Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: 14 May 2020

Early experimental data on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the UK economy and society, including online price changes data. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and experimental methods.

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Release date:
14 May 2020

Next release:
21 May 2020

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1 . Other pages in this release

More detailed commentary on the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the UK economy and society is available in the following page:

- Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 14 May 2020

2 . Main points

- Of UK businesses that responded to our fortnightly Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) for the period 20 April to 3 May 2020, 44% of businesses who had not permanently ceased trading between 20 April and 3 May reported that their cash reserves would last less than six months.

- 91% of businesses who had paused trading applied for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, compared with 72% of businesses who were still trading.

- Just 1 in 5 (21%) adults in Great Britain believed that Britain was united before the coronavirus pandemic, while nearly three-fifths (57%) expected that Britain would be united once we have recovered from the coronavirus pandemic.

- Expectations for when life will return to normal are getting longer: 46% of adults now think it will be more than six months compared with 33% after the first week of lockdown.

- Overall, online prices of items in the high-demand products (HDP) basket have decreased by 0.1% over the period week 7 (27 April to 4 May 2020) to week 8 (3 May to 10 May 2020).

- After a marked downward trend in daily ship visits from mid-March to mid-April 2020, daily ship visits to major UK ports have been steady over the last few weeks.

- Individual declarations for Universal Credit rose steeply in March to peak at 146,290 on 27 March 2020, before gradually declining to 27,870 on 5 May.

Online price change analysis is experimental and should not be compared with our regular consumer price statistics. Both the Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) and Opinions and Lifestyle (OPN) Survey are voluntary, so may only reflect the characteristics of those who responded. Results presented are experimental.

3 . Indicators included in this release

This bulletin contains:

- Initial results from Wave 4 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) of UK businesses for the period 20 April to 3 May 2020.

- Final results for Wave 6 of the Opinions and Lifestyle (OPN) Survey, covering the period 24 April to 3 May 2020 exploring the social impact of the coronavirus on individuals in Great Britain.

- Experimental online price indices for several high-demand products (HDPs) for 16 March to 10 May 2020.

- Weekly shipping data for the UK up to week commencing 4 May 2020 and daily shipping data up to 10 May 2020.

- Weekly management information on Universal Credit declarations (claims) and advances for reference period 1 March to 5 May 2020 (see Section 8 on Universal Credit). This information is published every Tuesday by the Department for Work and Pensions and will continue to be updated until at least the end of June

We will add new experimental data and indices as and when new data become available, and list them in this section.

This release does not contain data on the number of deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19). Our weekly deaths bulletin and accompanying dataset provides the most up-to-date figures on deaths involving COVID-19 in England and Wales.

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.

4 . Business impact of the coronavirus

Of the 18,506 UK businesses surveyed for the period 20 April to 3 May 2020, 5,036 (27%) responded and stated they had not permanently ceased trading. Final results for Wave 4 will be published in next week’s bulletin.

Trading

Initial results to the latest Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) saw 22% of responding businesses report they had temporarily paused trading for the period 20 April to 3 May 2020, while 77% reported trading during this period.

Of those that reported trading, only 6% responded they had started trading again during the reference period. Of those who had paused trading, 99% reported the temporary closure started before 20 April.

Less than 1% of responding businesses indicated they had permanently ceased trading during the period 20 April to 3 May 2020.

Financial performance

Of all businesses trading during the period 20 April to 3 May 2020, 61% reported that their turnover had decreased to some extent compared with normal. 25% of trading businesses reported their turnover had decreased by more than 50%, while 32% reported their turnover was within normal range.

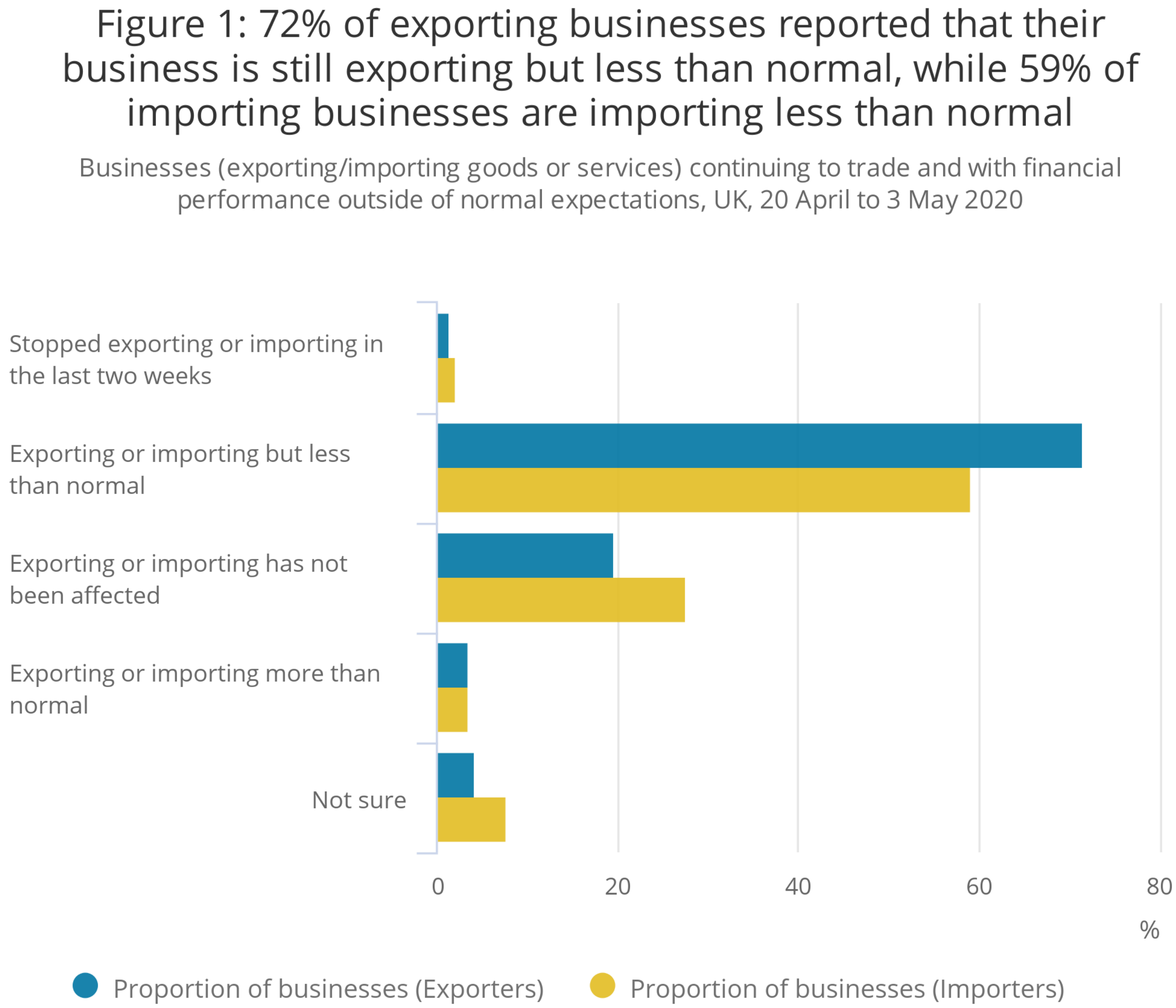
Of the 2,649 affected businesses that were trading and reported their turnover was outside its normal range, 99.8% attributed this to the coronavirus to some extent. Businesses could also specify any other reasons alongside this.

