



RESEARCH
& INSIGHT

Sign of the Times 2021

Prepared by B&A



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Qualitative methodology

Task primed online consumer groups

- 4 online groups Jan 2021.
- Life at home and purchasing behaviour.
- ABC1, 24-55, Dublin and Cork.



Nimble businesses

- 4 X 1 hour online depths
- Ireland's most innovative and emerging businesses.



*Diarmuid McSweeney,
Co-Founder*



*Ryan Scott,
Co-Founder*



*Sheelin Conlon,
Founder*



*Andrew Ennis,
Head bartender*

Quantitative methodology

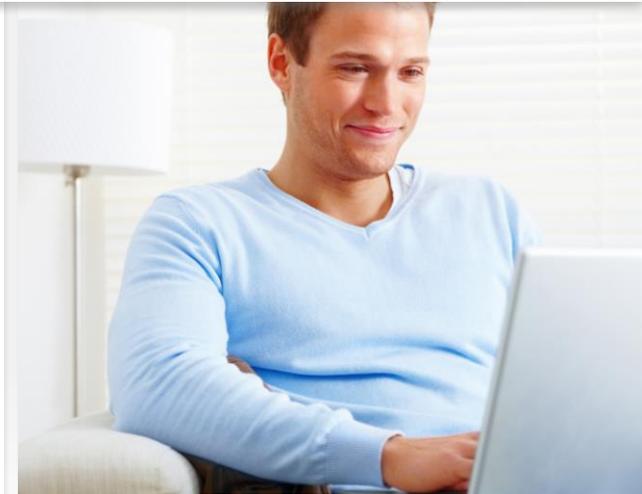
Online survey

- Nationally representative (n=,1000).
- Fieldwork Jan & Feb 2021.



OpinionX (Crowdsourcing)

- We partnered with DCU start-up 'OpinionX' to utilise an innovative survey tool.



This year's themes



Contrasting realities



'Normal' but better



Human needs exposed



New definitions emerging



Our horizons have shrunk



Evolving purchasing psychology



Cautious release



Sustainability – a unique moment in time

2022

2021

2020

A Turbulent Year

A turbulent year in pictures



BREXIT



Sinn Fein on top



I need to talk to you about Coronavirus



Cancelled events



Deserted streets



The clap for carers



I can't breathe



Staycations



Helen McEntee



Vaccine!



New beginnings



Dr. Tony Holohan

No commutes



Day-to-day life

Overwhelmed



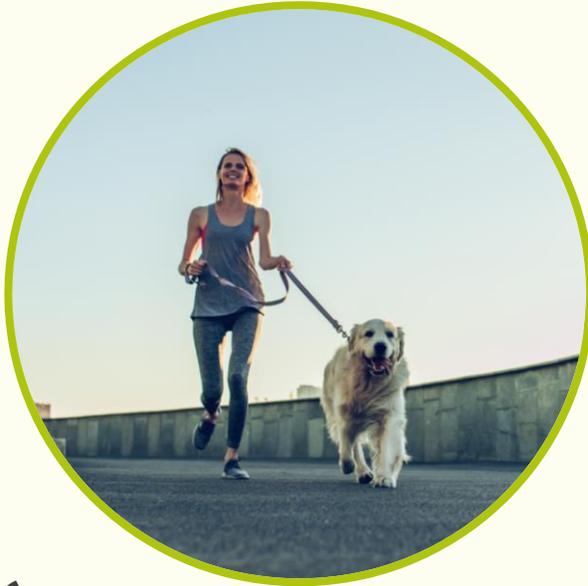
“

I have an hour and a half extra in bed every morning. Life changing.

“

I find I have way less time now. I never have a free minute to myself. I'm up with the kids all day and working. It's just exhausting.

New healthy routines



“

The dog has never been healthier. Its definitely been the year of the dog.

Shifting habits

Struggling to adapt



“

I find myself floating through the day..I work and then straight to the couch for the evening.

Deeper bonding



Relationships

Isolation



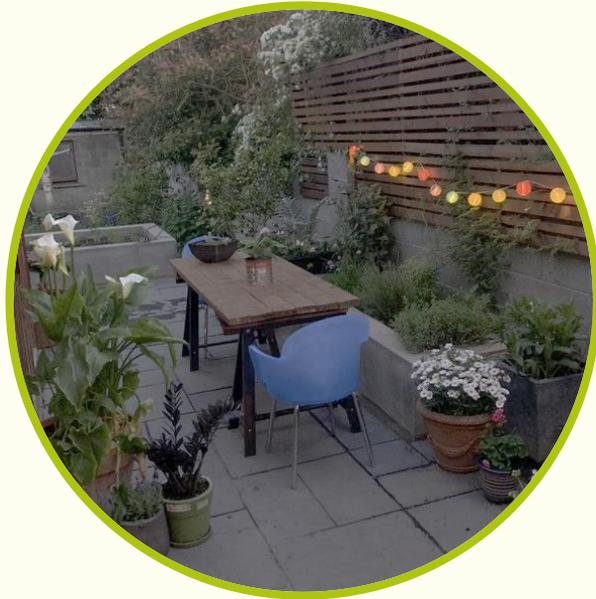
“

I have gotten a lot closer to every member in my family. Even including my brother who is 10 years younger than me.

“

It's a long day.. some days are better than others.

Making the most of what we have



“

The garden has been a savour, not so much now but during the summer we were out there constantly.

Different contexts

Limited by our spaces

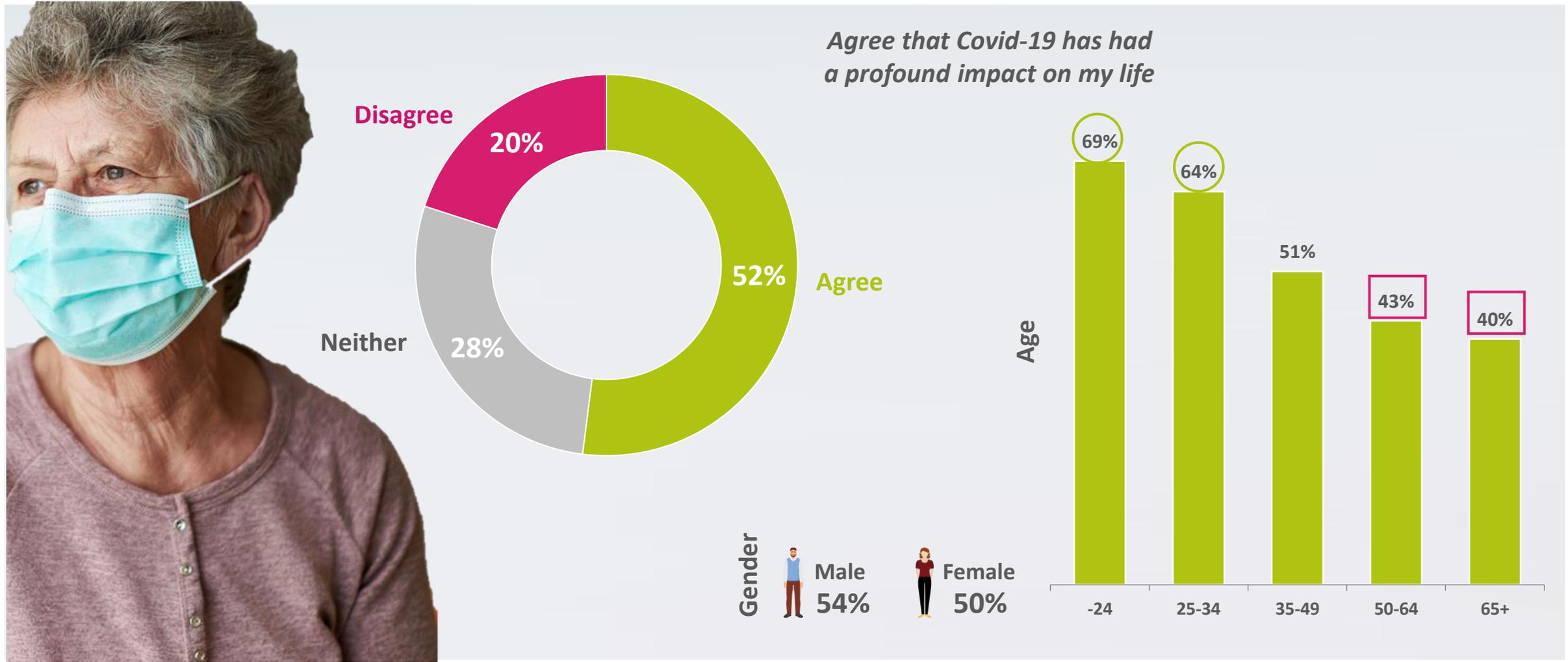


“

I'm in an apartment so I am definitely feeling the space. I would love to be in a house.

2021: The impact of Covid-19

Nationally representative n=1,000



Those over 55 have had to deal with 'harsher' periods of lockdown, but it is actually younger people who feel more strongly that the pandemic has had a profound impact.

Despite a yearning for things to go back to normal...

It has become clear to us that...

**‘normal’
was not
working
perfectly**



Never at home



The vote for change



Climate crisis

Going back to ‘normal’ does not feel like the right aspiration.

We now want the best of both worlds..

By retaining some of the positive aspects of Lockdown.



Deeper bonding



Quality of life experiences



Connecting with nature



Social collaboration

An opportunity to start over and to do better!



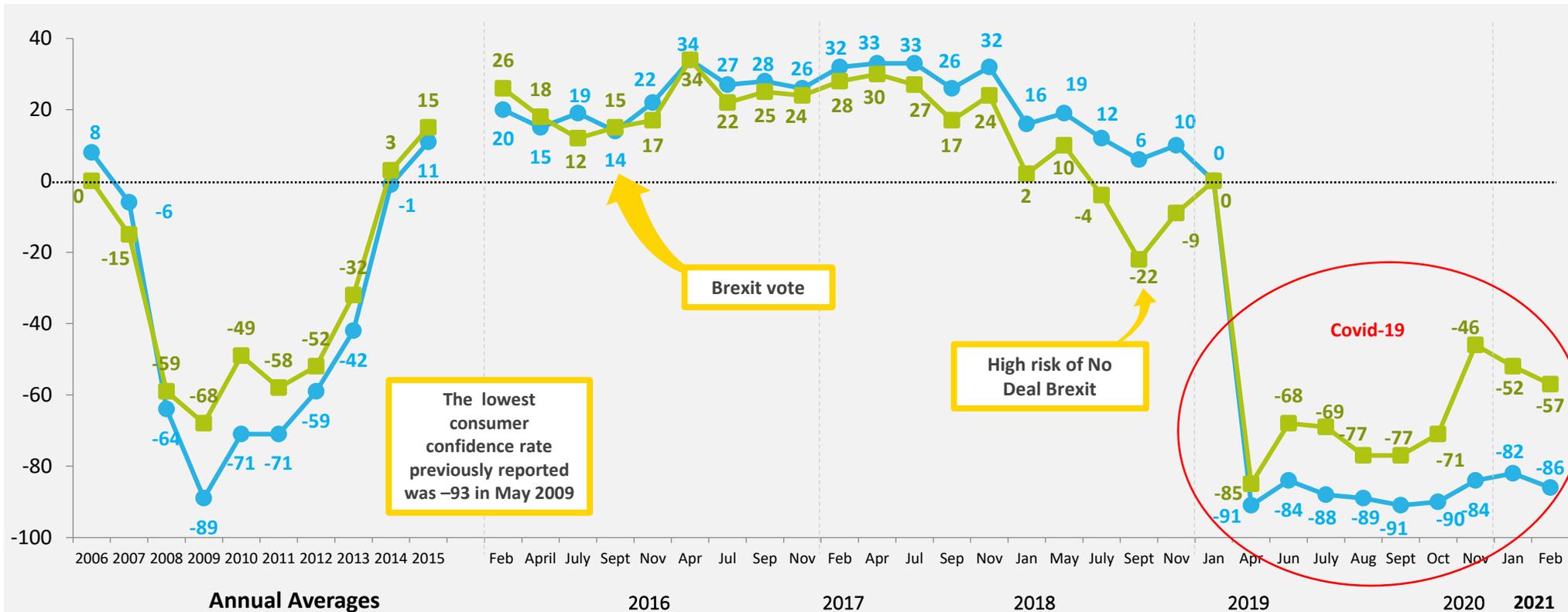
Consumer confidence

Consumer confidence fell in January as Covid-19 incidence (and restrictions) increased

Current vs. Looking Forward

Looking forward
(Net Diff: Positive-Negative)

| | | |
|--|----------------|-----|
| | Dublin | -46 |
| | Outside Dublin | -62 |



*Figures in the graph represent the net difference between those thinking the country will be economically better off minus those thinking it will be worse off.

