

52% of those who 'definitely wouldn't' get vaccinated have gotten jabs

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Half (52 percent) of those who said they would definitely not get a COVID-19 vaccine when asked back in November/December 2020 have now done so, indicating that many people's hesitancy has disappeared since the UK's vaccine rollout began, according to a new study.

Among people who said they were not very or not at all likely to accept a

[vaccine](#) when asked last year, an even greater share—84 percent—have since been vaccinated.

The research, by King's College London and the University of Bristol, is based on a survey of 4,896 UK adults aged 18 to 75 conducted between 1 and 16 April. It follows up a study in Nov/Dec 2020 and tracks 1,879 of the same individuals to see how their views have changed and why.

The analysis reveals that, overall, 94 percent of people who have been invited for a vaccine have taken up the offer—but despite this, there's a need to avoid complacency, as vaccine intentions and beliefs still vary among different groups, potentially undermining the very high levels of coverage needed to stay on track for a further easing of lockdown, and leaving some communities more exposed.

How people changed their minds on getting vaccinated

Among those who have not yet been offered a COVID vaccine, there has also been a significant change in intention to get vaccinated: many people who were previously skeptical about doing so now indicate that they are very likely to or definitely will.

Of those who said in Nov/Dec 2020 that they were not very or not at all likely to get a vaccine once it became available, 52 percent say they're now certain or very likely to do so—although only 15 percent of those who were previously definite that they wouldn't get the vaccine have changed their minds in this way.

Varying vaccine intentions, beliefs and anti-vax messages

Across different ethnic and [religious groups](#) surveyed, there have been big increases in COVID vaccine confidence since last year—although some groups are more confident than others:

- Thirty-six percent of people from ethnic minorities said they were certain or very likely to get vaccinated when asked in Nov/Dec 2020—compared with 72 percent of this group who now say they have the same high likelihood or have already been vaccinated. Among [white people](#), the proportion saying the same has increased from 56 percent to 87 percent.
- And 67 percent of Muslims now express such vaccine confidence—up from 23 percent last year. But this is still considerably lower than Anglicans, for example, 94 percent of whom say they are certain or very likely to get a COVID vaccine or have already had one. However, further analysis suggests it is not [religious practice](#) itself that is driving these different vaccine intentions.

The Muslim community stand out for certain beliefs about COVID vaccines:

- Muslims (19 percent) are four times as likely as the public overall (five percent) to think the vaccines contain pork products.
- Twenty-nine per cent believe people who have had the coronavirus vaccine may find it harder to have children in future—compared with seven percent of the population overall who believe this claim.
- Forty-one percent think it's true that the AstraZeneca vaccine causes blood clots—almost double the 23 percent of the general public who believe this.

Misinformation is also still a problem: 43 percent of the public now say they've seen or heard messages encouraging people not to get a COVID

vaccine since the start of the pandemic—up from 35 percent in Nov/Dec 2020. This increase is reflected across nearly all the ethnic and religious groups surveyed.

Trust is key to increasing vaccine take-up

Some groups are less trusting than others of the NHS, and some place greater [trust](#) in [religious leaders](#) when it comes to COVID and the response.

Thirty-six percent of people from [ethnic minority](#) groups say they have a great deal of trust in the NHS—compared with 55 percent of white people who say the same. However, 84 percent of ethnic minorities still say they have at least a fair amount of trust in the health service.

Of all the religious groups surveyed, Anglicans have the most faith in the NHS—61 percent trust it a great deal, compared with 39 percent of Muslims who trust it to such an extent.

Based on their past experience of NHS care, ethnic minorities (66 percent) are less likely than white people (78 percent) to trust those looking after them.

Similarly, across the different religions, Muslims are least likely to trust those caring for them in the health service. Seventy-one percent agree that they trust them, but only 20 percent strongly agree that this is the case. This compares with 41 percent of Anglicans who strongly feel this way.

Muslims also place the greatest trust in their faith leaders, with 56 percent trusting them a great deal or fair amount on issues relating to COVID and how we should be responding to it. They are followed by Catholics, 42 percent of whom trust their religious leaders to this extent,

while only 30 percent of Anglicans do the same.

Dr. Siobhan McAndrew, Senior Lecturer in Quantitative Social Science at the University of Bristol, said: "The high rates accepting the invitation to take up a vaccine are extremely encouraging. Convergence over time in vaccine confidence among members of different ethnic and religious groups provides evidence of a strong pro-vaccine norm.

"There is an apparently large difference in intention to get vaccinated between religious groups, with Muslims in particular standing out—but when we control for characteristics associated with religion, such as ethnicity, immigration status, social class and age, these differences are much reduced, suggesting that it's not religious belief in itself that's the driver. Nevertheless, the connections that the religiously-active have with religious peers, faith community leaders and with the NHS's diverse workforce serve as a valuable communications resource. Tailored messaging via these channels will address specific community needs, reassure the cautious, and support vaccine confidence."

More information: COVID-19: vaccine take-up and trust.
[www.kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute ... ake-up-and-trust.pdf](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute...ake-up-and-trust.pdf)

Provided by University of Bristol

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