

**THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE**

KING'S
College
LONDON

Life under lockdown: coronavirus in the UK

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Summary

This report is based on a survey of 2,250 UK residents aged 18-75 by King's College London in partnership with Ipsos MORI, conducted 1- 3 April 2020. Key findings include:

1. Perceptions and misperceptions

While there is a clear understanding of the threat from coronavirus among most, and good understanding of the main responses required, there are still widespread misperceptions, including:

- A quarter believe the conspiracy theory that the virus was probably created in a lab.
- One in seven (15%) still think people are more likely to die from seasonal flu than coronavirus, while the large majority of scientific estimates suggest that the latter is more deadly.
- One in 10 believe they should visit elderly relatives in their homes to check on them.
- Two in five (39%) think they should be shopping “little and often”.

There is also a lack of awareness of the extent of police powers:

- Only three in 10 realise the police can detain people they suspect of having coronavirus or use reasonable force to return people to their homes.
- Just 9% realise the police can require people to take a test for coronavirus.

Summary

2. Expectations

Significant minorities are already struggling with the current measures, and more expect to in the coming weeks:

- One in seven (15%) say it is already extremely difficult to cope, and a further 14% expect it be in the next four weeks.
- Younger people are more likely to find it difficult: 42% of 16-24s are already finding it extremely difficult, or expect to in the next four weeks
- 22% say they already can't afford essential items or housing costs, or think they are certain/very likely to during the crisis.

However, there is an understanding that the measures will be in place for some time:

- 41% think it will be six months or more before current restrictions are lifted.
- 51% think it will take a year or more for life to return to normal.
- 42% think it will be over a year before the economy grows.

A third of people expect over 20,000 deaths from coronavirus, including 11% thinking it will be over 100,000.

Summary

3. Behaviours

The threat from the virus and restrictions on behaviour are having an impact on some people's wellbeing:

- Half of people say they have felt more anxious or depressed than normal as a result of coronavirus.
- 38% have slept less or less well than normal.
- 35% have eaten more food or less healthy food than normal.
- 19% have drunk more alcohol than normal.
- 19% have argued more with their family or housemates than normal.
- 6% have phoned a counselling or support service.
- 25% of people are checking social media several times a day for updates on coronavirus, and 7% are checking once an hour or more.

However, people are supporting each other more:

- 60% have offered help to others, and 47% have received help from others.
- 6% say they have signed up to NHS Volunteer Responders, and a further 11% say they will.

Summary

4. Attitudes

There is some uncertainty about the government's overall strategy:

- 58% think that the government's original plan was for a significant proportion of the population to develop "herd immunity" to the virus.
- People are more likely to agree than disagree that the government's response has been confused and inconsistent (42% vs 31%) and that the government acted too slowly (62% vs 16%).

However, there is significant approval of much of the government's response:

- A majority (58%) agree that it has responded well to the shifting scientific advice and situation.
- There is near-universal support (89%) for the current measures, with 68% strongly agreeing with them.
- Just 14% think that "too much fuss" is being made about the risk – in stark contrast to the H1N1v/swine flu pandemic in 2009/10, when 55% of UK residents thought too much fuss was made of the outbreak.
- There is strong support for additional police powers, with 81% supporting them.

Summary

5. Linking beliefs and behaviours

How people understand the realities and see likely futures are related to their actions and attitudes...

- The 25% of the population who think coronavirus was probably created in a lab are over twice as likely to have met up with friends during lockdown, and to think too much fuss is being made about coronavirus.

	Believe coronavirus probably created in lab	Don't believe coronavirus probably created in lab
Have met up with friends during lockdown	12%	5%
Think 'too much fuss' is being made	24%	10%

- The 9% who think we'll have a vaccine within three months are nearly four times as likely to have met up with friends during the lockdown, and over twice as likely to think we're making too much fuss.

	Believe we'll have vaccine in 3 months or less	Don't believe we'll have vaccine in 3 months or less
Have met up with friends during lockdown	19%	5%
Think "too much fuss" is being made	28%	12%

1. Perceptions and misperceptions: what we get right and wrong

On average, the public have a clear view of the seriousness of the health threat from Covid-19 – and in some cases think it is more serious than current evidence indicates.

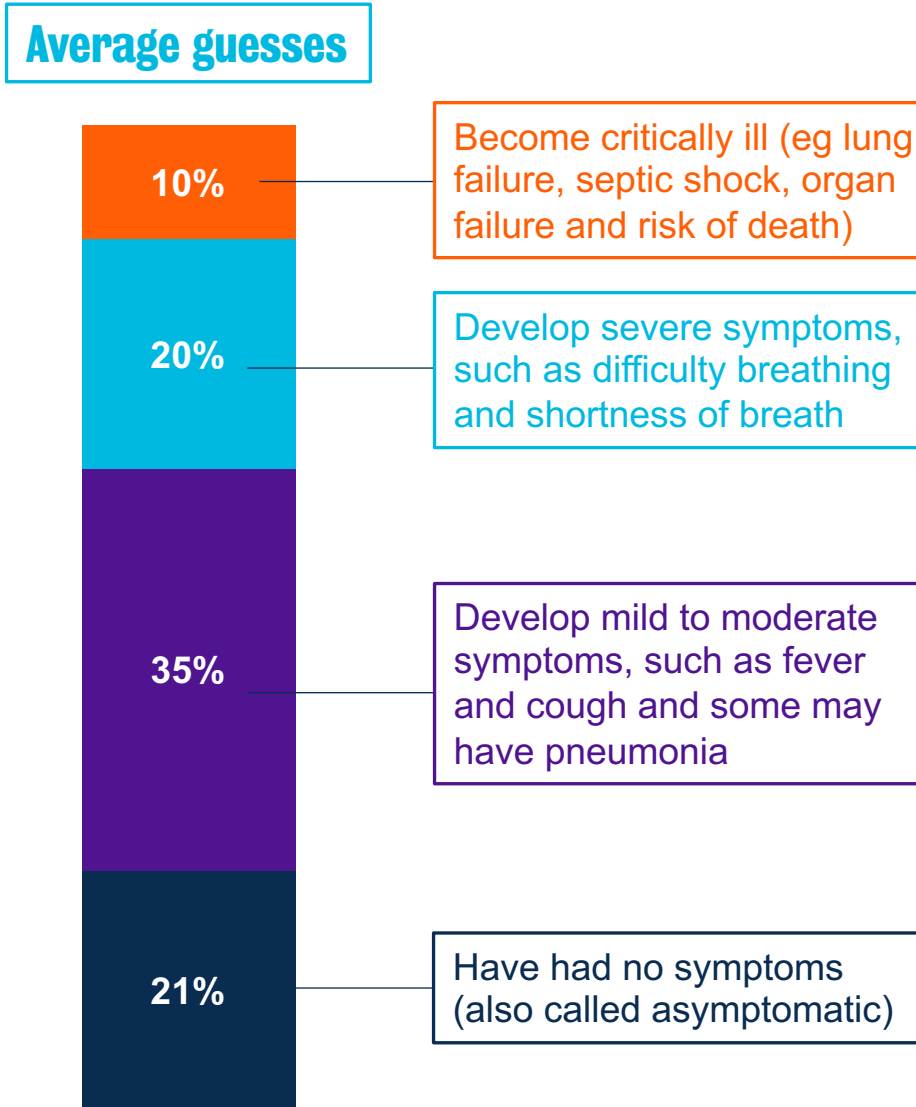
BUT this masks the fact that sizeable minorities are still underestimating the threat to health...

There are no reliable measures of the severity of condition experienced among those with COVID-19, because of the lack of full population testing.

However, **WHO early estimates suggest that 6% become critically ill and 14% develop severe symptoms.**

The public are fairly accurate on average, just slightly more likely to expect critical (10%) or severe (20%) symptoms than these estimates.

What percentage of people in the UK with the coronavirus...?



Source: [World Health Organisation](#)

See annex for further information

Most people recognise how serious this crisis is, and that deaths from coronavirus are rising rapidly.

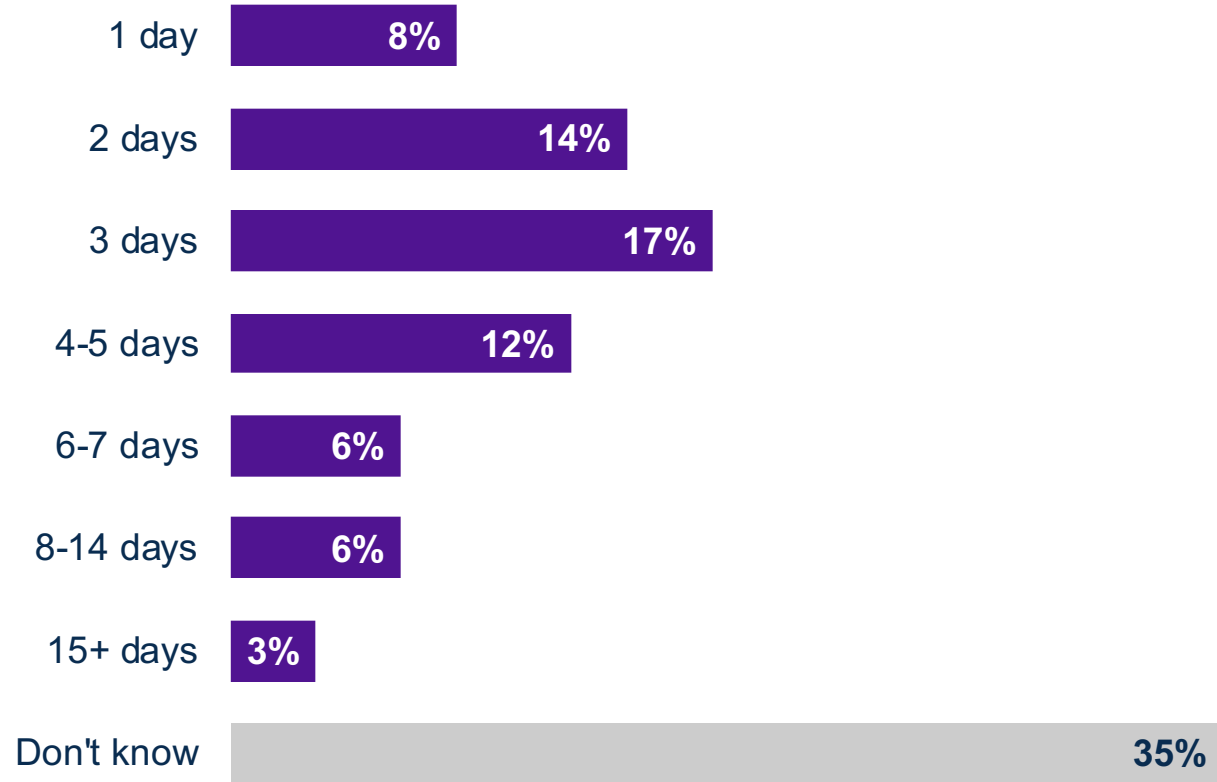
The public's average guess is correct that deaths were doubling every three days, although significant numbers still over- and underestimate the death rate from the virus.

With diseases like the coronavirus, scientists try to understand how quickly they are spreading by working out how many days it takes for the number of deaths to double.

How many days do you think it is currently taking for the number of confirmed deaths to double in the UK?

Median guess: 3 days

Actual estimate: 3 days

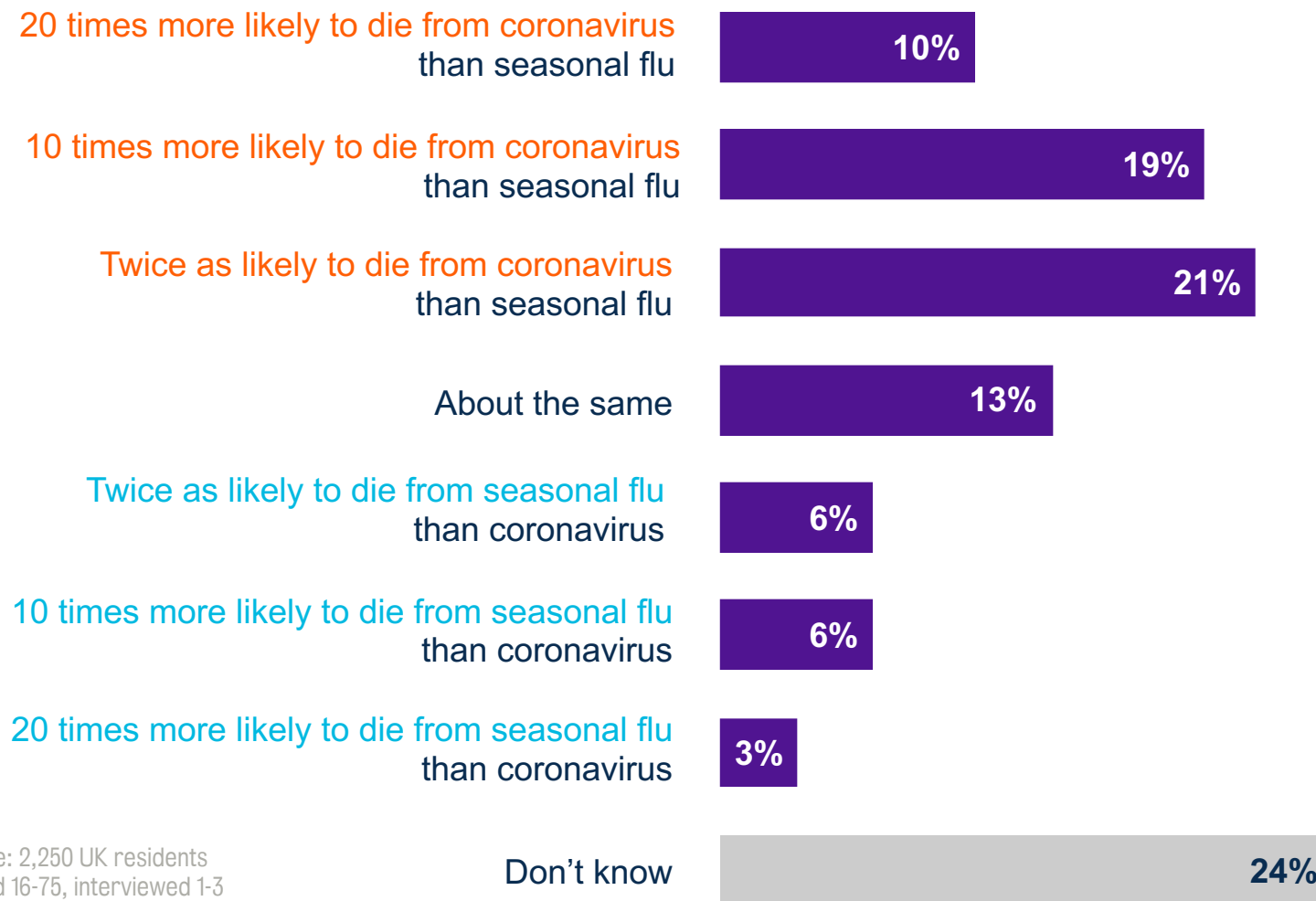


Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Source: Our World in Data [analysis](#) of European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control [data](#)

There are no reliable estimates of death rates for coronavirus, and there won't be until fuller testing is conducted. The public generally think coronavirus has a higher death rate than flu, however, one in seven (15%) think the flu is more deadly, and another 13% think the likelihood of death is about the same for the two viruses.

Among the UK population as a whole, how much more or less likely are people infected with either to die from coronavirus or seasonal flu, or do you think there is no difference?



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

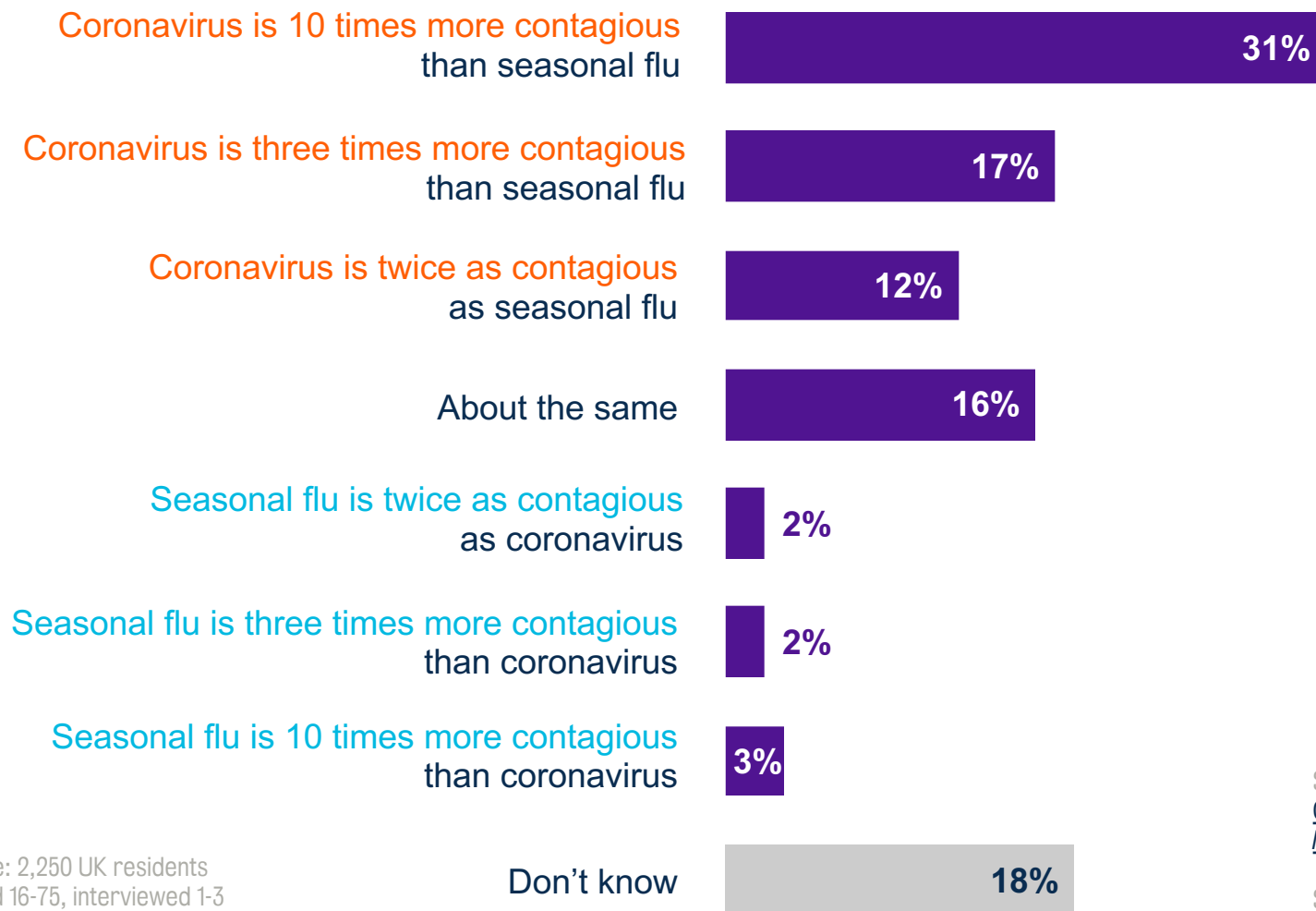
Source: [Imperial College COVID-19 Response Team](#)

Again, there are no fully reliable measures of how contagious coronavirus is, though early evidence suggests it's around three times as contagious as seasonal flu.

