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# Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey

Insights into the prevalence and nature of impacts from COVID-19 on households in Australia.

Reference period June 2021

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Released 14/07/2021

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## Key statistics

- In June 2021, people in Victoria (34%) were more likely than the rest of Australia (23%) to report it will take more than a year for life to return to normal.

- Of the Australians who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, 90% reported that it was very or moderately easy to get one.

## About this issue

This publication presents results from the final Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey, a longitudinal survey which collected information from the same panel each month. The June 2021 survey was run between 11 and 20 June 2021 via online forms and telephone interviews. The survey included 3,414 continuing participants, a response rate of 87% of the total panel.

The June 2021 survey collected information on:

- emotional and mental wellbeing
- COVID-19 vaccination attitudes and experiences
- symptom testing behaviours
- health precautions
- expectations for household income, saving and spending
- training and development of skills
- participation in selected activities
- perceptions of the future after the COVID-19 pandemic
- job status.

The scope of the survey was people aged 18 years and over in private dwellings across Australia (excluding very remote areas).

## About this collection

This survey is designed to provide a quick snapshot of the changing social and economic situation for Australian households with particular focus on how they are faring in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each cycle collects information on different topics.

From 1 April to 10 July 2020, the survey was conducted fortnightly with the same panel for eight cycles. From August 2020, a new panel of respondents was selected for a monthly survey. Panel members have rotated, with new members added in November 2020 and March 2021. The results for all past surveys can be accessed by selecting '[View all releases](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/household-impacts-covid-19-survey/>)' in the header of this publication.

Some topics have been repeated in both the fortnightly and monthly surveys. Where relevant, comparisons are made based on the weighted representative data for both surveys. The monthly

survey gathered information via online forms and telephone interviews. The previous fortnightly survey was collected via the telephone only. This change in survey methodology means that comparing topics across the two survey iterations should be treated with caution.

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 MoEs refer to the publication Methodology.

## **COVID-19 pandemic progress and interventions**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, initiatives in place to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and support the economy included:

- ongoing international travel restrictions
- border control measures for states and territories as needed
- two economic stimulus packages (12 March and 22 March 2020)
- a safety net package of \$1.1 billion to expand mental health and Telehealth services, increase domestic violence services and provide more emergency food relief (29 March 2020)
- stimulus payments including:
  - a Coronavirus Supplement paid fortnightly from 27 April 2020 to eligible income support recipients along with their usual payments (reduced in September 2020 and January 2021, and ended 31 March 2021)
  - a JobKeeper Payment passed in legislation on 15 April 2020 and paid to employers to keep more Australians in jobs and support businesses affected by the COVID-19 restrictions (reduced to include two tiers in September 2020 and January 2021, and ended 28 March 2021)
- various restrictions, including shutting down non-essential services, limits on gatherings and social distancing rules from March 2020
- a guided easing of these restrictions in many states and territories using the National Cabinet agreed three step framework introduced in early May 2020
- returning restrictions and lockdowns in some areas to manage locally transmitted cases as needed
- a COVID-19 vaccination program from February 2021
- subsidised airfares to encourage tourism in selected locations around Australia.

From 11 to 20 June 2021, when this survey was conducted, locally transmitted cases were identified in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Victoria was continuing to identify new cases from local clusters which had emerged between cycles of the survey. New South Wales had a new cluster emerge towards the end of enumeration. Queensland identified one case from a

local source on the last day of enumeration. Other new cases of COVID-19 across Australia were predominately from overseas and the risk of further transmission was managed through hotel quarantine.

In between survey cycles, Victoria had implemented a 14-day lockdown in some areas to manage the local spread of the virus. The lockdown ended at the start of the survey, but some restrictions remained in place.

In the last days of the survey, New South Wales began implementing new measures in some areas, such as mandatory face mask requirements. Queensland was yet to change their restrictions when the survey ended.

Other states and territories had eased restrictions other than for large gatherings or occasions where social distancing is difficult.

Participation in the COVID-19 vaccination program in Australia is in phases. At the time of the survey, Phase 1 of the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines was continuing. This included people aged 70 years and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and over, people with disability or an underlying medical condition and a range of workers in specific roles.

Phase 2 of the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines in Australia began in May 2021. At the time of the survey, this included people aged 40 years and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 to 49 years, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants aged 16 years and over and other critical and high-risk workers.

## **Emotional and mental wellbeing**

### **Key findings**

- In June 2021, one in five (20%) Australians experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress in the last four weeks, similar to March 2021 (20%) and November 2020 (21%).
- Almost one in three (30%) younger Australians (aged 18 to 34 years) experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress in June 2021, compared with 18% of people aged 35 to 64 years and 10% of people aged 65 years and over.
- In June 2021, more people living in Victoria (27%) experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with the rest of Australia (18%).

### **Emotional and mental wellbeing in the previous four weeks**

The survey asked Australians about feelings that had an adverse impact on their emotional and mental wellbeing. The feelings asked about were those associated with experiences of anxiety

and depression. People were asked how frequently in the previous four weeks they felt:

- tired out for no good reason
- nervous
- so nervous that nothing could calm you down
- hopeless
- restless or fidgety
- so restless you could not sit still
- depressed
- that everything was an effort
- so sad that nothing could cheer you up
- worthless.

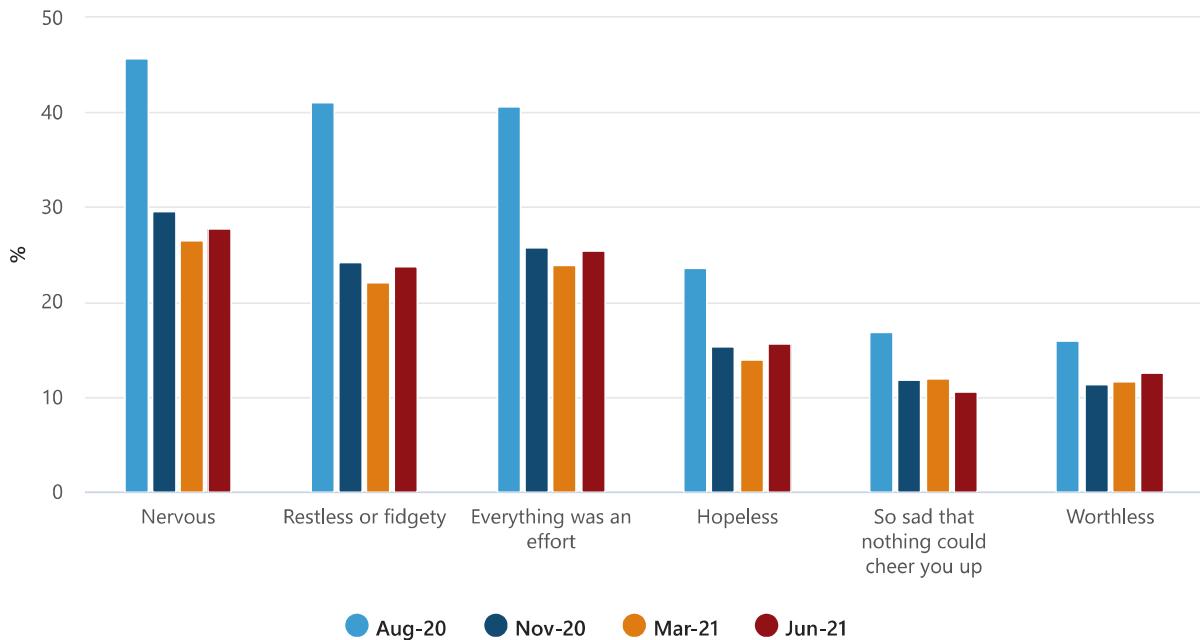
This complete question set is known as the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10). These questions were also asked in March 2021 and November 2020. A subset of six of these questions (K6) was also asked in August 2020.

While the proportion of people reporting these feelings decreased between August 2020 and November 2020, there has been little change since then.

In June 2021, at least some of the time:

- 28% of people 18 years and over felt nervous
- 26% felt everything was an effort
- 24% felt restless or fidgety
- 16% felt hopeless
- 13% felt worthless
- 11% felt so sad that nothing could cheer them up.

**Persons aged 18 years and over, selected feelings that impacted on emotional and mental wellbeing at least some of the time, by time of reporting(a)(b)**



- a. Includes feelings experienced in the last four weeks at the time of interview  
b. At least some of the time includes responses of some, most or all of the time

## Psychological distress

The full set of Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) questions asked in November 2020 and March and June 2021 allows for reporting of levels of psychological distress.

One in five (20%) Australians experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress in June 2021, similar to March 2021 (20%) and November 2020 (21%).

In June 2021:

- almost one in four (23%) women experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with 17% of men
- almost one in three (30%) younger Australians (aged 18 to 34 years) experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress, compared with 18% of people aged 35 to 64 years and 10% of people aged 65 years and over

- more than one in four (27%) people living in Victoria experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with 18% in the rest of Australia
- around half (48%) of all people who reported having a mental health condition experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with 16% who did not have a mental health condition
- more than one in four (29%) people with disability experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with 17% of people without disability.

### **Seeing a doctor or other health professional**

People who reported experiencing any of the feelings referred to were asked if they had discussed these feelings with a doctor or other health professional. Similar proportions of Australians discussed these feelings with a doctor or other health professional in June 2021 (15%), March 2021 (16%) and November 2020 (17%).

## **COVID-19 vaccination**

### **Key findings**

- In June 2021, 73% of Australians agreed or strongly agreed that they would get a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available and is recommended for them, an increase from May 2021 (68%).
- The main reasons people may not get a COVID-19 vaccination were concerns relating to potential side-effects (52%) and effectiveness of the vaccine (15%).
- Of the Australians who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination, 90% reported that it was very or moderately easy to get one.
- Of those who had not received a COVID-19 vaccination, 55% reported they would prefer to get one from a general practitioner (GP).

### **COVID-19 vaccination**

In June 2021, the survey revisited questions asked in previous months about how strongly people agreed or disagreed with statements about a COVID-19 vaccine. A new set of questions was included about experiences of COVID-19 vaccination including:

- whether or not they had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination
- COVID-19 vaccination locations
- motivating factors for getting a COVID-19 vaccination
- ease of getting vaccinated
- factors which impact on their ability to get vaccinated.

At the time of the survey, phase 1 and 2 of the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines in Australia was continuing. This included people aged 40 years and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 years and over, people with disability or an underlying medical condition and a range of workers in specific roles. Different types of vaccine were available depending on eligibility criteria.

Data reported below was derived from responses to the survey. Official COVID-19 vaccination data is reported on the [Department of Health website \(<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19#australias-vaccine-rollout>\)](https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19#australias-vaccine-rollout).

## Attitudes about COVID-19 vaccines

In June 2021, the survey asked how strongly people agreed or disagreed with statements about a COVID-19 vaccine. Similar questions were asked in previous months.

From April 2021 people who had already received a COVID-19 vaccine were included with the strongly agree responses for reporting purposes.

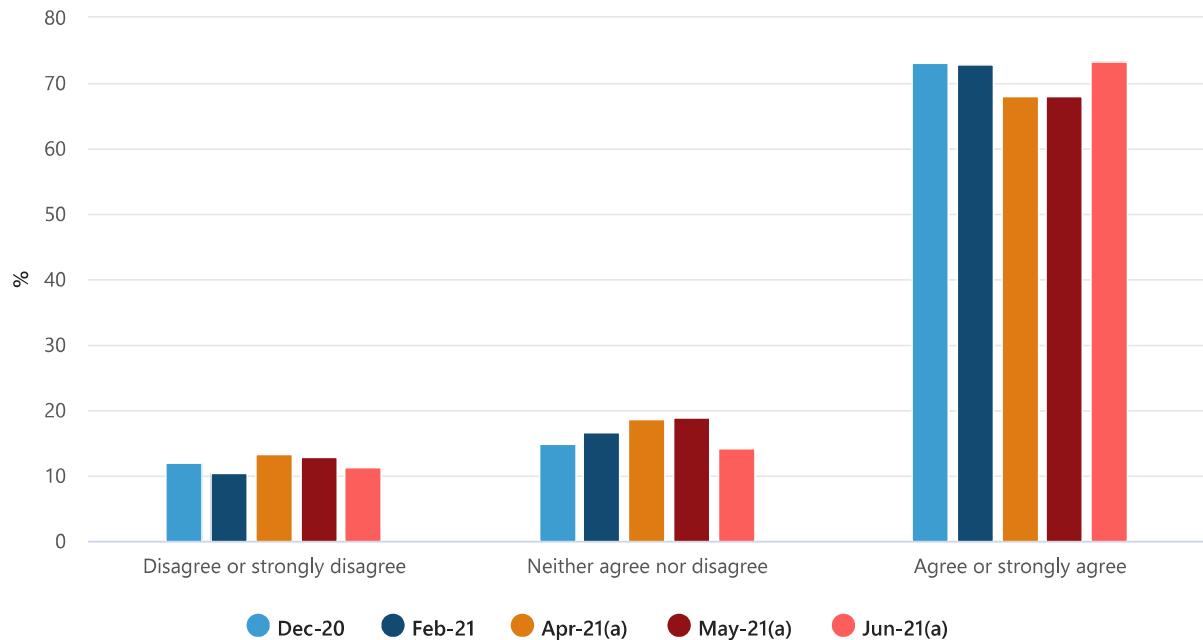
In June 2021, 73% of Australians agreed or strongly agreed that they would get a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available and is recommended for them, an increase from May 2021 (68%).

Those who agreed or strongly agreed with getting a COVID-19 vaccine were more likely to be:

- men (78%) than women (69%)
- people aged 70 years and over (90%) than those aged 50 to 69 years (74%), 18 to 34 years (71%) and 35 to 49 years (68%)
- people in Victoria (78%) than those in Western Australia (69%) and South Australia (67%)
- people in family households without children (78%) and those living alone (75%) than those in family households with children (67%)
- people without a job (80%) than those with a job (70%).

One in nine (11%) people disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would get a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available and is recommended for them, similar to May 2021 (13%).

## Persons aged 18 years and over, whether would get a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available and is recommended, by time of reporting



a. In April, May and June 2021 respondents who indicated they already had a COVID-19 vaccination were coded as 'strongly agree'

## Factors affecting decision to get COVID-19 vaccination

In June 2021, of people who said they would get a COVID-19 vaccine when it was available to them, the factors most affecting the decision were:

- a recommendation from their GP or other health professional (24%, similar to 27% in May 2021)
- a recommendation from a Department of Health (19% in June and May 2021)
- whether the vaccine had been in use for a long time with no serious side-effects (18%, a decrease from 24% in May 2021).

People who disagreed or strongly disagreed (11%), or neither agreed nor disagreed (14%), that they would get a COVID-19 vaccine were asked the main reason why they may not get one. The most common reasons were:

- concerns relating to potential side-effects (52%, a decrease from 64% in May 2021)
- concerns about how effective a COVID-19 vaccine might be (15%, similar to 12% in May 2021).

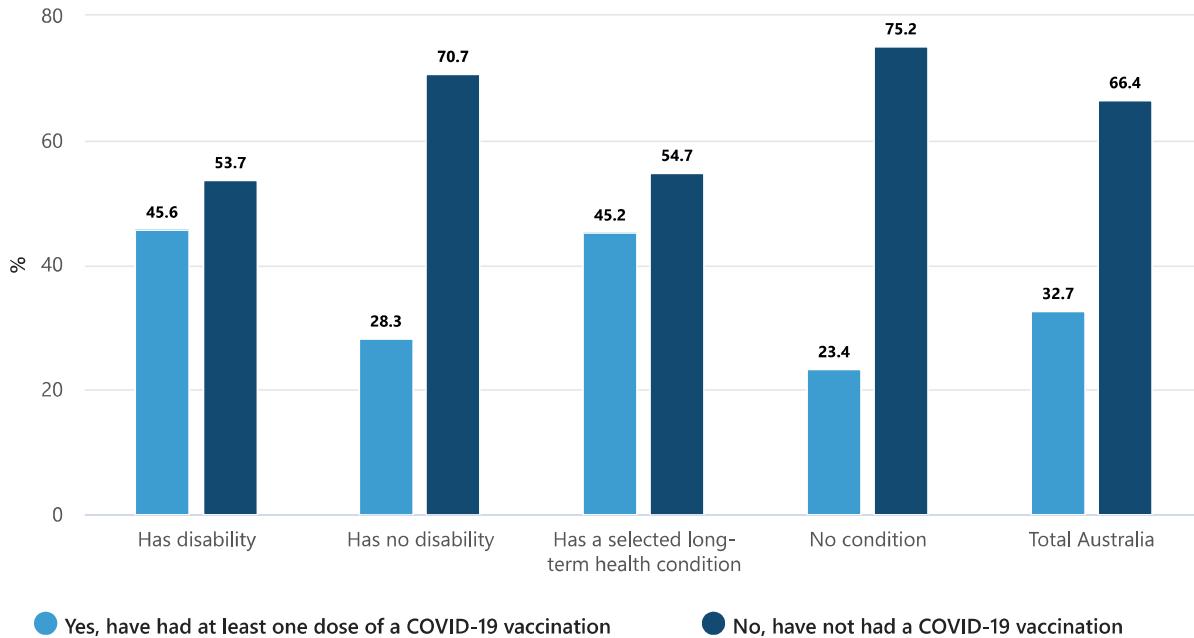
## People who have received a COVID-19 vaccination

In June 2021, one in three (33%) Australians aged 18 years and over reported that they had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination. This figure is derived from responses to the ABS Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey and is not official vaccination data. Individual group participation has also been derived based on responses. For example, disability has been derived from a subset of questions from the ABS Short Disability Module to allow for the broad comparison of the characteristics of people with and without disability. Official COVID-19 vaccination data is reported on the [Department of Health website](https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19#australias-vaccine-rollout) (<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19#australias-vaccine-rollout>).

Those who reported receiving at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination were more likely to be:

- people aged 70 years and over (78%) than those aged 50 to 69 years (47%), 35 to 49 years (22%) and 18 to 34 years (11%)
- people in family households without children (40%) and those living alone (39%) than those in family households with children (20%)
- people born overseas who arrived more than ten years ago (38%) than those born overseas who arrived within the last ten years (18%)
- people without a job (51%) than those with a job (24%)
- people with disability as reported in this survey (46%) than those without disability (28%)
- people with a long-term health condition (45%) than those without a long-term health condition (23%).

**Persons aged 18 years and over, whether received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination, by disability and/or long-term health conditions(a)(b)(c)(d)**



- a. People with disability includes those reporting Profound core activity restriction, Severe core activity restriction, Moderate core activity restriction, Mild core activity restriction, Schooling/employment restriction, and No specific restriction
- b. Whether a person has a disability has been derived from a subset of questions from the ABS Short Disability Module. These questions are not designed to estimate prevalence but rather allow for the broad comparison of the characteristics of people with and without disability
- c. Long-term health conditions refer to self-reported conditions that were diagnosed by a doctor or nurse, which had lasted or were expected to last for 6 months or more for the following conditions: arthritis, asthma, cancer, dementia, diabetes, heart disease (including heart attack and angina), kidney disease, lung condition (including COPD or emphysema), mental health (including depression or anxiety), stroke
- d. Includes not stated responses and total may not add up to 100%

In June 2021, people reported receiving their COVID-19 vaccination from their usual GP (38%) or at a COVID-19 vaccination hub or clinic (36%).

People with disability as reported in this survey were more likely than those without disability to have received a COVID-19 vaccination from their usual GP (50% compared with 31%).

The main factors motivating people to get a COVID-19 vaccination were:

- to prevent contracting or experiencing severe symptoms of COVID-19 (79%)

- recommendation by a GP or other health professional (31%)
- notification that they were eligible (28%)
- they wanted to travel (24%).

People with disability as reported in this survey were more likely than those without disability to be motivated to get a COVID-19 vaccination:

- because it was recommended by a GP or other health professional (38% compared with 28%)
- because they have health conditions that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19 (28% compared with 13%).

In June 2021, of the people who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination:

- 74% reported it was very easy to get one
- 15% reported it was moderately easy to get one.

### **People who have not received a COVID-19 vaccination**

In June 2021, two in three (66%) Australians reported they had not received a COVID-19 vaccination.

Of those who had not received a COVID-19 vaccination, or were unsure:

- 48% reported they are currently eligible
- 77% know where to go to get a COVID-19 vaccination
- 55% prefer to receive their COVID-19 vaccination from a GP
- 19% prefer to go to a walk-in vaccination hub or clinic.

