

# The Tasmania Project

Share your experience during COVID-19.

Photo: Tourism Tasmania and Chris Crerar.

## What is concerning Tasmanians during the pandemic?

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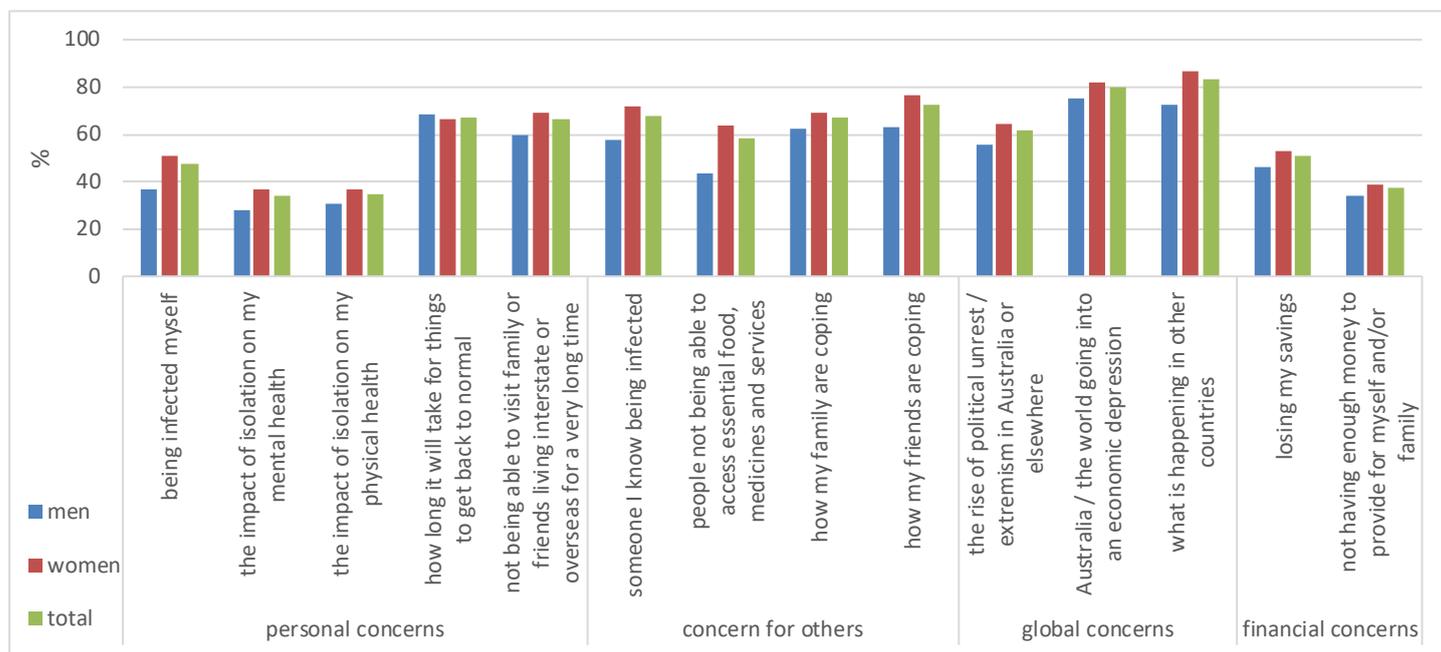
The Tasmania Project has found that while Tasmanians are adapting well in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, they also hold considerable concerns relating to the health and well-being of themselves and their families and friends as well as the state of the global economy.

While respondents reported some concern for their own health and well-being, most concern was evident for the global economy and the health and well-being of their friends and family. Most were concerned with how long it will take for things to get back to 'normal'. In particular, many are not confident the Tasmanian economy will recover within five years.

Considerable difference in the level of concern is also evident between men and women, select age groups and household type. Women were more likely to be concerned about most matters than men, while the level of concern varied by age group depending on the issue. Single parents of dependent children reported the highest level of concern for most issues.

