

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 7 May 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 17 April to 27 April 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain. This 10-day collection period is the fourth to be based wholly after the government's Stay at home measures were introduced on 23 March 2020.

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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: 7 May 2020](#)
- [Coronavirus and the economic impacts on the UK: 7 May 2020](#)

2 . Main points

- A month after lockdown measures were introduced, over 8 in 10 adults (82%) in Great Britain continue to say 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.
- Over 1 in 5 adults (21%) say their relationships are being affected, with partners or spouses causing the most concern.
- Expectations for when life will return to normal are getting longer: 40% of adults now think it will be longer than six months compared with 33% after the first week of lockdown.

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.

It contains breakdowns of results for identified "at-risk" groups that have been advised to take additional precautions. This includes those aged 70 years and over, those with certain underlying health conditions, and women who are pregnant. The full list of conditions are included in the [Glossary](#). Further breakdowns by sex are included in the [associated datasets](#).

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.

The statistics in this publication are based on a survey of 1,327 adults (66% response rate) sampled through the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), which was conducted online between 17 and 27 April 2020 (inclusive). Throughout this bulletin, "this week" refers to the period 17 to 27 April 2020 and "last week" refers to the period 9 to 20 April 2020.

4 . Concerns about the coronavirus

Levels of overall concern have shown a gradual but continual decline over recent weeks. In Great Britain, 8 in 10 adults (80%) said they were very worried or somewhat worried about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) was having on their life now, compared with 82% last week. This decrease was also seen among those aged 70 years and over, falling to 75% this week from 82% last week, and for those with an underlying health condition, falling to 80% this week from 85% last week.

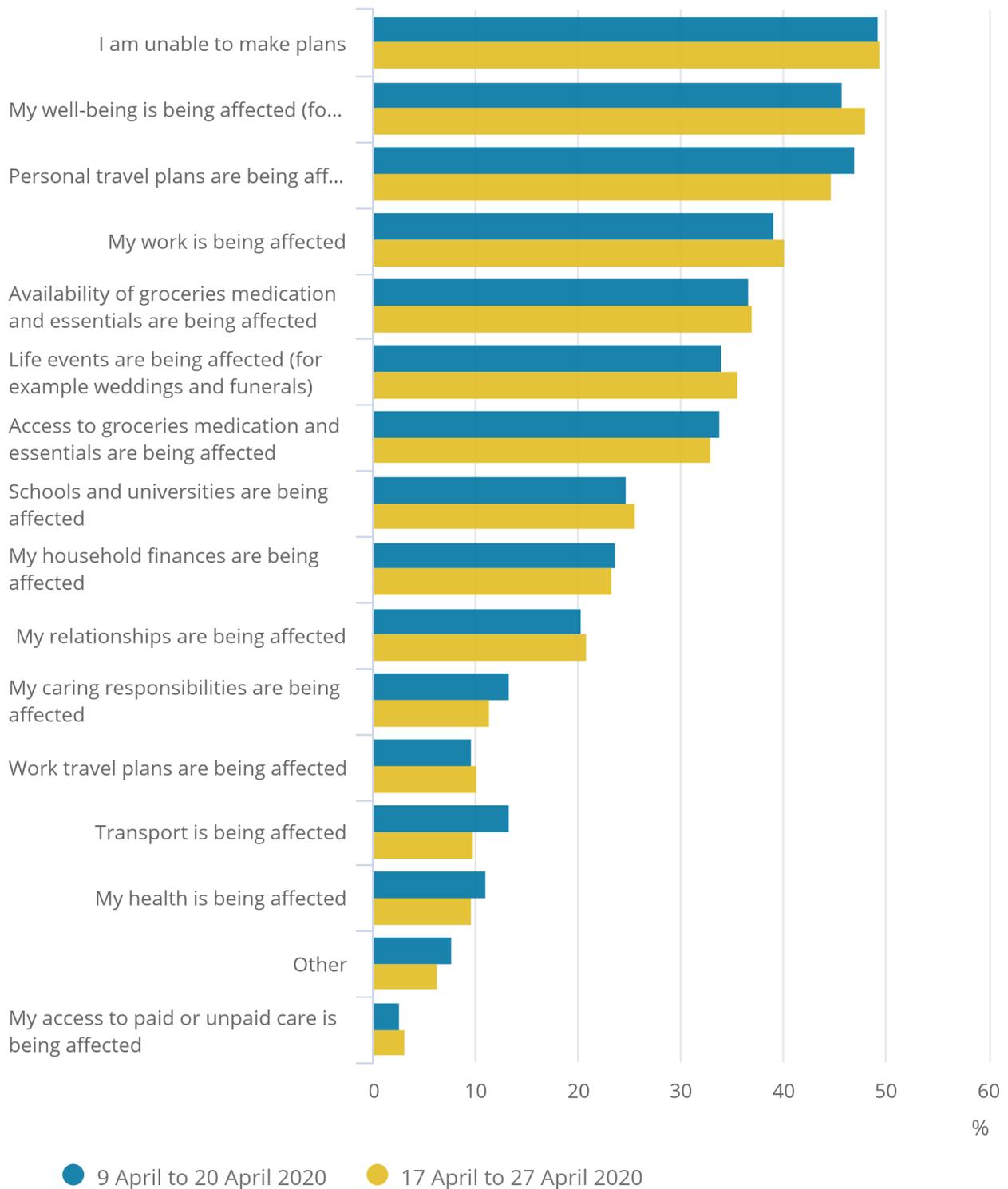
For a third week, the most common way that the coronavirus pandemic was impacting people's lives was on their ability to make plans, with 49% saying this was being affected (Figure 1).