Some **overestimate how contagious coronavirus is**, with three in 10 (31%) thinking it is 10 times more infectious than flu.

Very few think that seasonal flu is more contagious.

Among the UK population as a whole, do you think the coronavirus is more contagious, seasonal flu is more contagious, or do you think they are about the same?



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Sources: [World Health Organisation](#) and [BMC Infectious Diseases](#)

See annex for further information

1. Perceptions and misperceptions: what we get right and wrong

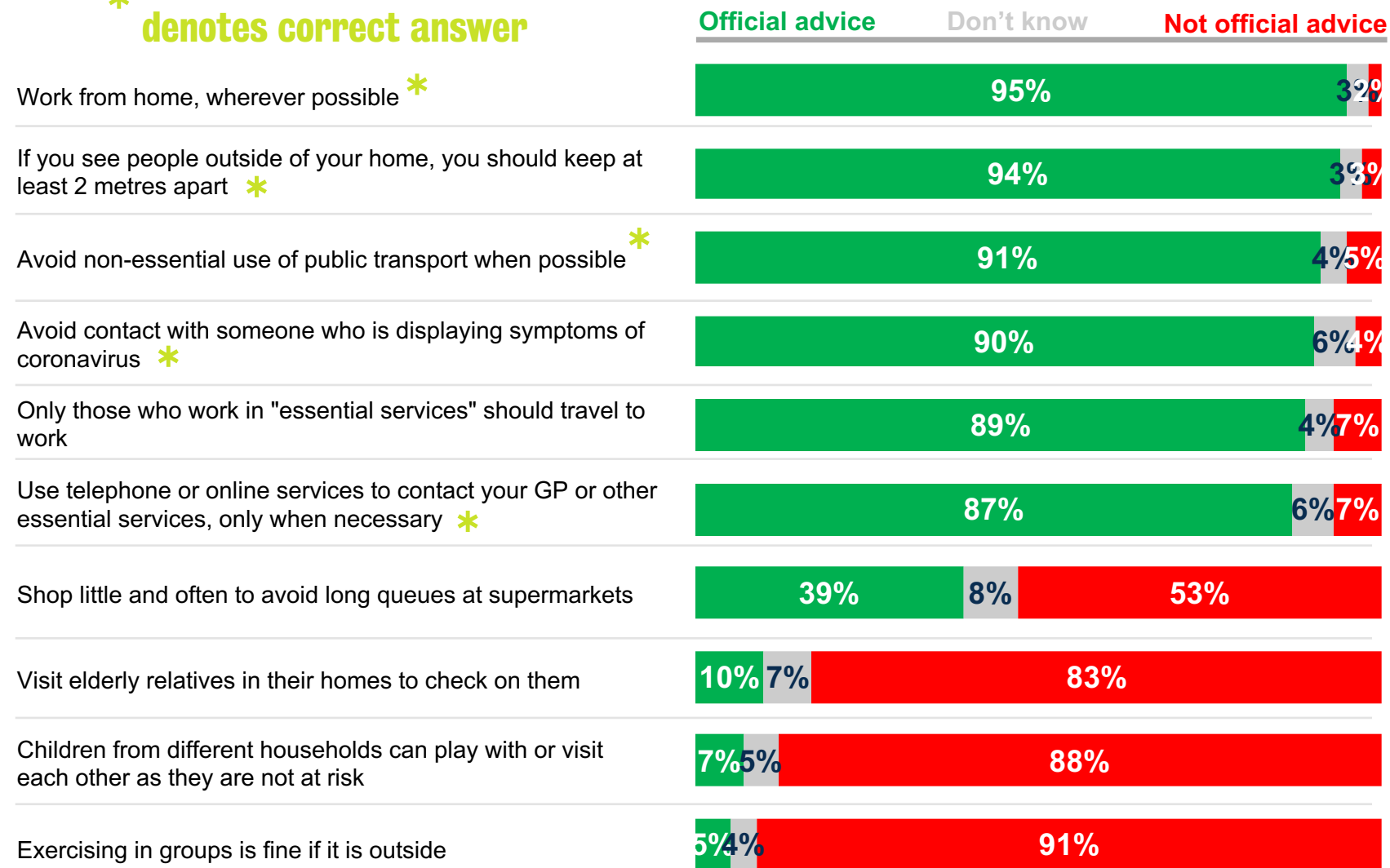
The public also have a high level of awareness of the key actions they need to take to stop the spread of coronavirus, but significant numbers have misunderstood government advice, and many believe common false claims about the virus and the measures to tackle it...

While the public are on the whole good at recognising official government advice, there is still some confusion:

- **39% think the government recommends shopping little and often**, but its official advice is to only shop for basic necessities as infrequently as possible.
- **One in 10 think government advice is to go and check on elderly relatives in their home**, despite official warnings against doing so.
- **89% think people can only travel to work if they are employed in “essential services”**, but the government has said this is allowed if you cannot do your job from home.

Which are official recommendations from the government and which are not?

* denotes correct answer

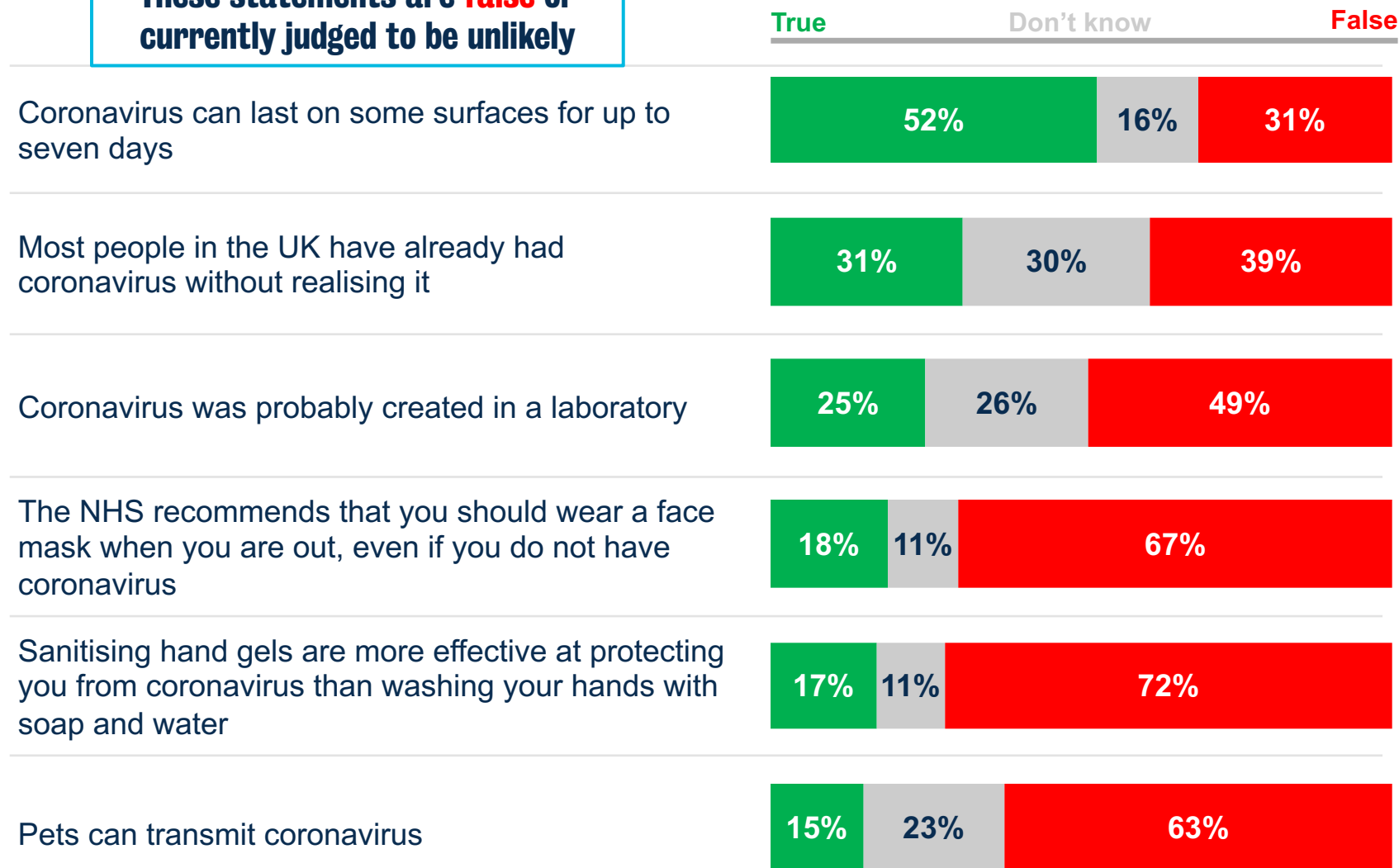


A quarter of the public believe the conspiracy theory that coronavirus was probably created in a laboratory – and this increases to 45% among those who say they oppose the government’s “lockdown” measures. Misperceptions such as these circulate freely on social media

And 31% of the public think “most people in the UK” have already had coronavirus, a claim made in media reports drawn from a model that has been challenged by many scientists for being based on unrealistic assumptions.

Are the following statements true or false?

These statements are **false** or currently judged to be unlikely

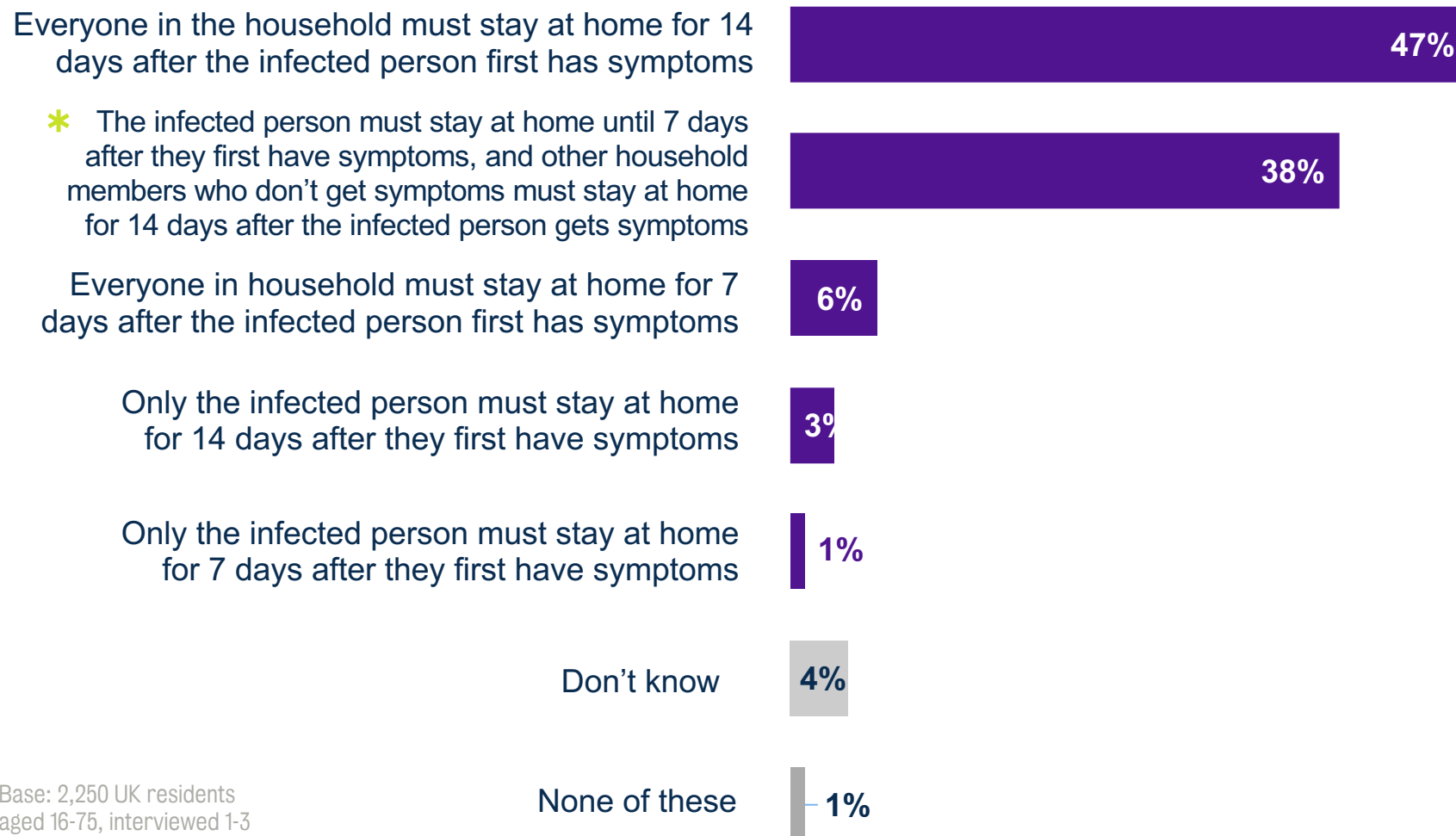


There is also confusion about how long people need to self-isolate if they live with someone who displays symptoms of coronavirus.

47% mistakenly think everyone must stay home for 14 days after the infected person first has symptoms. By comparison, 38% correctly recognise that the infected person can in fact leave the house seven days after their symptoms begin, provided they no longer have a fever.

If you live in a household with others, and you develop symptoms of the coronavirus, which one, if any, of these actions are you recommended to take?

* denotes correct answer



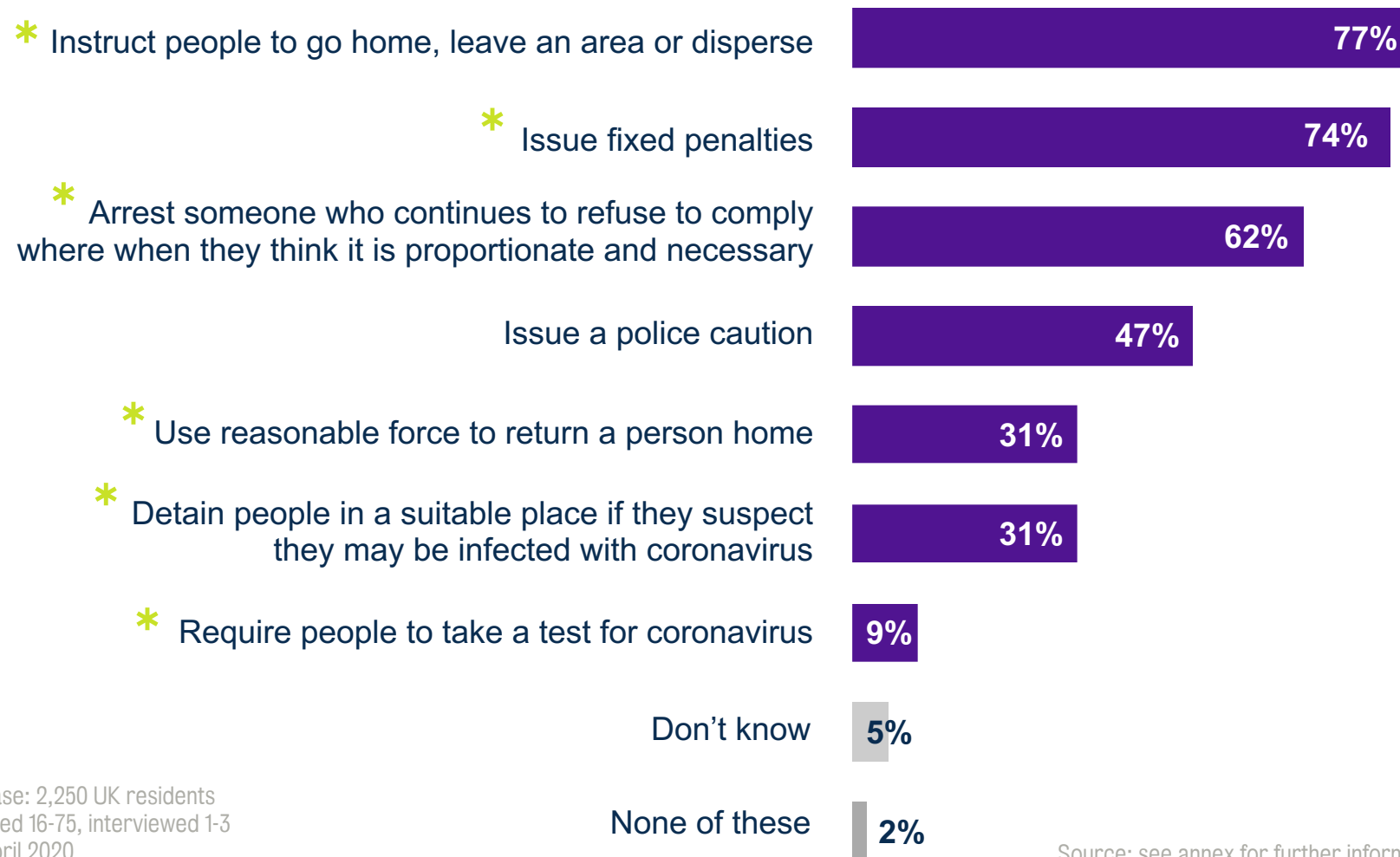
Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

The public do not fully understand the extent of police powers to deal with the coronavirus crisis, particularly **the power to test those they believe to be infectious – which just under one in 10 correctly identify.**

Only 31% recognise that the police can detain people or force them to return home if they are suspected of having coronavirus.

What powers, if any, do the police have to enforce the measures and help contain the spread of the disease?

* denotes correct answer



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Source: see annex for further information

2. Expectations: looking ahead at how we'll cope

The average person says it will be six weeks before the current measures in place to control coronavirus become “extremely difficult” for them to personally cope with.

But significant numbers say they are already experiencing financial difficulties or job losses, or are very likely/certain to...

While just over a quarter are confident the lockdown measures in place will not become extremely difficult to cope with, one in seven (15%) say they are already extremely difficult, and another 14% say they will be within the next four weeks.

