

COVID-19 cases by Output Area Classification

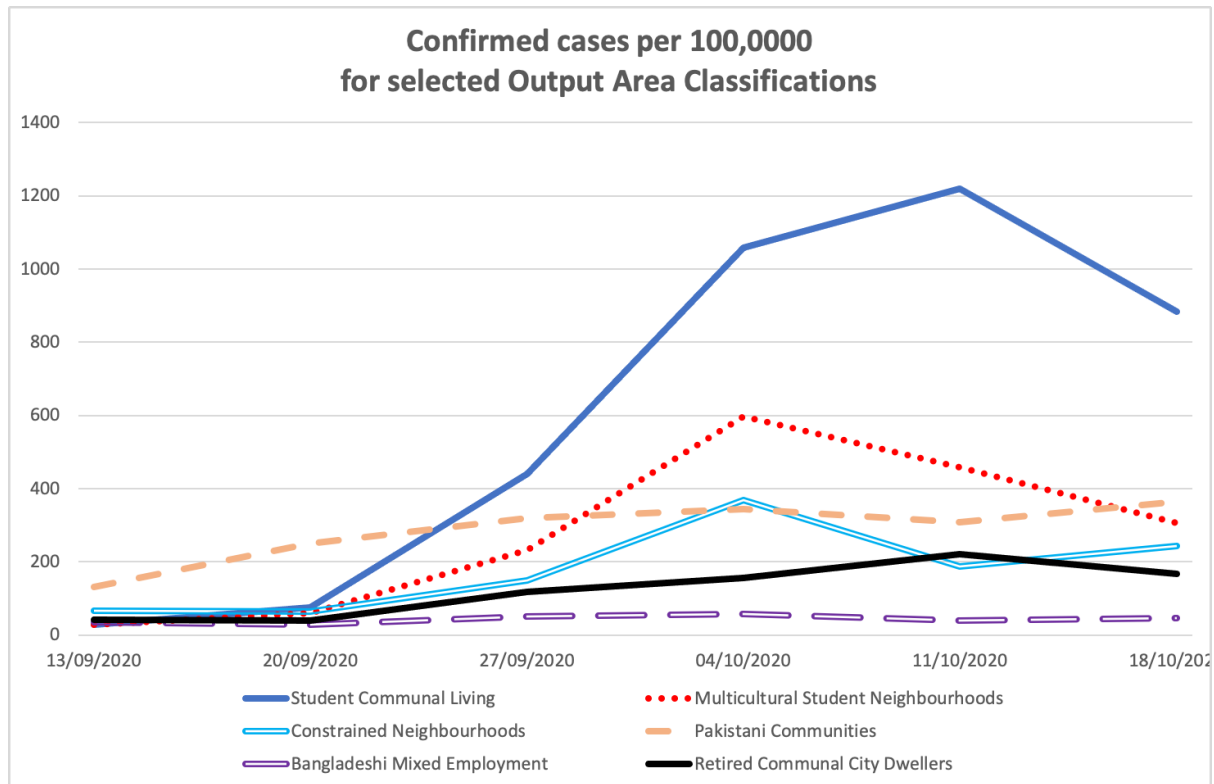
Output Area Classifications (OAC) are a geodemographic view of the country developed by the Office of National Statistics following the 2011 census. The ONS pen pictures of the OAC groups are available from the More Metrics website.

More Metrics has been modelling weekly COVID-19 results and risk measures down to Output Area (~7 postcodes) since April. This data has been made available each week for free at Ward levels and above, with the more granular data available for purchase.

This paper uses our Output Area model of confirmed cases from week ending 18th October 2020, aggregated at OAC subgroup level.

Student Halls of Residence: the story of the last 6 weeks

This graph shows a more complex pattern of changes in case numbers than evident from published figures.



Student Communal Living output areas are described in the ONS pen pictures as having a higher proportion of people (largely students) living in communal establishments.

We're thinking of Halls of Residence and the effect of students starting a new academic year. It is possible that these numbers are under-reported as some students who had yet to register with a GP at university were reported under their home address.

How do the number differ across all the OAC groups?

