



CODEBOOK  
Pandemic Backsliding:  
Democracy during Covid-19  
(PanDem)

V6.1 - December 2022

Codebook

# Pandemic Backsliding (PanDem): Democracy during Covid-19

**v6.1, December 2022**

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## **Notes:**

This is the final version of the dataset.

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## A. Background

The Pandemic Backsliding Project monitors state responses to the Covid-19 pandemic as illustrative of the varieties of emergency measures and their execution, addressing how these decisions affect short- and long-term prospects for political regimes and democracy.

### What are emergency measures?

We refer to “**emergency measures**” as a general term for all government responses taken with reference to Covid-19. These may include - but do not have to - the formal declaration of a state of emergency.

The variable *emlaw* provides information on the nature of the legal instrument used to adopt the main national-level emergency measures. Subsequent variables starting with “*em*” are coded specifically about the emergency measures adopted under this legal framework. Variables that do not begin with this prefix refer to measures that may fall outside the main legal instrument *emlaw*.

### What about subnational variation?

We aim to capture the extent to which democratic standards have been violated at the national level. We recognize that for some countries, the response to Covid-19 varies subnationally. For this reason, we also provide an indicator of subnational variation: *subvar*.

### Where do the data come from?

The Pandemic Backsliding data were collected by a team of trained research assistants. Sources include official government documents/websites, academic databases, trusted inter-governmental, state or independent organizations, and trusted media outlets. We do not claim to provide a comprehensive coding of all incidents of violations during the pandemic. Rather, our data capture reported violations located using thorough internet searches by the coders. For each data point, coders have provided comments justifying their coding decisions and sources.

The full documentation of coding, data sources, and comments for each country and variable are accessible online at [www.github.com/vdeminstitute/pandem](https://www.github.com/vdeminstitute/pandem).

We used a multistep strategy to ensure data validity. In general, one coder was assigned to one country. After completing coding, a member of the management team (either a research associate or principal investigator) reviewed the coding for consistency and fact-checked the comments and sources provided by the original coder. Afterward, the coder implemented any necessary changes.

We designed the questions to emphasize factual information, thereby minimizing judgements on the part of the coders. Inevitably, however, some cases involved making judgements due to incomplete information or peculiar circumstances. If in doubt, coders were instructed to consult with others and code something as less (rather than more) severe. In some cases, a broader discussion amongst the entire team was necessary to come to a coding decision. This means that if our data errs, it errs on the side of under- rather than over-reporting. Violations might have occurred that we do not capture. A justification for each coding decision along with all sources is available at [www.github.com/vdeminstitute/pandem](https://www.github.com/vdeminstitute/pandem).

## B. Time-series (TS) and Cross-sectional (CS) datasets

We provide the data in two formats. The **time-series format (TS)** contains observations from 11 March 2020 to 30 June 2021 arranged within five coding periods that roughly coincide to financial quarters. This data may be useful for analyzing trends over time. The **cross-sectional format (CS)** contains a single row for each country. It reports the maximum value on the PanDem index and each of the types of violations. It also reports the average value for the PanBack index for the period from 11 March 2020 to 30 June 2021.

## C. Changes Between v5 and v6

V5 provided a time series for the three last quarters of 2020 (Q2, Q3, and Q4). This new version (v6.1), adds the first two quarters of 2021. In v6.1, we build on prior coding and sources of information from v3, v4, and v5 instructing coders to look for any new information that updates our prior knowledge for previous coding periods. If they find such information, values are updated to reflect the new information and new sources/comments are added. For this reason, values may deviate from v5 coding. The coding for the fourth quarter of 2020 may also deviate from v5 if new information was found concerning events occurring between December 10th (the last date covered by v5) and December 31st.

This version (v6.1) includes updated permanent links to all sources and corrects a known error in coding on the "discrim" variable for Singapore. We do not anticipate making any future updates to the dataset.

Previous rounds of data will be made available upon request.

## D. Identifiers and V-Dem variables

### Year (year)

*Question:* In what year was this data point observed?

*Scale:* Integer, (2020-2021)

### Quarter (quarter)

*Question:* In which quarter of the year was this data point observed?

*Clarification:* This variable denotes the quarter for which the coding applies. The variable can take on four values: Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4, corresponding to the first, second, third and fourth quarters respectively. Note that for the year 2020, Q2 begins on March 11th rather than 01 April as in the year 2021. Due to coding periods, cases may not cover the entire quarter; see *time* for the last date the case was checked.

