

Mainstreet Insights

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# The art of finishing strong

Exploring Australians' sentiment amidst the transition to  
2021

**mainstreet**

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October 2020



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# Contents

About Mainstreet Insights	4
Research objectives	4
Research methodology	4
Australians might be ending 2020	6
Despite their circumstances Australians are optimistic	8
Australians expect Christmas to be different this year	12
Looking to the future	13
Demographic summary	16

# About Mainstreet Insights

Mainstreet Insights, an initiative of [Reventure](#) and [McCrinkle](#), exists to provide insights to build flourishing communities. It seeks to understand Australians as people not just consumers or employees. It explores the big issues of life that are impacting main street

Australia. From family and relationships to education, faith, wellbeing and work, it is a collection of timely insights that speaks into important community conversations to enable leaders to make informed decisions.

## Research objectives

This research conducted for Mainstreet Insights endeavours to provide insights into the concerns, behaviours, beliefs and habits of Australians as they emerge out of 2020 and begin the new year.

The key objectives of this research are to:

- Explore Australians' attitudes and beliefs about 2020
- Understand Australians' sentiment heading into the holidays and the new year
- Explore Australian's expectations for 2021 and beyond

## Research methodology

*The Art of finishing strong: Exploring Australian's sentiment emerging out of 2020 and beginning the new year* report is the collation of quantitative data collected via an online panel. The national representative survey of Australians aged 18+ was in field from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of October and yielded 1,000 responses.

### Graphs and rounding

Data labels on the graphs in this report have been rounded for simplicity. Some graphs, may, therefore sum to 99% or 101%. Any calculations where two data points have been

added are based on raw data (not the rounded data labels on the graph) which have been rounded once combined.

### Terminology

Throughout this report the total sample of respondents are referred to as Australians. In addition to this several segmentation filters are applied to understand the results. One filter regularly applied is employed Australians who are referred to as "Australian workers".

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<b>Data sets</b>	Question and option/s chosen	No. of respondents
Australian workers	Q. <i>Which of the following best describes your employment status?</i> 'Full-time', 'part-time/casual' or 'self-employed/independent contractor'	558

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# Australians might be ending 2020

## Australians have been stretched to their capacity.

Despite optimism emerging out of 2020 and the pandemic, the events of the year have left a lasting impact on Australians.

Not only do Australians feel that 2020 has stretched them beyond their capacity (55%), but many are concerned about their future. Three in five Australians (59%) are worried about how changes in the Australian economy will affect their job in the year ahead.

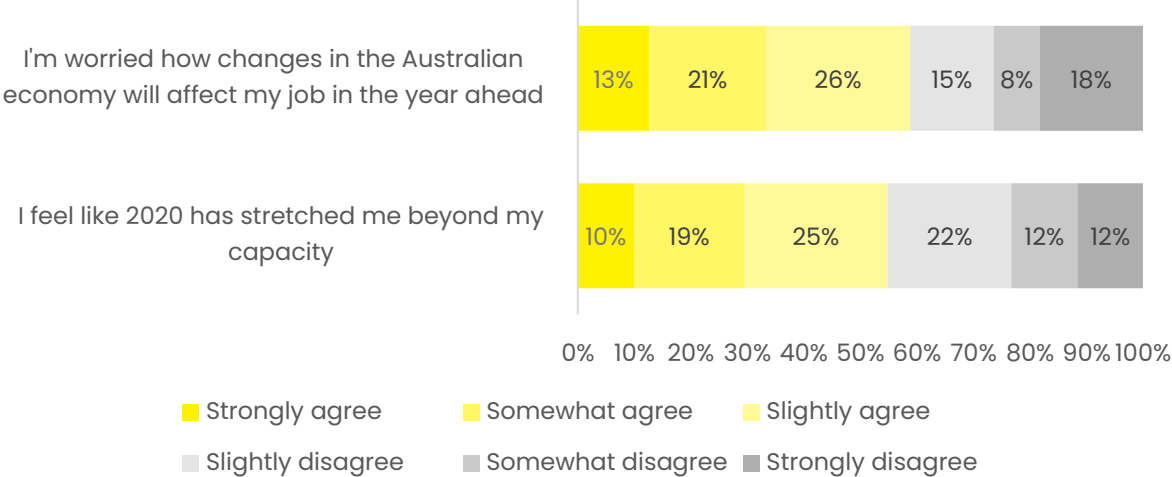
Australians living in New South Wales are more likely than Australians living in other states to be worried how changes in the Australian economy will affect their job in the year ahead (68% NSW, 60% VIC, 49% QLD).

