

Statistical bulletin

# Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 4 to 14 May 2023

Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, and shortages of goods from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

Contact:  
Ben Harris, Hannah White, David  
Ainslie, Tim Vizard  
policy.evidence.analysis@ons.  
gov.uk  
+44 30 0067 1543

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# 1 . Main Points

The following information is for the latest survey period 4 to 14 May 2023, based on adults in Great Britain.

- When asked about the important issues facing the UK today, the most commonly reported issues continue to be the cost of living (91%), the NHS (82%), the economy (73%), and climate change and the environment (59%).
- Around two-thirds of (67%) adults reported that their cost of living had increased, compared with a month ago.
- The most common reasons reported by adults who said their cost of living had increased compared with a month ago were an increase in the price of food shopping (96%), an increase in gas or electricity bills (74%), and an increase in the price of fuel (38%).
- Around 6 in 10 (59%) reported watching (or planning to watch) the coronation of King Charles III and Camilla, Her Majesty the Queen on TV; this proportion increased with age, being reported by 39% of people aged 16 to 29 years, 56% of those aged 30 to 49 years, 62% of those aged 50 to 69 years, and 82% of those aged 70 years or over.
- Around half (49%) of adults reported trying to contact a GP practice for themselves or someone else in the past month.
- Around 4 in 10 (40%) adults who had tried to contact a GP practice for themselves or someone else in the past month reported it was easy or very easy to contact the GP practice, and 36% reported that it was difficult or very difficult.
- Around 6 in 10 (60%) of those who tried to contact a GP practice for themselves or someone else in the past month described their overall experience of the GP practice as very or fairly good, while 22% reported that it was very or fairly poor.

## 2 . Important issues facing the UK

Estimates in this release are based on data collected between 4 and 14 May 2023 (the "latest period") and 19 April and 1 May 2023 (the "previous period"). Analysis is based on adults in Great Britain.

### Important issues

In the latest period, we asked adults what they feel are important issues facing the UK today. The most commonly reported issues were:

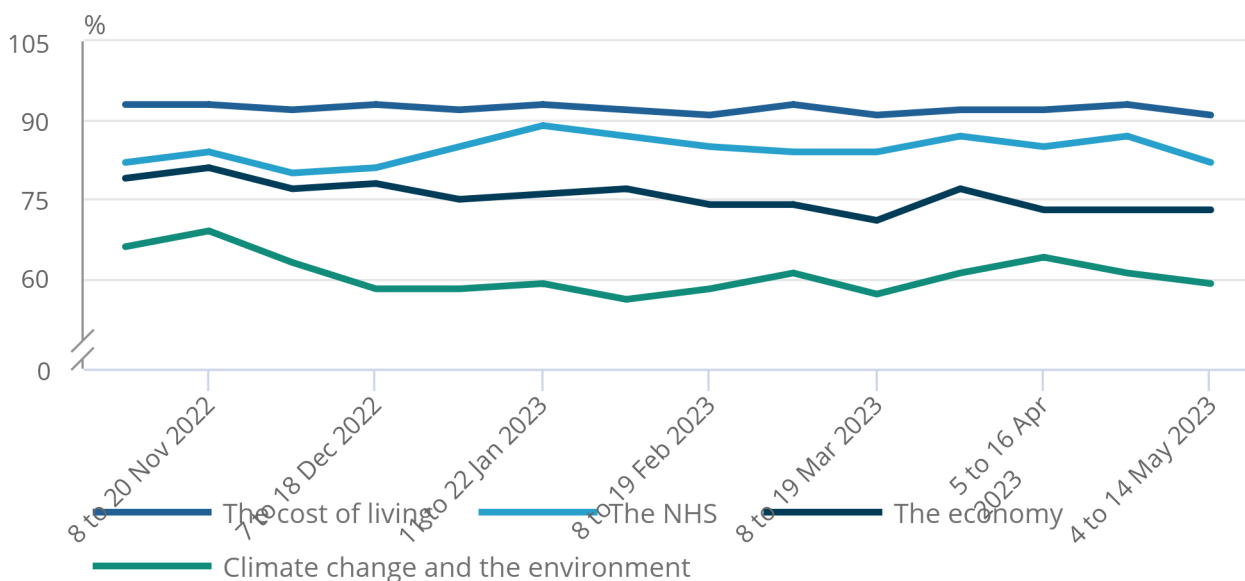
- the cost of living (91%)
- the NHS (82%)
- the economy (73%)
- climate change and the environment (59%)

