



## COVID-19 Survey Summary: February 12, 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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Reports of being vaccinated against the coronavirus continue to rise in the United States, but the net total for intended uptake has steadied at the lower end of target levels. Results by state, moreover, reveal a great deal of variability in vaccine uptake and intentions alike.

As these results suggest the need for greater and more targeted outreach, a newly released modeling study proposes pathways to achieve greater participation, including demonstrating the vaccine's safety and effectiveness and reinforcing both subjective and moral norms for vaccination – the sense that loved ones want you to get the shot, and that it's needed for community protection, not just a personal preference.

With cases declining across the country, survey results released this week also find a decline in the perceived risk of resuming pre-COVID activities, but with uncertainty about how to know when it's safe. Others find greater satisfaction with romantic relationships, rising economic vulnerability and a decline in trust in the media for coronavirus information.

### Vaccine Intentions

Polls this week continue to show vaccination intentions hovering at or near the low end of the estimated levels needed for herd immunity, with more saying they've already gotten inoculated but no consistent indications of recent broader growth in uptake intentions.

- In the most recent survey, half say they've gotten a shot (15 percent) or will get it as soon as it becomes available to them (35 percent), essentially unchanged from last week. Two in 10 plan to wait a few weeks or months; the net of 70 percent is similar to other results reported [last week](#). Of the rest, one in 10 plans to wait a year or more and 19 percent don't plan on getting vaccinated at all ([Axios/Ipsos 2/5-2/8](#)).
- In another study, 71 percent say they definitely or probably will get the vaccine, lean that way or already have done so. Among those who don't definitively rule out getting vaccinated, just half say they'll try to do so as soon as it's available to them. The rest plan to wait a few weeks (13 percent), a few months (16 percent) or longer (19 percent) ([COVID Collaborative 1/15-1/25](#)).

- An identical 71 percent say that if one of the FDA-approved vaccines were available right now at no cost they would agree to be vaccinated (62 percent) or that they have already received at least one dose (9 percent) ([Gallup 1/25-1/31](#)).
- A Census Bureau survey completed Feb. 1 has 13 percent saying they've received a COVID-19 vaccine, up from 8 percent in the first half of January. Of the rest, 55 percent say they definitely will do so once available, up from 51 percent ([U.S. Census Bureau 1/20-2/1](#)).
- In another poll, two-thirds say they'll definitely (35 percent) or probably (19 percent) get vaccinated or already have done so (13 percent) ([AP-NORC 1/28-2/1](#)). Similarly, two-thirds say they're "willing to get" a COVID-19 vaccine (59 percent) or have been vaccinated (7 percent); three in 10 say they are not ([Quinnipiac 1/28-2/1](#)).

### Change in Intentions

A CDC report comparing vaccine intentions in December vs. September found a 10-point increase in the share absolutely certain or very likely to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Among priority groups, intent to be vaccinated increased by 17 percentage points among seniors (from 49 to 66 percent), 9 points among essential workers (from 37 to 46 percent) and 5 points among non-senior adults with underlying medical conditions (from 37 to 42 percent).

The share who said they were not likely to get vaccinated dropped by 6 points, including an 11-point decline among seniors and a 10-point decline among adults age 50-64. Black people were more apt to say they were not likely to get vaccinated in both September (56 percent) and December (47 percent) compared with those in other racial and ethnic groups. Those without health insurance also were more likely than those with private or public health insurance to say they would not get vaccinated, 45 vs. 31 and 30 percent, respectively ([CDC 12/18-12/20](#)).

### Vaccine Hesitancy

Among those who are not willing to get vaccinated, most say it's mainly because of safety concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine in particular (65 percent) rather than concerns about vaccines in general (28 percent) ([Quinnipiac 1/28-2/1](#)).

When all those who have yet to be vaccinated (including those who plan to get vaccinated as well as those who don't) are asked to express their main concern in their own words, 36 percent mention side effects, 12 percent mention the vaccines' newness and a perceived lack of testing, one in 10 cites concerns about access and availability, 7 percent mention effectiveness and 5 percent mention safety ([KFF 1/14-1/18](#)).

