

Attitudes Towards Mask Wearing and Social Gathering Between April 2021 and September 2022 in five countries in the iCARE Study

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Background

When the COVID-19 pandemic was announced in March 2020, governments around the world implemented several policies to reduce virus transmission (e.g., masks and avoiding social gatherings), which were not uniformly accepted and adhered to across the population.

Objective

The current study aimed to describe attitudes towards two preventive behaviours (wearing a face mask and avoiding small social gatherings) in five countries (Canada, Colombia, France, Ireland, and Italy) by sociodemographic and health status variables.

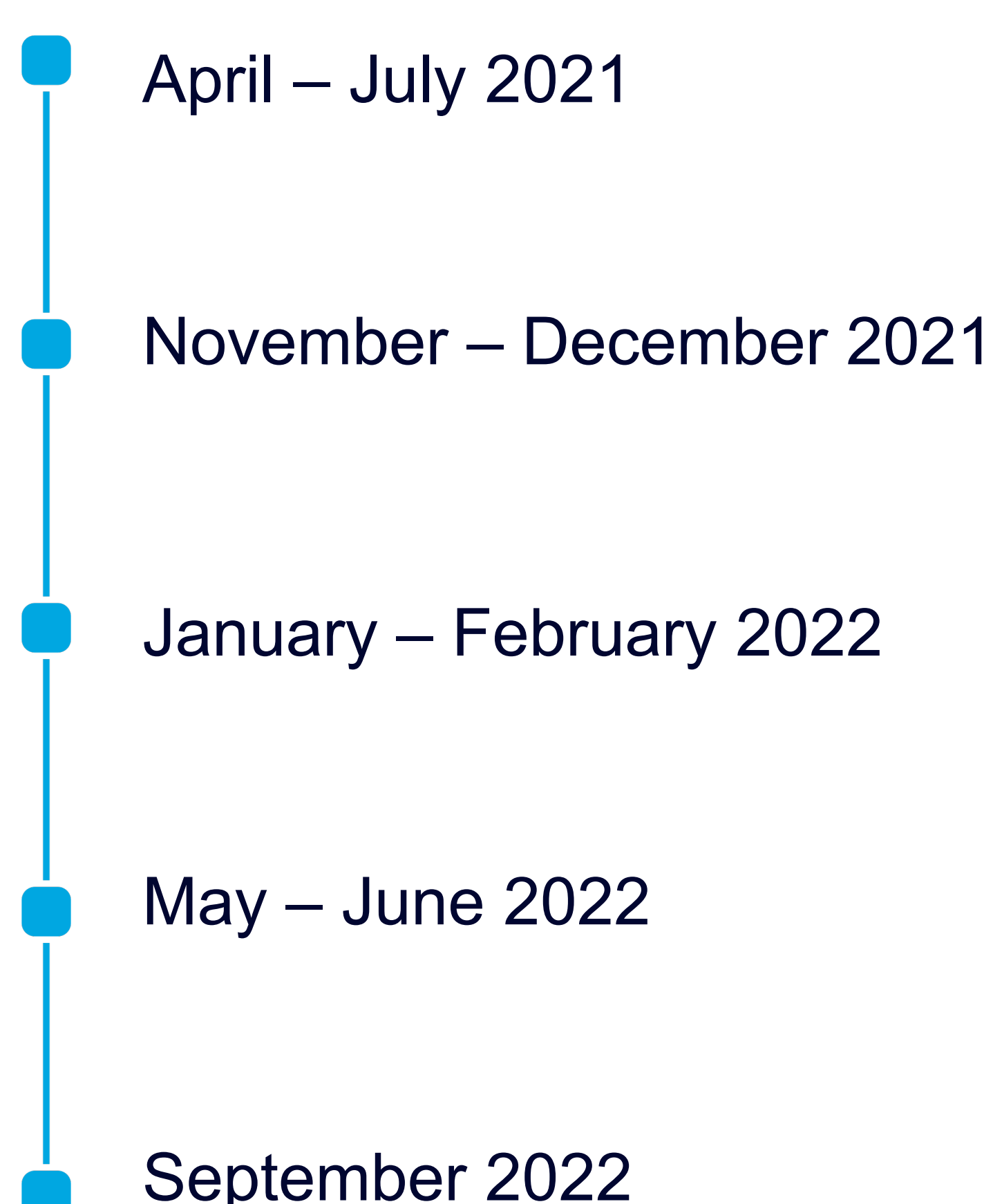
Methods

We report data from the International COVID-19 Awareness and Responses Evaluation (iCARE) Study using five countries' representative samples from June 2021 to September 2022 (5-time points). Participants were asked about their attitudes ([1]very to [4] not at all important) and how often they engaged in mask wearing and avoided small social gatherings ([1]most of the time to [4] never).

