

Domestic Sentiment Tracker: May 2023

Published: May 2023

Fieldwork Period: 2nd to 9th May 2023

UK Results

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Note: * Overnight Business Trip Intentions questions are asked every second month

Introduction

- VisitEngland, VisitScotland and Visit Wales have commissioned a Domestic Sentiment Tracker to understand the impact of major events, such as the cost of living crisis, on the UK public's intent to take overnight trips, both within the UK and abroad.
- The survey addresses areas, such as: current attitude to travel (incl. concerns around travel and reassurances needed from the tourism sector), intentions of UK residents to travel for day trips, short breaks and holidays, when they plan to book and when they plan to go on their trip, as well as the destination, type of location and accommodation for their intended trip.
- This tracker is based on a UK nationally representative sample of 1,500 adults aged 16+, with additional boosts for Scotland and Wales.
- Fieldwork tends to take place at the start of each month and this wave's fieldwork was conducted between 2nd to 9th May 2023
- The results (both, reports and data tables) are made publicly available and updated each wave at the following website:

<https://www.visitbritain.org/domestic-sentiment-tracker>

Definitions used within this report

In this report, we look at the behaviour and attitudes of a number of separate audiences depending on when they intend to take an overnight domestic trip.

- **May to June 2023 Intenders:** Residents of the UK who claim their next domestic overnight trip will take place between May to June 2023
- **July to September 2023 Intenders:** Residents of the UK who claim their next domestic overnight trip will take place between July to September 2023

We also segment respondents by life stage and use the following definitions:

- **Pre-Nesters:** Aged 16-34 without children in household
- **Families:** Aged 16-64 with children in household
- **Older Independents:** Aged 35-64 without children in household
- **Retirees:** Aged 65+

May 2023: Scorecard of Key Metrics

Key Metrics	May 2023	Change since April 2023
% of UK adults stating 'WORST IS STILL TO COME' in regard to cost of living crisis	49%	-5%*
Proportion intending a UK overnight trip at any point <u>in the next 12 months</u>	76%	-1%
Proportion intending an overseas overnight trip at any point <u>in the next 12 months</u>	58%	+1%
Preference for UK over overseas in the next 12 months (vs past 12 months)	36%	+1%
Took a domestic overnight trip in the past 12 months (May 2022 –April 2023)	63%	0%
Net proportion of UK trips in the next 12 months vs the last 12 months [% 'more' minus % 'fewer' trips]	5%	+4%*
Net proportion of overseas trips in the next 12 months vs the last 12 months [% 'more' minus % 'fewer' trips]	-18%	-2%
Reduce the number of UK overnight trips due to cost of living crisis [NET 'fewer', 'not go', 'go day trips instead']	30%	-1%
Reduce the number of day trips due to cost of living crisis [NET 'fewer', 'not go on day trips']	33%	-2%
Top 3 barriers to taking a UK overnight trip in the next 6 months	1 st Rising cost of living; 2 nd UK weather 3 rd Personal finances	Personal finances moved to 3 rd place

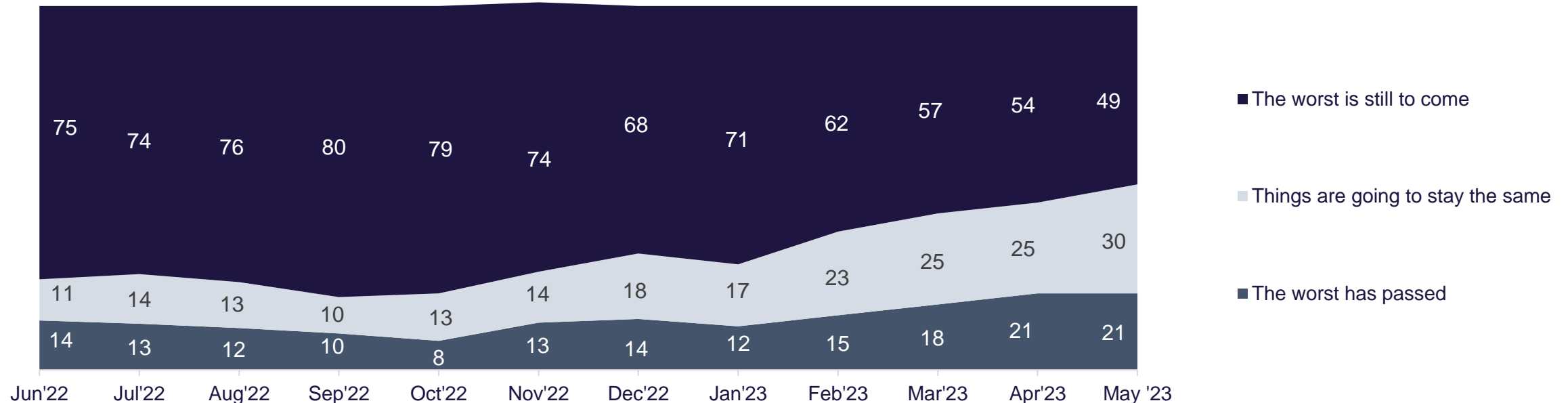
* Represents a statistically significant change on previous wave
N/A – due to new question wording meaning comparison to last wave cannot be done



1. Current General Sentiment

The proportion that think 'the worst is still to come' in relation to the cost of living crisis has decreased for the fourth consecutive wave

Figure 1. Perception of the situation with regards to cost of living crisis, Percentage wave-on-wave, UK

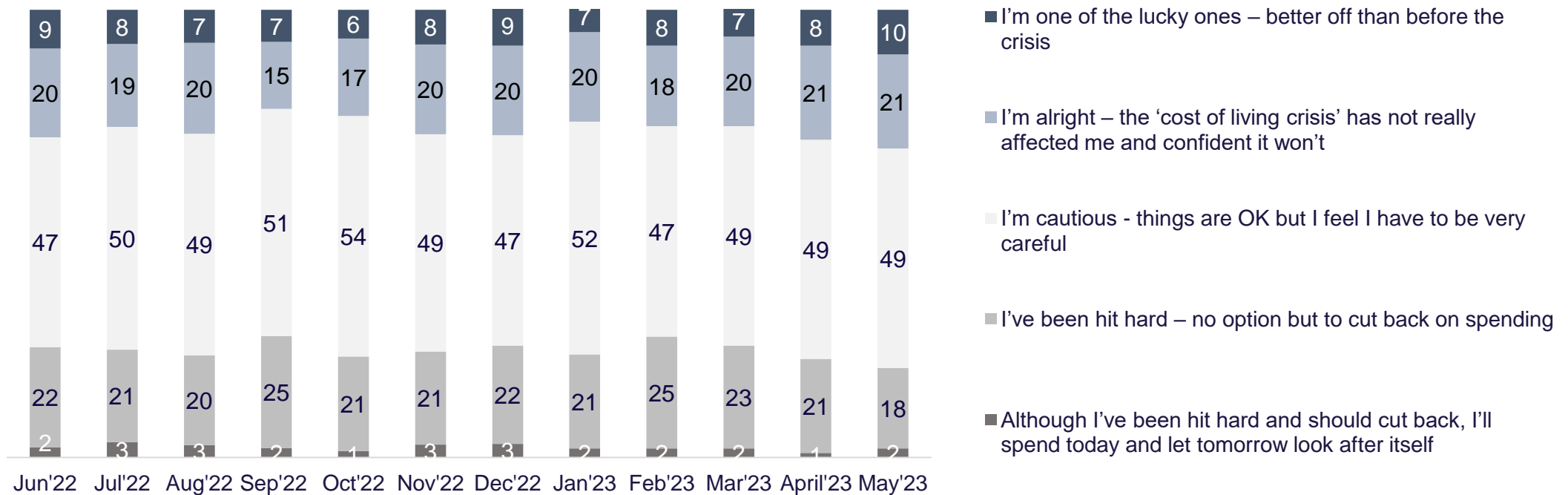


22nd Jun: UK inflation rose to 40-year high of 9.1%
 20th Jul: Fuel, milk and eggs increases in 40 years
 17th Aug: UK inflation up to 10.1%, shoppers feel the inflation hit
 14th Sep: UK inflation eases to 9.9% but remains close to 40-year high
 19th Oct: UK inflation hits 10.1%; 20th Oct – Liz Truss resigns; 25th Oct: Rishi Sunak UK's new prime minister
 16th Nov: UK inflation up to 11.1%, 41-year high
 14th Dec: UK inflation eases to 10.7% but remains close to 41-year high
 18th Jan: UK inflation eases to 10.5%; 2nd Feb: Bank of England expects recession 'to be shorter and less severe'
 15th Feb: UK inflation eases to 10.1%
 22nd March: UK inflation jumps to 10.4% due to veg shortages
 19 April: UK Inflation fell to 10.1% in March

Question: Q7b: And now regarding the 'cost of living crisis' in the UK and the way it is going to change in the coming few months, which of the following best describes your opinion? Base: All respondents. May 2023 = 1,755

The majority of UK adults (67%) are either 'cautious and being very careful' (49%) or have been 'hit hard and are cutting back' (18%) due to the cost of living crisis

Figure 2. Feelings about situation during the 'cost of living crisis', Percentage, UK

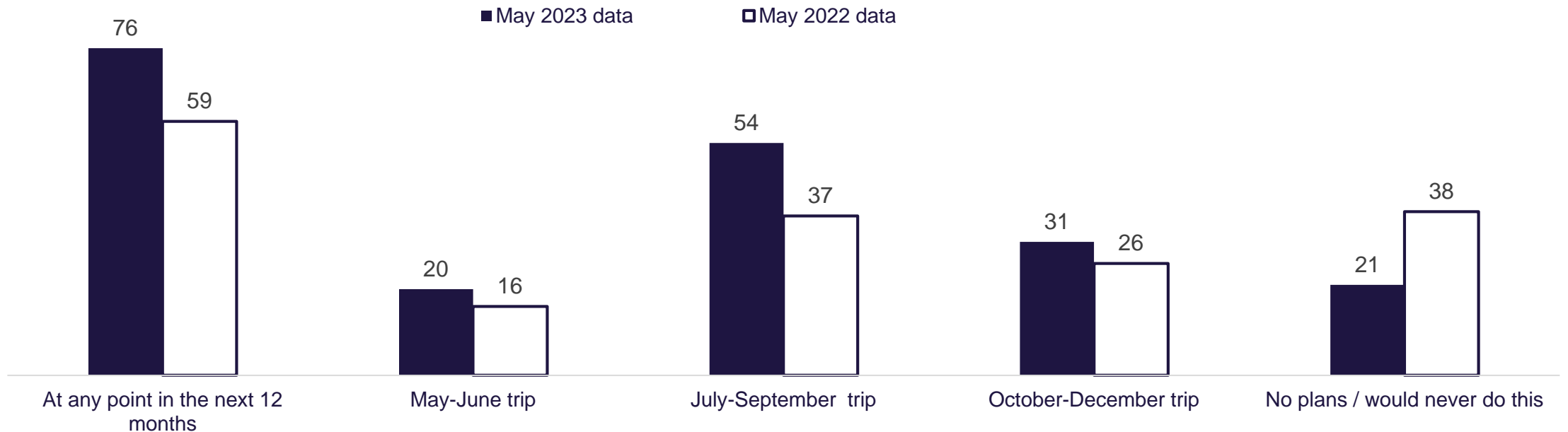


Question: Q17: There has been a lot of talk about how the 'cost of living crisis' has affected people's financial circumstances. If you had to choose, which ONE of the following statements would best describe your feelings about your own situation, right now? Base: All respondents. May 2023 = 1,755.

2. Trip Intentions: UK and Overseas

Overnight domestic trip intentions are above the levels anticipated back in May 2022, 76% planning a trip in the next 12 months compared to 59% a year earlier

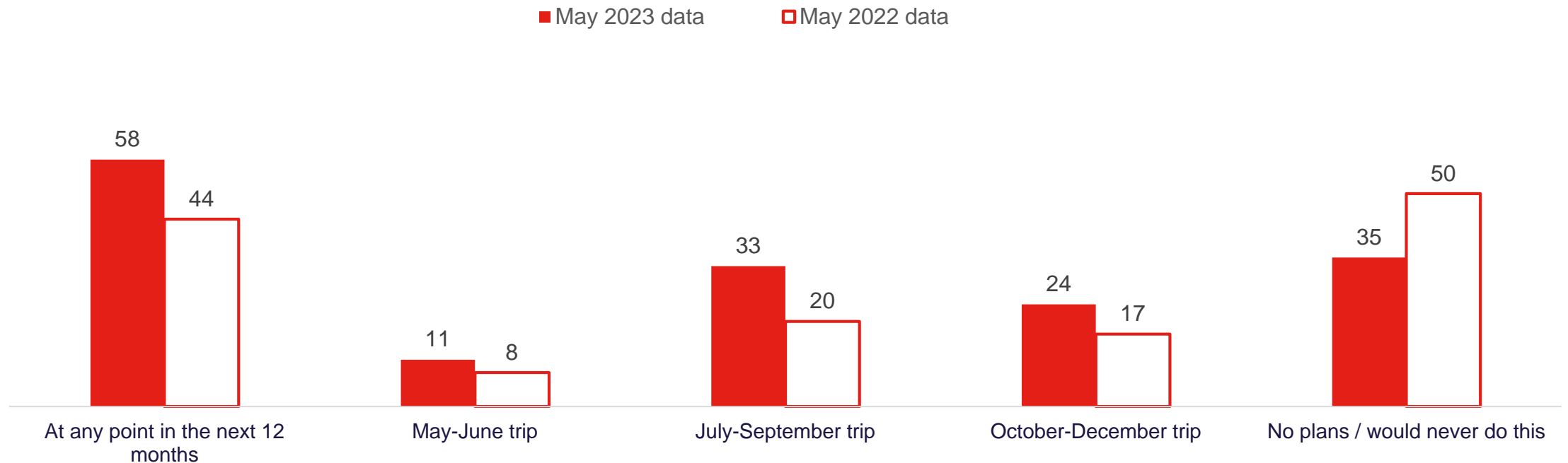
Figure 5. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight UK trips, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Question: QVB2a. Thinking of your next UK holiday or short break, when are you likely to go on this trip? QVB2b. And when else do you anticipate going on a UK holiday or short break? Base: All respondents. May 2022 = 1,760, May 2023 = 1,755. Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate taking multiple trips across several time periods.

For overnight overseas trips, intentions are higher than in May 2022, in particular between July and September

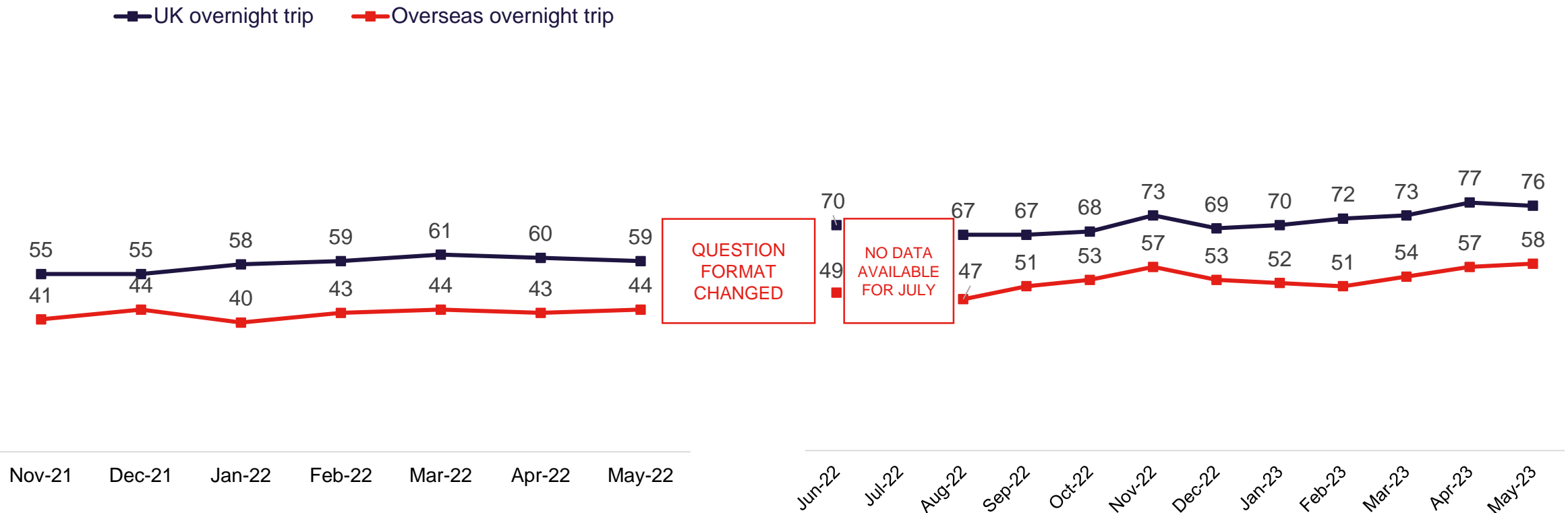
Figure 5b. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight overseas trips, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Question: QVB2c. Thinking of your next OVERSEAS holiday or short break, when are you likely to go on this trip? QVB2d. And when else do you anticipate going on an overseas holiday or short break? Base: All respondents. May 2022 = 1,760, May 2023 = 1,755. Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate taking multiple trips across several time periods.

Both long term domestic and overseas overnight trip intentions have steadily increased since December 2022

Figure 6. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight UK and overseas trips in the NEXT 12 MONTHS, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Question: QVB2a. Thinking of your next UK holiday or short break, when are you likely to go on this trip? QVB2b. And when else do you anticipate going on a UK holiday or short break? QVB2c. Thinking of your next OVERSEAS holiday or short break, when are you likely to go on this trip? QVB2d. And when else do you anticipate going on an overseas holiday or short break? Base: All respondents. May 2023 = 1,755. Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate taking multiple trips across several time periods.

At a 'net level', the number of intended domestic trips by UK adults is above those taken in the last 12 months – overseas intentions still below

Figure 7. Number of UK overnight trips likely to take in next 12 months compared to last 12 months, Percentage, May 2023, UK

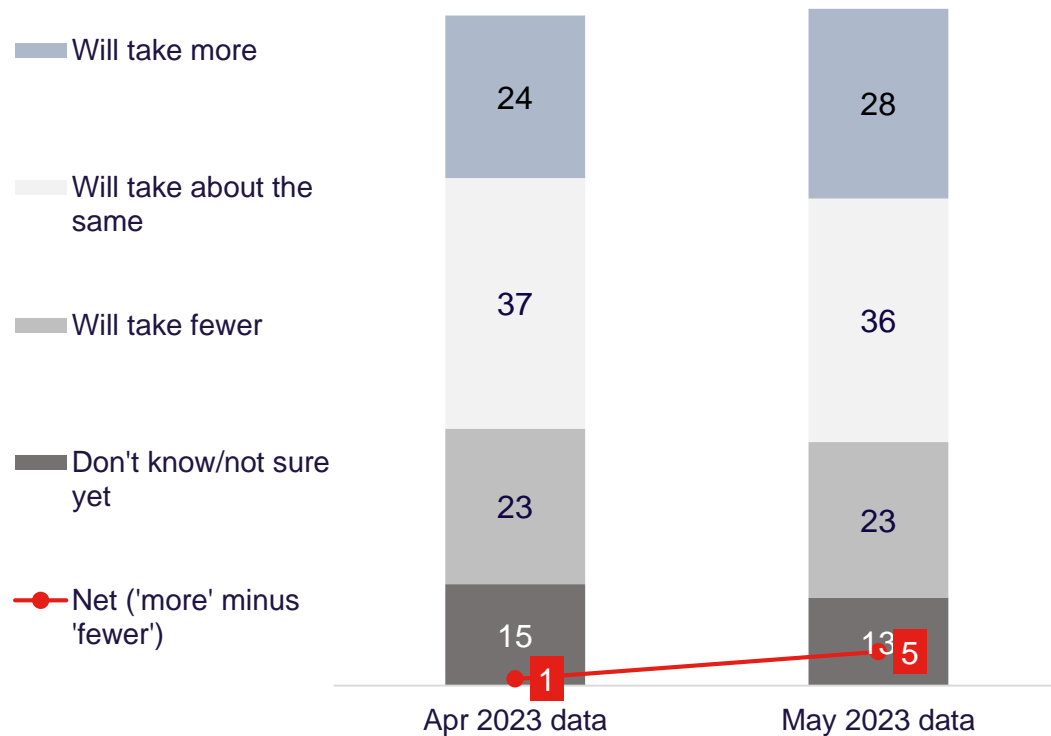
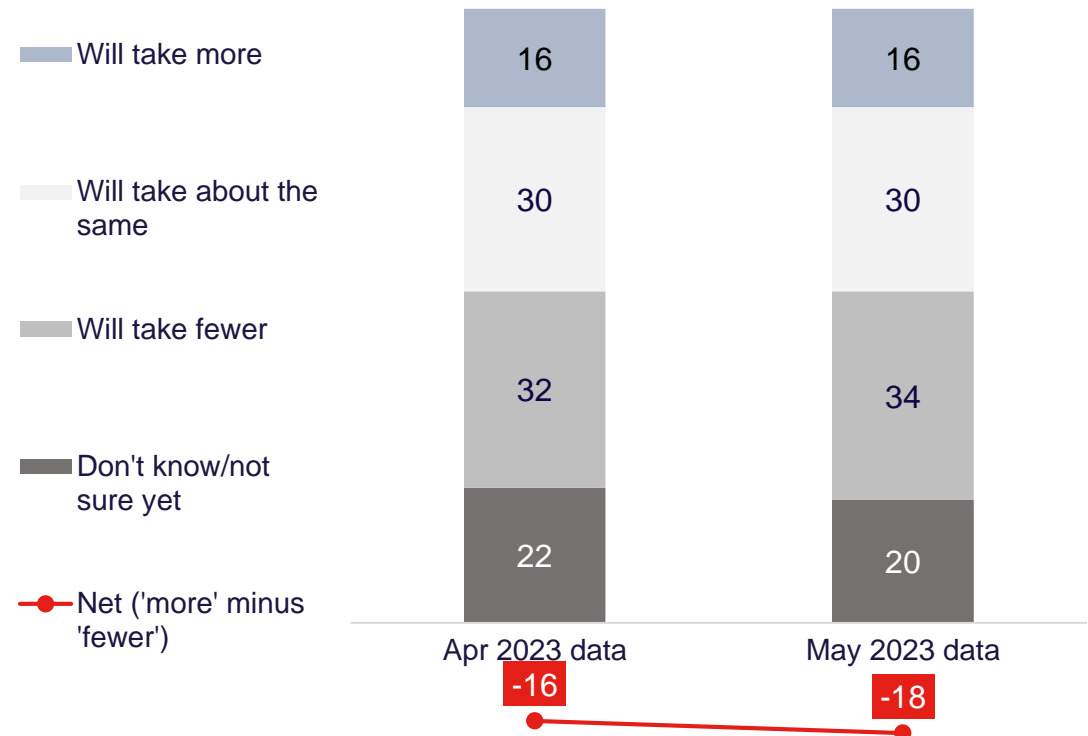


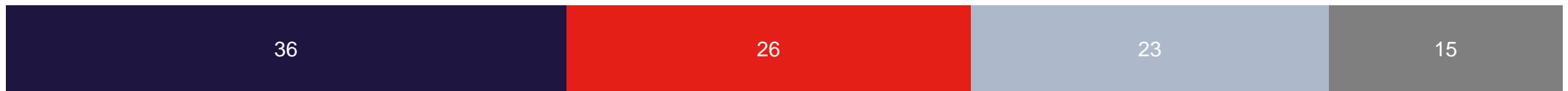
Figure 8. Number of Overseas overnight trips likely to take in next 12 months compared to last 12 months, Percentage, May 2023, UK



36% of respondents indicated they are more likely to choose a trip in the UK than overseas, compared to the last 12 months – the top reason being ‘UK holidays are easier to plan’ (56%)

Figure 9. Difference in short break/holiday choices in the next 6 months compared to last 12 months, Percentage, May 2023, UK

■ More likely to choose UK than overseas ■ More likely to choose overseas than UK ■ Broadly the same as past 12 months ■ Don't know/It depends on the situation



TOP 5 reasons for UK preference

1. UK holidays are easier to plan (56%)
2. Shorter / quicker travel (46%)
3. UK holidays are cheaper (45%)
4. To avoid long queues at airports/cancelled flights (40%)
5. Uncertainty around restrictions overseas (27%)

TOP 5 reasons for Overseas preference

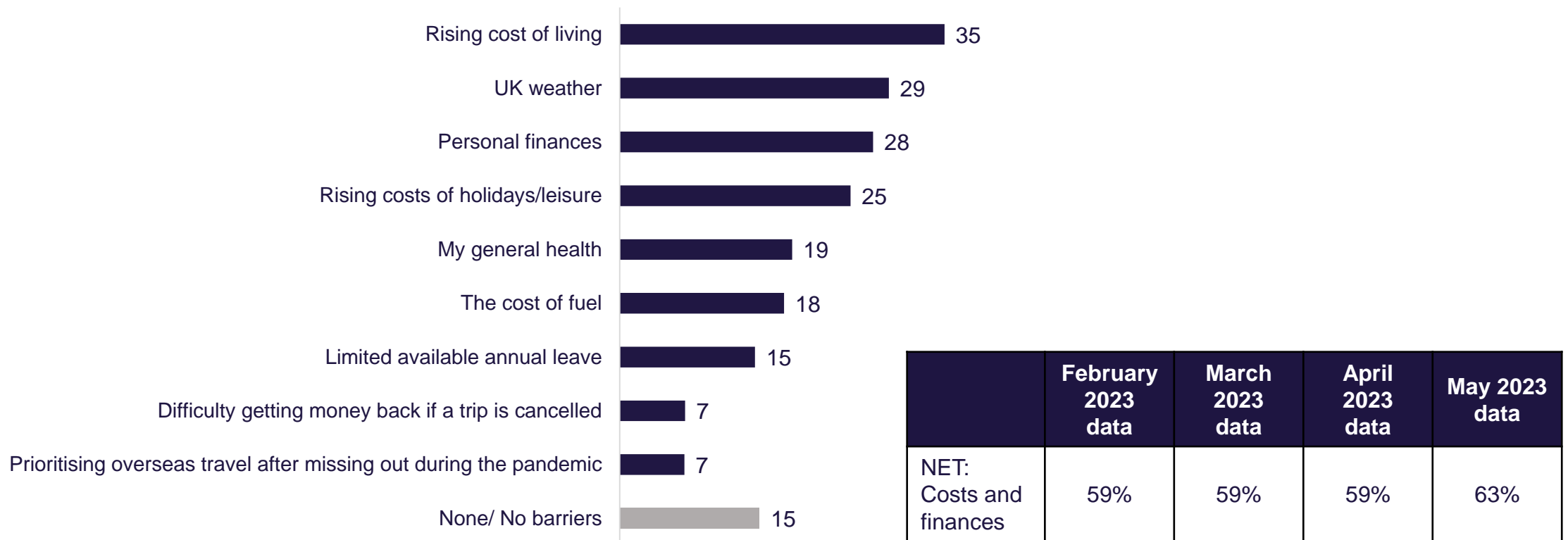
1. Better weather (50%)
2. I want to visit new places/experience new cultures (40%)
3. Overseas holidays are cheaper (28%)
4. I'm prioritising overseas trips after missing out in the last few years (23%)
5. To visit friends and relatives (21%)

FOR THE FULL LIST OF REASONS, PLEASE SEE THE PUBLISHED TABLES.

Question: VB2j. Thinking of the next 12 months, how different do you think your short break/holiday choices will be compared to the last 12 months? Base: All respondents. May 2023 = 1,755. VB2k. Why are you more likely to choose a UK trip than an overseas trip? May 2023 = 637, VB2l. Why are you more likely to choose an overseas trip than a UK trip? May 2023 = 473

The top potential barrier to taking overnight UK trips in the next 6 months is the ‘rising cost of living’, followed by ‘UK weather’ and ‘personal finances’

Figure 10. Top 10 Barriers to taking an overnight UK trip in next 6 months, Percentage, May 2023, UK

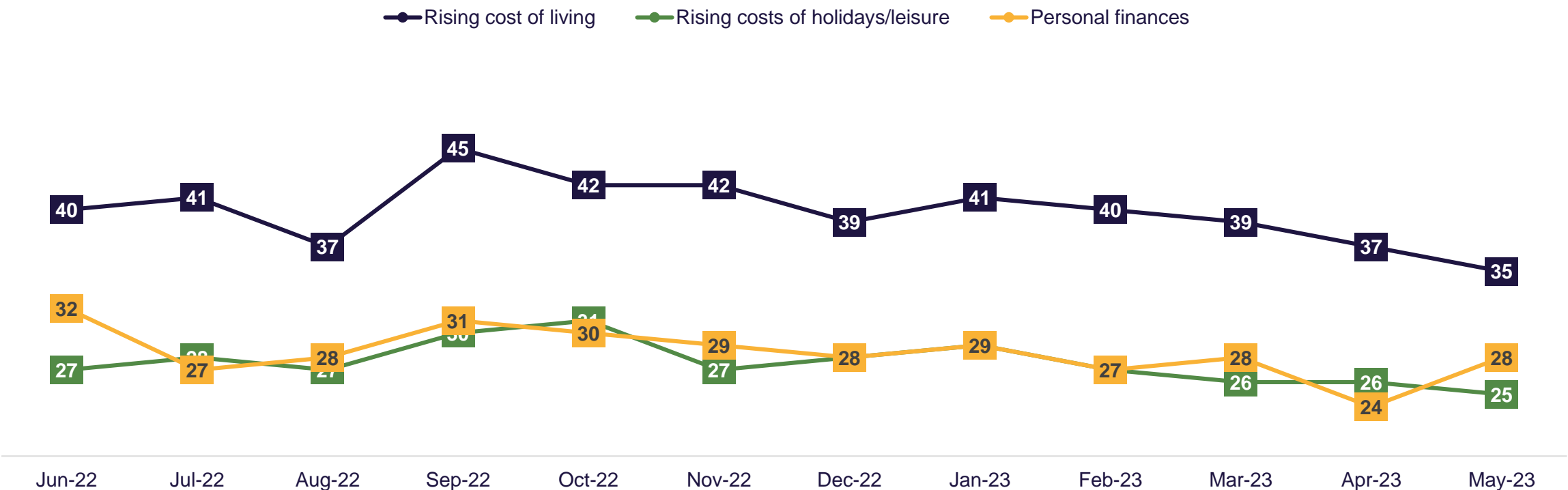


FOR THE FULL LIST OF BARRIERS, PLEASE SEE THE PUBLISHED TABLES.

