

**THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE**

KING'S
College
LONDON

Getting used to life under lockdown? Coronavirus in the UK

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Introduction

This report includes findings from a survey of 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75 by [King's College London](#) in partnership with [Ipsos MORI](#), conducted on 20-22 May. Some of these results are compared with a similar survey conducted on 1-3 April.

It finds that, compared with six weeks ago, the public are still complying with the measures to control the spread of coronavirus to a very high degree, even going beyond the latest advice by not leaving their homes at all for long periods, with children not leaving for even longer. However, there has been a marked increase in people who have now had friends or family visit them.

The general high compliance reflects the fact that the public still overwhelmingly put the need to limit the health impacts of coronavirus over the need to limit other wider effects, such as negative impacts to the economy. This may be because the proportion of people who expect short term financial difficulties has fallen slightly, while popular estimates of hospitalisation and death rates remain several times higher than research would suggest.

Many also appear to be getting used to the lockdown, with a sizeable increase in those saying it will not become extremely difficult to cope with, people more likely to say they have enjoyed aspects of the lockdown than not, and fewer people finding Covid-19 stressful than in early April.

But there are still many who are suffering: the proportion of people who say they have drunk more than normal has increased significantly, half are depressed or anxious, half have put on weight, and over a third have postponed seeking medical advice for conditions unrelated to coronavirus. Three in 10 think that they are likely to lose their jobs, and the same number have already seen their income fall.

And there is a growing realisation that we may be living like this for a very long time, as more people now think we won't return to normal for two years or more, and more expect a vaccine to be over two years away.

How society continues in these circumstances appears fraught with potential tensions, particularly over education, as half the public think it would be acceptable for children to be home-schooled over the very long term.

Compliance with the lockdown measures is still very high – and despite the UK government now advising people to “stay alert”, many are still “staying home”

While the restrictions were eased on 10 May, with people in England being allowed to go outside as many times as they like, huge proportions of the public – including children – are still not leaving their home for significant periods.

And although levels of compliance are generally unchanged since early April, more people have broken the rules to have friends or family visit them.

41% of people had not left their home at all on five or more of the previous seven days, indicating the seriousness with which people are still treating the crisis.

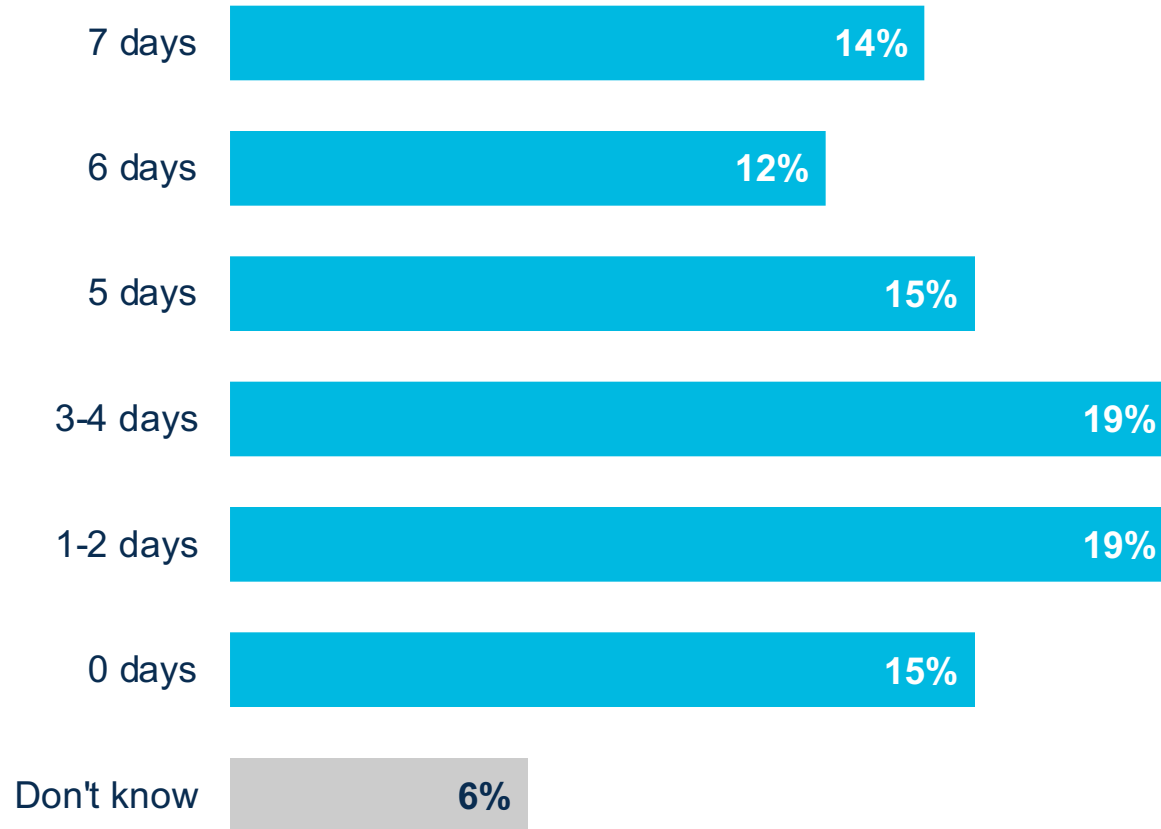
1 in 7 people (14%) did not leave their home once in the previous week.

The overwhelming majority of the public – 4 in 5 people (79%) – had not left their home at all on at least one day over the previous week.

Just 15% had left their home every day over the same period.

Thinking about the last 7 days, on how many days did...

...you not leave your home at all?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

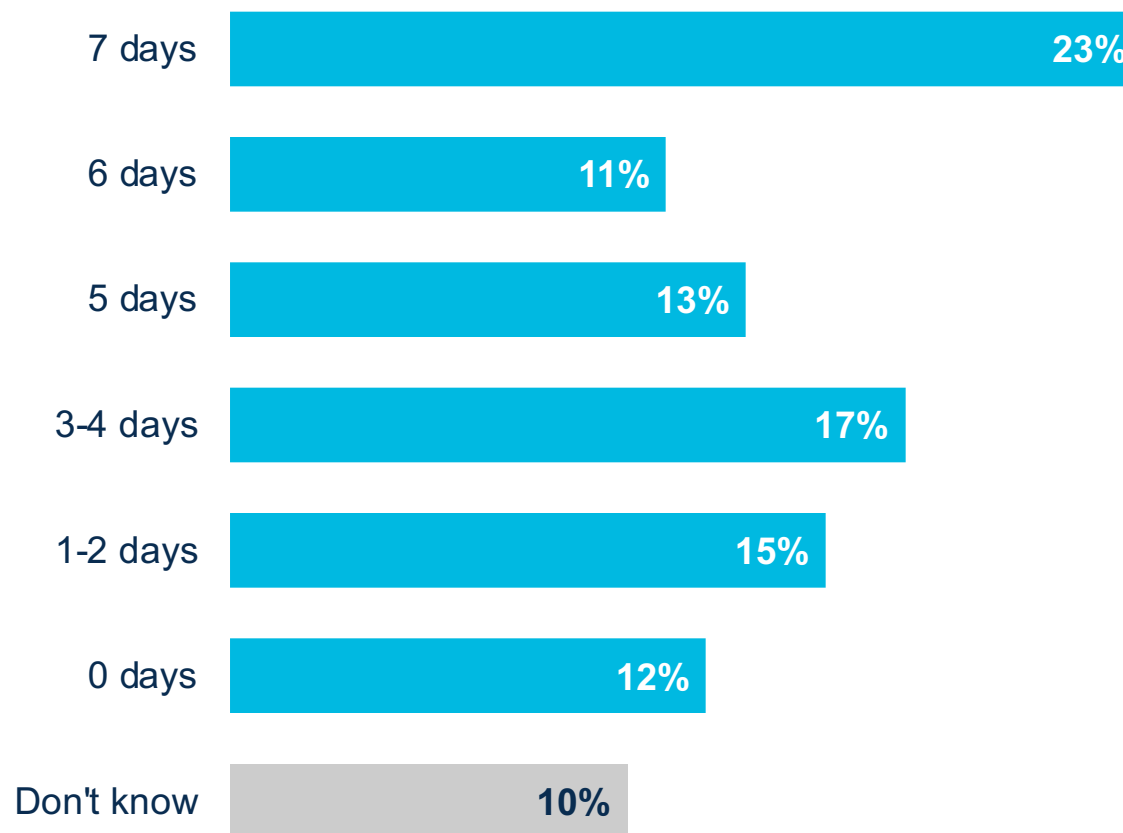
The proportion of parents who say their **children did not leave their home once over the previous week** is significantly higher, at a **quarter (23%)**.

46% said their children hadn't left their home at all on **five or more of the last seven days**.

4 in 5 children (78%) had not left their home on at least one day in the previous week, according to their parents.

Thinking about the last 7 days, on how many days did...

...your children not leave your home at all?

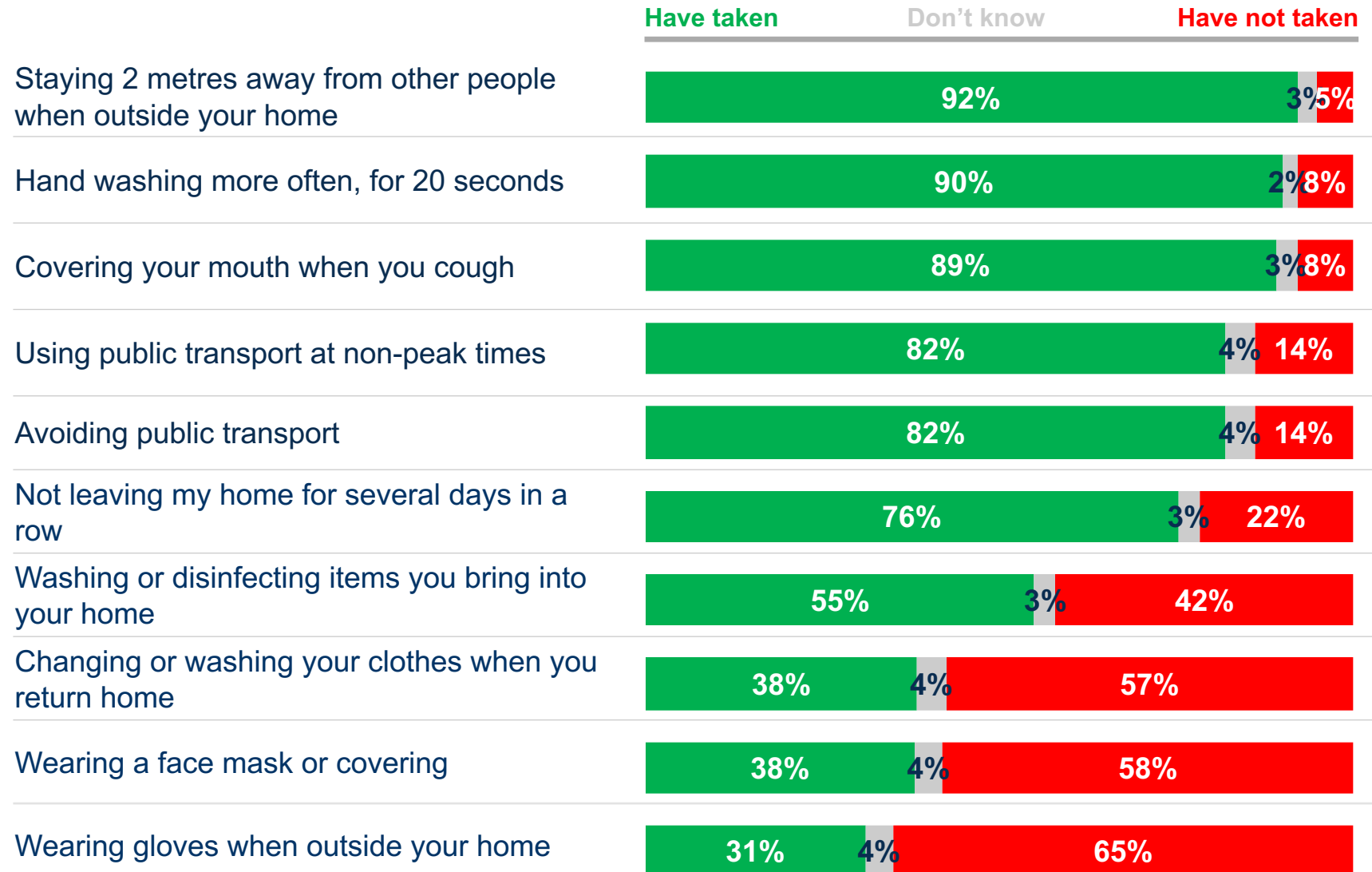


The public still report extremely high levels of compliance with official guidance.

Many are also taking steps that are **not part of the government's advice**, such as:

- Washing or disinfecting items they bring home (55%).
- Changing or washing clothes when they return home (38%).
- Wearing a face mask or covering (38%), or wearing gloves outside (31%).

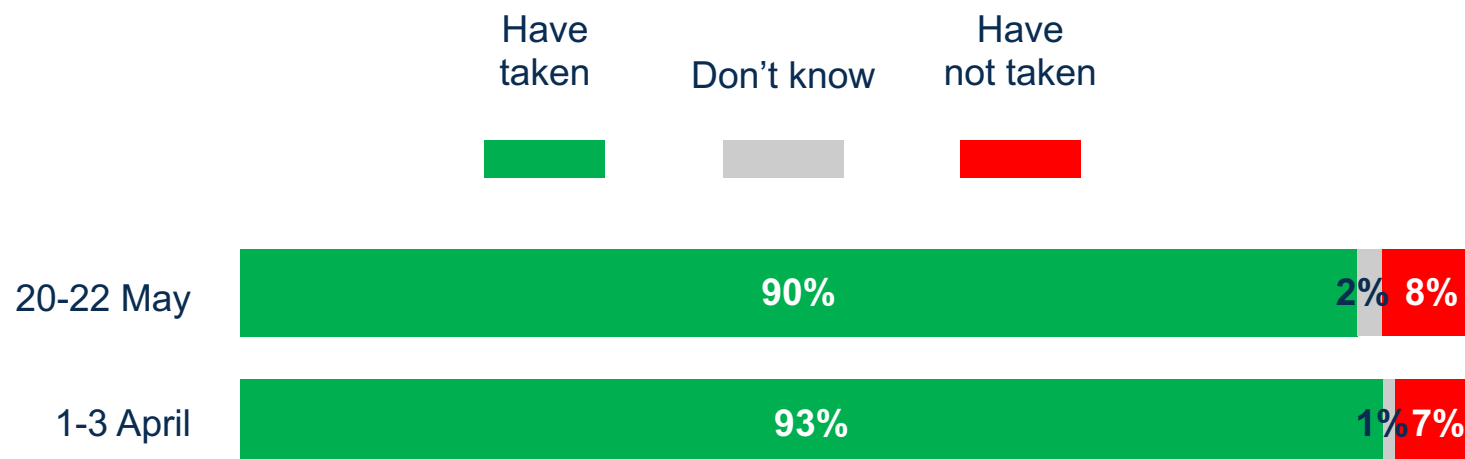
Which of the following measures, if any, have you personally taken because you believe they may prevent the spread of coronavirus?



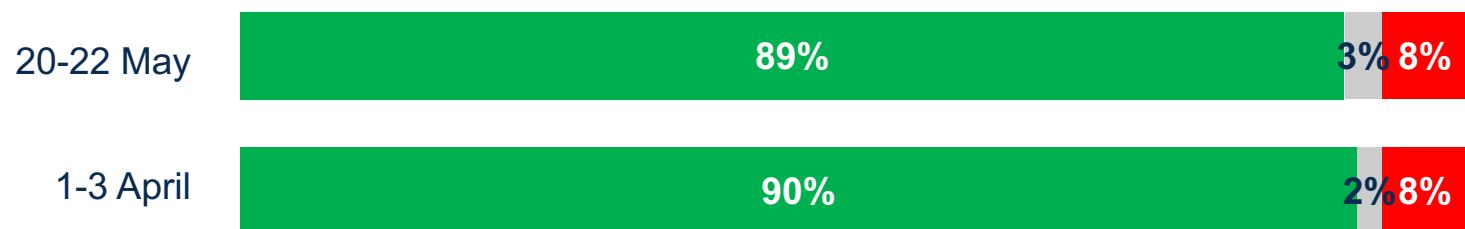
Compliance with key recommended measures such as hand washing and covering your mouth when you cough is virtually unchanged from the beginning of April, at around 90%.

