

## GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

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### ***Abstract***

*Although, there is no single definition of the concept of "good governance" it is known that "good governance" means "a process by which public institutions carry out public activities, manage public resources and ensure respect for human rights in a manner free from abuse and corruption, paying particular attention to the rule of law ". This term is used with great flexibility and starting from its eight dimensions (transparency, accountability, citizen participation, receptivity, consensus-building, effectiveness and efficiency, fairness and inclusion and the rule of law) this article aims to provide an overview of what the literature has been studying extensively over the past two years regarding good governance in relation to citizens' rights and Covid-19.*

*The Covid-19 pandemic is one of the major contemporary human rights challenges for governments and the international community. Thus, the goal of this article is to review how international governments react and try to control the spread of Covid-19. The purpose of this analysis is to focus on the effectiveness of governance in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, by presenting statistical facts/data that lead to the conclusion that the pandemic is better controlled by countries where good governance and trust in rulers is increased. Hence what is happening at the government level nowadays offers compelling insights into how we can be better prepared for similar challenges in the future*

***Keywords:*** good governance, rule of law, human rights, challenges, citizen participation.

## **Introduction**

Good governance at the national level, but also at the international level involves the governance processes, institutions and practices through which issues of common interest are decided and regulated, having as a core the proper functioning of the nation. Without a specific reference to the necessary but not sufficient political processes and actions, one cannot speak of a good administration applied in order to achieve the development objectives of a state. In order to be able to talk about the "good governance" of a state, one should assess the degree to which it fulfills its promise to its citizens through the process of guaranteeing human rights is assessed.

In a state governed by the rule of law, in which human rights should be recognized and guaranteed, it is imperative that there must be a reciprocal relationship and conditioning between human rights and good governance. This relationship should be based on a clear and well-defined set of principles, coupled with a set of values that should guide the work of the social actors involved in the act of governing, with a view to the active involvement of citizens under the terms of their right to self-determination, both domestically and internationally recognized. Moreover, the principles on which the human rights issue is based influence the content of the efforts made in order to substantiate the public policies adapted to our days. They can serve as a basis for the development of citizen-oriented legislative policies, programs and measures.

The implementation of human rights is based on an enabling and supportive environment that is characterized by the influences of sustainable development and good governance in certain successful, properly constructed patterns that can be implemented in public institutions by responsible public authorities. This approach includes well-built legal frameworks and appropriate institutions, as well as political, managerial and administrative processes responsible for responding to the rights and needs of the population.

Does good governance influence how a pandemic can spread? How is a government affected by a global pandemic? Is there a relationship between good governance and the rate of the Covid-19 virus spread? How are citizens affected by measures taken by governments in different countries? What is the reaction of the citizens to the pandemic control measures? All these questions and many others related to this research are studied by countless authors in various fields, from administrative sciences to social sciences, medical sciences and even statisticians and engineers.

## **1. Theoretical background**

The notion of good governance is not new, it has roots as old as human civilization. Properly, governance can be defined by reference to the decision-making process and the way in which they are implemented through a specific procedure. Their practical applicability should also be taken into account in a state governed by the rule of law characterized by dynamism and not necessarily consistency of legislation. The governing act can be used in several contexts, such as: international, European, domestic, regional, local and corporate governance.

The relationship between good governance and the rule of law must be characterized by a combination of qualities, so we consider it appropriate to say that good governance is effective in a society if it is participatory, responsible, respects the principles of decision-making transparency and consensus-oriented, mainly for the productive purposes, in the interest of the law and of the citizen. However good governance must respect the rule of law, be efficient, fair and inclusive, thus ensuring the idea of minimizing corruption practices. Through a citizen-oriented act of government, the opinions of minorities are also taken into account, and the voices of the most disadvantaged, vulnerable or in special situations are heard and included in the decision-making process (Kjaerum Morten, Davis Martha F., Lyons Amanda (2021) .

Although there is no internationally agreed definition of "good governance", it may include the following topics: full respect for human rights, the rule of law, effective participation, political pluralism, partnerships between different actors, an efficient and effective public sector, transparent processes and institutions, legitimacy, access to knowledge, information and education, people's political empowerment, equity, sustainability and attitudes and values that promote responsibility, solidarity and tolerance (OHCHR, 2007).

## **2. Values of the good governance concept - the relationship between good governance and human rights**

The connections between good governance and the rule of law can be analyzed by reference to several fields of activity, for example compared to the specifics or typology of democratic institutions, the provision of public services, anti-corruption .

When carried out on the basis of human rights values, reforms resulting from good governance of democratic institutions create opportunities, openings, different avenues, so that citizens can participate in policy-making, either through formal institutions or through informal consultations. The same reforms also establish mechanisms for the inclusion of different social groups in decision-making processes, especially at the local level. Citizens should be encouraged to express their views on issues that are important to the community in which they live.

Good governance is not exempt from repeated adaptations to changes in the knowledge-oriented society, so a reform in this area should be mentioned, especially when, through the necessary changes, there is an improvement in the capacity of the state in terms of fulfilling the responsibility for the provision of public goods essential for the protection of human rights, such as the right to education, health, the right to life, quality of life, etc. Reform initiatives may include monitoring and control mechanisms, responsiveness and decision-making transparency, policy tools tailored to the needs of the labor market and new social settings, ensuring the participatory rights of citizens, etc. Abouk R, Heydari B (2021).

Regarding the relationship between good governance and the rule of law, mention should be made to compliant legislative initiatives that can promote appropriate legal reform, raising public awareness of the legal framework and capacity building, or reforming institutions focused on promoting and guaranteeing human rights, where we notice sensitive initiatives for the implementation of legislation adapted to current needs. For example, the crisis caused by the pandemic Covid 19 virus, will remain in our memory in the form of a brutal memory, because of the health services and their way of acting during this period, mainly regarding the respect of patients' rights. In order to ensure sustainable progress based on respect for civil, political and social rights, a timely analysis of the pandemic we have just gone through is needed, in terms of the balance that the authorities must make once the end of the crisis is in sight.

Both the ECHR and the European Social Charter through its monitoring mechanisms (complaints or collective reports) are the perfect tools to be taken into account by the internal fora of each state severely affected by the pandemic, in the future reconstruction efforts.

The Covid-19 pandemic, related measures and restrictions, have put social rights under enormous pressure all across Europe. Above all, the pandemic has highlighted the weaknesses of public health services and the urgent need to make them effective and accessible to all. The challenge for our society as a whole is unprecedented, but the most vulnerable of us are the most affected.

The consequences will last, and social rights could suffer repercussions. The European Social Charter, our most important second-generation human rights treaty, includes a single monitoring tool - the collective redress procedure - an essential element for the economic recovery, and for respecting a wide range of social rights (Acemoglu D, Chernozhukov V, Werning I, Whinston MD (2021)).

Such complex and multidimensional factors impose greater demands on the competition of resources and the institutional capacity of the authorities, which states should take into account

when trying to fulfill their obligations derive from these international instruments that are universally valid.

Table 2. 1 Country statistics Updated on (06. 2021) on the situation of covid cases - <https://www.cnsct.ro/index.php/situatia-la-nivel-global-actualizata> zilnic?limit=10&limitstart=320 și <https://www.trt.net.tr/romana/covid19>

Country	Cases	healed	Deaths
România	<b>1,08mil</b> <b>Plus103</b>	<b>1,04mil</b> <b>Plus 199</b>	<b>31,681</b> <b>Plus 150</b>
<b>United States of America</b>	33,4 mil. +26.076	-	600 K +730
<b>India</b>	29,4 mil. +84.332	27,9 mil. +121 K	367 K +4.002
<b>Brazil</b>	17,3 mil. +85.149	15,3 mil. +49.283	484 K +2.216
<b>France</b>	5,73 mil. +3.871	-	110 K +74
<b>Turkey</b>	5,32 mil. +6.261	5,19 mil.	48.593 +69
<b>Russia</b>	5,12 mil. +12.361	4,73 mil. +10.037	124 K +390
<b>Italy</b>	4,24 mil. +1.892	3,95 mil. +5.893	127 K +69
<b>Spain</b>	3,73 mil.	-	80.465
<b>Germany</b>	3,72 mil. +2.194	3,57 mil. +5.540	89.821 +128
<b>South Africa</b>	1,73 mil. +8.020	1,6 mil. +5.234	57.592 +182
<b>Netherlands</b>	1,67 mil. +1.377	-	17.708 +3

Since the beginning of the Pandemic until the end of 2020, the following data were recorded:

- 1 case out of 52 cases was registered within the medical staff;
- 83.1% of all deaths were people over 60 years;
- 59.2% of deaths were recorded in men;
- 95.3% of the deceased were had at least one associated comorbidity;

The share of cases and deaths by age group is as follows:

- 0-9 years (between 0% and 5% cases).
- 0 - 19 years (5% cases).
- 20-29 years (10% cases, between 0 and 1% deaths).
- 30 - 39 years (15% cases and between 0 and 2% deaths).
- 40 - 49 years (20 and 25% cases and less than 5% deaths).
- 50 - 59 years (20% cases, between 10 and 15% deaths).
- 60 - 69 years (25% deaths - 30% cases).
- 70 -79 years (30% deaths, between 5 and 10% cases).

