



COVID-19 Survey Summary: December 3, 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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Most Americans doubt the safety of coronavirus vaccines in pregnant women in new polling this week, and vaccine uptake intentions among parents with young children remain comparatively low. Still, most people continue to see the vaccines as safe generally, and about eight in 10 fully vaccinated adults say they have gotten a booster shot or intend to do so.

Two polls find majority support for the Biden administration's testing/vaccine mandate for larger employers, albeit down in one. More than half of workers at larger companies, dropping to three in 10 at small ones, say they're currently required to get vaccinated or favor such a mandate.

About half the public thinks the government hasn't done enough to help small businesses or lower-income people in the pandemic. Other polls find racial and ethnic disparities in the pandemic's impact on family finances and investigate Americans' holiday travel plans.

No new surveys have emerged yet relating to the Omicron variant.

Beyond these polls, one study finds increased risk of death in the year following hospitalization for the coronavirus, another documents a sharp rise in eating disorders and a third finds greater risk of breakthrough infection among vaccinated adults with compromised immune systems.

This week's summary also includes a newly released multinational survey of 113 countries and territories conducted in the second half of 2020, as well as new individual surveys from Australia, Chile, Greece, Mexico, Russia and Ukraine.

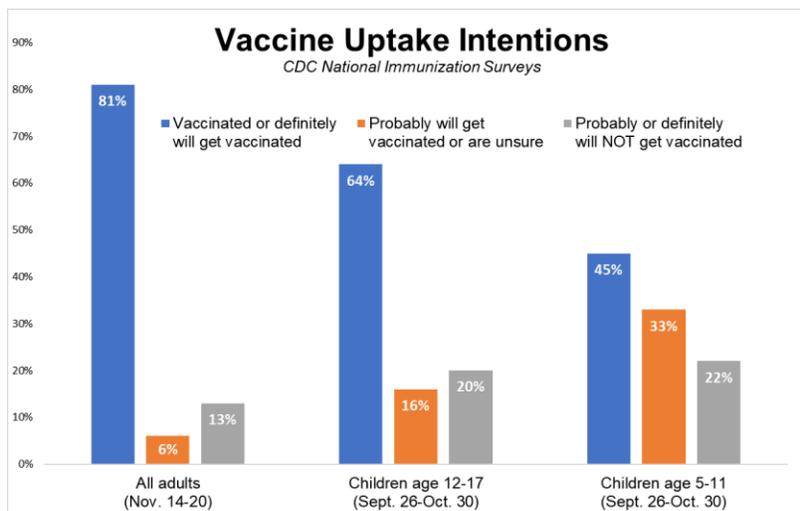
Vaccines

Eighty-three percent of adults have received at least one vaccine dose, according to [CDC estimates](#), up 3 percentage points in the past month. [So have](#) 61 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds, steady the past week, and 16 percent of children age 5-11, double the share in mid-November.

Vaccine uptake is at about eight in 10 in two national surveys this week, including one that uses jurisdiction-level vaccine administration data as a weighting adjustment ([Marquette University 11/1-11/10](#), [CDC 11/14-11/20](#)). It's lower in another, 73 percent, essentially unchanged from 72 percent in September ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).

Just 2 percent of Americans still definitely intend to get a shot and 6 percent probably will or are unsure, while 13 percent definitely or probably won't, about the same as in early November ([CDC 11/14-11/20](#)). Similarly, in another study, 2 percent say they'll get vaccinated as soon as possible, 6 percent prefer to wait and see and 17 percent rule it out or say they'll act only if required ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).

Parents express more skepticism when it comes to vaccinating their children. In a newly released survey conducted in late September and October, 58 percent of parents said their 12- to 17-year-old was vaccinated. Six percent said they definitely would get them a shot; 16 percent, probably or unsure; and 20 percent leaned against it. (The poll was calibrated to jurisdiction-level vaccination data.)



Among parents of five- to 11-year-olds, fewer, 45 percent, indicated they definitely would get their child vaccinated (and 0.3 percent already had done so). A third said they'd probably act or were unsure; 22 percent, probably or definitely not ([CDC 9/26-10/30](#)).

Booster Shots

The [CDC](#) says 23 percent of fully vaccinated adults have received a booster dose, including 34 percent of those 50 and older and 45 percent of people 65+.

Matching this estimate, in a mid-November survey, 23 percent of fully vaccinated adults reported having gotten a booster shot, up from 10 percent in October. Nearly six in 10 said they would definitely (37 percent) or probably (19 percent) would do so once recommended by the FDA and CDC (as since has occurred), leaving 18 percent disinclined.

