

Social Activity Measure

July 27th-Aug 3rd



ABOUT THE RESEARCH

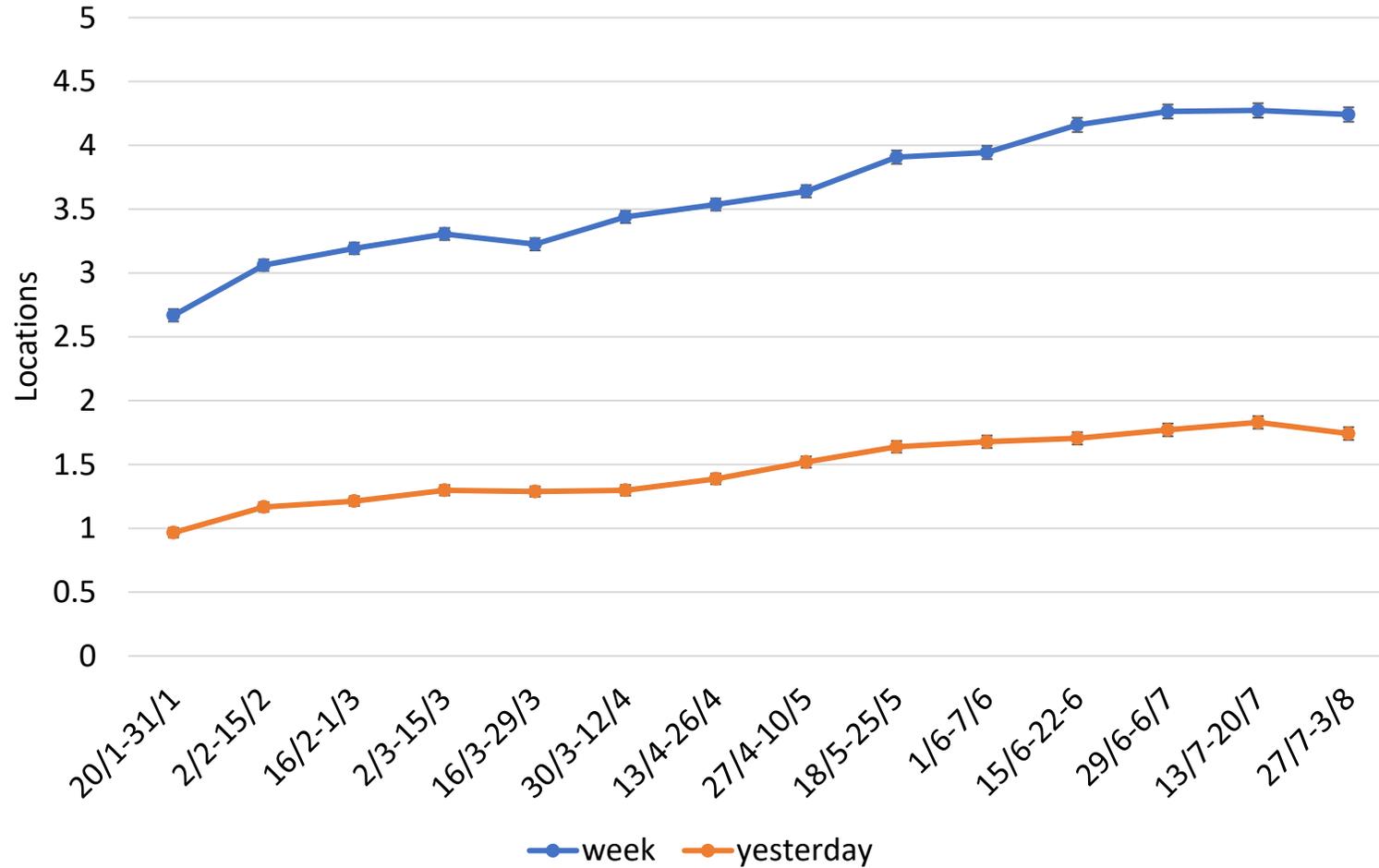
The Social Activity Measure (SAM) is a behavioural study that records the public response to the risk of COVID-19 infection over time. Designed by the ESRI's Behavioural Research Unit (BRU), SAM is an anonymous, interactive, online study that surveys people about their recent activity. The study offers 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 July 27th and August 3rd. Data collection followed the re-opening of indoor dining for those with proof of being fully vaccinated or having recovered from COVID-19. The vaccine registration portal for the 18-24 age group opened on July 21st. A change to the maximum number of guests permitted to attend weddings was announced on July 27th, up from 50 to 100, to come into effect from August 5th.



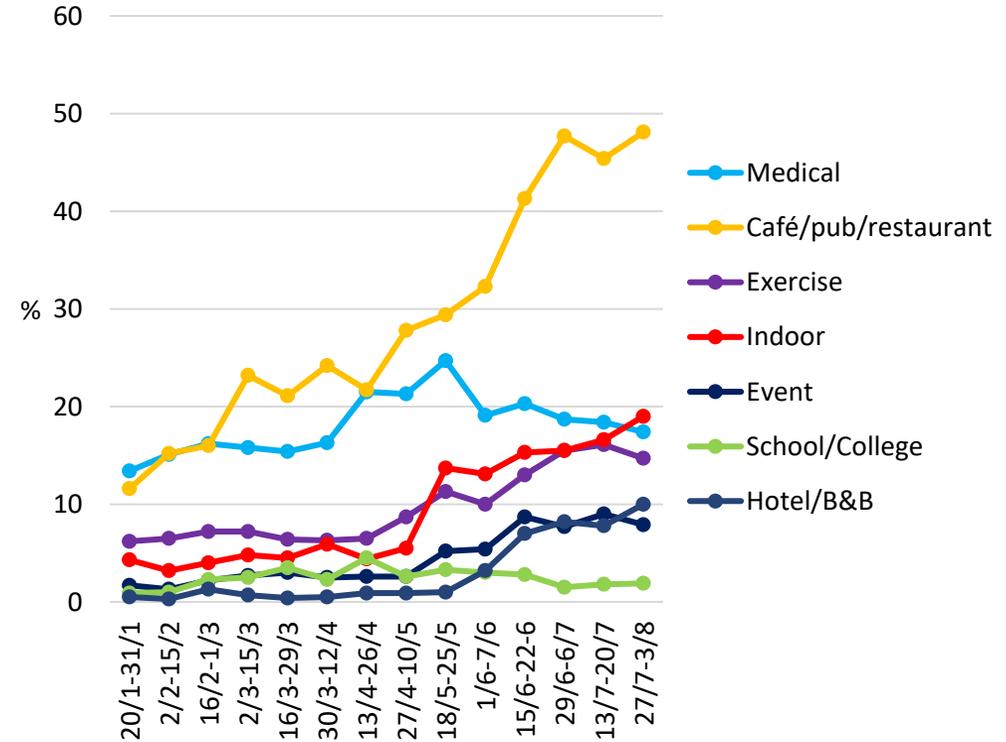
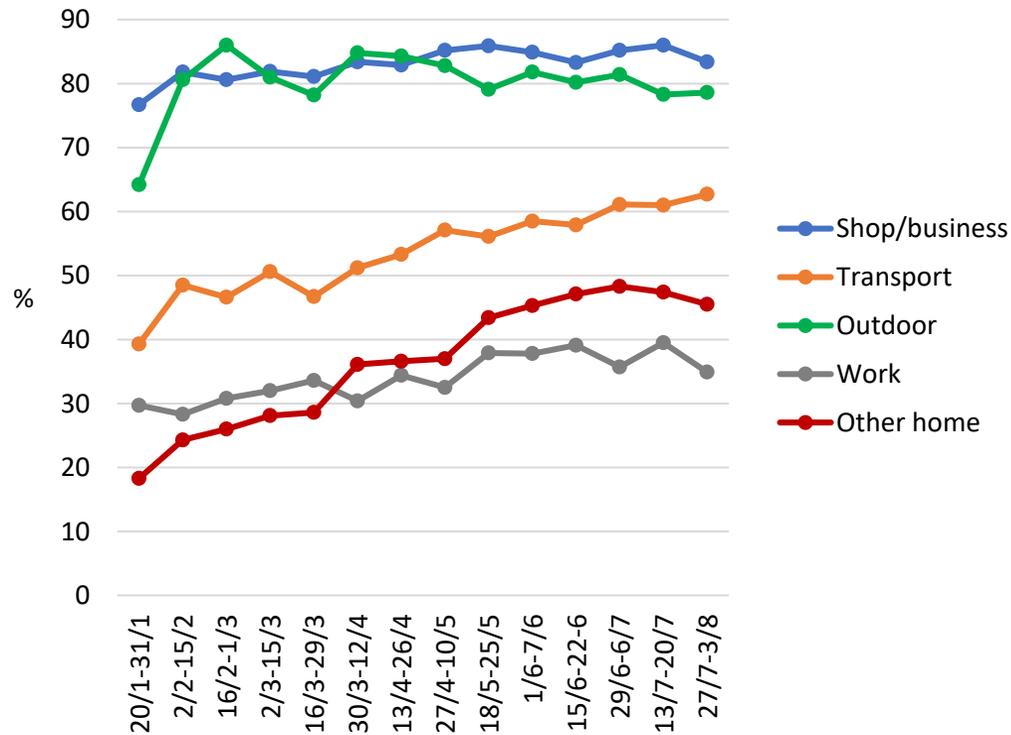
Total locations visited



The average number of locations visited outside the home during the previous week and over the previous day remained stable.

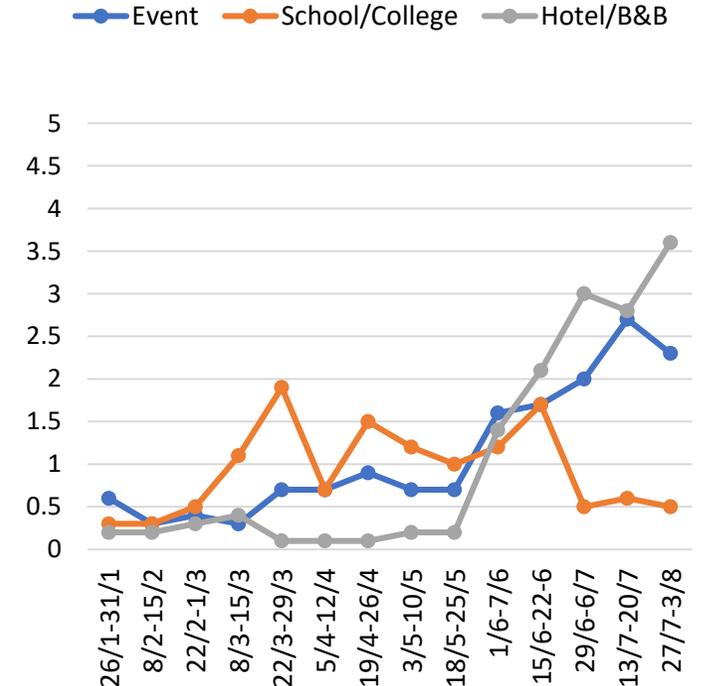
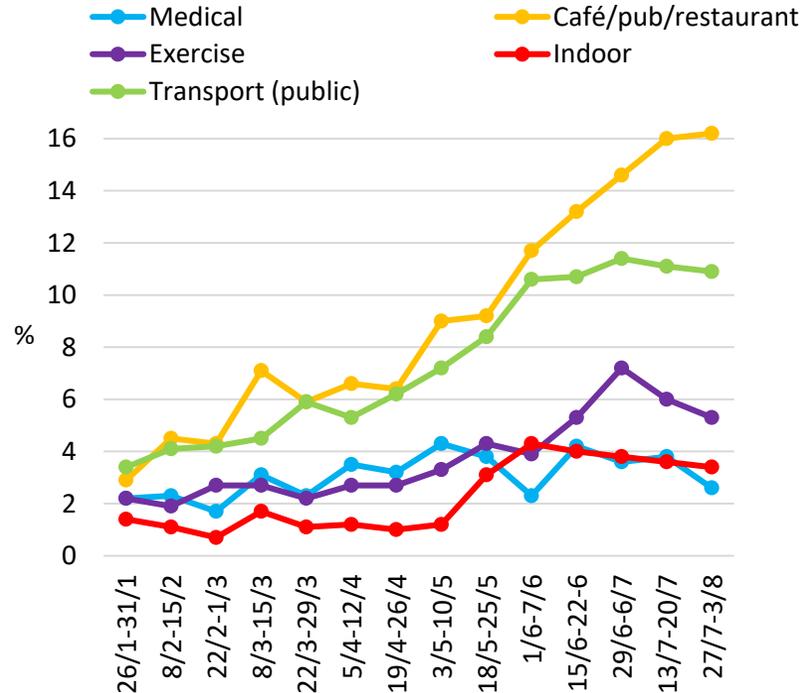
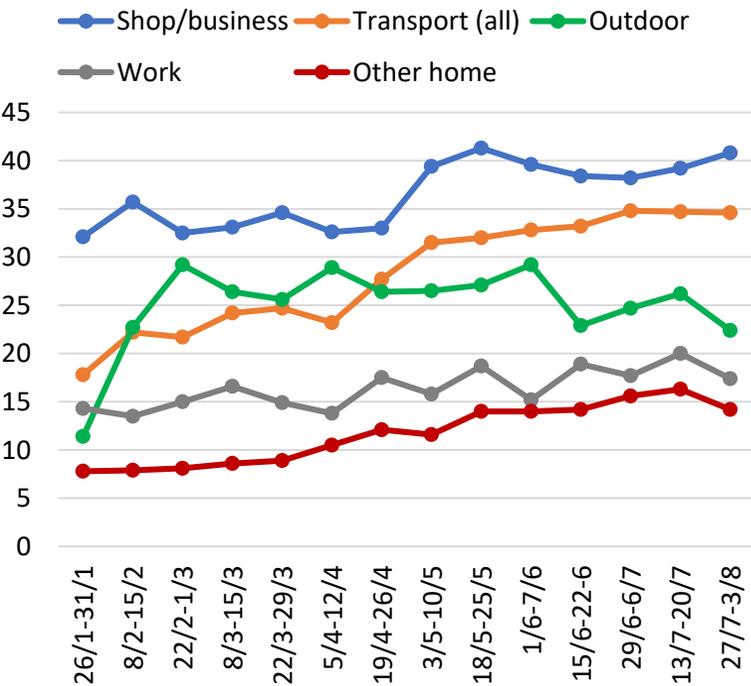


Locations visited (previous week)



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 was little change from the previous round, although there was a decline in people attending their workplace and a marginally significant increase in people going to hotels and B&Bs.

