

Boomtown.



Mood Monitor.

The moods and concerns of regional Aussies.

2019 | 2020 | 2021

Introducing the Boomtown Mood Monitor



Now in its third year for regional markets and eighth for metro markets, the purpose of the *Mood Monitor* study is to ascertain the 'mood' of the nation as a continuum, rather than only relying on traditional consumer sentiment statistics that provide figures with little feeling attached to them.

This report's aim is to act as a current picture of how those living in Boomtown and metro areas differ and/or are alike, which also enables some level of prediction to inform future activities.

The *Mood Monitor* is conducted by SCA iQ every six months. This iteration surveyed 580 people drawn from regional Australia (18-64) and 1,220 metro respondents drawn from the five capital cities across SCA's online communities plus an external sample from 18th October – 14th November 2021. The external sample was conducted by panel providers TEG and Humaniti, to provide a more representative view of the Australian population.

While the metro *Mood Monitor* has captured regional data for the past three years for comparison purposes, this is the first time the regional results have been released by Boomtown; providing unique insight into pre-COVID sentiments along with those spanning the pandemic to October 2021.

By gaining an insight into the mood of the nation Boomtown hopes to precede movement, particularly in relation to what is likely to occur with spending habits in regional Australia in order to both prepare for ensuing challenges and to embrace unfolding opportunities.

Key Insights

After almost two years living through COVID, Boomtown's more content than ever.

Feelings of being Happy and Content have seen an uplift in Boomtown between October 2020 and October 2021.

With vaccination rates on the up-and-up and easing border restrictions, it's no wonder regional Aussies are feeling happier and more content than this time last year.

Money and family remain the biggest worries in Boomtown this year.

Regional Aussies continue to mention specific issues related to their personal finances or their family as their biggest worries right now, and this has not changed YOY.

Whilst the outlook is more positive at the tail end of 2021, stagnating wage growth and the rising cost of living make these concerns top of mind for many.

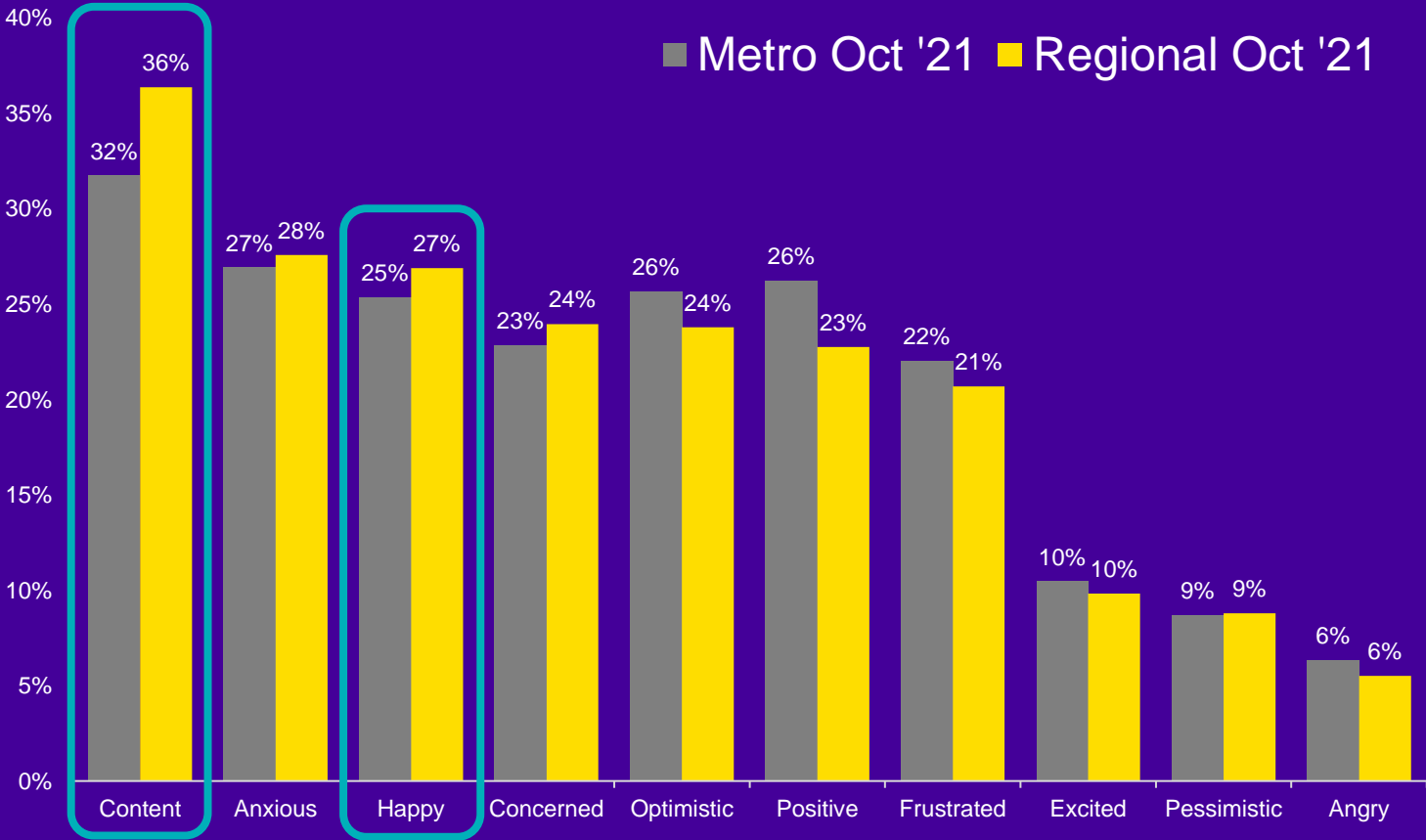
The housing market isn't cooling. Neither is concern for housing affordability.

Over 4 in 5 regional Aussies feel housing prices are over-inflated, with concern for housing affordability being the #1 prompted concern.

Compared with every issue/concern tested, only housing affordability has seen an increase of 'very worried' (12%) versus 2019 (pre-COVID) levels.

Boomtown's happier and more content

How are people feeling right now? (PROMPTED)



We see a slight decline in optimism and positivity, however this could be due to this group feeling a sense of 'optimism fatigue' after almost two years of hopefulness through the unprecedented events this and last year.

