

Activities and Government Restrictions in Bolivia

Insights from the COVID Behaviors Dashboard

Monthly Research Question: How did government restrictions affect individual's reported daily activities?

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, countries have implemented various preventive measures to limit interpersonal contact, including stay-at-home orders, complete or partial lockdowns, closures of gathering places, cancellations of certain events, and varied restrictions on gatherings. In addition to these government-mandated measures, individuals might also have chosen to refrain from some of their daily activities out of concern over COVID-19. As the pandemic evolves and new tools such as vaccination and treatments are developed, government and individual responses may also change.

In the COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey (CTIS), respondents were asked whether they took part in various activities in the past 24 hours, and if so, whether they wore a mask during those activities. This report presents the CTIS data, alongside the Government Stringency Index (see box), a composite score indicating the strictness of government responses sourced from the [Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker](#), to shed light on how the return to day-to-day activities might be impacted by local policies as well as individuals' attitudes and beliefs toward the pandemic.

Government Stringency Index

A composite measure scaled from 1-100, with a higher score indicating stricter government responses

Nine response metrics were incorporated:

- school closures
- workplace closures
- public event cancellations
- public gathering restrictions
- public transport closures
- stay-at-home requirements
- public information campaigns
- internal movement restrictions
- international travel controls

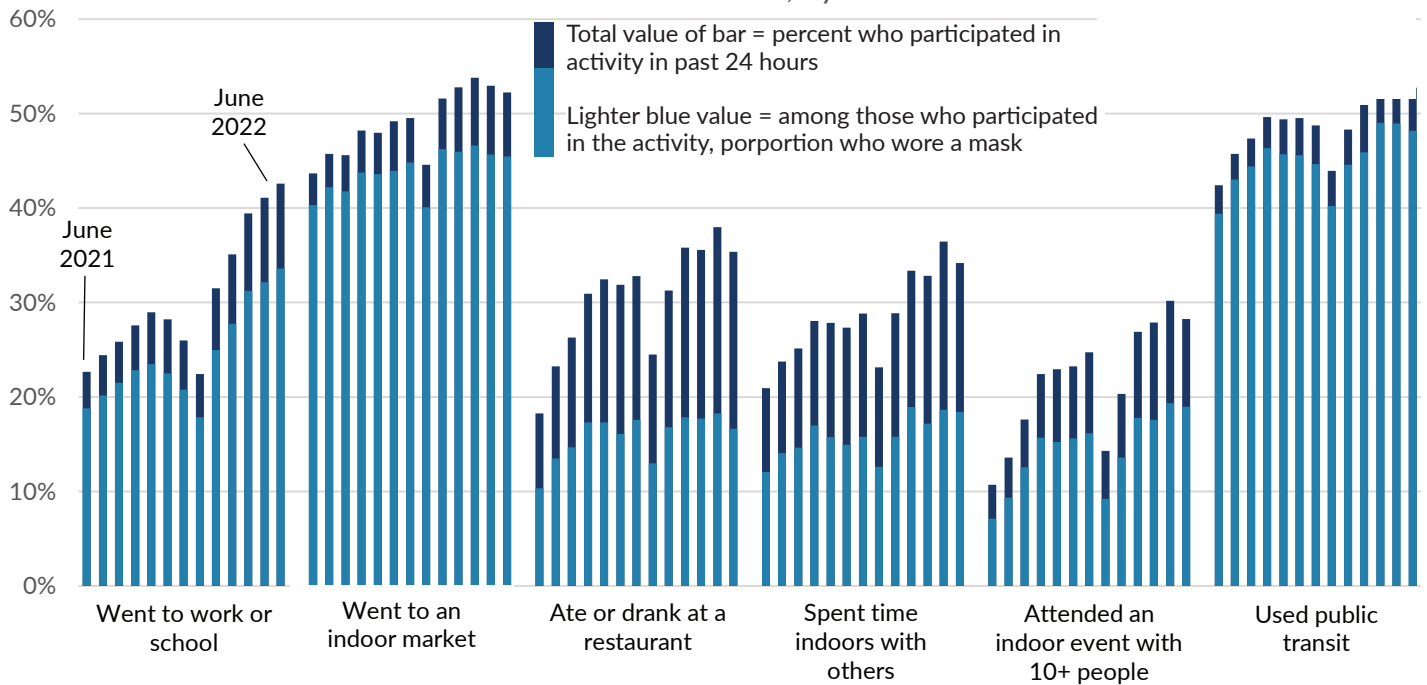
About the COVID Behaviors Dashboard

This report summarizes data from the COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey (CTIS), generated by the University of Maryland Social Data Science center in collaboration with Facebook's Data for Good Initiative. CTIS data are presented through the interactive COVID Behaviors Dashboard, prepared by researchers and social and behavior change communication experts at Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs in coordination with WHO's Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). The dashboard presents data on COVID-related knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

