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> Detailed Release, June 2020

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Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey

Coronavirus (COVID-19) personal levels of concern in the community, actions taken as a result of COVID-19, and use of stimulus payments

Reference period Detailed Release, June 2020

Released 24/08/2020

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Key statistics

- Fewer people reported feeling concerned about their health due to COVID-19 compared to May.
- People born overseas take more actions to slow the spread of COVID-19.
- Fewer Australians self-isolated in June (48%) compared to May (62%).
- 32% of people's main use of the stimulus payment was to pay household bills.

About this issue

The Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey, Detailed Release provides insight into personal experiences during the spread of COVID-19 in Australia, and was collected between 7 and 20 June 2020.

The Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey, Detailed Release presents information on:

- Level of concern for personal health due to COVID-19
- Actions taken in the last four weeks in response to COVID-19
- Receipt and use of Government stimulus payments
- Flu vaccinations

The scope of this survey was people aged 18 years and over in private dwellings across Australia.

About this collection

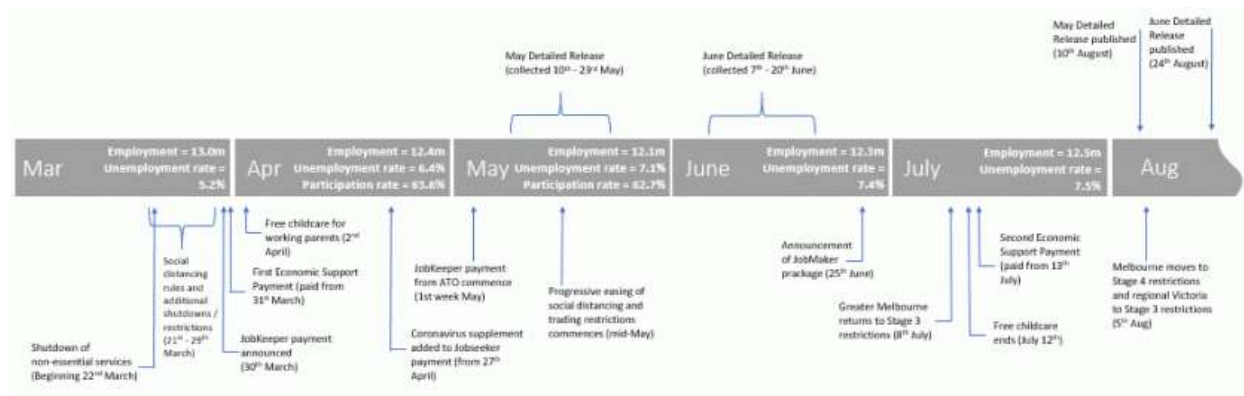
The findings below were collected as part of the Multi-Purpose Household Survey (MPHS) from approximately 2,500 people via telephone interview. The MPHS, undertaken each financial year by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), is a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) and is designed to collect statistics for a number of small, self-contained topics. For further information about the collection of this data, please refer to the Methodology.

This survey was designed to provide data on how Australians were responding to the spread of COVID-19. At the time of the June survey, initiatives in place to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and support the economy included:

- International travel restrictions
- An economic stimulus package (announced 12 March)
- Border control measures for some states and territories
- Shutting down of non-essential services and a second economic stimulus package (22 March)
- A safety net package of \$1.1 billion to expand mental health and tele-health services, increase domestic violence services and provide more emergency food relief (29 March)
- Social distancing rules and additional shutdown restrictions (20–30 March)
- Free childcare for working parents (2 April)
- A JobKeeper payment passed in legislation on 15 April, to keep more Australians in jobs and support businesses affected by the COVID-19 restrictions
- Easing of restrictions on elective surgery gradually from 28 April

- Announcing a Federal Government three-stage plan on 8 May to begin easing restrictions

Survey collection timeline



Proportions marked with an asterisk (*) have a Margin of Error (MoE) greater than 10 percentage points which should be considered when using this information. For more information about MoE refer to the publication Methodology.

Level of concern and health precautions taken

Key findings

- Approximately half of all Australians (54%) reported feeling either concerned or very concerned about their personal health at the time of the survey in June (compared with 62% in May).
- Victorians remained the most likely of all Australians to report feelings of concern relating to COVID-19 in June, with three in five people (60%) reporting feeling concerned or very concerned.
- People living in Queensland (48%) were least likely to report feelings of concern relating to COVID-19 in June.
- Half (51%) of people born in Australia reported no concern for their personal health, compared with two in five (39%) people born overseas.

Concern across the country

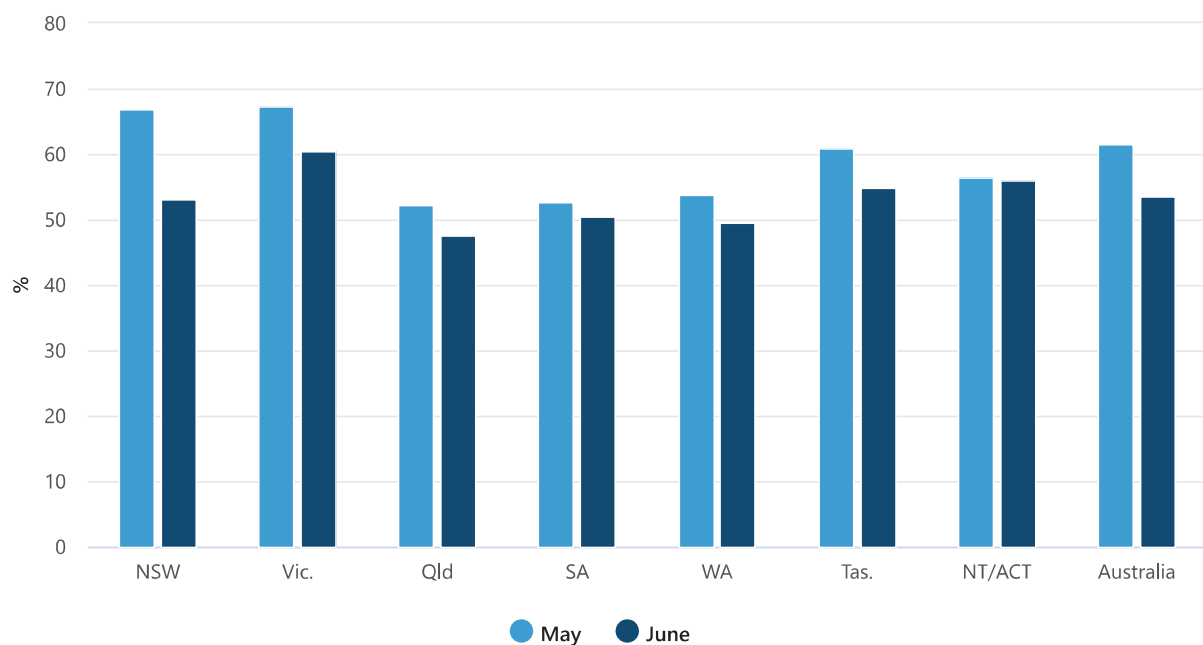
At the time of the survey the State and Territory Governments of Australia were continuing to review the level of COVID-19 restrictions in place to protect their communities. The survey asked respondents if they were: not concerned, neither concerned nor unconcerned, concerned, or very concerned about their personal health due to the spread of COVID-19.

