

Statistical bulletin

Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: January 2025

Social insights on daily life and events, including experiences of loneliness, hopefulness for the future, well-being and general health as well as attitudes to important issues, from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

Contact:
Public Policy and Social Insights
team
policy.evidence.analysis@ons.
gov.uk
+44 3000 671543

Release date:
21 February 2025

Next release:
21 March 2025

Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Important issues facing the UK](#)
3. [Health and personal well-being](#)
4. [Loneliness](#)
5. [Data on public opinions and social trends](#)
6. [Data sources and quality](#)
7. [Related links](#)
8. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

1 . Main points

The following information is from data collected from 8 January to 2 February 2025, based on adults in Great Britain.

- When asked about the important issues facing the UK today, the most commonly reported issues were the NHS (86%), the cost of living (86%), the economy (71%), crime (60%), housing (57%), climate change and the environment (57%), and immigration (54%).
- Younger adults aged 16 to 29 years were more likely than older adults to report the cost of living, housing, employment, education and EU exit as important issues; older adults aged 70 years and over were more likely than younger adults to report the NHS, the economy, crime, immigration and international conflict.

Other questions included experiences of health, well-being, and loneliness:

- Around two-thirds of adults (65%) reported that their health was very good or good; with younger adults aged 16 to 29 years (72%) reporting better health than older adults aged 70 years and older (50%).
- One in four adults (25%) reported feeling lonely "often or always" or "some of the time" (7% often or always; 18% some of the time); a further one in four (24%) reported feeling lonely "occasionally", and around one in two adults (49%) reported feeling lonely "hardly ever" or "never".
- Average personal well-being scores for life satisfaction (7.0), feeling that things done in life are worthwhile (7.3), happiness (7.0), and anxiety (3.9) remained similar to one year ago (17 to 28 January 2024).
- Average ratings of hope for the future were lower for men (6.5) than women (6.7), and adults aged 16 to 29 years (6.2) compared with adults aged 30 to 49 years (6.7), adults aged 50 to 69 years (6.6), and adults aged 70 years and over (6.6).

2 . Important issues facing the UK

In the latest period (8 January to 2 February 2025), the NHS (86%) and the cost of living (86%) remain the two most reported important issues facing the UK (Figure 1). While the proportion of all adults reporting the NHS as an important issue has generally remained stable since October 2022 (82%), the proportion of all adults reporting the cost of living has gradually decreased over the same period (93%).

The proportions of all adults reporting the economy (71%) and climate change and the environment (57%) as important issues facing the UK have also gradually decreased since October 2022, when these proportions were 79% and 66% respectively.

By contrast, the proportions of adults reporting crime (60%) and immigration (54%) as important issues facing the UK have increased compared with October 2022, (49% and 43%, respectively). Housing (57%) has remained stable as an important issue facing the UK since October 2022 (53%).

Figure 1: The NHS, the cost of living, and the economy have been the most commonly reported important issues facing the UK since October 2022

Proportion of adults reporting each important issue, Great Britain, October 2022 to January 2025

Notes

1. Question: "What do you think are important issues facing the UK today?".
2. Base: All adults.
3. Respondents could select more than one option. Responses were presented in a randomised order to mitigate ordering bias.
4. Estimates and associated confidence intervals for all response categories are provided in the datasets associated with this release.
5. The length of each data collection period presented in this time series may be different.

Important issues facing the UK by age and sex

Looking beyond all adults, some demographic groups consider different issues facing the UK to be more or less important than other groups.

In the latest period, the most commonly reported important issues by younger adults aged 16 to 29 years were:

- the cost of living (89%)
- the NHS (77%)
- housing (71%)
- the economy (62%)
- climate change and the environment (57%)

Younger adults aged 16 to 29 years were more likely than older adults aged 70 years and over to report the cost of living, housing, employment, education and EU exit as important issues.

The most commonly reported important issues for older adults aged 70 years and over were:

- the NHS (91%)
- the cost of living (80%)
- the economy (75%)
- crime (74%)
- immigration (73%)

Older adults aged 70 years and over were more likely than younger adults aged 16 to 29 years to report the NHS, the economy, crime, immigration and international conflict as important issues.