All businesses continuing to trade were asked about their turnover expectations in the next two weeks from the reference period, compared with normal: 22% expect turnover to decrease a little; 14% expect it to increase a little, while 50% expect it to stay the same.

International trading

Figure 1: 72% of exporting businesses reported that their business is still exporting but less than normal, while 59% of importing businesses are importing less than normal

Businesses (exporting/importing goods or services) continuing to trade and with financial performance outside of normal expectations, UK, 20 April to 3 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Initial results, Wave 4 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey. (Exports: n = 701 Imports: n = 927)

Figure 1 refers only to businesses continuing to trade who reported their financial performance was outside of normal expectations between 20 April and 3 May, and were continuing to export or import during the coronavirus pandemic. It does not include businesses whose financial performance was within normal expectations.

The most common challenge faced in exporting between 20 April and 3 May was coronavirus-related transport restrictions (44%), followed by increases in transportation costs (28%). However, 39% of exporting businesses reported that they did not experience any challenge with exporting.

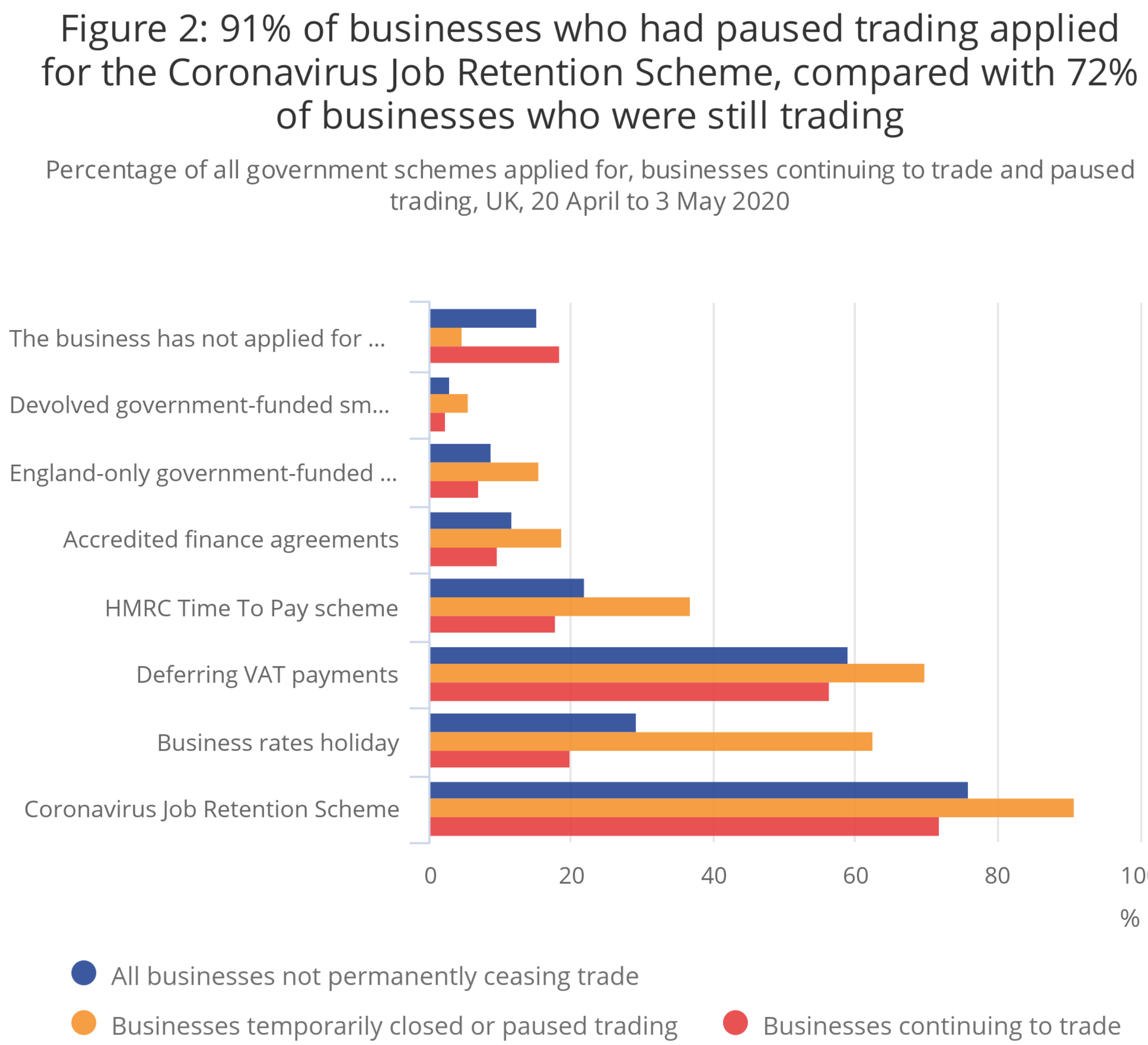
Coronavirus-related transport restrictions were also the most common challenge to importing (50%), followed by increases in transportation costs (29%), while 33% reported that they did not experience any challenge with importing. This refers only to businesses who were exporting or importing more or less than normal during the reference period, who were continuing to trade, and whose financial performance was outside of normal expectations (529 businesses for exports and 581 businesses for imports).

Government schemes

The two most popular government support schemes applied for by businesses who had not permanently ceased trading, were the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) (76%) and the Deferring VAT Payments Scheme (59%), during the period 20 April to 3 May 2020 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: 91% of businesses who had paused trading applied for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, compared with 72% of businesses who were still trading

Percentage of all government schemes applied for, businesses continuing to trade and paused trading, UK, 20 April to 3 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Bars will not sum to 100% as businesses could select multiple schemes.
2. Initial results, Wave 4 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (Continuing Trading + Paused Trading = 5,018).

