

# 2021 Planning & Progress Study

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## COVID-19 and Financial Behavior

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company (NM), Milwaukee, WI and its subsidiaries.

# Background

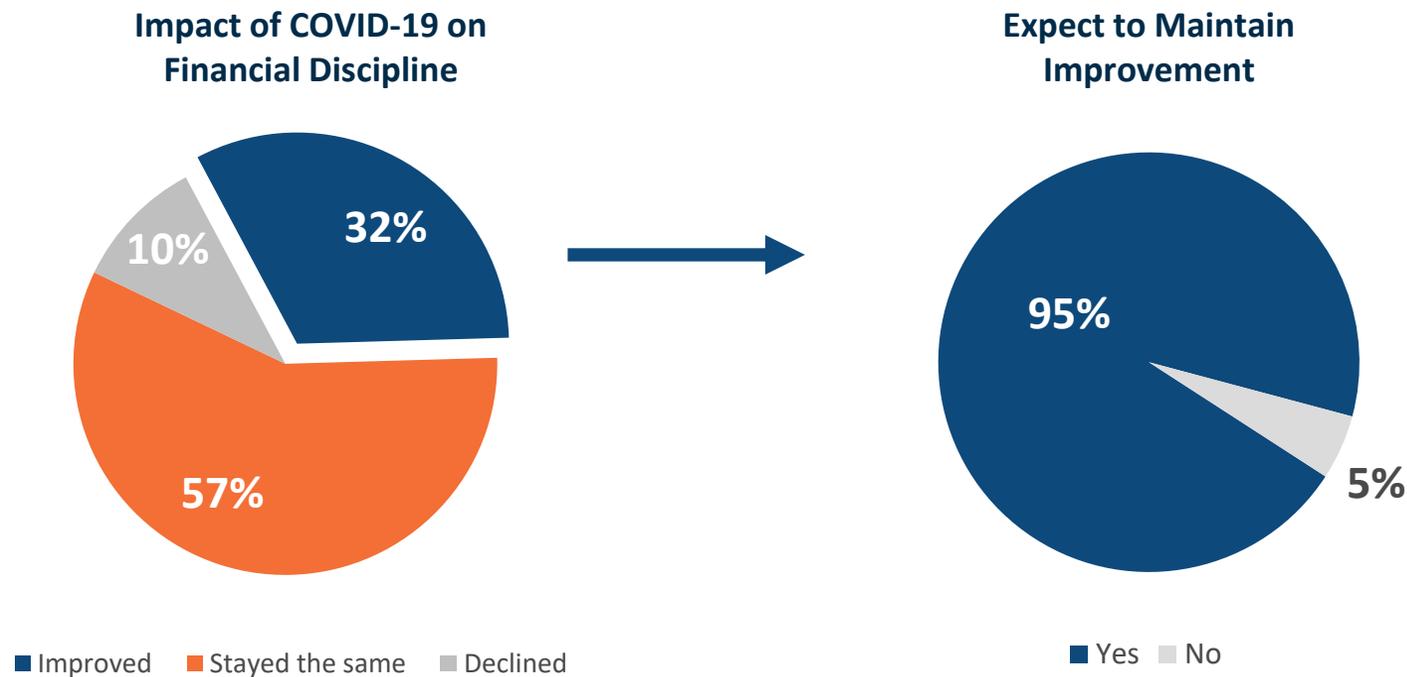
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The 2021 Planning & Progress Study, a research series from Northwestern Mutual, explores U.S. adults' attitudes and behaviors toward money, financial decision-making, and the broader issues impacting people's long-term financial security.

The study was conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of Northwestern Mutual. This wave included 2,320 American adults aged 18 and older who participated in an online survey between March 16 – 26, 2021. Previous waves included 2,650 American adults aged 18 or older who participated in an online survey between February 12 – 25, 2020 and 2,702 adults aged 18 or older who participated between June 26 – July 10, 2020.

Results were weighted to Census targets for education, age, gender, race/ethnicity, region and household income. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.

