

## OFCOM coronavirus omnibus – March 2021

### Introduction

We would like to know how you are finding out about the Coronavirus, and what your opinions are about the information you are getting. Throughout this section, we would like for you to think about the last week / 7 days. There are no right or wrong answers – we are interested in your own views and habits.

### ASK ALL

#### Multicode

#### Randomise

Q1. Which device(s) do you use to connect to the internet, at home or elsewhere? (if you do not have access to the internet, please select the not applicable option)

1. Desktop PC
2. Laptop
3. Netbook
4. Tablet computer (e.g. iPad)
5. Smartphone
6. E-reader (e.g. Kindle)
7. TV set
8. Games console
9. Other portable/ handheld device (e.g. portable games console/ iPod Touch)
10. Smart watch (e.g. Apple Watch, Pebble, Samsung, Sony)
11. Smart speaker/display (e.g. Amazon Echo, Google Home)
12. Other device (SPECIFY)
13. None
14. Not applicable, I do not have access to the internet
15. Don't know

### ASK ALL

Q1a. Typically, how often would you say you use social media?

1. 10 times or more a day
2. 5-9 times a day
3. 2-4 times a day
4. About once a day
5. A few times a week
6. About once a week
7. About once a month
8. Less than once a month
9. Never

### Single code

#### ASK ALL

Q2. In the **LAST WEEK**, on average how often would you say you are getting information/news about the Coronavirus outbreak?

1. 20 times or more a day
2. 10-19 times a day
3. 5-9 times a day
4. 2-4 times a day

5. About once a day
6. A few times a week
7. Less than a few times a week
8. Never – not following the Coronavirus outbreak – **[SKIP TO Q4b3, Q10k then Q12]**

**Multicode**

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS GETTING INFORMATION/NEWS ABOUT THE CORONA OUTBREAK**

Q3a. Which, if any of the following sources have you used to get information/news about the Coronavirus outbreak in the **LAST WEEK**? Please select all that apply. ROTATE ORDER IN THE FOLLOWING GROUPS

**Single code**

**ASK FOR ALL SOURCES USED AT Q3a (codes 1-55) – ensure to pull in other specifics**

Q3b. Which do you consider is the **MOST** important source for you?

1. BBC - TV
  2. BBC – Radio
  3. BBC – Online/ app
  4. BBC Alba (Scotland only)
  5. ITV
  6. STV (Scotland Only) /UTV (Northern Ireland only) /ITV Wales (Wales only)
  7. S4C (Wales only)
  8. Channel 4
  9. Channel 5
  10. Sky
  11. RTÉ (Northern Ireland only)
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12. “Broadsheets”, such as The Times or Guardian (printed)
  13. “Mid-market tabloids”, such as The Daily Mail or Daily Express or Belfast Telegraph or Irish News (Northern Ireland only) (printed)
  14. “Red-top tabloids”, such as The Sun or Daily Mirror (printed)
  15. “Broadsheets”, such as The Times or Guardian (online)
  16. “Mid-market tabloids”, such as MailOnline or Express or Belfast Telegraph or Irish News (Northern Ireland only) (online)
  17. “Red-top tabloids”, such as The Sun or Mirror (online)
  18. Magazines
  19. Advertising
  20. Commercial Radio
  21. Cool FM (Northern Ireland only)
  22. Community Radio
  23. Podcasts
  24. Local sources across TV, radio and online
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25. Direct from World Health Organisation (WHO) website/email/text/post
  26. Direct from NHS website/email/text/post
  27. Direct from UK government website/email/text/post
  28. Direct from Scotland government website/email/text/post (Scotland only)
  29. Direct from Wales government website/email/text/post (Wales only)
  30. Direct from Northern Ireland government website/email/text/post (Northern Ireland only)

31. Official scientists
  32. Direct from Local health service website/email/text/post
  33. Direct from Local council website/email/text/post
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34. Facebook
  35. Twitter
  36. Instagram
  37. Snapchat
  38. YouTube
  39. WhatsApp
  40. WhatsApp group(s)
  41. Facebook messenger
  42. Apple iMessage
  43. Search engine (e.g. Google)
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44. Websites/apps of online news organisations like BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, Vice, etc.
  45. Websites or apps that bring together news from different news providers such as Apple News, Google News, Upday, Feedly, MSN, Yahoo, or the home page of your internet service provider such as Tesco or Virgin. This might also include apps like Flipboard, Nuzzel or Smart News that are designed for mobiles and tablets
  46. Non-mainstream online news sources such as Russia Today, Breitbart, Swawkbox, Infowars, Rebel Media
  47. Email
  48. Smart speaker/display (e.g. Amazon Echo, Google Home)
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49. Family and friends directly
  50. People in your local area/neighbourhood
  51. Celebrity and/or social media influencer
  52. Direct Mail, e.g. leaflets or other types of information that you get through the letterbox
  53. Flyers, e.g. leaflets that you may be given or find when out and about
  54. Stickers, e.g. on lamp posts or other places in your neighbourhood
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55. Other (open code – up to 3)
56. I don't know where the source is from - exclusive