In all, 79 percent of fully vaccinated people have gotten or say they will get a booster shot, corresponding to 53 percent of adults overall. Among fully vaccinated adults, booster willingness differs by political partisanship, encompassing nine in Democrats, three-quarters of independents and two-thirds of Republicans ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).

Vaccine Perceptions

One poll finds 72 percent of Americans very or somewhat confident that the vaccines are safe for adults ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)). In another, 64 percent think the vaccines are completely or very safe for them personally, largely unchanged in recent months ([CDC 11/14-11/20](#)). (Both are higher than the [58 percent](#) of registered voters who saw the vaccines as safe and effective in a poll covered last week, down from two-thirds in mid-September.)

Nine in 10 vaccinated adults are at least somewhat confident in the vaccines' safety, compared with three in 10 unvaccinated people. And it's nine in 10 among Democrats compared with seven in 10 independents and 56 percent of Republicans.

Americans are far more skeptical of the vaccines for pregnant women, with 41 percent confident in their safety for this group. Additionally, women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant lag in vaccine uptake compared with other women their age, 64 vs. 73 percent ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)). (As of late November, an estimated [35 percent](#) of pregnant women were fully vaccinated before or during their pregnancy, according to data from eight healthcare organizations in seven states.)

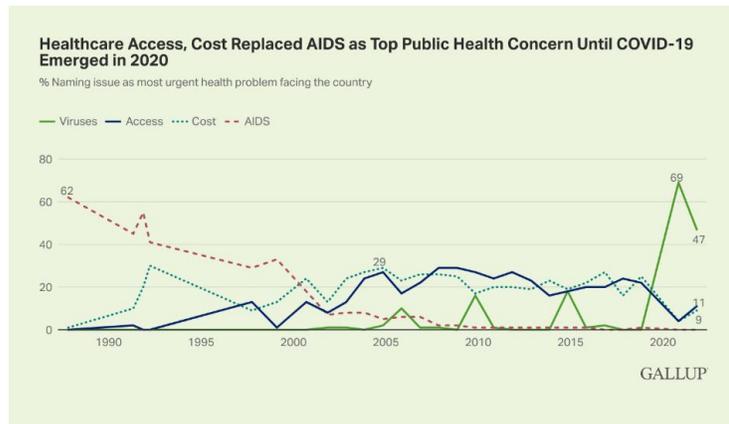
In another gauge, six in 10 adults reject the statement "COVID-19 vaccines are much more dangerous than we're being told." About a third agree, two in 10 strongly so. Partisanship again is a factor, with agreement among more than half of Republicans, compared with just more than a third of independents and one in 10 Democrats ([Fairleigh Dickinson University 11/9-11/16](#)).

Forty-seven percent overall view getting vaccinated as part of everyone's responsibility to protect the health of others, while 51 percent instead call it a personal choice. These views have held steady throughout the course of the vaccine rollout ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).

Concerns & Outlooks

In results predating identification of Omicron as a variant of concern, 30 percent of Americans were very or somewhat worried about becoming seriously sick from the coronavirus, down from 38 percent in mid-September. More, 55 percent, worried about someone else in their family becoming seriously ill, down from 62 percent in mid-September ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)). Half in early November said the coronavirus was a serious problem in their state, down from 68 percent in the height of the Delta surge ([Marquette University 11/1-11/10](#)).

Forty-seven percent called the coronavirus or viruses generally the most urgent health problem facing the country, down from 69 percent in November 2020 but far



surpassing others, such as access to care (11 percent) or cost (9 percent) ([Gallup 11/1-11/16](#)).

