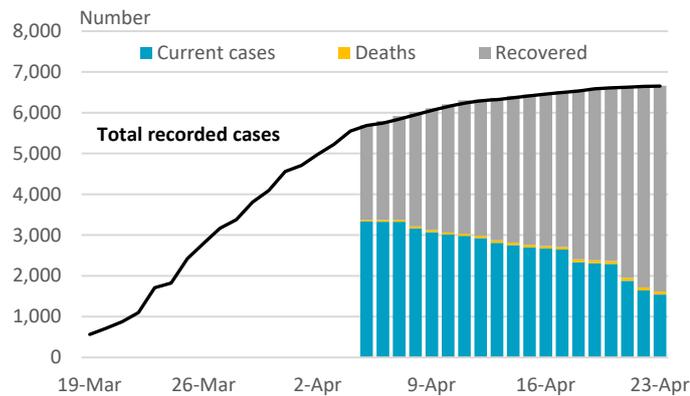


ASFA Economic Snapshot: week ending 24 April

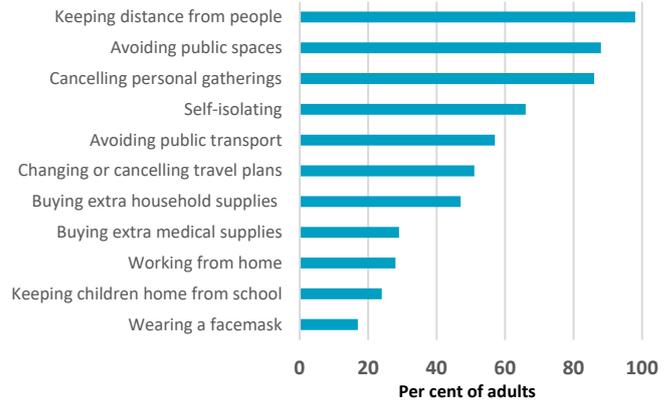
This is a weekly update on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on financial and economic conditions, in Australia and globally, and government policy measures to support economic activity and employment.

The number of current virus cases is dropping ...



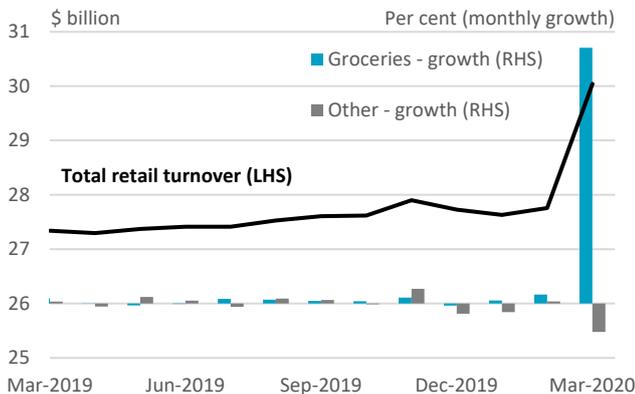
The number of infected people declined markedly this week, by about 160 per day. As at 23 April the number of current cases was about 1550, which is about half the figure of two weeks ago. The number hospitalised decreased to about 150 (around 10% of current cases).

... as most Australians have changed their behaviour



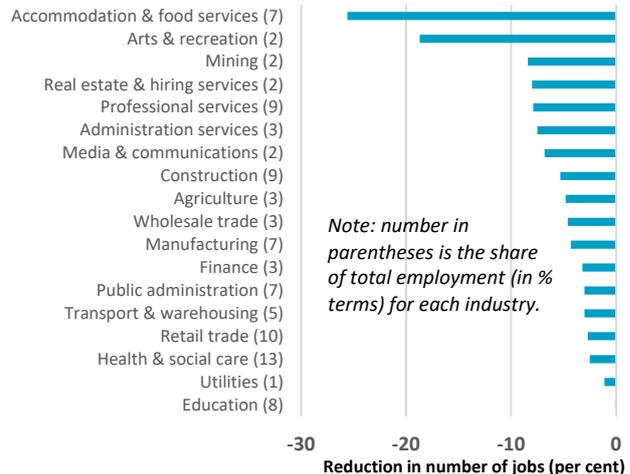
A survey undertaken in the first week of April reveals that the vast majority of Australian adults are practising social distancing measures to prevent the spread of the virus. A smaller, but still large proportion reported that they stocked-up on medical and/or household supplies.

