



Timor-Leste COVID-19 Survey

Round 5 – February 2021

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Timor-Leste COVID-19 Survey

February 2021 results



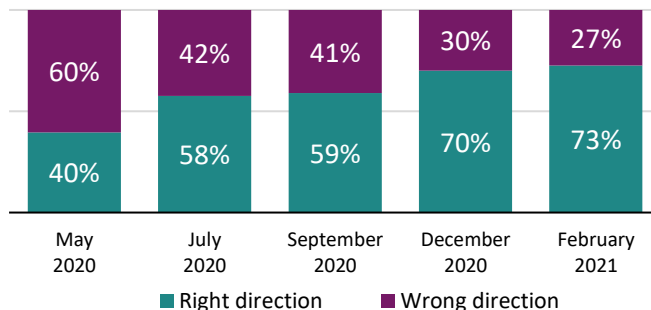
This factsheet presents the results of a **telephone survey** of 429 **Timor-Leste adults** (261 males and 168 females) conducted from **20 February-2 March 2021**. During the week of survey, there were 25 active COVID-19 cases in Timor-Leste, and the 10th State of Emergency was in effect until March 3, 2021. The health fences for Bobonaro and Covalima were in effect. Results from **February** are compared with previous results where possible.

COVID is the biggest challenge at all levels, and growing in February 2021

For Timor-Leste:

	May	July	Sep	Dec	Feb	
	62%	53%	72%	61%	87%	COVID-19
	10%	18%	8%	17%	6%	Economy
	18%	19%	10%	11%	4%	Politics

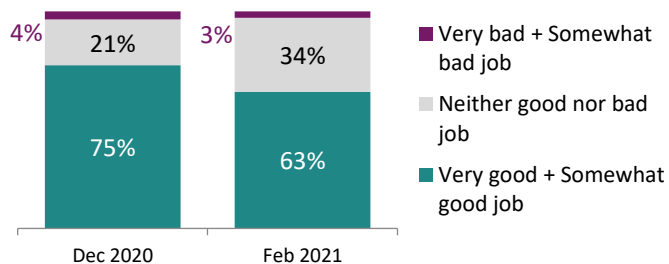
Timor-Leste is increasingly felt to be going in the right direction



For your community:

	May	July	Sep	Dec	Feb	
	76%	70%	64%	70%	85%	COVID-19
	64%	72%	62%	68%	75%	Economy
	37%	48%	38%	41%	56%	Politics

Most still think the government is doing a good job carrying out its responsibilities



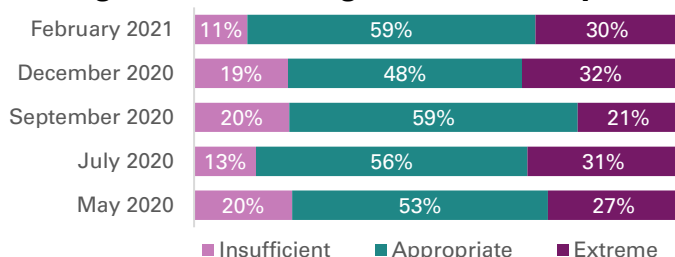
For you as an individual:

	May	July	Sep	Dec	Feb	
	80%	75%	79%	81%	90%	COVID-19
	63%	74%	62%	69%	77%	Economy
	49%	59%	50%	51%	63%	Politics

54% trust the government to take care of them during COVID-19

May 49% July: 64% Sept: 83% Dec: 59%

Feeling about current government response:



COVID-safe behaviors were stable

(% of safe behaviors practiced)

	58% Face mask	Dec: 55%	Sept: 70%
	57% Wash hands	Dec: 52%	Sept: 67%
	46% Maintain 1.5m distance	Dec: 51%	Sept: 60%

During this time, what can the government do more to support citizens? *Top 3*

1. More information on accessing support – **36%**
2. Provide more cash to households – **36%**
3. More information on COVID prevention – **31%**

In the past 30 days,



62% have **cut meal size** or **skipped a meal** because there wasn't **enough money** for food

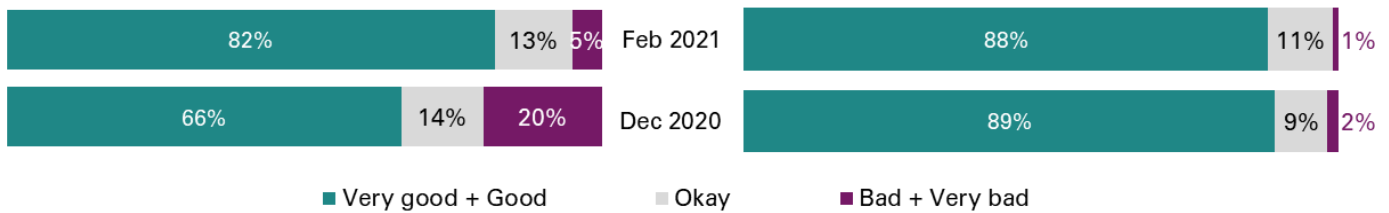
May: 76% July: 70% Sept: 53% Dec: 60%

Have you heard of the COVID-19 vaccine? Yes: 78% → No: 15% Don't know / refused: 7%	If aware: Once the vaccine is approved by GOTL, would you be willing to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if one were available?		
	Yes 91%* <small>*or 72% of all respondents</small>	No 5%	Don't know / refused 4%

Have you received the food basket / voucher? Yes 82% No/Not yet 16% Something else 1%	Would you prefer the government distribute the cash payment or food basket / voucher?				
	Food basket 9%	Food voucher 4%	Uma Kain cash payment 39%	\$25 cash (instead of voucher) 7%	Either is good 31%

Satisfaction with food basket / voucher:

Satisfaction with Uma Kain cash payment:

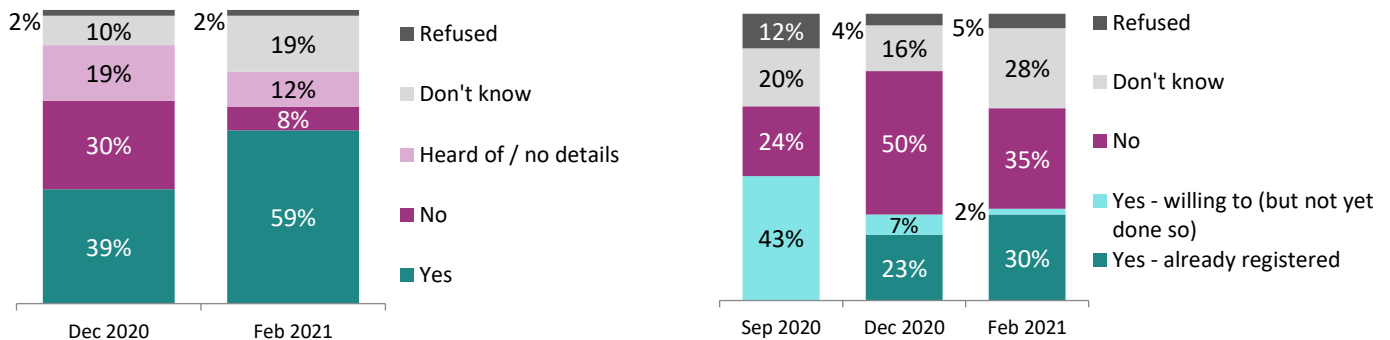


The government agreed to make four monthly payments to support self-employed and informal sector workers from November this year, provided they register for Social Security

Were you aware of this scheme?

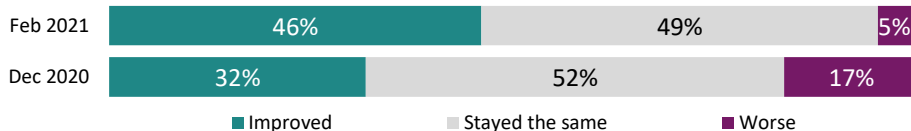
If self-employed, or work in the informal sector:

Have you or would you be willing to register for Social Security in order to receive the payment?



Safety: Since March 2020, how has safety and security in your local community changed?

Most common security threats since March: Top 3



1. COVID-19 – **77%**
2. Martial arts groups – **11%**
3. Land disputes – **6%**

Safety: 63% reported conflict in the area

Most common causes of conflict in your area: Top 3

1. Injury from physical attack – **21%**
2. Illegal obstruction of water – **7%**
3. Disputes over agricultural land – **7%**

We would like to thank the 429 respondents for their time and the 13 interviewers in Dili who conducted the February survey.

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Background

What is this research about?

The COVID-19, or coronavirus global pandemic, has required huge responses from governments all over the world. Timor-Leste has its own unique requirements when addressing an event of this magnitude.

This research aims to understand:

- The concerns of the people of Timor-Leste
- How well people are adopting prevention measures and taking care of their health
- The level of trust in government
- The use of, and satisfaction with, government programs
- The social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- How household tasks have been distributed during the pandemic
- The resilience of individuals and their communities
- The sources of news and information the people of Timor-Leste are relying on to stay informed about the pandemic, and
- People's views and understanding about the vaccine.

Timor-Leste context

While initially Timor-Leste was seen as having avoided the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic compared to many other countries, it was always known that the country remained vulnerable due to high levels of poverty, very limited health facilities, and sharing a porous land border with Indonesia. By late December there were increasing levels of concern about the worsening COVID-19 situation across the border in West Timor, the global emergence of more infectious COVID variants, and the increasing numbers of cases arriving in Timor-Leste.

On 29 December the Council of Ministers increased restrictions, closed border posts between the Special Autonomous Region of Oecusse Ambeno (RAEOA) and West Timor, and prohibited land and sea travel between RAEOA and other municipalities. The following day the President declared a nine-day State of Emergency for the New Year period and extended the 'sanitary fence' around RAEOA. On 15 February 2021, the GoTL approved sanitary fences in the two border municipalities of Bobonaro and Covalima, and by the following day COVID-19 testing had detected positive results. An additional case was confirmed in Baucau on 2 March and two further cases were confirmed in Dili on 7 March. On 8 March the government imposed a sanitary fence and lockdown in Dili to commence the following day. From this point there was a rapid increase in the number of cases; and by 27 March 452 cases had been confirmed and 298 of those cases were active. Updates can be found at <https://covid19.gov.tl/en/dashboard/>.

On 8 March 2021, the Council of Ministers approved the Vaccination Plan Against COVID-19, with the first phase scheduled for the second week of April. There was an expectation that all persons over the age of 18 will be vaccinated by the end of 2021. However, this will depend on the availability of vaccine supplies.

This unfolding of events means that at the time of data collection for this 5th round of the survey between 20 February and 3 March, only the very early cases of community transmission were being detected in Timor-Leste. These events are therefore unlikely to have significantly influenced the results. The survey will be conducted again in April.

States of Emergency have been continuously renewed since August and were renewed again on 3 January 2021 for the ninth time, 2 February for the tenth, and again on 4 March for the eleventh time.

In the background to the above events, following some delays, the budget law was approved by Parliament on 12 December, and was promulgated by the President on 29 December. On 8 January 2021, the Government adopted Decree 1/2021 detailing how the budget is to be executed.

MARCH 2020

- 21 First case of Covid-19 in Timor-Leste recorded.
- 27 The President declared a State of Emergency (#1) from 28 March until 26 April.
- 28 The Council of Ministers (CoM) adopted Government Decree 3/2020 to combat the spread of Covid-19.

APRIL

- 16 The number of people positive for Covid-19 had risen to 18.
- 29 State of Emergency (#2) commences, extended till 27 May, 11:59 pm. All people, including citizens of Timor-Leste, are still barred from entering the country.

MAY

- 19 First round of data collection from 19 to 25 May.
- 27 State of Emergency (#3) commences, extended till 26 June, 11:59 pm.

JUNE

- 9 The distribution of uma-kain payments for 12 municipalities begin.
- 26 State of Emergency (#3) ended midnight. Measures are still in place to prevent the Covid-19 virus from coming into Timor-Leste.

JULY

- 18 Second round of data collection from 18 to 27 July.

AUGUST

- 5 State of Emergency (#4) declared, effective till 4 September, 11:59 pm. As before, it restricts travel, and enables mandatory quarantine.

SEPTEMBER

- 4 State of Emergency (#5) commences, extended till 4 October, 11:59 pm.
- 5 The Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL) announced the provision of "basic goods basket" to each Timorese worth \$25.
- 21 Third round of data collection from 21 September to 2 October.

OCTOBER

- 5 State of Emergency (#6) commences, extended till 3 November, 11:59 pm.
- 27 Launch of the Food Basket (Cesta Básica) Program in Metinaro, Dili Municipality.
- 31 Australia commits \$500m for COVID-19 vaccine for the Pacific and south-east Asia, including Timor-Leste.

NOVEMBER

- 4 State of Emergency (#7) commences, extended till 4 December, 11:59 pm.
- 7 World Bank forecasts that Timor-Leste's economy will contract by 6.85% in 2020.
- 14 Timor-Leste temporarily COVID-19 free.

DECEMBER

- 3 Fourth round of data collection from 3 December to 7 December.
- 4 State of Emergency (#8) commences, extended till 2 January, 11:59 pm. GoTL commences delivery of the "Food Basket" shopping voucher to delivered to 285,660 beneficiaries across Cristo-Rei, Dom Aleixo, Nain Feto and Vera Cruz within Dili.
- 29 CoM increases restrictions. GoTL closes border posts in RAEOA and prohibits land and sea travel between RAEOA and other municipalities until January 2nd, 2021, 11:59 p.m
- 30 President declares 9-day state of emergency for New Year period including stopping Church services.

JANUARY 2021

- 3 State of Emergency (#9) commences, extended till 4 February, 11:59 pm.

FEBRUARY

- 2 State of Emergency (#10) declared, extended till 3 March, 11:59 pm.
- 15 GoTL approves health fence in two border municipalities of Bobonaro and Covalima.
- 20 Fifth round of data collection from 20 February to 3 March.

MARCH

- 2 New cases of Covid-19 detected in Baucau.
- 4 State of Emergency (#11) declared, extended till 2 April, 11:59 pm.
- 8 Government Resolution 12/2021 declared which imposes health fence and lockdown in the Municipality of Dili until 15 March, 11:59 p.m. CoM approves Vaccination Plan Against COVID-19, with first vaccination phase scheduled for second week of April. All persons over 18 years of age are expected to be vaccinated by the end of 2021.
- 14 The National Police of East Timor (PNTL) detains 233 people for violating confinement.
- 15 Since March 2020, a total of 196 confirmed Covid-19 cases has been recorded with 97 currently active cases.

Who is the research being conducted for?

The Asia Foundation has been working with the people of Timor-Leste for nearly 30 years on issues such as employment, women's rights, and community policing, and commissioned this research. The results will be used for advocacy with the Timor-Leste Government and donors on issues relating to COVID-19. This research is supported by the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

How was the research conducted?

Between 20 February and 2 March 2021, a Dili-based call centre conducted 429 interviews with Timor-Leste adults (261 males and 168 females), using a sample list of previous respondents to The Asia Foundation Tatoli and Community Policing surveys. This followed up from near-identical surveys conducted in May, July, September and December 2020, which will be used to compare change over time. ORIMA Research (Australia) worked with The Asia Foundation on the questionnaire and data collection methodology, performed data quality checks, and conducted the analysis and reporting. All data were gender-disaggregated but results are only reported separately for men and women where significant differences are found. More detail is available in the methodology section of this report. The full survey results are also available on the Q2i Visualization platform: [Dashboard \(asiafoundation.org\)](https://asiafoundation.org/q2i)

The future

The survey is expected to run at a 2-month interval until June 2021 to see changes for the community over time. This report and the Q2i visualization platform will be subsequently updated to reflect this data.

Results

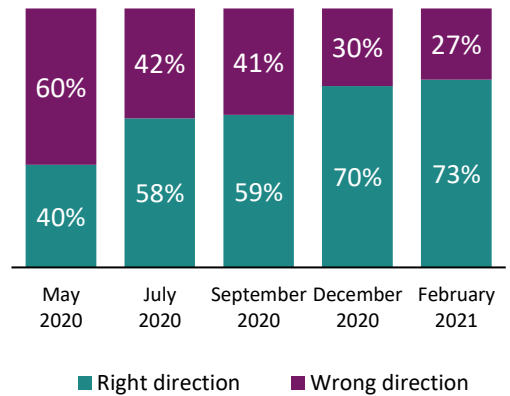
Biggest concerns

In February 2021, more respondents felt that Timor-Leste was going in the right direction (73%) than the wrong direction (27%) – giving a net score of +46%.

