

LIFE AFTER THE PANDEMIC

a special **Insight | Out** Report

By Shadi Kaddoura & Nikola Kovacevic

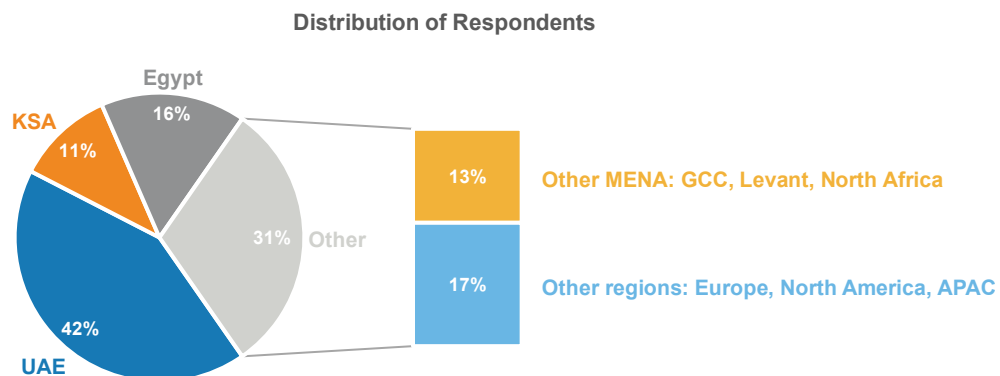


INTRODUCTION

This COVID-19 pandemic may well be the biggest historical worldwide event in our lifetime. Experts are still working on figuring out the final bill we are all going to pay, but it doesn't look good. The change this pandemic is going to impose on our lives is inevitable.

The picture is not all gloomy, though. So, instead of dwelling on the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on different aspects of life, we at **Insight | Out** have already begun to dream: **How are our lives going to change after the pandemic is over?**

*We carried out a survey amongst 2,912 consumers, regular people like you and me, to capture their views and sentiments about the future. We asked questions about how **social** and **business** practices are going to change as well as **travel**.*



INSIGHT | OUT

ABOUT INSIGHT OUT CONSULTANCY

Founded in 2008, **Insight | Out** is a holistic commercial advisory that enables hospitality, travel, and tourism brands to overcome their business challenges through data-driven and tailor-made solutions created and implemented by a diverse team of regional experts.

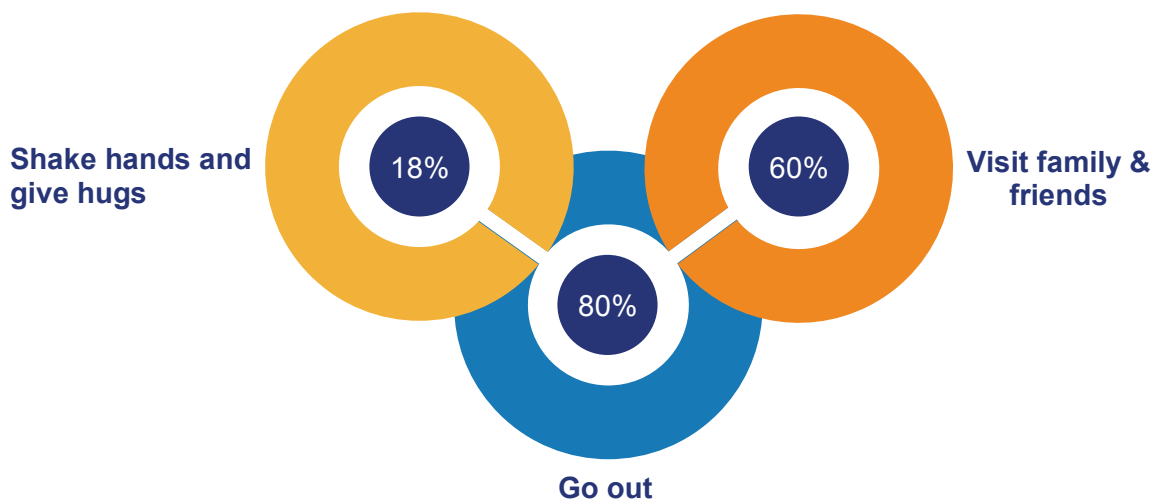
With an incredible wealth of regional and international travel experience, our team of experts is innately connected to the pulse of the industry. Through our holistic approach, we create innovative solutions to improve the core commercial performance of hospitality and tourism businesses. By completing over 300 projects successfully, we have honed an approach that assesses processes, people, and systems to identify the key areas of focus for any project. No two projects are ever the same.

