

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 14 August 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 5 August to 9 August 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

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Release date:
14 August 2020

Next release:
21 August 2020

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1 . Main points

- 4 in 10 adults (40%) said they would feel comfortable or very comfortable eating indoors at a restaurant this week, an increase from 37% last week, and 34% the week before.
- Of those adults who had left their homes this week, almost 3 in 10 (28%) said they had visited a café, pub or restaurant, an increase from 10% four weeks ago (period covering 8 July to 12 July 2020).
- 4 in 10 adults (40%) reported that the coronavirus was affecting their well-being this week; of these adults, 18% reported that they were worried about a possible job loss – an increase from 14% last week.
- Over 6 in 10 adults (62%) said they were very unlikely to travel abroad on holiday if they had to self-isolate at home for two weeks upon their return to the UK.
- 1 in 5 adults (20%) reported that they had cancelled travel plans abroad because of rules that say people need to self-isolate at home for two weeks upon returning to the UK from certain foreign countries.
- When asked to identify which issue they felt was the single most important being faced by Great Britain today, 37% of adults said the coronavirus pandemic and 23% said the economy.

2 . Understanding the impact on society

This weekly bulletin contains data and indicators from a new module being undertaken through the Office for National Statistics' (ONS's) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on British society.

The statistics in this publication are based on a survey of 2,500 adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain conducted between 5 and 9 August 2020 (inclusive). Results this week are based on 1,424 responding adults (57% response rate).

It contains breakdowns of results by sex and for identified “at-risk” groups that have been advised to take additional precautions. This includes those aged 70 years and over and those with certain underlying health conditions. The full list of conditions is included in the [Glossary](#).

This bulletin presents a summary of results, with further data including [confidence intervals](#) for the estimates contained in the [associated datasets](#). Where changes in results from previous weeks are presented in this bulletin, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the change.

Throughout this bulletin, “this week” refers to the period 5 to 9 August 2020 and “last week” refers to the period 29 July to 2 August 2020.

3 . Leaving home

Of adults in Great Britain, over 9 in 10 (95%) said they had left their home for any reason in the past seven days, an increase on last week (92%). However, over one-quarter (26%) report that they feel either very uncomfortable or uncomfortable about leaving home because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Each week we ask people the reasons why they had left their homes. Some of the reasons people list are looked at in more detail in this section.

Official guidance varies across England, Wales and Scotland. This section gives the reasons people are leaving their home, but an estimate of compliance is not provided.

Eating out and leisure

As lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted, respondents were asked how comfortable they would feel to participate in a variety of leisure activities, including eating in restaurants.

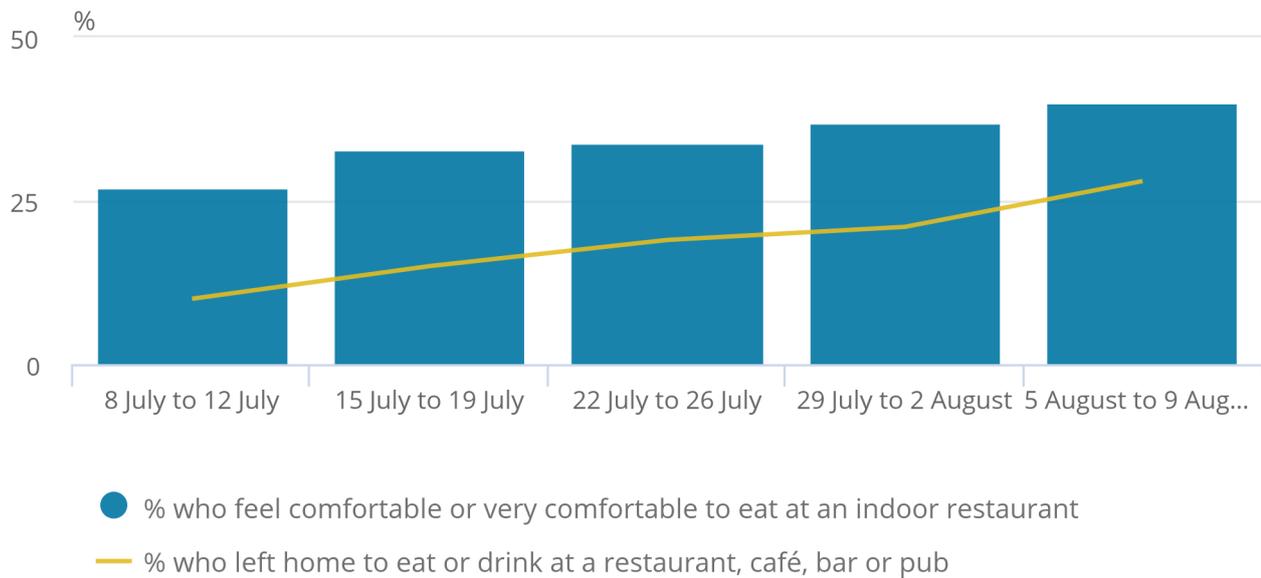
This week, 4 in 10 adults (40%) said they would feel comfortable or very comfortable to eat indoors at a restaurant, an increase from 37% last week, and 34% the week before. Of those people who had left their homes this week, almost 3 in 10 (28%) said they had visited a pub, restaurant or café, an increase from 1 in 10 (10%) four weeks ago (period covering 8 July to 12 July 2020). This survey captured the first week that cafés, pubs and restaurants were able to serve food indoors across all three countries. Cafés, pubs and restaurants re-opened indoors in [England](#) from 4 July, in [Scotland](#) from 15 July and in [Wales](#) from 3 August