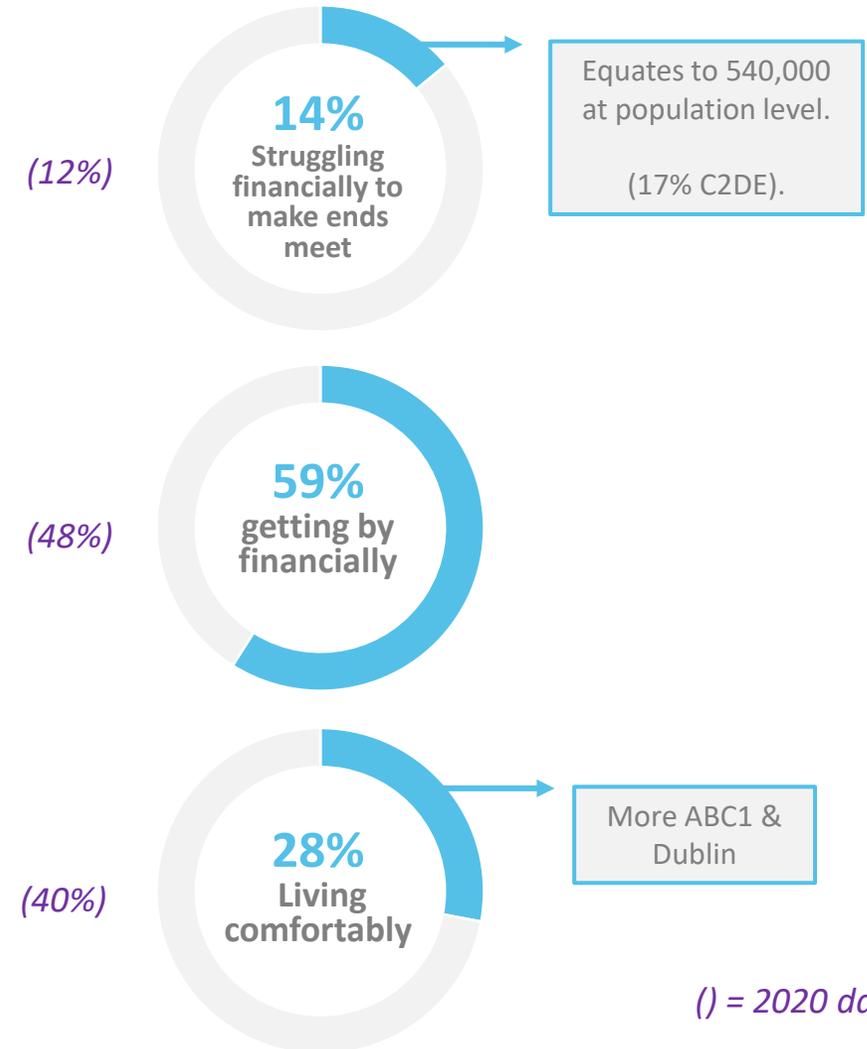
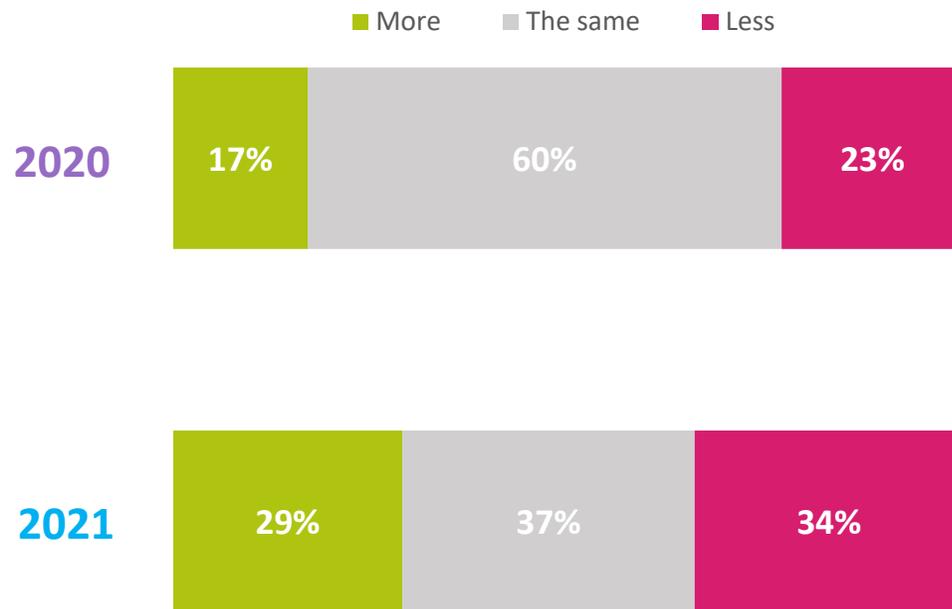
Source: B&A Consumer Confidence Report

- Q.1 Thinking about the economy as a whole, do you think that the country is better off, worse off, or about the same as last year?
- Q.2 And what about the coming year, do you think that the country will be better off, worse off or about the same as this year?

In 2021 financial reality is more polarised

Nationally representative n=1,000

Do you feel that you have more, less or the same amount of money in your pocket compared to this time last year?



() = 2020 data

The u35s, ABC1 and those from Dublin are most likely to have 'more money in their pockets compared to last year'. But there are less people 'living comfortably, and more people just 'getting by'.

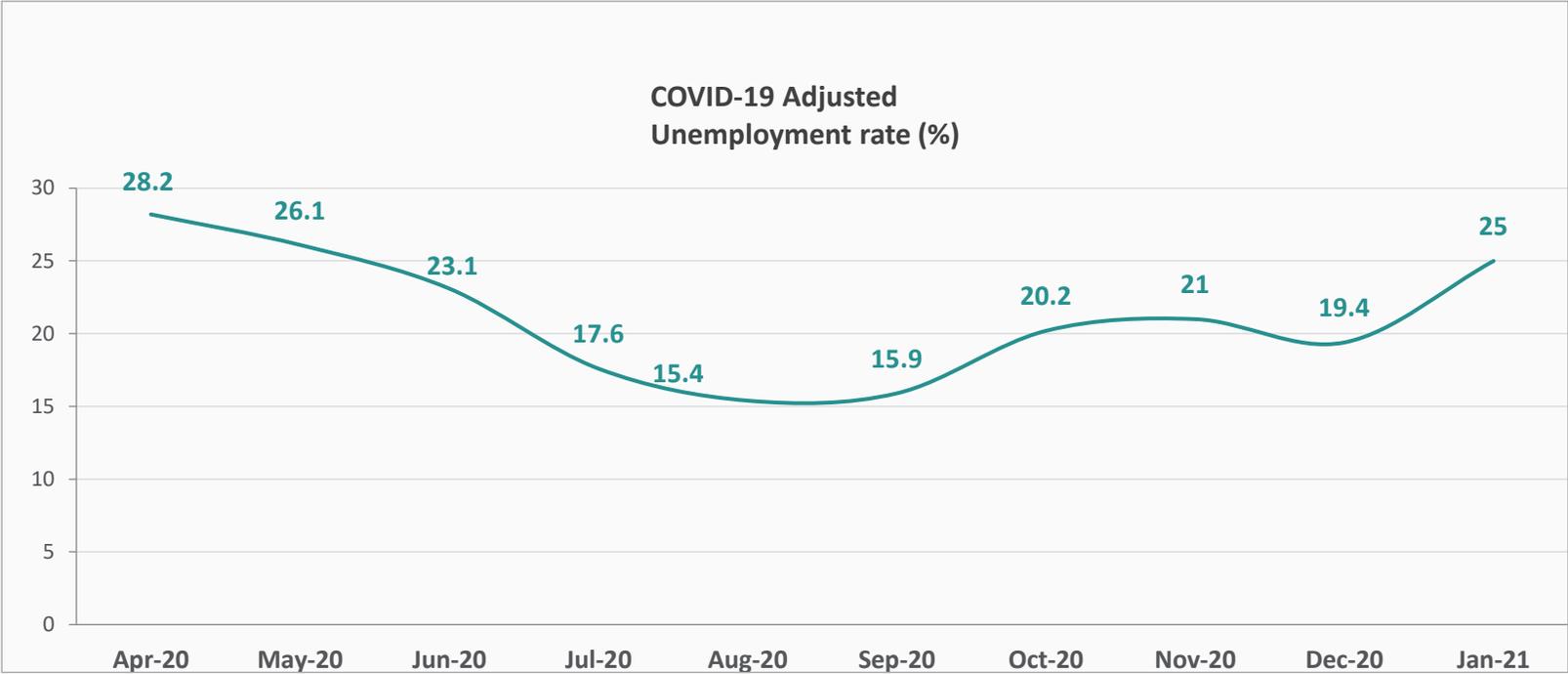
Q.11 Do you feel that you have more, less or the same amount of money in your pockets (i.e. disposable income) compared to this time last year?
Q.13 Which best describes your household?

Covid-19 Adjusted Unemployment rate

Nationally representative n=1,000



Monthly Unemployment

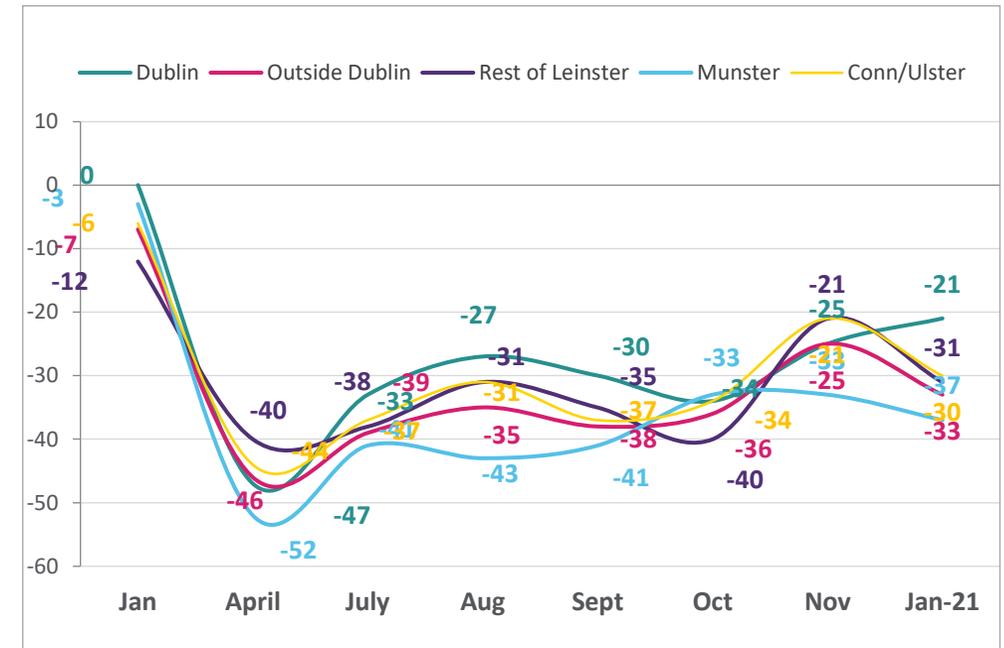
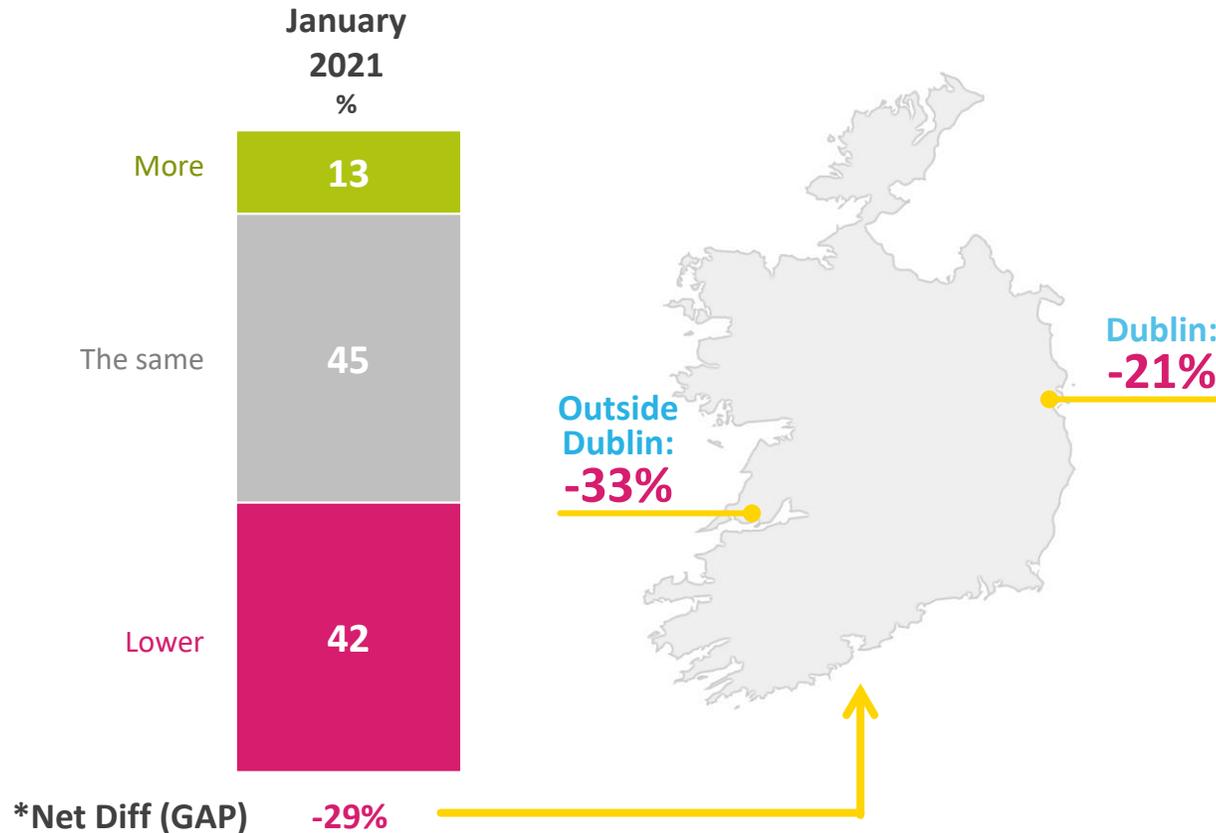


