

How are we doing in Wales?

Public Engagement Survey on Health and Wellbeing during Coronavirus Measures

Trends over time and socio-economic differences in health and wellbeing

Key findings for week 58

Public Health Wales are conducting a public engagement telephone survey to ask members of the public in Wales how coronavirus and related control measures are affecting their health and wellbeing.

The survey interviews approximately 600 randomly selected individuals every other week. It began in April 2020 and includes a set of routine questions asked each survey week, with other questions changing depending on emerging issues.

This report looks at trends in responses to selected questions over the pandemic period, including worry about coronavirus, vaccine acceptance, and mental and physical health. It also looks at socio-economic differences in responses to these questions and additional questions asking how people's health and wellbeing has changed since before the pandemic.

Key findings for week 58 of the survey are also presented. For these findings, survey data are adjusted to represent the Welsh population by age, sex and deprivation*.

We thank the people of Wales for giving us their valuable time to support this work.



*Unless stated otherwise. Throughout the report, figures may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

Around 18,000 Welsh residents have participated in the national public engagement survey since it began in April 2020.

- The proportion of adults that are **very worried about catching coronavirus** has reduced substantially since the start of 2021, from 31% to 8%.

Worry about catching coronavirus has been higher among residents in more deprived communities, females and individuals aged 55-74 years.

- 42% of adults say their **mental health** is worse now than it was before the pandemic, equivalent to over 1 million adults.*

Females and younger adults are more likely to report that their mental health has worsened.

- Feelings of **loneliness** and **isolation** have reduced throughout 2021.

Residents in more deprived communities, females and younger adults are more likely to have been feeling lonely and isolated.

- The proportion of adults feeling **very unhealthy** increased from 3% in April 2020 to 13% in January 2021, and is currently at 8%.

Residents in more deprived communities, females and individuals aged 35-54 years are more likely to have been feeling very unhealthy.

- 18% of adults say their **alcohol consumption** has increased since the pandemic, equivalent to 445,000 adults.*

Residents in less deprived communities and those aged 35-54 years are more likely to report increased alcohol consumption.

- **Vaccine acceptance** increased from 64% in October 2020 to 95% in March 2021, where it remains.

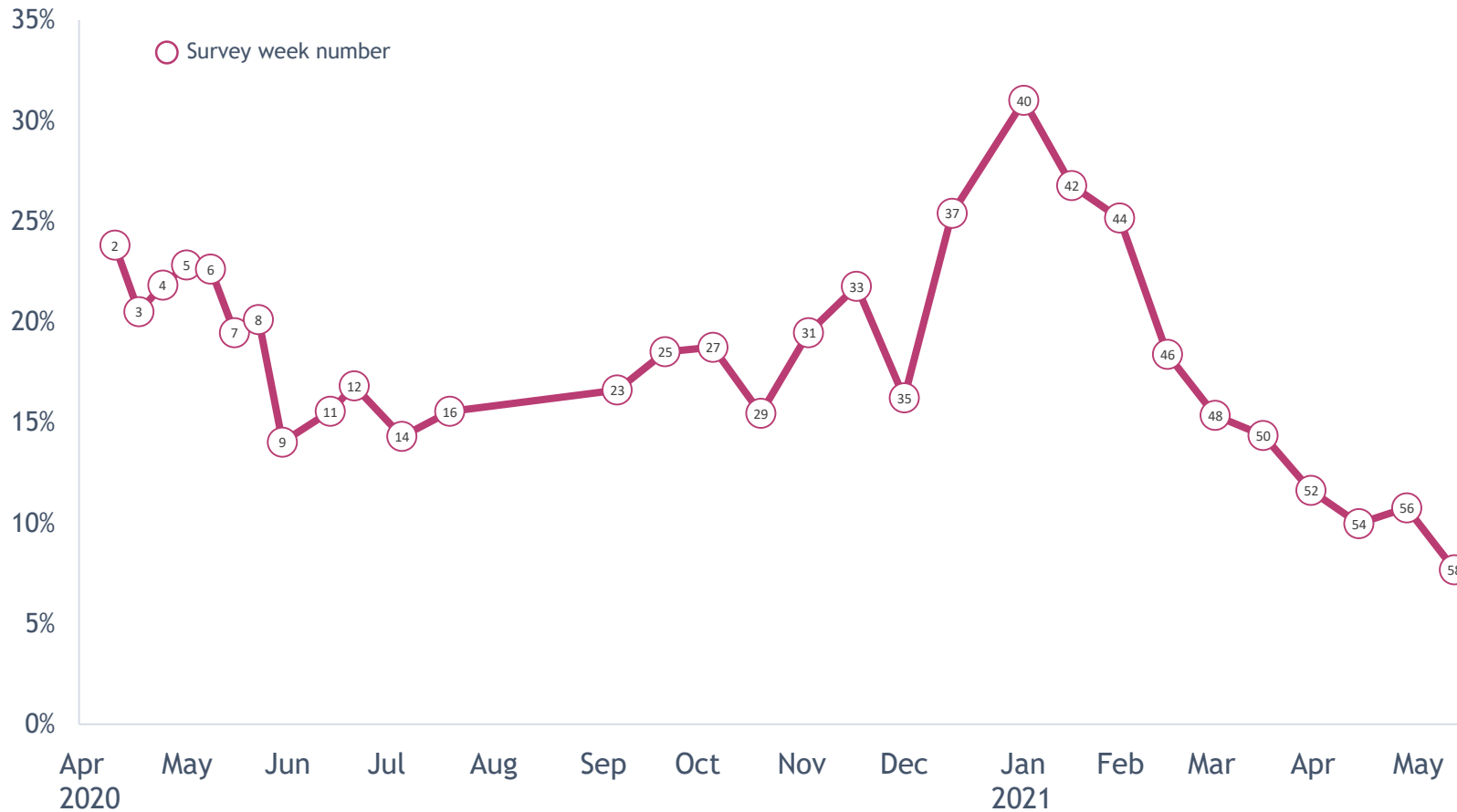
Lower vaccine acceptance is associated with higher deprivation, being female and younger age.

*These questions have been asked since January 2021

Worry about catching coronavirus

- The proportion of adults that are very worried about catching coronavirus* has fallen from a peak of 31% in early January to 8% in May 2021.
- Worry about catching coronavirus has been higher among residents of more deprived communities, females and individuals aged 55-74 years.

Adjusted proportion 'very worried' about catching coronavirus*, by survey week



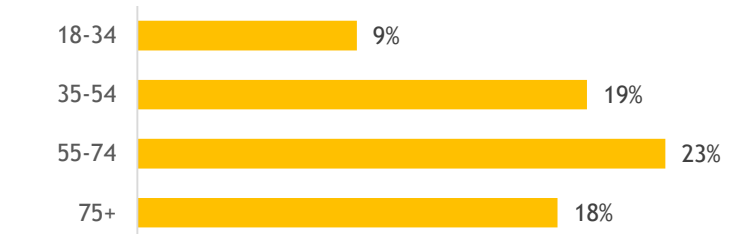
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group