Figure 1: Adults feel more comfortable visiting an indoor restaurant this week than in previous weeks

Great Britain, July 2020 to August 2020

Figure 1: Adults feel more comfortable visiting an indoor restaurant this week than in previous weeks

Great Britain, July 2020 to August 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: "At this time, how comfortable or uncomfortable would you be about eating indoors at a restaurant?"
2. Base population: all adults.
3. Question: "In the past seven days, for what reasons have you left your home?"
4. Base population: adults who had left their home in the past seven days.

This week, 14% of adults reported they would feel comfortable or very comfortable visiting an indoor swimming pool or water park compared with 15% last week. Outdoor pools were able to re-open in England from 11 July, followed by [indoor gyms and pools on 25 July](#). Pools and gyms were not open in Wales or Scotland at the time of the survey.

More than 1 in 10 (13%) adults said they had left their home to participate in leisure activities this week, which is the same proportion as last week, but has increased from 8% five weeks ago (period covering 2 to 5 July 2020).

Socialising

More than 7 in 10 adults (73%) said they had met up with other people to socialise this week – a similar proportion to last week (72%); and half of adults (50%) reported that family or friends had visited them at home.

Of those adults who had met up with other people to socialise this week, almost half (47%) said they always maintained social distancing, but 8% said they never maintained social distancing, or did not very often. Those aged 70 years and over were most likely to report always maintaining social distancing when meeting others, with 7 in 10 (70%) reporting they had.

Working

This week, 4 in 10 adults (40%) reported that the coronavirus was affecting their well-being; of these adults, 18% reported that they were worried about a possible job loss and over 1 in 10 (11%) reported they were worried about returning to work – both small increases when compared with last week (14% and 10% respectively).

Of all working adults, over three-quarters (78%) said they had either worked at home or travelled to work this week – a small increase when compared with last week (76%). Over half of working adults (55%) reported they had travelled to work in the past seven days, while just under one-quarter (23%) had worked exclusively at home.

