COVID-19 Preventive Health Survey Overview

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The COVID-19 Preventive Health Survey is designed to help policymakers and health researchers better understand and monitor people’s knowledge, attitudes and practices related to COVID-19.

Facebook app users in 67 countries and territories are invited to take an off platform survey collected by faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and advised on by Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (CCP) and the World Health Organization Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). Sampled users see the invitation at the top of their News Feed, but the surveys are collected off the Facebook app and the Facebook company does not collect or receive individual survey responses. The survey asks users to self-report their adherence to preventive measures, such as wearing masks and what they know about COVID-19, including symptoms of the disease, risk factors and how their community is handling the pandemic.

Facebook and a consortium of partners hope that new insights can help policymakers understand the effectiveness of various policies, such as stay-at-home orders, physical distancing, wearing a mask and washing hands. Survey data can also help public health officials adjust communications to be most effective for their communities, particularly given variation in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in different countries and territories.

Information from the preventive health survey can be used in conjunction with other Facebook tools mobilized to help understand COVID-19. For example, the Symptom Surveys can help monitor the spread of COVID-19 in advance of widespread testing. Additionally, the Disease Prevention Maps use aggregated and anonymous Facebook movement data to summarize the prevalence of staying near home and the probability of exposure to new populations. These data in these maps can help health researchers understand how population dynamics influence the spread. For more information about other Facebook data sources to aid COVID-19 efforts, please visit the Data for Good website and the Humanitarian Data Exchange.
The Facebook app invites a sample of adult users to take an optional, off-Facebook survey through an invitation at the top of their Facebook News Feed. Users who click on the invitation are redirected to a Qualtrics page hosted by MIT where they are informed about the survey and can take the survey.

While MIT designs, collects, and analyzes the survey data, Facebook provides assistance with questionnaire translation, survey sampling and recruitment, and statistical bias correction.
The survey instrument is managed by MIT and available in more than 55 languages. Two versions of the survey are currently being fielded across 67 countries and territories for a period of 4 months (July - October 2020), with the possibility of extension. Countries with sufficient sample sizes receive a “Wave Survey” that is fielded every 2 weeks over a 4 month period. The rest of the countries receive a one-time “Snapshot Survey”.

Snapshot and wave surveys were developed based on feedback from global health partners so that information could be collected that is helpful to inform public health responses even in areas with fewer survey respondents. The feedback on the survey questions is appreciated, the input may be considered for revisions to the survey in the future. The full survey instrument is available here.

**SNAPSHOT SURVEY** (qualtrics preview)

Fielded to 44 countries and territories with a one-time sample over a 2 week period.

**WAVE SURVEY** (qualtrics preview)

Fielded to 23 countries and territories with repeated, bi-monthly cross-sections. Each of the 8 waves is two weeks long. Sampled users may be invited to take the survey again in subsequent weeks, depending on the density of their area. However, the responses of sampled users who participate more than once will not be linked longitudinally.
Facebook provides MIT with analytic weights that adjust for non-response and coverage biases. Making adjustments using the weights ensures that the sample more accurately reflects the characteristics of the target population represented.

**NON-RESPONSE BIAS**

This means that some sampled users are more likely to respond to the survey than others. To adjust for this, Facebook calculates the inverse probability that sampled users complete the survey using their self-reported age and gender as well as other characteristics known to correlate with non-response. Then these inverse probabilities are used to create weights for responses, after which the survey sample reflects the active adult user population on the Facebook app.

**COVERAGE BIAS**

This means not everyone in every country has a Facebook app account or uses their account regularly. To adjust for this, Facebook adjusts the weights created in the first step even further so that the distribution of age, gender, and administrative region of residence in the survey sample reflects that of the general population.

Facebook and MIT designed this effort with privacy in mind from the start. The weights will be available for all countries. For more details about the weighting methodology and the general population benchmarks used, please see the technical brief provided in the API by MIT.

Facebook does not receive any survey responses. Instead, MIT sends Facebook the Random ID number for the users who completed the survey so that Facebook can share the corresponding survey weight. Facebook only has access to public, aggregated survey data provided by MIT.
PUBLICLY AVAILABLE, AGGREGATED DATA AND INSIGHTS

**Aggregated survey data** are made available to the public by MIT.

Actionable insights from the survey are made publicly available for use in national COVID-19 responses.

- **JHU KAP COVID Dashboard**: Designed for policymakers and public health implementers, these combine data from across the survey for actionable insights by country.
- **MIT Dashboard**: This summarizes some of the core tracking questions of the survey (e.g., vaccine acceptance) and questions about norms and intentions to visit various locations.

REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO NON-AGGREGATED DATA FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES

Researchers from academic and nonprofit institutions may request access to non-aggregated survey data for their research. This includes files with the survey variables and weights. Once a request is approved by Facebook and MIT, the researcher’s institution must have a signed Data Use Agreement (DUA) from MIT in place before data access will be provided.

**Eligible researchers may see more information and submit a Request for Data Access online.** They will need to fill out a short form and attach a project summary, including a description of their analysis plan and any complementary work. Facebook and MIT will then proceed with onboarding researchers from institutions with a signed DUA.

For questions about data access, please reach out to [PHSurvey@fb.com](mailto:PHSurvey@fb.com).

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**Appendix A: The survey is being fielded in the following countries and territories (wave or snapshot).**

**Wave Countries and Territories:** Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam

**Snapshot Countries and Territories:** Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Cote d’Ivoire, Ecuador, Estonia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Taiwan, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela