



Submission to the Annual Wage Review 2023-24

ACTU Submission, 28 March 2024

ACTU D. No 21/2024

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1. INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

1. The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is the peak body of Australian Unions with 36 affiliated unions together representing over 1.7 million workers.
2. The ACTU submits that the Fair Work Commission Annual Wage Review should increase National Minimum and Award Wages by **5%** from 1 July 2024.
3. This increase would provide much needed cost of living relief for the 2.9 million workers that now rely on minimum and award wages; the majority of who are low paid, female and facing record levels of financial stress. While last year's increase was a welcome move to restore real wage growth for these workers, and inflation is coming down, there is still significant work to be done: a worker earning the average award wage three years ago (May 2021), would be about \$5,200 better off today if their pay had kept up with inflation, as measure by the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
4. The ACTU claim would see more progress towards restoring these loses and continue progress towards returning Australia's minimum wage to also being a living wage. Recent decisions have seen our minimum wage "bite" recover from a low of 51.5 per cent in 2021 to 55.2 per cent of median earnings, still shy of 60 per cent, a key and recognised benchmark of a living wage.
5. The ACTU claim is also an economically responsible one. As this submission covers in considerable detail, the national economy is in good health, having achieved a soft landing after monetary policy tightening. While the labour market has moderated slightly, it still remains close its recent and historically excellent performance. Businesses are performing well, particularly non-mining businesses, with profits in the past year above both pre-pandemic averages and wage growth, and investment picking up.
6. On 1 July 2023 the biggest single annual increase in the minimum wage since 1982 occurred, just as inflation then dropped another 1.9 percentage points over the final two quarters of the year

down to 4.1 per cent. This should give the Panel yet more confidence that its decisions will not have a negative impact on inflation.

7. The real economic headwind is declining consumer spending, especially on discretionary items, as workers have been forced to tighten their belts. As this submission demonstrates, that there is any growth in domestic consumption is due to spending by inbound migration. Delivering real and fair wage growth will be critical to addressing this fragile situation.
8. Depending on the measure, labour productivity has either returned to or is slightly above pre-pandemic levels, as the disruptions of Covid and subsequent recovery have worked their way out of the system, an analysis confirmed by the Productivity Commission in its Annual Bulletin for 2024.¹ Strong growth in business investment, and the Government's productivity agenda should also give the Panel confidence that the ACTU claim can be easily sustained.
9. The Panel this year has an historic opportunity to make significant progress towards gender pay equality by making specific adjustments to particular modern awards to address gender based undervaluation. There is a sound basis to intervene in rates for female dominated care work and professional work on an interim basis and to establish a process to identify interim increases for other types of female dominated work.
10. The impact of our claim on hourly and weekly rates of pay, subject to the matters raised in Chapter 5 of this submission, is provided in Table 1 below.

¹ Productivity Commission (27 March 2024) *Annual Productivity Bulletin 2024* page 3
<https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/productivity-insights/bulletins/bulletin-2024/productivity-bulletin-2024.pdf>

Table 1: Impact of the ACTU claim for 5%

Award classification	Current rates		Proposed rates		Weekly \$ increase	Hourly \$ increase
	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly		
C14	859.3	22.61	902.27	23.74	42.97	1.13
NMW / C13	882.8	23.23	926.94	24.39	44.14	1.16
C12	914.9	24.08	960.65	25.28	45.75	1.20
C11	945	24.87	992.25	26.11	47.25	1.24
C10	995	26.18	1044.75	27.49	49.75	1.31
C9	1026.2	27.01	1077.51	28.36	51.31	1.35
C8	1057.4	27.83	1110.27	29.22	52.87	1.39
C7	1085.6	28.57	1139.88	30.00	54.28	1.43
C6	1140.7	30.02	1197.74	31.52	57.04	1.50
C5	1164.1	30.63	1222.31	32.16	58.20	1.53
C4	1195.3	31.46	1255.07	33.03	59.77	1.57
C3	1257.9	33.1	1320.80	34.76	62.90	1.66
C2(a)	1289.3	33.93	1353.77	35.63	64.46	1.70
C2(b)	1345.7	35.41	1412.99	37.18	67.29	1.77

11. To assist the Panel, a summary of the key points in this submission are made below, organised by the relevant objectives under the *Fair Work Act* that it must take into account.

12. When taking into account “employment growth, inflation and the sustainability, performance and competitiveness of the national economy” we encourage the Panel to consider that:

- a. While slowing over the course of 2023, the Australian economy has remained remarkably resilient, aided by a pick-up in investment by firms and a rebound in net overseas migration, which have combined to support business income and profitability. This resilience is also reflected in historically low unemployment rates and underemployment rates, a high participation rate, high vacancy rates, high capacity utilisation, and buoyant profit growth.
- b. Profit growth has been solid and broad-based in the non-mining sector and across both large and small businesses, even in the face of a slowing economy. Non-mining profits

increased 6.2 per cent year on year in the December quarter, following an increase of 10.7 per cent year on year in September, having averaged 10.3 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months. This is well above the average year on year growth of 3.0 per cent during the 10-years prior to the pandemic.

- c. In general, industries with high shares of award reliant workers have performed solidly over the last twelve months. Real gross value added and employment in these industries have both picked up; profit to income ratios have stabilised; and profits have been solid relative to pre-COVID levels. Further, job vacancies are elevated and underutilisation rates are below pre-pandemic averages, which is occurring alongside a pick-up in nominal wages growth. However, the uptick in wages growth has not been enough to prevent a severe decline in real wages for workers in these sectors.
- d. Inflation growth has eased over the past twelve months but remains high and is concentrated most strongly in essential goods and services, which is weighing heavily on workers' real incomes. Workers have had no hand in driving economy-wide price increases, which have been due mainly to pandemic-related supply chain disruptions, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, severe weather events disrupting supply chains in Australia, and then opportunistic price gouging by many firms domestically.
- e. Wages growth has picked up across a range of sectors and pay-setting methods, but real wages have declined rapidly and are at decadal lows because of high inflation. As of the December quarter 2023, a year after inflation growth peaked at 7.8 per cent annual growth, real wages have declined to the same level they were in early 2011 and are around 5.2 per cent lower than they were in March 2021. Declining real wages, higher interest rates, and inflation concentrated in essentials have precipitated a cost of living crisis and acted as a drag on household consumption. Australia's workers have scaled back on spending, particularly discretionary spending, in response to strained household budgets even as spending in Australia is supported by inbound tourists and returning international students.
- f. Disaggregating spending in Australia into the Australia resident component and the inbound tourist and international student component helps explain why business capacity utilisation and aggregate profitability have both been solid even while the cost of living crisis weighs heavily on Australia's workers.

- g. Productivity outcomes are normalising as the effects of COVID-19 washes out; the flow of business investment becomes bedded down; and the Government's genuine productivity agenda begins in earnest, giving grounds to have an optimistic view of productivity growth in the period ahead. The Panel should be encouraged that productivity grew in the two quarters immediately following the most recent Annual Wage Review decision. On the two major measures of labour productivity, productivity has either returned to or is above pre-pandemic levels, giving the Panel further confidence in framing decisions around the long run average productivity growth of 1.2 per cent per annum.

13. When taking into account "relative living standards", we encourage the Panel to consider that:

- a. Over three quarters of award reliant workers are "low paid" – earning less than two-thirds of median earnings. Many are clustered in or adjacent to age brackets that are usually associated with peak career earnings.
- b. While the population affected by the Panel's decision is diverse, it includes a majority of workers who are women, or working part time hours or in casual work.
- c. There remains a high disparity between paid rates generally and award rates for skilled work, and for some skill levels above ANZSCO 5 the relative position has worsened over the last year. The award rate at which an employee can meet the revised updated *Budget Standards* has unfortunately shifted from C11 to C10.
- d. While last year's increase and re-benchmarking of the minimum wage is a welcome development, it has only begun to address the longer-term decline in the Australia's minimum wage "bite" as a percentage of median wages. Once a world leader, Australia is now in the middle of the OECD pack, particularly as other countries have stepped up efforts to increase the relative strength of their minimum wages.
- e. Tax and transfer policy changes since the last review do not provide a justification for restraint in this Review, particularly given their policy intent of providing cost of living relief. This is also because the Panel's moderation on account of past beneficial tax-transfer changes (the LMITO) was never rebalanced once those measures were withdrawn. Finally, many award-reliant employees earn below the tax free threshold – the lowest paid – and will therefore receive no benefit from these tax changes.

14. When taking into account the "needs of the low paid" we encourage the Panel to consider that:

- a. Employees earning the full time weekly rates of between C14 to C8 would be considered low paid. The percentage share of the median wage that each of these classification rates accounts for has decreased over the past year.
- b. The National Minimum Wage has not kept pace with relative poverty thresholds such as 60% of median earnings. While the re-benchmarking of the minimum wage to the C13 rate last year helped to lift it to 55.2 per cent of median earnings, that rate itself has suffered a decline as a percentage of median earnings, dropping from 55.7 per cent in August 2022.
- c. Of the 14 hypothetical household types earning award wages (equivalised household disposable income), five of them fall below the poverty line if earning the NMW and four still do even if earning the C10 rate.
- d. There has been a marked increase in financial stress for households over the past two years, as Covid-era supports ended, and real wages have declined. Households experiencing any form of financial stress has risen from 20.3 per cent in 2021 to 26.9 per cent in 2023. Around 10.6 per cent of households would now be unable to raise \$4,000 in an emergency, up from 8.3 per cent in 2021.
- e. The findings are supported by a range of additional surveys including:
 - i. The NAB Australian Wellbeing Survey (Q4 2023) finding that “Wellbeing is at its lowest point since the onset of Covid” but felt most by the lower income group.
 - ii. The Melbourne Institute – Taking the Pulse of the Nation Survey finding consistently high or rising levels of financial stress among the two cohorts most reliant on award wages; and
 - iii. The ACTU’s Attitudes, Sentiments and Knowledge (ASK) survey finding that low income earners reporting they cannot afford housing or food and groceries without significant financial stress at the highest levels since the survey began in Q4 2021.
 - iv. Rent increases of between 9.7 per cent to 11.6 per cent in capital cities over the past 12 months, in circumstances where even an award reliant worker paid above the low paid threshold was in rental stress *before* experiencing the full extent of those increases.

- f. Even given this finding, the cost of living pressure on Award reliant workers will be more acute than is reflected in the CPI, as employees, and particularly lower income ones, spend more of their income on non-discretionary items which grew by 4.8 per cent in the year to December 2023, compared to 2.4 per cent for non-discretionary items. This is also reflected in the Living Cost Index for employee households which has risen 16.2 per cent over the past two years, compared to 11.9 per cent for CPI.

15. In considering the concepts and objectives of gender equality introduced by the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs Better Pay) Act 2022 (Cth)*, the Panel has an opportunity in the Review to begin making specific adjustments to particular modern awards to address gender based undervaluation. Whilst we expect the State 2 research (due to be released in April) will assist in targeting those adjustments, there is a sound basis to intervene in rates for female dominated care work and professional work on an interim basis and to establish a process to identify interim increases for other types of female dominated work.

16. When taking into account “the need to promote social inclusion through increased workforce participation”, we encourage the Panel to consider that:
 - a. The labour market continues to be remarkably resilient. While some softening has recently taken place, major indicators are still close to record lows, and much stronger than pre-pandemic levels. As key indicators show:
 - i. Employment growth is 3.2 per cent for February 2024, well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 1.8 per cent.
 - ii. Unemployment is at 3.7 per cent for February 2023, just 0.2 per cent above the historic lows of the second half of 2022, and well below pre-pandemic levels.
 - iii. Participation has remained strong, particularly for women at 62.8 percent in February 2024, up from the pre-pandemic average of 59.3 per cent. Both male and female youth participation levels are also encouragingly above pre-pandemic levels.
 - iv. Unemployment rates for workers out of employment for more than one year are also well below the pre-pandemic averages.
 - v. Underemployment has ticked up slightly, but again, remains well below pre-pandemic levels.

17. There is no evidence of any dis-employment effects from last year’s decision, and nor can it be ruled out that last year’s positive increase acted as an incentive for people to enter the labour market.
18. For Award-reliant industries:
- a. The unemployment, underemployment and vacancy rates, as of December 2023, are lower than the pre-COVID average in all industries.
 - b. Employment growth has remained broadly steady in award reliant industries, with the lone exception of Accommodation and food services, as people shift spending away from discretionary to non-discretionary items, in response to cost of living pressures.
 - c. Multiple job holding rates are above the pre-Covid averages, suggesting that workers are making the most of current labour market conditions to work the hours they wish.
19. Taking into account the “need to improve access to secure work across the economy”, the Panel should have regard to:
- a. Secure employment has grown at a faster rate than insecure employment during the recent period of significant increases to minimum and award wages occurred. This lends weight to the argument that such increases have not limited people accessing secure work.
20. The Panel has previously considered that there is no sound basis to consider that its decisions within a reasonable range will either encourage or discourage collectively bargaining. There is no reason to disturb that finding in this year’s review.
21. Considering the “likely impact... on business” we encourage the Panel to consider that:
- a. With the non-mining sector a major contributor to recent income and profit growth, which has been broad-based both across industries as well as across small and large businesses, the large effective increase in the minimum wage of 8.6 per cent and the increase for awards of 5.75 per cent last year has had no discernible impact on the prospects for Australian businesses.
 - b. A recent slowing of growth rates in the number of businesses is likely due to the unwinding of COVID-era supports (which caused a commensurate and earlier spike in growth rates) as well as rising interest rates. Despite this, growth rates appear to have returned to

slightly higher than pre-pandemic levels, with growth rising to 1.0 per cent for the December quarter, and 2.8 per cent for the year, above the pre-pandemic average of 2.6 per cent.

- c. Around 70 per cent of award reliant employees come from businesses with 20 employees or more. Given the nil change in exit rates of businesses this size between 2021-22 and 2022-23, alongside the healthy growth rate in the total number of businesses operating with 20 employees or more, it is difficult to suppose there is a causal link between increases in minimum and award wages arising from the Review process and increased firm exits.
 - d. Minimum wage policies have been actively and increasingly applied in most industrial countries, and a growing number of developing countries, in recent years. This policy activism continues to spark a wide and growing research literature on the varied economic and social consequences of minimum wage policies. Recent studies on the employment impacts of minimum wage policies have reinforced the broad consensus that has emerged over the last quarter-century that the employment effects of moderate minimum wage increases are negligible, and in some cases can be positive.
22. Considering the “providing a comprehensive range of fair minimum wages to junior employees, employees to who training arrangements apply and employees with a disability” we encourage the Panel to consider that:
- a. Employment outcomes for apprentices and trainees have been favourable in recent years, although the incentives to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship lag behind those associated with alternative employment in the relatively tight labour market.
 - b. Despite some softening, the employment to population ratio and participation rate for 15-19 year old workers remain well above their pre-pandemic averages and are accompanied by low unemployment and low unemployment relative to pre-pandemic averages.
 - c. The current approach should be maintained with respect to wages for persons with a disability. However, we would welcome legislative reform to no longer require persons with a disability to subject to a separately identified minimum wage in circumstances where their disability does not impact their productive capacity.

2. THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

23. The Panel is required by the minimum wages objective to consider “the performance and competitiveness of the national economy, including productivity, business competitiveness and viability, inflation and employment growth”² when making the National Minimum Wage Order and when deciding whether to vary modern award minimum wages in a Review.³
24. Additionally, in deciding whether to vary modern award minimum wages, the Panel is required to take into account “the likely impact of any exercise of modern award powers on employment growth, inflation and the sustainability, performance and competitiveness of the national economy”⁴.
25. Both considerations are self-evidently directed to measures at the national level: the former maps the current state and the latter focuses on the aggregate (as opposed to sectoral) impact of an exercise of modern award powers.⁵ The Panel has taken the view that the “underlying intention of these provisions is that the Panel takes into account the effect of its decisions on national economic prosperity and in doing so give particular emphasis to the economic indicators specifically mentioned in the relevant statutory provisions”⁶, albeit while paying close attention to developments in the most award reliant industries.⁷ Consistent with the Panel’s previously identified interests, we discuss both current data as well as forecasts⁸ on key measures. However, consistent with our own past practice, some of the discussion of labour market measures is located in Chapter 6, concerning promoting social inclusion through increased workforce participation.

² FW Act s. 284(1)(a).

³ FW Act s. 284(2)-(3), 285 (2).

⁴ FW Act s 134(1)(h).

⁵ [2022] FWCFB 200 [1068], [1079]

⁶ [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [34]

⁷ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [52]

⁸ [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [8]

26. Based on the detailed analysis provided in this Chapter, the Panel can in our view comfortably make the following findings relevant to its consideration of the national economy:
- a. While slowing over the course of 2023, the Australian economy has remained remarkably resilient because of a rebound in net overseas migration; a strong recovery in inbound tourism; and a pick-up in investment by firms, which have combined to support business income and profitability.
 - b. Economic resilience is also reflected in historically low unemployment rates and underemployment rates, a high participation rate, high vacancy rates, high capacity utilisation, and buoyant profit growth.
 - c. The pick-up in investment growth, driven by above pre-pandemic levels of capacity utilisation on a sustained basis and by an easing of supply chain pressures, is laying the foundations for renewed productivity growth.
 - d. Profit growth has been solid and broad-based in the non-mining sector and across both large and small businesses, even in the face of a slowing economy. Non-mining profits have increased substantially in the two quarters after the Panel's previous Review decision and annual growth in non-mining profits has been well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average for the last eight quarters.
 - e. In general, industries with high shares of award reliant workers have performed solidly over the last twelve months. Real gross value added and employment in these industries have both picked up; profit to income ratios have stabilised; and profits have been solid relative to pre-COVID levels.
 - f. In award reliant industries job vacancies are elevated and underutilisation rates are below pre-pandemic averages, which is occurring alongside a pick-up in nominal wages growth. However, the uptick in wages growth has not been enough to prevent a severe decline in real wages for workers in these sectors.
 - g. Inflation growth has eased over the past twelve months but remains high and is concentrated most strongly in essential goods and services, which is weighing heavily on workers' real incomes.
 - h. Workers have had no hand in driving economy-wide price increases, which have been due mainly to pandemic-related supply chain disruptions, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and severe weather events disrupting supply chains in Australia. Further, Professor Alan Fels' *Inquiry into Price Gouging and Unfair Pricing Practices* found that business pricing

practices have contributed to upwards pressure on prices, driven by a lack of competitiveness in key sectors and exacerbating cost of living pressures for workers.⁹

- i. Wages growth has picked up across a range of sectors and pay-setting methods, but real wages have declined rapidly and are at decadal lows because of high inflation.
- j. Declining real wages, higher interest rates, and inflation concentrated in essentials have precipitated a cost of living crisis and acted as a drag on household consumption.
- k. Australia's workers have scaled back on spending, particularly discretionary spending, in response to strained household budgets even as spending in Australia is supported by inbound tourists and returning international students.
- l. Disaggregating spending in Australia into the Australia resident component and the inbound tourist and international student component helps explain why business capacity utilisation and aggregate profitability have both been solid even while the cost of living crisis weighs heavily on Australia's workers.
- m. Productivity outcomes are beginning to normalise as the effects of COVID-19 washes out; the flow of business investment becomes bedded down; and the Government's genuine productivity agenda begins in earnest, giving grounds to have an optimistic view of productivity growth in the period ahead.
- n. Labour productivity in the market sector is above levels prevailing prior to the pandemic and aggregate labour productivity has returned to around December 2019 levels. This is an analysis recently confirmed by the Productivity Commission in its Annual Productivity Bulletin for 2024, and which should give the Panel confidence that productivity will return to the long-term average projected by Treasury of average annual growth of 1.2 per cent over the cycle
- o. Since the last Review, the economy has evolved broadly as expected by the official forecasters, albeit with stronger than expected employment growth, higher than expected participation, and a faster than expected decline in inflation growth.
- p. Updates by official forecasters are largely unchanged, and both the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia continue to expect inflation to return to target by 2025.

⁹ [InquiryIntoPriceGouging_Report_web.pdf \(actu.org.au\)](#)

2.1 Macroeconomic Conditions: the economy has remained resilient despite slowing in expected ways

27. Following a strong rebound after COVID-related restrictions were eased in mid-2022, the Australian economy has remained resilient, despite slowing over the course of 2023 and being weighed down by high inflation, higher interest rates, and severe cost of living pressures for workers.
28. Real GDP grew 0.2 per cent in the December quarter 2023, below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 0.6 per cent, with growth having eased gradually over the course of 2023 as the slowdown took hold. Year on year growth has averaged around 2.1 per cent over the past twelve months, with growth in December coming in at 1.5 per cent over the year, compared to an average of 2.5 per cent in the 10 years before COVID-19 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Real GDP growth

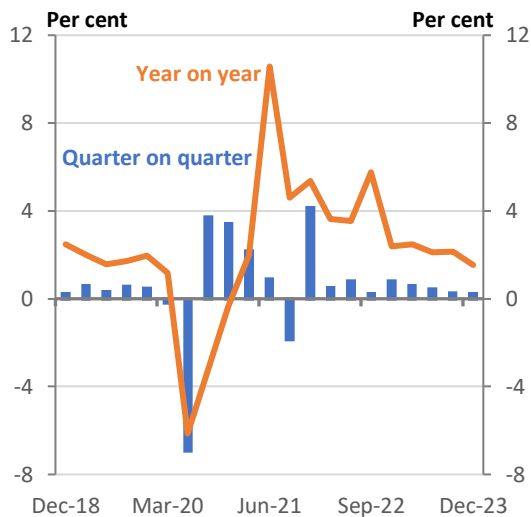
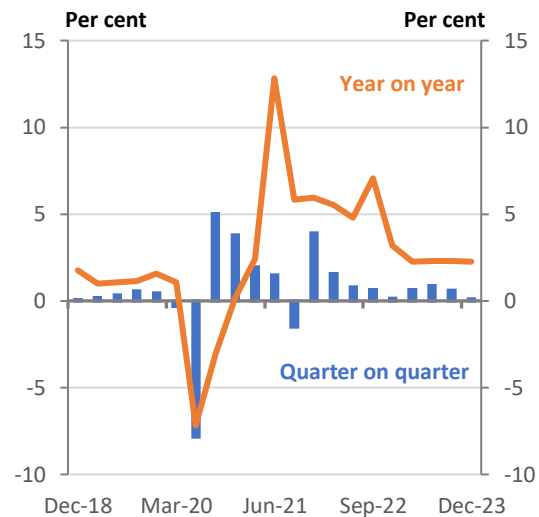


Figure 2: Real domestic demand growth



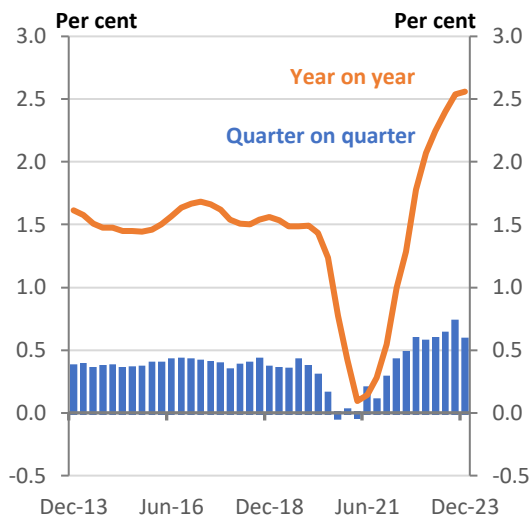
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

29. Domestic demand has also eased as the economy slowed, growing 0.1 per cent in the December quarter. Annual growth has been more resilient, coming in 2.3 per cent higher than December 2022 and averaging growth of 2.3 per cent over the last twelve months. This result was below

the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 0.6 per cent quarterly growth and broadly in line with average year on year growth of 2.4 per cent (see Figure 2).

