

Public attitudes to Coronavirus

June and early July summary

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Introduction

This report includes some high level findings from recent polling work on public attitudes to the Coronavirus pandemic in Scotland. Two reports covering earlier survey work were published on [8 May](#) and [12 June](#) 2020. As with previous reports, this report is not intended to provide comprehensive analysis of the large amount of polling information available, but rather to draw together findings on some key indicators. The report contains brief descriptions and explanations of the included measures.

The Coronavirus pandemic represents a rapidly changing situation, and the polling surveys have been developed at pace. Results should be interpreted in that context, recognising the limitations of the data sources, detailed below.

Data sources

The sources are two weekly polling surveys, one by Ipsos MORI and one by YouGov, of respondents in Scotland. Data from Ipsos MORI was initially collected as part of a multi-country survey on the Global Advisor platform, with the Scottish Government commissioning a Scotland-boost to the UK sample in this study. From May onwards, Ipsos MORI has continued to conduct weekly polling for the Scottish Government via a separate online survey. The YouGov weekly survey also runs online and is a bespoke commission by Scottish Government. Further information about these sources can be found in Annex A.

Scottish Government receives weekly outputs from these sources, and this report contains results from 29 May to 15 July 2020, inclusive. Due to the evolving situation and responses to Coronavirus, some questions were not asked at all waves. The dates included in the charts denote the fieldwork dates from the wave of the survey that the data point relates to. Fieldwork dates should be kept in mind when interpreting the data. A timeline showing dates when announcements about easing restrictions were made can be found in Annex B.

Throughout this report, the data source used is clearly denoted.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations in the research methodologies used in this polling research. The sample sizes (see Annex A for details) limit meaningful subgroup analysis and both surveys are based on non-probability research panels, which means representativeness is achieved using quotas. Furthermore, the nature of online research inherently excludes those who do not have internet access. These data sources nevertheless provide useful and timely information, as long as appropriate caveats are applied.

As each of the surveys has been conducted using a quota sample, rather than a random probability sample, statistical significance can only be used on an indicative basis. Differences over the survey waves are only highlighted if they are likely to be significant, however not all significant differences have been described.

Overall trends and key points

There are a number of trends observable across the polling data:

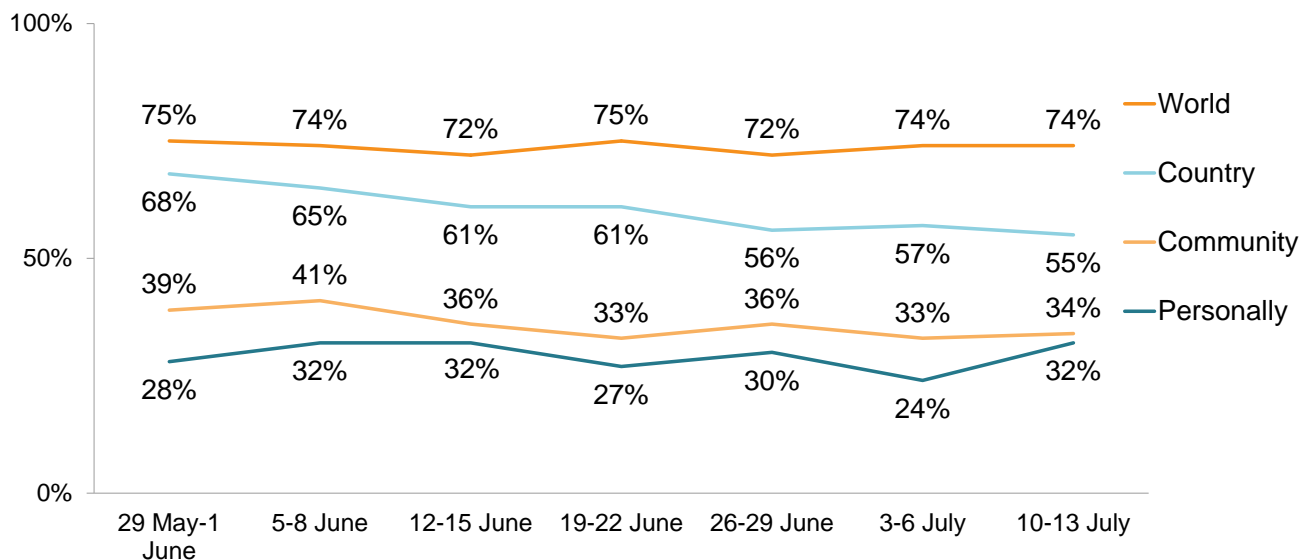
- Perceived risk from the virus to 'your country' has reduced since the start of June, whilst perceptions of the threat to the world, your community and you personally have remained stable. Confidence that things will improve increased at the start of June but has been declining since the middle of June.
- Levels of optimism increased in early June but fell back again in early July. Anxiety and happiness levels have both remained relatively high and stable in the past few weeks. A high proportion of respondents reported experiencing loneliness in the past week.
- Claimed compliance with suppression measures was high and most remained relatively stable in June but fell in early July. A different trend is seen for the wearing of a face covering, which has increased substantially over the past few weeks.
- The NHS and Scottish Government were consistently rated highly in terms of doing a good job. Trust in Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests has also remained high.
- Levels of comfort with returning to work (for those in employment) and children returning to school have increased since early June, with a majority now comfortable with these activities. Whilst levels of comfort using public transport have also increased, only a third were comfortable with this in July.

1. Impact of Coronavirus

Threat perception

Respondents were asked what level of threat they thought Coronavirus posed to a range of dimensions of life. As shown in Figure 1, the greatest threat was perceived to be to 'the world', followed by 'your country', 'your community' and 'you personally'. The perceived threat to 'your country' has fallen since the end of May.

Figure 1: Proportion who consider there to be a very high/high threat from Coronavirus



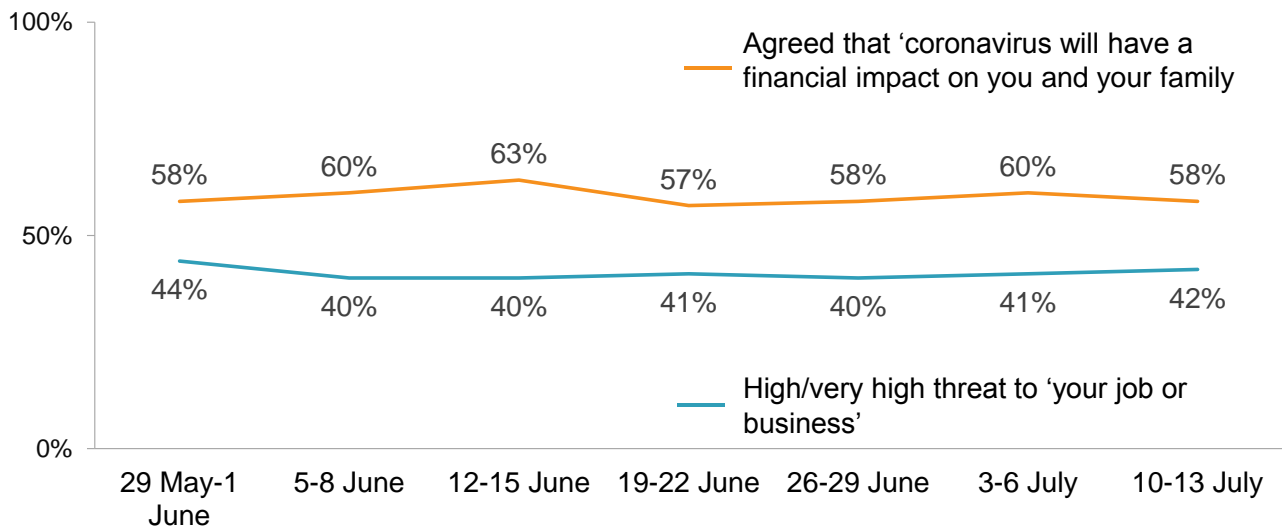
Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500).

Financial impact

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a statement about the financial impact of Coronavirus, and the perceived level of threat to their job or business. As shown in Figure 2, the majority agreed that there will be a financial impact on them and their family, and this has remained stable since the end of May. There has however been a decrease since the end of April when 70% agreed there would be a financial impact.¹ Two-fifths of those in employment perceived a threat to their job or business and this has remained relatively stable since the end of May.

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-summary/>, Figure 2.

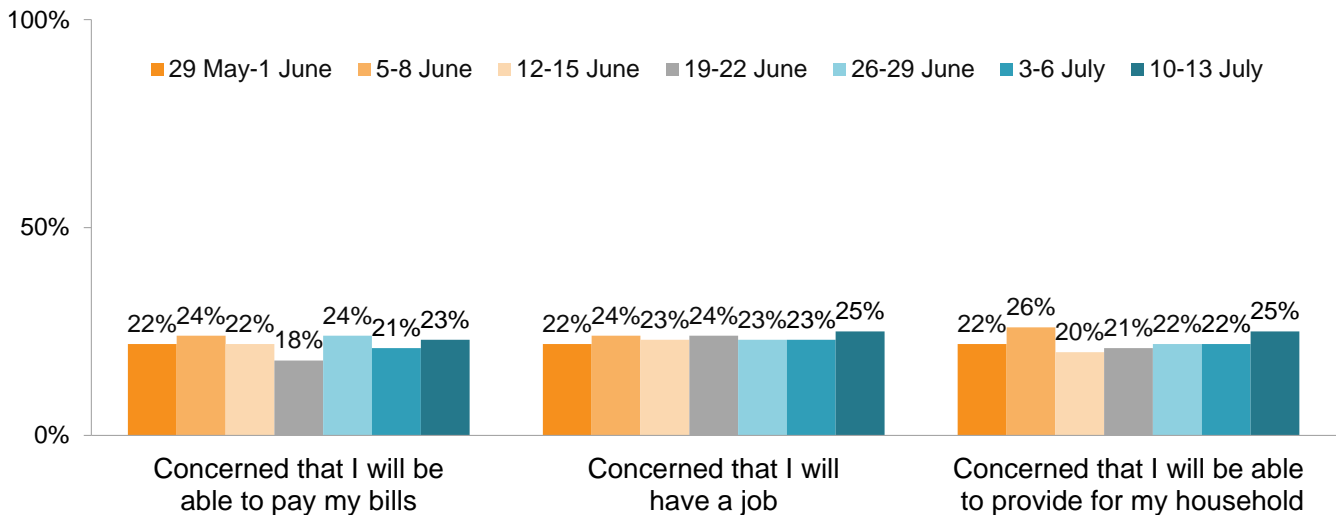
Figure 2: Proportion who agreed/agreed strongly or answered high/very high to the statements shown



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base: all respondents (n=500), those in employment (n=287-323)

Respondents were also asked how concerned they were about the impact of Coronavirus on their household finances. As shown in Figure 3, throughout June and into July, between a fifth and a quarter of respondents were 'extremely' or 'very' concerned about being able to pay their bills, that they will have a job, and that they will be able to provide for their household. These proportions have remained relatively stable since the end of May.

Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who were very/extremely concerned with the statements shown



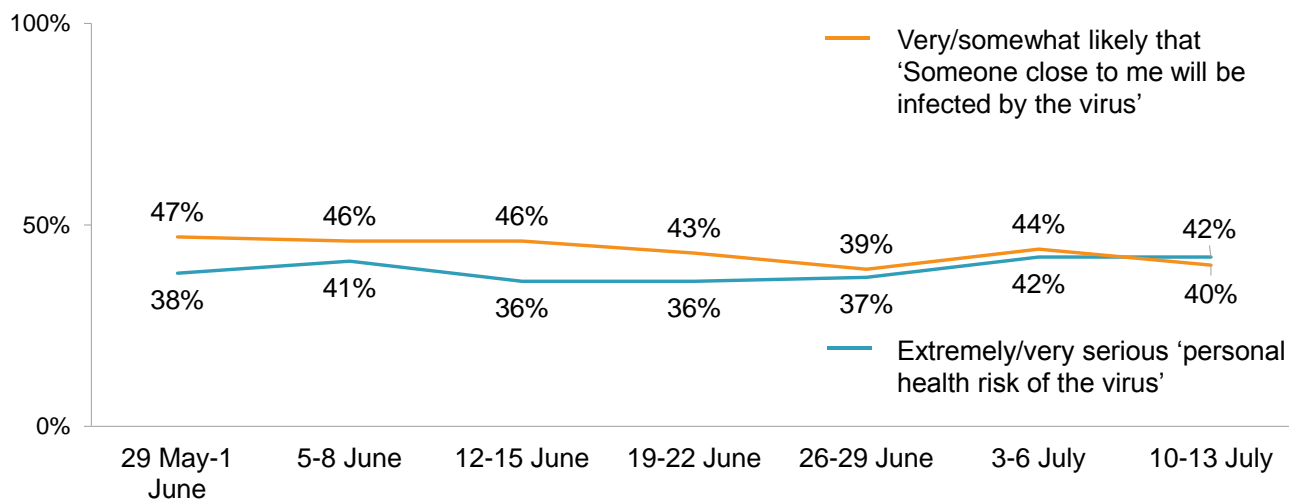
Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500).

Health impacts

To understand the perceived health risk of Coronavirus, respondents were asked how serious they thought catching the virus would be for their health. As shown in Figure 4, the proportion who considered it would affect their health 'extremely' or

'very' seriously has remained stable, whilst the proportion who thought it 'very' or 'somewhat' likely that someone close to them will be infected has decreased since early June.

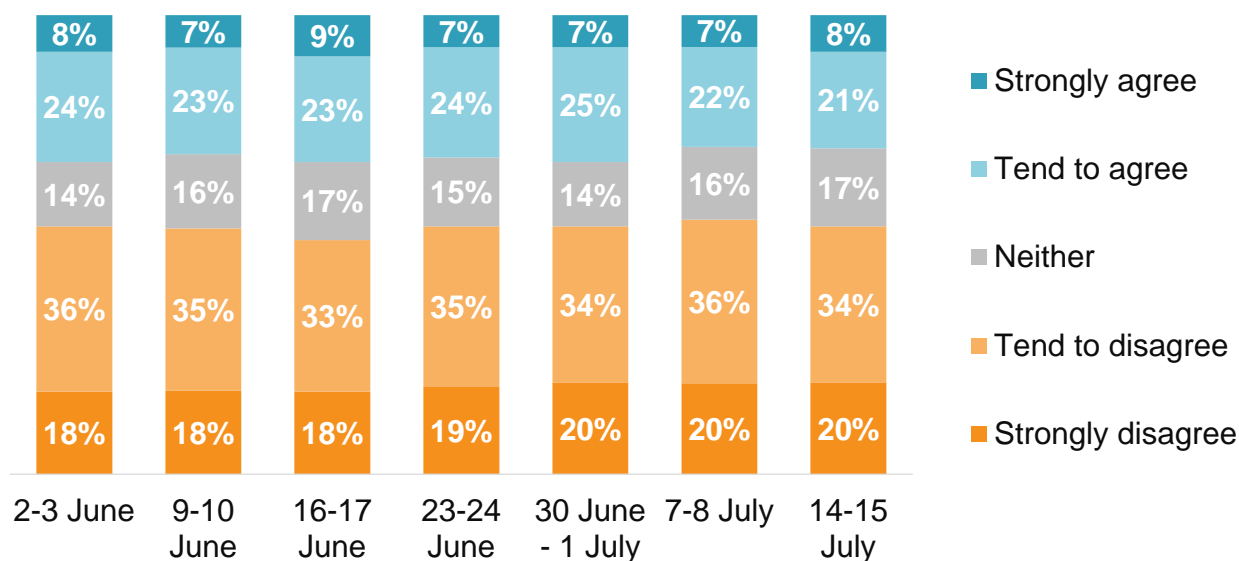
Figure 4: Proportion who answered extremely/very serious risk or very/somewhat likely to the statements shown



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500)

To understand the potential impact on non-COVID related health issues, respondents were asked if they would avoid going to a hospital or GP practice if they had a medical concern unrelated to Coronavirus. As shown in Figure 5, just under a third agreed that they would avoid going to a hospital or GP practice. This has remained stable since the beginning of June.

Figure 5: Proportions who agreed/disagreed that 'I would avoid going to a hospital or GP practice at the moment even if I had an immediate medical concern (not related to Coronavirus)'



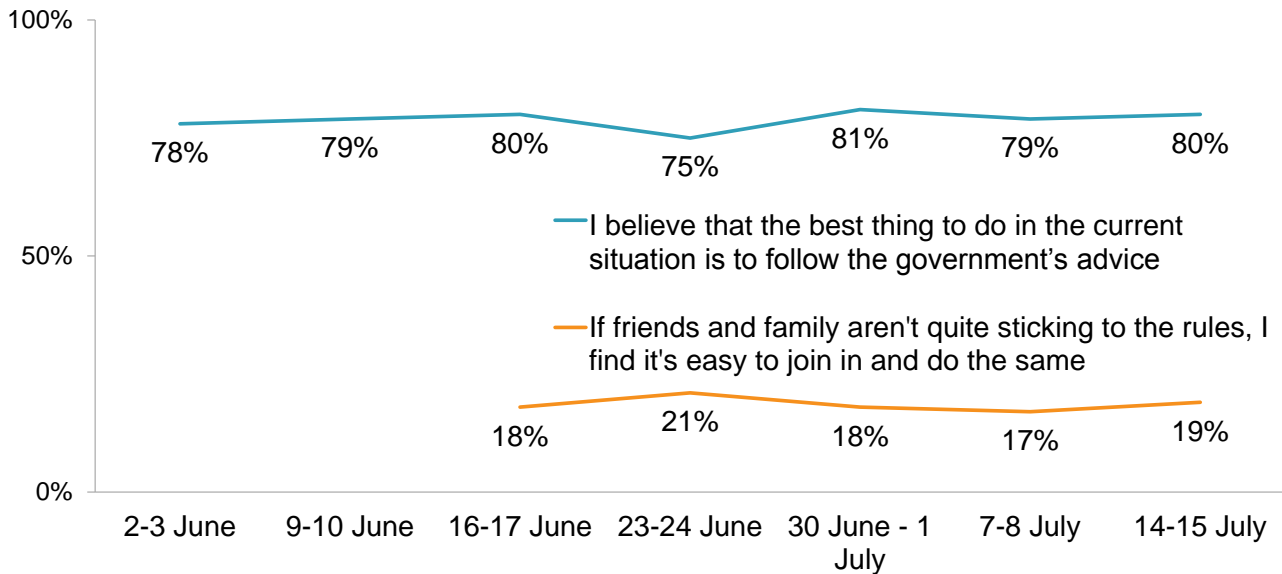
Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048)

2. Compliance

Views on guidance

Respondents were asked about their views on government guidance and advice. As shown in Figure 6, the vast majority agreed that 'I believe the best thing to do in the current situation is to follow the government's advice' and this has remained stable since the beginning of June. However, a substantial minority agreed that they find it 'easy to join in with friends and family who are not quite sticking to the rules'.

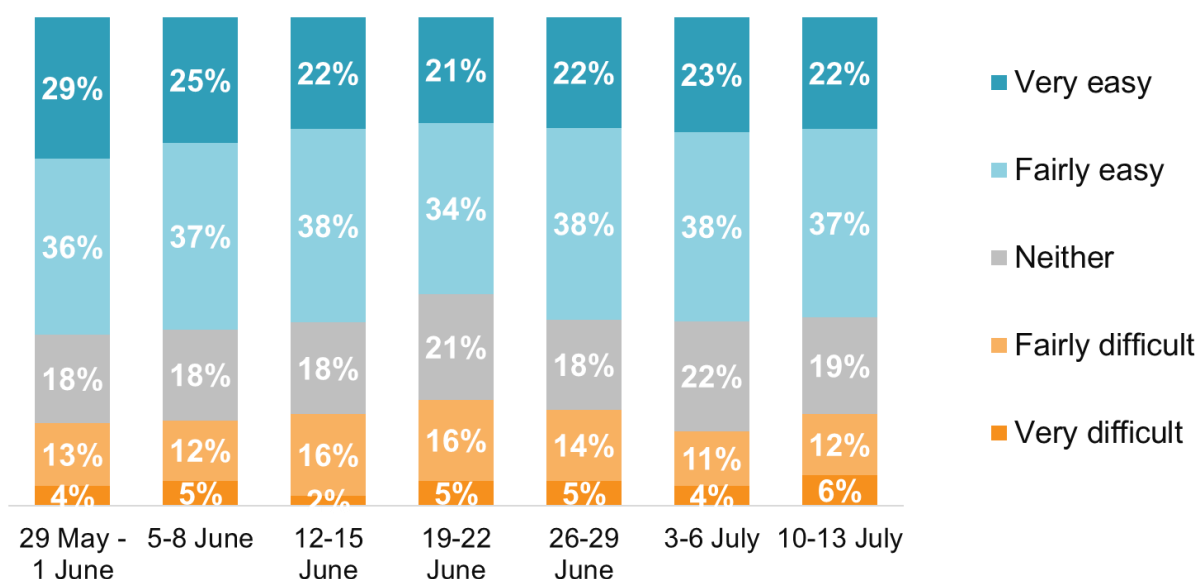
Figure 6: Proportion who agreed/agreed strongly with each statement



Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048)

Respondents were asked how easy or difficult they find it to stick to current guidance. As shown in Figure 7, the majority reported finding this 'very' or 'fairly' easy. The proportion who found it 'very easy' to stick to the guidance has decreased since the end of May.

