



Pacific Trade Invest

PACIFIC BUSINESS MONITOR 2020



PACIFIC ISLANDS
FORUM SECRETARIAT

CONTENTS

Objectives	3
Key insights	4
Sample profile.....	6
Impact of COVID-19 on business	10
Impact of COVID-19 on business revenue.....	11
Impact of COVID-19 on the local economy.....	12
Impact of COVID-19 on wellbeing	13
Impact of COVID-19 on emotional state	14
Current business status.....	15
Actions taken to reduce cost and damage to business due to COVID-19	16
Top three challenges due to COVID-19 and market conditions.....	18
Challenges as a result of COVID-19 and market conditions	19
Confidence in business survival	21
Timeframe of business sales/revenue returning to business as usual	22
Top initiatives needed to support businesses.....	23
Barriers to actioning initiatives.....	24
Access to government support during COVID-19 crisis.....	26
Satisfaction with government support.....	27
Information needed to help businesses action initiatives.....	28
Research methodology.....	29

INTRODUCTION

INSIGHTS INTO PACIFIC BUSINESSES

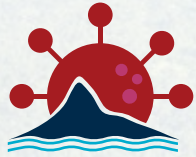
The COVID-19 outbreak has caused a global health emergency and an economic slowdown impacting millions of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) around the world, including the Pacific region.

International tourism is a driving sector for local Pacific economies, but travel restrictions in 2020, including border closures, have affected businesses in this region.

To understand the ongoing impact on the Pacific's private sector, Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) commissioned Fifth Quadrant, an independent research agency, to run a regular survey to understand the ongoing effects of COVID-19 on businesses in the Pacific.

This report reviews the data collected from across the Pacific region in the nine waves of the survey, conducted from 18 May–13 December 2020.

OBJECTIVES



UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SMES IN THE PACIFIC:

- Track impact on business revenue
- Track impact on the local economy
- Track level of concern regarding business survival
- Track impact on mental health

COMPARE SATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:

- Track satisfaction with government response and support
- Track access to government support



UNDERSTAND HOW SMES IN THE PACIFIC ARE REACTING TO THE CRISIS:

Track how businesses are adapting to the crisis to reduce impact and damage (e.g. reduced wages, staff/operational costs etc.)

IDENTIFY KEY AREAS OF SUPPORT NEEDED TO RECOVER FROM THE IMPACT OF COVID-19:

- Expectations regarding speed of recovery
- Initiatives taken to optimise/improve business readiness for upswing
- Understand the key challenges
- What assistance do they need to adapt/optimize/ improve/ survive?
- What information is required?



KEY INSIGHTS

1. THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESSES AND THE COMMUNITY IN THE PACIFIC REGION HAS REMAINED SEVERE ACROSS 2020

- Businesses in the Pacific Islands have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 due to international border restrictions and the absence of tourists. Many businesses in the Pacific rely on revenue generated from tourism and most have faced significant declines in revenue since COVID-19 began. Revenue declines have remained high across 2020, with close to 90% of businesses experiencing declines in revenue. Positively, the proportion of businesses reporting significant revenue decline decreased from 79% in May 2020 to 65% in December 2020.
- The collective impact on revenue for the majority of businesses in the Pacific has meant that local economies have been significantly impacted, with over 90% reporting a negative impact on their local economy throughout the year.
- Subsequently, the wellbeing of the community and mental health of business owners have been negatively impacted in 2020, with the pandemic disrupting livelihoods and lifestyles. This was amplified with the uncertainty regarding how long the crisis will last. Levels of worry among business owners have declined throughout the year and positive sentiments such as happiness and optimism have remained high for around a third of business owners.

2. DESPITE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS ON BUSINESS AND WELLBEING, BUSINESSES IN THE PACIFIC HAVE REMAINED RESILIENT AND TAKEN ACTION TO REDUCE IMPACT

- Despite significant declines in revenue, around three-quarters of Pacific businesses have remained fully or partly operational throughout the year. July and August saw a higher proportion of businesses temporarily close but most have since recovered, with less than a quarter temporarily closed and none permanently closed at the end of 2020.
- To remain operational, almost all businesses have taken actions to reduce the cost and damage to their businesses. At the beginning of the pandemic, most businesses were focusing on reducing operational costs but positively, since August 2020, 50 per cent of businesses also started to diversify their offering.
- Reducing operational costs and reducing working hours remain the main methods to preserve business revenue. However, businesses are now implementing alternative revenue streams such as diversifying products/ services and a quarter are selling more online. The shift to a diversified offering and selling more online means that these businesses are less dependent on income from tourists and will be able to survive until borders reopen.
- As of December 2020, 53 per cent of businesses had not diversified their offering or pivoted to online – showing an area for increased support.

KEY INSIGHTS CONT...

3. BUSINESSES IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS HAVE FACED SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES WHILST NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC

- Although businesses are trying to counteract negative impacts, the uncertainty of how long the COVID-19 crisis will last remains a major challenge for businesses. Without a timeframe of when tourists will be allowed back in, it is difficult for businesses to generate short- and long-term plans.
- The impact of no tourism due to closed international borders and subsequent lack of cashflow remain very challenging for most businesses and although many are looking for alternative revenue streams, it is unlikely to replace the majority of income generated from tourism.
- As the pandemic has also impacted supply chains and distribution channels, the increasing cost of products/raw materials became increasingly challenging for three-quarters of businesses during the second half of 2020.

4. DESPITE CHALLENGES, BUSINESSES ARE CONFIDENT AND LOOKING FOR INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT THEIR BUSINESS MOVING FORWARD

- Positively, and despite significant challenges, over three-quarters of businesses are confident that they will survive the COVID-19 crisis. Confidence has been increasing throughout the year as businesses are adapting and looking to alternative avenues and initiatives to generate revenue.
- As the year has progressed, timeframe expectations of returning to business as usual have shifted back, with half of businesses now expecting to return to normal by end of 2021. A quarter of businesses find it hard to predict, highlighting the ongoing uncertainty and high dependency around when borders will reopen.
- Looking forward, businesses are seeking to action initiatives to further support their business. Improving financial position remains key for around half of businesses as revenue continues to be impacted and nearly one third are looking to improve/implement online commerce capabilities to support the need to sell more online.
- Businesses are facing slightly less barriers to actioning these initiatives as the year has progressed. The key barriers are still limited cashflow and closed borders, which are faced by over a third of businesses. Reopening borders and allowing tourists to visit the Pacific Islands remains key for businesses to recover cashflow. Many businesses have also expressed that they need more information to be able to action initiatives, particularly information regarding where to go for assistance, available government support and how to access it, economic information and e-commerce assistance.
- Limited government assistance has become less of a barrier in recent months as the proportion of businesses receiving government support has increased significantly. Two thirds of businesses now state that the government has provided some support. Satisfaction with the government response has also increased significantly in December 2020. Around half of businesses are now satisfied with the response but one third are still dissatisfied, indicating that more needs to be done to support businesses through the crisis.

SAMPLE PROFILE

Our sample includes businesses based in the Pacific Islands. We achieved a robust sample of over n=110 for each wave in 2020.

WAVE	FIELDWORK START	FIELDWORK END	BASE SIZE PER WAVE
Wave 1	18 May 2020	- 24 May 2020	Wave 1 n=157
Wave 2	1 June 2020	- 7 June 2020	Wave 2 n=143
Wave 3	15 June 2020	- 21 June 2020	Wave 3 n=126
Wave 4	29 June 2020	- 12 July 2020	Wave 4 n=134
Wave 5	3 August 2020	- 16 August 2020	Wave 5 n=199
Wave 6	31 August 2020	- 13 September 2020	Wave 6 n=123
Wave 7	5 October 2020	- 18 October 2020	Wave 7 n=136
Wave 8	2 November 2020	- 15 November 2020	Wave 8 n=171
Wave 9	30 November 2020	- 13 December 2020	Wave 9 n=113

SAMPLE PROFILE

LOCATION

Our sample includes businesses across 16 Pacific Island countries, with the distribution of respondents from each country generally in line across the waves.

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9
<i>Total base n=</i>	157	143	126	134	199	123	136	171	113
Cook Islands	10	4	4	2	20	4	31	9	17
Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fiji	27	15	10	10	6	13	5	34	9
French Polynesia	3	0	4	2	0	1	0	1	1
Kiribati	6	2	3	2	4	1	2	4	0
Marshall Islands	1	1	1	0	0	7	1	0	0
Nauru	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	1
New Caledonia	8	10	7	9	25	12	7	10	6
Niue	2	36	10	52	41	18	22	36	30
Palau	2	13	16	4	5	9	4	4	3
Papua New Guinea	19	26	16	12	18	4	5	6	4
Samoa	15	10	12	5	10	10	9	8	4
Solomon Islands	8	8	13	8	30	6	6	9	9
Tonga	32	9	16	15	18	10	8	11	2
Tuvalu	2	1	1	4	13	15	26	15	20
Vanuatu	20	8	11	9	8	13	9	13	7

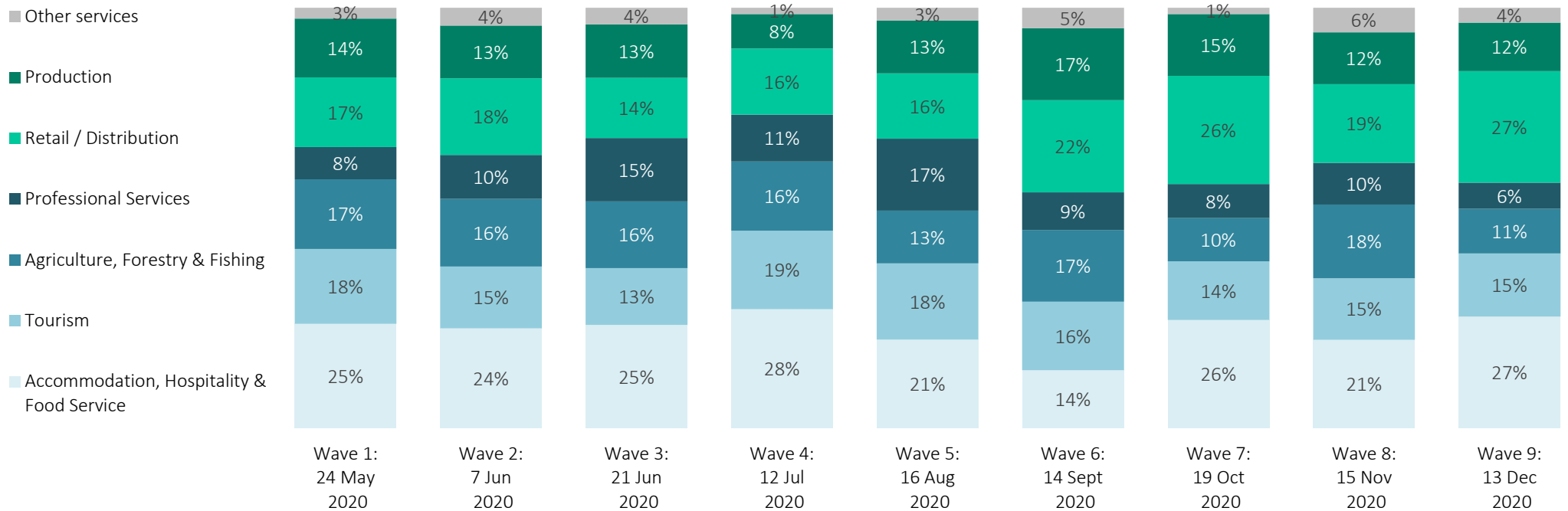
SAMPLE PROFILE

INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION

The distribution of respondents across different industry groups are generally in line across the waves.

