

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 26 February 2021

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 17 February to 21 February 2021 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

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1 . Main points

This week, over the period 17 to 21 February 2021, based on adults in Great Britain:

- Compliance with most measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) remained high, with the proportions reporting always or often handwashing after returning home (89%) and using a face covering (96%) both unchanged from last week; however, 86% of adults reported always or often maintaining social distance when meeting up with people outside their support bubble, which was lower than last week (91%).
- This week, the proportion of adults reporting staying at home or only leaving for work, exercise, essential shopping or medical needs in the past seven days fell to 54% (56% last week) but remains higher than the mid-November peak (43%) when governments introduced tighter restrictions across Great Britain.
- A similar proportion of adults reported exclusively working from home in the last seven days (35%) to those who reported to have exclusively travelled to work in the last seven days (36%); this is in comparison with 16 to 20 September 2020 when the proportion of adults reported travelling to work was considerably higher (53%) than those working from home (21% over the same period).
- Personal well-being measures including life satisfaction (6.4), the feeling that things done in life are worthwhile (7.0) and anxiety (4.1) were at similar levels to last week; however the level of happiness (6.6) has increased slowly from the low level seen at the end of January (6.4).
- This week, over 3 in 10 (35%) adults in Great Britain reported they had received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, compared with 26% last week; this increased with age with the majority (97%) of adults aged 70 years and over reporting they had received at least one dose of the vaccine.
- Positive sentiment towards the COVID-19 vaccine increased this week with 94% of adults reporting they had now either received the vaccine or would be likely to have the vaccine if offered; an increase from the 91% reported last week.

2 . Understanding the impact on society

This bulletin contains data and indicators from a 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 bulletin presents a summary of the results. Breakdowns by age, sex, region and country, including [confidence intervals](#) for the estimates, are contained in the [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain dataset](#). Where changes in results from previous weeks are presented in this bulletin, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of this difference.

The latest statistics in this release are based on a survey of 6,017 adults aged 16 years and above in Great Britain conducted between 17 and 21 February 2021 (inclusive). Results from this period are based on 4,113 responding adults (68% response rate).

Throughout the bulletin:

- “this week” refers to responses collected during the period 17 to 21 February 2021
- “last week” refers to responses collected during the period 10 to 14 February 2021

On 22 February 2021, the government published a four-step [road map](#) to ease lockdown restrictions in England. The reporting period for this release covers the week before this announcement, from 17 to 21 February 2021.

3 . Main indicators

Compliance with most measures to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) remained high this week (Table 1), with 89% of adults reporting always or often handwashing after returning home and 96% using a face covering; both unchanged from the proportions reported last week. This week, a similar proportion of adults (92%) reported avoiding physical contact when outside their home to last week (93%).

Table 1: Main indicators

Great Britain, 10 to 21 February 2021

Notes:

1. "This week" refers to responses collected during the period 17 to 21 February 2021.
2. "Last week" refers to responses collected during the period 10 to 14 February 2021.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Further statistics on compliance with measures to stop the spread of coronavirus, including trends over time, can be found in Tables 1a to 6 of the [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain dataset](#).

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](#).

Reasons for leaving home

This week, the proportion of adults reporting staying at home or only leaving for work, exercise, essential shopping or medical needs in the past seven days fell to 54% (56% last week). This proportion is lower than the peak in mid-January (65%) but remains higher than the mid-November peak (43%) when governments introduced tighter restrictions across Great Britain (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The proportion of adults staying at home or only leaving for essential needs in the past seven days has fallen from the mid-January peak but remains higher than the peak in November

Great Britain, March 2020 to February 2021

Figure 1: The proportion of adults staying at home or only leaving for essential needs in the past seven days has fallen from the mid-January peak but remains higher than the peak in November

Great Britain, March 2020 to February 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Questions: "In the past seven days, have you left your home for any reason?" and "In the past seven days, for what reasons have you left your home?".
2. Base: all adults.
3. Reasons for leaving home include: "Travelling to and from work", "For exercise, for example a run, walk or cycle", "Shopping for basic necessities (food and medicine)", "Any medical need, including to get a vaccine", and "To provide care or to help a vulnerable person".

A possible reason for people to leave home may be to meet others, either indoors or outdoors. We asked respondents to think of their largest gathering in the last seven days and found that:

- at least 12% of adults have met up indoors with someone outside their household or support bubble indoors in the last seven days (excluding work or education); this was similar to last week (11%)
- at least 18% of adults have met up with someone outside their household or support bubble outdoors in the last seven days (excluding work or education); this was up from 14% last week

When looking at those who had met up with others outside their household or support bubble (either indoors or outdoors), 86% of adults reported always or often maintaining social distance when meeting up with people outside their support bubble this week. This was a decrease from 91% last week.

