

Statistical bulletin

# Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 22 June to 3 July 2022

Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, location of work, health and well-being from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

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## Correction

**29 July 2022 15:00**

We have corrected an error in section 2 under the heading "Actions following cost of living increases".

The previous version read "The most common actions reported by adults who reported their cost of living had increased were".

It should have read "The most common actions reported by adults who reported their cost of living had increased included".

This happened because of a human error.

# Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Household finances and cost of living](#)
3. [Location of work and rail disruptions](#)
4. [Social impacts of COVID-19 and other illnesses](#)
5. [Worries, personal well-being and loneliness](#)
6. [Public opinions and social trends data](#)
7. [Measuring the data](#)
8. [Related links](#)

# 1 . Main points

The following information is on the latest period, 22 June to 3 July 2022, based on adults in Great Britain.

- Around 9 in 10 (91%) adults continued to report their cost of living had risen over the past month; an increase since we first started asking this question in the period 3 to 14 November 2021 (62%).
- Around half (49%) of adults reported that they were buying less food when food shopping and 48% of adults reported they had to spend more than usual to get what they normally buy; these proportions are increasing from when the data were first collected (8% and 18% in September and October 2021, respectively).
- When asked what energy saving actions adults had taken in the past year, 91% of all adults reported they had taken at least one action from the lists presented on the survey.
- Around half (51%) of adults have closed all the curtains at night to keep the heat in, 49% have washed their clothes at a lower heat and 44% have turned their appliances off standby; the main motivation for these types of actions was to save money (81%).
- Around one in seven (15%) adults reported that the rail strikes had disrupted their travel plans; being unable to take part in leisure activities (34%), spending more money on travel (24%), and being unable to work the hours they planned (13%) were the most common impacts.
- Over 6 in 10 (67%) working adults travelled to work at some point in the past seven days; among those who travelled to work by train (9%), the most frequently reported alternatives if they were unable to travel by train was working from home (70%).
- Around three-quarters of adults were very or somewhat worried about the rising cost of living (78%) and the conflict in Ukraine (77%), and more than half (57%) reported they were worried about the environment.
- A smaller proportion reported worries about new variants of coronavirus (COVID-19) (49%) and the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on their lives (39%).

## 2 . Household finances and cost of living

Estimates in this release are based on data collected between 22 June to 3 July 2022 (the "latest period") and 8 and 19 June 2022 (the "previous period").

We continued to ask adults about changes in their cost of living over the last month, with around 9 in 10 (91%) reporting it had increased in the latest period (same as the previous period). The proportion of adults reporting this had increased since we first asked about this in November 2021, when 62% of adults reported this (3 to 14 November 2021).

Reasons reported by adults for the rise in their cost of living were an increase in:

- the price of food shopping (95%, compared with 93% in the previous period)
- gas or electricity bills (83%, compared with 86% in the previous period)
- the price of fuel (79%, compared with 80% in the previous period)

### Actions following cost of living increases

The most common actions reported by adults who reported their cost of living had increased included:



- spending less on non-essentials (62%, compared with 60% in the previous period)
- using less fuel such as gas or electricity at home (53%, compared with 51% in the previous period)
- cutting back on non-essential journeys in a vehicle (46%, compared with 45% in the previous period)
- shopping around more (38%, compared with 35% in the previous period)

When asked about their shopping habits in the past two weeks, around half (49%) of adults reported that they were buying less food when food shopping. Similarly, 48% of adults reported they had to spend more than usual to get what they normally buy in the latest period. These proportions are increasing from when the data were first collected (8% and 18% in September and October 2021, respectively) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Nearly half (48%) of adults reported they were spending more to get what they usually buy when food shopping in the past two weeks**

All adults in Great Britain, September 2021 to July 2022

Figure 1: Nearly half (48%) of adults reported they were spending more to get what they usually buy when food shopping in the past two weeks

All adults in Great Britain, September 2021 to July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

Notes:

1. Questions: "In the past two weeks, which, if any, have you been doing when food shopping?" and "In the past two weeks, have you experienced any of the following when food shopping?"
2. Base: all adults.
3. For the question: "In the past two weeks, have you experienced any of the following when food shopping?", the response option "I had to spend more than usual to get what I normally buy" was added from the period 20 to 30 October 2021 onwards.

