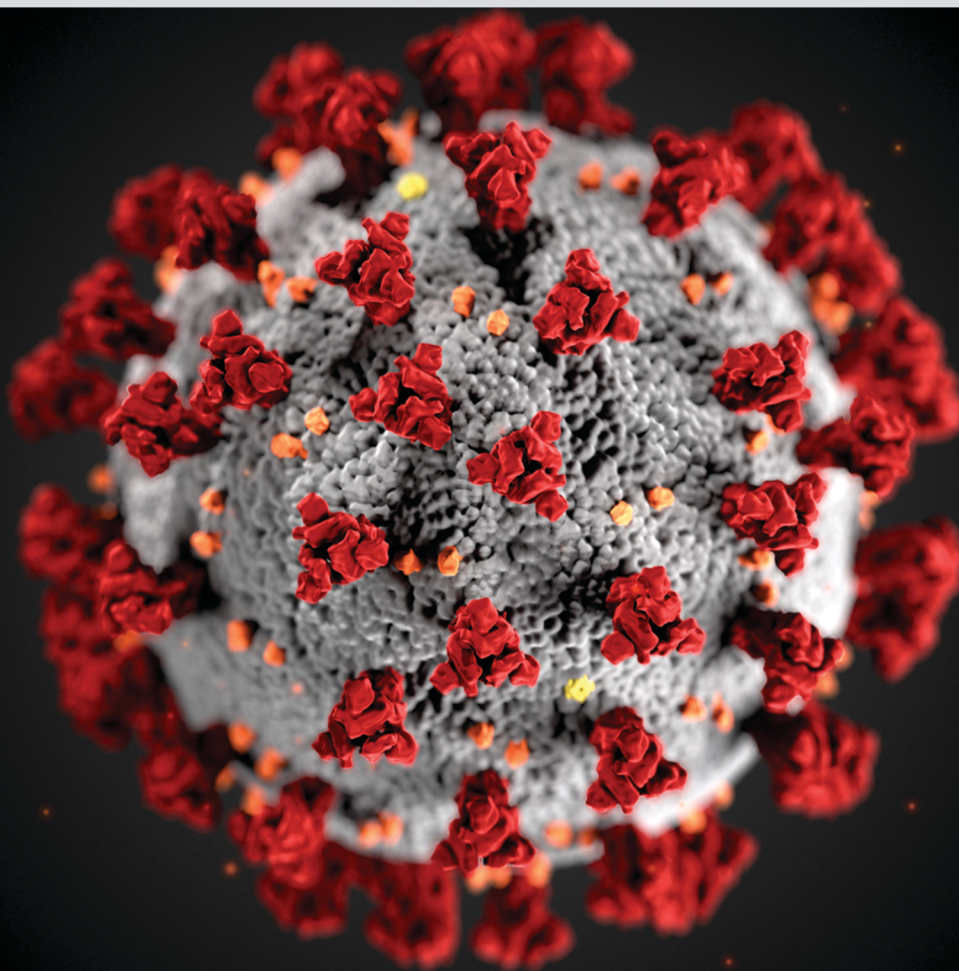


# PUBLIC OPINION ON FIGHTING THE PANDEMIC IN AZERBAIJAN

## ANALYTICAL REPORT





## **About the Social Research Center**

The Social Research Center (SRC) was established by Presidential Decree No. 525 on February 8, 2019, in the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a public legal entity, the SRC systematically analyzes the evolving dynamics of social relations. It identifies current trends, predicts changes, and investigates their potential impact on society. Utilizing state-of-the-art information technologies and scientific methodologies, the SRC conducts social research and studies public opinion. Its findings are presented to government authorities to inform policy-making and decision-making processes.



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PANDEMIC IN AZERBAIJAN**

**ANALYTICAL REPORT**

**Authors:**

Seymur Aliyev

*Head of the socio-economic analysis department*

Aysham Balayeva

*Head of the public opinion research department*

**Research team:**

Public opinion research department

Socio-economic analysis department

Domestic policy analysis department

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**Editor:**

Agshin Mammadov

**Editor (English):**

Pasha Bayramov

**Graphic designers:**

Gurban Jalilov

Babek Jafar

**Address:**

Republic of Azerbaijan, AZ 1073, Baku city,  
Yasamal district, Ismayil bey Gutgashinli street, 18.

**Phone:** (+994 12) 510-70-78

(+994 12) 510-23-75

(+994 12) 510-70-69

**Mail:** [info@stm.az](mailto:info@stm.az)

**Internet address:** [www.stm.az](http://www.stm.az)

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**Phone:** (+994 12) 431 11 00

(+994 50) 314 09 37



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## INTRODUCTION

Studies show that pandemics, ranging from the recorded Antonine Plague to COVID-19, have occurred throughout different historical periods, exerting dramatic effects on humanity at varying scales and in different directions. Most pandemics are regarded as pivotal moments in history, whether on a national or global scale. It is also evident that pandemics continue to pose a significant risk to countries today, as exemplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, the socio-economic ramifications of such events are gauged by the socio-psychological turmoil and profound economic crises experienced by millions of people who face the risk of death.

Belonging to the coronavirus family, which has recently played a significant role in reshaping the world and engendering short- and medium-term uncertainty about the course of global development, the COVID-19 epidemic, declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization, is testing countries' political, social, and economic infrastructural resilience.

The global pandemic is marked by substantial shifts in countries' anti-crisis strategies, giving rise to derivative crises such as the oil crisis and economic downturns.

Consequently, there is a discernible emergence of stringent selective preventive policies alongside collective preventive measures implemented by the global community, with the latter approach being fundamentally advantageous. Conversely, the globalized world has experienced an unprecedented level of national border closures in a remarkably flexible manner.

Responding to the exigencies of national interests in the face of global force majeure, the country's leadership delineated systematic preventive measures aimed at preempting threats by making informed decisions regarding potential risks prior to the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The systematicity of the strategic measures adopted by Azerbaijan's leadership to curtail the widespread transmission of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure the safety, health, and well-being of its citizens is paramount in all decision-making processes.

Under the directive of the head of state, the Operational Headquarters, es-

tablished under the purview of the Cabinet of Ministers at the outset of this year, is diligently executing an action plan aimed at navigating the post-pandemic period while simultaneously maintaining control over the current situation.

On March 19, 2020, President Ilham Aliyev extended his congratulations to the people of Azerbaijan on the occasion of Novruz, stating: "On January 24, by my order, an Operational Headquarters was established under the Cabinet of Ministers. This headquarters operates 24 hours a day, overseeing the activities of all state institutions and monitoring all cases related to the disease, and coordinates these efforts."

The effective coordination of policies and crisis communication in the fight against the pandemic reflects the flexibility, determination, and foresight in public administration.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan's purposeful efforts in combating the pandemic at the international level are noteworthy. The country has collaborated closely with the World Health Organization since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cooperation includes incorporating recommendations from the organization's expert mission into the national action strategy. Moreover, Azerbaijan has demonstrated global solidarity by signing a donor agreement to provide voluntary financial assistance to the COVID-19 Fund under the World Health Organization's strategic preparedness and response plan.

Additionally, at the initiative of President Ilham Aliyev, an extraordinary summit of the Turkic Council was conducted via video conference, underscoring the importance of global cooperation in battling the pandemic.

In summary, Azerbaijan has been recognized as an exemplary nation in the fight against the pandemic, particularly by the World Health Organization.

The document "Fighting the pandemic in Azerbaijan in public opinion" presents the findings of a nationwide sociological survey conducted by the Social Research Center from March 19 to 28, 2020.

*\*<https://president.az/articles/36212>*

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### Choice of respondents:

❖ A total of 1212 respondents participated in the public opinion survey.

❖ The public opinion poll was based on the cluster sampling method. In total, 101 clusters were determined based on random selection at selected addresses across the country.

❖ The survey results were analyzed with a 95% confidence interval and a statistical error rate of 3%.

❖ The survey was conducted on March 19-28, 2020.

**Regions.** The survey was conducted in the following economic-geographic regions: Baku, Absheron, Guba-Khachmaz, Nagorno-Shirvan, Sheki-Zagatala, Aran, Ganja-Kazakh, Upper Karabakh, Lankaran. The survey covered the entire country, excluding the territory of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and the occupied regions.

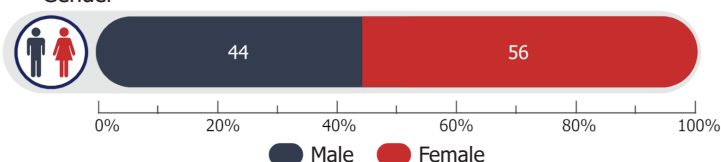
### Method of inquiry

A telephone interview method was used in conducting the survey. The employees of the center made calls to the respondents' landline numbers during the day between 12:00 and 21:00.

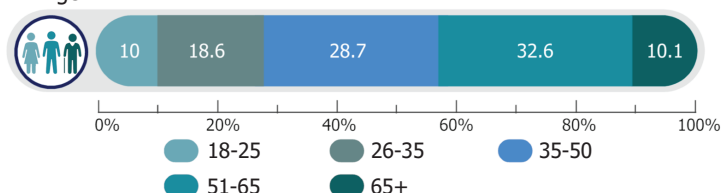
### Data processing and analysis

After the completion of the survey, the data collected for each questionnaire was entered into the database and analyzed using a special program SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

Gender



Age

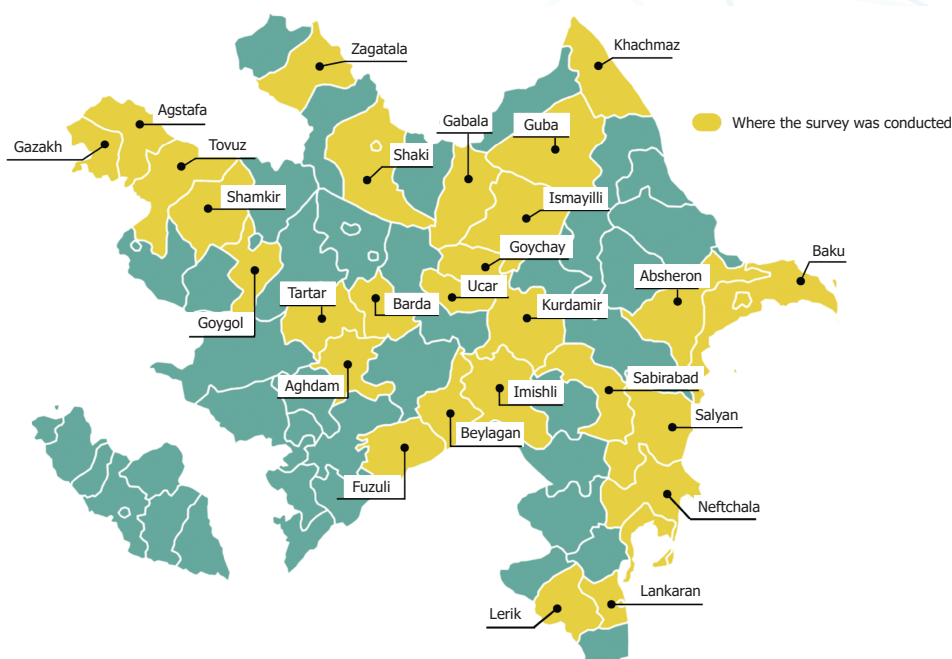


Correlation analysis was used to find a statistically significant relationship between variables, and  $X^2$  and ANOVA test were used to compare variables between different socio-demographic groups.

### The structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised 15 primary questions and 4 demographic inquiries. The questions were primarily formulated to explore the following areas:

1. Attitudes towards personal measures to combat the COVID-19 epidemic.
2. Concerns about infection and views on undergoing examination (for oneself and relatives) under quarantine conditions.
3. Assessment of the state's policies in combating the COVID-19 pandemic and evaluation of the activities of the Azerbaijani Food Safety Agency (TABIB) in this regard.



**Note:**  
Percentages in charts may not total 100% due to rounding.

## II. Comparative analysis of the current situation in Azerbaijan and the world with similar studies

In general, combating infectious diseases holds significant importance as part of the state's social policy. Experience demonstrates that when containment proves difficult in such cases, the World Health Organization may intervene and declare it a pandemic. The evolving nature of these situations, contingent upon their complexity, necessitates addressing them as matters of national security.

During a pandemic, effective coordination among all healthcare services becomes imperative, given the potential for higher-than-anticipated infection and mortality rates.

To mitigate the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic within Azerbaijan's borders and promptly implement preventive and urgent measures, an Operational Headquarters was established under the Cabinet of Ministers in response to the global threat. This headquarters comprises heads of relevant state bodies and institutions. It has organized expert groups composed of specialists in various fields to enact immediate preventive measures and conduct monitoring across all regions of Azerbaijan. Additionally, on January

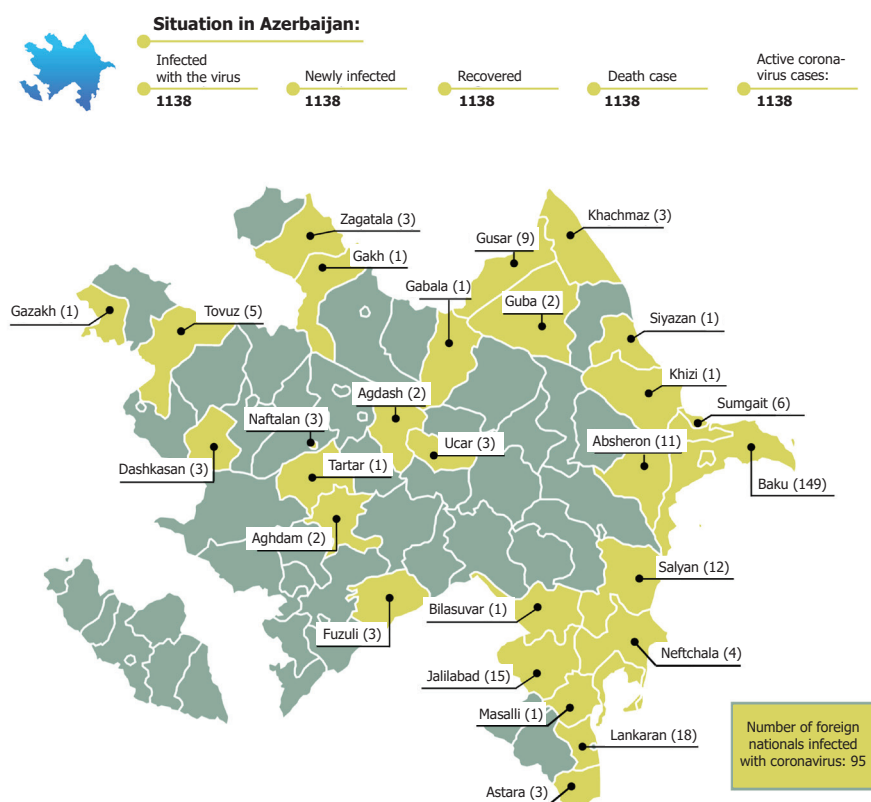
30, 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the "Action Plan to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus disease in the Republic of Azerbaijan," with ongoing implementation of its outlined measures. Recognizing the extensive spread of the disease, a more comprehensive Action Plan was subsequently approved by the Cabinet of Ministers and is currently being implemented under the direct supervision of the country's leadership.

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 infection in Azerbaijan was recorded on February 28, 2020. The current infection situation within the country and the geographic distribution of cases by region are depicted in the following infographic.

The main motto of the anti-crisis strategy implemented in the field of reducing the possible effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in our country was "We are strong together!" It is realized through the format of State-Citizen-Business cooperation.

In essence, the COVID-19 pandemic is seen as a kind of endurance test for all three parties. The main directions are, without a doubt, in the following context:

❖ Testing the level of civic responsibil-



**Infographic 1.**  
<https://koronavirusinfo.az/az/page/statistika/azerbaycanda-cari-veziyyet>  
 Official information as of 12.04.2020.



ity and solidarity;

- ❖ Testing flexible and result-oriented crisis management of the public sector;

- ❖ Testing the potential of the state to support the civil and business sector;

- ❖ Testing the level of crisis management for the business sector;

- ❖ Testing the social responsibility approaches of the business sector, etc.

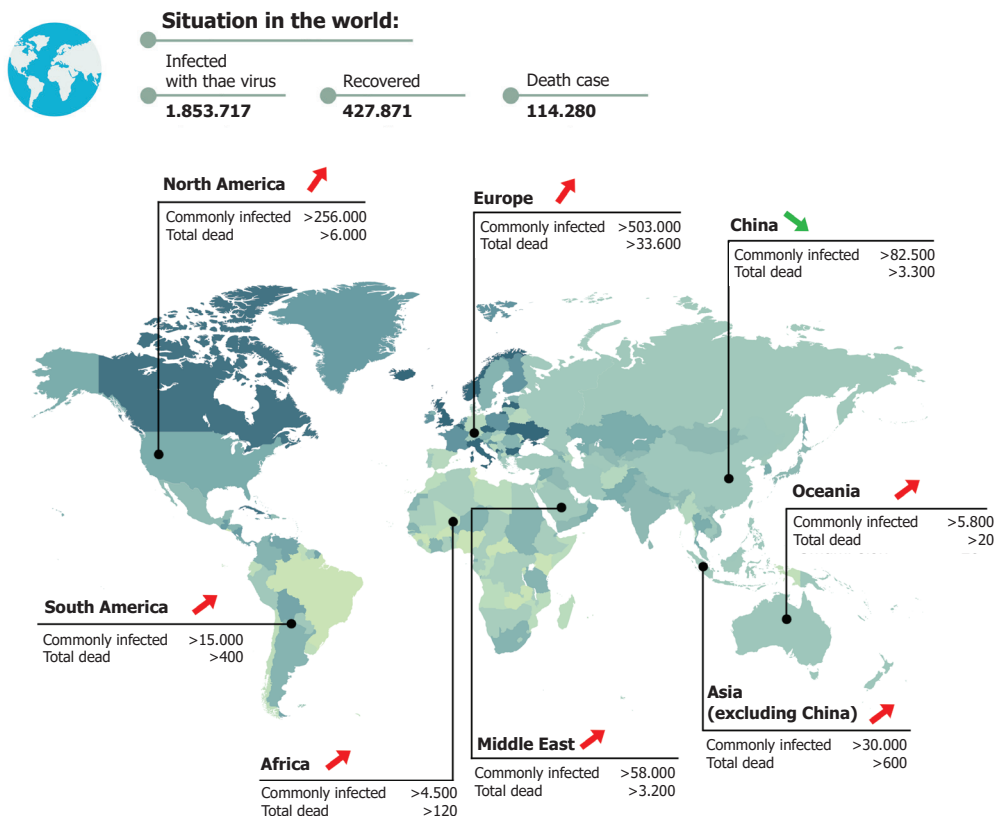
When evaluating the global impact of the pandemic, it is informative to consider the following statistical table:

Analysis indicates a relatively positive change in the global situation concerning the COVID-19 pandemic over the past week. For instance, countries like China, New Zealand, and Italy are experiencing a downward trend in the number of infections and deaths. In the Chinese city of Wuhan, where the outbreak initially occurred, residents are now permitted to leave the city, although schools remain closed. Additionally, governments in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, and Norway have devised plans for a more relaxed quarantine regime<sup>1</sup>.