*Scale:* String

Q1– Observed between January 1 and March 31.

Q2– Observed between March 11 and 30 June (if year=2020) or April 1 and June 30 (if year=2021).

Q3– Observed between July 1 and September 30

Q4– Observed between October 1 and December 31

## **Time (time)**

*Question:* When was this version of the coding submitted?

*Clarification:* Date when coding was completed for this country during May/June 2021.

*Scale:* Date

## **Country name (country\_name)**

*Question:* What is the country name?

*Clarification:* Country name from the V-Dem data set.

*Scale:* Character string.

*Source(s):* [www.v-dem.net/en/data/data-version-10/](http://www.v-dem.net/en/data/data-version-10/)

## **Liberal democracy index (v2x\_libdem\_2019)**

*Question:* What was the liberal democracy score for this country in 2019?

*Clarification:* Liberal democracy index from v11.1 of the V-Dem dataset for 2019.

*Scale:* Interval, from low to high (0-1)

*Source(s):* [www.v-dem.net/en/data/data-version-10/](http://www.v-dem.net/en/data/data-version-10/)

# **E. Indices**

## **Pandemic Violations of Democratic Standards Index (PanDem)**

*Question:* To what extent have government responses to the Covid-19 pandemic violated democratic standards for emergency measures?

*Clarification:* With this index, we aim to capture the degree to which government responses to the Covid-19 pandemic have violated democratic standards for emergency measures within the time period (see quarter and year). Specifically, we draw on international agreements about

democratic standards for emergency measures (e.g. ICCPR) to categorize seven types of violations (see Section F). Emergency responses are coded as no violation (0), minor violation (1), moderate violation (2), and major violation (3) in each of these sub types and then aggregated into the overall PanDem index.

*Scale:* Interval, from low to high (0-1).

*Aggregation rules:* For the time-series dataset, this index is calculated as the sum of observed values across all violation types (see below) for the quarter (q) divided by the maximum possible score (20) to obtain the 0-1 interval. In other words, it represents the proportion of possible violations we have observed in that case. Below is the formula:

$$pandem_{iq} = \frac{(type1_{iq} + type2_{iq} + type3_{iq} + type4_{iq} + type5_{iq} + type6_{iq} + type7_{iq})}{20}$$

For the cross-sectional dataset, we take the maximum value of the PanDem index observed across all quarters.

### **Pandemic Backsliding Index (PanBack)**

*Question:* To what extent has democracy receded due to government violations of democratic standards in response to Covid-19?

*Clarification:* This index estimates the amount of democratic backsliding during the Covid crisis. It builds on existing scholarship showing that a country's vulnerability to democratic backsliding is non-monotonic in the level of democracy. At low levels of democracy, there is little room for backsliding; and at high levels, the institutions of democracy are robust. The most vulnerable countries for backsliding are those in the mid-range, namely those that are neither fully democratic nor autocratic. The PanBack Index captures such inverted U-shaped vulnerability to backsliding by weighing more heavily violations recorded in countries in the mid-range of V-Dem's (v11.1) Liberal Democracy Index (*v2x\_libdem*) measured in 2019. Note that we use the mean of the PanDem score over all periods to calculate the PanBack Index, to capture the average risk of backsliding during the pandemic.

*Scale:* Interval, from low to high (0-1).

*Aggregation rules:* For the time-series dataset, the PanBack index is calculated by multiplying the PanDem index for the quarter by the country's (i) liberal democracy index score from 2019 times its inverse, factored by 4 to ensure the index ranges between zero and one. The equation is:

$$panback_{iq} = 4 \times pandem_{iq} \times v2x\_libdem\_2019 \times (1 - v2x\_libdem\_2019)$$

For the cross-sectional dataset, we take the average score for this index to capture the average amount of backsliding within the fifteen month period.



## F. Types of Violations

### Type 1: Discriminatory measures (type1)

*Question:* Have the emergency measures violated the principle of non-discrimination as articulated in the ICCPR?

*Clarification:* This type of violation pertains to the provision within the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that prohibits states from implementing emergency measures that “involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin” (Article 4.1).

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from the indicator for discrimination (*discrim*).

