PUBLIC POLL FINDINGS AND METHODOLOGY

Most Americans Agree that Keeping Up with COVID-19 News is Overwhelming

Latest Newsy/Ipsos poll shows that less Americans now are watching news more often than they typically would when compared to previous weeks

Topline Findings

Washington, DC, May 18, 2020 – As the coronavirus pandemic continues, a new Newsy/Ipsos poll finds that the number of Americans who are watching the news more the normal has decreased since mid-April. A majority agree that keeping up with COVID-19 news is overwhelming, and half are seeking out other news unrelated to the pandemic. Around half of Americans continue to agree that they feel lonelier since social distancing began, and there are signs that people are starting to relax their stance on social distancing with most reporting they met at least once with a friend or family member they do not live with in the last two weeks. Even so, most are not comfortable going to restaurants, salons, movie theaters, and other establishments as soon as they reopen.

Detailed Findings

1. The number reporting that they are watching the news more than normal has decreased by double digits since last month.
   - Currently, 29% say they are watching the news more often than normal over the past week, a decrease of 16 percentage points from mid-April (45%). More than one in ten (12%) did not watch the news at all in the past week.
   - Seven in ten (72%) agree that keeping up with COVID-19 news is overwhelming, and half (51%) are seeking out more news and information not related to the virus.

2. A majority of Americans continue to report feelings of loneliness. However, many have met up with a friend or family member in-person over the last two weeks.
   - More than half of Americans (54%) still agree that they feel lonelier since social distancing began, unchanged from last month (55%).
   - Around one in ten (12%) have sought out therapy since the pandemic began, with 46% saying it was their first time seeking it. Among those that have sought out therapy, men are significantly more likely than women to say they did so for the first time (63% vs. 21%).
   - Thirty-nine percent have met up with someone outside of their household once or twice over the last two weeks, with another 20% meeting up with someone 3 or more times. Among those that saw someone outside of their household, three quarters (73%) met up outside. Two thirds (67%) came within six feet of someone they do not live with, but far fewer (39%) touched a shared surface without sanitizing after.

3. Most Americans are not yet comfortable returning to pre-coronavirus public places, like salons, bars, and gyms.
   - Less than half of Americans are comfortable going to a hair salon or barber (49%) or a dine-in restaurant (44%), and even less are comfortable going to a movie theater (30%), bar (27%), and gym or workout studio (27%) shortly after they reopen.
   - More than half (66%) of employed Americans would be comfortable returning to work soon after their workplace reopens.

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4. Interest in the presidential election has stayed level for most (54%), with Democrats more likely than any other group to say their interest has increased. Across the board, Elizabeth Warren and Kamala Harris draw the most excitement as Joe Biden's potential running mate.
    - Just under half of Democrats (48%) say their interest has stayed the same, compared to 61% of Republicans and 60% of Independents. At the same time, 35% of Democrats report an increased level of interest, compared to just 25% of Republicans and 17% of Independents.
    - Elizabeth Warren and Kamala Harris would garner the most excitement if chosen as Joe Biden's vice presidential nominee, with over half of Democrats expressing excitement for each (54% and 53% respectively)

These are the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 13-15, 2020 on behalf of Newsy. For this survey, a sample of 2,009 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents.

For full results, please refer to the following annotated questionnaire.

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Full Annotated Questionnaire

1. Do any of the following situations apply to you, as a result of coronavirus-related restrictions or closures?

Yes Summary

	May 13-15 (N=2,009)	April 16-20 (N=2,004)	March 20-24 (N=2,007)
Had work hours cut or been laid off or furloughed	31%	34%	40%
Lost income in the past week	30%	35%	32%
Will lose income in the next month	27%	36%	37%

a. Lost income in the past week

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
Yes	30%	35%	32%
No	68%	61%	64%
Don't know	3%	4%	4%

b. Will lose income in the next month

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
Yes	27%	36%	37%
No	60%	53%	48%
Don't know	13%	11%	14%

c. Had work hours cut or been laid off or furloughed (*April 16-20 "Had work hours cut or been laid off"*)

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
Yes	31%	34%	40%
No	65%	62%	57%
Don't know	4%	4%	3%