These estimates are consistent with those presented in our [Retail sales in Great Britain: May 2022 bulletin](#), showing that retail sales volumes in May 2022 continued a downward trend since summer 2021.

## **Energy bills**

Around 4 in 10 (43%) adults who pay energy bills reported they found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them in the latest period, an increase compared with 37% in the previous period.

Among those who reported they have gas or electricity supplied to their home, 6% reported they were behind on these bills (4% in the previous period). This proportion has appeared to be relatively stable since we first started asking this question in March 2022.

There are strong seasonal spending patterns relating to gas and electricity that may affect the results presented in this section. For more information on this and recent price rises for gas and electricity, please see our [latest Consumer price inflation bulletin for May 2022](#).

## Energy saving actions

This week, for the first time, we asked what energy saving actions adults had taken in the past year. Around 9 in 10 (91%) reported they had taken at least one action from the lists presented on the survey. These can be referenced in [Table 5 of the household finance tables](#).

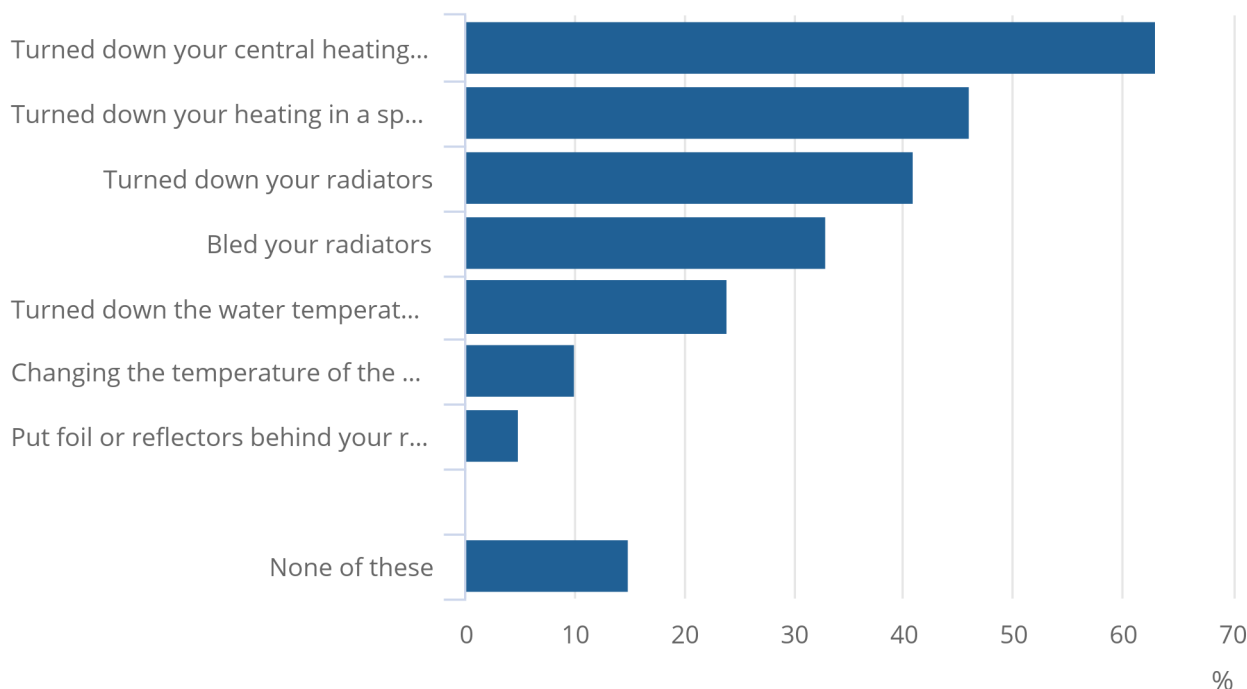
Around 6 in 10 (63%) adults said that they had turned down their central heating temperature, almost half (46%) had turned down their heating in a specific room when not using it, and around 4 in 10 (41%) had turned down their radiators. Over one in seven (15%) adults said that they had not done any of the actions listed in the survey (Figure 2).

