

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Review: data and analysis, March to October 2020

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Household and community impact

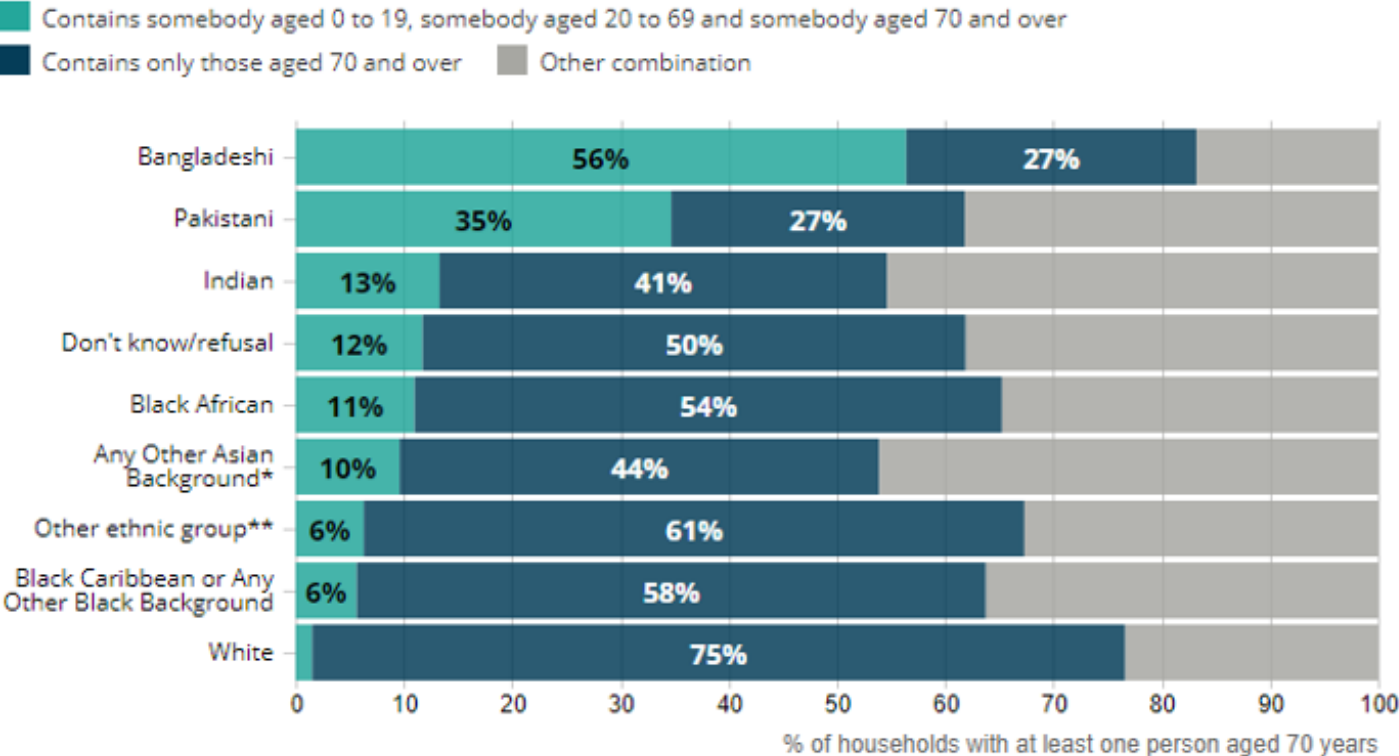
This section includes analysis on how different households have been affected by the pandemic and how communities have responded

Older people living in multigenerational households may be more exposed to COVID-19

- People aged 70 years or over from certain ethnic groups are more likely to live with those from a range of ages.
- Households containing someone aged 70 years or over are most likely to contain a mix of ages living together if that person's ethnicity is Bangladeshi (56%) or Pakistani (35%)
- Older people who live with more than one generation of people may be more exposed to COVID-19.
- Over 80% of deaths registered up to 25 September 2020 that mention COVID-19 on the death certificate in England and Wales relate to someone aged 70 years or over.

Households containing someone aged 70 years or over are more likely to contain a mix of ages living together if that person's ethnicity is Bangladeshi or Pakistani

Proportion of households with at least one person aged 70 years or over by ethnic group of that person, by mix of ages in the household, UK, 2018



Source: [ONS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup: Multigenerational households](#)

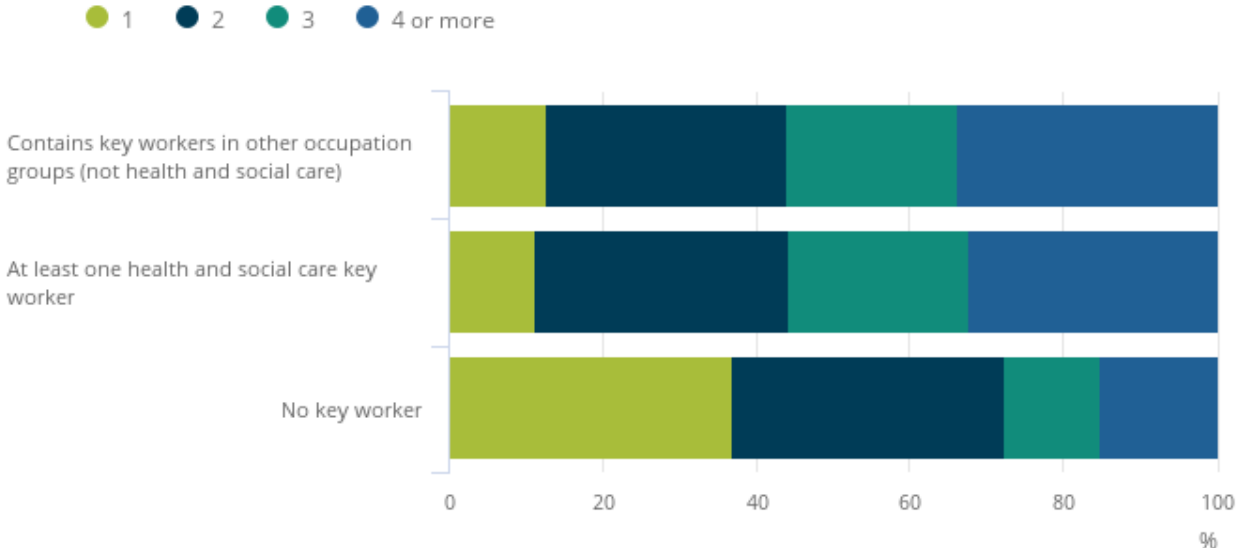
Lead analyst: [Pamela Cobb](#)

Households containing key workers are more likely to be larger than other households in the UK, increasing the risk of COVID-19 exposure

- 30% (8,340,132) of households in the UK contain at least one key worker. 10% (2,809,000) of households contain at least one health and social care key worker.
- Over 30% of households containing at least one key worker include four or more people (32% for those containing a health and social care key worker and 34% for households with other key workers only) compared with only 15% of households without a key worker.
- Households containing a key worker may be at more risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Households without key workers are more likely to contain someone aged 65 years or over (41%) than those that contain at least one health and social care key worker (8%) or other key worker only (9%).