covidbehaviors.org

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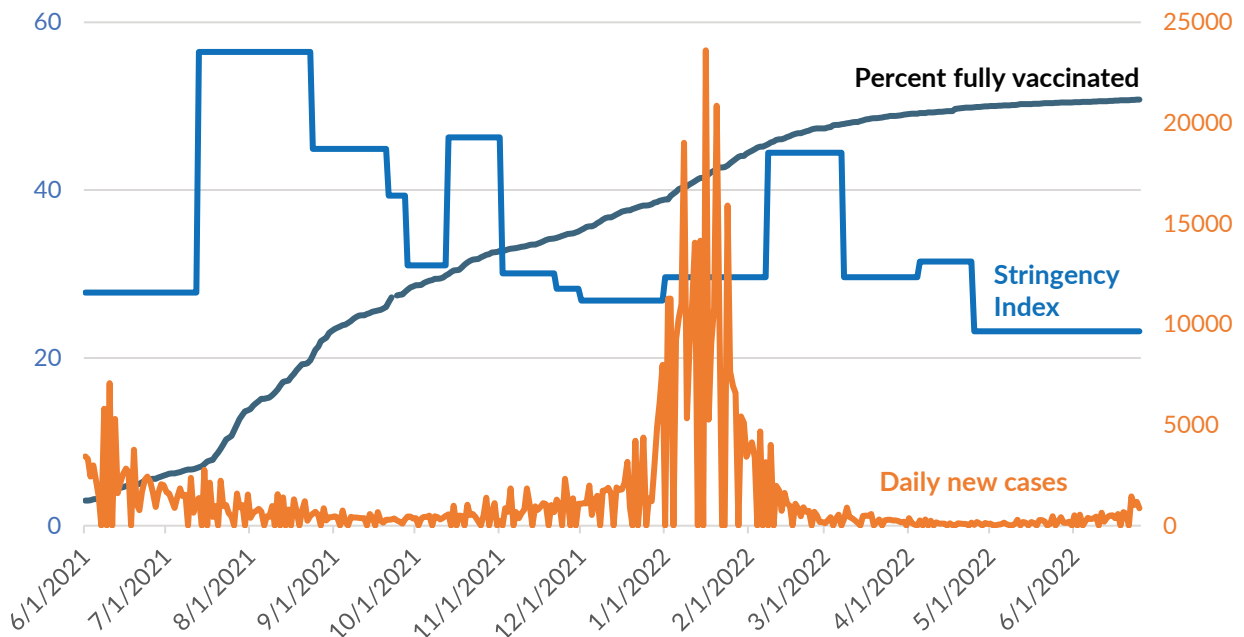
Figure 1. Bolivia: Returning to Daily Activities
June 2021–June 2022, by month



Participation in all activities generally rose between June 2021 and 2022, with an abrupt decline in January (Figure 1) likely corresponding with the emergence of the omicron variant (Figure 2). Attending an indoor event with ten or more people, eating in restaurants, and spending time indoors with others decreased the most dramatically between December and January 2022.

Most survey participants indicated they wore a mask during these activities throughout the reported data period (June 2021–June 2022). Mask-wearing was most common at work, school, indoor markets, and while using public transportation. However, it has become slightly less common in 2022. For example, in June 2021, 93% of people who went to an indoor market wore a mask compared with 88% in June 2022.

Figure 2. Bolivia: Policy Responses, Vaccination Rate & Daily New COVID-19 Cases, June 2021–June 2022



Data source: [Our World in Data](#)

*Moving averages are shown for percent fully vaccinated

Figure 2 shows the Government Stringency Index alongside daily COVID-19 case counts and the percentage of people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in Bolivia from June 2021–June 2022, corresponding with the CTIS data collection period.

In general, COVID-19-related restrictions fluctuated sharply, with stricter restrictions often following within a month of COVID-19 case surges and then immediately returning to previously less stringent levels. For example, during January and February 2022, high COVID-19 case counts were reported in Bolivia compared with November–December 2021 but policy restrictions to limit transmission were only

put back in place in March and were then relaxed as early as April. The vaccination coverage of the population seems to have little relation to the pattern of relaxing restrictions, as June 2022 levels were only slightly lower than June 2021 (Figure 2).