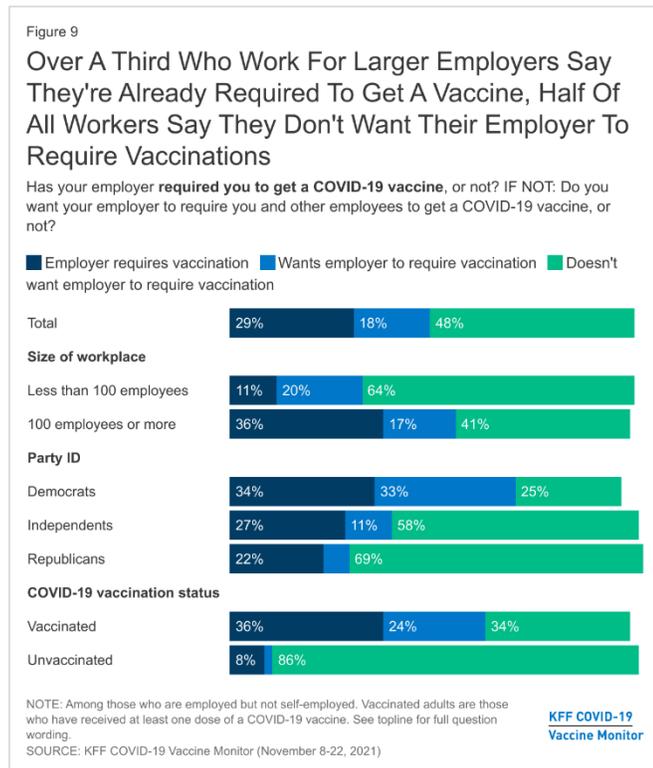
Fifty-eight percent said they were frustrated about the status of coronavirus vaccination in the United States, up 8 points since January. Fewer, 48 percent, were optimistic, down from 66 percent at the beginning of the year. The change mainly was among Republicans: Thirty-seven percent were optimistic, down from two-thirds in January. Nearly twice as many, 68 percent, were frustrated, up from 42 percent. Majorities of Democrats continue to say they were both frustrated (55 percent) and optimistic (60 percent). ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#))

Vaccine Requirements

In an early November poll, Americans by 56-44 percent supported the Biden administration’s requirement for larger employers to mandate vaccines or weekly testing ([Marquette University 11/1-11/10](#)). Another survey found 52 percent support, down from 58 percent in September.

Fifty-three percent of workers at such firms say their employer has instituted a vaccine/testing requirement (36 percent) or want it to do so (17 percent). Forty-one percent are not currently covered by such a requirement and don’t want one.

At smaller firms, 11 percent of workers report a vaccine/testing requirement and 20 percent want one. Opposition rises to 64 percent ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).



Government Response

As with other [recent surveys](#), the public divides on Biden’s handling of the pandemic, 44-48 percent approve-disapprove, down from 62-30 percent in February.

Forty-eight percent apiece say the government hasn’t done enough to help small businesses or lower-income people. Four in 10 say so about help for rural residents, black Americans and Hispanic people alike. Fewer, 32 percent, think the government hasn’t done enough for people like them or for white people, 26 percent. Just 18 percent think it hasn’t done enough to help large businesses; twice as many say it’s done either enough or too much ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).

Pandemic Impacts

Fifty-three percent overall say the pandemic has had a negative effect on their mental health, 47 percent on their relationships with family members and 36 percent on their physical health. In economic terms, 43 percent report a negative impact on their ability to pay for basic necessities such as housing, utilities and food. This rises among Black, Hispanic and lower-income people compared with others ([KFF 11/8-11/20](#)).

In another survey, 34 percent of Americans rate their mental health as excellent, unchanged from a year ago and matching its low in data since 2001. It was 42 percent or more in the two decades predating the pandemic ([Gallup 11/1-11/16](#)).

Employment

The United States added a lower-than-expected 210,000 jobs in November, marking a slowdown in job growth since October. Still, the unemployment rate fell 0.4 points to 4.2 percent (corresponding to 6.9 million unemployed people), down from its peak of 14.8 percent in April 2020. It's still higher than its pre-pandemic level, 3.5 percent (5.7 million) in February 2020.

The number of people not in the labor force who said they were preventing from looking for work because of the pandemic, 1.2 million, was little changed from October.

In the healthcare sector specifically, employment is down by 450,000 compared with its pre-pandemic level. Nearly all these losses are in nursing and residential care facilities, down 11,000 jobs in November alone ([U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 12/3](#)).

Holiday Travel Plans

Seventy-nine percent of Americans say they'll be seeing family during the holidays. Among them, 53 percent expect to see about the same amount of people as in most years, 24 percent more and 21 percent fewer ([Fairleigh Dickinson University 11/9-11/16](#)).

A recently released survey conducted in August finds that 26 percent of adults age 50-80 planned to travel for the holiday season (November to January) and 31 percent had plans for a trip of two weeks or more within the next year. Among older adults planning extended trips, 75 percent said they'd travel to another state and 33 percent to another country.

Two in 10 older adults planning an extended vacation said a spike in coronavirus cases at their destination definitely would cause them to change their travel plans. Fifty-two percent said they might do so, 28 percent not ([AARP/University of Michigan 08/2021](#)). (In response to the Omicron variant, the World Health Organization advises adults age 60 and older and those at high risk of severe illness to [postpone travel](#) to countries with community transmission.)