Source: CSO website (Monthly Unemployment)

The COVID-19 adjusted unemployment rate for January 2021 was 25% for all persons including those on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment

Consumer caution towards spending has fallen back on the improvement experienced during the run up to Christmas 2020

Nationally representative n=1,000



High levels of consumer caution towards spending remains evident across the country.

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | Jan 19 | May 19 | July 19 | Sept 19 | Nov 19 | Jan 20 | Apr 20 | Jun 20 | July 20 | Aug 20 | Sept 20 | Oct 20 | Nov 20 | Jan 21 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gap | +5% | -29% | -63% | -47% | -52% | -45% | -37% | -19% | -13% | -4% | = | +2% | -3% | -4% | -7% | -16% | -9% | -5% | -46% | -38% | -37% | -33% | -36% | -35% | -25% | -29% |



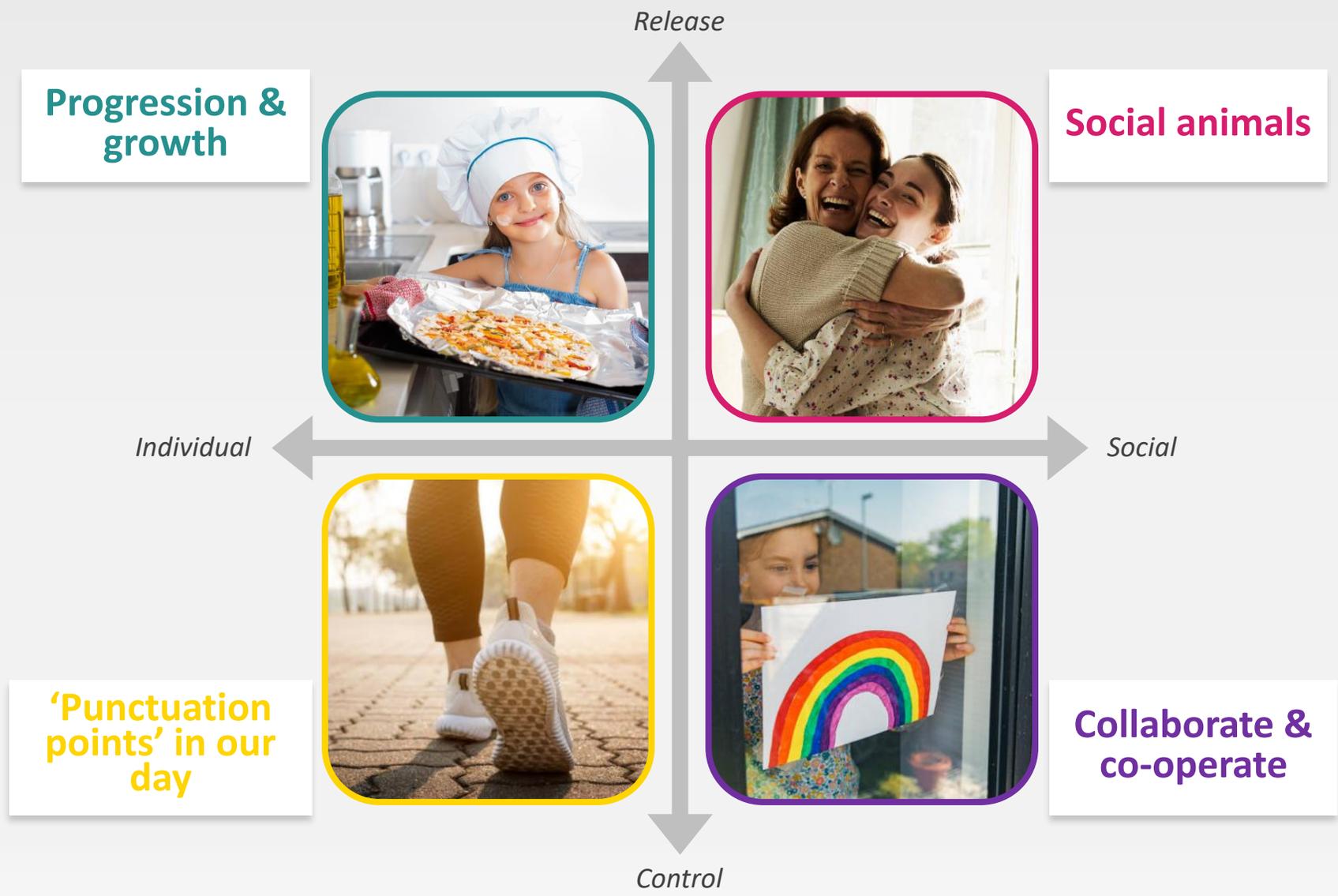
New perspectives

Core human needs have been exposed

We have continually **adjusted** to changing circumstances...



What we **need** and what is really **important** has become clearer...



With this new perspective, we are reassessing our priorities

'Reward' in the kitchen

With our 'life goals' and yearly plans disrupted...

We are rewarding ourselves in the kitchen with a bit of nostalgia and tradition...



A shift from 'control seeking' to 'reward seeking' behaviours in our kitchens

Solving for our needs

The initial shock in March 2020 made us retreat to things that gave us a **perceived sense of control over our lives.**



Stocking up



Proving 'we can'



Over time, this has transitioned into an **innate need for challenge** and to find **outlets for our creativity.**



Greater appreciation for our agency



Confidence in our abilities

People have found new ways to solve for many of their needs

New habits are ‘bedding in’



“

We have a couple of new cookbooks that we are using now. Like a tin of chopped tomatoes for example, I would have never bought this before.



“

I have taken up sewing. Using a sewing machine and altering my clothes and my kid's clothes and making different things out of old clothes and stuff.

We should not assume that consumers will revert to all of their prior habits

New definitions: 'Convenience +'



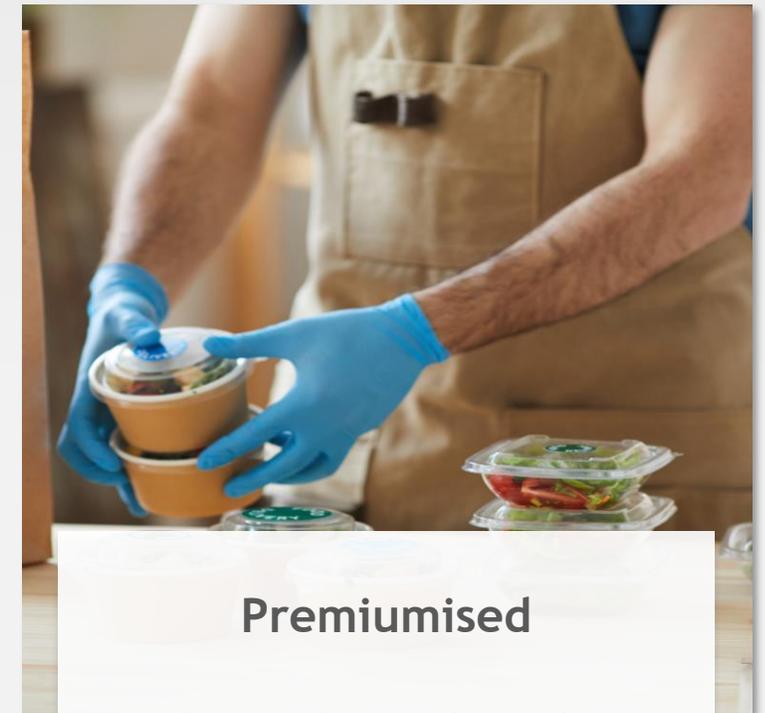
Tech enabled

- Consumers are **unwilling to forfeit choice for ease**.
- **Slick multichannel engagement** is now expected, regardless of company size.



Buying local

- Local businesses are now **firmly on our radar**.
- We have become **aware of the uniqueness and authenticity** of what is available on our doorsteps.



Premiumised

- The trend towards 'quality convenience' has **accelerated** (particularly in food and drink).

New definitions: 'Total wellness'

Nationally representative n=1,000

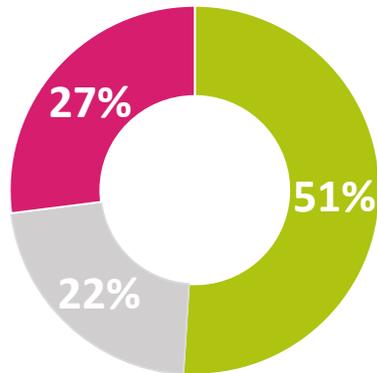


- Any agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Any disagree



2020/2021, mental health became mainstream

Covid-19 has been bad for my mental health because I am spending more time at home

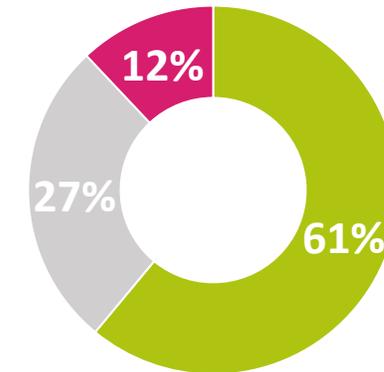


-35s: 65%
35-54: 47%
55+: 42%



Allocating time to our self-care (e.g. reducing stress)

Due to Covid-19, I have become more health conscious



-35s : 56%
35-54: 55%
55+: 71%

There has been a significant shift in our attitudes towards our health and our openness with each other in managing it.