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– None: No discrimination (*discrim*=0)
- 1– Minor: De-facto minor discrimination (*discrim*=1)
- 2– Moderate: De-jure minor discrimination (*discrim*=2)
- 3– Major: Major either de-facto or de-jure discrimination (*discrim*=3)

### Type 2: Derogations from non-derogable rights (type2)

*Question:* Have any of the emergency measures derogated from non-derogable rights as articulated in the ICCPR?

*Clarification:* This type of violation pertains to the provision within the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that prohibits states from implementing emergency measures that suppress non-derogable rights, as enumerated in Article 6, Article 7, Article 8 (I & II), Article 15, Article 16, and Article 18. For more information, see the indicator *ndrights*.

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from the indicator for non-derogable rights (*ndrights*).

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– None: No on all items of ICCPR provisions (*ndrights*=0)
- 3– Major: Yes on any item of ICCPR provisions (*ndrights*=1)

### Type 3: Abusive enforcement (type3)

*Question:* Have security agents violated physical integrity rights while enforcing the emergency measures?

*Clarification:* This type of violation pertains to derogations from the right to life (Article 6), freedom from torture and inhuman treatment (Article 7), right to liberty and security of person (Article 9), and the right to equality of the law (Article 14) among others as articulated in the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). It specifically addresses acts of physical violence by security agents while enforcing Covid-19 emergency measures. As stated in guidance on emergency measures during Covid-19 from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Law enforcement officials may use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty and only when less harmful measures have proven to be clearly ineffective.” See [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures\\_Covid19.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_Covid19.pdf).

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from the indicator for physical violence by the police and military (*pomviol*).

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– None: No to very little reports (*pomviol* = 0)
- 1– Minor: Sometimes (*pomviol* = 1)
- 2– Moderate: Often (*pomviol* = 2)
- 3– Major: Widespread (*pomviol* = 3)

#### **Type 4: No time limit (type4)**

*Question:* Have the main national-level emergency measures violated the principle of necessity by failing to explicitly state a time limit for which they will remain in effect?

*Clarification:* This type of violation pertains to the principle that emergency measures should “be time-bound and only exercised on a temporary basis with the aim to restore a state of normalcy as soon as possible” as stated in guidance on emergency measures during Covid-19 from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. See [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures\\_Covid19.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_Covid19.pdf).

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from the indicators for time limit (*emlimit*) and end of emergency measures (*emend*). In particular, we consider whether the main national-level emergency measures have a declared time limit for all provisions and if not, whether the main national-level emergency measures ended within the quarter.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-2)

- 0– None: There is a declared end date for all measures (*emlimit*=1).
- 1– Minor: There is no end date for some or all measures (*emlimit*=0); however, the measures ended within the quarter (*emend* is not missing).
- 2– Moderate: There is no end date for some or all measures (*emlimit*=0) and the measures have not ended during the quarter (*emend* is missing).

#### **Type 5: Limitations on the legislature (type5)**

*Question:* Have the emergency measures violated the principle of legality by placing limitations on the lawmaking powers of the legislature?

*Clarification:* This type of violation mostly pertains to the principle of legality or that the “law must not be arbitrary or unreasonable, and it must be clear and accessible to the public” as stated in guidance on emergency measures during Covid-19 from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition, it assesses whether the emergency measures are “subject to periodic and independent review by the legislature” and emergency legislation is subject to “legislative scrutiny.” Limitations on the lawmaking powers of the legislature may also lead to violations of principles of proportionality and necessity. See [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures\\_Covid19.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_Covid19.pdf).

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from the indicator for legislature limitations (*leglimit*).

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– None: Few limitations and only with direct reference to Covid-19 related measures (*leglimit* ≤ 2)
- 2– Moderate: The executive has the right to rule by decree on many issues, which may exceed Covid-19 related issues due to vague formulation in emergency laws, but the legislature still exists (*leglimit* = 3)
- 3– Major: The legislature has been dissolved/suspended or equivalent (*leglimit* ≥ 4)

## **Type 6: Official disinformation campaigns (type6)**

*Question:* Has the government or its agents violated the right to information by disseminating misinformation about Covid-19?

*Clarification:* This type of violation pertains to the right to accurate information during emergencies. According to a United Nations group of experts, states are “obligated under human rights law to provide reliable information in accessible formats to all”, and “it is essential that governments provide truthful information about the nature of the threat posed by the coronavirus.” See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25729&LangID=E>.

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from the indicator for government disinformation (*govdis*).