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

Hand washing more often, for 20 seconds



Covering your mouth when you cough

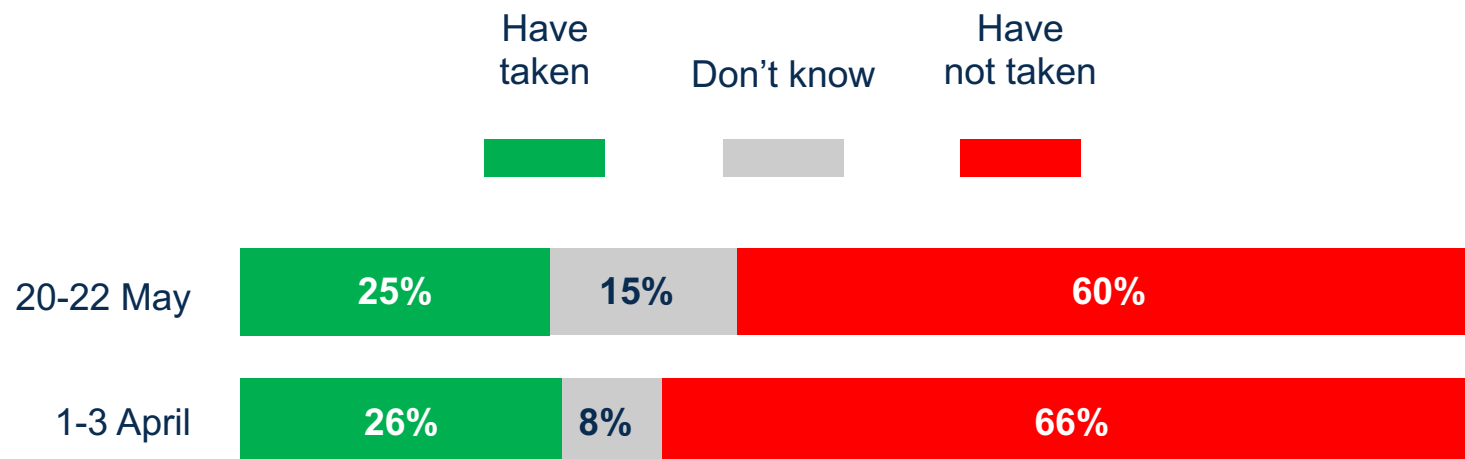


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

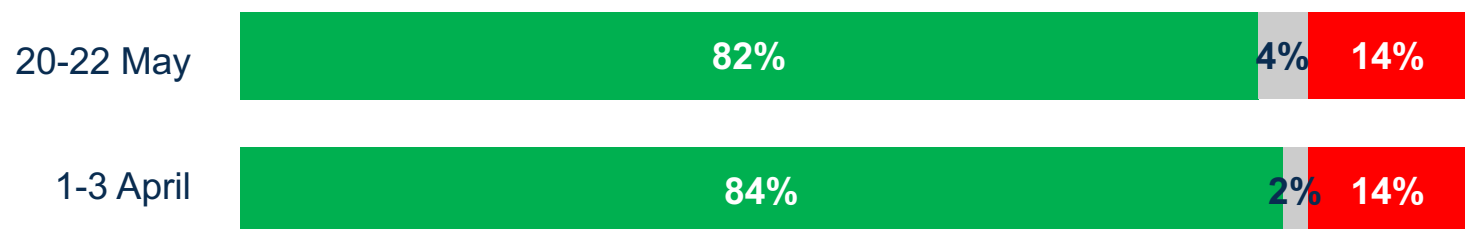
Similar proportions of people say they are still avoiding using public transport where possible.

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

Using public transport at non-peak times



Avoiding public transport

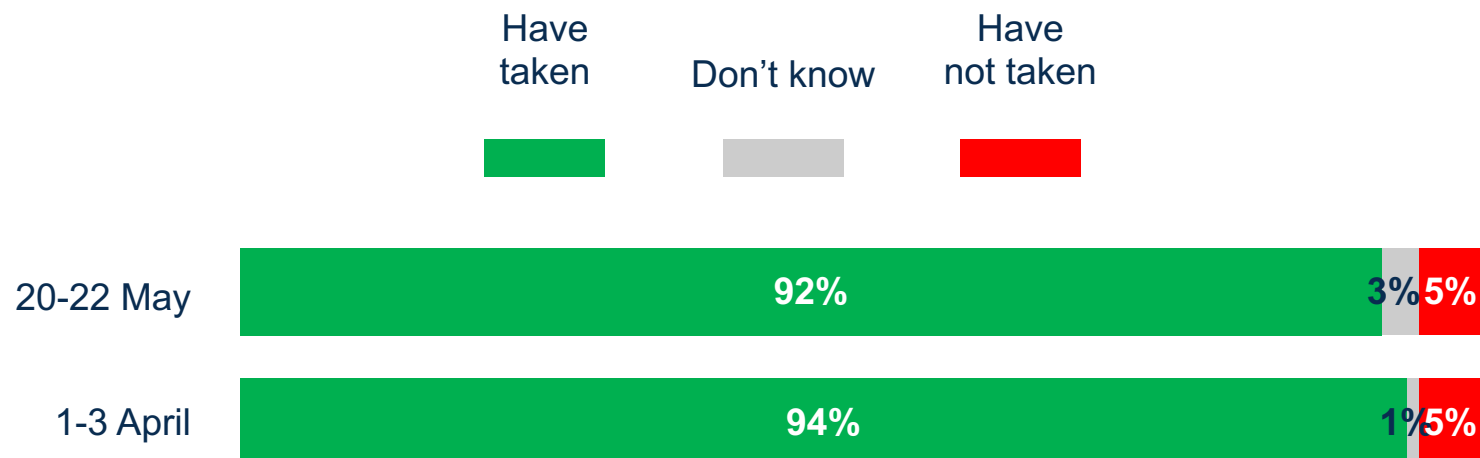


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

The public still report following the 2-metre distance rule and not going out with coronavirus symptoms to the same extent as before.

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

Staying 2 metres away from other people when outside your home



Gone to work or outside despite having symptoms that could be coronavirus



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

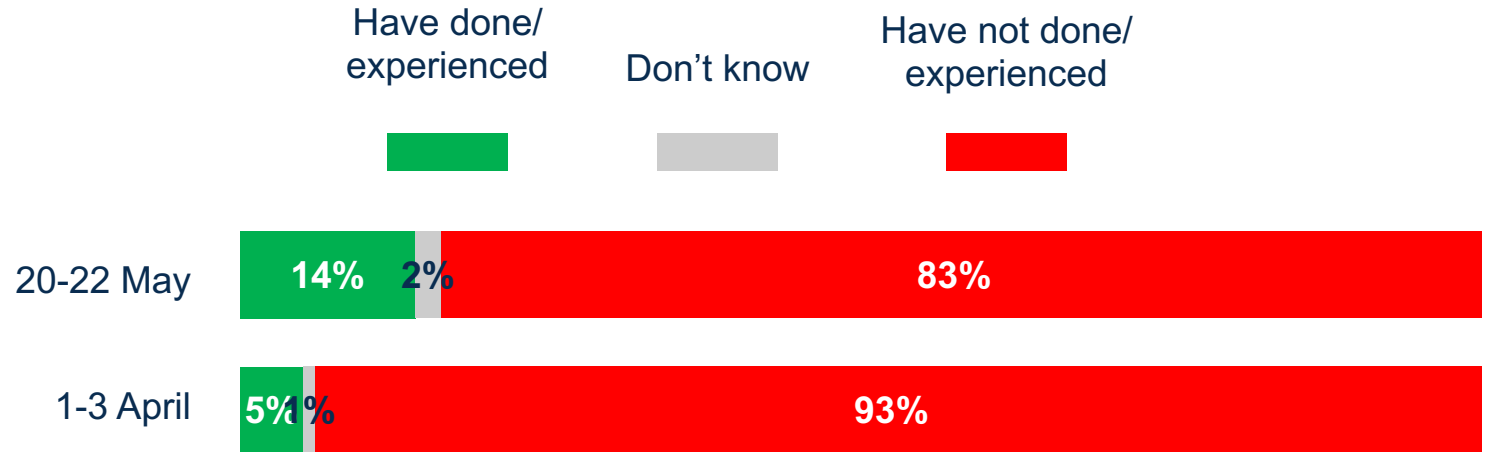
But despite general continued compliance, **more people report breaking the rules by having friends or family visit them at home.**

5% had done this at the beginning of April, but this has now **almost tripled, to 14%.**

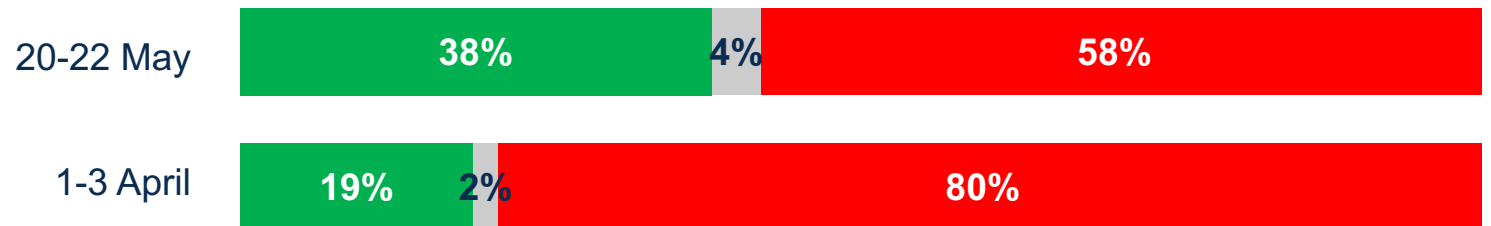
A potentially more beneficial change is the **proportion of people now wearing a face mask or covering, which has doubled from 19% in early April to 38% at the time of this most recent survey.**

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

Had friends or family visit you at home



Wearing a face mask



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Continued high compliance with the lockdown reflects a clear sense that the risk to health is still the top priority – for the country and individually

People see increased deaths due to both Covid-19 and fewer healthcare resources in general as the most serious problems, ahead of the economic impact of lockdown or the impact on young people's education.

There has also been an increase in the public's expectations of being hospitalised due to coronavirus, and their perception of the risk of catching or dying from the virus is unchanged.

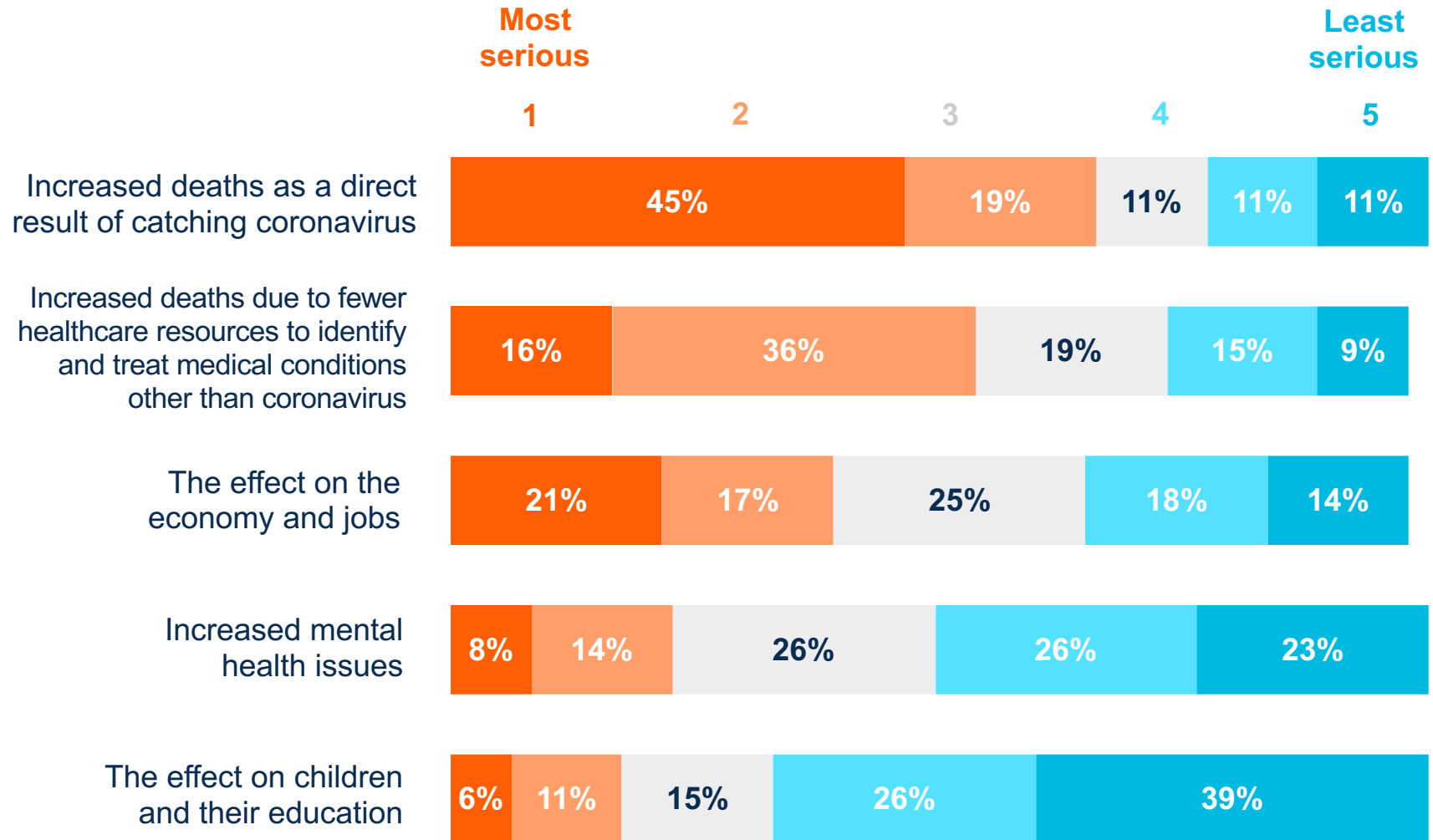
And while we won't know for certain what the real chances of dying from coronavirus are for some time, it seems likely that the public are still significantly overestimating them.

When presented problems stemming from Covid-19, **64%** of the public rank **increased deaths from the virus** as one of the two most serious threats, and **45%** rank it as the most serious.

Increased deaths from other conditions are seen as the second-biggest problem, with **52%** saying this is one of the two most serious problems.

38% say the impact on the **economy and jobs** is a serious problem, with the public ranking it third in terms of overall seriousness.

Looking at these effects from the coronavirus crisis, please could you rank them in order of how serious a problem you think each is for the country, where 1 is the most serious, and 5 is the least serious?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

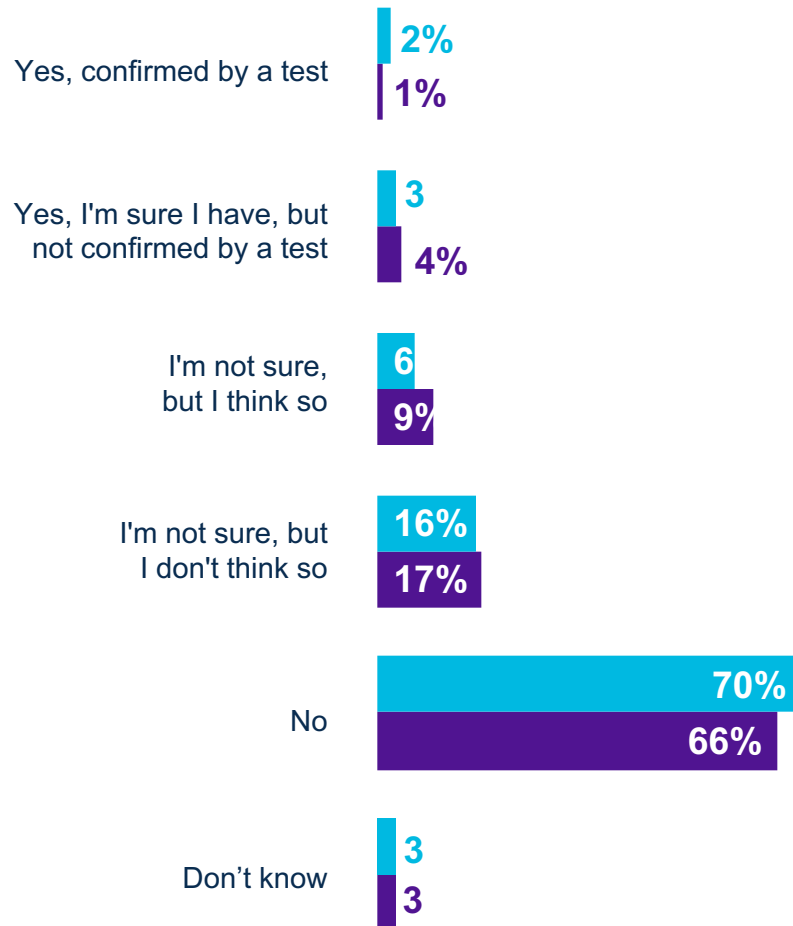
Greater concern about the future health impacts of the virus could reflect the fact that the **vast majority of people (83%) still think they have not had Covid-19.**

And 85% of people think their family members or housemates have not had the virus, almost the same proportion as at the beginning of April.