Of those who had not received a COVID-19 vaccination, the most common factors impacting their ability to get one were:

- wanting a different vaccine to what was available to them (15%)
- the waiting time to get an appointment was too long (11%)
- they did not know if they were eligible (8%).

Over half (55%) of those who had not received a COVID-19 vaccination reported that none of the factors listed impacted their ability to get one.

## **COVID-19 testing**

### **Key findings**

- In June 2021, just under half (45%) of Australians reported they would definitely get a COVID-19 test if they had mild respiratory infection symptoms, similar to April (48%).

### **Likelihood of getting a COVID-19 test for respiratory infection symptoms**

From 11 to 20 June 2021, the survey asked Australians how likely they were to get a COVID-19 test if they had symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a sore throat, cough, fever or aches and pains.

In June 2021, just under half (45%) of Australians reported they would definitely get a COVID-19 test if they had mild respiratory infection symptoms, similar to April (48%).

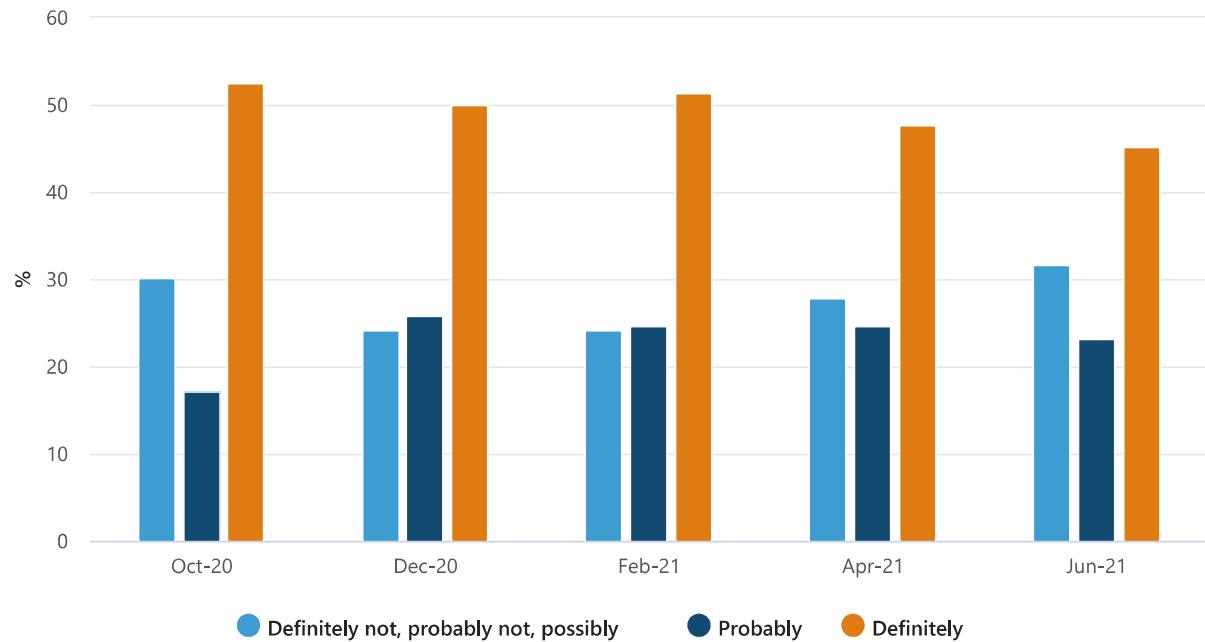
Those who would definitely get a COVID-19 test if they had mild respiratory infection symptoms were more likely to be:

- people aged 65 years and over (59%) than those aged 35 to 64 years (44%) and 18 to 34 years (39%)
- people in Victoria (58%) than those in New South Wales (46%), Queensland (40%), South Australia (36%), Western Australia (27%) and the rest of Australia (35%)
- people in family households without children (50%) and those living alone (49%) than those in family households with children (36%)
- people without a job (50%) than those with a job (43%)
- people with a long-term health condition (50%) than those without a long-term health condition (42%).

In June, common reasons people would not get a COVID-19 test if they had mild respiratory infection symptoms included:

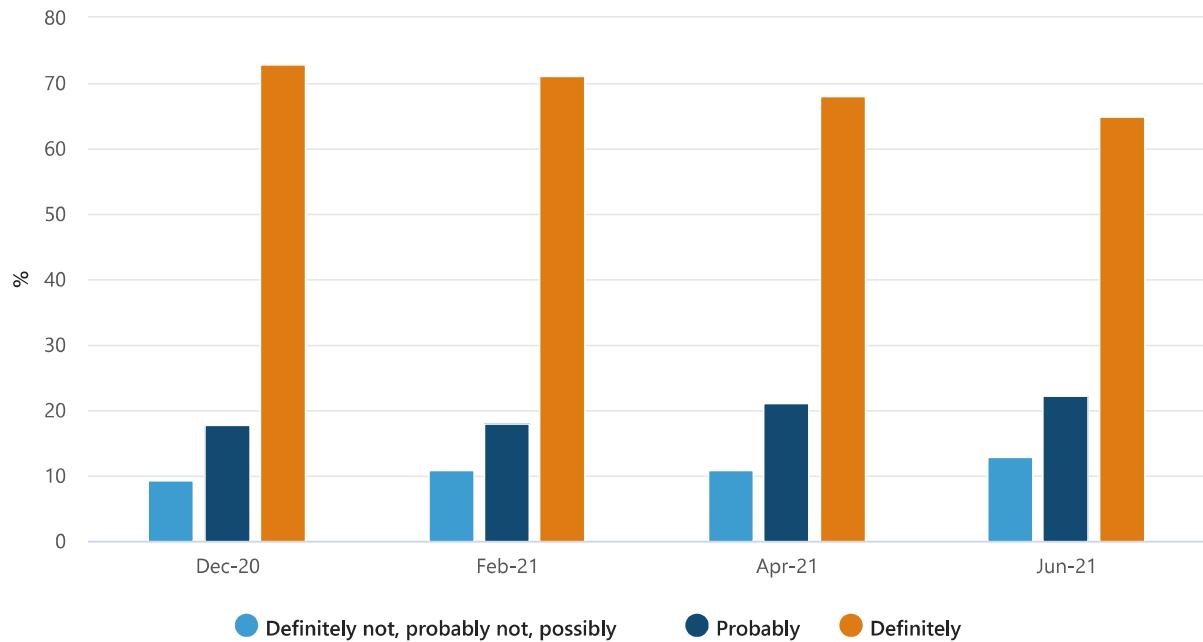
- if they thought the symptoms were unrelated to COVID-19 (60%)
- if there were few or no cases of COVID-19 where they live (51%)
- if they did not feel the symptoms were serious enough (44%)
- if they had not been in contact with anyone who had COVID-19 symptoms (38%).

**Persons aged 18 years and over, likelihood of getting a COVID-19 test if had mild respiratory infection symptoms, by time of reporting**



Of those who may not get a COVID-19 test for mild symptoms, just under two thirds (65%) reported they would definitely get a COVID-19 test if the symptoms were severe, similar to April (68%).

## Persons aged 18 years and over, likelihood of getting a COVID-19 test if had severe respiratory infection symptoms, by time of reporting(a)



a. Does not include persons 18 years and over who would definitely get a COVID-19 test for mild symptoms

## Precautions

### Key findings

- In June 2021, fewer Australians (44%) reported wearing a facemask in the last week compared with March 2021 (51%).
- Fewer people also reported keeping a physical distance from others in the last week (63% in June 2021 compared with 66% in March 2021).

### Precautions taken in the last week

At the time of the survey (11 to 20 June 2021), Victoria was emerging from a 14-day lockdown in some areas. All other states and territories had eased most restrictions. In the final days of the survey, new COVID-19 clusters started to emerge in New South Wales resulting in mandatory

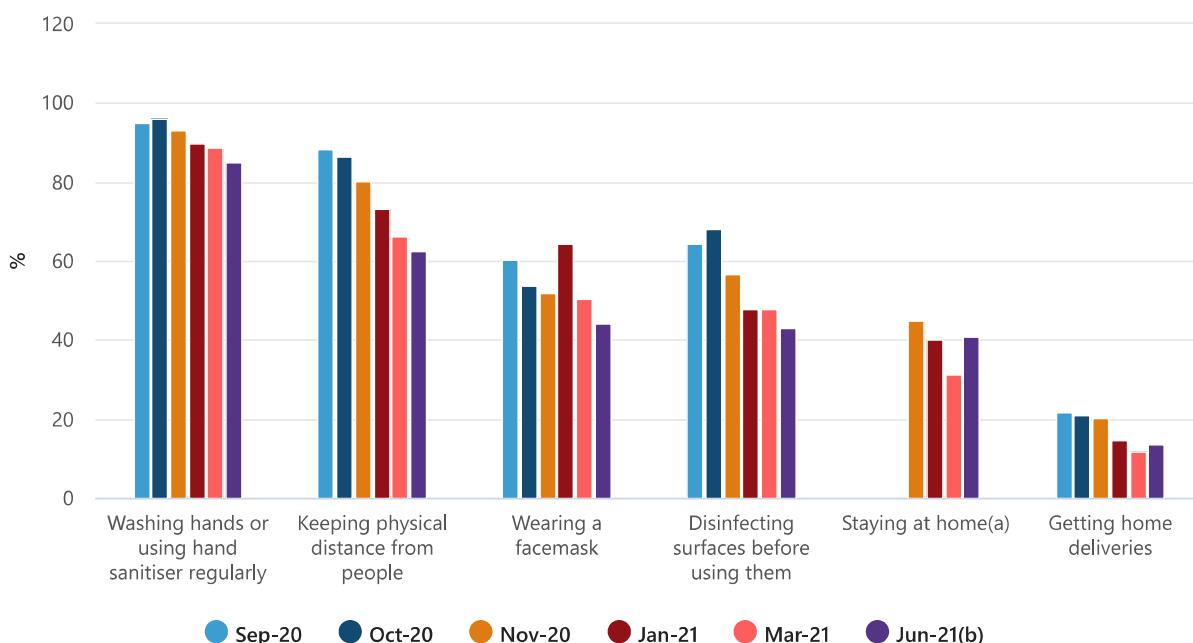
facemask requirements, however this was introduced too late to impact most survey responses for the state.