However, there are also countries where the situation remains tense. In recent days, the United States, which has become the epicenter of the coronavirus, has recorded nearly 400,000 infections

and 12,740 deaths (with a mortality rate exceeding 3%). To counteract economic stagnation, the Federal Reserve System injected over 5.8 trillion dollars into the country's economy. Meanwhile, in Great Britain, amidst rising infections, a new 4,000-bed hospital was constructed in east London within nine days.<sup>2</sup> According to data from the World Health Organization as of April 9, there have been 1,537,174 infections and 89,954 deaths worldwide. More than half of these infections are in Europe, with a third occurring in the Americas.

An analysis of the graph presented in the "Business Insider" publication reveals that although the initial infection rates in countries are quite similar, the rate of infection in later stages differs significantly. For instance, since the 100th case of infection, by the 18th day, the number of infections registered in countries like the United States, Italy, Germany, Iran, and Great Britain was less than 20,000. However, just 10 days later, this number skyrocketed to 240,000 for the United States, and 70,000, 60,000, 30,000, and 30,000 for Italy, Germany, Iran, and Great Britain, respectively. South Korea, on the other hand, had nearly 10,000 cases. These differences stem from various factors

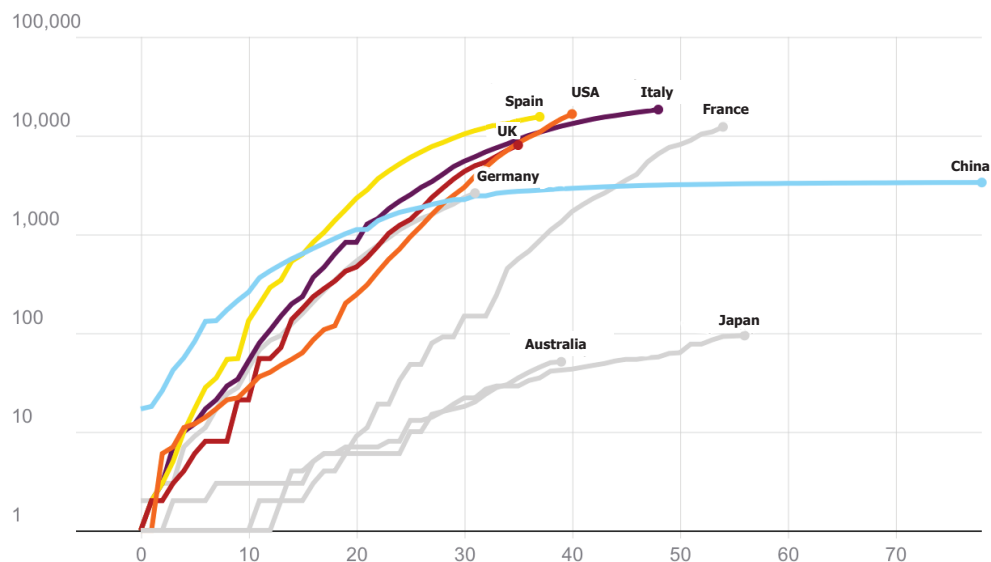


<sup>1</sup>CNBC (2020). 'Like walking the tightrope': Some European countries are starting to lift coronavirus lockdown measures. [cnbcm.com/2020/04/08/coronavirus-some-european-countries-set-to-lift-lockdown-measures.html](https://www.cnbcm.com/2020/04/08/coronavirus-some-european-countries-set-to-lift-lockdown-measures.html)

<sup>2</sup>BBC News (2020) Coronavirus: How NHS Nightingale was built in just nine days <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-52125059>

**Infoqrafika 2.** <https://koronavirusinfo.az/az/page/statistika/dunyada-cari-veziiyet> Official information as of 12.04.2020.





such as differing quarantine measures and socio-demographic characteristics of the population.

Regarding the death rate, Europe and the Middle East lead the statistics. In Europe, there have been reported more than half a million infections and about 34,000 deaths, equating to a mortality rate of over 6%. The Middle East has a similar fatality rate of close to 5.5%. Conversely, the death rate in South America and North America regions is less than 3%.

According to the results of a survey conducted by Gallup International<sup>3</sup> among 500 people in Kazakhstan, 53% of respondents fear contracting the coronavirus. While 62% support the Kazakh government's measures against the virus, the uptake of individual protective measures varies. Only 42% wear masks, 13% wear gloves, and 40% use medical disinfectants. Although 74% wash their hands more frequently, 43% spend more time at home, indicating a significant portion do not adhere to social isolation principles.

A similar survey in the Russian Federation, involving 1,000 respondents, reveals that 68% fear contracting the virus. However, only 49% express satisfaction with the government's measures. Few wear masks (13%) or gloves (6%), but 23% use alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Washing hands more frequently is the most common preventive measure (70%), with 35% spending more time at home.

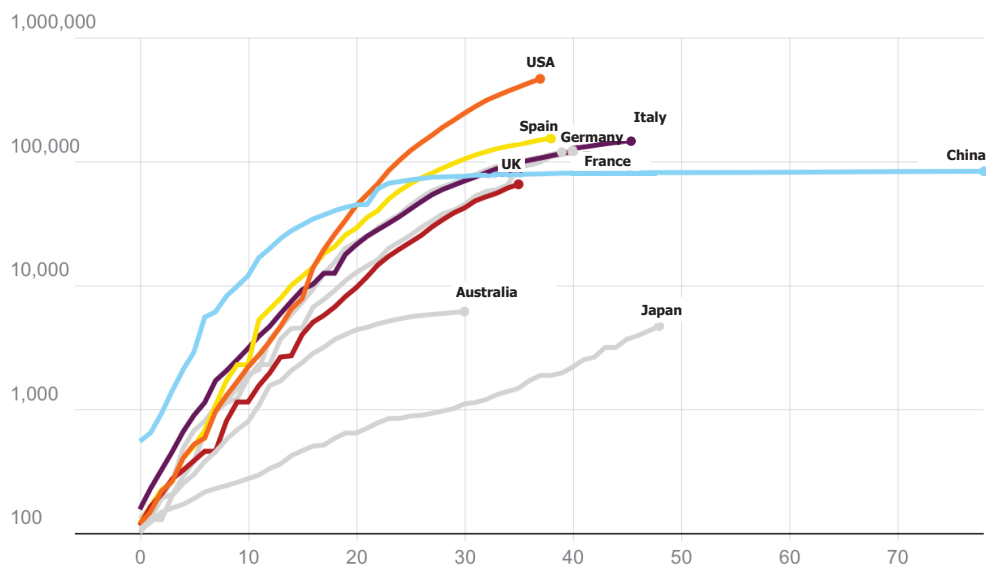
In Russia, Levada<sup>4</sup> conducted a survey in March with 1,624 respondents to gauge public opinion on the COVID-19 pandemic. 44% expressed fear of contracting the virus, marking a 14% increase from February. Additionally, due to the pandemic threat, 23% avoided public events, and 16% purchased medical masks. Notably, medical masks were reported as the most recently scarce products in Russian stores. Moreover, 59% are skeptical of official coronavirus information in the media, while 48% doubt the healthcare system's preparedness for a pandemic.

Let's examine the results from another neighboring country, Turkey. According to a survey conducted with 1,000 people, 67% express fear of contracting the coronavirus, while 69% support the measures implemented by the country's leadership. Similar to Russia, the use of masks and gloves remains relatively rare, with only 10-20% of respondents employing these measures. Moreover, the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also low at 14%. A more prevalent preventive measure is washing hands more frequently, with 41% of respondents indicating this practice. However, a concerning aspect is that only 11% stated that they stay at home more often.

Interestingly, divergent results were observed in surveys conducted by various polling centers in the United States regarding support for the country's admin-

<sup>3</sup>Gallup International (2020). The coronavirus: a vast scared majority around the world - Snap poll in 28 Countries by Gallup International Association. [gallup-international.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/GIA\\_SnapPoll\\_2020\\_COVID\\_Tables\\_final.pdf](https://www.gallup.com/content/2020/03/GIA_SnapPoll_2020_COVID_Tables_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup><https://www.levada.ru/2020/03/26/pandemiya-koronavirusa/>



istration's measures against the coronavirus or levels of fear. Notably, while half of citizens endorse the measures implemented by the country's leadership, party affiliation significantly influences opinion, with Democrats expressing more dissatisfaction than Republicans.<sup>5</sup> In Great Britain, although 52% of the population approve of the government's actions, 38% call for further tightening of the current quarantine regime<sup>6</sup>.