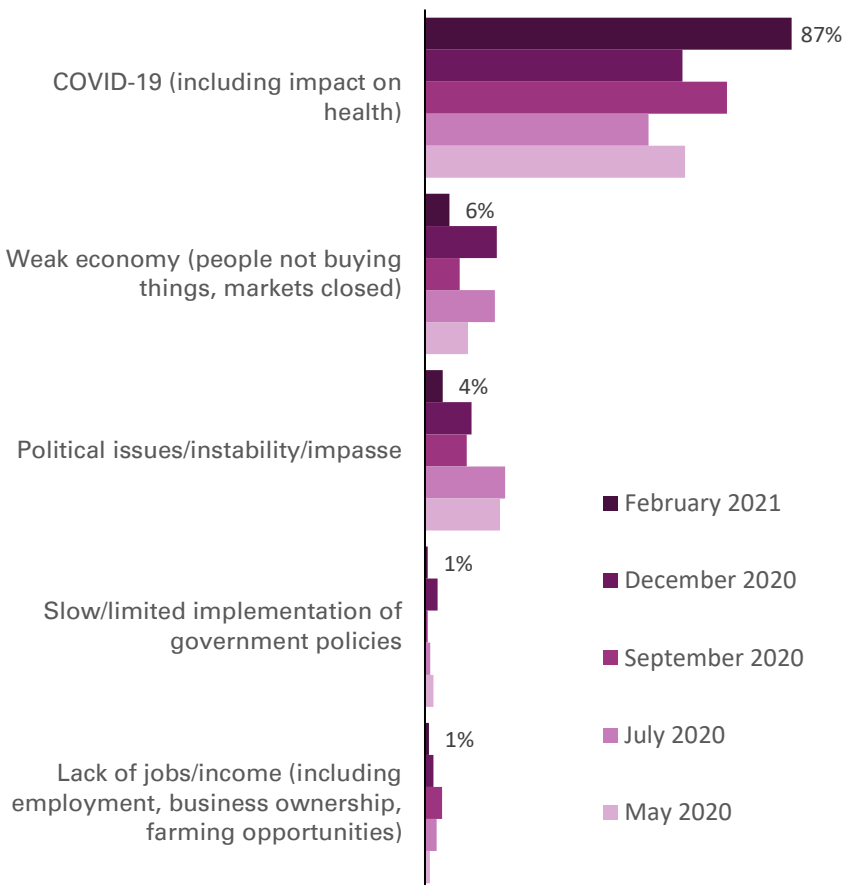
This is the most positive result recorded since the start of the survey and continues the steadily upwards trend over this time.

In previous surveys perceptions that Timor-Leste was going in the right direction have been least positive in the over 45 age group. In February 2021, those aged 45 or over (70%) were less positive than those aged 24-44 (77%-82%) – but those aged 18-24 were the least positive (66%).

Generally speaking, Timor-Leste is going in the...



The biggest challenge facing Timor-Leste:



COVID-19 has consistently been viewed in each survey round as the biggest challenge facing Timor-Leste, including its impact on health. In February 2021, this is considered the single biggest challenge by the highest proportion of respondents (87%).

Accordingly, the other two challenges that are usually seen both dropped in February 2021. A weak economy dropped from 17% to just 6%, while political issues dropped from 11% to 4% as the single biggest challenge.

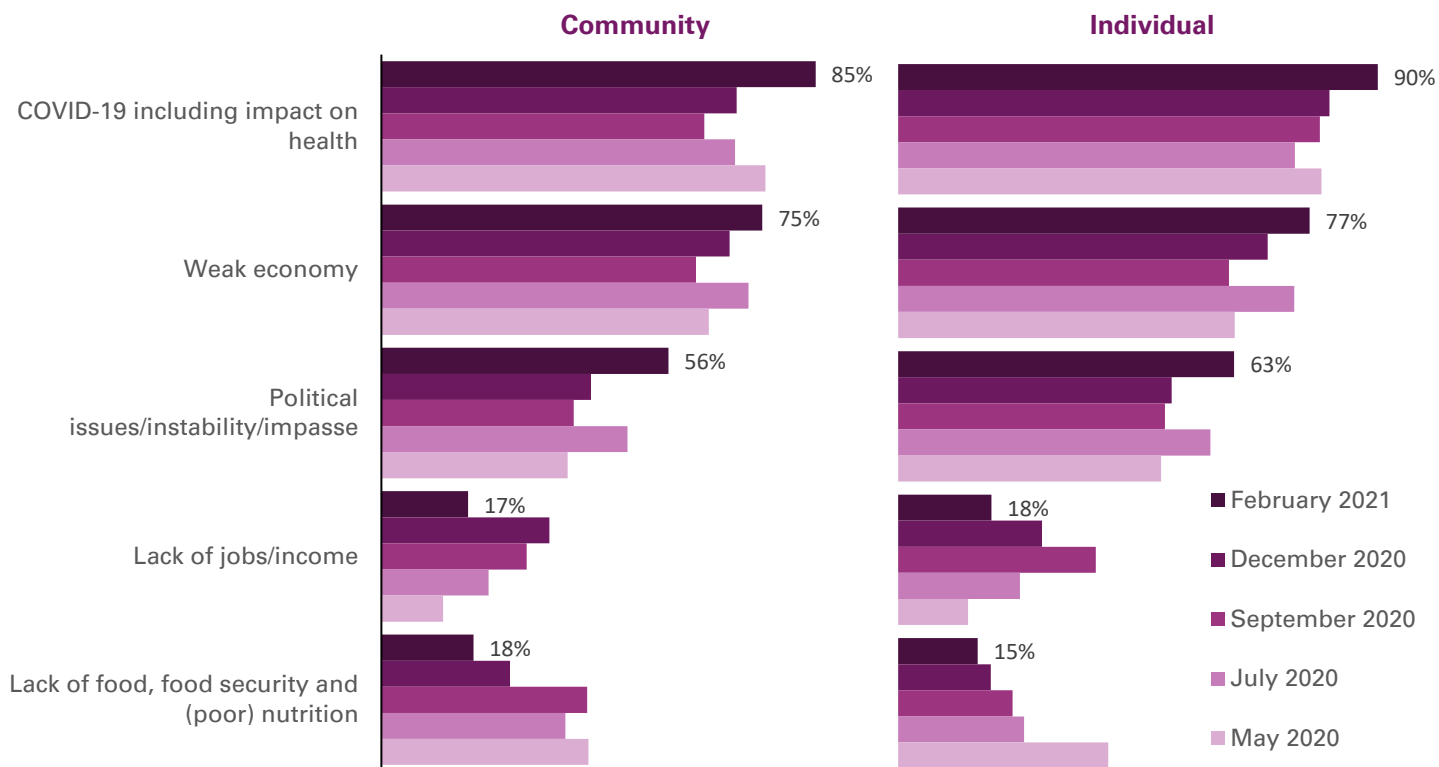
The higher focus on concern about COVID-19 was seen across all demographic groups, with the exception of households with a single adult (where 66% were most concerned about COVID-19, and 28% were most concerned about the weak economy).

95% of those in Dili identified COVID-19 as the single biggest challenge for Timor-Leste, compared to 84% outside of Dili.

In February 2021 COVID-19 also remained the most commonly reported concern for individuals (90%) and the community (85%). As for Timor-Leste overall, both of these figures were the highest that have been seen across the five rounds of the survey, and sharply higher than in December.

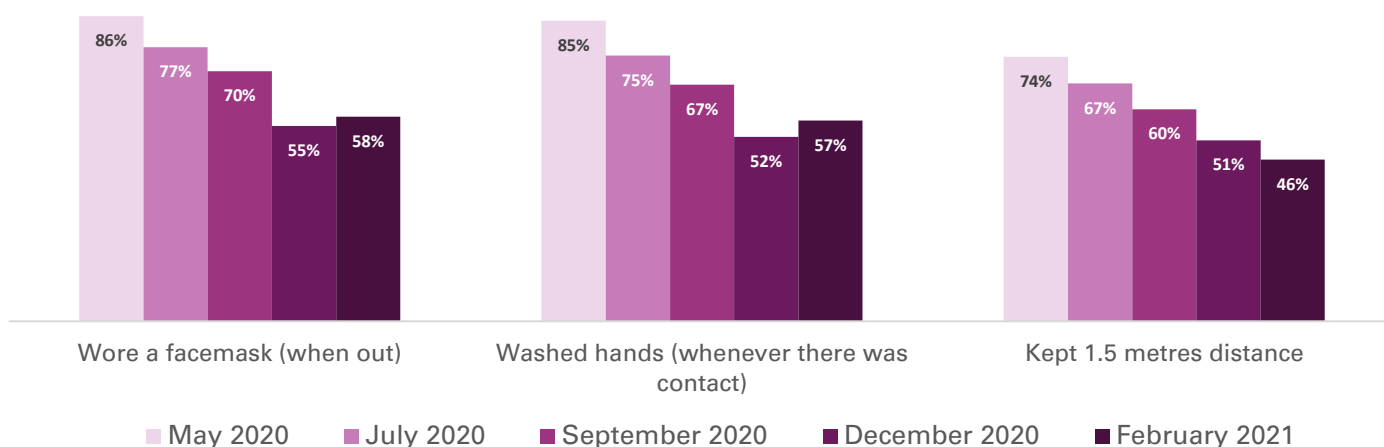
For Timor-Leste people identified their single biggest concern, so when COVID-19 cases increased in February, naturally the other options went down. At an individual and community level, where people could identify multiple concerns, both a weak economy and political issues also both went up to their highest levels in February. However, lack of jobs and lack of food both fell to their *lowest* level of concern for individuals and for communities.

Top 3 problems as an individual and in your community (Multiple response, five most common problems shown)



Prevention measures and healthcare behavior

COVID-19 safe behaviors (applies very much) in past week



The proportion of respondents who report 'very much' following COVID-19 prevention behaviours in the last week has declined steadily since the first survey in May. By December, only around half of respondents were still 'very much' wearing a facemask (55%), washing their hands after contact (52%) and keeping 1.5 metres distance from others (51%). In February 2021 the proportion who reported wearing a facemask when out (58%) and washing hands after contact (57%) both increased slightly – but the proportion keeping 1.5 metres distance continued to fall (46%).

As seen in earlier survey rounds, those living in Dili (60%-70%) were more likely to be 'very much' following COVID-19 behaviours compared to those not living in Dili (51%-58%).

If you had symptoms, would you:

May 2020	July 2020	Sept 2020	Dec 2020	Feb 2021	
94%	95%	99%	98%	97%	Go to a hospital or health clinic
92%	79%	79%	88%	97%	Inform people around me
85%	79%	77%	86%	87%	Stay home
-	-	63%	89%	85%	Take traditional medicine
-	-	80%	85%	88%	Carry on as usual

As in previous survey rounds, nearly all respondents (97%) reported they would go to a hospital or health clinic if they found themselves having symptoms of sickness. Most respondents also reported they would take traditional medicine (85%, up from 63% when first measured in September).

Ninety-seven percent said they would immediately inform the people around them (the highest result seen, the

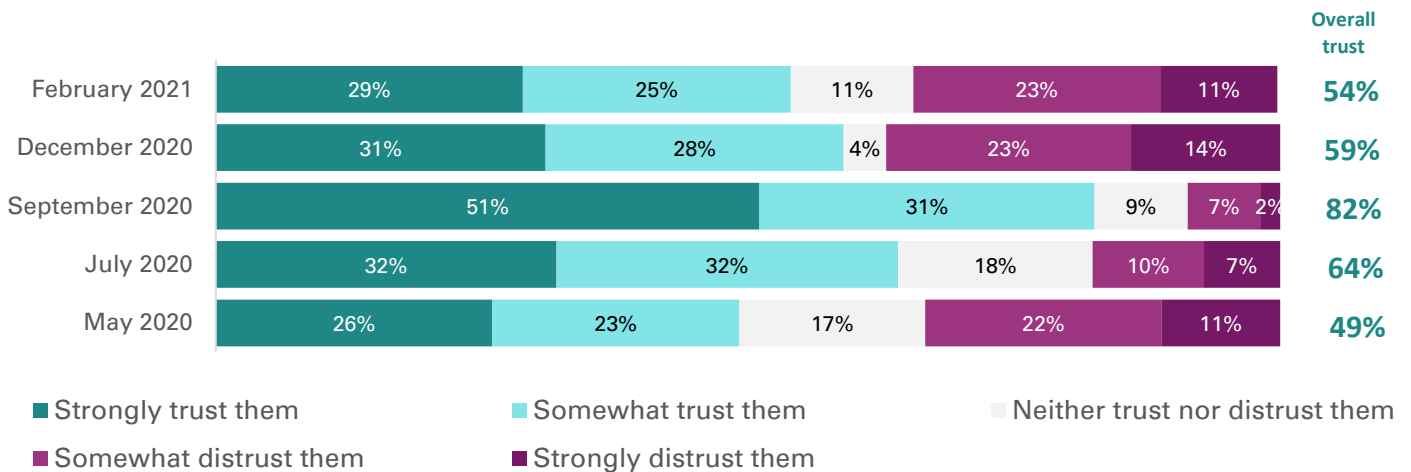
previous closest being 92% in May). Eighty seven percent said they would stay home (in line with December, 86%).

However, most (88%) respondents also reported that they would carry on as usual if they showed symptoms, a little higher than September (80%) and December (85%). Older respondents were slightly more likely to indicate they would carry on as usual (92-94% for those aged 25+, compared to 76% of 18-24 age group). Those living in Dili (82%) were less likely to carry on as usual than those living outside Dili (91%).

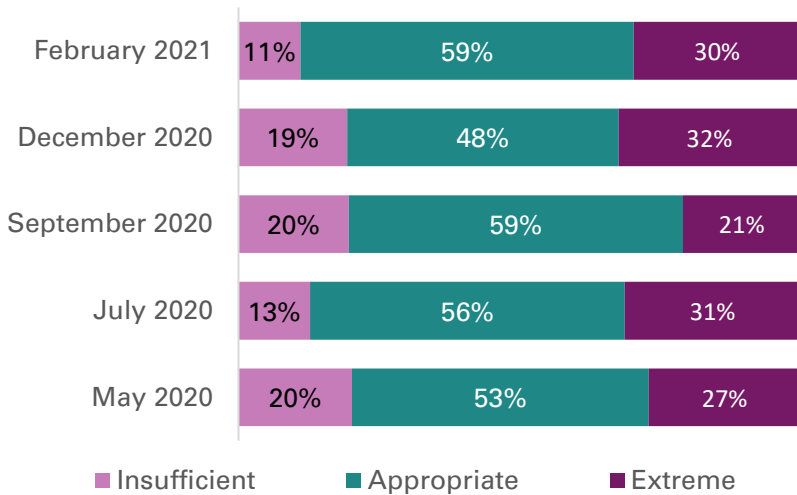
Government trust

Trust in the government of Timor-Leste to take care of its citizens during COVID-19 peaked at 82% in September 2020, before dropping to 59% in December and slightly further to 54% in February 2021. Distrust in the government was also the highest recorded in December (37%), but this also fell back slightly to 34% in February. The February 2021 results are very similar to those seen in the first round of the survey, in May 2020.

Those living in Dili (63%) again reported higher trust in the government than those outside Dili (51%). In February trust was lowest among younger respondents aged 17-24 (44%), and highest among those aged 25-34 (74%), dropping then to 55% of 35-44-year-olds and 49% of 45+ year olds. This lower level of trust from the younger age group is different to December.



What do you think of the current reaction of the government to COVID-19



Despite trust in the government to take care of citizens being considerably lower than September, the proportion who think the current reaction of the government to COVID-19 is appropriate is the same as September (59%).

Compared to September, slightly more currently think the reaction is too extreme (30% compared to 21%), and fewer that it is insufficient (11% compared to 20%).

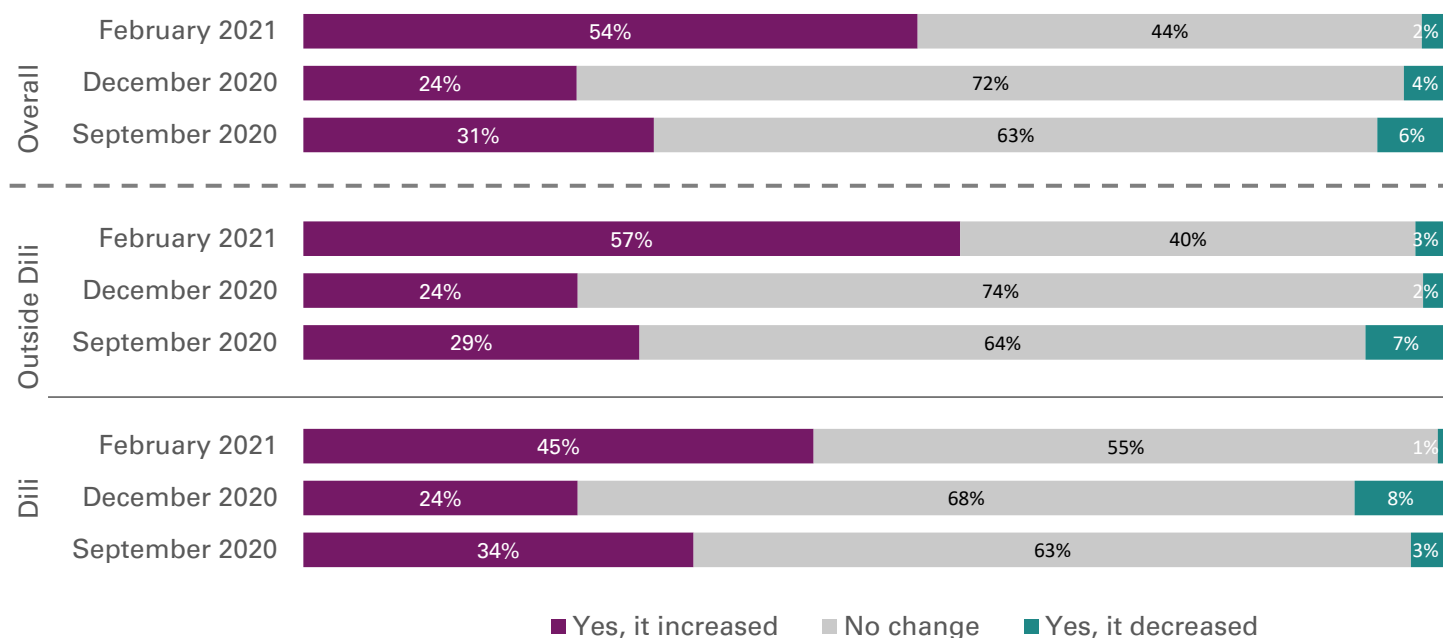
In previous survey rounds younger respondents aged 17-24 were more likely to consider the government reaction to be insufficient. However, in February 2021 they were the most likely to say it was *extreme* (35%), and 8-13% of all age groups felt the reaction was insufficient.

