



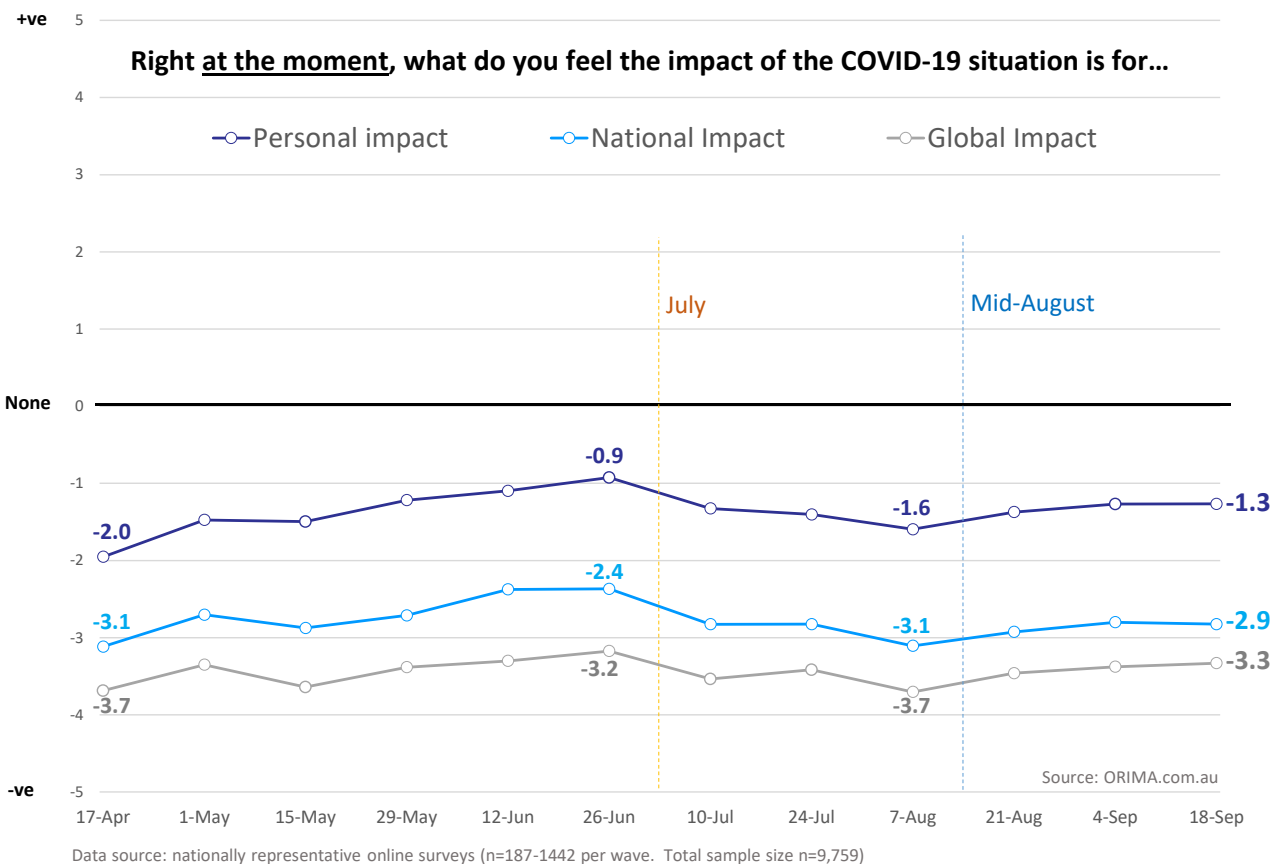
September results from the COVID-19 Recovery Tracker (CRT) show a clear ‘third phase’ in Australia’s experience of the pandemic. April to June was a period of decreasing negative impact and converging, albeit quite ‘flat’, experiences. July through to the start of August then saw a sharp increase in negative impact (largely driven by the situation in Victoria), and considerable divergence in the experiences of people in different states and territories. **The third phase has seen a more cautious improvement from the low-point at the start of August**, but perceptions of personal and national impact are both still closer to that low point than where they had recovered to in June.

**Gender differences have emerged in recent months**, with women feeling a greater negative impact in August, but a number of men’s mood and emotional indicators falling increasingly lower than women.

**September has seen an uptick in most indicators in Victoria**, but trust in leadership and satisfaction with the state government response has fallen.

## Spring is coming

**In the closing weeks of winter, Australians’ perceptions of the impact of COVID-19 bottomed out from the second wave, and have cautiously improved into the first weeks of spring.** While not yet back to the levels seen in late June, before the rapid deterioration of the Victorian situation, there was a clear change in the direction of movement in the perceived impact in mid-August.



As seen since the start of the pandemic, perceptions of national impact remain worse than personal impact, but better than the impact on the rest of the globe.

