

Statistical bulletin

# Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 6 to 17 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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# 1 . Main points

The following information is on the latest period, 6 to 17 July 2022, based on adults in Great Britain.

- Around 9 in 10 (89%) adults continued to report their cost of living had risen over the past month; this is an increase since we first started asking this question in the period 3 to 14 November 2021 (62%).
- Around half (46%) of adults who pay energy bills found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them, which is an increase from 43% in the previous period (22 June to 3 July 2022).
- Just over one in five (21%) adults reported they had to borrow more money or take out more credit in the past month compared with a year ago, while 46% of adults stated they will not be able to save any money in the next 12 months.
- Half (50%) of adults reported that they were buying less when food shopping, while 50% of adults reported having to spend more than usual to get what they normally buy; these proportions have increased from when the data were first collected (8% and 18% in September and October 2021, respectively).
- Around one in seven (14%) adults travelled abroad in the last four weeks; among those, a third (33%) of adults reported that they experienced some form of disruption while travelling abroad in the past four weeks.
- Among those who reported disruption when travelling abroad by plane, the most common forms of disruption were delayed flights or more time waiting on the plane (92%) and longer than normal queues at the airport (54%).

## 2 . Cost of living and household finances

Estimates in this release are based on data collected between 6 to 17 July 2022 (the "latest period") and 22 June to 3 July 2022 (the "previous period").

### Cost of living increases

In this period, we continued to ask adults about changes to their cost of living over the past month, with around 9 in 10 (89%) reporting it had increased in the latest period (91% in the previous period). This is a rise from 62% when we first asked about this in the period 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 (94%, compared with 95% in the previous period)
- gas or electricity bills (81%, compared with 83% in the previous period)
- the price of fuel (75%, compared with 79% 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 were:



- spending less on non-essentials (61%, compared with 62% in the previous period)
- using less fuel such as gas or electricity at home (49%, compared with 53% in the previous period)
- cutting back on non-essential journeys in a vehicle (46%, the same as the previous period)
- spending less on food shopping and essentials (45%, compared with 44% in the previous period)

When asked about their shopping habits in the past two weeks, half (50%) of adults reported that they were buying less food than before, while 50% reported spending more than usual to get what they normally buy in the latest period. These proportions have increased from when the data were first collected (8% and 18% in September and October 2021, respectively) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Half of adults (50%) 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: Half of adults (50%) 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 31 October 2021 onwards.

## Household and energy bills

This week, we asked all adults how easy or difficult it has been to pay their usual household bills in the last month compared with a year ago. Around 3 in 10 (29%) reported that they found it very difficult or difficult to pay their usual household bills in the last month compared with a year ago.

Almost half (46%) of all adults who pay energy bills reported they found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them in the latest period, compared with 43% in the previous period.

Among those who reported having gas or electricity supplied to their home, 5% stated they were behind on these bills (6% in the previous period). This proportion has been relatively stable since we first asked this question in March 2022.

There are strong seasonal spending patterns relating to gas and electricity that may affect the results 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 June 2022](#).

## Savings and borrowing

This week, we continued to ask all adults about their outlooks on saving and borrowing money.

In view of the current economic situation, nearly half (46%) of adults stated that they will not be able to save any money in the next 12 months.

Around one in five (21%) adults reported having to borrow more money or take out more credit in the past month compared with a year ago.

## 3 . Travel and disruption

This week, we asked all adults whether they have travelled abroad in the past four weeks. We also asked about any disruption experienced while travelling abroad and the nature of this disruption.

Around one in seven (14%) adults travelled abroad in the past four weeks. Of those using various forms of transport exclusively or in combination, around 9 in 10 (86%) travelled by plane, 23% by train and 14% by boats or ferries.

Of the 14% who travelled abroad, around a third (33%) mentioned that they experienced some form of disruption.

Of those who travelled abroad by plane in the past four weeks and experienced some form of disruption:

