

The Covid Lockdown: So What About Sweden, Huh?

Proof that lockdowns are no solution

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It's amazing how often Sweden still crops up in conversations. It didn't impose tough lockdown, kept primary schools and core economic activities functioning, issued clear guidelines and relied on voluntary social distancing and personal hygiene practices to manage the crisis. For harsh lockdowns to be justified elsewhere, Sweden had to be discredited. Hence the harsh criticisms of Sweden's approach last year by the New York Times, Newsweek, USA Today, CBS News and others.

But with Sweden's demonstrable success, goalposts have shifted. Every time it's mentioned as a counter to Europe's high Covid-toll lockdown countries, the response now is: 'But their Nordic neighbours did much better. Look at Denmark'. Let's 'interrogate' this argument.

First off, the situation in any other country is irrelevant to assessing the utility of modelled projections on which the lockdowns were based. The 16 March 2020 Neil Ferguson model from Imperial College London (ICL), by now deservedly infamous, precipitated lockdowns with grim predictions of 510,00 British and 1.2 million American dead in an unmitigated spread of the virus.

The second sentence of the summary boasted its epidemiological modelling 'has informed policymaking in the UK and other countries'. In an article in *Nature* last June, the team claimed lockdowns had 'averted 3.1 million deaths' in eleven European countries as of 4 May 2020.

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