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Attendance at live entertainment activities plunges in 2020 with entertainers hoping for a comeback in 2021

New Roy Morgan data shows attendance at live entertainment activities plunged during 2020 as lockdowns, border closures and ongoing restrictions on crowds at venues and events led to the cancellation or postponement of many entertainment activities.

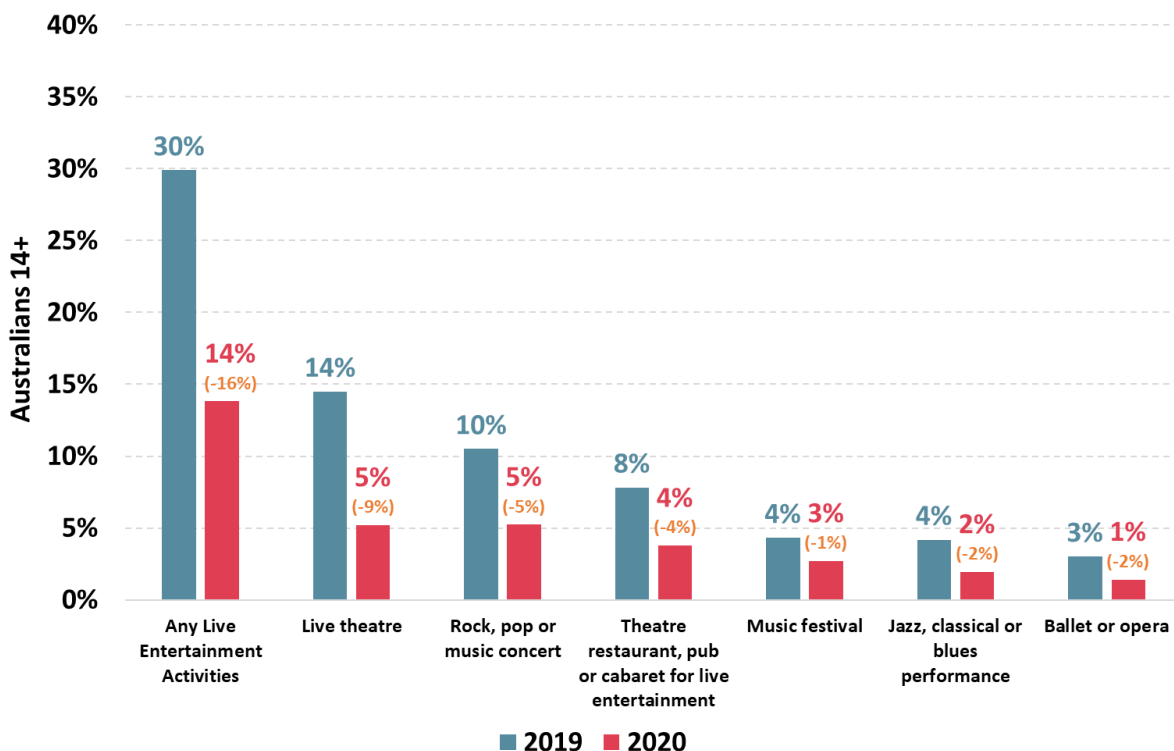
In 2020 just 14% of Australians aged 14+ attended live entertainment activities such as theatre, rock, pop or music concerts, theatre restaurants, cabaret, music festivals, jazz, classical, blues, ballet or opera performances in an average three months, down from 30% a year earlier in 2019.

Only 5% of Australians attended live theatre in an average three months in 2020, down from 14% in 2019, and just 5% went to rock, pop or music concerts, compared to 10% in 2019.

Attendance at other activities including theatre restaurants, music festivals, jazz, classical, blues, ballet or opera performances also plunged during 2020. The re-opening of Australia that has occurred in 2021 and the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines this year should lead to a boost in attendance at live entertainment activities although the threat of outbreaks means it is unlikely to approach the levels of 2019 just yet.

The data comes from Roy Morgan Single Source, the nation's largest and longest-running program of research into consumer behaviour and attitudes, continuously conducted year-round.

Live entertainment activities attended: 2019 vs. 2020



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source, January – December 2019, n=50,422, January – December 2020, n=61,294;
Base: Australians 14+.

Generation Z were most likely to attend live entertainment activities in 2020

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 changed the composition of audiences at live entertainment activities with Generation Z overtaking Generation X as the generation most likely to attend a performance – although both were down significantly on 2019.