Figure 1: People were most worried about the effect of the coronavirus on their ability to make plans, their well-being and their personal travel plans

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 1: People were most worried about the effect of the coronavirus on their ability to make plans, their well-being and their personal travel plans

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Notes:

1. Question: In which ways is the coronavirus (COVID-19) affecting your life?
2. This question was only asked of those who said they were very worried or somewhat worried about the impacts of COVID-19, but the base population for these estimates was all adults aged 16 years or over, to reflect the level of concern among the whole population. These estimates are calculated using Table 4b of the datasets.
3. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

Concern over the availability of groceries, medication and toiletries is similar to last week but the proportion of adults who said they had struggled to access groceries, medication and toiletries in the past week decreased to 33% from 43% last week. The proportion was lower for key workers, with 30% saying they had struggled this week.

People's expectations for how long their life will be disrupted are increasing. This week, 40% of adults expected it to be longer than six months before life returned to normal compared with 33% after the first week of lockdown.

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 our studies and surveys are [serving public need](#).

Concerns about work

Of the 40% of adults who said the coronavirus was affecting their work, the most common reasons were because of homeworking (either being asked to work from home or that people were finding it difficult). Around 1 in 10 (11%) of these adults also said they were concerned about their health and safety at work.

A lower proportion of key workers said they were very or somewhat worried about the effect the coronavirus was having on their life (78%) compared with 85% last week, and the most common issue was the effect on their work.

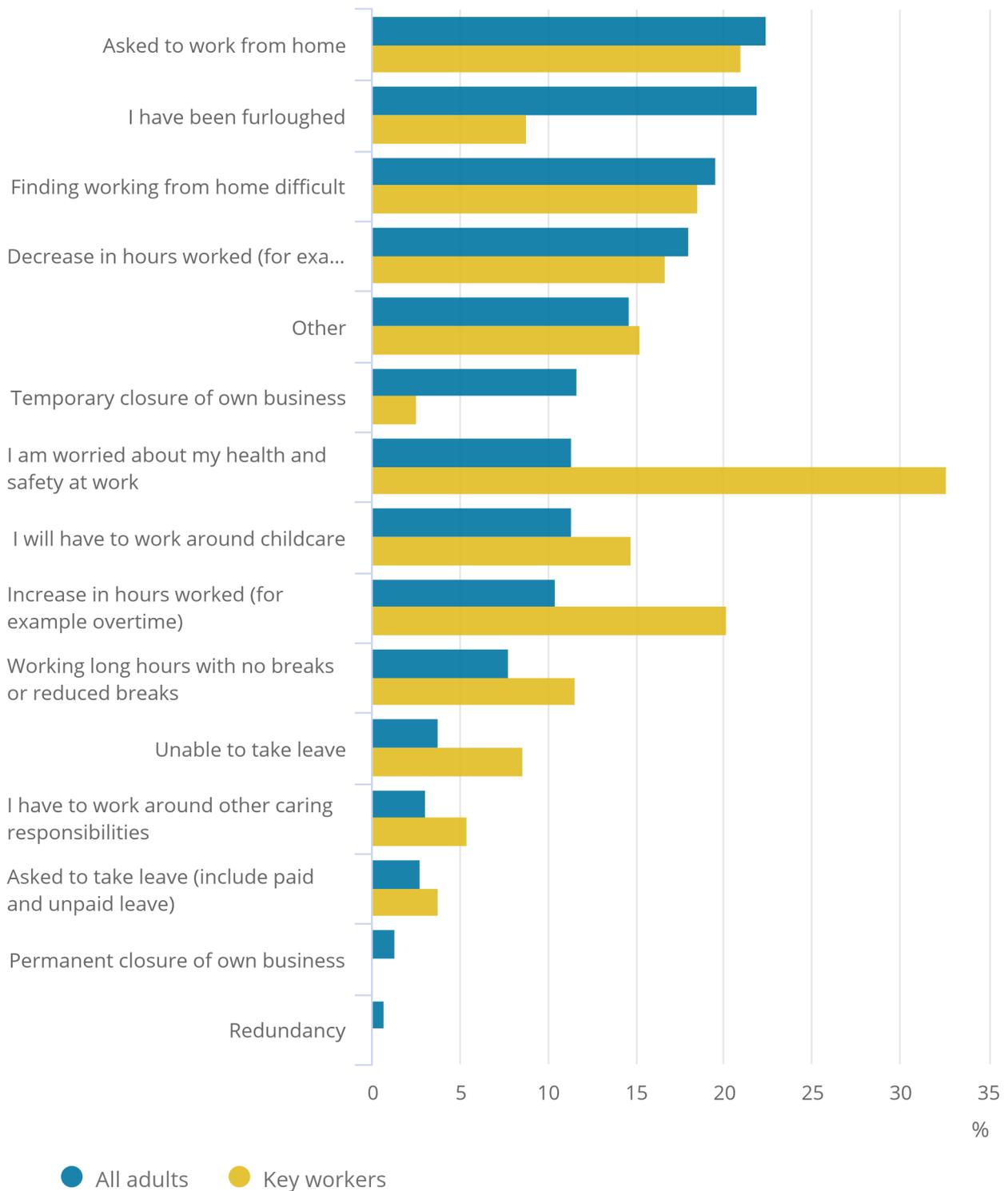
Of the 54% of key workers who said their work was being impacted, concerns about their health and safety was the most common reason, with over 3 in 10 (33%) saying they were concerned about this (Figure 2). Difficulty in following social distancing advice (90%) and there being limited or no protective clothing available (40%) were the most cited reasons.