According to the data provided by the National Coordinating Committee for Covid-19 vaccination activities, the vaccination situation in Romania on the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of 2022: the total number of vaccinated persons is 16,737,321, of which 8,116,026 are people vaccinated with the first dose, and 8,080,704 people vaccinated with a complete scheme.

From a prevention perspective, in order to adequately address the pandemic problem, Romania is among the states that have adopted measures to prevent the transmission of the virus immediately after the confirmation of the first cases of COVID 19 infection. As can be seen from the table above, the pandemic caused by COVID19 has caused a major imbalance for contemporary societies: the major health crisis although health systems have mobilized to prevent mass mortality, the threat of a deep financial and economic crisis, risk of over-indebtedness and massive unemployment, a situation that could lead to other social and political crises that threaten the stability of states, especially the most vulnerable ones (Akesson J, Ashworth-Hayes S, Hahn R, Metcalfe RD, Rasooly I (2020). Knowing for a fact that the pandemic poses major challenges to the governance of the security sector, directly affecting public health, civil security and respect for the rule of law and human rights, there should be a focus on an in-depth knowledge of the issue, analysis of affected human rights and good coordination and cooperation of states being important key in fighting against pandemics.

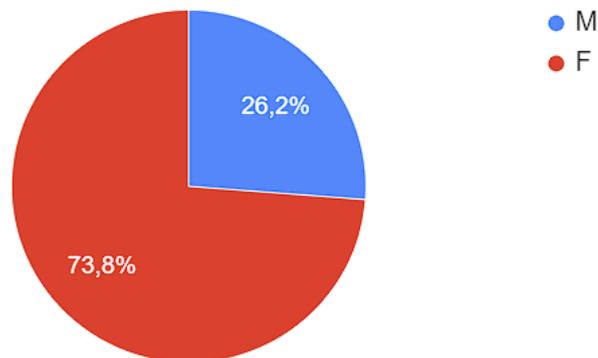
### **3. Empiric research**

How does this pandemic legally affect human rights and public health? Is there another side of the shield regarding COVID 19 virus? It is possible to have an answer based on a questionnaire conducted online, with a number of 145 respondents, aged between 18 and 60, men and women alike, most of them being included in the category of those with higher education.

The questions varied, starting from general data on people (age, gender, level of education) ongoing with rights that were considered most violated in the context of COVID 19, vaccine and the effects of the pandemic on the physical and mental condition of respondents.

### 1. Gender:

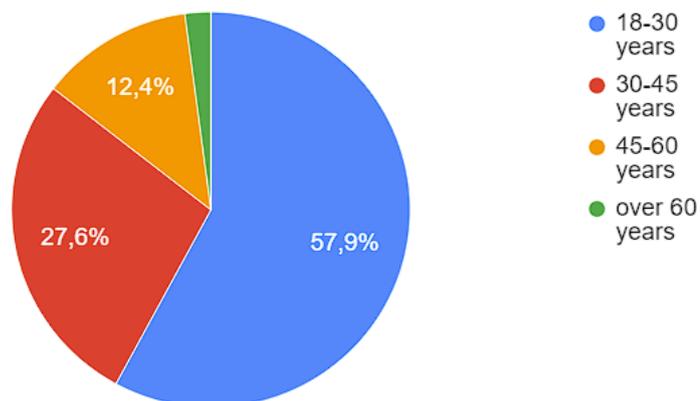
145 responses



Therefore, the preponderance of female participants in the questionnaire can be easily deduced from the graph above.

### 2. Age:

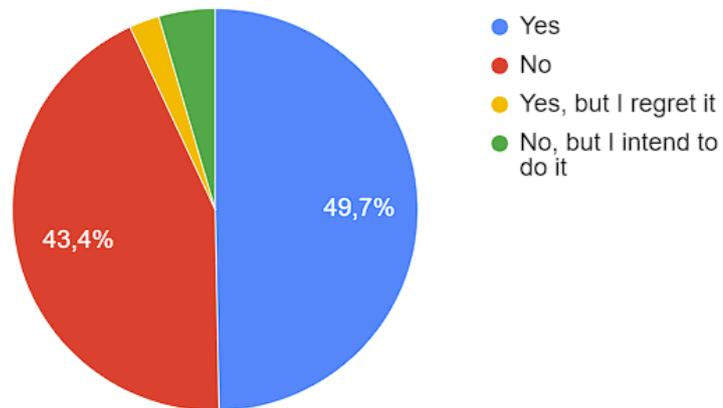
145 responses



We have a majority of respondents aged between 18 and 30 years, those over 60 being in a percentage of only 2.1%.

### 3. Are you vaccinated?

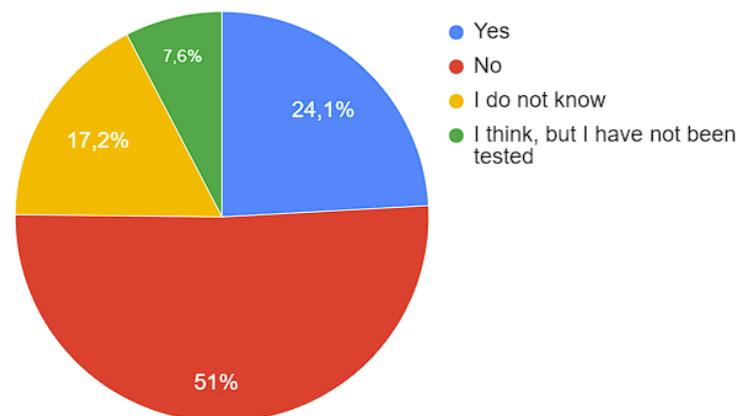
145 responses



The percentage between those unvaccinated and those vaccinated against COVID 19 is very close, with a difference of only 6.3% in favor of those vaccinated.

### 4. Have you been infected with SARS-COV-2?

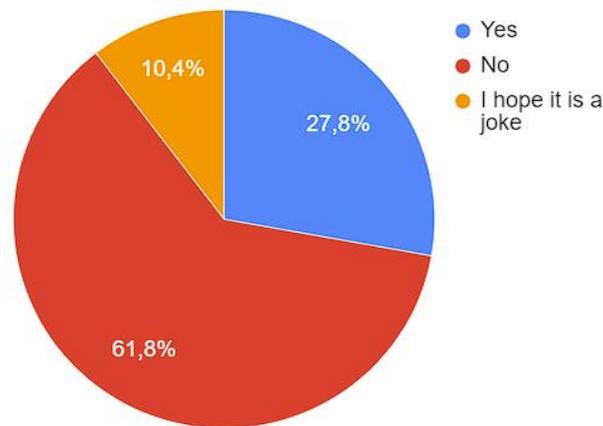
145 responses



A worryingly high percentage of survey participants are still at risk of infection as more than 50% say they have not been infected with the Sars-Cov2 virus, while only 24.1% affirm they have already had the virus.