It is noteworthy to consider two crucial points regarding economically developed countries. Firstly, in countries such as Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, and Switzerland, the prevalence of people wearing protective masks is very low, around 10%. In contrast, in Japan and South Korea, this figure stands at 70% and 94%, respectively. Secondly, the adoption of the "stay at home" campaign is significantly higher in economically developed countries compared to developing ones. It appears that since staying at home is the primary preventive measure, the use of masks and gloves is less common.

When comparing with global surveys, it becomes evident that in studies concerning Azerbaijan, there is a high level of public agreement with the state policy, placing it in a superior position in the South Caucasus region compared to Armenia.

<sup>5</sup>FiveThirtyEight (2020) How Americans View the Coronavirus Crisis and Trump's Response. [projects.fivethirtyeight.com/coronavirus-polls/](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/coronavirus-polls/)

<sup>6</sup>YouGov (2020). For the first time in nearly a decade, Britain approves of its government. [yougov.co.uk/topics/health/articles-reports/2020/04/03/COVID-19-four-ten-brits-think-we-need-tougher-lock](https://yougov.co.uk/topics/health/articles-reports/2020/04/03/COVID-19-four-ten-brits-think-we-need-tougher-lock).

### III. Statistical and analytical analysis of survey results

Following the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, every country, without exception, encountered health shocks in varying degrees. Consequently, in addition to state interventions, it is imperative to implement personal safety measures in the fight against COVID-19. The World Health Organization regards individual efforts in combating the pandemic as the most effective method.

Approaching the issue from this perspective, a notable portion (44.9%) of respondents in our country expressed no fear of contracting COVID-19, while 25.6% indicated being very afraid, and 27.5% admitted to feeling somewhat afraid. The proportion of those fearing COVID-19 (53.1%) and those who do not (44.9%) is almost equal, with only 2% of respondents finding it difficult to answer.

Analysis reveals a significant correlation between education level and fear of contracting the virus ( $X^2(4)=30.593$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Specifically, respondents with completed secondary education (51.2%) expressed greater fear of infection compared to those with higher education (27.3%). Interestingly, individuals with completed secondary education are predominant among those asserting "I am not afraid of the risk of infection" (56.5%). Geographically, respondents residing in urban areas (57.4%) exhibit more fear of contracting COVID-19 than those in towns (15.2%) and villages (27.4%), indicating a higher overall sensitivity ( $X^2(4)=9.199$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

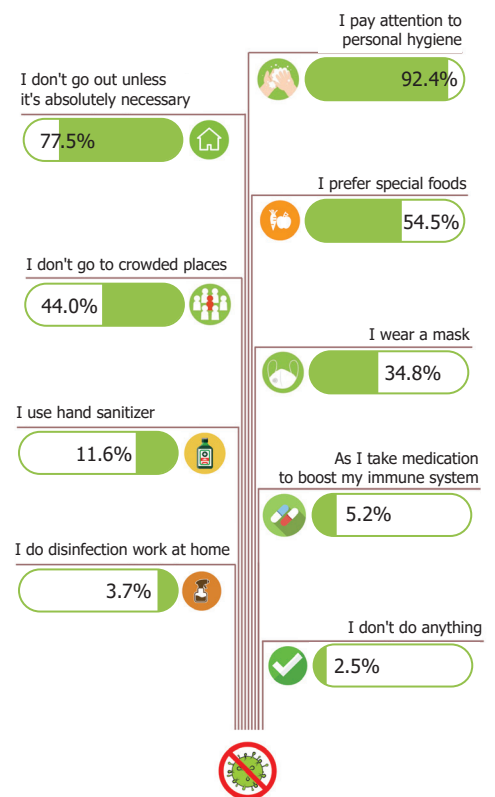
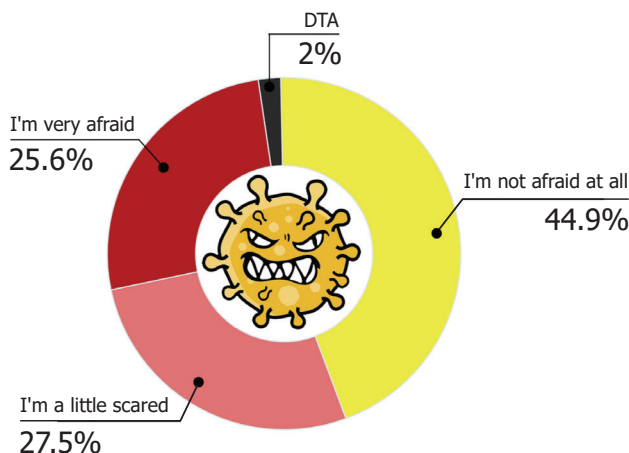
Women are less afraid of contracting

the virus than men. The fear level of people over 51 years old is lower compared to other age groups, and it is higher in middle age groups. In terms of employment, the fear of self-employed workers is higher, while housewives and private sector workers are less afraid.

In order to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the experts of the World Health Organization regularly provide citizens with appropriate recommendations for

**Diagram 1.**  
To what extent are you afraid of contracting COVID-19?

**Diagram 2.**  
What do you do to protect yourself from COVID-19?  
(across all applicable options)



preventive measures.

Attention to personal hygiene stands out as the most common protective measure among the respondents (92.4%). 77.5% of the respondents said that they do not go out of the house unless there is a serious need, which indicates compliance with the quarantine regime.

The share of those who prefer special foods is not small in the total sample (54.5%). However, the fact that only less than half of the sample (34.8%) wears a mask, as well as only 3.7% disinfect the house, should cause some concern. It is possible that the main reason for the low prevalence of house disinfection is that

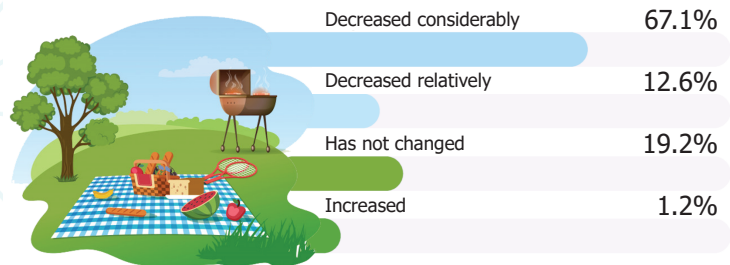


disinfection requires a certain amount of funds, as well as the indifference of citizens to this work.

When evaluating preventive measures against the COVID-19 pandemic from a gender perspective, the following conclusions emerge: Female respondents exhibit greater sensitivity in using protective masks (women 42.4%, men 28.8%) and avoiding unnecessary outings (83.6% of women compared to 74.6% of men) ( $X^2(12)=25.249$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Geographically, urban respondents (45.3% and 50.5%, respectively) are more inclined to use protective masks and avoid crowded places compared to rural (30.7% and 40.1%) and township respondents (35.0% and 42.6%). This trend is observed significantly ( $X^2(12)=75.560$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Analyzing respondents' adherence to preventive measures across age groups reveals a decline in the use of protective masks among those over 50 years old ( $X^2(24)=84.291$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Conversely, young people (aged 16-25) frequent crowded places more often (64.4%) compared to other age groups, possibly due to a perception of lower infection risk among this demographic.

Taking a broader perspective, the preventive measures adopted by respondents can be categorized into two groups based on their perceived importance. Primary preventive measures include attention to personal hygiene (92.4%), minimizing unnecessary outings (77.5%), opting for special foods (54.5%), and avoiding crowded places (44.0%). Secondary prevention measures encompass the use of protective masks (34.8%), medical alcohol (11.6%), immunity-boosting supplements (5.2%), and home disinfection (3.7%).

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered the daily routines of many individuals. A large portion of the population (79.7%) has reduced their time spent outside the home to varying degrees (67.1% significantly reduced, 12.6% slightly reduced), indicating widespread adherence to the "stay at home" campaign to mitigate infection risk and spread. However, for one in five individuals (19.2%), there has been no change in their time spent outside the home despite



**Diagram 3.**  
*Have you or your family members noticed any changes in the time spent outside the home after the COVID-19 pandemic-induced social distancing measures?*

social isolation. Analysis reveals that one in four people (25.8%) still leave home for work.

This suggests that providing direct financial assistance or offering concessions in monthly payments could potentially reduce the number of individuals leaving home for work. Both urban and rural respondents (73.0% and 63.0%, respectively) noted a significant decrease in their time spent outside the home. Additionally, among respondents aged 65 and over, 61.1% observed a significant reduction in their time spent outside the home after implementing social isolation measures.

The majority of the population (83%) spends their time at home watching local TV channels, and just over three-quarters (67.2%) doing house/yard work. Considering the large number of viewers of local television channels, we can say that disinformation about the coronavirus can be prevented by producing more educational videos. About one in four people (22.7%) value their time with self-education (online courses, etc.) and reading books. We believe that through television campaigns and propaganda, interest in self-development, education and professional development can be increased so that people spend their time at home in a more pro-

**Diagram 4.**  
*Within the framework of the "Stay Home" social call, which of the following activities constitute your main occupation? (You can choose multiple options)*



ductive way.