Figure 2: Key workers were more worried about their health and safety at work compared with other adults

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 2: Key workers were more worried about their health and safety at work compared with other adults

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Notes:

1. Question: In which ways is your work being affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19)?
2. Base population for percentage: adults aged 16 years or over who said they were very worried or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life right now and said it was affecting their work.
3. Key workers have been identified if a respondent has self-reported they have been given “key worker status” only. It has not been defined by an official list of occupations or industries in which people work.
4. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.
5. New response categories were added to the survey (9 April to 20 April 2020) last week, so data for previous weeks may not be directly comparable.
6. Response category “I have been furloughed” indicates the level of concern with this and should not be interpreted as the overall level of the working population that has been furloughed. [Estimates of levels of furloughing](#) are available.

Further details on changes to labour market participation and the impact on businesses from the coronavirus can be found in [Coronavirus, UK economy and society, faster indicators: 7 May 2020](#).

Concerns about household finances

Just under 1 in 4 adults (23%) said the coronavirus was affecting their household finances, similar to last week (24%).

The most common concern among these adults continued to be a reduced income (70%), with increasing proportions, 30%, saying they had needed to use savings to cover living costs, and 16% saying they had to borrow money or use credit (Figure 3).

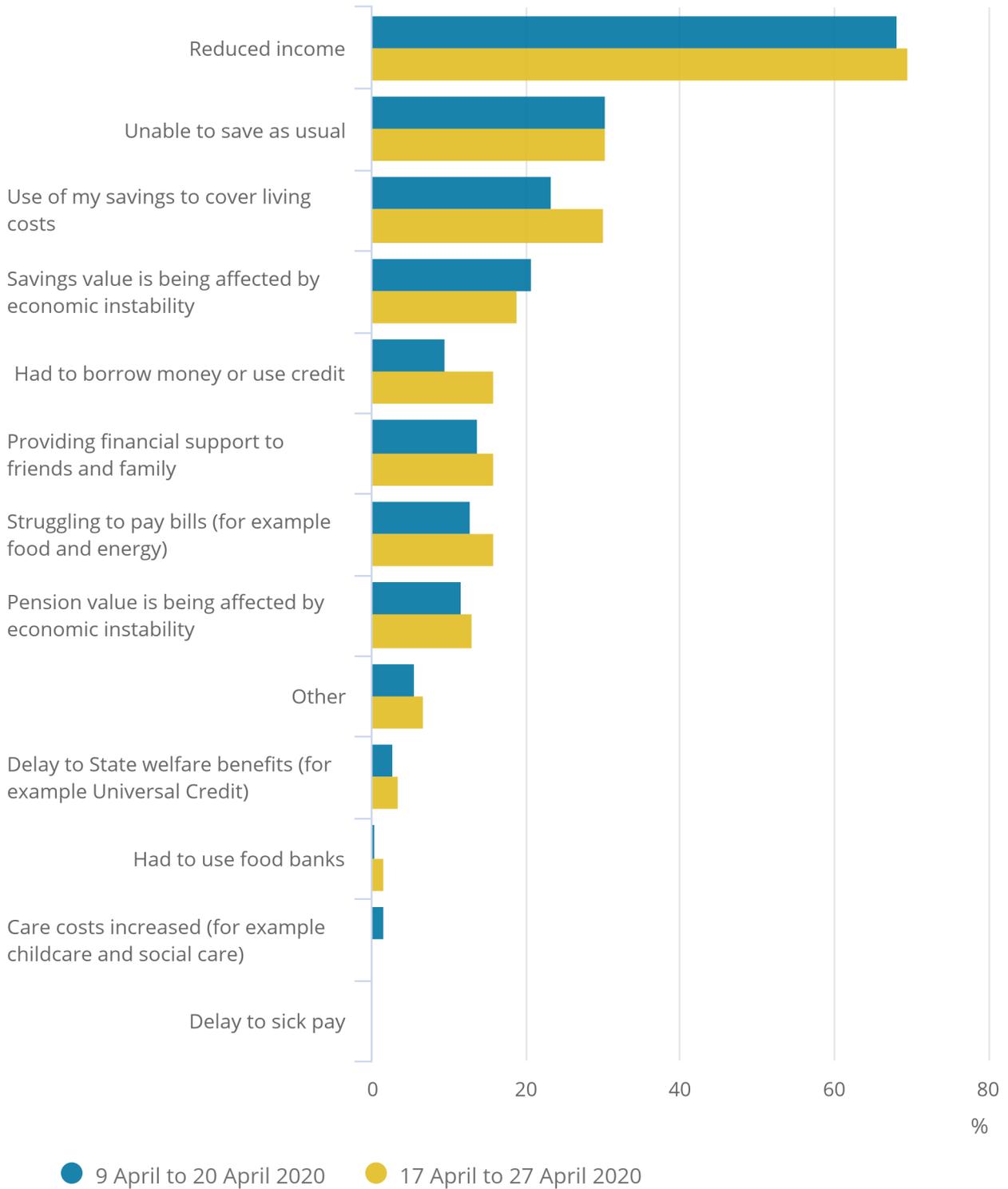
Further analysis on how different people and households are managing financially through the coronavirus pandemic, with breakdowns by age, household type and sex, was published on 4 May as part of the [Personal and economic well-being in Great Britain](#) bulletin.

