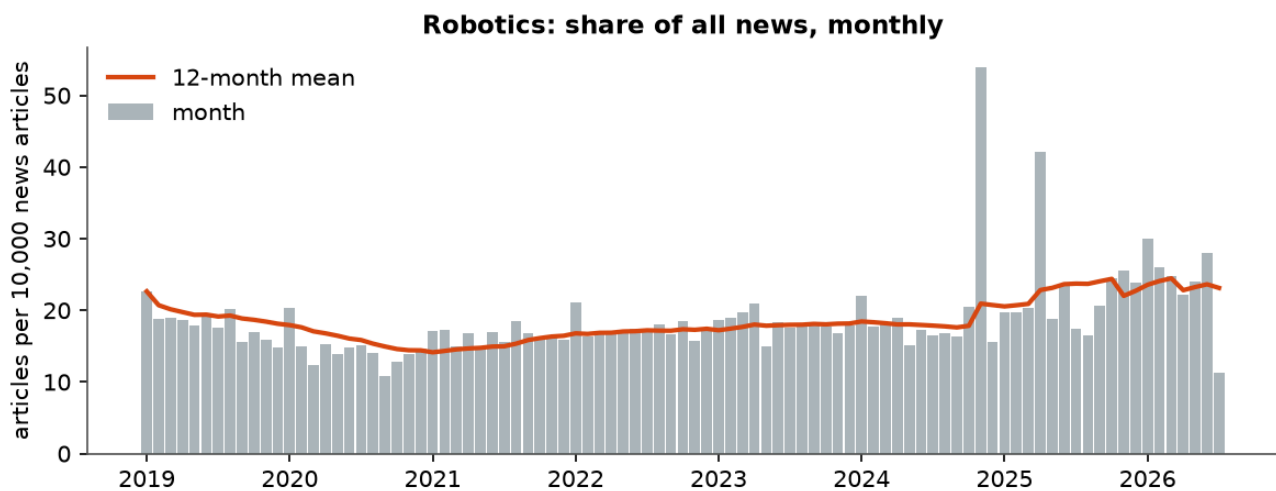


Figure 1. Robotics coverage as articles per 10,000 news articles, monthly, January 2019 – July 2026. Bars are months; the line is the 12-month mean. The spikes in November 2024 and April 2025 are bulk-dated batches of trade-press articles (see text).

Two months stand far above the rest: November 2024 (54.01 per 10,000) and April 2025 (42.08). In each, most of the month's articles carry a single date. They are batches of trade-press pages added to the index at once, not a news event, so we do not report a peak month.

Robotics news is only mildly seasonal (Figure 2). January holds 10.23% of a typical year's articles, against 8.33% for an even spread. January is the month of the annual Consumer Electronics Show, where consumer and humanoid robots are often shown, but the timing is a coincidence we do not test. November (9.78%) and April (9.39%) are inflated by the 2024 and 2025 batches. The quietest month is December (7.52%).

