

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Social Practices of Young People in The Moscow Region Associated with The Spread of The Covid-19 Pandemic

## Prácticas sociales de los jóvenes en la región de Moscú Asociado con la propagación de la pandemia Covid-19

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## Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread rapidly around the world and has had significant impact on changing the social practices of everyday behavior and interpersonal communication of people. In Russia, the Moscow Region was one of the leaders in the number of people infected with COVID-19. Therefore, the focus of the present study is on the everyday social practices of students in the Moscow Region during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the attitude of young people to restrictions and measures aimed at countering the spread of coronavirus infection in the region. The findings of the study are based on the results of a questionnaire survey of more than 2,500 young respondents studying at universities, colleges, and technical schools in the Moscow Region, conducted during the second wave of the pandemic. The conducted analysis has shown that more than half of the respondents admitted that they were afraid of contracting coronavirus and considered it a very dangerous disease. Nevertheless, young people's adherence to safety standards was often due to the strict requirements of the authorities and the public to comply with them. The most common measures taken by respondents to prevent COVID-19 included frequent handwashing with soap, wearing face masks in public places, wiping hands with antiseptic, and avoiding contact with sick people.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 pandemic, Self-Isolation, Face Mask Regime, Vaccination, Self-Medication, Ways To Combat Coronavirus Infection.

## Resumen

La pandemia de COVID-19 se ha extendido rápidamente por todo el mundo y ha tenido un impacto significativo en el cambio de las prácticas sociales del comportamiento cotidiano y la comunicación interpersonal de las personas. En Rusia, la Región de Moscú fue uno de los líderes en el número de personas infectadas con COVID-19. Por lo tanto, el enfoque del presente estudio está en las prácticas sociales cotidianas de los estudiantes en la región de Moscú durante la pandemia de COVID-19, así como en la actitud de los jóvenes ante las restricciones y medidas destinadas a contrarrestar la propagación de la infección por coronavirus en la región. Los hallazgos del estudio se basan en los resultados de una encuesta a más de 2.500 jóvenes encuestados que estudian en universidades, colegios y escuelas técnicas en la región de Moscú, realizada durante la segunda ola de la pandemia. El análisis realizado ha demostrado que más de la mitad de los encuestados admitieron que tenían miedo de contraer coronavirus y lo consideraban una enfermedad muy peligrosa. Sin embargo, la adherencia de los jóvenes a las normas de seguridad a menudo se debe a los estrictos requisitos de las autoridades y el público para cumplirlas. Las medidas más comunes tomadas por los encuestados para prevenir el COVID-19 incluyeron lavarse las manos con frecuencia con jabón, usar mascarillas en lugares públicos, limpiarse las manos con antiséptico y evitar el contacto con personas enfermas.

**Palabras clave:** pandemia COVID-19, autoaislamiento, régimen de mascarilla facial, vacunación, automedicación, formas de combatir la infección por coronavirus.

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## Introduction

Initially, an outbreak of new coronavirus infection, COVID-19, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, was recorded in the Chinese city of Wuhan, in December 2019 (Previously unknown coronavirus – China, 2020). The virus has spread rapidly around the world, mainly due to global air travel. Soon, the centers of the pandemic moved from Asia to the United States (for example, New York) and Europe (Italy, Spain, the UK, etc.). Thus, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared this outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) (Statement on the second meeting..., 2020). Already on March 11, 2020, WHO announced that the spread of the new coronavirus had reached the stage of a pandemic, as most countries of the world and all continents were already affected. At that time, 118,000 cases were reported in 114 countries, and the disease claimed the lives of 4,291 people (Introduction by the Director-General at the press briefing on COVID-19, 2020).

As of December 1, 2020, the number of cases of coronavirus infection recorded in the world exceeded 63 million. More than 1,463,000 people died, and more than 43 million recovered (COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic, n.d.). In Russia, the total number of cases of coronavirus infection at that time was more than 2,269,000, the number of patients who died with coronavirus was more than 39.5 thousand, the number of recovered patients was more than 1,761,000 (The coronavirus pandemic, n.d.).

Countries and cities undertook various measures to counter the epidemic, which included ways to reduce social contacts, closing schools, universities, shops, restaurants, and bars, banning mass events, and encouraging remote working from home. Many countries implemented a strict lockdown.