Figure 3: The main concern about household finances is having a reduced income

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 3: The main concern about household finances is having a reduced income

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Notes:

1. Question: In which ways are your household finances being affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19)?
2. Base population for percentage: adults aged 16 years or over who said they were very worried or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life right now and said it was affecting their finances.
3. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.
4. The value for "Care costs increased" for 17 April to 27 April 2020 has been suppressed due to small sample size.

5 . Homeschooling

This week's survey started collecting responses four weeks after it was announced schools would close. The greatest change this week is a lower proportion of parents or guardians with dependent children reporting that homeschooling is affecting the well-being and relationships of those involved.

Of those adults who said they had dependent children, 63% said they had homeschooled their child or children in the past seven days compared with 66% last week. This survey only asks for information from the respondent, so other people within the household may be providing the homeschooling or the dependent children in the household may be of pre-school age.

Of those homeschooling, 1 in 4 adults (25%) said it was putting a strain on their relationships in the household, a decrease from 43% last week. Fewer adults also thought the well-being of their child or children was being negatively affected, down to 32% this week from 42% last week.

A smaller proportion of adults who homeschooled their child said they were confident in their abilities compared with last week (45% compared with 51%). Over 2 in 3 adults (69%) said they had access to the resources they needed to homeschool their children well, with 66% saying their child or children were continuing to learn (Figure 4).

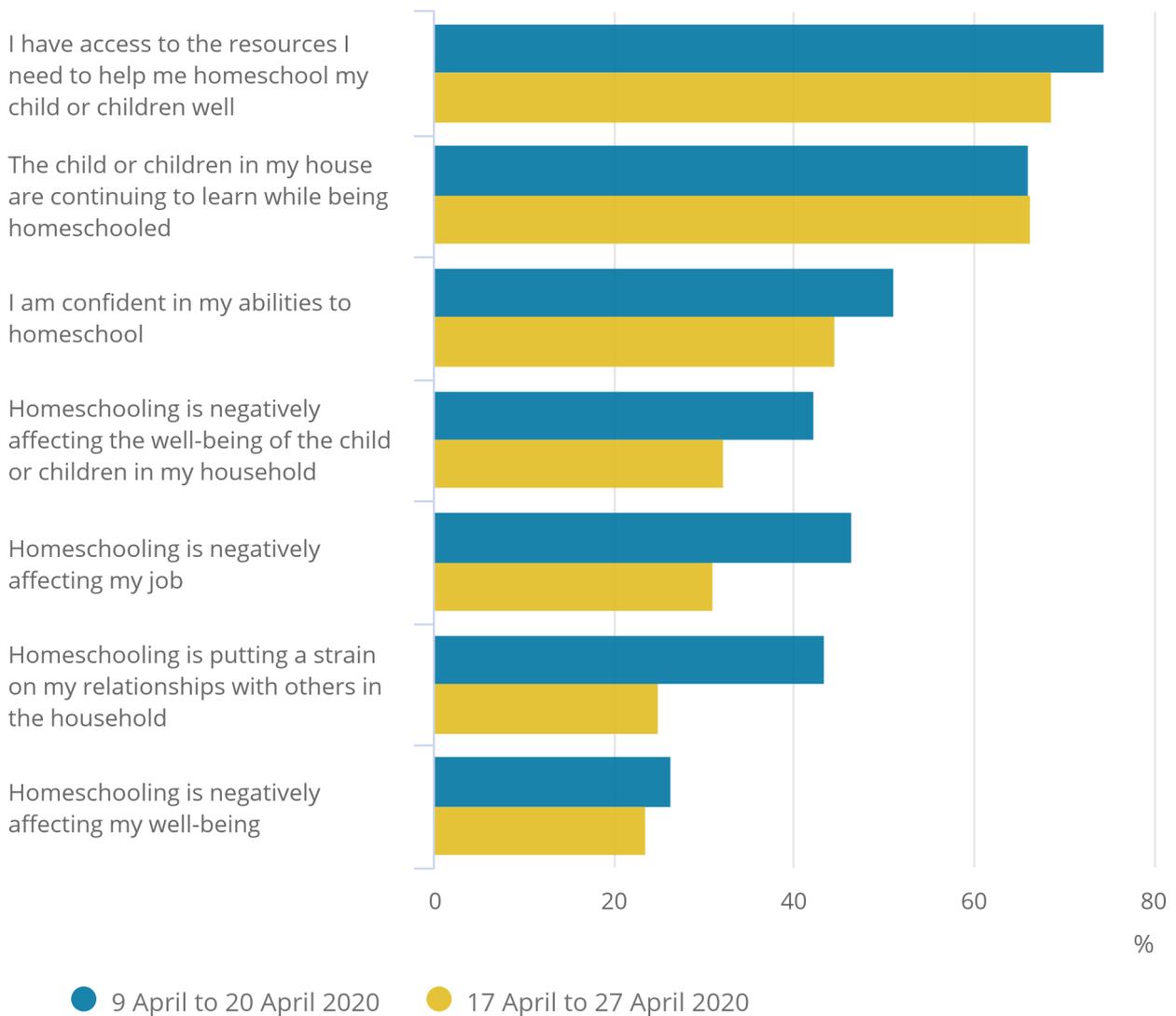
For those that did not agree they had the resources they needed, the most common aspects affecting their child's ability to continue learning were limited support from teachers (55%) or limited access to equipment (38%).