In mid-June 2021, over nine in 10 (91%) Australians took one or more precautions in the previous week because of the spread of COVID-19, a decrease from 94% in March 2021.

The precautions taken in mid-June 2021 included:

- washing hands or using hand sanitiser regularly (85%, a decrease from 89% in March 2021)
- keeping a physical distance from people (63%, a decrease from 66% in March 2021)
- wearing a facemask (44%, a decrease from 51% in March 2021)
- disinfecting surfaces before using them (43%, a decrease from 48% in March 2021)
- staying at home (41%, an increase from 31% in March 2021)
- getting home deliveries, including groceries and household products (14%, similar to 12% in March 2021).

### Persons aged 18 years and over, selected precautions taken in the last week because of the spread of COVID-19, by time of reporting



a. Precaution was not collected in September and October 2020

b. June data refers to precautions in the week before the survey conducted from 11 to 20 June 2021

## Income and savings

### Key findings

- In June 2021, one in four (26%) Australians expected their household income to increase over the next 12 months, while one in nine (11%) expected a decrease.
- Almost one in three (32%) Australians earning \$3,000 or more weekly expected an increase in income, compared with one in six (16%) earning between \$400 to \$649 per week.
- Over the next 12 months, over one in three (32%) Australians plan to use their current or expected savings on travel, one in six (16%) plan to renovate their home and one in seven (15%) plan to use the money for mortgage repayments.

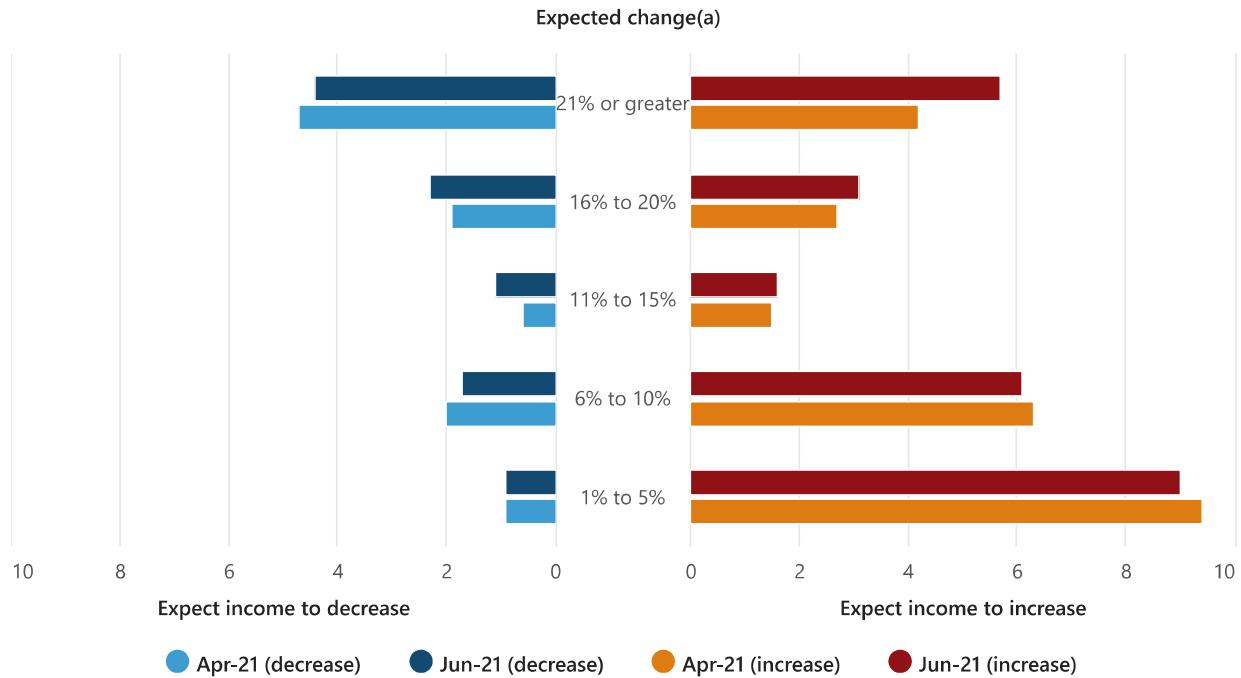
### Expected household income

In June 2021, over the next 12 months:

- 26% of Australians expected their household income to increase (similar to 25% in April 2021)
- 63% of Australians expected their household income to stay the same (similar to 64% in April 2021)
- 11% of Australians expected their household income to decrease (similar to 10% in April 2021).

The most common expectation for a change in household income in the next 12 months was an increase between 1% to 5% (reported by 9% of Australians in June and April 2021).

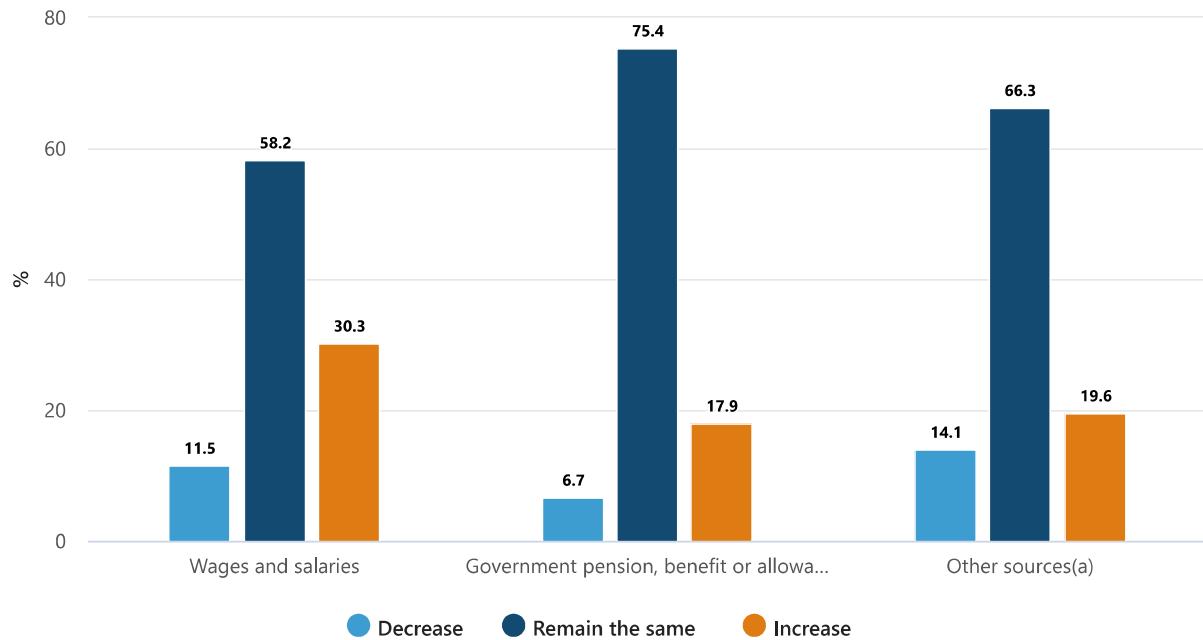
**Persons aged 18 years and over, expected change in household income over the next 12 months, by time of reporting**



a. Proportion who expect income to stay the same is included in the total (denominator) for each cycle but not included in the graph

When broken down by main source of household income (MSHI) there are significant differences in the expected change to household income. Almost one in three (30%) people where the MSHI is through wages and salaries expect their household income to increase over the next 12 months, compared with one in six (18%) where the MSHI is through government pensions and allowances.

**Persons aged 18 years and over, expected change in household income over the next 12 months, by main source of household income**

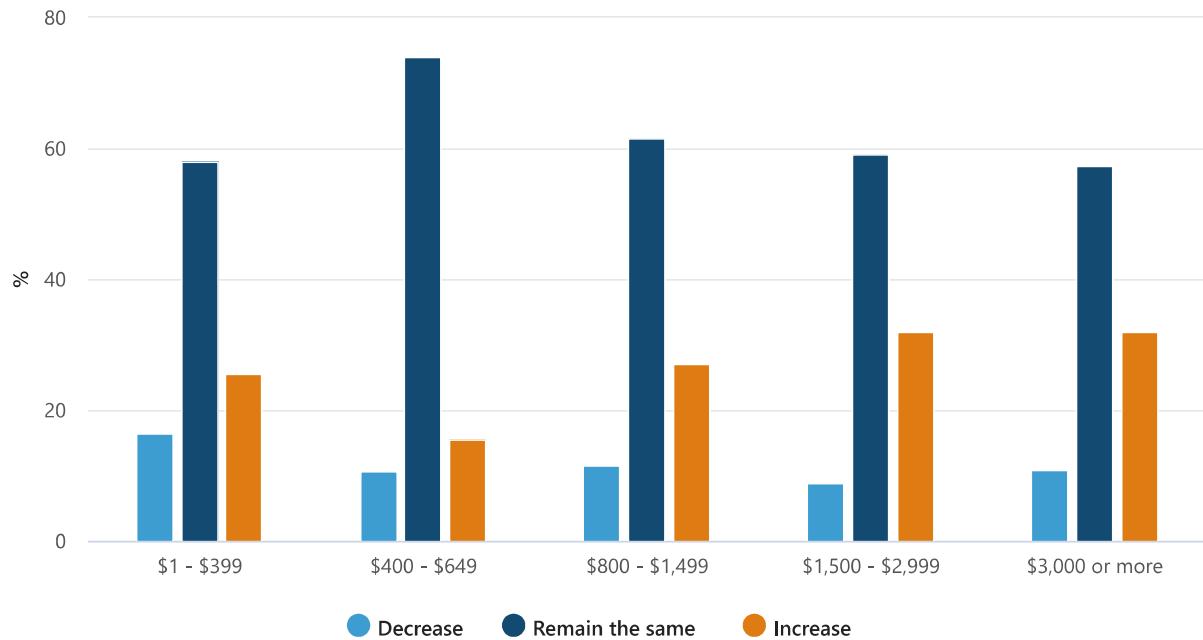


a. 'Other sources' include:

1. Superannuation, an annuity or private pension
2. Profit or loss from own unincorporated business or share in a partnership
3. Profit or loss from a rental investment property
4. Any other regular source such as interest, dividends, scholarships, silent partnerships, child support, workers compensation

When broken down by total weekly household income (TWHI) there are also significant differences in the expected change to household income. Almost one in three (32%) Australians where the TWHI is \$3,000 or more per week expect their household income to increase over the next 12 months, compared with one in six (16%) where the TWHI is between \$400 to \$649 per week.