**Multicode except code 9**

**ASK ALL WHO SELECT ANY OF THE CODES 34-43 AT Q3a.**

**IF CODE 43 AT Q3a [SEARCH ENGINES], ONLY ASK CODES 1-4 AND 9.**

**ASK FOR EACH IN GRID FORMAT**

Q4a. Thinking about what **you** are seeing on the below sources, which of the following types of news/information about the Coronavirus are you getting?

**PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY AND AT LEAST ONE AN ANSWER FOR EACH ROW**

1. Directly from official sources such as NHS, Government etc
2. Directly from traditional TV or press news sources such as the BBC, Telegraph, The Daily Mail, etc
3. Directly from online news providers like BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, Vice, etc.
4. Directly from "Non-mainstream" news sources such as Russia Today, Breitbart, Swawkbox, Infowars, Rebel Media etc

5. Opinions from a person you know
6. Facts forwarded/posted/shared from a person you know
7. Opinions from a person you don't know
8. Facts forwarded/posted/shared from a person you don't know
9. I don't notice where the information is coming from - exclusive

**SINGLE CODE**

**(show codes 1-8 only if selected at Q4a)**

Q4b. And which **ONE** of these is the most important to **you**?

1. Directly from official sources such as NHS, Government etc
2. Directly from traditional TV or press news sources such as the BBC, Telegraph, The Daily Mail, etc
3. Directly from online news providers like BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, Vice, etc.
4. Directly from "Non-mainstream" news sources such as Russia Today, Breitbart, Swawkbox. Infowars, Rebel Media etc
5. Opinions from a person you know
6. Facts forwarded/posted/shared from a person you know
7. Opinions from a person you don't know
8. Facts forwarded/posted/shared from a person you don't know
9. None of these

**ASK ALL WHO USE SOCIAL MEDIA (DO NOT INCLUDE SEARCH ENGINE)**

Q4b1. When you go onto social media, how often are you coming across/seeing information in the form of banners, pop-ups and upfront notices about Coronavirus from official sources, such as health organisations or the government?

1. Each time I go onto social media
2. Most times
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never
6. I do not use social media

**ASK ALL WHO USE SOCIAL MEDIA (DO NOT INCLUDE SEARCH ENGINE)**

**EXCLUDE RESPONDENTS WHO SELECT CODE 6 AT Q4B1**

**SINGLE CODE**

Q4b2. And when you go onto social media, how often are you coming across news or information that have warnings or notices from the social media platform attached to them, saying that the information may be untrustworthy/untrue?

1. Each time I go onto social media
2. Most times
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never

**ASK ALL WHO SEE WARNINGS OR NOTICES (Q4b2 1-4)**

Q4b2a. And when you come across these warnings or notices, how often do you click through to view the content being flagged in this way?

1. Each time I see the warning or notices
2. Most times
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never

**ASK ALL  
SINGLE CODE**

Q4b3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

**ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS**

Strongly agree

Slightly agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Slightly disagree

Strongly disagree

1. I think that untrue stories or items about Coronavirus should **not** be posted or shared on social media
2. I think that people and organisations have a right to say what they want on social media about Coronavirus, even if it might not be true
3. I think it's OK for untrue stories about Coronavirus to be posted and shared on social media, as long as they are flagged as potentially untrustworthy/untrue by the social media platform

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS GETTING INFORMATION/NEWS ABOUT THE CORONA OUTBREAK**

**Single code**

**BASED ON ANSWERS SELECTED AT Q3a. For those answering Code 4 at Q4a to be added to be Non-mainstream if not answered code 46 at Q3a**

**ROTATE ORDER**

Q5. Using the following scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is do not trust at all and 5 is trust completely, how much do you trust the following sources for information/news about Coronavirus?

