

## COVID-19 Survey Summary: August 28, 2020

The following is a summary of social, behavioral and economic survey research on COVID-19 released in the past week, as compiled for the Societal Experts Action Network ([SEAN](#)). Most surveys cited in this report are available in the [SEAN COVID-19 Survey Archive](#).

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Nearly six in 10 Americans now personally know someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Black people are twice as likely as whites to know someone who’s died from it, yet far less likely to intend to get a vaccine immediately. While fewer adults overall see a major risk in returning to their normal lives, a record number expect disruptions into next year. K-12 parents’ satisfaction with their children’s education has dropped. And negative views of the federal response – and the nation’s direction – run high.

### Contact and Concern

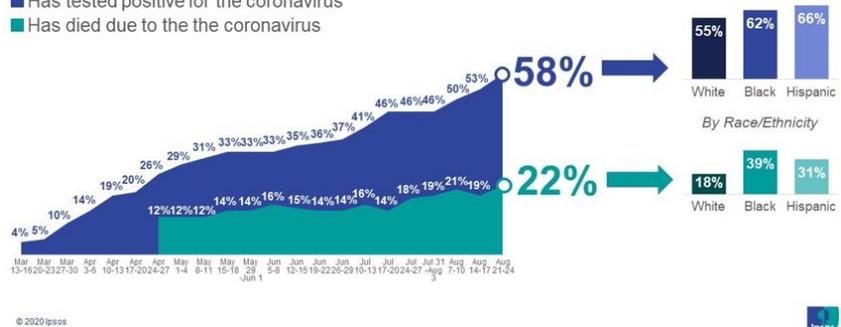
Fifty-eight percent of Americans know someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus, up 5 percentage points since last week to a new high. Twenty-two percent know someone who has died from the virus, rising to four in 10 Blacks and three in 10 Hispanics, vs. 18 percent of non-Hispanic whites. A quarter overall personally have been tested, including 38 percent of Hispanics, 19 percent of Blacks and 22 percent of whites ([Axios/Ipsos 8/21-8/24](#)).

#### Majority of Americans know someone who has had COVID-19

Black and Hispanic Americans are more likely to know someone who has died from the virus

#### Do you personally know anyone in the U.S. who...?

- Has tested positive for the coronavirus
- Has died due to the the coronavirus



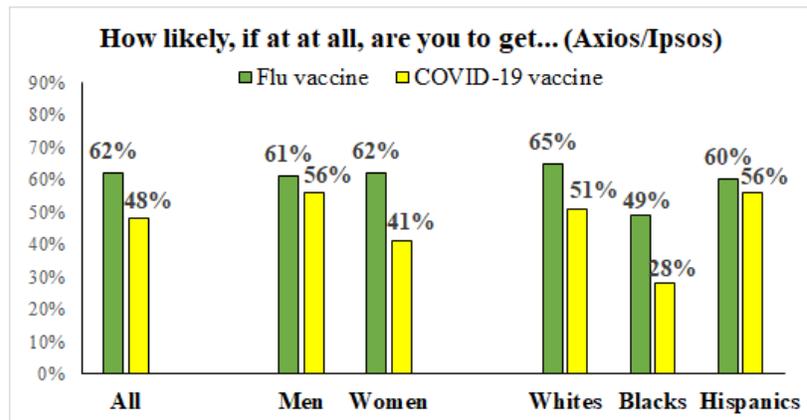
Six in 10 say the coronavirus situation in the United States is getting worse, essentially unchanged from the week before, but down from a July peak of 73 percent ([Gallup 8/10-8/16](#)). Forty-two percent are extremely or very worried about someone in their family getting infected, down 7 points since mid-July, but 10 points above mid-June levels ([AP-NORC 8/17-8/19](#)).