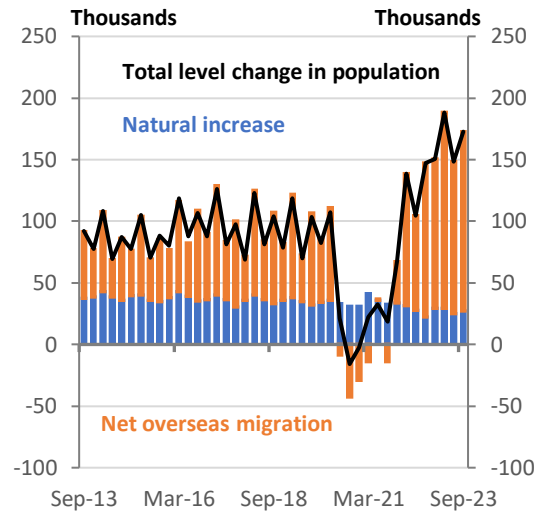
30. Growth has been supported by a rebound in population growth, which grew 2.6 per cent year-on-year in the December quarter, driven by strong growth in net overseas migration following the reopening of international borders after the pandemic (see Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Figure 3: Population growth



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 4: Contributions to population increase



Source: ABS National, State and Territory Population & ACTU calculations

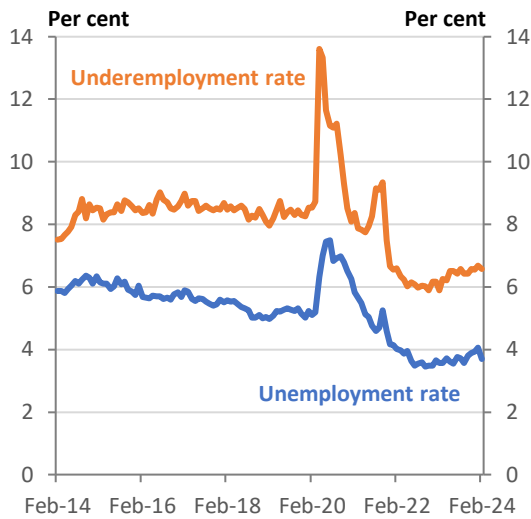
Note: ABS resident population releases are on a different cycle to national accounts and therefore have different time-period availabilities

31. The resilience of the Australian economy has been supported by the still unwinding strong demand impulse following necessary and robust economic support provided by the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) and the Treasury, a demand impulse that has overlapped the boost in demand from the rebound in population and a recovery in tourism and business investment.

32. These combined factors, coupled with a disruption to labour supply because of COVID-related restrictions during the pandemic, has led to record low unemployment and underemployment rates, which appear to have settled at levels below their pre-pandemic averages even as the economy has slowed. The unemployment rate has averaged 3.7 per cent in the last twelve months, well below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 5.5 per cent. Similarly, the underemployment rate has averaged 6.5 per cent over the last twelve months, again below the pre-pandemic average of 7.9 per cent (see Figure 5).

33. The resilience of the Australian economy is not just reflected in lower than average unemployment and underemployment rates. Strong demand for labour elicited a robust supply response, with the participation rate and the employment to population ratio rising steadily over the course of 2023 and remaining elevated into 2024 (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: Measures of underutilisation



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU
Calculations

Figure 6: Measures of labour supply

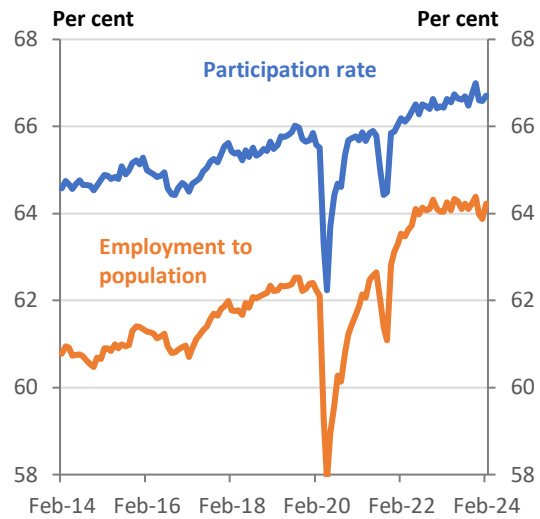
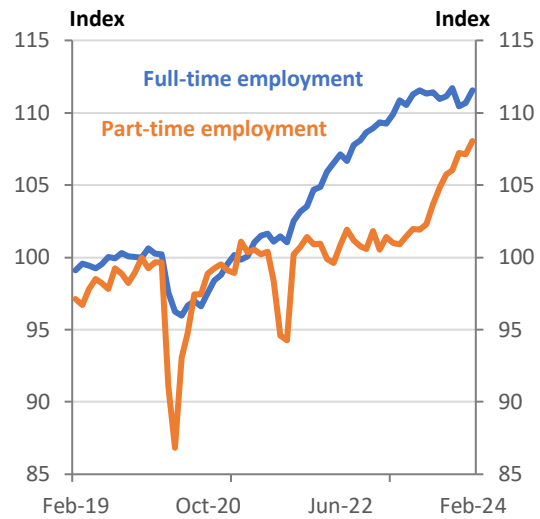
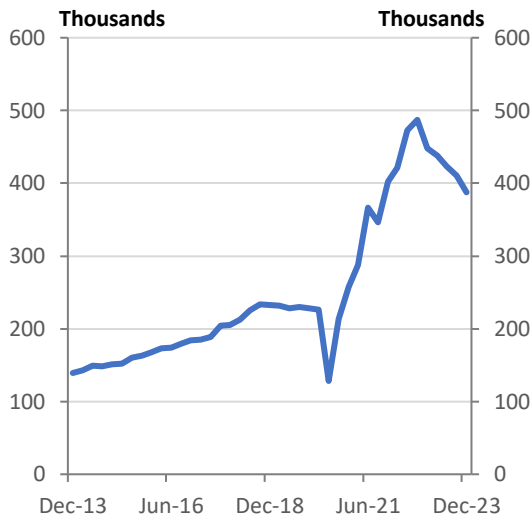


Figure 8: Growth in full-time employment



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU
Calculations

Figure 7: Job vacancies



Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU
Calculations

34. The overlapping demand impulses, and the attendant demand for labour, saw the number of job vacancies accelerate from December 2020, going on to peak at 117.3 per cent above December 2019 levels. Job vacancies remain 69.8 per cent above pre-pandemic levels as of December 2023, even as net migration has recovered, and labour supply increased (see Figure 7).

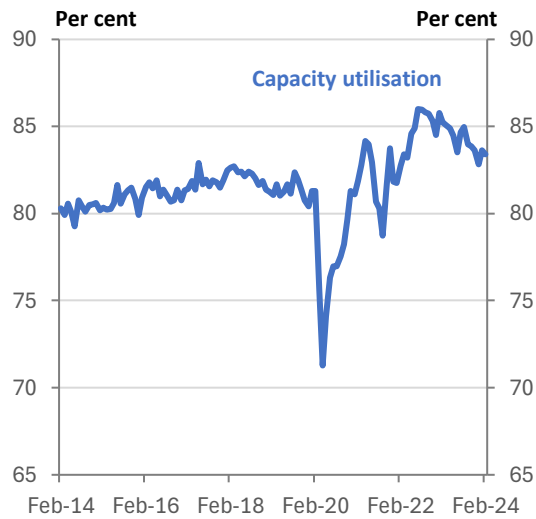
35. Insights from the Reserve Bank of Australia’s liaison program indicate that part of the easing in job vacancies has been driven by improvements in the availability of labour and partly by an easing in hiring intention of firms to around their long-run average levels as growth eases. However, with vacancies still at elevated levels and underutilisation rates below pre-pandemic levels, it suggests firms are in a robust position and continue to seek more labour to meet demand.¹⁰

36. The period following the rebound from COVID-19 provided an opportunity for workers to secure the hours of work they wanted, particularly urgent as the cost of living crisis was beginning in earnest, with a rapid rise in full-time employment from November 2021 onwards (see Figure 8). Full-time employment was until around July 2023 the engine of employment growth, drawing workers into the labour force as a result of the overlapping demand impulses as the economy adjusted post-COVID, and reflecting the ability of the labour force to adapt to higher labour demand despite the COVID-19 related disruption to labour supply.

37. Robust demand from increased migration, increases in tourism exports, and the after-echoes of the COVID-era stimulus led to elevated capacity utilisation, which has been above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 81.0 per cent since October 2021, despite a slight decline to 83.4 per cent in February 2024 (see Figure 9).

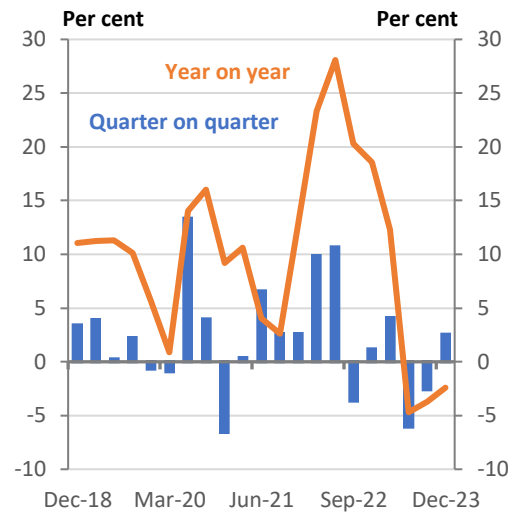
¹⁰ [Economic Conditions | Statement on Monetary Policy – February 2024 | RBA](#)

Figure 9: Capacity utilisation



Source: NAB Monthly Business Survey, Feb-24

Figure 10: Total profit growth



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

38. Reflecting the overall level of demand, strong capacity utilisation and a generally favourable international environment, economy-wide profits have been buoyant over the past two years, growing on average by 11.5 per cent in year on year terms, well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 4.8 per cent annual growth. The recent period of weakness in quarterly and annual terms mainly reflects declines in commodity prices, with non-mining profits still staying buoyant (see **Business Profitability** section below).
39. The on-going strong demand for labour, elevated capacity utilisation, continued strong population growth, and low under- and unemployment rates all point to a resilient aggregate economy and favourable conditions for business, despite the easing in growth over 2023. This is also reflected in the strength of business investment, which is laying the foundation for future productivity growth, to be explored in the next section.
40. However, the resilience at the aggregate level conceals some important challenges for Australia's workers, particular its Award and minimum wage reliant workers, to be dealt with in subsequent sections.

2.2 Business investment: laying the foundations for future productivity growth

41. Robust capacity utilisation, strong demand and an easing in supply chain pressures have seen strong business investment over the past twelve months, with prospective investment also expected to remain robust. As Treasury reports, solid investment intentions over the coming period are underpinned by strong business balance sheets and a period of elevated capacity utilisation.¹¹
42. Real investment in machinery and equipment grew 7.4 per cent year on year in the December quarter, well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 0.3 per cent (see Figure 11). Machinery and equipment investment has also averaged 7.1 per cent year on year over the last twelve months, which according to Treasury is due to an improvement in the supply of capital goods.¹²
43. Non-dwelling construction has been robust over the previous twelve months, growing 9.1 per cent year on year in December 2023 and averaging 9.6 per cent annual growth across the period, well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 2.0 per cent year on year growth (see Figure 12).
44. Investment has been driven mainly by the non-mining segment over the last twelve months (see Figure 13). In real terms, non-mining investment rose 9.0 per cent year on year in December 2023, having averaged 9.8 per cent over the previous twelve months, well above the 10-year pre-COVID average of 2.4 per cent annual growth.

