

Reporting Summary

Nature Research wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Research policies, see our [Editorial Policies](#) and the [Editorial Policy Checklist](#).

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

n/a Confirmed

- ☐ ☒ The exact sample size (n) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
- ☐ ☒ A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
- ☐ ☒ The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided
Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.
- ☐ ☒ A description of all covariates tested
- ☐ ☒ A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
- ☐ ☒ A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
- ☒ ☐ For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. F , t , r) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and P value noted
Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.
- ☒ ☐ For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
- ☒ ☐ For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
- ☐ ☒ Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's d , Pearson's r), indicating how they were calculated

Our web collection on [statistics for biologists](#) contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about [availability of computer code](#)

Data collection Data collection occurs through Internet searches that trained contributors enter into a Azure-based SQL database using a custom-made website. The database endpoints are made publicly available via a Github repository.

Data analysis Stata 16.1 was used to manipulate and analyze the data.

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors and reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Research [guidelines for submitting code & software](#) for further information.

Data

Policy information about [availability of data](#)

All manuscripts must include a [data availability statement](#). This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A list of figures that have associated raw data
- A description of any restrictions on data availability

The most up-to-date OxCGRT data and documentation are available via the project github repository: <https://github.com/OxCGRT/covid-policy-tracker>. Data for all figures in the manuscript and supplemental information can be obtained from this repository. There are no restrictions on data availability.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

☐ Life sciences ☒ Behavioural & social sciences ☐ Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see [nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf](https://www.nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf)

Behavioural & social sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	This 'resource' article describes presents a dataset that provides both quantitative and qualitative data. It does not carry out causal inference.
Research sample	The database includes information on nearly all countries in the world and a number of subnational jurisdictions in the United States, Brazil, Canada, and the UK.
Sampling strategy	This article does not rely on sampling.
Data collection	The initial set of data collectors in March 2020 were recruited largely from the postgraduate student body of the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford. Since then, additional contributors have been recruited through Oxford University departmental mailing lists, student societies and alumni email lists, as well as referrals from existing contributors. Subnational coders are mostly students or recent graduates from partner institutions in the countries we are collecting subnational data (for example the University of São Paulo, Fundação Getulio Vargas, and the State University of Pará in the case of Brazil). To date approximately 400 data collectors have contributed to OxCGRT. New members of the data collection team undergo a series of training steps. First, they complete a self-directed tutorial of training slides and videos that explain how to search for data, interpret policies, and submit contributions through the online interface. New contributors are then given a short test for comprehension and understanding of the coding schema and collection process. After that, new data collectors are expected to attend a weekly all-contributor meeting, at which point they will start being included in the regular task allocation. OxCGRT collects national data on a weekly schedule, during which new task allocations are sent to the data collection team. This allocation is based on a regular review of database coverage – prioritizing those countries that have not been updated within the last week. Most contributors are assigned to a list of 4-6 jurisdictions and will cycle through that list each allocation round, building up expertise in a small set of jurisdictions. The data is published in real-time as contributors enter it into the system. After data is entered, it is marked 'provisional', which flags it for the review process. First, after each allocation round, a small team will do quick spot checks to ensure that data has been entered and there are no gross errors (for example, accidental deletion of a whole column can be noticed and fixed during this quick review). The provisional data is then queued for attention by a more thorough review team. This review team will examine the data entry and the original source, and either confirm its veracity or flag the data entry for escalation. The reviews process suggests a high degree of accurate in the initial data collection. As of 31 December 2020, 84.79 percent of all datapoints have never been changed, and, since 1 June 2020, 87.45 percent of data points have not required revision. Note these revisions include both post-hoc alterations to the coding scheme and factual errors. Meanwhile, just 0.41 percent of observations have been escalated by reviewers for adjudication, 0.25 percent since 1 June 2020. Of the 1.2 million data points captured between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020, 319,840 were reviewed or changed; of these 51 percent were confirmed without edits. Data is collected from publicly available sources such as government press releases and briefings, international organizations reports, and trusted news articles. OxCGRT records the original source material using archived links so that coding can be checked and substantiated.
Timing	Data collection began in March 2020 and continues through the present.
Data exclusions	The article does not contain analysis, but presents 'snapshots' of the data to demonstrate its potential uses. No data are excluded from these presentations.
Non-participation	There are no participants in this study.
Randomization	This study did not rely on randomization.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Involvement in the study
☒	☐ Antibodies
☒	☐ Eukaryotic cell lines
☒	☐ Palaeontology and archaeology
☒	☐ Animals and other organisms
☒	☐ Human research participants
☒	☐ Clinical data
☒	☐ Dual use research of concern

Methods

n/a	Involvement in the study
☒	☐ ChIP-seq
☒	☐ Flow cytometry
☒	☐ MRI-based neuroimaging