

Polling - Wages and cost of living

November 2022

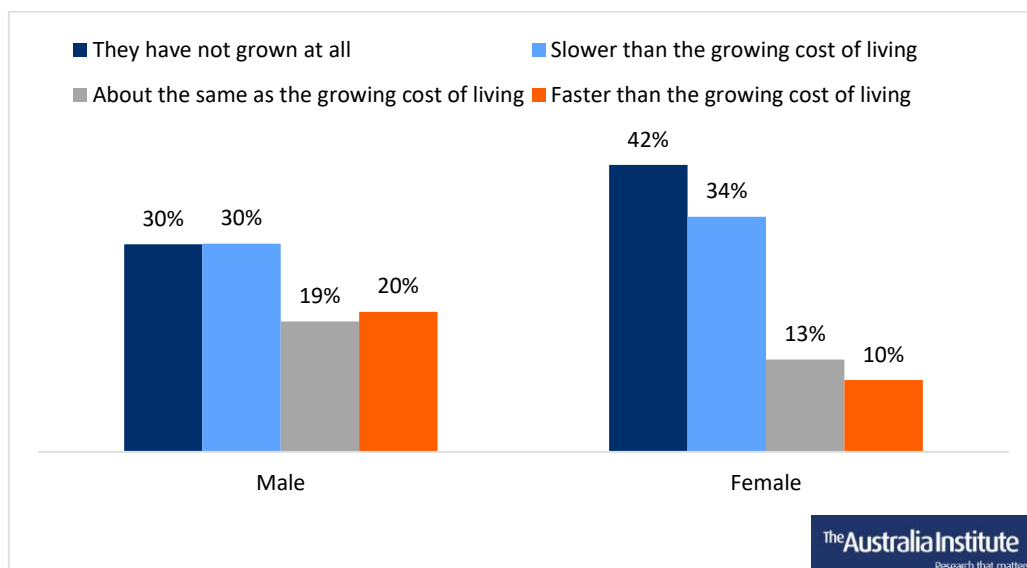
Key results

The Australia Institute surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,001 Australians about their views on wages and cost of living.

The majority of Australians report that their wages have not kept up with the cost of living over the past 12 months.

- For two in three Australians (68%) their wages have either not grown at all or grown slower than the cost of living.
 - This is higher among women, with 42% saying their real wages have not grown at all and 34% saying their wages have grown slower than the cost of living.
- Two in three Australians (67%) think changing laws to make it easier for workers to bargain collectively would be an effective way to get wages increasing faster.
 - Fewer than one in two Australians (46%) think that working harder personally at one’s job would be an effective way to get real wages to increase faster.

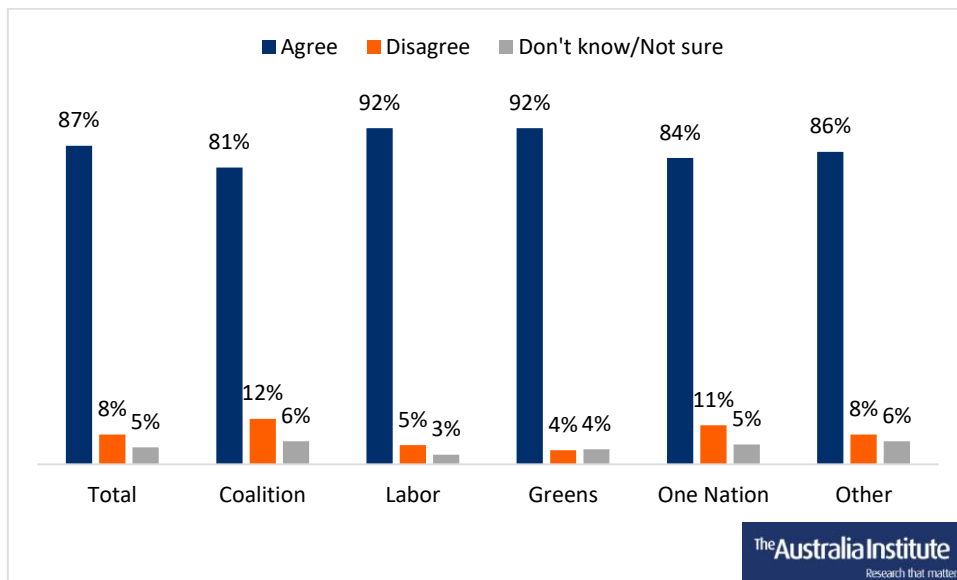
Figure 1: Real wages growth compared to cost of living in the past year, by gender



Nine in 10 Australians (87%) agree with the statement “it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that real wages grow to keep up with the cost of living”, irrespective of voting intention.