Figure 4: About 2 in 3 parents said their children were continuing to learn while being homeschooled

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 4: About 2 in 3 parents said their children were continuing to learn while being homeschooled

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement on homeschooling?
2. All adults with a dependent child or children who said they strongly or somewhat agree with the statement on homeschooling.
3. Base population for percentage: adults aged 16 years or over who said they had a dependent child or children.

Although schools have been closed to most pupils, they have remained open for vulnerable children and children of key workers. A similar proportion of key workers (58%) to that of other adults said they had homeschooled their child or children.

The most common reasons given by key worker parents for not sending their child or children to school were the availability of alternative care (30%) and concern for the health and well-being of their child (27%).

6 . 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 where it is not possible to work from home.

Staying at home

Over 8 in 10 adults (82%) said they had either not left their home or only left for one of the permitted reasons listed earlier, in the past seven days, a small decrease from last week (84%). This increased to 87% for those aged 70 years and over, and for those with an underlying health condition it was 87%.

Of the 18% who said they had left their home for something else, the main reason was to run errands.

There continued to be a high level of support for the stay at home measures, with 81% of adults saying they strongly supported the measures and a further 16% 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 3 in 10 adults (29%) said they had self-isolated in the past seven days, a similar level to last week (30%). For those aged 70 years and over, 45% said they had self-isolated, while for those with an underlying health condition (all ages) it was 41%.

For those who said they had self-isolated over the past seven days, 24% of them said they had not left their home for the full seven days. Someone could have left their home at the start of the week and then started self-isolating or, conversely, completed their self-isolation at the start of the week and then left their home.

Over 1 in 5 adults (21%) said someone in their household had self-isolated in the past seven days, a similar level to last week (22%). For those aged 70 years and over, 1 in 4 (26%) said someone in their household had self-isolated, while for those with an underlying health condition it was 1 in 4 (24%).

Working from home

A similar proportion of adults in employment said they had worked from home at some point this week (44%) compared with last week (45%).

This consisted of 36% of adults who had only worked from home and 8% who had both worked from home and travelled to work (both key workers and non-key workers). A further 1 in 4 adults in employment (26%) said they had travelled to work in the last seven days and had not worked from home.

Of all adults in employment, 3 in 10 (30%) had neither worked from home nor travelled to work; the reason for this is not known but could be that the person was on leave, on sick leave, furloughed or off-shift during the reference seven days.

More detailed information on changes to labour market participation can be found in [Coronavirus, UK economy and society, faster indicators: 7 May 2020](#).

Social distancing

Social distancing guidance states that physical contact with others should be kept to a minimum. A large majority of adults continue to say that they are avoiding contact with other people when outside their homes. This has been over 90% since week 1 of the survey and this week is 94%.