¹¹ [Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023–24 \(budget.gov.au\)](https://www.budget.gov.au/2023/mid-year-economic-and-fiscal-outlook)

¹² [Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023–24 \(budget.gov.au\)](https://www.budget.gov.au/2023/mid-year-economic-and-fiscal-outlook)

Figure 11: Real investment in Machinery and equipment

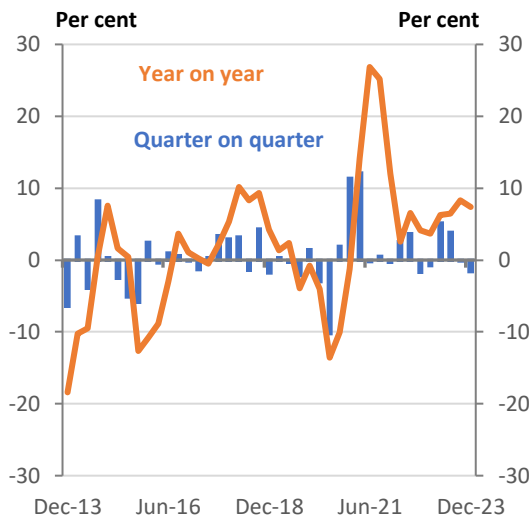


Figure 12: Real investment in Non-dwelling construction

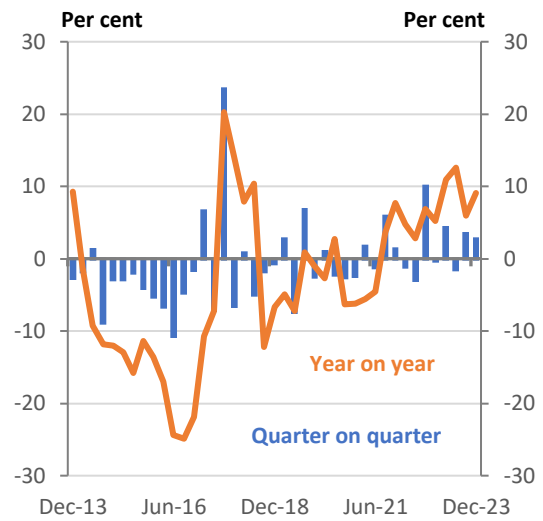


Figure 13: Contributions to year on year investment growth

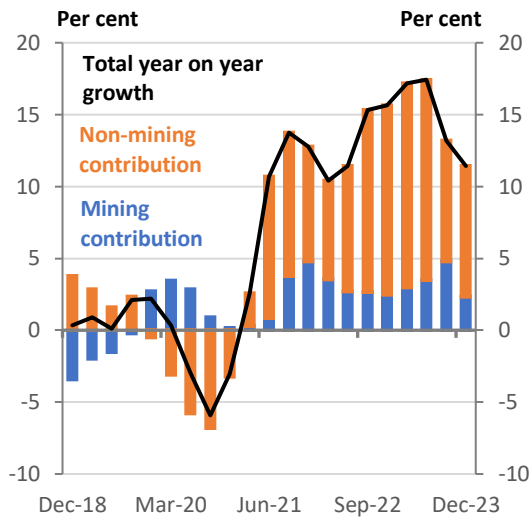
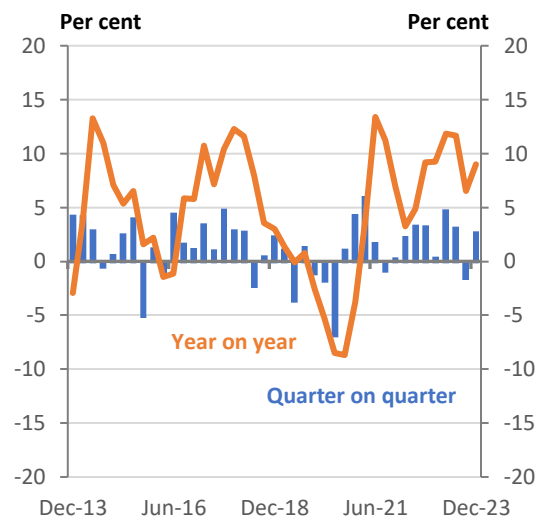


Figure 14: Real Non-mining investment growth



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

45. Treasury expects non-mining investment to drive business investment over the coming years, with activity focused on commercial buildings, such as data centres and warehouses, and the

generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity from a growing number of renewable energy projects.

46. Mining investment is expected to contribute less to investment growth over the period ahead. As reported by Treasury in Budget 2023-24, mining investment will mainly be to maintain existing resource production capacity along with a modest number of new LNG and metal ore projects.¹³
47. The expected solid investment intentions and strong growth in non-mining investment should lay the foundations for an improvement in productivity growth in the coming years. The view is supported by the Reserve Bank Governor, Michele Bullock, who told the House of Representatives Economics Committee on 9 February 2024 that:
- “I think there are good reasons to think that [productivity] will return...It means investment in technology; it means investment in more efficient ways of doing things. We are seeing business invest. We are seeing technology improvements, which will take some time to become evident.”¹⁴
48. On-going investment, robust business balance sheets and solid investment intentions, evidenced by an upward revision in expected capex spend in the most recent ABS capital expenditure survey¹⁵, point to a business sector in good health, as well as grounds for an optimistic outlook for productivity growth. The business sector’s good health is further evidenced by solid profitability, which is elaborated upon in the next section.

2.3 Business profitability: income and profits have been robust

49. The corollary of the overlapping demand impulses that led to elevated capacity utilisation and a strong labour market has been reasonably solid profit growth, even as growth eased over 2023.

¹³ [Budget Paper No. 1](#)

¹⁴ [ParInfo - Standing Committee on Economics : 09/02/2024 : Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia Annual Report 2023 \(aph.gov.au\)](#)

¹⁵ [New capital expenditure up 0.8% in the December quarter | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)

50. The recent decline in total profit growth conceals sectoral divergences. The fall was driven entirely by declining commodity prices relative to a year ago (see Figure 15), with mining profits down 13.7 per cent year on year in the December quarter, which followed annual declines of 21.9 per cent in September and 21.7 per cent in June 2023.
51. By contrast, non-mining profits increased 6.2 per cent year on year in the December quarter, following an increase of 10.7 per cent year on year in September and having averaged 10.3 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months. This is well above the average year on year growth of 3.0 per cent during the 10-years prior to the pandemic (see Figure 16).
52. The robust growth in non-mining profits has led to a pick-up in the non-mining profit share of GDP, which has averaged 17.3 per cent in the last twelve months, despite a slight decline in the December quarter to 16.7 per cent (see Figure 17).
53. On a sectoral basis, since December 2019, total business profit growth has been stronger than total growth in wages and salaries in all but six industries, with Other services seeing a 177.7 percentage point difference between total profit growth and total wages and salaries growth and Administrative and support services seeing a 35.5 percentage point difference (see Figure 18).

Figure 15: Contributions to total profit growth

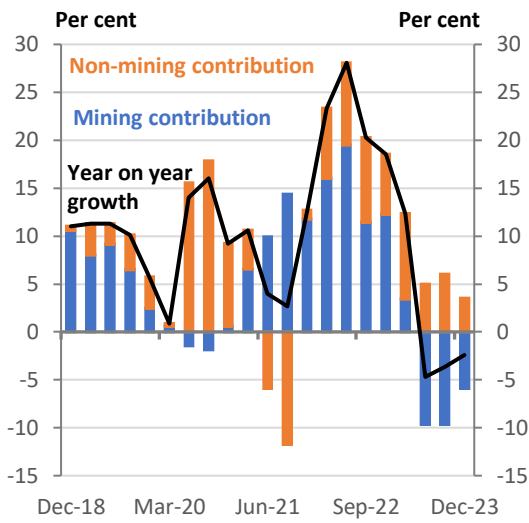
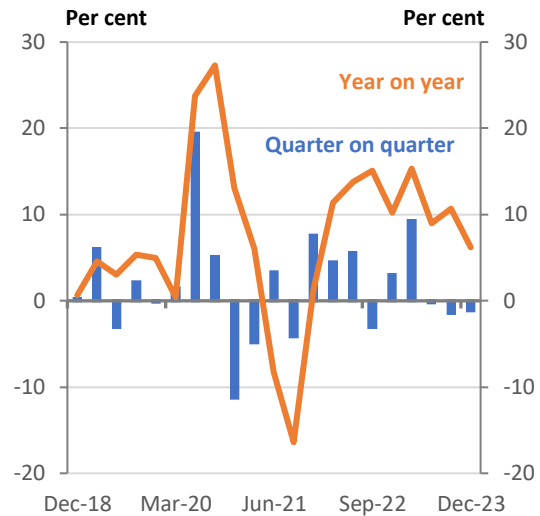
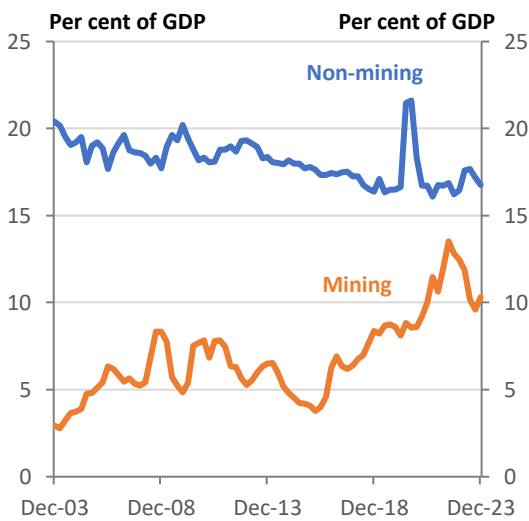


Figure 16: Non-mining profit growth



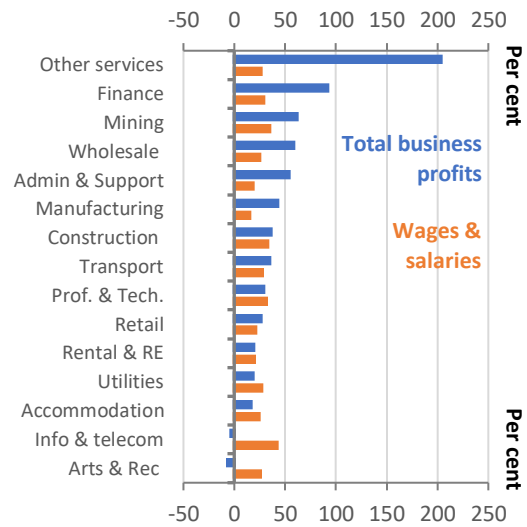
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 17: Mining and non-mining profit shares



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 18: Total business profit and wages and salaries growth since Dec-19



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Note: Utilities denotes Electricity, gas, water and waste services

54. Rapid increases in profits have not been constrained merely to companies. Relative to December 2019, just prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, non-mining unincorporated enterprise gross operating profits have increased 34.6 per cent, compared to an increase of 32.8 per cent for company gross operating profits and only 27.2 per cent for wages and salaries (see Figure 19). Unincorporated business is generally limited to small businesses, but fall within the footprint of the modern award system by virtue of State referrals in all States other than Western Australia. Profit growth has come off as the economy slowed over 2023 but has remained healthy in spite of the easing in growth and profits have increased more rapidly than have wages and salaries.
55. Driving profit growth has been the rapid run up in prices for consumer goods and services, particularly non-discretionary goods and services (see section 2.4 below). This has seen annual growth in nominal non-mining income from goods and services average around 4.9 per cent, growing 3.3 per cent in the December quarter despite the slowing economy and coming in around the 10-year pre-pandemic average year on year growth rate of 3.2 per cent (see Figure 20).