Approximately half of Australians (54%) reported feeling either concerned or very concerned at the time of the survey in June (compared with 62% in May).

The largest change in levels of concern was in New South Wales, where the proportion of those reporting feelings of concern fell from 67% in May to 53% in June.

Victorians were more likely to report feelings of concern (60%) in June than other states and territories, while people in Queensland were the least likely (48%).

All people - whether concerned or very concerned about personal health due to COVID-19, May-June 2020

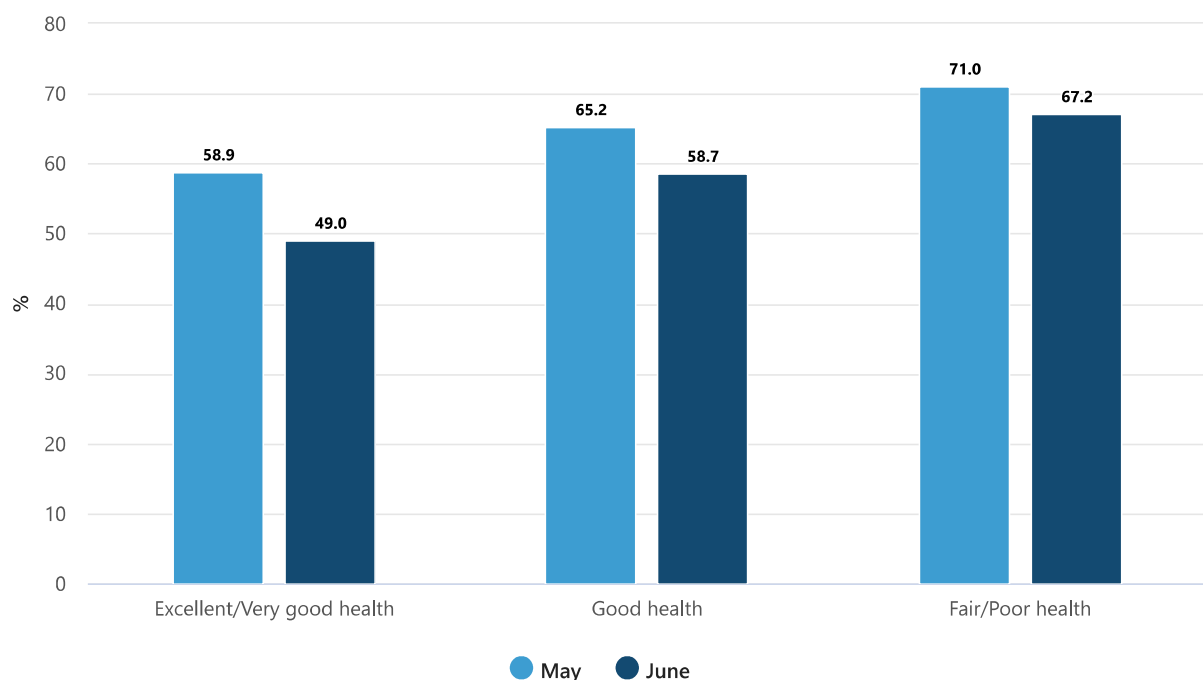


In June, half (51%) of people born in Australia reported no concerns about their health due to COVID-19. In comparison only two in five (39%) people who were born overseas reported no feelings of concern.

Three in five (61%) people who were unemployed or not in the labour force in June reported concern for their personal health, compared to half (50%) of people who were employed during the same period.

Half (49%) of people who self-reported being in excellent or very good health were concerned about COVID-19 impacting their health, compared to two in three (67%) who assessed their health to be fair or poor. Similarly, half (49%) of people without any long-term health conditions were concerned about their personal health, compared to three in five (58%) people with a long-term health condition.

All people - level of concern by self-assessed health status, May-June 2020



Australians aged 65 and over were more likely to be concerned than those aged 18 to 64 (65% compared to 51%).

Health precautions

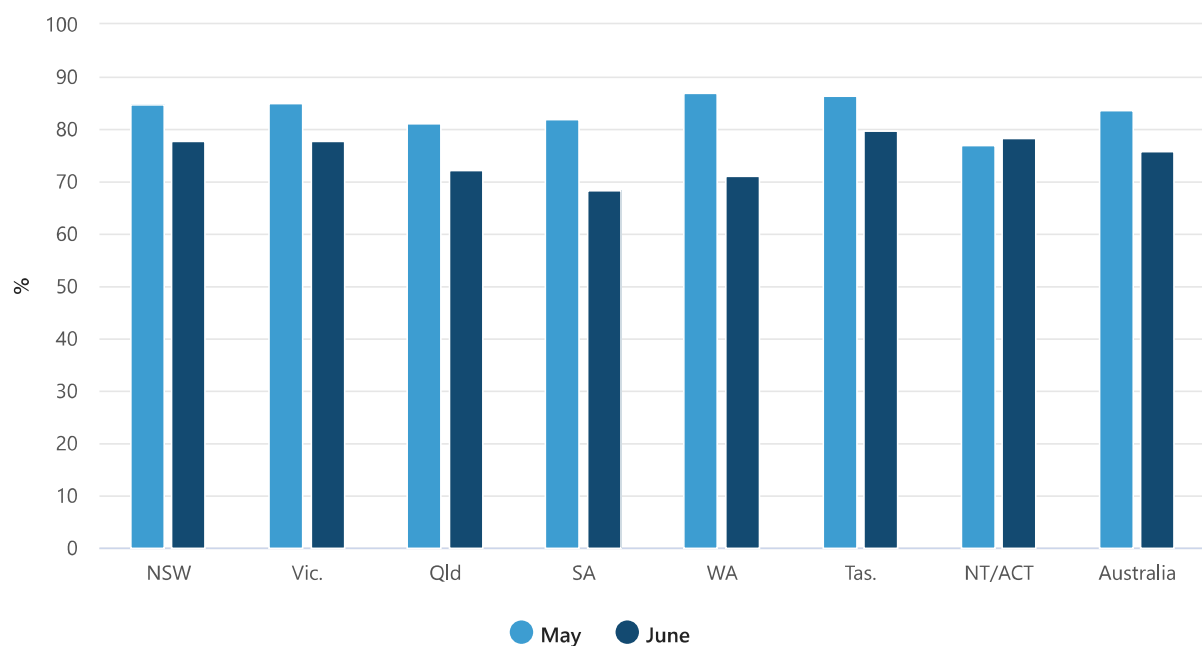
The survey asked respondents if, in the previous four weeks, they had washed their hands and touched their face more, less or about the same due to the spread of COVID-19.