The vast majority of respondents (86.5%) leave home mainly to go to the market. The other two main reasons are to go to the pharmacy (39.4%) and to work (25.8%). Although it is a very small part, 5.9% of the respondents leave the house to walk outdoors. While 18.4% of the respondents who declared that they went to work in the quarantine regime include employees in the public sector, this indicator is 23.7% in the private sector.

To control the spread of the epidemic within the framework of the quarantine regime, various applications are being implemented in international practice.

The Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan has established movement restrictions within the special quarantine regime to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

It is scheduled to enforce movement restrictions from April 5, 2020, at 00:00, to April 20, 2020, at 00:00, by sending SMS information to the number 8103 and following the corresponding procedures to obtain permission to leave the place of residence under special rules (SMS data is free). The SMS message must include one of the following three indices and information confirming the citizen's identity:

Index 1: to leave the place of residence for urgent medical needs or scheduled treatment. Permission is granted for a two-hour duration within the district or city. For intercity movement between districts and cities, the distance between the address and the destination, as well as the

duration of the treatment procedure, are taken into account. The duration of return is determined by a certificate issued by a doctor and, if necessary, is presented to police officers.

**Number 2:** to leave the place of residence for purchasing food and other essential daily items, as well as medicines, and to use banking and postal services (permission granted once a day for a period of 2 hours).

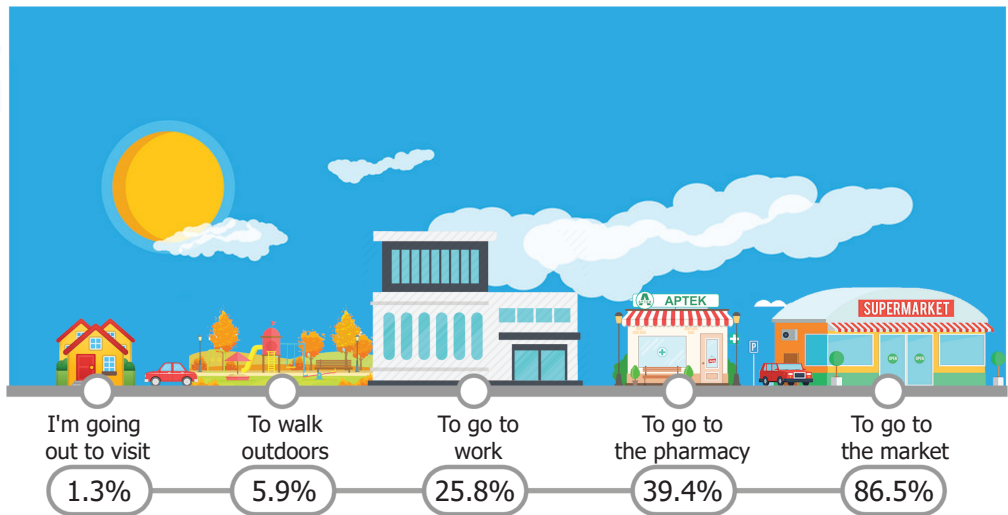
**Number 3:** to leave the residence to attend the funeral of a close relative.

A descriptive analysis of survey results suggests that the government's designated indices for movement restrictions closely align with public opinion. This indicates the effectiveness of such preventive policies.

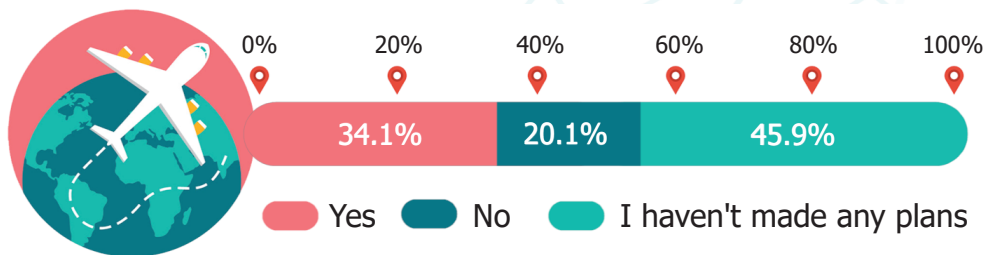
Approximately half of the respondents (45.9%) do not have travel plans, indicating that the coronavirus pandemic has not affected them in this regard. However, one-third of people (34.1%) have either postponed or altered their health-related plans due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Interestingly, despite the pandemic, 20.1% of respondents did not change their travel plans. Among those who postponed their travel plans, the majority (58.9%) are urban respondents.

41% of those who are very afraid of contracting the COVID-19 pandemic make up one third (32.2%) of those who postpone their travel plans ( $\chi^2(9)=26.271$   $p<0.01$ ). On the other hand, a significant part (47.6%) of the respondents (20.1%) who are of the opinion that COVID-19

**Diagram 5.**  
For what reasons do you and your family members usually leave home?







**Diagram 6.**  
Did COVID-19 cause you to postpone your travel plans?

does not postpone their health-related plans are those who are not afraid of being infected by the pandemic.

A significant portion of respondents (66.4%) do not take precautions or consider them necessary when purchasing food, hygiene products, or medicines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This result suggests that many respondents did not panic-buy food and other items in large quantities. Furthermore, respondents believe there won't be any issues in the sale of essential products such as food, hygiene items, and medicines. About a third of respondents (29.1%) do take precautions by purchasing these items.

When asked, "Have you taken precautions by purchasing any food, hygiene products, or medicines due to COVID-19?" a substantial portion of respondents (66.4%) answered "no, I don't think about it at all." Those who reported taking precautionary measures constitute 29.1% of the surveyed population. Merely 4.5% of respondents plan to implement such initiatives.

Analysis of the survey results reveals that 73.9% of those who express no fear of being infected by the COVID-19 pandemic do not feel the need to stock up on food, hygiene products, or medicines as a precautionary measure. Notably, 52.6% of respondents who do not consider

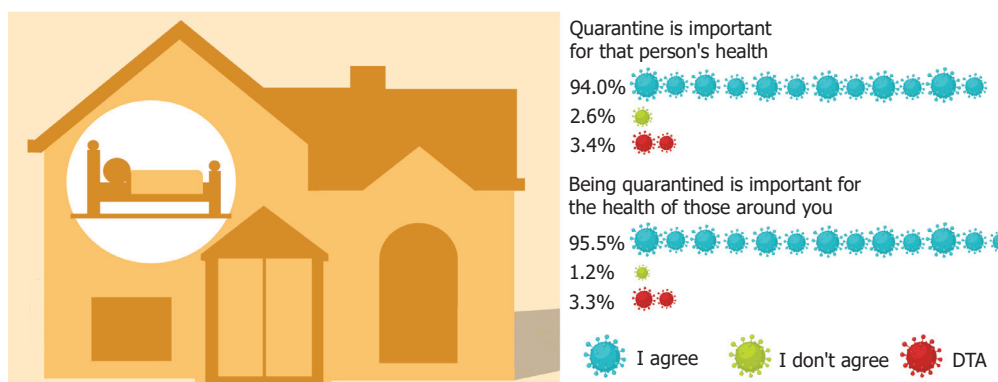
stocking up on supplies have completed secondary education, while 27.3% have higher education ( $\chi^2(4)=10.840$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).



**Diagram 7.**  
Have you taken precautionary measures such as purchasing food, hygiene items, and medications due to COVID-19?

Examining those who reported taking procurement measures across different categories, the majority of respondents fall within the 18-35 age range, along with those who fear infection from the pandemic (53.1%).

If we approach the analysis of the results of the survey from another aspect, we can note that a significant part of the respondents (93.9%) consider quarantine as very important from the point of view of that person's health. On the other hand, from the point of view of national security and solidarity, 95.5% of the respondents considered the quarantine of potential carriers as an important measure in terms of protecting those around them. To de-



**Diagram 8.**  
To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

scribe the landscape in more detail, it is appropriate to pay attention to diagram 8.

One of the myths formed in the society about the pandemic was that most of the citizens in our country who feel the symptoms of COVID-19 do not go to medical institutions specified by the state for one reason or another (the quality of the provided medical care, the risk of infection, psychological factors, etc.).

The results of the sociological survey largely debunked this myth. An overwhelming majority of respondents (97.5%) considered it inevitable to seek medical attention if they or their loved ones experience symptoms of COVID-19. We can attribute this opinion to two factors. Firstly, the fact that the vast majority of those who answered "yes" (95%) do not conceal such cases can be linked to trust in the government's deliberate state policy, prioritizing the health and safety of citizens<sup>1</sup>. Secondly, based on respondents' opinions, we can infer that citizens of the country behave quite rationally, displaying high trust in state-provided services during emergencies. The analysis of the results indicates that a very small fraction of citizens (2.5%) attempt to conceal symptoms of the coronavirus.

A significant portion of respondents—40.1%—expressed the belief that the likelihood of encountering any problem is low under potential quarantine conditions. However, 31% of those polled stated that their family members would encounter difficulties, 13.3% indicated dissatisfaction with potential quarantine conditions, and 11.3% feared an increased risk of infection. Additionally, 11.5% of respondents expressed concern that people's attitudes toward them would turn negative after the quarantine, which

is purely a socio-psychological factor.