In the Moscow Region, the self-isolation regime was introduced on March 23 for citizens over the age of 65, as well as citizens with chronic diseases (diabetes, bronchial asthma, cancer, as well as those who had suffered a heart attack or stroke), which lasted from March 26 to April 14, 2020 (The decree of the Governor of the Moscow Region No. 136-PG, 2020).

Self-isolation is a set of restrictive measures for the population that the government imposes for a certain period as part of a high alert or emergency. In March 2020, self-isolation was introduced to combat the spread of COVID-19. Residents of the Moscow Region were asked to observe the regime, i.e., not to go out without urgent need, limit contact with other people, and follow all the recommendations to prevent viral diseases proposed by the medical community.

On March 28, the self-isolation regime was imposed for all residents of the Moscow Region and lasted from March 30 to May 31. People were ordered not to leave their homes except for seeking emergency medical care, commuting to work, going to the nearest store or pharmacy, walking dogs, and taking out the garbage. It was also possible to leave the house in case of a threat to life and health. In the Moscow Region, mass events, the work of enterprises in the service sector, catering, and nonfood trade was banned (The decree of the Governor of the Moscow Region No. 136-PG, 2020).

Universities and colleges in the Moscow Region, subordinated to the Ministry of Education of the Moscow Region, were switched to distance learning from March 21, which lasted until the end of the academic year (Kolledzhi i vuzy Podmoskov'ya perekhodyat na distancionnoe obuchenie, 2020).

Despite all the measures taken, from the very beginning of the epidemic, the Moscow Region has become one of the leaders in Russia in the number of infected with COVID-19, passing only Moscow ahead. This was due to the proximity of Moscow, which had taken the

brunt of the pandemic. In mid-May, about 1,000 cases were detected daily in the Moscow Region (The Decree of the Governor of the Moscow Region No. 222-PG, 2020).

Since May 12, a decree on the mandatory wearing of protective face masks in public spaces, namely, shops, pharmacies, transport, including taxis, as well as when visiting medical organizations, had come into force in the Moscow Region (The Decree of the Governor of the Moscow Region No. 502-PG, 2020).

Since the end of May, the number of newly deceased people began to gradually decrease, and from July 7 to September 22, 2020, did not exceed 200 people per day (Coronavirus (Covid-19), n.d.).

Since October, another increase in the incidence of COVID-19 had been recorded in the Moscow Region. While on October 1, the number of new cases of COVID-19 was 230 people, on November 1,545 new cases were already detected among residents of the Moscow Region (Coronavirus (Covid-19), n.d.).

On November 16, all universities and colleges of the Moscow Region, subordinated to the Ministry of Education of the Moscow Region, were again switched to distance learning (The Decree of the Governor of the Moscow Region No. 502-PG, 2020).

Even though the COVID-19 virus has appeared recently, nevertheless, scientific reflection has already emerged within the framework of social and humanitarian discourse.

Thus, in the work of A.O. Kholyavin, an attempt was made to study the everyday state and behavior of people in the context of uncertainty and changes in social practices. The scientist conducted a qualitative study of the autoethnographic observation diaries collected in the spring of 2020. Kholyavin concluded that the identity of a responsible citizen was formed among the middle and middle-high class, observing the new rules of behavior in the context of the spread of the coronavirus epidemic, as an opposition to the inaction of some members of society (Kholyavin, 2020).

An interesting analysis of the perception of the COVID-19 pandemic by Moscow residents was conducted by a team of authors led by A.V. Reshetnikov. The results have shown that most of the residents of the capital were concerned about the rapid spread of coronavirus infection, the lack of effective treatment and vaccines, fear for the health of parents, and possible economic destabilization in the country. In the context of self-isolation, respondents most often experienced anxiety due to rising prices with simultaneous decrease (loss) of income, violation of vacation plans, as well as discomfort due to the restriction of personal space (Reshetnikov et al., 2020).

A study of the social adaptation of future engineers was conducted by E.I. Makarenko based on the method of content analysis of student essays (Makarenko, 2020). Later, the study was continued by a team of authors, focused on the features of adaptation of students to distance learning (Makarenko, Demin, Tyukov, 2020).

