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### Cost of living: majority say cost of food, goods and services have increased since COVID-19 began

#### *Groceries and household supplies, and utility bills top list of higher cost items globally*

**Sydney, Australia:—** A majority of people in 26 countries say the overall cost of food, goods and services have increased for them and their family, since the coronavirus outbreak began, according to the latest global Ipsos survey.

In Australia, more than half (52%) said the overall cost of food, goods and services had increased for them.

#### **Key Australian findings:**

- 52% said the overall cost of food, goods and services had increased for them and their families since the coronavirus outbreak began. Four in ten said it has stayed the same, while 8% said it had decreased
- Among Australians (and globally), food, groceries and household supplies were the top items reported to have increased. More than half (56%) of Australians surveyed said the cost of food, groceries and household supplies had increased, while 40% said it had stayed the same and 4% said it had decreased
- Utility bills, including water, electricity, heating, air conditioning and phone/TV/internet services, were the second biggest cost people said had increased both in Australia (40%) and globally (39%)
- Around eight in ten Australians (84%) said housing costs, such as rent and mortgage payments, had stayed the same since COVID-19 began, followed by education and childcare (80%), insurance (79%) and healthcare (78%). Another major expenditure where people said they were not paying more or less was taxes (85%)
- Australians reported personal care and beauty products, transportation, such as using public transport and fuel costs, (39%) and the cost of apparel (22%) had declined since the coronavirus outbreak. This was most likely a result of people travelling less, as restrictions forced them to work from home, and fewer purchases as retail outlets closed physical stores
- Half of people believed costs had increased for them (50%) because they had to purchase more expensive items or pay delivery charges, due to store closures and a shortage of supplies since COVID-19. But at the same time, an equal proportion of people disagreed
- Meanwhile, more than a third (37%) of Australians surveyed said they had incurred new or additional costs, such as larger utility bills, due to spending more time at home or working from home
- More than a quarter of Australians surveyed (28%) said they had purchased new, more or better goods and services, to cope with the effects of isolation

#### **Key global findings:**

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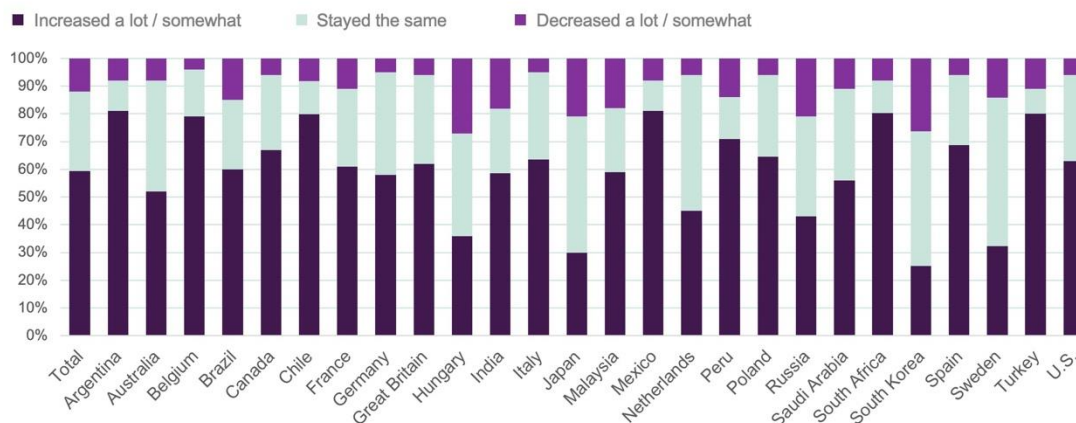
Three in five people (60%) in a poll of nearly 18,000 people worldwide, conducted from May 22 to June 5, said costs had increased somewhat or a lot, with those in Argentina, South Africa and Mexico (81%), Turkey (80%), Chile and Belgium (79%) at the top of the list.

On the other end, more than a quarter of people in Hungary (27%) and South Korea (26%) said costs had decreased somewhat or a lot since the outbreak, followed by Japan and Russia (21%).

Meanwhile, almost a third of people in all countries (29%) said costs had stayed the same, with a majority agreeing in Sweden (53%), where restrictive lockdown measures were not implemented. Almost half of people in the Netherlands and Japan (49%) and South Korea (48%) also agreed.

### Has the cost of food, goods and services increased?

Q: Overall, has the cost of food, goods and services for you and your family increased or decreased since the coronavirus?



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17,997 adults polled in 26 countries from May 22 to June 5, 2020



By region, people in Latin America were most likely to say costs had increased at 75%, followed by those in the Middle East and Africa at 72%.