## 5. Do you believe in conspiracy theories related to the Covid-19 pandemic?

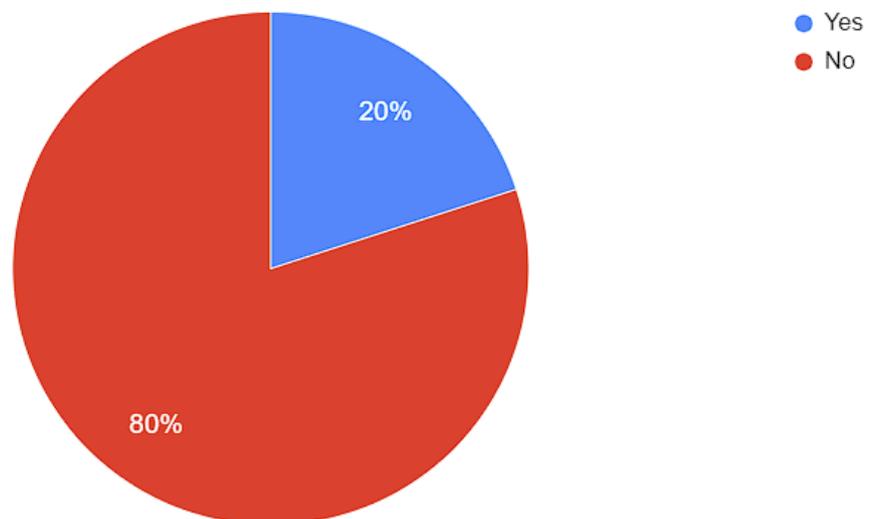
144 responses



Because our country is one of those in which the degree of skepticism about anything reaches high levels, the question addressed to the participants represented in the chart above, finds its justification within our research, as we can see that more than 25% of questioned people believe in conspiracy theories.

## 6. Do you travel abroad often?

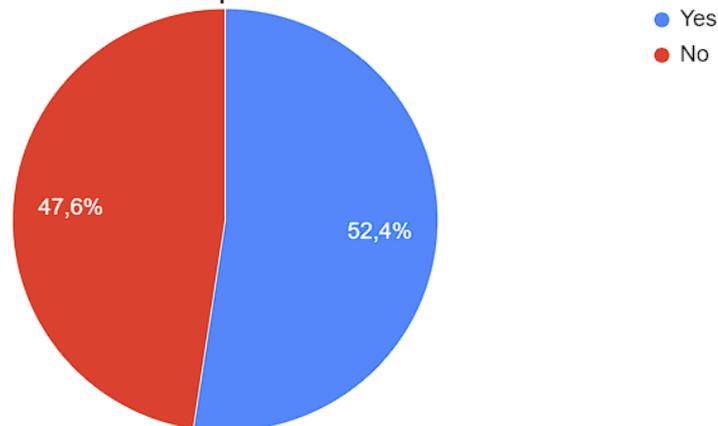
145 responses



The above question is linked with the right to free movement since one of the most restricted rights during the pandemic was this right.

7. Do you consider that the legislation applied in Romania infringes your rights and freedoms in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic?

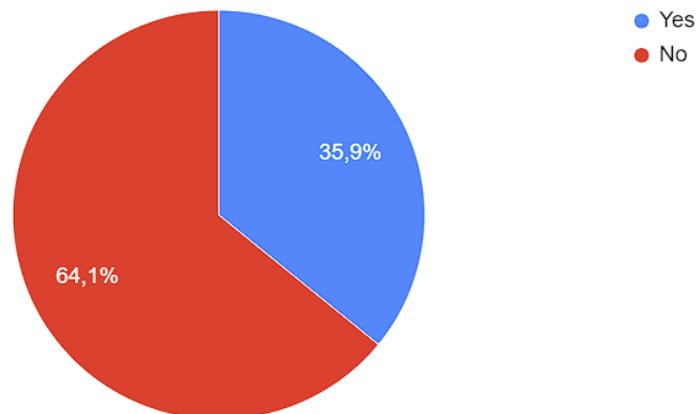
145 responses



More than half of the respondents to the questionnaire answered affirmative to the question that brings to the fore the gaps at national legislative level, in the context of the current pandemic.

8. Do you think that the laws of other countries in the world affect human rights and freedoms more than national laws?

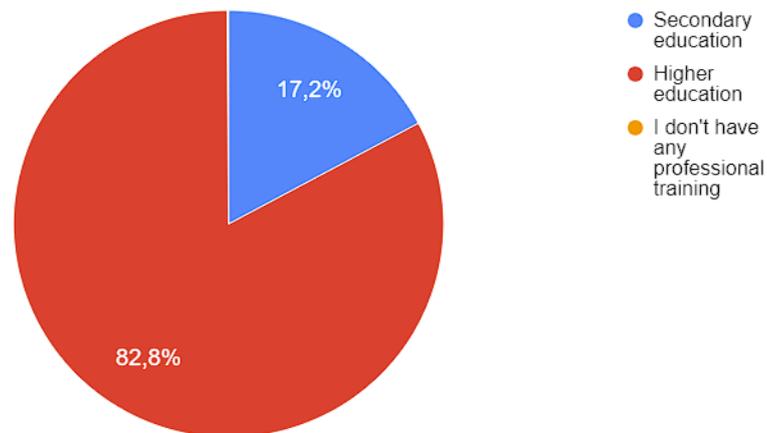
145 responses



Hence the study of the paper aims to be a comparative one, we also focus on external legislative level, at least at the level of perception, through the question addressed above.

## 9. Education:

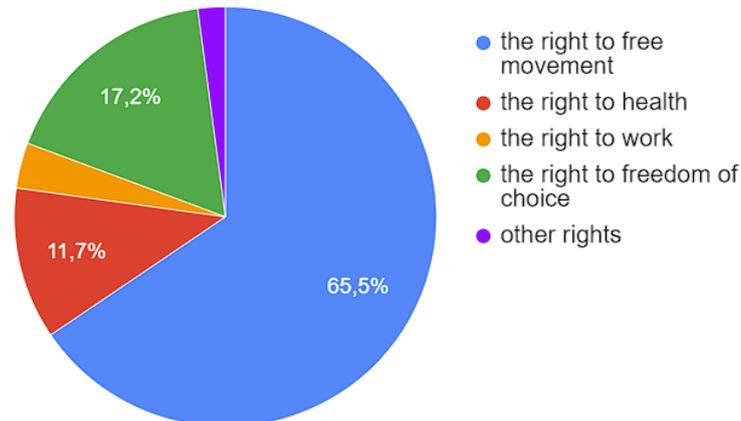
145 responses



A positive element of the questionnaire is that none of the participants in the questionnaire are without any professional training, 82.8% of the respondents have higher education.

## 10. Which law do you think was the most affected during the Covid-19 pandemic?

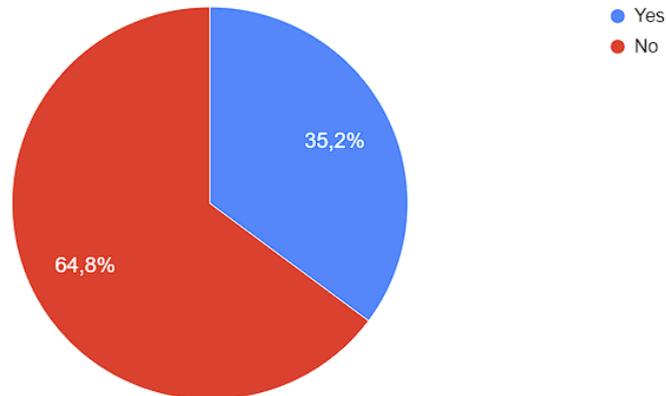
145 responses



As we have shown throughout this article, one of the most affected human rights during the pandemic was the right to free movement, a fact confirmed by 65.5% of respondents to this questionnaire.

11. Do you consider justified and balanced the decisions and obligations imposed by state authorities once the Covid pandemic started?