Q

WHAT IS THE MAIN FOCUS OF YOUR BUSINESS?



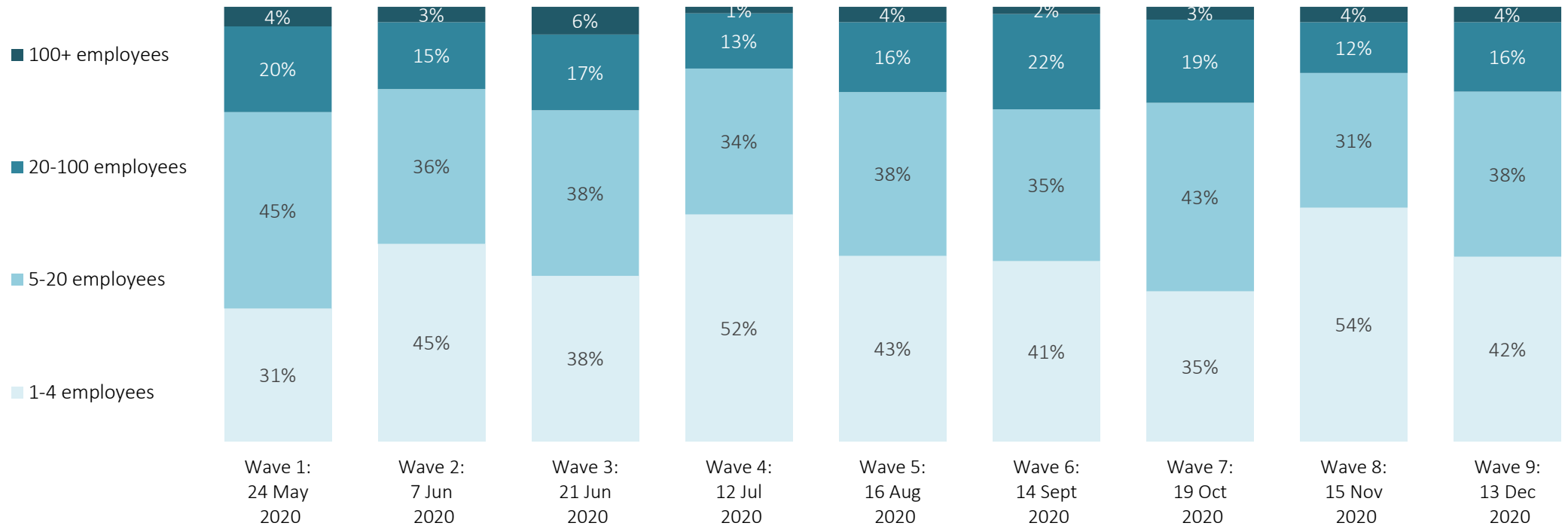
SAMPLE PROFILE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Number of employees and the proportion of business sizes in the sample were also consistent across the waves.

Q

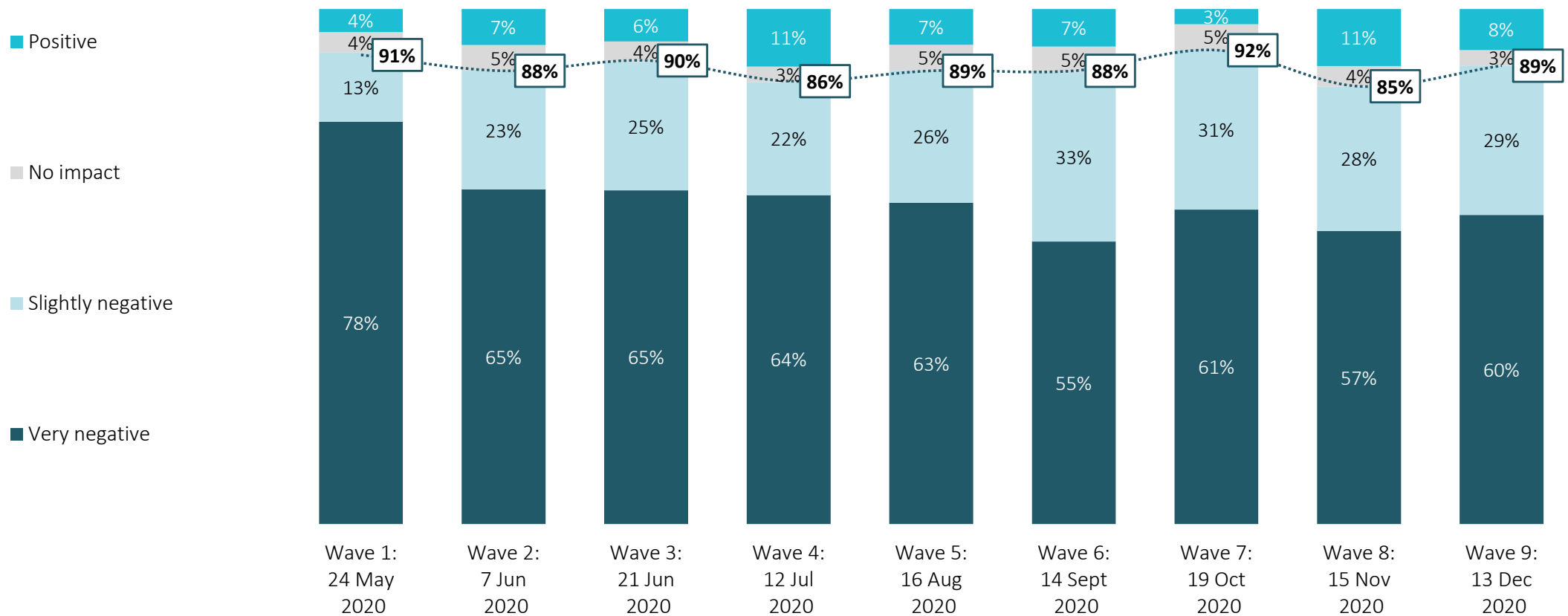
INCLUDING YOURSELF, HOW MANY EMPLOYEES DOES YOUR BUSINESS DIRECTLY EMPLOY?



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS

Businesses in the Pacific Islands have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 due to international border restrictions. The negative impact has remained high across 2020, with approximately 90% of businesses experiencing negative impact.

Q HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK ON YOUR BUSINESS?

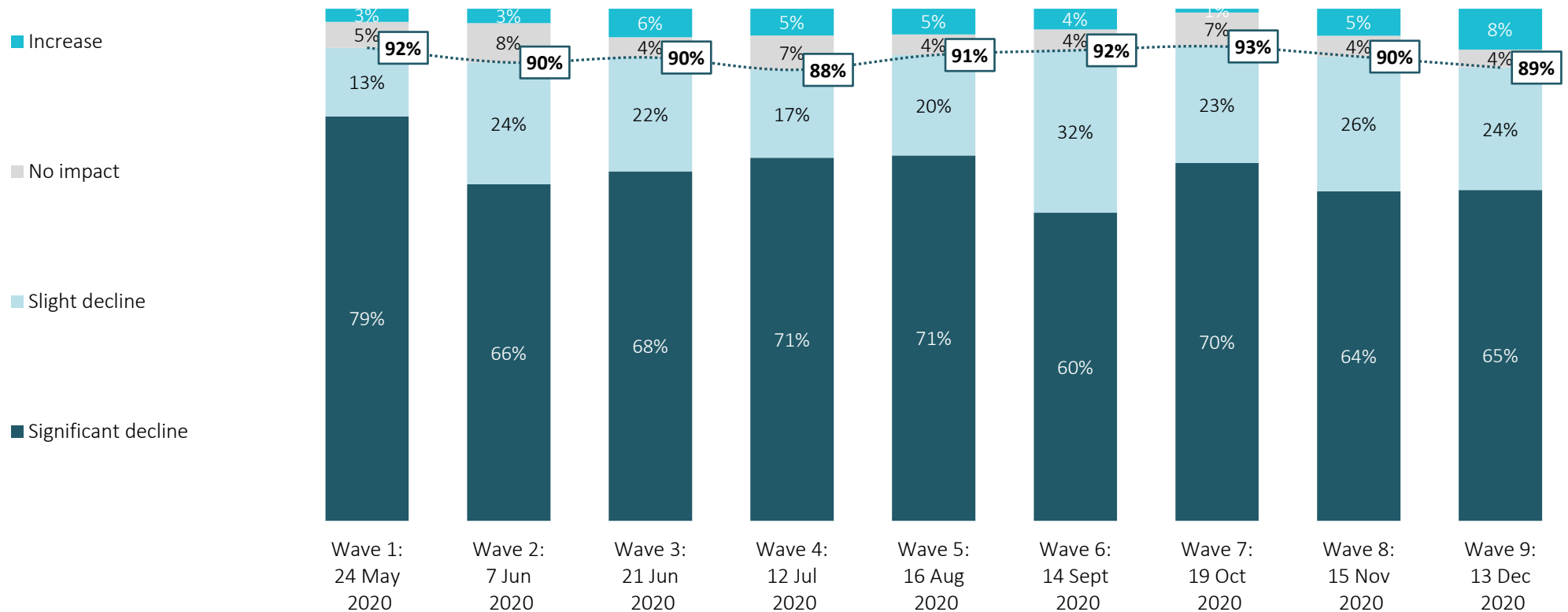


IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS REVENUE

In line with the negative impact, businesses have faced significant declines in revenue since COVID-19 began, due to border restrictions and the absence of tourists.

