



# Timor-Leste COVID-19 Survey

Round 8 – September 2021



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# Timor-Leste COVID-19 Survey

## September 2021 results



This factsheet presents the results of a **telephone survey** of 409 **Timor-Leste adults** conducted from **17 to 23 September 2021**. The sample comprised 244 males and 165 females. At the end of the week of the survey, there were 1,183 active COVID-19 cases in Timor-Leste, and the State of Emergency had been renewed for the 17<sup>th</sup> time. Results from **September** are compared with previous results where possible.

### COVID-19 remained by far the biggest challenge for individuals, the community and the country

#### For Timor-Leste:

	May '20	July '20	Sep '20	Dec '20	Feb '21	May '21	Jun '21	Sep '21	
	62%	53%	72%	61%	87%	87%	84%	<b>89%</b>	<b>COVID-19</b>
	10%	18%	8%	17%	6%	6%	9%	<b>4%</b>	<b>Economy</b>
	1%	3%	4%	2%	1%	1%	<1%	<b>4%</b>	<b>Lack of jobs/ income</b>

#### For your community:

	May '20	July '20	Sep '20	Dec '20	Feb '21	May '21	Jun '21	Sep '21	
	76%	70%	64%	70%	85%	85%	85%	<b>84%</b>	<b>COVID-19</b>
	64%	72%	62%	68%	75%	61%	64%	<b>70%</b>	<b>Economy</b>
	37%	48%	38%	41%	56%	37%	42%	<b>34%</b>	<b>Politics</b>

#### For you as an individual:

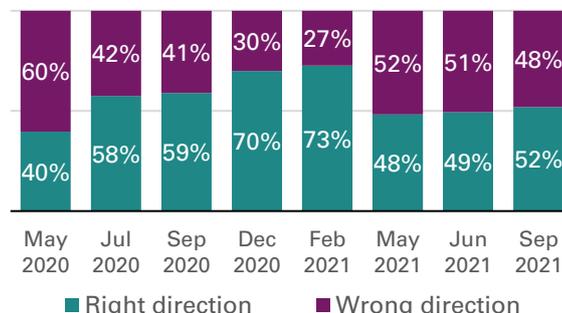
	May '20	July '20	Sep '20	Dec '20	Feb '21	May '21	Jun '21	Sep '21	
	80%	75%	79%	81%	90%	92%	95%	<b>94%</b>	<b>COVID-19</b>
	63%	74%	62%	69%	77%	66%	71%	<b>74%</b>	<b>Economy</b>
	13%	23%	37%	27%	18%	34%	33%	<b>41%</b>	<b>Lack of jobs/ income</b>

### COVID-safe Behaviors

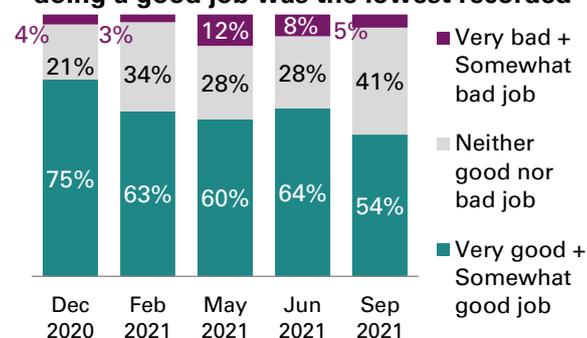
(% applies 'very much')

	<b>80%</b> Wear face mask	Dec '20: 55%	Feb '21: 58%	May: 66%	Jun: 70%
	<b>52%</b> Wash hands	Dec '20: 52%	Feb '21: 57%	May: 61%	Jun: 58%
	<b>36%</b> Maintain 1.5m distance	Dec '20: 51%	Feb '21: 46%	May: 48%	Jun: 53%

### Around half felt Timor-Leste was going in the right direction, similar to June



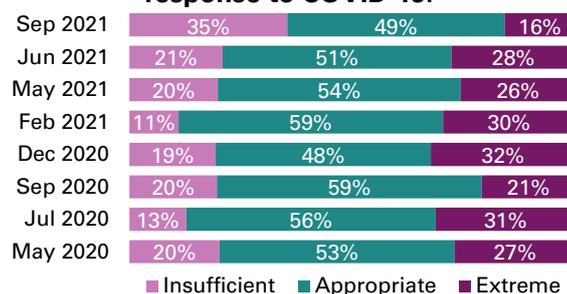
### The proportion who felt the Government was doing a good job was the lowest recorded



### 25% trust the Government to take care of them during COVID-19, the lowest recorded across all rounds

May '20: 49% July '20: 64% Sept '20: 83% Dec '20: 59%  
Feb '21: 54% May '21: 34% June '21: 34%

### Feeling about current Government response to COVID-19:



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

1. End sanitary fences – **41%**
2. End State of Emergency – **41%**
3. End lockdown – **29%**

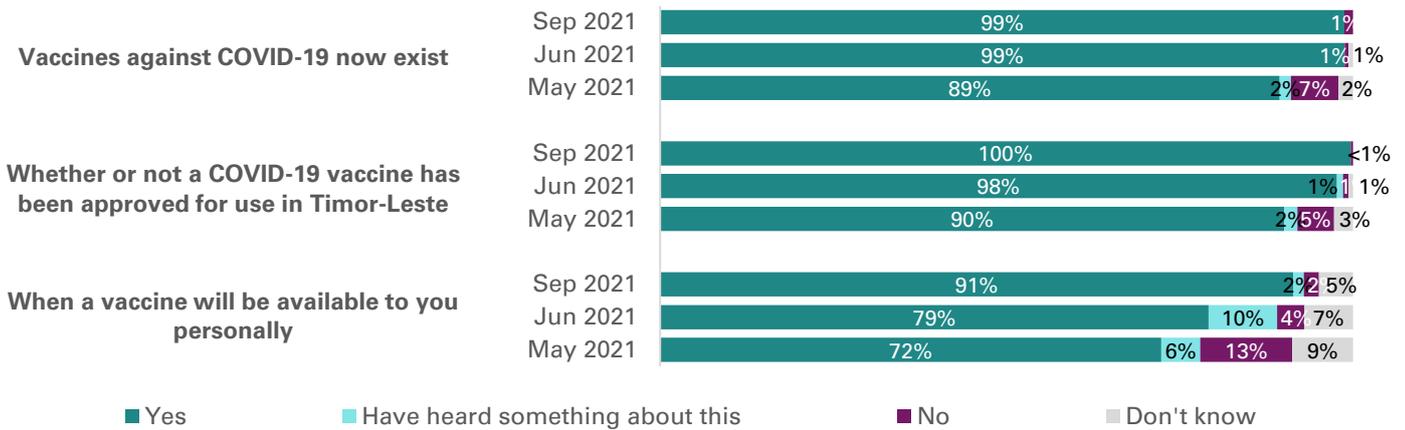
In the past 30 days,



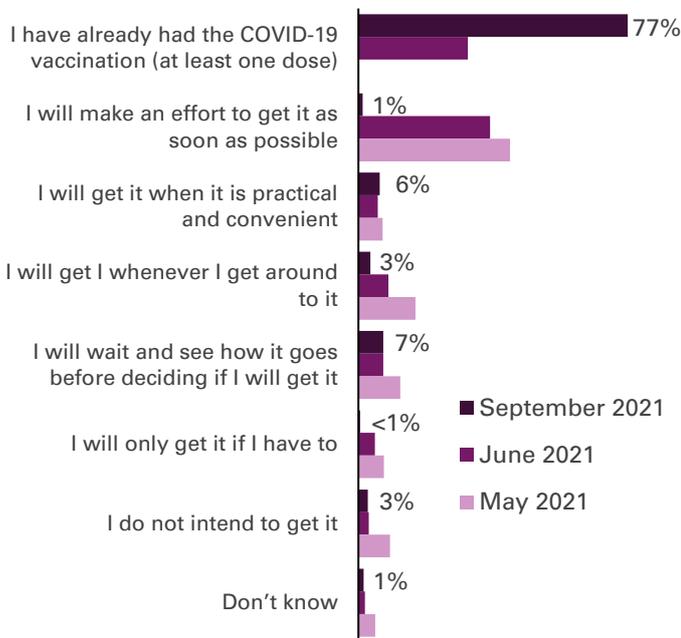
**58%** have **cut meal size** or **skipped a meal** because there wasn't **enough money** for food

Jul '20: 70% Sep: 53% Dec: 60% Feb '21: 62% May: 74% Jun: 55%

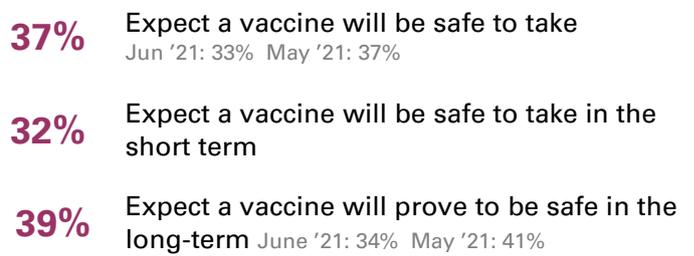
**Nearly all respondents were aware of the COVID-19 vaccine and its approval for use in Timor-Leste, AND the proportion who were aware of when it would be available to them personally also increased**



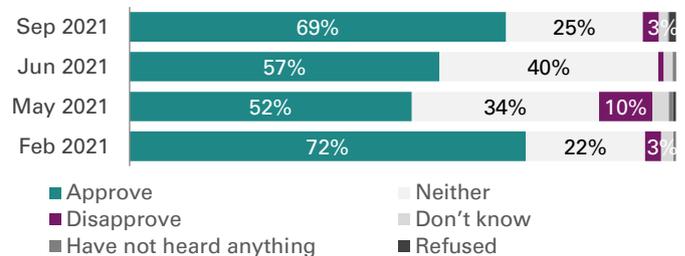
**Around three quarters had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, up from June**



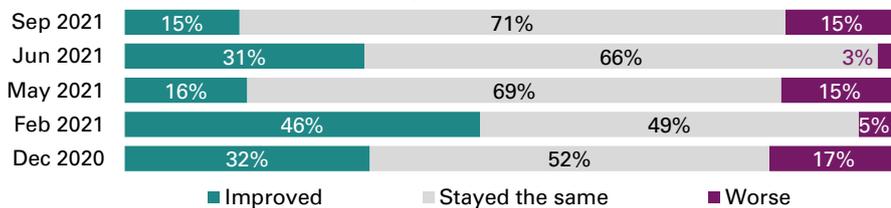
**Slightly more respondents perceived the COVID-19 vaccine to be safe, compared with June**



**Approval of Timor-Leste's vaccination plan increased from May and June**



**Nearly all feel safety and security in their local communities improved or stayed the same compared to three months ago\***



\*Prior to September 2021, question wordings asked "compared to March 2020"

**Safety: 51% reported conflict in their area**

Dec '20: 64% Feb '21: 63% May: 63% Jun: 64%

**Most common causes of conflict in your area: Top 3**

**Most common security threats in last three months\*: Top 3**

- 1. COVID-19 – 82%**  
Dec '20: 70% Feb '21: 77% May: 91% Jun: 82%
- 2. Land disputes – 8%**  
Dec '20: 6% Feb '21: 6% May: 3% Jun: 7%
- 3. Martial Arts Groups – 6%**  
Dec '20: 9% Feb '21: 11% May: 4% Jun: 3%

- 1. Physical attack resulting in injury – 18%**
- 2. Theft of personal property – 7%**
- 3. Gangs or groups – 7%**

We would like to thank the 409 (244 M: 165 F) respondents for their time and the 11 interviewers in Dili who conducted the September 2021 survey.



# 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
- Perceptions of the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccination plan
- The level of trust in Government
- The use of, and satisfaction with, Government programs
- The social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- The resilience of individuals and their communities, and
- The sources of news and information the people of Timor-Leste are relying on to stay informed about the pandemic.

## Timor-Leste context

This survey was conducted between 17-23 September (Round VIII). At the time of the previous survey (11-17 June 2021, Round VII) a continuing focus on border, quarantine, lockdown and sanitary fence measures; together with the vaccination rollout meant that the number of active cases was declining. At that time there were no recorded cases of the more infectious COVID-19 Delta variant. However, by 23 July Timorese health authorities were announcing four imported cases of the Delta variant, who had entered Timor-Leste across the land border from Indonesia on 23 June. These cases were identified in 300 samples sent for urgent testing at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and immunity, in Melbourne, Australia.<sup>1</sup>

Between the survey periods Timor-Leste experienced another wave of COVID-19 infections. At the time of this survey there were 1,319 active cases (21 September), more than the 1,275 cases at the time of the previous survey in June; but less than the high of 4,484 active cases recorded on 2 September. Among newly reported cases from June to September 2021, the majority had not been vaccinated. About 20-30% of cases have reportedly been fully vaccinated and are thus considered “breakthrough infections. The number of registered deaths had increased to 107 by 21 September, with close to 70% of these deaths being in Dili. <https://covid19.gov.tl/en/dashboard/>

At the peak of the most recent wave of infections the Guido Valadares National Hospital (HNGV) in Dili, the country’s main COVID-19 referral hospital, was reporting that 116 of its medical staff, including 26 doctors and 53 nurses, were infected with COVID-19, leaving the hospital dangerously understaffed.

States of Emergency (#15-#17) were renewed respectively on 2 July 2021, 1 August, and 31 August. A variety of measures were imposed at different times between the two survey periods including periods of home confinement (lockdowns) in Dili and parts of Ermera; and sanitary fences in Dili, Baucau, Ermera, Manufahi, Covalima and parts of the Special Administrative Region of Oecusse Ambeno (RAEOA). In the week of the survey itself sanitary fences were in operation in Dili, however with exemptions for people who had received both vaccinations and for children under six years old. Towards the end of that week (22 September) the GoTL decided not to renew the imposition of sanitary fences in the municipalities of Baucau, Covalima and Ermera.

Timor-Leste commenced COVID-19 vaccinations on 7 April 2021, and by 21 September 2021, 421,912 first doses (55.9%) had been administered; and 248,513 second doses (32.9%) had been administered, predominantly in Dili. Vaccines have been supplied by the COVAX facility and vaccine donations from the Australian, New Zealand and Chinese Governments, including AstraZeneca and Sinovac. During this period Timor-Leste started preparations for the introduction of the Pfizer vaccine for people aged between 12 and 17 years.

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<sup>1</sup> Tatoli, 2021. ‘Timor-Leste records four cases of Delta variant’, 23 July 2021

The State of Calamity in Dili Municipality in response to Cyclone Seroja and the ensuing floods finished on 4 August. The number of displaced people still in shelters continued to fall with more than 15,000 of the initial 15,876 people having returned home.

## 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)-funded Governance for Development Program.

## How was the research conducted?

Between 17 and 23 September 2021, a Dili-based call centre conducted 409 interviews with Timor-Leste adults (comprising 244 males and 165 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 February, May and June 2021 as well as 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 during the analysis, and any gender differences are mentioned in this report. More detail is available in the methodology section of this report. The full survey results are also available on the Q2i Visualization platform: [surveys.asiafoundation.org/Dashboard?SurveyCode=TLCV](https://surveys.asiafoundation.org/Dashboard?SurveyCode=TLCV)

## The future

The next survey is expected to be conducted in early 2022 to observe changes for the community over time. This report and the Q2i visualization platform are updated each survey round to reflect current data.