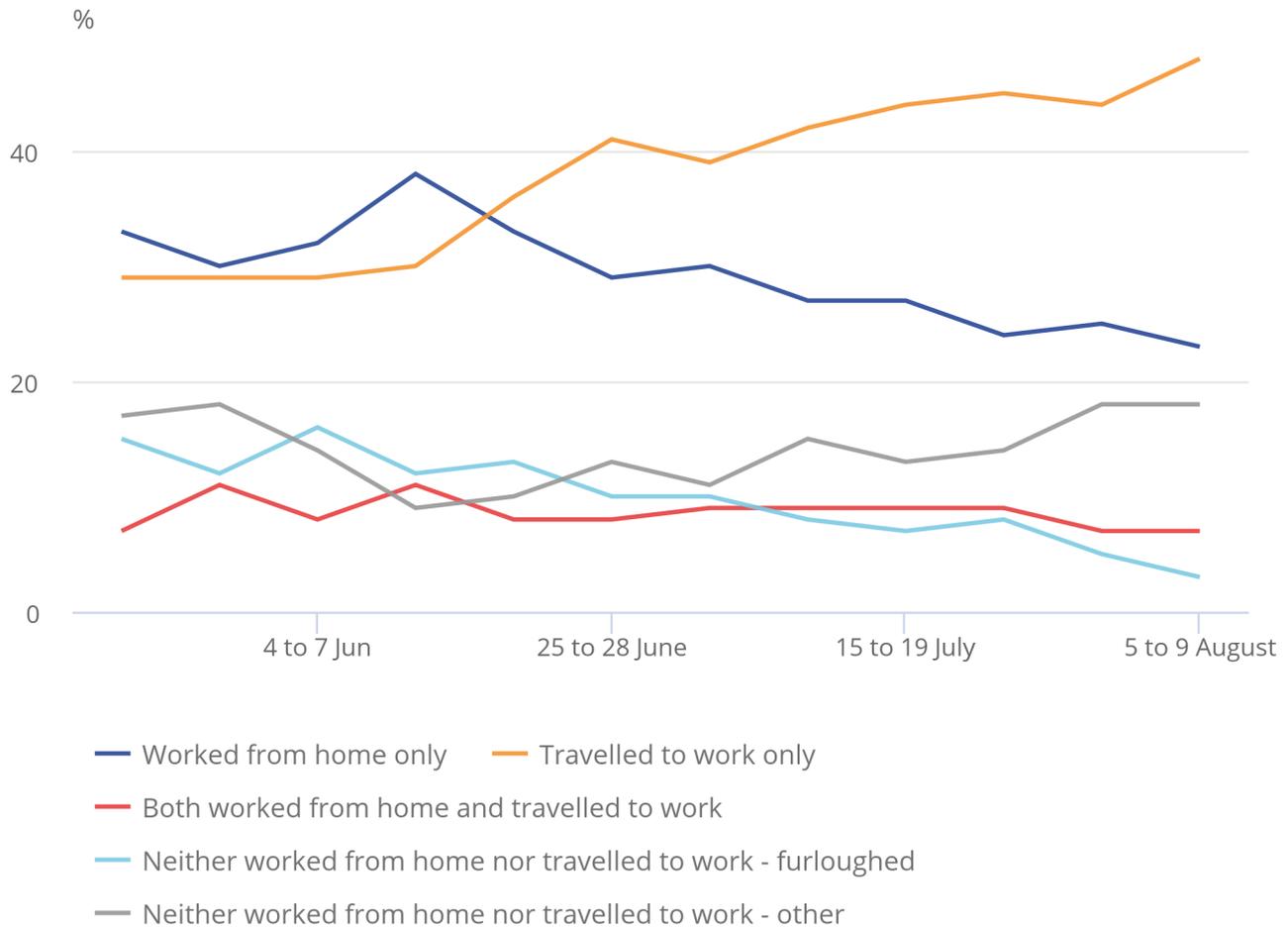
Official estimates of labour market participation can be found in the [Labour market overview](#).

Figure 2: More people are now travelling to work, and fewer are working exclusively at home, when compared with data from one month and two months ago

Great Britain, May to August 2020

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Great Britain, May to August 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Base population for percentage: working adults. This definition is different to some other surveys and is included in the glossary.
2. The main reasons for respondents neither working from home nor travelling to work (other) in the past seven days include temporary closure of business or workplace, on annual leave or sick leave, variable hours, being on maternity or paternity leave or being unable to work because of caring responsibilities.
3. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

More detailed information on changes to labour market participation can be found in [Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: 13 August 2020](#).

More about coronavirus

- Find the latest on [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK](#).
- All ONS analysis, summarised in our [coronavirus roundup](#).
- View [all coronavirus data](#).
- Find out how we are [working safely in our studies and surveys](#).

