

## Global COVID-19 Pandemic: Implemented Policies and Effective Measures Employed Worldwide

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### ABSTRACT

In this article, a comprehensive methodology has been used to investigate the policies and measures taken around the world in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. Research includes examining international reports, official government statements, and scientific literature from organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Analysis and synthesis of these resources were made to identify common trends, challenges and effective strategies used in different countries and regions. The methodology aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the global response to the Covid-19 pandemic, to provide insights into the effectiveness of these various policies and measures by addressing the measures taken and policies implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, he discussed the countries struggling with the covid-19 pandemic on a country basis and explained the policies and measures they took.

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## INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled governments and health organizations worldwide to swiftly devise and implement policies and measures to combat the Virus spread. This article aims to analyze the range of strategies and interventions deployed globally, focusing on key areas such as lockdowns, testing and tracing, vaccination campaigns, travel restrictions, public health guidelines, health system strengthening, and communication strategies. Understanding these policies and measures will provide valuable insights into the global response and help identify successful approaches for managing future public health crises.

The measures and policies taken in the global labor market during the COVID-19 pandemic have diversified and evolved over time as the situation has changed. Key measures include wage subsidies, unemployment benefits, paid sick leave, remote working, health and safety regulations, economic stimulus packages, support for vulnerable workers, job training and reskilling programs, and support for businesses (International Labour Organization, 2020). These interventions aim to protect workers, support businesses, and maintain economic activity amid significant disruptions. While the effectiveness of these measures varies depending on the context and implementation, they have helped mitigate the pandemic's impact on the labor market to some extent.

In the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and to mitigate its negative effects on the economy, countries rapidly implemented fiscal policies and financial precautionary packages. Initially, the United States allocated \$484 billion in support, which was later increased to \$2 trillion as the pandemic's impact grew, making it the largest support package announced globally (The U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). Similarly, Japan announced a financial support package of approximately \$1 trillion to support both the public and private sectors, nearly double the package implemented during the 2008 financial crisis (Ministry of Finance Japan, 2020). These financial aid packages have significantly influenced the GDPs of their respective countries.

The policy measures implemented globally to cope with the economic recession caused by the coronavirus can be categorized into four types: monetary measures, financial measures, public health measures, and human control measures (Ozili & Arun, 2020). Monetary measures included lowering interest rates and providing liquidity support. Financial measures involved direct fiscal stimulus, unemployment benefits, and business loans. Public health measures encompassed widespread testing, contact tracing, and vaccination programs. Human control measures included lockdowns, social distancing mandates, and travel restrictions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted global health systems, economies and societies, prompting unprecedented policy responses from governments around the world. To understand these responses, it is important to review existing literature investigating the effectiveness of various measures, the theoretical frameworks that support these strategies, and global coordination efforts that are successful or incomplete.

### *Theoretical Frameworks*

The global response to the COVID-19 pandemic can be analyzed through various theoretical lenses. Public Health Theories, such as the Health Belief Model (Rosenstock, 1974), provide insight into how individuals' perceptions of viruses affect the effectiveness of public health measures such as social distancing and mask wearing. Studies have shown that compliance with these measures varies significantly depending on the perceived severity of the disease and the perceived benefits of preventive actions (Champion & Skinner, 2008).

Keynesian Economic Theory (Keynes, 1936) is particularly important in understanding the expansionary fiscal policies adopted by many governments. These policies, which include stimulus packages, direct payments to citizens and business supports, are designed to ease the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. Blanchard's (2020) research shows that these measures are critical in preventing a more severe global recession, especially in developed economies.

Crisis Management Theory (Fink, 1986) also provides a framework for analyzing how governments manage the epidemic. This theory emphasizes the importance of preparation, response and recovery phases in crisis situations. For example, studies have highlighted that countries with advance pandemic preparedness plans, such as South Korea and New Zealand, were more successful in containing the virus and minimizing economic disruption (Kim et al., 2020 ; Cousins, 2020 ).

