



COVID-19 Survey Summary: April 23, 2021

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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Americans' coronavirus vaccine uptake and intentions appear little changed by the pause in distribution of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, and a vast majority thinks the government acted responsibly in recommending it. While not higher, vaccine hesitancy remains substantial.

In other new polls released this week, perceptions of the risk of many public activities continue to set pandemic lows and mask use and social distancing have declined further, even while more people venture out. Americans' economic outlook has advanced to a pandemic best, with more saying the economy is improving and fewer seeing signs of deterioration.

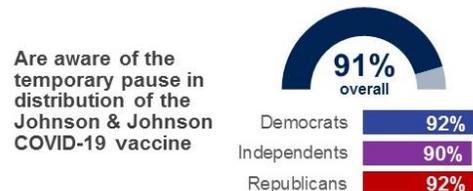
Other results suggest that faith-based approaches to reducing vaccine hesitancy may be effective in religious groups, examine Asian people's experiences of discrimination during the pandemic, provide county-level estimates of vaccine hesitancy, describe the rare "breakthrough cases" of COVID-19 that have occurred post-vaccination and find that a significant portion of frontline healthcare workers have considered leaving the profession because of the pandemic.

Vaccines

The vast majority of Americans – 91 percent – are aware of the temporary pause in distribution of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine; among them, 88 percent say the FDA and CDC acted responsibly by recommending the pause, including similar shares of Democrats and Republicans.

The pause does not seem to have impacted vaccination intentions or uptake. Fifty-six percent say they have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, up from 47 percent two weeks ago. Seven percent plan to get it as soon as available, a share that has steadily declined since its peak in late January as shots have become widely available. Eighteen percent plan to

Percentage of Americans who...



wait before getting it and two in 10 do not plan on getting it at all, both essentially unchanged from two weeks ago.

In terms of access, three-quarters of those who have been vaccinated say they got their shot within half an hour of their home; 20 percent traveled 30 minutes to an hour and 3 percent traveled for longer. Three in 10 know someone who claimed to have a health condition or another qualifying criteria that would allow them to get vaccinated sooner. Seven percent say they know someone who has traveled to another state to get vaccinated ([Axios/Ipsos 4/16-4/19](#)).

Vaccine Hesitancy and Faith

A poll done in March focused on the role of religious faith in vaccination intentions. It divided the sample into vaccine accepters (people who had received a shot or planned to get one as soon as possible, six in 10 adults at the time of the interviews); hesitators (those who planned to wait and see how vaccines work for others or said they would get vaccinated only if required, 28 percent); and refusers, who said they definitely would not get vaccinated (14 percent).

Jews were the most likely to be vaccine accepters (85 percent), followed at some distance by white Catholics (68 percent) and 63 or 64 percent of other Christians, white mainline Protestants and non-Christian religious Americans. It was 60 percent among religiously unaffiliated Americans and 56 percent among Hispanic Catholics. The share of accepters was lower among Mormons (50 percent), Black Protestants (49 percent), other Protestants of color (45 percent), white evangelical Protestants (45 percent) and Hispanic Protestants (43 percent).

Refusers peaked among white evangelical Protestants (26 percent), Black Protestants (19 percent), other Protestants of color (20 percent) and Mormons (17 percent). An additional 28 to 35 percent in each of these groups were vaccine hesitant.

About a quarter of hesitators (and a slight 8 percent of refusers) said at least one of six faith-based approaches supporting vaccination would make them at least somewhat more likely to get a shot. These included encouragement from a religious leader, a religious leader getting a vaccine, religious communities holding information forums, learning that another religious community member received a vaccine, being able to get a vaccine at a nearby congregation and being able to get vaccine appointment assistance from their religious community.

TABLE 1.6 Impact of Faith-Based Approaches on Vaccine Willingness

Percent who say the following would make them at least somewhat more likely to get the vaccine:

	Hesitant	Refuser
A religious leader encouraged you to get the vaccine	13%	4%
Your religious community held a forum to discuss the safety of the vaccine	14%	3%
A religious leader you trust got the vaccine	13%	4%
A member of your religious community got the vaccine	11%	3%
You could get the vaccine at a nearby religious congregation	10%	3%
Your religious community provided assistance in getting an appointment to get the vaccine	11%	3%

Source: PRRI-IFYC March 2021 Survey.