Around one in three households containing a key worker contained four or more people

Households by presence of health and social care key workers, and number of people in the household, UK, April to June 2019



Sources: [Estimated number of households by presence of key workers and people age 65 years and over, English regions and other UK countries, 2019](#) and [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) – Quarter 2 \(Apr to June\) 2019](#)

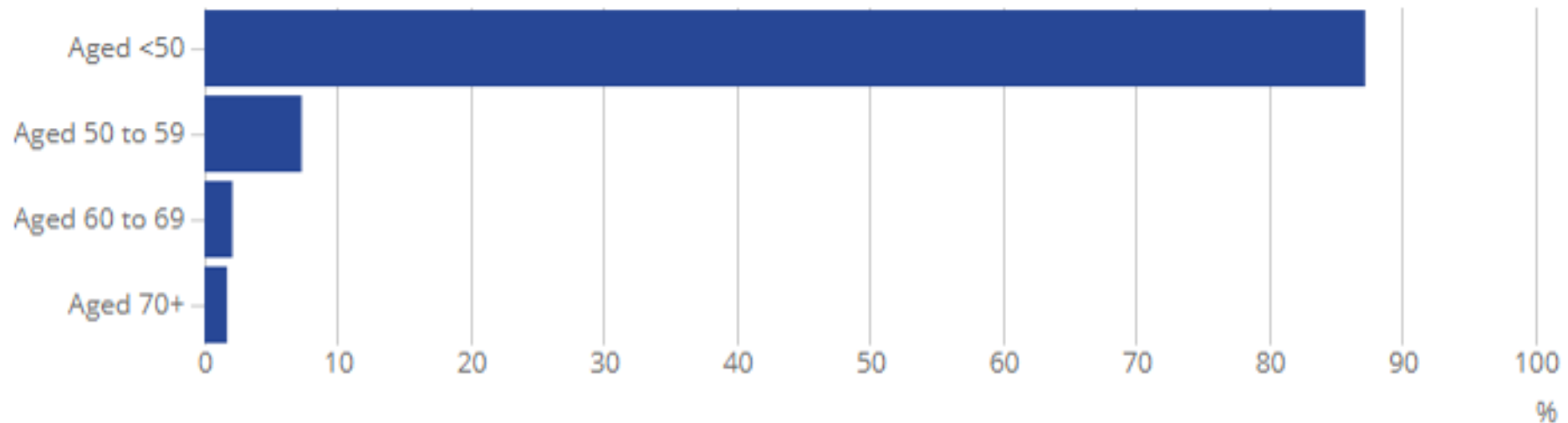
Lead analyst: [Pamela Cobb](#)

People living with primary school-aged children may have been more exposed to COVID-19 following a return to school from 1 June 2020 in England

- As part of guidance set out by the government, children in reception, year 1 and year 6 in England were strongly encouraged to return to school from 1 June 2020.
- We estimated that there were approximately 2.1 million children in these year groups (43% of all primary school-aged children).
- Up to 680,000 (17.5% of all families with primary or early years aged children) of families could have expected all their children to return to school.
- This could have potentially allowed an estimated 1 million people in employment in these families to return to work (3.8% of the total workforce in England).
- The majority of parents living with one or more primary school-aged children are themselves aged 35 to 39 years (27%) or 40 to 44 years(25%).
- The majority (87.2%) of primary school-aged children do not live with anyone over the age of 50, but 7.3% live with someone aged 50 to 59 years and 1.7% live with someone aged 70 years and over.

A small minority of primary school-aged children are living with someone aged 70 years and over

Primary school aged children living in a household, by age of oldest household member, England, October to December 2019



Sources: [ONS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup: Children returning to school](#) and [Estimates of the age distribution of parents of primary school aged children: England, Oct to Dec 2019](#)

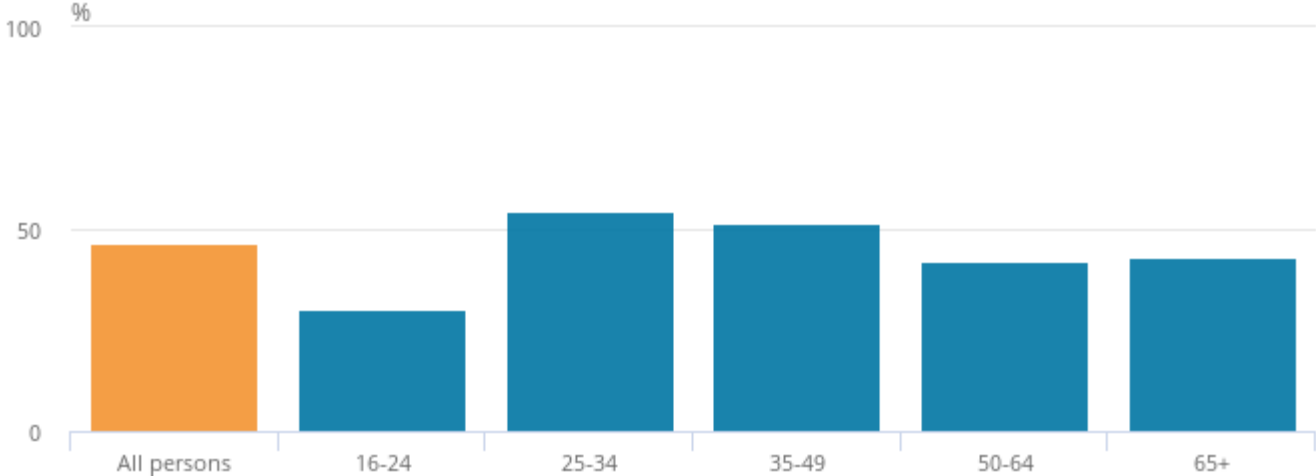
Lead analyst: [Pamela Cobb](#)

During April 2020, most people who did some work at home did so as a result of COVID-19

- 46.6% of people in employment did some work at home during April 2020. 86.0% of these individuals did so as a result of COVID-19.
- Of those who did some work from home, around one-third worked fewer hours than usual (34.4%) and around one-third worked more hours than usual (30.3%).
- Women were slightly more likely to do some work at home than men, at 47.5% and 45.7% respectively.
- People aged 16 to 24 years were less likely to do some work from home than those in older age groups.
- Occupations requiring higher qualifications and more experience were more likely to provide homeworking opportunities than elementary and manual occupations.

People aged 16 to 24 years were less likely to do any work from home than other age groups

Homeworking rates, by age, of those in employment (aged 16 years and over), UK, April 2020



Source: [Coronavirus and homeworking in the UK: April 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Alastair Cameron](#)

Nearly two-thirds of working adults said their work was being affected by COVID-19 in May, but this has decreased to just under half of working adults in October

The percentage of working adults¹ who said their work had been impacted because of the pandemic has been gradually declining. During May, around two-thirds of working adults¹ said this, but by August this had fallen to under half. The main impacts have remained consistent over these months:

- furloughed;
- asked to work from home;
- decrease in hours worked and
- finding working from home difficult.

As lockdown restrictions eased, there has been a steady rise in the percentage of working adults travelling to work, either exclusively or in combination with working from home.

¹The working population is those who said they had a paid job, either as an employee or self-employed; or said they did any casual work for payment; or said they did any unpaid or voluntary work in the previous week.

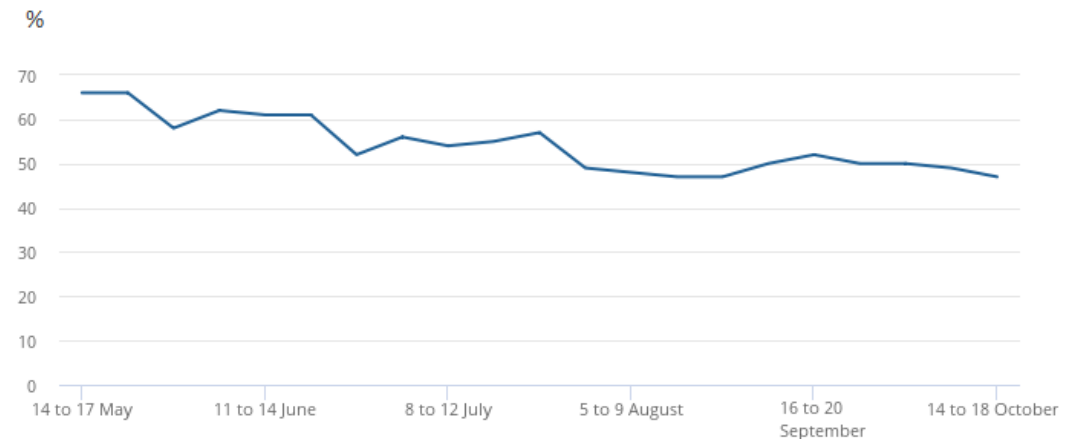
The percentage of working adults¹ that say their work is being affected by the coronavirus pandemic is gradually declining

Percentage of working adults, Great Britain, May to October 2020

¹The working population is those who said they had a paid job, either as an employee or self-employed; or said they did any casual work for payment; or said they did any unpaid or voluntary work in the previous week.

