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Australian's views about COVID-19 policies: May 2020

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Abstract

There is vigorous debate about a range of COVID-19 specific policies as well as a discussion about what economic policies will be required as the immediate concerns about infection and mortality due to COVID-19 recede. In order to support this debate, this paper provides data on Australian's views in May 2020 about a range of COVID-19 specific policies. It also provides data on Australian's views about range of broader economic policies collected in May 2020 and how this has changed since January 2020.

There has been very little change between January and May 2020 in Australian's views about cutting taxes, putting more money into the hands of poor people, increasing spending on domestic programs like health, care, education or housing or increasing spending on infrastructure. This is despite the very different economic circumstances in May compared to January 2020.

Of the four COVID-10 related policy changes asked about in the May ANUpoll, the policy which the highest support was to increased spending on the search for a COVID-19 vaccine and treatment, followed by easing restrictions on pubs, clubs and cafes; and extending the JobKeeper and Jobseeker payments beyond the current six-months. The lowest level of support was for opening up Australia's borders to tourists and international students. There were significant age differences in support for these policies with support for extending JobKeeper/JobSeeker also varying along party lines. The strongest predictor of support for these policies, however, was anxiety and worry regarding COVID-19. Those who were anxious and worried were far less likely to support liberalisation measures (on borders and hospitality) but far more likely to support spending measures (on vaccines and the labour market).

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1 Introduction and overview

Following the apparent success of physical distancing and other isolation measures in controlling the spread of COVID-19 in Australia, the restrictions have started to be relaxed with the National Cabinet agreeing to a 3-step plan beginning in mid-May.¹ The first step, which has largely been implemented, allowed gatherings of up to 10 people, up to five visitors in the family home and some local and regional travel. The second step, which is in the process of being implemented at the time of writing, will allow gatherings of up to 20 people and more businesses being allowed to reopen including gyms, beauty services and entertainment venues like galleries and cinemas. The third step involves a transition to COVID safe ways of living and working including allowing gatherings of up to 100 people. The third step, however, still maintains restrictions on international travel and gatherings of over 100 people.²

The initial physical distancing and isolation measures and closure of Australia's borders have been very successful in controlling the spread of COVID-19 in Australia and at the time of writing (7th June) there had been only 7,255 confirmed cases for COVID-19 across Australia and 102 death attributable to the disease. Despite (and in some ways because of) the public health success in Australia, the spread of COVID-19 and the associated restrictions has had a very large negative effect on the Australian economy with official estimates from the Labour force Survey (ABS 2020a) showing that there were 594,300 fewer people employed in April 2020 compared to March 2020 and a reduction in estimated hours worked of 163,900,00 hours for the month of April compared to March. The combined effect of the early stages of the spread of COVID-19 and the effects of the bushfires and drought mean that Australia's GDP fell by 0.3 per cent in the March 2020 quarter (ABS 2020b) and it is widely expected that GDP will fall again in the June 2020 quarter.

The negative economic effects, while enormous, appear to have been mitigated at least in the short-run for individuals and households by a range of government policies. These have increased the incomes of many Australians (primarily at the bottom of the income distribution (Biddle et al. 2020a)) including increases in social security payment levels, the JobKeeper payment for many people who have been able to maintain their employment and various measures to assist businesses, particularly small to medium sized enterprises.

The total additional government spending on COVID-19 related economic support measures is estimated by the Commonwealth Treasury to be \$259 billion.³ While these support measures are reducing the impacts of the restrictions on household incomes, keeping many people attached to the labour market and saving many businesses, it is resulting in an increase in government debt. It is also money that could not be spent on other productive purposes, and there is inevitably some expenditure that will be misallocated and be received by those who would not otherwise need it to maintain their financial status.

There is vigorous debate about a range of COVID-19 specific policies as well as a discussion about what economic policies will be required as the immediate concerns about infection and mortality due to COVID-19 recedes. In order to support this debate, this paper provides data on Australian's views in May 2020 about a range of COVID-19 specific policies. It also provides data on Australian's views about range of broader economic policies collected in May 2020 and how this has changed since January 2020.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. We begin with an overview of the survey data and measures used in this paper (Section 2). This is followed by a presentation of Australian's views about a range of economic policies and how these views have changed since

January 2020. (Section 3). This is followed by a section that looks at Australian's views about the value of COVID-19 related policies and their value in helping to address Australia's economic policies (Section 4). The final section concludes.

2 Data and measures

The data analysed in this paper is from the May 2020 and January 2020 ANUpolls which collected data from a representative sample of the Australian population from Life in Australia™, Australia's only probabilistic, longitudinal panel.⁴ Most of the panel members who completed the May 2020 ANUpoll had also completed the January 2020 ANUpoll (that is, they are the same group of individuals). This allows us to track how the views of individual respondents have changed through time, as well as how the characteristics of individuals prior to the spread of COVID-19 predict attitudes during the pandemic.⁵

The May 2020 ANUpoll (the 34th ANUpoll) collected information from 3,219 respondents aged 18 years and over across all eight States/Territories in Australia, and is weighted to have a similar distribution to the Australian population across key demographic and geographic variables.⁶ About half of respondents (1,555) completed the survey on the 12th or 13th of May, with the remaining respondents interviewed between the 14th and 24th of May. Of those individuals who completed the May 2020 ANUpoll, 91.8 per cent or 2,955 individuals had completed the January 2020 ANUpoll.

When analysing responses to questions at a particular point in time, we use the full cross-sectional samples and the survey weights for that particular wave. When analysing change through time at the individual level or when using Wave 34 data to predict Wave 38 attitudes, we use the linked longitudinal sample and Wave 38 weights.

In the May 2020 ANUpoll, immediately following a number of questions on data privacy and cybercrime, we repeated four questions from a 2009 ANUpoll (McAllister 2009) during the Global Financial Crisis and asked respondents "...Turning now to the economy. People have suggested various ways that the government could act to try to fix the economy. How much do you think each of the following would help fix the country's economic problems?" with the policies asked about randomised and as follows:

- Cutting taxes;
- Putting more money into the hands of poor people;
- Increasing spending on domestic programs, like health care, education and housing; and
- Increasing spending on infrastructure, like roads and public buildings.

These questions were also asked in the January 2020 ANUpoll, following a number of questions on global warming and other environmental issues.

In the May 2020 ANUpoll the general economic questions were followed by the question "...now thinking about policies specifically related to COVID-19. How much do you think each of the following would help fix the country's economic problems?" with the policies randomised again and as follows:

- Opening up Australia's borders to tourists and international students;
- Easing restrictions on pubs, clubs, and cafes;
- Increasing spending on the search for a COVID-19 vaccine and treatment; and
- Extend the JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments beyond the current six months.

The possible response options for both sets of questions were: a great deal; some; only a little; and no help at all. When analysing responses as a binary variable, we combine the first two response options as agreement with regards to that specific policy, and the last two response options as disagreement.

3 Australians' views about economic policies

3.1 Australians's views in January and May 2020

We begin our analysis by looking at Australian's views about the value of general economic measures in May 2020 and how such views have changed since January 2020. Figure 1 shows the percentage of Australians who think that each policy would help a great deal or some in January and May 2020.

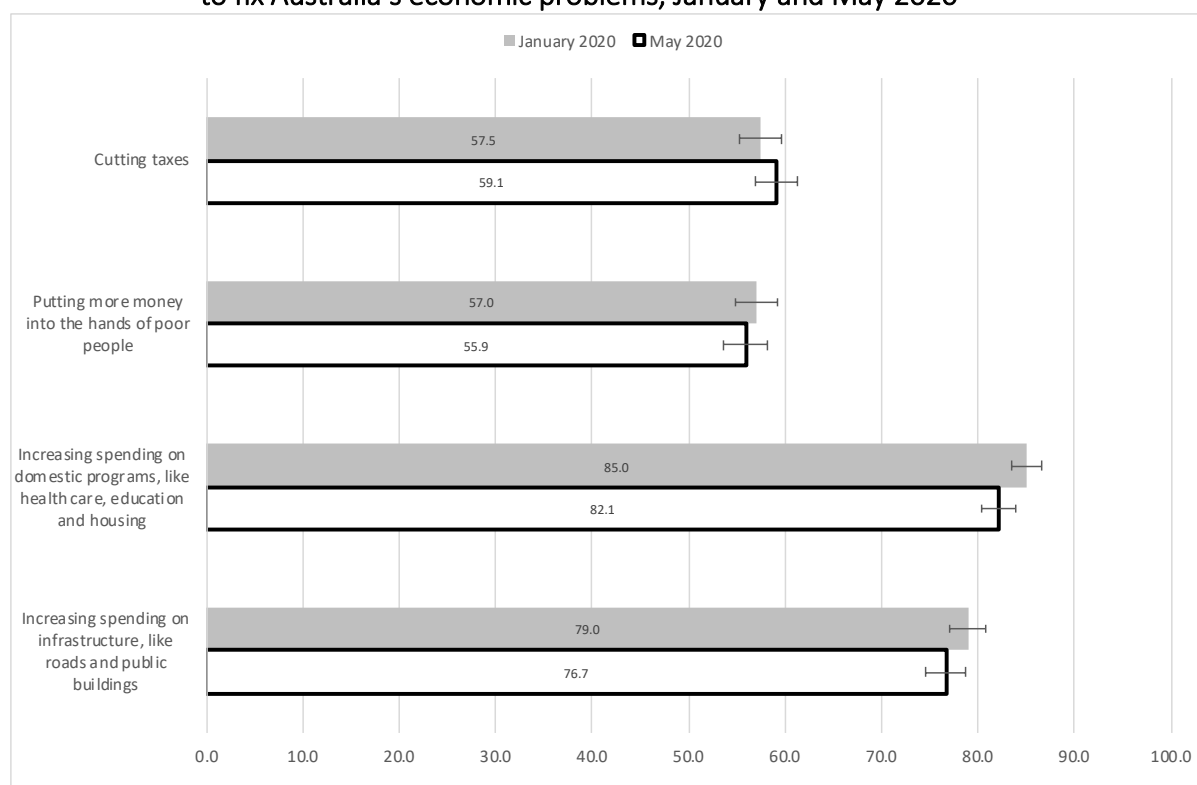
The most striking feature of Figure 1 is that there is very little change in views about the value of each of the policies in helping to fix Australia's economic problems. The policy with the highest level of support is increasing spending on domestic programs, like health care, education and housing with 82.1 per cent of Australians' in May 2020 saying this type of policy would help a great deal or some. This is followed by increasing spending on infrastructure, like road and public buildings with 76.7 per cent saying this type of policy would help a great deal or some. The other two policy options (cutting taxes and putting more money into the hands of poor people) were still supported by more than half of the sample.

The only policy option for which there was a statistically significant change through time was increasing spending on domestic programs, with support having decreased from 85.0 per cent in January 2020⁷, though it should be noted that the decline in support for increased spending on infrastructure was almost statistically significant at the 10 per cent level of significance.⁸

Despite the very different economic circumstances now compared to the start of the year, the vast majority of people think that increased spending on domestic programs or on infrastructure will help the economy, with a smaller (but still majority) percentage of people thinking that cutting taxes or direct transfers to relatively disadvantaged people will help.

We are also able to compare results from May 2020 with the same questions from June 2009 (McAllister 2009). Although the sample recruitment and survey methods were quite different, the differences between the four policy options were very similar. There is higher level of support for spending on domestic programs and infrastructure, but lower levels of support for cutting taxes and giving money to the disadvantaged.

Figure 1 Percentage agreeing that the economic policy would help a great deal or some to fix Australia’s economic problems, January and May 2020



Notes: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate. Estimates based on respondents who responded to the respective surveys (i.e., cross-sectional populations).

Source: ANUpoll, January 2020 and ANUpoll, May 2020.

3.2 Factors associated with views on economic policy during COVID-19

People make decisions about who they would vote for and the policies that they support based on a range of factors including their own self-interest; their group identity (including party affiliation) and the personal views they have towards the political candidates they are making a decision about (Jenke and Huettel 2016). In this section we report the results of regression model estimates of the factors associated with thinking that a particular policy change would help improve Australia’s economic performance.

The factors are estimated using a Probit regression model with the dependent variable being that the person thinks that the policy would help a great deal or some. We estimate two models for each of the dependent variables. In Model 1 the explanatory variables are sex, age, Indigenous status, whether born in Australia and if born outside of Australia whether born in an English or non-English speaking country, whether speaks a language other than English, educational attainment, socio-economic status of neighbourhood live in and whether live in a capital city. In Model 2, we include these explanatory variables, as well as voting intention in January 2020. We include this variable in a separate model given that views about different policies may differ according to political party supported, but also that party support is likely to vary by the demographic and socioeconomic factors that we are interested in measuring support across. The detailed regression results are provided in Appendix Table 1 (Model 1) and Appendix Table 2 (Model 2).