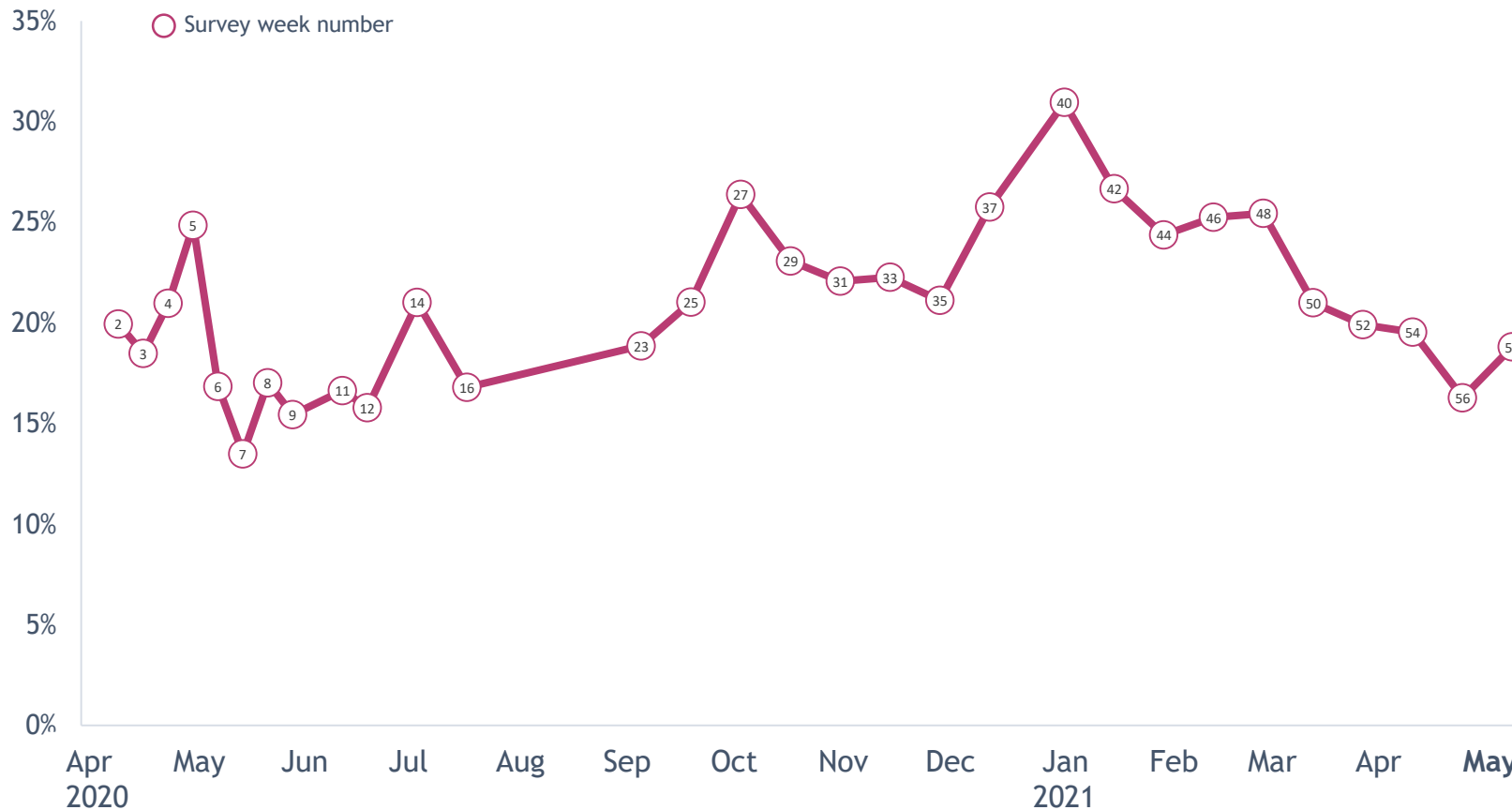


*Participants are asked how worried they are about catching coronavirus; response options are *not at all*, *a little*, *moderately* and *very*. Up to week 16, this question was not asked to those who said they had had coronavirus. From week 23, the question was asked to all individuals.

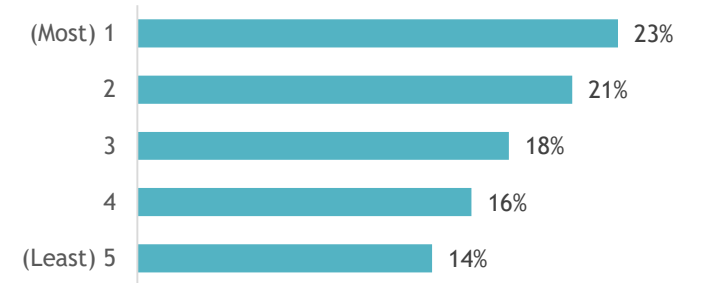
Worry about mental health and wellbeing

- The proportion of adults worrying ‘a lot’ about their mental health and wellbeing* rose from 13% in May 2020 to 31% in January 2021.
- Worry about mental health and wellbeing has been greater in residents of more deprived communities, females and younger age groups.

Adjusted proportion worrying ‘a lot’ about their mental health & wellbeing*, by survey week



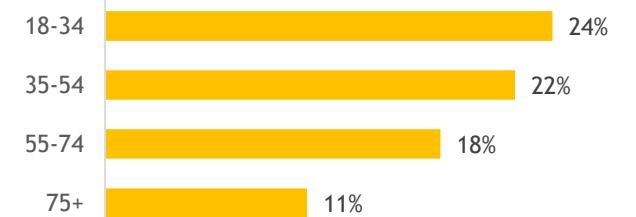
By deprivation quintile



By gender



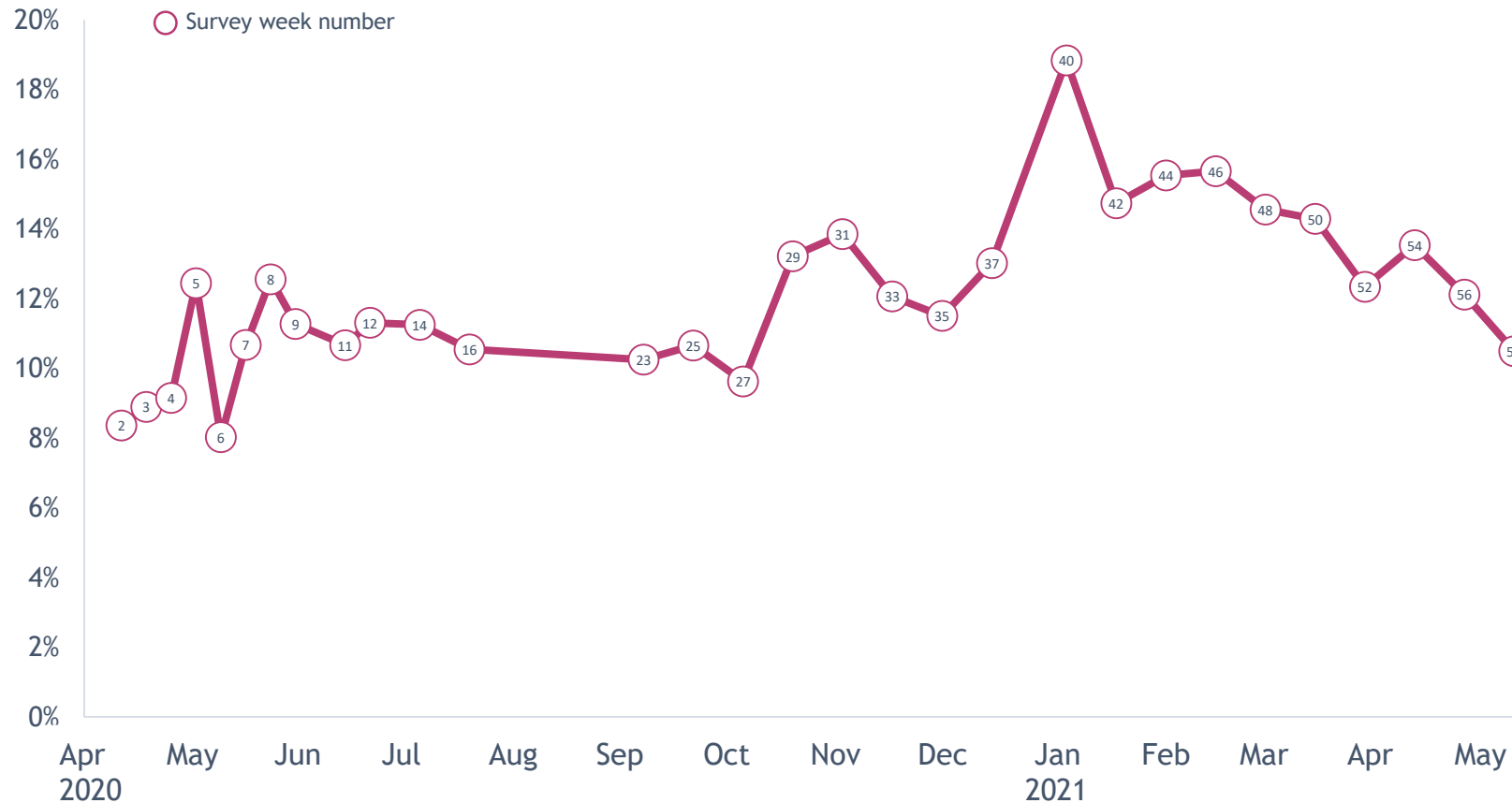
By age group



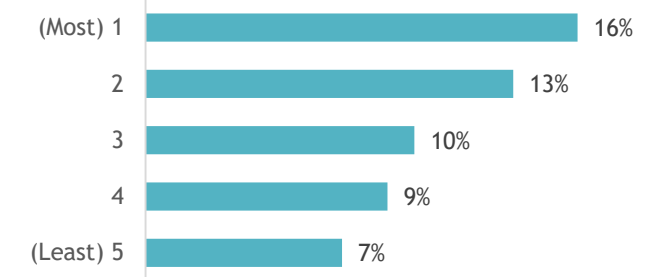
*Participants are asked, in the past week, how much they have been worrying about their mental health and wellbeing; response options are *not at all*, *a little*, and *a lot*.

