

**COVID Pandemic: Information and Behavior Survey  
Short Summary**

“COVID Pandemic: Information and Behavior” Survey was conducted between December 3 and December 14, 2020 within the framework of “Promoting Adherence to Rules During Coronavirus Pandemic Through Public Communication” research project, funded by Manoogian Simone Research Fund. An invitation to complete a survey with corresponding link was sent to randomly generated mobile phone numbers, soliciting participation and informing potential participants that some survey respondents will have an opportunity to win 10,000 AMD to be charged to their mobile numbers. A total of 1102 responses were received, making the sample representative of the country population overall.

**Demographics and socio-economic status**

About 36% of the respondents are from Yerevan, 37% are from other urban settlements and 27% are from villages; 45% are male, 56% are female. Respondents’ age varies from 18 to 84, mean is 34. Education levels range from elementary (2%) to postgraduate (PhD and similar, 6%); most respondents (24%) report having a Bachelor’s degree. Income distribution of the surveyed sample is presented in Table 1.

*Table 1. What was the total amount of your net (tax-deductible) cash income last month?*

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No income	379	34.39	34.39
Up to 92,000 AMD	186	16.88	51.27
92,001- 120,000 AMD	144	13.07	64.34
120,001- 180,000 AMD	129	11.71	76.04
180,001 - 500,000 AMD	126	11.43	87.48
500,001- 1,000,000 AMD	26	2.36	89.84
More than 1,000,000 AMD	7	.64	90.47
Hard to answer	42	3.81	94.28
Refuse to answer	63	5.72	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1102</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Opinions about COVID-19 Pandemic**

Some 42% consider their risk of being infected with COVID as either very high (13%) or high (29%) as compared to 39% of respondents considering it a low (29%) or a very low (10%) risk. About one-fifth of the respondents don’t know what the level of risk is. Overall, people are rather concerned about the risks, although there is also evidence of uncertainty reflected in the high percentage of those saying “don’t know.” People seem to be somewhat more worried about contracting the virus than about transmitting it: 33% are concerned about the risk of transmitting it to others with 9% considering it a very high risk and 24% considering it a high risk. The majority (54%) think that their risk of transmitting it to others is either low (33%) or very low (21%). Figure 1 below presents the details.

When asked about preventive measures they take against the COVID-19 disease, most survey respondents report wearing a mask (80%), regularly washing/disinfecting their hands (68%), keeping a 1.5 meters distance from others when outside (46%) and avoiding crowded places (46%). More than one-third of the respondents (36%) leave home for absolute necessities only. Most people (53%) report that other people around them tend to wear a mask: when asked if people in their surrounding wear a mask while outside, 14% of the respondents

said “almost everyone wears a mask” while another 39% said “the majority wears a mask” as reported in Table 2.

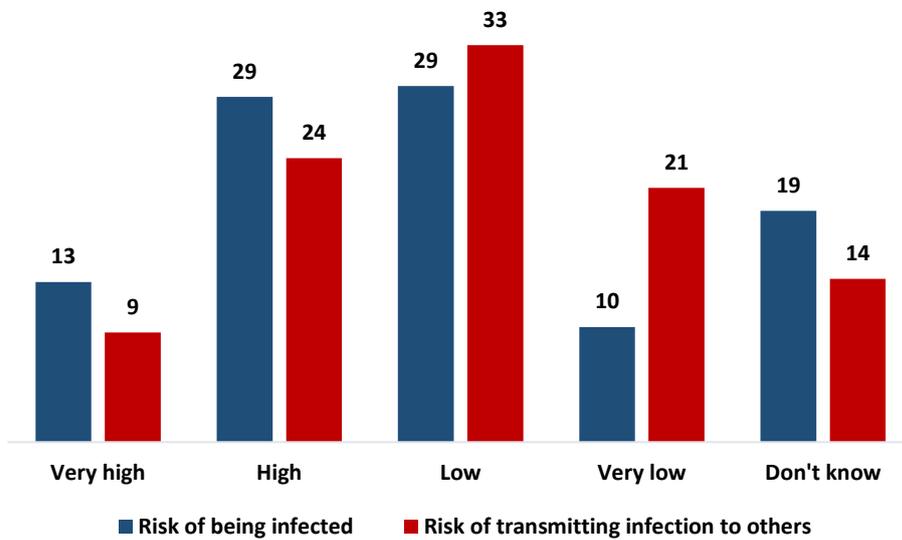


Figure 1. Perceived risks of contracting and transmitting COVID-19, %

Table 2. Do people in your surroundings wear masks while being outside among other people?