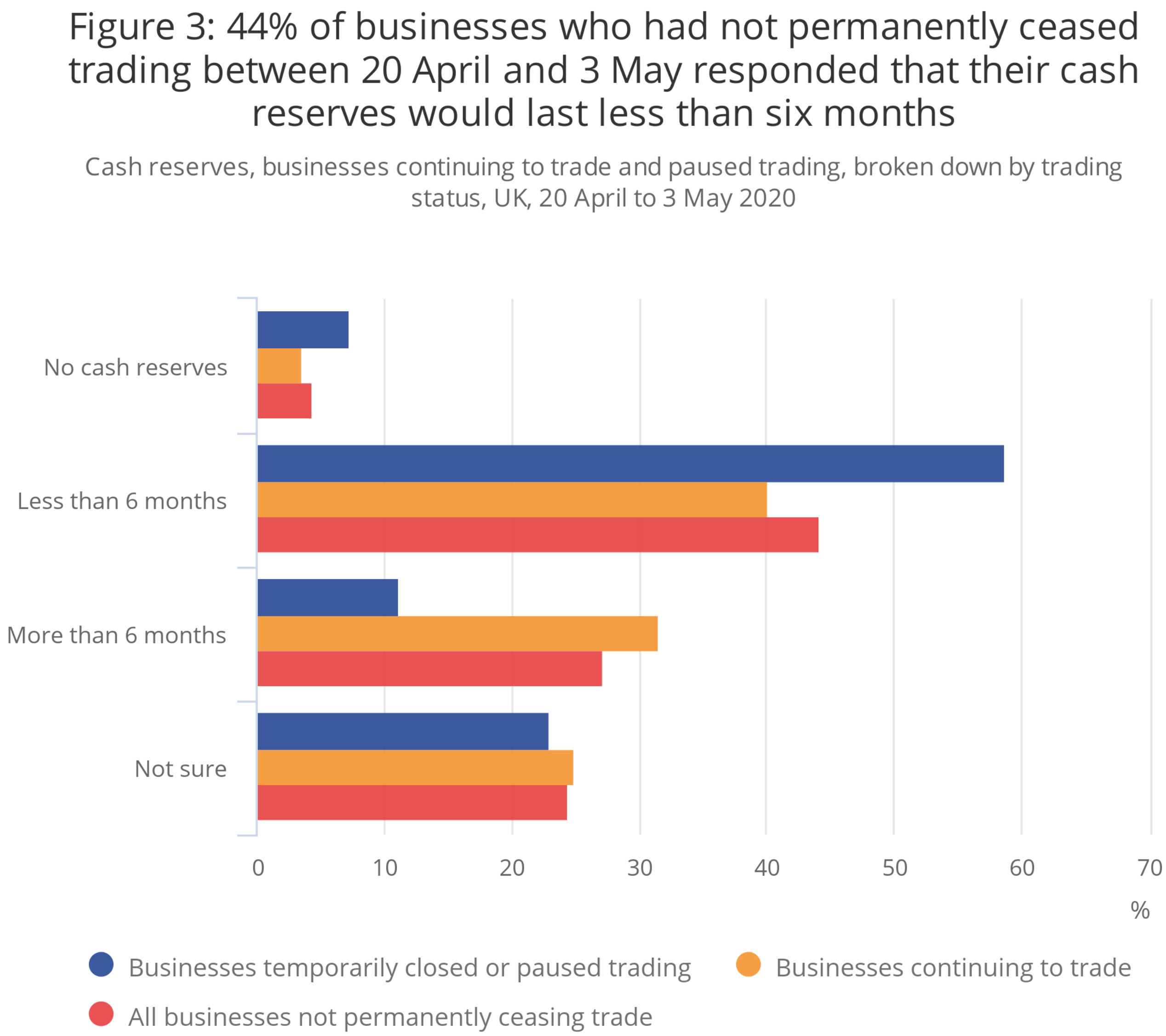
These two government schemes were also the top two schemes that businesses had reported receiving, with 58% of businesses who had not permanently ceased trading having received the CJRS and 51% for Deferring VAT Payments.

Cash flow

Businesses that had not permanently ceased trading were also asked how long they thought their cash reserves would last in Wave 4.

Figure 3: 44% of businesses who had not permanently ceased trading between 20 April and 3 May responded that their cash reserves would last less than six months

Cash reserves, businesses continuing to trade and paused trading, broken down by trading status, UK, 20 April to 3 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Initial results, Wave 4 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (Continuing Trading + Paused Trading = 5,018).

5 . Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain

Results from the Opinions and Lifestyle (OPN) Survey covering the period 24 April to 3 May 2020; these are to help understand the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

Following government guidance to prevent the spread of the coronavirus

This survey was completed before the changes to UK government guidance were announced on Sunday 10 May, as well as separate guidance issued by the devolved administrations. Responses will reflect people's actions at this time, when the advice was 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

The same proportion of adults (80%) said they had either not left their home or only left for one of the permitted reasons listed earlier, in the past seven days compared with last week.

Of the 21% who said they had left their home for something else, the main reason was to run errands.

Overall support for the Stay at home measures continued to be high, although a small proportion have moved from "strongly support" (78% this week, down from 81% last week) to "tend to support" (18% this week, up from 16% last week).

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.

In the past seven days, one-quarter of adults (25%) said they had self-isolated; a slight fall compared with last week (29%). For those aged 70 years and over, 51% said they had self-isolated, while for those with an underlying health condition (all ages) it was 42%.

For those who said they had self-isolated over the past seven days, 28% 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.

Almost 1 in 5 adults (23%) said someone in their household had self-isolated in the past seven days, a similar level to last week (21%). Similarly, 21% of people were in households where everyone had self-isolated over the past seven days. For those aged 70 years and over, nearly half (48%) said someone in their household had self-isolated, while for those with an underlying health condition it was over a third (38%).

Working from home

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

This consisted of 36% of adults who had only worked from home and 9% 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.

The remaining 31% of adults in employment 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.

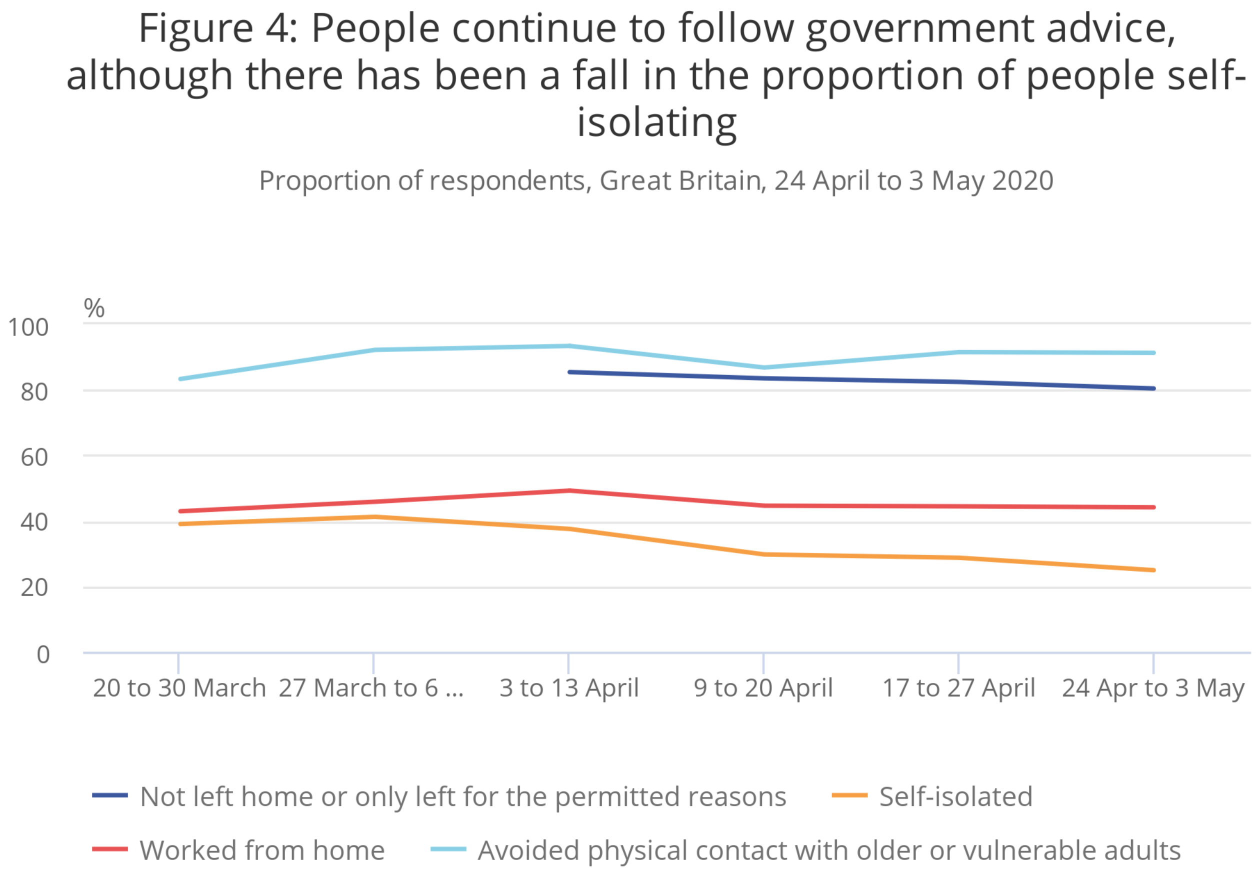
Social distancing

Social distancing guidance at the time of data collection stated 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 93%.

