

# Social Activity Measure

## May 30<sup>th</sup>-June 7<sup>th</sup>



## ABOUT THE RESEARCH

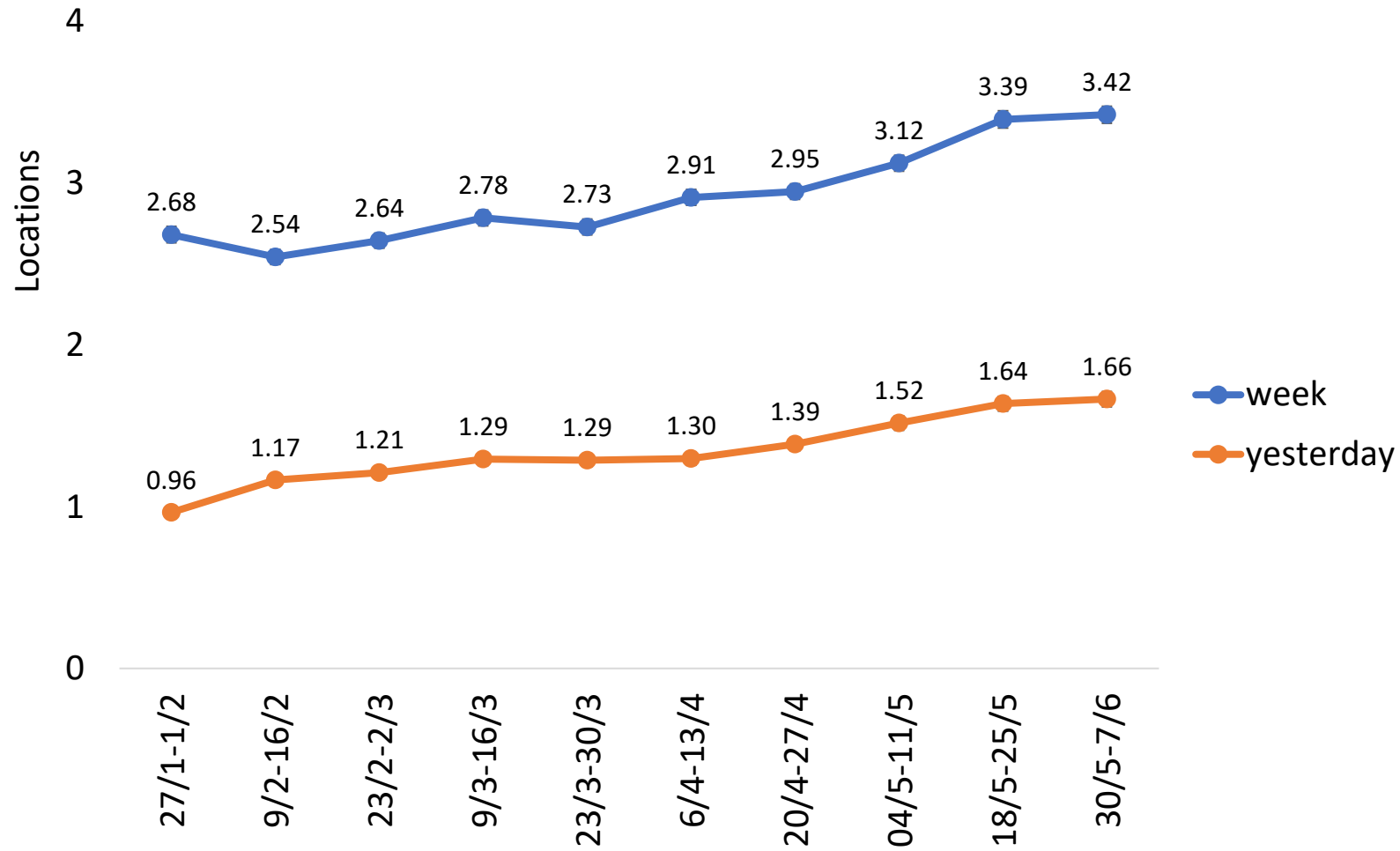
The Social Activity Measure (SAM) is a behavioural study that records the public response to the risk of COVID-19 infection over time. Designed by the ESRI's Behavioural Research Unit (BRU), SAM is an anonymous, interactive, online study that surveys people about their recent activity. The study offers insight into where and how risks of COVID-19 transmission arise. SAM aims to inform policy regarding the opening of parts of the economy and society, while keeping COVID-19 under control. The research was designed by the BRU in consultation with the Department of the Taoiseach, which funds the work. The survey is completely anonymous. Where comparisons between survey rounds are highlighted, they are statistically significant.

## TIMING

This slide deck presents results from a nationally representative sample of 1,000 people aged 18 and over who participated in the study between May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>. Data were collected after the announcement that foreign travel could resume from July 19<sup>th</sup>. Accommodation services reopened on June 2<sup>nd</sup> during the data collection period. Outdoor dining and drinking, limited social visits, visits to indoor sport and exercise locations, larger events and sports matches were possible only from June 7<sup>th</sup> – the last day of data collection and a bank holiday.



# Total locations visited

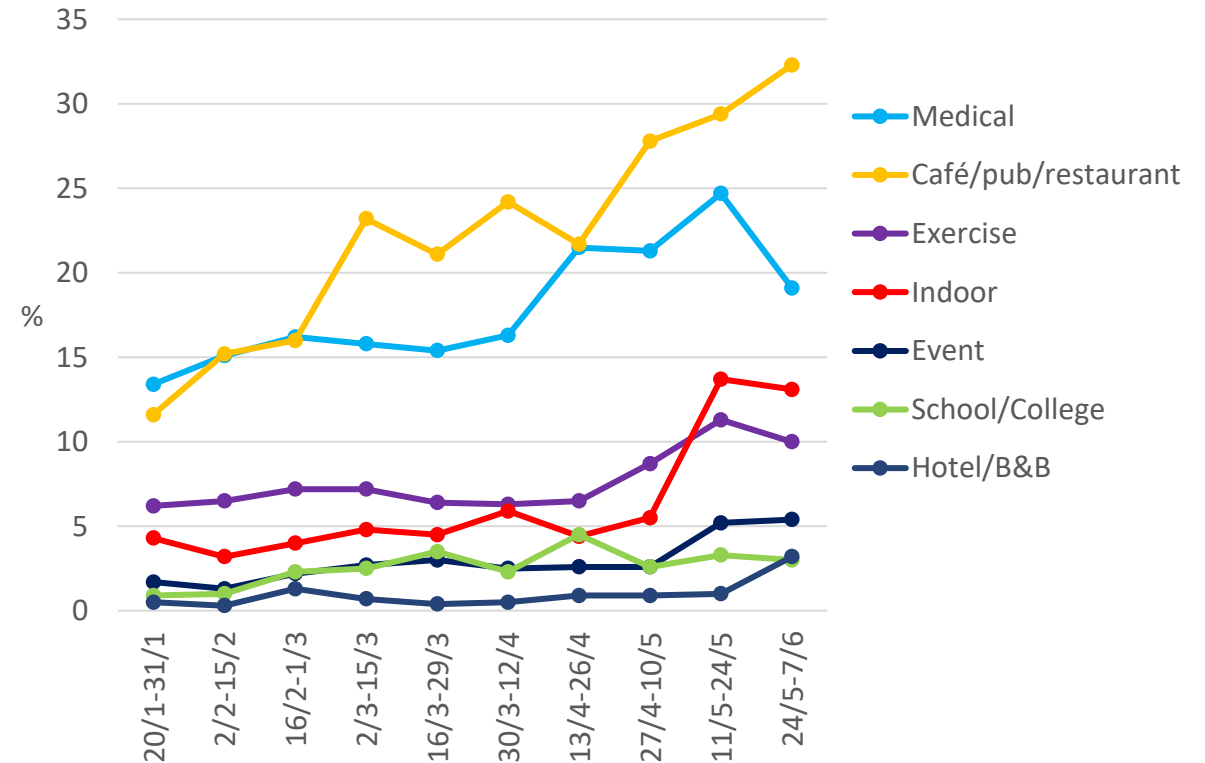
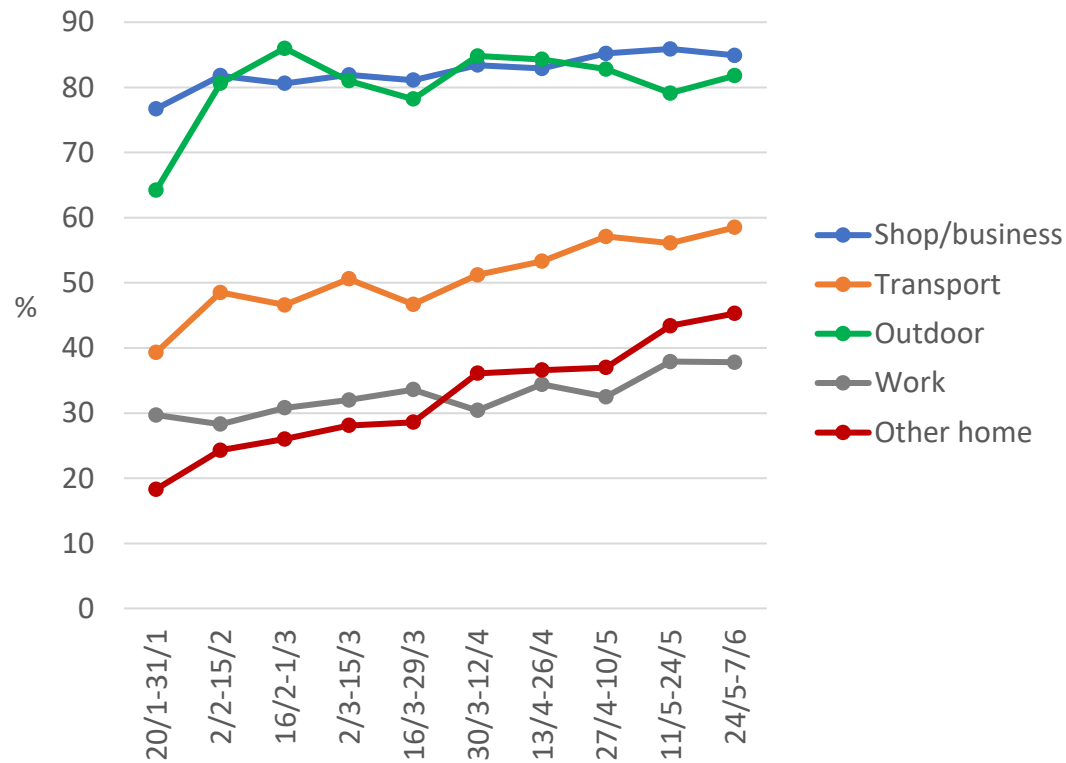


*The average number of locations visited has increased slowly and steadily since January, with the larger share of the increase occurring since early April.*

● week  
● yesterday



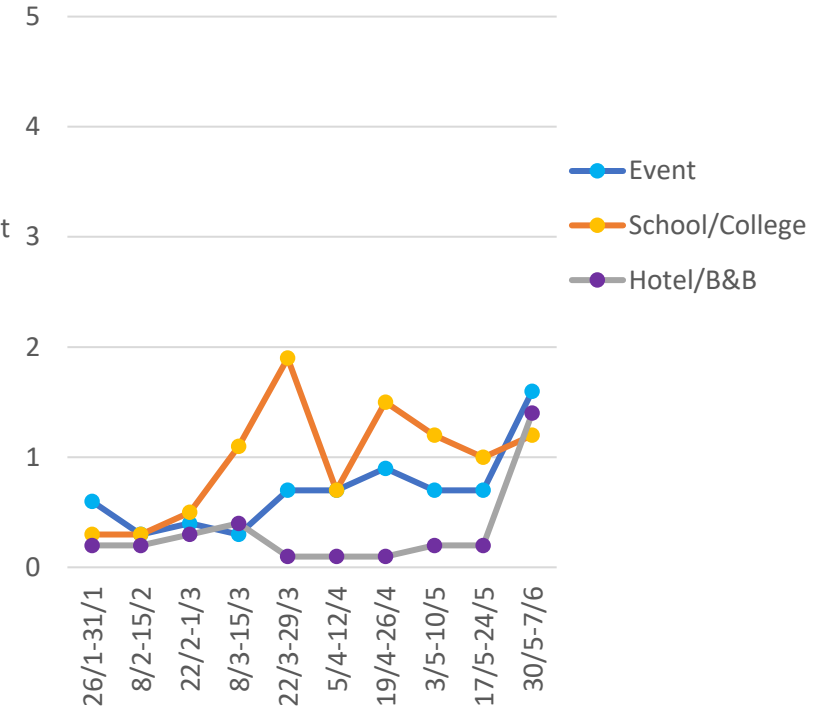
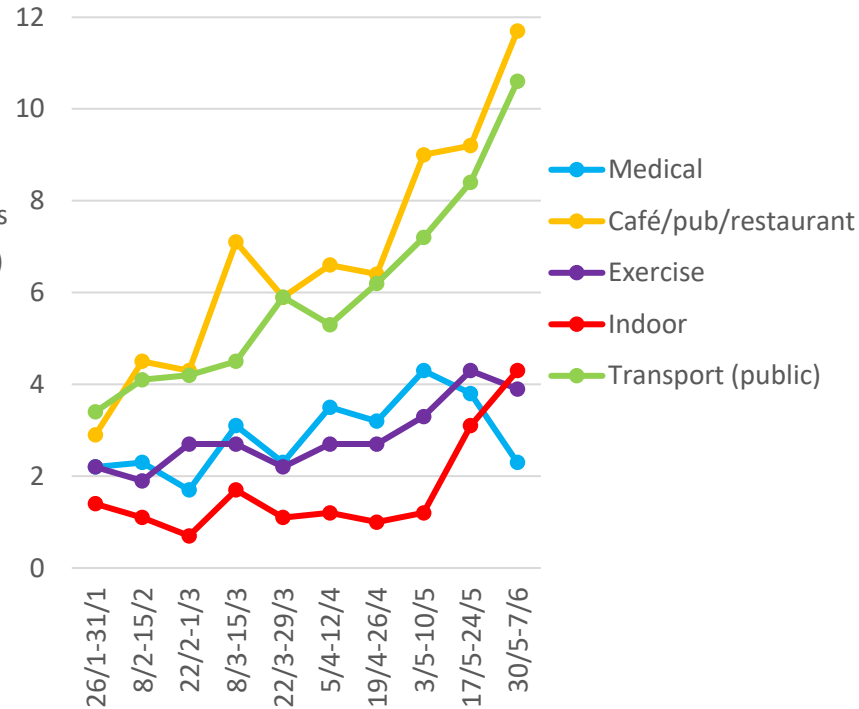
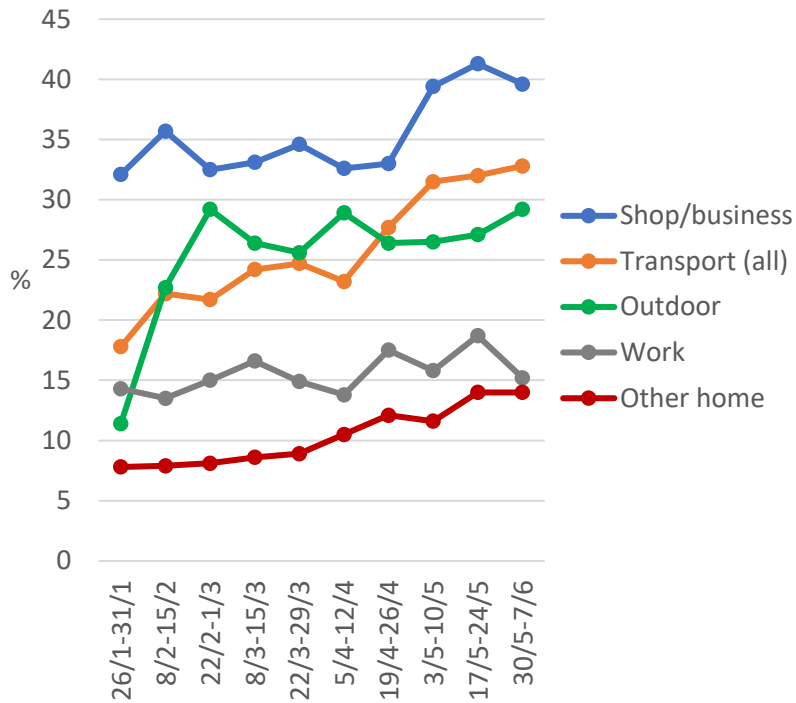
# Locations visited (previous week)