Figure 19: Index of non-mining business profits and wages & salaries

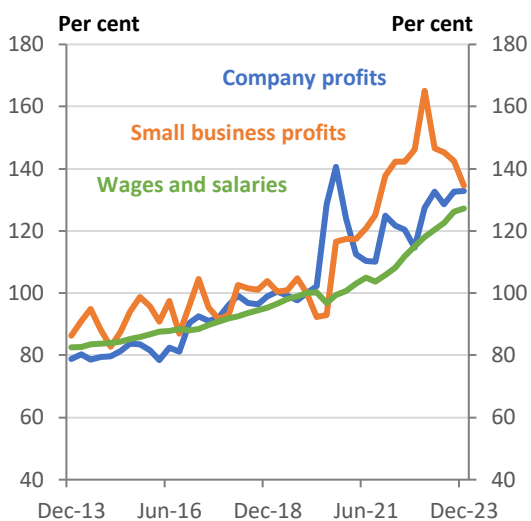


Figure 20: Contributions to year on year growth in non-mining income from sales

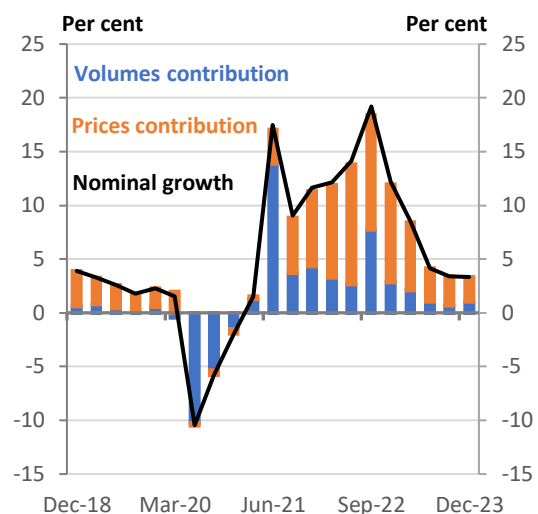


Figure 21: Ratio of profit to income

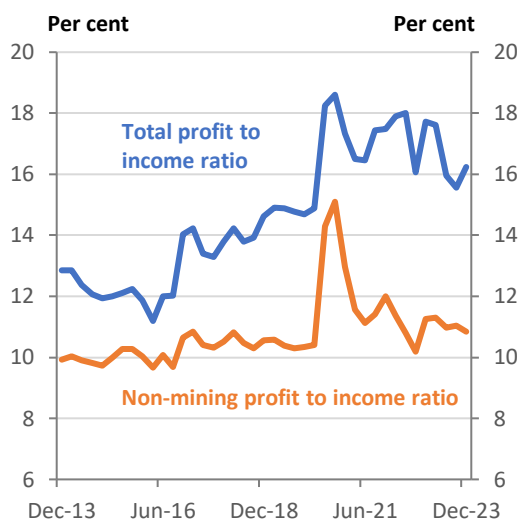
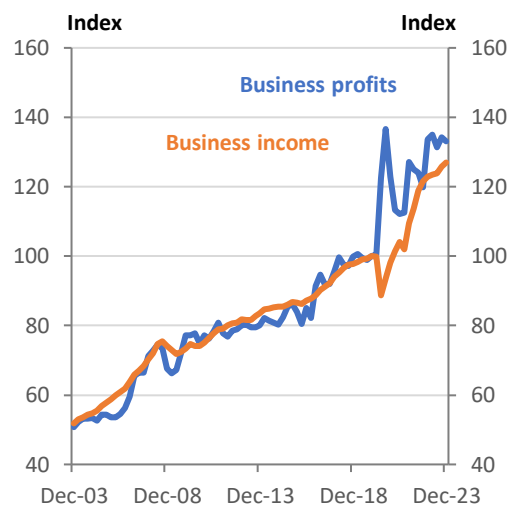


Figure 22: Index of non-mining profit and income



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

56. Prices, rather than volumes of sales, have driven annual growth in income, contributing around 74 per cent of the increase in nominal income growth on average over the last twelve months. The combination of robust income growth, driven by price increases, and strong profit growth

post-COVID is not inconsistent with an increased capacity to pay across a range of firms in the business sector.

57. The suggestion of businesses capacity to pay for the wage increase put forward by the ACTU is supported by the increase in the non-mining business profit to income ratio. The profit to income ratio has averaged 11.0 per cent over the last twelve months, having decreased only slightly in the December quarter to 10.8 per cent even as the economy slowed further in late 2023 (see Figure 21). The December quarter result was above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 10.3 per cent, representing an increase of around 4.8 per cent relative to the prevailing rate in December 2019, just prior to the pandemic.
58. Further illustrating the increase in profits relative to income, which has been primarily driven by prices over volumes, is the divergence between profits and income post-COVID. Where up to December 2019 non-mining income and profits moved broadly in line with each other, since around March 2021 a notable gap has emerged between the two, favouring business profits (see Figure 22).
59. Consistent with solid investment intentions and robust business balance sheets, business profitability over the last twelve months, which has been sound even in the face of a slowing economy, further corroborates the notion of a business sector in good health and is not inconsistent with the capacity to fund an increase in Award and minimum wages argued for in this submission.
60. But solid profitability and income driven mainly by price increases in the non-mining business sector points to a key headwind facing the economy and the main driver of the cost of living crisis. High inflation poses a significant challenge for Australia's Award and minimum wage reliant workers, and the dimensions of the challenge will be elaborated in the next section.

2.4 Inflation: price growth has been rapid and concentrated in essential goods and services

61. A core reason for prices driving sales income, and a defining feature of Australia's current economic challenges, is the return of high inflation. A key headwind to the economy since June 2021, year on year inflation growth peaked in December 2022 at 7.8 per cent and has been moderating for the last twelve months (see Figure 23). However, inflation does remain above the RBA's target band of 2-3 per cent.
62. Driven initially by pandemic-related supply chain disruptions, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and severe weather events disrupting supply chains in Australia, inflation has weighed heavily on Australian workers and led to a severe cost of living crisis.
63. The influence of international supply chains and commodity markets on inflationary pressures is reflected in tradeables inflation, which increased to 3.6 per cent in the June quarter 2021, the same quarter that headline inflation first left the RBA's target band (see Figure 24). Despite the easing of the initial supply shock, the after-echoes of these disruptions continue to cascade through the economy.

Figure 23: Headline inflation growth

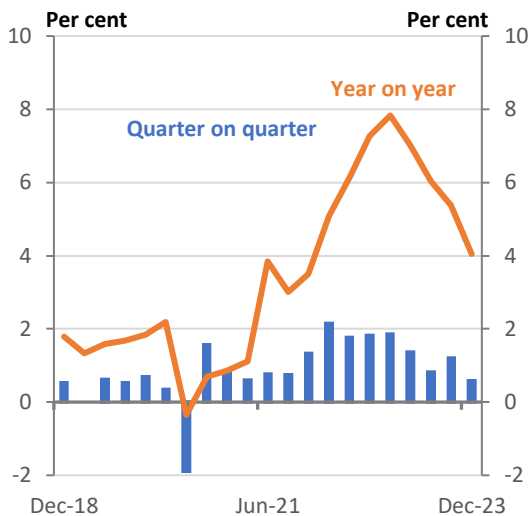
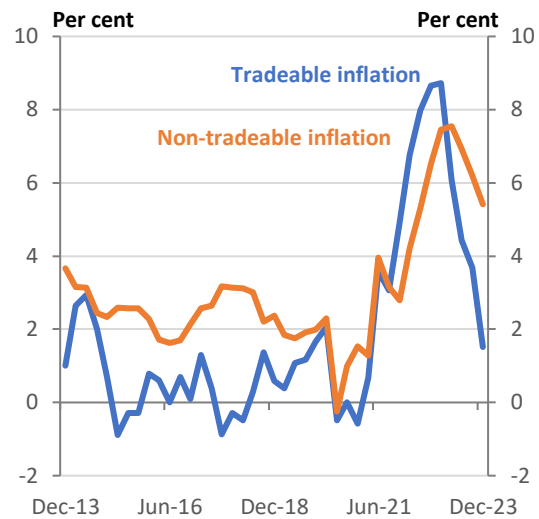


Figure 24: Tradeables and non-tradeable inflation



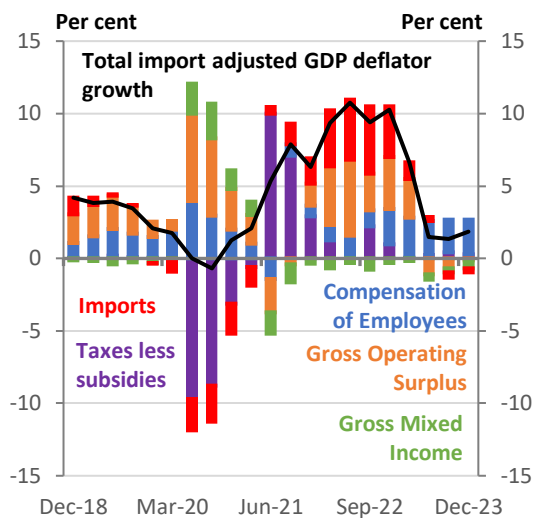
Source: ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

64. In stark contrast to the inflationary episode initiated by a commodity price shock in the 1970s, wages have not made a significant contribution to upward price pressures. Using a decomposition of the GDP deflator that incorporates imports (OECD 1985, Greenwell 2023)¹⁶, it is evident that import prices and gross operating surplus were the main drivers of inflation in the initial shock period (see Figure 25).
65. While not conceptually aligned with the Consumer Price Index, the GDP deflator is nonetheless instructive in that it provides an indication of the relative contributions of factor incomes to economy-wide price rises. A similar methodology was used by the OECD (2023, Box 1.2) to conclude that unit profit costs have been a key driver of the global inflationary episode, which will have flow on effects for Australia, even before the pricing decisions of Australia's businesses in the face of the cost shock are factored in. That said, it is worth noting that the OECD rightly cautions that commodity exporting countries should treat this result with caution.¹⁷

¹⁶ OECD (1985) 'OECD Economic Surveys: Australia 1985', January, available [OECD Economic Surveys: Australia](#) & Greenwell, T. (2024), 'The Economic Challenge', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, No. 92, pp. 9-34

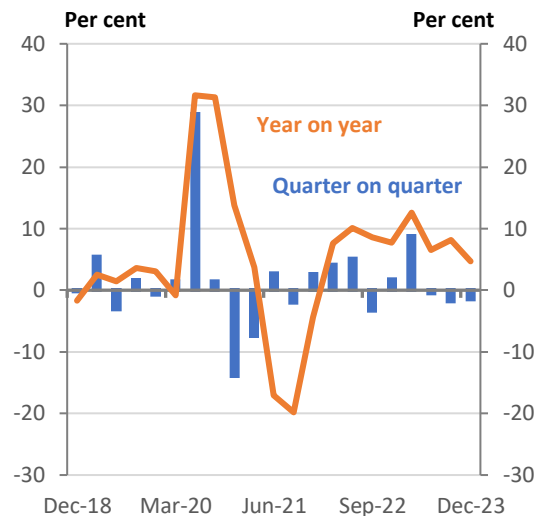
¹⁷ [OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2023 Issue 1 | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#)

Figure 25: Factor income price drivers



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Balance of Payments and International Investment Position & ACTU calculations

Figure 26: Growth of non-mining unit profit costs



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

66. It is noteworthy that non-mining unit profit costs grew 4.7 per cent year on year in the December quarter 2023, having averaged 8.0 per cent annual growth over the previous twelve months, well above the 0.5 per cent year on year growth prevailing prior to the pandemic (see Figure 26).
67. This compares to growth in nominal unit labour costs, which averaged 7.2 per cent over the previous twelve months, staying steady at 6.8 per cent growth in December after easing to 6.8 per cent in September, down from 7.5 per cent growth in June 2023. However, this was still above the 1.8 per cent average growth in the 10 years prior to COVID-19 (see Figure 27).
68. The Panel should be sanguine about this outcome, as the direction of travel is back towards unit labour cost growth consistent with the inflation target once productivity picks up on a sustained basis again. The foundations of that return are being laid by businesses' solid investment (see section 2.2) even as productivity growth begins to normalise after the COVID-19 related

disruptions (see section 2.10). Further encouragement can be taken from testimony by the Governor of the Reserve Bank before the House of Representatives Economics Committee, where the Governor indicated:

“One year of high unit labour costs does not mean that we’re going to be derailed, but, if it continues over a number of years, then, yes, it’s going to be challenging.”

69. The Panel should not expect an outcome of persistently high unit labour costs as both the Treasury and the RBA expect the labour market to ease further and wage growth to moderate in the wake of the easing in growth over 2023, with each forecasting inflation to return to the target band by 2025 (see section 2.7).
70. Alongside the easing in headline inflation, and in price pressures in the GDP deflator, services inflation has also eased considerably. Year on year growth in market services ex. volatile items, which gives a measure of underlying services inflation, has slowed from a peak of 6.8 per cent in June 2023 to 4.5 per cent in December 2023, a similar pace of moderation to headline inflation over the same period (see Figure 28).
71. Treasury expects that services inflation has peaked and will moderate over the next two years¹⁸, a view shared by the RBA who are also forecasting services inflation to ease, albeit more slowly than goods price inflation.¹⁹
72. In considering the impact of a wage rise on services inflation, it is worth remembering that price pressures in services have been driven by both labour and non-labour costs, with Governor Bullock describing a range of factors contributing to services price inflation beyond labour costs in testimony to the House of Representatives Economics Committee on 9 February 2024:

“...some of the things that are going into non-labour cost inflation in services are things like insurance and electricity. There might be increases in financial administrative costs

¹⁸ [Opening statement to the Economics Legislation Committee | Treasury.gov.au](https://www.treasury.gov.au/press-releases/2024/01/01/2024-01-01-opening-statement-to-the-economics-legislation-committee)

¹⁹ [ParlInfo - Standing Committee on Economics : 09/02/2024 : Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia Annual Report 2023 \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/standing_committees/economics/2024-02-09/2024-02-09-review-of-the-reserve-bank-of-australia-annual-report-2023)

that are going in, and some of these things are associated with labour...in some cases, businesses that are in transport and logistics it might also be rent, because industrial property is actually doing quite well...and there are logistics costs that are sometimes associated with the supply shocks.”²⁰

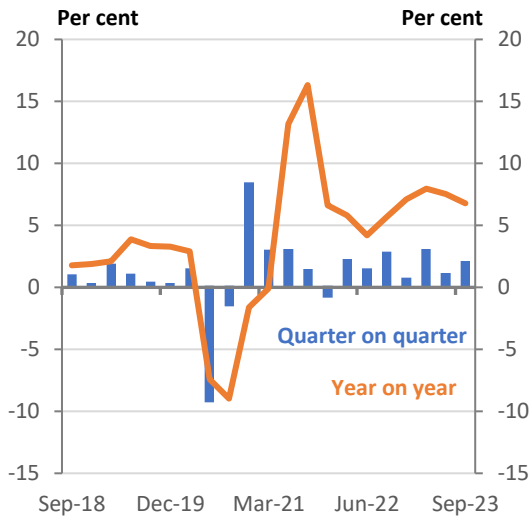
73. Governor Bullock also noted in the same testimony that services inflation being slightly higher than goods price inflation is consistent with inflation being within the RBA’s target band:

“Historically, services inflation typically runs above goods price inflation. In the couple of decades prior to the pandemic, inflation averaged about 2½ per cent, but, within that, goods price inflation averaged around two per cent, while services inflation averaged about three per cent.”