Question: VB7b. Which, if any, of the following factors do you see as potential barriers to you taking a UK short break or holiday in the next six months? .
 Base: All asked each question. May 2023 = 1,755. *NET: Cost and finances includes ‘rising cost of living’, ‘personal finances’, ‘the cost of fuel’, ‘rising costs of holidays/leisure’ and ‘difficulty getting money back if a trip is cancelled’

The rising cost of living has consistently been the biggest financial barrier to taking an overnight domestic trip, though on a declining trend since the beginning of the year

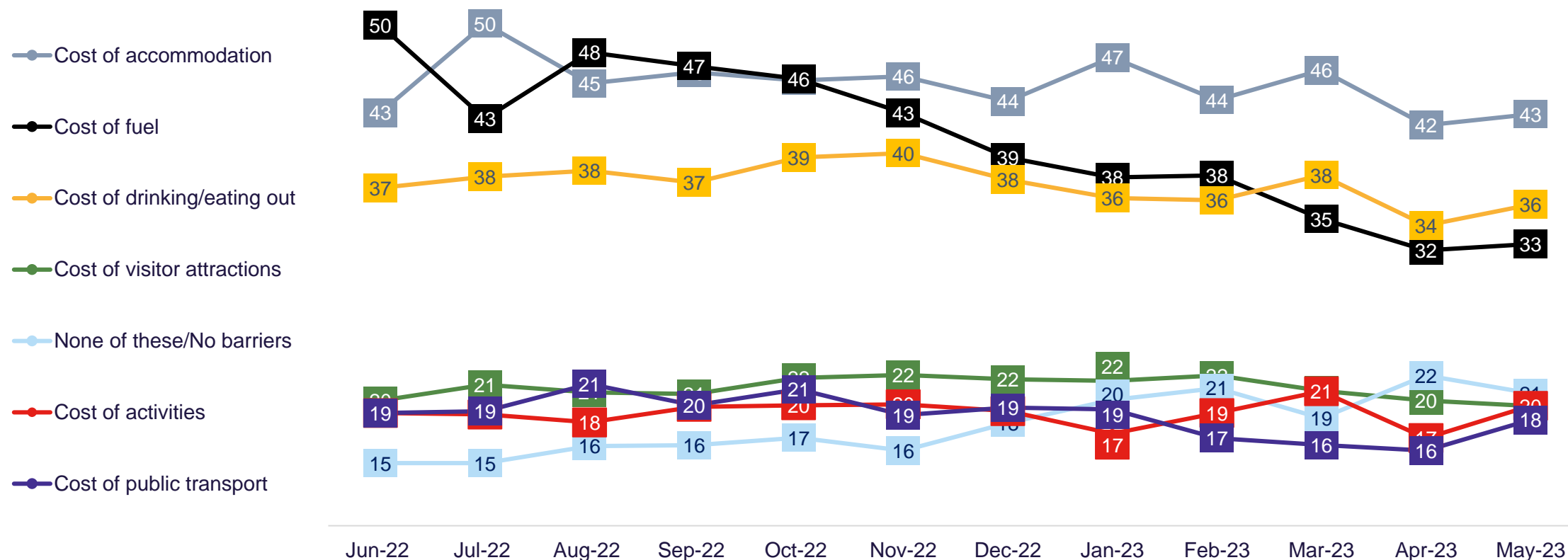
Figure 10b. Perceived financial barriers to an overnight trip in the UK in next 6 months, Wave-on-wave, Percentage, UK



Question: VB7b. Which, if any, of the following factors do you see as potential barriers to you taking a UK short break or holiday in the next six months?
 Base: All asked each question. May = 1,755.

Focusing on barriers related directly to the cost of a domestic overnight trip, the cost of accommodation remains at the top, followed by cost of drinking/eating out

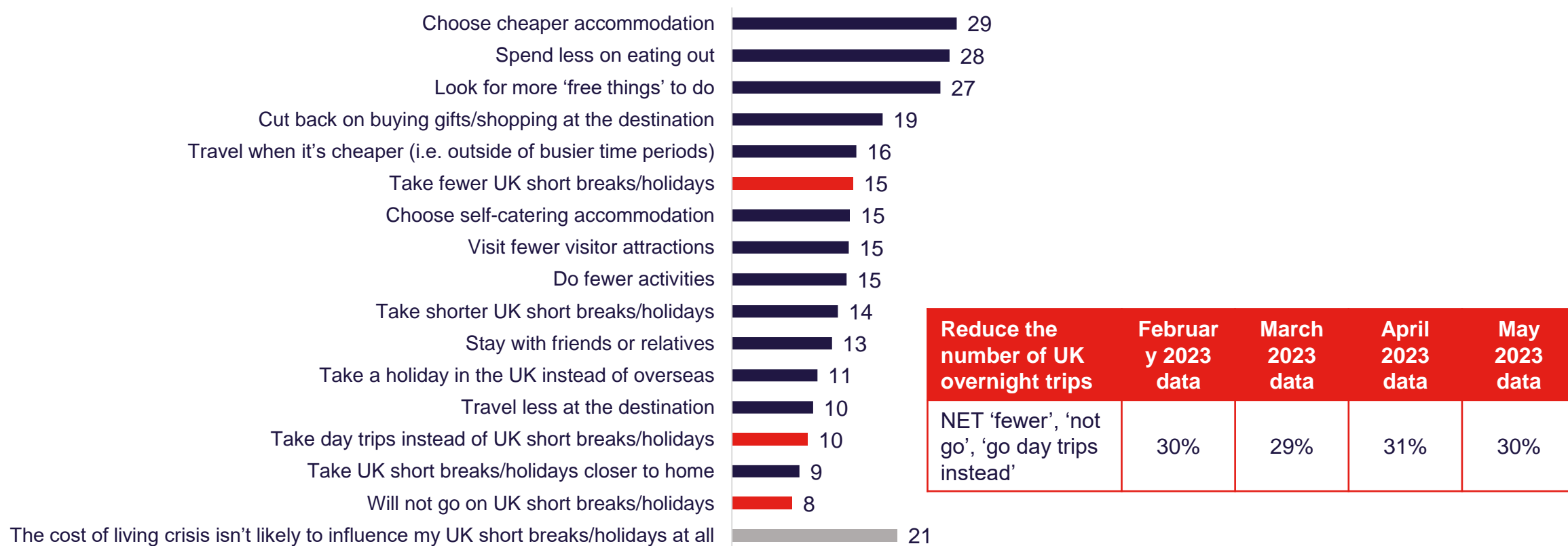
Figure 12. Individual costs barrier to taking UK holidays and short breaks in next 6 months, Wave-on-wave, Percentage, UK



Question: VB7bii. Which, if any, of these costs are the main financial barriers to you taking a UK short break or holiday in the next six months?
 Base: May 2023 = 1,755.

UK adults plan to cut their overnight trip spending mainly on accommodation, activities and eating out. 30% will cut the number of trips, in line with the previous three waves

Figure 13a. 'Cost of living' impact on UK holidays and short breaks, Percentage, May 2023, UK, Full list



In terms of UK day trips, 28% of UK adults intend to look for more free things to do. 33% will reduce the number of day trips – a slight decrease from the last three waves

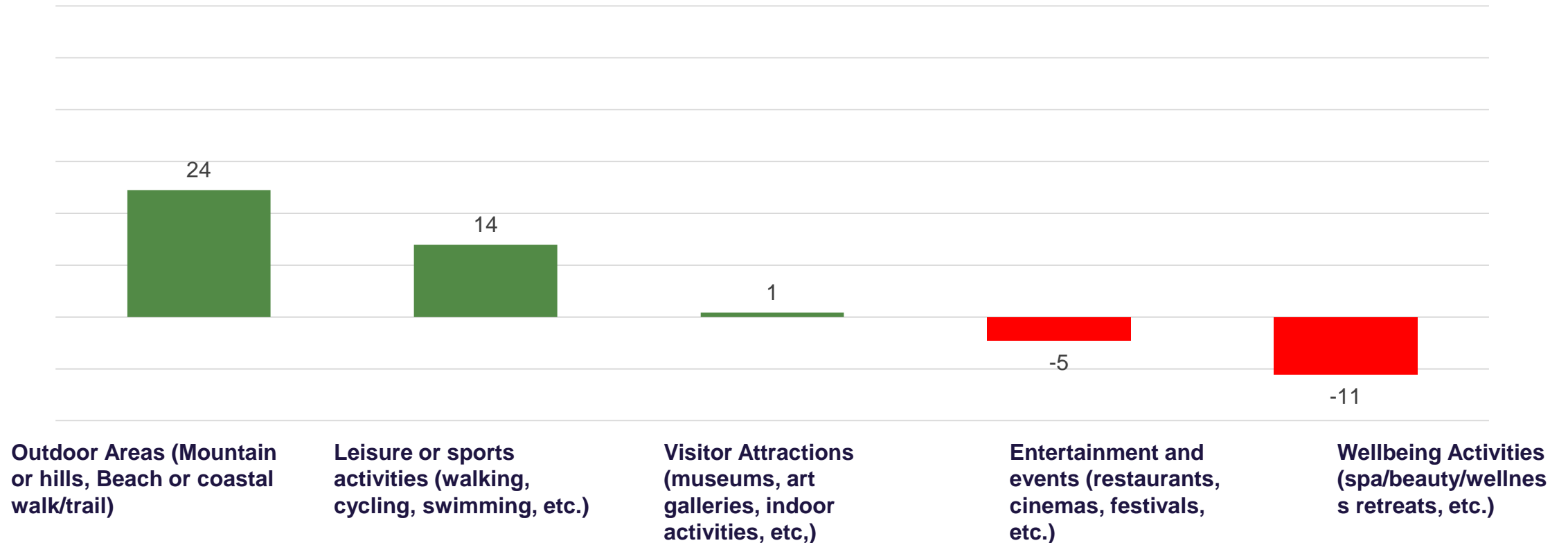
Figure 13b. 'Cost of living' impact on day trips, Percentage, May 2023, UK, Full list



Reduce the number of day trips	February 2023 data	March 2023 data	April 2023 data	May 2023 data
NET 'fewer', 'not go on day trips'	34%	34%	35%	33%

Compared to the previous 12 months, UK adults are more likely to visit outdoor areas and practice leisure or sports activities, while are less likely to attend entertainment activities and wellbeing activities

Figure 14. Leisure venues and activities more or less likely to visit/do compared to last 12 months, Net: 'more likely' minus 'Less likely', Percentage, UK, May 2023



