



# BTI 2022

Guidance for assessing COVID-19

# Guidance for assessing COVID-19 in the BTI 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic has significant implications for most aspects of political, economic and social transformation in the large majority of countries assessed by the BTI. In your report, please bear two aspects in mind.

**1. Written assessment:** While the pandemic constitutes a major disruptive shock from early 2020 onward, please make sure that you cover all relevant developments throughout the complete BTI period of review (January 2019 – January 2021). The structural constraint of a pandemic with severe economic and social effects might intensify or accelerate existing trends, but should be discussed in the context of overarching long-term societal transformations.

**2. Numerical assessment:** While the pandemic will influence many aspects of transformation and development, it will not automatically have a direct (negative) impact on each of the codebook indicators. Avoid introducing a general COVID-19 malus across the board, but make sure that you carefully map potential effects for the scoring to specific indicators and substantiate your rating in your written assessment.

In order to assist in your writing process and assure comparability of the country reports, this document provides you with a more detailed guidance on specific indicators, in which we expect the effects of the pandemic to bear a particular importance. Generally, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

## **Executive Summary**

Please offer a comprehensive assessment of the severity of COVID-19 effects and the quality of crisis management in a separate, additional paragraph of the Executive Summary. Avoid generalizations such as: “The COVID-19 pandemic has posed a profound challenge to the government’s transformation strategy.”, but put effects and responses in perspective of the country’s given transformation status and governance.

## **Transformation Status**

Generally, please make sure to differentiate whether the pandemic solely accentuates existing weaknesses or actually aggravates them. While a status assessment is supposed to focus on the political and economic situation as of January 2021, please bear in mind to reflect on the whole evaluation period. Economic growth rates, for example, might have picked up in some countries again, but often from a decidedly lower level of output strength than in January 2019.

Politically, anti-pandemic measures often include limitations on freedom of movement and assembly or the postponement of elections and might imply a strengthened role of the coordinating executive. Please assess whether these measures are time-bound and only exercised on a temporary basis, if restrictions meet the requirements of legality, necessity and proportionality on a non-discriminatory basis, and if respect of some fundamental rights that cannot be suspended under any circumstances is guaranteed. Only if all of these requirements are met, please refrain from downgrading.

## **Governance Performance**

Crisis management will overlap with or even dominate transformation management in numerous cases. Please consider that governance scores relate to the entire review period from January 2019 to January 2021. When assessing the steering capability and international cooperation of governments, please bear in mind that the primary focus is on the ability, capability and commitment to maintain and implement strategic priorities and a long-term strategy of development over periods of crisis.

## Strategic Outlook

The text should include an assessment of the prospects of dealing with the effects of the pandemic in the future in concrete terms. Again, please avoid generalizations on crisis-related hardships by highlighting the most prominent tasks ahead when dealing with the effects of COVID-19.

Please make sure that the information covering the extent and impact of COVID-19 does not lead to exceeding the text limit for the overall length of the report.

## Overview of COVID-19 guidance for specific indicators

The following overview shows for which indicators COVID-19 related questions should be considered. To navigate through the document, you can select the specific indicators to jump directly to the respective additional COVID-19 questions. For some of the indicators, additional resources for information on COVID-19 are available.

### Democracy

1	Stateness	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4
2	Political Participation	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4
3	Rule of Law	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
4	Stability of Democratic Institutions	4.1	4.2		
5	Political and Social Integration	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4

### Market Economy

6	Level of Socioeconomic Development	6.1			
7	Organization of the Market/Competition	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4
8	Monetary and Fiscal Stability	8.1	8.2		
9	Private Property	9.1	9.2		
10	Welfare Regime	10.1	10.2		
11	Economic Performance	11			
12	Sustainability	12.1	12.2		

### Governance

13	Level of Difficulty	13.1	13.2	13.3	
14	Steering Capability	14.1	14.2	14.3	
15	Resource Efficiency	15.1	15.2	15.3	
16	Consensus-building	16.1	16.2	16.3	16.4 16.5
17	International Cooperation	17.1	17.2	17.3	

# Democracy

In addition to your general assessment, please take into account the following questions:

[↩ Back to the overview](#)

## 1 Stateness

### 1.4 Basic administration

Have services in basic infrastructure been limited or disrupted due to COVID-19 for a longer or enduring period of time?