When considering gender differences, men tend to believe they will not face any problems to a certain extent (47.4% of men compared to 32.2% of women). Conversely, women are more likely to believe that family members of both genders are highly concerned about the possibility of difficulties (36.4% of female respondents compared to 25.4% of male respondents).

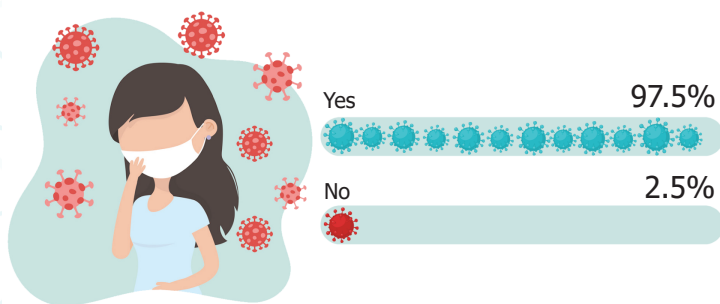
We can draw a parallel between both determinations with the following similarity ( $X^2(9)=57.280$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Conversely, only 8.4% of those unafraid of contracting COVID-19 believed the conditions of their quarantine location would be poor. Additionally, merely 8% of respondents (44.9%) who harbored no fear of contracting the pandemic believed transmission could occur from their quarantine environment. This misconception often stems from misinformation spread on social media. To mitigate such instances, it is imperative to accurately and comprehensively communicate current quarantine conditions.

Analyzing the survey results through a geographical lens using the  $X^2$  test suggests a notable proportion of respondents (40.6%) who perceive no threat hail from rural areas. Conversely, the sentiment "My family members may face difficulties" predominates among urban (36%) and town (34.9%) populations ( $X^2(18)=46.515$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Concerns regarding quarantine conditions were more prevalent among respondents residing in urban and town areas (14.5% and 16.7%, respectively), while rural respondents exhibited less concern at only 9.2%.

Similarly, opinions regarding the risk of infection from the quarantine location were expressed by 13.3% of urban respondents, 10.2% of those in settlements, and finally, 9.4% of rural respondents ( $X^2(18)=46.515$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

Within the survey, 25.6% of respondents highly apprehensive about contracting COVID-19 stated their family members would likely face difficulties, 17.3% expressed dissatisfaction with quarantine conditions, and 16.4% cited threats such as infection possibilities. Finally, scrutinizing the evaluation of respondent attitude toward presented question options ac-

**Diagram 9.**  
*Would you seek medical attention if you or your close ones experience symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, fatigue)?*

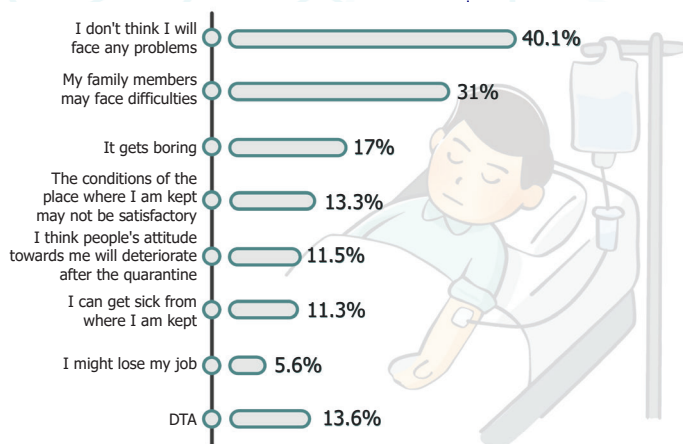


According to educational levels yields the following insights. According to the  $X^2$  test, respondents with higher education exhibit greater concern that their family members will encounter difficulties (38.9%). Similarly, 17.9% of these respondents voiced dissatisfaction with quarantine conditions (attributed to concerns about detention conditions) ( $X^2(18)=64.143$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

Approximately two-thirds (63.5%) of respondents perceive the preventive measures instituted by the "Medical Territorial Units Management Union" (TABIB) to be effective to varying degrees, with 45.6% deeming them "completely effective" and 17.9% considering them "mostly effective". Conversely, a notable portion (43.5%) of those who express being "very afraid of being infected with the COVID-19 pandemic" (25.6%) regard TABIB's activity as fully effective. According to the ANOVA test, among those whose opinions were surveyed, individuals residing in villages assessed TABIB's activity as more effective ( $F(2)=5.591$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Similarly, based on the ANOVA test, among those whose opinions were analyzed, individuals with secondary education perceived TABIB's activity as more effective ( $F(2)=7.115$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

A concerning point is that a significant number of respondents (31.1%) experienced difficulty in answering this question, possibly due to a lack of knowledge about TABIB's activities in the specified area. Furthermore, among the 31.1% of respondents struggling to articulate their opinion on TABIB's measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, 37.5% hail from rural areas. Additionally, within the geographical breakdown of respondents finding it challenging to answer, the proportion from villages stands at 40.3%. Among respondents, those with higher education found it less difficult to answer compared to those with other educational backgrounds. Therefore, concerning the educational level of respondents finding it challenging to respond, 32% have secondary education, 36.8% have vocational-specialized education, and finally, 27.3% possess higher education.

The analysis of respondents' opinions suggests a positive correlation between

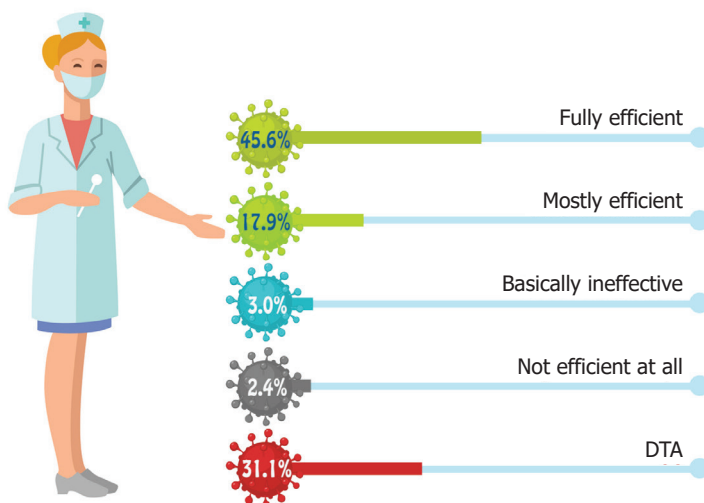


**Diagram 10.**  
If you were placed in quarantine due to suspected COVID-19 exposure, what difficulties do you anticipate facing? (all relevant options)

satisfaction with state-implemented pandemic measures and effective assessment of TABIB's activities ( $r=0.498$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). In other words, those who positively evaluate state-implemented pandemic measures also tend to perceive TABIB's activity as effective.

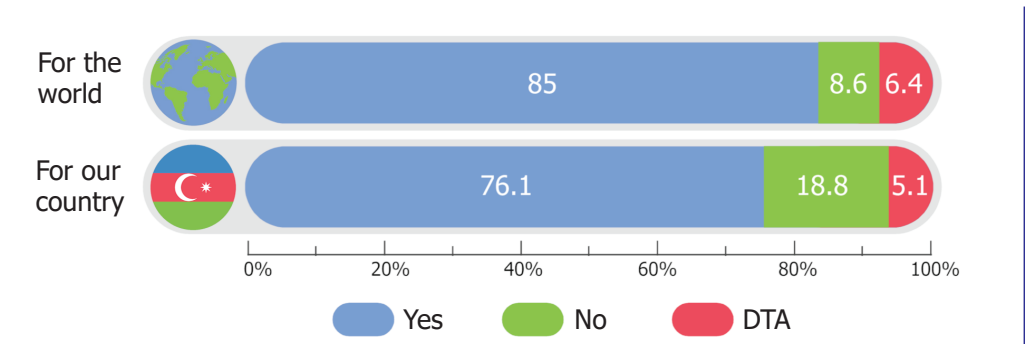
The COVID-19 pandemic significantly conditions global uncertainty in the current environment and acts as a serious catalyst, so to speak. Based on various combinations of analyzes of leading think tanks, we can say that the possible consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic increase our expectations about the formation of a new order in the world. It is in this direction that a significant part of the respondents (85.0%) consider the pandemic as a serious danger (threat) for the world. Undoubtedly, the fact of Azerbaijan's integration into the world community in various directions makes the respondents believe that such a danger (threat) is high for our country as well (76.1%).

**Diagram 11.**  
In your opinion, how effective is TABIB in combating COVID-19?





**Diagram 12.**  
Do you consider the COVID-19 pandemic a serious threat to our country and the world?



On the other hand, 8.6% and 18.8% of the respondents, respectively, are of the opinion that there is no danger (threat) of COVID-19 for the world and our country. One of the interesting points is that about 6.0% of the respondents said that they had difficulty answering this question.

In all instances, the findings of both local and global sociological surveys depict the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant threat from both a global and local perspective.

The absolute majority of respondents (93%) positively assess the measures taken by the state regarding the coronavirus and think that they are sufficient (79.6% "completely" sufficient, 13.4% "partially sufficient"). Thus, we can say that there is social support from citizens for the measures taken now. The analysis shows that as the age of the respondents increases, the level of satisfaction with the preventive measures implemented by the state against the pandemic also increases.