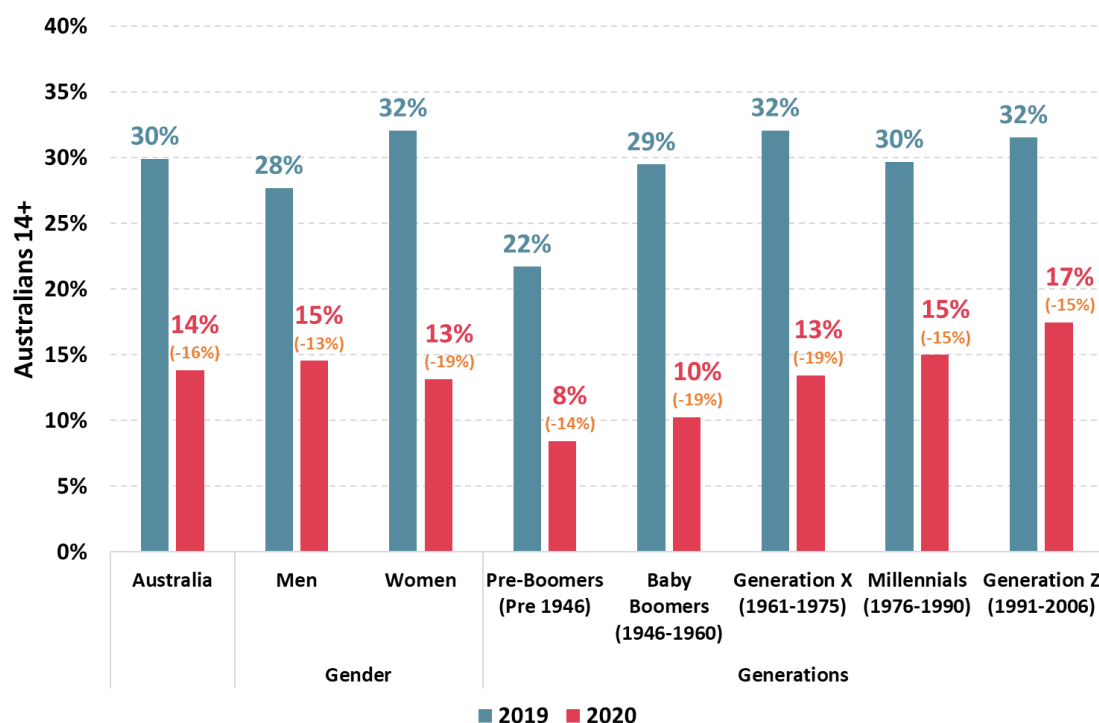
In 2020 attendance at live entertainment activities was heavily correlated to age with younger Australians the most likely to attend. Over 1-in-6 people in Generation Z (17%) attended a live entertainment activity during 2020, down from 32% in 2019, but higher than any other generation.

Next most likely to attend live entertainment activities were Millennials on 15% (down from 30% in 2019). However, the biggest declines in attendance in 2020 were for Generation X on 13% (down from 32%) and Baby Boomers on 10% (down from 29%).

Only 8% of Pre-Boomers attended a live entertainment activity in 2020, down from 22% in 2019.

Women were less likely than men to attend live entertainment activities in 2020 with attendance at only 13%, down from 32% in 2019 – a decline of 19% points. Attendance by men declined less steeply to be at 15%, down from 28% in 2019 - a drop of 13% points.

Attendance at live entertainment activities by Gender & Generation in 2020



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source, January – December 2020, n=61,294; Base: Australians 14+.

Roy Morgan CEO, Michele Levine, says live entertainment was one of the biggest losers during 2020 as a nation-wide lockdown and restrictions on gathering in crowds forced many venues to close and led to the cancellation of many events:

“Attendance at live entertainment activities plummeted during 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic led to the closure of venues for months on end and forced cancellations of many events such as music festivals and tours, and jazz, classical, blues, ballet and opera performances.

“Only 2.9 million Australians attended live entertainment activities in 2020 representing around 14% of the population aged 14+, down from over 6.2 million (30%) in 2019 prior to the pandemic.

“The biggest declines in 2020 were for Baby Boomers and Generation X – those born from 1946-1975 and aged 44-74 years old during 2020. Prior to the pandemic over 32% of people in Generation X (born from 1961-1975) attended live entertainment activities – higher than any other generation. However, in 2020 only 13% of Generation X attended live entertainment activities – a drop of 19% points on 2019.

"In 2020 it was younger Australians in Generation Z who were more likely to attend live entertainment activities than older generations. Just over 1-in-6 of those in Generation Z (17%) attended a live entertainment activity in 2020 down from just under 32% in 2019.

"The Roy Morgan data illustrates how vaccinating older Australians is vital to returning audiences at live entertainment activities to their pre-pandemic levels of well over 6 million people. Older Australians are far more hesitant about attending events which involve coming into contact with hundreds, or even thousands, of strangers than their younger counterparts.

"Given the mortality statistics surrounding COVID-19, which presents a far greater danger to older people and those with significant existing health issues, this is no surprise. However, these results emphasise the importance of a successful vaccination program in Australia to many live entertainment activities.

"Prior to the pandemic activities such as live theatre, ballet, opera and jazz, classical and blues performances were all more likely to be attended by Australians in Generation X, Baby Boomers or Pre-Boomers – those aged 40+, rather than younger Millennials or Generation Z."

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan's data on live entertainment activities including live theatre, ballet, opera, rock, pop or music concerts, music festivals, jazz, classical or blues concerts data please contact:

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About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is Australia's largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state, as well as in the U.S. and U.K. A full-service research organisation, Roy Morgan has over 79 years' experience collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

