

## Global survey shows COVID-related concern at record lows in Sweden

The proportion of Swedes reporting strong concern about the economic impact of COVID-19 drops to 37% (from 65% in April), compared to 49% in Germany and 70% in Great Britain. Meanwhile, levels of concern for personal and family health are lower in Sweden than in other surveyed European countries. These are results from the fifth edition of the international Covid Opinion Tracker, a survey conducted by Kekst CNC with 1,000 respondents in each of France, Japan, Great Britain, Sweden, Germany, and the United States.

**Stockholm, October 13th 2020** – Sweden continues to stand out for its comparatively positive view of the pandemic situation in the September survey.

Although individuals across countries prioritise reduced transmission over economic recovery, the gap between the two is diminishing. Sweden leads this trend alongside France and Germany. The gap has dropped from 30 percentage points in April to 8 percentage points today. In Britain the gap is 25 percentage points, although there too the gap is closing.

### Faith in Swedish institutions grows

Approval of institutions has increased across the board. The Public Health Agency of Sweden enjoys a net approval score of 44 (share that approves of pandemic response minus the share that disapproves). Net approval for the Public Health Agency is negative only among Sweden Democrat voters.

Sweden's upward trend stands apart from developments in Germany, Great Britain, and France. In those countries, public approval is waning for institutions such as the government, health system, and WHO. For example, Germany's Ministry of Health saw net approval drop from 42 in the previous survey to 34.

In the light of the heated debate playing out since spring regarding Sweden's choice of strategy, we also examined public sentiment toward a full lockdown. The data shows that 48% support the Swedish strategy of avoiding a full lockdown while 26% deem it a mistake. In sum, the survey points to significant support for Sweden's strategy and its architects.

Citizens continue to give their political leaders low scores. Angela Merkel is the exception, though her net approval score has dropped from 42 to 33. Swedish PM Stefan Löfven scores a 3. As for the other leaders Donald Trump scores -11, Emmanuel Macron scores -21, and Boris Johnson scores -24. Notably, the French give president Emmanuel Macron a lower score than the Americans do President Donald Trump.

### Bracing for a second wave with relative confidence

A majority of respondents expect a second wave within a year. 39% of Swedes surveyed believe the government is well prepared for a second wave, the second highest figure in the survey. The corresponding figure for Germany is 44% whereas all other countries come in below 30%.

When asked about the future, 73% of British participants say they are more worried about the future of their country than they have ever been before. The corresponding figures for France, the U.S., Japan, and Germany are 65%, 62%, 62%, and 55%. The Swedish figure is 44%, making Sweden the country with by far the lowest level of concern for the future. High income earners, Moderate Party voters, and residents of Norrland (Northern Sweden) are least concerned.

Sweden also stands out regarding attitudes towards forthcoming vaccines. 42% report that they likely or definitely would not take a coronavirus vaccine. However, given a scenario where a vaccine has been tested as thoroughly as regular medicines and been approved by the WHO 75% state that they would likely or very likely be vaccinated. We also see potential similarities to the swine flu vaccine acting as a deterrent.

## **The post-coronavirus economy**

A majority of Swedes, 54%, want to see pharmaceuticals play a bigger role in the future economy. This probably reflects the need for rapidly producing a vaccine for COVID-19. Conversely, 39% of Swedes say they want aviation to play a smaller role after the pandemic while only 12% want it to play a bigger role. This may be an effect of the debate on climate change.

## **About the survey**

This survey was conducted by Kekst CNC Research among randomly recruited online panels consisting of 1,000 respondents in each of France, Great Britain, Sweden, Germany, the United States, and Japan during September 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> 2020. Basic demographic criteria were applied to ensure that the sample reflects the composition of each population. This is the fifth survey in a series conducted by Kekst CNC starting this April to monitor sentiments regarding the pandemic.

Kekst CNC's global research offering combines qualitative and quantitative products and services that are currently used by more than a hundred organizations worldwide. Our research products measure sentiments in public, employee, investor and other specialized audiences with a focus on identifying risks and opportunities faced by clients.

**For the full report, follow this [link](#).**

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