

Brief Report

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“THE LANCET – Respiratory Medicine” Published an Article that Contradicts Our World Data

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Brief Report

THE LANCET– Respiratory Medicine Published an Article that Contradicts Our World Data

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Abstract: Lancet article titled “Estimated number of lives directly saved by COVID-19 vaccination programmes in the WHO European Region from December, 2020, to March, 2023” is not in line with official Our World Data. The article claims that COVID-19 vaccination in 2021 has reduced global mortality in 2020 by 63%. According to Our World Data in 2021 6.08 million more people died than in 2020 which means that the discrepancy between article claims of reduced global mortality and official data is 159.5%.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemics; global mortality; Our World Data

1. Introduction

In a recently published article in THE LANCET – Respiratory Medicine, it is stated that “A study of the global impact of the first year of vaccination found that vaccination had decreased mortality by 63% globally”. The article is titled “Estimated number of lives directly saved by COVID-19 vaccination programmes in the WHO European Region from December, 2020, to March, 2023: a retrospective surveillance study” [1]. According to Our World Data, 57.94 million people died in the world in 2019. In 2020, when COVID-19 began to spread, 63.17 million people died. In 2021, when COVID-19 vaccinations started around the world, 69.25 million people died that year [2].

Table 3: Effectiveness of covid vaccines on the world scale and excess mortality in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Year	Number of people died (in millions)	Average mortality rate (in millions)
2015	55,89	56,87
2016	56,20	56,87
2017	56,97	56,87
2018	57,35	56,87
2019	57,94	56,87
2020	63,17	+6,30
2021	69,25	+12,28
2022	67,10	+10,23

Table 1. Number of deaths on the planet in the covid crisis.

The average number of deaths in the years (2015-2019) is 56.87 million people per year. In 2020, 6.30 million more people died due to the COVID-19 pandemic comparing the average mortality in 2015-2019. These 6.30 million represent "increased global mortality" due to the COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-19 virus.

2. Graphical Analysis of Global Mortality Based on Our World Data

In 2021, 6.08 million more people died than in 2020. In 2020 and 2021 there was a COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 there was no COVID-19 vaccination and in 2021 there was a COVID-19 vaccination. The living circumstances on the planet were similar in 2020 and 2021. In 2020 and in 2021 we had COVID-19 pandemics. The main difference in living circumstances of the global population was COVID-19 vaccination in 2021.

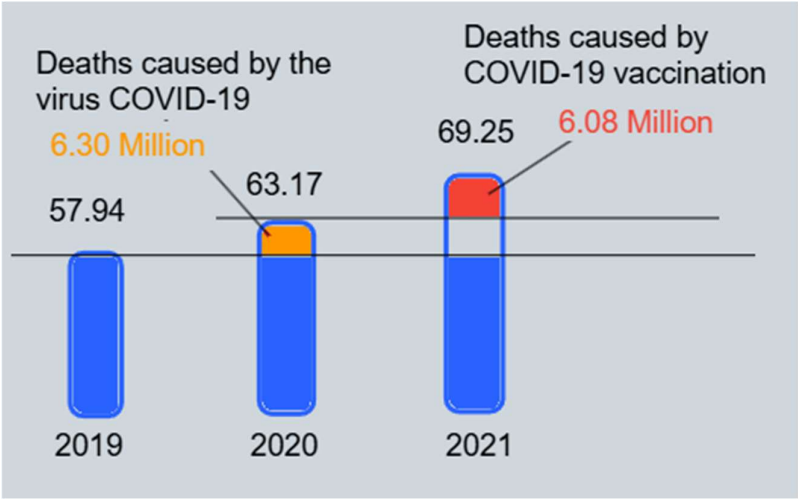


Figure 1. Global mortality in 2020 and mortality caused by COVID-19 vaccination.

Our World Data confirms that COVID-19 vaccination increased the "global mortality" in 2020 which was 6.30 million by an additional 6.08 million in 2021 which means 96.5%. The claim that vaccination reduced global mortality in 2020 by 63% in 2021 is a huge error of 159.5%.

3. Exact Mathematical Model to Evaluate Results of COVID-19 Vaccination

The main data needed for the evaluation of COVID-19 vaccination are the mortality rate of the vaccinated part of the population and the mortality rate of the unvaccinated part of the population. If vaccination was successful mortality rate of the vaccinated population should be lower than the mortality rate of the unvaccinated population. To exclude the statistical Simpson paradox the population should be divided into five age groups [2]. We have done this calculation based on England data and we got the result that the mortality of the vaccinated part of the population is higher by 14.5% than the unvaccinated part of the population.

Let's take that by the end of 2021 approximately 40% of the human population was vaccinated. This means 40% of the 69.25 million persons which is 27.70 million who died in 2021 were vaccinated. If we take that 27.70 million is 100% then 6.08 million is 22% which is close to 14.5%. In developed countries all data are available and exact calculations of the mortality rate of vaccinated and unvaccinated part of the population can be done. Medical institutions worldwide are refusing to apply this methodology which is worrying.