- One in 10 (8%) disagree that it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that real wages grow to keep up with the cost of living.
- Agreement that it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that real wages grow to keep up with the cost of living is highest among Labor (92%) and Greens voters (92%).
- Four in five Coalition (81%) and One Nation voters (84%) agree that it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that real wages grow to keep up with the cost of living.

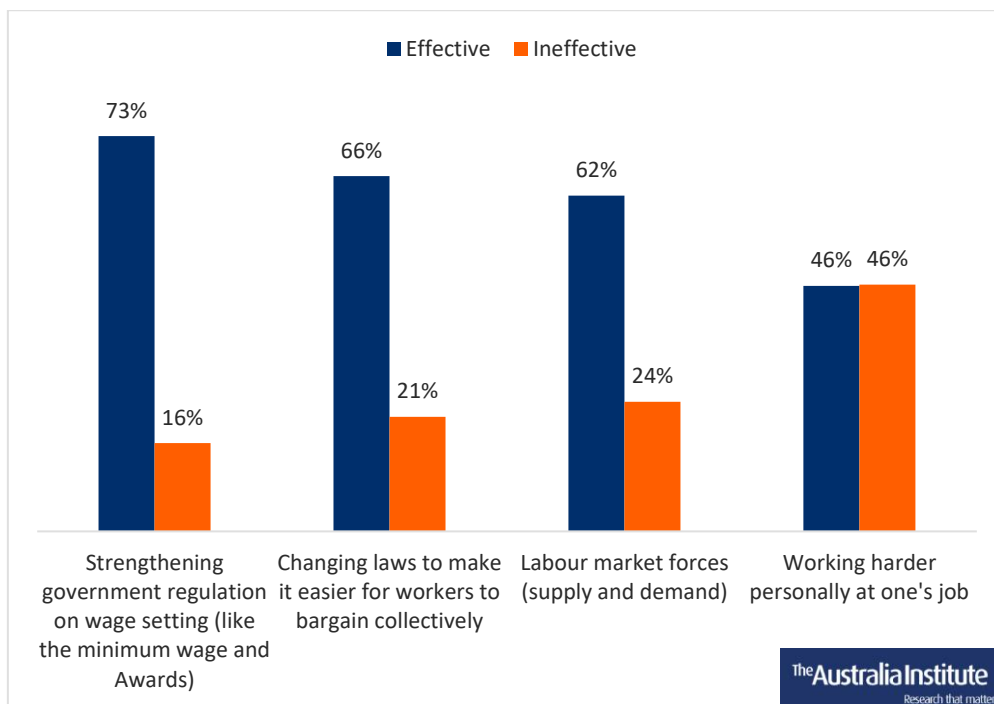
Figure 2: Government’s responsibility to ensure real wages grow to keep up with cost of living, by voting intention



Respondents were presented with four options, and were asked for each one whether they thought it would be very effective, somewhat effective, somewhat ineffective or very ineffective for getting wages to increase faster.

- The most popular was strengthening government regulation on wage setting, which three in four Australians (73%) think would be very or somewhat effective for getting wages to increase faster.
- Two in three Australians (66%) think changing laws to make it easier for workers to bargain collectively would be very or somewhat effective for getting wages to increase faster.
- Three in five Australians (62%) think labour market forces would be very or somewhat effective for getting wages to increase faster.
- Less than half of Australians (46%) think working harder personally at one's job would be very or somewhat effective for getting wages to increase faster.

Figure 3: Effectiveness of different methods of getting wages to increase faster



Method

Between 1 and 4 November 2022, The Australia Institute surveyed 1,001 adults living in Australia, online through Dynata’s panel, with nationally representative samples by gender, age group and state/territory.

Voting crosstabs show voting intentions for the House of Representatives. Those who were undecided were asked which way they were leaning; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs.

The research is compliant with the [Australian Polling Council Quality Mark standards](#). The long methodology disclosure statement follows.