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 91% (Figure 4). Amongst these, 11% say the people they are avoiding are those to whom they provide care.

Figure 4: People continue to follow government advice, although there has been a fall in the proportion of people self-isolating

Proportion of respondents, Great Britain, 24 April to 3 May 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?

2. Final results for Wave 6 of the Opinions and Lifestyle (OPN) Survey, covering the period 24 April to 3 May 2020 (n = 1,114).

Impact on well-being

The proportion of adults who said their well-being was affected decreased this week (42%) compared with last week (48%). The proportion remained higher for those with an underlying health condition, at 45%, and lower for those aged 70 years and over, at 32%.

Table 1: Indicators of well-being

Indicator	Group	This week (%)	Last week (%)
Wellbeing is being affected	All adults	42	48
	70+	32	39
	Underlying health	45	51
Mean anxiety score[1]	All adults	4.1	4.2
	70+	3.8	4.0
	Underlying health	4.5	4.3
Percentage with high anxiety (score 6-10)[1]	All adults	33	37
	70+	29	33
	Underlying health	40	38
Feeling lonely often/always	All adults	5	6
	70+	3	2
	Underlying health	10	10
Feeling lonely some of the time	All adults	16	16
	70+	12	13
	Underlying health	21	18

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 24 April to 3 May 2020, and “last week” refers to the period 17 April to 27 April 2020. Back to table
3. Final results for Wave 6 of the Opinions and Lifestyle (OPN) Survey, covering the period 24 April to 3 May 2020 (n = 1,114). Back to table

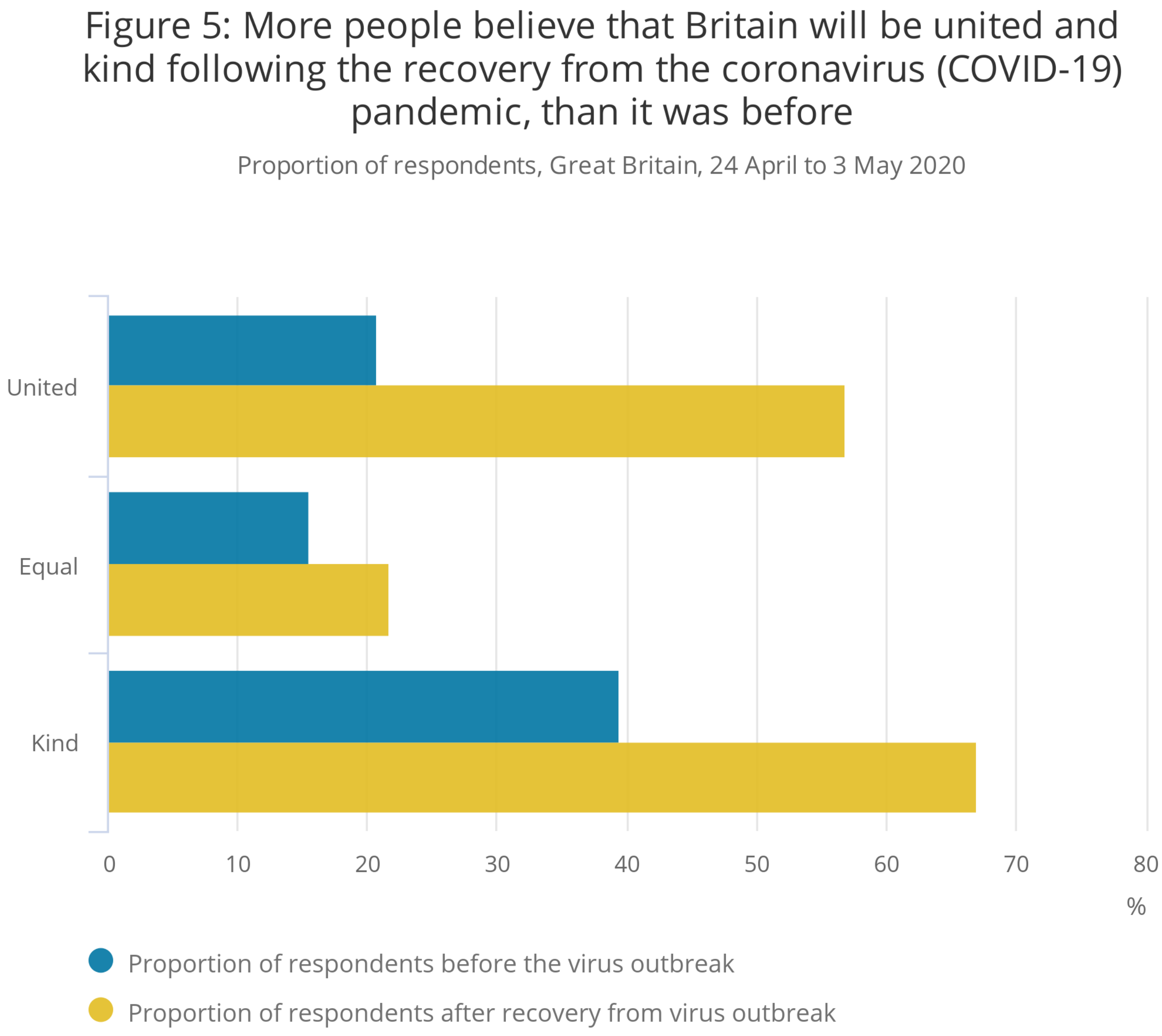
Unity, equality and kindness

Through the different weeks of the survey, measures of community spirit have increased. This week we see attitudes and expectations towards societal unity, kindness, and equality in Great Britain have also been affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

A minority of adults, just over 2 in 10 (21%), believed that Britain was very or somewhat united before the coronavirus pandemic. However, a majority of adults (57%) said they thought that Britain would be united once we have recovered from the coronavirus pandemic (Figure 5).

Figure 5: More people believe that Britain will be united and kind following the recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, than it was before

Proportion of respondents, Great Britain, 24 April to 3 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Questions: How united or divided do you think Britain was before the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? and How united or divided do you think Britain will be after we have recovered from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? How equal or unequal do you think Britain was before the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? and How equal or unequal do you think Britain will be after we have recovered from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? And How kind or unkind do you think Britain was before the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? and How kind or unkind do you think Britain will be after we have recovered from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? All respondents were asked these questions.

2. These are new questions added to the survey last week (24 April to 3 May).

3. Final results for Wave 6 of the Opinions and Lifestyle (OPN) Survey, covering the period 24 April to 3 May 2020 (n = 1,114).