	Frequency	Percent
Almost no one wears a mask	36	3.27
Some do, the majority does not	339	30.76
The number of those wearing a mask and those who do not is equal	127	11.52
The majority wears a mask	427	38.75
Almost everyone wears a mask	154	13.97
Hard to answer	19	1.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>1102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

When asked why they think other people do not wear masks or wear them wrongly, most respondents believe that people are inattentive or careless. The second most frequent answer was that people do not believe masks are useful or that they consider wearing a mask inconvenient. Figure 2 presents all the responses.

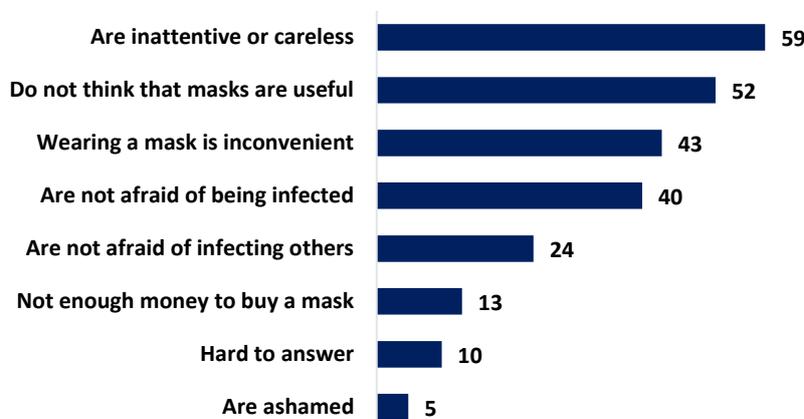


Figure 2. According to you, why do people not wear masks or wear them wrongly in public places? (Choose up to 3 most relevant options), %

An overwhelming majority of people (84%) say they will keep a distance from a person not wearing a mask in a shop or a closed public space; about 43% will ask such a person to wear a mask, 33% will leave the place, as Figure 3 demonstrates.

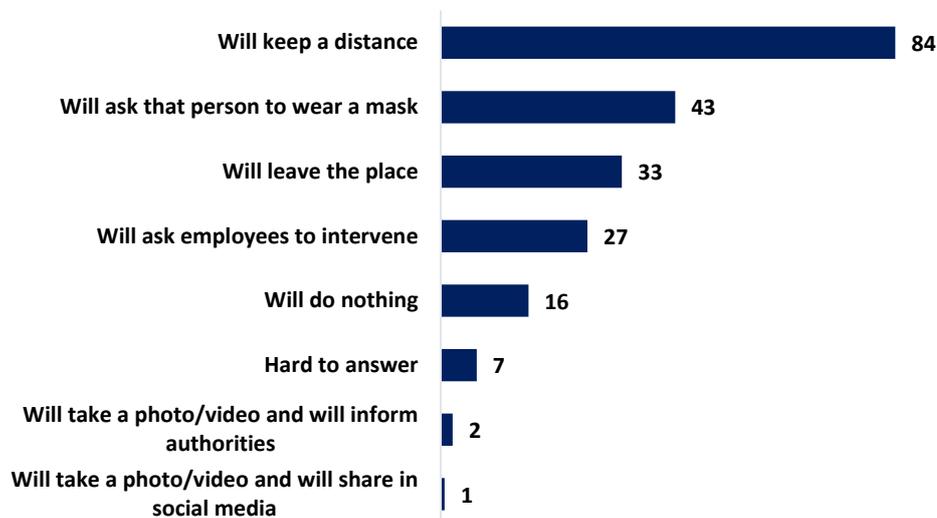


Figure 3. If you see a person without a mask in a shop or in other closed public places what will you do? (Choose up to 3 most relevant options), %

Most respondents (48%) use Armenian TV channels to receive information about the pandemic; Armenian medical and healthcare experts were mentioned by 46% of the respondents as a source of information, another 36% mentioned Armenian online news agencies. Most survey respondents clearly rely on official news sources for information. Social media sources are mentioned by about one-fifth of the respondents, as Figure 4 demonstrates.