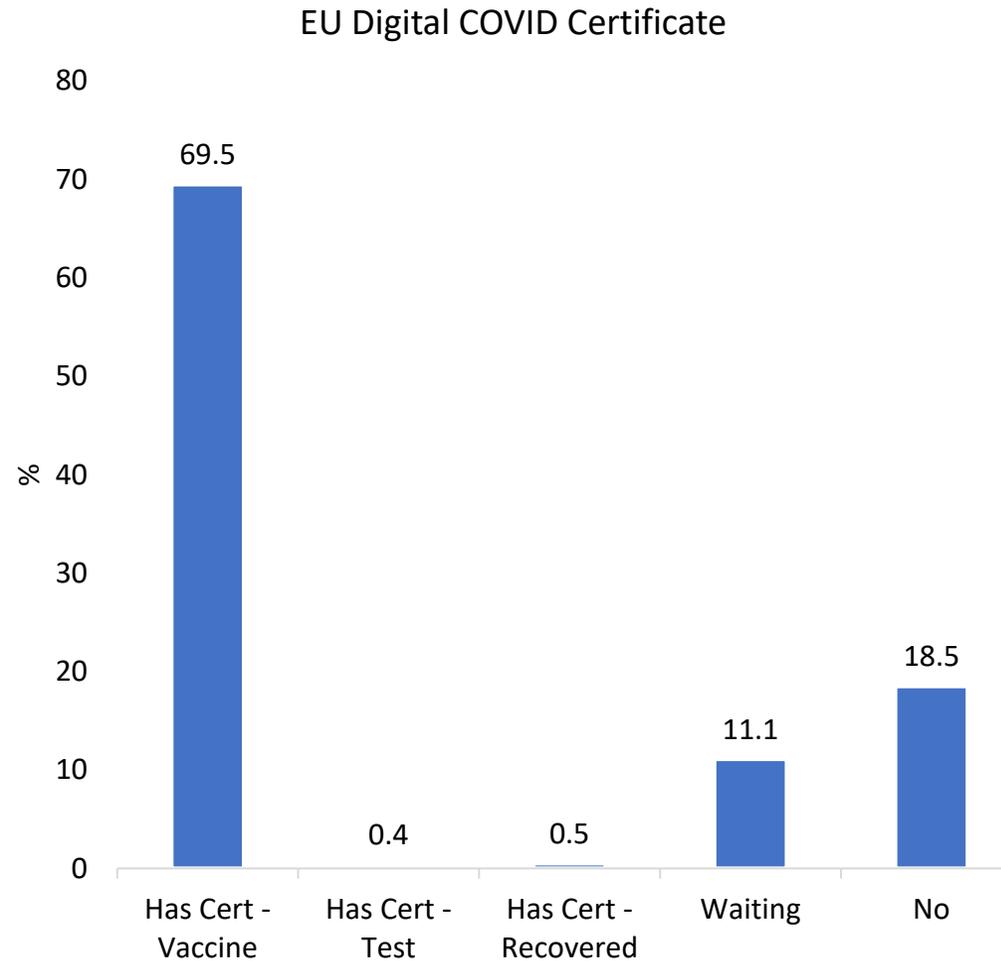
Locations visited (yesterday)



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. Locations visited were relatively stable, although there was a decline in visits to outdoor locations, a trend that continues since hospitality venues have reopened. Despite indoor dining re-opening, there was no significant increase in people visiting hospitality venues.



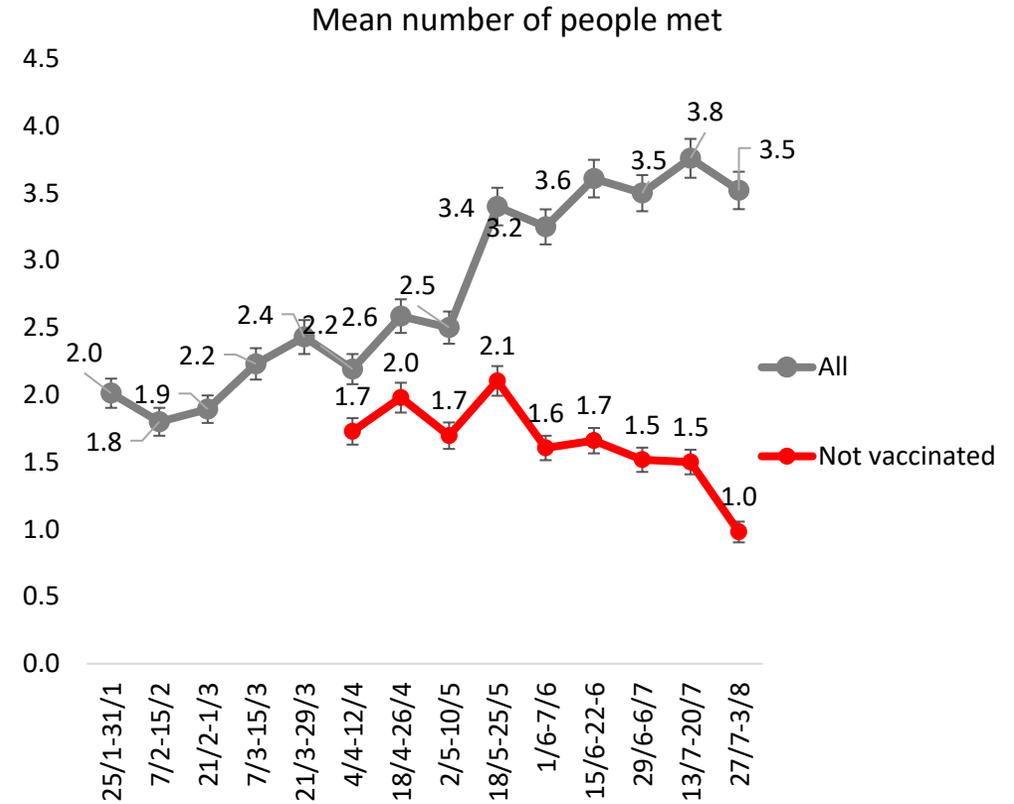
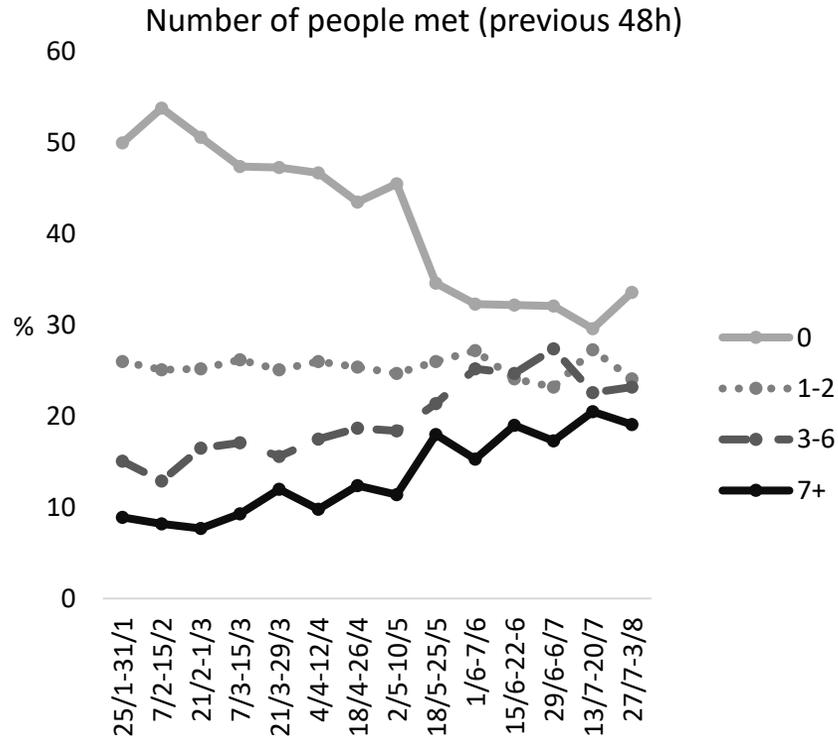
EU Digital Covid Certificate



The chart shows a majority of adults have received their EU Digital Covid Certificate (DCC). Some of those who attended a hospitality venue for indoor dining reported however that their proof of vaccination was not checked. We refrain from reporting exact figures of those who reported their proof of vaccination was not checked because the overall proportion who reported dining indoors is too low to give reliable estimates. However, detecting any effect in a single wave of SAM implies there is some scope for improving compliance with this guideline. Note that a majority of the public judge the need for proof of vaccination or recovery in order to dine indoors to be fair (Slide 20).



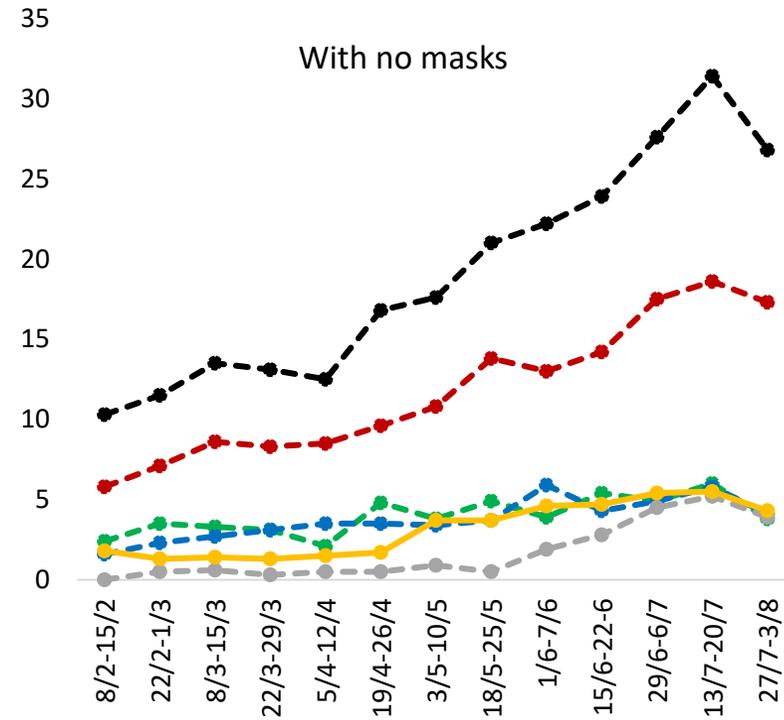
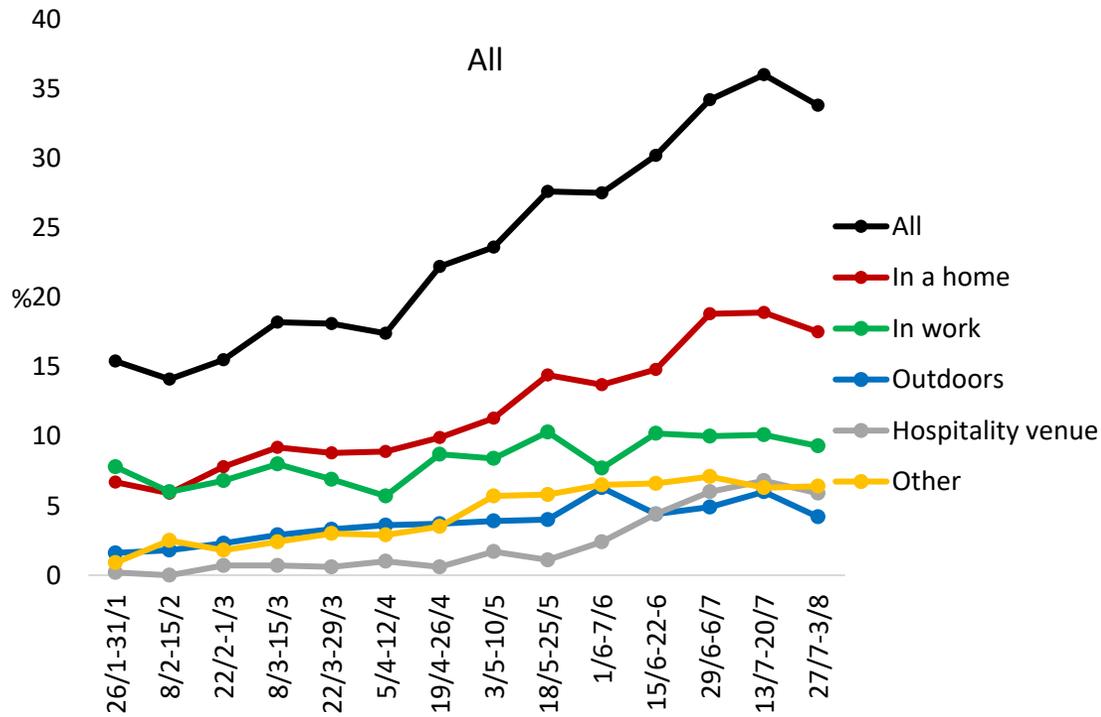
Meeting people outside the household



The number of people individuals met up with from other households remained the same overall. The number of unvaccinated people met declined significantly.



Close contacts* (previous day)



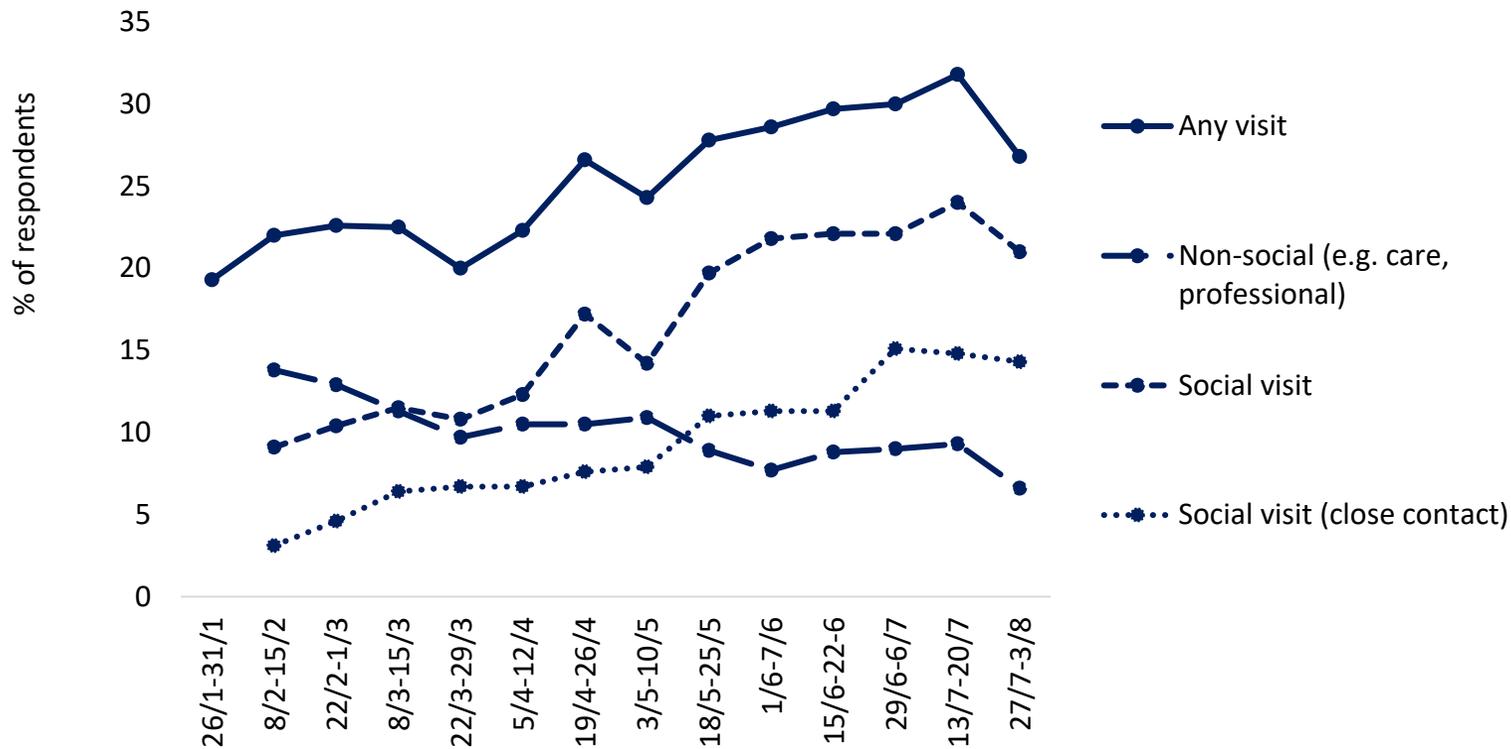
*Close contact interactions are defined as those that are likely to have lasted for longer than 15 minutes without a 2m distance being maintained at all times or that took place indoors for longer than 2 hours in a space that was not well ventilated (hse.ie).