Volkov Yu.G. and V.I. Kurbatov (2020) attempted to generalize, systematize, and analyze domestic and foreign scenarios and trends in the development of the world after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors believe that one of the most pressing problems of the post-coronavirus world will be the problem of security, including food security, social security, medical security, and biological security. Only large and powerful economic actors will be able to solve global problems in the international arena. This will strengthen the role of the state in eliminating the damage caused by the pandemic and restoring the economy. The economic consequences of the pandemic will be very serious (poverty, economic inequality, and unemployment). This will lead not only to an economic downturn but also to the transformation

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of the middle class, and in some countries – to its almost complete disappearance. Digital technologies will be actively used in various fields: in production, social sector, education, and culture. The authors' conclusion about the atomization of social ties associated with social distance, as well as the emergence of various mass consequences of the pandemic for people's mental health, is quite exciting.

In the framework of the present study, it was important for the authors to understand how the epidemiological situation and the restrictions imposed affected the attitude of young people in the Moscow Region to the COVID-19 epidemic, as well as their social practices.

## Methods

To study the attitude of young people in the Moscow Region to the COVID-19 epidemic, in October 2020, the Educational and Scientific Laboratory of the Leonov Moscow Region University of Technology conducted a sociological study in the form of a questionnaire. The survey was conducted during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study involved 2,560 students of the Moscow Region aged 16 to 35 years. The sample consisted of students from the University of Technology, the College of Space Engineering and Technology, and the College of Technology and Design. Male respondents accounted for 53%, female respondents – for 47%.

The survey was conducted both on paper and online. The online questionnaire was completed by 2,320 respondents.

## Results

From the very beginning of the epidemic, statements were constantly made by representatives of the authorities and the public about the danger of new coronavirus infection. For example, at the end of March, a member of the WHO in the Russian Federation, Melita Vujinovich, stated that coronavirus infection was dangerous for people of all ages and that infection and deaths caused by this infection were also observed in young people (V VOZ zayavili ob opasnosti koronavirusa dlya vsekh vozrastov, 2020).

At the beginning of this study, more than 1,125,000 deaths from coronavirus were recorded in the world, including 24,433 deaths in Russia, and 1,478 deaths in the Moscow Region (Coronavirus (Covid-19), n.d.).

The study has shown that more than half of the respondents (51.2%) agreed with the statement that the coronavirus was a very dangerous disease. At the same time, more than a third of interviewed participants (38.4%) believed that the danger of coronavirus was greatly exaggerated, while 2.5% were generally convinced that coronavirus did not exist (Table 1).

**Table (1):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Which statement about the coronavirus is closer to you? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Which statement about the coronavirus is closer to you?</b>	<b>%</b>
Coronavirus does not exist	2.5
Coronavirus does exist but its danger is greatly exaggerated	38.4
Coronavirus is a very dangerous disease	51.2
Difficult to answer	7.9
Total	100.0

According to the results of the conducted survey, almost two-thirds of respondents (60.5%) believed that the coronavirus was more dangerous than the seasonal flu. At the same time, more than a quarter of respondents (29.9%) agreed with the statement that "the

coronavirus is no more or less dangerous than the usual seasonal flu", and only 2.8% believed that it was less dangerous than the seasonal flu (Table 2).

**Table (2):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you think the coronavirus is more dangerous than the usual seasonal flu virus or not? (in % of the total number of respondents)

<b>Do you think the coronavirus is more dangerous than the usual seasonal flu virus or not?</b>	<b>%</b>
Coronavirus is more dangerous than seasonal flu	60.5
Coronavirus is no more or less dangerous than the usual seasonal flu	29.8
Coronavirus is less dangerous than seasonal flu	2.8
Difficult to answer	6.9
Total	100.0

According to official statistics, by the beginning of the survey, in the Russian Federation, 1,415,316 people were infected with COVID-19, including more than 80 thousand residents (80,905 people as of 19.10.2020) in the Moscow Region (Coronavirus (Covid-19), n.d.).

About half of the respondents (45.8%) confirmed that there were already people in their immediate environment (relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, coursemates), who had been diagnosed with coronavirus. Approximately the same number (43.7%) indicated that yet there were no such diseased people in their immediate environment.

On the days of the survey, the number of new cases of infection in the Moscow Region steadily increased from 466 to 505 per day (Coronavirus (Covid-19), n.d.).