Our consultancy is built on four distinct areas of capability: commercial solutions, learning and development, industry research, and representation. Each is executed by our subject matter experts, and the four verticals integrate to offer comprehensive commercial advisory services unlike any other firm in the region.

OUR PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL INTERACTION WILL CHANGE

*Right after social distancing is no longer mandated and lockdown is lifted, **88%** of our polled respondents said they would go out and do something **SOCIAL!***

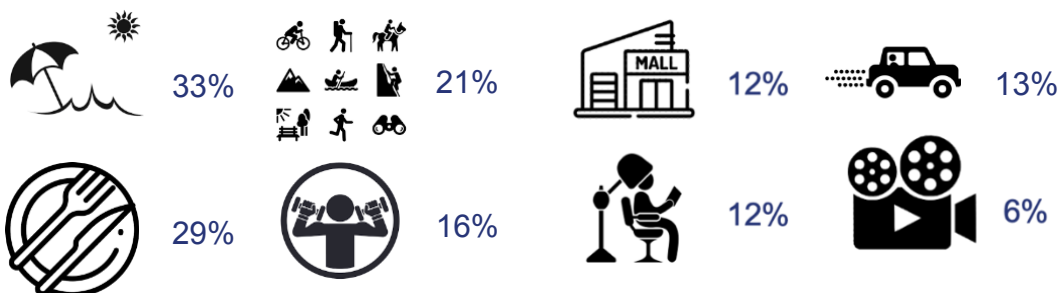
Q. What are the first things you would do when mobility is back to normal in your country?
 (Multiple answers Question)




Where would people go?

As people slowly return to their normal lives, **domestic and overland travel** may finally have a big moment, especially if borders remain tight and travel bans are still in place.

Some of our first mini-getaways might include visits to the beach, restaurants, day trips or just going out for a drive. In other words, people will still be cautious and prefer minimal-contact, domestic outings, where they are not in high-density or high-risk environments.





10% When we start to go out again, it seems people might consider a staycation that is filled with outdoor activities instead of international travel. Some businesses have even started [preparing for that trend](#).

OUR PERCEPTION OF SPACE & HYGIENE WILL CHANGE

The form in which we live or experience social interaction, as individuals and as a society, is the most evident change we are going to witness. This new view will impact a wider spectrum of our day to day actions, routines, and rules.

The increased prioritisation of cleanliness and hygiene will not only impact the amount of cleaning products we will buy, but it will also alter our perception of cleanliness and sanitisation.

Q.
How social would you behave once mobility is back to normal?

As I have been before
 I don't want to hear about social distancing anymore!

30%

Social but Cautious
 The smaller the crowds, the better

59%

I would maintain social distancing
 This is now a part of our lives

12%

The most evident change we are going to witness is how we socially interact, how we choose products and services and possibly, the rules and regulations we will have to comply with when conducting business or travel.

Following the pandemic, hygiene is going to be a highlighted feature in any product or service. Public areas will be arranged to maintain space between individuals, and additional rules and legislation will mandate precautions to prevent contamination and infection.

