

Windhoek, Namibia
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News release

Namibians reject mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations, Afrobarometer study shows

Despite growing calls for mandatory vaccinations against COVID-19, most Namibians believe that vaccinations should be voluntary, a recent Afrobarometer survey indicates.

Only about one in four Namibians would support a policy of mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations. And most Namibians do not support vaccinating children against COVID-19.

Namibians are divided on mandatory vaccinations for special groups: More than half support requiring the vaccine for health and frail-care workers, but only minorities agree when it comes to teachers and employees of private companies. And most do not agree with restricting access to sports, cultural, musical, and other large social events to vaccinated people only.

Public opposition to mandatory vaccinations may limit the government's politically plausible options for overcoming the country's low COVID-19 vaccine uptake thus far.

Key findings

- Nearly three in four Namibians (72%) believe that vaccination against COVID-19 should be voluntary. Only 26% agree that the government should make the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory (Figure 1).
 - Citizens above age 45 are somewhat more supportive of mandatory vaccinations than their younger counterparts. Opposition to mandatory vaccination is highest among 18- to 25-year-olds (77%) (Figure 2).
- Six in 10 Namibians (61%) do not support the vaccination of children against COVID-19. Only 28% believe that children aged 12-17 years need to be vaccinated to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 (Figure 3).
- A slim majority (53%) of citizens "agree" or "strongly agree" that health and frail-care workers should be required to take the COVID-19 vaccine (Figure 4).
 - Only four in 10 (40%) say companies should be allowed to make vaccinations mandatory for their staff, and about the same number (43%) support mandatory vaccinations for teachers and other education workers.
 - Fewer than four in 10 Namibians (36%) think access to large social events should be restricted to the vaccinated.

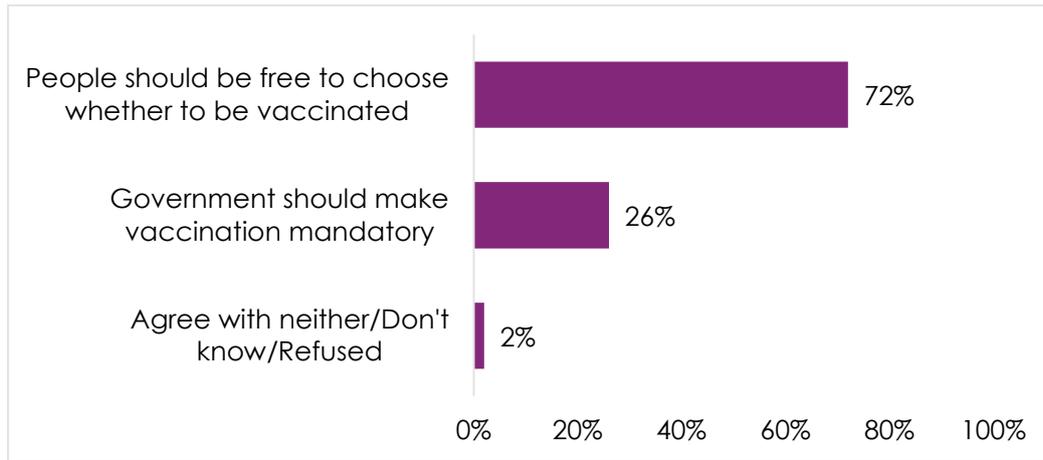
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Namibia, led by national partner Survey Warehouse, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Namibians in October and November 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Namibia in 1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2019.