Q

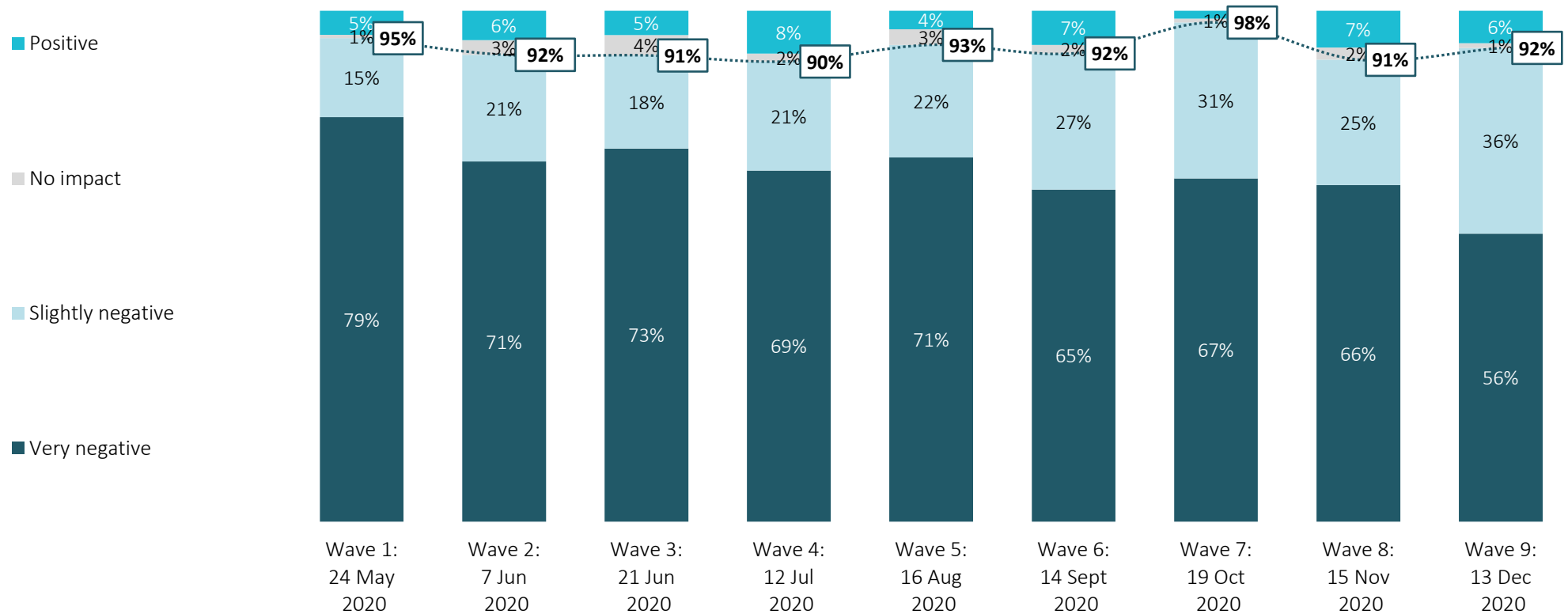
WHAT IMPACT HAS THE COVID-19 CRISIS HAD ON YOUR BUSINESS SALES/REVENUE SO FAR?



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The collective impact on revenue for most businesses in the Pacific has meant that local economies have been significantly impacted, with over 90% reporting a negative impact on their local economy throughout the year.

Q WHAT IMPACT HAS THE COVID-19 CRISIS HAD ON YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY?



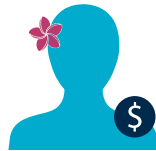
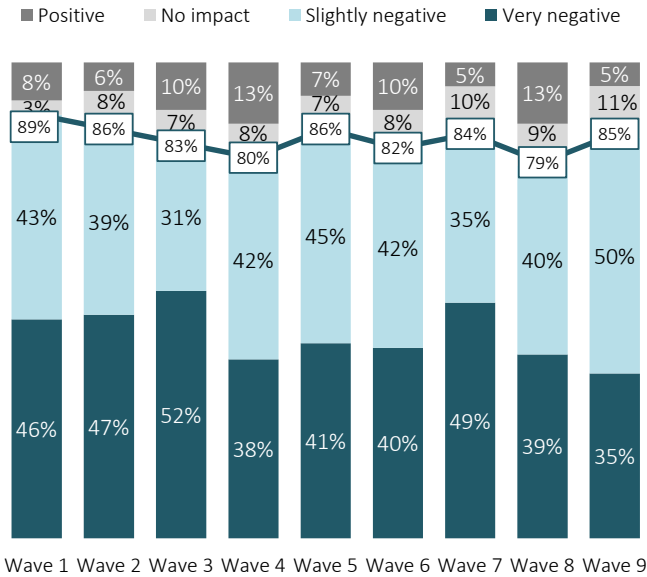
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WELLBEING

The wellbeing of the community and mental health of business owners were negatively impacted in 2020, with the pandemic disrupting livelihoods and lifestyles as well as operating with the uncertainty of when things would return to 'normal'.

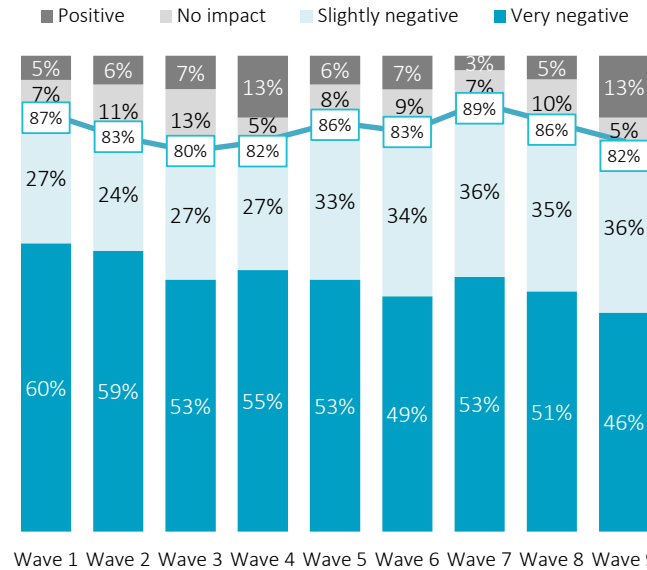
Q WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK THE COVID-19 SITUATION WILL HAVE ON THE FOLLOWING...?



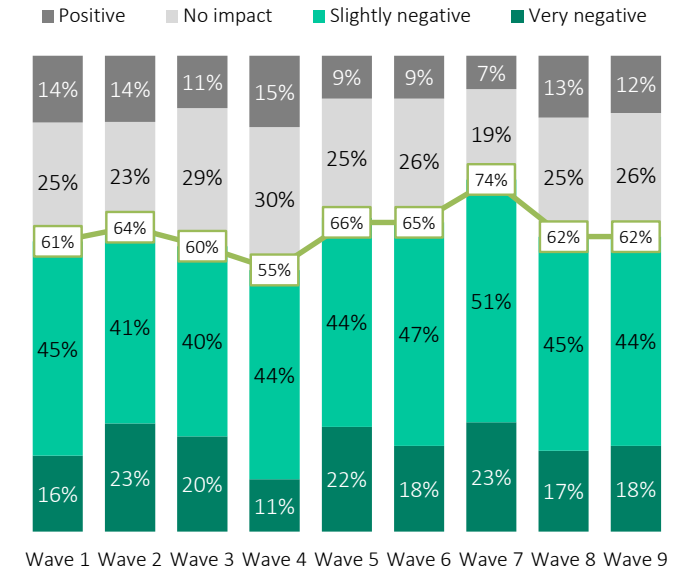
THE WELLBEING OF YOUR COMMUNITY



YOUR PERSONAL FINANCIAL SITUATION



YOUR MENTAL HEALTH



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EMOTIONAL STATE

Levels of worry among business owners have declined throughout the year and positive sentiments such as happiness and optimism have remained high for around a third of business owners.

Q THINKING BACK OVER THE LAST 2 WEEKS, HOW OFTEN DID YOU FEEL...?