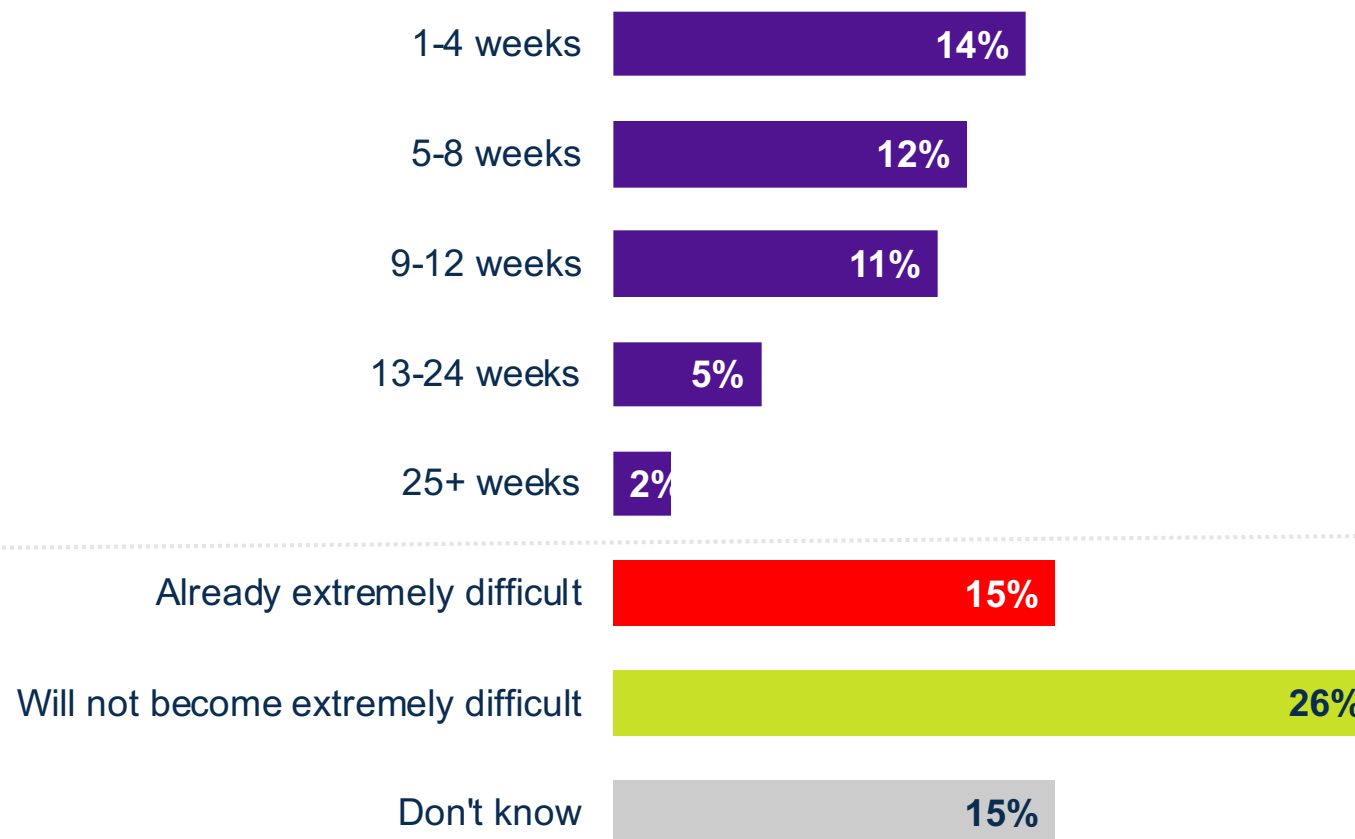
Those most likely to say it's extremely difficult are:

- People who oppose the lockdown measures (39%).
- 16- to 24-year-olds (24%).
- People who think they've already had coronavirus.

From those who give a figure, the average person estimates it will be six weeks until it becomes extremely difficult for them.

How many more weeks do you think it will be before the measures now in place to control coronavirus, including remaining at home and school closures, become extremely difficult for you personally to cope with?

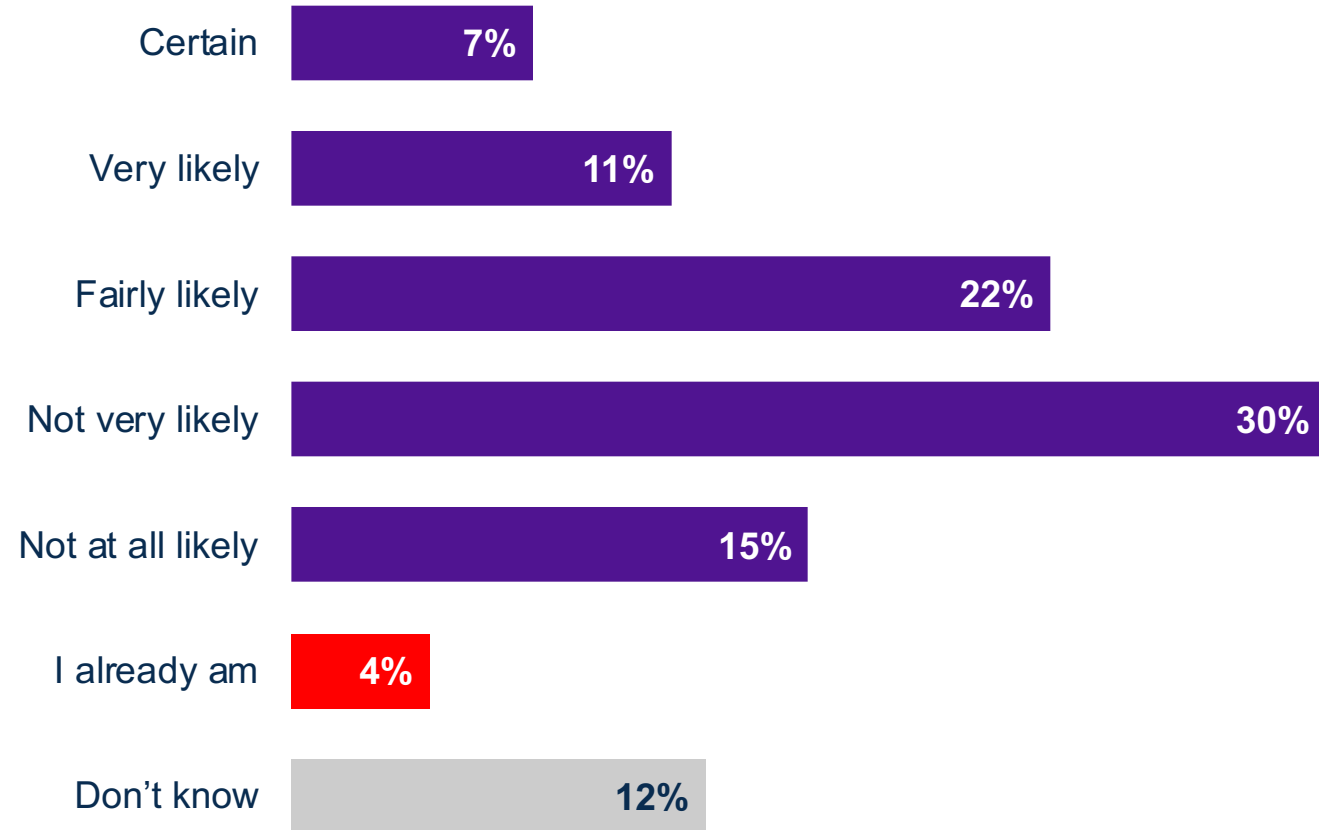
Median estimate: 6 weeks



22% of all those surveyed say they are either already facing significant financial difficulties – including not being able to pay for essential items or their housing – or it is certain/very likely that they will be at some point.

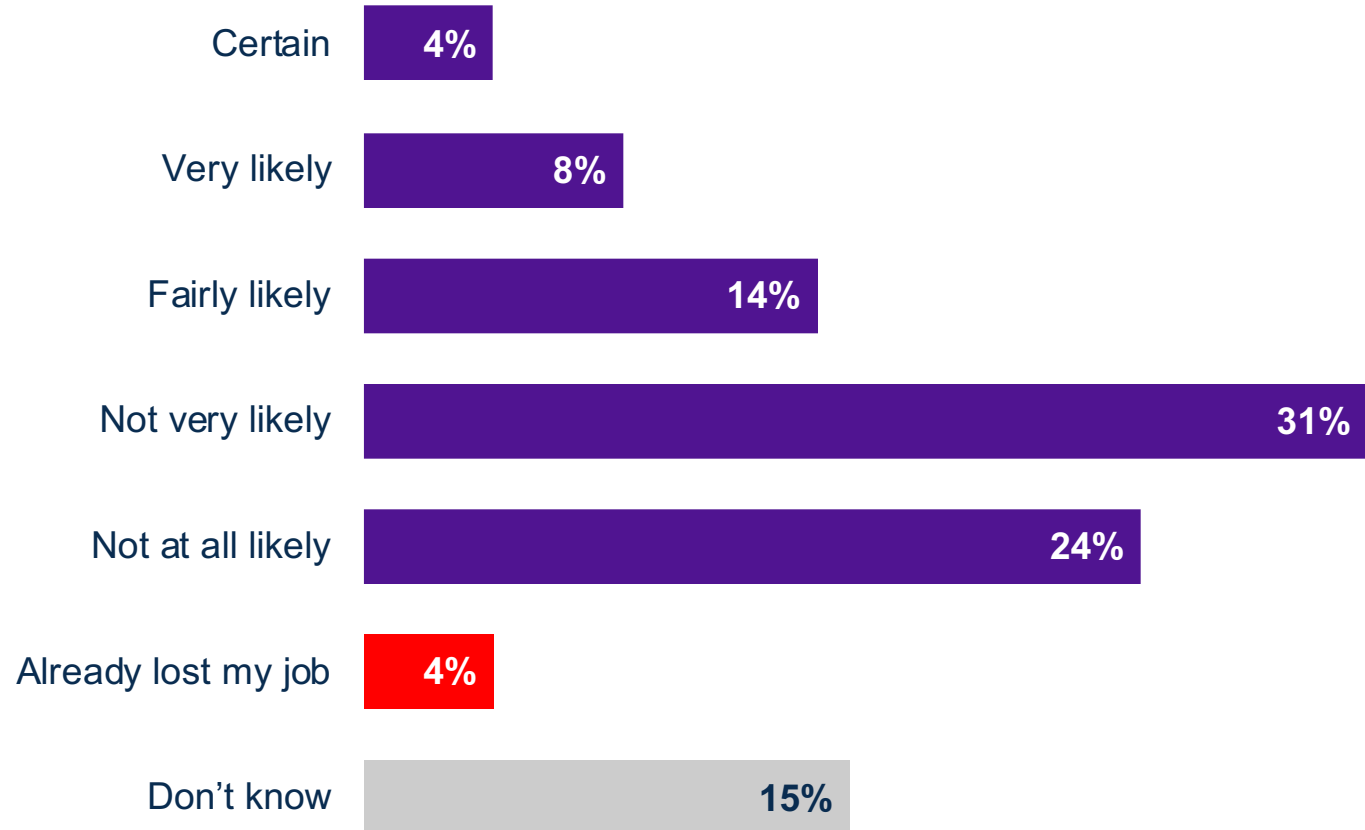
And 12% of the self-employed say they're already facing significant financial difficulties, with a further 12% saying they are certain they will.

How likely or unlikely do you think it is that you will face significant financial difficulties such as not being able to pay for your housing or essential items as a result of the disruption from coronavirus?



There is significant fear of the negative economic impacts of coronavirus, with **nearly one in six (16%) workers saying they have either already lost their job or are certain/very likely to lose it.**

How likely or unlikely do you think you are personally to lose your job as a result of the disruption from coronavirus?



2. Expectations: looking ahead at how we'll cope

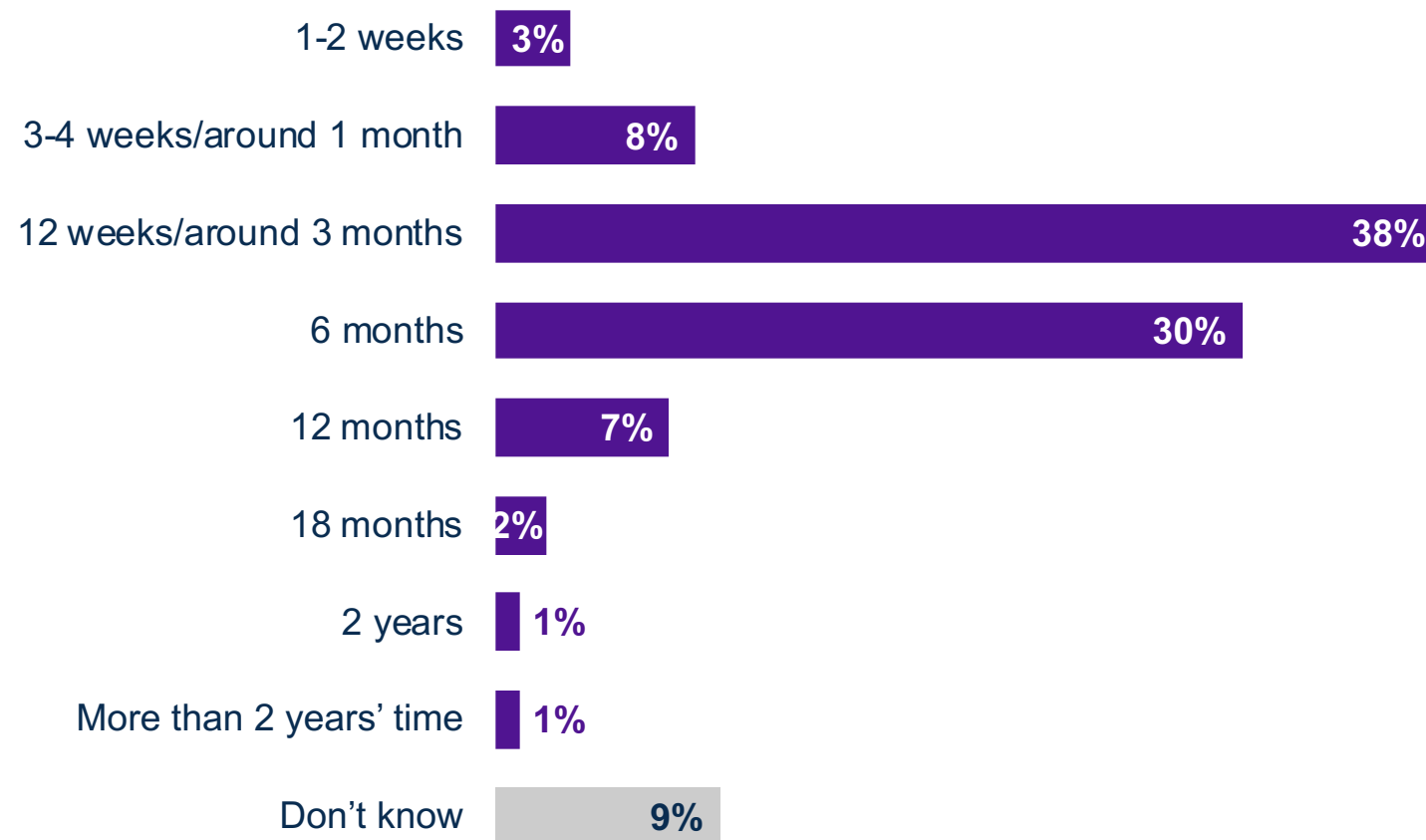
While six weeks is how long the average person thinks it'll take before the measures become extremely difficult for them, people mostly expect the restrictions to continue for longer than this.

Most also think it's at least fairly likely that the measures will be reintroduced after they've been relaxed, in response to a new outbreak...

Few expect a quick resolution to the crisis. People estimate that requirements on working from home and against non-essential travel will take some time to be lifted: **38% think it will happen in about three months, and 41% think it will take six months or more.**

And 25% of those who oppose the lockdown expect the restrictions to last for a year or more, compared with 11% of the public overall.

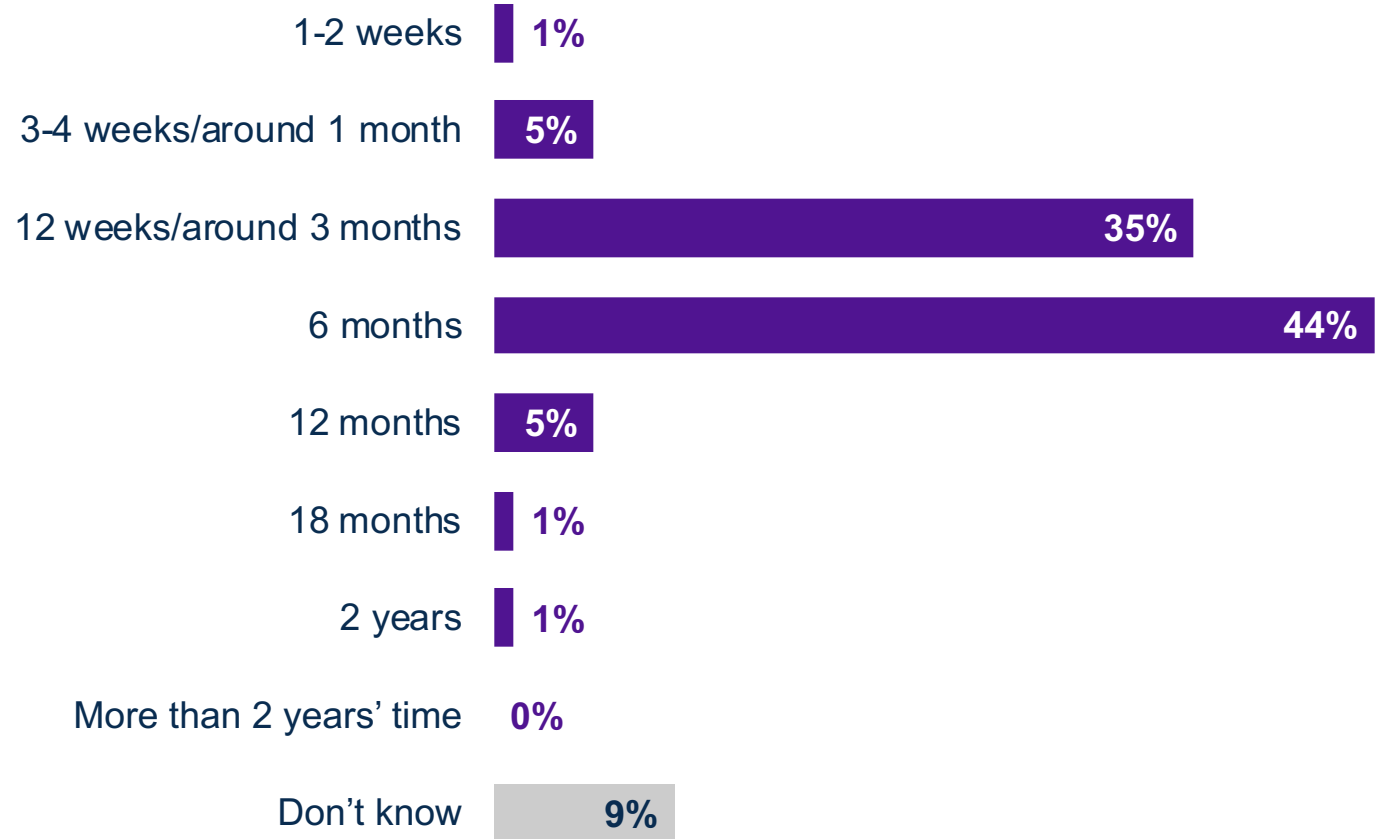
When, if at all, do you think the following will happen? The general public will be required to work at home whenever possible and avoid non-essential travel for...



51% think schools will stay closed for six months or more, while 35% think they will reopen after around three months.

When, if at all, do you think the following will happen?