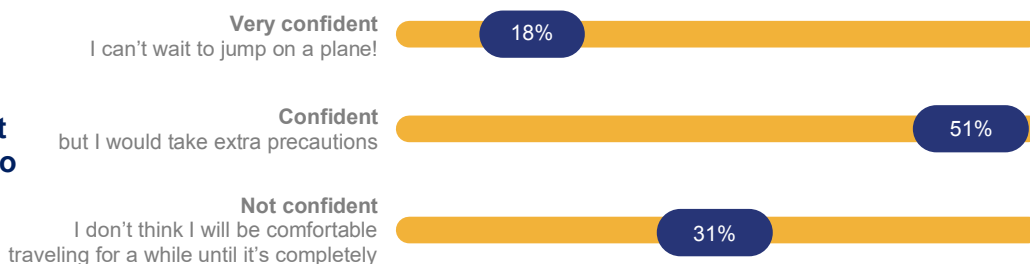


OUR PERCEPTION OF TRAVEL WILL CHANGE

In order for travel to be considered safe again, passengers will await official statements from the World Health Organization and the opening of borders by governments. Many expect certain measures and rules will be instated to protect travellers.

Tourism authorities, travel, hospitality companies, and travellers themselves are all preparing for that day to come soon. **The positive news** is that confidence levels are high, with 69% of polled respondents indicating they will travel again once possible.

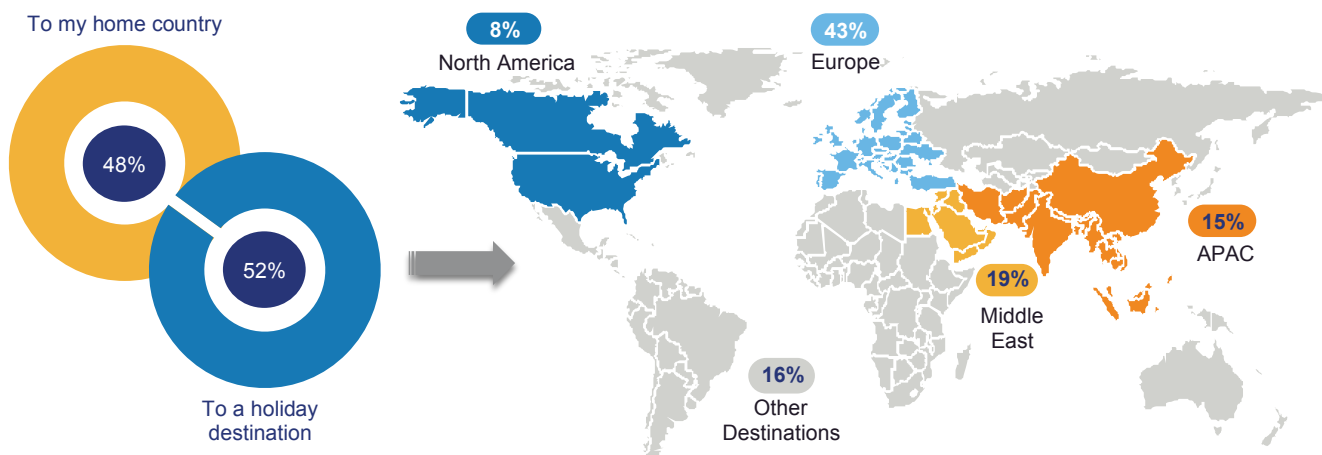
Q.
How confident would you be to travel again?



Despite the high confidence in travel, international holiday travel may not see a full comeback, but essential inter-regional travel has the potential to rebound much more quickly.

International holiday travel, however, may not see a large comeback at first, but travelling “back home” and other essential domestic and inter-regional travel has the potential to rebound much sooner. Countries may even **encourage it** as a way to help support their economy.

