



COVID-19 Survey Summary: November 5, 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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Surveys released this week find continued substantial hesitancy among parents to get their child vaccinated against the coronavirus, with many either saying they'll wait or ruling it out entirely, even as newly authorized vaccines for 5- to 11-year-olds roll out nationally.

With the Delta surge having subsided, new pandemic-related polls also find a sharp rise since September in views that the situation is getting better; indeed, most think the worst in the United States is behind us, up substantially since August. Concerns about falling ill also have eased somewhat, though remain elevated compared with mid-summer.

Despite these gains, eight in 10 think pandemic disruptions will persist through 2022 or longer.

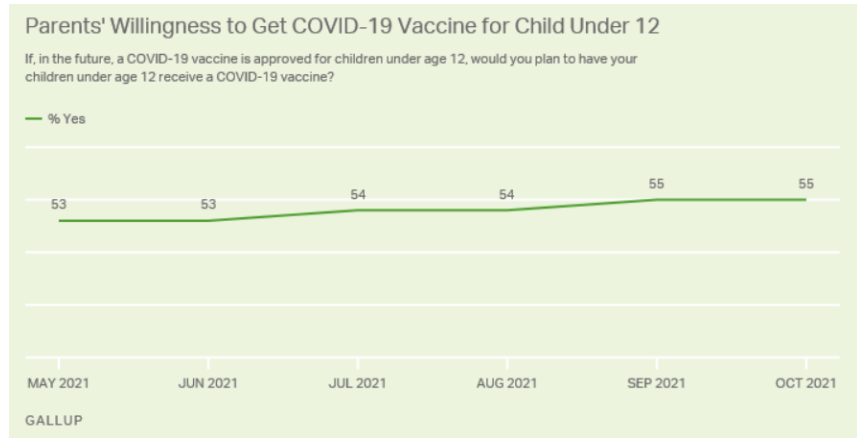
Polls differ on Joe Biden's handling of the pandemic, one steady since September, another showing a continued decline. Other surveys document the impact of the pandemic on familial relationships, holiday plans, employment and financial priorities among young adults. Several studies investigate vaccine efficacy, including one that finds vaccines offer greater protection than natural immunity alone.

We also cover exit poll results from the Virginia gubernatorial election, a state poll in Wisconsin, a study among Jewish adults in New York City and polls from Chile, Greece, Mexico and Russia.

Vaccines

Among parents with children age 5-11, 28 percent intend to have their child vaccinated as soon as possible, 36 percent prefer to wait to see if there are major problems or side effects, 7 percent say they'll act only if required and 27 percent rule it out. Results are similar to polling [last week](#). ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)).

In another poll, with different response options, 55 percent of parents with children younger 12 plan to have their child vaccinated, little changed in monthly data since May. That ranges from 90 percent of Democrats to 48 percent of independents and 19 percent of Republicans. It's seven in 10 among college graduates, compared with 44 percent of those without a degree ([Gallup 10/18-10/24](#)).



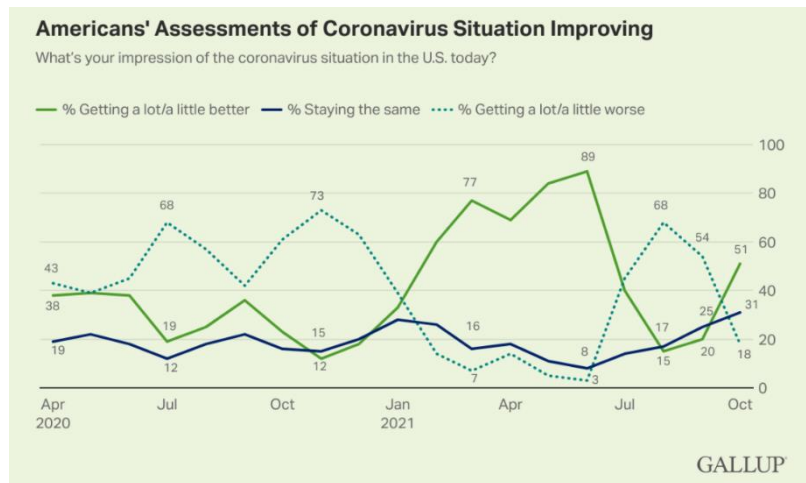
Among parents with older children, 12-17, 51 percent say at least one has been vaccinated; 46 percent say so about all their eligible children ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)). In another poll, 55 percent of parents of children age 12-15 and 58 percent of those with 16- to 18-year-olds report that their child has been vaccinated ([Gallup 10/18-10/24](#)). The [CDC's](#) figures are 57 percent of 12- to 15-year-and 64 percent of those age 16-17.

