



COVID-19 Survey Summary: April 22, 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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Mask mandates on airplanes, trains and other public transit remained popular in a survey conducted just before a ruling that lifted such requirements this week, even as public support for mask requirements in the workplace and at public events continued to decline.

Use of shared transit, for its part, was subdued in advance of the ruling: Half of typical bus, rail or ride-share users reported taking fewer trips because of the pandemic.

Studies this week also find essentially no change in initial vaccine uptake since the fall, with concerns about side effects still the top-cited reason for resistance; measure the rebound in in-person K-12 instruction; show pandemic impacts on women in the workforce; and document disproportionate financial impacts of the pandemic in 2020, finding further consolidation of incomes within better-off households.

A state poll in North Carolina and new international polls in Canada, Chile, Russia and South Korea also are included this week.

Concerns & Outlooks

Cases are rising again nationally, up more than 50 percent in two weeks, with sharper increases in the Northeast and Midwest. Hospitalizations remain low and deaths continue to fall; both are lagging indicators ([CDC](#)).

Even with cases up, one new poll, like others recently, finds eased concerns. Twenty percent of Americans are extremely or very worried that they or someone in their family will be infected with the coronavirus, down 5 percentage points since mid-March and 16 points since January to the fewest in data since February 2020. An additional 33 percent are somewhat worried, while about half are not too or not at all worried, up from a third in January ([AP-NORC 4/14-4/18](#)).

Another, with different response categories, finds 40 percent very or moderately concerned about personally catching the virus, steady since mid-March after falling from 55 percent in January ([CDC 4/3-4/9](#)).

Mask Requirements

Mask requirements on public transportation had majority support in interviews conducted before a federal judge in Florida [struck down](#) the CDC’s nationwide mandate. Fifty-six percent were in favor of such a mandate, steady since August and more than double the number opposed. (Two in 10 selected a neutral midpoint.) ([AP-NORC 4/14-4/18](#))

Many still are avoiding travel in shared spaces. Among the one in five adults typically using bus, rail or ride-sharing services pre-pandemic, 51 percent say they took fewer trips in the past week because of the pandemic ([U.S. Census Bureau 3/30-4/11](#)).

Support for mask requirements in other situations has declined.

Forty-nine percent favor requiring masks for people attending crowded public events such as concerts, sporting events or movies, down from 62 percent in August; 28 percent are opposed, up from 19 percent. Support for mask requirements for workers who interact with the public follows a nearly identical trajectory.

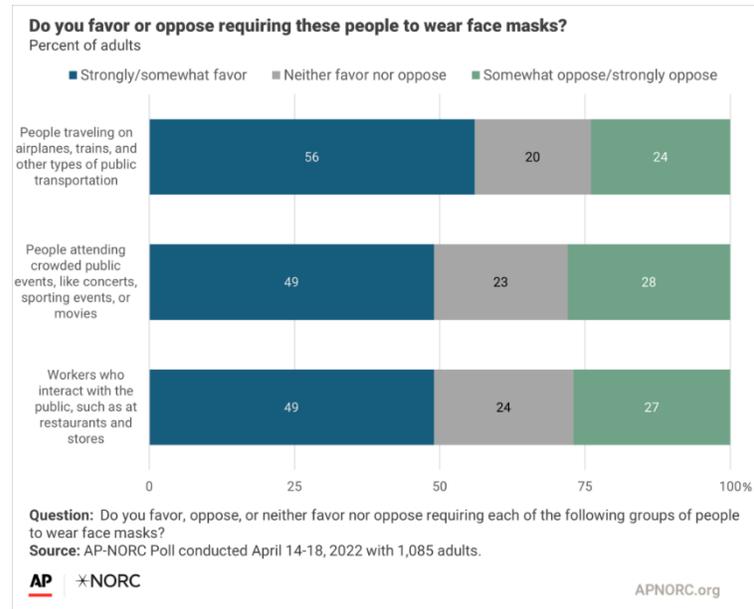
A third of employees favor requiring masks at their workplace, down from 52 percent in August. Compared with last summer, more select a neutral midpoint, up 13 points to 33 percent; and slightly more are opposed, up 6 points to 33 percent ([AP-NORC 4/14-4/18](#)).