Five in six (84%) people surveyed in May reported washing their hands or using sanitiser more than usual in response to the spread of COVID-19. In comparison, this rate dropped to three in

four Australians (76%) in June. Similarly, the proportion of Australians who reported touching their face less due to the spread of COVID-19 dropped from 43% in May to 36% in June.

In June, four in five (80%) Tasmanians reported washing their hands more, which was the highest rate across the states and territories. The state which reported the highest proportion of people touching their face less in response to COVID-19 was Victoria, with two in five (41%) people reporting this change in their behaviour. Conversely, the lowest proportions of these behaviours were reported in South Australia, with 68% washing their hands more than usual and one quarter (26%) of South Australians touching their face less frequently.

All people - whether washed hands more than usual due to the spread of COVID-19, May-June 2020



People born overseas were more likely to wash their hands more (79%) and touch their face less (44%) than those born in Australia (74% and 32%).

In June, two in five (40%) people with a qualification reported they were touching their face less than usual, compared to 46% of those who were surveyed in May. The proportion of people

without a qualification who reported touching their face less also dropped from 39% in May to 29% in June.

Actions taken by Australians due to the spread of COVID-19

Key findings

- Nine in ten Australians (91%) reported keeping their distance from people in the four weeks prior to the June survey. Across the states and territories, the proportion of Australians who reported doing so ranged from 86% in Western Australia to 94% in Victoria.
- Less than half (48%) of Australians reported self-isolating in the June survey, compared to more than three in five (62%) in May.
- Three in five (61%) Australians reported cancelling personal gatherings in June, compared to 77% in May.
- Two in five (40%) employed people reported self-isolating during the survey period, compared to three in five (62%) of those who were unemployed or not in the labour force.
- Employed people with a qualification were twice as likely to have worked from home than those without a qualification (39% compared to 19%).

Actions taken

The survey asked respondents if they had taken any of the following actions because of the spread of COVID-19 in the previous four weeks:

- Wearing a facemask (at least once)
- Seeking advice from a medical professional
- Avoiding public transport
- Avoiding public spaces (and public events)
- Keeping distance from people
- Cancelling personal gatherings (e.g. with friends or family)
- Changing or cancelling travel plans
- Working from home
- Stopped working at all (e.g. cancelled shifts)
- Keeping children home from school or childcare
- Purchasing additional household supplies
- Purchasing additional medical supplies

- Self-isolated (stayed at home)
- Other actions

Respondents who reported changed or cancelled travel plans were also asked if the travel was domestic, international, or both.

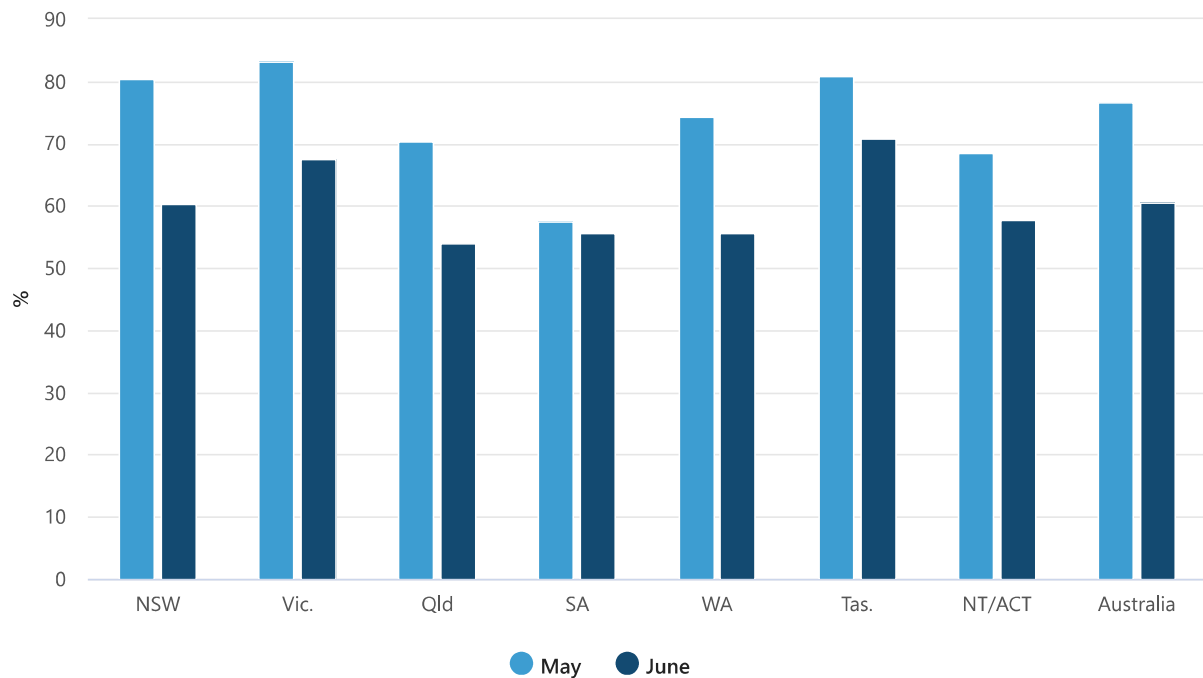
Social distancing

Three in five (61%) Australians reported cancelling personal gatherings when surveyed in June, down from three in four (77%) during May. Similarly, two thirds (63%) of people avoided public spaces (and public events) in June, compared to three quarters (75%) of those surveyed in May.

Two in three (68%) Victorians reported cancelling their plans with family and friends in June, down from more than four in five (83%) in May.

Seven in ten people living in Tasmania (71%) reported cancelling plans for personal gatherings, which was the largest proportion across the states and territories. In contrast, the states reporting the lowest rates of this action were Queensland (54%), South Australia (56%) and Western Australia (56%).

