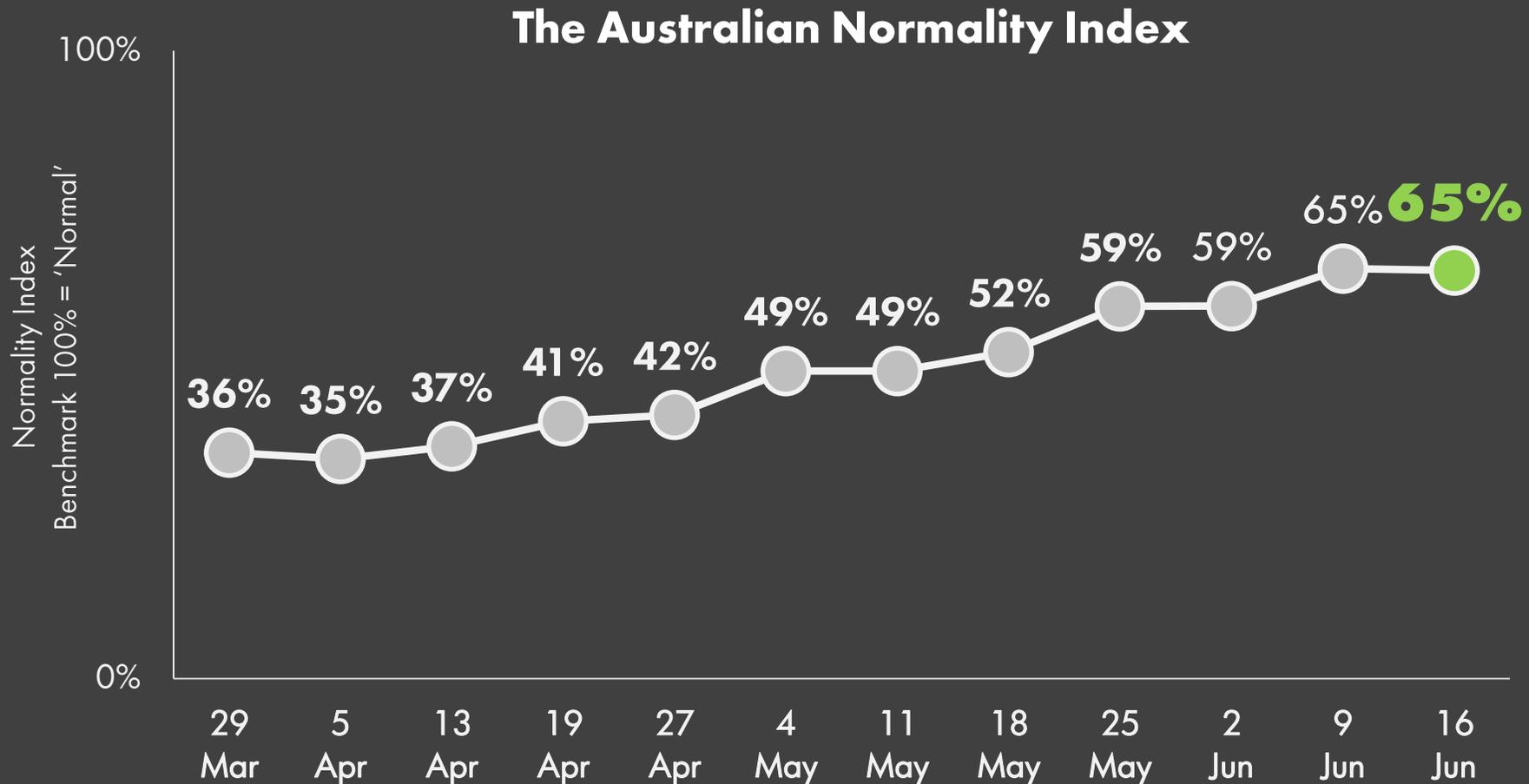


**Week 12: Australians now feeling much closer to normal. But still 35% less than in the pre-COVID period and stabilising.**



# Following a step change last week, Normality has stabilised at 65%

This week marks the end of our 12 weeks of continuous tracking of the Australian Normality Index. We will now move to a monthly pulse.

