



## COVID-19 Survey Summary: October 22, 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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Eight in 10 Americans think normality is a year or more off, six in 10 feel disappointed by the pandemic situation, nearly half are emotionally exhausted and four in 10 say vaccinations and safety protocols have resulted in divisions with family and friends – all marking the pandemic’s emotional and social toll.

There are political impacts as well: The public now divides closely on how Joe Biden is handling the situation, with his approval rating on the issue down 13 points since late June.

Still, half say they’re hopeful, concerns about the pandemic continue to ease, more now than a month ago say the outbreak is under control, more are returning to in-person religious services and, in one new poll, other issues rival the coronavirus as the country’s most urgent problem.

Among other new studies this week, one analysis finds no evidence that cash lotteries tied to vaccinations increased vaccine uptake in the United States. Another finds the Pfizer vaccine 93 percent effective against hospitalization in 12- to 18-year-olds.

This week’s summary also includes international results from Brazil, Chile, the Netherlands, South Korea, Russia and Turkey, as well as a multinational study among adults 65 and older in 11 economically advanced countries.

### Vaccines

Seventy-nine percent of adults have received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine, per [CDC estimates](#), essentially unchanged in the last week. The pace of new vaccinations has returned to levels in June and early July after a rise amid the Delta surge.

Pandemic-related polls this week generally align. Eighty-three percent in one say they’ve gotten a shot, as do 78 percent in another, using jurisdiction-level vaccination data as a weighting adjustment ([U.S. Census Bureau 9/29-10/11](#), [CDC 9/26-10/2](#)).

Eleven percent say they definitely or probably will not get vaccinated, steady in recent months while down from 21 percent in mid-January. A similar 13 percent are unlikely to get vaccinated in another survey, unchanged since mid-August but down from 19 percent in mid-June ([U.S. Census Bureau 9/29-10/11](#), [CDC 9/26-10/2](#)).

Seven percent of adults have received a booster dose, including 16 percent of those 65 and older, per the [CDC](#). (The FDA [authorized](#) boosters for the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines Wednesday and Pfizer boosters Sept. 22.)

### Concerns & Outlooks

A still-elevated 67 percent express high levels of concern about the pandemic, but with cases falling that's down 7 percentage points in a month. The share saying it's not at all under control has dropped to 22 percent from 35 percent in mid-September. Three in 10 say it's completely or mostly under control, up from 23 percent; an additional 47 percent say it's somewhat under control ([Fox News 10/16-10/19](#)).

Eighty-one percent expect it will be about a year or longer before life returns to normal, including 26 percent who don't think it'll ever be the same ([Quinnipiac 10/15-10/18](#)). (The outlook was somewhat less glum in a survey [last week](#) that asked specifically about one's own behavior, but still nearly two-thirds expected normality to be at least six months off.)

Emotions vary. Sixty-two percent feel disappointed about the pandemic situation. Half are hopeful. Forty-six percent report being emotionally exhausted and roughly four in 10 apiece say they're worried or angry.

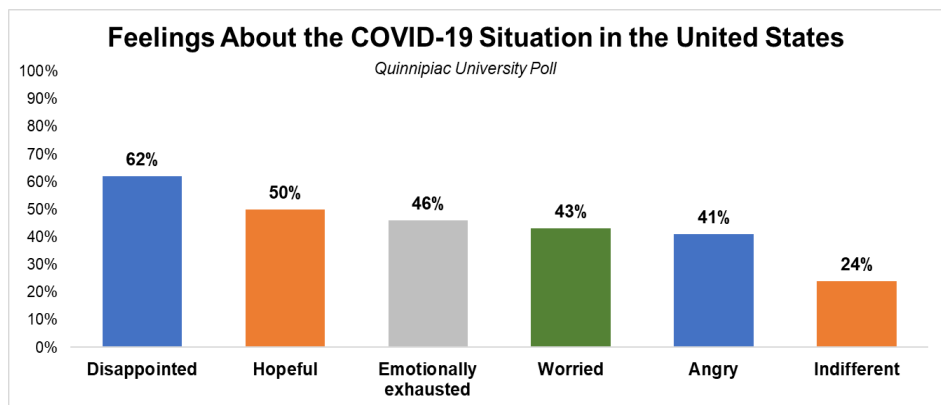
Democrats are most apt to be hopeful about the situation, 61 percent, vs. 45 percent of Republicans and independents alike.

Adults 65 and older are 13 to 17 points more likely to be hopeful than those in younger age groups. About half of white Americans are angry about the situation, compared with about three in 10 Black and

Hispanic adults. Women are more apt than men to say they're worried about the pandemic (50 vs. 35 percent) or emotionally exhausted by it (57 vs. 35 percent).