Analysis

Multivariate logistic regressions were conducted to assess the associations between attitudes and level of adherence (dependent variables) with a series of sociodemographic and health status factors (independent variables).

Timeline recruitment



Results

Sociodemographics for all the countries. n = 35,418

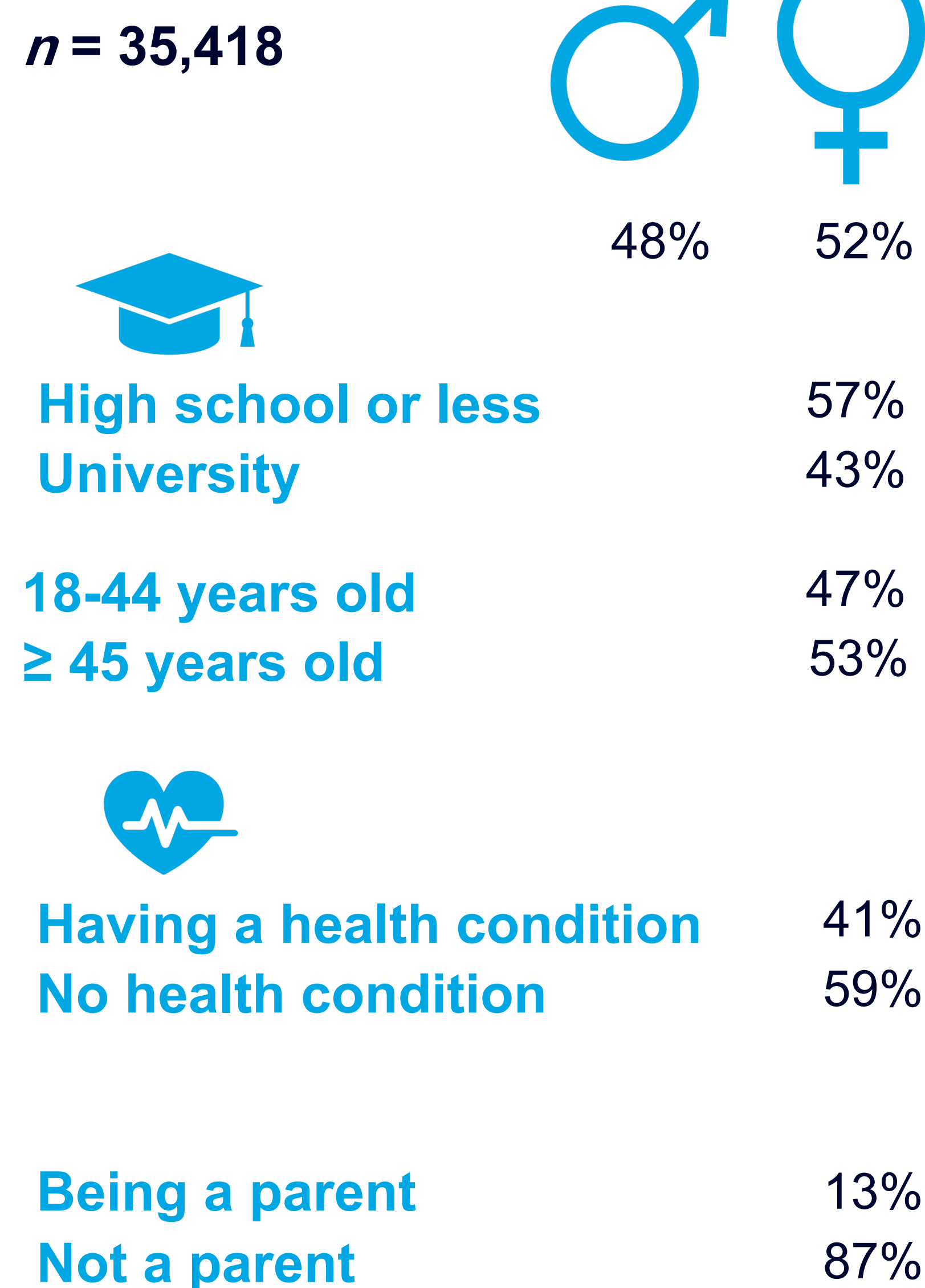


Figure 1. Participants' level of adherence to wearing a mask and avoiding social gatherings (% 'most of the time').