## Vaccine uptake

As reported in previous weeks' summaries (e.g., [here](#) and [here](#)), a substantial minority of Americans express reluctance to get a coronavirus vaccine. In a new result, while 62 percent say they're at least somewhat likely to get the flu vaccine this fall or winter, just 48 percent say the same about getting "the first generation COVID-19 vaccine, as soon as it's available." Moreover, while 45 percent say they're "very" likely to get a flu vaccine, just 19 percent say they're very likely to get the "first generation COVID-19 vaccine."

There are wide differences among groups in willingness to get a flu shot compared with a COVID-19 vaccine. Among them:

- Men and women are equally likely to say they'll get a flu vaccine (61 and 62 percent, respectively), but men are far more likely to say they'd get the COVID-19 vaccine (56 vs. 41 percent).



- Black people are less apt than white or Hispanic people to say they'd get either a flu shot or COVID-19 vaccine. And while Hispanics are about equally likely to say they'd get a flu or COVID-19 shot (60 vs. 56 percent), Blacks are 21 points less likely to say they'd get the COVID-19 vaccine than a flu shot (49 vs. 28 percent). Among whites, the gap is 14 points (65 vs. 51 percent).
- Intention to get a flu vaccine increases with age – it's 55 percent among those younger than 50, 64 percent among 50- to 64-year-olds and 76 percent among those 65+. There's a 16-point drop among seniors in likelihood of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, 60 percent, dropping to 45 percent of those younger than 65, with no further distinction between non-senior age groups ([Axios/Ipsos 8/21-8/24](#)).

## Daily Life

Half of Americans now expect the level of disruption to travel, school, work and public events caused by the coronavirus to last longer than the end of the year before it starts to improve, up 5 points in the past week to a new high ([Gallup 8/10-8/16](#)).

At the same time, fewer see a return to their pre-coronavirus life as a major risk, and more employed people are returning to their normal place of work:

- Three in 10 see it as a large risk to their health and well-being to return to their normal, pre-coronavirus life, down 7 points in two weeks to the fewest since mid-June.

- Among employed adults, 30 percent say they've worked remotely instead of at their normal workplace in the last few weeks, down 7 points in the past week and 16 points from its peak in late April and mid-May ([Axios/Ipsos 8/21-8/24](#)).

## Back to School

Half of K-12 parents say their child's school has resumed, including three in 10 who say classes are entirely virtual, 14 percent fully in-person and 6 percent a mix ([Axios/Ipsos 8/21-8/24](#)).

K-12 parents' satisfaction with their child's education has dropped compared with last year, and more now say their oldest child will be home-schooled:

- Seventy-two percent are completely (32 percent) or somewhat (40 percent) satisfied with the quality of their child's education, compared with 82 percent in 2019, a 20-year high. (Among all adults, satisfaction with the quality of K-12 education in the United States is lower – 50 percent satisfied, 48 percent dissatisfied – and about the same as last year.)
- Ten percent of parents say their oldest child will be “not enrolled in a formal school, but taught at home,” up from 5 percent in 2019 ([Gallup 7/30-8/12](#)).

Looking ahead, three in 10 parents are very confident or confident that their child's school will be able to provide high-quality education in the fall term. Of the rest, 36 percent are somewhat confident and 34 percent are not too or not at all confident.

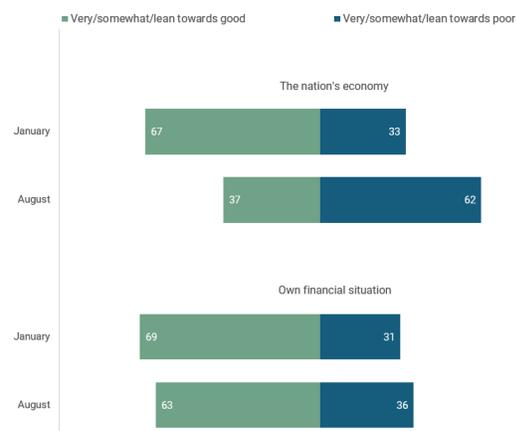
Looking back, difficulties with distance learning in the spring semester were most common with younger students. Nearly three-quarters of elementary-school parents say it was somewhat or very hard to have their child take classes at home instead of in school. That falls to six in 10 middle school parents and 49 percent of high school parents ([Gallup 7/22-8/5](#)).

