

# COVID-19 Consumer Tracker

## Wave 35

Published: 23rd July 2021  
Fieldwork Period: 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### UK Results



# Introduction

- VisitEngland, VisitScotland and Visit Wales have commissioned a Covid-19 consumer sentiment tracking survey to understand domestic intent to take overnight trips both within the UK and abroad, with particular focus around the current barriers and concerns around travel and how these will evolve over time.
- The survey addresses themes such as: the likelihood of UK residents to travel; when and where they plan to go; specific trip details such as destination and accommodation types, alongside the reassurances they're seeking from the sector.
- This tracker is based on a UK nationally representative sample of 1,500 adults aged 16+ with boosts for Scotland and Wales.
- Fieldwork for this wave's results took place between 12 – 16 July 2021.
- The results are made publicly available and updated each wave at the following website:  
<https://www.visitbritain.org/covid-19-consumer-sentiment-tracker>

# Definitions used within this report

In this report we look at the profiles and attitudes of a number of separate audiences depending on when they intend to take an overnight domestic trip. For ease of reference, the time periods have been given seasonal labels, although we appreciate these may not necessarily correspond with strict meteorological definitions.

- **Summer Intenders:** Residents of the UK who claim their next domestic overnight trip will take place between July and September 2021
- **Autumn Intenders:** Residents of the UK who claim their next domestic overnight trip will take place between October and December 2021

Where comparable questions exist, this report also includes benchmark data from 2020. The data shown is taken from fieldwork conducted in the equivalent period in 2020.

# Fieldwork Periods

Project Period	Fieldwork Period	Project Period	Fieldwork Period	Project Period	Fieldwork Period
Wave 1	18 – 22 May	Wave 14	31 August – 4 September	Wave 27	22 – 26 March
Wave 2	25 – 29 May	Wave 15	14 – 18 September	Wave 28	6 – 10 April
Wave 3	1 – 5 June	Wave 16	28 September – 2 October	Wave 29	19 – 23 April
Wave 4	8 – 12 June	Wave 17	12 – 16 October	Wave 30	4 – 9 May
Wave 5	15 – 19 June	Wave 18	26 – 30 October	Wave 31	17 – 21 May
Wave 6	22 – 26 June	Wave 19	9 – 13 November	Wave 32	31 May – 6 June
Wave 7	29 June – 3 July	Wave 20	23 – 27 November	Wave 33	14 - 18 June
Wave 8	6 – 10 July	Wave 21	7 – 11 December	Wave 34	28 June – 2 July
Wave 9	13 – 17 July	Wave 22	18 – 23 December	Wave 35	12 - 16 July
Wave 10	20 – 24 July	Wave 23	11 – 15 January	Wave 36	
Wave 11	27 – 31 July	Wave 24	25 – 29 January	Wave 37	
Wave 12	3 – 7 August	Wave 25	8 – 12 February	Wave 38	
Wave 13	10 – 14 August	Wave 26	8 – 12 March		

# Wave 35: Scorecard of Key Metrics

Key Metrics	Wave 34	Wave 35	Wave Shift
National mood (average score out of 10)	6.8	6.6	-0.2
Perceptions of the situation regarding Covid-19 (% stating 'worst has passed')	33%	23%	-10*
Appetite for Risk: Comfort in undertaking a range of activities (1-4 comfort score)	2.8	2.7	-0.1
Normality score (proportion expecting normality by December)	30%	23%	-7*
Leading two reasons for not feeling confident about taking a trip in Summer (July-September)	1. Restrictions on travel from government 2. Personal Finances	1. Restrictions on travel from government 2. Concerns around catching COVID-19	One change
Near-term confidence in taking UK overnight trip (July/August confident)	51%/57%	51%/54%	No change/-3*
Medium-term confidence in taking UK overnight trip (September/October confident)	61%/61%	57%/55%	-4*/-6*
Net anticipated number of UK short breaks compared to normal (% more minus fewer)	-7	-8	-1
Net anticipated number of UK longer breaks compared to normal (% more minus fewer)	-13	-12	+1
Proportion going on a UK overnight trip in Summer (July - September)	34%	30%	-4*
Leading UK overnight destination likely to stay in Summer (July - September)	South West	South West	No change
Main <i>type</i> of overnight destination likely to stay in Summer (July - September)	Traditional coastal/seaside town	Traditional coastal/seaside town	Change
Main overnight accommodation type likely to stay in Summer (July - September)	Hotel/motel/inn; camping/caravan	Hotel/motel/inn	One change
Proportion going on a UK day trip in next two weeks	28%	27%	-1
Place/activity likely to attract highest engagement compared to normal	Outdoor areas (e.g. beaches, trails etc)	Outdoor areas (e.g. beaches, trails etc)	No change
Place/activity likely to attract lowest engagement compared to normal	Predominantly indoor or covered attractions	Predominantly indoor or covered attractions; Indoor health and wellbeing activities	One change

\* Represents a significant change on previous wave



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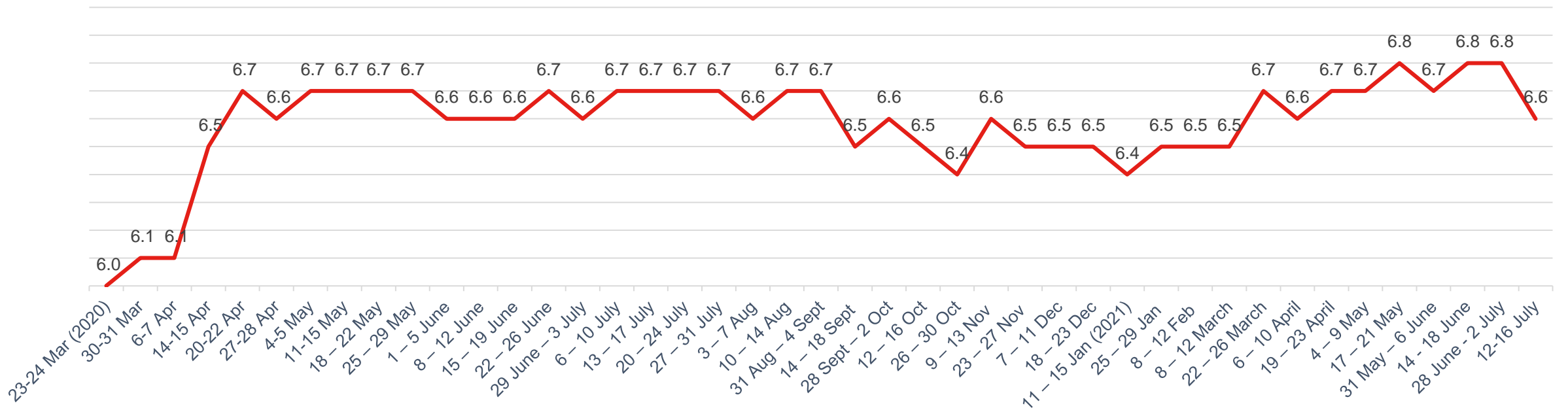
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# 1. The National Mood

# The National Mood

- The average mood of U.K. adults dips by 0.2 to 6.6 in Wave 35, dropping to levels not seen since the beginning of April 2021.

Figure 1. Current mood out of 10, Percentage wave-on-wave, UK

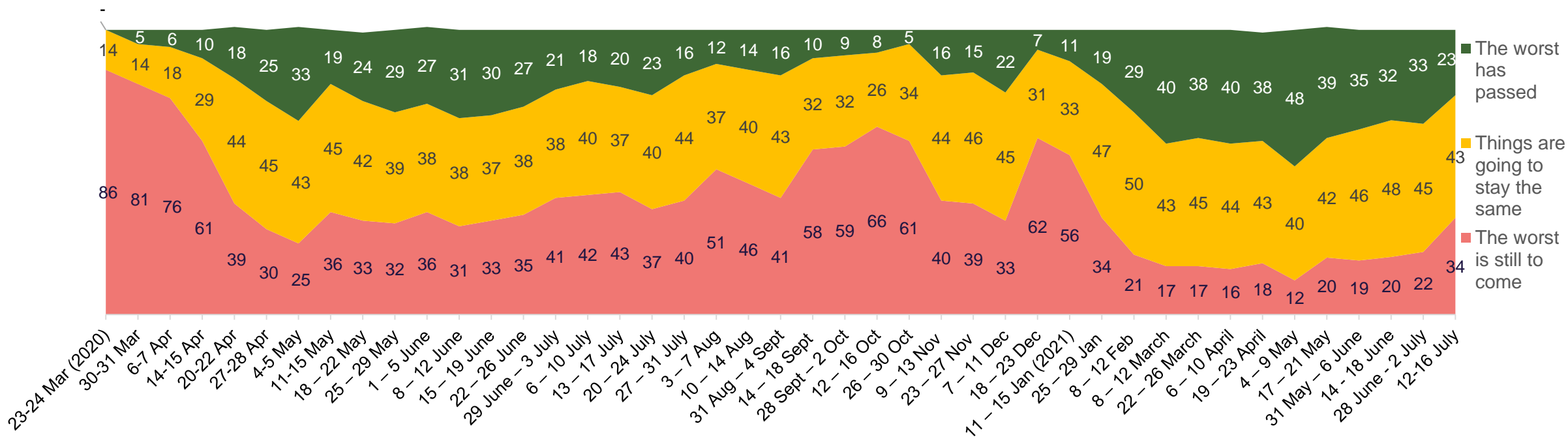


Q5: How would you rate, between 0 and 10, your mood today? Base: All respondents. Wave 35 = 1,761 All others waves n=c,1750. Pre Wave 1, research was conducted by BVA BDRC with base size of c.750

# Perceptions of the situation relating to COVID-19

- The proportion who believe ‘the worst has passed’ in relation to COVID-19 has dropped significantly, while ‘the worst is still to come’ observes a significant increase. Overall, a larger proportion of U.K. adults still perceive ‘things are going to stay the same’
- Sentiment in relation to COVID-19 is now similar to late January this year.

Figure 2. Perception of the situation with regards to COVID-19, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



Q7: Regarding the situation of Coronavirus in the UK and the way it is going to change in the coming month, which of the following best describes your opinion?  
 Base: All respondents. Wave 35 = 1,761 All others waves n=c,1750. Pre Wave 1, research was conducted by BVA BDRC with base size of c.750



# Perceptions of when things will 'return close to normal'

- Only a small minority of U.K. adults expect life to return 'something close to normal' by this summer – 2% by July, 5% by August and 11% by September – a significant drop on the figures reported in Wave 34.
- 23% expect normality by the end of the year\* ( a 7 percentage point fall from Wave 34), with 3 in 5 now expecting normality by April-June 2022.