Most respondents (92%) felt the government should continue to restrict people from coming into Timor-Leste from other countries and require mandatory quarantine for people entering the country. This high proportion was quite consistent across locations, gender and age groups (between 87-94% for all groups).

Use of and satisfaction with government programs

A higher than usual proportion of respondents indicated that the cost of basic goods such as rice and cooking oils had increased in the past month, 54% compared to 31% in September and 24% in December. Perceptions that the cost of basic goods had increased was a little more common outside of Dili (57%) than in Dili (45%).

In the past month, did the cost of things like rice or cooking oil change in your local markets?



One of the first COVID-19 programs announced by the government was the **Uma Kain household payment**, also known as Apoiu Monetáriu ba COVID-19, which has been received by 98% of all respondent households.

At the time of the September survey the government was considering distributing **food vouchers or baskets** as a possible alternative to cash payments. At that point around two-thirds of respondents indicated they would be satisfied with either option. By the time of the December survey only around one third (31%) of respondents were equally satisfied with either option, and most respondents preferred cash payments over vouchers or food baskets. In February 2021 again 31% indicated they were happy with either option, while 39% preferred the Uma Kain cash payment. Seven percent preferred \$25 cash instead of a voucher, 9% preferred a food basket, and just 4% preferred food vouchers.

Just over one-third (36%) had received a food basket/voucher at the time of the December survey, with that figure increasing to 82% by the time of the February 2021 survey. This was lowest amongst those aged 45+ (75%), but also lower amongst household with more children. Ninety two percent of households with no children had received the voucher or food basket, but only 79-86% of households with children had done so. Ninety three percent of respondents in Dili had received the food voucher or basket, compared to 77% outside of Dili.

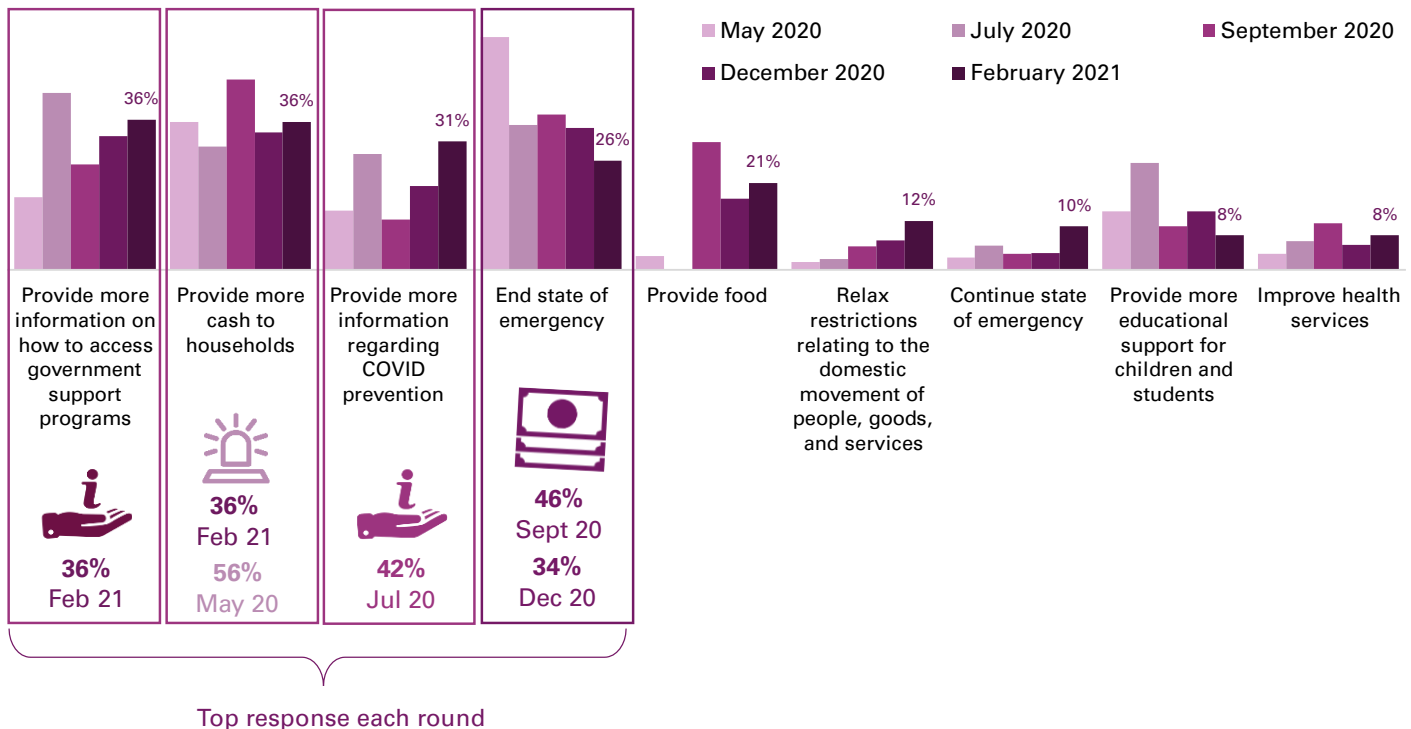
Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the Uma Kain and food basket/voucher support payments. Most (88%) of those who had received the Uma Kain payment felt it was 'good' or 'very good', similar to December 2020. Satisfaction was higher among those living in Dili (96%, compared to 83% of those living outside Dili). Satisfaction with the food basket/voucher was up to 82% from 66% in December, and the proportion of those who had received who thought it was 'bad' or 'very bad' dropped from 20% to just 5% in February. Satisfaction with the food basket/voucher was also slightly higher among those living in Dili (87%, compared to 80% of those living outside Dili).

Additional government support

In each survey round respondents have been asked what the government could do to more support its citizens. In February 2021, many respondents wanted more information, with 36% feeling the government could provide more information on how to access support programs and 31% feeling it could provide more information on COVID-19 prevention. The other suggestion in the top three was to provide more cash to households (also 36%).

Ending the state of emergency (26%) and providing food (21%) were the next two most common suggestions.

During this time, what could the government do more to support its citizens? (Multiple responses allowed)

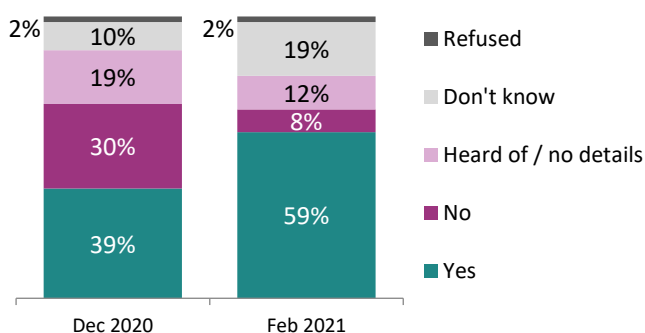


Compared to people in Dili, those outside of Dili were more likely to feel the government should provide more information on accessing support programs (38% compared to 30%), provide food (26% compared to 9%), relax movement restrictions (14% compared to 6%) and continue the state of emergency (14% compared to 2%).

Males (18%, compared to 5% of females) were more likely to request movement restrictions be relaxed. The youngest respondents aged 17-24 were the most likely to request more information about COVID-19 prevention (42%) and to relax movement restrictions (23%), but also to continue the state of emergency (21%). Middle-aged respondents (25-44) were the most likely to request providing more cash to households (41-45%).

The government has agreed to make **four monthly payments to support self-employed and informal sector workers** from November this year, provided they register for Social Security.

Were you aware of this scheme before now?



Awareness of the scheme has increased from 39% in December 2020 to 59% in February 2021, with another 12% responding that they had heard something about scheme but did not know any details.

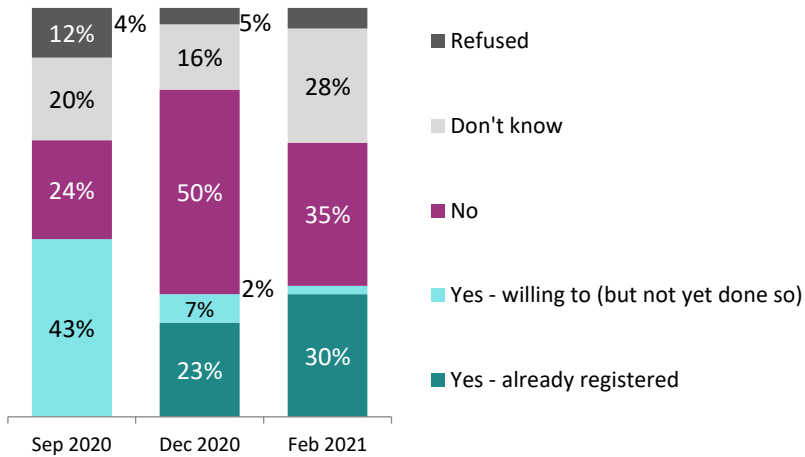
Seventy percent of respondents in Dili were aware of the scheme, compared to 54% outside of Dili. Those outside Dili were more likely to answer 'don't know' (22% compared to 12% in Dili).

Awareness was highest amongst those age 17-24 (66%) and lowest amongst those aged 45+ (50%).

Note: Don't know and refused responses included in the base size for this question

Have you or would you be willing to register for Social Security in order to receive the payment?

Base = If self-employed or work in informal sector



Note: Don't know and refused responses included in the base size for this question

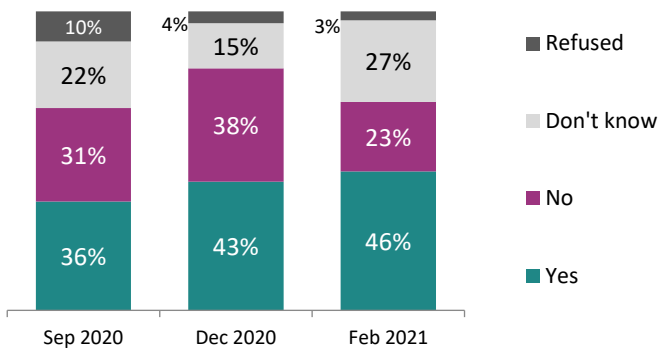
Thirty percent of those who were self-employed or work in the informal sector had already registered in February 2021, with another 2% willing to do so.

Thirty five percent said they were not willing to register for social security in order to receive the payment, and 28% were unsure.

Respondents in Dili were more likely to be registered already (39% compared to 27%), but also more likely to say they would not register (40% compared to 32%). Thirty two percent of those outside Dili said they were unsure if they would be willing, compared to 18% in Dili.

Thirty six percent of females had registered, but only 24% of males. Males (38%) were also more likely to say they would not register than females (31%). Forty one percent of those over 45 said they would not register, the highest for any age group.

Do you know how to gain access to this scheme?



Note: Don't know and refused responses included in the base size for this question

In February 46% of self-employed respondents and those who work in the informal sector knew how to access the scheme – with 23% who said they did not, and 27% who were unsure.

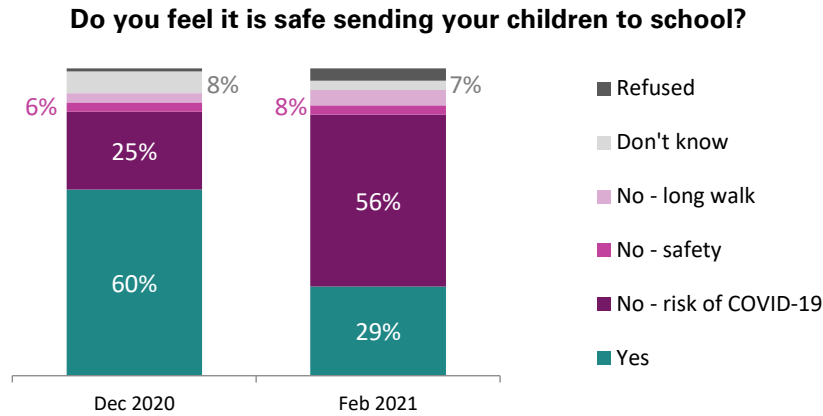
Sixty percent of those in Dili knew how to access the scheme, compared to 41% of those outside Dili.

Fifty percent of those aged 17-34 knew how to access the scheme, slightly more than the 40-45% of those aged 35+ who did.

Sixty six percent of those who knew how to access the scheme got information from TV or radio (up from 50% in December), and 21% from a government website (24% in December). Females were more likely to get information from TV or radio (73% compared to 58% of males), and less likely to use a government website (17% compared to 27%). Respondents outside Dili also used TV or radio more (71%) and a government website less (13%).

Education

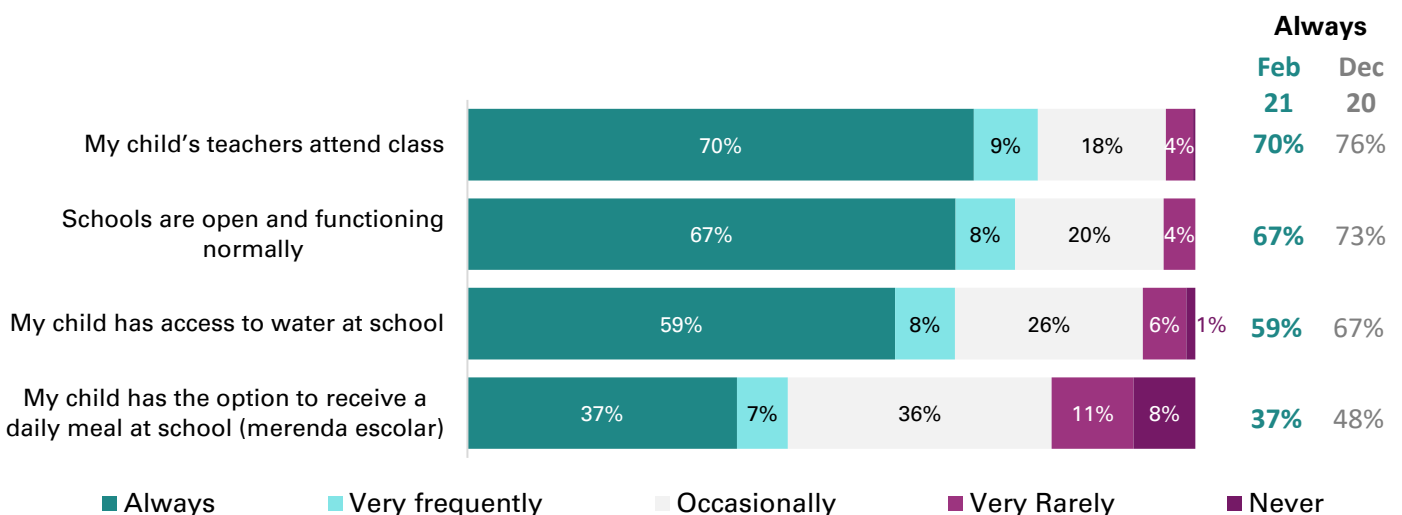
Only 29% of respondents felt it was safe sending their children to school in February 2021, compared to 60% in December 2020. The biggest concern is the risk of COVID-19, which has increased from 25% in December to 56% in February. Perceptions of safety were the same in Dili as outside Dili. Younger respondents aged 17-24 were the least likely to feel it was safe to send children to school (18%), while people aged 45+ were the most likely to feel it was safe (37%).



Note: Don't know and refused responses included in the base size for this question

Slightly fewer respondents with children indicated their children's teachers 'always' attend class (70%) and schools are 'always' open and functioning normally (67%) in February compared to December. Fewer also reported their children 'always' had access to water (59%) or a daily meal at school (37%). Respondents in Dili were more likely to say 'always' to each of the elements relating to schools, by 5-18%. The biggest difference was for having the option to receive a daily meal, where 50% said always in Dili and 32% did outside of Dili.

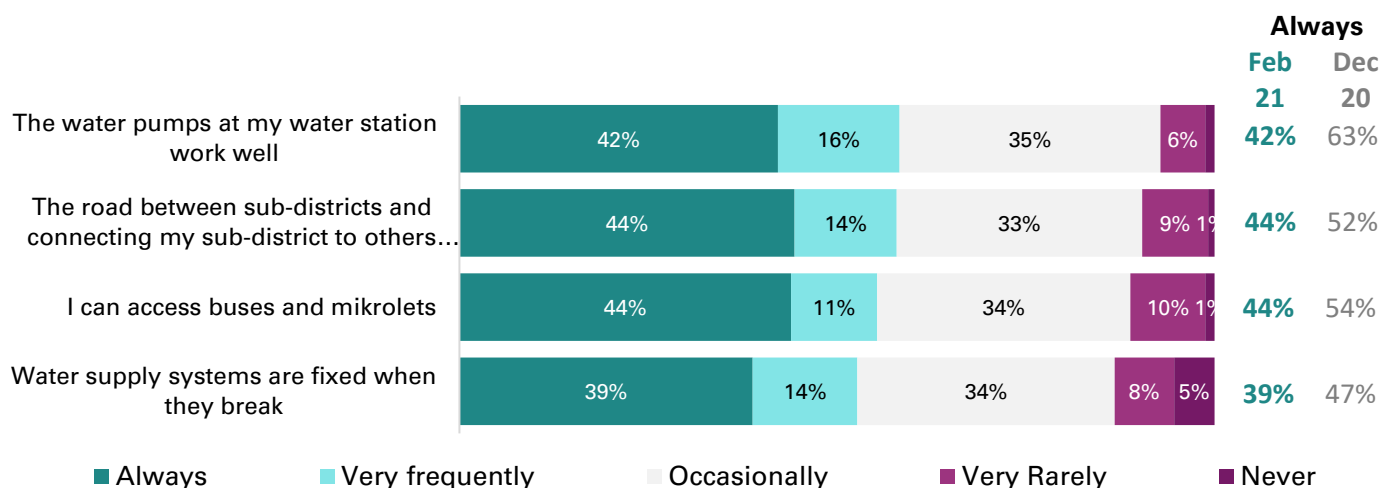
Please tell me whether schools in your area have the following always, occasionally, rarely, or never:



Infrastructure

Perceptions of infrastructure were also lower in February 2021. Less than half (42%) of respondents indicated the water pumps at their water station 'always' work well, while similar proportions reported they could 'always' access buses and mikrolets (44%), the roads in their administrative post (Postu Administrativu) were 'always' in good condition (44%) and water supply systems are 'always' fixed when they break (39%). Ratings for infrastructure were more positive among those living in Dili, compared to those outside Dili, by between 14-28%.