Figure 7: Proportions finding it easy or difficult to stick to current guidance about social distancing and contact with others.



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500)

Levels of compliance

A list of social distancing guidelines was shown to respondents who indicated which ones they were following. Throughout April² and May³ levels of claimed adherence to the majority of these guidelines was high and stable. However, since the end of May there has been a gradual decline in the proportions who were:

- avoiding meeting with family and friends inside
- avoiding gatherings with family and friends
- only leaving home for essential trips

These declines likely reflect guidance about changing lockdown restrictions, such as people being allowed to meet with family and friends inside, and meet more than two other households outdoors since 10th July. More detail can be found in Annex B.

Furthermore, at the most recent survey wave there were also declines in the proportions who were:

- avoiding travelling more than a short distance for exercise, leisure or recreation⁴
- avoiding meeting with more than two other households when outside⁵
- trying to keep 2 metres distance from people when out
- avoiding non-essential travel journeys

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-april-summary/pages/7/>, Figure 5

³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-summary/pages/6/>, Figure 7

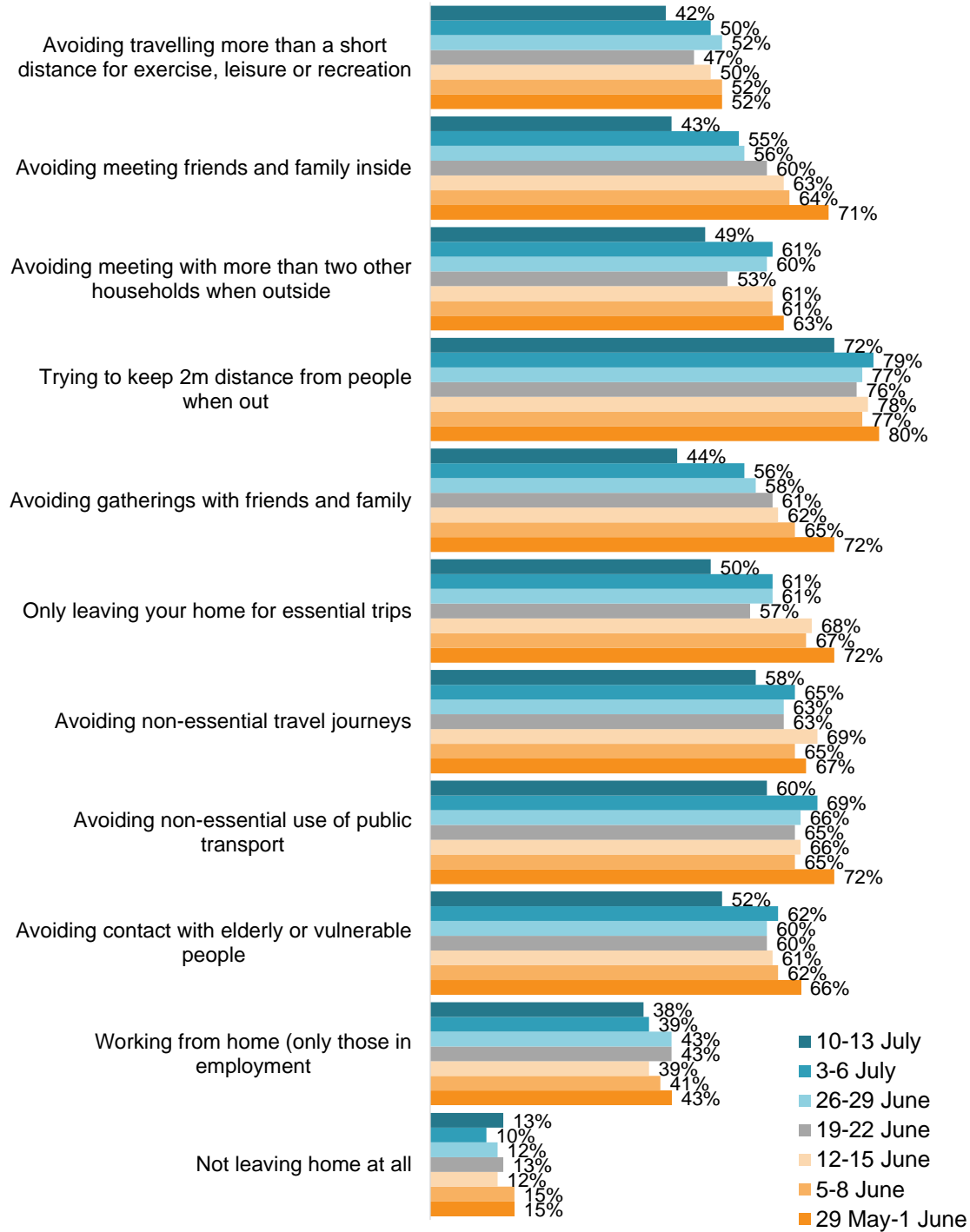
⁴ Question wording prior to 26-29 June was 'avoiding travelling more than a short distance by vehicle to exercise'

⁵ Question wording prior to 26-29 July 'avoiding meeting with more than one other household when outside'

- avoiding contact with elderly or vulnerable people
- avoiding non-essential use of public transport

Four in ten respondents in employment were working from home, and this has remained stable over time. One in ten were not leaving home at all. This has remained stable in June but has decreased from a quarter at the start of lockdown.⁶

Figure 8: Proportions claiming to follow each of the social distancing measures



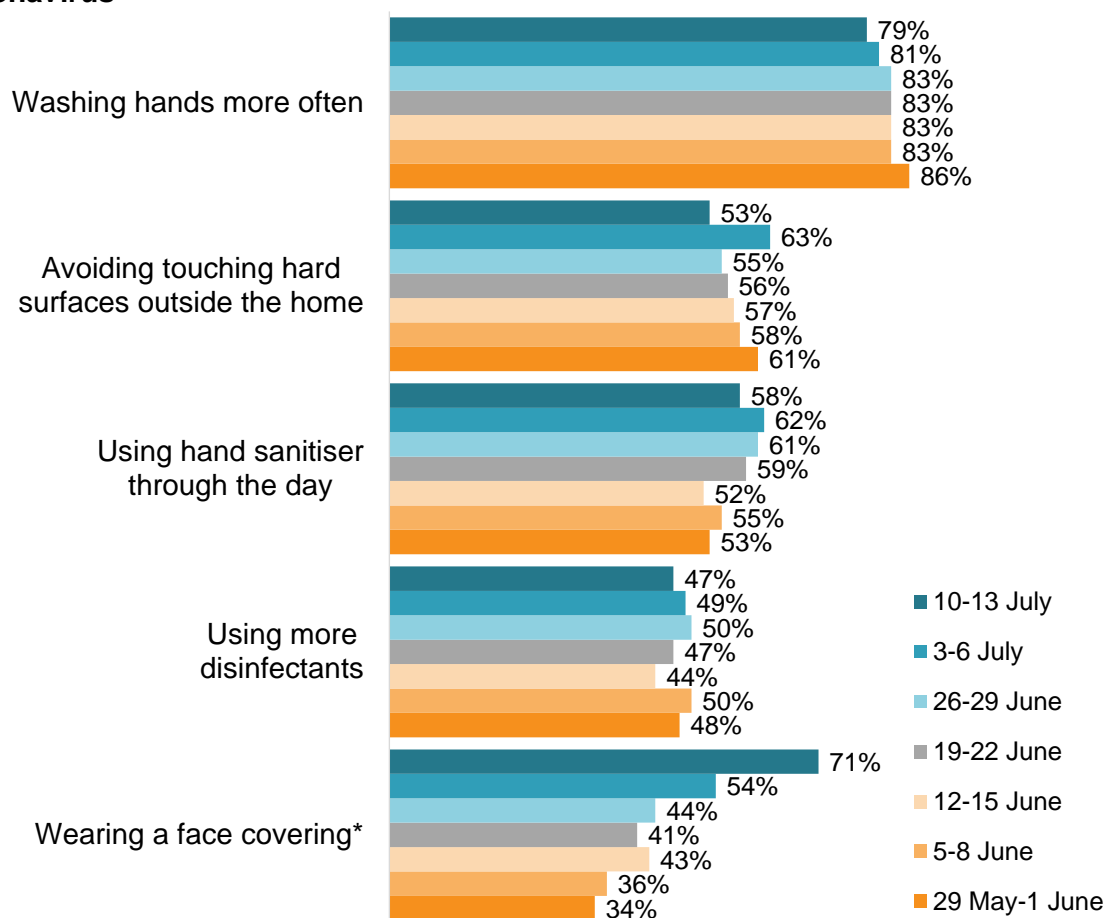
Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500).

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-april-summary/pages/7/>, Figure 5

Personal protective actions

Further to this, respondents were asked which, if any, personal protective actions they had taken to protect themselves from Coronavirus. As shown in Figure 9, the majority of respondents reported washing their hands more often and avoiding touching hard surfaces outside the home, although these behaviours have declined slightly since the end of May. The proportion reporting wearing a face covering⁷ has increased steadily since the end of April (17%, 23-26 April)⁸ with a sharp increase at the latest survey wave, likely in response to the introduction of face coverings becoming mandatory in shops on 10 July.