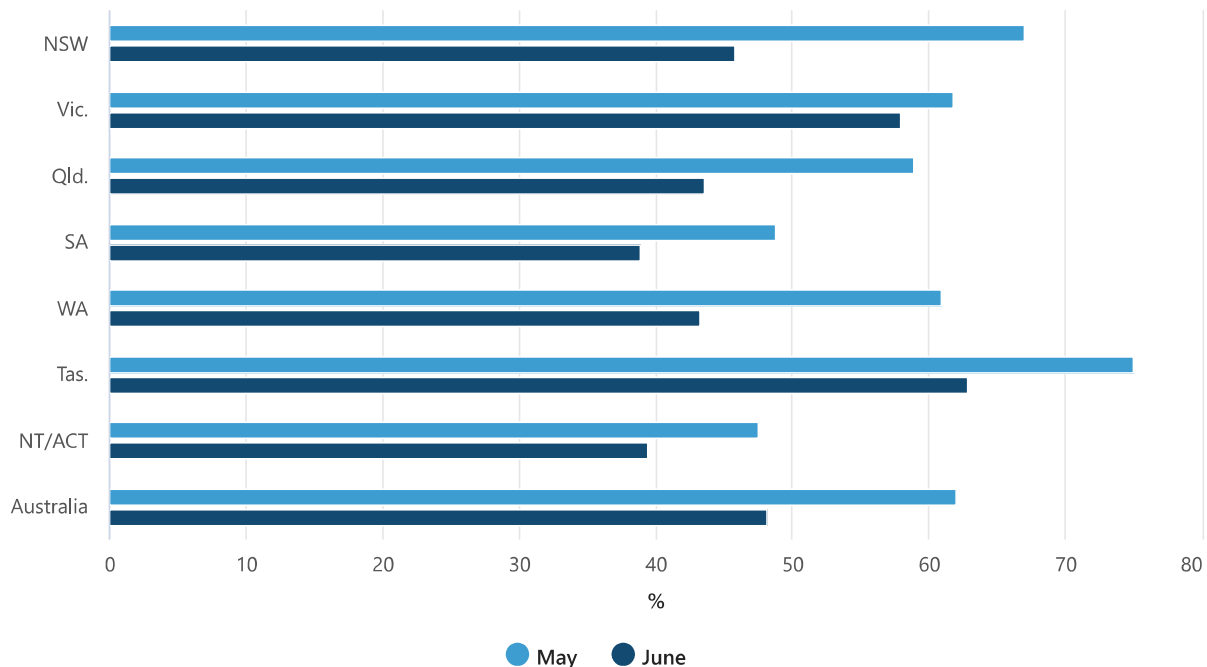
All people - cancelled personal gatherings due to COVID-19, May-June 2020



Over half (56%) of those born overseas reported avoiding public transport in the four weeks prior to the survey, compared to 42% of those born in Australia. Similarly, two in three people born overseas (67%) reported avoiding public spaces at least once during this time period, while three in five people born in Australia (61%) reported taking this action.

Half (48%) of Australians reported self-isolating in the four weeks prior to the June survey. The proportions of people doing so were highest in Tasmania (63%) and Victoria (58%).

All people - whether self-isolated due to COVID-19, May-June 2020



People who were unemployed or not in the labour force were also more likely to self-isolate, with three in five (62%) self-isolating in the four weeks prior to the survey compared to two in five (40%) of those employed.

People who assessed their health to be fair or poor were more likely to self-isolate (62%) in June compared to two in five (43%) who recorded their health as excellent or very good.

Facemasks

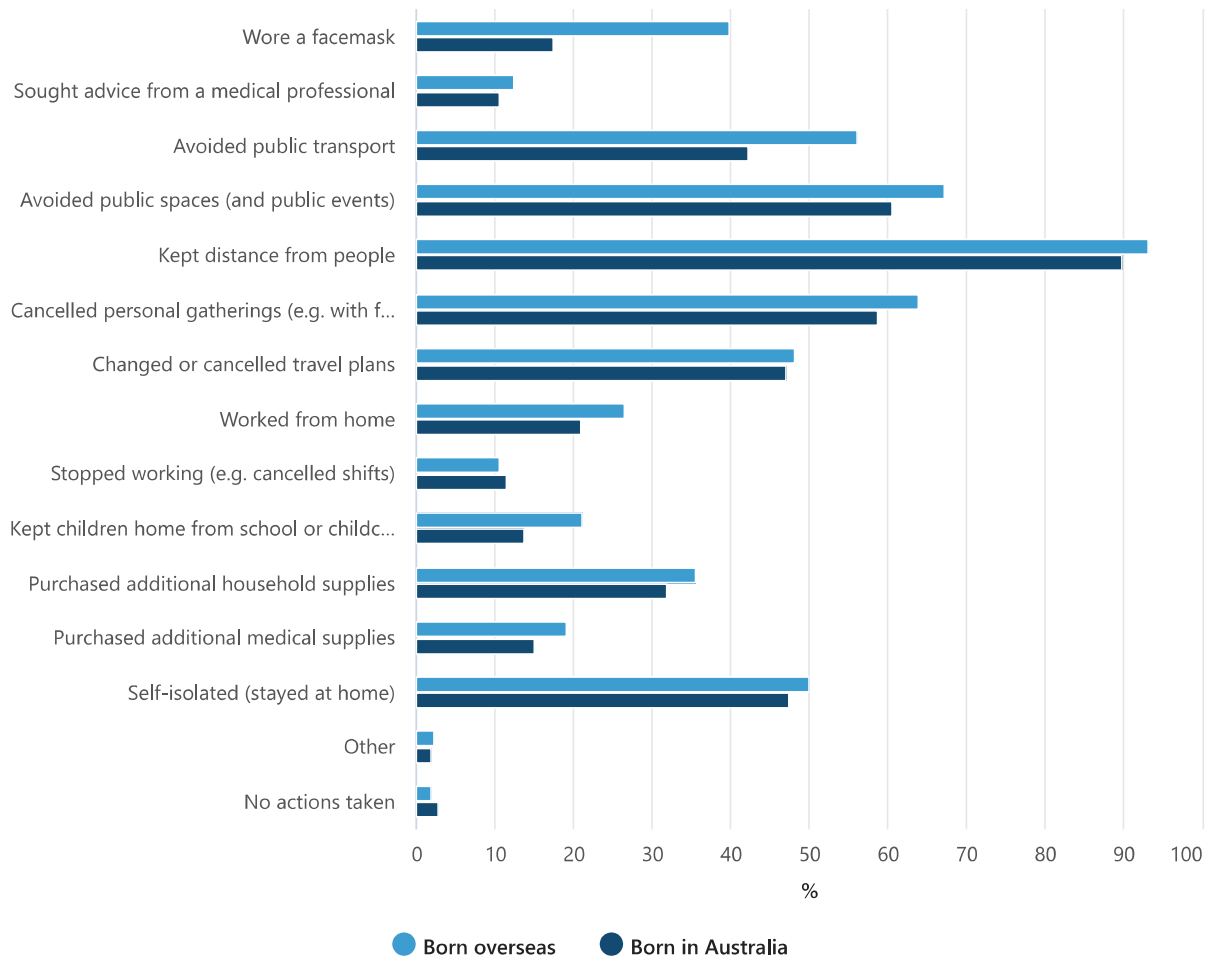
Victorians were the most likely to have reported wearing a facemask, with approximately one third (35%) having worn a mask at least once in the four weeks prior to the survey in June.

All people - wore a facemask, June 2020



People born overseas were twice as likely to wear a facemask in response to COVID-19 than people born in Australia (40% compared to 18%), and this was consistent with May 2020. In general, those born overseas were more likely to have taken any action in the period of the June survey than people born in Australia.

