

Half of people will find it harder to follow lockdown rules the longer it continues, new study shows

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The study says almost a third of people admitted to breaking or ‘bending’ the rules. Credit: University of York

Nearly half the people (48%) questioned in a survey about the lockdown said that they will find it harder to follow the rules the longer it continues and almost a third of people admitted to breaking or 'bending' the rules.

The research—from the University of York's Law School—also found that a factor driving people to comply with the lockdown was a strong sense of owing an obligation to NHS workers (78%) - which rated above the obligation to their families at 76%.

Significant problem

The pandemic and ensuing lockdown has left around 21% of people experiencing a significant problem around mental health; 17 % around loneliness and 17% about money.

The study—funded by the Nuffield Foundation—was compiled from a representative national survey of 1,700 people to better understand [public attitudes](#) to the lockdown. The report is the preliminary findings of an 18-month research project to understand more about how people understand the rules, if they see themselves as compliant, what drives compliance, and how the rules relate to ordinary perceptions of rights.

Other key findings include:

- Approximately half (52%) indicated they will find it harder to comply should the lockdown rules become stricter against 48% who said they would follow the rules if the lockdown became stricter.
- While most respondents are following the lockdown rules, a sizeable proportion of them reported failing to observe strict compliance with 31.8% of respondents having broken or 'bent' a restriction at least once during the 7-day period preceding the survey.
- Most people saw the lockdown as violating various 'rights' but felt that the violation was acceptable in the circumstances of the current pandemic.
- There was a slight lean towards willingness to trade privacy to

shorten the length of the lockdown with 54% willing to sacrifice some of their privacy and 39% were not.

Report author Dr. Joe Tomlinson from York Law School said: "An examination of how the public understand and experience the lockdown, and the significance of these perceptions for compliance, is essential to developing a clear picture of how the [lockdown](#) restrictions are working. Understanding the role of law in society, and not only in strict 'legal' terms, has rarely been so important.

More information: Law and Compliance during COVID-19: Interim Report 1: Public Attitudes on Compliance with COVID-19 Lockdown Restrictions: drive.google.com/file/d/1bIWWN...PrZehTyrqqhmbCt/view

Provided by University of York

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