## Figure 2: Around 6 in 10 (63%) adults had turned down their central heating temperature

All adults in Great Britain, 22 June to 3 July 2022

### Figure 2: Around 6 in 10 (63%) adults had turned down their central heating temperature

All adults in Great Britain, 22 June to 3 July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

#### Notes:

1. Question: “In the past year, which of these have you done?”
2. Base: This question on energy saving actions was only asked to those who reported that they have a boiler for central heating, gas or electric radiators, or central heating thermostat. However, the estimates reported are based on all adults.
3. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

Around 8 in 10 adults (84%) reported the main reason for these actions was to save money. A further 11% reported their main reason was to help the environment and 5% said there was another reason.

When asked about other energy saving actions in the past year, around half (51%) of adults said they had closed all the curtains at night to keep the heat in, around half (49%) said they had washed their clothes at a lower heat, and around 4 in 10 (44%) said they had turned their appliances off standby. Almost 2 in 10 (17%) adults said that they had not done any of the actions listed in the survey (Figure 3).

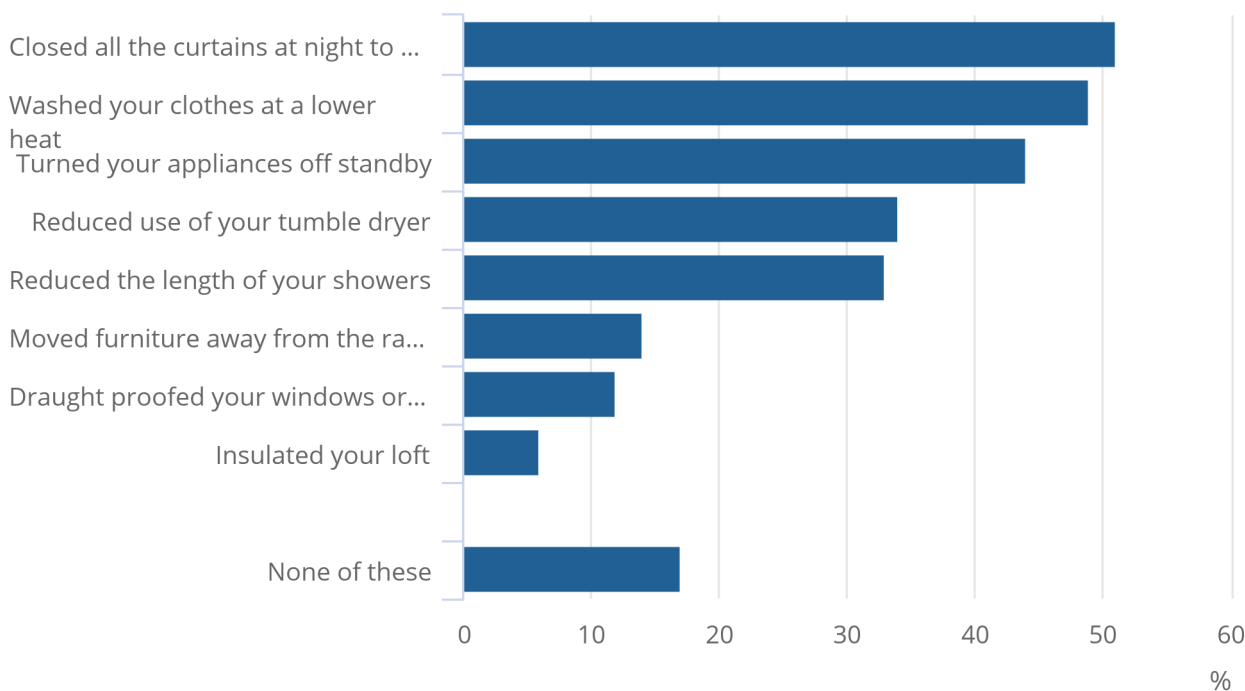


**Figure 3 – Around half (51%) of adults said they had closed all the curtains at night to keep the heat in**

All adults in Great Britain, 22 June to 3 July 2022

**Figure 3 – Around half (51%) of adults said they had closed all the curtains at night to keep the heat in**

All adults in Great Britain, 22 June to 3 July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

Notes:

1. Question: “In the past year, which of these other actions have you done?”
2. Base: All adults.
3. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

Around 8 in 10 adults (81%) reported the main reason for these actions was to save money. A further 15% reported their main reason was to help the environment and under 1 in 10 (4%) said there was another reason.

