

Statistical bulletin

# Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 23 April 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 3 to 13 April 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain. This bulletin includes new indicators on compliance with the government's Stay at home measures and the impact of homeschooling.

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# 1 . Other pages in this release

Other commentary on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the UK economy and society is available on the following pages:

- [Coronavirus, UK economy and society, faster indicators: 23 April 2020](#)

## 2 . Main points

- Over four in five adults (84.8%) said they are very worried or somewhat worried about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on their life now. This is a similar result to last week (84.2%).
- The most common issue affecting people's lives as a result of COVID-19 is people's inability to make plans (52.3%). Last week, the most common issue given was the impact on people's well-being.
- Measures of community spirit have all seen an increase this week; for example, three-quarters of adults (77.9%) said they thought people are doing more to help others since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Over half of adults homeschooling their children are confident in their abilities, but 50.2% say it is affecting the well-being of their children.
- The majority of adults (85.4%) said they had either not left their home or only left for the permitted reasons (essential shopping, medical reasons, one form of daily exercise and key workers travelling to work) in the past seven days.

## 3 . 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) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on British society.

This release updates our statistics on how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting people's lives, within their homes, work and communities, and the impact it is having on their well-being. This week, new estimates on compliance with the government's [Stay at home guidance](#) are included along with the impact of homeschooling on parents or guardians and their children.

It contains breakdowns of results for identified "at-risk" groups that have been advised to take additional precautions: those aged 70 years and over and those with certain underlying health conditions. The full list of conditions are included in the [Glossary section](#).

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 indicate their significance.

No breakdowns by disability have been included in this bulletin, as a more in-depth article on this topic will be published on 24 April.

The statistics in this publication are based on a survey of 1,203 adults (59.9% response rate) sampled through the OPN, which was conducted online between 3 and 13 April 2020 (inclusive). Throughout this bulletin, "this week" refers to the period 3 to 13 April 2020 and "last week" refers to the period 27 March to 6 April 2020.

## 4 . Concerns about work and household finances

Over 8 in 10 adults (84.8%) said they are very worried or somewhat worried about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on their life now. This is largely unchanged from last week (84.2%). As previously found, there remains a greater level of concern among those aged 70 years and over (88.6%) and for those with an underlying health condition (87.8%).

The most common way that COVID-19 is impacting people's lives is on their ability to make plans, with 52.3% saying this is being affected. This is followed by people's well-being, which nearly half of adults (49.9%) say is being affected. Nearly half of adults (47.3%) say their personal travel plans (for example, holidays and gap years) are being affected.

Expectations for when life will return to normal are similar to last week, with just under one in three (29.5%) expecting it to be between four and six months and just over a further one in three (36.3%) expecting it to be longer than six months.

### Figure 1: People were most worried about the effect of COVID-19 on their ability to make plans and their well-being

Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020

#### Notes

1. This question was only asked of those who said they were very worried or worried about the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19), but the base population for these estimates is all adults aged 16 years or over, to reflect the level of concern among the whole population. These estimates are calculated using Table 2b of the datasets.
2. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

[Data download](#)

#### 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](#).

### Concerns about work

Of the 42.7% of all adults that said COVID-19 was affecting their work, the main reason was a decrease in hours worked because of workplace closures, reduced opening times or availability of work. Closure of own business also remains a concern for many.

Other common concerns were being asked to work from home and having to work around childcare (Figure 2). The impact of homeschooling for parents or guardians and children are included in [Section 5](#).

Further details on changes to labour market participation and the impact on businesses from COVID-19 can be found in [Coronavirus, UK economy and society, faster indicators: 23 April 2020](#).

## **Figure 2: The main concern about work was a decrease in hours worked (because of workplace closures, reduced opening times or availability of work, for example)**

Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020

### **Notes**

1. The base population for these estimates is those who answered “My work is being affected” for the question “In which ways is coronavirus affecting your life?”. For example, 34.5% of those who stated their work was being affected stated their hours of work had decreased.
2. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

[Data download](#)

## **Concerns about household finances**

Over one in four adults (26.7%) said COVID-19 was affecting their household finances, an increase from last week (22.9%).

The main concern among these people was because of a reduced income (75.4%), with 27.4% saying they have needed to use savings to cover living costs and 17.8% saying they had to borrow money or use credit (Figure 3).

## **Figure 3: The main concern about household finances was having a reduced income**

Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020

### **Notes**

1. The base population for these estimates is all adults aged 16 years or over who answered “My household finances are being affected” for the question “In which ways is coronavirus affecting your life?” For example, 75.4% of those who stated their household finances were being affected stated they had a reduced income.
2. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.
3. \*New response categories were added to the survey (3 to 13 April). Therefore, there are no data available for the previous week.