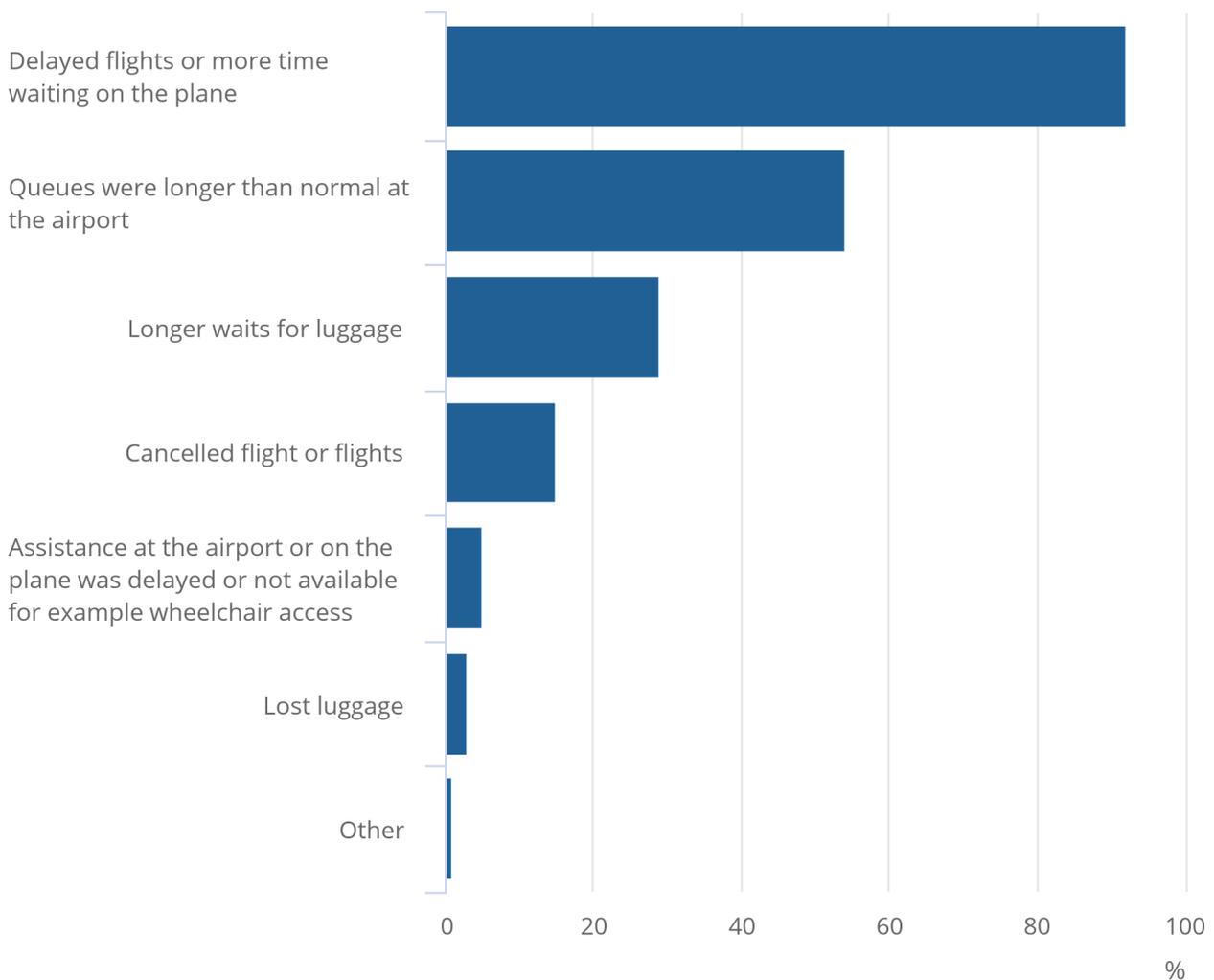
- almost all experienced delayed flights or more waiting time on the plane (92%)
- around half reported longer than normal queues at the airport (54%)
- almost a third said they experienced longer waits for luggage (29%)
- around one in seven reported cancellation of flights (15%)

**Figure 2: Around 9 in 10 (92%) of those who travelled abroad by plane, and experienced disruptions, reported delayed flights or more waiting time on the plane**

Adults in Great Britain who have travelled abroad by plane and experienced disruption, 6 to 17 July 2022

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Adults in Great Britain who have travelled abroad by plane and experienced disruption, 6 to 17 July 2022



Notes:

1. Question: "When you went abroad by plane, how were your travel plans disrupted?"
2. Base: this question on travel disruption was only asked to those who reported that they had travelled abroad by plane in the last four weeks and experienced disruption to travel plans.
3. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

## 4 . Location of work

When answering questions about their work, respondents were asked to consider the last seven days.

Almost 7 in 10 (68%) working adults travelled to work at some point in the past seven days (67% in the previous period). Of those, 45% only travelled to work (same as the previous period), while 24% reported both working from home and travelling to work (21% in the previous period).

Among working adults, 16% said they worked from home exclusively in the past seven days (18% in the previous period), while 15% neither travelled to work nor worked from home (16% in the previous period) (Figure 3).

### **Figure 3: Around a quarter (24%) 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 nor 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 3, 11 and 12 of our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and other illnesses dataset](#).

Our [Homeworking in the UK - regional patterns](#) article provides information on how people's attitudes to homeworking have changed throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, examining changes to the regional distribution of labour across the UK.

## 5 . Actions taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses

This week, we asked all adults about the actions and preventative measures they took to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and other illnesses such as coughs or colds when having visitors in their homes. The most reported actions taken were:

- opening windows or doors (27%)
- washing hands regularly (20%)
- maintaining social distancing (15%)
- cleaning touch points (8%)

When asked about some of the preventative measures taken by all adults in the past seven days to help slow the spread:

- three-quarters (75%) reported they always or often wash their hands with soap straight after returning home from a public place
- over a third (36%) said they wore face coverings when outside their home
- almost 3 in 10 (29%) stated that they always or often maintained social distancing when meeting up with people outside their household

Among all adults, around a third (35%) reported that they have avoided older or more vulnerable people because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 and analysis](#) from the ONS and other sources.
- View [all coronavirus data](#).

## 6 . Personal well-being and loneliness

### 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 (7.2 in the latest period and 7.3 in the previous period)
- happiness (7.1 in the latest period and 7.2 in the previous period)
- anxiety (3.9 in the latest period and 3.8 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 4: 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 (the same as 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](#).

## 7 . Public opinions and social trends data

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

Dataset | Released 22 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 22 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 22 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 22 July 2022

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

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

Dataset | Released 22 July 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) on people in Great Britain's experiences travelling abroad and any disruption faced.

## 8 . 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 (6 to 17 July 2022), we sampled 4,956 households. This sample was randomly selected from those who had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or OPN. The responding sample for the latest period contained 2,212 individuals, representing a 44.6% 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 \(QMI\)](#).

## 9 . 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 real-time 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 summary of ONS' current and future analytical work related to the cost of living.

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

Article | Released 10 June 2022

An article covering people's worries about the rising costs of living, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey collected between 27 April and 22 May 2022 and based on adults in Great Britain aged 16 years and over.

### [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.