

## International Survey on COVID-19:

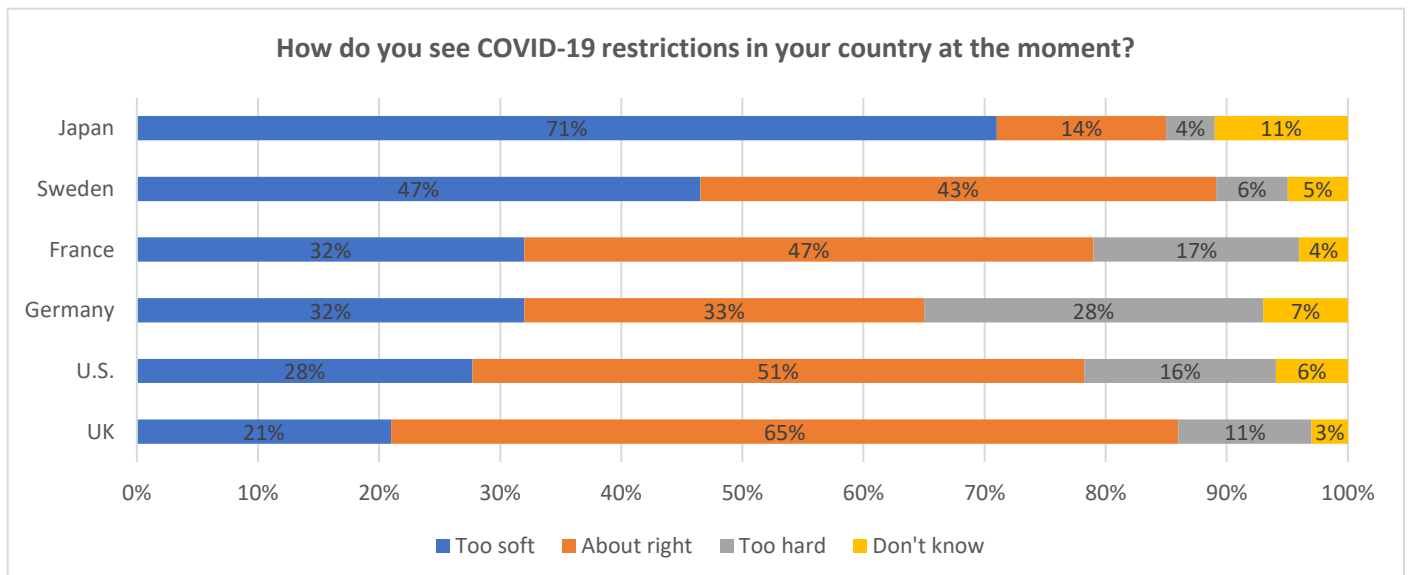
### Japan stands out as the country with highest and increasing concerns to COVID-19 since February leading to strong demands for tougher restrictions and a faster vaccine rollout

- Japan is only country where majority of respondents think that current restrictions are too soft (71%)
- Deep plunge in approval for Japanese government against backdrop of general handling of COVID-19 situation including dissatisfaction with speed of vaccine rollout
- 63% of Japanese oppose to holding the Tokyo Olympic Games this summer; also opposed in the UK, Germany, Sweden and France
- Japan has the highest number of people wanting to go back to the office (43%)

**Tokyo, 13 May 2021** – The 8<sup>th</sup> Kekst CNC COVID-19 international tracking survey shows that Japanese people – different from their peers in other major countries – show demand for tougher COVID-19 restrictions. This feeling is based on the highest levels of concern and a deep dissatisfaction about the vaccine rollout so far. Likewise, the Japanese are strongly opposed to holding the Olympic Games in Tokyo this summer, an attitude shared by people in the UK, Germany, Sweden and France.