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

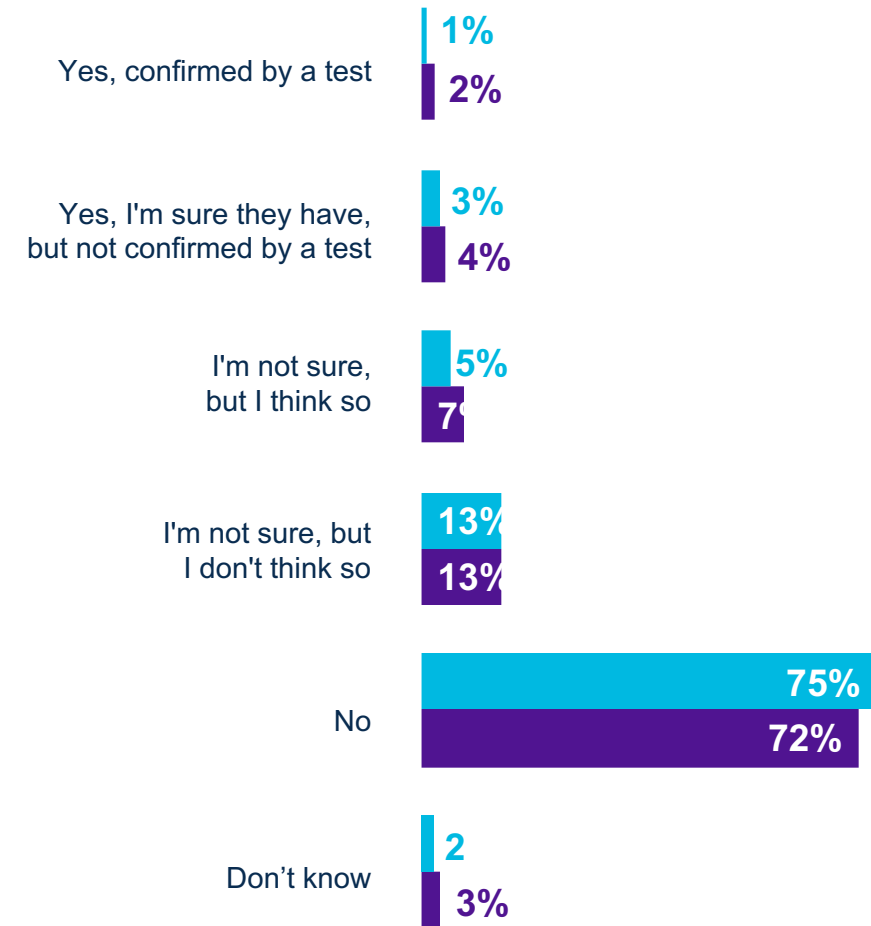
■ 1-3 April ■ 20-22 May

Note: 20-22 May question specified confirmation **by a test**, but 1-3 April question did not



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

■ 1-3 April ■ 20-22 May

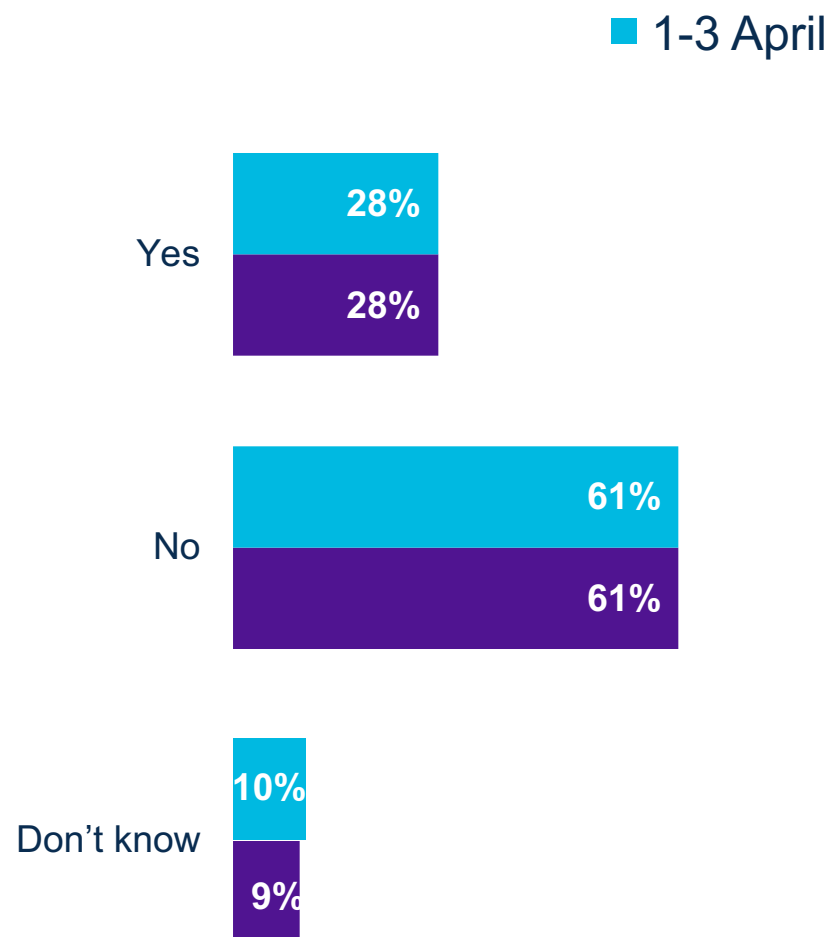


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

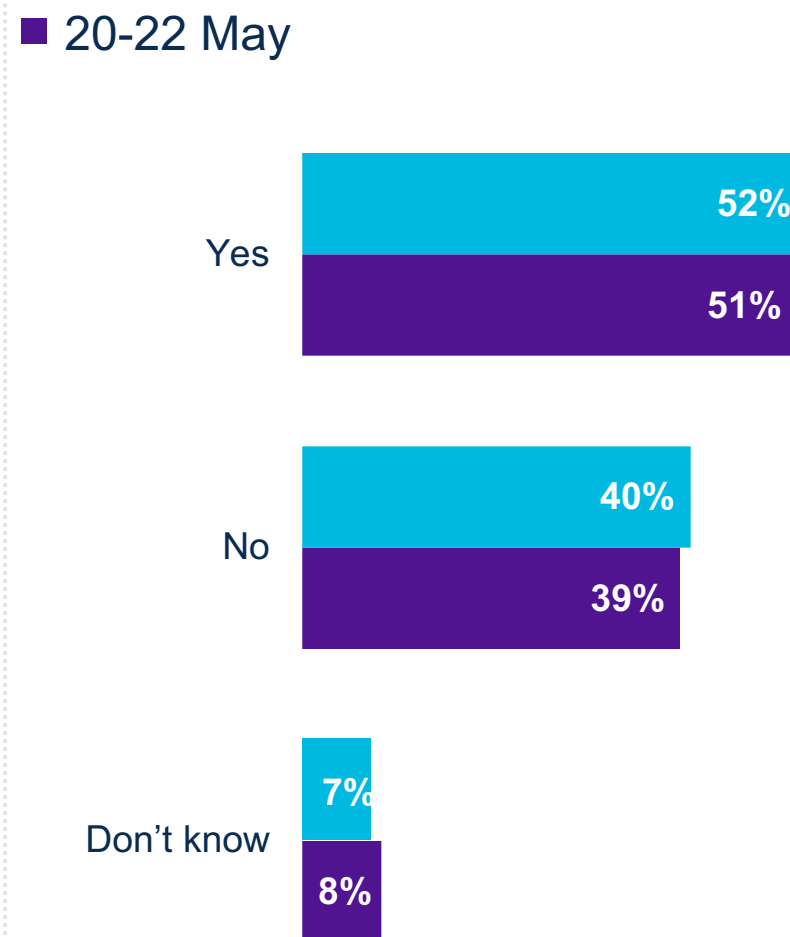
And just as a couple of months ago, **over a quarter of the public feel particularly vulnerable to the virus.**

At the same time, people are still **much more likely to see loved ones, rather than themselves, as being at particular risk 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?



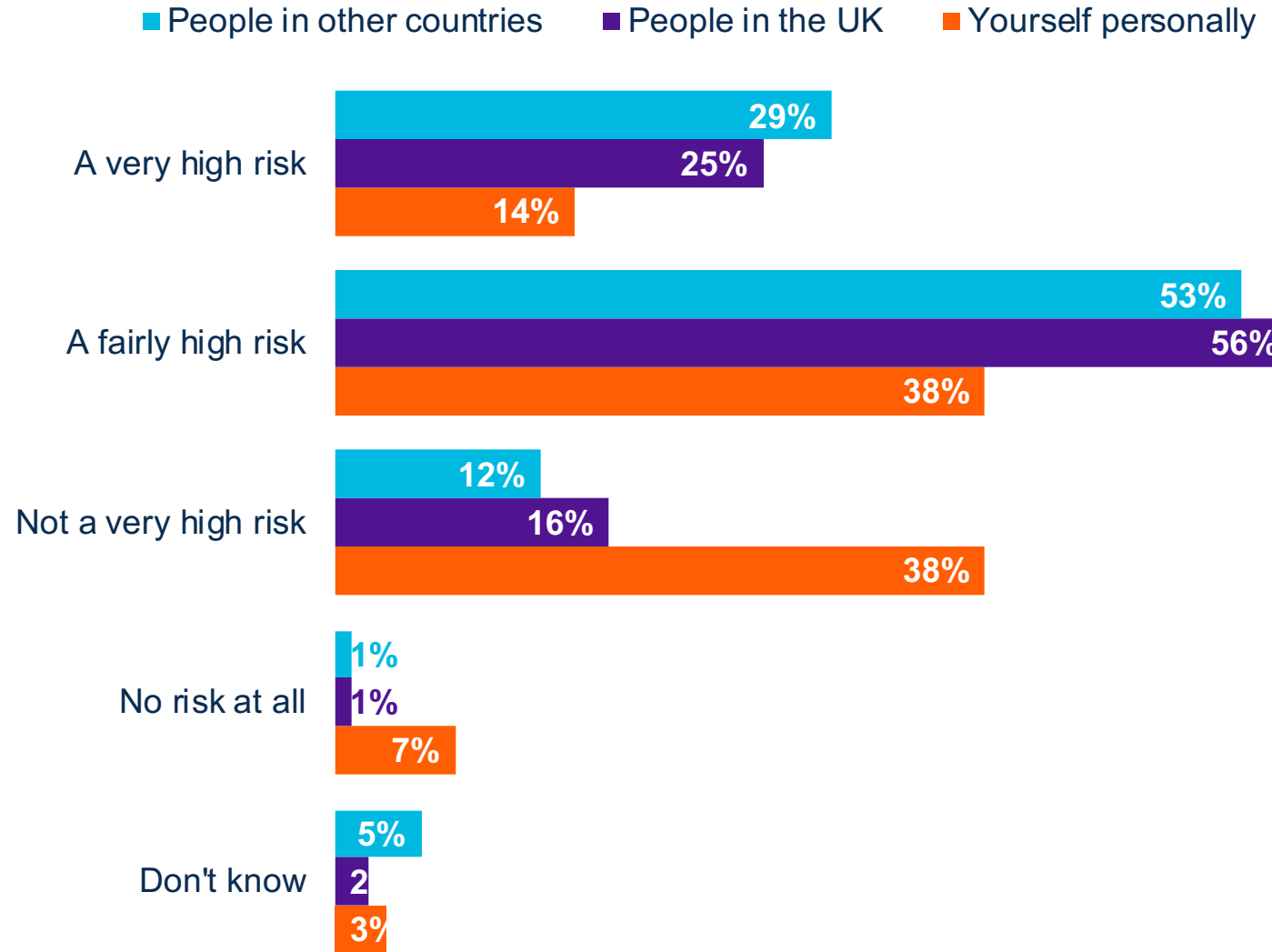
As far as you know, do any of your close family or friends have an illness or condition that would make them particularly susceptible to serious effects from coronavirus, or not?



Similarly, people are much more likely to see Covid-19 as a risk to other people than to themselves, reflecting our sense of responsibility towards others.

45% say coronavirus does not pose a very high risk or no risk to themselves, compared with **17%** who say the same for other people in the UK and **13%** who say the same for people in other countries.

To what extent, if at all, do you think the coronavirus poses a risk to...?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

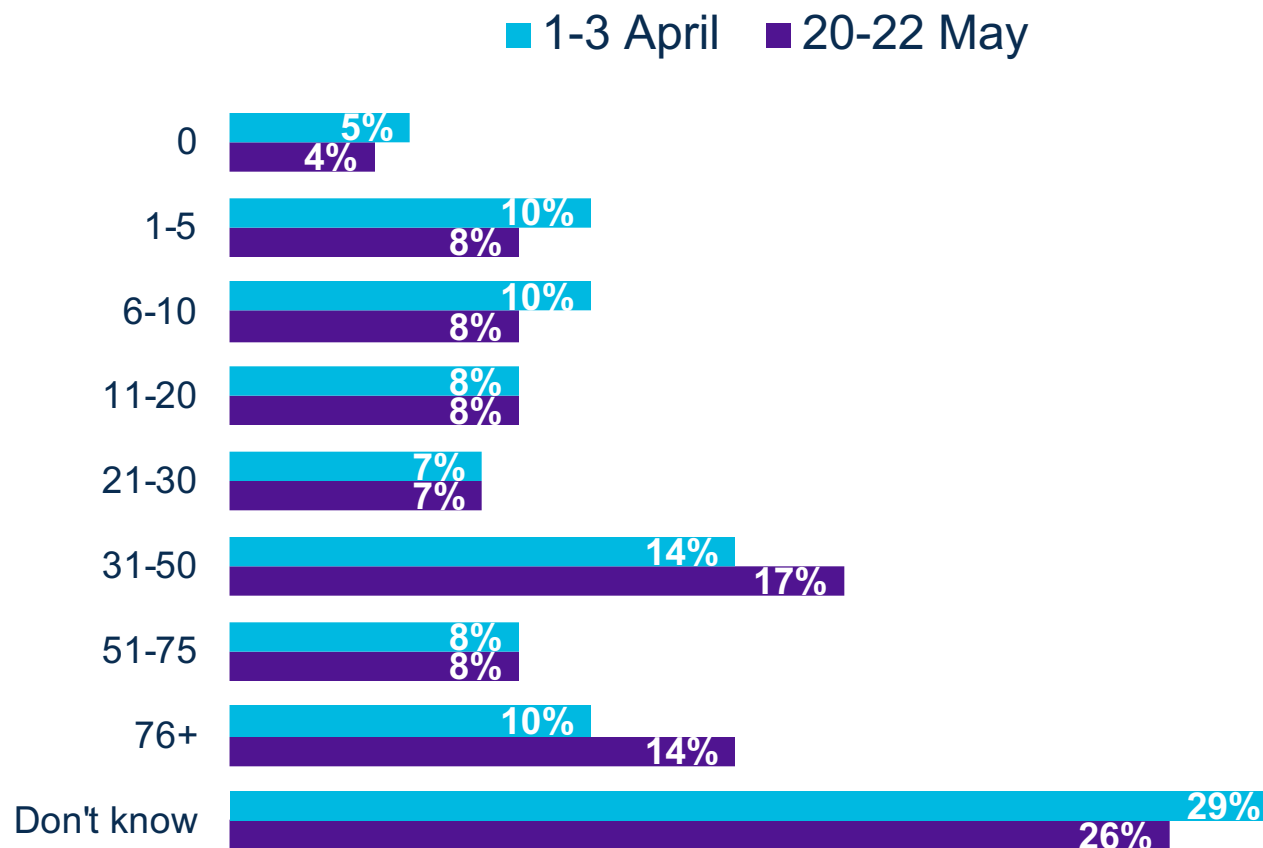
There has been a **big increase in people's expectation of being hospitalised as a result of coronavirus**, with the median estimate now putting it at a **40%** chance, up from **30%** at the beginning of April.

While estimates of the true hospitalisation rate vary, **the public's guess is likely to be around 10 times higher than the reality.**

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.

Median estimate 1-3 April: 30%

Median estimate 20-22 May: 40%



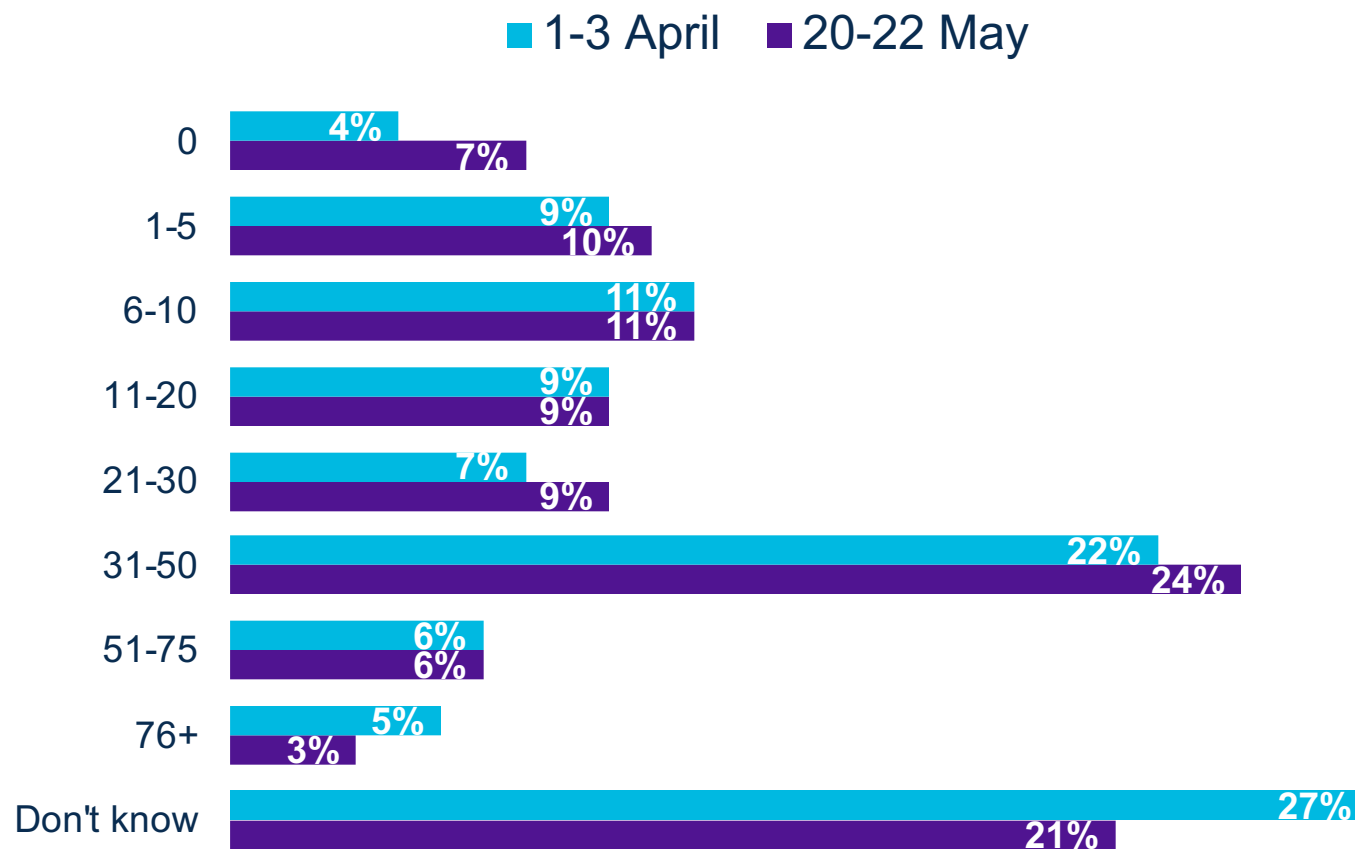
Base: 1,945 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020, and 1,992 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020, who have not had, don't think have had or don't know if had coronavirus

There has been a **slight decline** in the average person's view of their chances of catching coronavirus in the next month, from 30% to 25% – although there has been a big drop in those who say there is no chance.

