

# Examining the Economic Costs of Vaccine Nationalism in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tim Berger

School of Economics and Finance and School of International Relations  
Supervised by Dr. Nikolay Chernyshev

## What is "Vaccine Nationalism"?

Vaccine nationalism can be defined as "the prioritization of the domestic needs of the country in an outlay of others" (Lagman, 1). The dangers of this vaccine hoarding are very real; if only a select group of countries can fully vaccinate its population the virus will continue to thrive and mutate in unvaccinated communities. As of August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, approximately 5.13 billion Coronavirus vaccines have been administered at a rate of over nearly 36.1 million doses a day, fully vaccinating around 5 percent of the global population (Bloomberg). However, 40 percent of all vaccinations have occurred in the 27 wealthiest nations, vaccinating their populations 25 times faster than lower income countries.

The UK and US  
have enough  
doses to vaccinate  
**250%**  
of their population

## Who's guilty?

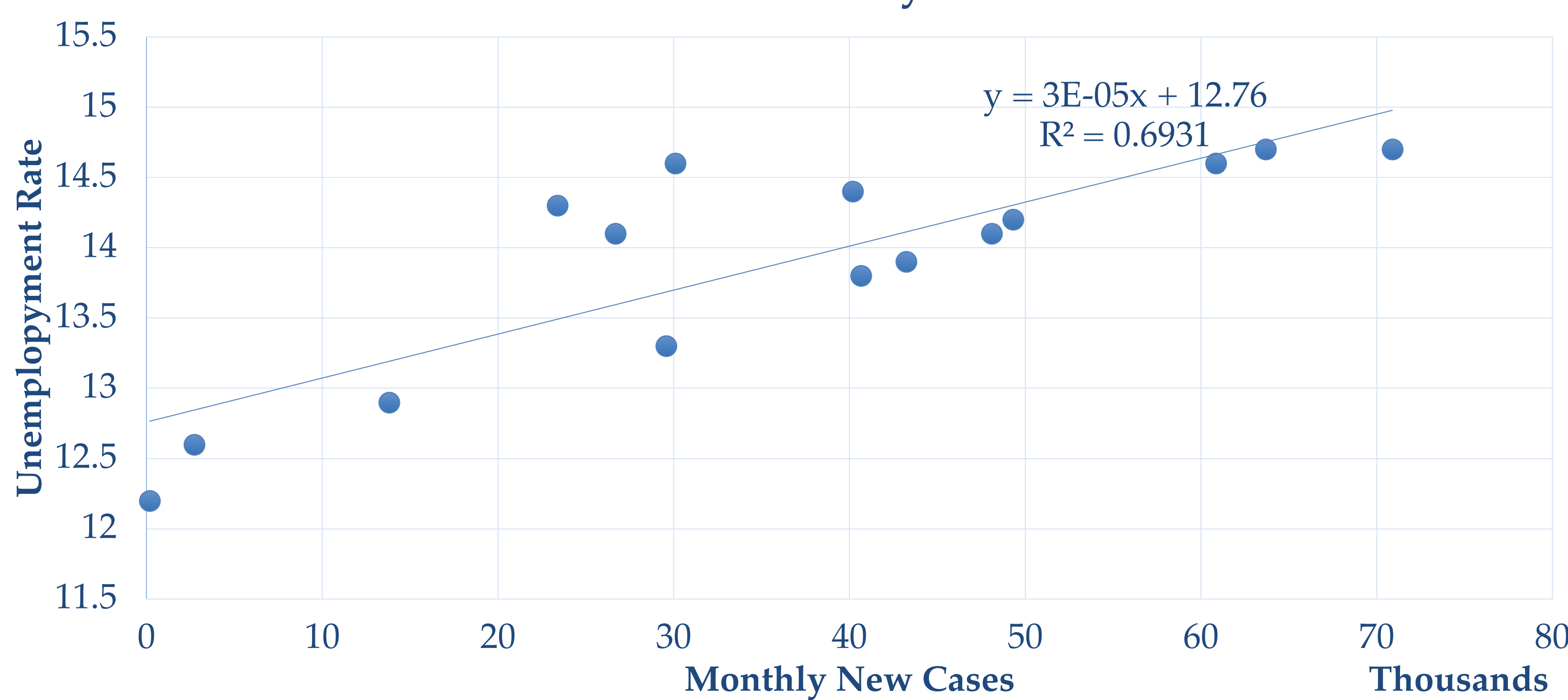
This issue can be attributed to a group of 13 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, Korea, Russia, Switzerland, UK, and US. These countries are completely self-reliant in the production and distribution of vaccines, aptly nicknamed "The Vaccine Production Club" (Roghani). This Vaccine Club currently holds 60% of APAs and is home to the headquarters of all companies producing EUL approved vaccines, as well as 91% of their subsidiaries (Evenett, 2). As a result of these factors global sourcing, production, and distribution of vaccinations has become circular in nature; currently 10 companies produce effective vaccines, and all are in at least one of the 13 countries. Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, and Novavax are headquartered in the US, AstraZeneca in the UK, and Curevac, Medicago, and Sinovac are all located within the Vaccine Club (Evenett, 16). The inter-dependence of the club extends to the ingredients needed to manufacture the vaccines, with over 70% of the 444 manufactures of key ingredients located in the EU, US, China, and India (Park, 1). Furthermore, vaccine producers import 68% of their supplies from within the vaccine club, growing a dependence between countries like the US and the EU bloc (Evenett, 2).