Figure 3. Perceptions of when things will return 'close to normal', cumulative percentage, Wave 35, UK

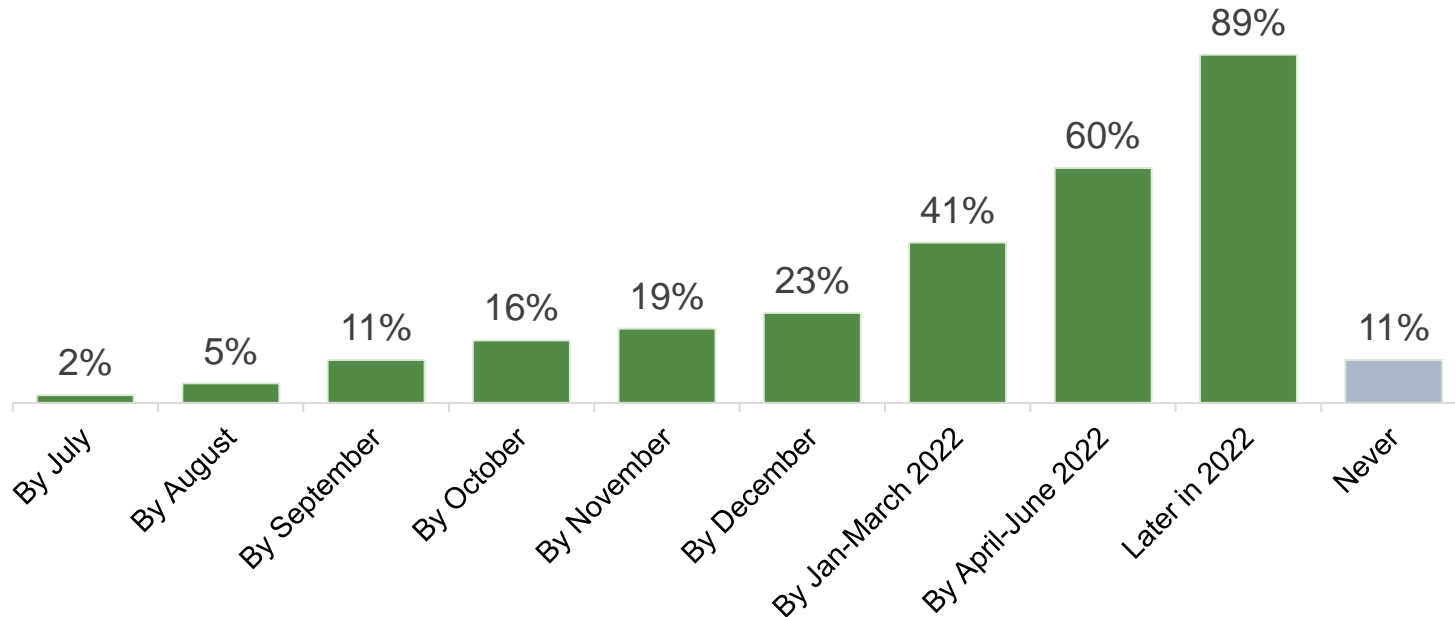
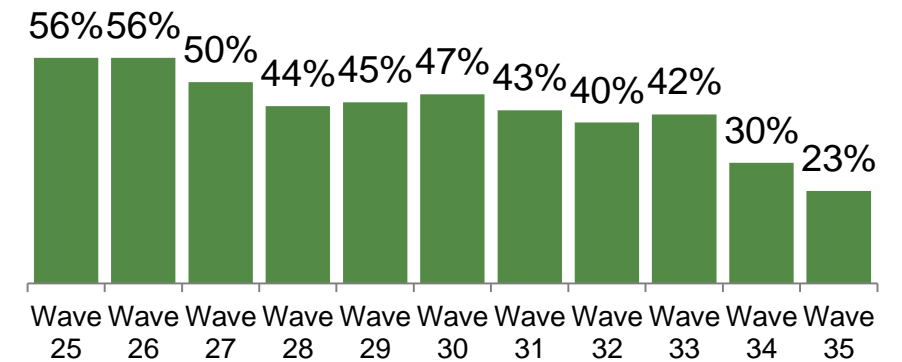


Figure 4. Proportion expecting normality by December, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



Q16: Given what you know today, when do you think life will return to something close to normal? Base: All respondents. Wave 35 = 1,761  
 \*New options added to the questionnaire in Wave 34 means a potential increased bias to later time frame responses from Wave 34 onwards

# Confidence in the ability to take overnight trips in UK

- 51% of U.K. adults are currently confident that an overnight domestic trip would go ahead in July and 54% in August. At 57%, September is the last month that confidence levels increase – from October they are relatively consistent.
- Compared to Wave 34, confidence levels have marginally decreased, but not at the same rate as ‘expectations of normality’ or attitudes in relation to COVID-19.

Figure 5. Confidence in taking a UK overnight trip across different time periods, percentage, Wave 35, UK

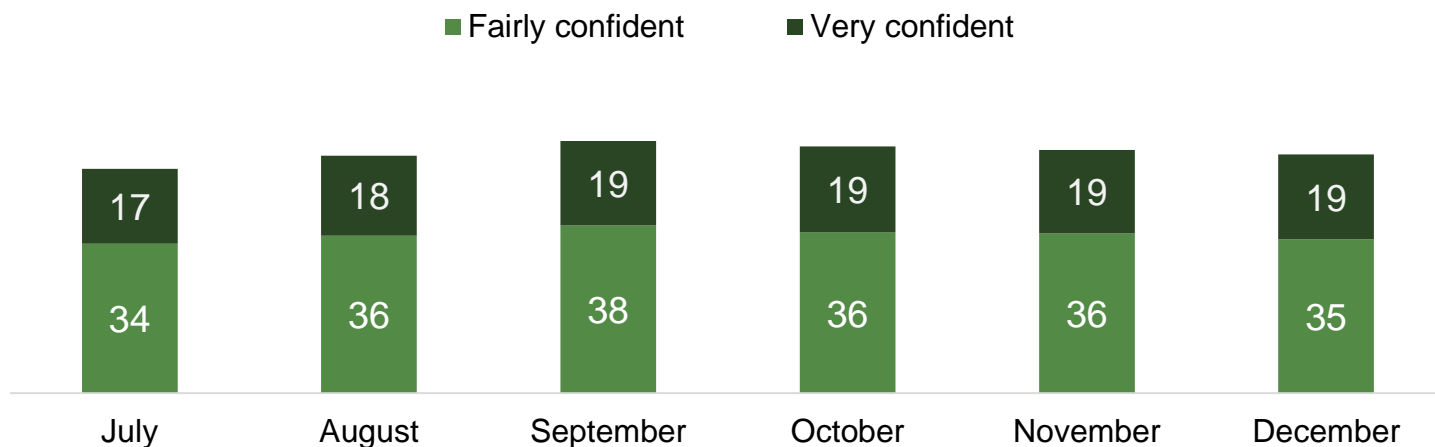
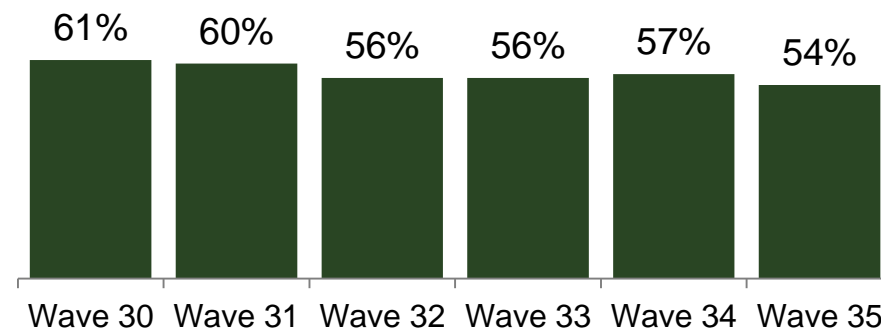


Figure 6. Confidence in taking a UK overnight trip in August 2021, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



# Top 5 reasons for not feeling confident about taking overnight trips in the UK

- ‘Restrictions on travel from government’ is the top reason people do not feel confident about taking an overnight trip during summer, although it is only marginally more influential than ‘concerns about catching COVID-19’.
- In autumn, the opposite is apparent with ‘concerns about catching COVID-19’ moving to become the top reason, while ‘restrictions on travel from government’ moves to second position with ‘personal finances’ in third place.

Figure 7. Top 5 reasons for not being confident about travelling in Summer\*, percentage Wave 35, UK

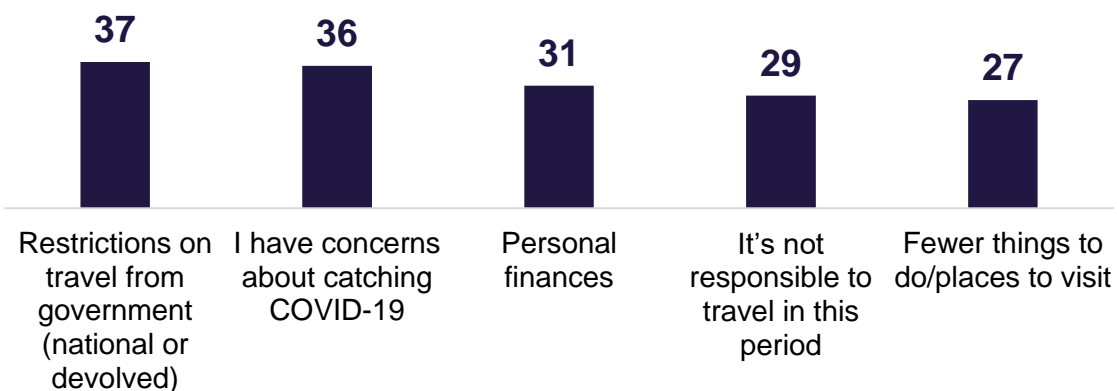
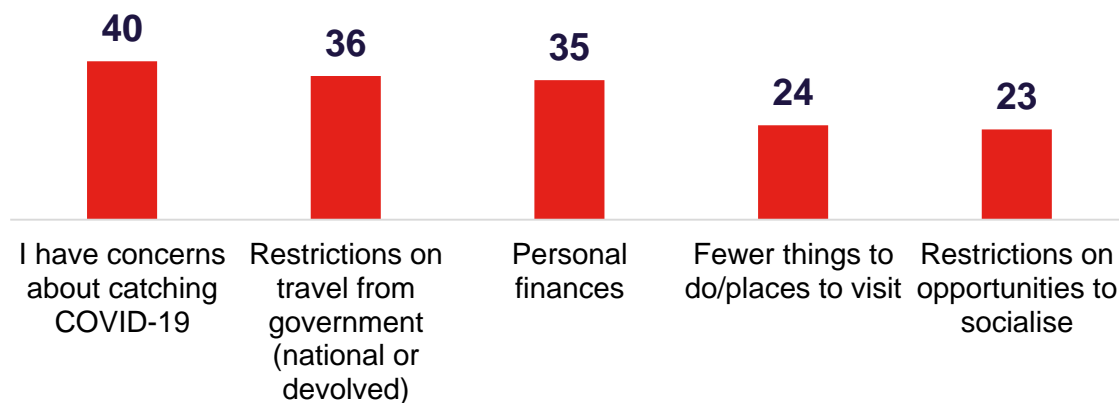


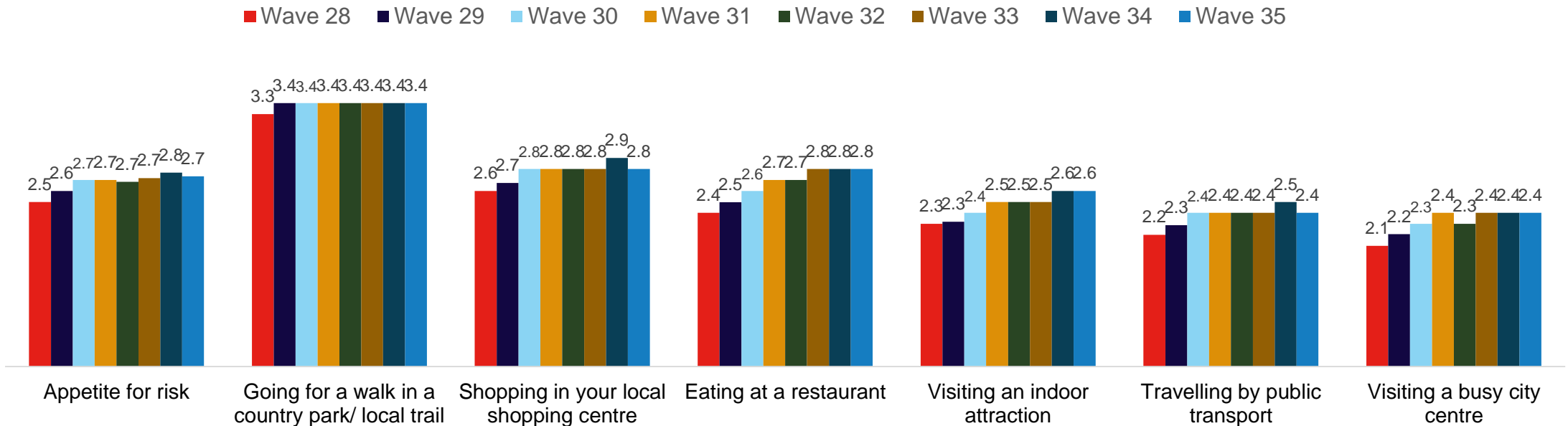
Figure 8. Top 5 reasons for not being confident about travelling in Autumn\*, percentage Wave 35, UK



# The 'Appetite for Risk'

- This wave's 'appetite for risk' score is 2.7, falling 0.1 since Wave 34, but remaining at the levels reported in the 4 waves prior to that
- The overall decrease is driven by falls in comfort levels for 'shopping in your local shopping centre' and 'travelling by public transport'. Comfort with all other activities remains the same.