4 . Face coverings and support for government measures

Almost all adults (96%) who had left their homes said they had worn a face covering to slow the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) at least once in the past seven days – the same proportion as last week, but up from 84% the week before.

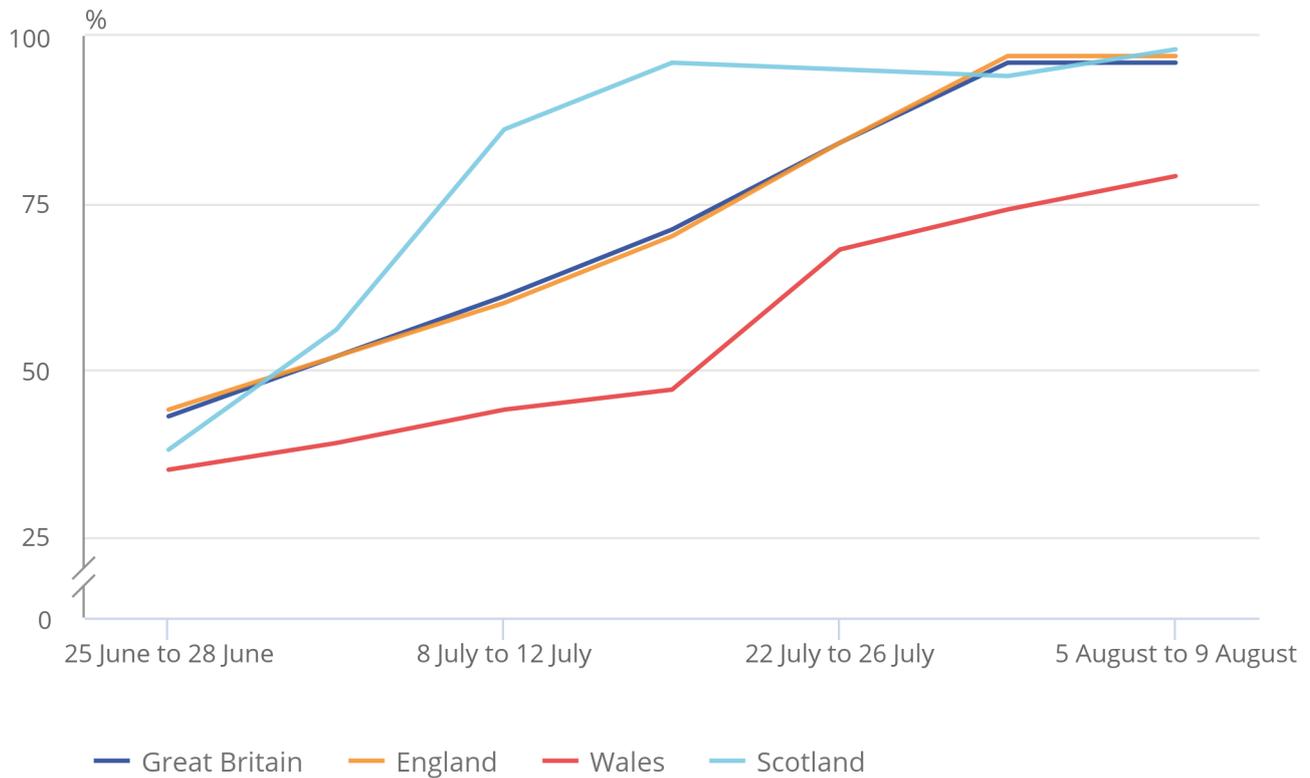
The proportion of people who reported they had worn a face covering outside of their home at least once in the past week varies between Scotland (98%), England (97%) and Wales (79%), although all three countries have seen an increase in the reporting of face coverings being worn over the past five weeks.

Figure 3: Almost all adults in Great Britain who left home this week reported wearing a face covering at least once, but this varies by country

Great Britain, June to August 2020

Figure 3: Almost all adults in Great Britain who left home this week reported wearing a face covering at least once, but this varies by country

Great Britain, June to August 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: “In the past seven days, have you used a face covering when outside your home to slow the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?”
2. Base population: all adults.

Of those who had been shopping this week, almost all (95%) said they had worn a face covering while doing so – the same proportion as last week.