#### Various COVID-19 concerns, longer-lasting impact, and soft restrictions

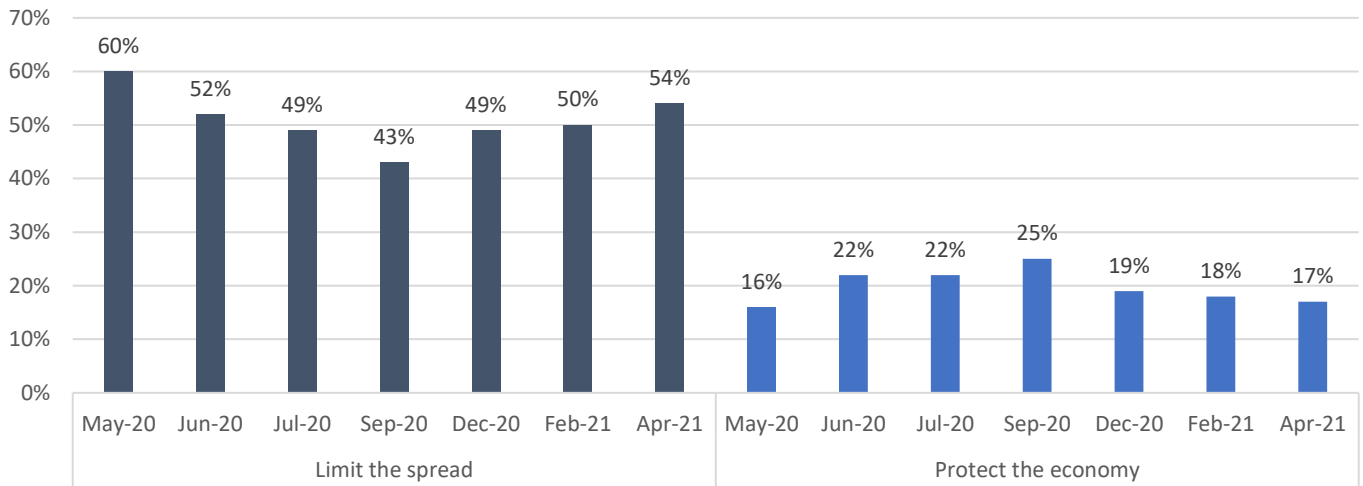
The research, carried out among a representative sample of 1,000 adults each in the UK, U.S., Germany, Sweden, France and Japan (6,000 adults in total) between 22 and 30 April, shows Japan as the only country where concerns about the economy as a whole (France also sees an increase), about businesses in their country, about their household finances, about health of people in the country as a whole (Germany also sees an increase) and their family's health than in any other country tracked have increased since February. Japan also has a very high share of people expecting the impact of the pandemic on various aspects to last at least another year ranging from 71-79% of all Japanese respondents. Additionally, 71% of Japanese feel that restrictions are too soft, a much higher share than in any other country surveyed.



#### Prioritization of limiting the spread over protecting the economy

This comes as no surprise as the percentage of Japanese respondents wishing the government to prioritize limiting the spread of COVID-19 has risen continuously since September 2020 to 54% in the last survey. At the same time, the percentage of those preferring the government to protect the economy went down from 25% to 17%.