Figure 9: Proportions claiming to take each action to protect themselves from Coronavirus



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500)

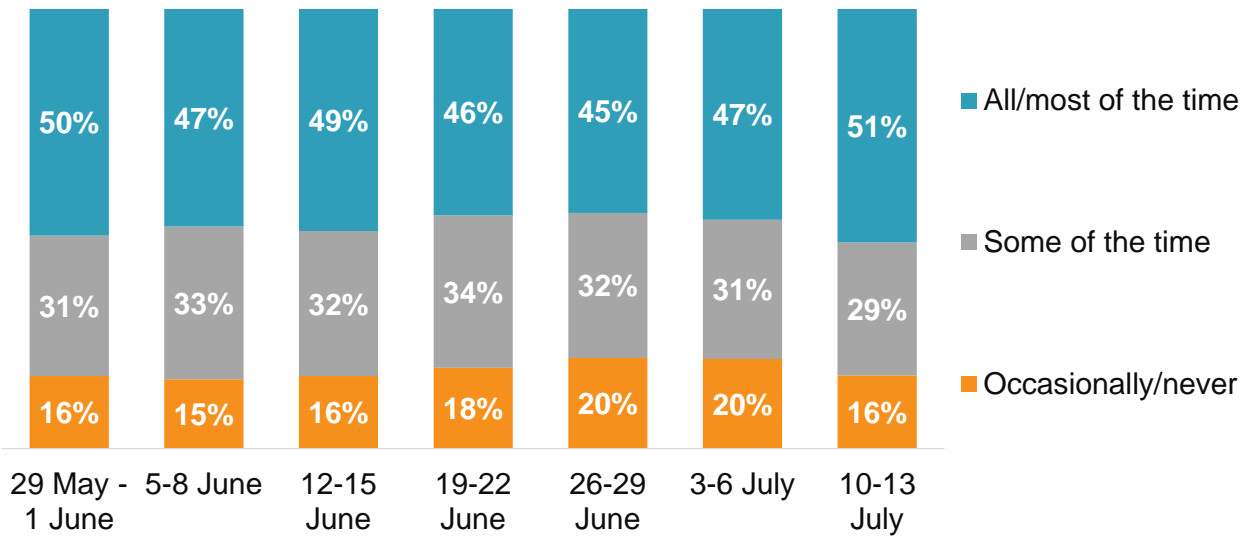
Respondents were also asked, from what they have seen or heard, how far they thought other people in their local area were following Scottish Government guidance. As shown in Figure 10, around half of respondents thought other people followed guidance all or most of the time and around a third thought others followed

⁷ Question wording prior to 19-22 June was 'wearing a face mask'.

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-summary/pages/6/>, Figure 8

guidance some of the time. These proportions have remained fairly stable since the end of May.

Figure 10: Proportions who think other people in their local area are following Scottish Government guidance about how to behave through the pandemic

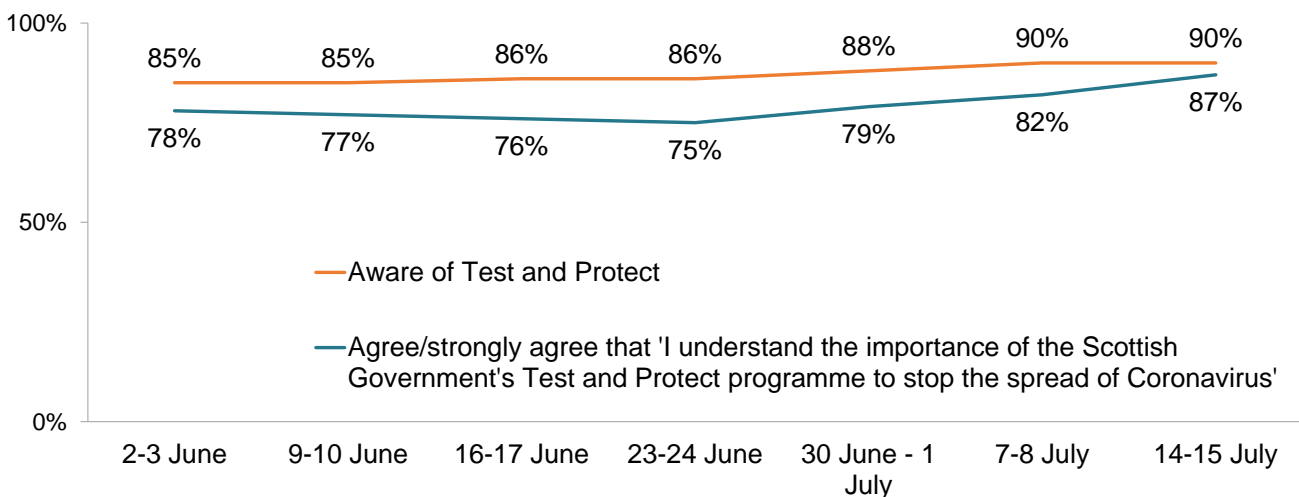


Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500)

Testing

Respondents were asked whether they were aware of Test and Protect and whether they understood the importance of the Test and Protect programme. Figure 11 shows that the vast majority agreed that they would be happy to provide details and that they understand the importance of Test and Protect. Agreement with both statements has increased since early June.

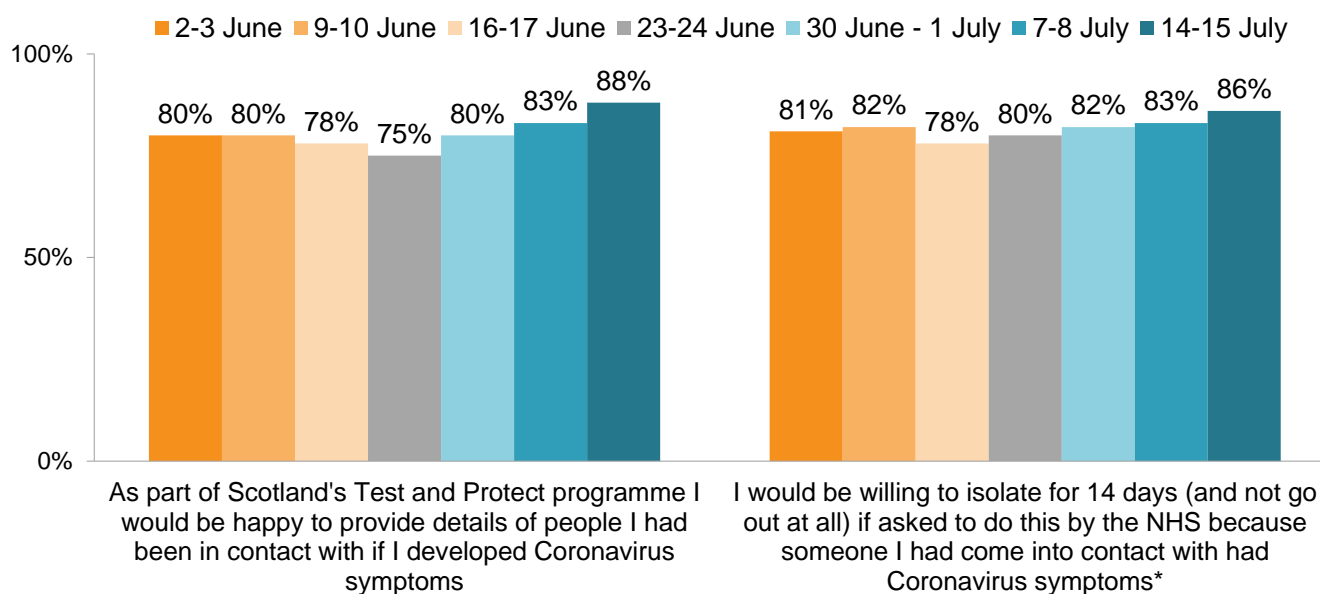
Figure 11: Proportions who were aware of Test and Protect and agreed or strongly agreed with the statements about its importance



Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048).

Respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed that they would be happy to provide details of people they had been in contact with if they developed Coronavirus symptoms, and whether they would be willing to isolate for 14 days if asked to do so by the NHS. Figure 12 shows high levels of anticipated compliance with both of these aspects of Test and Protect.

Figure 12: Proportions who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements shown about Test and Protect



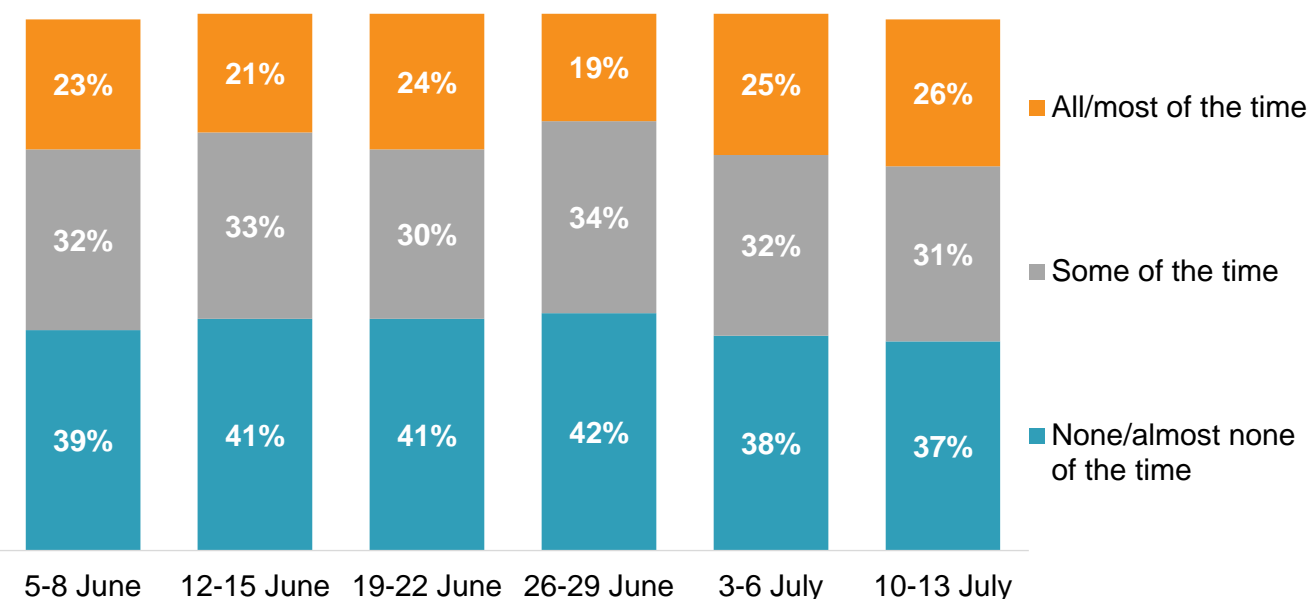
Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048).