74. While services inflation remains high and is expected to moderate more slowly than goods price inflation as the economy slows down, the increase in wages of the size argued for in this submission should not be expected to change the moderation of inflation back to the RBA’s target band, given the range of factors influencing services price inflation, most of which will unwind in due course.

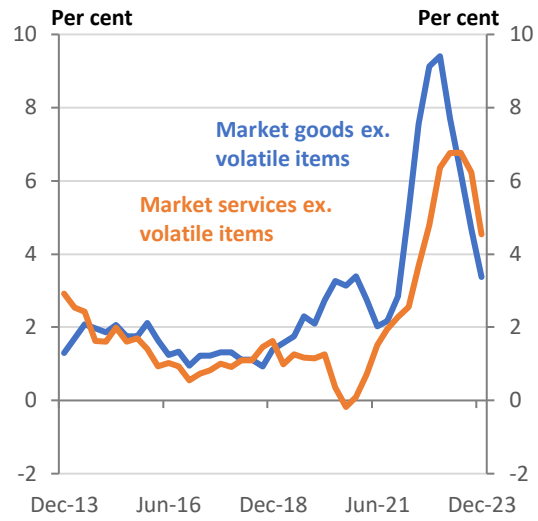
²⁰ [ParlInfo - Standing Committee on Economics : 09/02/2024 : Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia Annual Report 2023 \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/standing_committees/economics/09/02/2024/Review_of_the_Reserve_Bank_of_Australia_Annual_Report_2023)

Figure 27: Growth in nominal unit labour costs



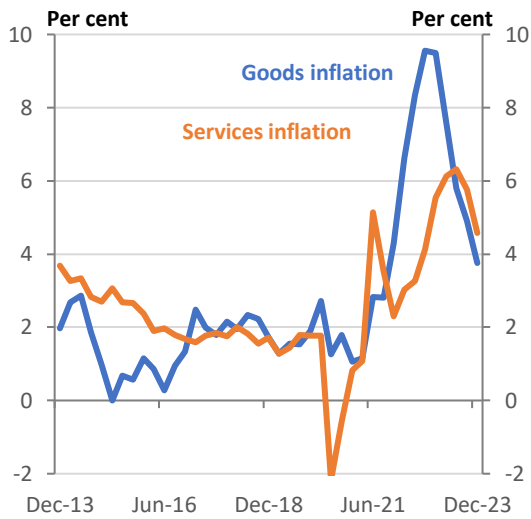
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 28: Goods and services inflation ex. volatile items



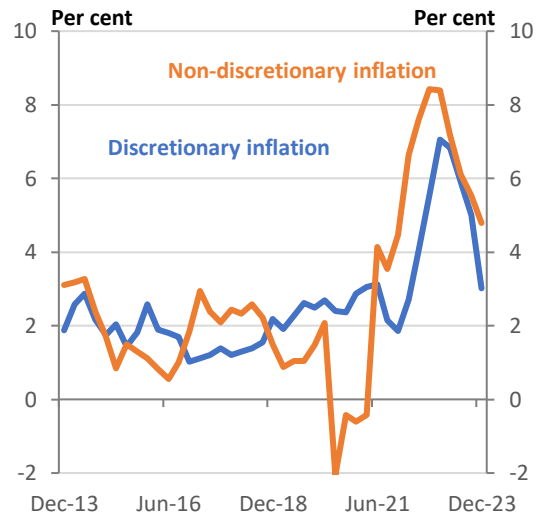
Source: ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 29: Goods and services inflation



Source: ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 30: Discretionary and non-discretionary inflation



75. Further, services price inflation being higher than goods inflation is consistent with inflation returning to the target band in a reasonable timeframe, and the Panel should consider the composition of inflation in arriving at its decision.
76. Significantly for the Panel, and for workers on awards and the minimum wage, non-discretionary inflation has risen further and more rapidly, and growth declined more slowly, than discretionary inflation. Non-discretionary CPI inflation peaked at 8.4 per cent in September 2022 and has only declined to 4.8 per cent year on year as of December 2023 (see Figure 30).
77. By contrast, discretionary inflation (ex. tobacco) peaked at 7.1 per cent in December 2022 and has declined to 3.0 per cent as of December 2023, sitting right at the top of the RBA's target band.
78. Inflation remains a key headwind in the economy and is driving a cost of living crisis for workers, even amidst tight labour market conditions. The evidence considered in this section suggests that workers have had no hand in driving up prices in the economy but are bearing the brunt of the consequences through rapid price growth for essential goods and services. The evidence also points to the expected easing in inflation within a reasonable timeframe being consistent with a fair wage rise for award and minimum wage workers, which will provide support to those facing rising costs and shrinking real incomes, the latter being the issue explored in the next section.
79. Further support for the wage rise argued for in this submission being consistent with inflation returning to the target within a reasonable timeframe can be found in analysis by the Centre for Future Work (Stanford and Jericho 2024)²¹, which argues that the 'impact of economy-wide prices of even a large increase in minimum and Award wages is negligible, due both to the limited coverage of Awards, and the relatively low starting level of Award wages.' The Panel should take comfort from these findings that a fair wage rise for minimum and award workers poses no risks to the return of inflation to target.

²¹ [The Irrelevance of Minimum Wages to Future Inflation | The Australia Institute's Centre for Future Work](#)

80. Stanford and Jericho’s findings are also consistent with findings from the United Kingdom’s National Minimum Wage Low Pay Commission Report 2023, which found that:
81. “While the costs of the [National Living Wage (NLW)] may be an important driver of prices in certain sectors, our analysis suggests that price increases resulting from the NLW have a limited impact on inflation overall. NLW employment makes up only around 2 per cent of the UK-wide wage bill, despite covering around 5 per cent of jobs. Even once we account for spillovers to those higher up the wage distribution and non-wage costs, the total wage cost of employing NLW workers accounts for a very small share (around 7-8 per cent) of the total costs faced by employers economy-wide. Following from this, we find that even if firms passed on 100 per cent of the cost of NLW increases and spillovers – an improbable scenario – this would only increase the CPI inflation rate by up to 0.3 percentage points.”²²

2.5 Wages: a real problem even amidst strong nominal growth

82. While wages growth has picked up after nearly a decade of stagnation, workers real wages have been falling as growth in inflation has outpaced increases in workers’ pay, made all the more acute by the run up in prices for essentials goods and services.
83. The Wage Price Index rose by 4.2 per cent year on year in December 2023, a slight increase from 4.1 per cent year on year in September 2023 and a continuation of the first sustained period of solid wages growth since March 2013 (see Figure 31).
84. Solid nominal wages growth has been broadly based, with private sector wages increasing 4.2 per cent year on year in December, down slightly from 4.3 per cent in September, and public sector wages increasing 4.3 per cent in December, up from 3.5 per cent in September (see Figure 32 and Figure 33).

²² [National Minimum Wage - Low Pay Commission Report 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121111/nlw-report-2023.pdf)

85. Public sector wages saw their highest growth since March 2010, driven by newly implemented enterprise agreements for essential workers in Health care and social assistance and in Education and training industries, following the removal of state wages caps.

86. Both private and public sector wages have seen sustained growth over the last twelve months, the first such period of consistent wage growth since early 2013. This is a direct result of the unpicking of the economic architecture of the previous government, which famously described low wages growth as a 'deliberate design feature of our economic architecture' (Clench 2019, Greenwell 2023).²³

²³ [Linda Reynolds on wage growth: Sky News interview turns into trainwreck | news.com.au — Australia's leading news site](#) & Greenwell, T. (2024), 'The Economic Challenge', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, No. 92, pp. 9-34

Figure 31: Total wages growth

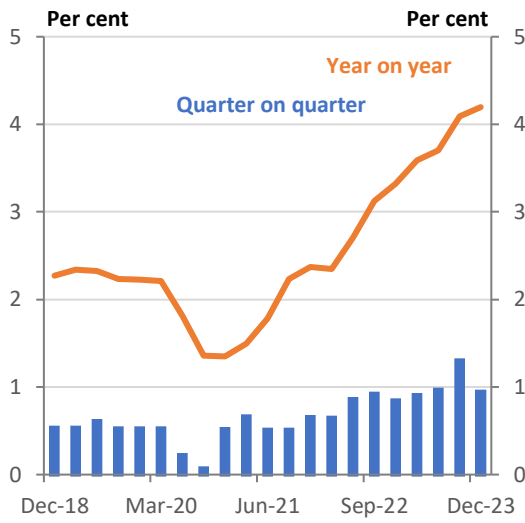


Figure 32: Private sector wages growth

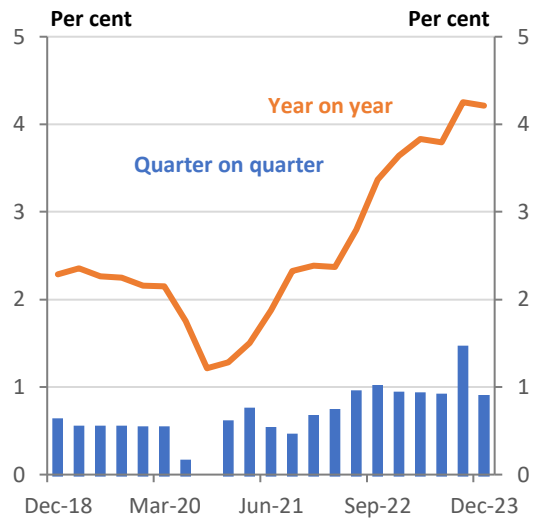


Figure 33 Public sector wages growth

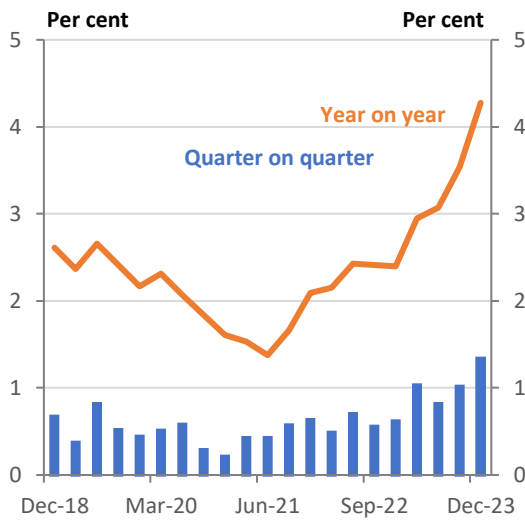
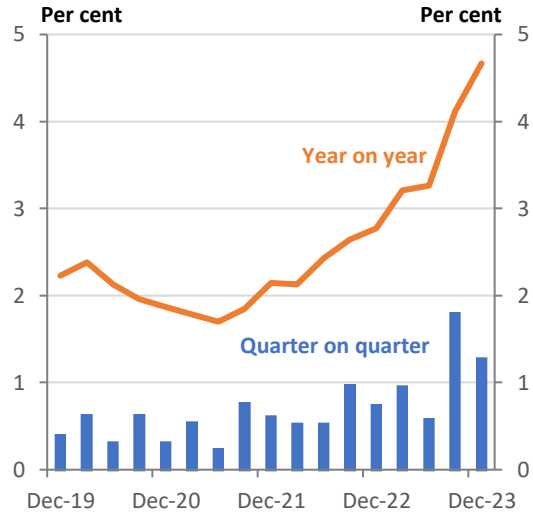


Figure 34: Enterprise agreement wage growth



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

87. Wages for workers on enterprise agreements rose 4.7 per cent year on year in December, an increase from the 4.1 per cent growth in September, supported by the above mentioned public sector agreements, the flow through of much needed reform to the industrial relations system, and by the impact of the reasonably tight labour market flowing through to newly settled enterprise agreements (see Figure 34).