Source: [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, ONS](#)

Lead analyst: [Andrea Lacey](#)



The reasons for working from home have changed during the pandemic. Among those adults that were working from home (either exclusively or in combination with travelling to work), some of the reasons were:

	18 to 21 June	26 to 30 August
Workplace was closed	38%	23%
Employer asked them to work from home	69%	59%
Following government advice	48%	32%
Preferred to work from home	9%	20%

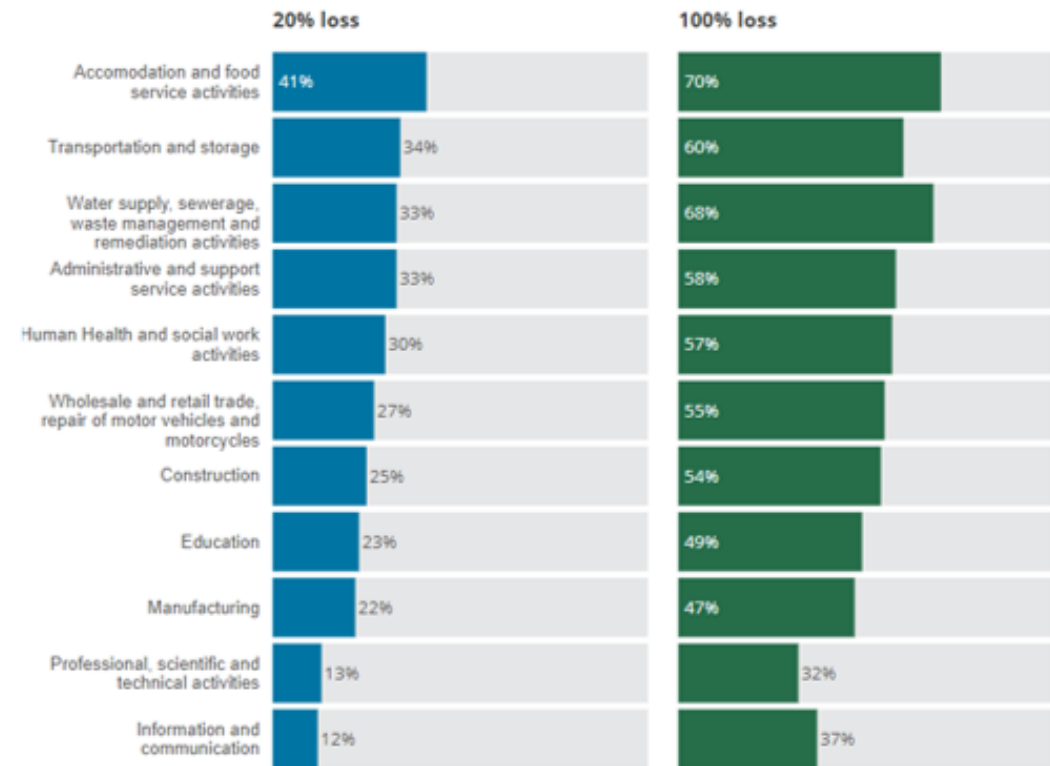
Source: [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, ONS](#)

In normal times, around 75% of households (where the head is employed) have enough savings to cover a 25% loss of employment income over three months; however, many are less financially resilient to the kinds of losses in income faced during the COVID-19 pandemic

- In previous years, around three in four households have had enough savings to cover a 25% loss of employment income for three months, while around two in four could cover a a total loss of employment income over this period.
- However, even in “normal” times, at least 1 in 10 adults report difficulties meeting their financial commitments and regularly run out of money before the end of the week or month.
- Households less likely to cope with a sudden loss of income include those who rent their home (particularly in the North East); have lower household income; are lone parents with dependent children; or where the head of the household is younger, has a long-term illness or disability, or works in accommodation and food services.

Households where the head works in accommodation and food services, an industry largely shut down in lockdown, are the least equipped to cope with a loss of income

Percentage of households unable to cover a three-month loss of income, by industry: Great Britain, April 2016 to March 2018



Sources: [Financial resilience of households \(by household type, standard industrial classification, region and housing tenure\), Great Britain, April 2016 to March 2018](#); and [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup: Covering a sudden loss of household income](#)

Lead analyst: [Hilary Mainwaring](#)

At the UK-wide level, there was an increase in voluntary and involuntary household savings in response to the pandemic

- In response to the coronavirus pandemic, lockdown restrictions were imposed, which led to a very sharp contraction in non-essential spending.
- Mandatory business closures were in effect, while forms of social distancing affected those transactions that require direct contact between consumers and businesses.
- There were particularly large falls in consumer spending on restaurants, transport and recreation and culture, which include forms of social consumption.
- The households saving ratio increased to a record 29.1% in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2020, compared with 9.6% in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2020. This reflects an increase in the ability of individuals to work from home, or that there has been a large number of individuals who have been furloughed.
- It is also possible that households have chosen to increase their savings in response to the higher levels of uncertainty around their future employment prospects.

The households saving ratio hit a record high in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2020

Households saving ratio, UK, Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2000 to Quarter 2 (Apr to Jun) 2020



Source: [Quarterly sector accounts, UK: April to June 2020](#) and [Quarterly economic commentary: April to June 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Michael Rizzo](#) and [Sumit Dey-Chowdhury](#)

The initial shock to household finances at the beginning of the lockdown disproportionately affected certain parts of the population more, and the effects have continued as financial resilience worsened for some despite easing of restrictions

- People expressed initial concern surrounding their finances during the first few weeks of lockdown, with strong doubts about their ability to save; those already impacted financially had higher anxiety on average.
- The self-employed, parents and those who rent were at a greater disadvantage during lockdown as they were at an increased likelihood of having to use savings to cover living costs, working reduced hours and also being unable to save for the future, compared with the general population. These impacts also continued until the end of July.
- Parents and those who rent were also seen to have worse financial resilience (which can have repercussions such as mental health issues, low productivity and long-lasting debt) near the end of July as 47.5% of parents could not afford an unexpected but necessary one-off expense of £850, compared with an average of 32.8% for the population; this means there were approximately 3 million fewer parents that could afford the expense, when compared with 2018.

Parents and those who rent were seen to have worse financial resilience near the end of July 2020

Percentage of group that specified they had:	3 to 20 April				22 to 26 July			
	Self-employed	Parents	Those who rent	Total population	Self employed	Parents	Those who rent	Total population
Reduced income	60	35	32	28	29	23	26	19
Used savings to cover living costs	23	12	15	9	27	7	8	6
Were unable to afford a one off expense	15	49	62	33	25	48	63	33

Source: [Personal and economic Well-being in Great Britain: September 2020](#)

Despite some easing of restrictions by the end of July 2020, more economically vulnerable people were worse hit financially and more expected their finances to get worse as they thought life would take longer to get back to normal

- Between 20 March and 26 July 2020, there were trends of growing economic inequality, as more low-income individuals were negatively impacted by COVID-19 than high-income individuals.
- People's expectations surrounding their own finances and the UK economy continued to worsen after lockdown, especially as more people expected it would take longer than a year for life to return to normal, if ever.