Among all those who do not definitely plan to get the vaccine, or who have gotten one dose but don't intend to get a second, reasons include concerns about possible side effects (60 percent), plans to wait and see if it is safe (48 percent), general distrust of COVID-19 vaccines (38

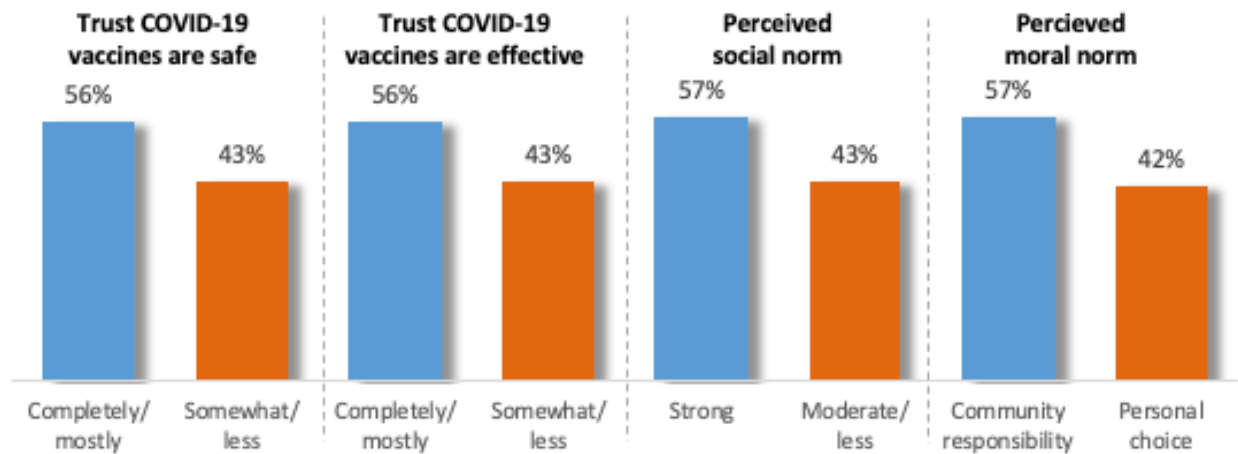
percent), perceptions that other people need it more (35 percent), doubts it will work (30 percent) and concerns about allergic reactions (29 percent) ([AP-NORC 1/28-2/1](#)).

When asked in another study to select their main reason for not agreeing to be vaccinated, a quarter cite concerns about the rushed timeline, 22 percent want to wait to confirm it is safe, 16 percent don't trust vaccines generally, 9 percent want to wait and see how effective it is and 28 percent mention another reason ([Gallup 1/25-1/31](#)).

### Predicting Intentions

Underscoring the importance of addressing these concerns, a new report using statistical modeling to identify independent predictors of vaccine intentions finds that the strongest predictor by far is perceiving the vaccines to be safe and effective. Additional predictors include people's belief that others close to them would like them to get vaccinated, the view that getting vaccinated is a social responsibility rather than just a personal preference and concerns about catching the coronavirus.

As of now, however, only middling majorities completely or mostly trust that the coronavirus vaccines are safe (56 percent) or effective (also 56 percent), and trust drops considerably among Black people, Republicans and independents, conservatives and moderates, and those without college degrees, compared with others.



Moreover, just 51 percent overall say they're likely to recommend to their friends and family that they get vaccinated; 4 percent say they're likely to recommend against vaccination while 45 percent say they won't make a suggestion either way. Somewhat more – 57 percent – think that all or most of the people close to them want them to get the vaccine. And while 57 percent view vaccination as a responsibility, a substantial minority – 42 percent – view it as an individual choice and don't feel community considerations should come into play.

The report suggests that shifting these views by stressing safety and effectiveness, the support of loved ones and community responsibility may be key to increasing vaccine uptake ([COVID](#)

[Collaborative 1/15-1/25](#)).

### Contact and Concern

Eight in 10 Americans personally know someone in the United States who has tested positive for the coronavirus, 43 percent have been tested and 34 percent know someone who has died; all are essentially unchanged since last week. Three-quarters now say they know someone who has received the COVID-19 vaccine, up from roughly two-thirds a week ago.