**ASK ALL**

**Single code**

Q5b Thinking about your views on the mainstream media sources, which means the main organisations that provide news, such as the BBC, ITV, Sky News, the press such as The Sun, The Times, The Guardian, the Daily Mail etc ... which of the following is closest to your view?

1. I use mainstream media sources and trust them to give me accurate and truthful information about the Coronavirus
2. I use mainstream media sources but sometimes question if the information is accurate and truthful about the Coronavirus
3. I sometimes use mainstream media sources but always question if the information is accurate and truthful about the Coronavirus
4. I don't use mainstream media sources because I don't trust them to give me accurate and truthful information about the Coronavirus
5. I don't really think about accuracy and truthfulness when consuming news and information about the Coronavirus

**ASK ALL**

Q6a Thinking about the Coronavirus situation and the information and news you need to manage your daily life, to what extent are you relying on people that you know/people in your local area/people on social media to give you the information you need compared to the media/official sources?

1 – relying completely on media/official sources

5 – relying completely on people I know/people in my local area/people on social media

**Single code**

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS GETTING INFORMATION/NEWS ABOUT THE CORONA OUTBREAK**

Q7. In the **LAST WEEK**, how have you **shared** information/news about Coronavirus?

1. Talked to family, friends and colleagues in person or by phone
2. Writing on closed messenger groups, such as WhatsApp, Teams, Zoom etc
3. Talking by video via closed messenger groups, such as WhatsApp, Teams, Zoom etc
4. Sharing a video or website link on closed messenger groups, such as WhatsApp, Teams, Zoom etc
5. Via social media posts
6. Other (WRITE IN)
7. I have not shared any information/news about Coronavirus

**Multicode**

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS WHO SELECT 1-6 in Q7**

Q7b. Why did you share this information/news about Coronavirus?

1. To inform/discuss with family, friends and colleagues, e.g. by sharing information that might be relevant or helpful to them.
2. For entertaining family, friends and colleagues, e.g. by sharing information that might be interesting or funny to them.
3. To receive positive feedback from people who share similar opinions, ideas, attitudes or interests to me
4. Other (WRITE IN)

**Single code**

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS GETTING INFORMATION/NEWS ABOUT THE CORONA OUTBREAK**

Q8. Have you come across any information/news about Coronavirus that you think has been false or misleading in the LAST WEEK?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

**Single code**

**IF YES AT Q8**

Q9. How often in the LAST WEEK, on average have you come across information/news that you know to be false or misleading?

1. 20 times or more a day
2. 10-19 times a day
3. 5-9 times a day
4. 2-4 times a day
5. About once a day
6. A few times a week
7. Less than a few times a week

**Multicode code**

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS GETTING INFORMATION/NEWS ABOUT THE CORONA OUTBREAK**

Q10. Have you come across any of these claims which some people are making about aspects of the Coronavirus and that could be considered as false or misleading in the **LAST WEEK**?

**RANDOMISE**

1. Inhaling steam helps to treat or eliminate Coronavirus
2. The origin or cause of Coronavirus is in some way linked to 5G technology
3. Face masks/coverings offer no protection or are harmful
4. The number of deaths linked to Coronavirus is much lower in reality than is being reported
5. The number of cases linked to Coronavirus is much lower in reality than is being reported
6. The flu alone is killing more people than Coronavirus
7. Flu and Coronavirus statistics are being combined to make Coronavirus look more harmful than it is
8. Empty hospitals shown via social media posts as evidence that the Coronavirus has been exaggerated
9. The Coronavirus vaccine will alter human DNA
10. The Coronavirus vaccine is a cover for a plan to implant trackable microchips into people
11. The Coronavirus vaccine may reduce fertility
12. The Coronavirus vaccine has animal products in them
13. Other (SPECIFY)
14. None of these

**IF CAME ACROSS ANY OF THE CONSIDERED FALSE OR MISLEADING INFO AT Q10**

Q10j. Thinking about these claims which some people are making ~~are making~~ about aspects of the Coronavirus and that could be considered as false or misleading, have any of these made you think twice about the issue? (5 point scale)

Has not made me think twice ----- Has made me think twice (1-5 point scale)

**MULTI CODE**

**IF CAME ACROSS CLAIMS ABOUT THE FLU KILLING MORE PEOPLE THAN CORONAVIRUS**

Q10n. Thinking about all of the times in recent weeks that you've come across claims stating that the flu alone is killing more people than Coronavirus, how has it been reported/described? You might have come across the claims in different places and being reported in different ways, so please tick all that apply.