*The charts show the proportion of the population who had visited each location at some point during the previous week. Note the different scales on the vertical axis. There were increases in people visiting hospitality venues (cafés, restaurants, pubs, hotels) and other indoor locations. The significant decline in visits to medical facilities is likely linked to the recent cyberattack on the health service.*



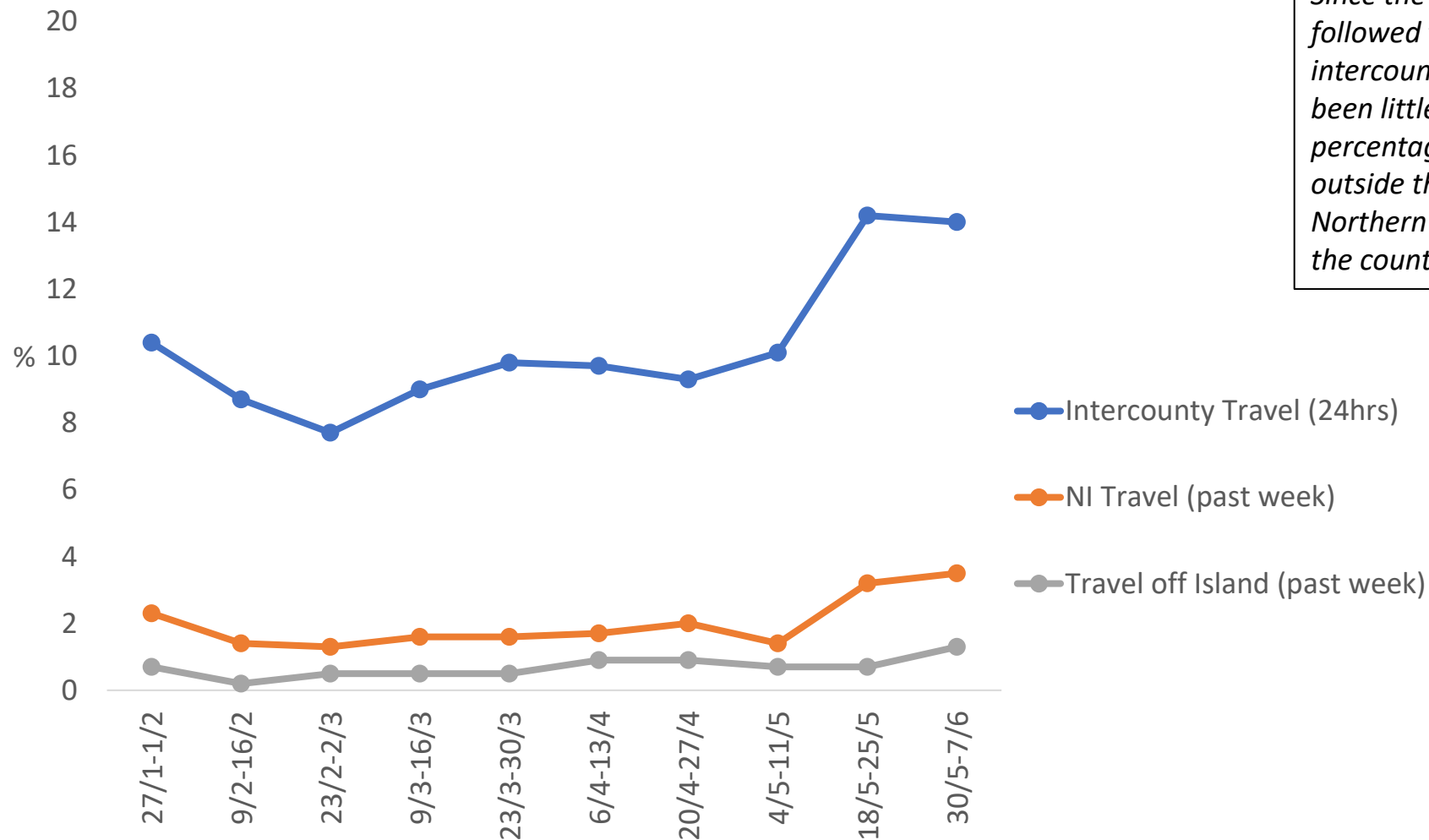
# Locations visited (yesterday)



*The charts show the proportion of the population who had visited each location at some point the previous day. Note the different scales on the vertical axis. The decrease in going to work coincides with the June Bank Holiday. There were increases in visits to hospitality venues (cafés, restaurants, pubs, hotels), visits to other indoor venues, and attendance at events. Visits to medical facilities decreased.*



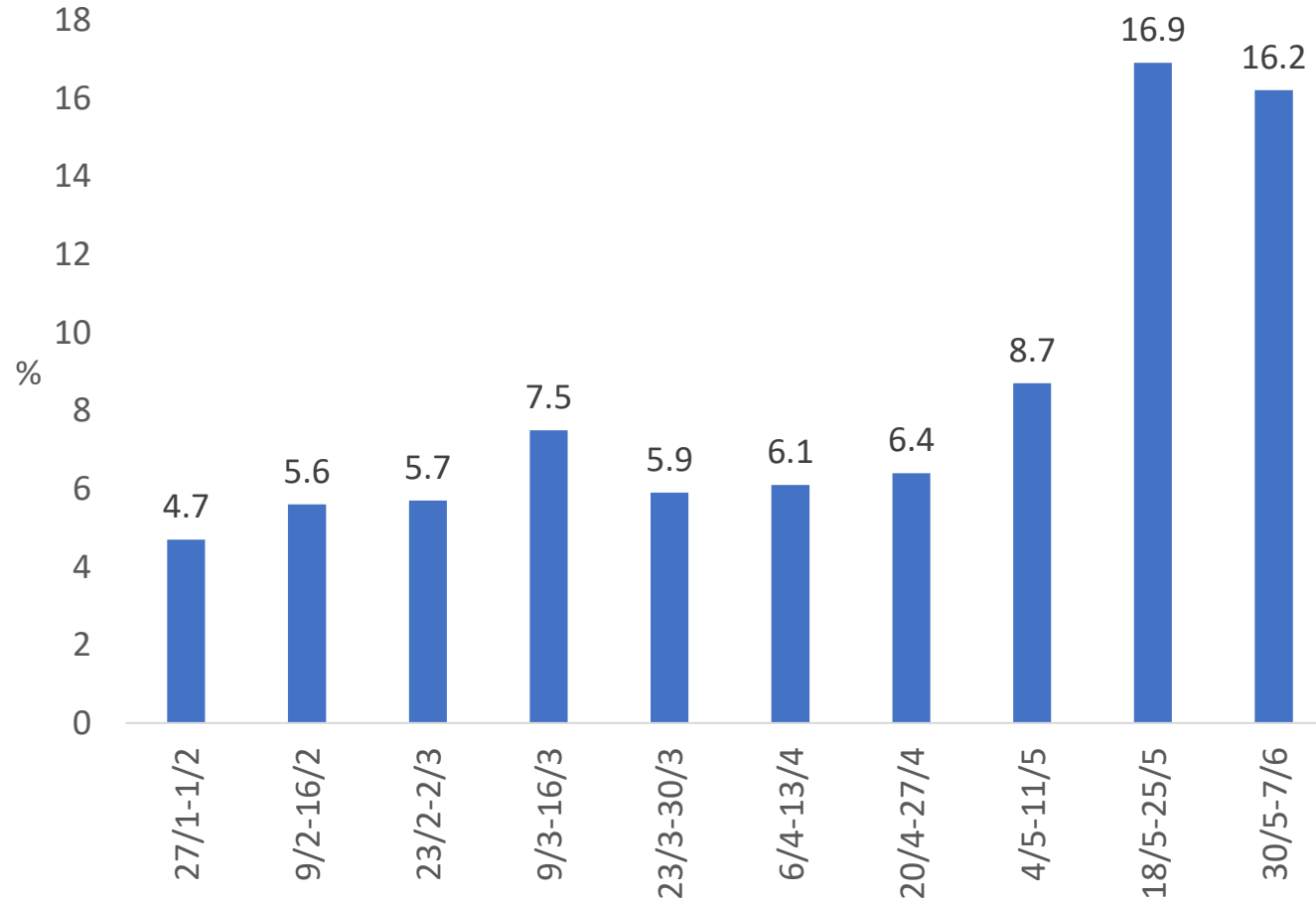
# National and international travel



*Since the previous wave, which followed the opening up of intercounty travel, there has been little change in the percentage of people travelling outside their county, into Northern Ireland, or outside the country.*



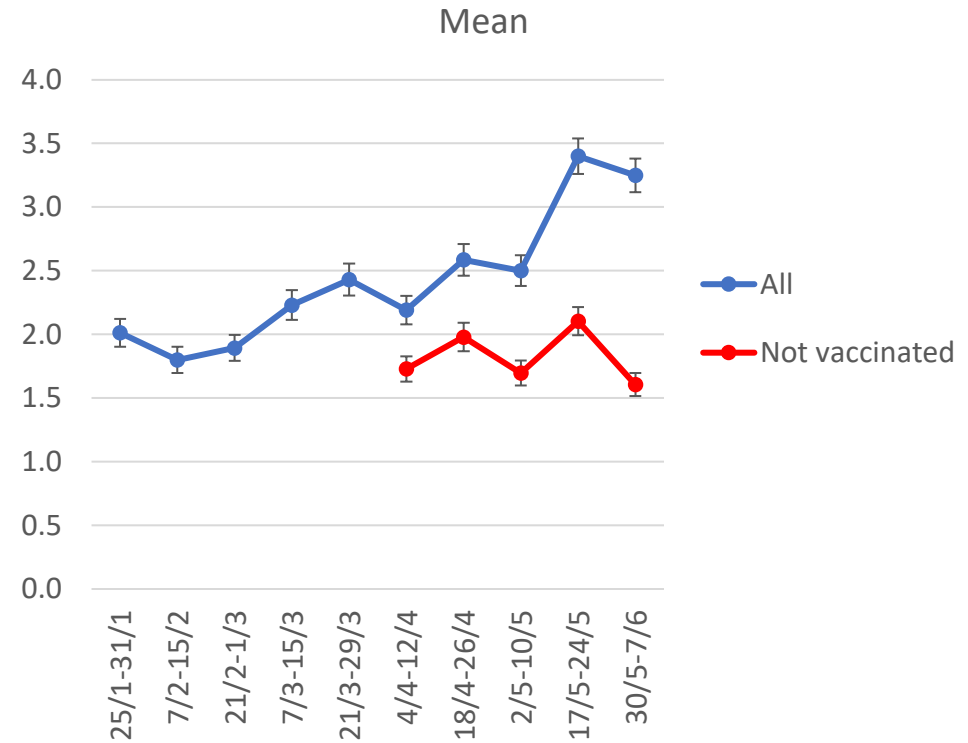
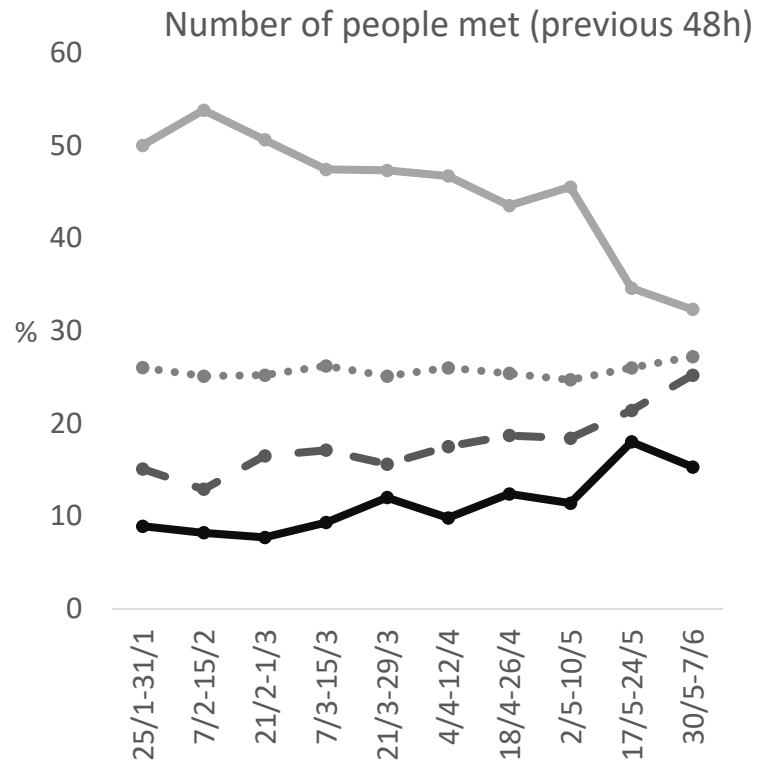
# Non-essential shops (previous 48h)