Figure 9. Level of comfort conducting a range of activities separately and combined, average score where 1= not at all comfortable doing activity and 4= very comfortable doing activity, average wave-on-wave, UK



VB11. Broadly speaking, how comfortable or uncomfortable would you feel doing the following in the next month or so?  
 Base: All respondents excluding those stating 'don't know' or who wouldn't do activity under any circumstances. Mean average based on those that gave a score of 1-4. 'Net: appetite for risk' is calculated as a straight average of the four scores. Wave 35 = 1,761



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## 2. Overnight Trip Intentions

# Anticipated number of U.K. and overseas trips compared to normal

- Similar ‘travel confidence’ translates to consistent expectations of the number of U.K. trips in the next 6 months compared to normal – around half of UK residents anticipating more or about the same, with the remainder anticipating fewer or unsure.
- Anticipated overseas trips continue to be significantly below normal, with the number of those saying ‘fewer’ trips rising for the second consecutive wave.

Figure 10a. Number of U.K. overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Percentage Wave 35, UK

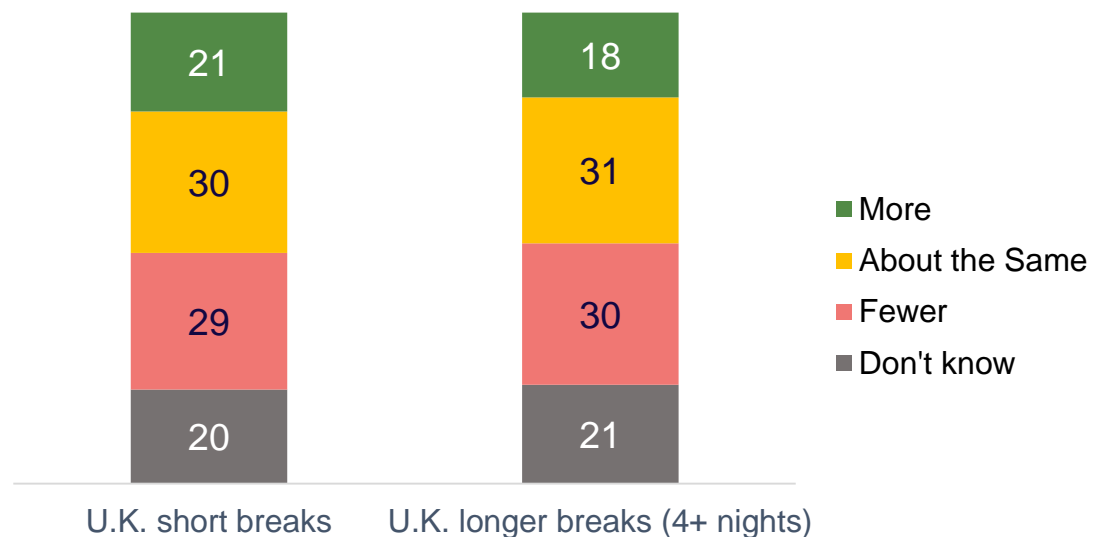
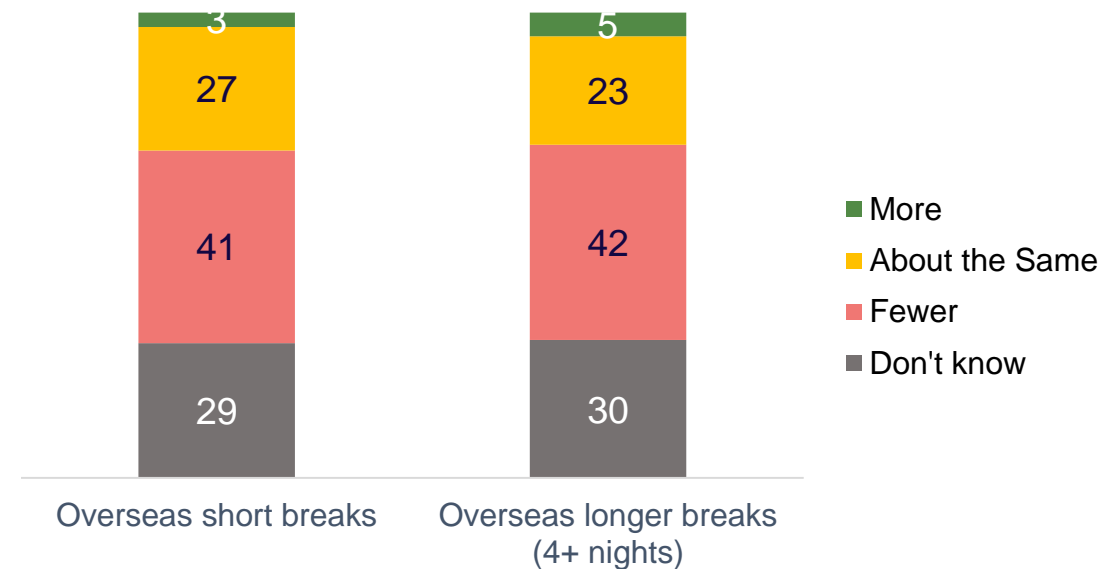


Figure 10b. Number of OVERSEAS overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Percentage Wave 35, UK



QVB1b. Compared to normal, are you likely to take more, fewer or about the same number of UK holidays/short breaks in the next 6 months? Base: All respondents. Wave 35 = 1,761

\*Note: Questionnaire changed in Wave 34 from 'by the end of the year' to 'next six months'

# Anticipated number of U.K. and overseas trips compared to normal

- Overall, the U.K. public anticipate taking fewer short breaks in comparison to Wave 34, though have seen a marginal improvement on longer breaks.
- The anticipated number of domestic trips is now at similar levels to Wave 30 (early May), whilst anticipated overseas trips continue to decline and now sit at their lowest level, particularly for longer overseas breaks.

Figure 10. Number of U.K. overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Net 'More minus fewer', Wave-on-wave, UK

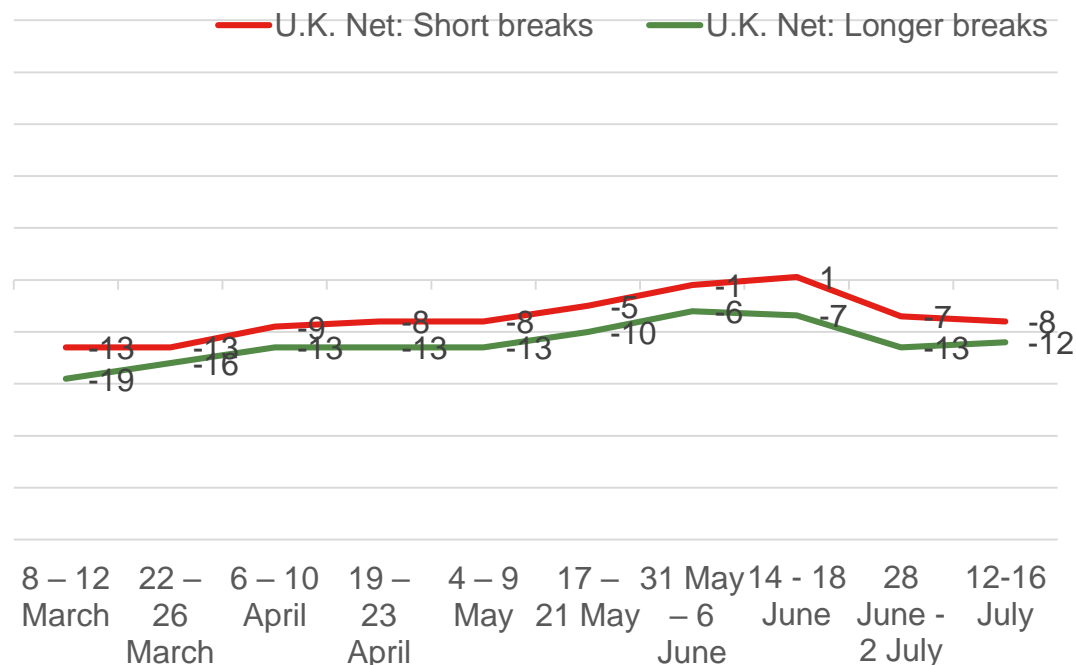
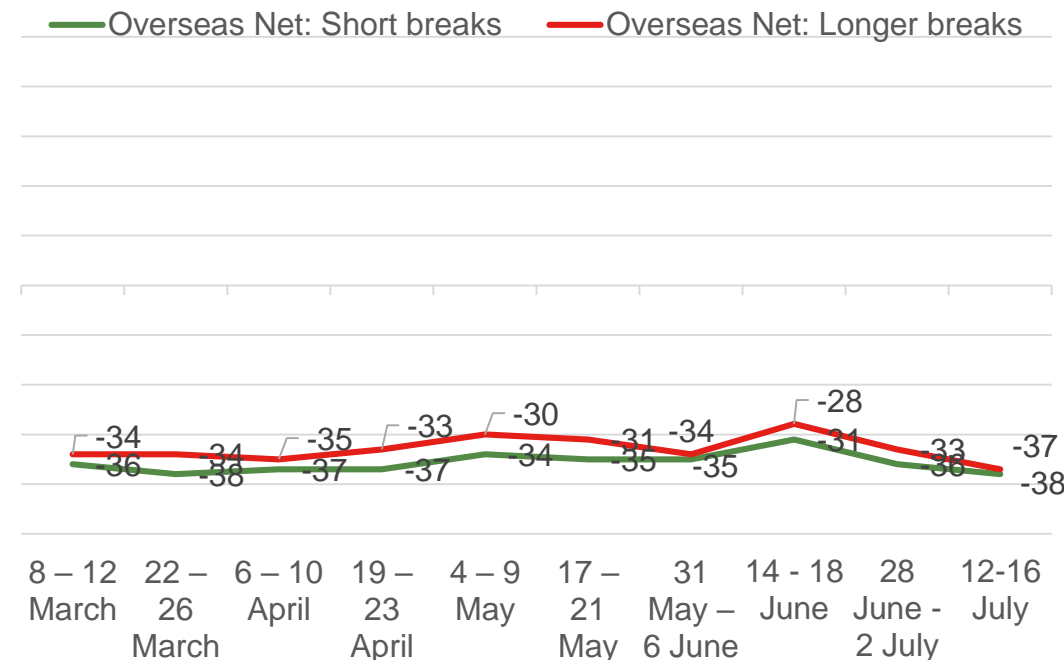


Figure 11. Number of OVERSEAS overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Net 'More minus fewer', Wave-on-wave, UK



QVB1b. Compared to normal, are you likely to take more, fewer or about the same number of UK holidays/short breaks between now and the end of the year 2021? Base: All respondents. Wave 35 = 1,761

\*Note: Questionnaire changed in Wave 34 from 'by the end of the year' to 'next six months'

# When anticipate to plan and book the next overnight trip in UK

- 24% of U.K. adults claim to have already planned and 19% already *booked* their next domestic overnight trip, both of which are fairly consistent with last wave, but significantly ahead of the equivalent period in 2020.
- 47% are likely to have *planned* a domestic overnight trip by the end of summer (compared to 40% in 2020), with 2 in 5 (41%) expecting to have one *booked* (compared to 35% in 2020).