There was a significant decline in close contact interactions in which masks were not worn. This is accounted for primarily by a decline in unmasked close contacts in workplaces, likely due to the decrease in people who attended their workplace over the data collection period.

Visits to homes



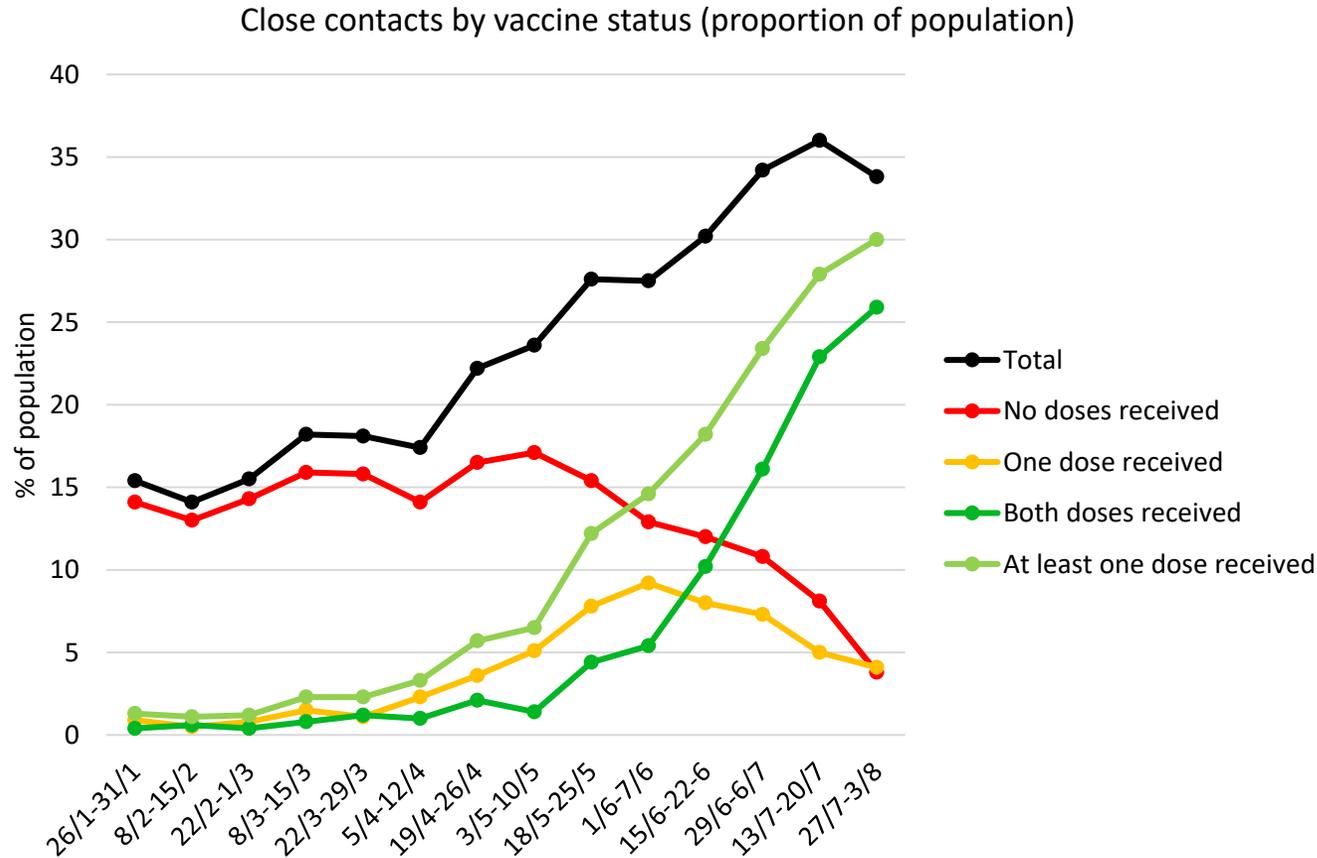
Proportion who had visitors or visited another household (previous day)



Overall, the number of household visits declined. This is driven by a decline in visitors to households for professional reasons (e.g. household repairs). The upward trend in close contact social visits has stabilised.



Close contacts by vaccine status

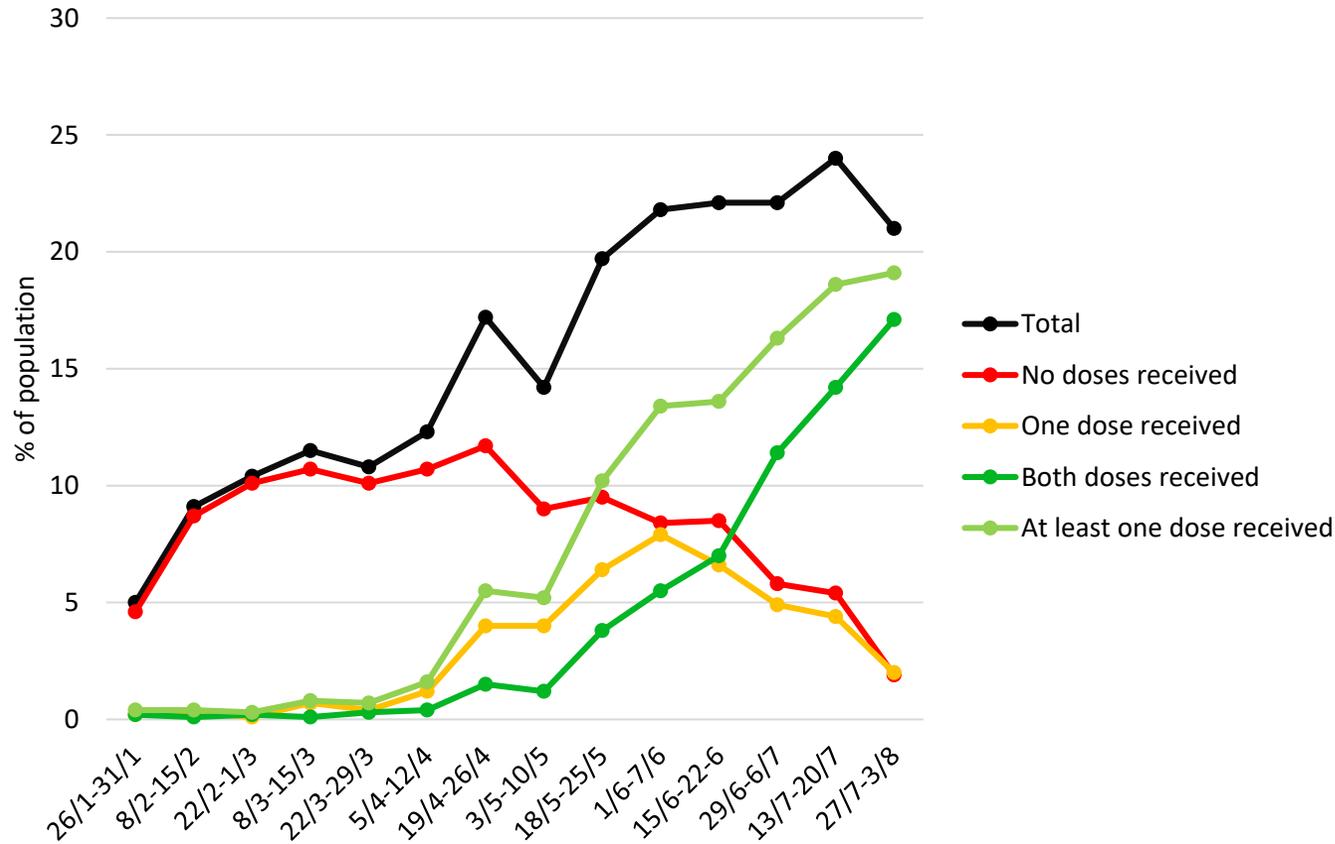


More than three quarters of close contacts are now reported by individuals who are fully vaccinated, while close contacts reported by unvaccinated people continue to fall.



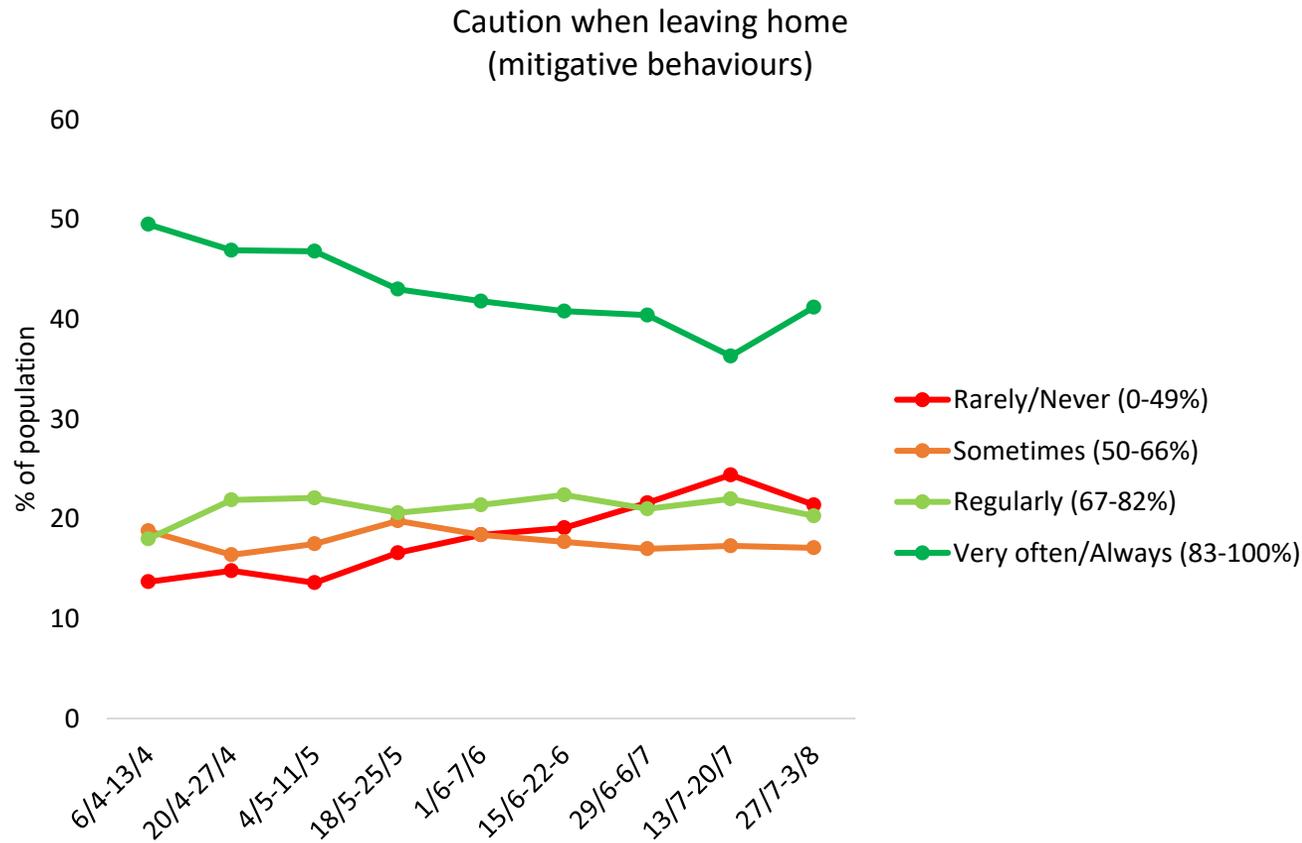
Social visits to homes by vaccination status

Social visits by vaccination status



More than 80% of social visits to other people's homes are now reported by individuals who are fully vaccinated.