## First signs of recession concern

In week 9, we posed the question 'are we in the eye of the storm?' and considered whether the end of JobKeeper would lead to another shock in the system.

In week 12, our confidence in the economy took a step back. Could this be the first sign that Australians' progress back to normality may be compromised? What will this do to Australians' consumption habits over the coming weeks as restrictions start to ease?

## Can virtual connection replace face to face?

For two weeks in a row Love has continued to rise with Australians' emotions now nearly returned to the COVID baseline.

Could the ease in restrictions and the ability for Australians to connect with loved ones be driving this improvement? If so, what does this suggest about the strength of face to face connection vs virtual?

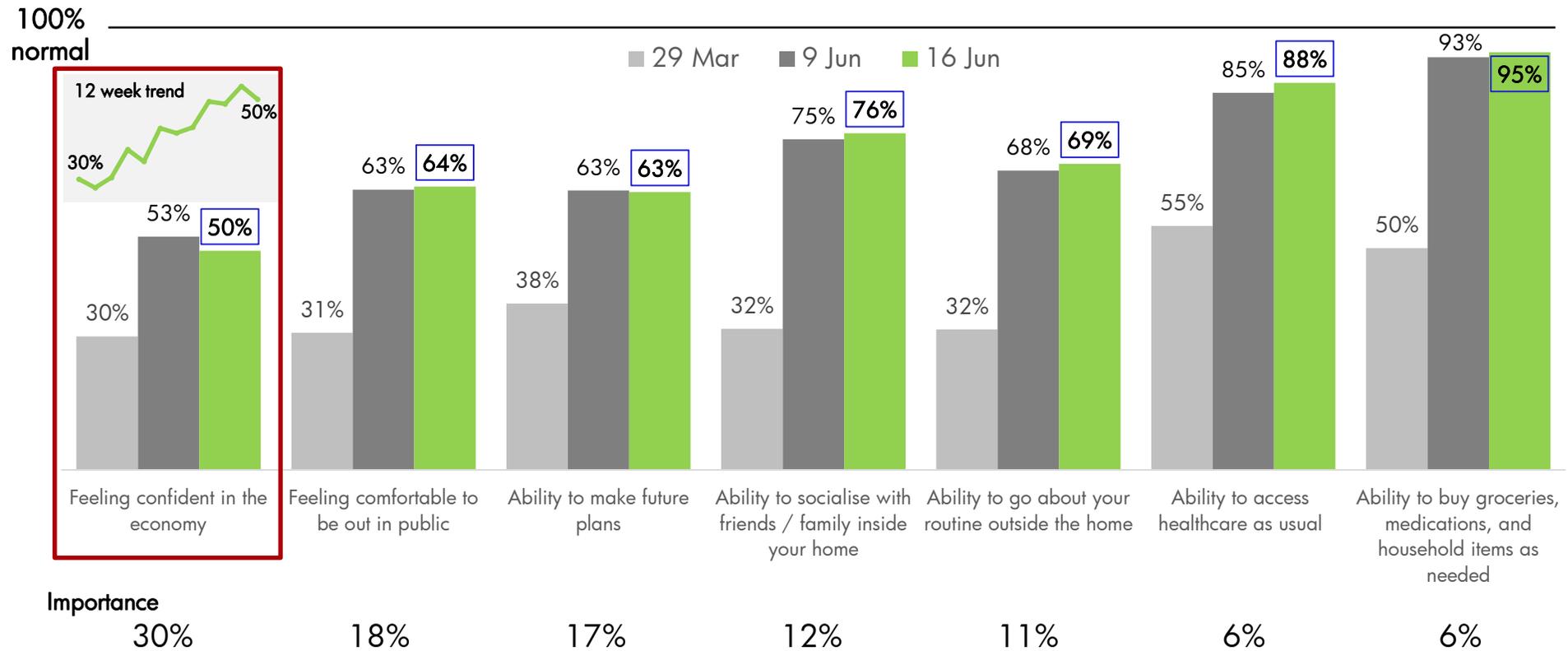
## A moment for luxury

For those who thought life was better than normal, saving money was a key benefit of lockdown.

