

Statistical bulletin

# Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 5 June 2020

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 28 May to 31 May 2020 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

Contact:  
Ruth Davies  
policy.evidence.analysis@ons.  
gov.uk  
+44 (0)1633 651827

Release date:  
5 June 2020

Next release:  
12 June 2020

## Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Understanding the impact on society](#)
3. [Actions undertaken to prevent the spread of the coronavirus](#)
4. [Homeschooling and back to school](#)
5. [Indicators of concern, well-being and loneliness](#)
6. [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain data](#)
7. [Glossary](#)
8. [Measuring the data](#)
9. [Strengths and limitations](#)
10. [Related links](#)

# 1 . Main points

- A similar proportion of people in Great Britain have left their home this week, with 91% of adults saying they had left for any reason compared with 90% last week; however, this varies between England (92%), Scotland (88%) and Wales (84%).
- The most common reasons for leaving home across Great Britain this week were: essential shopping, exercise, work and running errands; however, leaving to meet with others in a public place continued to increase this week, and the largest increase compared with last week was for those travelling to and from work.
- Almost half of adults (49%) had visited a park or public green space this week – with 39% of these saying they had met with family or friends from outside of their household – an increase on last week.
- 4 in 10 adults in employment (40%) said they had left their home to travel to and from work in the past seven days, up from 36% last week.
- Over 4 in 10 adults (41%) said they felt safe or very safe when outside of their home this week, compared with 33% last week.
- Almost 3 in 10 adults (28%) reported that they had used face coverings outside of their home in the past week, a similar proportion to last week (29%); again, people were most likely to wear these while shopping.
- For those it was applicable to, almost 2 in 3 parents (63%) in England felt either very or quite unconfident in sending their children back to school in June.

## 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 1,224 responding adults (49% response rate) sampled through the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) conducted between 28 and 31 May 2020 (inclusive).

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

Results in the weekly bulletin are for Great Britain only unless stated otherwise.

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

Throughout this bulletin, "this week" refers to the period 28 to 31 May 2020 and "last week" refers to the period 21 to 24 May 2020.

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

## Staying at home

Of adults in Great Britain, over 9 in 10 (91%) said they had left their home for any reason in the past seven days, a similar level to last week. This varied across the three countries, although the differences were not found to be statistically significant. 92% of adults in England had left their homes, while this figure was 88% for adults in Scotland, and 84% for adults in Wales (Figure 1).

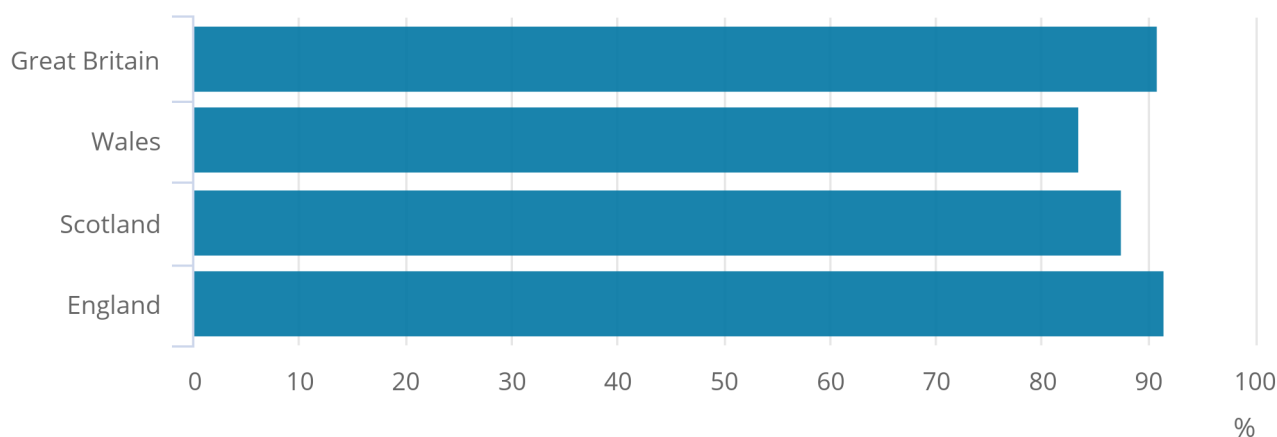
Official guidance on staying at home varies across England, Wales and Scotland. This section gives the reasons people are leaving their home but an estimate of compliance is not provided. Results are for Great Britain, unless stated otherwise.