# One-third of Americans say their financial discipline has improved during the pandemic; most expect those habits to stick



**BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS –Gen Pop (n=2320)**

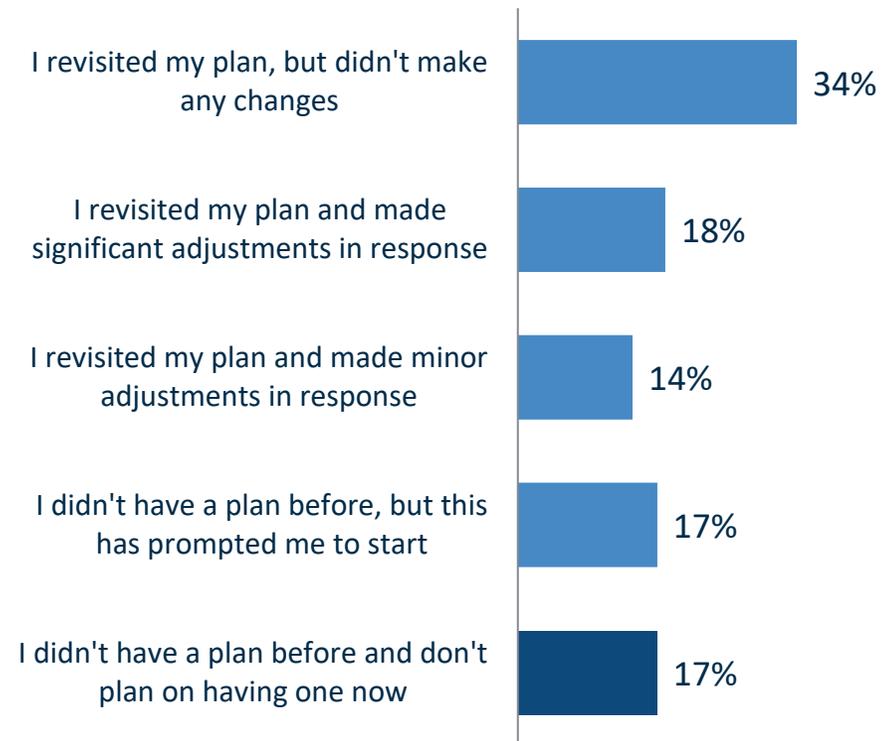
**Q5002.** How has the market volatility and economic downturn prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your financial discipline overall?