Via qualitative research Forethought explored this revealing that some Australians were in their best ever financial position given the inability to spend on social activities. Additionally, this improved financial position and lockdown deprivations have led some to want to 'treat themselves'. This desire for a little indulgence suggests this might be a moment for luxury brands. But will this be short-lived as the possible effects of recession come into full force?

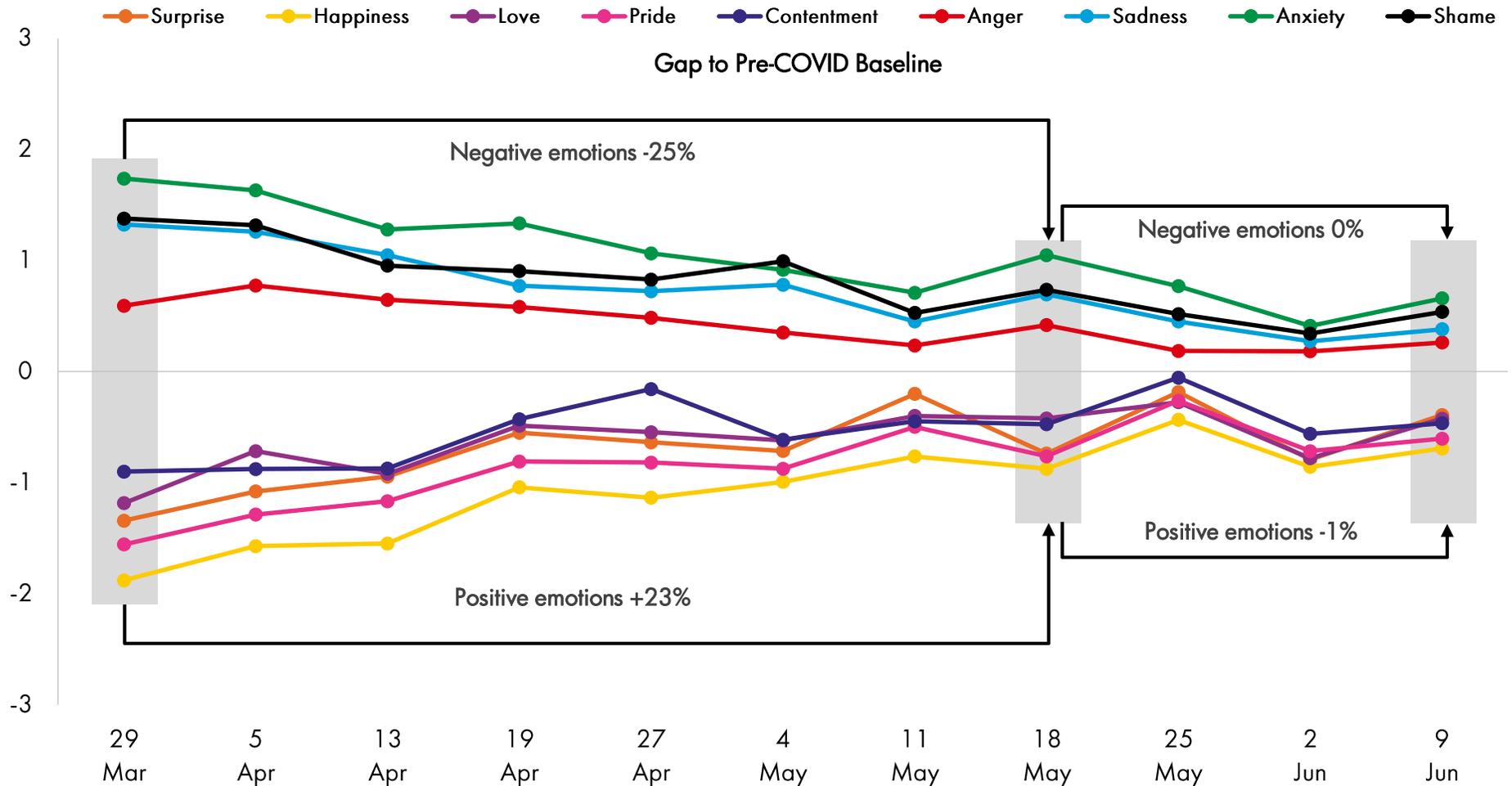
# ...but, confidence in the economy took a step back

Thinking about life at present (including wider society), how normal do you feel the following aspects are?