OPTIMISTIC



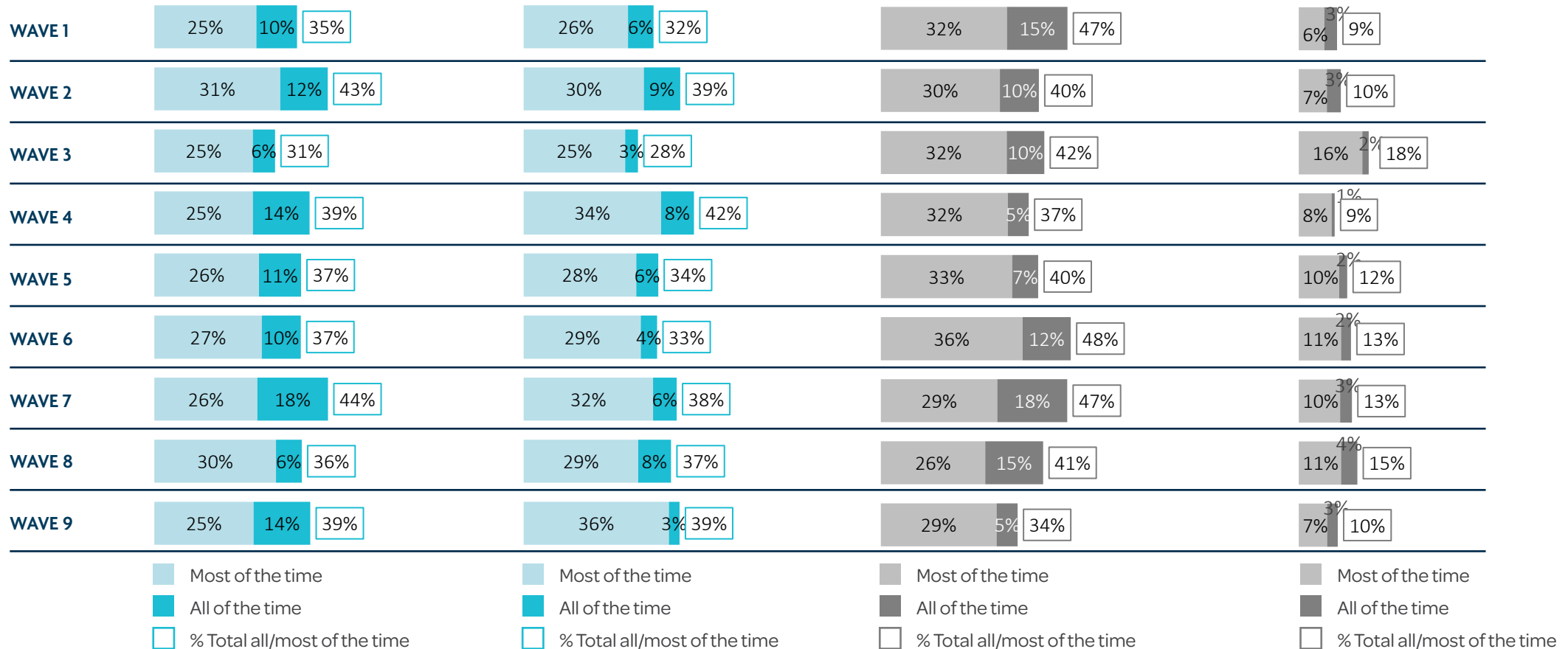
HAPPY



WORRIED



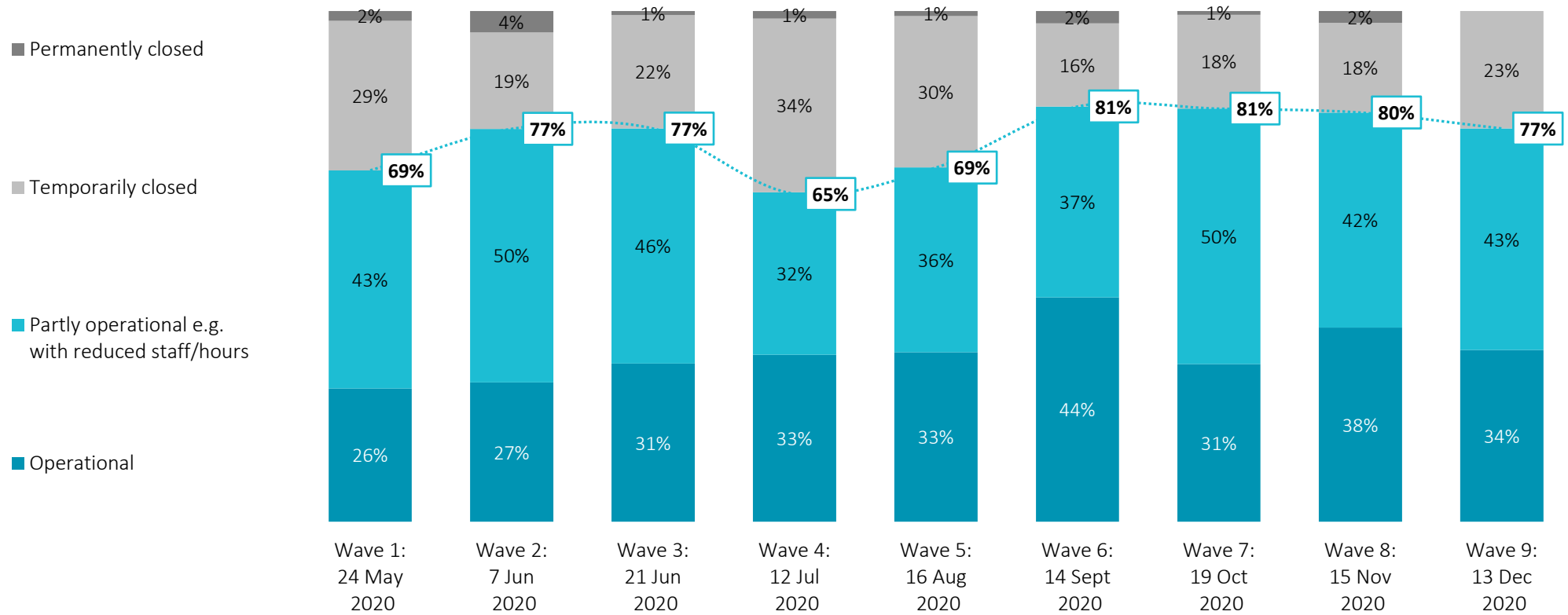
ANGRY



CURRENT BUSINESS STATUS

Despite significant declines in revenue, around three-quarters of Pacific Island businesses have remained fully or partly operational throughout the year. July and August saw a higher proportion of businesses temporarily close; however, rates of closure declined, with less than a quarter temporarily closed and none permanently closed at the end of 2020.

Q WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS STATUS?

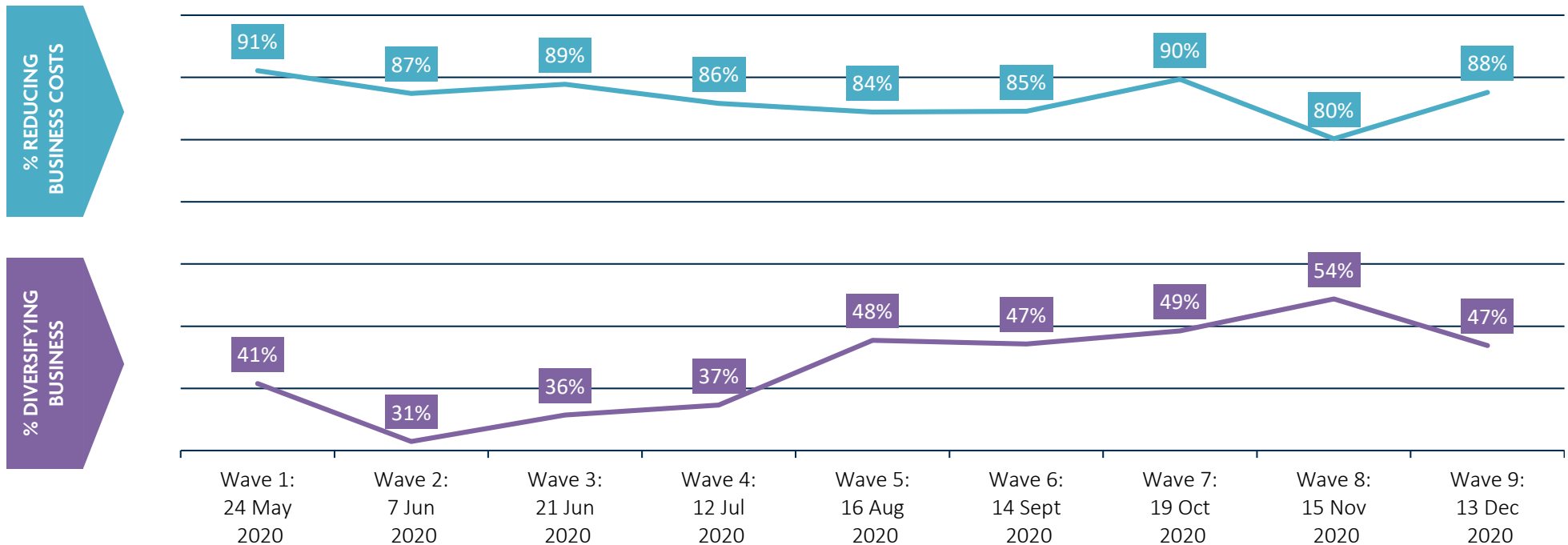


ACTIONS TAKEN TO REDUCE COST AND DAMAGE TO BUSINESS DUE TO COVID-19

To remain operational, almost all businesses have taken actions to reduce the cost and damage to their businesses. At the beginning of the pandemic, most businesses were focusing on reducing operational costs but positively, since August, 50% of businesses have also started to diversify their offering.



