

Tuesday, 29 June 2021

## Movement in the Sydney CBD plunged last week – even before the city was placed into lockdown

A special analysis of movement data in Australia’s Capital City CBDs since the COVID-19 pandemic began shows movement in the Sydney CBD plunged to only 26% of pre-pandemic averages last week – even before the city was placed into a two-week lockdown on the weekend.

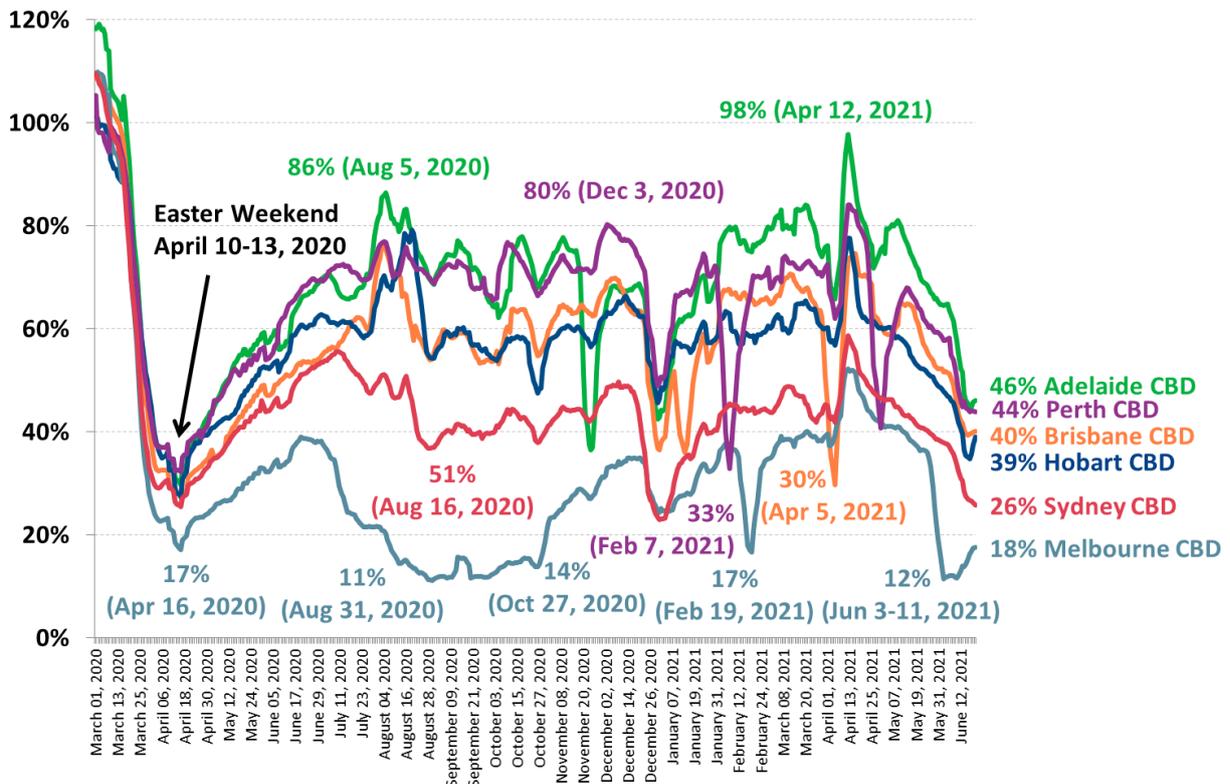
The average 7-day movement level in the Sydney CBD last week was at its lowest since early January, during the COVID-19 outbreak in the Northern Beaches, and movement levels are set to fall further this week after the entire Sydney metropolitan area was placed into its first lockdown since mid-May 2020.

Movement levels in the Melbourne CBD are recovering from the lockdown of the city in early June. Although restrictions on mask wearing and crowd gathering sizes remain, average movement levels in the Melbourne CBD had picked up to 18% of pre-COVID-19 averages last week, up from a low of 12% during the lockdown.

The last few days have seen a flurry of new border restrictions introduced as new cases of COVID-19 have emerged in Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia as well as the Northern Territory. The new ‘Delta variant’ of COVID-19 is estimated to be as much as twice as infectious as the original virus.

Before the new restrictions introduced over the weekend, movement levels in other Capital City CBDs were at just under half of their pre-pandemic levels led by the Adelaide CBD at 46% - the only mainland State yet to report a recent community case of COVID-19. In a close second place was the Perth CBD at 44% of pre-COVID-19 averages ahead of Brisbane CBD (40%) and Hobart CBD (39%).

### Australian Capital City CBDs average 7-day movement levels March 1, 2020 – June 21, 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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The latest vaccination figures from the [Health Department show over 7 million vaccination doses](#) have so far been administered to Australians covering around a quarter of the population. If herd immunity requires 80% of Australia's 20 million adults to be vaccinated, we are still many months away from administering the 32 million vaccination doses required to reach this mark.

The events over the weekend comprehensively demonstrate that until a sizeable majority of Australians are vaccinated against COVID-19 there will remain the ongoing threat of snap border closures and restrictions as well as lockdowns being enforced to get on top of any viral outbreaks.

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 the latest outbreak of COVID-19 in Sydney began in mid-June and has now resulted in the Sydney metropolitan area entering a two-week lockdown – its first city-wide lockdown for over a year since May 2020:**

*“Even before Sydney’s second city-wide lockdown was announced on Saturday the movement levels in the Sydney CBD were falling and were at an average of only 26% of pre-pandemic levels last week – less than half of what they were two months ago during the Easter school holidays.*

*“The two-week lockdown is set to send movement levels in the Sydney CBD down even further this week and below the record lows experienced during the Northern Beaches outbreak in December/January when only a small part of the wider metropolitan area was locked down.*

*“As movement in the Sydney CBD plunges there is a slow recovery in the Melbourne CBD with average movement levels increasing to 18% of pre-pandemic levels last week, up from a low of only 12% during Melbourne’s two-week lockdown in early June.*

*“There are continuing restrictions in Melbourne, including mandatory mask wearing on public transport and indoors at retail stores and workplaces, and now further restrictions have been introduced in other cities including Perth and Brisbane over the weekend.*

*“Along with a series of border closures announced over the weekend the situation has evolved quickly as concerns have grown about the new highly infectious ‘Delta strain’ of COVID-19 which some experts have said could be up to twice as contagious as the original virus.*

*“The slow rate of Australia’s vaccination take up is now contributing to the uncertainty and with only around 3% of Australians fully vaccinated the lockdowns, border closures and restrictions we have seen on the weekend are set to continue being used as policy tools for many months to come.*

*“Until a large majority of around 80% of Australian adults are vaccinated against COVID-19 we are at a continuing risk of drastic measures being taken that provide a huge hit to businesses attempting to recover from the pandemic without the level of support provided during 2020.”*

**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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