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

Median estimate 1-3 April: 30%

Median estimate 20-22 May: 25%



Base: 1,945 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020, and 1,992 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020, who have not had, don't think have had or don't know if had coronavirus

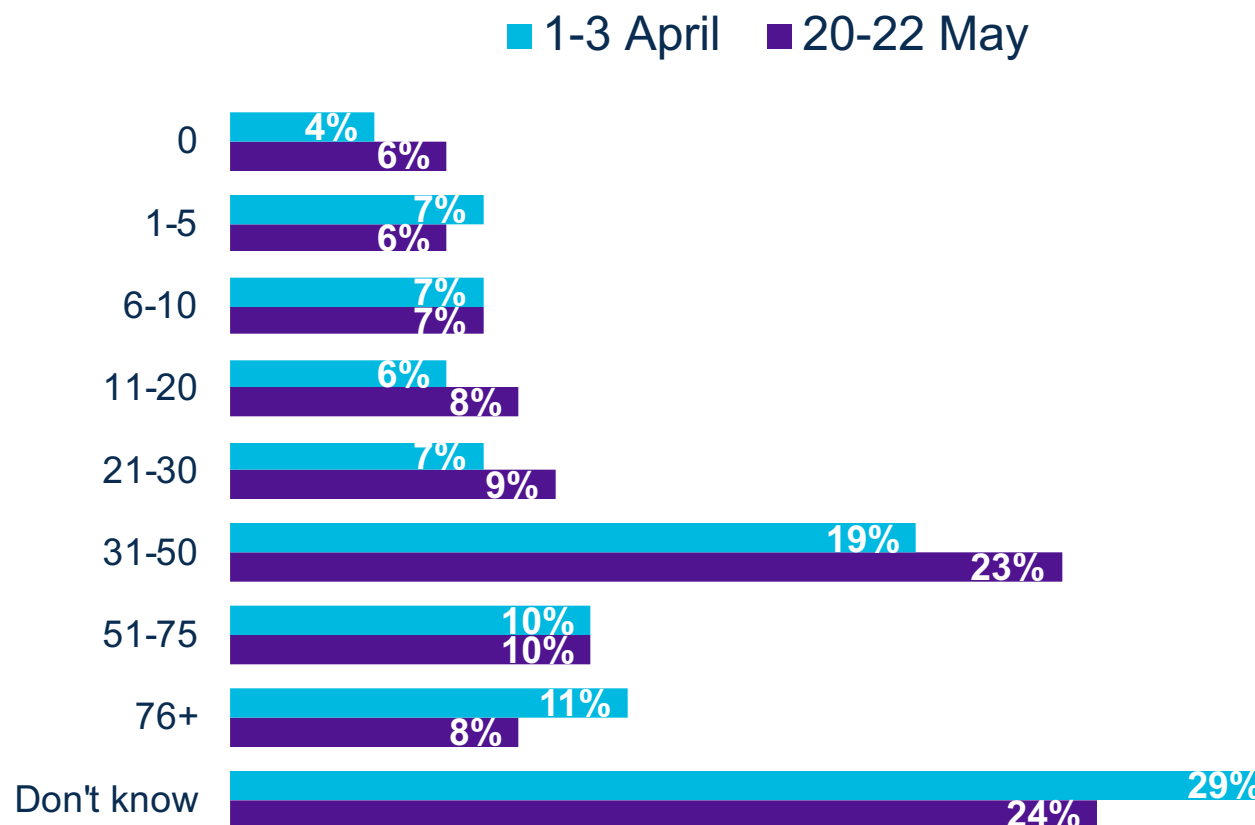
There is less change in the proportion who think they'll catch the virus in the next year, with the average person putting the chance at 40% in both studies.

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

Median estimate 1-3 April: 40%

Median estimate 20-22 May: 40%



Base: 1,945 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020, and 1,992 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020, who have not had, don't think have had or don't know if had coronavirus

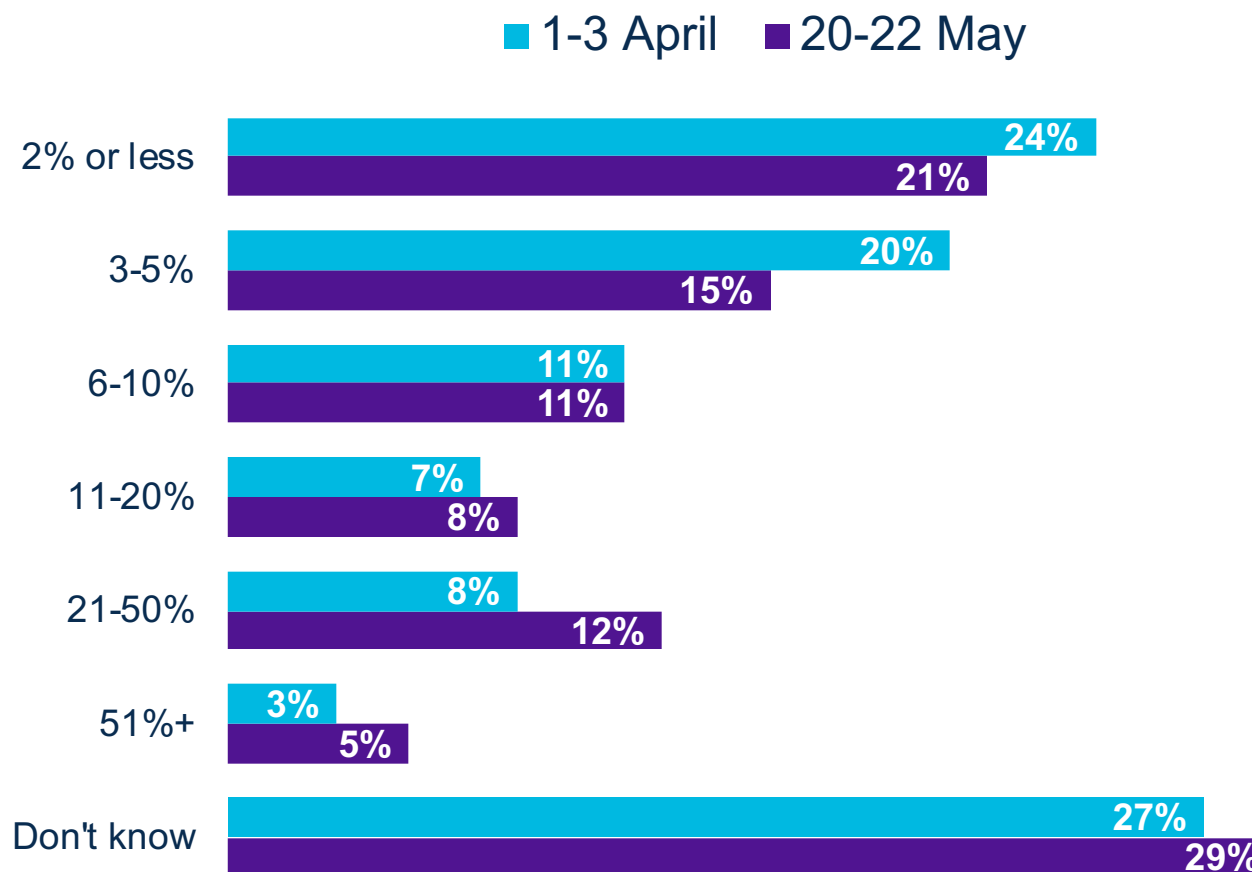
There has also been little change in average estimates of the likelihood of dying from coronavirus, now estimated to be 6% of those who catch the disease.

The actual figure will not be known for sometime, but seems likely to be lower than this – potentially five times lower, if estimates by researchers are correct.

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

Median estimate 1-3 April: 5%

Median estimate 20-22 May: 6%

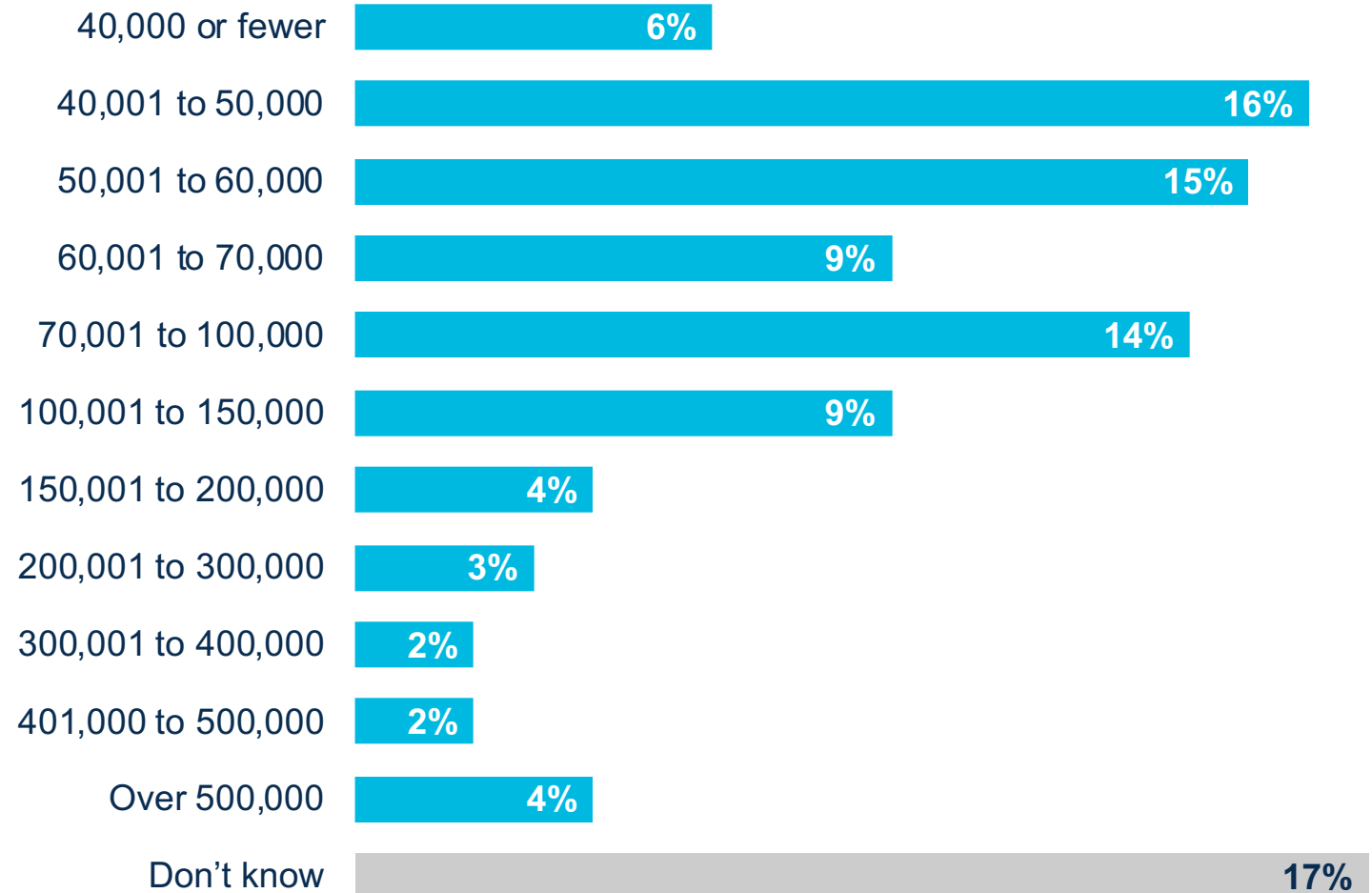


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

60% now think **100,000 people or fewer will die** as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

And 24% think over 100,000 will die.

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



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

However, there is a mixed picture with regard to the economic threat

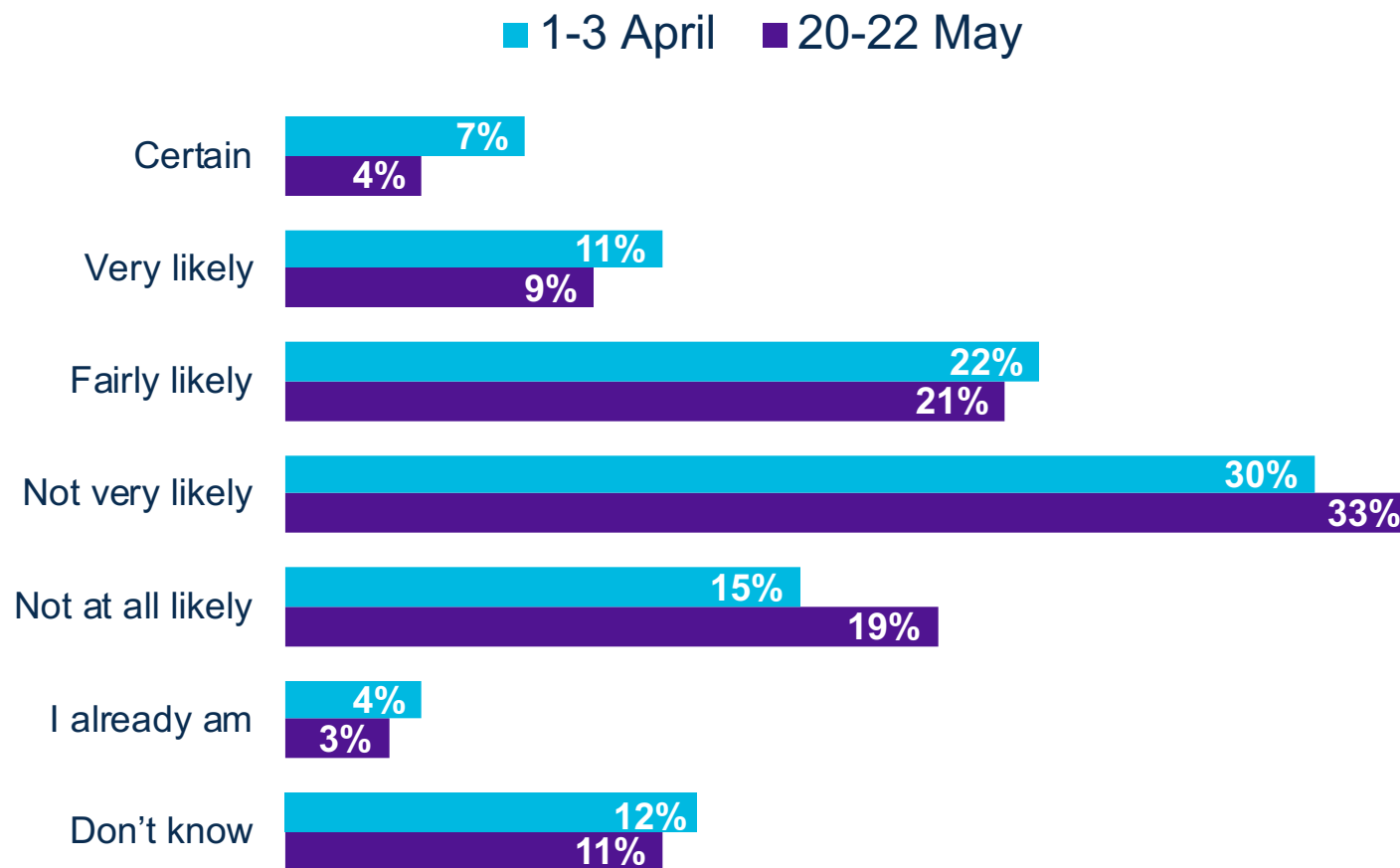
Compared with early April, fewer people expect that coronavirus disruption will cause them to experience significant financial difficulties in the short term.

But the proportion of workers who say that they are certain, very likely, or fairly likely to lose their jobs has increased.

And while two in 10 people have had more money left at the end of the month, three in 10 say that their income has reduced and about the same number have had to cut back on essential spending.

The proportion of people who say that they are **certain or very likely to face financial difficulties** to coronavirus disruption has **fallen from 18%** a week after the lockdown was introduced, **to 13%** towards the end of last week.

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?