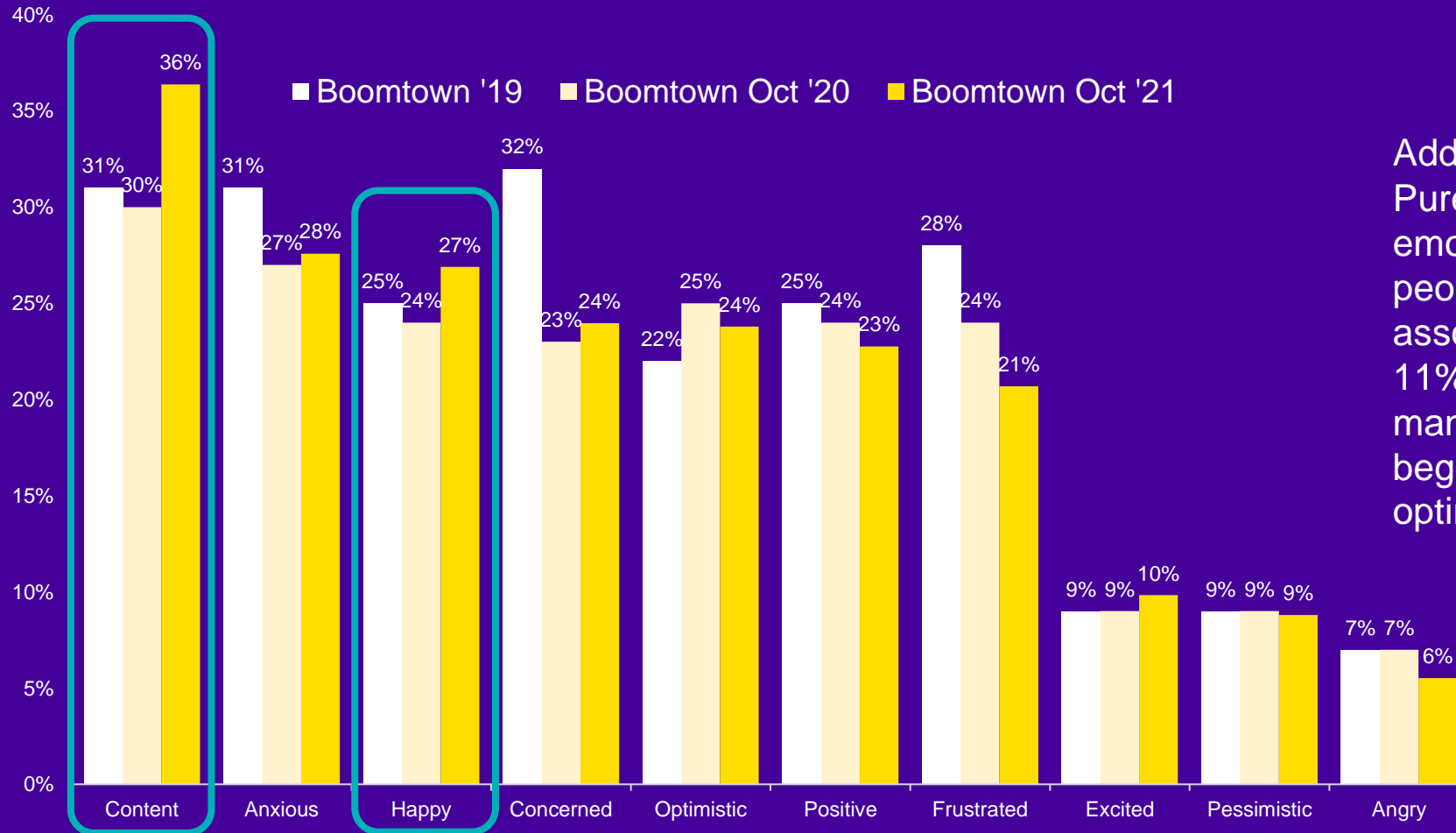


Source : SCA IQ. Consumer Sentiment Study. "And just so we can narrow it down a little, from the following list, which word or words best describes your mood at the moment?" PROMPTED. MULTI-CHOICE. Metro October 2021 n=1,452. Regional October 2021 n=580.



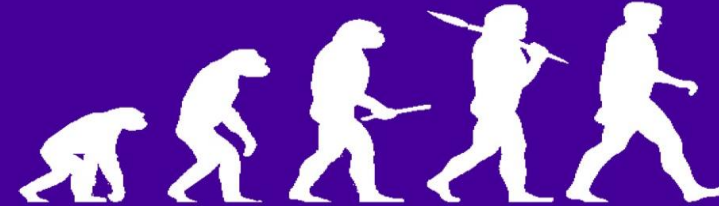
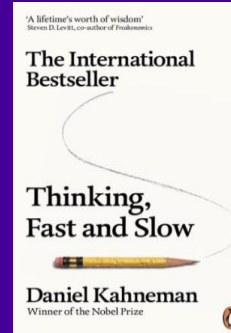
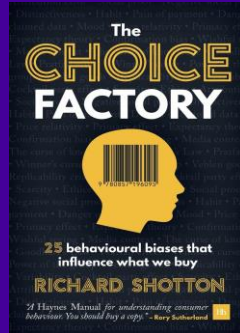
Happier and more content than pre-COVID

Q. From the following list, which words best describe your mood OVERALL at the moment?



Additional research conducted by Pureprofile has found that positive emotions are on the rise, with 57% of people feeling a positive emotional association with Christmas this year, an 11% on 2020 results. This indicates that many are looking to the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022 with renewed optimism and positivity.

Why does mood matter?



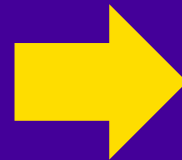
Happy people are ...

More likely to recall your ads

More likely enjoy your ads

More receptive to your content

But why?



Because you can't fight evolution.

According to Nobel Prize-winning psychologist and author Daniel Kahneman, when we're happy we're more likely to absorb advertising messages.

That's because through evolution, when early humans were in danger, they had to think critically to be safe (e.g. to run from an attacking lion!)

But when we're in a good mood, our brains have the capacity to absorb non-critical information, like ads.

What's driving Boomtown emotions?

55%
CONTENT
POSITIVE
HAPPY

- Gratefulness / general positive outlook / Easing of restrictions and less lockdowns / Return to the norm
- Financial / Job security
- Loving relationships / family / friends

"Coming out of lockdown, had a family weekend away at the beach, and life returning to normal. Healthy and loved"

"Despite the health crisis, climate change and conservative state of world politics I'm fairly contented. I'm healthy, happily married, look after 2 foster children and we enjoy a wonderful life in regional South Australia"

"Happy with where I am and my friends and family. Have what I need to live a happy life."

"Got our second child due next month. I'm getting married in March to my beautiful partner."

"I feel this way because I'm happy with my life the way it is. It couldn't be better, but I appreciate the little things and family is the most important thing right now."

"Positive news with easing of restrictions and will be able to see my family soon. Doing really well at University and am about to be done for the year so will have a nice break. Am on top of health and feeling good mentally."

"The borders and shops are reopening and I can see my friends and family again. I just started a new job and it's going well. I have a new outlook on life and a deeper sense of gratefulness for what I have after lockdown."

What's driving Boomtown emotions?

45%
ANXIOUS
CONCERNED
FRUSTRATED

- Financially / job insecurity / Housing affordability
- Impacts of COVID-19 (Lockdown, etc.)
- Lack of control / uncertainty

"I don't know what the future holds in the next months, in terms of border closures, travel and family health matters."