Figure 2: The cost of living and the NHS were the two most reported important issues across all age groups

Proportion of adults reporting each important issue by age and sex, Great Britain, 8 January to 2 February 2025

Notes

1. Question: "What do you think are important issues facing the UK today?".
2. Base: All adults.
3. Respondents could select more than one option. Responses were presented in a randomised order to mitigate ordering bias.
4. Estimates and associated confidence intervals for all response categories are provided in the datasets associated with this release.

Estimates of important issues by age group are available for all time periods collected in Table 27 of our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness dataset](#).

Analysis also revealed differences in the importance men and women place on different issues facing the UK. Men were more likely than women to report the economy (73% of men compared with 68% of women) and EU exit (40% of men compared with 34% of women) as important issues. Women were more likely than men to report housing (60% of women compared with 54% of men), the NHS (89% of women compared with 83% of men) and the cost of living (88% of women compared with 83% of men).

These results should be treated with caution, as the important issues reporting has varied over time. See Table 26 of our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness dataset](#).

3 . Health and personal well-being

In the latest period, around two-thirds of adults (65%) reported that their health was very good or good, similar to last year (69% in the period 17 to 28 January 2024).

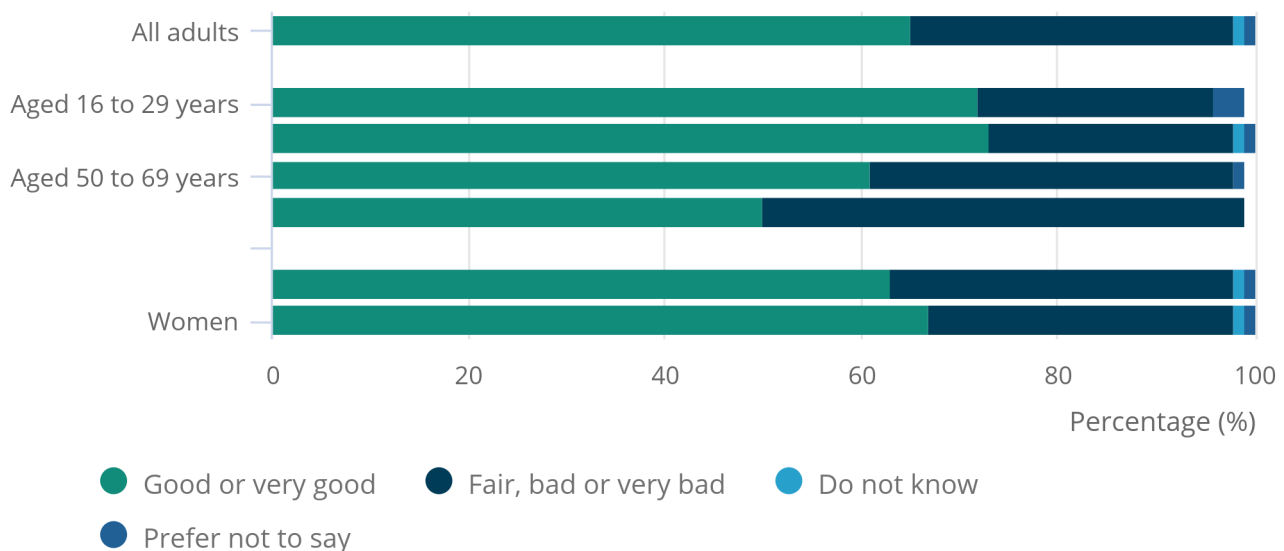
Around one in two (50%) adults aged 70 years and over reported being in good or very good health. This was lower than other age groups (61% among adults aged 50 to 69 years, 73% among adults aged 30 to 49 years, 72% among adults aged 16 to 29 years). Men (63%) were also less likely to report being in good or very good health compared with women (67%).

Figure 3: Those aged 70 years and over were the least likely to report being in good or very good health in general

Proportion of adults reporting their general health status, Great Britain, 8 January to 2 February 2025

Figure 3: Those aged 70 years and over were the least likely to report being in good or very good health in general

Proportion of adults reporting their general health status, Great Britain, 8 January to 2 February 2025



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Question: "How is your health in general?".
2. Base: All adults.
3. Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding or suppression.
4. Estimates and associated confidence intervals for all response categories are provided in the datasets associated with this release.

