

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 18 September 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 9 to 13 September 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

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1 . Main points

- More than 9 in 10 (95%) adults 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 – this has been at a similar level since the end of July.
- Among adults with children or young people attending school, just under 4 in 10 (38%) said that all or some of their children had worn a face covering in school.
- Over 6 in 10 (62%) working adults reported they had travelled to work (either exclusively or in combination with working from home) in the past seven days, while 20% had worked exclusively at home.
- For adults who had visited public indoor places such as restaurants or hairdressers this week, just over 3 in 10 (31%) said they were always asked to provide their personal details for the test and trace service, but 26% said they were never asked.
- Of those who were asked to provide their details, nearly 7 in 10 (69%) said they did so every time, but 11% said they rarely or never did provide their personal contact details.
- Nearly 6 in 10 (57%) adults said they had socialised with between one and five other people at the same time, and a further 13% said they had socialised with six or more – please note, these responses were prior to the changes in guidance from 14 September limiting the number of people able to meet.

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') 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 9 and 13 September 2020 (inclusive). Results from this week are based on 1,694 responding adults (68% 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 [Section 7: 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 responses collected during the period 9 to 13 September 2020 and “two weeks ago” refers to responses collected during the period 26 to 30 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](#).

3 . Leaving home

More than 9 in 10 (96%) adults in Great Britain said they had left their home for any reason in the past seven days. This percentage has steadily increased since lockdown measures started to ease and has been over 90% since the end of May (28 to 31 May 2020).

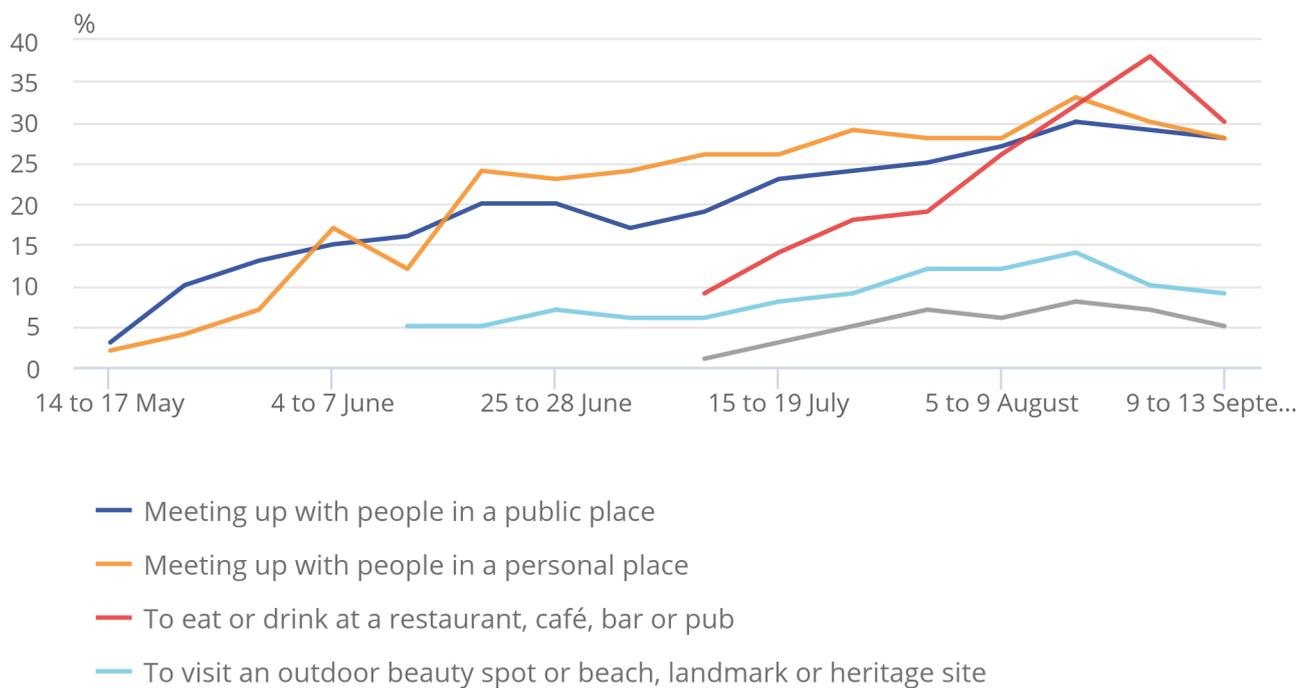
The percentage of adults who had left their home to eat or drink at a restaurant, café, bar or pub decreased for the first time this week, following continued increases since early July. This week, 3 in 10 (30%) adults said they had done this activity, compared with nearly 4 in 10 (38%) two weeks ago.