Long disclosure statement

The results were weighted by three variables (gender, age group and state or territory) based on Australian Bureau of Statistics [“National, state and territory population”](#) data, using the raking method. This resulted in an effective sample size of 943.57.

The margin of error (95% confidence level) for the national results is 3%.

Results are shown only for larger states.

Voting intention questions appeared just after the initial demographic questions, before policy questions. Respondents who answered “Don’t know / Not sure” for voting intention were then asked a leaning question; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs. “Coalition” includes separate responses for Liberal and National. “Other” refers to Independent/Other, and minor parties in cases where they were included in the voting intention but represent too small a sample to be reported separately in the crosstabs.



**Australian
Polling Council
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Detailed results

No preceding questions in the poll are expected to have influenced the results of the questions published here.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

"It is the government's responsibility to ensure that real wages grow to keep up with the cost of living."

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>NSW</i> | <i>VIC</i> | <i>QLD</i> | <i>WA</i> |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Strongly agree | 46% | 41% | 50% | 46% | 42% | 44% | 52% |
| Agree | 41% | 43% | 39% | 41% | 44% | 43% | 40% |
| Disagree | 6% | 8% | 4% | 6% | 7% | 8% | 4% |
| Strongly disagree | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 3% | 1% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 5% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 5% | 2% | 3% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>18-29</i> | <i>30-39</i> | <i>40-49</i> | <i>50-59</i> | <i>60+</i> |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 46% | 52% | 48% | 54% | 45% | 36% |
| Agree | 41% | 41% | 43% | 37% | 39% | 44% |
| Disagree | 6% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 9% | 10% |
| Strongly disagree | 2% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 2% | 2% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 5% | 2% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 8% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Coalition</i> | <i>Labor</i> | <i>Greens</i> | <i>PHON</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Strongly agree | 46% | 40% | 49% | 54% | 39% | 46% |
| Agree | 41% | 41% | 43% | 38% | 45% | 40% |
| Disagree | 6% | 9% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 6% |
| Strongly disagree | 2% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 6% | 2% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 5% | 7% | 3% | 4% | 5% | 6% |

Over the past 12 months, cost of living in Australia has grown 7.3%. During the last 12 months, have your wages grown

| | <i>Total</i> | Male | Female | NSW | VIC | QLD | WA |
|---|--------------|------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Faster than the growing cost of living | 15% | 20% | 10% | 16% | 15% | 14% | 19% |
| About the same as the growing cost of living | 16% | 19% | 13% | 17% | 18% | 14% | 13% |
| Slower than the growing cost of living | 32% | 30% | 34% | 29% | 34% | 33% | 30% |
| They have not grown at all | 36% | 30% | 42% | 38% | 33% | 39% | 38% |

| | <i>Total</i> | 18-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60+ |
|---|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Faster than the growing cost of living | 15% | 27% | 28% | 10% | 9% | 6% |
| About the same as the growing cost of living | 16% | 26% | 21% | 19% | 8% | 9% |
| Slower than the growing cost of living | 32% | 26% | 24% | 40% | 35% | 36% |
| They have not grown at all | 36% | 21% | 27% | 30% | 48% | 49% |

| | <i>Total</i> | LNP | ALP | GRN | PHON | Other |
|---|--------------|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Faster than the growing cost of living | 15% | 23% | 6% | 20% | 4% | 20% |
| About the same as the growing cost of living | 16% | 19% | 16% | 14% | 16% | 12% |
| Slower than the growing cost of living | 32% | 30% | 36% | 35% | 21% | 26% |
| They have not grown at all | 36% | 28% | 41% | 31% | 59% | 42% |

Which of the following do you think would be effective in getting wages to increase faster?

