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Americans Remain Hesitant to Resume Eating Out or Traveling by Plane, According to Franklin Templeton-Gallup Economics of Recovery Study

The survey also highlights Americans' willingness to pay a premium for safety, such as fees for nearby plane seats to remain empty.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – August 6, 2020 – Almost half of air travelers would pay up to \$99 to ensure an empty seat next to them, according to new research released today by Franklin Templeton and Gallup. The research comes from a survey conducted in early July, and represents the first results from the [Franklin Templeton-Gallup Economics of Recovery Study](#), an ongoing monthly survey to capture Americans' readiness to resume pre-COVID-19 behaviors.

American Travelers Reluctant to Return to the Skies

In what would normally be the airline industry's peak travel season, more than half (52%) of U.S. adults who flew at least once per year before the pandemic are now uncomfortable flying at all. Those who flew 10 or more times per year before the pandemic have the least concern, with 34% feeling discomfort about flying, compared with 81% of those who did not fly at all prior to COVID-19.

Differences also exist by party affiliation and age. Forty-two percent of Republicans who flew at least once a year before the pandemic are not comfortable flying, compared with 59% of Democrats who flew at least once a year before the pandemic and 54% of Independents who flew at the same rate. Thirty-three percent of Americans aged 18 to 24 who flew before the pandemic are not comfortable flying, compared with 69% of those 55 and older, a key market for leisure travel, but also the group most susceptible to severe illness related to the coronavirus.

Among those who flew at least once a year before the pandemic and are now comfortable flying, comfort levels drop significantly for any flight over three hours, perhaps limiting international and cross-country markets. Among travelers ready to take flight again, nearly half are willing to pay under \$100 to ensure an empty seat next to them, a tactic Frontier controversially tested recently. That percentage drops sharply for fees over \$100.

U.S. Air Travelers' Willingness to Pay for Empty Seat Next to Them

Assume you are purchasing a plane ticket for personal travel for \$500. Would you be willing to pay the following extra amounts to ensure an empty seat next to you?

	Yes, would pay
	%
Less than \$100	47
\$100-\$149	29
\$150-\$249	22
\$250 or more	18
No amount selected	47

Categories not mutually exclusive; among those who flew at least once in the year prior to the pandemic

FRANKLIN TEMPLETON-GALLUP ECONOMICS OF RECOVERY STUDY, JULY 2-14, 2020

Democrats Less Likely Than Republicans to Eat at Restaurants With 100% Seating Capacity

Americans' openness to eating in restaurants depends on the capacity restaurants allow. Three in 10 of those asked about restaurant capacity are open to eating in a restaurant that is operating at 100% capacity. This figure rises to five in 10 among those asked about restaurants that allow 25% capacity.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to consider reduced-seating capacity in deciding whether to dine indoors at restaurants. While 41% of Republicans would be willing to eat at a restaurant operating at full seating capacity, that figure drops to 22% among Democrats.

The survey also finds that 12% of Americans say they or someone in their household had dined indoors at a restaurant in the past 24 hours, while 9% had dined outdoors at a restaurant.

Americans aged 18 to 34 are more likely than older Americans to have dined out, whether indoors or outdoors. Americans with children in their household are more than twice as likely as those without children to have eaten out. Republicans are almost twice as likely (17%) as Democrats (10%) and Independents (9%) to have eaten inside a restaurant, while outdoor dining practices are similar across political affiliations.

Americans Who Ate at Restaurants in the Last Day

In the past 24 hours, have you or anyone in your household done the following? -% Yes

	Dined at a restaurant, seated indoors	Dined at a restaurant, seated outdoors
	%	%
All Americans	12	9
Age 18-34	17	16
Age 35-54	12	9
Age 55+	8	4
No children in household	9	6
Children in household	19	14
Republican	17	11
Democrat	10	9
Independent	9	7

FRANKLIN TEMPLETON-GALLUP ECONOMICS OF RECOVERY STUDY

“The first results from this study illustrate that consumer attitudes and behaviors are, in general, against practices that, a few months ago, would have seemed unremarkable,” said Jonathan Rothwell, Gallup principal economist. “However, sizable gaps exist between demographic subgroups, indicating different cost-benefit calculations for Americans, depending on who they are.”

“The range of responses in this survey provides concrete evidence of U.S. consumers’ attitudes and actual behaviors when it comes to how and when they want to re-engage with services,” said Sonal Desai, chief investment officer, Franklin Templeton Fixed Income. “These initial results will form the beginning of important trendlines to inform our understanding of how Americans will recover from the economic damage brought about by the pandemic.”

The results come from a survey conducted online, July 2-14, and include responses from more than 10,000 U.S. adults. The Franklin Templeton-Gallup Economics of Recovery Study will survey Americans monthly regarding their readiness to resume pre-COVID-19 behaviors.

To read the full analysis of the new results, please visit the following links:

[52% of U.S. Air Travelers Now Uncomfortable Flying](#)
[Which Americans Are Most Likely to Be Eating Out Again?](#)

Learn more about the project [here](#). To sign up for project updates, register [here](#) or email riley_brands@gallup.com.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.

About Franklin Templeton

Franklin Resources, Inc. [NYSE:BEN], is a global investment management organization with subsidiaries operating as Franklin Templeton and serving clients in over 165 countries. Franklin Templeton’s mission is to help clients achieve better outcomes through investment management expertise, wealth management and technology solutions. Through its specialist investment managers, the company brings extensive capabilities in

equity, fixed income, alternatives and custom multi-asset solutions. With offices in over 30 countries and 1,300 investment professionals, the California-based company has more than 70 years of investment experience and approximately \$1.4 trillion in assets under management as of June 30, 2020 (on a pro forma basis for its acquisition of Legg Mason, Inc.). For more information, please visit [franklintempleton.com](https://www.franklintempleton.com).