Figure 1: Levels of socialising, eating out and travel have decreased this week after increasing through the summer

Great Britain, May to September 2020

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Great Britain, May to September 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: "In the past seven days, for what reasons have you left your home?"
2. Base population: all adults.
3. Respondents asked to select all that apply.

Meeting other people and households

“Support bubbles” in England, or “extended households” in Scotland and Wales, is where households can choose to join together to provide support and help avoid loneliness. We refer to both as “support bubbles” here.

This week, over 6 in 10 (61%) adults said they had socialised indoors with at least one household other than the household in their support bubble. A similar proportion (56%) said they had socialised outdoors with at least one household, excluding their support bubble.

Responses for this survey were collected before new guidance came into effect on 14 September restricting the number of people that are able to meet socially.

Just under 3 in 10 (29%) adults said they had not socialised with anyone outside their household in the past seven days, similar to two weeks ago (28%). Nearly 6 in 10 (57%) adults said they had socialised with between one and five other people at the same time, and a further 13% said they had socialised with a group of six or more other people. Again, this is similar to two weeks ago, at 60% and 12% respectively.

4 . Preventative measures

Official guidance on the use of preventative measures varies across England, Wales and Scotland.

Face coverings

More than 9 in 10 (95%) adults 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 – this has been at a similar level since the end of July.

At the time of the survey, face coverings were mandatory on public transport, in shops and in some other enclosed spaces in England and Scotland but only on public transport in Wales. Some different rules applied in local lockdown areas.

Over 9 in 10 (94%) adults with children or young people in their household that were due to start or return to school or college this autumn term said they had all attended. For those adults with children or young people attending school, just under 4 in 10 (38%) said that all or some of their children had worn a face covering to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in school. Of those whose children had worn a face covering, 63% said it was mandatory and 25% said it was voluntary.

At the time of the survey, it was mandatory for secondary school pupils to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas in schools in Scotland and for children aged 5 years and over to wear them on dedicated school transport. Face coverings were not mandatory in English schools, but government guidance gave schools and colleges discretion over their use. In Wales, guidance recommended face coverings for those aged over 11 years in indoor settings in which social distancing cannot be maintained, including schools and school transport.

Test and trace

Contact tracing systems have been put in place in each country in Great Britain. These help trace and notify those who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19). Each country has a different name for the system but here we refer to them collectively as “Test and Trace” systems.

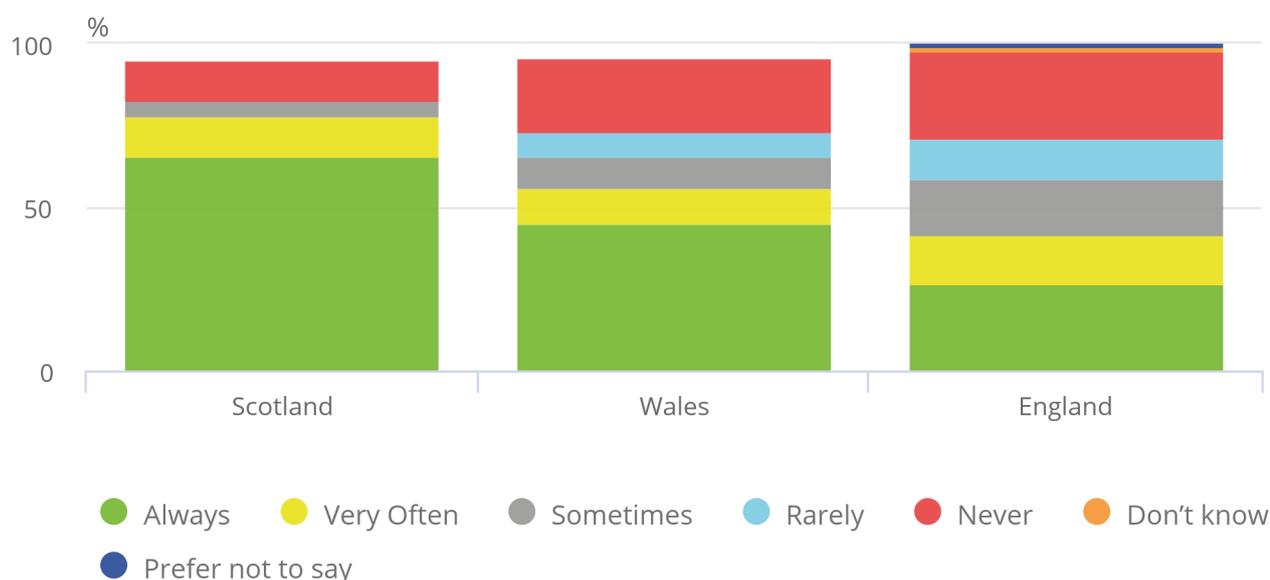
Across Great Britain, for adults who visited public indoor places such as restaurants or hairdressers this week, over 3 in 10 (31%) said they were always asked to provide their personal details for the test and trace service. A further 15% said they were asked very often to provide them, but 26% said they were never asked. This varied by country. In England, 27% said they were always asked, but 27% said they were never asked. In Wales, it was 45% and 23% respectively and in Scotland it was 66% and 12% respectively.

