

Two Years with the Pandemic:

Support for the Restrictions goes down as Doubts about the Effectiveness of Vaccines are Growing

Two years after the first cases of Covid people seem to get more accustomed to living with a pandemic. Global public opinion however seems now more critical towards the idea of sacrificing human rights (down by 10 percentage points) although willingness to sacrifice rights against the virus still prevails. The shadow of doubt in the effectiveness of the main tool to fight the disease – the vaccines – is increasing as half of the surveyed around the world are not sure if vaccines actually work. The perceptions on Covid as a threat are rather preserved in recent years.

These are some of the highlights of the new global research on attitudes towards the COVID-19 virus, conducted by Gallup international Association at the end of 2021. The survey includes 45 countries around the world and about 42 000 adult citizens. Throughout the pandemic Gallup International Association (GIA) tracked changing attitudes towards the pandemic. The results, presented below, are coming from the last wave of global research. More information for the previous waves of polling regarding the Coronavirus is available on our website: www.gallup-international.com.

Degrees of Doubt in Vaccine Effectiveness

Opinion appears to be divided on the effectiveness of the vaccines - half of those surveyed around the world have doubts whether they are really effective while 43% have no doubts.

Uncertainty towards the vaccines is most prominent in Africa (64% of the surveyed there agree or strongly agree with the statement that they have doubts that vaccines against Covid are actually effective), the Middle East, India, Asia and Russia.

The least doubtful on the vaccine's effectiveness are people in Australia (78% express no doubt on the actual effectiveness of the vaccines against coronavirus), EU (53%) and USA (51%).

This significant voice of doubt in the COVID vaccine has the potential to disrupt routine vaccine take up.

Country-wise people in Albania (86%), Ghana (73%), Philippines (68%), Kenya and Palestine (67%) and Pakistan (66%) express most doubt in the vaccines against Covid. People in Australia (78%), Spain (67%), UK (63%), Italy (61%) and Austria (58%) are most certain in vaccination effectiveness.

How Serious is the Threat?

Two years after the outbreak of the pandemic 44% around the world believe that the threat from the coronavirus is exaggerated. Near a half (49%) disagree with the statement.

Despite some countries speaking of 'living with COVID' and 'the end of restrictions' these views on the threat remain largely unchanged from two years ago.

Now the perception that the threat is exaggerated is most prominent in India (65%), the Middle East (61%), West Asia (55%), Africa (53%) and European countries outside of EU (50%).

Australia (78% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement "I believe the threat from the Coronavirus is exaggerated"), Latin America (62%), European Union (61%), East Asia (53%) and Russia (52%) are among big nations and regions that most strongly disagree that the threat is exaggerated.

At the national level people in Philippines (69% agree or strongly agree that the threat is exaggerated), Nigeria (67%), Palestine (66%), India and Moldova (65%) and Pakistan (63%) are most likely to believe the threat is exaggerated. On the other side of the scale most anxious are the attitudes in Vietnam (79% disagree or strongly disagree), Australia and Mexico (78%), Albania (77%), Spain (74%) and Japan (72%).

Rights during the Pandemic

People seem less willing to sacrifice their human rights in order to prevent the spread of the virus two years after the pandemic started, although willingness still prevails. Now 60% around the world declare that they are willing or even strongly willing to sacrifice some of their human rights if it would prevent the spreading of the disease. 31% disagree or strongly disagree. The rest hesitate in answering. A year ago, 70% of respondents worldwide stated that they are ready to give up some of their rights in the fight against Covid. A fourth opposed the idea of sacrificing their rights.

Citizens in India (80% agree or strongly agree with the statement) Australia (75%), the Middle East (75%), Africa (65%), and Asia (62% in the western part of the continent and 61% in the eastern one) are most willing to give up some of their human rights in order to prevent the spread of the virus. Most opposing the idea of sacrificing human rights are people in Latin America (40% disagree or strongly disagree), EU (35%) and USA (35%).

On a nation level Vietnam (93% agree or strongly agree), Iraq (84%), Pakistan (81%), India (80%) and Philippines (77%) are most prone to sacrifice some of their human rights in the fight against the spread of the virus. Most unwilling to give human rights up are people in Albania (66% disagree or strongly disagree), Japan (58%), Mexico (54%), Poland (48%) and Kazakhstan (45%).

Kancho Stoychev, president of GIA:

"Living with the virus is accepted as the new normal by the vast majority of the people across all continents, but support for the restrictions is declining almost everywhere. The overwhelming approval of governments, registered in the world two years ago at the beginning of the pandemic, is steadily evaporating. Vaccines are no longer perceived as the

magical salvation miracle for a majority of the global citizens and serious disappointment in that respect is registered in the developed countries where vaccination levels are high.

The pandemic crisis is not over, but the way it has been addressed so far is losing support and there are clear signs that “more of the same” is not going to work.”

Methodology:

These poll results are part of the Gallup International End of Year Survey (EoY). EoY is an annual tradition initiated by and designed under the chairmanship of Dr. George Gallup in 1977. The survey has been conducted every year since then. This year it was carried out in 45 countries around the world.

Regional coverage:

- EU Total + Switzerland – combines EU West and EU East and Switzerland
- EU West + Switzerland – Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK and Switzerland
- EU East – Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania
- Non-EU Europe – Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine
- Latin America – Argentina, Columbia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru
- Middle East – Iraq, Jordan, Palestine
- East Asia – Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Vietnam
- West Asia – Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Turkey
- Africa – Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya
- USA, India, Russia and Australia are not included in any other regional category

Sample Size and Mode of Field Work:

About 42 000 persons were interviewed globally. In each country a representative sample of around 1,000 men and women was interviewed during October-December 2021 using face to face, telephone or online methods.

The margin of error for each country's survey is +3-5% at the 95% confidence level.

Due to political, religious and sociocultural considerations, in rare cases certain questions or statements are not asked in each country.



About Gallup International

Gallup International Association (GIA) is the leading global independent association in market research and polling.

For 75 years Gallup International members have demonstrated their expert ability to conduct multi-country surveys on a comparable basis and deliver the highest quality. Our more than 100 members and partners are carefully selected by the Association Board and are leading national institutes with a profound local knowledge of research methods and techniques, statistical sources, and the customs and culture factors affecting research. With only one member agency per country, members work together on a daily basis to share knowledge, new research techniques and tools, as well as to provide the most appropriate solutions to international research projects and provide world-class service our clients.

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