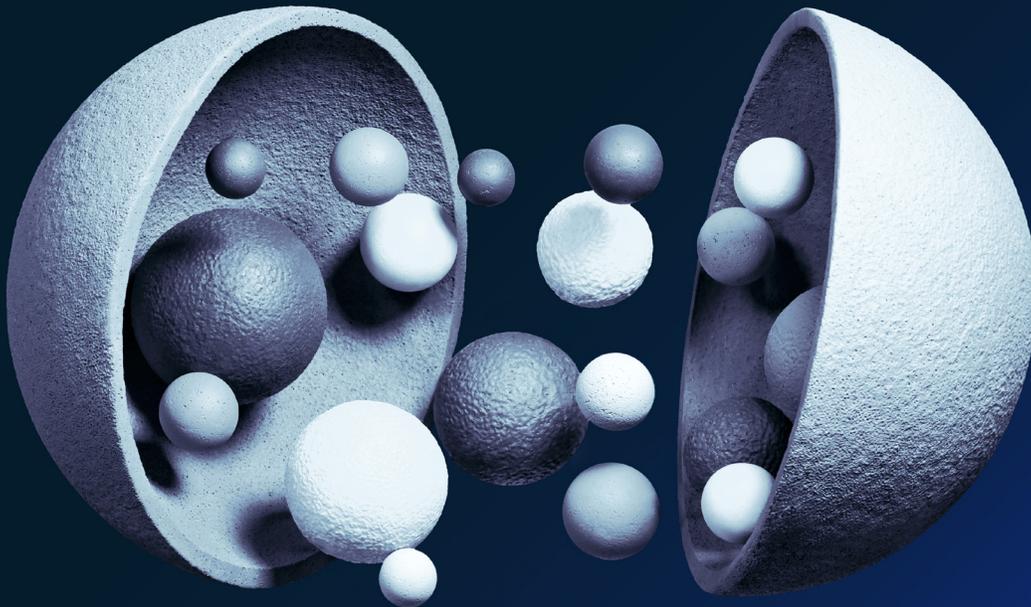McKinsey & Company

Risk Practice

COVID-19: Briefing note #50, April 14, 2021

No one is safe until we are all safe, so how can vaccine programs work for everyone?

With multiple approved vaccine candidates worldwide and manufacturing capacity that covers 85 percent of the world's population, hope is surging. But getting vaccination right is multifaceted, with abundant opportunities for missteps, and complicated by variants that can throw even the best-oiled system into disarray.

The McKinsey Podcast this week features senior partners Lieven Van der Veken and Tania Zulu Holt outlining what we've learned so far about a well-built vaccine rollout. Each country's program is a complex system of component parts, and the challenge is making sure a weakness in one area doesn't delay or derail everything else. A key question countries face is how to inspire popular acceptance of the vaccine.

The answer? Perhaps another Elvis, who played a role in promoting the polio vaccine in the 1950s.
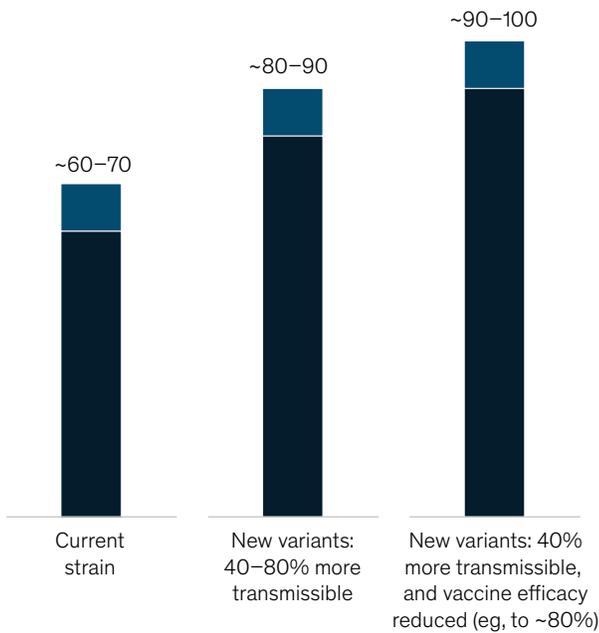
Employers can also play a key role in the quest for herd immunity. In a recent McKinsey survey of more than 400 US-based companies, over 40 percent of employees said they would be significantly more likely to get the vaccine if their employers helped them do it. Paid time off to get vaccinated was the most popular incentive, but information and appointment help also rated high.

