



**REGIONAL  
AUSTRALIA  
INSTITUTE**

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 6:00AM MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2021**

# **RAI NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN MARKET RESEARCH**

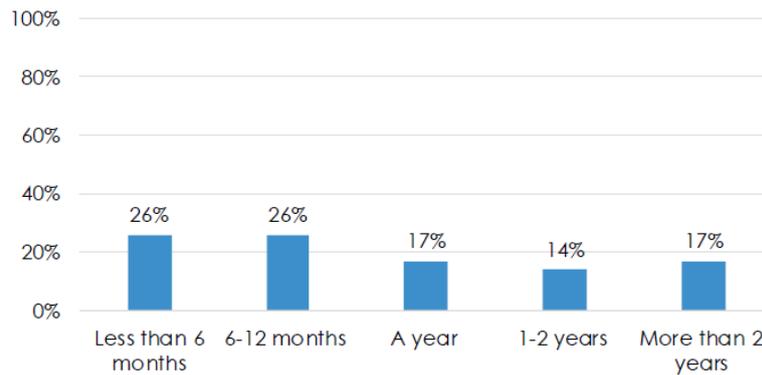
**UNDERSTANDING METRO DWELLERS'  
DESIRES TO MOVE TO THE REGIONS**



## RESEARCH KEY MESSAGES

- A life in Regional Australia is top of mind for thousands of city dwellers with new research released by the Regional Australia Institute (RAI) showing that about one in five residents of the country’s major capitals are considering a move to the regions. More than two-thirds of those considering moving thought they would make the jump in the next 12 months.

*Imagine for a moment you are considering a move to regional Australia. About how long, from first thought to actual move, do you think it would take?*



*“I expect the whole process to take about six months. I’d move in the drier season, not hot or cold.”*

– Male, 53, NSW

*“I’ve been looking for about a year or two. It started with a holiday on the mid-north coast and prices of houses and close to the beach.”*

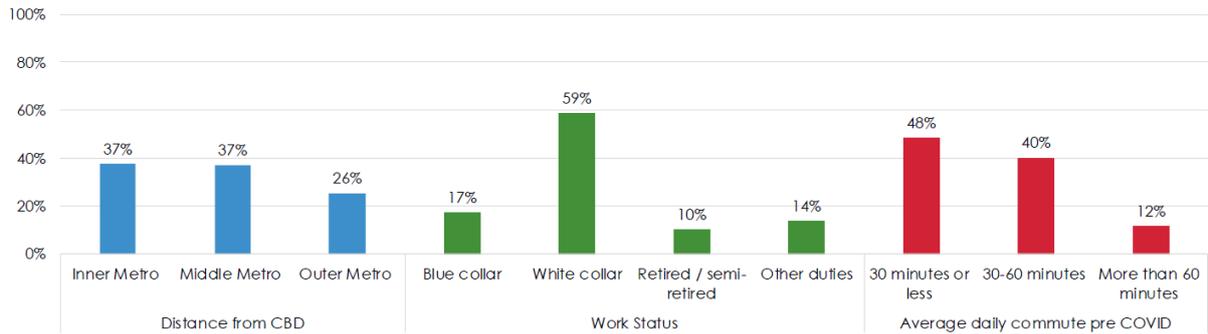
– Female, 44, NSW

*“I would hope that the process would be relatively quick and only take a few months however realistically it could probably take a year or so. I don’t think there would be a particular time of the year unless my children were older and I wanted them to finish out the school year at their school.”*

– Female, 35, VIC

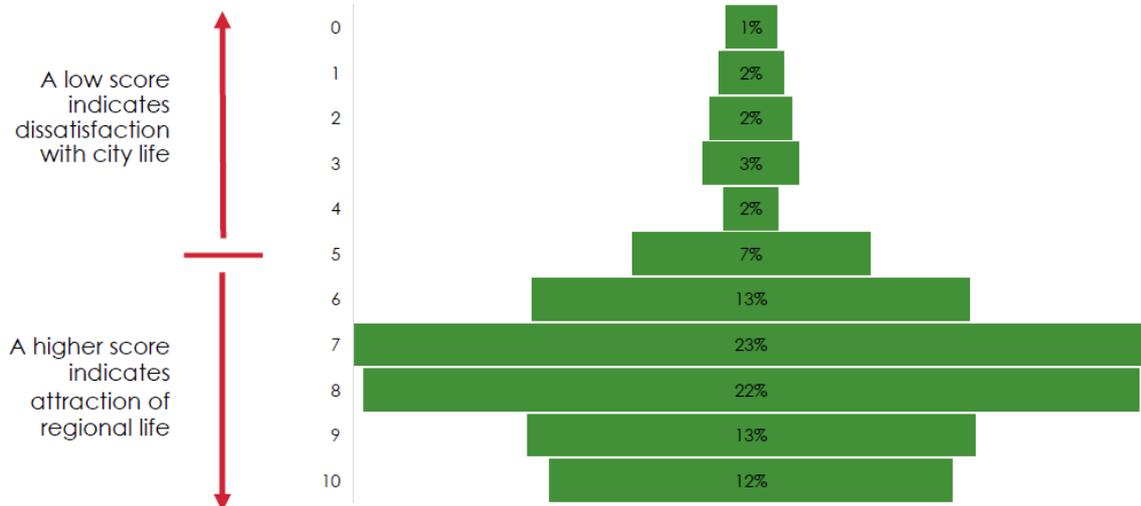
- The RAI commissioned qualitative and quantitative research among more than 1,000 people living in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth who were considering moving to Regional Australia. The research was carried out in November and December 2020.