For estimates on people's experiences regarding cost of living including breakdowns by age, sex and trends over time, please see our [Household finances dataset](#). For more estimates on people's experiences when shopping specifically, please see our [Personal experiences of shortages of goods dataset](#).

Our [Inflation and the cost of living for UK households: June 2022 article](#) provides a summary of the factors affecting inflation and cost of living, collating and updating analysis of different price measures.

## 3 . Location of work and rail disruptions

### Location of work

When answering questions about their work, respondents were asked to consider the last seven days. The previous period (8 to 19 June 2022) may have included the school half term in parts of Great Britain.

Over 6 in 10 (67%) working adults travelled to work at some point in the past seven days (61% in the previous period).

This comprised 45% of working adults who only travelled to work (44% in the previous period) and 21% of adults who both worked from home and travelled to work (17% in the previous period).

Among working adults, 18% said they worked from home exclusively in the past seven days (same as the previous period), while 16% neither travelled to work nor worked from home (22% in the previous period) (Figure 4).

### Figure 4: Around 2 in 10 (21%) of working adults both worked from home and travelled to work (hybrid working) in the latest period

Working adults, Great Britain, January 2021 to July 2022

#### Notes:

1. Questions: "In the past seven days, have you travelled to work?" and "In the past seven days, have you worked from home?"
2. Base: Working adults.
3. Because of changes in the wording of the survey questions, there is a break in the time series from the period 30 March to 10 April 2022. Data before this period cannot be directly compared with data from this period onwards.
4. Reasons for respondents neither working from home or travelling to work might currently include being on annual leave or sick leave, being on maternity or paternity leave or being unable to work.

#### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Further estimates regarding the location of work, including breakdowns by age and sex, and trends over time, can be found in Tables 4, 11 and 12 of our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and other illnesses dataset](#).

Our [Is hybrid working here to stay article](#) provides information on people's future plans regarding their location of work, including examination of the characteristics of those most likely to hybrid work (both work from home and travel to work).

### Travel to work methods

When we asked working adults who travel to work what method of transport they took, the most frequently reported were:

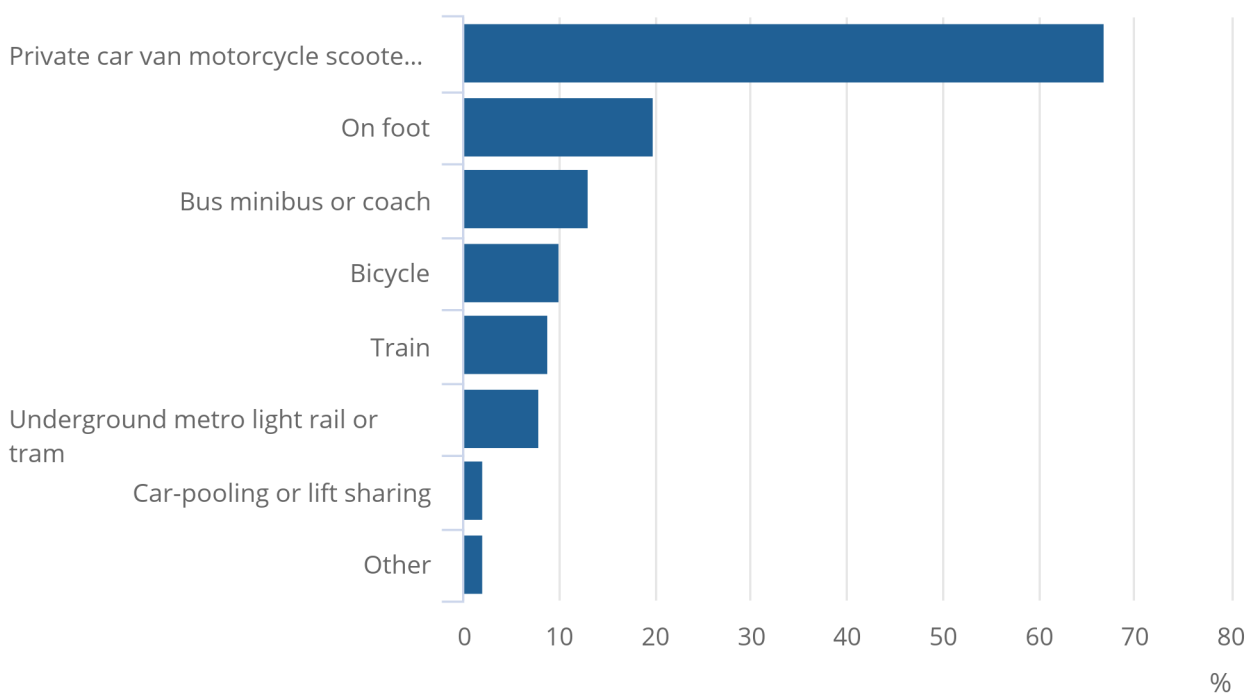
- by a private vehicle such as a car, van or motorbike (67%, 64% in the previous period)
- on foot (20%, 14% in the previous period)
- by bus, minibus or coach (13%, 15% in the previous period)

**Figure 5: Nearly 7 in 10 (67%) working adults used private transport to travel to work in the latest period**

Working adults in Great Britain that travelled to work, 22 June to 3 July 2022

### Figure 5: Nearly 7 in 10 (67%) working adults used private transport to travel to work in the latest period

Working adults in Great Britain that travelled to work, 22 June to 3 July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

**Notes:**

1. Question: "In the past seven days, which of the following types of transport have you used to travel to and from work?"
2. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.
3. Base: working adults that travel to work.

These data were collected during the recent rail and underground disruptions. Among the 9% who reported they travelled to work by train, the most frequently reported alternatives if they were unable to travel by train were:

- working from home (70%)
- travelling by bus, minibus or coach (31%)
- by underground, metro, light rail or tram (20%)

## **Rail disruptions**

This week, we asked all adults if in the past two weeks, rail strikes have disrupted their travel plans.

Around one in seven (15%) adults said that their travel plans had been disrupted. This rises to one-quarter (25%) of those aged 16 to 29 years and decreases to less than 1 in 20 (4%) for those aged 70 years or older.

Of those who said they had experienced travel disruptions, the most common impacts were (Figure 6):

- being unable to take part in leisure activities (34%)
- spending more money on travel (24%)
- being unable to work the hours they planned to (13%)

