

COVID-19 Consumer Tracker

Wave 36

Published: 5th August 2021
Fieldwork Period: 26th - 31st 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 26 – 31 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	26-31 July
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 36: Scorecard of Key Metrics

Key Metrics	Wave 35	Wave 36	Wave Shift
National mood (average score out of 10)	6.6	6.8	+0.2
Perceptions of the situation regarding Covid-19 (% stating 'worst has passed')	23%	27%	+4*
Appetite for Risk: Comfort in undertaking a range of activities (1-4 comfort score)	2.7	2.7	No change
Normality score (proportion expecting normality by December)	23%	23%	No change
Leading two reasons for not feeling confident about taking a trip in Summer (July-September)	1. Restrictions on travel from government 2. Concerns around catching COVID-19	1. Concerns around catching COVID-19 2. Personal finances	Change
Near-term confidence in taking UK overnight trip (July/August confident)	54%	54%	No change
Medium-term confidence in taking UK overnight trip (September/October confident)	57%/55%	55%/57%	-2/+2
Net anticipated number of UK short breaks compared to normal (% more minus fewer)	-8	-4	+4
Net anticipated number of UK longer breaks compared to normal (% more minus fewer)	-12	-10	+2
Proportion going on a UK overnight trip in Summer (July - September)	30%	27%	NA**
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	No change
Main overnight accommodation type likely to stay in Summer (July - September)	Hotel/motel/inn	Hotel/motel/inn	No change
Proportion going on a UK day trip in next two weeks	27%	27%	No change
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; Indoor health and wellbeing activities	Predominantly indoor or covered attractions;	Change

- Represents a significant change on previous wave
- ** Comparison not valid due to different time frames across waves



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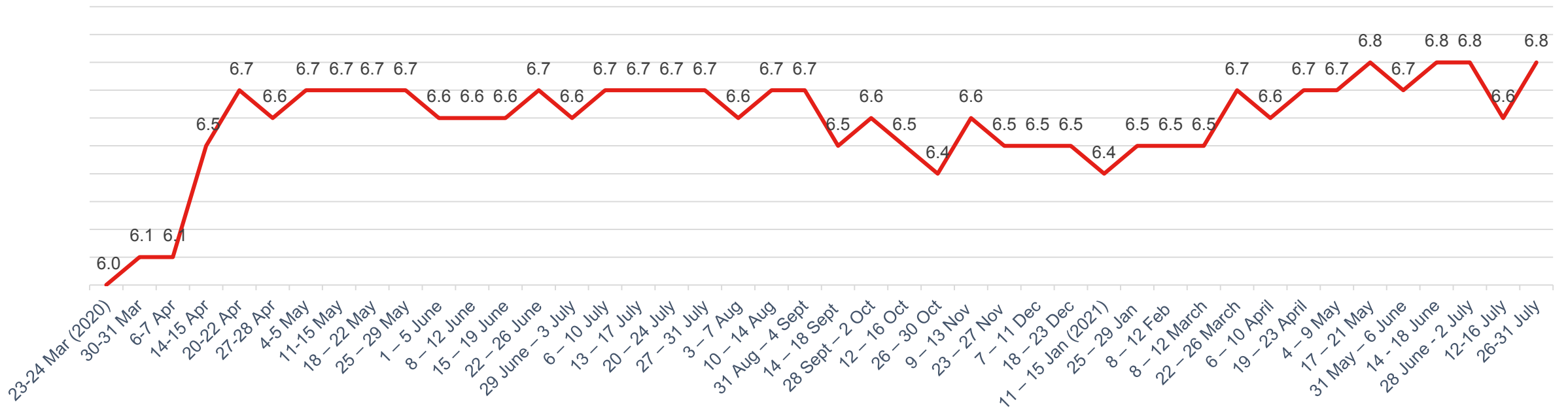
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1. The National Mood

The National Mood

- The average mood of U.K. adults rises back to levels seen throughout June, increasing by 0.2 points to 6.8 in Wave 36.

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

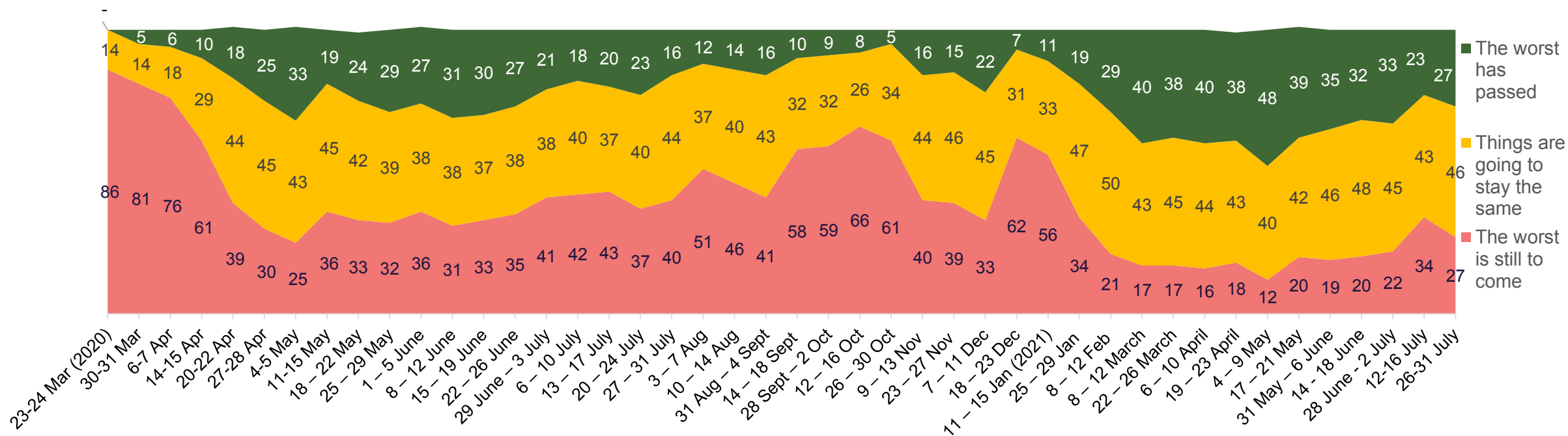


Q5: How would you rate, between 0 and 10, your mood today? Base: All respondents. Wave 36 = 1,763 All others waves n=c,1750. Pre Wave 1, research was conducted by BVA BDRC with base size of c.750

Perceptions of the situation relating to COVID-19

- The proportion of the U.K. public that believe ‘the worst has passed’ in relation to COVID-19 has increased since the previous wave, arresting two consecutive waves of decline. However, it is still lower than at any point between early February and early July.
- The U.K. public are most likely to think that ‘things are going to stay the same’, 46% stating this – a figure that has remained relatively stable since 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 36 = 1,763 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 – 3% by August and 10% by September – relatively consistent with figures reported in Wave 35.
- 23% expect normality by the end of the year (consistent with wave 35), with a majority not expecting it until April 2022 or later.
- 1 in 8 of the U.K. public 'never' expect a return to normality – a figure that has crept up in recent waves.

Figure 3. Perceptions of when things will return 'close to normal', cumulative percentage, Wave 36, UK

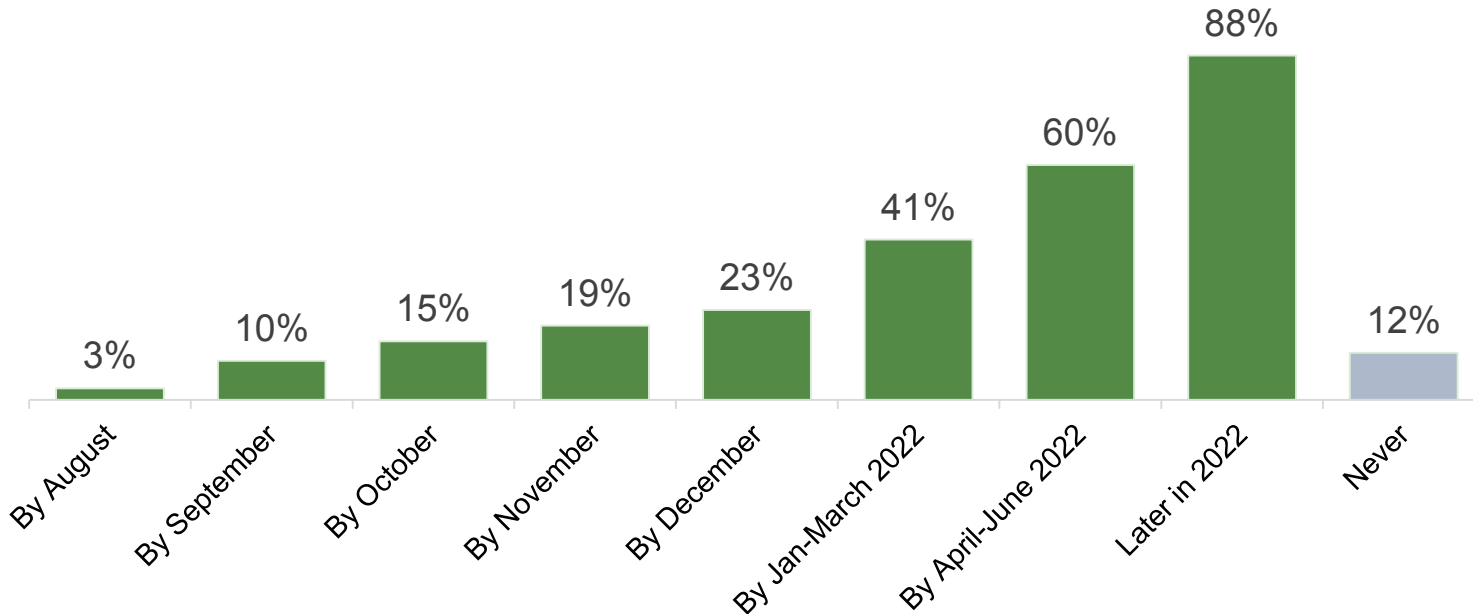
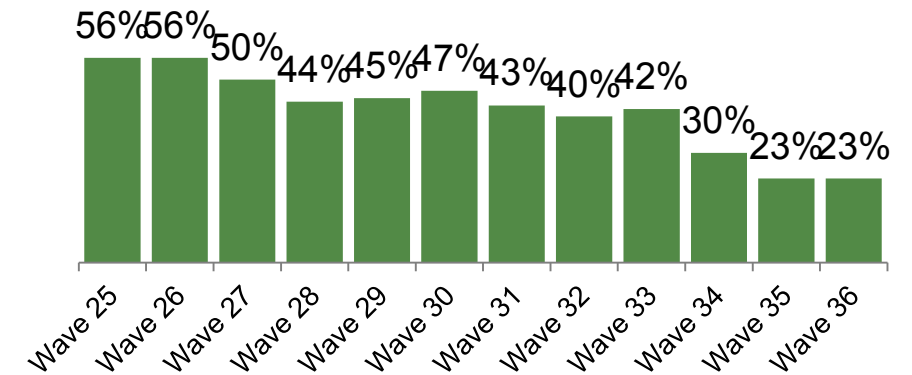


Figure 4. Proportion expecting normality by December, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



Q16: Given what you know today, when do you think life will return to something close to normal? Base: All respondents. Wave 36 = 1,763
 *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

- 54% of U.K. adults are currently confident that an overnight domestic trip would go ahead in August, 55% by September, and 57% by October - the last month that confidence levels increase.
- Confidence levels are fairly consistent with Wave 35.