"Husband losing his job, being dictated to in what he cannot do. Cannot volunteer anymore at schools. Made to look like the bad guy in not getting jabbed. Cannot get the job due to health reasons."

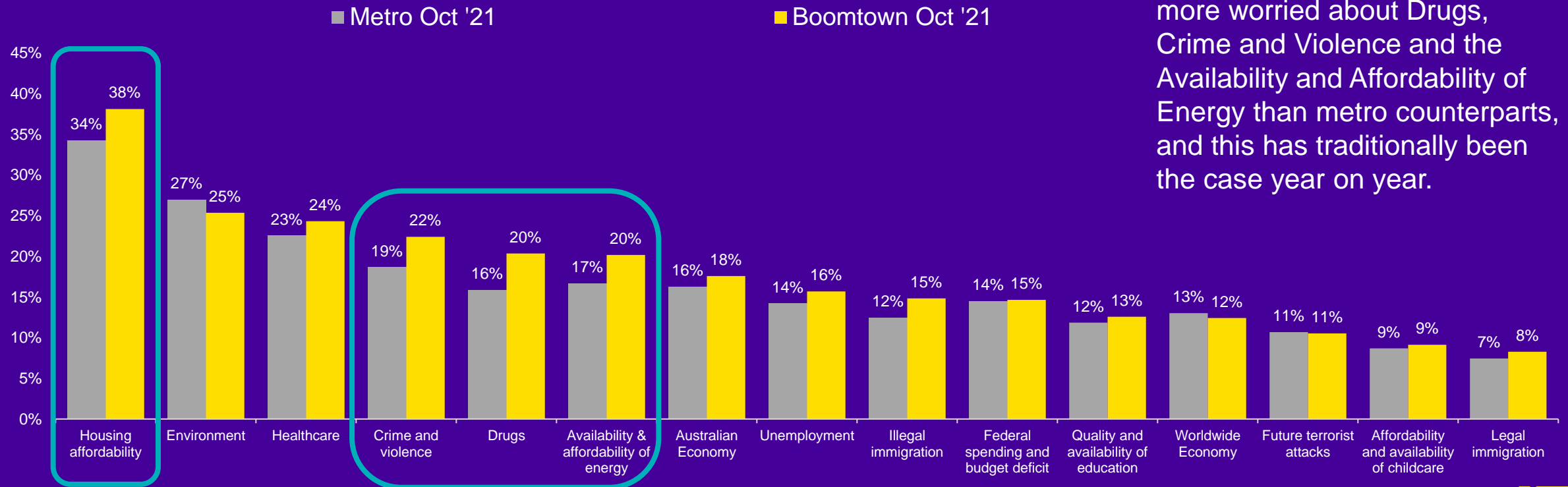
"Financial concerns."

"Uncertainty regarding the future, especially due to the pandemic."

"There is so much uncertainty in the world at the moment and I'm currently pregnant with my first child and feel uncertain about how everything will work out. I'm worried about the limited maternity leave, the cost of childcare and rising living costs."

Housing affordability main concern for all

How worried are you about... ? VERY WORRIED (PROMPTED)

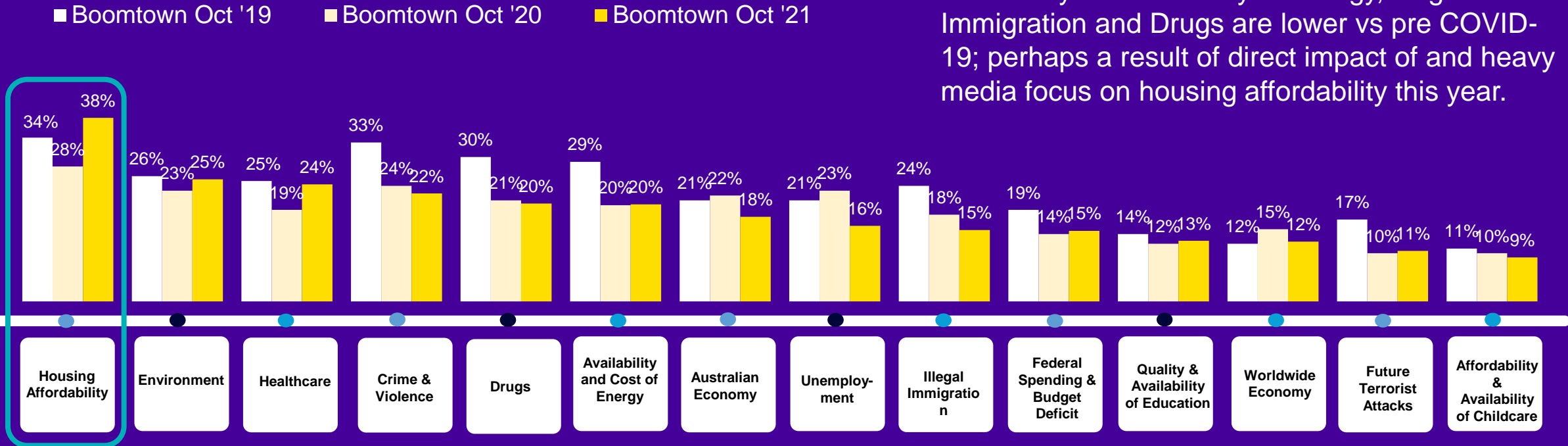


Regional Australians are also more worried about Drugs, Crime and Violence and the Availability and Affordability of Energy than metro counterparts, and this has traditionally been the case year on year.

Significant uplift in housing affordability concerns in Boomtown

How worried are you about... ? VERY WORRIED (PROMPTED)

Boomtown concerns have shifted from 2019 to 2021. Traditional worries like Crime and Violence, Availability & Affordability of Energy, Illegal Immigration and Drugs are lower vs pre COVID-19; perhaps a result of direct impact of and heavy media focus on housing affordability this year.