88. Wages for workers on Awards also rose in the December quarter, increasing 5.6 per cent year on year, down slightly from 5.8 per cent in September 2023 when the previous Review decision was implemented, with the flow through of the decision continuing in the December quarter 2023 (see Figure 35).

Figure 35: Award wage growth

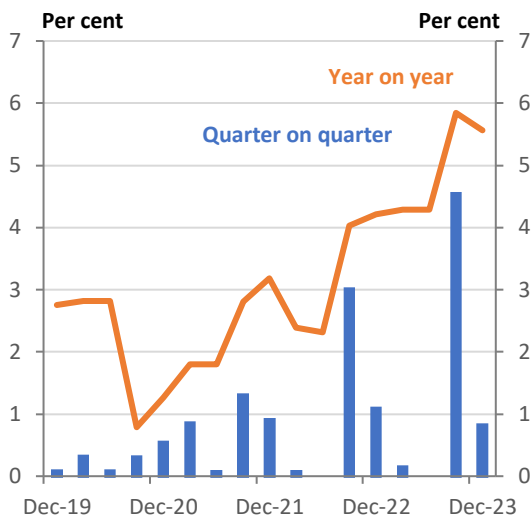
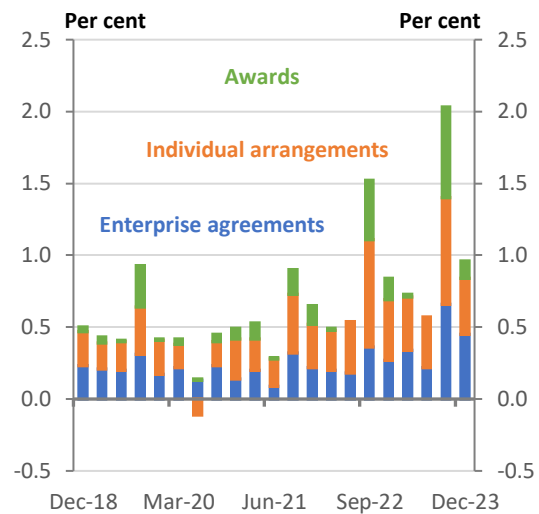


Figure 36: Contributions to wages growth



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

89. Enterprise agreements drove growth in the December quarter, making up 46.9 per cent of total growth in the wage price index, with individual arrangements the second largest contributor. Award wages contributed significantly during the September quarter – as is the case in each September quarter – although were behind both individual arrangements (the largest contributor) and enterprise agreements (the second largest contributor). Award wages contributed very little to wage growth in the December quarter 2023.

90. However, the contributions series published by the ABS should be treated with caution as it refers to quarterly growth in the original series of the Wage Price Index, which is not the widely reported seasonally adjusted series that is used by economists and commentators to take the

pulse of wages growth. Contrary to some potentially misleading reporting by a national newspaper²⁴, the ABS's seasonal adjustment process will smooth out a regular increase in award wages in the September quarter given the routine occurrence of the implementation of the Fair Work Commission's decision at this time.²⁵

91. Across a range of industries, wages growth has picked up in recent quarters. Both the range and median industry wage growth has picked up over the past twelve months (see Figure 39). Further, on an industry basis, annual wages growth is the highest it has been since around 2012 and is broad based across industries (see Figure 37 and Figure 38).

92. It is noteworthy that in its February 2024 decision, the Reserve Bank Board described wages growth as consistent with the inflation target:

“Wages growth picked up a little further in the December quarter, but appears to have peaked with indications it will moderate over the year ahead. Nevertheless, this level of wages growth remains consistent with the inflation target only on the assumption that productivity growth increases to around its long-run average.”²⁶

93. The Panel should be reassured that the current pace of wages growth is consistent with inflation returning to the target band in an orderly way within a reasonable timeframe, in line with the Reserve Bank Board's goals, given the recent pick up in productivity growth as the effects of COVID-19 on the official statistics unwind (see section 2.10) and the robust business investment seen over the past twelve months that point towards future improvements in productivity (see section 2.2).

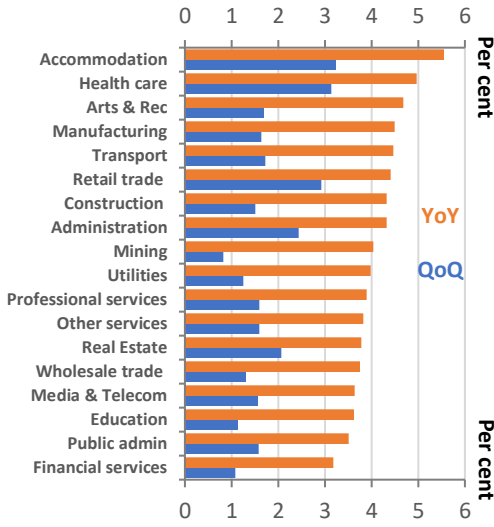
²⁴ [Minimum wage effect on wage growth doubles after ABS revisions \(afr.com\)](#)

²⁵ Seasonal adjustment is the process of estimation and then removing from a time series influences that are systematic and calendar related. Observed data needs to be seasonally adjusted as seasonal effects can conceal both the true underlying movement in the series, as well as certain non-seasonal characteristics which may be of interest to analysts. Seasonal patterns are also reanalysed annually to reflect known changes to regular events.

²⁶ [Statement by the Reserve Bank Board: Monetary Policy Decision | Media Releases | RBA](#)

94. Despite strong wages growth across a broad range of industries and pay-setting methods, real wages have gone backwards – the corollary of domestic price pressures being driven by factors other than wages over this inflationary period.

Figure 37: Wages growth by industry, September quarter 2023



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 38: Wages growth by industry, December quarter 2023

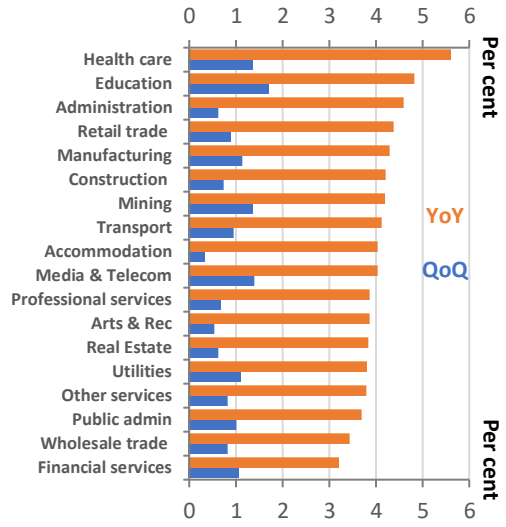
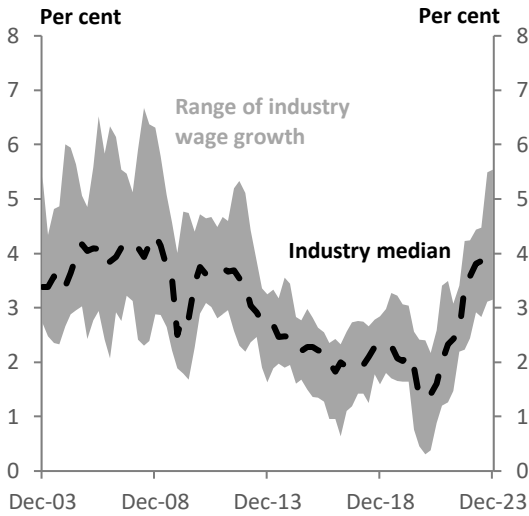
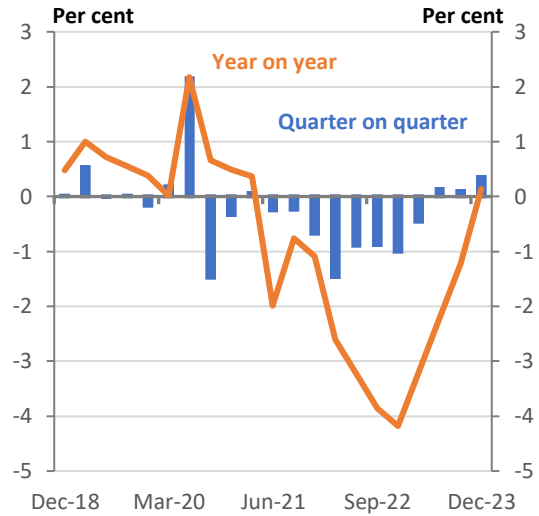


Figure 39: Range of nominal wages growth



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 40: Total real wages growth



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

95. Since March 2021, real wages growth has been negative in eight of twelve quarters on a quarterly basis and negative in ten of twelve quarters on a year on year basis. Year on year real wage growth turned (barely) positive in December 2023, the first time since March 2021, growing by 0.1 per cent (see Figure 40). On a quarterly basis, real wages saw some positive growth from June 2023 onwards, although this growth has been very modest.

Figure 41: Private sector real wage growth

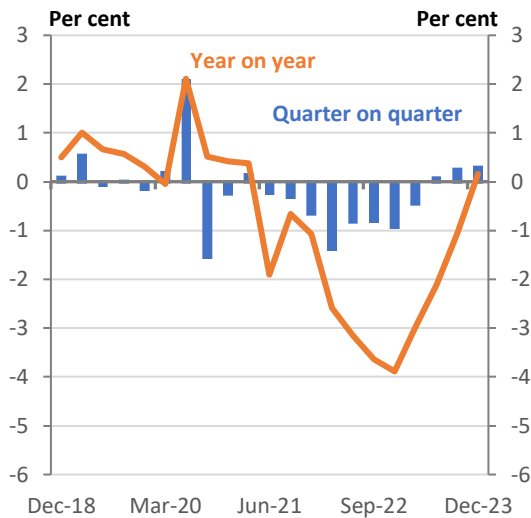
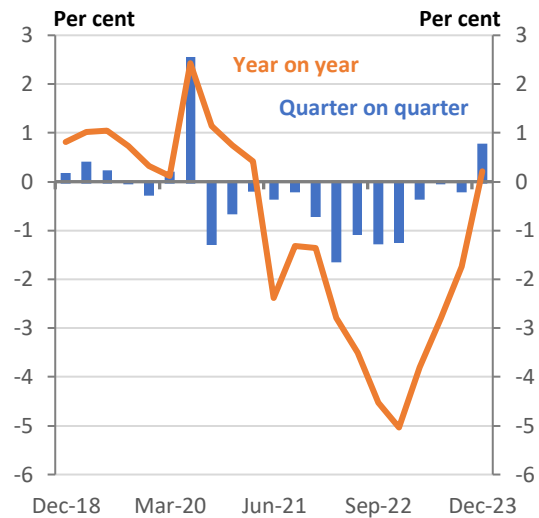


Figure 42: Public sector real wage growth



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS

Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

96. Both the private and public sector have seen a similar pattern over the inflationary period, although because of wage caps the decline in public sector real wages has been more severe.