“Mitigators” – those who are careful when out and about

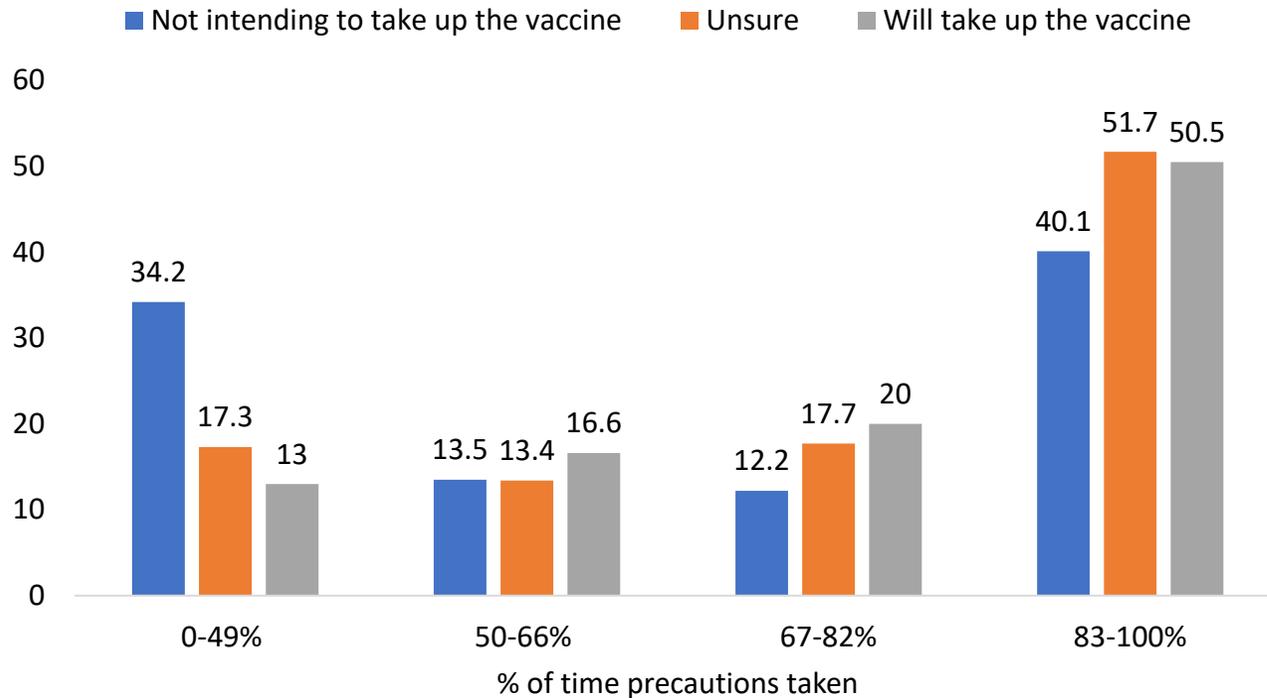


The chart shows a measure of how much people engage in risk mitigation when visiting locations outside their home. Four groups are defined based on whether they reported keeping 2m distance, wearing a mask, and cleaning their hands in each location visited. The share of the population being highly cautious had been steadily falling since January, but returned to late June/early July levels in the latest wave of SAM.



Caution and Vaccine Intentions

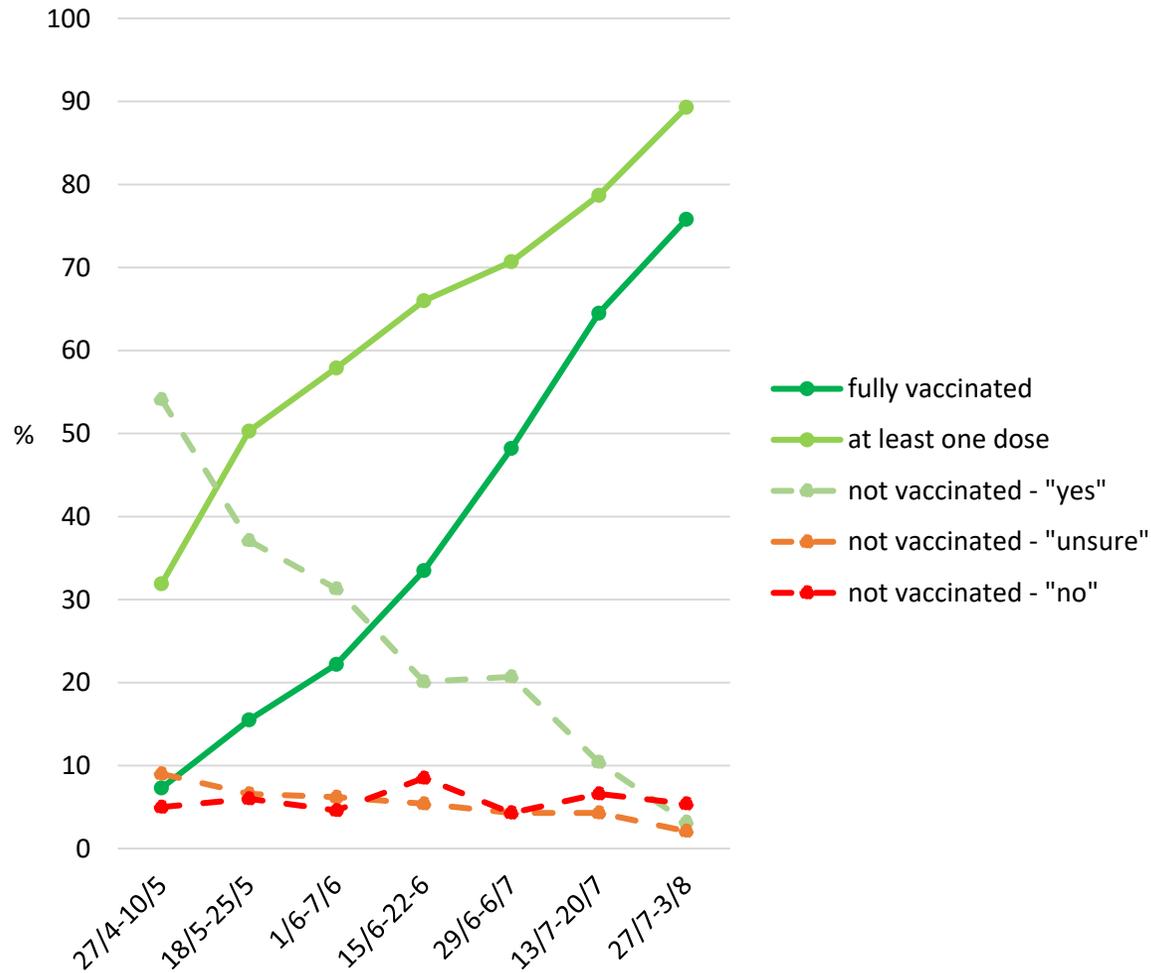
Mitigation behaviours among people not yet vaccinated
(all waves)



The chart shows how caution breaks down among people with different vaccine intentions. In the unvaccinated group, those who are willing to take the vaccine are more likely to be cautious than those not willing to take the vaccine. The latter group are less likely to take precautions.



Vaccine uptake and intention

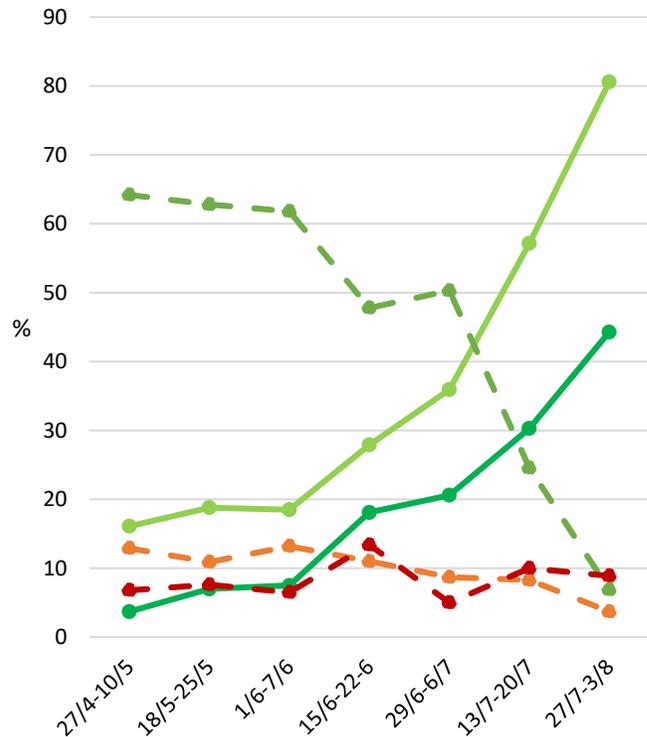


The chart shows trends in vaccine status and intention over the last 14 weeks. The solid green lines show those who have been fully vaccinated or those who have received at least one dose. Dashed lines show the intention of those who have not yet received the vaccine.

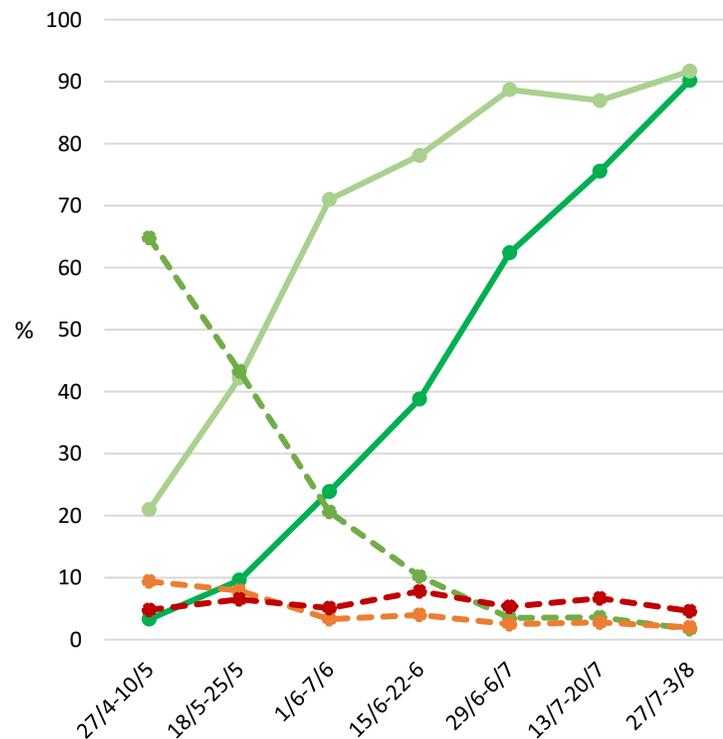
Uptake and intention by age group



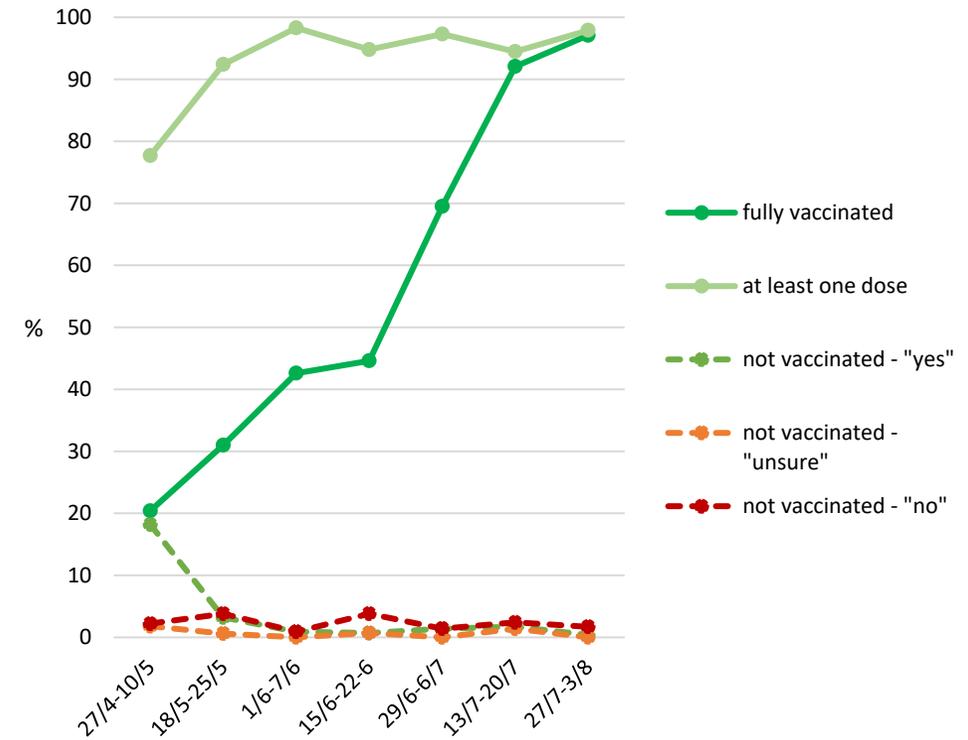
Under 40 years



40 - 59 years

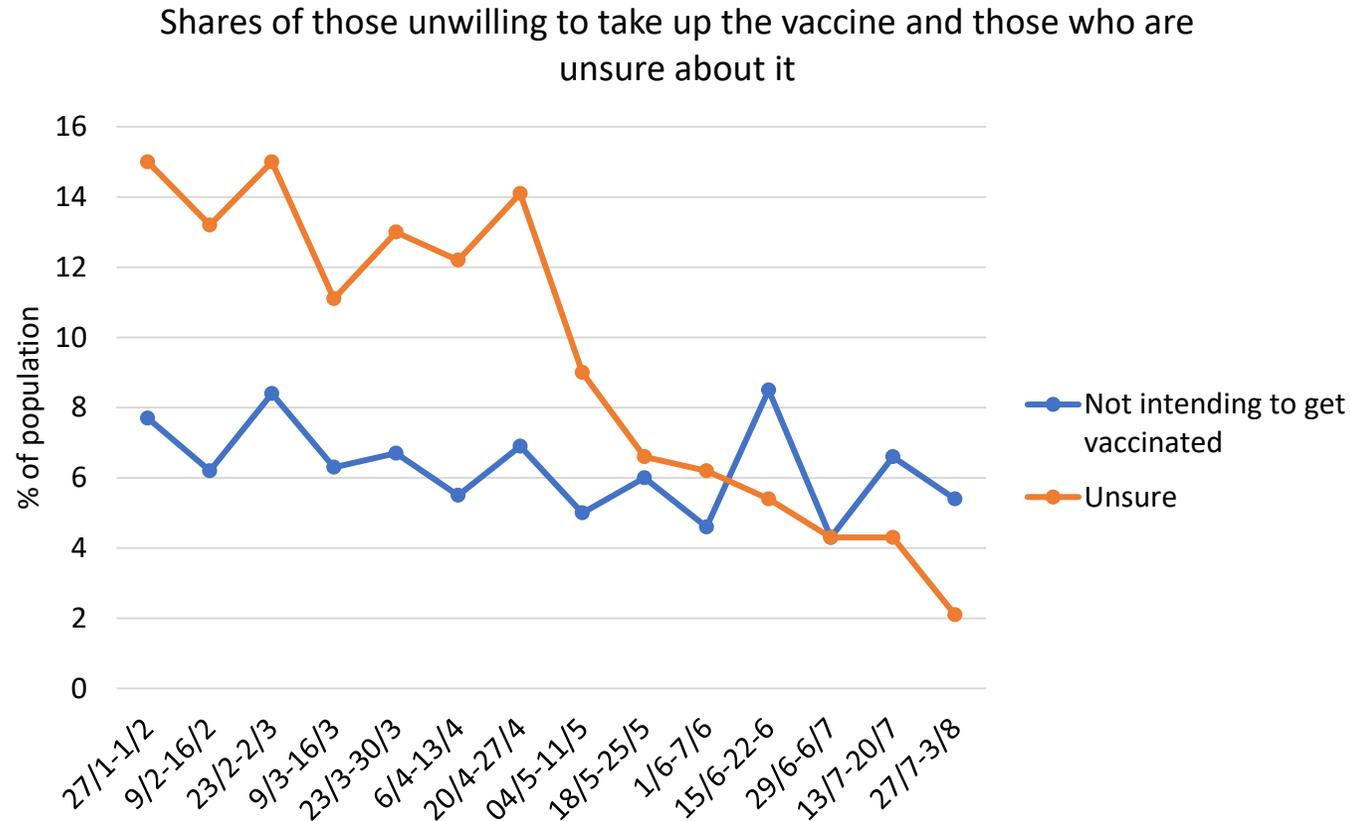


60+ years



The charts show uptake of the vaccine and intention by age group. Hesitancy remains greatest among the under 40s, but the large majority in all age groups are proceeding with vaccination.