Forty-three percent say coronavirus issues such as vaccinations or safety protocols have caused divisions with their family and friends ([Quinnipiac 10/15-10/18](#)).

### Government Response



Hispanic adults. Women are more apt than men to say they're worried about the pandemic (50 vs. 35 percent) or emotionally exhausted by it (57 vs. 35 percent).

Forty-three percent say coronavirus issues such as vaccinations or safety protocols have caused divisions with their family and friends ([Quinnipiac 10/15-10/18](#)).

### Government Response

A new low of 51 percent approve of Biden's handling of the pandemic; 46 percent disapprove, up 12 points from late June ([Fox News 10/16-10/19](#)). Another poll also finds Americans divided on Biden's performance, 46-44 percent, approve-disapprove ([Grinnell College 10/13-10/17](#)). These results are similar to a poll covered [two weeks ago](#).

Sixteen percent call the coronavirus the most urgent issue facing the country; 19 percent say it's the economy, 14 percent immigration, with others following ([Quinnipiac 10/15-10/18](#)).

Fifty-four percent continue to support the federal government's vaccination/testing requirement for workers at larger businesses, essentially unchanged the past month ([Fox News 10/16-10/19](#)).

Eight in 10 favor the federal government permanently implementing a part of the COVID-19 relief package that gave additional financial help to low- and moderate-income Americans who buy their own health insurance coverage ([KFF 9/23-10/4](#)).

### Mask Mandates

Roughly six in 10 in support government requirements to wear masks indoors in public places, consistent with [previous results](#). Results are essentially the same in a split-sample test in which one group was told the mandates were intended "to address the continuing spread of COVID" and the other group was told "some people have a higher-than-average risk of infection from COVID, such as those with poor immune systems or children too young to be vaccinated" and the mandates were "to protect vulnerable people" ([Grinnell College 10/13-10/17](#)).

### Pandemic & Work

Forty-one percent of adults say the pandemic has made them or people they know more likely to look for a new job, peaking at 63 percent among 18- to 34-year-olds ([Quinnipiac 10/15-10/18](#)). As noted [last week](#), job openings held near a record high in August and the number of Americans who quit their jobs as a percentage of total employment reached its highest in data since 2000.

### Religious Attendance

Twenty-six percent have attended religious services in person in the past month, compared with 17 percent in March and 13 percent in July 2020. Among adults who typically attend services at least once a month, 64 percent say they've recently gone in person, up from 42 percent in March and 33 percent in summer 2020.

The rise in in-person attendance corresponds with a decline in the share who've watched religious services online or on TV. Twenty-eight percent of adults overall say they've done so in the past month, down from 36 percent in July 2020. Among those who attend services, it's fallen from 72 to 55 percent.

Eighty-eight percent of congregants say the house of worship they attend is open for in-person services, compared with 61 percent in July 2020. Twenty-nine percent say their place of worship

is holding services in the same way as before the pandemic, up from 6 percent in July 2020; 59 percent say it's open but with restrictions.

Eighty-two percent of those who attend services feel at least somewhat confident they can do so in person without spreading or catching the virus, up slightly from 76 percent in March. Forty-five percent are very confident, unchanged ([Pew 9/20-9/26](#)).

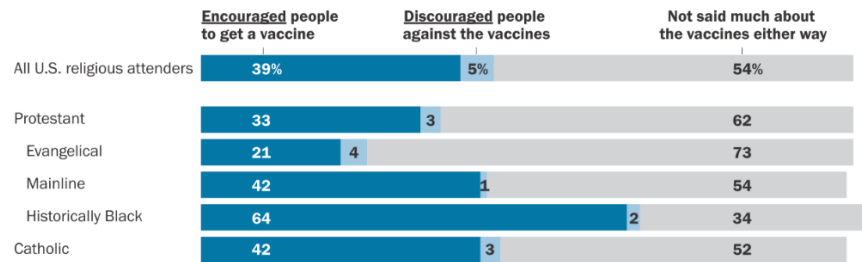
### Clergy and vaccines

Among people who typically attend services at least monthly or who have attended in person in the past month, more than four in 10 say they've heard their religious leader speak about coronavirus vaccination – 39 percent to encourage it, 5 percent to discourage it.

Twenty-one percent of evangelical Protestants say they've been encouraged to get a vaccine. That rises to 42 percent among non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics alike and 64 percent among congregants of historically Black churches. Fewer than 5 percent across these denominations say they've been discouraged ([Pew 9/20-9/26](#)).

#### **Far more U.S. worshippers say their clergy have encouraged COVID-19 vaccines than discouraged them**

*Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % who say their clergy have ...*



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 20-26, 2021, among U.S. adults.

