

UK and USA attitudes towards COVID-19 booster vaccines

► **Report** June 2021

Insights and trends in people's behaviours related to COVID-19. Brought to you by a team of health and behavioural experts at the Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI) at Imperial College London and YouGov. These reports are created on a regular basis, following new survey results.

With special acknowledgement of the contribution from the WHO working group on measuring behavioural and social drivers (BeSD) of COVID-19 vaccination.

Key insights from this report

This report looks at attitudes in the UK and the USA towards coronavirus (COVID-19) booster vaccines (i.e., an additional dose after the person has been fully vaccinated to increase antibodies). Responses are weighted to be nationally representative. Sample sizes in each country are included at the end of the report.

As of June 7th, 2021, **an overwhelming majority of respondents in both the UK (78%) and the USA (69%) report being willing to donate their vaccine booster dose** if a COVID-19 antibody test shows they do not need it. Furthermore, **most respondents in both countries (81% in the UK and 64% in the USA) stated they would be willing to take a COVID-19 antibody test at least once** to find out how protected they were from COVID-19.

Specifically:

- **Donation of booster doses if not needed:** 78% of respondents in the UK and 69% of respondents in the USA stated that, if a test showed they did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, they would be happy for their dose to be donated to people in poor countries.
 - In all age groups the share of respondents who disagreed with the donation of their booster dose was lower than 15%.
 - Most respondents in both countries were willing to donate their booster dose regardless of whether they reported having had COVID-19.
 - Most respondents in the UK were willing to donate their booster dose regardless of whether they reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine. In the USA, 79% of respondents who reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine stated they would be willing to donate their booster dose, compared to 50% of those who had not received a COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Antibody tests:** 81% of respondents in the UK and 64% of respondents in the USA stated they would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once to find out how protected they were from COVID-19.
 - Those who reported having had COVID-19 were more likely to be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test in both the UK and the USA.
 - Those who reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine were more likely to be willing to get a COVID-19 antibody test in both the UK and the USA.
- **Booster doses:** respondents in both the UK and the USA were more willing than not to take a booster dose. 8% of respondents in the UK and 18% of respondents in the USA stated they “would prefer not to take the test to see if they need a booster dose, nor the booster dose”
 - Those who reported having had COVID-19 were more likely to respond they “would prefer not to take the test to see if they need a booster dose, nor the booster dose” in both the UK and the USA.
 - Those who reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine were more likely to be willing to get a booster dose.

Respondents in the UK and the USA would be willing to donate booster vaccines to poor countries

As of June 7th, 2021, the overwhelming majority of respondents in the UK and the USA stated that, if a test showed they did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, they would be happy for their dose to be donated to people in poor countries. This held true across males and females, as well as across age groups in both the UK and the USA. In all age groups the share of respondents who disagreed with the donation of their booster dose was lower than 15%.

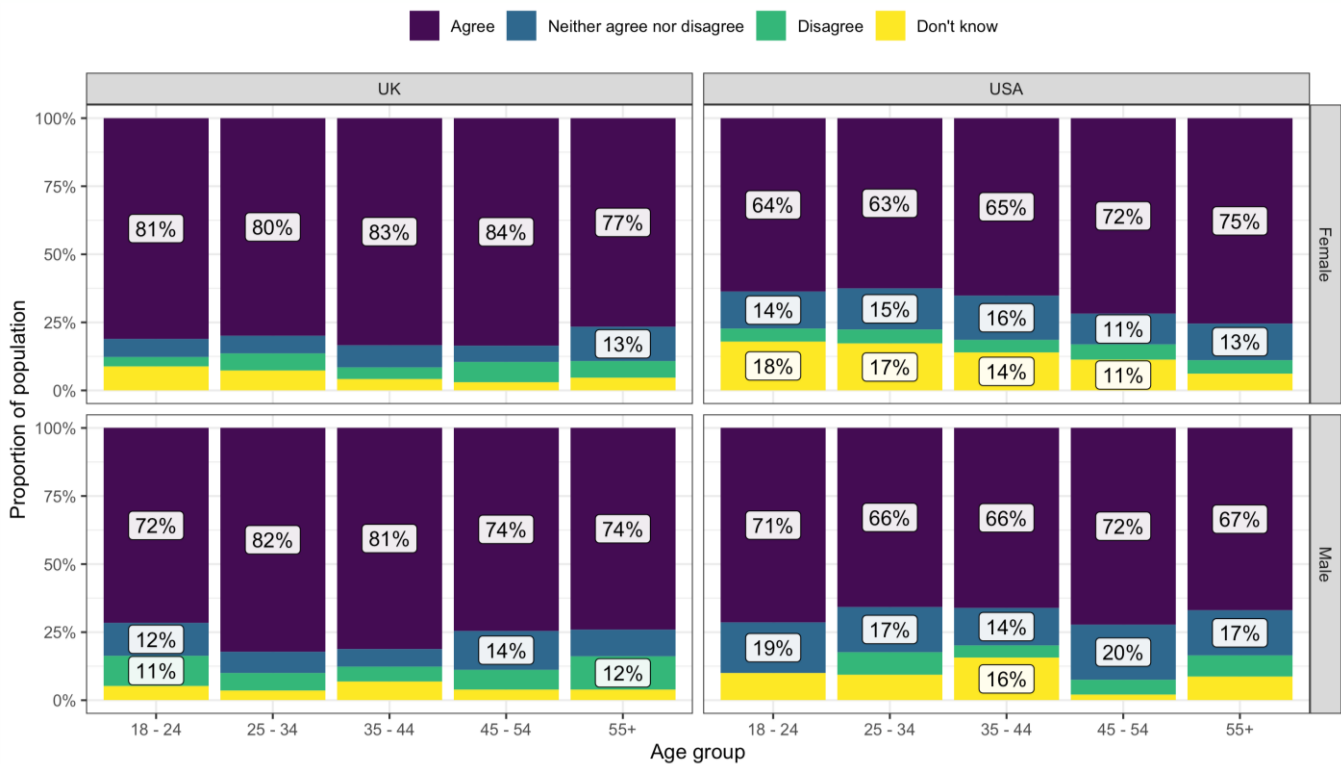
78%

UK respondents who would be happy to donate their booster dose to poor countries if a test showed they did not need it

69%

USA respondents who would be happy to donate their booster dose to poor countries if a test showed they did not need it

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?: “If a test showed I did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, I would be happy for my dose to be donated to people in poor countries who need it”



COVID-19 status did not impact willingness to donate booster vaccines to poor countries

As of June 7th, 2021, the overwhelming majority of respondents in the UK and the USA stated that, if a test showed they did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, they would be happy for their dose to be donated to people in poor countries. This held true for respondents who stated they had had COVID-19 previously and those who didn't. In the UK, there was no difference between these two groups, whereas in the USA those who reported having had COVID-19 were 9 percentage points more likely to be willing to share the booster dose with poorer countries.

