

# Scottish Lockdowns Vs. Swedish Freedom – Who Won?

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## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › In a short documentary, CAN Films explored pandemic outcomes in Scotland, which began requiring vaccine passports October 1, 2021, with those of Sweden, which rejected forced lockdowns in favor of voluntary measures
- › With half the population of Sweden, Scotland scored a higher excess death rate for 2020, with much more restrictive pandemic responses
- › Sweden fared better than Scotland on many pandemic outcome measures, including excess deaths, weight gain, alcohol-related deaths, inflation and economic viability
- › Sweden did not mandate face masks at any point during the pandemic and, in July 2021, also dropped their “vague recommendation” to wear one at all
- › Scotland implemented a vaccine passport requirement October 1, 2021; backlash from hospitality and other groups has ensued

Whether or not lockdowns and other restrictive measures worked to reduce COVID-19 deaths is a topic of great debate, one that was recently explored by CAN Films. In a short documentary, they explore pandemic outcomes in Scotland, which began requiring vaccine passports October 1, 2021, with those of Sweden, which rejected forced lockdowns in favor of voluntary measures.

The numbers, they said, speak for themselves. "With half the population of Sweden, Scotland scored a higher excess death rate for 2020, having imposed all the draconian

rules we'd had in England and even more. Now, they were the first in the U.K. to introduce vaccine passports."<sup>1</sup>

## **Differences Between Scotland and Sweden's Pandemic Responses**

CAN Films spoke with several people in Scotland, who believed their government's approach to the pandemic was sound – although they weren't aware of how Sweden had handled things, or the outcomes.

By March 2020, Scotland implemented strict lockdowns and closed schools, restaurants, gyms and other social venues, with people threatened with police fines if they went outside other than to buy food, exercise (once daily) or go to work if they couldn't work from home.<sup>2</sup>

March 23, 2021, Scotland's first minister Nicola Sturgeon said, "Let me blunt. The stringent restrictions on our normal day-to-day lives that I'm about to set out are difficult and they are unprecedented. They amount effectively to what has been described as a lockdown."<sup>3</sup>

Sweden handled the pandemic differently than most of the globe and has been chided for its looser restrictions and lack of severe lockdowns. In October 2020, TIME called the Swedish COVID-19 response a "disaster,"<sup>4</sup> but data showed that the death rate in Sweden in 2020 was right in line with other years – nothing out of the ordinary.<sup>5</sup>

While most other European countries instituted lockdowns at the beginning of the pandemic, Sweden did not, and maintained few social distancing requirements through most of 2020. Later in the year, and in 2021, they did implement some restrictions on attendance numbers at public gatherings and events, however. Sweden described their pandemic response this way:<sup>6</sup>

*"Sweden's response to the coronavirus pandemic has been about taking the right measures at the right time, because different measures are effective at*

*different points in time. The country's response has been partly based on voluntary action.*

*For example, rather than enforce a nationwide lockdown, the authorities have given recommendations: to stay home if you've got symptoms, to keep a distance to others, to avoid public transport if possible, etc.*

*... Swedish preschools and schools for 6- to 16-year-olds have stayed open during the pandemic, with a few exceptions. The Public Health Agency of Sweden made the assessment that closing all schools in Sweden would not be a meaningful measure, based on an analysis of the situation in Sweden and possible consequences for the entire society."*

## **Sweden: Fewer Excess Deaths With No Lockdowns**

Below you can see a side-by-side comparison of the two countries' pandemic response results, based on data compiled by CAN Films:<sup>7</sup>

	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>Sweden</b>
Population	5.5 million	10.2 million
Excess deaths 2020	15%	7.5%
Lockdowns	3	0
Vaccine passports	Yes	Vaccination voluntary
School closure days	64	0
Weight gain due to boredom	54%	0%

	Scotland	Sweden
Rise in alcohol-related deaths	17%	3%
Inflation rate	3.2%	1.5%
Depression increase	24%	6%
Economy shrinkage	10%	2.8%
Debt increase	28%	13%

Sweden has stood by their handling of the pandemic, despite heavy criticism. The country's state epidemiologist, Dr. Anders Tegnell, has been vocal about his anti-lockdown approach since early on in the pandemic, leading him to be described as Sweden's "anti-lockdown architect."<sup>8</sup>

In the beginning, Tegnell described the rest of the world's lockdowns as "madness," considering the steep side effects they ultimately cause. Stanford's Nobel-laureate Michael Levitt, Ph.D., who is among those in support of Sweden's lighter restrictions, suggested that not only did lockdowns not save lives but instead cost lives due to social damage, domestic abuse, divorces, alcoholism and other health conditions that were not treated.<sup>9</sup> Bloomberg reported:<sup>10</sup>

*"It was as if the world had gone mad, and everything we had discussed was forgotten," Tegnell said in a podcast with Swedish Radio ... 'The cases became too many and the political pressure got too strong. And then Sweden stood there rather alone.'"*

Tegnell stated that shutting down schools was also unnecessary during the pandemic, and scientists from the Institut Pasteur in France indeed found that there was no significant transmission of COVID-19 in primary schools, either among the students or from students to teachers.<sup>11</sup>