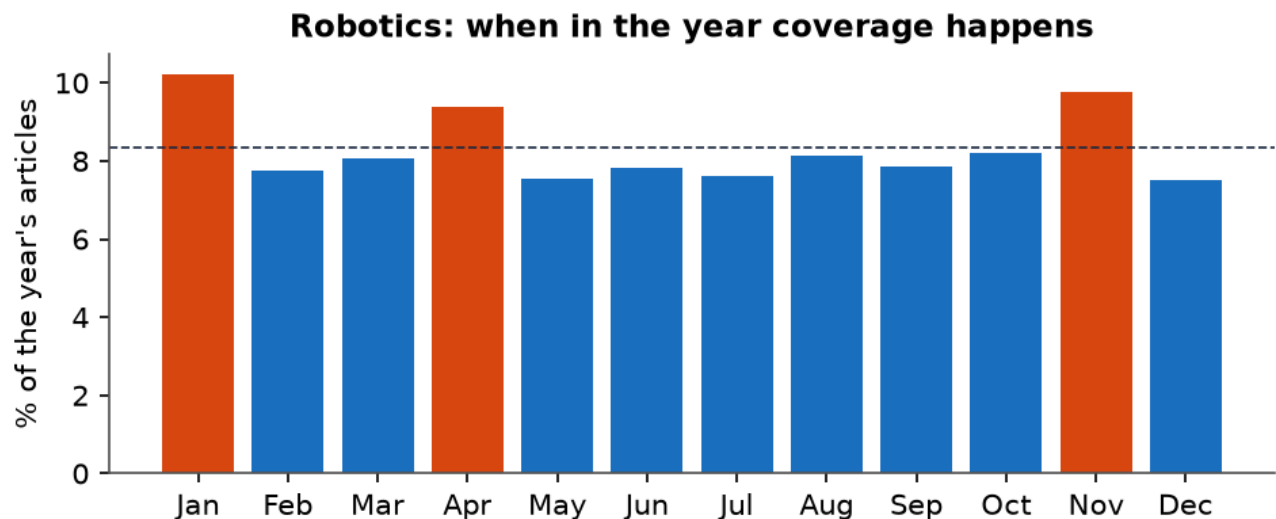


Figure 2. Share of each year's robotics articles published in each month, averaged over 2019–2025. Dashed line = an even spread (8.3% per month).

3.2 Where

Between January 2023 and July 2026, 67,938 robotics articles carried a primary location. The United States holds nearly half of them (47.75%), about its weight in located news overall (lift 0.99). Among the ten largest sources, robotics is most over-represented in China (3.44), Germany (3.33), Japan (3.18) and South Korea (2.81). Among smaller sources, Denmark (4.56) and Taiwan (3.9) have the highest lifts; the Netherlands (3.52) is left out because about half of its located articles are tagged to Erp, a Dutch village whose name

matches the software acronym ERP (enterprise resource planning). India holds 6.5% of located robotics news but is under-represented, at 0.49 (Table 2, Figure 3).

Country	Located robotics articles	Share %	Lift vs all news
United States	32,442	47.75	0.99
China	6,155	9.06	3.44
India	4,419	6.5	0.49
United Kingdom	3,638	5.35	0.92
Germany	2,663	3.92	3.33
Japan	2,299	3.38	3.18
Canada	1,373	2.02	0.94
Singapore	1,340	1.97	2.21
Australia	1,173	1.73	0.81
South Korea	1,145	1.69	2.81
France	979	1.44	0.73
Switzerland	725	1.07	2.46

Table 2. Leading countries in located robotics news, January 2023 – July 2026, with lift against all located news.

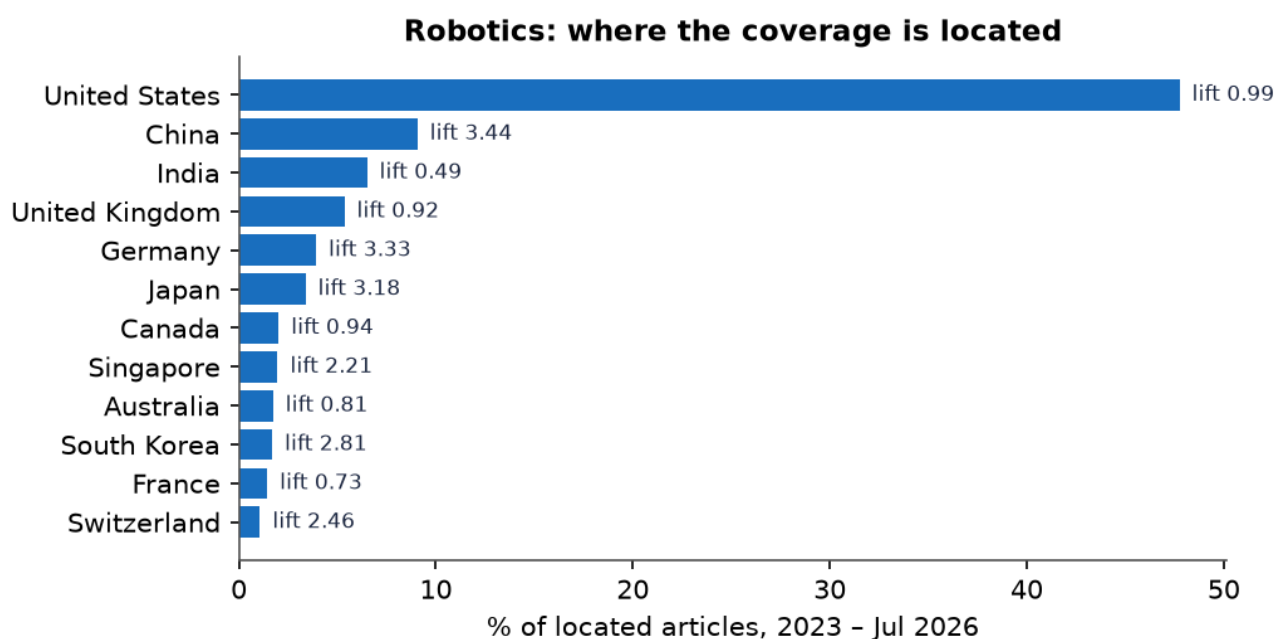


Figure 3. Leading countries by share of located robotics articles, 2023 – Jul 2026, labelled with lift against all located news.