New definitions: 'The world of work'

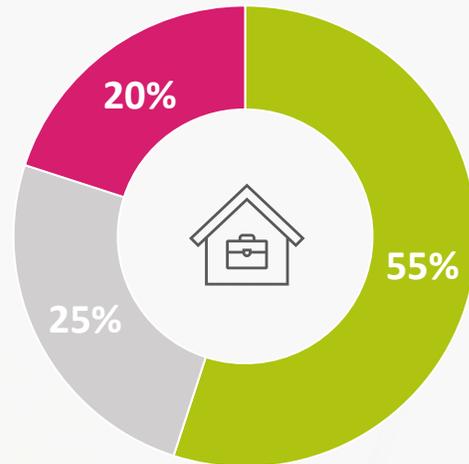
Of those working from home n = 354

■ Any agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Any disagree



Working from home has been positive for many

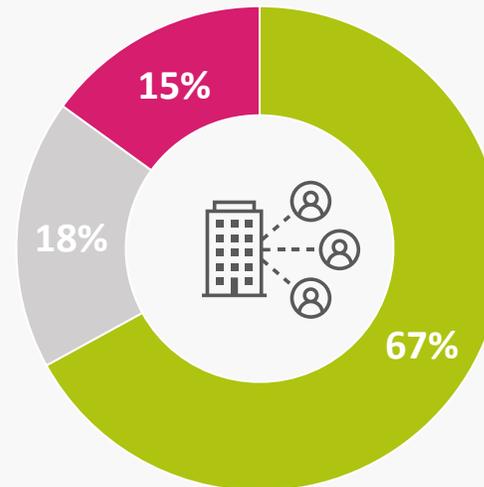
I prefer working from home



-44: 60%
+45: 45%

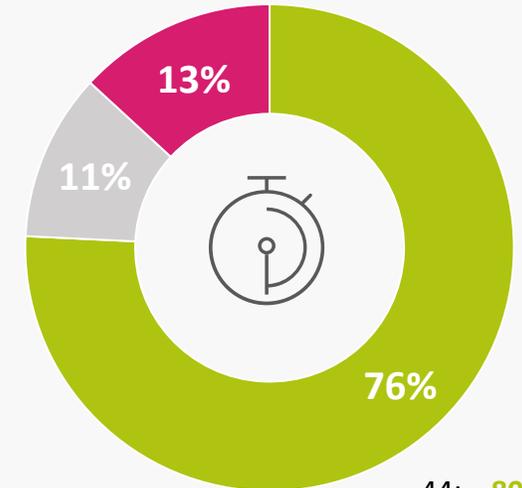
But we do miss the social aspect

I miss my work colleagues



We now want the best of both worlds

I want to work from home at least a few days a week from now on



-44: 80%
+45: 66%

The central workplace that was left behind and the one that we return to is unlikely to be the same.

The future of work?

Of those working from home n = 354

■ Any agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Any disagree

‘Zoom shaming’?



Will ‘presence’ become a differentiator?

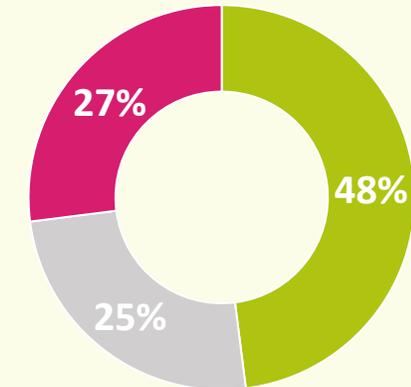
‘Workplace creep’?



The need to manage new expectations around technology?

Productivity gaps?

...I find that I get more work done when I am in the office.



Will productivity gaps emerge between the home and the office?

Technology

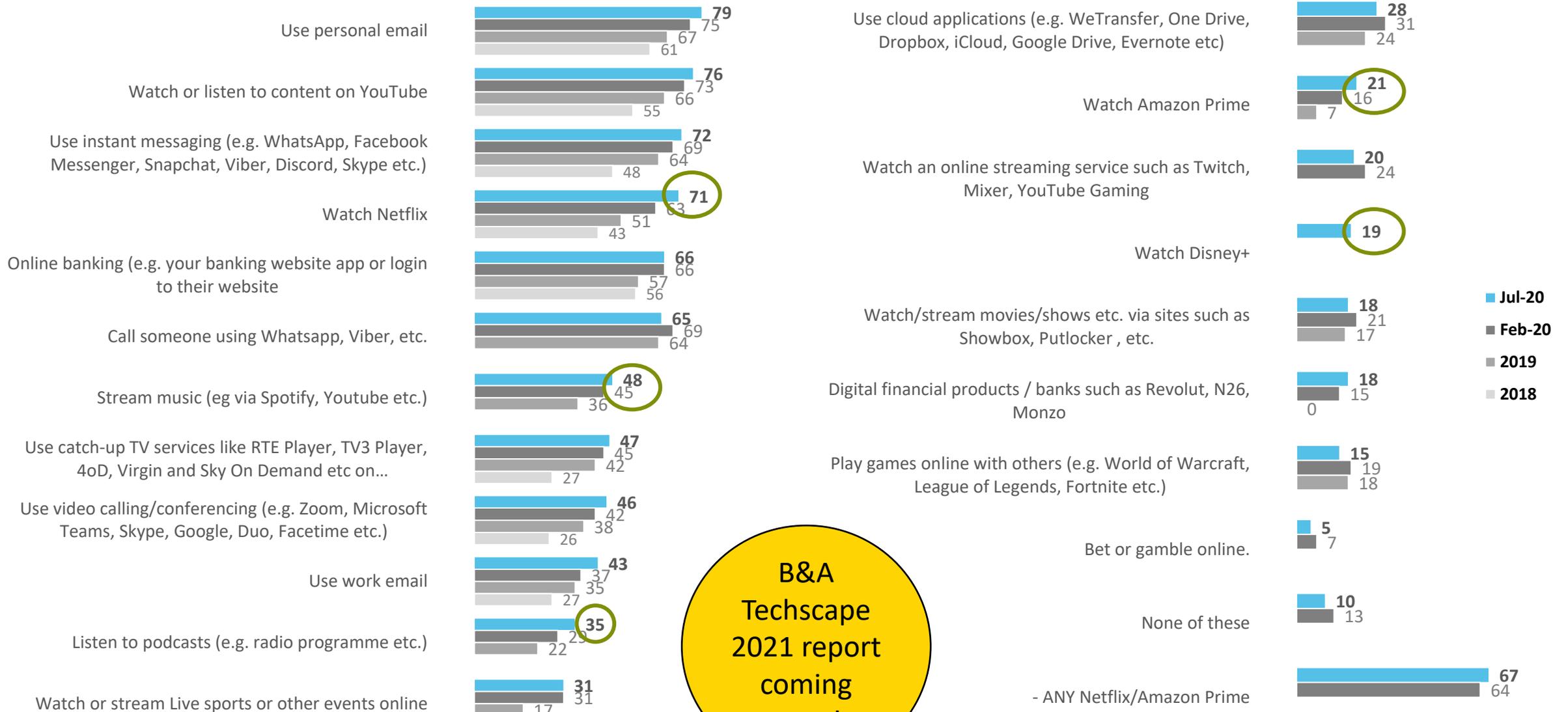
Broadband is now more important than roads for almost half the population!



Evolution in technology usage during the pandemic

Base: All adults 16+ - 1,003 (July 2020)

Barometer (face-to-face omnibus) trended 2018 - 2020

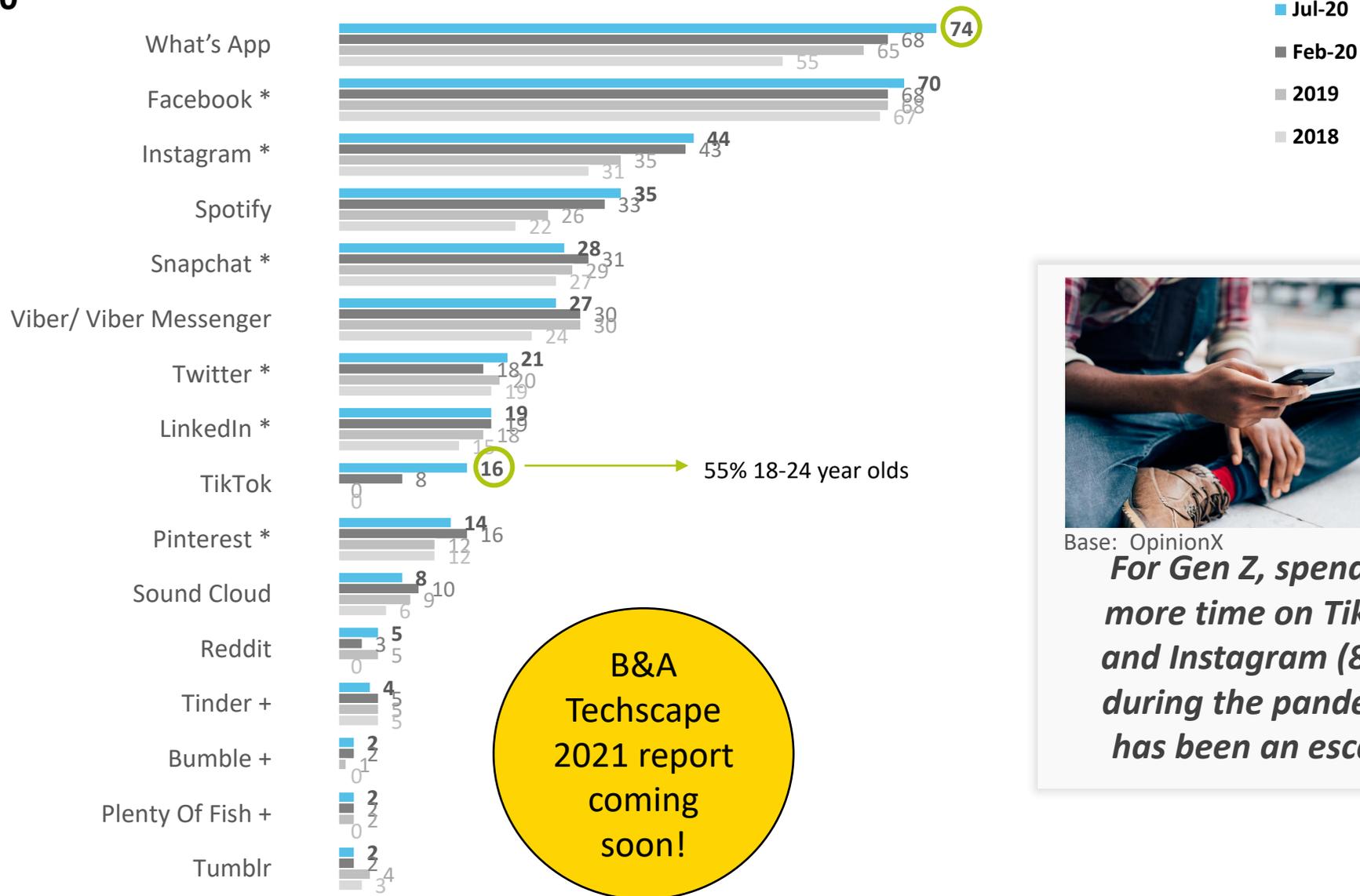


B&A Techscape 2021 report coming soon!

Social Media ever used nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ - 1,003

Barometer 2018 - 2020



Base: OpinionX

For Gen Z, spending more time on TikTok and Instagram (82%) during the pandemic has been an escape

**B&A
Techscape
2021 report
coming
soon!**

Pre-January 2017 comparable data from eir Connected Living Survey 2015

Reddit, Plenty of Fish and Bumble added in 2018

* = Social media + = Dating Sites



A changing grocery context

Grocery habits have changed



Our grocery shopping experiences have become much more functional, efficient and less enjoyable in the pandemic era.

With speed and safety top of mind it's all about getting 'in and out' as fast as we can:



Are making lists before shopping



Have been put off grocery shopping because of the queuing



Find it impossible to browse



No longer enjoy the shopping experience

We've gone from experiences that many found emotionally rewarding to one that we want over as quickly as possible.



As the supermarket became a more anxious and less engaging place to be during lockdown, more and more of us are looking into online and remote options

While,

10%

Of shoppers nominate online as their **main grocery channel**

And,

15%

Say they will **definitely** shop online in the next month

However,

30%

Attempted to shop for grocery online during the crisis but were unsuccessful

Additionally,

38%

Are interested in **click and collect** options

This represents a significant financial opportunity for the supermarket brands who can develop an effective and compelling proposition.



When shops opened again in 2020 Irish shoppers focused on a smaller number of 'inner circle' retail brands. Will they do the same in 2021?



Grocery shopping shifted from multiple shops to one 'big' grocery trip



Having to shop for the whole week at once really threw me. I'd never done that. A level of planning that I'd never encountered before.

Shopper Dublin



As non-essential retail opened up, we focused on the one or two shops we really missed.



Penney's was on my mind throughout lockdown. I used to shop in loads of places, but Penney's was the only one I really missed.