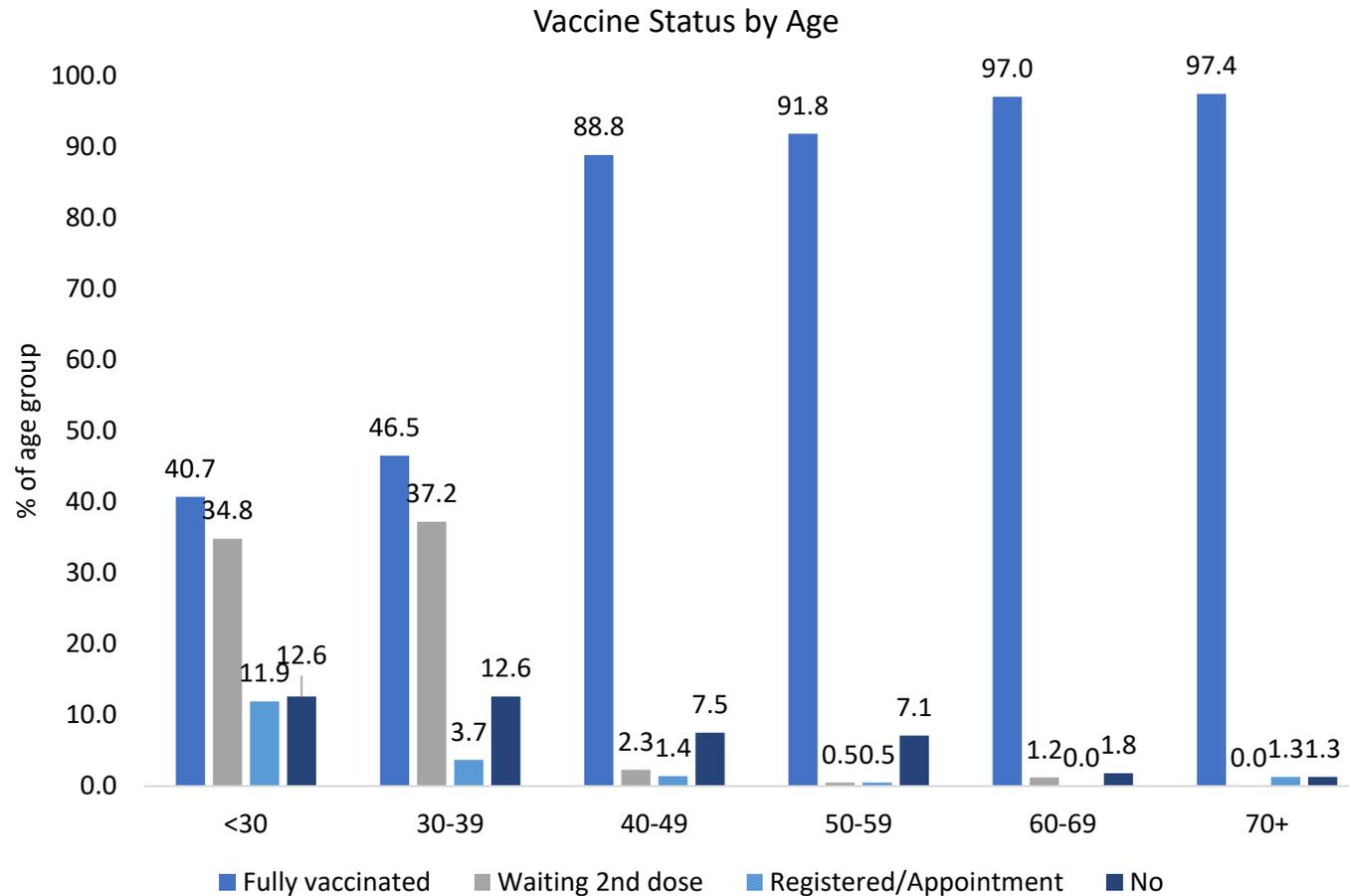
Vaccine hesitancy



The chart shows that the share of the population who were unsure about taking the vaccine in January has fallen steadily, implying that many of those who were unsure eventually took the vaccine. The share of those who were unwilling to take the vaccine has also declined somewhat since January, albeit at a slower rate.



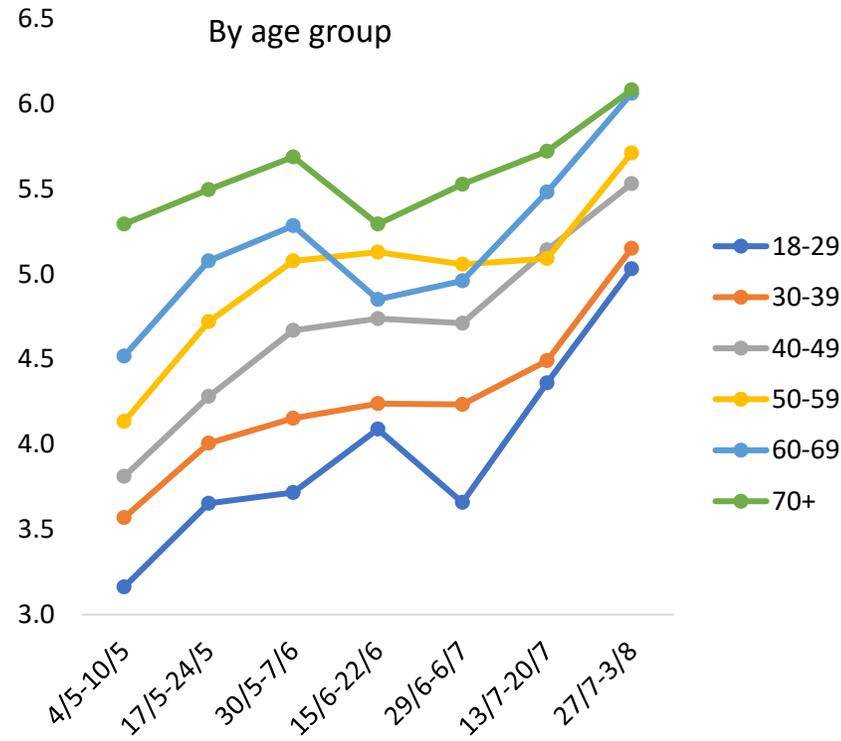
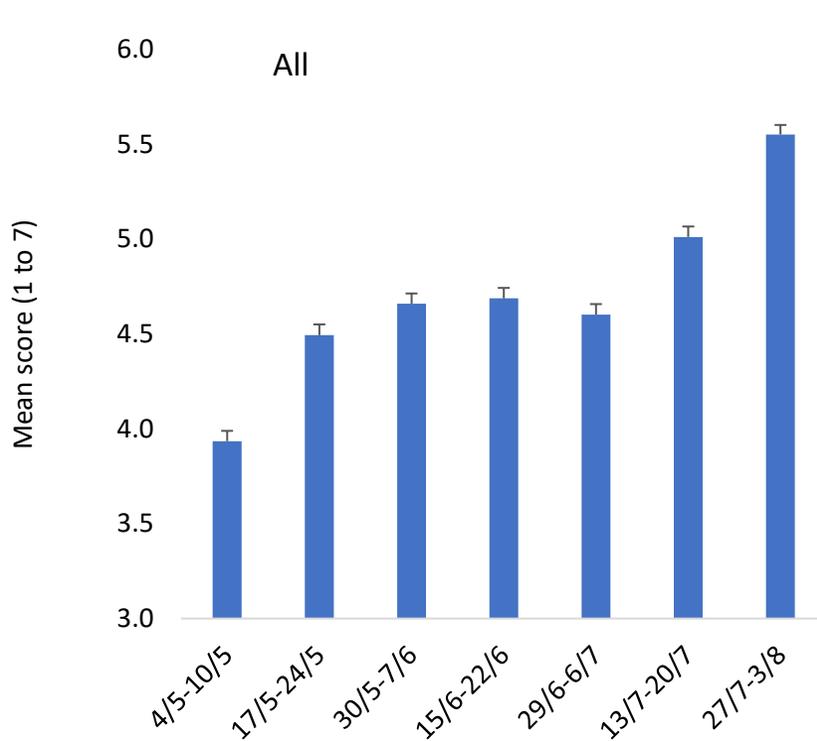
Vaccine Status by Age



Almost all over 60s report being fully vaccinated, alongside large majorities of all age groups over 40. A clear majority of all adults have now progressed as far having one dose of the vaccine.



Vaccine rollout satisfaction



There has been a sharp increase in satisfaction with the vaccine roll-out. This increase was strongest among the youngest age group, to whom vaccination has recently been made available, however large increases are evident across all age groups.

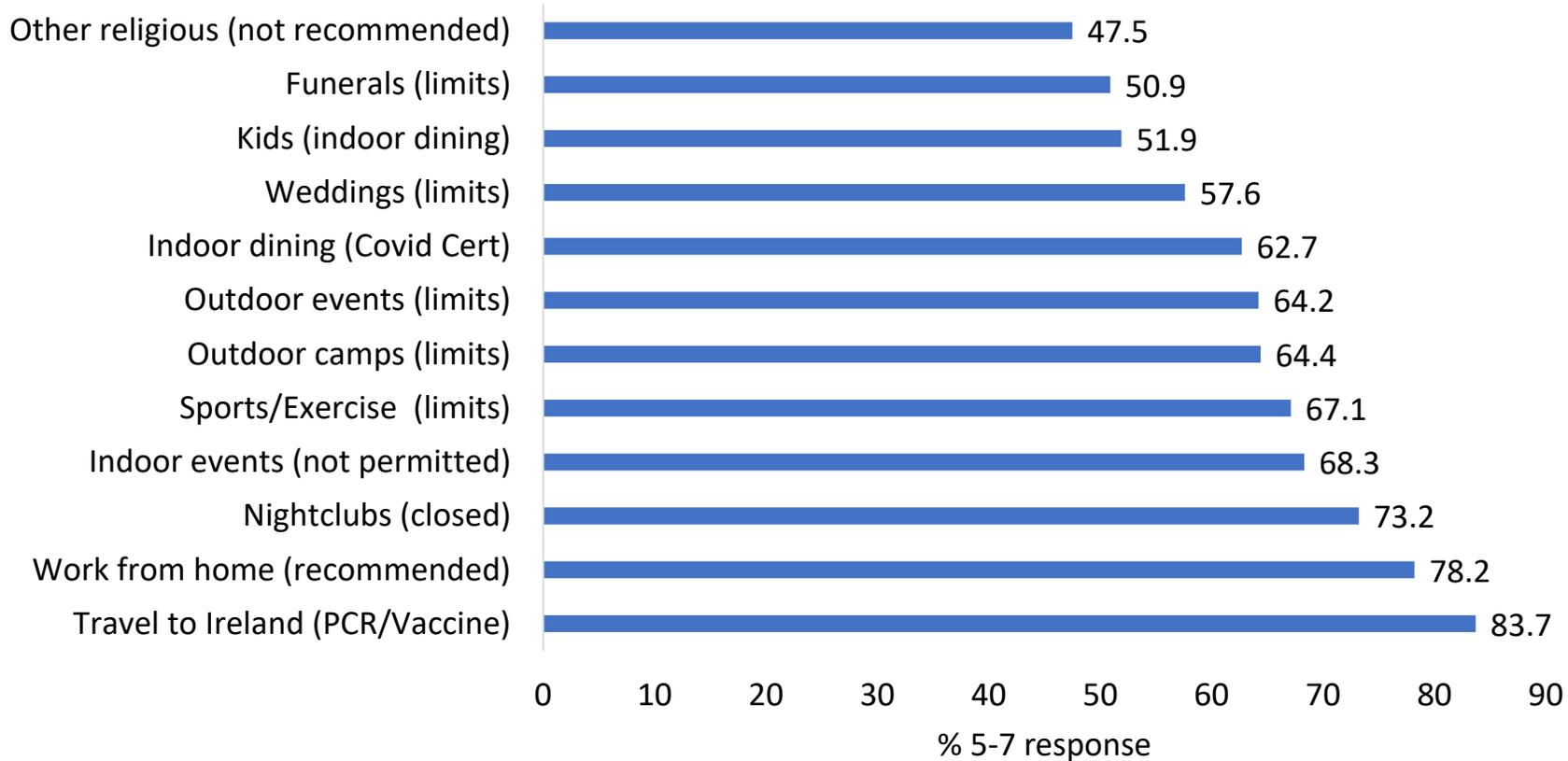
Restrictions



- Organised indoor events (e.g. large conferences, concerts and shows) not permitted.
- A max. of 200 attendees can attend organised outdoor events in the majority of venues. A limit of 500 people is in place for venues with capacity greater than 5,000 with appropriate protective measures in place - including social distancing requirements.
- Weddings can have a maximum of 50 guests for the wedding ceremony and reception. *Note. An announcement that this restriction would be increased to 100 guests was issued during the data collection period.*
- The number of mourners permitted at funeral services is 50 people.
- It is advised that religious ceremonies such as Baptisms, First Holy Communions and Confirmations should not take place at this time.
- Outdoor summer camps can go ahead, but indoor camps are not permitted.
- Exercise and sporting activities:
 - outdoor training in pods of a maximum of 15 people is allowed
 - gyms, swimming pools, leisure centres are permitted to open for individual training only with protective measures
 - swim lessons and classes can take place
 - other indoor sporting activities including matches, group/team training and exercise/dance classes are not permitted
 - outdoor sports matches are permitted, with attendance in line with the regulations for organised outdoor events.
- Indoor dining in restaurants, pubs and cafés is permitted only for those who are fully vaccinated or who have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 6 months.
- Unvaccinated children can dine indoors in a restaurant if accompanied by a fully vaccinated adult.
- Nightclubs, discos and casinos are closed.
- People are advised to work from home unless necessary to attend in person.
- If you are travelling to Ireland from abroad you must have appropriate valid proof of vaccination or recovery, or present evidence of a negative RT-PCR result from a test taken within 72 hours prior to arrival into the country.



