

Most do not expect any vaccine will be available before the end of year; fear of side effects is top reason for not wanting to take the vaccine

Nine in 10 Australians would get a COVID-19 vaccine if it were available, according to a new Ipsos survey of nearly 20,000 adults from 27 countries on behalf of the World Economic Forum. Globally, 74% say they would get a vaccine for COVID-19 if it were available, however, 59% do not expect this will be an option before the end of this year.

The reason most commonly given by those who would not get a vaccine is worry about side effects (56%) followed by doubt about its effectiveness (29%).

Key Findings for Australia

- In Australia, 88% of all adults surveyed agree that: "If a vaccine for COVID-19 were available, I would get it", with 59% strongly agreeing and 28% somewhat agreeing. Overall, Australians are among the most likely to indicate they would get vaccinated for COVID-19, behind only China (97%) and Brazil (88%).
- However, where Australia and Brazil stand out from many other nations, including China, is in the proportion who strongly agree that "if a vaccine for COVID-19 were available, I would get it". Globally, only 37% strongly agree, whereas 64% of Brazilian and 59% of Australian adults surveyed strongly agree. In China this figure is only 38%.
- While Australia is among the most likely to say we would get vaccinated, we are among the least likely to believe that a vaccine will be available before the end of 2020. Just over one quarter (27%) of Australian adults surveyed believed we would see a vaccine this year, compared with the global average of 41%.
- Among Australians who disagreed they would get vaccinated for COVID-19, the key reasons for doing so were being worried about side effects (46%), doubt about its effectiveness (24%), the perception of not being enough at risk from COVID-19 (18%), and general opposition to vaccines (18%). The breakdown of our reasons for not wanting to get vaccinated are close to the global average.

Ipsos Australia Director, David Elliott, said: "Australia can expect rapid adoption of a vaccine for COVID-19 when it becomes available locally, with Australians expressing relatively high levels of preparedness to 'get it'. This has implications for the careful management of the rollout of the vaccine to cope with high levels of demand. Additionally, health authorities will need to pay particular focus to educating the public about the potential side effects of any vaccine to ensure maximum take-up. Reassuring them of its effectiveness will also be important."

Global Findings

Intentions to get vaccinated against COVID-19

Globally, 74% of all adults surveyed agree that: "If a vaccine for COVID-19 were available, I would get it". However, only 37% strongly agree while 37% somewhat agree. Overall, 26% disagree (15% somewhat disagree and 12% strongly disagree).

In most countries, those who agree outnumber those who disagree by a significant margin (more than 50 percentage points in 12 out of 27 countries).

- The countries where COVID-19 vaccination intent is highest are: China (97%), Brazil (88%), Australia (88%), and India (87%)
- Those where it is lowest are Russia (54%), Poland (56%), Hungary (56%), and France (59%).

Expectation that a COVID-19 vaccine will be available this year

Across all 27 countries, 59% disagree that "a vaccine for COVID-19 will be available to me before the end of 2020" (23% disagree strongly and 36% somewhat) while the other 41% agree (9% strongly and 31% somewhat).

- Again, China stands out for its optimism, with 87% of those surveyed expecting a vaccine will be ready this year. Agreement is also high in Saudi Arabia (75%) and India (74%).

- By contrast, skepticism prevails in Germany, Belgium, Japan, and Poland where fewer than one in four adults anticipate that a vaccine will be available at some point in the next four months.

Reasons for not taking a vaccine

The nearly 5,000 adults surveyed who do not intend to take a vaccine for COVID-19 were asked why they would not do so. In every one of the 27 countries, the #1 reason is worry about the side effects, cited by 56% globally (from 70% in Spain and 68% in Sweden to 41% in Argentina and 40% in Saudi Arabia).

The second-most common reason for not wanting to take a COVID-19 vaccine is doubt about its effectiveness, cited by 29% globally (from as many as 44% in Russia and Poland to just 12% in China and 9% in Mexico).

The third most common reason is the perception of not being enough at risk from COVID-19, cited by 19% globally. Among those who are reluctant to be vaccinated, this view is most prevalent in India (37%), Malaysia (36%) and Sweden (35%), while it is least so in Italy (7%) and Brazil (10%).

General opposition to vaccines is cited by 17% of those who would not get a COVID-19 vaccine globally, but as many as 30% in Russia and Italy.

About the Study

These are the results of a survey conducted by Ipsos between July 24 and August 7, 2020 on its Global Advisor online survey platform among a total of 19,519 adults, aged 18-74 in United States, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, and aged 16-74 in 22 other countries.

The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals in each of Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland), France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the U.S., and 500 individuals in each of Argentina, Chile, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and Turkey.

The samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S. can be taken as representative of these countries' general adult population under the age of 75. The samples in Brazil, Chile, China (mainland), India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. The survey results for these countries should be viewed as reflecting the views of the more "connected" segment of these population.

The data is weighted so that each country's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of the adult population according to the most recent census data.

Where results do not sum to 100 or the 'difference' appears to be +/-1 more/less than the actual, this may be due to rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.

The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 4.8 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

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