

NPHE – Communications Update

1 October

Quantitative Tracker

The nationally representative sample of 1,650 people conducted on behalf of the Department of Health on 28 Sep, available [here](#) reveals

- The level of worry is increasing, now standing at 6.7/10 similar to the level of worry expressed in April, with the main sources of worry being health system overload, the health of family and friends, and the economy
- 47% think the worst of the pandemic is ahead of us, the highest level reported since April
- 52% think there should be more restrictions, similar to the levels reported in March

Qualitative Tracker

Key insights from the qualitative tracker as at 28 Sep, talking to entrepreneurs, mums with kids at home and community leaders, reveals that:

- Confusion is widespread and has a negative effect on compliance.
 - Guidelines - €9 meal, how many people can I have in my house?
 - Difficulty in understanding probability, exponential growth and risk. People tend to believe that any one measure, if carried out well, should eliminate all risk, and become confused when it does not (e.g. masks, pubs with food)
- The need to make progress on a personal and national level is a dominant theme. Many have not fully understood why authorities are relatively cautious about opening up the country: they believe the risk feels contained (because deaths are low). There is little appreciation of exponential growth, and poor understanding of risk
- Community will bring people through Covid, and the country has a powerful template for community success in the GAA. That institution's ability to mobilise Irish people through deeply understanding our desire to participate, to contribute and to have fun is inspiring. The GAA is a potential powerful ally in keeping the country holistically well
- The entrepreneurial spirit (problem-solving, imagination, making things happen) feels like an important template of success – and a potential inspiration for young people. Critically, entrepreneurs are buoyant chiefly because they are fully occupied
- Leadership in Covid communications must focus on making a cogent case to the Irish people as to WHY the guidelines should be adhered to; this case is different by cohort – and should be framed in a manner which engages.

COVID & Young People

- A recent report from the ECDC has noted reduced compliance by younger people to public health advice.
- However, it is important to bear in mind that this cohort has been severely impacted by the pandemic. The OECD highlights the considerable challenges faced by young people in the fields of education, employment, mental health and disposable income, as well as the fact that youth and future generations will shoulder many of the long-term economic and social consequences of the crisis.
- Again, as noted by the ECDC, in any communication campaign specifically targeting this cohort, it is essential that young people see themselves as part of the solution.
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- Actions to address
 - HSE campaign visualising the virus
 - Engaging influencer organisations
 - Anthropological evaluation of socialising behaviours to develop detailed guidelines
 - Showcasing employer best practice in infection prevention and control
 - Gross Government Workshop / Youth Council