### What has increased, stayed the same or decreased?

Almost two-thirds of people globally (63%) said the cost of food, groceries and household supplies had increased since the COVID-19 outbreak – the only majority average of the 11 cost categories presented.

This sentiment was highest in Argentina and Turkey (86%), Chile, Mexico and South Africa (80%).

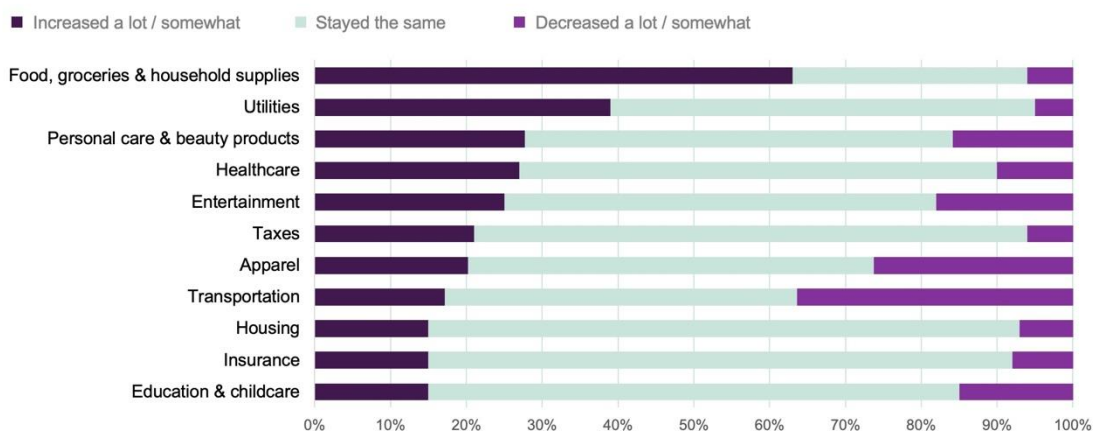
Utility bills, including water, electricity, heating, air conditioning and phone/TV/internet services, were the second biggest cost people said had increased, at an average of 39%. Those in Turkey (74%), Chile (68%), and Malaysia (65%) were most likely to cite this.

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A significant portion of people also said personal care and body products and services (28%), healthcare (27%), and entertainment (25%) products and services had also increased.

### Which costs have gone up?

Q: More specifically, has the cost of the following products or services for you and your family increased, decreased or stayed the same since the coronavirus outbreak began?



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In terms of where costs remain unchanged, three in four people (78%) said housing costs, such as rent and mortgage payments, stayed the same, followed by insurance (77%) and taxes (73%). Another major expenditure, where 70% of people said they were not paying more or less, was education and childcare.

While costs overall have either increased or stayed the same, there were some areas where a significant portion of people said costs had decreased.

More than a third (36%) said transportation, such as using public transport and fuel costs, had decreased – likely a result of less travel, as restrictions forced people to work from home. A majority of people in Turkey (56%) cited this, followed by Malaysia (52%), Great Britain (51%) and Canada (50%).

More than a quarter (26%) said the cost of apparel, such as clothing, shoes and accessories, had decreased, reflecting fewer purchases, as retail outlets closed physical stores. People in South Korea and Turkey (46%) were most likely to agree with this.

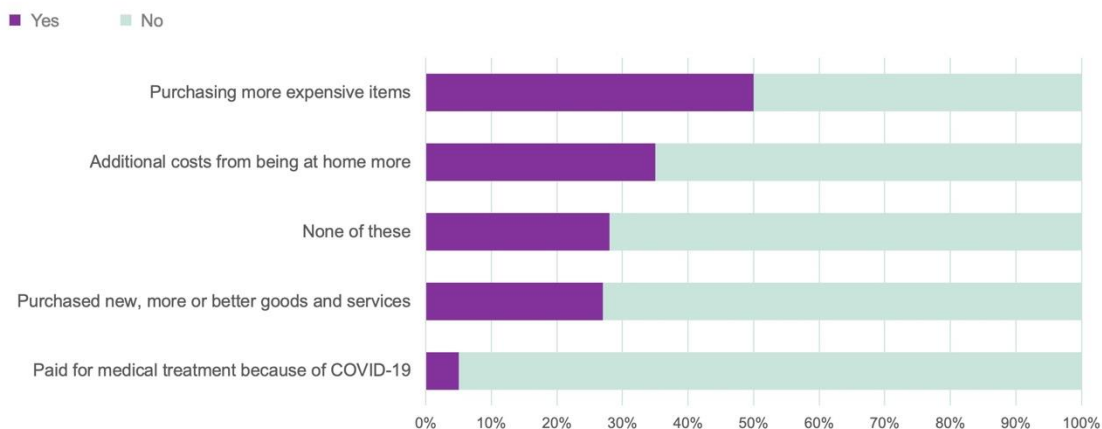
### Why did costs increase?