### *Global Policy Responses*

The literature on global policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic is vast, with studies documenting the diversity of strategies implemented in different regions. Monetary and Fiscal Policies were among the most critical tools used by governments to stabilize their economies. Research shows that developed countries, such as the United States and members of the European Union, are able to implement more comprehensive and larger-scale fiscal measures than developing countries (Baldwin and Mauro, 2020). This inequality is linked to the greater financial resources and lower borrowing costs that developed economies have.

Public Health Measures such as quarantine, travel restrictions and mass testing have been widely implemented to curb the spread of the virus. According to a study by Hsiang et al. (2020) noted that these measures are effective in reducing transmission rates when implemented early and consistently. However, the effectiveness of these interventions varied significantly across regions; While countries such as China and Australia have achieved notable success through stringent sanctions, others have faced challenges due to public resistance or logistical issues (Petersen et al., 2020).

### *Challenges and Criticisms*

The pandemic response was not without its challenges and criticisms. Economic inequality has worsened due to the pandemic, with studies showing

that low-income populations and developing countries have borne the brunt of the economic impact (Sumner et al., 2020). The unequal distribution of vaccines and other resources has further highlighted these inequalities and led to calls for more equitable global health governance (Fidler, 2020).

Additionally, pressure on Public Health Infrastructure has been a significant problem, especially in countries where health systems are underfunded. A study by Legido-Quigley et al. (2020) found that the pandemic has exposed critical weaknesses in healthcare systems worldwide, particularly in terms of capacity and preparedness. This has led to calls for greater investment in public health to better prepare for future epidemics.

Finally, the effectiveness of policy measures has been a matter of debate. While some policies, such as early quarantine and widespread testing, were thought to save lives, others were criticized for their economic and social costs. Research by Atkeson (2020) suggests that although stringent measures are necessary, a balance must be struck to avoid long-term negative consequences.

The literature on the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of various policies and the theoretical frameworks that underpin them. While there is broad consensus on the importance of early and decisive action, there is also recognition of the challenges posed by economic inequality and public health infrastructure limitations. Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term impacts of these policies and exploring ways to enhance global cooperation in pandemic response.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In this study, "Document Analysis Method" was used, and qualitative and quantitative data were examined. Document review is the examination of documents containing information about the researched subject. In document analysis, sources such as written documents, films, videos, and photographs are used as data sources (Karagöz, 2019: 955).

Document analysis allows researchers to gather comprehensive insights from existing literature and data, contributing to a robust understanding of the topic (Ghaleb, 2024). In this context, within the scope of the study, Dergipark, Google Academic, Google Scholar, YÖK thesis, Google sites were scanned using the keywords "Covid 19", "pandemic", "globalization", "policies", "measures", "analysis of existing data".

Researchers reached a conclusion by analysing all the articles, reports, and news written during the pandemic years. Previously available documents in the literature on the subject, works published on different dates and in many languages were examined in detail and systematically, and the results were conveyed.

## **RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Following the document analysis, the COVID-19 epidemic went beyond a global health crisis, deeply affecting the labor market, causing a global economic crisis has had a significant impact on labor market indicators?. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a global economic crisis, severely affecting labor

markets worldwide. According to Ghaleb (2024), the global unemployment rate increased from 5.36% in 2019 to 6.58% in 2020, before decreasing to 6.2% in 2021 and 5.77% in 2022 due to various economic recovery measures. This fluctuation in unemployment rates underscores the pandemic's profound impact on employment and economic stability. The aviation industry has faced significant challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including financial problems for airline companies and a reduction in resources for insurance companies.