For respondents aged 70 years and over, 59% thought Britain would be united after we have recovered from the coronavirus pandemic, compared with 56% of 16- to 69-year-olds.

Similarly, nearly 4 in 10 (39%) adults believed that Britain was kind before the coronavirus pandemic. A larger proportion of just under 7 in 10 (67%) believed that Britain would be kind once we have recovered from the coronavirus pandemic.

For respondents aged between 16 and 69 years, 37% believed Britain was kind before the virus, compared with 51% of those aged 70 years or over. Of respondents aged 16 to 69 years, 66% thought Britain would be kind after recovering from the virus, whilst 72% of respondents aged 70 years and over thought Britain would be kind following recovery.

In terms of equality, 16% of people felt that Britain was equal before the pandemic, with the proportion of respondents feeling that Britain would be equal after the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic rising to 22%. Of respondents aged 70 years and over, 28% thought that Britain would be equal after the coronavirus pandemic, while 20% of respondents aged between 16 and 69 years felt that Britain would be equal after we have recovered from the pandemic.

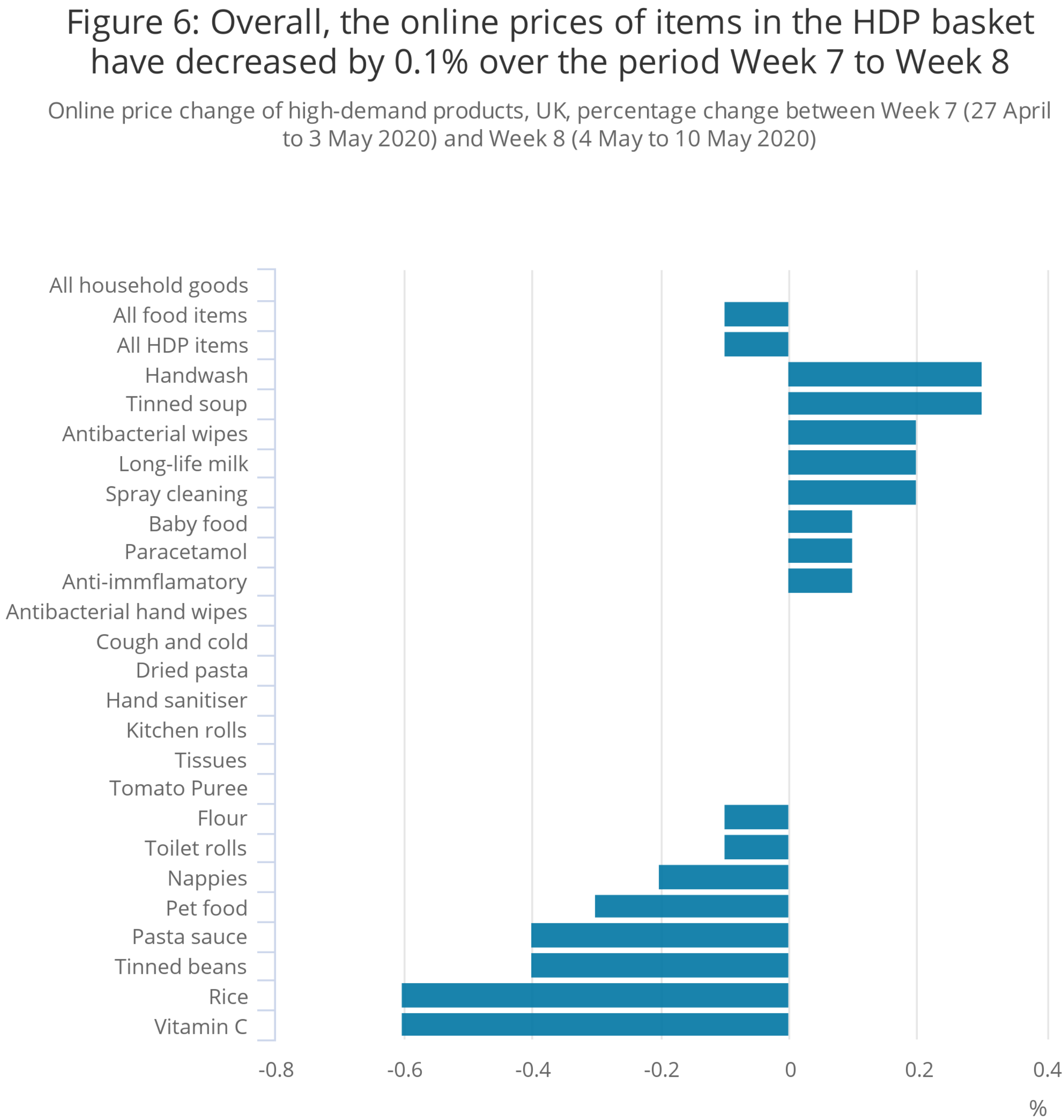
6 . Online price change for high-demand products (HDPs)

A timely indication of weekly price change for high-demand products (HDPs) has been developed, covering the period 16 March to 10 May 2020. This analysis is experimental and should not be compared with our regular consumer price statistics.

As experimental indices, these data are subject to revisions as we develop our methodology and systems. We have made some further improvements to the way we identify and match unique products over time, resulting in some small revisions to the historic series.

Figure 6: Overall, the online prices of items in the HDP basket have decreased by 0.1% over the period Week 7 to Week 8

Online price change of high-demand products, UK, percentage change between Week 7 (27 April to 3 May 2020) and Week 8 (4 May to 10 May 2020)



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. These statistics are experimental and therefore subject to revision as methods are developed. They should not be used instead of official statistics.

2. Out of stock products have been removed where these are clearly labelled, however, there may be products out of stock that have still been included for some retailers. If the price of these items do not change, this could cause the index to remain static.

3. Note that the size of the sample means that sometimes single retailers can contribute to substantial movements at the item level.

Figure 6 shows that overall the online prices of items in the HDP's basket have decreased by 0.1% from Week 7 to Week 8 and the index of all food items also decreased by 0.1%.

