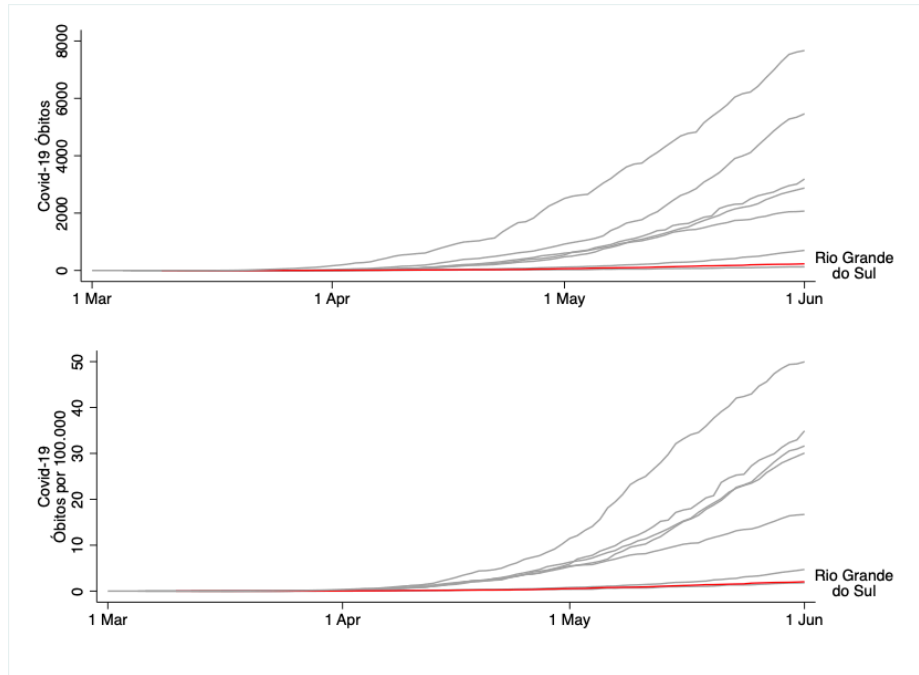
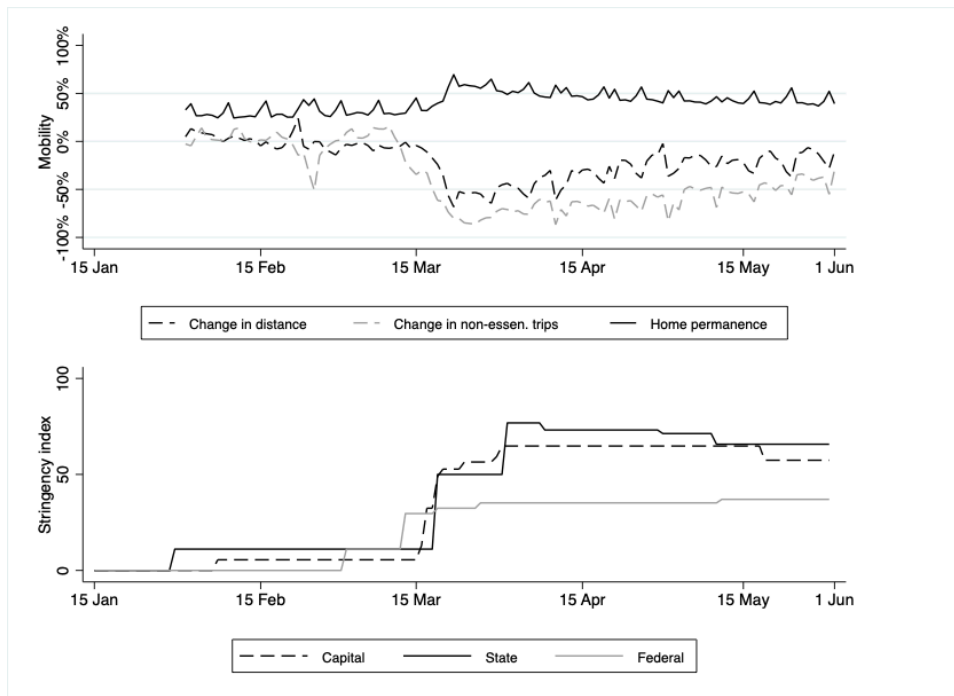


# Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul

**Figure RS.1 – Accumulated number of deaths and deaths per capita for Rio Grande do Sul and the seven other states surveyed.**