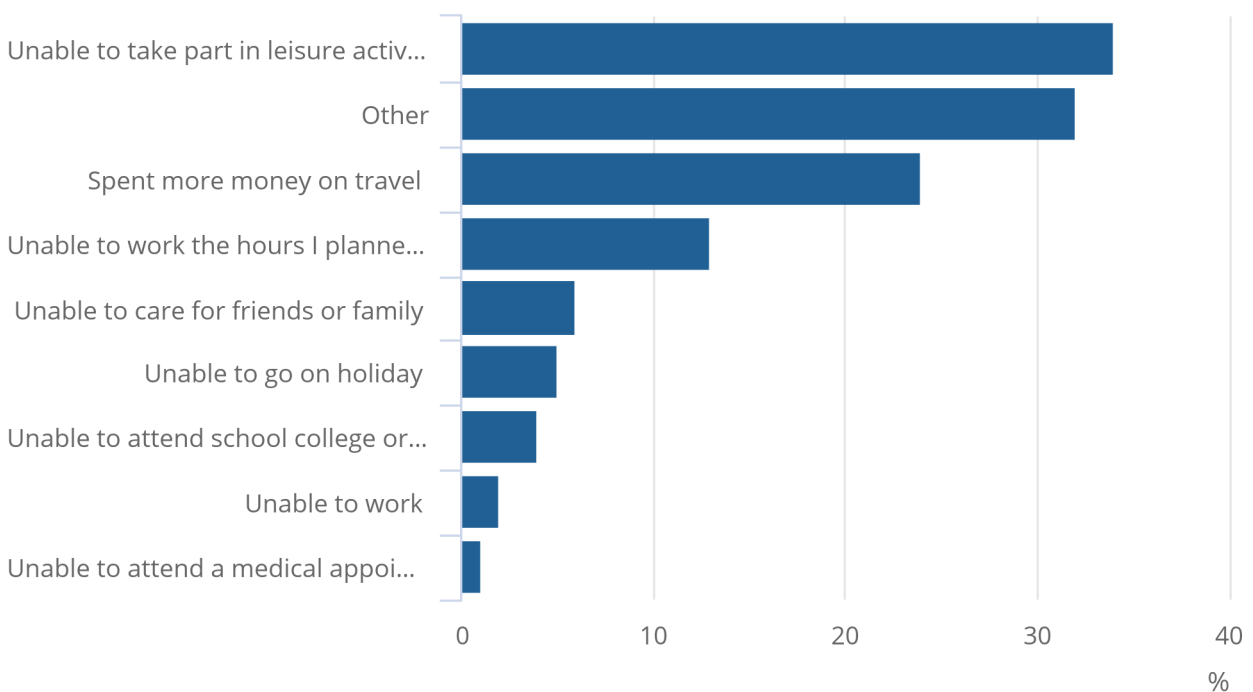
Around 3 in 10 (32%) said the rail strikes had affected them in other ways than the ones listed in the survey.

**Figure 6: Unable to take part in leisure activities was the most frequently reported impact of rail disruptions**

All adults in Great Britain that reported travel disruptions because of rail strikes, 22 June to 3 July 2022

Figure 6: Unable to take part in leisure activities was the most frequently reported impact of rail disruptions

All adults in Great Britain that reported travel disruptions because of rail strikes, 22 June to 3 July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

Notes:

1. Question: “In the past two weeks, how have rail strikes affected you?”
2. Base: Adults who reported that rail strikes had disrupted their travel plans in the past two weeks.
3. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

Further estimates regarding the travel to work methods and rail disruptions, including breakdowns by age and sex, can be found in our [Rail disruptions dataset](#).

## 4 . Social impacts of COVID-19 and other illnesses

This week, when asked about the importance (important or very important) of some of the preventive measures to slow down the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and other illnesses:

- over 8 in 10 (87%) said they thought that hand washing is important
- around 7 in 10 (71%) said they thought that wearing a face covering is important
- over 7 in 10 (76%) said they thought that social distancing is important

Although a higher percentage of adults reported the importance of preventative measures, when asked about whether they had done these in the past seven days, percentages remained comparatively low. For example:

- around three-quarters (73%) said they always or often wash their hands with soap straight after returning home from a public place
- around 4 in 10 (35%) said they wore face coverings when outside their home
- around a quarter (26%) said that they always or often maintained social distance when meeting up with people outside their household

Our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights tool](#) provides a roundup of the latest data and trends about the COVID-19 pandemic from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) and other sources.

Further estimates regarding the social impacts of COVID-19 with trends over time and breakdowns by age and sex, can be found in our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and other illnesses dataset](#).

### More about coronavirus

- Find the latest on [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK](#).
- [Explore the latest coronavirus data](#) from the ONS and other sources.
- View [all coronavirus data](#).

## 5 . Worries, personal well-being and loneliness

## Worries

This week, we continue to ask respondents how worried they were regarding a range of issues: the conflict in Ukraine, increases in the cost of living, the environment, the effect of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on their life right now, and new variants of COVID-19.

The most frequently reported worries (being very or somewhat worried) were about the rising cost of living (78%) and the conflict in Ukraine (77%).

More than half (57%) reported they were worried about the environment.