3.3 Geo intelligence: continents, states and shifting attention

The world map (Figure 4) shows the pattern at a glance. Robotics is over-represented in the news of China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Germany and Denmark (the Netherlands also shows red, but see §3.2), and under-represented in Nigeria (0.3), Ireland (0.36), Brazil (0.37), India (0.49), Turkey (0.49), South Africa (0.51), New Zealand (0.54) and Russia (0.58). Most African countries have too few articles to map. By continent, Europe (1.18) and Asia (1.08) are slightly over-represented, North America sits at 0.98, and Oceania (0.69), South America (0.57) and Africa (0.32) are under-represented (Figure 7, left).

Robotics: which countries over- and under-cover the topic

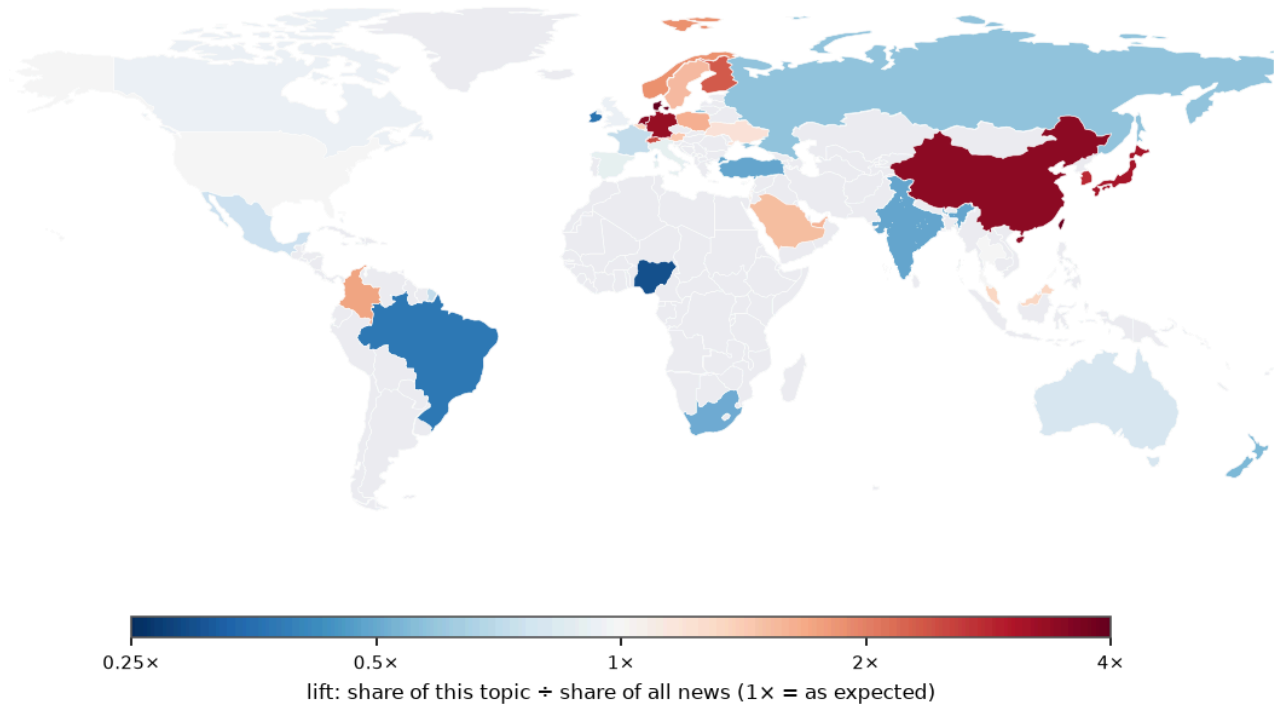


Figure 4. Lift of each country's share of located robotics articles, January 2023 – July 2026 (red = over-represented, blue = under-represented, grey = fewer than 100 articles). India is drawn with its official outline.