K-12 Education

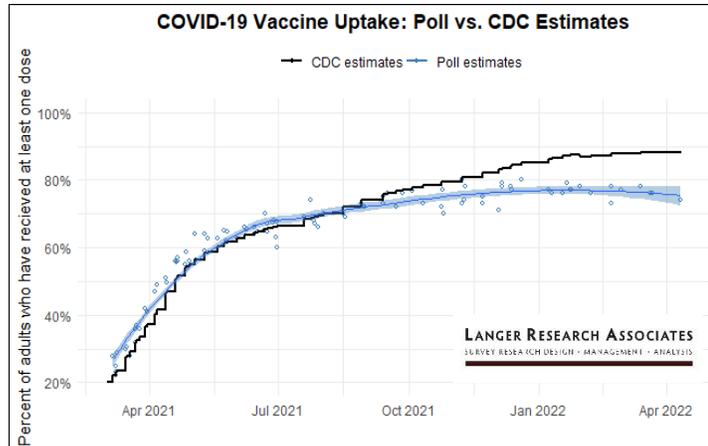
Among adults with children in their household enrolled in public or private school, 94 percent say their child received in-person instruction from a teacher at their school at some point in the past week. Fifteen percent report remote instruction, evenly divided between online instruction from a teacher in real time (8 percent) and asynchronous instruction through online or paper materials provided by the school (7 percent). ([U.S. Census Bureau 3/30-4/11](#))

Vaccines

Seventy-six percent of adults say they’ve received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine, largely unchanged since September ([AP-NORC 4/14-4/18](#)). Another survey, with historically [higher estimates](#), places uptake at 84 percent, also steady since September ([U.S. Census Bureau 3/30-4/11](#)). The CDC puts initial uptake among adults higher still, at [89 percent](#). The agency’s rate has been, on average, 11 points higher than in 17 probability-based surveys conducted this



year from five survey organizations, 77 vs. 88 percent (excluding Census HPS estimates and those weighted to the CDC rate). As noted [previously](#), the CDC figure started to diverge from polling estimates when boosters first became available; the agency says it's not always able to link doses, resulting in an overestimation of first doses.



Among the unvaccinated, 62 percent say they definitely will not get a shot and an additional 19 percent probably won't. Twelve percent are unsure, leaving 8 percent likely to get one. Among people who don't intend to get vaccinated, 52 percent say it's because they're concerned about possible side effects; nearly as many, 46 percent, don't trust coronavirus vaccines generally. Thirty-seven percent think they don't need a vaccine and 36 percent don't trust the government ([U.S. Census Bureau 3/30-4/11](#)).

Financial Impacts

The median household income of lower-income adults fell 3.0 percent from 2019 to 2020, compared with 2.1 percent among middle-income Americans and 0.5 percent among upper-income adults. This marks a departure from 2010 to 2019, when median household income of all income groups grew by 1.6 to 1.9 percent.

These shifts further consolidated income within upper-income households, extending longer-term trends. In 2020, upper-income households held 50 percent of aggregate U.S. household income, up from 46 percent in 2010. Conversely, the share of aggregate household income held by middle-income families fell 3 points, to 42 percent; and by 1 point among lower-income household, to 8 percent.

Three in 10 lower-income adults said they experienced unemployment at least some of the time in 2020, compared with 14 percent of middle-income Americans and 8 percent of those with higher incomes. Each was similar to the share who reported unemployment in 2010 amid the Great Recession.

About three-in-ten lower-income adults had an unemployment spell in 2020

% of adults who experienced unemployment at least some of the time during a calendar year



Note: The figures show the "work-experience unemployment rate," or the ratio of adults who experienced unemployment at least some of the time during a year to all adults who worked or looked for work in that year. Only adults who worked less than 50 weeks in a year and looked for work are included among the unemployed.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

"COVID-19 Pandemic Pinches Finances of America's Lower- and Middle-Income Families"