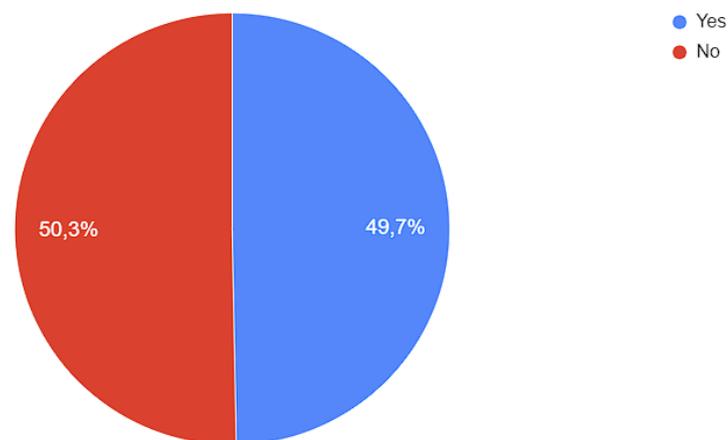
145 responses



From the answers highlighted by the above question, we can notice the imbalance resulting from the measures applied by the state authorities worldwide, as a result of the pandemic caused by the Sars-Cov 2 coronavirus.

12. Do you consider it discriminatory that vaccinated persons may travel from one country to another sometimes under more favorable or easier conditions than unvaccinated persons?

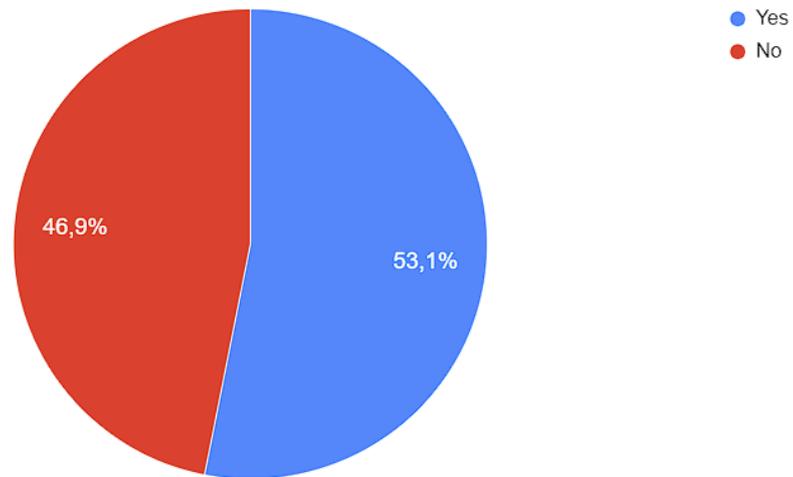
145 responses



The scale is fairly balanced when respondents state or disprove elements of discrimination between vaccinated and unvaccinated in the context of traveling abroad.

13. Do you think that your mental health has been affected by the pressure of the measures taken in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic?

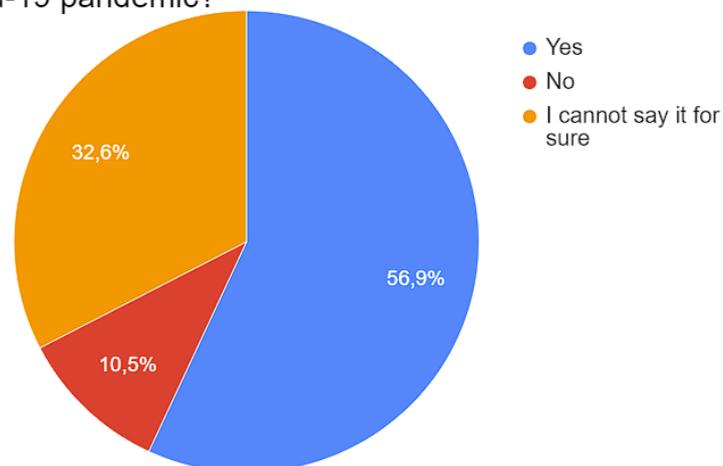
145 responses



Mental health is at least as important as physical health, so one should not overlooked that respondents perceive in over 50% that this has been affected by the pandemic.

14. Do you consider that, from the beginning of the pandemic until now there have been abuses by the Romanian authorities against the citizens in the context of the application of the measures generated by the Covid-19 pandemic?

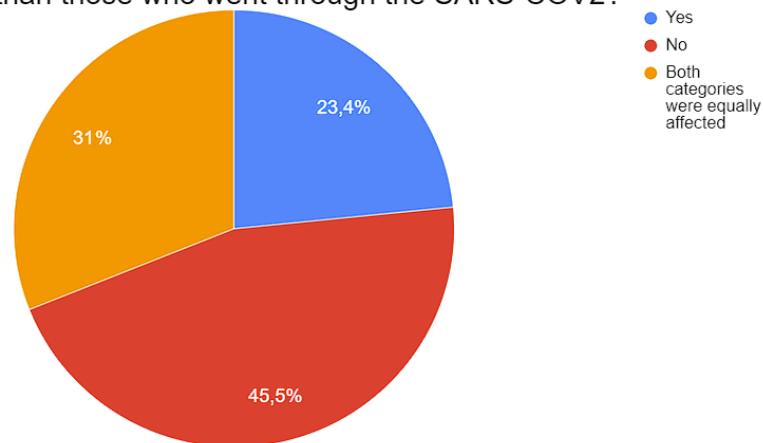
144 responses



10.5% of those who answered the above question are reluctant to say whether or not there were abuses made by the authorities during the COVID 19 pandemic, but a majority claim that such facts exist.

15. Do you consider that in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, people more vulnerable in terms of physical / mental health, other than those directly affected by the SARS-COV-2 virus, were less affected by vaccination than those who went through the SARS-COV2?

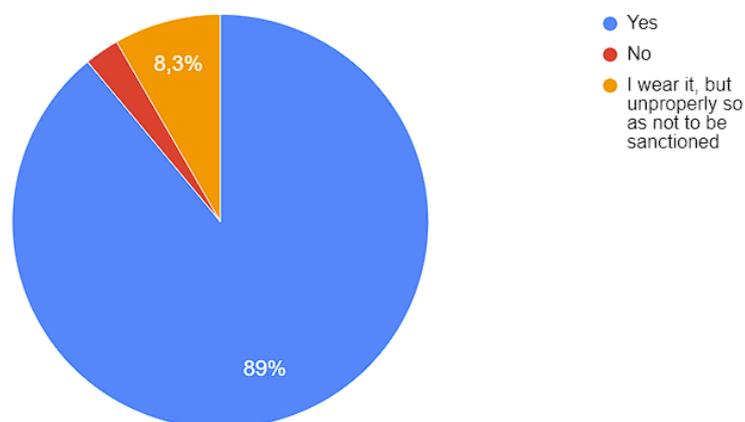
145 responses



It is interesting to note that 31% of those surveyed believe that both those who are vulnerable in terms of poor health and those affected by Covid 19 were equally affected during the pandemic.

16. Do you wear a mask when entering an enclosed space?

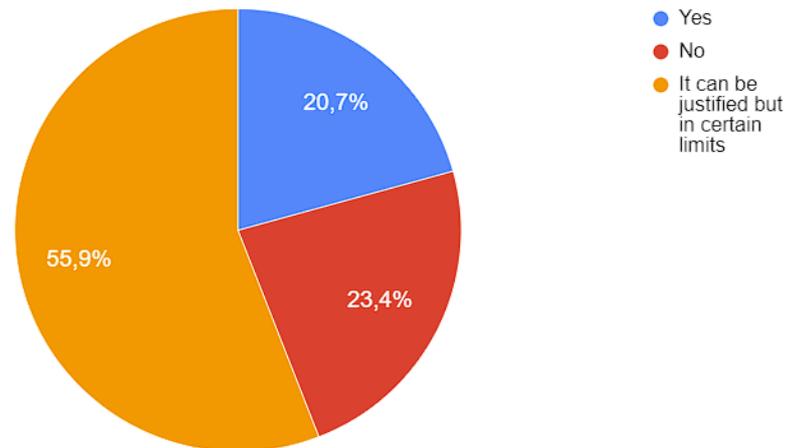
145 responses



89% of the 145 respondents to the questionnaire wear a face mask when they are indoors, but there are still those who wear it symbolically (8.3%) and a tiny percentage who do not wear it at all (2.7%) .