Family and money Boomtown's biggest worries

Biggest worry right now... ? (UNPROMPTED)

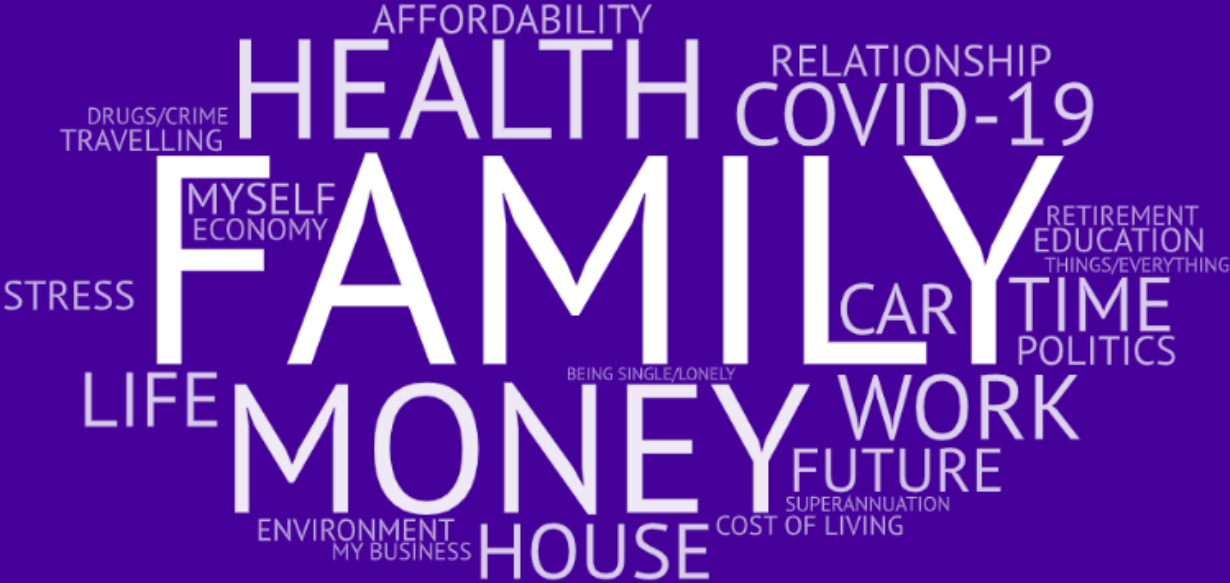
21% of regional Australians mention a specific issue related to their family as their biggest worry right now, with 20% mentioning a finance-related concern.

Border closures (still in effect) keep families apart, and stagnating wage growth coupled with the rising cost of living creates strain for many Aussies.

"Never being able to afford my own home. I'm 38 years old and still trying to save for a first home deposit while paying rent at the same time. Property is so expensive and I fear I will be renting my whole life."

"Being restricted from attending to important matters and family members because of border closures due to COVID."

"Money – do we have enough to live on, pay bills and still have some for a house and IVF for children in the future."

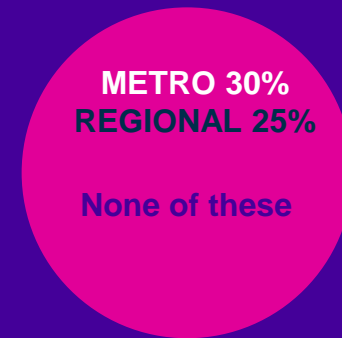
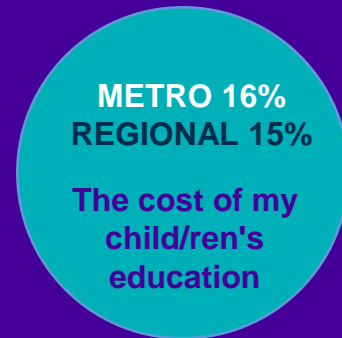
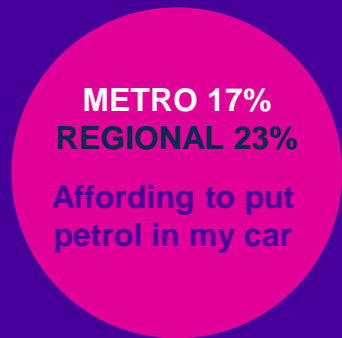
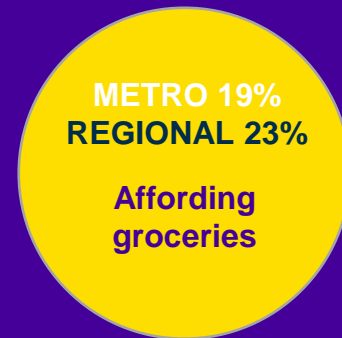
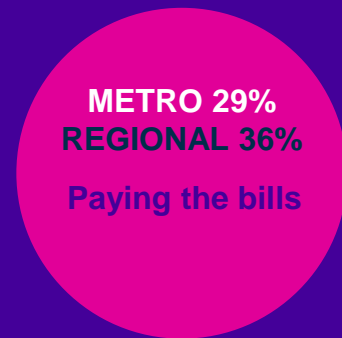


Retirement the biggest financial concern for both regional and metro

However, when looking at their concerns there's been almost universal YOY decline in worry amongst regional Aussies.

Are any of the following things a concern for you at the moment? (PROMPTED)

While regional Aussies are more worried about specific financial pressures (other than education), there's been almost universal YOY decline in worry amongst those living in Boomtown.



Regional and metro similar on economic views

Almost 2 in 3 Aussies feel confident in their job security, and this could be due to the predicted *Great Resignation*.

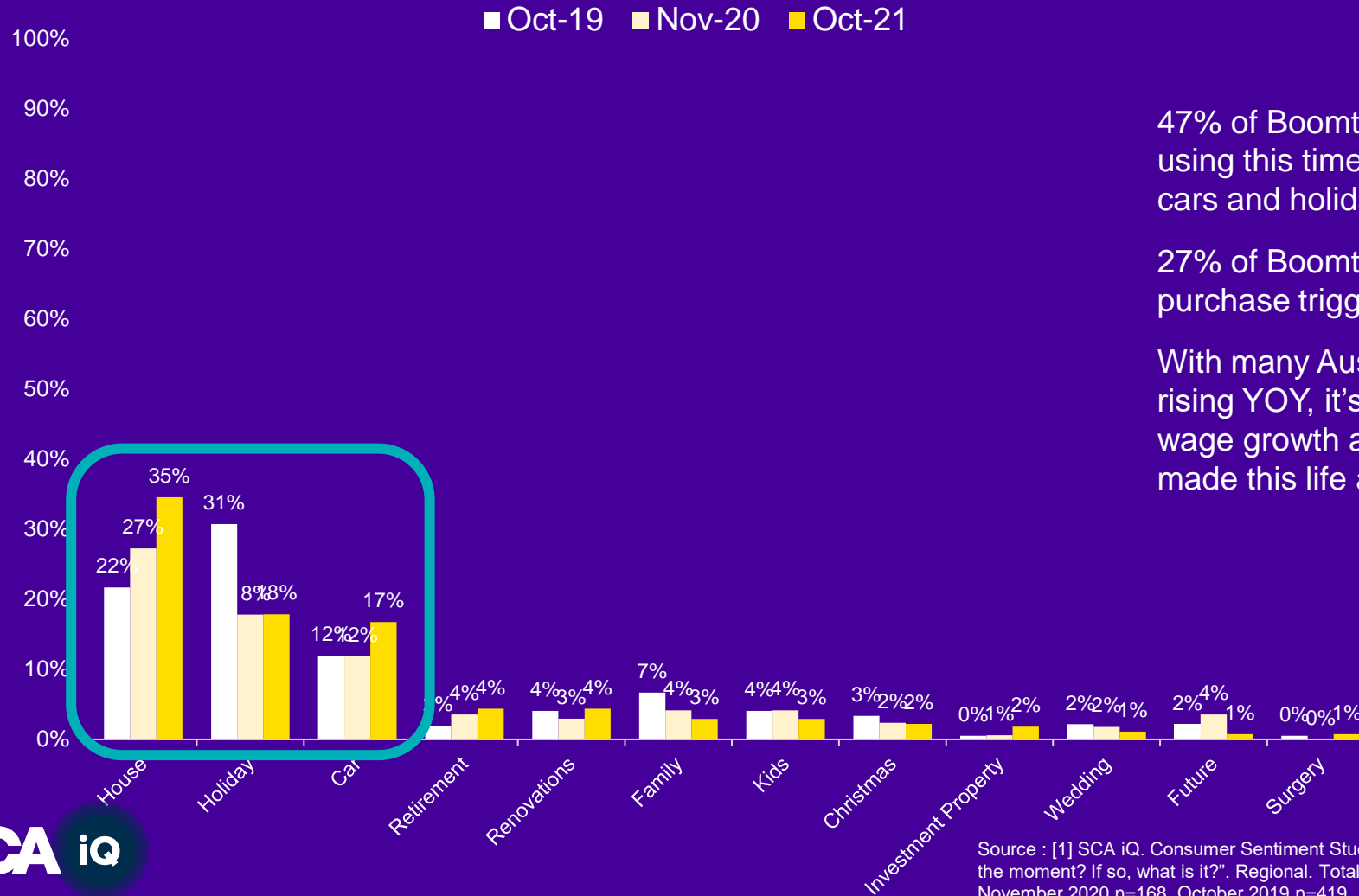
This unique economic event could be steering the power balance in favour of the employee, with many employers preparing to increase benefits for retention purposes.