- The proportion of adults ‘always’ or ‘often’ feeling lonely* has ranged from 8% in May to 19% in early January.
- Residents in more deprived quintiles, females and younger adults are more likely to have been feeling lonely.

Adjusted proportion ‘often’ or ‘always’ feeling lonely*, by survey week



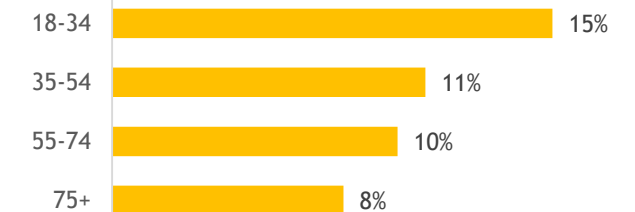
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



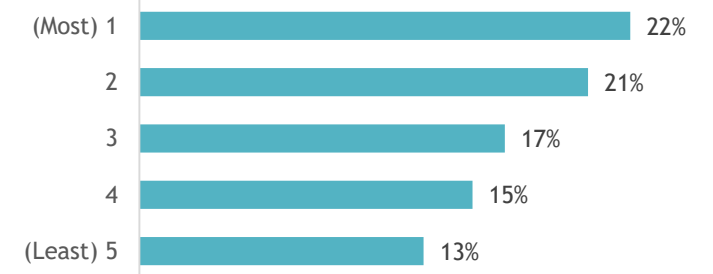
*Participants are asked, in the last week, how often they have been feeling lonely; response options are *never*, *occasionally*, *often* and *always*.

- The proportion of adults ‘always’ or ‘often’ feeling isolated* has ranged from 11% in September 2020 to 29% in early January 2021.
- Residents in more deprived quintiles, females and younger adults are more likely to have been feeling isolated.

Adjusted proportion ‘often’ or ‘always’ feeling isolated*, by survey week



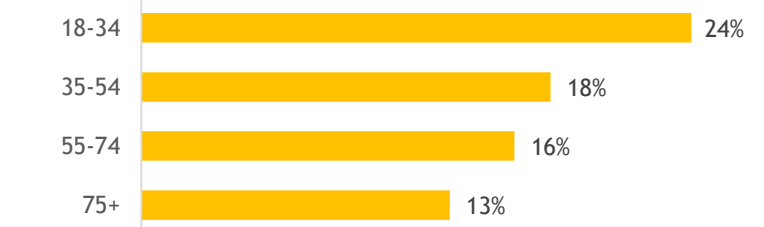
By deprivation quintile



By gender



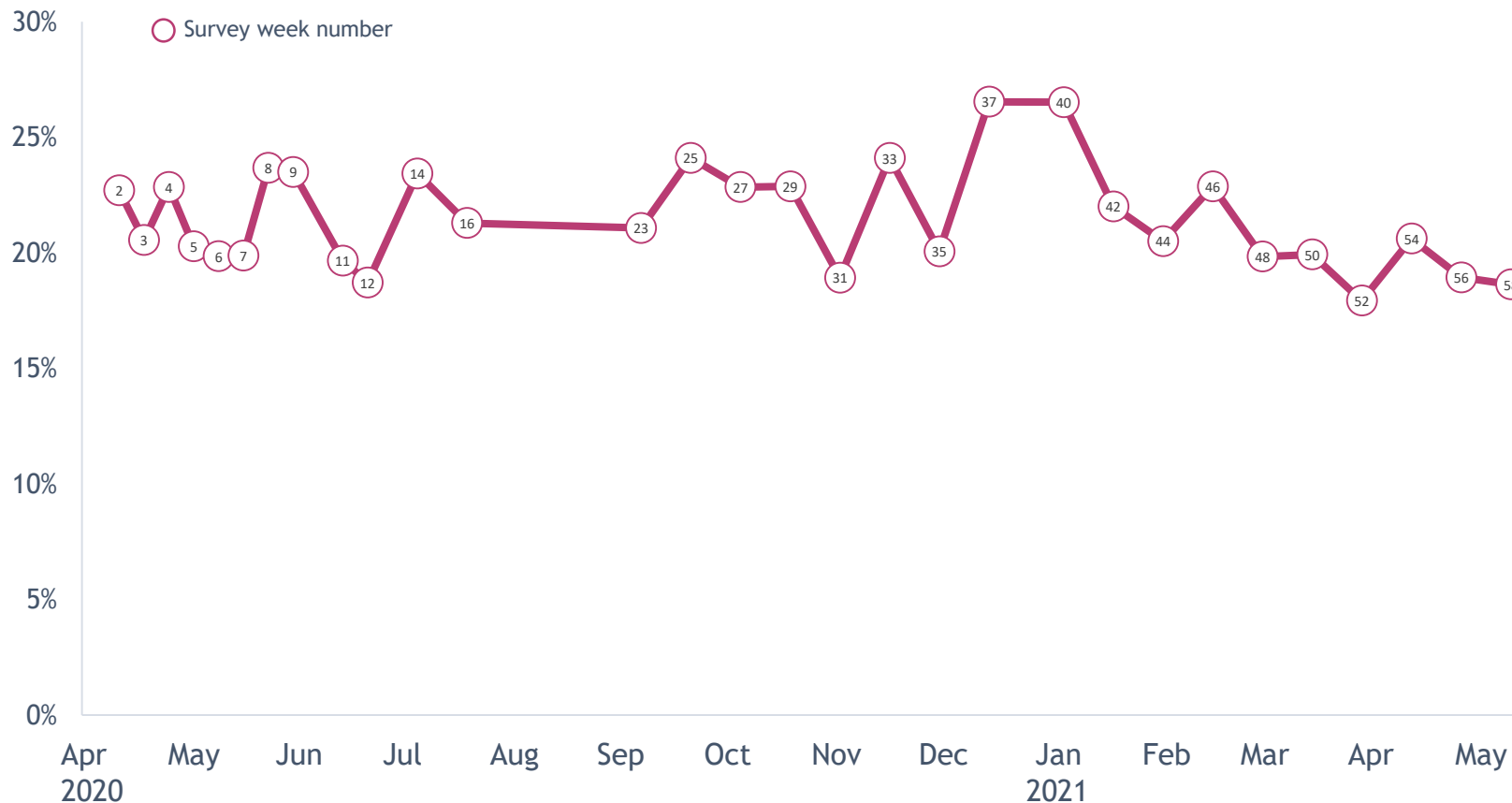
By age group



*Participants are asked, in the last week, how often they have been feeling isolated; response options are *never*, *occasionally*, *often* and *always*.

- The proportion of adults feeling very anxious* has ranged from 27% in December 2020 to 18% in late March/early April 2021.
- Residents in more deprived quintiles and females are more likely to have been feeling very anxious, with no difference between age groups.