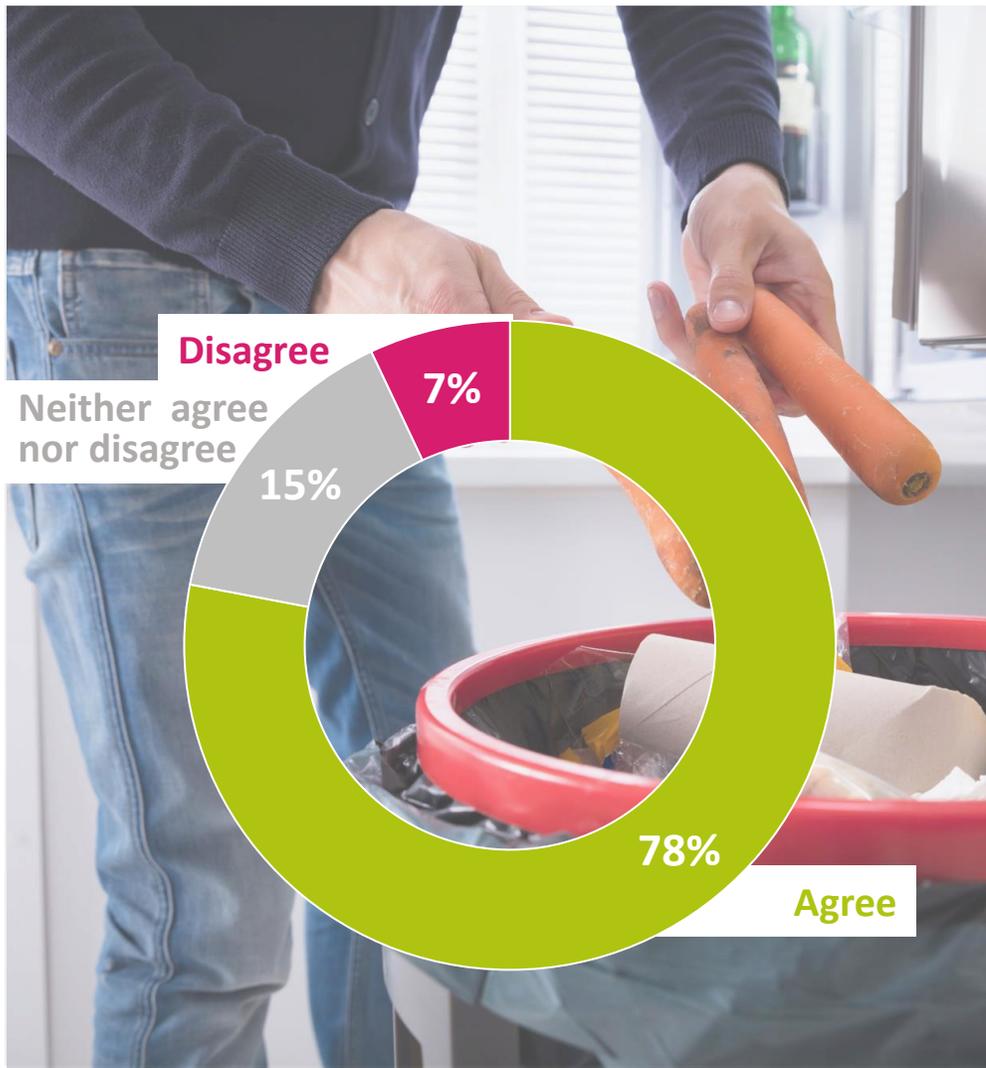
Going forward, queuing and logistics make it likely that we'll continue to prioritise the stores that really matter to us.



I went into town on Tuesday but with all the queuing I won't be doing that again or even going to that many shops. They'll have to be worth it.

Food waste at home

Nationally representative n=1,000



In the past year, I have made an effort to reduce the amount of food that I waste at home

Gender



Male
75%



Female
81%

Class

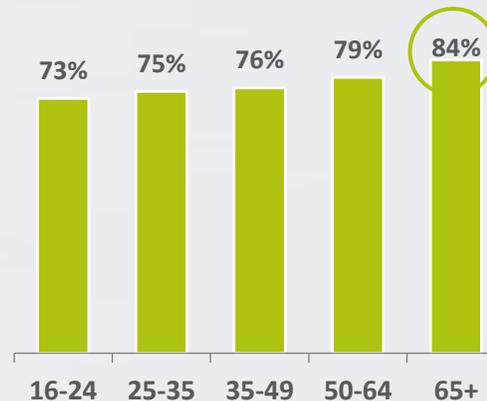


ABC1
78%



C2DE
77%

Age



Strong desire and effort amongst the population to decrease food waste.



Deep dive into the home

Our horizon has shrunk: It's all about the home

Family relationships

Sense of:

Calmness

Protection

Security

Sanctuary



With no significant milestones, festivals or holidays to look forward to,
aspirations have been recalibrated.

Structure and separation keeps us sane

Without clear boundaries between work and leisure spaces, we have developed ways of segmenting the day and our spaces.

Mental separation



Lighting a different essential candle for worktime and another for leisure time.

Physical separation



Building an office space in the garden.

Bending the rules



Giving the kids game systems to use in their own rooms.

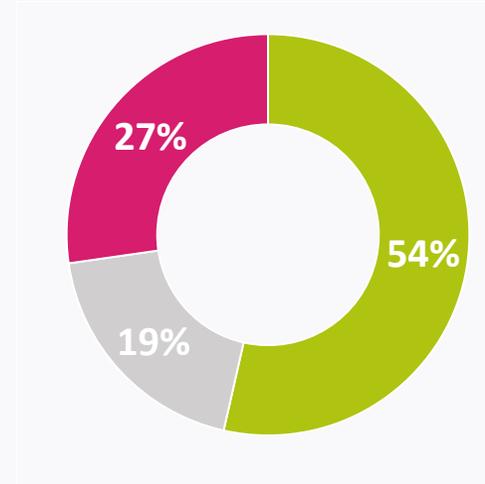
Mental separation

Of those working from home n = 354

- Any agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Any disagree



I find it more difficult to separate my work and personal life when working from home



- Any agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Any disagree

“

I am now in a habit of lighting a scent upstairs when I'm working and then having something else when I'm not working. It is something that a friend of mine suggested.

The future role of the home

What is for certain

What is likely



Multi-functional spaces



Our homes will continue to play **multiple roles in the future**

Visual enhancement



The increased **appreciation** that we have for our homes **will endure**

'Boosted' home socialising



We crave to get back out there... but the home is likely to be **more prominent in the consideration set** for future occasions

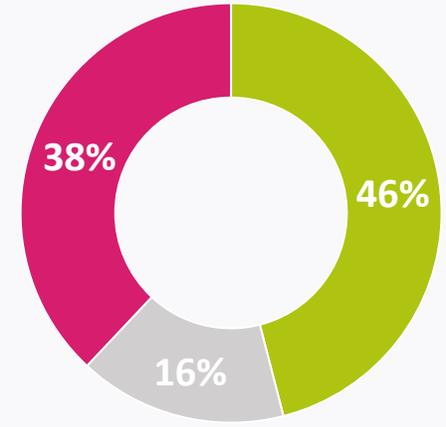
This is not just a temporary solution. We are now thinking about and designing our homes for a different future.

Permanent solutions

Of those working from home n = 354



I have made some home improvements over the past year due to Covid-19



■ Any agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Any disagree



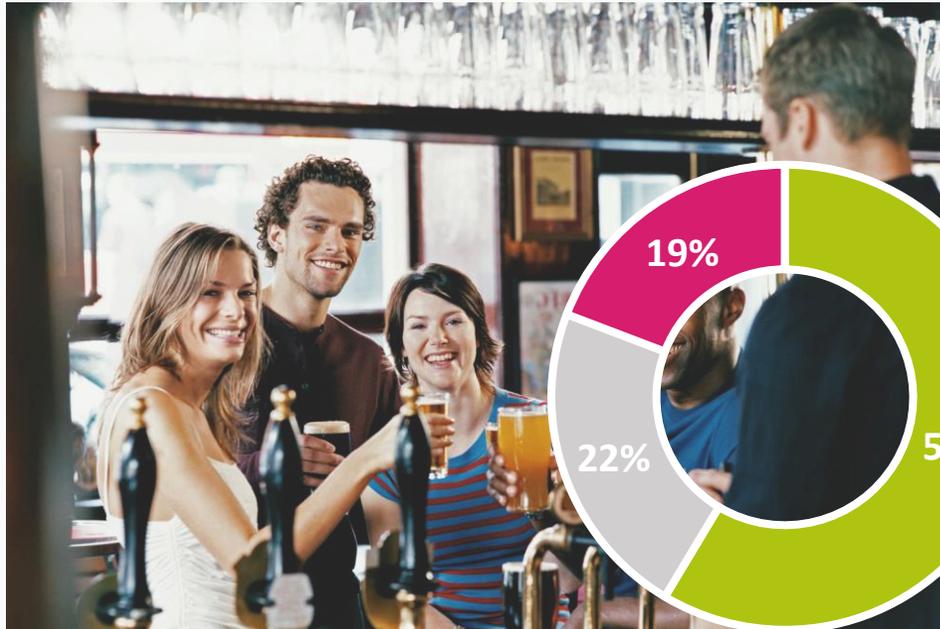
I just installed a desk today myself up in our attic. My wife and I were on the kitchen table but we got fed up with packing the stuff away for dinner.

Entertaining at home

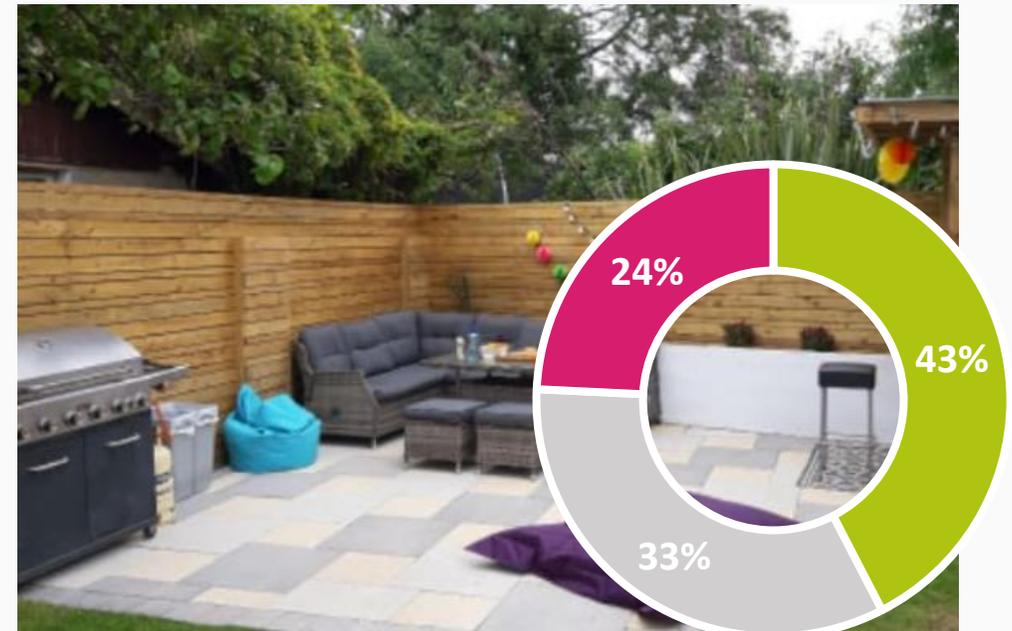
Of those working from home n = 354

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Neither agree nor disagree
Any disagree

When Covid-19 ends, what will be your main priorities ... Going to restaurants/pubs



Even when Covid-19 ends I think I will spend more time entertaining in my home than before Covid-19



-34s: 52%
35-54: 42%
55+: 34%

The home is likely to have a more prominent position in the consideration set for entertainment.

LOVE



Products & Brands

Love

Luxury narratives have been impacted by Lockdown



Better quality lasts longer so it represents value in the long term.

Classic support for premium products
(evident last recession too)



Access (and cost) have been removed so this luxury is just a replacement.

No holiday spending
No hairdresser visits

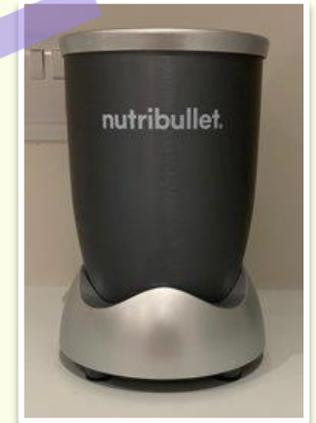


Upgrade home facilities as none available elsewhere.

No gym access
Less access to cafes
No pubs, cinemas, restaurants...

