



Media Release

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Australians e-scape to the country

- **COVID-19 shift online has opened the door to a more flexible approach to where people live and work.**
- **35% of Australians surveyed are looking to e-scape to their ideal community after the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **Half (50%) of city-dwellers in the five major capitals have wanted to relocate for a while but only recently considered it feasible.**
- **89% of people agree that having a more flexible lifestyle allows them to focus on what really matters in life, like their family and overall wellbeing.**
- **85% of workers that can work remotely agree that being online is more important than ever before to achieve their ideal work approach.**

Australians are exploring a permanent escape to their ideal community and lifestyle following the experience of working remotely online during COVID-19.

According to the *nbn Flexible Lifestyle Survey**, conducted by YouGov and commissioned by **nbn**, 35% of Australians surveyed are considering relocating to their ideal community after COVID-19. This desire is felt more keenly by city-dwellers, with half (50%) of those who live in one of the five main capital cities saying they've wanted to relocate for a while. People see benefits like saving money, a quieter lifestyle, and getting on with the things that make them happy as the key drivers for relocation.

However, for many Australians, a move to their ideal community has only become a realistic choice since the shift to remote online work during COVID-19. About half of the population (47% nationally and 50% in the five major capital cities) have long dreamed of relocation but only now see it as a feasible option.

Of those who can work remotely, almost two-thirds (62%) would prefer to do so in future, and more than eight in ten (85%) respondents agree that being connected is now more important than ever to achieve their ideal work approach.

Gavin Williams, Chief Development Officer, Regional & Remote at NBN Co, said: "COVID-19 has been an incredibly challenging time for everyone, but it has also been a catalyst for positive change in many areas. With more activities – from work, to education, to catch-ups with family and friends – shifting online, it is now possible for Australians to convert this recent experience into lasting changes that support their lifestyle goals. Enabled by high-speed, reliable broadband**, people are now considering how they can move home without giving up their job, access to important services or connection with family and friends."

The survey also identified several key characteristics Aussies are seeking in their ideal community. Plenty of green space was the most popular at 65%, closely followed by quiet streets and low traffic at 64%, and proximity to good health facilities at 59%.

On the flip side, Australians would be willing to say goodbye to perks including a vibrant night life, proximity to the CBD and business centres, being close to cultural venues or their favourite in-person exercise class to live in their ideal community.

Of those looking to relocate, half (54%) say they want to move to a regional area, suggesting smaller communities across Australia could see residential growth. The majority (89%) of Aussies based outside of the five main capital cities say people moving to areas outside of big cities will benefit and help reinvigorate small regional towns, including the viability of local businesses (75%).

“As people increasingly seek a lifestyle that allows them to focus on what’s most important, like family and wellbeing, the typical city benefits of being close to the office or having a broad choice of cultural and entertainment options on the doorstep are fading. Instead, people are exploring the things that make them happiest – which they believe are now more achievable,” said Mr Williams.

The survey investigated how COVID-19 has accelerated consumer behaviour shifts and spurred lifestyle and priority changes. It also illustrates the flexibility consumers now have to make life-changing decisions.

“As more people look to embrace a more flexible lifestyle, the role of the **nbn**[™] network as a crucial backbone supporting evolving ways of working and living is clear. In fact, three in four (74%) Australians say they couldn’t achieve the flexible lifestyle they are looking for without access to fast and reliable broadband**. With 11.82 million premises now able to connect to the **nbn**[™] network, we’re committed to helping people across the country achieve these lifestyle benefits and continuing to lift the digital capability of Australia as our habits and priorities change,” Mr Williams said.

Tips for optimising your broadband setup to achieve greater flexibility**

- Check your speed plan suits your needs. If your internet is slow it may be because you are on an entry level internet plan. Call your internet retailer and talk to them about the number of devices you have connected and how you are using the internet to find out if you have the right retail plan to support your needs.
- Get the right plan. Most home internet plans are used primarily to download (web browsing, movies, music) and as such have good download speeds, but are not as strong when it comes to uploading. When it comes to working from home you may have a greater need for uploading files and joining Skype calls so speak with your internet retailer to make sure your plan has the upload speeds you need to work from home.
- Check your in-home set-up. Check your Wi-Fi router is in a central location in the home, ideally close to the devices you need to connect. Some routers may not deliver high performance and speeds. If you are concerned about the age or quality of your router or modem, seek advice from your internet retailer on possible upgrade options.

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Notes:

1. *This research was undertaken by YouGov on behalf of NBN Co. The research was conducted from the 31st August to the 19th September 2020. 3,358 respondents aged 18+ completed the nationally representative survey, including hyperlocal boosting in Wollongong, Bendigo (Central VIC), Far North QLD, Adelaide, Perth, South West WA, Hobart, Darwin, Canberra. 63% of the respondents lived in one of the 5 major capital cities, and 37% outside the capital cities. Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest population estimates in Australia as per statistics published by the ABS.
2. **Your experience, including the speeds actually achieved over the **nbn**[™] network, depends on the **nbn**[™] access network technology and configuration over which services are delivered to your premises, whether you are using the internet during the busy period, and some factors outside **nbn**'s control (like your equipment quality, software, broadband plan, signal reception and how your service provider designs its network). Speeds may also be impacted by the number of concurrent users on the **nbn**[™] Fixed Wireless network, including during busy periods. Satellite end customers may also experience latency.