Within countries, the picture is sharper (Table 3). In India, robotics coverage concentrates in the southern states. Measured against each state's share of Indian news, Karnataka (2.43), Telangana (2.43) and Kerala (2.35) are the most over-represented, followed by Himachal Pradesh (1.71) and Tamil Nadu (1.64). Uttar Pradesh (0.65), Haryana (0.68) and West Bengal (0.7) are under-represented, and Maharashtra, with the most articles (455), sits at its expected weight (1.0) (Figure 5). Indian robotics coverage is small: 2,867 located articles in all. In the United States, Nevada (4.3), Massachusetts (3.01), California (2.2), Michigan (2.05) and Illinois (1.77) lead by lift. Nevada's articles are mostly tagged to Las Vegas, so its figure may include trade-show coverage; this is not tested. Alaska (2.06) and Delaware (1.7) also rank high, but their tags come mostly from a company name and from a town name shared with Massachusetts, so they are left out of Table 3. New Jersey (0.1), Mississippi (0.42) and North Dakota (0.5) are far below their weight in American news, and New York, the third-largest source of articles (1,944), is at 0.67 (Figure 6). North Carolina, which ranked high before ordinary-word place tags were removed, now sits at 1.24.

India: state	Articles	Lift	United States: state	Articles	Lift
Karnataka	387	2.43	Nevada	1,097	4.3
Telangana	242	2.43	Massachusetts	1,779	3.01
Kerala	164	2.35	California	5,477	2.2
Himachal Pradesh	66	1.71	Michigan	1,189	2.05
Tamil Nadu	236	1.64	Illinois	1,167	1.77
Gujarat	142	1.5	Texas	2,388	1.63
<i>lowest:</i> Rajasthan	86	0.87	<i>lowest:</i> Alabama	147	0.52
West Bengal	70	0.7	North Dakota	58	0.5
Haryana	50	0.68	Mississippi	69	0.42
Uttar Pradesh	237	0.65	New Jersey	460	0.1

Table 3. States with the highest (top six rows) and lowest (bottom four rows) lift in robotics coverage, January 2023 – July 2026, states with at least 50 articles; Alaska and Delaware are omitted as tagging artefacts (see text). Lift = the state's share of the country's located robotics articles ÷ its share of all located news from that country.

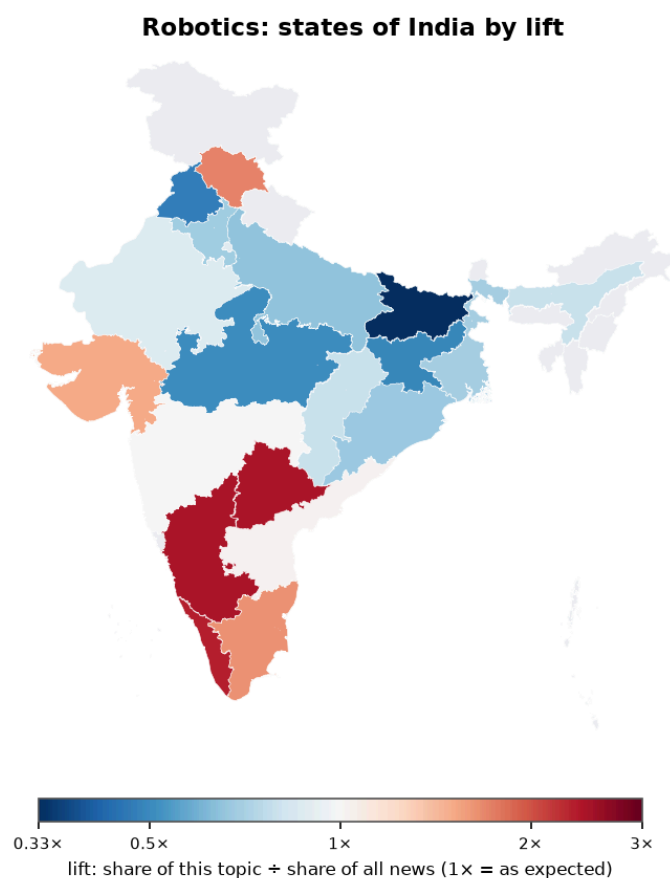


Figure 5. Lift of each Indian state's share of located robotics articles against its share of all located Indian news, January 2023 – July 2026. Official outline; Ladakh is drawn within Jammu and Kashmir in the boundary file used.