**Figure 1: The proportion of people who had left their home in the past seven days varied by country**

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020

Figure 1: The proportion of people who had left their home in the past seven days varied by country

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020



**Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey**

**Notes:**

1. Question: "In the past seven days, have you left your home for any reason?".
2. At the time of the survey, guidance on staying at home varied across [England](#), [Wales](#) and [Scotland](#).

Although official guidance on reasons to leave the home has changed in recent weeks, for comparison with previous weeks, the proportion of people in Great Britain that said they had either not left their home or only left to travel to and from work; to do essential shopping; for medical reasons or to exercise is at its lowest level of 63%. This compares with 73% last week and a peak of 85% between 3 April and 13 April 2020.

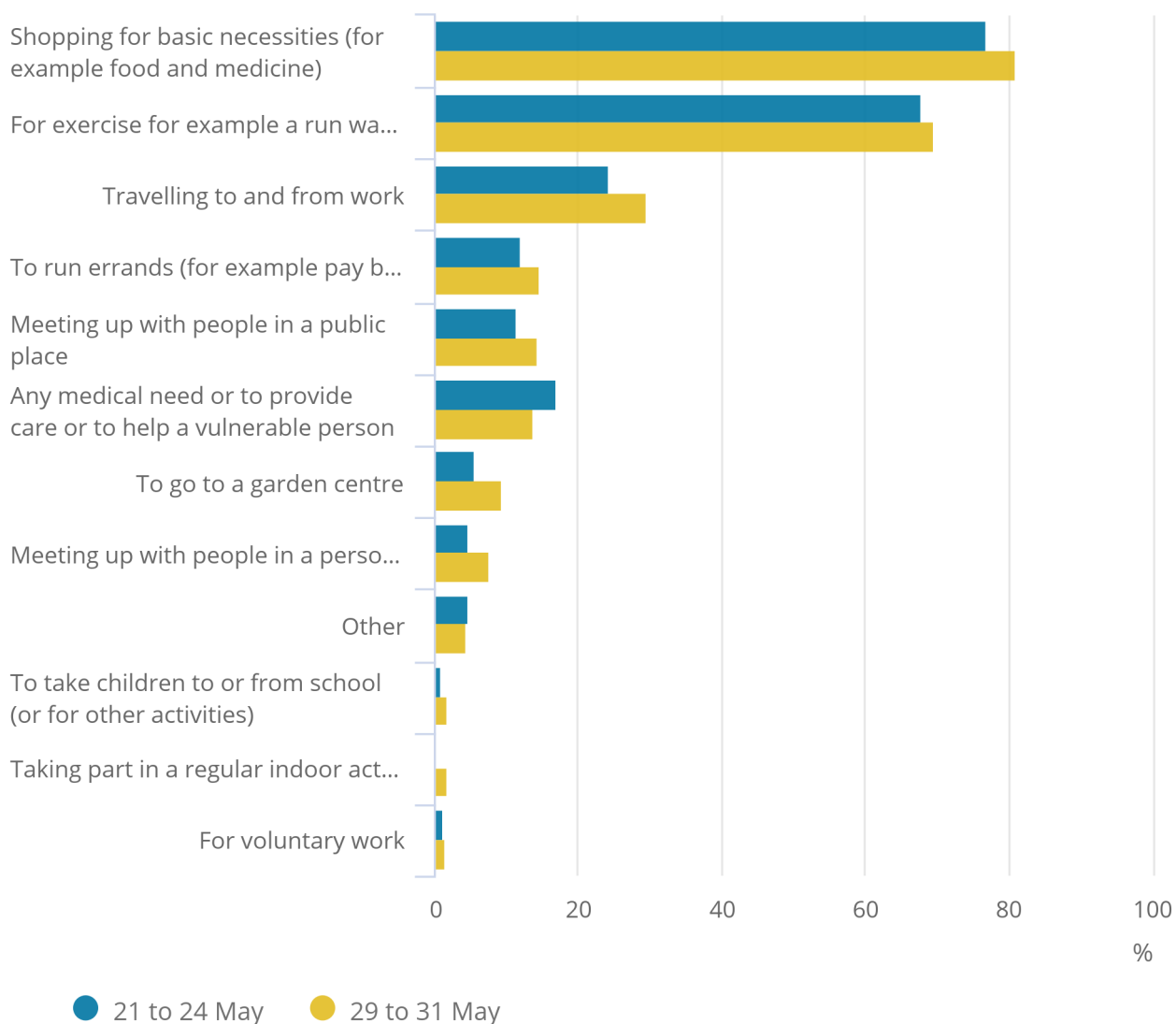
The largest increase in reasons for leaving the home is for people travelling to and from work, up to 30% compared with 24% last week.