Younger generations are not only more likely to feel 2020 has pushed them to their capacity compared to older generations (78% Gen Z, 74% Gen Y cf. 54% Gen X, 32% Baby Boomers, 28% Builders) but also, that changes in the economy will affect their job in the year ahead (59% Gen Z, 76% Gen Y cf. 80% Gen X, 32% Baby Boomers, 23% Builders).

Almost two-thirds of Australian workers (63%) feel that 2020 has stretched them to their capacity, three in four (75%) are worried about how changes to the Australian economy will affect their job in the year ahead.

***“From rising unemployment and closed international borders to transformed industries and working from home, the pandemic has reshaped work. Yet it is already clear that the mental health and wellbeing of workers is an essential factor that will most impact and define the future of work. “said Dr McMillan***

### To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



# Despite their circumstances Australians are optimistic

## Australians are valuing their support systems.

Australians are embracing mental health and wellbeing, beginning with establishing good support systems. For nine in ten Australians (89%) 2020 has highlighted the importance of having a good support system around them.

Four in five (80%) Australians agree that even though 2020 has been a tough year they have made sure to prioritise their mental health.

***“The age at which we experience a transformative event determines how embedded it will be in our psyche. While the pandemic has impacted us all, its social effects are most marked in the younger generations.” said Mark McCrindle***

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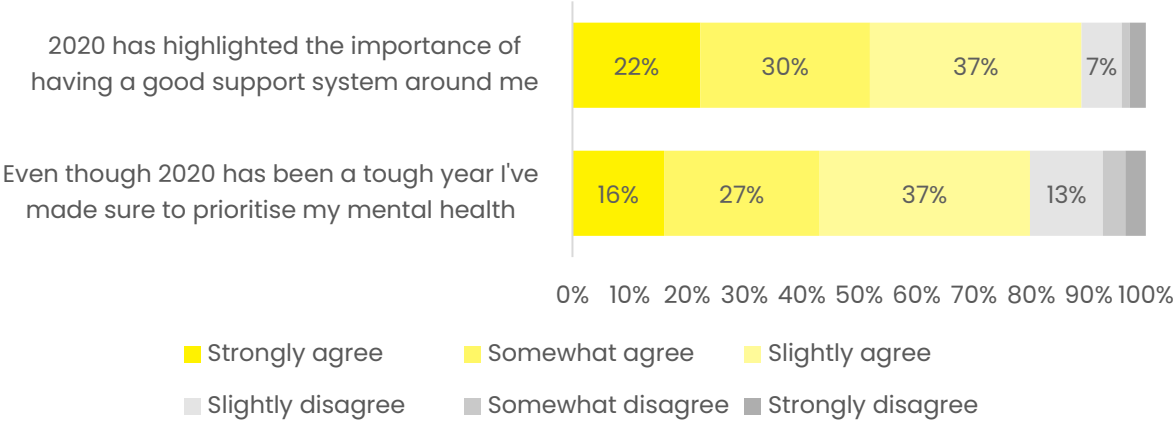
Despite being most impacted in their mental health, Gen Zs are less likely to prioritise their mental health in comparison to older generations (76% Gen Z cf. 83% Gen Y, 78% Gen X, 77% Baby Boomers, 88% Builders).

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Four in five Australian workers (82%) made sure to prioritise their mental health, despite believing that 2020 has been a tough year. Nine in ten (91%) believe that 2020 has highlighted the importance of having a good support system around them.