Adjusted proportion feeling very anxious*, by survey week



By deprivation quintile



By gender



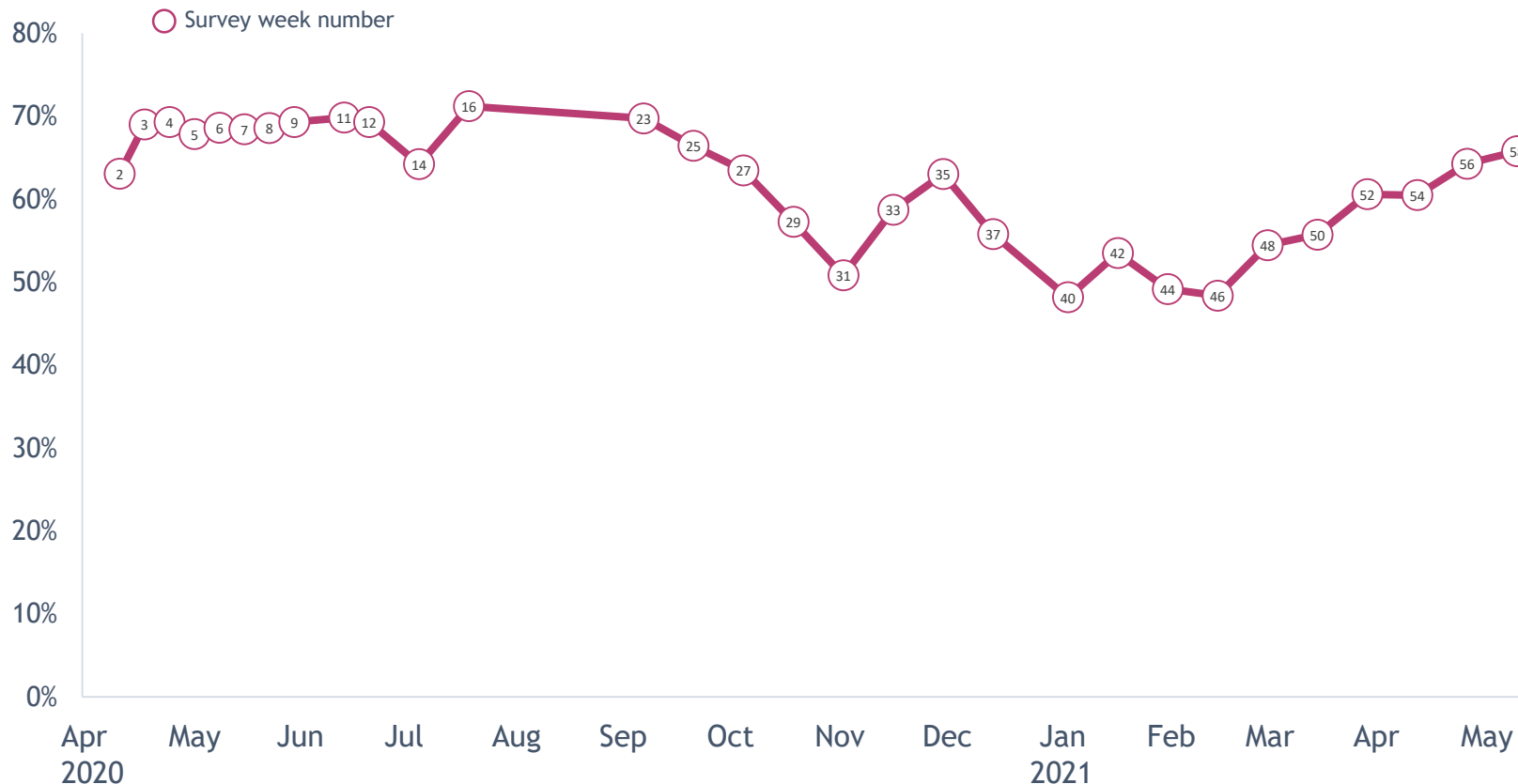
By age group



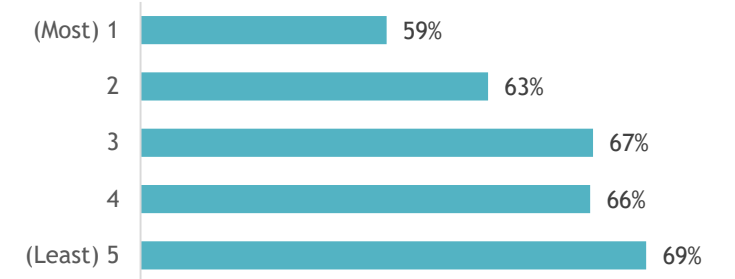
*Participants are asked to rate how anxious they feel today, using a scale of 0 (not at all anxious) to 10 (completely anxious). Responses of 7-10 are categorised as 'very anxious'.

- The proportion of adults feeling happy* fell from 71% in July 2020 to 48% in early January 2021, but has since increased to around 65%.
- Residents of less deprived quintiles, males and older adults are more likely to have been feeling happy.

Adjusted proportion feeling happy*, by survey week



By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group

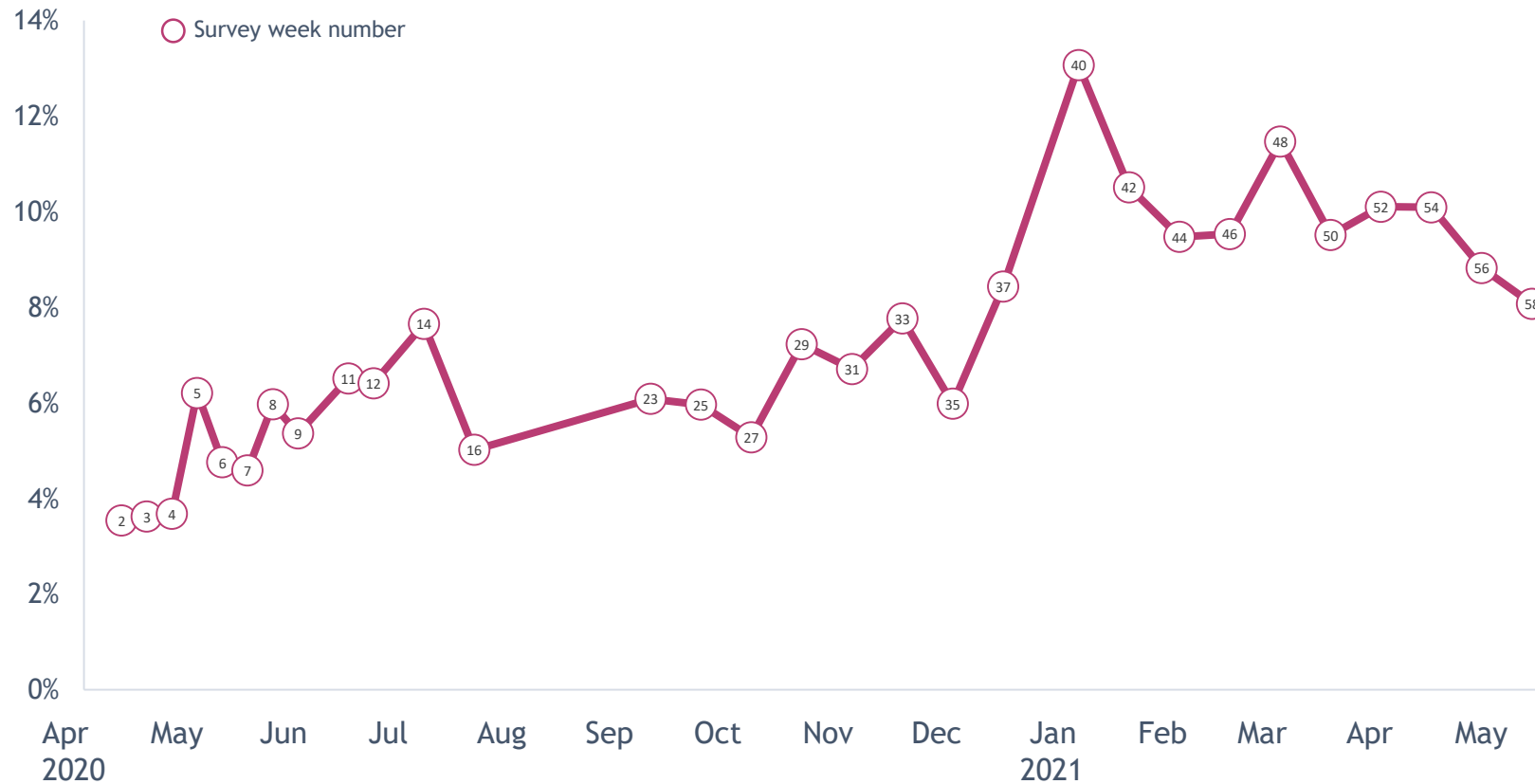


*Participants are asked to rate how happy they feel today, using a scale of 0 (not at all happy) to 10 (completely happy). Responses of 7-10 are categorised as 'happy'.

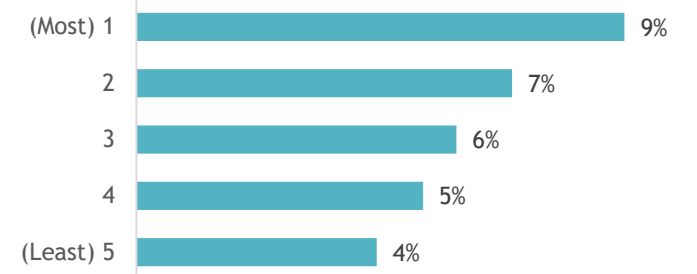
Feeling unhealthy

- The proportion of adults feeling very unhealthy* increased from 3% in April 2020 to 13% in early January 2021, and is currently 8%.
- Residents in more deprived quintiles, females and individuals aged 35-54 years are more likely to have been feeling very unhealthy.