**Figure 2: The most common reasons for leaving home continue to be shopping for basic necessities, and exercise**

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020

Figure 2: The most common reasons for leaving home continue to be shopping for basic necessities, and exercise

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 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. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.
3. The values for "to visit a tourist attraction"; "travel within the UK for holidays or short breaks"; "travel outside of the UK for work"; "travel outside of the UK for holidays or short breaks" and "to visit a library" have been suppressed because of small sample size.
4. Base population: adults that said they had left their home in the past seven days.

Almost half of adults (49%) in Great Britain said they had visited a park or public green space this week, up from 42% last week. Of these, 39% said they had met up with friends or family from outside of their household.

Again, this varied across the three nations:

- over half of adults (52%) in England said they had visited a park or public green space, of which 40% had met with others
- in Wales, just over one-third of adults (34%) had visited a park or public green space, with 41% of these meeting others
- in Scotland one-quarter of adults (25%) had visited a park or public green space, with 24% of these saying they had met with others

However, it should be noted that at the time of the survey, there was different guidance in place in each of the three countries around people from more than one household meeting in a public place.

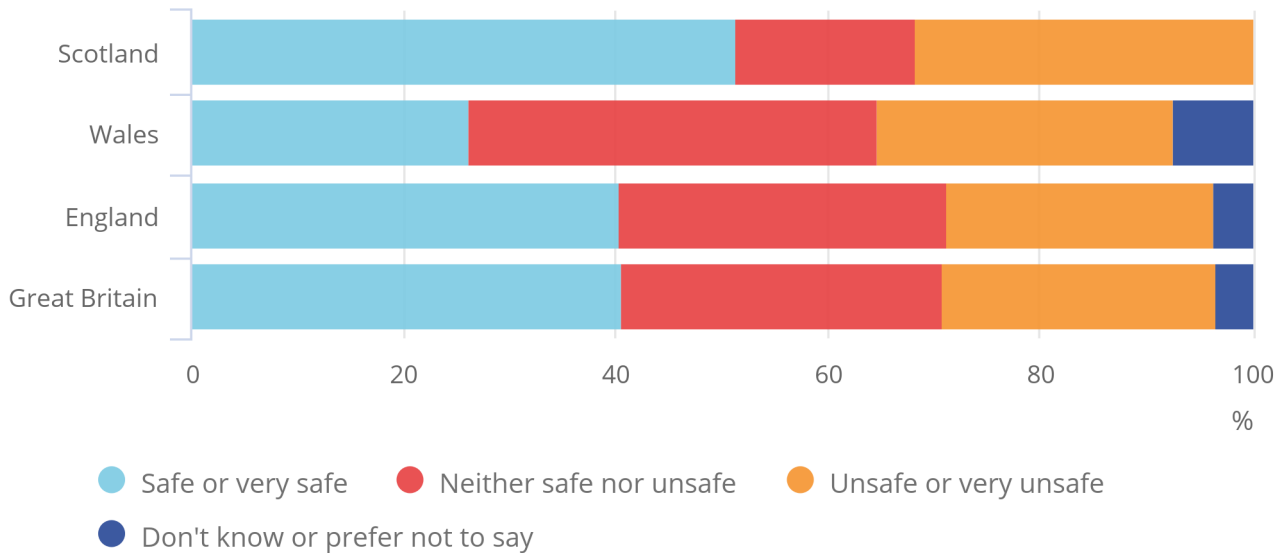
Across Great Britain, feelings of safety outside the home are increasing compared with the past two weeks. Just over 4 in 10 adults (41%) said they felt safe or very safe when outside of their home, which has increased from 33% last week. However, this varied across the three countries of Great Britain. 40% of adults in England felt safe or very safe outside of their home this week, while 26% of adults in Wales, and 51% of adults in Scotland felt this way.

