



COVID-19 Survey Summary: January 21, 2022

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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Public concern about catching the coronavirus virus is its highest since last winter's peak and the number of Americans who think the pandemic situation in the United States is getting worse has tripled since late October, to six in 10. More people are avoiding crowds, restaurants and other public places.

In the face of the Omicron surge, more small businesses, for their part, report decreased revenues and fewer staff hours. Among people who didn't work for pay in the past week, two in 10 cite a pandemic-related reason. Two polls this week find Joe Biden's ratings for handling the pandemic underwater for the first time since he took office.

New studies also find declines in the labor force disproportionately concentrated among less-educated women, deaths due to drug overdoses in 2020 highest among Black men and racial and ethnic disparities in the receipt of monoclonal antibody therapies for the coronavirus. In a newly released survey from last March, high school teachers reported providing fewer students with college and career readiness advice compared with the previous year.

State polls from New Hampshire and Vermont are included in this week's summary, as are international polls from Brazil, Chile, Mexico, the Netherlands, Russia and South Korea.

Vaccines

Eighty-seven percent of adults have received at least one vaccine dose, according to the [CDC](#), with boosters administered to 42 percent of fully vaccinated adults. The overall figure is similar, 85 percent, in the sole poll to estimate it this week (one with historically [higher estimates](#) than other polls), but estimated booster uptake in that study rises to 54 percent. (Overall uptake estimates were 76 percent in two polls [last week](#).)

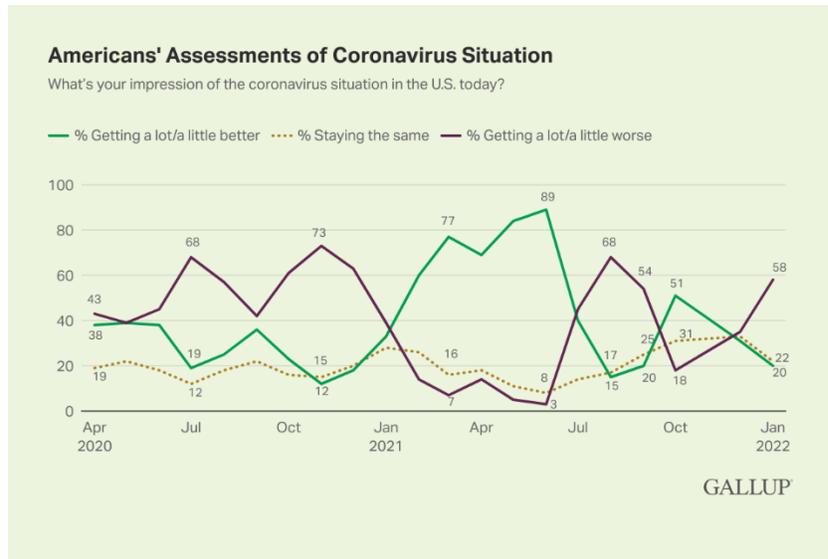
Among vaccine-hesitant adults, 53 percent express concerns about possible side effects, 42 percent don't trust coronavirus vaccines generally, 36 percent don't trust the government and three in 10 don't think they need a vaccine. A quarter to two in 10 doubt its efficacy (25 percent) or don't think the virus is a big threat (21 percent) ([U.S. Census Bureau 12/19-1/10](#)).

An updated analysis of CDC county-level vaccination data finds that 65 percent of people living in counties that voted for Joe Biden are fully vaccinated, vs. 52 percent in counties won by Donald Trump. That 13-point difference compares with a 12-point gap in late 2021 and nine percentage points in June ([KFF 1/19](#); [CDC](#)).

Concerns & Outlooks

Fifty-eight percent think the coronavirus situation is getting worse, up 40 percentage points since late October to a high since August. Twenty percent think it's improving, down 31 points; an additional 22 percent say it's staying the same.

As seen in other [recent polls](#), concerns have risen: Half of Americans are worried about personally contracting the virus, up 12 points since early December to the most since last winter. While worry increased across groups, the gain was sharpest among adults age 55 and older, Democrats and vaccinated people. Worry among Republicans and unvaccinated adults remains low ([Gallup 1/3-1/14](#)).



New daily cases in the United States averaged [745,000](#) in the past week, about triple last winter's peak, though with signs the surge may be abating. On average, 1,700 deaths were linked to the virus each day the past week, up more than 40 percent since the first of the month.

Twenty-three percent of adults say a doctor or health care provider has told them they've had the coronavirus at some point, up from 19 percent in early December ([U.S. Census Bureau 12/19-1/10](#)). (In an early January poll covered [last week](#), 16 percent said they'd tested positive, including 5 percent in the past month. Twenty-two percent thought they had the coronavirus but were not tested or tested negative, including 7 percent in the past month.)