2. In the past week, have you done each of the following more or less than you typically would?

More Often Than I Typically Would Summary

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
Watch streaming platforms	36%	44%	36%
Watch television (traditional)	32%	41%	37%
Video chat with family and friends	30%	35%	20%
Watch the news	29%	45%	46%
Play video games (single- or multi-player)	20%	-	-
Exercise	18%	21%	16%
Play virtual games with other people	15%	18%	-
Drink alcohol	14%	17%	-

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a. Watch television (traditional)

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
More often than I typically would	32%	41%	37%
Same amount	51%	44%	56%
Less often than I typically would	6%	4%	5%
I did not do this at all in the past week	9%	10%	-
Don't know	1%	1%	2%

b. Watch streaming platforms (Netflix, Hulu, YouTube, etc.)

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
More often than I typically would	36%	44%	36%
Same amount	38%	32%	52%
Less often than I typically would	4%	3%	7%
I did not do this at all in the past week	20%	19%	-
Don't know	1%	2%	5%

c. Watch the news

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
More often than I typically would	29%	45%	46%
Same amount	48%	37%	44%
Less often than I typically would	10%	6%	7%
I did not do this at all in the past week	12%	9%	-
Don't know	2%	1%	4%

d. Exercise

	May 13-15	April 16-20	March 20-24
More often than I typically would	18%	21%	16%
Same amount	47%	41%	59%
Less often than I typically would	17%	18%	21%
I did not do this at all in the past week	16%	19%	-
Don't know	2%	2%	4%

e. Play video games (single- or multi-player)

	May 13-15
More often than I typically would	20%
Same amount	31%
Less often than I typically would	5%
I did not do this at all in the past week	42%
Don't know	3%

f. Play virtual games (e.g. board games, role playing games, etc.) with other people

	May 13-15	April 16-20
More often than I typically would	15%	18%
Same amount	24%	24%
Less often than I typically would	5%	5%
I did not do this at all in the past week	53%	50%
Don't know	3%	3%

g. Drink alcohol

	May 13-15	April 16-20
More often than I typically would	14%	17%
Same amount	35%	32%
Less often than I typically would	9%	7%
I did not do this at all in the past week	39%	42%
Don't know	3%	3%

h. Video chat (Skype, Facetime, etc.) with family and friends

	May 13-15	April 16-17	March 20-24
More often than I typically would	30%	35%	20%
Same amount	28%	23%	59%
Less often than I typically would	6%	3%	12%
I did not do this at all in the past week	34%	35%	-
Don't know	2%	3%	9%

3. In the **past week**, have you spent more or less money than you typically woud on each of the following?

More Money Than I Typically Would Summary

	Total
Streaming subscriptions	11%
Movie/TV show purchases	11%
Movie/TV show rentals	10%
Video games	9%

a. Streaming subscriptions

	Total
More money than I typically would	11%
Same amount	43%
Less money than I typically would	4%
I did not spend any money on this in the past week	40%
Don't know	2%

b. Video games

	Total
More money than I typically would	9%
Same amount	24%
Less money than I typically would	5%
I did not spend any money on this in the past week	60%
Don't know	2%

c. Movie/TV show rentals

	Total
More money than I typically would	10%
Same amount	30%
Less money than I typically would	6%
I did not spend any money on this in the past week	52%
Don't know	1%

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d. Movie/TV show purchases

	Total
More money than I typically would	11%
Same amount	29%
Less money than I typically would	6%
I did not spend any money on this in the past week	53%
Don't know	2%

4. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

Agree Summary

	May 13-15	April 16-17
Trying to keep up with all of the news on COVID-19 is overwhelming	72%	-
I feel like part of a community when I see friends or family virtually	59%	55%
I feel lonelier since COVID-19 social distancing began	54%	55%
I find myself seeking out more news and information **not** related to COVID-19	51%	-

a. I feel like part of a community when I see friends or family virtually

	May 13-15	April 16-17
Strongly agree	14%	13%
Somewhat agree	45%	42%
Somewhat disagree	19%	21%
Strongly disagree	11%	11%
Don't know	12%	13%
Agree (Net)	*59%*	*55%*
Disagree (Net)	*29%*	*32%*

b. I feel lonelier since COVID-19 social distancing began

	May 13-15	April 16-17
Strongly agree	19%	23%
Somewhat agree	35%	32%
Somewhat disagree	23%	22%
Strongly disagree	20%	20%
Don't know	3%	3%
Agree (Net)	*54%*	*55%*
Disagree (Net)	*43%*	*41%*

c. Trying to keep up with all of the news on COVID-19 is overwhelming

	May 13-15
Strongly agree	28%
Somewhat agree	44%
Somewhat disagree	17%
Strongly disagree	8%
Don't know	3%
Agree (Net)	*72%*
Disagree (Net)	*25%*