**Figure 3: The proportion of adults who felt safe or very safe outside of their home varied by country**

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020

Figure 3: The proportion of adults who felt safe or very safe outside of their home varied by country

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Question: "How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside your home due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?".
2. Some values of "don't know" or "prefer not to say" have been suppressed because of small sample sizes.

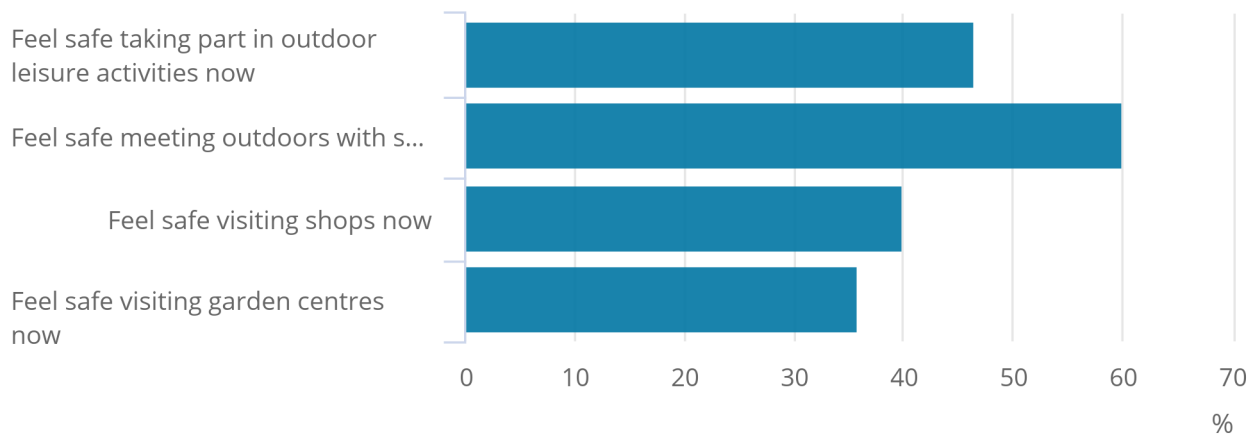
Feelings of safety also varied for activities outside of the home. While 6 in 10 adults (60%) in Great Britain felt safe when meeting with someone outside of their household outdoors, this fell to around 1 in 3 who felt safe when visiting garden centres (36%).

## Figure 4: 6 in 10 people felt safe when meeting outdoors with someone from outside of their household

Great Britain, 28 May to 31 May 2020

### Figure 4: 6 in 10 people felt safe when meeting outdoors with someone from outside of their household

Great Britain, 28 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

#### Notes:

1. Questions: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I feel safe taking part in outdoor leisure activities now, I feel safe meeting outdoors with someone from outside my household now, I feel safe visiting shops now, I feel safe visiting garden centres now".
2. Percentages displayed are the combination of those who strongly or somewhat agreed with each statement.

The proportion of adults in Great Britain that said they had enough information about how to protect themselves has returned to similar levels seen in the peak between 9 and 17 April, after falls in recent weeks. Almost 9 in 10 adults in Great Britain (87%) said they had enough information about how to protect themselves from the coronavirus (COVID-19), which has increased from 79% last week.