Figure 2: Adults in Scotland were most likely to be asked to provide their contact details as part of the test and trace system in places such as restaurants and hairdressers

Great Britain, 9 to 13 September 2020

Figure 2: Adults in Scotland were most likely to be asked to provide their contact details as part of the test and trace system in places such as restaurants and hairdressers

Great Britain, 9 to 13 September 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: "In the last seven days, when visiting places outside your home such as restaurants or hairdressers, how often were you asked to provide your personal contact details for the test and trace service?"
2. Base population: adults who had left home in the past seven days.
3. Results for "Don't know" and "Prefer not to say" for Wales, and "Rarely", "Don't know" and "Prefer not to say" for Scotland, have been suppressed because of small sample sizes.

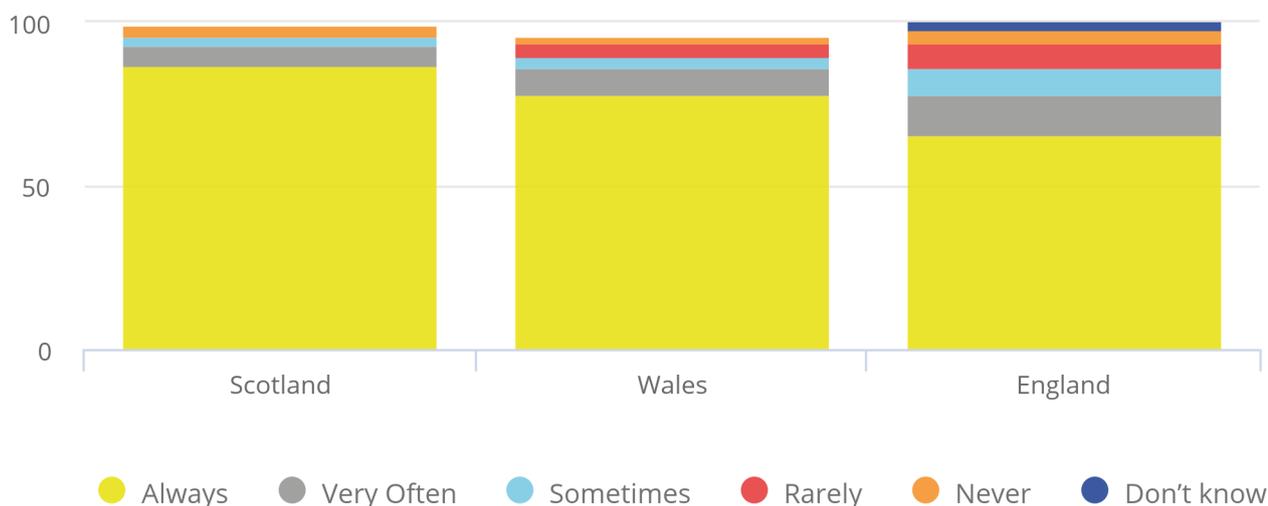
Among those who were asked to provide their details, across Great Britain nearly 7 in 10 (69%) said they did so every time, but 11% said they rarely or never did provide their personal contact details. This also varied by country with adults in Scotland being the most likely to say they had always provided their details. Nearly 9 in 10 (87%) adults in Scotland who had been asked to provide their details said they had always done so, compared with just under 8 in 10 (78%) in Wales and under 7 in 10 (66%) in England.

Figure 3: Adults in Scotland were most likely to give their personal contact details for test and trace systems

Great Britain, 9 to 13 September 2020

Figure 3: Adults in Scotland were most likely to give their personal contact details for test and trace systems

Great Britain, 9 to 13 September 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: "How often did you provide your personal contact details for the test and trace service?"
2. Base population: adults that had been asked to provide their details to the track and trace service after visiting places such as restaurants or hairdressers.
3. Results for "Don't know" for Wales and "Rarely" and "Don't know" for Scotland have been suppressed because of small sample sizes.

5 . Work

This week, half of working adults (50%) reported that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was affecting their work, a similar percentage to two weeks ago at 47%.

This week, there was a higher percentage of working adults who said they had both worked from home and travelled to work in the past seven days (12% this week compared with 7% two weeks ago). The increase was because of fewer people saying they had neither worked from home nor travelled to work as a result of being furloughed or having a temporary closure of their business or workplace, being on annual leave, or being unable to work because of caring responsibilities (18% this week compared with 23% two weeks ago). This change may reflect the end of the summer holiday period and schools reopening for the new term.

