ESRI

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

# Social Activity Measure
# May 3rd – May 10th 2022

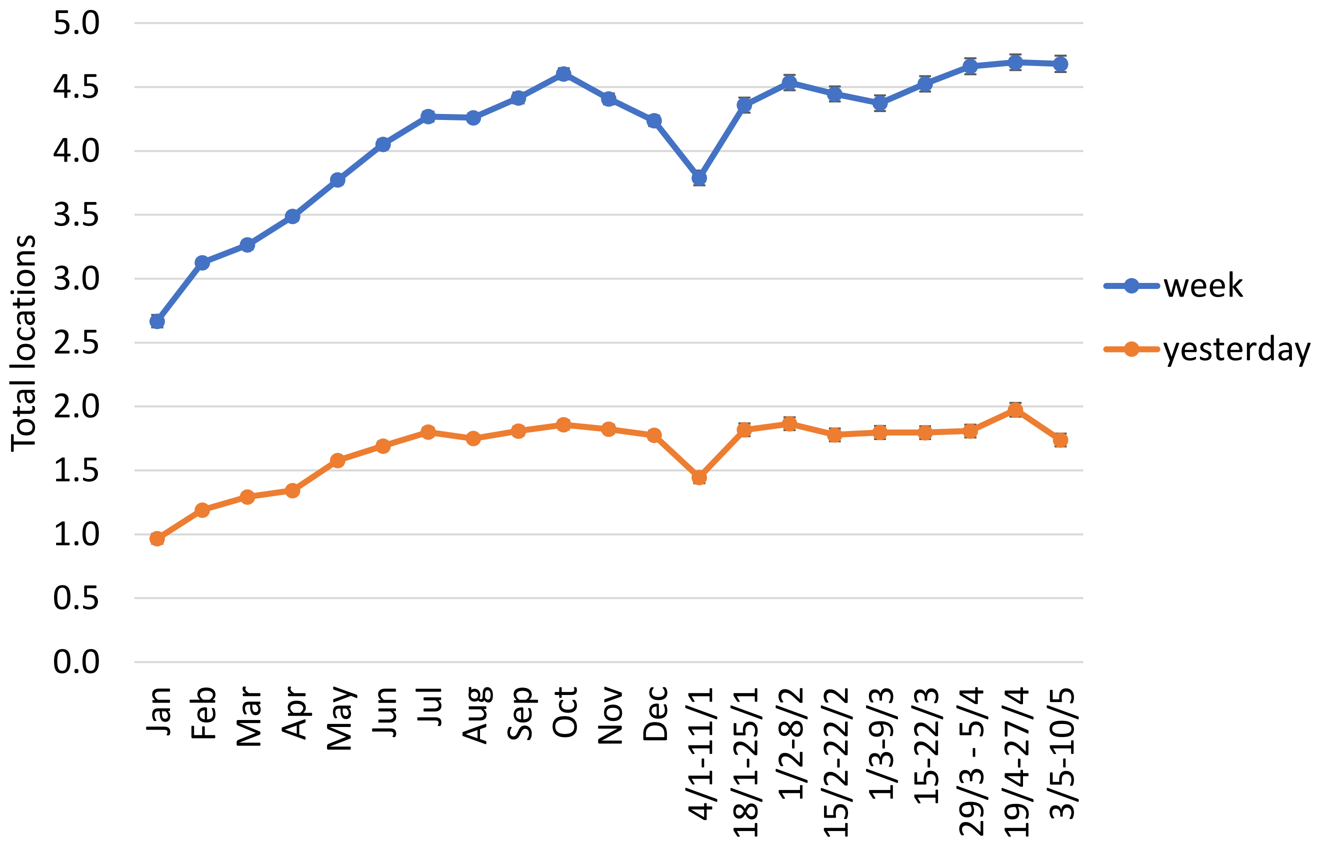
## ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The Social Activity Measure (SAM) is a behavioural study that records the public response to the risk of COVID-19 infection over time. Designed by the ESRI's Behavioural Research Unit (BRU), SAM is an anonymous, interactive, online study that surveys people about their recent activity. The study offers insight into where and how risks of COVID-19 transmission arise. SAM aims to inform policy regarding the opening of parts of the economy and society, while keeping COVID-19 under control. The research was designed by the BRU in consultation with the Department of the Taoiseach, which funds the work. The survey is completely anonymous. Where comparisons between survey rounds are highlighted, they are statistically significant.

## TIMING

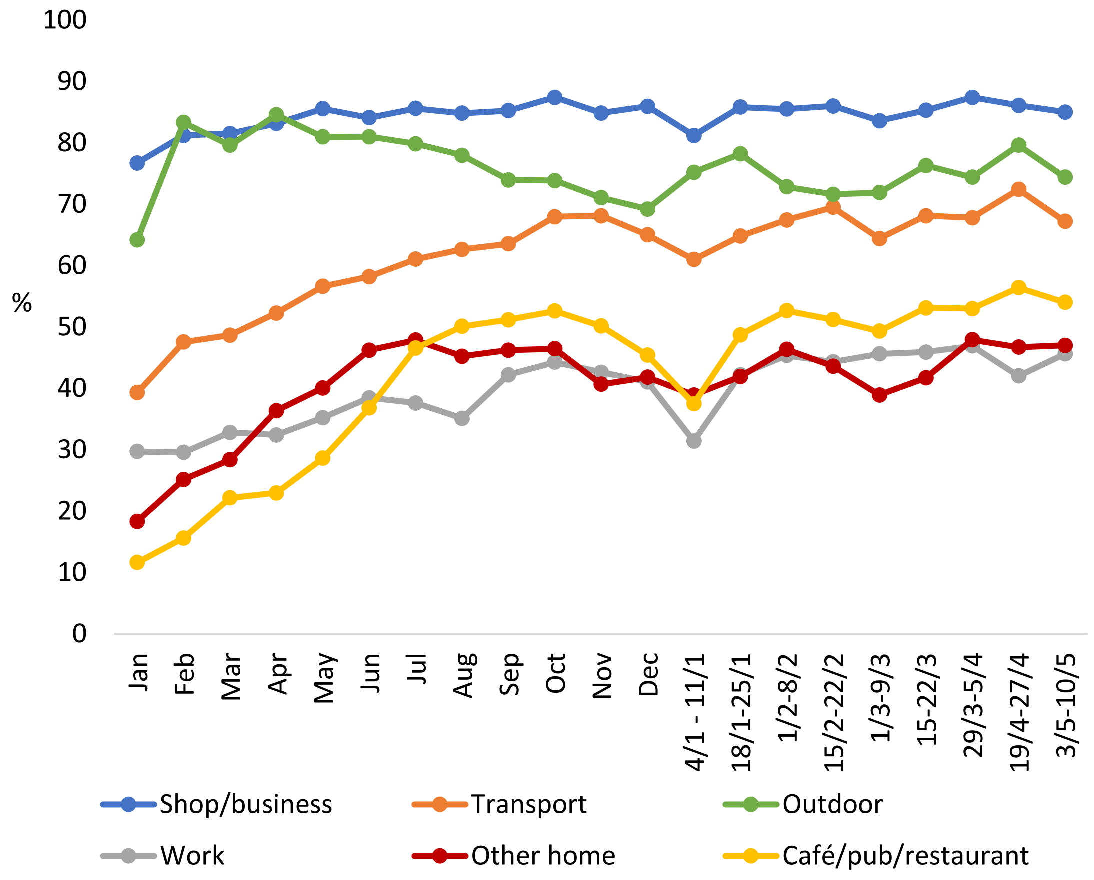
This slide deck presents results from a nationally representative sample of 1,000 people aged 18 and over who participated in the study between 3rd and 10th May 2022. Data collection therefore began the day following the May Bank Holiday, such that some responses referring to activity during the previous day or week would cover the Bank Holiday. News about COVID-19 remained broadly positive during the period, with further falls in hospitalisations and ICU cases.

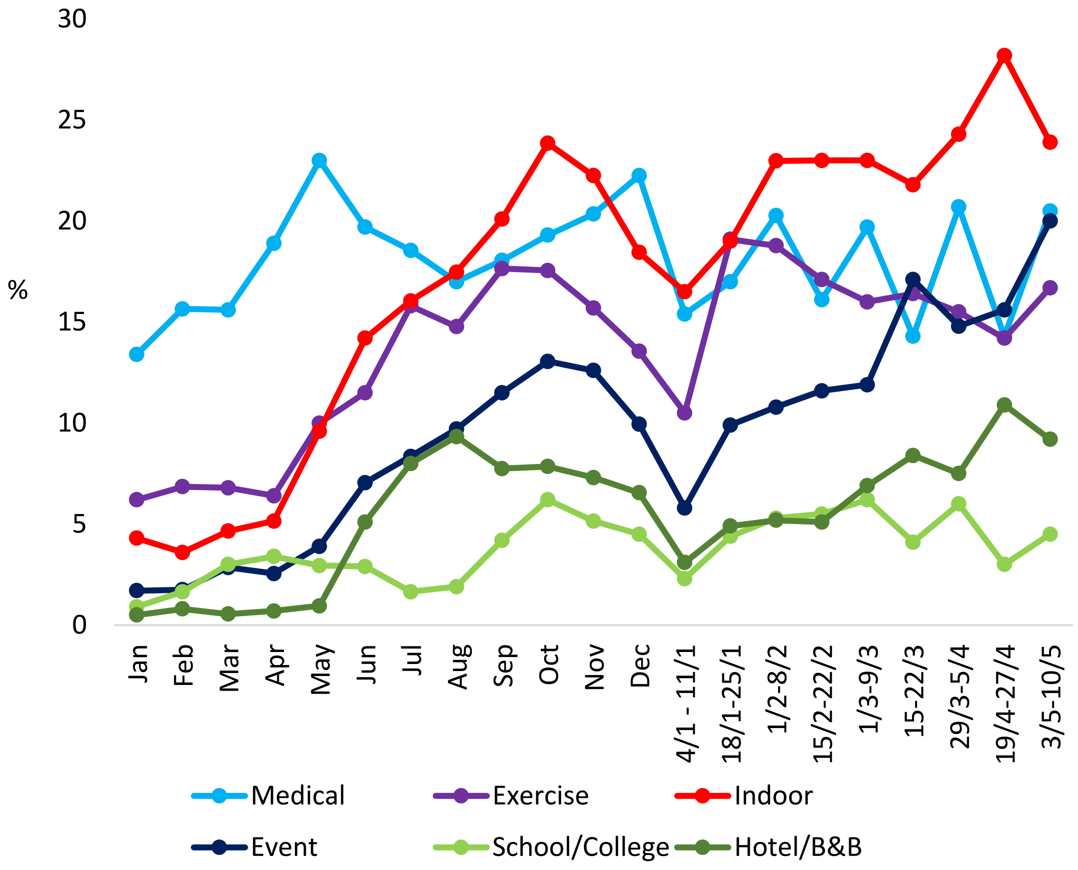
# Total locations visited




There was no significant change in aggregate locations visited over the previous week, but a modest fall in locations visited the previous day, perhaps due to the Bank Holiday.