*There has been no further increase in visits to non-essential shops and businesses since the initial response to re-opening recorded in the previous wave.*



# Meeting people outside the household

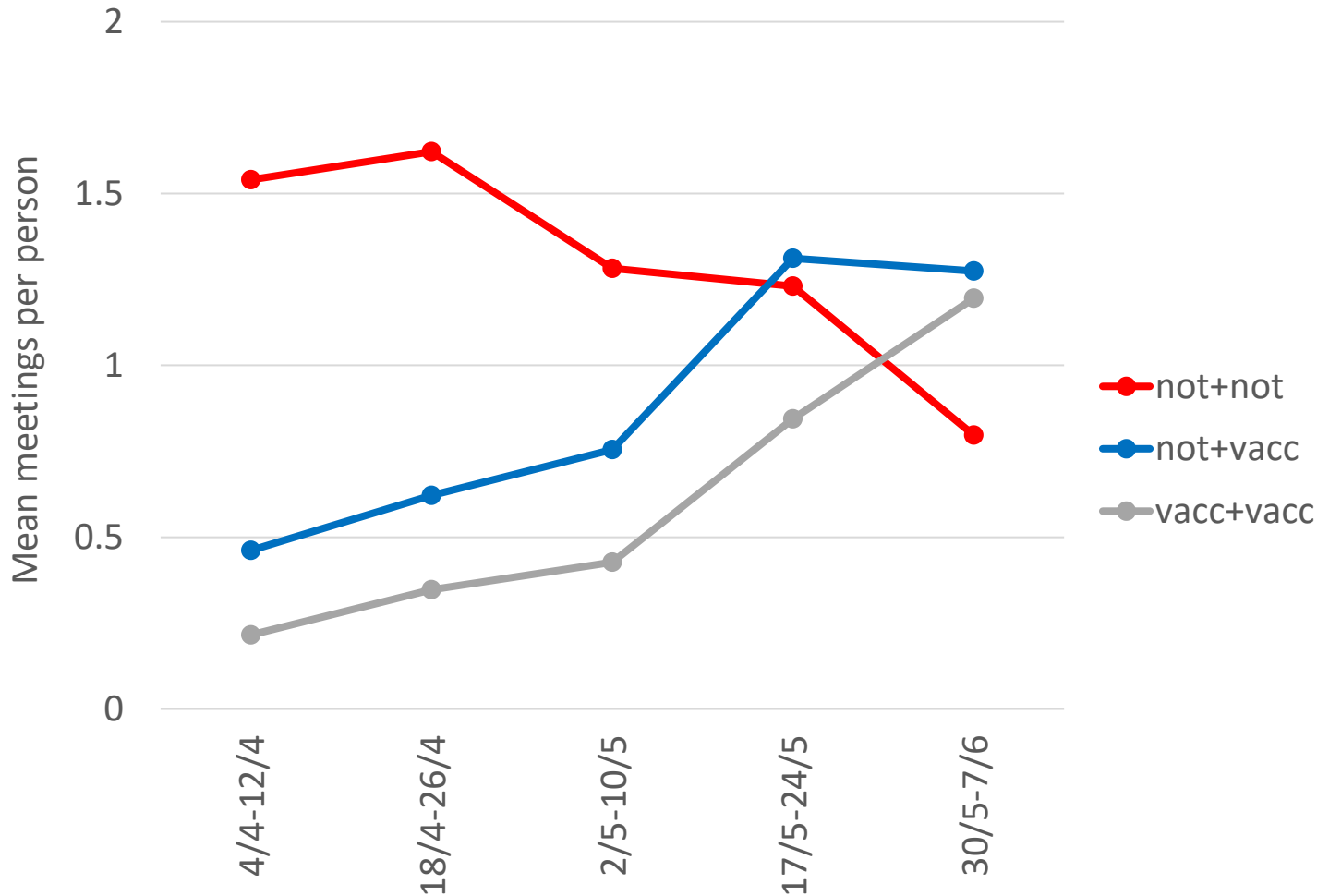


*There was no further increase in the number of people individuals met up with from other households, following the steep increase in mid-May. However, the average number of unvaccinated people each individual met up with fell.*





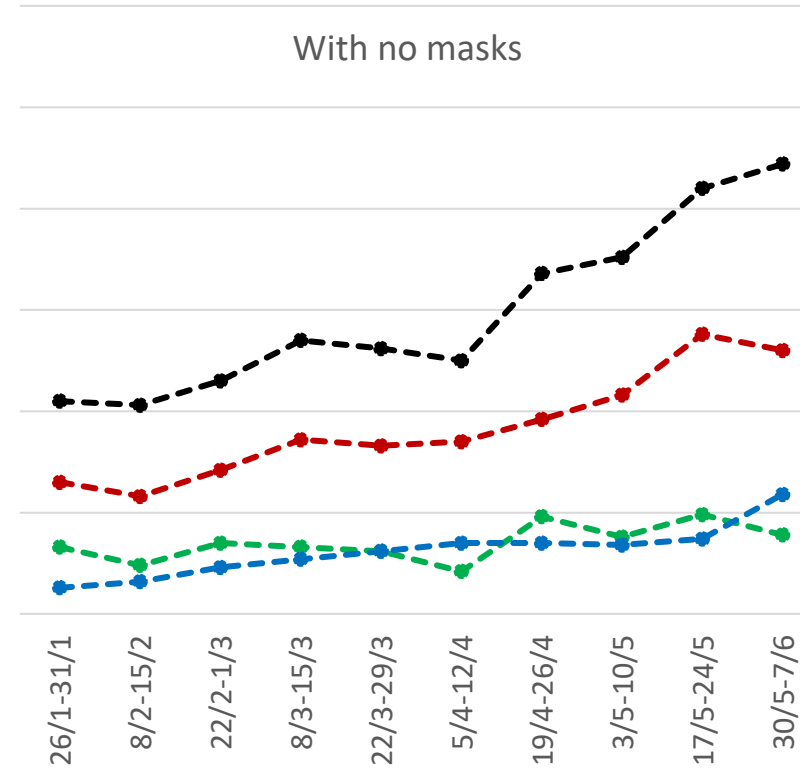
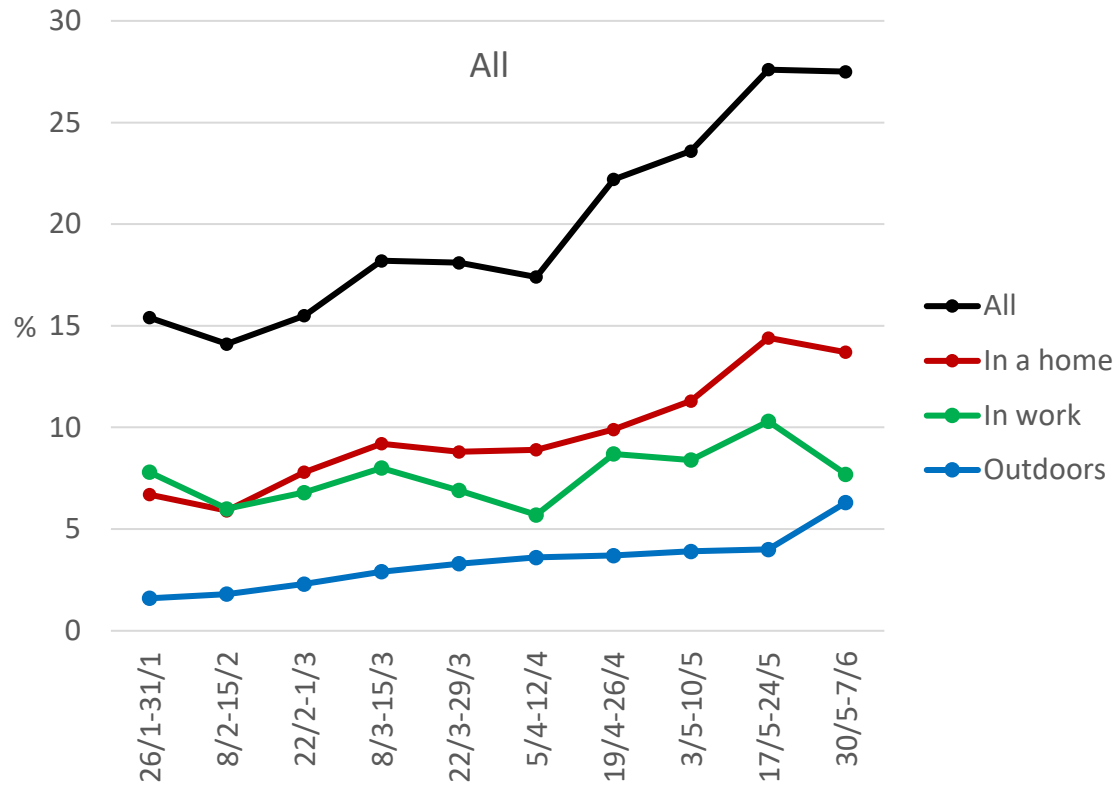
# Meetings (per person) by vaccination status



*Despite the increase in the total number of meetings, the number occurring in which both parties are not vaccinated has fallen steeply. The number of meetings in which one or both individuals have had at least one dose has increased rapidly.*



# Close contacts\* (previous day)

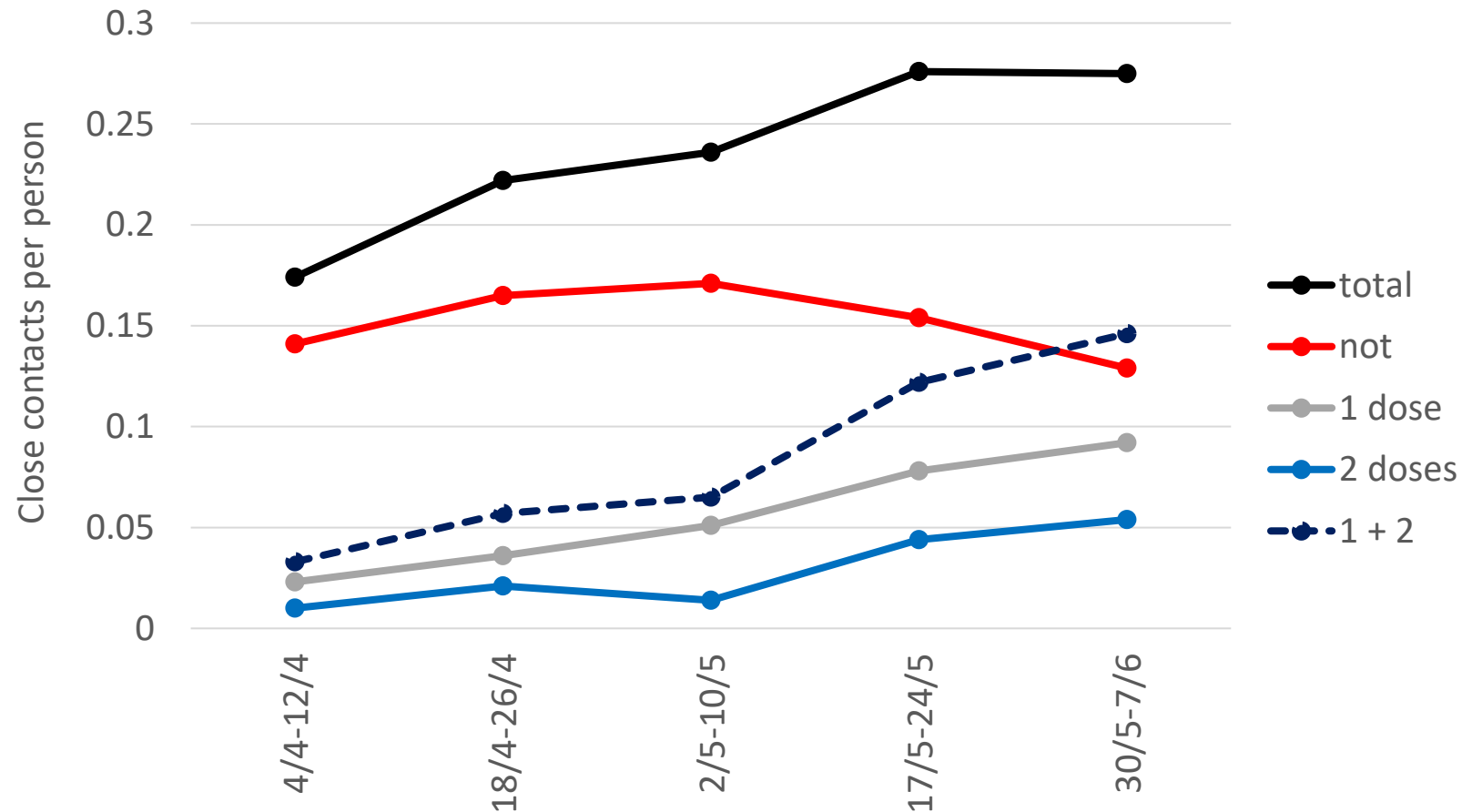


\*Close contact interactions are defined as those that are likely to have lasted for longer than 15 minutes without a 2m distance being maintained at all times or that took place indoors for longer than 2 hours in a space that was not well ventilated (hse.ie).