Figure 5. Confidence in taking a UK overnight trip across different time periods, percentage, Wave 36, UK

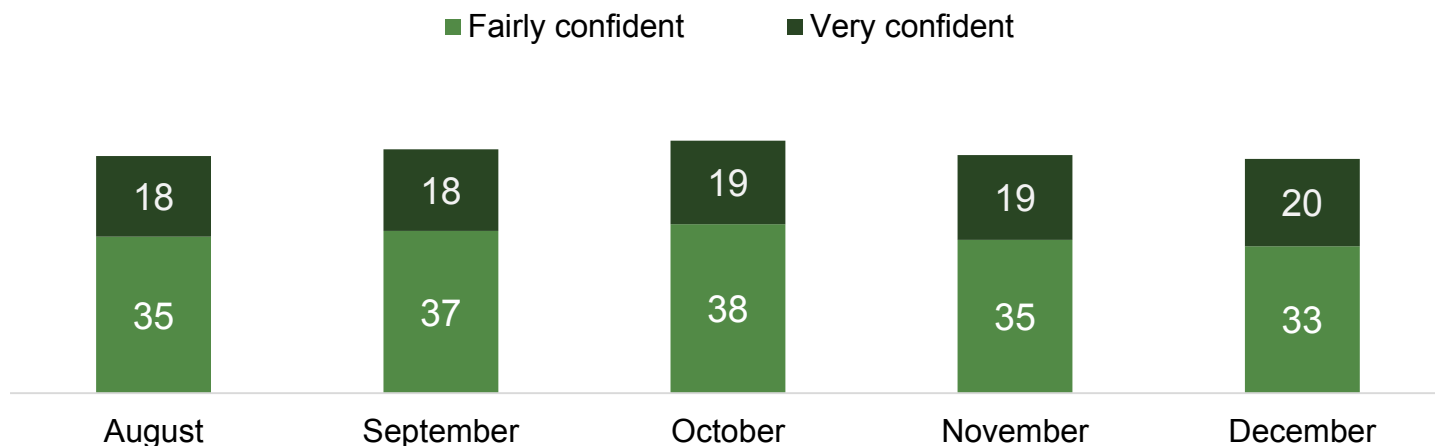
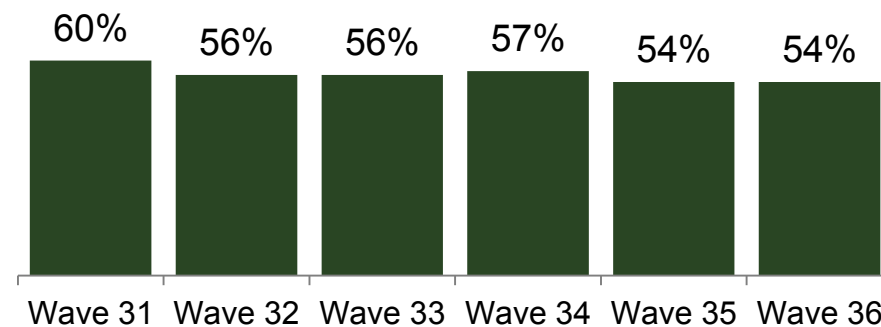


Figure 6. Confidence in taking a UK overnight trip in August 2021, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



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

- ‘Concerns about catching COVID-19’ is the top reason people do not feel confident about taking an overnight trip during summer, a rise on last wave and 7 percentage points higher than ‘personal finances’ – the second highest reason.
- In autumn, ‘restrictions on travel from government’ is the most influential reason, although there is little to separate it from ‘personal finances’ and ‘concerns about catching COVID-19’.

Figure 7. Top 5 reasons for not being confident about travelling in Summer*, percentage Wave 36, UK

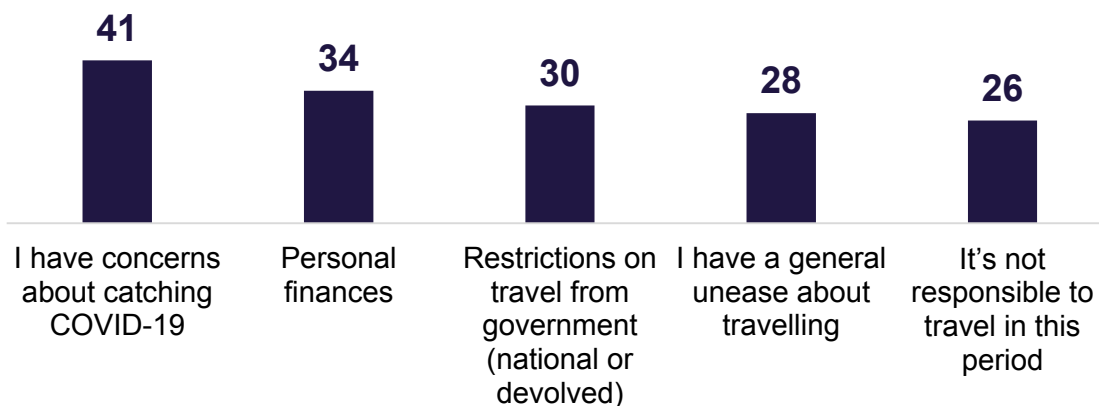
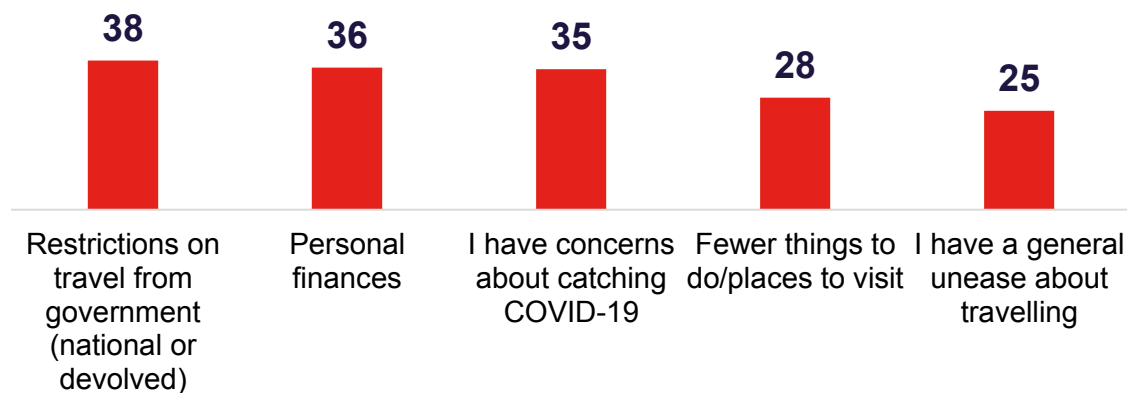


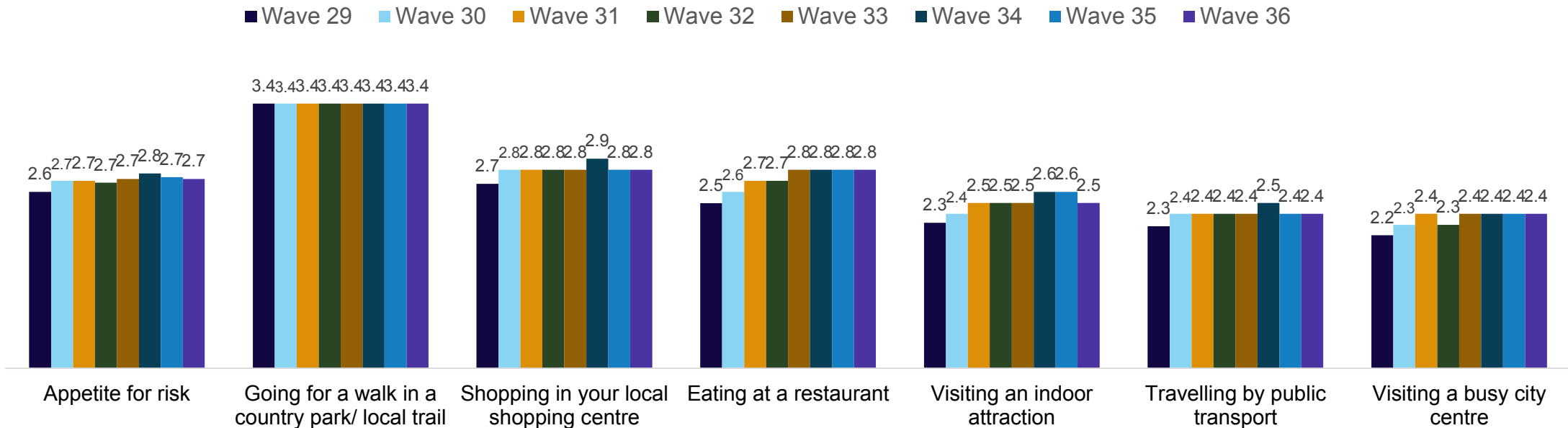
Figure 8. Top 5 reasons for not being confident about travelling in Autumn*, percentage Wave 36, UK



The 'Appetite for Risk'

- This wave's 'appetite for risk' score is 2.7, unchanged since Wave 35
- Overall, the majority of activities have seen no change in their average score since Wave 35, the one exception being 'visiting an indoor attraction' which fell by 0.1 points this wave.

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 36 = 1,763



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2. Overnight Trip Intentions

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

- Over half of UK residents anticipating more or about the same number of U.K. short breaks or longer breaks compared to normal (slightly higher than in wave 35), with the remainder anticipating fewer or unsure.
- Anticipated overseas trips continue to be significantly below normal.