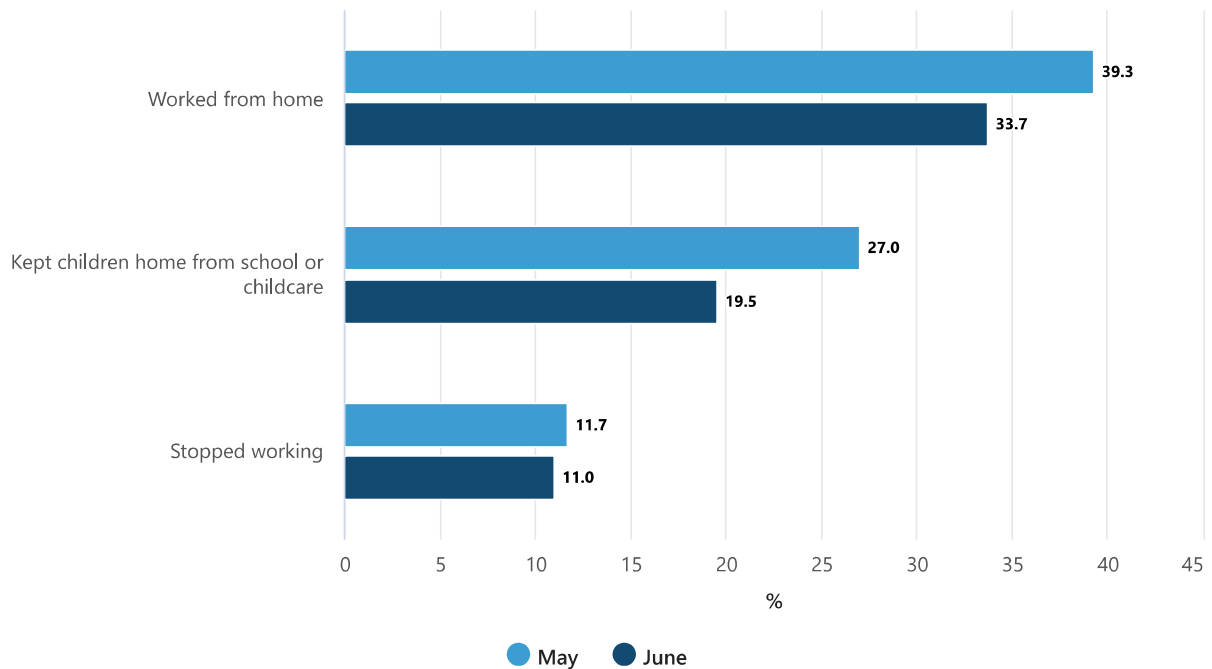
All people - actions taken due to the spread of COVID-19, June 2020



Working and caring from home

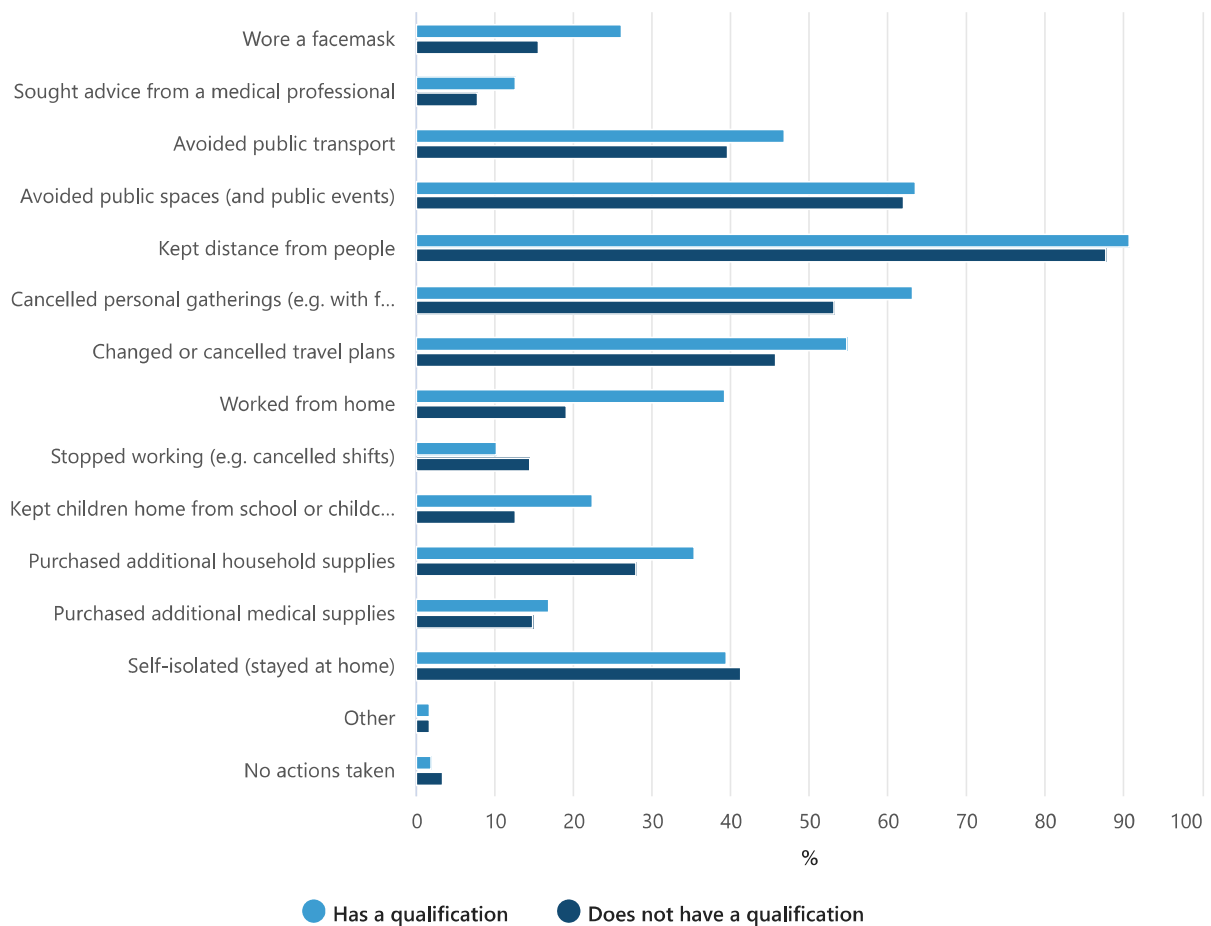
Across the country, one in three (34%) employed Australians reported working from home in the four weeks prior to the June survey, compared to two in five (39%) in the May survey period. Similarly, the proportion of employed Australians who reported keeping children home from school or childcare fell from 27% in May to 20% in June.

All employed people - selected actions taken due to the spread of COVID-19, May-June 2020



In June, employed people with a qualification were twice as likely to have worked from home as those without a qualification (39% compared to 19%) and to have kept children home from school (23% compared to 13%).