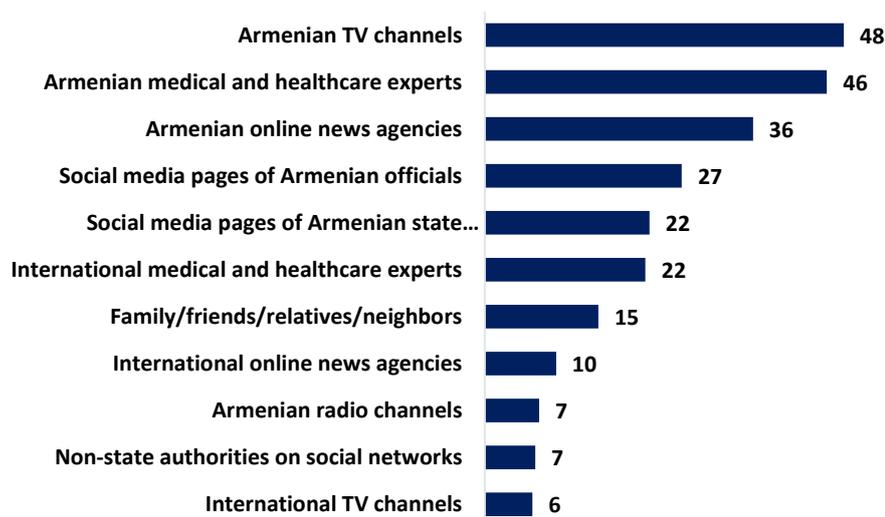


Figure 4. What sources do you mainly use to receive information about the pandemic (list up to the 3 most relevant options)? %

Although people follow the official news sources, and 36% of the respondents trust Minister of Healthcare Arsen Torosyan’s statements about the pandemic, about one-fifth of the

respondents found it hard to say whose statements about the pandemic they trust the most, as Table 3 demonstrates. Other medical or healthcare professionals are trusted by about 15% of the respondents. These findings combined with the previous findings on sources followed show that Armenians do follow the official news sources (with TV being clearly more important than social media) and are willing to listen to healthcare professionals but there is a substantial proportion of people still confused about who to trust.

Table 3. Whose statements about the pandemic do you trust the most?

	Frequency	Percent
Minister of Healthcare Arsen Torosyan	395	35.84
Hard to answer	218	19.78
Other medical or healthcare professionals you know	168	15.25
Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan	114	10.34
Epidemiologist Arman Badalyan	75	6.81
Other	43	3.90
Other knowledgeable individuals in your milieu	37	3.36
Vice Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan	26	2.36
Social media influencers	22	2.00
Political opposition figures of Armenia	4	.36
Total	1102	100.0

Pandemic-related information, provided by the Armenian government is rated by most of the respondents as rather understandable, clear, precise, practical and sufficient. When asked to rank the above-mentioned characteristics on a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 stands for “understandable”, “clear” and so on while 1 stands for the opposite (such as “obscure”, “complicated” and so on) all mean scores were above 3.8. The lowest mean score was 3.83 for the “unrealistic vs practical” pair, the highest score was 3.9 for the “complicated vs clear” pair.

There is a certain reservoir of willingness to see more restrictions if the numbers of infected people continue to grow: 48% of the respondents would rather agree (27%) or strongly agree (21%) with restrictions as compared to 37% of strongly (16%) or rather (21%) disagreeing with prospects of more restrictions, as Table 4 shows. About 15% found this question hard to answer.

Table 4. To what extent do you agree to re-imposing severe restrictions or travel restrictions if the number of people infected with the COVID-19 in Armenia continues to grow significantly?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	182	16.52	16.52
Rather disagree	230	20.87	37.39
Rather agree	296	26.86	64.25
Strongly agree	237	21.51	85.75
Hard to answer	157	14.25	100.00
Total	1102	100.0	

About 30% of the respondents think that a fine for not wearing a mask should be up to 5,000 AMD, another 15% think it should be in the 6,000 – 10,000 AMD range. A substantial number of respondents (27%) think there should be no fine for not wearing a mask, as Table 5 demonstrates.

Table 5. In your opinion, what should be the fine for not wearing a mask?

Value Label	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Up to 5,000 AMD	333	30.22	30.22
6,000 - 10,000 AMD	170	15.43	45.64
11,000 - 15,000 AMD	35	3.18	48.82
16,000 - 20,000 AMD	38	3.45	52.27
21,000 - 50,000 AMD	36	3.27	55.54
More than 50,000 AMD	89	8.08	63.61
The is no need for a fine	300	27.22	90.83
Hard to answer	101	9.17	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1102</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Overall, the survey show that people are concerned about the risk of getting infected and claim to follow the three basic rules of wearing the mask, washing hands and keeping a safe distance. People seem to be more concerned of contracting rather than transmitting the disease. Most respondents claim they will keep a distance from someone who does not wear a mask, but they are reluctant to report or confront rule-breakers. Some restrictions are acceptable if needed but steep fines are not favoured. People tend to follow official news sources and listen to healthcare professionals, but many questions received rather large (10%, 15% and in one case 20%) number of “hard to answer” responses, showing the need for more professional and perhaps more targeted communication.