



## COVID-19 Survey Summary: May 13, 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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Concerns about contracting the coronavirus remained low in mid- to late April, nearly two in three Americans viewed the pandemic situation in the United States as improving and protective measures were at pandemic lows, even as cases increased nationwide.

Despite new lows in mask use and social distancing, most people in one poll support mask requirements on public transit. New surveys also show broad support for benefits for those suffering from long COVID, measure expectations of pandemic impacts on long-term financial goals and find that few still fully remote workers intend to return to in-person work.

International results from Chile and Turkey are also included in this week's report.

### Concerns & Outlooks

New daily coronavirus cases have risen more than 50 percent in two weeks to average about [85,000](#) per day. Hospitalizations, a lagging indicator, have begun to rise, with 41 states [reporting increases](#) of coronavirus-related hospitalizations of 10 percent or more in the past week.

Concerns remained muted in data from last month. Seventeen percent were very or moderately worried about getting the coronavirus, the fewest in data since July 2021. Nearly two-thirds said the situation was improving, steady since February after rising from 19 percent in early January, during the Omicron surge. Just more than one in 10 said it was worsening ([Gallup 4/15-4/23](#)).

Few, 19 percent, see the coronavirus outbreak as a very big problem facing the country today, last on a list of 12 items and down from 58 percent in June 2020. An additional 38 percent think it's a moderately big problem ([Pew 4/25-5/1](#)).

### Precautionary Measures

A pandemic-high 53 percent reported that they made no attempts to distance socially from others in the previous day, compared with 17 percent who mostly or completely isolated from people outside their home. The shares who avoided large crowds (32 percent), public places (21 percent)

or small gatherings (15 percent) also fell to pandemic lows. Half wore a mask outside of the home in the previous week, down 18 points since February to the fewest in data since April 2020 ([Gallup 4/15-4/23](#)).

In another poll, three in 10 report having worn a mask all or most of the time when in stores or businesses in the previous month, down 31 points from January to a pandemic low.

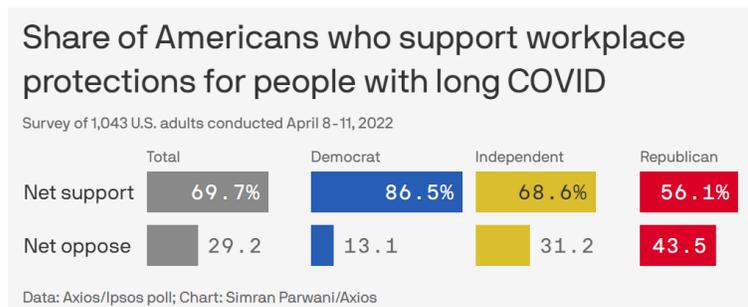
Even with declining mask use, 57 percent say masks should be required on airplanes and public transportation. In polls released [last week](#) and the [week before](#), fewer than half favored requiring masks on public transportation.

Mandates aside, seven in 10 say that moving forward they probably would wear a mask in public if they were sick with a cold or flu.

A third are bothered when stores and businesses require customers to wear a mask, ranging from 52 percent of Republicans to 16 percent of Democrats. Thirty-seven percent are bothered when people around them in public places don't wear masks – 52 percent of Democrats, 18 percent of Republicans ([Pew 5/2-5/8](#)).

### Long COVID

In March, the Government Accountability Office estimated that long COVID symptoms may be affecting [7.7 to 23 million Americans](#). The condition is associated with a wide range of symptoms; relatively little is known about its risk factors, causes and impacts ([CDC](#)).



Most Americans think long COVID should be treated as a disability under the law, with 67 percent supporting free medical services and care for people who suffer from the condition and 70 percent supporting workplace protections. Nine in 10 support requiring health insurance companies to cover treatment for people with long COVID ([Axios-Ipsos 4/8-4/11](#)).

(Under Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, long COVID can be considered a [disability](#) if it “substantially limits one or more major life activities.”)