Objects of desire

With so many experiences out of reach, we have indulged in premium consumer durables



Opportunistic self-gifting ('from me to me')



We rationalise the functional value

“

It makes sense to spend money on things like the UGG slippers... I literally wear them all the time.



We 'deserve' something special

“

I'm not feeling guilty about spending because I am a foodie and I do like nice wine.



And we still want some social value

“

You can buy it in every proper supermarket. It's in a silver tin, Illy Coffee it's around 9 euro for a tin but it's so yummy.

Making the everyday a little bit more special



The odd item I am going for let's say the Tesco Finest or just a bit of a nicer, I don't know, whatever it may be, we're just treating ourselves a bit more with our weekly shop. Just that sort of stuff really. Anything just to lift our mood really when you are a bit down from Covid.



'Me to me' gifting, even on a small scale, is likely to endure as we look for ways to make the everyday a little bit more special.

Considered purchasing ('from me to them')

We have become more aware of the **power of individual spending...**

And **'spending mindfully'**.



'My' local economy

As our horizons have shrunk, we have felt a **sense of duty** to invest in our local eco-systems....and **we have enjoyed contributing.**



A new social contract

Paying closer attention than ever to companies' actions – We seek brands with **good intentions**



Scrutinising source

We are considering the **sourcing of products** more than ever

- Back to basics
- Brexit

We are looking more holistically at products and services.

Considered purchasing ('from me to them')

Nationally representative n=1,000

Any agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Any disagree



I look for online companies who are mindful of the environment with regard to the packaging they use for despatch and delivery



-35s: 52%
35-54: 33%
55+: 35%

I plan to switch some of my shopping to local businesses for the foreseeable future



-35s: 55%
35-54: 52%
55+: 65%

Generating emotional 'hits'

With **more technological distance** and a focus on making experiences **'more seamless'...**

There is a need to ensure that customers continue to **feel and have emotional connections with your brand**

Maintaining some 'connection' with customers through innovation and creativity needs to be a priority.



There is

N



PLANET

Sustainability - A unique
moment in time



It's now or never to reimagine the future



Australian fires in early 2020



Top of the Himalayas visible for the first time in 30 years

The full human impact on the environment has become *even more apparent*.

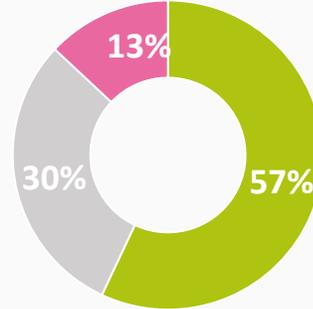
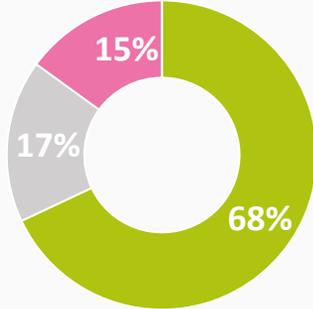
Environmental guilt has lifted a little

Nationally representative n=1,000

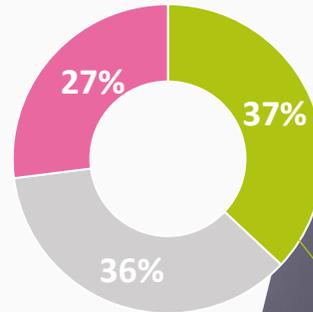
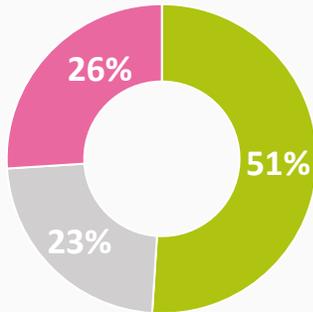
2020

2021

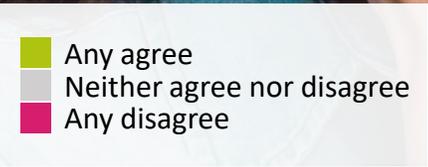
I am extremely concerned about environmental issues



Environmental issues have a profound effect on my life



Largest decreases amongst those over 35 years of age and those in Dublin



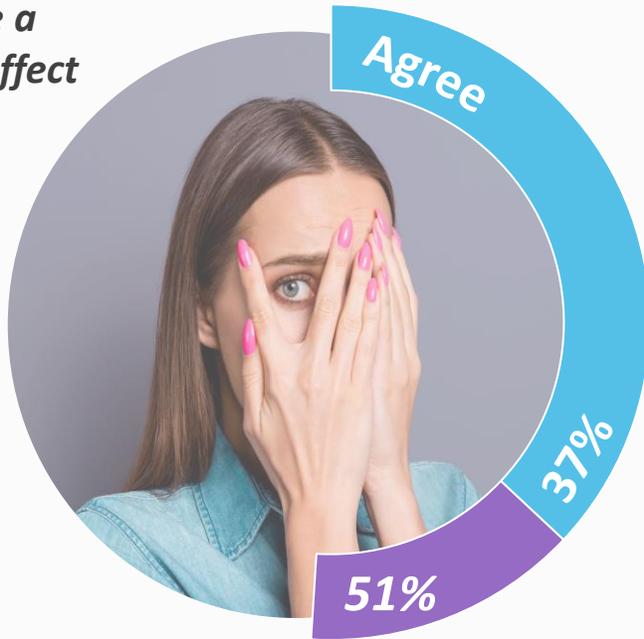
Climate issues are less top of mind



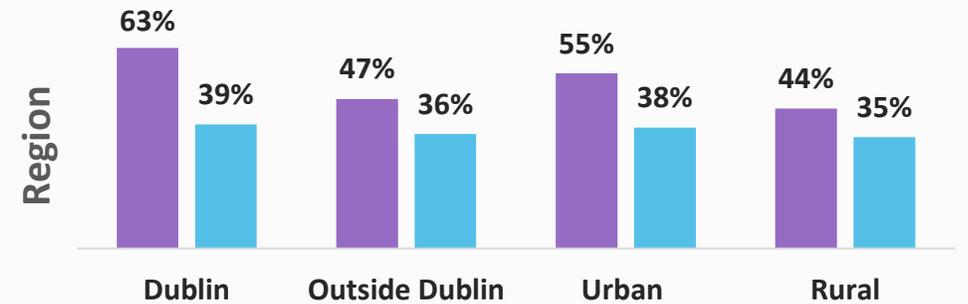
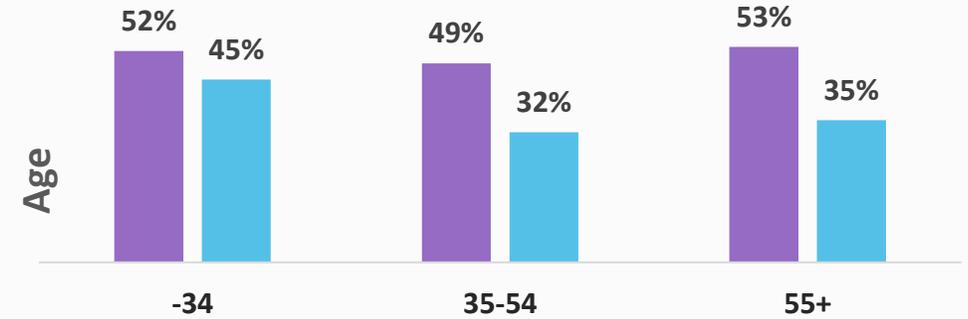
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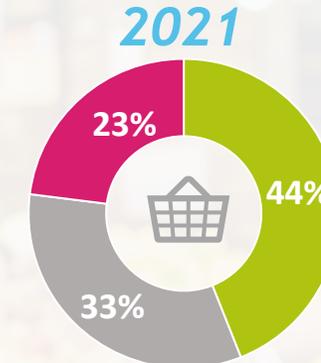
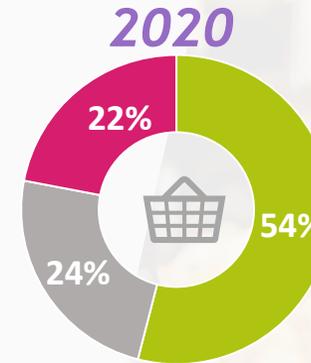
Is there a 'finite capacity for worry'?

Nationally representative n=1,000

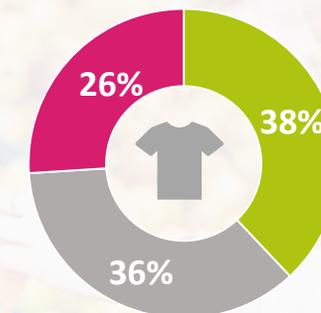
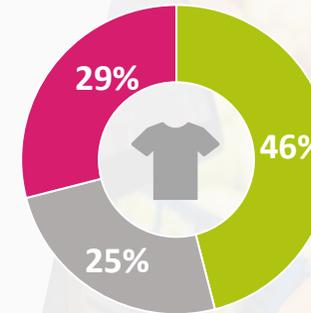
When we become more worried about one 'threat', it can simultaneously decrease worry about other 'threats'.

Any agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Any disagree

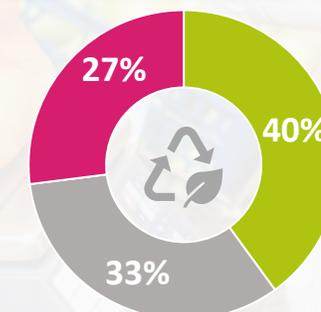
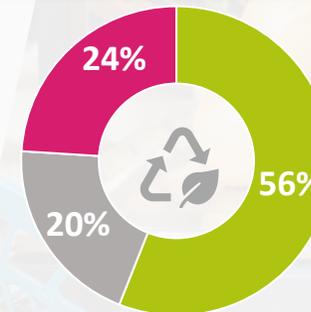
I give a lot of consideration to sustainability when shopping for groceries



I give a lot of consideration to sustainability when shopping for clothes



I would happily pay more for a product packaged in an environmentally friendly way

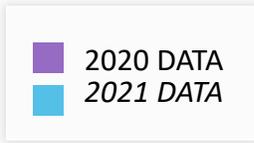


Largest decreases amongst those between the age of 35-54, and those in Dublin

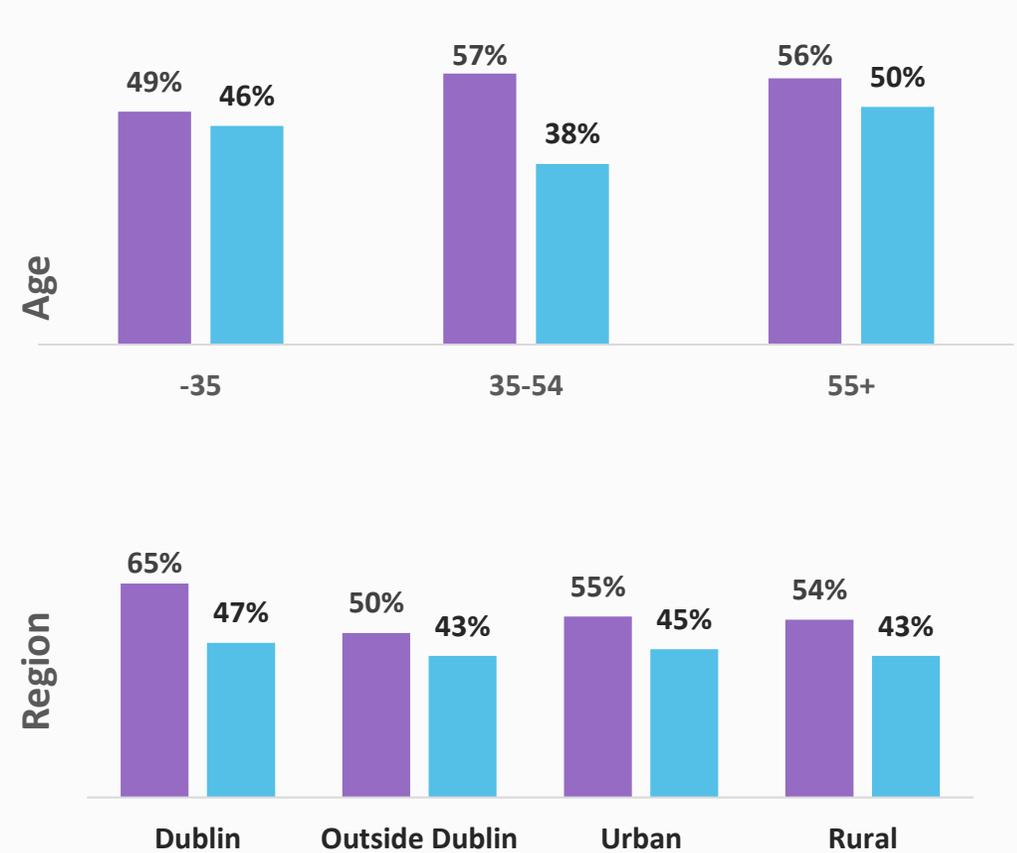
A 'finite capacity for worry'?