[Data download](#)

When considering their future, just over 4 in 10 (43.8%) expect their financial position to get a little or a lot worse over the next 12 months. However, a similar proportion (41.5%) expect it to stay the same.

Many adults were more pessimistic when considering the financial future outside their household. Over 8 in 10 adults (82.9%) expected the general economic situation in this country to get a little or a lot worse over the next 12 months.

## 5 . Homeschooling

Schools have been closed to most children since Monday 23 March 2020. This week, we look at how parents and guardians are homeschooling their children and the impact on their learning and well-being.

Of those adults who said they had dependent children, 70.9% said they had homeschooled their child or children in the past seven days. This survey only asks for information from the respondent, so other people within the household may be providing the homeschooling. Also, the dependent children in the household may be of pre-school age, and the survey was carried out over the Easter period. This estimate should therefore not be interpreted as 29.1% of children are not being homeschooled.

Just over half (52%) of those homeschooling said they strongly or somewhat agreed they were confident in their abilities, but just over a quarter (26%) strongly or somewhat disagreed. Nearly three-quarters (72.8%) said they strongly or somewhat agreed their children were continuing to learn while being homeschooled. More people said homeschooling was negatively affecting the well-being of their child or children than said it was negatively affecting their own well-being.

### **Figure 4: Over 70% of parents said their children were continuing to learn while being homeschooled**

Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020

[Data download](#)

## 6 . Understanding information about the coronavirus

Just over four in five adults (82.5%) said they had enough information about how to protect themselves from the coronavirus (COVID-19), a slight decrease from 83.6% last week. For those aged 70 years and over, it was 89.7%, while for those with underlying conditions, it was 83.3%.

Just over half of adults (50.6%) said they had enough information about the UK's plan for dealing with COVID-19; this is also a decrease, from 52.5% last week.

Further statistics on the public's consumption of, and attitudes towards, news and information on the COVID-19 pandemic are being published by [Ofcom](#).

## 7 . Actions undertaken to prevent the spread of the coronavirus

Official [government advice](#) is for everyone to stay in their homes apart from for a limited number of reasons such as essential shopping, medical reasons, one form of daily exercise and key workers travelling to work.

This week, we have the first estimates of the levels of compliance and support for these measures since they were introduced on 23 March 2020.

## Staying at home

Over 8 in 10 adults (85.4%) said they had either not left their home or only left for one of the permitted reasons listed earlier in the past seven days. This increased to 86.2% for those aged 70 years and over and for those with an underlying health condition, it was 85.1%.

Of the 14.6% who said they had left their home for something else, the main reasons were to run errands or for voluntary work.

There was a high level of support for the Stay at home measures, with 84.6% of adults saying they strongly supported the measures and a further 12.8% saying they “tend to support” the measures.

## Self-isolation

Alongside the Stay at home guidance, official advice is that people should self-isolate if they or someone in their household experiences symptoms related to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Some people may choose to self-isolate for other reasons, so these results should not be interpreted as an estimate of those with COVID-19 symptoms or those diagnosed with COVID-19.

Just under 4 in 10 (37.5%) said they had self-isolated in the past seven days. For those aged 70 years and over, this rose to 60%, while for those with an underlying health condition (of all ages), it was 49.2%.

About 3 in 10 (30.4%) adults said someone in their household had self-isolated in the past seven days. For those aged 70 years and over, this rose to 38.3%, while for those with an underlying health condition, it was 32.4%.

## Working from home

An increased proportion of adults in employment said they were working from home this week (49.2%) compared with last week (45.8%). Of those who were in employment and had an underlying health condition, 55.1% said they were working from home.

It is not known whether those who said they were not working from home were still working in their usual place of work or if they had stopped working. More detailed information on changes to labour market participation can be found in the [Faster Indicators release](#).

## 8 . Coping whilst staying at home and community support networks

Data collection for this survey started 10 days after the implementation of the [government's Stay at home measures](#). As with last week, staying in touch with friends and family remotely was the most popular action helping people cope while being at home. Exercising, both outside (53.7%) and inside (33.2%) the home, also remains popular.

## Figure 5: The majority of adults said staying in touch with friends and family was helping them cope

Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020

### Notes

1. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

### [Data download](#)

Nearly 9 in 10 adults said they had access to a garden (89.7%), and 35.1% said they had visited a public green space in the past seven days.

Community spirit has also become more important this week, as nearly two in three adults (64.1%) said other local community members would support them if they needed help during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, an increase from 57.0% last week. In addition, over three in four adults (77.9%) said they thought people are doing more to help others since the COVID-19 pandemic compared with 67.9% last week.