In total, over 6 in 10 (62%) working adults reported they had travelled to work (either exclusively or in combination with working from home) in the past seven days, while 20% had worked exclusively at home.

Among those who had worked from home in the past seven days, the main reasons were their employer had asked them to do so (61%), they normally worked from home (32%) and they were following government advice (28%).

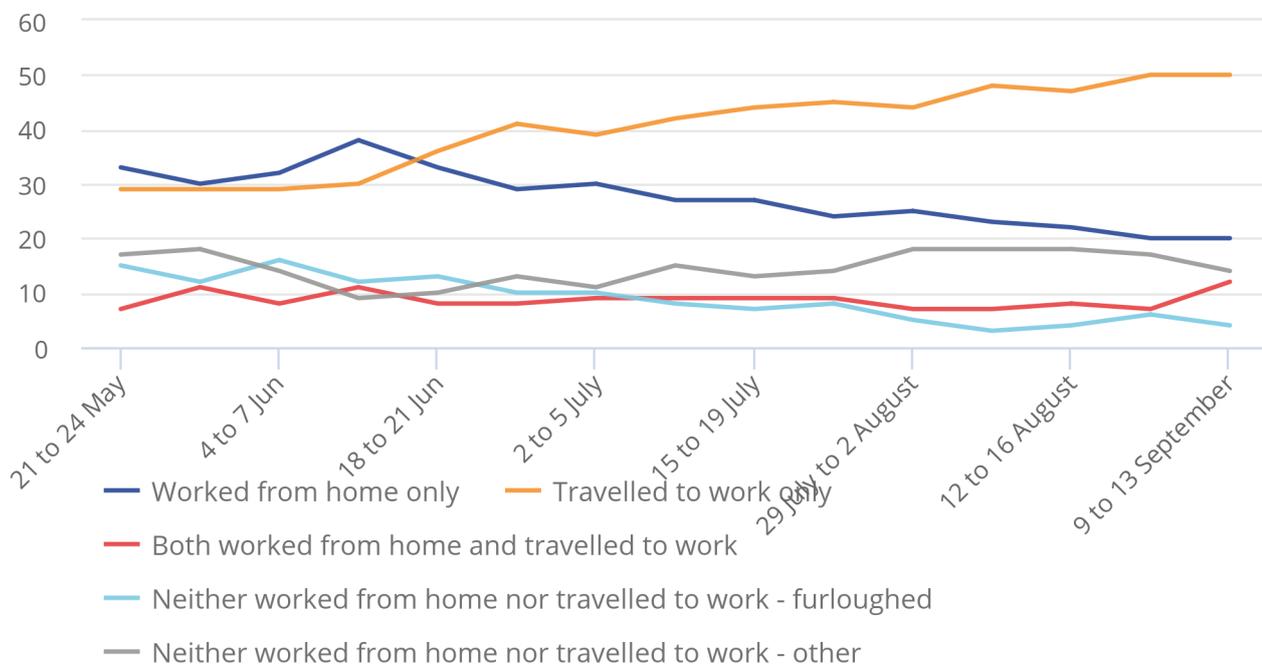
Official estimates of labour market participation can be found in the [Labour market overview](#).

Figure 4: Over 6 in 10 working adults said they had travelled to work at some point in the past seven days

Great Britain, May to September 2020

Figure 4: Over 6 in 10 working adults said they had travelled to work at some point in the past seven days

Great Britain, May to September 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 [Section 7: Glossary](#).
2. The main reasons for respondents neither working from home nor travelling to work (other) in the past seven days included temporary closure of business or workplace, on annual leave or sick leave, variable hours, being on maternity or paternity leave, and being unable to work because of caring responsibilities.
3. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

As more working adults are travelling to a workplace, among employees and those adults doing casual work and not working from home, over 6 in 10 (63%) said they had been consulted about safer working within their workplace. Nearly 8 in 10 (78%) also said their workplace encouraged social distancing if they were on site, and just under 6 in 10 (58%) said the number of people, employees or clients physically at the workplace had been limited.

6 . Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain data

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

Dataset | Released 18 September 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.

7 . 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

8 . 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 pandemic on day-to-day life in Great Britain. In this wave, 2,500 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 68% (or 1,694 individuals) for the survey conducted from 9 to 13 September 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 [OPN QMI](#).

Sampling

A sample of 2,500 households was randomly selected from those who had previously completed the Labour Force Survey (LFS). 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 1,694 individuals (68% 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, 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 September 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.

9 . 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

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

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

Bulletin | Released 10 September 2020

Estimates looking across personal and economic well-being covering the period from 20 March to 26 July 2020, to understand the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on people and households in Great Britain.

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

Blog | Updated as data become available

Catch up on the latest data and analysis related to the coronavirus 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 OPN to understand the impact of the coronavirus 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.