While individual behaviors, as seen in Figure 1, also changed dramatically compared with government restrictions, they do not appear to correspond directly. For example, when COVID-19-related restrictions rose in March 2022, respondents had already returned to social activities in February at higher levels than any data period seen previously.

Multi-Country Overview: How Did Government Restrictions Affect Individuals' Reported Daily Activities?

Overview of 21 USAID Priority Countries

Returning to work and school has been a priority for all countries, especially as vaccinations have become available. Mask wearing during school and work attendance has been mandatory in some settings, and optional in many others. The CTIS data allow us to compare these behaviors across countries and over time, as government policies shifted and risk perceptions changed in response to pandemic waves.

In June 2022, work/school attendance in the past 24 hours ranged from 29% in Myanmar to 52% in Mozambique. Mask wearing varied widely among those who attended school or work, from a low of 16% in Ukraine to 88% in the Philippines. In general, mask wearing at work and school was most common in Asia and Latin America and least common in Ukraine. Mask wearing varied widely in Africa, from 44% of those attending school/work in Egypt to 81% in Mozambique (Figure 3).

In most countries, work and school attendance dropped between June and July/August 2021 and then slowly started to rise again, presumably as stay-at-home orders were lifted and schools and places of business reopened (Figure 4). In some countries, particularly in Asia and Latin America, mask-wearing follows the same pattern, meaning the proportion of people who wore a mask at work or school remained similar as more people returned to work and school. This suggests those who returned to work or school took precautions to prevent COVID-19 by wearing a mask (e.g., Vietnam, Myanmar, Bolivia, Honduras).

In other countries, mask-wearing at work or school was less common and decreased rapidly as the year went on. In Kenya, for example, while work and school attendance stayed the same or increased, the percentage who went to work or school and also wore a mask dropped by 20 percentage points.

Figure 3. Heat Map of Mask Wearing During Work or School Attendance, June 2022

		Went to work or school	Among those going to work/school, % wearing a mask
Asia/ Pacific	Bangladesh	47%	66%
	India	30%	58%
	Indonesia	36%	80%
	Myanmar	29%	76%
	Nepal	44%	71%
	Pakistan	38%	50%
	Philippines	37%	88%
	Vietnam	44%	87%
Latin America	Bolivia	43%	80%
	Brazil	41%	56%
	Guatemala	33%	76%
	Honduras	31%	84%
Africa	Côte d'Ivoire	51%	61%
	Egypt	37%	44%
	Ethiopia	53%	60%
	Ghana	47%	54%
	Kenya	48%	74%
	Mozambique	52%	81%
	Nigeria	43%	54%
	South Africa	47%	72%
Europe	Ukraine	32%	16%