**Figure 1: The cost of living and the NHS continue to be the most commonly reported important issues**

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain, October 2022 to May 2023

### Figure 1: The cost of living and the NHS continue to be the most commonly reported important issues

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain, October 2022 to May 2023



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

**Notes:**

1. Question: "What do you think are important issues facing the UK today?".
2. Base: all adults.
3. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

## 3 . Cost of living

Over 9 in 10 (93%) people reported that their cost of living had increased, compared with a year ago. Compared with one month ago, 67% reported an increase in their cost of living (70% in the previous period).

## Reasons for cost of living increases

The most commonly reported reasons given by adults for the rise in their cost of living over the past month were increases in:

- the price of food shopping (96%)
- their gas or electricity bills (74%)
- the price of fuel (38%)

Data released in our [Consumer price inflation \(CPI\), UK: March 2023 bulletin](#) show that food costs and housing costings (including energy, electricity and other fuel) continue to be causes of CPI.

## Actions taken because of the rising cost of living

The most common actions reported by all adults because of the rising cost of living in the latest period were:

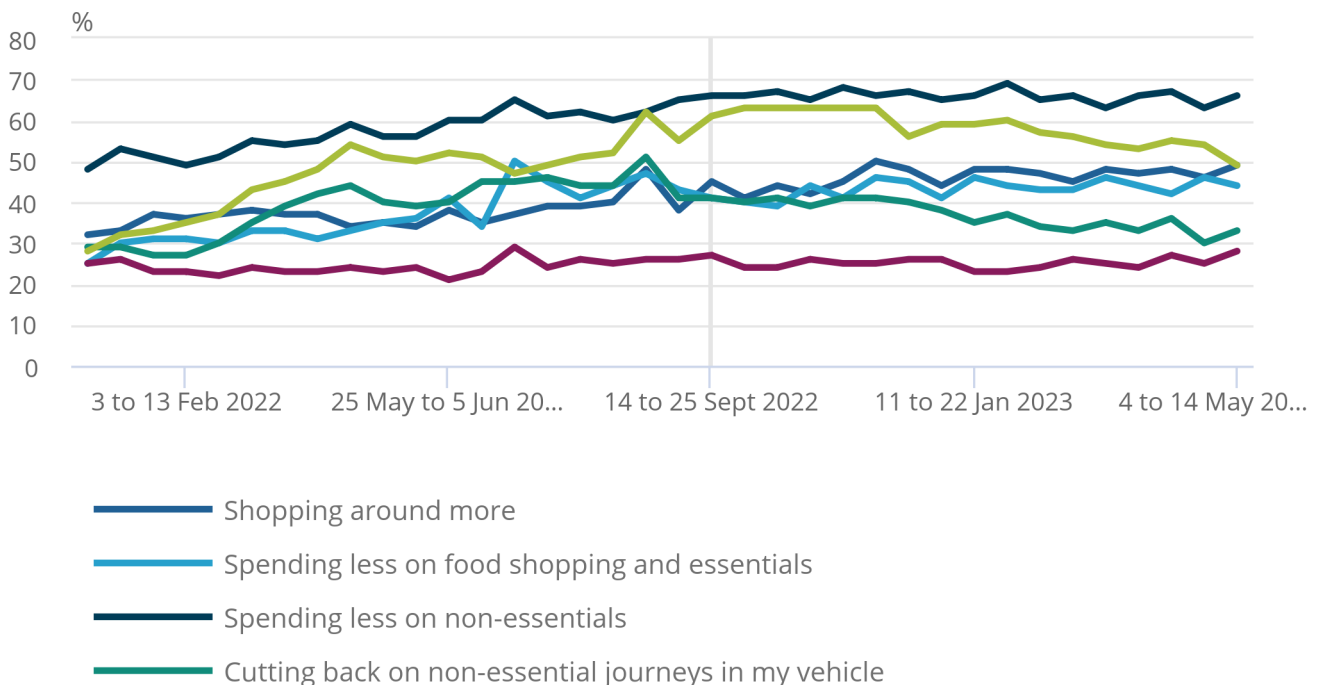
- spending less on non-essentials (66%)
- shopping around more (49%)
- using less fuel such as gas or electricity in their home (49%)
- spending less on food shopping and essentials (44%)