The results from the regression modelling show that being younger (under 35-years of age) and older (55 years and over) was associated with a lower probability of thinking that tax cuts would help fix the economy. Similarly, those with a university degree, living in more socio-

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economically advantaged areas (Model 1) and who would have voted Green or Labor in January 2020 (Model 2) were less likely to think that tax cuts would help fix the economy. A higher proportion thought that cutting taxes would help fix the economy amongst Indigenous Australians, those born in non-English speaking countries, and those who speak a language other than English at home (Model 1).

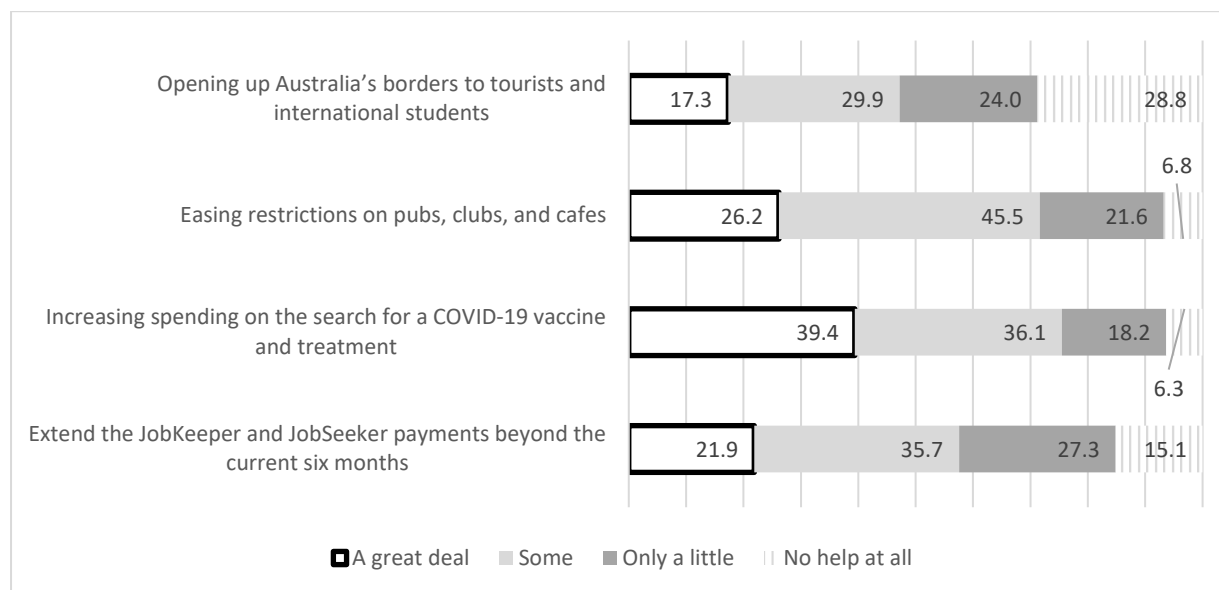
There were very few factors associated with the probability of support for putting more money into the hand of the poor as a way of fixing economic problems. Compared to the base case, there were higher levels of support for this policy amongst those aged less than 25-years, those living in relatively disadvantaged areas (Model 1) and all non-Coalition voters (Model 2).

For the policy of increasing spending on domestic programs there was lower levels of support amongst those aged 55-64 years and those with a university degree and higher levels of support amongst those living in relatively disadvantaged areas (Model 1) and all non-Coalition voters (Model 2). Finally, for the policy of increasing spending on infrastructure there were lower levels of support amongst females, those aged under 25-years of age and those born overseas. There was a higher level of support amongst those aged 45 years and over (Model 1) and Labor voters.

4 Australian's Views about COVID-19 policies

In this section we show mixed support for a number of COVID-specific policies in terms of what they might contribute to the economy. Of the four COVID-19 policy changes asked about in the May ANUpoll, the one which the highest proportion of Australians agreeing that it would do a great deal to help fix the country's economic problems was to increased spending on the search for a COVID-19 vaccine and treatment (39.4 per cent) (Figure 2). This was followed by easing restrictions on pubs, clubs and cafes (26.2 per cent), and extending the JobKeeper and Jobseeker payments beyond the current six-months (21.9 per cent). Just 17.3 per cent of Australians thought that opening up Australia's borders to tourists and international students would do a great deal to help fix the economic problems. Furthermore, over half of Australians said that opening up Australia's borders would not help at all (28.8 per cent) or help only a little (24.0 per cent).

Figure 2 How much do you think each of the following would help fix Australia's economic problems?, COVID-19 policies, May 2020



Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

4.1 Factors associated with support for COVID-specific policies

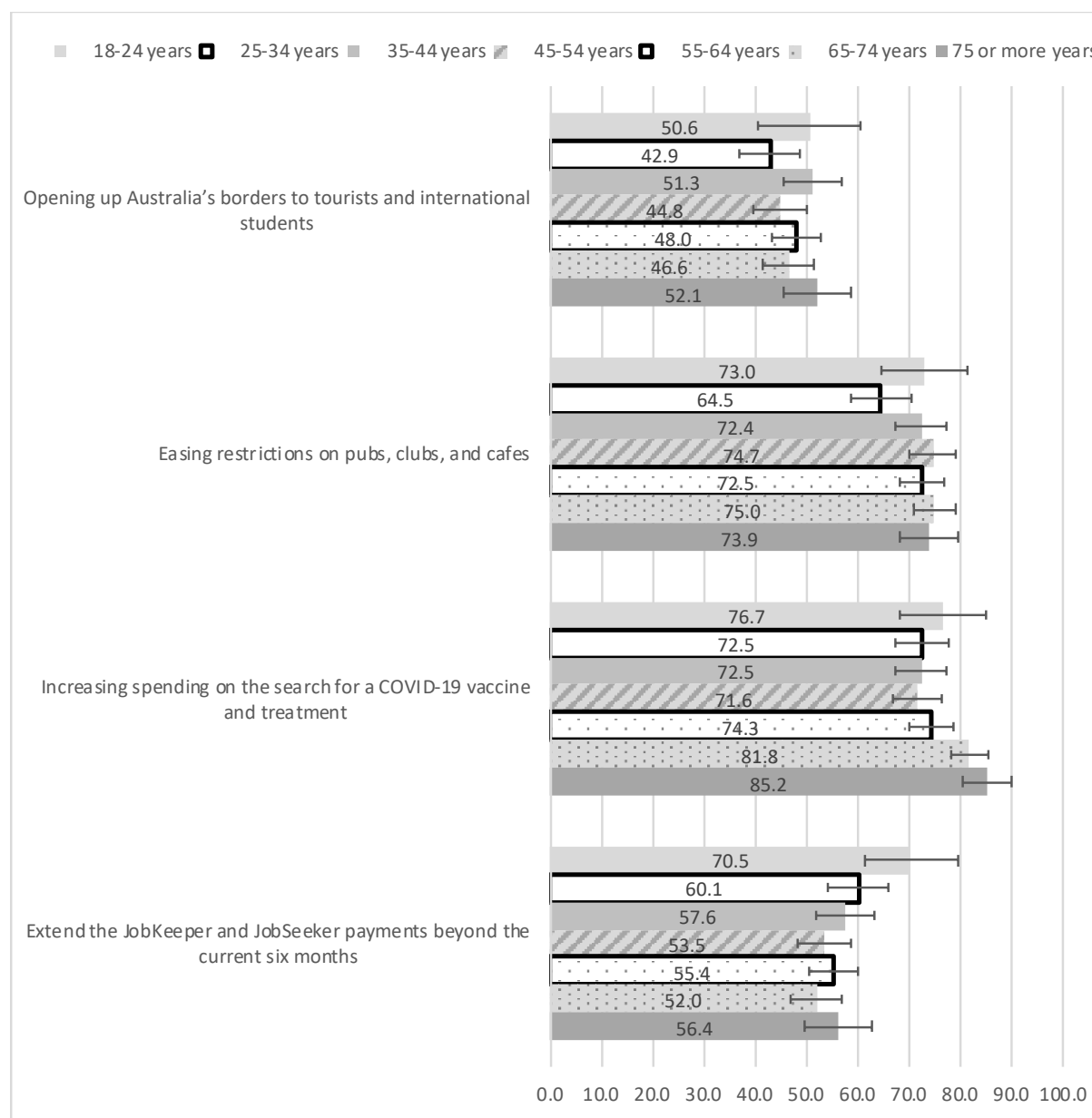
There are some significant variations in support for COVID-specific policies in terms of how they will improve Australia's economic circumstances between different population groups (Appendix Table 3). Those who were born in a non-English speaking country were more likely to support the opening of Australia's borders to students and tourists. However, there was significantly lower levels of support amongst those who have not completed Year 12, as well as amongst those who have a Certificate III/IV, Diploma, or Associate Degree as their highest level of qualification. It would appear that those with relatively low levels of skills, or with a more vocationally-orientated qualification are more supportive of maintaining relatively closed borders.

There was less variation in support for easing restrictions in the hospitality sector explained by our data. Females are slightly more supportive than males, as are those with an undergraduate degree. There were demographic differences in support for spending additional money on the search for a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19. Specifically, there was a greater level of support amongst females relative to males and even larger differences amongst those aged 65 years and over.

The level of support for the extension of JobKeeper and JobSeeker appears to be somewhat correlated with the likelihood of receiving support for it. The largest level of support was amongst those aged 18 to 24 years, whereas there is lower levels of support for those in relatively advantaged areas and amongst those living outside of capital cities.

The age differences modelled in Appendix Table 3 are further highlighted in Figure 3 which gives the average level of support without controlling for other characteristics. The figure shows that 81.8 per cent of those aged 65 to 74 years and 85.2 per cent of those aged 75 years and over support increased spending on a vaccine, compared to around 72 per cent for those aged 25 to 54 years. At the other end of the age distribution, 70.5 per cent of those aged 18 to 24 years support extending JobKeeper and JobSeeker compared to between 52 and 55.4 per cent of those aged 45 to 64 years.

Figure 3 Percentage agreeing that that the COVID-policy would help a great deal or some to fix Australia's economic problems by age group, May 2020



Notes: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate.

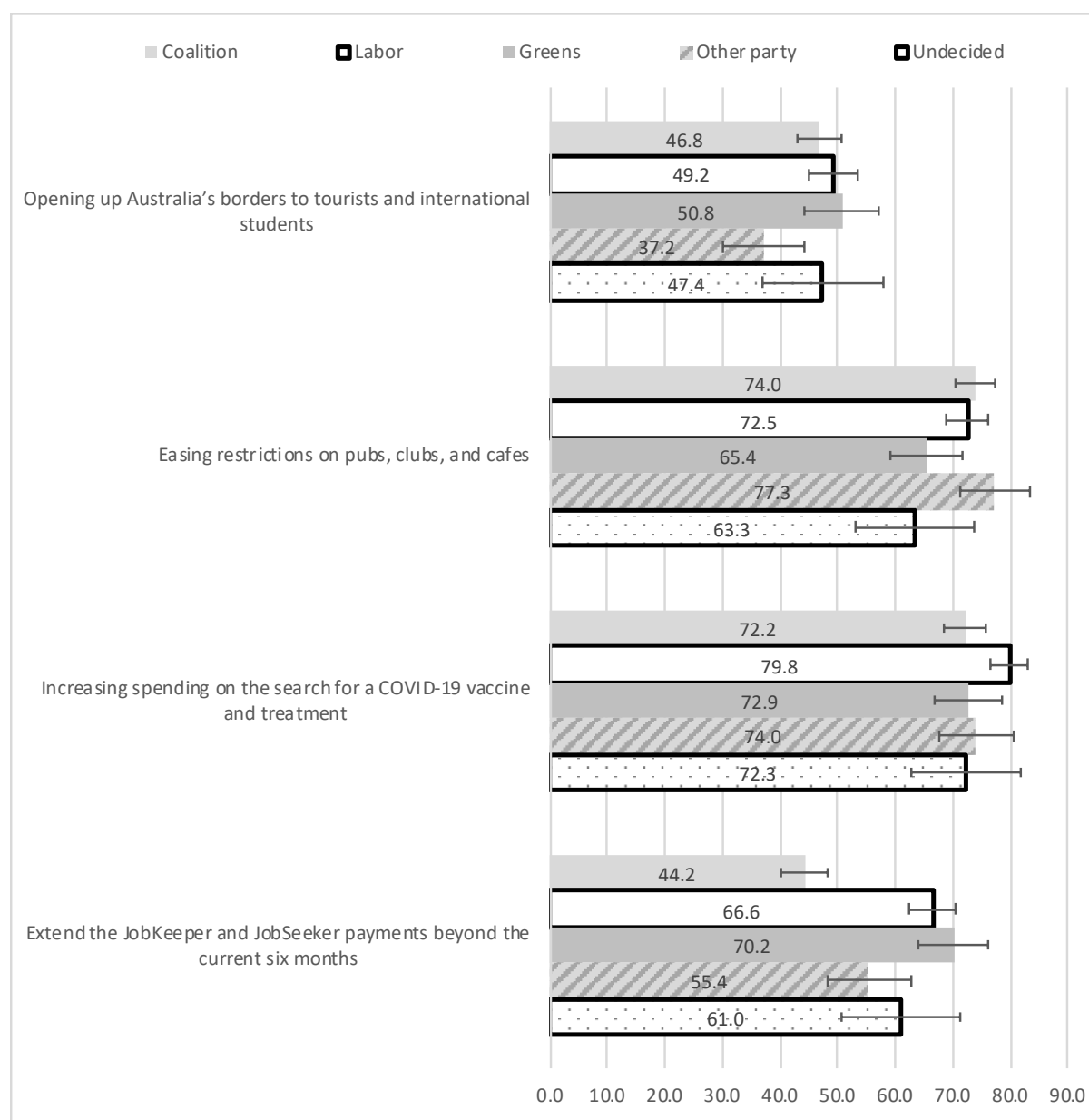
Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