We measure personal well-being through four main measures: "life satisfaction", "feeling the things done in life are worthwhile", "happiness yesterday", and "anxiety yesterday". Personal well-being data are presented as average scores on an 11-point scale (0 to 10). Higher life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness indicate better well-being while lower anxiety scores also indicate better well-being.

For more information, see our [Personal well-being user guidance](#).

Levels of personal well-being have remained similar to one year ago (17 to 28 January 2024), including:

- life satisfaction (7.0 in this period and 6.9 one year ago)
- feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile (7.3 in this period and 7.2 one year ago)
- happiness (7.0 in this period and 6.9 one year ago)
- anxiety (3.9 in this period and 3.9 one year ago)

Compared with adults aged 70 years and over, younger adults aged 16 to 29 years reported lower life satisfaction (6.7 compared with 7.4), feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile (6.8 compared with 7.8), happiness (6.6 compared with 7.5) and higher levels of anxiety (4.6 compared with 3.4).

These personal well-being estimates may differ from the [headline personal well-being statistics](#) based on the Annual Population Survey. Our [data collection changes due to the pandemic and their impact on estimating personal well-being methodology](#) details the differences between these two data sources.

The [UK Measures of National Well-being dashboard](#) provides an overview of well-being in the UK on an individual, community and national level.

Hope for the future

Estimates of how hopeful adults living in Great Britain feel about their future are included in this bulletin for the first time. Respondents were asked to rate their level of hopefulness on an 11-point scale from 0 to 10 when asked "Overall, how hopeful do you feel about your future?".

In the latest period, the average rating of hope for the future was 6.6 out of 10. This has remained consistent since we started publishing this measure (6.6 in period 5 to 28 July 2024). Average ratings of hope for the future were lower for men (6.5) than women (6.7). They were also lower for adults aged 16 to 29 years (6.2) compared with adults aged 30 to 49 years (6.7), adults aged 50 to 69 years (6.6), and adults aged 70 years and over (6.6).

4 . Loneliness

In the latest period, one in four adults (25%) reported feeling lonely "often or always" or "some of the time" (7% often or always; 18% some of the time). This has remained relatively stable since we first started collecting data in March 2020 (23%). A further one in four (24%) reported feeling lonely "occasionally", and around one in two adults (49%) reported feeling lonely "hardly ever" or "never".

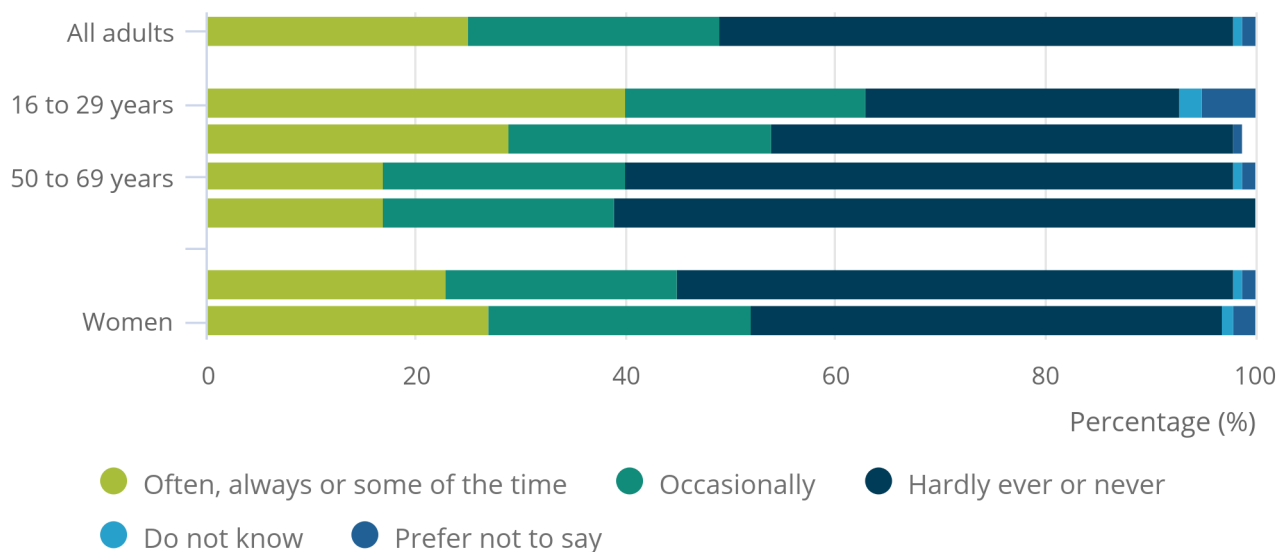
Younger adults consistently report higher levels of loneliness. Of adults aged 16 to 29 years, 4 in 10 (40%) reported feeling lonely "often or always" or "some of the time" compared with around 3 in 10 (29%) adults aged 30 to 49 years, 2 in 10 (17%) adults aged 50 to 69 years and 2 in 10 (17%) adults aged 70 years and over. Women (27%) reported feeling lonely often, always or some of the time more often than men (23%).