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d. I find myself seeking out more news and information not related to COVID-19

	May 13-15
Strongly agree	16%
Somewhat agree	35%
Somewhat disagree	31%
Strongly disagree	13%
Don't know	5%
Agree (Net)	*51%*
Disagree (Net)	*43%*

5. Have you sought out professional counseling/a therapist (virtually, over the phone, via an app, or in person) since the COVID-19 pandemic began?

	Total
Yes	12%
No	88%

6. **[If selected "Yes" in Q5]** Was this the first time you sought out therapy?

	Total (N=226)
Yes	46%
No	54%

7. In the **past two weeks**, how often have you met up with friends or family (that you do not live with) in person?

	Total
Once	20%
Twice	19%
3-4 times	14%
5+ times	6%
Never	37%
Don't know	3%

8. **[If did not select "Never" or "Don't know" in Q7]** When you met up with friends or family (that you do not live with) in person in the past two weeks, did you do any of the following?

Yes Summary

	Total (N=1,216)
Met up outside	73%
Came within six feet of a friend or family member that you do not live with	67%
Met up inside	64%
Touched a shared surface without sanitizing your hands after	39%

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a. Came within six feet of a friend or family member that you do not live with

	Total
Yes	67%
No	31%
Don't know	2%

b. Touched a shared surface without sanitizing your hands after

	Total
Yes	39%
No	56%
Don't know	5%

c. Met up outside

	Total
Yes	73%
No	26%
Don't know	1%

d. Met up inside

	Total
Yes	64%
No	35%
Don't know	1%

9. Once businesses start to reopen in your area, how comfortable would you feel going to the following establishments soon after they open?

Total Comfortable Summary

	Total
Your office or place of work	66%
Hair salons and barber shops	49%
Dine-in restaurants	44%
Movie theaters	30%
Bars	27%
Gyms/fitness studios	27%

a. Dine-in restaurants

	Total
Very comfortable	14%
Somewhat comfortable	31%
Not very comfortable	29%
Not comfortable at all	23%
Don't know	3%
Comfortable (Net)	*44%*
Not comfortable (Net)	*53%*

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b. Hair salons or barber shops

	Total
Very comfortable	18%
Somewhat comfortable	31%
Not very comfortable	25%
Not comfortable at all	22%
Don't know	5%
Comfortable (Net)	*49%*
Not comfortable (Net)	*47%*

c. Movie theaters

	Total
Very comfortable	10%
Somewhat comfortable	20%
Not very comfortable	28%
Not comfortable at all	36%
Don't know	5%
Comfortable (Net)	*30%*
Not comfortable (Net)	*64%*

d. Bars

	Total
Very comfortable	10%
Somewhat comfortable	18%
Not very comfortable	25%
Not comfortable at all	39%
Don't know	9%
Comfortable (Net)	*27%*
Not comfortable (Net)	*64%*

e. Gyms/fitness studios

	Total
Very comfortable	10%
Somewhat comfortable	17%
Not very comfortable	27%
Not comfortable at all	37%
Don't know	8%
Comfortable (Net)	*27%*
Not comfortable (Net)	*65%*

f. **[If employed full-time, part-time or self-employed]** Your office or place of work

	Total
Very comfortable	30%
Somewhat comfortable	36%
Not very comfortable	19%
Not comfortable at all	12%
Don't know	3%
Comfortable (Net)	*66%*
Not comfortable (Net)	*31%*

10. Now, for something different. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began around two months ago, would you say your interest in the 2020 presidential election has…

	Total (N=2,009)	Republicans (N=779)	Democrats (N=853)	Independents (N=225)
Increased a lot	14%	11%	20%	9%
Increased somewhat	13%	14%	15%	9%
Stayed the same	54%	61%	48%	60%
Decreased somewhat	7%	6%	8%	10%
Decreased a lot	6%	6%	6%	9%
Don't know	5%	2%	4%	4%
Increased (Net)	*27%*	*25%*	*35%*	*17%*
Decreased (Net)	*13%*	*12%*	*13%*	*19%*

11. Below is a list of potential picks to be Joe Biden's vice presidential nominee. For each, please indicate how excited you would feel if they were chosen to be part of the Democratic ticket.