At the time of the survey, it was mandatory to wear face coverings while shopping in Scotland and England. In both Scotland and England, 97% had worn face coverings when shopping in the last seven days, while 67% had done so in Wales (where it is not mandatory to wear them).

Respondents were asked this week to what extent they supported or opposed the mandatory wearing of face coverings in shops and supermarkets. Two-thirds of adults (67%) reported that they strongly supported the mandatory wearing of face coverings in these places, an increase from 62% last week.

It became mandatory to wear [face coverings on public transport in England on 15 June](#), in [Scotland on 22 June](#) and in [Wales on 27 July](#). Of those adults in Great Britain who had used public transport in the past seven days, 92% reported they had worn a face covering while doing so.

We also asked adults whether they supported the targeted lockdown measures for local areas affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreaks, and over half (53%) reported that they strongly supported these measures. People living in Wales were most likely to strongly support local lockdown measures (71%), followed by those aged 70 years or over (67%) and people living in Scotland (65%).

5 . Holidays

This week, 28% of adults said they were either likely or very likely to go on holiday in the UK this year, and 9% said they were likely or very likely to go on holiday abroad. Although not directly comparable, data from the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) for 2019 show that [64% of British people took a foreign holiday in 2019 and 72% went on holiday within the UK](#).

We also asked adults whether their household could afford to take a week's holiday away from home this year - over half (59%) of adults said they could, while one-third (33%) said that their household would not be able to afford this.

This week, we asked adults how likely or unlikely they were to travel abroad on holiday if they had to self-isolate at home for two weeks upon their return to the UK. Of all adults, 1 in 10 (10%) said they were likely or very likely to travel with the knowledge that they would have to self-isolate for 14 days, however, 62% of respondents said they were very unlikely to travel if this were the case.

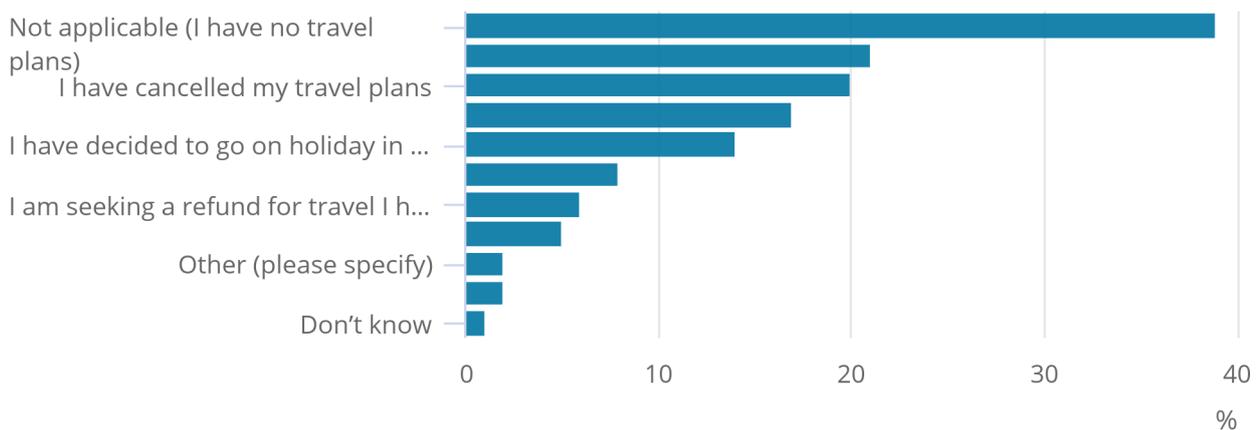
We also asked all adults how the possibility of having to self-isolate for 14 days upon returning home from holidays abroad had affected their travel plans. Of all adults, 1 in 5 (20%) reported that they had cancelled their travel plans and 14% said they had decided to holiday in the UK instead of travelling abroad this year.

Figure 4: 1 in 5 adults (20%) have cancelled their travel plans because of the possibility of having to self-isolate at home for 14 days after travelling abroad

Great Britain, 5 to 9 August 2020

Figure 4: 1 in 5 adults (20%) have cancelled their travel plans because of the possibility of having to self-isolate at home for 14 days after travelling abroad

Great Britain, 5 to 9 August 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: " In what ways, if any, has this (possibility of having to self-isolate for 14 days after travelling abroad on holiday) affected your travel plans?"
2. Base population: all adults.
3. Respondents were asked to select all that applied.