### To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



## The majority of Australians are thriving.

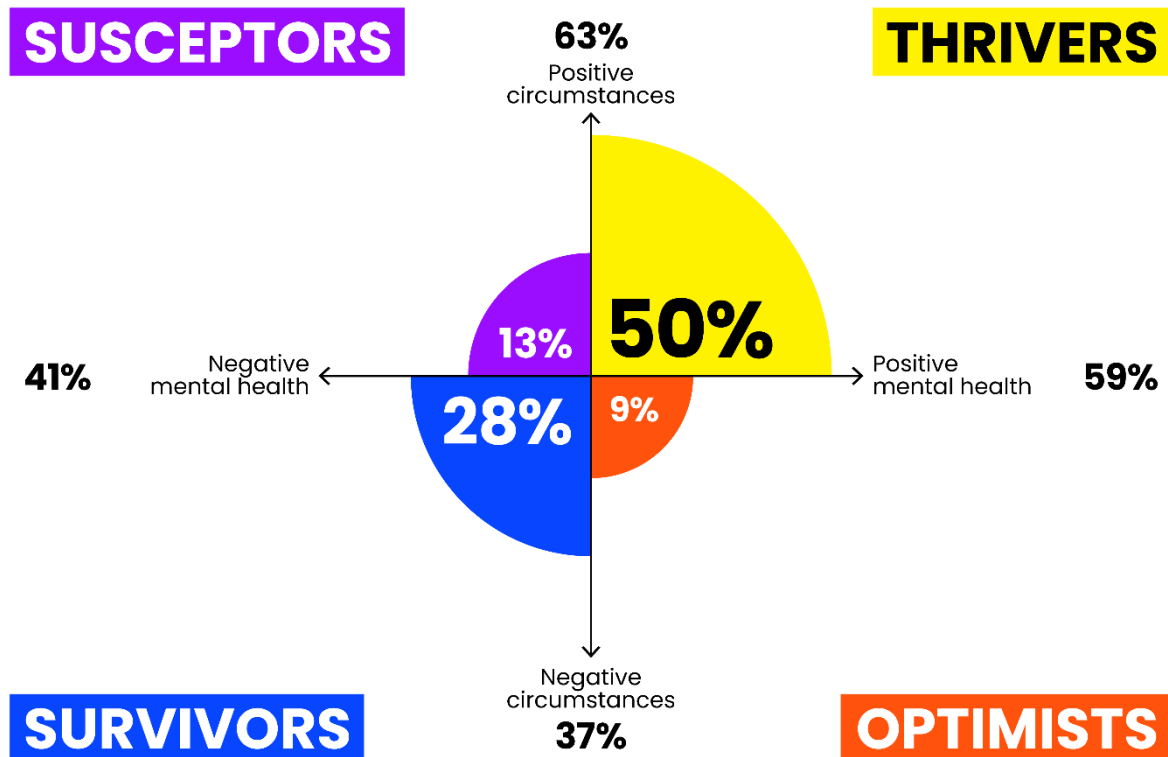
2020 has been a tough year and brought on many hardships, with Australians not only affected in numerous ways, but responding uniquely to their situations. One in two Australians (50%) are thriving throughout 2020, experiencing both positive mental health and positive circumstances overall.

Just less than one in ten (9%) are optimists, experiencing positive mental health despite negative circumstances. One in eight (13%) are susceptible to their circumstances, experiencing overall negative mental health, but positive circumstances throughout 2020 and COVID-19.

Three in ten Australians (28%) are, however, only surviving through 2020 and COVID-19, experiencing both negative mental health and negative circumstances overall.

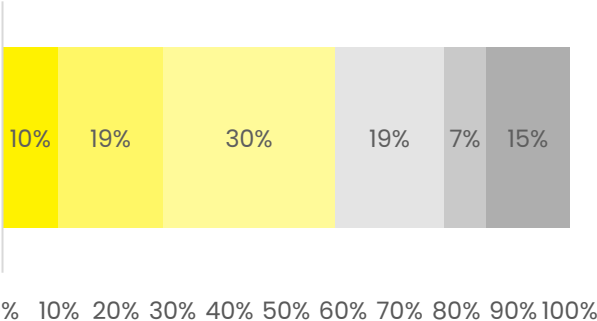
### Access to government support has been helpful

Three in five Australians (59%) believe that access to government support has helped to decrease the impact of COVID-19 on their mental health.



