

Public attitudes towards voting in England in the context of COVID-19 | Electoral Commission Search Public attitudes towards voting in England in the context of COVID-19 You are in the Public attitudes towards voting in the context of COVID-19 section Home Our research Public attitudes towards voting in the context of COVID-19 On this page Introduction Key findings Polling station voting Postal Voting Other findings First published: 20 January 2021 Last updated: 19 March 2021

**Introduction** In February 2021, we asked a representative sample of eligible voters in England about their attitudes towards voting during the pandemic. The questions covered attitudes towards postal voting and other options for the safe running of the election in 2021. This is a repeat of the work carried out in December 2020. This page provides a summary of findings from the latest of these studies, makes comparison with December. **Key findings** The key findings are consistent between December and February with voting in a polling place remaining the preferred option amongst a majority of voters although the results indicate a likely increase in the proportion of voters opting to use a postal vote at the May 2021 elections compared to previous polls. **Polling station voting** The majority said they would feel safe voting at the polling station. This was consistent between December (71%) and February (73%). When they are informed about the Covid safety measures, based on Electoral Commission guidance, there is an increase in the proportion who see in-person voting as safe (82%). Of those who would not feel safe, around 4 in 5 (82%) said there were no additional provisions that would make them feel safe voting at a polling station. 61% of BAME respondents in Great Britain said voting in person was safe compared to 75% of White respondents. Once told about the Electoral Commission guidance around safety measures 73% of BAME respondents feel safe voting in person compared with 84% of white respondents. **Postal voting** There was no change between December and February in the proportion of people who said they would vote by post (42%). 22% of people who normally vote in person said they intend to vote by post (23% in December). While this should not be taken as a reliable indicator of the number of people who will actually vote by mail this does indicate that there could be a significant uplift in the number of postal votes compared with previous polls. **Other findings** There has been an increase in the proportion of people who say that they would vote if an election was to take place now. Rising from 79% in December up to 88% in February. When presented with options on how the May elections could be conducted the most popular choice was to hold the poll largely as usual (40%). The second most popular choice was for the polling stations to be open more than one day (31%). 13% preferred an all postal vote and 8% wanted the election postponed for a short period. The only finding that was not consistent between December and February was the number of people thinking that it should be postponed doubled, albeit only from 4% to 8%. Just under a third (33%) of those people who intend to vote in person said that if their household had to isolate due to Covid-19 then they would not know someone able to vote for them. Just over half (53%) said they would. **Background notes** All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from work done for the Commission by YouGov Plc. For the February fieldwork, total sample size was 1894 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 29th January and 20th February 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults in England (aged 18+). For the December fieldwork, total sample size was 1,461 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 7th and 8th December 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults in England (aged 18+). **Full tables** England **Related content** Public attitudes towards voting in Scotland in the context of COVID-19 [Read more about](#)

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