While 75.6% of respondents aged 16-25 consider the state's preventive measures against the pandemic to be "completely sufficient", respondents in other age groups consider them "completely sufficient" in the range of 81%-88% ( $X^2(8)=17.041$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

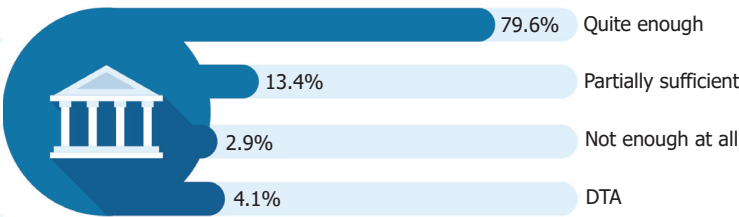
The quarantine regime and in general, the COVID-19 pandemic, as we have already mentioned, in addition to the health

crisis (shocks) at the national and global level, also conditions the deepening of the socio-economic crisis. It is for this reason that those polled are of the opinion that extending the quarantine regime will mainly deepen the following threats. First of all, we would like to note that 16.5% of the surveyed respondents were of the opinion that there is no socio-economic threat caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, based on the opinion of the respondents, we can group as a high risk group those who say that 39.6% of them say that the price increase of consumer products (possibility of potential inflation), 36.2% of them say that the income of those who work today will decrease, and finally, 33.7% of them say that there will be difficulties in credit and rent payments.

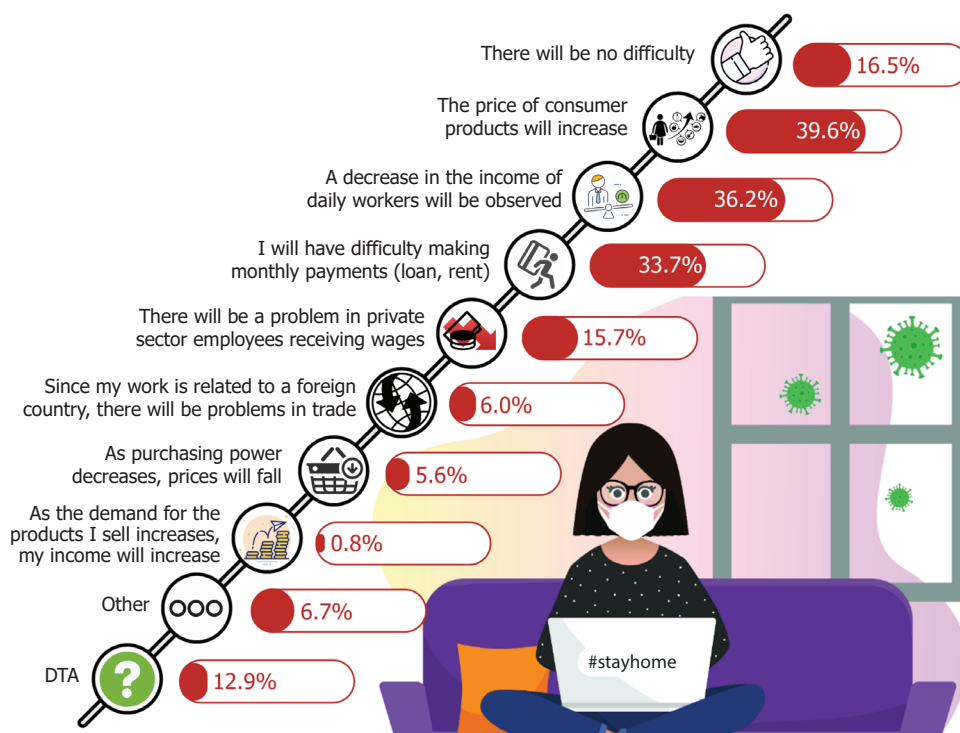
The analysis shows that 36.2% of the respondents who believe that the probability of a decrease in the income level of those working today will increase, are made up of secondary and vocational education graduates (42.6% and 40.3%, respectively). 30.1% of the respondents with higher education made this conclusion. A similar trend applies to respondents (33.7%) who believe that they will have difficulties with monthly loan and rent payments (37.6% with secondary education, 37.2% with vocational-specialized education and 28.4% with higher education, respectively).

39.6% of respondents who mentioned the price increase of consumer products as another sub-threat expressed their opinion with almost the same frequency at all levels of education. Based on the  $X^2$  test, we can note the similarity ( $X^2(18)=57.760$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). If we look at the geographical position of the respondents, there is no significant difference in the opinions given on the directions included in the high risk group. 86.8% of self-em-

**Diagram 13.**  
To what extent do you consider the measures implemented by the state related to COVID-19 to be sufficient?



**Diagram 14.**  
If the current quarantine regime continues, what are the socio-economic implications? (for all eligible options)



employed respondents rate the risk of their incomes decreasing.

In the public sector, 68.8% of employees generally overestimated the likelihood of price increases in consumer goods compared to those in other sectors. Within the low-risk group, 15.7% expressed concerns about potential salary issues in the private sector, 6% anticipated trade difficulties due to foreign-related work, and 5.6% predicted decreased purchasing power leading to price drops.

The negative sentiment among respondents working in the private sector (58.4%) is primarily directed towards apprehensions about delayed salary payments ( $X^2(49)=179.197$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Among the 6% of respondents foreseeing trade-related problems due to foreign connections, those with secondary education (61.0%) comprised the majority ( $X^2(18)=57.760$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

It's worth noting the pertinent decree issued by the head of the country on March 19, 2020, which contains precise measures tailored to the current situation and outlines strategic initiatives aimed at mitigating potential economic downturns.

A significant majority of respondents (87.8%) are confident in the government's

support if they encounter any issues related to the ongoing situation. Geographically, high expectations regarding state support prevail across all locations—87% in urban areas, 86.6% in settlements, and 89.2% in rural areas—with no significant differences observed.

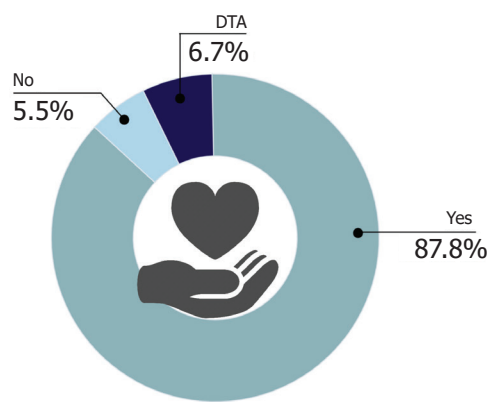
Furthermore, among the respondents who believe the state's measures to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are fully adequate (79.6%), an overwhelming majority (92.3%) anticipate receiving government support for any potential problems.

The measures implemented by the president in response to the current pandemic stand out as one of the primary reasons behind citizens' positive opinions. Thanks to the prompt and effective actions taken by the country's leadership during the initial stages of the pandemic, the situation in Azerbaijan can be deemed more satisfactory compared to other nations.

Under the president's directives, the establishment of the Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers, the imposition of quarantine restrictions, and the enactment of legislative measures by the Milli Majlis to support the special regime demonstrate a comprehensive approach to safeguarding the health of the



**Diagram 15.**  
*Do you believe that the state will support you when you encounter any problems in the current situation?*



nation's citizens. Direct oversight from the president ensures continuous monitoring of the coronavirus situation.

What distinguishes these efforts is not only their logical coherence and professional execution but also their humane principles. A notable example is the cre-

ation of the Support Fund for the Fight against Coronavirus by the head of state, coupled with the decision to donate the annual salaries of the President and the First Vice-President to this fund. These actions by the country's leadership have instilled a heightened sense of social responsibility among the populace, encouraging widespread participation in this nationwide endeavor.

## CONCLUSION

When tracing the trajectory of the COVID-19 epidemic leading up to the pandemic, it's notable to observe both national and international reactions during this timeframe. The unfolding events, commencing on December 31, 2019, when officials in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, alerted the World Health Organization about health workers treating numerous patients with an unidentified cause of pneumonia, swiftly gripped the entire globe due to the "synchronization" effect induced by globalization.

Until February 28, 2020, various international organizations escalated the epidemic risk indicator (COVID-19) from "high" to "very high," underscoring the disease's pandemic potential. Ultimately, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, citing the rapid and severe spread of the virus and policymakers' failure to implement adequate preventive measures.

A significant aspect is that the health crisis also precipitates a profound economic crisis in national economies, effectively halting the global economy. Analyzing international experiences, we can discern three distinct policy strategies adopted by countries concerning the situation.

Firstly, the predominant strategy, implemented by most countries including ours, prioritizes health security while simultaneously addressing socio-economic concerns. Secondly, the "Mass Immunity" approach, pursued by countries like Great Britain and Sweden, initially favored prioritizing economic security but eventually shifted towards the first strategy. Lastly, there's a policy strategy, as seen in Belarus, that deems it acceptable to prioritize economic security.

Reports from international organizations and think tanks characterize our country's efforts in combating the pandemic as a "model of success" due to the President of Azerbaijan's flexible yet decisive decisions and orders. The preventive policy, hailed as a model, is primarily characterized by two key determinants: mitigating pandemic risks, or "flattening the pandemic curve," and

implementing macroeconomic policy strategies, such as state support and social packages, to counteract economic stagnation within a defined timeframe.

