CORONAVIRUS TRACKING UK PUBLIC PERCEPTION

A snapshot of Ipsos MORI’s research and analysis related to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. 6th November 2020


THREAT
As the UK heads for a second lockdown, concern about the virus has increased

- What level of threat do you think the coronavirus poses to...
  - % ‘very high’ + ‘high’ threat

  - 19% in Feb 19
  - 9% in May 19
  - 64% in Oct 19

  - Your country
  - You personally

HOME TESTING STUDY
The largest testing programme for coronavirus shows a marked increase in cases

- 60 people in every 10,000 in September-October, with an estimated R rate of 1.2
- Increased to 128 people in every 10,000 in mid to late October, with an estimated R rate of 1.6

- Postal swabs returned from 85,971 people.
- Oct 22-25

- 2-step lockdown easing plan announced (Oct 18)
- 3-tier system introduced (12th October)

PLANNING NHS RESPONSE
Findings from a dialogue with Londoners for NHS England and Improvement

- The workshops were designed to inform future decision making with a set of expectations from the public. Views were gathered on:
  - Travelling further to have a procedure at a COVID-free site
  - ‘I would be happy as long as you can mitigate for those who have difficulty about travelling.”
  - Virtual appointments
  - ‘If a certain percentage of us do have technology and are quite happy to see people virtually...then definitely that is going to reduce the backlog in GPs and hospitals.”
  - Encouraging the public to use NHS services
  - ‘I know a lot of patients are scared of catching COVID-19 so [the NHS] need to promote that it’s still a safe environment.”


HOUSING PAYMENTS
Three in ten Britons are concerned about paying their rent or mortgage at the moment

- How concerned, if at all, are you with the following...Your ability to pay the rent/your mortgage repayments at the moment?

  - 63% Not concerned
  - 30% Concerned

  - Levels of concern are highest among private renters (43%) and Londoners (39%)

  - Find out more here: https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/3-10-britons-are-worried-about-paying-their-rent-or-mortgage

ALLOCATION OF NHS RESOURCES
Members of the public deliberated on how to allocate scarce NHS resources during the second wave of COVID-19

- The public are willing and able to engage with sensitive and complex information in order to reach workable conclusions through deliberative methods. They agreed:
  - Resources should not be allocated based on age
  - There are three ways of acceptably approaching allocating resource, prioritising:
    - those with the strongest survival chances
    - those who arrive first
    - those who are most vulnerable


HANDLING OF COVID-19
The UK public are the least likely to rate the performance of their government in recovering from the pandemic as ‘good’

- How good or poor a job are each of the following doing to help your country deal with recovery following the pandemic? [Government]

  - % ‘Very good’ + ‘Good’

  - Global
  - Other countries
  - UK

  - 49%
  - 32%


GOVERNMENT RULES
Almost three quarters said they were following the government’s rules in October, an increase from the previous month

- To what extent, if at all, are you personally following government rules on how to respond to the coronavirus?

  - % ‘Completely’ + ‘Nearly all the time’

  - Oct
  - 73%

  - Sept
  - 62%


OUTLOOK
There are still conflicting emotions among the UK public when thinking about getting back to normal

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

  - Thinking about resuming normal activities after the pandemic makes me feel very anxious.
  - We should restart the economy and allow businesses to open or operate as they choose.

  - % ‘strongly agree’ + ‘somewhat agree’

  - 30%
  - 45%


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