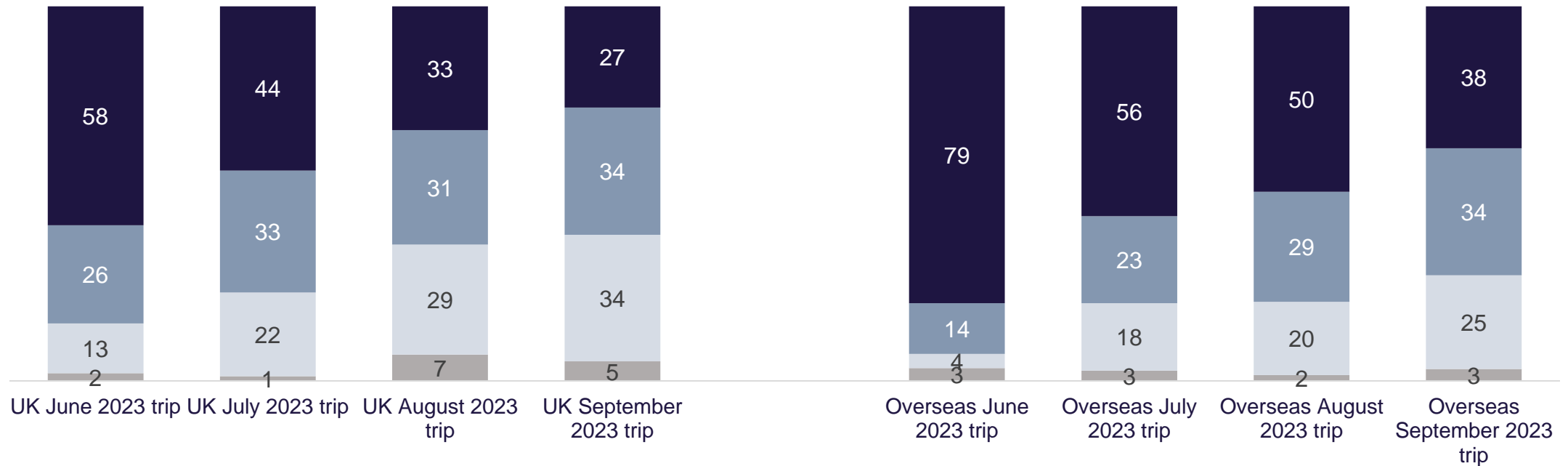
Question: VB9ai. Thinking about your personal finances, which, if any, of these types of places in the UK are you more likely to visit in the next 12 months, compared to the last 12 months? VB9bi. Still thinking about your personal finances, which, if any, are you less likely to visit in the next 12 months compared to the last 12 months?
Base: May 2023 = 1,755.

3. The Next Trip: Overnight and Day Trips

58% of UK adults have already booked their domestic trips for June, while 79% have already booked their overseas trips for that month

Figure 15. Planning and booking the next intended UK and overseas overnight trip, Percentage, May 2023, UK

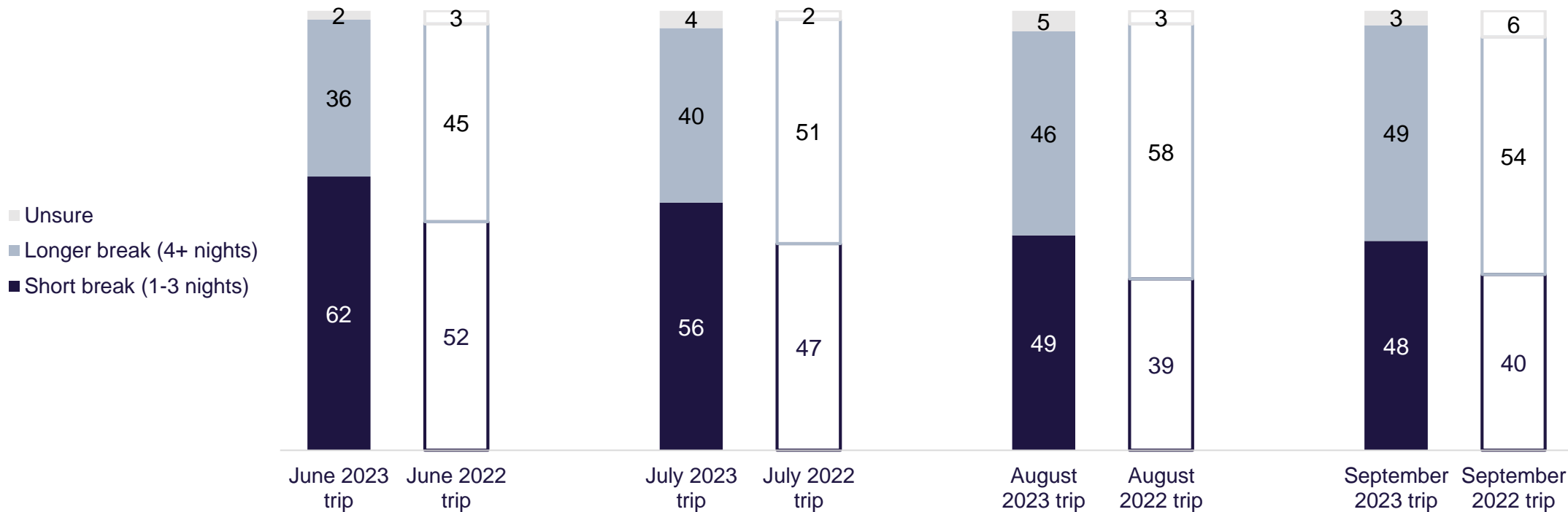
■ I have already booked the trip ■ I have decided where to go but not yet booked ■ I am yet to decide where to go ■ I am undecided whether I will take this trip at all



Question: VB2e. Which of the following best describes how close you are to booking your next overnight UK trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2c(III)>? UK trip: June 2023 n = 205, July 2023 n = 270, August 2023 n = 273, September 2023 n = 196. VB2g. Which of the following best describes how close you are to booking your next overnight OVERSEAS trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2c(III)>? Base: Overseas trip: June 2023 n = 117, July 2023 n = 147, August n = 176, September n = 184.

In June and July, short breaks are more common than longer breaks – all four months reported saw an increase in the proportion of those taking a short break with respect to the past year. In September, longer breaks are more likely

Figure 17. Length of next UK holiday or short break by time period, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Question: QVB3. Is this next trip to <INSERT DESTINATION FROM VB4A> in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A> likely to be a short break (1-3 nights) or a holiday (4+ nights)?
 Base: All May 2023 respondents intending to take next holiday or short break in each time period: UK trip 2022-2023: June 2023 n= 205, July 2023 n = 270, August 2023 n = 273, September 2023 n = 196. UK trip 2021-2022: June 2022 n = 151, July 2022 n = 152, August 2022 n = 192, September 2022 n = 155.

The South West is the most preferred UK overnight destination in both time periods, consistent with intentions in 2022

Figure 18. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip in May to June 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK

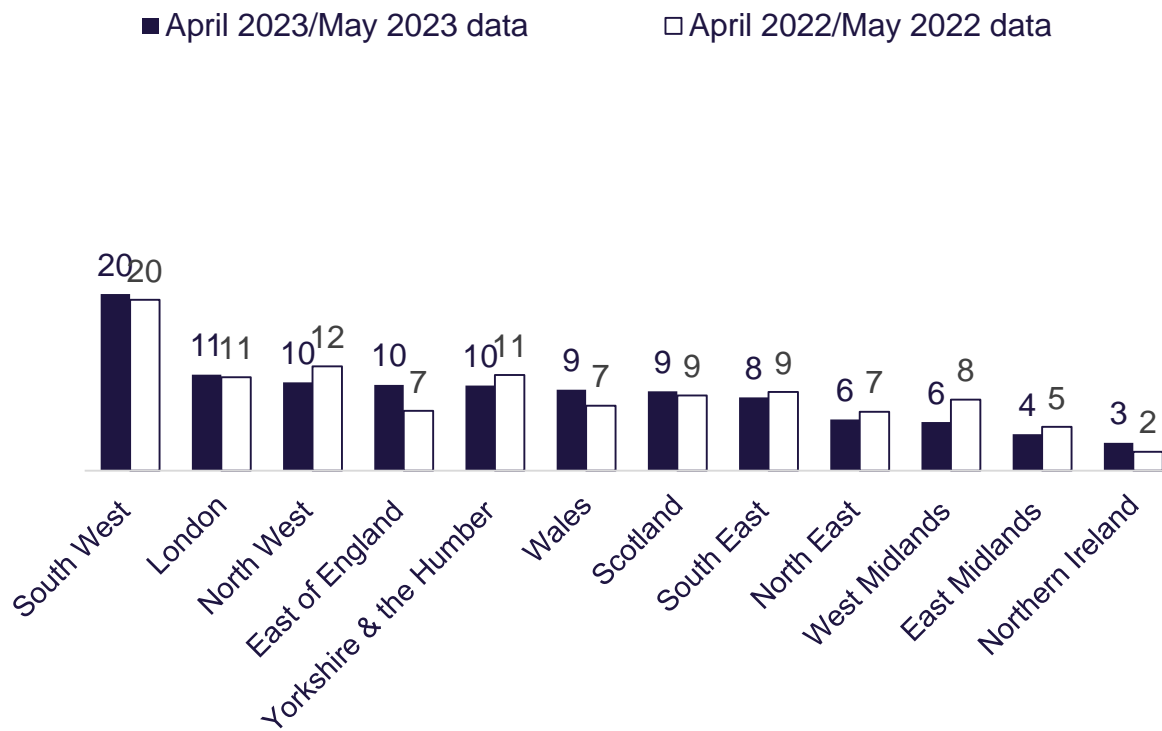
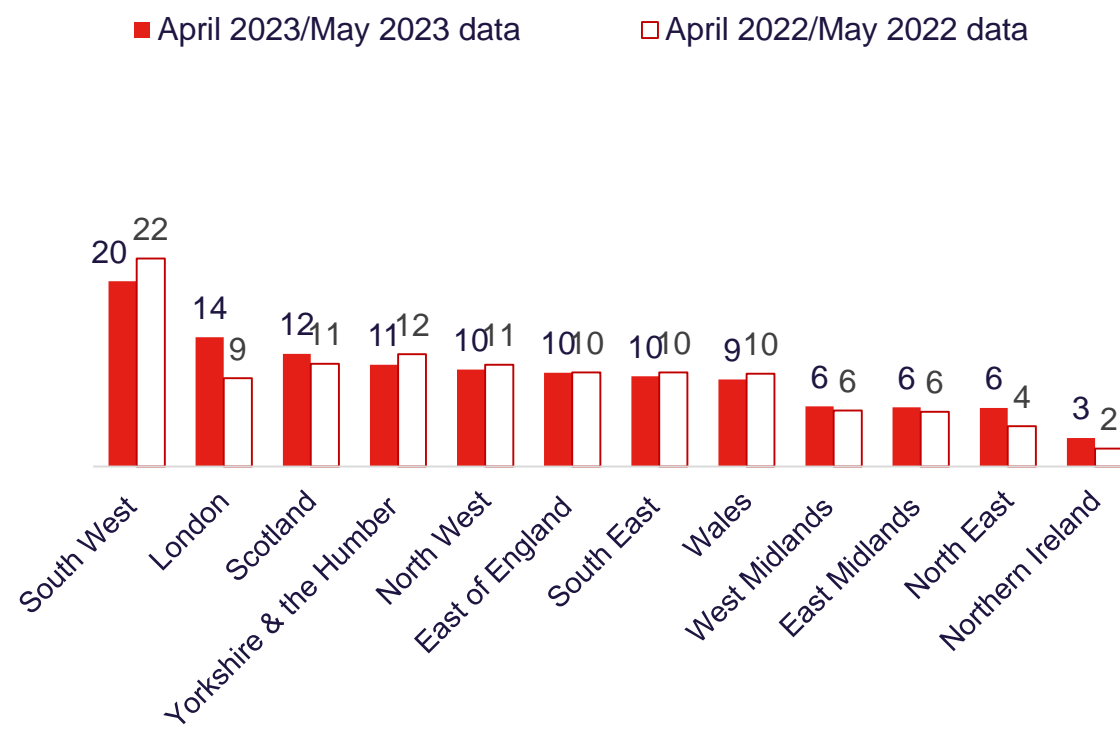


Figure 19. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip in July to September 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK



Question: QVB4a. Where in the UK are you likely to stay on this next trip in <insert month>?