### To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Access to government support has helped to decrease the impacts of COVID-19 on my mental health



- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

# Australians expect Christmas to be different this year

## Australians might be spending Christmas without their families.

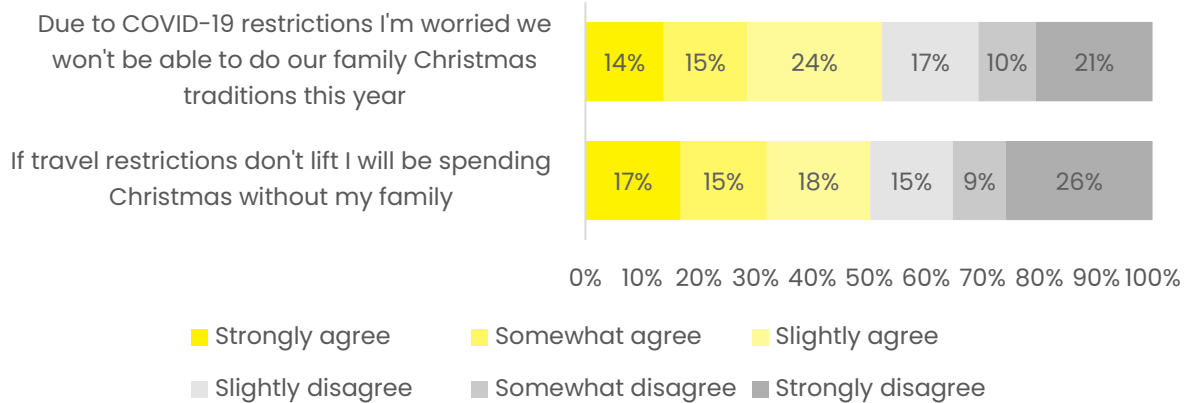
COVID-19 has not only affected everyone’s year but is now affecting the holiday season too. While we often think of Christmas as a time of celebration with family for one in two Australians (50%) if the border and travel restrictions are not lifted, they will be spending Christmas without their family this year.

For many families the traditions and memories are a key part of Christmas and one in two Australians (52%) are worried that due to restrictions, they won’t be able to do their family Christmas traditions this year.

Younger generations are more worried than their older counterparts they won’t be spending Christmas with their families if restrictions don’t lift (63% Gen Z, 64% Gen Y cf. 47% Gen X, 33% Baby Boomers, 46% Builders).

Considering the extensive lockdowns in Melbourne, it is no surprise that Victorians are more worried than Australians living in other states they won’t be able to spend Christmas with their family if travel restrictions do not lift (65% VIC cf. 53% NSW, 41% QLD).

### To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



# Looking to the future

## Australians are hopeful for the new year.

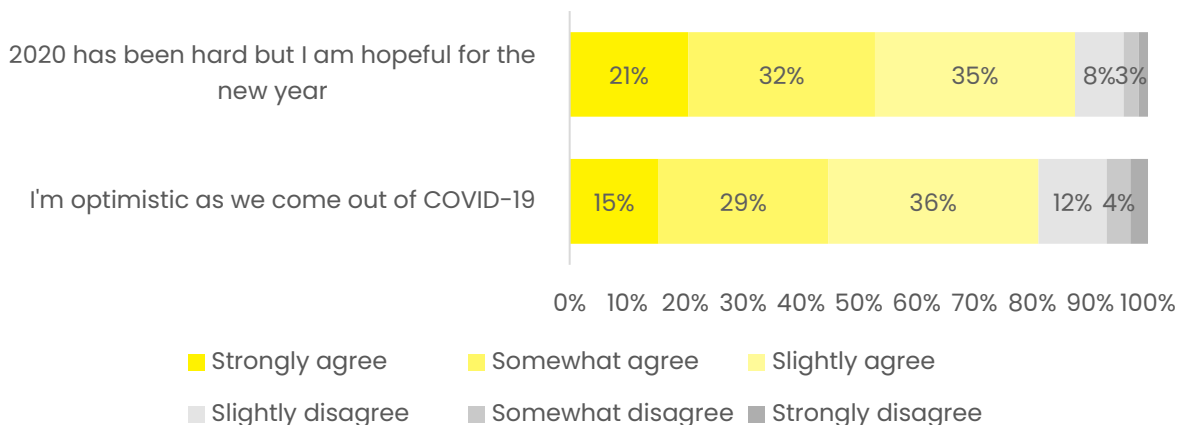
Australians are looking ahead to the new year as they emerge from the pandemic, with many welcoming the new beginning. Despite the difficulties of 2020, almost nine in ten Australians (87%) are feeling hopeful for the new year.