### Key findings

- Most people are more concerned about the state of the global economy and others health and well-being rather than their own.
- Older people were more concerned about COVID-19 infection, while working age people were more concerned about mental and physical health and well-being.
- The financial situation of respondents was less of a concern, however, more than half were concerned about losing their savings and a third were concerned about not having enough money to provide for themselves or their family.
- Single parents and people living alone have the highest level of concern for a range of issues.
- Most people were not concerned about their relationship with their partner ending or deteriorating (71.6%).
- Two thirds of people are concerned about not being able to visit family or friends living interstate or overseas for a very long time.
- Three in five people are concerned about the rise of political unrest or extremism in Australia, or elsewhere.
- More than two thirds (67.0%) are concerned with how long it will take for things to get back to normal, particularly men (68.5%) and those aged 65 or older (70.4%).



Respondents concerns during times of COVID-19, percentage concerned, The Tasmania Project

## Global economy concerns

Respondents were most concerned about global issues, with more than four in five (83.0%) concerned about what was happening in other countries and the world going into an economic depression (79.9%). The level of concern was similar across age groups, however, women were more concerned than men.

Associated with this concern, is that more than half (50.2%) are not confident that the Tasmanian economy will recover within five years, men more so than women as well as those aged 25 to 44 years. While one in four (27.5%) are more optimistic.

## Health and well-being concerns

While a considerable level of concern was reported for their own health; being infected (47.3%), the impact of isolation on their mental health (34.3%) or physical health (35.0%), with women, those aged 25 to 44 years and single parents more concerned relatively, most respondents were more concerned about the health and well-being of others.

More than two in three (68.0%) were concerned about others being infected with COVID-19, particularly those aged 65 or older (70.6%). Women were more concerned than men (71.6% compared with 57.6%), while more than three quarters of single parents were concerned. While concern decreased with age, it remained concern for more than two thirds all age groups.

Over half were concerned that people would not be able to access essential food, medicines and services (58.3%), with women more concerned than men (63.7% compared with 43.5%). Age groups were similarly concerned, while single parents and persons living alone were the most concerned (74.5% and 61.6% respectively).

There was considerable concern with how family (67.3%) and friends (72.7%) were coping, particularly by women and those aged 25 to 44 years as well as women aged 65 or older (71.0%) and single parents (70.0%).

Two thirds of people are concerned about not being able to visit family or friends living interstate or overseas for a very long time. This concern is the greatest for older age groups (71.5%), women (64.3%), people living alone (70.5%) and couples with no kids at home (69.0%).

## Financial concerns

While half (51.0%) of the respondents are concerned about losing their savings, less are concerned about not having enough money to provide for themselves or their family (37.7%). Women are more concerned than men as well as those of working age and single parents.

## Where next?

The Tasmania Project found that respondents are more concerned about the wellbeing of vulnerable Tasmanians, than their own needs. One interviewee summed it up "Made me realise that these restrictions drew an arbitrary line for our society, where if you're on one side of the line, you are fine. And if you're on the other side of the line...". During the interviews concern for others was a dominant theme, concerns about homeless people, affordable housing, those living with mental illness, those from non-English speaking backgrounds, the elderly and the younger generation and their future. Many felt guilty that they had not been affected by the pandemic, and, that in some ways, they had also benefited from the experience. This guilt made people feel as though they couldn't complain, that they had no right to feel anxious, and that their focus needs to be on others that are less fortunate; either helping them or advocating for their needs, and that makes them feel a bit better within themselves. Many also expressed despair for the Tasmanian economy and the impact it will have on the vulnerable, many also held a glimmer of hope that the recovery will be swift.

As Tasmania moves into the recovery phase of the pandemic and the immediate threat on health and well-being subsides, it is likely that concern about the state of the economy and the global economy will increase. Pressure is also likely to mount on returning the Tasmanian way of life back to 'normal'. However, the Tasmania Project also identified that three in four respondents also want a new Tasmania to emerge from this crisis.

### The Tasmania Project – approach, method and limitations

The Tasmania Project includes a range of approaches and methods to understand how Tasmanians are experiencing and adapting to life during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

See a more detailed explanation of the Project's approach and method [here](#).