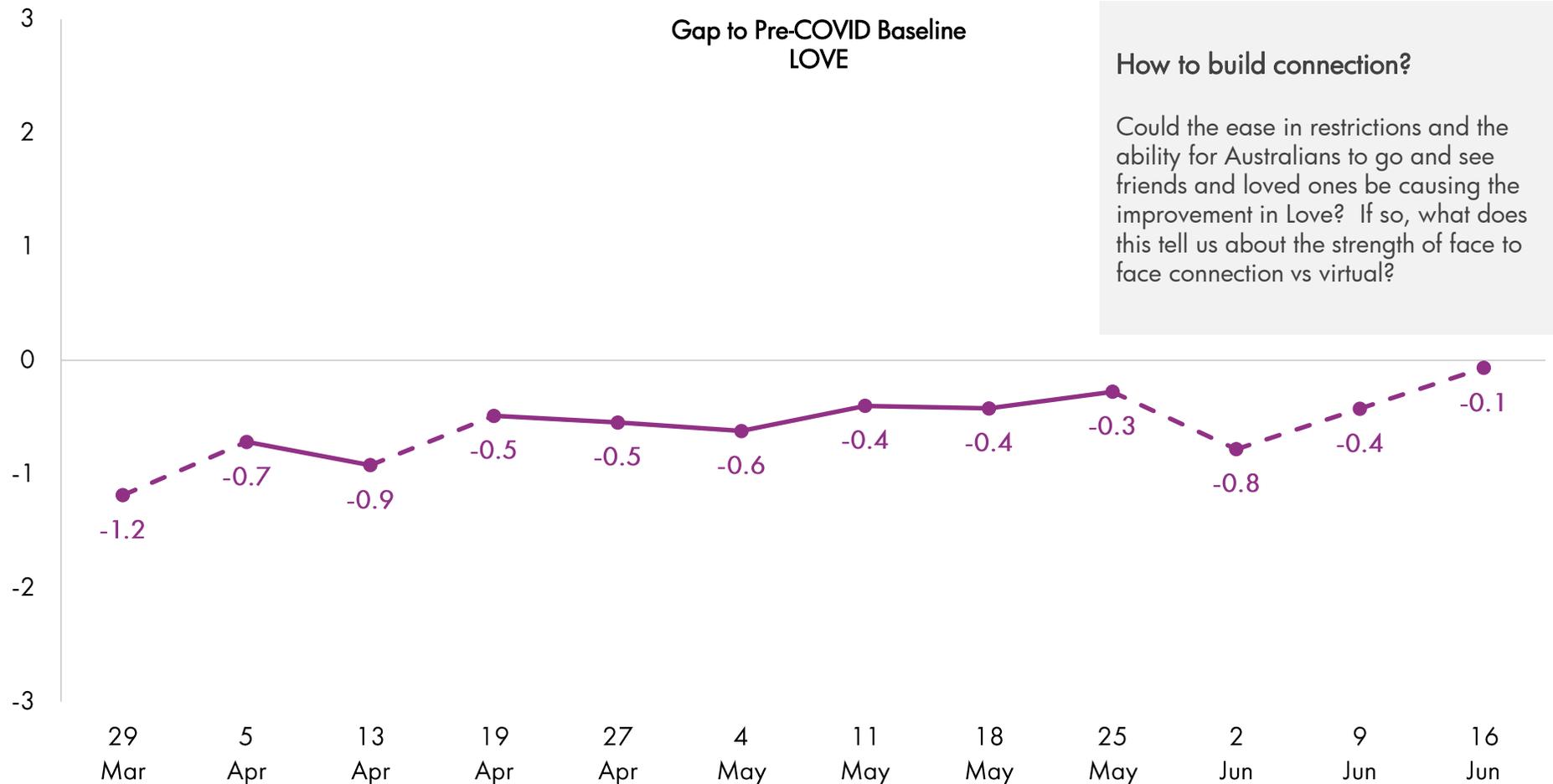
# Recap: And Australians' emotions had stabilised

The initial shock of COVID-19 left Australians displaced emotionally. After 7 weeks of movements back toward pre-COVID baseline, emotions stabilised.