**Figure 2: Around two-thirds (66%) of adults reported spending less on non-essentials because of the rising cost of living**

Proportion of adults taking actions because of increases in the cost of living, Great Britain, December 2021 to May 2023

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Proportion of adults taking actions because of increases in the cost of living, Great Britain, December 2021 to May 2023



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

Notes:

1. Question: "Which of these, if any, are you doing because of the increases in the cost of living?".
2. Base: Adults who said their cost of living has increased over the last month until the period 14 to 25 September 2022 from which the base is all adults.
3. Because of changes in the base of the question, there is a break in the time series from the period 14 to 25 September 2022.
4. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

## 4 . GP practice access

In the latest period, we asked adults about their experiences of accessing a GP practice.

Around half (49%) of adults reported trying to contact a GP practice for themselves or someone else in the past month.

Of these adults:

- around 7 in 10 (68%) reported they had managed to make contact on the same day they tried (had received a response from a receptionist or clinician or been able to book an appointment)
- 8% reported they had made contact on the day after
- 15% reported they had made contact two or more days later
- 10% reported they didn't manage to make contact with the GP practice

Around 4 in 10 (40%) of these adults reported it was easy or very easy to contact the GP practice, whereas 36% reported that it was difficult or very difficult.

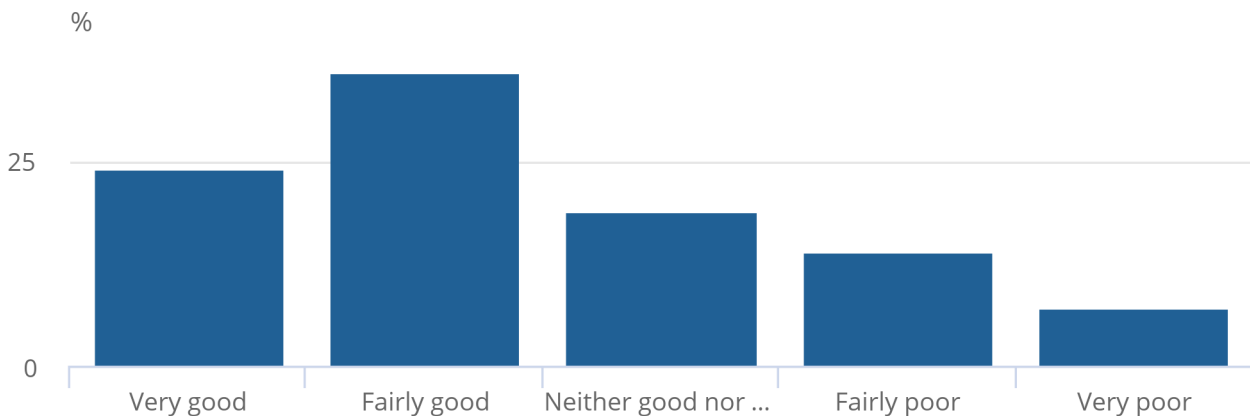
Around 6 in 10 (60%) of these adults described their overall experience of the GP practice as very or fairly good, and 22% reported that it was very or fairly poor.

**Figure 3: Around 6 in 10 (60%) adults described their overall experience of the GP practice as very or fairly good**

Proportion among adults who tried to contact a GP practice in the past month for themselves or someone else, Great Britain, 4 to 14 May 2023

Figure 3: Around 6 in 10 (60%) adults described their overall experience of the GP practice as very or fairly good

Proportion among adults who tried to contact a GP practice in the past month for themselves or someone else, Great Britain, 4 to 14 May 2023



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

Notes:

1. Question: "Overall, how would you describe your experience of the GP practice?".
2. Base: Adults who tried to contact a GP practice in the past month for themselves or someone else.
3. Combined categories may not sum because of rounding.