*There was no further rise in close contacts, with a marginal fall in close contacts in workplaces and homes offset by a rise in close contacts outdoors.*



# Close contacts by vaccine status

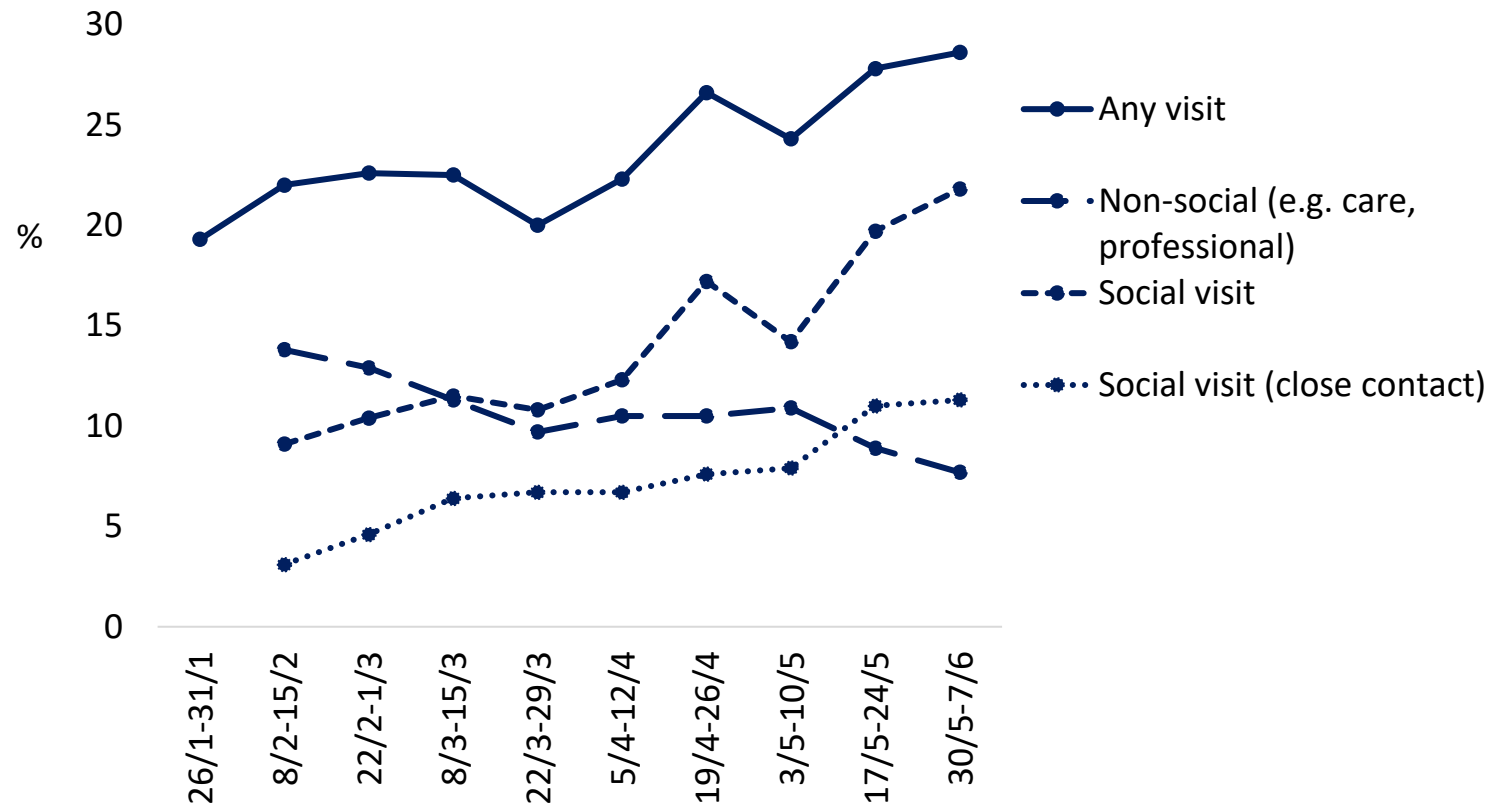


*The total number of close contacts remained steady, following recent increases. The number of close contacts reported by individuals who have not had at least one dose of vaccine is now falling. Close contacts reported by people who have had one or two vaccine doses are rising. More close contacts are now reported by people who have had at least one dose than by people who are not vaccinated.*

# Visits to homes



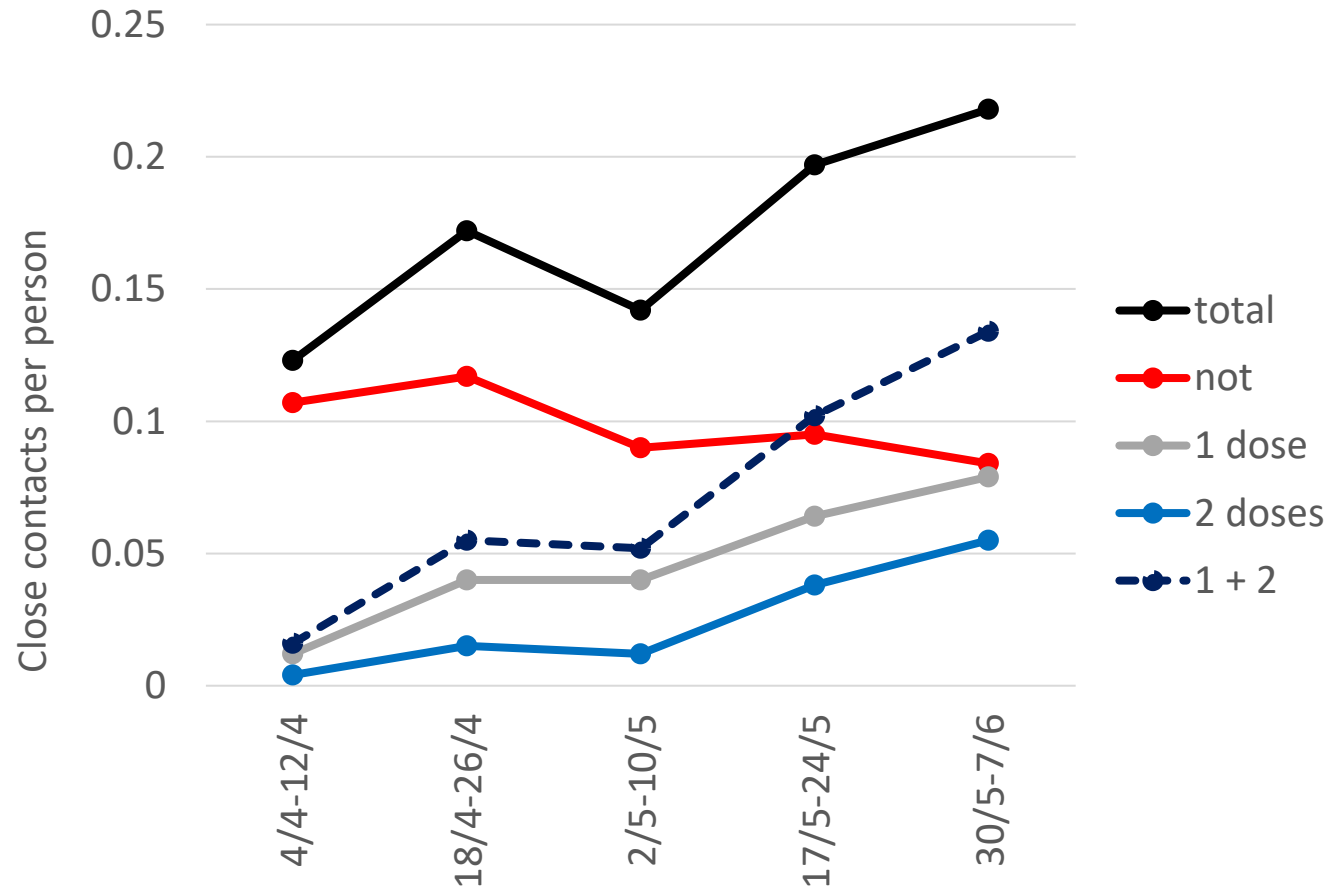
Proportion who had visitors or visited another household  
(previous day)



*There was a marginal increase in social visits to homes and resulting close contacts.*



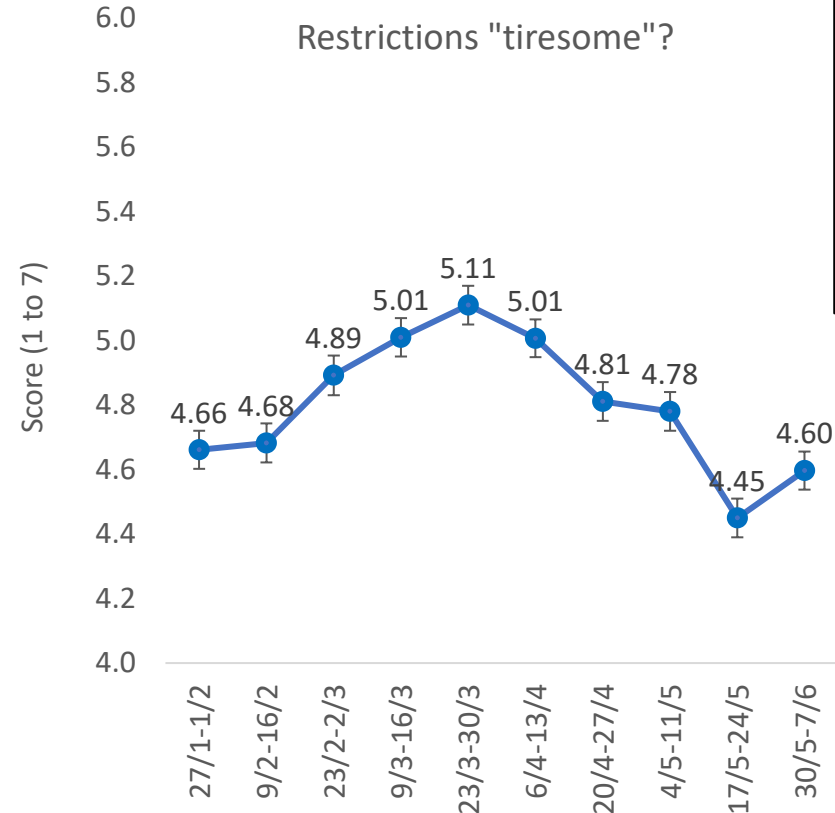
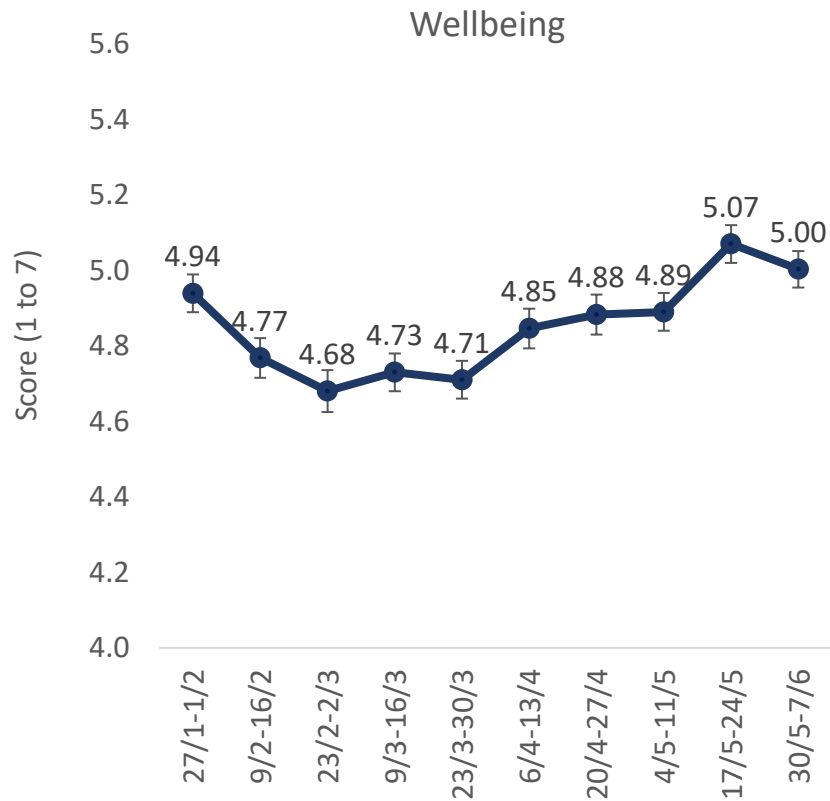
# Social visits to homes by vaccination status



*The number of social visits to homes reported by individuals who have not had at least one dose of vaccine is now falling. The number of social visits reported by people who have had one or two vaccine doses is rising. More such visits are now reported by people who have had at least one dose of vaccine than by people who are not vaccinated.*