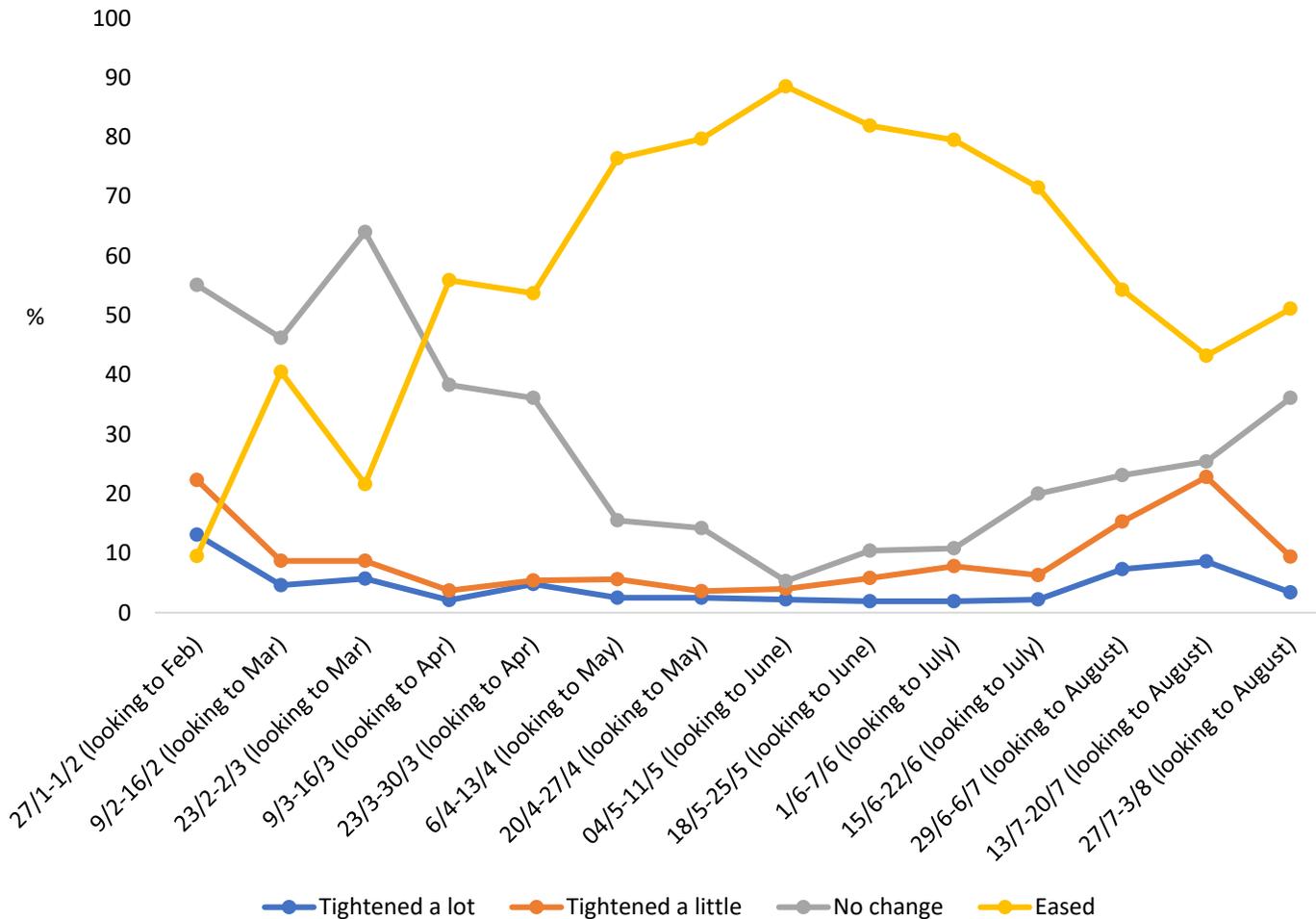
Fairness of restrictions



Broadly speaking, a majority judge the current restrictions to be fair. However there is significant variation across restrictions. Those that affect families (e.g. funerals, weddings and other religious ceremonies) tend to be judged as less fair than other restrictions. Almost 63% of people support current restrictions on indoor dining.

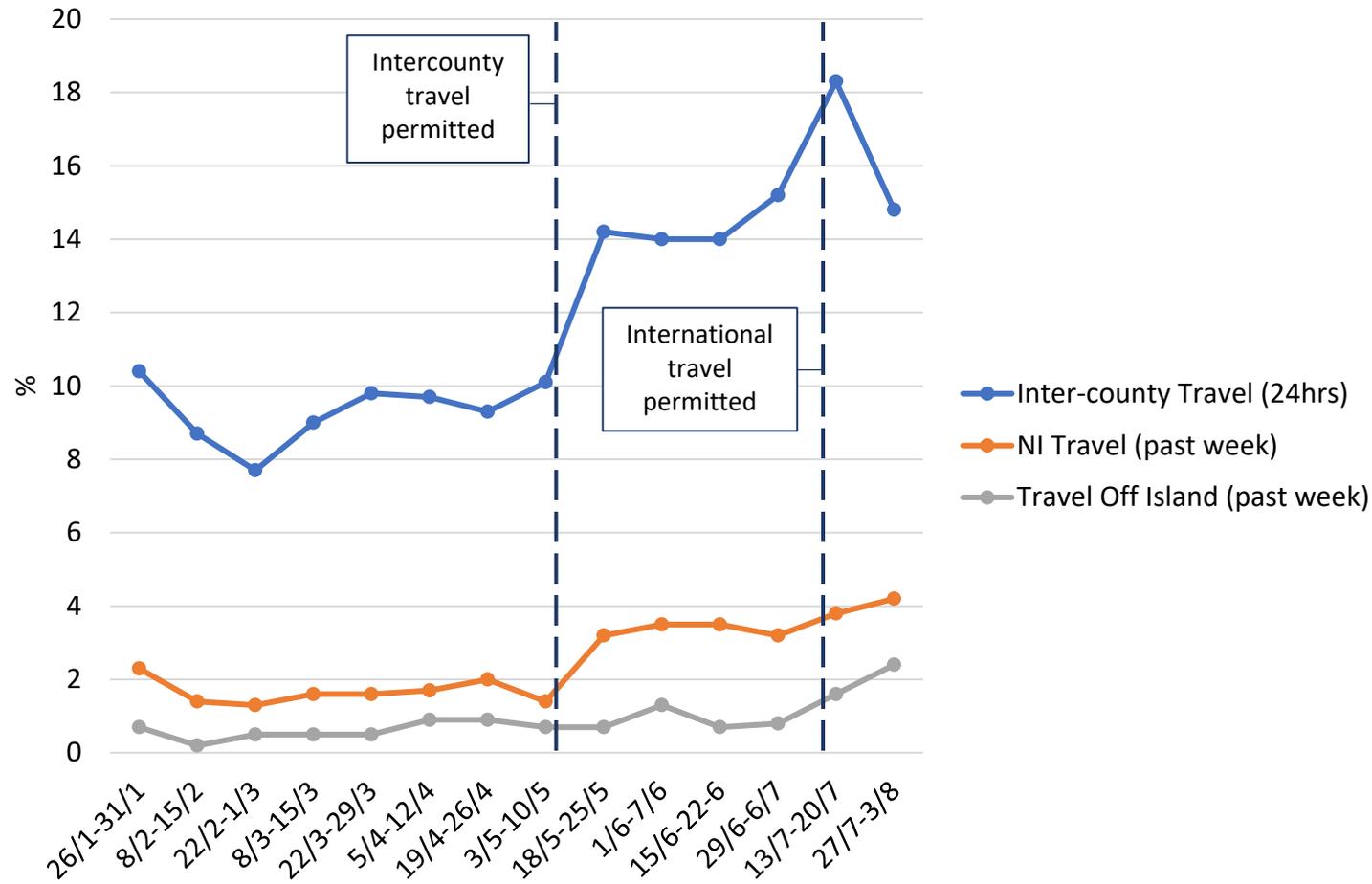


Expectations for easing restrictions (next month)



A majority expected further easing or no change to restrictions in early August. The decreasing trend in those expecting further easing reversed in the latest wave of SAM.

National and international travel

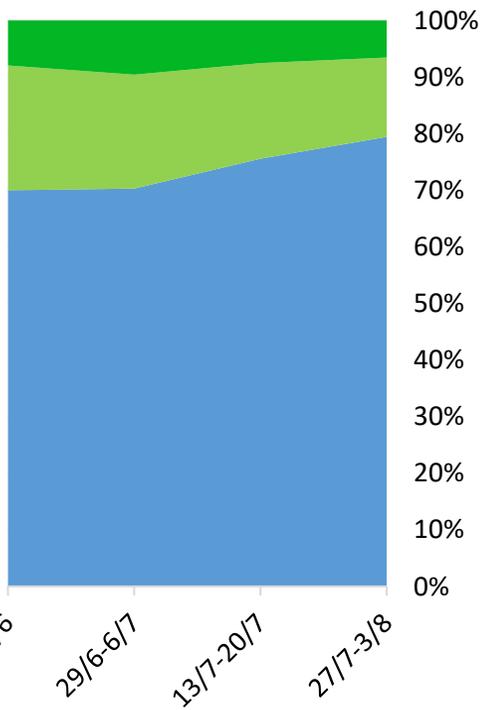


There was a decline in intercounty travel compared to mid July. International travel, however, has increased significantly since late June.

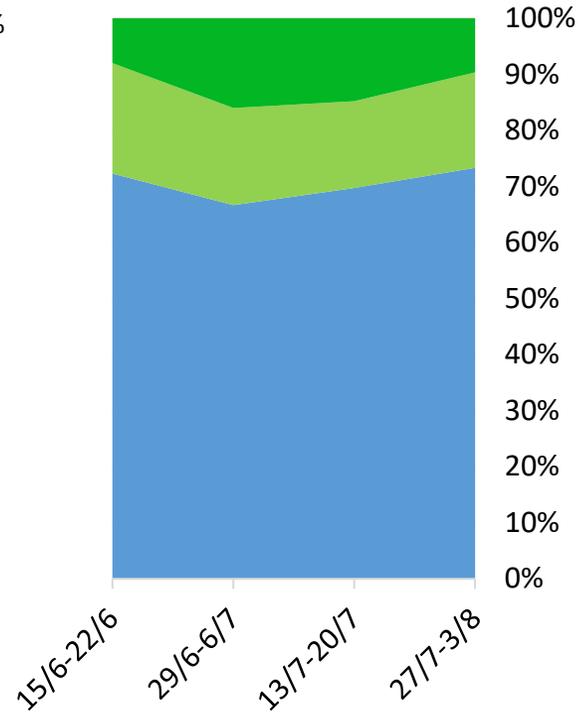
Travel by vaccination status



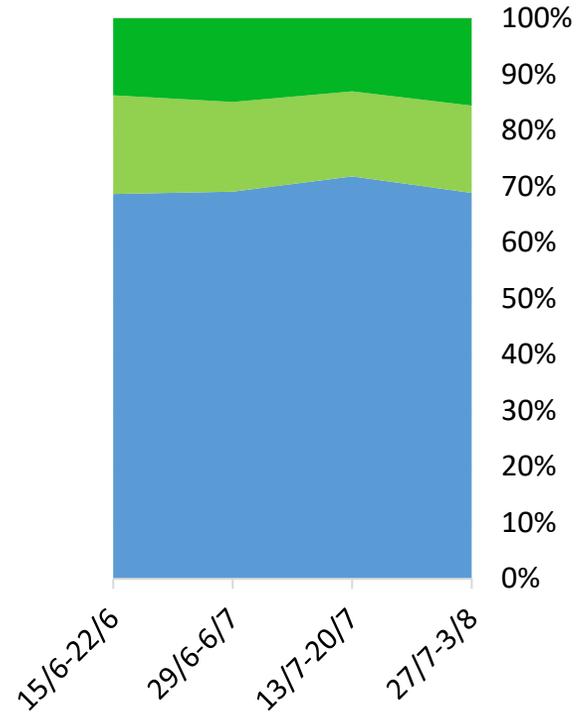
Travel plans (Unvaccinated)



Travel plans (Partially vaccinated)



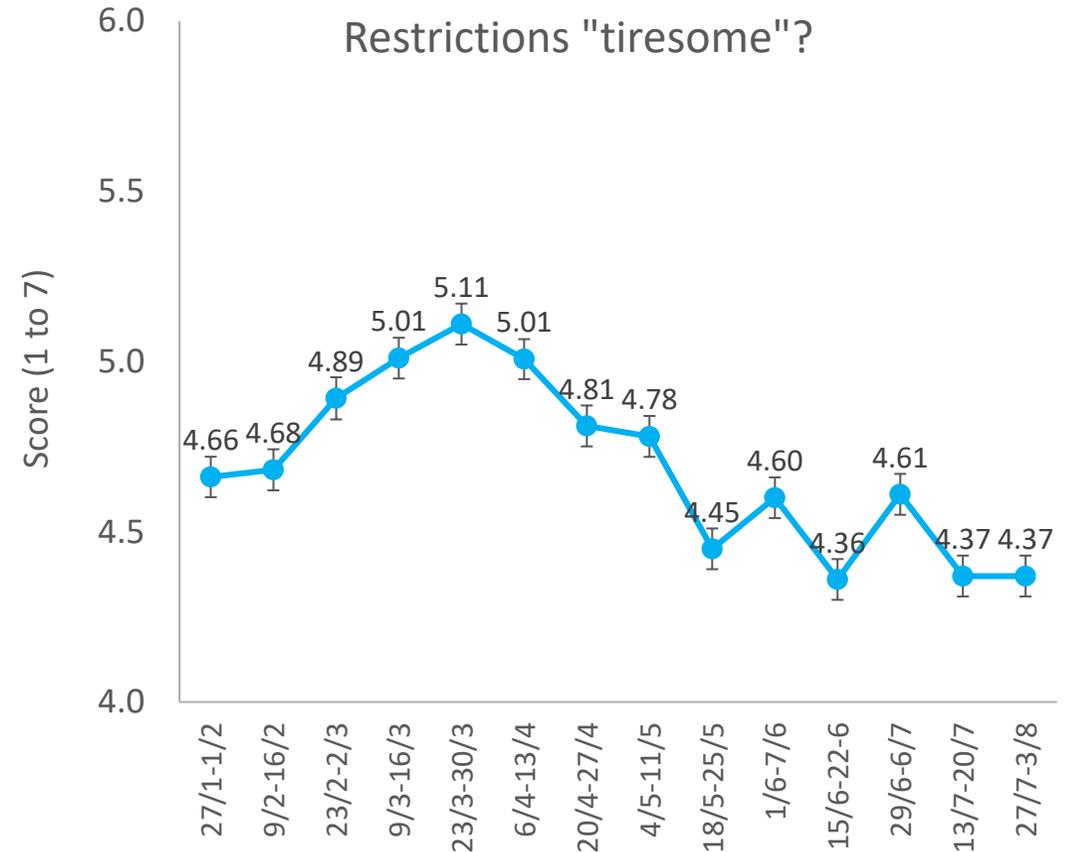
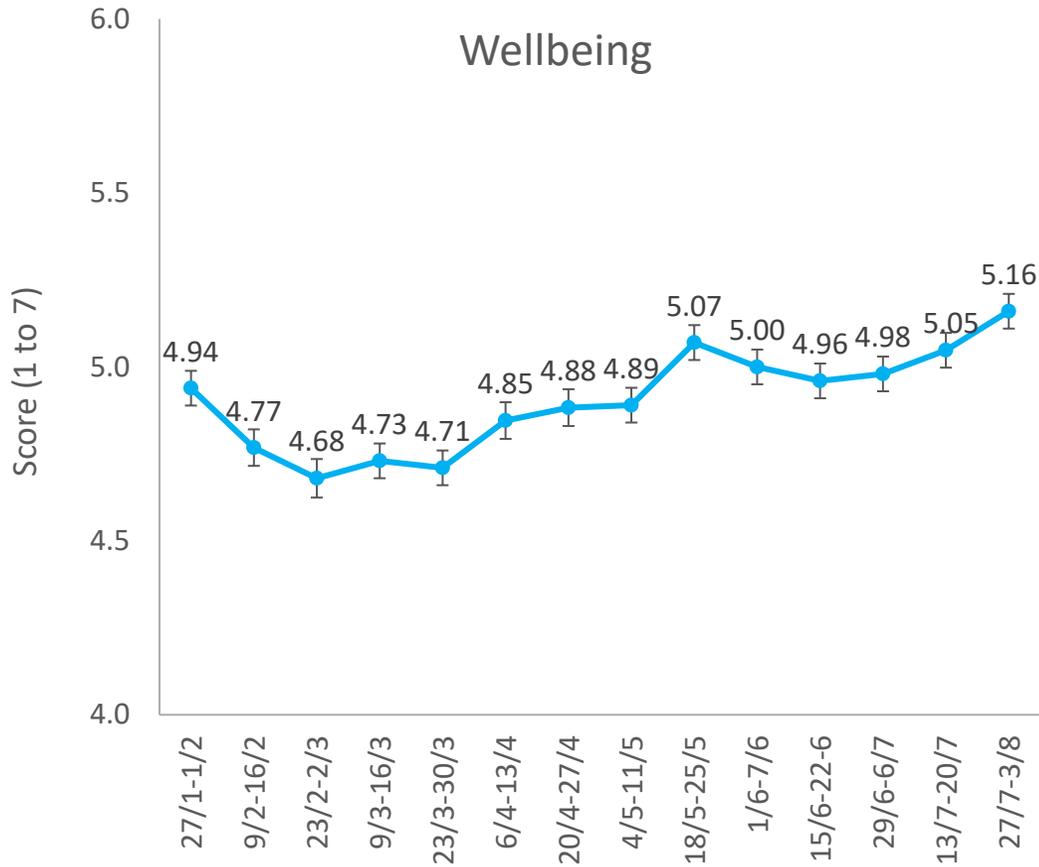
Travel plans (Fully vaccinated)