According to recent studies, the expected contraction in global airport passenger traffic will further impact the industry adversely (Ghaleb, 2024). The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a rapid and well-coordinated global response, where countries around the world have implemented a variety of policies and measures to combat the virus, protect public health systems and protect vulnerable populations. However, the effectiveness of these policies varied by region, influenced by factors such as health infrastructure, cultural considerations, and government strategies. Evidence-based decision-making, international cooperation and effective communication have proven to play crucial roles in successfully combating the epidemic. Countries have adopted monetary and fiscal policies, including remote working, financial support, tax relief, reduced working hours, active monetary policy, and improved occupational health and safety measures, to mitigate the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Although these actions may help mitigate the effects of the virus, it is clear that its impact still lingers. This observation is illustrated by analyzing the policies and measures adopted in the USA, France, Germany, China, Spain and Italy. While states have implemented policies to address the lingering effects of Covid-19, it is clear that it can be difficult to completely eradicate the problem, especially with the emergence of unexpected crises. The lessons learned from these measures will significantly shape future preparedness and response strategies for similar public health crises.

Measures and policies to revive the international labor market, as well as reports from the International Labor Organization and other organizations, show that renewed policy coordination and social dialogue are needed to accelerate global employment recovery, improve job quality, protect real incomes and address development and living standards inequalities. An important aspect of this effort is the establishment of a stronger, global social contract with long-term goals, including increasing productivity, growth and addressing climate change threats.

What should not be forgotten is that; Many countries have implemented expansionary fiscal policy. The examinations revealed that developed countries implemented monetary and fiscal policy measures that are larger and more comprehensive than those of other countries.

Some countries have implemented complementary policies such as providing state guarantees during the crisis. As a result of the policies implemented, it is seen that the ratios of both the budget deficits and public debts to the national income of the countries have increased significantly.

**Rapid Policy Measures Taken by Countries**

Globally, various policies and measures were implemented to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdowns and social distancing measures were among the first strategies to contain the virus's spread, although their duration and strictness varied by region (Ghaleb, 20024). Extensive testing and contact tracing were critical in identifying and isolating infected individuals to prevent further transmission (Ghaleb, 20024). Vaccination campaigns were pivotal in reducing the virus's spread and severity, with countries employing various strategies to ensure efficient vaccine rollouts (Ghaleb, 20024). Travel restrictions were imposed by many countries to limit the spread of the virus across borders, with adjustments made based on the evolving nature of the pandemic (Ghaleb, 20024).

Governments worldwide introduced economic stimulus packages to support businesses and individuals affected by the pandemic, including direct payments, loans, and grants to sustain economic activity (Ghaleb, 20024). Investments in healthcare infrastructure and resources were crucial for managing the increased demand for medical services (Ghaleb, 20024). Effective communication from governments and health organizations helped manage public behavior and compliance with health measures, with transparent and consistent messaging being essential to build public trust.

Type	Immediate Policy Actions Taken by Policy Makers	Applied Countries
Monetary Policy Measures	Coercive regulations on banks, the moratorium on principal and interest on borrowers affected by Covid-19	Ireland, China, Nigeria and Italy
	Providing liquidity to financial (bond and stock) markets by central banks	China, USA
	Central banks buying fast-growing bonds and securities	Australia, EU and Canada
	Lowering interest rates by central banks	Turkey, USA, New Zealand, Japan and UK, Nigeria, South Korea and Canada

	A Continuous credit flow to banks, SMEs, the public health sector, individuals, and key businesses.	Australia, Nigeria, USA and UK
Financial Measures	Governments approving massive stimulus packages for the sectors and industries most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.	UK, USA, Australia and Nigeria
	Providing income support for individuals	Australia, USA, UK and India
	Social assistance payments to support each household	Australia, USA
Public Health Measures	People's Quarantine	India, The USA, UK and almost every country
	Border Quarantine	Poland, Vietnam, India, UK, USA, Pakistan, Australia and Colombia
	stay-at-home policy	Italy, Iran, Nigeria and England
	Social distancing policy	South Africa, USA, UK, UAE, Singapore, Nigeria, Japan, China, India, Germany, Pakistan, Australia, South Korea and Israel
People Control Measures	Temporary release of inmates from overcrowded the prisons	Iran, USA
	Closing air, land and sea borders.	Taiwan, India, Mexico, USA, Germany, Serbia and Nigeria
	Closing of schools	UK, Spain, Italy, South Africa, Nigeria and USA
	Use of law enforcement in stay-at-home quarantine.	Malaysia, Italy, USA, Israel, South Africa and Spain