All employed people - actions taken due to the spread of COVID-19, by whether has a qualification, June 2020



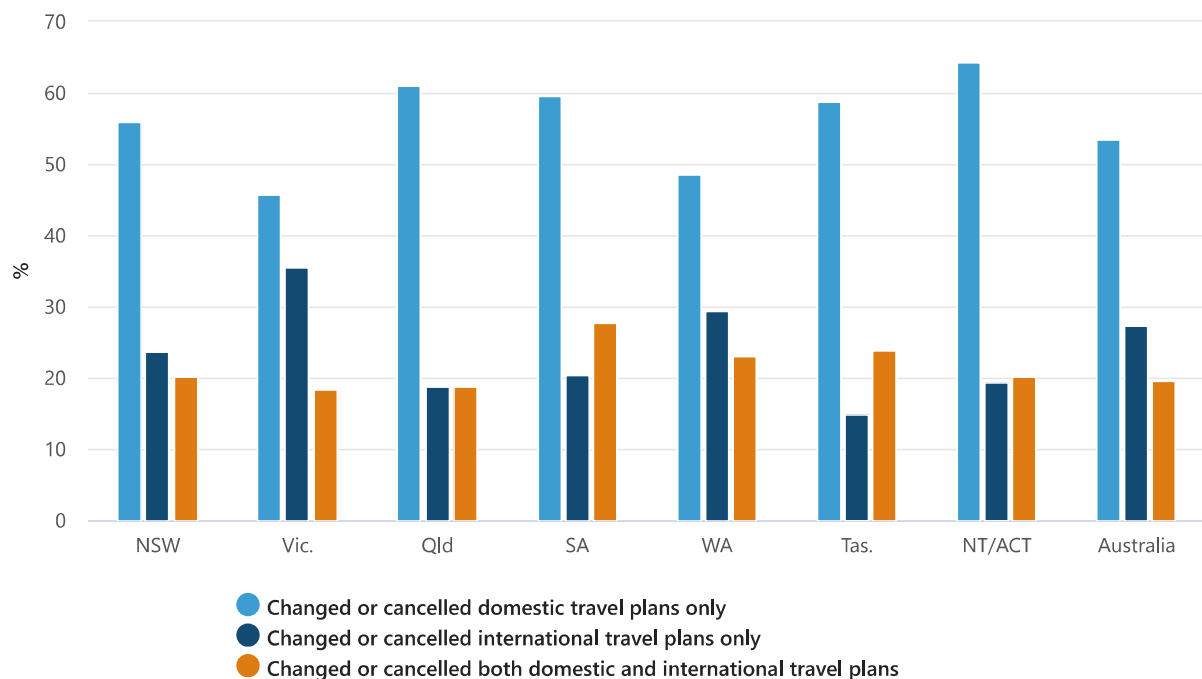
Travel plans

Less than half (47%) of Australians changed or cancelled travel plans in the four weeks prior to the June survey due to COVID-19, which was down from May (55%).

Three quarters (73%) of people who reported changing or cancelling their plans did so for domestic travel, and almost half (47%) had to change their international travel intentions.

Of those who changed travel plans, half (53%) did so for domestic travel only, a quarter (27%) changed international travel plans only, and one in five (20%) changed both domestic and international travel.

People who changed or cancelled travel plans, June 2020



Half (49%) of people aged 18 to 64 years changed or cancelled their travel plans, compared to two in five (39%) Australians aged 65 and over.

For those Australians who considered themselves to be in excellent or very good health, half (50%) had to change or cancel travel plans (compared to 34% of people in fair or poor health).

Receipt and use of Government stimulus payments

Key findings

- By June, 35% of Australians had received a personal stimulus payment from the Government in response to COVID-19.

- One third (32%) of people reported that the main use of the payment was to pay household bills.
- Australians who were unemployed or not in the labour force were three times as likely to have received a stimulus payment by June as those who were employed (61% compared to 20%).

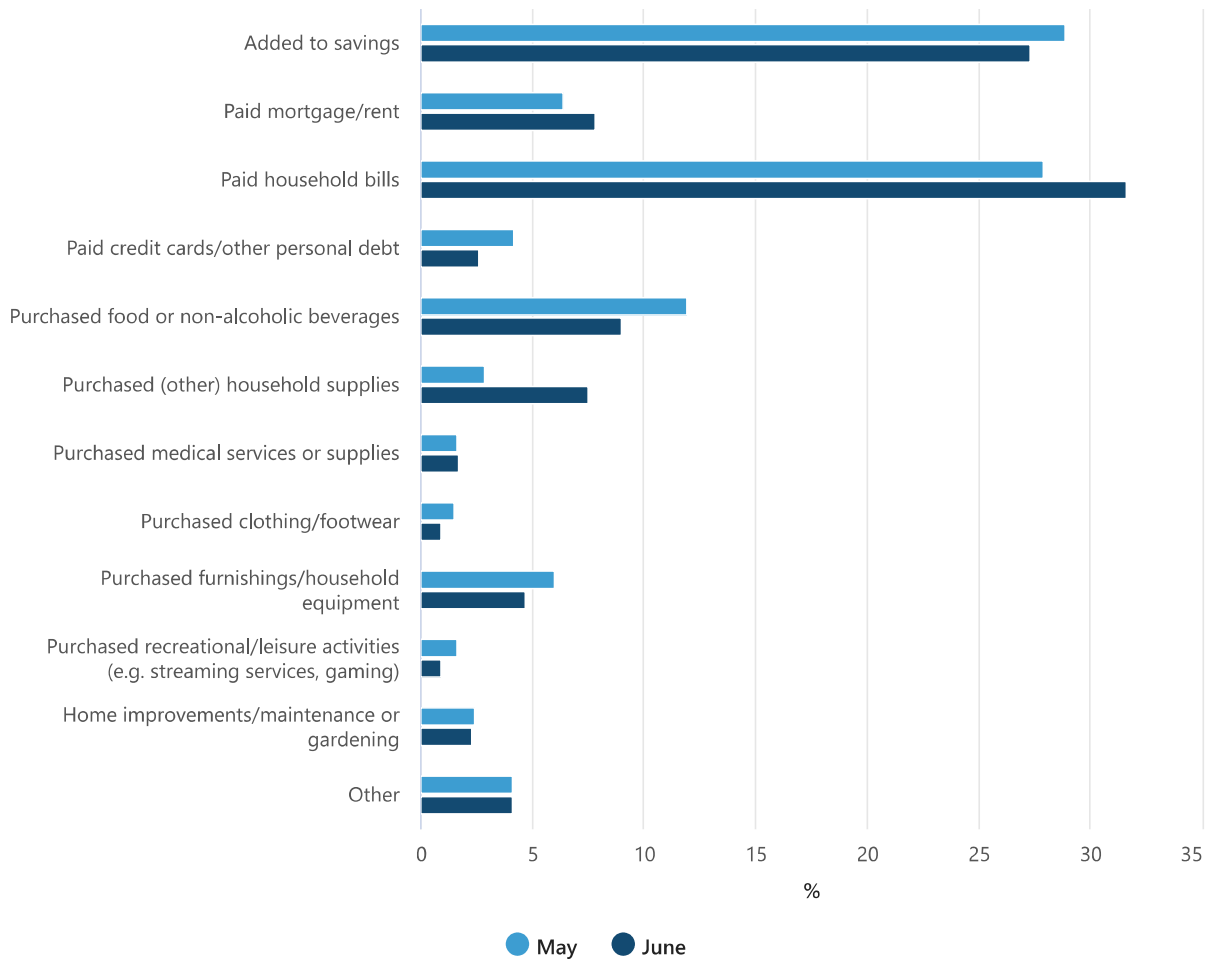
Stimulus payments and use

The survey asked respondents whether they had received a stimulus payment provided by the Government in response to COVID-19, and how they used that payment. The survey collected information only related to personal payments received, and did not include any business-related stimulus payments.