Consumer purchases of groceries surged in March



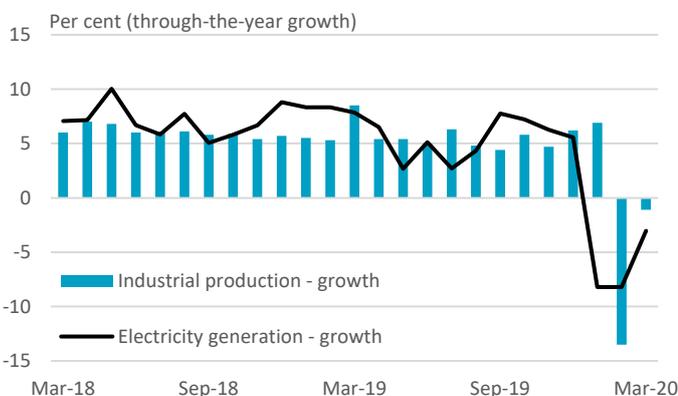
Preliminary data shows that retail turnover jumped by almost 10% in March (the largest ever recorded rise). For supermarkets, purchases of perishable groceries increased by 22%, while purchases of non-perishables increased by 36%. Supermarket turnover peaked in mid-March before levelling-off. With respect to other retailers, department stores and cafes/restaurants suffered big falls in turnover (on average), while sales rose for hardware and electrical goods retailers.

Social restrictions have led to a sharp decline in jobs



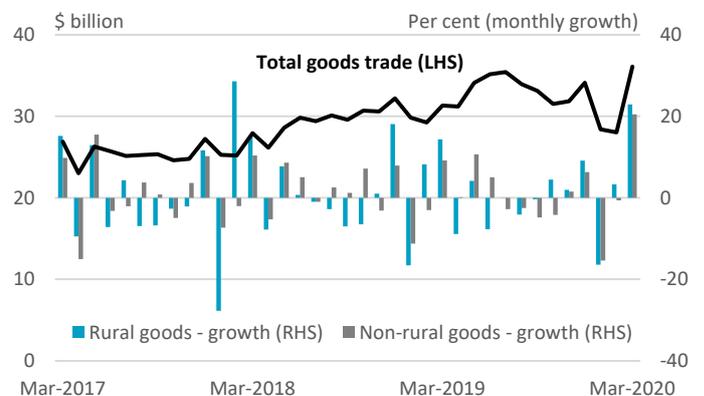
Payroll data reveals that the total number of jobs fell by 6% over the 3 weeks to 14 April. This fall will not translate one-for-one to unemployment since it includes workers on unpaid leave. Other data show that of those who had a job, a quarter worked reduced hours.

In China, economic activity is recovering ...



Chinese economic activity levelled-out in March, following a large fall in February. For March, industrial production was around 1% lower than a year ago, while electricity generation (a proxy for activity) was around 3% lower. Other data point to a pick-up in activity in the months ahead. Chinese manufacturers report an increase (on average) in new orders, and demand for industrial commodities is recovering.

... and is lifting Australian commodity exports



Preliminary data show that Australia's goods exports rebounded in March. The value of (total) rural and non-rural exports both rose by about 20% in March, following large falls in January. For non-rural exports this largely reflects a rebound in volumes – in particular, iron ore exports to China. In contrast, any recovery in exports of tourism and education (not captured in this data release), will be much slower.