# Pitch text total

# Intro

***(Maßnahmen Bild)*** - Covid took a toll on all of us, preventing **some aspects that** constitute human freedom, from free movement to being able to physically meet friends and family. It would thus be unsurprising that these stringent measures to contain the spread of Sars-Cov2 might have impacted societal well-being.

***(Happiness-picture).*** This is vital to understand, because happiness is an important indicator of societal well-being, such as for productivity and mental-health. We therefore want to know how the stringency of Covid-measures affected happiness during the pandemic. Specifically, we aim to understand if more stringent measures decreased our happiness on a societal level or not.

Our aim is to generate insights ***(WHO)*** to support policy makers with data-driven information to make informed decisions in future pandemics - to understand how to strike the right balance between containment and societal well-being.

# Data

To analyse the effect of Stringency measures on Happiness worldwide, we obtained happiness and stringency data for 115 countries. Happiness consists of several indicators, such as freedom-to-make choices, health expectancy and others. Stringency is the composite measure of nine indicators, including restrictions to movement and other stay-at-home requirements.

Our visual output consisted of three sets of graphs, one for each year between 2020 and 2022 showing the relationship between happiness and stringency. To account for inherent pre-pandemic happiness differences, we compared the happiness changes per pandemic year relative to the average pre-pandemic happiness levels for each country.

In the graph, you will see that happiness ratings centre around 0. Countries above 0 mean that they were happier during than before the pandemic and vice versa for countries where happiness is below 0. For stringency, higher scores equate to higher stringency measures.

Our prediction was that happiness ratings in countries that applied more stringent measures would in turn have lower happiness ratings and that this effect would increase as the pandemic went on.

# Results and Implications

Contrary to our initial assumption, stringency did not affect happiness.

As you can see, there are almost no differences between years 2020 and 2021 with a mean stringency overall of ~50 and 2022 with lowered stringency ~30.You can see slight negative correlations for each year, but none of them was statistically significant.

***What does this mean?***

These data suggest that people were “fairly resilient” and that stringency measures did not affect people’s happiness overall over the course of the pandemic.

This might be because happiness does not solely depend on external circumstances and people managed to adapt.

However, we need to be cautious about interpretation of these results. This is because the happiness ratings were collected only once a year. Given the frequent fluctuations in stringency measures especially throughout the different seasons, it could mean that some variation in happiness was missed.

***What are implications/recommendations?:***

Overall, we would advise governments to be optimistic about people’s ability to handle stringency measures during pandemic times in general. However, it is important to note that happiness of a population might be stable but can vary across different contexts and individuals. Therefore, governments should monitor happiness more frequently. Combining more frequent happiness ratings and changes in stringency will help getting a clearer understanding of how stringency affects happiness.

These insights will enable governments to adjust strategies on a smaller scale and to balance containment and societal well-being better in future pandemics where prioritizing public health by implementing stringency measures might be necessary again.

Important questions to consider with this are further: who coordinates the collection of data on such an international level and also, what indicators should constitute happiness scores? Either way, it is extremely important. WHY? 🡪 important indicator; next pandemic may not be like the last (“citation small virus” (Tedros, Reuters Artikel)?)

[*"A commitment from this generation (to a pandemic accord) is important, because it is this generation that experienced how awful a small virus could be," said Tedros.*](https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/dont-delay-reforms-prepare-next-pandemic-who-chief-2023-05-22/)

Communication key?