17. Do you consider that public health justifies the violation of human rights and the restriction of freedoms for an indefinite period?

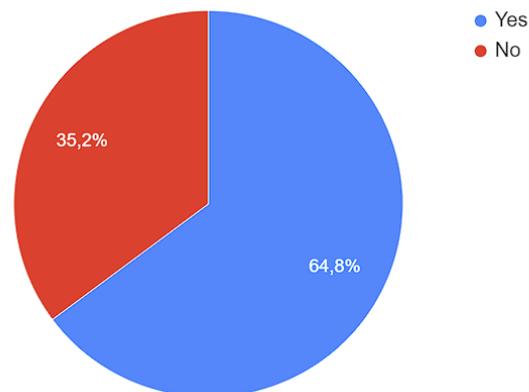
145 responses



55.9% of the participants in the questionnaire consider that public health is important, as long as there is no major imbalance in relation to human rights and freedoms.

18. Do you consider the vaccination campaign justified, although there is a possibility of infection despite being vaccinated?

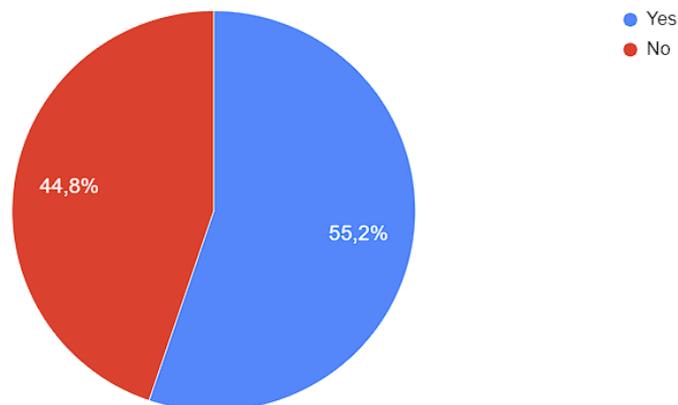
145 responses



The vaccine is the one that puts an end to the pandemic, according to public claims of the authorities, although 35.2% of respondents consider the vaccination campaign unjustified.

19. Do you consider that the rights that were been violated during pandemic to have irreversible effects?

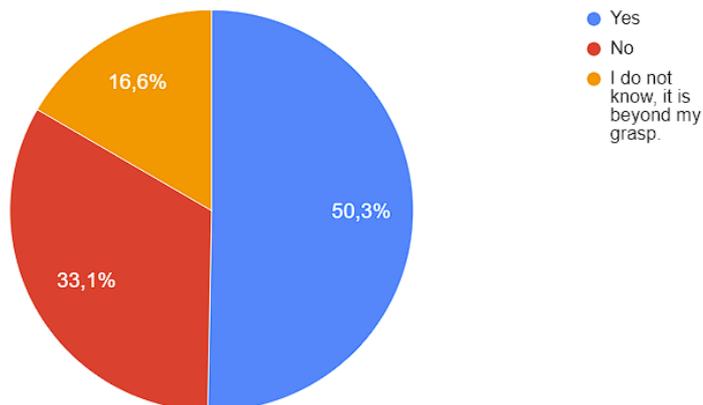
145 responses



Unfortunately, the majority perception in the questionnaire is that some rights that were violated during the pandemic have effects that do not have the reverse.

20. Do you consider that the current romanian legislation applied in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic infringes the rights protected by the Romanian Constitution?

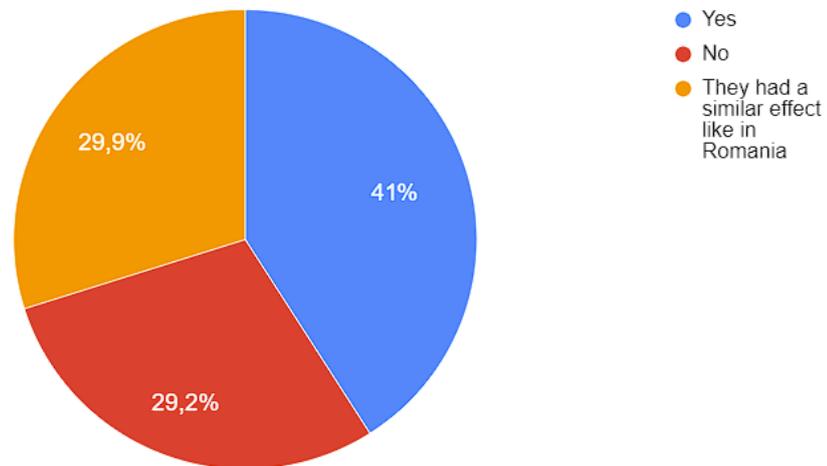
145 responses



The Romanian Constitution is practically the Romanian Bible in terms of human and citizen rights and freedoms, and 50.3% of those surveyed confirm that, in the context of the virus that caused the pandemic, the current legislation still violates them.

21. Do you consider that the measures applied by the other world countries have been more effective in combating the Covid-19 pandemic?

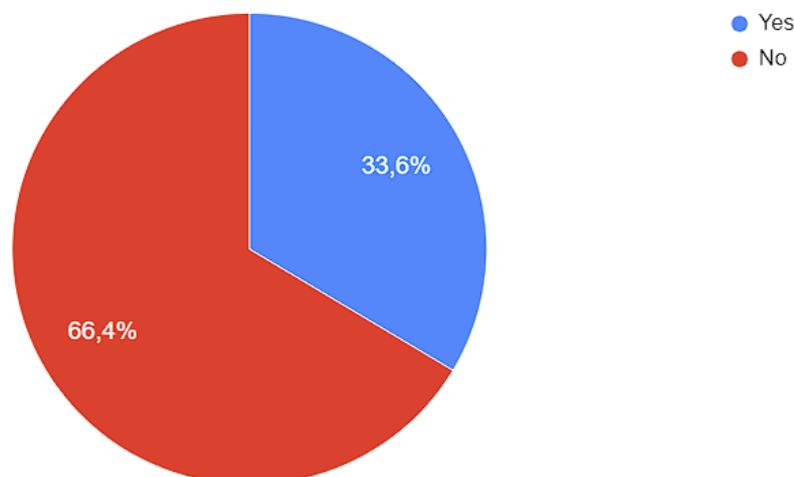
144 responses



The people's perception, according to the questionnaire, is that the measures taken by the other states of the world were more effective in the context of COVID 19, compared to Romania.

22. Do you think that the studies on the Covid-19 vaccine were sufficient to ensure that human physical integrity is not affected?

146 responses



More than half of the respondents are convinced that the vaccine is not yet a sure answer to the pandemic, being a possible element of impaired physical integrity, according to the studies.

#### 4. Aspects of comparative law regarding the analysis performed

Analyzing the case of France, the NCCHR (National Consultative Commission on Human Rights), without denying the serious health consequences of the covid-19 pandemic, finds that the restrictions introduced in the context of health of emergency are unprecedented, by generalizing them to all rights and freedoms and not only by their scope. Other freedoms continue to be restricted, such as those relating to movement, the right to attend meetings and demonstrations, and the freedom to religion. This also applies to effective access to public services or public or private facilities. It can be seen that these violations of freedoms go further by generating issues of personal insecurity such as respect for privacy which is called into question by the use of specific information systems (Alon I, Farrell M, Li S (2020)).