## Why is this important?

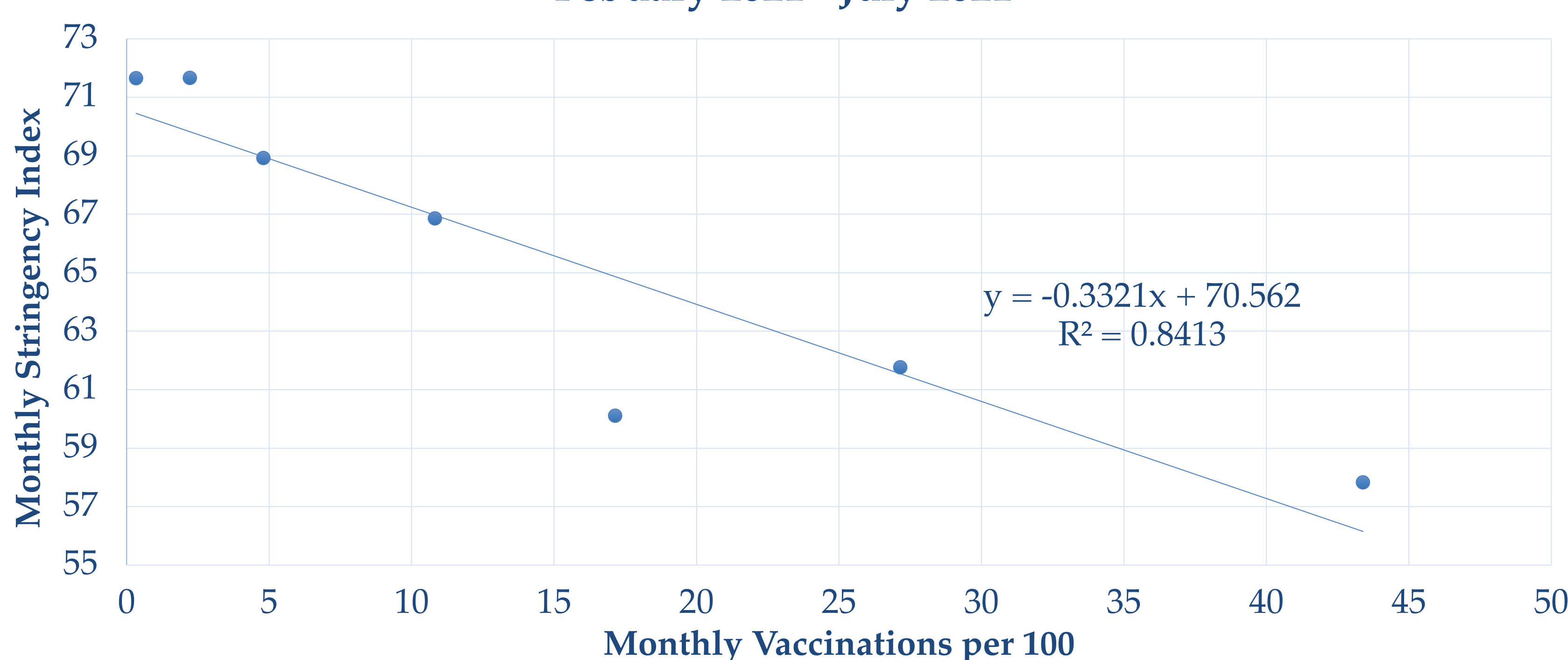
### Mini-Case Study: Brazil

Brazil has the second highest COVID-19 death toll in the world, around 579,000 as of August 2021. Since 2020 Brazilian GDP has sunk by over 6%, the largest drop since the early 90's. As vaccinations have been introduced the economy has steadily recovered and rapidly reopened, evidencing the need for equitable vaccine access in the global south