Nationally representative n=1,000

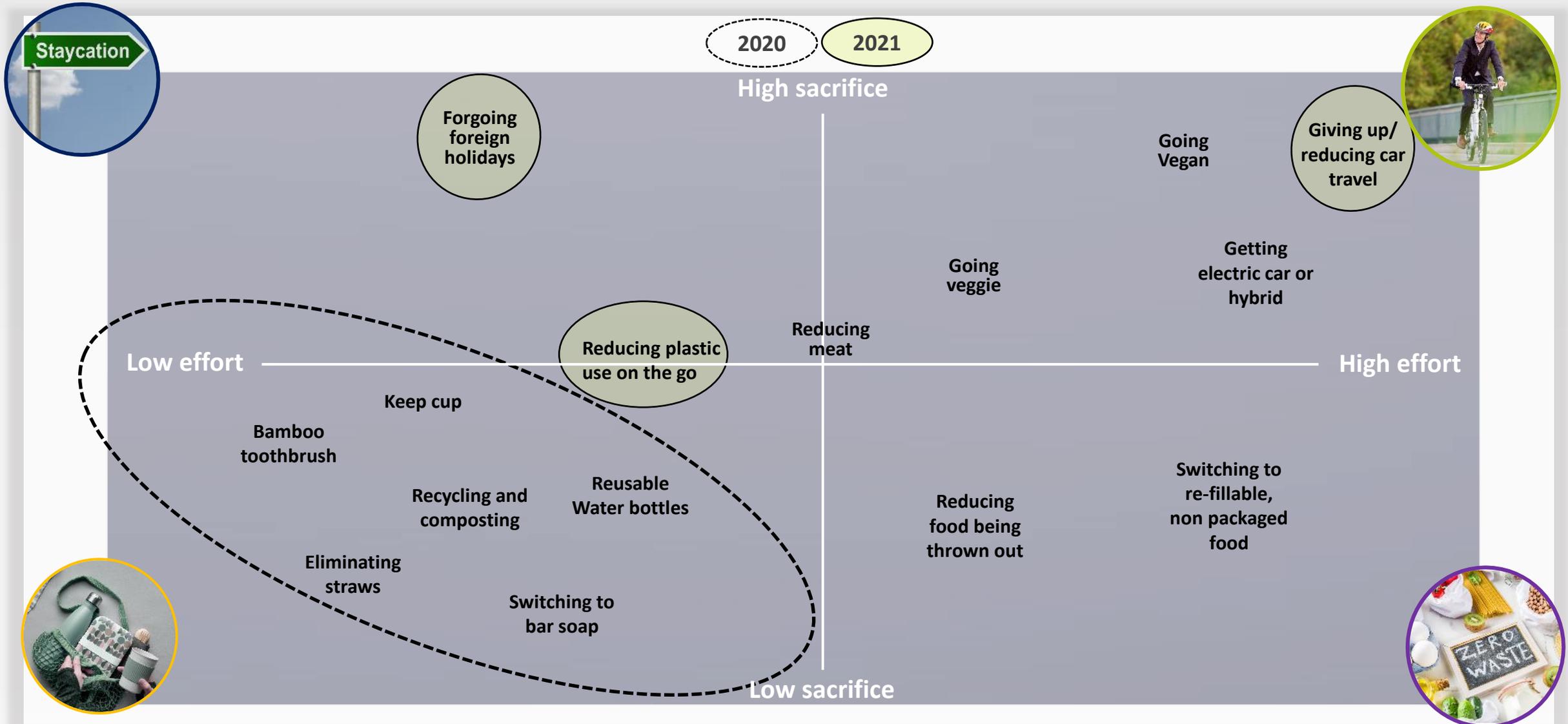
I give a lot of consideration to sustainability when shopping for groceries



Largest decreases amongst those between the age of 35-54, and those in Dublin



The 'say-do' gap



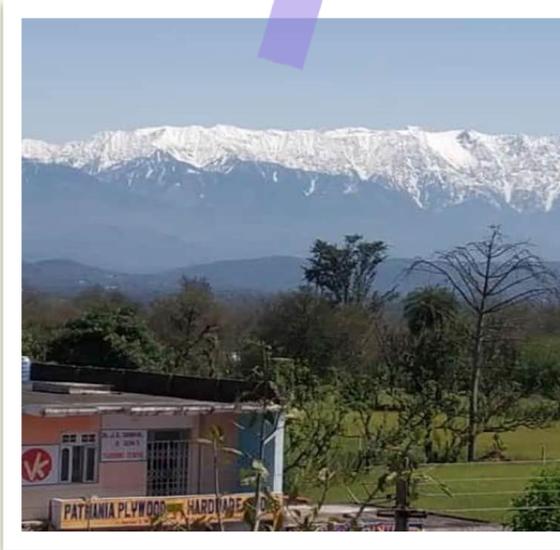
We are making changes but most of these are 'low effort, low sacrifice' (or imposed by Govt restrictions)

Sustainability - a unique moment in time

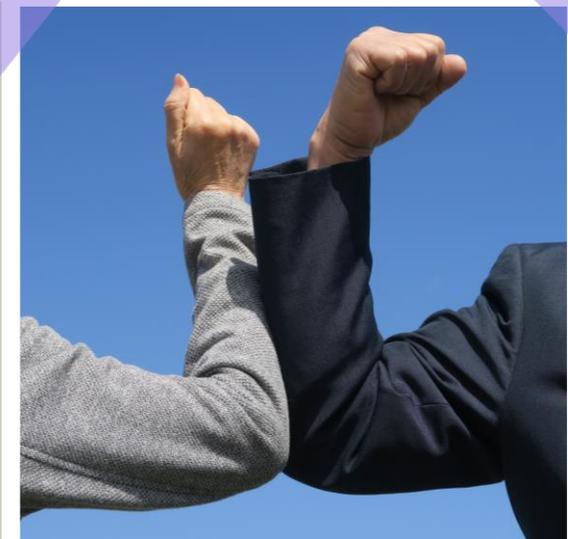
Habits have been
'reset'



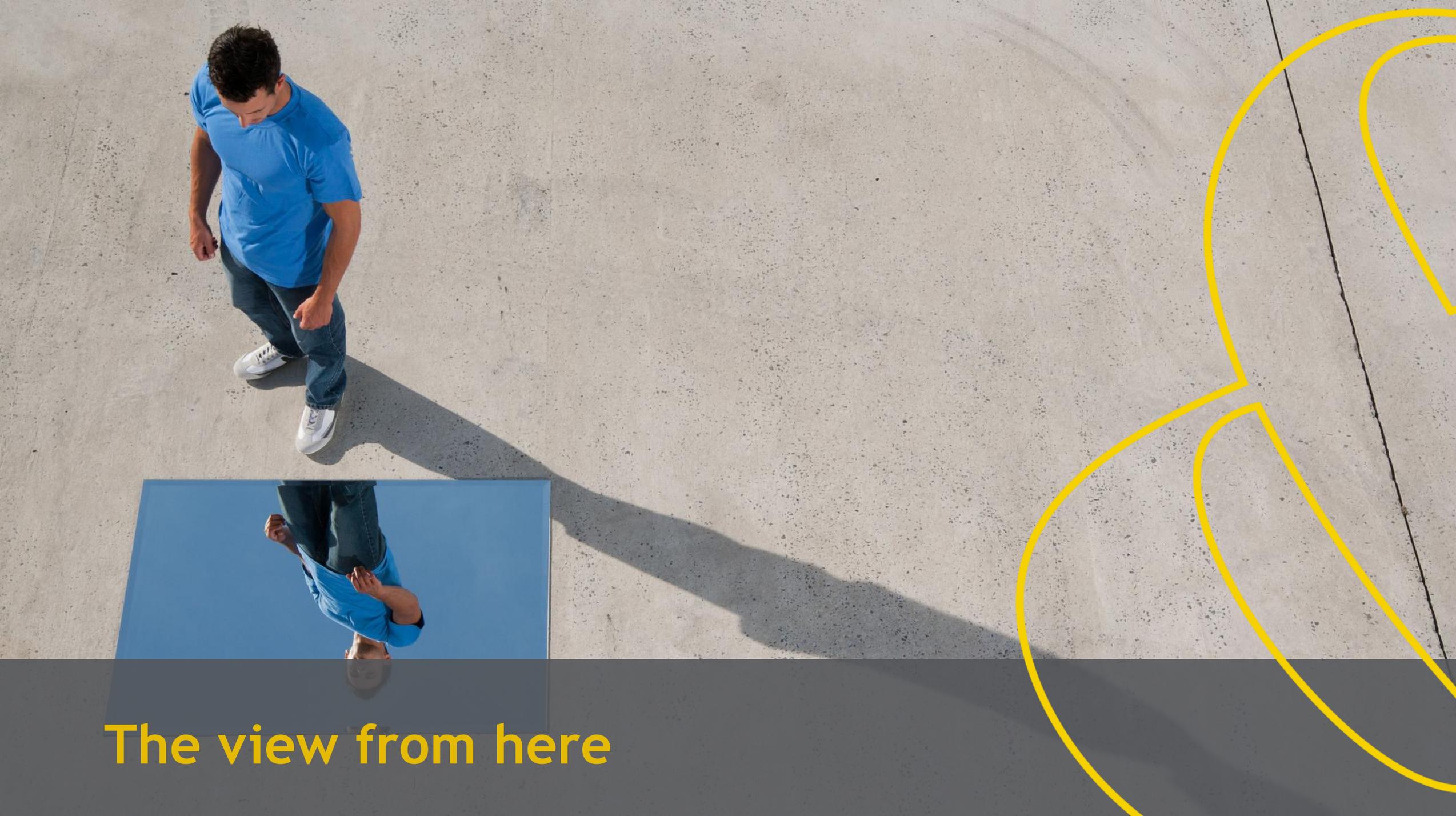
Greater visibility of
the human impact



And a sense of what is possible with collective
action



As we emerge from the pandemic, there is a window of opportunity to encourage more consumers to 'start of on the right foot' with sustainability – its now or never to reimagine the future.



The view from here

There is an acceleration of pre-Covid trends

- The importance of broadband: Online shopping and comms.
- Flexibility of working/less commuting.
- Sustainability and.....social contract expectations.

- ***The pandemic has ripple effects:***
 - Our appreciation of our home
 - Slick digital CX expectations offline
 - A craving for quality emotional experiences
 - A reimagining of cities and indeed where we live
 - New workspaces/commercial property reappraisal
- ***And*** people are yearning for a return to some F2F normality.....clear indications some habits will return.



The Gen Z (16-24 year olds) experience

Source: B&A Opinion X Research (n=60)

With social connection and experiences **out of reach...**

&

the realisation that many life rituals have been **entirely missed..**

The pandemic has had a profound impact on the lives of Generation Z.



The majority have enjoyed the extra time on their hands (73%) and spending more time with family (62%)



However, Covid has worsened their mental health (70%). Only a fifth (21%) have had extra money this year due to Covid.