Adjusted proportion feeling very unhealthy*, by survey week



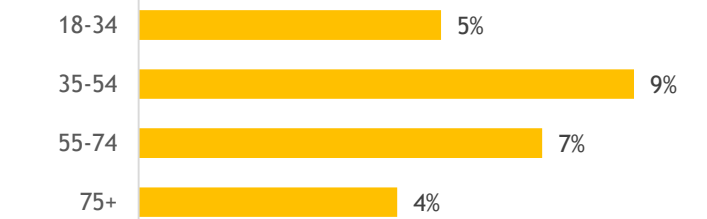
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group

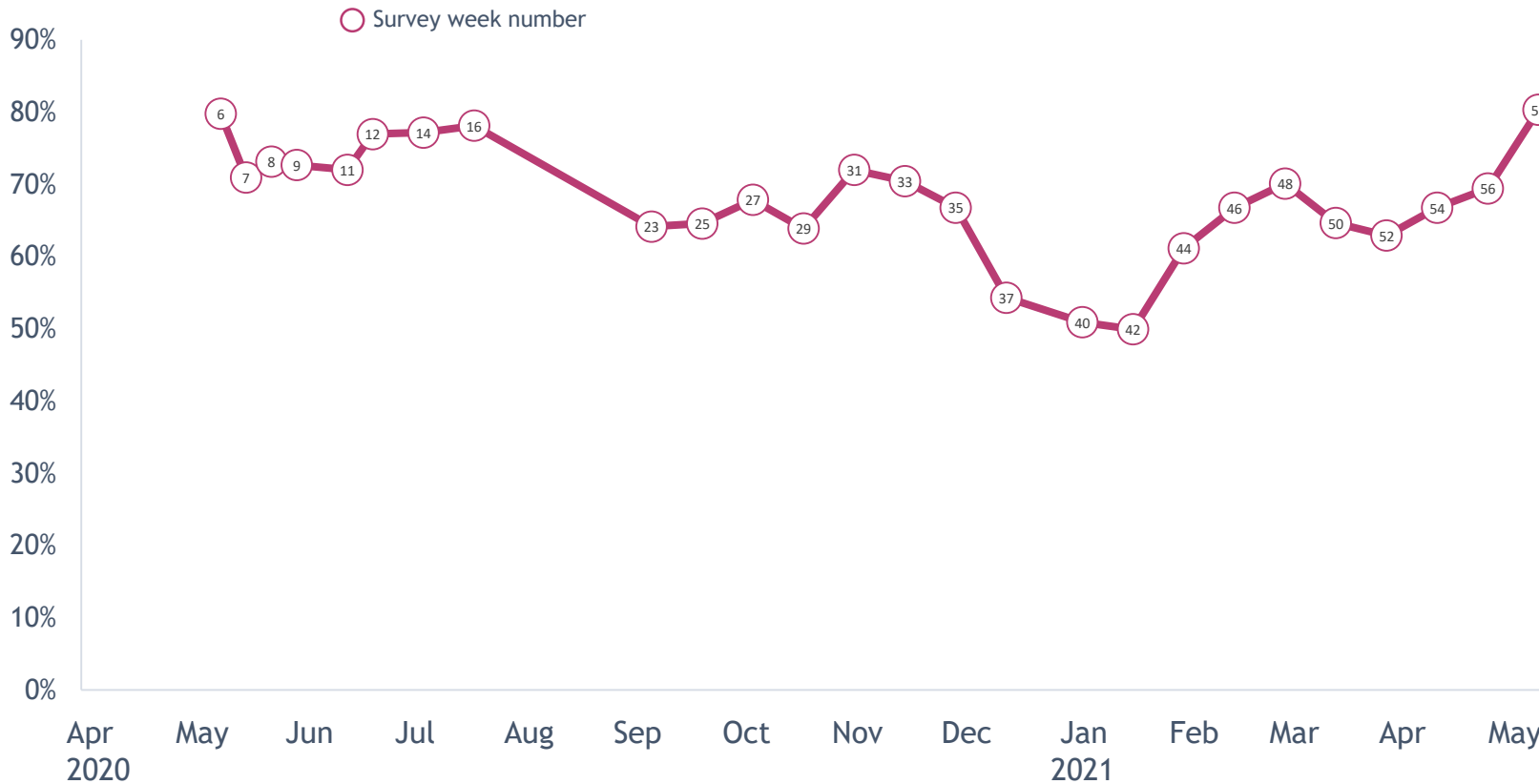


*Participants are asked to rate how healthy they feel today, using a scale of 0 (not at all healthy) to 10 (completely healthy). Responses of 0-3 are categorised as 'very unhealthy'.

Welsh Government's response to the pandemic

- The proportion agreeing Welsh Government has responded to the pandemic well* fell to 50% in January 2021 but has since increased to 80%.
- Residents of the least deprived quintile, males and younger adults are less likely to have approved with the Welsh Government response.

Adjusted proportion agreeing Welsh Government has responded to the pandemic well*, by survey week



By deprivation quintile



By gender



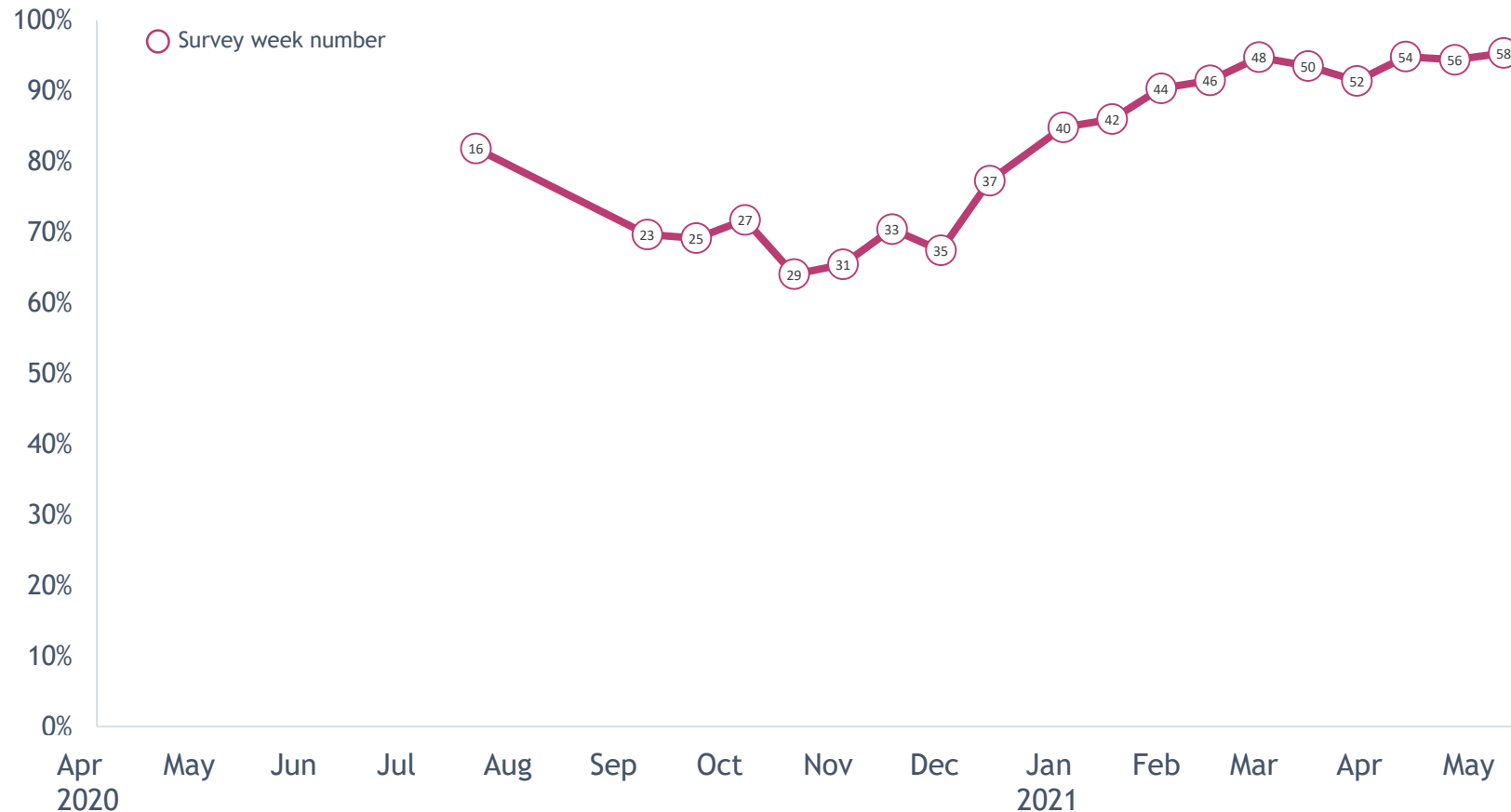
By age group



*Since week 6, participants have been asked how much they agree with statement "I think that Welsh Government is responding to the problems caused by coronavirus well". Those responding *strongly agree* and *agree* (v. *neither agree nor disagree*, *disagree* or *strongly disagree*) are categorised as agreeing.