In the general population, these faith-based approaches were rated as less influential than close friends, family members or trusted health care providers. Four in 10 hesitators said a close friend or family member getting a vaccine would make them more likely to follow suit, while just 13 percent said the same about a religious leader they trust.

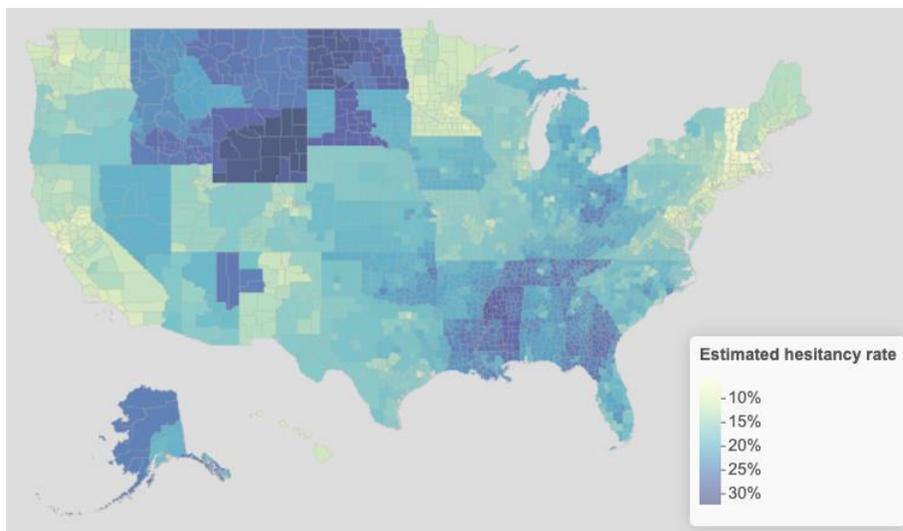
However, these approaches held more sway for those with stronger religious attachments. Among those who said they attend services at least a few times a year, 44 percent of hesitators were open to at least one of the faith-based approaches (as were 14 percent of refusers). Similarly, among white evangelical Protestants who attend services, nearly half (47 percent) of hesitators said a faith-based approach would make them more likely to get vaccinated.

Given that these groups are particularly likely to be vaccine resistant, the report suggests that faith-based approaches may have a place in encouraging overall uptake ([PRRI-IFYC 3/8-3/30](#)).

County-Level Estimates of Vaccine Hesitancy

Using modeling that relied on the [Household Pulse Survey](#) and other U.S. Census Bureau data, the Department of Health and Human Services [estimated](#) the share of adults in each U.S. county who are vaccine hesitant.

Overall, in more than 500 of the roughly 3,000 U.S. counties, at least a quarter of adults are estimated to be vaccine hesitant, with rates especially high in pockets of the Mountain West and South East. This echoes anecdotal reports of a dearth of demand for vaccine appointments in some counties, while others face too little supply.



Additionally, analysis of these results indicates that vaccination rates (as of mid-April) and willingness to get vaccinated (as of early March) were lower, on average, in counties where a majority of residents voted for Donald Trump in 2020 ([NYT](#)).

Daily Life

Gradual resumption of public activity continues. Nearly half (48 percent) of Americans say they've gone out to eat in the past week, the most since mid-March 2020. Fifty-six percent have visited a non-grocery retail store, a high in available data since late May. Four in 10 have visited a park, beach, or other outdoor space, also a high.

More than half (53 percent) visited friends or relatives in the past week, little changed from the high two weeks ago. Sixty-one percent stayed at home and avoided others as much as possible, the fewest in available data since mid-April last year.

Normalcy seems to be returning for more schoolchildren as well: Fifty-four percent of parents with children under the age of 18 say they sent their child to school in person in the past week, up 6 percentage points in two weeks to the most in data since August.

This increased public activity parallels a continuing decrease in perceptions of risk:

- Overall, 52 percent think it would be a large or moderate risk to their health and well-being to return to their normal pre-coronavirus life right now, down 7 points in the past month to a pandemic low.
- Fifty-one percent view dining inside a restaurant as a large or moderate risk, down 6 points in a month, also to a low.
- Half see it as at least moderately risky to attend an in-person gathering of friends and family outside their household, essentially unchanged from two weeks ago, but a numerical low.
- Four in 10 view shopping at retail stores as at least moderately risky and 35 percent say the same about going to a grocery store; both also are pandemic lows in data since April and May last year.