More information about the methods people contacted their GP practice by and any next steps they took after making contact is available in the [GP practice access dataset](#).

A more detailed look at people's experience of GP practice access is included in our [Impact of winter pressures on different population groups in Great Britain article](#). You can also explore estimates of how people feel about their GP practice experience in England using estimates from the [GP patient survey](#).

## 5 . Personal well-being

During the latest period, we continued to ask respondents about their personal well-being. Average levels of personal well-being were:

- life satisfaction: 6.9 in the latest period (6.9 in the previous period)
- feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile: 7.2 in the latest period (7.2 in the previous period)
- happiness: 7.0 in the latest period (7.1 in the previous period)
- anxiety: 3.9 in the latest period (3.9 in the previous period)

### Figure 4: Levels of personal well-being

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to May 2023

#### 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?", "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.

We also asked adults how often they feel lonely. Around a quarter (26%) of adults reported that they felt lonely often, always, or some of the time (25% in the previous period).

Section 3 of our [Personal well-being quarterly estimates technical report](#) provides more information on the seasonal variation associated with measures of personal well-being. You can learn more about the Measures of National Well-being from our [Quality of life in the UK: May 2023 bulletin](#) and our [Measures of National Well-being dashboard](#), which provides longer-term trends in well-being since 2012.

#### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

## 6 . King's coronation

The coronation of King Charles III and Camilla, Her Majesty the Queen, took place on 6 May 2023, during the latest period of our survey.

We asked adults what activities they did or planned to do over the coronation weekend, 6 to 8 May 2023. Around 6 in 10 (59%) people reported they watched, or planned to watch, the Coronation Service on TV. This proportion increased with age, being reported by:





- 39% of those aged 16 to 29 years
- 56% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 62% of those aged 50 to 69 years
- 82% of those aged 70 years or over

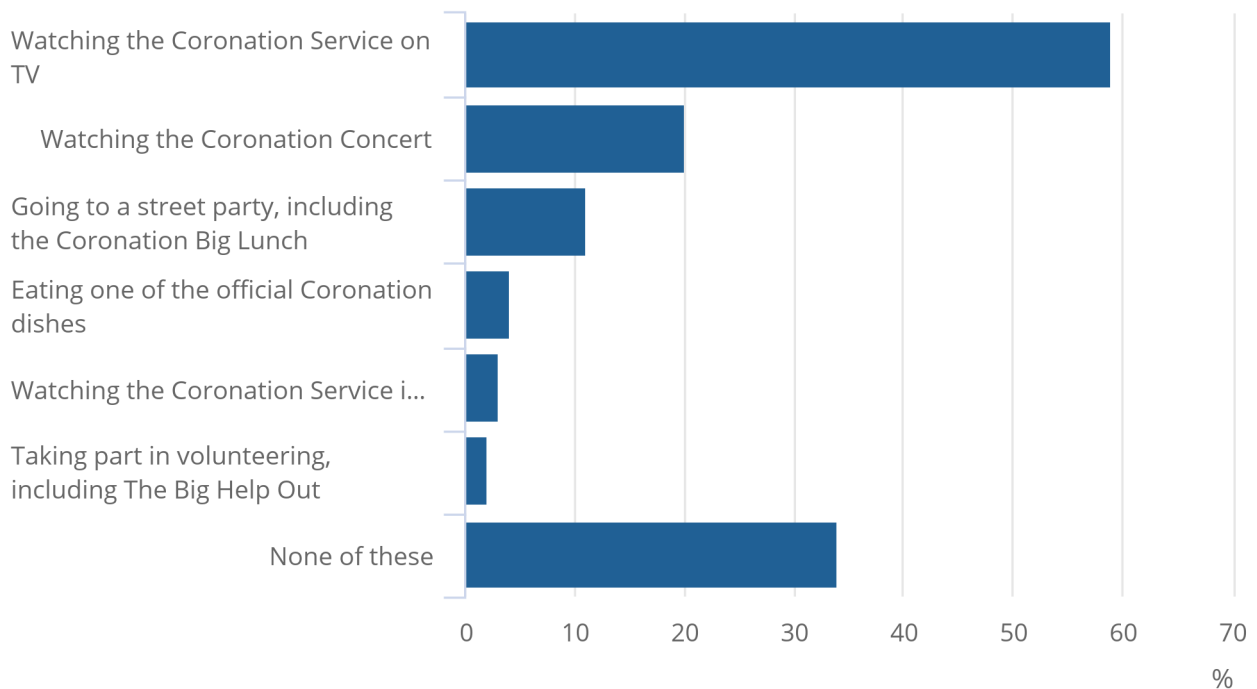
Figure 5 shows the proportion of adults undertaking a range of activities we asked about.