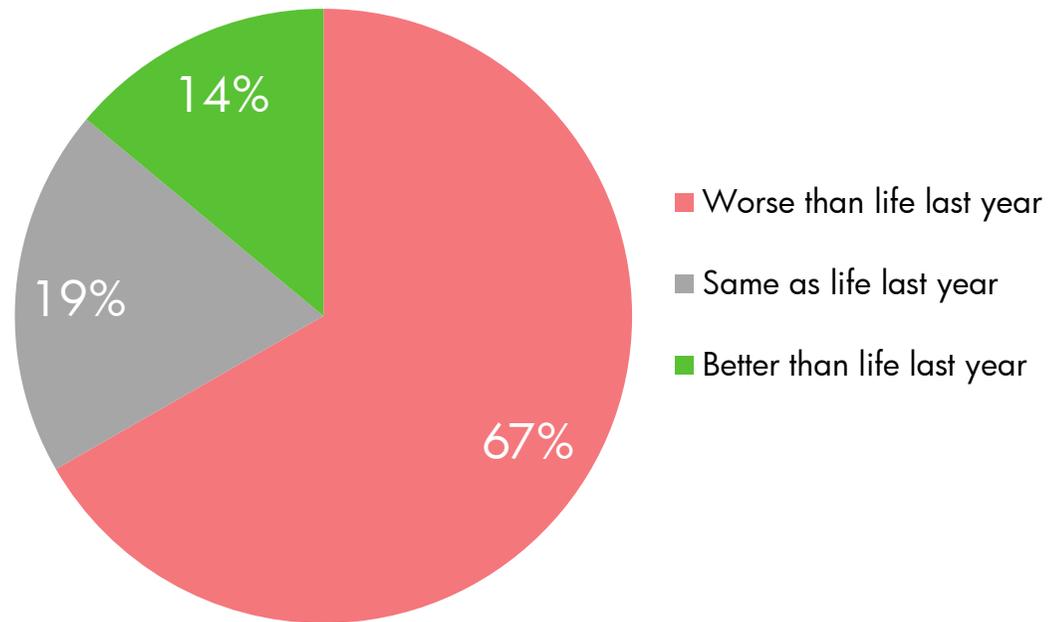
# ...but this week we are feeling the *Love*

For two weeks in a row *Love* has continued to rise with Australians now nearly at pre-COVID baseline.



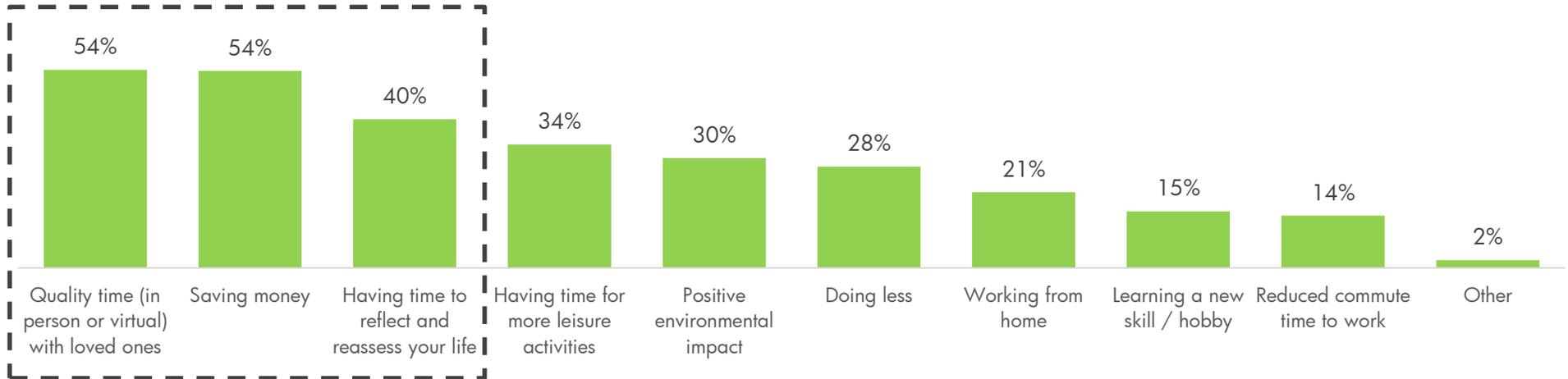
## RECAP: For some, the glass was half full...