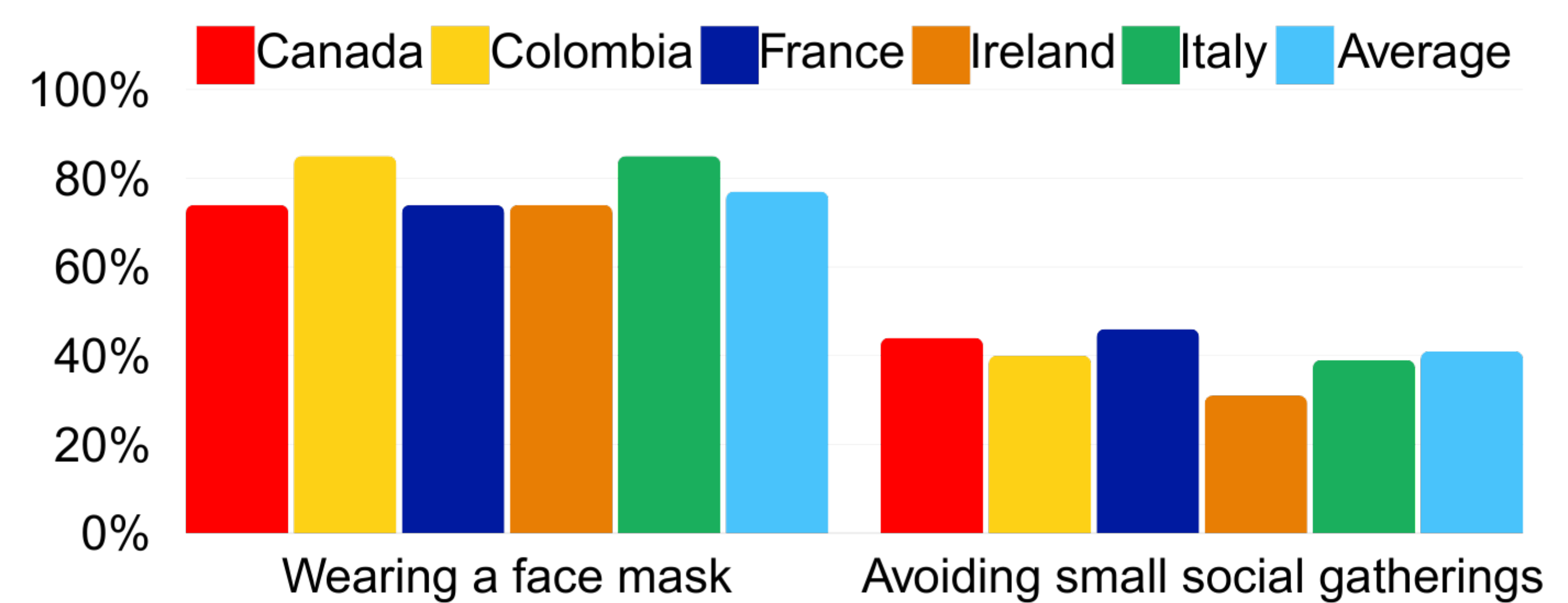


Figure 2. Participants' attitudes towards wearing a mask and avoiding social gatherings (% 'very important').