- The proportion of adults who want, or have already had, a coronavirus vaccination* increased from 64% in October 2020 to 95% in March 2021.
- Residents of the most deprived quintile, females and younger adults are less likely to report vaccine acceptance.

Adjusted proportion reporting vaccine acceptance, by survey week*



By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



*From week 16, participants were asked if they would want a coronavirus vaccination if one became available, and from week 37 if they would want a vaccination if offered or had already had one. Those responding yes (v. no or unsure) or already had one are categorised as accepting the vaccine.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their physical health has changed since before the pandemic*.

38%

of adults said their physical health is worse now than before the pandemic

Equivalent to **971,000** adults[#]

Individuals from more deprived communities, females and those aged 35-54 are more likely to report worse physical health.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse physical health

By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their physical health is *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse physical health.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their physical fitness has changed since before the pandemic*.

43%

of adults said their physical fitness is worse now than before the pandemic

Equivalent to 1,074,000 adults[#]

Individuals from more deprived communities, females and those aged 35-54 are more likely to report worse physical fitness.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse physical fitness

By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their physical fitness is *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse physical fitness.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their mental health has changed since before the pandemic*.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse mental health

42%

of adults said their mental health is worse now than before the pandemic

Equivalent to 1,055,000 adults[#]

Females and younger adults are more likely to report worse mental health. There were no significant differences across deprivation quintiles.

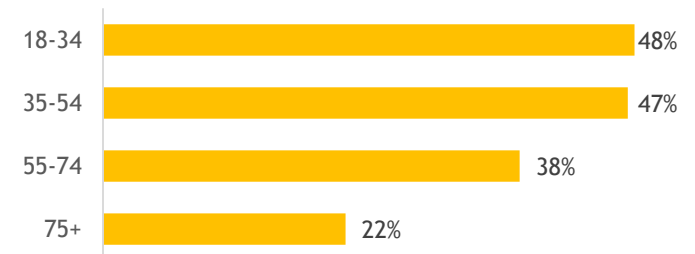
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their mental health is *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse mental health.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their family relationships have changed since before the pandemic*.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse family relationships

23%

of adults said their family relationships have worsened since the pandemic

Equivalent to **583,000** adults#

Females and younger adults are more likely to report their family relationships to have worsened. There were no significant differences across deprivation quintiles.

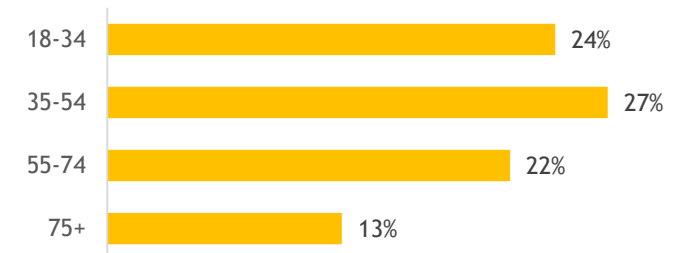
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their family relationships are *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse family relationships.

#Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their social relationships have changed since before the pandemic.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse social relationships

By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



60%

of adults said their social relationships have worsened since the pandemic

Equivalent to 1,509,000 adults[#]

Residents in less deprived communities, females and adults under the age of 75 are more likely to report worse social relationships.

*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their social relationships are *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse social relationships.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their financial situation has changed since before the pandemic*.

21%

of adults said their financial situation has worsened since the pandemic

Equivalent to **529,000** adults[#]

Residents in more deprived communities and younger adults are more likely to report a worse financial situation. There were no significant differences by gender.

Adjusted proportion reporting a worse financial situation

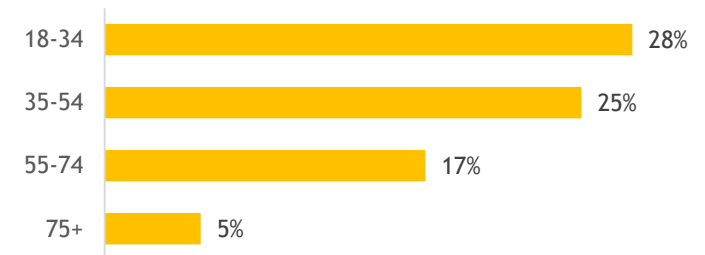
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



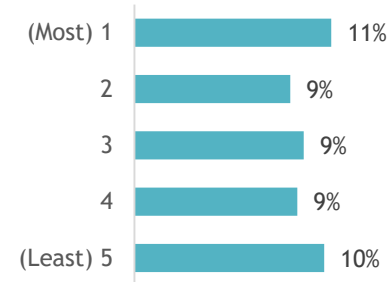
*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their financial situation is *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having a worse financial situation.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

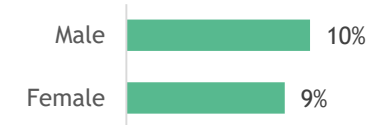
From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their employment or work prospects have changed since before the pandemic*.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse employment or work prospects

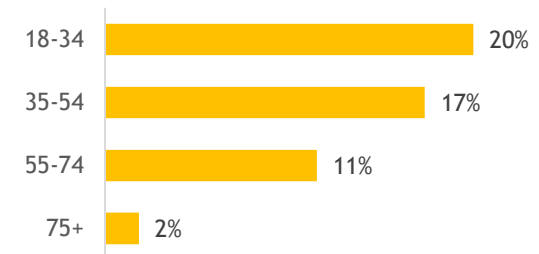
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



14%

of adults said their employment or work prospects had worsened since the pandemic

Equivalent to **364,000** adults[#]

Males and younger adults are more likely to report worse employment or work prospects. There were no significant differences by deprivation level.

*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their employment or work prospects are *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding a *bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse employment or work prospects.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their dental health has changed since before the pandemic.

Adjusted proportion reporting worse dental health

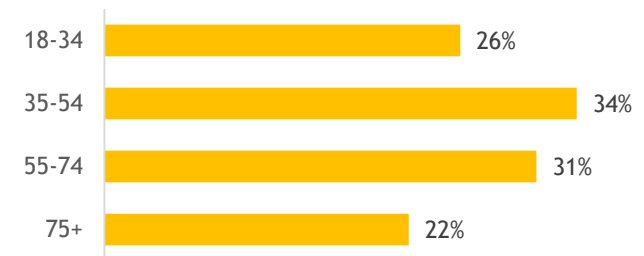
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



30%

of adults said their dental health had worsened since the pandemic

Equivalent to **748,000** adults[#]

Females and adults aged 35-54 were more likely to report worse dental health. There were no significant differences by deprivation level.

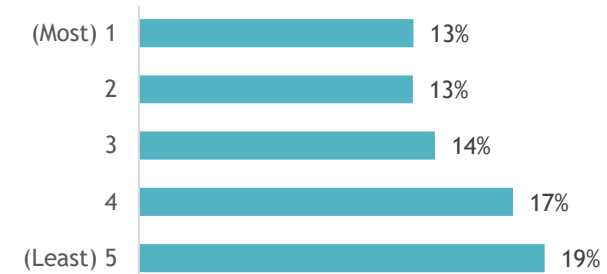
*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, they would say their dental health is *much better*, *better*, *the same*, *a bit worse*, or *much worse*. Those responding *a bit worse* or *much worse* are categorised as having worse dental health.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their alcohol consumption has changed since before the pandemic*.

Adjusted proportion reporting increased alcohol consumption

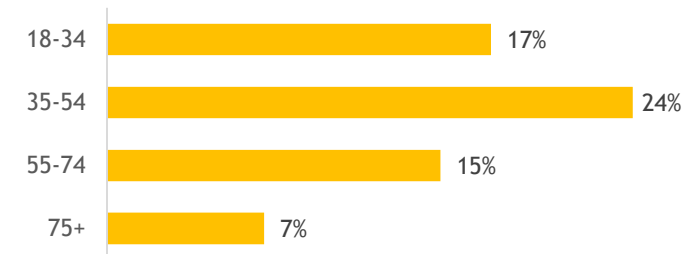
By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



18%

of adults said their alcohol consumption had increased since the pandemic

Equivalent to 445,000 adults#

Residents in the least deprived quintiles and those in the 35-54 year age group are more likely to have increased their alcohol consumption. There was no significant difference between males and females.

*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, their alcohol consumption has *reduced*, *stayed the same* or *increased*.

#Rounded to the nearest thousand.