	Travel Prohibition	EU, USA, Argentina, Austria, Australia, Bolivia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Cape Verde, Cambodia, Colombia, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Greece and Haiti
	Visa refusal and suspension	South Africa, Canada, Singapore, China, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Bolivia and Brazil

The key policies and measures implemented globally to combat the COVID-19 pandemic included a range of strategies. Lockdowns and social distancing were among the first strategies employed to contain the virus's spread, with the duration and strictness of these measures varying across regions (Hale et al., 2020). Extensive testing and contact tracing proved critical in identifying and isolating infected individuals, thereby preventing further transmission (World Health Organization, 2020).

The rapid development and distribution of vaccines played a pivotal role in reducing the virus's spread and severity, with countries adopting various strategies to ensure efficient vaccine rollouts (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). To limit the spread across borders, many countries-imposed travel restrictions, which were often adjusted in response to the pandemic's evolving nature (International Air Transport Association, 2020).

Economic stimulus packages were introduced globally to support businesses and individuals affected by the pandemic, including direct payments, loans, and grants to sustain economic activity (International Monetary Fund, 2021). Investments in healthcare infrastructure and resources were essential for managing the increased demand for medical services (World Bank, 2020). Moreover, effective communication from governments and health organizations was crucial in managing public behavior and ensuring compliance with health measures, with transparent and consistent messaging being key to building public trust (Van Bavel et al., 2020).

***Economic Measures Taken in Combating the Pandemic: Examples of Countries***

***1. United States of America***

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States implemented several significant economic measures:

1. Interest Rate Reduction: The Federal Reserve (Fed) reduced interest rates by 0.5% in early March 2020 to mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic (Federal Reserve, 2020).

2. Bond Purchases: On March 23, the Fed announced it would purchase \$125 billion in bonds to support the market (Federal Reserve, 2020).
3. Loan Programs: The Fed introduced a \$300 billion loan program for Main Street businesses (Federal Reserve, 2020).
4. Travel Restrictions: On March 11, 2020, the U.S. imposed a 30-day travel ban from Europe (White House, 2020).
5. State of Emergency: A state of emergency was declared on March 13, releasing disaster relief funds and initiating additional virus testing and a symptom-identifying website (White House, 2020).
6. CARES Act: On March 27, the CARES Act was enacted, a \$2 trillion relief package. Key provisions included:
  - a. Direct payments of \$1,200 for individuals earning less than \$75,000 and \$500 per child under 17 (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).
  - b. Enhanced unemployment benefits by \$600 per week and extended eligibility (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).
  - c. \$500 billion in loans and guarantees for businesses (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).
  - d. \$377 billion in loans and grants for small businesses (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).
  - e. Various other measures, including student loan deferrals, mortgage foreclosure bans, and food aid (The U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).

## 2. *Italy*

Italy implemented several economic measures in response to the pandemic:

1. Initial Packages: On March 11, Italy announced two packages worth €25 billion to support the healthcare system and provide tax and loan payment freezes for companies and households (Italian Government, 2020).
2. Emergency Decree: On April 6, a decree aimed at providing over €400 billion in bank loans to affected companies was announced (Italian Government, 2020).
3. "Restart" Fiscal Measures: On May 15, a €55 billion package was introduced, including income support for families, healthcare funding, and grants for SMEs (Italian Government, 2020).
4. Third Support Package: On August 8, a new package including labor and social measures was adopted (Italian Government, 2020).

## 3. *Germany*

Germany introduced significant fiscal measures to combat the pandemic:

1. Budgets: Two additional budgets were adopted, totaling €156 billion in March and €130 billion in June (German Federal Ministry of Finance, 2020).