Eight in 10 are at least somewhat concerned about the COVID-19 outbreak and three-quarters are as concerned about the possibility of getting sick, unchanged in recent weeks ([Axios/Ipsos 2/5-2/8](#)). More than seven in 10 are at least somewhat concerned that new strains of COVID-19 will make the pandemic in the United States worse ([Quinnipiac 1/28-2/1](#)).

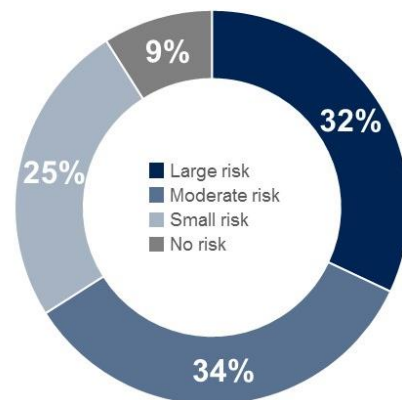
### Daily Life

After holding stable at about three in 10 in December and January, 36 percent now say they've gone out to eat in the past week. Other activities have held relatively steady – 37 percent have visited friends or relatives, essentially unchanged, and eight in 10 continue to say they've stayed at home and avoided others as much as possible, steady since late November.

However, perceptions of the risk of engaging in a variety of activities have declined:

- Thirty-two percent think it'd be a large risk to return to their normal pre-coronavirus life right now, down 7 points from last week to the fewest since mid-September.
- Forty-eight percent see traveling on an airplane or mass transit as a large risk, down from 56 percent in mid-December.
- Thirty-six percent view attending in-person gatherings of friends and family outside their household as a large risk, down from a recent peak of 43 percent in early December and January.
- Twenty-nine percent say dining in at a restaurant is a large risk, down from 40 percent in early December.
- About a third view using taxis or ride shares (34 percent) and taking a vacation (33 percent) as large risks, down from 40 and 44 percent in May, when these questions last were asked.

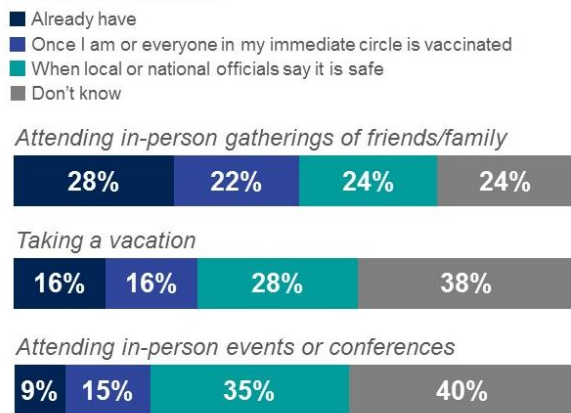
**How much of a risk to your health and well-being do you think returning to your normal pre-coronavirus life is right now?**



- In a new question, just 11 percent say outdoor winter sports such as skiing, sledding or skating are a big risk. Twenty-two percent view them as moderately risky, 43 percent see a small risk and a quarter see no risk at all.

However, when asked how soon they anticipate returning to something like normal pre-COVID activities, there's division and uncertainty. For example, when it comes to resuming normal levels of attendance at in-person gatherings of friends and family outside their household, 28 percent say they already have, 22 percent plan to wait until they or their inner circle have been vaccinated, a quarter say they'll wait until local or national officials say it's safe and a quarter are unsure.

**When do you anticipate returning to something like normal, pre-COVID levels of activity for the following?**



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More (35 percent) say they've already returned to normal levels of dining in at a restaurant, but again, the rest are divided as to what cues they will use first – 14 percent say they'll wait until they or their immediate circle are vaccinated, a quarter will wait for a sign from local or national officials and 23 percent don't know.

Even more are unsure what metric they'll use before they return to normal pre-COVID levels for using taxis or rideshares (54 percent), traveling on airplanes or mass transit (44 percent) attending in-person events or conferences (40 percent) or taking a vacation (38 percent) ([Axios/Ipsos 2/5-2/8](#)).