It is worth noting that there may be valid reasons why people are unable to maintain social distancing (essential appointments, shopping, and so on) and it does not necessarily mean that adults are breaking lockdown rules.

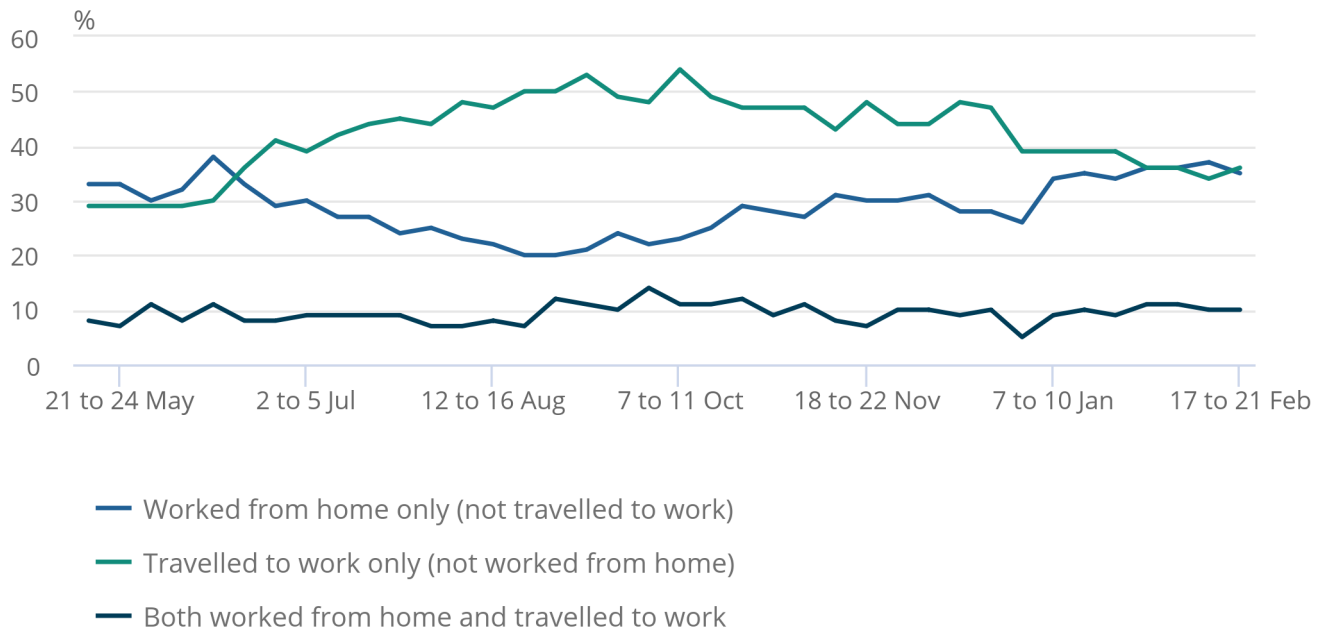
Looking at leaving home for work, a similar proportion of adults reported working from home this week (35%) to those who reported to have travelled to work exclusively (36%). This is compared with mid-September when fewer government restrictions were in place and a much higher proportion of adults reported travelling to work exclusively in the last seven days (53%) than those who reported to work from home (21%).

Figure 2: A similar proportion of working adults are working exclusively from home this week to those who are travelling to work

Great Britain, March 2020 to February 2021

Figure 2: A similar proportion of working adults are working exclusively from home this week to those who are travelling to work

Great Britain, March 2020 to February 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Notes:

1. Questions: "In the past seven days, have you worked from home because of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?"
2. Base: all adults.
3. Over the Christmas period, there were lower numbers of adults who said they had either travelled to work or worked from home in the last seven days. This was most likely because of changing work plans over the Christmas break.
4. A person is "working" 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.

4 . Personal well-being

This week, personal well-being measures including life satisfaction (6.4), the feeling that things done in life are worthwhile (7.0) and anxiety (4.1) all remained similar to the levels reported last week.

We do see a continued increase in the level of happiness (6.6 this week), albeit a slow improvement from the low level seen at the end of January (6.4).