From January 2021 (week 40), participants have been asked how their weight has changed since before the pandemic*.

40%

of adults said their weight had increased since the pandemic

Equivalent to 1,008,000 adults[#]

Females and younger adults are more likely to have gained weight. Differences by deprivation level were not significant.

Adjusted proportion reporting increased weight

By deprivation quintile



By gender



By age group



*Participants are asked if, compared to last year, before the coronavirus situation, their weight has *reduced*, *stayed the same* or *increased*.

[#]Rounded to the nearest thousand.

601 Welsh residents aged 18 years and over were interviewed in week 58 of the survey (10th to 16th May 2021).

This section presents findings from the weekly survey. Key findings include:

30%

of people said they were not at all worried about catching coronavirus, and a further 35% said they were only a little worried.

27%

of people said they had been worrying ‘a lot’ about losing someone they love to coronavirus; down from 43% in early March*.

39%

of people said that at least one person from outside a permitted support bubble had been into their house in the last 7 days.

51%

of people said they understood the restrictions in place in Wales to reduce the spread of coronavirus ‘very well’ and a further 41% said they understood them ‘quite well’.

43%

of people said they were following the restrictions ‘completely’ and a further 43% reported majority compliance**.

65%

of people thought coronavirus should be among the top three policy priorities for 2021; below NHS waiting lists, which was selected by 68% of people. 37% placed coronavirus as their top priority; down from 54% in March*.

Do you think you have or have had coronavirus?

Yes	17%
Don't know	5%

Have you been tested for coronavirus or had an antibodies test?

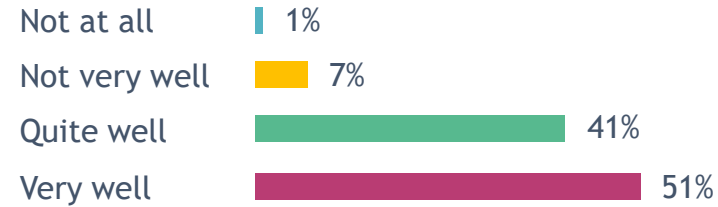
Had a coronavirus test	49%
Had an antibodies test	8%

How worried are you that you could get coronavirus?

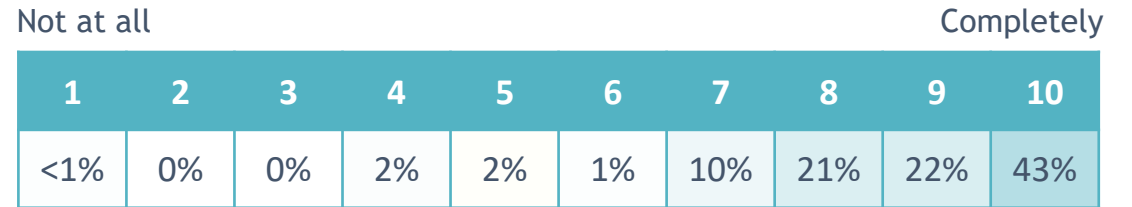
Not at all	30%
A little	35%
Moderately	27%
Very	8%

Knowledge and compliance with restrictions

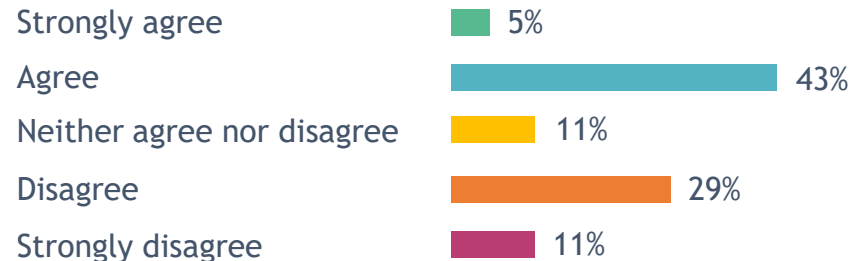
How well do you feel you understand the current restrictions in place in Wales to reduce the spread of coronavirus?



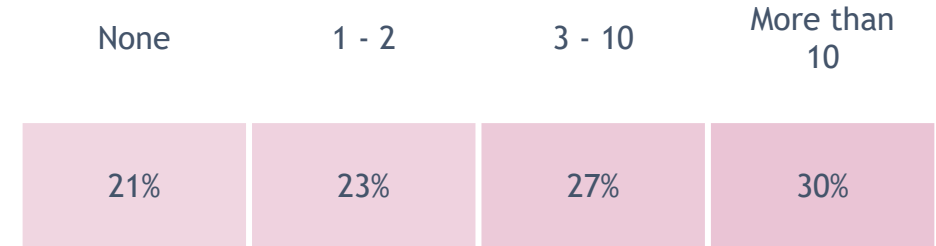
On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is *not at all* and 10 is *completely*, how much would you say you are following the restrictions?



I think most people are following social distancing guidelines



Apart from the people in your own household or a permitted support bubble, in the last 7 days, how many other people have you come into close contact with, meaning within one metre?



Apart from the people in your own household or a permitted support bubble, in the last 7 days, how many people have come into your house?

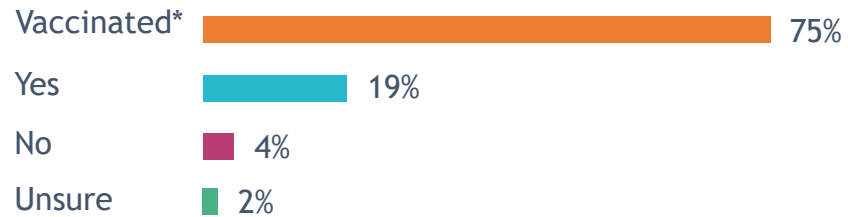


In the last 7 days, how many other people's houses have you been into - not including that of a permitted support bubble?



If you were offered a coronavirus vaccination...

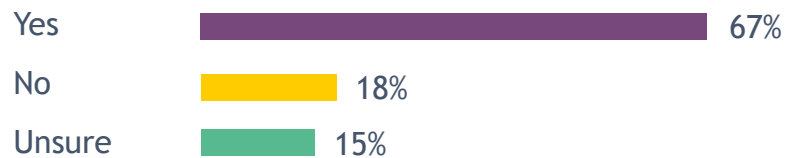
Would you personally want to be vaccinated?



*Already received a coronavirus vaccination.

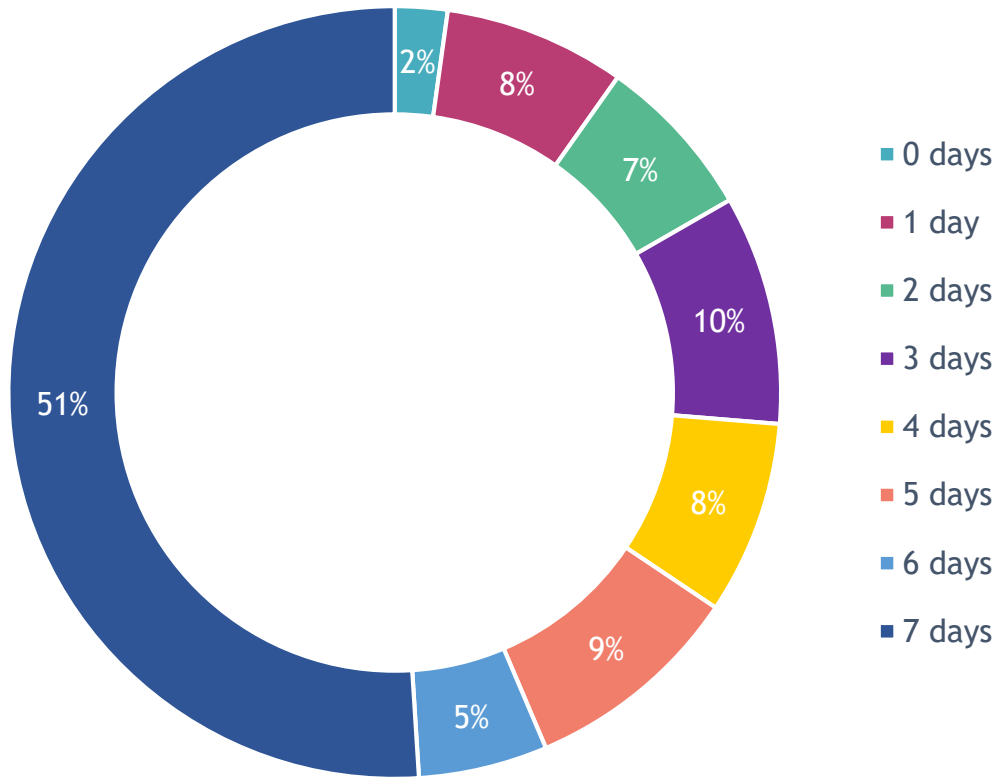
*For those with children in the household**:*

Would you want your children to be vaccinated?