**Relationships During the Pandemic**

Americans with a romantic partner are expressing greater relationship satisfaction as the pandemic continues:

- Seven in 10 say they're extremely satisfied with their relationship. That compares with 59 percent in May, when the pandemic was still relatively new, and a similar 57 or 58 percent before the pandemic, in January 2017 and December 2014.
- Two-thirds say their partner is extremely important to their own overall happiness, up from 56 percent in 2014, the last time the question was asked.
- Since May, top-level satisfaction is up among married adults (+9 points to 73 percent) and those who are in an unmarried relationship (+15 to 62 percent) and among men (+14 to 73 percent) and women (+8 to 67 percent) alike.

- Extreme satisfaction jumped among those age 18-34 (+13 to 69 percent) and 35-54 (+16 to 74 percent) while holding essentially steady among those 55 and older (+2 to 66 percent).

Despite the increase in reported satisfaction, 68 percent of Americans with a romantic partner say their relationship has not changed since the outbreak started. Twenty-one percent say it's improved and 9 percent say it's worsened.

When it comes to Valentine's Day plans, more couples are staying home than in the past. Thirty-nine percent don't plan to mark the day, 38 percent plan to do something special at home and one in five says they will go out to dinner or some other event. In a similar question in 2014, twice as many, 42 percent, said they usually go out for Valentine's Day; just 13 percent said they usually stay in ([Monmouth 1/21-1/24](#)).

### Economic Impacts

Fifty-eight percent of Americans say the pandemic has caused financial struggles for them or someone in their immediate family. Just a quarter describe the national economy as excellent or good, down from 43 percent (among registered voters) in mid-December. Fifty-nine percent say it would be at least somewhat difficult for them to pay an unexpected \$1,000 bill, up from 49 percent in the same time period ([Quinnipiac 1/28-2/1](#)).

### Masks

Three-quarters say they wear a mask at all times when they go out in public and social distancing cannot be maintained. A quarter say they're wearing masks more often than they did a few months ago; two-thirds say they're mask use is about the same and just 7 percent say they're wearing masks less frequently.

Among those who say they're wearing a mask more, three in 10 say President Biden's urging for Americans to wear a mask is a major reason why, 11 percent say it's a minor reason and 58 percent say it is not a reason at all ([Quinnipiac 1/28-2/1](#)).

### Impact on Medicare Beneficiaries

Newly released results from a fall survey of Medicare beneficiaries reveals attitudes toward the coronavirus and its impact on this higher-risk population:

- Overall, nearly six in 10 said they would definitely (34 percent) or probably (24 percent) get vaccinated if a vaccine were available. Men, white beneficiaries, those with higher incomes and non-smokers were more apt than others to say they definitely would get vaccinated.
- Nearly all (96 percent) agreed that it is important for everyone to take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, even if they're not high risk, and eight in 10 apiece agreed that COVID-19 is more deadly and more contagious than the flu.



- Eight percent of beneficiaries reported needing health care for something other than COVID-19 since July 1 but not getting it because of the pandemic. Regular check-ups (36 percent), treatment for an ongoing condition (32 percent), dental care (32 percent) and diagnostics or medical screening (29 percent) were the most common types of foregone care.
- Among beneficiaries who have a usual health care provider, 64 percent reported that their provider currently offers telephone or video appointments.
- Four in 10 said they'd felt more stressed or anxious since July 1, 38 percent felt less socially connected to family and friends, two in 10 felt more lonely or sad and 15 percent felt less financially secure ([MCBS 10/5-11/15](#)).

### Moving During the Pandemic

Newly released results from a November poll find that financial pressure became a bigger factor in motivating people to change their residence as the pandemic wore on. Among those who reported moving because of COVID-19, a third in November said they did so for financial reasons, compared with 18 percent in June. The share who said they moved to reduce their risk of COVID-19 declined by half in the same period, from 28 to 14 percent.

Destinations also changed. Fewer of those who moved because of the pandemic said they moved in with a family member than said so in June, 42 vs. 61 percent. Instead, 30 percent said they bought or rented a new home, compared with 16 percent in a slightly different question in June.

Overall, 5 percent said they moved either permanently or temporarily because of the outbreak, up slightly from 3 percent in June. Young adults (11 percent), those in lower-income households (9 percent), Hispanic (9 percent) and Black (7 percent) adults were the most apt to report moving because of the outbreak.

Of those who moved, most have not moved back: Seven in 10 said they reside in a different home than where they lived before ([Pew 11/18-11/29](#)).