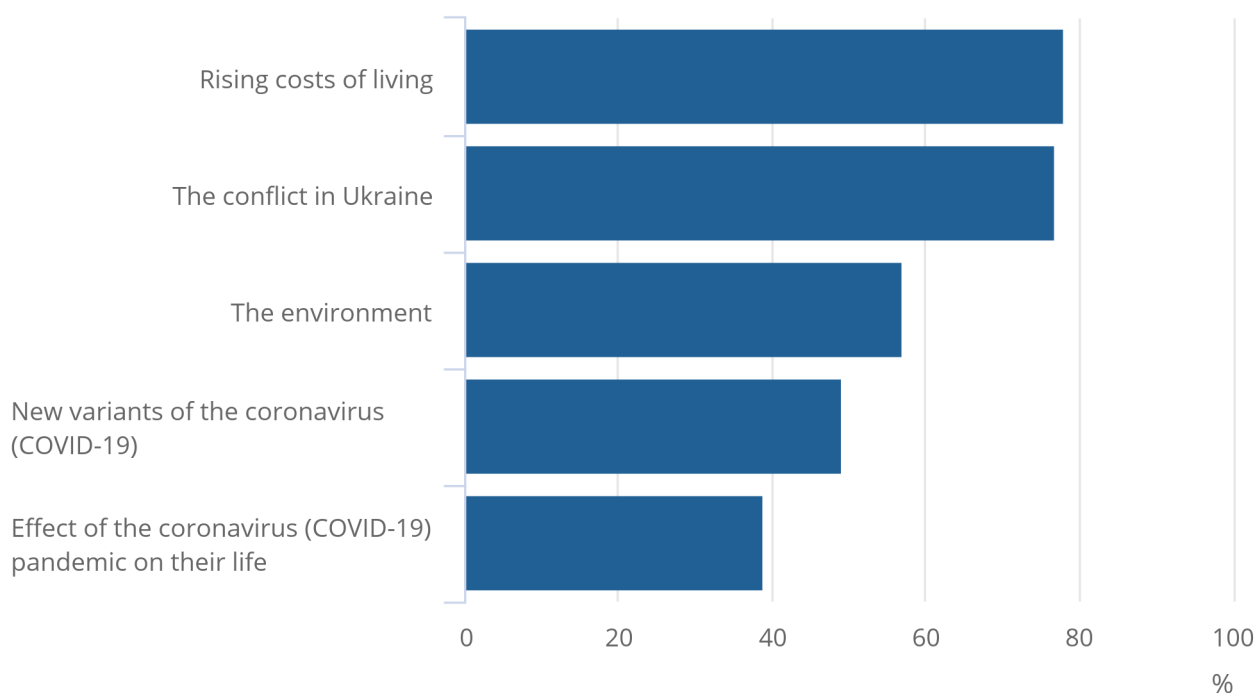
A smaller proportion reported being worried about new variants of COVID-19 (49%), and the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on their lives (39%). These are both higher compared with the previous period (41% and 32%, respectively). This could be driven by the increasing percentage of people testing positive for COVID-19 in the most recent week across all UK countries, according to our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey bulletin](#).

## Figure 7: Around three-quarters of adults were very or somewhat worried about the rising cost of living and the conflict in Ukraine

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain who are very or somewhat worried, 22 June to 3 July 2022

### Figure 7: Around three-quarters of adults were very or somewhat worried about the rising cost of living and the conflict in Ukraine

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain who are very or somewhat worried, 22 June to 3 July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

#### Notes:

1. Questions: "In the past two weeks, how worried or unworried have you been about rising costs of living?", "In the past two weeks, how worried or unworried have you been about the environment?", "In the past two weeks, how worried or unworried have you been about the conflict in Ukraine?", "How worried or unworried are you about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is having on your life right now?" and "How worried or unworried are you about new variants of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?".
2. Base: all adults.