Appendix Table 4 gives the regression results for the relationship between voting patterns and support for COVID-specific policies. Figure 4 summarises these differences using average levels of support without controlling for other factors. Both tell a very similar story. There are relatively small differences between Coalition and Labor voters in views about the economic benefits of opening up Australia's borders, easing restrictions on pubs, clubs and cafes. Of the first three of the COVID-specific policies, the only significant differences are Greens and Undecided voters having a lower level of support for easing restrictions, and Greens voters having a slightly higher level of support for spending on a vaccine or treatment.

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Where there are quite large differences is views on the economic benefits of extending the JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments beyond the current six-months. Specifically, 66.6 per cent of Labor voters thought this would help the economy compared to 44.2 per cent of Coalition voters. Greens voters had a slightly higher level of support (70.2 per cent) than Labor voters, with the 'Other' and Undecided voters falling somewhere in between (55.4 per cent and 61.0 per cent respectively).

Figure 4 Percentage agreeing that that the COVID-policy would help a great deal or some to fix Australia's economic problems by voting intentions May 2020



Notes: The "whiskers" on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate. Voting intentions were not asked in the May 2020 ANUpoll. The voting intentions measure is from the January 2020 ANUpoll which was chosen because it was prior to most Australians becoming aware of the risk of COVID-19 to Australia.

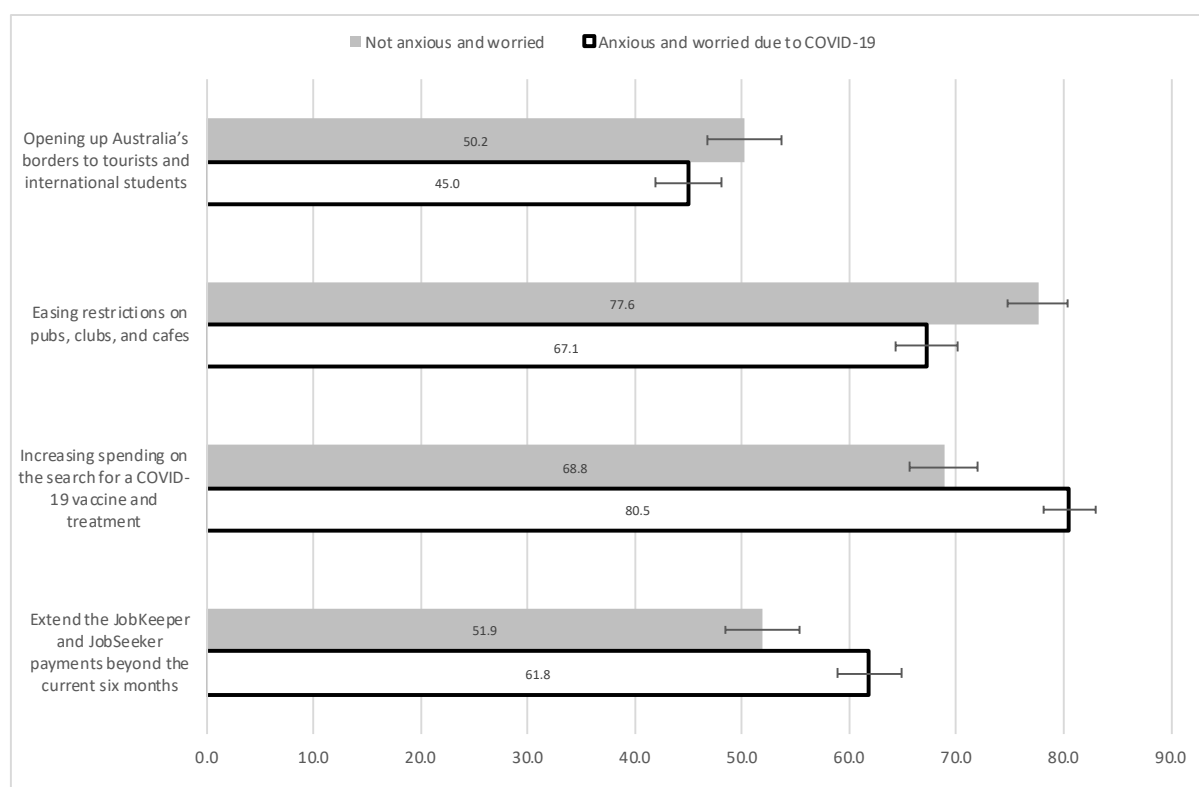
Source: ANUpoll, January 2020 and ANUpoll, May 2020.