**Persons aged 18 years and over, expected change in household income over the next 12 months, by total weekly household income(a)**



a. Refers to gross total household income before tax or Medicare levy is taken out

### Expected household savings

The survey also asked questions on household savings and planned actions with money already saved or expected to save.

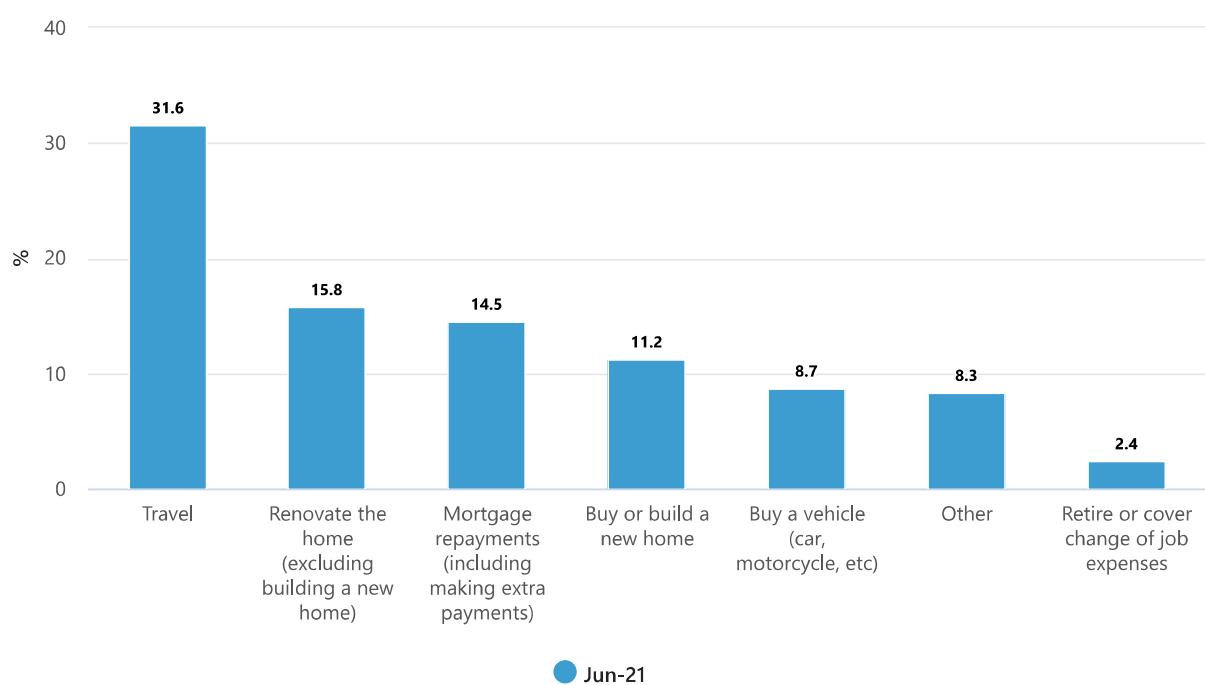
Over the next 12 months:

- 54% of Australians expect their household to be able to save money (similar to 52% in April 2021)
- 26% of Australians do not know if their household will be able to save money (similar to 24% in April 2021)
- 20% of Australians expect their household will not be able to save money (similar to 23% in April 2021).

Plans to use current or expected savings over the next 12 months include:

- travel (32%)
- renovating the home (16%)
- mortgage repayments (15%)
- building or buying a new home (11%).

### Persons aged 18 years and over, actions planned for savings over the next 12 months(a)



a. Respondents may have reported more than one action planned for their savings. Components are not able to be added together to produce a total

## Spending Key findings

- In June 2021, just over one in four (27%) Australians expected their household spending to increase over the next 12 months.

### Expected household spending

In June 2021, the survey asked questions on expected household spending over the next 12 months. Household spending included:

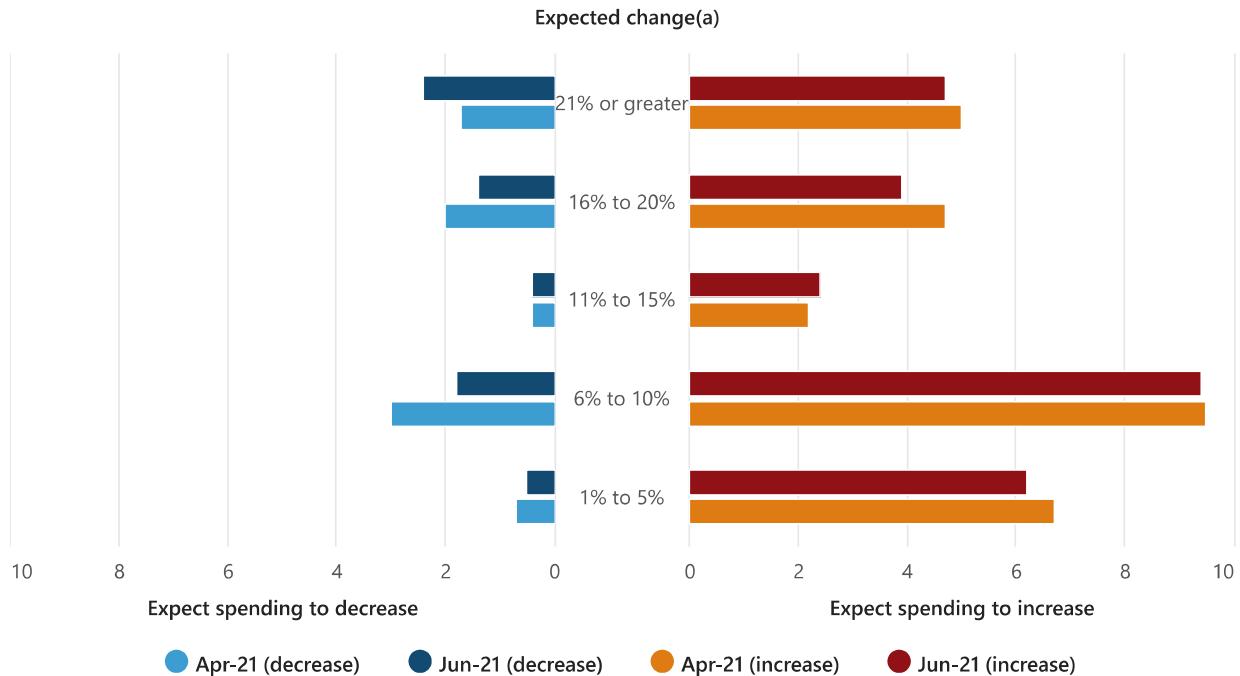
- groceries
- take-away or delivered meals
- cafés, restaurants, pubs, clubs or bars
- clothing or footwear
- personal care (e.g. hairdressers, barbers, beauty services and products)
- household furnishings and equipment (e.g. sofas, desks, electrical goods)
- motor vehicle costs (e.g. fuel, repairs)
- public transport
- taxi and ride-sharing fares
- recreation or leisure activities (e.g. going to cinemas, playing sports, gym)
- household expenses (e.g. rent, mortgage, utilities, maintenance, improvements).

Over the next 12 months:

- 27% of Australians expect their household spending to increase (similar to 29% in April 2021)
- 66% of Australians expect their household spending to stay the same (similar to 63% in April 2021)
- 7% of Australians expect their household spending to decrease (similar to 8% in April 2021).

The most common expectation for a change in household spending in the next 12 months was an increase between 6% to 10% (reported by 9% of Australians in June 2021 and 10% in April 2021).

**Persons aged 18 years and over, expected change in total household spending over the next 12 months, by time of reporting**

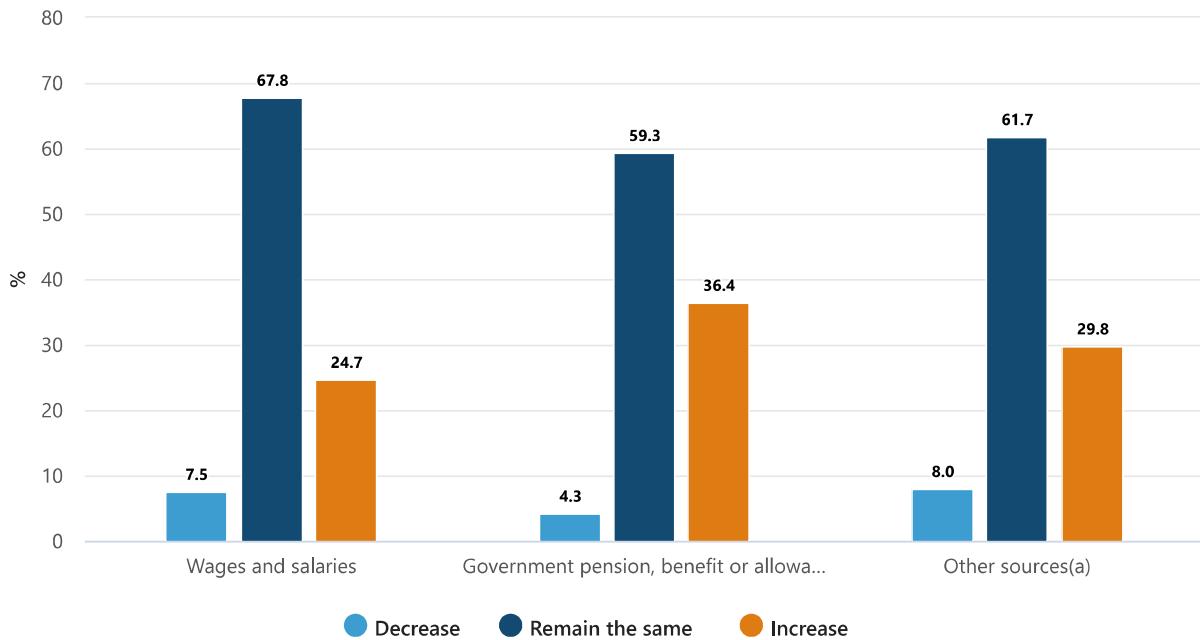


a. Proportion who expect spending to stay the same is included in the total (denominator) for each cycle but not included in the graph

In June 2021, when broken down by main source of household income (MSHI), over the next 12 months:

- 36% of Australians whose MSHI is through government pensions and allowances expect their household spending to increase
- 25% of Australians whose MSHI is through wages and salaries expect their household spending to increase.