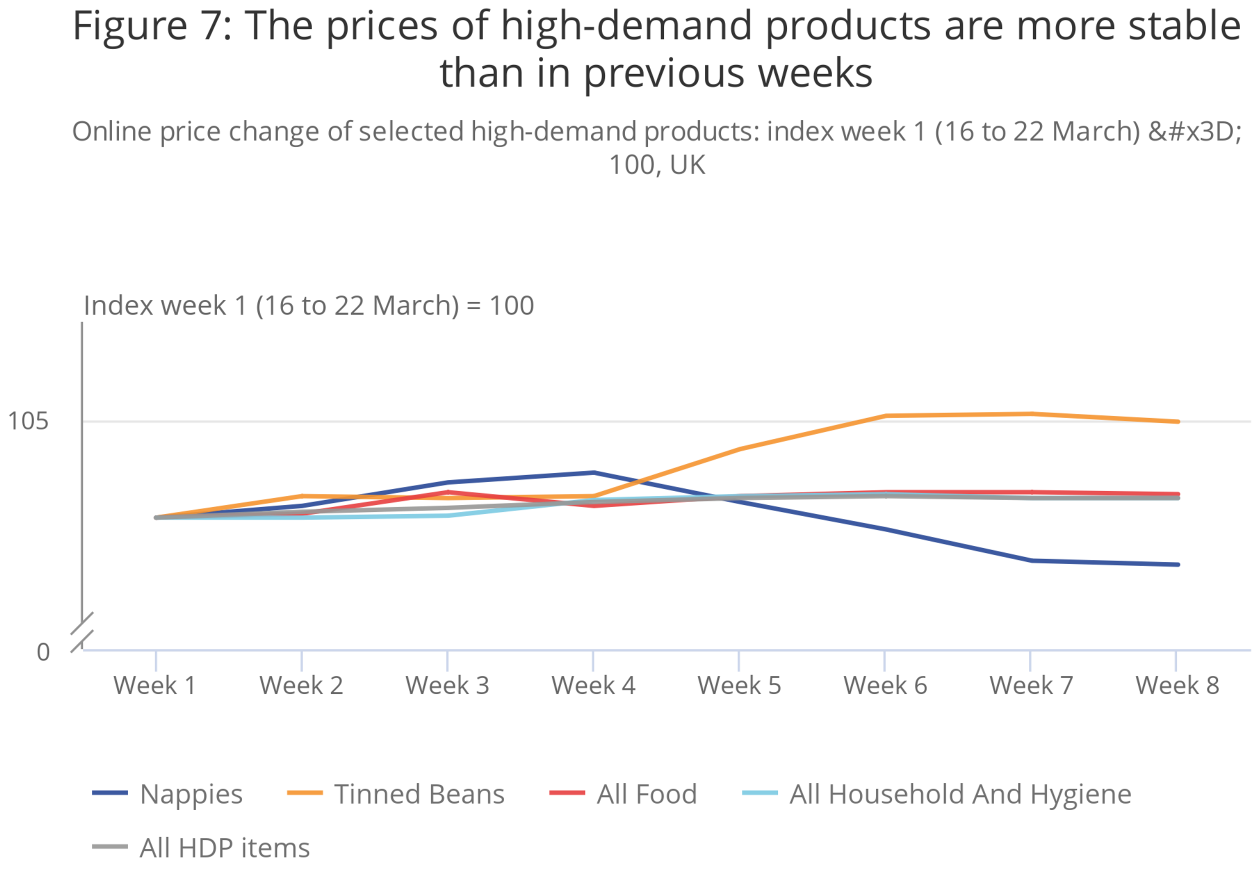
On an individual item level, prices have been relatively stable compared with the more volatile price changes seen in March and early April. Rice and vitamin C showed the largest price falls of 0.6% between Week 7 and Week 8, while handwash and tinned soup saw the largest price rises of 0.3% between the same weeks.

Figure 7 presents weekly price movements for aggregated indices and some selected items. The all HDP items index and the all food index follow a similar trend; they both grew week-on-week from Week 1 to Week 6 and have showed a small decline from Week 6 onwards.

At the individual item level, after several weeks of growth the prices of tinned beans declined in the latest week, showing an overall increase of 4.9% from Week 1. Nappy prices continued to decrease, although the rate of decline has slowed. The time series for all individual HDP items are published in a [dataset](#) alongside this release.

Figure 7: The prices of high-demand products are more stable than in previous weeks

Online price change of selected high-demand products: index week 1 (16 to 22 March) = 100, UK



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. These statistics are experimental, and should not be used instead of official statistics.

2. In figure 6 the all HDP prices index decreases by 0.1% between weeks 7 and 8, and in figure 7 it holds constant at 101.0. This is a result of rounding; to two decimal points week 7's index was 101.03 and week 8's index was 100.95.

3. Week 1 refers to 16 to 22 March and Week 8 refers to 4 May to 10 May.

7 . Shipping

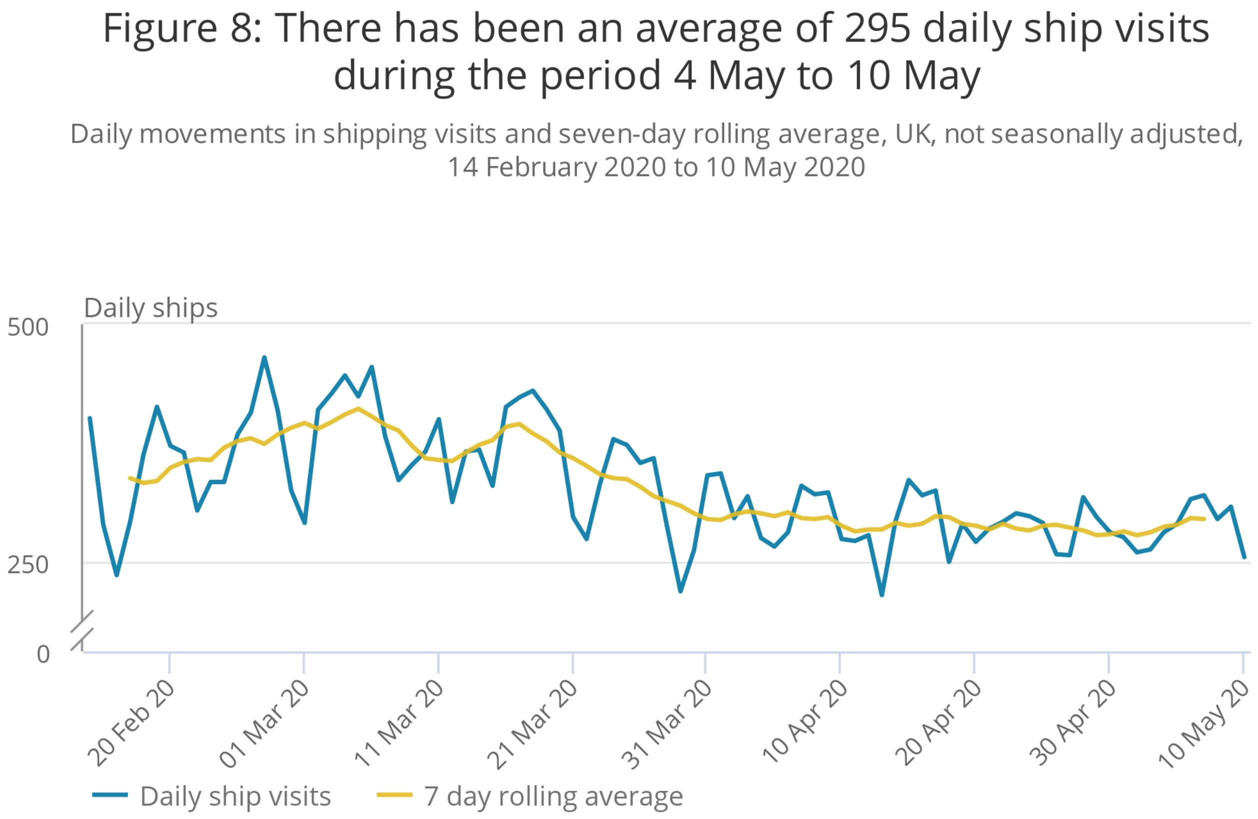
This section discusses the shipping indicators based on counts of all vessels. We have advanced the timeliness of these indicators to include up to 10 May 2020 for daily data and up to the week commencing 4 May 2020 for weekly data. As discussed in [Faster indicators of UK economic activity: shipping](), we expect the shipping indicators to be related to the import and export of goods.