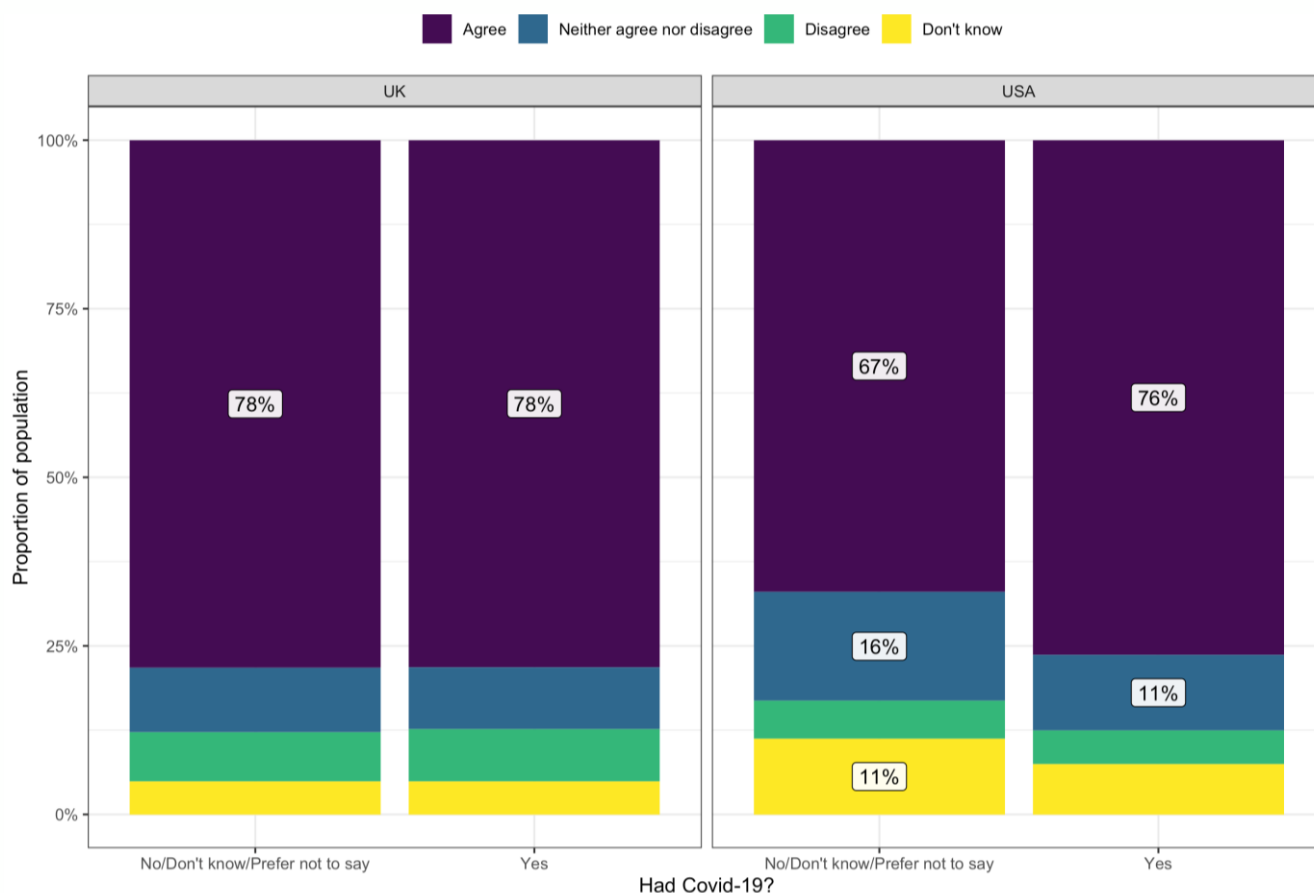
78%

UK respondents who had COVID-19 and would be happy to donate their booster dose to poor countries if a test showed they did not need it

76%

USA respondents who had COVID-19 and would be happy to donate their booster dose to poor countries if a test showed they did not need it

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?: "If a test showed I did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, I would be happy for my dose to be donated to people in poor countries who need it"



Those who received a COVID-19 vaccine are more willing to donate booster doses in UK and USA

As of June 7th, 2021, the overwhelming majority of respondents in the UK stated that, if a test showed they did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, they would be happy for their dose to be donated to people in poor countries. This held true for respondents who stated they had had a COVID-19 vaccine and those who didn't. In the USA, 79% of respondents who reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine stated they would be willing to donate their booster dose, compared to 50% of those who had not received a COVID-19 vaccine.