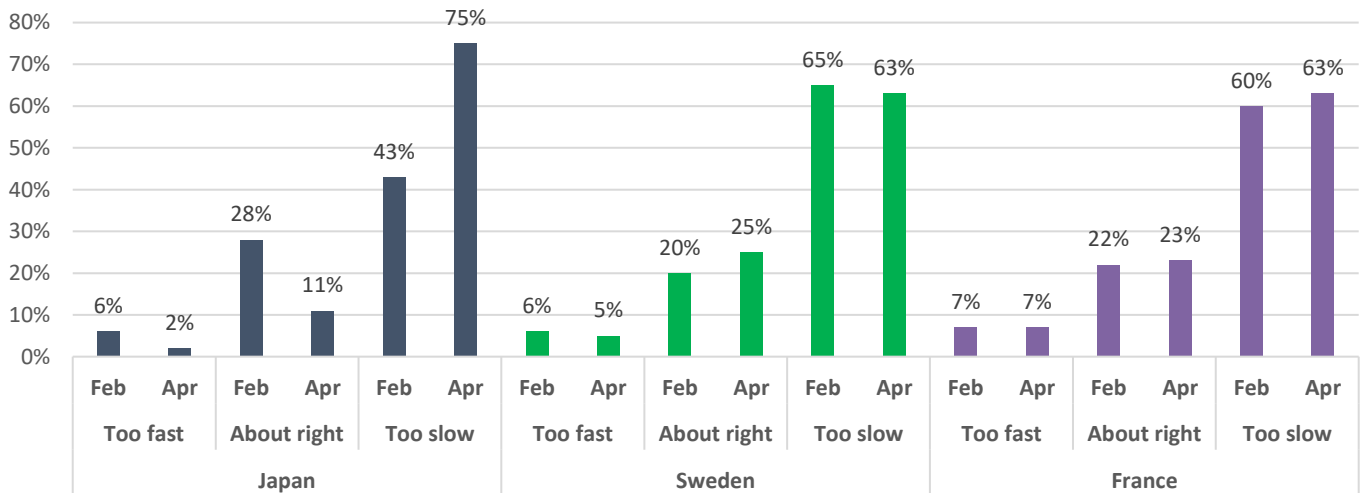
**Should the priority for the Japanese Government be to limit the spread of the disease and the number of deaths or to avert a major recession or depression, protecting many jobs and businesses?**



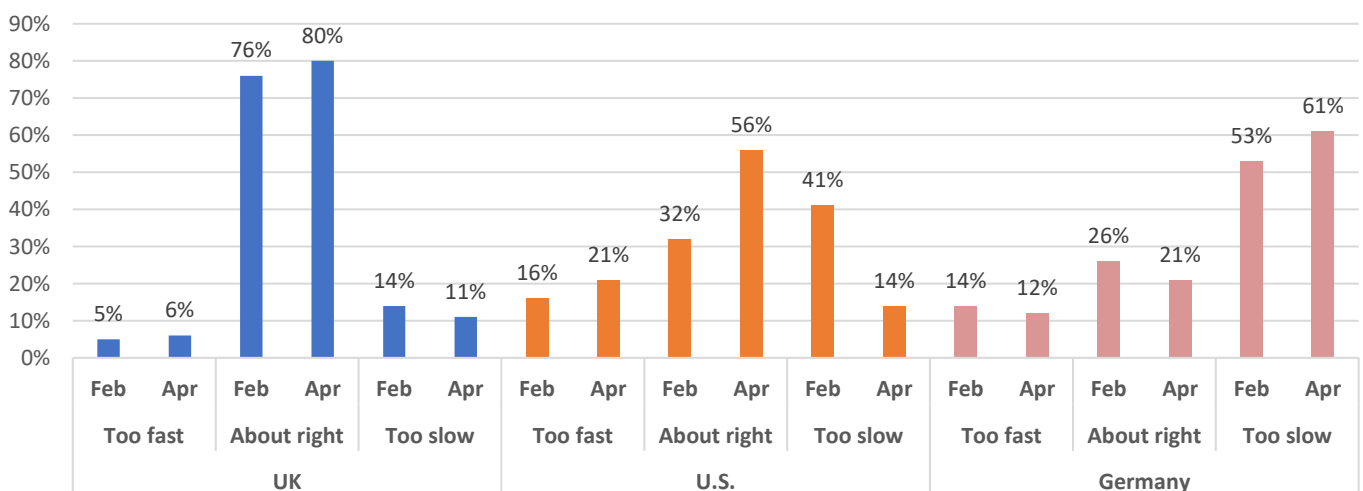
**Dissatisfaction with speed of the vaccine rollout**

The Japanese are deeply dissatisfied with the speed of the vaccine rollout with 75% saying it is too slow. This is by far the highest figure by international comparison and a remarkable change from February when only 43% answered this way. In countries like the UK, the U.S. or Sweden, figures of dissatisfied people are not only much lower but have also decreased since February.