### Reader Notes

Throughout the report results are shown at the overall level. Where there are statistically significant differences based on gender or location (Dili compared to those living outside of Dili), these are described in the commentary. Where no differences are noted, this means there were no statistically significant differences seen.

Colours are used in some charts to show different rounds of the survey. The most recent results are shown in the darkest colours.

Not all questions have been asked in all rounds of the survey. Where results are not shown for some questions or some parts of questions, this means they were not asked in that round.

In some places results may not naturally add up to exactly 100% due to rounding. Where this occurs, results are manually rounded to 100%.

More complete technical information can be seen in the appendix at the end of this report. More detailed breakdown of results are available in the Q2i data visualizer.

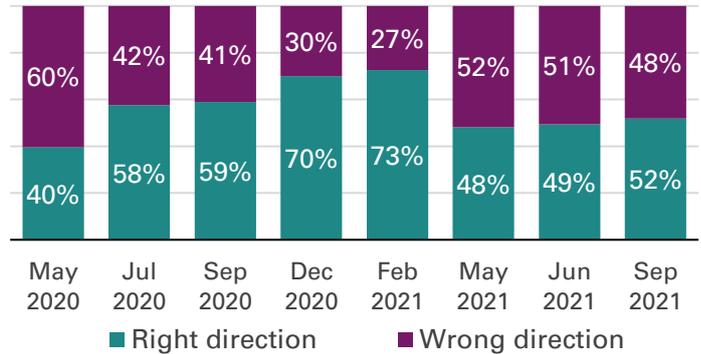
# Results

## Biggest concerns

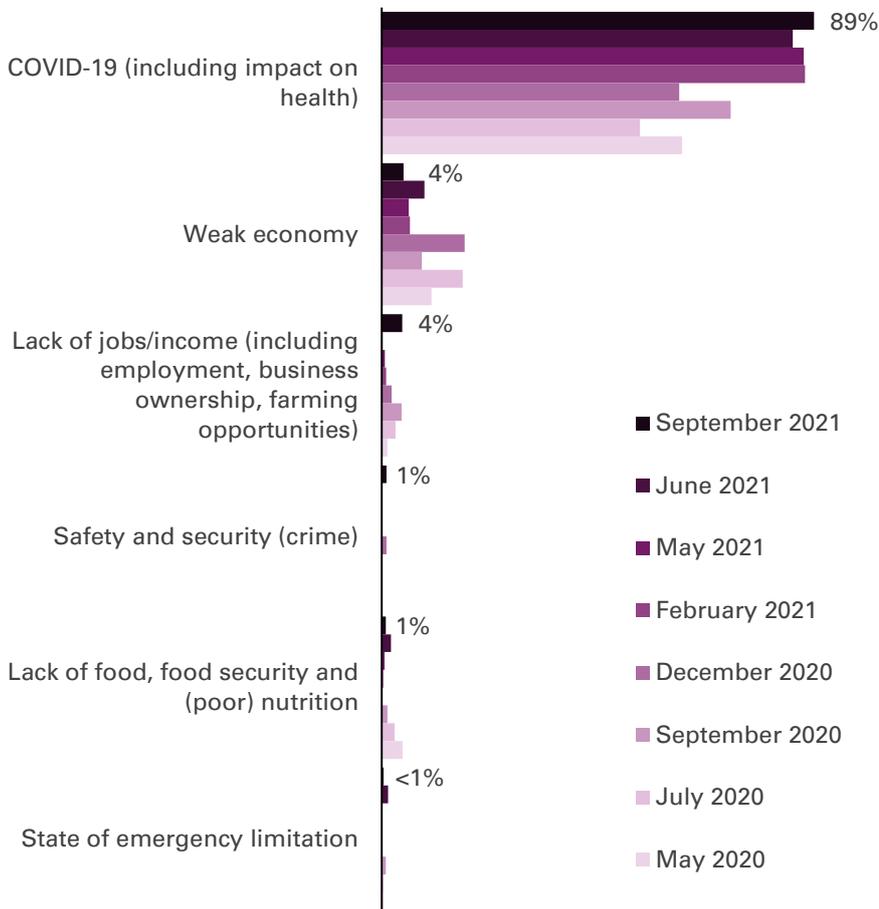
In September 2021, around half (52%) of respondents felt that Timor-Leste was going in the right direction, in line with June 2021 (49%) and May 2021 (48%).

As in previous rounds, greater proportions of those living in Dili considered Timor-Leste was going in the right direction (68%, compared to 46% outside Dili).

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



## The biggest challenge facing Timor-Leste:



As in all previous survey rounds, COVID-19 (including its impact on health) was by far the biggest perceived challenge facing Timor-Leste (89%). This is at a consistently higher level across 2021 compared to 2020.

COVID-19 was considered the biggest challenge facing Timor-Leste across all demographic groups.

A weak economy (4%) and lack of jobs / income (4%) were the next biggest perceived challenges, though only a minority of respondents selected these options.

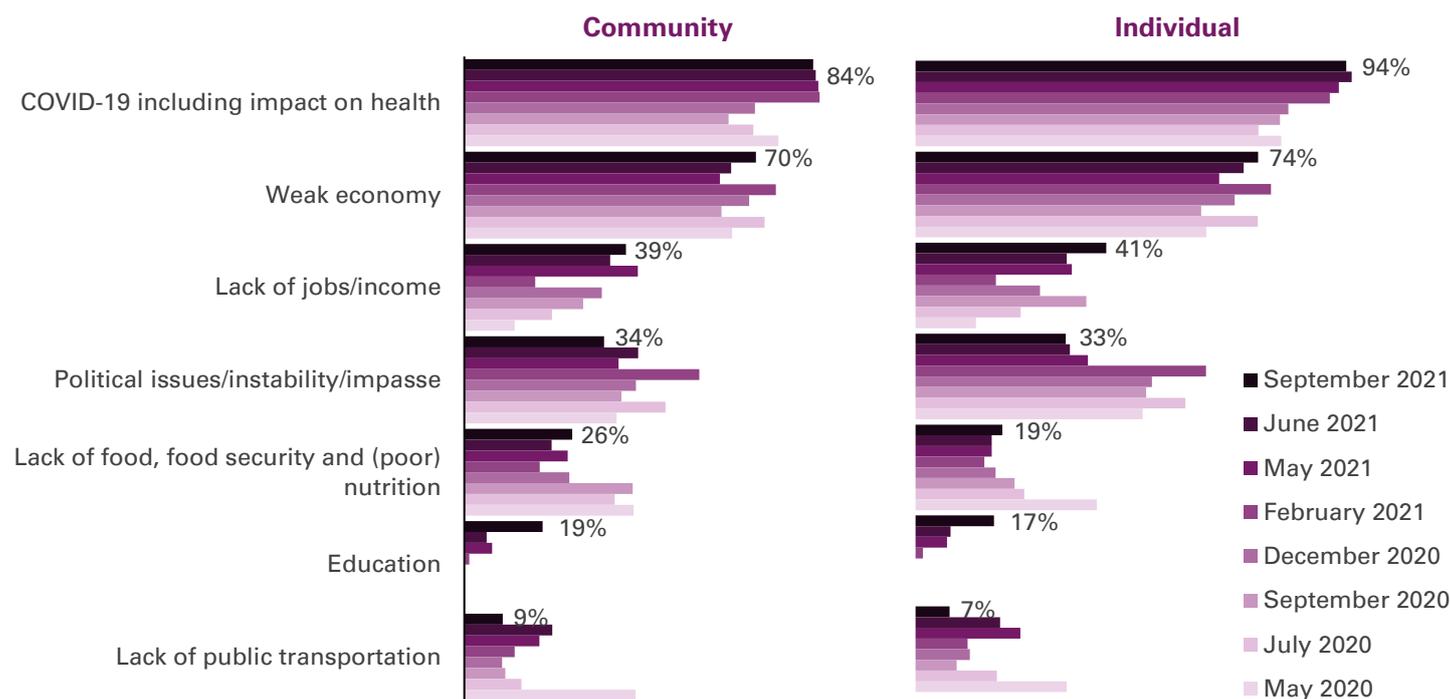
In September 2021, COVID-19 remained the most commonly reported concern for individuals (94%) and the community (84%). These figures were in line with those recorded between February and June 2021; but were higher than those observed in 2020.

As in previous rounds, a weak economy was the second most common concern for both individuals (74%) and the community (70%). More respondents living outside Dili felt a weak economy was a concern for themselves (80%, compared to 59% of those living in Dili) and their community (75%, compared to 57%). In addition, a greater proportion of respondents aged 45 years and over reported a weak economy as a concern for both themselves (81%) and their community (77%), compared to younger age groups (67-76% for themselves and 63-69% for their community).

Concern about a lack of jobs / income increased compared to June 2021, particularly at the individual level (41%, up from 33% in June 2021). As in previous rounds, a greater proportion of those living in Dili were concerned about a lack of jobs / income (49% for themselves and 51% for their community) than those living outside Dili (39% and 35%, respectively).

Concern about education (17% for themselves and 19% for their community) was also higher than in previous rounds. More respondents living in Dili were concerned about education (27% for themselves and 29% for their community) compared to those outside Dili (14% and 15%, respectively). In addition, a greater proportion of females were concerned about education for themselves (22%, compared to 13% of males) but a similar proportion to males considered education was a problem for their community.

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

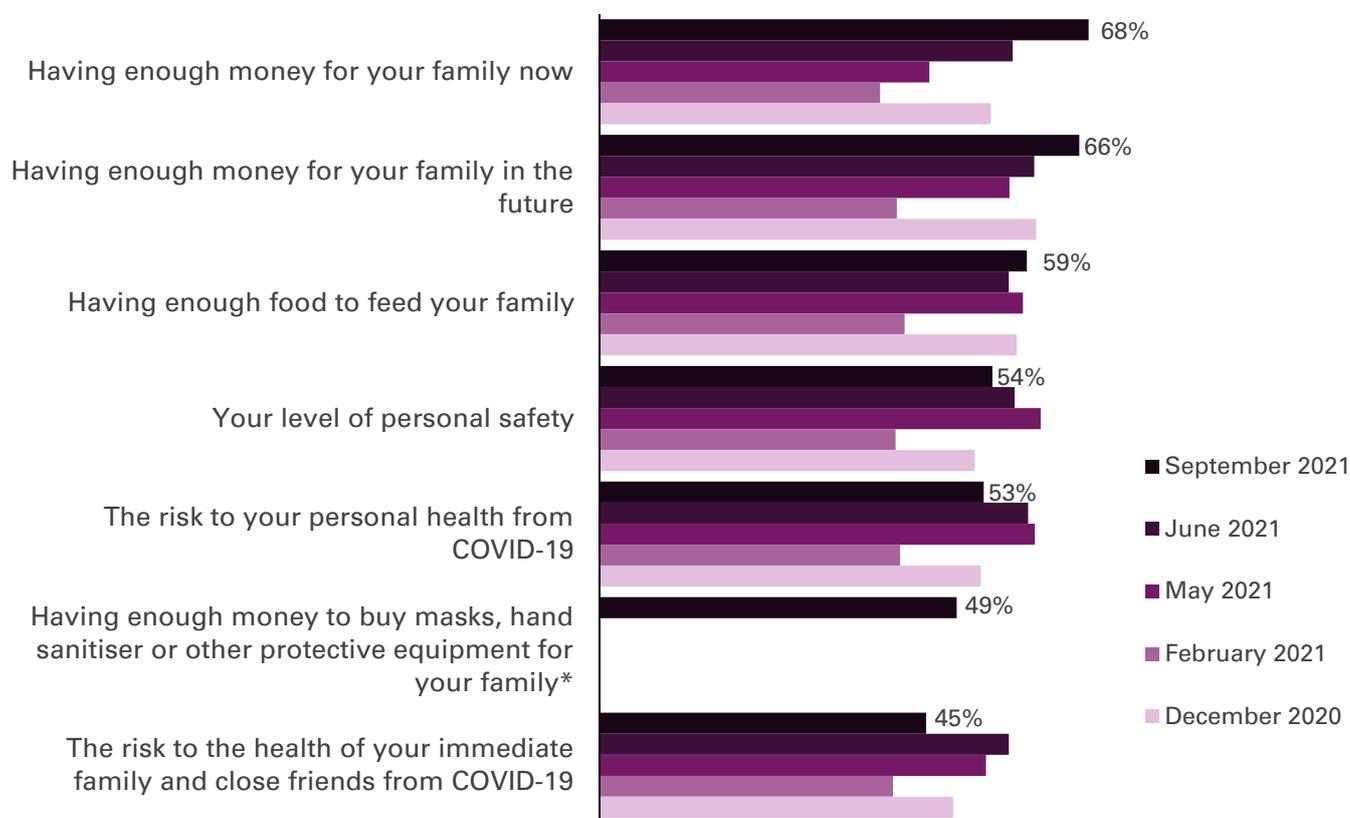


Respondents were asked about how concerned they were about various aspects of life. Respondents were most concerned about having enough money for their family now (68%) and having enough money for their family in future (66%). Concern about both of these aspects related to money has steadily increased since February 2021 (when they were 39% and 41%, respectively). Having enough month to buy masks, sanitizer and protective equipment is a new question added in September 2021, and at 49% is less of a specific concern.

Concern about most aspects was higher among those living outside Dili except for their level of personal safety and the risk to their personal health from COVID-19., compared to those living in Dili.

Concern about most aspects was lower among respondents aged 45 years and over (except having enough money to buy masks, hand sanitiser or other protective equipment for their family), compared to younger age groups.

**Concerns about health, safety and financial security (% very concerned)**



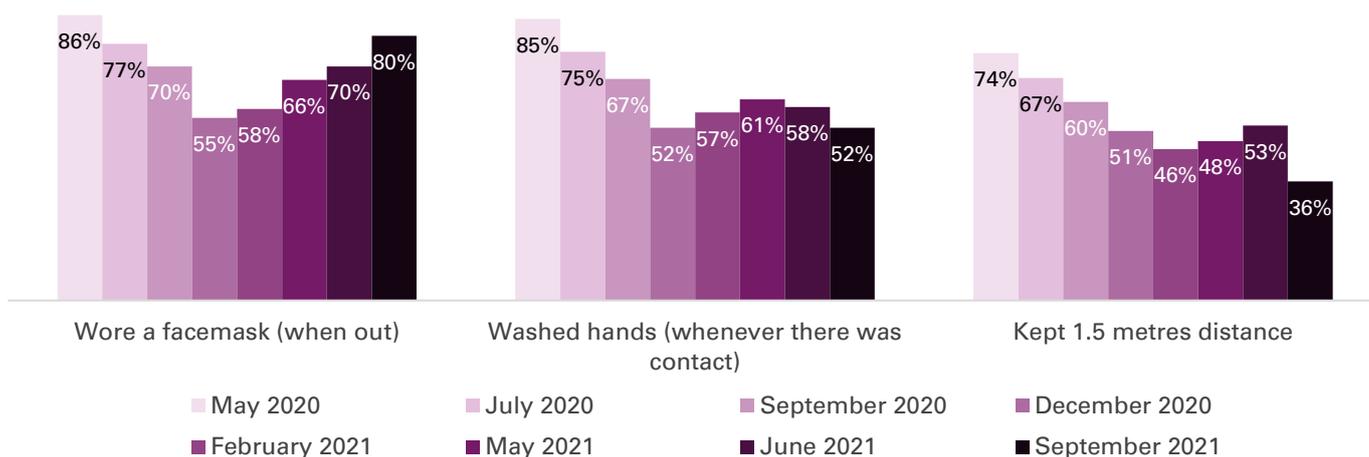
\*New question added in September 2021

## Prevention measures and healthcare behavior

COVID-19 safe behaviours are measured by asking people how much certain statements apply to them in the last week. The proportion of respondents who reported that in the past week “wearing a facemask” *applies very much* to them continues to increase. However, the proportions who report that they “kept 1.5 metres distance from others” and “washed their hands” *apply very much* to them decreased compared to June 2021.