More than half of the respondents (59.2%) admitted that they were afraid to get infected with coronavirus (total number of responses "Very afraid" and "Rather afraid" to the question: "Are you afraid of contracting the coronavirus?"). However, about a third (30.4%) did not see such a danger for themselves (total number of responses "Rather not afraid" and "Not at all afraid" to the above question) (Table 3).

**Table (3):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Are you afraid of contracting the coronavirus? (in % of the total number of respondents)

<b>Are you afraid of contracting the coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
I'm very afraid	23.5
Rather afraid	35.7
Rather not afraid	21.2
Not afraid at all	9.2
Already been diseased	5.0
Difficult to answer	5.4
Total	100.0

About half of the respondents (44.8%) rated the probability of contracting coronavirus as high (total number of responses "Very high" and "Rather very high" to the question: "How would you estimate for yourself the probability of contracting coronavirus?"). At the same time, more than a quarter of respondents rated it as not very high, while 17.1% – as low (Table 4).

**Table (4):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: How would you estimate for yourself the probability of contracting coronavirus? (in % of the total number of respondents)

<b>How would you estimate for yourself the probability of contracting coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Very high	16.7

Rather high	28.1
Rather low	28.9
Low	17.1
Difficult to answer	9.1
Total	100.0

During the pandemic, doctors constantly warned COVID-19 patients against self-medication. However, more than a fifth of respondents (21.8%) preferred to stay at home and self-medicate when ARVI symptoms appeared, while 7.8% intended to continue attending studies. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (63.9%) were ready to go to the doctor and take a sick leave (Table 5).

**Table (5):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: What will you do if you feel unwell, experience ARVI symptoms? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>What will you do if you feel unwell, experience ARVI symptoms?</b>	<b>%</b>
I will continue to attend my studies	7.8
I will stay home and self-medicate	21.8
I will go to the doctor and take a sick leave	63.9
Difficult to answer	6.5
Total	100.0

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO and medical institutions distributed many recommendations on how to protect oneself and others from infection. What were the most effective ways to fight the coronavirus, according to young respondents?

The conducted research has shown that wiping hands with antiseptic and handwashing with soap were the most effective ways to prevent COVID-19 for the vast majority of respondents. This was stated by 92.5% and 89.9%, respectively (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you find the methods listed below to combat coronavirus effective?") (Table 6).

**Table (6):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider wiping your hands with an antiseptic/sanitizer to be an effective way to fight the coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you consider wiping your hands with an antiseptic/sanitizer to be an effective way to fight the coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Effective	62.4
Rather effective	30.1
Rather inefficient	4.7
Completely ineffective	1.3
Difficult to answer	1.4
Total	100.0

At the same time, only 58.6% on average in the sample wiped their hands with an antiseptic/sanitizer to prevent COVID-19. Moreover, there were slightly more than half of them (51.7%) among male respondents, and two-thirds (66.5%) – among female respondents. Three-quarters of the respondents (74.7%) washed their hands with soap (Table 7).

**Table (7):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider washing your hands with soap to be an effective way to fight the coronavirus? (*% of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you consider washing your hands with soap to be an effective way to fight the coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Effective	59.7

Rather effective	30.2
Rather inefficient	6.8
Completely ineffective	1.9
Difficult to answer	1.3
Total	100.0

As mentioned above, on March 30, the self-isolation regime was imposed in the Moscow Region for all residents. It lasted until May 31. In the present study, it was important to learn also the opinion of young respondents about the effectiveness of self-isolation.

The vast majority of respondents (83.3%) considered self-isolation to be an effective way to fight coronavirus (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider self-isolation to be an effective way to fight coronavirus?"). At the same time, less than a third of the respondents (29.5%) observed self-isolation as far as feasible and tried not to leave the home without a good reason (Table 8).

**Table (8):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider self-isolation to be an effective way to fight the coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you consider self-isolation to be an effective way to fight the coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Effective	59.8
Rather effective	23.5
Rather inefficient	8.0
Completely ineffective	6.0
Difficult to answer	2.6
Total	100.0

On March 16, the governor of the Moscow Region, Andrey Vorobyov, announced on his Instagram account a ban on holding events involving more than 50 people, which lasted until August 1 (V Podmoskov'e vveli zapret na meropriyatiya s uchastiem bolee 50 chelovek, 2020). Since October 21, due to the challenging epidemiological situation, a ban on holding mass and sports events was re-imposed in the Moscow Region (Vorob'ev ob'yavil o novyh ogranicheniyah i zapretah v Podmoskov'e, 2020).