Robotics: states of United States by lift

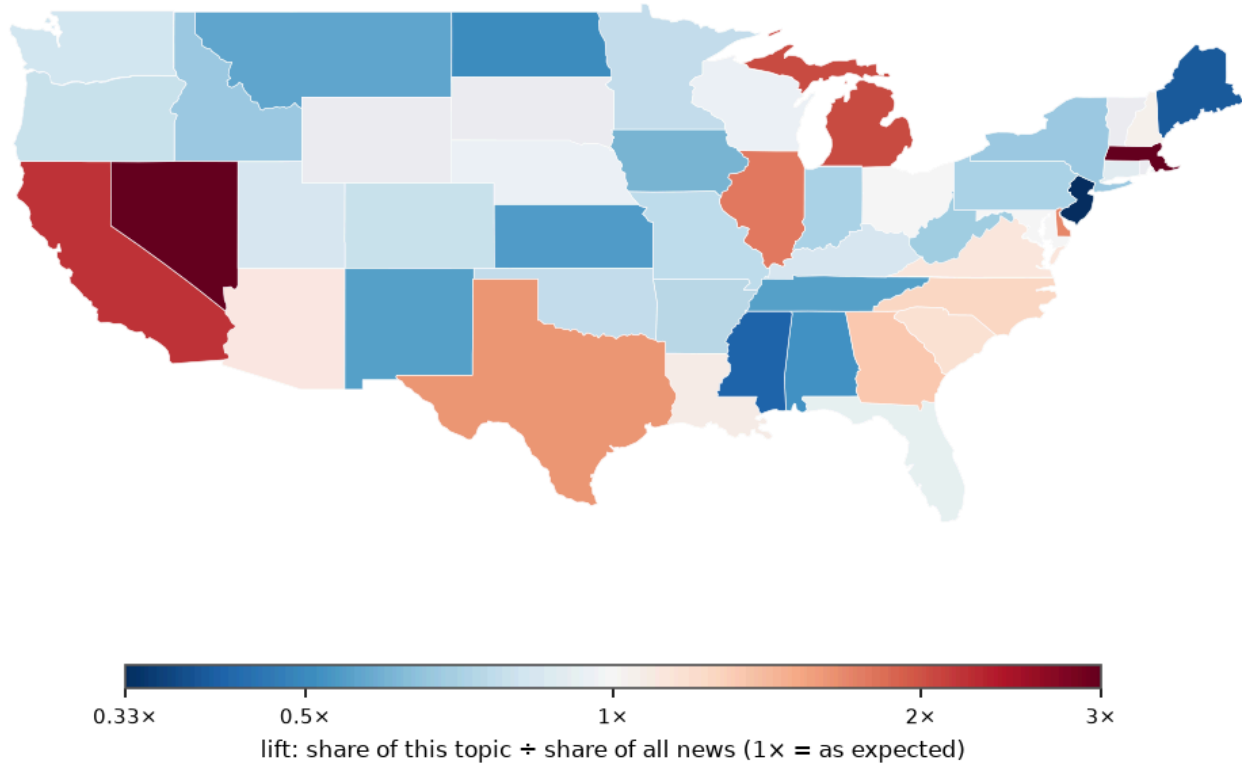


Figure 6. Lift of each US state's share of located robotics articles against its share of all located US news, January 2023 – July 2026.

Attention also moves between countries from year to year (Figure 7, right). Measured as robotics articles per 10,000 of each country's located news, China rose from 34.12 in 2023 to 70.27 in 2025 (2.06 times), and Germany from 49.16 to 71.35 (1.45 times). Colombia (3.84 times), Russia (2.32 times) and Ukraine (1.91 times) also rose, on smaller bases. The United States moved from 13.08 to 17.6 (1.35 times), and India from 7.89 to 10.13. Attention fell in France (from 14.86 to 10.45, 0.7 times), Israel (from 23.12 to 16.28), Switzerland (0.79) and Denmark (from 68.3 to 60.34), and was flat in the United Kingdom (1.03). The Netherlands' series is not reported because of the Erp tagging artefact.

Tone differs by country even after allowing for each country's news overall. Robotics news is far less negative than general news everywhere: in the United States 7.7% of robotics articles are negative, against 33.1% of all American news, and in China 7.7% against 27.2%. The exceptions are Ukraine (42.8% negative, against 72.4% for all Ukrainian news) and Russia (40.8%, against 72.1%), where robotics news is far more often negative than elsewhere, though still below its own national baseline.