Work status, distance from CBD – this is the breakdown of survey respondents. By design, the sample was relatively evenly distributed and broadly representative of the general population



- The research showed that the appeal of the regions is a more motivating factor to move than any dissatisfaction with city life.

Use the slider to indicate which would be the stronger motivation for you to consider a move to Regional Australia



## PULL FACTORS

- The research shows the top three factors drawing people to Regional Australia are:
  - Sense of space (77%)
  - Connecting with the natural environment (77%)
  - Overall improved wellbeing (75%)
- The pull factors are even stronger for people who have children transitioning from pre- to primary school.

*“Wide open spaces, everyone knows you by your first name, cheaper house prices with bigger houses and blocks. Happy smiling faces. It’s more the case that cities are just too overcrowded where country towns you can sit and smell the roses.”*

– Female, 55, VIC

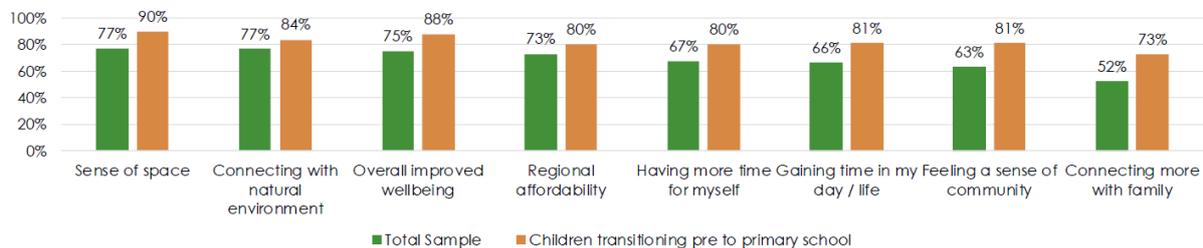
*“When I think about regional I see a slowed down/relaxed place.”*

– Female, 33, VIC

*“I love the open air, the lack of traffic, the variety of landscapes and activities you can enjoy that is so difficult to access when living in the city.”*

– Male, 64, QLD

### Pull factors



## PUSH FACTORS

- The top three factors driving people’s desire to leave big city life are:
  - Avoiding roads and traffic congestion (70%);
  - Reducing general stress and anxiety (69%);
  - Reducing cost of living (68%)

*“I like the idea of being away from the hustle and bustle and anonymity of city life. I want to get away from traffic and be part of a community where you can get to know people and of course it’s easier to find affordable housing.”*

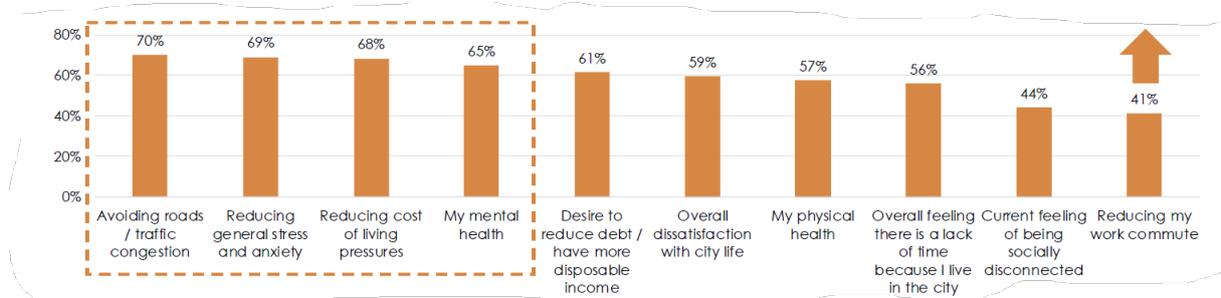
– Male, 40, NSW

*“Properties are cheaper out in rural areas too, so what we can afford in the city is tiny and rundown, whereas in the country we could have a large property with a big backyard which would be perfect for raising a family.”*

– Female, 32, VIC

“We are looking for a change of pace, but also, having more money in our pockets at the end of the week and more time for things that matter.”  
 – Female, 52, VIC

Push factors



- Almost two-thirds of respondents agreed that city life is stressful, with Brisbane residents the most stressed.