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– None: No disinformation from government officials found (*govdis* = 0)
- 1– Minor: Occasional disinformation from government officials that is not necessarily intentional (*govdis* = 1)
- 2– Moderate: Frequent disinformation that may be intentional (*govdis* = 2)
- 3– Major: Systematic and intentional disinformation (*govdis* = 3)

## **Type 7: Restrictions on media freedom (type7)**

*Question:* Have the emergency measures or their implementation been used to place restrictions on media freedom, thereby violating the right to information?

*Clarification:* This type of violation pertains to the right to accurate information during emergencies. As stated in guidance on emergency measures during Covid-19 from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Transparency and the right to information during a state of emergency require that media freedom is protected, as journalism serves a crucial function during the emergency.” See [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures\\_Covid19.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_Covid19.pdf).

*Component indicators:* This type is constructed from indicators for de-jure (*melim*) and de-facto restrictions on media (*merepfact*, *merepgov*, *merepoth*, *meinf*), as well as, indicators for harassment of journalists (*mephar* and *mevhar*). Note that *merepgov* and *merepfact* account for the overall media environment in the country, even if specific reports are not found.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3) *Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– None: No de-jure (*melim*=0) and no de-facto restrictions on the media (*merepfact*=0, *merepgov*=0, *merepoth*=0, and *meinf*=0); and no harassment of journalists while reporting about Covid-19 (*mevhar*=0 and *mephar*=0).
- 1– Minor: There are some de-jure or de-facto limitations about how the media can report about Covid-19 (*melim*=1 or *merepfact*=1); or some limitations to access to information (*meinf*=1). However, there are no de-facto restrictions on how the media can report about the government’s response to Covid-19 (*merepgov* = 0) and other issues (*merepoth*=0); including no harassment of journalists while reporting about Covid-19 (*mevhar*=0 and *mephar*=0).
- 2– Moderate: There are widespread limitations on access to information (*meinf*=2) or verbal harassment of journalists while reporting about Covid-19 (*mevhar*=1). However, there are no or few restrictions (de-jure or de-facto) on how the media can report about the government’s response to Covid-19 (*melim*≤1 and *merepgov*=0); no restrictions on media reporting about other issues (*merepoth*=0); and no physical harassment of journalists while reporting about Covid-19 (*mephar*=0).
- 3– Major: Any of the following conditions are observed: de-jure limits on media freedom (*melim*≥2); de-facto restrictions on how the media can report about the government response to Covid-19 (*merepgov*=1); de-facto limitations on how the media can report on other issues (*merepoth*=1); or physical harassment of journalists while reporting about Covid-19 (*mephar*=1).

## G. Indicators of Emergency Measures during Covid-19

### Emergency measures legal instrument (emlaw)

*Question:* What is the main legal instrument that the state has used to adopt a national-level emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in the primary legal instrument used to adopt and enforce the main national-level emergency measures with reference to Covid-19 during this quarter. If the country has used multiple instruments, choose the one that most closely resembles a “state of exception”, defined as a period during which one person or the government has enhanced powers and authority to limit rights and freedoms beyond what the law ordinarily allows (e.g. see Agamben 2005). Note that the emergency measures may have ended by the time of coding.

*Scale:* Categorical

- 1– Declaration of state of emergency, within existing legal framework.
- 2– Declaration of state of public health emergency, within existing legal framework that distinguishes between a public health emergency and a state of emergency.
- 3– Declaration of state of disaster / catastrophe, within existing legal frameworks where this differs from a state of emergency.
- 4– Other legislation, where this differs from a state of emergency, public health emergency, or disaster/catastrophe.
- 5– None, the state has a national-level emergency response without specific reference to legal instruments.
- 6– None, the state has no national-level emergency response.
- 7– Other

### **Emergency response name (emname)**

*Question:* What is the specific name of the legal instrument that the state used to adopt a national-level emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic?

*Clarification:* This refers to the legal instrument defined in *emlaw*. This may be the Constitution, law, executive order, or other legal mechanism. Give the specific proper name of the law as it is known in the country. This can be in the country's language or a translation if such is readily used and available. If the legal instrument is the Constitution, also provide the Article or section number wherever possible. If the state has not specifically referenced a legal instrument (*emlaw*=5) or the state does not have a national-level emergency response (*emlaw*=6) leave this variable blank.

*Scale:* Character string.