## Personal well-being

This week, we continued to ask respondents about their personal well-being. Average levels of personal well-being were:



- life satisfaction (7.0 in both the latest and previous periods)
- feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile (7.3 in both the latest and previous periods)
- happiness (7.2 in the latest period and 7.1 in the previous period)
- anxiety (3.8 in the latest period and 4.0 in the previous period)

These estimates of personal well-being may differ from those in our [Personal well-being in the UK, quarterly: April 2011 to September 2021 bulletin](#), based on the Annual Population Survey (APS). To find out more about the difference between these two data sources, you can view our [Data collection changes due to the pandemic and their impact on estimating personal well-being methodology](#).

## Figure 8: Levels of personal well-being remained relatively stable in the latest period

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to July 2022

### Notes:

1. Questions included "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?", and "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?"
2. These questions are answered on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely".
3. Base: all adults.

### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

## Loneliness

Around 1 in 16 (6%) adults reported feeling lonely always or often in the latest period (7% in the previous period).

For further estimates on people's personal well-being and loneliness, including breakdowns by age, sex and trends over time, please see our [Personal well-being and loneliness dataset](#).

## 6 . Public opinions and social trends data

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and other illnesses](#)

Dataset | Released 8 July 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and other illnesses on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal experiences of shortages of goods](#)

Dataset | Released on 8 July 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of whether people experienced shortages of goods such as food, medicine, or fuel when shopping in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: household finances](#)

Dataset | Released on 8 July 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of people's experiences of changes in their cost of living and household finances in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness](#)

Dataset | Released on 8 July 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of personal well-being and loneliness in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: travel to work and rail disruptions](#)

Dataset | Released on 8 July 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of travel to work methods and travel disruptions in Great Britain.

## 7 . Measuring the data

This release contains data and indicators from a module being undertaken through the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

From the period 30 March to 10 April 2022, changes were made to the OPN to enable us to provide ongoing indicators on a wide range of public opinions and societal issues.

Changes were made to the OPN survey design, for example, sample size, the questionnaire, and financial incentives to participate. These changes may result in small changes to the responding sample. We therefore advise caution with comparing estimates from this period onwards with those published prior to this period.

Breakdowns by age and sex, including [confidence intervals](#) for the estimates, are contained in our [Public opinion and social trends, Great Britain datasets](#). Breakdowns by region are no longer provided within these datasets because of the smaller responding sample size of the OPN survey.

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 differences.

### Sampling and weighting

In the latest period (22 June to 3 July 2022), we sampled 4,974 households. This sample was randomly selected from those that had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or OPN. The responding sample for the latest period contained 2,298 individuals, representing a 46.2% response rate.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population (based on June 2021 population estimates). Further information on the survey design and quality can be found in our [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

## 8 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Released 1 April 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (covering 16 to 27 March 2022) of the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights](#)

Web page | Updated as data become available

An interactive tool to explore the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and other sources.

### [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators](#)

Bulletin | Released weekly

Early experimental data and analysis on economic activity and social change in the UK. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources, and experimental methods.

### [Inflation and the cost of living for UK households, overview: June 2022](#)

Article | Released 22 June 2022

Inflation and cost of living article collating and updating analysis of different price measures.

### [The rising cost of living and its impact on individuals in Great Britain: November 2021 to March 2022](#)

Article | Released 25 April 2022

Analysis of how different groups in the population have been affected by an increase in their cost of living, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

### [The cost of living, current and upcoming work: June 2022](#)

Article | Released 10 June 2022

A collation of ONS' current and future work contributing to the cost of living analysis.

### [Worries about the rising costs of living, Great Britain: April to May 2022](#)

Article | Released 10 June 2022

People's worries about the rising costs of living and the impact on people's well-being, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey collected between 27 April and 8 May.

### [Is hybrid working here to stay?](#)

Article | Released 23 May 2022

Almost half of working adults were working from home at times during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, but what will business as usual look like with restrictions lifted?

### [COVID-19 Question Bank](#)

Web page | Updated frequently

Government Statistical Service page that provides a bank of questions from multiple Office for National Statistics (ONS) surveys related to COVID-19 to be used in other surveys to further support harmonisation and questionnaire development. This bank also provides users with an understanding of what data the ONS has in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.