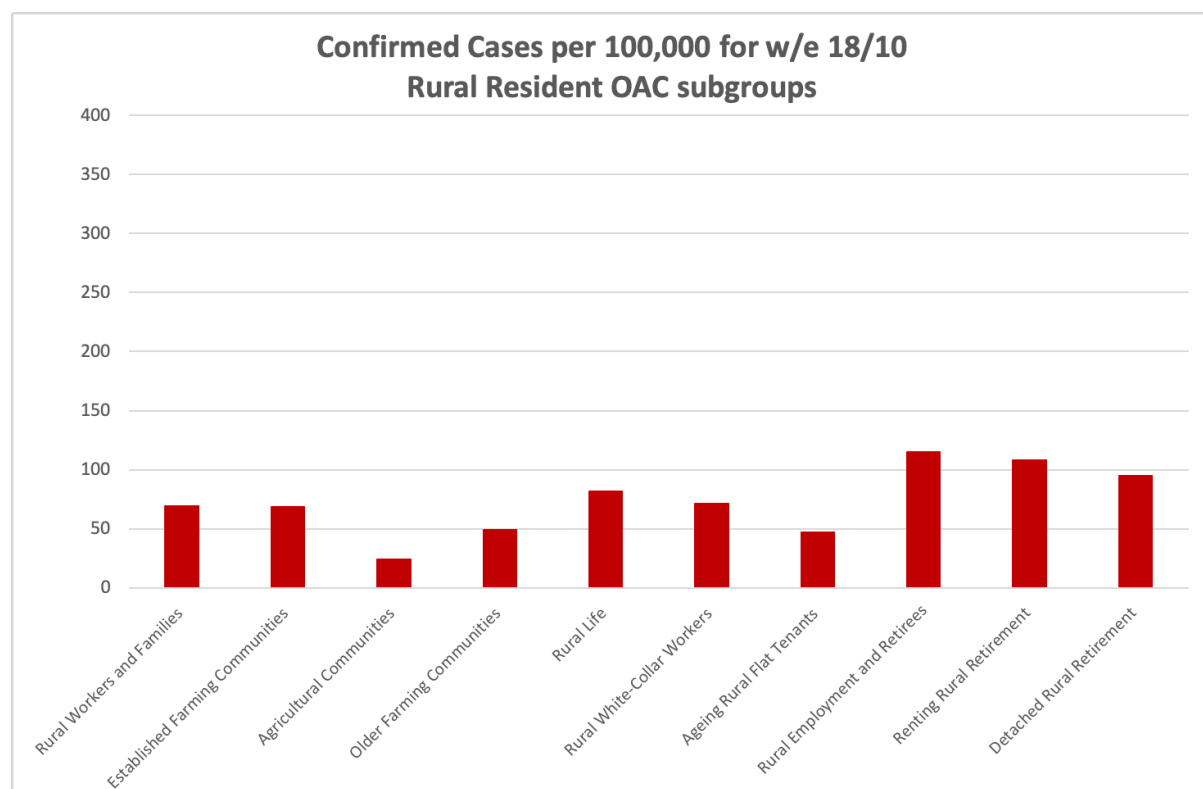
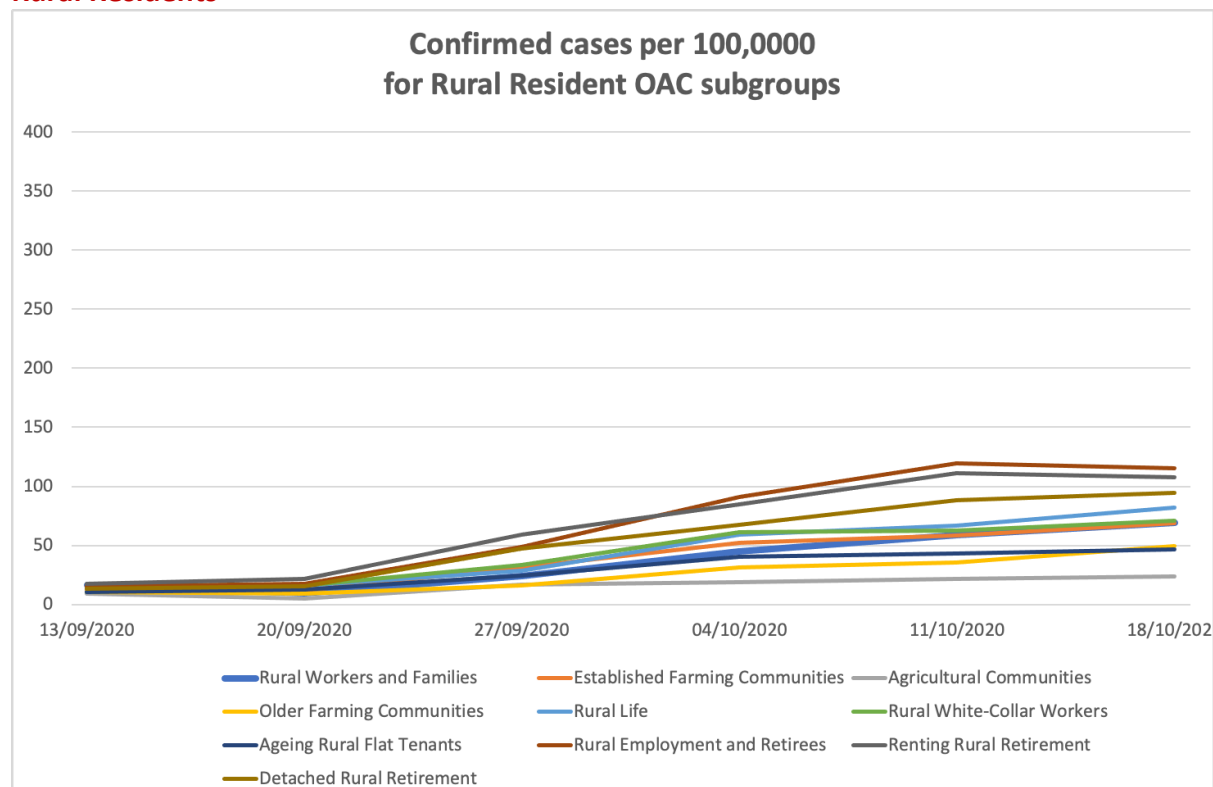
The following graphs show the story across each subgroup by OAC supergroup.

Although they overall show growth in confirmed cases, this seems to be slowing and not exponential as in the first wave. There remain differences between subgroups reflecting age, housing, commuting and other factors. Most of these factors are covered by the risk measures available with the More Metric data.