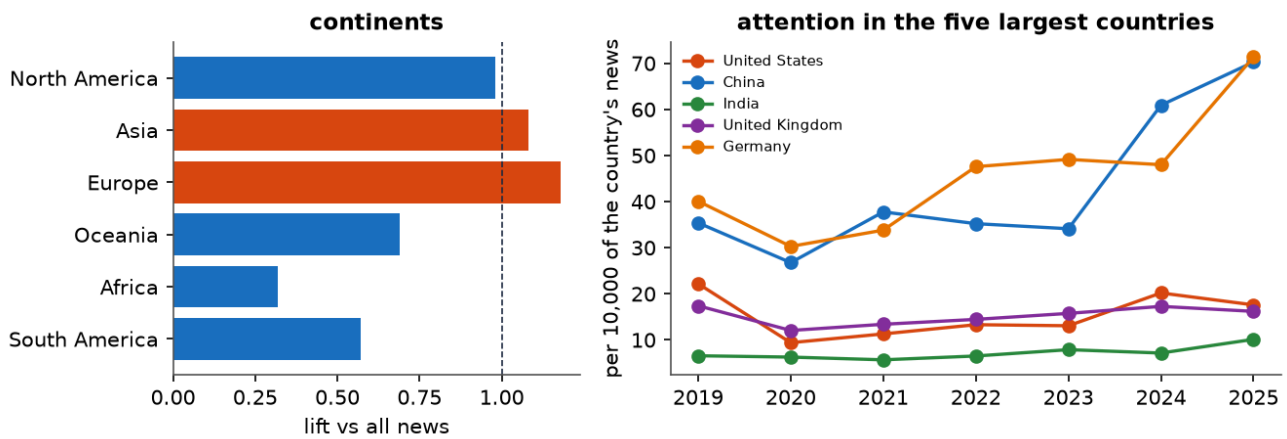


Figure 7. Left: lift by continent, January 2023 – July 2026. Right: robotics articles per 10,000 of each country's located news, 2019–2025, for the five countries with the most articles.

3.4 Tone, urgency and themes

Robotics coverage is far more positive than news in general (Figure 8). Among articles with a tone label, 92.9% are positive, against 56.8% across the index (1.64 times), and only 6.2% are negative, against 33.6%. All news is 5.42 times as likely to be negative. Editorial priority puts 54.9% of robotics articles at critical level (7 or higher), against 42.6% of all news (1.29 times).

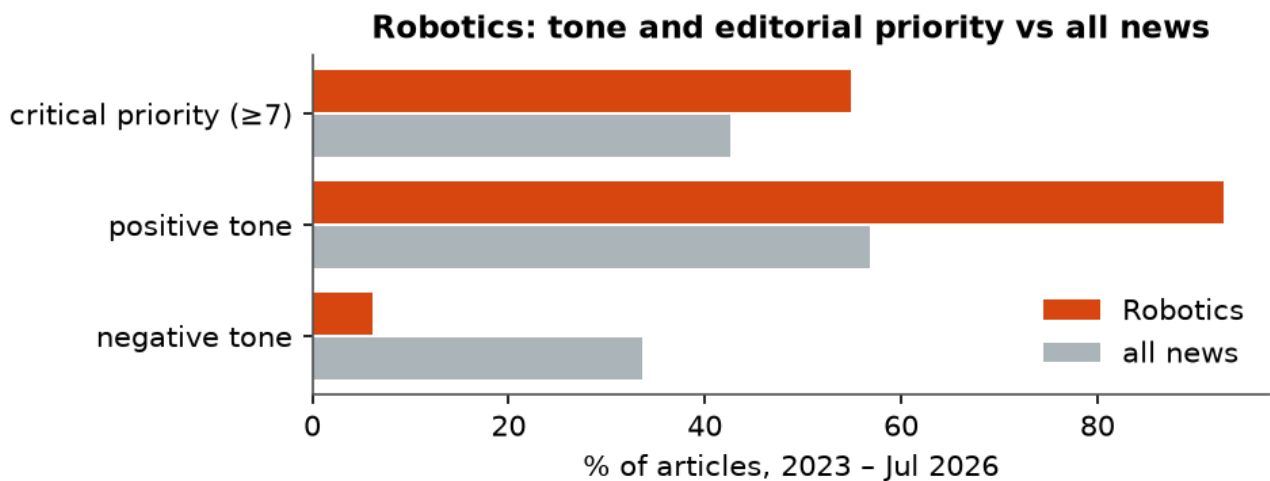


Figure 8. Tone and the share rated critical priority, robotics articles vs all news, 2023 – Jul 2026.

Themes show what robotics stories are about (Table 4). Household service robots (7.25% of themed articles) and entertainment and companion robots (6.62%) are the most common, followed by medical and surgical robotics (5.72%). Medical robotics is also among the themes most specific to the topic, at 359.81 times its rate in all news. Business themes such as product launches and partnerships are common but not specific (lift near 5).