Among all adults, 80 percent have received at least one dose, according to [CDC estimates](#), unchanged in the past week. Eleven percent of fully vaccinated adults who have gotten a booster, including 28 percent of those age 65 or older.

The estimate is similar in one pandemic-related poll that uses jurisdiction-level vaccination data as a weighting adjustment ([CDC 10/10-10/16](#)). It's 74 percent in another, with an additional 6 percent saying they plan to get vaccinated, both unchanged since September ([Gallup 10/18-10/24](#)). In a third survey, 70 percent say they've gotten vaccinated, up from 57 percent in April. In this poll, 2 percent say they'll get a shot as soon as possible, 9 percent are waiting, 3 percent will act only if required and 15 percent rule it out ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)).

Concerns & Outlooks

The share of Americans who think the coronavirus situation in the United States is getting better has soared 31 points in a month, to 51 percent. Eighteen percent say it's getting worse, down 36 points since September and 50 points since August. The rest, 31 percent, say it's staying about the same ([Gallup 10/18-10/24](#)).



In another gauge, 56 percent think the worst of the coronavirus in the United States is behind us, up 19 points since August and just short of its peak in April, 61 percent. Nineteen percent think the worst is yet to come, down 23 points since August. An additional 17 percent say it's not a major problem, steady since April ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)).

Worry about getting sick from the coronavirus is down a slight 4 points since September to 36 percent, still double its level in late June. It was half or more before vaccines were widely available.

Thirty-three percent are at least moderately worried about the availability of hospital supplies, services and treatment in their area, down 10 points since September. That's still 12 points higher than in March and 16 points higher than in July.

Most take a long view of pandemic impacts. Fifty-one percent think disruption to travel, school, work and public events will persist through 2022; an additional 28 percent think it will be longer than that ([Gallup 10/18-10/24](#)).

Fifty-four percent in late September said the coronavirus was a critical issue to them personally, compared with 60 percent in September 2020. A third said the pandemic was one of many important issues, while 11 percent didn't see it as important. In another personal measure, 22 percent said their relationships with extended family were "strained to the breaking point" over the issue of getting vaccinated. It was 29 percent among unvaccinated adults ([PRRI 9/16-9/29](#)).

Vaccine Mandates

Americans roughly divide on requiring all eligible people to get vaccinated, with 47 percent in favor, 50 percent opposed, unchanged since August. At the same time, 40 percent of registered voters say they would be less likely to vote for a congressional candidate who supported a vaccine mandate, vs. 32 percent more likely. Twenty-seven percent say it wouldn't make a difference ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)).

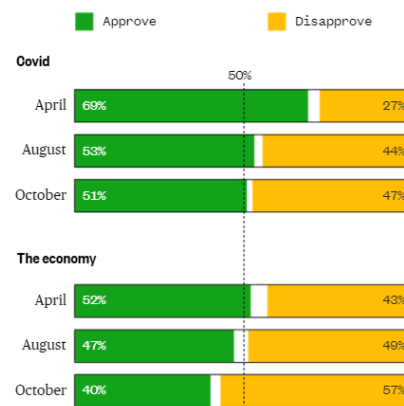
Government Response

One poll finds Americans split on Biden's handling of the pandemic, 51-47 percent, approve-disapprove; it was 53-44 percent in August and 69-27 percent in April ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)). It's 56-44 percent in another estimate, steady since September ([ABC News/Ipsos 10/29-10/30](#)). It was 56-42 percent in late September ([PRRI 9/16-9/29](#)).

The public is 12 points more apt to say the Democratic Party would do a better job

How Biden's doing on the issues

While approval of the president's handling of the pandemic is near even, more now disapprove of how he's handling the economy.



Notes

The NBC News survey was conducted Oct. 23-26, and its margin of error is ± 3.1 percentage points.

Source: NBC News

Graphic: JoElla Carman / NBC News

dealing with the coronavirus than the Republican Party, 38 vs. 26 percent. Fifteen percent think both would handle it about the same, while 19 percent think neither would do a good job ([NBC News 10/23-10/26](#)).

Economic and Employment Impacts

Sixty-five percent of Americans think economic issues facing the country mainly are a result of long-term problems rather than being mostly caused by pandemic-related hardships (32 percent) ([PRRI 9/16-9/29](#)).

Job growth has rebounded after a sluggish September, with unemployment down 0.2 points to 4.6 percent in October, a low since February 2020. In all, 18.2 million jobs have been added since employment hit a pandemic low in April 2020, including 531,000 in October. Still, total employment is down by 4.2 million compared with February 2020. The labor force participation rate, 61.6 percent, is about 2 points lower than its pre-pandemic level.