Source: [Personal and economic well-being in Great Britain: September 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Gueorguie Vassilev](#)

More than one-fifth of usual household spending was largely prevented during lockdown; however, young people and renters may have found it difficult to cut back on spending

- In the financial year ending March 2019, 53% of UK household spending covered essential items, such as food and housing, and the remaining 47% was spent on discretionary items.
- Approximately 22% of usual household budgets was spent on activities that were later largely prevented by government guidelines during lockdown (such as travel, holidays and meals out); this is equivalent to an average of £182 per week that households may have been able to save, spend elsewhere or use to cover lost income resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Younger households, renters and those living in London usually spend a large proportion of their budget on essentials and relatively little on the goods and services that were unavailable under lockdown; this could limit their ability to cut back on spending if their income were to fall.
- Younger households and renters are also less likely to have enough savings to cover a loss of income.

Source: [More than one-fifth of usual household spending has been largely prevented during lockdown](#)

More than one-fifth of usual household spending has been prevented by the lockdown

Weekly household expenditure by category, UK, financial year ending March 2019

Source: [More than one-fifth of usual household spending has been largely prevented during lockdown](#)

Lead analyst: [Carla Kidd](#)

Total household spend: £831 per week



Higher prices and demand for certain items could have had a potential further impact on household spending

- Overall, prices for items in the [high-demand product \(HDP\) basket](#) peaked between 20 and 26 April 2020 (week 6), at 1.3% above the week prior to lockdown (16 to 22 March 2020). Products that saw the biggest price rises between March and June included tomato puree; spray cleaning; tinned beans; antibacterial wipes; and handwash.
- Since then, prices have stabilised or fallen below pre-lockdown levels, but we expect that during the early period of lockdown, higher prices and demand for common household items could have had a further impact on household spending.
- To help households under increased financial pressure, some companies, including mortgage providers and utility suppliers, offered payment holidays; [we estimate](#) that 39% of non-discretionary household spending may have been subject to a payment holiday, equivalent to £173 per week.

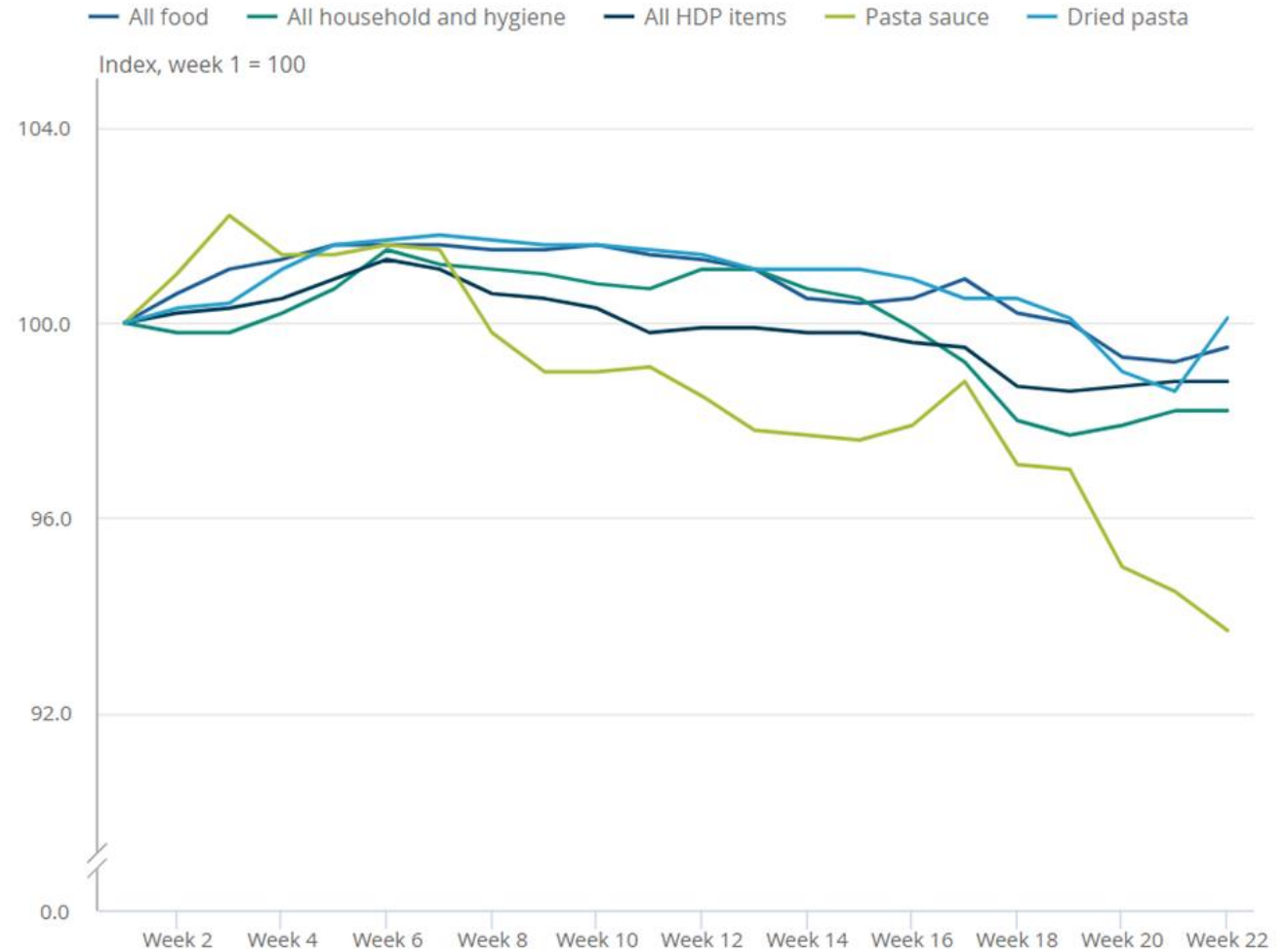
Note: The HDP basket includes long-life food (for example, dried pasta, tinned soup and flour), household and hygiene products (for example, antibacterial wipes, toilet rolls and nappies) and health products (for example, anti-inflammatory medication, cough and cold medication, and vitamin C). From [September 2020](#), the HDP basket was replaced with a broader selection of food and drink items as shopping habits during the pandemic changed.

All three aggregate indices continued to remain below their week 1 level (16 to 22 March 2020)

Online price change of selected high-demand products 16 March to 16 August 2020: index week 1 (16 to 22 March 2020) = 100, UK

Source: [Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: 20 August 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Chloe Gibbs](#)



With schools closed to most children, homeschooling impacted both parents' and children's well-being

On Monday 23 March 2020, schools closed to most children because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Between 3 April and 10 May 2020:

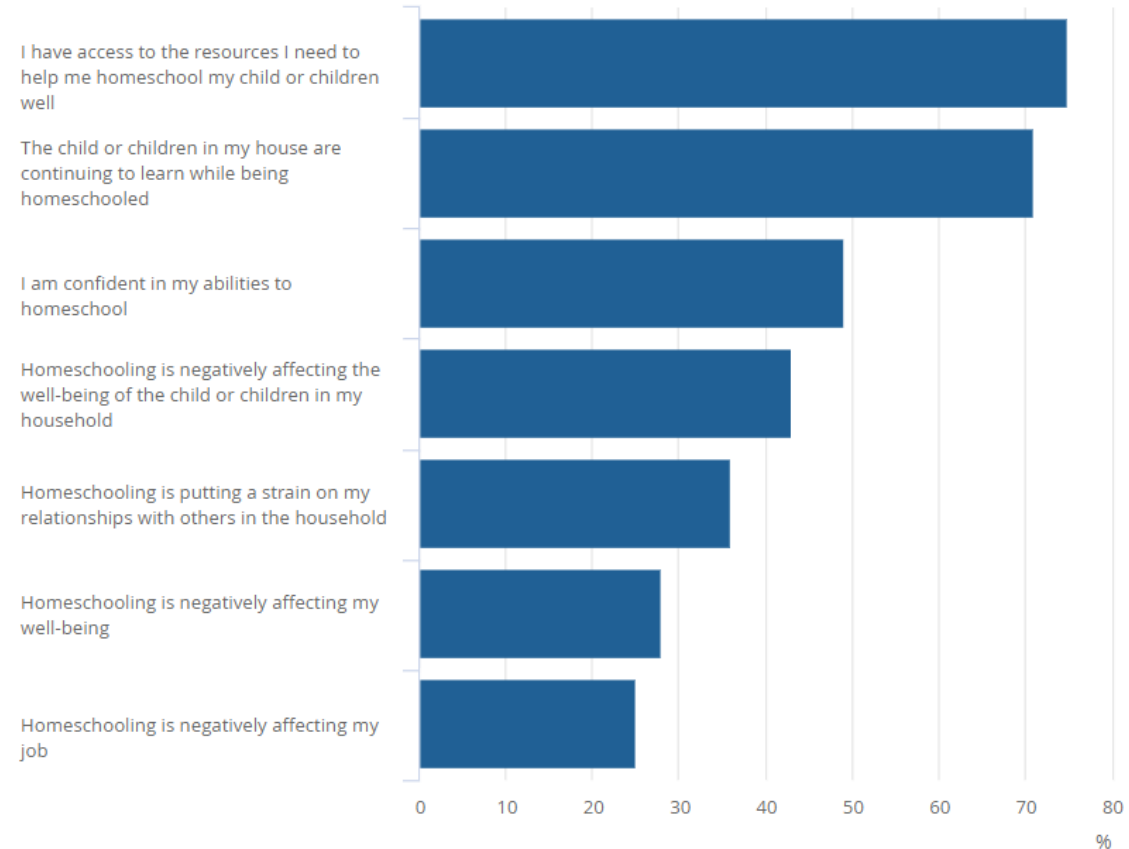
- 77% of parents with a school-aged child in their household said they had homeschooled their children in the past seven days because of the pandemic.
- Of these, 34% of women agreed that it was negatively affecting their well-being compared with 20% of men.
- 43% of homeschooling parents agreed that it was negatively affecting the well-being of their children.

Between 7 May and 7 June 2020:

- 87% of parents said a child in their household had been homeschooled because of the pandemic.
- On average, children aged 5 to 10 years did 10 hours of school work per week compared with 16 hours for children aged 11 to 15 years.
- 52% of parents with school-aged children said a child in their household was struggling to continue their education while at home, with lack of motivation being the most common reason.

Only half of parents who were homeschooling (49%) because of the coronavirus pandemic agreed that they were confident in their abilities

Percentage of parents homeschooling children in their household aged 5 to 18 years, who agreed with the statement on homeschooling, Great Britain, 3 April to 10 May 2020



Source: [Coronavirus and homeschooling in Great Britain: April to June 2020](#)

Lead analysts: [Ruth Davies](#) and [Andrea Lacey](#)

Homeworking hours were condensed into the morning, allowing parents to provide more developmental childcare in the afternoons

On days when someone was working from home:

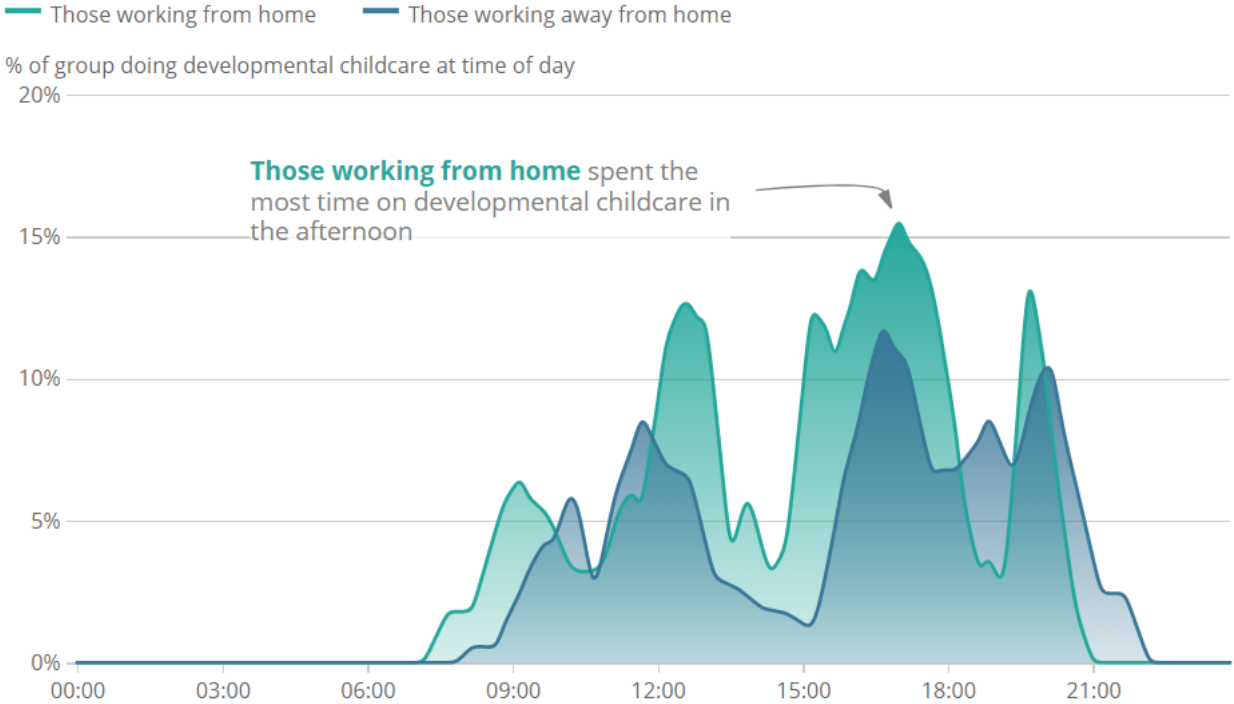
- work hours tended to be in the mornings and often afternoons involved some sort of developmental childcare (reading to children, playing with children or helping children with homework).

On days when someone worked away from home:

- work hours were more likely to be unsociable with a higher proportion of the group working earlier and stopping work later.
- developmental childcare provided by the group tended to be slightly later in the evening
- women provided more childcare time than men, particularly for younger children

Parents working from home delivered most childcare in the afternoon

Percentage of group doing developmental childcare by time of day (weekdays only), Great Britain, 2020



Source: [Parenting in lockdown: Coronavirus and the effects on work-life balance](#)

Lead analyst: [Chris S Payne](#)

Over half of parents reported they were very or somewhat worried about their children returning to school or college