Strengthening government regulation on wage setting (like the minimum wage and Awards)

| | Total | Male | Female | NSW | VIC | QLD | WA |
|----------------------|-------|------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Very effective | 36% | 38% | 34% | 38% | 34% | 31% | 36% |
| Somewhat effective | 38% | 34% | 41% | 35% | 39% | 41% | 46% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 12% | 13% | 11% | 9% | 15% | 16% | 9% |
| Very ineffective | 4% | 7% | 2% | 5% | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 10% | 9% | 11% | 14% | 8% | 8% | 6% |

| | Total | 18-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60+ |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Very effective | 36% | 52% | 44% | 36% | 29% | 23% |
| Somewhat effective | 38% | 32% | 34% | 36% | 40% | 44% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 12% | 10% | 14% | 12% | 12% | 13% |
| Very ineffective | 4% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 5% | 6% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 10% | 2% | 6% | 13% | 14% | 15% |

| | Total | <\$20K | \$20-40K | \$40-\$60K | \$60-80K | \$80-100K | \$100-\$150K | \$150-200K | >\$200K | Not sure |
|----------------------|-------|--------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|--------------|------------|---------|----------|
| Very effective | 36% | 27% | 29% | 29% | 35% | 45% | 38% | 42% | 48% | 27% |
| Somewhat effective | 38% | 41% | 44% | 39% | 37% | 34% | 38% | 35% | 27% | 35% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 12% | 10% | 11% | 13% | 11% | 9% | 14% | 12% | 12% | 17% |
| Very ineffective | 4% | 7% | 2% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 7% | 6% |
| Don't know/ Not sure | 10% | 16% | 14% | 14% | 13% | 6% | 6% | 7% | 6% | 14% |

| | Total | Coalition | Labor | Greens | One Nation | Other |
|----------------------|-------|-----------|-------|--------|------------|-------|
| Very effective | 36% | 34% | 38% | 46% | 31% | 24% |
| Somewhat effective | 38% | 36% | 42% | 34% | 31% | 36% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 12% | 13% | 10% | 14% | 6% | 17% |
| Very ineffective | 4% | 6% | 1% | 2% | 18% | 7% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 10% | 11% | 9% | 4% | 14% | 16% |

Changing laws to make it easier for workers to bargain collectively

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>NSW</i> | <i>VIC</i> | <i>QLD</i> | <i>WA</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Very effective | 22% | 22% | 22% | 24% | 17% | 21% | 21% |
| Somewhat effective | 44% | 45% | 44% | 41% | 47% | 46% | 51% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 15% | 15% | 16% | 14% | 18% | 16% | 10% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 9% | 4% | 4% | 6% | 9% | 6% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 12% | 10% | 14% | 16% | 12% | 7% | 12% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>18-29</i> | <i>30-39</i> | <i>40-49</i> | <i>50-59</i> | <i>60+</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Very effective | 22% | 24% | 22% | 22% | 26% | 20% |
| Somewhat effective | 44% | 51% | 52% | 41% | 33% | 43% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 15% | 16% | 14% | 15% | 17% | 15% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 3% | 6% | 8% | 7% | 7% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 12% | 6% | 5% | 15% | 18% | 16% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i><\$20K</i> | <i>\$20-40K</i> | <i>\$40- \$60K</i> | <i>\$60-80K</i> | <i>\$80- 100K</i> | <i>\$100- \$150K</i> | <i>\$150- 200K</i> | <i>>\$200K</i> | <i>Not sure</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Very effective | 22% | 27% | 23% | 24% | 26% | 18% | 18% | 22% | 30% | 24% |
| Somewhat effective | 44% | 34% | 41% | 39% | 40% | 53% | 51% | 52% | 42% | 28% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 15% | 16% | 15% | 14% | 13% | 13% | 17% | 12% | 12% | 27% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 8% | 6% | 6% | 8% | 5% |
| Don't know/ Not sure | 12% | 18% | 16% | 16% | 15% | 8% | 8% | 8% | 9% | 15% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Coalition</i> | <i>Labor</i> | <i>Greens</i> | <i>One Nation</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Very effective | 22% | 16% | 26% | 29% | 18% | 23% |
| Somewhat effective | 44% | 45% | 45% | 51% | 25% | 38% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 15% | 18% | 14% | 10% | 18% | 14% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 8% | 3% | 5% | 20% | 9% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 12% | 13% | 12% | 5% | 19% | 16% |