Pandemic impacts linger but are diminishing. The number unable to work because their employer closed or lost business because of the pandemic fell from 5.0 million in September to 3.8 million in October. And 1.3 million cited the pandemic as a reason they were not looking for work, down from 1.6 million in September ([Bureau of Labor Statistics 11/5](#)).

A new analysis finds that employment fully recovered its pandemic losses among self-employed workers by last spring, but not among those working for others. Employment declines from spring 2019 to spring 2020 were similar in the two groups. In the ensuing year, self-employment recovered fully (+0.9 percent) but still was down 4.3 percent among other workers ([Pew 11/3](#), [U.S. Census Bureau](#)).

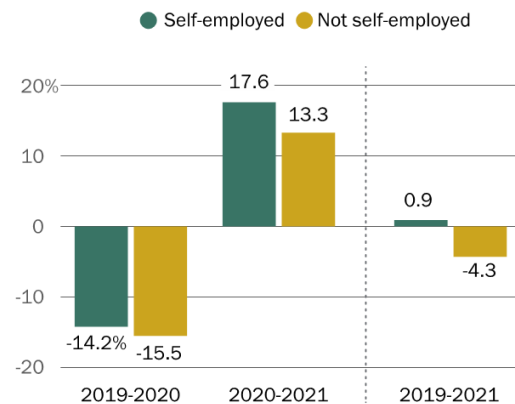
Financial Impacts

A poll in mid-August to early September looked at pandemic impacts on career and financial goals among adults age 18-24. Almost seven in 10 said the pandemic had influenced their financial priorities. A third placed greater importance on savings, 19 percent on frugality.

Forty-nine percent said the pandemic had altered their career priorities, including 20 percent who placed greater importance on jobs with flexibility and/or work/life balance. One in 10 prioritized pay over work they're passionate about.

Self-employment is back to level from before pandemic; employment among other workers is shy of a full recovery

% change in the number of self-employed and not self-employed U.S. workers who are actively at work



Note: Samples include employed workers ages 16 and older, working full time or part time, and are not seasonally adjusted. Workers who are employed but absent from work for any reason are excluded. The changes shown are from the second quarter of one year to the second quarter of the other year.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2019, 2020 and 2021 Current Population Survey monthly files.

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More young Black people, 72 percent, reported an influence on their career priorities. Three in 10 put more emphasis on flexibility, compared with 18 percent of others, and 18 percent prioritized salary over work passion, vs. 8 percent of others ([Bank of America 8/12-9/7](#)).

Holiday Spending Plans

Anticipated holiday spending has gained but not fully recovered from a pandemic slump. Americans plan to spend an average of \$837 on gifts this season; it was \$805 in 2020, down from a record \$942 in 2019. Sixty-four percent expect to spend the same amount as last year, up 6 points; 13 percent more; 22 percent expect to spend less, down from 28 percent in 2020 ([Gallup 10/1-10/19](#)).

Vaccine Efficacy

A newly released study adds to evidence that COVID-19 vaccines are less effective in protecting immunocompromised adults from severe illness. Among people fully vaccinated with an mRNA vaccine, effectiveness against COVID-19-associated hospitalization was 90 percent among immunocompetent adults vs. 77 percent among the immunocompromised, ranging from 59 percent among organ or stem cell transplant recipients to 81 percent among those with a rheumatologic or inflammatory disorder. Differences persisted regardless of vaccine product, age and Delta variant predominance in the state. Data were collected from January to September in seven U.S. health care systems and research centers in nine states ([CDC 1/17-9/5](#)).

Another CDC study finds evidence that vaccination offers greater protection than natural immunity. Unvaccinated patients who tested positive for the coronavirus 90-179 days before hospitalization were five times more likely than patients who were fully vaccinated with an mRNA vaccine during the same period to have laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. (Results were adjusted for demographic and health characteristics.) Comparative rates of infection were similar before and during the Delta surge. Data were from 187 hospitals in nine states from January to September, among patients hospitalized with a coronavirus-like illness. The authors stress that all eligible people should get vaccinated, including those previously infected ([CDC 1/1-9/30](#)).

In Israel, a study of booster data from July to September finds that a third dose of the Pfizer vaccine provided substantially improved protection from severe COVID-19-related outcomes. Compared with a matched control group that received two doses at least five months prior, a third dose at least five months after the second dose reduced the risk of hospitalization by 93 percent, severe disease by 92 percent and COVID-19-related death by 81 percent. Results were similar accounting for comorbidities ([Barda et al., 2021](#)).