City comparisons

Metric		Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Perth
Financial Motivations	Q4 Moving for affordability	68%	79% ↑	78%	67% ↓
	Q3 Reduce Debt	62%	66% ↑	59%	45% ↓
Career influences	Q14 I am satisfied in my job	63% ↑	55%	50%	45% ↓
	Q6 Career might stall	49% ↑	40%	43%	39% ↓
City Life	Q14 City Life is stressful	67%	58%	70% ↑	56% ↓
	Q14 I have a meaningful city life	50% ↑	42%	41%	39% ↓
	Q3 Reducing work commute	47% ↑	39%	37%	30% ↓
	Q6 leaving family & Friends	50%	59% ↑	43% ↓	45%
Regional Benefits	Q4 More time for myself	69%	66%	70% ↑	56% ↓
Regional concerns	Q6 Concerns about fitting in	46% ↑	47% ↑	33%	30% ↓
	Q6 Lack of regional vibrancy	42% ↑	37%	28% ↓	31%
	Q6 Lack of regional knowledge	42% ↑	37%	30% ↓	33%

↓ = lowest city

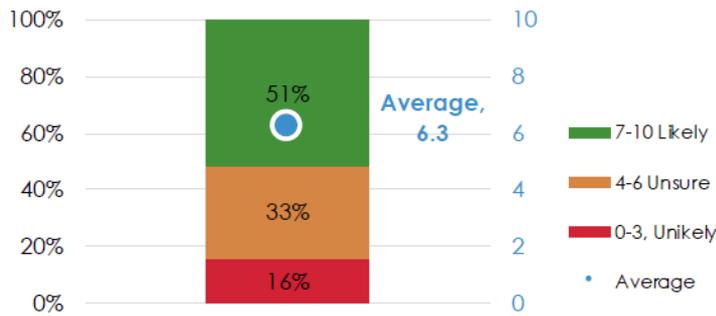
↑ = highest city

## IMPACT OF COVID

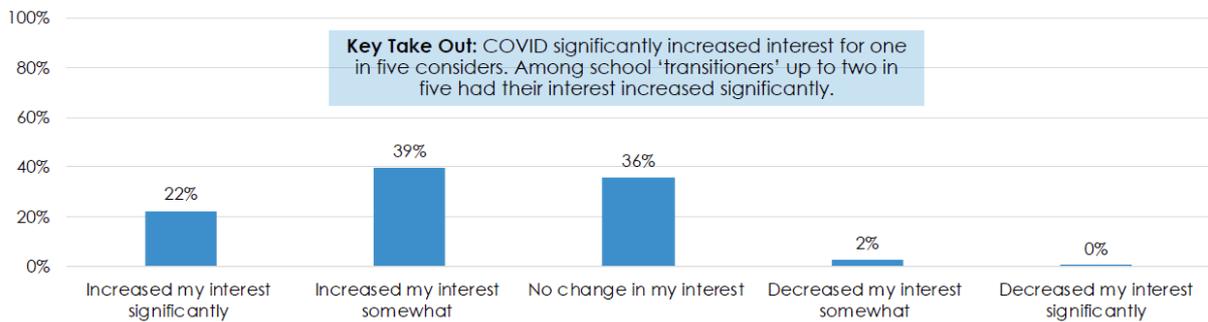
- While COVID significantly increased interest in moving for one-fifth of those surveyed, more than half of all respondents indicated that they were thinking about relocating even before COVID.

*Prior to COVID-19 how likely were you to consider relocating from the city to live in regional Australia? Use a 0-10 scale where 0 means very unlikely and 10 means very likely*

**Key Take Out:** Around half of metro considerers indicated they were already likely to relocate before COVID.



*How has COVID-19 changed your level of interest, if at all, in relocating from the city to live in regional Australia?*