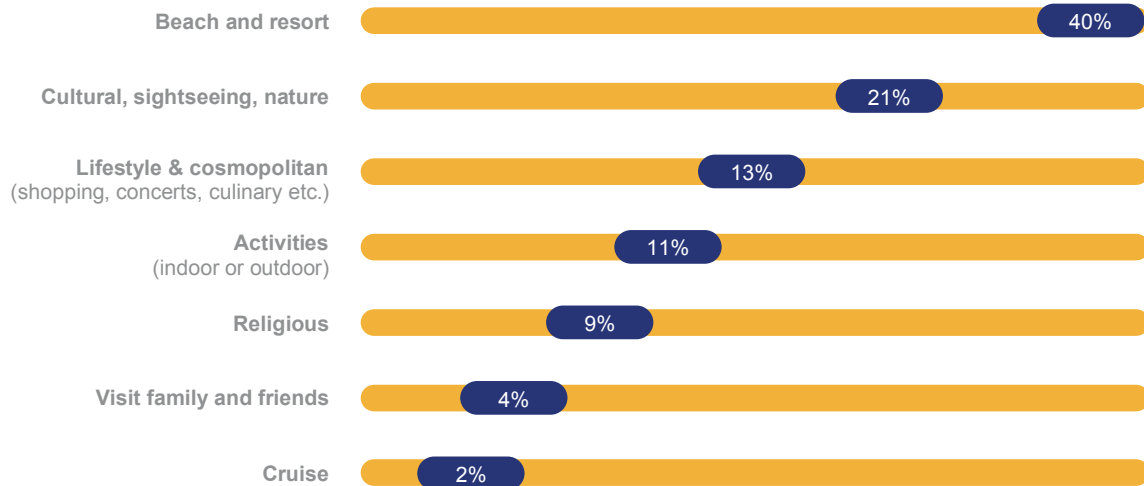
Q. **Where would you travel?**



Many of our respondents (mainly expatriates), who are confident about traveling, indicated their first trip would be to their home countries once restrictions are lifted. While others (holidaymakers), intend to travel to their favourite destinations, Europe being on top of the list.

Q. What kind of a holiday would your first trip be?

The majority of holidaymakers look forward to a break on the beach, nature, going shopping, attending concerts, and outdoor activities. 9% said they would visit religious sites (mosque, church, Umrah) to show gratitude, others would visit grandparents or grandchildren and other relatives or friends. but only 2% would be confident enough to go on a cruise trip.

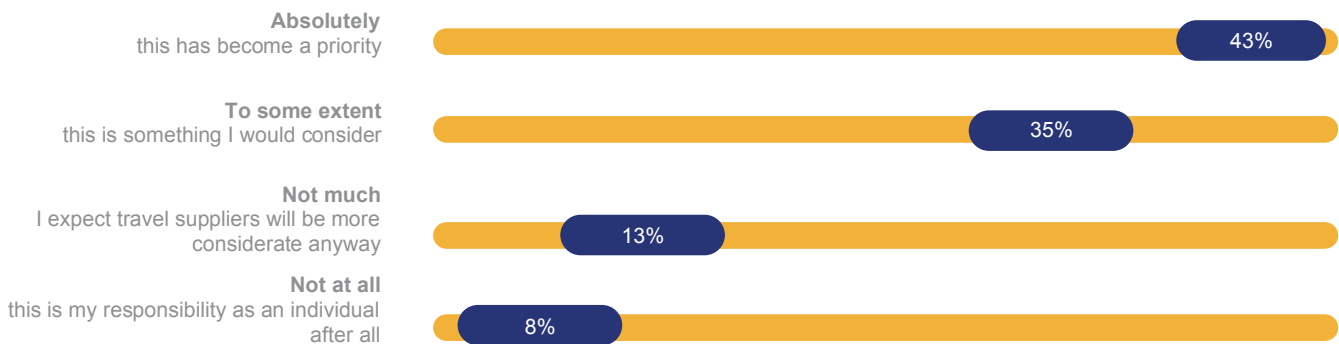


Importance of hygiene and sterilisation

78% of our polled respondents would consider hygiene and sterilisation as factors in their future selection of products and services. This would extend to travel decisions such as selecting a car rental company, hotel, airline and even a destination. Moreover, businesses will begin to highlight their practices in their future marketing communication. That might as well be part of future legislation or an industry practice.

Hygiene is going to be a highlighted feature in any product or service after the pandemic

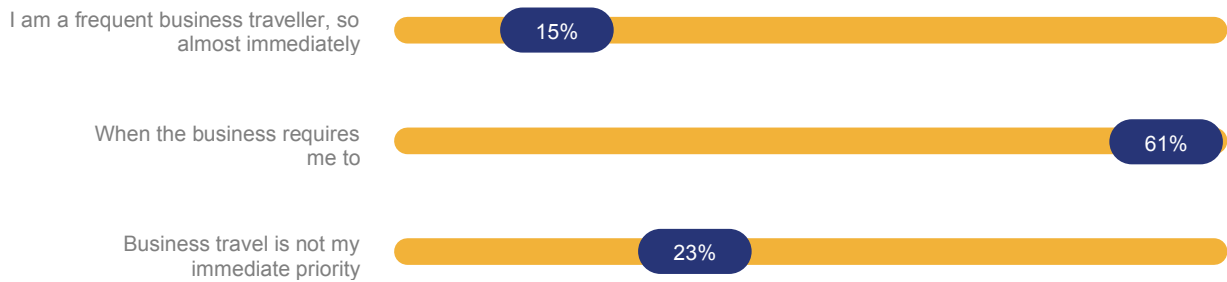
Q. Is hygiene going to be a deciding factor for you when you book your next travel supplier? (i.e. hotel, airline, car rental)



OUR PERCEPTION OF HOW WE CONDUCT BUSINESS WILL CHANGE

Two-thirds of our polled respondents do travel for business. The majority (who are company employees) would travel as soon as the business requires them to do so. While a few (who are mainly business owners) would jump on the next flight. However, approximately a quarter of the respondents said they would use alternative methods if possible.

Q. When would your first business trip be?



Using online meeting tools such as Zoom, Webex and GoToMeeting has become the norm as most people must now work from home. Many organisations have adopted online meetings to try to keep business going, and some have gone as far as setting up virtual conferences and networking events with as many as 5000 global attendees. The increase in virtual work is one trend that we believe will remain following the pandemic

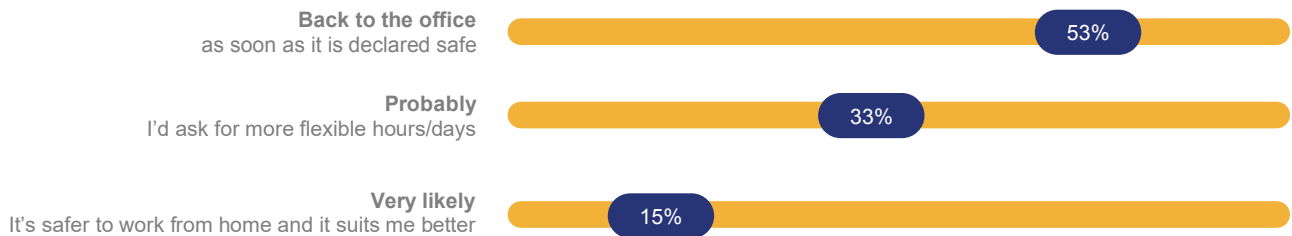


THE WAY WE EXPERIENCE WORK MIGHT CHANGE

This may look like an easy one. Everybody is talking about remote work. But the change is going to be deeper than that. Before this crisis, remote work was limited to certain type of jobs. After the pandemic, workers across all age and job spectrums will have sampled remote working, which may cause a change in our views of traditional home and office spaces.

73% of our respondents were required to adhere to the “working from home” directive, and **more than half** said they would **go back to their workplaces** as soon as it’s safe to do so. However, one third said they would probably adopt flexible hours, and a few, those are the ones still sceptical about workplace safety, would continue to work from home