More respondents living outside Dili reported “washing their hands” *applies very much* to them (60%), compared to 29% of those living in Dili.

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



Consistent with fewer people saying they had kept 1.5m distance, respondents were less likely to have avoided events and social settings where they could come into contact with others. Specifically, respondents were less likely to avoid attending social gatherings (39% *applies very much*, down from 52% in June 2021), avoided public places (39%, down from 51% in June), and worked from home (35%, down from 51% in June). In addition, only around one third of respondents indicated they *very much* avoided religious gatherings (36%), funerals, weddings and other big family events (37%) and visiting family and friends outside their immediate household (33%). Those living in Dili were less likely to have avoided events and social settings, compared to those living outside Dili.

Respondents were asked when they last visited relatives in other Municipalities (or relatives visited them). 40% had visited relatives less than half a year ago, 24% between half a year and one year and 26% more than one year ago (not charted). Among those who had not seen their relatives in more than one year, this was primarily due to COVID-19 related sanitary fences (94%, not charted).

### If you had symptoms, would you:

May 2020	Jul 2020	Sep 2020	Dec 2020	Feb 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Sep 2021	
94%	95%	99%	98%	97%	93%	97%	97%	Go to a hospital or health clinic
92%	79%	79%	88%	97%	92%	96%	98%	Inform people around me
85%	79%	77%	86%	87%	86%	91%	86%	Stay home
-	-	63%	89%	85%	87%	83%	84%	Take traditional medicine
-	-	80%	85%	88%	86%	75%	74%	Carry on as usual

Nearly all respondents reported that if they had symptoms of sickness, they would go to a hospital or health clinic (97%) and inform people around them (98%), similar to previous rounds.

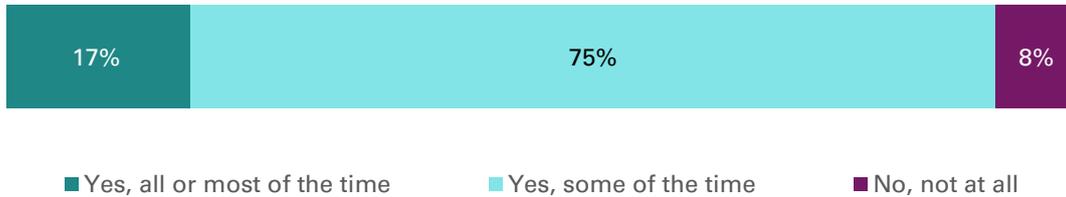
While most respondents reported they would stay home (86%), the majority (74%) also indicated they would carry on as usual. Greater proportions of those living outside Dili (82%, compared to 50% of those living in Dili) and males (79%, compared to 68% of females) indicated they would carry on as usual if they had symptoms.

## School attendance

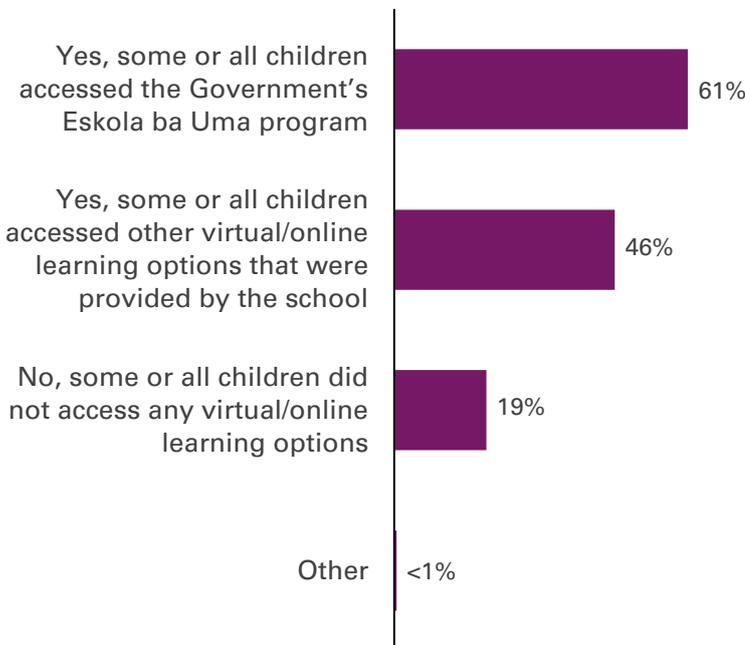
Among those with school-aged children, most (92%) had been attending school at least some of the time, with 17% attending all or most of the time.

Among those whose children had not been attending school all or most of the time, this was most commonly due to their school being closed due to COVID (82%) and being worried about the risk of COVID if they went to school, although their school was open (45%).

### If you have school-aged children, have they been attending school in the past three months?



### Did any of your children access any virtual / online learning options during the last three months?



Among those whose children had not attended school all or most of the time, most (81%) had accessed virtual/ online learning options – either through the Government's Eskola ba Uma program (61%) or other options provided by the school (46%).

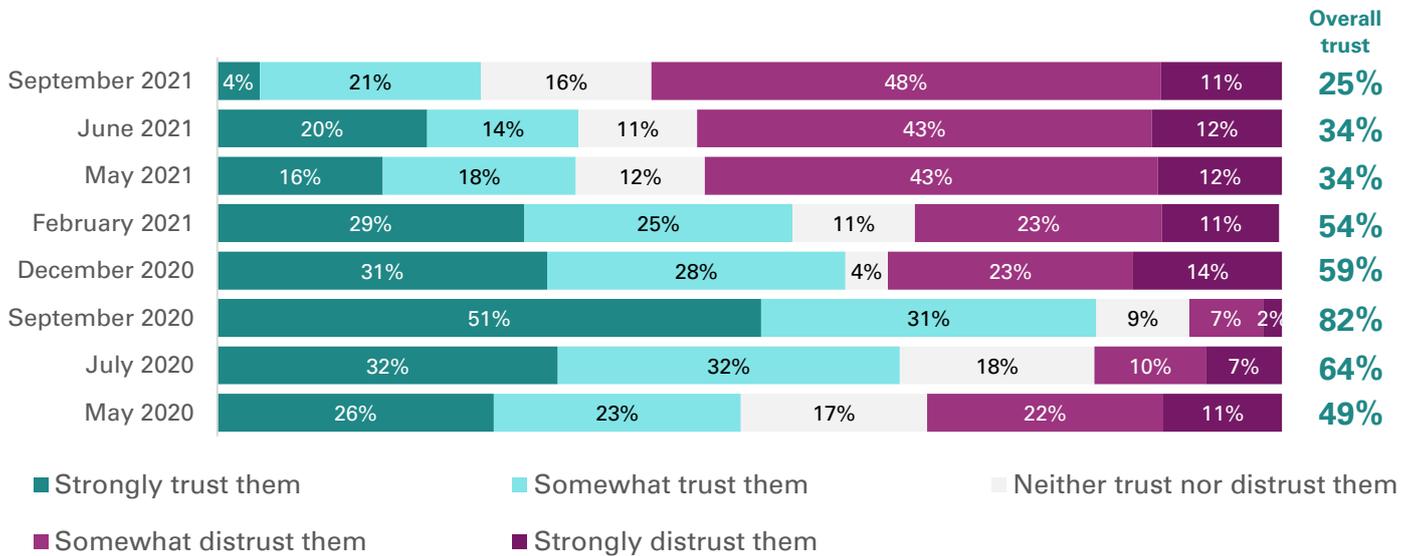
Among those who did not use any virtual/ online learning options, this was most commonly because it was too difficult to access materials (82%, not charted) or they were not able to provide the help their child needed to use the materials (39%).

## Government trust

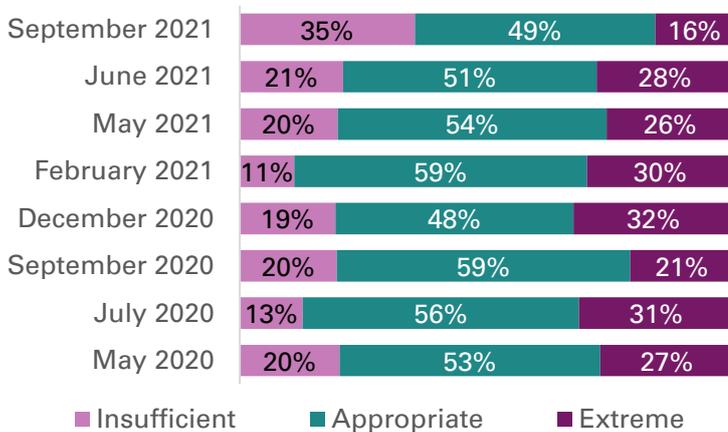
Overall trust in the GoTL to take care of its citizens during COVID-19 declined further in September 2021 to the lowest level recorded in all survey rounds (25%, compared to 82% in September 2020).

As in June 2021, those living in Dili reported lower trust in the Government (17%, compared to 28% of those outside Dili), however those living outside Dili reported slightly higher distrust (63%, compared to 49% of those in Dili).

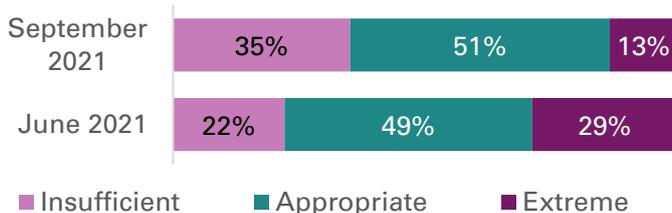
Similar proportions of males (23%) and females (27%) indicated they trust the Government. However, a greater proportion of males reported distrust in the Government (67%, compared to 51% of females).



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



## What do you think of the current reaction of the Timorese people to COVID-19



Around half (49%) of respondents felt the current reaction of the Government to the COVID-19 outbreak was appropriate, in line with previous rounds. However, compared to June 2021 more respondents felt the Government's response was insufficient (35%, up from 21% in June 2021), while less felt it was too extreme (16%, down from 28%).

Similarly, compared to June 2021, more respondents felt the reaction of the Timorese people to the COVID-19 outbreak was insufficient (35%, up from 22% in June 2021) and less felt it was too extreme (13%, down from 29%). Around half (51%, in line with 49%) felt the reaction was appropriate.

More females felt the reaction of the Government (57%, compared to 41% of males) and Timorese people (58%, compared to 45% of males) was appropriate.

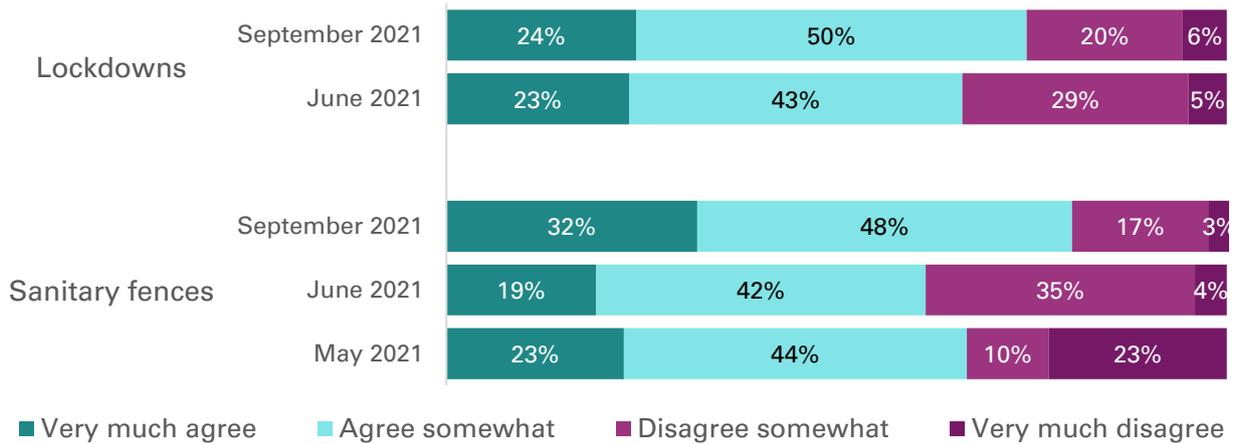
Greater proportions of those living in Dili felt that the response of the Government was insufficient (46%, compared to 32% of those outside Dili). Similarly, greater proportions of those living in Dili felt that the response of Timorese people themselves (43%, compared to 32% of those outside Dili) was insufficient.

## Government response to COVID-19

On 9 March the GoTL implemented sanitary fences in Dili and has since implemented them in most municipalities as a way of responding to COVID-19. Support for the use of sanitary fences increased in September 2021 (80% agree 'somewhat' or 'very much' with their use, up from 61% in June 2021).

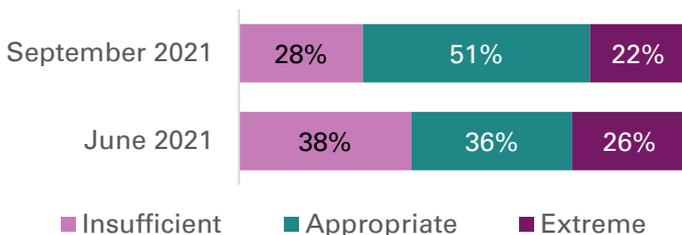
The Government has also used lockdowns (having to stay home) at different times in Timor-Leste as a way of responding to COVID-19. Support for lockdowns also increased in September 2021 (74%, compared to 66% in June 2021). Agreement with the Government's use of lockdowns was higher among those aged 17-24 (80%, compared to 68% of those aged 45 years and over) and those living outside Dili (77%, compared to 68% of those living in Dili).

### Do you agree with the Government's use of...



Nearly all respondents also felt the Government should require mandatory quarantine for people coming into Timor-Leste (99%), the Government should continue to restrict people from coming into Timor-Leste from other countries (94%, in line with 89-92% in previous rounds) and there should be a regular schedule for Timorese outside the country to be able to return to Timor-Leste (91%, in line with 88-91% in previous rounds).