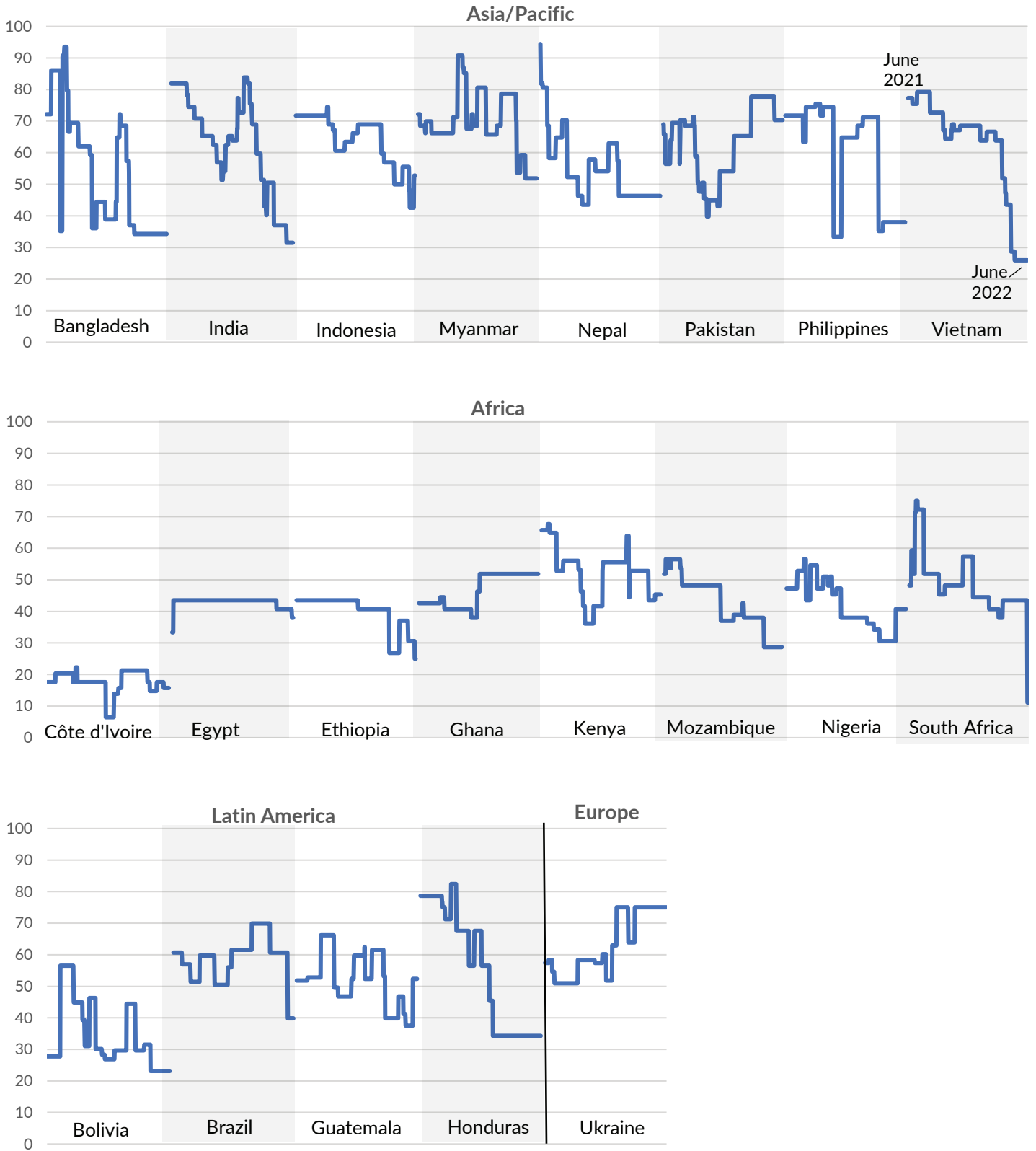
Multi-Country Overview: Activities and Government Restrictions

Figure 4. Trends in Going to Work or School in 21 Focus Countries, by Month, June 2021–June 2022



Multi-Country Overview: Activities and Government Restrictions

Figure 5. Stringency Index: Trends Over Time in 21 Focus Countries
June 2021–June 2022