Eating Disorders Amid the Pandemic

A new study finds a rise in eating disorders during the pandemic. Using deidentified commercial claims data on more than three million individuals, the authors found that inpatient care for eating disorders increased from approximately 0.3 per 100,000 people per month in the years

before the pandemic to about 0.6 per 100,000 in June to December 2020. Increases were seen across diagnoses including anorexia, bulimia and other eating disorders ([Asch et al., 2021](#))

Breakthrough Infections

An analysis from researchers at Pfizer finds that vaccinated adults with compromised immune systems are at higher risk for breakthrough infections compared with non-

immunocompromised adults, though the risk is very small for both groups. The authors analyzed health records of nearly 1.3 million people age 16 and older who had received two doses of the Pfizer vaccine from Dec. 10, 2020 to July 8, 2021. They found that 0.8 percent of fully vaccinated adults (978 of 1,176,907) had a breakthrough infection, including 0.18 percent of immunocompromised adults compared with 0.06 percent of others. The authors say their findings support FDA and CDC recommendations for boosters among immunocompromised people ([Di Fusco et al., 2021](#)).

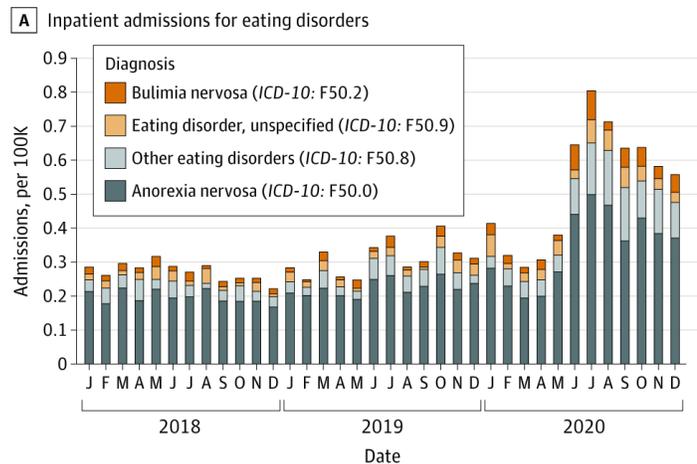
Severe COVID-19 and Death

A study finds that patients hospitalized for the coronavirus were at increased risk of mortality—in most cases not associated with the virus—in the ensuing year, compared with those who had mild or moderate illness or who never were infected. The authors analyzed health records of 13,638 adult patients who were tested for the coronavirus from Jan. 1 to June 30, 2020 and then monitored for 12 months. Among patients who required hospitalization for the coronavirus and died, 20 percent died because of complications from their infections, such as abnormal blood clotting, respiratory failure or cardiovascular problems. Eighty percent died for reasons considered unrelated to the virus. The authors suggest that since most deaths were not directly tied to the virus, complications caused by severe coronavirus illness left the patients vulnerable to other medical conditions. They stress the importance of vaccinations in reducing the chance of severe disease ([Mainous et al., 2021](#)).

State Results

In Texas, 25 percent of adults say stopping the spread of the coronavirus should be a top priority for the state’s next governor, tied for second out of a list of 11 items. About as many, 24 percent, say jobs and the economy should be the top issue. Immigration surpasses both matters, at 36 percent ([Spectrum/Ipsos 11/16-11/26](#)).

In New Jersey, just 6 percent cite the pandemic as the most important problem facing the state, the fourth-most cited answer in an open-ended question. Taxes are cited by 39 percent, followed by the economy, 14 percent, and problems with government, 10 percent ([Rutgers-Eagleton 10/21-10/27](#)).



International Results

Eight in 10 adults globally said the coronavirus had impacted their lives a lot (45 percent) or some (35 percent), according to a newly released survey in 113 countries and territories conducted in the second half of 2020. Thirty-three percent overall said they lost their job or business because of pandemic, including 45 percent in low- or lower-middle-income countries, compared with 10 percent in high-income countries. In seven countries more than half reported a job loss: the Philippines (66 percent), Kenya (65 percent), Zimbabwe (62 percent), Zambia (58 percent), Thailand (58 percent), Peru (57 percent) and India (52 percent). At the time of the interviews, people in more rural regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Central Asia, were most apt to report being unaffected by the pandemic.

Trust in scientists increased globally during the first year of the pandemic. Forty-three percent of people age 15 and older trusted scientists in their country “a lot,” up from 34 percent in 2018. High-level trust in science more generally also increased, up 10 points to 41 percent. Increases were more modest in terms of trust in doctors and nurses (45 percent in 2020), one’s national government (26 percent) and people who work at charities (22 percent).