\*Most Americans Who Go to Religious Services Say They Would Trust Their Clergy's Advice on COVID-19 Vaccines\*

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A newly released analysis of an August survey finds that encouragement in historically Black Protestant churches may have impacted vaccine uptake. Among members of such churches who attend services at least monthly, 82 percent reported being vaccinated as of late August, compared with 60 percent of those who attend less frequently. There were no differences in uptake by frequency of attendance among people in other denominations ([Pew 8/23-8/29](#)).

Sixty-one percent of congregants have at least a fair amount of confidence in their religious leaders to provide vaccine guidance, about the same as confidence in public health officials such as those in the CDC. More, 84 percent, express confidence their primary care doctor. Half are confident in their local or state elected officials, 41 percent in the news media.

Among Catholics, 47 percent have confidence in Pope Francis to provide vaccine guidance, rising to 60 percent of those who attend mass at least monthly. The pope has [encouraged](#) all eligible people to get vaccinated.

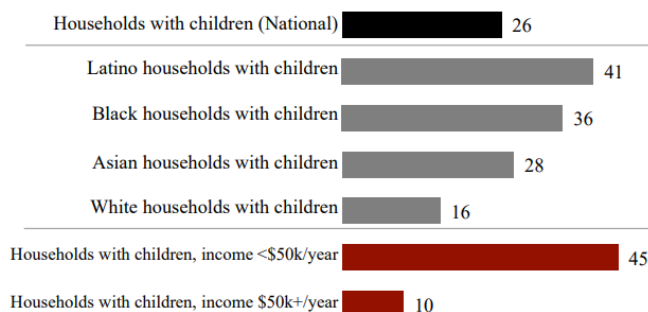
About half of Americans, 52 percent, don't think churches and religious organizations have had much effect on the U.S. COVID-19 response. The rest divide between saying they've done more harm than good (25 percent) or more good than harm (22 percent) ([Pew 9/20-9/26](#)).

## Financial Impacts in Households with Children

In newly released data collected from August to early September, 38 percent of adults with children in the household said they're in a worse financial situation now than before the pandemic. (It was 32 percent among adults nationally, as reported [last week](#).)

Half of adults with children said they don't have savings to fall back on, including 26 percent who lost savings during the pandemic. (By comparison, 19 percent of adults overall said they lost savings in the outbreak.) Forty-one percent of Latino people in households with children reported lost savings, as did 36 percent of Black people, compared with 28 percent of Asians and 16 percent of whites.

**Figure 2. U.S. Households with Children Who Lost Their Savings During the COVID-19 Outbreak and Have No Savings to Fall Back On (in Percent)**



NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Experiences of U.S. Households with Children During the Delta Variant Outbreak*, 8/2/21 – 9/7/21. N=1,013 U.S. adults ages 18+ living in households with children under 18. Respondent's racial/ethnic identity categorized as Latino, non-Hispanic Black, non-Hispanic Asian, and non-Hispanic white. Income defined as reported 2020 household income. *Lost savings during COVID-19 and have no current savings* includes responses to Q8/Q8a – No to Q8. *Currently, does your household have any savings to fall back on, or not? Yes to Q8a. And before the COVID-19 outbreak began, did your household have any savings to fall back on, or not?*

Overall, 36 percent of adults in households with children said they've had serious problems meeting work and family responsibilities in the past few months, rising to 40 percent of those with children 8 and younger. Among those with children younger than 4, 32 percent reported trouble finding daycare or preschool programs ([NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health 8/2-9/7](#)).

Another poll also finds greater financial insecurity in households with children. Thirty percent of adults who with children in the household say it's been somewhat or very difficult for them to pay for usual household expenses in the past seven days, compared with 22 percent of adults without children. Three in 10 of those with children at home also say they've experienced food insufficiency in the past week, compared with 23 percent of others. Two in 10 adults with children say someone in their household has experienced a loss of employment income in the past month, vs. 13 percent of those without children ([U.S. Census Bureau 9/29-10/11](#)).

## Vaccination Lotteries

A new analysis finds no evidence that large cash lotteries tied to COVID-19 vaccinations boosted vaccine uptake. Using data from the Johns Hopkins University Vaccine Tracker, the authors compared trends in vaccination rates from April 28 to July 1 in the 19 states that announced lotteries vs. those that did not. Controlling for covariates such as COVID-19 case counts and foot traffic in bars and restaurants, the authors found no association between lottery announcements and vaccine uptake. They theorize that incentives that result in certain payouts and other forms of vaccine messaging may be more effective than lotteries ([Dhaval et al., 2021](#)).

## Vaccine Efficacy Among Adolescents

A new CDC analysis assesses the effectiveness of the Pfizer vaccine against hospitalization in adolescents. In data from June 1 to Sept. 30 from 19 pediatric hospitals in 16 states, 97 percent of 12- to 18-year-olds hospitalized for COVID-19 were unvaccinated. Two doses of the vaccine were 93 percent effective against hospitalization. The authors stress that vaccinations are critical for preventing serious illness among adolescents ([CDC 6/1-9/30](#)).

