



Monday 1 June 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Oxford University's coronavirus government response tracker extends to cover economic and testing measures**

*Pioneering tool to track and compare policy responses of governments tackling coronavirus around the world now includes information about testing, contact tracing and income support*

The University of Oxford's Blavatnik School of Government has expanded its pioneering research on tracking governments' policy responses to the coronavirus outbreak to include measures such as income support to citizens, testing regime or emergency investments into healthcare.

The Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker – launched last March and now counting data from more than 160 countries (including China, South Korea, Italy, UK and USA) – systematically records government responses to the coronavirus worldwide on 17 indicators such as school closures and travel restrictions.

The new indices, reporting a number between 1 and 100 to reflect the level of government action on the topics in question, are:

1. an **overall government response** index (which records how the response of governments has varied over all indicators in the database, becoming stronger or weaker over the course of the outbreak);
2. a **containment and health** index (which combines 'lockdown' restrictions and closures with measures such as testing policy and contact tracing, short term investment in healthcare, as well investments in vaccine)
3. an **economic support** index (which records measures such as income support and debt relief)
4. as well as the original **stringency index** (which records the strictness of 'lockdown style' policies that primarily restrict people's behaviour).

The Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker's data and its indices are freely available online and will continue to be updated, refined and improved throughout the crisis:

[www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker)

**Thomas Hale, Associate Professor of Global Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government and lead for this project, said:** "It's been encouraging to see that the Blavatnik School's government response tracker has been a useful tool for policymakers, public health professionals, academics and concerned citizens to understand disease progression and policy response. We've improved and expanded the government response tracker to help governments continue to adopt an evidence-based approach and establish which measures are effective and which are not."

Importantly, the data also informs the new version of the 'lockdown rollback checklist': a checklist that looks at countries' readiness to exit lockdown based on how closely they meet four of the six World Health Organization's recommendation for relaxing physical distancing rules. The updated

checklist now takes into account the number of tests each country is doing, as well better ways to assess the risk of community transmission. According to this analysis at the time of writing countries like New Zealand and Taiwan are best placed to rollback their restrictions.

The Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker data is collected from publicly available information by a cross-disciplinary Oxford University team of over one hundred academics, students and alumni from every part of the world.

**Ends. /**

**Notes to editor**

**For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:**

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- The coronavirus outbreak has forced governments to put in place policies to contain the spread of the disease among their population. The Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker collects publicly available information on 17 indicators of government response. Eight of the policy indicators record information on containment and closure policies, such as school closures and restrictions in movement. Four of the indicators record economic policies, such as income support to citizens or provision of foreign aid, and five indicators record health system policies such as the COVID-19 testing regime or emergency investments into healthcare. More information on the methodology is available on the project page on the Blavatnik School website [www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker)
- Government responses vary significantly from one country to another, and like any policy interventions, their effect is highly contingent on local political and social context. The COVID-19 Government Response Indices, like all aggregate indices which combine different indicators into a general index, should not be interpreted as measuring the appropriateness or effectiveness of a country's response.
- With the rapidly evolving situation, the data collection is live and ongoing. The project team welcomes specific feedback on both country data and analysis. Please visit the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker project page on the Blavatnik School website [www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker) to fill in a feedback form.

#### **About the Blavatnik School of Government**

The Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford exists to inspire and support better government and public policy around the world. The Blavatnik School teaches current and future public leaders through innovative programmes, conducts independent, evidence-based research into pressing issues facing policymakers – from improving education to reducing corruption – and convenes leaders and experts across disciplines and sectors to share knowledge, exchange ideas and identify solutions.

[www.bsg.ox.ac.uk](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk)