

Thursday, 15 April 2021

## We're coming back to town: Movement in Melbourne CBD & Adelaide CBD hits highest levels in over a year after Easter break

A special analysis of movement data in Australia's Capital City CBDs over the past year shows movement levels hitting their highest levels in over a year in both the Melbourne CBD and Adelaide CBD after the recent Easter break.

In the week to April 11 movement levels in the Adelaide CBD were almost back to pre-COVID times. At 94% of pre-COVID levels movement in Adelaide was the highest level since mid-March 2020 before the strictest lockdown measures were implemented.

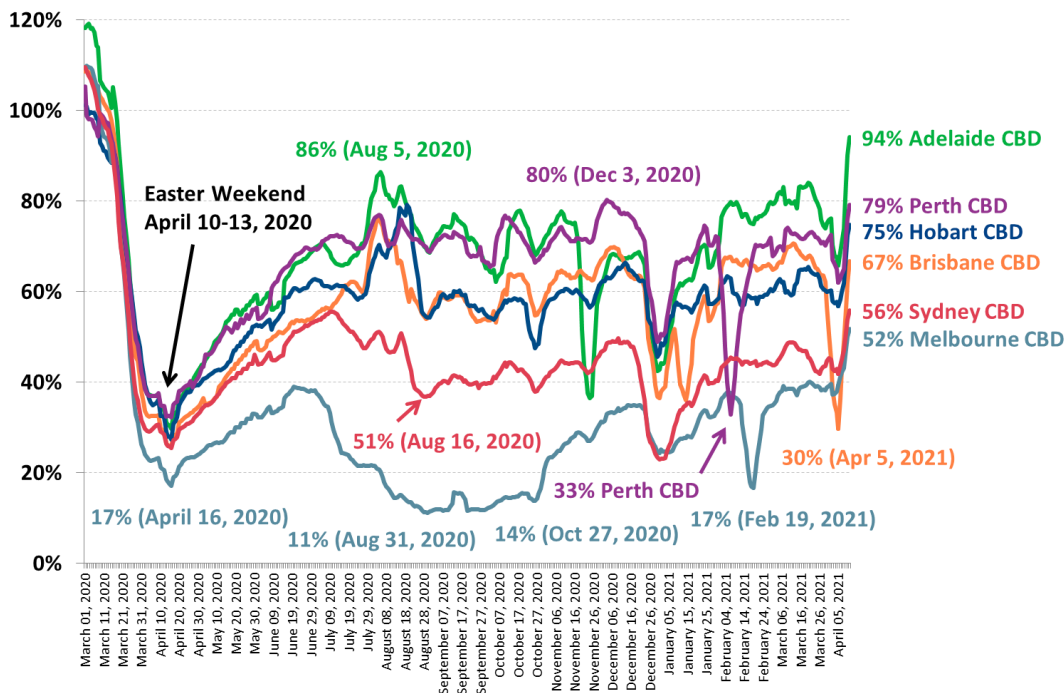
Although movement in the Melbourne CBD was at only 52% of pre-COVID normal last week – lower than any other Capital City CBD – this was still the highest level of movement for the southern capital for over a year since late March 2020 as the first lockdown measures were being introduced.

Movement in other Capital City CBDs also reached its highest in many months as Australians return to the office as density limits are lifted and vaccinations are rolled out across the community.

The Sydney CBD movement levels were at 56% of pre-COVID normal last week, the highest since July 2020, the Hobart CBD movement levels were at 75% of normal – the highest since late August 2020 and the movement levels in the Perth CBD were at 79% of normal matching the level last seen in early December 2020 before the Northern Beaches outbreak in Sydney.

The one exception is the Brisbane CBD in which movement levels were at 67% of pre-COVID normal last week as the city was still recovering after hitting a low of 30% of normal during the recent three-day lockdown of Greater Brisbane. Restrictions including the mandatory wearing of masks indoors in Queensland have continued until today (Thursday April 15, 2020).