Figure 12. When anticipate PLANNING the next UK overnight trip, Percentage Wave 35, UK

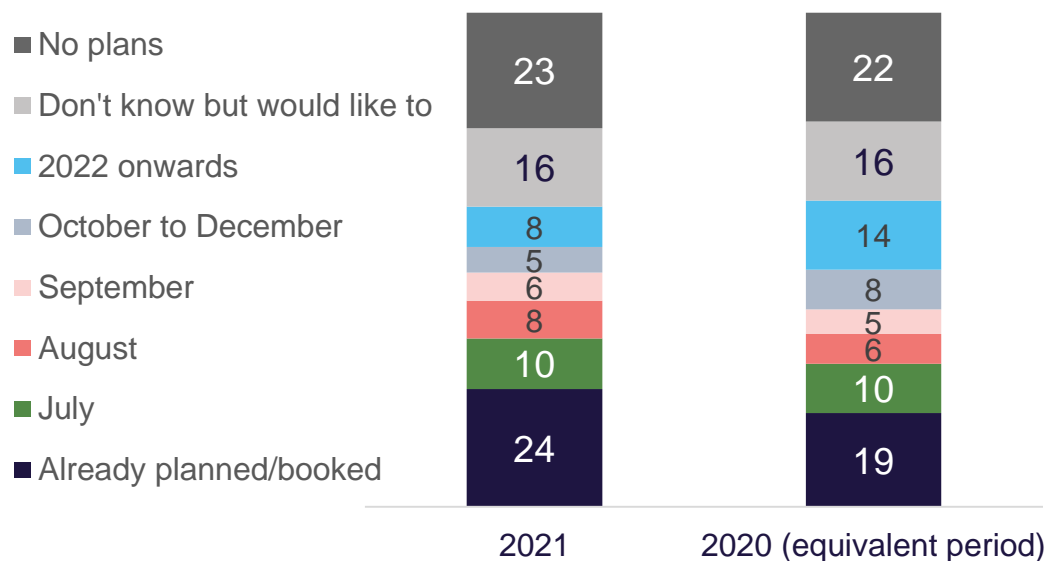
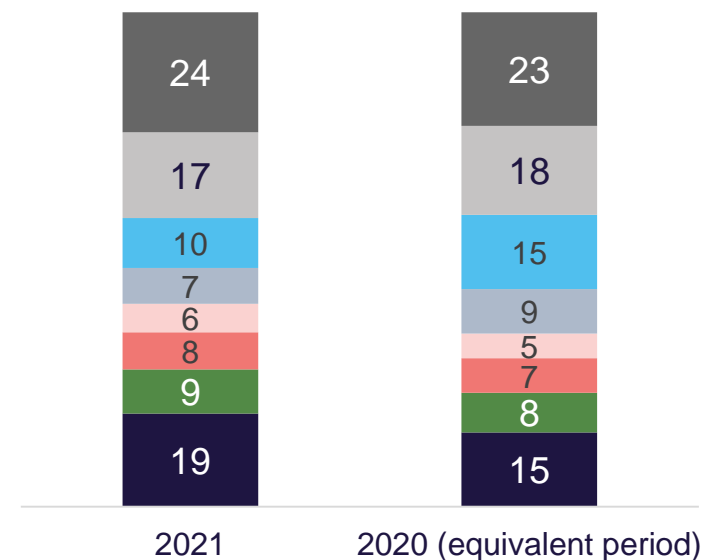


Figure 12. When anticipate BOOKING the next UK overnight trip, Percentage Wave 35, UK





# When anticipate taking overnight trips in the UK and impact on U.K. trip if overseas restrictions lifted

- 3 in 10 (30%) of U.K. adults anticipate taking an overnight domestic trip this summer, slightly down on last wave but this is driven by the reduced available time in summer (the remaining time in July being two fewer weeks than in Wave 34). 7% plan to do so in July, 15% in August and 14% in September – all of which are ahead of intentions in the equivalent period in 2020. 23% plan on taking a trip this Autumn.
- The vast majority would continue to take their planned U.K. trip even if all overseas travel restrictions were lifted.

Figure 14. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight UK trips, percentage Wave 35, UK

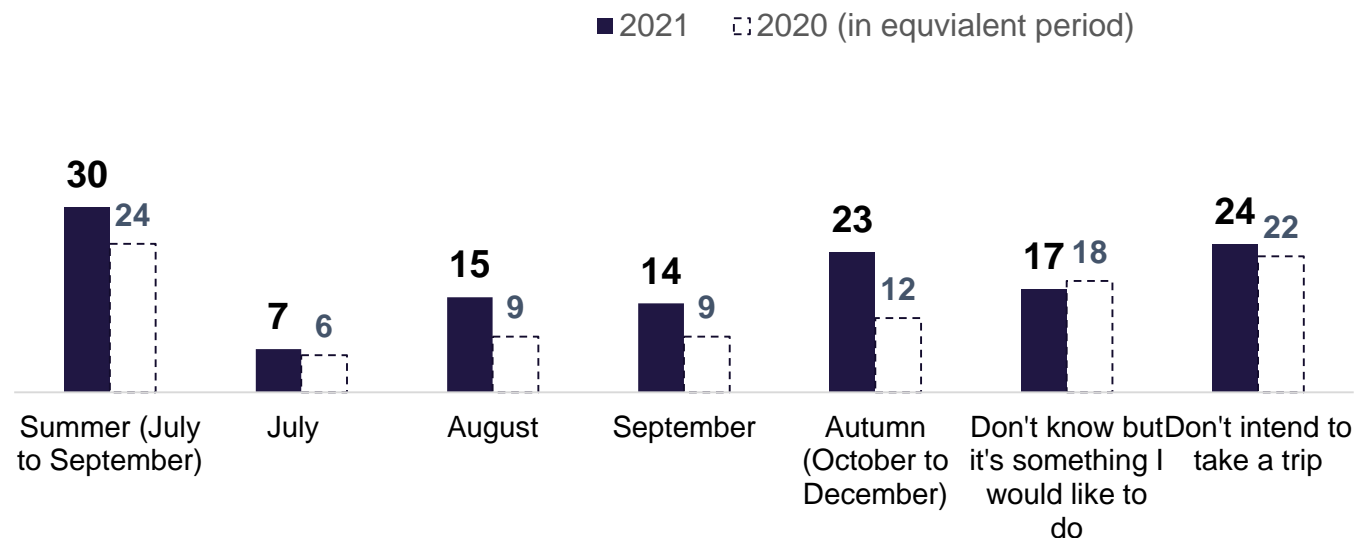
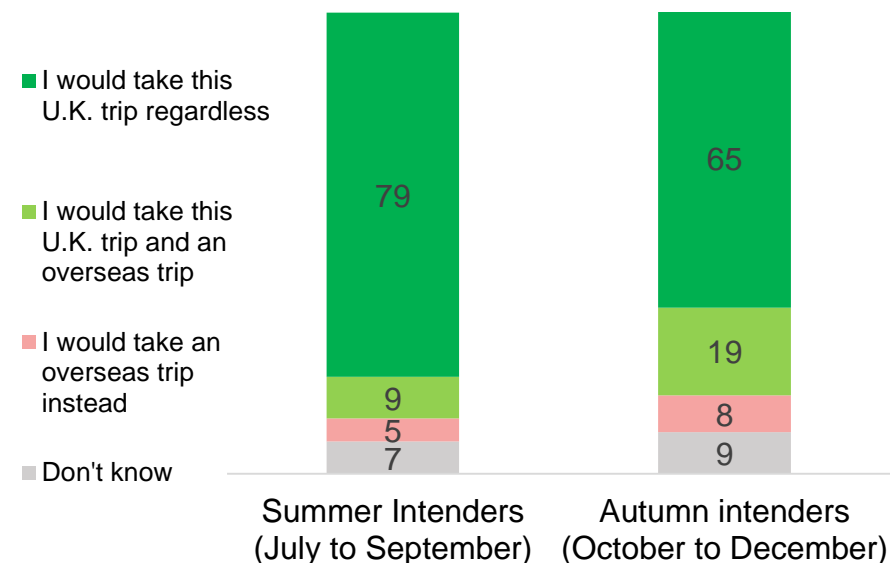


Figure 14b. Impact on U.K. trip if majority of overseas travel restrictions were lifted, percentage Wave 35, UK



QVB2a. Thinking of the next UK holiday or short break you are likely to take, when are you likely to plan, book and go on this trip? QVB2b. And when else do you anticipate going on a UK holiday or short break? Base: All respondents. Wave 35 = 1,761  
 Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate taking multiple trips across several time periods. VB6gii. In the event of the vast majority of restrictions relating to overseas travel being lifted, how, if at all, would this impact your planned overnight trip in the UK during <<insert month>>? Base: All Wave 35 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK in Summer (July to September) n=471, Autumn (October to December) n=220

# Planning and booking timeline compared to normal

- The U.K. public are planning their summer and autumn trips further away from the travel date than they normally would.
- The 'net' position among both summer and autumn intenders indicates that the *booking* of trips is happening closer to the travel date than usual.

Figure 15. **PLANNING** lead times for Summer or Autumn trips compared to normal, percentage Wave 35, U.K.

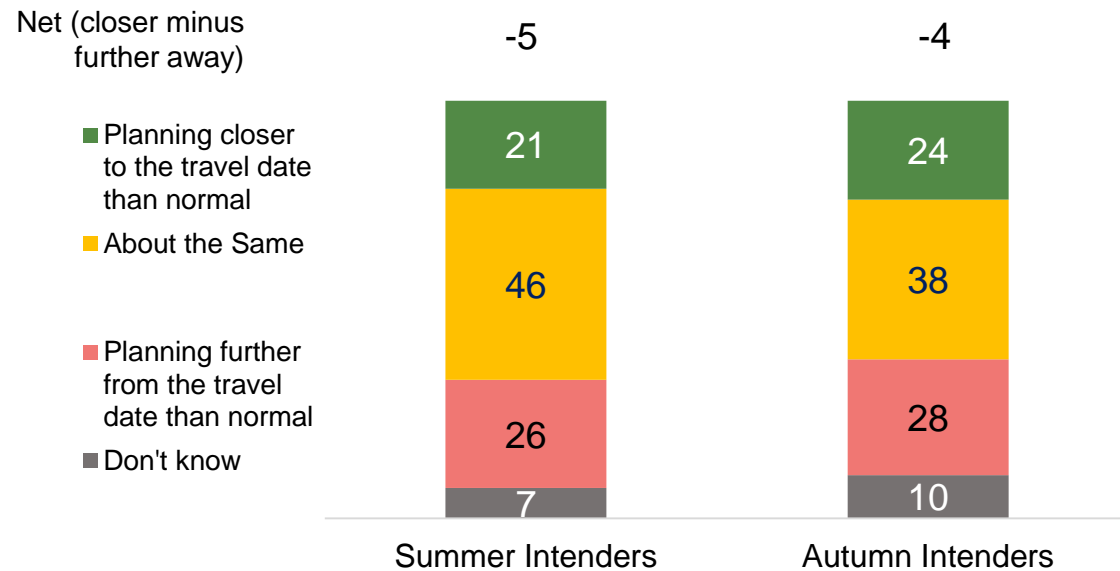
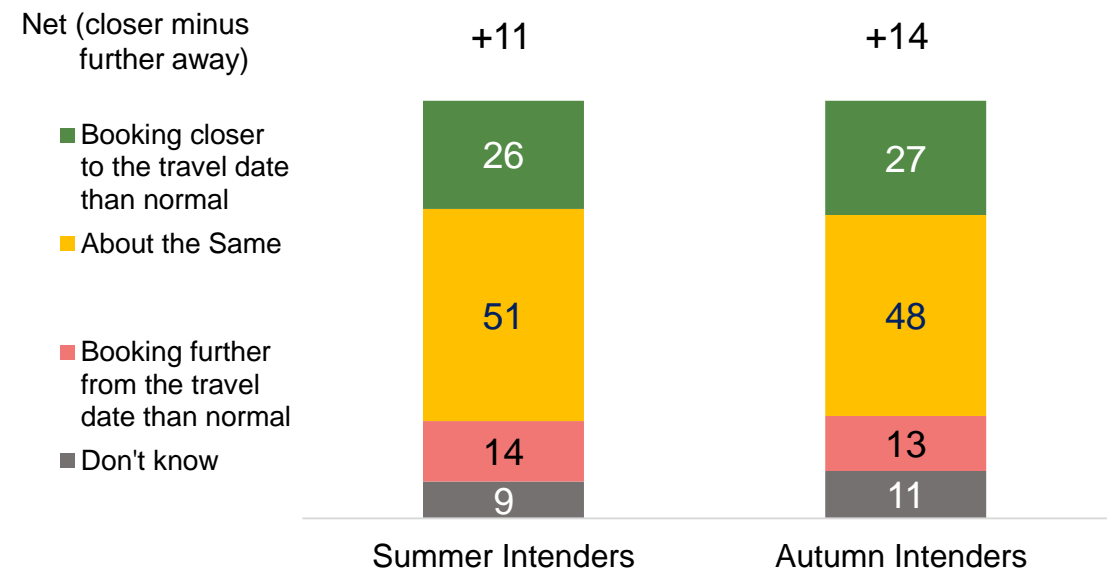