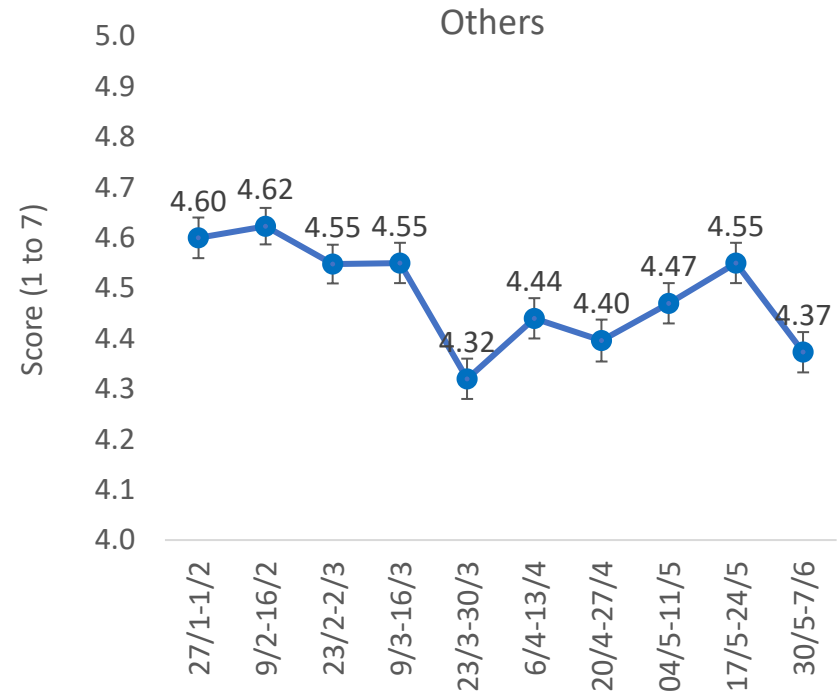
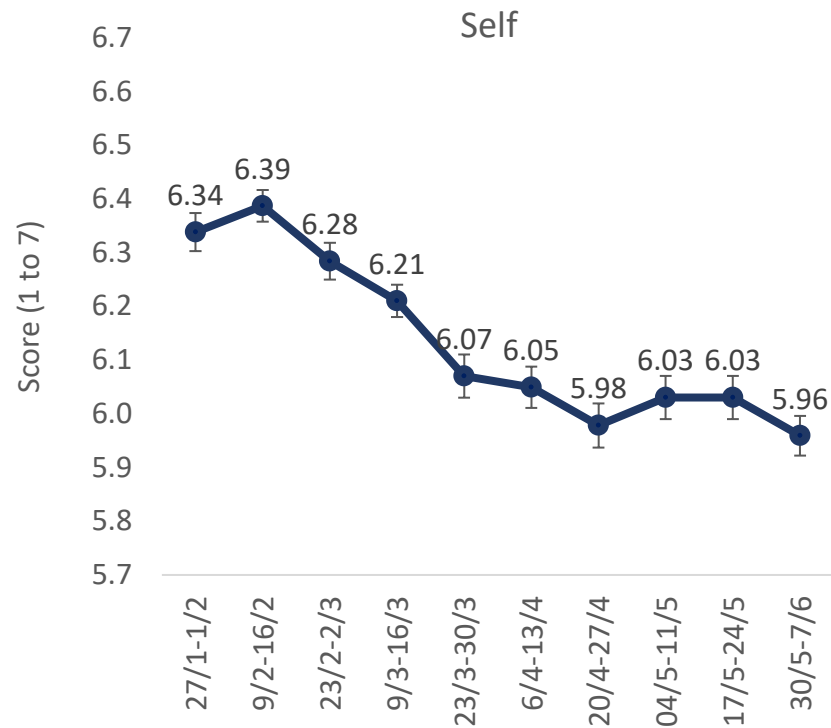


# Wellbeing and Fatigue



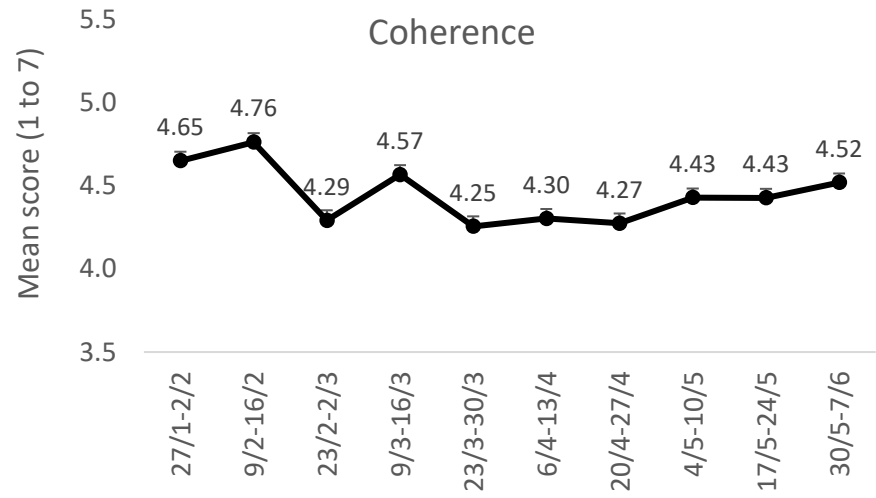
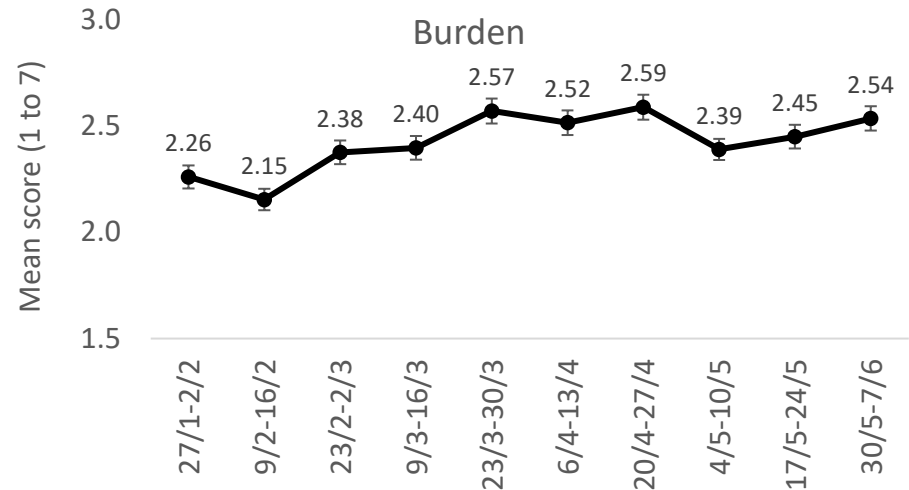
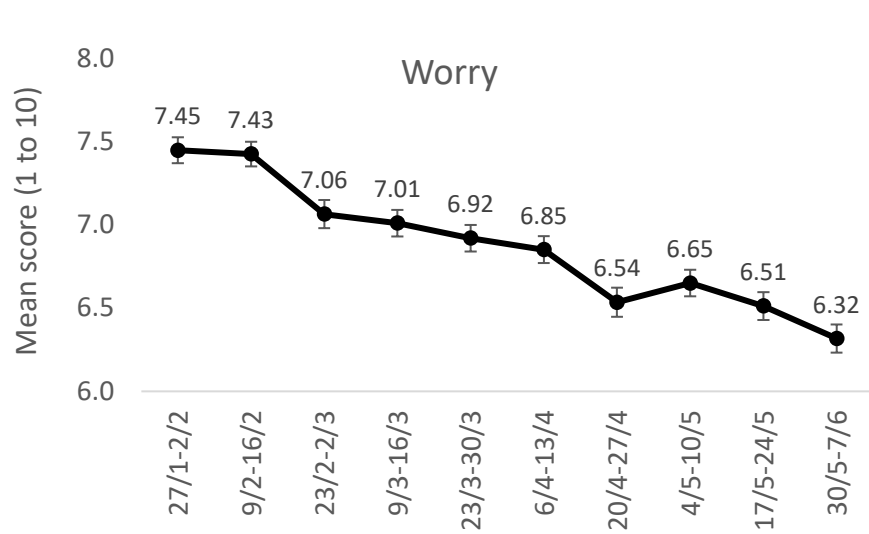
*There was a marginal decrease in wellbeing and increase in the extent to which people say they are tired of the restrictions, but these were short of statistical significance and the levels remain significantly better than 4 weeks previously.*

# Compliance



*Self-reported compliance fell marginally, but remains largely unchanged over the past two months. However, there was a sharp and significant fall in the perception of how much other people are complying with current restrictions.*

# Key psychological variables

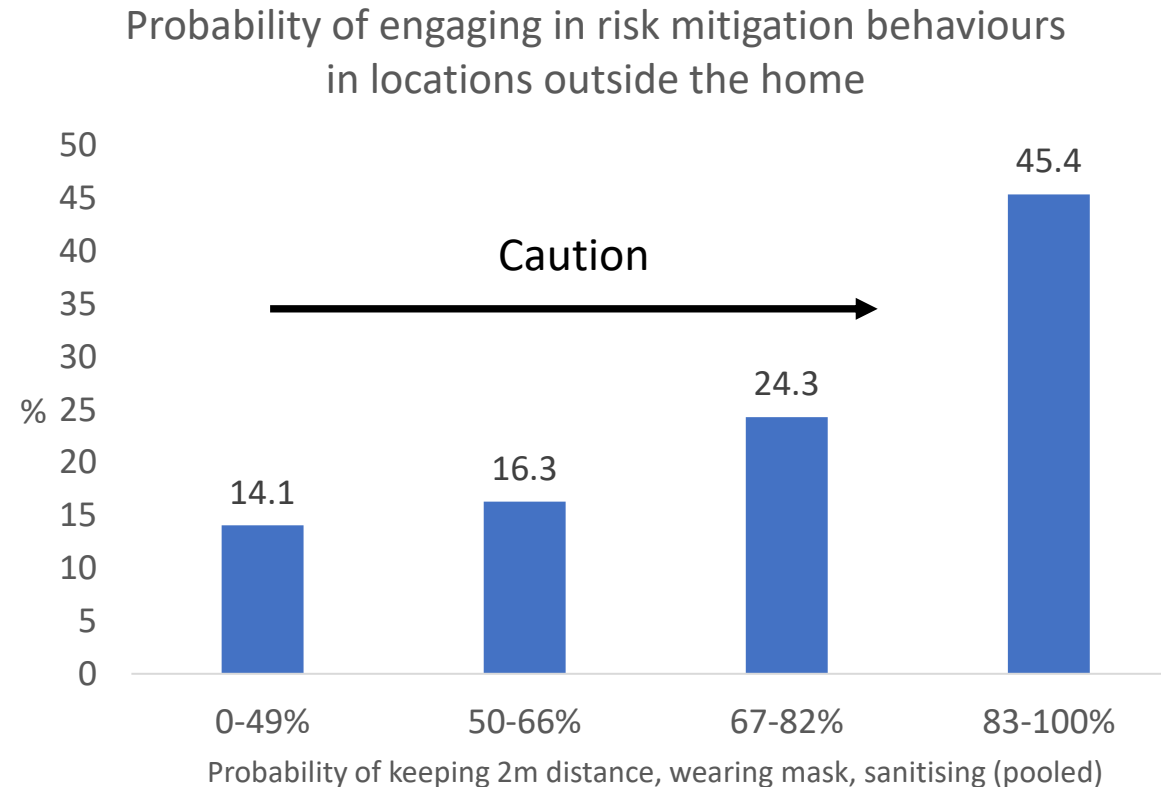


*Overall worry has continued to fall. The extent to which people prioritise preventing the spread of Covid-19 over the burden of restrictions has remained stable. There is a shallow upward trend since March in the extent to which respondents view the restrictions as coherent rather than contradictory. These three psychological variables are all linked to the likelihood that people have a close contact, whether they engage in a social visit to another household, and how many people individuals meet from other households.*



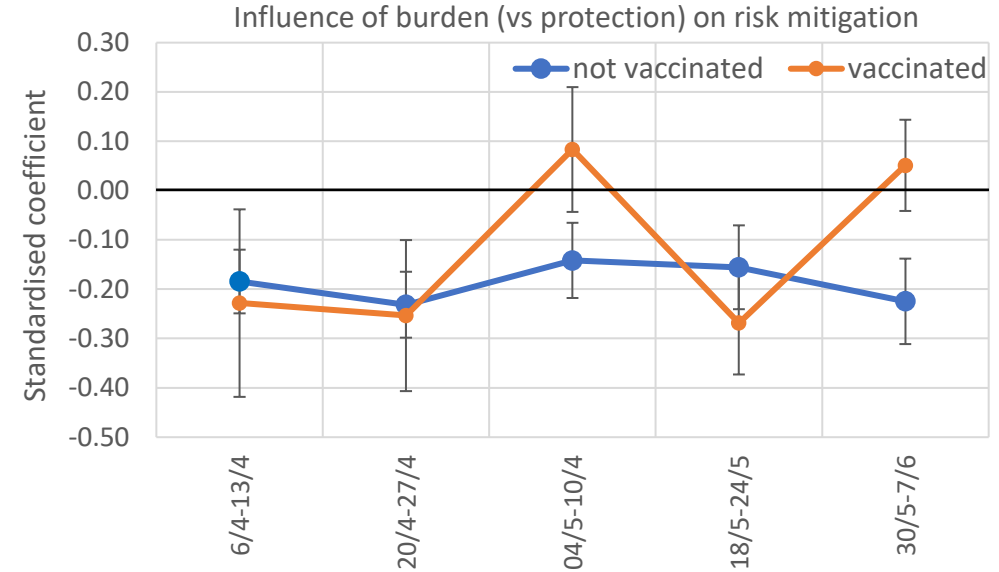
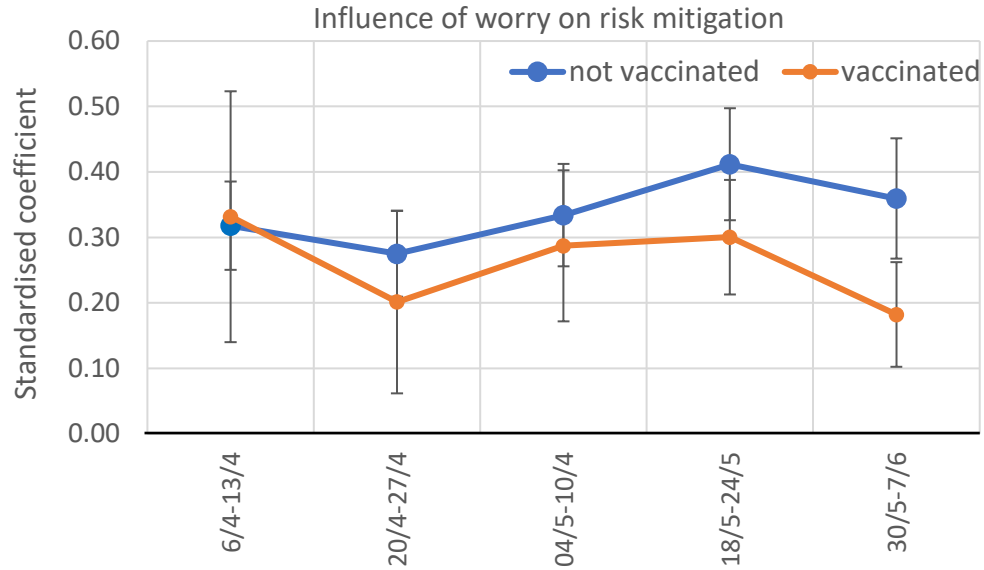