Figure 10a. Number of U.K. overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Percentage Wave 36, UK

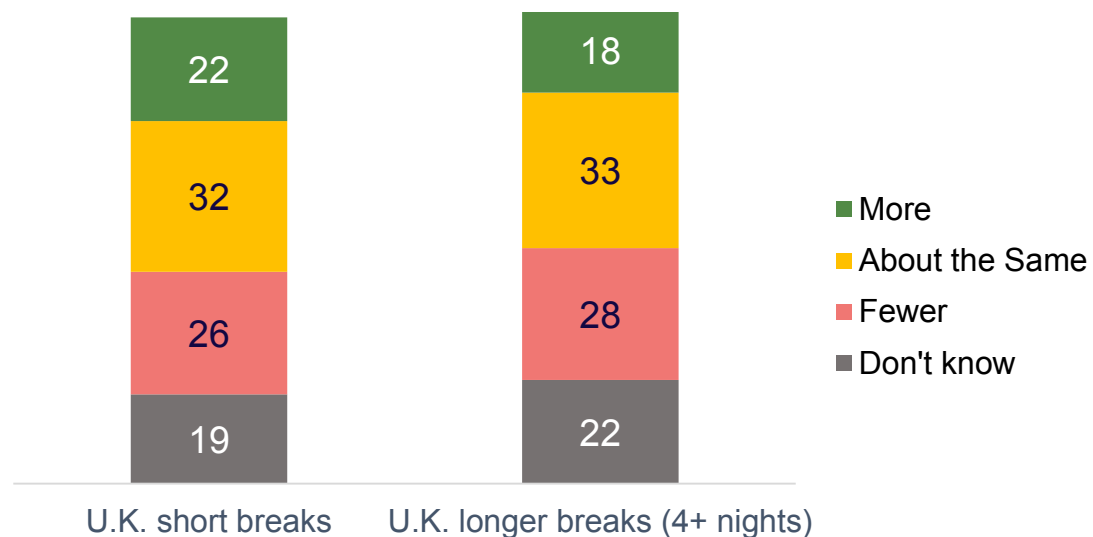
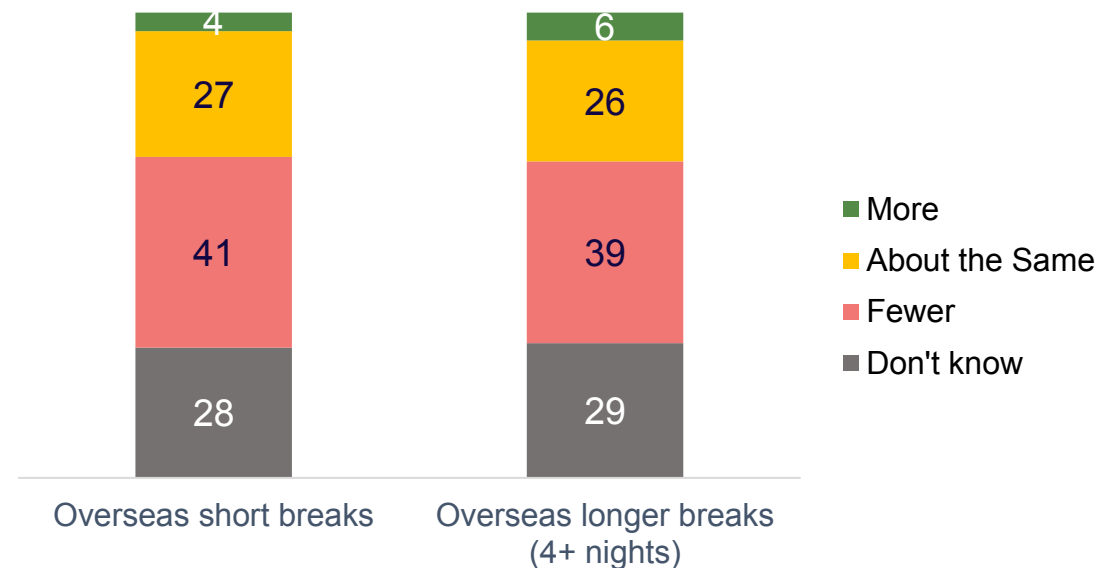


Figure 10b. Number of OVERSEAS overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Percentage Wave 36, UK



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 36 = 1,763

*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 number of those who anticipate taking U.K breaks has improved on Wave 35 – this is the case for both short and longer breaks. That said, anticipated number of trips remain below ‘normal’ levels, albeit only just.

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

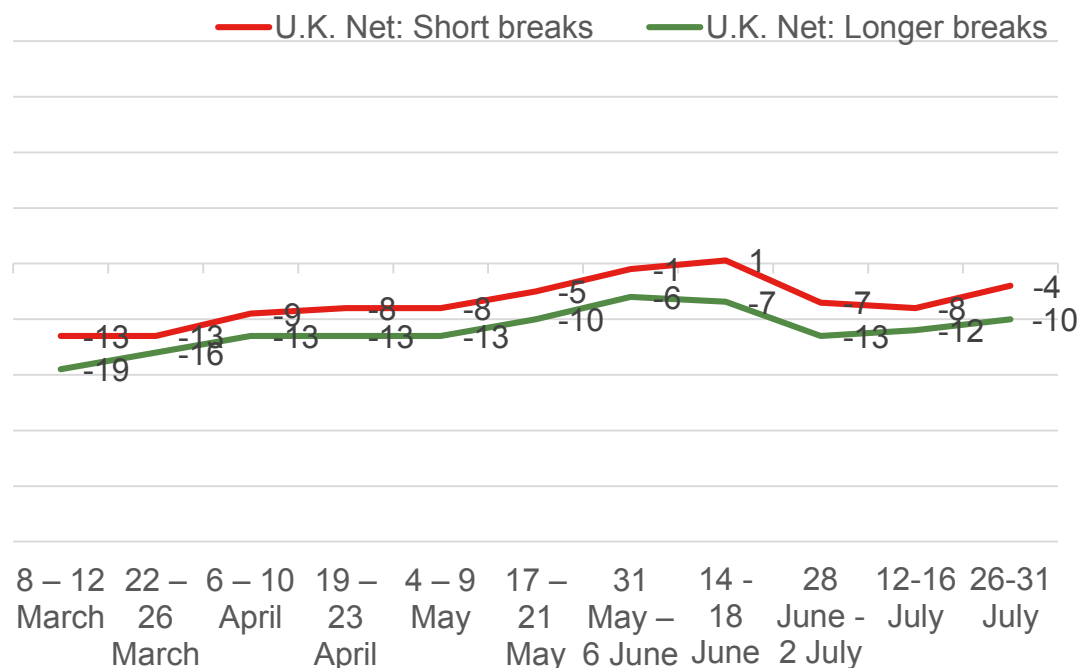
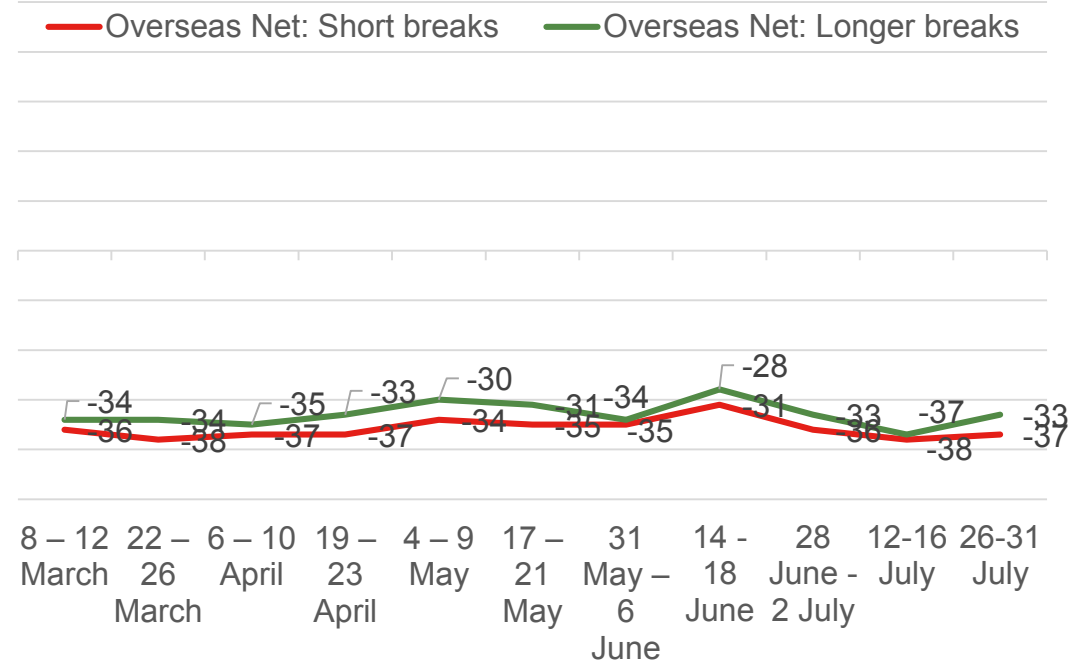


Figure 11. Number of OVERSEAS overnight trips between now and the end of the year compared to normal, Net ‘More minus fewer’, Wave-on-wave, UK



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 36 = 1,763

*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

- 25% 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 the last wave, and significantly ahead of the equivalent period in 2020.
- 44% are likely to have *planned* a domestic overnight trip by the end of summer (compared to 38% in 2020), with 2 in 5 (39%) expecting to have one *booked* (compared to 33% in 2020).

Figure 12. When anticipate PLANNING the next UK overnight trip, Percentage Wave 36, UK

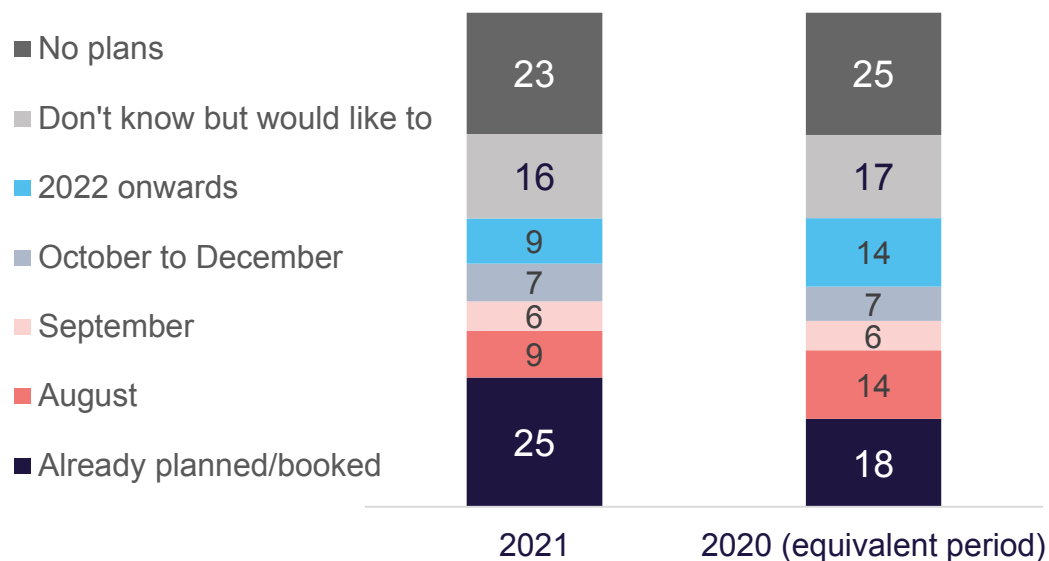
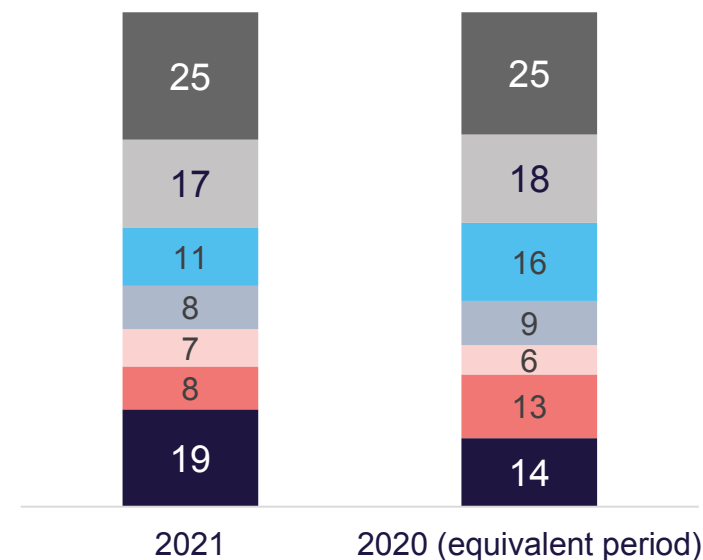