In the week commencing 4 May 2020, the number of unique visits to UK ports increased by 0.6%. In the same week, total visits to UK ports increased by 5.7%, following six consecutive weeks of declining total visits.

Figure 8 shows the movements in total daily ship visits. After a downward trend in daily ship visits from mid-March to mid-April 2020, there has been an average of 295 daily ship visits during the period 4 May to 10 May.

Figure 8: There has been an average of 295 daily ship visits during the period 4 May to 10 May

Daily movements in shipping visits and seven-day rolling average, UK, not seasonally adjusted, 14 February 2020 to 10 May 2020



Source: exactEarth

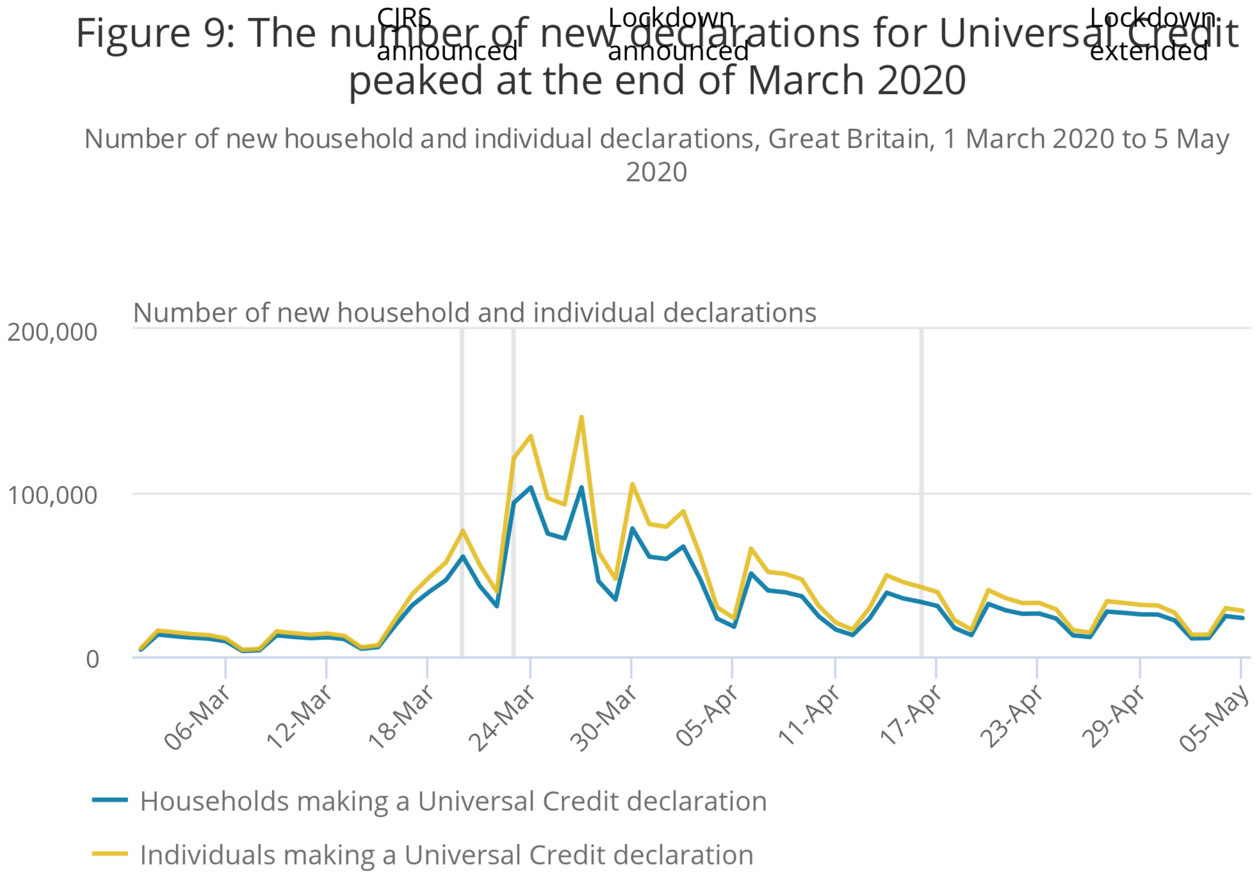
Notes:

The seven-day rolling average has been constructed using the three days before and after the reference point.

8 . Universal Credit

Figure 9: The number of new declarations for Universal Credit peaked at the end of March 2020

Number of new household and individual declarations, Great Britain, 1 March 2020 to 5 May 2020



Source: Department for Work and Pensions - Universal Credit declarations (claims) and advances: management information

Notes:

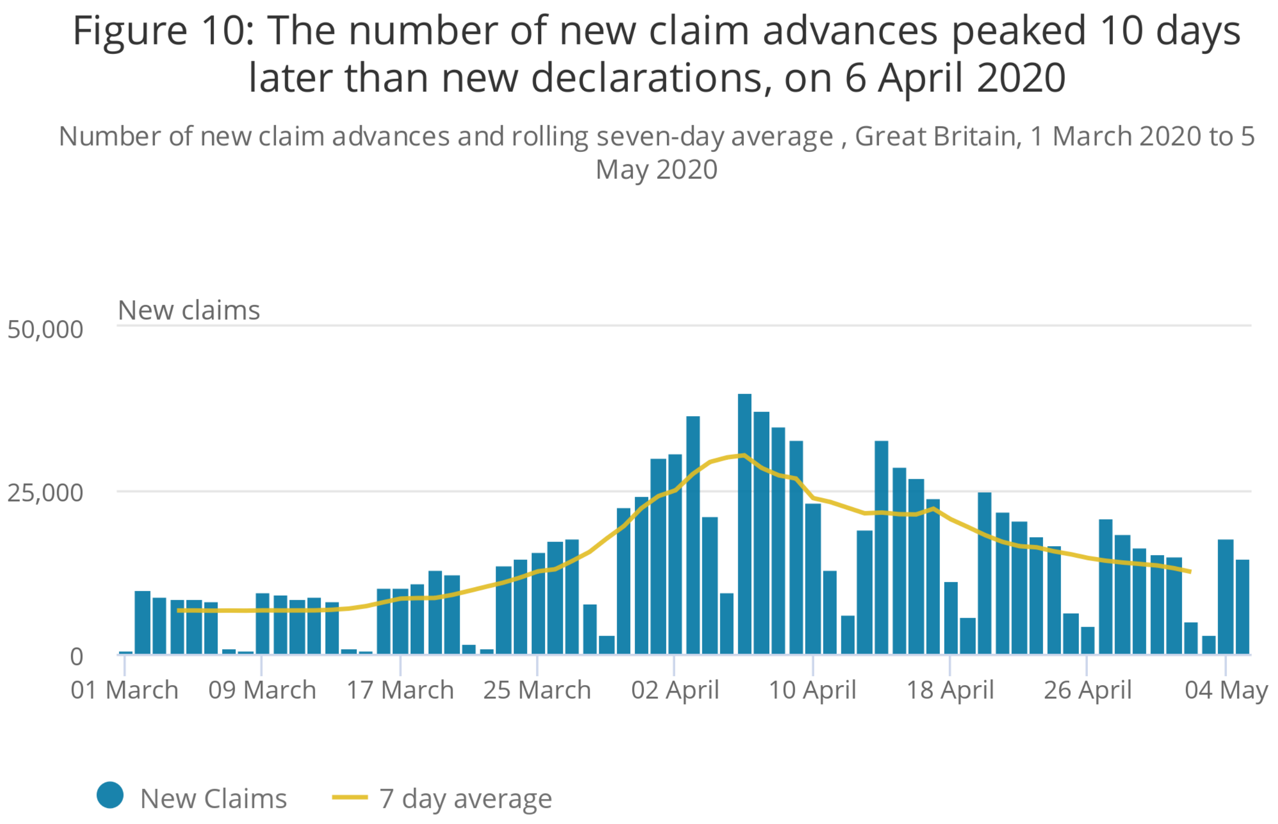
1. These declaration figures have not been derived to the same methodology as official statistics, and therefore the Management Information and official statistics will not be directly comparable. Figures relate to Great Britain only, and Northern Ireland is not included.