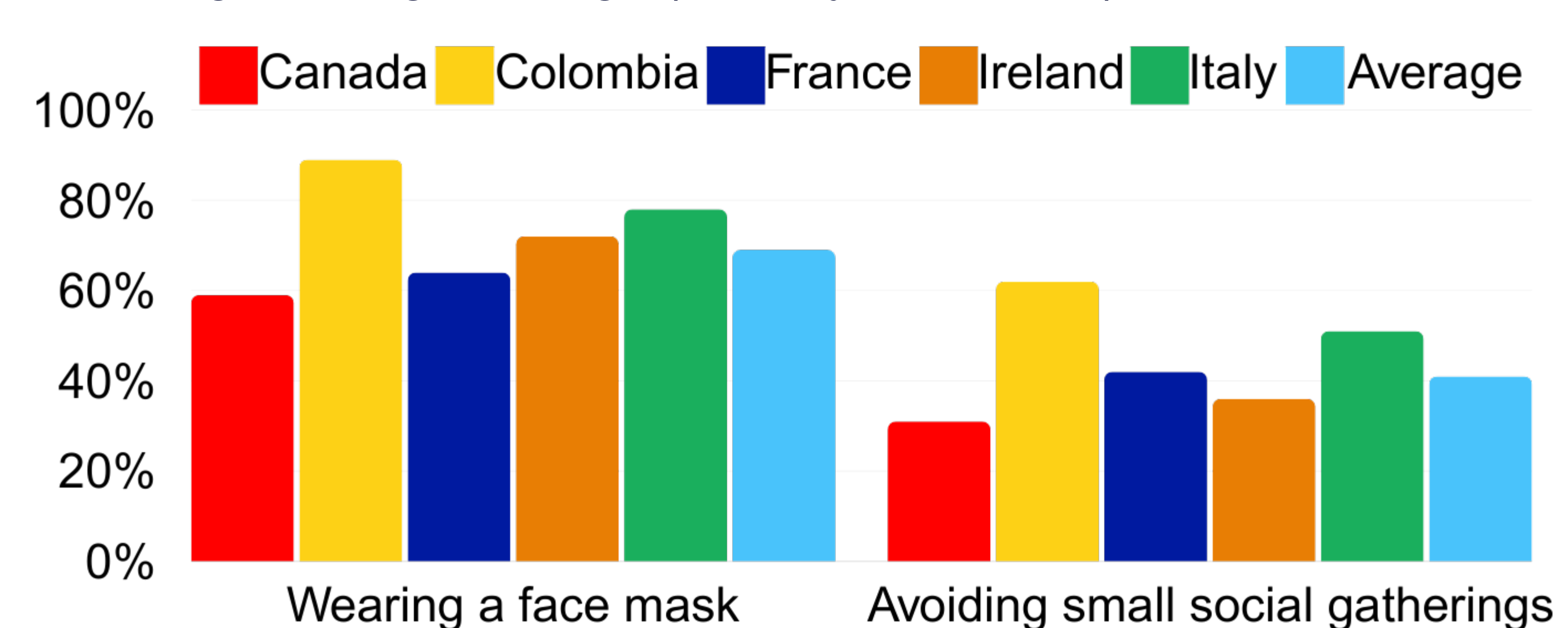


Table 1. Multivariate statistically significant associations between sociodemographic characteristics and health conditions with attitudes and adherence to mask wearing and avoiding small gatherings.

Odds ratios	Wearing a face mask		Avoiding small gathering	
	Attitudes	Adherence	Attitudes	Adherence
	Female ^a	1.38	Female	1.66
	18-44 years old ^b	0.53	18-44 years old	0.53
	Not a parent ^c	1.54	Not a parent	1.40
	Female	1.40	Female	1.29
	18-44 years old	0.57	18-44 years old	0.45
	High school		High school	0.84
	Female	1.33	Female	1.30
	18-44 years old	0.70	18-44 years old	0.72
	No condition		No condition	0.70
	Female	1.33	Female	1.33
	18-44 years old	0.66	18-44 years old	0.52
	No condition	0.74	No condition	0.70
	Female	1.54	Female	1.46
	18-44 years old	0.43	18-44 years old	0.37
	No condition		No condition	0.68

^aFemale vs Male; ^b18-44 years vs 45 or more; ^cNot a parent vs Parent; ^dHigh school or less vs University; ^eNot having a health condition vs having a health condition

Discussion

Attitudes towards and adherence to two key pandemic preventive behaviours are consistently patterned according to sex and age, with younger males having less positive attitudes and adherence. Future analyses will enable us to include changes in attitudes and behaviours after introducing or discontinuing policies.

Acknowledgement

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