4.2 Relationship between support for COVID-specific policies and other COVID-19 attitudes, behaviours and exposure

In Biddle et al. (2020b) we presented results from the May 2020 ANUpoll related to the subjective views and experience of respondents with regards to COVID-19. We found that ‘Australia continues to experience high rates of anxiety and worry due to COVID-19, albeit with significant declines from earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic’ but that ‘there has been a fall in the percentage of Australians who think that it is likely or very likely that they will catch COVID-19 from 39.0 per cent in April to 31.7 per cent in May 2020.’ In Appendix Table 5, we look at how both measures relate to views on COVID-specific policies controlling for the standard set of demographic, socioeconomic and geographic factors. In Figure 5 we summarise the main finding, namely that there is a strong relationship between anxiety and worry and support for specific policies.

Regardless of whether we control for other characteristics (Appendix Table 5) or do not (Figure 5) we find that those who reported that they were anxious or worried due to COVID-19 were less likely to support the opening up of borders (45.0 per cent compared to 50.2 per cent) and less likely to support easing restrictions on the hospitality industry (67.1 per cent and 77.6 per cent). They were, however, more likely to support spending on a vaccine or treatment (80.5 per cent compared to 68.8 per cent) and extending JobKeeper/JobSeeker (61.8 per cent compared to 51.9 per cent). While the differences aren’t always as large, there is a similar relationship with a person’s self-reported likelihood of being infected by COVID-19 over the next six months (Figure 6).

Figure 5 Percentage agreeing that that the COVID-policy would help a great deal or some to fix Australia’s economic problems by anxiety and worry due to COVID-19, May 2020

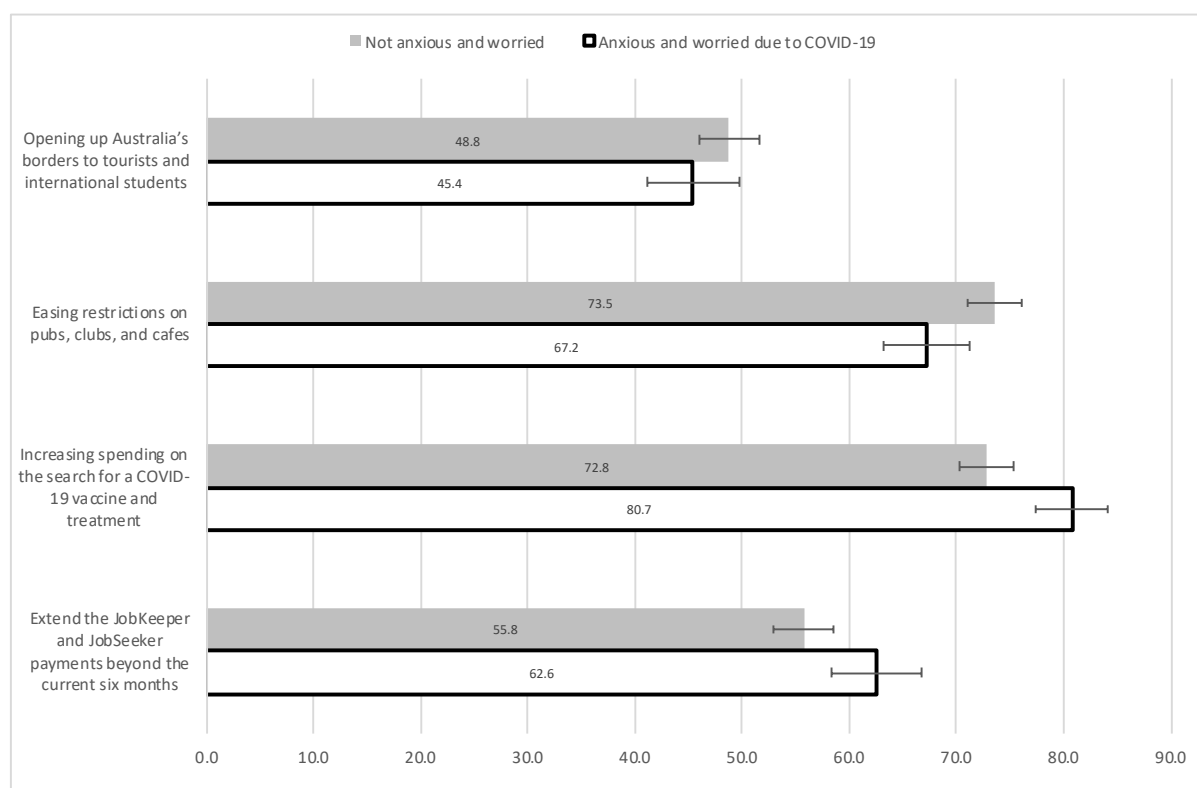


Notes: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate.

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Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

Figure 6 Percentage agreeing that that the COVID-policy would help a great deal or some to fix Australia's economic problems by self-reported likelihood of being infected by COVID-19, May 2020



Notes: The “whiskers” on the bars indicate the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the estimate.

Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

5 Concluding comments

The design and delivery of economic policy is complicated, with a careful balance needing to be struck between competing priorities, as well as different population groups. Such policy making is even more complicated during times of economic crises and external shocks, as decisions need to be made very quickly, often using limited or outdated data. During the COVID-19 pandemic, policy makers in Australia have placed a heavy reliance on the views of public health experts in order to slow the rate of infection and ensure the hospital system is able to meet the very large projected increase in demand that was likely to occur if infection rates in Australia matched those in other developed countries in Europe and North America. It is less clear as to the role that economic experts have played in shaping the economic response to the initial infections and resulting shut-down, though it is reasonably clear that the Commonwealth Department of the Treasury has been involved in the design and delivery of a number of the economic measures.

If the relatively low rates of infection continue, then it is likely that the policy focus will turn to supporting the recovery of the economy and moves to full-employment. In order to support such decision making, it is important to monitor the views of the general public regarding particular policy responses. While the general public does not have the same level of information or expertise of those within the policy-making community, it is going to be more

difficult to implement economic policies that clash with the views of the general public. Perhaps even more importantly, there is a level of on-the-ground knowledge that can be aggregated from those making employment and purchasing decisions, either as business owners/managers or as workers/consumers. This knowledge is not easy to obtain without asking people directly.