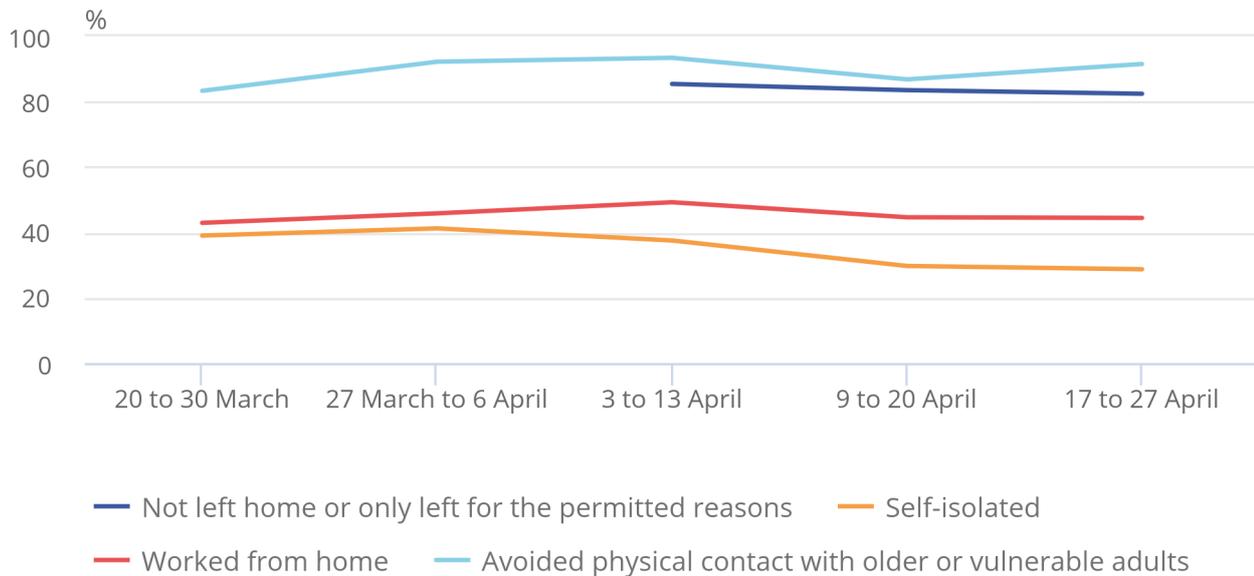
Shielding older or vulnerable people from the risk of infection is also important. Again, a consistently high proportion of adults say they are avoiding contact with older or vulnerable adults, this week it is 92% (Figure 5). Amongst these, 16% say the people they are avoiding are those to whom they provide care.

Figure 5: People continue to follow government advice, although there has been a fall in the proportion of people self-isolating

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 5: People continue to follow government advice, although there has been a fall in the proportion of people self-isolating

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Questions: In the past seven days, have you avoided contact with older people or other vulnerable people because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?; In the past seven days, for what reasons have you left your home?; In the past seven days, have you worked from home because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?; In the past seven days, have you self-isolated because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?

7 . How relationships are changing and community support networks

Relationships

Responses to this survey were collected four weeks after the stay at home measures were introduced. This has impacted both the relationships with those we live with and with those we do not. However, through this month of lockdown there is no distinct trend in our relationships worsening or improving.

This week, 21% of adults said their relationships were being affected. Over the previous three weeks, this has ranged between 20% and 24%. Throughout each week, the relationship that is causing most concern is with a partner or spouse, with around half of those with affected relationships being concerned about this. Around one-third were worried about their relationship with parents and one-fifth were worried about relationships with dependent children.

Among those who say the coronavirus has affected their well-being this week, 1 in 4 (25%) said they were concerned about the strain on their relationships, just over 1 in 5 (22%) said they were spending too much time with others in their household but just under 1 in 3 (30%) said they were spending too much time alone. These proportions have been very similar over the four weeks.

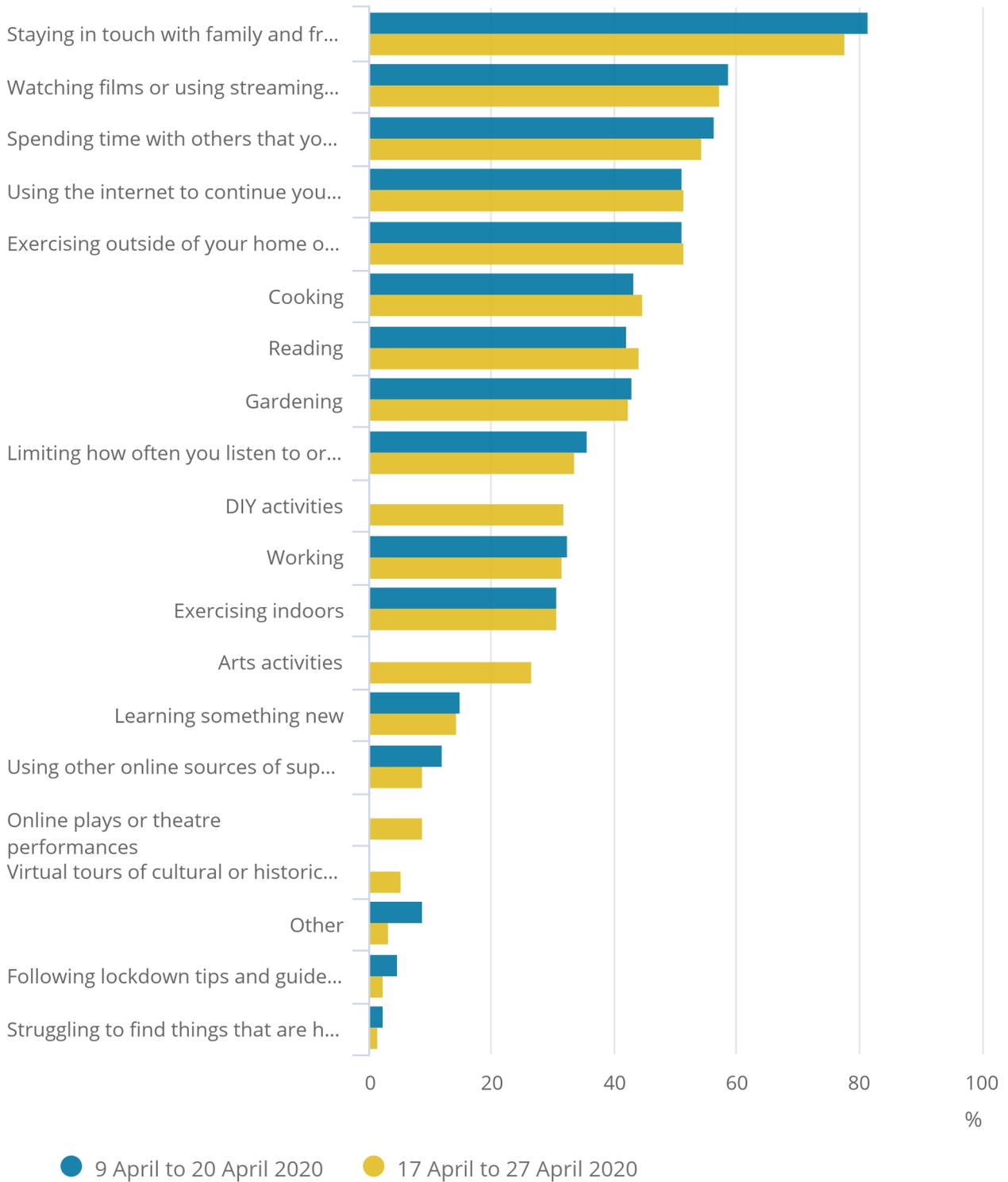
As we continue to stay at home, staying in touch with friends and family remotely remained the most popular action helping people cope this week. Over half of adults (54%) also said spending time with people they live with was helping (Figure 6), again a similar proportion throughout the month of lockdown.