### Trust in Media

Trust in the news media to provide accurate information about the coronavirus has declined since early spring:

- Fifty-one percent have a great deal or fair amount of trust in local news outlets to provide accurate information on COVID-19, down from 66 percent in early April when the question last was asked.
- Forty-seven percent have as much trust in network TV news to provide accurate information on the virus, down from 55 percent in the same time period.

- Thirty-eight percent have at least a fair amount of trust in cable news, down from 50 percent.
- Thirty-six percent trust digital or online news companies, down 10 points since April.

Trust in friends and family also has declined. Fifty-eight percent now trust them as an information source on COVID-19, down from 65 percent in early April ([Axios/Ipsos 2/5-2/8](#)).

### Government Response

Two-thirds of Americans approve of the way President Biden is handling the response to the coronavirus, essentially unchanged since his first week in office.

Forty-nine percent think Biden should work to pass the \$1.9 trillion coronavirus aid package with just the support of Democrats in Congress, while four in 10 think he should work to pass a smaller package with the support of some Republicans in Congress. One in 10 doesn't support an aid package at all ([ABC/Ipsos 2/5-2/6](#)).

Fifty-seven percent think Biden will be able to fulfill his pledge that there will be enough vaccines for 300 million Americans by the end of summer. Two-thirds are at least somewhat confident in the federal government's ability to oversee the distribution of vaccines ([Quinnipiac 1/28-2/1](#)) and a similar share think the distribution process so far has been fair ([ABC/Ipsos 2/5-2/6](#)).

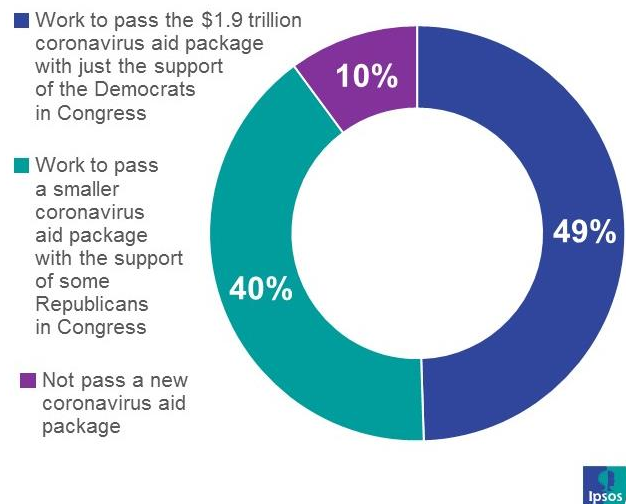
At the same time, 78 percent express at least some concern over the government's handling of the rollout, essentially unchanged since early January ([Axios/Ipsos 2/5-2/8](#)), and two-thirds are dissatisfied with the way the process is going ([Gallup 1/25-1/31](#)).

### State Results

Statewide estimates from the Census Bureau's [Household Pulse Survey](#) continue to show a great deal of variability in vaccine uptake and intentions:

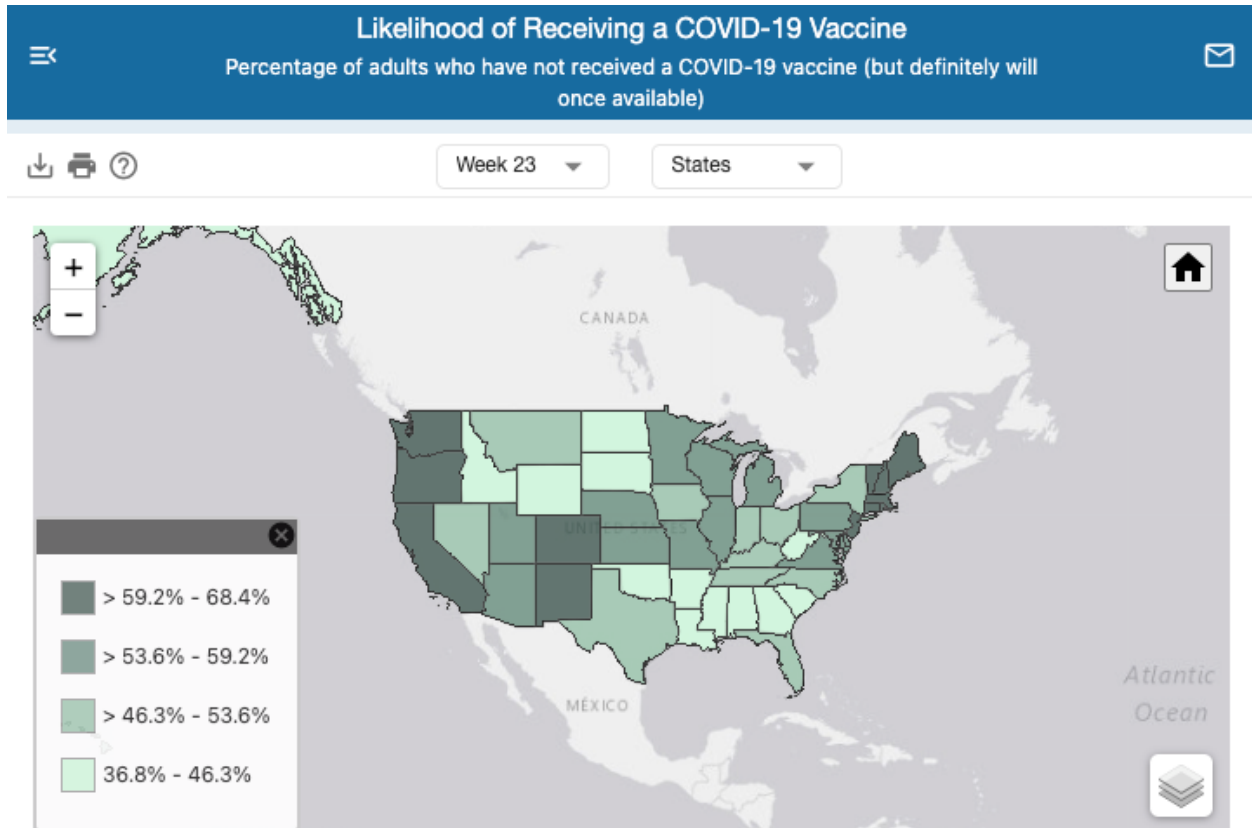
- Vaccination uptake is highest in Alaska and Hawaii at 23 percent apiece, with 10-point increases in both states since early January.
- Roughly two in 10 in New Mexico (20 percent), South Dakota (19 percent), Mississippi and West Virginia (18 percent apiece) also say they've been vaccinated.

**Thinking about a new coronavirus aid package, do you think Joe Biden should...?**





- At the other end of the spectrum, just about one in 10 in Alabama (9 percent), Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kansas, Georgia, California, Montana and Tennessee (all 11 percent) say they have been vaccinated.
- The share who definitely plan to get vaccinated (among those not yet having done so) peaks at about two-thirds in Washington, D.C. (68 percent), Massachusetts (68 percent), Washington state (66 percent) and New Jersey (65 percent). It remains lowest in Mississippi (37 percent), Wyoming and Louisiana (both 41 percent) ([U.S. Census Bureau 1/20-2/1](#)).



### International Results

In Chile, 53 percent say they’ll get a COVID-19 vaccination when it’s available, 27 percent say they will do so later and two in 10 do not plan to get vaccinated, largely unchanged since last week. However, the share who plan to get a shot once it’s available has grown steadily from 36 percent in mid-December. Nearly all (96 percent) are aware of the vaccine plan promoted by the government; 72 percent evaluate it positively. Forty-one percent approve of the government’s management of COVID-19 overall, up 6 points in the past week ([Cadem 2/3-2/5](#)).

In Canada, nine in 10 support the government introducing mandatory coronavirus testing for any traveler returning to the country and 72 percent support the government suspending all flights to “sunny destinations” during the pandemic. Nearly two-thirds support (20 percent) or somewhat

support (45 percent) a government bailout package to help airlines survive the pandemic. Average ratings of provincial governments are more positive than ratings of the federal government's performance in the rollout so far (5.5 vs. 4.7 on a 0-10 scale) ([Nanos/Globe and Mail 1/31-2/4](#))

Seven in 10 oppose allowing Canadians to travel to another province to try to get vaccinated earlier than they would in their own community. Six in 10 are at least somewhat supportive of the federal government paying a premium to pharmaceutical companies to get more and quicker access to vaccines, while roughly half are as supportive of the government "using the powerful Emergencies Act to take over the vaccine rollout from the provinces and set overall COVID-19 lockdown restrictions across Canada." Half believe or somewhat believe Prime Minister Trudeau when he says all Canadians who want to be will be vaccinated by September ([Nanos/CTV 1/31-2/4](#)).