Additional resource for information:  
[UNICEF COVID-19 Database on Service Disruptions](#)

## 2 Political Participation

### 2.1 Free and fair elections

Have elections been postponed due to COVID-19? If so, indefinitely or with an alternative date set?

Was there a concise justification given and were legislation or existing rules followed?

Was parliament involved in the decision?

If elections took place after the outbreak, please elaborate on specific precautions that have been introduced in addition to the overall assessment.



Additional resources for information:  
[The Global State of Democracy Indices](#)  
[International IDEA - COVID-19 impact on elections](#)

2.3

Association /  
assembly rights

Have there been COVID-19 related restrictions on assembly rights and how have they been enforced?

Do they meet the requirements of legality, necessity, proportionality and are they of non-discriminatory character?

Which of the restrictions and their enforcements are still in place in January 2021?



Additional resources for information:

[The Global State of Democracy Indices](#)  
[International Center for Not-For-Profit Law](#)  
[Carnegie Global Protest Tracker](#)

2.4

Freedom of  
expression

Has access to information been restricted?

Have journalists or citizens who report on COVID-19 been harassed?

Was the pandemic used as justification to pass or enforce legislation on "fake news" or COVID-19 related misinformation?



Additional resources for information:

[Council of Europe Media Freedom](#)  
[The Global State of Democracy Indices](#)

3

## Rule of Law

3.1

Separation of  
powers

Please make sure to elaborate on the following questions:

Was a state of emergency declared? If not, in which legal framework were emergency measures enacted?

Did this follow existing procedures (legality), are the measures time-bound and subject to continuous review?

Do they meet the requirements of necessity, proportionality and are they non-discriminatory?

Are they subject to parliamentary oversight and judicial review?

If applicable:

Was there an attempt to restore parliamentary functions as soon as possible (e.g. remote voting, hearings etc.)?

Was parliament restricted in its oversight role due to the pandemic (dissolution of parliament, abandonment or restriction of parliamentary control functions)?

Was there an attempt to restore judicial review of the emergency measures in a timely manner?



Additional resources for information:

[The Global State of Democracy Indices](#)  
[International Center for Not-For-Profit Law](#)

3.4

Civil rights

Are fundamental rights (right to life, freedom from torture, slavery etc.) protected under the state of emergency/emergency measures?

What restrictions on other civil rights (e.g. freedom of movement, equality before the law, access to justice) have been imposed due to COVID-19?

Do they meet the requirements of time-boundness, legality, necessity, proportionality on a non-discriminatory basis? How is the right to privacy affected by emergency measures?

Can citizens seek redress for violations?



Additional resource for information:

[The Global State of Democracy Indices](#)

[International Center for Not-For-Profit Law](#)

4

## Stability of Democratic Institutions

4.2

Commitment to democratic institutions

To what extent has the executive been willing to uphold its commitment to democratic institutions (parliaments, judiciary, oversight and watchdog institutions) during the state of emergency? Or does it rather use its exceptional powers to further undermine them?

5

## Political and Social Integration

5.3

Approval of democracy

Does the COVID-19 response have a positive or negative effect on people's attitude towards democratic institutions (particularly increased or decreased trust)?

5.4

Social capital

Is there evidence that the pandemic has affected the sense of solidarity and trust and the self-organizational capacities of civil society?

# Market Economy

In addition to your general assessment, please take into account the following questions:

[↩ Back to the overview](#)

## 6 Level of Socio-Economic Development

### 6.1 Socioeconomic barriers

Does the COVID-19 pandemic have a discernible effect on the level of social exclusion?

As up-to-date data on poverty rates, inequality and human development will most likely not be available at the time of writing, please use reliable projections and estimates by international organizations or national statistical offices.

## 7 Organization of the Market and Competition

### 7.4 Banking system

Is the banking sector affected by a credit crisis due to non-performing loans from clients not meeting their repayment commitments?