### **Beginning of emergency response (emstart)**

*Question:* When did the government first adopt this legal instrument in response to Covid-19?

*Clarification:* This question refers to the date that the legal instrument defined in *emlaw* was first used to enact a national-level emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic. If the state has previously ended the emergency measures and reactivated them, code as the most recent activation as of this quarter. If the exact date is unknown, the first day of the month is given. If unknown, leave blank. If the state has not specifically referenced a legal instrument (*emlaw*=5) or the state does not have a national-level emergency response (*emlaw*=6) leave this variable blank.

*Scale:* Date format.

### **End of emergency response (emend)**

*Question:* When did the implementation of this legal instrument end?

*Clarification:* This question refers to the date that the implementation of the legal instrument mentioned in *emlaw* ended. If this instrument has been activated and ended on several occasions within the quarter, code as the last date it was implemented. Leave blank if the implementation of the legal instrument has not ended within the quarter. Please only consider the legal instrument mentioned in *emlaw*. If the state has not specifically referenced a legal instrument (*emlaw*=5) or the state does not have a national-level emergency response (*emlaw*=6) leave this variable blank.

*Scale:* Date format.

### **Time limit (emlimit)**

*Question:* Does implementation of the legal instrument used as the main national-level response to Covid-19 have an officially declared time limit?

*Clarification:* This question refers to the legal instrument defined in *emlaw*.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1).

0– No end date for some or all provisions.

1– Yes.

### **Time limit end date (emlimitdate)**

*Question:* What is the official end date for the implementation of the legal instrument used as the main national-level response to Covid-19?

*Clarification:* This addresses the legal instrument defined in *emlaw*. If the enhanced powers have no officially declared end date but have a natural sunset clause under the legal framework described in *emlaw* (e.g. every 30 days), code the date at which such an expiry would occur without review for extension. If the end date varies by provision, code the date when the final provision is set to expire. If there is no officially declared end date, leave blank.

*Scale:* Date format.

### **Law legislature approval (emlawapp)**

*Question:* Does the law require that the national legislature approve the implementation of the legal instrument used as the main national-level response to Covid-19?

*Clarification:* This question refers to the legal instrument used to adopt the main national-level emergency measures as defined in *emlaw*. By national legislature, we mean the national body with powers to examine, pass, amend, or repeal laws.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

**Legislature approval (emlegapp)**

*Question:* Did the legislature approve the implementation of the legal instrument used as the main national-level response to Covid-19?

*Clarification:* This question refers to the legal instrument used to adopt the enhanced powers as defined in *emlaw*. By national legislature, we mean the national body with powers to examine, pass, amend, or repeal laws.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

**Legislature limitations (leglimit)**

*Question:* During this quarter, to what extent have any of the emergency measures with reference to Covid-19 limited the lawmaking role of the legislature?

*Clarification:* By national legislature, we mean the national body with powers to examine, pass, amend, or repeal laws. The lawmaking role of the national legislature includes power to introduce, scrutinize, and pass legislation. This question asks specifically how the emergency measures have affected the lawmaking powers of the legislature. “Rule by decree” enables the government to pass laws without the approval of the legislature, through what is commonly referred to as a decree, regulation, or ordinance, but can also be referred to by other terms. Note that an extended recess during which the legislature continues to exist and/or periods where the plenary is suspended but committees still meet do not count as suspension, dissolution, or equivalent. If the legislature was dissolved pending elections under what is considered “normal” procedure, this does not count as a suspension, dissolution, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 unless the dissolution is extended past the normal time frame because elections are delayed due to Covid-19. In such cases, code as 4 starting from the date election postponement was announced until the legislature resumed sittings. If no legislature existed prior to Covid-19, code as 5. Code this item based on the most severe limitations observed during the quarter, even if those limitations have since been lifted.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-4)

0– Not at all. The lawmaking role of the national legislature is not affected.

1– Very little. The legislature has given the executive branch the power to relatively widely interpret Covid-19 related laws, but not to rule by decree.

2– Somewhat. The executive branch has the right to rule by decree on several, narrowly defined Covid-19 related issues such as deciding on physical distance measures and measures to support the health system.

3– To a large extent. The executive branch has the right to rule by decree on many issues, which may exceed Covid-19 related issues due to vague formulation in emergency laws.

4– Completely. The legislature has been dissolved, suspended, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19.