1. Reported/described as a true claim
2. Reported/described as a false claim
3. Unclear whether true or false

**IF REPORTED/DESCRIBED AS TRUE**

Q10o. And on which of these sources was it being reported/described as true? Please tick all that apply

SHOW ALL SOURCES USED AT Q3a

Other (specify)

MULTI CODE



**MULTI CODE**

**IF CAME ACROSS CLAIMS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE BEING A COVER PLAN TO IMPLANT TRACKABLE MICROCHIPS IN PEOPLE**

Q10r. Thinking about all of the times in recent weeks that you've come across claims stating that the Coronavirus vaccine is a cover for a plan to implant trackable microchips in people, how has it been reported/described? You might have come across the claims in different places and being reported in different ways, so please tick all that apply.

1. Reported/described as a true claim
2. Reported/described as a false claim
3. Unclear whether true or false

**IF REPORTED/DESCRIBED AS TRUE**

Q10s. And on which of these sources was it being reported/described as true? Please tick all that apply

SHOW ALL SOURCES USED AT Q3a

Other (specify)

MULTI CODE

**MULTI CODE**

**IF CAME ACROSS CLAIMS THAT THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE MAY REDUCE FERTILITY**

Q10t. Thinking about all of the times in recent weeks that you've come across claims stating that the Coronavirus vaccine may reduce fertility, how has it been reported/described? You might have come across the claims in different places and being reported in different ways, so please tick all that apply.

1. Reported/described as a true claim
2. Reported/described as a false claim
3. Unclear whether true or false

**IF REPORTED/DESCRIBED AS TRUE**

Q10u. And on which of these sources was it being reported/described as true? Please tick all that apply

SHOW ALL SOURCES USED AT Q3a

Other (specify)

MULTI CODE

**Multicode code**

**RANDOMISE STATEMENTS**

**IF YES AT Q8 OR CAME ACROSS ANY AT Q10**

Q11. When you came across these claims which some people are making about aspects of the Coronavirus and that could be considered as false or misleading in the LAST WEEK, what (if anything) did you do after seeing them?

1. Forwarded/shared it with people I know
2. Used a fact checking site or tools
3. Used tips from media such as BBC website
4. Checked whether it was misleading with family and friends
5. Asked the person who forwarded/shared it with me whether it was accurate
6. Blocked it or reported it to a social media platform
7. Other (SPECIFY)
8. Did nothing

**IF YES TO CODE 2 at Q11**

Q11b. Which of the following fact checking sites or tools did you use?  
(ROTATE ORDER) (multicode ok)

1. Full Fact
2. Snopes
3. Newsguard
4. Poynter Institute
5. Sense about science
6. Infotagion
7. First Draft News
8. Other (open code)
9. Cannot recall name

**ASK ALL**

Q10k. To what extent are you concerned or not concerned about the following statements?

ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

Not at all concerned ----- Very concerned (1-5 point scale)

1. The amount of false or misleading information you may be getting about Coronavirus
2. The amount of false or misleading information that others in society may be getting about Coronavirus

**ASK ALL**

**Single code**

Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

Strongly agree

Slightly agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Slightly disagree

Strongly disagree

1. I find it hard to know what is true and what is false about Coronavirus
2. I am trying to avoid news about Coronavirus
3. The mainstream media is exaggerating the seriousness of Coronavirus
4. This crisis is showing some positive sides of society (e.g. more local/community spirit, support for NHS)
5. I feel confident that I understand the statistics and data used to provide the number of Coronavirus cases and deaths in the UK
6. I am happy to be vaccinated against the Coronavirus

**ASK ALL**

**Single code**

Q13. In the **LAST WEEK**, how closely would you say you are following official advice on the following aspects of Coronavirus?

Very closely

Fairly closely

Not very closely

Not at all closely

1. Washing hands regularly for 20 seconds or more
2. Practising social distancing
3. Wearing a face mask/covering where relevant
4. Stay at home as much as possible

**ASK ALL**

**Single code**

Q14. Some people talk about 'left', 'right' and 'centre' to describe parties and politicians. (Generally socialist parties would be considered 'left wing' whilst conservative parties would be considered 'right wing'). With this in mind, where would you place yourself on the following scale?

1. Very left-wing
2. Fairly left-wing
3. Slightly left-of-centre
4. Centre
5. Slightly right-of-centre
6. Fairly right-wing
7. Very right-wing
8. Don't know
9. Prefer not to say