Caveats

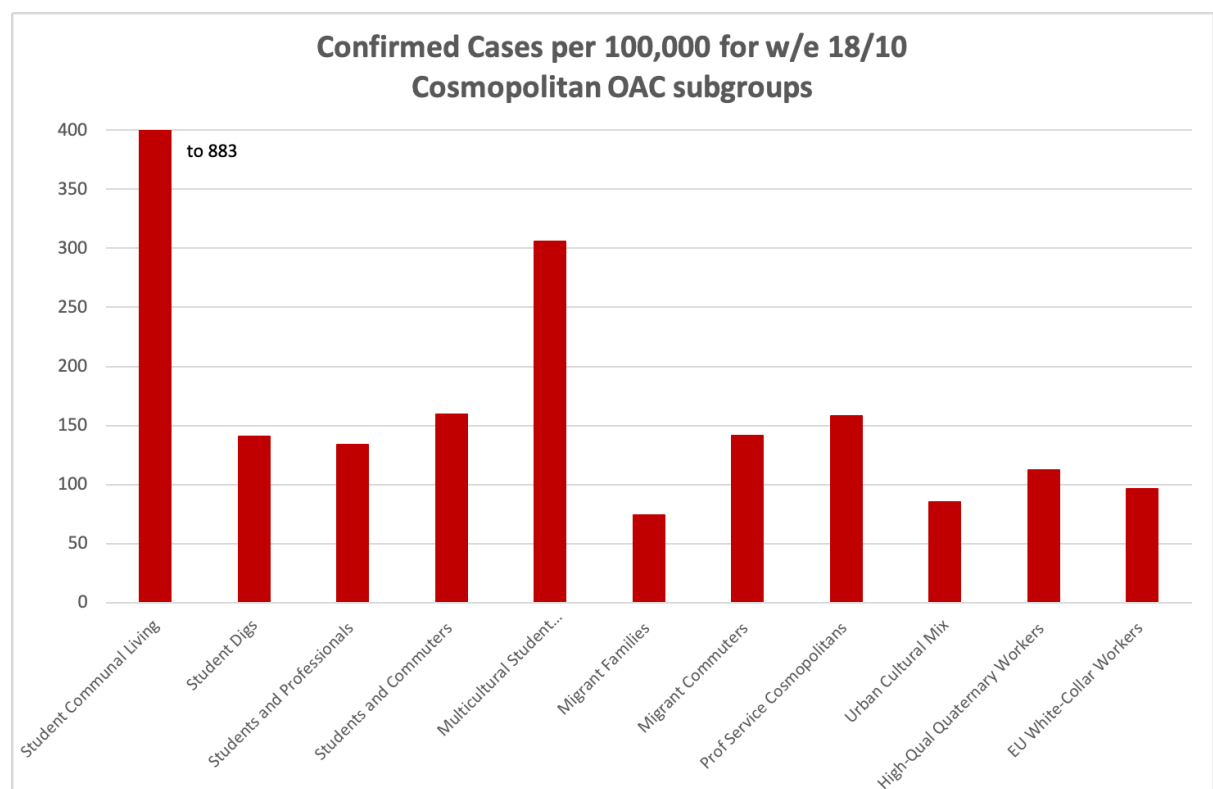
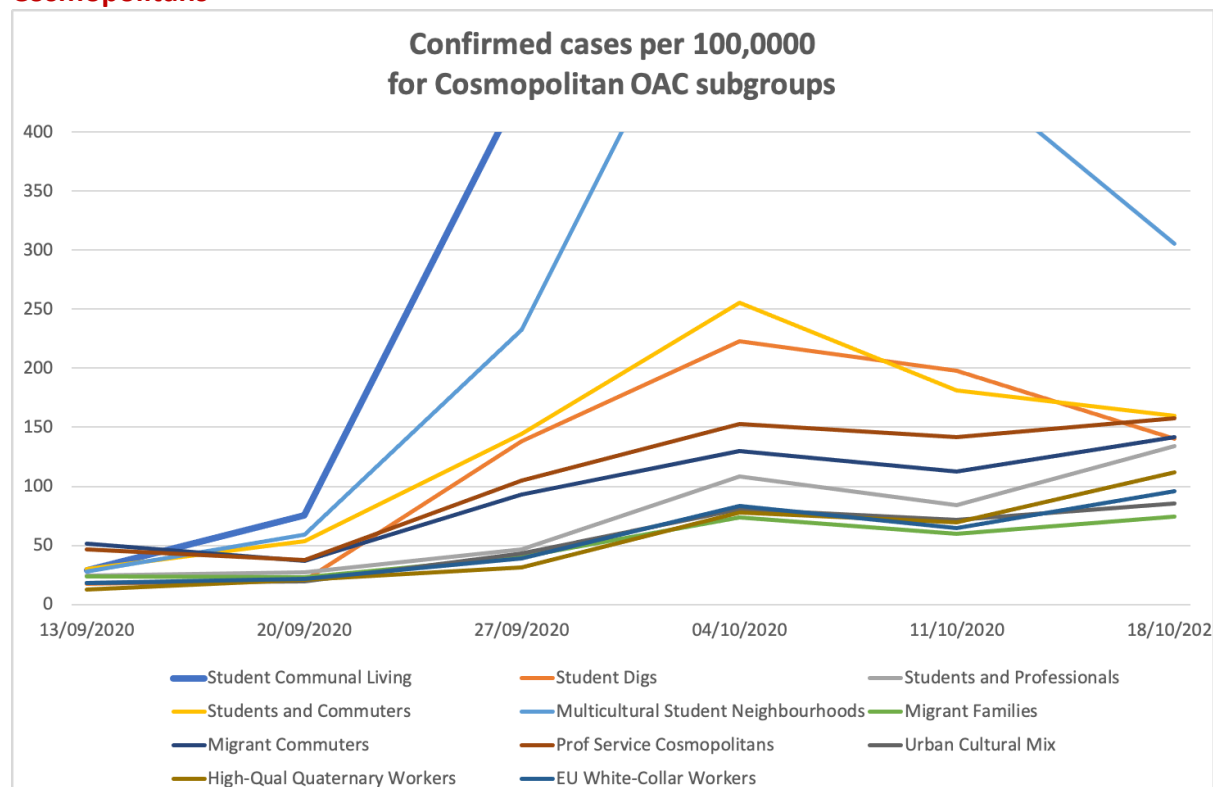
A model is a model and is also only as good as the data. In particular there have been both variable test report delays and data reporting lags in COVID related data. These are often subsequently corrected, so it is the most recent weeks results that should be treated with greatest caution.