### State Results

In Virginia, 11 percent of registered voters say the pandemic is the most important issue in their vote for governor, down 7 points since late September, trailing jobs and the economy (27 percent) and education and schools (21 percent). Former Gov. Terry McAuliffe has a slight edge over his opponent Glenn Youngkin in trust to handle the pandemic, 37 vs. 31 percent; that's narrowed from 41 vs. 28 percent three weeks ago ([Monmouth 10/16-10/19](#)).

In New Hampshire, 65 percent approve of Gov. Chris Sununu's handling of the coronavirus situation, up 5 points from its low in mid-September. About equal shares call the pandemic (20 percent) and jobs or the economy (19 percent) the most important issues facing the state, topping a list of concerns mentioned in an open-ended question ([University of New Hampshire 10/14-10/18](#)).

### International Results

In Chile, 96 percent of adults are vaccinated and 28 percent have gotten a booster shot. Two-thirds approve of the government's handling of the pandemic, just off its high two weeks ago. Thirty-seven percent are concerned about it, near its low last week ([Cadem 10/13-10/14](#)).

In South Korea, 54 percent approve of the government's response to the coronavirus, up 7 points from August but well below its high of 85 percent in May 2020. In an open-ended question, a quarter say the government has done well supplying vaccines, 16 percent imposing a quarantine and stopping the spread. The public divides on when life may return to normal ([Gallup South Korea 10/12-10/14](#)).

In Brazil, 90 percent say they have gotten vaccinated or plan to, a high. It's 9 points higher among those who disapprove of President Jair Bolsonaro vs. approvers, 92-83 percent. Seventy-seven percent approve of employers requiring employees to be vaccinated to return to in-person work ([PoderData 10/11-10/13](#)).

Eighty-five percent of Dutch adults are fully vaccinated, with 2 percent waiting for a second dose. Eighty-six percent say they have the vaccination app or paper ticket required for admission to most indoor public places or large events. Those who went to a restaurant or cafe, or a large event, report having their vaccine document checked 65 percent of the time. Checks were done most often at professional sports events and theaters and least often at amateur sports events. Sixty-four percent have had positive experiences with the approach, 8 percent negative, with the rest neutral. Eighty-four percent of unvaccinated people say the vaccine passport is unfairly discriminatory, compared with 18 percent of vaccinated adults. Vaccinated people are twice as



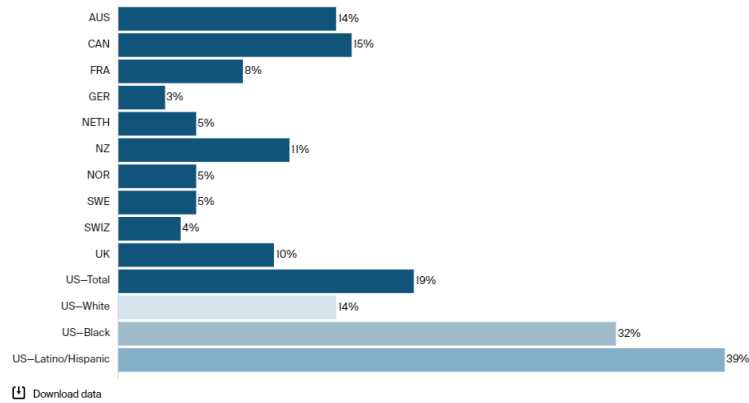
likely as the unvaccinated to say they'd get a test if they felt sick, 69 vs. 34 percent ([I&O Research 10/8-10/11](#)).

As Russia prepares to conduct its census, a third say it should be carried out as planned (at census points, at home, by phone and online), while 46 percent say it should be carried out only by phone and online. Thirteen percent are in favor of postponing the census ([FOM 10/8-10/10](#)).

In a multinational survey from March to June, 19 percent of Americans age 65 and older said they lost a source of income or used up all or most of their savings because of the pandemic, more than said so in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. There were sharp divisions by race/ethnicity in the United States, with 39 percent of Hispanic and 32 percent of Black older adults reporting economic difficulties, compared with 14 percent of white seniors.

Older adults in the U.S. were the most likely to experience economic difficulties related to the pandemic.

Percent of adults age 65+ who reported either using up all or most of their savings or losing job/source of income because of the coronavirus pandemic



Thirty-seven percent of U.S. seniors with multiple chronic conditions had a doctor appointment cancelled or postponed because of the pandemic, again more than in other developed countries, where this ranged from 11 to 32 percent ([Commonwealth 3/1-6/14](#)).

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

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