That said, YOY there's been growing positive sentiment in several economic statements and a decrease in negative sentiment.



Almost half are saving for something right now

Q. Are you saving for something in particular at the moment? If so, what is it? (UNPROMPTED)



47% of Boomtowners (in line with metro Aussies) are using this time to save for bigger life purchases; houses, cars and holidays.

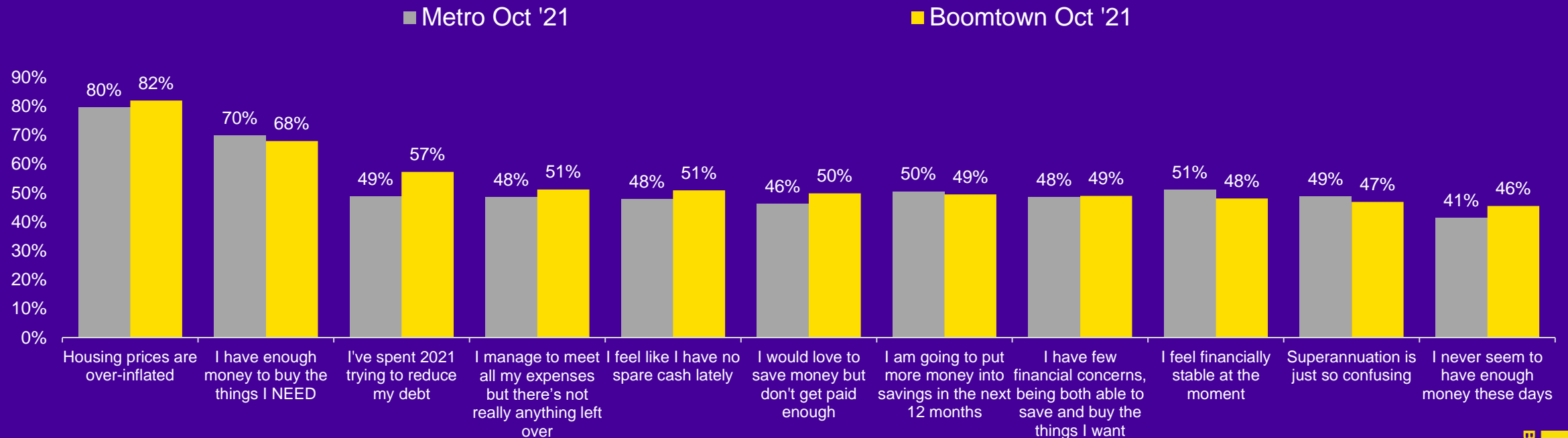
27% of Boomtowners think they'll be ready to hit the purchase trigger within 6 months.

With many Aussies currently saving and with these goals rising YOY, it's important to note that stagnant to low wage growth and the ever-rising demand for property has made this life achievement harder to reach for many.

Regional Aussies more likely to reduce debt this year, but it's still challenging for many

Irrespective of their efforts, many are still feeling the pinch. The majority of regional Aussies feel that the housing market is over-inflated, and although 2 in 3 feel that they have enough money to buy what they need, over half agree that after expenses are paid there's hardly any spare cash. This is likely a result of the rising cost of living in Australia and stagnant wage growth, with half of Boomtown respondents agreeing that they have a desire to save, but can't due to their current pay.

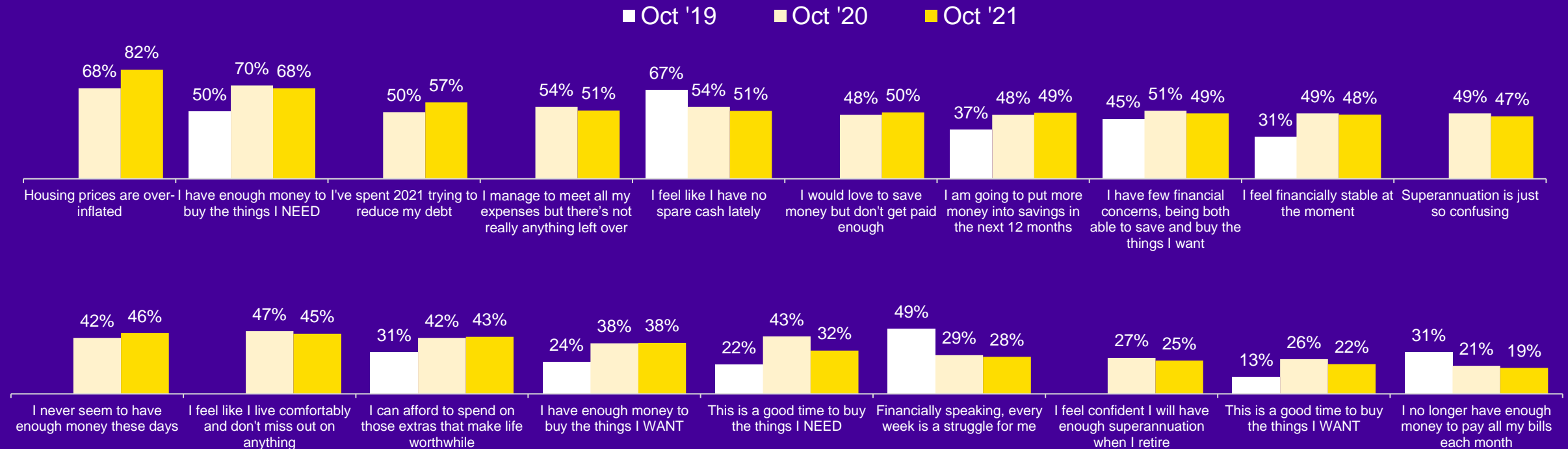
How do you feel about the following statements? AGREEMENT (PROMPTED)



Feeling more positive about finances

Almost half are feeling financially stable and in better shape than pre-COVID. YOY more Boomtowners are concerned about over-inflated housing prices, however they're also taking action, with an upward trend YOY to save more money in the next 12 months.