## Persons aged 18 years and over, expected change in household spending over the next 12 months, by main source of household income



a. 'Other sources' include:

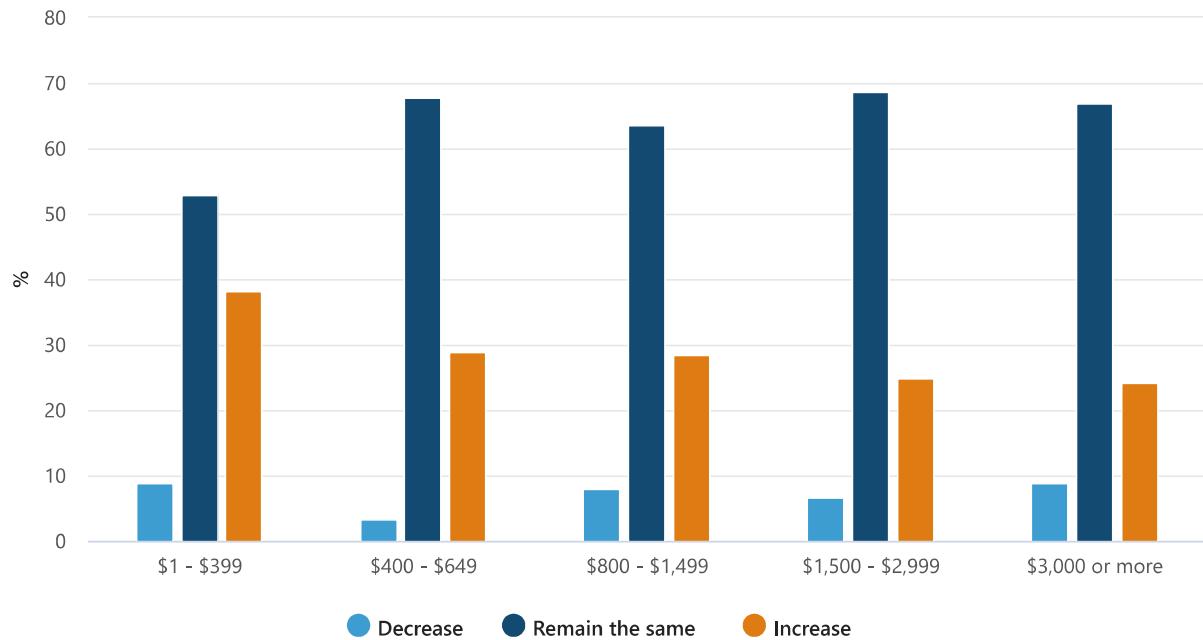
1. Superannuation, an annuity or private pension
2. Profit or loss from own unincorporated business or share in a partnership
3. Profit or loss from a rental investment property
4. Any other regular source such as interest, dividends, scholarships, silent partnerships, child support, workers compensation

When broken down by total weekly household income (TWHI), over the next 12 months:

- 38%\* of Australians whose TWHI is between \$1 to \$399 per week expect their household spending to increase
- 24% of Australians whose TWHI is above \$3000 per week expect their household spending to increase.

Proportions marked with an asterisk (\*) have a Margin of Error (MoE) greater than 10 percentage points which should be considered when using this information.

**Persons aged 18 years and over, expected change in household spending over the next 12 months, by total weekly household income(a)**



a. Refers to gross total household income before tax or Medicare levy is taken out

## Study and training

### Key findings

- In June 2021, over one in four (28%) Australians aged 18 years and over had undertaken study or training since January 2021.
- One in four (25%) people intended to undertake new or additional study in 2021 but had not yet started.

### Study since January 2021

In June 2021, over one in four (28%) Australians aged 18 years and over had undertaken study or training since January 2021.

The types of study and training undertaken since January 2021 included:

- formal learning leading to a qualification, such as a certificate, diploma or bachelor degree (52%)
- formal learning not leading to a qualification, such as a one-off unit or training for a skill set (15%)
- non-formal learning, such as industry or product specific non-award courses (21%)
- informal learning, such as on the job training, self-learning a language or watching a series of lectures (38%).

Those who had undertaken study or training since January 2021 were more likely to be:

- women (31%) than men (25%)
- people with a job (32%) than those without a job (19%)
- people aged 18 to 34 years (44%) than those aged 65 years and over (10%).

The most common type of study for women and men was formal learning leading to a qualification (56% of women and 47% of men undertaking study since January 2021).

Younger Australians aged 18 to 34 years, were more likely to have undertaken formal study leading to a qualification than those aged 35 to 64 years (71% compared with 34%).

People aged 35 to 64 years were more likely than those aged 18 to 34 years to undertake:

- formal learning not leading to a qualification (23% compared with 10%)
- non-formal learning (25% compared with 15%).

## **Study intentions in 2021**

In June 2021, one in four (25%) Australians aged 18 years and over intended to undertake study in 2021 but had not yet started. This included some of those who had already begun study or training since January 2021.

Those who had not started study intended for 2021, were more likely to be:

- people in Victoria (30%) than those in New South Wales (22%), South Australia (22%), or Northern Territory, Tasmania and Australian Capital Territory (20%)
- people aged 18 to 34 years (36%) than those aged 35 to 64 years (25%) or 65 years and over (8%)
- people with a job (29%) than those without a job (17%).

Of those who had not started study intended for 2021:

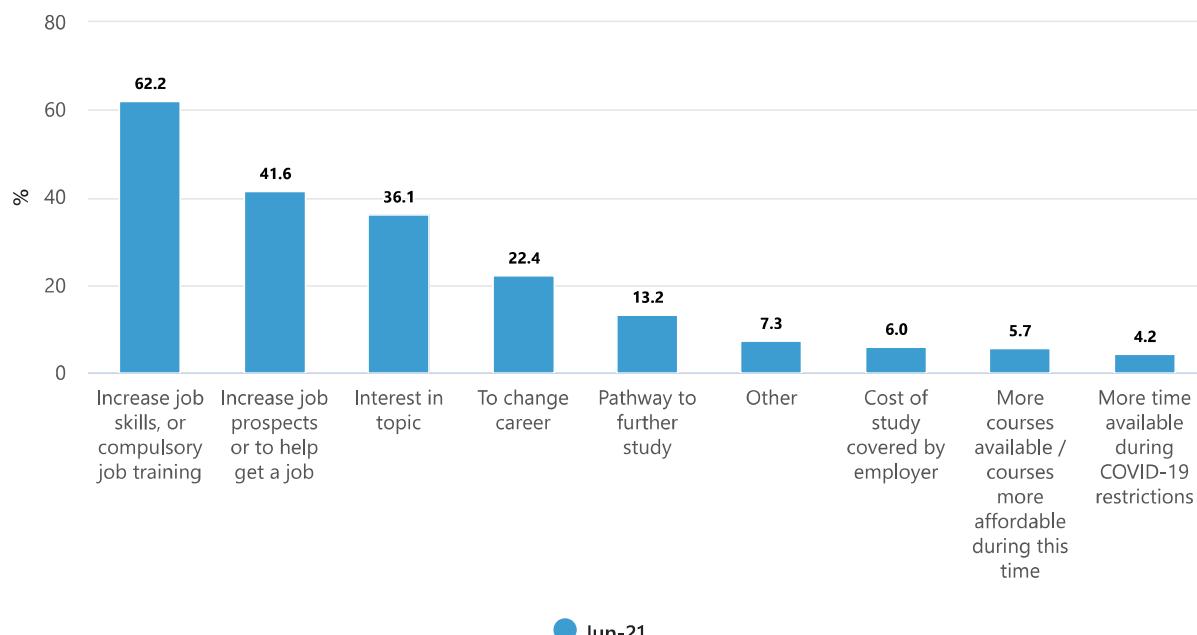
- 4% planned to use places made available by the JobTrainer Fund
- 65% did not intend to use places made available by the JobTrainer Fund

- 31% were unsure.

The most common reasons people reported for studying or intending to study in 2021 were:

- to increase job skills, or compulsory job training (62%)
- to increase job prospects or to help get a job (42%)
- interest in a topic (36%).

### **Persons aged 18 years and over who studied or intended to study in 2021, reasons for studying or intending to study in 2021**



## **Activities**

### **Key findings**

- In June 2021, more people with jobs (37%) worked from home one or more times a week compared with before COVID-19 restrictions began in March 2020 (24%).
- People in Victoria (81%) were more likely than people in the rest of Australia (26%) to report the COVID-19 pandemic had at least somewhat limited how often they participated in

activities in the last four weeks.

## Participation in activities

The survey asked people to reflect on how often they participated in selected activities in the last four weeks. The same topic was asked in June, April and February 2021, and December, October and September 2020. For comparison, participation before COVID-19 restrictions began in March 2020 has also been collected.