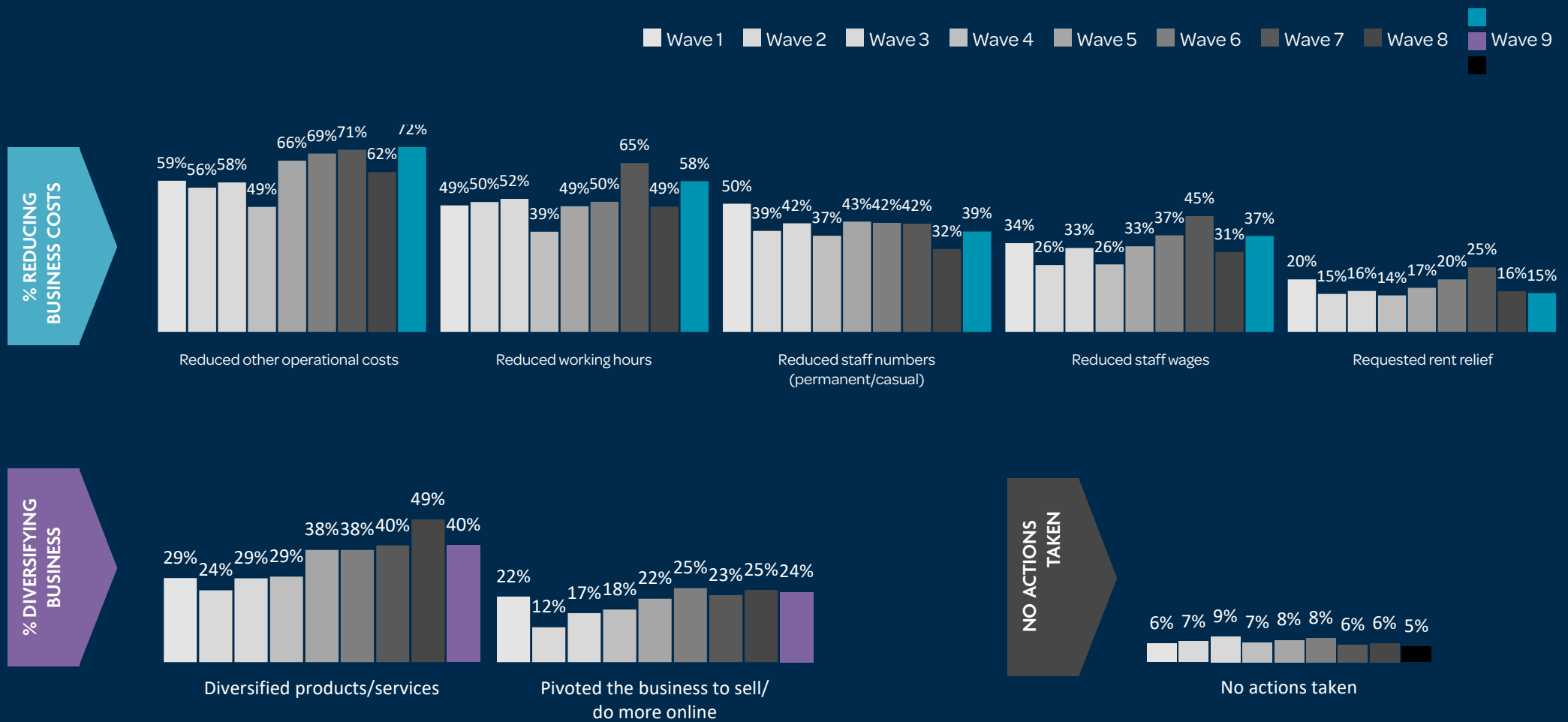
INDICATE THE ACTIONS YOUR BUSINESS HAS TAKEN TO REDUCE THE COST & DAMAGE TO YOUR BUSINESS DUE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS.



ACTIONS TAKEN TO REDUCE COST AND DAMAGE TO BUSINESS DUE TO COVID-19

Positively, businesses are implementing alternative revenue streams such as diversifying products/services and a quarter are selling more online. The shift to a diversified offering and selling more online means that these businesses are less dependent on income from international tourists.

Q INDICATE THE ACTIONS YOUR BUSINESS HAS TAKEN TO REDUCE THE COST & DAMAGE TO YOUR BUSINESS DUE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS.



TOP THREE CHALLENGES DUE TO COVID-19 AND MARKET CONDITIONS

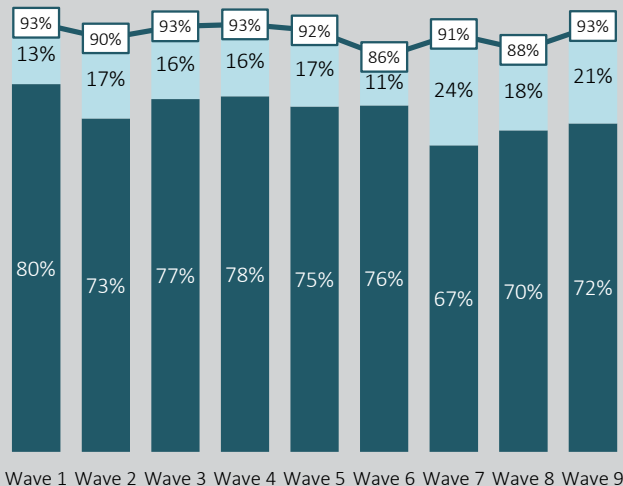
Despite these efforts, businesses in the Pacific have faced significant challenges whilst navigating the pandemic. The uncertainty of how long the crisis will last, the impact of no international tourism due to closed borders and subsequent lack of cashflow, remain very challenging for most businesses.



HOW CHALLENGING HAS YOUR BUSINESS FOUND THE FOLLOWING AS A RESULT OF COVID-19 AND THE CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS?



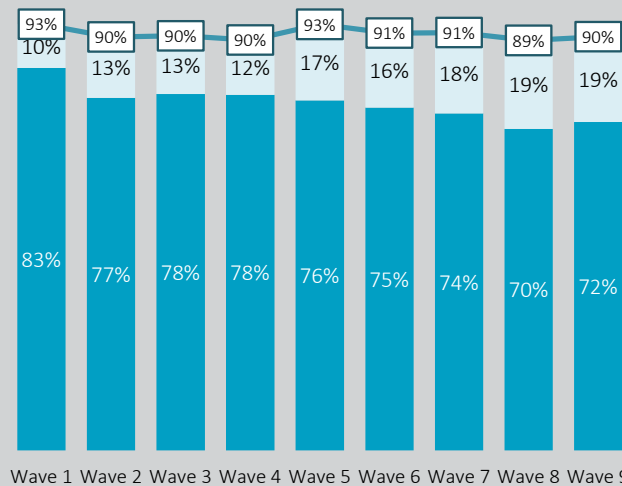
NOT KNOWING HOW LONG THE CRISIS WILL LAST



- Somewhat challenging
- Very challenging
- Total



IMPACT OF CLOSED INTERNATIONAL BORDERS



- Somewhat challenging
- Very challenging
- Total



POOR CASHFLOW



- Somewhat challenging
- Very challenging
- Total

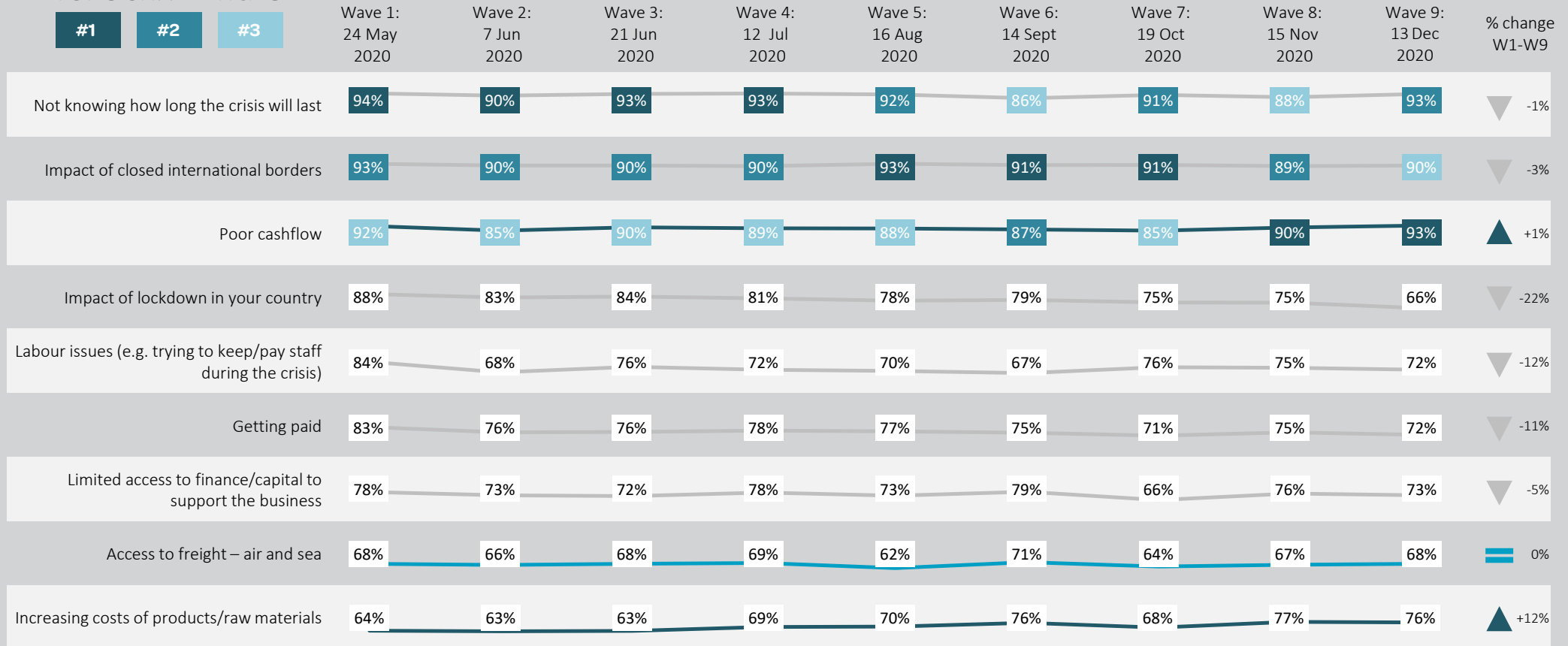
CHALLENGES AS A RESULT OF COVID-19 AND MARKET CONDITIONS

As the pandemic has also impacted supply chains and distribution channels; the increasing cost of products/raw materials have become increasingly challenging for three-quarters of businesses during the second half of the year.



HOW CHALLENGING HAS YOUR BUSINESS FOUND THE FOLLOWING AS A RESULT OF COVID-19 AND THE CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS?

TOP 3 CHALLENGES



CHALLENGES AS A RESULT OF COVID-19 AND MARKET CONDITIONS

VERBATIM COMMENTS – INCREASING COSTS AND ACCESS TO FREIGHT

INCREASING COSTS OF PRODUCTS/RAW MATERIALS/FREIGHT

“Little to no cash flow to implement new products/services to a new market. Cost of internet for online endeavors.”

SME, Tourism, Tonga, Wave 3

“Costs of red-tape regulations are too high and keep increasing every year. Loan interests are too high, especially (Agriculture Bank).”

SME, Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, Vanuatu, Wave 1

“Lockdown and State of Emergency limiting a lot of movement and increase in daily cost of living.”

SME, Tourism, Papua New Guinea, Wave 1

“Prices for raw products (Coffee) have increased due to uncertainty of the supply on the market. As major exporters have pushed prices up, this has resulted in smaller buyers being pushed out of the market, by increase in cost of raw products.”