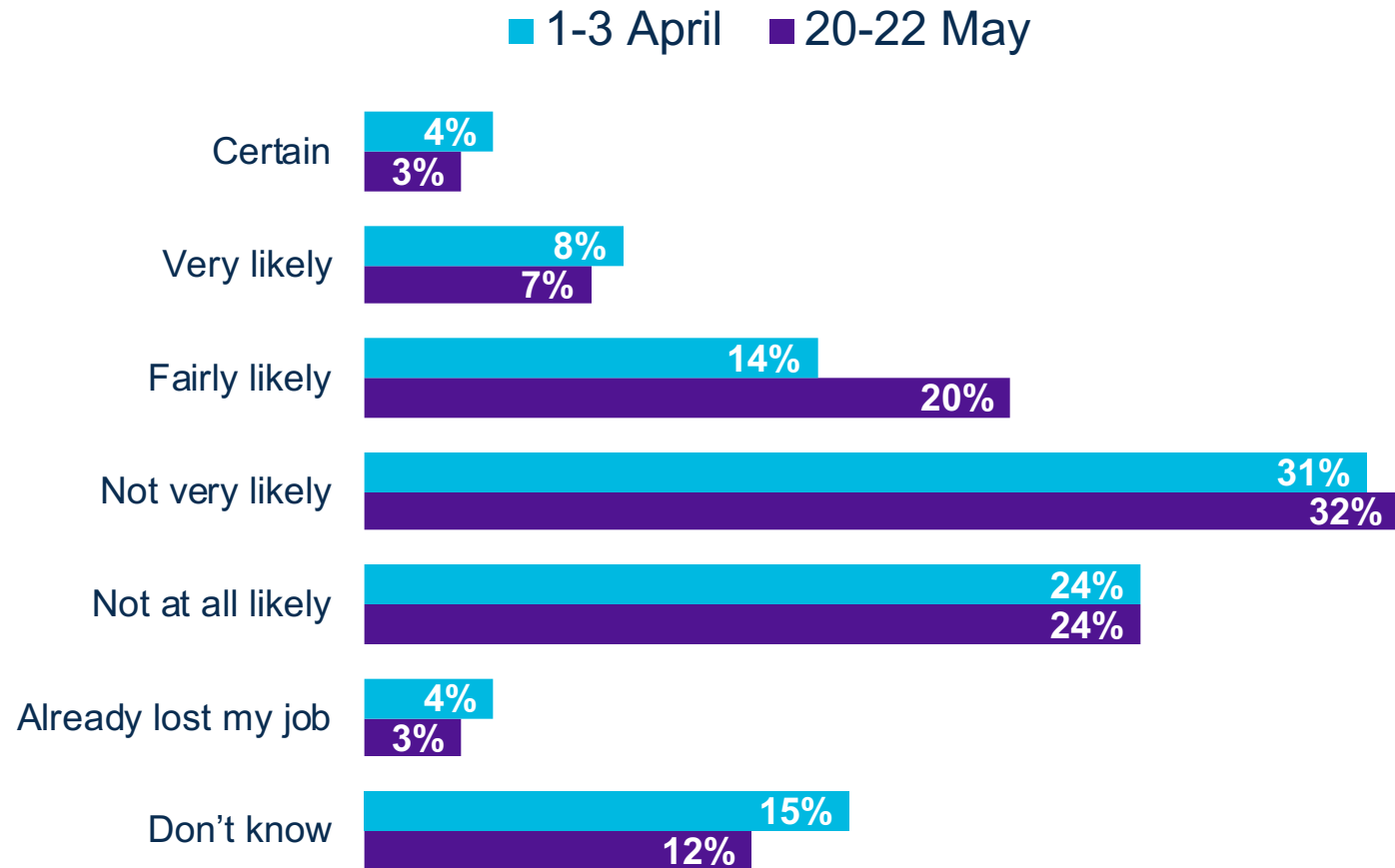
Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

20% of workers now think they are **fairly likely to lose their jobs**, up from 14% in early April.

The proportion who say they are certain or very likely to is similar between the studies, at 12% in April compared with 10% now.

Overall, **30% of workers now say they are fairly likely, very likely, or certain to lose their jobs**, up from 26%.

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

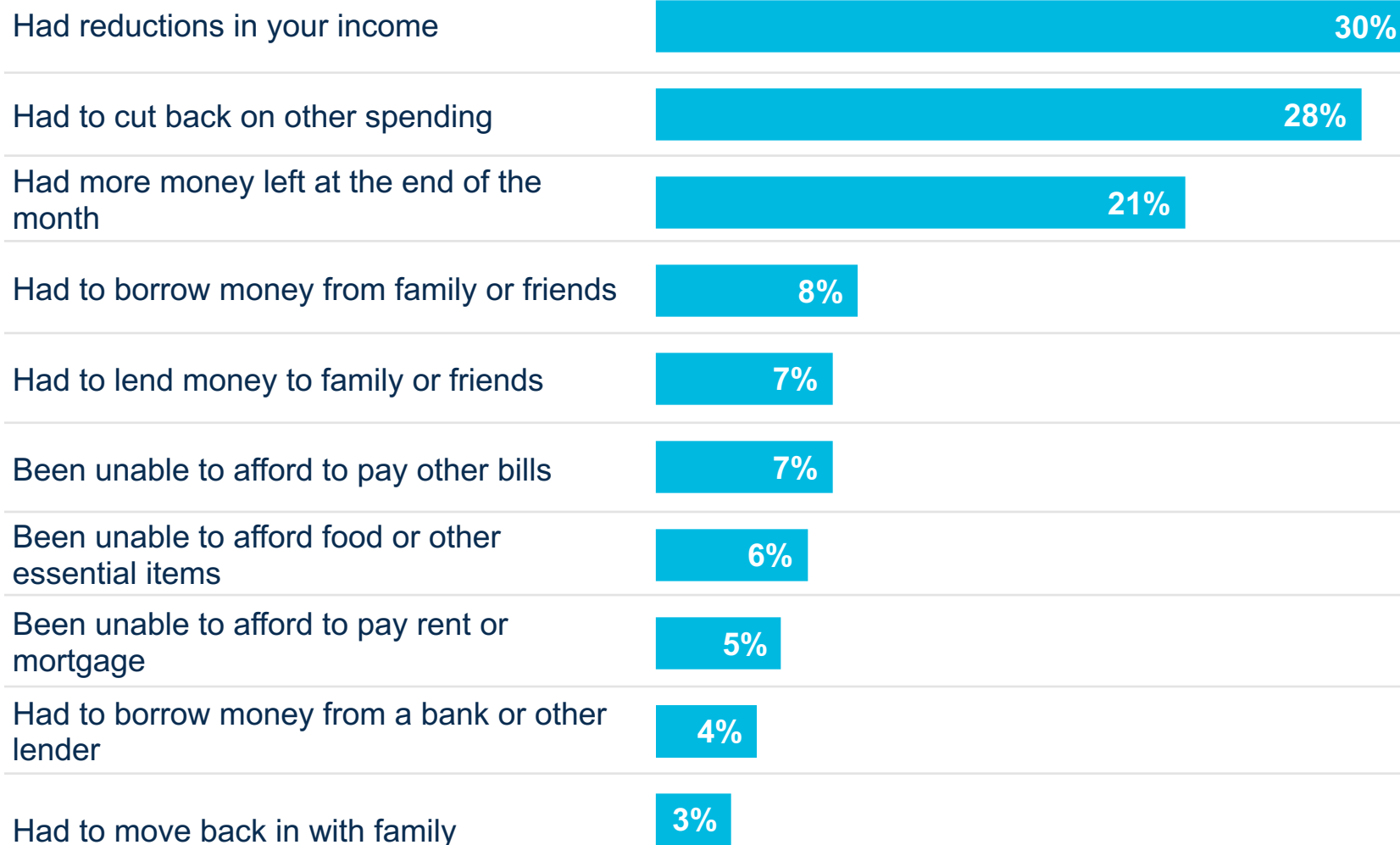


Base: 1,334 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 1,321 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020 who currently work

3 in 10 have experienced a **reduction in their income** as a result of coronavirus.

And while **3 in 10 people** have had to cut back on non-essential spending, **2 in 10 have had more money left at the end of the month.**

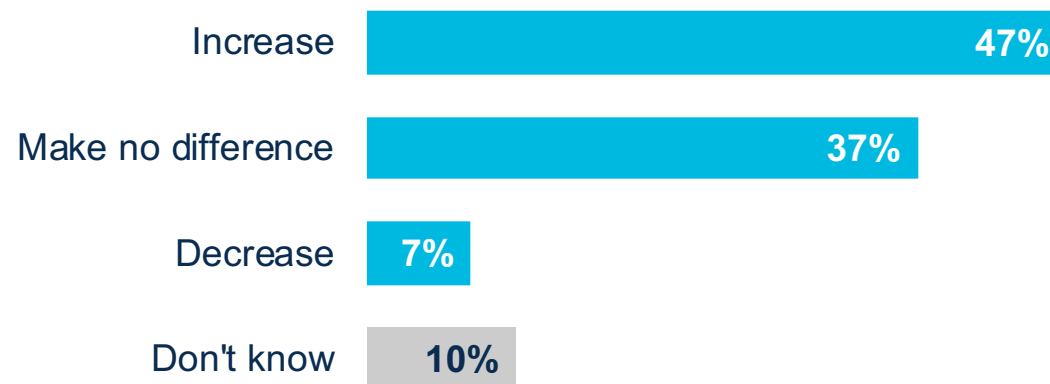
Which of these, if any, have you experienced as a result of the changes caused by the coronavirus – have you...?



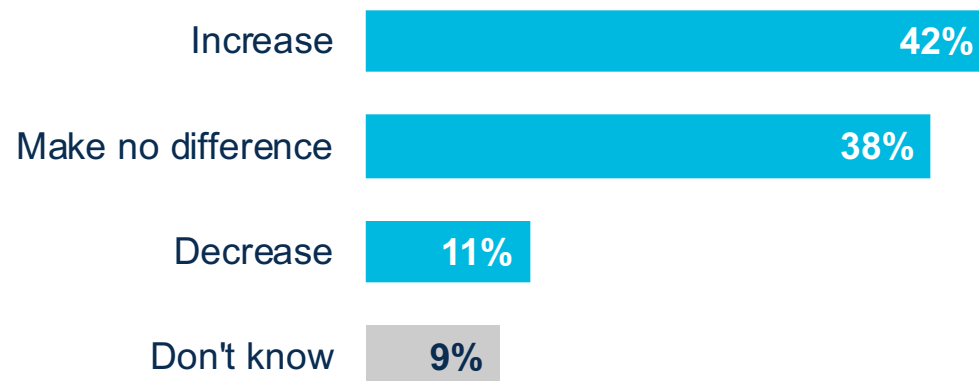
Nearly **half (47%)** the public think coronavirus will **exacerbate inequality** in the UK, compared with **37%** who think it won't have an effect.

Opinion is more evenly split on the impact on **division in the UK**: 42% think it will increase, only slightly higher than the 38% who think it won't.

Do you think the coronavirus crisis will increase or decrease the level of inequality in the UK, compared with before the pandemic?



Do you think the coronavirus crisis will increase or decrease how divided the UK is, compared with before the pandemic?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

Some may even be getting used to, or enjoying, lockdown

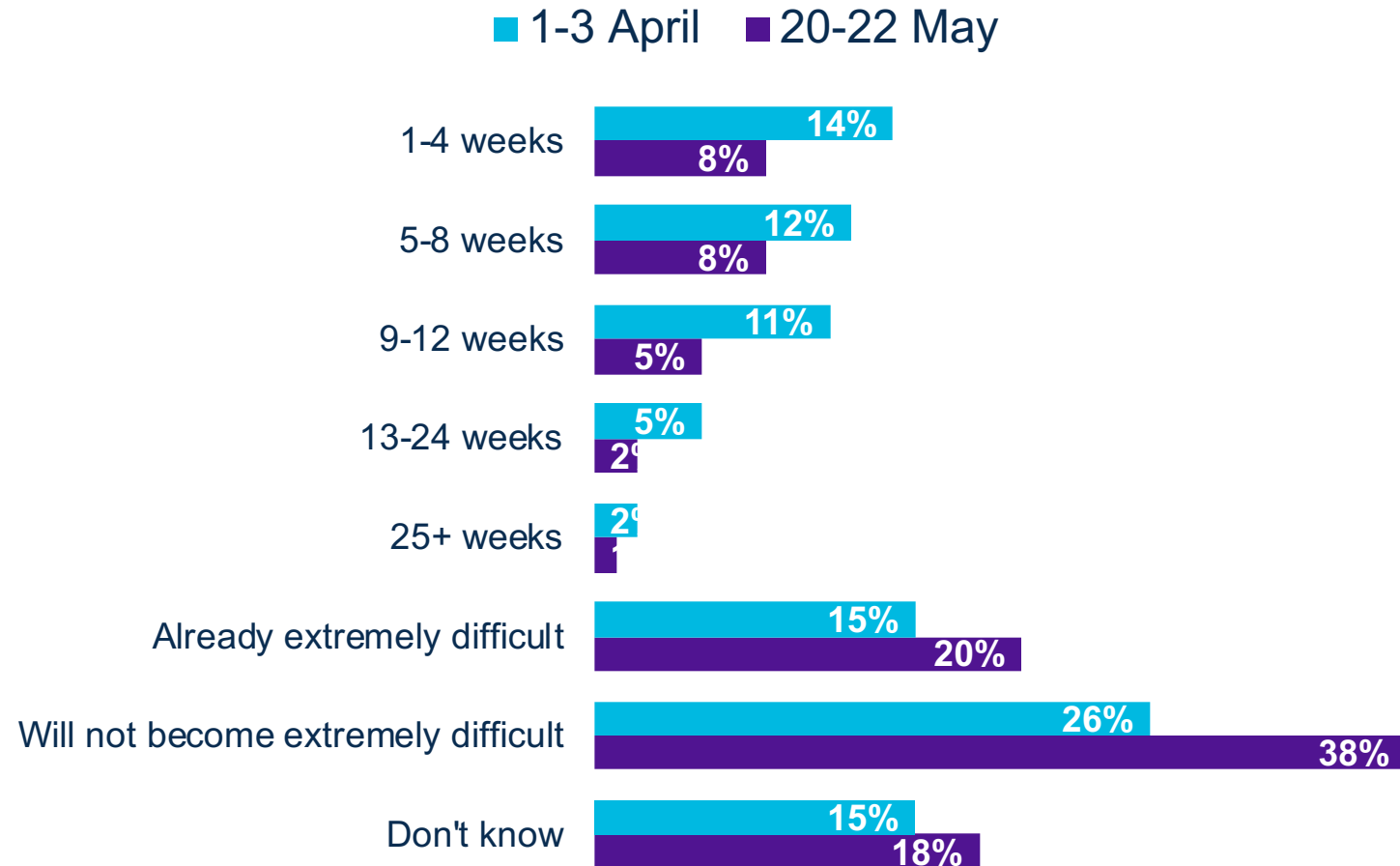
While there has been an increase in the proportion of people finding the lockdown measures extremely difficult to cope with, there has been a much bigger increase in the proportion who think the lockdown measures won't become extremely difficult for them, and fewer people now say they find coronavirus stressful.

People are also more likely to say that there are some aspects of lockdown they've enjoyed than to say that there are no aspects they've found enjoyable.

The proportion of people who say **the lockdown measures will not become extremely difficult to cope with** has increased significantly, **up 12 points, from 26% in the second week of lockdown, to 38% now.**

There has been a smaller increase, of 5 points, among those who say the measures are **already extremely difficult to deal with.**

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?

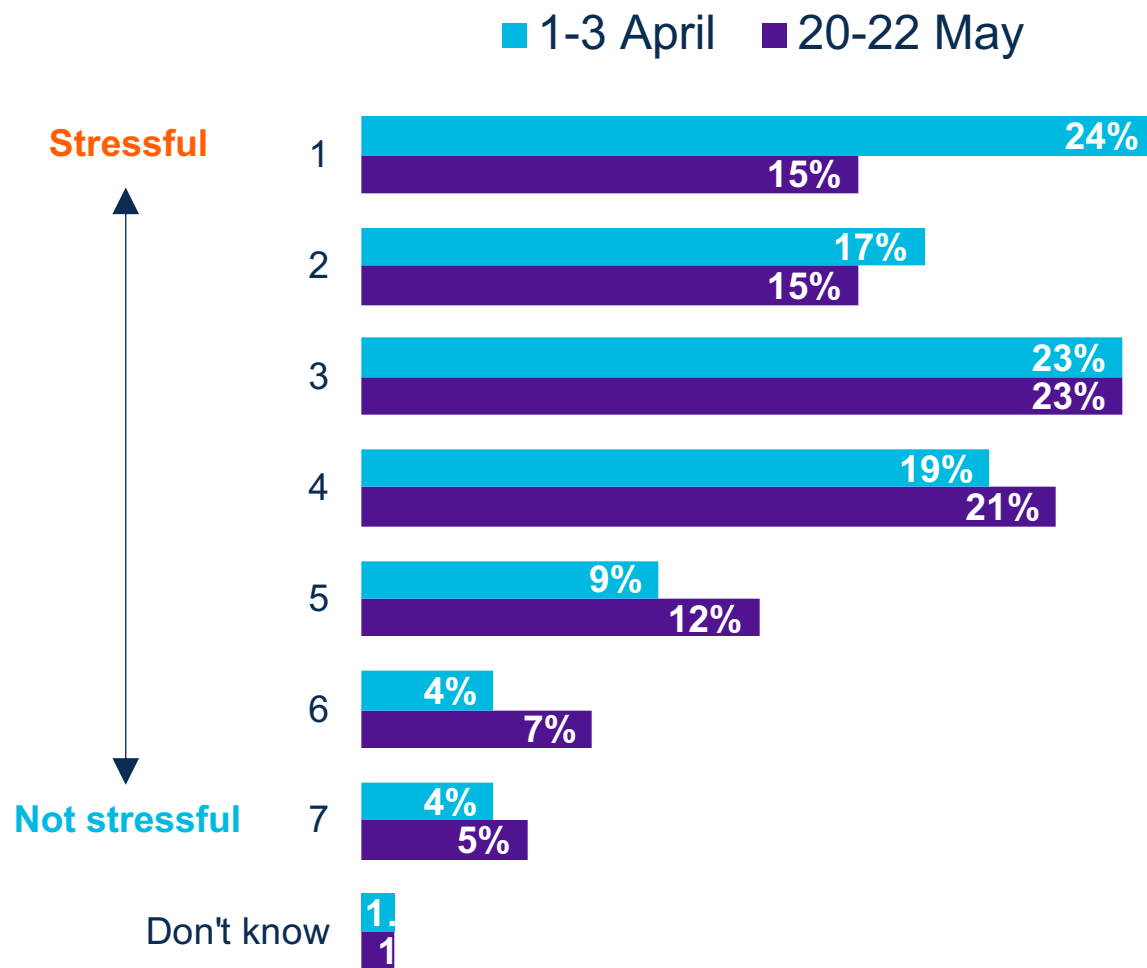


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

There has been a **significant decrease** in the proportion who say **coronavirus is stressful**. 15% now say they feel this way, down 9 points, from 24% at the beginning of April.