Although asked far less frequently, the shares who see risk in traveling on an airplane or mass transit (68 percent), attending a sporting event (67 percent), taking a vacation (54 percent) or going to salons, barber shops or spas (46 percent) also are at lows in available data. And just a third of employed adults view returning to their normal place of employment as a risk, the fewest in data since last May ([Axios/Ipsos 4/16-4/19](#)).

Masks & Distancing

Amid these declining perceptions of risk, the number taking safety precautions also has dropped. Sixty-three percent say they're wearing a mask at all times when leaving the house, down 5 points in two weeks to the fewest since July. Forty-three percent say they are always maintaining a distance of at least six feet from other people when leaving home, little changed from two weeks ago (45 percent), but a pandemic low ([Axios/Ipsos 4/16-4/19](#)).

Economic Impacts

Economic optimism is its best since February 2020, with a third of Americans saying the economy is getting better, up 14 points since December, matching its largest four-month gain since January 2015. Views that the economy is getting worse have declined in tandem, to 31 percent, with the rest saying it's staying the same.

That result buttresses a separate gauge of public ratings of current economic conditions. The Consumer Comfort Index hit another pandemic peak this week to cap its best three-month advance in 35 years of weekly data. That said, its pace slowed, and it remains one-third of the way off its pre-pandemic level in March 2020 ([CCI](#)).

Anti-Asian Discrimination

A third of Asian adults say that since the coronavirus outbreak began they have feared someone might threaten or physically attack them because of their race, a greater share than in other racial or ethnic groups. Twenty-seven percent apiece say people have acted as if they were uncomfortable around them or they've been subject to racial slurs or jokes. Sixteen percent say someone made a remark to them that they should go back to their home country and 14 percent say someone told them they were to blame for the outbreak. Overall, 45 percent experienced at least one of these six incidents.

Eight in 10 say violence against Asians is increasing in the United States. Among them, in an open-ended question, 20 percent mentioned Donald Trump's rhetoric as one of the reasons, 16 percent cited racism generally, 15 percent mentioned the pandemic's impact overall and 12 percent cited scapegoating and blaming Asians for the pandemic ([Pew 4/5-4/11](#)).

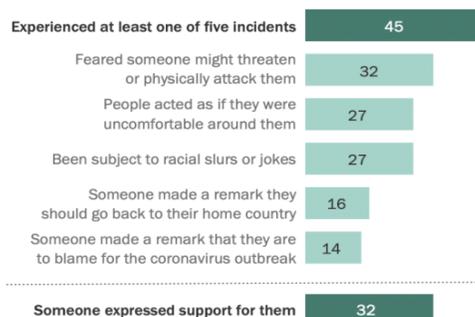
Eight-in-ten Asian Americans say violence against them in the United States is increasing ...

% of Asian adults who say violence against Asian Americans in the U.S. is ...*



... and nearly half experienced an incident tied to their racial or ethnic background since the pandemic began

% of Asian adults who say each of the following has happened to them since the coronavirus outbreak because of their race or ethnicity*



*Asian adults were interviewed in English only.
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. No answer responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 5-11, 2021.

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Frontline Healthcare Workers

Additional results from a poll of frontline healthcare workers conducted mostly in February find that three in 10 considered leaving the profession as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This echoes [previously released results](#) that documented the pandemic's toll on these workers' mental and physical health ([KFF/Post 2/11-3/7](#)).

Breakthrough Cases

The CDC is tracking the number of "breakthrough cases" of COVID-19 that occur two-weeks or more after people are fully vaccinated. Such cases are rare, but expected, as the vaccines are not 100 percent effective.

As of April 13, with more than 75 million people in the United States fully vaccinated, the CDC had received 5,814 reports of vaccine breakthrough cases from 43 states. Sixty-five percent occurred among women and 45 percent were among those age 60 and older. Twenty-nine

percent were reported to be asymptomatic. (Of course, asymptomatic cases are far less likely to be detected and therefore reported to the CDC.)

Seven percent of those with breakthrough infections were known to have been hospitalized, but for a third of them it was for reasons not related to COVID-19. One percent of people with breakthrough cases died; in 9 of these 74 cases the cause was not related to the virus ([CDC](#)).