## Face coverings and handwashing

Almost 3 in 10 adults (28%) have worn a face covering outside of their homes in the past seven days to slow the spread of the coronavirus – a similar level to last week (29%). For those that had worn a face covering, the most common situation was while shopping (76%), followed by exercising outdoors (23%) and running errands (20%).

Regardless of whether they had worn a face covering in the past, over 1 in 3 adults (36%) said they were either very or fairly likely to wear one in the next seven days – this has decreased from 41% last week.

Over 9 in 10 adults (94%) said they either always or often washed their hands with soap and water straight away after returning home from a public place. This is a similar level to that seen between 17 and 27 April when these data were last collected.

## **Self-isolation**

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.

In the past seven days, just over 1 in 10 adults (13%) said they had self-isolated, which has decreased when compared with last week (19%) and is the lowest level across all the weeks data have been collected for. For those aged 70 years and over, 28% said they had self-isolated, while for those with an underlying health condition (all ages) it was 19%. Both represent a lower proportion than reported last week (36% and 33% respectively).

1 in 10 adults (10%) were in households where everyone had self-isolated over the past seven days, which has decreased from 17% last week, and is the lowest proportion across the weeks.

## **Social distancing**

Social distancing guidance advises physical contact with others should be kept to a minimum. Nearly all adults (98%) said they had tried to stay at least two metres away from other people when outside their home.

Shielding older or vulnerable people from the risk of infection is also an important element of advice. Again, a consistently high proportion of adults said they are avoiding contact with older or vulnerable adults, this week it is almost 9 in 10 adults (88%). Among these, 1 in 10 adults (10%) said the people they are avoiding are those to whom they provide care.

## **Work**

Similar levels of people said their work was being affected this week compared with last week. Over 4 in 10 adults (41%) said the coronavirus was having an impact on their work, and of these the most common impacts this week were: being furloughed, finding working from home difficult and needing to work from home.

The largest change among those who said their work was affected was seen with increased levels of people finding working at home difficult. This increased to 24% this week from 14% last week.

However, a similar proportion of adults in employment in Great Britain said they had worked from home at some point this week (41%) compared with last week (39%). Location of work has remained largely unchanged through the last three weeks in May (Figure 5). 4 in 10 adults in employment (40%) said they had left their home to travel to and from work in the past seven days compared with 36% last week.