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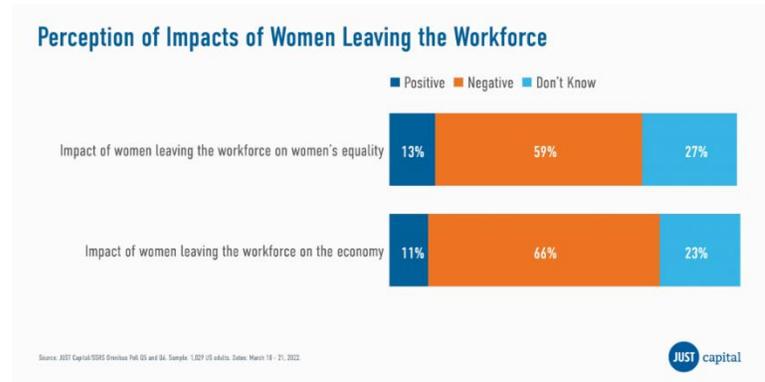
Fifteen percent of all U.S. households reported receiving unemployment insurance benefits in 2020, compared with 10 percent in Great Recession 2010. This ranged from 18 percent of middle-income families to 13 percent apiece among lower- and upper-income households ([Pew 4/20](#); [U.S. Census Bureau](#)).

Workforce Re-entry

The coronavirus recession resulted in [sharper job](#) losses among women than men, particularly among women without a college degree. In March, there were 872,000 fewer women in the labor force compared with pre-pandemic ([NWLC](#); [BLS](#)).

Asked the top three things that companies can do to help women re-enter the workforce, 55 percent cite equal wages by gender. Forty-seven percent say companies can improve childcare access and 39 percent apiece point to flexible working hours and providing a living wage.

Two-thirds think women leaving the workforce has a negative impact on the economy and 59 percent say the same for women's equality; just one in 10 sees positive impacts ([JUST Capital 3/18-3/21](#)).



Vaccine Coverage Among Kindergarteners

A new CDC analysis finds that fewer kindergarteners were reported to have been vaccinated with the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis) and chickenpox vaccines in the 2020-21 school year than the year before, with reported coverage falling 1 point below the nationwide target of 95 percent. The researchers suggest the decline is associated with pandemic-related factors such as lower school enrollment, missed pediatrician appointments and an easing of vaccination requirements for remote learners, but they also say the pandemic may have impacted the quality and quantity of vaccination data collected, so some of the decreases can be attributed to schools not reporting data to state immunization programs ([CDC 4/21](#)).

State Results

In North Carolina, 56 percent of registered voters support requiring public school teachers and staff in the state to be vaccinated. At the same time, fewer than half, 41 percent, support schoolwide mask mandates and 58 percent support not having mandatory quarantines for vaccinated children who are exposed to the virus but have no symptoms. Few, 10 percent, say the coronavirus is one of the top three problems facing the state; 54 percent cite inflation or rising costs ([Ipsos-Spectrum 3/31-4/12](#)).

International Results

In Canada, just 4 percent call the coronavirus their top issue of concern in an open-ended question, down from about a third in January to the fewest since the onset of the pandemic ([Nanos 4/15](#)).

In Chile, 29 percent are worried about the possibility of catching the coronavirus, essentially unchanged from last week's pandemic low. It was as high as six in 10 at the height of the Omicron surge and three-quarters in the initial months of the pandemic ([Cadem 4/12-4/14](#)).

In South Korea, 78 percent say they're avoiding in-person events and gatherings because of the coronavirus, compared with more than nine in 10 in April and July 2020. Fewer are currently avoiding markets and department stores (55 percent), outdoor activities such as outings in parks (48 percent), public transit (40 percent) and hospitals and public health centers (39 percent), each down 35 to 52 points compared with their highs in April 2020.

Sixty-nine percent of South Koreans think social distancing guidelines should be relaxed, while 27 percent think they should be maintained. Half think they'll be able to stop wearing masks by the end of this year and 23 percent into 2023, while 16 say they'll continue to wear masks indefinitely ([Gallup Korea 4/12-4/14](#)).

In a late March survey in Russia, 5 percent called the coronavirus one of the most memorable events of the month, particularly citing the easing of restrictions and falling case levels. It's far surpassed by the share who cite the "special military operation" in Ukraine, 75 percent ([Levada 3/24-3/30](#)).

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

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