### What do you think of the current reaction of the PNTL in enforcing COVID-19 restrictions



The National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) are responsible for enforcing COVID-19 restrictions in the community. Around half (51%) of respondents felt the reaction of the PNTL was appropriate, up from June 2021 (36%). Perceptions that the reaction of the PNTL was insufficient declined (28%, down from 38%).

Greater proportions of those living in Dili (60%, compared to 48% of those living outside Dili) and females (57%, compared to 44% of males) considered the reaction of the PNTL to be appropriate.

## Additional Government support

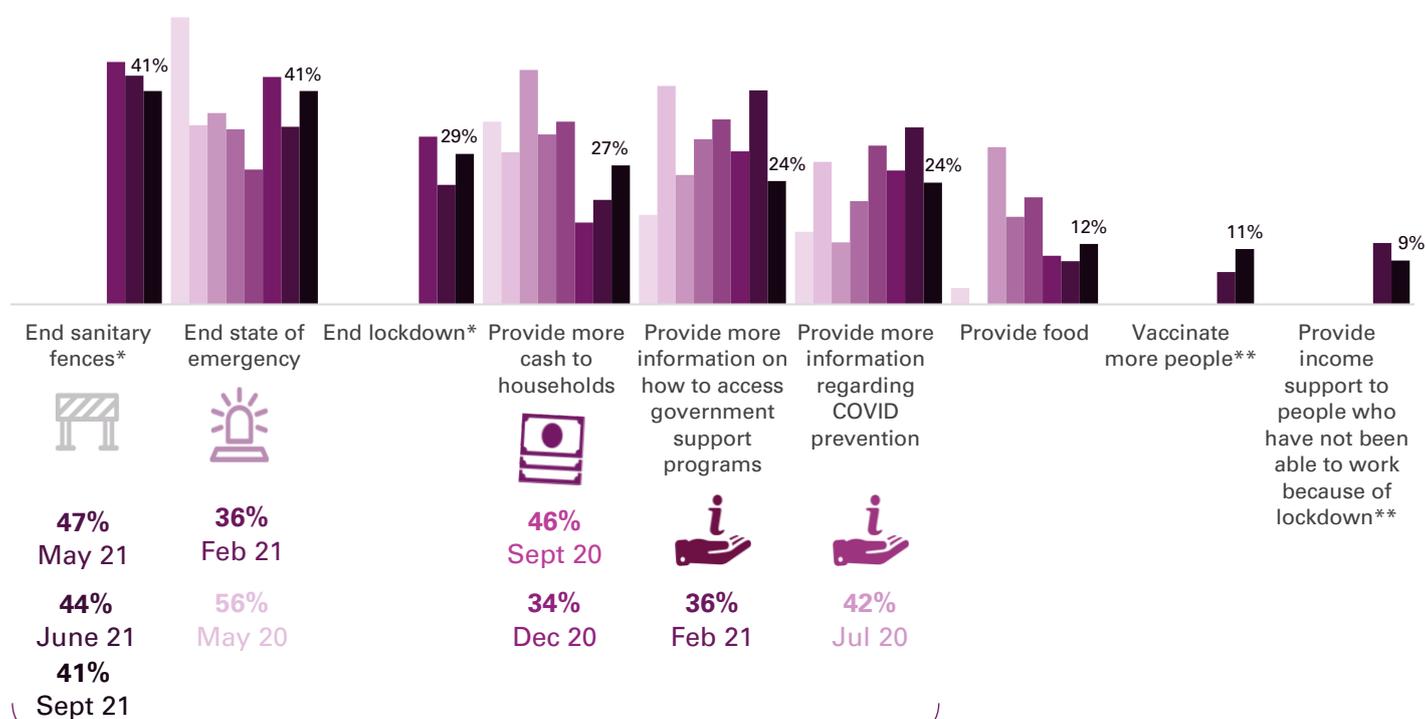
In each survey round respondents have been asked what more the Government could do to support its citizens. In September 2021 ending sanitary fences (41%) and ending the state of emergency (41%) were the most common suggestions. The proportion who felt the Government could provide more cash to households increased (27%, up from 20% in June 2021 and 16% in May 2021), whereas the proportion who felt the Government could provide more information on how to access Government programs (24%, down from 42% in June 2021) and COVID-19 prevention (24%, down from 34%) decreased.

As observed in previous rounds of research, more respondents living outside Dili felt the Government could end the state of emergency (46%, compared to 29%). More respondents living in Dili felt the Government could provide more cash to households (39%, compared to 23% of those living outside of Dili).

Perceptions of what the Government could do to support its citizens were similar among males and females. However, a greater proportion of males (36%, compared to 23% of females) felt the Government could end lockdown.

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

■ May 2020 ■ July 2020 ■ September 2020 ■ December 2020 ■ February 2021 ■ May 2021 ■ June 2021 ■ September 2021

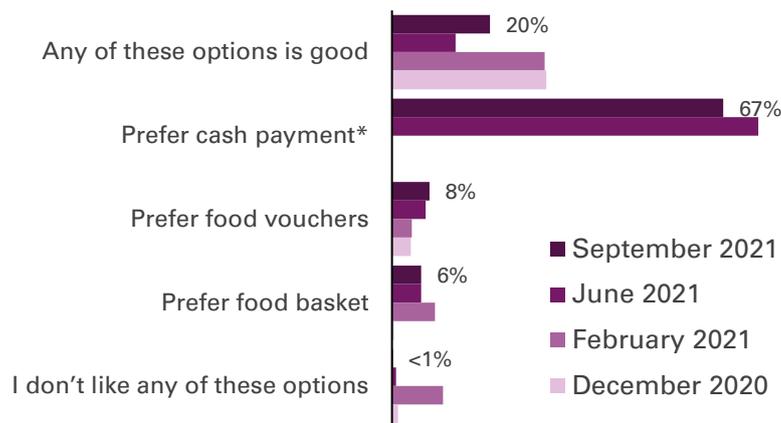


Top response each round highlighted

\*Response option added in May 2021

\*\*Response option added in June 2021

**If the Government were to introduce further support to address the hardship caused by lockdowns and sanitary fences, would you prefer another cash payment, a food voucher, or a food basket?**



\*Please note in February 2021 and December 2020 'Prefer cash payment' was not provided as an option hence results are not shown

In response to COVID-19, the GoTL distributed the Uma Kain cash payment to citizens, followed by a food basket /voucher (Cesta Basica).

Respondents were asked if the Government were to introduce further support what their preference would be out of a cash payment, food voucher or food basket. The majority of respondents (67%) had a preference for cash payments.

In particular, more respondents living in Dili (84%, compared to 61% living outside Dili) and older respondents aged 45 years and over (72%, compared to 57% of those aged 17-24) indicated they preferred cash payment.

**Governance and participation**

Consistent with lower results relating to trust and perceptions of appropriate responses, the proportion of respondents who felt the GoTL were doing a 'very' or 'somewhat' good job in carrying out its responsibilities declined (54%) compared to previous rounds.

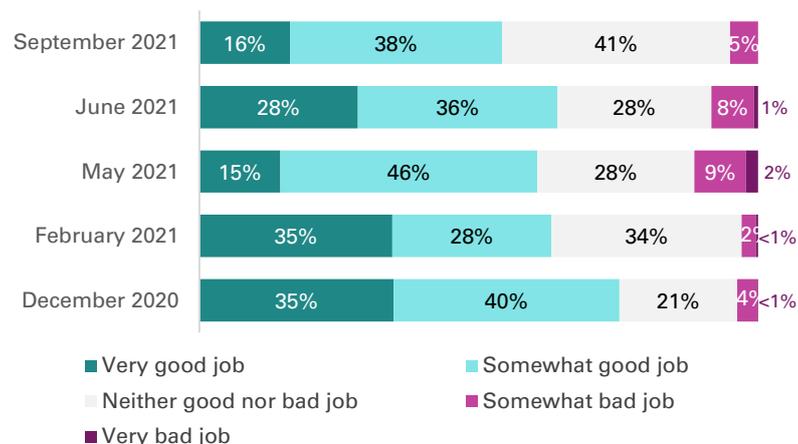
As also observed in June 2021, perceptions of the way the Government was carrying out its responsibilities were more positive among younger respondents aged 17-24 (61% felt they were doing a good job). In comparison, those aged 35-44 years (49%) and 45 years and over (50%) were least positive.

In contrast to previous rounds, more people living outside Dili (58%) reported positive perceptions of the Government's performance than those living in Dili (43%).

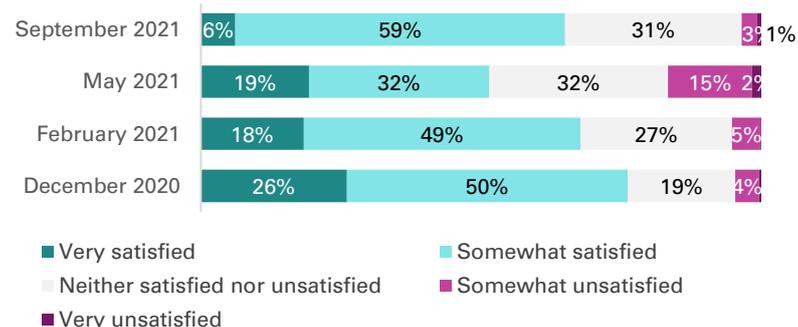
The majority (65%) of respondents were 'very' or 'somewhat' satisfied with the current level of Government consultation with citizens, higher than in May 2021 (51%) when this question was last asked.

More people living outside Dili reported being satisfied with the level of Government consultation (72%, compared to 45% of those living in Dili).

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



**How satisfied are you about with the current level of government consultation with citizens, like yourself, to address important problems facing the country?\***



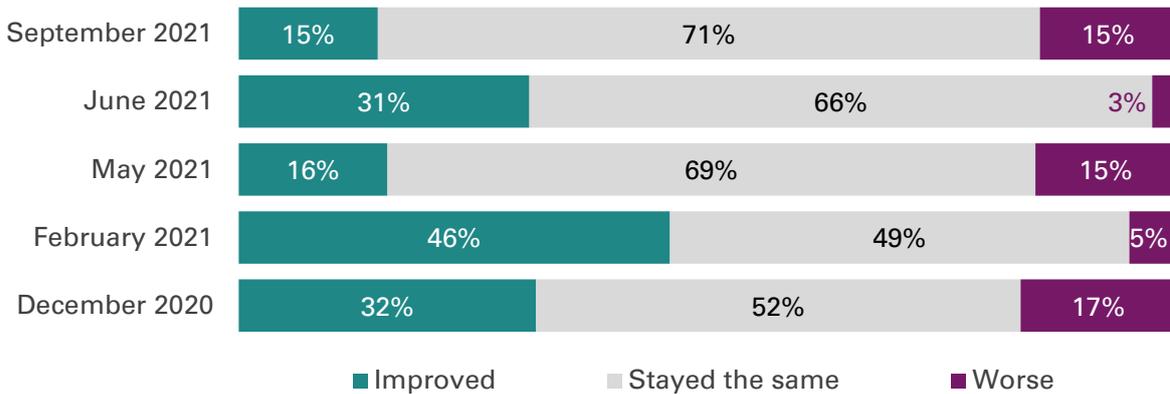
\*Please note prior to September 2021 scale was 'Very happy' to 'Very unhappy'

## Safety and security

The majority (71%) of respondents felt safety and security had stayed the same compared to three months ago. While some respondents felt the situation had improved (15%), the same proportion felt it had gotten worse (15%). This is in contrast to the corresponding percentages in June, but similar to the percentages in May.

Greater proportions of respondents living outside Dili (18%, compared to those living in Dili 5%) and those aged 17-24 (23%, compared to 9-13% among older age groups) felt security had become worse.

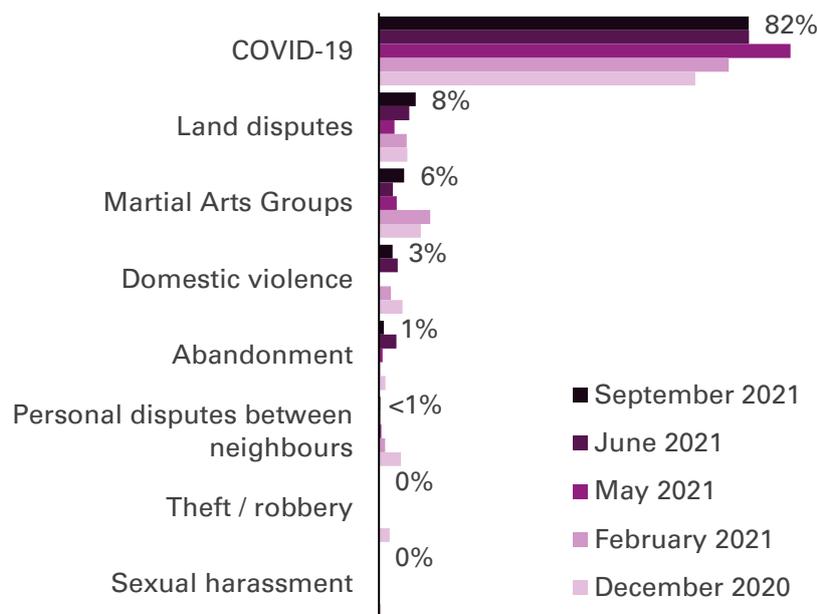
### How would you describe the safety and security situation in your local community compared to three months ago?\*



\*Wording prior to September 2021 was: 'How would you describe the safety and security situation in your local community compared to before the first SOE and start of COVID-19 in March last year?'

COVID-19 (82%) was by far the most common perceived threat to security in respondents' local area. More people living in Dili perceived COVID-19 to be the most common threat to security (89%, compared to 79% of those outside Dili) and this perception was also more common among females (86%, compared to 77% of males).