Cognitive Function after COVID-19

Another study finds a relationship between disease severity and cognitive impairment in the months after treatment for the coronavirus. Hospitalized patients were more likely to have impairments in attention, executive function, category fluency and memory than patients who were treated for COVID-19 in an outpatient setting, adjusting for demographics and health

characteristics. The study was done among 740 COVID-19 patients age 38-59 who were treated in outpatient, emergency department or inpatient hospital settings associated with Mount Sinai Health System registry; all contracted COVID-19 from April 2020 through May 2021 and had no history of dementia. The authors say more research is needed to understand the long-term effects of COVID-19 on cognitive function ([Becker et al., 2021](#)).

State & Local Results

The pandemic ranked fourth in a list of five issues in exit poll results from the Virginia gubernatorial race Tuesday, cited by 14 percent. Voters divided 43-37 percent between Democrat Terry McAuliffe and Republican Glen Youngkin in trust to handle it. Twelve percent trusted neither candidate to handle it, with 62 percent in this group breaking for Youngkin, who won the election.

Among other exit poll results, 83 percent of Virginia voters reported being vaccinated, in line with the [CDC's](#) estimate for adults in the state, 85 percent. Most voters, 55 percent, favored employers requiring the coronavirus vaccine for employees, while 42 percent were opposed ([ABC News 11/2](#)).

In Wisconsin, three-quarters of registered voters are at least somewhat concerned about the pandemic, including four in 10 very concerned. Voters split 50-46 percent, approve-disapprove, on Biden's handling of the pandemic; Gov. Tony Evers gets somewhat better marks, 53-40 percent. Fifty-two percent say they trust Evers a great deal or fair amount as a source of information about vaccines and treatments, vs. 39 percent for Sen. Ron Johnson.

Seventy-four percent in the same poll say they've received a coronavirus vaccine, somewhat higher than the [CDC's](#) estimate for all adults in the state, 69 percent. Among the unvaccinated, 74 percent lean against getting a shot. Most registered voters support requiring teachers and students in public elementary and high schools to wear masks, 55-40 percent. They're evenly divided, 48-48 percent, on the federal vaccination/testing mandate for companies with 100 or more employees ([Marquette Law School Poll 10/26-10/31](#)).

A poll from February to June finds that 16 percent of adults in Jewish households experienced a worsened financial situation because of the pandemic. Nearly four in 10 reported higher feelings of social isolation compared with pre-pandemic; 19 percent said they felt more down, depressed or hopeless since it started ([UJA Federation New York 2/25-6/24](#)).

International Results

In Chile, 96 percent have been vaccinated and 42 percent have received a booster shot, yet the number who are at least somewhat concerned about the coronavirus jumped 12 points in the past week to 52 percent, matching mid-September numbers as new coronavirus cases are on the rise. Concern about the Delta variant more specifically rose 7 points, to 51 percent. Support for President Sebastian Pinera's handling of the pandemic fell 9 points to 60 percent, back to mid-August levels ([Cadem 10/27-10/29](#)).

A third of Russians are vaccinated, while 19 percent say they are ready and 45 percent say they won't get the shot, down from 52 percent in August. Fear of contracting the coronavirus is up 5 points from August to 48 percent; 50 percent say they are not afraid ([Levada 10/21-10/27](#)). In a broader measure, more, 67 percent, say they are afraid they or their loved ones might catch the coronavirus ([WCIOM 10/24](#)).

Fifty-five percent feel that the worst difficulties of the pandemic are yet to come; 29 percent think they're occurring now, while just 7 percent think the worst has passed. Fifty-three percent support nationwide mandatory vaccination for some groups (such as doctors, educators and transit workers); this drops to four in 10 for everyone eligible. A third support restricting access to public places for those who are unvaccinated or haven't had the coronavirus in the past six months; a quarter back a general lockdown or remote learning for children ([Levada 10/21-10/27](#)).

Seventy-three percent say it's unacceptable for someone to try to dissuade others from getting the vaccine; 64 percent say that doing so means putting others' lives and health in danger. Older adults are more likely than younger adults to say so ([WCIOM 10/24](#)).

In Greece, 73 percent say they've received at least one dose of a vaccine, 5 percent plan to wait and see and 7 percent say they won't get vaccinated. Of the unvaccinated, 56 percent say nothing will convince them to change their minds ([Pulse RC 10/22-10/25](#)).

In Mexico, 69 percent approve of how the government of Andrés Manuel López Obrador is handling the vaccination process, up from 53 percent in April to a new high. That said, just fewer than half, 48 percent, say the government is doing a good job handling health in the country overall, down 5 points in a month ([El Financiero 10/15-10/16](#)).

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

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