**Figure RS.2 – Mobility indicators for Rio Grande do Sul and the OxCGRT stringency index for different levels of government.**



## State and City Government Responses

Rio Grande do Sul's first case of Covid-19 was confirmed on 10 March, and its first death on 25 March. Between these dates, on 19 March—by which time 30 cases had been found in the city of Porto Alegre—the state government issued a decree declaring a public calamity (thus leapfrogging the less extreme declaration of a 'public emergency'). This decree introduced a series of closure and containment measures: it cancelled school classes, and required shopping centres to close as well as all shops selling non-essential items. Only pharmacies, supermarkets, and banks were allowed to remain open—as well as restaurants, provided that they ensured a distance of two metres between each diner. Public transport continued but only with seated passengers. Inter-state transport was restricted. The governor urged citizens to stay at home whenever possible. As of 15 June Rio Grande do Sul had 128.9 confirmed cases of Covid-19 and 3 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants.

The state government issued another decree on 1 April, tightening social distancing requirements even more. All non-essential services had to close, such as cinemas, and theatres. All public events were called off. Private gatherings with more than 30 people were prohibited. Beaches were closed, and all vehicles coming from other states or from abroad (the state borders Uruguay) were not allowed to enter Rio Grande do Sul. This decree also required that people only travel within the state out of necessity.

From 11 May, these restrictions were gradually relaxed. The state government decided to transition to a 'controlled' social distancing policy, which meant allowing some establishments to begin reopening in places where levels of transmission had been controlled, and in accordance with evaluation and guidance provided by each municipal government. Schools remained closed and gatherings remained restricted to no more than 10 people.

The city of Porto Alegre implemented similar closure and containment policies to the state government. For example, from mid-March the municipal government suspended school classes, closed shopping centres, and introduced social distancing measures in bars and restaurants, requiring tables to be arranged two metres apart. In addition, it limited restaurant services to half capacity. At the end of March, the city government also closed all non-essential activities in commerce, industry and services, cancelled public events, and prohibited all private and public gatherings. Mirroring the state government's decision just over a week before, the city of Porto Alegre started to lift some of its rules on 20 May. Gyms, bars, churches, and shopping centres, and other establishments, were allowed to reopen, provided that social distancing and hygiene measures had been adopted.

## Porto Alegre Survey Results

Porto Alegre has 1.5 million inhabitants, and 15% of the population is more than 60 years of age. It has a fairly high standard of living: its HDI is 0.805, making it the 3<sup>rd</sup> most developed Brazilian capital (out of 27).

Remaining at home for two weeks between 22 April and 13 May was rare among Porto Alegre's residents. Only 10% of respondents reported not going out during this period. Those that did left home on average on 6.1 days. The majority of the sample (79%) left home for essential activities, such as going to the supermarkets, pharmacy or banks. Almost a third, 30%, went out to work (compared to 61% who reported going to work in February). Those who went out during the two-week period estimated that, on average, 76% of people were wearing masks on the streets. Four percent of respondents had been tested, and 1% said that they had sought a test without success. Six percent of respondents reported having had at least one symptom in the week prior to interview

Of the 30% of people going to work in Porto Alegre, 60% stated that their workplace had introduced measures to keep workers two metres apart. Respondents who had visited hospitals and supermarkets reported that employees in these places commonly used masks, that it was easy for them to access alcohol gel or hand washing facilities that had soap, and that social distancing measures for queuing and waiting had been brought in. Public transportation closures did little to stop people going about their intended activities: this was the case for only 9% of respondents. Twenty-six percent of people in Porto Alegre used public transport during the prior fortnight; 45% stated that they had used it in February.

Levels of knowledge about the symptoms of Covid-19 and about the meaning and practices of self-isolation were similar in Porto Alegre to average survey responses across the eight urban populations studied. The average scores were 82 out of 100 for 'knowledge of symptoms' and 43 out of 100 for 'knowledge about self-isolation'. (See the results section of the main paper for an explanation of these scores.)

The main sources of information about Covid-19 were TV news shows (58%) and newspapers and newspapers websites (14%). Of those who had seen public information campaigns (65% of all respondents in Porto Alegre), 74% reported seeing them on TV, 31% came across them through newspapers, 29% via Facebook or Twitter, 17% via blogs, and 11% via WhatsApp. Of those who had seen public information campaigns, 59% said they thought they had seen a campaign from the state government, 42% said they thought they had seen one from the federal government, and 31% from the municipal government.