### In the last three months, what has been the most common threat to security in your area?\*

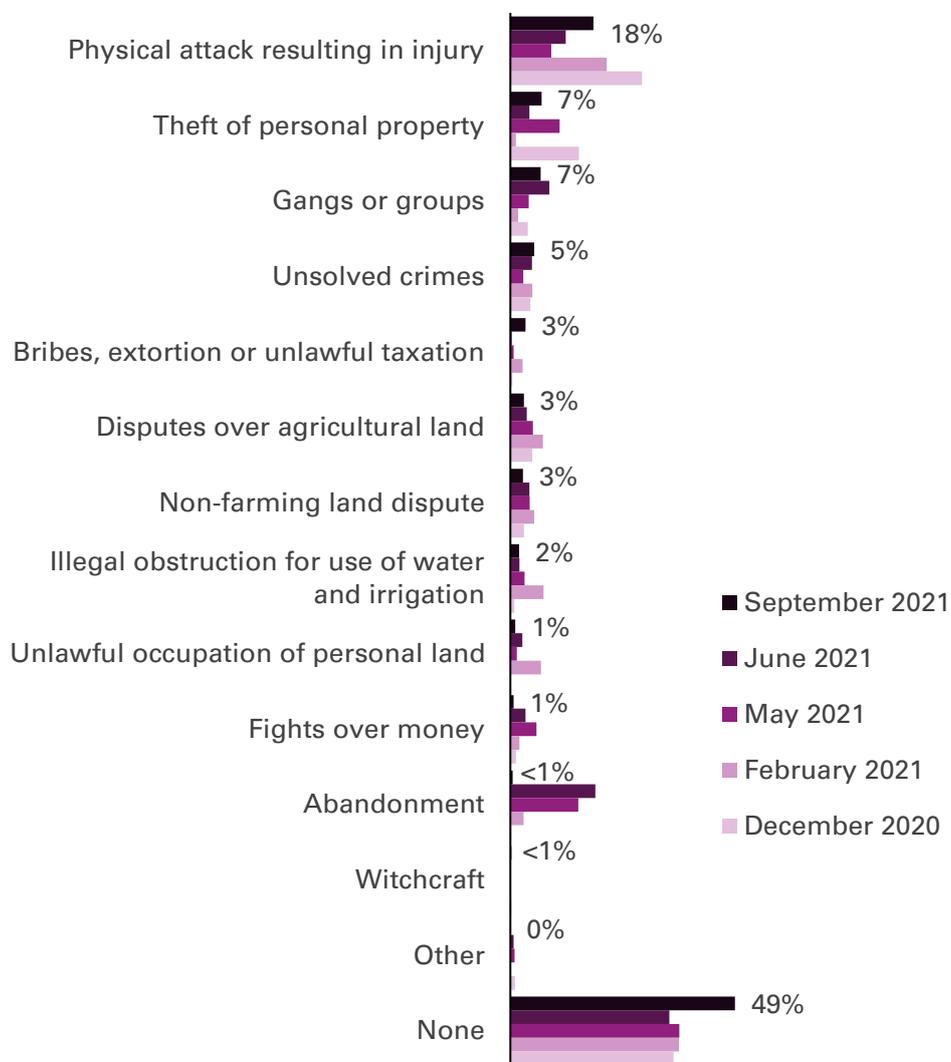


\*Wording prior to September 2021 was: Since March 2020, what has been the most common threat to security in your area?

Half of respondents (51%, lower than 63-65% in previous rounds) felt there was at least one **cause of conflict in their area**. More respondents living outside Dili reported at least one conflict in their area (55%, compared to 39% of those living in Dili).

Physical attack resulting in injury was the most common cause of conflict (18%, up from 12% in June 2021). Abandonment<sup>2</sup> was one of the least common causes of conflict reported (less than 1%), after peaking in June 2021 (19%).

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



<sup>2</sup> Abandonment in the Timor-Leste context often refers to men leaving their wife/partner and/or children without material support. It includes paternity cases where a pregnant woman is seeking material support from someone who promised to marry her; as well as in sexual assault cases resulting in pregnancy where the perpetrator refuses to pay maintenance.

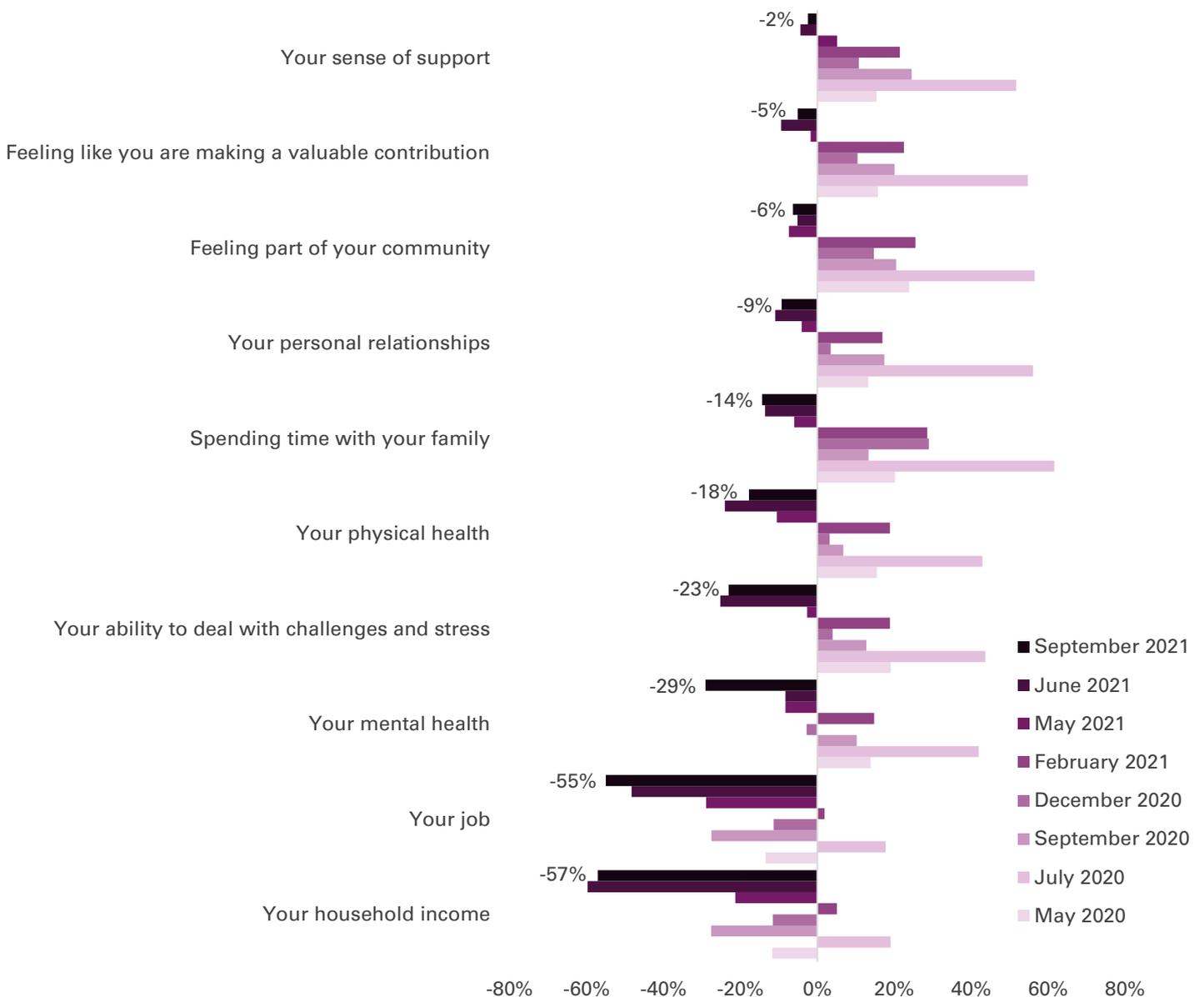
## Social and economic impacts

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 impact minus negative impact) show that since June 2021 more respondents viewed the impact of COVID-19 on their life as negative than positive across *all* aspects of their life.

Between 48-78% of respondents said they had been negatively impacted by COVID-19 on each aspect, while between 21-46% felt each aspect had a positive impact.

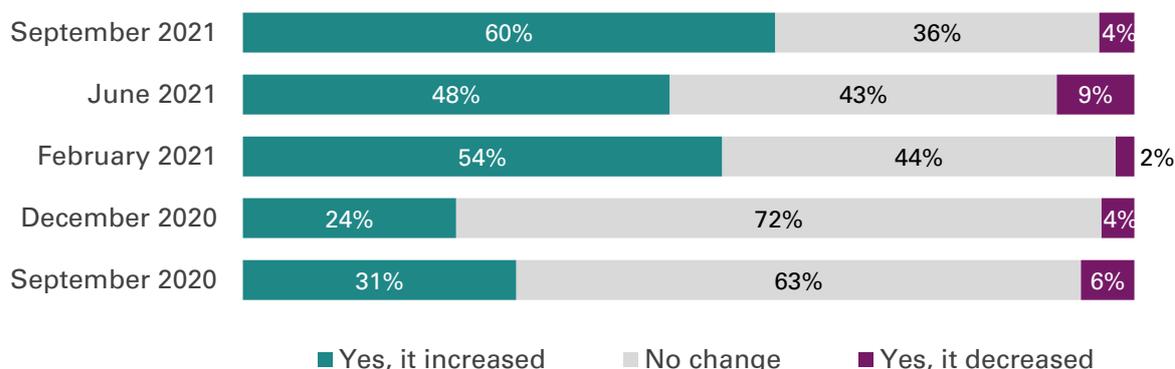
Net scores for nearly all aspects were broadly in line with June 2021, except for mental health, which was much lower (-29%, compared to -8% in June 2021). As in previous rounds, respondents reported the most negative impacts on their household income (-57%) and job (-55%).

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



The majority of respondents (60%) indicated the cost of things like rice or cooking oil had increased in their local markets, the highest recorded across all survey rounds.

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



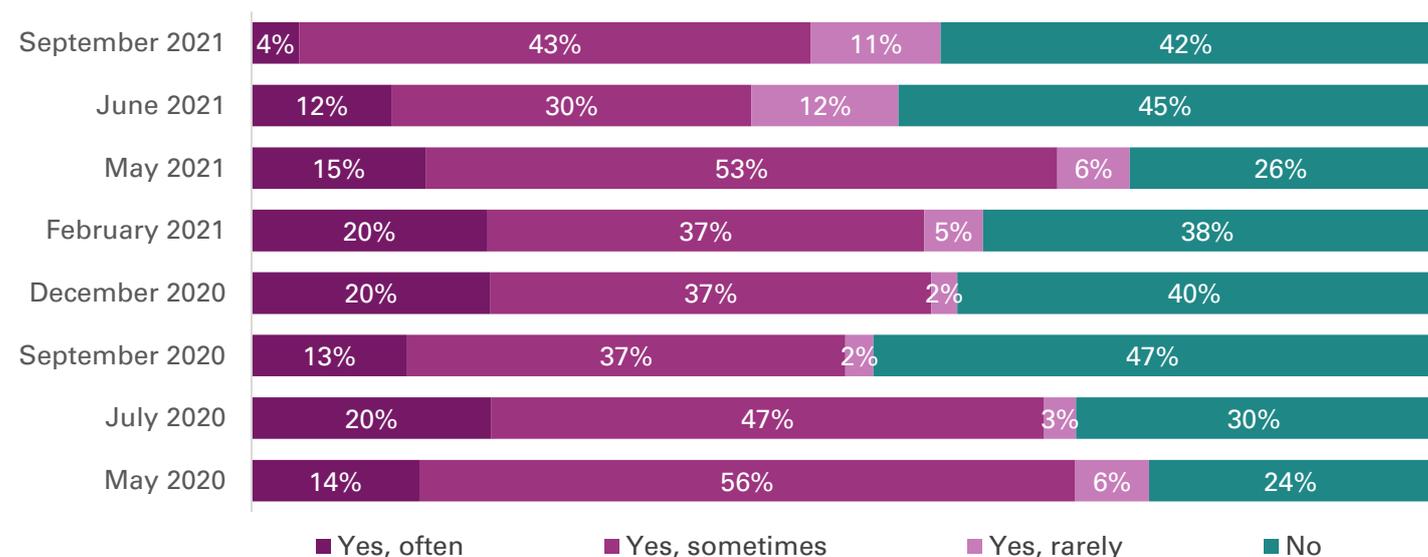
Although more respondents reported the cost of things like rice and cooking oil had increased in their local markets, the proportion who indicated they had been forced to skip or cut the size of a meal at least once in the past month because there wasn't enough money for food was similar to the previous round (58%, in line with 55% in June 2021).

A similar proportion (59%, in line with 55% in June 2021, not charted) 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.

As observed in previous rounds, more respondents living in Dili indicated that they (67%, compared to 55% of those living outside Dili) or somebody else in the household (68%, compared to 57%) had skipped or cut the size of a meal.

In contrast to previous rounds, more males indicated that they (62%, compared to 55% of females) or somebody else in the household (63%, compared to 56% of females) had skipped or cut the size of a meal.

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



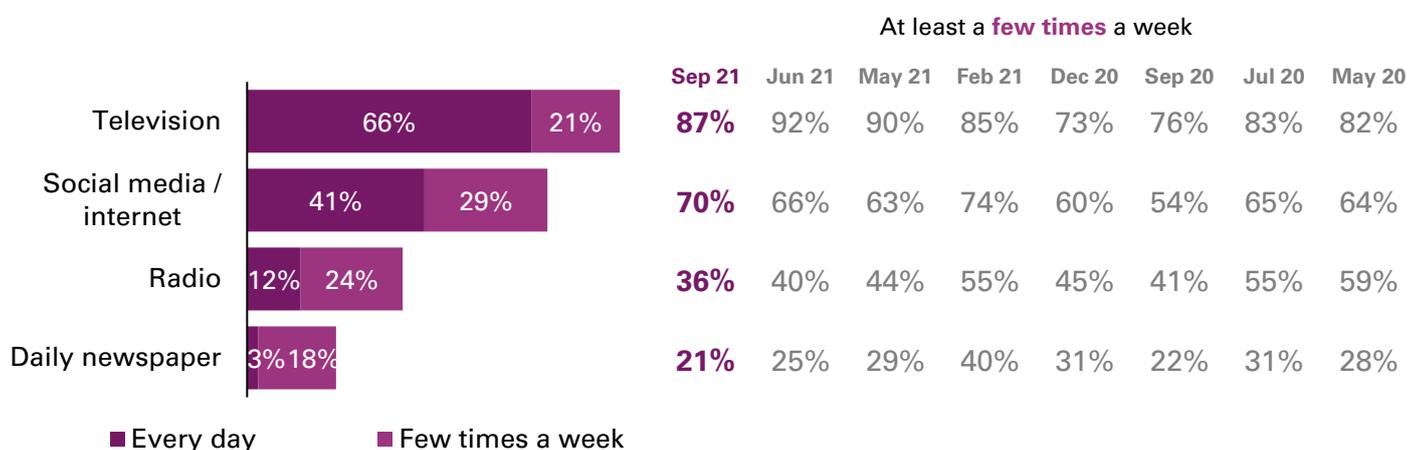
## News and information

Television remained by far the most frequently used channel for media and entertainment (87% used this at least a few times per week, in line with 92% in June 2021), followed by social media and the internet (70%, in line with 66%). Respondents listened to the radio (36%) and read newspapers (21%) less frequently than they engaged with television and social media/ internet. The proportion who listened to the radio or read newspapers at least a few times a week has been declining each round since February 2021.

As in previous rounds, those living in Dili reported using social media/ internet (87% 'every day' or a 'few times a week', compared to 63% of those outside Dili) and watching television (93%, compared to 84%) more frequently than those outside Dili.

Social media/ internet usage was highest among younger respondents aged 17-24 (87%) and declined with age, as observed in previous rounds. However, younger respondents aged 17-24 were less likely to use all other channels compared to older age groups.

Use of media channels was similar among males and females, except for radio. Males listened to the radio more frequently (45%) than females (28%).