Base: All April 2023 to May 2023 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 772 July to September 2023 n = 1,348; May to June 2022 n = 517 July to September 2022 n = 948. Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate staying in more than one location.

The top types of destination for an overnight trip in May-June is 'a city or large town' and 'traditional coastal / seaside town'.

Figure 20. Types of destination for trip in May to June 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK

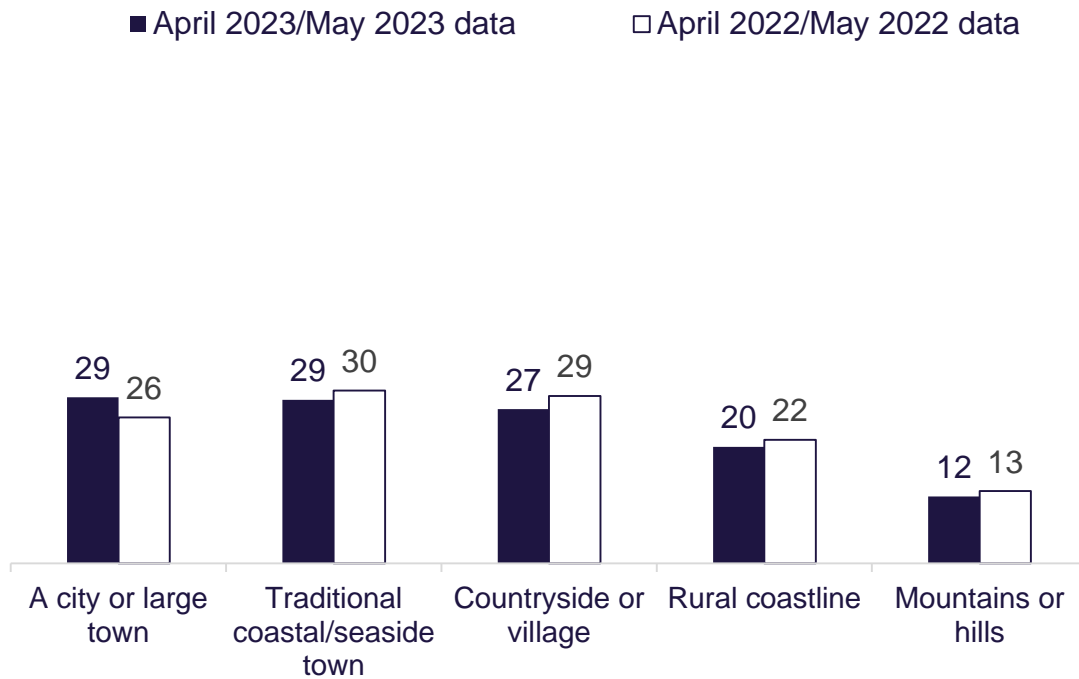
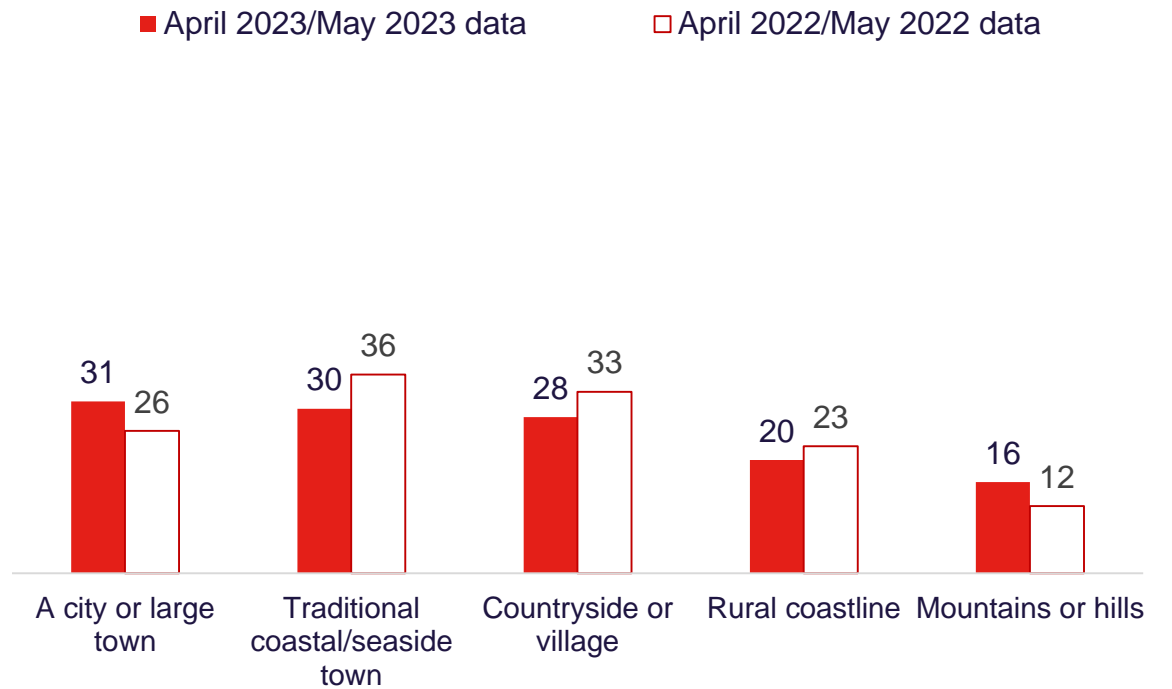


Figure 21. Types of destination for overnight trip in July to September 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK



Question: VB5. Which of the following best describes the main types of destinations you are likely to stay in during your next UK holiday or short break in <INSERT DESTINATION FROM VB4A> in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A>? Base: All April 2023 to May 2023 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 772, July to September 2023 n = 1348; April to June 2022 n = 517, July to September 2022 n = 948.

For both time periods, own car is the most common mode of travel, followed by train

Figure 22. Top 5 main modes of travel to destination for trip in May to June 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK

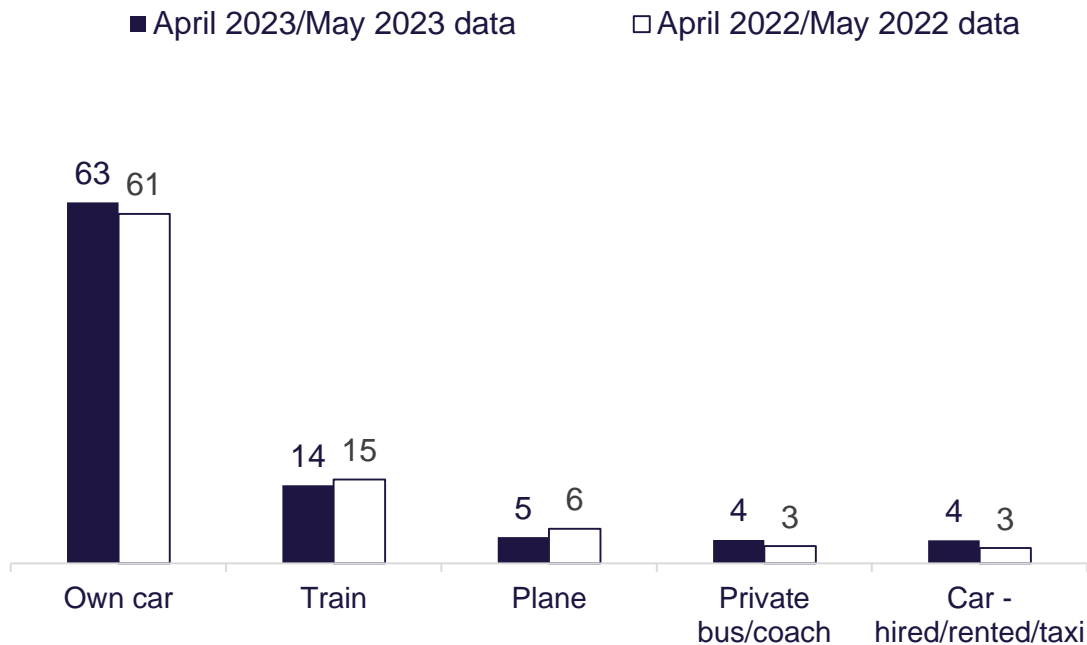
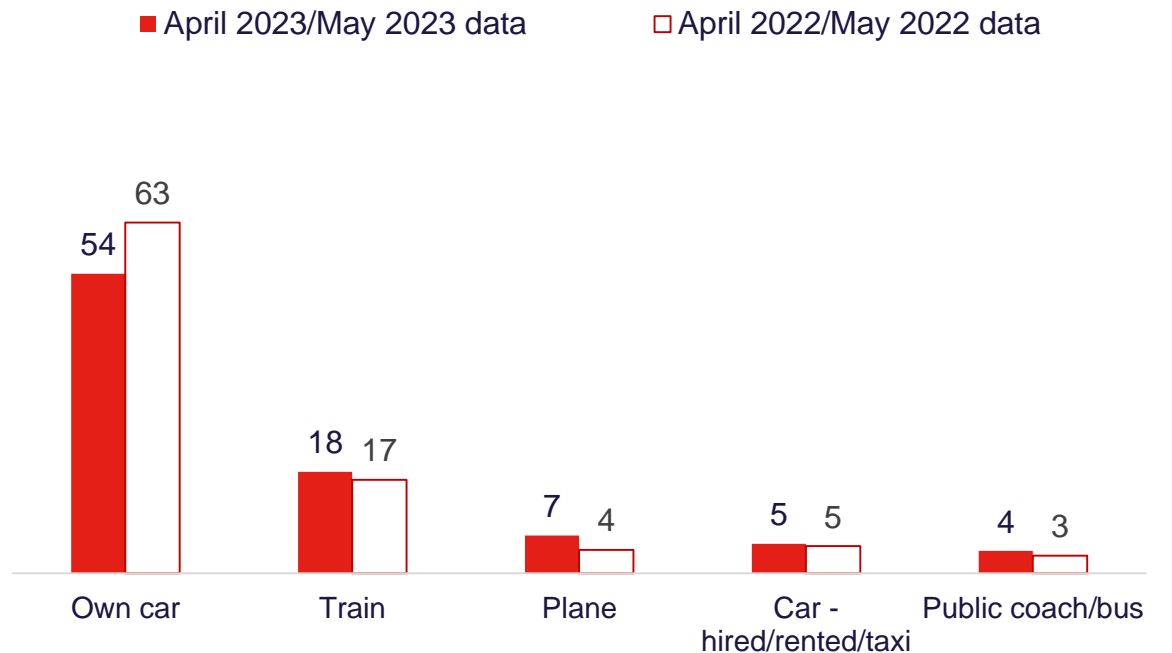


Figure 23. Top 5 main modes of travel to destination for overnight trip in July to September 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK



FOR THE FULL LIST OF MODES OF TRANSPORT, PLEASE SEE THE PUBLISHED TABLES.