State Results

In New Hampshire, 48 percent oppose Gov. Chris Sununu's decision to end the statewide mask mandate, while 43 percent support it. Eighty-three percent of Democrats are opposed, 79 percent of Republicans are in support, and independents split 45-45 percent. Eight in 10 say they are comfortable eating outdoors at a restaurant since the mandate ended, two-thirds are comfortable going to a barbershop or hair salon and 57 percent are comfortable eating inside a restaurant. Fewer than half are comfortable going to a bar or pub (41 percent), movie theater (41 percent), gym or health club (38 percent), athletic stadium (34 percent) or large concert (32 percent).

Nearly two-thirds expect the state economy will recover within 12 months, up from 51 percent in March. That includes 6 percent who think it will recover within three months, 21 percent who think it'll be within six months and 39 percent who think it'll be 6-12 months. Republicans, younger adults, women and those without a college education are notably more optimistic than they were in March ([UNH 4/16-4/20](#)).

In Pennsylvania, 36 percent in a late March poll had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Among the rest, nearly two-thirds planned to get vaccinated, including 46 percent who planned to do so as soon as the vaccine became available to them. However, three in 10 of those yet to be vaccinated did not plan to get a shot, including half of Republicans. Fifty-four percent overall approved of Biden's handling of the pandemic, while views of Gov. Tom Wolf's performance were split, 40-41 percent. Six in 10 agreed the worst of the pandemic is behind us ([Muhlenberg 3/15-3/29](#)).

International Results

In India, where cases continue to soar, nearly half (47 percent) agree that they are afraid that they or someone in their family may catch the virus, the most since September and nearly double the number in February, before the surge. However, more than half continue to agree that the threat is exaggerated, essentially unchanged in recent months. Seventy-three percent agree that the Indian government is handling the coronavirus well, but that's the fewest since October.

Most Indians continue to agree that when a vaccine becomes publicly available they will take it (84 percent), that a new vaccine is important (76 percent) and will be safe and effective (70 percent apiece), that the country in which the vaccine is manufactured will not impact their uptake (60 percent) and that vaccines are compatible with their religious beliefs (60 percent); all are largely unchanged in recent weeks ([CVoter 4/21](#)).

In Japan, 62 percent say that once they are able to get a vaccine they will do so right away, up 13 points since last month; a third say they'll wait and see, down 9 points. Just 4 percent say they will not get vaccinated. However, three-quarters think the vaccine rollout in the country has been slow. Seven in 10 do not expect the government's recent quasi-emergency coronavirus measures to be effective and just 19 percent approve of the pandemic measures enacted by the administration of Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga overall.

Forty-eight percent think the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games should proceed, either without overseas spectators, as planned (34 percent), or without domestic spectators as well (14 percent). Of the rest, 19 percent favor further postponement and 29 percent think the games should be canceled ([Mainichi Shimbun 4/18](#)).

In Chile, more than half (52 percent) have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, including a third who have received both doses. But with cases continuing to surge, just a third now express confidence that the vaccine will effectively stop the pandemic, down 9 points since February. However, 72 percent are confident that the vaccine will reach Chile in sufficient quantities for everyone, up 5 points in the same period, and seven in 10 are confident it will be possible to have timely access to the vaccine, up 7 points. Fewer – 44 percent apiece – are confident the vaccine effectively immunizes people and will not bring negative consequences.

Sixty-five percent think the mid-May elections should be postponed until the number of infections drops. Just 31 percent approve of the way the government is managing the crisis, down 27 points in seven weeks to the fewest since July ([Cadem 4/14-4/16](#)).

In Brazil, just 15 percent of religious individuals are leaving home to go to church or temple, down from 32 percent in January. Four in 10 are practicing their beliefs at home because of the pandemic, double the number in January. Thirty-five percent have watched services online or on TV and 7 percent are practicing their faith in other ways ([PoderData 4/12-4/14](#)).

In Great Britain, 94 percent of adults have been vaccinated or say it is likely they will get a shot if offered, essentially unchanged in recent weeks. This includes 63 percent who have received at least one dose, 1 percent who have been offered and are awaiting it and 30 percent who are likely to get it when offered. Fifty-seven percent met up with someone outside their household or bubble in the past week, up from 49 percent the previous week. The share avoiding physical contact when outside their home has eased slightly since lockdown lifted, from 91 percent in early March to 85 percent now. Fifty-three percent of working adults left home for work in the past seven days, essentially unchanged since last week but up from 44 percent in mid-February ([Office for National Statistics 4/7-4/11](#)).

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

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