A similar proportion of Australians (81%) are feeling optimistic as they come out of COVID-19.

Older generations are more likely to feel optimistic as they come out of COVID-19 compared to younger generations (92% Builders, 82% Baby Boomers, 81% Gen X cf. 81% Gen Y, 71% Gen Z).

Despite the easing of lockdowns, Victorians are less optimistic about the year ahead than other Australians (79% VIC cf. 81% QLD, 84% NSW).

### To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



## Australians believe the coming decades will bring more trouble.

Even though Australians are optimistic and hopeful for the new year, they are expressing a stoic outlook. Despite the hardships experienced throughout 2020, Australians believe the next few decades will be worse.

Four in five Australians (81%) believe that even though COVID-19 has been big, the next few decades will bring even bigger economic and global health shocks. The majority of Australians however, only slightly agree (39%).

Seven in ten Australians (72%) expect there will be more COVID-19 outbreaks and temporary returns of restrictions in 2021.

***“Much of what we had pre-COVID we will never see again. We are not moving to the next but the new. It is not a continuation of how things were, but the start of a whole new reality.” said Dr McMillan***

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Older generations are more likely to believe that in 2021 there will be more COVID-19 outbreaks and temporary returns of restrictions (78% Builders, 71% Baby Boomers, 71% Gen X cf. 74% Gen Y, 68% Gen Z).

### **Australians are proud of their response to 2020**

Despite their concerns for the future, Australians are proud of their response so far. Four in five Australians (82%) are proud of how the nation has rallied together to get through 2020.

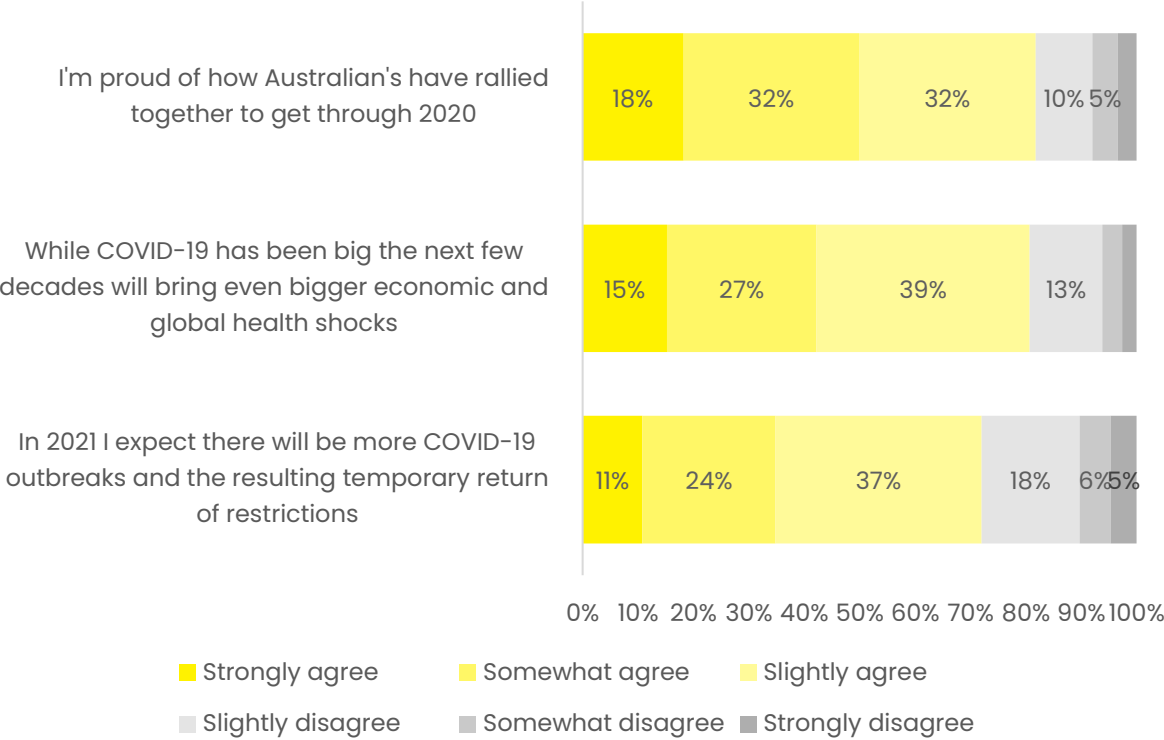
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Older generations are more likely than their younger counterparts to be proud of how Australian's have rallied together to get through 2020 (92% Builders, 86% Baby Boomers, 83% Gen X cf. 80% Gen Y, 69% Gen Z).