Figure 12. When anticipate BOOKING the next UK overnight trip, Percentage Wave 36, UK



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

- Just over 1 in 4 (27%) U.K. adults anticipate taking an overnight domestic trip in the remainder of this summer. 13% plan to do so in August and 14% in September – both of which are ahead of intentions in the equivalent period in 2020. 23% plan on taking an overnight trip this Autumn – also significantly ahead of predictions in 2020.
- 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 36, UK

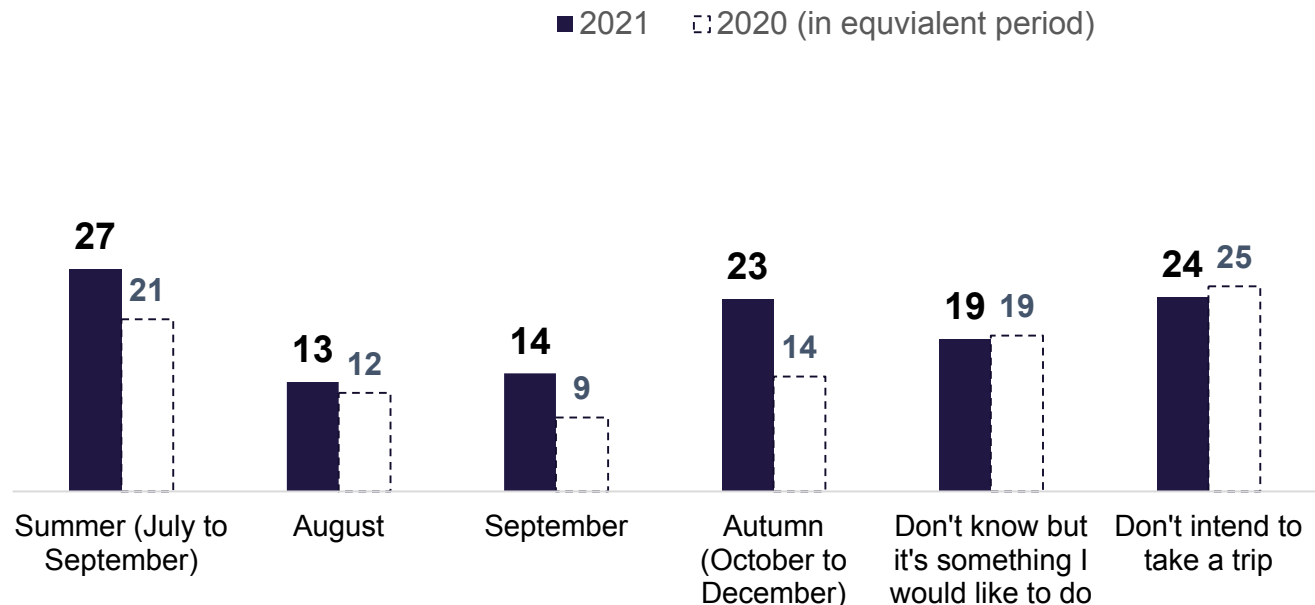
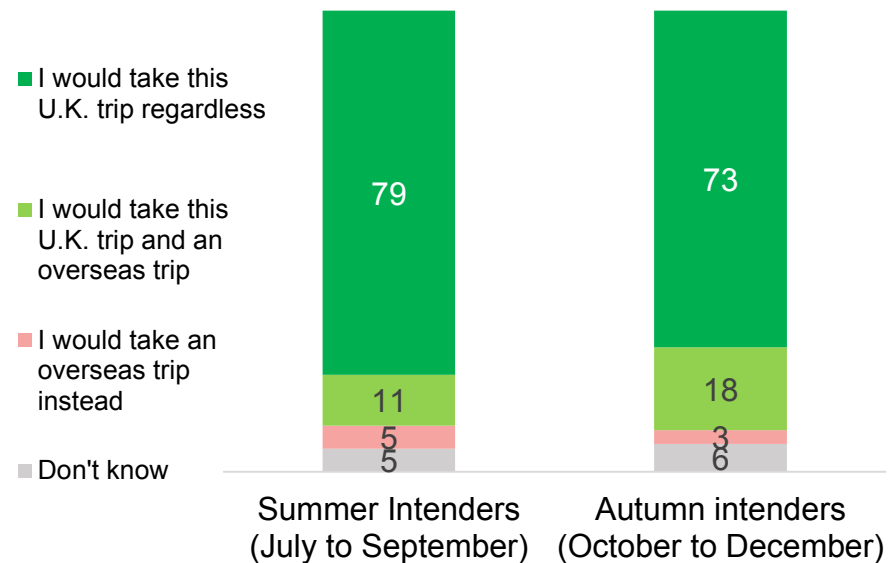


Figure 14b. Impact on U.K. trip if majority of overseas travel restrictions were lifted, percentage Wave 36, UK



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 36 = 1,763
 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=455, Autumn (October to December) n=235

Planning and booking timeline compared to normal

- On balance, the U.K. public are planning their summer trips relatively in line with normal, and autumn trips further from normal.
- Bookings amongst both summer and autumn intenders are happening closer to the travel date than usual.

Figure 15. **PLANNING** lead times for Summer or Autumn trips compared to normal, percentage Wave 36, U.K.

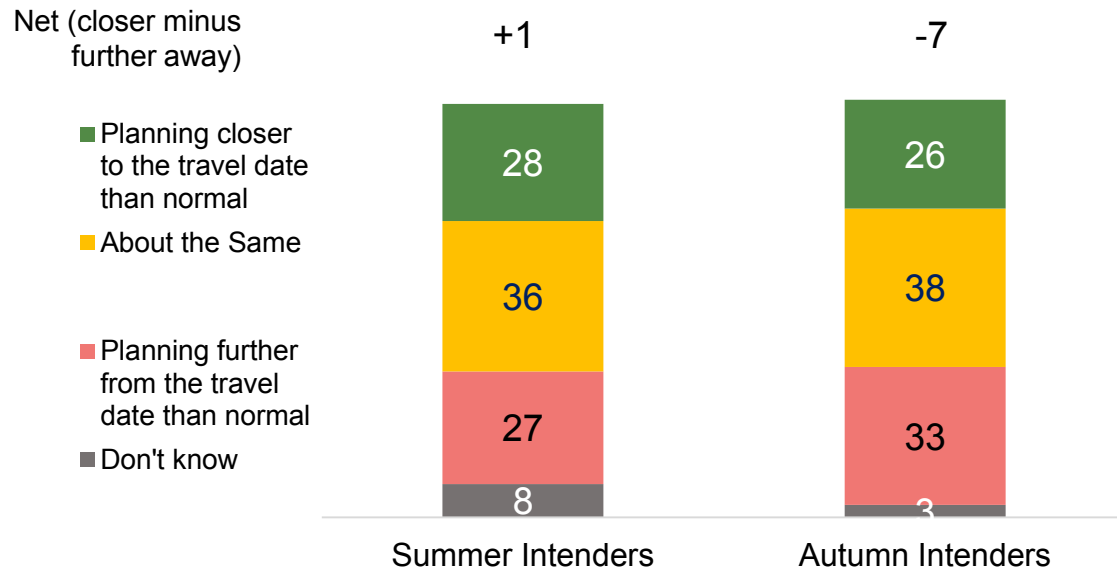
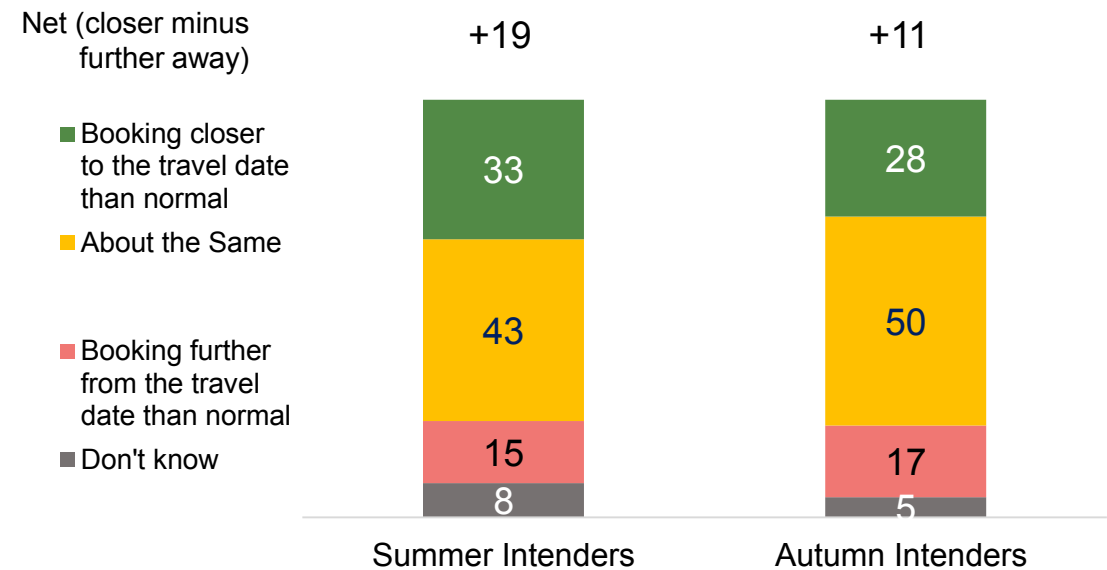


Figure 16. **BOOKING** lead times for Summer or Autumn trips compared to normal, percentage Wave 36, U.K.