Figure 6: Staying in touch with friends and family remains the most common way to help cope while staying at home

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 6: Staying in touch with friends and family remains the most common way to help cope while staying at home

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Notes:

1. Question: What is helping you to cope while staying at home?
2. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.
3. New response categories were added to the survey (17 April to 27 April 2020). Therefore, there are no data available for the previous week.

Community support

Feelings of community have increased over the past few weeks, but have slightly decreased this week. Just under 2 in 3 adults (64%) said other local community members would support them if they needed help during the coronavirus pandemic, a decrease from 67% last week. In addition, 8 in 10 adults (80%) said they thought people were doing more to help others since the coronavirus pandemic, similar to last week.

Among key workers, there were similar feelings of support, with 63% saying other local community members would support them if they needed help and 81% saying they thought people were doing more to help others.

In the past seven days, a higher proportion of adults (55%) said they had checked on neighbours who might need help at least once, up from 52% last week. Additionally, just over 3 in 10 adults (31%) said they had gone shopping or done other tasks for neighbours at least once, up from 29% last week.

8 . Indicators of well-being and loneliness

The proportion of adults who said their well-being was affected increased this week (48%) compared with last week (46%) after a downward trend for several weeks. The proportion remained higher for those with an underlying health condition, at 51%, and lower for those aged 70 years and over, at 39% (Figure 7). A similar proportion of key workers (46%) to all adults said their well-being was affected.

The most common issues affecting people's well-being are similar to previous weeks. About 3 in 4 (75%) of those who said their well-being was being affected said they were feeling worried about the future, with over 6 in 10 (63%) feeling stressed or anxious and over half (53%) feeling bored. Over 4 in 10 (43%) also said not being able to exercise as normal was impacting their well-being.