More time on TikTok and Instagram (82%) has been an escape..and some rule bending – with 1 in 6 (16%) having attended a house party in some form during the Covid-19 lockdown



When things do go 'back to normal', living life to the fullest is a key priority (87%) for this generation

And emerging cognitive dissonance

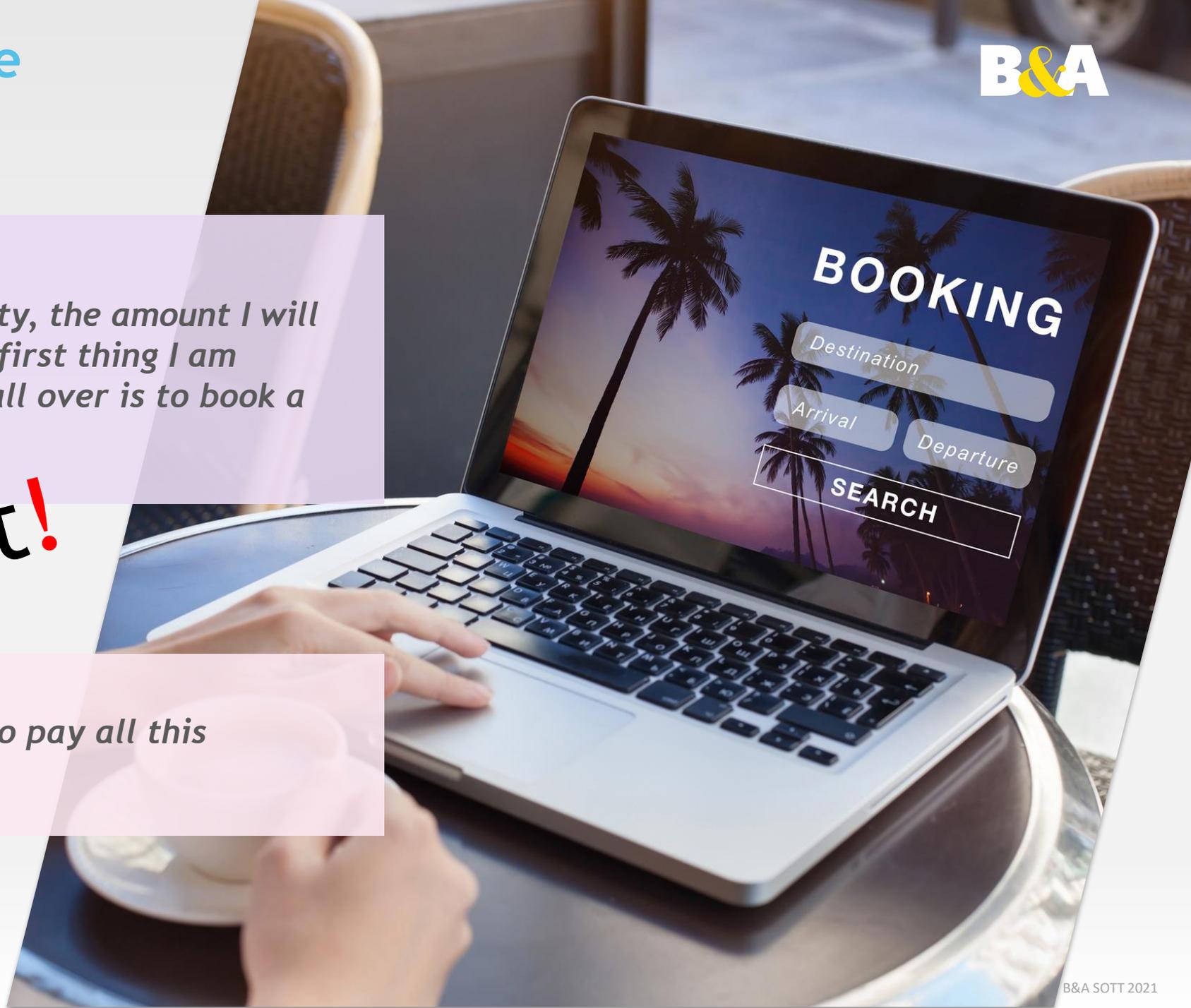
“

When I get the opportunity, the amount I will spend will be crazy. The first thing I am going to do when this is all over is to book a holiday abroad.

yet!

“

Somebody has to pay all this back... right?



Caution about the future?

Nationally representative n=1,000

Apprehensive about the future



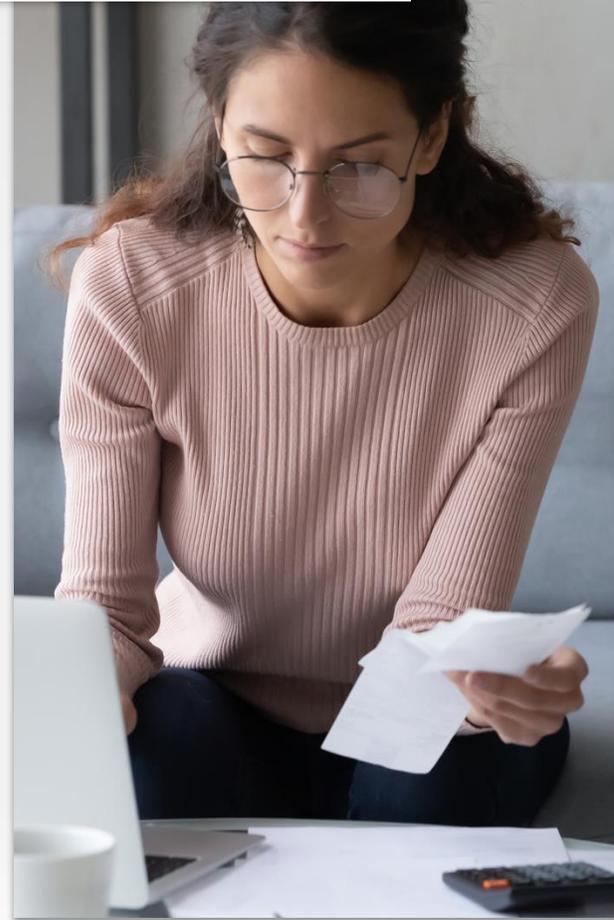
70%

of people feel that the country will be worse off than last year.

34%

expect their income to be lower in 2021 compared to last year.

A more pragmatic customer?



40%

expect to purchase less than they did last year.

44%

are less confident about their economic well-being for the year ahead.

67%

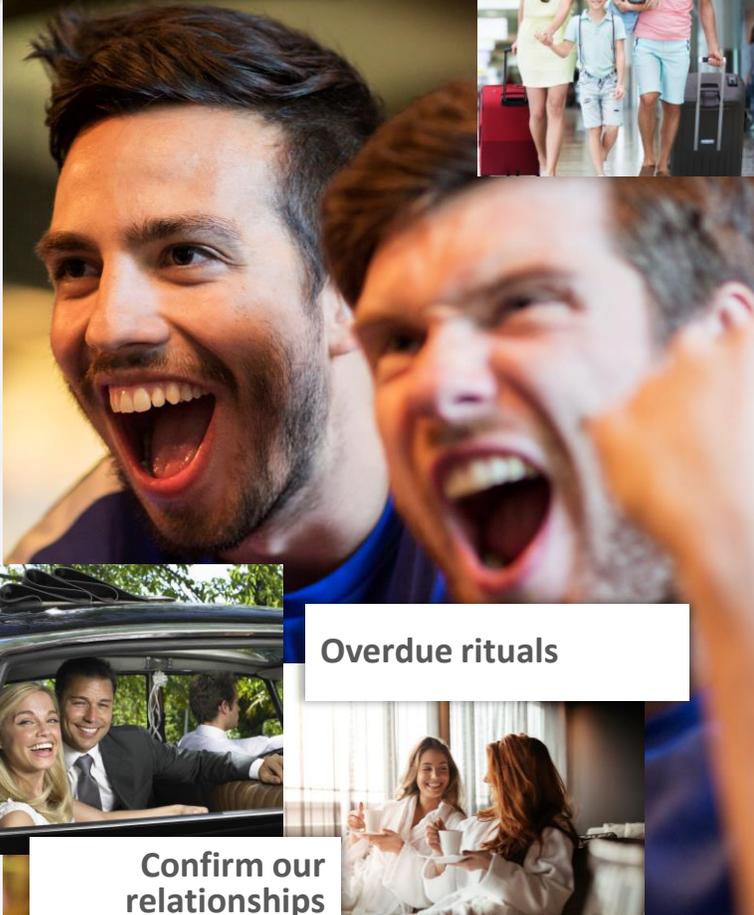
Are more conscious about how they spend their money due to Covid-19.

Yet a pent up desire for release

Nationally representative n=1,000

We can't wait to get back out there and spend our money

Blow off steam!

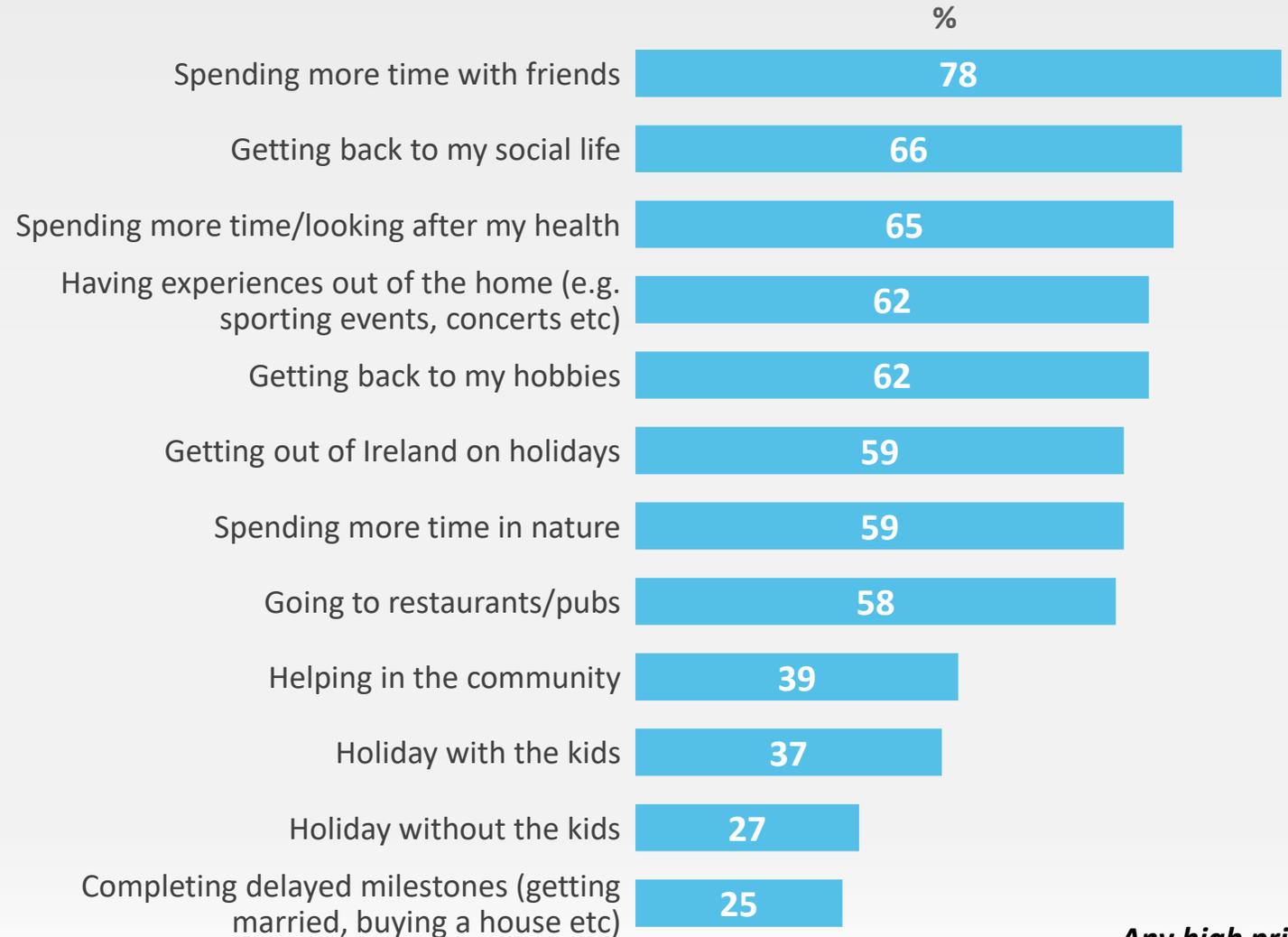


Overdue rituals

Confirm our relationships



Q. When Covid-19 ends, what will be your main priorities



Any high priority

To recap: 2021 themes



Contrasting realities – Despite common restrictions, the experience of Lockdown has **varied for each of us**



Our horizons have shrunk - We are now thinking about and designing our homes for a **different future**



'Normal' but better - Normal was **not working perfectly** before Covid-19... and we now **want the best of both world**



Evolving purchasing psychology - There are **new reasons to buy** and **new considerations when buying**



Human needs exposed - The pandemic has exposed what we **really need** and **what is actually important** in our lives



A cautious release - Despite a **strong desire to splurge**, be alert to a more **pragmatic consumer** for 2021



New definitions - New definitions of **convenience**, **health** and **work** have emerged as trends accelerate



Sustainability - **A unique moment in time** - It's **now or never** to reimagine the future

Thank you.



RESEARCH
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Delve Deeper