# Day-to-day risk mitigation

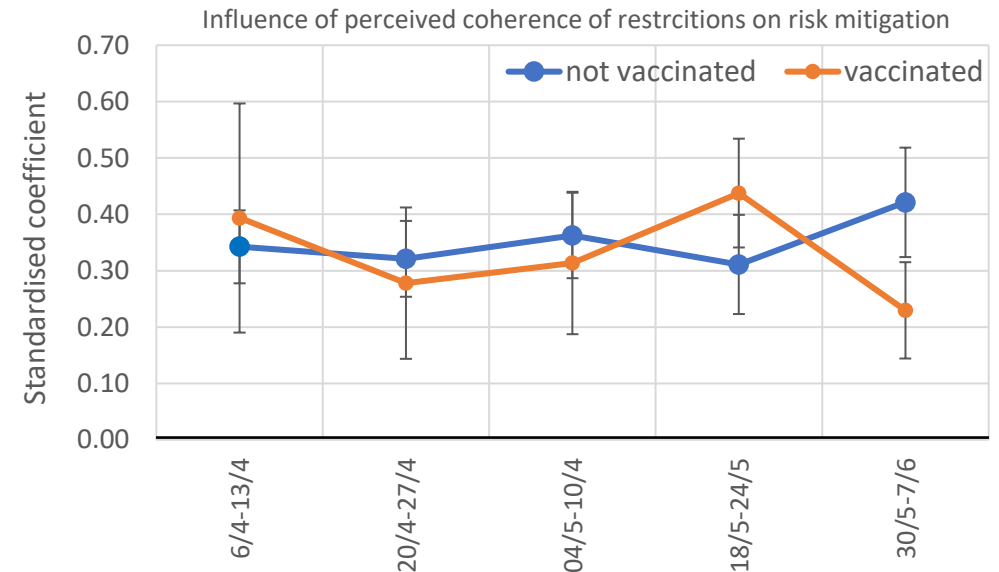


*Meeting up with people, close contacts, and social visits are all possible within current restrictions. However, public health guidance has consistently stressed keeping social distance, wearing masks and hand hygiene. We created a measure of how often, when visiting each location outside of their home, people reported keeping 2m distance, wearing a mask, and cleaning their hands. These were pooled into a single measure of the probability that the individual undertook the behaviour. There is substantial variation across the population. Most people complied with the guidance most of the time, but more than one-in-eight less than half of the time.*

# Predictors of day-to-day risk mitigation

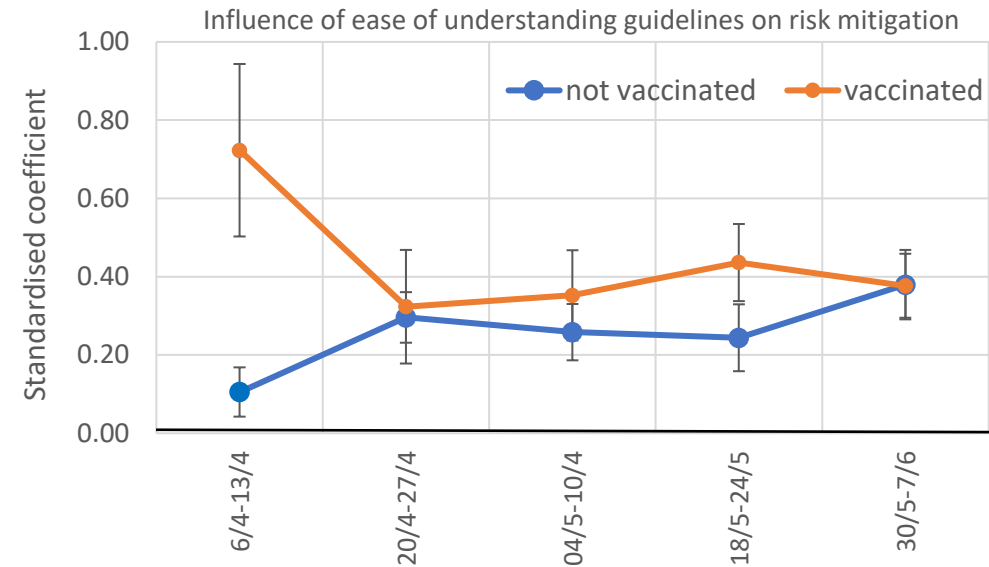
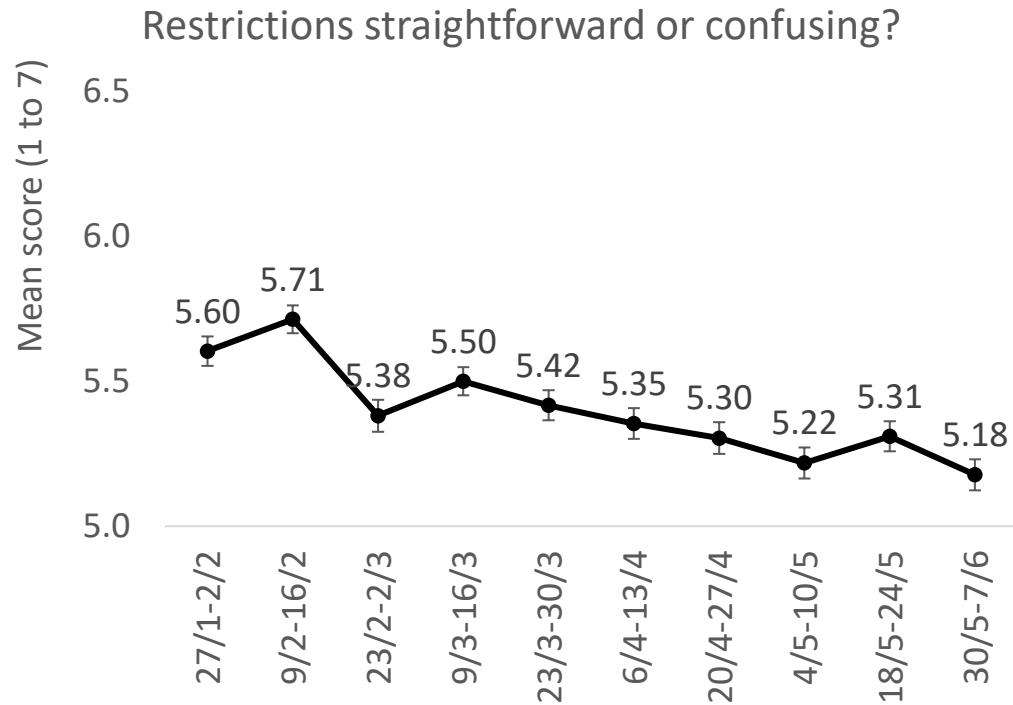


*Worry, the burden-protection trade-off and perceived coherence of restrictions all influence risk mitigation (mask wearing, keeping distance, using sanitiser). Overall, the effects of the first two of these three variables are weaker among those who have had at least one dose of vaccine than people who are not vaccinated, controlling for socio-demographic characteristics.*



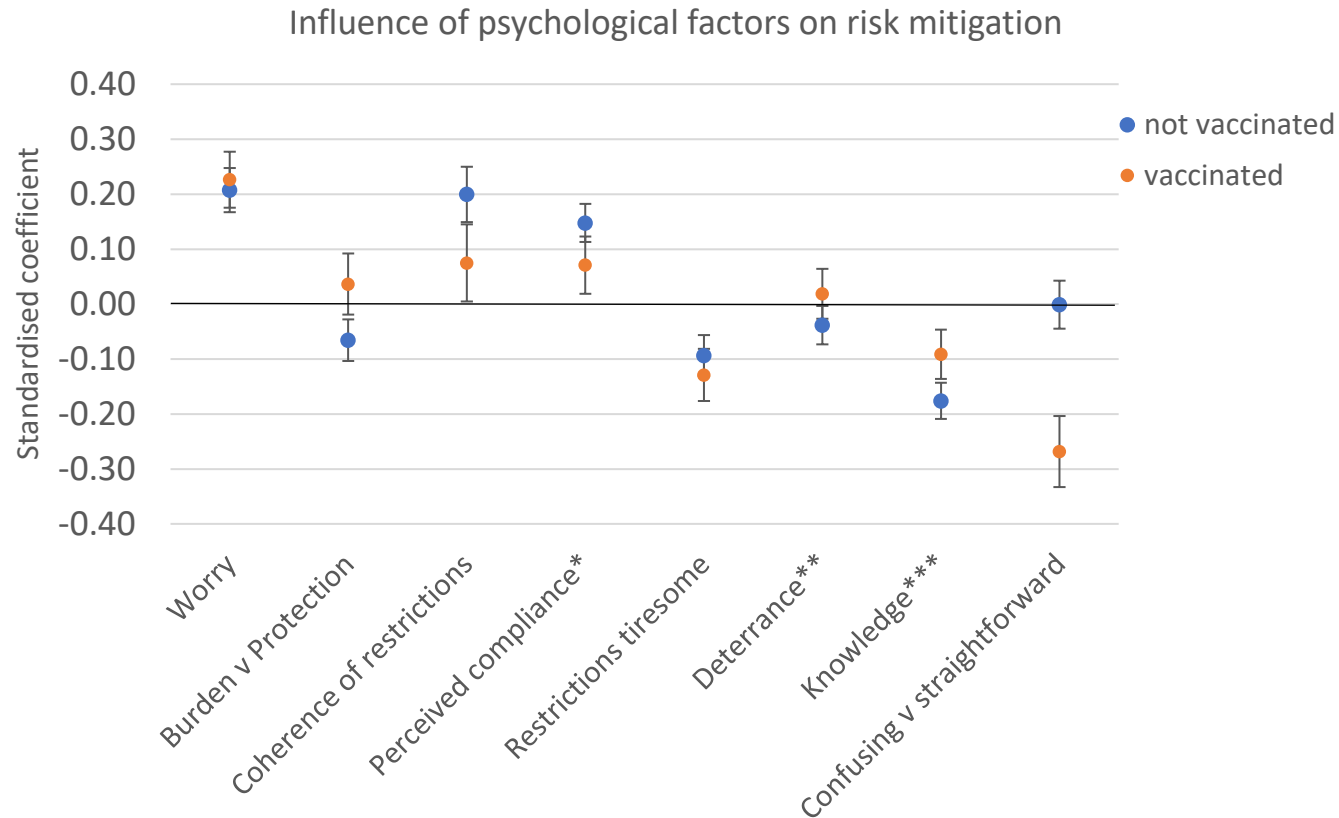


# Ease of following guidelines



*How straightforward people say it is to understand the guidelines on a 7-point scale (1=very confusing, 7=very straightforward) has been falling. This measure has had a weaker relationship with behaviour than worry, the burden-protection trade-off, or how coherent people perceive the restrictions to be. However, the variable is a stronger predictor of risk mitigation among people who have had at least one vaccine dose than people who are not vaccinated: those who find the guidelines more confusing are less likely to keep distance, wear a mask or use sanitiser when they leave home.*

# Different drivers of behaviour between vaccinated and non-vaccinated



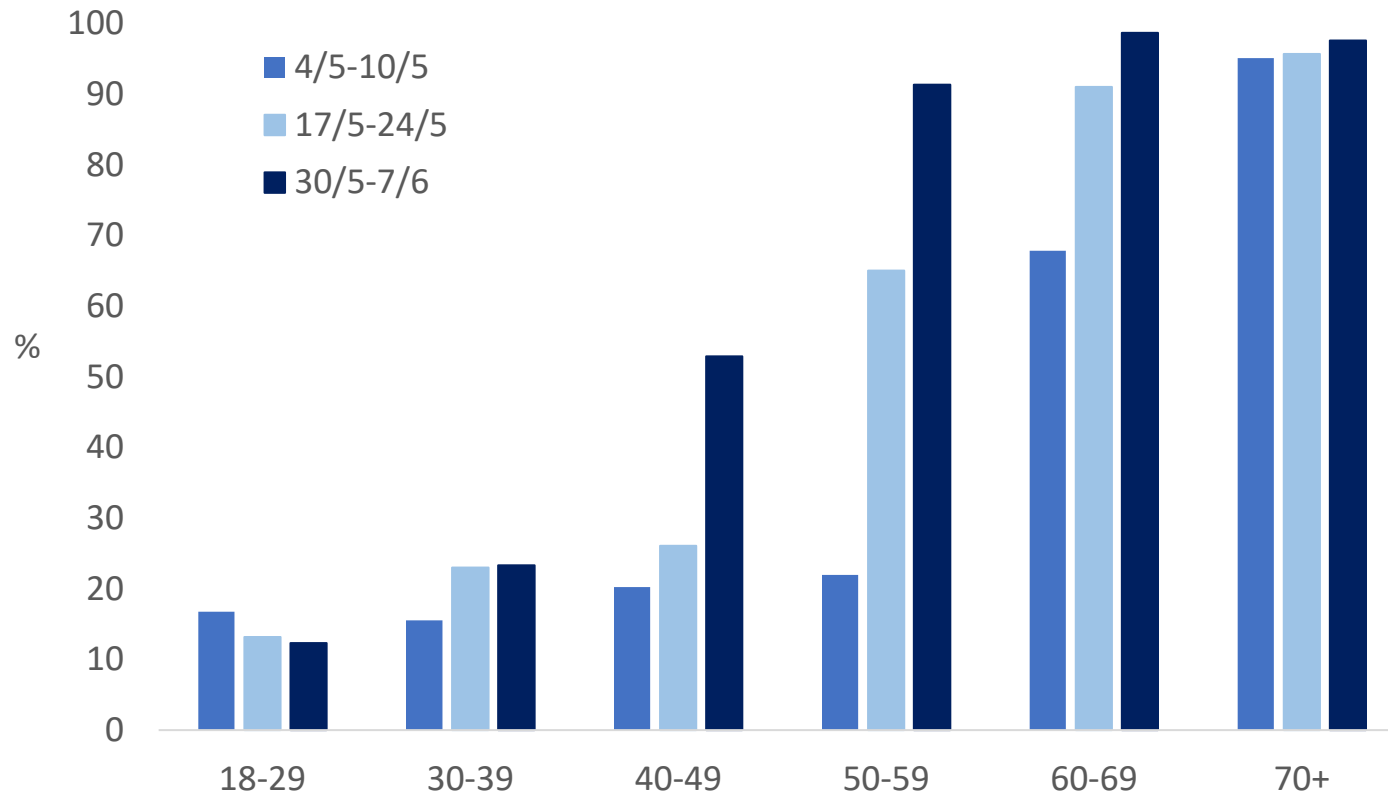
*The chart shows the influence of 8 different psychological factors on how often, when visiting each location outside of their home, people reported keeping 2m distance, wearing a mask, and cleaning their hands. In contrast to the previous charts, these measures are based on a statistical model that simultaneously controls for the other psychological variables as well as socio-demographic background. Data are from the most recent 5 rounds (6<sup>th</sup> April – 7<sup>th</sup> June).*