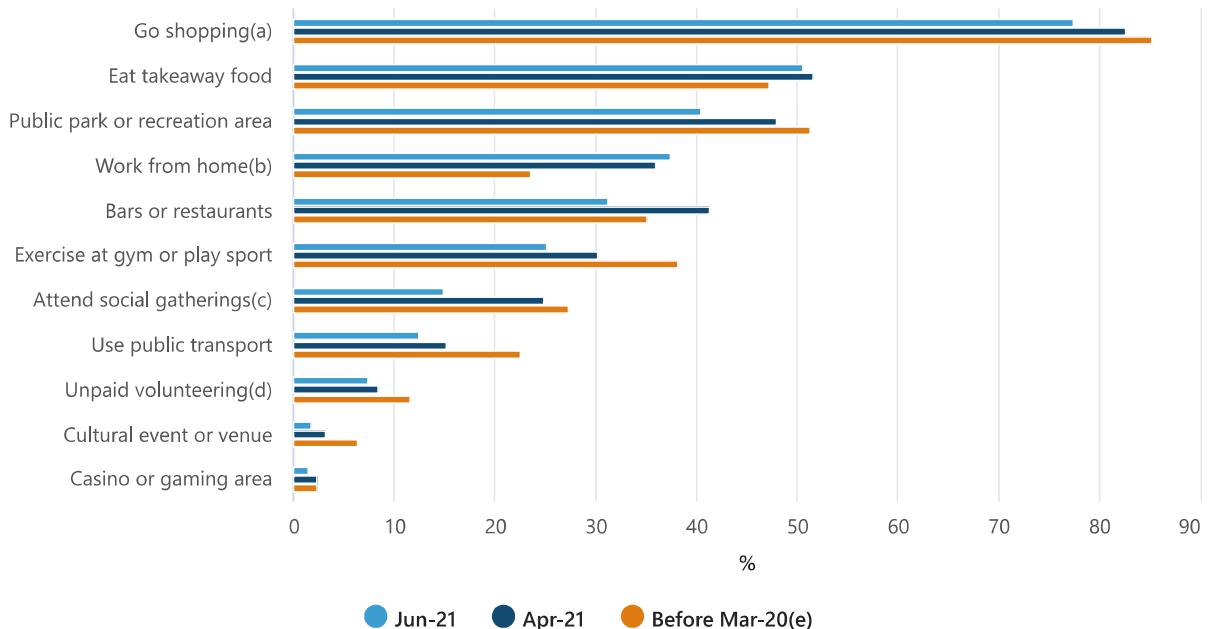
In June 2021, the biggest decrease in participation in comparison to April 2021 was for:

- visiting bars or restaurants in person (31% visiting one or more times a week in June 2021 compared with 41% in April 2021)
- attending social gatherings of more than 10 people (15% attending one or more times a week in June 2021 compared with 25% in April 2021)
- visiting a public park or recreation area (41% visiting one or more times a week in June 2021 compared with 48% in April 2021).

Comparing June 2021 with before COVID-19 restrictions began in March 2020:

- more people with jobs worked from home one or more times a week (37% in June 2021 compared with 24% before March 2020)
- fewer people reported exercising at a gym or playing sport one or more times a week (25% in June 2021 compared with 38% before March 2020)
- fewer people reported attending social gatherings of more than 10 people one or more times a week (15% in June 2021 compared with 27% before March 2020).

**Persons aged 18 years and over, participation in selected activities one or more times a week in the last four weeks, by time of reporting**



- a. Includes shopping in physical stores only
- b. Includes people 18 years and over with a job at the time of the survey
- c. Includes social gatherings of 10 or more people
- d. Doing unpaid voluntary work for an organisation or group
- e. Usual participation in the activity before COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020

At the start of the survey, parts of Victoria emerged from 14 days of strict lockdown with remaining restrictions impacting social gatherings and businesses throughout the survey period. New South Wales and Queensland identified cases through local transmission towards the end of the survey. Additional restrictions in New South Wales and Queensland were not implemented in time to impact survey responses. Other states and territories had eased most restrictions.

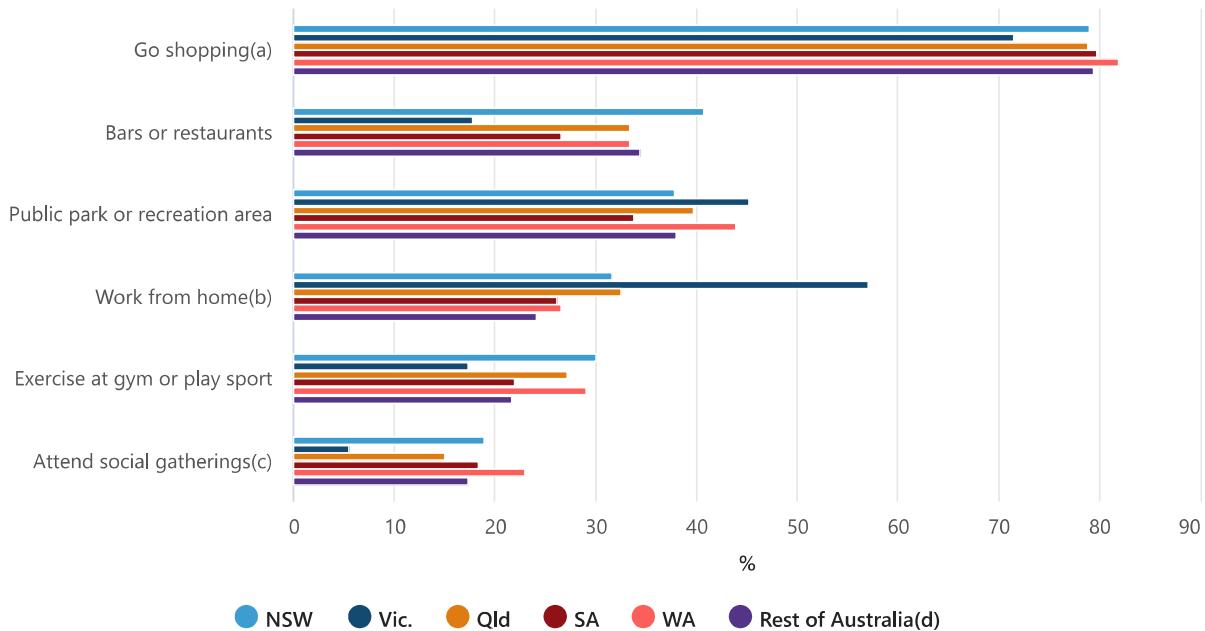
In June 2021, people with a job in Victoria (57%) were more likely to work from home one or more times a week compared with the rest of Australia (30%).

In the last four weeks, fewer people in Victoria:

- visited bars or restaurants one or more times a week (18% compared with 36% in the rest of Australia)

- attended social gatherings of more than 10 people one or more times a week (6% compared with 18% in the rest of Australia).

### Persons aged 18 years and over, participation in selected activities one or more times a week in June 2021, by location



a. Includes shopping in physical stores only

b. Includes people 18 years and over with a job at the time of the survey

c. Includes social gatherings of ten or more people

d. Rest of Australia includes Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory

### Impact of COVID-19 on participation

In June 2021, the survey asked whether the COVID-19 pandemic had limited how often people participated in the selected activities in the last four weeks.

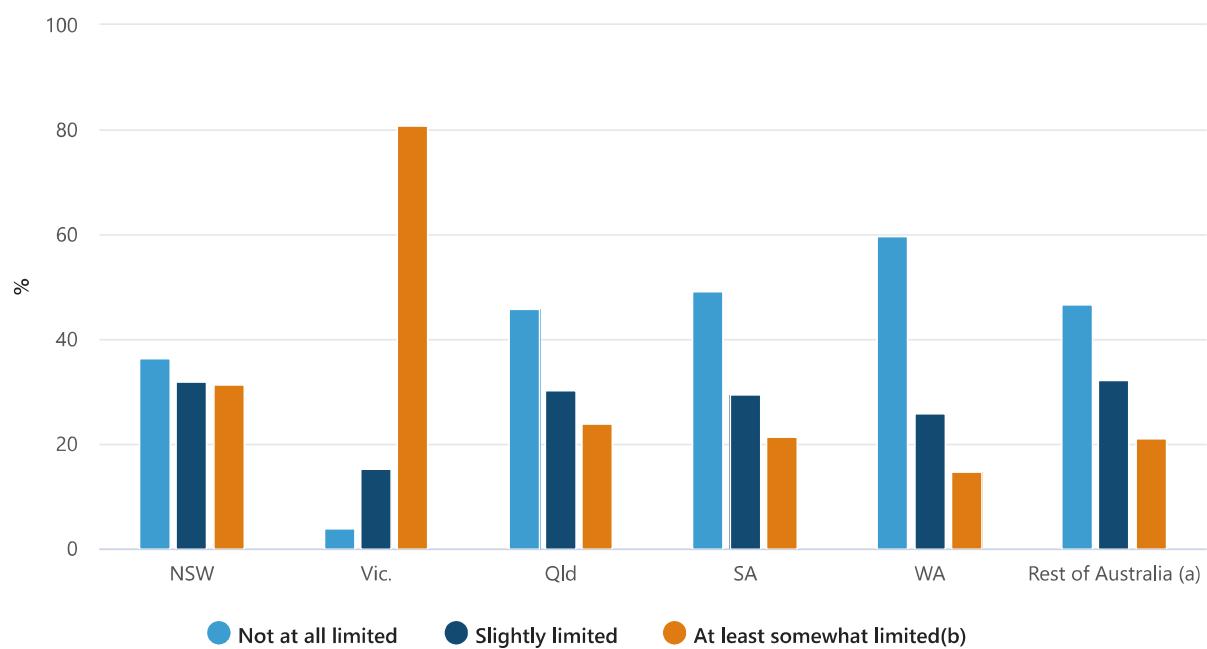
In the last four weeks:

- 40% reported the COVID-19 pandemic had at least somewhat limited how often they participated in the selected activities (an increase compared with 29% in April 2021)
- 26% reported the pandemic had slightly limited their participation (similar to 29% in April 2021)

- 33% reported the pandemic had not at all limited their participation (a decrease compared with 42% in April 2021).

People in Victoria (81%) were more likely than people in the rest of Australia (26%) to report the COVID-19 pandemic had at least somewhat limited how often they participated in activities.

### **Persons aged 18 years and over, whether participation in activities in the last four weeks was limited by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, by location**



a. Rest of Australia includes Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory

b. At least somewhat limited includes somewhat limited, moderately limited, and extremely limited

## **Life after the COVID-19 pandemic**

### **Key findings**

- In June 2021, over one in four (26%) people reported life would take more than a year to return to normal, compared with 14% in November 2020 and 18% in July 2020.
- In June 2021, people in Victoria (34%) were more likely than people in the rest of Australia (23%) to report that it would take more than a year for life to return to normal.

- The most common aspects of life Australians wanted to continue after the COVID-19 restrictions ease were working from home (33%) and spending more time with family and friends (33%).

## Time expected for life to return to normal

Respondents were asked to consider the impacts of COVID-19 on their health and lifestyle and how long they expected it would be before their lives returned to normal. 'Normal' was left to the respondent to define. The same question was previously asked in July and November 2020.