Please tell me whether infrastructure such as water systems, road and bridges in your area have the following always, sometimes, rarely or never:

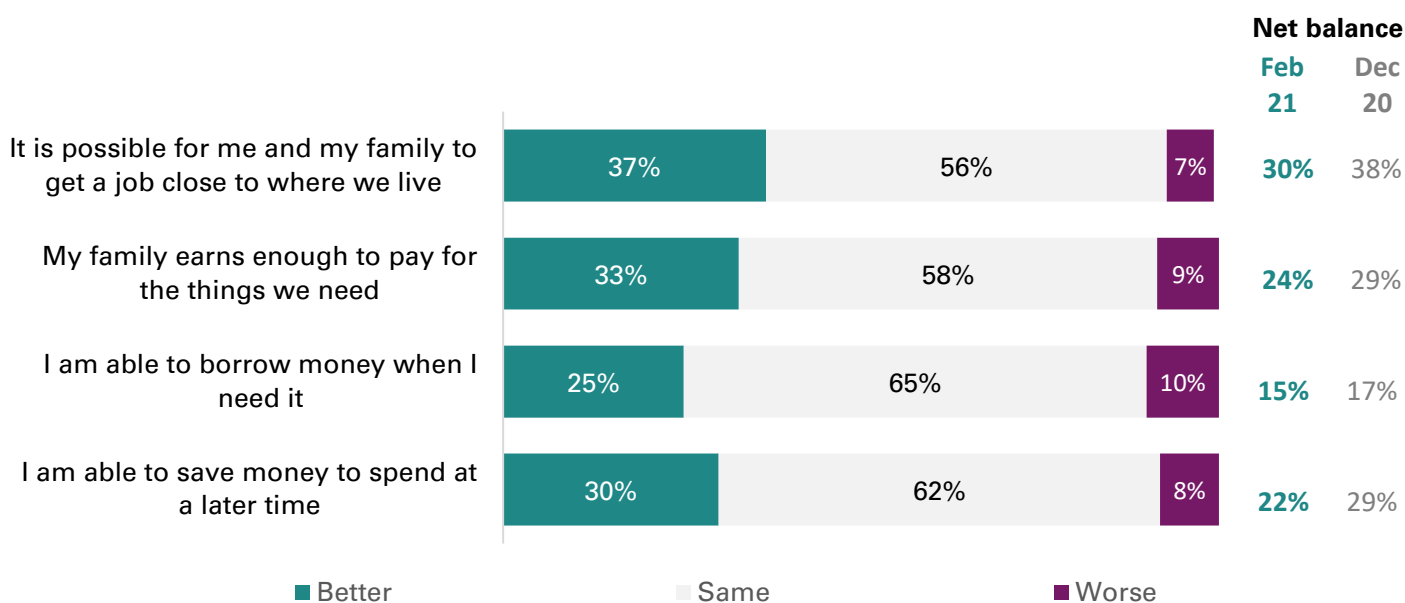


Financial services

Most respondents indicated that financial aspects of their life were the same or better than before the pandemic. The greatest improvement compared to before the pandemic was in relation to their family's ability to get a job close to where they live (37% better, 7% worse, a net positive score of 30%). In contrast, the smallest positive impact was in relation to borrowing money if they need it (net positive score of 15%). The net positive score for all of these aspects has declined by 2-8% since December 2020.

Perceptions were generally more positive among females and those living in Dili.

Comparing before the pandemic and now are things better, the same or worse than before the pandemic?

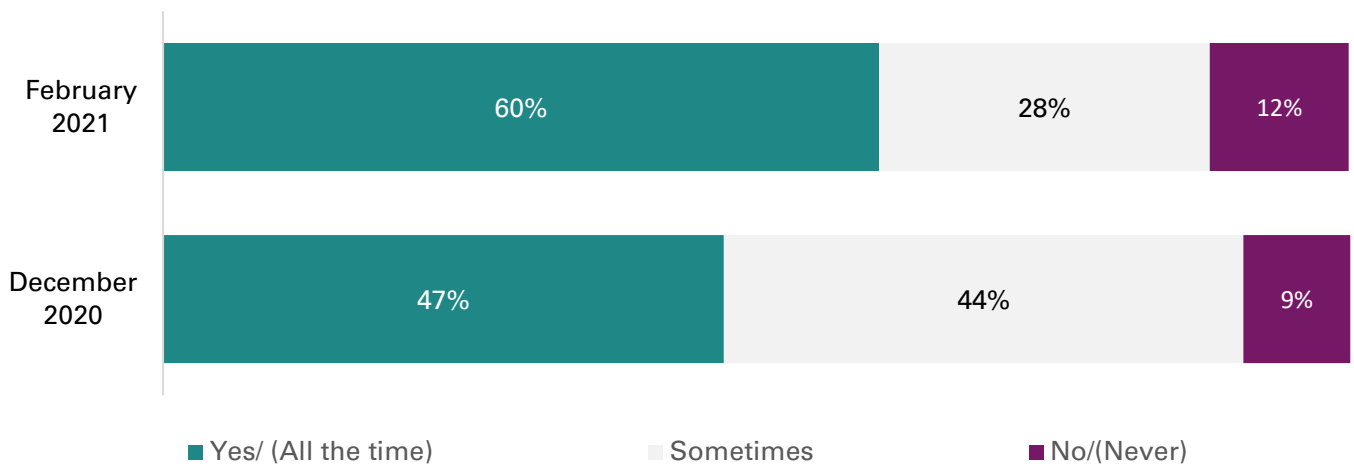


Social services

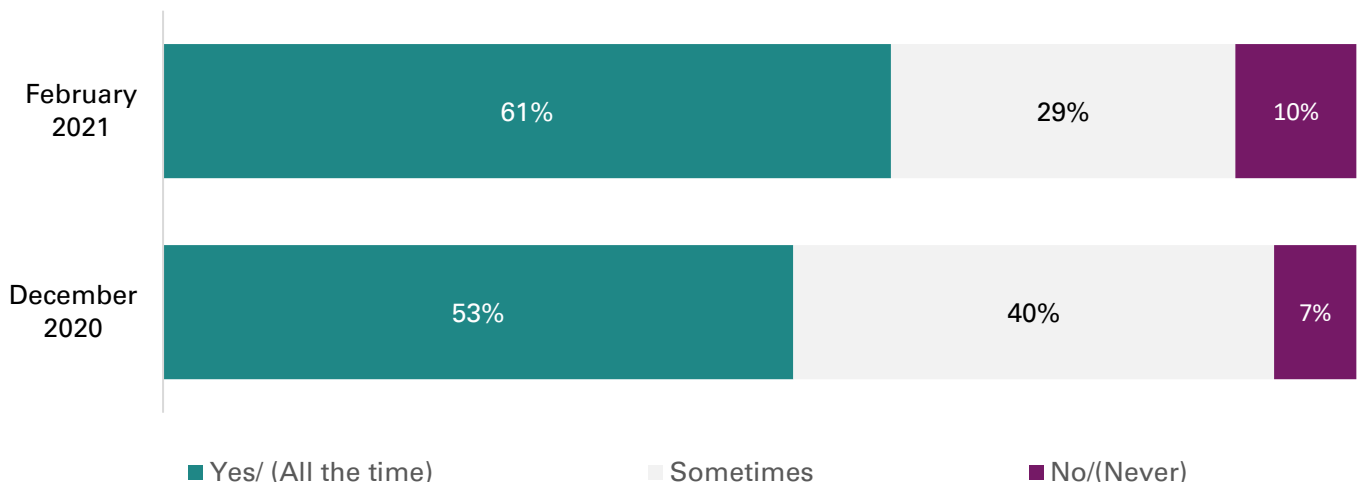
Nearly all respondents reported there were government programs/services available in their community to support people with disability (88%) and elderly or senior citizens (90%) at least 'sometimes'. In February 2021 more than half of respondents reported there were government programs/services available all the time (60% for people with disability and 61% for elderly or senior citizens).

Availability of government programs was higher among Dili residents for both people with disability (74% 'all the time', compared to 55% outside Dili) and elderly or senior citizens (70%, compared to 57%). Although still lower than in Dili, the proportion reporting there are 'always' services available outside of Dili was higher than in December 2020.

Are there government programs to support people with disability in your community?



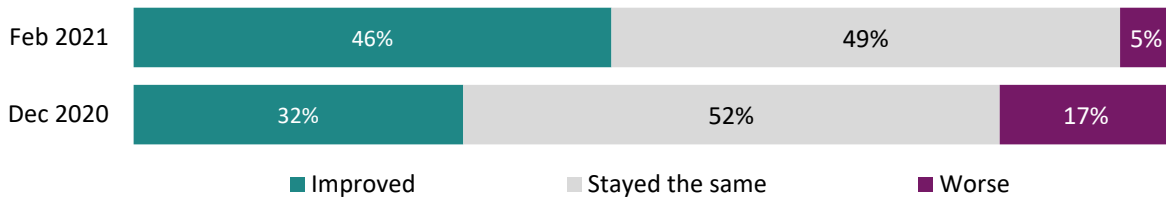
Are there government programs to support elderly people or senior citizens in your community?



Safety and security

Respondents were more positive about the safety and security situation in their local community in February 2021 than they were in December 2020. Forty six percent felt that safety and security had improved since March 2020, and just 5% felt it had got worse – a net positive score of +41%. In December 32% had felt safety and security had got better since March, and 17% felt it had got worse, for a net positive of +15%.

How would you describe the safety and security situation in your local community compared to before the first SOE and start of COVID in March last year?

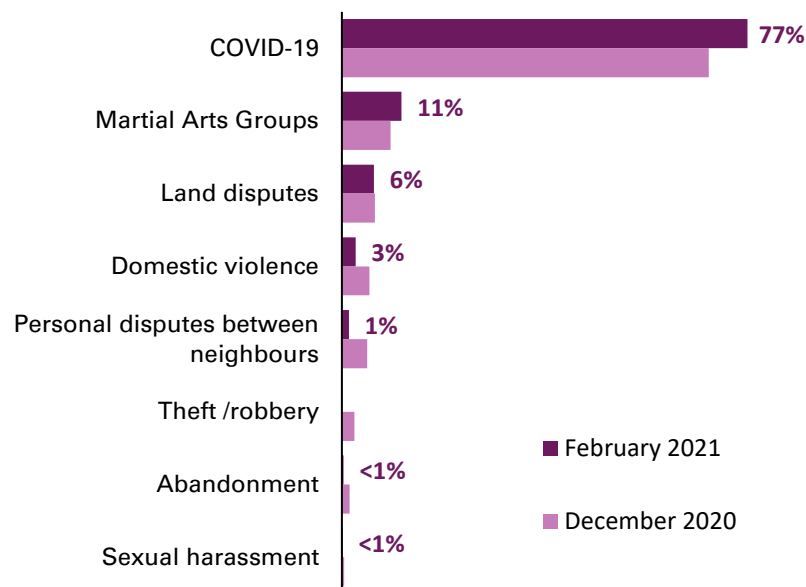


In December respondents living in Dili had more positive perceptions of the safety and security in their community (+32%, compared to +9% outside Dili), but in February this was much the same for both groups (+42% in Dili, and +41% outside of Dili).

Perceptions that safety and security has improved since March 2020 are strongest amongst younger respondents, being highest in the 17-24 age group (+52%) and dropping to +32% amongst the 45+ age group. Females (+46%) are slightly more likely than males (+36%) to believe safety and security has improved since March 2020.

Perceptions of the most common **threats to security in respondents' local area** are much the same in February 2021 as they were in December 2020. COVID-19 was by far the most commonly considered threat to security in the community (77%) and was considered a slightly greater threat by Dili residents (83%) compared to those outside Dili (75%) – though not by quite as much as in December.

Since March, what has been the most common threat to security in your area?

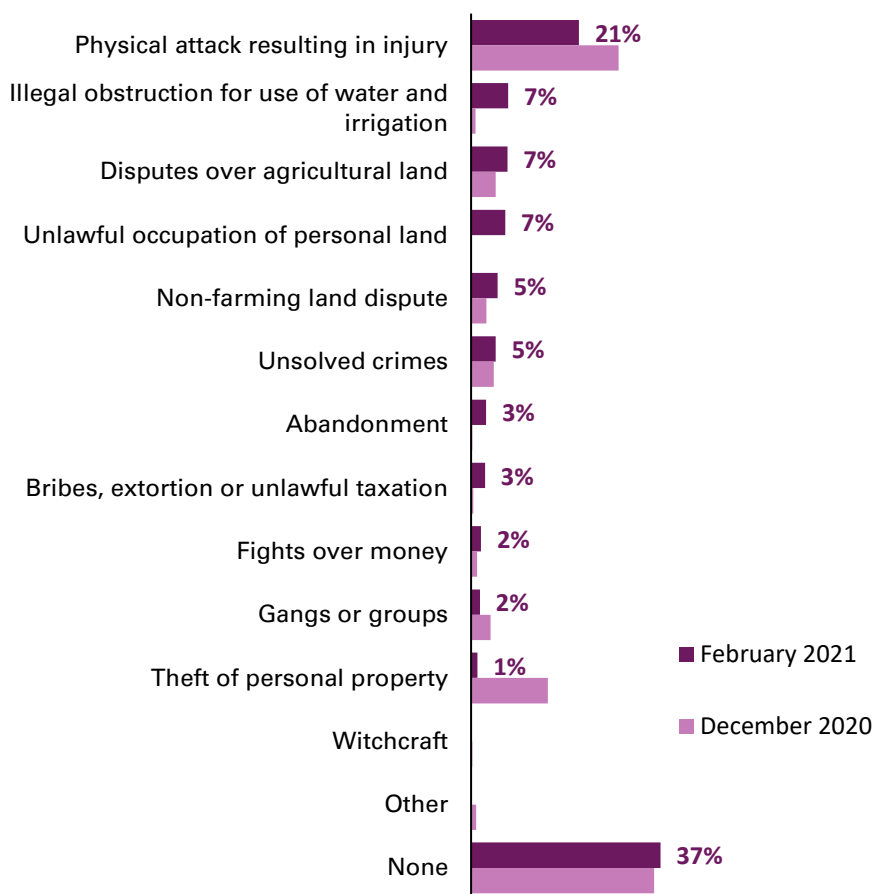


The majority (63%) of respondents felt there was at least one **cause of conflict in their area** (unchanged from 64% in December). Unlike December though, Dili residents (67%) were not much more likely to do so compared to those outside Dili (61%).

Males (64%) and females (62%) were no more likely than each other to perceive at least one cause of conflict in their area. Respondents aged 17-24 (73%) were the most likely to do so, higher than the 56-61% seen across the older age groups.

The most common perceived causes of conflict were physical attack resulting in injury (21%), as it was in December. In December this was followed by theft of personal property (at 15%), but this had dropped to just 1% in the February survey.

What are the most common causes of conflict in your area?



Governance and participation

Overall perceptions of the government of Timor-Leste were positive, but not as positive as in December 2020. Sixty three percent felt the government was doing a 'very' or 'somewhat' good job carrying out its responsibilities in February 2021, down from 75% in December.

In addition, nearly all respondents (96%) agreed the National Parliament represents the people, unchanged from December.

Seventy two percent of males felt the government was doing a 'very' or 'somewhat' good job, compared to 55% of females. Younger people aged 17-24 (40%) were by far the least likely to think the government was doing a good job – though no more likely to say it was doing a *bad* job.

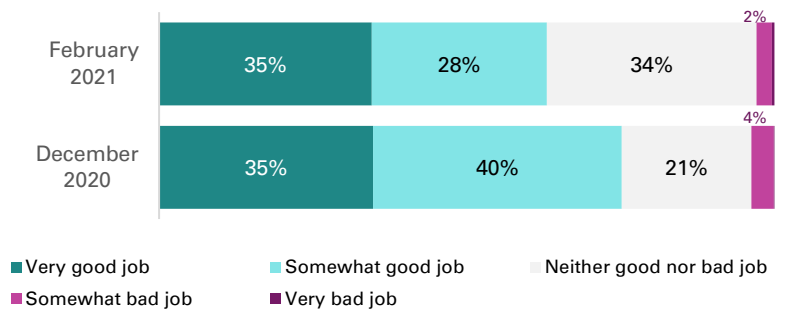
Forty-eight percent those in Dili felt the government was doing a 'very good' job, compared to 29% outside of Dili.

The majority of respondents were also happy with the way the government engages with citizens to address problems facing the country (67% 'very' or 'somewhat' happy). This was also a little lower than December (76%).