Q. Would you continue to work from home?

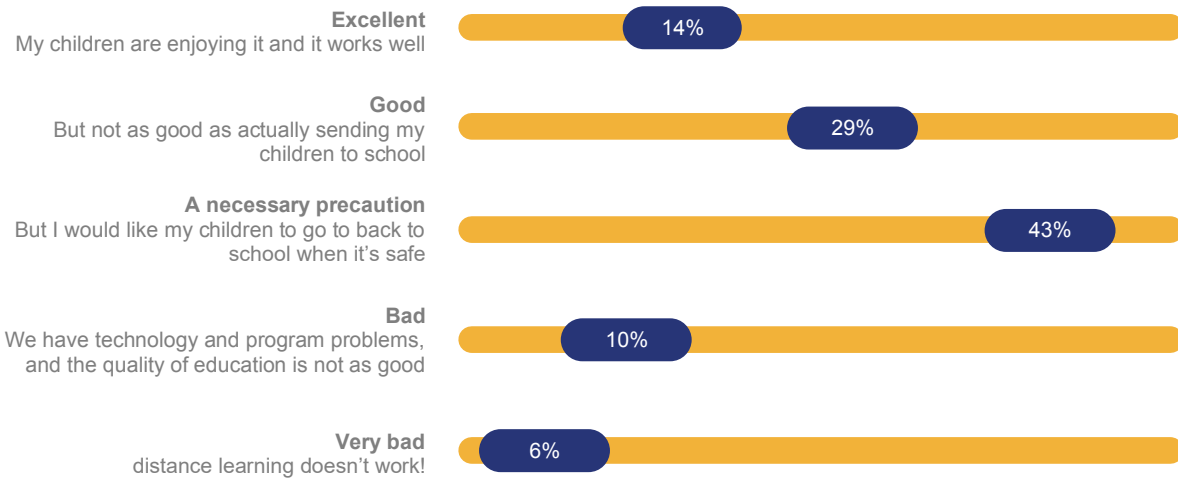


OUR EXPERIENCE OF EDUCATION MIGHT ALSO CHANGE

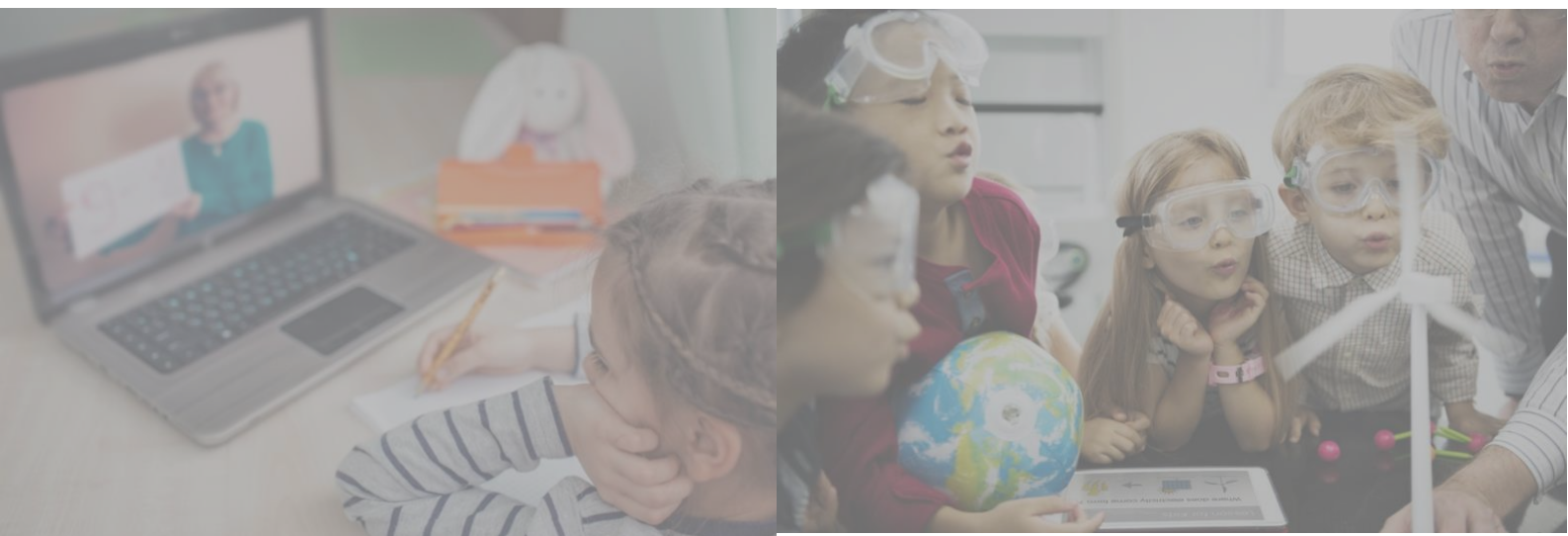
We may have overestimated the skills and knowledge we have for the use of new technology. Digital capabilities are not distributed equally across schools and universities, and deficiencies have delayed implementing systems for online teaching. Bandwidth and student access to computers are also issues.