In this paper we therefore looked at the support for eight specific policy areas, with a particular focus on the extent to which a representative sample of respondents thought the measures 'would help fix the country's economic problems.' One of the surprise findings was that there was not that much change in people's views on four of these when asked in May 2020 compared to when the same individuals were asked in January 2020. This is despite the very different economic circumstances then and now. People's support for particular policies during what has been described as the worst economic circumstances in Australia since the Great Depression are not that different to what they were during a time of close to full employment and the longest continuous economic expansion in Australia's history.

We found varying degrees of support for COVID-specific measures. Of the four policy changes asked about in the May ANUpoll, the policy which the highest support was to increased spending on the search for a COVID-19 vaccine and treatment, followed by easing restrictions on pubs, clubs and cafes; and extending the JobKeeper and Jobseeker payments beyond the current six-months. The lowest level of support was for opening up Australia's borders to tourists and international students. There were significant age differences in support for these policies with support for extending JobKeeper/JobSeeker falling reasonably closely along party lines.

The strongest predictor of support for these policies, however, was anxiety and worry regarding COVID-19. Those who were anxious and worried were far less likely to support liberalisation measures (on borders and hospitality) but far more likely to support spending measures (on vaccines and the labour market). This creates a challenge for government. In order to maintain support for some of the physical distancing measures required to maintain low rates of infection, there needs to be some concern regarding COVID-19 and fear of infection if the virus once again gets out of hand. However, in order to implement some policies that will help support economic growth into the future, this concern and perceived risk may need to be reduced. It is definitely a challenging policy landscape to navigate.

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Appendix Tables

Appendix Table 1 Factors associated with support for economic policies – Demographic, socioeconomic and geographic variables

	Cutting taxes M.Effect Signif	Money for poor people M.Effect Signif	Increased spending on domestic programs M.Effect Signif	Increased spending on infrastructure M.Effect Signif
Female	0.029	-0.029	0.018	-0.112 ***
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.105 *	0.203 ***	-0.049	-0.154 ***
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.063	0.008	-0.025	-0.026
Aged 45 to 54 years	-0.024	-0.002	-0.042	0.082 ***
Aged 55 to 64 years	-0.067 *	-0.055	-0.063 **	0.096 ***
Aged 65 to 74 years	-0.108 ***	0.037	-0.011	0.150 ***
Aged 75 years plus	-0.176 ***	-0.015	-0.013	0.161 ***
Indigenous	0.151 *	0.032	0.032	0.092
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	0.014	0.003	0.017	-0.108 ***
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.070 *	-0.004	0.023	-0.039
Speaks a language other than English at home	0.127 ***	-0.010	-0.045	-0.005
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	0.032	-0.060	-0.057	0.000
Has a post graduate degree	-0.130 ***	-0.024	-0.010	0.048
Has an undergraduate degree	-0.074 **	0.017	-0.053 *	0.024
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	0.022	-0.018	-0.045	-0.011
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	-0.032	0.023	0.025	0.017
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	-0.017	0.069 *	0.049 **	0.007
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	-0.023	-0.031	0.027	0.015
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	-0.072 *	0.000	0.023	-0.004
Lives in a non-capital city	-0.028	-0.028	-0.007	-0.014
Probability of base case	0.631	0.570	0.850	0.787
Sample size	3,061	3,067	3,068	3,066

Notes: Probit Regression Model. The base case individual is female; aged 35-44; non-Indigenous; born in Australia; does not speak a language other than English at home; has completed Year 12 but does not have a post-graduate degree; lives in neither an advantaged or disadvantaged suburb (third quintile); and lives in a capital city. Coefficients that are statistically significant at the 1% cent level of significance are labelled ***; those significant at the 5% level of significance are labelled **, and those significant at the 10% cent level of significance are labelled *.

Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

Appendix Table 2 Factors associated with support for economic policies – Voting, demographic, socioeconomic and geographic variables

	Cutting taxes	Money for poor people	Increased spending on domestic programs	Increased spending on infrastructure
	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif
Would have voted Labor in January 2020	-0.076 **	0.284 ***	0.153 ***	0.073 ***
Would have voted Greens in January 2020	-0.161 ***	0.315 ***	0.142 ***	0.051
Would have voted for another party in January 2020	0.021	0.152 ***	0.075 **	0.026
Did not know who they would have voted for in January 2020	0.031	0.105 *	0.131 ***	0.000
Female	0.036	-0.029	0.022	-0.126 ***
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.060	0.196 ***	-0.080	-0.102 *
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.071 *	0.002	-0.029	-0.030
Aged 45 to 54 years	-0.070 *	0.026	-0.045	0.091 ***
Aged 55 to 64 years	-0.108 ***	-0.009	-0.057	0.118 ***
Aged 65 to 74 years	-0.144 ***	0.086 **	0.017	0.172 ***
Aged 75 years plus	-0.203 ***	0.077	0.025	0.202 ***
Indigenous	0.166 **	-0.016	0.004	0.094
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	0.013	-0.007	0.005	-0.104 ***
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.059	0.007	0.041	-0.025
Speaks a language other than English at home	0.119 ***	0.014	-0.042	-0.019
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	0.039	-0.009	-0.043	-0.017
Has a post graduate degree	-0.089 *	-0.024	-0.011	0.055
Has an undergraduate degree	-0.045	0.030	-0.067	0.026
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	0.038	0.002	-0.037	-0.005
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	-0.030	-0.002	-0.002	0.008
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	-0.023	0.062	0.067 *	0.003
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	-0.028	-0.060 *	0.015	0.015
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	-0.064 *	-0.013	0.008	-0.019
Lives in a non-capital city	-0.031	-0.011	0.001	-0.008
Probability of base case	0.677	0.366	0.757	0.752
Sample size	2,788	2,793	2,794	2,792

Notes: As for Appendix Table A1. In addition, the base case individual would have voted for the Coalition if an election were held in January 2020.

Source: ANUpoll, January 2020, and ANUpoll, May 2020.