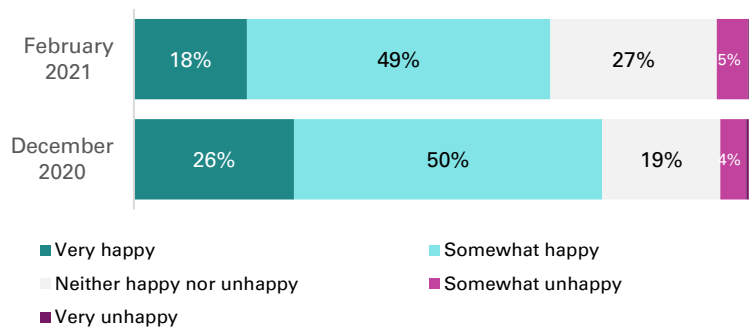
Respondents were asked whether they think that political leadership positions should be mostly for men or mostly for women, shared equally between men and women, or be open to anyone, based on merit. The majority (76%) still felt that political leadership positions should be shared equally between men and women.

Perceptions of male and female respondents were almost identical.

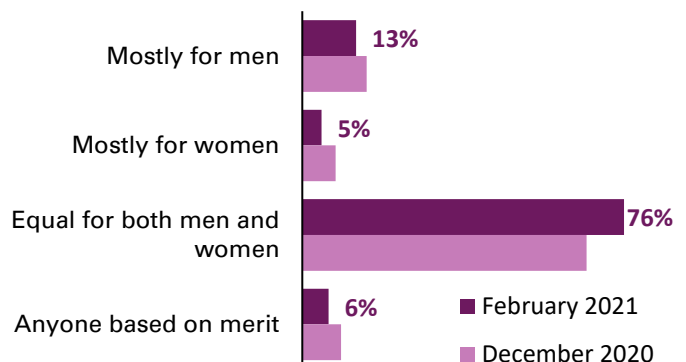
Overall, how do you feel about the way the Government of Timor-Leste is carrying out its responsibilities?



What would you say about the current level of government consultation with the citizens to address important problems facing the country?



Do you think that political leadership positions should be mostly for men or mostly for women, or shared equally between men and women, or should leadership positions be open to anyone, based on merit?

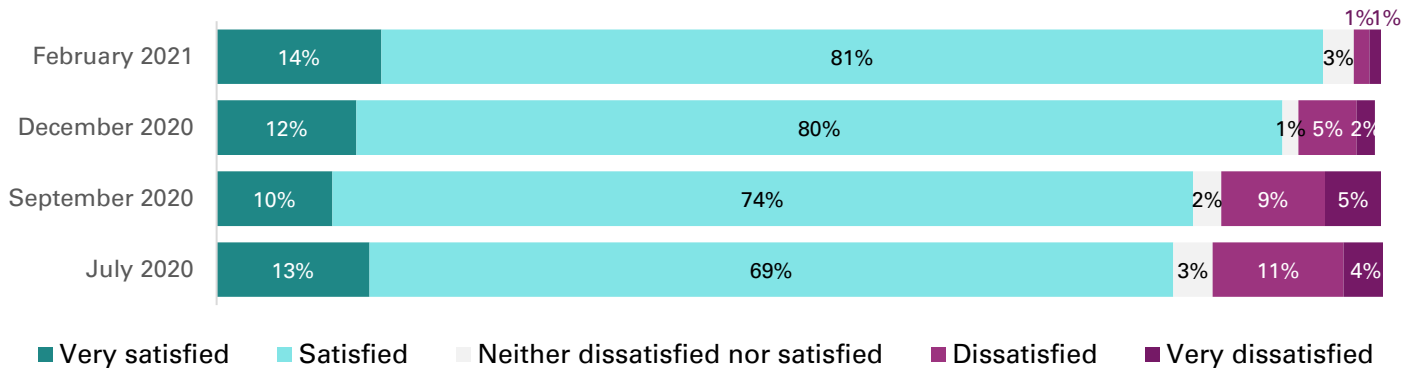


Household duties

Satisfaction with the way household tasks are divided up between them and their spouse or partner increased further to 95% (up from 82% back in July 2020). Conversely, dissatisfaction has decreased (now just 2%, down from 15% in July).

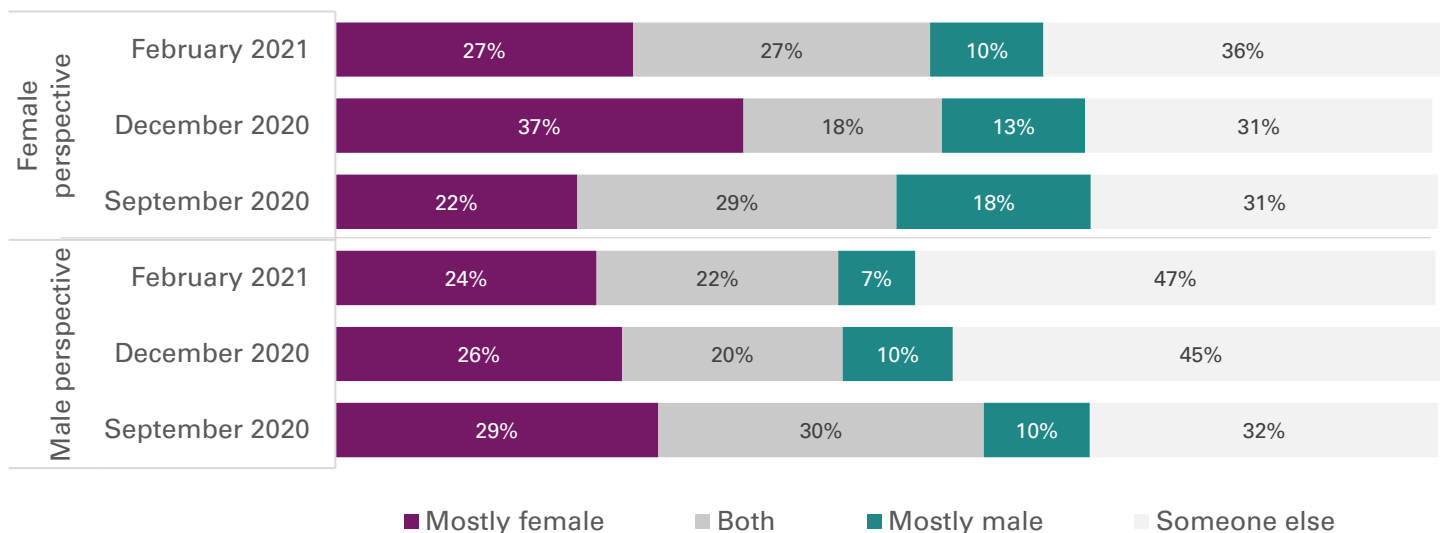
As observed in previous survey rounds, satisfaction with the division of work between individuals and their spouse or partner was similar among men (97%) and women (93%), despite uneven distributions of male and female labor across household tasks.

How satisfied are you with the way household tasks are divided between you and your spouse or partner?



Respondents were asked about the distribution of various household chores between themselves, their spouse or partner, or someone else (such as a relative, child or roommate). As in previous survey rounds, men tended to attribute more work to their partners than to themselves (on average, across all household tasks, men attribute 24% of the work to their partners, and 7% to themselves) and women attribute more work to themselves (attributing 10% to their partners, 27% to themselves). On average similar proportions of women and men say that the work is shared equally (22-27%), however men were more likely attribute the work to someone else (47% of males, compared to 36% of females).

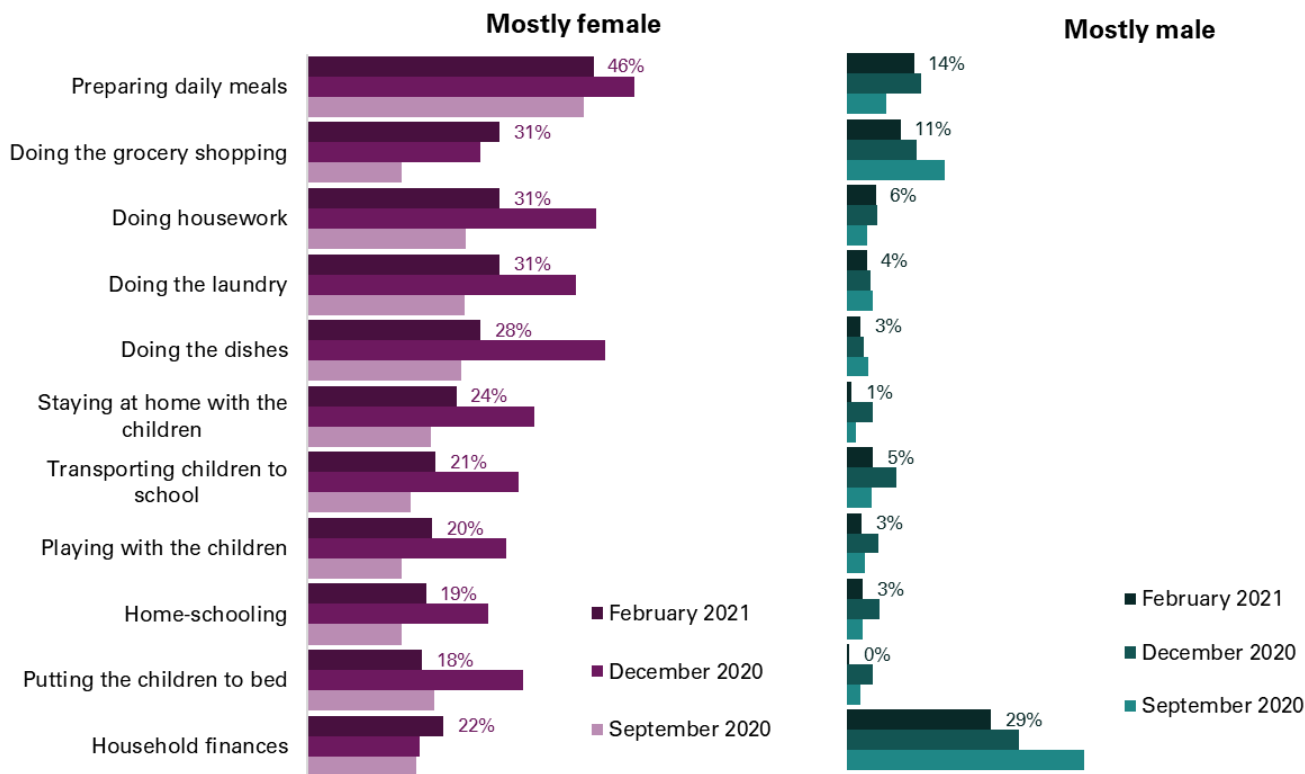
Perception of task distribution (average across all items)



All but one task were performed mostly by women more often than they were performed mostly by men— particularly preparing daily meals (mostly women in 46% of respondents’ households, mostly men in 14%), dishes (28% vs 3%), housework (31% vs 6%), and laundry (31% vs 4%).

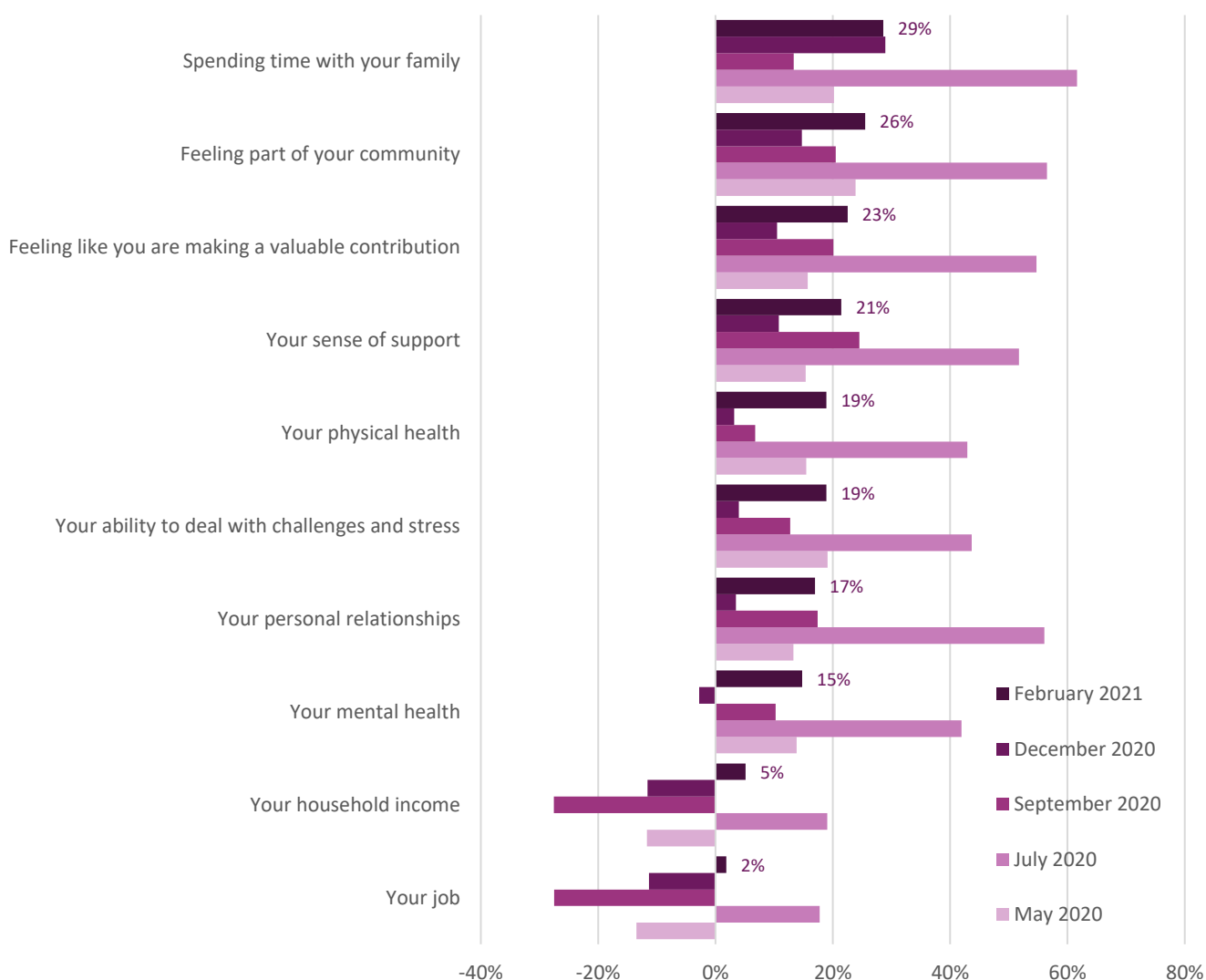
Males were more likely to be responsible for household finances (mostly performed by men in 29% of households, mostly by women in 22%). Household tasks involving caretaking of children were amongst the most likely to be equally shared; but were still more likely to be the primary responsibility of women.

Task distribution (perception from own gender)



Social and economic impacts

Perceived personal impact of COVID-19 [Net balance: positive impact *minus* negative impact]



Respondents were asked to identify how COVID-19 had impacted them personally across a range of aspects of their life—whether they had been impacted positively, negatively, or not really affected at all. The resulting *net balance* scores (positive sentiment minus negative sentiment) show that in most respects, respondents remain more likely to view the impact of COVID-19 on their life as somewhat more *positive* rather than negative.

This effect was most dramatically seen at the time of the July 2020 survey, but remains the case in February 2021. In February 2021 respondents are generally more positive than they were in December, and looking across all aspects of their life, on average the most positive since that July 2020 survey.

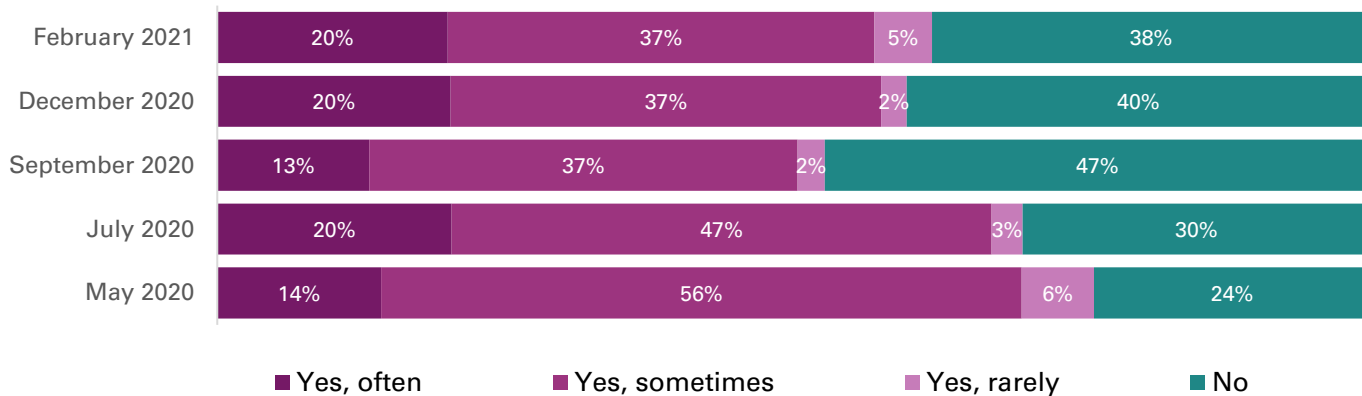
Between 49-59% of respondents said they have been positively impacted by COVID-19 on each aspect. The proportion negatively impacted ranges from 32-46%.

The largest net positive impacts are on spending time with family (+29%), feeling part of the community (+26%) and feeling like they are making a valuable contribution (+23%). Impacts on jobs (+2%) and household income (+5%) have the lowest net positive scores, and these have typically been negative impacts in previous surveys (other than July).

Six-in-ten respondents (62%) indicated they had been forced to skip or cut the size of a meal at least once in the past month because of a lack of money. This proportion was higher than in September (53%) but equal to December (60%) and still considerably lower than in July (70%) and May (76%).

The same proportion said that someone else in the household had also skipped or cut the size of a meal in that time due to lack of money.