Figure 16. **BOOKING** lead times for Summer or Autumn trips compared to normal, percentage Wave 35, U.K.



# Proportion of trip intenders that have already planned or booked their next overnight trip in the UK

- Over half (55%) of summer intenders have already planned their forthcoming trip with 48% having already booked it – fairly consistent with Wave 34, and significantly higher than in the equivalent period in 2020.
- The proportion of autumn intenders that have already planned or booked their trip is unsurprisingly lower than summer (34% and 25% respectively), but also higher than in 2020.
- 20% of summer and 29% of autumn overnight trips are transferred bookings that were previously cancelled or postponed due to Covid.

Figure 17. Proportion of Intenders that have already planned their trip, percentage Wave 35 for Summer and Autumn, UK

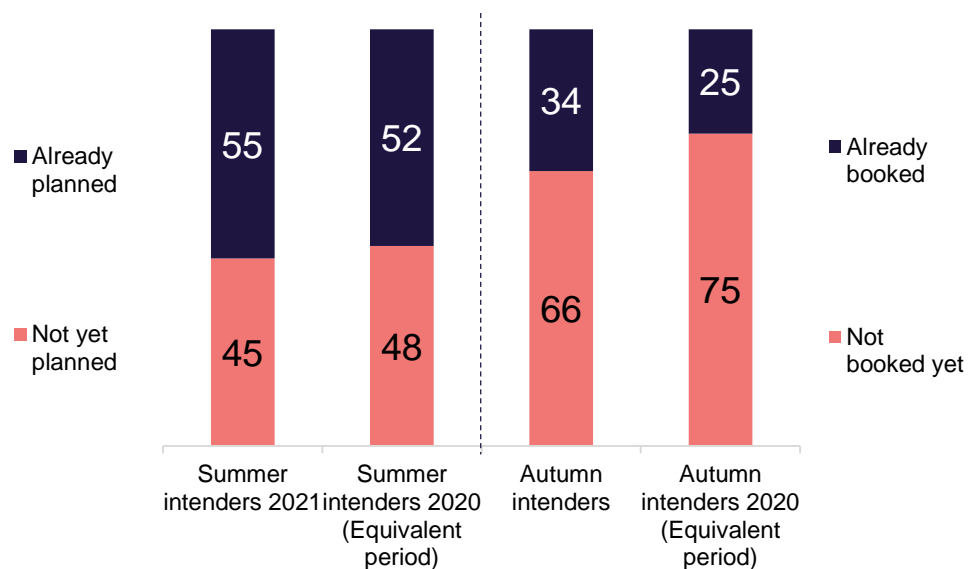


Figure 18. Proportion of Intenders that have already booked their trip, percentage Wave 35 for Summer and Autumn, UK

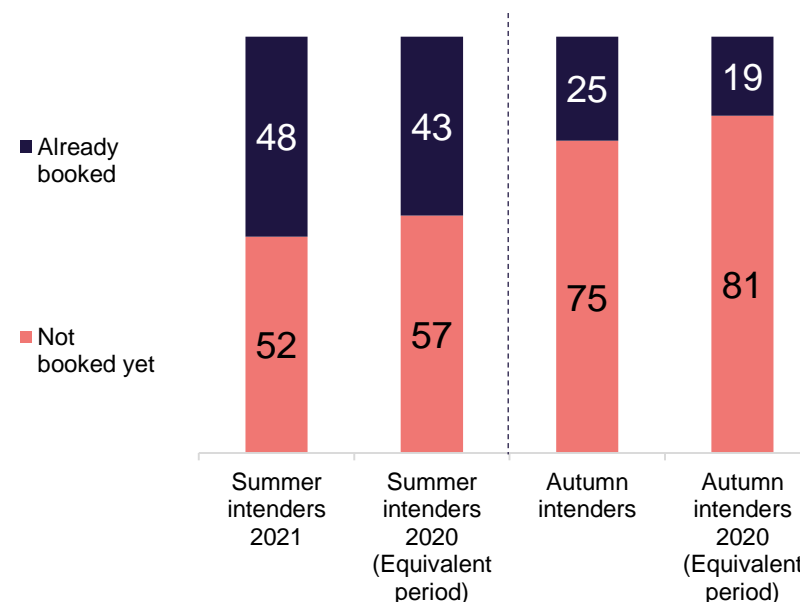
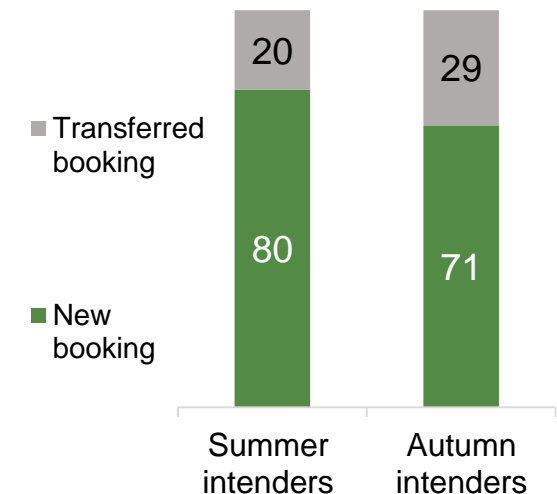


Figure 19. Proportion of next trips that are transferred bookings, percentage Wave 35 for Summer and Autumn, UK



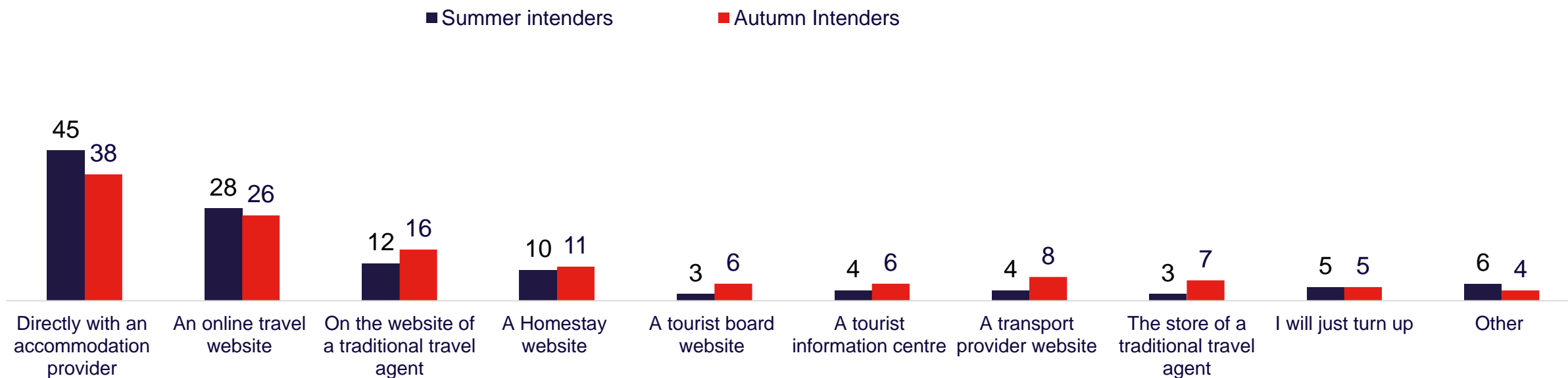
QVB2a. Thinking of the next UK holiday or short break you are likely to take, when are you likely to plan, book and go on this trip? VB6diii Is this next trip a transferred booking from a trip that was previously cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19?

Base: All Wave 35 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK in Summer (July to September) n=519, Autumn (October to December) n=220

# Ideal method of booking accommodation for next overnight trip in UK

- ‘Directly with an accommodation provider’ remains the leading anticipated method of booking accommodation for summer and autumn intenders
- ‘An online travel website’ proves to be the second leading anticipated method of booking accommodation in both time periods

Figure 19a. Accommodation booking channel for next trip in Summer and Autumn, percentage Wave 35, UK



VB6d. How would you ideally book or have you already booked your accommodation for your U.K. trip.

Base: All Wave 35 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK in Summer (July to September) n= 519, Autumn (October to December) n=220

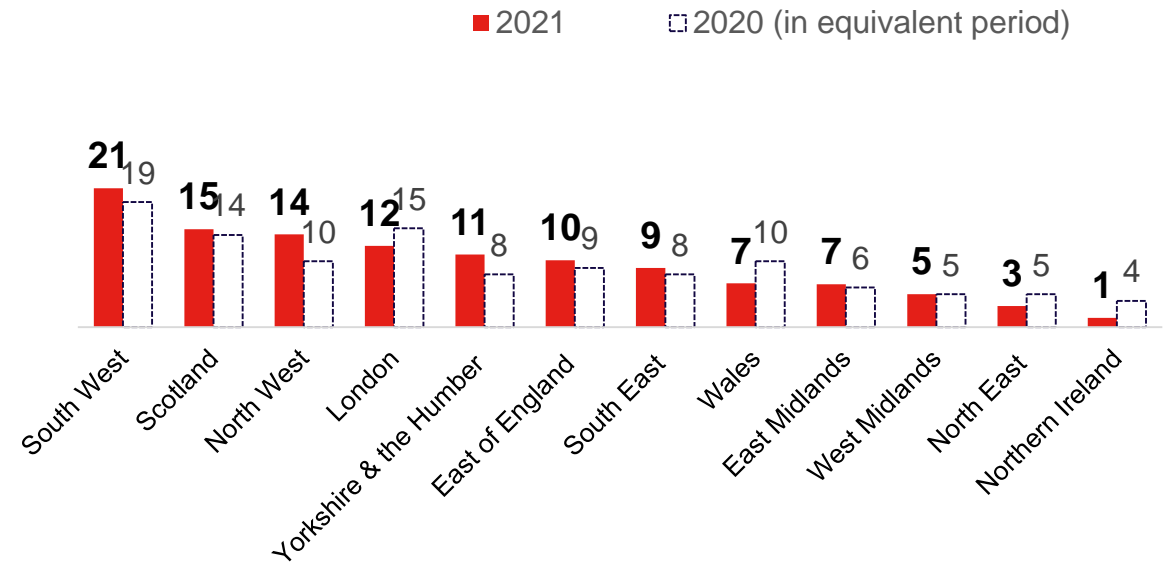
# Where planning on staying on next overnight trip in UK

- The South West of England remains the leading destination for an overnight domestic trip during both the summer and autumn periods – preferred by more than twice as many summer intenders as any other destination.
- In line with previous waves, little separates the visitor share of the majority of subsequent destinations in the summer period.
- Destination intention is relatively in line with the equivalent period in 2020. However, it's worth noting that London is significantly preferred this year, compared to the equivalent period last year.