## Economic Impacts

Thirty-seven percent describe the U.S. economy as good, down from 67 percent in January. There's been far less change in Americans' ratings of their own household finances, from 69 percent positive to 63 percent. That's even though half say COVID-19 has affected their household income (by layoffs, reduced hours or wage cuts) and a quarter say they've been unable to make a rent or mortgage payment or pay other bills.

Two-thirds say they're spending less than usual because of the pandemic, 45 percent

**Personal financial outlook remains positive while national outlook sours**  
Percent of adults



Question: How would you describe the nation's economy these days? Would you say...  
Question: And how would you describe the financial situation in your own household these days? Would you say...  
Source: AP-NORC polls conducted August 17-19, 2020, with 1,075 adults and January 16-21, 2020 with 1,353 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

say they're saving more than usual and a quarter say they're paying down debt faster ([AP-NORC 8/17-8/19](#)).

## Mask Use

Eighty-five percent of Americans say they've worn a mask or face covering all or most of the time when in stores or other businesses in the past month, up 20 points since early June. Mask use has jumped 33 points in the Mountain region, 27 or 28 points in the South Central states and 19 to 23 points in the North Central and South Atlantic regions. It has not risen significantly in New England and the Mid-Atlantic states, largely because it was already quite high there in June. Mask use remains least common in the West North Central region, but at 70 percent, vs. 47 percent in June.

Overall, women, Black and, Hispanics and those with a college degree remain more likely than men, whites and those without a degree to say they regularly wear a mask. Democrats and those who lean Democratic also remain more apt to say they usually wear a mask than Republicans and GOP-leaners, 92 vs. 76 percent, but the partisan gap has narrowed from 23 to 16 points since June ([Pew 8/3-8/16](#)).

## Government Response

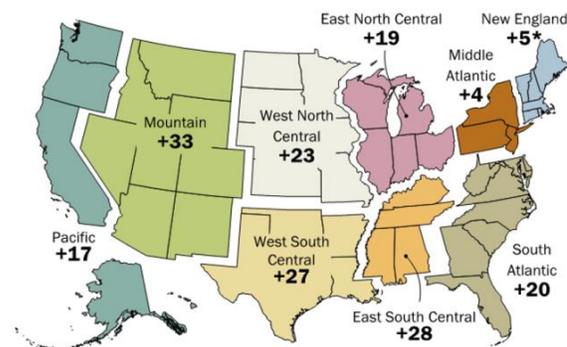
With no agreement in Congress on an additional coronavirus relief package, 65 percent of Americans disapprove of how congressional leaders are handling the outbreak, up 7 points in the past month. A similar share (68 percent) disapprove of how President Trump is handling the outbreak, essentially unchanged ([AP-NORC 8/17-8/19](#)).

Just three in 10 express a great deal or fair amount of trust in Trump to provide accurate information about the coronavirus. More, but still fewer than half (46 percent), trust Joe Biden to provide accurate information; nearly three in 10 don't trust either ([Axios/Ipsos 8/21-8/24](#)).

More broadly, 57 percent disapprove of how the federal government overall is handling the coronavirus outbreak, essentially unchanged since July. Fewer disapprove of government responses to the outbreak at the state (40 percent) and local (31 percent) levels, but both have increased by 6 points since last month.

### Mask-wearing increased substantially throughout most of the U.S. between June and August

Percentage-point change in the share of U.S. adults who say that, in the past month, they've worn a mask or face covering when in stores or other businesses all or most of the time, by census division



Region	June	August	% pt change
Mountain	52%	85%	+33
East South Central	50	78	+28
West South Central	58	85	+27
West North Central	47	70	+23
South Atlantic	64	84	+20
East North Central	61	80	+19
Pacific	75	92	+17
New England	86	91	+5*
Middle Atlantic	87	91	+4

\*The percentage-point change between June and August in New England is not statistically significant.