5– No legislature existed prior to Covid-19 or the legislature has been dissolved for some

reason other than Covid-19 (e.g. coup d'État) that falls outside of “normal” legal frameworks.

### **Legislature dissolution date (legdisdate)**

*Question:* If the national legislature was dissolved, suspended, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 during this quarter, on what date did this occur?

*Clarification:* By national legislature, we mean the national body with powers to examine, pass, amend, or repeal laws. Leave blank if the legislature has not been dissolved, suspended, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 (*leglimit!=4*). Note that an extended recess during which the legislature continues to exist and/or periods where the plenary is suspended but committees still meet do not count as suspension, dissolution, or equivalent. If the legislature was dissolved pending elections under what is considered “normal” procedure, this does not count as a suspension, dissolution, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 unless the dissolution is extended past the normal time frame because elections are delayed due to Covid-19. In such cases, code as the date election postponement was announced. If exact date is unknown, give an approximate date (e.g. first of month if month is known).

*Scale:* Date format.

### **Legislature resumption date (legresdate)**

*Question:* If the national legislature was dissolved, suspended, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 during this time period, when did it resumed its functions?

*Clarification:* By national legislature, we mean the national body with powers to examine, pass, amend, or repeal laws. Leave blank if the legislature has been dissolved, suspended, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 (*leglimit=4*) and has not resumed its functions; or it has not been dissolved, suspended, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 (*leglimit!=4*). Note that an extended recess during which the legislature continues to exist and/or periods where the plenary is suspended but committees still meet do not count as suspension, dissolution, or equivalent. If the legislature was dissolved pending elections under what is considered “normal” procedure, this does not count as a suspension, dissolution, or equivalent with reference to Covid-19 unless the dissolution is extended past the normal time frame because elections are delayed due to Covid-19. In such cases, code as the date the legislature resumed sittings. If exact date is unknown, give an approximate date (e.g. first of month if month is known).

*Scale:* Date format.

### **Sub-national variation (subvar)**

*Question:* During this quarter, to what extent have the emergency measures referring to Covid-19 varied de jure at the sub-national level?

*Clarification:* Coders should identify and cite sources indicating that subnational governments have implemented varying responses to the pandemic between 11 March 2020 until the coding date; or that the national government implemented measures that varied throughout the country.



*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– Almost no variation. The emergency measures are uniform or nearly uniform throughout the country.
- 1– A little. There are a few sub-national areas where the emergency measures differ.
- 2– Somewhat. There are some sub-national areas where the emergency measures differ.
- 3– Almost completely. The emergency measures vary across all or almost all of the sub-national areas of the country.

### **Discrimination (discrim)**

*Question:* During this quarter, have any of the emergency measures that place restrictions on democratic rights or freedoms discriminated “solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin” (ICCPR Art 4)?

*Clarification:* This indicator captures whether the emergency measures have affected some groups’ democratic rights and freedoms disproportionately based on their race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin in ways that cannot be justified by concerns for public health. Democratic rights and freedoms are defined as freedom of movement, assembly, association, and expression. This includes, for instance, quarantines for specific social groups without explicit virological indication. If measures are applied to neighborhoods due to prevalence of Covid-19 cases, this does not count as discrimination. Do not code cases of discrimination dealing with access to medical care, testing, or supplies. By de-jure, we mean any official government instrument used to make or enforce the emergency measures, including (but not limited to) laws, decrees, and official pronouncements or directives. By de-facto, we mean the actions taken on the part of the government or its agents in an official capacity regardless of whether those actions were allowed de-jure.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– No, not at all.
- 1– Not de-jure, but minor de-facto discrimination.
- 2– Minor de-jure discrimination.
- 3– Yes, major, systematic de-jure or de-facto discrimination

### **Non-derogable rights (ndrights)**

*Question:* During this quarter, have any of the emergency measures derogated from non-derogable rights as defined by the ICCPR?

*Clarification:* Non-derogable rights include:

- Right to life (Article 6).
- Freedom from torture and cruel/inhuman treatment (Article 7).
- Prohibition of slavery and servitude (Article 8, I & II).

- Prohibition of imprisonment due to inability to fulfill a contractual obligation (Article 11).
- No conviction for a crime which was not a crime at the time of commitment (Article 15).
- Right as a person before the law (Article 16).
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 18).