How do you feel about the following statements? AGREEMENT (PROMPTED)



YOY data sorted from largest to smallest by October 2021 results

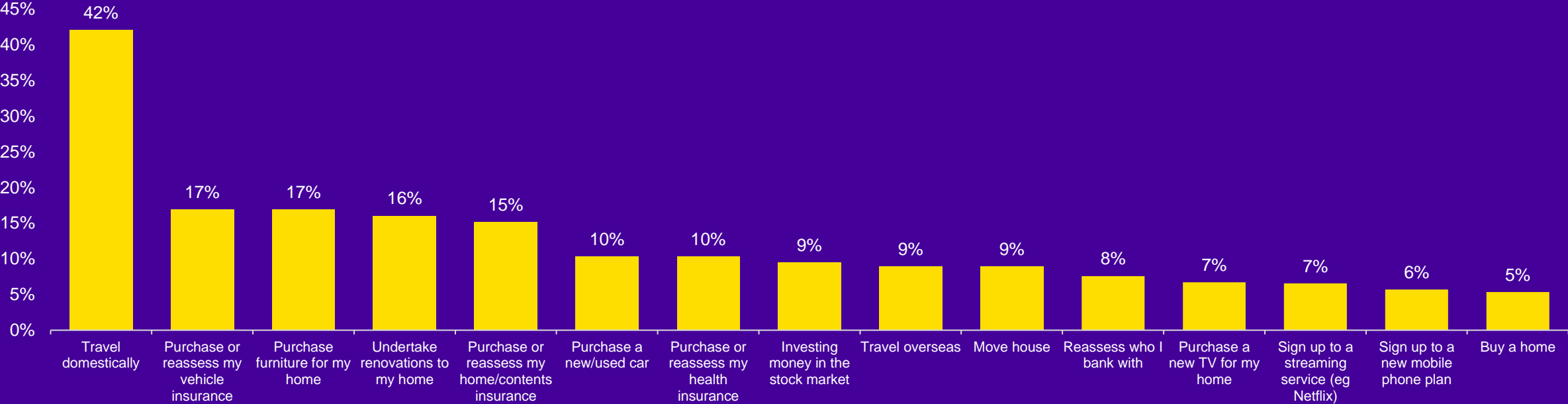
Source : SCA iQ. Consumer Sentiment Study. October 2021 . "How do you feel about the following statements?" [AGREEMENT]. 2021 Regional. n=580, 2020 Regional n=686, 2019 Regional n=927.



Almost half of regional Aussies planning domestic travel in the next 6 months

Tourism and travel brands are very well placed to reap the most rewards, followed by motor insurance, home furniture and renovations on Boomtown’s shopping list.

Are you planning on doing any of the following sometime in the next 6 months? (PROMPTED)



*Displaying top 15 results

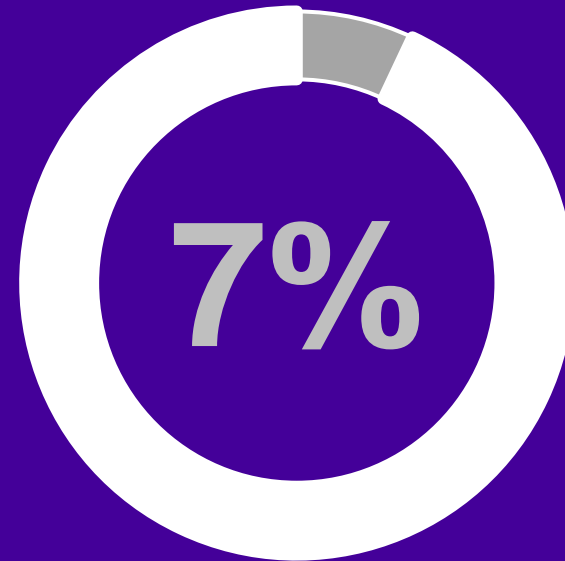
Source : SCA iQ. Consumer Sentiment Study. October 2021 . “Are you planning on doing any of the following sometime in the next 6 months?”. Regional. n=580.



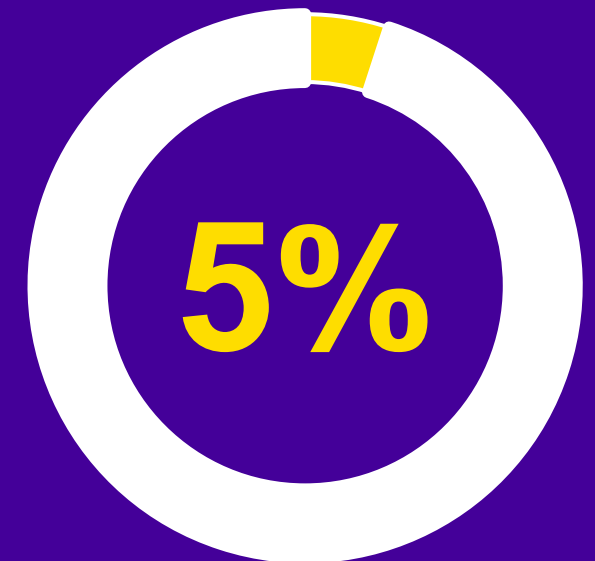
More regional Aussies staying put in Boomtown

**BOOMTOWNERS
KNOW THEIR
COMMUNITITES
LIKE THE BACK
OF THEIR HAND**

Almost 75% of regional respondents have lived in their city for over a decade and 95% of them intend to staying in Boomtown.



**OF METRO RESPONDENTS
INTEND TO MOVE / RELOCATE
FROM THEIR CURRENT CITY TO
A REGIONAL CITY**



**OF BOOMTOWN RESPONDENTS
INTEND TO MOVE / RELOCATE
FROM THEIR CURRENT CITY TO
A METRO CITY**

The Opportunity

The Opportunity

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IS TOP OF MIND AND BOOMTOWNERS FEAR BEING PRICED OUT OF THE MARKET

The low supply - high demand formula driving inflation in the housing market, as well as the consistent media coverage, has created unprecedented concern for many Australians fearing that they can no longer afford the Australian dream.