Figure 21. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip in Summer, percentage Waves 34 and 35, UK



Figure 22. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip in Autumn, Percentage Waves 34 and 35, UK



QVB4a. Where in the UK are you likely to stay on this next trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2(III)>?

Base: All Waves 34 and 35 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK for Summer (July to September) n=1,117, Autumn (October-December)

n = 404

Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate staying in more than one location.

# Destination type for next overnight trip in UK

- Over 1 in 3 (35%) summer intenders are likely to stay in a ‘traditional coastal/seaside town’, fairly consistent with the last two waves and the equivalent period in 2020. Consistent with ‘London intention’, intentions to holiday in a ‘city or large town’ is significantly higher than in 2020.
- In the autumn period, ‘traditional coastal/seaside town’ is the also top destination type, which differs from the equivalent period in 2020, which saw ‘city or large town’ lead on destination type.

Figure 23. Main type of destination for trip in summer, percentage  
Waves 34 and 35, UK

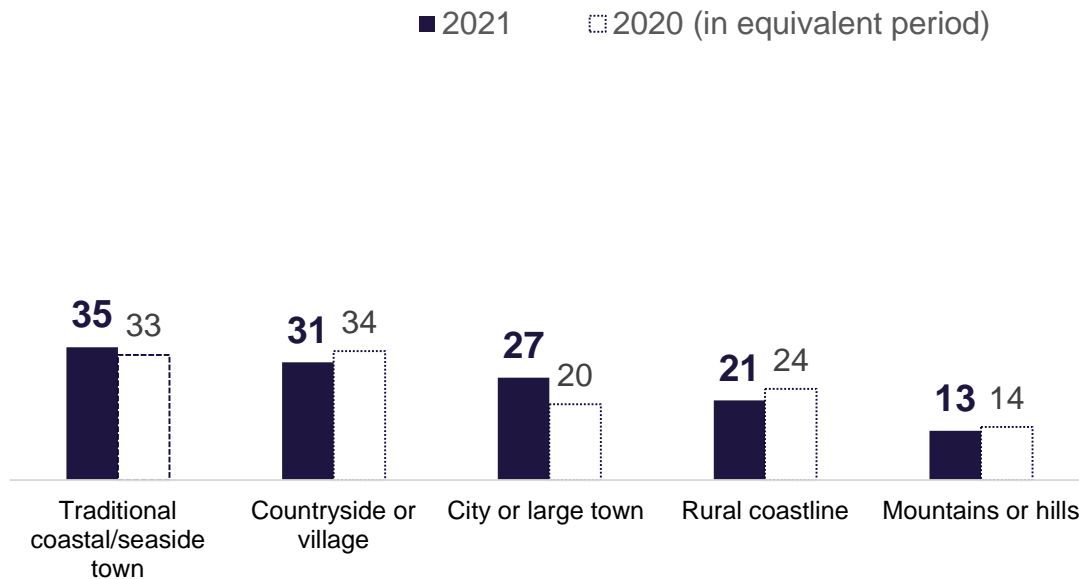
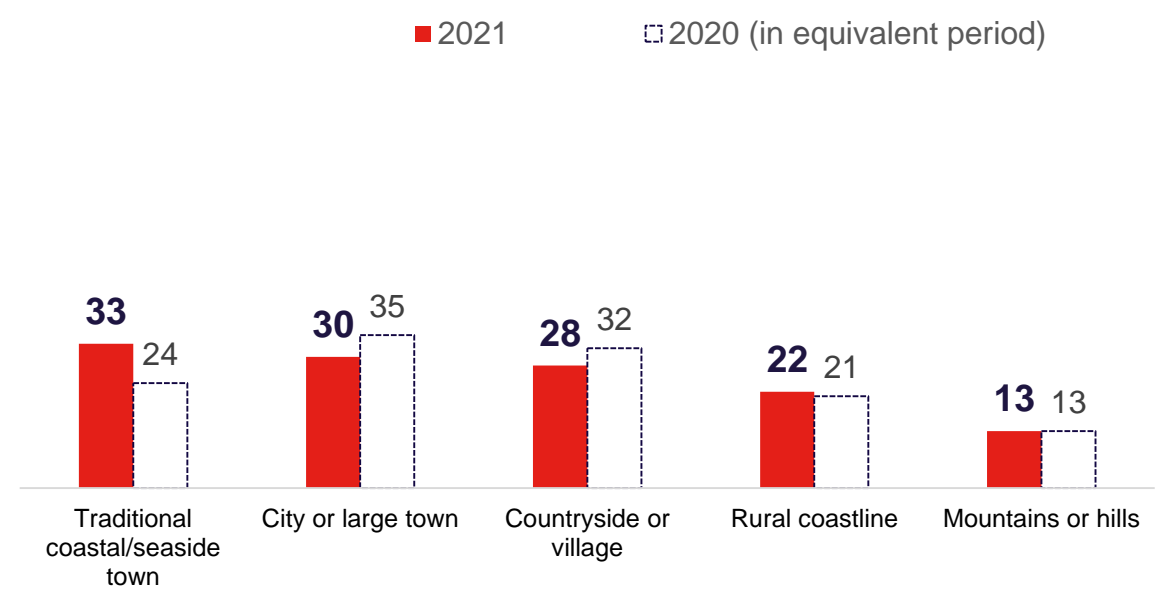


Figure 24. Main type of destination for trip in autumn, percentage  
Waves 34 and 35, UK



QVB5a. Which of the following best describes the main types of destination you are likely to stay in during your UK trip?

Base: All Waves 34 and 35 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK for Summer (July to September) n=1,117, Autumn (October-December) n = 404

Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate staying in more than one location.

# Accommodation type for next overnight trip in UK

- ‘Hotel/motel/inn’ is the leading accommodation choice amongst summer intenders and higher than in the equivalent period in 2020 (driven by more of a preference for ‘city/large town’ trips).
- ‘Hotel/motel/inn’ is also the leading choice amongst autumn intenders, ahead of ‘commercial rental’, ‘a private home’ and ‘camping/caravan’. Autumn intenders are considering a wider range of accommodation choices than 2020 intenders.

Figure 25. Accommodation planning on staying in on next UK overnight trip in summer, net percentage Waves 34 and 35

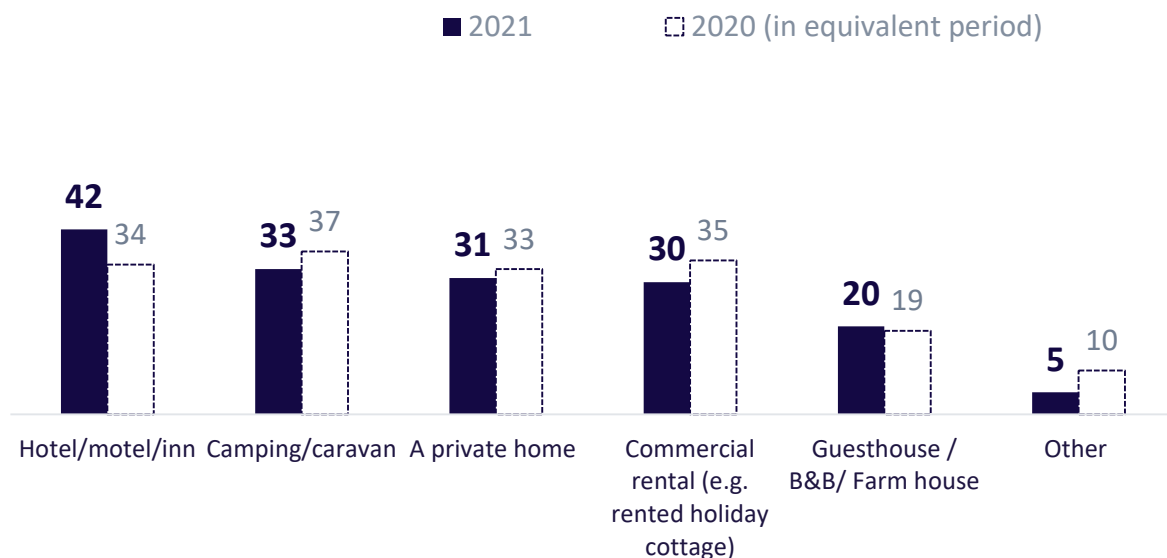
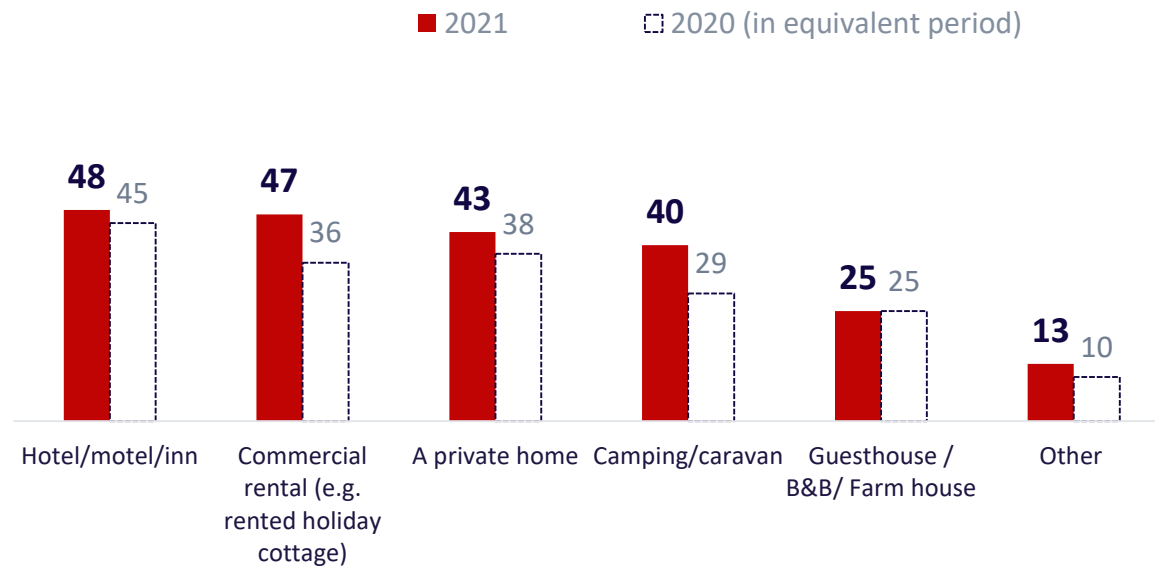


Figure 26. Accommodation planning on staying in on next UK overnight trip in autumn, net percentage Waves 34 and 35



QVB6a. What type/s of accommodation do you expect to be staying in during your UK trip in <insert month>?