Please choose one option for the following questions, on a scale of 1 to 7.

The coronavirus to me is...



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

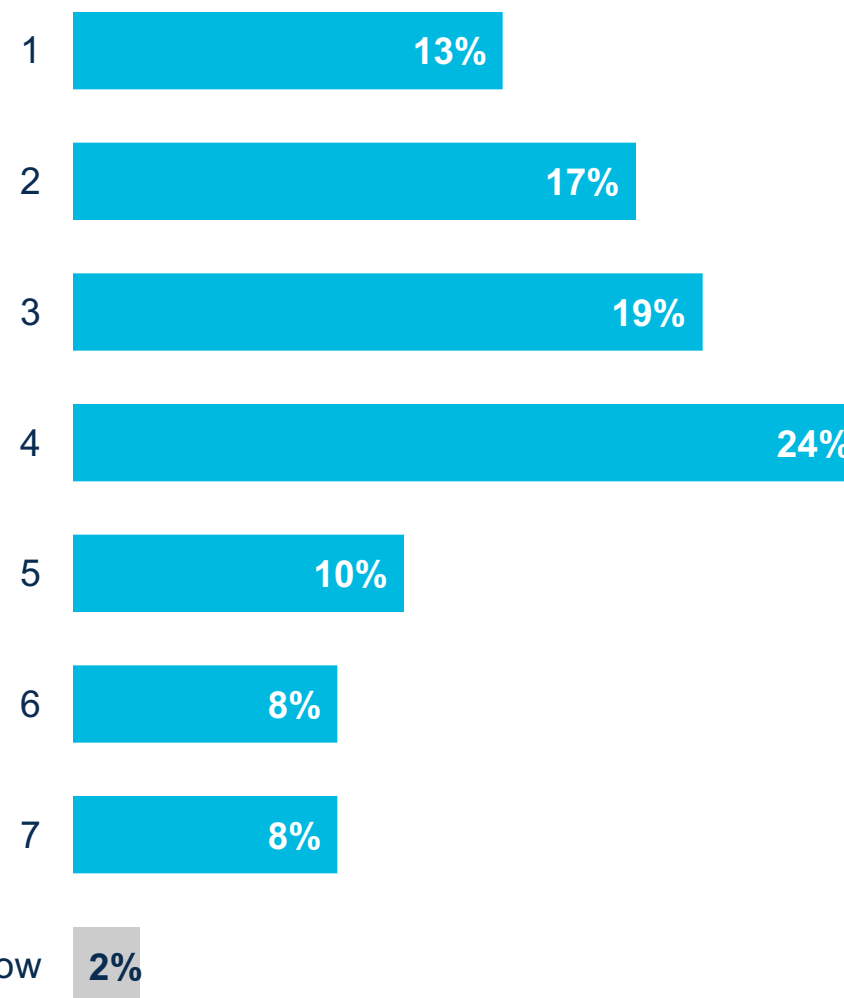
49% of the public say “There are some aspects of the ‘lockdown’ measures that I’ve enjoyed” is closer to their view, compared with 26% who say “There are no aspects of the ‘lockdown’ measures that I’ve enjoyed” is closer.

Which of these is closest to your view...?

There are some aspects of the “lockdown” measures that I’ve enjoyed



There are no aspects of the “lockdown” measures that I’ve enjoyed



But there are still those who are suffering as a result of the current situation

Half the population say they have put on weight and felt more anxious or depressed since the lockdown was announced, and 43% have felt more lonely than usual.

Over a third have postponed seeking medical advice or treatment for conditions not related to coronavirus, while a significant minority have had to delay or cancel such treatment due to disruption caused by the crisis.

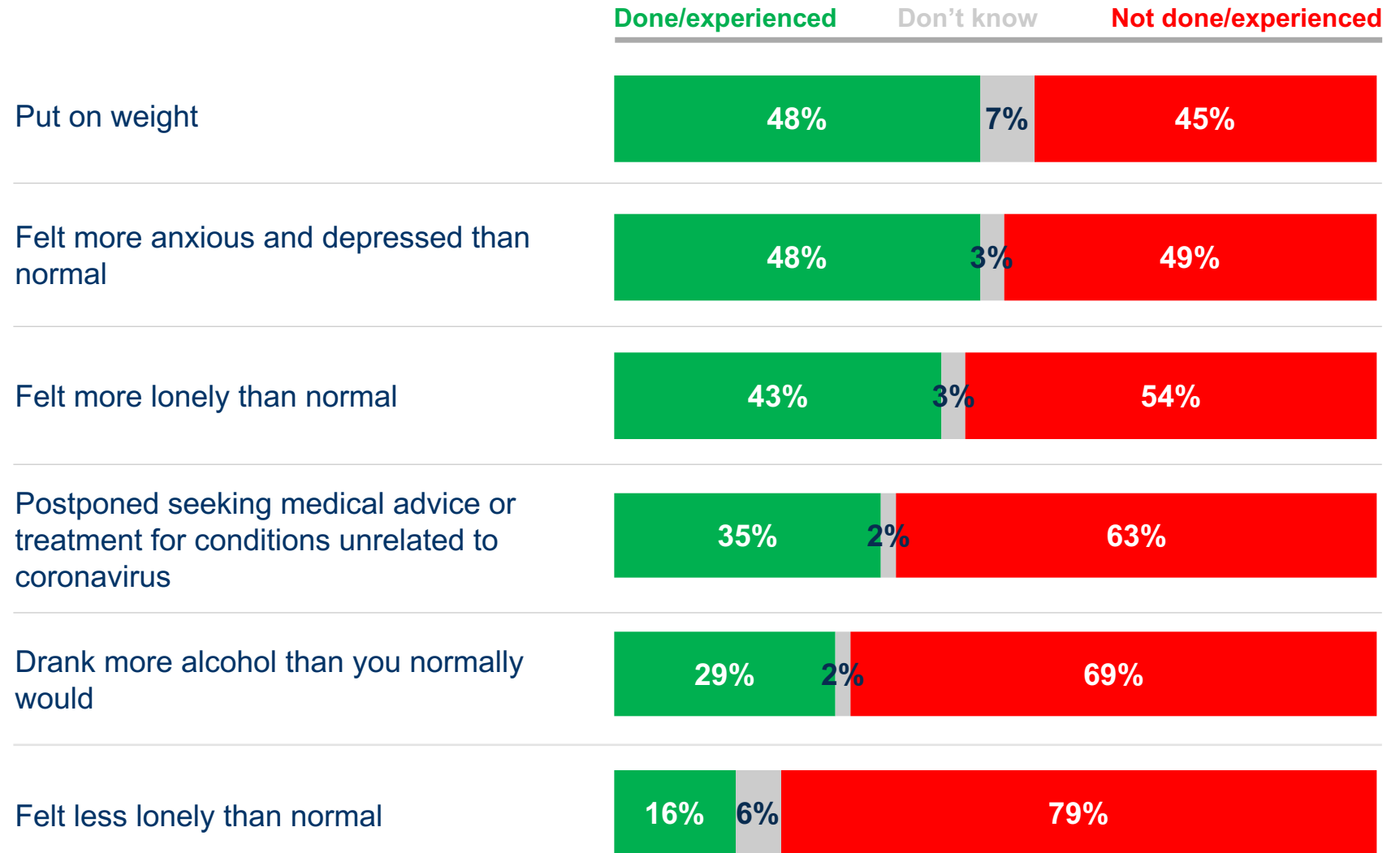
And compared with the second week of lockdown, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of people drinking more than normal.

Half the population has put on weight and felt more anxious and depressed than usual since the lockdown was announced.

Over a third have postponed getting medical advice or treatment unrelated to Covid-19.

People are also much more likely to have felt more lonely (43%) than less lonely (16%).

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



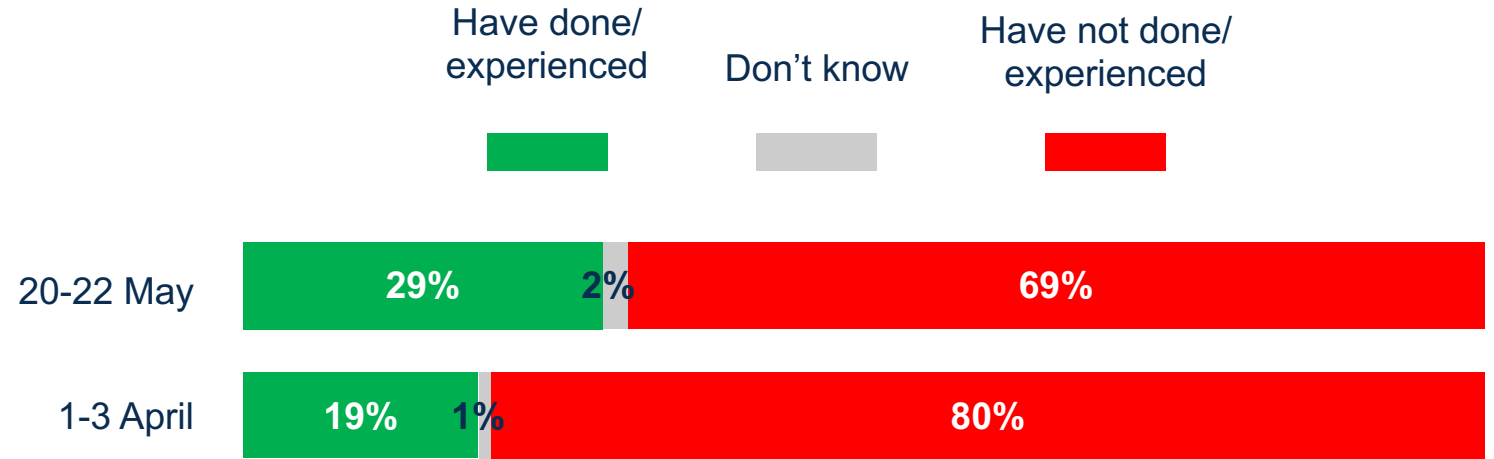
Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

Comparing with figures from the second week of lockdown, there has been a **10-point increase in the proportion of people who say they have drunk more alcohol than they normally would**: 3 in 10 people now say they have, up from 2 in 10 six weeks ago.

Levels of anxiety and depression are unchanged.

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

Drank more alcohol than you normally would



Felt more anxious and depressed than normal



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

That 35% of people have postponed seeking medical advice or treatment may be linked to the fact that a **significant minority of the population – 14% – think they shouldn't be contacting the NHS about conditions unrelated to Covid-19.**

17% also say that they've **had to delay or cancel treatment** due to coronavirus disruption, underscoring the secondary health impacts of the pandemic.

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

Postponed seeking medical advice or treatment for conditions unrelated to coronavirus



Are the following statements true or false?

People who don't have coronavirus have been asked not to contact the NHS, even if they are ill



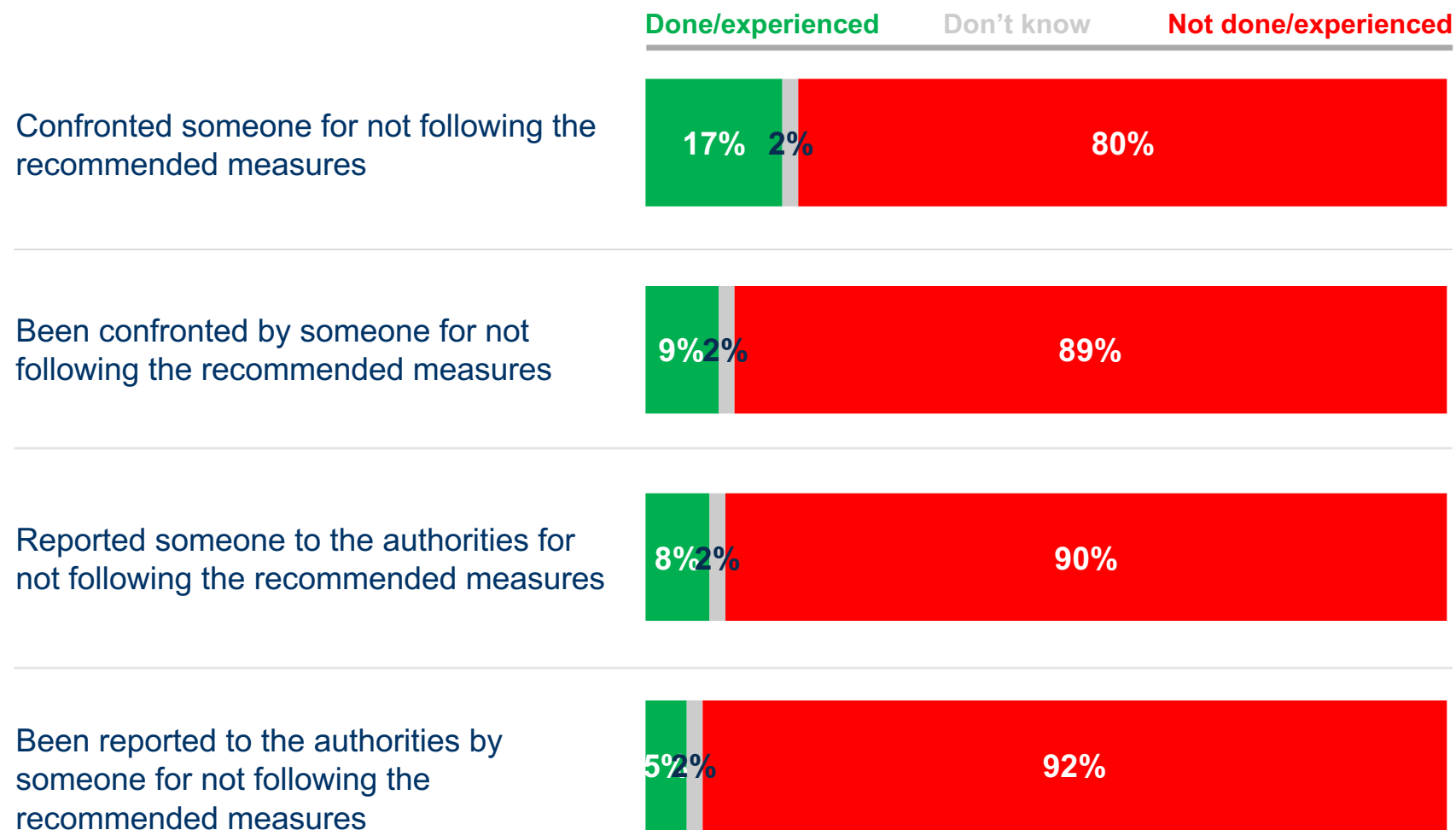
Which of these, if any, have you experienced as a result of the changes caused by the coronavirus – have you had to delay or cancel a medical procedure or treatment?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

There are some tensions around rule-breaking, with around **1 in 6 people having confronted someone for not following the recommended measures** and a smaller minority being confronted themselves.

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

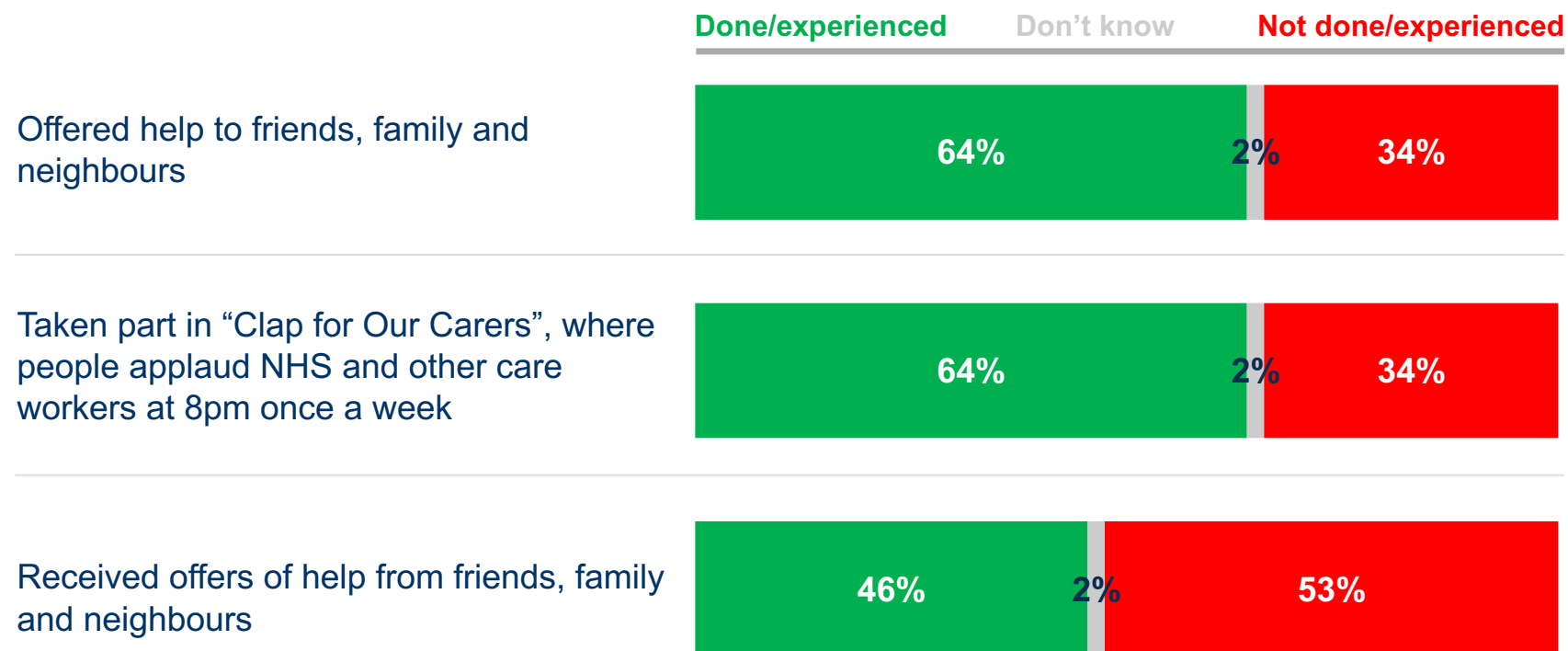


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

More positively, pro-social behaviours are widespread, with **two-thirds** of the public **offering help** to others and **almost half** **receiving offers of help** – virtually the same as six weeks ago.

