

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and vaccine hesitancy, Great Britain: 28 April to 23 May 2021

Hesitancy towards the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine, based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 28 April to 23 May 2021.

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1 . Main points

In the latest period, 28 April to 23 May 2021, based on adults in Great Britain, we found:

- More than 9 in 10 (94%) adults reported positive sentiment towards a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine, while 6% report vaccine hesitancy; this is a similar finding to the previous period (93% and 7% respectively in the period 31 March to 25 April 2021), and a trend observed across most population groups.
- Around 1 in 8 (13%) of those aged 16 to 29 years reported vaccine hesitancy, the highest of all age groups; this has not changed from the previous period.
- Black or Black British adults had the highest rates of vaccine hesitancy compared with all ethnic groups, at 21% in this period compared with 30% in the previous period; this decrease was not [statistically significant](#).
- Around 1 in 10 adults identifying Muslim (11%) or Other (11%) as their religion¹ reported vaccine hesitancy; this was higher compared with adults who identify as Christian (5%) or as Hindu (2%), however, there was no [statistically significant](#) difference when compared with any of the remaining religious groups.
- In London, 8% of adults reported vaccine hesitancy – a higher percentage than most other regions in England; this compared with 12% in the previous period, however this decrease wasn't [statistically significant](#).
- Adults living in the most deprived areas of England (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation) were more likely to report vaccine hesitancy (10%) than adults living in the least deprived area (3%); this is similar to findings in the previous period (12% and 4% respectively).

Among those with negative vaccine sentiment, there were differences in the reasons for vaccine refusal reported across various population groups, some of which are:

- Around 1 in 3 (31%) women selected reasons relating to fertility.
- Clinically extremely vulnerable (44%) and disabled adults (27%) were most likely to be worried about the effect on an existing health condition, compared with 11% of all adults.
- Those living in the least deprived areas of England (27%) were more likely to say that coronavirus was not a personal risk than those living in the most deprived areas (8%).

The estimates are from a sample of adults and may differ from the latest official data on the [number of adults who have received the COVID-19 vaccination](#). It does not include adults living in care homes or other establishments.

Notes for: Main points

1. Other here refers to people who identify their religion as: No Religion, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim or Sikh. For more information please see the [GSS harmonised principle for Religion](#).

2 . Coronavirus and vaccine hesitancy data

[Coronavirus and vaccine hesitancy, Great Britain](#)

Dataset | Released 9 June 2021

Estimates of vaccine sentiment with breakdowns by different population groups. Analysis based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

3 . Measuring the data

Vaccine sentiment

"Vaccine hesitancy" refers to adults who:

- have been offered a vaccine and decided not to be vaccinated
- report being very or fairly unlikely to have a vaccine if offered
- responded "neither likely nor unlikely", "don't know" or "prefer not to say" to the question "if a vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19) was offered to you, how likely or unlikely would you be to have the vaccine?"

It should be noted that a small number of respondents reported "prefer not to say". This response is considered to represent those unsure about the vaccine.

"Positive sentiment" refers to adults who:

- have received a vaccine
- have been offered a vaccine and are waiting to be vaccinated
- report being very or fairly likely to have a vaccine if offered

When considering the reasons for not having the vaccine, the base population is adults reporting negative sentiment.

"Negative sentiment" refers to adults who:

- have been offered a vaccine and decided not to be vaccinated
- report being very or fairly unlikely to have a vaccine if offered

Our survey does not include adults living in care homes or other establishments so will not capture vaccinations in these settings. Owing to small sample sizes, the percentage of adults who have declined the vaccine should be treated with caution.

Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

This release contains data and indicators from a module being undertaken through the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on British society.

Where differences between groups are presented in this bulletin, associated [confidence intervals](#), which are included in the [accompanying datasets](#), indicate their significance.

The analysis presented in this bulletin (covering the period 28 April to 23 May 2021) is an update to analysis published on 8 March (covering the period 13 January to 7 February 2021), 1 April (covering period 17 February to 14 March 2021) and 6 May 2021 (covering the period 31 March to 25 April 2021). Comparisons with data from these previous periods should be made using estimates in the [accompanying datasets](#), which include confidence intervals to indicate whether the differences are significant.

Sampling and weighting

This analysis is based on pooled data, which comprise four waves of data collection covering the following periods: 28 April to 3 May, 5 to 9 May, 12 to 16 May and 19 to 23 May 2021, and included 15,173 adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain. Pooling four waves of data together increases sample sizes, allowing us to explore vaccine sentiment for different groups of the population.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population (based on May 2021 population estimates).

Further information on the survey design and quality can be found in the [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey QMI](#).

4 . Related links

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey, antibody and vaccination data for the UK: 9 June 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 9 June 2021

Antibody and vaccination data by UK country and regions in England from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey. This analysis has been produced in partnership with University of Oxford, University of Manchester, Public Health England, and Wellcome Trust. This study is jointly led by the ONS and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) working with the University of Oxford and UK Biocentre to collect and test samples.

[Coronavirus and vaccination rates in people aged 70 years and over by socio-demographic characteristic, England: 8 December 2020 to 9 May 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 June 2021

First and second dose COVID-19 vaccination rates among people aged 70 years and older who live in England, both in private households and communal establishments. Includes estimates by socio-demographic factor such as ethnic group, religious group, and those identified as disabled.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Released 28 May 2021

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 19 to 23 May 2021 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

[COVID-19 vaccine refusal, UK: February to March 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 May 2021

Exploring the attitudes of people who are uncertain about receiving, or unable or unwilling to receive a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine in the UK.

[Coronavirus and clinically extremely vulnerable people in England: 17 to 22 May 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 8 June 2021

Analysis of clinically extremely vulnerable people in England during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including their behaviours and mental and physical well-being.

[Coronavirus and vaccine attitudes and behaviours in England: over 80s population, 15 February to 20 February 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 4 March 2021

Attitudes, behaviours and well-being of people aged over 80 years in England in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights](#)

Interactive tool | Updated as and when data are available

An interactive tool to explore the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the ONS and other sources.