

Viewpoint: The Great Barrington Declaration got many things right on COVID, yet it remains in ideological crosshairs

In October 2020, along with Professor Sunetra Gupta, we authored the [Great Barrington Declaration](#), in which we argued for a ‘focused protection’ pandemic strategy. We called for better protection of older and other high-risk people, while arguing that children should be allowed to go to school and young adults should be free to live more normal lives. We understood that it might lead to vigorous and heated discussions, but we did not expect a multi-pronged propaganda campaign that gravely distorted our arguments and smeared us.

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We Great Barrington Declaration authors failed to sway any politicians, except Florida governor Ron DeSantis. Governments worldwide re-imposed lockdowns in the autumn and winter of 2020. The lockdowns’ [failure to control Covid’s spread](#) was catastrophic.

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The age-adjusted per-capita Covid mortality of the US as a whole is 38 per cent higher than that in Florida, which adopted a focused-protection approach. Assuming we could have achieved the same percentage reduction in deaths in the UK, we might have had around 49,000 fewer Covid deaths. The actual number could be larger or smaller, of course. But again, there is no prima facie evidence that lockdowns reduced Covid deaths over the long run.

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