The vast majority of respondents (84.9%) recognized the effectiveness of the ban on mass gatherings of people (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider the ban on mass gatherings of people to be an effective way to combat the coronavirus?"). Only 4.1% of respondents believed that this ban was ineffective. However, according to the study, only 39.3% of respondents tried to avoid mass gatherings of people (Table 9).

**Table (9):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider a ban on mass gatherings to be an effective way to combat the coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you consider a ban on mass gatherings to be an effective way to combat the coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Effective	58.8
Rather effective	26.1
Rather inefficient	8.7
Completely ineffective	4.1
Difficult to answer	2.3
Total	100.0



The face mask requirement was imposed in the Moscow Region on May 12. Residents of the Moscow Region were required to wear protective face masks in public spaces, such as shops, pharmacies, transport, including taxis, as well as when visiting medical institutions.

Since September 28, in the Moscow Region, the face mask regime was re-imposed by the order of the Governor of the Moscow Region. This order prescribed to strictly comply with the requirements for the mandatory use of personal respiratory protection means (face masks, respirators) when staying in public spaces (including all retail facilities, pharmacies, public transport, including the transportation of passengers and luggage under the order, taxis, railway transport, railway stations, stations, passenger platforms, pedestrian decks, bridges, and tunnels, at all enterprises that continued their work, in public areas of apartment buildings, and medical organizations) (Karantinnye mery v Podmoskov'e: vozvrashchenie udaleni i samoizolyacii pozhilyh, 2020).

Another objective of the present study was to learn the opinion of young residents of the Moscow Region about the effectiveness of wearing face masks. More than two-thirds of respondents (68.9%) agreed upon the effectiveness of wearing a face mask in public spaces to combat coronavirus (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider wearing face masks in public spaces to be an effective way to combat coronavirus?"). Along with this, about a third of respondents (29.2%) believed that face masks were in general ineffective (total number of responses "Probably ineffective" and "Ineffective at all" to the question: "Do you consider wearing face masks in public spaces to be an effective way to combat coronavirus ") (Table 10).

At that, almost three-quarters of respondents (74%) observed the face mask regime.

**Table (10):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider wearing face masks in public spaces to be an effective way to combat coronavirus? (*% of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you consider wearing face masks in public spaces to be an effective way to combat coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Effective	40.1
Rather effective	28.8
Rather inefficient	17.2
Completely ineffective	12.0
Difficult to answer	2.0
Total	100.0

Even though the effectiveness of wearing gloves in public spaces had been recognized by more than half of respondents (60.3%) (total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider wearing gloves in public places to be an effective way to combat coronavirus?"), only 13.0% of the respondents admitted that they wore gloves in public spaces (transport, store, etc.) (Table 11).

**Table (11):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider wearing gloves in public places to be an effective way to combat coronavirus? (*% of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you consider wearing gloves in public places to be an effective way to combat coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Effective	29.9
Rather effective	30.4
Rather ineffective	16.7
Completely ineffective	17.4
Difficult to answer	5.7

Total	100.0
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More than half of respondents (51.9%) did not consider the imposition of a curfew to be an effective measure to combat the coronavirus (the total number of responses "Rather ineffective" and "Completely ineffective" to the question "Do you consider the imposition of a curfew to be an effective way to combat coronavirus?"). At the same time, 41.7% of the survey participants recognized the effectiveness of this measure (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the above question) (Table 12).

**Table (12):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider the imposition of a curfew to be an effective way to combat coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

Do you consider the imposition of a curfew to be an effective way to combat coronavirus?	%
Effective	16.3
Rather effective	25.4
Rather ineffective	22.4
Completely ineffective	29.5
Difficult to answer	6.5
Total	100.0

Two-thirds of respondents (65.8%) believed that closing restaurants, cafes, sports complexes, and theaters was an effective way to combat coronavirus (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider closing restaurants, cafes, sports complexes, and theaters to be an effective measure to combat coronavirus?").