- Travel planned - Booked
- Travel planned - Not booked
- No travel planned

There has been little change in the proportion of people intending to travel abroad in 2021. There was a reduction in the percentage of unvaccinated people who intend to travel.

Wellbeing and Fatigue

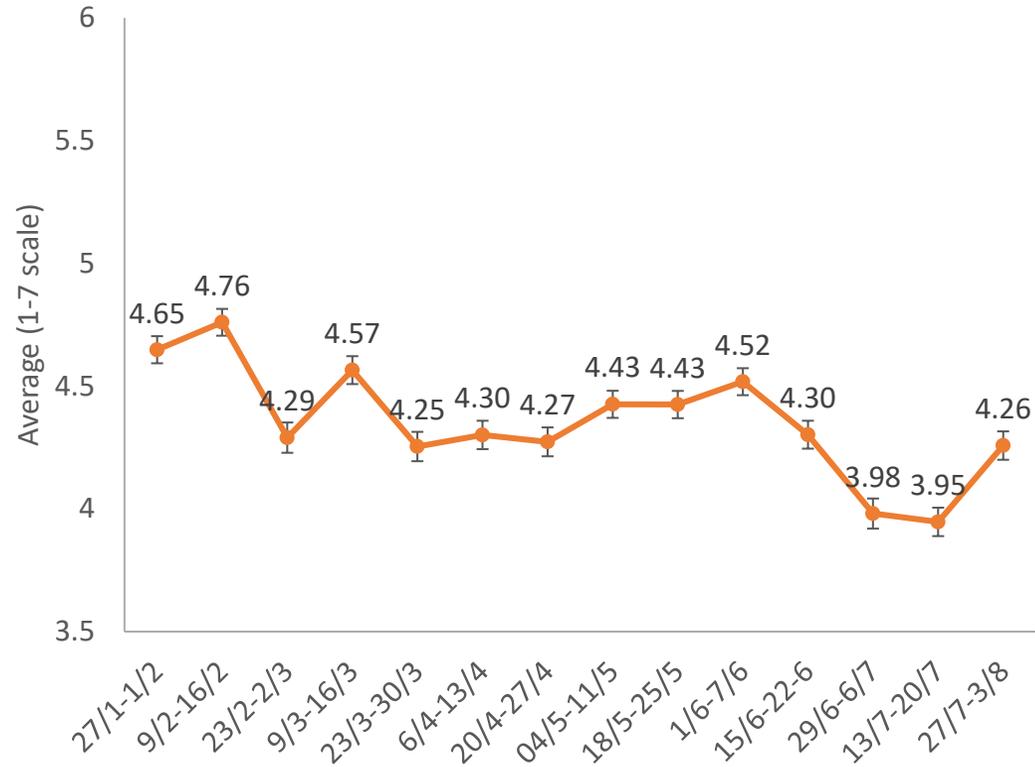


Self-reported wellbeing increased significantly and is at its highest level since SAM began. Levels of tiredness with restrictions remains at its lowest levels.

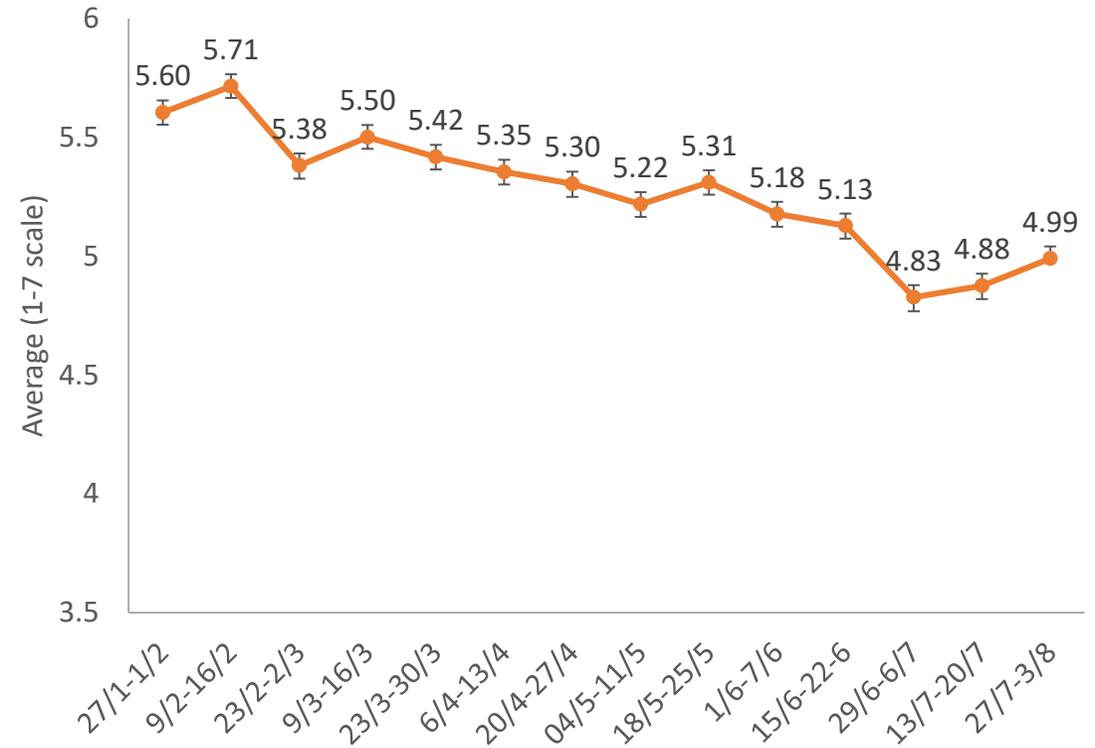
Coherence and Simplicity of Restrictions



Restrictions are coherent



Restrictions are easy to understand

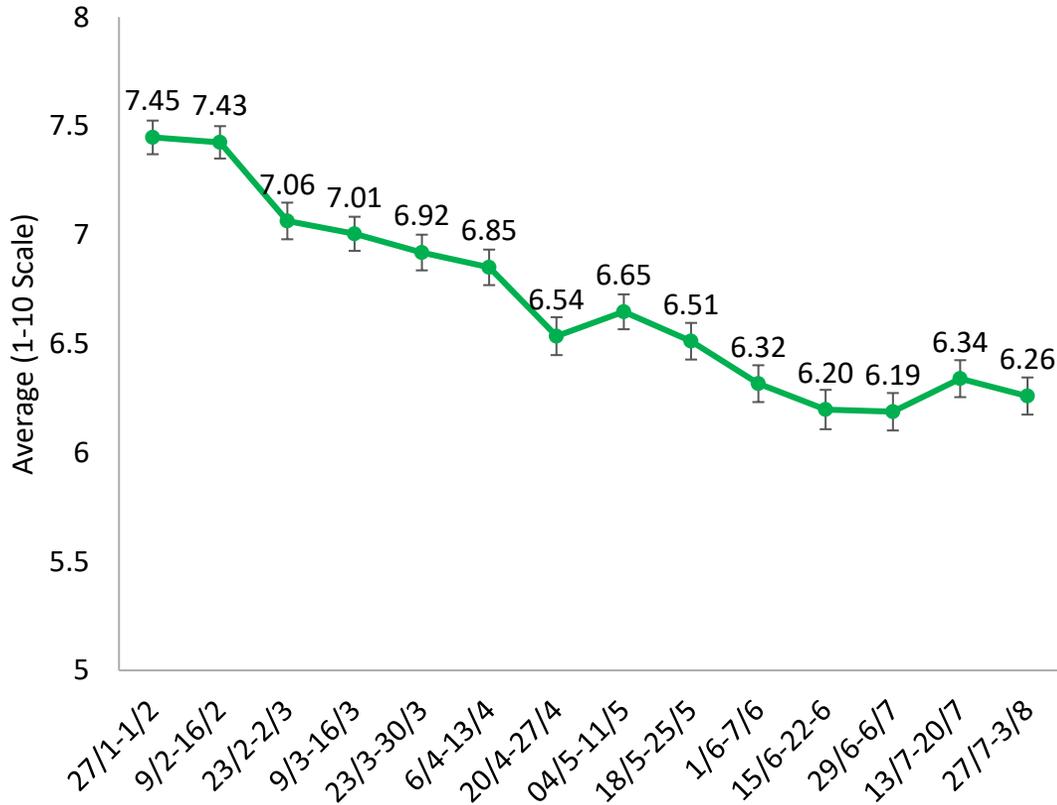


The fall in the perceived coherence and simplicity of restrictions between June and early July recovered in the latest wave of SAM.