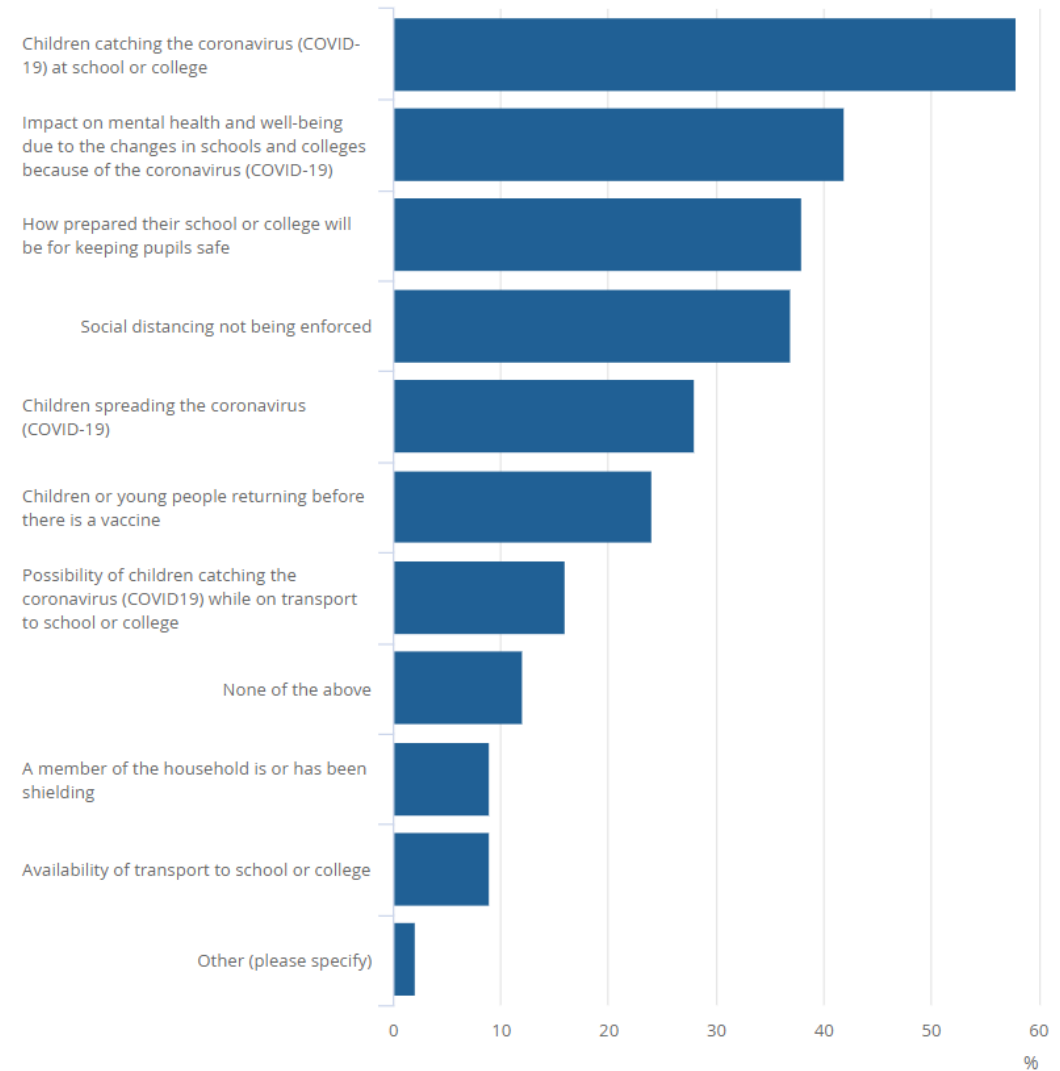
- Children in Scotland returned to school in late August, and as September approached many parents in England and Wales were looking ahead to the new school term.
- Over half of parents reported they were very or somewhat worried about their children returning to school or college, and this remained consistent through July and August.
- The most common concern among parents was their child catching COVID-19 and the school's ability to maintain social distancing, and some expressed other worries:
 - **“My son was too anxious and did not like the new bubble system as he was not with his friends”**
 - **“My daughter is just starting school, I'm worried that settling in will be affected.”**
- However, some parents spoke positively about their child's return to school:
 - **“No worries [about returning to school.] Children attended school through lockdown. School were amazing dealing with everything and keeping children in bubbles, I have every confidence this will be the same in September”**

The main concerns parents had about sending children back to school or college were the risk of catching the coronavirus and the impacts on mental health and well-being

Great Britain, 15 to 19 July 2020

Source: [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, ONS](#)

Lead analyst: [Andrea Lacey](#)



Young people (aged 16 to 29 years) were less likely to be very worried about the effect the coronavirus pandemic was having on their lives than the older age groups

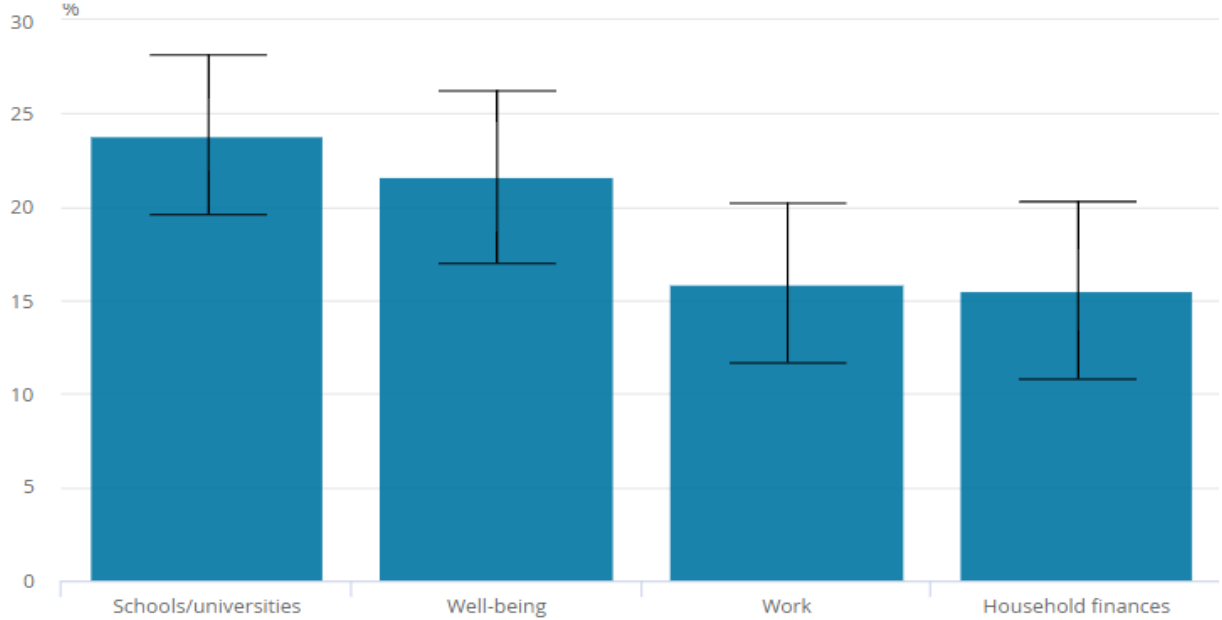
- They were generally more optimistic about lockdown than the older age groups, with more than half expecting life to return to normal within six months; they were also significantly less likely to expect the impact on their lives to last more than a year (13%).
- While they were more optimistic as a whole, young people who reported that their well-being was being affected were much more likely to report being bored and lonely during the lockdown period, and 42% reported that it was making their mental health worse.
- One of their biggest worries was the impact on schools and universities; by far the most commonly reported concern among this group being that they were unable to attend their places of education, with almost 8 in 10 reporting this.
- Uncertainty over exams and qualifications (58%) and concerns over the quality of education being affected (46%) were also common concerns.
- A sizeable percentage (18%) were also worried about the move to homeschooling.

Young people (aged 16 to 29 years) were less likely to be very worried about the effect the coronavirus was having on their lives than the older age groups

- Young people aged 16 to 29 years who reported concerns about the impact of the coronavirus on their relationships were much more likely than 30 to 59-year-olds to report being most worried about their relationships with friends (60% and 34% respectively) and with their grandparents (36% and 13% respectively).
- Friends includes girlfriends and boyfriends, with whom young people are less likely to live, so may have been unable to see during lockdown.
- Over three in four (76%) of those aged between 25 and 29 years who were worried about the effect of the coronavirus on their lives reported that the coronavirus pandemic has affected their work. This was significantly higher than those aged 30 to 59 years (65%), possibly reflecting their less secure status in the labour market and the types of jobs they are likely to do.

