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Information Rights Strategic Plan: Trust and Confidence

Prepared for:

Information Commissioner's Office

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A. Background

A.1 Background

Goal #1 of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Information Rights Strategic Plan 2017-21 is to "increase the trust the public has in Government, public bodies and the private sector in terms of how personal information is used and made available". In doing so, the aim is also to increase public trust through transparency and creating a culture of accountability, both in the digital economy and in digital public service delivery.

It is therefore important for the ICO to gauge and monitor the public's changing perceptions in this area and where possible to use benchmarks from previous research to understand trends.

The trust and confidence research was last undertaken in June-July 2020. This year's study took place in May 2021. Both this year's study and last year's study took place during the Covid-19 pandemic, and one of the aims of the 2021 programme was to gauge public opinion on the transfer and use of personal health data to public and private sector organisations to further improve treatments or health and care services.

B. Aims & Objectives

B.1 Overall Objective

The **main aim** of this research is:

"To gauge the general public's awareness and perceptions of their information rights and to monitor any change in people's trust and confidence in organisations who use their personal information. Also, to provide a measure of how the Commissioner/ ICO is perceived by the UK public."

In more detail, the research aims to:

- Monitor the differing levels of the public's trust and confidence in how companies and organisations collect, use and store personal information and in doing so assess what drives people's level of trust and confidence.
- Measure public perceptions about the regulator.
- Identify individuals' awareness of their legislative rights and how to exercise them.
- Understand individuals' perceptions around handing over personal information in return for access to products and services.

C. Executive Summary

Below is a summary of the key findings from the 2021 research.

Trust & Confidence

- Following a significant shift to the middle ground in 2020, the public's trust and confidence in companies/organisations storing and using their personal data has remained largely stable in 2021. Indeed, a larger proportion than in 2020 claim that their trust and confidence has remained the same over the past 12 months.
- Yet half claim to receive more unwanted marketing calls now than they did 12 months ago, and there has been an indicative rise in those providing as reasons for low levels of trust and confidence perceptions that companies/organisations sell personal information and concerns about data being misused. The proportion claiming to have a good understanding of how their personal information is used is down slightly, and the proportion agreeing that "companies/organisations are open and transparent about how they collect and use personal information" and that "current laws and regulations sufficiently protect personal information" are significantly lower compared to last year.
- Trust and confidence in companies/organisations storing and using children's personal data is similarly split to the overall picture, although with a slightly higher proportion having high trust and confidence.
- As in 2020, levels of trust and confidence with different types of organisations are highest for the NHS and local GPs, and lowest for social media companies. However, the proportion of those having high trust and confidence in financial services has fallen.

Accountability

- The most top-of-mind way the public claim they would get advice and/or information about protecting their personal information is by searching online, followed by contacting the company in question. When prompted, the public also frequently mention Gov.uk and the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- A large majority of the public believes that companies/organisations – more so than company directors – should be held accountable for data breaches. They state that banning companies and organisations from sharing personal information with third parties without permission and making it a legal requirement to inform customers of data breaches would increase trust and confidence.
- Although still in the minority, there has been significant rises in the proportions who feel a regulatory body and the affected individuals should be held responsible.
- The data protection concern of most importance to the public is "personal information being used for scams or fraud"; this is also the concern most likely to prevent the public from using a company.

Awareness of the regulator and its purposes

- Amongst those who don't mention when prompted the ICO as somewhere they would seek information, just under a further two in five (37%) have heard of the ICO.
- Two thirds are aware that the ICO is the regulator for data protection in the UK.
- A quarter of those in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information. One in seven of those in Scotland are aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information for UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland, and not the Scottish Information Commissioner.
- While two thirds agree that the regulator is there to act in the interests of the public, there is some misunderstanding and confusion about the role, with one in six believing that the public cannot contact the regulator.

Perceptions of legislative rights and how to exercise them

- There has been an indicative rise in the relative importance of the right to object to personal information being processed and a significant decline in the proportion claiming to have accessed their personal information.
- Although most have not exercised or experienced their rights, many are open to doing so in the future. However, for those who would consider exercising a right, most are unaware or not sure how to do this.

Perceptions of the exchange of information

Exchange of personal information

- The public are often willing to trade personal information for access to products and services. However, they are largely against contact from companies as a result of information being shared.

Exchange of health information

- Half are comfortable with their personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons, although one in five are not.

D. Methodology and Response Rates

D.1 Methodology – main sample and regional boost

Harris Interactive, an independent market research agency, designed and implemented an online quantitative self-completion questionnaire using an online UK panel.

To ensure robust sample sizes for each of the devolved nations, a boost sample was undertaken to ensure a minimum number of interviews were achieved in each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

D.1.1 Interviews achieved

2102 online interviews were obtained amongst UK adults between 6th May – 18th May 2021.

The numbers shown in the tables below are unweighted numbers, so these are the number of interviews achieved before the data was weighted to make it nationally representative by age, gender and regions.

Table 1. Number of interviews achieved by gender

	Total	%
Male	953	46%
Female	1144	54%
Identify another way	5	0%
TOTAL	**2102**	**100%**

Table 2. Number of interviews achieved by age

	Total	%
18-24	172	8%
25-34	331	16%
35-44	339	16%
45-54	412	20%
55-64	368	18%
65+	480	22%
TOTAL	**2102**	**100%**

Table 3. Number of interviews achieved by region

	Total	%
England	1718	82%
Scotland	164	8%
Wales	113	5%
Northern Ireland	107	5%
TOTAL	**2102**	**100%**

Table 4. Number of interviews achieved by ethnicity classification

	Total	%
Non-BAME	1871	89%
BAME	206	10%
Did not disclose	25	1%
TOTAL	**2102**	**100%**

Table 5. Number of interviews achieved by parental/carer status

	Total	%
Non-Parent/Carer	1457	69%
Parent/Carer	645	31%
TOTAL	**2102**	**100%**

Table 6. Number of interviews achieved by where people live

	Total	%
Suburban	1149	55%
Urban	480	23%
Rural	473	22%
TOTAL	**2102**	**100%**

D.1.2 Reporting

The data has been weighted to be nationally representative by age, gender and region.

Where relevant, comparisons have been made to the 2020 survey.

D.1.3 Interpreting the results

This is a trended report documenting differences and similarities between the 2020 and 2021 results, at a total and sub-group level, including age, parental status, BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) status and country of residence.

Where meaningful year-on-year changes have occurred, or exist between sub-groups, these are highlighted as significant differences. Significant differences refer to data that is statistically significant, i.e. there is statistical evidence that the difference between two figures has not occurred by chance to a level of 95% significance level.

E. Research Findings

E.1 Understanding public trust & confidence levels

The public continues to be split on the trust and confidence it has in companies and organisations storing and using their personal information, with similar levels of trust and confidence as in 2020.

- Just under 3 in 10 (28%) people have high trust and confidence (rating 4-5 out of 5) in companies and organisations storing and using their personal information. However, a similar proportion (29%) have low trust and confidence (rating 1-2 out of 5).

Q1. How much trust and confidence do you have in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information?

	2020	2021
NET: Low trust and confidence	**28%**	**29%**
1 – None at all	10%	10%
2	18%	20%
3	45%	43%
4	21%	21%
5 – A great deal	6%	6%
NET: High Trust and Confidence	**27%**	**28%**

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Males (33%) are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using their personal information than females (22%).
- Parents/carers (37%) are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence than non-parents/carers (23%).
- Trust and confidence is significantly higher amongst 18-34 year olds (39%) than 35-54 (29%) and 55+ year olds (18%).
- Those living in urban areas (38%) have a significantly higher level of trust and confidence than those living in suburban areas (25%) and rural areas (21%).
- BAME respondents (34%) also have a significantly higher level of trust and confidence than non-BAME respondents (27%).

Proportions of trust and confidence amongst parents/carers in companies and organisations storing and using their child's / children's personal information is similarly split to overall levels of trust and confidence. However, for children's personal data there is a slight shift away from the middle and into high trust and confidence.

A third of parents/carers have high trust and confidence (rating 4-5 out of 5) in companies and organisations storing and using their child / children's personal information.

Q1aa. Thinking about your child/children, how much trust and confidence do you have in companies and organisations storing and using their personal information when they are online?

	2021
NET: Low trust and confidence	**29%**
1 – None at all	11%
2	18%
3	34%
4	23%
5 – A great deal	10%
NET: High Trust and Confidence	**33%**
Not applicable	3%

NB: Question not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults who are parents/carers: 2021 (645)

Differences between sub-groups are similar to overall trust and confidence:

- Men (42%) are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing / using their child/children's personal data than women (23%).
- 18-34 year olds (40%) are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence than 35-54 year olds (30%) or 55+ year olds (21%).
- Those living in urban areas (46%) are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence than those living in suburban (29%) or rural (19%) areas.
- BAME respondents (46%) are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence than non-BAME respondents (32%).

There has been a slight shift in spontaneous reasons for high trust and confidence since 2020, with legislation now most mentioned, followed by trust in policies, security, and good previous experience.

- Legislation now being the most mentioned reason is due to a slight increase in this (17%, vs. 15% in 2020), while there has been a slight decrease in those citing good previous experience as a reason (12%, down from 15% in 2020).

Q1a. What is the main reason for the level of trust and confidence you have in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information?
(Most cited reasons amongst those with a high level of trust and confidence)

	2020	2021
Legislation (protected by the law, regulations, Data Protection Act etc.)	15%	17%
Trust/I trust them/their policies	12%	13%
Good (previous) experience (Never had any problems/No experience of data breaches/loss etc.)	15%	12%
Security (safe, good security systems)	9%	12%
Companies protect my data (they don't share/sell my information without my consent etc.)	7%	7%
(I choose/use) Reputable/Well-known companies	6%	6%
Their reputation is at stake (They care for their reputation, it's in their own interests to protect data, not lose customers etc.)	4%	5%
New GDPR policy/Companies have to comply to the new GDPR policy	4%	4%
Other	15%	6%
None/Nothing/No reason	7%	4%
Don't know/Not sure	2%	3%

All Adults with a high level of trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using personal information: 2020 (583) / 2021 (538)

The main reasons given by the public for having a low level of trust and confidence (rating 1-2 out of 5) in companies and organisations storing and using their personal information are similar to those cited in 2020 and are centred around the belief that companies sell personal information to third parties, as well as concerns about data misuse, data hacking and data leaks/breaches.

Q1a. What is the main reason for the level of trust and confidence you have in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information?
(Most cited reasons amongst those with a low level of trust and confidence)

	2020	2021
They sell your personal information (to 3rd parties)	18%	20%
Data hacking	16%	14%
Concerns about data/information being misused (not sure what they do with my data)	12%	14%
Data leaks/breaches	13%	13%
They are profit-driven (they use data for their own purposes/interests)	13%	13%
Concerns about security (Lack of safety/ Security issues/ Poor security systems/It's not (completely) secure)	9%	9%
Lack of trust/Not trustworthy/I don't trust anyone	11%	8%
They share your personal information with 3rd parties (without my consent)	7%	6%
Spam (junk/ unsolicited emails)	5%	6%
Marketing/Advertising purpose (used in advertising, for targeted advertising)	5%	4%
Other	8%	4%
Don't know/Not sure	1%	1%

All Adults with a low level of trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using personal information: 2020 (600) / 2021 (630)

The most commonly cited reason for having a medium level trust and confidence is that it depends on the company as some are better/safer than others, followed by data leaks and a belief that companies sell personal information to third parties.

- There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of those mentioning data hacking concerns (8%, down from 13% in 2020).

Q1a. What is the main reason for the level of trust and confidence you have in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information?
(Most cited reasons amongst those with a medium level of trust and confidence)

	2020	2021
Depends on the company (some are better/safer than others etc.)	12%	12%
Data leaks/breaches	9%	10%
They sell your personal information (to 3rd parties)	9%	10%
Concerns about data/information being misused (not sure what they do with my data)	9%	9%
Data hacking concerns	13%	8%
Concerns about security (Lack of safety/ Security issues/ Poor security systems/It's not (completely) secure)	7%	7%
I remain vigilant/careful (I have my doubts)	6%	6%
They share your personal information with 3rd parties (without my consent)	5%	6%
Good (previous) experience (Never had any problems/No experience of data breaches/loss etc.)	5%	4%
Other	8%	5%
Don't know/Not sure	4%	3%

All Adults with a medium level of trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using personal information: 2020 (976) / 2021 (934)

For companies and organisations generally, trust and confidence is highest for the NHS, with three in four (75%) having high trust and confidence in this organisation.

On the other end of the scale, trust and confidence is lowest for social media and messaging platforms, with 6 in 10 (60%) having low trust and confidence in these.

Q2a. Generally, how much trust and confidence do you have in the following companies and organisations?

	2021	
	NET LOW TRUST & CONFIDENCE	NET HIGH TRUST & CONFIDENCE
The NHS	7%	75%
Your local GP	8%	72%
The Police	17%	58%
National Governmental departments/ organisations	17%	55%
Financial services	16%	55%
Local Government	20%	49%
Online retailers	24%	37%
Mobile, broadband, utility providers	27%	34%
Social media and messaging platforms	60%	15%

NB: This question was not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults: 2021 (2102)

- Males (39%) are significantly more likely than females (35%) to have high trust and confidence in online retailers.
- Parents/carers are significantly more likely to have a high level of trust and confidence in online retailers; mobile, broadband and utility providers; and social media and messaging services than non-parents/carers.
- 55+ year olds are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in the NHS; their local GP; national government departments and organisations; and local government than 18-34 year olds or 35-54 year olds.
- 18-34 year olds are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in online retailers; mobile broadband and utility providers; and social media and messaging services than 55+ year olds and 35-54 year olds, with 35-54 year olds also significantly more likely than 55+ year olds to have high trust and confidence in these organisations.
- Those living in rural areas are significantly more likely than those in urban or suburban areas to have high trust and confidence in the NHS, their local GP and the Police, whereas those in urban areas are significantly more likely than those in suburban or rural areas to have high trust and confidence in online retailers; mobile, broadband and utility providers; and social media and messaging services.

The highest levels of trust and confidence (rating 4-5 out of 5) in different types of companies and organisations storing and using personal information continue to be for the NHS, the Police and national governmental bodies, and the lowest levels of trust and confidence (rating 1-2 out of 5) continue to be for social media companies.

In terms of confidence in companies and organisations storing and using personal information, trust and confidence remains fairly similar, with the exception of financial services, which has seen a significant decrease in high trust and confidence between 2020 (56%) and 2021 (52%).

Q2. How much trust and confidence do you have in the following companies and organisations storing and using your personal information?

	2020		2021	
	NET LOW TRUST & CONFIDENCE	NET HIGH TRUST & CONFIDENCE	NET LOW TRUST & CONFIDENCE	NET HIGH TRUST & CONFIDENCE
The NHS or your local GP	8%	73%	N/A	N/A
The NHS	N/A	N/A	9%	72%
Your local GP	N/A	N/A	9%	71%
The Police	17%	59%	17%	57%
National Governmental departments/ organisations	18%	57%	16%	55%
Financial services	16%	56%	17%	52%
Local Government	20%	51%	17%	51%
Online retailers	29%	35%	30%	34%
Mobile, broadband, utility providers	27%	34%	31%	32%
Social messaging platforms	60%	16%	59%	16%

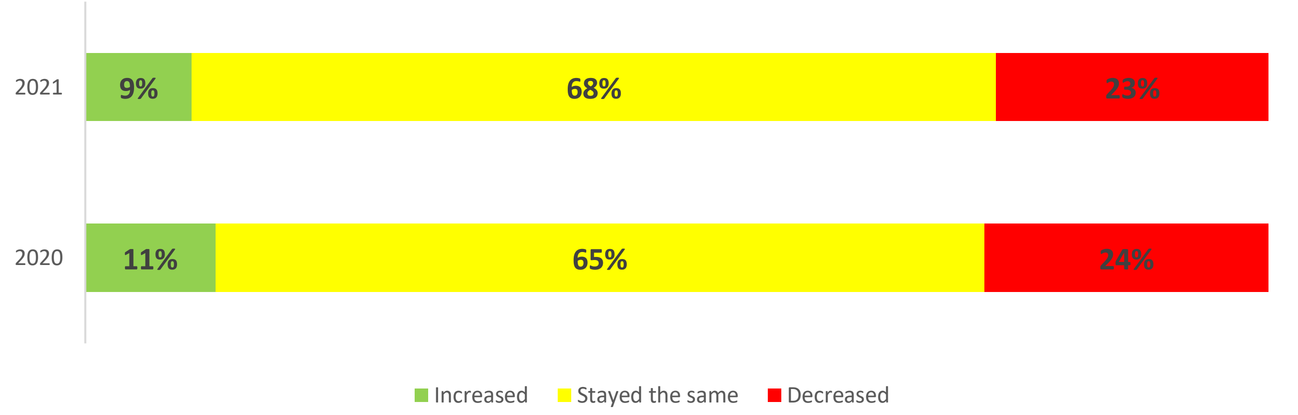
Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Males and parents/carers are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in online retailers; mobile, broadband and utility providers; and social messaging platforms, with parents/carers also significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in the Police.
- Over 55s are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in the NHS, their local GP and national government departments than under-54s, while 18-34s are significantly more likely to have high trust and confidence in mobile, broadband and utility providers, and social messaging platforms than over-35s.
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely than those living in suburban or rural areas to have high trust and confidence in online retailers; mobile, broadband and utility providers; and social messaging platforms.
- Non-BAME respondents are significantly more likely than BAME respondents to have high trust and confidence in their local GP, the Police, and financial services.
    - BAME respondents are significantly more likely than non-BAME respondents to have high trust and confidence in social messaging platforms.

The majority (68%) of the public perceive that their trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using personal information has stayed the same in the past year, a significant increase from 2020 (65%).

- 9% feel that their trust and confidence has increased, a significant fall from 11% in 2020, whereas 23% state that it has decreased.

Q2aa. Has your trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information increased, decreased or stayed the same in the past year?



Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) 2021 (2102)

- Males (12%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year compared with females (6%).
- 18-34 year olds (18%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year than 35-54 year olds (8%) and 55+ year olds (2%).
- Parents/carers (16%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year than non-parents/carers (5%).
- Those living in urban areas (18%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year than those living in suburban (6%) or rural areas (3%).
- BAME respondents (17%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year compared with non-BAME respondents (8%).

The reasons for increased trust in companies and organisations storing and using personal information in the past year focus around perceptions of improvements or already good security – either feeling that companies and organisations are already satisfactory/improving, or that security and security systems are getting better – and not having had any problems.

A small minority (7%) cite the Covid-19 pandemic as a reason.

Q2aa1. Why do you say that your trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information has increased in the past year? [Most cited reasons for increased trust]

	2021
(They are) Good/Great/They are improving/I am happy/I had no problems	16%
Good/Improved security/safety/Better security systems	13%
Reliable/Trustworthy/I trust them	12%
Covid-19 pandemic/situation	7%
Legislation (protected by law, law regulations etc.)	6%
Other	15%
None/No/Nothing	9%
Don't know	4%

NB: Question not asked in 2020 Base: All who stated their trust and confidence has increased: 2021 (182)

Conversely, those who said that their trust and confidence had decreased in the past year most commonly claimed this was caused by negative stories or reports in the media, followed by a perception of too many scams/fraudulent activity.

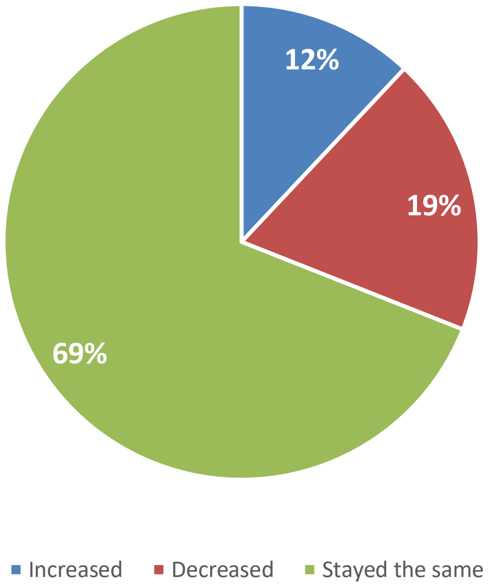
Q2aa1. Why do you say that your trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information has decreased in the past year?[Most cited reasons for decreased trust]

	2021
Negative stories/reports in the media/I have learned more about it	17%
Too many scams/Scam (calls/emails)/Fraud (identity fraud)	15%
Data leaks/breaches	14%
Getting calls/texts/being contacted by companies I had no interaction with/Cold calling	8%
Data hacking/Cyber attacks/Too easy for others to access my information	8%
They sell your personal information (to 3rd parties)	7%
Other	5%
None/No/Nothing	3%
Don't know	2%

NB: Question not asked in 2020 Base: All who stated their trust and confidence has decreased: 2021 (489)

69% of parents/carers state that their trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using their child's/children's personal information had stayed the same in the past year, although 19% said it decreased.

Q2aaa. Has your trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using your child's/children's personal information increased, decreased or stayed the same in the past year?



NB: Question not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults who parents/carers: 2021 (656)

- Males (16%) are significantly more likely to say their trust and confidence in companies and organisations handling their children's personal data has increased in the past year than females (8%).
- 18-34 year olds (21%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year than 35-54 year olds (8%) and 55+ year olds (7%).
- Those living in urban areas (22%) are significantly more likely to feel that their trust and confidence has increased in the last year than those living in suburban (8%) or rural areas (4%).

Almost three tenths (29%) of those who claim their trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using their child's/children's personal information has increased in the past year, state this is because they have not had any issues and are satisfied overall. The second most popular reason cited is perceived better security/stricter rules/GDPR regulations.

Q2aaa1. Why do you say that your trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using your **child/children's** personal information has increased in the past year?
[Most cited reasons for increased trust]

	2021
Good/No issues (so far)/No reason not to trust them/I'm satisfied	29%
Better security/Stricter rules/GDPR regulations	17%
Good values/offers/services	6%
Other	16%
None/No/Nothing	12%
Don't know	8%

NB: Question not asked in 2020
Base: All who stated their trust and confidence in companies/organisations storing/using their child/children's personal data has increased: 2021 (81)

The most commonly cited reasons for decreased trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using children's personal data are data leaks/breaches and hacking/scamming, both mentioned by one in ten (10%).

Q2aaa1. Why do you say that your trust and confidence in companies and organisations storing and using your **child/children's** personal information has decreased in the past year?
[Most cited reasons for decreased trust]

	2021
Data leaks/breaches/loss/theft	10%
Hacking/Scamming issues	10%
The numbers of scams/hacks has increased	9%
Lack of trust/ You can't trust anyone	8%
(Personal) Information is shared/sold (for profit)	8%
Other	10%
None/No/Nothing	13%
Don't know	3%

NB: Question not asked in 2020
Base: All who stated their trust and confidence in companies/organisations storing/using their child/children's personal information has decreased: 2021 (123)

Levels of understanding of how personal information is used by companies and organisations remain at similar levels to 2020. 13% of adults feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is used by companies and organisations in the UK. This is slightly lower than the 15% who felt they had a good understanding in 2020.

Q3. Which of the following statements comes closest to your understanding of how your personal information is being **used** by companies and organisations in the UK?

	2020	2021
I have a good understanding of how my personal information is used	15%	13%
I am familiar with some aspects of how my personal information is used, but not all aspects	54%	54%
I know very little about how my personal information is used	27%	28%
I know nothing at all about how my personal information is used	4%	5%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Males (16%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is used than females (11%).
- Parents/carers (19%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is used than non-parents/carers (11%).
- Respondents from urban areas (21%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is used than respondents from suburban (11%) or rural areas (11%).
- 18-34 year olds (21%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is used than 35-54 year olds (13%) or 55+ year olds (8%).

12% of adults feel that they have a good understanding of how their personal information is made available by third parties and the public by companies and organisations in the UK. This is down slightly from 13% in 2020.

- 42% feel they know very little or nothing at all about how their personal information is made available by companies and organisations in the UK.

Q4. Which of the following statements comes closest to your understanding about how companies and organisations in the UK share your personal information with **third parties, for example other companies and organisations?**

	2020	2021
I have a good understanding of how my personal information is made available	13%	12%
I am familiar with some aspects of how my personal information is made available, but not all aspects	46%	46%
I know very little about how my personal information is made available	33%	35%
I know nothing at all about how my personal information is made available	8%	7%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Males (15%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is made available than females (9%), whereas females are significantly more likely to feel that they know very little about how their personal information is made available than males (38% vs 35% respectively).
- Parents/carers (18%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is made available than non-parents/carers (9%), whereas non-parents/carers are significantly more likely to feel they know very little about how their personal information is made available than parents/carers (39% vs 28% respectively).
- Respondents from urban areas (20%) are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of how their personal information is made available than respondents from suburban (9%) or rural areas (8%).

There has been a notable negative shift in responses to certain statements about the use of personal information, with agreement that "Current laws and regulations sufficiently protect personal information" falling significantly from 49% in 2020 to 42% in 2021.

- The proportion of the public that agrees that "companies/organisations are open and transparent about how they collect and use personal information" has also decreased significantly since 2020 (33% compared to 37%).

Q5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the use of personal information in the UK?

	2020			2021		
	NET Agree	NET Disagree	Don't know	NET Agree	NET Disagree	Don't know
Current laws and regulations sufficiently protect personal information	49%	41%	11%	42%	45%	13%
It is easy to access and change my personal information held by companies/organisations	40%	45%	15%	40%	44%	16%
Companies/organisations are open and transparent about how they collect and use personal information	37%	54%	9%	33%	56%	10%
It is easy to find out how my personal information is stored and used by companies/ organisations	31%	55%	13%	30%	56%	14%
It is easy to find out whether my personal information is shared with third parties	29%	58%	13%	26%	59%	15%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Parents/carers, 18-34 year olds, BAME respondents, and those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to agree with all of the statements than non-parents/carers, 35+ year olds, non-BAME respondents, and those living in suburban or rural areas.

Half (50%) of the public state that they or a close friend/family member have heard about or actually experienced a data breach (i.e. personal information being shared without permission, used fraudulently or lost/stolen) in the last 12 months, a decrease from 57% in 2020.

- There has been a significant drop amongst those who say that either they or a close friend/family member "heard a news story about a data breach in a company/organisation that they have shared personal information with, but were not personally notified", from 31% in 2020 to 25% in 2021.

Q7i & Q7ii. Thinking about personal information you may hold with companies and organisations, have any of the following things happened to you or a close friend/family member in the last 12 months?

	2020			2021		
	Happened to you	Happened to a friend/ family member	NET Happened to you/ friend or family	Happened to you	Happened to a friend/ family member	NET Happened to you/ friend or family
Net: ANY	**51%**	**36%**	**57%**	**45%**	**35%**	**50%**
Heard a news story about a data breach in a company/ organisation that I/they have shared personal information with, but was not personally notified	26%	12%	31%	22%	11%	25%
Personal information has been shared with a third party without permission	15%	9%	20%	15%	9%	18%
Had an online account(s) accessed or used fraudulently by someone else	12%	13%	22%	10%	13%	19%
Had personal details stolen and used to commit fraud	8%	11%	16%	6%	10%	13%
Been told by a company or organisation I/they've contacted/ hold an account with or are employed by, that my/their personal details may have been lost or stolen	15%	9%	19%	13%	9%	17%
None of these	**49%**	**64%**	**43%**	**55%**	**65%**	**50%**

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

Around one in ten (9%) feel that they (5%) or a close friend / family member (5%) have been negatively affected as a result of a company or organisation not sharing their data. Some cite examples of finding it hard to have data transferred between companies even when they have requested it or require it, which can be frustrating. Interestingly, a few mention that either they or a close friend/family member has had a negative experience with medical care due to improper communication or medical data being shared between providers.

Q7icom/Q7iicom. Please tell us why you/a friend/family member has been negatively affected as a result of a company or organisation NOT sharing their data in the last 12 months?

	2021		
	Happened to you	Happened to a friend/ family member	NET Happened to you/ friend or family
Been negatively affected as a result of an organisation NOT sharing data	5%	5%	9%

Base: All Adults: 2021 (2102)

Example comments around how "you" have been negatively affected

"I'm unsure exactly, I just know that I wasn't offered a suitable product recently as a result of this"

"Because when it should have been shared - medical stuff - it wasn't so I became ill"

"Needing information shared that I wanted between companies. Impossible to get this done"

"My bank account was NOT transferred when I instructed"

Example comments around how "a friend/family member" has been negatively affected

"An organisation was reluctant to share old working data and was therefore affected at her new job by it"

"Because my family member needed some medical documents and they were not given"

"Important information was not passed on as it should have been"

This question was not asked in 2020
Base: All Adults who have been affected by personal data NOT being shared (either themselves or a close friend / family member): (183)

Over three quarters (77%) of the public state that protecting their personal information is important to them; however, it also appears that people sometimes struggle to control the use of their information, as…

- A third (33%) disagree that "I am confident I know who to seek help from about my rights and companies/organisations storing and using my personal information" and that "Companies/organisations usually make it easy for me to change how much of my personal information they have access to".
- Half (50%) agree that they receive more unwanted marketing calls than they did 12 months ago.

Q8a. Thinking generally about the overall trust and confidence that you have in companies and organisations storing and using your personal information, please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following.

	2021		
	NET Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	NET Disagree
Protecting my personal information is essential to me	77%	18%	5%
I know how to opt-out of receiving online communications from companies/organisations	60%	25%	15%
The amount of trust I have in a company/organisation handling my personal information is linked closely to how much I trust them generally	58%	33%	9%
Covid-19 has made me more digitally active	57%	28%	15%
As far as I'm aware, my personal details are shared between companies/organisations	53%	37%	10%
If an online service is free to use I accept that I may be 'paying' for it by providing my personal information	53%	32%	15%
I receive more unwanted marketing calls than I did 12 months ago	50%	26%	24%
I understand current laws around the use of my personal information	39%	34%	27%
I understand how companies/organisations use my personal information	35%	35%	30%
I am confident I know who to seek help from about my rights and companies/organisations storing and using my personal information	34%	33%	33%
I've had experiences of companies/organisations misusing my personal information	30%	33%	37%
Companies/organisations usually make it easy for me to change how much of my personal information they have access to	29%	39%	33%

NB: This question was not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults: (2102)

There are a considerable number of differences by sub-groups to these statements:

- Females are significantly more likely than males to agree that "Protecting my personal information is essential to me", "The amount of trust I have in a company/organisation handling my personal information is linked closely to how much I trust them generally", and "Covid-19 has made me more digitally active".

  - Males, on the other hand, claim more digital ‘savviness’, being significantly more likely than females to agree that “If an online service is free to use I accept that I may be 'paying' for it by providing my personal information”, “I am confident I know who to seek help from about my rights and companies/organisations storing and using my personal information”, and “Companies/organisations usually make it easy for me to change how much of my personal information they have access to”. They are, however, also significantly more likely to agree “I’ve had experiences of companies/organisations misusing my personal information”.

- Parents/carers are significantly more likely than non-parents/carers to agree that…
  - “Covid-19 has made me more digitally active”
  - “I understand how companies/organisations use my personal information”
  - “I've had experiences of companies/organisations misusing my personal information”
  - “Companies/organisations usually make it easy for me to change how much of my personal information they have access to”.

- Those aged 55+ are significantly more likely to agree that “Protecting my personal information is essential to me” than those aged 18-34 or 35-54.

- Those aged 18-34 are more likely than over 35s to agree that…
  - “I understand how companies/organisations use my personal information”
  - “I am confident I know who to seek help from about my rights and companies/organisations storing and using my personal information”.

- BAME respondents are more likely than non-BAME respondents to agree that…
  - “I am confident I know who to seek help from about my rights and companies/organisations storing and using my personal information”
  - “I’ve had experiences of companies/organisations misusing my personal information”
  - “Companies/organisations usually make it easy for me to change how much of my personal information they have access to”
  - “I understand current laws around the use of my personal information”.
  - “Covid-19 has made me more digitally active”.

- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely than those living in suburban or rural areas to agree that….
  - “I understand how companies/organisations use my personal information”
  - “I am confident I know who to seek help from about my rights and companies/organisations storing and using my personal information”
  - “I've had experiences of companies/organisations misusing my personal information”
  - “I understand current laws around the use of my personal information”.

Almost three quarters (74%) feel that if a company/organisation that they used was affected by a data breach and their information was lost or stolen, the company holding the data should be held responsible.

- Two fifths (40%) of the public feel that the culpability should rest with the directors of the company/organisation holding their personal information.
- Interestingly, there have been significant increases year-on-year in the proportion who feel a regulatory body should be held responsible (20%, vs. 17% in 2020) and the proportion who feel the individual affected should be held responsible (15%, vs. 9% in 2020).

Q8. If a company/organisation that you used was affected by a data breach and your information was lost or stolen, who do you think should be held responsible?

	2020	2021
The company/ organisation who was holding my personal information	73%	74%
The directors of the company/organisation holding my personal information	39%	40%
A regulatory body	17%	20%
The Government	11%	13%
Me*	9%	15%
Don't Know	5%	5%
None	2%	1%
Other	1%	1%

* option was presented as "You" in 2020
Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Females (78%) are significantly more likely to state that the company/organisation holding the personal information should be held responsible than males (71%).
  - Males, on the other hand, are significantly more likely to state that a regulatory body, the individual affected, and Government (22%, 18% and 16% respectively) should be held responsible than females (17%, 13% and 10% respectively).
- Non-parents/carers (79%) are significantly more likely to state that the company/organisation that was holding the personal information should be held responsible than parents/carers (64%).
  - Parents/carers, on the other hand, are significantly more likely to state that a regulatory body (25%), the individual affected (22%), and Government (19%) should be held responsible than non-parents/carers (17%, 12%, and 10% respectively).
- 55+ year olds (84%) are significantly more likely to state that the company/organisation holding their data should be held responsible than 35-54 year olds (74%) and 18-34 year olds (62%). They are also significantly more likely to state that the directors of the company/organisation should be held responsible (46%) than 35-54 year olds (40%) and 18-34 year olds (30%).

- 18-34 year olds were significantly more likely to state that if a data breach occurs, a regulatory body (26%), the individual affected (23%), or Government (23%) should be held responsible than 35-54 year olds (19%, 14% and 13% respectively) and 55+ year olds (15%, 11% and 6% respectively).
- Non-BAME respondents are significantly more likely to state that if a data breach occurs, the company/organisation that was holding the data should be held responsible (75%) than BAME respondents (66%).
    - On the other hand, BAME respondents are significantly more likely to state that a regulatory body (30%), the individual affected (22%), or Government (23%) should be held responsible than non-BAME respondents (18%, 14%, and 12% respectively).
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to state that a regulatory body (26%), the individual affected (24%), or the Government (25%) should be held responsible than those in suburban (17%, 13% and 9% respectively) and rural areas (17%, 10% and 8% respectively).

People are most likely to state that either "banning companies/organisations from sharing personal information with third parties without permission" or "making it a legal requirement for companies/organisations to tell customers that they have been affected by a data breach" would increase their trust and confidence in how their personal information is used and made available. These are ranked first of six options by 24% and 22% respectively and in the top three by 62% and 61% respectively. These findings are very consistent with those from 2020.

- The public is least likely to state that "companies/organisations having to register with the UK body that upholds the public's information rights" would increase trust and confidence in how personal information is used and made available. This is ranked first by one in ten (11%).

Q9. Which of the following, if any, would increase your trust and confidence in how your personal information is used and made available by companies and organisations?

	2020		2021	
	1st Choice	NET: Top 3	1st Choice	NET: Top 3
Ban companies/organisations from sharing personal information with third parties without permission	24%	62%	24%	62%
Make it a legal requirement for companies/organisations to tell customers that they have been affected by a data breach	23%	62%	22%	61%
Give custodial sentences (i.e. prison) for those responsible for the most severe breaches in the use of personal information	17%	46%	15%	42%
Fine companies and organisations if they are found to use personal information without permission	15%	58%	15%	56%
Make it easier to see and change any consent I have given to companies/ organisations regarding the use of my personal information	11%	40%	12%	43%
Register companies/organisations with the UK body that upholds the public's information rights	10%	34%	11%	36%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Non-parents/carers are significantly more likely to rank first banning companies/organisations from sharing personal information with third parties without permission (27%) than parents/carers (19%).
- Those aged 55+ are significantly more likely to rank first banning companies/organisations from sharing personal information with third parties without permission (29%) than 35-54 year olds (22%) and 18-34 year olds (21%).

E.2 Public knowledge/awareness of the regulator of data protection

Unprompted, the largest proportion of the public states that if they wanted to get advice and/or information on protecting their personal information, they would search online, mentioned by more than three in ten (32%).

- One in ten (10%) would seek advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau, slightly up from 7% in 2020.
- However, knowing where to source advice and/or information on protecting personal information remains an area of uncertainty for many, with one in six (17%) of the public stating they are unsure. This is down slightly on the 19% stating this in 2020.

Q13a. What would you do if you wanted to get advice and/or information on protecting your personal information? (UNPROMPTED)
(Most cited reasons)

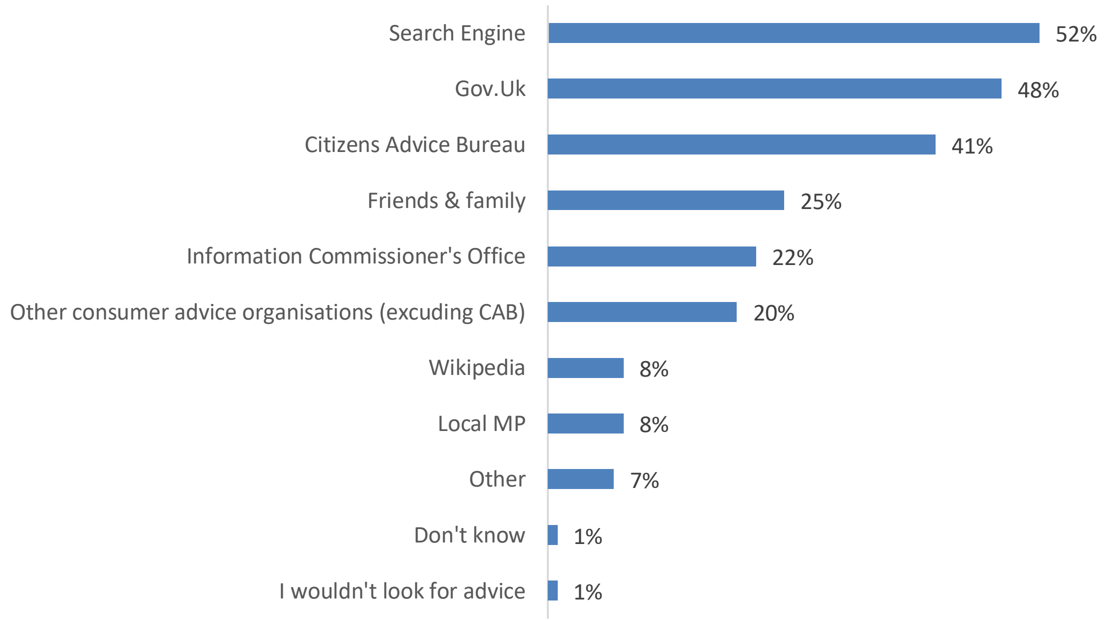
	2020	2021
Search online	31%	32%
Contact the company in question	17%	16%
Contact Citizens Advice Bureau/CAB (for advice)	7%	10%
Look on/seek help on Government websites (gov.uk)	4%	4%
Contact a solicitor/lawyer/seek legal advice	2%	2%
Ask/search for information/seek advice (generic)	2%	4%
Contact the Government/Government bodies	2%	2%
Contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (website)	2%	2%
Other	6%	4%
Don't know/Not sure	**19%**	**17%**

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

When prompted, the most common way that the public would look to get advice and/or information on protecting their personal information is via a search engine, mentioned by just over half (52%).

- Other key ways that would be used to get advice and/or information are via Gov.uk (48%) and the Citizens Advice Bureau (41%). 22% would seek advice from the ICO.
- Friends and family would be a source of information for 25%.

Q13. Where would you go to get advice and/or information on protecting your personal information? (PROMPTED)



NB: This question was not asked in 2020

Base: All Adults: (2102)

- Females (30%) are significantly more likely to look to friends and family for advice and/or information on protecting their personal information than males (19%).
- 18-34 year olds (35%) are significantly more likely to look to friends and family for advice and/or information than 35-54 year olds (20%) and 55+ year olds (21%).
- BAME respondents are significantly more likely to seek information via Gov.uk (57%), friends and family (35%) and their local MP (15%) than non-BAME respondents (47%, 23% and 7% respectively).

Amongst those who don't mention when prompted the ICO as somewhere they would seek information, just under a further two in five (37%) people have heard of the ICO.

Q13c. Have you ever heard of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)?

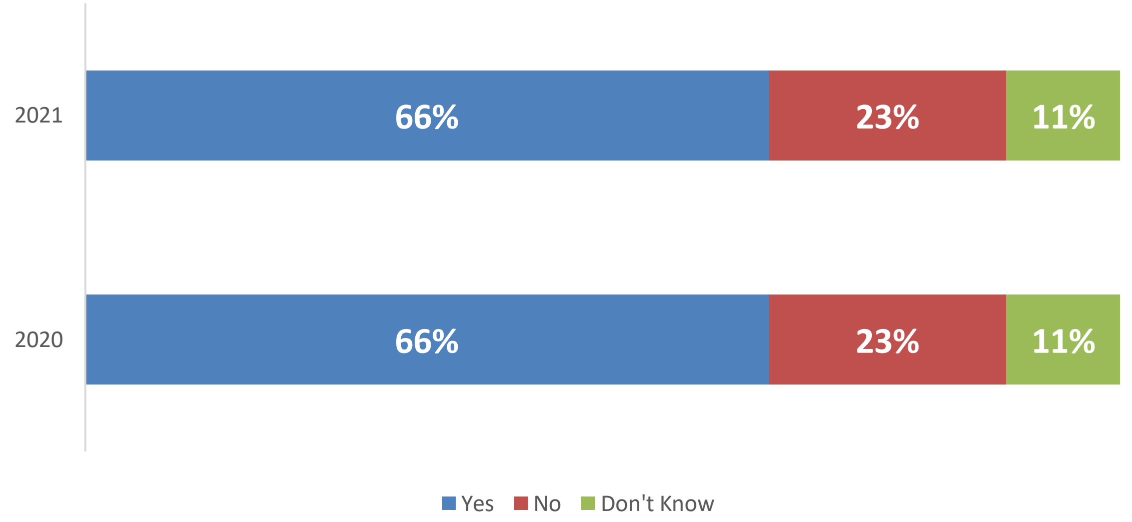
	2021
Yes	37%
No	54%
Unsure	9%

NB: This question was not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults: (2102)

- Males (43%) are significantly more likely to be aware of the ICO than females (31%).
- Parents/carers(41%) are significantly more likely to be aware of the ICO than non-parents/carers (35%).
- 35-54 year olds (40%) are significantly more likely to be aware of the ICO than 18-34 year olds (34%) or 55+ year olds (35%).
- Those living in urban areas (41%) are significantly more likely to be aware of the ICO than those living in suburban (36%) and rural (34%) areas.

When prompted, two thirds (66%) of those aware of the ICO are aware that it is the regulator for data protection in the UK, with no change on the 2020 proportions.

Q13d. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the regulator for data protection in the UK. Were you aware of this before today?

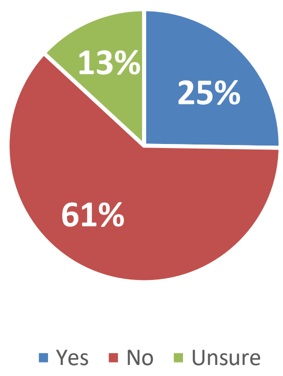


Base: All Adults aware of the ICO: 2020 (937) / 2021 (771)

- Males (73%) are significantly more likely to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for data protection in the UK than females (57%).
- 35-54 year olds (72%) are significantly more likely to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for data protection in the UK than 55+ year olds (61%).

A quarter (25%) of those from England, Wales or Northern Ireland are aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information in these countries.

Q14b1. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the regulator for freedom of information in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Were you aware of this before today?



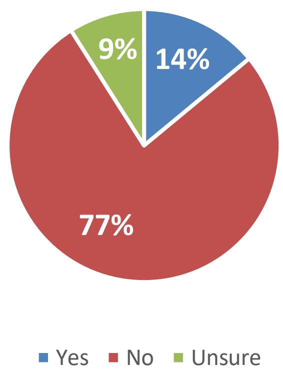
NB: This question was not asked in 2020

Base: All Adults from England, Wales or Northern Ireland: (1927)

- Males (31%) are significantly more likely to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information in England, Wales and Northern Ireland than females (20%).
- Parents/carers (31%) are significantly more likely to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information in England, Wales and Northern Ireland than non-parents/carers (23%).
- Those aged 18-34 (28%) or 35-54 (28%) are significantly more likely to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information in England, Wales and Northern Ireland than those aged 55+ (21%).
- Those living in urban areas (33%) are significantly more likely to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information in England, Wales and Northern Ireland than those who live in suburban or rural areas (both 23%).

One in seven (14%) of those living in Scotland are aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information for UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland, and not the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Q14b2. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the regulator for freedom of information for UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland, and not the Scottish Information Commissioner. Were you aware of this before today?



NB: This question was not asked in 2020

Base: All Adults from Scotland: (175)

- Males (22%) are significantly more likely than females (5%) to be aware that the ICO is the regulator for freedom of information for UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland.

Two thirds (66%) of adults believe that the "regulator is there to act for the interests of the public", and nearly three in five (57%) agree the "regulator can successfully enforce data protection through the courts".

- However, one in six (16%) state "the public cannot contact the regulator" and a further one in five (21%) state "the regulator will only deal with data breaches from large companies", enforcing the need to ensure the ICO's purposes continue to be made public.
- Furthermore, there is often uncertainty around the purposes of the regulator of data protection, with between 24% - 48% of adults stating they don't know if the purposes actually apply.

Q13bb. From the following list, please say whether you think these apply to the regulator of data protection in the UK. We are looking for your initial thoughts regardless of whether they are right or wrong.

	2020			2021		
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't know
The regulator is there to act for the interests of the public	69%	9%	22%	66%	10%	24%
The regulator can successfully enforce data protection through the courts	60%	9%	31%	57%	11%	32%
The regulator has the power to impose a monetary penalty on a company	57%	9%	34%	53%	12%	35%
The regulator can audit any company, at any time	54%	10%	36%	52%	11%	37%
The regulator is a governmental department	45%	18%	36%	41%	19%	40%
The regulator supports organisations to use personal information in innovative ways	30%	21%	49%	29%	22%	48%
The regulator will only deal with data breaches from large companies	21%	44%	35%	21%	44%	35%
The public cannot contact the regulator	17%	41%	42%	16%	40%	44%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Males are significantly more likely to believe that the regulator will only deal with data breaches from large companies (24%) and that the public cannot contact the regulator (18%) than females (18% and 14% respectively).

E.3 Legislative rights and concerns

E.3.1 Personal Information

When considering the personal information held by companies and organisations in the UK, the right the public deem of most importance is the "right to access my personal information", ranked first of eight options by 20% and in the top three by 49%.

- Around one in six (16%) state that the personal information right of most importance to them is the "right to be informed about the collection and use of my personal information" with 45% ranking it in the top three rights.
- "The right to restrict the processing of my personal information" is also important for many, with around one in seven (14%) ranking it first of eight options and in the top three by 44%, although those ranking it in the top three has seen a decrease from just under half (48%) in 2020.
- The "right to move personal information from one provider to another" is the least important right, with only one in twenty (5%) ranking it first of eight options and in the top three by 20%.

Q12a. For the personal information held about you by companies and organisations in the UK, which of the following rights are the most important to you?

	2020		2021	
	1st Choice	NET: Top 3	1st Choice	NET: Top 3
The right to access my personal information	19%	49%	20%	49%
The right to be informed about the collection and use of my personal information	16%	43%	16%	45%
The right to restrict the processing of my personal information	16%	48%	14%	44%
The right to be forgotten / to have personal information erased	15%	39%	14%	39%
The right to object to personal information being processed	13%	42%	15%	45%
The right to have inaccurate personal information rectified, or completed if it is incomplete	9%	31%	8%	30%
The right not to be the subject of automated decision making and profiling	8%	29%	8%	29%
The right to move personal information from one provider to another	5%	18%	5%	20%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

The proportion of the public that claims to have exercised or experienced each personal information protection right is relatively low. However, many are open to doing so in the future.

- "Being informed about the collection and use of my personal information" is the right with the highest proportion of the public having already done or experienced this (18%).
- The proportion stating they have already accessed their personal information has seen a decline from 18% in 2020 to 12%.
- Between 49% - 64% either want to do or experience each right but have not yet or would consider doing or experiencing it in the future.
- The right with the lowest proportion being open to doing it in the future is "moving my information from one provider to another" (49%) which is also the right with the largest proportion feeling they don't know anything about it (43%).

Q12b. Again, looking at the following personal information protection rights, which of the following best describes you on each?

	2020			2021		
	Have already done this	NET plan to consider / experience this	NET don't know anything about this protection right / Unsure	Have already done this	NET plan to consider / experience this	NET don't know anything about this protection right / Unsure
Being informed about the collection and use of my personal information	20%	58%	22%	18%	57%	24%
Accessing your personal information	18%	59%	24%	12%	64%	24%
Restricting the processing of my personal information	13%	62%	25%	12%	61%	26%
Objecting to personal information being processed	11%	64%	25%	11%	62%	27%
Having inaccurate personal information rectified, or completed if it is incomplete	11%	60%	29%	10%	60%	30%
Requesting to be 'forgotten' / have personal information erased	11%	60%	29%	11%	59%	30%
Moving my information from one provider to another	7%	48%	45%	8%	49%	43%
Not being the subject of automated decision making and profiling	7%	54%	38%	7%	56%	37%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- With the exception of "being informed about the collection and use of my personal information", parents/carers are significantly more likely to have already exercised personal data protection rights than non-parents.
- With the exception of "being informed about the collection and use of my personal information" and "accessing the personal information held about me by a company/organisation", those aged 55+ are significantly more likely to say they don't know anything about a data right than 35-54 year olds and 18-34 year olds.
- BAME respondents are significantly more likely to have already requested to be forgotten, have inaccurate personal information rectified or completed, and moved their information from one provider to another than non-BAME respondents.
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to have already exercised all data rights than those living in suburban or rural areas.

Of those who would consider exercising their data protection rights in the future, there are varying levels of awareness of how to actually do it, with the majority of the public either not aware or unsure.

- Under two in five (39%) of those who want to or would consider "accessing their personal information" are aware how to do so, although this is up slightly on the proportion stating this in 2020 (36%).
- This falls to just over a quarter (26%) of those who want to or would consider "not being the subject of automated decision making" being aware how to do so.

Q12c. You mentioned you want to or would consider doing the following in the future. Would you say you are aware of how to do each of these?

	2020			2021		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
Accessing your personal information	36%	44%	20%	39%	38%	23%
Being informed about the collection and use of my personal information	33%	47%	19%	32%	47%	22%
Having inaccurate personal information rectified, or completed if it is incomplete	30%	50%	21%	30%	47%	23%
Restricting the processing of my personal information	29%	51%	20%	30%	45%	25%
Objecting to personal information being processed	31%	51%	18%	29%	45%	25%
Requesting to be 'forgotten' / have personal information erased	32%	50%	18%	28%	48%	24%
Moving my information from one provider to another	29%	48%	22%	27%	48%	25%
Not being the subject of automated decision making and profiling	24%	56%	20%	26%	49%	25%

Base: All Adults who would consider doing/experiencing the personal information rights: 2020 (ranging from 1034 to 1356) / 2021 (ranging from 1034 to 1334)

- Males are significantly more likely to claim they know how to "move my information from one provider to another" and "not be the subject of automated decision making and profiling" than females.
- Parents/carers are significantly more likely to claim they know how to exercise all of the rights than non-parents/carers.

Unprompted, the overriding concerns stated by the public are that their data could be sold/shared with third parties (21%) and being a victim of fraud/scams (16%).

- Having data shared/sold to third parties and being a victim of fraud/scams are the main concerns for those with low, medium or high levels of confidence in companies and organisations storing/using personal information.
- Those with high levels of trust and confidence are much more likely to say that have no concerns about the protection of their personal information (18%) than those with medium or low levels of trust and confidence (7% and 4% respectively).

Q14a. Thinking about the protection of your personal information, what would you say are your concerns? (UNPROMPTED)

	2020				2021			
	Total	Low trust & confidence (600)	Medium trust & confidence (967)	High trust and confidence (583)	Total	Low trust & confidence (615)	Medium trust & confidence (909)	High trust and confidence (579)
Having my data shared/passed on to 3rd parties/sold to others	20%	22%	22%	15%	21%	23%	22%	18%
Being the victim of fraud/scams (no mention of identity)	18%	20%	19%	14%	16%	18%	18%	12%
Misuse of my data (including by 3rd parties)	9%	13%	9%	6%	11%	12%	12%	9%
Identity theft/fraud	10%	12%	10%	6%	10%	11%	10%	8%
Bank details (might get stolen)/Access to my bank account/ credit cards	7%	5%	8%	9%	8%	7%	8%	7%
Being hacked/Having my computer/ accounts hacked	8%	7%	10%	7%	7%	6%	8%	7%
Other	7%	9%	6%	6%	5%	7%	4%	3%
Nothing	10%	4%	6%	22%	9%	4%	7%	18%

All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102).

- Males (13%) are significantly more likely to say they have no concerns than females (6%).
- Parents/carers (12%) are significantly more likely to say they have no concerns than non-parents/carers (8%). Furthermore, those aged 18-34 (15%) are significantly more likely to say they have no concerns than 35-54 year olds (8%) and 55+ year olds (6%).

When prompted, the data protection concern of most importance to the public is "personal information being used for scams or fraud", ranked first of nine options by 29% and in the top three by 60% (vs. 31% and 65% respectively in 2020).

- This is followed by "personal information being stolen", ranked first by a fifth (21%) and 57% ranking it in the top three.
- The least important data concern is "my personal information being shared for medical reasons", ranked first by 3% and in the top three by 13%.

Q14aii. Please rank the following data protection concerns in order of their importance to you.

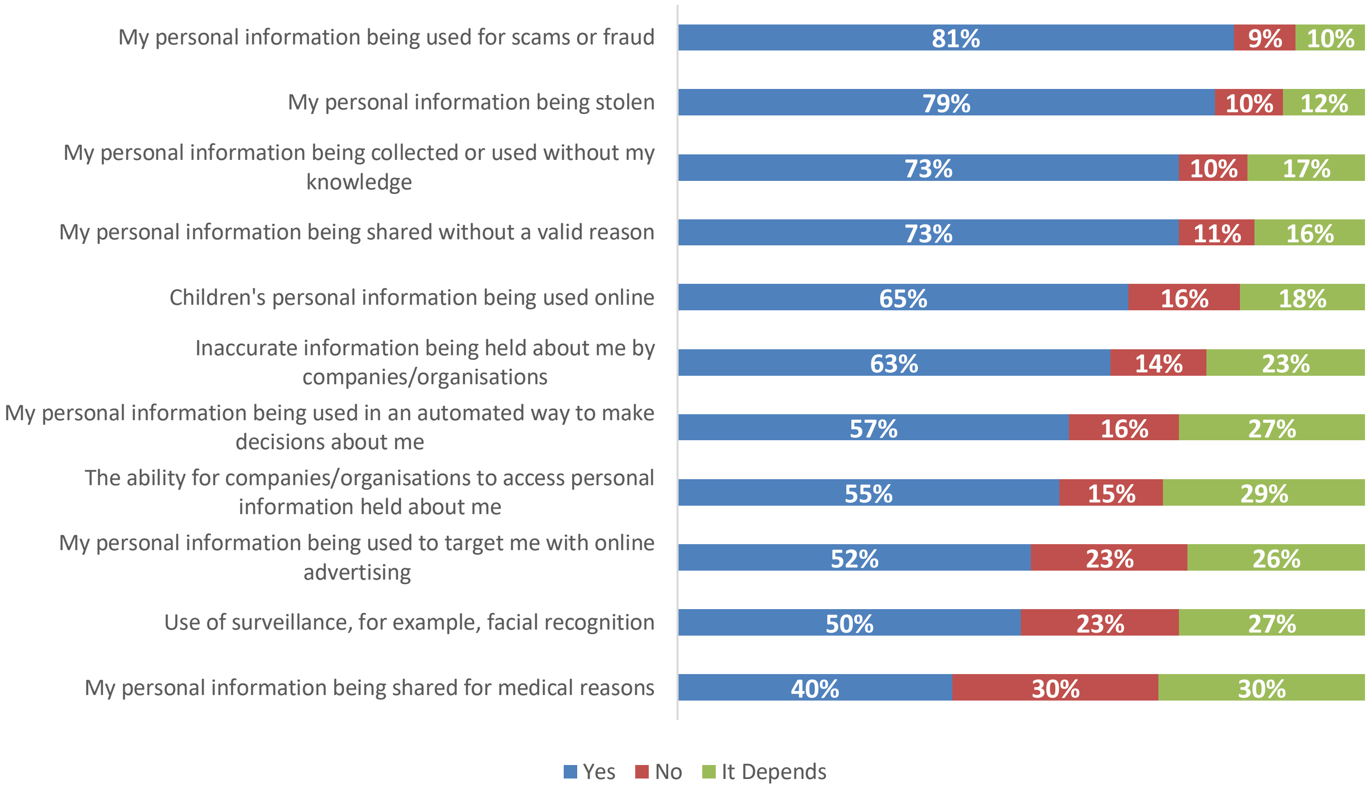
	2020		2021	
	1st Choice	NET: Top 3	1st Choice	NET: Top 3
My personal information being used for scams or fraud	31%	65%	29%	60%
My personal information being stolen	26%	64%	21%	57%
Children's personal information being used online	8%	26%	10%	26%
My personal information being collected or used without my knowledge	N/A	N/A	10%	35%
My personal information being shared without a valid reason	9%	36%	6%	26%
My personal information being used in an automated way to make decisions about me	5%	24%	5%	18%
Inaccurate information being held about me by companies/organisations	5%	21%	5%	18%
Use of surveillance, for example, facial recognition	6%	20%	4%	15%
My personal information being used to target me with online advertising	6%	19%	4%	16%
The ability for companies/organisations to access personal information held about me	5%	24%	3%	18%
My personal information being shared for medical reasons	N/A	N/A	3%	13%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Non-parents/carers are significantly more likely to rank "My personal information being used for scams or fraud" or "My personal information being stolen" as most important to them than parents/carers.
- Additionally, those aged 55+ are significantly more likely to rank "My personal information being used for scams or fraud" or "My personal information being stolen" as most important to them than those aged 18-34 or 35-54.

Having personal information used for scams/fraud (81%) or stolen (79%) are events that would be most likely to prevent the public from using an organisation.

Q14aiii. Would these concerns stop you from using a company or organisation?



NB: This question was not asked in this way in 2020

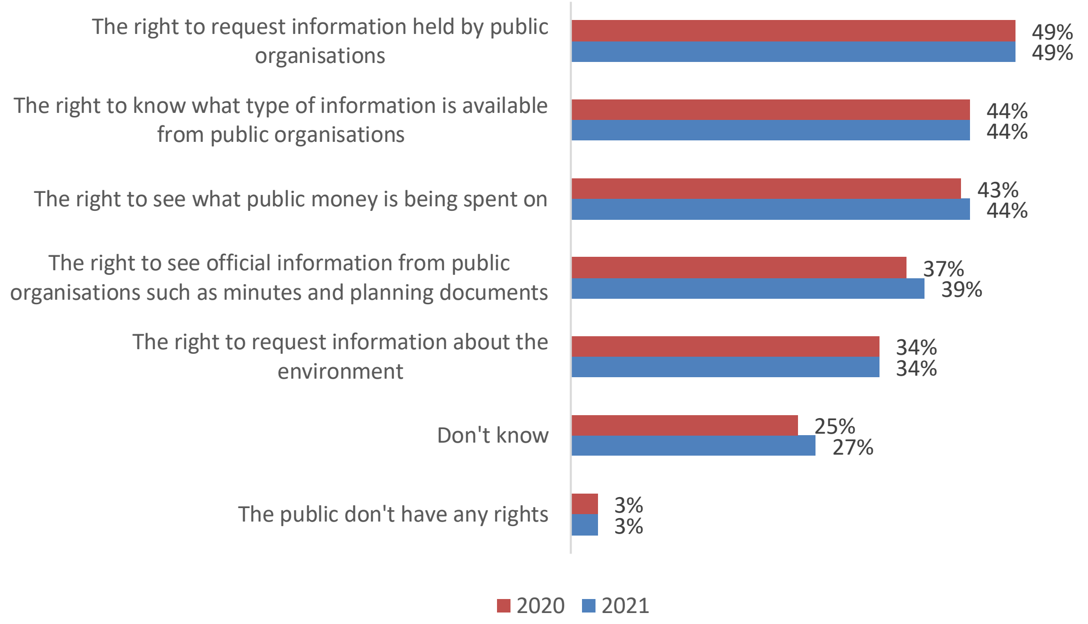
Base: All Adults: (2102)

- With the exception of "My personal information being used to target me with online advertising", "My personal information being shared for medical reasons", "Use of surveillance, for example, facial recognition" and "The ability for companies/organisations to access personal information held about me", females are significantly more likely than males to say all of these concerns would stop them from using a company or organisation.
- Non-parents/carers are significantly more likely to say that "My personal information being stolen" and "My personal information being used for scams or fraud" would prevent them from using a company or organisation than parents/carers.
- Those aged 55+ are significantly more likely than 18-34 year olds to say that all of the concerns would prevent them from using a company or organisation. With the exception of "My personal information being shared for medical reasons", "Use of surveillance, for example, facial recognition" and "Children's personal information being used online", those aged 55+ are also significantly more likely than 35-54 year olds to say all of these concerns would stop them from using a company or organisation.

E.3.2 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The awareness of rights that the public feels it has to access information held by the Government, public authorities and/or publicly owned companies remains in line with the awareness of this in 2020, with no significant shifts.

Q17. What rights under law do you think you have to access information held by the **Government, public authorities and/or publicly owned companies and organisations** in the UK?



Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Females (46%) are significantly more likely to be aware of "the right to see what public money is being spent on" than males (42%).
- Non-parents/carers are significantly more likely than parents/carers to be aware of "the right to request information held by public organisations", "the right to know what type of information is available from public organisations", and "the right to see official information from public organisations such as minutes and planning documents".
- BAME respondents (52%) are significantly more likely to be aware of "the right to see what public money is being spent on" than non-BAME respondents (43%), while non-BAME respondents are significantly more likely to claim they "don't know" about any of the rights than BAME respondents (28% vs. 19% respectively).
- With the exception of "the right to request information about the environment", those aged 55+ are significantly more likely than 18-34 or 35-54 year olds to know about all rights.

The proportion of the public that claims to have exercised each FOIA right is relatively low. Many who haven't would like to do so in the future but are often unsure how to.

- "Seeing official information from public organisations such as minutes and planning" is the FOIA right with the highest proportion of the public already having done (18%).
- Around a third (between 30%-37%) would like to exercise each right and feel they know how to. The right to "know what type of information is available from public organisations" and to "see what public money is being spent on" (37% and 35% respectively) are the FOIA rights with the highest future interest and knowledge how to do so.
- Between 24%-35% would like to exercise each right but feel they don't know how to.

Q17a. Which of the following best describes you for each of the following rights?

	2020				2021			
	Already done this	Would like to do this and know how to	Would like to but don't know how to	Not interested in this	Already done this	Would like to do this and know how to	Would like to but don't know how to	Not interested in this
The right to see official information from public organisations such as minutes and planning	20%	30%	25%	24%	18%	30%	24%	27%
The right to see what public money is being spent on	14%	36%	32%	18%	12%	35%	35%	19%
The right to request information held by public organisations	12%	32%	35%	22%	10%	34%	32%	24%
The right to know what type of information is available from public organisations	10%	36%	36%	19%	10%	37%	35%	19%
The right to request information about the environment	9%	35%	31%	25%	10%	34%	35%	22%

Base: All Adults mentioning any rights: 2020 (between 740 - 1059) / 2021 (between 714 - 1025).

- With the exception of "the right to see official information from public organisations such as minutes and planning", 18-34 year olds are significantly more likely to have already exercised FOIA rights than 35+ year olds.

- With the exception of "the right to see official information from public organisations such as minutes and planning", parents/carers are significantly more likely to have already exercised FOIA rights than non-parents/carers.
- Those in urban areas are significantly more likely to have exercised FOIA rights than those in suburban or rural areas.

46% agree that "Information I want about Government, public authorities and/or publicly owned companies is available and accessible", while 42% agree that "The right of access to information has increased my trust and confidence in public bodies", both similar proportions to 2020 (47% and 45% respectively).

- There has been a significant shift towards the middle for "The right of access to information has increased my trust and confidence in public bodies", with 46% saying they neither agree nor disagree with this (vs. 43% in 2020).

Q18. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	2020			2021		
	Net Agree	Neither	Net Disagree	Net Agree	Neither	Net Disagree
Information I want about Government, public authorities and/or publicly owned companies is available and accessible	47%	41%	12%	46%	43%	11%
The right of access to information has increased my trust and confidence in public bodies	45%	43%	12%	42%	46%	12%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- Males (50%) are significantly more likely to agree that "Information I want about Government, public authorities and/or publicly owned companies is available and accessible" than females (42%).
- Parents/carers are significantly more likely to agree with these statements (53% and 51% respectively) than non-parents/carers (42% and 38%).
- BAME respondents are significantly more likely to agree with these statements (57% and 54% respectively) than non-BAME respondents (44% and 41%).
- 18-34 year olds are significantly more likely to agree with these statements than 35+ year olds.
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to agree with these statements than those living in suburban or rural areas.

E.4 Perceptions towards the exchange of information

E.4.1 Perceptions towards the exchange of personal information

The public is often willing to undertake online activity that risks compromising their personal information. Opinion is split on willingness to trade-off personal information online for something in return, free access to websites or the ability to purchase products and services they want. A majority are against contact from companies they haven't dealt with before if the information has been sourced from either publicly available information or between partner companies.

- Over half (53%) of the public state they agree that "when prompted, they will agree to accept cookies from a website without looking at the details", and nearly half (48%) agree that "they are comfortable accessing online banking on their mobile while away from home".
- Over two in five (43%) agree that they are willing to share their personal information freely if they feel there is a benefit in doing so, and the proportion disagreeing with this has significantly fallen since 2020, from 25% to 21%.
- Opinion is split in terms of "not minding seeing advertisements targeted to me if I can use websites free of charge" and being "more important to them to purchase and use products and services than what organisations do with their personal information" (with 38% and 33% respectively agreeing, whilst 30% and 29% disagree).
- The lowest agreement levels are shown in response to companies and/or organisations sharing information, with one in five (20%) agreeing that "they are fine with a company contacting them that they haven't dealt with before, if their details have been sold between partner organisations". 58% disagree with this statement.
    - The proportion disagreeing that "they are fine with a company contacting them that they haven't dealt with before, if they are getting details from publicly available information" is 46%, although this is significantly down from 52% in 2020.

Q19. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements…?

	2020			2021		
	Net Agree	Neither	Net Disagree	Net Agree	Neither	Net Disagree
When prompted, I will agree to accept cookies from a website without looking at the details they give me	55%	26%	19%	53%	27%	20%
I am comfortable with my personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%	31%	19%
I am comfortable accessing online banking on my mobile while away from my home	48%	19%	32%	48%	22%	30%
I am willing to share my personal information freely if I feel there is a benefit for me	43%	32%	25%	43%	36%	21%
I don't mind seeing advertisements targeted to me if I can use websites free of charge	38%	30%	32%	38%	32%	30%
It is more important to me to purchase and use products and services than what organisations do with my personal information	35%	36%	29%	33%	38%	29%
I am fine with a company contacting me that I haven't dealt with before, if they are getting my details from publicly available information	24%	24%	52%	26%	28%	46%
I am fine with a company contacting me that I haven't dealt with before, if my details have been sold between partner organisations	20%	20%	60%	20%	22%	58%

Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (2102)

- With the exception of "When prompted, I will agree to accept cookies from a website without looking at the details they give me", "I am comfortable with my personal information being shared for medical reasons", and "I am comfortable accessing online banking on my mobile while away from home", males are significantly more likely to agree with all statements than females.
- Parents/carers are significantly more likely to agree with all statements than non-parents/carers, with the exception of "I am comfortable with my personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons."
- With the exception of "When prompted, I will agree to accept cookies from a website without looking at the details they give me", those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to agree to all statements than those living in suburban or rural areas.

The majority of the public feel that there would be no difference in their behaviour in terms of exchanging personal information with organisations/companies as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, more people say they are "less likely" than "more likely" across the statements.

With the Covid-19 pandemic now into its second year and the public more used to different ways of doing things than a year ago, there has been a shift to the middle ground, with the proportion saying "no difference" higher for all statements.

- "Be comfortable accessing online banking on my mobile while away from home" is the activity with the highest proportion of "more likely" (15%). It is the only activity with at least the same proportion of "more likely" as in 2020.

Q20. As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic, are you more or less likely to do the following, or has it not made a difference?

	2020			2021		
	More likely	Less likely	No difference	More likely	Less likely	No difference
Be comfortable accessing online banking on my mobile while outside my home	15%	23%	62%	15%	20%	65%
Share my personal information freely if I feel there is a benefit for me	15%	23%	61%	14%	21%	65%
When prompted, agree to accept cookies from a website without looking at the details they give me	15%	22%	63%	13%	23%	64%
Use websites where advertisements are targeted to me if I can use them free of charge	15%	23%	62%	12%	20%	66%
Receive contact from a company I have not dealt with previously as long as they are getting my details from publicly available information	13%	28%	59%	10%	25%	66%
Purchase and use products and services regardless of what organisations do with my personal information	12%	28%	59%	10%	26%	65%
Receive contact from a company I have not dealt with previously if my details have been sold between partner organisations	12%	31%	57%	10%	31%	60%

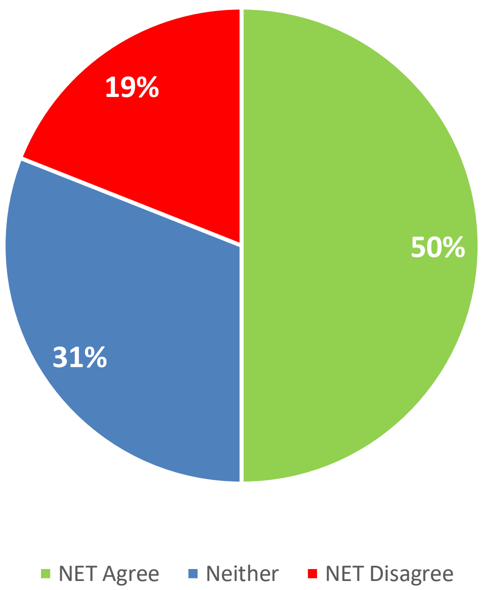
Base: All Adults: 2020 (2150) / 2021 (rebased to not include new "unsure" code – ranging from 1943 – 1979)

E.4.2 Perceptions towards the exchange of health related information

Half (50%) are comfortable with their personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons, while one in five (19%) would not be comfortable with this.

Q19. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements…?

"I am comfortable with my personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons"



NB: This question was not asked in 2020

Base: All Adults: (2102)

- Non-parents/carers (21%) are significantly more likely to disagree that they are comfortable with their personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons than parents/carers (17%).
- Those living in urban areas (59%) are significantly more likely to agree that they are comfortable with their personal information being shared if it is for medical reasons than those living in suburban (45%) or rural (50%) areas.

Nearly 6 in 10 feel that there is no difference in their comfort with their personal information being shared with public or private sector companies/organisations for medical reasons or if it will lead to tailored health insurance or other similar products as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, more people say they are "less likely" than "more likely" to feel comfortable with this exchange of information for medical reasons.

Q20. As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic, are you more or less likely to do the following, or has it not made a difference?

	2021			
	More likely	Less likely	No difference	Unsure
Be comfortable with my personal information being shared amongst public sector organisations (e.g. universities and national advisory bodies) if it is for medical reasons	15%	20%	57%	7%
Be comfortable with my personal information being shared with private sector companies (e.g. pharmaceutical companies) if it is for medical reasons	14%	22%	58%	6%
Be comfortable with my personal information being shared with private sector companies (e.g. health insurance companies) if it will lead to tailored health insurance or other similar products	10%	24%	58%	8%

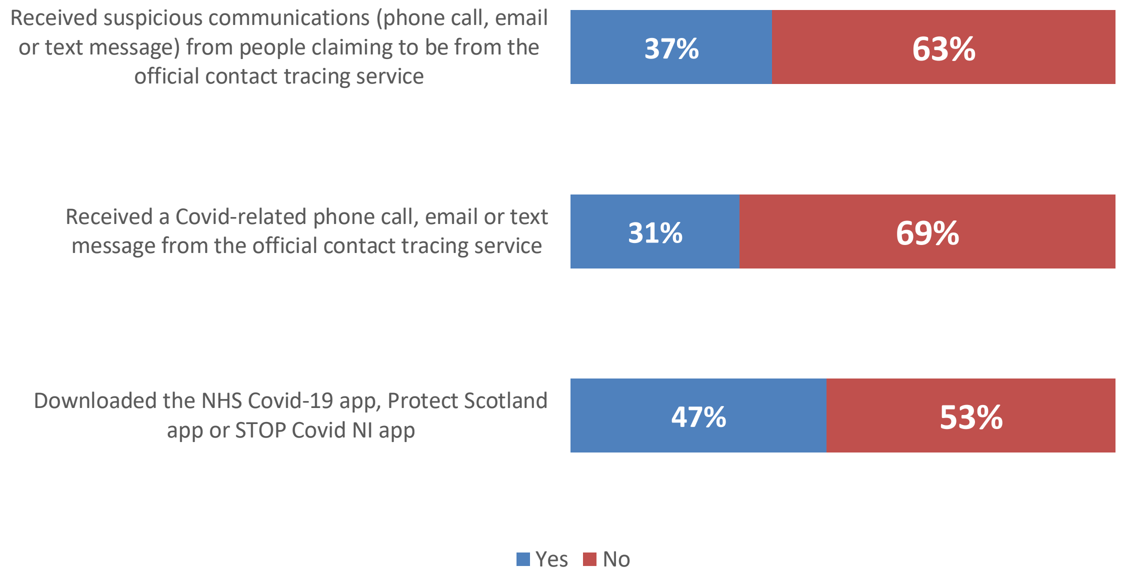
NB: This question was not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults: (2102)

- Parents/carers are more likely to feel strongly about their comfort with personal information being shared for medical reasons, being both significantly more likely and less likely to feel comfortable with all statements as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic than non-parents/carers.
- Those aged 18-34 are significantly more likely to feel more comfortable with all statements as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic than those aged 35+.
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to feel comfortable with all statements than those living in suburban or rural areas.
- BAME respondents are significantly less likely to feel comfortable with all statements as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic than non-BAME respondents.

Just under half (47%) have downloaded the NHS Covid-19 app, Protect Scotland app or STOP Covid NI app in the past 12 months.

- Respondents are more likely to claim they have received suspicious communications from people claiming to be from the official contact tracing service (37%) than they have received communications from the official contact tracing service (31%).

Q20a. In the last 12 months, have you…?



NB: This question was not asked in 2020

Base: All Adults: (2102)

- Males (40%) are significantly more likely to have received suspicious communications from people claiming to be from the official contact tracing service than females (34%).
- Parents/carers are significantly more likely to answer 'yes' to all statements than those who aren't parents/carers.
- Those aged 18-34 are significantly more likely to answer 'yes' to all statements than those aged 35-54 or 55+.
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to answer 'yes' to all statements than those living in suburban or rural areas.
- BAME respondents are significantly more likely to have received communication from the official contact tracing service (40%) and significantly more likely to have received suspicious communications from people claiming to be from the official contact tracing service (49%) than non-BAME respondents (30% and 35% respectively).

Just under half (47%) are comfortable with the NHS sharing their health data with public sector companies as long as it will aim to lead to improved treatments for viruses/illnesses, while a lower proportion (42%) would be comfortable with the NHS sharing their data with private sector companies for the same reasons.

Q20ab. How comfortable or uncomfortable are you with the NHS sharing your health data with each of the following…?

	2021		
	NET comfortable	Neither	NET uncomfortable
With other public sector companies or organisations (e.g. universities or national advisory bodies), as long as it will aim to lead to improved treatments for viruses/illnesses.	47%	30%	23%
With private sector companies or organisations (e.g. Pharmaceutical Companies), as long as it will aim to lead to improved treatments for viruses/illnesses.	42%	30%	28%

NB: This question was not asked in 2020 Base: All Adults: (2102)

- Parents/carers are significantly more likely to be comfortable with the NHS sharing their health data with other public sector companies (54%) and private sector companies (53%) as long as it will lead to improved treatments for viruses/illnesses than those who are not parents/carers (44% and 37% respectively).
- BAME respondents are significantly more likely to be comfortable with the NHS sharing their health data with public sector companies (55%) and private sector companies (54%) as long as it will lead to improved treatments for viruses/illnesses than non-BAME respondents (47% and 40% respectively).
- Those living in urban areas are significantly more likely to be comfortable with the NHS sharing their health data with public sector companies (54%) and private sector companies (51%) as long as it will aim to lead to improved treatments than those in suburban (47% and 40% respectively) and rural areas (42% and 36% respectively).
- Those aged 55+ are significantly more likely to not be comfortable with the NHS sharing their health data with both public sector companies (29%) and private sector companies (35%) than those aged 35-54 (23% and 30% respectively) and 18-34 (13% and 17% respectively).