

## Vaccination Intentions in Germany

### Current SFU Berlin Study: Trust-Building Communication Central to Success of Vaccination Campaign

The outbreak of a pandemic not only raises public anxiety and concerns but potentially also boosts misinformation and stigmatisation. A comprehensive understanding of individual experiences and a resulting diversity of perceptions of the ongoing crisis are critical for successful vaccination campaigns.

With a mixed methods approach including a representative online survey ( $N = 933$ ) and 41 follow-up interviews, the Institute for Psychological Research at the Sigmund Freud University Berlin has, for the first time, provided a comprehensive picture on this matter. As part of the project *Public Perceptions of Ethical, Legal and Socio-Economic Dimensions of the COVID-19 Outbreak* which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), researchers investigated the predictors of COVID-19 vaccination attitudes as well as the backgrounds for said attitudes, e.g. perceived benefits or threats. Cultural and developmental psychologist Prof. Dr. Meike Watzlawik comments:

“It is pleasing to see that more than half of people in Germany would voluntarily get vaccinated, and generally, data seems to indicate that this willingness has increased since the completion of this survey’s data collection. However, more than a quarter would rather reject a voluntary vaccine, making it clear that effective crisis and health communication need to specifically address this group.”

Detailed results show that age (the older, the more positive attitudes), location (differences in attitudes between federal states) as well as risk perception (assessment of COVID-19 risks and risks related with vaccination) are the main predictors of vaccine hesitancy. It would be recommended to pay special attention in communication to the age group of 20 - 29 years and people who are potentially less familiar with the German health care system.

Queries to:

Prof. Dr. Meike Watzlawik (project lead): [meike.watzlawik@sfu-berlin.de](mailto:meike.watzlawik@sfu-berlin.de)

Axel Pfleger (online survey, quantitative research): [axel.pfleger@sfu-berlin.de](mailto:axel.pfleger@sfu-berlin.de)

Lisa Herbig (follow-up interviews, qualitative research): [lisa.herbig@sfu-berlin.de](mailto:lisa.herbig@sfu-berlin.de)

<https://www.viralcomm.info/>