6 . Issues facing Great Britain

This week we asked adults a series of questions around the future of Great Britain and the most important issues faced by the country.

Adults were asked what the most important issues facing Great Britain were today. Over 8 in 10 (81%) said they felt the economy was one of the most important issues, 75% said the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and 68% said employment.

When asked to identify which issue was the single most important facing Great Britain today, 37% said they believed the coronavirus pandemic and 23% said they felt the most important issue was the economy.

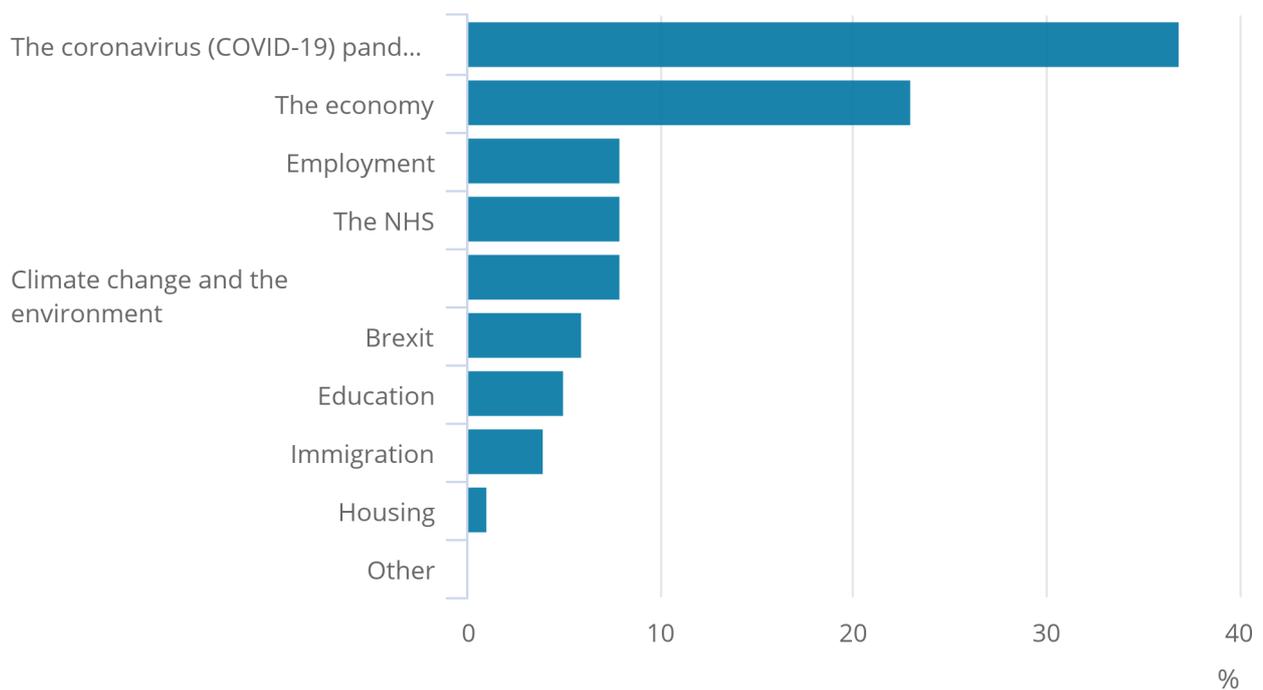
Although not directly comparable, an [Ipsos MORI poll](#) from 12 months ago (August 2019) showed that respondents felt that the most important issue facing the country was Brexit (47%), followed by the NHS (8%). At the time, 2% of respondents said the economy was the most important issue facing Britain.

Figure 5: Adults felt the most important issue faced by the country today was the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, followed by the economy

Great Britain, 5 to 9 August 2020

Figure 5: Adults felt the most important issue faced by the country today was the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, followed by the economy

Great Britain, 5 to 9 August 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: "What do you see as the most important issue facing Britain today?"
2. Base population: adults who listed more than one issue that they thought was important for Britain today.