3. Wellbeing

Levels of loneliness, anxiety and happiness

To understand social isolation, respondents were also asked how much of the time during the past week they had felt lonely. As shown in Figure 13, around a quarter felt lonely 'all or most of the time'. Around a third felt lonely 'some of the time' and around two-fifths felt lonely 'none or almost none of the time'. Loneliness levels have remained fairly stable since the beginning of June.

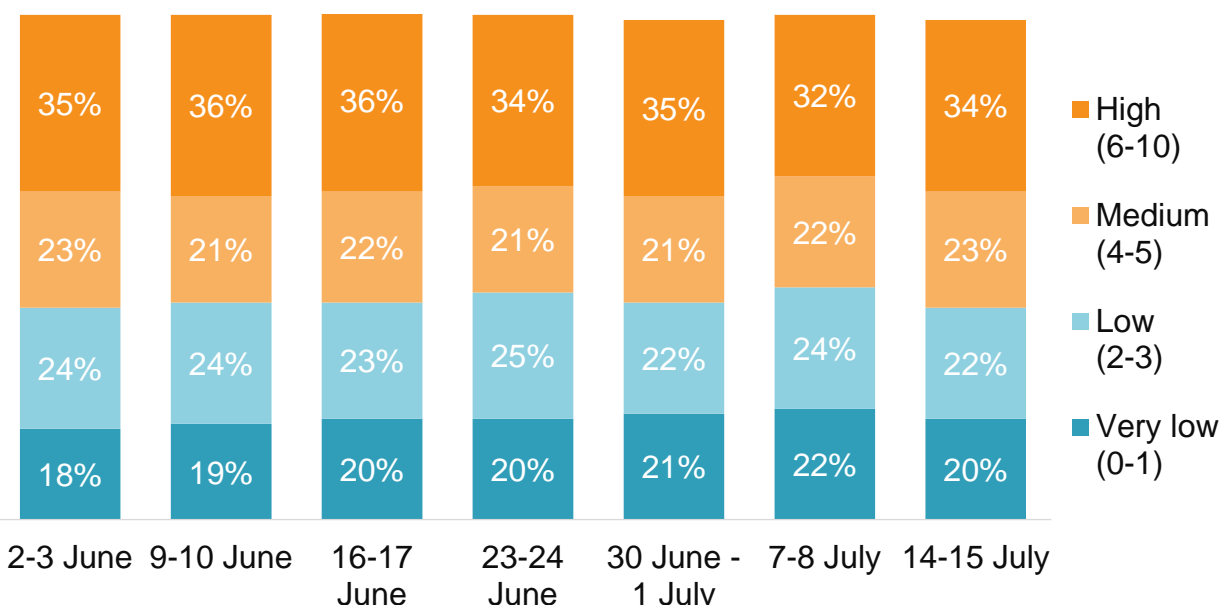
Figure 13: How often respondents felt lonely during the past week



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Base (n=500).

The YouGov weekly survey included two of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) wellbeing questions⁹ to measure levels of anxiety and happiness. Respondents were asked how anxious and how happy they felt 'yesterday', on a scale of 0 to 10. As shown in Figure 14, anxiety levels have remained stable and relatively high since the beginning of June. However, as reported previously, anxiety levels at the start of lockdown were much higher; 60% felt highly anxious (score of 6-10) on March 24-25.¹⁰

Figure 14: How anxious respondents felt yesterday on a scale of 0-10



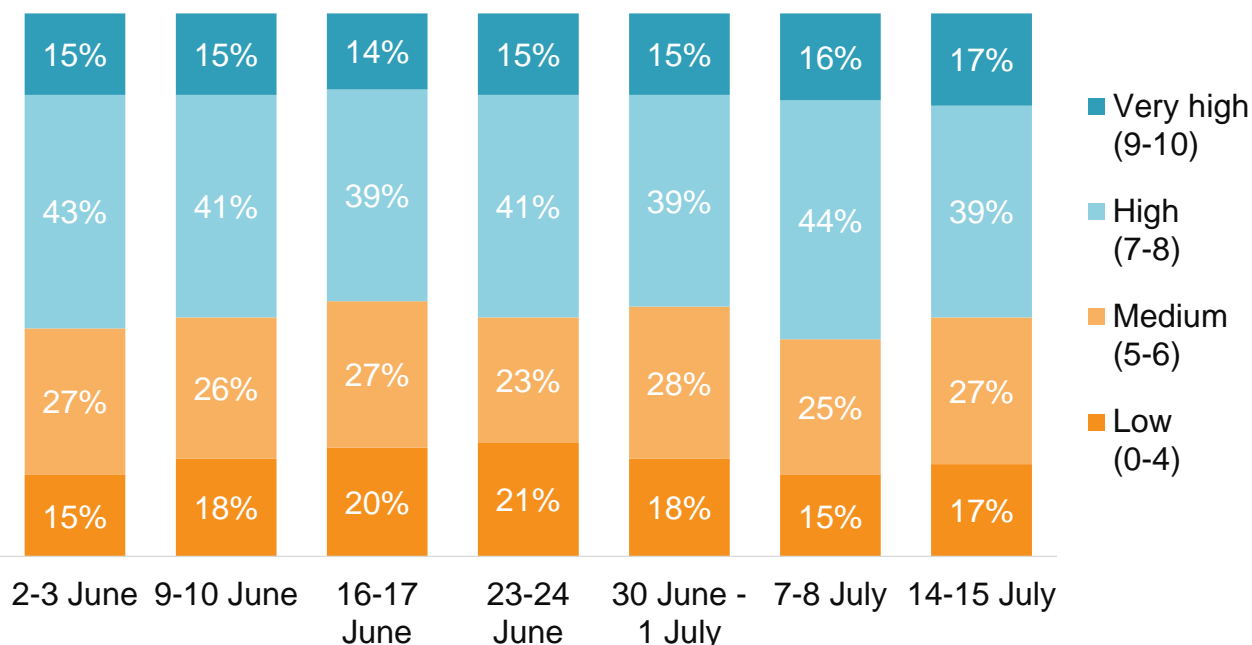
Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048)

⁹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/personalwellbeingssurveyuserguide>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-april-summary/pages/8/>, Figure 8

As shown in Figure 15, the majority of respondents reported high or very high levels of happiness (score of 7-10), which has remained fairly stable since the start of June. Just around one in five felt low levels of happiness (score of 0-4), which was stable throughout June but lower than at the beginning of lockdown (34%, 24-25 March).¹¹

Figure 15: How happy respondents felt yesterday on a scale of 0-10



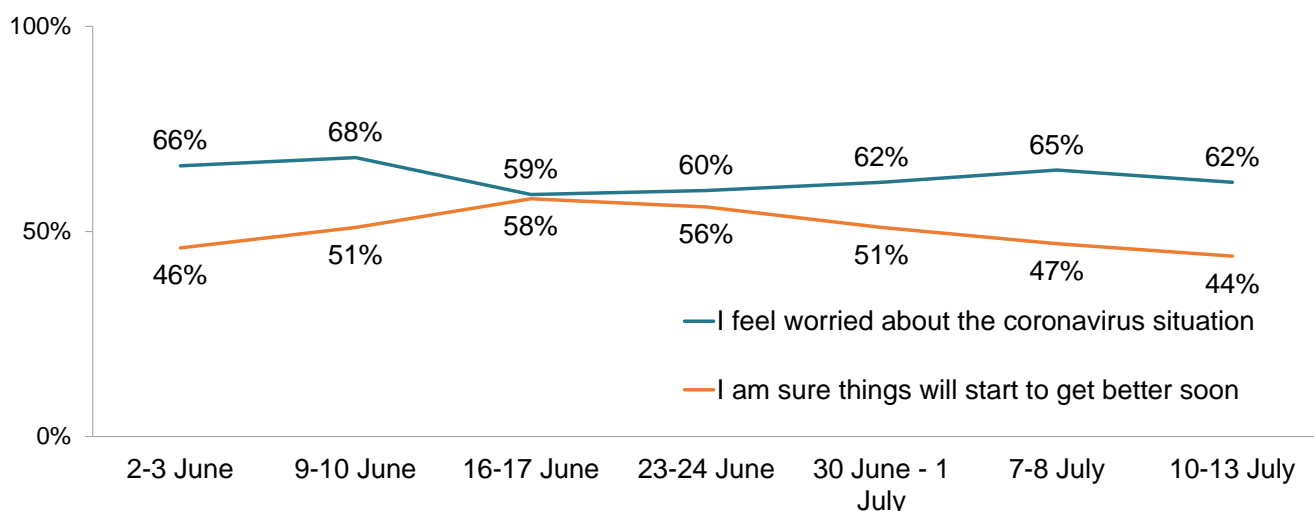
Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048)

Coping, worries and optimism

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements shown in Figure 16. The proportion who agreed that they felt worried about the Coronavirus situation fell in the middle of June and has since increased slightly and stabilised. The proportion who agreed that ‘things will start to get better soon’ increased towards the middle of June and then decreased again in July.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-attitudes-coronavirus-april-summary/pages/8/>, Figure 9

Figure 16: Proportion of respondents who agreed/strongly agreed with each statement about coping and worry

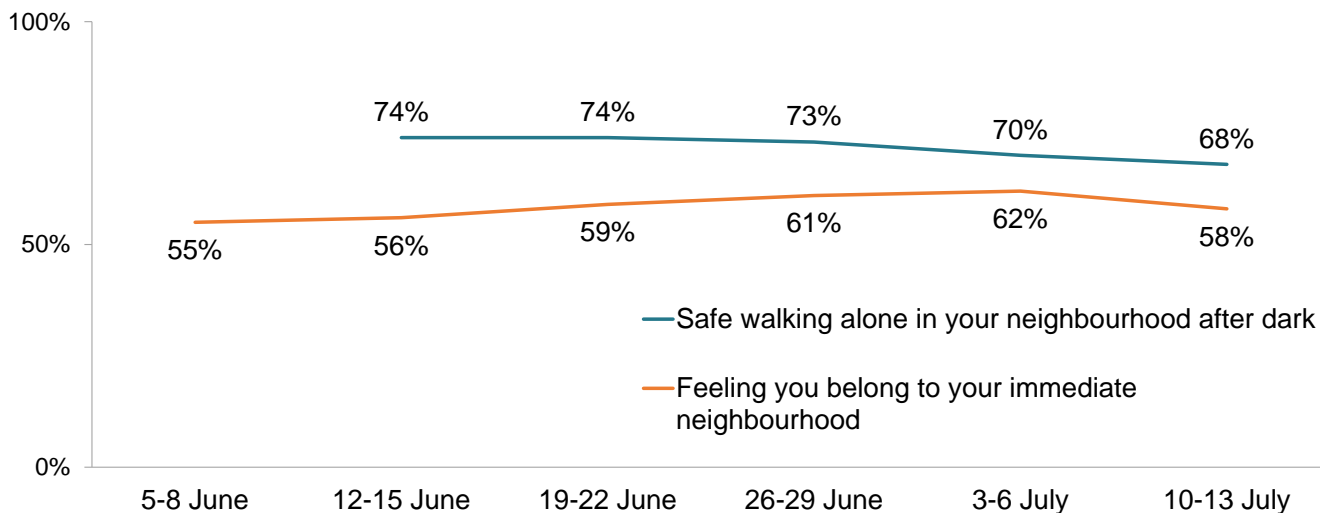


Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048).