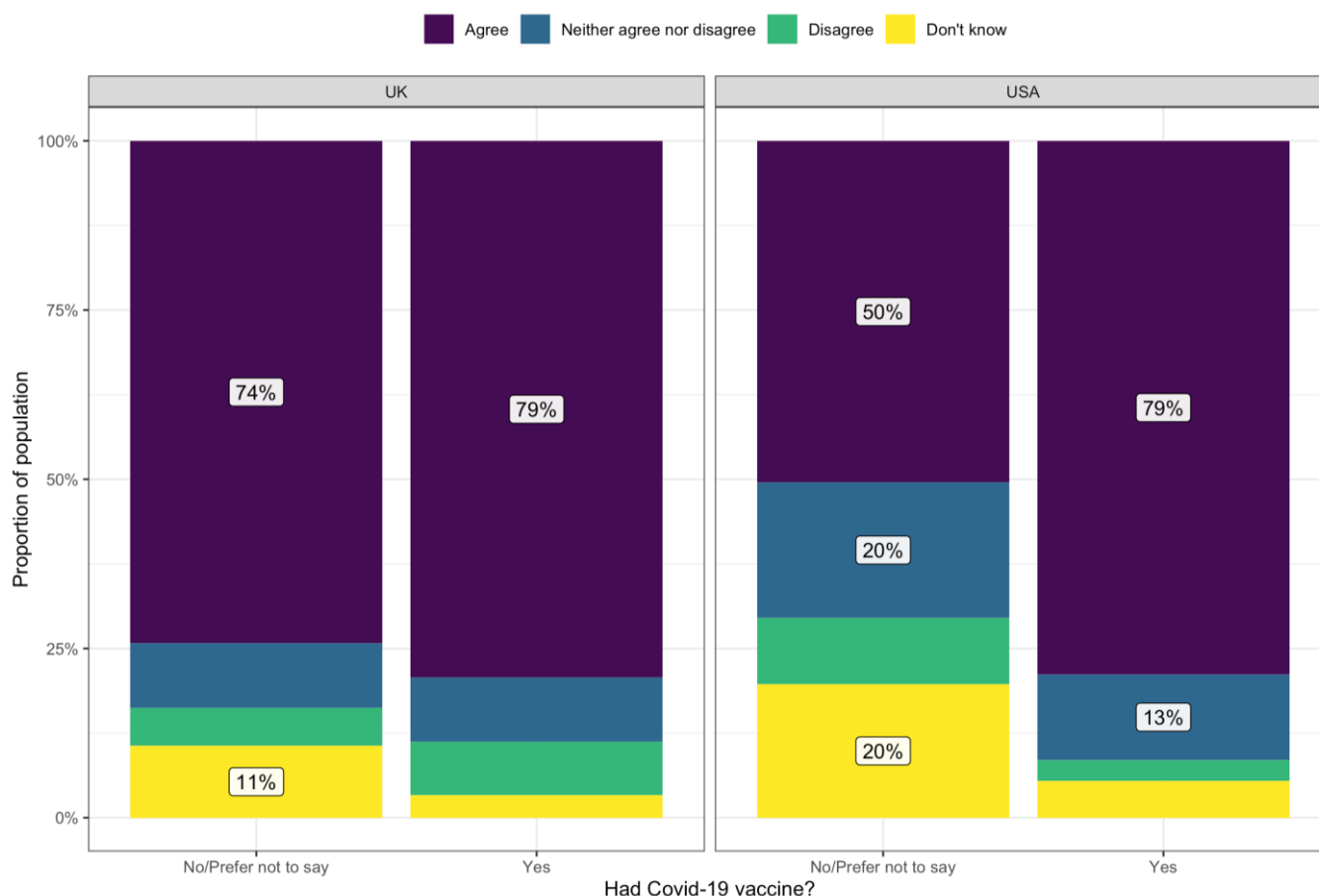
79%

UK respondents who had a COVID-19 vaccine and would be happy to donate their booster dose to poor countries if a test showed they did not need it

79%

USA respondents who had a COVID-19 vaccine and would be happy to donate their booster dose to poor countries if a test showed they did not need it

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?: "If a test showed I did not need a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, I would be happy for my dose to be donated to people in poor countries who need it"



Respondents in the UK are more willing to get COVID-19 antibody tests than USA respondents

As of June 7th, 2021, most respondents in the USA and the UK stated they would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once to find out how protected they were from COVID-19. Nevertheless, respondents in the UK were more likely to be willing to take more frequent tests than respondents in the USA. Males aged 45-54 in the USA were the most likely to report they would not be willing to take a test, whereas females aged 45-54 in the UK were the most likely to report they would be willing to take such tests more than twice a year. In the UK, willingness to take multiple tests per year appears to increase with age for both males and females, whereas in the USA differences by age group are less clear.

81%

UK respondents who would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once

64%

USA respondents who would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once

It might be possible to find out how protected you are from Covid-19/check for antibodies, by doing a test that involves taking a few drops of blood from your finger. This test would be free and administered at your GP surgery/local medical centre. How often, if at all, would you be willing to take such a test to find out how protected you are from COVID-19/check for antibodies?



COVID-19 status did not affect willingness to get antibody tests

As of June 7th, 2021, most respondents in the USA and the UK stated they would be willing to have COVID-19 antibody tests at least once to find out how protected they were from COVID-19. This held true for respondents who stated they had had COVID-19 previously and those who didn't, although those who reported having had COVID-19 were more likely to be willing to have the antibody tests in both countries.