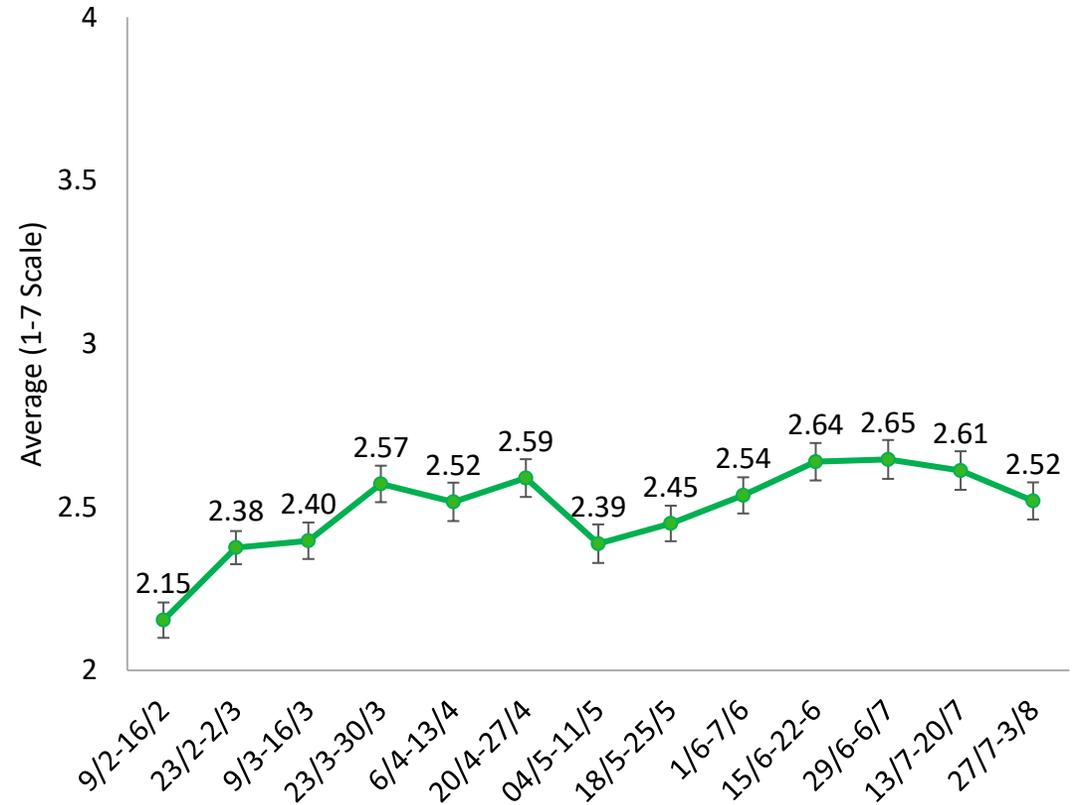
Worry and Burden of Restrictions



Worry



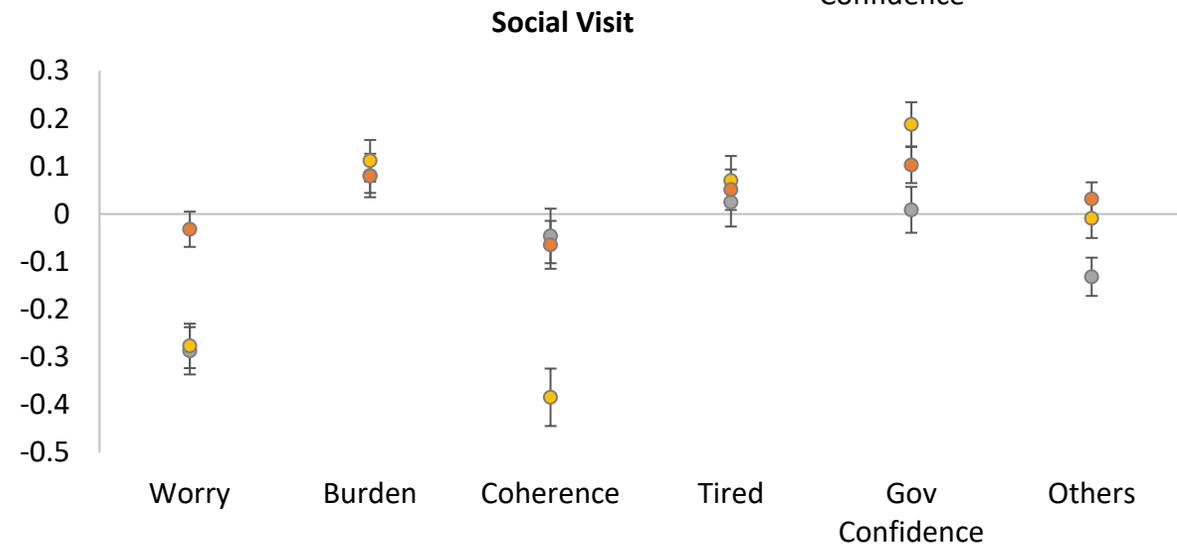
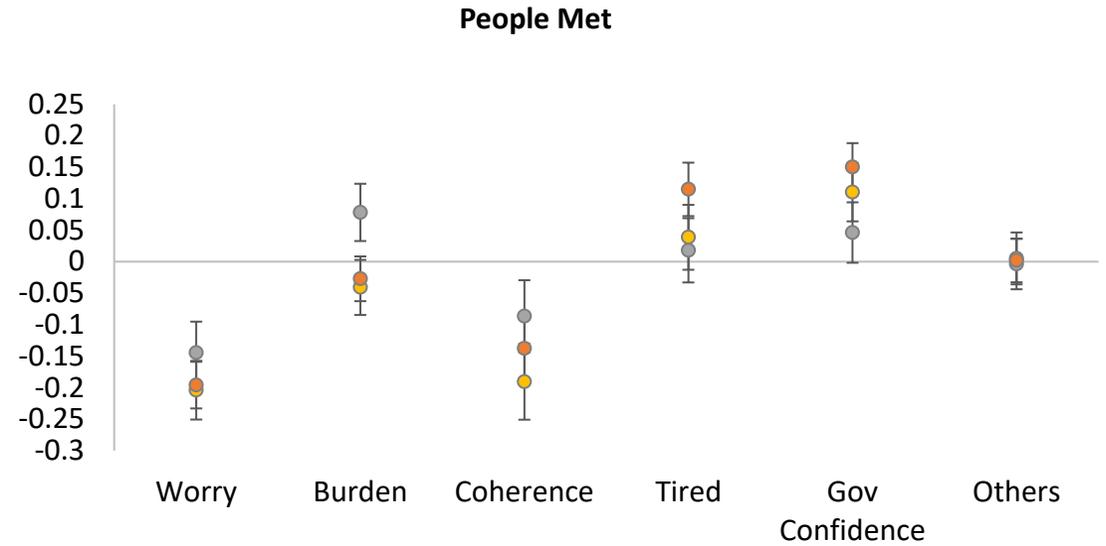
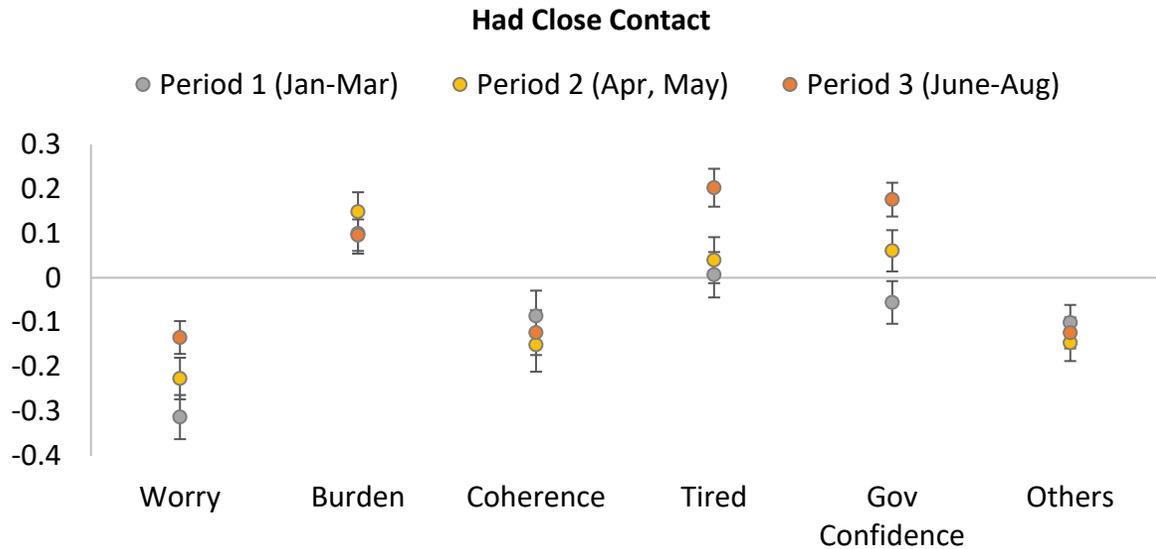
Burden



There was no further change in worry. A majority still judge preventing the spread of the virus to be more important than the burden of restrictions.



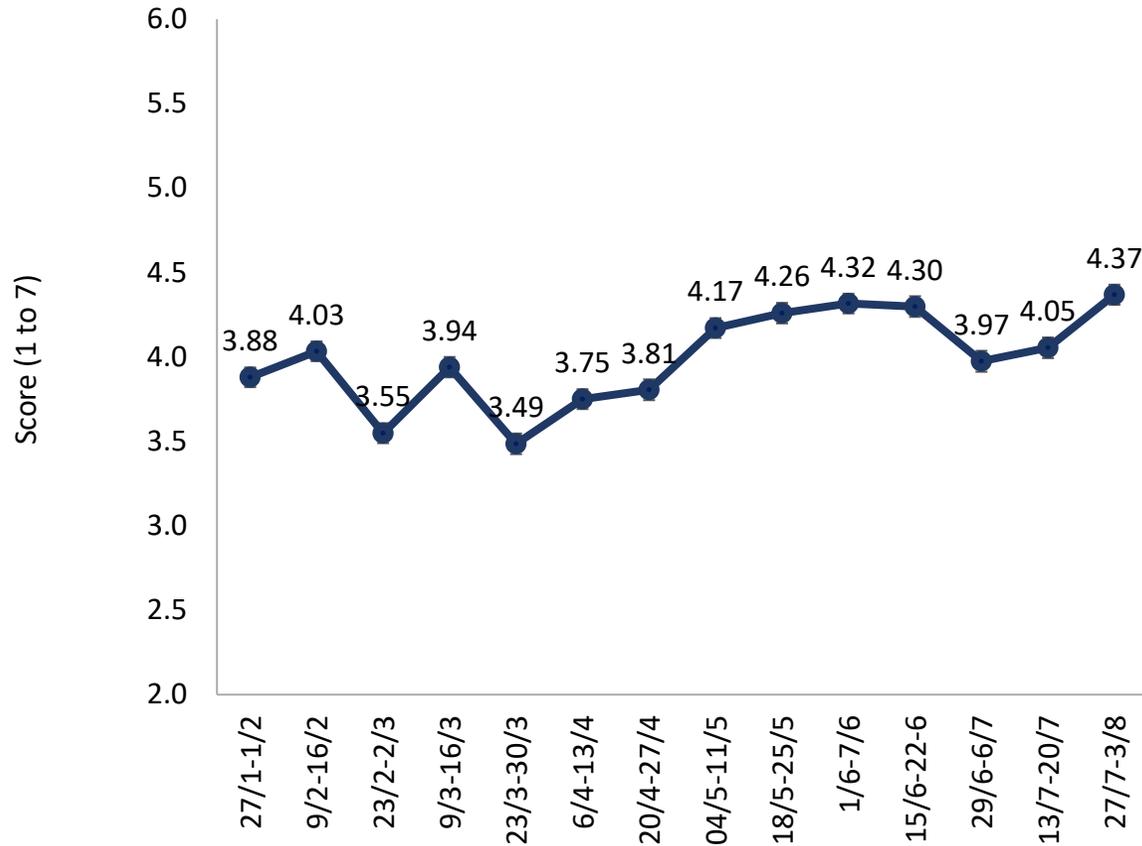
Changing Psychological Drivers of Behaviour



This chart looks at how the psychological predictors of behaviour have changed since early January, splitting the year into three periods: Period 1 for level 5 restrictions, Period 2 for initial easing and Period 3 for further easing. The further away the dots are from 0, the stronger the effect of that psychological variable. The effect of worry, burden and coherence have weakened over time, while the effect of tiredness and confidence in the Government have strengthened.

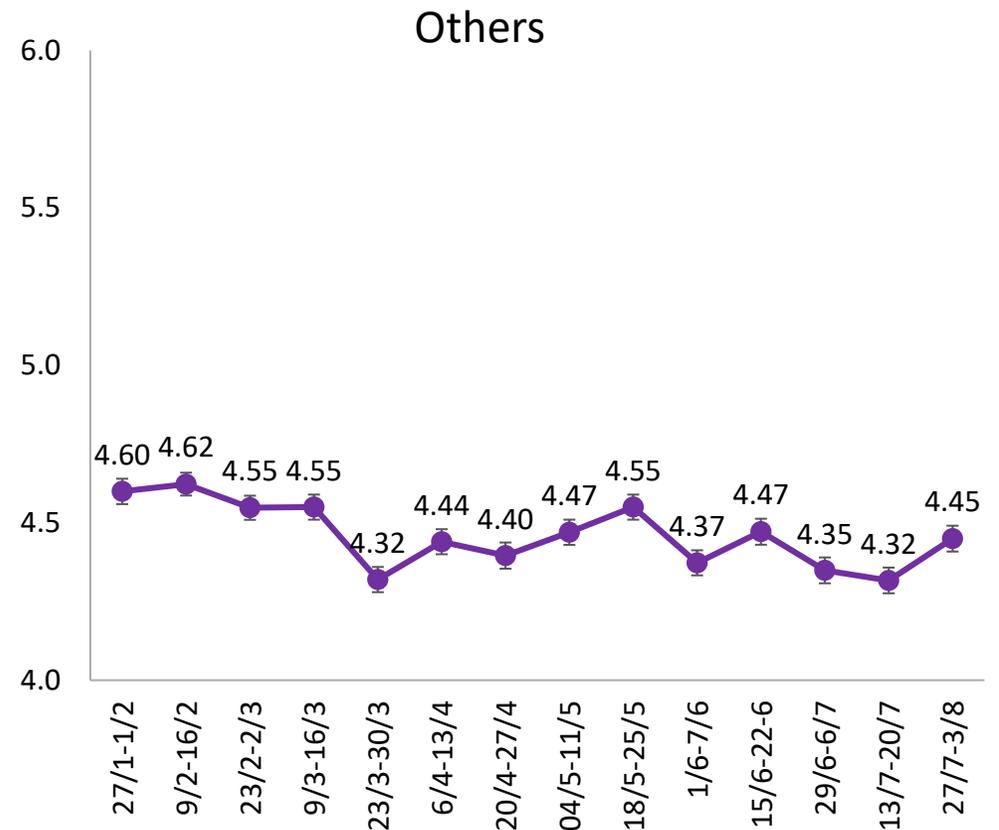
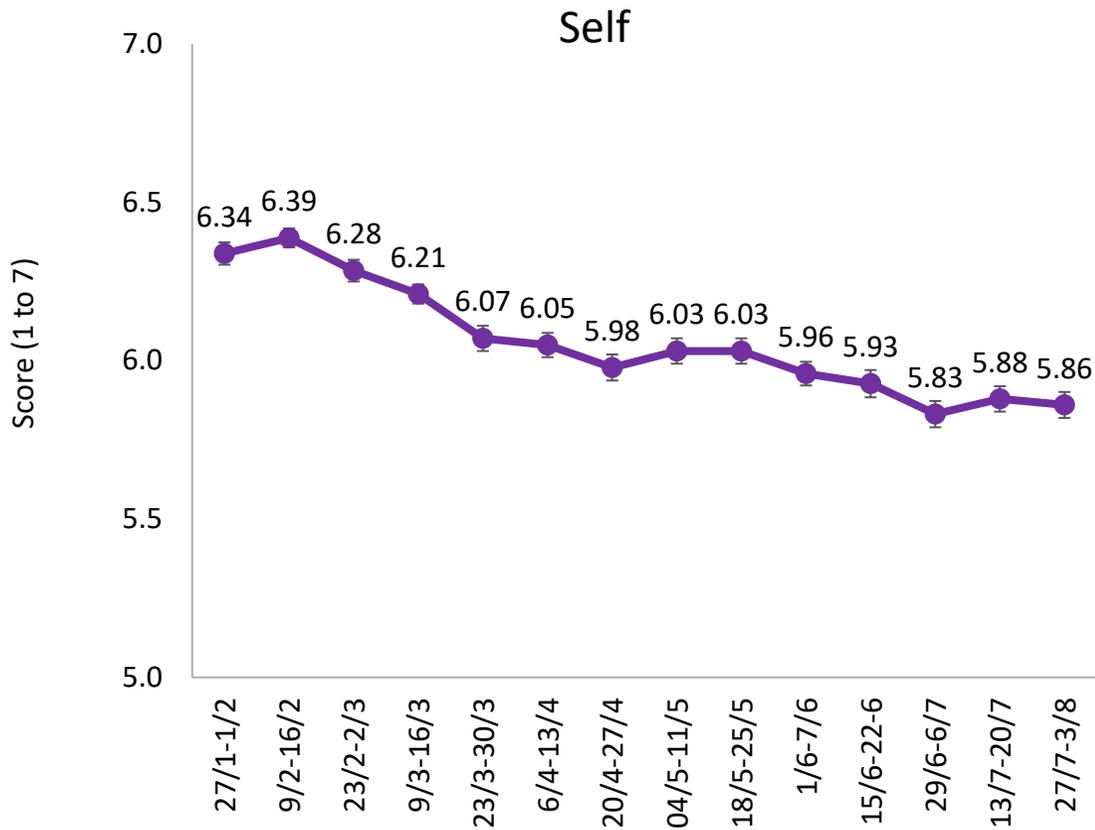


Confidence in the Government



Confidence in the Government's handling of the pandemic has trended upwards since early 2021. The latest wave showed a significant increase in confidence following a dip in June.

Compliance



There was no change in self-reported compliance with restrictions, although perceptions that others are complying increased.