Neighbourhood experiences

Respondents were asked about their sense of belonging to their neighbourhood and how safe they felt walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. As shown in Figure 17, the majority felt a sense of belonging to their immediate neighbourhood. The majority also felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, however this has declined slightly since early June.

Figure 17: Proportions who answered very or fairly about feeling they belong to their neighbourhood and feeling safe



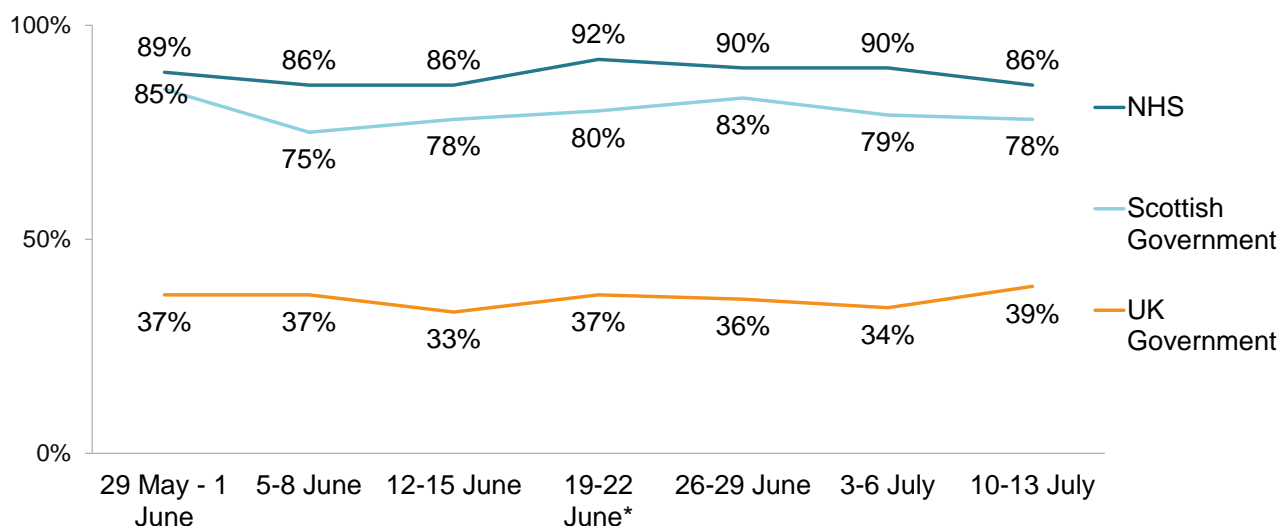
Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Scottish base (n=500)

4. Views on government and information sources

Rating of government

Respondents were asked how good or poor a job various institutions were doing to help their country deal with recovery following the pandemic. As shown in Figure 18, respondents continued to rate the NHS highly. The proportion rating the Scottish Government as doing a 'good' or 'very good' job fell at the beginning of June but has since increased slightly and stabilised.

Figure 18: Proportion who rate each as doing a good/very good job to help your country deal with recovering following the pandemic¹²



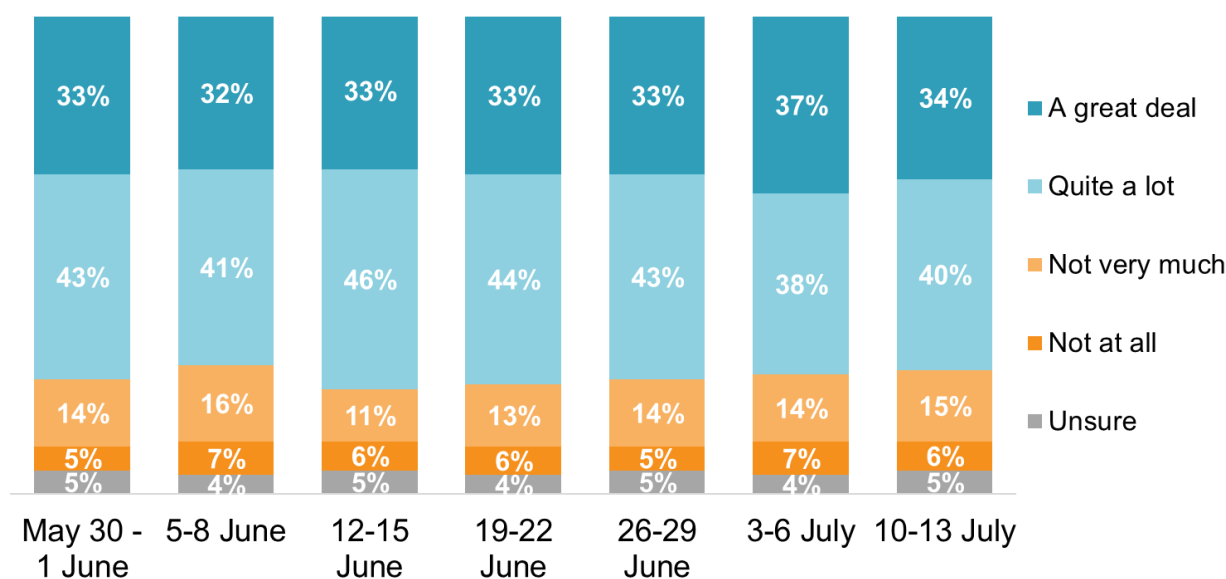
Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Scottish base (n=500)

Trust in Scottish Government

Respondents were asked to what extent they trust the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests during the Coronavirus pandemic. As shown in Figure 19, three quarters of respondents reported either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of trust in the Scottish Government, which has remained stable throughout June and July.

¹² *Question wording prior to 19-22 June asked about how good or poor a job the following were doing to 'contain the spread of the virus'.

Figure 19: Whether respondents trust Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests during the Coronavirus pandemic

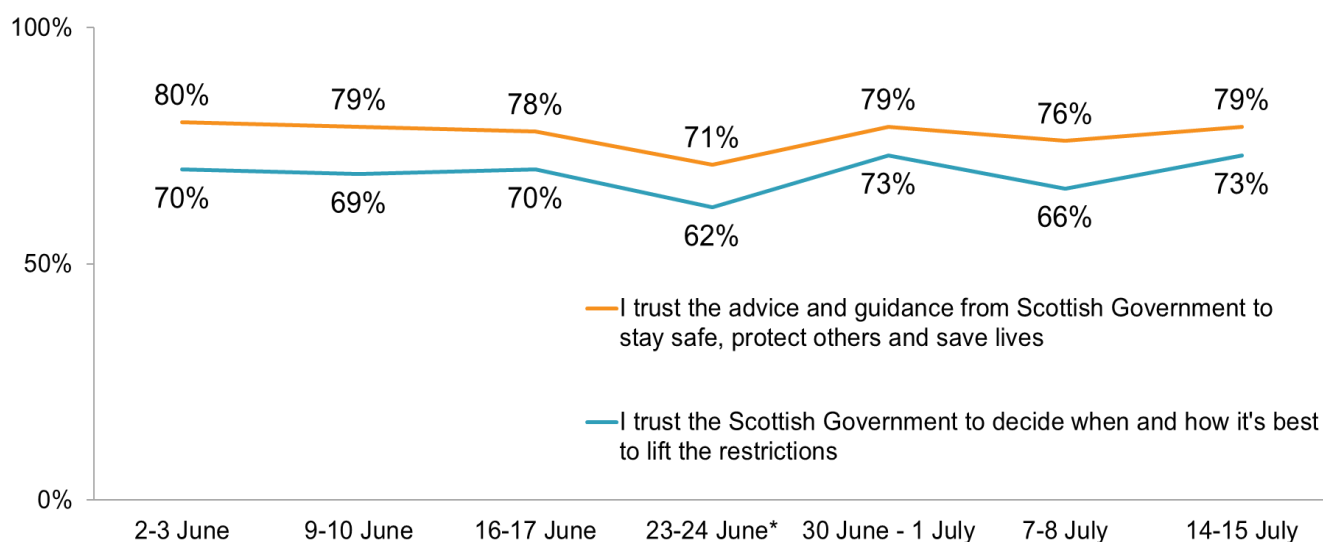


Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Scottish base (n=500)

Trust in Scottish Government advice and guidance

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements about trust in government advice and guidance. Figure 20 shows that the majority agreed with each of these statements, and despite a dip towards the end of June (23-24), levels of agreement have overall remained fairly stable.