Two-thirds have also taken part in the weekly **clap for carers**.

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



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

We're split on how to live with the virus if a vaccine or treatment can't be found

The issue of how to continue young people's education over the long term looks likely to become a flashpoint, and while most people accept the potential need for restaurants, bars and major public events to be very different for a very long time, sizeable minorities think extended restrictions would be unacceptable.

Half the population finds it acceptable for most children to be home-schooled over the very long term if no treatment or vaccine could be found.

Three in five (62%) think it is OK for parents to decide whether their children goes to school or not.

Slightly more people find it unacceptable (45%) than acceptable (41%) that parents could have to follow government instructions on when their children return to school.

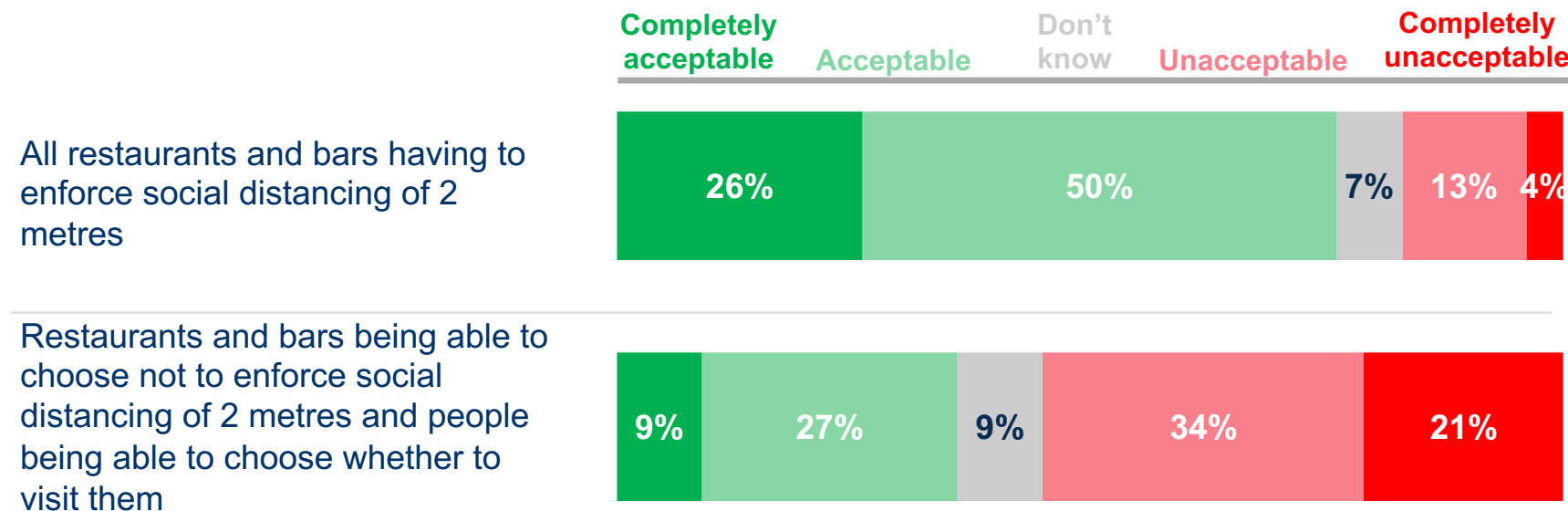
If it became clear over the next year or two that it is not possible to produce a vaccine or a treatment that deals with the threat of coronavirus, how acceptable or unacceptable would you find the following options being in place for the very long term?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

People are **twice as likely** to say it's acceptable to **force bars and restaurants to continue social distancing over the very long term (76%)** as they are to say it's fine for **such venues to choose not to do so (38%)**.

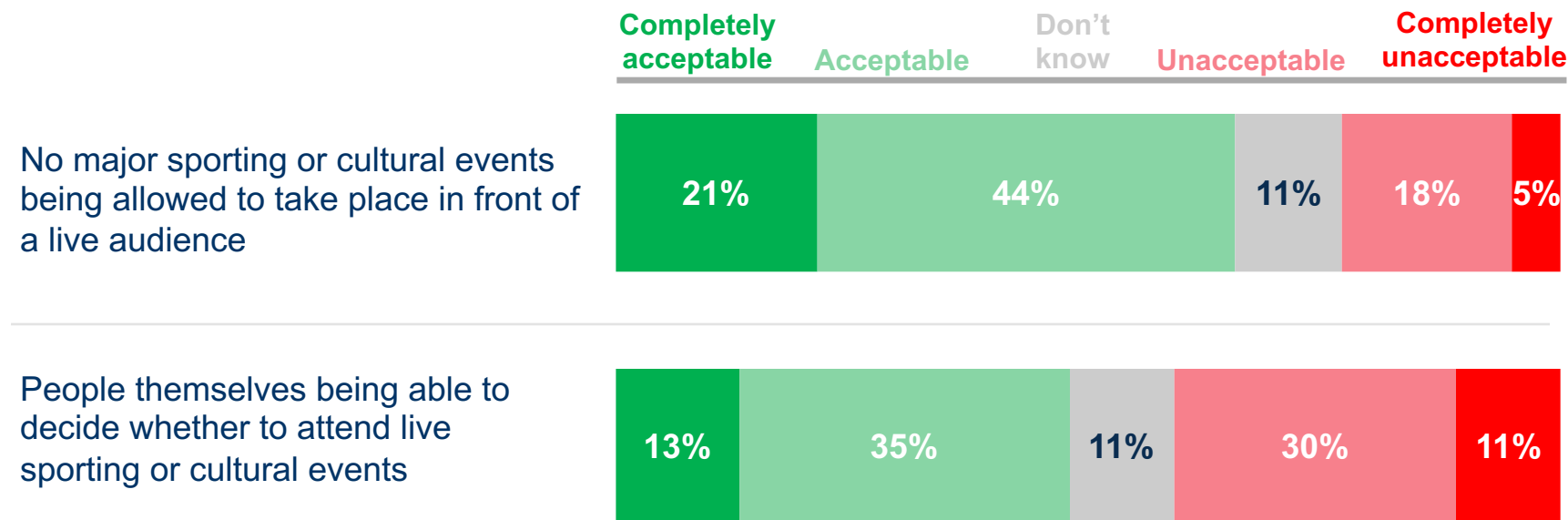
If it became clear over the next year or two that it is not possible to produce a vaccine or a treatment that deals with the threat of coronavirus, how acceptable or unacceptable would you find the following options being in place for the very long term?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

People are also **more likely to say it's acceptable to maintain a ban on major sporting and cultural events with a live audience (65%)** for a very long time than they are to think it's OK for people to **make their own minds up about attending (48%)**.

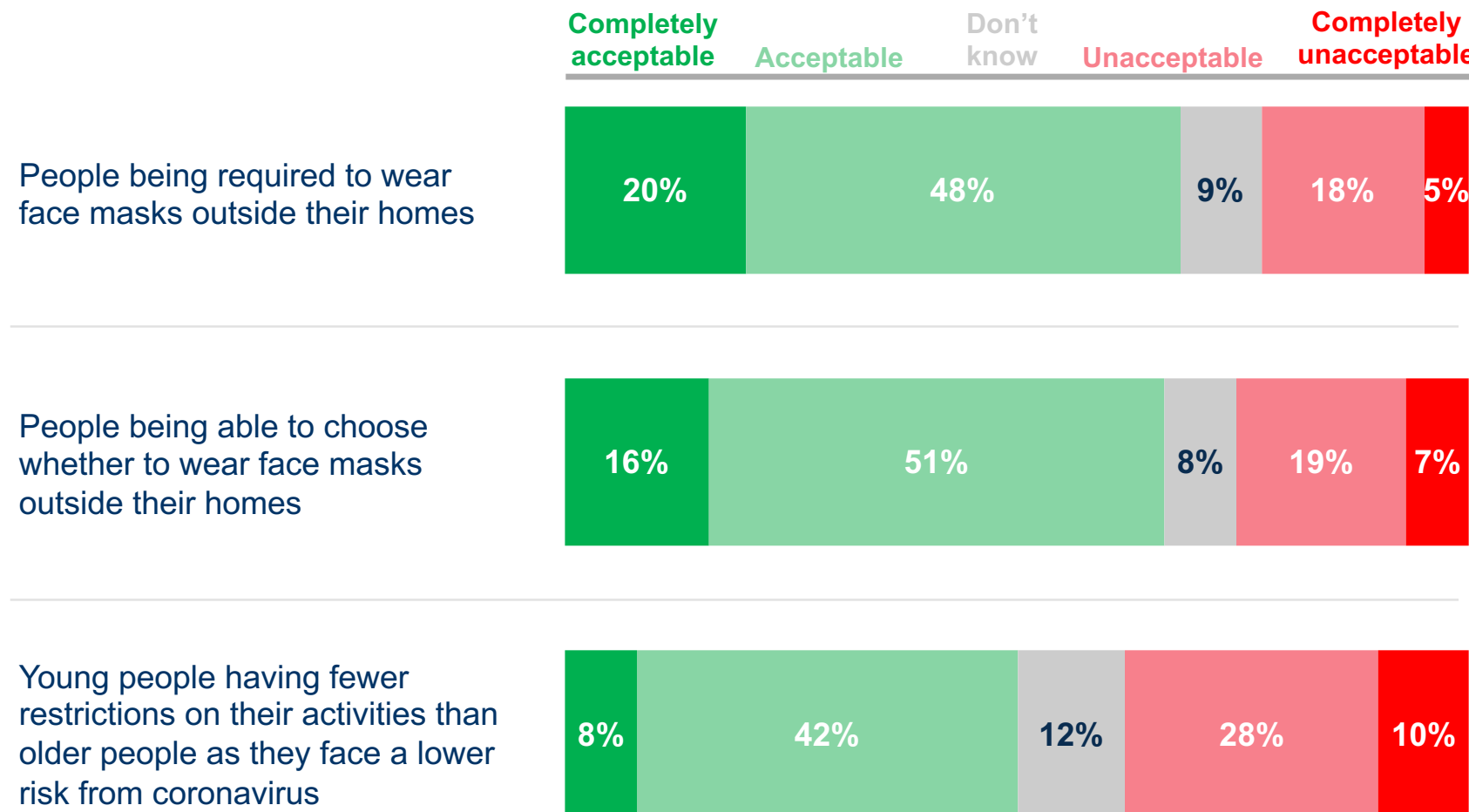
If it became clear over the next year or two that it is not possible to produce a vaccine or a treatment that deals with the threat of coronavirus, how acceptable or unacceptable would you find the following options being in place for the very long term?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

Enforced mask wearing for the very long-term is **acceptable to 68% of the public**, and **half** think it's **acceptable for young people to be subject to fewer restrictions.**

If it became clear over the next year or two that it is not possible to produce a vaccine or a treatment that deals with the threat of coronavirus, how acceptable or unacceptable would you find the following options being in place for the very long term?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

There is a growing awareness that we're in it for the long haul when it comes to beating the pandemic and overcoming its impacts

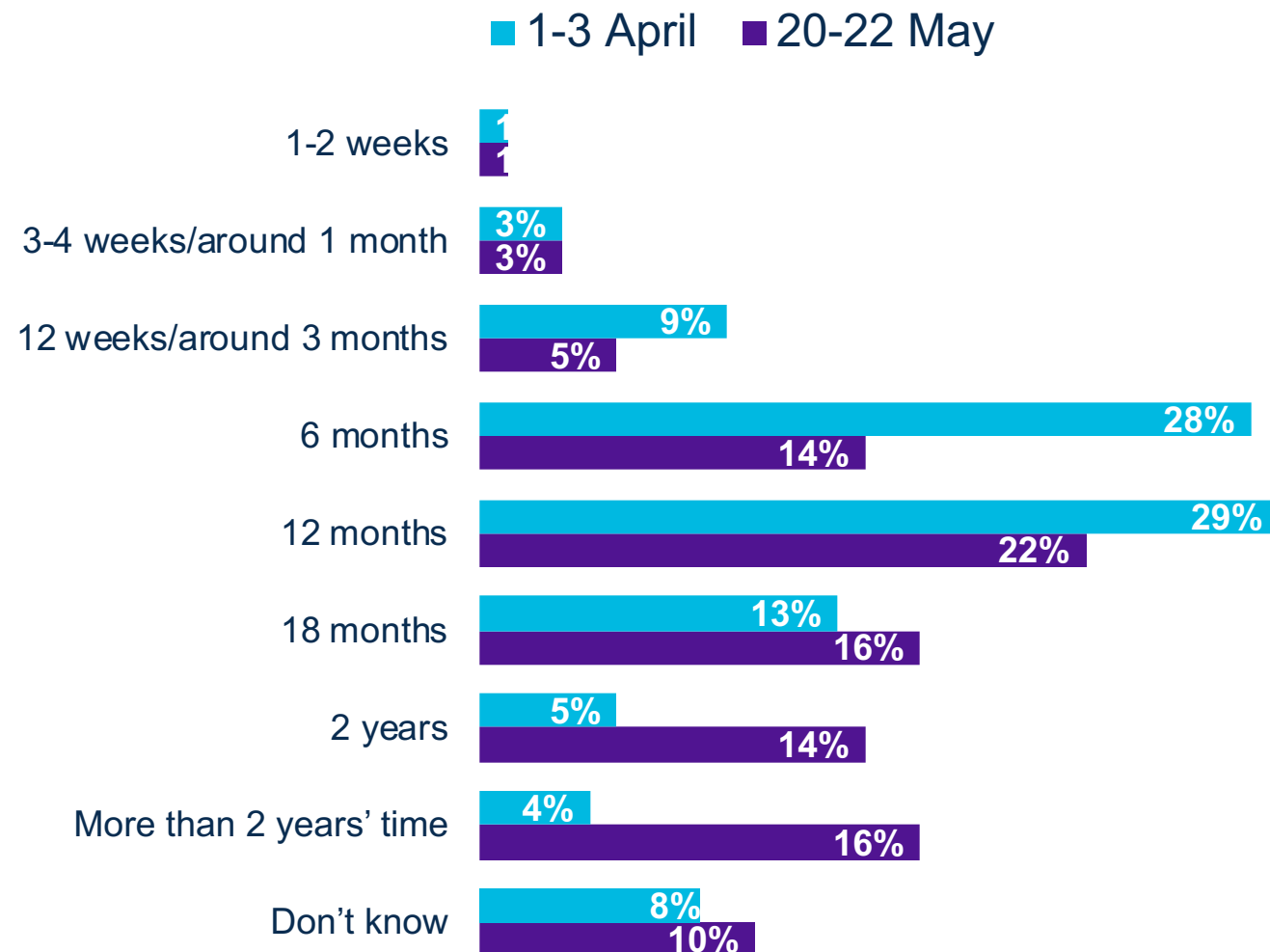
People are significantly more likely than they were six weeks ago to think life will not be back to normal for a long time, and there has been an increase in those who think a vaccine will not be available for over two years. There is also more uncertainty about the prospect of developing a vaccine.

At the same time, more people now think it will take more than two years for the economy to bounce back – although there has also been a small increase in those who say it will rebound in less than three months.

There have been **significant increases** in the proportion of people who think **life will not return to normal for two or more years**: 30% now expect this to be the case, up from 9% six weeks ago.

The proportion who think the crisis will largely all be over **within six months** has **fallen from 41% to 23%**.