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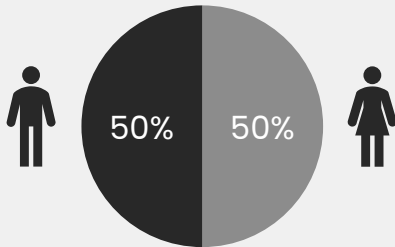
Victorians are least likely than Australians living in other states to be proud of how Australian's have rallied together to get through 2020 (81% VIC cf. 82% NSW, 84% QLD).

### To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

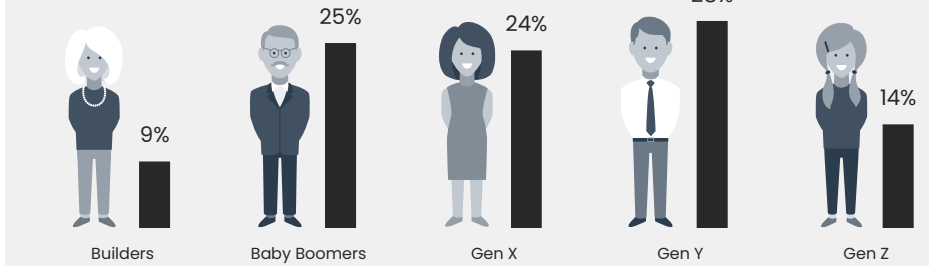


# Demographic summary

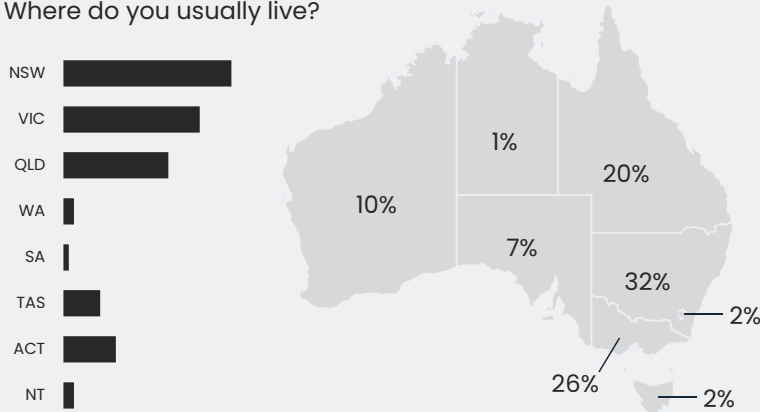
Are you male or female?