Coronavirus Precautions

Alongside rising concern, Americans report taking increased precautions against the virus, again aligning with other [recent findings](#). Fifty-six percent avoided large crowds in the past week because of their concern about the virus, up 10 points since early December to a high since April. Forty-six percent avoided travel by plane, bus, subway or train because of the virus, up 6 points since early December; 41 percent avoided public places, up 12 points; 34 percent avoided small gatherings, up 13 points; and 18 percent dined out at a restaurant within the past 24 hours, down from a peak of 30 percent in June and July to a low since March.

Seventy-two percent say they wore a face mask within the past week when outside of their home, steady since August ([Gallup 1/3-1/14](#)). Other polls also find overall mask use roughly steady, albeit with [frequency](#) of use up in recent weeks.

Government Response

Biden is underwater in ratings of his handling of the pandemic in two surveys, a first for both. Fifty-four percent disapprove in one and 53 percent in another; in each, that's 9 points more than approve ([AP-NORC 1/13-1/18](#), [NBC News 1/14-1/18](#)).

Thirty-seven percent have “hardly any” confidence that Biden can get the country through the pandemic. About as many, 38 percent, have some confidence; 23 percent, a great deal of confidence ([AP-NORC 1/13-1/18](#)).

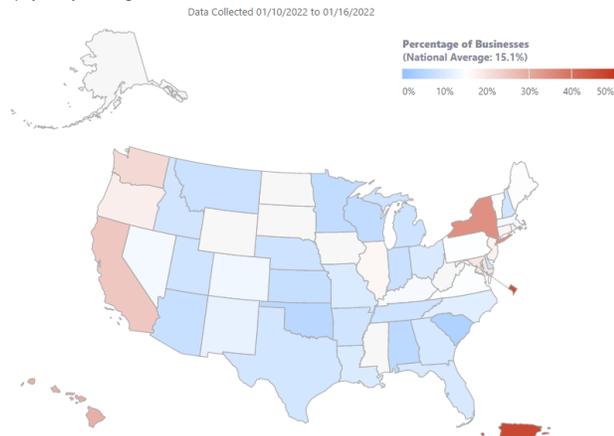
Small Business Impacts

Amid the latest wave of infections, a quarter of small businesses (with 500 or fewer employees) say they've decreased the number of hours worked by paid employees in the past week, up from 13 percent in mid-December to a high since last winter. Thirty-four percent report decreased operating revenues, up 11 points and also its highest since last winter. This rises to 55 percent of small businesses in the accommodation and food services sector.

Precautions have risen moderately. Sixteen percent of small businesses required employees to test negative before physically coming to work, up 8 points since late November to a high in data since February. Fifteen percent required employees to have proof of vaccination before physically coming to work, also a high since February.

In states for which data are available, reported vaccinated requirements are highest in New York (34 percent), Hawaii (29 percent) and California (25 percent), while lowest in South Carolina (4 percent), Alabama, Oklahoma and Wisconsin (each 6 percent) ([U.S. Census Bureau 1/10-1/16](#)).

In the last week, did this business require employees to have proof of COVID-19 vaccination before physically coming to work? ☰



Employment

Less-educated women lag pre-pandemic employment by greater numbers than similarly educated men. Comparing employment data from Q3 2021 and Q3 2019, the number of women in the

labor force who were not high school graduates decreased by 12.8 percent vs. 4.9 percent among non-high-school-educated men. High-school-educated women also saw disproportionate losses, down 6.0 percent, compared with 1.8 percent among their male counterparts.

There were no significant gender disparities in employment losses among those with some college but no degree, down 3.8 percent among women and 4.7 percent among men. Employment among those with a bachelor's degree or higher increased, up 3.9 percent among women and 2.7 percent among men ([Pew Research Center 1/14](#); [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)).

Employment is down by [3.6 million](#) compared with pre-pandemic February 2020. Among the 44 percent of adults who did not work for pay in the past week, about two in 10 give an explicitly pandemic-related reason: Nine percent were sick with the coronavirus or were caring for someone who was sick with it, up from 3 percent in early December; 3 percent were concerned about getting or spreading the coronavirus, 3 percent were laid off or furloughed because of the coronavirus and an additional 3 percent say their employer closed temporarily or permanently because of the pandemic ([U.S. Census Bureau 12/19-1/10](#)).