The aforementioned state support is directly outlined in the President's Decree titled "On a number of measures related to reducing the negative impact of the Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic and the resulting sharp fluctuations in the world energy and stock markets on the economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, macroeconomic stability, employment issues, and business entities in the country," encompassing the following directions: [Insert directions here].

- The main support tools for economic growth and entrepreneurship;
- Financial support to individual (micro) entrepreneurs;
- Tax concessions, privileges and relevant holiday programs for business entities;
- Credit-guarantee support for new bank loans and existing loan portfolio;
- Financial support for the payment of salaries of salaried employees;
- Social package to support the financial situation of the population;
- Support for the payment of tuition fees for students who are members of families belonging to the socially vulnerable population group;
- Financial support for the mortgage and credit guarantee mechanism;
- Support for utility payments for electricity consumption of the population;
- Support for vital passenger transport activities.

An allocation of 2.5 billion manats has been earmarked by the state for these strategic directions, equivalent to 3% of the GDP.

To ensure the fulfillment of clause 10.2 of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated March 19, 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers approved an Action Plan on April 4, 2020. This comprehensive plan encompasses three key areas: support for economic growth and entrepreneurship, bolstering employment and social welfare, and fostering macroeconomic and financial stability.

**At the outset, the government is rolling out action mechanisms in the following areas:**

1. Initiatives aimed at safeguarding jobs and maintaining social stability;
2. Implementation of tax incentives to bolster economic activity protection.

**The main results of the sociological survey conducted on a national scale by the Social Research Center from March 19 to 28, 2020, are as follows:**

□ The proportion of those who fear contracting COVID-19 (53.1%) is nearly equal to those who do not fear it (44.9%). Among those who fear contracting COVID-19, 25% are highly fearful, while 27.5% are less fearful.

□ Women are less afraid of contracting the virus compared to men. The level of fear among those aged 51 and above is lower relative to other age groups, while in middle-aged groups, it is higher.

□ Respondents with a high school education (51.2%) are more afraid of contracting the virus compared to those with a higher education (27.3%).

□ City respondents (57.4%) are more afraid of contracting COVID-19 compared to town (15.2%) and village (27.4%) respondents, and in general, they exhibit a more sensitive reaction.

□ Respondents highlight personal hygiene as the most widely adopted protective measure (92.4%). Furthermore, 77.5% of those surveyed refrain from going out unless absolutely necessary, indicating adherence to quarantine measures. It is also noteworthy that women (83.6%) exhibit a more cautious approach compared to men (74.6%), as they avoid going out unless absolutely necessary.

□ 54.5% of respondents prefer special foods to protect against the virus.

□ Approximately one-third of respondents (34.8%) wear masks, while only 3.7% disinfect their homes, which is somewhat concerning. Specifically, women dominate the use of protective masks (women 42.4%, men 28.8%).

The trend in the use of protective masks is characterized by a decrease among those aged 50 and above. The younger and middle-aged population category uses protective masks more frequently.

□ If we evaluate the results of the survey from a geographical perspective, it is observed that city residents adhere more to issues related to the use of protective masks and going to crowded places compared to those living in rural areas and towns.

□ Furthermore, among the surveyed individuals, young people (aged 16-25) are more likely to go to crowded places compared to respondents represented in other age groups (64.4%). This may also be related to the widespread belief among young people that they are less susceptible to contracting the virus.

□ After the coronavirus pandemic, a significant portion of respondents (79.7%) reported a decrease in the time spent outside their homes to varying degrees. This indicator reflects the population's participation in the "stay at home" campaign, aimed at reducing the risk of contracting and spreading the disease.

□ Among the surveyed respondents aged 65 and above, 61.1% noted a significant decrease in the time spent outside their homes after the implementation of social distancing measures.

□ However, for every fifth person (19.2%), there has been no change in the duration of their time spent outside, indicating that a certain portion of the population either knowingly or involuntarily (for example, due to work-related reasons) did not adhere to or could not adhere to the principles of social distancing.

□ The majority of respondents (83%) spend their time at home watching local television channels, while slightly less than two-thirds (67.2%) are engaged in household chores or activities.

□ Taking into account the high number of people watching local television channels, it can be suggested that combating misinformation about the coronavirus by producing more informative videos could be effective.

Approximately one in every four individuals (22.7%) spends their time self-educating (through online courses, etc.) and reading books. We believe that through campaigns and dissemination via television channels, interest in self-improvement, education, and skill enhancement could be increased, encouraging people to spend their time at home in a more productive manner.

□ It should be noted that the majority of those leaving their homes (86.5%) do so to go to the market. Subsequently, people mainly go out to pharmacies (39.4%) and for work purposes (25.8%).

□ It is noteworthy that one in every four individuals leaving their homes for work is a significant observation. From this, it can be inferred that if direct financial assistance is provided to a certain portion of the population, or if there are incentives in their monthly payments, there may be a decrease in the number of individuals leaving home for work-related purposes.

□ The majority of respondents (66.4%) do not take precautionary measures by buying any food, hygiene products, or medicines due to coronavirus and do not even think about it. From this result, it can be inferred that most citizens do not engage in panic buying of food and other products. Furthermore, we can say that people believe there will be no problem in the sale of essential products such as food, hygiene items, and medicines.

□ The analysis of the survey results suggests that a significant portion (73.9%) of the respondents who are not afraid of contracting COVID-19 (44.9%) do not feel the need for precautionary measures such as stocking up on food, hygiene products, and medicines.

□ Approximately one-third of the respondents (29.1%) take precautionary measures by stocking up on food, hygiene products, and medicines.

□ Approximately half of the respondents (45.9%) did not have any travel plans, so the coronavirus pandemic did not affect them in this regard. However, one in every three individuals (34.1%) had their travel plans either postponed

or changed direction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of those who postponed their travel plans (58.9%) are city residents.

□ Interestingly, 20.1% of respondents did not change their travel plans despite the coronavirus pandemic.

□ The overwhelming majority of respondents (93.9%) consider quarantine to be highly important for the person's health. On the other hand, an almost equal number of respondents (95.5%) also perceive the quarantine of potential carriers as an important measure for national security and solidarity in protecting others.

□ The overwhelming majority of respondents (97.5%) considered it inevitable to go to a medical facility if symptoms of COVID-19 are observed in themselves or their loved ones. We can relate this opinion to two factors. Firstly, as one of the factors, the absolute majority of those who said "yes" (95%) do not hide such cases, which can be attributed to the trust in the government's purposeful state policy, where the health and safety of citizens are defined as a priority. From another perspective based on the opinions of the respondents, we can say that citizens of the country can behave quite rationally in such emergency situations, showing high trust in the services provided by the state.

□ A significant portion of the respondents (40.1%) believe that the likelihood of facing any problems in possible quarantine conditions is low. However, 31% of the respondents believe that their family members will encounter difficulties, 13.3% believe that the quarantine conditions will not be satisfactory, and 11.3% believe that the risk of infection will increase even more. Those who are of the opinion that people's attitude towards them will be negative after the quarantine, as a completely socio-psychological factor, constitute 11.5% of the total respondents.

□ Approximately two-thirds of respondents (63.5%) consider the preventive measures implemented by the "Medical Territorial Units Management Union" (TABIB) to be effective to varying degrees (45.6% "completely effective"



and 17.9% "mostly effective", respectively). Those who positively evaluate the measures implemented by the state regarding the coronavirus also assess the activity of TABIB as effective.

□ A somewhat concerning point is that a noticeable number of respondents (31.1%) had difficulty answering this question, which may stem from their lack of knowledge about TABIB's activities in the mentioned direction. Among those having difficulty expressing their opinion about TABIB's measures to combat COVID-19, rural residents are predominant.

□ A significant portion of respondents (85%) perceive the pandemic as a serious threat to the world, while this figure for Azerbaijan is 76.1%.

□ In all cases, the results of local and global sociological surveys indicate that people perceive the COVID-19 pandemic as a serious threat both globally and locally.

□ The vast majority of the population (93%) positively assesses the measures taken by the government regarding the coronavirus and considers them sufficient (79.6% "completely sufficient", 13.4% "partially sufficient"). Based on this result, we can say that there is social support for the current measures taken by the citizens.

□ According to the respondents' opin-

ions, 16.5% believe that there will be no socio-economic threats arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, based on the respondents' opinions, we can categorize those who foresee potential threats as follows: 39.6% as a high-risk group foreseeing price increases in consumer goods (potential inflation), 36.2% anticipating a decrease in the current income of those currently employed, and finally, 33.7% foreseeing difficulties in credit and rent payments. Additionally, 15.7% of respondents are concerned about potential problems with their salaries due to their and their family members' employment in the private sector.

□ The vast majority of respondents (87.9%) are confident that the government will support them in case they encounter any problems related to the current situation. Furthermore, the absolute majority (92.3%) of those who consider the government's measures to minimize the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as fully sufficient believe that state support will be provided in relation to potential problems.



## NOTES

[illegible]





18, Ismayil bay Kutkashenli Str., Yasamal district, Baku, AZ1073, the Republic of Azerbaijan

Telephone: (+994 12) 510-70-78; (+994 12) 510-23-75; (+994 12) 510-70-69

[info@stm.az](mailto:info@stm.az)   [www.stm.az](http://www.stm.az)