Working harder personally at one's job

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>NSW</i> | <i>VIC</i> | <i>QLD</i> | <i>WA</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Very effective | 19% | 23% | 15% | 21% | 20% | 21% | 12% |
| Somewhat effective | 26% | 26% | 26% | 28% | 26% | 27% | 29% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 31% | 29% | 33% | 28% | 31% | 30% | 41% |
| Very ineffective | 15% | 13% | 17% | 13% | 16% | 16% | 13% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 9% | 8% | 9% | 11% | 7% | 6% | 5% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>18-29</i> | <i>30-39</i> | <i>40-49</i> | <i>50-59</i> | <i>60+</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Very effective | 19% | 19% | 27% | 14% | 16% | 19% |
| Somewhat effective | 26% | 25% | 30% | 21% | 29% | 27% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 31% | 36% | 28% | 33% | 28% | 30% |
| Very ineffective | 15% | 17% | 11% | 18% | 16% | 13% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 9% | 4% | 5% | 14% | 11% | 10% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i><\$20K</i> | <i>\$20-40K</i> | <i>\$40- \$60K</i> | <i>\$60-80K</i> | <i>\$80- 100K</i> | <i>\$100- \$150K</i> | <i>\$150- 200K</i> | <i>>\$200K</i> | <i>Not sure</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Very effective | 19% | 10% | 13% | 18% | 15% | 27% | 19% | 24% | 31% | 13% |
| Somewhat effective | 26% | 25% | 30% | 24% | 25% | 24% | 27% | 31% | 25% | 24% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 31% | 31% | 29% | 35% | 30% | 29% | 32% | 32% | 28% | 33% |
| Very ineffective | 15% | 17% | 16% | 14% | 16% | 14% | 15% | 10% | 15% | 17% |
| Don't know/ Not sure | 9% | 17% | 12% | 9% | 13% | 5% | 6% | 4% | 0% | 12% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Coalition</i> | <i>Labor</i> | <i>Greens</i> | <i>One Nation</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Very effective | 19% | 24% | 16% | 15% | 20% | 15% |
| Somewhat effective | 26% | 32% | 25% | 21% | 25% | 22% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 31% | 27% | 33% | 37% | 29% | 29% |
| Very ineffective | 15% | 8% | 16% | 23% | 14% | 21% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 9% | 8% | 9% | 5% | 12% | 13% |

Labour market forces (supply and demand)

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>NSW</i> | <i>VIC</i> | <i>QLD</i> | <i>WA</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Very effective | 19% | 21% | 18% | 20% | 19% | 20% | 17% |
| Somewhat effective | 43% | 44% | 42% | 40% | 45% | 47% | 42% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 18% | 17% | 19% | 17% | 18% | 19% | 20% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 8% | 4% | 6% | 7% | 4% | 9% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 14% | 9% | 18% | 17% | 11% | 11% | 12% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>18-29</i> | <i>30-39</i> | <i>40-49</i> | <i>50-59</i> | <i>60+</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Very effective | 19% | 21% | 21% | 18% | 21% | 17% |
| Somewhat effective | 43% | 42% | 44% | 34% | 41% | 49% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 18% | 19% | 18% | 23% | 18% | 14% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 10% | 9% | 7% | 2% | 4% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 14% | 9% | 8% | 18% | 19% | 15% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i><\$20K</i> | <i>\$20-40K</i> | <i>\$40- \$60K</i> | <i>\$60-80K</i> | <i>\$80- 100K</i> | <i>\$100- \$150K</i> | <i>\$150- 200K</i> | <i>>\$200K</i> | <i>Not sure</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Very effective | 19% | 12% | 18% | 25% | 16% | 13% | 19% | 24% | 32% | 18% |
| Somewhat effective | 43% | 44% | 50% | 39% | 38% | 51% | 43% | 45% | 41% | 21% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 18% | 16% | 14% | 13% | 23% | 21% | 17% | 20% | 13% | 26% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 4% | 3% | 5% | 6% | 7% | 10% | 7% | 9% | 6% |
| Don't know/ Not sure | 14% | 23% | 16% | 17% | 17% | 8% | 11% | 4% | 5% | 28% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Coalition</i> | <i>Labor</i> | <i>Greens</i> | <i>One Nation</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Very effective | 19% | 18% | 22% | 13% | 22% | 22% |
| Somewhat effective | 43% | 48% | 43% | 43% | 36% | 30% |
| Somewhat ineffective | 18% | 17% | 16% | 23% | 10% | 22% |
| Very ineffective | 6% | 6% | 3% | 10% | 14% | 8% |
| Don't know/Not sure | 14% | 11% | 15% | 12% | 18% | 18% |