The sentiment around distance learning reflects that around working from home; it is a necessity, but as a temporary solution. As much of the burden of distance learning falls on parents already dealing with many other concerns connected to COVID-19, it is understandable that the **majority** of respondents indicated that they would like children to **go back to school** as soon as safe.

Q. How would you rate your experience with distance learning?



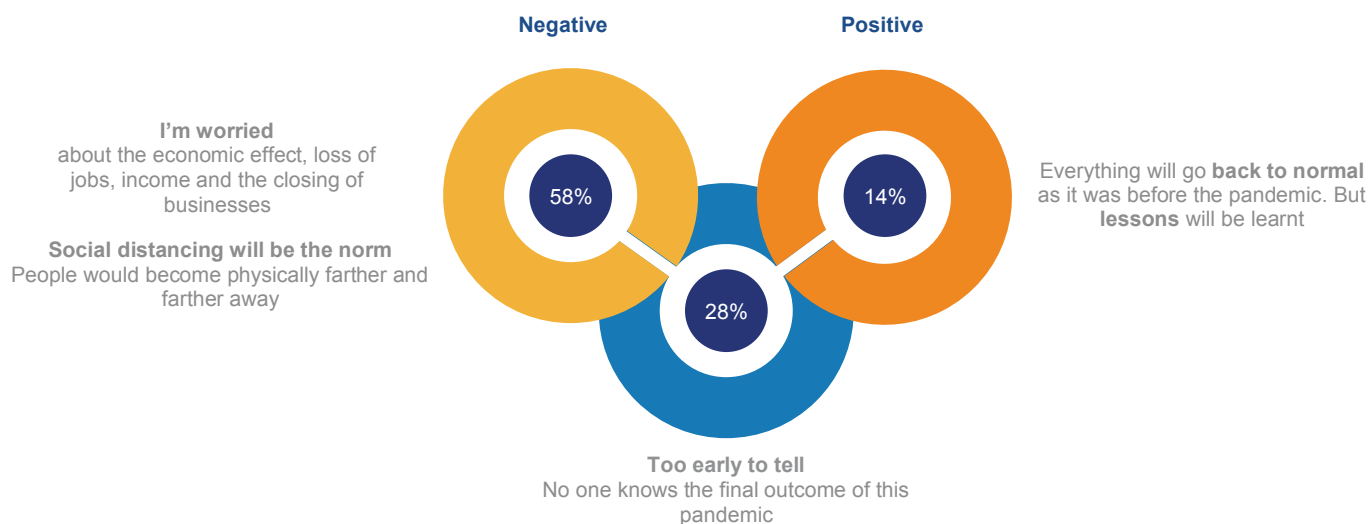
Two thirds or our polled respondents have experienced distance learning during the pandemic. 42% of those respondents said the experience was positive and it works. But of course, most would send their kids back to school as soon as they reopen. In fact, 16% of them cannot wait to do so.



DESPITE EVERYTHING, THERE WILL BE JOY

After both World Wars, arts and entertainment became the way to celebrate peace. It's natural and normal to affirm life after danger.

Q. How do you think the coronavirus pandemic would change our lives?



Despite high levels of confidence in returning back to normal and socialising again, the majority of respondents in this study expressed concerns about the effect of this pandemic on the economy and on the health of our society as a whole. But certainly, there are lessons to be learnt.

*One thing is clear: the end of the pandemic will be marked by celebration, at least in the mood. For some, they will seize the opportunity to travel far away from the home they've been isolated in for weeks. For others, this will mean having the chance to travel back to loved ones. In all cases, people will act in many ways to reaffirm their passion for life and go back to normal, albeit more **PRECAUTIOUSLY!***