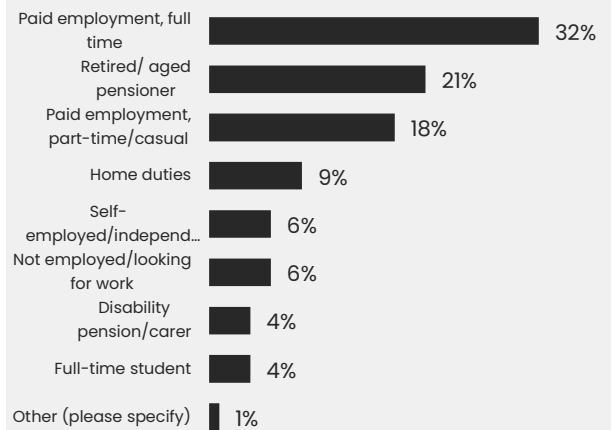
What age will you be in 2020?



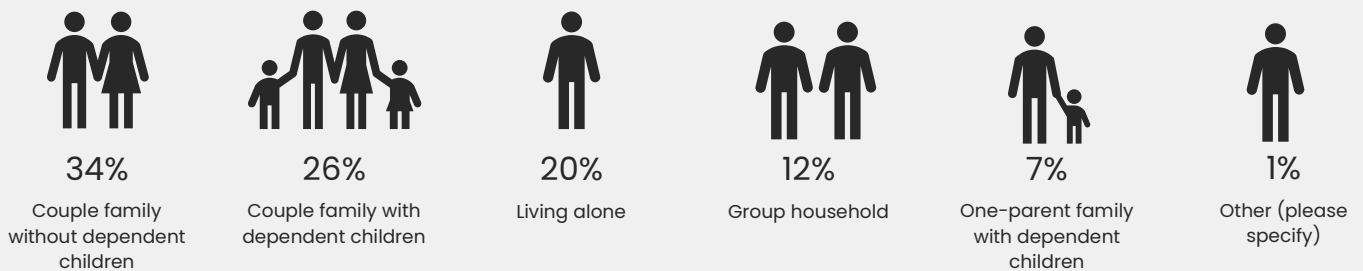
Where do you usually live?



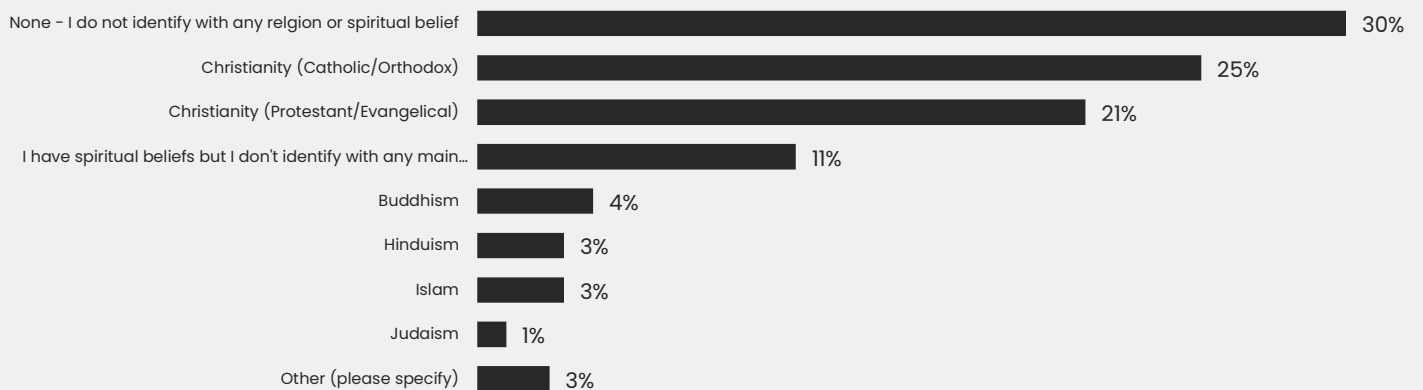
Which of the following best describes your employment status?



What type of household do you currently live in?



What religion do you currently practice or identify with?





**mainstreet**

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