SME, Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing Papua New Guinea, Wave 4

“It’s all well and good looking at how we can do things differently or look at new markets, increase our internet presence but we still have to get our products to our customers. The increased cost of freight and postage make it impossible to have any profit margin and at times those costs are so great that we would be selling at a loss if we proceeded with the sale. Nothing will happen, there will be little growth until those excessive costs are addressed.”

SME, Other Services, Cook Islands, Wave 7

“Increased cost of freight for exports.”

SME, Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, Vanuatu, Wave 8

ACCESS TO FREIGHT – AIR AND SEA

“There is limited flights a week with limited cargo space.”

SME, Healthcare & Social Assistance, Palau, Wave 3

“We can diversify and do everything possible to make things work but until we have affordable air and sea freight which doesn’t use all the profit in any sales we are wasting our time. Airlines and shipping companies aren’t the only ones that need to make a profit.”

SME, Other Services, Cook Islands, Wave 8

“It’s all well and good looking to increase online sales or diversify our market but the cost for airfreight makes it not financially viable to look at doing these sales. When using the postal services, a small parcel to Auckland is taking over 4 weeks to arrive and parcels are going missing in the post. The cost to post has also skyrocketed.”

SME, Other Services, Cook Islands, Wave 6

“We only have one courier service out of Niue DHL and once the product is being transshipped in New Zealand, we have to deal with incompetent staff there and at a premium cost. We need an alternative courier service out of Niue.”

SME, Arts & Recreation, Niue, Wave 2

“Online service is challenging especially with COVID Impacts on Freight! Out of Rarotonga there is only 1 cargo flight. Orders posted we cannot track. Duration/time-frame for a customer to receive goods is unknown. This is a major challenge currently faced. Additionally, PayPal does not allow our region (Cook Islands) to receive payment as well as having difficulties creating an online system to receive funds here in the Cook Islands. Freight cost is also high.”

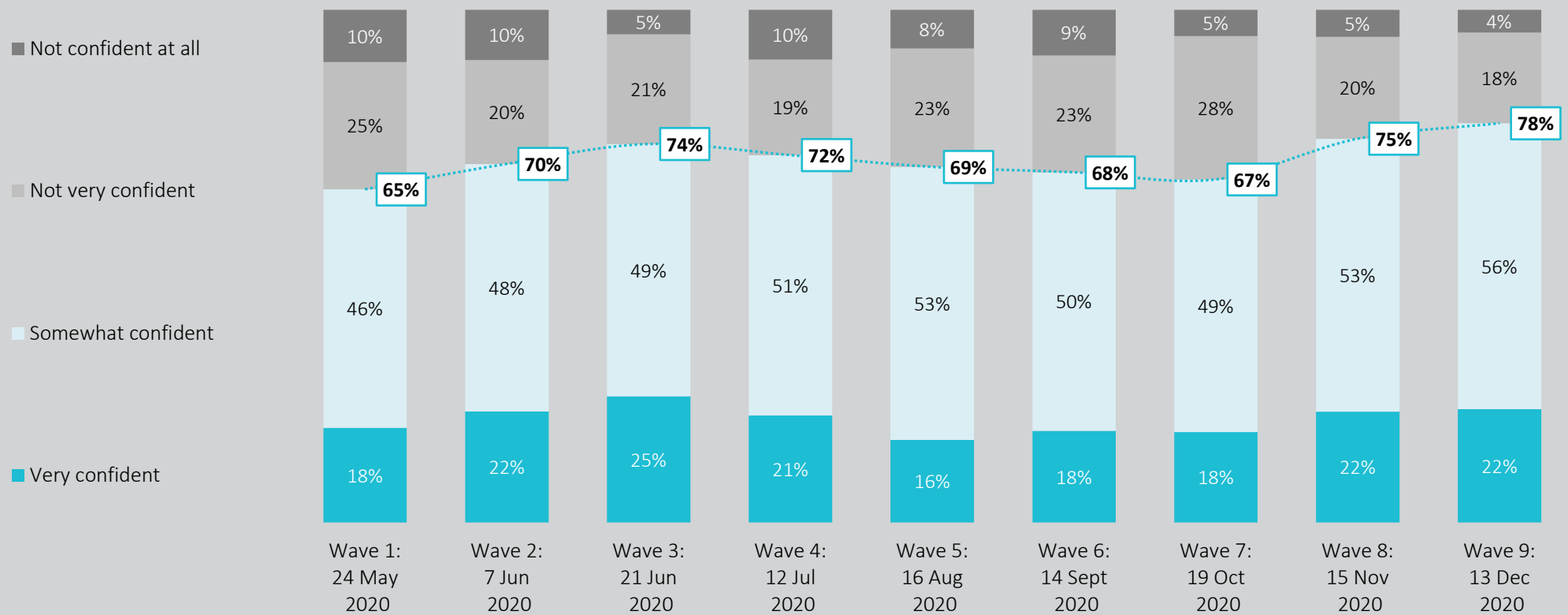
SME, Retail Trade Cook Islands, Wave 7

CONFIDENCE IN BUSINESS SURVIVAL

Positively, and despite significant challenges, over three-quarters of businesses are confident that they will survive the COVID-19 crisis. Confidence has been increasing throughout the year as businesses are adapting and looking to alternative avenues and initiatives to generate revenue.

Q

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT YOUR BUSINESS WILL SURVIVE THE COVID-19 CRISIS?



TIMEFRAME OF BUSINESS SALES/REVENUE RETURNING TO BUSINESS AS USUAL

As the year has progressed, timeframe expectations of returning to business as usual have shifted back, with half of businesses now expecting to return to normal by end of 2021. One quarter find it hard to predict, highlighting the ongoing uncertainty and dependency around when borders will reopen.

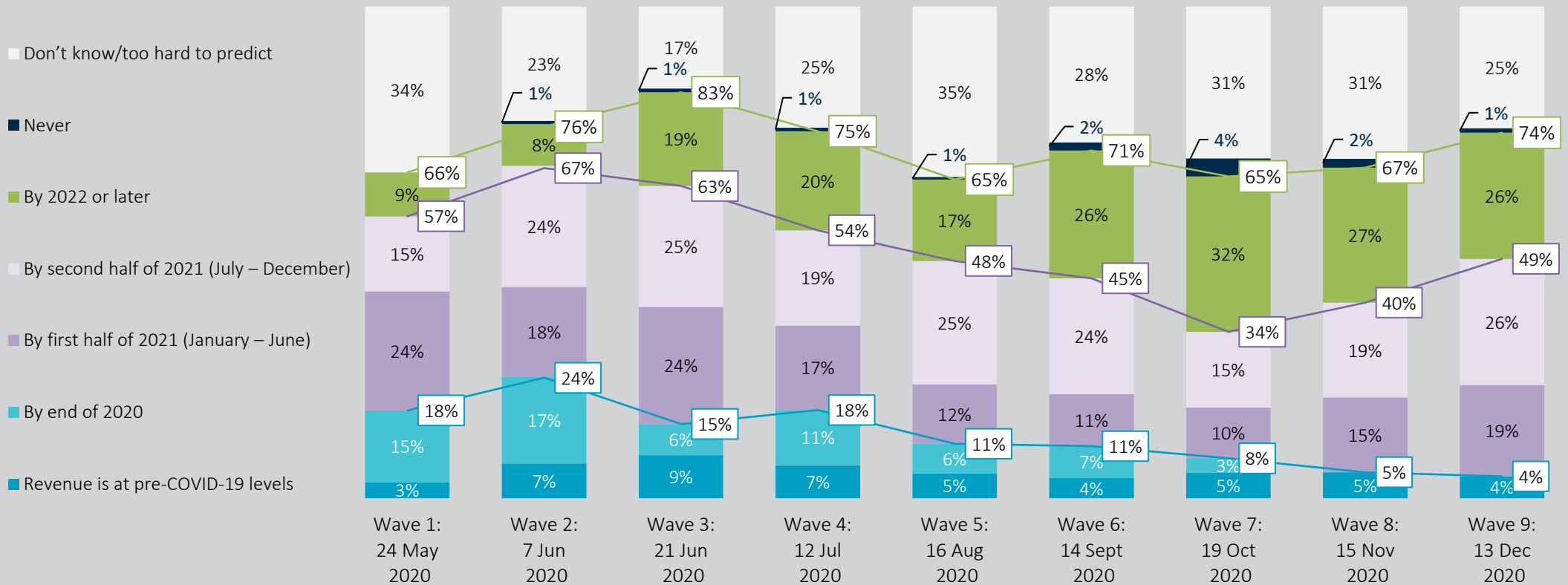


WHEN DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR BUSINESS SALES/REVENUE WILL RETURN TO PRE-COVID-19 LEVELS?

Total returned to pre-COVID levels by 2022 or later

Total returned to pre-COVID levels by end of 2021

Total returned to pre-COVID levels by end of 2020

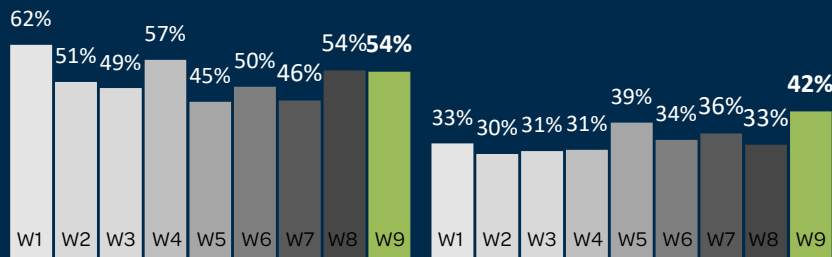


TOP INITIATIVES NEEDED TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES

Looking forward, businesses are looking to action initiatives to further support their business. Improving financial position remains key for around half of businesses as revenue continues to be impacted and nearly one-third are looking to improve/implement online commerce capabilities to support the need to sell more online.

Q WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE INITIATIVES THAT YOU NEED TO ACTION TO SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS NOW?

