

Updated Johns Hopkins Study on Lockdowns Debunks the Fact Checkers

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By [Thorsteinn Siglaugsson](#) May 30, 2022 June 3, 2022 [Media](#) 2 minute read

Last January, the Johns Hopkins Institute for Applied Economics, Global Health and the Study of Business Enterprise published a working paper which showed clearly how lockdowns across the world did not affect Covid-19 mortality at all. The paper, is written by economists Jonas Herby, Lars Jonung and Steve H. Hanke, now appearing in its final version, titled **A LITERATURE REVIEW AND META-ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF LOCKDOWNS ON COVID-19 MORTALITY – II**

The use of lockdowns is a unique feature of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdowns have not been used to such a large extent during any of the pandemics of the past century. However, lockdowns during the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic have had devastating effects. They have contributed to reducing economic activity, raising unemployment, reducing schooling, causing political unrest, contributing to domestic violence, loss of life quality, and the undermining of liberal democracy. These costs to society must be compared to the benefits of lockdowns, which our meta-analysis has shown are little to none.

Such a standard benefit-cost calculation leads to a strong conclusion: until future research based on credible empirical evidence can prove that lockdowns have large and significant reductions in mortality, lockdowns should be rejected out of hand as a pandemic policy instrument.

The conclusion is of course counterintuitive to many, but it is a fact-based and well argued conclusion arrived at through a rigorous, well designed and unusually transparent meta review of available research.

Appendix II is a particularly interesting read. Some readers may recall the media storm against this paper, driven by some self-proclaimed fact-checkers. The appendix not only debunks all the “fact-checkers” claims but the authors also demonstrate how they were based not on any understanding of the paper (in fact it looks as if the “fact-checkers” mostly never even read it), but rather on superficial and to a large extent irrelevant “criticisms”, repeated blindly by one “fact-checker” and one media outlet after another.

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