The detailed ICCPR provisions can be found here: [www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx). A temporary ban on religious services does not count as a violation of freedom of religion as long as all religions are targeted equally (see Article 18.3 of the ICCPR). Provide detailed information about the violations, including which non-derogable rights are violated.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

## Media limitations (melim)

*Question:* During this quarter, to what extent do any emergency measures de-jure limit media freedom?

*Clarification:* This addresses the text of the main national-level emergency measures (de-jure). Do not consider the extent to which such provisions have been enforced. Coders should only consider how the emergency measures affect media freedoms within the country, not other laws or practices. For instance, a case may be coded as 0 - “Not at all” if the emergency measures do not de-jure limit media freedoms, even if the case already had low media freedoms in practice prior to the pandemic.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

0– Not at all. Media freedoms are not affected by the emergency measures.

1– Somewhat. The emergency measures de-jure allow the government to put some limitations on how the media can report on Covid-19. These provisions are explicitly limited to stopping disinformation on Covid-19, such as closing news websites that misreport on the origins or how the disease spreads (as a reference to “fact check” what is “disinformation”, please use the WHO information on Covid-19 provided here: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>).

2– To a large extent. The emergency measures de-jure put strict limitations on how the media can report on Covid-19. These provisions are not limited to stopping the spread of disinformation on Covid-19, but include any reporting on Covid-19 such as the prevalence of the virus and the government response (as a reference to “fact check” what is “disinformation”, please use the WHO information on Covid-19 provided here: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>).

3– Almost completely. The emergency measures de-jure require that all or almost all media reporting on Covid-19 reflect the government’s position.

**Media limitations start (melimstart)**

*Question:* When were the de-jure limits on media freedom first adopted?

*Clarification:* This question addresses the text of the main national-level emergency measures (de-jure). Do not consider the extent to which such provisions have been enforced. Provide the exact date the emergency measures with de-jure limitations on media freedoms (*melim*) were first adopted. If the exact date is unknown, give the first day of the month. If there are no de-jure limits on media freedoms (*melim=0*), leave blank.

*Scale:* Date format.

**Media limitations end (melimend)**

*Question:* When do the de-jure limits on media freedom end?

*Clarification:* This question addresses the text of the main national-level emergency measures (de-jure). Do not consider the extent to which such provisions have been enforced. Provide the exact date the emergency measures with de-jure limitations on media freedoms (*medialimits*) are set to expire. If the exact date is unknown, give the final day of the month. If there are no de-jure limits on media freedoms (*melim=0*) or there is no defined end date, leave blank.

*Scale:* Date format.

**Limitations on media reporting about Covid-19 (merepfact)**

*Question:* During this quarter, have the media faced de-facto limitations on reporting about the nature of the Covid-19 virus?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in the de-facto limitation of media reporting on the virus, its origins, treatment, and prevalence. These limits may or may not be allowed by law. The overall media environment is to be considered when coding this variable. Provide specific references to sources and comments to justify coding.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

**Limitations on media reporting about the government response to Covid-19 (merepgov)**

*Question:* During this quarter, have the media faced de-facto limitations on reporting about the government response to the Covid-19 pandemic?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in the de-facto limitation of media reporting about news on the government responses to Covid-19. If this includes limitations on reporting about the government's official messaging on the pandemic (e.g. its prevalence, treatment, or origins),

code this and *merepfact* as 1- Yes. These limits may or may not be allowed by law. The overall media environment is to be considered when coding this variable. Provide specific references to sources and comments to justify coding.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

### **Limitations on media reporting about non-Covid-19 related news (merepoth)**

*Question:* During this quarter, has the government placed de-facto limitations on reporting about non-Covid-19 related news, but with reference to the pandemic?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in the de-facto limitation of media reporting about news unrelated to the pandemic, justified by the government under its emergency response to Covid-19. These limits may or may not be allowed by law. Provide specific references to sources and comments to justify coding.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

### **Limitations on access to information (meinf)**

*Question:* During this quarter, how often does the government and its agents limit media access to Covid-19 related information?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in how often the government and/or its agents limit media access to information about the nature of the Covid-19 virus (i.e. its origins, treatment, and prevalence), the government response, and/or other matters related to the pandemic. Provide specific references to sources and comments to justify coding.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-2)

0– Never or almost never. There are no or almost no reports of the government or its agents limiting media access to Covid-19 related information.

