

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 8 October 2021

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey covering the period 22 September to 3 October 2021 to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

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Release date:
8 October 2021

Next release:
22 October 2021

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1 . Main points

Throughout the period of 22 September to 3 October 2021, based on adults in Great Britain:

- Most adults (85%) felt that wearing a face covering was either very important or important as a measure to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19); at the same time 86% of adults reported they wore a face covering when outside their home in the past seven days compared with 88% in the previous period (8 to 19 September 2021), continuing a trend of gradual decline since the start of July 2021.
- Most adults (85%) felt that socially distancing from others not in their household was either very important or important; a smaller proportion of adults (40%) reported that they always or often maintained social distancing when outside their home compared with 45% in the previous period, a figure which has steadily decreased since the start of May 2021.
- Just over half of adults (55%) reported that they avoided physical contact with others outside their home in the past seven days, a reduction of 4 percentage points from the previous period (59%).
- When friends and family had come into their home, the most common actions adults reported to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 were washing hands regularly (35%), opening windows or doors (34%), maintaining social distancing (18%) and cleaning touch points (17%); around 4 in 10 adults (39%) reported friends and family had not come into their homes in the past seven days.
- The proportion of adults who reported self-isolating in the past seven days remained stable (3% in both this period and the previous period); the main reasons adults self-isolated were that they had been in contact with someone who had tested positive for COVID-19 (34%), they had COVID-19 symptoms (31%), or because they had tested positive for COVID-19 (24%).
- Personal well-being measures of life satisfaction (7.1 in this period, 7.0 in the previous period), feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile (7.4 in this period, 7.3 in the previous period), happiness (7.1 in both this period and the previous period) and anxiety (4.0 in both this period and the previous period) all remained stable.
- Among working adults, 67% reported travelling to work at some point in the past seven days, an increase of 2 percentage points compared with the previous period (65%); 29% of working adults reported working from home at some point in the past seven days, unchanged from the previous period.
- In this period, for the first time, we asked adults in Great Britain about the likelihood of children in their household aged between 12 and 15 years receiving a coronavirus vaccine, around 7 in 10 (71%) responded that this is very likely or fairly likely.

In this period, we also asked adults in Great Britain whether they had experienced shortages of any goods at any time in the past two weeks¹:

- Around 1 in 6 (17%) adults reported that they had not been able to buy essential food items because they were not available; around 1 in 7 (15%) were unable to buy fuel; around 1 in 4 (23%) reported that they had not been able to buy other non-essential food items; and around 6 in 10 (57%) reported that everything they needed had been available to buy.
- When food shopping, around 6 in 10 (61%) of adults reported experiencing some differences compared with usual; the most commonly reported were that there was less variety in the shops (43%), that items they needed were not available but they could find a replacement (20%), that items they needed were not available and they could not find a replacement (20%), or that they had to go to more shops to get what they needed (14%).
- Around 2 in 10 (23%) of adults who had tried to buy medicine or get a prescription reported experiencing some differences compared with the usual; the most commonly reported were that they had to wait longer for their prescriptions (13%), that items they needed were not available but they could find a replacement (6%), that items needed were not available and they could not find a replacement (5%), or that they had to go to more pharmacies to find what they needed (4%).
- Most adults (85%) reported that their food shopping habits had not changed in the past two weeks, 5% reported buying more and 10% reported buying less.

Notes for: Main points

1. Totals for estimates regarding adults' experiences of shortages of goods may not sum to 100% as respondents were able to choose more than one option. Please see the datasets provided with this bulletin for further detail.

2 . Social impacts on Great Britain data

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

Dataset | Released 8 October 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 age, sex and region.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: Likelihood of a child receiving a vaccine for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Dataset | Released 8 October 2021

Dataset from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) on the likelihood of children aged between 12 and 15 years receiving a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: Personal experience of shortage of goods](#)

Dataset | Released on 8 October 2021

Data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) on whether people experienced shortage of goods such as food, medicine and fuel when shopping.

3 . 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) to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on British society.

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 the differences.

Sampling and weighting

From the period between 4 and 8 August 2021 onwards, OPN sample size was reduced to around 5,000 households in each period to help ensure the survey remains sustainable. In this period between 22 September and 3 October, we sampled 5,000 households. These were randomly selected from those that had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or OPN. The responding sample contained 3,326 individuals, representing a 67% response rate.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population (based on September 2021 population estimates). Further information on the survey design and quality can be found in the [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey Quality and Methodology Information](#).

4 . Related links

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Web page | Updated as data become available

Latest data and analysis on coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effects on the economy and society.

[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.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) harmonisation guidance](#)

Webpage | Updated frequently

This page provides harmonisation guidance on how best to collect data about the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Users can also find a bank of questions from multiple Office for National Statistics (ONS) surveys related to coronavirus (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 ONS has in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

[One in ten adults report being asked for COVID-19 vaccination or test proof](#)

Article | Released 10 September 2021

Data and analysis on the percentage of adults in Great Britain who have been asked to show proof of vaccination or a recent negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test, to be let into a venue or event.

[Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 7 October 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 October 2021

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.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey, characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19, UK: 6 October 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 6 October 2021

Characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19 from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey. This survey is being delivered in partnership with University of Oxford, University of Manchester, Public Health England and Wellcome Trust. This study is jointly led by the ONS and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) working with the University of Oxford and Lighthouse Laboratories to collect and test samples.

[Monthly mortality analysis, England and Wales: August 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 21 September 2021

Provisional death registration data for England and Wales, broken down by sex, age and country. Includes deaths due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and leading causes of death.

[Remote schooling through the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic, England: April 2020 to June 2021](#)

Article | Released 22 September 2021

How remote learning has affected the amount of learning materials covered by pupils and the dependence of remote learning on parental input over the course of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey: antibody and vaccination data, UK: 16 September 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 16 September 2021

Antibody and vaccination data by UK country and regions in England from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey. This analysis has been produced in partnership with the University of Oxford, the University of Manchester, Public Health England, and Wellcome Trust. This study is jointly led by the ONS and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) working with the University of Oxford and Lighthouse Laboratories to collect and test samples.

[Coronavirus and depression in adults, Great Britain: July to August 2021](#)

Bulletin | 1 October 2021

Analysis of the proportion of the adult population of Great Britain experiencing some form of depression in summer 2021, based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. Includes analysis by age, sex and other characteristics and comparisons with early 2021, 2020 and pre-pandemic estimates.