7 . Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain data

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#)

Dataset | Released 14 August 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain. Includes breakdowns by at-risk age, sex and underlying health condition.

8 . Glossary

Underlying health condition

In this bulletin, adults with an underlying health condition include those with:

- Alzheimer's disease or dementia
- angina or a long-term heart problem
- asthma
- a learning disability such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or Asperger's (Asperger syndrome)
- conditions affecting the brain and nerves, such as Parkinson's disease
- cancer
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or a long-term lung problem
- diabetes
- kidney or liver disease
- a weakened immune system such as the result of conditions as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or treatment for cancer
- problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease, or if you have had your spleen removed
- being overweight (having a BMI of 40 or above)
- an organ transplant
- stroke or cerebral haemorrhage or cerebral thrombosis
- rheumatoid arthritis

Working adults

For this survey, a person is said to be a “working adult” if:

- they had a paid job, either as an employee or self-employed
- they did any casual work for payment
- they did any unpaid or voluntary work in the previous week

9 . Measuring the data

The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) is a monthly omnibus survey. In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we have adapted the OPN to become a weekly survey used to collect data on the impact of the coronavirus on day-to-day life in Great Britain. In this wave, 2,500 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 57% (or 1,424 individuals) for the survey conducted from 5 to 9 August 2020.

The survey results are weighted to be a nationally representative sample for Great Britain, and data are collected using an online self-completion questionnaire. Individuals who did not want to or were unable to complete the survey online had the opportunity to take part over the phone.

Where changes in results from previous weeks or differences between groups are presented in this bulletin, associated [confidence intervals](#), which are included in the associated datasets, indicate their significance.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in the [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey \(OPN\) QMI](#).

Sampling

A sample of 2,500 households were randomly selected from those that had previously completed the Living Costs and Food Survey (LCF). From each household, one adult was selected at random but with unequal probability. Younger people were given higher selection probability than older people because of under-representation in the sample available for the survey.

Further information on the sample design can be found in the [OPN QMI](#).

Weighting

The responding sample contained 1,424 individuals (57% response rate). Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population.

Weights were first adjusted for non-response and attrition. Subsequently, the weights were calibrated to satisfy population distributions considering the following factors: sex by age, region, tenure, highest qualification, employment status and National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) group. For age, sex and region, population totals based on projections of mid-year population estimates for August 2020 were used. The resulting weighted sample is therefore representative of the Great Britain adult population by a number of socio-demographic factors and geography.

10 . Strengths and limitations

The main strengths of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) include:

- it allows for timely production of data and statistics that can respond quickly to changing needs
- it meets data needs: the questionnaire is developed with customer consultation, and design expertise is applied in the development stages
- robust methods are adopted for the survey's sampling and weighting strategies to limit the impact of bias
- quality assurance procedures are undertaken throughout the analysis stages to minimise the risk of error

The main limitations of the OPN include:

- the sample size is relatively small: 2,500 individuals per week with fewer completed interviews, meaning that detailed analyses for subnational geographies and other sub-groups are not possible
- comparisons between periods and groups must be done with caution as estimates are provided from a sample survey; as such, confidence intervals are included in the datasets to present the sampling variability, which should be taken into account when assessing differences between periods, as true differences may not exist

11 . Related links

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Web page | Updated as data become available

Latest data and analysis on the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effects on the economy and society.

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 31 July 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 11 August 2020

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving COVID-19, by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on young and older people in Great Britain: 3 April to 10 May](#)

Articles | Released 22 June 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on young and older people in Great Britain. This release uses five waves of survey results covering the period from 3 April 2020 to 10 May 2020.

[Personal and economic well-being in Great Britain: June 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 18 June 2020

Estimates looking across personal and economic well-being covering the period from 20 March to 7 June 2020, to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people and households in Great Britain.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup](#)

Blog | Updated as and when data become available

Catch up on the latest data and analysis related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on our economy and society.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on the countries and regions of Britain: April 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 26 May 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in the countries and regions of Great Britain. This release uses four waves of survey results covering April 2020 to present results for Wales, Scotland and the nine English regions.