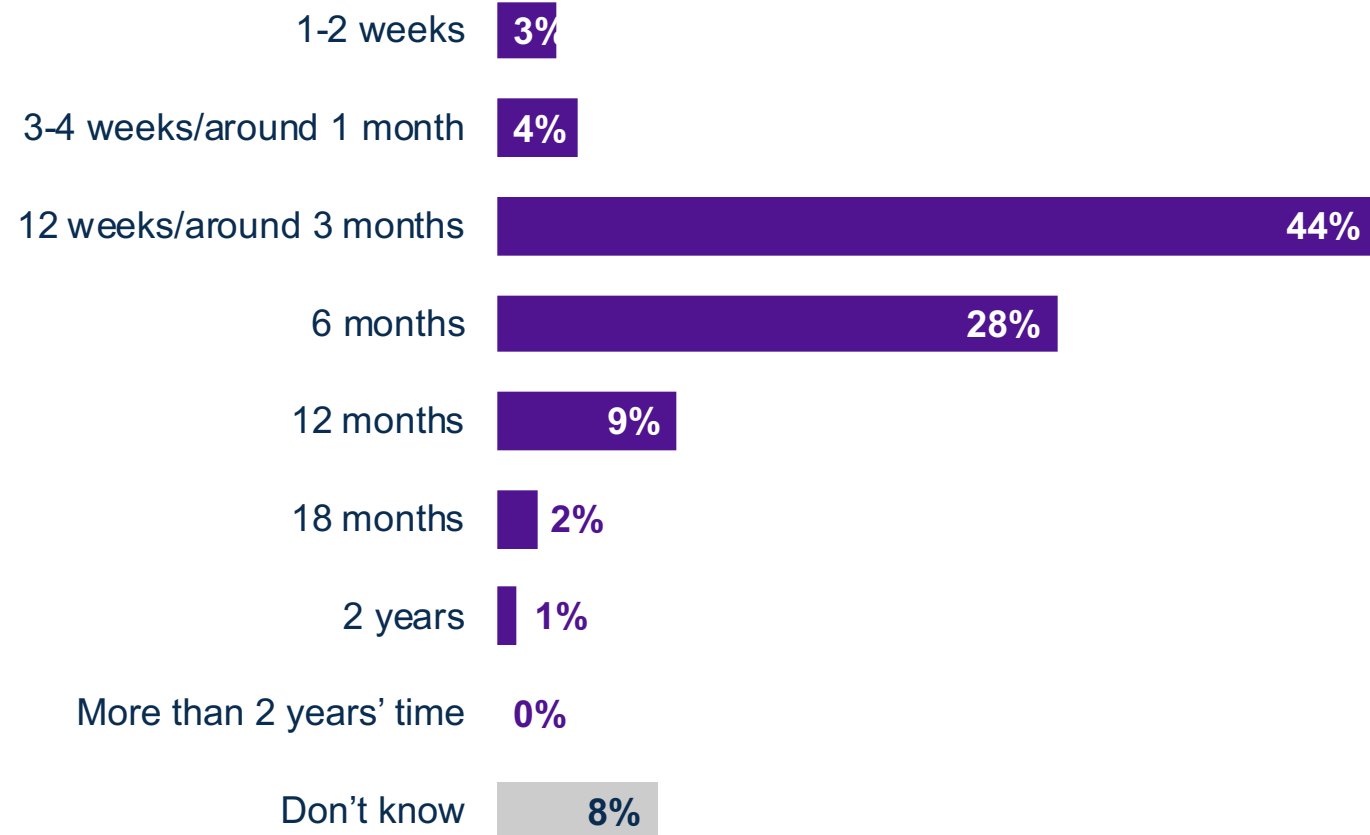
Schools will stay closed for...



40% think older people and those with underlying health issues will be asked to stay home for six months or more.

But 44% are more optimistic, saying they expect it last for three months.

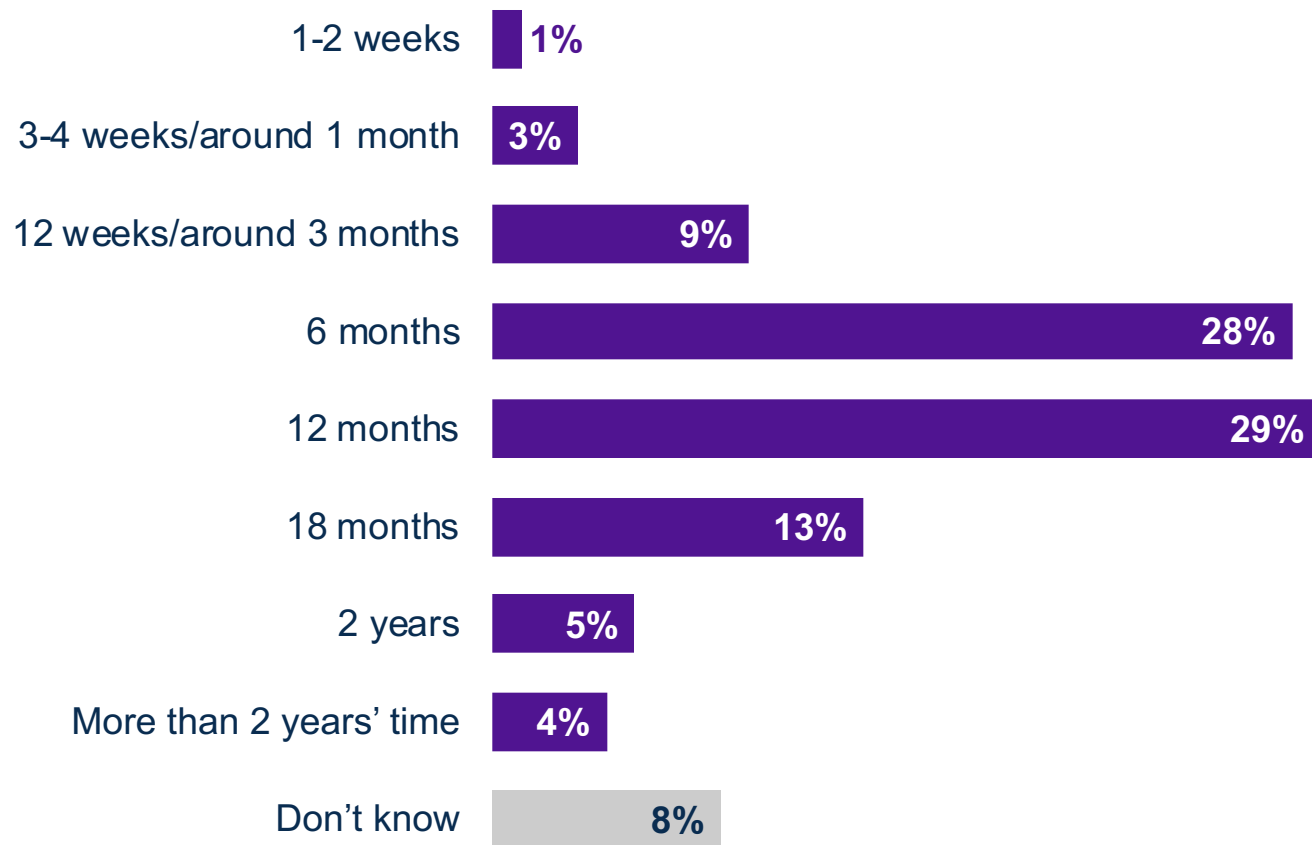
When, if at all, do you think the following will happen? Older people and those with underlying health issues will be asked not to leave home for...



51% think it will take a year or more for life to return to normal, while 28% think it will take six months.

Only 13% expect normal life to resume within three months.

When, if at all, do you think the following will happen? Life to return to “normal”, with people living much as they did before...



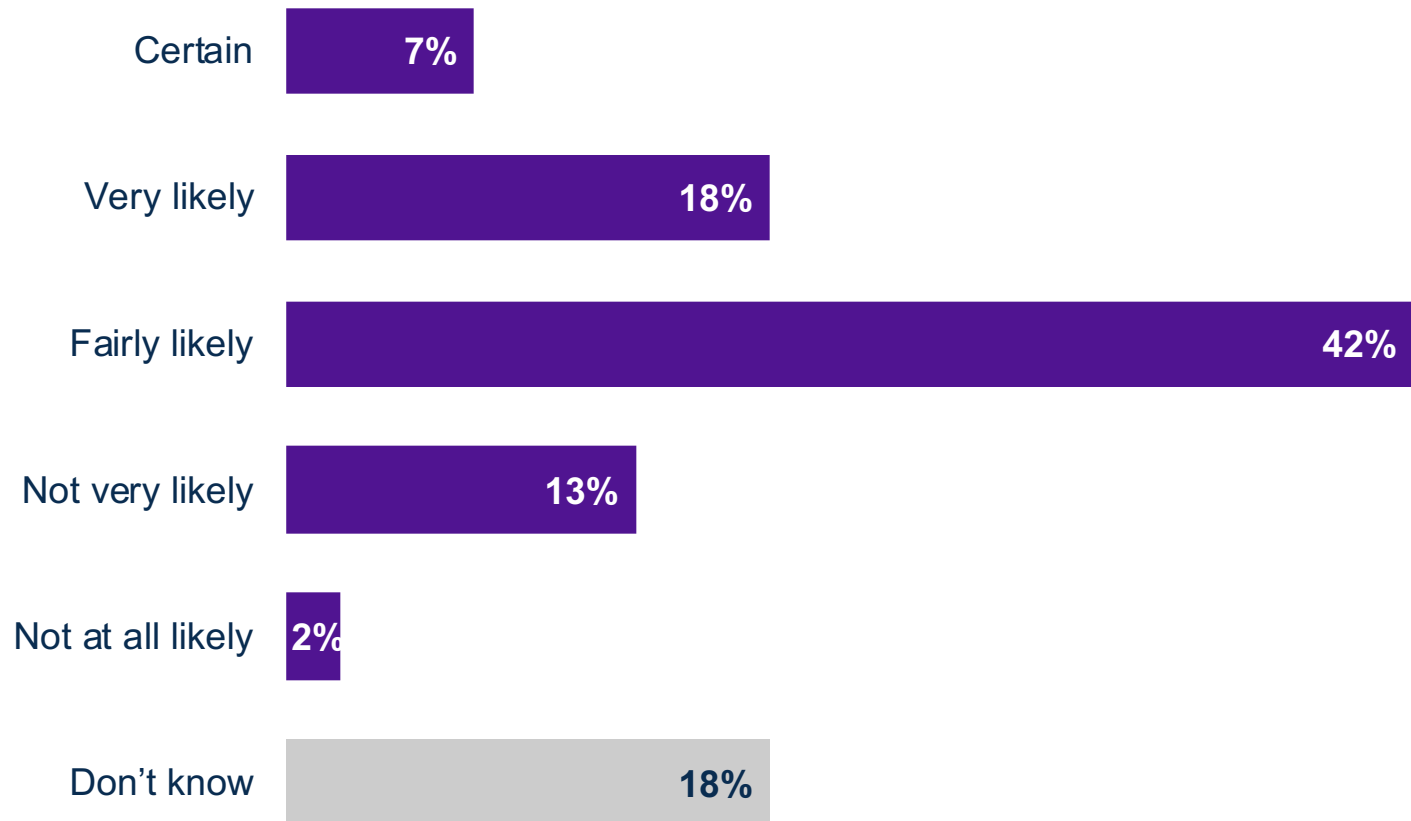
There is widespread pessimism about the UK's economic future: **42% think it will be over a year before the economy starts to grow again.**

When, if at all, do you think the following will happen? The economy to start growing again...



Most people (67%) are at least fairly likely to think that after the measures brought in to deal with the coronavirus crisis are relaxed or lifted, they will need to be reintroduced at some point.

The current measures being taken to control coronavirus are likely to be relaxed or lifted in the future. After that happens, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that they will have to be introduced again, in response to a new outbreak of coronavirus?



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

2. Expectations: looking ahead at how we'll cope

When it comes to the possible end stages of the coronavirus crisis, there are varying levels of optimism about how quickly a vaccine will be developed and what the overall death toll and death rate will be...

48% think it will take 18 months or longer to vaccinate the population against coronavirus, but 22% think it will take six months or fewer.

When, if at all, do you think the following will happen? We will be able to vaccinate the population against coronavirus in...

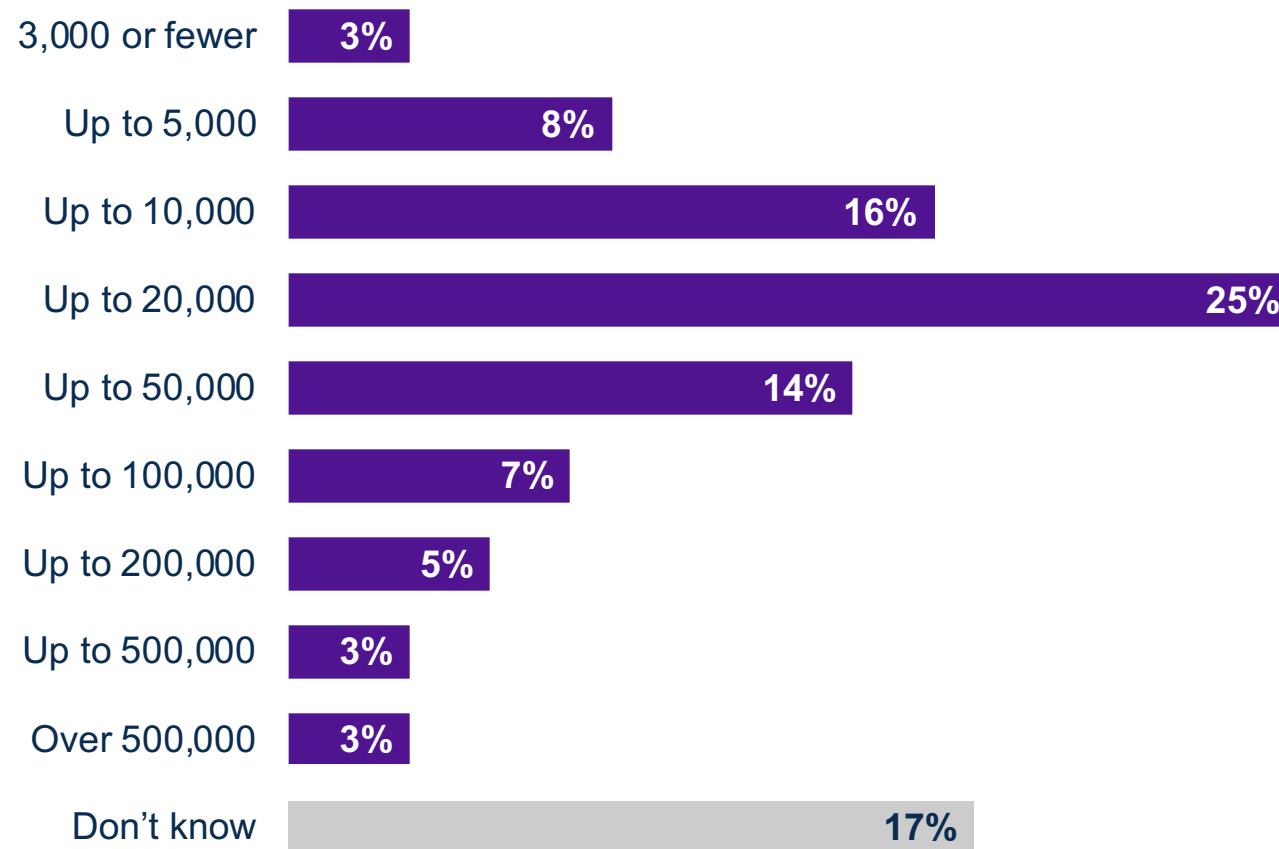


There are no precise estimates of the final death toll, with a wide range being suggested by different models, which is reflected in public guesses.

The most-chosen guess is up to 20,000 – which was featured by government advisors as a “good, if grim” outcome.

But a third (32%) think the number of deaths will be over 20,000, and **one in nine (11%) expect it to exceed 100,000.**

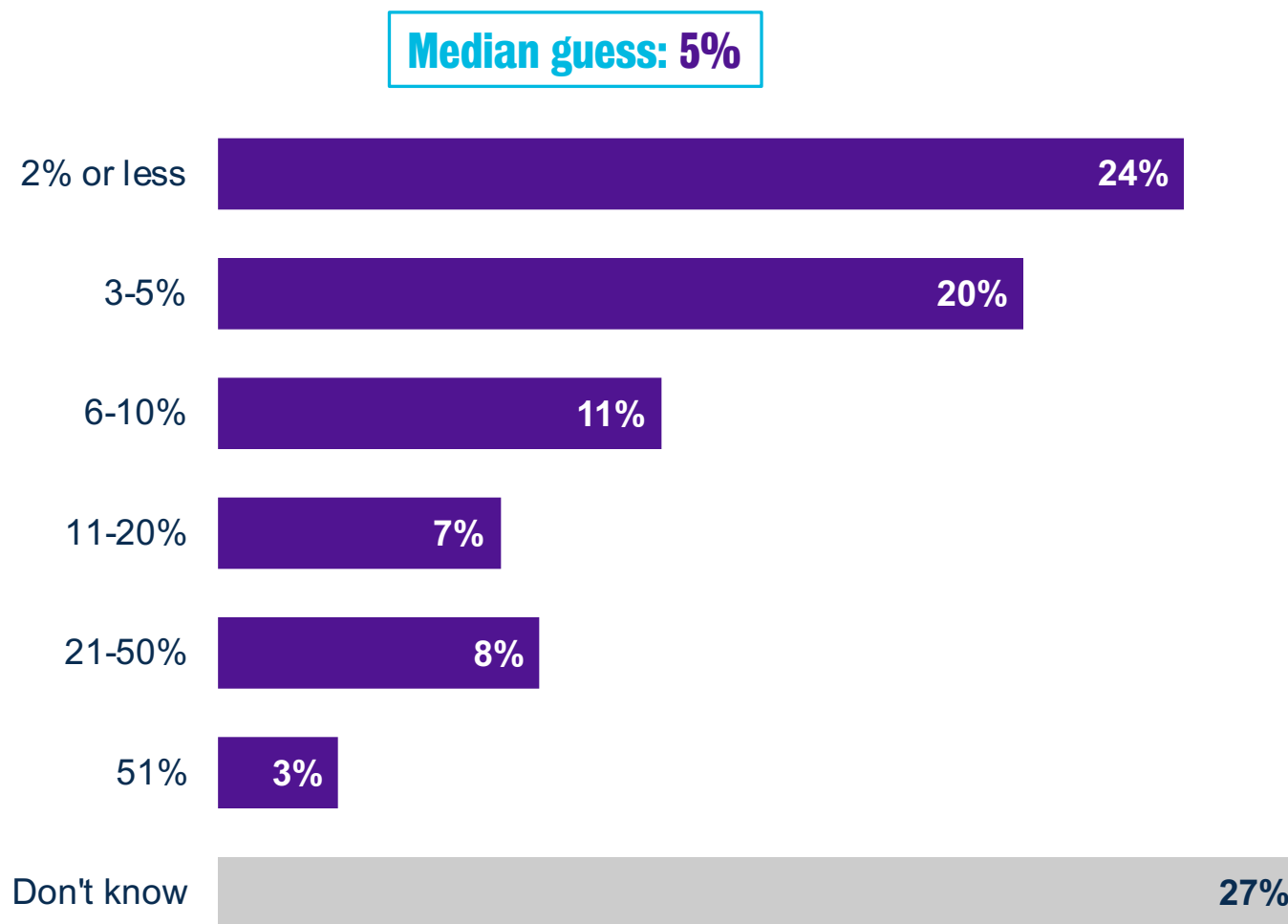
How many people do you think will end up dying in the UK as a result of the coronavirus outbreak?



The fatality rate of a new virus is not possible to calculate accurately without extensive testing and current estimates from different countries vary widely.

The average person's current guess at the final fatality rate is 5%, although 18% expect it to be over 10%. These seem likely to be overestimates of the actual death rate

What percentage of people in the UK who catch coronavirus will end up dying as a result of the disease?



3. Behaviours: how we're acting in the crisis

There is strong adherence to the measures set out by the government, albeit with some exceptions.