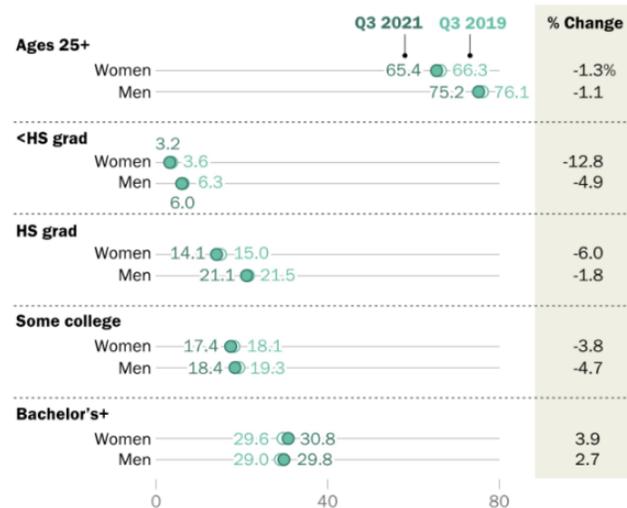
Overdose Deaths

A new analysis finds that 54.1 per 100,000 Black men died from drug overdoses in 2020. Death rates were 52.1 per 100,000 among American Indian or Alaska Native men, 44.2 per 100,000 among white men and 27.3 per 100,000 among Hispanic men. The death rate among Black men more than tripled from 2015; it increased by 69 percent among white men.

While women were far less likely to die from drug overdoses, the fatality rate among them similarly increased. It remained highest among American Indian/Alaska Native and white women in 2020, but with an especially sharp 144 percent

Among less-educated adults, labor force decline has been greater for women than men from 2019 to 2021

Labor force ages 25 and older, in millions

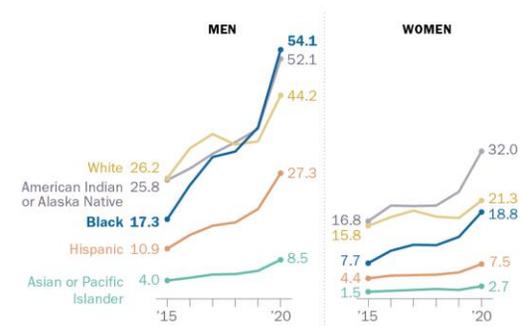


Note: Estimates refer to civilians ages 25 and older who are either employed or actively looking for work and are not seasonally adjusted. "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of July, August and September Current Population Survey monthly files (IPUMS).

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Black men had the highest death rate from drug overdoses in 2020, overtaking other groups

U.S. drug overdose death rate per 100,000 people, by race and ethnicity (age-adjusted)



Note: All racial categories include people of one race, as well as those who are multiracial. For those who are multiracial, the CDC selects a single race to allow for consistent comparisons. All racial groups refer to non-Hispanic members of those groups, while Hispanics are of any race. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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increase among Black women. As [covered previously](#), a total of approximately 92,000 people died of drug overdose deaths in 2020, a 30 percent increase over 2019 ([Pew 1/19](#); [CDC](#)).

College & Career Readiness

A newly released survey conducted last March finds that fewer high school teachers provided students with college and career guidance during the 2020-21 school year than in 2019-20. Forty-nine percent talked about education and career options with all or most of their students, compared with 58 percent the previous year. Thirty-five percent talked with all or most of their students about testing goals in relation to postsecondary interests, down from 43 percent. Teachers also were less apt to say they talked with all or most of their students about how to use their lessons outside the classroom, soft skills and characteristics of postsecondary institutions ([RAND 03/2021](#)).

Disparities in Health Care Access & Use

A CDC report finds racial and ethnic disparities in the receipt of monoclonal antibody therapies used to prevent the progression of the coronavirus. In data from 41 health care systems, it finds that Asian and Black patients were given monoclonal antibody treatments 48 and 22 percent less often than white patients. Hispanic patients received the treatment 58 percent less often than non-Hispanic patients. While relative differences are large, the average monthly use of monoclonal antibody therapies was about 4 percent or less across these groups, meaning that absolute differences in receipt of the treatments was small. The authors note that while vaccination is the best prevention measure, equal distribution in post-infection medications can reduce racial and ethnic disparities in coronavirus-related illness and death ([CDC 1/14](#)).

A newly released April survey finds that 62 percent of parents with incomes at or below 138 percent of the poverty level (about \$30,000 a year for a family of three) delayed or forwent medical care from April 2020 to April 2021, compared with 19 percent of parents with incomes at or above 400 percent of the poverty level (about \$88,000 for a family of three). Lower-income parents were more apt to cite cost concerns, difficulties taking time off work, family or childcare obligations and transportation as reasons for forgoing care. Thirty-one percent of lower-income parents said they avoided care explicitly because of coronavirus concerns, essentially even with the 26 percent of higher-income parents who cited this as a reason ([Urban Institute 4/2-4/20](#)).