Rural Residents



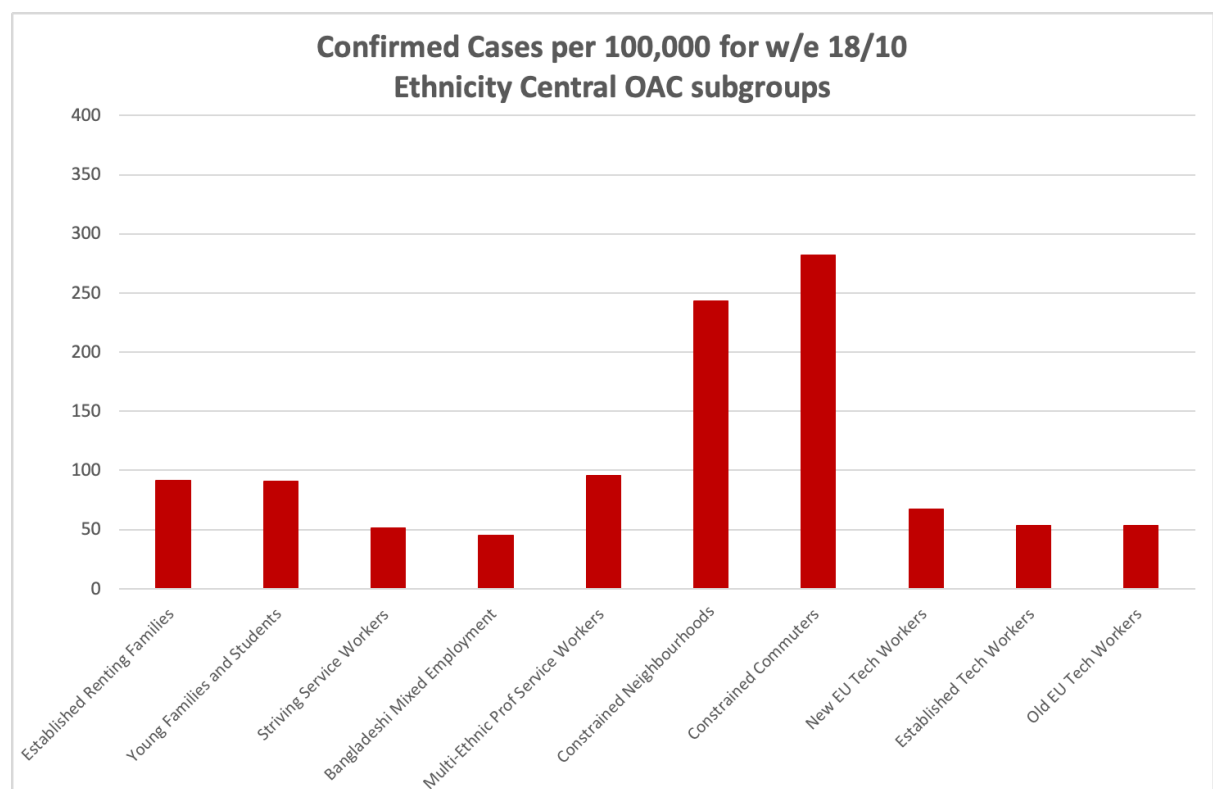
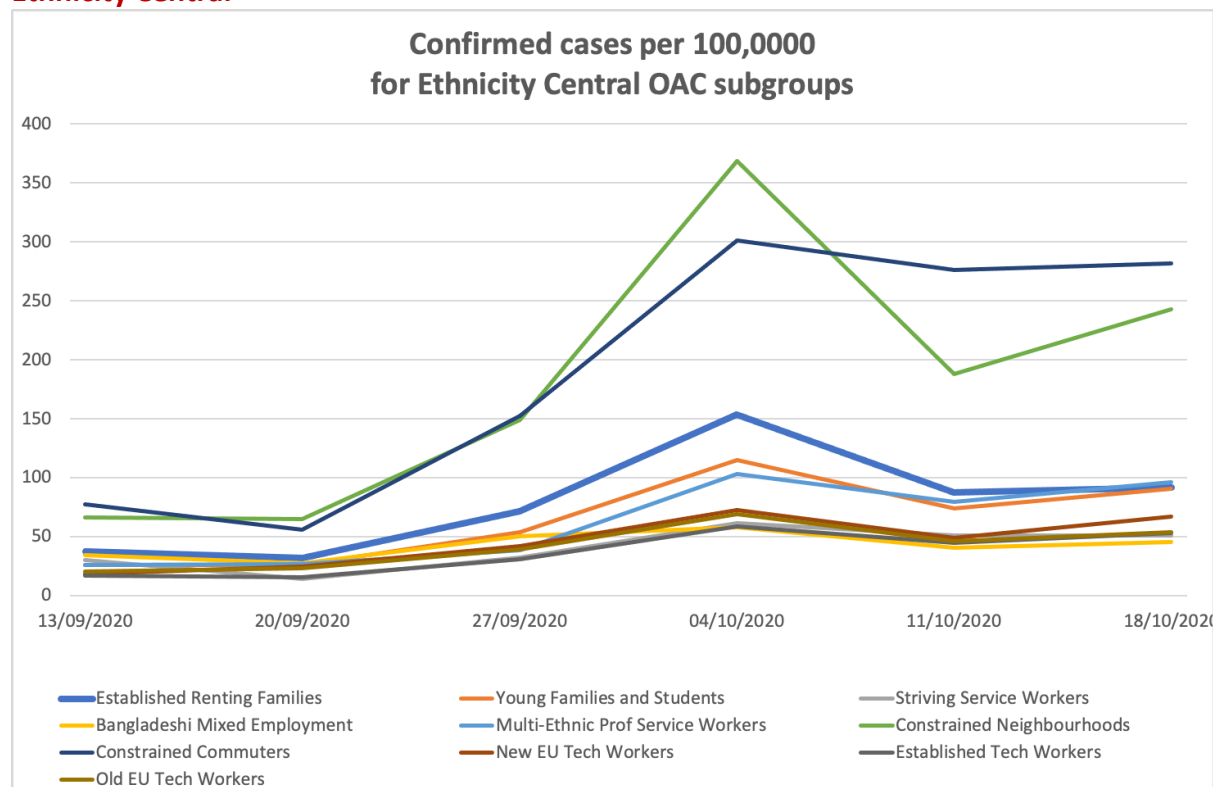
Overall low rates of cases: the joys of the great outdoors and low-intensity housing. However, they do not escape the general upward trend in cases over the last 6 weeks, though there is the first indication that this growth may be slowing.