Figure 20: Proportions who agreed/strongly agreed with the two statements shown¹³

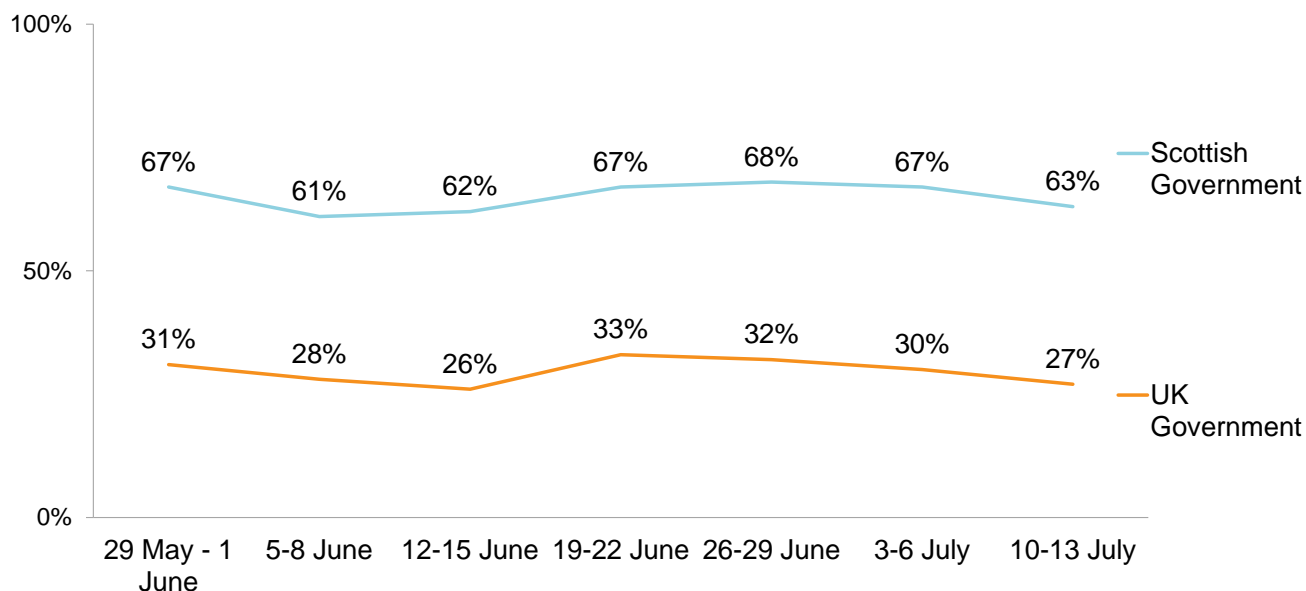


Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1004-1037)

¹³ *Question wording prior to 23-24 June was 'I trust the advice and guidance from the Scottish Government to stay at home, protect others and save lives'.

Respondents were shown a list of information sources and asked about the degree with which they trust the source to deliver information on Coronavirus. As shown in Figure 21, the proportion who trusted the Scottish Government was consistently higher than the proportion who trusted the UK Government to deliver information about Coronavirus. Trust in information from the Scottish Government fell in early June but has since increased slightly and stabilised.

Figure 21: Proportion who completely or mostly trust each information source to deliver information on Coronavirus

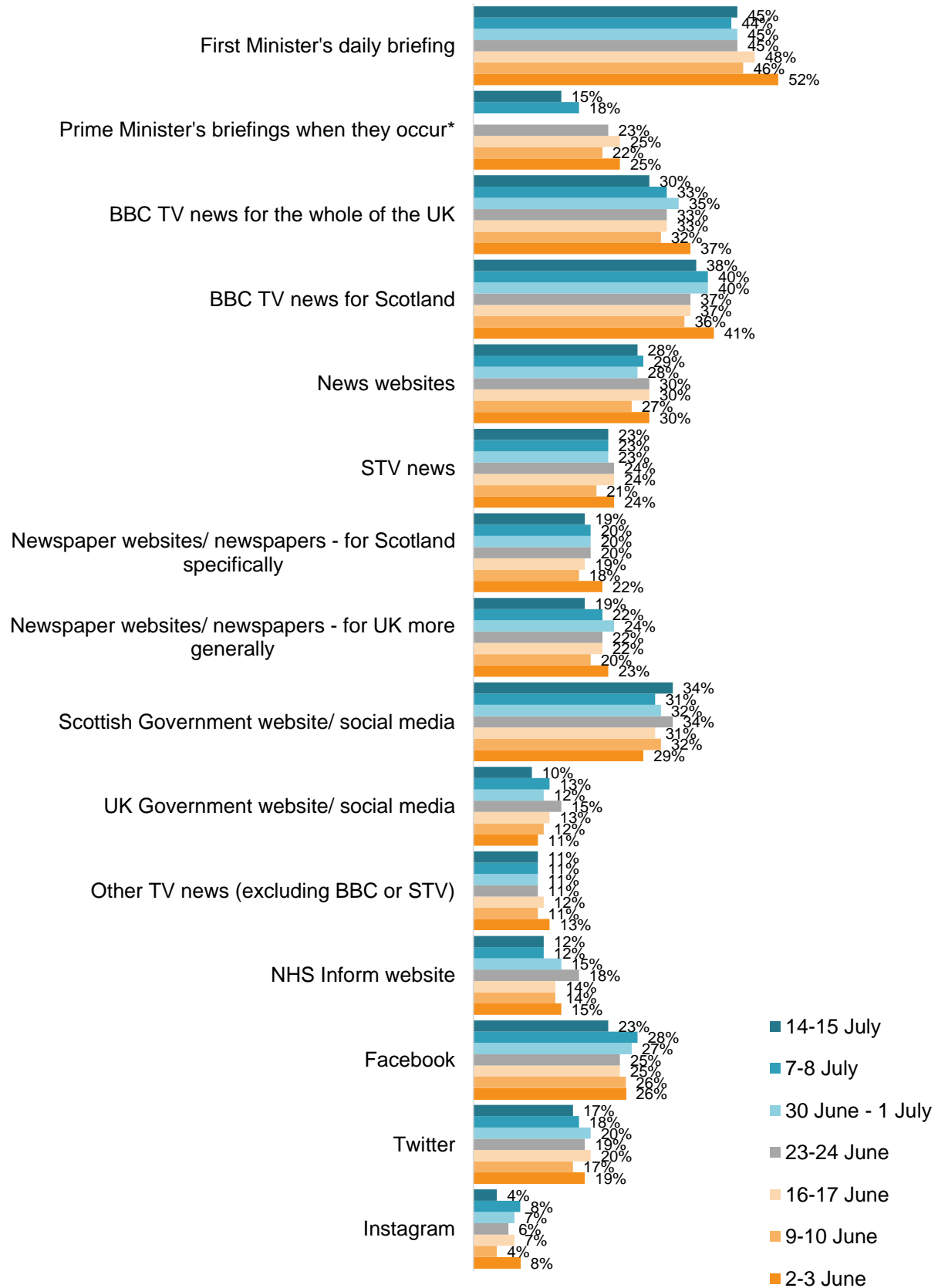


Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Scottish base (n=500)

Sources of information

Respondents were shown a list of information sources and asked which they use regularly to access information on coronavirus (i.e. at least three times a week). As shown in Figure 22, the most commonly used sources were the First Minister’s daily briefing and BBC TV News, although there has been a decrease in the proportion watching the First Minister’s briefing since the start of June.

Figure 22: Proportion using each information source regularly to access information on coronavirus



Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1003-1048)

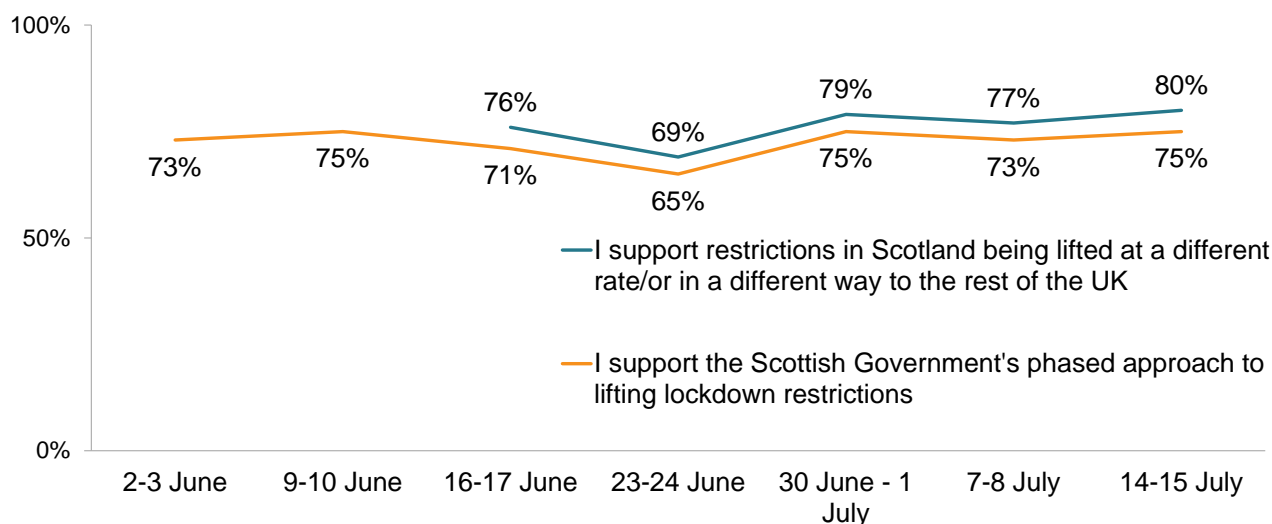
N.B PM's daily briefing was removed for the 30 Jun-1 July wave but 'PM briefings when they occur' was added from 7-8 July wave onwards

5. Looking forward

Lifting restrictions

Respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed with two statements about how to decide when to lift restrictions. As shown in Figure 23, the majority of respondents agreed with each statement. There was a dip towards the end of June (23-24) but otherwise levels of agreement have remained stable over the time period.

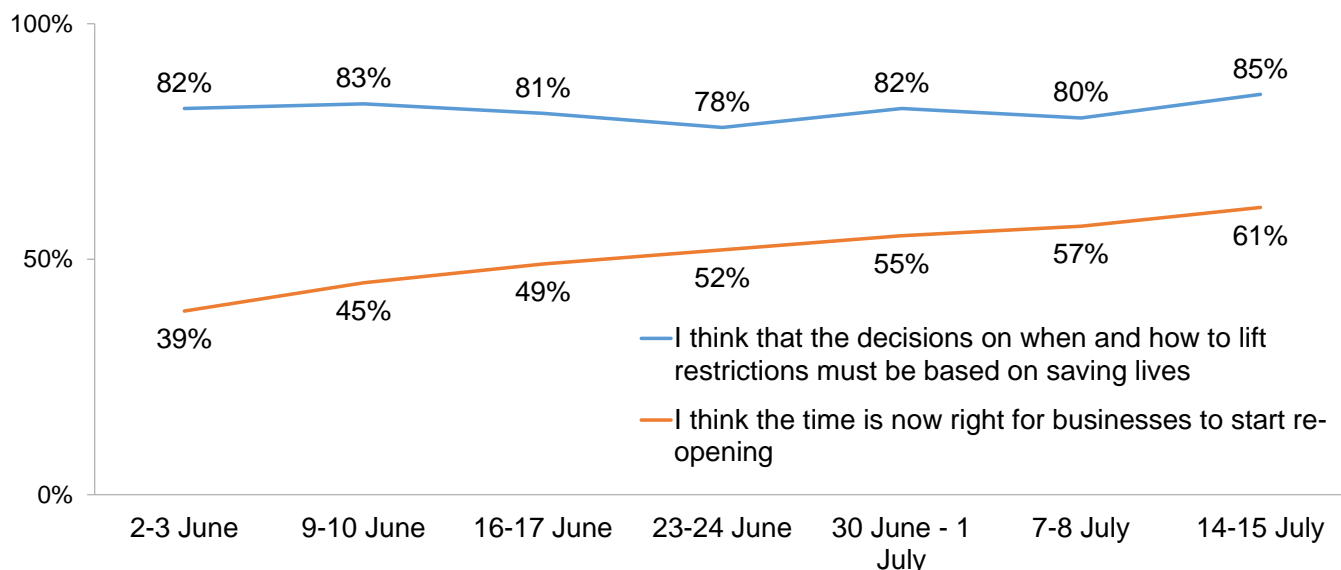
Figure 23: Proportions who agreed/agreed strongly with each statement about lifting restrictions



Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1002-1037)

As shown in Figure 24, since the start of June, the proportion agreeing that 'time is now right for businesses to start re-opening' increased gradually throughout June and early July. The vast majority agreed that decisions on when and how to lift restrictions should be based on saving lives.

