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Research Insights

Taking the pulse of the nation

Australians optimistic about government actions and reducing the long lasting effects of COVID-19

Melbourne Institute's Survey of the Impact of COVID-19 in Australia

Survey Results: 13-15 April 2020*

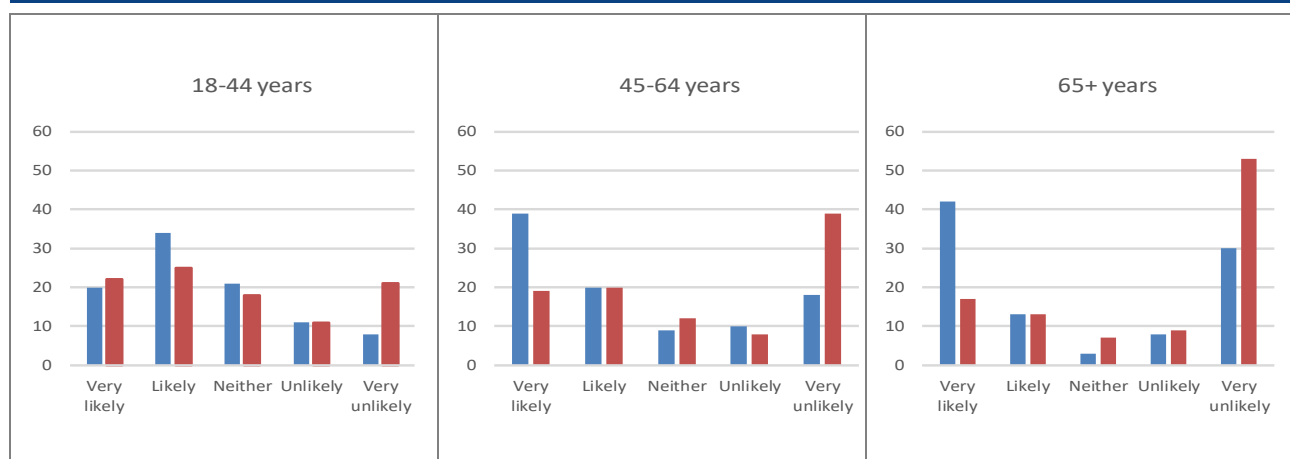
A glimmer of optimism – satisfaction with government policies to support jobs increased by 7 percentage points while fewer Australians interviewed expect the duration of the pandemic effects on economic activity to last beyond a year.

For survey results, see Figures 1 and 2 which compare two consecutive weeks of the survey.

- Compared to the survey held in the week April 6-11, the proportion of Australians interviewed in the week April 13-15 who are satisfied with government economic policies to support jobs and keep people at work increased from 62% to 69%. Furthermore, the proportion expecting the impact of the coronavirus pandemic to last for more than 12 months fell from 49% to 41%.
- The proportion of survey respondents reporting being financially stressed (in terms of paying for essential goods and services) remained at around 30%, while the proportion who felt depressed and anxious, during the past week, remained at around 20%.
- When asked about their perceptions of social behaviour, almost 80% of Australians (same as last survey) thought that “most people” to “everyone” in their neighbourhood, practiced social distancing.
- To measure pro-social behaviour, the survey included a question about respondents' willingness to donate blood if there were a shortage. There is a marked shift from “likely” to “unlikely” in the distribution of responses between the pre- and the post-Easter surveys. The respondents indicating they are very unlikely to donate blood has increased from 16% to 33%.
- The swing in pro-social behaviour is reflected in the age distribution of responses to the question about donating blood. There are striking differences in the response to the pro-social behaviour question across the age groups. The biggest changes, however, are for those respondents who are 65+ years. The proportion of this group reporting being unlikely to donate blood increased from 30% to 53%.

Figure 1: Age groups and Pro-Social Behaviour (Would you be willing to donate blood?)

A comparison of 2 weekly surveys: April 6-11 (blue) & April 13-15 (red)



* The survey contains responses from 1200 persons, aged 18 years and over. The sample is stratified by gender, age and location to be representative of the Australian population.

Figure 2: How are Australians Coping with COVID-19?

A comparison of 2 weekly surveys* April 6-11 (blue) & April 13-15 (red)



* The question about feeling depressed is about assessing symptoms/experiences and not about assessing the presence of a clinical diagnosis or disorder. The proportion in the “don’t know/refused” category, is very small and has been excluded from the figures.

Melbourne Institute: Applied Economic & Social Research

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About the survey

These results have been drawn from *Taking the pulse of the nation* - Melbourne Institute's survey of the impact of COVID-19. The aim of the weekly survey is to track changes in the economic and social wellbeing of Australians living through the effects of the coronavirus pandemic whilst adapting to various changes in Federal and State government policies.

The survey contains responses from 1200 persons, aged 18 years and over. The sample is stratified by gender, age and location to be representative of the Australian population.

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