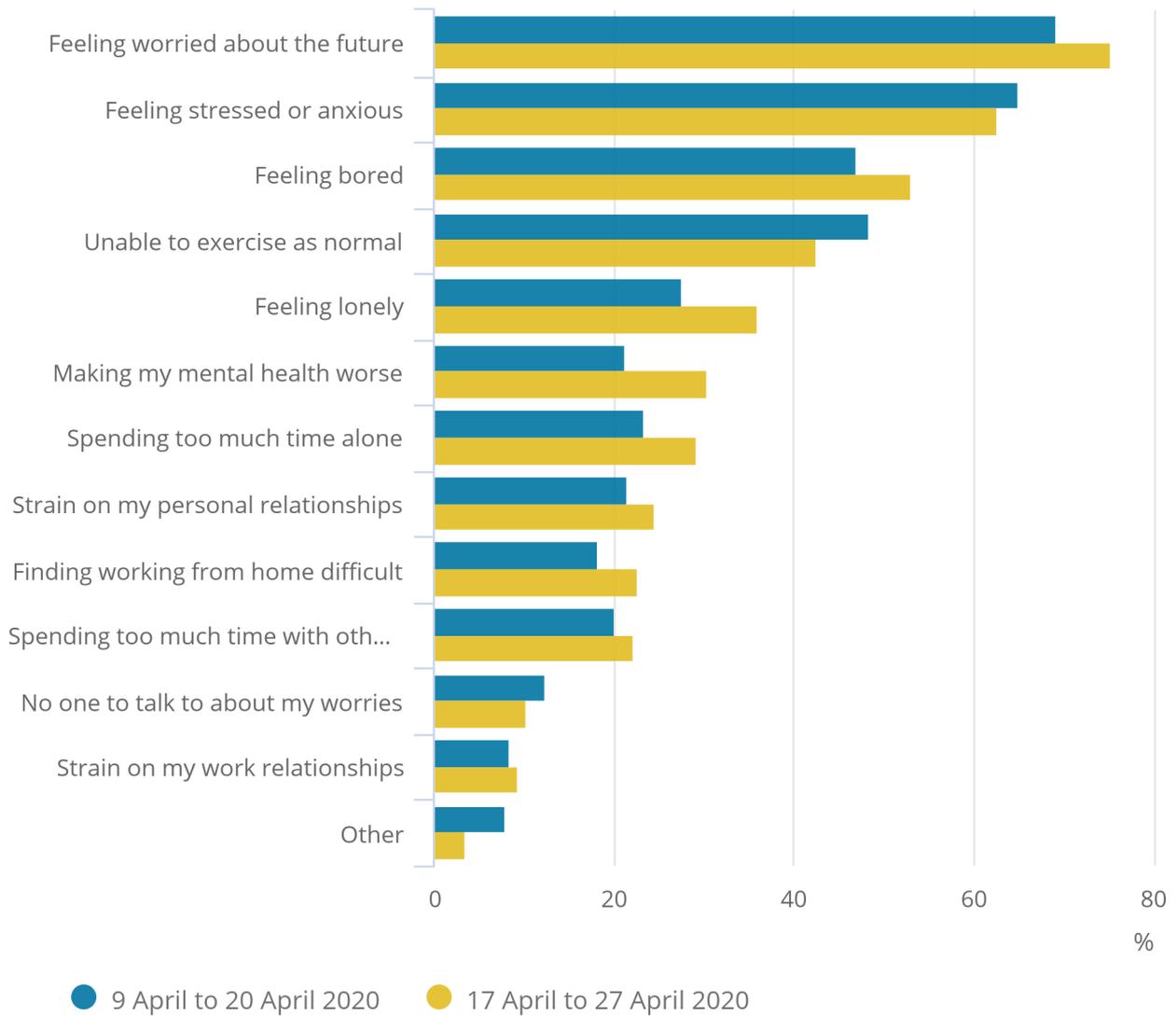
Although it is not known how many people who said their well-being was affected had mental health issues prior to the coronavirus pandemic, over 3 in 10 (31%) of those whose well-being has been affected said it was making their mental health worse, an increase from 21% last week.

Figure 7: Of those who were concerned about the impact of the coronavirus on their well-being, the majority felt worried about the future, stressed or anxious

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020

Figure 7: Of those who were concerned about the impact of the coronavirus on their well-being, the majority felt worried about the future, stressed or anxious

Great Britain, 17 April to 27 April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: In which way is your well-being being affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19)?
2. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.
3. Base population for percentage: adults aged 16 years or over who said they were very worried or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life right now and said it was affecting their well-being.
4. New response categories added to the survey (9 April to 20 April 2020) last week, so data for previous weeks may not be directly comparable.

Anxiety levels, though higher than before the coronavirus pandemic, remain largely similar to last week for most adults.

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

Table 1: Indicators of well-being

	Group	This week (%)	Last week (%)
Wellbeing is being affected	All adults	48	46
	70 years and over	39	38
	Underlying health	51	58
Mean anxiety score*	All adults	4.2	4.2
	70 years and over	4	4.2
	Underlying health	4.3	4.9
Percentage with high anxiety (score 6-10)*	All adults	37	36
	70 years and over	33	35
	Underlying health	38	46
Feeling lonely often/always	All adults	6	4
	70 years and over	2	4
	Underlying health	10	9
Feeling lonely some of the time	All adults	16	17
	70 years and over	13	14
	Underlying health	18	22

Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes

1. * Anxiety is measured on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”. [Back to table](#)
2. “This week” refers to the period 17 April to 27 April 2020, and “last week” refers to the period 9 April to 20 April 2020. [Back to table](#)

9 . Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain data

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

Dataset | Released 7 May 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.

10 . 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. This also includes pregnant women.

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.

Key workers

Key workers have been identified if a respondent has self-reported they have been given "key worker status" only. It has not been defined by an official list of occupations or industries in which people work.

11 . 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, 2,010 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 66% (or 1,327 individuals) for the survey conducted from 17 April to 27 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. Individuals who did not complete the survey online were given the opportunity to take part over the phone.

Where changes in results from previous weeks 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 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 1,327 individuals (66% 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 April 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.

12 . 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
- 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

13 . 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 24 April 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 5 May 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 disabled people in Great Britain](#)

Article | Released 24 April 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) covering the period 27 March 2020 to 13 April 2020 on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on disabled people in Great Britain.

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

Bulletin | Released 4 May 2020

Estimates looking across personal well-being and economic well-being covering the period October 2019 to April 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus 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.