

PRESS RELEASE

People need behavioural support strategies to resume activities amid COVID-19

Governments need to facilitate re-engagement while also protecting the population from infection

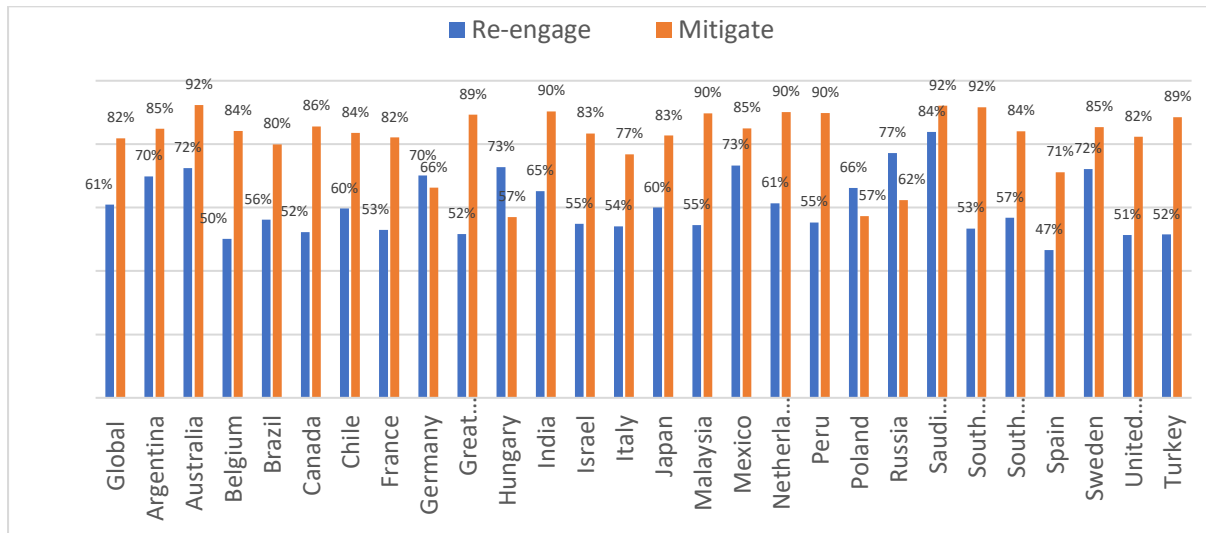
London, July 27, 2020 — Two in five people across 27 countries are comfortable resuming normal activities amid the coronavirus pandemic, according to the latest Ipsos survey, but governments need to understand how to facilitate the behaviour change needed for re-engagement.

Governments globally have been highly effective in encouraging people to protect themselves and mitigate against COVID-19, with an average of four in five people (82%) polled saying they are comfortable following protective guidelines.

While this has been essential in preventing the spread of the virus, the key challenge now as countries start to relax protective measures, is how to encourage people to resume normal activities.

The table below shows how comfortable people are with re-engagement or mitigation amid the outbreak.

Percentage comfortable resuming regular activities vs percentage following protective guidelines



We outline what influences re-engagement and mitigation by assessing these findings through the Ipsos behavioural science framework.

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What can drive re-engagement?

The most important characteristics for driving comfort with re-engagement are:

- Management of outcome expectations (help people consider the risk when they are out is low)
- Self-efficacy (help people feel confident managing risk)
- Routines (help people develop new patterns of behaviour)

While these were found to be important drivers, the level agreement with these characteristics indicate that governments need to work on developing them to drive comfort with re-engagement:

Key dimensions for encouraging re-engagement	% agree
Outcome expectations: Resuming normal activities after the pandemic will likely be safe	59%
Self-efficacy: I feel confident about how to resume normal activities after the pandemic	65%
Routines: I will be able to resume normal activities after the pandemic the same way I did before	63%

Colin Strong, Global Lead for Behavioural Science at Ipsos, said governments need to ensure that behavioural strategies are in place that help people functionally navigate their environments, so they feel they are managing risk effectively.

“Giving people measures such as an app that provides current risk assessment based on location and activity will help,” said Strong. “People need to feel confident about their ability to navigate, including providing opportunities for people to try different protective equipment to learn how they feel and work.”

The government also needs to help people to develop effective routines such as providing mnemonics for people to remember simple guidance when they are out, he said.

What drives mitigation?

Even while there is a need to support people in their re-engagement with the economy, there remains a need to continue to encourage adherence to protective guidelines. This is the other side of the decision dilemma which requires a different approach. The key dimensions for supporting this are:

- Emotion (feeling happy about following protective guidelines)
- Internalisation (having personal satisfaction to follow guidelines rather than simply doing it because it is required)

The level of agreement with these dimensions indicates that governments need to work to reinforce these feelings:

Key dimensions for encouraging mitigation	% agree
Emotion: I feel happy about following these protective guidelines	78%
Internalisation: It gives me personal satisfaction to follow these protective guidelines	80%



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In order to ensure that people continue to adhere to guidelines, behavioural strategies need to be in place that support positive emotions such as sending “well-done” emails to people who have been in lockdown.

Strong said governments also need to facilitate internalised motivation such as introducing online groups that connect people of similar risk profile to allow them to share strategies for managing lockdowns, and this differs by country.

“There is broad consistency across countries in the actions needed for people to re-engage, but there are some country differences,” said Strong “For example in France, the establishment of new routines is critical, while in South Korea it is more important for the physical environment to be set up in a way that facilitates their behaviour.”

Overall, governments have a challenging balancing act in terms of managing the need for re-engagement versus the requirement to protect the population.

It has become very clear in the course of COVID-19 that any activity to encourage mitigation or re-engaging will require an understanding of human behaviour – and our analysis shows that what drives comfort with those behaviors differ. This highlights the importance of using behavioural science not only as an effective diagnosis of behaviour, but also providing linkage through to intervention activities to help move towards desired outcomes.

About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted between April 24th to May 8th 2020. The survey instrument is conducted monthly in 27 countries around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system. The countries reporting herein are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States of America.

For the results of the survey presented herein, an international sample of 18,518 adults aged 18-74 in the US, Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey and Canada, and age 16-74 in all other countries, were interviewed. Approximately 1000+ individuals participated on a country by country basis via the Ipsos Online Panel with the exception of Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Hungary, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden and Turkey, where each have a sample approximately 500+. The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.1 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 4.5 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

16 of the 27 countries surveyed online generate nationally representative samples in their countries (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden and United States). Brazil, Chile, India, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey produce a national sample that is more urban & educated, and with higher incomes than their fellow citizens. We refer to these respondents as “Upper Deck Consumer Citizens”. They are not nationally representative of their country.





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