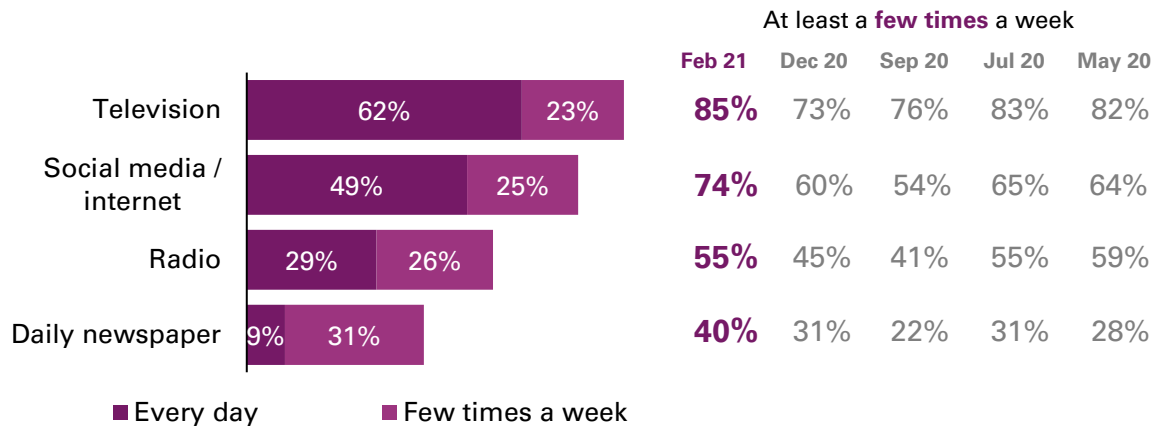
In the past 30 days, had to cut the size of a meal or skip a meal because there wasn't enough money for food?



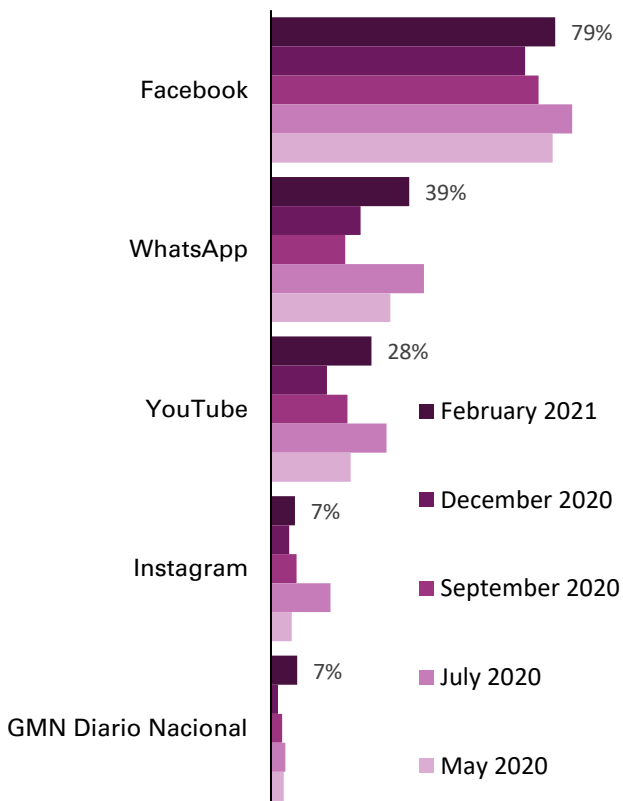
News and information

In February, television remained the most frequently used channel for media and entertainment (85% used this at least a few times per week, higher than 73% in December). Compared to September, respondents were somewhat more likely to use social media and the internet (now at 74%, up from 54%), listen to the radio (now at 55%, up from 41%) and read newspapers (now at 40%, up from 22%).

In the February survey use of TV was similar across age groups. Social media / internet usage was highest for younger people and reduced with age. Use of radio was lowest in the 25-34 age group; and use of newspapers was lowest in the 25-44 age groups.



Top 5 most used websites or apps



In their household...

- 78%** Do not share their phone with others
- 89%** Access the internet using a phone
- 82%** Often use websites or apps

Around eight-in-ten respondents (78%) had their own phone, similar to December. The least likely to do so were 17-24 year-olds (68%) and the most likely were the 45+ year olds (86%).

Eighty nine percent reported that they or someone in the household accessed the internet or social media on their phone.¹ This figure is the highest seen, up from 76-79% in May, July and September. One hundred percent of 17-24 year-olds reported this happens. Dili residents (95%, compared to 87% of those living outside Dili) were more likely to access the internet via their phones.

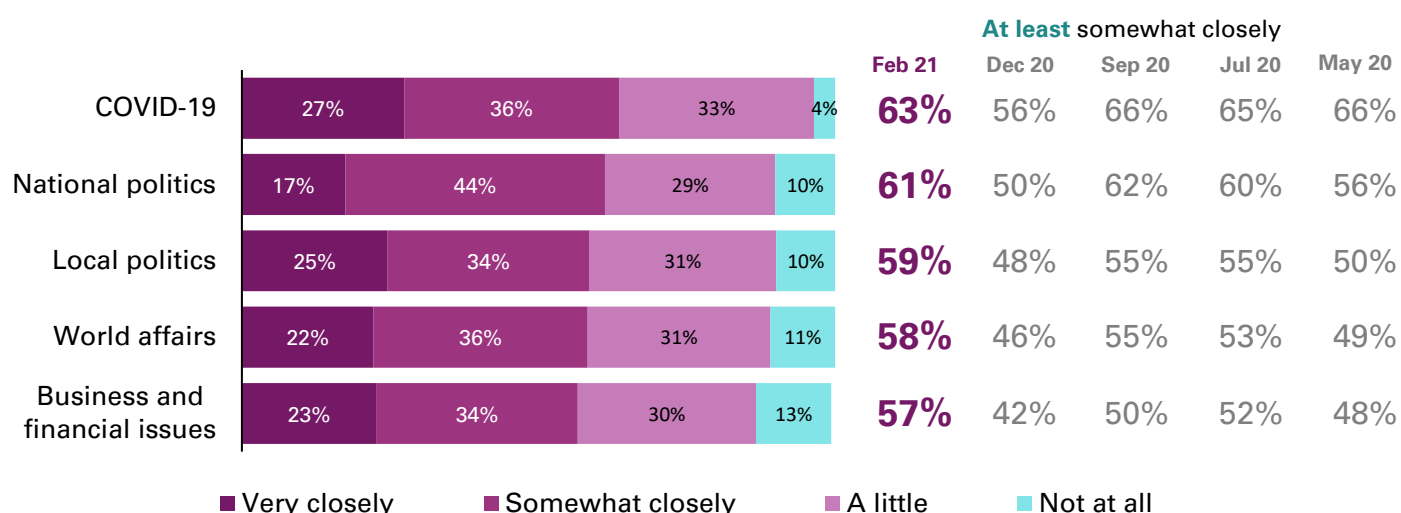
Overall, 82% of respondents indicated using some apps or websites frequently (whether on their phone, someone else’s phone, or by other means)—consistent with previous rounds other than December, which was lower. Those living in Dili (94%) and aged 17-24 (100%) were more likely to use websites or apps regularly.

Facebook (79%) remained by far the most commonly used website or app, followed by WhatsApp (39%) and YouTube (28%).

COVID-19 remained the most closely followed news topic in February. At 63% of respondents who at least ‘somewhat closely’ followed it, this was back to the levels seen in May, July and September 2020 (65-66%). The proportions at least ‘somewhat closely’ following other topics also increased compared to December, back to levels more consistent with what was seen in the earlier rounds of the survey.

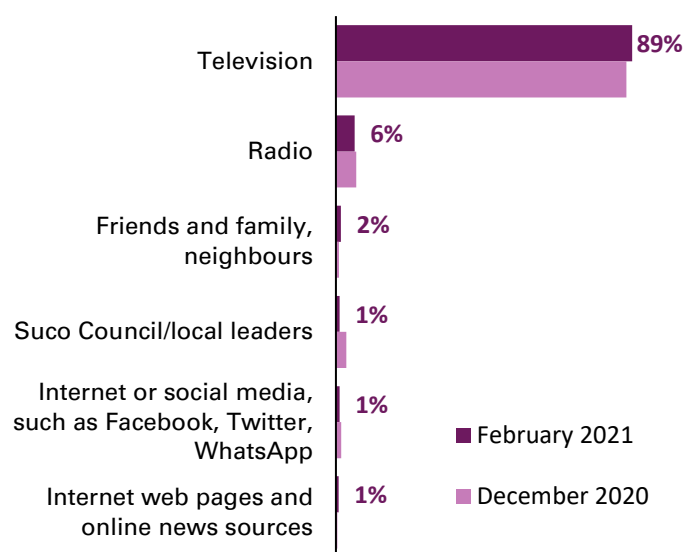
As seen previously, those living in Dili were more likely to be following each topic more closely than those living outside Dili. Unlike December, males were no more likely to be following each topic than females. Younger respondents were more likely to be following each topic than older respondents.

How closely do you follow each of the following topics?



¹ As the survey was conducted over the telephone, all respondents had access to a telephone. As a comparison, in the 2018 Tatoli Survey, 76% of respondents provided a mobile phone number and only 33% of respondents said they had access to the internet.

What source of news and information do you trust the most?



Television remained by far the most trusted source of information (89%).² Television was more likely to be the most trusted source among Dili residents (96%, compared to 87% of those living outside Dili) and for 17-24 year-olds (100%).

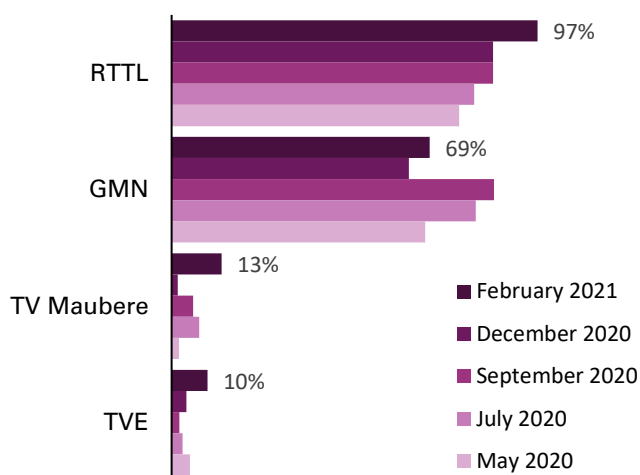
Radio (6%) and family, friends and neighbours (2%) were the next most trusted sources of news and information.

When asked which television channels respondents watch, RTTL (97%) was the most commonly watched channel, followed by GMN (69%). These proportions were similar in Dili and outside of Dili in February.

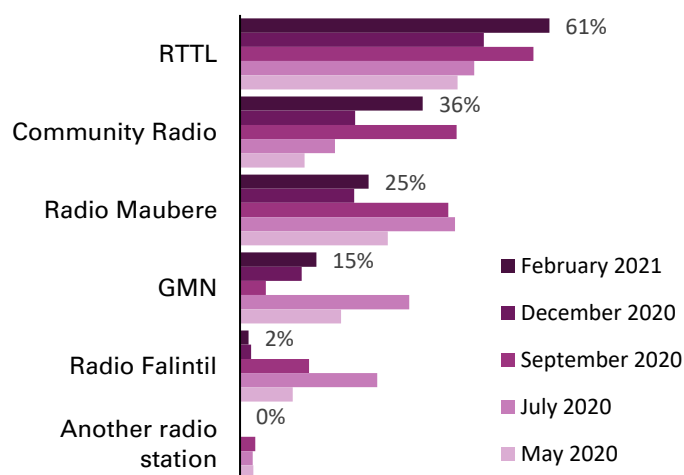
Respondents were also asked what radio stations they listened to. RTTL was the most popular station (61%), followed by Community Radio (36%) and Radio Maubere (25%). Those living in Dili were somewhat more likely to listen to Community Radio (42%, compared to 33%) and Radio Maubere (33%, compared to 22%), but less likely to report listening to GMN (5%, compared to 19%).

Only just over half of respondents reported reading newspapers. Of those respondents who did read newspapers, they most often reported reading Timor Post (52%), Jornal Independente (24%), Diário Nacional (14%) and Suara Timor Lorosae (13%). Those living in Dili were more likely to read Timor Post (77% compared to 41% outside of Dili).

What television channels do you most often watch?

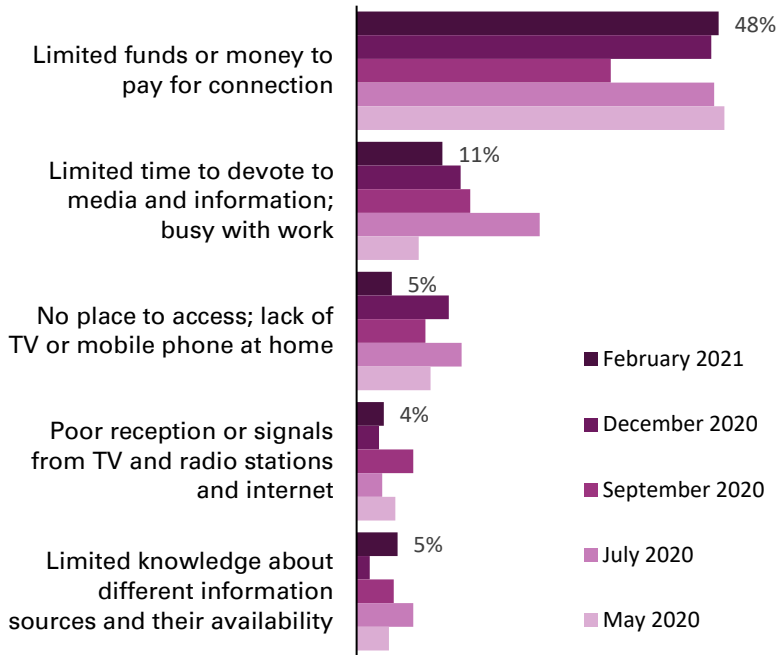


What radio stations do you most often listen to?



² Please note that in Round 4 this question was asked about sources of news and information in general. In previous rounds, this question was asked in relation to COVID-19 and other news information separately.

Top 5 challenges in accessing information



Most respondents in December (82%) reported at least some challenges in accessing information, slightly lower than the 88% in December, and fairly similar to previous survey rounds (69-82%).

Limited funds or money to pay for a connection was the most common challenge (48%).

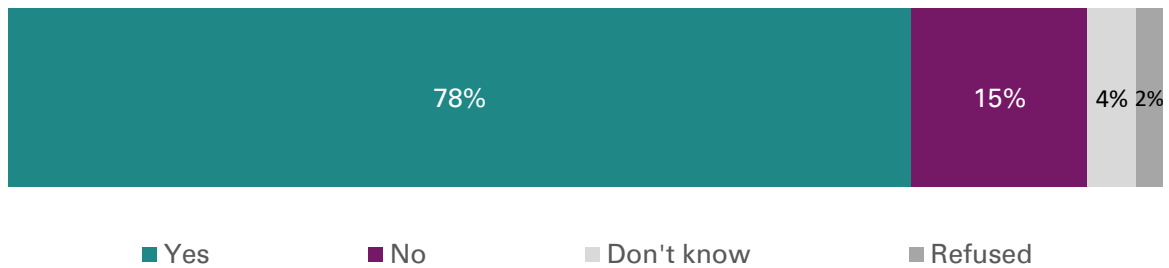
Limited time to devote to media and information was next most common (11%). This was more commonly a challenge among those living in Dili (18%) than those outside Dili (8%).

Vaccination

Note: *Don't know and refused responses are included in the base size for all questions in this section.*

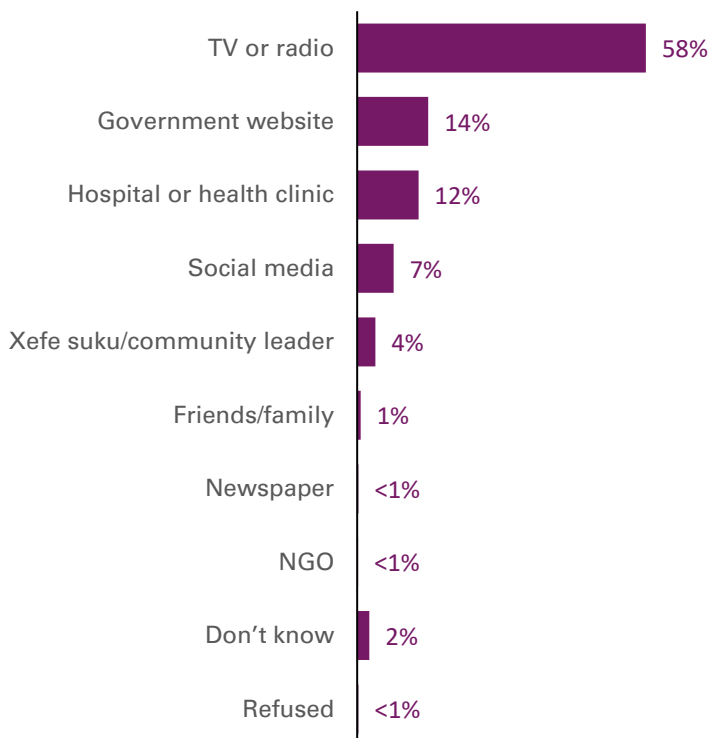
Seventy eight percent of respondents had heard about a COVID-19 vaccine. Eighty six percent of respondents in Dili had heard about the vaccine, compared to 75% outside of Dili. Females (82%) were a little more likely to report being aware of the vaccine than males (75%). Respondents aged over 45 (73%) were the least likely to have heard of the vaccine, compared to 78-85% of those aged 17-44.

Have you heard about a COVID-19 Vaccine?



Note: All other questions in the vaccine section are only asked of those who have heard of the vaccine.