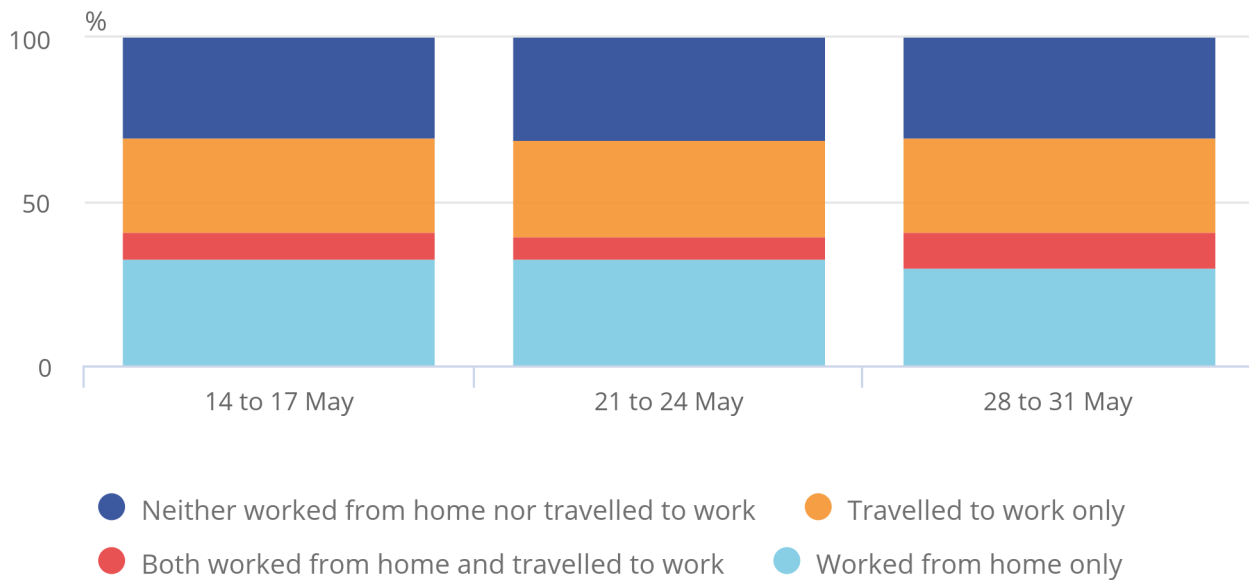


## Figure 5: Location of work has remained largely unchanged through the last three weeks in May

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020

### Figure 5: Location of work has remained largely unchanged through the last three weeks in May

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

#### Notes:

1. Base population for percentage: all adults in employment. This definition is different to some other surveys and is included in the [Glossary](#).
2. The main reasons for respondents neither working from home nor travelling to work in the past seven days include being on sick leave or annual leave, not being on shift, being on maternity or paternity leave or being furloughed.
3. Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

More detailed information on changes to labour market participation can be found in [Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: 28 May 2020](#).

#### More about coronavirus

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

## 4 . Homeschooling and back to school

Almost 2 in 3 adults (65%) with dependent children said their children had been homeschooled this week. This is similar to previous weeks, although levels of homeschooling may have been impacted by half term falling in the reference week.

For children that had been homeschooled, they spent on average 11 hours learning this week with the most common resources used being devices provided by parents (such as laptops and tablets; 73%), school-provided digital resources accessed through online learning platforms (for example, pre-recorded lessons, assignments, e-workbooks; 61%), and digital online learning resources found by parents (for example, BBC Bitesize, YouTube; 49%).

However, around 4 in 10 (39%) adults with dependent children said their children were struggling to continue their education. Lack of motivation, lack of guidance and support, and limited parent or carer knowledge to support were the most common reasons for children to be struggling.

This week in England (week commencing 1 June 2020), some children are able to return to school. Almost 2 in 3 (63%) adults in England with dependent children who said this applied to them, said they felt either very or quite unconfident in sending their child or children back to school in June. Over half (54%) said they were either very or quite unlikely to send their children back to school this month.

For those parents to whom it applied, 70% said a vaccine available for the coronavirus (COVID-19) would make them feel more confident to send their child or children back to school, and 67% said that reassurance that their school was fully prepared would also make them feel more confident.

## 5 . Indicators of concern, well-being and loneliness

Over two-thirds of adults (69%) said they were very or somewhat worried about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) was having on their life now. This is similar to last week (67%), however, there has been a downward trend in the number of people reporting feeling this way since data collection started (27 March 2020).

For a third week, the most common impact was a lack of freedom and independence with almost 6 in 10 adults (58%) reporting this. Other common issues were an inability to make plans (52%) and personal travel plans being affected (50%).

More than 4 in 10 adults (44%) said their well-being was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the past seven days, a decrease from 47% last week. The proportion of those aged 70 years and over who reported their well-being had been affected (36%) continued to be lower than the general population but for those with an underlying health condition it was similar at 47%.

The most common issue affecting well-being continues to be feeling worried about the future (63%), followed by feeling stressed or anxious (56%), and feeling bored (49%).

Through the weeks of lockdown, of the four measures of personal well-being, anxiety levels have seen the largest change over the period, falling to an average score of 3.7 this week, from 5.2 at the start of the lockdown period. As a point of reference, the average anxiety rating of people in the UK in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2019 (pre-COVID-19) was 2.97, although it should be noted that these figures come from different surveys.

