

COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH WAVE 56 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

April 23 - 25, 2021

MDC and **The Harris Poll** have partnered to conduct research to monitor the pulse of the American Consumer.

The executive summaries on the pages that follow provide insight into current consumer attitudes and behavior and can be used to help navigate the changing industry landscape. We hope this information proves useful to you and your team as you address these changes in real time and strategize for your next moves.

As always, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Positively,

Ryan Linder + The MDC Family
Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP



WAVE 56

WAVE 56 INTRODUCTION

The following research was conducted between **April 23-25, 2021** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,097** U.S adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

01

Topic:

MOST AMERICANS SAY THEY SHOULD BE VACCINATED BEFORE THE U.S. DONATES COVID-19 SHOTS ELSEWHERE: STAT-HARRIS POLL

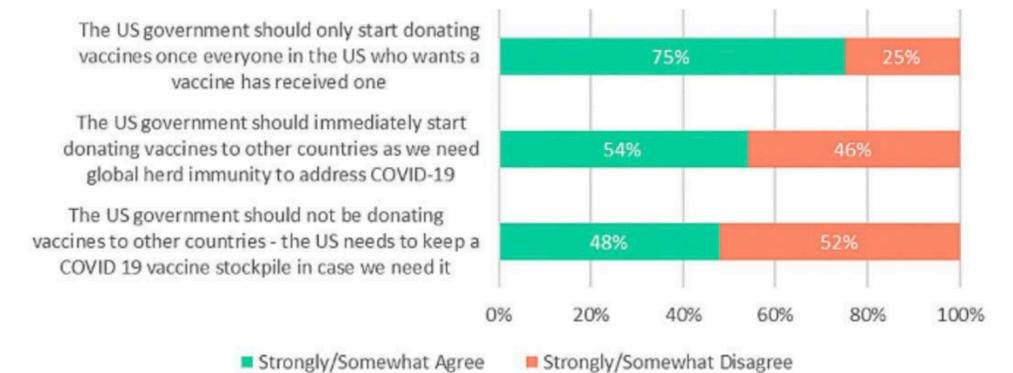
Introduction:

In our [new survey with STAT](#), we found that three-quarters of Americans believe the U.S. government should start donating COVID-19 vaccines to other countries, but only after every person in the U.S. who wants a vaccine has received one. Here's what else we found:

- Younger Americans (59% Gen Z, 65% Millennials) are more likely to say the U.S. government should start to immediately donating vaccines to other countries, compared to older Americans.
- On the flipside, 48% agree that the **U.S. government shouldn't donate vaccines at all**, and instead create a stockpile. Three-fifths (58%) of GOP members agree, while only 44% of Democrats feel the same way.

- On Monday, the White House announced it would [share as many as 60 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine](#) as part of an effort to help developing countries fight the pandemic. Officials also announced exploration into options for urgent dispatch of oxygen and other supplies to help India fight a [record-breaking second wave](#).

How much would you agree or disagree with the following statements related to the US government donating vaccines to other countries



Implication:

We need other solutions to reduce global vaccine shortages, in fact, researchers at Duke [suggest](#) “vaccine diplomacy” by using additional funding mechanisms and supporting more licensing deals between vaccine makers and companies based in other countries.

Section:

02

Topic:

THE BAD NEWS ABOUT THE J&J PAUSE: AXIOS-HARRIS POLL

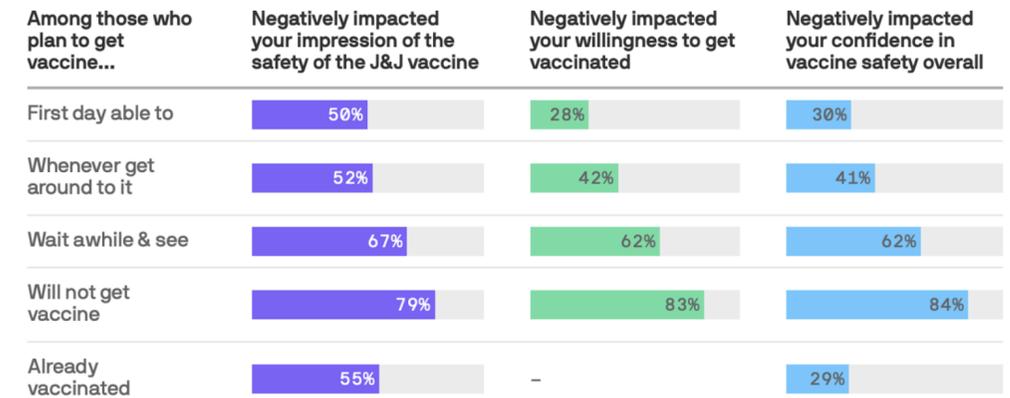
Introduction:

Publicity surrounding the Johnson & Johnson vaccine's possible link to blood clots has had a negative effect on those already hesitant to get vaccinated, [according to a new Harris Poll shared exclusively with Axios](#).

- Those who are “vaccine eager” (plan to get vaccinated the first day they are able to) say the pause gives them more confidence (41%) than hesitation (36%), while those who are “vaccine hesitant” (will wait awhile and see before getting vaccinated) **say it gives them more hesitation than confidence** (53% vs. 27%).
- While three-fifths (58%) of those who are “vaccine eager” would be willing to get the J&J vaccine once reinstated, only 39% of those who are “vaccine hesitant” say the same.
- The pause had an overall negative impact on the willingness of those who are “vaccine hesitant” to get vaccinated at all , 62% vs. only 28% of those who are “vaccine eager.”
- [FiveThirtyEight Politics podcast](#) looks at “good” and “bad” polls around the J&J vaccine news - in which they categorize our Axios-Harris Poll as a “good” poll.