The top worries for young people were the effects on schools and universities, well-being, work, and household finances

Percentage of adult population aged 16 to 29 years who were worried about the effect the coronavirus pandemic was having on their lives by main concern, Great Britain, 3 April to 10 May 2020

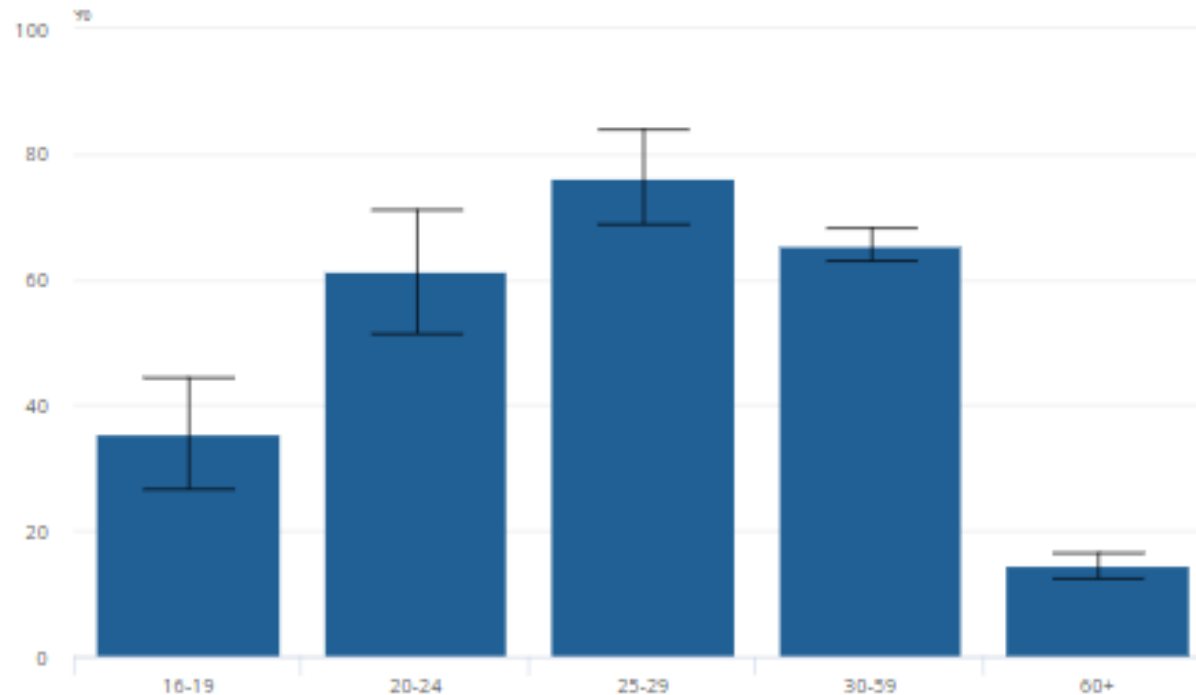


Source: [Coronavirus and the social impacts on young people in Great Britain: 3 April to 10 May 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Paola Serafino](#)

Those aged between 20 and 59 years were most likely to report an impact on their work

Percentage of adult population worried about the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on their lives who reported an impact on their work by age group, Great Britain, 3 April to 10 May 2020



Source: [Coronavirus and the social impacts on young people in Great Britain: 3 April to 10 May 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Paola Serafino](#)

Older people reported higher levels of well-being than younger people, except for anxiety, which was similar across age groups during the lockdown period 3 April to 10 May 2020

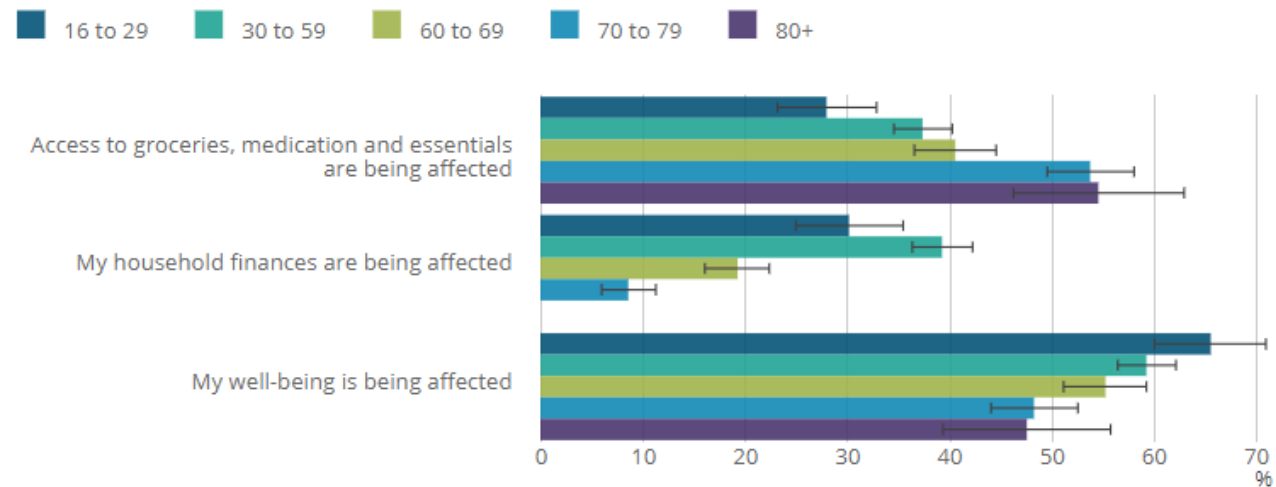
- Among older people (aged 60 years and over) who were worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their lives, their main concerns were being unable to make plans in general (64.5%), personal travel plans such as holidays (53.4%), and their own well-being (51.4%).
- Of those who said their well-being had been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, the most common ways older people said it had been affected were being worried about the future (70%), feeling stressed or anxious (54.1%) and being bored (43.3%).
- People aged in their 60s were the least optimistic about how long it will take for life to return to normal, with a higher proportion saying it will take more than a year or that life will never return to normal, than those aged under 60 years and those aged 70 years and over.

In the lockdown period of 3 April to 10 May 2020, older people were more likely than younger people to be coping by reading or gardening

- Staying in touch with family and friends remotely was the main way those aged 60 years and over said they were coping while staying at home, followed by gardening, reading and exercise.
- Those aged in their 60s and 70s were equally as likely as younger age groups to say that exercise was helping them to cope.
- People aged in their 60s and 70s were more likely to have checked on neighbours who might need help three or more times and they were equally as likely to have gone shopping or done other tasks for neighbours at least one or two times as those aged under 60 years.