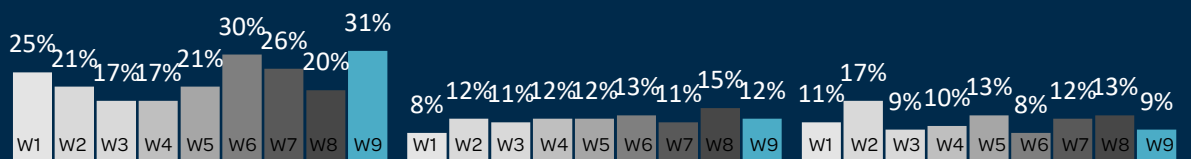
IMPROVE FINANCIAL POSITION



Access financial support (grants, deferrals, etc)

Review/update financial position (cashflow, debt levels, leases)

IMPROVE TECHNOLOGY & SKILLS

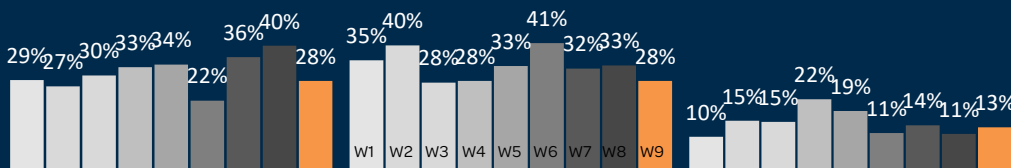


Improving/implement online-commerce capabilities

Access to better skills and knowledge & upskill staff

Review/update technology

IMPROVE BUSINESS OFFERING

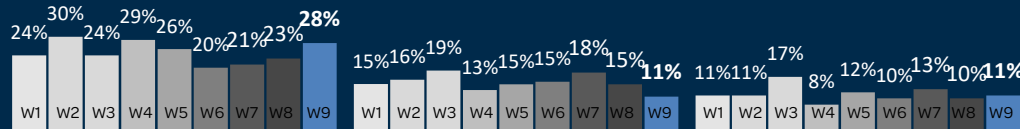


Diversify business (sell products/services previously did not sell)

Access to new markets locally or overseas

Review/update product & service offering

IMPROVE BUSINESS STRUCTURE / PROCESSES



Review/update business strategy

Review/update business processes & efficiency

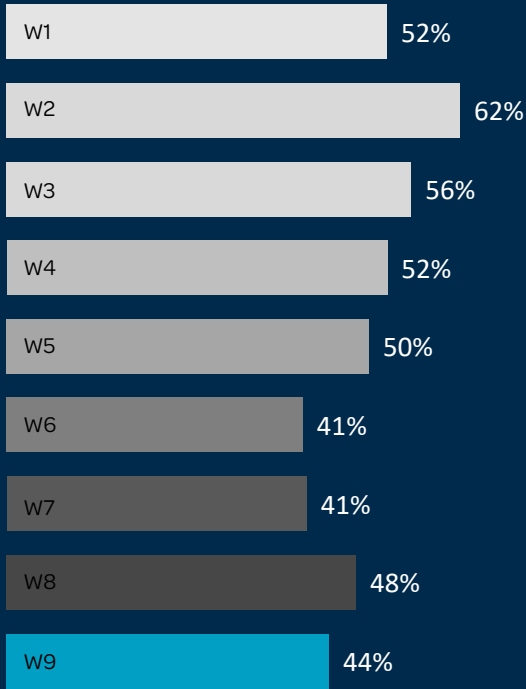
Review/update staff/team structures or requirements

BARRIERS TO ACTIONING INITIATIVES

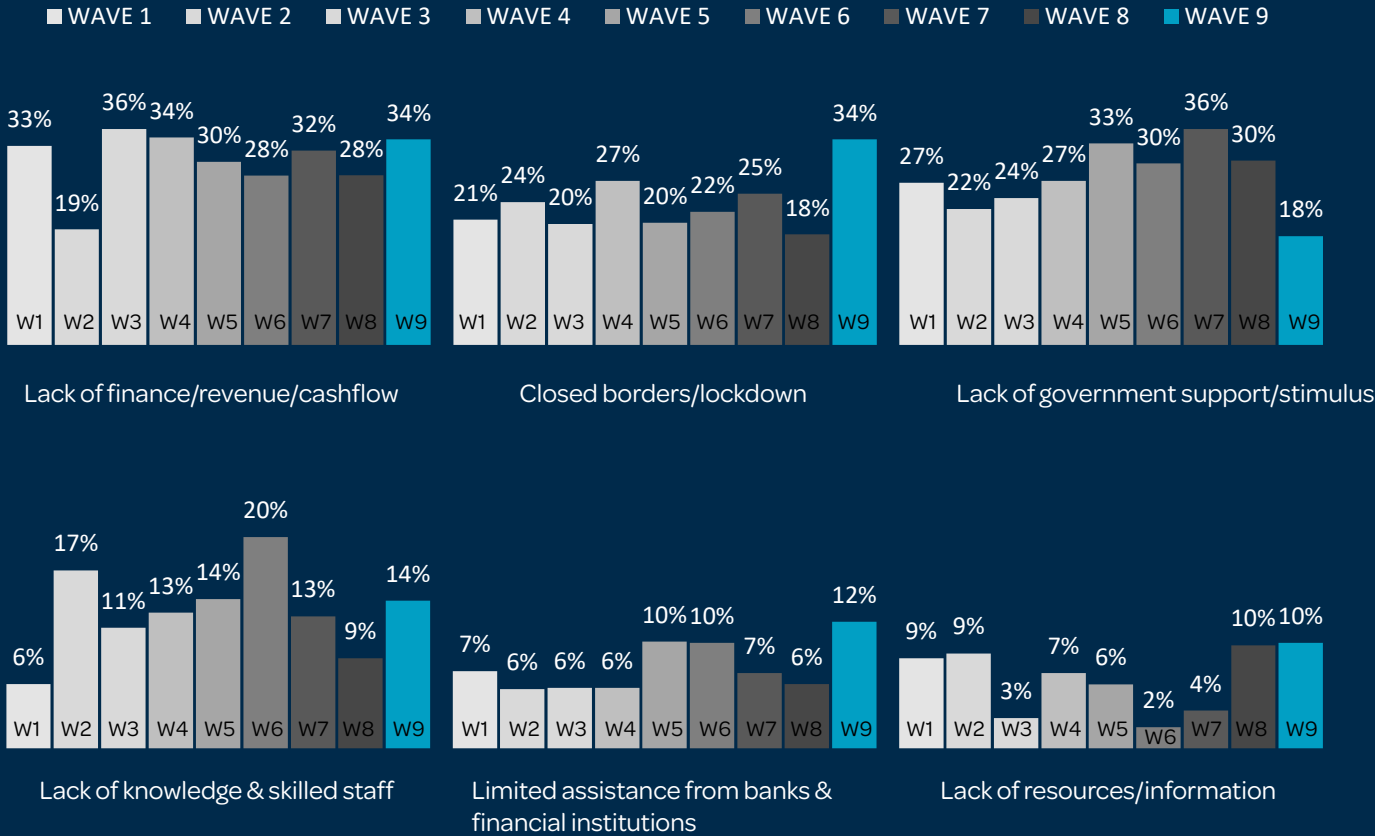
Businesses are facing slightly less barriers as the year has progressed. The key barriers are limited cashflow and closed borders faced by over a third of businesses. Reopening borders and allowing tourists to visit the Pacific Islands remains key for businesses to recover cashflow.

Q IS ANYTHING PREVENTING YOU FROM ACTIONING THESE INITIATIVES?

% YES



Q WHAT IS PREVENTING YOU FROM ACTIONING THESE INITIATIVES?



BARRIERS TO ACTIONING INITIATIVES

VERBATIM COMMENTS – WHAT IS PREVENTING YOU FROM ACTIONING THESE INITIATIVES?

LACK OF FINANCE/REVENUE/CASHFLOW

“Little to no cash flow to implement new products/ services to a new market. Cost of Internet for online endeavors.”

**SME, Tourism
Tonga, Wave 3**

“Need finance to make changes to my existing business. Build new infrastructure, new skills training, and equipment.”

SME, Other services, Niue, Wave 2

“Poor cash flow due to no tourists.”

SME, Tourism ,Solomon Islands, Wave 9

CLOSED BORDERS/LOCKDOWN

“Closed borders mean no international tourism which is the life blood of the tourism industry.”

SME, Tourism, Tonga, Wave 4

“Because of closed borders, upskilling is very challenging.”

**SME, Other Services, Niue,
Wave 9**

“No timeframe on when I can open my business again as NZ keeps dragging their feet about approving a travel bubble with our COVID-free country.”

**SME, Accommodation,
Cook Islands, Wave 9**

LACK OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT/STIMULUS

“Government has not assisted with a reasonable stimulus package or any option for grants, credit lines or loans for tourism. Or supplied any educational training.”

**SME, Accommodation,
Samoa, Wave 3**

“Lack of government transparency & assistance.”

**SME, Accommodation, Niue,
Wave 3**

“NO clear guidelines on the tax relief and financial relief offered by the Government.”

**SME, Agriculture, Papua New
Guinea, Wave 2**

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE/SKILLED STAFF

“Lack of knowledge around online technology, and potential cost for assistance in this area.”

**SME, Tourism Cook Islands,
Wave 5**

“Skills & competency of staff.”

**SME, Education & Training,
Tonga, Wave 6**

“No international flights in and out of the country, so not able to bring in new staff that were hired before the pandemic with the skills needed to make our operation more successful.”

**SME, Tourism, Palau,
Wave 3**

“Reluctant banks; slow on the support.”

**SME, Accommodation, Samoa,
Wave 1**

“Banks are very cautious and are unable to make long term commitments.”

**SME, Agriculture, Papua New
Guinea, Wave 5**

“There is no clear direction from Banks and financial institutions, regarding credit facilities and loans. Some have completely stopped lending; others seem to opt for wait and see attitude.”

**SME, Agriculture, Papua
New Guinea, Wave 1)**

LACK OF RESOURCES/INFORMATION

“Access to centralized information and advisory to reach out to. It’s difficult to know where to go and who to talk to you.”

**SME, Professional,
Scientific & Technical
Services Fiji, Wave 8**

“Poor/slow internet.”

**SME, Other Services, Tuvalu,
Wave 8**

“Limited resources, reliant on tourists, local population is very small.”