*This analysis confirms that what influences the behaviour of people who have received at least one vaccine dose differs from what influences those who are not vaccinated. The largest difference concerns the effect of how confusing versus straightforward people find the guidance, which substantially influenced the behaviour of people who have received at least one vaccine dose.*

\* Perception of how much other people are complying with restrictions  
 \*\* Perceived likelihood of being caught if you don't comply with restrictions  
 \*\*\* Knowledge of how the virus transmits (tested by multiple choice questions)

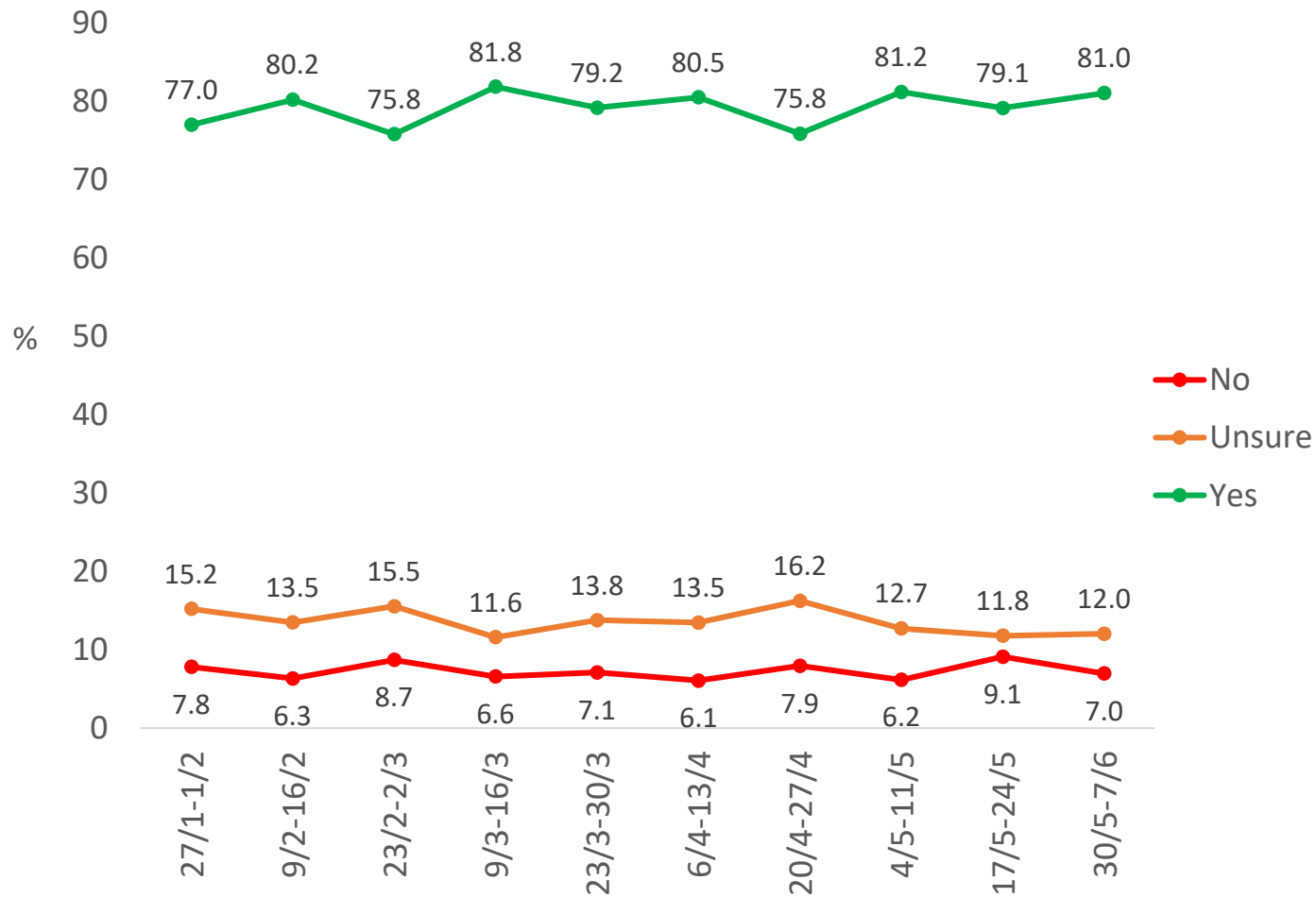


# Vaccinated (at least one dose) by age



*Almost 60% of respondents say that they have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. All three age groups over 50 have coverage of more than 90%.*

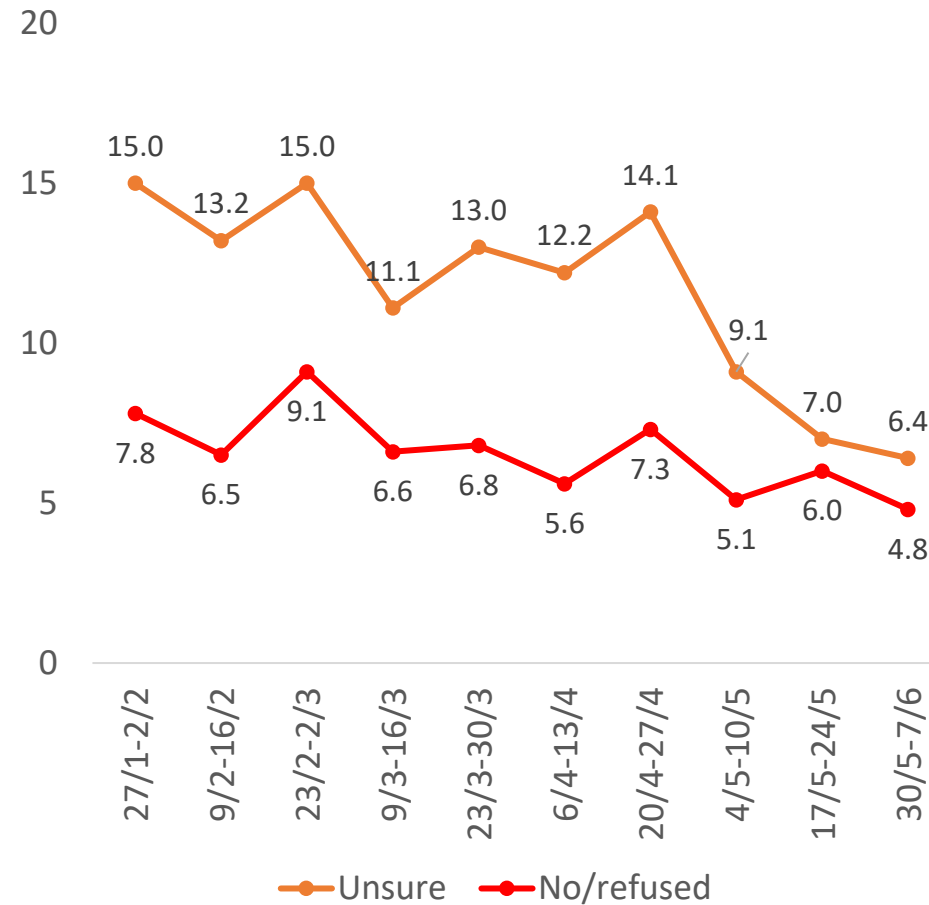
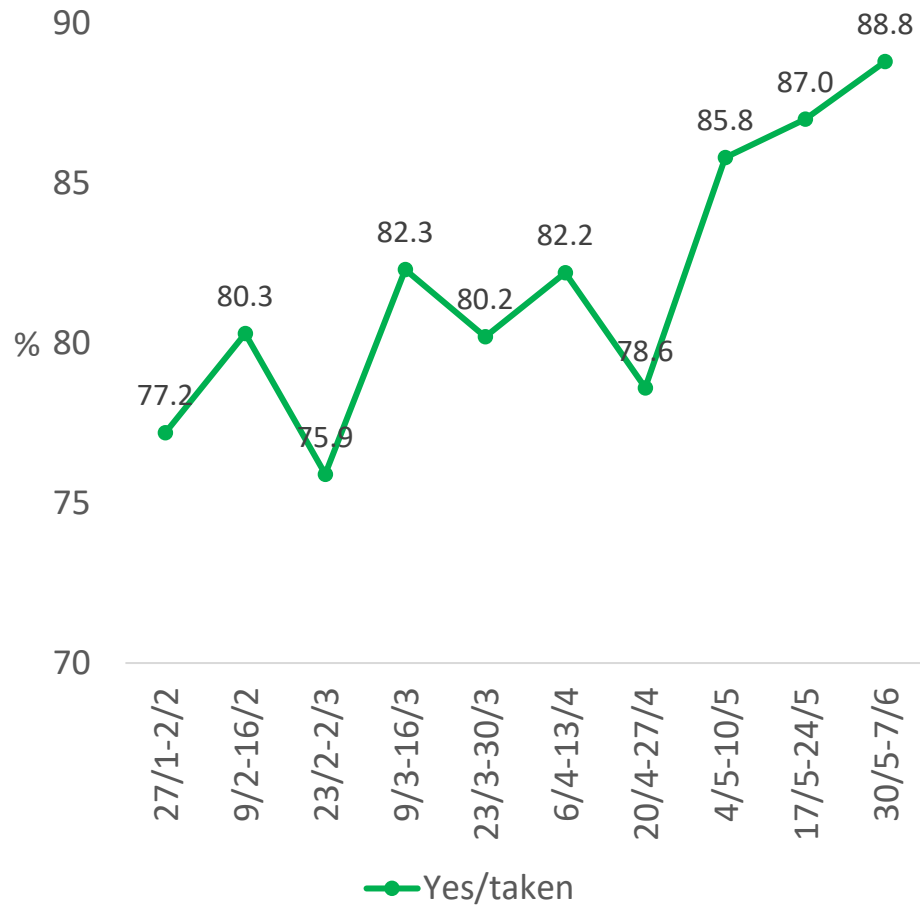
# Vaccine intention



*The chart shows intention among those who have not yet been offered the vaccine. The level of support for the vaccine remains consistently high. Note that this in fact implies increased support for the vaccine over time, because the first groups offered the vaccine were those most inclined to take it. (See next slide).*