Businesses in the **finance category** can leverage these concerns through media campaigns that reinforce their **deeper level of understanding** of the housing affordability crisis and to **remain top of mind** as competition remains high and differentiation low.

Facilitating potential home buyers' goals with unique products and offerings will be key for product differentiation and competitive advantage.

The Opportunity

SPENDING MONEY NEEDS TO BE LESS OF A BARRIER TO PURCHASE FOR BOOMTOWNERS

With money once again being one of the top worries for Boomtowners and a strain for both metro and regional Aussies, brands can address this concern in order to remove a roadblock to purchase.

Research by KPMG highlights how consumers are constantly looking for competitive pricing, indicating that brands need to be advertising to remain top of mind, especially during sale periods.

Additionally, KPMG has highlighted that the 2020-21 disruption has caused a rise in digital retail purchases such as the delivery-focused model and a shift towards regionalisation campaigns such as 'shop local'.

These trends are likely here to stay and present opportunities for brands to leverage in the coming year.

The Opportunity

HOUSES, HOLIDAYS, CARS AND RETIREMENT ARE WHAT BOOMTOWNERS ARE KEEN TO SPEND ON

After a global pandemic and with months of being cooped up at home, Boomtowners are ready to splash cash on some big ticket items.

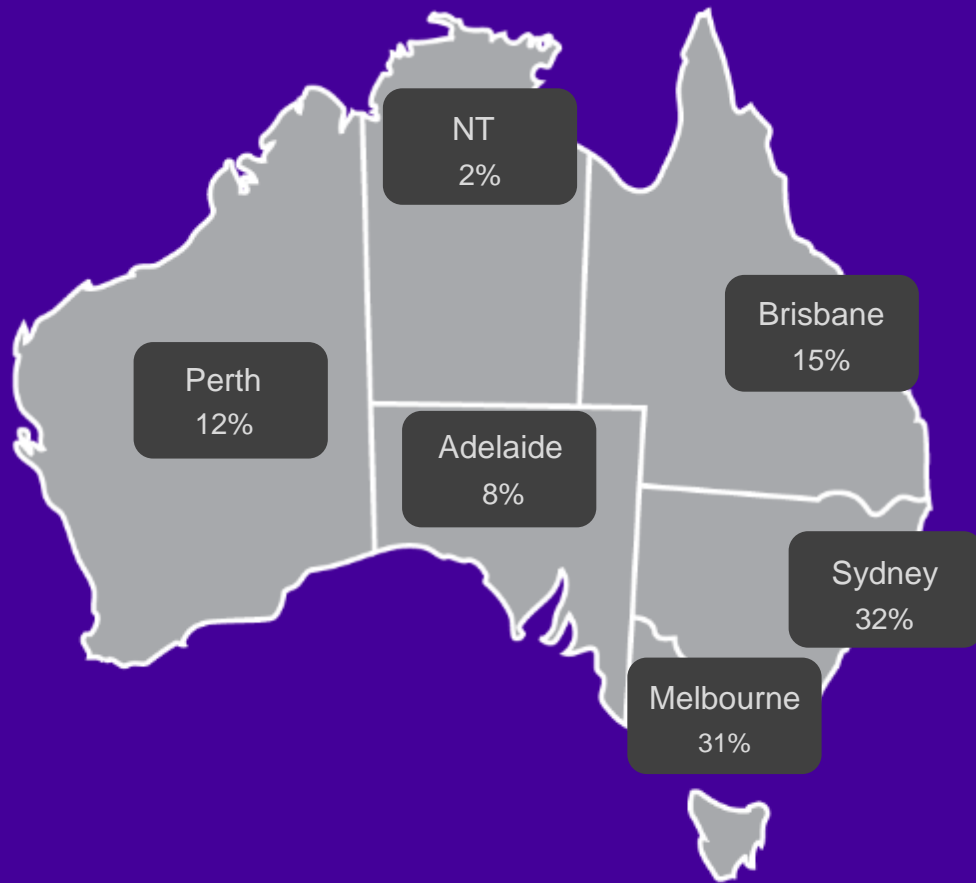
25%+ say they'll be ready to hit the purchase trigger within six months, a behavioural insight that travel, real estate, automotive and retirement category brands can leverage heading to mid-2022.

With many Aussies currently saving for a house, car or their retirement and with these saving goals rising YOY, stagnant to low wage growth and the sustained property demand has made these life achievements harder to reach for many. This also presents an opportunity for brands to leverage this knowledge (and empathise) by highlighting exclusive deals, sales periods and value adds and build stronger top ofmind awareness and brand growth in the relatively uncluttered advertising environments Boomtown affords marketers