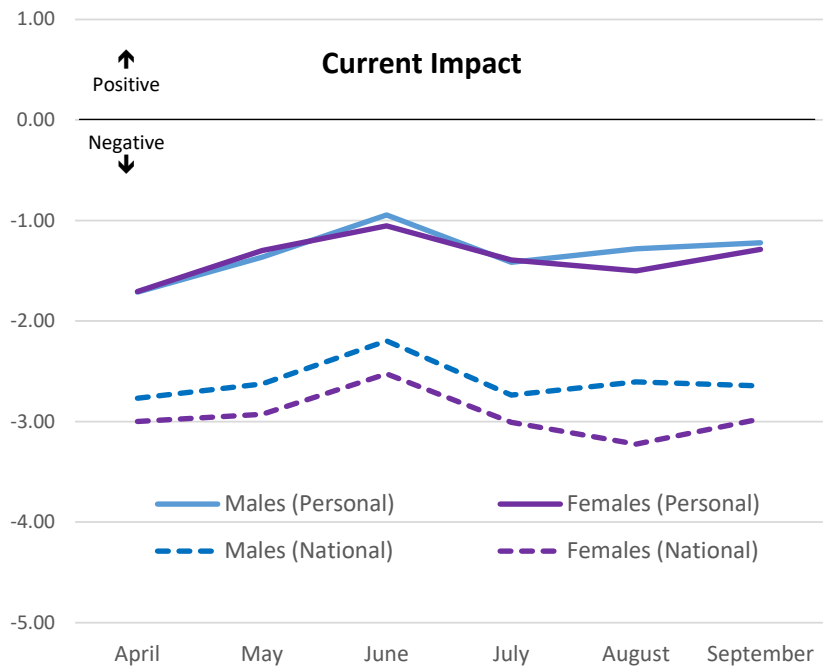
## Gender differences emerge

From April to July, across Australia men and women reported feeling remarkably similar levels of personal impact. Over the same timeframe women felt a greater negative impact nationally than did men – but the two tracked in lockstep in terms of change over those months.

In August, this pattern suddenly changed.

**Men felt the negative impact both personally and nationally, hitting their lowest point in July. Women felt that both impacts continued to decline in August, only improving again into September.**

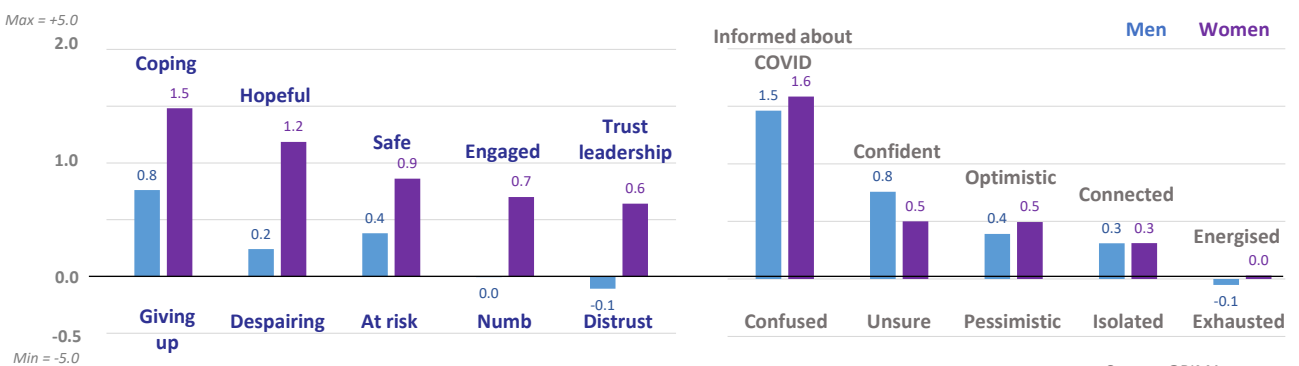
However, by September, the results were back to being very consistent with the patterns seen previously.



Source: ORIMA.com.au

**On a number of emotional and mood indicators though, men are faring increasingly poorly compared to women.** In particular, there are increasing discrepancies in the sense of coping, being hopeful, feeling safe, feeling engaged, and having trust in leadership compared to the stronger self-ratings of women.