**Limited to those with children living in the household; excluding those responding 'not applicable'; unweighted data.

In the past 7 days, on how many days have you left your home or garden?



In the past 7 days, on how many days have you left your home...

	0 days	1-2 days	3-4 days	5+ days
...to work	54%	8%	10%	27%
...to shop	19%	54%	17%	9%
...to exercise	42%	17%	12%	29%
...to meet family/friends	51%	38%	5%	6%
...to eat at a café, pub or restaurant	85%	12%	2%	<1%

How well are we handling coronavirus?

Do you think the restrictions in place to manage coronavirus are...

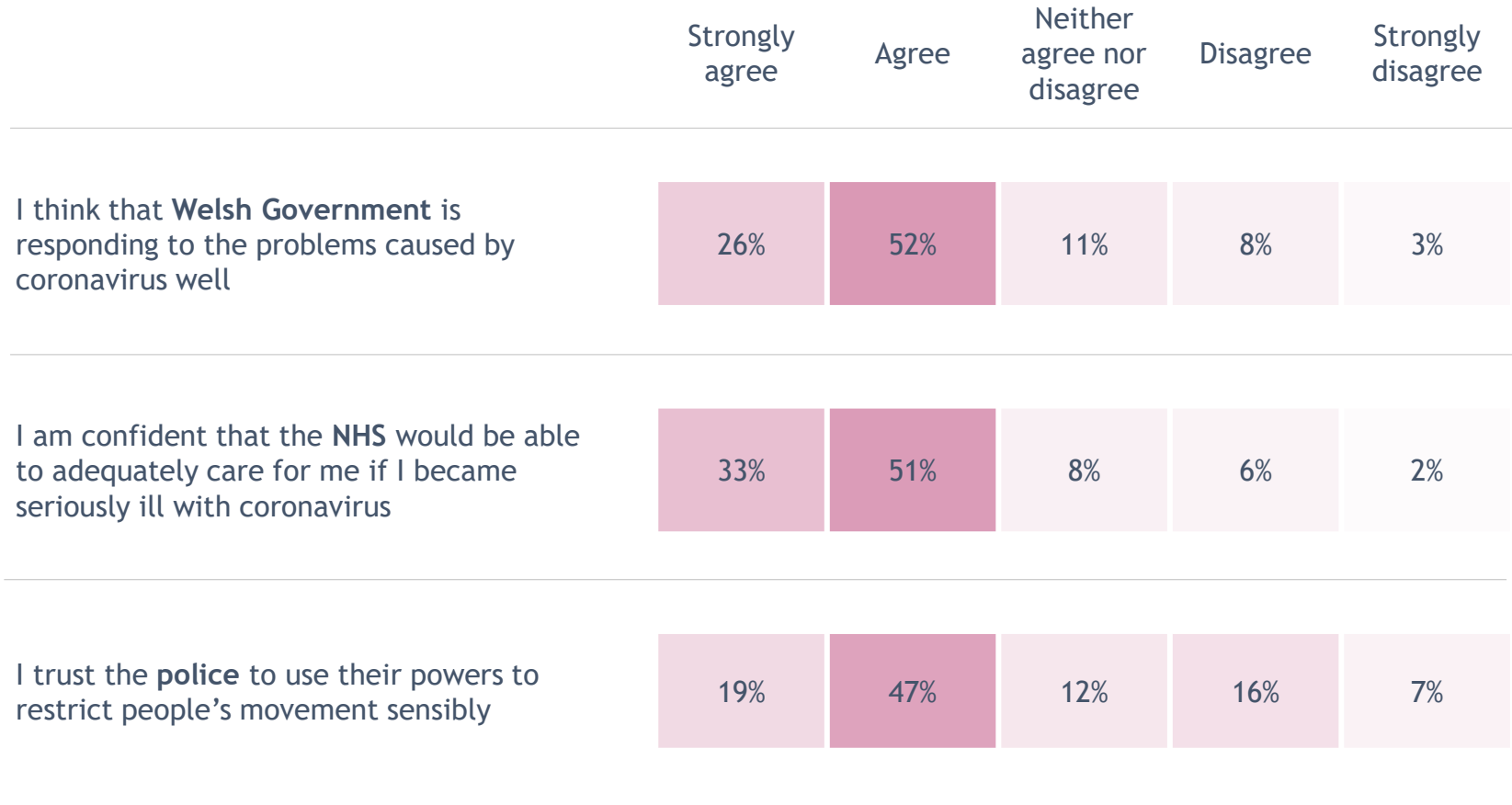
Too little 9%



About right 79%



Too much 12%



What are we worried about?

Over the past week, how much have the following been worrying you?

	Not at all	A little	A lot
Losing someone you love to coronavirus	43%	30%	27%
The wellbeing of your children ^{**~}	28%	31%	41%
Your children's education ^{**~}	30%	32%	38%
Losing your job or not being able to find one ^{#~}	72%	13%	15%
Your finances	65%	20%	15%
Going out in public places [#]	46%	41%	13%
The impacts of Brexit	64%	24%	12%

*Limited to those with children in the household; #Excludes those responding 'not applicable'; ~Unweighted data.

Of this list of potential policy areas, which do you think should be the first, second and third priorities for 2021?

	1 st priority	2 nd priority	3 rd priority	Included in top three priorities
NHS waiting lists	26%	27%	15%	68%
Coronavirus	37%	15%	13%	65%
Mental health	13%	16%	19%	48%
Education	11%	15%	21%	47%
Unemployment	3%	13%	14%	30%
Climate change	6%	8%	12%	25%
Brexit	3%	7%	7%	16%

How healthy do you feel today?

0 = Very unhealthy

10 = Very healthy

0-3

4-6

7-10

8%

36%

56%

How happy do you feel today?

0 = Not at all happy

10 = Completely happy

0-3

4-6

7-10

6%

29%

65%

How anxious do you feel today?

0 = Not at all anxious

10 = Completely anxious

0-3

4-6

7-10

51%

29%

20%

On how many days in the last week did you do at least 30 minutes exercise (enough to make you out of breath)?

0 days

1-4 days

5+ days

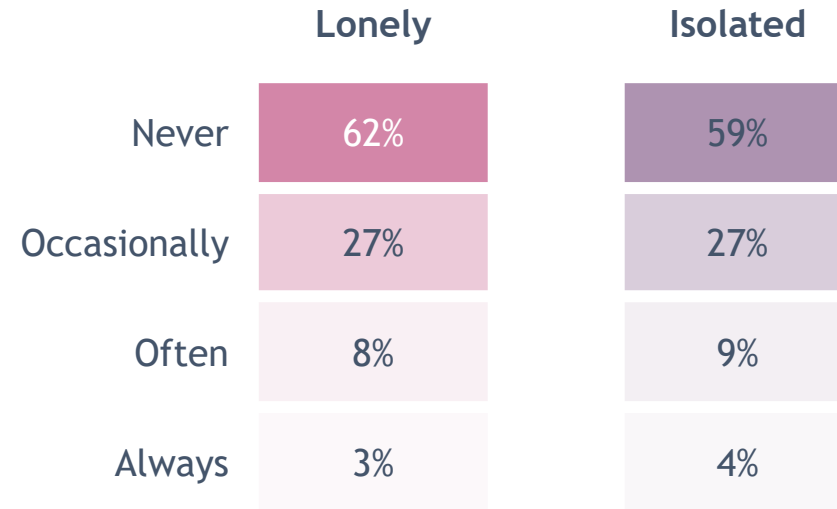
28%

37%

35%

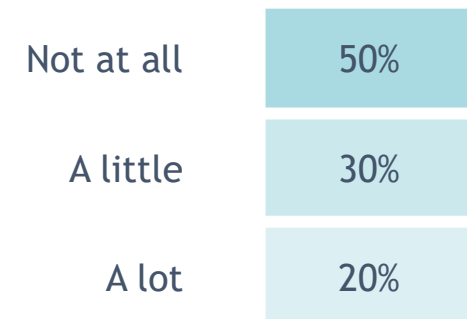
How are we feeling?

In the last week, how often have you felt...



Over the past week, how much has the following been worrying you?

Your mental health and wellbeing



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How are you doing?

For general information on how to look after yourself, your friends and family during the coronavirus restrictions visit:
phw.nhs.wales/howareyoudoing