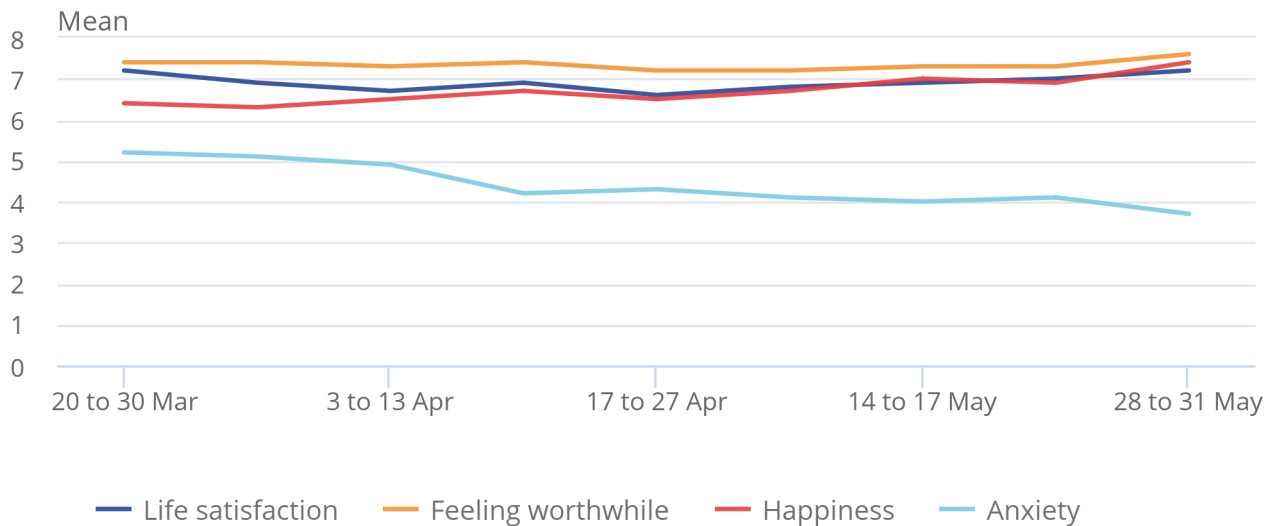
A more detailed analysis providing insights into which social and economic factors are most associated with high levels of anxiety will be published on 15 June 2020.

## Figure 6: Through the weeks of lockdown, anxiety levels have fallen

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020

### Figure 6: Through the weeks of lockdown, anxiety levels have fallen

Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

#### Notes:

1. Question: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?", "Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?", "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?", "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?".
2. Each of these questions is answered on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely".

At the whole population level, estimates of loneliness since the start of lockdown have also been similar to those seen before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This week 1 in 4 adults (25%) reported feeling lonely either often or always, or some of the time, similar to last week at 27%. However, as previously [found](#), people's personal and household characteristics impact on the likelihood of feeling lonely. A more detailed analysis of those who have been affected by loneliness during the coronavirus pandemic will be published on Monday 8 June, exploring the characteristics of those who say they are lonely "often or always" and those who say that loneliness has affected their well-being in the past seven days as a result of the coronavirus.

Table 1: Indicators of well-being  
Great Britain, 28 to 31 May 2020

	Group	21 to 24 May	28 to 31 May
<b>Percentage that report well-being is being affected</b>	All adults	47	44
	70 years and over	35	36
	Underlying health	48	47
<b>Mean anxiety score*</b>	All adults	4.1	3.7
	70 years and over	3.5	3
	Underlying health	4.6	3.7
<b>Percentage with high anxiety (score 6-10)*</b>	All adults	33	30
	70 years and over	28	24
	Underlying health	44	32
<b>Percentage feeling lonely often or always or some of the time</b>	All adults	27	25
	70 years and over	16	17
	Underlying health	43	29

Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes

- \* Anxiety is measured on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”. [Back to table](#)

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

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

Dataset | Released on 29 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.

## 7 . 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
- 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 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)
- given an organ transplant
- stroke or cerebral haemorrhage or cerebral thrombosis
- rheumatoid arthritis

## **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.

## **Dependent children**

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.

## **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 on day-to-day life in Great Britain. In this wave, 2,500 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 49% (or 1,224 individuals) for the survey conducted from 28 to 31 May 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 are presented in this bulletin, associated [confidence intervals](#), which are included in the associated datasets, indicate their significance.

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

## Sampling

A sample of 2,500 households were randomly selected from 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. 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 1,224 individuals (49% 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, and highest qualification. For age, sex and region, population totals based on projections of mid-year population estimates for May 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 22 May 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 2 June 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.

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

Bulletin | Released 26 May 2020

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