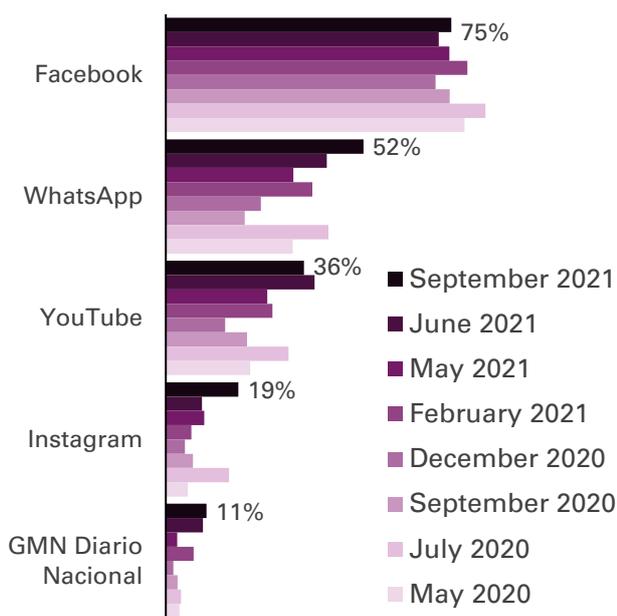
Most respondents (85%) had their own phone, similar to previous rounds (78-85%).

87% (in line with 85% in June 2021) reported that they or someone in the household accessed the internet or social media on their phone.<sup>3</sup> As in previous rounds, a greater proportion of respondents living in Dili accessed the internet via their phones (94%, compared to 85% of those living outside Dili).

77% of respondents indicated using some apps or websites frequently (whether on their phone, someone else's phone, or by other means), in line with previous rounds. More respondents living in Dili (90%, compared to 72% of those living outside Dili), females (82%, compared to 71% of males) and respondents aged 17-24 (92%) used websites or apps regularly.

Facebook (75%) remained the most popular app, followed by WhatsApp (52%) and YouTube (36%). Usage of most websites / apps was similar to previous rounds.

### Top 5 most used websites or apps



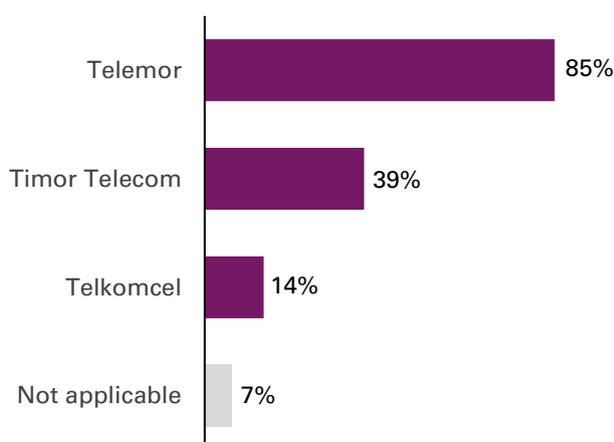
### In their household...

**85%** Do not share their phone with others

**87%** Access the internet using a phone

**77%** Often use websites or apps

### Internet provider(s) used



Telemor (85%) was the most common internet provider used, followed by Timor Telecom (39%).

A greater proportion of those living outside Dili used Telemor (91%, compared to 68% of those living in Dili).

Timor Telecom was more widely used among those aged 35-44 (45%) and 45 years and over (48%), compared to those aged 25-34 (37%) and 17-24 (27%). Telkomcel was more commonly used among those aged 17-24 (24%), compared to older age groups (8-14%).

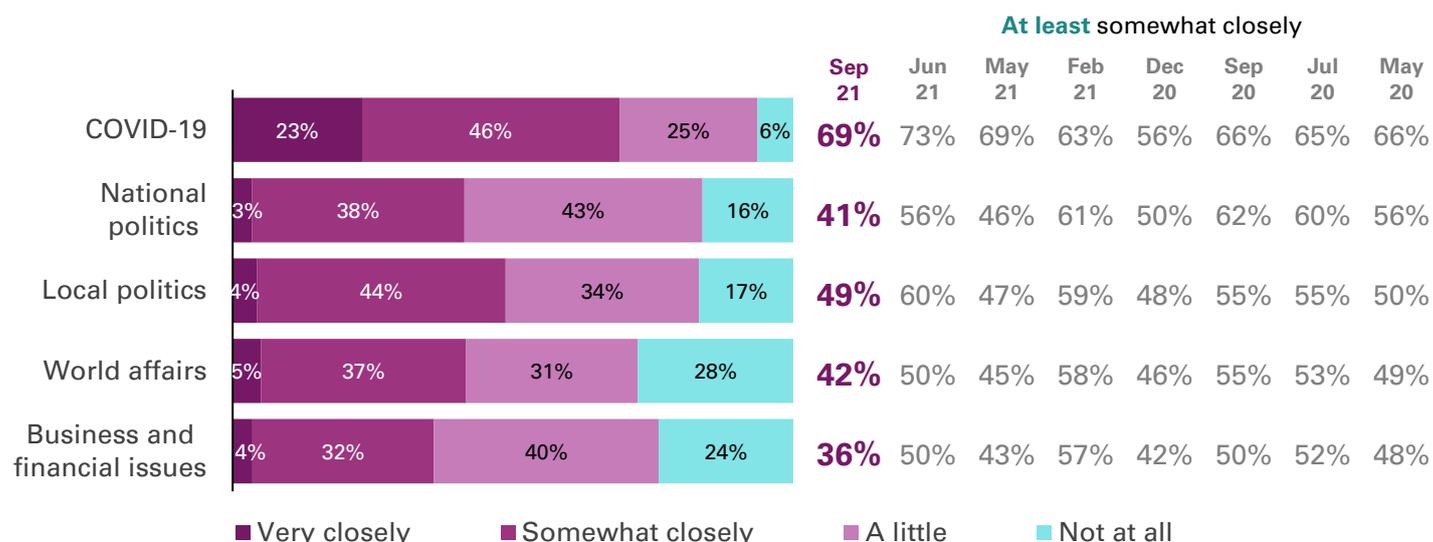
<sup>3</sup> As the survey was conducted over the telephone, all respondents had access to a telephone. As a comparison, in the 2018 Tatoli Survey, 76% of respondents provided a mobile phone number and only 33% of respondents said they had access to the internet.

In September 2021, nearly all (99%, not charted) respondents had received public information or an announcement about observing COVID-19 safety protocols.

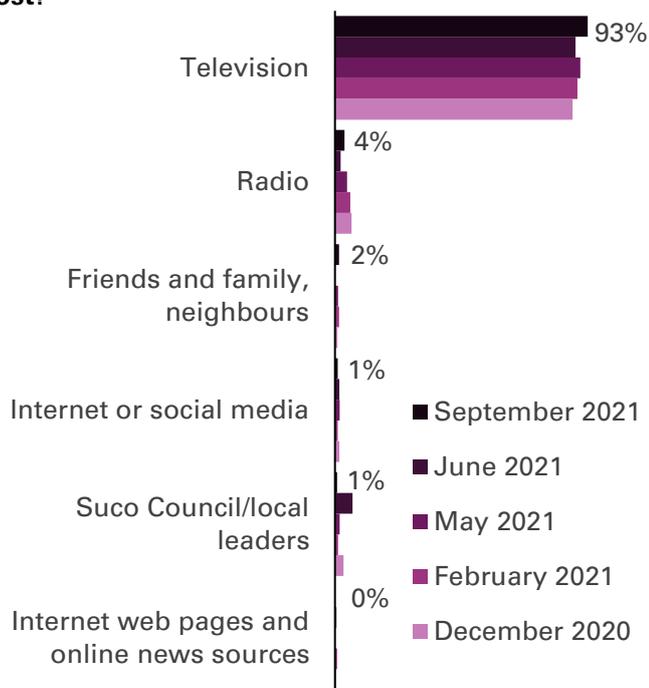
COVID-19 was the most closely followed news topic in September 2021 (69% at least 'somewhat' closely), in line with June 2021 (73%) and May 2021 (69%). Compared to previous rounds, respondents were less likely to be following all other topics at least 'somewhat' closely.

As observed in June 2021, greater proportions of respondents living in Dili were following news about COVID-19 at least 'somewhat' closely (74%, compared to 67% of those living outside Dili). However, more of those living outside Dili were following other topics compared to those living in Dili.

### How closely do you follow each of the following topics?



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



As in previous rounds, television was by far the most trusted source of information (93%, in line with 87-90% in previous rounds).<sup>4</sup>

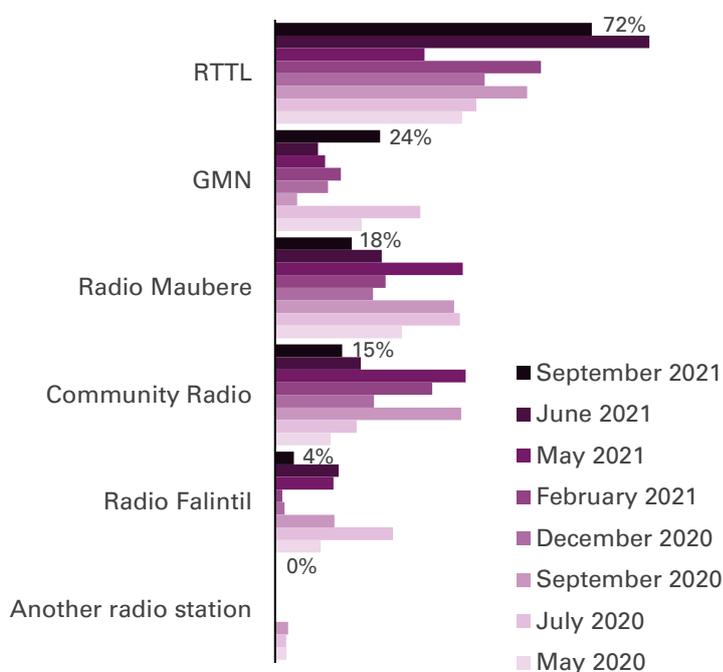
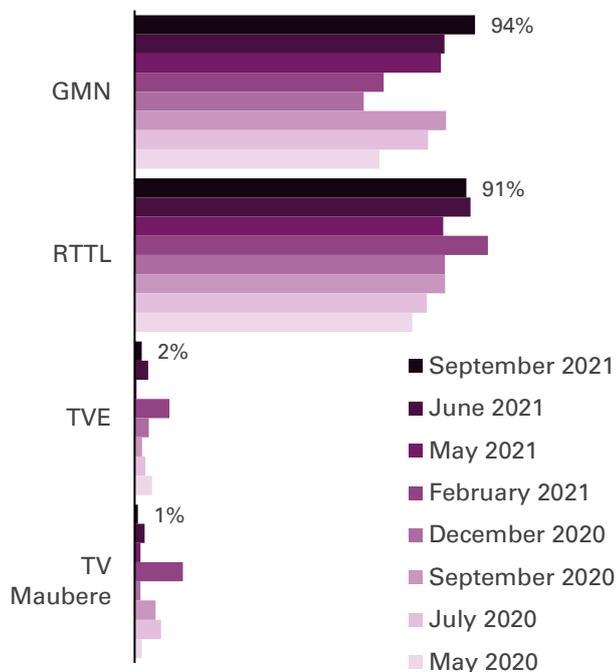
No differences in trusted sources of information were observed between demographic groups.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

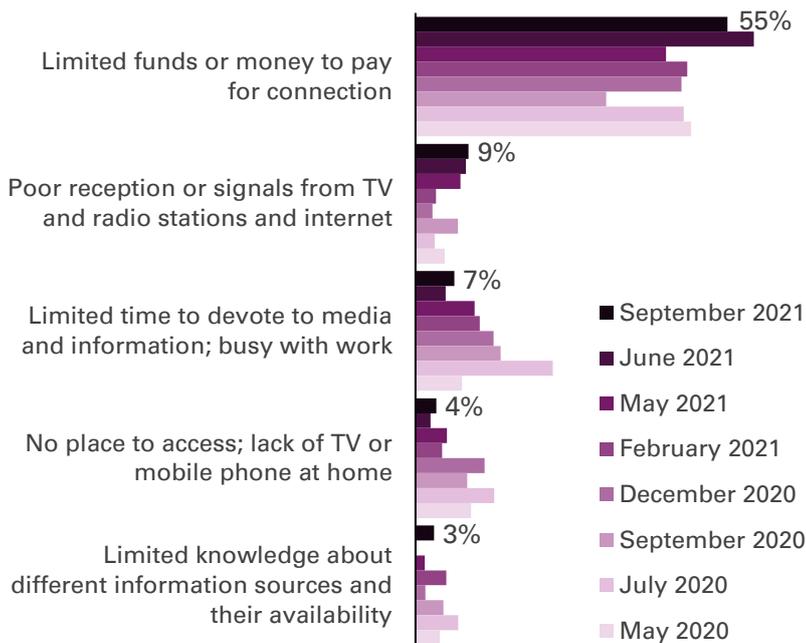
GMN (94%) and RTTL (91%) remained by far the most commonly watched television channels. As observed in previous rounds, more respondents living outside Dili watched RTTL (94%, compared to 83% of those living in Dili). RTTL was also more popular among those aged 45 years and over (97%, compared to 86-91% of younger age groups).

RTTL was the most popular station in September 2021 (72%), down from June 2021 (85%) but still much higher than in previous rounds.

**What television channels do you most often watch? What radio stations do you most often listen to?**



**Top 5 challenges in accessing information**



Most respondents in September 2021 reported at least one challenge in accessing information (81%), in line with June 2021 (79%).

As in previous rounds, limited funds or money to pay for a connection was the most common challenge (55%, in line with 60% in June 2021). This was particularly a challenge for those living in Dili (82%, compared to 45% of those living outside Dili).