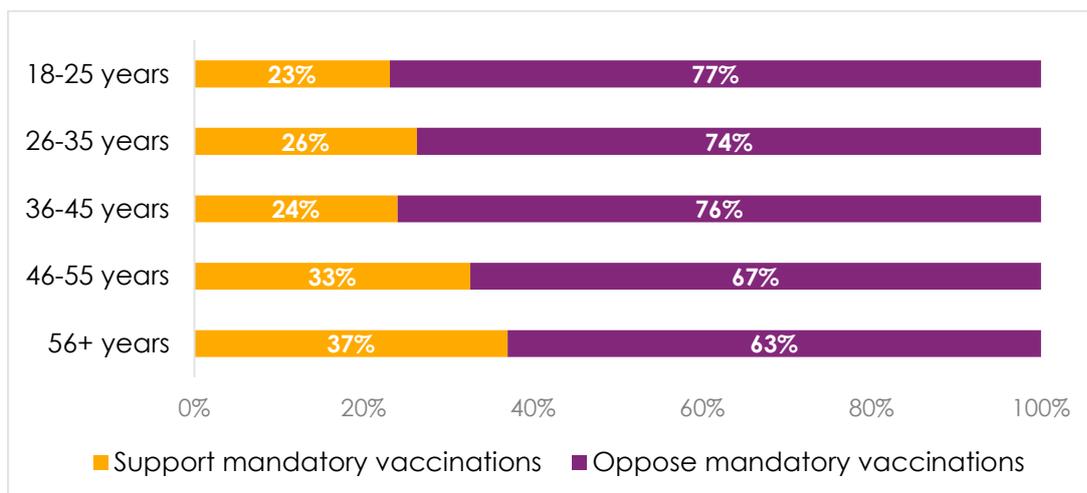
Charts

Figure 1: Support for mandatory vaccinations | Namibia | 2021



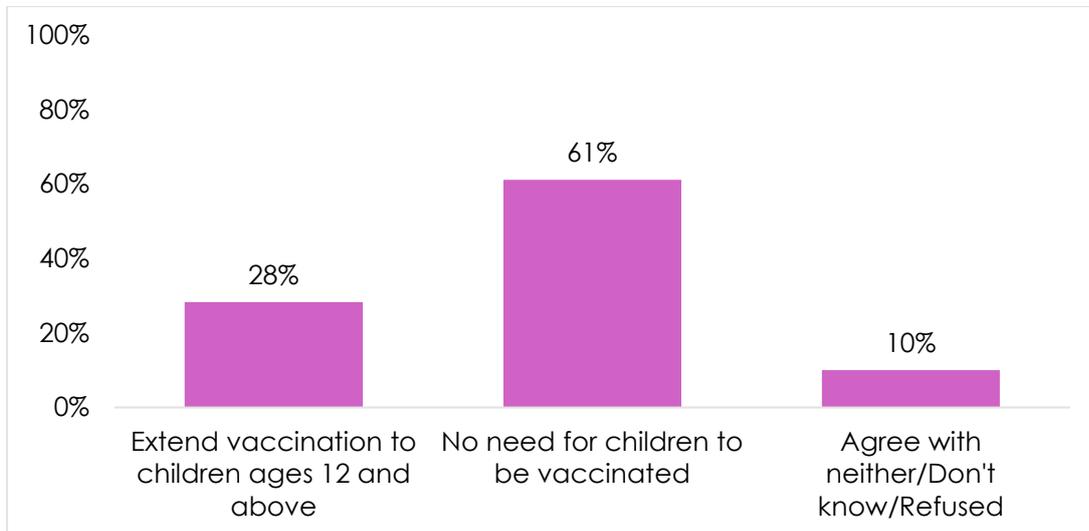
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: When faced with a pandemic such as COVID-19, the government must make it mandatory for all citizens to be vaccinated.
 Statement 2: Citizens should have the right to choose whether to take up vaccines or not, even during times of pandemics such as COVID-19.
 (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

Figure 2: Support for mandatory vaccinations | by respondents' age | Namibia | 2021



Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: When faced with a pandemic such as COVID-19, the government must make it mandatory for all citizens to be vaccinated.
 Statement 2: Citizens should have the right to choose whether to take up vaccines or not, even during times of pandemics such as COVID-19.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 3: Support for extending vaccinations to include children | Namibia | 2021



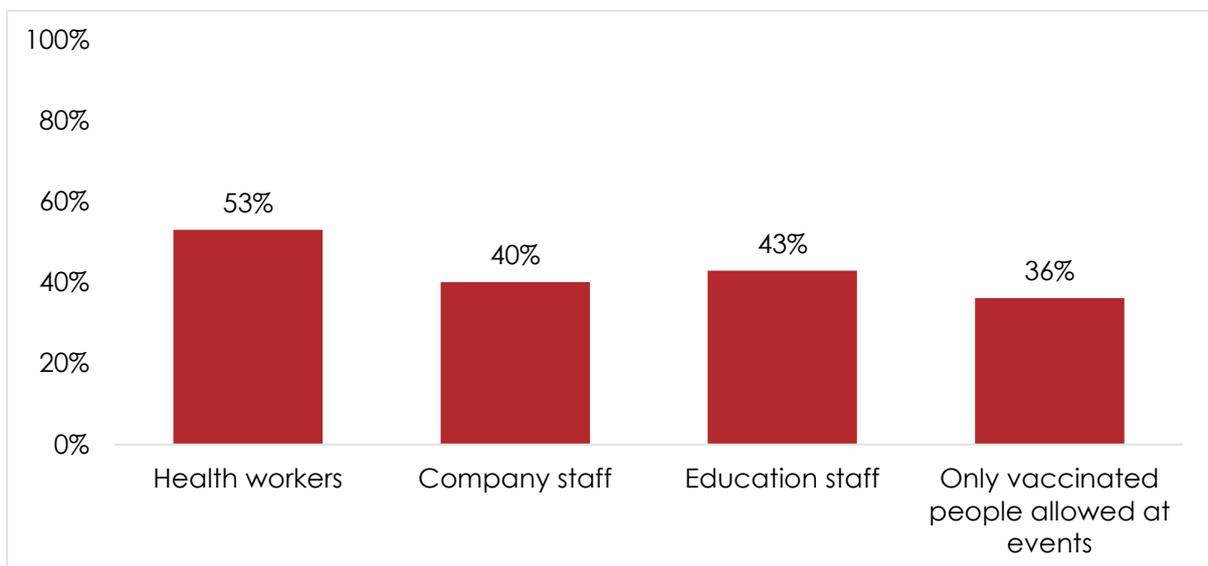
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: In order to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, the government must extend vaccination to children who are 12 years and above.

Statement 2: Since children are less likely to exhibit serious symptoms of COVID-19, there is no need to vaccinate them.

(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 4: Support for mandatory vaccinations for special groups | Namibia | 2021



Respondents were asked:

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree with each of the following proposals for COVID-19 vaccinations.

All health and frail-care workers should be required to take COVID-19 vaccinations.

Companies should be allowed to make vaccinations mandatory for their staff.

COVID-19 vaccinations should be made mandatory for all teachers and staff working in schools, universities, and training institutions.

Only vaccinated people should be allowed to attend sports events and cultural and music festivals.

(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

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