**BASE: ALL WHO SAY THEIR FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE HAS IMPROVED (n=710)**

**Q5010** Do you expect to maintain the improvement in your financial behavior once the pandemic ends?

# Nearly 1 in 5 (17%) didn't have a financial plan before the pandemic, but it has prompted them to start

## Impact on financial planning due to market volatility and economic downturn prompted by COVID-19

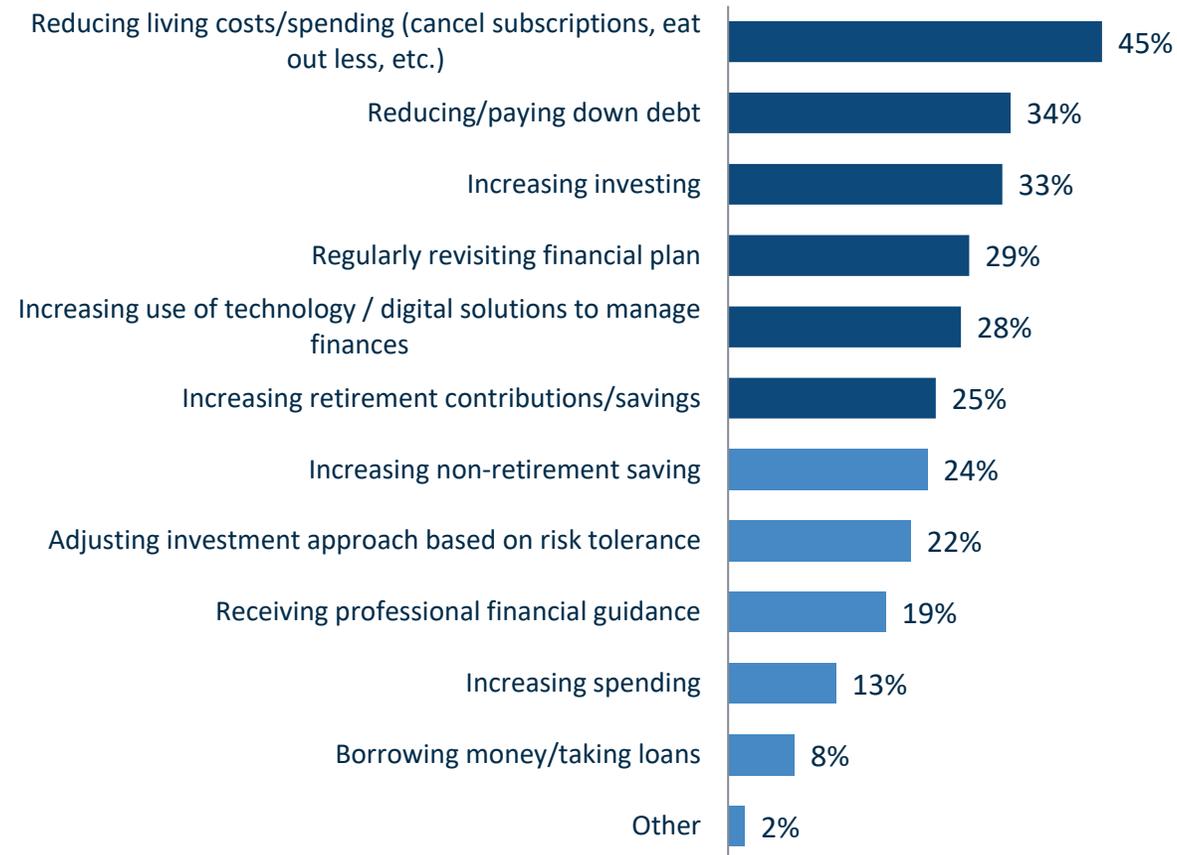


BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS –Gen Pop (n=2320)

Q5000. How has the market volatility and economic downturn prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your approach to financial planning?

# Reducing living costs/spending topped the list of financial behaviors people have adopted and expect to retain over the long term

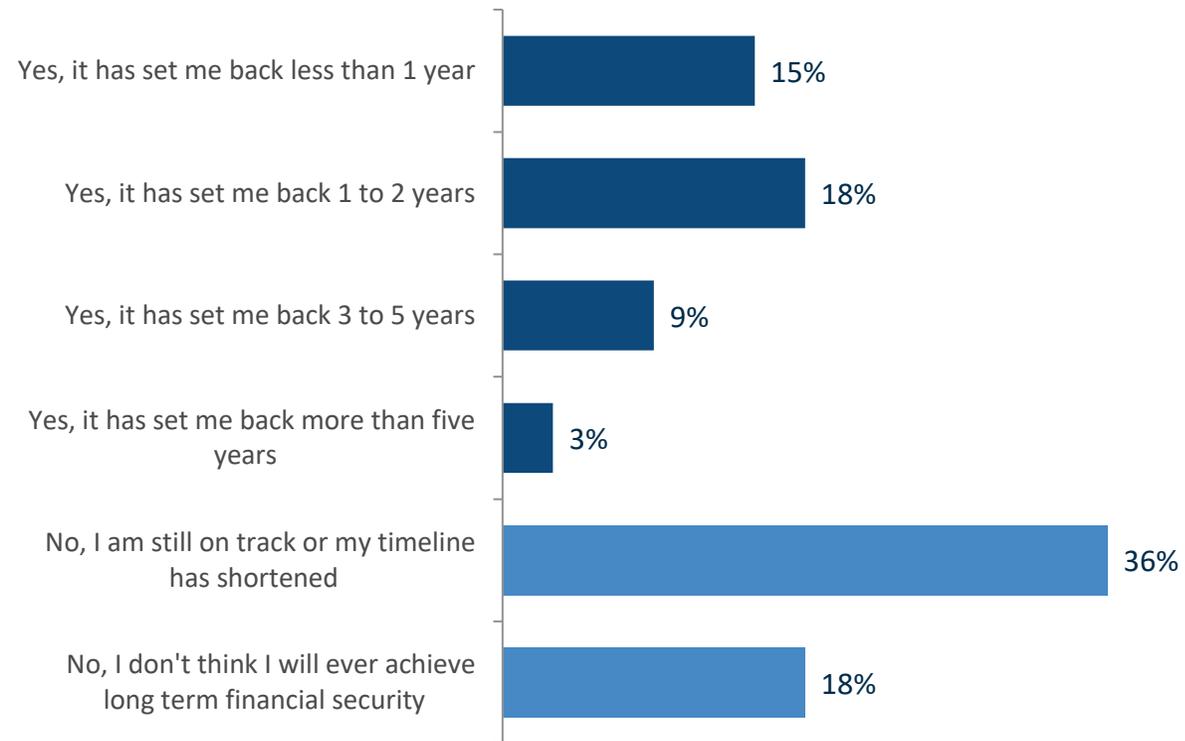
**Financial Behaviors Adopted During the Pandemic  
Expected to Retain in the Long-term**



**BASE: MAINTAIN IMPROVEMENT ONCE PANDEMIC ENDS (n=684)**

**Q5015** Which of the following financial behaviors that you have adopted as a result of the pandemic do you anticipate retaining over the long term? Please select all that apply.

# Nearly half of Americans say the pandemic has impacted their timeline for achieving long-term financial security



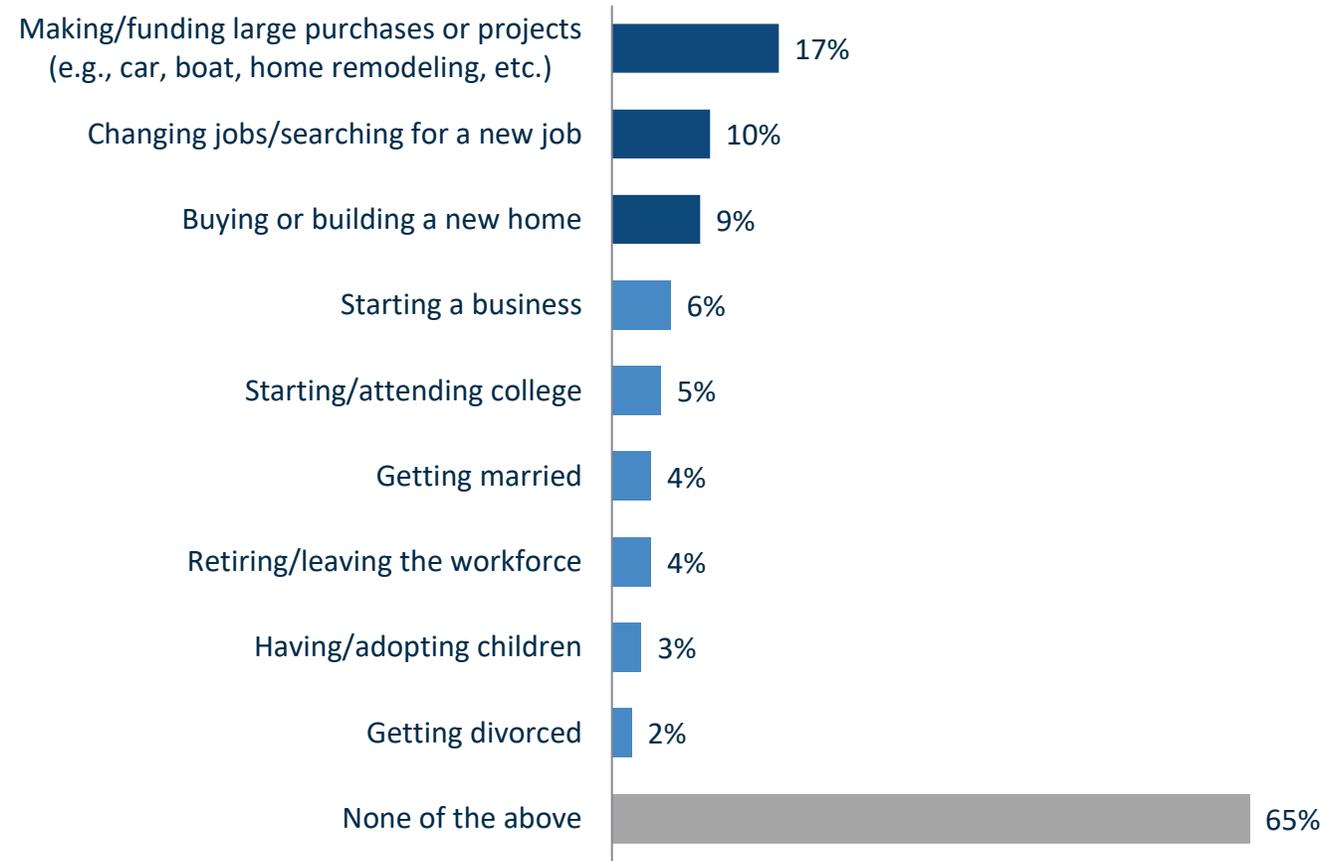
**2021 Gen Pop (n=2320)**

**Q5070.** For many, the road to long-term financial security takes years and may include twists and turns due to unforeseen factors. In your case, has the impact of COVID-19 changed your financial timeline to achieving long-term financial security, and if so, how?

# More than one-third (35%) have postponed a major financial or life event because of the pandemic

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## Plans Postponed due to COVID-19



**BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS—Gen Pop (n=2320)**

**Q5035** Have you postponed any of the following as a result of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic? Please select all that apply.