For the relevance of this view on public health and on the way in which states have chosen to act by taking exceptional measures, the case of **France** is also illustrative, there being applied measures derogating from common law in order to protect against the particular disease of the current pandemic, as shown in the following table:

Normative act	PERIOD OF APPLICATION	APPLICABLE TEXT	DURATION OF EXTENSION
1. STATEMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY 2020 (COVID-19)	STARTING WITH 25 MARCH FOR A TWO-MONTH PERIOD	ARTICLE 4	2 MONTHS
2. REGULATORY ACT ON THE EXTENSION OF RESIDENCE PERMITS: 1 LONG-STAY VISAS 2 RESIDENCE PERMITS EXCEPT THOSE ISSUED BY FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR STAFF 3 PROVISIONAL RESIDENCE PERMITS	SINCE THE BEGINNING OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN FRANCE	ART.16 OF THE EMERGENCY LAW NO.290 OF MARCH 23, 2020 TO DEAL WITH THE EPIDEMIC CAUSED BY THE COVID-19 VIRUS ART.1 OF THE ORDINANCE NO. 328 OF 25 MARCH ON	6 MONTHS

4 RECEIPTS FOR APPLICATIONS FOR RESIDENCE PERMITS ASYLUM APPLICATION CERTIFICATES		THE EXTENSION OF THE VALIDITY OF RESIDENCE DOCUMENTS	
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The World Health Organization declared the Sars-CoV2 virus a pandemic on March 11, 2020, when the number of SARS-CoV-2 infections was over 121,000 worldwide the statistics show that 114 countries had reported cases of infection, 81 countries had reported no cases, and 57 countries reported less than 10 cases. More than 90% of reported cases were in only four countries (China, Italy, Iran, South Korea ). **Italy** was among the worst affected European countries since the first case was reported on 31.01.2020, the worst affected people being those over the age of 65.

The state of crisis that strongly affects the development of the contemporary society, underlines once again the importance of human rights in the society. The top importance of fundamental human rights and freedoms within a society proves, if necessary, the dimension of the spiritual, cultural and moral transformations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century humanity. (Carl Gershman (2021)).

The purpose of this analysis is to provide an overview of what the literature has been studying extensively over the past two years. Thus, the aim is to review the way governments react internationally to try to control the spread of Covid-19, and on the other hand to include studies on the effectiveness of governance in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. These studies include effective statistical analysis and conclude that the pandemic is better controlled by countries where good governance and trust in rulers is increased. Society will continue to face major challenges after the Covid-19 pandemic, for example, the crisis caused by the Ukraine conflict, which is on the one hand one of the major contemporary human rights challenges for both governments and the international community, and on the other hand a flagrant violation of international law.

We are practically witnessing a replacement of negotiation with a battlefield for territorial claims and monopolies of all kinds, denying the law of treaties and reducing to absurdity the principles of international law. What is happening right now at the government level offers compelling insights into how we will deal with similar challenges in the future. After a year of trial and error, after many discussions and analyzes, we must admit that neither the governments nor the international human rights community have been prepared for what has happened in the last 2 years (Kjaerum, Davis & Lyons, 2021). Good governance and its relationship with the rule of law call for far-reaching measures to help recognize the fundamental rights and freedoms of

human beings, so that social and economic inequalities caused by the pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine can be alleviated until total disappearance, through measures adapted to the new social requirements.

The Call for Democracy is a statement signed by more than 150 pro-democracy institutions and more than 1,000 political and civic leaders around the world, including 13 Nobel laureates and 62 former heads of government (<https://www.ned.org/>). It draws attention on the fact that authoritarian regimes have used the crisis to silence criticism and tighten political pressure, and that some democratically elected governments are fighting against the current challenges through emergency ordinances that restrict human rights and increase state control, without concerning about the legality of the documents proclaimed, parliamentary oversight or constitutional order. Parliaments become marginalized structures, journalists are arrested and harassed, minorities are scapegoats, and the most vulnerable sections of the population face dangers everywhere, as the crisis affects the economic environment (Gershman, 2021).

Freedom House reported in October 2021 that the state of democracy, of good governance and human rights is being affected in more than 80 countries, and almost half of the world's countries have imposed media restrictions as part of their response to COVID 19. The pandemic has been used by some government regimes to enact laws and regulations, stifle freedom of expression, expand executive powers, eradicate corrupt practices, and shrink space for civil society (<https://freedomhouse.org/>). An emergency law has been invoked in Malaysia to allow Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to bypass parliament when making major decisions. The most common example is a recent "fake news" law that makes it a crime to publish any text on the new law on the government's management of the pandemic (Malaysia cites COVID-19 misinformation with new 'fake news' law, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/12/malaysia-cites-covid-19-misinformation-with-new-fake-news-law>).

The pandemic has also provided a way to introduce new digital technologies and make them a useful tool in the hand of state institutions. As governments have resorted to various software and digital applications to monitor the spread of the virus, systems lacking privacy measures have provided the Chinese authorities as far as Bahrain with a new means of tracking the population. Another example is that of the Iranian authorities, who claimed that a new application is being introduced to diagnose citizens with COVID-19, but it proves out to collect data on the location of Iranian citizens. In Bangladesh, a cartoonist, a writer and a whistleblower face potential life sentences for misinforming citizens about state actions and undermining the image of the state. In China, a Wuhan citizen who was a journalist has been detained for more than a year for "creating trouble", because at the beginning of the pandemic he posted pictures at

of corpses taken out of a hospital (Attacks on freedom of expression 'devastating' for public health, [www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com)).

The pandemic has also created new opportunities for corruption, especially now that there is external support for all affected states. This problem is particularly prevalent in the health sector, where embezzlement, bribery and rising prices allow elites to get rich. In South Sudan, authorities have been accused of taking advantage of aid for COVID-19, leaving the country's health system to face pandemic on its own, while corruption in Paraguay has caused a shortage of medical supplies, severely undermining government to respond to the new wave of COVID-19.

In response from civil society, many countries have "revolted" against the way the pandemic is managed. In Colombia, Jordan and Kazakhstan, there have been protests against economic insecurity, mismanagement of the public health crisis and the expansion of state authority under the pretext of emergency laws (Csonka & Salazar, 2021). The crisis has helped to crystallize the sense of responding to emergencies and social responsibility in civil society networks. Throughout Eurasia, citizen-led grassroots organizations provide services to those in need, and Ukrainian civil society has mobilized in a manner that reminds us of the spirit of solidarity during the Euromaidan revolution ([www.humanrights.vic.gov.a](http://www.humanrights.vic.gov.a)).

##### **5. Studies on good governance and pandemic control in various cases / case studies**

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, two components have been widely debated (regarding the pandemic and its control).

Similarly, Bunyavejchewin and Sirichuanjun (2021) found out that the effectiveness of public policy responses to COVID-19 is closely linked to the system of government and the political regime.

Toshkov et al. (2020) reported that European countries with more centralized forms of government, which scored relatively poorly on statistical tests of government effectiveness, trust and freedom, tended to respond more quickly and decisively to controlling the spread of the pandemic than decentralized countries with better scores on those measurements.

Using as model European democracies, Engler et al. (2021) studied variations in COVID-19 government control policies, and discovered that the considerable variation cannot be explained solely by pandemic factors, as strong-rooted democratic norms and institutions probably played an important role in pandemic control. Liang et al. (2020) underlined a negative association between COVID-19 deaths and government effectiveness and efficiency.

Anti-lockout protests, which were reported in various parts of the world during the COVID-19 crisis, reveal that people are unwilling to compromise on freedom of mobility, especially if they do not trust in the credibility of their government or on the political regime.

We cannot help but wonder what would inspire such an innate faith and confidence of the citizens in their own government.

Among other things, the history of government institutions and organizations, in terms of how effectively they have met the public's expectations in providing the desired public goods, especially in times of crisis, is not exactly successful. However, it can be hypothesized that government efficiency may lead to greater public confidence and therefore to higher levels of spontaneous compliance with public health directives by government institutions (Hale et al., 2020).

The means and methods by which government activity will be classified as effective are the basic elements of good governance in conjunction with the requirements of the rule of law, the quality of legal regulations, the means of controlling corruption, accountability and political stability. This data are also provided by World Bank.

This data archive is one of the most comprehensive elements of government quality. The data in the chart below demonstrates the government's efficiency and effectiveness in terms of the rate of infection, data obtained from the WHO and Our World in Data online database (OWID, 2020). According to the WHO, the positive rate is an appropriate measure in terms of testing, as it captures the amount of testing performed in a country in relation to the size of the outbreak it is facing (Nabin et al., 2021).

