

The wellbeing of different Australians

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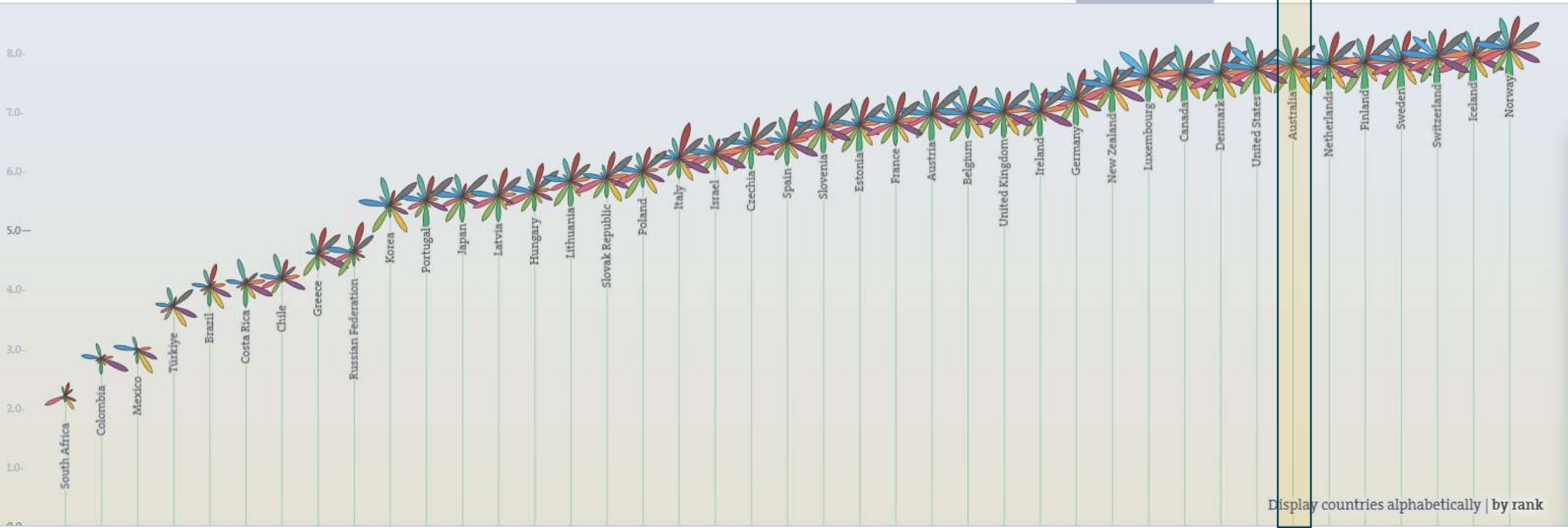


UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

The University of Canberra acknowledges the Ngunnawal people, traditional custodians of the lands where Bruce Campus is situated. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of Canberra and the region. We also acknowledge all other First Nations Peoples on whose lands we gather.

Aussie wellbeing holds up well internationally across multiple indexes and survey

Australia is currently ranked 7th of OECD countries in the Better Life Index

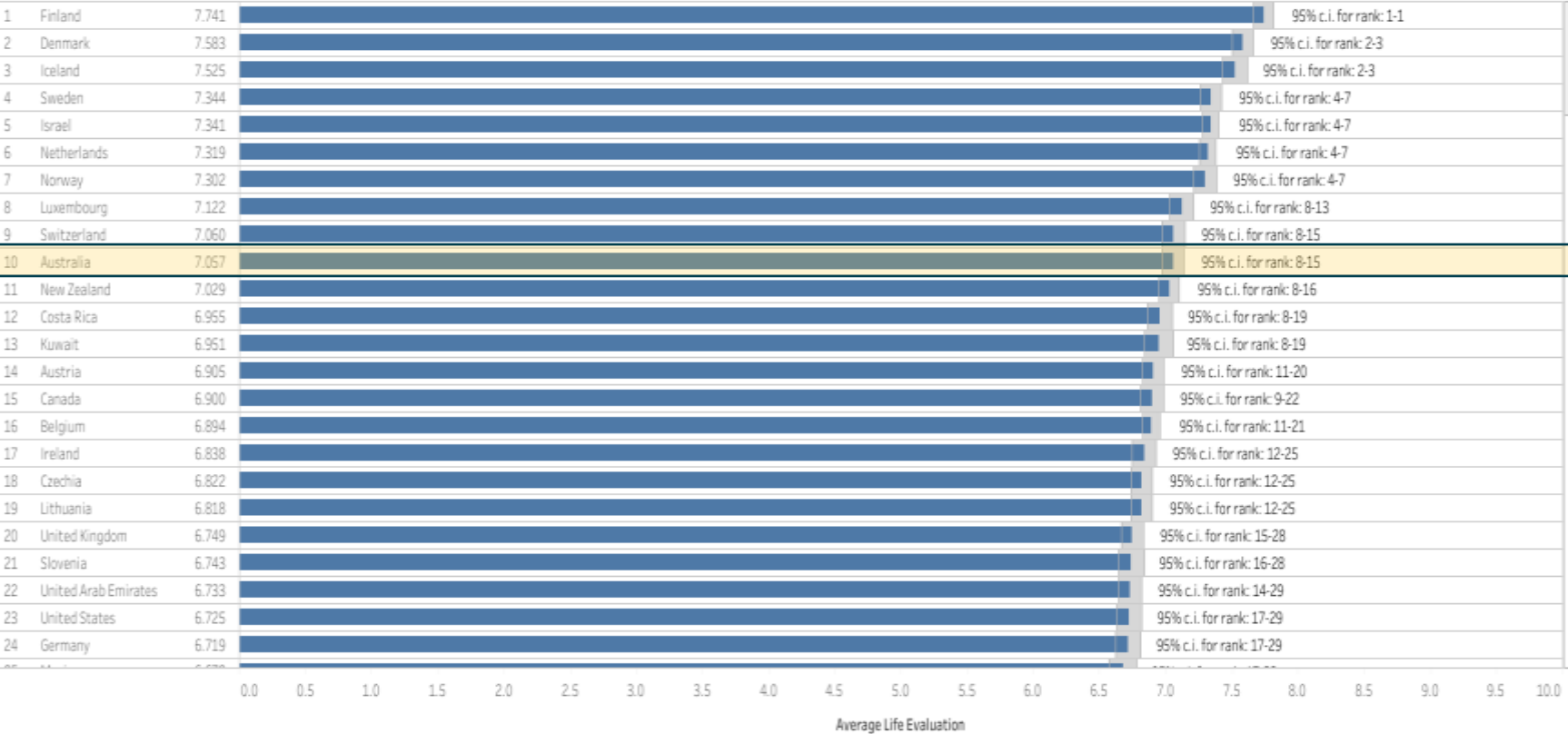


Display countries alphabetically | by rank

Aussie wellbeing holds up well internationally across multiple indexes and survey

Australia ranked 10th in the World Happiness report in 2024, out of 143 countries

(only top 24 shown)



Australia outranks New Zealand for happiness. But are we actually better off than Kiwis?



<https://worldhappiness.report/>

When we go below the headline, we often lack detail

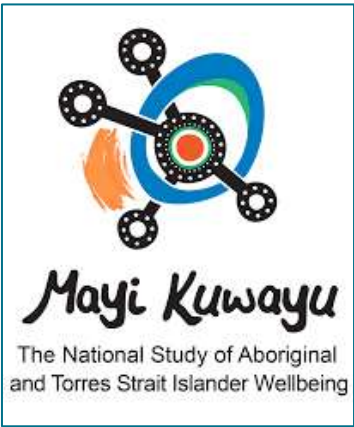
Major national data collections were not designed to capture many of the things now known to be critical to wellbeing

- Social connection & loneliness
- Inclusion & exclusion
- Housing quality
- Cost of living
- and many others...

Many of the things we do measure are not measured well for all Australians

- Culturally and linguistically diverse peoples
- Rural and remote communities
- Farmers
- First Nations
- Single parents
- Recent immigrants
- Carers
- and many others...

Filling our gaps in knowledge about wellbeing



The Australian Unity Wellbeing Index

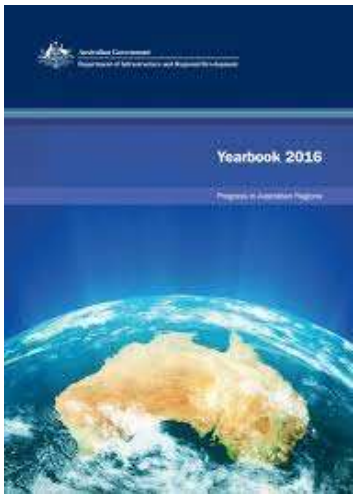


Figure 9.1.1: Indicator framework for Australia's welfare



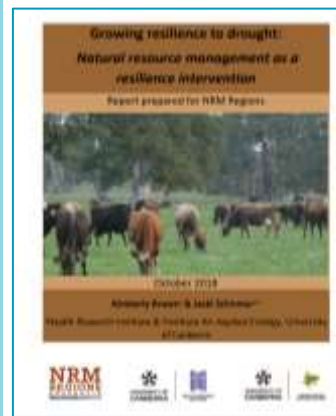
Regional Wellbeing Survey

- The need
 - Wellbeing, liveability and resilience vary significantly across rural communities
 - Regional Australia not well represented in most national surveys
- Meeting the need
 - Nationwide survey, focused on regional, rural and remote areas
 - Conducted annually since 2013
 - ≈15,000 participants each year

We are proud to support increasing the visibility of regional Australians through our data collection and analysis



www.regionalwellbeing.org.au



Wellbeing across regional Australia

When we look at averages across all of regional Australia, we see few differences.



% regional Australians with healthy levels of wellbeing
(Personal Wellbeing Index score 60+)



Wellbeing across regional Australia

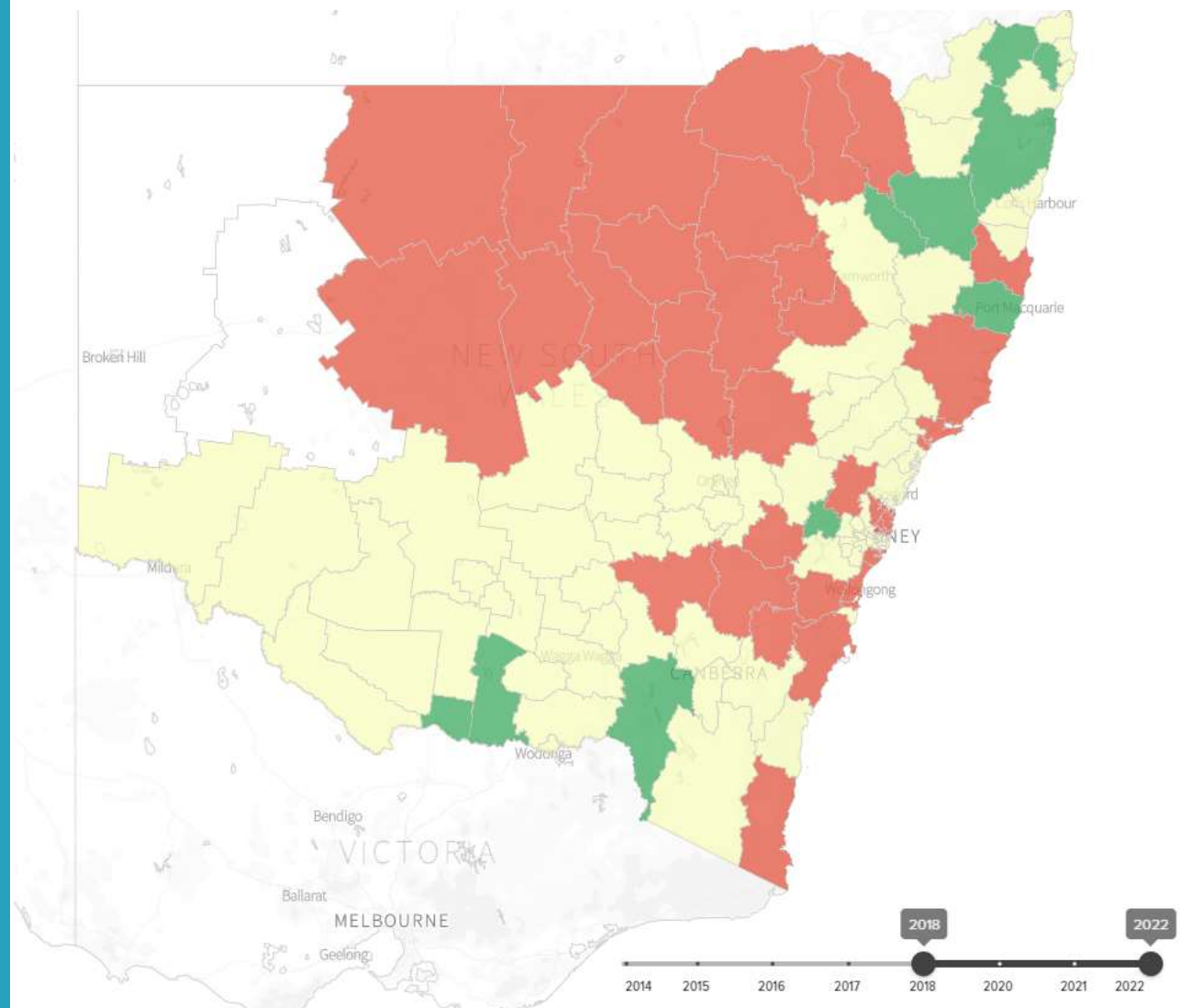
Change in **personal wellbeing**, 2018 to 2022, by LGA in NSW

Data source: Regional Wellbeing Survey

Red = % healthy wellbeing declined >5%

Green = % healthy wellbeing grew >5%

Yellow = % healthy wellbeing grew/fell <5%



Wellbeing across regional Australia

Change in **community liveability**, 2018 to 2022, by LGA in NSW

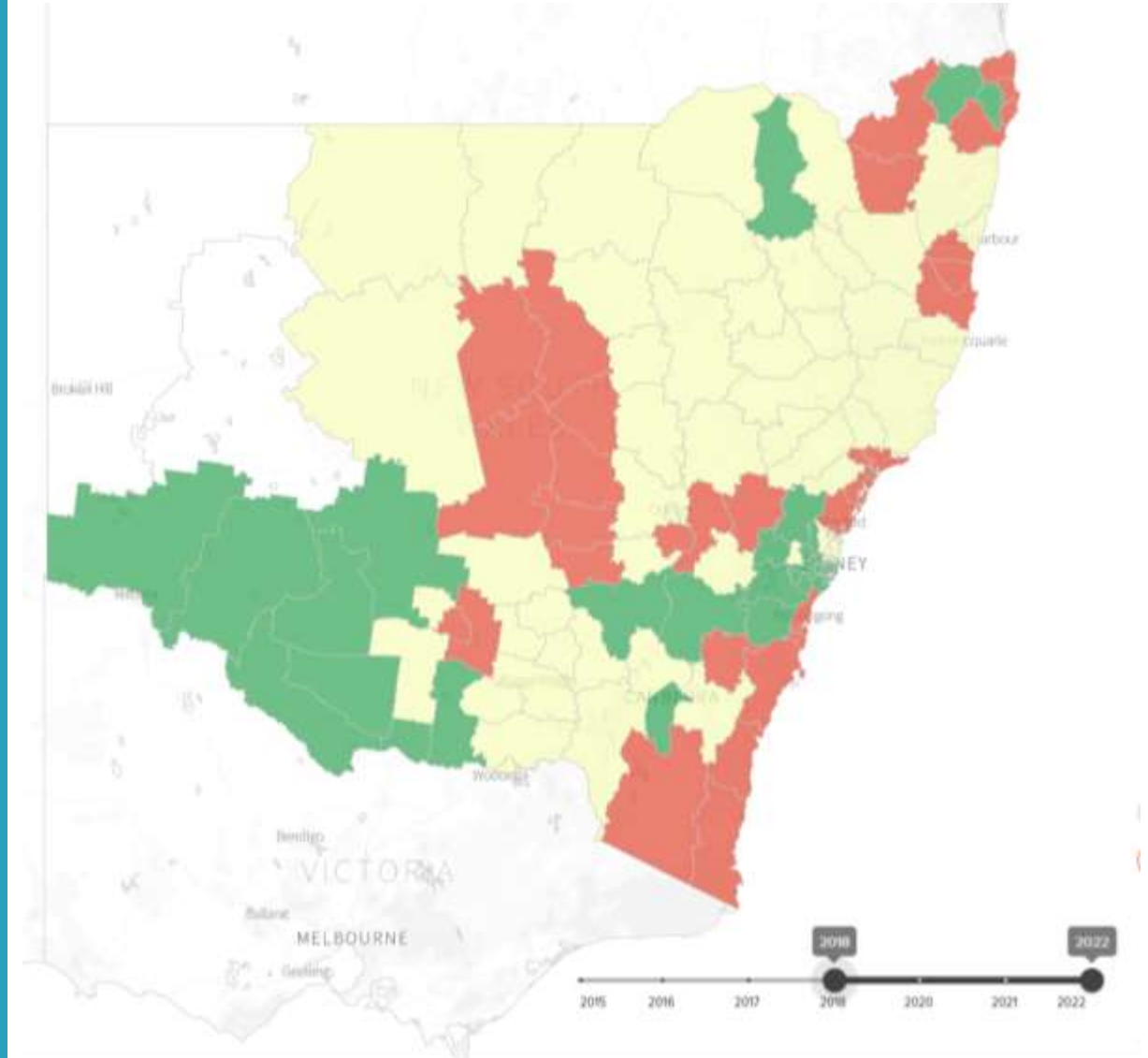
Data source: Regional Wellbeing Survey

Change in % agreeing “I would recommend my community to others as a good place to live”

Red = declined 5% or more

Green = declined 5% or more

Yellow = grew/fell <5%

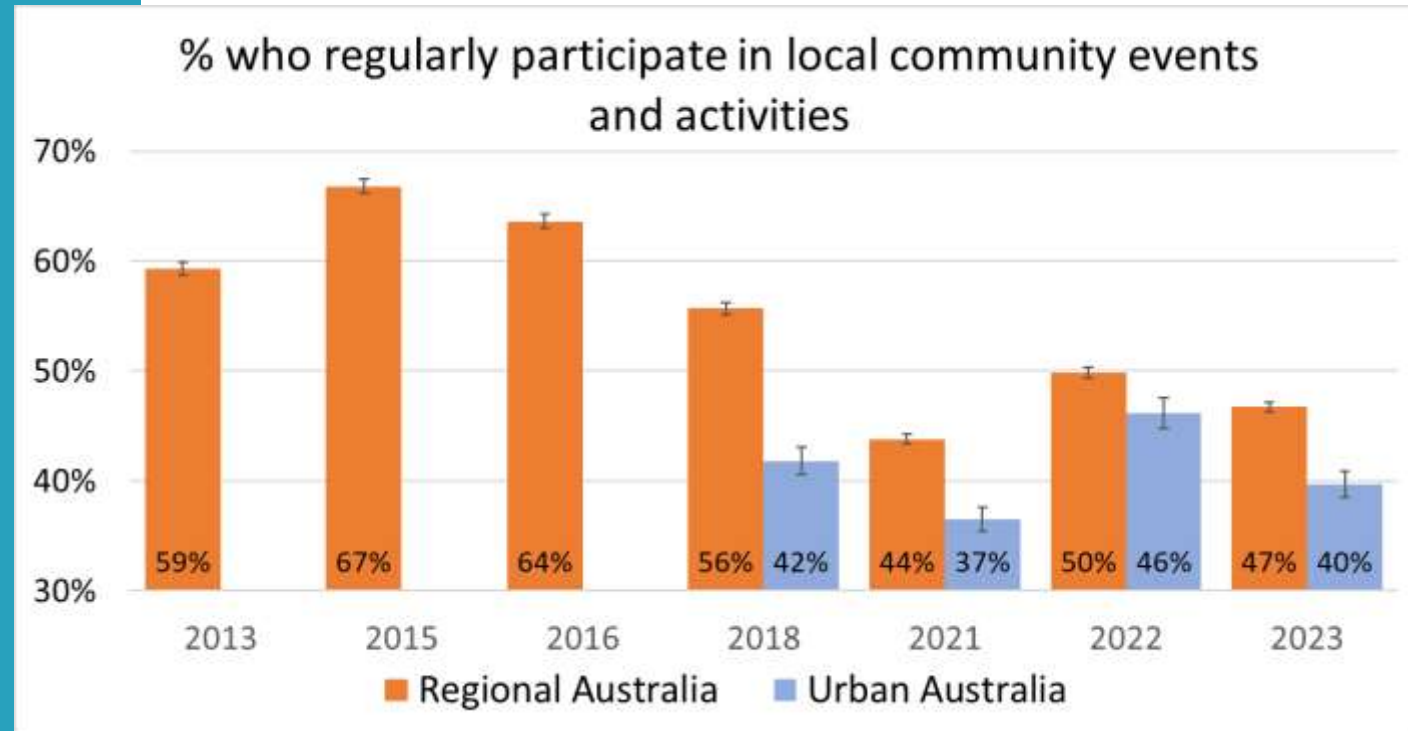


Wellbeing across regional Australia

Participation in community activities has declined significantly since 2013 – and this decline began *before* COVID-19

This decline is one of the factors contributing to change in liveability, and personal wellbeing, across Australian communities

Data source: Regional Wellbeing Survey



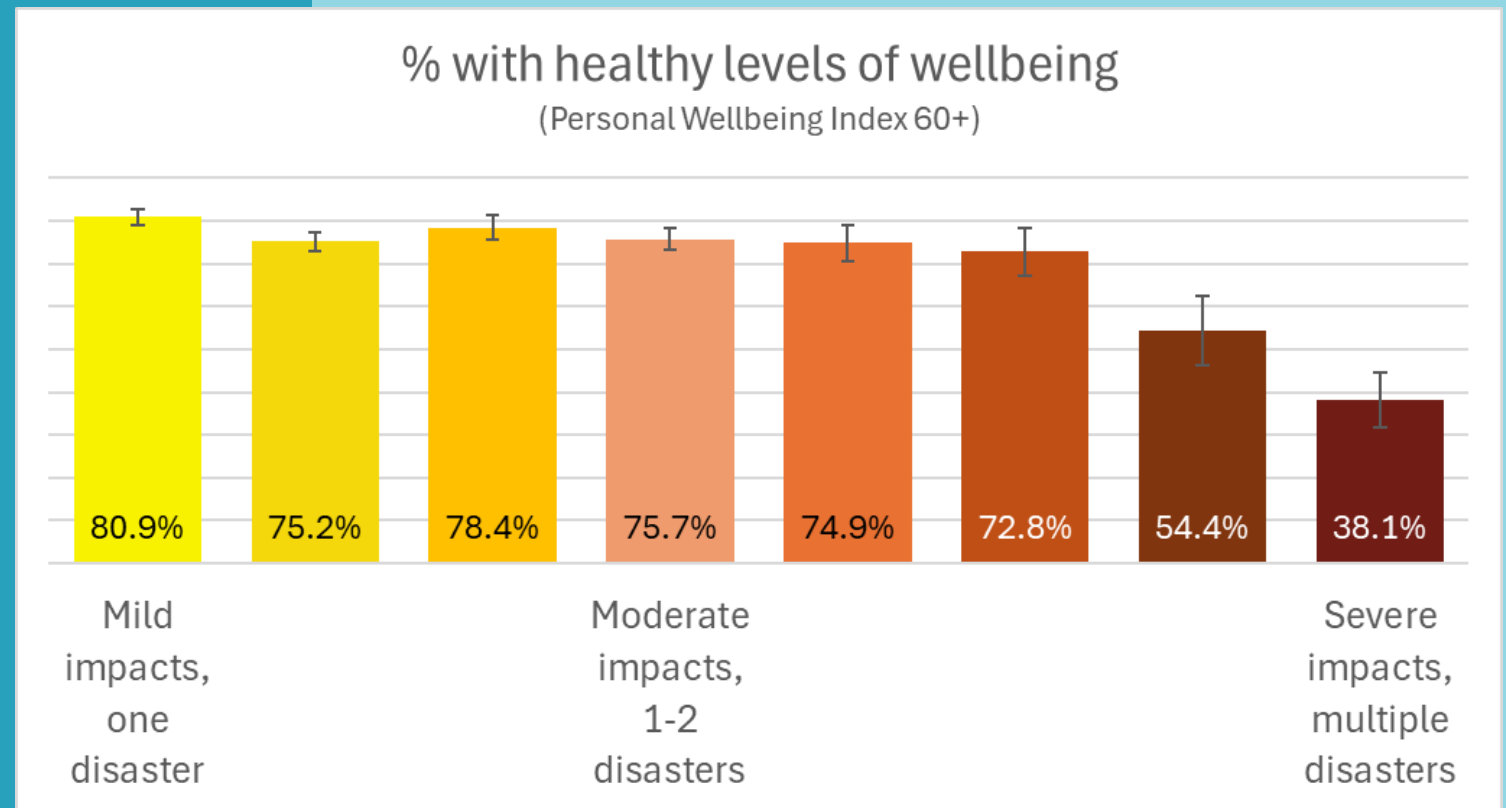
Droughts, fire, flood and storm

We are tracking the wellbeing of >4,000 Australians directly impacted by one or more natural hazards in the last 5 years

Wellbeing remains high for many – but cumulative events are presenting challenges.

What factors are protective of wellbeing when impacted by disaster?

- Strong social networks
- A safe place to live
- Agency to make decisions about your future
- Access to financial resources
- Good process for accessing support (as well as the support itself)
- Confidence in leaders
- ... and more (reports to be released in late 2024)



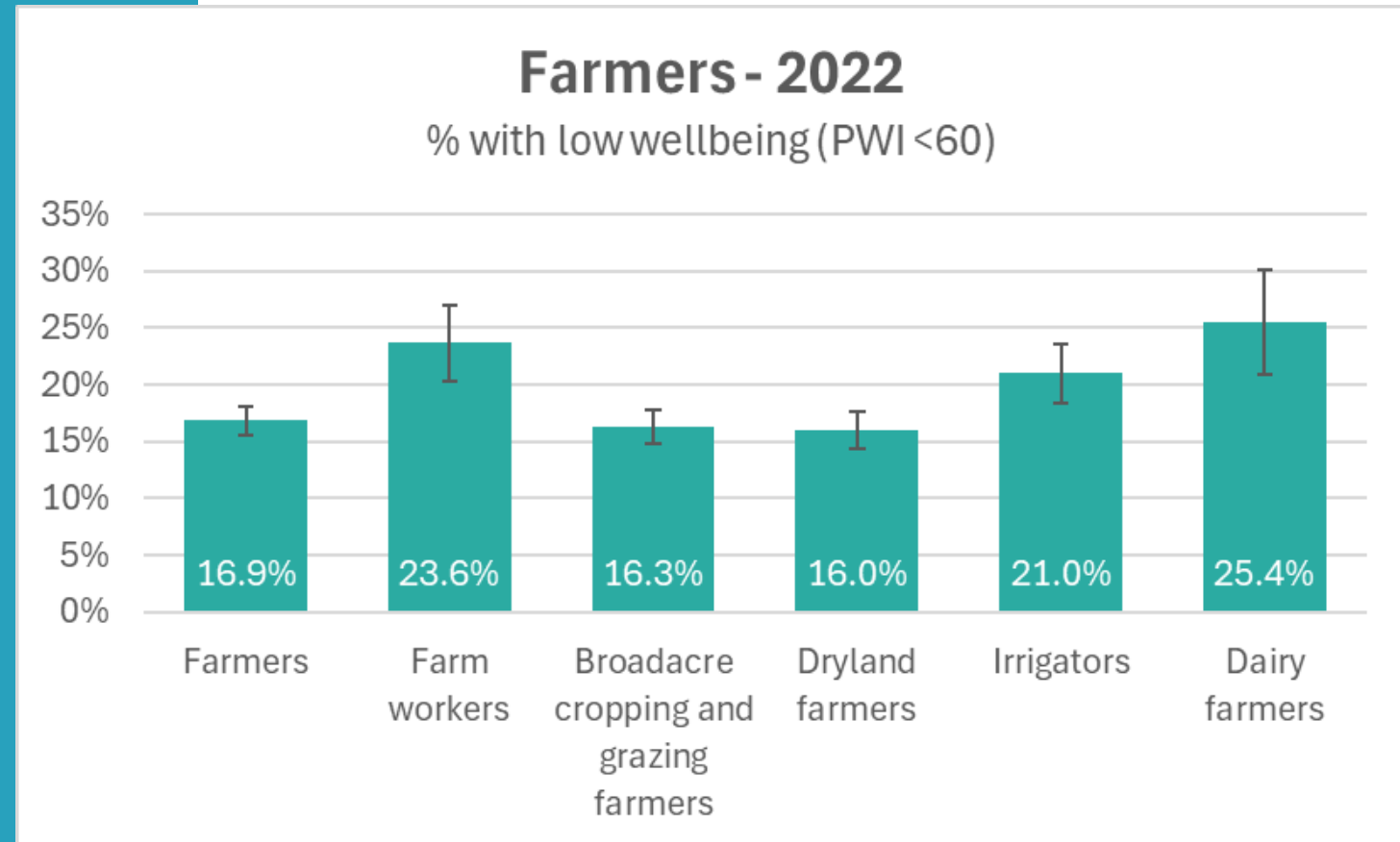
Wellbeing of farmers

Farmers are complex. Despite current public rhetoric, farmers have on average, higher well than non-farmers. This is despite higher risk of suicide and some types of distress.

Wellbeing of farmers can change rapidly. One of the biggest influences is what is happening on the farm.

Farm-related factors associated with significant changes in farmer wellbeing: extended drought, exposure to cumulative natural hazards impacting the farm, low commodity prices, livestock welfare, geographic and occupational isolation

(based on multiple reports from RWS data)



Aged 18-29 72.7%	Children at home 75.0%	Retired 85.6%	LGBTIQ+ 67.9%	Disaster impacted 57%-68%
Lived locally <3 years 70.5%	Aged 40-49 65.8%	Unemployed 55.8%	Male 77.3%	LOTE 75.0%
Born in Australia 75.3%	Lived locally 5-9 years 74.0%	Aged 60-69 83.9%	Female 76.0%	Farmer 83.3%
Unpaid carer 41.7%	Lived in Aus <10 years 66.9%	Lived locally 10-19 years 75.7%	Non-binary 33%-58%	Adult Australia 76.2%

The picture at the end of 2023

% with healthy wellbeing

Regional Wellbeing Survey

Carer Wellbeing Survey

- Australia's 2.7 million carers provide unpaid assistance to people living with disability, illness, chronic conditions or old-age related frailty
- It is estimated that the equivalent paid services would cost \$77.9 billion annually if not provided by unpaid carers
- Carers experience significant challenges, including high risk of financial stress, poor quality of life and difficulty accessing support
- We measure carer wellbeing through the Carer Wellbeing Survey in partnership with Carers Australia and Department of Social Services

We are proud to partner with Carers Australia and Department of Social Services

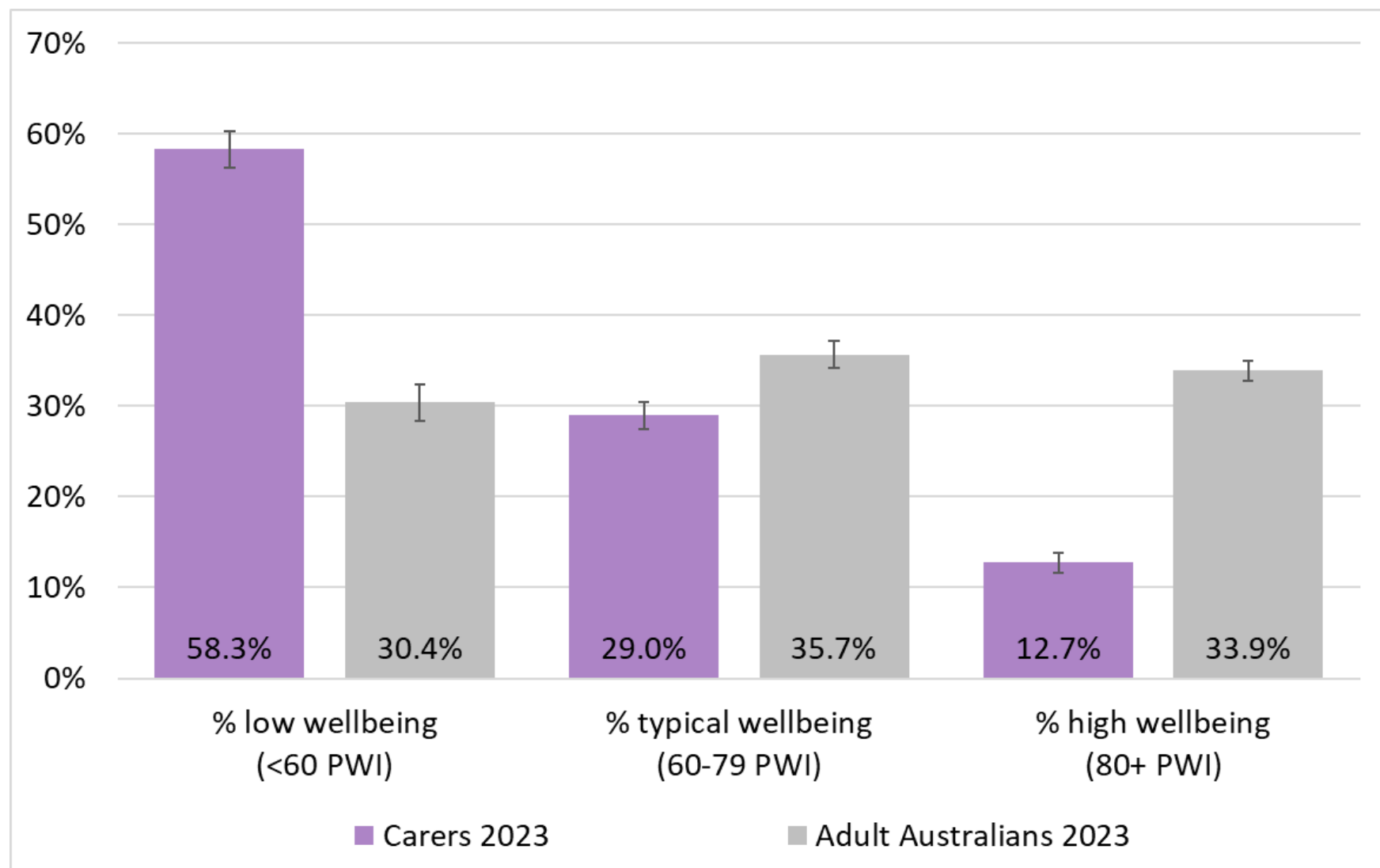


www.carersaustralia.com.au/carer-wellbeing-survey/



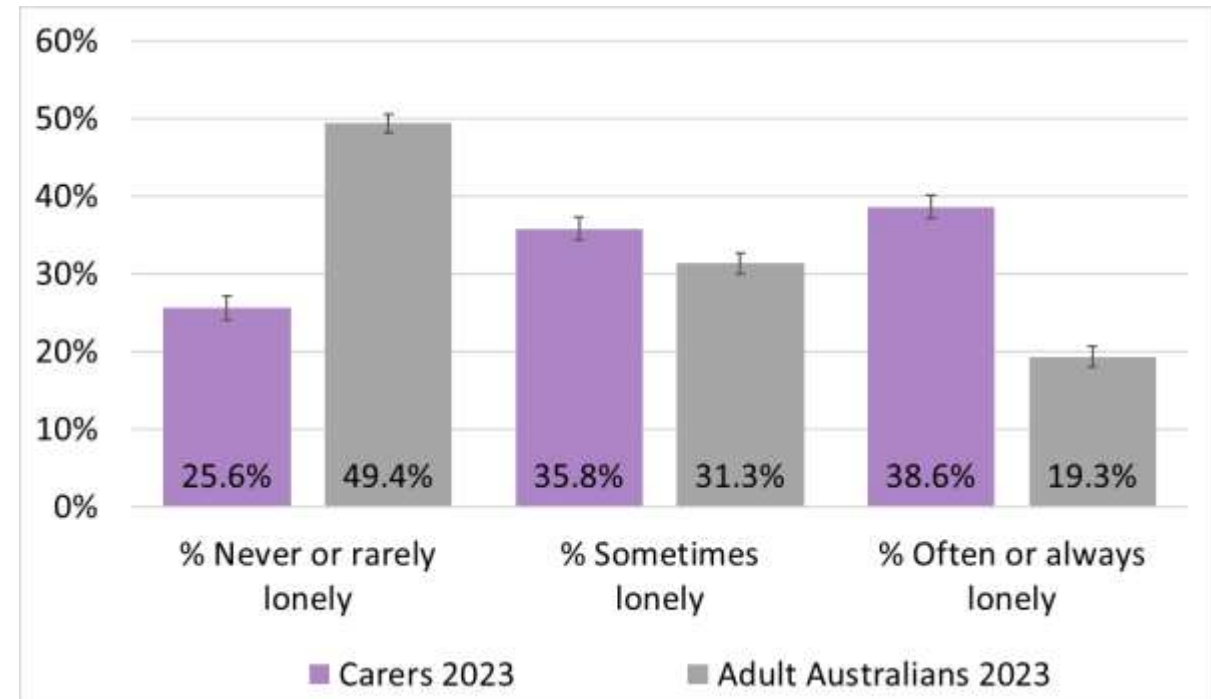
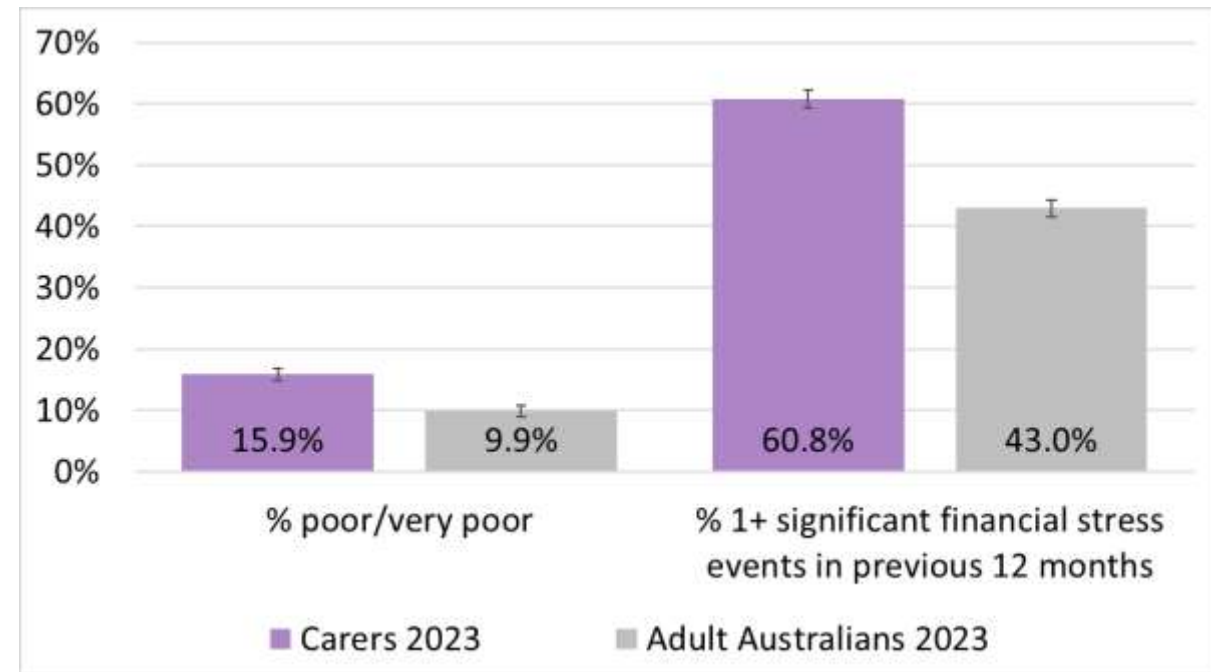
What do we know about carers' wellbeing and illbeing?

- Carers are significantly more likely than other Australians to have low wellbeing
- They also have higher rates of psychological distress (31.3% high in 2023, compared to 22.9% of adult Australians)



Key wellbeing challenges

- Carers are significantly more likely to experience financial stress compared to other Australians
- 64% of carers reported low satisfaction with their ability to participate in paid work; 71% indicated they did less work than they wanted because of their caring responsibilities
- Carers are twice as likely to report being lonely



Need for
bespoke
wellbeing
measures
to facilitate
bespoke
support

One size doesn't fit all

Some carers report poorer quality of life than others:

- Younger carers
- Carers with higher caring commitments (primary and sole carers, those caring for more than 40 hours per week, those who care for two or more people and those who live with their care recipient)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers
- Carers who identify as LGBTIQ+
- Carers of children or grandchildren

Other groups of carers reported better outcomes

- Older carers
 - Carers with lower caring commitments
- 



How can we support carers to improve quality of life as part of our future wellbeing agenda?

- Not all carers have low quality of life.
- Around 50% of carers reported that being a carer was a satisfying and positive experience in 2023.
- Need to look at the factors that facilitate better wellbeing amongst carers.
- These include
 - Access to services e.g. respite
 - Access to financial supports
 - Carer training and connection
 - Employment opportunities



Financial security

Carers who report higher financial wellbeing are significantly more likely to report higher wellbeing. Carers who are engaged in the workforce are significantly more likely to report higher financial wellbeing.



Social connection

Carers who report lower loneliness are significantly more likely to report higher wellbeing. Employed carers are significantly more likely to report lower loneliness.



Supportive friends/ family

Carers who have supportive friends and family are significantly more likely to report higher wellbeing, and are more likely to be engaged in the workforce.



Employment

Employed carers are significantly more likely to report higher wellbeing and higher financial security, and carers with supportive employers are significantly more likely to report higher wellbeing.



Setting the wellbeing agenda

- Most Australians have healthy levels of wellbeing
- The important stories are, however, in the details
- The wellbeing of different groups varies – as do the factors that influence their wellbeing
- We need to measure different things to understand what is causing change in the wellbeing of unpaid carers, farmers, First Nations, those impacted by disaster, those living in remote communities ...

The wellbeing agenda for Australians needs to recognize and address the unique wellbeing needs of different groups

... and to invest in data collections that actively ensure the wellbeing of all Australians is given a voice