1– Occasional. There are a few isolated reports of the government or government officials limiting media access to Covid-19 related information, but these are not systematic or ongoing.

2– Often. There are widespread and ongoing reports of the government and its agents limiting media access to Covid-19 related information.

**Verbal harassment of journalists (mevhar)**

*Question:* During this quarter, has the government or its agents verbally harassed journalists reporting about Covid-19?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in whether the government and/or its agents have verbally harassed journalists who report on the nature of the Covid-19 virus (i.e. its origins, treatment, and prevalence), the government response, and/or other matters related to the pandemic. Verbal harassment includes intimidation that may occur in person, online, or via other communication methods. Provide specific references to sources and comments to justify coding.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

**Physical harassment of journalists (mephar)**

*Question:* During this quarter, has the government or its agents physically harassed journalists reporting about Covid-19?

*Clarification:* Here we are interested in whether the government and/or its agents have physically harassed journalists who report on the nature of the Covid-19 virus (i.e. its origins, treatment, and prevalence), the government response, and/or other matters related to the pandemic. Physical harassment includes the use of force or intimidation to harm or kill and forced unlawful confinement, including arbitrary arrests of journalists while/for performing their job. Provide specific references to sources and comments to justify coding.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No

1– Yes

**Government disinformation (govdis)**

*Question:* During this quarter, how often does information provided by the government or its agents about Covid-19 related matters deviate from the official information provided by the World Health Organization (WHO)?

*Clarification:* This question is not about specific policies on Covid-19 or minor variations on how governments officially communicate about Covid-19-related matters (e.g. whether masks are recommended or not) but aims at capturing the dissemination of gravely misleading and false information by governments on key facts about Covid-19 such as what it is, how it is transmitted, or how it can be treated or cured. As a reference to “fact check” what is “false”, please use the WHO information on Covid-19 provided here: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>. Coders should document the source showing the information from the government or its agents and explain how this deviates from the official WHO information at the time.

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– Never, or almost never. The information provided by the government and its agents’ never or almost never deviates from the official information provided by the WHO at the time.
- 1– Occasionally. There are a few reported instances where the government or its agents have communicated information on Covid-19 that deviates from the official information provided by the WHO at the time, but this is not necessarily intentional.
- 2– Often. The government or some of its agents frequently disseminate information on many key issues concerning Covid-19 that deviates from official information provided by the WHO at the time.
- 3– Always or almost always. The government and its agents systematically disseminate information on a wide range of basic matters concerning Covid-19 that always or almost always deviates from the official information provided by the WHO at the time.

### **Physical violence by police, military (pomviol)**

*Question:* During this quarter, how often have security forces, such as the police or military, engaged in excessive physical violence to execute the emergency measures?

*Clarification:* Physical violence refers to the use of force or intimidation to harm or kill another individual, forced unlawful confinement, or harassment (including physical, psychological, and sexual in nature).

*Scale:* Ordinal, (0-3)

- 0– Never or almost never. Security forces seem to have engaged in little to no violence to execute the emergency measures.
- 1– Rarely. A few isolated incidents of security forces engaging in some non-lethal violence have been reported.
- 2– Sometimes. There are several reports of security forces engaging in violence to execute the emergency measures, and/or reports of deaths at the hands of security forces in response to Covid-19 enforcement.
- 3– Often. There are widespread reports about use of violence, sometimes with lethal outcomes, by security forces when executing emergency measures taken with reference to Covid-19.

### **Military involvement (milinv)**

*Question:* During this time period, has the military been tasked with enforcing any confinement measures?

*Clarification:* “Confinement measures” refer to measures restricting citizens’ freedom of movement. Such measures include quarantines, lockdowns, curfews and travel restriction within the country. “The military” refers to the set of armed organizations responsible for external security that are primarily composed of active-duty members (as opposed to reserve forces). We are interested in whether the military has been given the power to ensure these measures are

respected using coercion. We are not interested in whether the military is deployed to deliver aid or provide help to healthcare facilities.

*Scale:* Binary, (0/1)

0– No.

1– Yes.

### **Other limitations (misclimit)**

*Question:* What other emergency measures did the government pass or implement - not mentioned here until now - with reference to Covid-19, which limit the quality of electoral or liberal democracy?

*Clarification:* This includes for instance the ad-hoc removal of judges, jailing well-known opposition figures, use of financial responses to strengthen loyalists and weaken opposition, etc.

*Scale:* Character string.