State & Local Results

In New Hampshire, 62 percent of registered voters approve of the way Gov. Chris Sununu has handled the pandemic, vs. 40 percent for Biden ([Saint Anselm College 1/11-1/12](#)).

In Vermont, 58 percent support a statewide mask mandate in public places and 56 percent think reinstating emergency powers was a reasonable response to the current situation (rather than an abuse of power, 26 percent). Six in 10 support requiring eligible students to be vaccinated, though Vermonters are evenly split on vaccine requirements in public places such as restaurants, stores and entertainment venues, 47-47 percent. Most, 58 percent, do not think that health care providers should prioritize vaccinated people over unvaccinated people if resources become

scarce; 31 percent are in favor of this. Sixty-eight percent approve of the way Gov. Phil Scott has handled the pandemic ([VPR/Vermont PBS 1/3-1/9](#)).

International Results

In the Netherlands, nearly two-thirds want coronavirus restrictions in the country to be relaxed (45 percent) or eliminated (19 percent), up sharply from 29 percent in December, when most instead wanted stricter restrictions to combat rising cases. (The December poll was conducted before the government reimposed [strict lockdown measures](#) Dec. 19.) Forty-five percent support the cabinet's coronavirus policy in general, up 5 points since December though below its level earlier in the pandemic. Just 29 percent support the government's approach to the pandemic when it comes to the economy, down 13 points in a month to a pandemic low.

Eighty-eight percent of Dutch adults say they've been vaccinated and 66 percent report having received a booster; few unvaccinated people, 5 percent, say they'll probably get a shot. Only 26 percent of adults overall favor compulsory vaccination, down 10 points in a month. Thirty-seven percent support vaccinating 5- to 11-year-olds, compared with half in December; among parents with children in this age group, support fell from 36 to 22 percent. About a third of parents of 5- to 11-year-olds say they will certainly (16 percent) or probably (19 percent) vaccinate their child ([I&O Research 1/14-1/17](#)).

In Mexico, 60 percent support maintaining coronavirus restrictions while 37 percent favor resuming normal activities; in December, before the Omicron surge, attitudes essentially were flipped. Forty-three percent say someone in their family was infected with the virus within the past month; 16 percent say they themselves were infected. Seven in 10 personally know someone who has died from the virus. Among them, 23 percent have lost a family member. Ninety-four percent of Mexicans say they've been vaccinated, up from 85 percent in December. Two-thirds of them have received two doses; 17 percent, a booster ([El Financiero 1/14-1/15](#)).

In Chile, about half are at least somewhat worried about catching the coronavirus, up 14 points in a week. Concern about the Omicron variant specifically rose 9 points to 47 percent. Approval of the government's handling of the pandemic fell 9 points to 69 percent ([Cadem 1/12-1/14](#)).

Nearly all Brazilian adults, 96 percent, have gotten at least one dose of a vaccine. Thirty percent of the vaccinated have gotten a booster; three-quarters of adults older than 60 report having gotten three doses. Seventy-nine percent of adults overall support vaccines for 5- to 11-year-olds, with three-quarters of adults responsible for a child that age saying they plan to have the child vaccinated.

Eight in 10 support requiring proof of vaccination to enter public places indoors, higher among women and better-off Brazilians than among men and poorer people. Thirty percent overall report having had the coronavirus since the beginning of the pandemic, with a quarter overall saying this was confirmed with a positive test. Of those who were infected, 84 percent say it happened before they were vaccinated. Fifty-five percent say they know someone who got the coronavirus in the past 30 days; 3 percent received a positive test themselves ([Datafolha 1/12-1/13](#)).

In South Korea, half approve of the government's response to the coronavirus, up 7 points in a month. (Cases have been falling amid tighter restrictions, and 87 percent of the population has gotten at least one dose of a vaccine.) The supply of vaccines is mentioned most (by 20 percent) among those who approve of the government's performance, while vaccine mandates and passes are most mentioned among those who disapprove (by 31 percent). Fifty-eight percent see requiring proof of vaccination or a negative test as a necessary measure, while 36 percent call it a violation of human rights ([Gallup Korea 1/11-1/13](#)).

Forty-two percent of Russians in mid-December thought that life in Russia would change a lot after the end of the pandemic, while 48 percent did not think it would be noticeably different. Eighteen percent thought their own life specifically would be different. Twenty-five thought the economy would be worse after the pandemic, vs. 22 percent better. (A plurality, 36 percent, thought it'd be about the same.) Forty-six percent thought Russians would treat their health more attentively than before the pandemic; 3 percent thought they'd be less attentive, 45 percent about the same ([FOM 12/17-12/19](#)).

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

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