Cosmopolitans



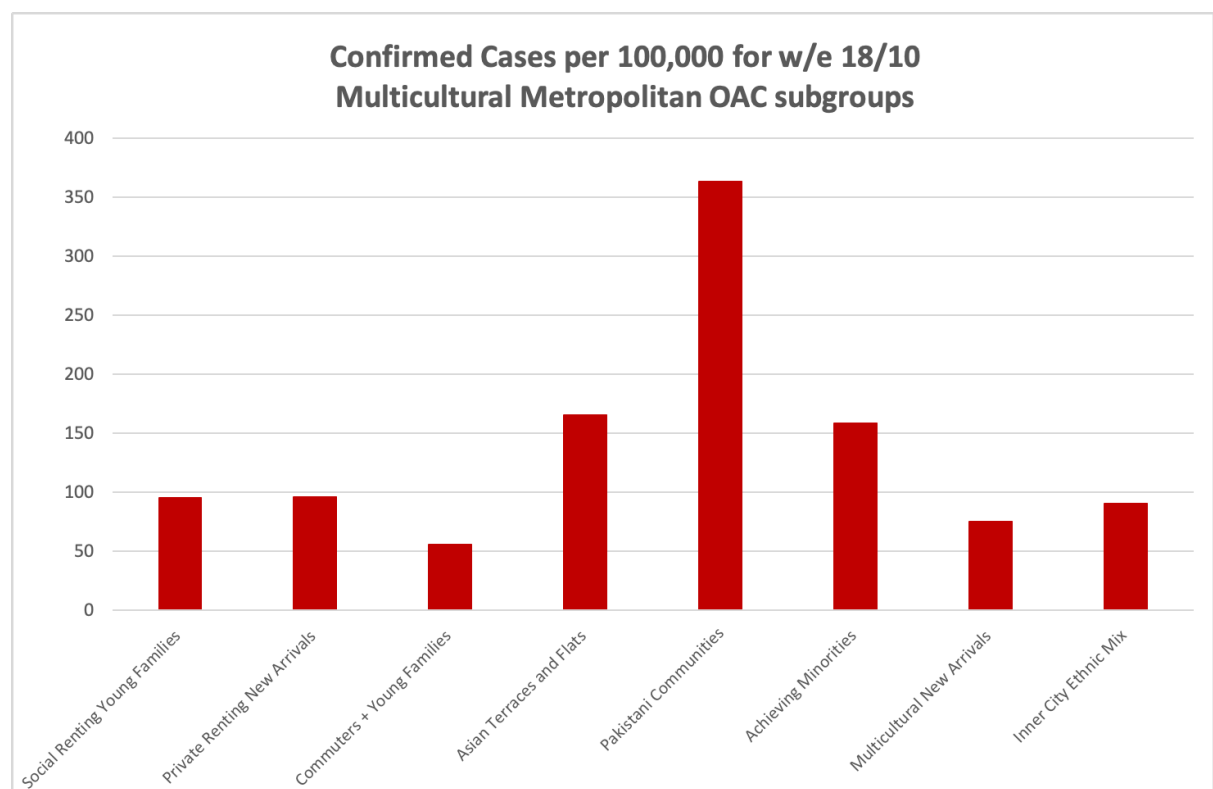
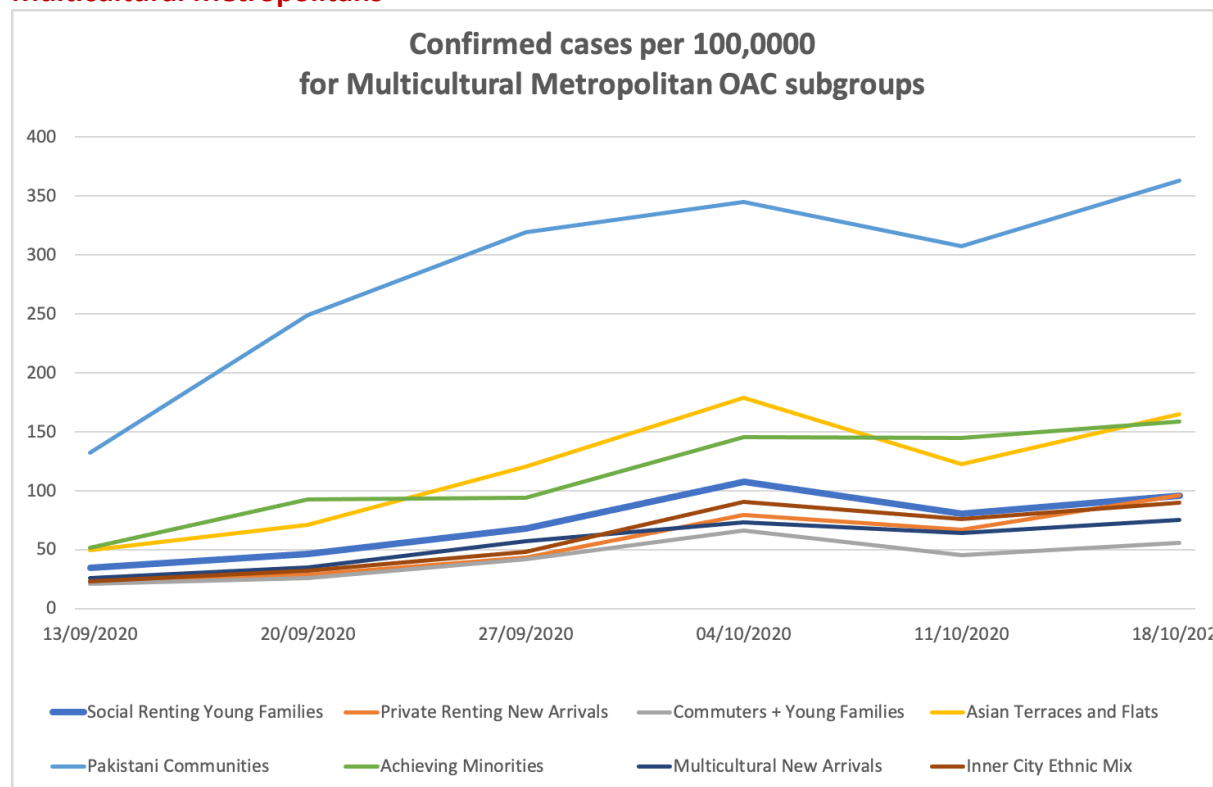
Generally high levels of cases, driven by student numbers despite these now being on the way down. It is possible that the continuing growth in other subgroups is due to a geographic spread from the student populations, but this hypothesis would require separate investigation.