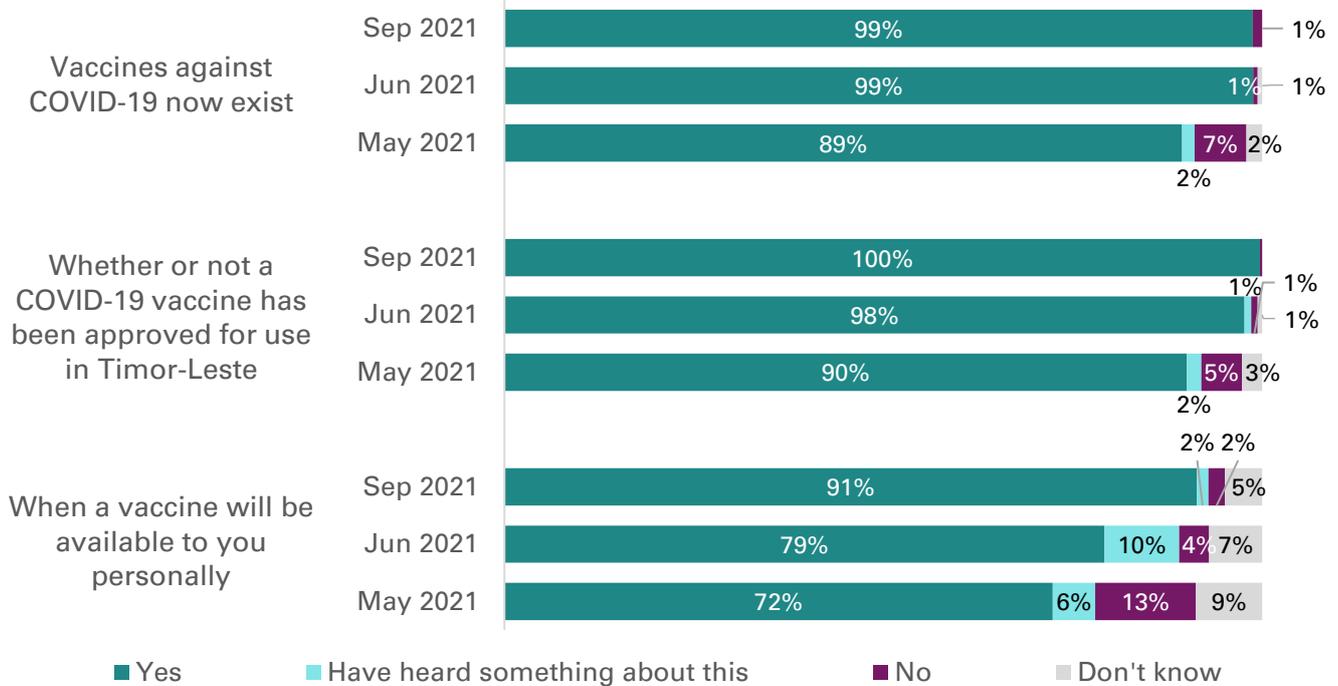
## Vaccination questions

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

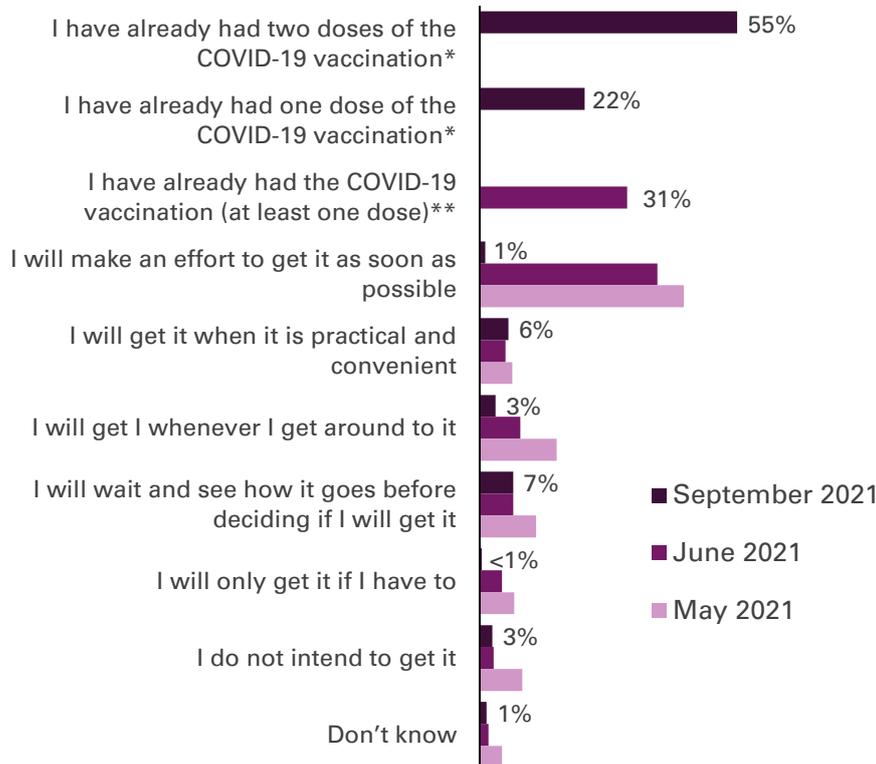
Nearly all respondents were aware that vaccines against COVID-19 now exist (99%, in line with 99% in June 2021) and whether a COVID-19 vaccine had been approved for use in Timor-Leste (100%, in line with 98%). Awareness of when a vaccine would be available to them personally increased (91%, up from 79%).

Awareness of each aspect was similar among all demographic groups.

### Do you know:



### Which of the following best describes how you feel about getting the COVID vaccine?



The majority (77%) of respondents had already had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccination, up from 31% in June 2021.

More respondents living in Dili (84%, compared to 74% of those outside Dili) had already had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccination.

Vaccination rates were lowest among those aged 45 years and over (67%, compared to 80-83% among younger age groups).

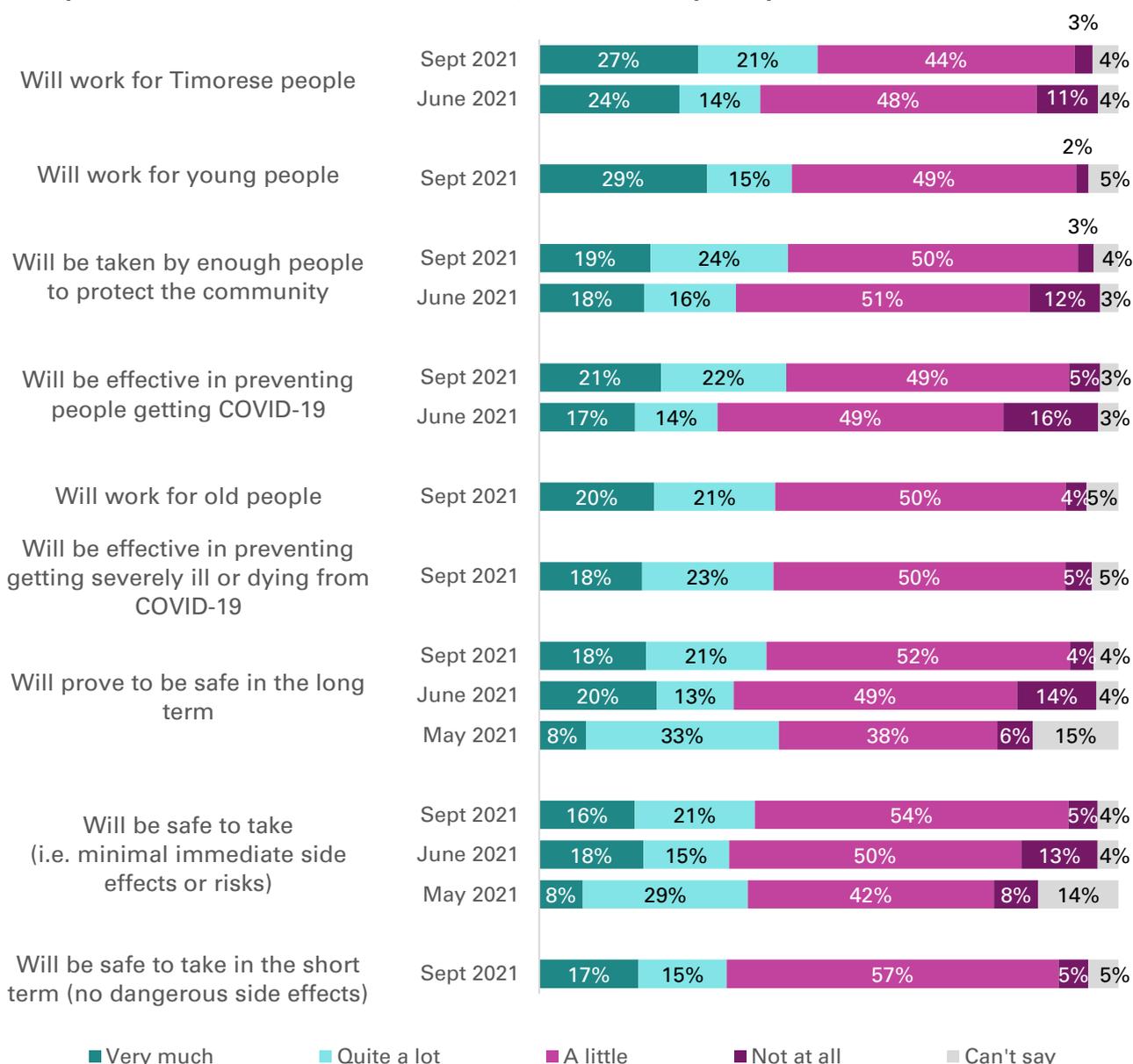
Only 3% reported they did not intend to get it, unchanged from 3% in June 2021. Those who did not intend to get it most commonly reported this was due to being afraid of short- or long-term effects on their health (31%), they never get vaccinations (31%), or they don't trust the government (26%).

\*Options only added in September 2021, \*\*Option only asked in June 2021

While less than half of respondents reported positive perceptions of safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine ('very much' or 'quite a lot'), perceptions were more positive across all measures than in June 2021 (where comparable questions were asked). Slightly more respondents had positive perceptions that the vaccines would be effective for the community, but somewhat fewer respondents had positive perceptions of the short- and long-term safety of the vaccines. Most respondents felt the vaccine would be at least 'a little' effective against each aspect.

Perceptions of the vaccine were generally more positive among those living in Dili (33-58% 'very much' or 'quite a lot' for each aspect, compared to 32-45% of those living outside Dili) and among males (36-52%, compared to 29-44% of females). This is shown in the table below.

**From what you have seen and heard at the moment; how much do you expect a vaccine...**

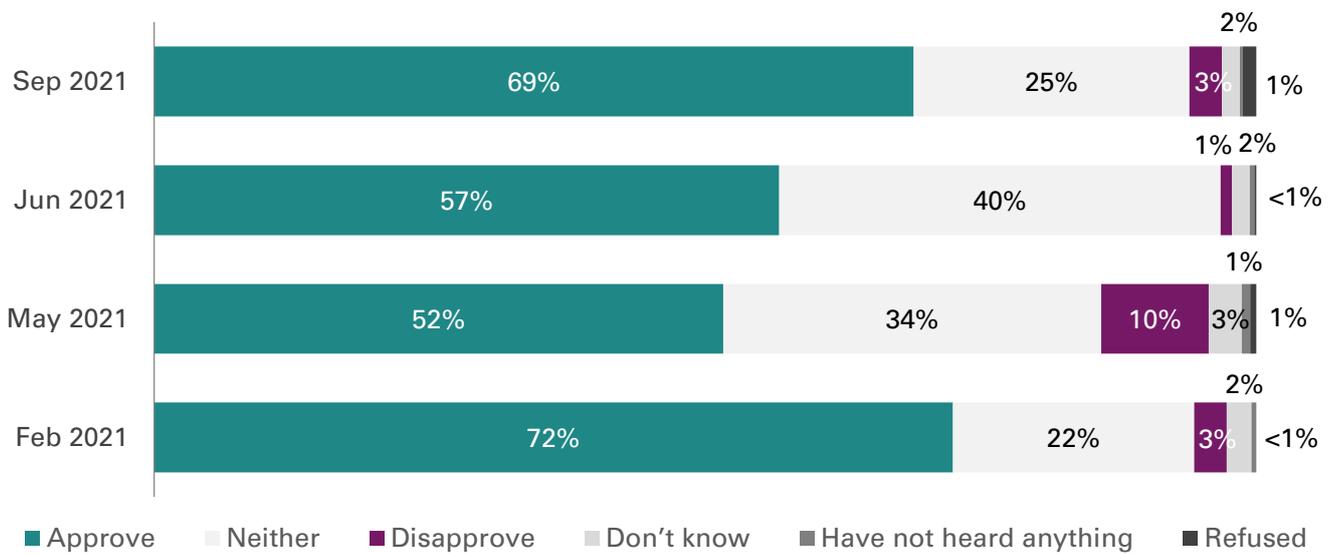


<b>Perceptions of the vaccine by location and gender% very much or quite a lot</b>	<b>Dili</b>	<b>Outside Dili</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Will work for Timorese people	58%	45%	52%	44%
Will work for young people	53%	40%	45%	43%
Will be taken by enough people to protect the community	49%	41%	45%	41%
Will be effective in preventing people getting COVID-19	51%	40%	45%	40%

Will work for old people	44%	40%	43%	39%
Will be effective in preventing getting severely ill or dying from COVID-19	43%	39%	45%	36%
Will prove to be safe in the long term	44%	38%	42%	36%
Will be safe to take (i.e.: minimal immediate side effects or risks)	40%	36%	40%	35%
Will be safe to take in the short term (no dangerous side effects)	33%	32%	36%	29%

Support for Timor-Leste’s vaccination plan increased (69%, up from 57% in June 2021 and 52% in May 2021). Approval of the vaccination plan was similar among all demographic groups.

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



Note: In February 2021 this question was only asked of those aware of the vaccine but was asked of all respondents in May and June 2021.

Most respondents (92%, in line with 94% in June 2021, not charted) supported mandatory vaccination for citizens above 17 years of age in Timor-Leste. However, support for mandatory vaccination for children between 12-17 years was much lower (50%, not charted).

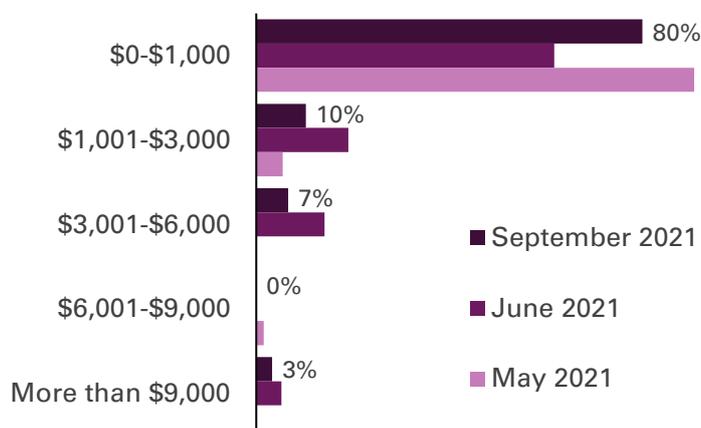
Most respondents also felt people who are fully vaccinated should be able to move around more freely than those who are not (87%, not charted).

## Income support from family/ friends overseas

Only a minority (8%) of respondents in September 2021 reported receiving money from a friend or family overseas since the State of Emergency began in March 2020, in line with 11% in June 2021 but lower than 20% in May 2021 (not charted).

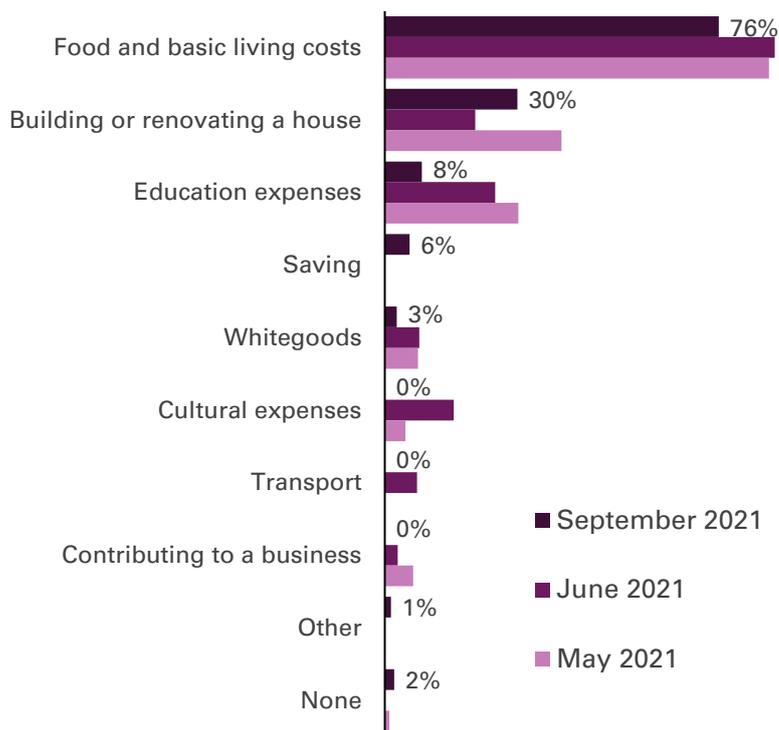
Those who had received money most commonly received it from the United Kingdom (57%), South Korea (27%) or Australia (11%, not charted).