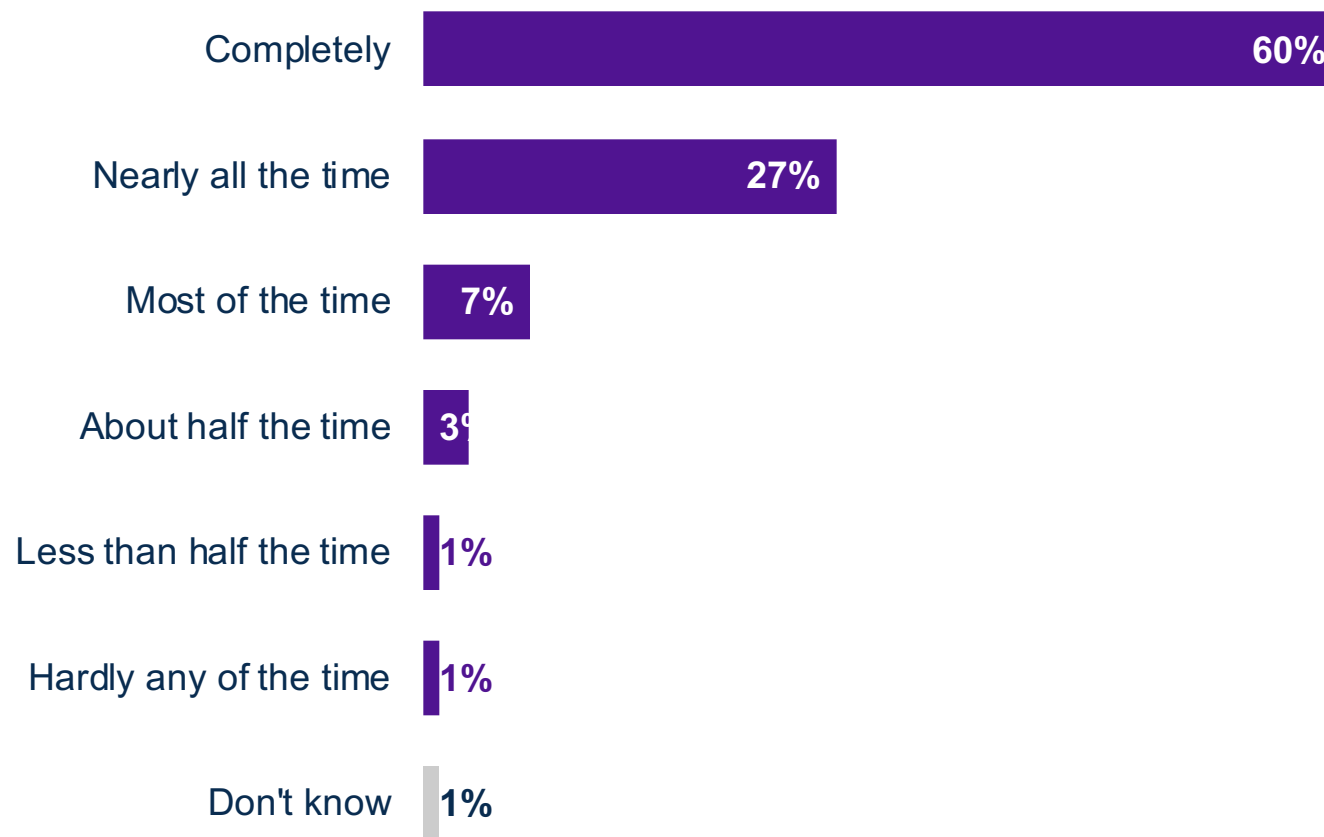
But many are taking unnecessary further measures that are not included in the official advice...

60% of the public say they have completely followed government guidelines on leaving the house as little as possible.

One in eight (12%) admit they have only followed them “most of the time” or less often, including one in 20 (5%) who’ve followed the rules only half the time or less.

The measures announced by the Prime Minister on 23 March required everyone to follow some key rules, including staying at home unless you cannot work from home, you need to buy essential supplies, for one exercise session a day or to attend a medical appointment. The rules prevent social gatherings of more than two people who don’t already live with you, in or outside your home.

To what extent, if at all, have you personally followed these rules?

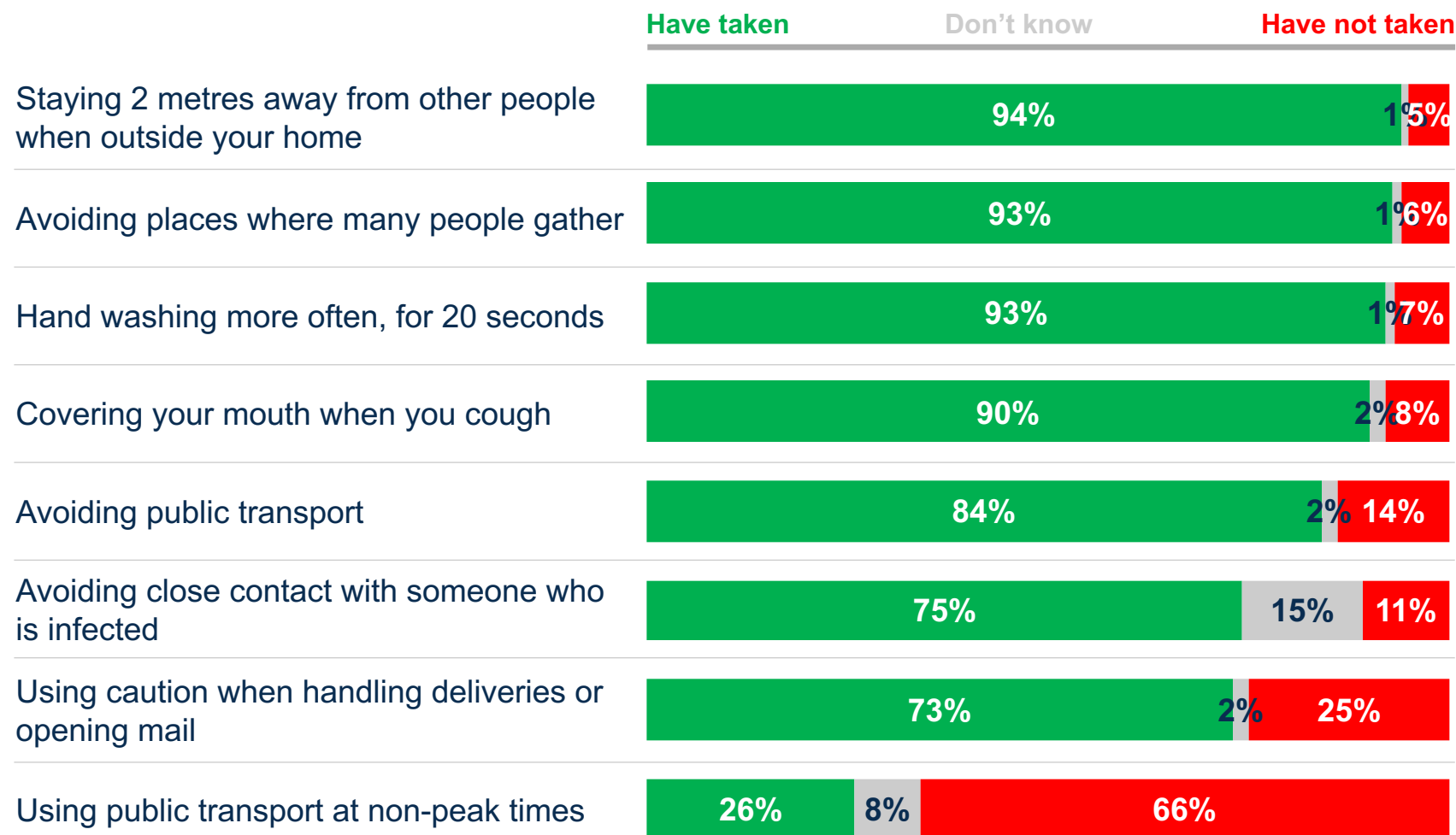


Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

There are high levels of adherence to much of the official guidance on how to stop the spread of coronavirus. For example:

- 94% say they are staying 2 metres away from people when they go out in public.
- 93% say they are avoiding places where people gather.
- 93% say they are washing their hands more often, and for longer.

Which of the following measures, if any, have you personally taken because you believe they may prevent the spread of coronavirus?



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

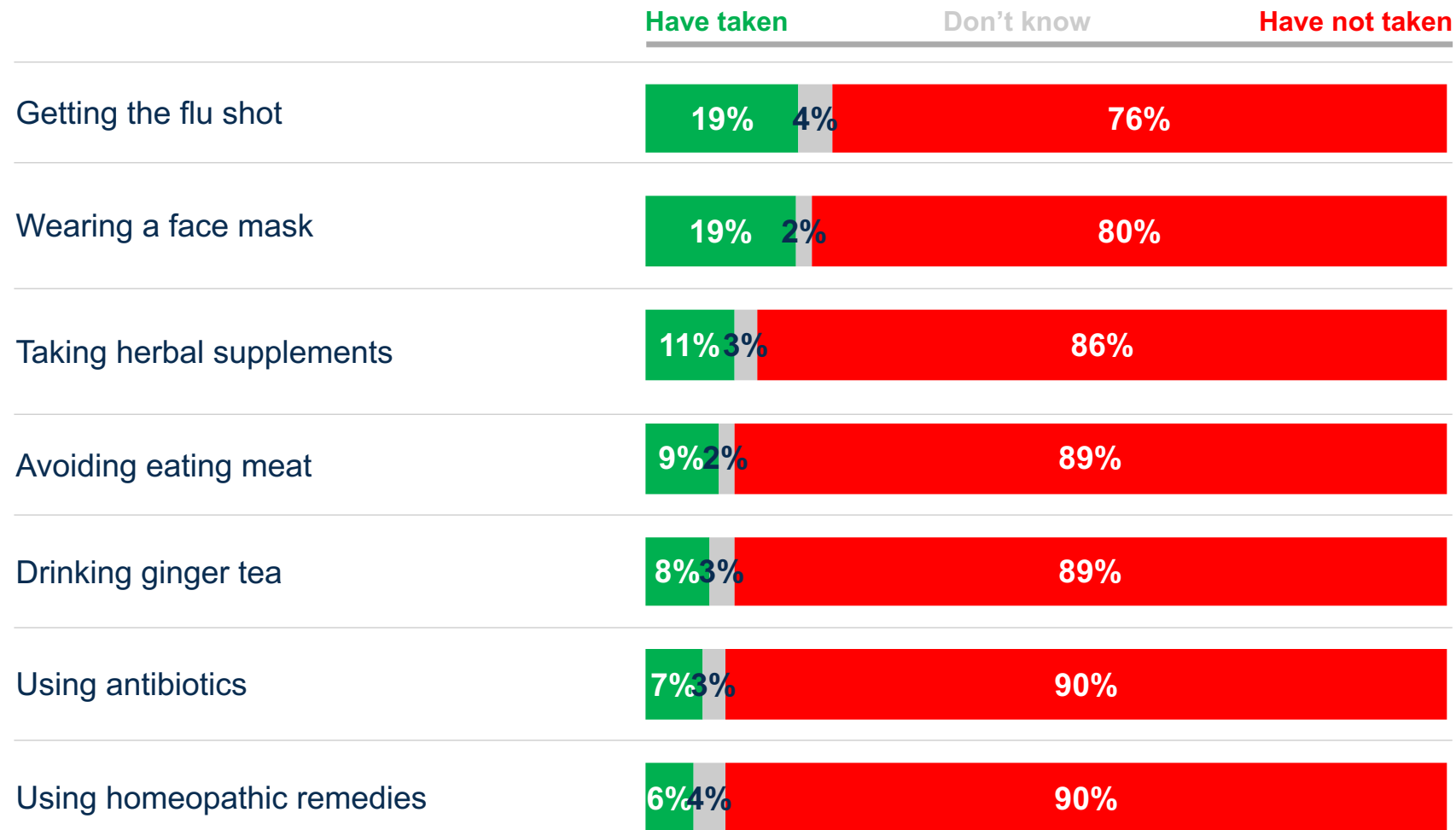
But a sizeable minority are taking measures that have not been recommended to the public to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Nearly one in five – 19% – have got a flu shot, and the same proportion have been wearing face masks.

And around one in 10 have taken **herbal supplements** (11%), **avoided eating meat** (9%) or **been drinking ginger tea** (8%).

While just over one in 20 have been using **antibiotics** (7%) or **homeopathic remedies** (6%).

Which of the following measures, if any, have you personally taken because you believe they may prevent the spread of coronavirus?



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

3. Behaviours: how we're acting in the crisis

The restrictions and changes in behaviour are having an impact on people's welfare and wellbeing...

It's clear that the measures people are taking are negatively impacting wider life for many:

- 49% have felt more anxious and depressed than normal.
- 38% have slept less or worse than usual.

People's food and alcohol consumption has been affected:

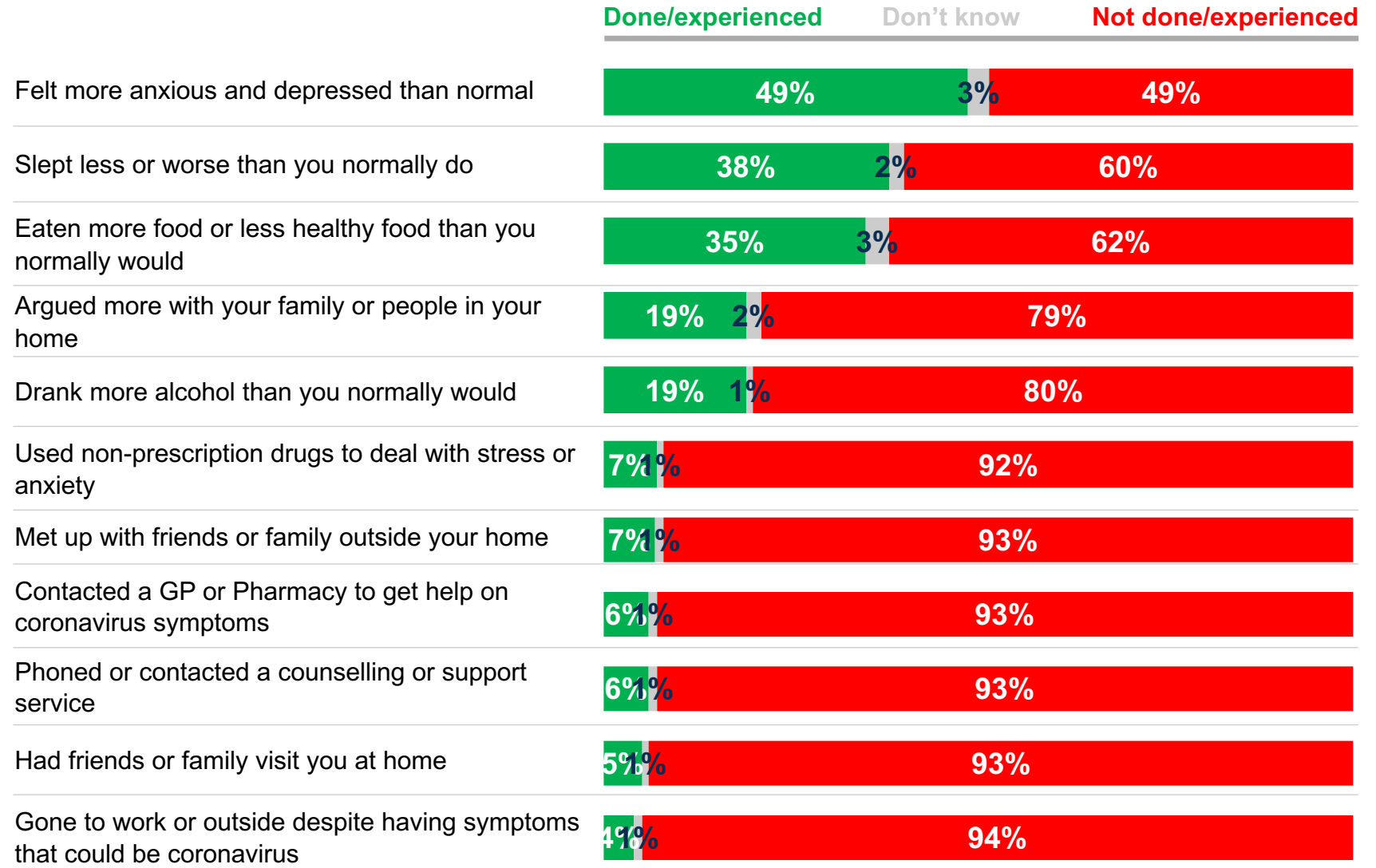
- 35% have eaten more or less healthily than they normally would.
- 19% are drinking more alcohol than they normally would.

And tensions have flared at home:

- 19% are arguing more with family or people they live with.

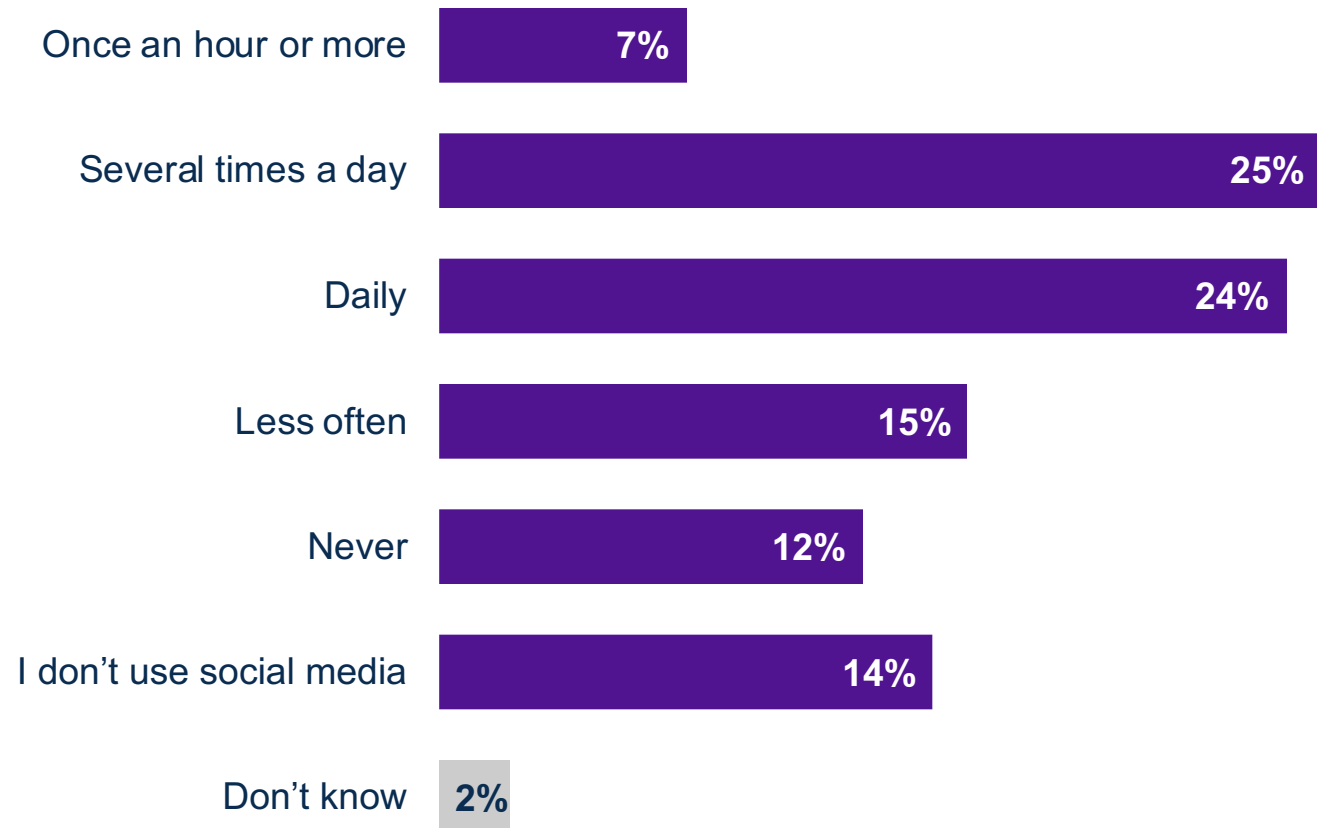
Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Since the Prime Minister announced the measures on 23 March, have you personally done or experienced any of the following?