In Brazil, intention to get vaccinated has dropped to 71 percent from 78 percent two weeks ago, while the share who say they will not get vaccinated has grown from 11 to 21 percent. Six in 10 think it's unfair that private clinics can offer vaccines to anyone who wants to pay for them. There's a more even split on whether it is fair or unfair that private companies can buy vaccines to immunize their employees, 47-44 percent. Twenty-seven percent say the governor of São Paulo, João Doria, is primarily responsible for the arrival of vaccines in the country; a quarter credit the ministry of health, 22 mention President Bolsonaro and one in 10 says doctors and scientists are the reason.

Seven in 10 support adopting new social distancing measures to contain the spread of the virus, unchanged since December. Fifty-eight percent oppose resuming in-person classes, fewer than the 76 percent who opposed reopening schools in a similar question in August. Fifty-eight percent say they failed to pay a bill in the last month because of the pandemic, up from 51 percent two weeks ago; 63 percent say their jobs or income have suffered, up from 57 percent. Fifty-six percent have had COVID-19 or know someone who's had it ([PoderData 2/1-2/3](#)).

In Germany, six in 10 say they definitely want to be vaccinated. Two-thirds describe the speed of local vaccinations as too slow, up from 52 percent in early January. Roughly three-quarters are concerned that child development will be impaired because of limited childcare and schooling (77 percent) and that the economic situation in Germany has worsened (73 percent). Fifty-six percent are concerned about the spread of new coronavirus variants and 44 percent are concerned that they or their relatives could be infected. All told, half feel current restrictions are appropriate, essentially unchanged since January; 22 percent think they go too far, up 5 points, and a quarter don't think they go far enough, down 6 points ([ARD-Infratest Dimap 2/1-2/2](#)).

In Ukraine, three-quarters view the coronavirus as a serious danger to the population, up from 68 percent this fall and 49 percent last the summer. Just one in 10 thinks the danger of COVID-19 is exaggerated, down sharply from 44 percent in the summer. Forty-three percent think the domestic health care system generally is failing to cope with the pandemic; 26 percent think it is generally coping and 31 percent give a mixed report. Two-thirds mistrust official statistics on the number of infections, up from 58 percent in September; 39 percent suspect an undercount, 28

percent an overcount. A third say they or a loved one has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Of them, 76 percent say the infected person was treated at home ([R&B Group 1/20-2/1](#)).

In Great Britain, 16 percent say they have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, up from 12 percent last week. Roughly nine in 10 of those who have yet to be offered the vaccine say they're likely to get it if offered, unchanged since last week. The share who report staying at home or only leaving for work, exercise, essential shopping or medical needs in the past week declined to 57 percent, from 62 percent a week ago and 65 percent the week before that. Compared with early December, fewer feel life will return to normal in six months or less (-11 points to 17 percent) and more think it'll take more than a year (+11 points to 29 percent) ([Office for National Statistics 1/27-1/31](#)).

In Greece, a December poll found that the share who did not intend to get vaccinated decreased by 15 points from September, to 27 percent. Two-thirds said they definitely or probably would get vaccinated, with seniors, those with higher incomes and those with an underlying condition particularly likely to say so. However, even among those willing to get the vaccine, just a quarter said they would be among the first to get it; half said they'd like to discuss it more with doctors or relatives first. Among those hesitant, most cited concerns about safety or side effects.

Six in 10 said the country is heading in the right direction on the issue of the pandemic and 39 percent thought the worst of the pandemic was over, up from 19 percent in September. However, 47 percent still thought the worst was yet to come and 68 percent said it'll be at least the middle of 2021 before things return to normal in the country ([Metron Analysis 12/1-12/10](#)).

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

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