The opposite point of view was shared by more than a third of respondents (39.4%) (the total number of responses "Rather ineffective" and "Completely ineffective" to the above question) (Table 13).

**Table (13):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider the closure of restaurants, cafes, sports complexes, and theaters to be an effective measure to combat the coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

Do you consider the closure of restaurants, cafes, sports complexes, and theaters to be an effective measure to combat the coronavirus?	%
Effective	32.3
Rather effective	33.5
Rather ineffective	18.1
Completely ineffective	11.3
Difficult to answer	4.7
Total	100.0

Almost three-quarters of the respondents (70.5%) were in favor of the effectiveness of stopping international air traffic (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider the termination of international air traffic to be an effective way to combat the coronavirus?") (Table 14).

**Table (14):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider the termination of international flights to be an effective way to combat the coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

Do you consider the termination of international flights to be an effective way to combat the coronavirus?	%
Effective	39.3

Rather effective	31.2
Rather ineffective	12.4
Completely ineffective	10.4
Difficult to answer	6.8
Total	100.0

The most common measures taken by respondents to protect themselves and their families from coronavirus included frequent handwashing with soap (74.7%), wearing face masks in public spaces (74%), wiping hands with an antiseptic (58.6%), and avoiding contact with sick people (57.1%). As for the gender differences, they were most pronounced concerning using an antiseptic. While among males there were a little more than half of them (51.7%), among females – two-thirds (66.5%). It should be noted that 15% of respondents considered it impossible to protect themselves from the virus, and thus it was pointless to take any measures (Table 15).

**Table (15):** Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: What measures do you personally take to protect yourself and your family from the coronavirus? (*in % of the number of respondents of different sexes*)

What measures do you personally take to protect yourself and your family from the coronavirus?	Males (%)	Females (%)	All respondents %
Often washing my hands with soap	76.2	72.9	74.7
Wearing a face mask in public spaces	71.7	76.5	74.0
Often wiping my hands with an antiseptic/sanitizer	51.7	66.5	58.6
Trying not to contact sick people	55.6	59.0	57.1
Trying to avoid large crowds of people	39.1	39.4	39.3
Taking vitamins, strengthen the immune system	32.2	34.2	33.2
Observing self-isolation as far as feasible, and not leaving the home without a good reason	32.0	26.6	29.5
Refusing paper money	28.2	26.1	27.3
Going to the doctor at the first sign of the disease	24.2	24.1	24.1
Trying not to use public transport	23.3	16.2	20.0
Wiping the goods bought in the store with an antiseptic/sanitizer	17.6	21.4	19.3
I believe that it is impossible to protect oneself from the virus and thus it is pointless to take any measures	13.7	16.5	15.0
Wearing gloves in public places	13.6	12.2	13.0
Periodically taking a test/analysis to detect the coronavirus	6.3	4.5	5.5

Mass vaccination is one of the most effective ways to combat the pandemic. According to scientists, it is the vaccination that can overcome the pandemic of novel coronavirus infection.

According to the conducted study, more than half of the survey participants (51.7%) recognized mass vaccination as an effective way to fight coronavirus (the total number of responses "Effective" and "Rather effective" to the question: "Do you consider mass vaccination to be an effective way to fight coronavirus?"). At the same time, a third of respondents did not consider it effective (Table 16).

**Table (16):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you consider mass vaccination to be an effective way to fight coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

Do you consider mass vaccination to be an effective way to fight coronavirus?	%
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Effective	21.7
Rather effective	30.0
Rather ineffective	17.9
Completely Ineffective	15.8
Difficult to answer	14.6
Total	100.0

On August 11, Russian President Putin announced that Russia had registered the world's first vaccine against coronavirus infection (Putin ob'yavil o registracii vakciny ot koronavirusa v Rossii, 2020).

By early November, WHO had registered 47 vaccines worldwide, of which 10 were in the final stages of clinical trials, including the Russian Sputnik-V vaccine. In early November, the chief physician of the Russian Ministry of Health, O. Drapkina, stated that the Russian coronavirus vaccine developed by the Gamalei National Research Center was effective in more than 90% of cases (V Minzdrave ocenili effektivnost' vakciny "Sputnik V" v 90 procentov, 2020).