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

- 3 in 5 (59%) of summer intenders have already planned their forthcoming trip with 49% having already booked it – both having increased on Wave 35, 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 (35% and 22% respectively), but also higher than in 2020 – if only marginally.
- 16% of summer and 37% 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 36 for Summer and Autumn, UK

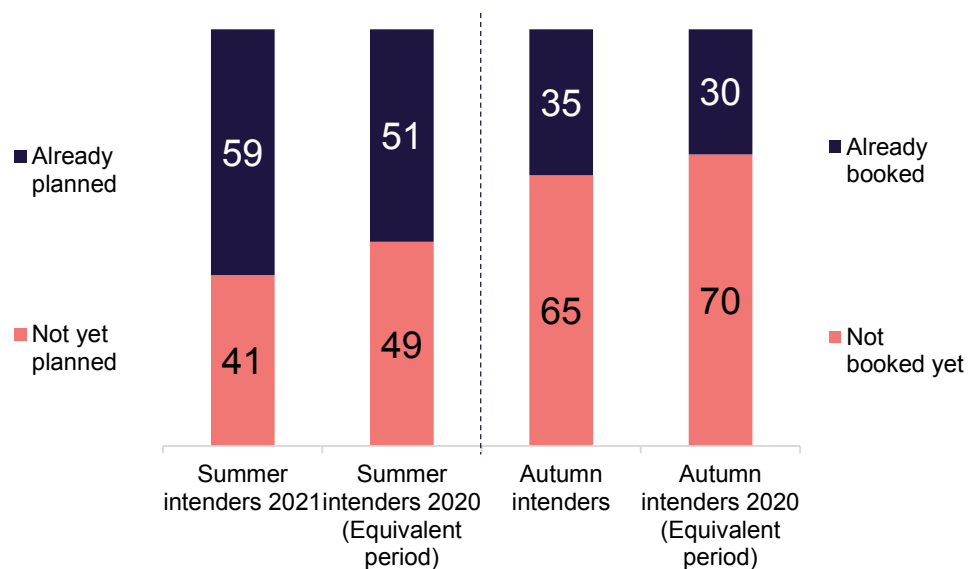


Figure 18. Proportion of Intenders that have already booked their trip, percentage Wave 36 for Summer and Autumn, UK

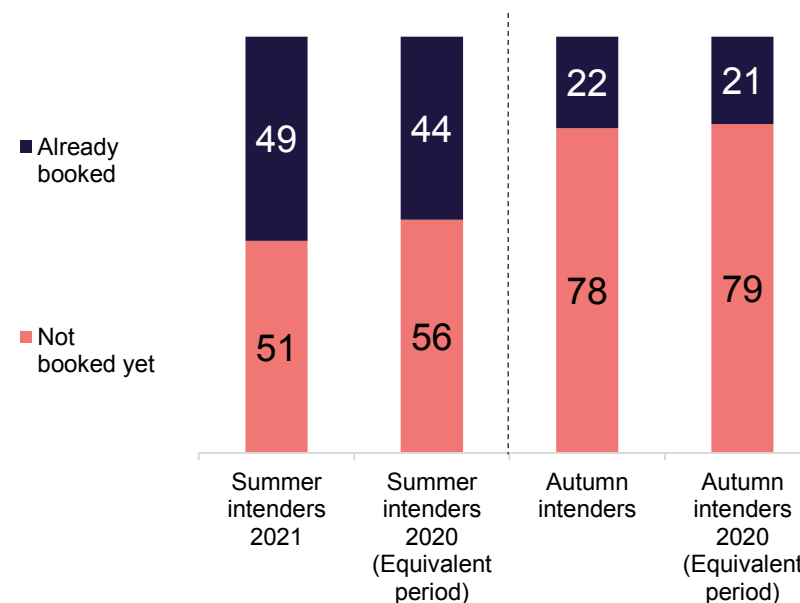
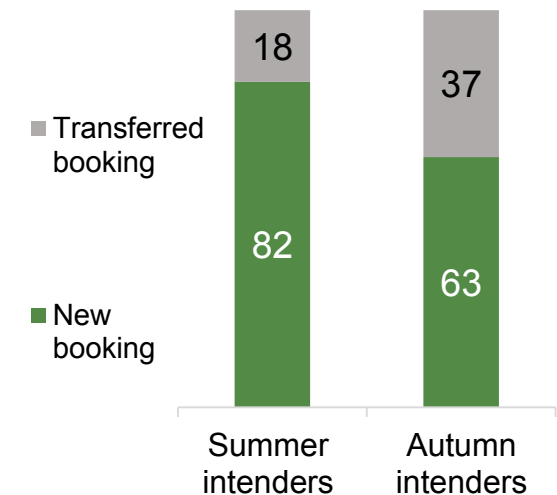


Figure 19. Proportion of next trips that are transferred bookings, percentage Wave 36 for Summer and Autumn, UK



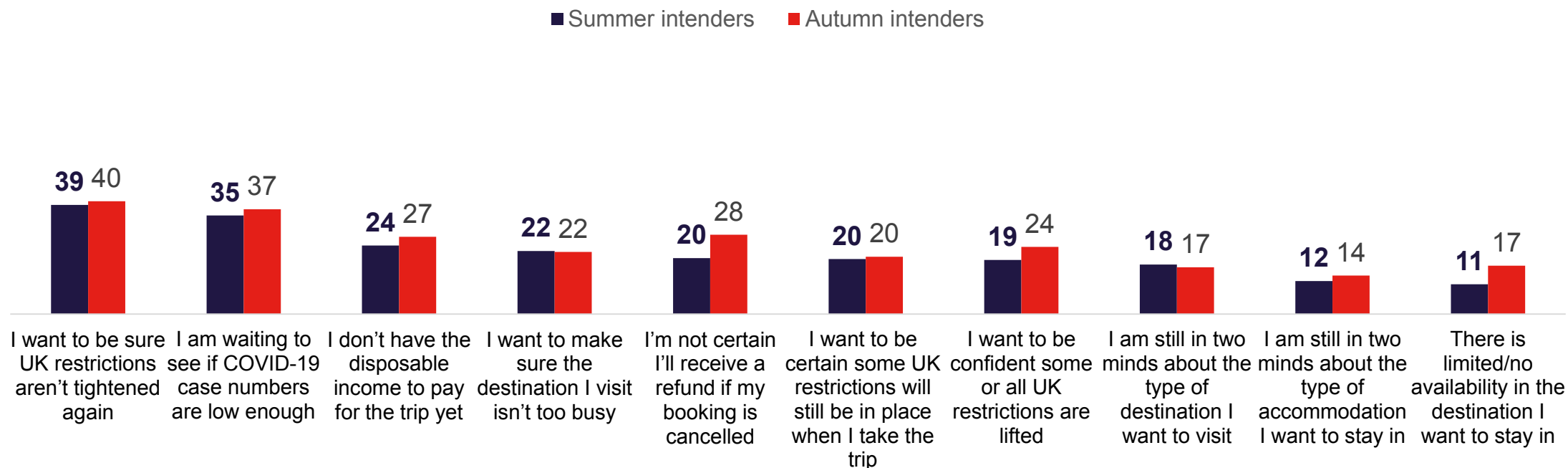
QVB2a. Thinking of the next UK holiday or short break you are likely to take, when are you likely to plan, book and go on this trip? VB6diii Is this next trip a transferred booking from a trip that was previously cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19?

Base: All Wave 36 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK in Summer (July to September) n=455, Autumn (October to December) n=235

Top 7 reasons for not having booked trip

- The most popular reasons for summer and autumn intenders not yet having booked their trips are 'I want to be sure restrictions aren't tightened again' and 'I am waiting to see if COVID case numbers are low enough'. A range of other reasons are provided, ranging from 'insufficient income' to 'ensuring the destination is not too busy' and 'uncertainty around receiving a refund'.

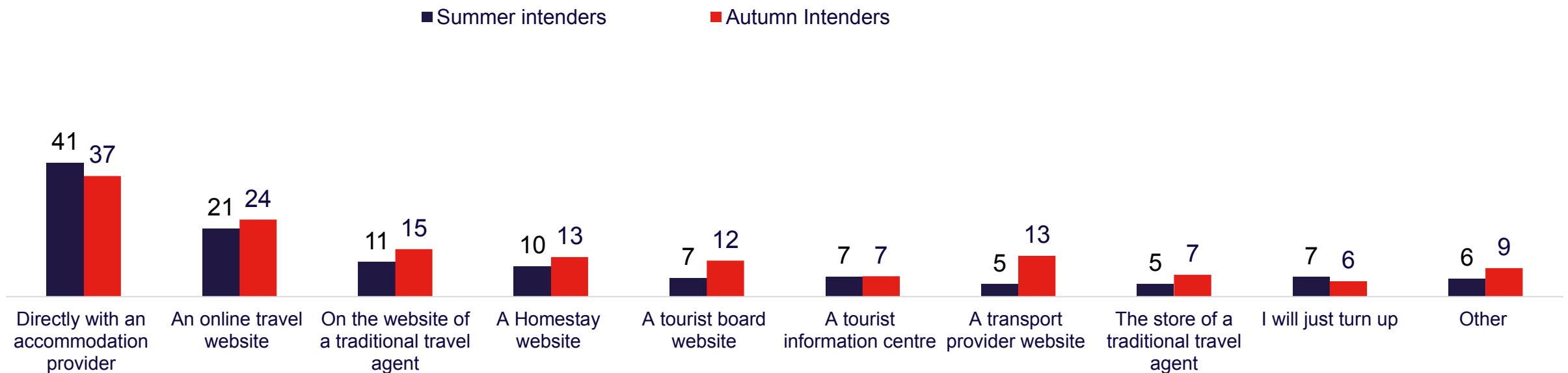
Figure 19b. Top 10 reasons for not having yet booked trip in Summer and Autumn, percentage Wave 36, ranked on summer, UK



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’ is 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 36, UK



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

Base: All Wave 36 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK in Summer (July to September) n= 455, Autumn (October to December) n=235

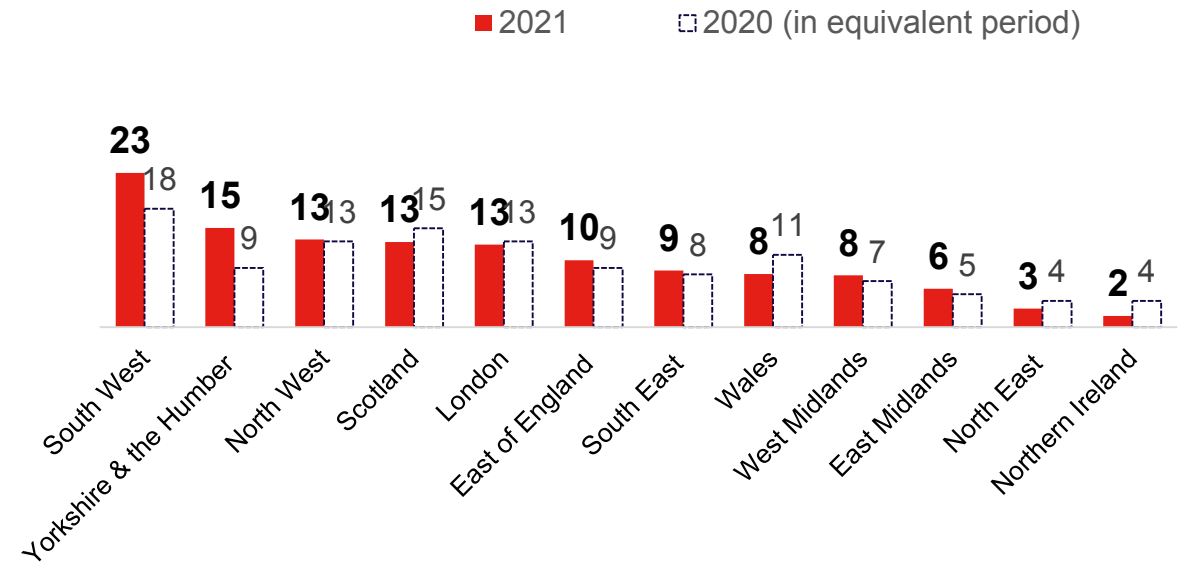
Where planning on staying on next overnight trip in UK

- The South West of England remains the leading destination for an overnight domestic trip this summer, followed by the North West, and Scotland. At 22%, the South West is significantly preferred to other parts of the UK. In line with previous waves, little separates the visitor share of the majority of subsequent destinations in the summer period.
- Summer destination intention is relatively in line with the equivalent period in 2020. However, it's worth noting that for the second consecutive wave, intention to visit London is higher than in 2020.
- The South West also leads amongst autumn intenders – Yorkshire and the Humber, the North West, Scotland and London the next most popular.