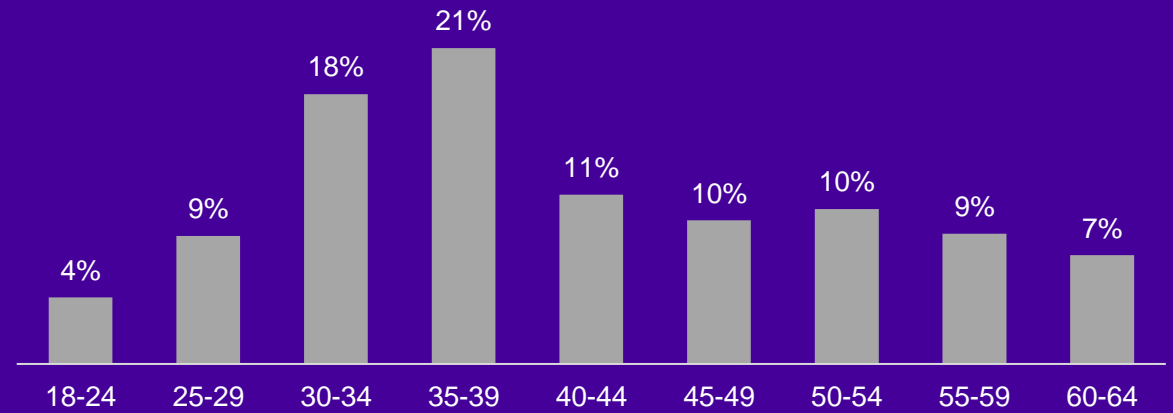
Respondent Breakdown & Methodology

Metro respondent breakdown

Market Breakdown



Age Breakdown

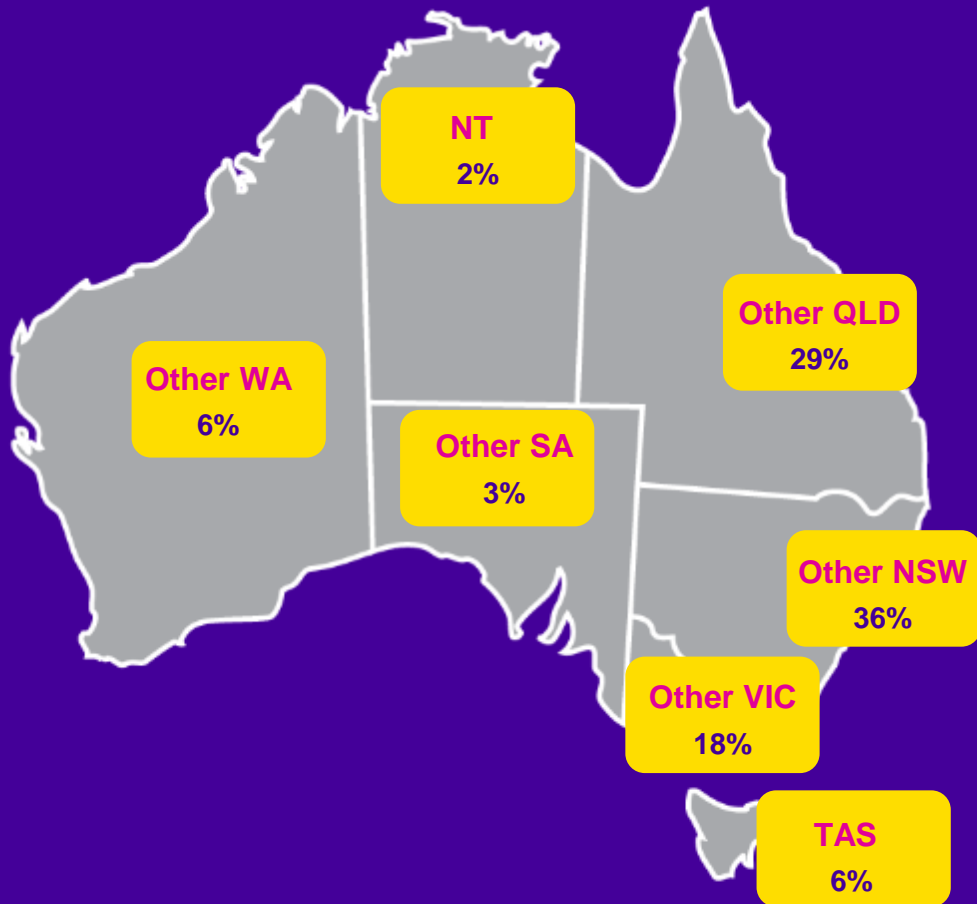


Gender Breakdown

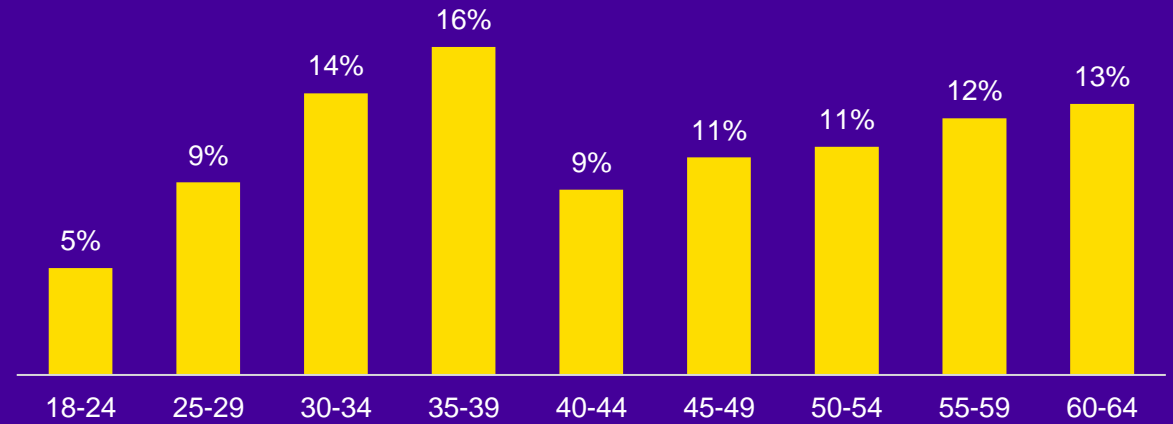


Boomtown respondent breakdown

Market Breakdown



Age Breakdown



Gender Breakdown



Methodology

The results of this survey are “INDICATIVE” ONLY.

The survey was conducted by Southern Cross Austereo using its online panel nationally. Additionally, this survey employed the use of two external sample providers, being TEG and Humaniti, to achieve sample representative of the Australian population.

The panel is obtained from our radio networks database under the labels of 'Hit VIP' on the HIT Network and 'The Club' on the MMM Network. All members of these databases would be considered listeners to these stations.

The database contains about 200,000 members.
This is split between the Hit database and the Triple M database.

Of these members, approximately 53,000 people were invited to be part of our Alida Insights panel community.

Approximately 2,034 completed the study. Various filters have been placed over the data at different times.

Certain questions asked for an 'essay' or 'verbatim' type of response OR brands/words that first came to mind.

A keyword search was used to sort and rank the responses to these questions.

The results are a weighted sample, aimed to be reflective of the general Australian population. SCA brands reach approximately 31% of the 10+ population and approximately 36% of the 25-54 population in the five metropolitan markets in Australia, suggesting it would be reasonable to consider these results to be a fair if not fully balanced representation of the opinions in these marketplaces.

Furthermore, as it is an online survey, the respondents would also be skewed towards being 'early adopters' for technology, 'trend setters' in general and likely to be a good early indication of brand leaders, trend setters and early adopters in general.

These research surveys conducted by Southern Cross Austereo are done so to provide a general understanding of the opinions, interests and attitudes of the metropolitan and larger regional marketplaces only.

Boortown.

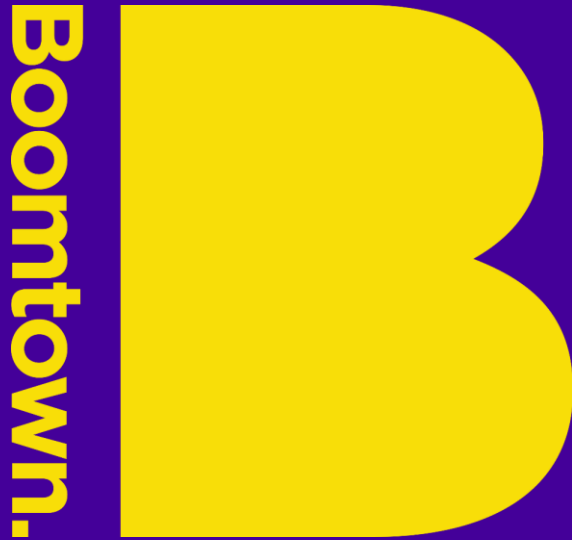


Mood
Monitor.

The moods and concerns of regional Aussies.

2019 | 2020 | 2021 | **2022**

For more information



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