Quantitative Tracker
The nationally representative sample of 1,770 people conducted on behalf of the Department of Health on 5 Oct, available [here](#) reveals

- The level of worry is increasing, now standing at 6.8/10 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
- 52% think the worst of the pandemic is ahead of us, the highest level reported since April
- 63% think there should be more restrictions, similar to the levels reported in March
- 52% now think Ireland is trying to return to normal too quickly with 34% thinking the pace is ‘about right’

Understanding non-compliance among young adults
The Department of Health is undertaking ethnographic research among young adults to understand the reasons behind the low levels of compliance and to identify possible solutions which will enable young adults to live and socialise safely within the public health guidelines. Final results are due on Oct 16. Insights to date include:

- Young Adults stand apart. They need to live life with friends, and exponentially suffer from Covid’s restrictions. They need tailored attention
- They’re bored of home. They desperately seek out novelty, new people, new situations. Variety is the way they want to live their lives. Covid is a waiting game with no end in sight. The absence of hope / an ending is difficult to bear
- The university experience is one of relative isolation: most classes online and few opportunities to meet new people. This is compounded for first years because new friendships are impossible to create online
- They feel it is not fair to be vilified (in the media) for the rise in cases. After all, Young Adults are circulating most (work, college, sport). Their instinct is to close down and block reality.
- Covid is isolating to all age groups – including young adults. While they may not be part of the national narrative on Covid, Young Adults are in it together – but with their mates.

Hypothesis
Very many young adults are disengaged. Covid presents little risk. They do not know the guidelines for socialising, nor much care. For them, socialising is necessary. Many feel the ‘ask’ is too much, so they simply do nothing
A new conversation is required. One that is acknowledging, empathetic in tone, focused only on young adults. It must offer a path: engage them in what they must do, how they should do it, why they should do it, and when it will all end.

**Engaging Young Adults**

1. Recognition and Acknowledgment: *we know your life is worse; we hear you*
2. Invitation to work together: co-create understanding of problem and solutions in a meaningful way
3. Engage: explain the stakes, simplify the guidelines and co-create and share optimal solutions, in targeted communication
4. End game: concrete, meaningful, hopeful plans, to create and look forward to, once all of this is done

**Next Steps**

- Establishment of (informal) Youth Task Force
  - Initial meeting with DoH, HSE, GIS, Spunout, USI, NYCI, BelongTo – 9 Oct
- Debrief of ethnographic research – 16 Oct
- Co-create solutions and identify communications options

**New Advertising Campaign launching**

HSE will launch a new campaign, targeted at young adults to explain how they can socialise safely within the guidelines. Build on the idea that the protective measures form a bubble to protect against COVID 19, the advertising dramatises that the risk of catching COVID is a function of many choices we make every day. The more we protect, the better the safety bubble.

HSE is also working with influencer organisations like the GAA and other sporting bodies to support this campaign.