### Employment

In mid-April, more than eight in 10 employed adults worked in person at least some of the time, including 72 percent fully in person and 13 percent in a hybrid arrangement. Twenty-eight percent of hybrid and in-person workers worked entirely remotely at some point during the pandemic.

Of those who worked fully remotely and then returned to in-person work at least some of the time, 45 percent said the amount of work they get done has improved, vs. 18 percent who said it's worsened. (Thirty-seven percent said it stayed the same.) More also said "the way things are going for you generally" improved rather than worsened, 39 vs. 23 percent, while 38 percent saw no change.

At the same time, 41 percent said their stress levels have gotten worse, vs. 22 percent better; and slightly more said their work-life balance has worsened, 37 vs. 31 percent. Again, substantial shares in either case, 37 and 33 percent, said these have stayed the same.

Twenty-four percent of in-person workers said being exposed to the coronavirus at work was a major source of stress; an additional four in 10 called this a minor source. White workers were less apt than those in other racial or ethnic groups to say potential exposure to the coronavirus was a major source of stress, 18 vs. 34 percent. Results correspond to a poll covered [last week](#), which found white workers far more apt than Black and Hispanic workers to feel very safe from the coronavirus at work.

Among the 16 percent of employed adults who worked entirely remotely in mid-April, four in five intended to continue doing so for the near future. Only 8 percent in this group intended to switch to in-person work at least one day a week ([AP-NORC 4/14-4/18](#)).

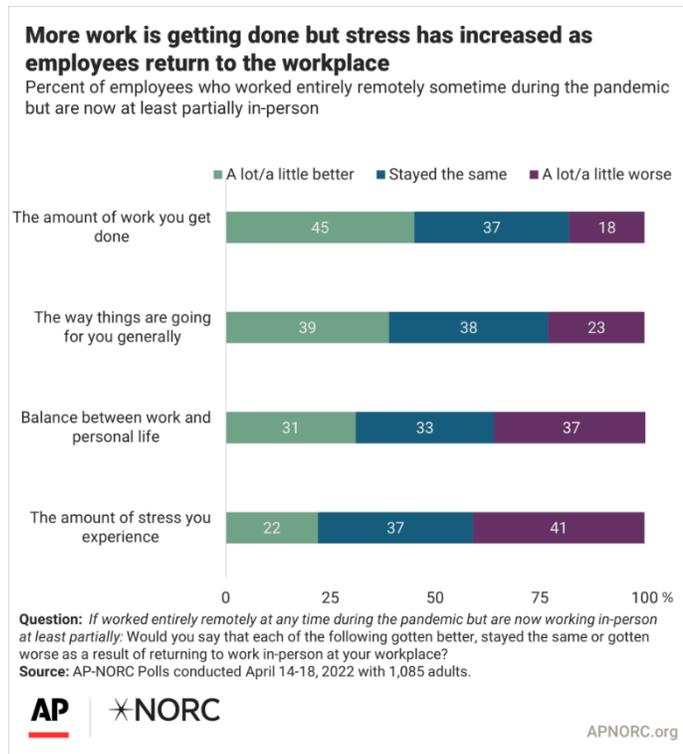
### Personal Finances

In a March study, 53 percent said the pandemic could have at least a medium negative impact on their ability to reach long-term financial goals such as home ownership or retirement, including 26 percent who saw the potential for a big negative impact. Thirty-seven percent said it could have a small impact or none at all, with the rest unsure ([Country Financial-Ipsos 3/18-3/20](#)).

### Gun Violence

The firearm homicide rate increased by 34.6 percent from 2019 to 2020, from 4.6 to 6.1 homicides per 100,000 people. Firearm suicides remained high but relatively steady. Groups with the highest underlying firearm homicide rates (young people, men and Black people) also experienced the largest yearly increases ([CDC 5/10](#)).

### International Results



In Chile, a quarter are concerned about contracting the coronavirus, down 8 points in a week to the fewest since early March 2020 ([Cadem 5/4-5/6](#)).

In Turkey, a quarter in early April blamed increased prices of products and services on the pandemic. More, six in 10, pointed to government economic policies ([Istanbul Economic Research 4/4-4/7](#)).

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

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