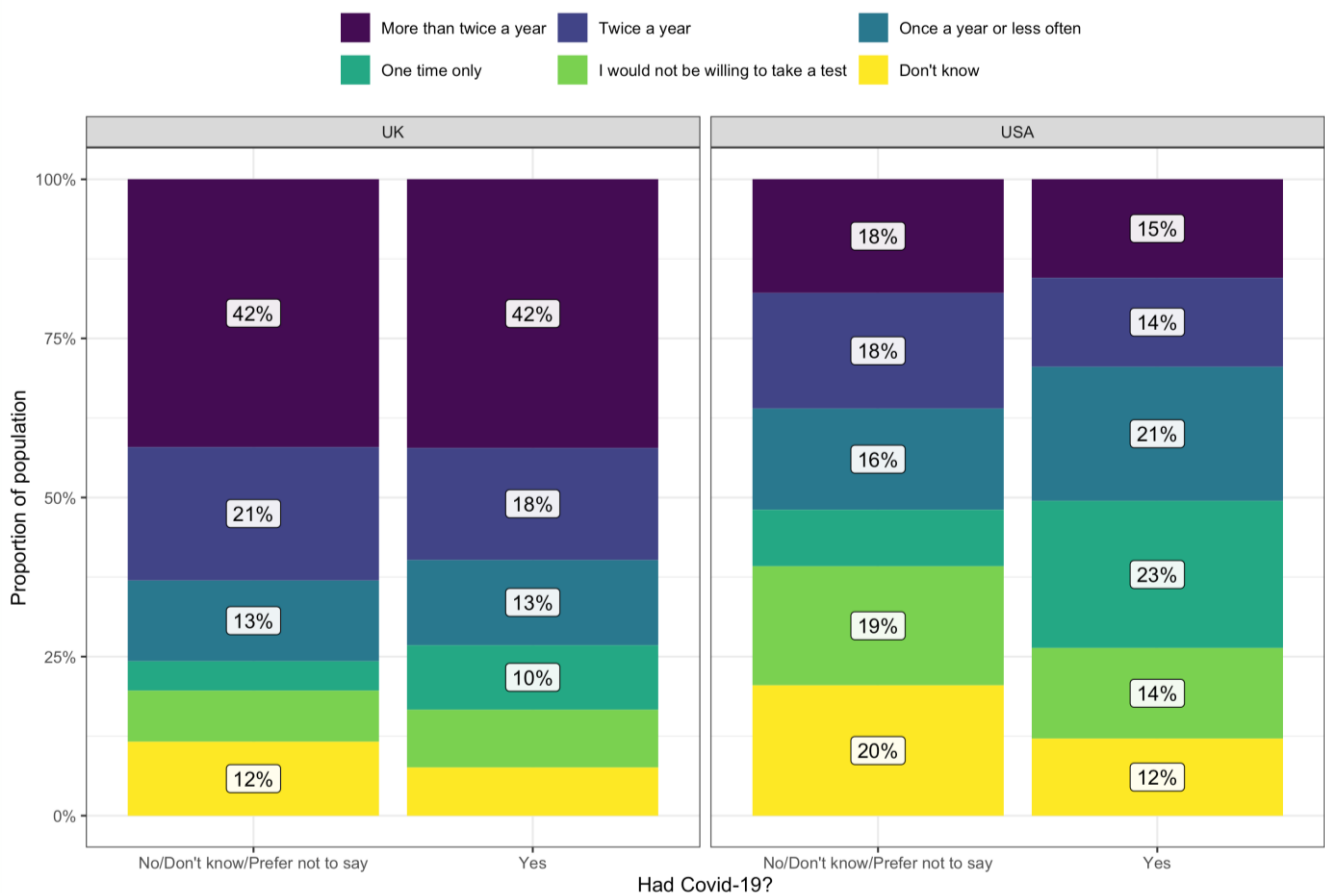
83%

UK respondents who had COVID-19 and would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once

73%

USA respondents who had COVID-19 and would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once

It might be possible to find out how protected you are from Covid-19/check for antibodies, by doing a test that involves taking a few drops of blood from your finger. This test would be free and administered at your GP surgery/local medical centre. How often, if at all, would you be willing to take such a test to find out how protected you are from COVID-19/check for antibodies?



COVID-19 vaccine status impacted willingness to get antibody tests

As of June 7th, 2021, most respondents in the USA and the UK who had had a COVID-19 vaccine stated they would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once to find out how protected they were from COVID-19. Those who did not report having had a COVID-19 vaccine were significantly less likely to be willing to get COVID-19 antibody tests: 85% vs 64% in the UK, and 75% vs 41% in the USA.

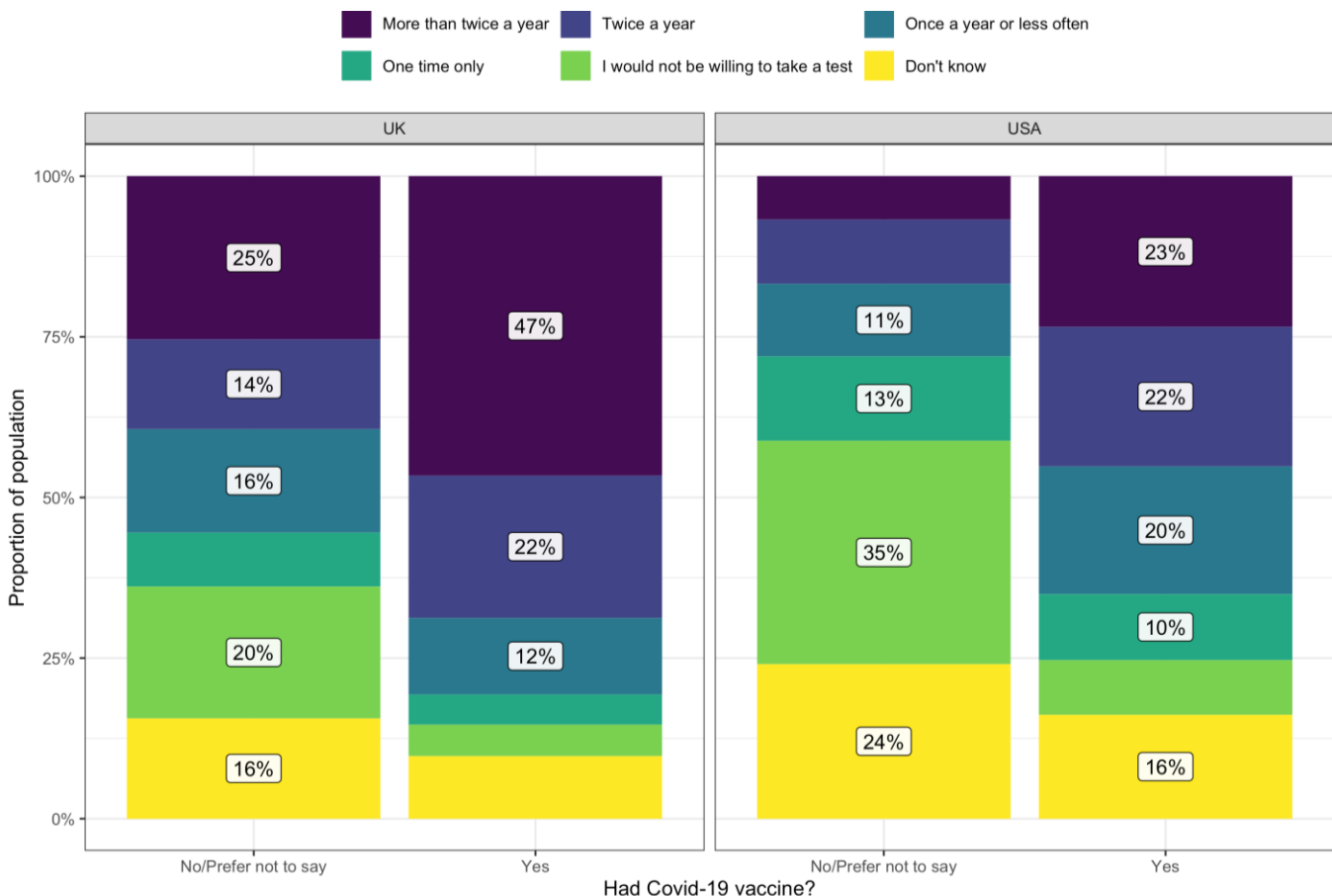
85%

UK respondents who had a COVID-19 vaccine and would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once

75%

USA respondents who had a COVID-19 vaccine and would be willing to have a COVID-19 antibody test at least once

It might be possible to find out how protected you are from Covid-19/check for antibodies, by doing a test that involves taking a few drops of blood from your finger. This test would be free and administered at your GP surgery/local medical centre. How often, if at all, would you be willing to take such a test to find out how protected you are from COVID-19/check for antibodies?