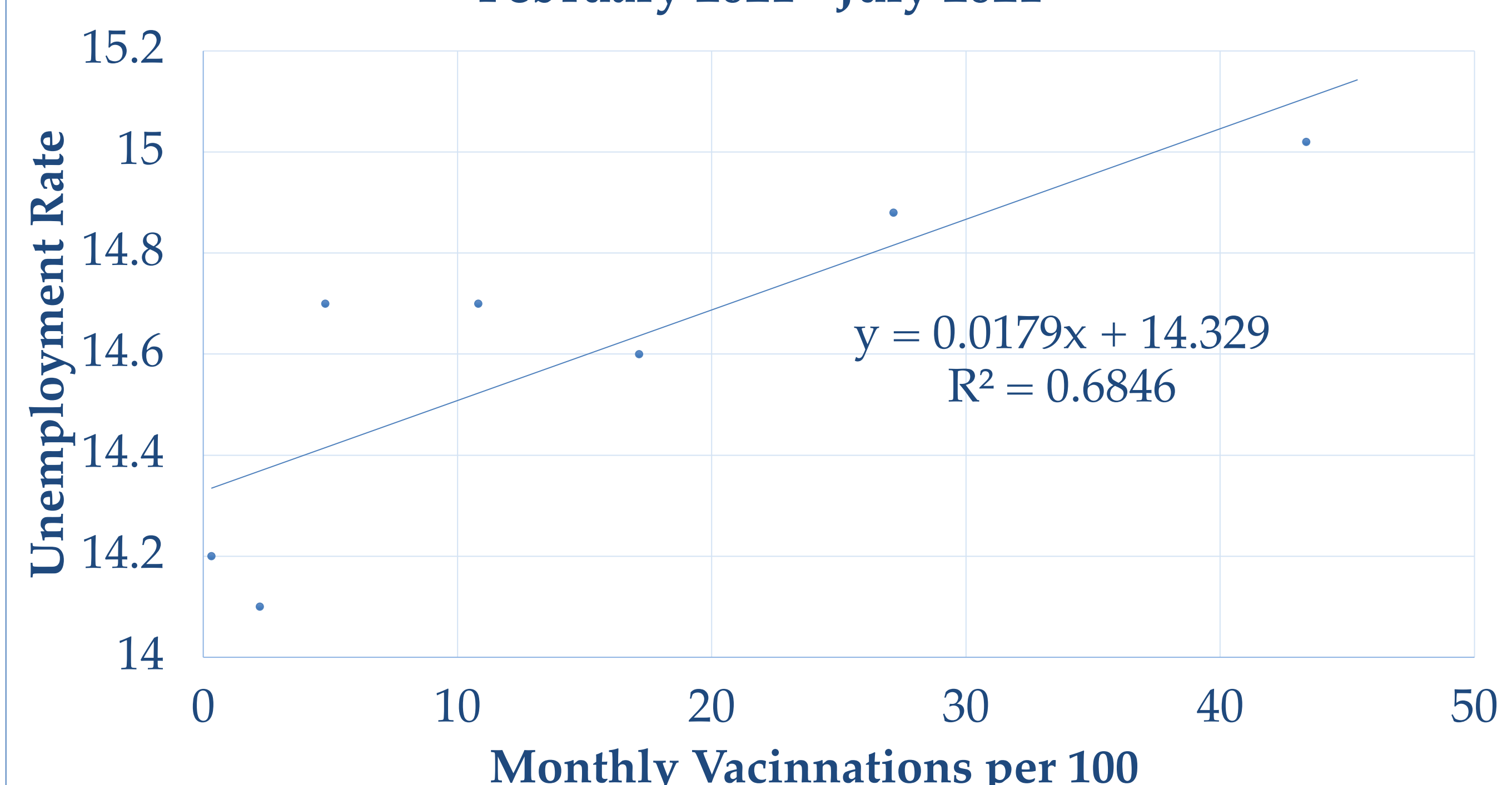
Brazil Monthly Average New Cases vs. Unemployment Rate  
March 2020 - May 2021



Brazil Average Monthly Vaccinations per 100 vs. Average Monthly Stringency Index  
February 2021 - July 2021



Brazil Monthly Average Vaccinations per 100 vs. Unemployment Rate  
February 2021 - July 2021



## References:

Zaid, Daoud, and Scott Johnson. "Rich Nations Are Three Years Ahead in the Vaccine Race." Bloomberg, 5 May 2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-05/rich-nations-are-three-years-ahead-in-vaccine-race-chart>.  
Lagman, James Darwin N. "Vaccine Nationalism: A Predicament in Ending the COVID-19 Pandemic." Journal of Public Health, vol. 43, no. 2, June 2021, pp. e375-76. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/tdab088>.  
Evenett, Simon J., et al. "THE COVID-19 VACCINE PRODUCTION CLUB: WILL VALUE CHAINS TEMPER NATIONALISM?" World Bank Group, Mar. 2021, p. 34. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/35244>  
Roghani, Ali, and Samin Panahi. The Global Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccine: The Role of Macro-Socioeconomics Measures. preprint, Public and Global Health, 12 Feb. 2021. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.1101/2021.02.09.21251436>.