Ethnicity Central



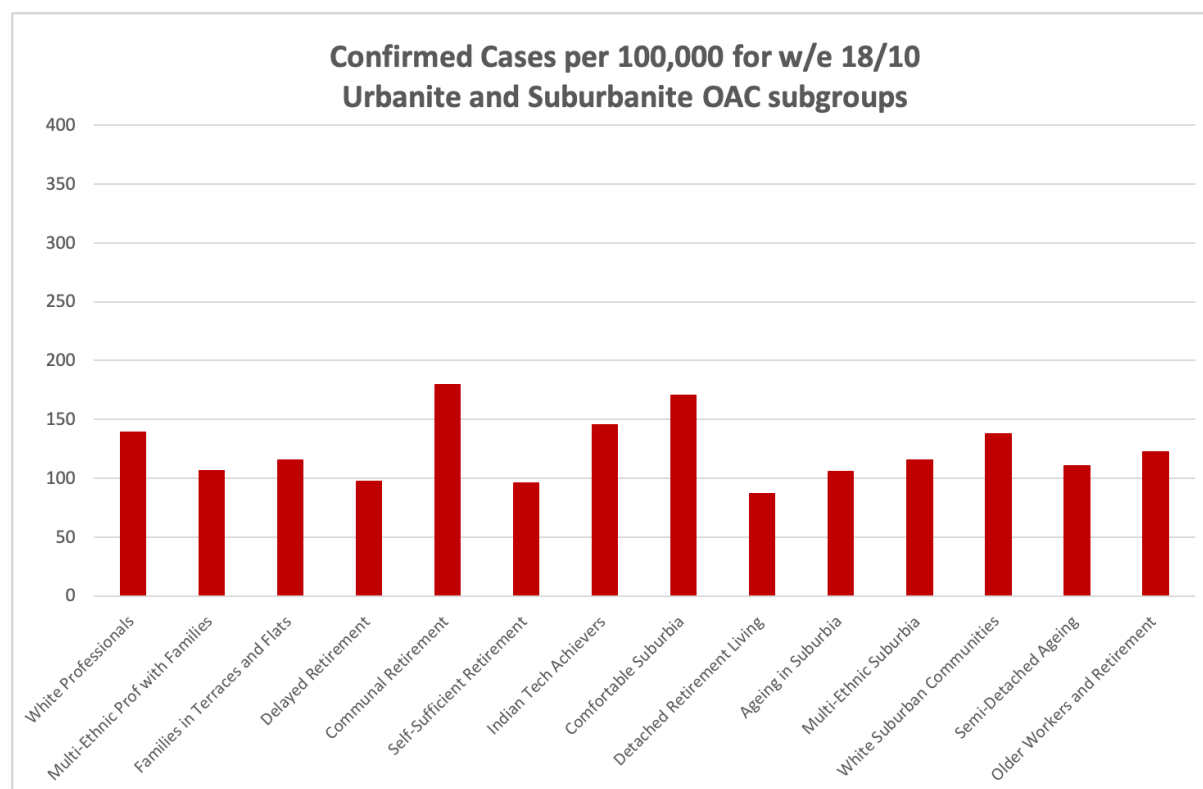
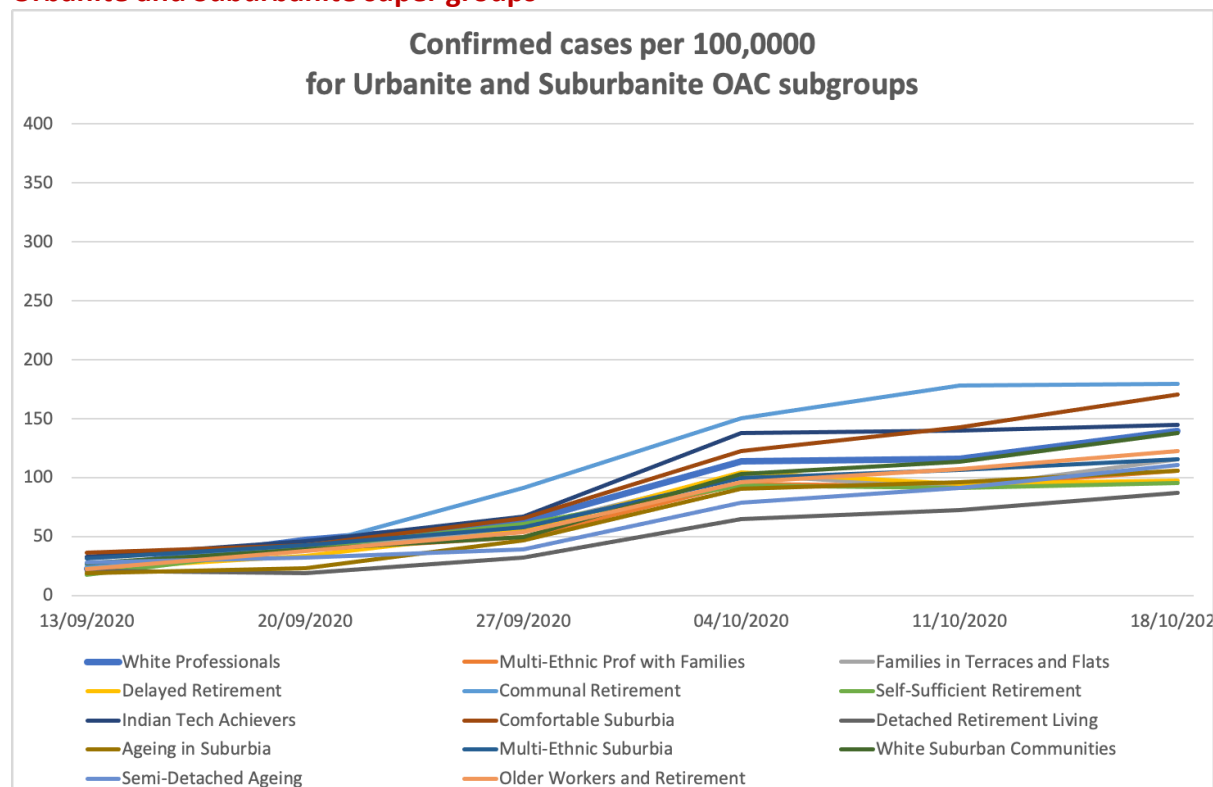
Constrained neighbourhoods have a higher proportion of terraced house dwellers, and constrained commuters more flat residents. However high-intensity housing is not the only risk factor, with for example the commuters needing to make more use of public transport.

