Title: Measuring Worldwide COVID-19 Attitudes and Beliefs

Authors and Affiliations:
University of Warwick: Dr Christopher Roth, Dr Thiemo Fetzer
Oxford University: Dr Lukas Hensel, Margarita Gómez
Princeton University: Dr Johannes Haushofer
Bristol University: Dr Stefano Caria
Cambridge University: Friedrich Goetz
University of California, San Diego/ Bocconi University: Dr Stefano Fiorin
Harvard Business School: Dr Jon Jachimowicz
Boston College: Dr Gordon Kraft-Todd
Expilab Research / ESCI-UPF: Andrew Ivchenko
Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Dr Erez Yoeli
IESE Business School: Dr Elena Reutskaja
NYU Abu Dhabi: Dr Marc Witte

Abstract:
We use a large-scale survey covering 58 countries and over 100,000 responses to study beliefs and attitudes towards citizens’ and governments’ responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Data collection is ongoing and we hope to maintain it via snowball sampling throughout the crisis, complemented by representative samples collected for a select few countries at irregular intervals depending on resource availability. We find that most people respond strongly to the crisis: they report engaging in social distancing and hygiene behaviors, and believe that strong policy measures, such as shop closures and curfews, are necessary. They also advocate large fines for disobeying such policy measures. At the same time, they believe that the attitudes and actions of others are insufficient: most respondents say their government is not doing enough, and they strongly underestimate the degree to which others in their country favor strong behavioral and policy responses to the pandemic. A greater difference between own attitudes and perceived attitudes of others predicts anxiety and depression symptoms. Our findings are robust to various demographic controls and weighting schemes to ensure representativeness, and to a control experiment for social desirability bias. In addition, we independently replicate our findings in representative online panels. Together these results suggest that strong policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have broad popular support.

Country: Global

Research design: (no research design) This is a data collection effort via snowball sampling, complemented by some representative samples where we were provided resources/donations

Keywords: Covid19, Social Norms; behaviors; health beliefs; international data collection

JEL code: C8, C9, D1

available online at: https://osf.io/3sn2k/