Sixty-three percent of respondents thought that doctors and nurses made decisions about the coronavirus based on scientific evidence, surpassing the share who said the same of the World Health Organization (48 percent), their national government (41 percent), friends or family (38 percent), or religious leaders (23 percent). Confidence in governments generally was associated with the view that they were making evidence-based decisions about the pandemic ([Wellcome/Gallup 2020](#)).

Views on whether sources base coronavirus-related decisions on scientific advice, global results

Percentage of people who said ‘a lot’, ‘some’, ‘not much’ or ‘not at all’.

In general, how much do you think each of the following make decisions about coronavirus based on scientific advice?



Three-quarters of Mexicans give positive ratings to President López Obrador’s government’s vaccine rollout, up 8 points since August. That surpasses positive ratings of its handling of the economy (54 percent), corruption (41 percent) or public safety (36 percent). That’s also higher than approval of the president overall, 66 percent. [Six in 10](#) report having gotten at least one dose of the vaccine ([El Financiero 11/12-11/28](#)).

In Greece, 66 percent support a vaccine mandate for frontline workers or those who are high risk, steady since early July. Nearly six in 10 support further restrictions for the unvaccinated, rising to 72 percent of adults over 60. About half of unvaccinated people say nothing will convince

them to get vaccinated; a quarter say they could be persuaded by information from doctors and scientists. Among initially vaccine-hesitant people who got a shot, 38 percent say they were convinced by information from doctors and scientists, a quarter acted in response to deteriorating health indicators, 19 percent cite their or their family's health and 12 percent say they were required to do so or faced restrictions if they refused ([Pulse RC 11/20-11/25](#)).

In Chile, 63 percent approve of President Sebastián Piñera's handling of the coronavirus, largely steady since August. As the country nears a Dec. 19 [presidential](#) runoff (Piñera is not on the ballot), just 2 percent name the coronavirus as one of the most important issues in the election, in an open-ended question. Still 46 percent are at least somewhat worried about catching the virus, vs. 35 percent just a little or not at all concerned ([Cadem 11/14-11/26](#)).

In Russia, 55 percent feel positively about mass vaccination against the coronavirus and a similar number approve of the decision to mandate vaccinations for most service workers. A third disapprove of each measure. Most, 64 percent, think encouraging people to refuse vaccination puts their lives and health at risk, steady since October. Most Russians say correctly that vaccinated people can get the coronavirus but are less likely to become severely ill (65 percent) or die (61 percent). Six in 10 are confident they'll have access to a vaccine if they want one ([VCIOM 11/14](#)).

An October survey found that one in 10 Ukrainians has gotten the coronavirus and about a third were fully vaccinated against it. Just 6 percent said they followed no preventative measures. Nearly seven in 10 wore masks outside the home, 52 percent washed their hands frequently, 40 percent avoided crowded places, 28 percent social distanced from others, 27 percent disinfected surfaces and a quarter didn't leave their homes unnecessarily. All were down from the first stage of the pandemic ([R&B Group 10/14-10/25](#)).

Also in October, 45 percent of Australians thought the worst of the pandemic was still to come. Forty percent thought it was likely they'd be infected with the coronavirus in the next six months, up 9 points from August to the most since April 2020. About six in 10 were anxious or worried due to the coronavirus, essentially steady, while a separate measure of psychological distress increased to a 12-month peak. Still, a measure of life satisfaction also rose slightly, albeit still far short of its November 2020 pandemic high ([Australia National University 10/13-10/26](#)).

In another recently released poll from Australia, results from a July survey found that six in 10 called the coronavirus the most important problem facing the country, a return to its July 2020 levels after dipping to a third in November 2020. (At the time of the survey, the Delta variant was [fueling a rise in cases nationwide](#), prompting renewed lockdowns.) About half approved of the federal government's response to the pandemic, down sharply from 85 percent in July 2020. Approval of state governments was higher, ranging from 59 to 94 percent. Eighty-seven percent approved of government lockdowns but just half as many, 44 percent, trusted the government to do the right thing for the Australian people overall, down 10 points from July 2020.

About two in 10 reported psychological distress, defined as stress or anxiety, steady since July 2020 but up from 13 percent in 2017-2018. Another two in 10 were unhappy, unchanged since 2019. Several indicators of financial well-being rose, despite economic disruption during the

pandemic. Seventy-one percent were happy with their finances, up from 64 percent in 2019 ([Scanlon Institute 7/12-7/26](#)).

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

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