Total Excited Summary

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Elizabeth Warren	33%	15%	54%	21%
Kamala Harris	32%	15%	53%	20%
Amy Klobuchar	26%	13%	41%	19%
Stacey Abrams	21%	11%	35%	13%
Gretchen Whitmer	16%	11%	23%	12%
Catherine Cortez Masto	14%	12%	19%	10%

a. Elizabeth Warren

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Very excited	13%	5%	24%	6%
Somewhat excited	20%	11%	30%	15%
Not very excited	19%	14%	24%	21%
Not excited at all	34%	63%	11%	38%
Never heard of/Don't know	13%	8%	10%	20%
Excited (Net)	*33%*	*15%*	*54%*	*21%*
Not excited (Net)	*54%*	*77%*	*35%*	*59%*

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b. Kamala Harris

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Very excited	11%	5%	19%	8%
Somewhat excited	21%	10%	34%	12%
Not very excited	17%	13%	20%	16%
Not excited at all	30%	54%	11%	34%
Never heard of/Don't know	21%	17%	16%	30%
Excited (Net)	*32%*	*15%*	*53%*	*20%*
Not excited (Net)	*47%*	*67%*	*31%*	*50%*

c. Gretchen Whitmer

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Very excited	4%	4%	5%	4%
Somewhat excited	12%	7%	18%	8%
Not very excited	17%	13%	21%	13%
Not excited at all	25%	43%	12%	25%
Never heard of/Don't know	42%	34%	44%	50%
Excited (Net)	*16%*	*11%*	*23%*	*12%*
Not excited (Net)	*41%*	*55%*	*33%*	*39%*

d. Stacey Abrams

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Very excited	7%	4%	12%	3%
Somewhat excited	14%	7%	23%	10%
Not very excited	16%	12%	21%	12%
Not excited at all	28%	48%	12%	29%
Never heard of/Don't know	35%	29%	32%	46%
Excited (Net)	*21%*	*11%*	*35%*	*13%*
Not excited (Net)	*44%*	*60%*	*33%*	*41%*

e. Amy Klobuchar

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Very excited	7%	5%	10%	3%
Somewhat excited	19%	8%	31%	17%
Not very excited	20%	17%	24%	18%
Not excited at all	27%	48%	12%	24%
Never heard of/Don't know	27%	21%	22%	39%
Excited (Net)	*26%*	*13%*	*41%*	*19%*
Not excited (Net)	*47%*	*66%*	*37%*	*42%*

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GAME CHANGERS

f. Catherine Cortez Masto

	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Very excited	4%	4%	4%	3%
Somewhat excited	11%	8%	15%	7%
Not very excited	14%	11%	19%	11%
Not excited at all	23%	39%	12%	22%
Never heard of/Don’t know	48%	38%	51%	57%
Excited (Net)	*14%*	*12%*	*19%*	*10%*
Not excited (Net)	*38%*	*50%*	*31%*	*33%*

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 13-15, 2020, on behalf of Newsy. For this survey, a sample of 2,009 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. This poll is trended against a Newsy/Ipsos poll conducted between March 20-24, 2020 with a sample of 2,007 U.S. adults and April 16-20, 2020 with a sample of 2,004 U.S. adults.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos' online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Ampario Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing a sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2016 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Posthoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online non-probability polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=2,009, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-4.0 percentage points).

The poll also has a credibility interval of plus or minus 7.4 percentage points for those who have sought professional counseling or a therapist since the COVID-19 pandemic began, plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for those who have met up with family/friends outside of their household in the past two weeks, and plus or minus 3.3 percentage points for employed resopndents. For political affilitation, the credibility intervals are plus or minus 4.0, 3.8, and 7.4 percentage points for Republicans, Democrats, and Indpendents, respectively. The polls fielded from March 20-24, 2020 and April 16-20, 2020 have a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

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Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

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