Coronavirus is dominating many people's thoughts: **nearly a third (32%) check social media several times a day for updates on the crisis, and of those, 7% do so once an hour or more.**

How often, if at all, do you check social media (such as Facebook or Twitter) for information or updates about coronavirus?



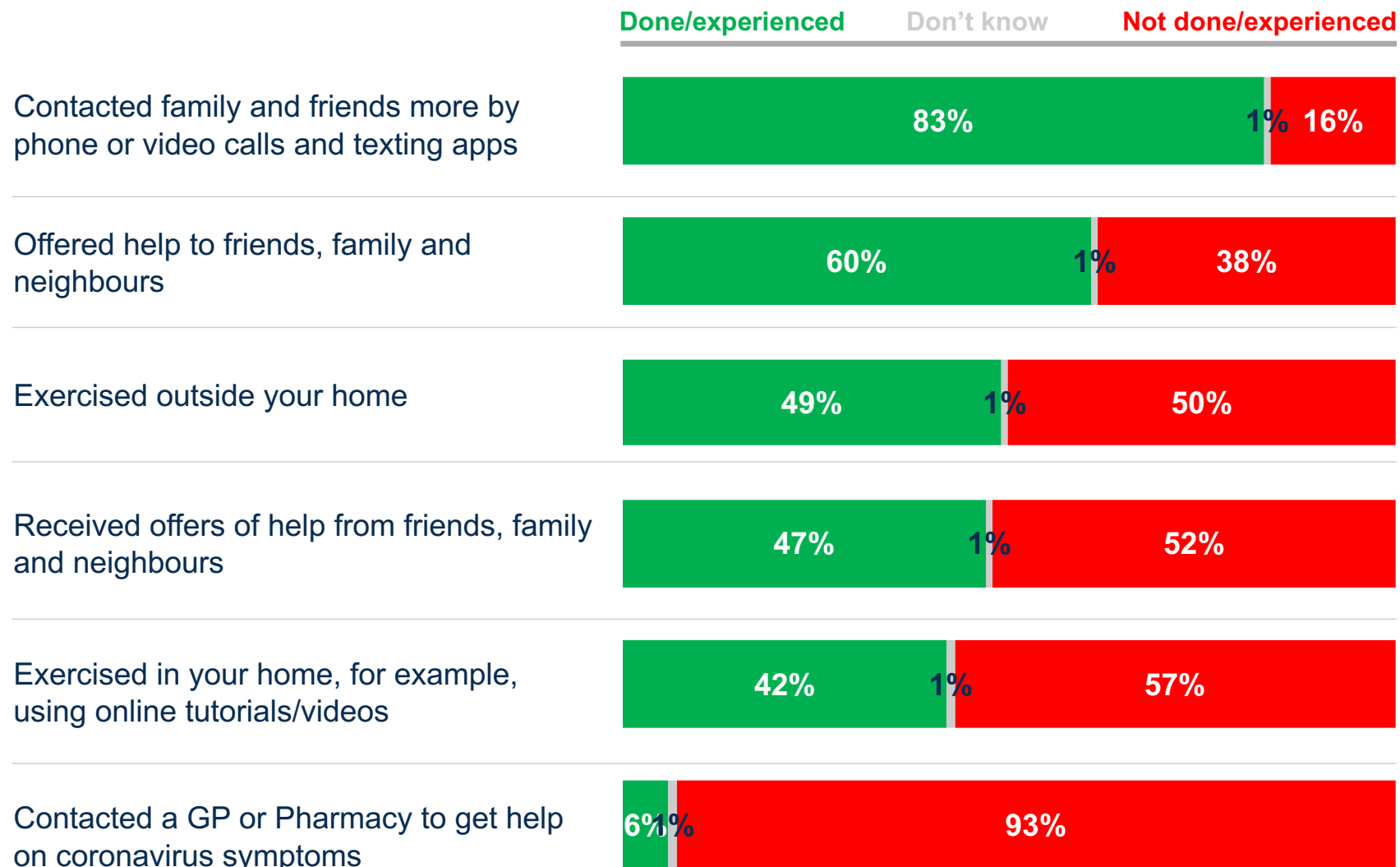
3. Behaviours: how we're acting in the crisis

However, people are supporting each other more during this time...

There have been more positive impacts: **60% have offered help to friends, family and neighbours**, while 47% say they've received such help.

And people are finding new ways to stay in touch and exercise.

Since the Prime Minister announced the measures on 23 March, have you personally done or experienced any of the following?



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

People are also volunteering to help others throughout the crisis. **6% say they've signed up to the NHS Volunteer Responders scheme, and 11% say they're planning to.**

Have you signed up for the official “NHS Volunteer Responders” scheme set up to help with the coronavirus, or not?



5% have also volunteered formally with another organisation to help people, while **22% say they've helped others on an informal basis.**

Have you volunteered formally with another organisation to support people during the coronavirus crisis, or have you helped others on an informal basis, or not?



4. **Attitudes:** views of the government's response

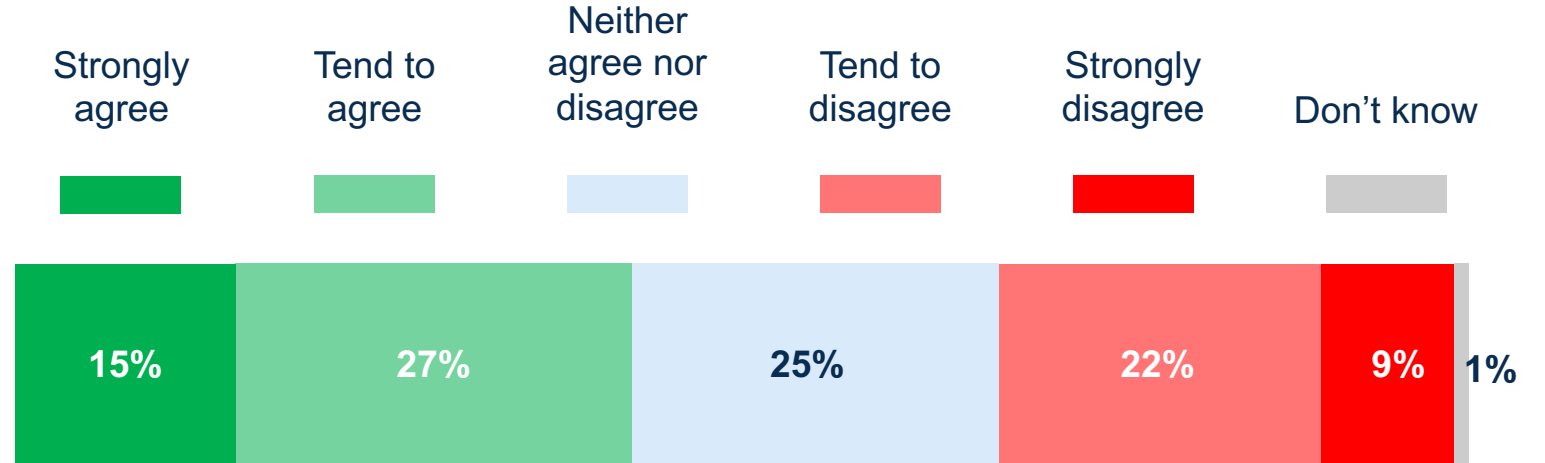
There is some uncertainty about the government's overall strategy, and scepticism about the coherence and speed of its response...

People are sceptical about the **government's overall response**, with **42% agreeing it has been confused and inconsistent**.

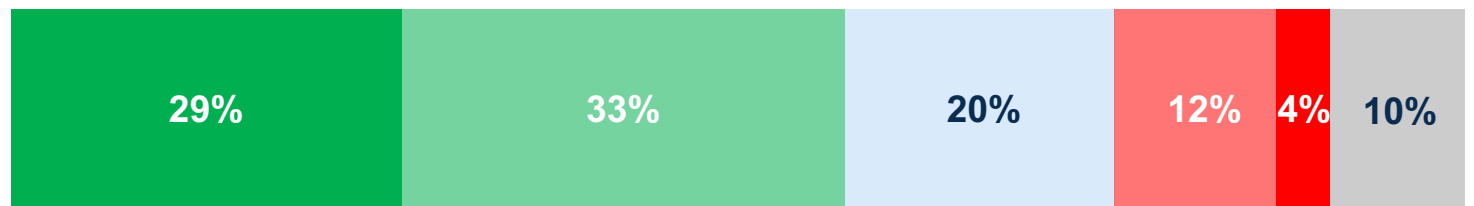
Only 25% of Conservative supporters agree, compared with 58% of Labour supporters, and 75% of those who don't trust government information.

And many more people agree (67%) than disagree (16%) that the government acted too slowly to control the spread of coronavirus. Labour supporters (77%) are more more likely than Conservative supporters (48%) to think this.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree that...
The government's response to the coronavirus has been confused and inconsistent



The government acted too slowly to control the spread of coronavirus



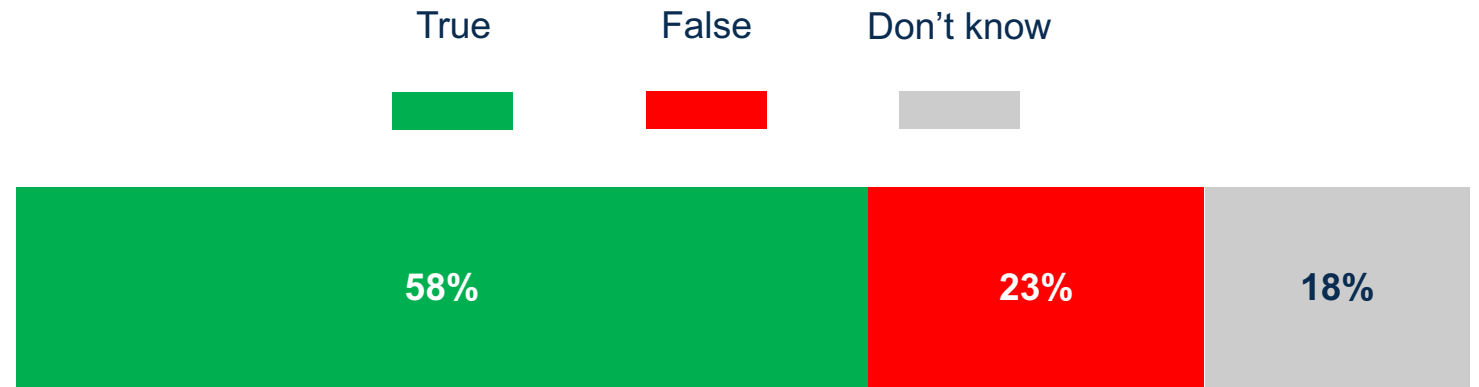
58% think the government's original plan was for the public to develop "herd immunity" to coronavirus.

Labour supporters are more likely to believe the government was aiming for herd immunity (67%), but 56% of Conservative supporters also believe this was the original plan

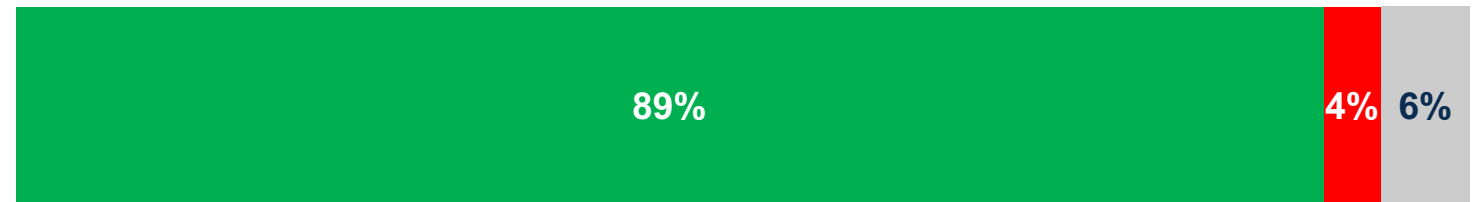
89% of the public also believe that the government's plan was to try to slow the number of cases to ease the burden on the NHS.

Are the following statements true or false?

The UK government's original plan was for a large proportion of the public to catch coronavirus so that they would be immune to it in future outbreaks (so-called "herd immunity")



The UK government has been trying to slow down the number of cases of coronavirus so that we don't overstretch the NHS



4. **Attitudes:** views of the government's response

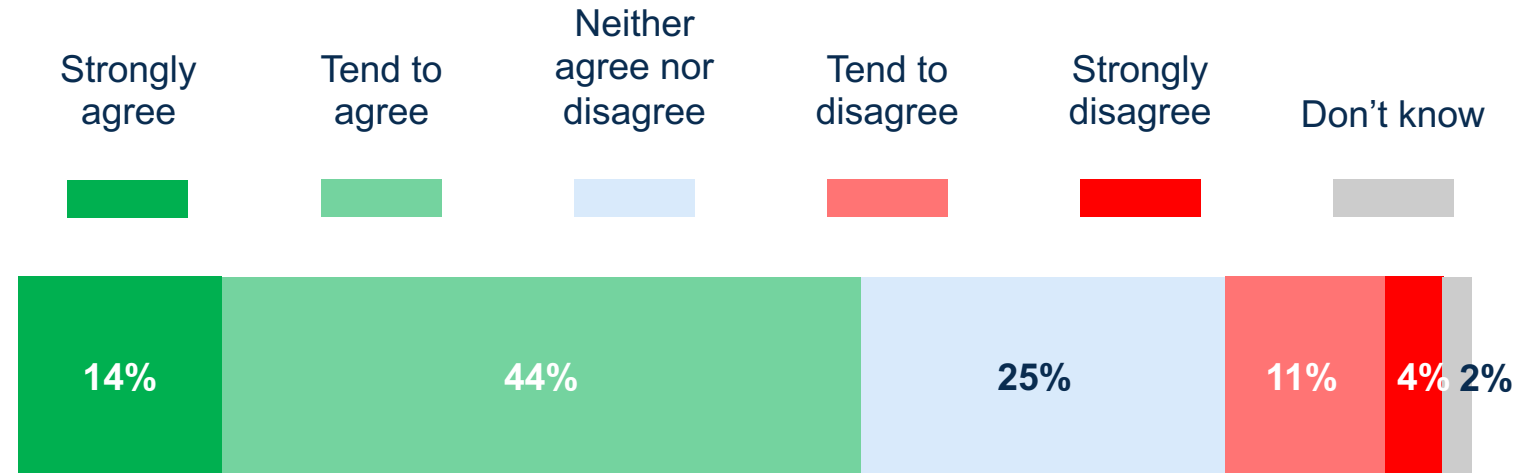
But, more positively for the government, most people think it is responding well to the shifting situation, and there is near-universal support for the current measures it has introduced, with very few thinking that “too much fuss” is being made – in stark contrast to the H1N1v/swine flu pandemic in 2009/10...

However, the public are more positive when it comes to how the government has modified its strategy throughout the crisis.

A majority – 58% – think the government’s plan has adapted well to the changing scientific information and situation.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following?

The government’s plan has adapted well to the changing scientific information and situation



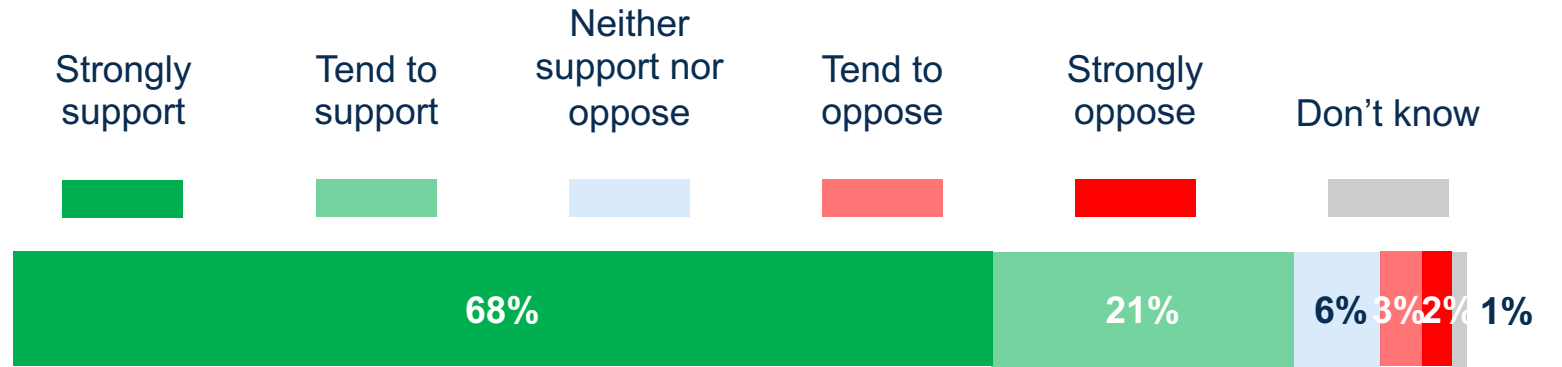
The public are much more clearly supportive of the lockdown measures that the government has introduced as part of its efforts to get the virus under control, with **89% saying they strongly (68%) or tend to (21%) support them.**

Only 12% of people think too much fuss is being made about coronavirus, while **75% disagree.**

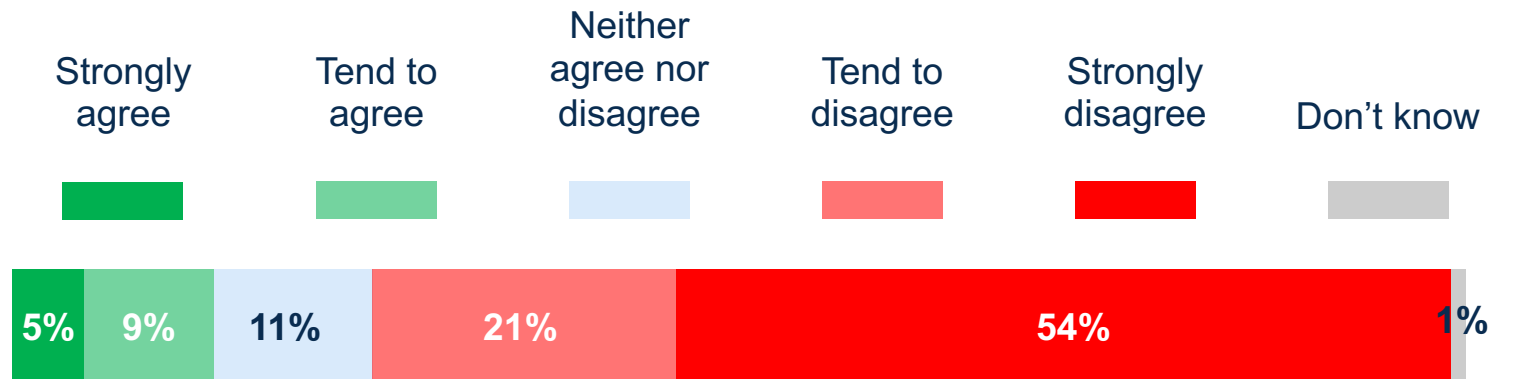
This is in stark contrast with responses to the same question asked during the H1N1v/swine flu pandemic, when **55% agreed there was “too much fuss”**.