Figure 21. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip in Summer, percentage Waves 35 and 36, UK



Figure 22. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip in Autumn, Percentage Waves 35 and 36, UK



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

Base: All Waves 35 and 36 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK for Summer (July to September) n=974, Autumn (October-December) n = 455

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

- A 'traditional coastal/seaside town' is the preferred destination type for summer intenders - consistent with the last three waves of research and the equivalent period in 2020. 'Countryside or village' and 'city or large town' are the next most preferred – the latter significantly more so than in the equivalent period in 2020.
- In the autumn period, 'traditional coastal/seaside town' is also the top destination type, significantly more so than in 2020.

Figure 23. Main type of destination for trip in summer, percentage
Waves 35 and 36, UK

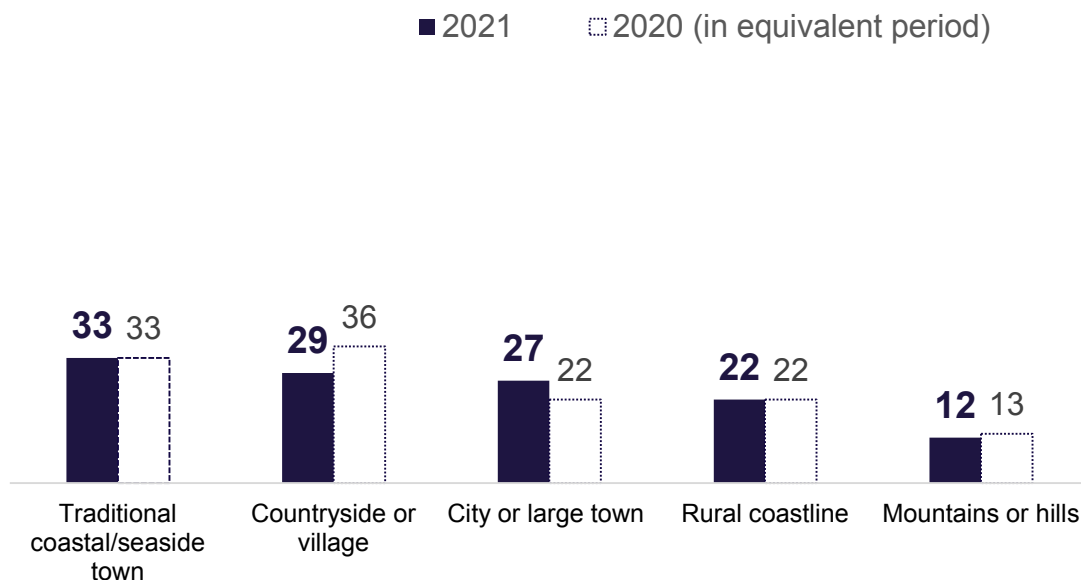
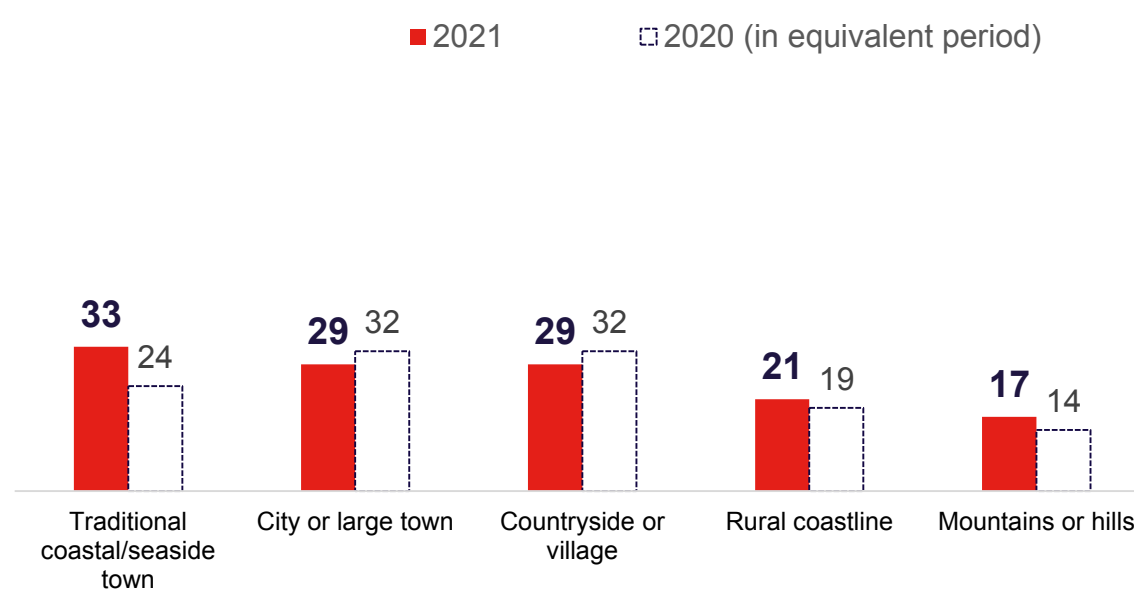


Figure 24. Main type of destination for trip in autumn, percentage
Waves 35 and 36, UK



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 35 and 36 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK for Summer (July to September) n=974, Autumn (October-December)

n = 455

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 consistent with the previous wave, significantly higher than in the equivalent period in 2020.
- For the autumn period, there is less certainty over accommodation type, with ‘hotel/motel/inn’, ‘commercial rental’ and ‘a private home’ sharing the top position as the leading choice with ‘camping/caravan’ close behind.

Figure 25. Accommodation planning on staying in on next UK overnight trip in summer, net percentage Waves 35 and 36

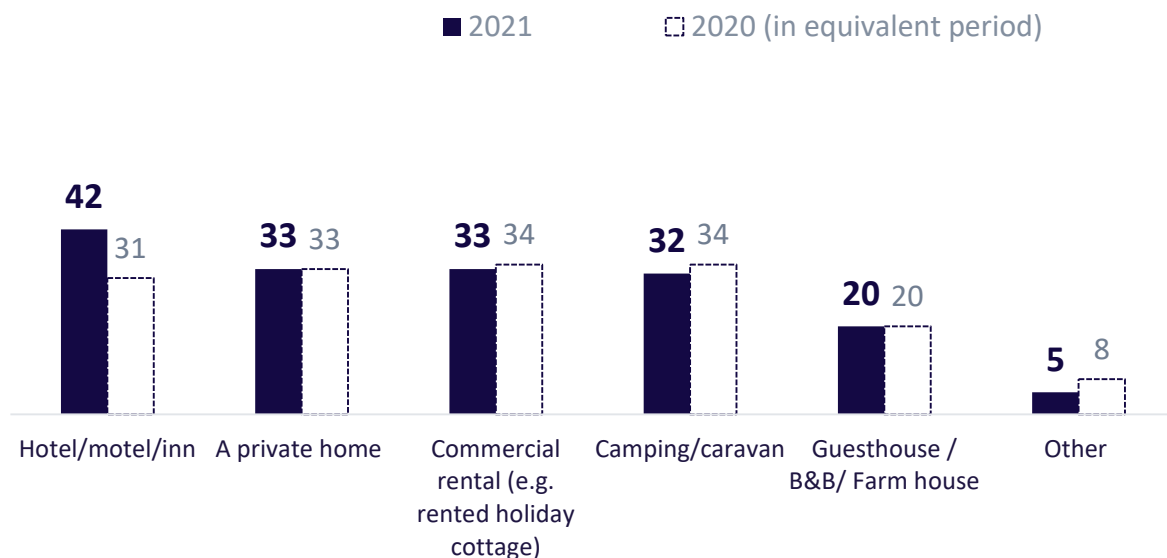
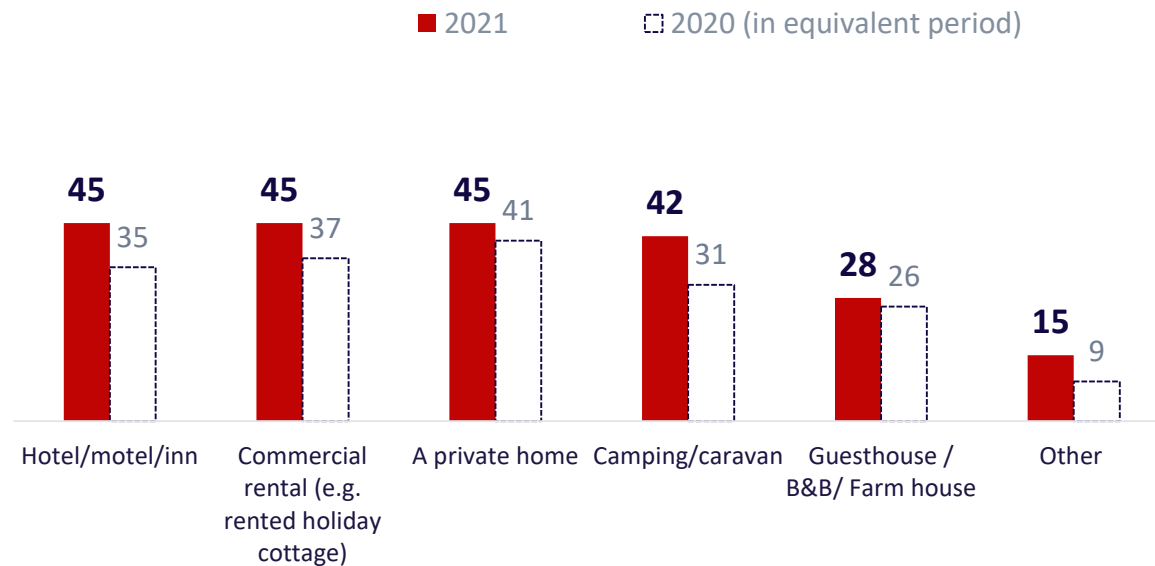


Figure 26. Accommodation planning on staying in on next UK overnight trip in autumn, net percentage Waves 35 and 36



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

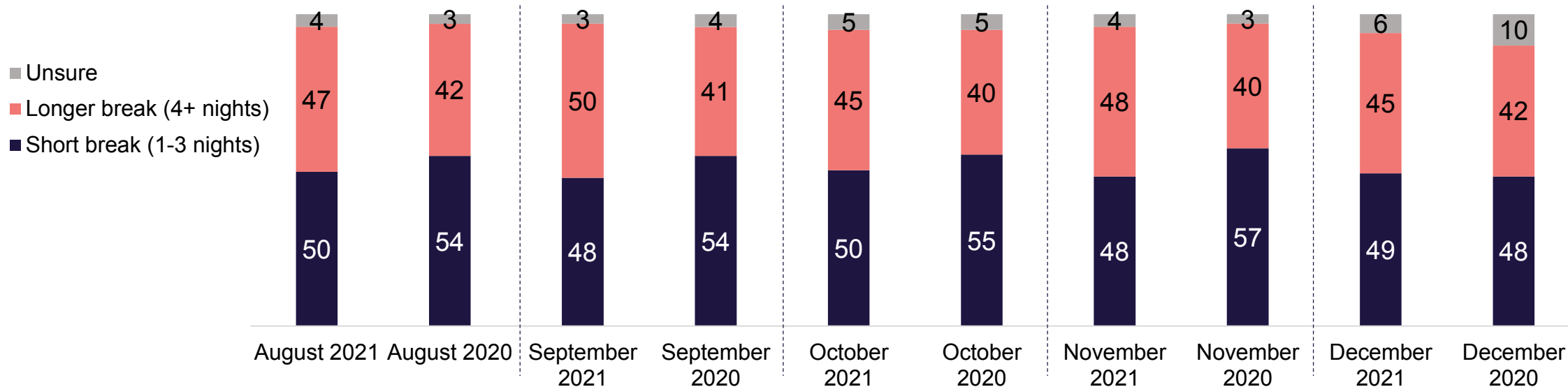
Base: All Waves 35 and 36 respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break in the UK for Summer (July to September) n=974, Autumn (October-December) n = 455

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

- There is a relatively even split between short breaks and longer breaks for intended overnight trips from August through to the end of the year.
- Most notably, 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 35 and 36, UK



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

Base: All Waves 35 and 36 respondents intending to take next holiday or short break in each time period: August n=427, September n=342, October n = 228, November n = 109, December n = 118

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 67% stating this for summer trips and 47% 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 36, UK

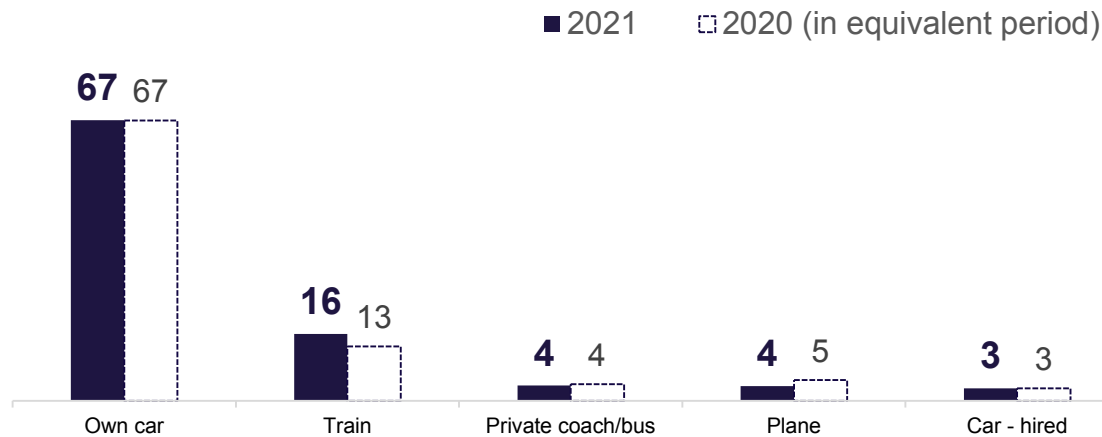
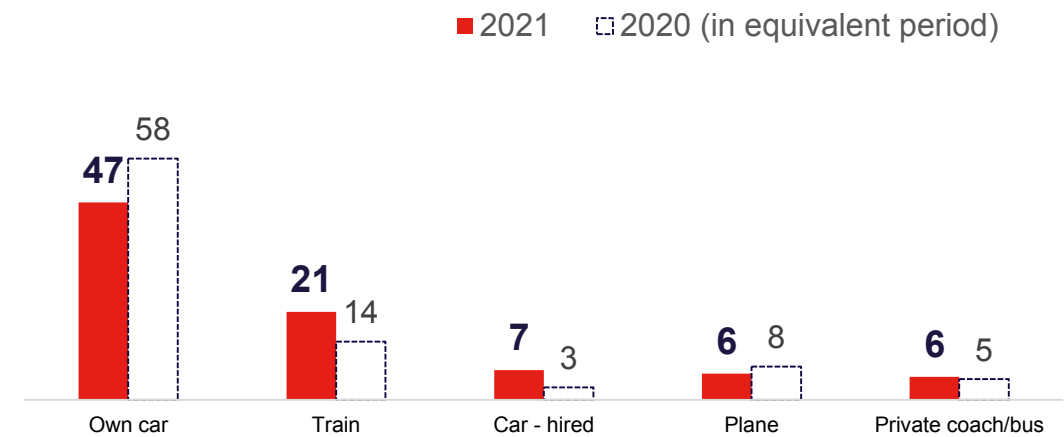


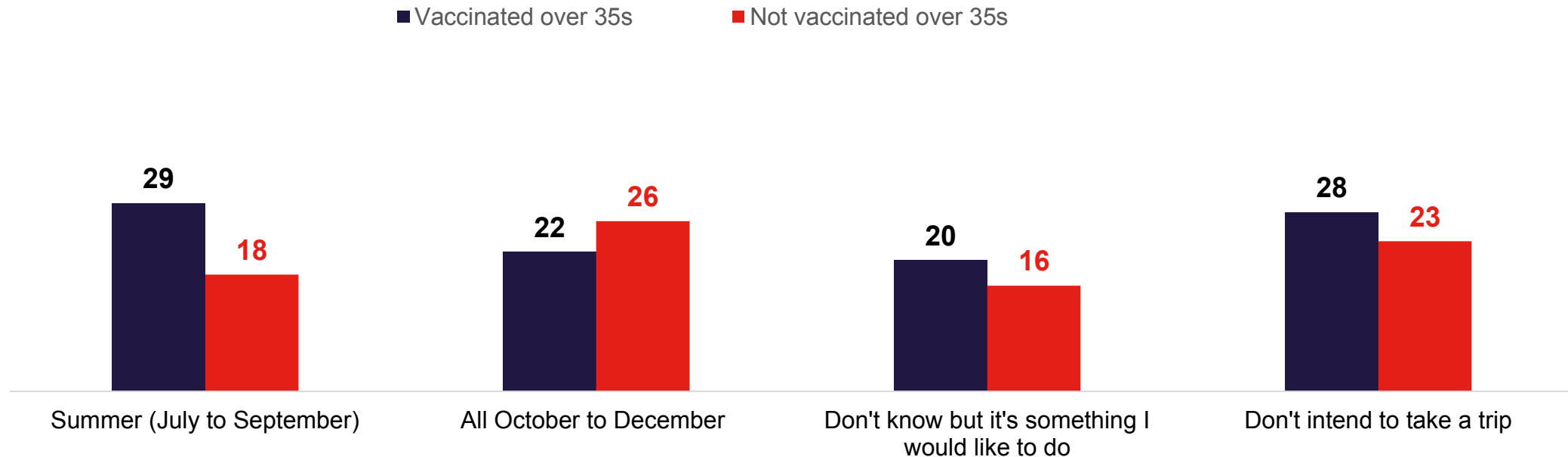
Figure 29. Top 5 main modes of travel to destination for trip in Autumn, percentage, Wave 36 UK



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 trips though are less likely to take autumn overnight trips than over 35s that have *not* been vaccinated.

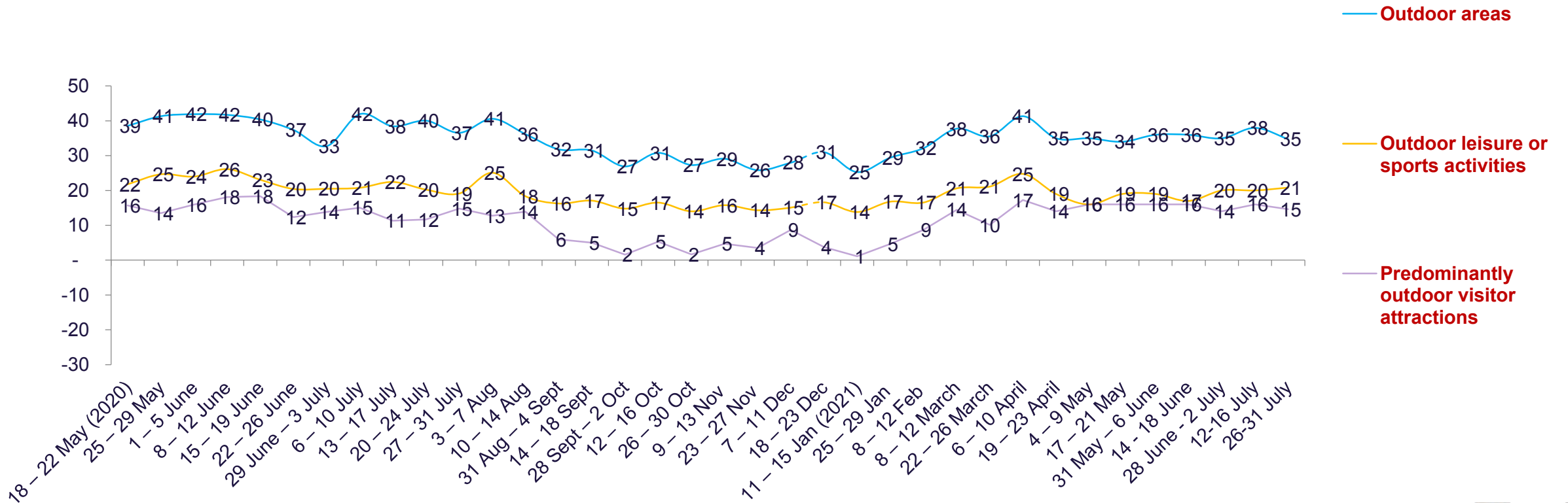
Figure 30. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight UK trip by vaccine status, Percentage Wave 36, UK



Outdoor leisure activity engagement in the next few months

- Engagement levels with outdoor activities and spaces remain significantly ahead of normal.

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

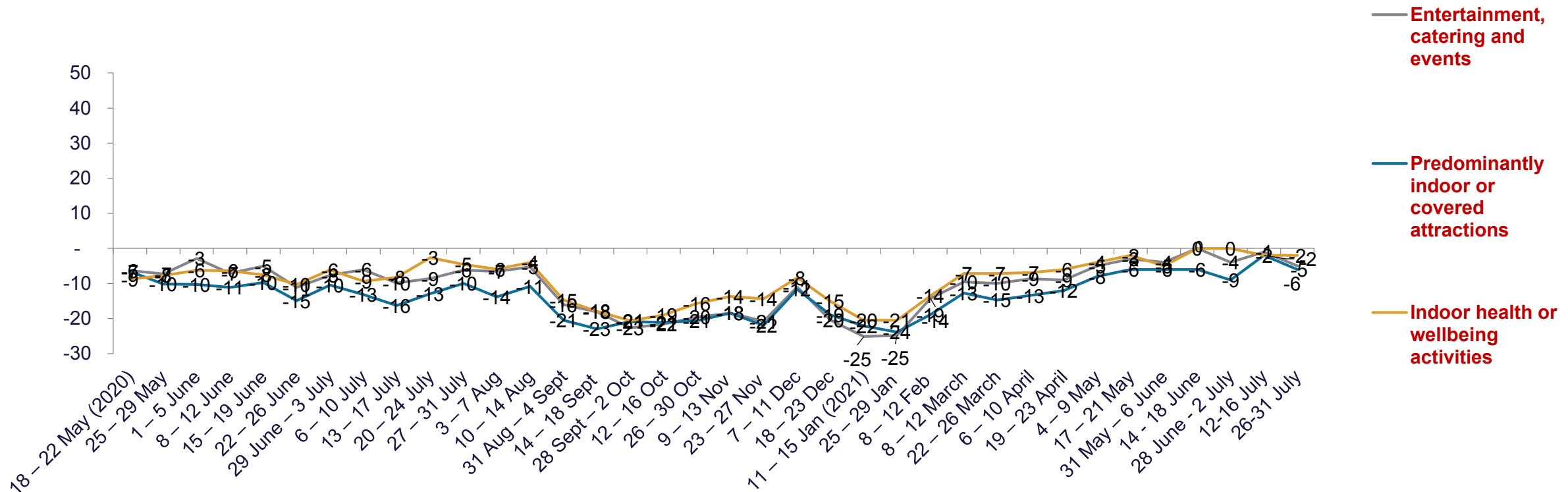


QVB9a/bB10a/b. Which, if any, of these types of places/activities in the UK are you more/less likely than normal to visit/do over the next few months? Base: All Wave 36 = 1,763

Indoor leisure activity engagement in the next few months

- Although intentions are still 'net negative', engagement with indoor activities and spaces remains close to normal.

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 36 = 1,763



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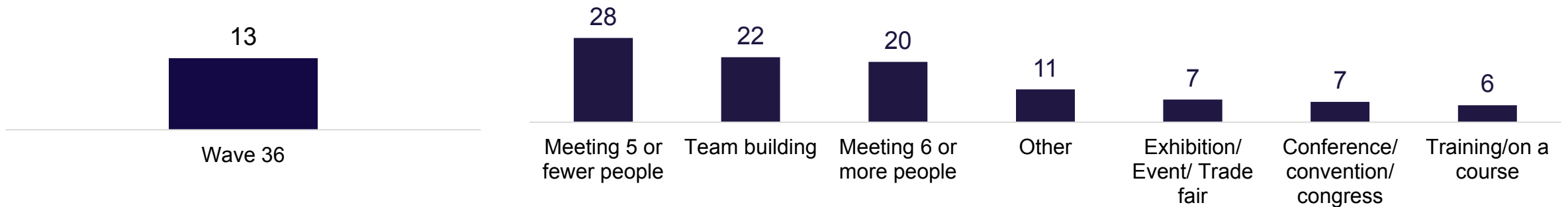
3. Business trip Intentions

Intentions for overnight business trips between now and the next 6 months

- 13% of U.K. adults in employment say they are intending to take a domestic overnight business trip over the next 6 months
- ‘Meetings with 5 or fewer people’ is the leading reason for an overnight business trip (28%). This is followed by ‘team building’ in second place (22%) and ‘meetings with 6 or more people’ in third (20%).

Figure 30a. Proportion anticipating an overnight business trip by end of 2021, Percentage, Wave 36, U.K. adults in employment

Figure 31b. Reasons for taking an overnight business trip, Percentage, Wave 36, U.K. adults in employment planning a trip





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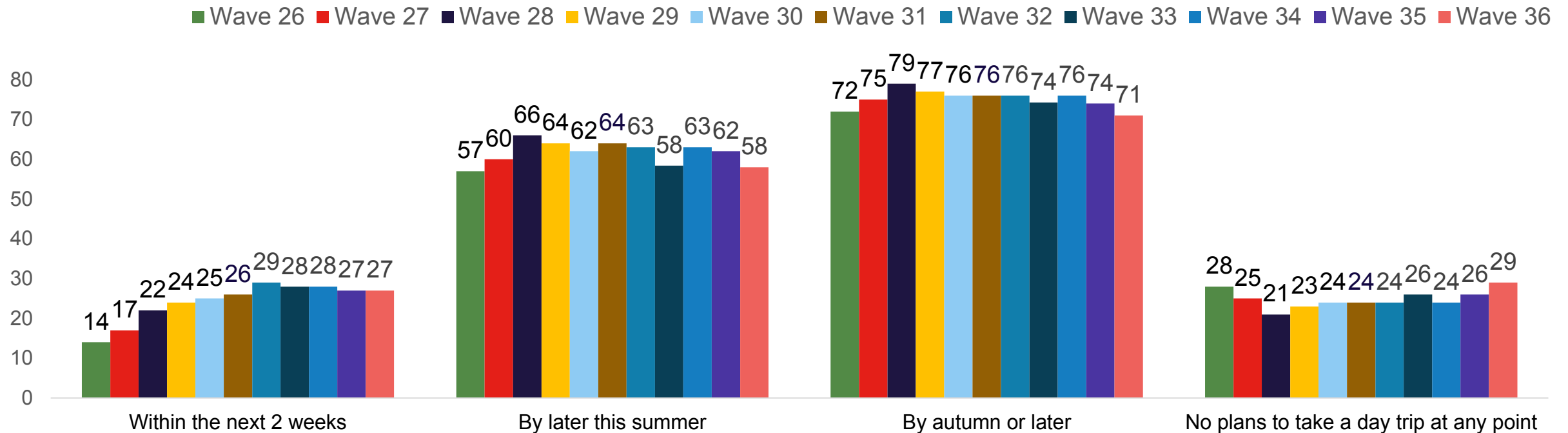
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4. Day Trip Intentions

Day trip intention overall

- The likelihood to take day trips in the next two weeks continues to plateau with just over 1 in 4 planning to do so.
- The likelihood to take a day trip by later this summer has dipped slightly, with the number of those with 'no plans to take a day trip at any point' rising.

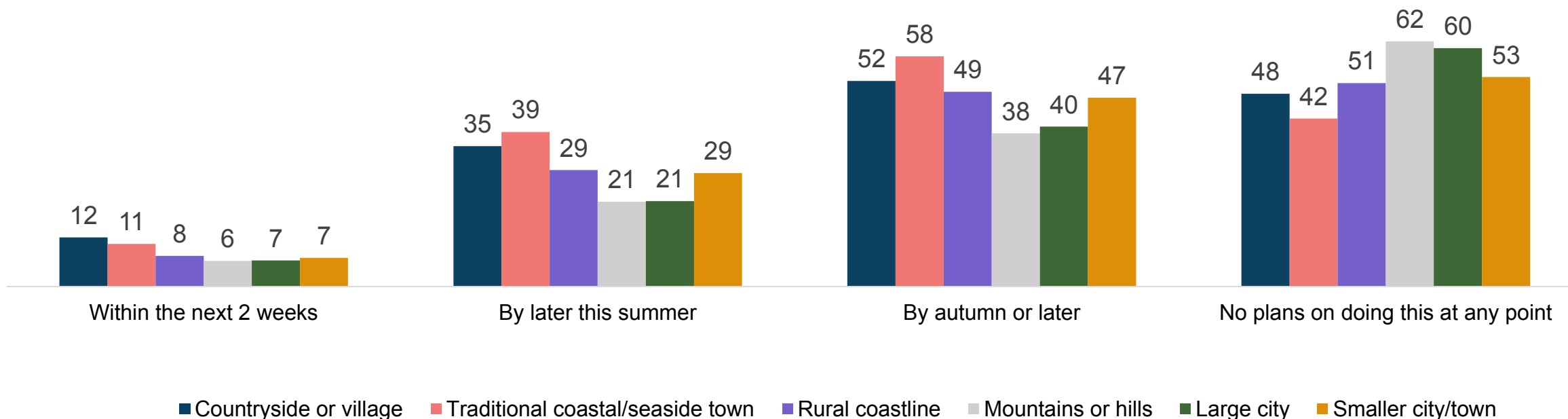
Figure 32. Likelihood to take any day trip, percentage wave-on-wave, UK



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' and 'mountains and hills' by autumn index the lowest compared to other destination types, while smaller cities/towns look set to be more popular among those travelling by autumn or later.
- There is minimal movement in intention since the previous wave of research.

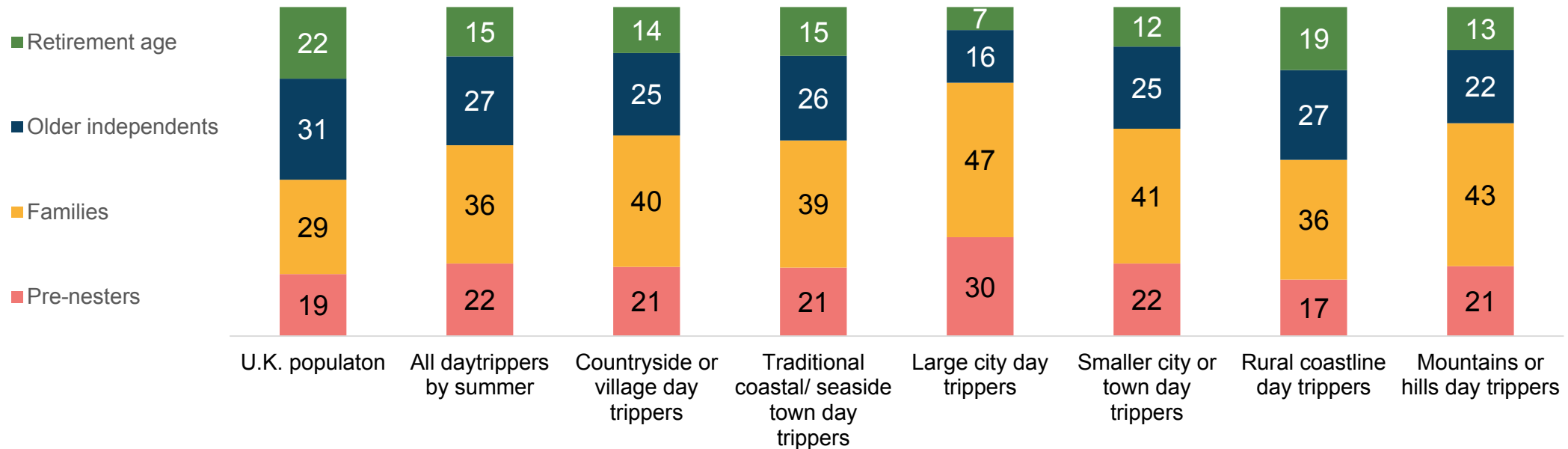
Figure 33. Likelihood to take a day trip by destination type, percentage, Wave 36, UK



Life stage of day trip intenders

- Overall, day trippers have higher representation amongst pre-nesters and families compared to the UK adult population.
- Consistent with previous reporting, the skew towards younger life stages is most apparent among those planning a day trip to a large city, where over 3 in 4 are pre-nesters and families.

Figure 34. Breakdown of day trip intenders* by life stage, percentage, Wave 36, 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 36 respondents: *All day trippers within the next 2 weeks/early spring summer n=1115; All day-trippers Countryside or village day trippers n=663; Traditional coastal/ seaside town day trippers n=728 Large city day trippers n=429 Smaller city or town day trippers n=535 Rural coastline day trippers n=538 Mountains or hills day trippers n=430



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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 36 of the COVID-19 consumer sentiment tracker, with comparisons to Waves 1-35 where appropriate. Wave 36 fieldwork was conducted between 26 – 31 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.