Respondents in the UK are more willing to take booster doses than respondents in the USA

As of June 7th, 2021, respondents in both the UK and the USA were more willing to take a booster dose than not. This held true across males and females, and across all age groups except the youngest (18-24) females in the USA, where this share was 49%. The share of respondents who stated they would prefer to take a booster dose without a test first was higher across all age groups and genders in the UK than in the USA. The share of those who reported they “did not know” or “would prefer not to take the test to see if they need a booster dose, nor the booster dose” was higher in the USA than in the UK for males and females, and across age groups.

8%

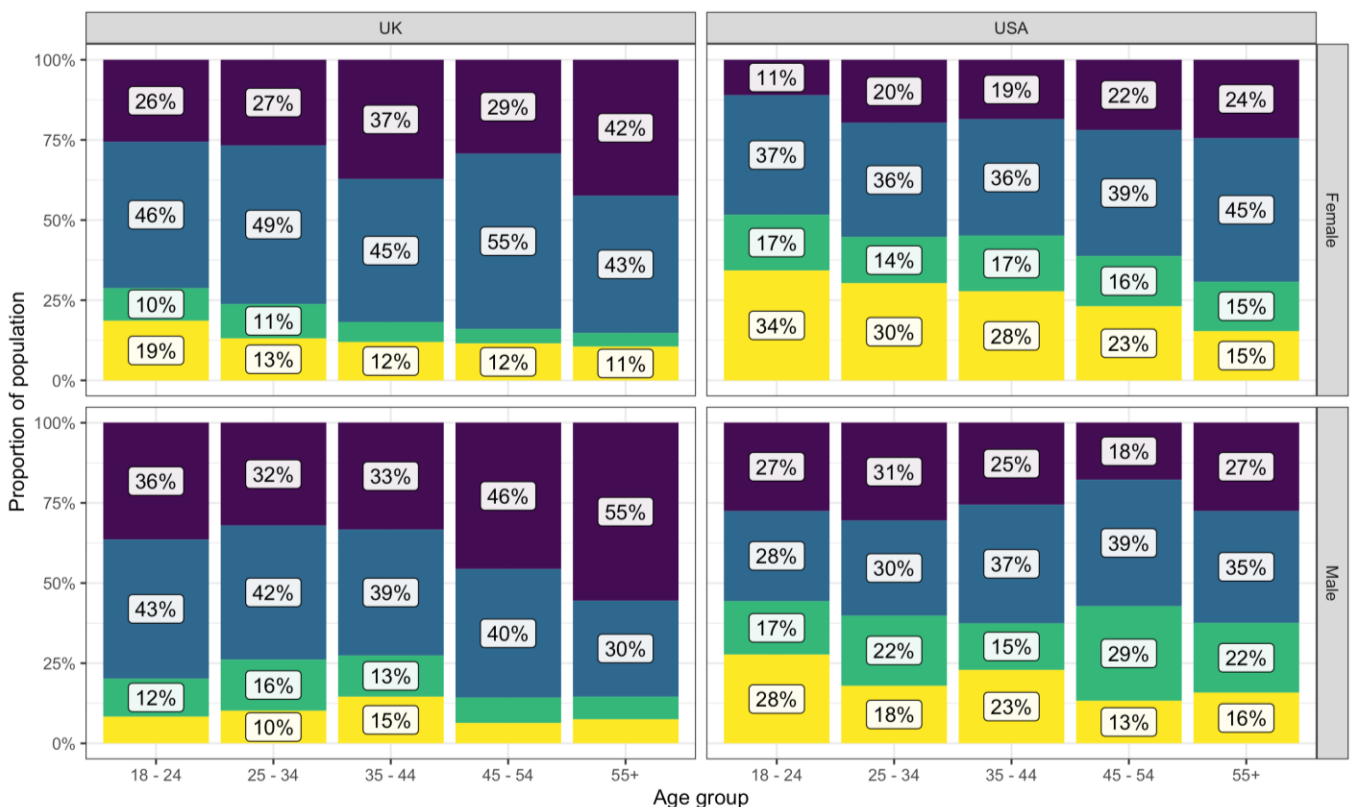
UK respondents who would prefer not to take the antibody test, nor the booster dose

18%

USA respondents who would prefer not to take the antibody test, nor the booster dose

Some people may need an additional COVID-19 booster shot to make sure they continue to be protected from the virus. Which ONE, if any, of the following would you MOST prefer?

- I would prefer to take a booster dose without a test first
- I would prefer to take a test first and only take a booster dose if I need it
- I would prefer to not take the test to see if I needed a booster dose, nor the booster dose
- Don't know



COVID-19 status had an impact on willingness to take booster doses in the UK and the USA

As of June 7th, 2021, respondents in both the UK and the USA were more willing to take a booster dose than not. This held true for respondents who reported having had COVID-19 and those who didn't. Nevertheless, respondents who had had COVID-19 were more likely to respond they "would prefer not to take the test to see if they need a booster dose, nor the booster dose" in both the UK and the USA.