The June survey showed a slight increase in the numbers of Australians who had received a Government stimulus payment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, rising from 32% in May to 35% in June.

The main use of the stimulus payment in June was to pay household bills (32%), which was a change from May when the main use of stimulus payments was to add to savings (29%).

People who received a stimulus payment - main use, May-June 2020



Three in five people (61%) who were unemployed or not in the labour force had received a stimulus payment by June, compared to one in five people (20%) who were employed.

People who were employed and received a stimulus payment were three times as likely to use it to pay mortgages or rent than those not working or not in the labour force (27% compared to 8%). Similarly, those who were employed were also more likely to pay household bills with their payment (55% compared to 38%).

Flu vaccination

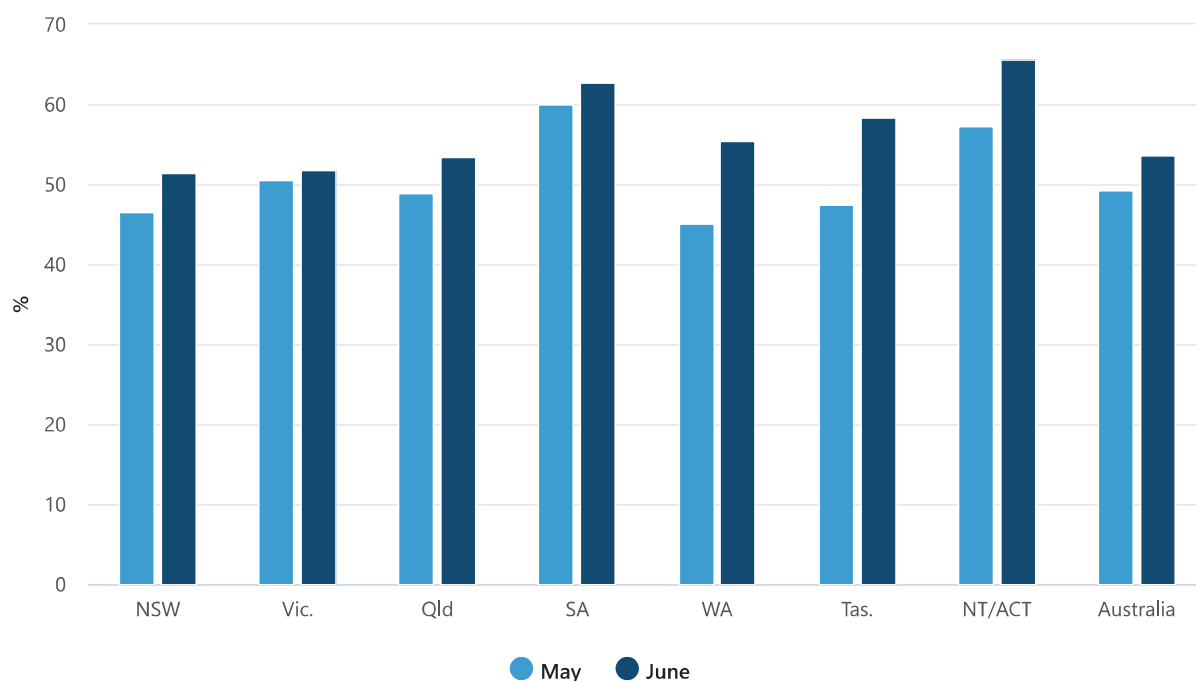
Key findings

- Two in three (66%) people with a long-term health condition were vaccinated against the flu by June, compared to two in five (41%) without a condition.
- Three in five women (59%) had received a flu vaccination by June, while just half (49%) of men around the country had been vaccinated.

Vaccination rates

By June, more than half (54%) of the country had received a flu vaccination, as other states began to catch up to South Australia's early vaccination rates. People in New South Wales and Victoria were the least likely in the nation to have received their flu shot (52%).

All people - whether had a flu vaccination, May-June 2020



One in three (29%) Australians who had not had a flu vaccination by the time of the survey in June reported that they intended to have one this year.

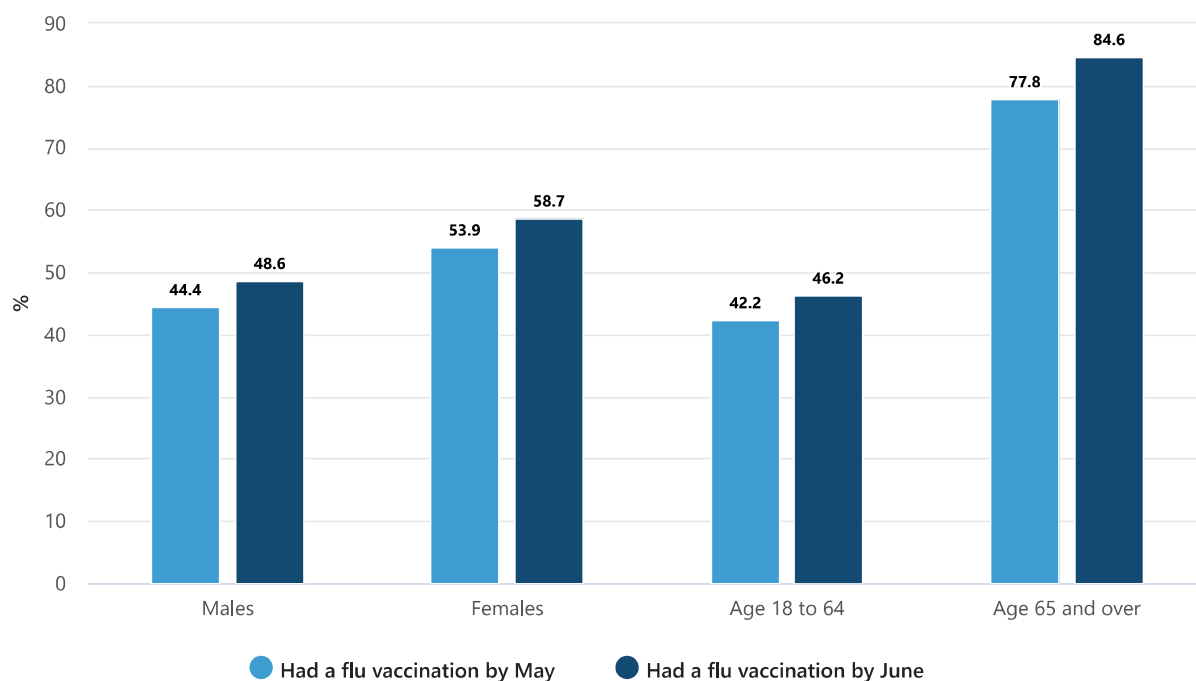
Three in five (60%) people who were unemployed or not in the labour force in June reported having had a flu vaccination this year, compared to half of those who were employed (50%).