The preparedness of the public health system is a cause of concern for people in Porto Alegre. Only 37% considered the public health system in the region to be either well prepared (16%) or very well prepared (21%) for the outbreak. Most of the population

(79%) said they were either worried (15%) or very worried (64%) about the possibility that medical equipment, hospital beds, or doctors might be insufficient to tackle it.

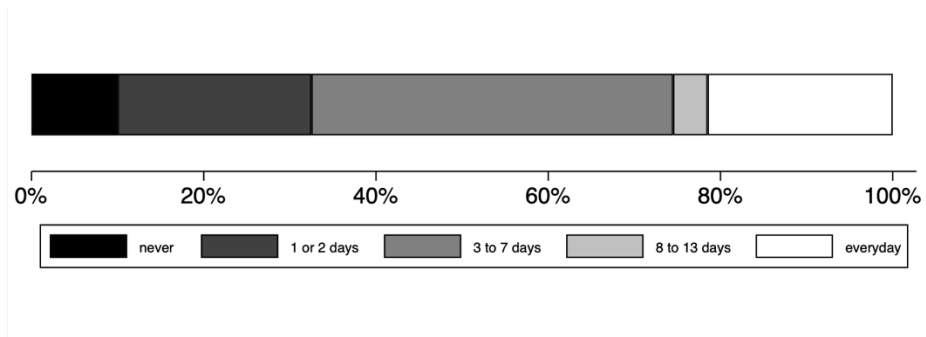
Half of the sample reported reductions in income, and almost a third (31%) suffered an income cut of half or more, relative to their income in February. Five percent of people reported a total loss of income since February.

Sixty-nine percent of Porto Alegre residents perceived Covid-19 to be much more serious than a common flu. The public measures adopted to fight the spread of the disease were assessed as adequate by 62% of respondents in the city, as insufficiently stringent by 30%, and as too stringent by only 8%. People in the city generally understand that lifting these restrictions will be a gradual process: they think it will take on average 5.1 months for measures to be removed, and only 18% of respondents in Porto Alegre expected that restrictions would be removed all at once.

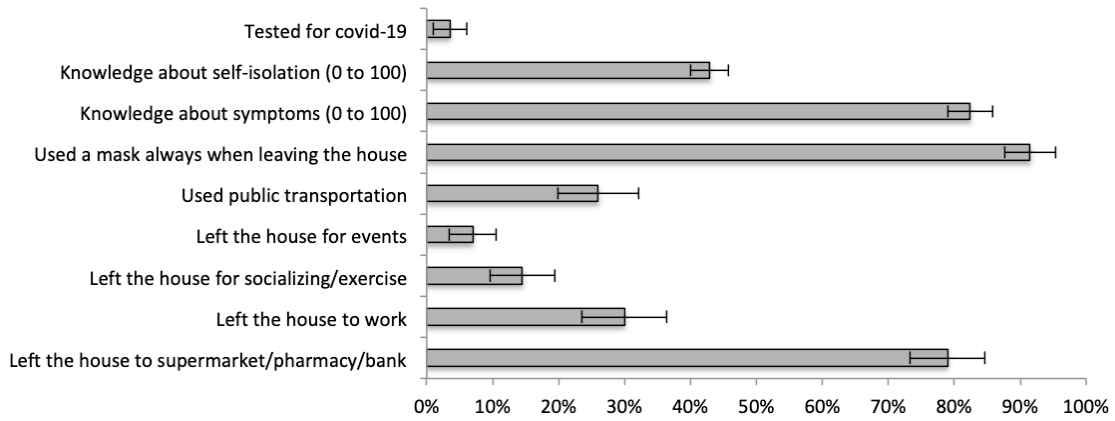
This summary is part of a broader study about Brazil's Covid-19 response policies. Please visit <https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/research/research-projects/brazils-covid-19-policy-response> for the full report: Petherick A., Goldszmidt R., Kira B. and L. Barberia. 'Do Brazil's COVID-19 government response measures meet the WHO's criteria for policy easing?' Blavatnik School of Government Working Paper, June 2020.

**Figure RS.3 – Social distancing, knowledge and testing in Porto Alegre.**

**A. Number of days that respondents left home in the previous two weeks.**



**B. Testing, knowledge, mask use, and reasons for leaving home.**



**Figure RS.4 - Hand hygiene, distancing and mask use.**