None of the articles which claim that COVID-19 vaccines saved lives used an appropriate method comparing the mortality rate of the vaccinated population with the mortality rate of the unvaccinated population. They all start with the unproven hypothesis that vaccines are saving lives. They build their models on the preposition of how many more people would die if there were no

vaccination. Such an example is the article in Lanced that claims that vaccination in 2021 saved on planet around 14 million lives [3]. If these were true then in 2021 14 million fewer people would die than in 2020. Our World Data confirms in 2021 6.08 million more people died than in 2020. The article claims that if there were no vaccination in 2021 14 million people more would die. This is highly speculative because it has never been proven that COVID-19 vaccines save lives. It was demonstrated that they increased the mortality rate in 2021 by 14.5% [4]. The article in the Lancet was published in September 2022. At that time all statistical data in developed countries were available to calculate the mortality rate of vaccinated and unvaccinated parts of the population in 2021 and prove that COVID-19 vaccines save lives. This was not done. The authors developed a theoretical study, mathematical modelling unrelated to existent statistical data, and have no real scientific validity.

4. Negative Causal Correlation Between the Intensity of Vaccination and Mortality Rate

If covid vaccines would save lives the intensity of vaccination should diminish the mortality rate. More people were protected, and fewer people should die. On Our World data, we have a daily number of administrated COVID-19 vaccines. And we have daily numbers of mortality. These numbers are represented with graphs. When we compare these graphs, we see for 37 countries the expected positive causal correlation is negative [3,4]. Below are graphs of Slovenia.

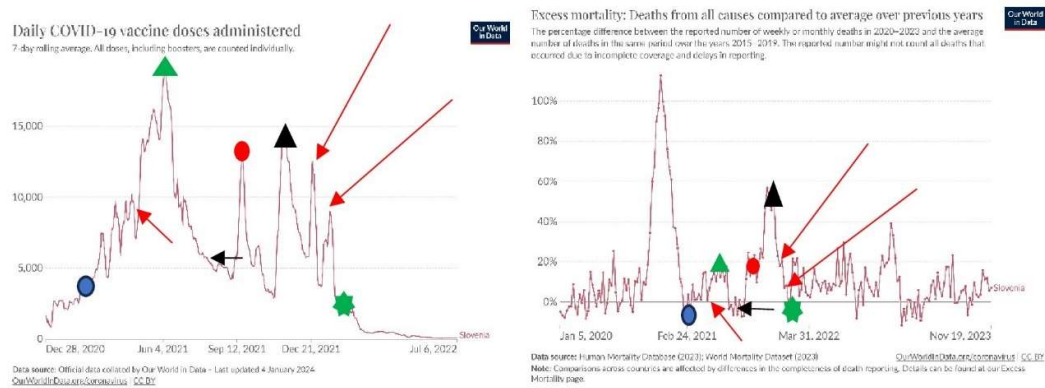


Figure 3. Negative causal correlation between intensity of vaccination and mortality.

5. Methodological Errors of Models Evaluating COVID-19 Vaccination Efficiency

All models that try to evaluate the efficiency of COVID-19 vaccination start with the preposition that vaccines saved lives (preposition A) [3,5,6,7,8]. None of them has compared the mortality rate of the vaccinated part of the population with the rate of mortality of the unvaccinated part of the population which is the only valid scientific method to prove the efficiency of COVID-19 vaccination. Their starting position (A) is theoretical and is not based on statistical data. From the methodological point of view, this is an inadmissible and irreparable error. Our research group did calculations based on statistical data and the mortality of the vaccinated part of the population in 2021 was bigger by 14.5% comparing the mortality of the unvaccinated part of the population [4]. Based on this unproved preposition that COVID-19 vaccines saved lives (A), authors of reference [3] claim that in 2021 on the globe 14 million lives were saved. The second methodological error of this study [3] is that it speculates how many more people would die if there were no vaccination. This is a preposition (B). Their speculative calculations proving preposition (B) have no scientific validity because preposition (A) in their research was not proved.

A not proved → B has no scientific validity

Calculations of how many more people would die if there were no COVID-19 vaccinations on the hypothetical basis that COVID-19 vaccines are saving lives have no scientific validity because statistical data confirm that the vaccinated part of the population in 2021 had bigger mortality than the unvaccinated part of the population.

6. Conclusions

Lancet published an article where the mistake of percentage is 159.5%. This is a frightening fact and shows that peer review for this article has failed. How it is possible that the authors and reviewers of this article were not familiar with the official data on global mortality in 2020 and 2021 published on Our World Data? This article contradicts undisputable statistical data. Science is about facts and the fact is that in 2021 global mortality has increased in respect to 2020. The saved human lives with a massive COVID-19 vaccination in 2021 for now remains unclear. They are not visible in statistical data.

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