For the 6/7th day in a row, cases across England have continued to fall. Few experts believed that this is where England would be heading in terms of cases. Only nine days ago, Professor Neil Ferguson, the scientist whose initial modelling helped shaped Britain's original lockdown strategy, stated that cases could reach as much as 200,000 a day. Instead, they seemed to have topped out at marginally more than 50,000. In particular, the north-east and midlands has seen a huge fall in cases over the past month

// Faceted map

Covid-19 modellers and experts seem to be unsure of exactly why this fall in cases has happened now, but there are various theories.

# Vaccines

There is still a huge discrepancy in vaccination rates between the older and younger segments of the population. Part of this is of course because younger age groups have had less time to get their jabs.

//young

Even as the vaccine rollout opened up to younger age groups, the rate of vaccination slowed markedly in June. Yet, since then it has kept a consistent pace, even ticking up slightly over the last few weeks.

While there is still a fair way to go to fully vaccinate all age groups, with only a \_\_ of those aged \_\_ having two jabs, the steady rise in the fully vaccinated could be behind the abrupt stop to this wave.

# Euros

Another potential factor could be the Euros since Scotland, which left the competition earlier than England, also saw the peak of their cases fall earlier than in England. There was also a gender split among cases at the peak of the euros, with men who were more likely to see the match in cramped pubs, seeing far more cases.

However, data from Google has shown that the boost in recreational activity over the Euro’s final was not as pronounced as it might have seemed at the time. Only \_\_\_\_ saw recreational activity above pre-pandemic levels. At the same time, the gap in cases between men and women at the height of the final only accounted for \_\_\_% of all cases.

# Schools

The start of the school holidays has also been mooted as a factor in the fall in overall cases. Summer holidays have only just started for most students and so it will likely be another week until it can be properly examined whether schools were propelling this latest wave.

It is certainly clear that right up until the holidays, the number of positive lateral flow tests in nurseries, primary and secondary schools had skyrocketed.

Covid-19 cases for people aged under 19, which makes up the school-age population, has also reached around a quarter of all cases in this last month but does look to be slowing.

Fundamentally, it’s unlikely that schools were the primary driver behind this wave as most schools have only just broken up at the end of last week. If schools were driving this wave, then you would not expect the peak of this wave to happen until at least a full week after schools had closed for summer.

# Climate

Another possible factor behind the fall in cases could be the increasingly good weather. On the one hand, good weather has meant that more people are congregating outside, in parks and outdoor areas where it is already more difficult for the virus to spread.

On the other, there is already some data that would indicate that hot weather makes it harder to catch Covid-19 altogether, whatever you choose to do in the weather.

If you compare the percentage increase in average temperature to the percentage increase in average cases five days alter, it’s clear that there has been a growing inverse correlation over the last months; as temperatures rise, cases fall. It’s highly possible that the hot weather has had a positive effect on this wave by encouraging people to meet outside and avoid crowded indoor spaces.

It’s still not clear what has led to this fall in cases, but one thing that is clear is that we are not out of the woods yet. A rise in cases is still expected due to the opening up of clubs and other venues last Monday.

It’s likely that we won’t be clear about our position until next week when last weekend’s club-going has been factored into the Covid-19 data. One thing that is increasingly clear though, is that the fabled 100,000 cases a day seem increasingly unlikely.