Multi-Country Overview: Activities and Government Restrictions

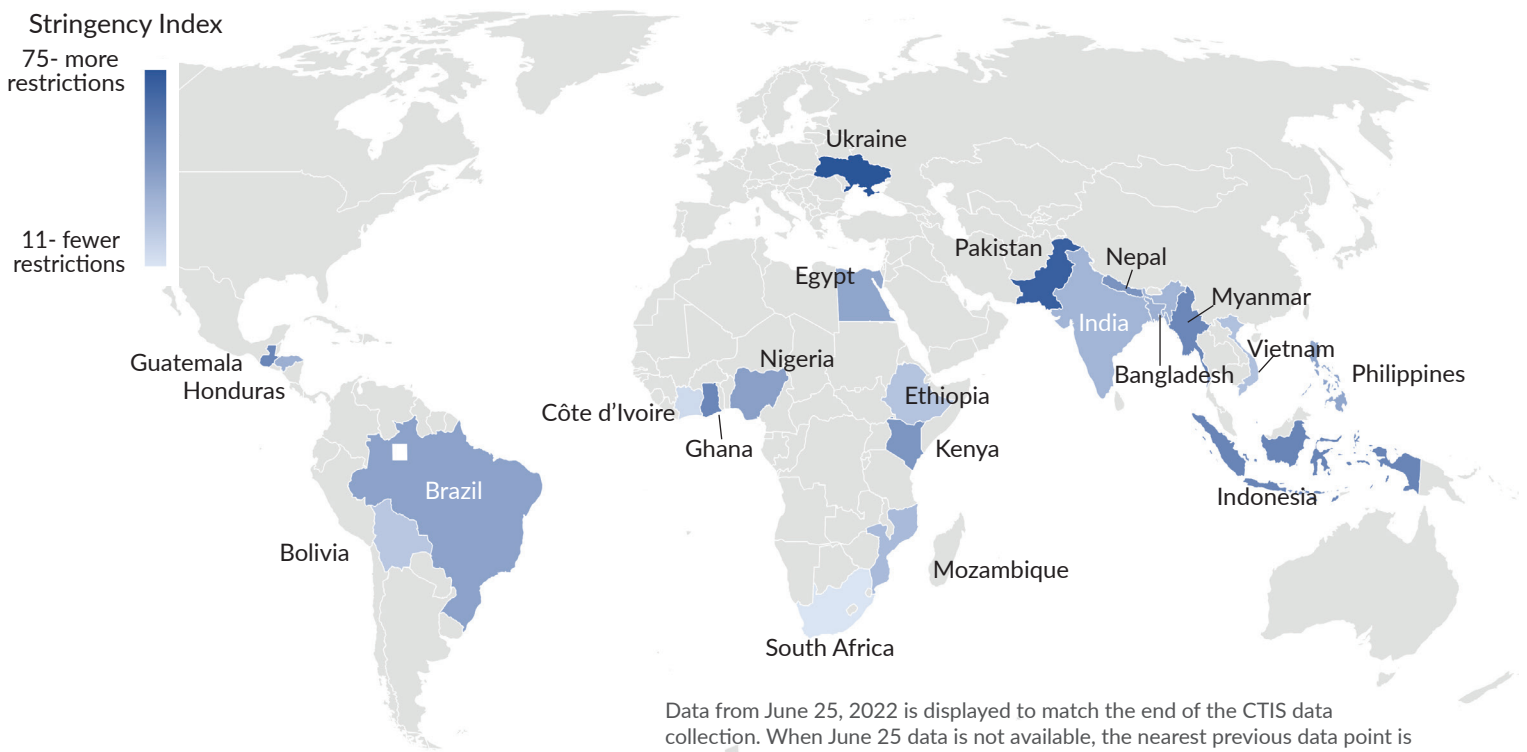
As shown in Figure 5, the stringency index varied considerably, both over time and between countries during the past year. Between June 2021 and June 2022, the stringency index was consistently lowest in Côte d'Ivoire. Six countries in this analysis reported an index over 80 at some point (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Vietnam, Honduras), five of which were in Asia.

The index has remained relatively stable in a few countries (Egypt, Ghana), but has fluctuated widely in most. Bangladesh, Vietnam, and South Africa have seen the most change, with indices ranging almost 60 points over the past year. Many countries (e.g., Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Bolivia) did see an uptick in the stringency index between December

2021 and February 2022, most likely in response to the omicron variant that was spreading throughout the world and driving up COVID-19 cases. As of June 2022, national restrictions were lower than they were in June/July 2021 in most (15 out of 21) countries in this analysis.

In June 2021, only Pakistan and Ukraine had stringency index scores at or above 70; Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa had the weakest scores (below 20) (Figure 6).

Figure 6: COVID-19 Stringency Index by Country, June 2022*



Data from June 25, 2022 is displayed to match the end of the CTIS data collection. When June 25 data is not available, the nearest previous data point is used (Bangladesh: June 21, Mozambique: June 20, Myanmar: June 22).

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Recommendations

Earlier in the pandemic, individual behavior was modified in response to policies and perceived risk of getting COVID-19. It appears many people followed government guidance to stay home, and/or to wear a mask during higher-risk activities. However, by June 2022, prevention behaviors no longer matched the level of policy stringency in many countries. It is important to note that during some time periods in some countries, individuals' self-reports of activities and mask-wearing do appear to be associated with stricter government restrictions, but also correspond to the COVID-19 case count, especially those seen during the omicron wave in late 2021 and early 2022.

Although we cannot rule out the possibility that some governments might have shifted their COVID-19 response strategies to rely on preventive measures other than workplace/school closures and mask-wearing later during the pandemic, the divergent trends in the stringency index and work/school attendance and mask-wearing suggest these behaviors reflect not only local policies, but also individuals' beliefs and attitudes toward the pandemic.

It is possible that adherence to COVID-19 protocols became less common as pandemic fatigue kicked in, especially if non-adherence was not addressed through restrictions or social pressures. Additionally, the association between adherence and collective responsibility should be explored to further understand the parameters in which these protocols were put into place. Findings in this report highlight the challenges in the implementation of COVID-19 regulations as the pandemic continues into its third year as well as the need for adaptive strategies to continue engaging individuals and reinforcing risk perceptions.