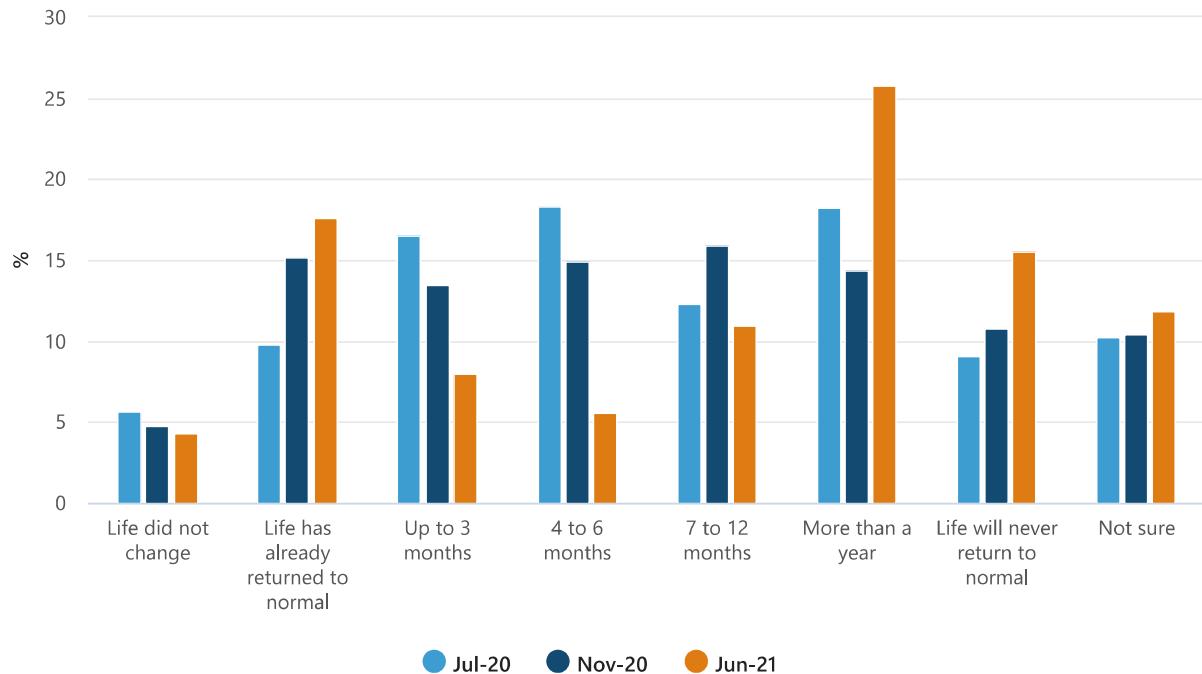
At the start of the survey, parts of Victoria were emerging from 14 days of a strict lockdown with several restrictions remaining in place. New South Wales introduced mandatory face mask requirements towards the end of the survey due to locally transmitted cases. Other states and territories had removed most restrictions.

In November 2020, all jurisdictions had continued with easing COVID-19 restrictions. In July 2020, Victoria had gone into lockdown following the second wave of COVID-19 cases while other states and territories were gradually easing restrictions.

In June 2021:

- over one in four (26%) people reported life would take more than a year to return to normal (compared with 14% in November 2020 and 18% in July 2020)
- around one in five (22%) people reported life did not change or had returned to normal (similar to 20% in November 2020 and an increase from 16% in July 2020)
- one in six (16%) felt that life would never return to normal in June 2021 (an increase compared with 11% in November 2020 and 9% in July 2020).

**Persons aged 18 years and over, time expected for life to return to normal, by time of reporting(a)**

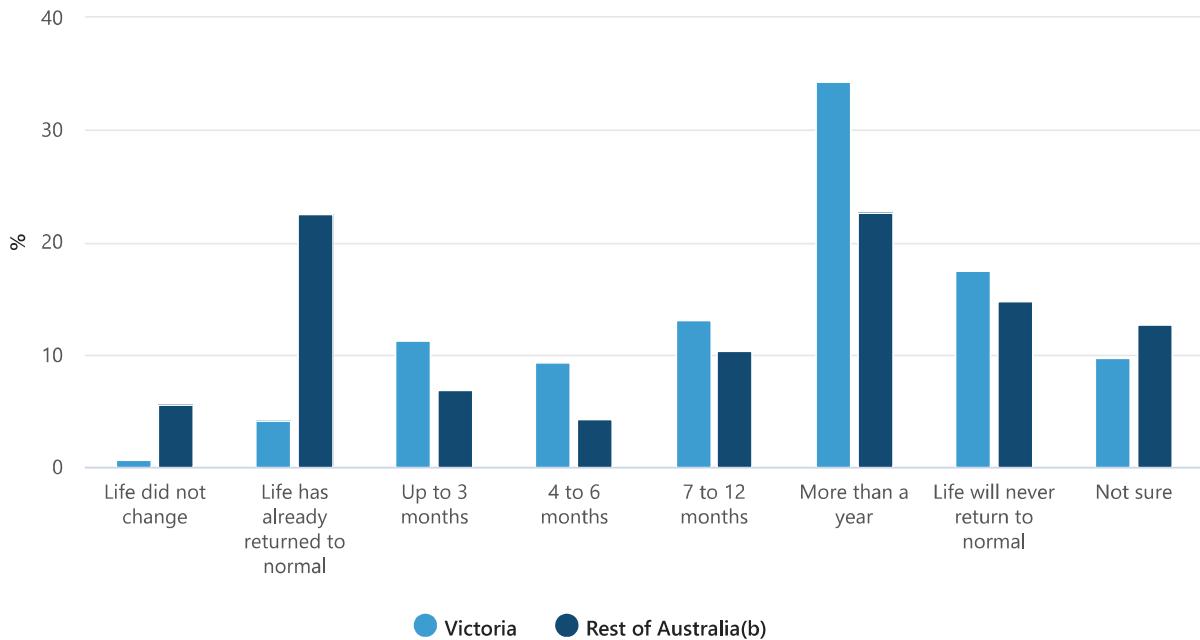


a. 'Normal' was left to the respondent to define. If asked, examples were provided such as "your life before COVID-19" or "before the 1st March 2020"

In June 2021, people in Victoria were:

- more likely to report it would take over a year for life to return to normal (34% compared with 23% of people in the rest of Australia)
- less likely to report that life had already returned to normal (4% compared with 23% of people in the rest of Australia).

## Persons aged 18 years and over, time expected for life to return to normal, Victoria and rest of Australia(a)(b)



a. 'Normal' was left to the respondent to define. If asked, examples were provided such as "your life before COVID-19" or "before the 1st March 2020"

b. Rest of Australia includes New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory

## Aspects of life to continue after COVID-19 restrictions

The survey asked respondents to think about life after the COVID-19 pandemic, and any aspects of life under the COVID-19 restrictions they would like to see continue in the future.

In June 2021, the aspects of life under COVID-19 restrictions Australians reported they would most like to see continue were:

- working from home (33%)
- spending more time with family and friends (33%)
- spending less and saving more (29%)
- slower pace of life (27%)
- taking more domestic holidays (27%)

- spending more time outdoors (25%)
- less environmental impact (25%)
- spending more time at home (24%)
- spending more time on hobbies (24%).

One in six (18%) people wanted none of the selected aspects of life under COVID-19 restrictions to continue.

In June 2021, women were more likely than men to want to continue:

- a slower pace of life (32% compared with 22%)
- spending more time cooking or baking (19% compared with 9%)
- a stronger sense of community (23% compared with 15%).

Men were more likely than women to want none of the aspects of life under COVID-19 restrictions to continue (20% compared with 15%).

In June 2021, the survey found:

- people in family households with children (32%) were more likely than those living alone (13%) to want to continue spending more time at home
- people born overseas (15%) were more likely than those born in Australia (9%) to want to continue connecting with friends and family online
- people aged 65 years and older (33%) were more likely than people aged 18 to 34 years (10%) or 35 to 64 years (16%) to select none of the aspects of life to continue after the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Job status**

### **Key findings**

- The proportion of Australians with a job working paid hours has remained the same since March 2021 (63%).

### **Current job status**

The survey collected changes to the job status of Australians when interviewed in mid-June. Responses are weighted and comparisons are included to show how the employment status of people has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Respondents were asked simple questions about changes to their job situation, rather than the full suite of employment-related questions included in the ABS' Labour Force Survey (see the

Labour Force Survey questionnaire, available from the Collection method chapter in the [Labour force, Australia methodology](https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/>) publication). The results of this survey are, therefore, not directly comparable to Australia's official Labour Force measures. The Margin of Error (MoE) on these estimates is greater than for Labour Force statistics (the Labour Force Survey sample is around 15 times larger). More information about measuring the labour market impacts of COVID-19 can be found here ([https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Measuring Labour Market COVID19](https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Measuring_Labour_Market_COVID19)).

The proportion of Australians with a job working paid hours has remained the same since March 2021 (63%). In June 2021, the proportion of people with a job and not working paid hours was 6%.

### Persons aged 18 years and over, self-reported job status

	Aug-20(a)	Sep-20(b)	Oct-20(b)	Nov-20(c)	Dec-20(b)	Jan-21(b)	Feb-21(b)	Mar-21(c)	Apr-21(b)	May-21(b)	Jun-21(b)
Has a job	68%	68%	67%	67%	67%	67%	68%	66%	67%	68%	68%
Working paid hours	60%	61%	62%	62%	63%	63%	64%	63%	63%	63%	63%
Not working paid hours	8%	7%	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%	6%
Does not have a paid job(d)	32%	32%	33%	33%	33%	33%	32%	34%	33%	31%	31%

- a. Job status reported mid-August
- b. Current job status based on changes between each collection
- c. Current job status based on changes between each collection for previous panel and reported status for new panel members
- d. Includes all people without a job and should be considered only a loose approximation for the combined "unemployed" and "not in the labour force" groups

The results of the most recent Labour Force Survey, with data in respect of the two weeks from 2 to 15 May 2021, collected over the three weeks from 9 to 29 May 2021, can be found using the following link: [Labour Force, Australia, May 2021](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/may-2021) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/may-2021>). The June 2021 results will be released 15 July 2021.

### What's next?

This is the final cycle of the Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey.

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

The results for all past publications can be accessed by selecting '[View all releases](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/household-impacts-covid-19-survey/>)' in the header of this publication.

This publication forms part of a suite of additional products that the ABS produced to measure the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Australian economy and society.

For more information refer to the [Measuring the impacts of COVID-19](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/covid-19>) update.

## Data downloads

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### Tables 1 - 30

[!\[\]\(711f81de5648ddf918583603859123f4\_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)

[2.14 MB]

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### Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 4940.0

## Methodology

[Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey methodology, June 2021](#)