Question: VB4c. What do you anticipate being the main mode of travel to your next UK holiday or short break in <INSERT DESTINATION FROM VB4A> in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2a>? Base: All April 2023 to May 2023 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 769, July to September 2023 n = 1339; May to June 2022 n = 517, July to September 2022 n = 948

For the next overnight trip in both time periods, 'hotel / motel / inn' is the leading accommodation type

Figure 24. Top 10 accommodation types planning on staying in on next UK overnight trip May to June 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK

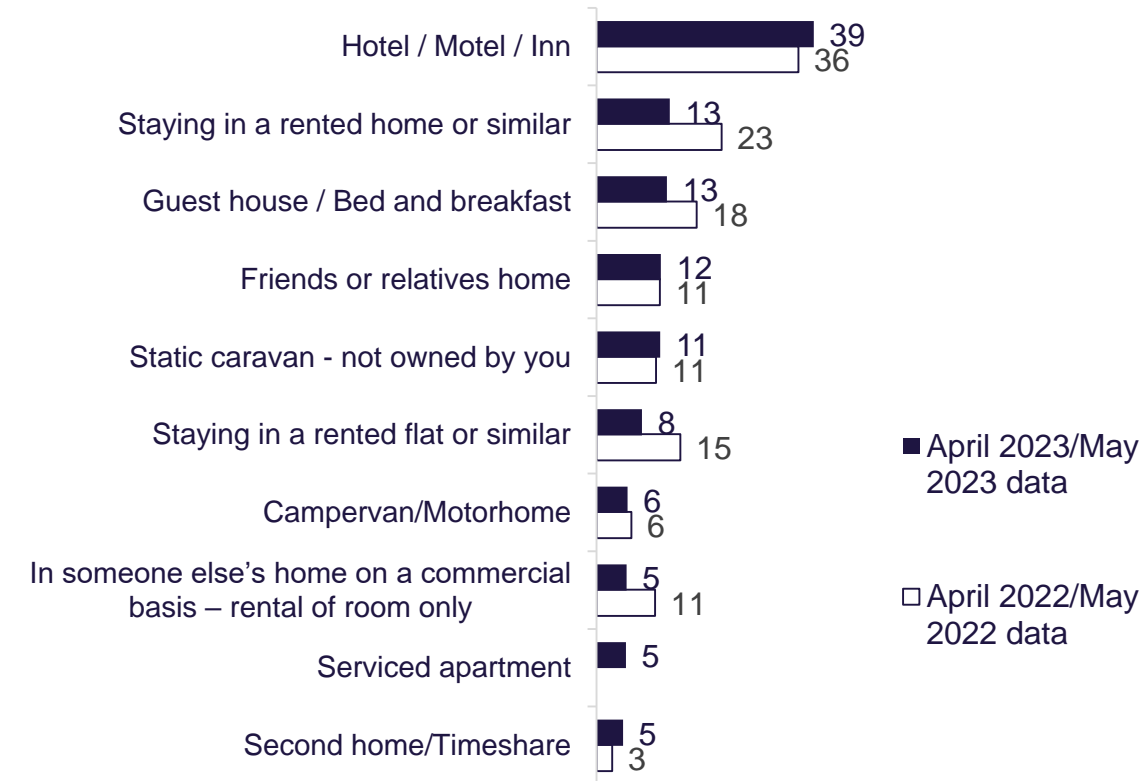
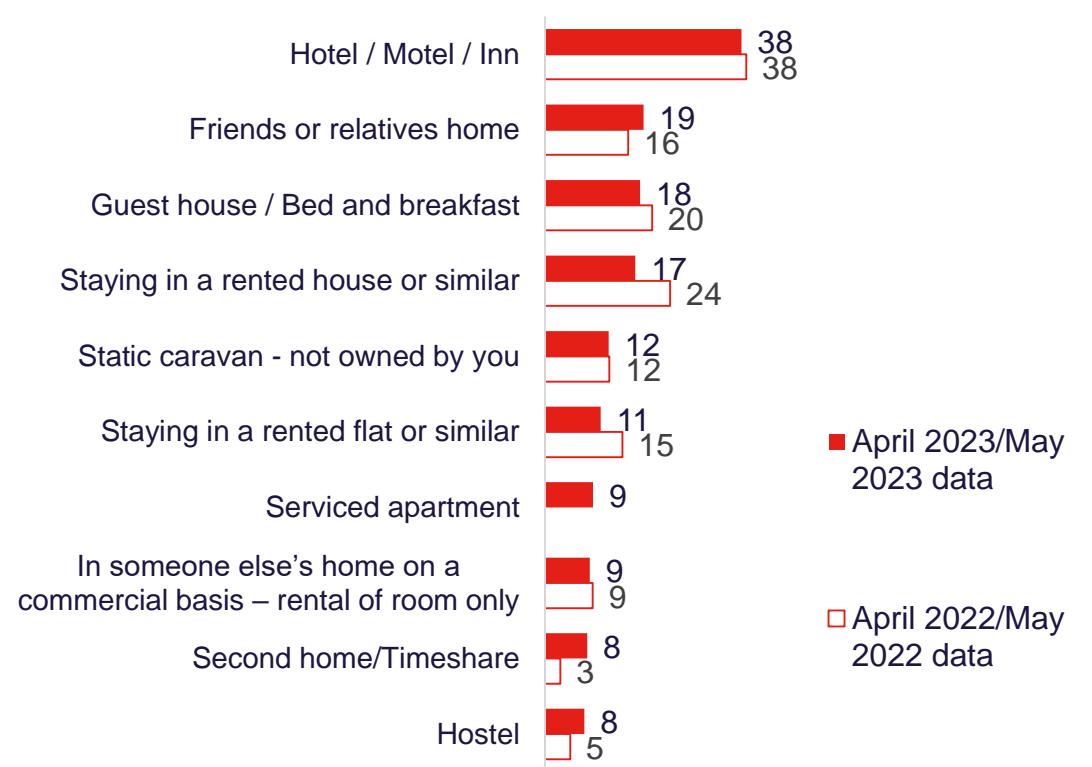


Figure 25. Top 10 accommodation types planning on staying in on next UK overnight trip in July to September 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK



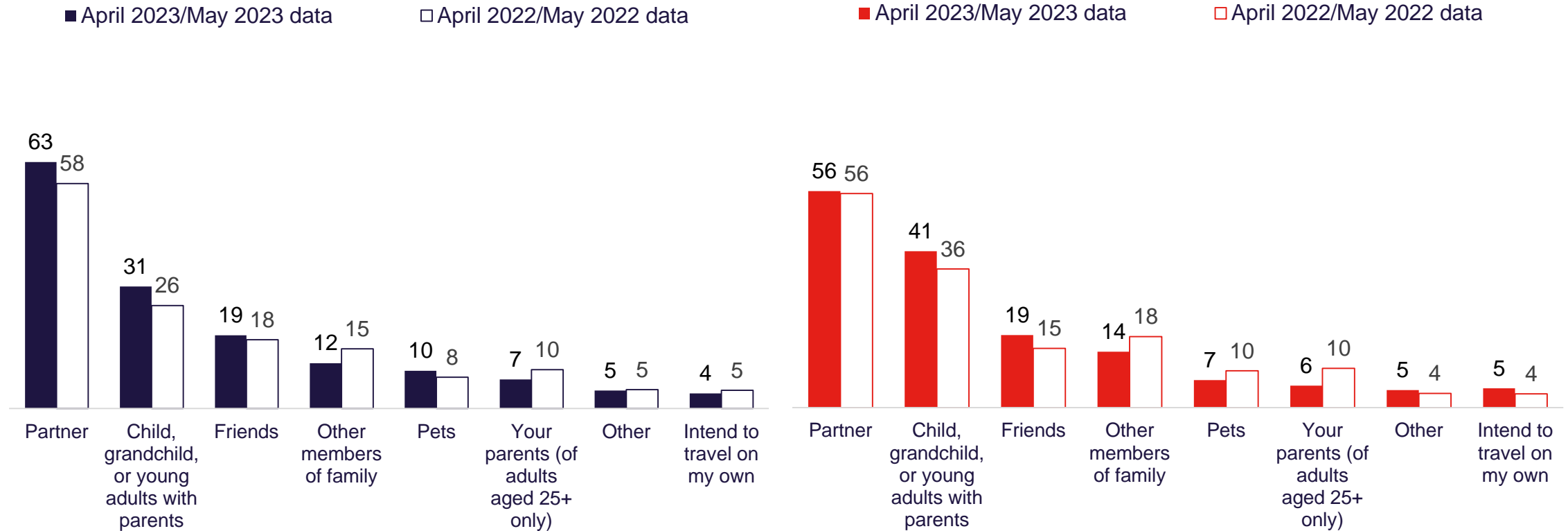
FOR THE FULL LIST OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES, PLEASE SEE THE PUBLISHED TABLES.

Question: VB6a. What type/s of accommodation do you expect to be staying in during your next UK holiday or short break in <INSERT DESTINATION FROM VB4A> in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A>? Base: All April 2023 to May 2023 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 772, July to September 2023 n = 1348; May to June 2022 n = 517, July to September 2022 n = 948.

‘Partner’ is the most common companion on a trip during both time periods, followed by ‘child, grandchild or young adult’

Figure 26. Visitor party make-up for trip in May to June 2023, Percentage, March 2023 to April 2023, UK

Figure 27. Visitor party make-up for trips taken from trip in July to September 2023, Percentage, April 2023 to May 2023, UK



Question: QVB4d. With whom are you likely to spend your next UK holiday or short break in <INSERT DESTINATION FROM VB4A> in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2a> ?

