

Attitudes toward mandatory COVID-19 vaccination in Germany

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It has become obvious that sufficiently high immunity to COVID-19 cannot be achieved in Germany through voluntary vaccination alone. On this background, Thomas Rieger and Carsten Schröder from the German Institute for Economic Research, Berlin, together with Christoph Schmidt-Petri from the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, investigated the acceptance of a policy of general mandatory vaccination against COVID-19. The scientists also investigated the questions of which

population groups are supportive of such a measure, which ones are opposed, and what their reasons are, respectively.

The authors used for their analysis representative data from the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP). The SOEP consists of a random sample from the population resident in Germany, whose members participate in annual surveys. Because of the far-reaching consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SOEP 2021 was enhanced by including a new COVID-19 survey module. In the time period from January through December 2021, 17,132 participants were interviewed regarding their attitudes regarding a policy of general mandatory vaccination against COVID-19. Furthermore, data were collected on participants' sociodemographic characteristics, health, political attitudes, and trust in the legal and [political systems](#). The authors used univariate, bivariate, and multivariate statistical analyses to evaluate these data.

They found that a slight majority of survey participants were supportive of mandatory general vaccination against COVID-19. The primary reason given was the [attitude](#) that otherwise, not enough people would undergo vaccination. The most important reason given by those opposed to mandatory vaccination was the desire for individual freedom of choice. The group of supporters were older, fewer of them had received tertiary education, they were less healthy, tended to have no children, had centrist political orientations, and had more trust in politics. These differences were, however, not terribly pronounced compared with the group of opponents of mandatory vaccination. The biggest difference actually consisted in the fact that notably more supporters were vaccinated against COVID-19 than opponents (90% versus 60%).

In the authors' view, future analyses should investigate the question of how attitudes towards mandatory COVID-19 vaccination change over time and can be influenced. In this context, in addition to whether or not mandatory vaccination is introduced in Germany, it is likely to play a

role how this would be implemented in detail.

More information: [Attitudes Toward Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination in Germany](#)

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