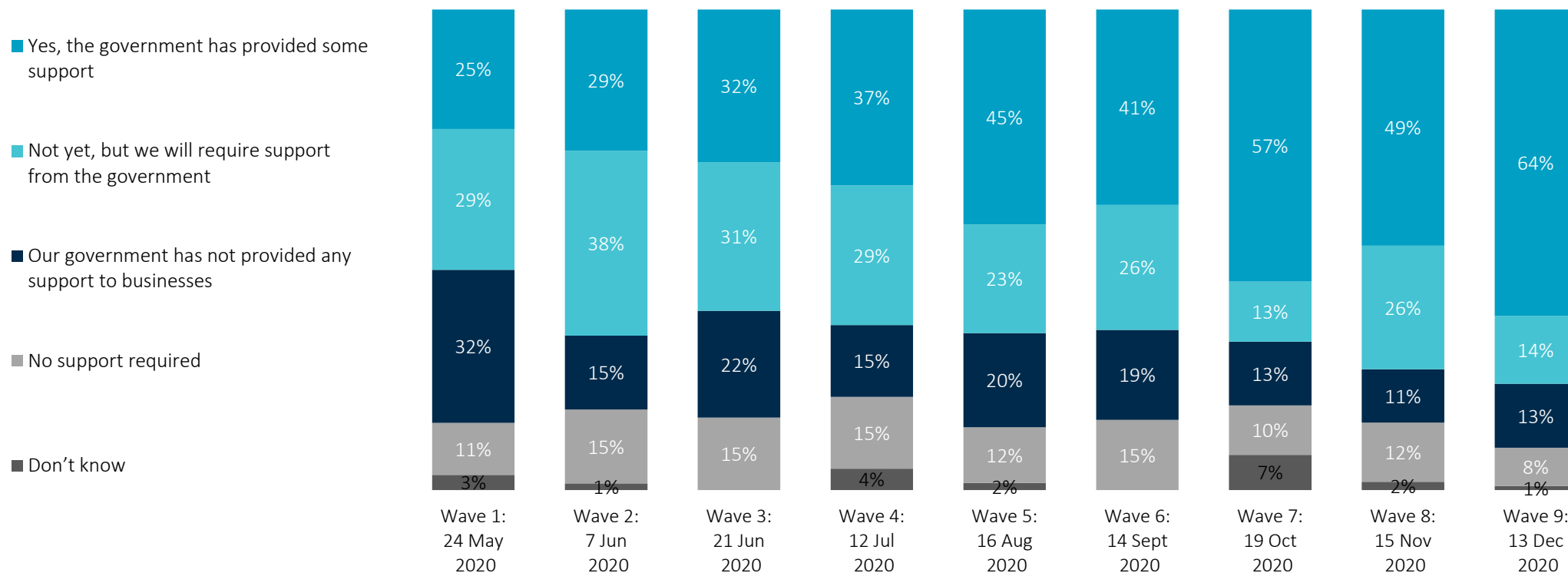
**SME, Other Services Tuvalu,
Wave 8**

ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

Limited government assistance has become less of a barrier in recent months as the proportion of businesses receiving government support has increased significantly. Two-thirds of businesses now state that the government has provided some support.



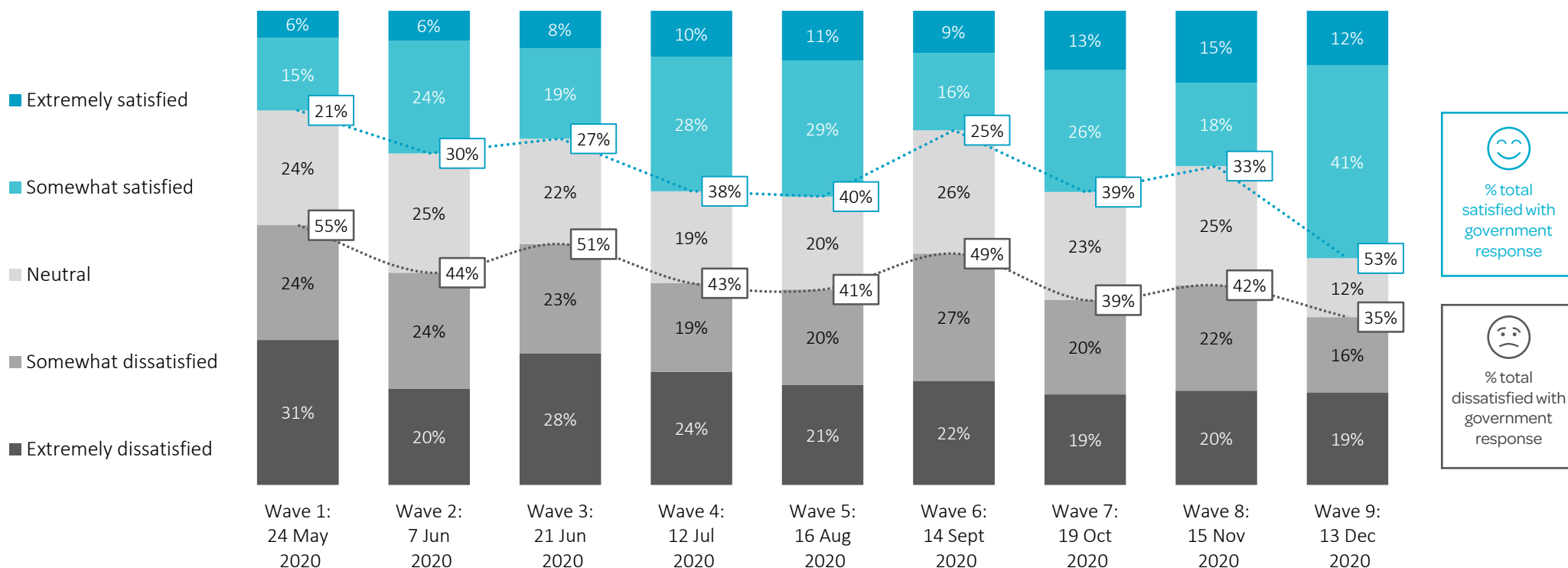
HAS YOUR BUSINESS ACCESSED ANY SUPPORT FROM YOUR GOVERNMENT TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE COVID-19 CRISIS?



SATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Satisfaction with the government response also increased significantly in December 2020. Around half of businesses are now satisfied with the response but one third are still dissatisfied, indicating that more needs to be done to support businesses through the crisis.

Q HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE WAY YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS SUPPORTED YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH THE COVID-19 CRISIS?



INFORMATION NEEDED TO HELP BUSINESSES ACTION INITIATIVES

VERBATIM COMMENTS – WHAT IS PREVENTING YOU FROM ACTIONING THESE INITIATIVES?

Many businesses have expressed that they need more information, particularly information regarding where to go for assistance, available government support and how to access it, and help with diversification.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

“Access to centralised information and advisory to reach out to. It’s difficult to know where to go and who to talk to you.”

SME, Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, Fiji, Wave 8

“Limited information from FRCS.”

SME, Accommodation, Hospitality & Food Service, Fiji, Wave 1

“Not knowing where and how to apply for financial grants to help with my dying business.”

SME, Accommodation, Hospitality & Food Service, Palau, Wave 9

“Availability of assistance and information.”

SME, Tourism, Kiribati, Wave 2

“Ongoing information re: government support.”

SME, Accommodation, Hospitality & Food Service, Niue, Wave 5

“The local economy appears stable for the immediate short term, though there is little information and gauge of longer-term planning and contingencies in which to easily evaluate risk levels. No clear informed contingencies of government if situation remains as is or it worsens.”

SME, Tourism, Niue, Wave 8

“More training on online business. More awareness needed on how to tap into e-commerce.”

Tuvalu, Retail Trade, Wave 5

“Due to the nature of business operation relying 100% on tourism, the uncertainty and lack of information, changing rules, are the major barrier of planning its future operation.”

SME, Accommodation, Hospitality & Food Service, Niue, Wave 4

HELP IN DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS

“We need help in diversifying existing businesses to new products utilising agriculture products.”

SME, Other Services, Samoa, Wave 4

“We need HR and financial support to help diversify the business to keep head afloat.”

SME, Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, Samoa, Wave 4

“A member of the government staff who is in a high position of influence and power is preventing us from diversifying by using his influence. Other similar licences applied for at the same time have been granted. Internal corruption appears to be being fostered here in Niue.”

SME, Accommodation, Hospitality & Food Service, Niue, Wave 1

“Whilst we would like to diversify the products/ services the company offers, so does everyone else, hence the number of genuine worthwhile products/services available that have capability to generate survival ROI is very limited. Most products/services were quite well catered for by businesses prior to Covid-19 and expanding into their markets is not as simple as it may seem.”

SME, Tourism, Fiji, Wave 1

“Small domestic marketplace already saturated with people/ businesses attempting to diversify into areas that the local market needs and can afford. Limited diversification opportunities.”

SME, Tourism, Fiji, Wave 4

“We are considered ‘foreign’ investors (we are kiwis) and cannot get a business licence to diversify our business. We are struggling the same as anyone. The government and its people here on Niue are very biased.”

SME, Accommodation, Hospitality & Food Service, Niue, Wave 2

“Capital required for diversifying, product development & market access.”

SME, Manufacturing, Fiji, Wave 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



WHO DID WE SPEAK WITH?

MORE THAN
110 COMPLETED
SURVEYS PER WAVE

All respondents are key influencers or decision makers in their business. All businesses are based in the Pacific Islands.



HOW DID WE SPEAK WITH THEM?

8 QUANTITATIVE
ONLINE SURVEYS
MINUTE



WHEN DID WE SPEAK WITH THEM?

9 IN 2020
WAVES

Online responses were collected over nine waves between 18 May–13 December 2020.

PACIFIC TRADE INVEST

The PTI Network is an agency of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and is the Pacific's leading trade and investment promotion agency. With offices in Australia, China, Europe and New Zealand, the PTI Network develops and promotes trade and investment across international markets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The PTI Network would like to thank all the Pacific businesses that took part in the Pacific Business Monitor Surveys, and on-the-ground partners for their ongoing support and who shared the surveys through their networks.

DISCLAIMER

The information presented in this report is based on responses received by research company Fifth Quadrant from surveys administered from 18 May–13 December 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Cath Cooksley-Little

General Manager – Marketing, Communications & Tourism

Cath@pacifictradeinvest.com



Pacific Trade Invest