Base: All Waves 34 and 35 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK for Summer (July to September) n=1,117, Autumn (October-December)

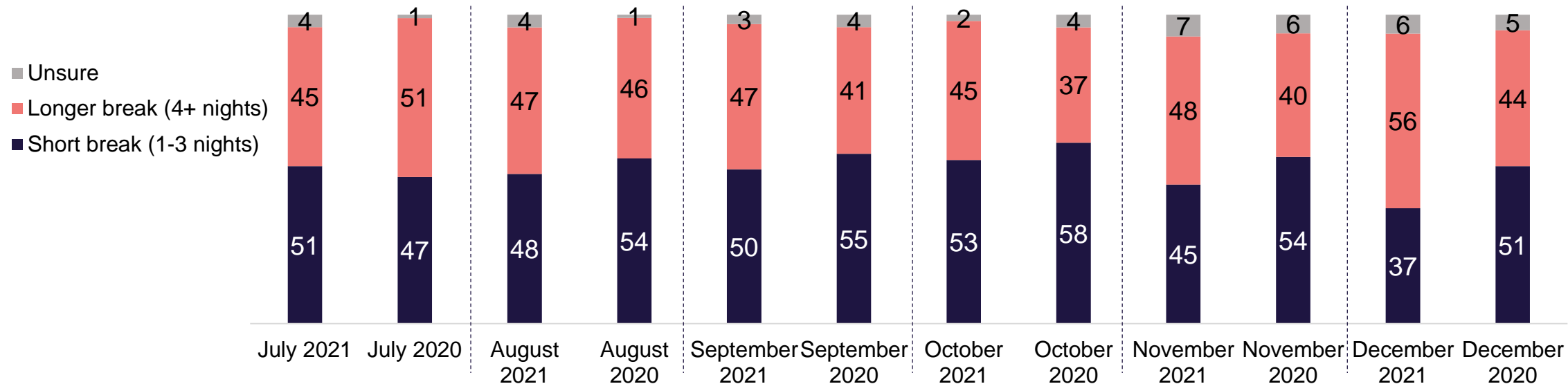
n = 404

Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate using more than one type of accommodation.

# Duration of the next overnight trip in UK

- Overnight domestic trips planned in the summer are predominantly longer breaks. This trend continues into the autumn period, particularly towards the end of the year in December.
- Broadly, intended trips in 2021 are more likely to be longer breaks than in 2020.

Figure 27. Length of next UK holiday or short break by time period, percentage Waves 34 and 35, UK



QVB3. Is this next trip likely to be a short break (1-3 nights) or a holiday (4+ nights)?

Base: All Waves 34 and 35 respondents intending to take next holiday or short break in each time period: July n=372, August n=417, September n=328, October n = 213, November n = 100, December n = 91



# Main mode of transport for next overnight trip in UK

- Across both time periods, 'own car' is by far the leading main mode of transport for travelling to an overnight destination, with 66% stating this for summer trips and 55% for autumnn trips.
- 'Train' is the second most likely mode of travel to an overnight destination in both time periods.

Figure 28. Top 5 main modes of travel to destination for trip in Summer, percentage, Wave 35, UK

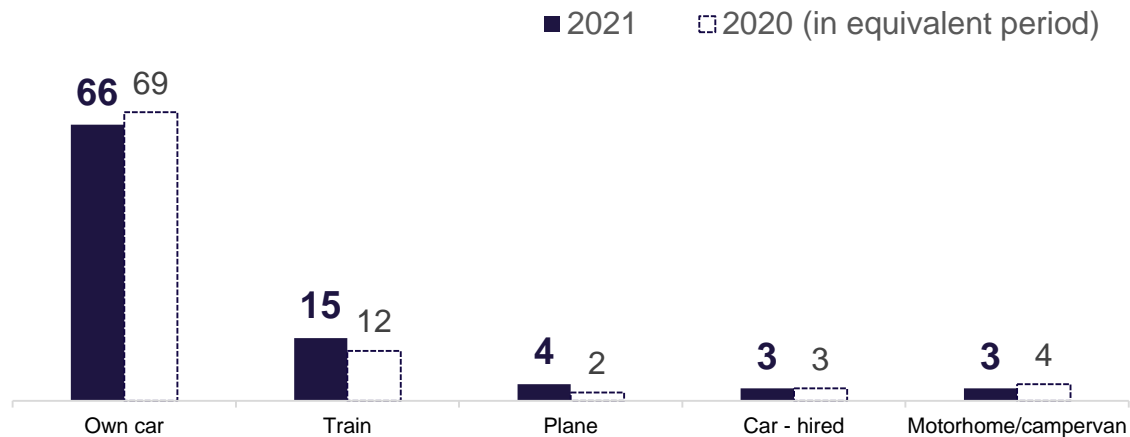
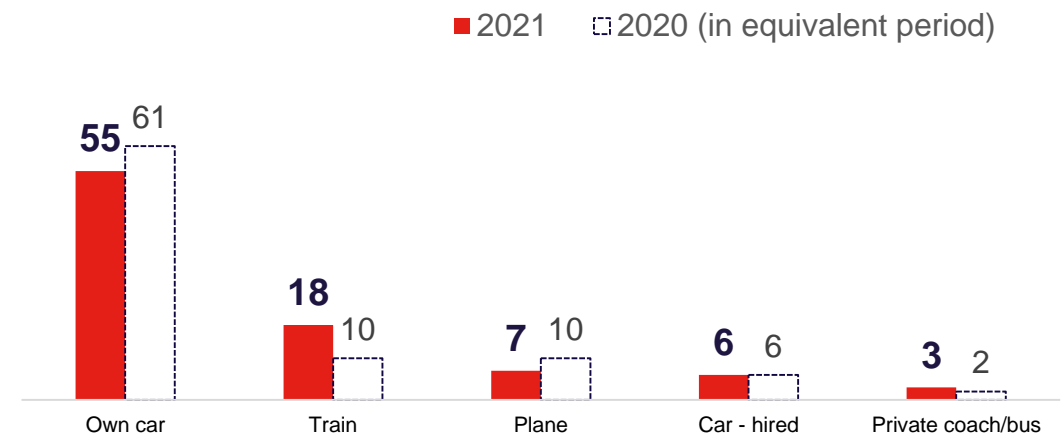


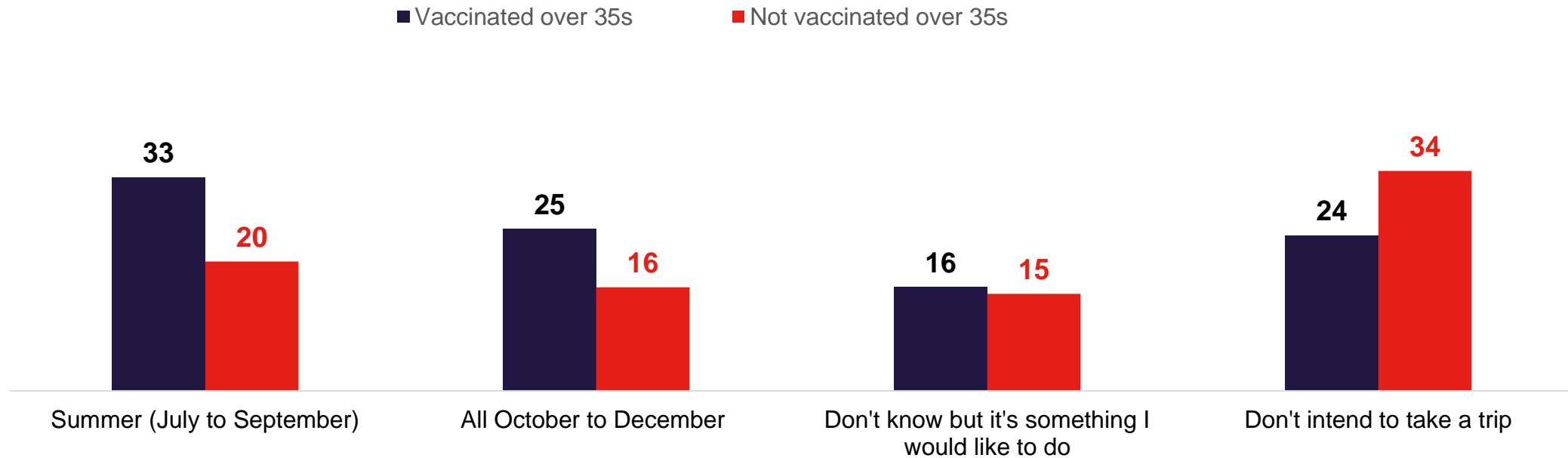
Figure 29. Top 5 main modes of travel to destination for trip in Autumn, percentage, Wave 35 UK



# Vaccine impact on domestic overnight trip intent

- U.K. adults aged over 35 and who claim to have had at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine exhibit a greater likelihood to take summer and autumn overnight trips than over 35s that have *not* been vaccinated.

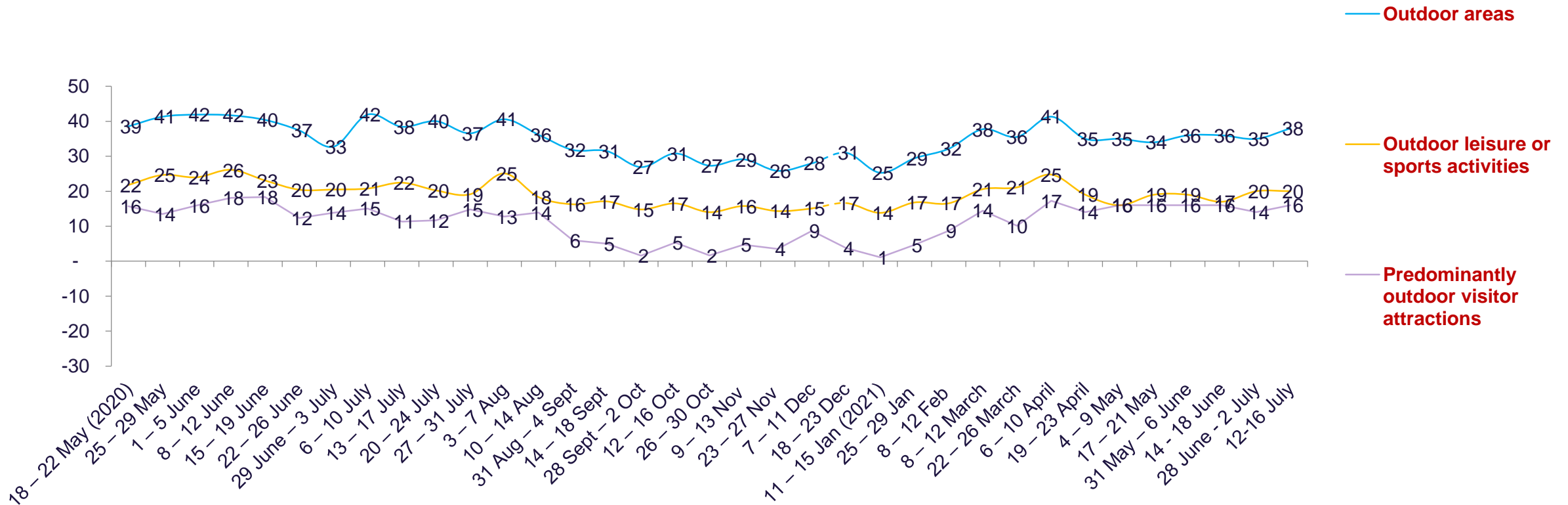
Figure 30. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight UK trip by vaccine status, Percentage Wave 35, UK



# Outdoor leisure activity engagement in the next few months

- Engagement levels for outdoor areas has slightly improved, continuing to generate more activity than normal.
- For 'outdoor areas' and 'predominantly outdoor visitor attractions', there is a 3 and 2 percentage point improvement respectively

**Figure 31. Leisure venues and activities more or less likely to visit/do as lockdown restrictions are lifted, Net: 'more likely' minus 'less likely', Wave-on-wave, UK**