## 8 Monetary and Fiscal Stability

### 8.1 Monetary stability

Has the local currency been devaluated due to a pandemic-driven withdrawal of foreign capital, an increase of the current account deficit or the growth of monetary aggregates due to preferential loans? Has this led to inflationary tendencies?



Additional resources for information:

[IMF COVID-19 Policy Response Tracker](#)

8.2

Fiscal stability

Have **state revenues** declined due to a lockdown-related contraction of domestic economic activity or a reduction of global demand and limited export earnings?

Have **state expenditures** risen due to investments in the health sector, countercyclical spending / stimulus packages or support for local businesses?

Has the government resorted to **additional borrowing**, to what extent and where?

Did the government apply for **debt relief**, and was this granted?

What **support** does the government receive from international financial institutions?

Are there indications for a **return to debt sustainability** and fiscal consolidation in the medium term?



Additional resources for information:

[IMF COVID-19 Policy Response Tracker](#)

[IMF COVID- 19 Lending Tracker](#)

[World Bank COVID-19 Debt Service Suspension Initiative](#)

[World Bank COVID-19 Project List](#)

[IMF Fiscal Monitor Database](#)

9

## Private Property

9.2

Private enterprise

Is the government taking equity stakes in troubled firms or nationalizing companies to prevent bankruptcy?

If so, is this a well-regulated process with an exit strategy for state-owned shares / public ownership, or would you assess a permanently larger share of state-owned enterprises or parastatals and a resulting decrease of the role of the private sector?

10

## Welfare Regime

10.1

Social safety nets

Has the government introduced additional social policy measures to cushion hardships in relation to the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic (targeted cash transfers, food programs for vulnerable groups or targeted policies for the informal sector etc.)?



Additional resources for information:

[OECD COVID-19 Country Policy Tracker](#)



# Governance

In addition to your general assessment, please take into account the following questions:

[↶ Back to the overview](#)

## 13 Level of Difficulty

**13.1**      **Structural constraints**      How severe is the disruptive shock caused by the pandemic (infection rate, excess death rate, effects on economic performance) and the limitations it imposes on political and economic transformation?

**13.3**      **Conflict intensity**      Does COVID-19 have an effect on the confrontational nature of politics, the mobilization along existing cleavages and violent confrontations?

## 14 Steering Capability

**14.1**      **Prioritization**      How have existing long-term plans been affected by the impact of COVID-19?  
Has the government been able to adapt its prioritization accordingly and strike a balance between short-term mitigation efforts and long-term recovery?  
Have additional mechanisms been established to enhance strategic capacities within the government?

When evaluating government measures in connection with the fight against the Corona pandemic, please not only consider the prioritization of these measures as such, but also their impact on the transformation to democracy and a market economy ("normative framework").

14.2 Implementation

Has the implementation of major policy priorities identified by the government been delayed, postponed or shelved in reaction to the pandemic?

When evaluating government measures in connection with the fight against the Corona pandemic, please not only consider the implementation of these measures as such, but also their impact on the transformation to democracy and a market economy ("normative framework").

14.3 Policy learning

Has the government been willing and able to improve institutional learning in response to COVID-19, and if so, by what mechanisms?

When evaluating government performance in connection with the fight against the Corona pandemic, please not only consider the flexibility and innovative capacities of governments as such, but also their impact on the transformation to democracy and a market economy ("normative framework").

## 15 Resource Efficiency

15.1 Efficient use of assets

Has the pandemic required a reallocation of resources? If so, has this been done in an efficient and transparent manner?

15.2 Policy coordination

As the pandemic brought with it additional challenges to policy coordination and coherence, has policy coordination been done in an effective and transparent manner?

## 16 Consensus Building

16.4 Civil society participation

Have there been attempts to actively involve civil society actors in the COVID-19 response by the government (deliberation or implementation)?

## 17 International Cooperation

**17.1** **Effective use of support** When evaluating the effectiveness of the government's use of external support in connection with the fight against the Corona pandemic, please not only consider the measures as such, but also their impact on the "long-term strategy of development".



Additional resources for information:

**IMF COVID-19 Policy Response Tracker**

**17.2** **Credibility** Has international credibility been affected by the government's engagement in international or multilateral efforts to coordinate the response (transparency in reporting, provision of additional support)? If so, how?

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