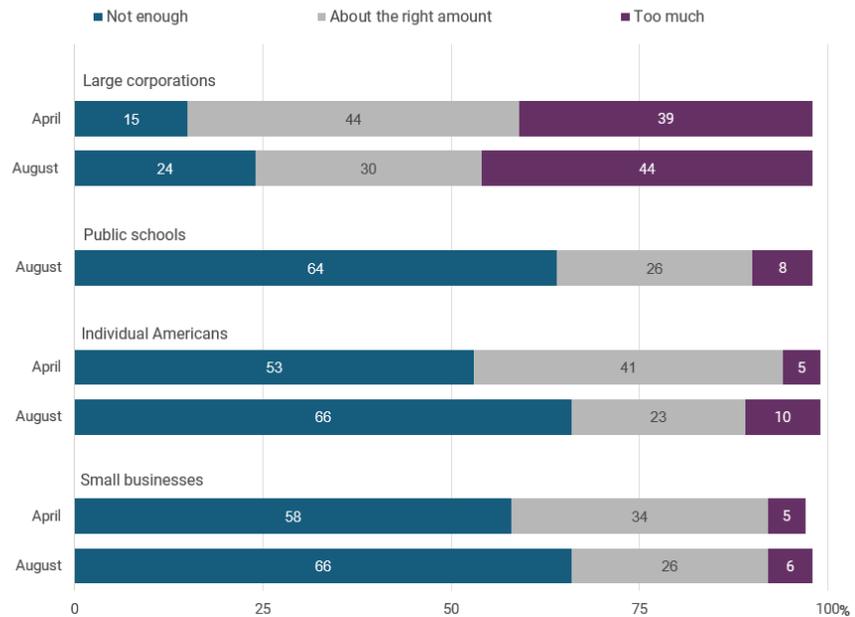
Source: Surveys of U.S. adults conducted June 4-10 and August 3-16, 2020.

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Two-thirds do not think the government is doing enough to help individual Americans in response to the coronavirus, up 13 points since April. As many don't think the government is doing enough to help small businesses, up from 58 percent, and (in a new question) 64 percent don't think the government is doing enough for public schools. Far fewer, 24 percent, think the government is not doing enough to help large corporations, but that too is up, by 9 points ([AP-NORC 8/17-8/19](#)).

### Is the government doing too much or not enough to help each of the following?

Percent of adults



**Question:** In response to the coronavirus outbreak, do you think the government is doing too much, not enough, or about the right amount to help the financial situation of each of the following?

**Source:** AP-NORC polls conducted August 17-19, 2020, with 1,075 adults and April 16-20, 2020 with 1,057 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



APNORC.org

Americans' overall satisfaction with the way things are going in the country remains at a nine-year low for the second month, with just 13 percent satisfied ([Gallup 7/30-8/12](#)). Three-quarters think things in the country are heading in the wrong direction, including 87 percent of Democrats and 61 percent of Republicans ([AP-NORC 8/17-8/19](#)).

### State Results

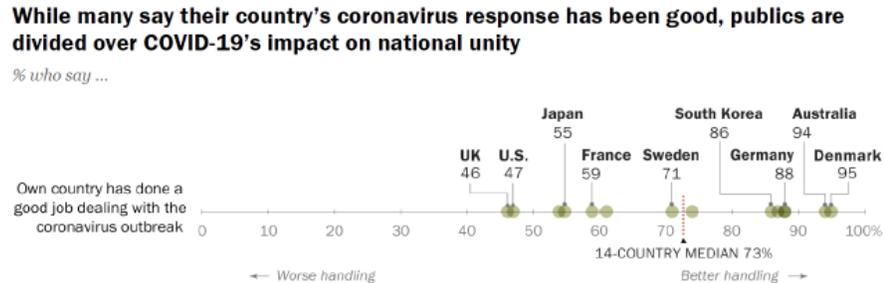
In Pennsylvania, where masks are mandatory when social distancing is not possible, 55 percent of likely voters say they wear a mask around other people outside their home all the time; 29 percent do so most of the time. Four in 10 would prefer a mix of in-person and online instruction when the school year begins; 28 percent prefer an entirely online approach and 22 percent back all in-person classes. In terms of the election, 64 percent say they intend to vote in person in November, a quarter plan to vote by mail and one in 10 is undecided. Forty-two percent say Gov. Tom Wolf has done an excellent or good job handling the outbreak, while 56 percent say he's done a fair or poor job. Three times as many rate his performance as poor as say it's been excellent, 31 vs. 10 percent ([Muhlenberg/Morning Call 8/11-8/17](#)).