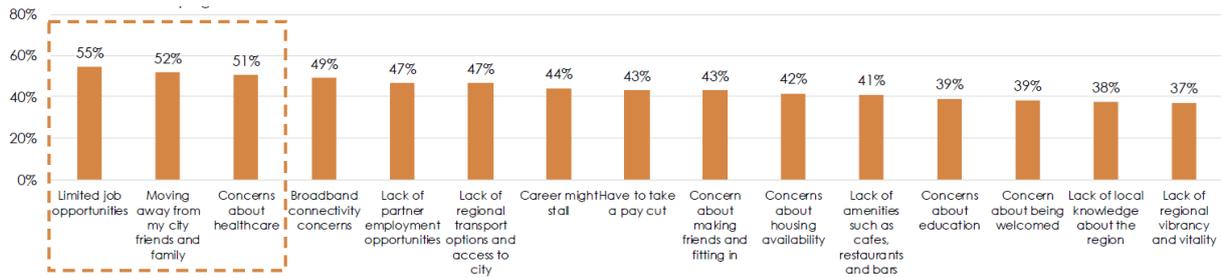
**Key Take Out:** COVID significantly increased interest for one in five considerers. Among school 'transitioners' up to two in five had their interest increased significantly.

- COVID has particularly increased interest in moving among parents of younger children.
  - Among 40-49 year olds, 28% said it had “increased my interest significantly”
  - That figure was 39% among parents with children transitioning from pre-school to primary school
  - And 33% among families with children transitioning from primary to secondary school

## BARRIERS

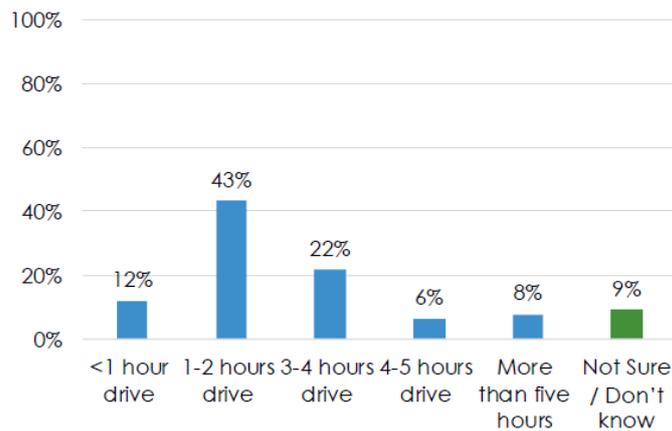
- Concern about limited job opportunities for self or partner was identified by respondents as the biggest barrier to moving to Regional Australia. However, latest job vacancy figures show that there are more than 54,000 roles available in Regional Australia, with professional and skilled jobs featuring strongly across the regions.
- Moving away from family and friends as well as concerns about healthcare and broadband connectivity also featured in reasons which may prevent people from making the move.

Regional and rural barriers



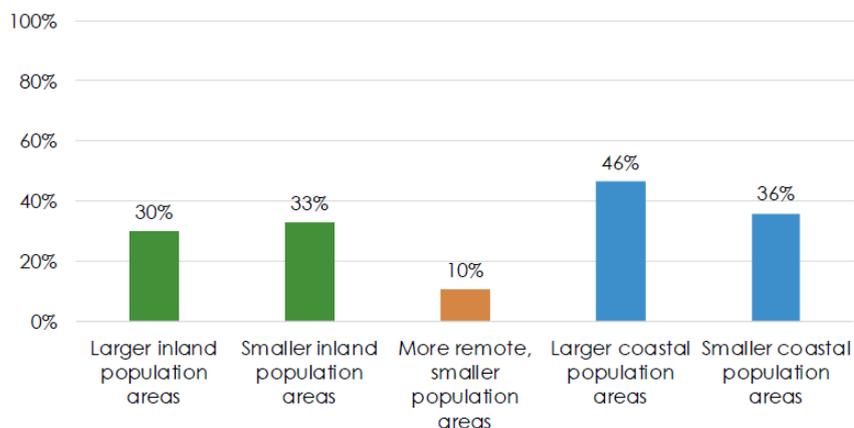
- Those aged less than 50 years and blue collar workers were the groups most likely to need reassurance that jobs are available in regional Australia, as they deem this the most significant barrier to moving
- More than half of the potential movers surveyed say they are considering locations no more than a two-hour drive away from their current home. But 22% are prepared to move up to four hours away.

If you were looking to move to regional Australia, about how far away from your current home would you be likely to consider relocating, in driving time?



- While the most popular locations being considered by metro movers were larger coastal areas, interestingly, smaller inland areas held the same appeal as smaller coastal towns with about one third of respondents indicating an interest in both.

Which of the following non-metro areas would you consider or are you considering relocating to? (you can select more than one)



## NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- This research underpins a multi-million-dollar, multi-platform public awareness campaign that the RAI will launch next month to inform potential metro movers about the opportunities to live, work and invest in Regional Australia.
- The campaign will be unveiled at the RAI's National Summit – *Growing Regional Australia: Shaping the Good Life* – on Wednesday 17 March at Hotel Realm, Canberra. Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Michael McCormack, will launch the campaign.