As you may know, the Prime Minister announced a range of measures on 23rd March, where people have been asked to remain at home except for a small number of exceptions (described by some as a “lockdown”).

To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose these measures?



To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree that too much fuss is being made about the risk of coronavirus



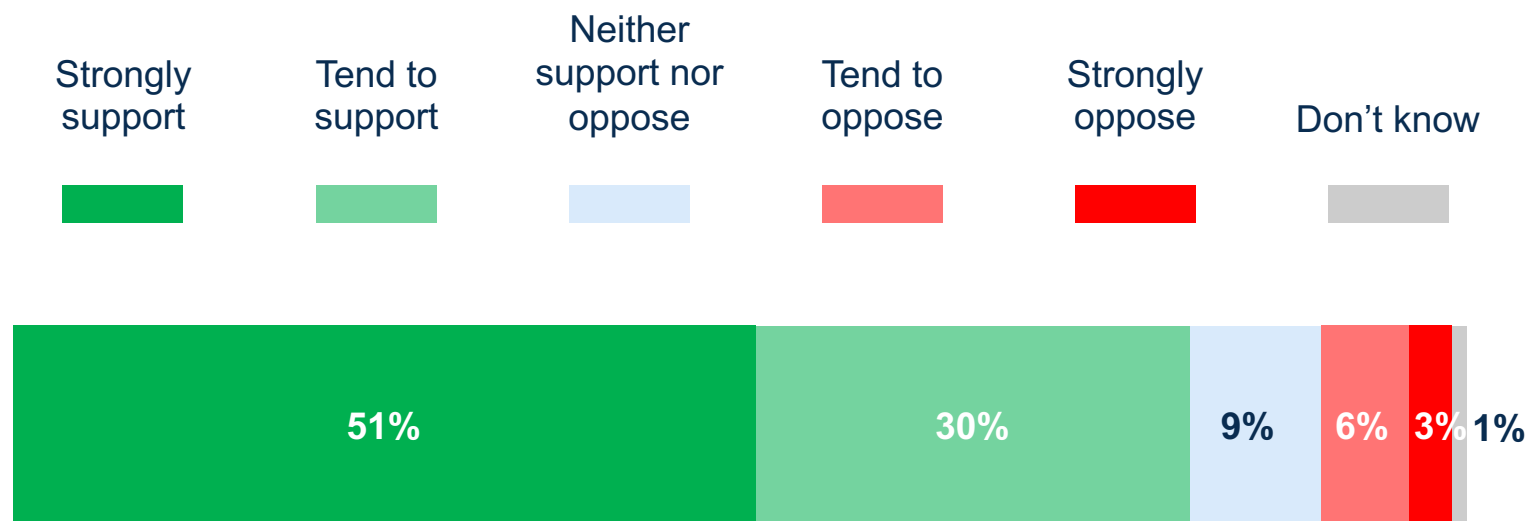
Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

In line with their approval of the lockdown measures, **the public are also strongly supportive of the powers police are being given to enforce these restrictions.**

81% either strongly support or tend to support these powers (although we have seen that the public generally do not have a full understanding of what they include).

The police have been given additional powers to enforce these “lockdown” measures.

To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the police being given powers to enforce these measures?

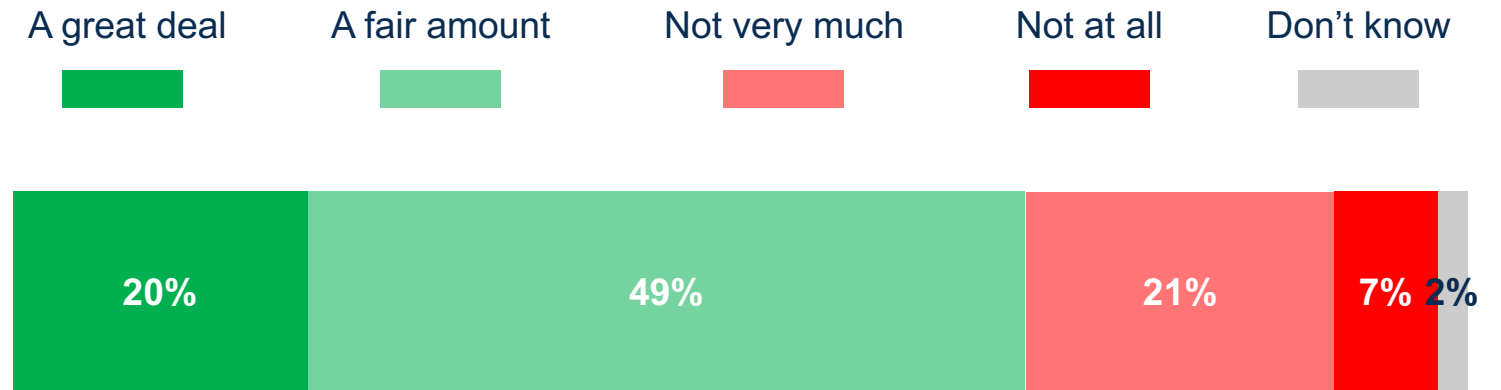


The public have relatively high levels of trust in the government's ability to control the spread of coronavirus, with **69%** saying they trust it a great deal or a fair amount, although only 20% say a great deal

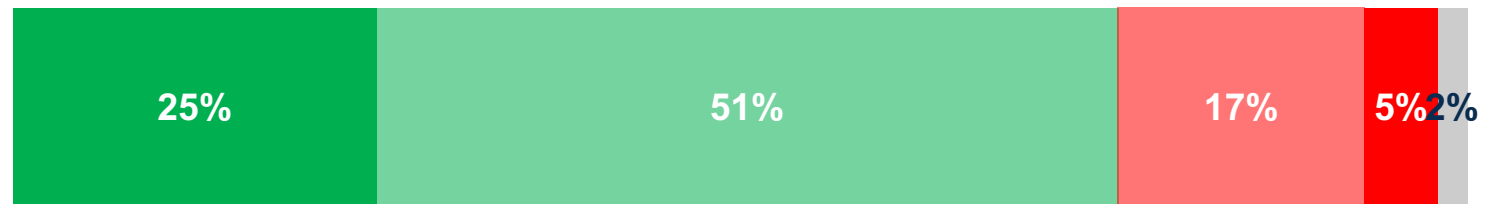
Similarly, **76%** say they trust the information the government is providing, but only 25% say they trust it a great deal

To what extent, if at all, do you trust...

...the government to control the spread of the coronavirus?

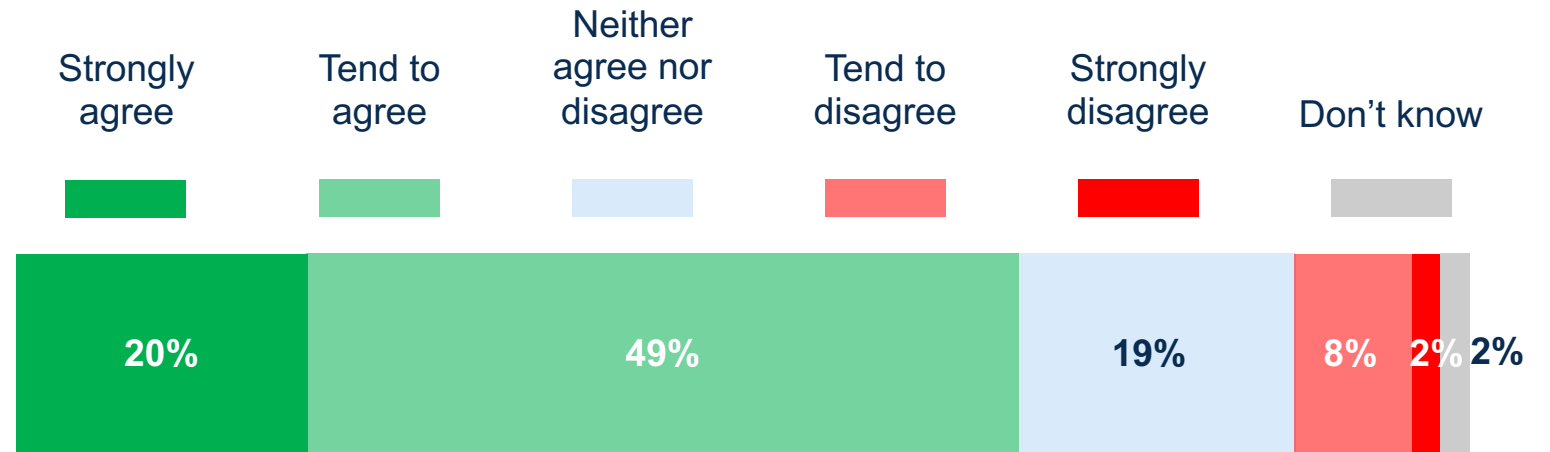


... the information provided by government on the coronavirus?

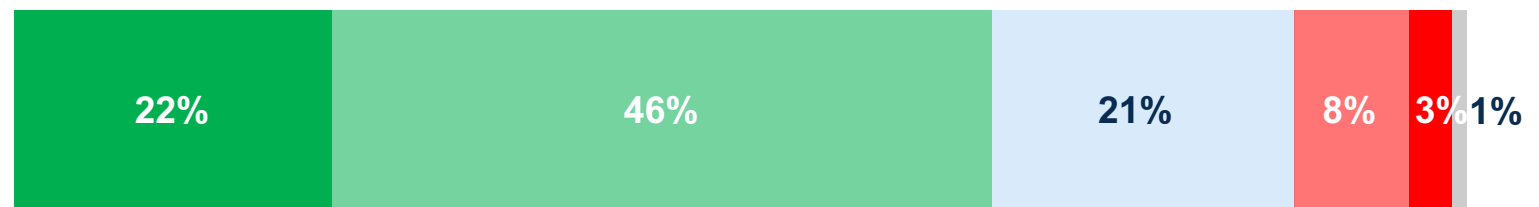


When it comes to the government's information campaign, **68% think the communication and advice has been helpful**, and **69% think the advice has been effective** – although only around one in five strongly agree.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following...
...the government's advice on how to protect yourself and others has been effective



...I have found the communication and advice from the government helpful

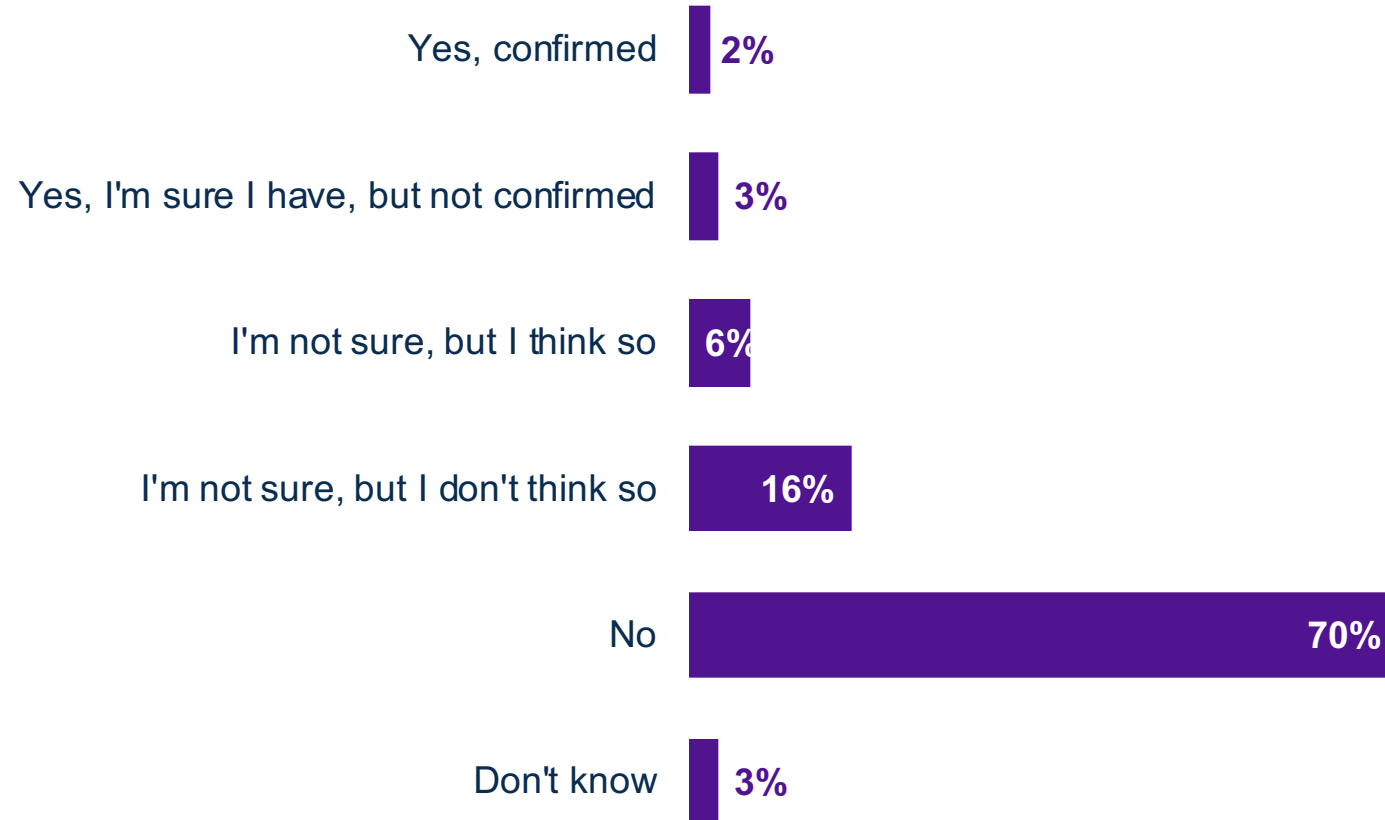


5. Experience of coronavirus

There is clearly uncertainty about whether people have had coronavirus or not, and fear of the consequences...

11% of the public say they think they've had the virus, and almost a quarter of the public – 22% – are unsure whether they have had coronavirus or not.

Do you have, or have you had, the coronavirus?



Similarly, 9% think other members of their household have had the virus, and 18% are unsure whether other members of their household have had it.

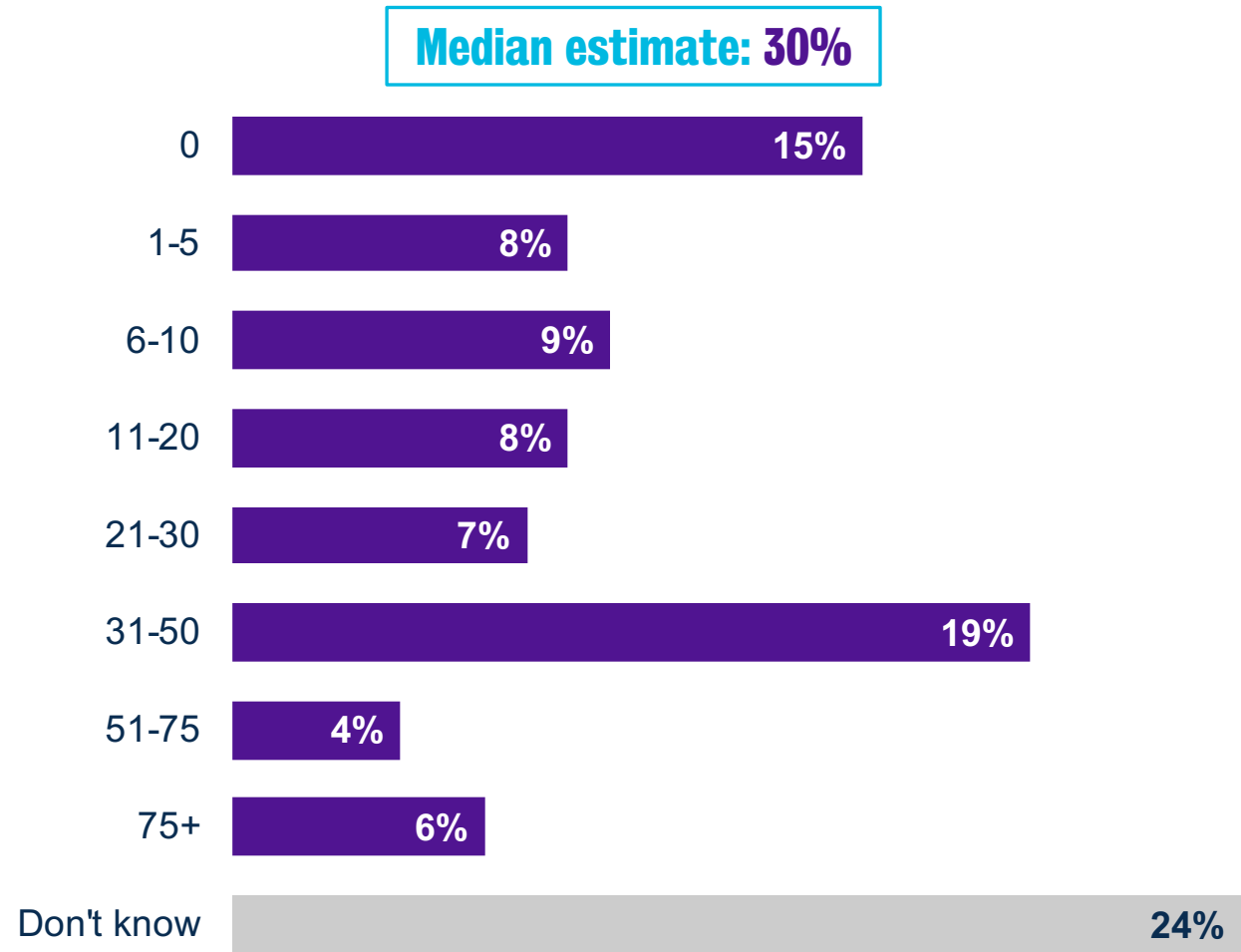
Do any of the other members of your household have, or have they had, the coronavirus?



The average person thinks they have a 30% chance of contracting coronavirus in the next month.

What do you think your personal chance of catching the coronavirus is in the next month?