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

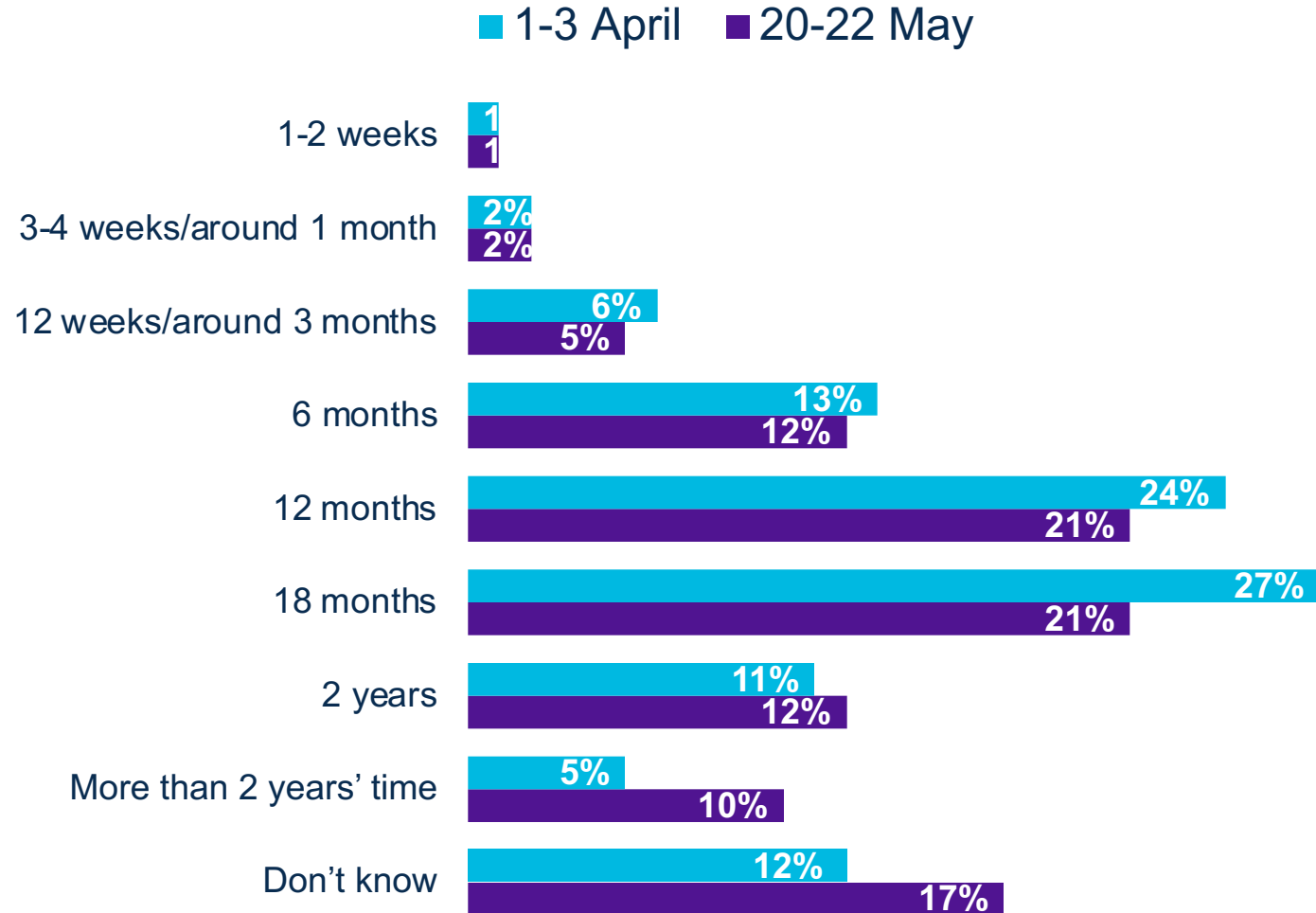


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

1 in 10 people now think it will be **over two years before we can vaccinate the population** against Covid-19 – **twice as many** who thought this in early April.

Fewer people now think we will have a vaccine within 18 months or a year, and more people say they don't know, likely indicating growing uncertainty that such a vaccine can be found and administered on such a scale.

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

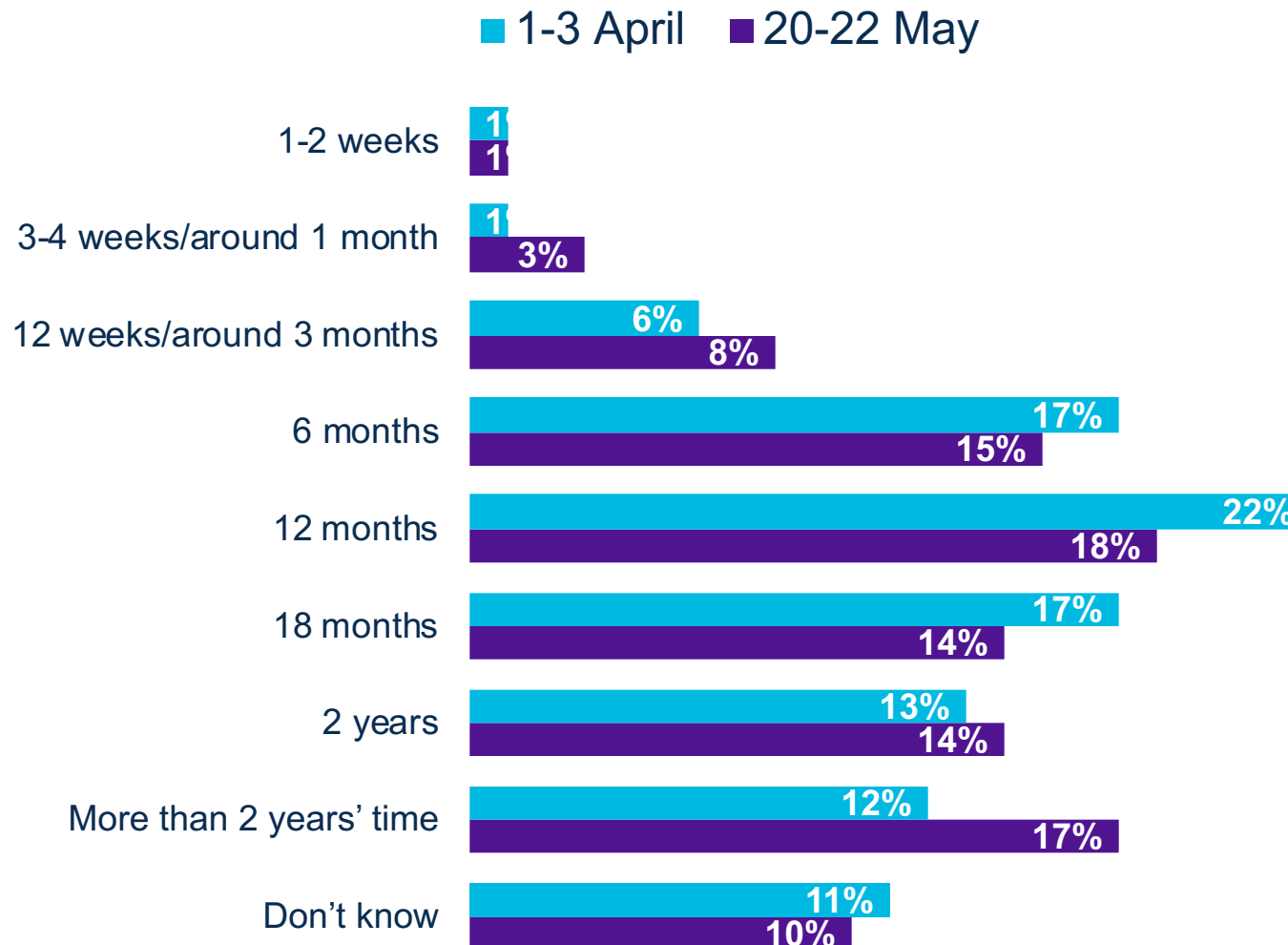


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Similarly, **17%** expect the economy won't start growing again for **more than two years** – up from **12%**.

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

The economy to start growing again...



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020 and 2,250 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 1-3 April 2020

Contact tracing apps: a way out of the crisis?

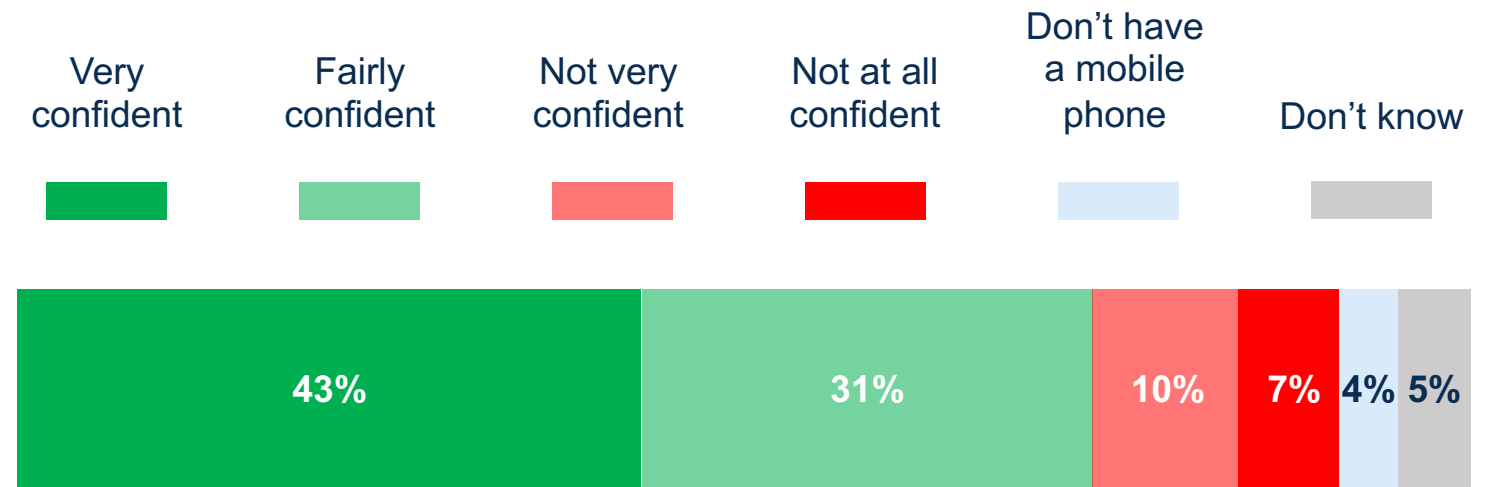
The public are confident they could download and operate such an app, and would follow its instructions – but they are less confident the government could keep personal data safe, or that such an app will be effective.

Around **three-quarters** of the public are confident that they could **download and operate an app** to help track the spread of coronavirus.

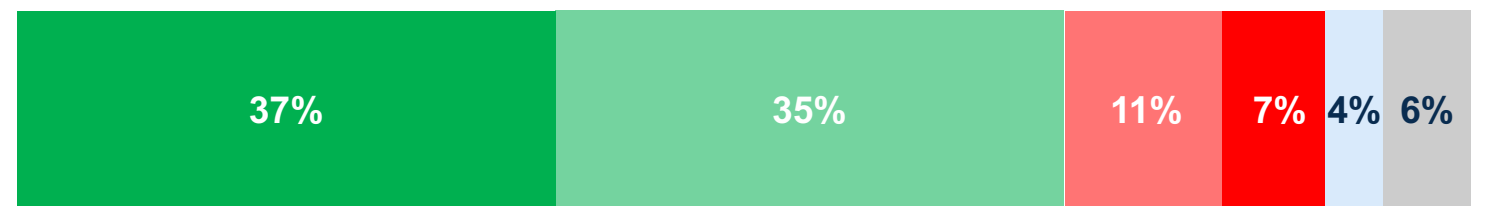
(Note respondents are from an online sample, which are likely to be more comfortable using apps.)

If a mobile phone app is released by the government to trace potential contacts you may have with people who have been diagnosed with coronavirus, how confident, if at all, would you feel about...?

Your ability to download the app



Your ability to operate the app

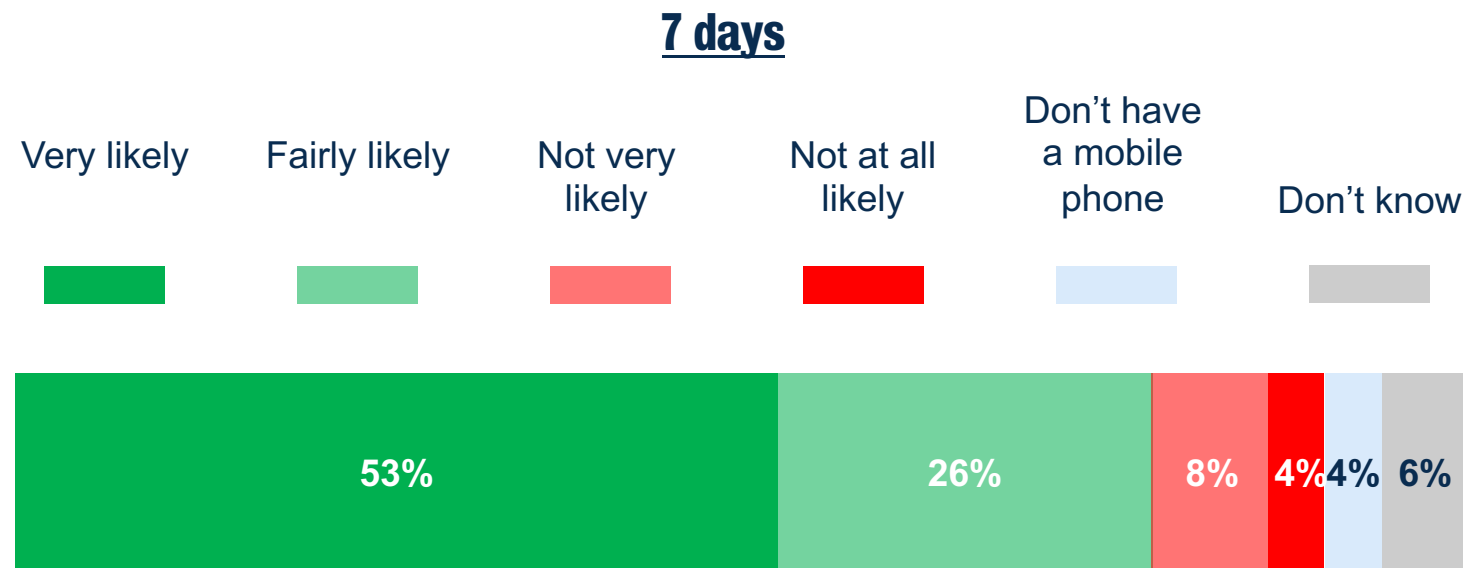


Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

Reflecting strong compliance with the rules, the majority of people say they would obey a tracing app's recommendation to self-isolate – and this is largely unaffected by whether they're asked to self-isolate for 7 or 14 days

79% would self-isolate for 7 days, and the **same proportion** would do so for 14 days.

If a mobile phone tracing app alerted you that someone you had been in contact with in the past two days had developed symptoms of coronavirus, and asked you to self-isolate for ___ days, how likely, if at all, are you to comply with that recommendation in full?



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

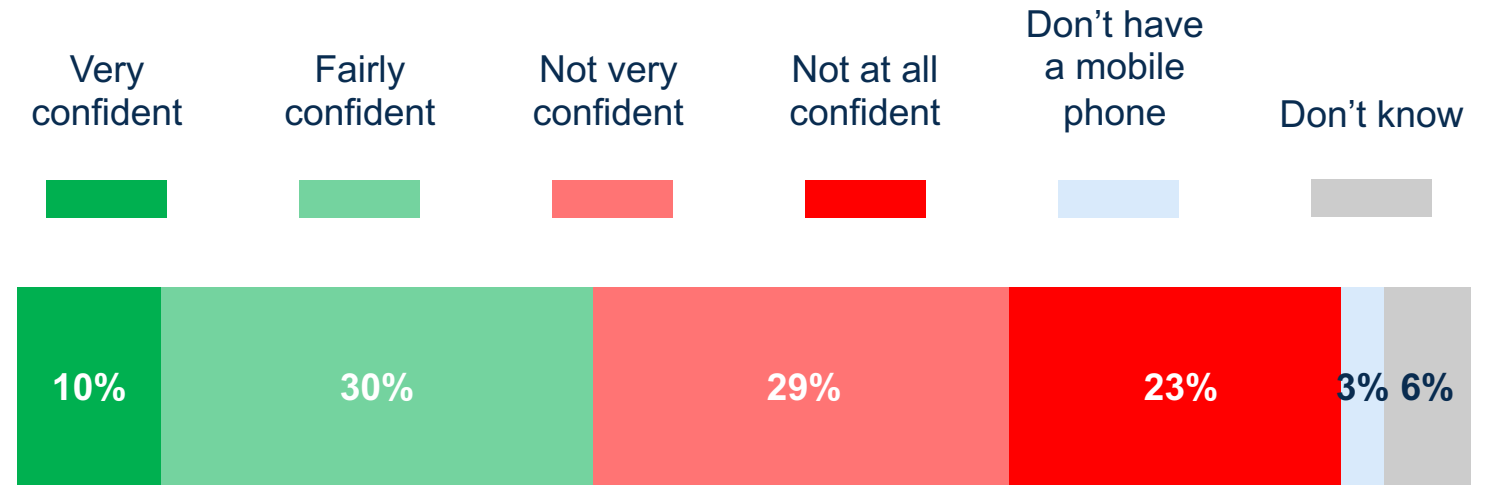
But people are more sceptical that the government would be able to protect their and other people's data, and they have doubts about the effectiveness of such an app.

52% say they aren't confident that the government could keep such data safe, compared with 40% who are.

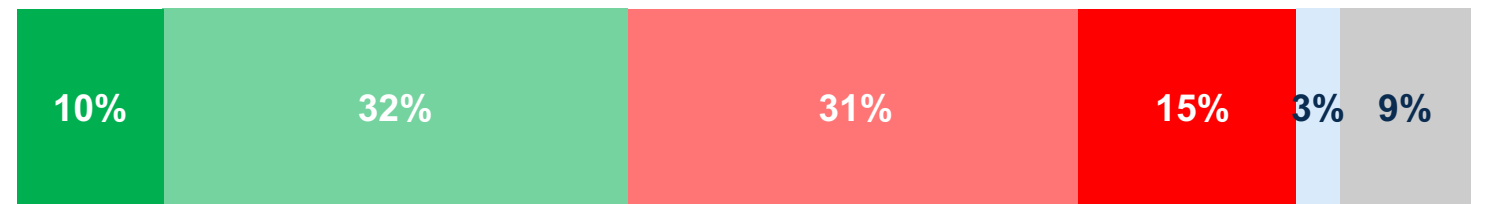
And **46% are not confident that a tracing app could help limit the spread of coronavirus**, compared with 42% who are.

If a mobile phone app is released by the government to trace potential contacts you may have with people who have been diagnosed with coronavirus, how confident, if at all, would you feel about...?

The government's protection of your and other people's data



The ability of such an app to limit the spread of coronavirus



Base: 2,254 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 20-22 May 2020

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