Figure 9 shows the number of new declarations, which is when an individual or household provides information on their personal circumstances to begin a Universal Credit (UC) claim. Note not all declarations will go on to receive a payment.

In the first half of March 2020, new declarations were steady between 10,000 and 16,000 each weekday. New declarations for individuals rose steeply in the third and fourth week to peak on 27 March with 146,290 declarations. The numbers then declined gradually in the subsequent three weeks to 27,810 new individual declarations on 5 May.

Figure 10: The number of new claim advances peaked 10 days later than new declarations, on 6 April 2020

Number of new claim advances and rolling seven-day average , Great Britain, 1 March 2020 to 5 May 2020



Source: Department for Work and Pensions - Universal Credit declarations (claims) and advances: management information

At the beginning of March, claim advances were steady at just under 5,000 per day (Figure 10). New claim advances peaked on 6 April at 35,280, which was 10 days after the peak of new declarations on 27 March, with another slight increase in the average around two weeks later. After the peak, claim advances have steadily fallen again to 11,520 on 5 May.

9 . Data

[Weekly and daily shipping indicators](#)
Dataset | Released 14 May 2020
The weekly and daily shipping indicators dataset associated with the faster indicators of UK economic activity.

[Online price changes for high-demand products](#)
Dataset | Released 14 May 2020
Weekly online price changes of selected high-demand products (HDP).

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#)
Dataset | Released on 14 May 2020
Final results for Wave 6 of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey to understand the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain. Including breakdowns by at-risk age, sex, disability and underlying health condition.

10 . Glossary

Faster indicator

A faster indicator provides insights into economic activity using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or experimental statistics, which represent useful economic and social concepts.

High-demand product (HDP) basket

The HDP basket contains everyday essential items that were identified at the beginning of the crisis to have high consumer demand, including items from food, health and hygiene categories. The selection of these items was based on anecdotal evidence on patterns of consumer spend. The basket does not cover all items within these categories.

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.

In employment

For the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey survey, a person is said to be “In employment” if they had a paid job, either as an employee or self-employed; or 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 in the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 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

Shipping

These weekly and daily faster shipping indicators data are created through new experimental methods and are not official statistics. More quality and methodology information is available in Faster indicators of UK economic activity: shipping.

Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey

The business indicators are based on responses from the voluntary, fortnightly Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey, which captures business' views on impact on turnover, workforce, prices, trade and business resilience. The data relate to initial Wave 4 results, covering the survey period 20 April to 3 May 2020 and the survey questions for the period are available in Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey questions 20 April to 3 May 2020. As such these preliminary indicators cover the business impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic only after the closure of all “non-essential” businesses and the introduction of the government’s job retention schemes.

The latest responses to the BICS are just of those businesses that responded to Wave 4 and does not take into account any businesses that responded to previous waves.

Table 2: Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey sample sizes, broken down by main trading and turnover status

Response	All Industries
Total	5036
Continuing to trade	3931
Continuing to trade and financial performance outside of normal expectations	2766
Continuing to Trade and turnover outside normal range	2649

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Estimates from the BICS Survey are currently unweighted and should be treated with caution when used to evaluate the impact of the coronavirus across the UK economy. Each business was assigned the same weight regardless of turnover, size or industry.

More information on the quality and methodology, including response rates, sample size and weighting, is available in the “Measuring the data” section of the Coronavirus and the economic impacts on the UK bulletin.

Social impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) (OPN)

Data on the social impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on Great Britain were collected from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) and the Labour Market Survey (LMS). The data related to final Wave 6 results, for the period 24 April to 3 May 2020. In this sixth wave, 2,010 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 55% (or 1,114 individuals) for the survey.

More information on the quality and methodology of the OPN Survey is available in the “Measuring the data” section of the Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain bulletin.

Online price change for high-demand products (HDP)

Prices were scraped daily from several large online UK retailers (typically supermarkets and other prominent high-street chains with an online presence) from 16 March to 10 May 2020 for selected items chosen to form the HDP basket (see Table 1 in the online price changes for HDPs methodology). An average weekly price was then calculated for each unique product and a movement splice GEKS-Jevons index was calculated using a rolling window of five weeks.

More information detailing our plan for data collection, compilation and publication of our various prices statistics following movement restrictions as a result of the coronavirus pandemic is available.

More information on the strengths and limitations of the online price changes data is available in the Online price changes of high-demand products methodology.

12 . Strengths and limitations

Shipping indicators

It should be noted that these indicators are not intended to be an early measure or predictor of gross domestic product (GDP), and their potential relationship with headline GDP should be interpreted with caution. Instead, they provide an early picture of a range of activities that are likely to have an impact on the economy, supplementing official economic statistics.

Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey

The Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) is voluntary and responses are qualitative, which should be treated with caution as results reflect the characteristics of those who responded and not necessarily the wider business population.

These data should not be used in place of official statistics. The survey was designed to give an indication of the impact of the coronavirus on businesses and a timelier estimate than other surveys.

More information on the strengths and limitations of the BICS data is available in the “Strengths and limitations” section of the Coronavirus and the economic impacts on the UK bulletin.

Social impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) (OPN)

More information on the strengths and limitations of the OPN Survey is available in the "Strengths and limitations" section of the Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain bulletin.

Online price change for high-demand products (HDP)

These experimental online price changes data should not be compared with the headline Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH). The CPIH is produced using different methods, data and quality thresholds, and incorporates a broader range of goods and services, such as housing.

More information on the strengths and limitations of the online price changes data is available in the Online price changes of high-demand products methodology.

Publication of coronavirus (COVID-19) related data

We will publish this bulletin on a weekly basis during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to ensure we are meeting user needs for more timely data. This is to ensure we are meeting user needs for more timely data. We will be adding new data and experimental indicators as and when data become available each week.

This publication will include regular updated data from the new fortnightly survey, BICS, online prices for high-demand products and weekly indicators from the OPN Survey on social impact of the coronavirus.

13 . Related links

Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest data and analysis
Web page | Updated as and when data become available
Latest data and analysis on the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) questions: 6 April 2020 to 19 April 2020
Article | Released on 23 April 2020
Questions from the Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey for the period 6 April to 19 April 2020 relating to the coronavirus, the UK economy and society, faster indicators weekly bulletin.

Rapid review of coronavirus, the UK economy and society, faster indicators
Webpage | Released on 9 April 2020
Letter from Ed Humpherson, the Director General for Regulation at the UK Statistics Authority, endorsing the ONS's new experimental faster indicators.

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 1 May 2020
Bulletin | Released 12 May 2020
Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available.