In the period of 3 April to 10 May 2020, older people were more likely to have had difficulties accessing essentials and less likely to have had their finances or well-being impacted than younger people

Percentage of the population aged 16 years and over worried about the effect of COVID-19 by selected aspects of life affected and age group, Great Britain, 3 April to 10 May 2020



Source: [Coronavirus and the social impacts on older people in Great Britain: 3 April to 10 May 2020](#)

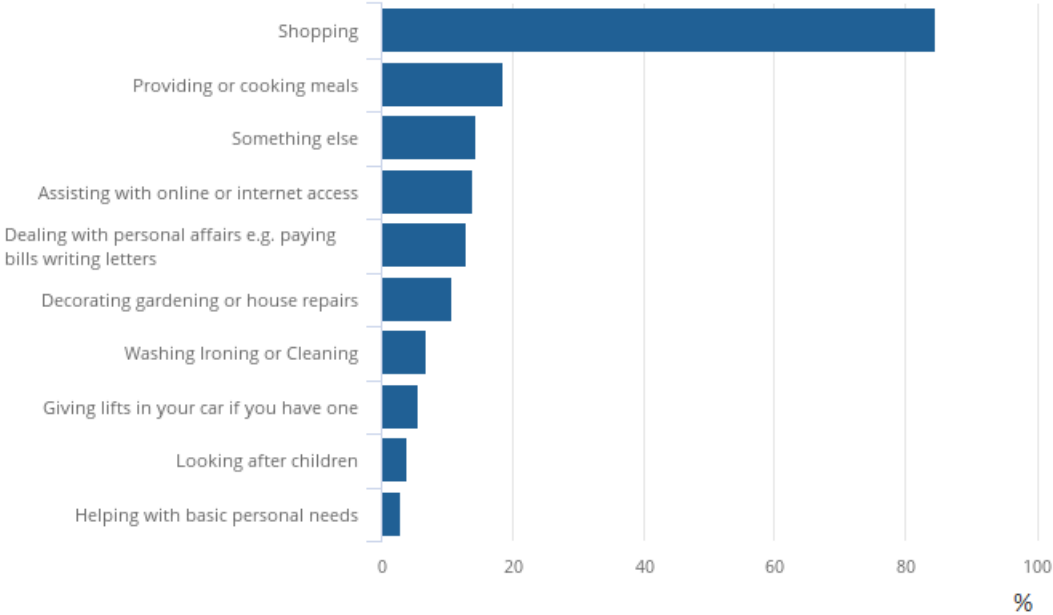
Lead analyst: [Angele Storey](#)

Nearly half of UK adults provided help or support to someone outside of their household during lockdown

- Almost half (48%) of UK adults reported providing help or support to someone outside of their household during April 2020; this contrasts with pre-pandemic findings of 11% of adults providing some regular service or help for an elderly, disabled or ill person living outside their household
- Of adults who reported providing help in April 2020, 32% were helping someone who they did not help before the pandemic and 33% reported giving more help to people they helped previously.
- Those aged 45 to 54 were the most likely group to report providing support, with 60% of this age group reported doing this; women were more likely than men to provide support, as were people who were employed and those with dependent children
- Of those providing help and support to others in April 2020, 16% felt they played a useful role more so than usual, compared with 9% of those who felt they had not; nevertheless, those supporting others were not immune to the increased feelings of anxiety common to different sections of the population as a whole during this time.

Shopping was the most common support provided in April 2020

Ways in which people provided help and support, UK, April 2020



Source: [Coronavirus and the impact on caring](#)

Lead analyst: [Andrea Lacey](#)

In 2018 to 2019, those aged 65 years and over in England were most likely to feel “very comfortable” asking a neighbour to collect essentials for them if they were ill (40.4%)

At the beginning of the coronavirus lockdown, we considered the ways in which vulnerable groups normally receive support from their family, friends and wider community, to understand how a period of isolation might impact those in need of extra support.

We focussed on two of the three groups [identified by the government](#) that may be considered vulnerable. These are older adults and those with a [self-defined disability](#) or who are Equality Act Disabled.

Our [analysis](#) found:

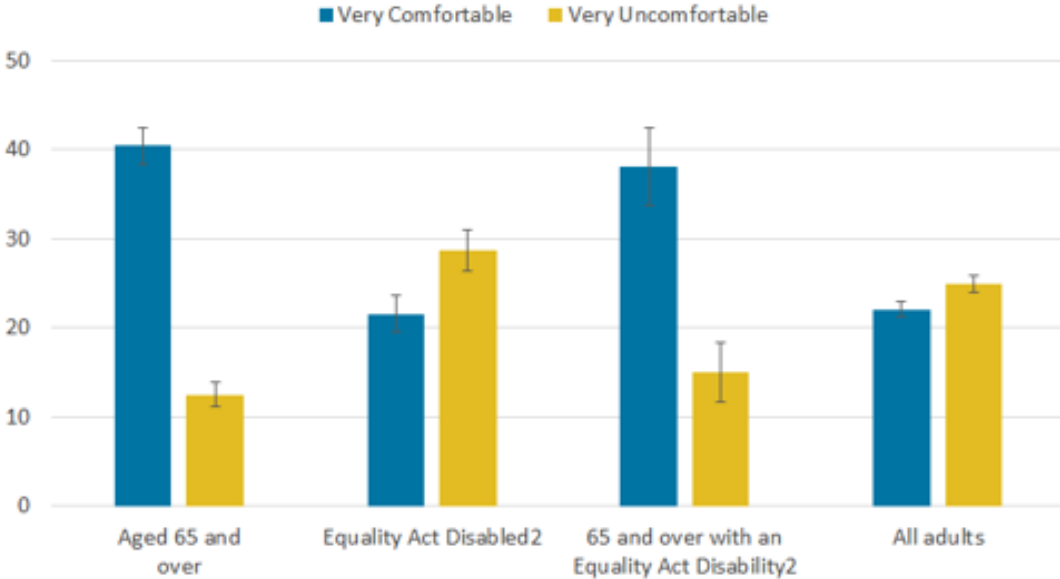
- at a UK level, parents were more likely to receive help from an adult child not living with them if they were in any of the vulnerable groups we analysed, when compared with the population aged 16 years and over as a whole.
- around one in seven UK parents who belonged to one of the vulnerable groups regularly received cooked meals from an adult child not living with them in the period 2017 to 2018.

In 2018 to 2019, those aged 65 years and over in England were most likely to feel “very comfortable” asking a neighbour to collect essentials for them if they were ill (40.4%)

- Over the same period, nearly 3 in 10 UK parents aged 70 years and over with a self-defined disability (28.9%) got their shopping regularly from an adult child not living with them.
- In 2018 to 2019, those aged 65 years and over in England were most likely to feel “very comfortable” asking a neighbour to collect essentials for them if they were ill (40.4%). However, looking at the wider population, almost one in four adults aged 16 years and over (24.9%) said they would feel “very uncomfortable” asking for this help from their neighbours; this proportion was higher among those who were Equality Act Disabled (28.7%).
- Data for England show that people who were Equality Act Disabled were less likely than the general population to definitely agree that they had people who would be there for them if they needed help (58.8% compared with 68.4%).

Older people were most comfortable with neighbours collecting their shopping for them

Percentage who would feel “very comfortable” or “very uncomfortable” with neighbours collecting a few shopping essentials for them, England, 2018 to 2019



Source: [Coronavirus and social relationships and support for vulnerable groups: 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019](#)

Lead analyst: [Eleanor Rees](#)

From 24 April to 28 June 2020, more adults on average thought that Britain will be united after we have recovered from the pandemic than thought that we were united before the pandemic

- In this same period, adults in Scotland were less likely (31%) to say that Britain will be united after the pandemic than those in either England (47%) or Wales (44%).
- Although women were as likely as men to say that Britain was united before the pandemic, they were more likely than men to think that Britain will be united after it, with half (50%) saying that Britain would be either very or somewhat united compared with 41% of men.
- Perceptions of unity within Britain are associated with higher average life satisfaction, happiness and feelings that things done in life are worthwhile as well as with checking on neighbours, feeling like the community is available to support you and thinking people are doing more to help others.
- As time progressed through the period, the percentage of adults who thought that Britain would be more united after the pandemic declined by 29 percentage points (from 57% in the first week of the period to 28% in the last week) so that by the end of this period, there was no difference between the percentage of people who thought that Britain was united before the pandemic and those who thought it would be united after.

Percentage of people reporting different levels of unity in Britain before and after the coronavirus pandemic by country

Great Britain, 24 April to 28 June 2020

Source: [Unity and division in Great Britain: 24 April to 28 June 2020](#)

Lead analyst: [Lucy Tinkler](#)