Multicultural Metropolitans



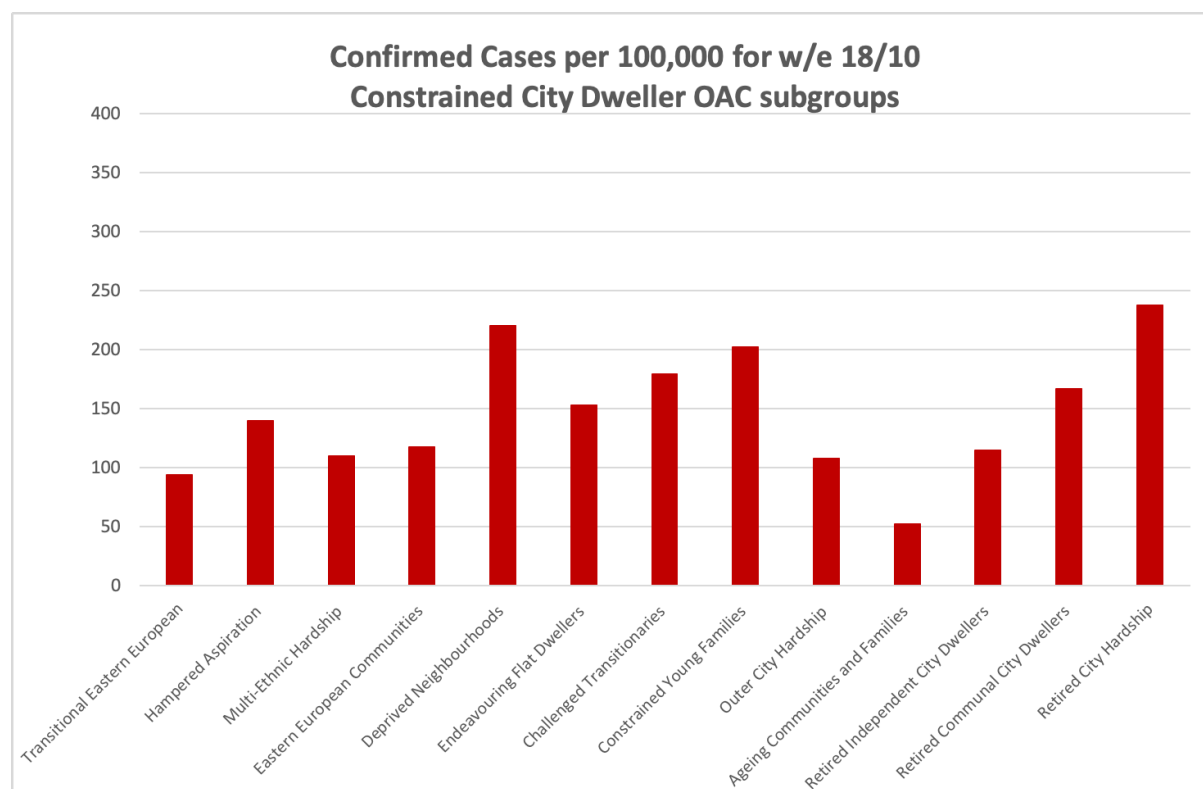
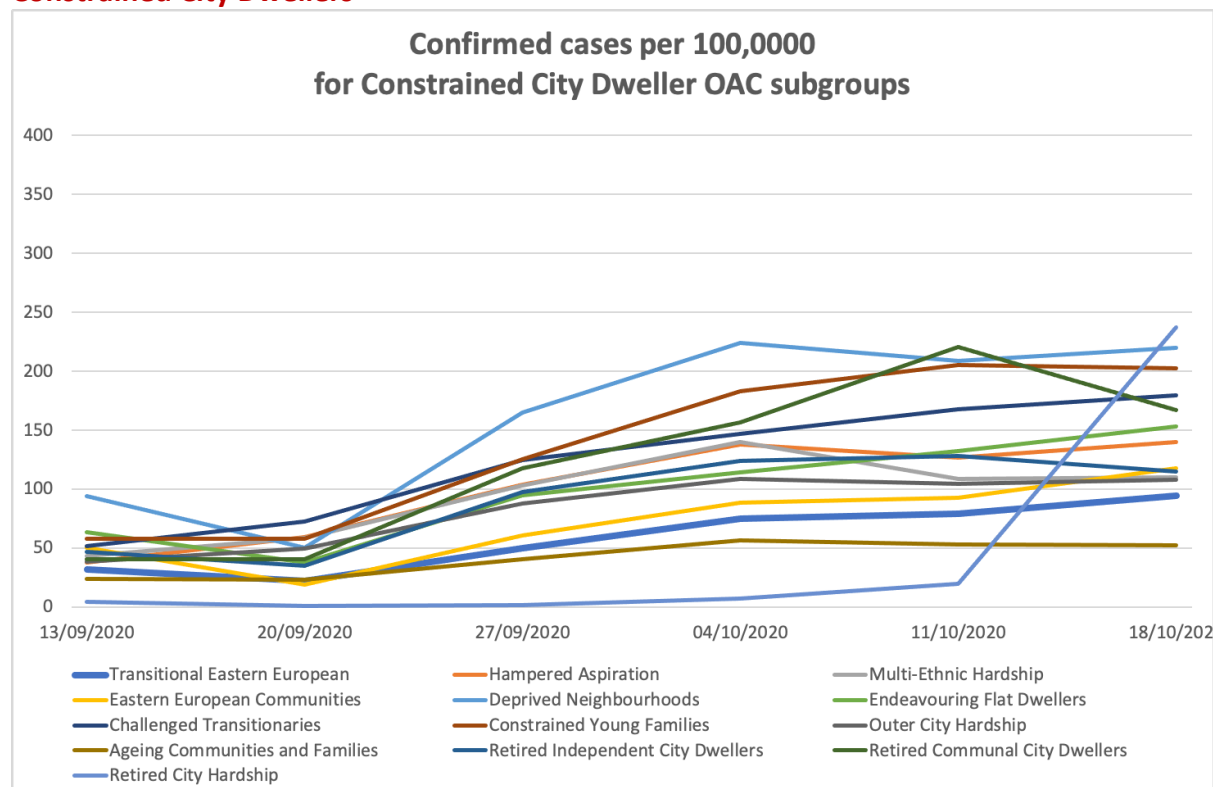
The Pakistani subgroup has a high proportion of people with Pakistani ethnicity and who are more likely to live in terrace house that they own. Otherwise the ONS pen picture does not give an indication of what could drive the higher cases counts, though intergenerational living and close community-ties may be factors.