In the past seven days, nearly two in three adults (62.6%) said they had checked on neighbours who might need help at least once, up from 53.8% last week. Additionally, over one in three adults (37.5%) said they had gone shopping or done other tasks for neighbours, up from 27.7% last week.

## 9 . Indicators of well-being and loneliness

Around half of adults (49.9%) said the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was affecting their well-being. This was higher for those with an underlying health condition, at 55.6%, and lower for those aged 70 years and over, at 45.5% (Figure 6).

The most common issues affecting people's well-being were the same as last week. Over 7 in 10 (71.3%) of those who said their well-being was being affected said they were feeling worried about the future, with two in three (66.4%) feeling stressed or anxious. Boredom was another common issue, with over half (53.9%) of this group saying they felt this way.

Although it is not known how many people who said their well-being was affected had mental health issues prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly one in four (23.9%) of those whose well-being has reportedly been affected said it was making their mental health worse.

## Figure 6: Of those who were concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on their well-being, the majority felt worried about the future, stressed or anxious

Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020

### Notes

1. The base population for these estimates is all adults aged 16 years or over who answered “My well-being is being affected” for the question “In which ways is coronavirus affecting your life?” For example, 71.3% of those who stated their well-being was being affected stated they were feeling worried about the future.
2. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

[Data download](#)

Anxiety levels, although higher than before the COVID-19 pandemic, have remained stable since last week for most adults. However, there has been an increase for those with an underlying health condition.

The full scores for the four measures of personal well-being are included in the [associated datasets](#).

Table 1: Indicators of well-being

	This week	Last week
Percentage (%) reporting their well-being is being affected*		
All persons total	49.9	53.1
70 years old or over	45.5	45.8
Any specific health condition	55.6	54.7
Mean anxiety score		
All persons total	4.9	5.0
70 years old or over	5.0	4.7
Any specific health condition	5.4	4.9
Percentage (%) reporting high anxiety (score 6-10)		
All persons total	46.4	46.9
70 years old or over	49.8	42.2
Any specific health condition	56.6	45.4
Percentage (%) who are feeling lonely often or always		
All persons total	5.8	5.4
70 years old or over	3.6	1.1
Any specific health condition	7.3	11.2
Percentage (%) who are feeling lonely some of the time		
All persons total	20.5	14.7
70 years old or over	10.9	10.5
Any specific health condition	20.4	14.4

Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

#### Notes

1. \*This question was only asked of those who said they were very worried or worried about the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19), but the base population for these estimates is all adults aged 16 years or over, to reflect the level of concern among the whole population. These estimates are calculated using Table 2b of the datasets. [Back to table](#)
2. Anxiety is measured on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”. [Back to table](#)
3. “This week” refers to the period 3 to 13 April 2020, and “last week” refers to the period 27 March to 6 April 2020. [Back to table](#)

## 10 . Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain data

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

Dataset | Released 23 April 2020

New 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.

## 11 . Glossary

### Underlying health condition

In this bulletin, adults with an underlying health condition include those with: Alzheimer's disease or dementia; angina or long-term heart problem; asthma; autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or Asperger's (Asperger syndrome); cancer; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or long-term lung problem; diabetes; epilepsy or other conditions that affect the brain; high blood pressure; kidney or liver disease; stroke or cerebral haemorrhage or cerebral thrombosis; and rheumatoid arthritis.

### Dependent children

Questions about homeschooling are asked when the responding individual has a dependent child in their household. A dependent child is defined as someone who is under the age of 16 years or someone who is aged 16 to 18 years, has never been married and is in full-time education.

### In employment

For this survey, a person is said to be "In employment" if they had a paid job, either as an employee or self-employed; they did any casual work for payment; or they did any unpaid or voluntary work in the previous week.

## 12 . 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 COVID-19 on day-to-day life in Great Britain. In this wave, 2,010 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 59.9% (or 1,203 individuals) for the survey conducted from 3 April to 13 April 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.

Where changes in results from previous weeks are presented in this bulletin, associated [confidence intervals](#) 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 QMI](#).

## Sampling

A sample of 2,010 households were randomly selected from the Annual Population Survey (APS), which consists collectively of those respondents who successfully completed the last wave of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) or the local LFS boost. 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 1,203 individuals. 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, National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) group and smoking status. For age, sex and region, population totals based on projections of mid-year population estimates for March 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.

## 13 . 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: 2,010 individuals per week with fewer completed interviews, meaning that detailed analyses for subnational geographies and other sub-groups are not possible
- the mode is online only, so the sample may be subject to more bias than usual
- 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

## 14 . Related links

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) product page](#)

Product 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 10 April 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 21 April 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 \(COVID-19\) 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.