Figure 4: Adults aged 16 to 29 years were more likely to report feeling lonely often, always or some of the time than other age groups

Proportion of adults reporting how often they felt lonely, Great Britain, 8 January to 2 February 2025

Figure 4: Adults aged 16 to 29 years were more likely to report feeling lonely often, always or some of the time than other age groups

Proportion of adults reporting how often they felt lonely, Great Britain, 8 January to 2 February 2025



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Question: " How often do you feel lonely?".
2. Base: All adults.
3. Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding or suppression.
4. Estimates and associated confidence intervals for all response categories are provided in the datasets associated with this release.

These findings are consistent with existing research showing experiences of loneliness to be more common among younger adults. Our [Loneliness – What characteristics and circumstances are associated with feeling lonely?](#) article examines this in greater detail.

Time series data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) from March 2020 onwards of loneliness and other measures of personal well-being are available in our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness dataset](#).

5 . Data on public opinions and social trends

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

Dataset | Released 21 February 2025

People's experiences of changes in their cost of living, household finances and cryptocurrencies in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

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

Dataset | Released 21 February 2025

Personal well-being, loneliness and what people in Great Britain felt were important issues; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: NHS hospital waiting experience](#)

Dataset | Released 21 February 2025

Experiences of being on an NHS hospital waiting list for adults in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: working arrangements](#)

Dataset | Released 21 February 2025

Working arrangements of people in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

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

Dataset | Released 21 February 2025

Social mobility and life opportunities across different generations in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: NHS hospital waiting experience by personal characteristics](#)

Dataset | Released 21 February 2025

Experiences of being on an NHS hospital waiting list for adults in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). Uses longer data collection periods to allow estimates from various personal characteristics.

6 . Data sources and quality

The analysis in this bulletin is based on adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain.

In the latest period, 8 January to 2 February 2025, we sampled 8,943 households. This sample was randomly selected from people who had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). The responding sample for the latest period contained 3,556 individuals, representing a 40% response rate.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population, based on our population estimates. Estimates for some groups of the population may be subject to greater [uncertainty](#) because of smaller sample sizes for these groups (for example, younger adults).

For all estimates in the datasets, [confidence intervals](#) are provided. Where comparisons between estimates are made, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the differences. In some cases, additional statistical hypothesis testing was performed to identify differences between groups.

Further information on the survey design and quality can be found in our [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#).

7 . Related links

[UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard](#)

Online tool | Updated 11 February 2025

An overview of well-being in the UK on an individual, community and national level. Considers change across 59 measures of well-being, grouped by 10 topic areas.

[Data collection changes due to the pandemic and their impact on estimating personal well-being](#)

Methodology article | Released 4 February 2021

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Office for National Statistics has published estimates of personal well-being using both the Annual Population Survey and the weekly module of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. This methodology article considers the impact that the pandemic has had on data collection, how this has influenced estimates of personal well-being and the comparability of these estimates.

[Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 20 February 2025](#)

Bulletin | Released 20 February 2025

Early data on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and innovative methods. These are official statistics in development.

[Business insights and impact on the UK economy: 20 February 2025](#)

Bulletin | Released 20 February 2025

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses, including financial performance, workforce, trade and business resilience.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 21 February 2025, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: January 2025](#)