Less than half (45%) of people who did not have any kind of private health cover had received a flu vaccination.

Two thirds (67%) of people who assessed their health to be fair or poor, or had a long-term health condition (66%) had received a flu vaccination. In comparison half (50%) of people who considered themselves to be in excellent or very good health received a flu shot, and only two in five (41%) people without any long-term health condition were vaccinated.

Three in five women (59%) had received a flu vaccination by June, while just half (49%) of men had been vaccinated. Older Australians (65 and over) were almost twice as likely (85%) to have been vaccinated than those aged 18 to 64 (46%).

All people - whether had a flu vaccination, May-June 2020



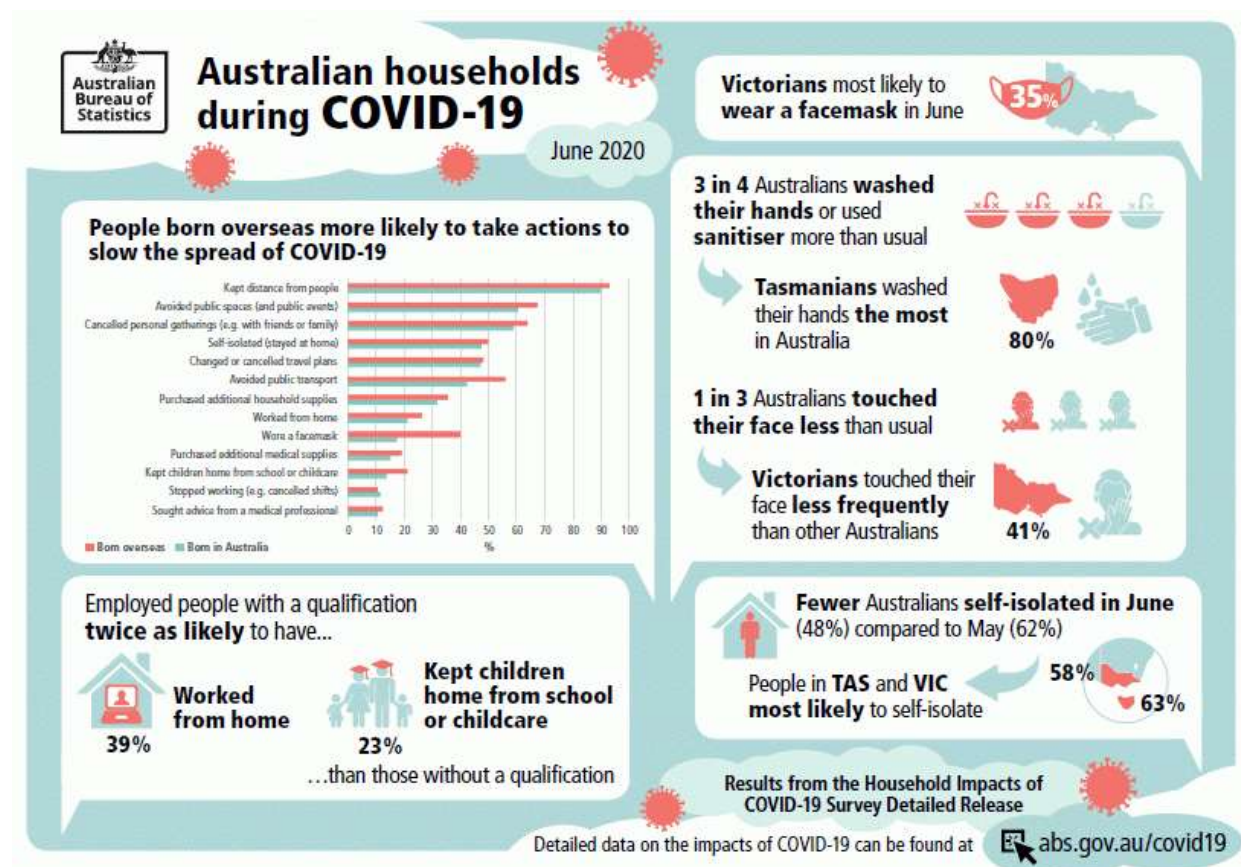
What's next?

This is the final cycle of the Household Impacts of COVID-19, Detailed Release Survey. The ABS will continue with a smaller monthly survey using a new panel of respondents from August 2020.

The ABS would like to thank all participants for their involvement in this survey. The information collected is of value to inform government and community responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Household Impacts visual summary

Show all



The following section describes the visual summary presented above.

Australian households during COVID-19, June 2020

- People born overseas more likely to take actions to slow the spread of COVID-19
 - Kept distance from people Born overseas 93.1% Born in Australia 89.9%
 - Avoided public spaces (and public events) Born overseas 67.3% Born in Australia 60.5%
 - Cancelled personal gatherings (e.g. with friends or family) Born overseas 63.8% Born in Australia 58.7%

- Self-isolated (stayed at home) Born overseas 50% Born in Australia 47.4%
 - Changed or cancelled travel plans Born overseas 48% Born in Australia 47%
 - Avoided public transport Born overseas 56.1% Born in Australia 42.3%
 - Purchased additional household supplies Born overseas 35.5% Born in Australia 31.9%
 - Worked from home Born overseas 26.4% Born in Australia 21%
 - Wore a facemask Born overseas 39.9% Born in Australia 17.5%
 - Purchased additional medical supplies Born overseas 19.1% Born in Australia 15%
 - Kept children home from school or childcare Born overseas 21.1% Born in Australia 13.7%
 - Stopped working (e.g. cancelled shifts) Born overseas 10.5% Born in Australia 11.5%
 - Sought advice from a medical professional Born overseas 12.4% Born in Australia 10.6%
-
- Employed people with a qualification twice as likely to have worked from home (39%) and kept children home from school or childcare (23%), than those without a qualification
 - Victorians most likely (35%) to wear a facemask in June
 - 3 in 4 Australians washed their hands or used sanitiser more than usual
 - Tasmanians washed their hands the most in Australia (80%)
 - 1 in 3 Australians touched their face less than usual (41%)
 - Fewer Australians self-isolated in June (48%) compared to May (62%)
 - People in TAS (63%) and VIC (58%) most likely to self-isolate

Results from the Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey Detailed Release

Detailed data on the impacts of COVID-19 can be found at [abs.gov.au/covid19](https://www.abs.gov.au/covid19)
[.https://www.abs.gov.au/covid19](https://www.abs.gov.au/covid19)

Data downloads

Tables 1 to 17

↓ [Download XLS](#)
 [587.5 KB]

Data item list

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 [169.5 KB]

Methodology

[Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey methodology, Detailed Release, June 2020](#)