The study has shown that despite the active promotion of the domestic vaccine, less than a tenth of the respondents (8.9%) were ready to get vaccinated against coronavirus, although more than half of the respondents recognized the effectiveness of mass vaccination to combat coronavirus. More than a third of respondents (36.9%) in principle did not mind getting vaccinated but they had some concerns. More than a third of the survey participants (36.4%) categorically stated that they would not be vaccinated under any circumstances, while 15.8% of respondents were convinced of the ineffectiveness of vaccination (Table 17).

**Table (17):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: How do you feel about vaccination against coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>How do you feel about vaccination against coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Ready to get vaccinated	8.9
In principle, I do not mind getting vaccinated against coronavirus, but I have some concerns	36.9
I will not be vaccinated under any circumstances	36.4
I find it difficult to answer	17.9
Total	100.0

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there were many reports in the domestic and foreign media about the underestimation of the number of cases in Russia by the official statistics on the morbidity and mortality caused by COVID-19 (Russia's Covid death toll could be 70 percent higher than the official figure, 2020).

According to the research, half of the respondents (49.2%) did not trust the Russian official statistics on coronavirus and believed that there were actually more Russians who were ill than the official data showed. At that, 18.7% of young people expressed the belief that the official statistics reflected the actual situation. At the same time, every sixth participant of the survey (16.3%) believed that there were fewer Russians who were ill than the statistics showed. Thus, less than a fifth of respondents trusted the data of the Russian official statistics on the coronavirus (Table 18).

**Table (18):** Distribution of respondents' responses to the question: Do you trust the data of the Russian official statistics on coronavirus? (*in % of the total number of respondents*)

<b>Do you trust the data of the Russian official statistics on coronavirus?</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, I believe that the official statistics reflect the actual state of affairs	18.7
No, I think that there are actually more diseased Russians than the statistics show	49.2

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No, I think that there are actually fewer diseased Russians than the statistics show	16.3
Difficult to answer	15.9
Total	100.0

## Conclusion

The Moscow Region is one of the leading regions in Russia in terms of the number of people infected with COVID-19.

The results of the conducted study have shown that the everyday social practices of students of the Moscow Region during the COVID-19 pandemic were changing. More than half of the respondents surveyed believed that coronavirus was a very dangerous disease (51.2%), which was more dangerous than seasonal flu (60.5%). Almost 60% of young people were afraid of contracting COVID-19 and rated such possibility as high (44.8%). Moreover, 45.8% of respondents already had people (relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, coursemates) in their immediate environment who had been diagnosed with coronavirus.

The coronavirus pandemic has caused serious concern in the minds of young people in the Moscow Region. Young people have become more attentive and responsible about their health. Thus, more than half of them (63.9%), feeling unwell and having symptoms of ARVI, intended to go to the doctor and take a sick leave.

The most common measures taken by respondents to protect themselves and their families from the coronavirus included frequent handwashing with soap, wearing face masks in public spaces, wiping their hands with antiseptic, and avoiding contact with sick people. However, every sixth student believed that it was impossible to protect themselves from the virus and thus it was pointless to take any measures.

Respondents recognized the need for preventive measures aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19, but they did not always implement them themselves. Thus, for the vast majority of respondents, the most effective means of preventing COVID-19 were wiping their hands with antiseptic and washing hands with soap. At the same time, only three-quarters of the respondents often washed their hands with soap, and a little more than half wiped their hands with antiseptic.

The survey participants generally recognized the effectiveness of restrictive measures aimed at combating coronavirus infection, but they did not always implement them themselves or did so for fear of sanctions (for example, fines).

Thus, the effectiveness of wearing face masks in public spaces to fight the coronavirus was recognized by more than two-thirds of respondents. At the same time, almost three-quarters of the respondents observed the mandatory face mask regime.

Even though more than half of the respondents recognized the effectiveness of wearing gloves in public spaces, only 13.0% of the respondents admitted that they wore gloves in public spaces.

Although more than half of the respondents recognized the effectiveness of mass vaccination to combat coronavirus, less than a tenth of the respondents were ready to be vaccinated. Less than a fifth of respondents trusted the data of the Russian official statistics on coronavirus.

Thus, it can be concluded that the adherence to safety standards and the changes in the daily social practices of young people associated with the pandemic are largely due to the rigidity of the requirements of the public and the authorities for their observation.

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