Such efforts are not just niceties, as this exhibit illustrates. If new variants take hold, US herd immunity will not occur if the populations that describe themselves as either "cautious" or "unlikely" abstain.
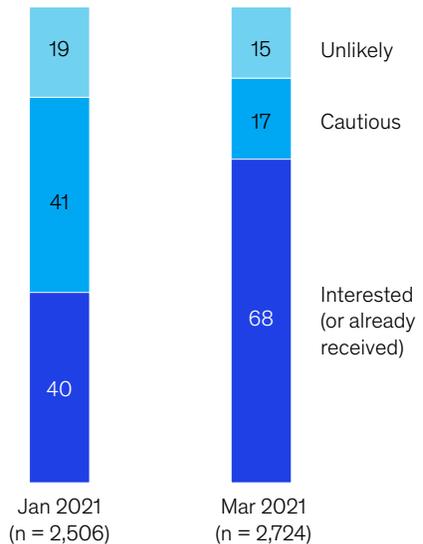
Exhibit

Achieving herd immunity will likely require at least all consumers who are interested to get vaccinated.

Estimated level of vaccination (ages 12+) required to reach herd immunity, % of population

~60–70 — Current strain
~80–90 — New variants: 40–80% more transmissible
~90–100 — New variants: 40% more transmissible, and vaccine efficacy reduced (eg, to ~80%)

US-consumer attitudes on getting a COVID-19 vaccine, % respondents

	Jan 2021 (n = 2,506)	Mar 2021 (n = 2,724)	
Unlikely	19	15	
Cautious	41	17	
Interested (or already received)	40	68	

Source: McKinsey 2021 Consumer Health Insights Survey, March 21, 2021

We looked into which sectors will benefit from a rebound in consumer spending, including the wellness arena, a $1.5 trillion market growing at 5 to 10 percent per year. The new edition of *The Next Normal* takes a deep dive into the post-COVID-19 world of shopping, where the tech-enabled "store of the future" can double retailers' earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) margins. The catch? Retailers need to make plans for the "phygital" future now, or get left behind. For a look at how a century-old fashion firm is preparing, see our interview with Tiger of Sweden's CEO.

Other key findings from our sector research this week:

— This study proposes a geographic approach to diversity, in which companies locate second headquarters or branches in places where more Black people live. The seldom-used strategy addresses one of the ten key challenges facing Black Americans at work.

— In the *Inside the Strategy Room* podcast , we explore how the pandemic pushed boards to meet more frequently and confront crises—while warding off groupthink.

— STEM-oriented, digitally capable employees have lots of job choices these days, which is a headwind for aerospace and defense companies. The sector can reinvigorate its talent pipeline through partnerships and diversity-hiring practices.

— Companies need to rethink how they view the cost of carbon reduction and retool their businesses piece by piece to bring climate change goals and dollars into line.

Business leaders crave new perspectives. In Our Asian Voices*, a new feature, 72 Asian colleagues at McKinsey raise their voices and share their stories. Our* Author Talks *series features top Hollywood voice and dialect coach Denise Woods discussing her new book on how to use breath and vocal variety and color for better communication. For more perspectives, please see the full collection of our coronavirus-related content, visual insights from our "chart of the day," a curated collection of our first 100 articles relating to the coronavirus, our suite of tools to help leaders respond to the pandemic, and how our editors choose images that help readers visualize the impact of an invisible threat.*