A sub-segment of Australians (14%) currently think life is better than normal



# ... and quality time with loved ones, saving money and more me time were the top reasons life seemed better than before

Please rank the top three things you have enjoyed since the COVID-19 outbreak.  
Top 3\* by Better than Life Last Year



Recent qualitative research explored the aspect of saving money, with some Australians stating they were in their best-ever financial position as social activities had been curtailed. Additionally, this improved financial situation and perceived deprivation during lockdown had led some to want to 'treat themselves'. Consumer spending, tracked by Illion, supports this finding highlighting the reduction over the lockdown and now the recovery to pre-COVID levels. This increase in desire for a little indulgence by some has led us to question....is this a moment for luxury brands? But will this be short-lived until the possible effects of recession come into full force?

# Trust in the Federal Government is inching down nationally, and even the West Australian strong position of trust in State Government has started to decline over the past three weeks

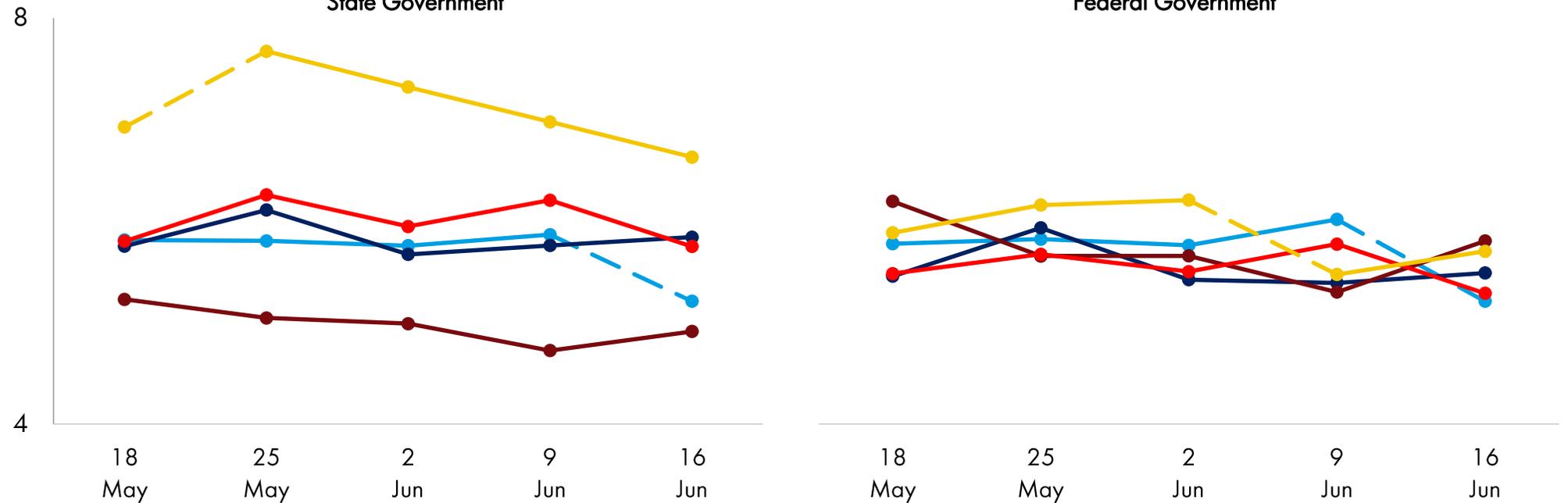
Despite continuing to be the market leader, trust in the Western Australian state government continued to trend down. Could the recent national media coverage and pressure from other states to re-open the borders be shaping the views of Western Australians and causing them to question what is best for the state?

How would you rate your government as being trustworthy?

● New South Wales   
 ● Victoria   
 ● Queensland   
 ● South Australia   
 ● Western Australia

State Government

Federal Government



# CONTACT

---

## Asia Pacific

Level 5 550 Bourke St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
AUSTRALIA  
+ 61 3 9614 3000

## North America

Suite 5B, 400 Madison Av  
New York NY 10017  
USA  
+1 929 239 3080

[www.forethought.com.au](http://www.forethought.com.au)