Figure 24: Proportions who agreed/agreed strongly with each statement about lifting restrictions¹⁴

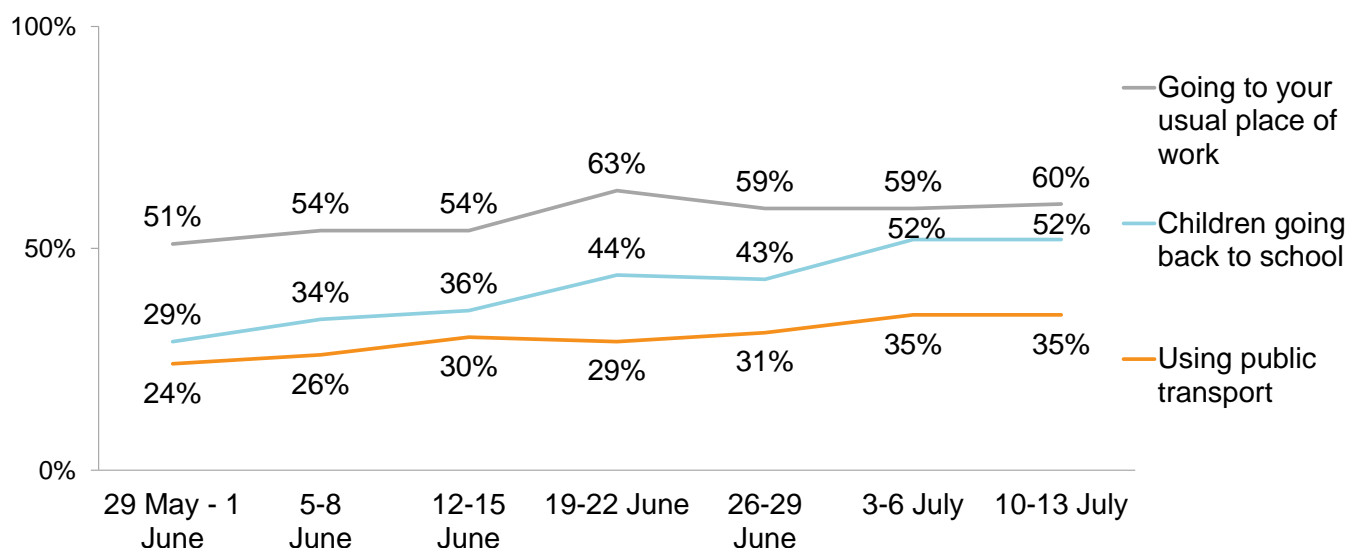


Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1002-1037)

Returning to normal

Respondents were asked whether they felt comfortable doing a range of activities in the next month. As shown in Figure 25, there has been an increase in the proportion feeling comfortable going to their usual place of work and with children going back to school. Although the proportion who would feel comfortable using public transport has also increased over the period, the majority of respondents still would not.

Figure 25: Proportions who feel very/fairly comfortable doing the activities shown in the next month



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Scottish base (n=500)

¹⁴ *Question wording prior to 23-24 June was 'I think that decisions on when and how to lift restrictions must be based on saving lives and protecting the NHS'.

In July, respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed with two statements about restrictions changing and meeting up. As shown in Table 1, in early July, just over half agreed that they were holding off arranging meet-ups with friends and family (20% disagreed with this statement). The majority agreed that they didn't want to rush into doing things.

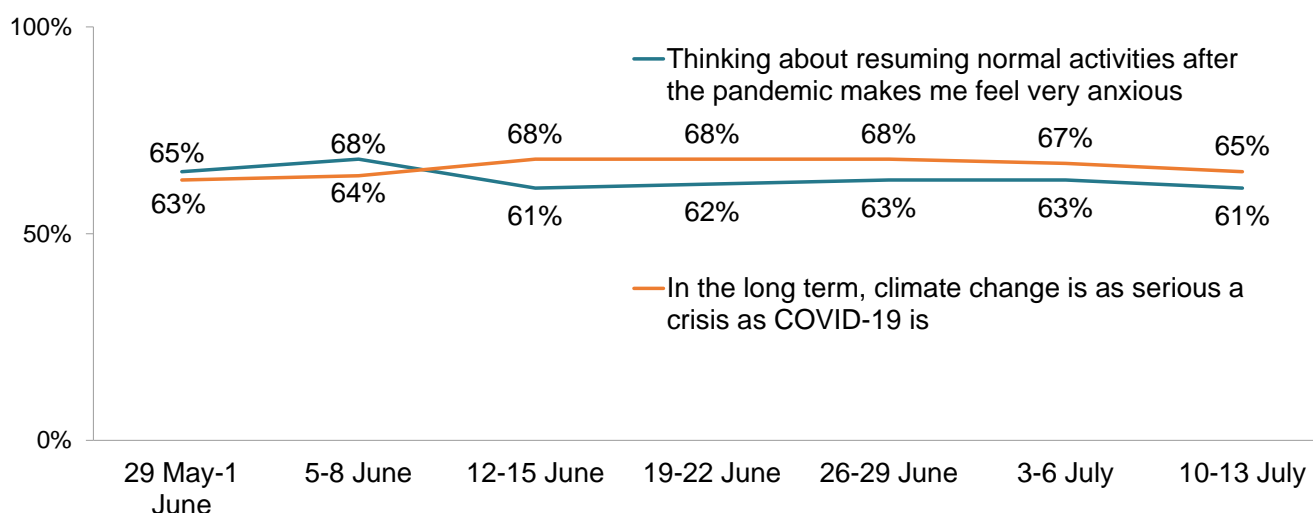
Table 1: Proportions who agreed/agreed strongly with the two statements shown about changing restrictions

Statements	7-8 July	14-15 July
Even though I can, I'm holding off arranging meet-ups with friends and family as I don't know if they really want to yet	54%	n/a
Even though the restrictions are changing, I don't want to rush into doing things	77%	79%

Source: YouGov weekly Scotland survey. Base (n=1006-1012)

Finally, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with two statements about the future. As shown in Figure 26, around two-thirds agreed with each statement. The proportion who agreed that 'thinking about resuming normal activities makes me feel very anxious' decreased in early June and has since remained stable.

Figure 26: Proportions who agreed/strongly agreed with the statements shown about the future



Source: Ipsos MORI, Scotland data. Scottish base (n=500)

Further information

This report contains the final data collected from the Ipsos MORI survey. However the YouGov survey is ongoing and more recent findings will be published in future.

Annex A: Sample sizes

The Ipsos MORI sample is broadly representative of the adult population aged 16-74. Data is weighted to reflect the age and gender profile of the Scottish population aged 16-74. Waves 10 and 11 were run as boosts on the Ipsos MORI Global Advisor survey. The sample size for these waves also includes respondents living in Scotland from the UK sample of that survey. From Wave 12 onwards, a separate survey of 500 people in Scotland was run by Ipsos MORI Scotland, though a number of questions continue to mirror questions asked globally.

YouGov results are based on a sample of c.1,000 adults 18+ across Scotland at each wave. YouGov apply weighting to the data to match the population profile to adjust for any over/under representations and to maximise consistency from wave to wave. Parameters used include age, gender, social class, region and level of education.

Table 2: Fieldwork information

Name	Sample size	Age group	Field dates
Ipsos MORI Global Advisor	Wave 15-21: 500	16-74	Wave 15: 29 th March – 1 June Wave 16: 5 th – 8 th June Wave 17: 12 th – 15 th June Wave 18: 19 th – 22 nd June Wave 19: 26 th – 29 th June Wave 20: 3 rd – 6 th July Wave 21: 10 th – 13 th July
YouGov weekly survey	Wave 11: 1048 Wave 12: 1004 Wave 13: 1026 Wave 14: 1003 Wave 15: 1005 Wave 16: 1012 Wave 17: 1006	18+	Wave 11: 2 nd – 3 rd June Wave 12: 9 th – 10 th June Wave 13: 16 th – 17 th June Wave 14: 23 rd – 24 th June Wave 15: 30 th June – 1 st July Wave 16: 7 th – 8 th July Wave 17: 14 th – 15 th July

Fieldwork dates cover the period where the bulk of the survey fieldwork was completed.

Annex B: Timeline of route map announcements

11 May	People can exercise for more than once a day
29 May	Enter phase one . Subject to safe physical distancing and hygiene measures, the following things are permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two households are able to meet outdoors, in a maximum group of 8 people • Travel is allowed to exercise or meet another household, within a recommended 5 mile • Sunbathing is permitted • Child minding services and outdoor nursery provision is available • Food outlets are able to offer take away, delivery or drive-through • Some non-contact outdoor sports resume, such as golf, tennis and angling
19 June	Enter phase two . Easing of restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are shielding can go outdoors to exercise and meet people from one other household • People who live on their own or only with children under 18 can form an extended household • Urgent dental care can resume • Places of worship will be allowed to open for particular reasons
29 June	Further easing of measures in phase two, as businesses and facilities reopen, these include: street-access retail, outdoor markets, outdoor sports grounds, playgrounds, zoos and garden attractions
3 July	Self-catered accommodation can reopen
6 July	Outdoor hospitality can reopen
10 July	Enter phase 3 . Easing of restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to eight people from three households can meet indoors • Up to 15 people from five households can meet outdoors, subject to physical distancing • Face coverings made compulsory in shops



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