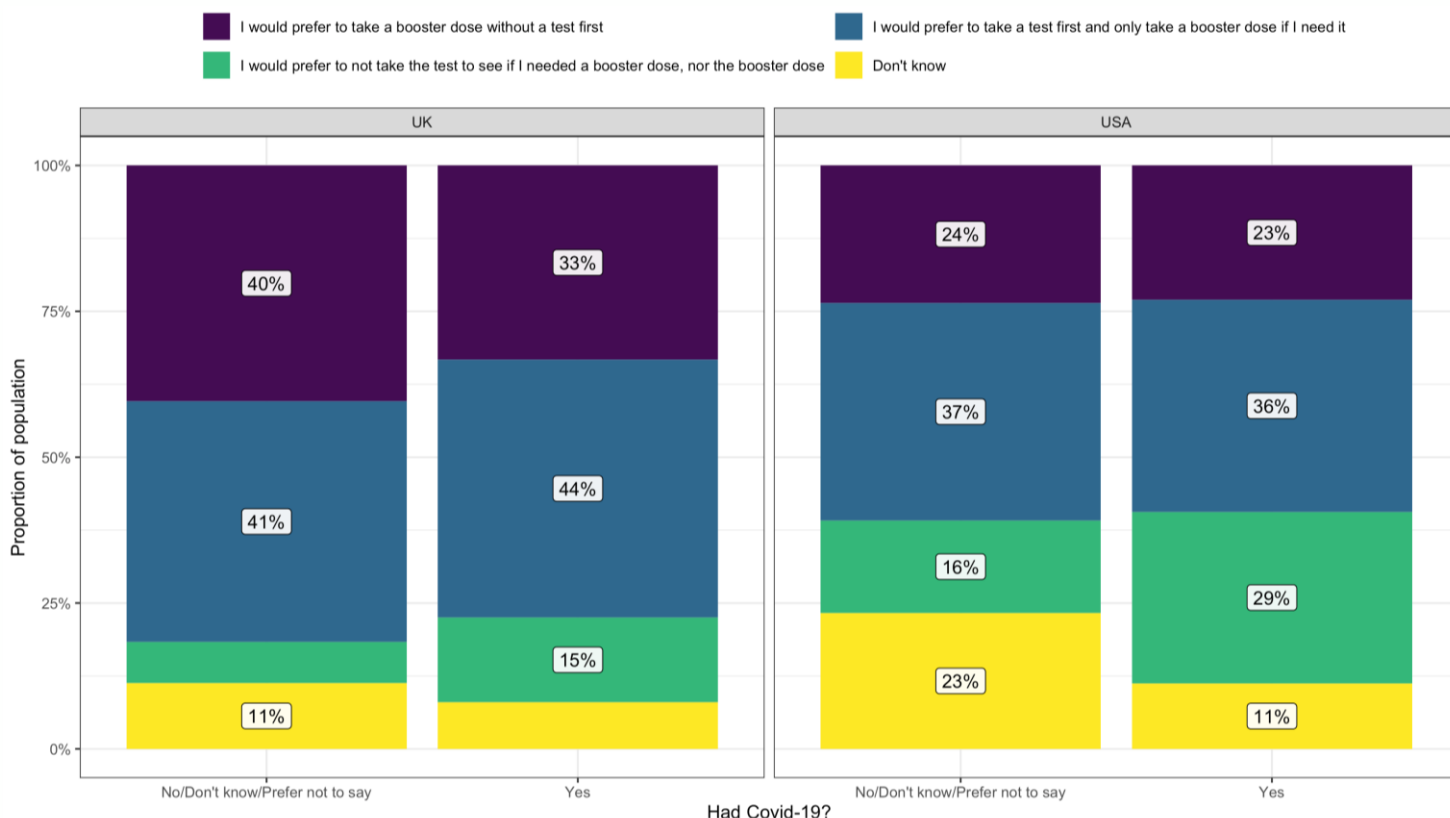
15%

UK respondents who had COVID-19 and would prefer not to take the antibody test, nor the booster dose

29%

USA respondents who had COVID-19 and would prefer not to take the antibody test, nor the booster dose

Some people may need an additional COVID-19 booster shot to make sure they continue to be protected from the virus. Which ONE, if any, of the following would you MOST prefer?



COVID-19 vaccine status had an impact on willingness to take booster doses

As of June 7th, 2021, most respondents in the UK reported being willing to take a COVID-19 booster dose. This held true for those who reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine (88% would be willing to get a booster dose) and those who did not (56% would be willing to get a booster dose). In the USA, 77% of those who reported having had a COVID-19 vaccine stated they would be willing to get a booster dose, whereas willingness dropped to 30% for those who did not report having had a vaccine.