0 means there is no possibility you will and 100 means you definitely will

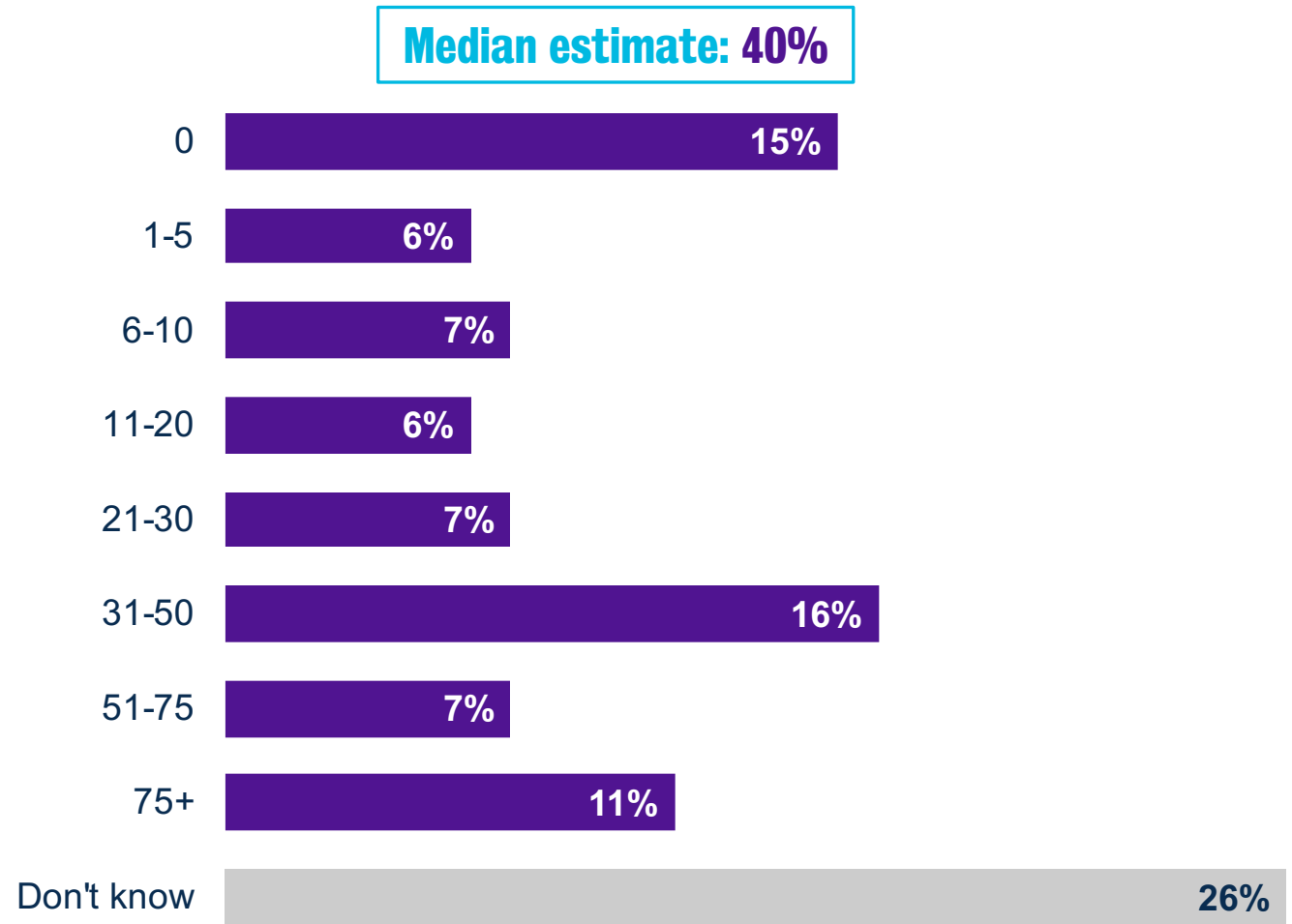


Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

And the average person puts their chances of getting the virus by the end of the year at 40%.

What do you think your personal chance of catching the coronavirus is by the end of this year?

0 means there is no possibility you will and 100 means you definitely will

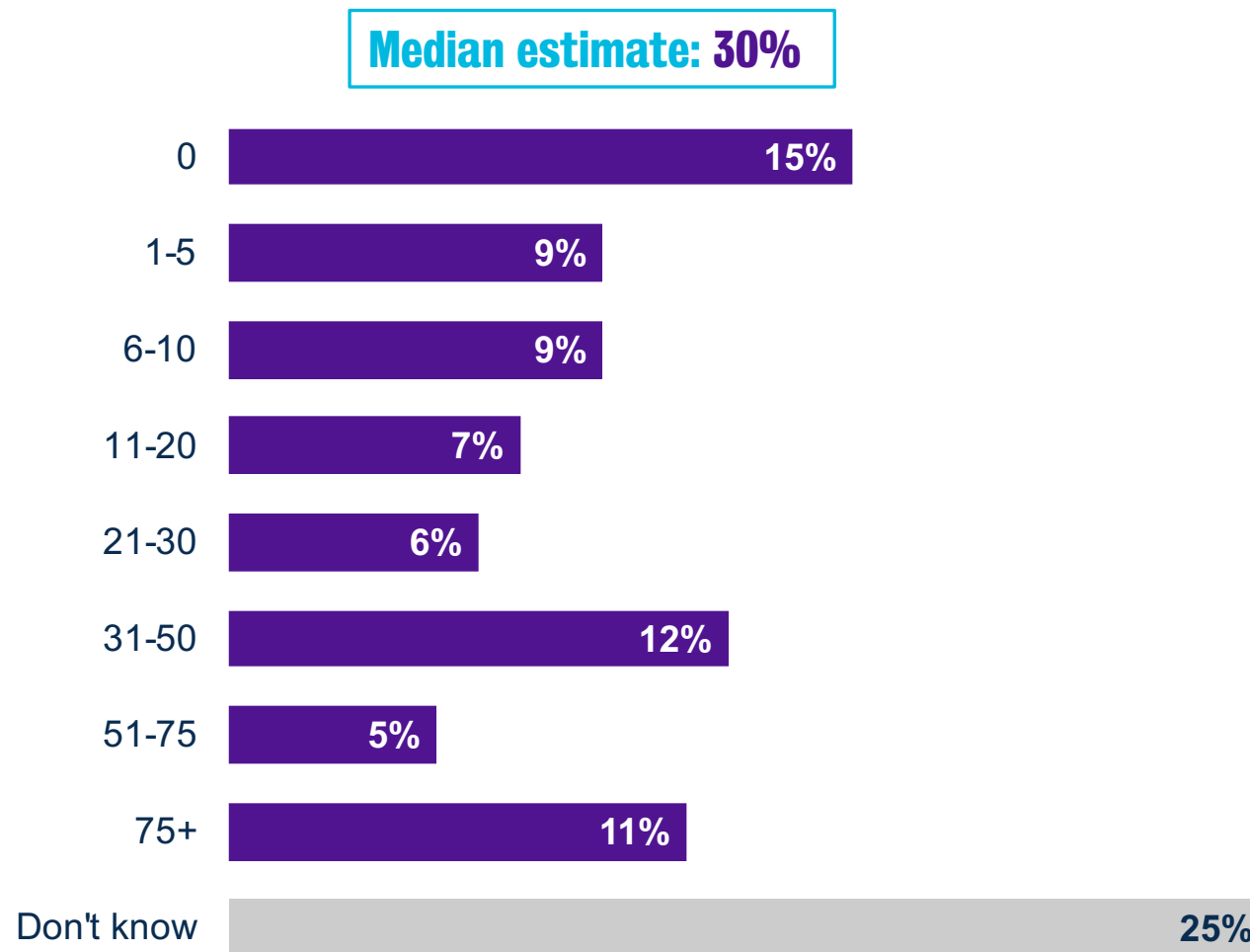


Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

On average, people think there is a 30% chance they will need hospital treatment if they catch coronavirus.

There are no data on the reality of hospitalisation rates at this stage, but for example, an Imperial College London model assumed a hospitalisation rate of 4.4% in the UK, drawing on early data from other countries.

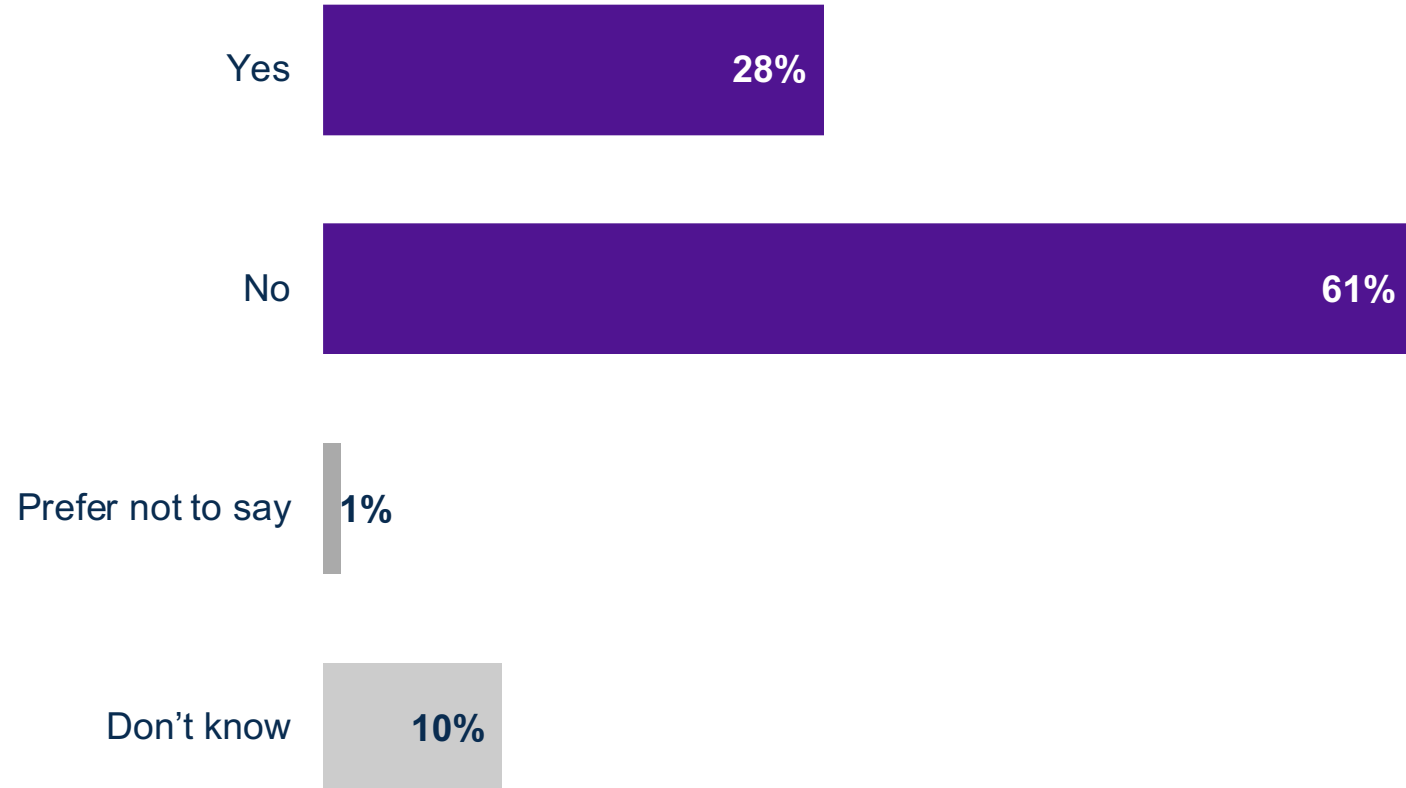
And if you do catch coronavirus, what do you think your chances of needing hospital treatment are? Again use a scale where 0 means there is no possibility you will, and 100 means you definitely will.



Base: 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

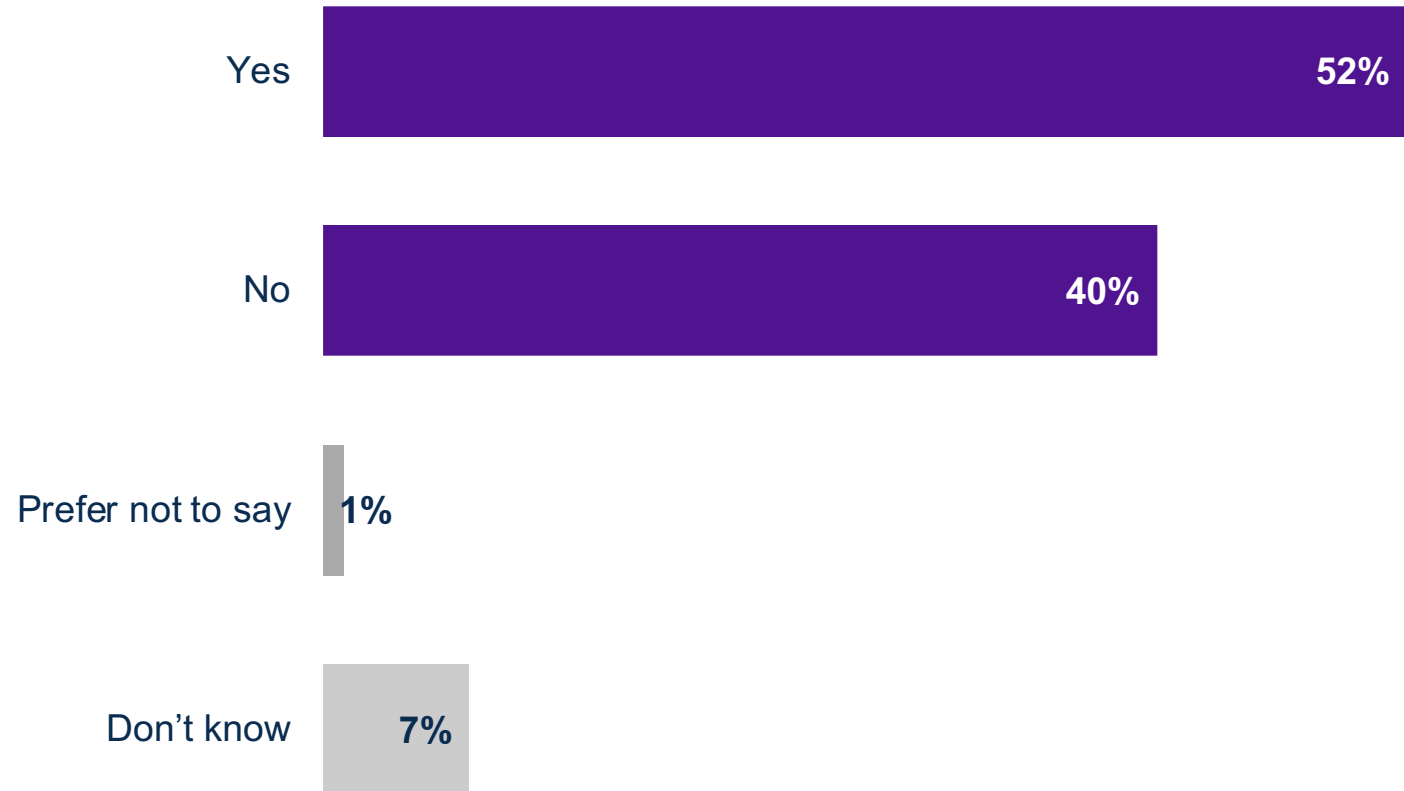
Nearly three in 10 think they have an illness or condition that puts them at a higher risk of experiencing serious negative effects from coronavirus.

As far as you know, do you have an illness or condition that would make you particularly susceptible to serious effects from coronavirus, or not?



And the people are significantly more likely to think close family members or friends are particularly susceptible to coronavirus – half the public (52%) think this is the case.

As far as you know, do any of your close family or friends have an illness or condition that would make them particularly susceptible to serious effects from coronavirus?



Annex – survey technical details

The research was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of King's College London.

Ipsos MORI interviewed a sample of 2,250 adults aged 16-75 in the United Kingdom using its online i:omnibus between 1st and 3rd April 2020. Data has been weighted to the known offline population proportions for age within gender, government office region, working status, social grade and education. All surveys are subject to a range of potential sources of error.

Annex – data sources and further information

Slide 8: What percentage of people in the UK with the coronavirus...?

Correct answer: Approximately 80% of laboratory confirmed patients have had mild to moderate disease, which includes non-pneumonia and pneumonia cases, 13.8% have severe disease (dyspnea, respiratory frequency ≥ 30 /minute, blood oxygen saturation $\leq 93\%$, PaO₂/FiO₂ ratio 50% of the lung field within 24-48 hours) and 6.1% are critical (respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiple organ dysfunction/failure).

Source: [World Health Organisation](#)

Slide 9: How many days do you think it is currently taking for the number of confirmed deaths to double in the UK?

Correct answer: Doubling every 3 days at time of survey.

Source: [Our World in Data](#) analysis of [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) data

Slide 10: Among the UK population as a whole, how much more or less likely are people infected with either to die from coronavirus or seasonal flu, or do you think there is no difference?

There are currently a range of estimates for how deadly coronavirus is. According to [Imperial College London](#), the chances of dying from a coronavirus infection are between 0.5% and 1%. However, the World Health Organisation says that the true mortality of Covid-19 will take some time to fully understand, but ranges between 3% and 4% – higher than for seasonal influenza, which is usually below 0.1%

Source: [FullFact](#): “true mortality of Covid-19 will take some time to fully understand’. Based on current data, the crude mortality rate (the number of reported deaths divided by the reported cases) is between 3-4%—although the actual rate, when including mild cases where people do not get diagnosed, is likely to be lower. Globally, for seasonal influenza, the WHO estimates the mortality rate is usually below 0.1%.”

Annex

Slide 11: Among the UK population as a whole, do you think the coronavirus is more contagious, seasonal flu is more contagious, or do you think they are about the same?

According to WHO, each person with Covid-19 infects an average of between two and 2.5 other people with the virus. But they stress: “estimates for both COVID-19 and influenza viruses are very context and time-specific, making direct comparisons more difficult.” The average patient spreads the flu virus to about 1.3 others.

Sources: [World Health Organisation](#) and [BMC Infectious Diseases](#)

Slide 13: Which are official recommendations from the government and which are not?

Source: [UK government](#)

Slide 14: Are the following statements true or false?

“Coronavirus was probably created in a laboratory”

False: According to a paper published in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#), genetic evidence and epidemiological information “implicates a bat-origin virus infecting unidentified animal species sold in China’s live-animal markets.” And a [paper currently under peer review](#) found that SARS-CoV-2 is “not a laboratory construct nor a purposefully manipulated virus.”

“Most people in the UK have already had coronavirus without realising it”

False: While modelling by researchers from the University of Oxford’s Evolutionary Ecology of Infectious Disease group suggested that as much as half of the UK population may already have infected far more, these findings [have been challenged by other scientists](#).

Annex

“Coronavirus can last on some surfaces for up to seven days”

False: Within a controlled laboratory setting, it has been found to be still detectable on copper for up to four hours, on cardboard for up to 24 hours, and on plastic and steel for up to 72 hours.

Source: [New England Journal of Medicine](#)

“The NHS recommends that you should wear a face mask when you are out, even if you do not have coronavirus”

False: The NHS does not include wearing face masks in its recommendations to the public

Source: [NHS](#)

“Sanitising hand gels are more effective at protecting you from coronavirus than washing your hands with soap and water”

False: Soap and water are more effective than hand sanitizers at removing certain kinds of germs

Source: [Centers for Disease Control](#)

“Pets can transmit coronavirus”

False: While there has been one instance of a dog being infected in Hong Kong, to date, there is no evidence that a dog, cat or any pet can transmit COVID-19, which is mainly spread through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks.

Source: [World Health Organisation](#)

Annex

Slide 15: If you live in a household with others, and you develop symptoms of the coronavirus, which one, if any, of these actions are you recommended to take?

Correct answer: The infected person must stay at home until 7 days after they first have symptoms, and other household members who don't get symptoms must stay at home for 14 days after the infected person gets symptoms

Source: [NHS](#)

Slide 16: What powers, if any, do the police have to enforce the measures and help contain the spread of the disease?

Correct answer: In England, and probably the rest of the UK, all are true except issuing police caution.

THE POLICY INSTITUTE

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