### Approximately how much money in \$US has been sent to you in the last year?



Most (80%) of those who had received money had received less than USD \$1,000, while a further 10% had received between USD \$1,000-3,000.

### What have you used this money for?



In line with previous rounds, money received from friends or family overseas was most commonly used for food and basic living costs (76%).

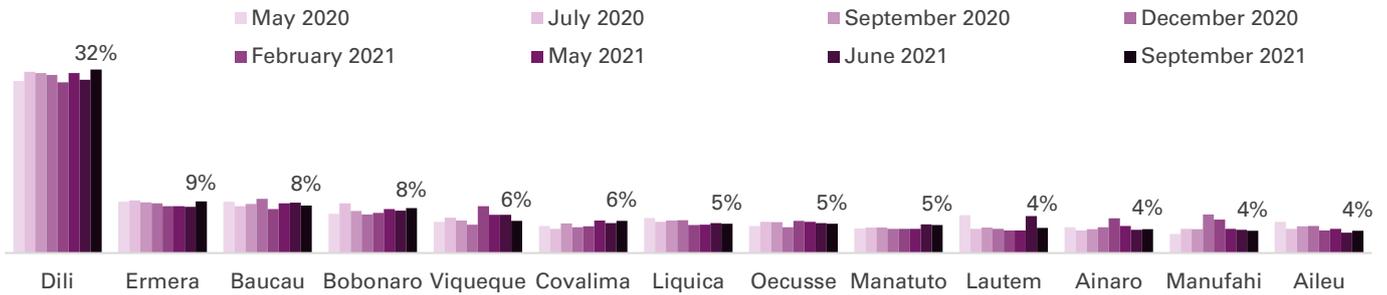
Those who received money were less likely to use it for education expenses (8%, down from 25%) and cultural expenses (0%, down from 16%).

A greater proportion of those living in Dili used the money for building or renovating a house (42%, compared to 22% of those living outside Dili).

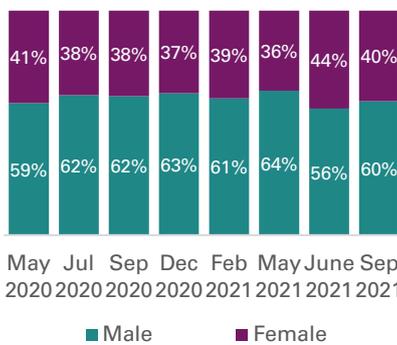
## Respondent profile

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

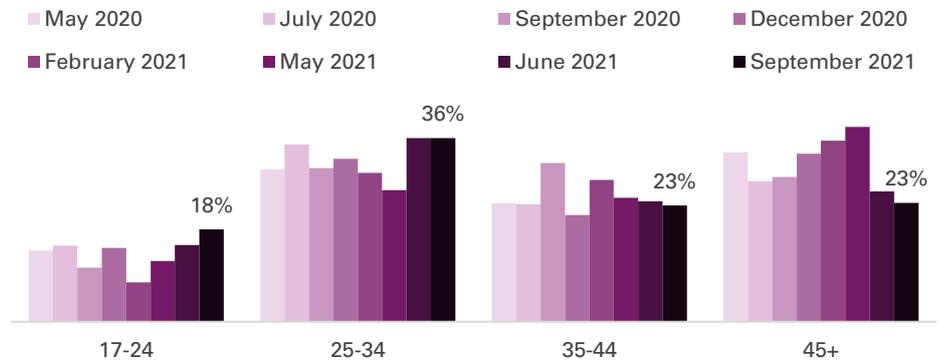
### Municipality



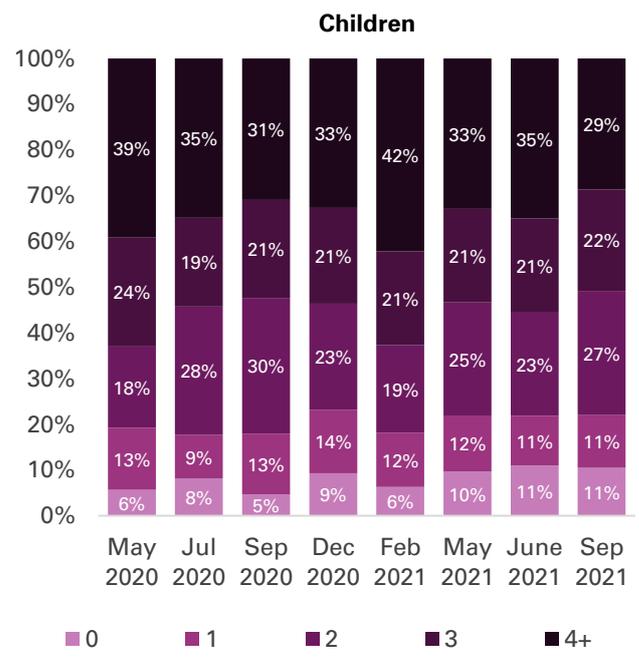
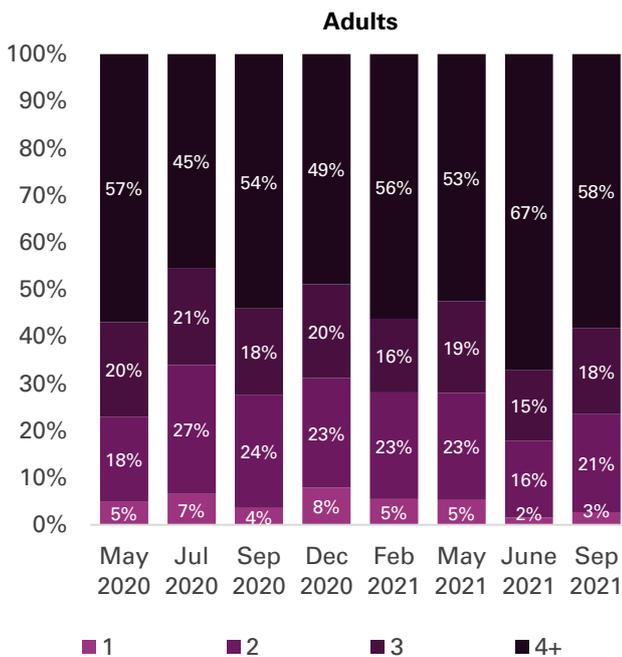
### Gender



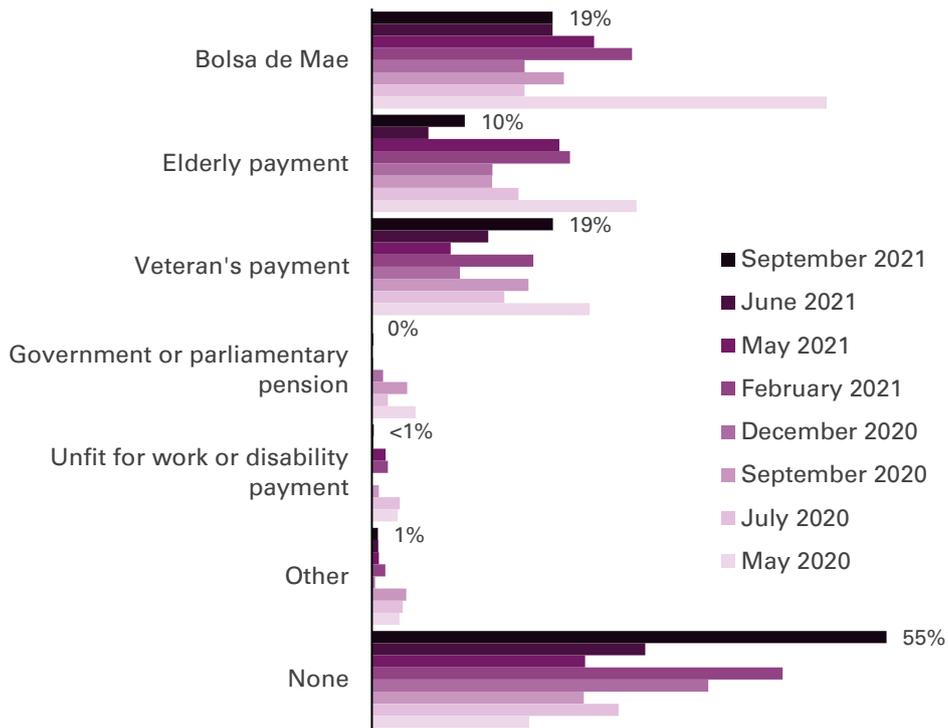
### Age



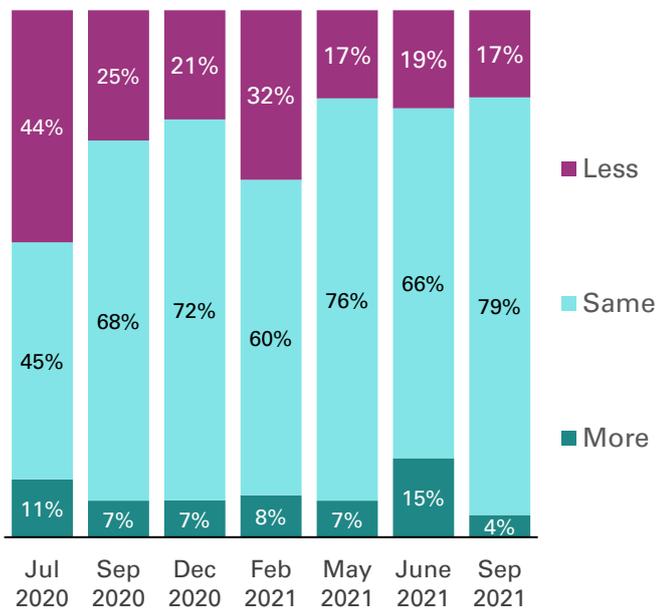
### Number of people in your household



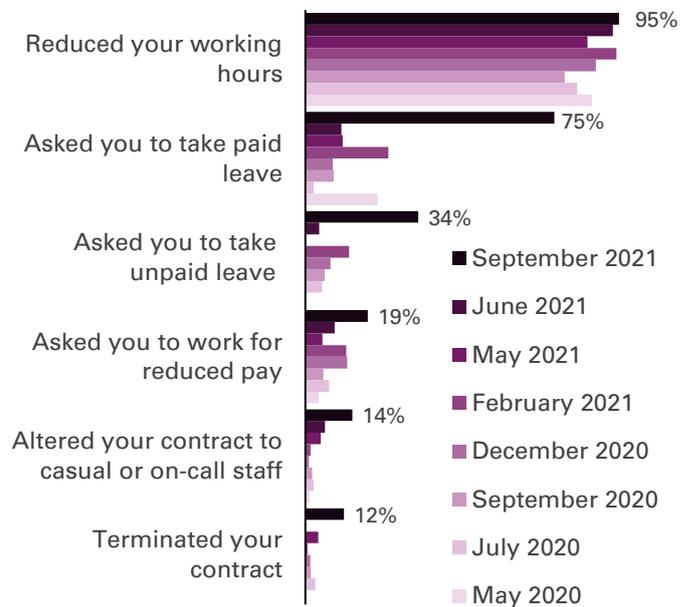
### Does your household receive any Government payments?<sup>5</sup>



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



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



<sup>5</sup> Please note Apoiu Monetariu ba COVID-19 / Uma Kain \$100 per household payment was not included as a response option for this question in September 2021, but was in previous rounds.

# 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 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	May 21	Jun 21	Sep 21
<b>Males in Dili</b>	38	70	78	80	73	72	70	56	75
<b>Females in Dili</b>	38	57	50	48	52	56	57	71	56
<b>Males non-Dili</b>	150	179	174	172	181	189	179	181	169
<b>Females non-Dili</b>	150	117	102	107	96	112	117	112	109

## 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

	May 20	Jul 20	Sep 20	Dec 20	Feb 21	May 21	Jun 21	Sep 21
<b>Sample list</b>	2,307	1,192	534	681	442	414	423	412
<b>Refusals</b>	30	47	66	87	2	4	0	0
<b>Non-working numbers</b>	1,666	619	60	188	11	6	3	3
<b>Final dataset</b>	423	404	407	402	429	404	420	409
<b>Response rate<sup>6</sup></b>	19.9%	32.6%	76.2%	59.0%	97.1%	97.6%	99.3%	99.3%
<b>Fieldwork start</b>	19 May 20	18 July 20	21 Sep 20	3 Dec 20	20 Feb 21	1 May 21	11 Jun 21	17 Sep 21
<b>Fieldwork end</b>	25 May 20	17 July 20	2 Oct 20	8 Dec 20	2 Mar 21	8 May 21	17 Jun 21	23 Sep 21
<b>Median length of interview<sup>7</sup></b>	47m25s	41m30s	43m23s	47m57s	42m12s	57m21s	49m8s	50m23s
<b>Number of interviewers</b>	14	19	11	17	13	11	14	11

found. Monitoring was also conducted by staff from The Asia Foundation.

Nearly all surveys were conducted in Tetum, with only a handful conducted in other languages such as Bunak, Makaleru, Fatuluku, Bahasa Indonesia or Baikenu. Respondents were sent a \$2 telephone credit for participating in the research.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> Median length calculated after excluding 10-29 cases per round 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 using the anesrake package in R

	Population	May 20 UW	Jul 20 UW	Sep 20 UW	Dec 20 UW	Feb 21 UW	May 21 UW	Jun 21 UW	Sep 21 UW
	(N=662,285)	(n=423)	(n=404)	(n=407)	(n=402)	(n=429)	(n=404)	(n=420)	(n=409)
Age									
<b>17-24</b>	28%	14%	15%	11%	14%	8%	12%	15%	18%
<b>25-44</b>	41%	53%	58%	61%	53%	57%	50%	60%	59%
<b>45-120</b>	31%	33%	27%	28%	33%	35%	38%	25%	23%
Gender									
<b>Male</b>	50%	59%	62%	62%	63%	61%	64%	56%	60%
<b>Female</b>	50%	41%	38%	38%	37%	39%	36%	44%	40%
Location									
<b>Dili</b>	26%	30%	32%	31%	31%	30%	31%	30%	32%
<b>Not Dili</b>	74%	70%	68%	69%	69%	70%	69%	70%	68%

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 questions 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	May 21	Jun 21	Sep 21
<b>Number of responses</b>	423	404	407	402	429	404	420	409
<b>Statistical margin of error</b>	±4.8%	±4.9%	±4.9%	±4.9%	±4.8%	±4.9%	±4.8%	±4.9%

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.

## 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](http://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](http://www.orima.com.au), or contact:

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This report was produced in accordance with the international standard ISO20252.