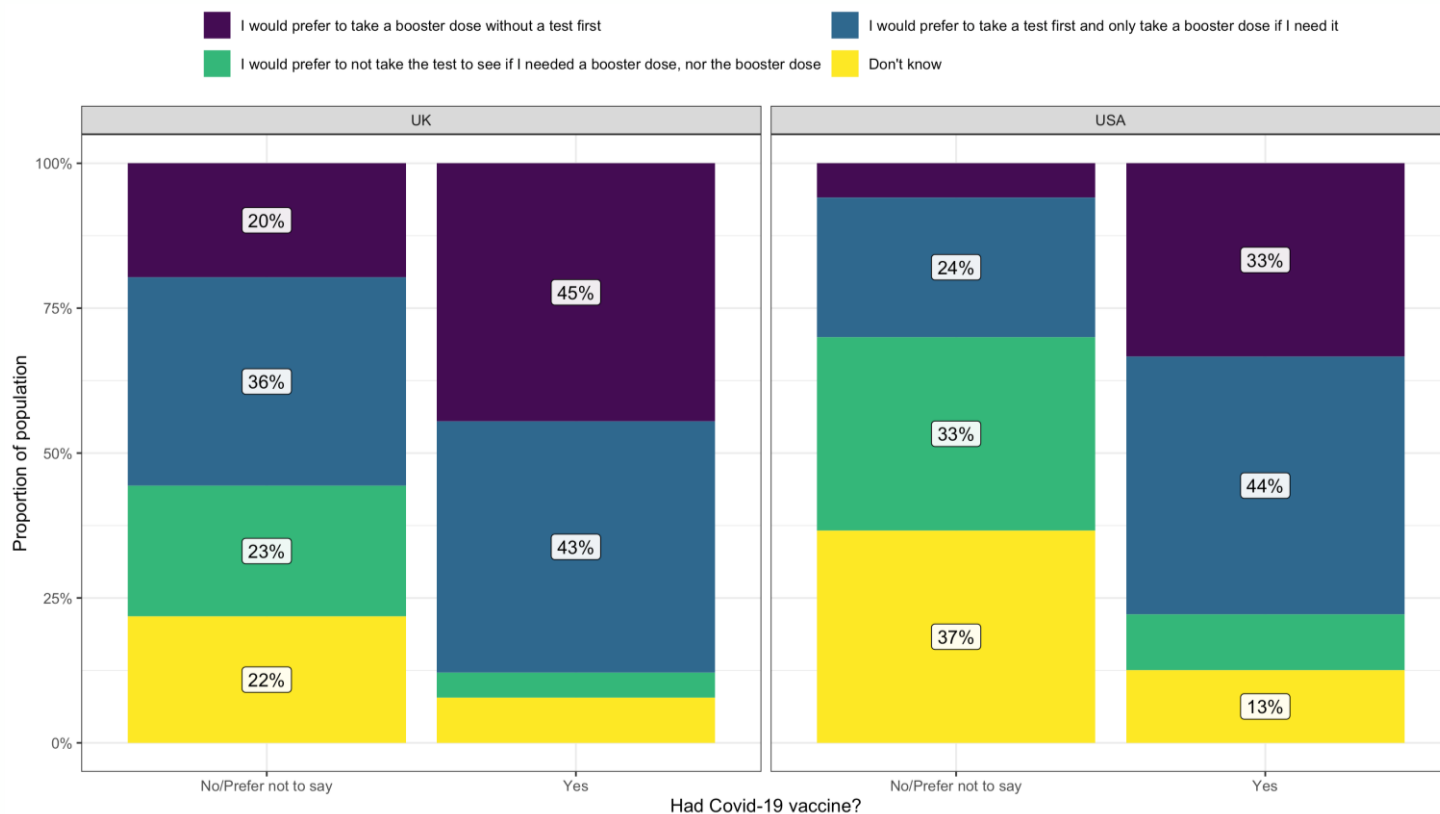
23%

UK respondents who did not report having had a COVID-19 vaccine and would prefer not to take the antibody test nor the booster dose

33%

USA respondents who did not report having had a COVID-19 vaccine and would prefer not to take the antibody test nor the booster dose

Some people may need an additional COVID-19 booster shot to make sure they continue to be protected from the virus. Which ONE, if any, of the following would you MOST prefer?



Vaccine uptake was higher among survey respondents in the UK than in the USA

As of June 7th, 2021, 79% of respondents in the UK had received at least 1 dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 64% in the USA. The distribution by age group varied significantly in the UK, which may reflect the fact that the vaccine was not available to all adults over 18 at the time of the survey. In general, it appears that there is higher vaccine uptake in the UK than in the USA. This is clearer in the older age groups, which had been eligible for COVID-19 vaccines the longest at the time of the survey. For example, in the UK, 94% of females and 95% of males aged 55+ had received at least 1 dose of the vaccine, compared to 72% of females and 75% of males in this same age group in the USA.

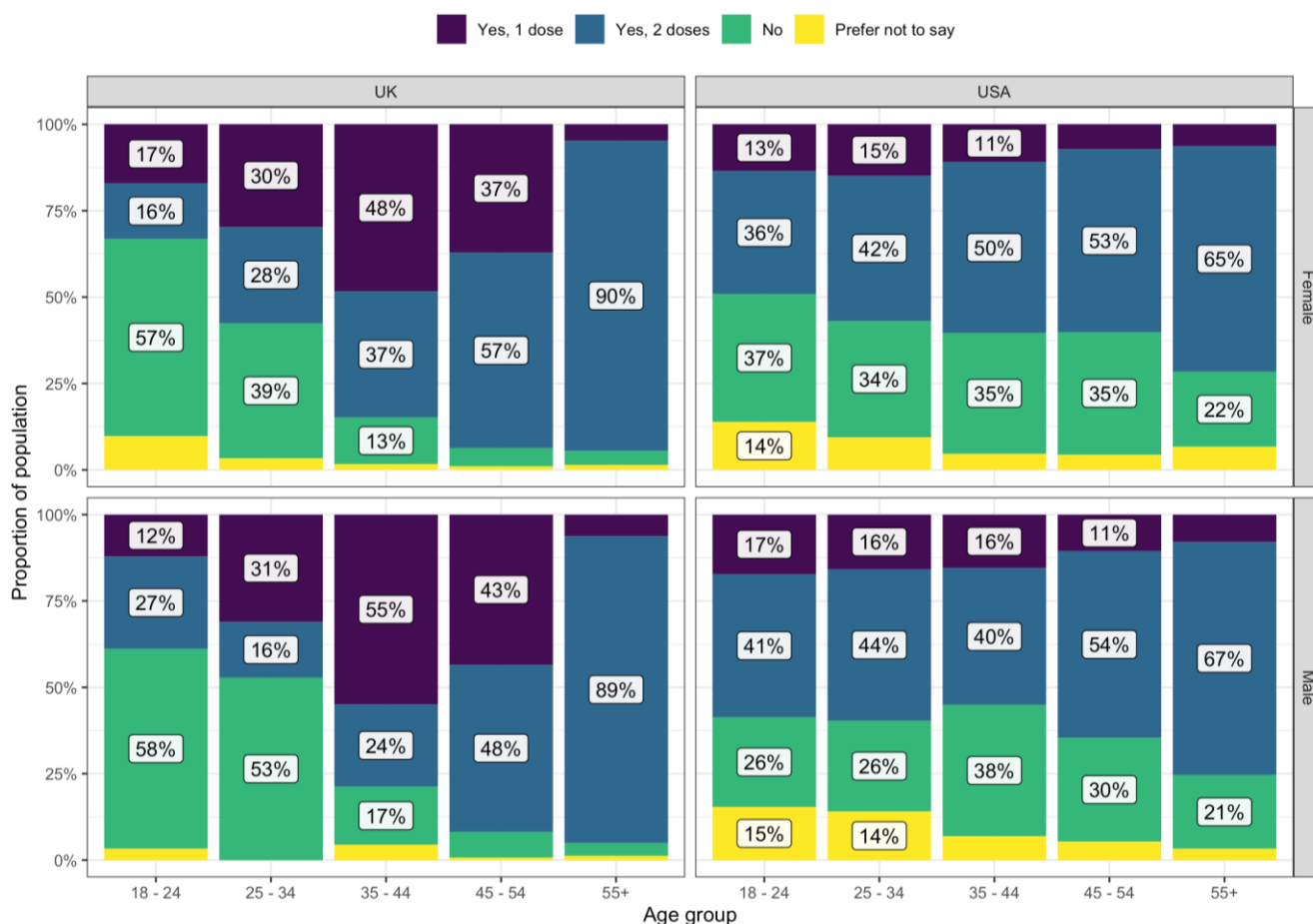
79%

UK respondents who had received at least 1 dose

64%

USA respondents who had received at least 1 dose

Have you been vaccinated for COVID-19 yet?