2. **Fiscal Measures:** These included spending on healthcare, increased access to short-term work subsidies, and grants for small businesses and self-employed individuals (The German Federal Ministry of Finance, 2020).
3. **Incentive Package:** Announced in June, this package included temporary VAT reduction, income support for families, and financial support for local governments (The German Federal Ministry of Finance, 2020).
4. **Extended Benefits:** In August, the maximum duration of short-term business benefits was increased from 12 to 24 months (The German Federal Ministry of Finance, 2020).

#### 4. *France*

France enacted three budget amendment laws between March and July, amounting to approximately €135 billion:

1. **Health Insurance and Supplies:** Increased spending on health insurance and supplies (French Government, 2020).
2. **Liquidity Support:** Deferral of social security and tax payments for companies and accelerated refund of tax credits (French Government, 2020).
3. **Wage Support:** Support for workers' wages under the reduced hour program (French Government, 2020).
4. **Direct Financial Support:** For affected micro-enterprises, self-employed, and low-income households (French Government, 2020).
5. **Rent and Utility Deferrals:** For affected micro-enterprises and SMEs (French Government, 2020).

#### 5. *China*

China took several measures to combat the economic impact of COVID-19:

1. **Reverse Repo Transactions:** Increased by \$174 billion on February 3 and \$71 billion on February 4 (People's Bank of China, 2020).
2. **Interest Rate Reductions:** Reduced one-year medium-term loan interest rate by 10 basis points on February 16 and main interest rates by 10 and 5 basis points on February 20 (People's Bank of China, 2020).
3. **Bank Reserve Requirements:** Lowered on March 13, freeing approximately \$79 billion for lending (People's Bank of China, 2020).
4. **Tax Cuts:** Announced on February 27, including the abolition of VAT on essential services and goods (People's Bank of China, 2020).
5. **Support for Infrastructure:** Accelerated development of "new infrastructure" to stimulate the economy (People's Bank of China, 2020).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a rapid and coordinated global response. Through the implementation of various policies and measures, countries worldwide have sought to control the spread of the virus, mitigate its impact on public health systems, and protect vulnerable populations. The effectiveness of these policies and measures has varied across different regions, influenced by factors such as healthcare infrastructure, cultural considerations,

and government strategies. Nonetheless, this analysis highlights the importance of evidence-based decision-making, international cooperation, and effective communication in successfully combatting the Covid-19 pandemic. Lessons learned from these policies and measures will undoubtedly shape future preparedness and response strategies for similar public health crises.

States have taken measures and developed policies to reduce or prevent the negative effects of the Covid 19 pandemic. It has received monetary and fiscal policies such as teleworking, financial support, tax relief, reducing working time, implementing an active monetary policy, and occupational health and safety.

Although the measures taken and the policies implemented have reduced the effect of Covid 19, it has been observed that its effect still continues. As an example, the measures and policies taken in the USA, France, Germany, China, Spain, Italy and Turkey are discussed. States have developed and implemented policies for the remaining effect after Covid 19, but the emergence of unexpected crises seems to be impossible to completely solve the problem. Reports by the International Labor Organization and other organizations emphasize the need for renewed policy coordination and social dialogue to accelerate progress in reducing global job gaps, improving job quality, and protecting real incomes. The strengthened, global social contract also needs to include long-term goals, in part to faster productivity growth and tackling climate change threats while addressing development and living standards gaps. Governments and social partners should not miss the opportunity to further deepen their cooperation to this end. Governments and social partners must seize the opportunity to deepen their cooperation and work together towards sustainable solutions. Addressing the aftermath of Covid-19 requires ongoing collaboration, innovative policies, and a shared commitment to building a more resilient and equitable world.

It is crucial to remember that during the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous countries adopted expansionary fiscal policies. Upon scrutiny, it becomes evident that the monetary and fiscal measures implemented by developed nations surpassed those of other countries in scale and scope. Certain countries also introduced supplementary policies, such as offering state guarantees to support their economies during the crisis. Consequently, these policy actions led to a notable increase in both budget deficits and public debts relative to the national income of these countries.

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