**How do you find the speed of the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in your country?**

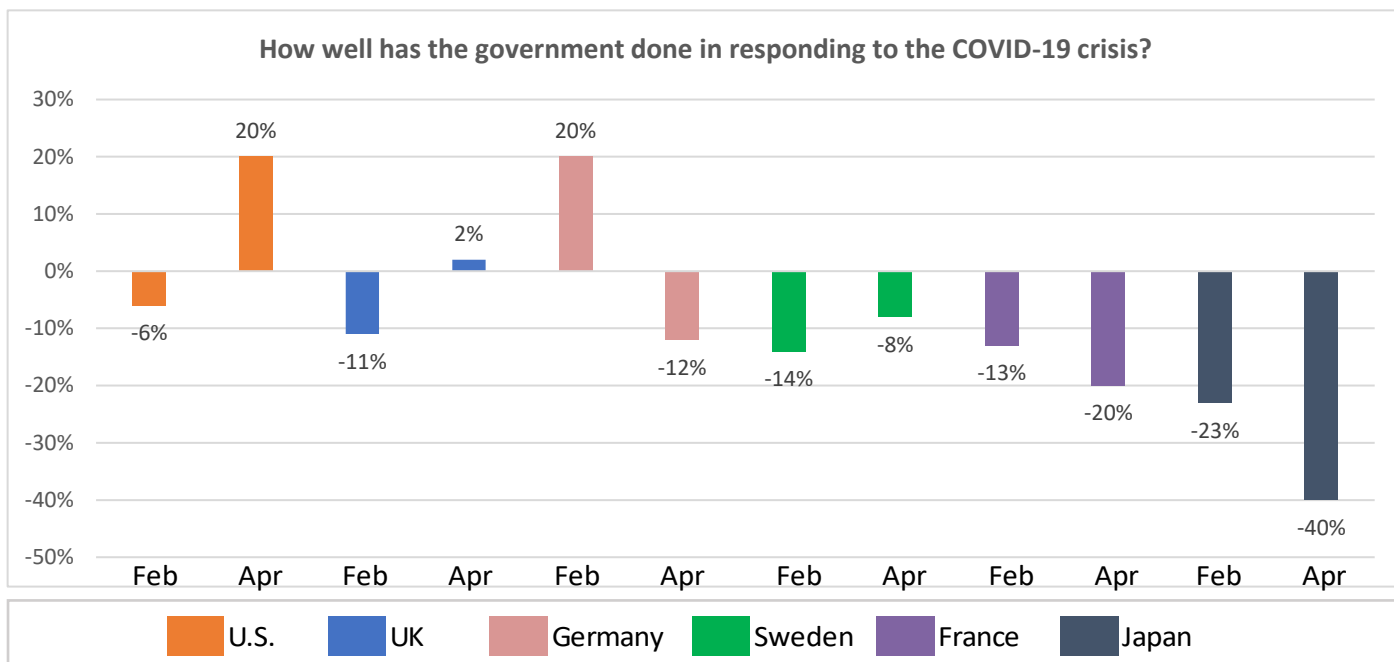


**How do you find the speed of the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in your country?**



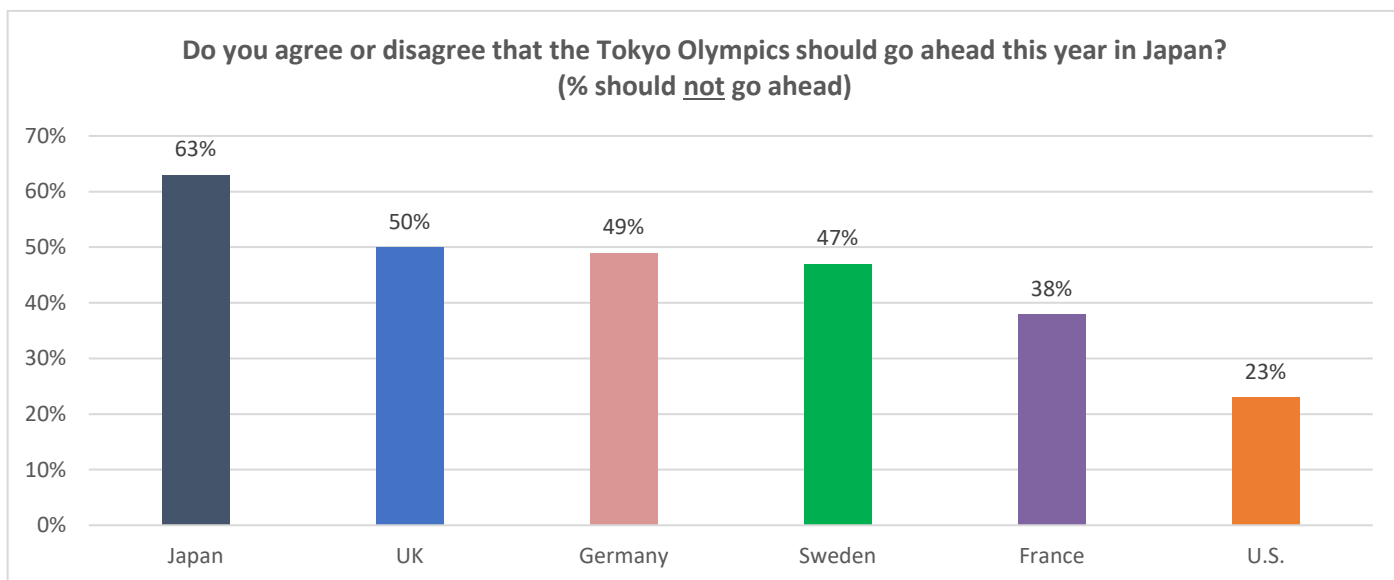
### Low ratings for the Japanese government's handling of COVID-19

While the central governments and health authorities in the UK, the U.S. and Sweden have all improved their net ratings for handing COVID-19 since February significantly with extremely positive ratings in the UK and the U.S, net ratings have gone down slightly in France and strongly in Japan and Germany. Japan stands out with the most negative ratings for the government at a net rating of minus 40%, which is more than 20% lower than any other country.



### Opposition to the Tokyo Olympics

Turning to the future, 63% of the Japanese are opposed to holding the Tokyo Olympics this year (a rise from 56% in February), while only 15% agree they should go ahead. Additionally, the majority in the UK, Germany, Sweden responded that they should not go ahead and in France, the opponents (38%) outweigh the proponents (27%). Only in the U.S., proponents (44%) outweigh opponents (23%) with 33% either undecided or without an opinion.