## Emotional and Mood Indicators (September 2020)



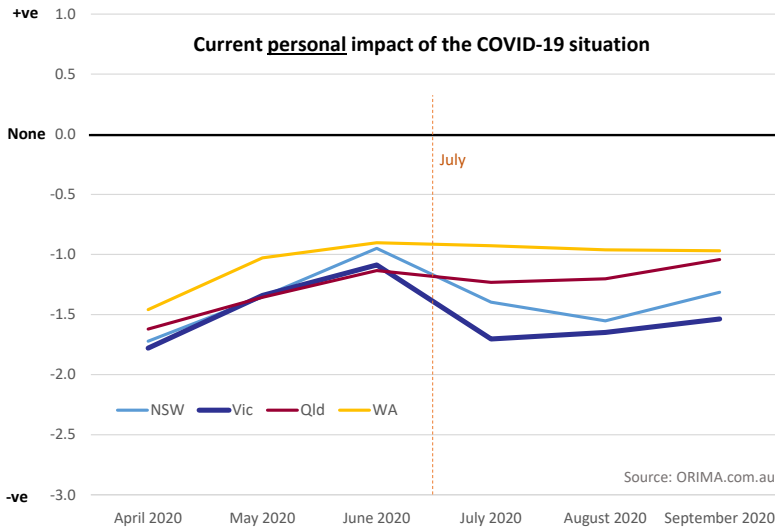
Source: ORIMA.com.au

**Difference in scores – results for men are lower/higher than results for women by...**

	Coping	Hopeful	Safe	Engaged	Trust leadership	Informed about COVID	Confident	Optimistic	Connected	Energised
September	-0.7	-0.9	-0.5	-0.7	-0.7	-0.1	0.3	-0.1	0.0	-0.1
May	0.0	-0.5	-0.2	-0.4	-0.2	-0.3	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.0

The differences highlighted in the chart on the left have all become considerably more distinct since May, when they were first robustly measured. The coping / giving up change is particularly stark, with women dropping from just +1.6 to +1.5 from May to September, but men dropping from +1.5 to +.8.

# What is happening in Victoria

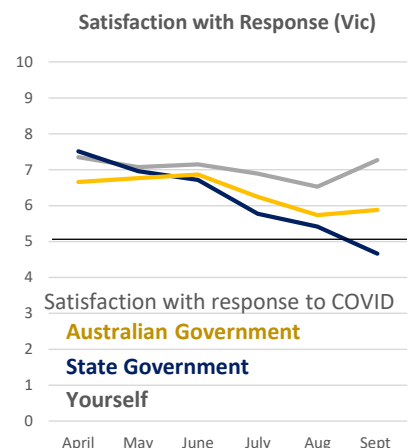
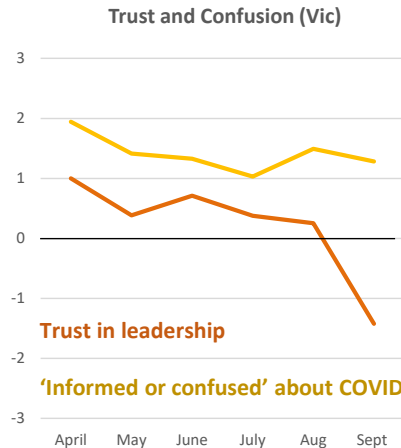
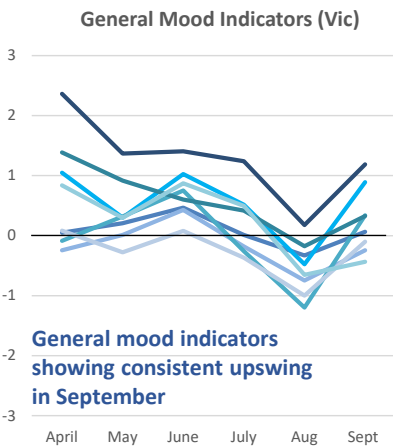


With Victoria as the epicentre of the winter outbreak of COVID-19 in Australia, and the much more extreme restrictions introduced in that state to contain the virus, it is of little surprise that Victorians have felt a greater level of negative impact since July.

In August and into September this impact has stayed the most negative of any state, but has come back slightly from the low point of July. The comparison with other states where there is sufficient sample available for analysis is illuminating.

With its closed borders and popular isolation model, WA remains the state where the least negative impact is felt – though this has not improved any further since June. Queensland has worked its way steadily to a similar position in September, and with some border restrictions there starting to relax into October, it will be interesting to observe the WA and Qld trajectories through the rest of 2020. NSW followed Victoria downwards, though slower, reaching nearly as low a point as Victoria in August.

Most mood indicators in Victoria have followed a similar pattern, rebounding in September from a low point in August. However, the sense of whether they feel more ‘informed (high) or confused (low)’ about COVID did not follow a similar pattern to the others. Trust in leadership and satisfaction with the state government response have both fallen, with trust in leadership in particular sharply lower in September.



CRT data is aggregated from a range of national and targeted surveys, and an open-link community survey which can be completed online by anyone ([do the survey here](#)). Volume 7 is based on n=9,779 responses. Data is classified into weeks defined from Friday midnight to Friday midnight. The next CRT update is expected in late October.



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