**Figure 5: Around 6 in 10 (59%) adults reported they planned to or did watch the Coronation Service on TV**

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain, 4 to 14 May 2023

**Figure 5: Around 6 in 10 (59%) adults reported they planned to or did watch the Coronation Service on TV**

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain, 4 to 14 May 2023



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

**Notes:**

1. Question: "What activities, if any, are you planning to take part in or did you take part in over the Coronation Weekend on the 6th to the 8th of May 2023?".
2. Participants were asked either what activities they were planning to take part in, would be taking part in, or did take part in over the Coronation Weekend of the 6 to 8 May 2023 depending on the date on which they responded to the survey.
3. Base: all adults.
4. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

## 7 . Public opinions and social trends data

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: household finances](#) Dataset | Released 19 May 2023  
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 19 May 2023  
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: working arrangements](#) Dataset | Released 19 May 2023  
Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to the working arrangements of people in Great Britain.

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal experiences of shortages of goods](#) Dataset | Released 19 May 2023  
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: GP practice access](#) Dataset | Released 19 May 2023  
Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to people's experience of GP practice access in Great Britain.

## 8 . Measuring the data

This release contains data and indicators from a module being undertaken through the Office for National Statistics's (ONS's) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

Breakdowns by age and sex, including [confidence intervals](#) for the estimates, are contained in our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain datasets](#).

Where changes in results from previous weeks are presented in this bulletin, or comparisons between estimates are made, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the differences.

### Sampling and weighting

In the latest period (4 May to 14 May 2023), we sampled 4,961 households. This sample was randomly selected from people who had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or OPN. The responding sample for the latest period contained 2,045 individuals, representing a 41% response rate.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population (based on ONS 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

### [Quality of life in the UK: May 2023](#)

Article | Released 12 May 2023

An update on UK's progress across ten domains of national well-being which include personal well-being, relationships, health, what we do, where we live, personal finance, economy, education and skills, governance, and the environment.

[Tracking the impact of winter pressures in Great Britain: November 2022 to February 2023](#) Article | Released 24 April 2023 Insights from our Winter Survey as we tracked participants to examine how increases in the cost of living and difficulty accessing NHS services had impacted their lives during the winter months.

[The impact of winter pressures on different population groups in Great Britain: 15 to 26 February 2023](#) Article | Released 30 March 2023 In-depth analysis on how increases in the cost of living and difficulty accessing NHS services have impacted people's lives across the winter period.

[Characteristics of adults experiencing energy and food insecurity in Great Britain: 22 November to 18 December 2022](#) Article | Released 13 February 2023 Understanding the characteristics associated with experiencing energy and food insecurity; logistic regression analysis using data from the Winter Survey.

[Cost of living insights](#) Web page | Updated frequently The latest data and trends about the cost of living. Explore changes in the cost of everyday items and how this is affecting people.

[Impact of increased cost of living on adults across Great Britain: September 2022 to January 2023](#) Article | Released 20 February 2023 Analysis of the proportion of the population that are affected by an increase in their cost of living, and of the characteristics associated with financial vulnerability, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle survey.

[Cost of living and depression in adults, Great Britain: 29 September to 23 October 2022](#) Article | Released 6 December 2022 Analysis into the prevalence of depression among adults in Great Britain in autumn 2022. Exploring this in the context of the rising cost of living.

## 10 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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