Figure 3: This week, levels of happiness continued to increase slightly and levels of anxiety remain unchanged from the previous week

Great Britain, March 2020 to February 2021

Notes:

1. Questions: "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](#)

5 . Perceptions of the future

This week, the proportion of adults in Great Britain that felt that life will return to normal in six months or less increased to 22% compared with 20% last week.

The proportion of adults who felt that it will take more than a year for life to return to normal decreased slightly. Under 3 in 10 (27%) adults felt it will take more than a year for life to return to normal, compared with 29% last week (Figure 4).

Figure 4: The proportion of adults who reported they felt that it will take less than six months for life to return to normal increased this week

Great Britain, March 2020 to February 2021

Notes:

1. Question: "How long do you think it will be before your life returns to normal?".
2. Base: all adults.
3. Response categories of "7 to 12 months", "Never", "Not sure" and "Prefer not to say" are not shown on this chart.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Further statistics on well-being, loneliness, perceptions of the future and worries, including trends over time, can be found in Table 1b, Table 7 and Table 8 of the [associated dataset](#).

6 . Attitudes to COVID-19 vaccination

This week, over 3 in 10 (35%) adults in Great Britain reported they had received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, compared with 26% last week. This proportion increased with age with the majority (97%) of adults aged 70 years and over reporting they had received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine (Figure 5).

Nearly 6 in 10 (59%) of all adults reported they had not yet been offered the COVID-19 vaccine (68% last week), 5% reported that they had been offered it and were awaiting it (4% last week), and 1% reported that they had been offered it but declined it (same as last week).

The estimates presented here are from a sample of adults, and may differ from the latest official administrative data on [the number of adults in Great Britain and its constituent countries who have received COVID-19 vaccination](#). Our survey does not include adults living in care homes or other establishments, so will not capture vaccinations in these settings. Because of small sample sizes, the percentage of adults who have declined the vaccine should be treated with caution. For more information please see the [Glossary](#).

Figure 5: This week, the majority of adults aged 70 years and over (97%) reported to have received the vaccine

Great Britain, 17 to 21 February 2021

Notes:

1. Questions: "Have you received a vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19)?", "Have you been offered the vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19)?" and "If a vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19) was offered to you, how likely or unlikely would you be to have the vaccine?".
2. Base: all adults.
3. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding and proportions of less than 1% are not included in this chart.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Looking at attitudes towards the COVID-19 vaccine over time, Figure 6 shows an increase in positive sentiment since December 2020. This week, 94% of adults reported they had now either received the vaccine or would be likely (very or fairly likely) to have the vaccine if offered; an increase from the 91% reported last week. This also includes adults who have accepted and are waiting to receive it. In early December 2020, around 8 in 10 (78%) adults indicated they would be likely to accept the vaccine if offered it (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Over 9 in 10 (94%) adults have either received, are awaiting, or would be likely to accept the COVID-19 vaccine if offered

Great Britain, December 2020 to February 2021

Notes:

1. Questions: "Have you received a vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19)?", "Have you been offered the vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19)?" and "If a vaccine for the coronavirus (COVID-19) was offered to you, how likely or unlikely would you be to have the vaccine?".
2. Base: all adults.
3. Questions asked about attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccination have changed over the survey periods shown so interpretation of this time series should be made with caution. For more information please see the datasets associated with this bulletin.
4. Response category of "Adults who have received the vaccine, or would be likely to have the vaccine if offered" includes those who reported they have either received the COVID-19 vaccine, accepted an offer of a vaccine and are awaiting vaccination, or would be very or fairly likely to have the vaccine if offered.
5. Response categories of "Adults who have been offered and declined the vaccine or would be very or fairly unlikely to have the vaccine if offered", "Neither", "Don't know" and "Prefer not to say" are not shown on this chart.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Of all adults who said they would be unlikely to have the COVID-19 vaccine if offered, or had decided not to have the vaccine when offered, the most commonly reported reasons why not were:

- feeling worried about the long-term effects on their health (43% this week, 41% last week)
- feeling worried about the side effects (37% this week, 31% last week)
- wanting to wait to see how well the vaccine works (34% this week, 27% last week).

Further statistics on attitudes to vaccines and mass testing this week can be found in Table 12 of the [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain dataset](#). For more information on attitudes to vaccines amongst different sub-groups of the population, including breakdowns by age, sex, ethnic group and disability status, see [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 29 January 2021](#).

7 . Social impacts on Great Britain data

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

Dataset | Released 19 February 2021

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.

8 . Glossary

Lockdown

On 5 January 2021, the UK government announced a further national lockdown for [England](#). Similar rules applied for [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#), particularly the message to “stay at home” meaning that adults in Great Britain were under a national lockdown at the start of the year in 2021.