Theme	Articles	Share %	Lift
domestic service robotics for household tasks	6,888	7.25	142.03
entertainment and companion robotics	6,290	6.62	134.67
medical robotics and surgical assistants	5,435	5.72	359.81
new product launches and innovations	5,379	5.66	6.05
strategic partnerships and collaborations	4,435	4.67	5.09
bio-inspired robotics and biomimetics	3,340	3.52	346.22
educational robotics and learning platforms	3,132	3.3	374.95
autonomous vehicles and self-driving tech	3,061	3.22	132.95

Table 4. Most common themes in robotics coverage, with lift against all themed news, January 2023 – July 2026. The organisations named most often are robot makers and technology firms: KUKA (3,726 articles), Google (3,694), Nvidia (2,930), Boston Dynamics (2,670), ABB (2,300) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1,766). Generic words tagged as organisations also rank high, so the list reflects tagging habits as much as the industry.

3.5 Research attention and invention

Research on robotics grew much faster than the scientific literature. Papers with a robotics term in the title rose from 21.61 per 10,000 papers in 2015 to 46.99 in 2025, a 2.17-fold increase in share, while the total literature in the corpus grew by a factor of 1.0 over the same years. Between 2015 and 2025, 227,037 such papers were published. The most-cited include work on soft robots, on the labour-market effects of industrial robots, and on reinforcement learning for robot control [1–4].

News attention tracks research attention only loosely (Figure 9). Research share rose every year from 2019, while news share fell in 2020 and recovered more slowly.

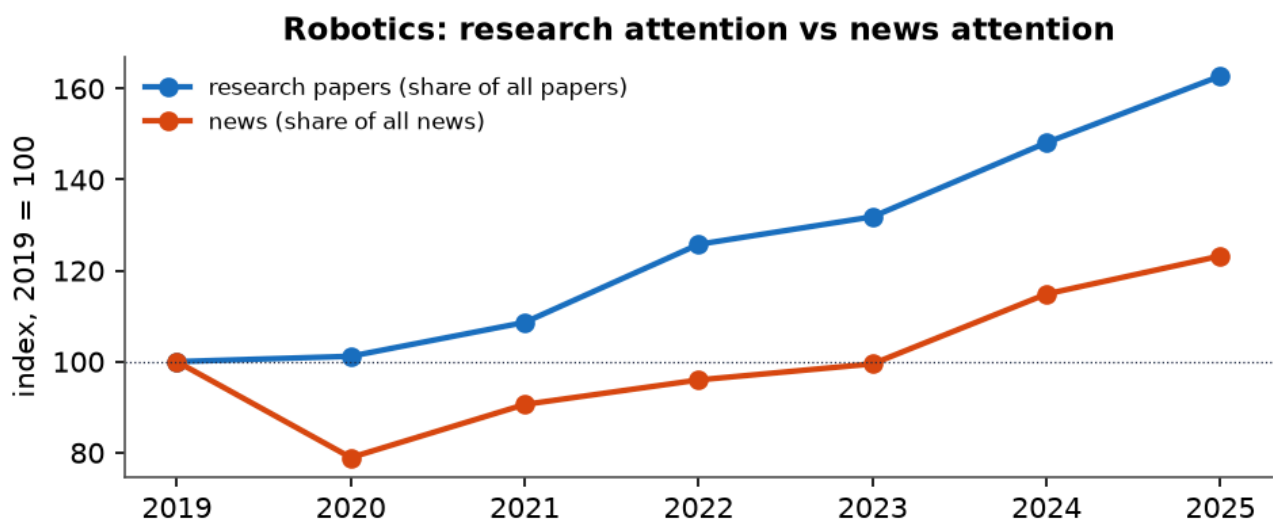


Figure 9. Research papers with robotics terms in the title (share of all papers) and robotics news (share of all news), each indexed to 2019 = 100.

Patenting rose faster still: 9,756 robotics patent families were published in 2015 and 43,489 in 2024 (4.46 times), with a plateau after 2021. China's office holds 77.4% of families from 2015 to 2024, followed by the United States (6.3%) and South Korea (3.4%) (Figure 10). The leading technology class is manipulators (B25J, 44,003 families), followed by vehicle position control (G05D, 8,127), surgical devices (A61B, 7,186) and domestic cleaning (A47L, 6,550).