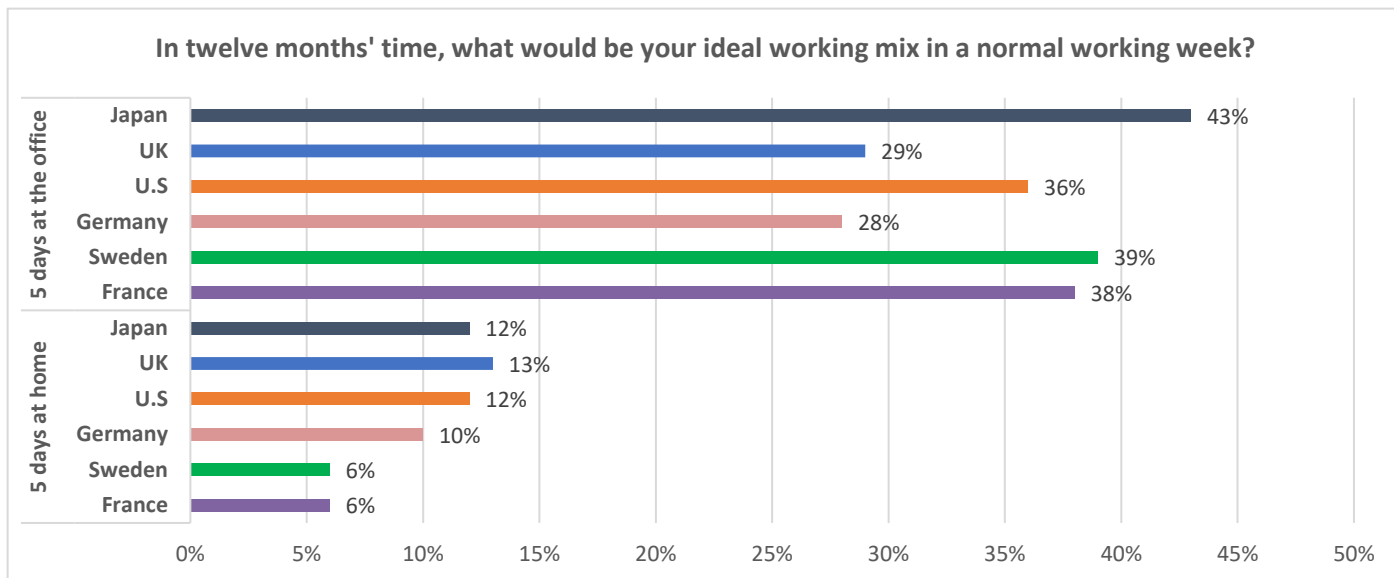


When people in Japan were asked whether they would follow the Tokyo Olympics on TV in case the Games were held, 18% replied they would not follow them at all and 27% answered less than the usual Olympic Games. By contrast, only 8% replied they would follow them on TV more than usual Olympic Games with 38% following them on TV as much as usual Olympic Games (9% were undecided).

### Japan's preference for back to 5 days at the office

In another future-oriented area, respondents were asked what the ideal working mix would be between working at home and office one year from now. The result might be surprising for those predicting a clear preference for telework. 64% of workers globally want to spend three days or more per week in the office as opposed to their home. 45% overall want some degree of flexibility with at least one day per week at home and at the office. The Japanese stand out with 43% responding

that the prefer a 5-day office week, by far the highest figure by international comparison. The older the population, the more they preferred having 5 days at the office, demonstrated by 37% of 18-24-year-olds and 55% of 55-64-year-olds preferring working the full week in the office.



Commenting on these findings, Jochen Legewie, Chairman Asia and Managing Director Japan of Kekst CNC, said, “Different from other countries, concerns of Japanese about COVID-19 are on the rise, which is mainly due to the government’s handling of the situation including the slow vaccine rollout and its insistence on going ahead with the Tokyo Olympic plans. Without addressing these issues in a fast and convincing way, the Japanese government will likely further lose the trust of its people and face significant headwinds in the upcoming fall elections.”

**Methodology and full results**

- Nationally representative sample of 1,000 adults each in the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Sweden, France and Japan.
- Fieldwork took place on 22-30 April 2021.
- Quotas and weights on gender, age and region in each country.
- Margins of error of +/- 3.3% for all countries.

Full results of the survey available at: <https://www.kekstcnc.com/insights/covid-19-opinion-tracker-edition-8>

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As trusted advisors, the firm contributes its expertise on such high-stake matters as: M&A, shareholder activism and governance, crisis communications, restructurings, regulatory investigations, litigation support, investor relations, IPO communications, issues and reputation management, change management and employee engagement, as well as digital and social communications. The Tokyo office has been serving its Japanese and international clients since 2004.

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