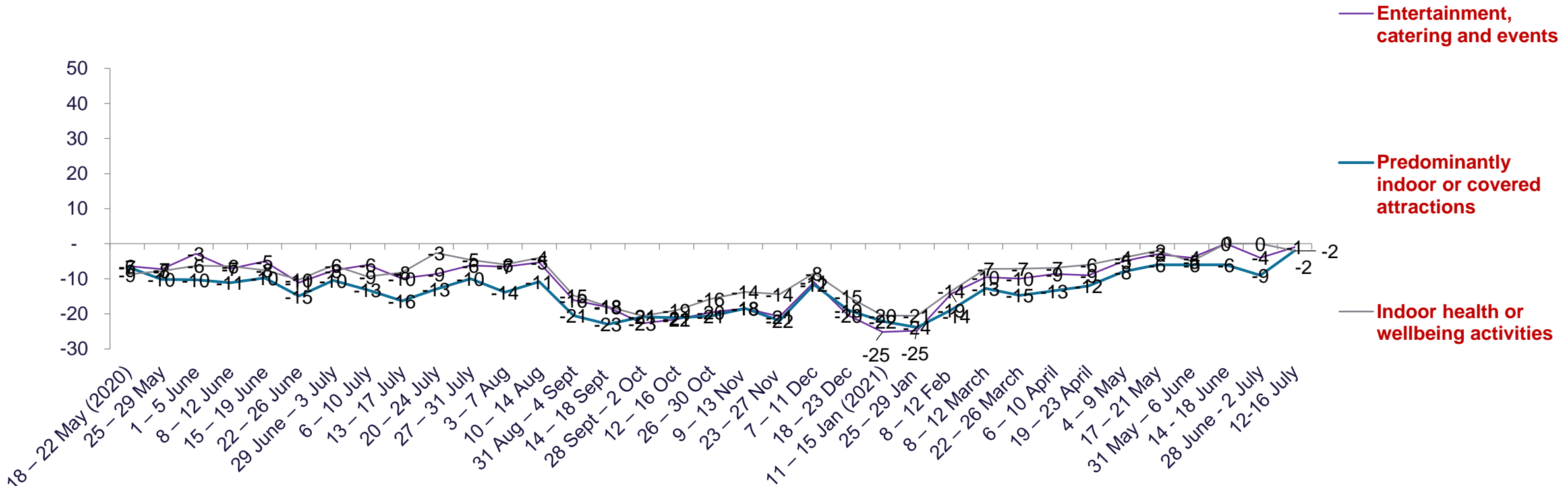


QVB9a/bB10a/b. Which, if any, of these types of places/activities in the UK are you more/less likely than normal to visit/do over the next few months? Base: All Wave 35 = 1,761

# Indoor leisure activity engagement in the next few months

- Intended engagement levels for 'indoor health or wellbeing activities' have dropped marginally after sitting at 'net: neutral' for the second time since the research began. At -2, 'predominantly indoor or covered attractions' are close to achieving 'neutral' activity levels, after improving by 5 percentage points on last wave, while 'entertainment, catering and events' have improved by 3 percentage points.

Figure 31. Leisure venues and activities more or less likely to visit/do as lockdown restrictions are lifted, Net: 'more likely' minus 'less likely', Wave-on-wave, UK





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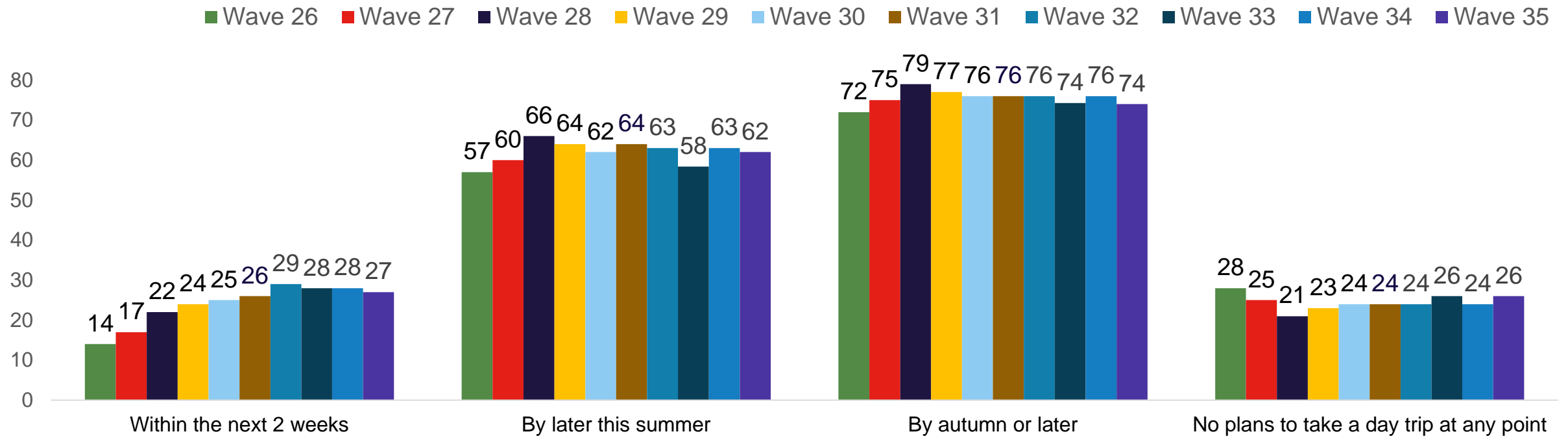
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## 4. Day Trip Intentions

# Day trip intention overall

- The likelihood to take day trips in the next two weeks dips appears to have plateaued with around 3 in 10 intending to do so.
- The likelihood to take a day trip by later in summer or by autumn also remains quite consistent.

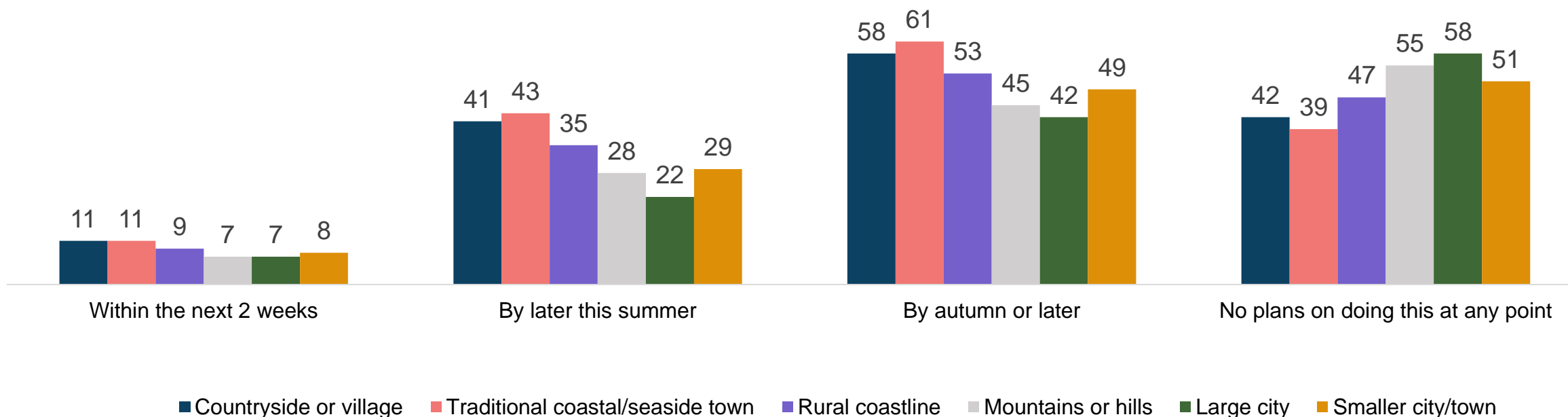
Figure 32. Likelihood to take any day trip, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



# Day trip intention by destination type

- The destinations of choice for day trippers are more likely to be rural or coastal in nature.
- Day trips to large cities by the autumn continue to index the lowest out of all destination types, while smaller cities/towns look set to be more popular among those travelling by autumn or later.
- There has been no movement in intention since the previous wave of research.

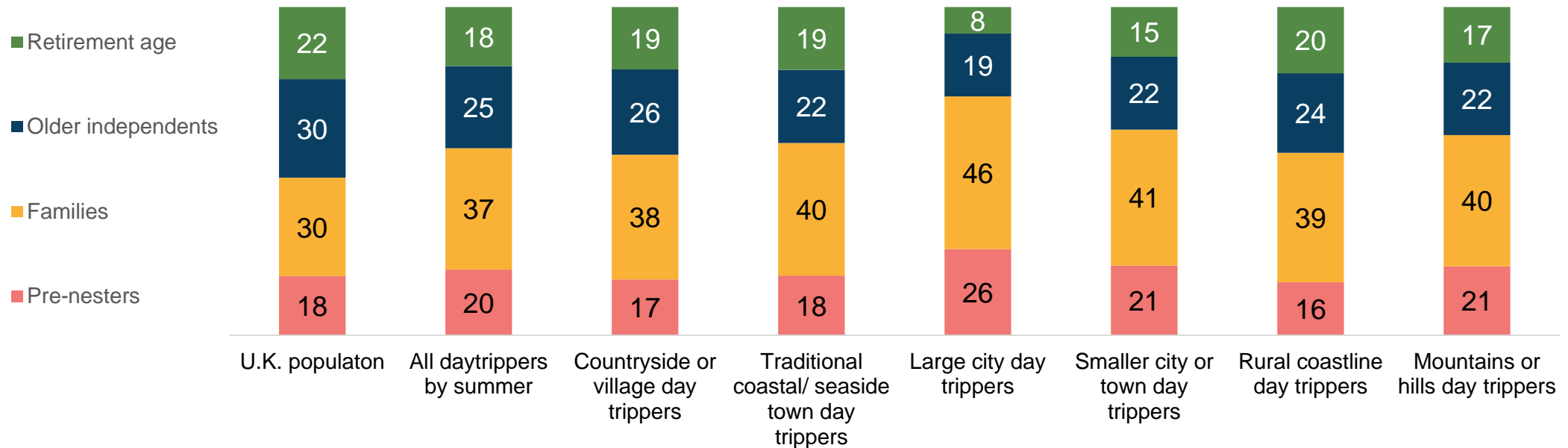
Figure 33. Likelihood to take a day trip by destination type, percentage, Wave 35, UK



# Life stage of day trip intenders

- Overall, day trippers have higher representation amongst pre-nesters and families compared to the UK adult population.
- The skew towards the younger life stages is most apparent among those planning a day trip to a large city.

Figure 34. Breakdown of day trip intenders\* by life stage, percentage, Wave 35, UK



Demographics questions and QVB16a. Are you likely to go on any day trips to the following types of places in these time periods? Base: Wave 35 respondents: \*All day trippers within the next 2 weeks/early spring summer n=1115; All day-trippers Countryside or village day trippers n=724; Traditional coastal/ seaside town day trippers n=757 Large city day trippers n=412 Smaller city or town day trippers n=532 Rural coastline day trippers n=605 Mountains or hills day trippers n=506





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# Methodology

# Methodology

- The findings in this report are based on an online survey conducted amongst a sample of the U.K. adult population.
- In the first stage a nationally representative core sample of 1,500 is recruited and interviewed. This sample is then 'boosted' in Wales and Scotland to ensure sufficient base sizes for separate nation analysis. The data are then weighted to make the sample representative of the U.K. overall and within each nation.
- This report presents findings from Wave 35 of the COVID-19 consumer sentiment tracker, with comparisons to Waves 1-34 where appropriate. Wave 35 fieldwork was conducted between 12 – 16 July 2021

# Master Data Table

- To access a .csv file of the data contained within the charts, please open this report with Adobe Reader. When you have done so, navigate to the left hand side of the page to the attachments area, symbolised by a paperclip icon, and click on the file to open the attachment.