### Cross-national Comparison

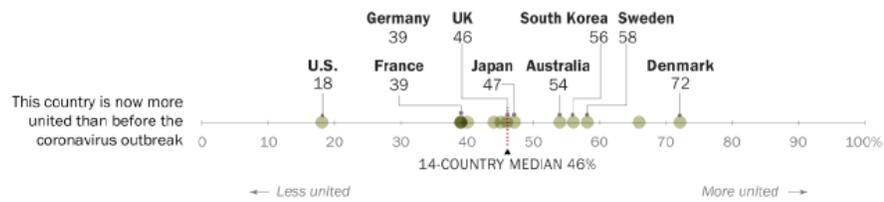
An analysis of surveys in 14 economically advanced countries from June to early August finds disparate views about these nations' handling of the pandemic. Among findings from the surveys

in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States:

- A median of 73 percent say their country has done a good job dealing with the outbreak, ranging from 46 percent in the United Kingdom and 47 percent in the United States to 94 percent in Australia and 95 percent in Denmark.



- Just 18 percent in the United States think the country is more united now than before the pandemic, compared with 46 percent in the United Kingdom and 72 percent in Denmark.



Note: In Australia and Canada, the question was asked about "COVID-19." In Japan, it was asked about "novel coronavirus," and in South Korea, it was asked about "Corona19."  
 Source: Spring 2020 Global Attitudes Survey, Q3 & Q10c.  
 "Most Approve of National Response to COVID-19 in 14 Advanced Economies"

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- Political polarization in views of how one's country has performed peaks in the United States, Spain and the United Kingdom, though there are double-digit differences by partisanship in Italy, Sweden and South Korea, as well.
- A median of 58 percent say their lives have changed a great deal or fair amount because of COVID-19. That ranges from fewer than half in Denmark (27 percent) and Germany (39 percent), about half in the Netherlands and France (both 46 percent) and Belgium and Australia (both 48 percent) and two-thirds or more in the United Kingdom (66 percent), United States (67 percent), Sweden (71 percent) and South Korea (81 percent).
- In 12 of the 14 countries surveyed (all but Germany and the Netherlands), women are more likely than men to report their life had changed because of the outbreak.
- A median of 59 percent think more international cooperation would have reduced the number of coronavirus cases in their own country, again with a wide range, from 20 percent in Denmark to 71 percent in Belgium.
- Economic views are closely tied to ratings of how the country has performed in response to the coronavirus – across all 14 countries, those who think the economic situation in their nation is good are more apt to think the country has performed well ([Pew 6/10-8/3](#)).

## Additional International Results

Concern has hit a new high in South Korea, where a recent surge in cases has prompted reintroduction of some social distancing measures – 83 percent are at least somewhat worried about getting infected, up from 73 percent in July and even higher than in late February (77 percent) when daily cases peaked. Sixty-one percent think they’re at least somewhat likely to get infected, a numerical high. Nearly all South Koreans (93 percent) think they’re doing a good job practicing social distancing, but just 52 percent say the same of other people. The share who say other people are not practicing social distancing well has risen from 28 to 37 percent since July. Two-thirds still rate the government’s response to the pandemic positively, down 11 points since July, but well above its level in February, 41 percent ([Gallup Korea 8/18-8/20](#)).