Similar shares of respondents stated having had COVID-19 in the UK and the USA

As of June 7th, 2021, 16% of respondents in the UK and 17% of respondents in the USA stated they had had COVID-19, either confirmed by a test or because they thought they had had it. The share of those who had COVID-19 was lowest among the older age groups in both countries. In the UK, 82% of females and 79% of males aged 55+ stated they had not had COVID-19, compared to 78% of females and 81% of males in the same age group in the USA.

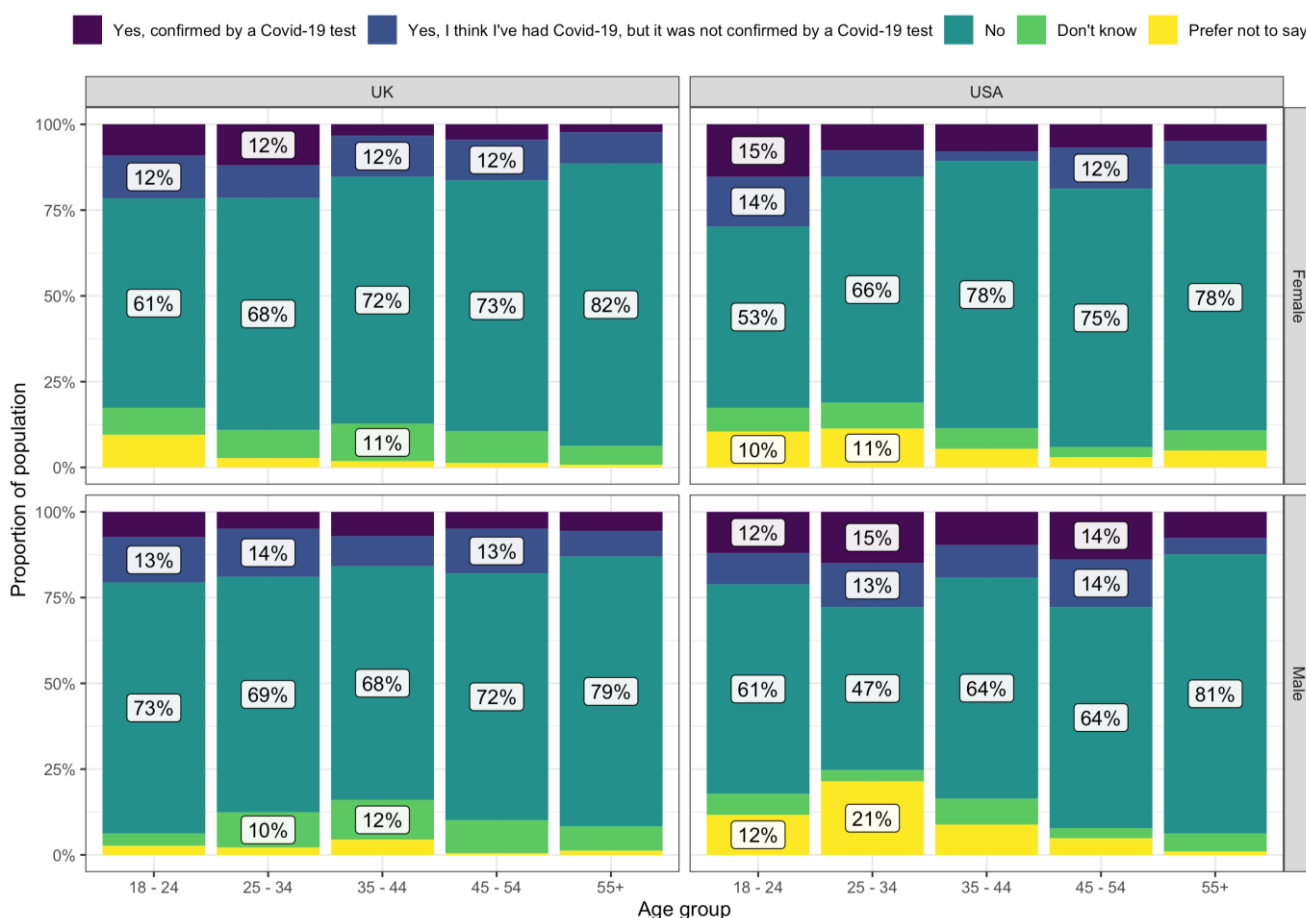
16%

UK respondents who have had COVID-19

17%

USA respondents who have had COVID-19

Have you had COVID-19? Either confirmed by a test or because you think you have had it



Countries included in this report

This table shows the countries included in this report, dates of the survey and the number of participants

This report looks at USA and UK survey responses from early June 2021. The table below indicates the survey dates and the number of respondents per country.

Country	Survey date	Number of Participants
United Kingdom	June 4 – June 7	2,060
United States	June 3 – June 6	1,413

Collaborators and supporters

Led by Imperial College London's Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI) and YouGov

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The members of the BeSD COVID-19 working group are: Neetu Abad (United States Centers for Disease Control); Helena Ballester Bon (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]); Cornelia Betsch (University of Erfurt, Germany); Noel Brewer (University of North Carolina, United States of America); Melissa Gilkey (University of North Carolina, United States of America); Julie Leask (University of Sydney, Australia); Abdul Momin Kazi (Aga Khan University, Pakistan); Ana Lisa Ong-Lim (University of the Philippines, Manila); Aaron Scherer (University of Iowa, United States of America); Holly Seale (University of New South Wales, Australia); Gilla Shapiro (University of Toronto, Canada); Smita Singh (Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance); Gillian SteelFisher (Harvard University, United States of America); Kerrie Wiley (University of Sydney, Australia); Charles Wiysonge (Cochrane South Africa). Lisa Menning and Francine Ganter Restrepo from WHO serve as the group Secretariat.

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Realised by



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Supporters



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Question for the research team? Get in touch [here](#)

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For more behavioural data on a global level, visit coviddatahub.com to explore our interactive charts

The [CovidDataHub.com](https://coviddatahub.com) project is a joint collaboration between the Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI) at Imperial College London and YouGov Plc to gather global insights on people's behaviours and life satisfaction in response to COVID-19. The research has covered 29 countries, areas or territories and surveys are conducted on a regular basis since the first week of April 2020.

This report is designed to provide insights on how different populations are responding to the pandemic, helping public health bodies in their efforts to limit the impact of the disease. Anonymised respondent-level data are generously made available for all public health and academic institutions globally. Please contact j.alford@imperial.ac.uk for access to the data included in this report.

In collaboration with