Base: All April 2023 to May 2023 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 769, July to September 2023 n = 1339; April to May 2022 n = 517, July to September 2022 n = 948. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate a range of party types.

The top motivation for both overnight trips in May-June and in July-September is ‘family time or time with my partner’

Figure 28. Motivations for UK holidays and short breaks in May-June 2023, Percentage, May 2023, UK, Full list



Figure 29. Motivations for UK holidays and short breaks in July-September 2023, Percentage, May 2023, UK, Full list



Question: VB6fii. Which of the following best describe your motivation/s for this trip?

Base: All April respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 359, July to September 2023 n = 739.

Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100%.

In May-June, ‘walking, hiking or rambling’ is the top activity, while the top one in July-September is ‘trying local food and drink’

Figure 30. Activities for UK holidays and short breaks, in May-June 2023, Percentage, May 2023, UK, Full list



Figure 31. Activities for UK holidays and short breaks in July-September 2023, Percentage, May 2023, UK, Full list

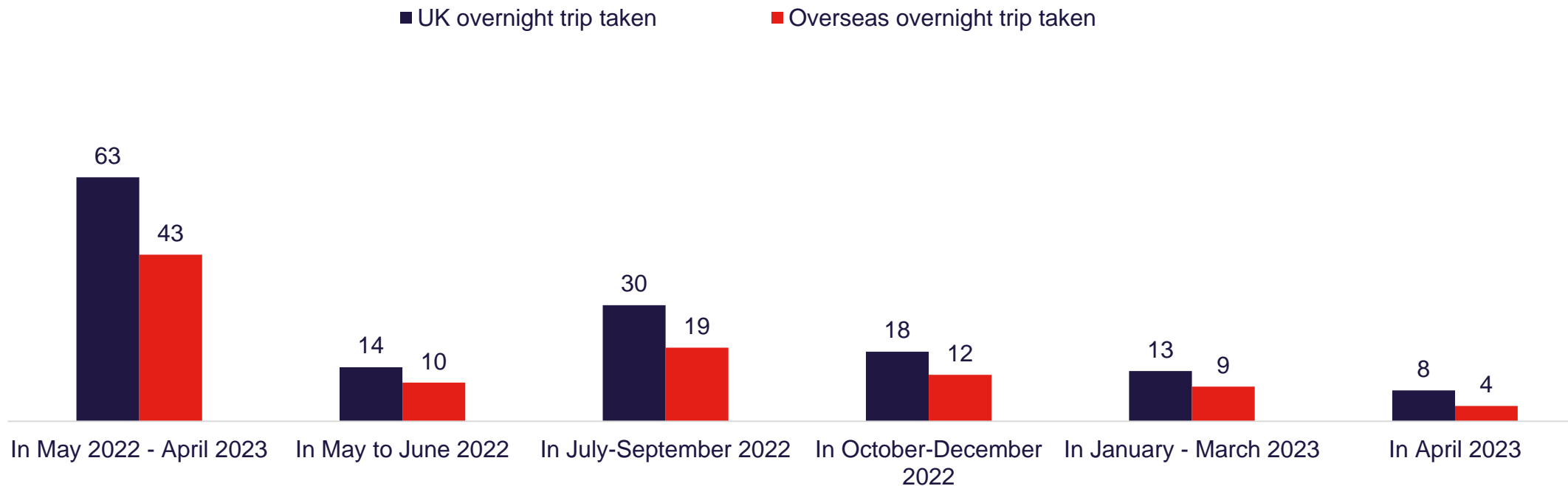


Question: VB6fiii. Which, if any, of these activities are you likely to do on your next UK short break or holiday in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A>?
 Base: All May respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK between May to June 2023 n = 359, July to September 2023 n = 739.
 Note: Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100%.

4. Past UK and Overseas Trips

More than 3 in 5 (63%) have taken a UK overnight trip between May 2022 and April 2023, while 43% have taken an overseas overnight trip in that time period

Figure 32. Proportion taken an overnight UK or overseas trip in below time period, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Question: VB13a/f. Now reflecting on your recent behaviour, have you taken an overnight short break or holiday in the UK/overseas in the last 12 months?

VB13a2/g. In which of these months have you taken an overnight short break or holiday in the UK in the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. May 2023 = 1,755.

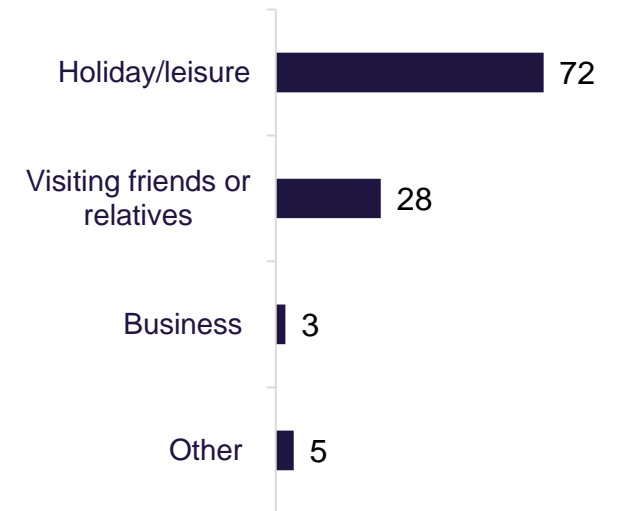
Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate taking more than one trip

Scotland, North West and South West were the most popular destination for domestic trips in the past three months. The majority were for a holiday/leisure purpose

Figure 33. Destination of overnight trips taken in UK in the past three months, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Figure 34. Purpose of overnight UK trip taken in the past three months, Percentage, May 2023, UK



Question: VB13c. Where in the UK did you stay on your most recent trip in <INSERT MOST RECENT MONTH>? VB13e. And which of the following best describe the purpose/s of your most recent trip in <INSERT MOST RECENT MONTH >?

Base: All May 2023 respondents that took an overnight trips in the last three months n= 294.

Note: Multiple choice questions. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents stayed in more than one location or travelled for more than one purpose

5. Overnight Business Trip Intentions (May 2023 data)

18% of UK adults in employment plan on taking an overnight business trip in the next 3 months. 'Conference' is the leading reason (30%), followed by 'team building' (at 29%)

Figure 35. Proportion anticipating an overnight business trip in next 3 months, Percentage, May 2023, UK adults in employment

82% of UK adults interviewed are in employment

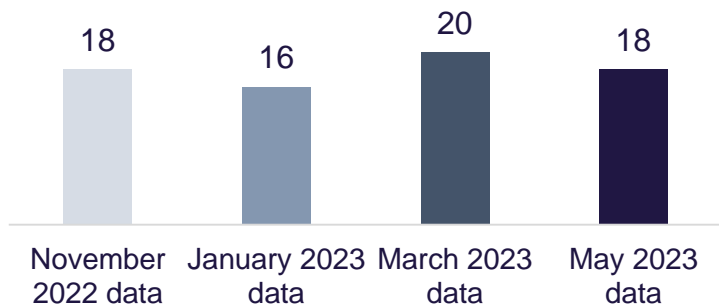
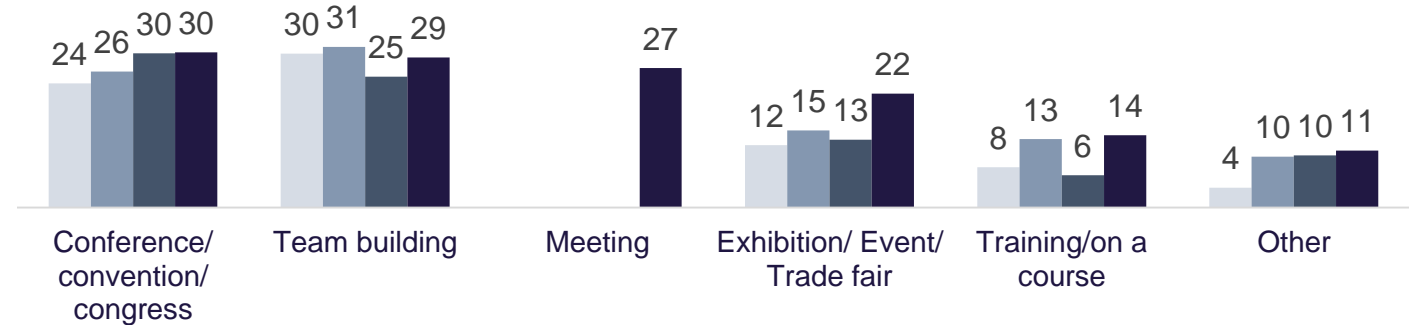


Figure 36. Reasons for taking an overnight business trip in next 3 months, Percentage, May 2023, UK adults in employment planning a trip

■ November 2022 data ■ January 2023 data ■ March 2023 data ■ May 2023 data



Question: VB14a. Now looking ahead again, are you intending to take any overnight business trips in the UK in the next three months? Please only answer yes if the overnight business trips are not a feature of your job. For example, if you are a long-distance lorry driver, airline crew or delivery service, an overnight stay would be a feature of the job so you would answer 'no'. Please also answer 'no' if your only overnight business trip is a regular trip to your main place of work (e.g. a weekly or monthly trip to your office). Multiple choice question. Totals may exceed 100% as some respondents anticipate more than one business reason.

VB14b: What would be the main reason for this overnight business trip? Base: May 2023 respondents currently in employment n = 1,420. All taking a business trip n=316.



Methodology & Further Data

Methodology

- This report presents findings from the May 2023 wave of the Domestic Sentiment Tracker, with comparisons to previous months where appropriate.
- The survey is conducted online, among a sample of the UK adult population.
- In the first stage, a nationally representative core sample of 1,500 is recruited and interviewed. This sample is then ‘boosted’ for Wales and Scotland to ensure sufficient base sizes for separate nation analysis. The data are then weighted to make the sample representative of the UK overall and within each nation.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The current 6th phase of this project started in April 2023 and will run until March 2023.
- With this newly commissioned phase, the questionnaire was updated to address the cost of living crisis’ impact on trips intentions. It also covers the preference for domestic vs overseas overnight trips.
- Please note that as a result of the questionnaire updates, some questions are not comparable between this 6th phase and the previous phases / waves.

Master Data Table

- The full data tables are published on the VisitBritain website alongside this report and questions' data not shown in this report are available to view there: <https://www.visitbritain.org/domestic-sentiment-tracker>
Extra questions available in the tables are:
 - VB1b. Likely to spend more, less or about the same on holidays in the next 12 months, vs last 12 months
 - VB9a/b. More/Less likely to visit leisure places in the UK in the next 12 months, vs last 12 months
 - VB10a/b. More/Less likely to conduct leisure activities in the UK in the next 12 months, vs last 12 months
- 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.