In Brazil, more than eight in 10 say they certainly would get a vaccine against COVID-19 if it were available, essentially unchanged since early July. Given a choice, a quarter say they’d prefer a vaccine developed in United States, 20 percent prefer a European formulation, 8 percent a Chinese vaccine, 7 percent a Russian vaccine and four in 10 have no preference. Fifty-four percent support the return of young people to work, provided they wear a mask – essentially unchanged in the past month, but up 12 points from two months ago. Forty-six percent say they have left the house for work in the last two weeks; 42 percent say they or someone close to them has gotten sick with the coronavirus – both essentially unchanged in the past month ([PoderData 8/17-8/19](#)).

In Great Britain, 44 percent say they’ve formed a “support bubble” with another household. Excluding those within the bubble, most say they have socialized indoors with only one other household (38 percent) or none at all (43 percent); 17 percent report socializing with more than one household. More broadly, 28 percent say they have not met with any people from outside their household at all and an additional six in 10 have met up with no more than five people. When it comes to imposing COVID-19 restrictions, seven in 10 think the police should be strict in enforcing rules to help reduce the spread of the virus, such as those on social distancing, lockdown measures and wearing face coverings; however, just 15 percent think the police in fact are being strict in enforcing these rules. With the new school year beginning or about to begin, nine in 10 of those with school-aged children in their household say it’s likely that their child will return to school for the new term. Fifty-eight percent are at least somewhat worried about it ([Office for National Statistics 8/12-8/16](#)).

In Turkey, where ([as noted](#)) concern about coronavirus has grown recently, the numbers who report taking a variety of actions to protect against the virus have hit highs, with all or nearly all saying that they’re often washing their hands (100 percent), not shaking hands (99 percent) and wearing masks (98 percent). More than nine in 10 say they’re not meeting up with friends (94 percent) or relatives (93 percent) and 74 percent say they try not to leave the house. In terms of economic activity, 96 percent say they’ve spent less money on cultural and recreational activities in the past six months, 88 percent spent less on transportation, 85 percent spent less on clothing and 62 percent spent less on personal care products. Far fewer have restricted spending on food and beverages (14 percent) or household cleaning products (19 percent). More than half (52 percent) do not think schools should open for face-to-face education as planned in a few weeks.

Forty-eight percent do not trust the coronavirus statistics released by the Ministry of Health ([Istanbul Economic Research 8/12-8/13](#)).

In Pakistan, where daily cases generally have declined for the past two months, 79 percent agree that the COVID-19 pandemic is now under control, up 32 points since June. Eighty-nine percent support further opening of business across the country by easing lockdown rules, up 11 points also since June. Seventy-seven percent say a male member of their household went to Friday prayers last Friday, up 12 points, and nearly nine in 10 parents say they're willing to send their children to school if they reopen, up from 73 percent. Seven in 10 agree that the federal government is controlling the coronavirus situation very well, essentially unchanged since June, albeit down from 82 percent in April. In economic terms, 84 percent of Pakistanis agree that their household income has decreased since the pandemic started, essentially unchanged since June, though fewer report that in the past week they've had to reduce the number or size of meals in their household (from 26 to 9 percent), rely on less-preferred or less-expensive foods (from 22 to 10 percent) or borrow food or ask for help to cover basic needs (from 18 to 11 percent). Two in 10 personally know someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 ([Gallup Pakistan 7/9-8/10](#)).

In Sweden, just 6 percent say they're wearing mouth coverings, but 36 percent say they would if more people did. As many, 38 percent, say they would not, with a quarter unsure. Still, more think it's likely that face coverings prevent the spread of infection than think this is unlikely, 43 vs. 27 percent. The rest say neither is true or have no opinion ([Novus](#)).

Additional U.S. and international poll results are available at the [COVID-19 Survey Archive](#).

*Summary for SEAN by [Langer Research Associates](#).*