Half of people (50%) believed costs had increased for them because they had to purchase more expensive items or pay delivery charges, due to store closures and a shortage of supplies since COVID-19. But at the same time, an equal proportion of people globally disagreed.

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### Why do you think costs have increased since COVID-19?

Q: Did you do experience any of the following when it comes to the cost of food, goods and services for you and your family since the coronavirus outbreak?



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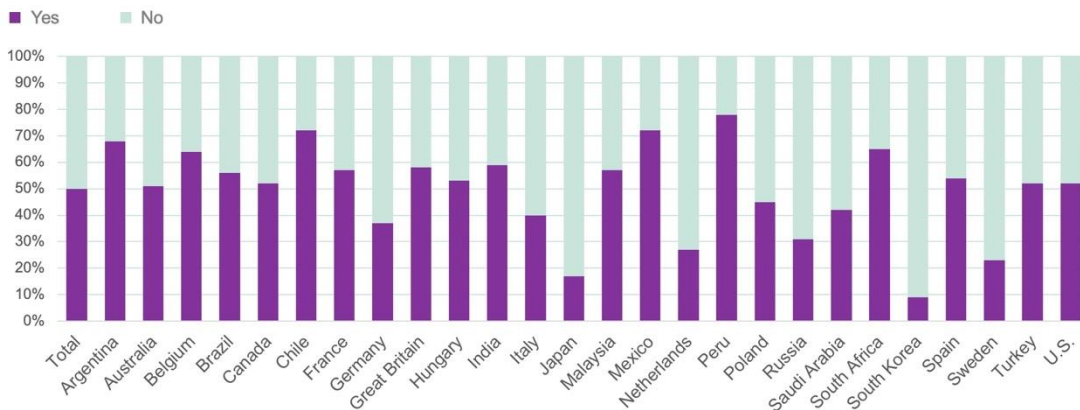
17,997 adults polled in 26 countries from May 22 to June 5, 2020



This sentiment was highest in South America with respondents in Peru (78%), Chile (72%) and Argentina (68%). Those in Asian countries - South Korea (91%) and Japan (83%) - were most likely to say this wasn't the case for them, followed by respondents in Sweden (77%) and the Netherlands (73%).

### Have you had to purchase more expensive items?

Q: Did you do experience any of the following when it comes to the cost of food, goods and services for you and your family since the coronavirus outbreak? Had to purchase more expensive items (e.g., food, household supplies, personal care products, etc.) or paid for delivery charges due to store closures and shortage of supplies.



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17,997 adults polled in 26 countries from May 22 to June 5, 2020





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Meanwhile, more than a third (35%) of people said they had incurred new or additional costs, such as larger utility bills, due to spending more time at home or working from home. Respondents in Turkey (65%) and Malaysia (63%) were most likely to agree. People in European countries like the Netherlands (84%), Sweden and France (83%), and Belgium (80%) were most likely to disagree.

In terms of spending more to cope with the effects of isolation, more than a quarter globally (27%) said they had purchased new, more or better goods and services for relief from lockdown and social distancing.

This sentiment was highest in Peru (45%), Turkey (37%), Chile (35%), Argentina (34%), Saudi Arabia and Canada (32%). People in Europe were most likely to disagree, with Hungary (89%), Germany (86%) and Russia (82%) at the top.

Lastly, most people (95%) said they didn't have to pay for medical treatment because of COVID-19, while more than a quarter (28%) said they had not experienced any of these factors when it came to purchasing food, goods and services since the outbreak began.

### About the study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted between May 22 and June 5, 2020. The survey instrument is conducted monthly in 26 countries around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system. The countries reporting are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States of America.

For the results of the survey presented, an international sample of 17,997 adults aged 18-74 in the US, Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey and Canada, and age 16-74 in all other countries, were interviewed. Approximately 1000+ individuals participated on a country-by-country basis via the Ipsos Online Panel with the exception of Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden and Turkey, where each have a sample approximately 500+. The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.1 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 4.5 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

16 of the 26 countries surveyed online generate nationally representative samples in their countries (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden and United States). Brazil, Chile, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey produce a national sample that is more urban & educated, and with higher incomes than their fellow citizens. We refer to these respondents as "Upper Deck Consumer Citizens". They are not nationally representative of their country.

For more information on the study, visit: [www.ipsos.com.au](http://www.ipsos.com.au)



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### **Ends.**

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