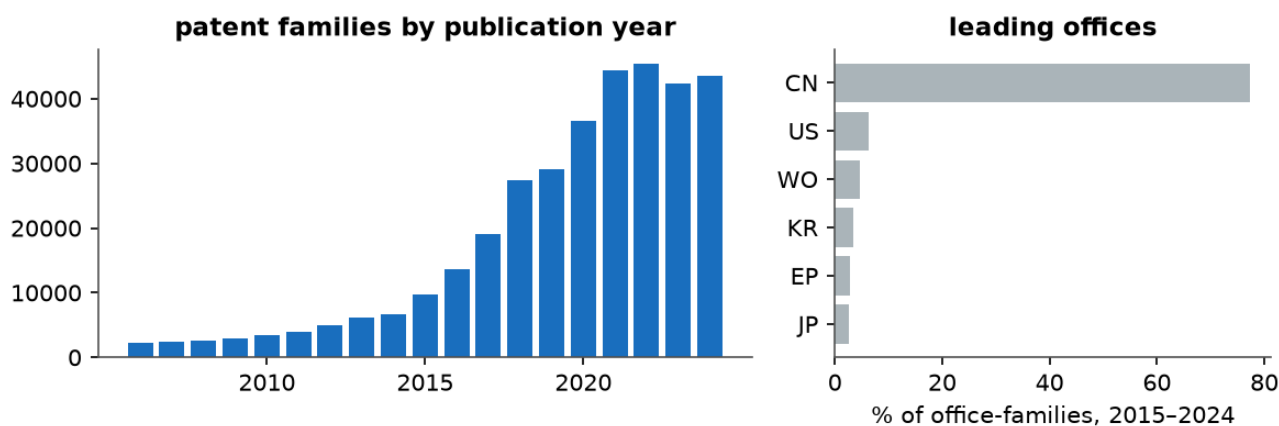


Figure 10. Robotics patent families by publication year (left) and the leading filing offices, 2015–2024 (right).

4. Discussion

Three points matter for anyone who uses news as a record of robotics. First, coverage measures attention, and attention to robotics has grown faster than the news overall since 2020. Second, raw counts mislead in both directions. The index holds a few templated pages repeated tens of thousands of times; without exclusions they would distort both the volume and the geography of coverage. After exclusion, the United States holds nearly half of located coverage but is not over-represented, while China, Germany, Japan and South Korea are the most over-represented among large sources. Third, robotics coverage is unusually positive. Much of it is product and company news. The negative exceptions are Ukraine and Russia; this study does not test why.

Research, invention and news run on different clocks. Research share has more than doubled in a decade. Patent families grew fastest and are concentrated in one office. News share moves more slowly, with batches and trade shows visible in the monthly series. The dataset lets researchers link the three, for example to test whether a country's rise in robotics news follows its patent activity.

5. Limitations

- **Index availability.** 92.88% of the index was readable at build time, so counts are lower bounds. Shares and lifts are less affected, because the missing part is spread across topics.
- **Coverage after May 2026.** The index thins after May 2026, so 2026 is partial and is excluded from year comparisons.
- **Bulk-dated batches.** November 2024 and April 2025 each hold a batch of trade-press pages dated to a single day. They inflate those months and the November seasonal share.
- **Matching.** Matching uses the article opening. Articles that mention robots only later are missed, and a little more than one matched article in five is not about robotics (precision 77.5%). Robotaxis and autonomous vehicles are included where the opening uses robot vocabulary.
- **Machine labels.** Location, tone, priority and themes are machine-labelled. Place tags derived from ordinary words were treated as unlocated (15.3% of city-tagged articles); some tags from company and town names remain (Alaska, Delaware, and the Netherlands through the village Erp, which matches the software acronym ERP). The city field is noisy and is not analysed.

- **Outlet mix.** The index over-represents English-language outlets. Located coverage from China, India and Africa is thin, which makes their lifts and trends sensitive to the outlets collected.
- **Research and patent counts.** These match titles only. Office shares reflect filing practice; utility models are numerous in China.

Data availability

The dataset (article sample, monthly and country tables, state and continent tables, research and patent tables, all metrics) is released under CC BY-NC 4.0 with this paper. The sample holds 71,393 of 285,488 matched articles to 31 July 2026. Full article text, headlines, publishers, later articles and other topics are served by the Prism News API: <https://github.com/fliarbi/prism-news-api> (base URL <https://radar-api.fliarbi.com/news>). A worked query: `prism-news trends "robotics" --since 2019-01-01 --until 2026-07-31 --granularity monthly`.

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