Appendix Table 3 Factors associated with support for COVID policies – Demographic, socioeconomic and geographic variables

	Opening borders	Easing restrictions	Vaccine and treatment	Extending JobKeeper and JobSeeker
	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif
Female	-0.027	0.036 *	0.047 **	0.003
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.041	0.022	0.028	0.150 ***
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.091 **	0.059	-0.001	0.026
Aged 45 to 54 years	-0.030	0.027	0.003	-0.033
Aged 55 to 64 years	0.007	0.007	0.037	-0.009
Aged 65 to 74 years	0.008	0.035	0.124 ***	-0.030
Aged 75 years plus	0.065	0.012	0.158 ***	0.034
Indigenous	0.046	0.029	0.039	0.045
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	0.020	0.043	0.018	0.029
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.161 ***	0.010	0.014	-0.021
Speaks a language other than English at home	-0.010	0.021	0.074 *	-0.008
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	-0.112 **	0.018	-0.027	-0.033
Has a post graduate degree	0.023	0.001	0.028	0.072
Has an undergraduate degree	0.019	0.077 **	-0.014	0.048
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	-0.099 ***	0.040	-0.027	0.041
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	0.031	0.022	0.022	0.022
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	-0.024	-0.005	0.002	0.055
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	-0.002	0.029	-0.040	-0.054
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	0.018	0.008	-0.065 *	-0.065 *
Lives in a non-capital city	0.023	0.000	-0.036	-0.076 ***
Probability of base case	0.507	0.706	0.708	0.573
Sample size	3,066	3,068	3,069	3,059

Notes: As for Appendix Table A1.

Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

Appendix Table 4 Factors associated with support for COVID policies – Voting, demographic, socioeconomic and geographic variables

	Opening borders	Easing restrictions	Vaccine and treatment	Extending JobKeeper and JobSeeker
	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif
Would have voted Labor in January 2020	0.035	-0.016	0.093 ***	0.219 ***
Would have voted Greens in January 2020	0.046	-0.072 *	0.037	0.260 ***
Would have voted for another party in January 2020	-0.069	0.030	0.039	0.115 ***
Did not know who they would have voted for in January 2020	0.023	-0.094 *	-0.003	0.172 ***
Female	-0.017	-0.026	0.054 **	-0.015
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.069	0.078	0.041	0.120 *
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.114 **	-0.052	0.023	0.012
Aged 45 to 54 years	-0.042	0.011	0.013	-0.039
Aged 55 to 64 years	-0.009	0.009	0.047	0.008
Aged 65 to 74 years	0.001	0.023	0.152 ***	-0.008
Aged 75 years plus	0.068	0.013	0.210 ***	0.101 *
Indigenous	-0.013	0.002	0.011	0.049
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	0.003	-0.070 **	0.030	0.052
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.151 ***	-0.010	0.026	0.024
Speaks a language other than English at home	-0.015	-0.051	0.080 *	0.000
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	-0.090 *	0.019	-0.015	-0.008
Has a post graduate degree	0.029	0.015	0.036	0.042
Has an undergraduate degree	0.031	0.076 **	-0.015	0.025
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	-0.076 *	0.044	-0.006	0.047
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	0.015	-0.003	0.001	0.030
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	-0.042	-0.008	0.020	0.067
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	-0.013	0.029	-0.038	-0.066 *
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	0.004	-0.005	-0.087 **	-0.061
Lives in a non-capital city	0.006	-0.005	-0.054 *	-0.078 ***
Probability of base case	0.511	0.731	0.648	0.439
Sample size	2,792	2,794	2,795	2,787

Notes: As for Appendix Table A2.

Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

Appendix Table 5 Factors associated with support for COVID policies – demographic, socioeconomic and geographic variables

	Opening borders	Easing restrictions	Vaccine and treatment	Extending JobKeeper and JobSeeker
	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif	M.Effect Signif
Experienced Anxiety and Worry due to COVID-19	-0.064 **	-0.092 ***	0.131 ***	0.081 ***
Thinks it likely or very likely to be infected in next 6-months	-0.020	-0.026	0.069 **	0.049 *
Female	-0.020	-0.027	0.051 **	-0.009
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.017	0.009	0.066	0.172 ***
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.085 *	-0.083 **	0.018	0.042
Aged 45 to 54 years	-0.035	-0.004	0.033	-0.020
Aged 55 to 64 years	0.004	-0.011	0.077 *	0.002
Aged 65 to 74 years	-0.005	-0.001	0.187 ***	-0.011
Aged 75 years plus	0.056	0.000	0.215 ***	0.043
Indigenous	0.061	0.038	0.028	0.012
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	0.015	-0.047	0.024	0.042
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.169 ***	-0.009	0.036	-0.022
Speaks a language other than English at home	-0.018	-0.010	0.081 *	-0.019
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	-0.100 **	0.016	-0.011	-0.036
Has a post graduate degree	0.021	0.005	0.026	0.056
Has an undergraduate degree	0.018	0.064 **	-0.007	0.047
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	-0.099 **	0.028	-0.035	0.041
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	0.018	0.010	0.025	0.028
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	-0.028	-0.001	-0.007	0.044
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	0.002	0.026	-0.049	-0.055
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	0.013	-0.001	-0.077 *	-0.065
Lives in a non-capital city	0.014	0.003	-0.049	-0.070 **
Probability of base case	0.553	0.786	0.595	0.515
Sample size	2,880	2,882	2,884	2,874

Notes: As for Appendix Table A2.

Source: ANUpoll, May 2020.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/update-coronavirus-measures-08may20>
- 2 <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/update-coronavirus-measures-08may20>
- 3 <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus>
- 4 <https://www.srcentre.com.au/services/life-in-australia-panel>
- 5 In order to monitor the impacts of COVID-19, the ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods has established a COVID-19 impact monitoring survey program. It builds upon data collected in January and February 2020 prior to COVID-19 restrictions being implemented, thereby following the same group of individuals prior to and through the COVID-19 pandemic period. This program provides population level estimates of the impact of COVID-19 and allows measurement of the variation in and the determinants of the change in outcomes for Australians. The surveys include a core set of questions on attitudes to COVID-19, labour market outcomes, household income, financial hardship, life satisfaction and mental health. In addition, each survey contains some specific questions of particular policy interest at the particular point in time in which the data was collected. The first wave of the COVID-19 monitoring surveys was conducted in April and the most recent survey conducted in May 2020. A number of additional waves of data will be collected throughout 2020 and 2021, with data from these surveys made available from the Australian Data Archive as soon as possible after the data collection has finished.
- 6 Data for the vast majority of respondents was collected online, with a small proportion of respondents enumerated over the phone.
- 7 A p-value of 0.019 based on people who completed both the January and May 2020 surveys (i.e., the longitudinal sample).
- 8 A p-value of 0.106 based on people who completed both the January and May 2020 surveys (i.e., the longitudinal sample).