Where did you hear about the COVID-19 vaccine?



Of the 78% who had heard of the vaccine, the top 3 places they had heard of it were TV or radio (58%), a government website (14%) and a hospital or health clinic (12%).

17-24 year-olds were the least likely to say they heard of the vaccine through TV or radio (42%, compared to 59-70% of the older age groups).

Respondents in Dili were less likely to have heard about the vaccine on TV or radio (51%) and more likely to have heard about it on a government website (27%) compared to those outside Dili.

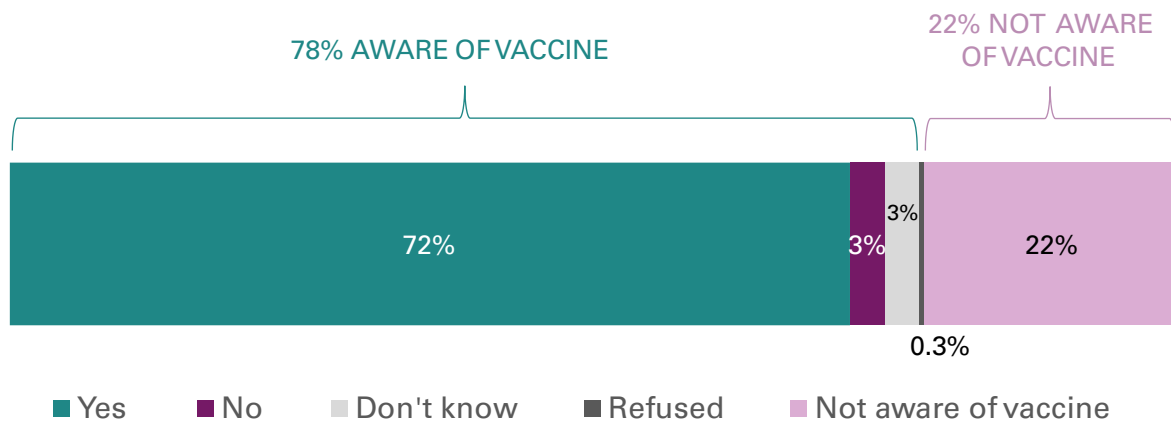
Note: All other questions in the vaccine section are only asked of those who have heard of the vaccine.

Of the 78% of respondents who were aware of the vaccine, 91% said they would be willing to receive a vaccination once it was approved by the GOTL. Five percent said they would not be willing to, 4% said 'don't know' and less than 1% 'refused' to answer.

Of those who had heard of the vaccine, 45+ year olds were also the least likely to be willing to have one (84%, compared to 92-97% of 17-44 year-olds).

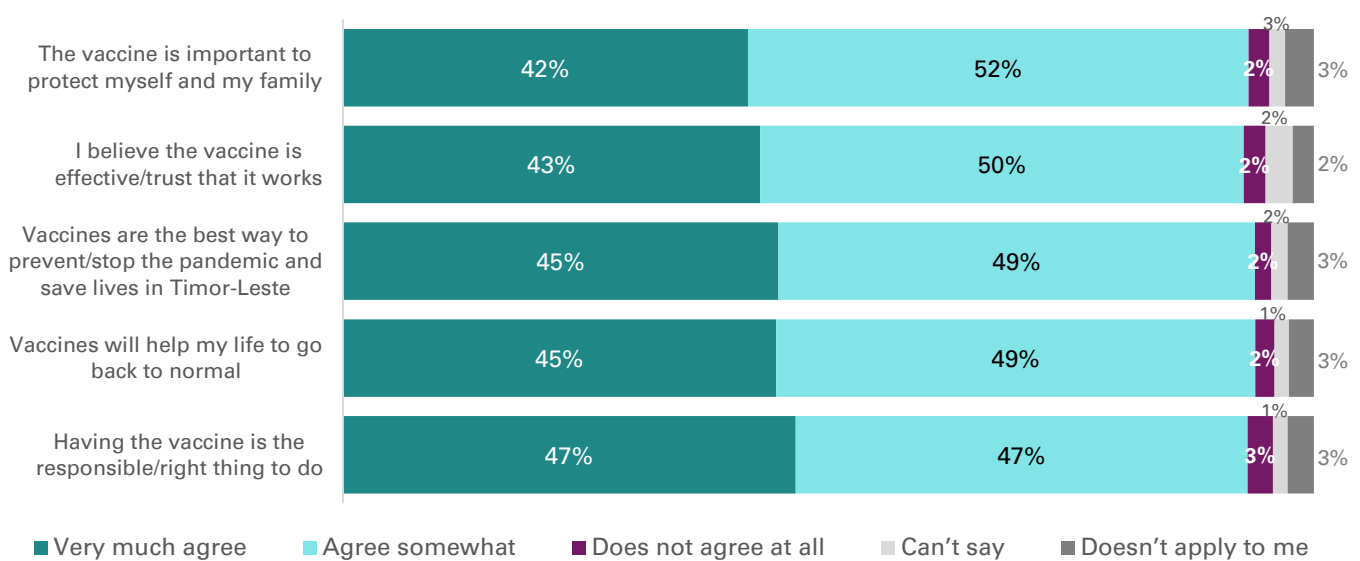
Converted into a view of the whole population, 72% are aware of the vaccine and willing to use it once approved by the GOTL, 6% are aware of the vaccine but don't feel willing to use it, and 22% are not aware of the vaccine.

Once the vaccine is approved by the GOTL, would you be willing to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if one were available?



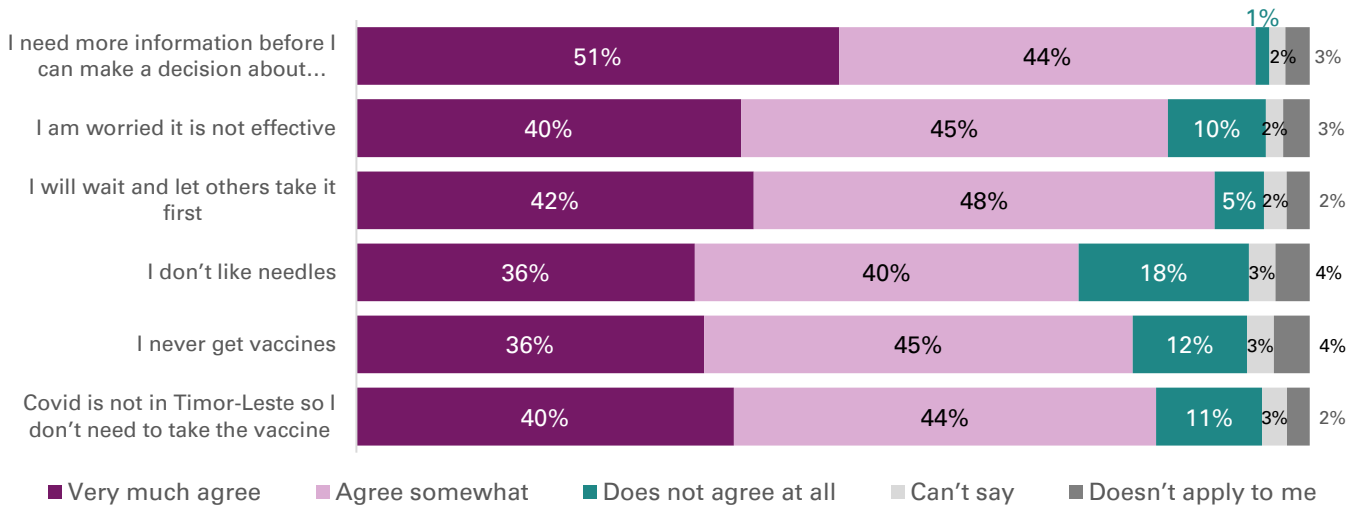
Understanding and perceptions of the vaccine in Timor-Leste may not yet be clear in February 2021. Respondents expressed consistently high levels of agreement with a range of positive statements about the vaccine – however also expressed similarly high levels of agreement with a range of more negative statements.

How much do you agree with the following statements describing your thinking about a COVID-19 vaccine?



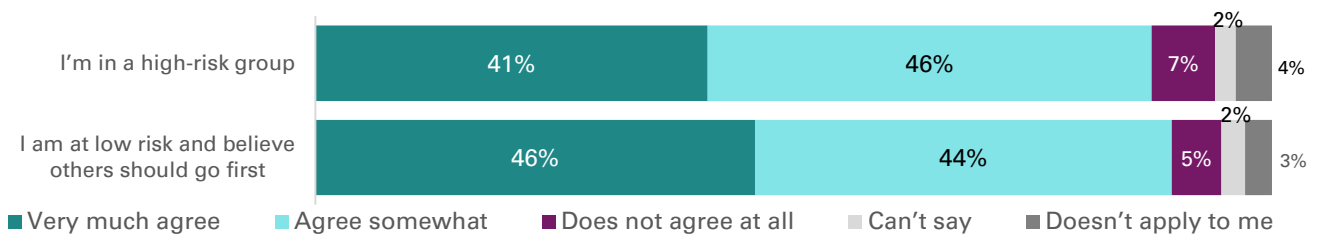
Note: All other questions in the vaccine section are only asked of those who have heard of the vaccine.

How much do you agree with the following statements describing your thinking about a COVID-19 vaccine?



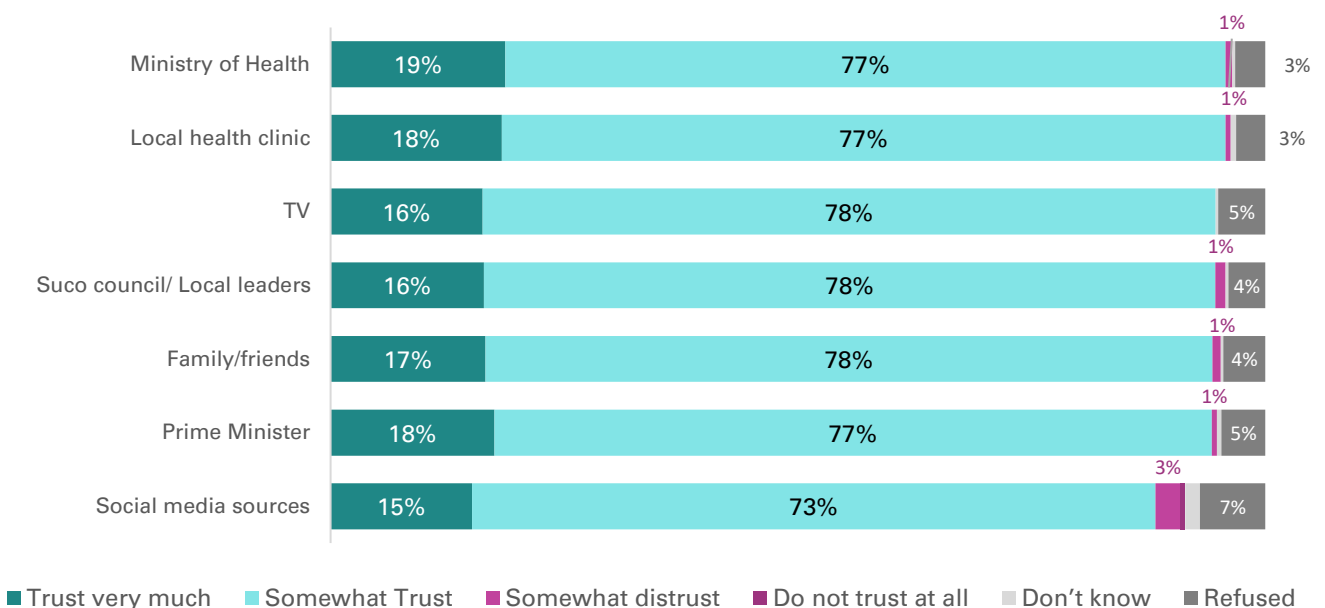
There was also considerable uncertainty about whether respondents were in high or low risk groups.

How much do you agree with the following statements describing your thinking about a COVID-19 vaccine?



There were high levels of trust in all sources of COVID-19 and health information. Respondents in Dili were more likely and those aged 17-24 were least likely to trust most sources 'very much'.

How much do you trust the following sources for COVID-19 and health information?



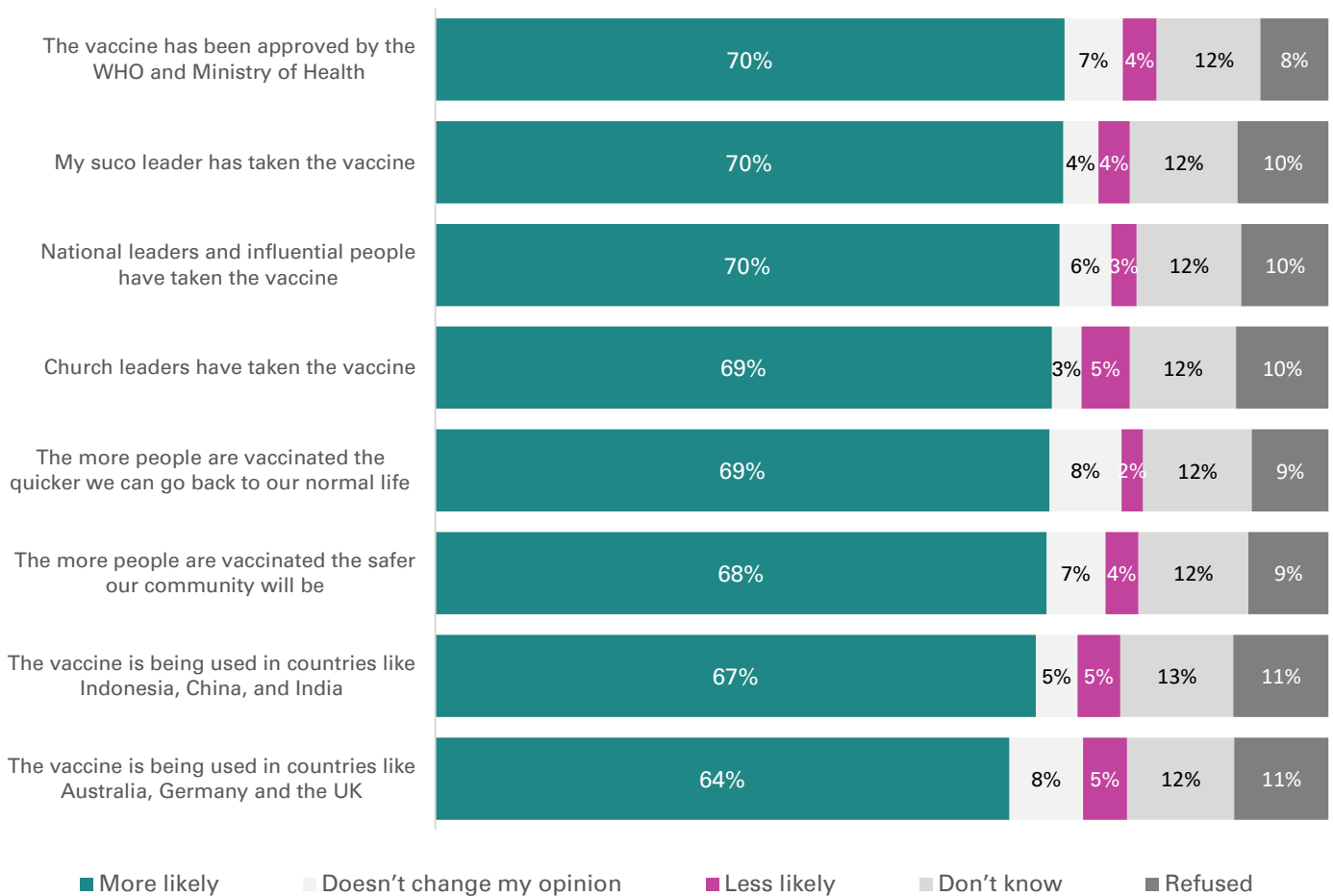
Note: All other questions in the vaccine section are only asked of those who have heard of the vaccine.

Respondents were asked what impact some pieces of information might have on their likelihood of getting vaccinated. Between 64-70% of those who were already aware of the vaccine said that each of these pieces of information would make them *more* likely to get vaccinated.

Of those outside Dili 69-78% said each piece of information would make them more likely to get vaccinated, compared to only 52-59% of those people in Dili.

There were no differences in the response of males and females, but those aged 35-44 were the most likely to say each piece of information would make them more likely to get vaccinated and those aged 45+ were the least likely to do so.

What information would make you more or less likely to get vaccinated or does not change your opinion about getting vaccinated?

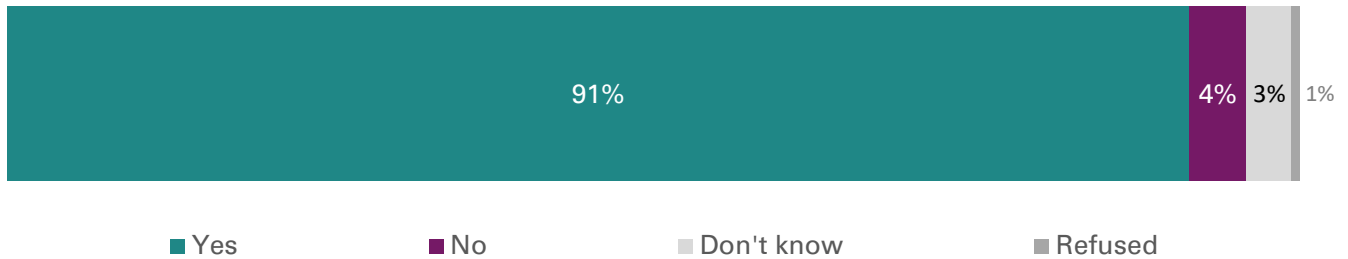


Note: All other questions in the vaccine section are only asked of those who have heard of the vaccine.