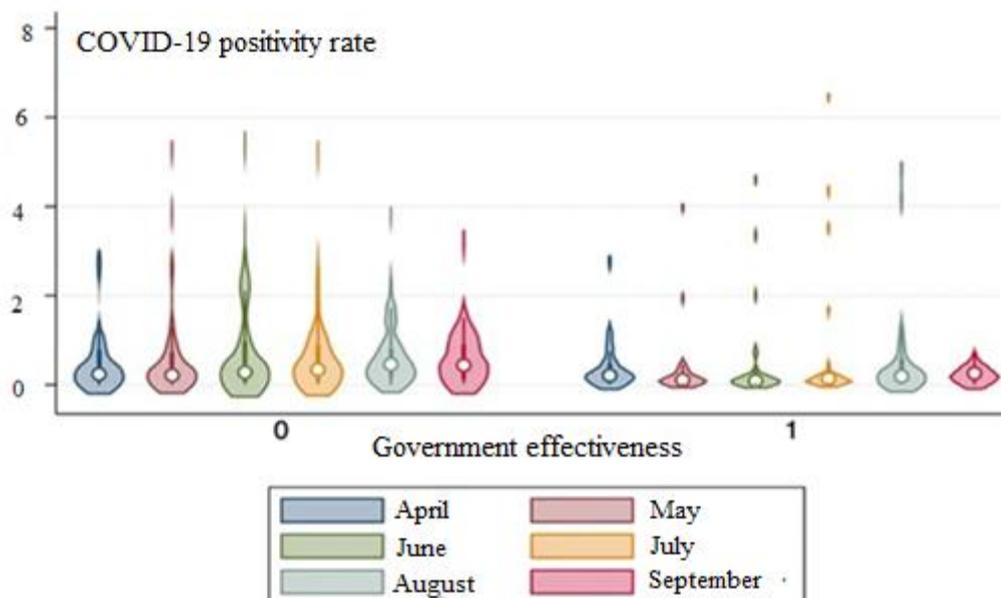


Fig. 1 Distribution of positive COVID-19 rate according to government effectiveness.

Source: Nabin, M.H., Chowdhury, M.T.H. & Bhattacharya, S. (2021)

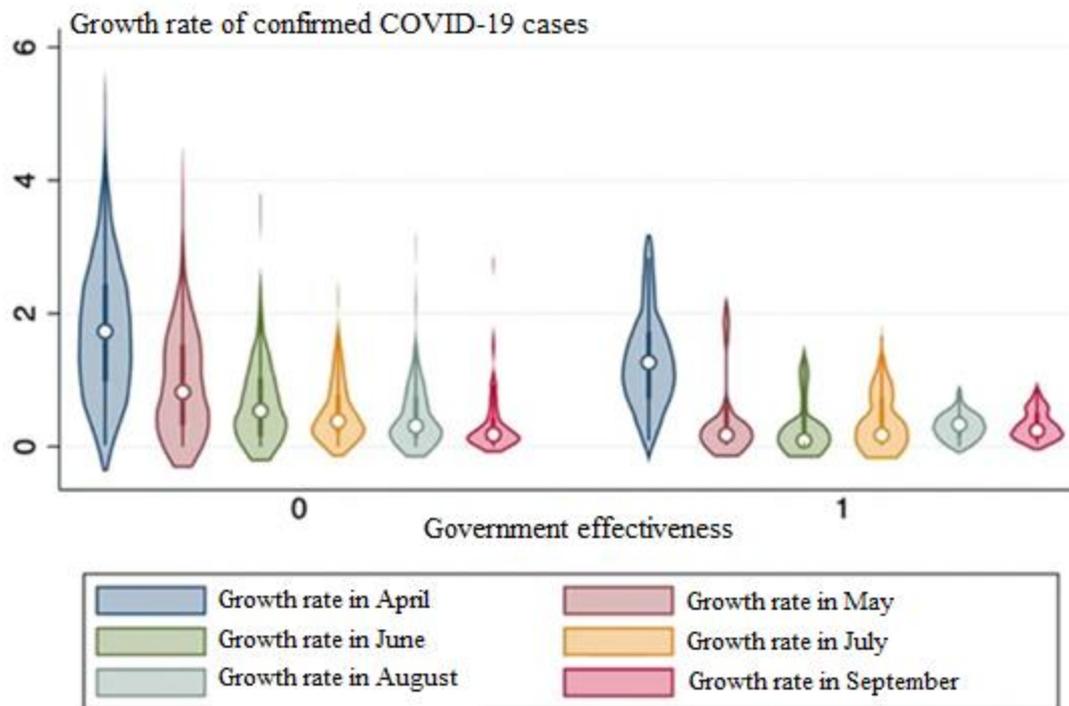


Fig. 2 Distribution of COVID-19 growth rate according to government effectiveness.

Source: Nabin, M.H., Chowdhury, M.T.H. & Bhattacharya, S. (2021)

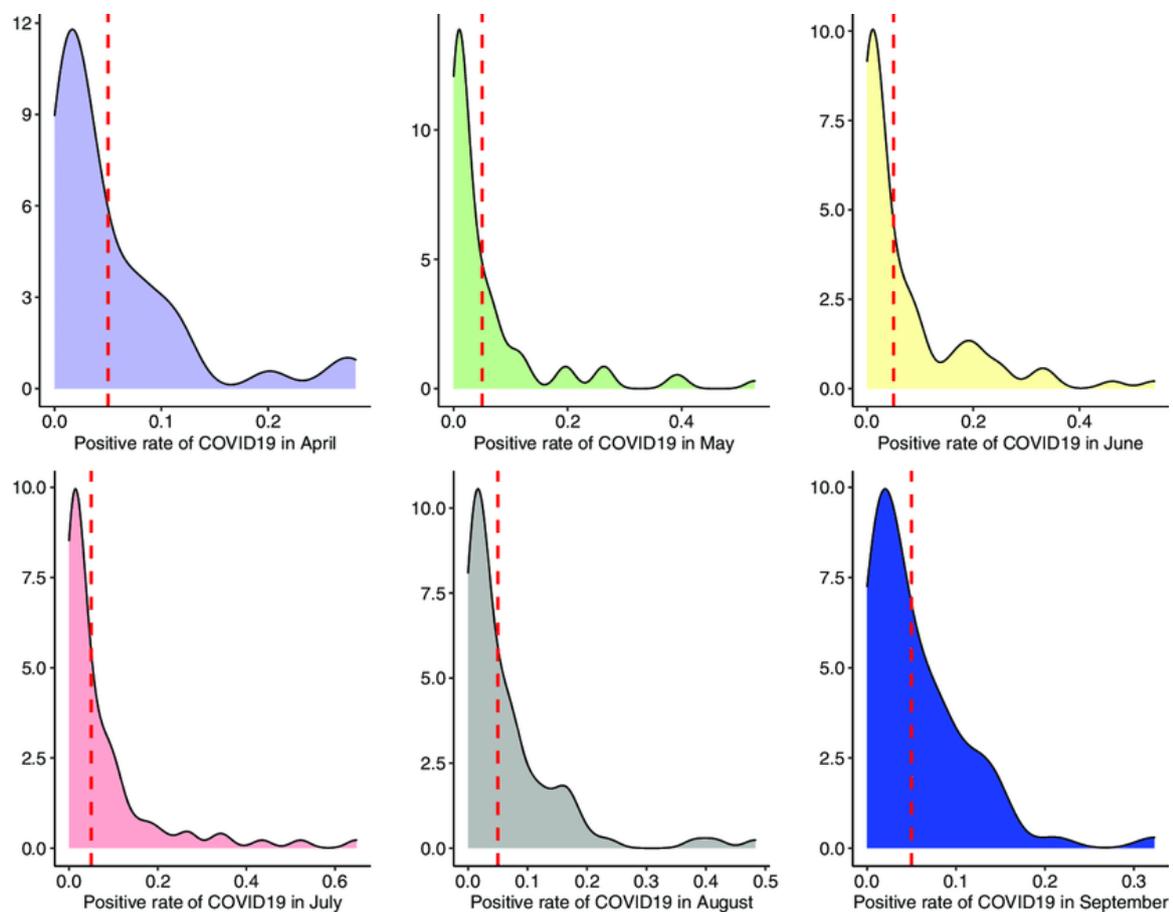


Fig. 3 Distribution of positive COVID-19 rate between countries.  
Source: Nabin, M.H., Chowdhury, M.T.H. & Bhattacharya, S. (2021)