# Locations visited (previous week)

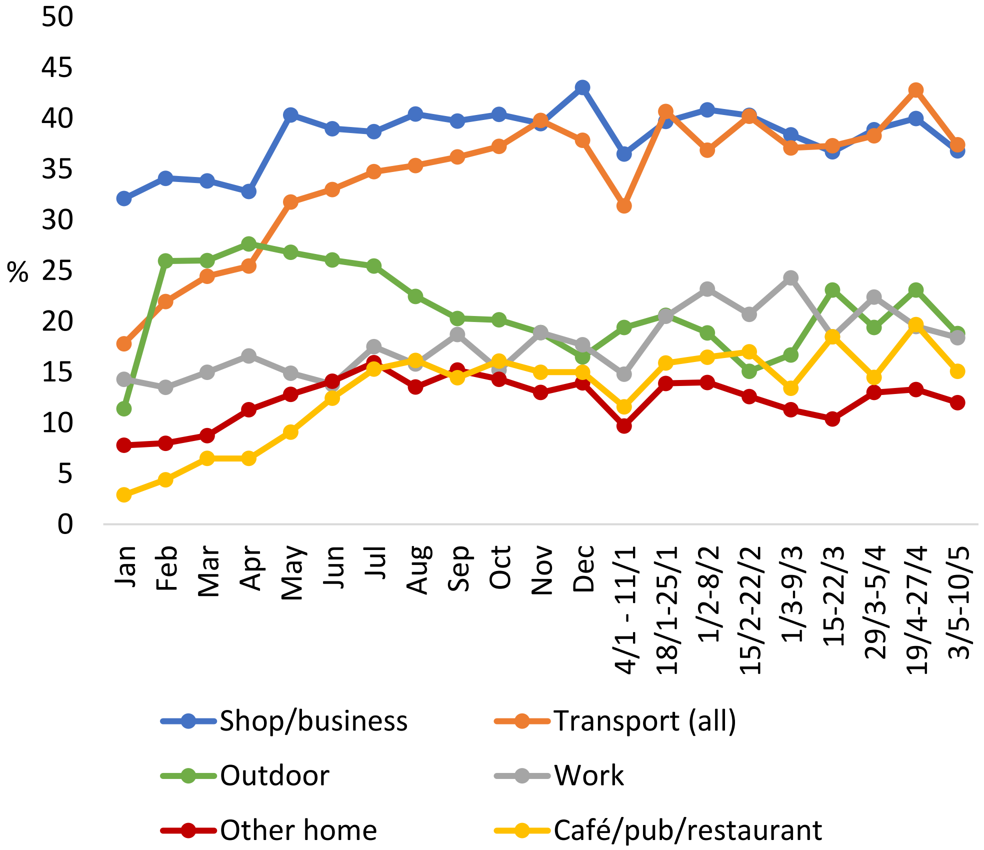


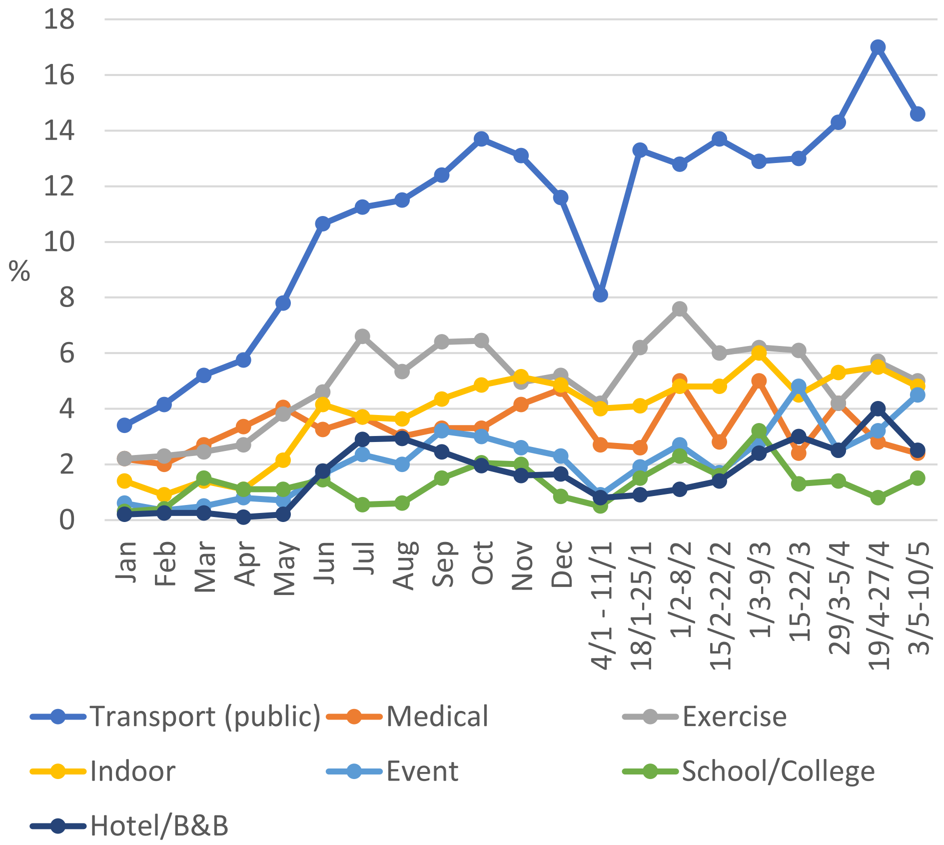




Visits to different locations over the previous week displayed little change, bar an increase in attendance at events, probably linked to the Bank Holiday.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Locations visited (yesterday)



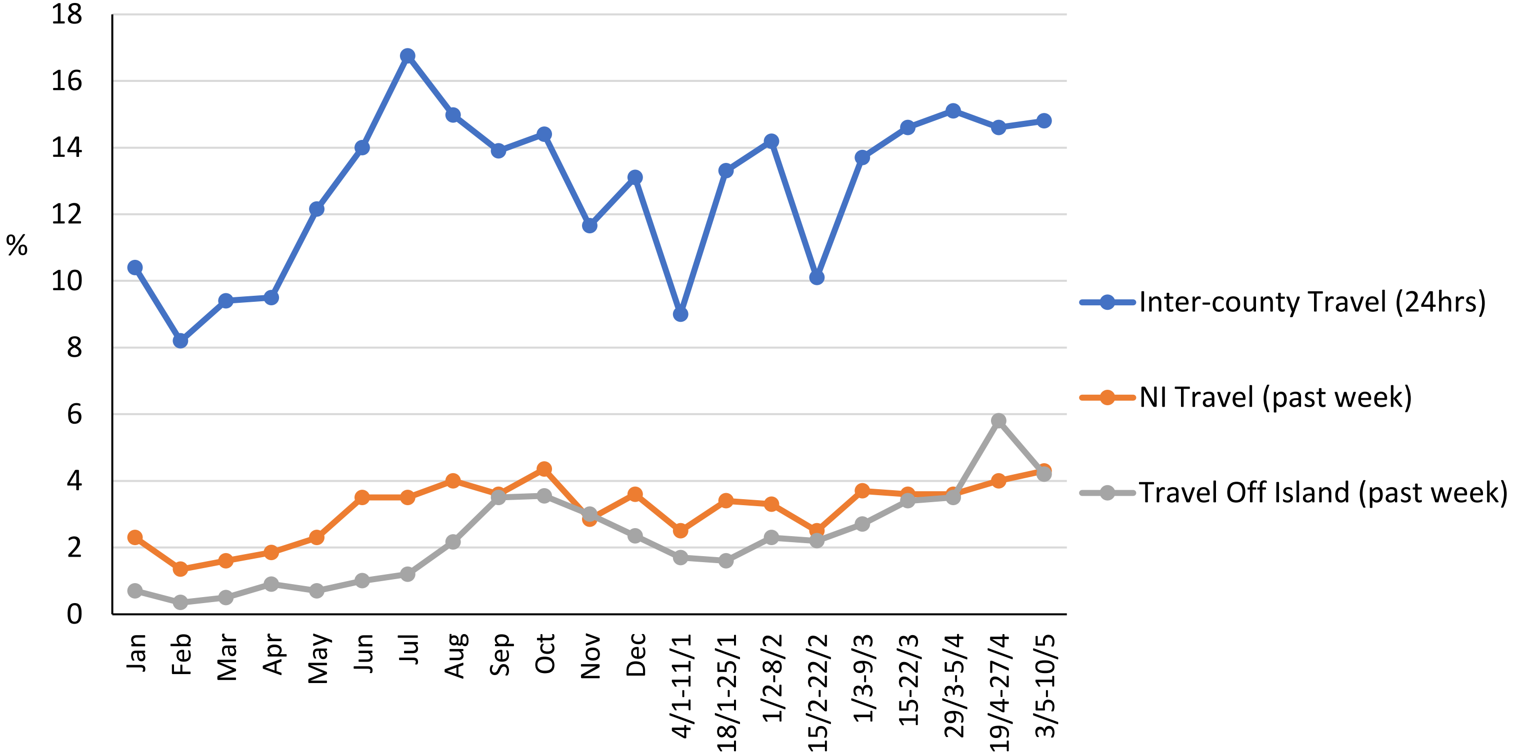




There were no substantive changes in locations visited yesterday.



Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

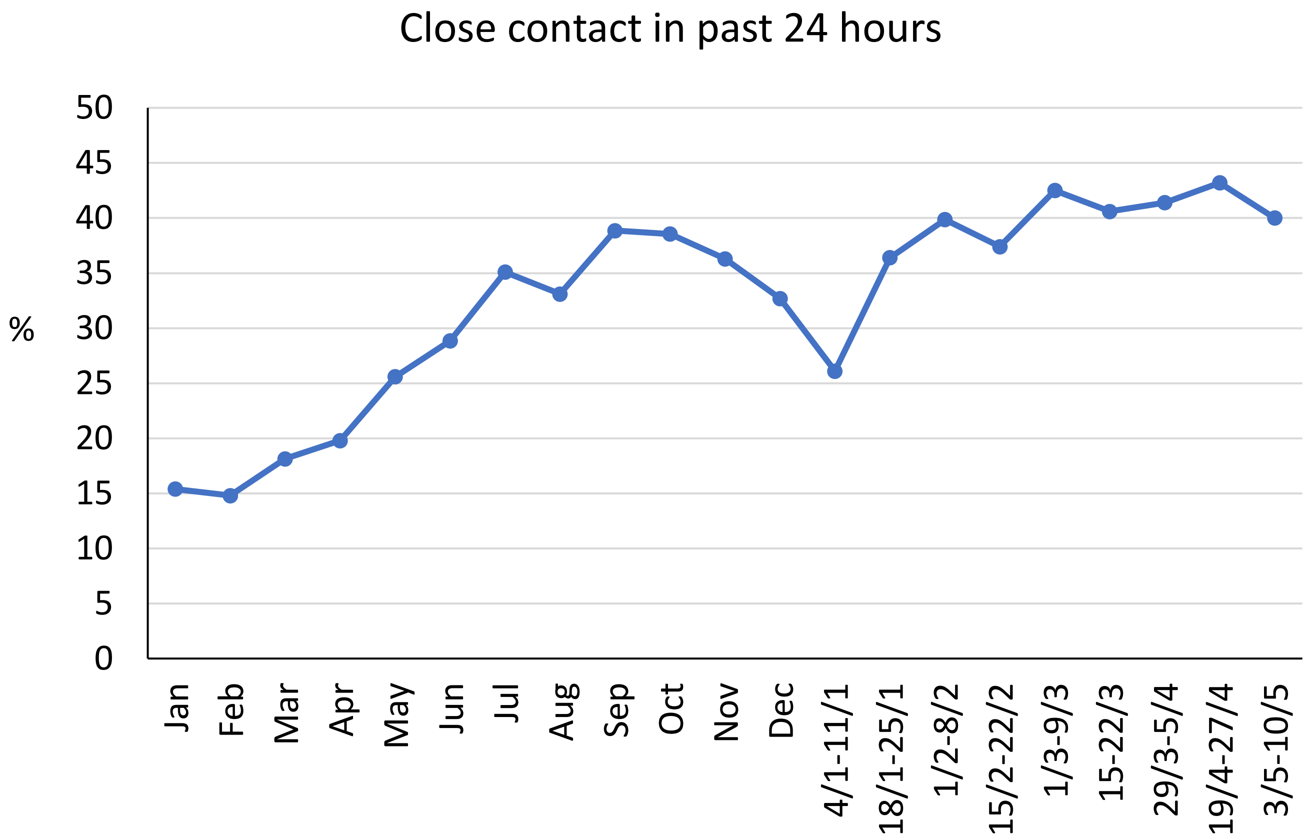
# National and international travel




The amount of travel remained broadly unchanged, although the rate of international travel fell back from the previous level recorded during the second half of the Easter holidays.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

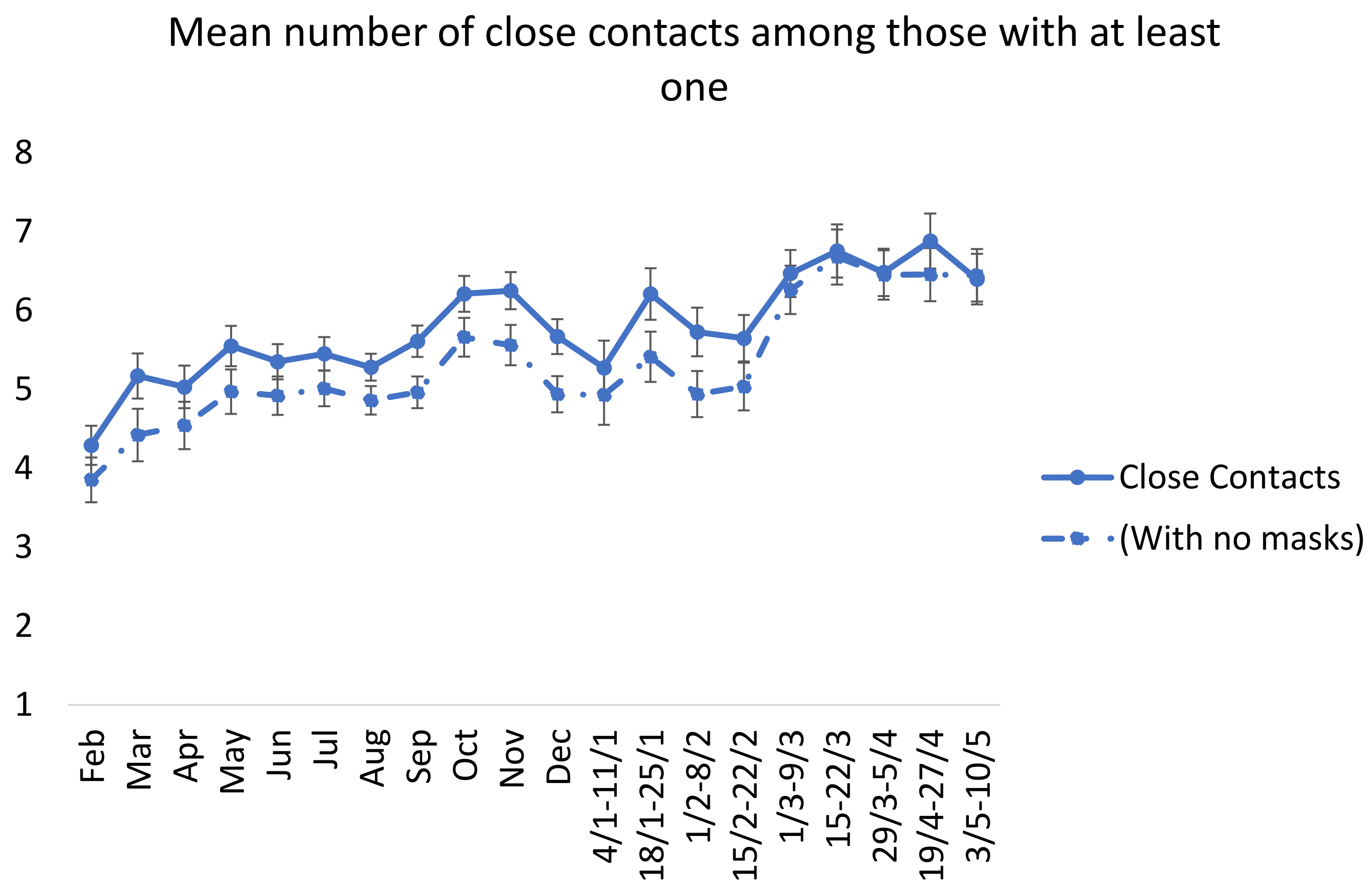
# Close contacts




The proportion of people who had a close contact fell slightly, mirroring previous small declines over Bank Holidays, although the decline was not statistically significant.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

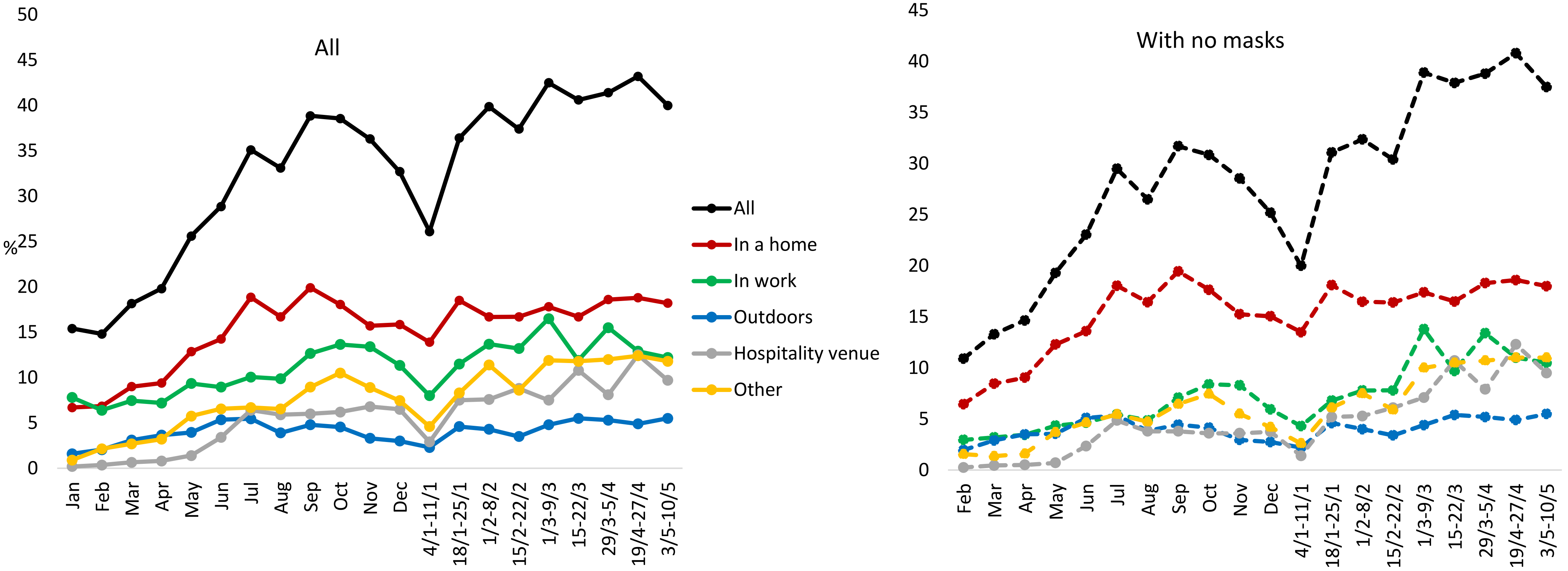
# Number of close contacts




Among those who had a close contact the previous day, the mean number of close contacts was unchanged.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

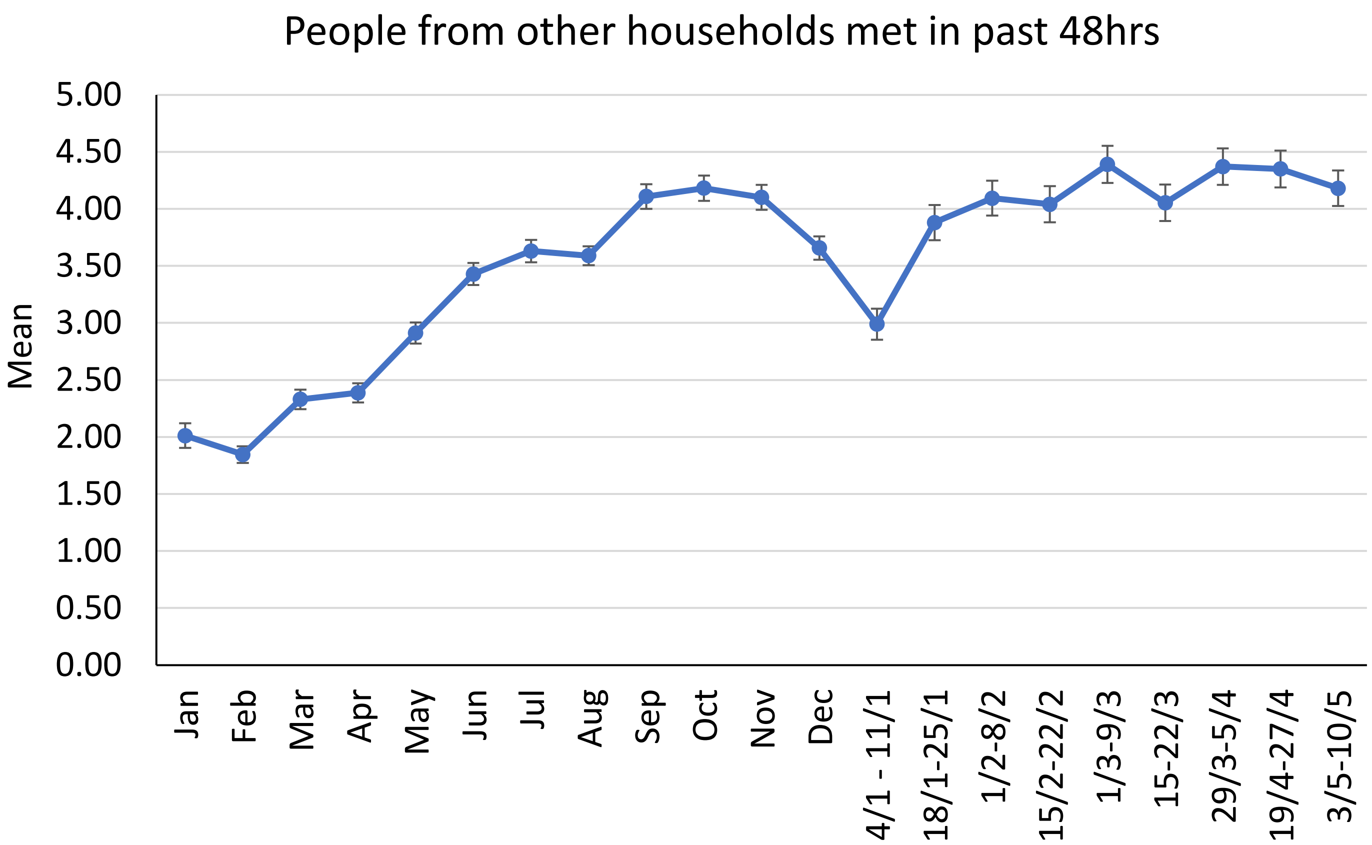
# Close contacts - locations




The proportions of close contacts occurring in different locations remained unchanged.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

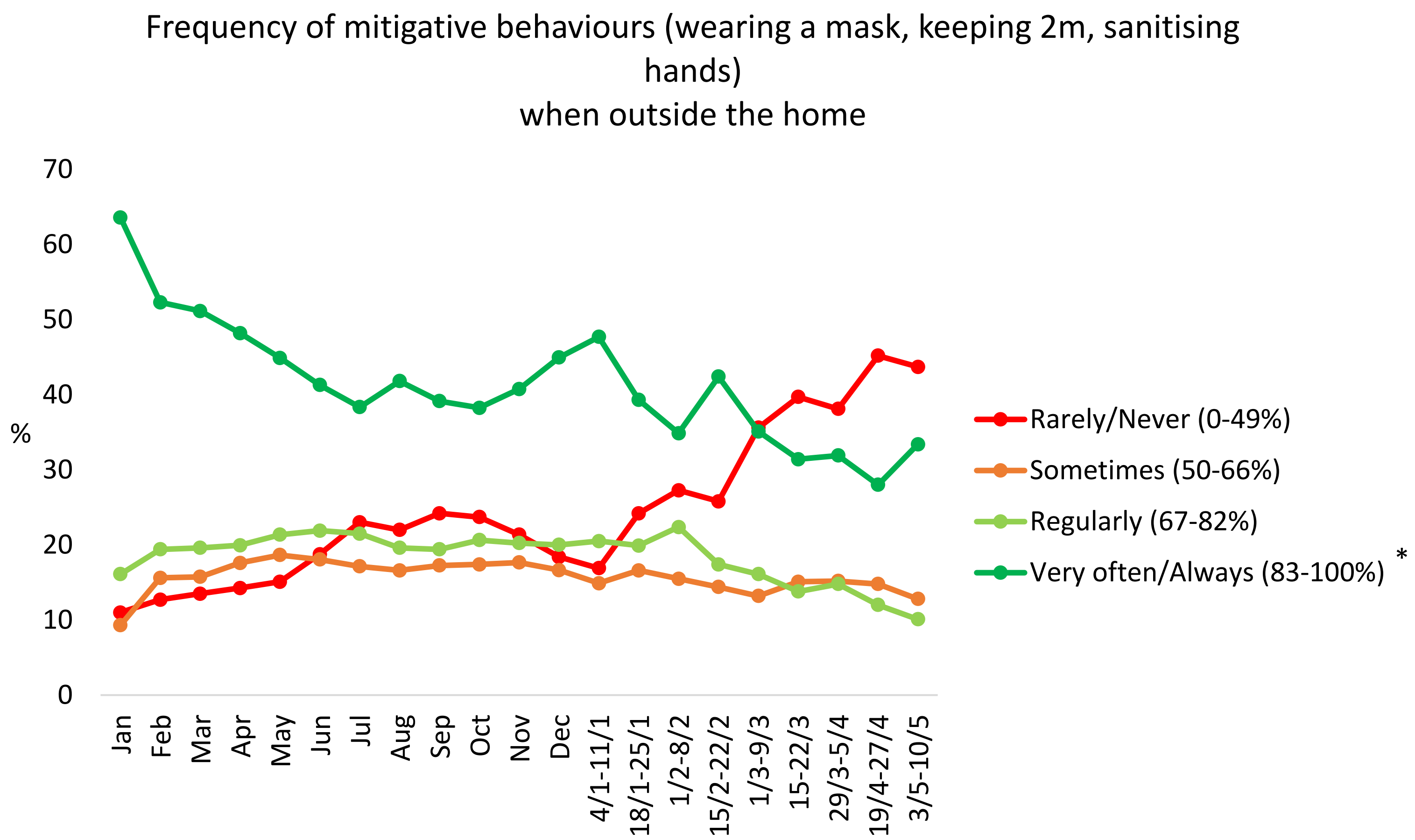
# Number of people met




The average number of people met has been unchanged over the past two months.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Mitigation

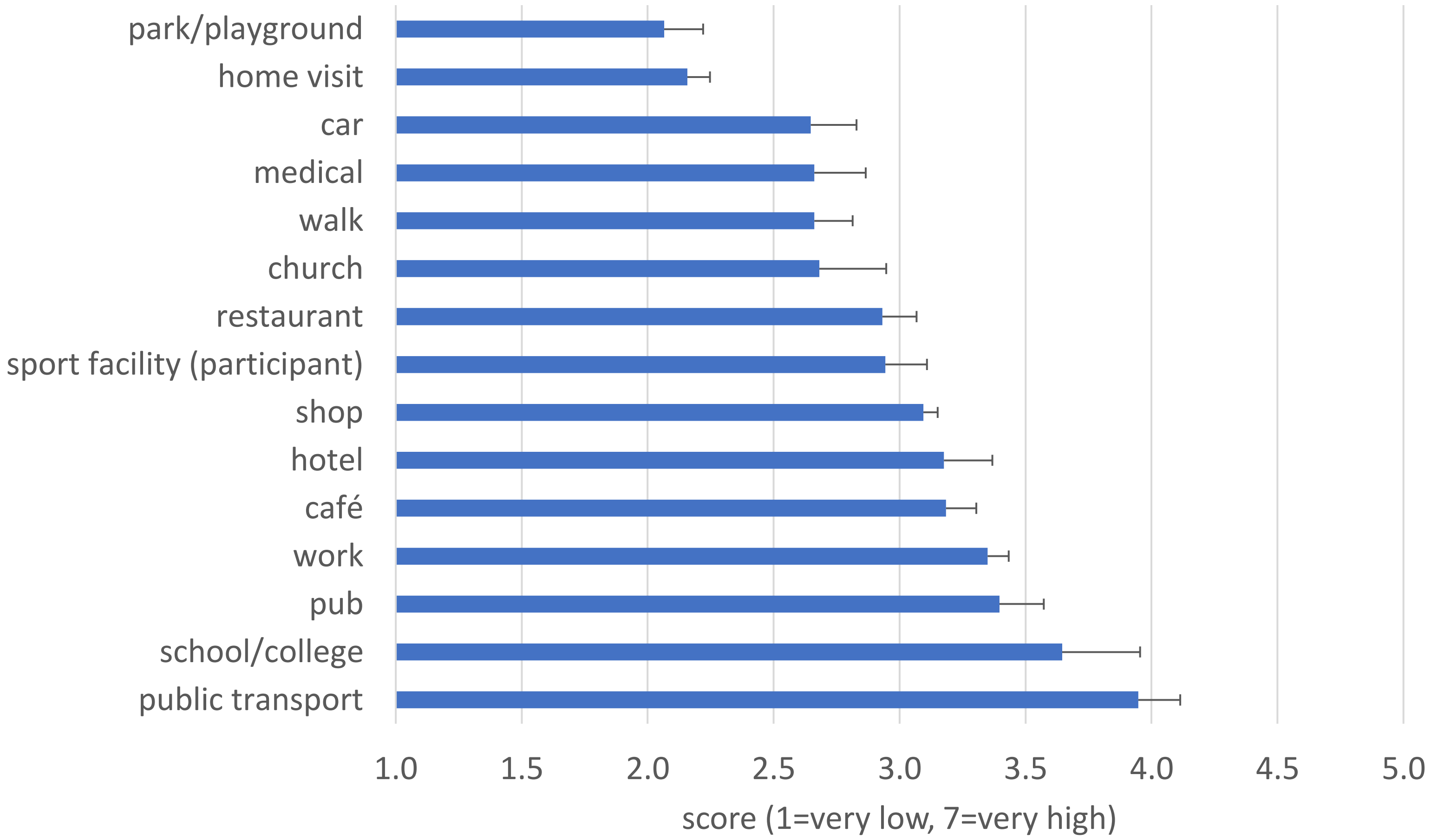



The proportion of people who engages in mitigative behaviours increased in this round of SAM.

*included in this group are those who did not leave their home or have visitors the previous day.

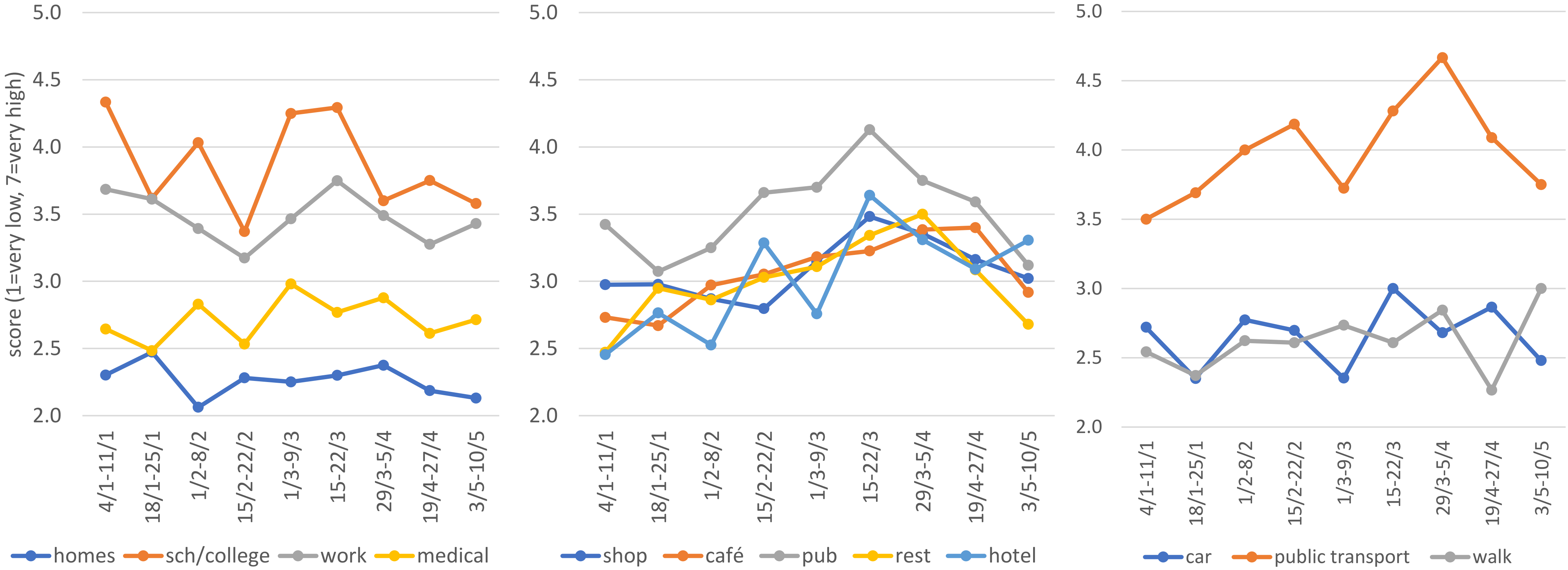
Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Perceived risk of locations visited (19/4-10/5)




There remain differences in the relative risk (of catching COVID-19) that people perceive in different locations that they visit. Public transport and colleges are perceived as most risky, followed by workplaces and hospitality venues, especially pubs.

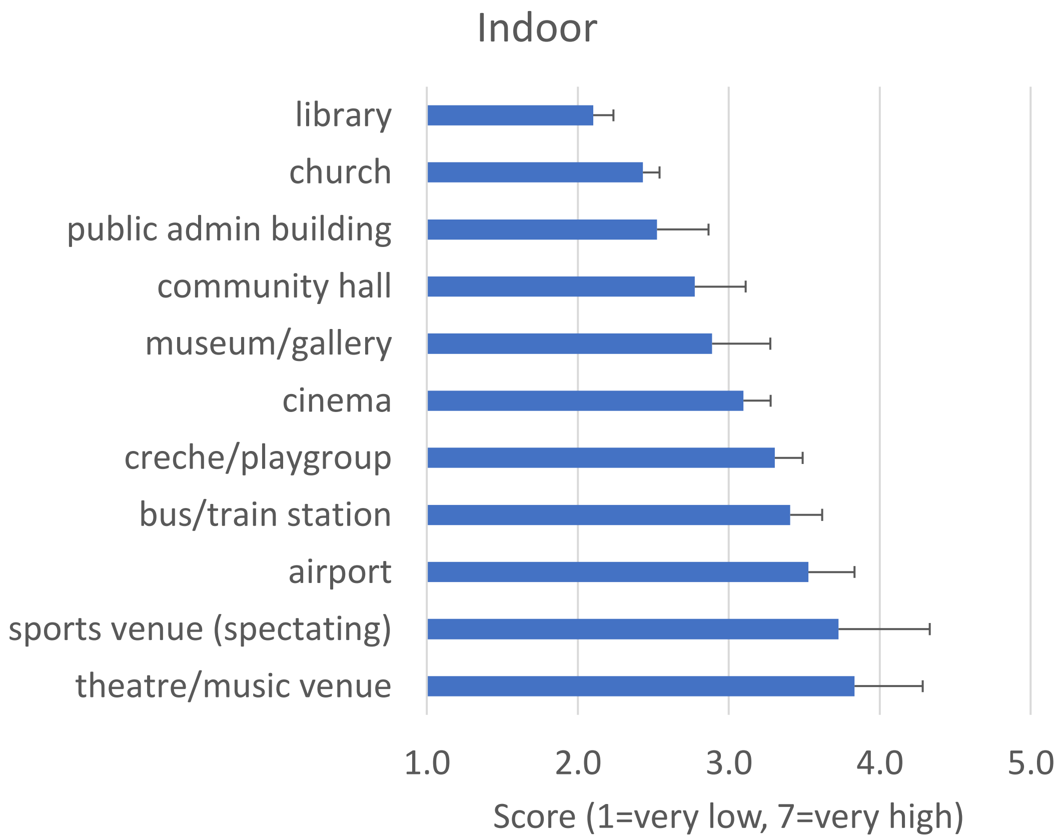
# Changes in perceived risk over time

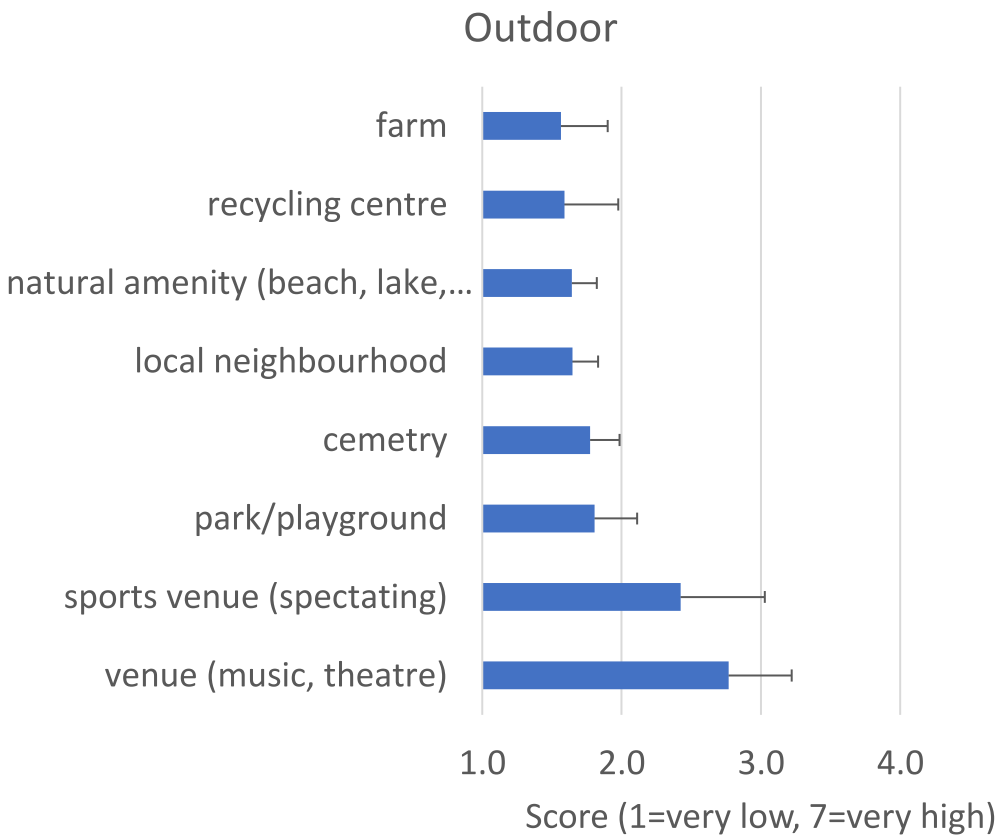



The rise in case numbers and hospitalisations in March increased the perceived risk associated with most locations, but especially pubs and public transport. Note that while one might expect perceived risk to fall as COVID-19 case numbers fall, some upward pressure is also to be expected as restrictions eased over time, because only people who go to the locations provide ratings and the first people to return are likely to be those who perceive least risk.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Detailed perceived risk (Jan-May)

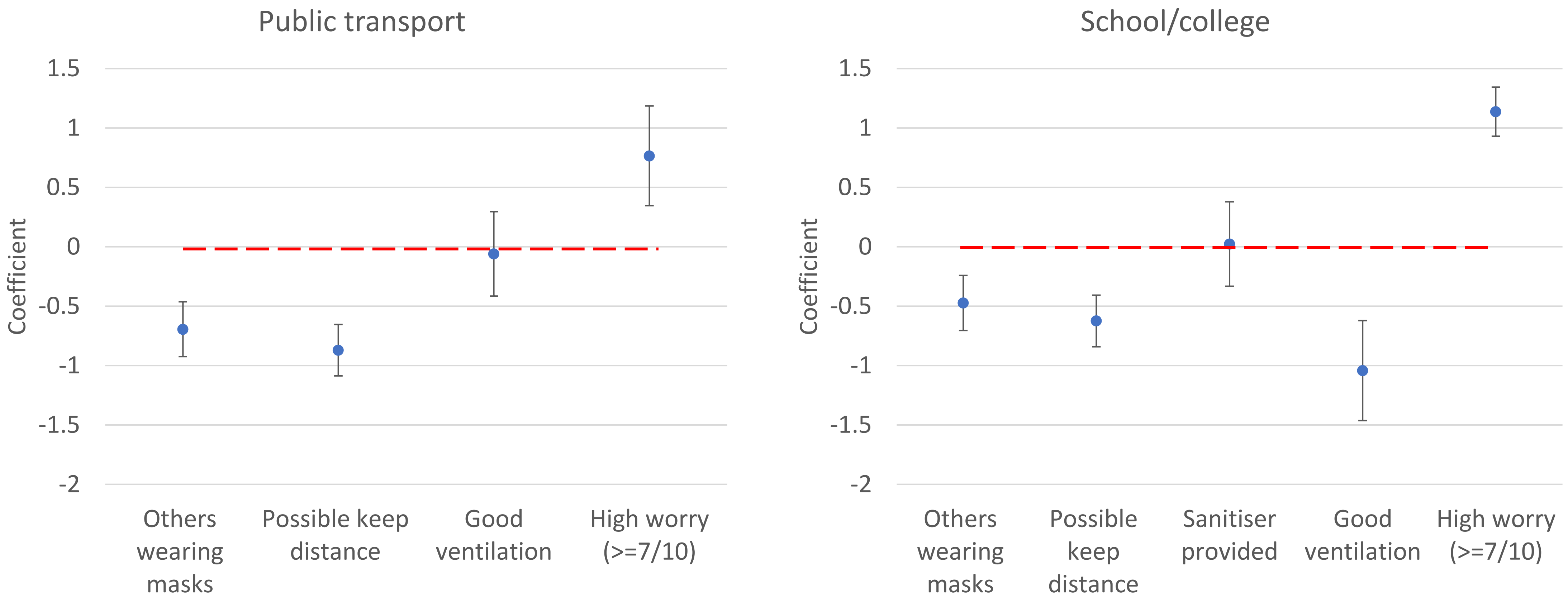



Indoor locations are generally perceived as more risky than outdoor locations. Safety appears to be corelated with being in the presence of multiple people for a period of time, although the perception of low risk when attending church is an anomaly.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

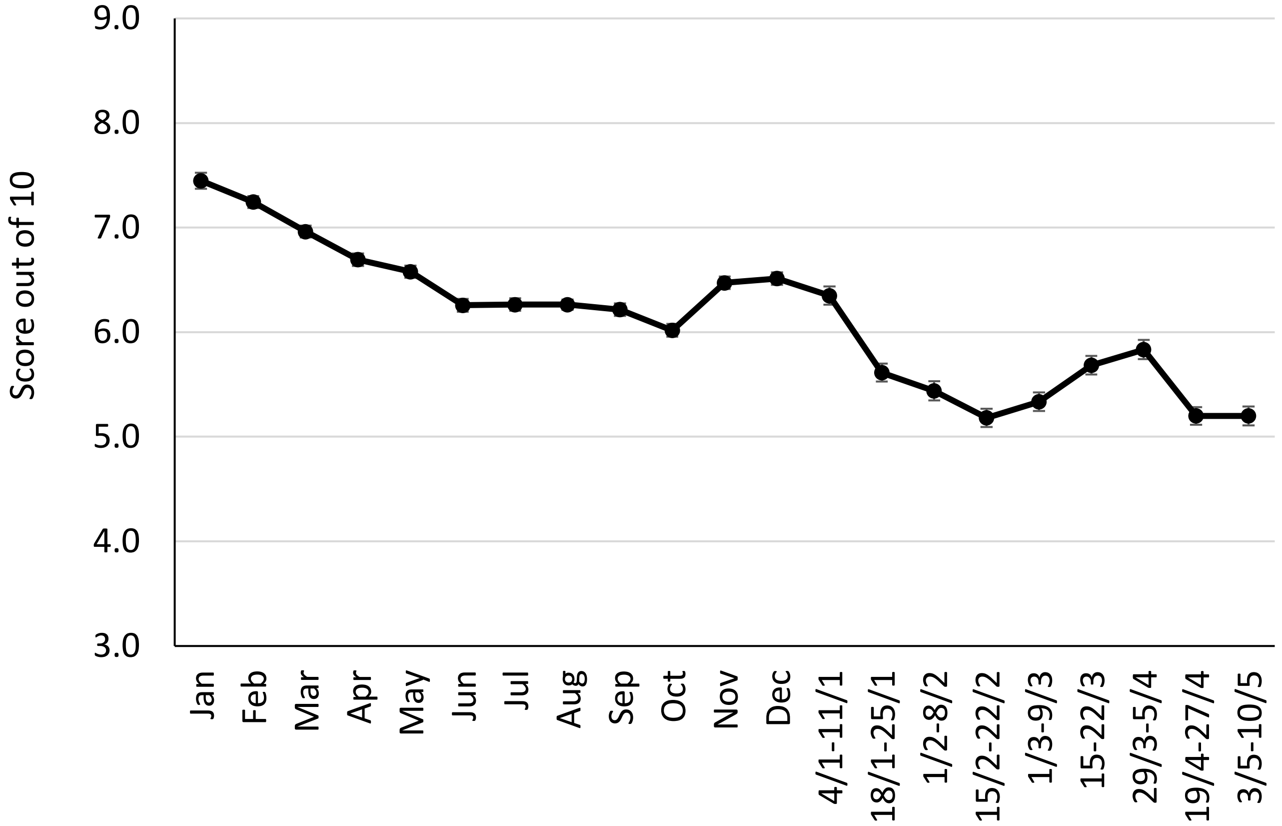
# Drivers of perceived risk




Statistical models show that perceived risk on public transport and in schools and colleges is reduced where people report mitigation measures, such as other people wearing facemasks, the possibility to keep 2m distance from others and good ventilation (in schools/colleges). Those who have higher overall worry about COVID-19 also perceive greater risk.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

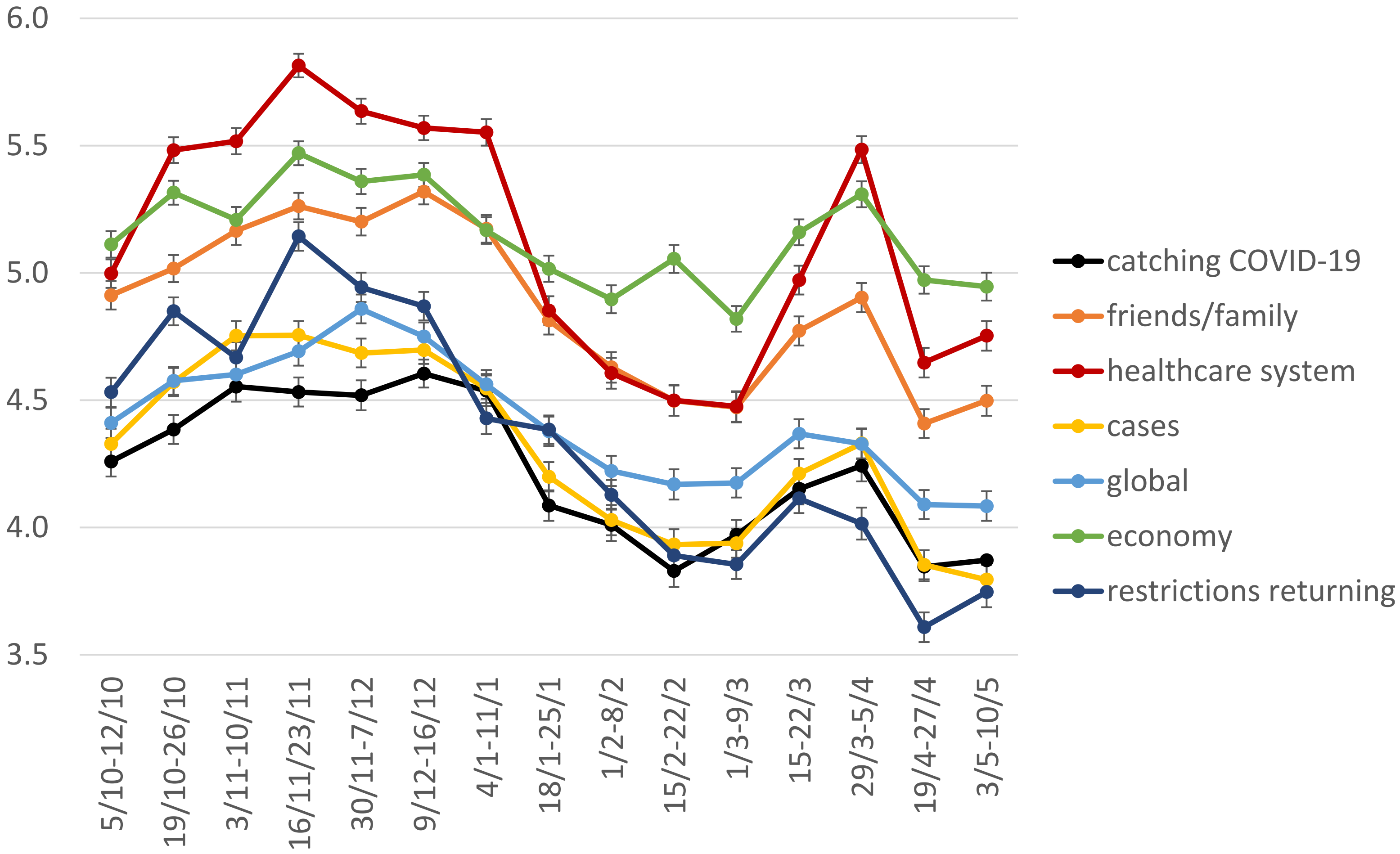
# Worry




Overall worry about COVID-19 was stable.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

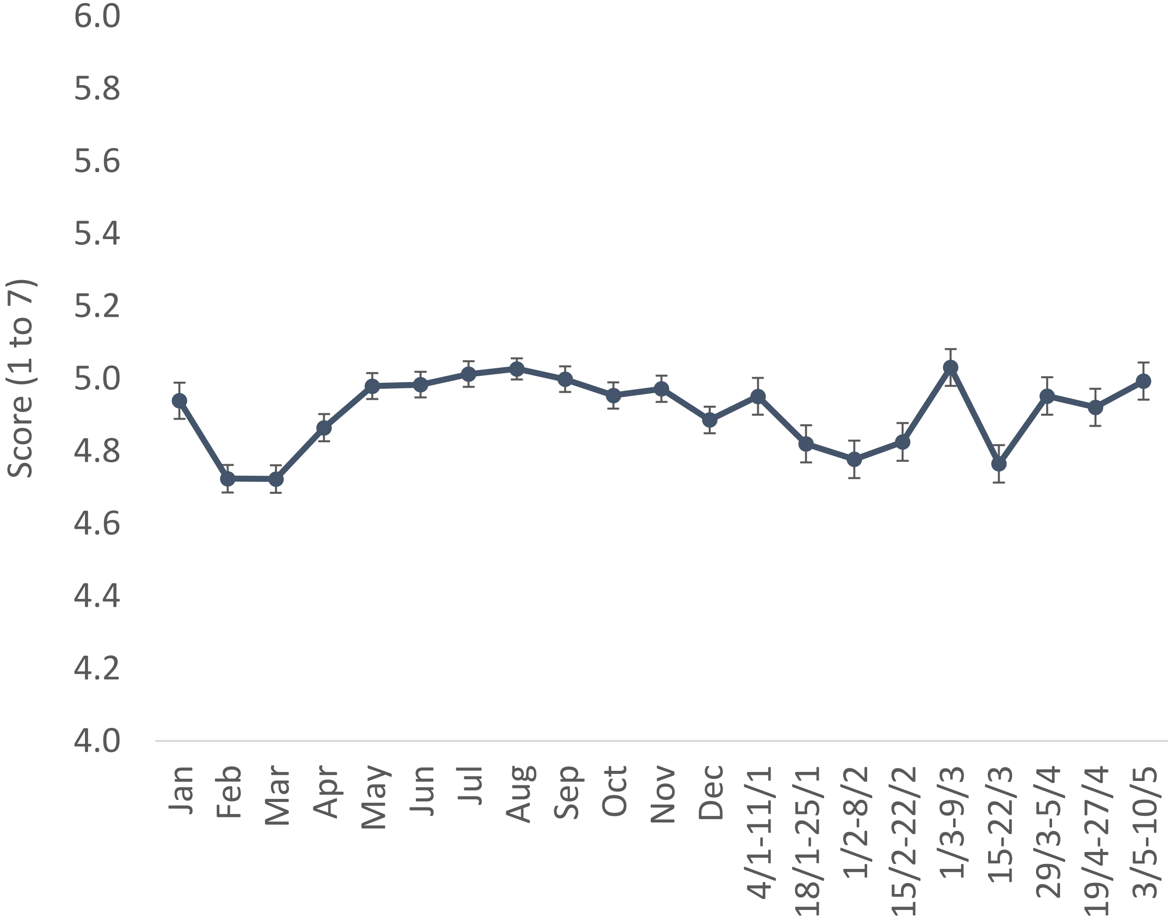
# Components of worry

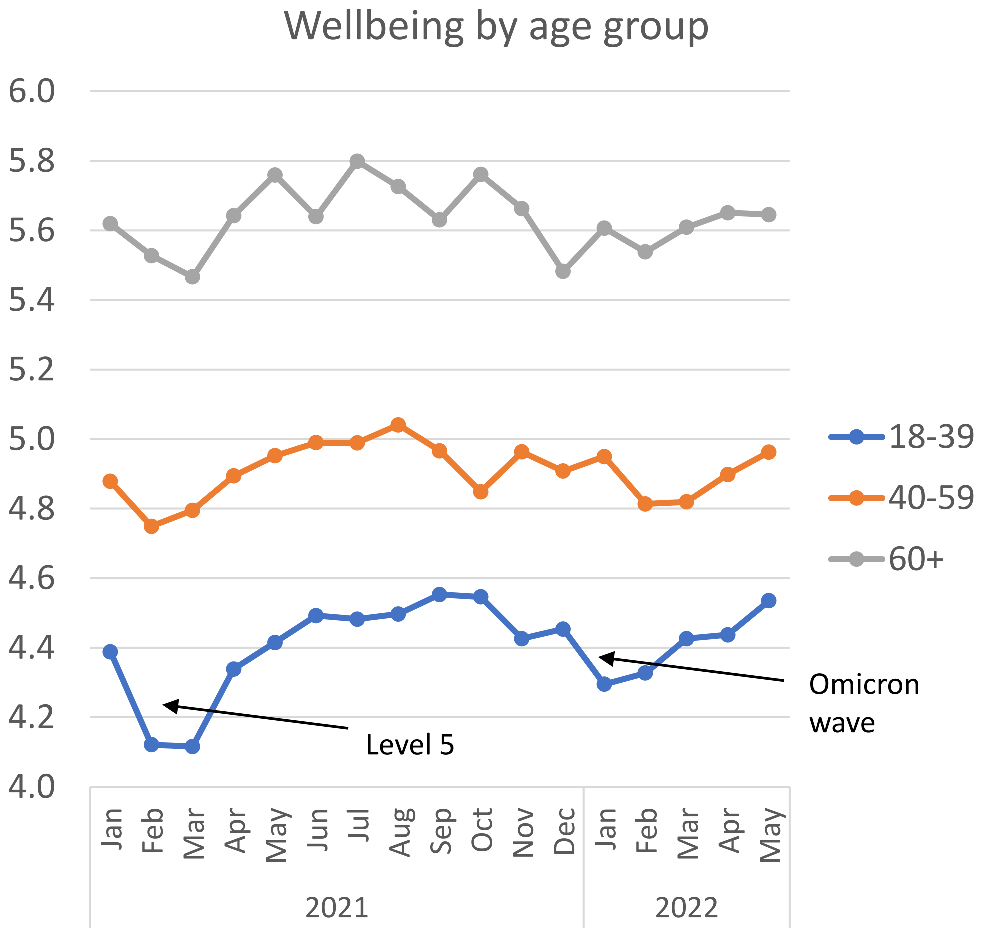



All components of worry were unchanged from the previous round of SAM.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Wellbeing

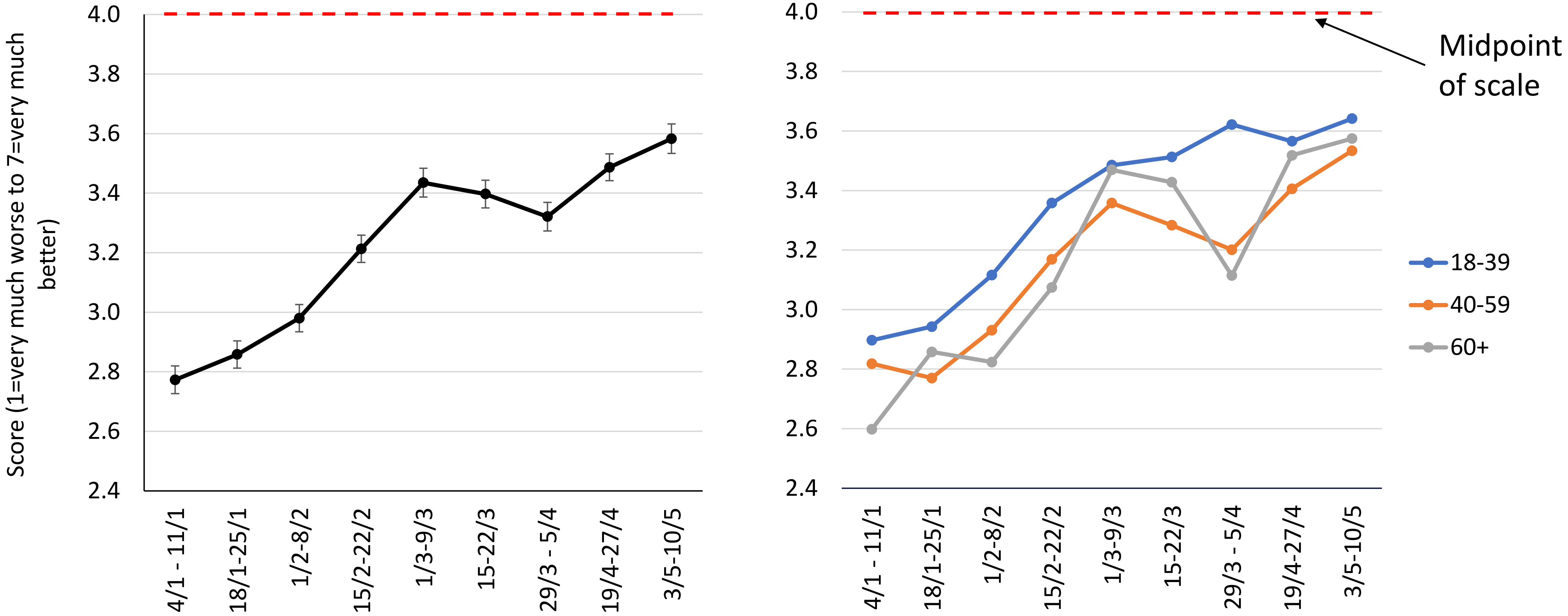



Self-reported wellbeing was stable over the past month. Young adults consistently report lower wellbeing, with greater volatility due to pandemic restrictions, but the gap has narrowed slightly in 2022.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

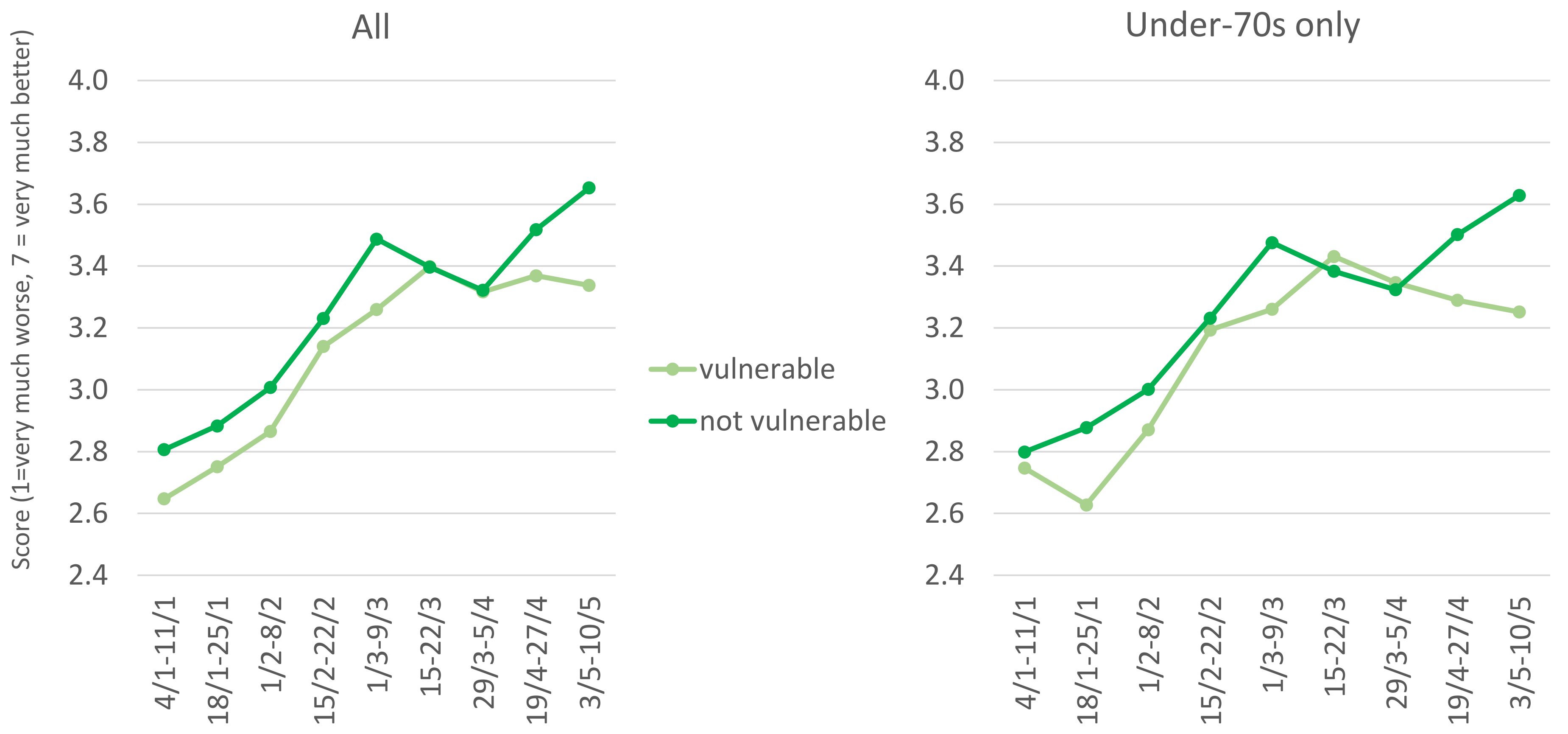
# Social life compared to pre-pandemic




Since January, there has been a significant increase in the self-reported quality of people's social life (compared to before the pandemic). Young adults reported higher responses and were less affected by the increases in cases and hospitalisations in March.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

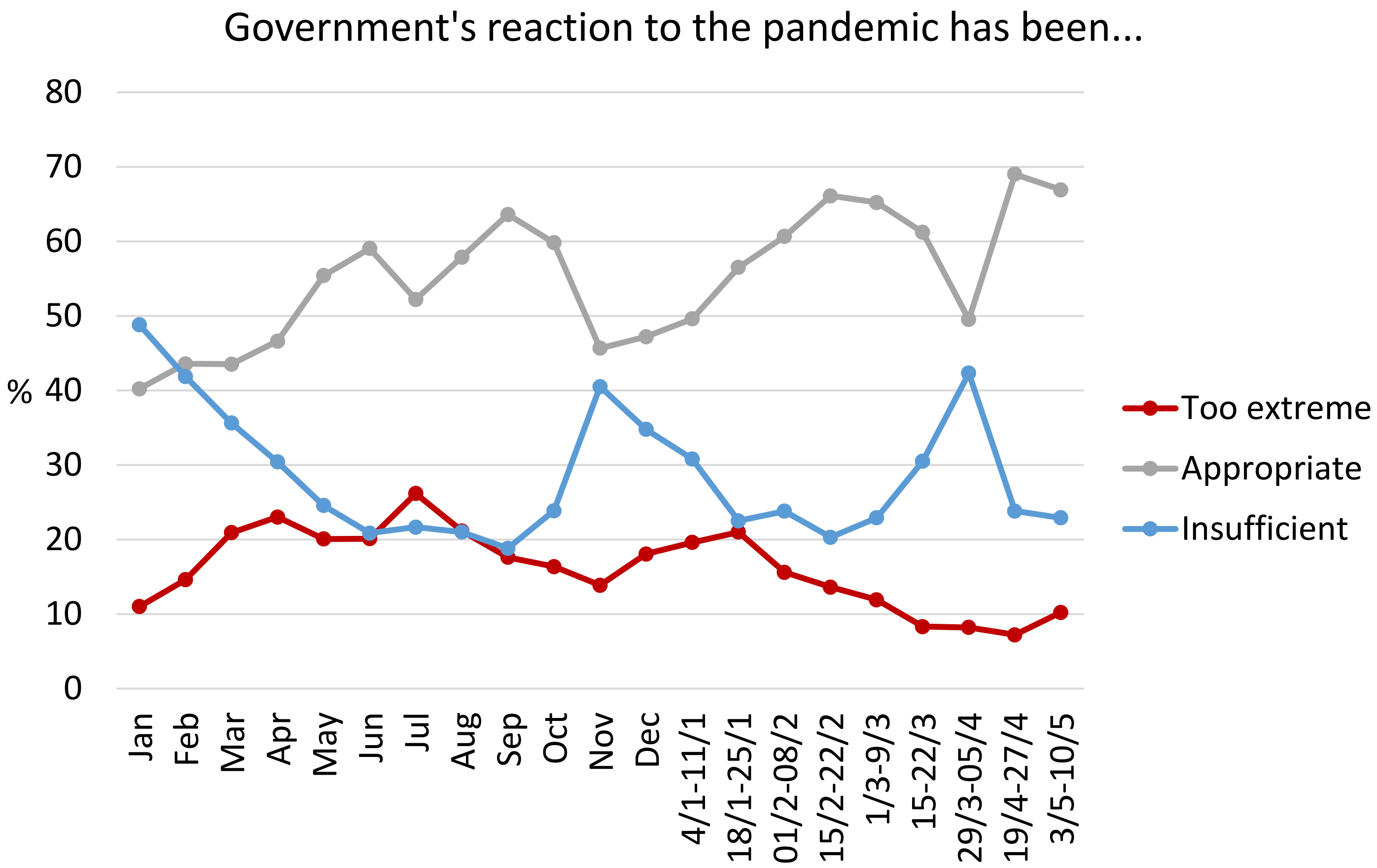
# Social life of vulnerable people




People in vulnerable or high-risk groups (those over 70 years-old or with an underlying health condition) have also experienced a return to a better social life, but this recovery was diminished by the increase in hospitalisations in March and has not yet recovered. The right-hand chart shows that this effect was stronger for those under 70 with underlying conditions.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

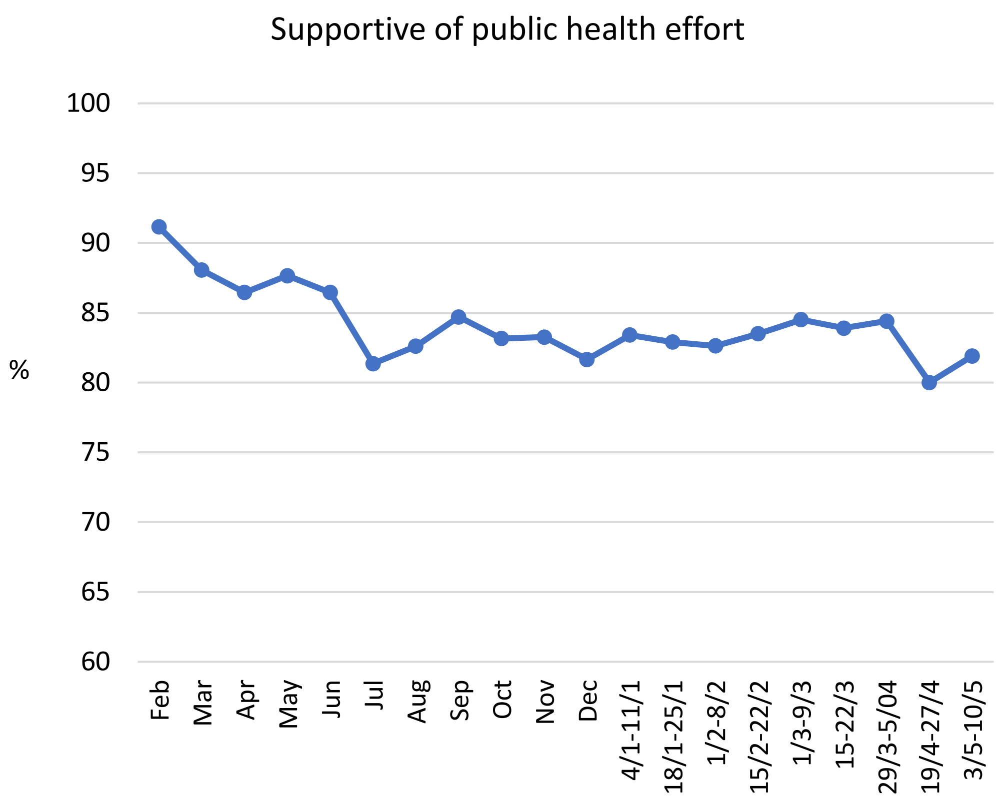
# Government Response to the Pandemic

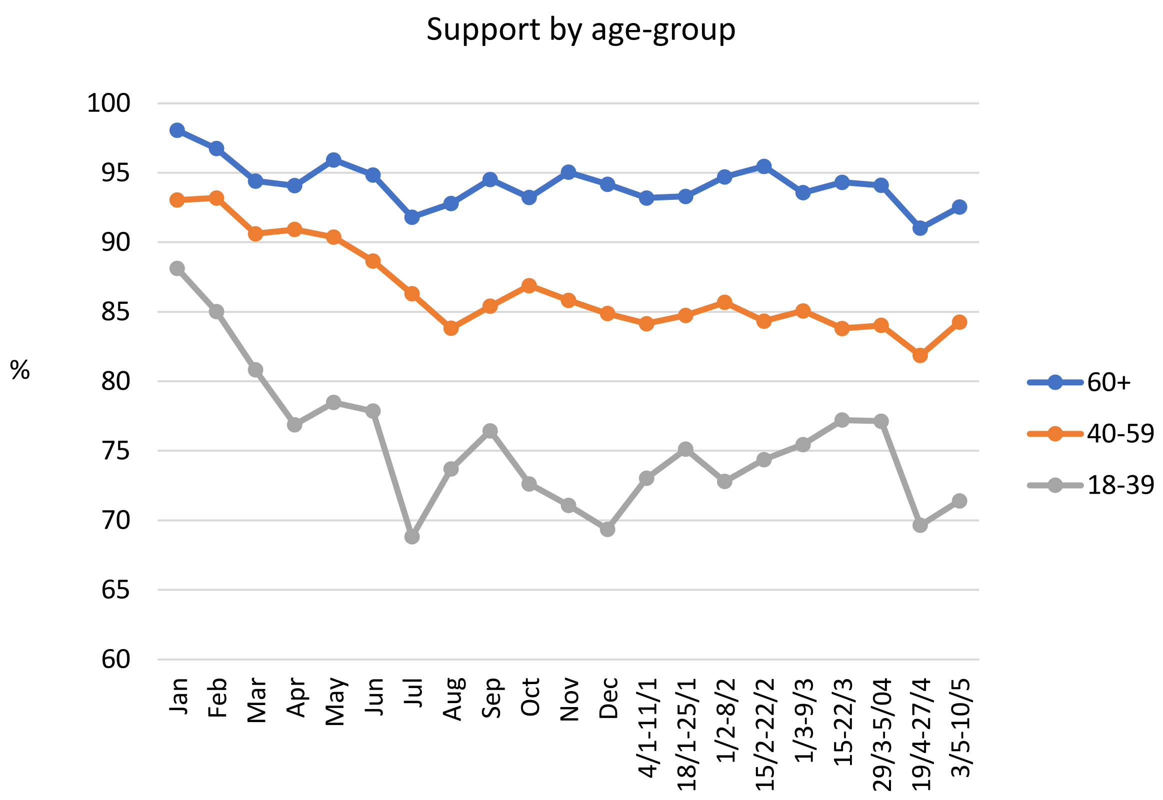



The number of people stating that the Government's response to the pandemic was appropriate remained just below 70%.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Overall support for the public health effort

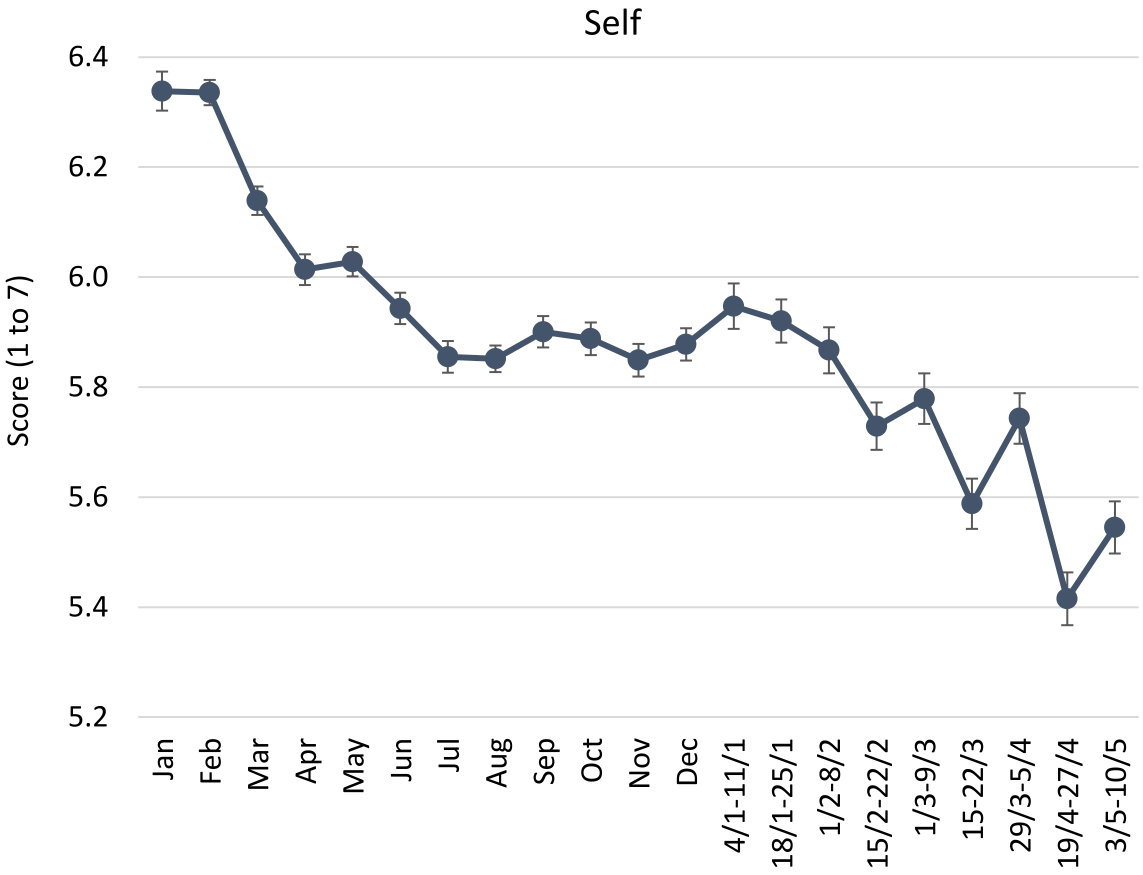


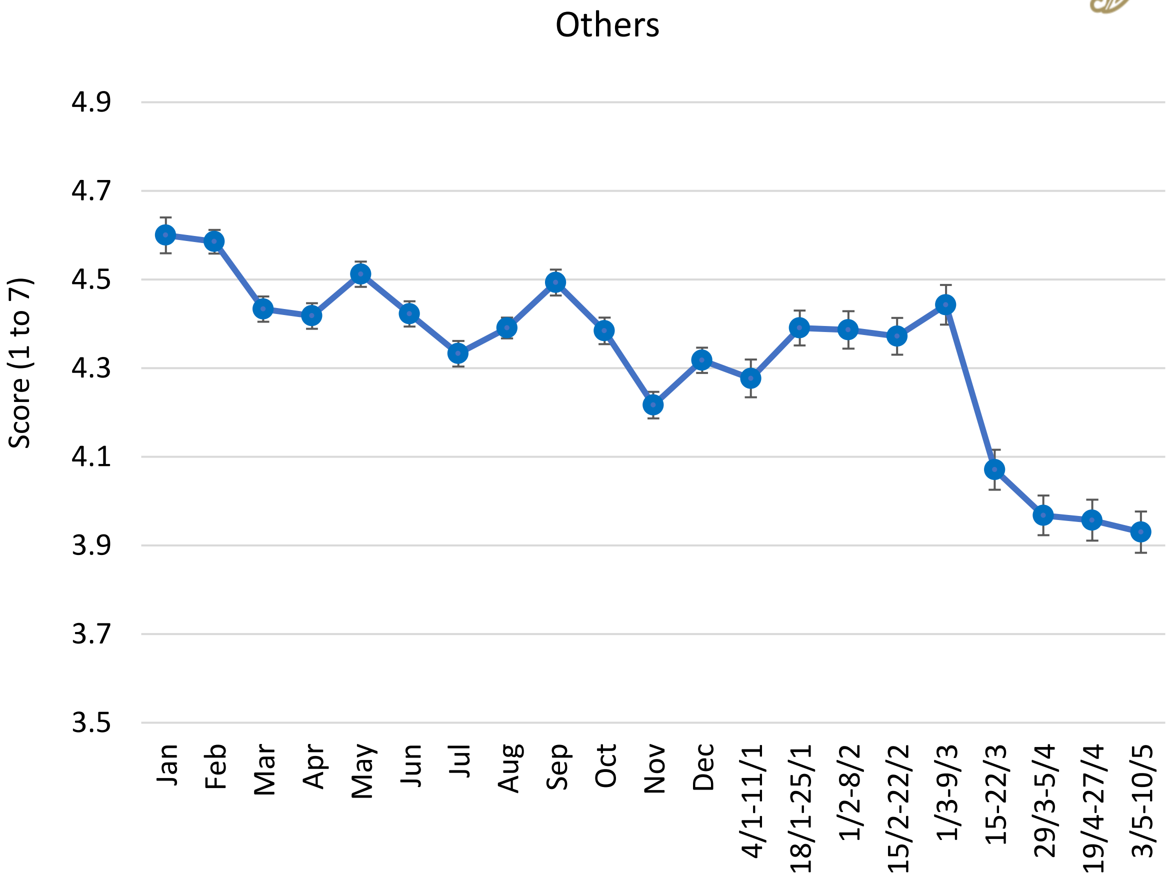




Overall support for the public health effort has stabilised at a lower level having dropped during the last wave of SAM, especially among 18-39 year olds.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Self-reported compliance

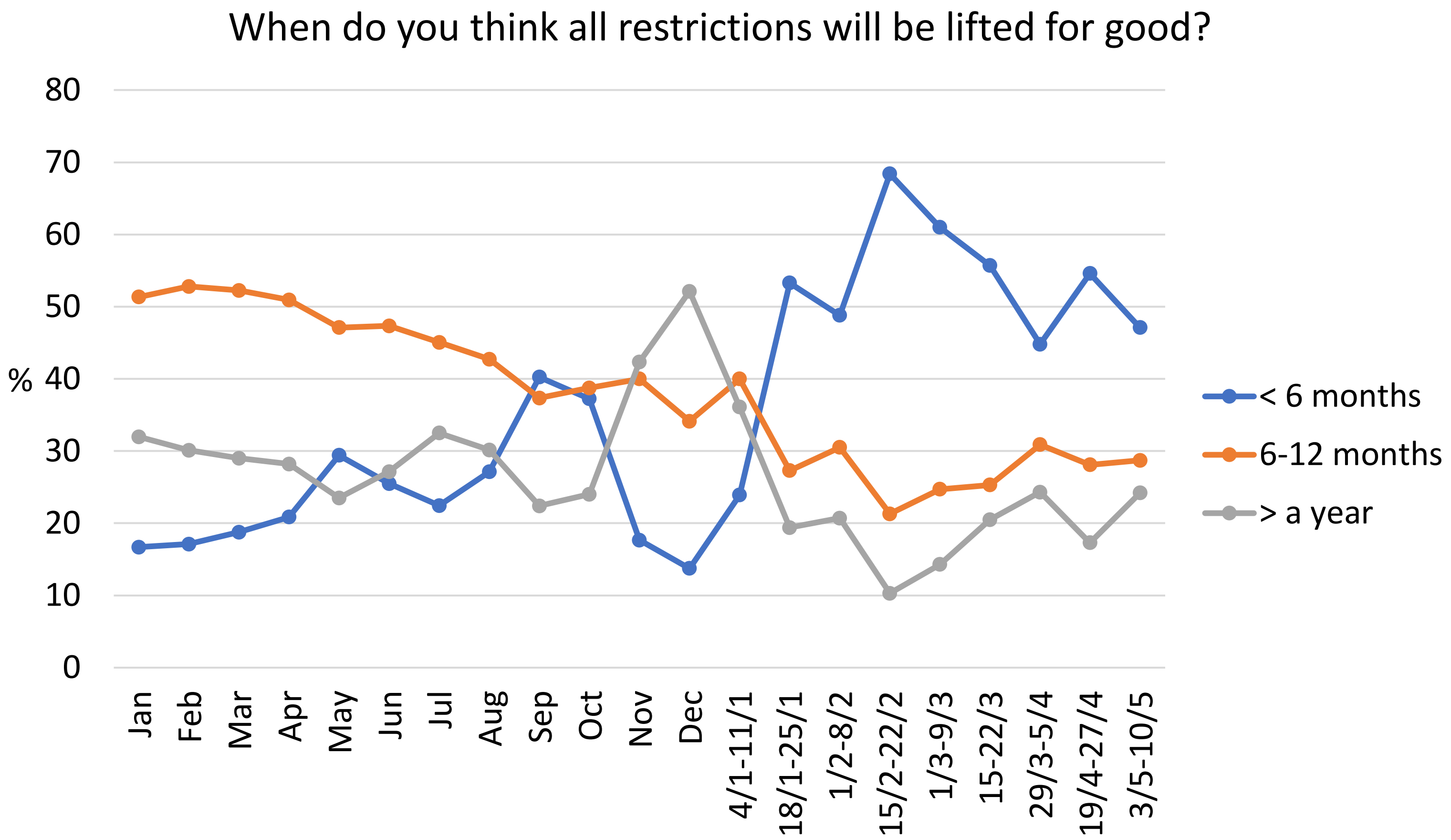



Self-reported compliance with public health recommendations has stabilised after falling over recent months. Despite the large falls that have occurred over the past 14 months, people have at all times believed that others are less compliant than they are themselves.

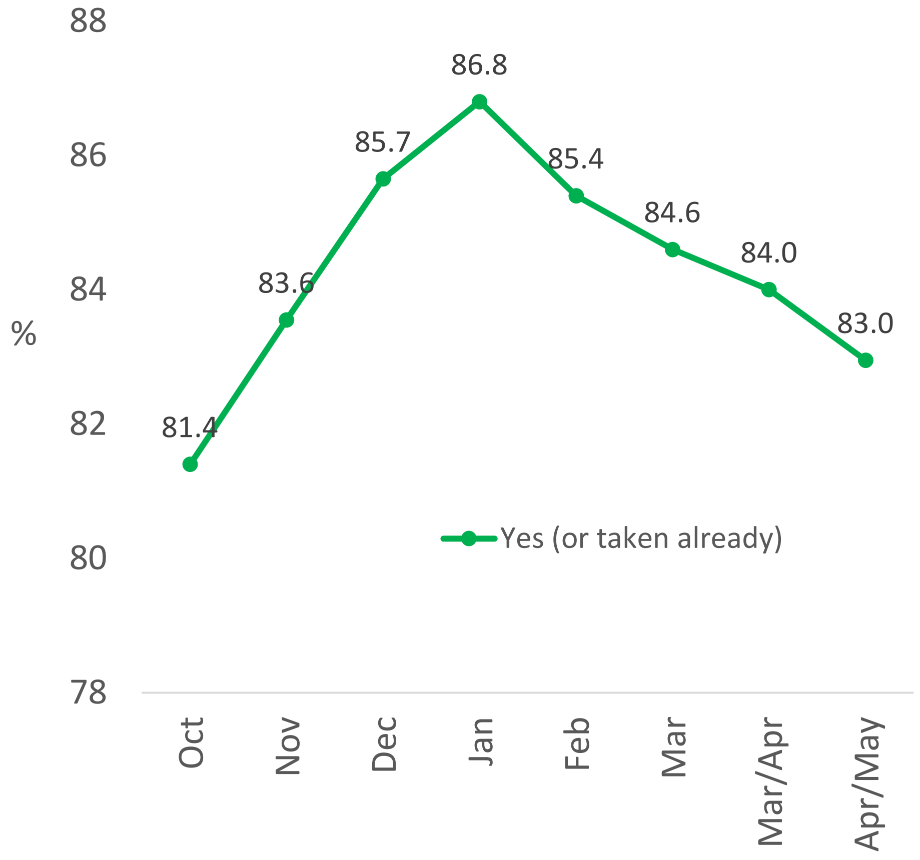
Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

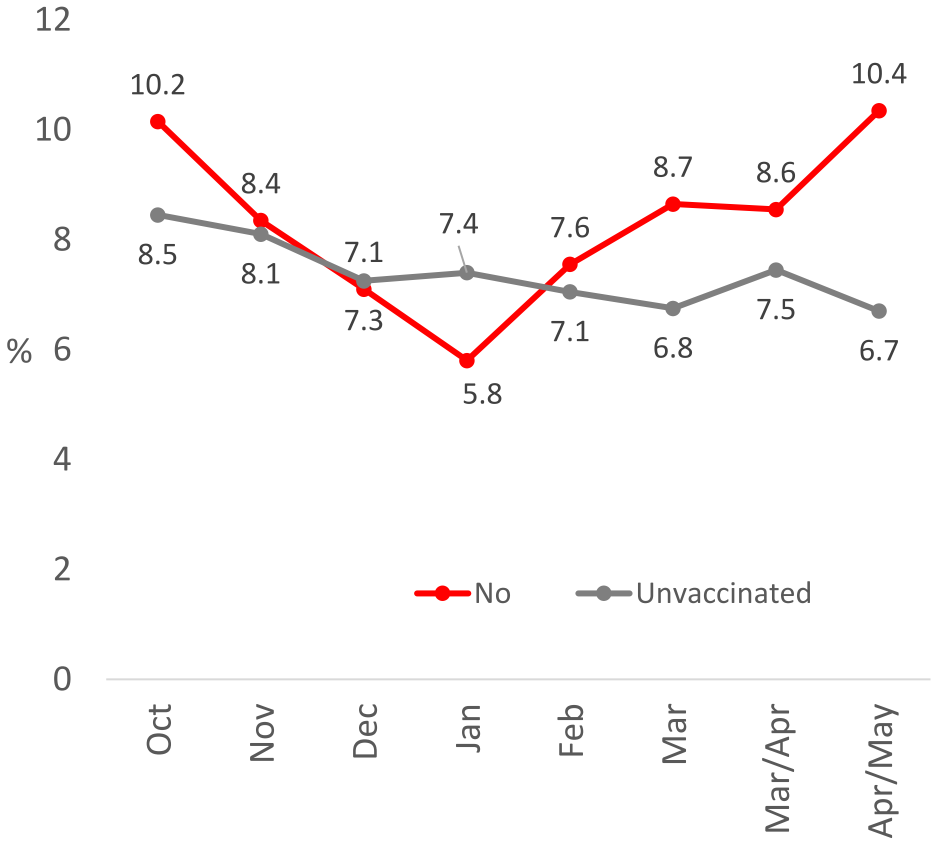
# Long-term expectations




Long-term expectations have displayed some volatility in recent rounds of SAM, but remain similar to one month ago.

# Vaccine intentions (adults)

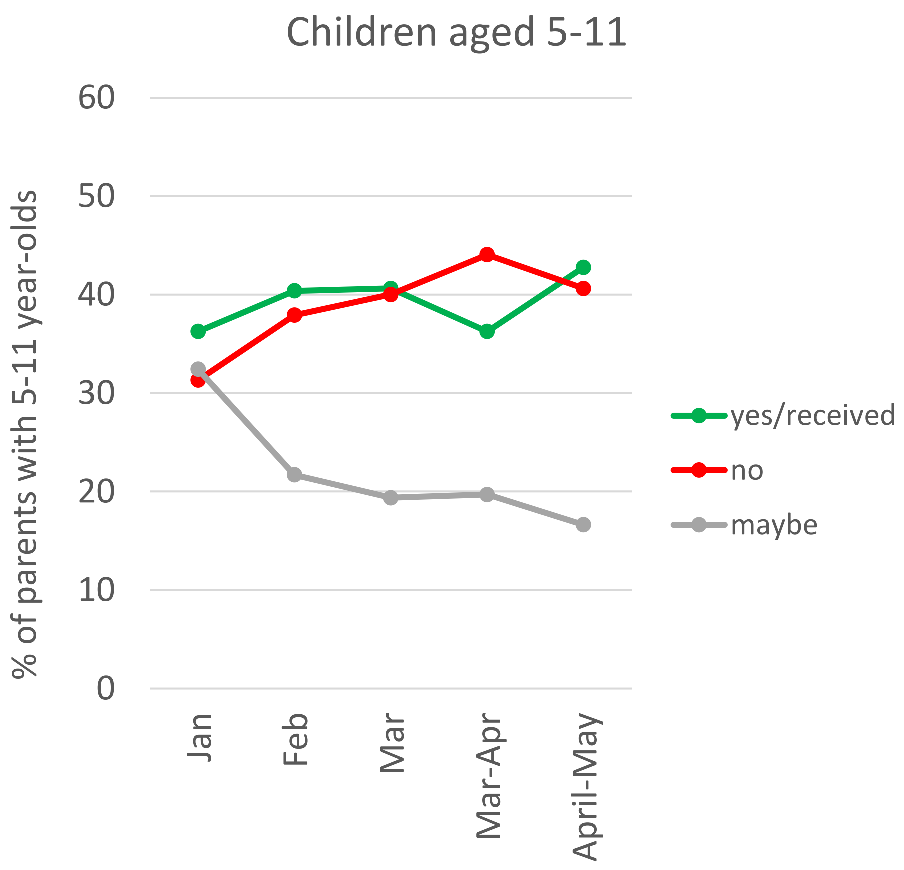


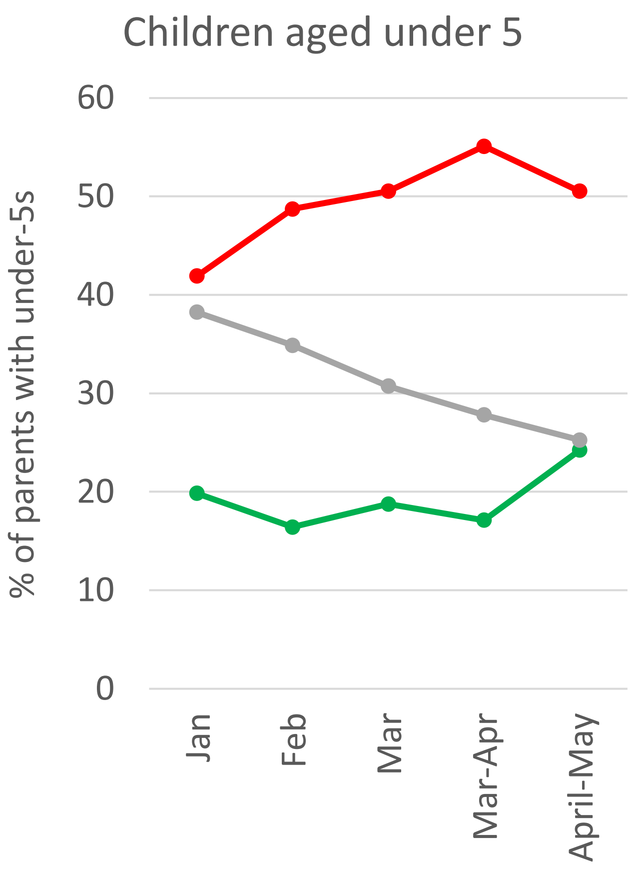




More than 80% have either taken a booster vaccine or intend to take one, but the proportion saying that they will not take a booster has climbed to its highest level thus far, at over 10%.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Vaccine intentions (children)

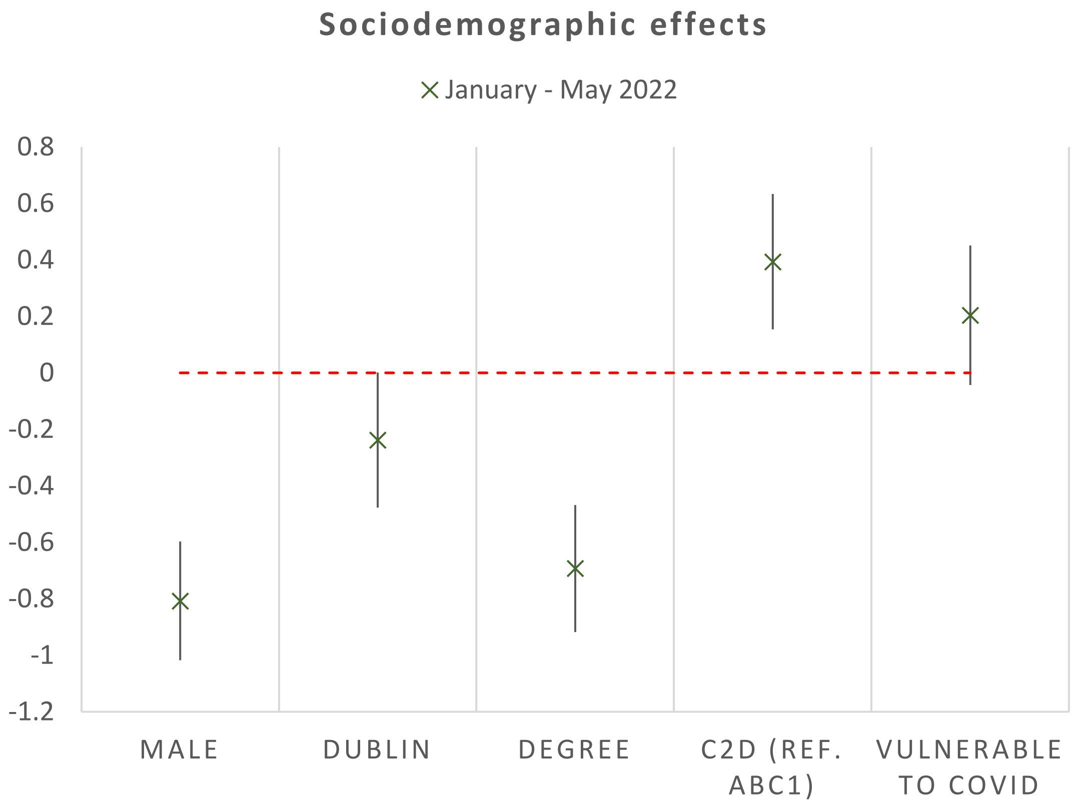


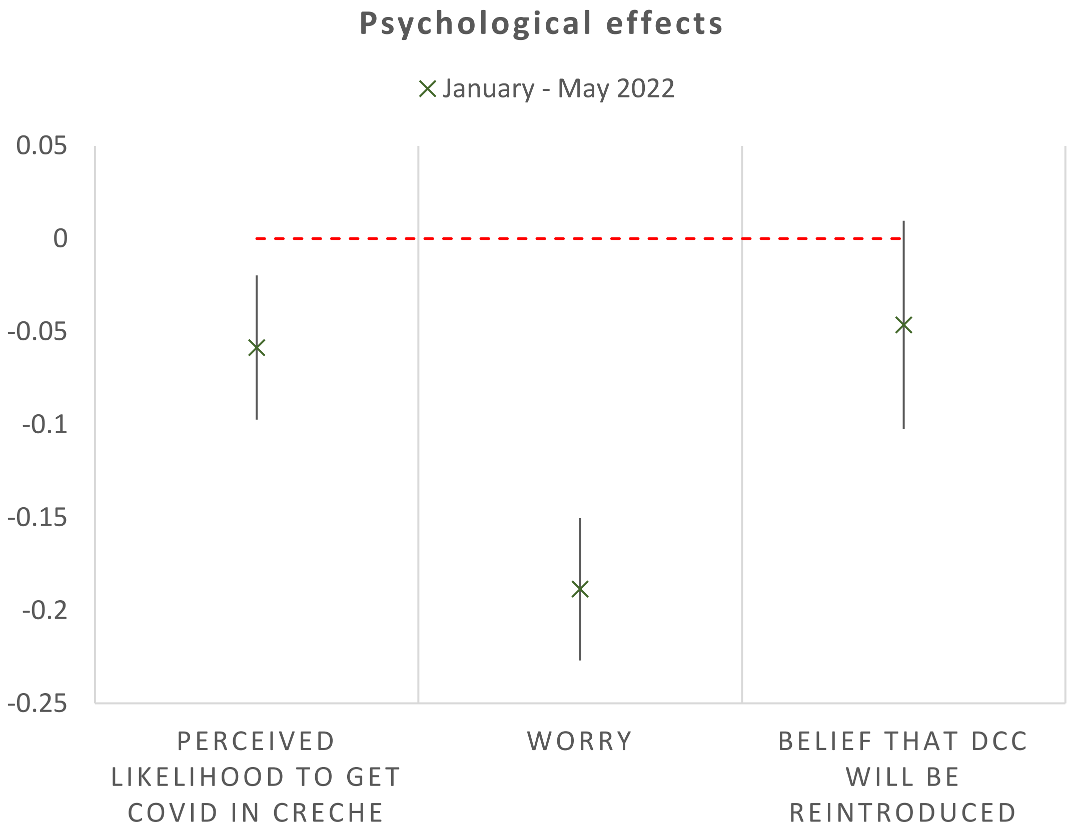




In the past month there has been a significant increase in the proportion of parents willing to vaccinate children.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Unwillingness to vaccinate under-5s




Willingness among parents to vaccinate under-5s is linked to gender and socio-economic status. Parents with lower overall worry about COVID-19 are also less willing to vaccinate their children.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach

# Unwillingness to vaccinate 5-11 year-olds



Willingness among parents to vaccinate children aged 5-11 is linked to gender, socio-economic status and self-reported vulnerability to COVID-19 (of themselves and/or family members). Parents are also less willing to vaccinate their children if they perceive less chance of getting COVID-19 at school, have lower overall worry about COVID-19 or think the reintroduction of digital COVID certificates is unlikely.

Source: ESRI Social Activity Measure for the Department of the Taoiseach