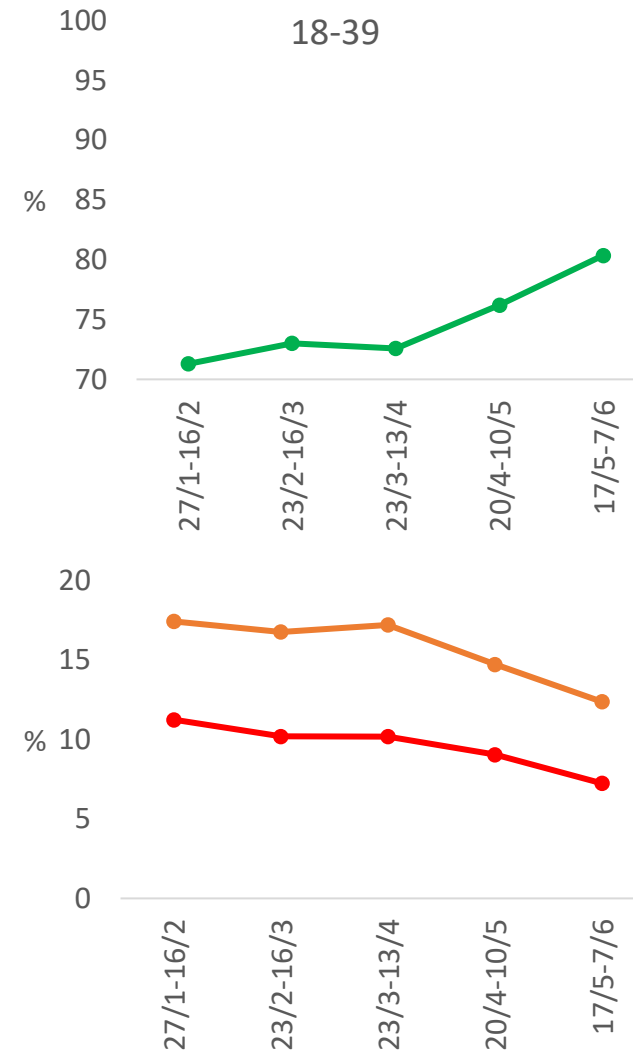
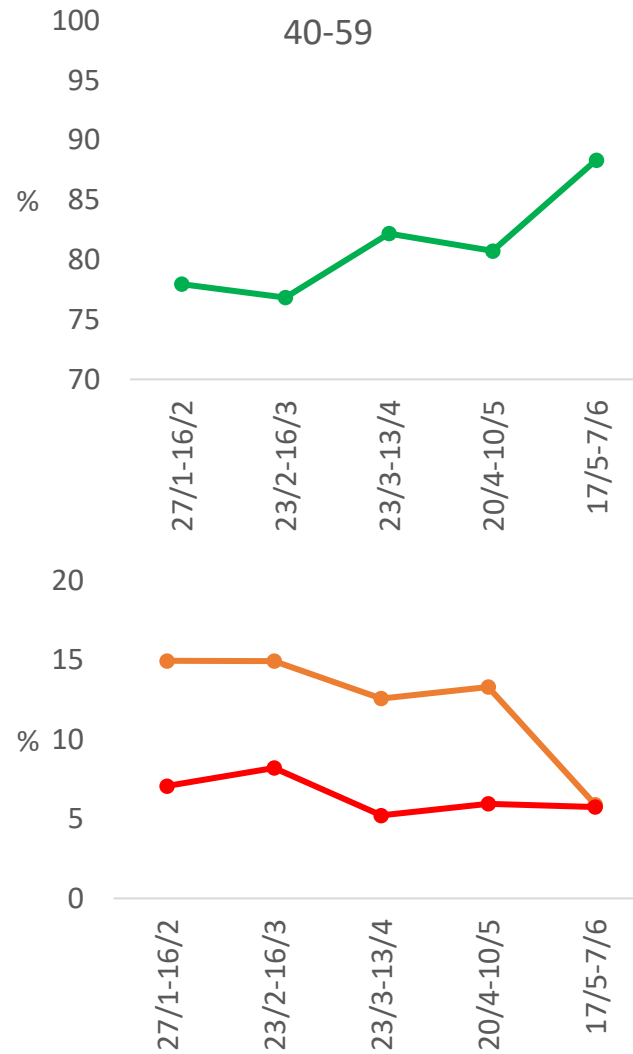
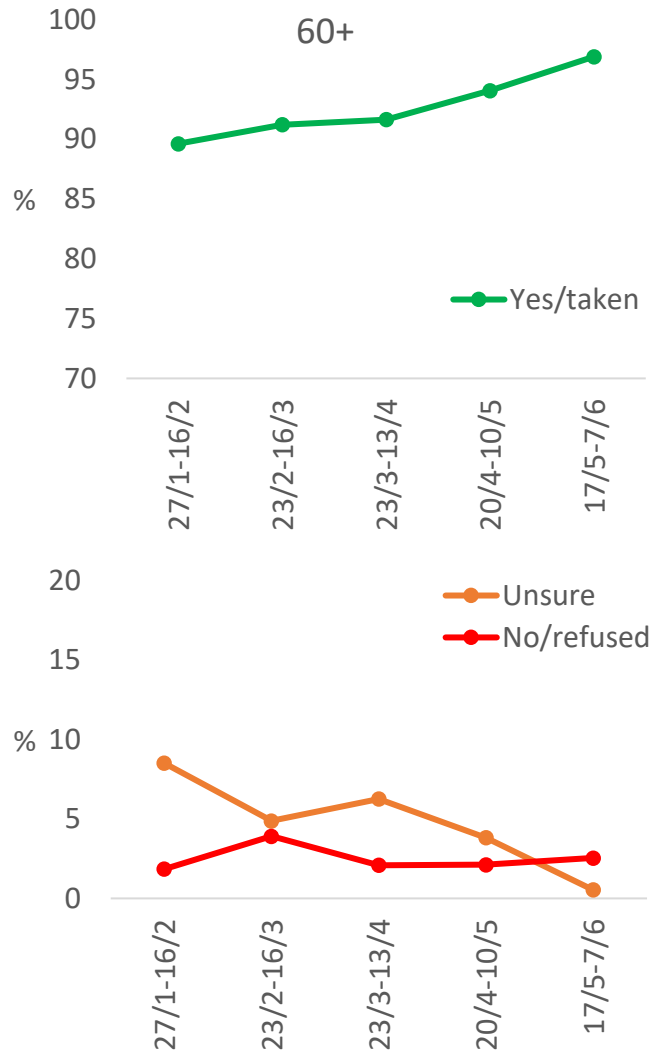
# Vaccine uptake and intention



*To give a better idea of likely ultimate coverage of the adult population, these charts group people who have already taken the vaccine with those who say they definitely will and people who have declined to take it with those who say they definitely will not. The upward trend in support for the vaccine is apparent, as is the fact that this increased support is mostly due to people who are unsure becoming positive, although there has also been a decrease in those saying that they will definitely not take the vaccine when offered it.*



# Uptake and intention by age group



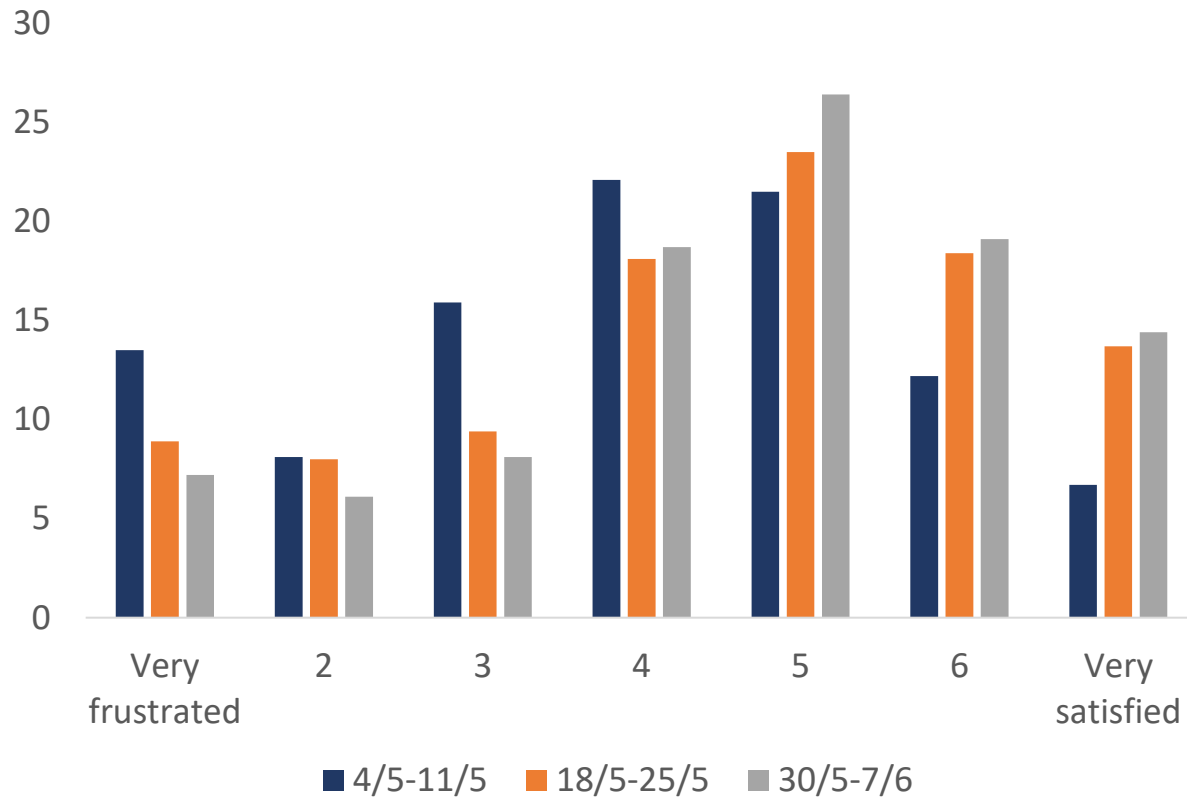
*The level of support for the vaccine is less in the under 40s than the over 60s, but has risen in all groups. In the two older groups, once the vaccine was offered, the majority who were unsure became positive. While the youngest group has the largest proportion of those against taking the vaccine, this proportion is declining steadily.*



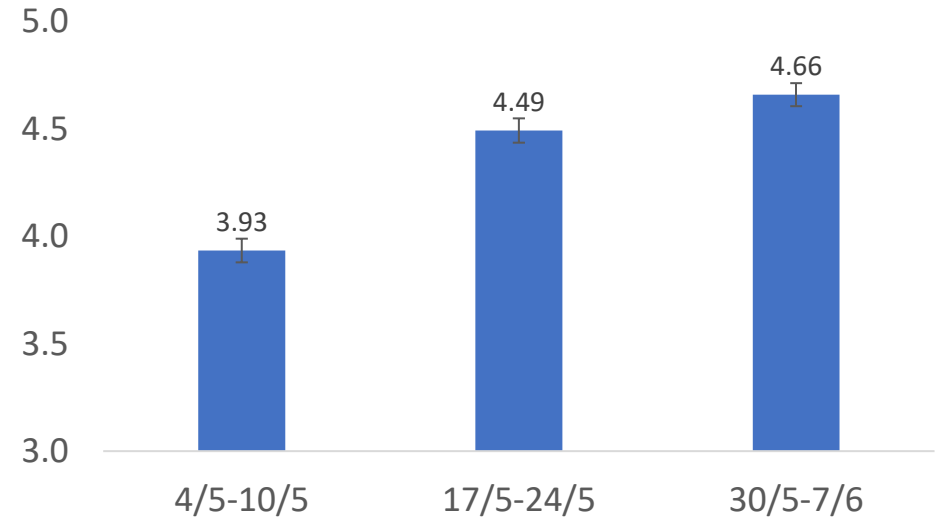
# Vaccine perceptions



Satisfaction with vaccine rollout



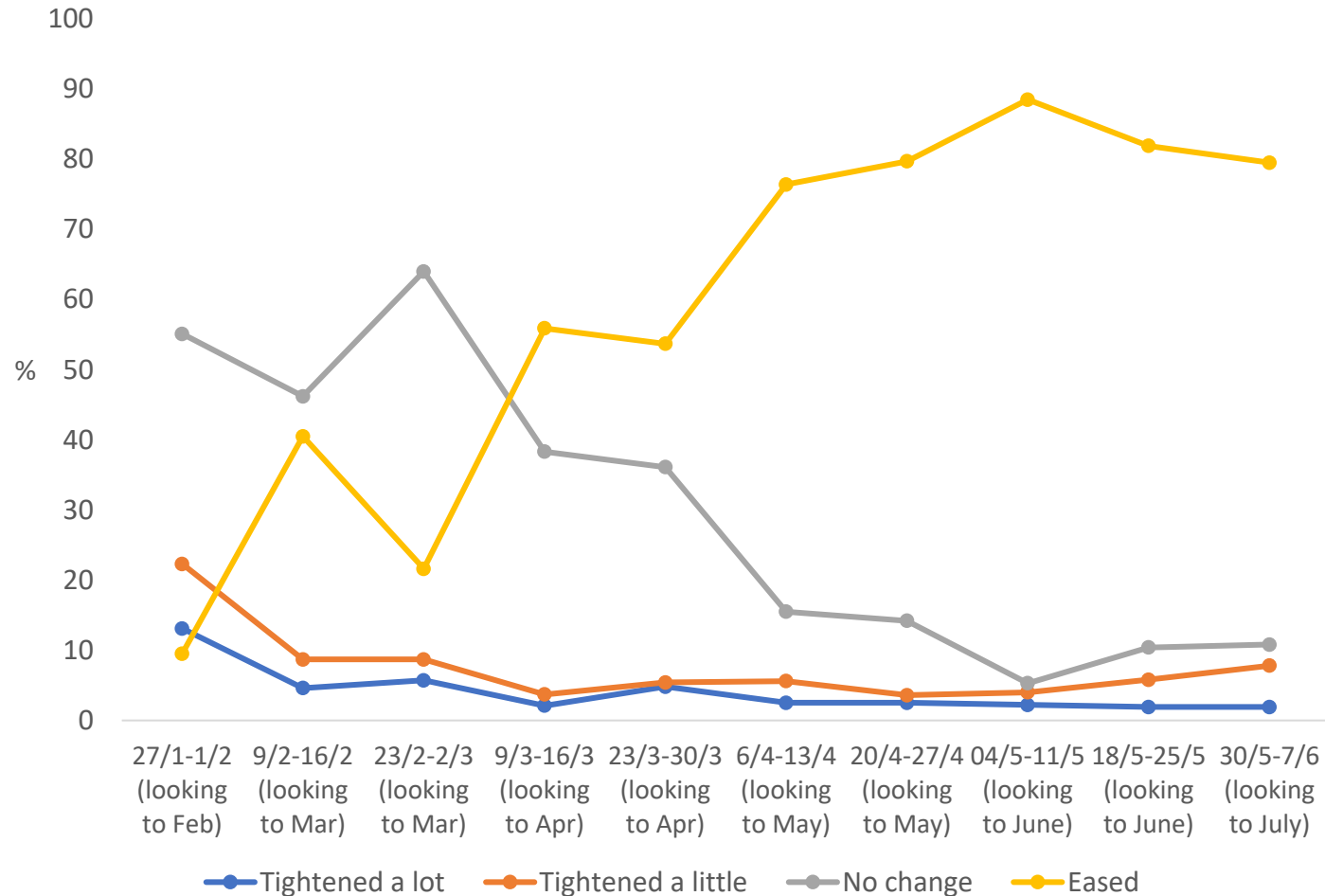
Mean



*Satisfaction with the vaccine rollout has continued to increase.*



# Expectations for easing restrictions (next month)



*There has been little change in expectations of further easing of restrictions. The large majority expect restrictions to be eased again in July.*