How the Johnson & Johnson vaccine news negatively impacted public opinion

Poll of 1,845 U.S. adults, April 16-18, 2021



Implication:

The announcement reinforced existing hesitation in those with already existing concerns in vaccine safety - the audience we most need to earn the trust of in order to end the COVID-19 pandemic here in America.

Section:

03

Topic:

SUMMER, SUMMER, SUMMERTIME

Introduction:

What's better than a summer vacation? After more than a year of COVID social distancing and the [CDC updating travel guidelines for fully vaccinated people](#), the answer is probably not much. Here's what Americans are thinking as we get closer to being able to [travel during the summer](#):

- When thinking about traveling out of town now, one quarter (26%) of Americans say they are **ready to go**. This includes 31% of Millennials and 28% of Parents. However, 29% say they are **cautious but optimistic**.
- **Reconnecting with friends and family** (19%) is what most are looking forward to when traveling this summer, especially Boomers (24%). While Millennials are most excited for **rest and relaxation** (20%).
- Half (52%) expect that they will **continue to have flexibility, like remote school or work, throughout the fall** - especially Millennials (60%). **Gen Z does not feel the same with one third (33%)** saying they don't expect to have the same flexibility.
- One in five (20%) of Americans **aren't facing any kind of barrier to travel this summer**, but **personal financial concerns for Millennials** (28%) and **being able to take off from work** for Hispanic Americans (20%) are potential roadblocks.

Implication:

Americans remain cautiously optimistic for a (mostly) normal summer and the start of the "roaring 21s" - the two items Americans are most looking forward to purchasing after things return to normal? Plane tickets and hotel stays.

Section:

04

Topic:

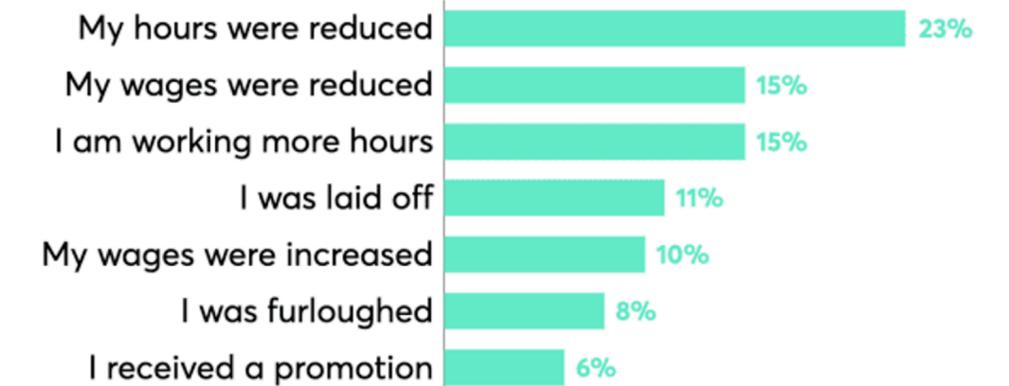
OLDER MILLENNIALS FACE THEIR SECOND EMPLOYMENT CRISIS: CNBC-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

This week in our partnership series with CNBC on “Middle-Aged Millennials”, we look at how the pandemic is impacting Older Millennials’ careers. [Here is what we found:](#)

- Six in ten (59%) Older Millennials **already have had their income impacted by the pandemic** and their career paths could be shaken up even more following a second once-in-a-lifetime economic downturn.
- How they were impacted: A quarter (23%) had their **hours reduced**, 15% had their **wages reduced** or are **working more hours**, and 11% were laid off.
- However, **education level plays a role**. Nearly half (47%) of those with a bachelor’s degree say they **were recently promoted in the last year** compared with 26% of those without a bachelor’s degree.

Have you experienced any of the following in the last year due to the Covid pandemic?



Note: Respondents were able to select more than one option.

Source: Survey of 1,000 U.S. adults ages 33 to 40 conducted from February 12 to 15, 2021.

Implication:

Many Older Millennials started their careers during the Great Recession that gave them limited career opportunities to pay off their surging student loans, let alone save for other financial milestones. Now as many enter management roles and likely more comfortable salaries, they are facing a second employment setback before they are even over the hill.

Section:

05

Topic:

FAST FOOD BRANDS HAVE A LOT TO GAIN FROM REDUCING SINGLE-USE PACKAGING WASTE: ADWEEK-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

As a follow up to the [Earth Day brand buzz](#) last week, we partnered with Adweek on a survey to gauge consumer sentiment on proposed solutions to one small piece of humankind's impact on the climate: [littering and pollution from single-use fast food containers](#).

- Most consumers (60%) said knowing that a quick-service restaurant (QSR) was polluting or contributing to litter in public spaces **would lower their opinion of the brand** and 57% said **they'd be less likely to buy from it**.
- Brands also have a lot to gain from improving their contributions to packaging-related waste: 55% of respondents said **they'd have a better opinion of a brand that phased out polystyrene containers**.
- Most consumers (55%) said they'd be **willing to consider a reusable or returnable container program** to address packaging waste at QSRs. Millennials and Gen Z are the most willing (77%).

- Around half of consumers said that a discount would help incentivize programs to reduce waste, but knowing there was an impact on waste reduction and resource conservation is a motivator for 60%.

Implication:

[Climate change is a top concern for Americans](#) and brands looking to bolster their image with core constituencies such as younger Americans will need to convey they take their responsibility to the environment seriously.

Questions?

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