Urbanite and Suburbanite super groups



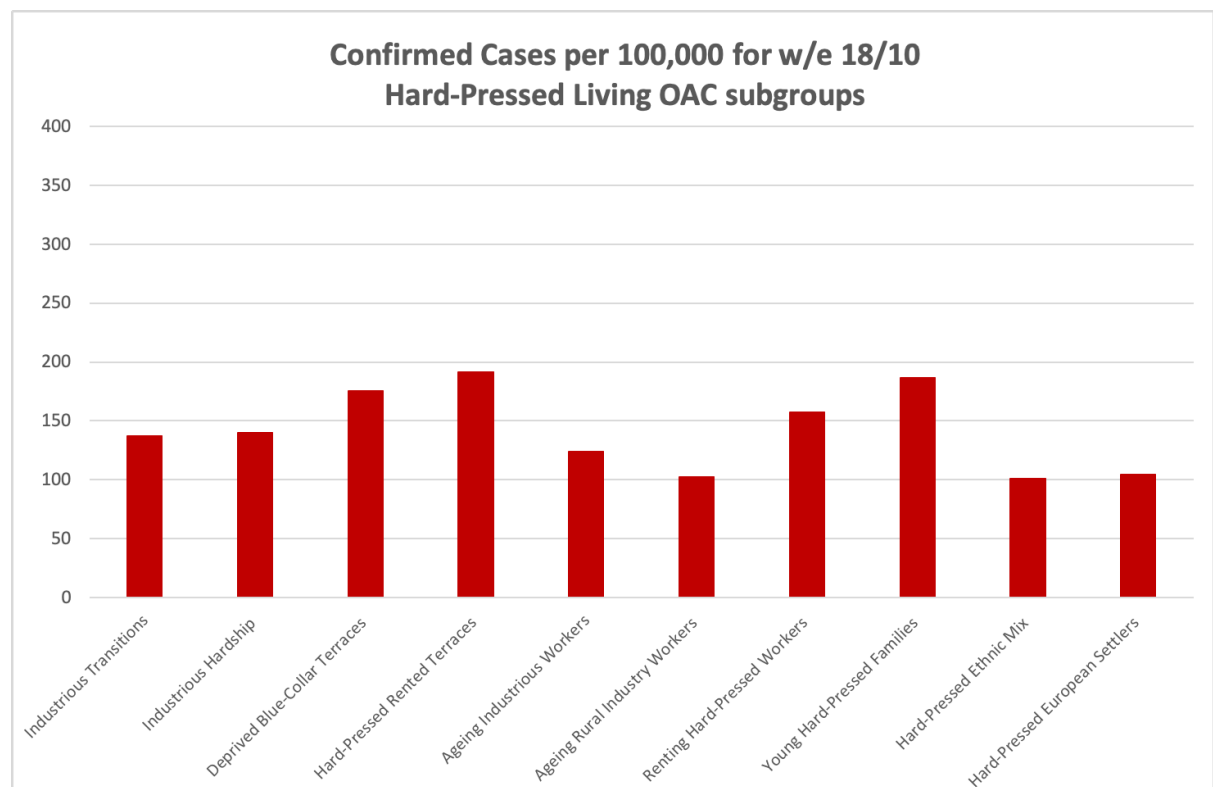
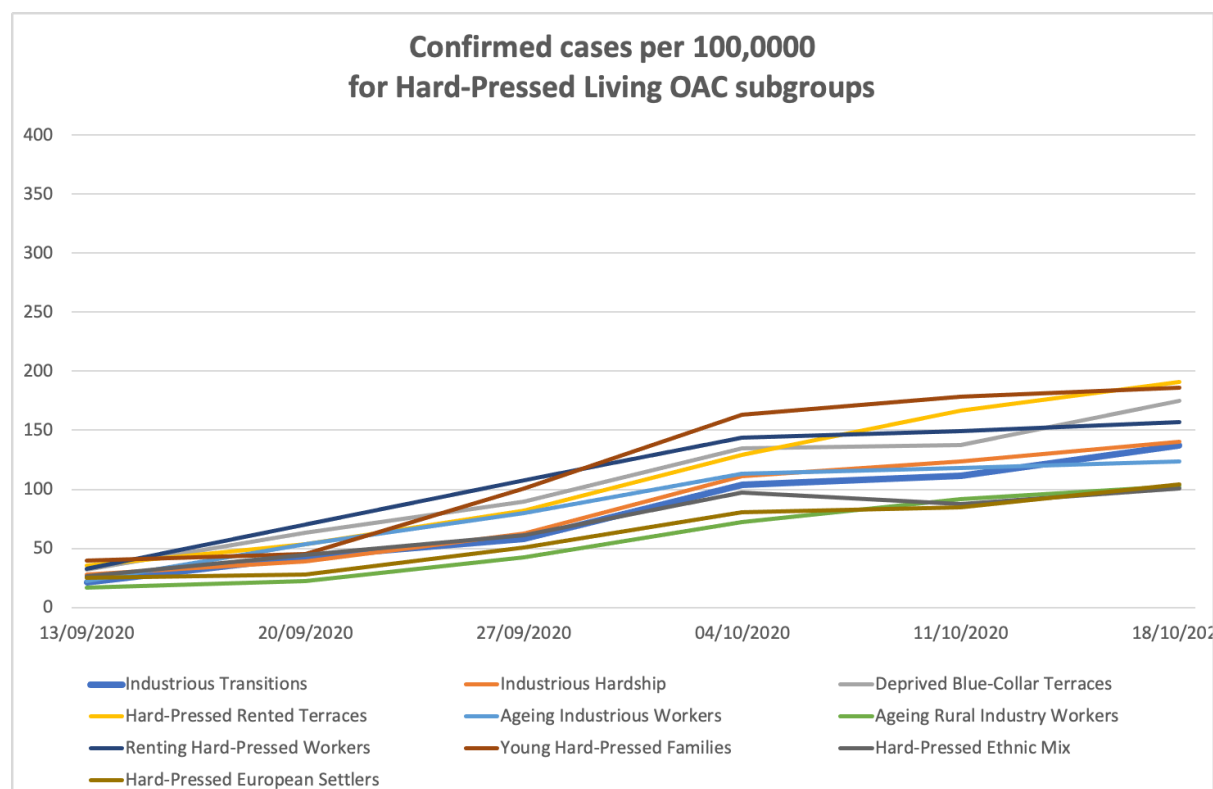
These groups display closely related impacts of COVID-19 and form a good view for the country overall. Confirmed cases are increasing, but the rate of growth in the last 2 weeks is low and not showing the exponential growth of the first wave.

Constrained City Dwellers



Generally higher than the urbanite and suburbanite groups, but displaying similar characteristics. Our full data currently shows a negative correlation between infections and our age risk measures, indicating the effectiveness of formal and self-shielding measures in the older populations. We cannot explain last week's increase for the Retired City Hardship subgroup, though we note that they are disproportionately in Scotland and that reporting granularity does vary by country and over time and has required frequent model improvements (though not in the 18/10/2020 week).

Hard-Pressed Living



Most likely found in urban northern England and southern Wales these areas are therefore overall under tighter lockdown measures than average, which seems to be relatively effective.

Get access to our data

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