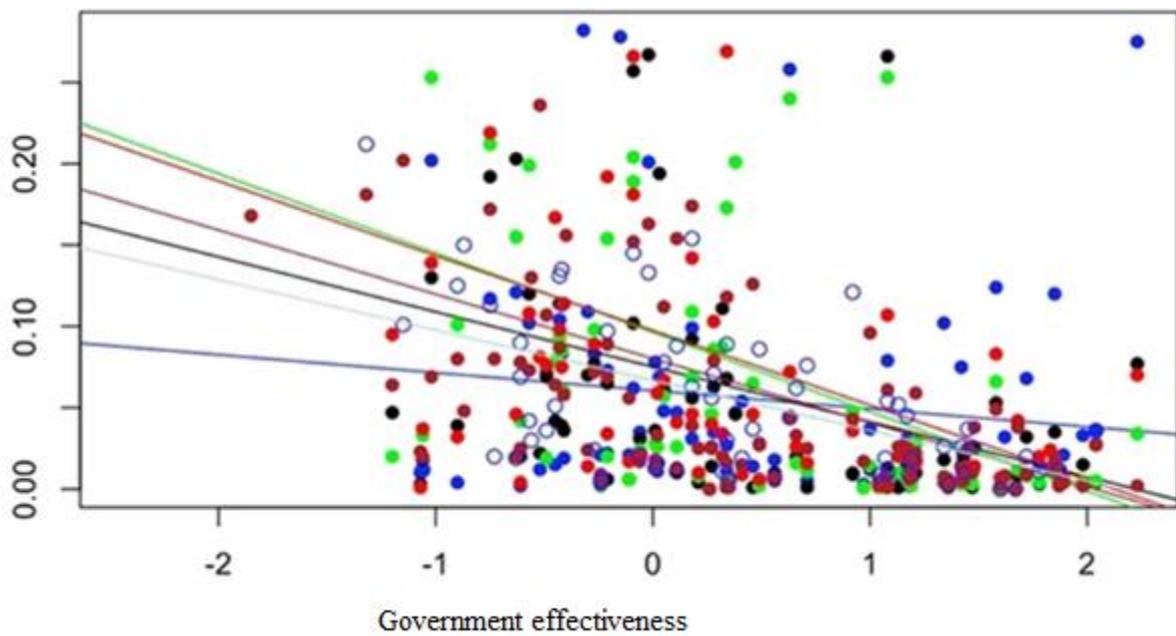


Fig. 4 The relationship between government efficiency and the positive rate of COVID-19.  
Source: Nabin, M.H., Chowdhury, M.T.H. & Bhattacharya, S. (2021)

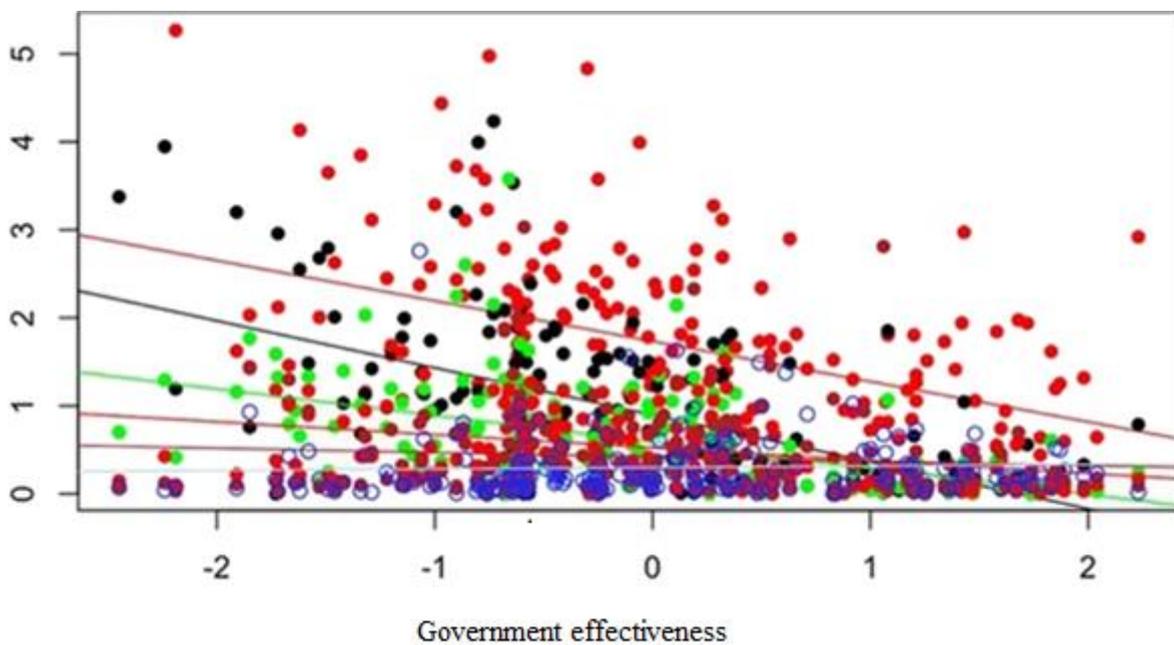


Fig. 5 Relationship between government efficiency and covid-19 growth rate.  
Nabin, M.H., Chowdhury, M.T.H. & Bhattacharya, S. (2021)

This study provides statistically significant evidence of the inverse relationship between the quality of governance, captured through two alternative measures, namely the positive rate for COVID-19 and the growth rate of COVID-19.

The research method was conducted empirically from data collected from a large number of countries, from different continents, so as to result from the comparative analysis of the data the relationship between the quality of government and the spread of the pandemic, which largely reflects the content of the good governance concept. in line with the requirements of the rule of law.

Thus, there is growing statistical evidence that it is very important for citizens to be led by an effective government when it comes to defending against epidemic.

All in all, this study confirms through a statistical analysis that a good governance, an effective governance is crucial in fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic, because in this way the citizens' trust in the imposed measures is obtained, the "rational trust" that is vital for to "winning the battle with this invisible enemy" (Nabin et al., 2021)

The public sector is facing complex problems in an increasingly turbulent social and political environment, having to deal with uncertain and unpredictable scenarios attributed to the new Coronavirus. This requires political leaders to improve their responsiveness by designing, combining and implementing reliable governance strategies (Ansell et al., 2020).

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, it would be useful to include Romania in this analysis, although in the literature such studies are very few. The Romanian government responded in time to the pandemic and tried to intervene in a timely manner with ordinances to try to control the spread of the new Coronavirus. However, there were both reactions at the level of citizens (dissatisfaction, protests), and at the government (many political struggles that have led to unclear decision) that would probably lead to a negative perception of good governance during the Covid-19 pandemic and of respecting human rights. However, these assumptions are not part of this study, but are still the subject of further analysis of citizens' perceptions of government.

Regarding the relationship between good governance, human rights and the Covid-19 pandemic, we can highlight the following ideas:

- inclusive governance practices and ongoing political dialogues between political and economic actors help to balance fiscal adjustments, state-society relations, civil security and even to respect human rights and to administer justice in a fair and non-discriminatory manner;

- it is necessary to insure a balance, and in the meantime an independence of the state powers in health responses in order to ensure the validation of the principles of legality and to downplay the impairment of civil and political freedoms;

- ensuring the observance and implementation of democratic practices are key elements in terms of trust in political structures;

- recognizing the importance of information and data, both on the health situation and on the socio-economic impacts of the crisis on behalf of governments and citizens;

- strengthening controls on abuse of authority and corruption and ensuring that transparency is not quarantined;

- promoting free debates, evidence-based freedom of expression, respecting differences of opinion and building consensus in order to avoid the anxieties and fears of the general population;

- putting pressure on governments to find innovative solutions to these problems.

The challenges are not only technical, but require proper government management; governors must also take into account socio-political issues, as well as the media coverage of events.

After seeing the relations currently established between states, strongly marked by the way they managed the pandemic but also by their reaction to the war, we may conclude that a good governance to be effective it must be oriented towards citizens, so that they gain confidence in the act of government and feel that their human rights are not limited but secured even beyond the country's borders.

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