Personal well-being

Personal well-being measures ask people to evaluate, on a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied they are with their life overall, whether they feel the things they do in life are worthwhile, and happiness and anxiety yesterday.

For the latest estimates of personal well-being available from the Annual Population Survey (APS) and more information on the comparability of estimates of personal well-being between the APS and the estimates provided in this bulletin from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), see [Personal well-being in the UK, quarterly: April 2011 to September 2020](#).

Vaccination for COVID-19

Following the first coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine being given in the UK on 8 December 2020, the COVID-19 vaccination is now being provided in various locations across the country. The vaccine is currently being offered in some hospitals and pharmacies, at local vaccination centres run by GPs and at larger vaccination centres.

[National Health Service \(NHS\) guidance on the COVID-19 vaccine](#) is available.

More information on [the number of people who have received the COVID-19 vaccine to date](#) is available.

Working adults

For this survey, a person is said to be a “working adult” if:

- they had a paid job, either as an employee or self-employed
- they did any casual work for payment
- they did any unpaid or voluntary work in the previous week

In employment

A respondent is said to be “in employment” if their employment status is either employee, self-employed or unpaid family worker. This is different to the definition used in [our labour market estimates](#), which also include a small number of people on government training schemes. The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) does not ask whether a person is on a government training scheme.

9 . 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 the latest wave, 6,017 individuals were sampled, with a response rate of 68% (or 4,113 individuals) for the survey conducted from 17 to 21 February 2021.

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 or differences between groups are presented in this bulletin, associated [confidence intervals](#), which are included in the [associated datasets](#), indicate their significance.

Estimates in this bulletin are rounded to the nearest whole number. Where individual answer categories for a question have been combined to provide an estimate, this total may not appear to sum to the total of individual categories because of this rounding.

Estimates of attitudes towards vaccination provided since 13 to 17 January should be used with caution when compared with any weeks prior to this. In the weeks prior to this, adults were asked their likelihood of having the vaccine if offered, but were not specifically asked if they had already been offered or received the vaccine.

Sampling

A sample of 6,017 households was randomly selected from those that had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS). From each household, one adult was selected at random but with unequal probability. Younger people were given higher selection probability than other people because of under-representation in the sample available for the survey. The survey also includes a boosted sample for England, to allow more detailed analysis at a regional level, which are available in the datasets.

Weighting

The responding sample in the week 17 to 21 February 2021 contained 4,113 individuals (68% response rate). Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population.

Weights were first adjusted for non-response and attrition. Subsequently, the weights were calibrated to satisfy population distributions considering the following factors: sex by age, region, tenure, highest qualification and employment status. For age, sex and region, population totals based on projections of mid-year population estimates for February 2021 were used. The resulting weighted sample is therefore representative of the Great Britain adult population by a number of socio-demographic factors and geography.

For more information, see [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey Quality and Methodology Information](#).

10 . 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:

- analysis of estimates in Wales and Scotland are based on low sample sizes, and therefore caution should be used with these estimates
- 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

11 . 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.

[Coronavirus and homeschooling in Great Britain](#)

Dataset | Released 22 July 2020

Analysis of homeschooling in Great Britain during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). Data relate to homeschooling from the COVID-19 module of the OPN, collected from 3 April to 10 May 2020 and 7 May to June 2020.

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 29 January 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 9 February 2021

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 behaviours during different lockdown periods, Great Britain: up to February 2021](#)

Article | Released 5 February 2021

Attitudes towards staying and working at home, meetings in personal and public places, compliance with lockdown rules, well-being and when life will return to normal.

[Quarterly estimates of personal well-being in the UK: April 2011 to September 2020](#)

Article | Released 4 February 2021

Quarterly estimates of life satisfaction, feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile, happiness and anxiety at the UK level, created using the Annual Population Survey (APS). Covering the periods from Quarter 2 (April to June) 2011 through to Quarter 3 (July to September) 2020.

[Personal and economic well-being in Great Britain: January 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 20 January 2021

Estimates looking across personal and economic well-being covering the period from March to December 2020, to understand the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on people and households in Great Britain.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain: September 2020](#)

Article | Released 11 November 2020

The social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on disabled people in Great Britain based on indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). Insights from qualitative research commissioned by the Cabinet Office Disability Unit and conducted by Policy Lab help illustrate how these indicators can be experienced by disabled people in day-to-day life.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup](#)

Blog | Updated as data become available

Catch up on the latest data and analysis related to the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on our economy and society.