Respondents who were aware of the vaccine reported strong support for mandatory vaccination, with 91% of those aware of the vaccine saying they support mandatory vaccinations. Four percent did not support mandatory vaccinations, with 4% answering 'don't know' or chose not to answer.

Support for mandatory vaccination amongst people who were aware of the vaccine was above 90% for both males and females, and for all age groups other than 45+ (86%).

Do you support mandatory vaccination in Timor-Leste?



Nearly three-quarters (72%) of those respondents who were aware of the vaccine also say they approve of Timor-Leste's vaccination Plan. Just 3% of people aware of the vaccine said they disapprove of the plan.

Eighty one percent of respondents in Dili who were aware of the vaccine approved of the plan, compared to 69% outside of Dili (only 3-4% disapproved of the plan in either area). Of 25-44 year-olds, 80-83% approve of the plan, compared to 64-67% of 17-24 year olds and 45+ year olds.

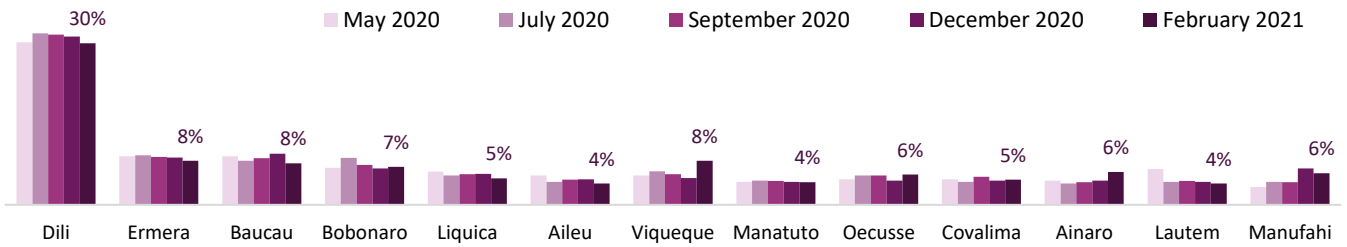
From what you have seen, read, or heard, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of Timor-Leste's vaccination plan?



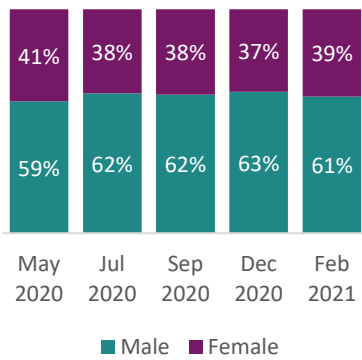
Respondent profile

The profile of respondents below is based on **unweighted** data (raw counts of respondents, not adjusted to reflect the Timor-Leste population).

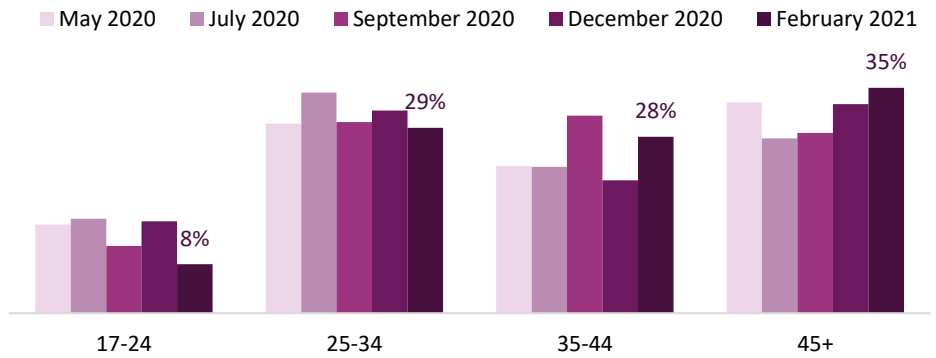
Municipality



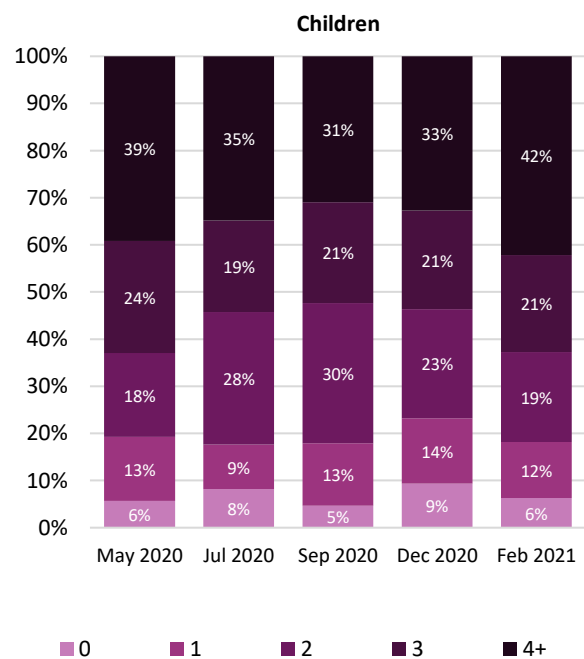
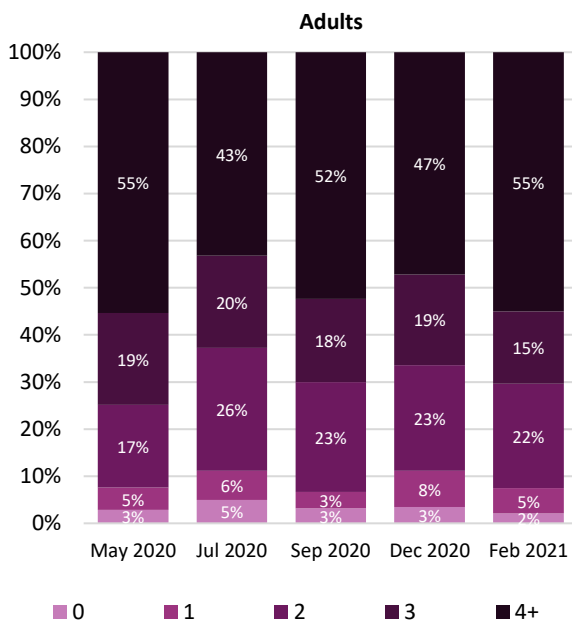
Gender



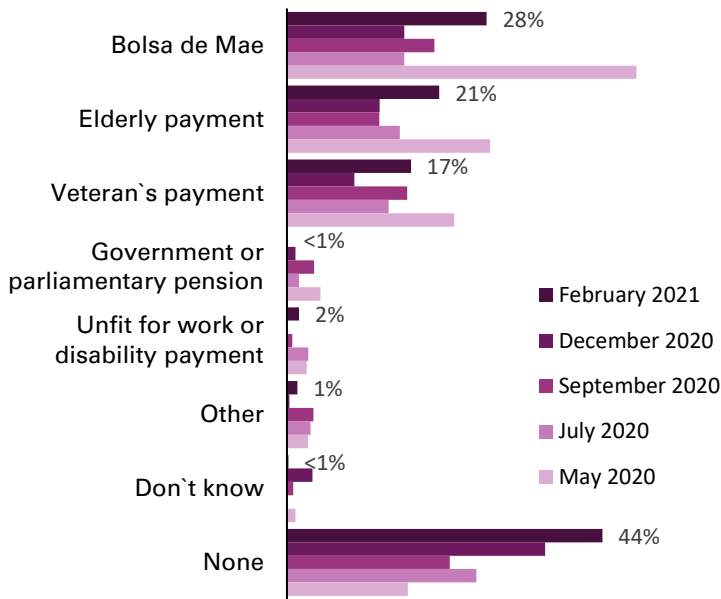
Age



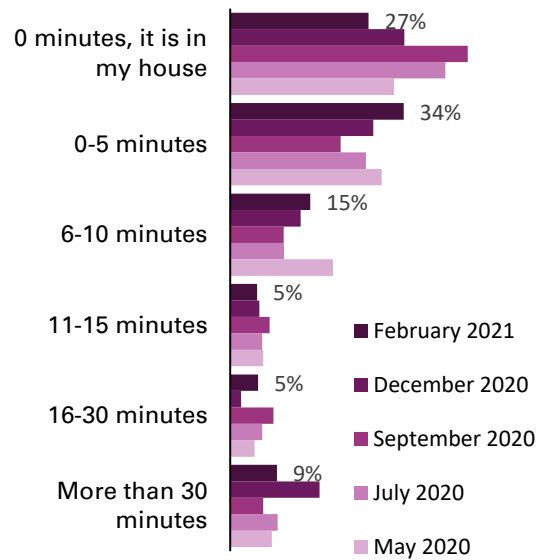
Number of people in your household



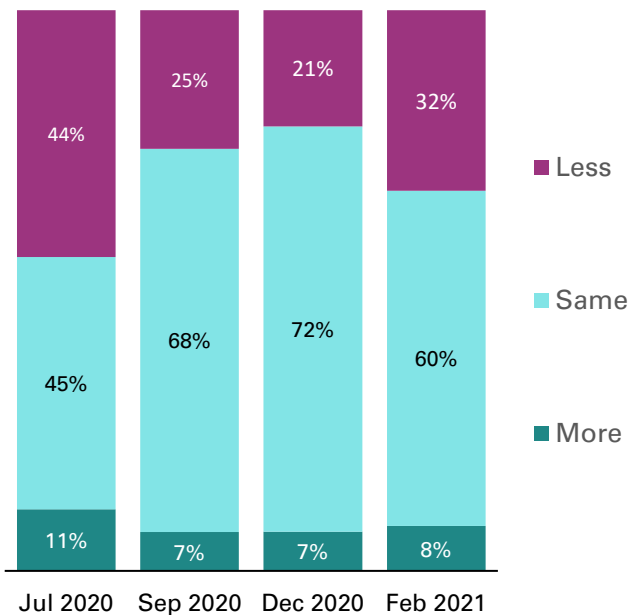
Does your household receive any government payments?



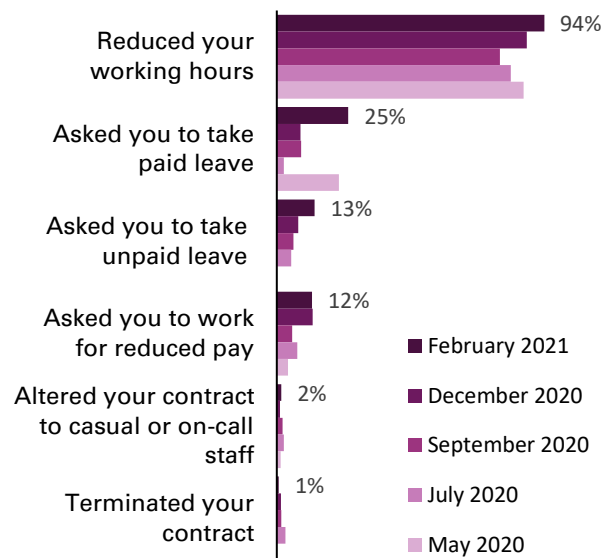
On an ordinary day, how long does it take you to walk to fetch water?



Hours worked (if employed) since start of State of Emergency



(If hours have been reduced) Has your employer...



Methodology

How was the questionnaire developed?

The Asia Foundation led the development of the questionnaire, with ORIMA Research providing advice where appropriate. Questions were drawn from previous research The Asia Foundation had conducted, as well as the ORIMA Research COVID-19 Recovery Tracker survey, amongst other international COVID-19 surveys. The February survey included new sections on COVID-19 vaccination as well as a lot of common questions from previous rounds of the survey. The Asia Foundation oversaw the programming and translation of the questionnaire into Open Data Kit (ODK), an open-source survey software platform.

How was the sample frame developed and how effective was it?

The sample frame for this survey was drawn from past Tatoli and Community Policing surveys The Asia Foundation had

conducted face-to-face. Cleaning of the sample involved the removal of blank / invalid / duplicate numbers (n=6,344).

When a number was dialed and a different person answered, this

person was able to also complete the survey. Whilst steps have been taken to make this survey as representative as possible, the sample from this project is classified as non-probability.

	Proposed minimum	May 20	Jul 20	Sep 20	Dec 20	Feb 21
Males in Dili	38	70	78	80	73	72
Females in Dili	38	57	50	48	52	56
Males non-Dili	150	179	174	172	181	189
Females non-Dili	150	117	102	107	96	112

How were the telephone interviews conducted?

To conduct the fieldwork, The Asia Foundation partnered with a Dili based NGO called Mata Dalan Institute (MDI). Most interviewers had previously worked on projects with The Asia Foundation, and many have now worked on multiple rounds of this survey. Staff from The Asia Foundation undertook callback recontact for validation purposes, with no major issues found. Monitoring was also conducted by staff from The Asia Foundation.

	May 20	Jul 20	Sep 20	Dec 20	Feb 21
Sample list	2,307	1,192	534	681	442
Refusals	30	47	66	87	2
Non-working numbers	1,666	619	60	188	11
Final dataset	423	404	407	402	429
Response rate³	19.9%	32.6%	76.2%	59.0%	97.1%
Fieldwork start	19 May 20	18 July 20	21 Sept 20	3 Dec 20	20 Feb 21
Fieldwork end	25 May 20	17 July 20	2 Oct 20	8 Dec 20	2 Mar 21
Median length of interview⁴	47m25s	41m30s	43m23s	47m57s	42m12s
Number of interviewers	14	19	11	17	13

Nearly all surveys were conducted in Tetum, with only a handful conducted in Fataluku, Bahasa Indonesia or Baikenu. Respondents were sent a \$2 telephone credit for participating in the research.

³ The response rate is calculated by the number of final survey completes coming from the sample frame divided by the number of valid phone numbers used from the sample frame.

⁴ Excludes 25/29/28/26 cases where length was over 4 hours, most likely due to not pressing the final "submit" button.

What steps have been taken to ensure the data is representative of the Timor-Leste population?

The research was designed to be as representative as possible of the adult (17+) population of Timor-Leste as defined by the 2015 Census. Considerations in the sampling included the need to enable comparisons between Dili and other municipalities, as well as being practical within the relatively short timeframe and limited sample.

Minimum quotas (see above) were set to ensure appropriate gender and geographic coverage. One quota, in relation to females outside of Dili, has never been met. Additionally, individual municipalities outside of Dili had minimum quotas proportionate to their population. The minimum quota required for each municipality was 10. Municipalities with higher populations (such as Baucau and Ermera) had minimum quotas of 25.

In each round, the sample was weighted to population benchmarks as defined in the 2015 census. This is to correct response bias from males and middle ages, as well as slight Dili over-sampling. Random Iterative Method (RIM) weighting

	Population (N=662,285)	May 20 unweighted (n=423)	Jul 20 unweighted (n=404)	Sep 20 unweighted (n=407)	Dec 20 unweighted (n=402)	Feb 21 unweighted (n=429)
Age						
17-24	28%	14%	15%	11%	14%	8%
25-44	41%	53%	58%	61%	53%	57%
45-120	31%	33%	27%	28%	33%	35%
Gender						
Male	50%	59%	62%	62%	63%	61%
Female	50%	41%	38%	38%	37%	39%
Location						
Dili	26%	30%	32%	31%	31%	30%
Not Dili	74%	70%	68%	69%	69%	70%

using the anesrake package in R studio was chosen as the most appropriate weighting method with consideration to future comparability, simplicity and representation of the population. The variables used for weighting, the proportions within population and unweighted proportions are shown to the right.

What data processing steps were taken?

Once ORIMA received the data, the following data processing steps were conducted:

- A duplicate check and speeder check was conducted.
- String question responses in Tetun were translated by The Asia Foundation.
- "Don't know" answers in multiple-response question were made exclusive.
- Back-coding was conducted where appropriate.
- Variable labels and value labels were checked and modified for the purposes of reporting.
- Weighting was conducted as above.

Answers indicating a type of non-response (such as "Don't know", "Not applicable" and "Refused") have been removed from the base in this report, unless indicated otherwise.

How confident can I be in the results?

	May 20	Jul 20	Sep 20	Dec 20	Feb 21
Number of responses	423	404	407	402	429
Statistical margin of error	±4.8%	±4.9%	±4.9%	±4.9%	±4.8%

The statistical margin of error is calculated using a proportion percentage of 50% at the 95% confidence level. While margin of error does not technically apply to non-probability samples, this can still be used as a general guide when determining whether results are actually different or only different by chance. Other factors, such as the sampling method, non-response bias and measurement error should also be taken into consideration when interpreting results. Figures within text that are flagged as different amongst sub-groups were found as significant to at least one other category when using a Welch T-test at a 95% confidence interval with a Bonferroni correction within the cTables interface of SPSS. Analysis of differences amongst sub-groups are subject to higher margins of error and these tests take this into account. However, they must only be used as a general guide. Tests are not highlighted where no sub-group difference existed. For example, there were few differences by gender. Within this report, not all figures will add up to 100% due to rounding.

About The Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Working through our offices in 18 countries and informed by deep local expertise and six decades of experience, we address the critical issues affecting Asia in the 21st century by: strengthening governance, expanding economic opportunity, increasing environmental resilience, empowering women, and promoting international cooperation. In Timor-Leste, the Foundation is currently focused on strengthening governance and policy, ending violence against women, developing inclusive tourism, and promoting peace and justice.

For more information about The Asia Foundation please visit asiafoundation.org, or contact:

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About ORIMA Research

ORIMA Research is an Australian social research company that specializes in the government and not-for-profit sectors. ORIMA has worked extensively with The Asia Foundation since 2015, including on data processing, survey methodology and analysis and reporting.

For more information about ORIMA Research please visit our website www.orima.com.au, or contact:

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