"The study also confirmed that younger children infected by the novel coronavirus generally do not develop symptoms or present with minor symptoms that may result in a failure to diagnose the virus," study author Bruno Hoen added.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, while Sweden has encouraged its citizens to engage in social distancing, mask usage is another story, and Tegnell has stated that there's little evidence for wearing face masks.<sup>13</sup> The country did not mandate face masks at any point during the pandemic and, in July 2021, also dropped their "vague recommendation" to wear one at all.<sup>14</sup>

In a September 2021 interview with U.K. website Unherd, Tegnell continued to support Sweden's less restrictive pandemic response, stating that they "did not fare very badly at all" considering they had fewer excess deaths in 2020 than some European countries that imposed lockdowns.<sup>15</sup> Regarding children, he said they "have definitely been affected by the pandemic, but to a lot lesser degree than children would have been if we had closed the schools."<sup>16</sup>

## **Herd Immunity 'Won't Cut It'**

The official narrative has led many people to believe that herd immunity is unattainable naturally and, without an injection, "won't cut it." CAN Films spoke with one Scottish woman who believed just that, because it's what she had been told.

Herd immunity, which occurs when enough people acquire immunity to an infectious disease such that it can no longer spread widely in the community, is calculated using reproductive number, or R-naught ( $R_0$ ), which is the estimated number of new infections that may occur from one infected person.<sup>17</sup>

$R_0$  of below 1 (with  $R_1$  meaning that one person who's infected is expected to infect one other person) indicates that cases are declining while  $R_0$  above 1 suggests cases are on the rise. It's far from an exact science, however, as a person's susceptibility to infection varies depending on many factors, including their health, age and contacts within a community.

The initial R0 calculations for COVID-19's HIT were based on assumptions that everyone has the same susceptibility and would be mixing randomly with others in the community. But a study published in Nature Reviews Immunology suggested that the herd immunity threshold for COVID-19 may need to be adjusted because children are less susceptible to the disease.<sup>18</sup>

Further, Dr. Robert Malone, the inventor of the mRNA and DNA vaccine core platform technology,<sup>19</sup> described the notion that the only way to reach herd immunity against COVID-19 is through universal vaccination as a myth.<sup>20</sup> "Herd immunity is most often reached through natural infection ... Vaccines will not get us to herd immunity," Malone said.<sup>21</sup>

## **Herd Mentality Vs. Herd Immunity**

What's more, in a shocking reversal that's akin to redefining reality, the World Health Organization even changed their definition of herd immunity. In June 2020, WHO's definition of herd immunity, posted on one of their COVID-19 Q&A pages, was in line with the widely accepted concept that has been the standard for infectious diseases for decades. Here's what it originally said, courtesy of the Internet Archive's Wayback machine:<sup>22</sup>

*"Herd immunity is the indirect protection from an infectious disease that happens when a population is immune either through vaccination or immunity developed through previous infection."*

In October 2020, however, WHO's updated definition of herd immunity described it as "a concept used for vaccination."<sup>23</sup> This perversion of science implies that the only way to achieve herd immunity is via vaccination, which is blatantly untrue.<sup>24</sup>

*"'Herd immunity', also known as 'population immunity', is a concept used for vaccination, in which a population can be protected from a certain virus if a threshold of vaccination is reached. Herd immunity is achieved by protecting people from a virus, not by exposing them to it."*

*Vaccines train our immune systems to create proteins that fight disease, known as 'antibodies', just as would happen when we are exposed to a disease but – crucially – vaccines work without making us sick. Vaccinated people are protected from getting the disease in question and passing it on, breaking any chains of transmission."*

Meanwhile, CAN Films pointed out the irony of seeking herd immunity from an experimental jab – that still allows for viral transmission – while ignoring the risks of the herd mentality that's taken over much of the globe:<sup>25</sup>

*"Herd immunity. What about herd mentality? I mean, everyone follow the official narrative no matter what? State lockdown no matter what your health condition or age is? Behave as if you're contagious no matter whether you have symptoms or not? Get an experimental jab even if the risk-to-benefit ratio plays against you ...? If this one-size-fits-all approach was not the dawn of totalitarianism, then people were definitely being treated as cattle."*

## **Scotland's Vaccine Passport 'Disaster'**

Scotland's vaccine passport scheme took effect October 1, 2021, but the government allowed a 17-day "grace period" to allow venues to get their procedures up and running. Strong backlash has ensued, with various groups referring to the passports as "discriminatory" and "shambolic, last-minute kneejerk decision-making."<sup>26</sup>

Now that the measure has been enacted, however, anyone age 18 years and over must show proof of COVID-19 injections in order to enter:<sup>27</sup>

- Nightclubs
- Adult entertainment venues
- Unseated indoor events with more than 500 people
- Unseated outdoor events with more than 4,000 people
- Any event with more than 10,000 people in attendance

Already, during the first weekend of enforcement, the Scottish Hospitality Group, which opposes the passports, described the scheme as an "unmitigated disaster," with venues having to turn away people at the door and staff suffering abuses as a result.

Spokesperson Stephen Montgomery told BBC News, "The experience of this weekend shows that the result has been intolerable levels of abuse of our staff, and the creation of an atmosphere that will totally undermine anyone's enjoyment of our night-time venues."<sup>28</sup>

And to what end? To date, data show that more restrictive measures haven't reduced excess COVID-19 deaths. And getting COVID-19 injections isn't effective for stopping spread since even those who have received two shots can still transmit the virus.<sup>29</sup> What vaccine passports will do is make this type of infringement on personal freedom "normal," paving the way for ever greater restrictions.

## Sources and References

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