### Australian Capital City CBDs average 7-day movement levels March 2020 – April 2021: % Movement is compared to the 7-day average in Jan-Feb 2020



**Source:** Roy Morgan collaboration with UberMedia who provide anonymous aggregated insights using mobile location data. **Note:** Movement data for the Capital City CBDs excludes the residents of the respective CBDs.

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Roy Morgan has partnered with leading technology innovator UberMedia to aggregate data from tens of thousands of mobile devices to assess the movements of Australians as we deal with the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The interactive dashboard available on the website tracks the movement data for those visiting the Capital City CBDs during 2020 and 2021, excluding the CBD residents of each city. Movement data from several key locations around Australia is also available to view by using the interactive dashboard.

**Michele Levine, CEO of Roy Morgan, says more than a year after the COVID-19 pandemic began movement levels in Australia's Capital City CBDs are still well below pre-pandemic levels – particularly in the largest cities of Sydney and Melbourne:**

*"Movement levels in Australia's Capital City CBDs plunged over the Easter period as many Australians holidayed for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began. However, the recovery in movement levels after the Easter break sees many cities at multi-month highs and the Melbourne CBD and Adelaide CBD now have their highest levels of movement since the nation-wide lockdown was introduced in late March 2020.*

*"Last week movement levels in the Adelaide CBD were at 94% of pre-COVID averages, a record high for any Capital City CBD since the pandemic began and on a sharp upward trajectory following the Easter break.*

*"Despite trailing other cities movement in the Melbourne CBD was at 52% of pre-COVID levels in the week to Sunday April 11 – the first time movement in the southern capital has exceeded 50% since the nation-wide lockdown was implemented.*

*"The positive signs of increasing movement in Australia's Capital City CBDs were also evident in the Sydney CBD at 56% of pre-COVID averages (highest since early July 2020), Hobart CBD at 75% of pre-COVID averages (highest since late August 2020) and Perth CBD at 79% of pre-COVID averages (highest since early December 2020).*

*"The movement levels in the Brisbane CBD had recovered to 67% of pre-COVID averages by the end of last week even as the city deals with an ongoing mandate to wear masks indoors. The lockdown of the Greater Brisbane area in late March saw movement levels plunge to a low of only 30% of normal over the period leading up to Easter.*

*"The recovery in movement levels in the week after Easter is a positive sign for retailers in Capital City CBDs who have been amongst the hardest hit by the COVID-19 related restrictions. However the levels of movement in the Melbourne CBD and Sydney CBD in particular remain well down on pre-COVID averages and present an ongoing challenge for these businesses now that the JobKeeper wage subsidy payments have ended.*

*"A big issue set to face Australia's cities as workers return their city offices in higher numbers is the use of public transport compared to the use of cars. Many commuters understandably regard tightly packed public transport as a riskier way to travel to work in the era of COVID-19 compared to the perceived safety of driving one's self in and avoiding close contact with others.*

*"[Roy Morgan's public transport figures for 2020](#) show a big plunge in usage during the year as people were locked down and working from home and only a slight recovery over the last few months of the year as restrictions eased. The increased reliance many now have for driving rather than catching public transport is likely to lead to increasing problems of 'gridlock' on our roads – particularly in the larger cities of Sydney and Melbourne."*

**View the latest Roy Morgan UberMedia movement data for Australian Capital City CBDs including the [Melbourne CBD, Sydney CBD, Perth CBD, Adelaide CBD and Hobart CBD here](#).**

**MORE INFORMATION**

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### **About Roy Morgan**

Roy Morgan is Australia's largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state, as well as in the U.S. and U.K. A full-service research organisation, Roy Morgan has over 75 years' experience collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

### **About UberMedia**

UberMedia provides the highest quality mobile data solutions to creatively solve businesses persistent challenges. The company's products process billions of social, demographic, and location signals daily across retail, automotive, and entertainment to better understand modern consumers with the most accurate business decision science.

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