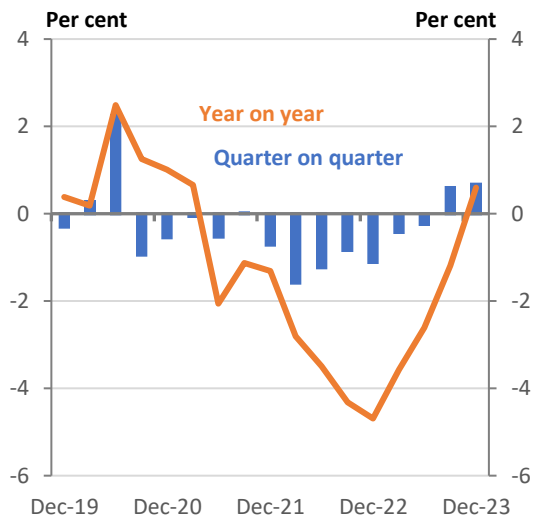
97. Private sector wages growth has been negative in eight out of the twelve quarters since March 2021 on a quarterly basis, and ten out of twelve quarters on a year on year basis. Public sector wages growth has been negative in eleven out of the twelve quarters since March 2021 on a quarterly basis and ten of twelve on a year on year basis over the same period.

98. Both private and public sector real wages turned positive in December 2023, each growing by 0.2 per cent in real times in that quarter (see Figure 41 and Figure 42). Public sector wages saw

stronger quarterly growth in December, rising 0.7 per cent compared to an increase of 0.3 per cent in December in the private sector.

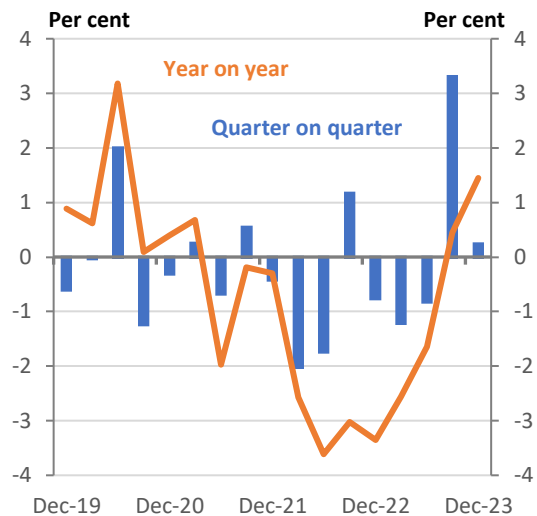
99. Examining real wages by pay-setting method paints a similar picture. For workers on enterprise agreements, real wages have been negative in nine of the twelve quarters since March 2021 on a quarterly basis and ten of the twelve quarters on a year on year basis over the same period.
100. For workers on Awards, real wages have been negative in seven of the twelve quarters since March 2021 and nine of twelve quarters over the same period.
101. Real wages for workers on enterprise agreements turned positive on a quarterly basis from September 2023, driven by easing inflation and the flow through of the impact of positive industrial relations changes since December 2022, rising 0.6 per cent in September and 0.7 per cent in December 2023. Annual wage growth turned positive in December for the first time since March 2021, rising 0.6 per cent over the year to December (see Figure 43).

Figure 43: Enterprise agreements real wage growth



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 44: Awards real wage growth



102. For workers on Awards, there is routine real wage growth in September quarter outcomes, driven by the Commission’s ability to take account of inflationary pressures in setting the wage outcome, although this is limited by the release schedule of the quarterly Consumer Price Index. However, annual real wage growth has only been positive since September 2023 (see Figure 44), the first time since March 2021, and most quarterly outcomes have been negative given high inflation weighing on workers’ real incomes.

103. The main result of negative real wage growth since March 2021 – despite a tight labour market and solid profitability in the non-mining segment of the economy – has been a severe decline in the level of real wages.

104. As of the December quarter 2023, a year after inflation growth peaked at 7.8 per cent annual growth, real wages have declined to the same level they were in early 2011 and are around 5.2 per cent lower than they were in March 2021, the last quarter of inflation within the RBA’s target band (see Figure 45).

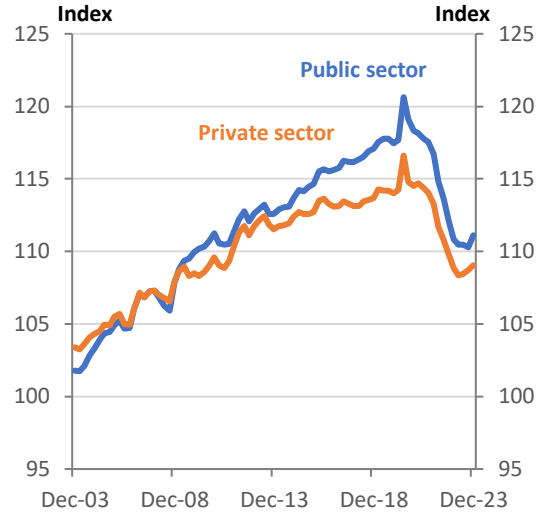
105. For the private sector, the level of real wages is the lowest it has been since September 2010, and is around 4.9 per cent lower than it was in March 2021. For the public sector, the level of real wages is the lowest it has been since September 2011, and is around 6.0 per cent lower than it was in March 2021 (see Figure 46).

Figure 45: Real wage level



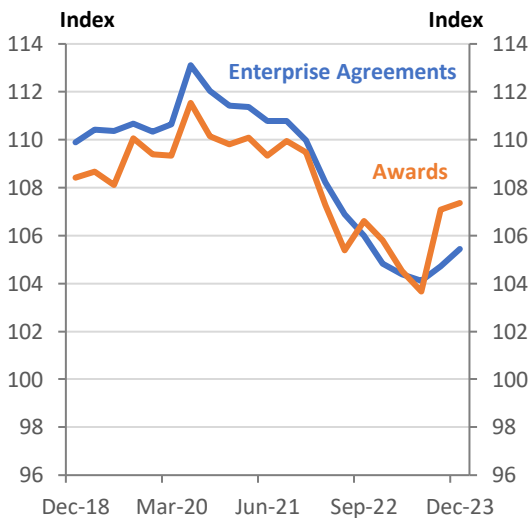
Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 46: Private and public sector real wage level



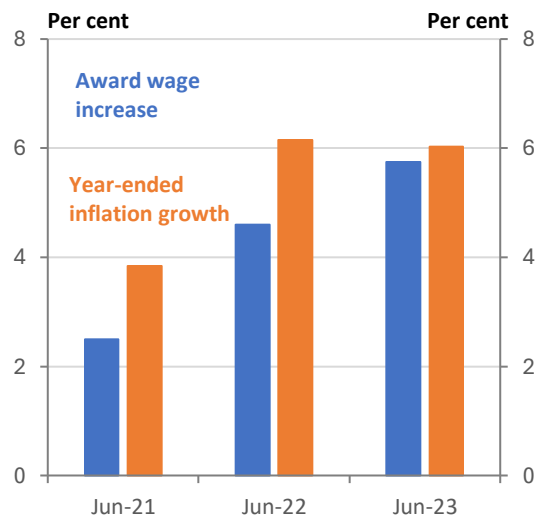
Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 47: Enterprise agreement and Award real wage level



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 48: Increases in award wages compared to June quarter year-ended inflation



Source: ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, Fair Work Commission (various years) & ACTU calculations

106. For both workers on enterprise agreements and awards, the level of real wages is the lowest it has been in the available series, and around 5.3 per cent below March 2021 levels for enterprise agreements and 2.5 per cent below March 2021 levels for Award wages.
107. A key reason for the erosion of real wages for award workers is that inflation outcomes have generally been higher than the increases granted by the Review’s decisions, resulting a cumulative decline that subsequent decisions only partially redress.
108. The Panel has discussed this challenge in previous Review decisions, observing that “the increases we have determined will mean a real wage cut for some award reliant employees. This is an issue that can be addressed in subsequent reviews.”²⁷
109. Given the depths of the cost of living crisis (discussed in the next section), which will be affecting the lowest paid workers most severely, redressing the issue of past gaps between the increases in award wages granted by the Panel and the subsequently published inflation outcomes in the current Review would be expedient.
110. Further, taking this approach would be consistent with the Government’s approach to fiscal considerations in a shifting economic environment. Treasurer Jim Chalmers told reporters in Canberra on 6 March 2024 that:
- “I think any person looking at these numbers [the national accounts] and looking at the way that inflation has come off in ways that were quicker, frankly, than many anticipated, we’ve still got this big inflation challenge – that still remains our primary focus, but we’ve got a growth challenge as well. Every budget tries to strike a series of find balances and in this budget in May we’ll be balancing the fact that inflation is coming off in ways that we welcome, growth is slowing and we need to address both of those challenges at once.”²⁸

²⁷ [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [196].

²⁸ [Press conference, Canberra | Treasury Ministers](#)

111. As this submission has argued thus far, the economy has been resilient because of the health of the business sector, supported by inbound tourism and net overseas migration, while workers are enduring a decline in real wages and severe cost of living crisis (the extent of which is discussed below). Redressing the gap between inflation and the increases in award wages arising from past Reviews would provide both cost of living relief to the lowest paid workers and make a small but meaningful contribution to supporting growth, while in no way putting the return of inflation to target in jeopardy (see section 2.4 earlier and section 2.7 below).
112. Two years of high inflation, concentrated particularly in essentials, and a decade of stagnant wages growth, have combined to drive real wages to decadal lows and instigated a severe cost of living crisis for Australia's workers, which is weighing particularly heavily on Australia's award and minimum wage reliant workers. The breadth of the cost of living crisis will be discussed in the following section, illustrating the driving need for the solid increase in award and minimum wages argued for in this submission.

2.6 Cost of living crisis: Australia's workers are under extreme pressure, particularly the lowest paid

113. While the economy has been resilient in aggregate in the face of slowing growth, driven by overlapping demand impulses and increased labour supply, that resilience conceals important underlying challenges facing workers and households.
114. Australia's workers have been weighed down by high inflation growth, higher interest rates, and a rising share of incomes going to taxes through bracket creep. The cost of living crisis has been particularly acute for those on lower incomes because of the extent to which essential prices have contributed to the decline of real incomes.
115. Decomposing the household consumption deflator, the national accounts measure of inflation that adjusts for changes in expenditure in each quarter, shows that non-discretionary price

growth has been the main driver of price increases on both a quarterly and annual basis (see Figure 49 and Figure 50).

116. Non-discretionary price growth has contributed to around 81 per cent of total quarterly consumption price growth and 65 per cent of total year on year consumption price growth on average over the last twelve months (see Figure 49 and Figure 50).

Figure 49: Contributions to consumption deflator growth

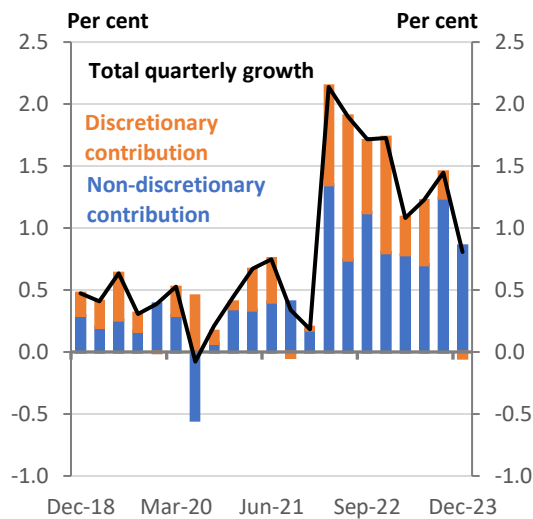
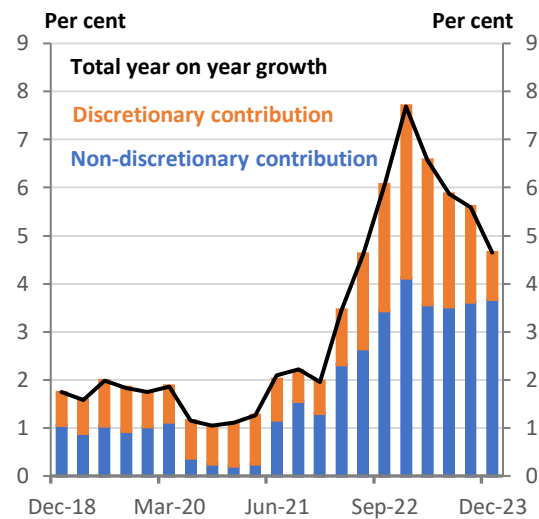


Figure 50: Contributions to consumption deflator growth



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

117. The rapid run up in and slower easing in the price of essentials will have weighed very heavily on low income households. As RBA Governor Bullock noted in evidence to the House of Representatives Committee on Economics on 9 February 2024:

“Higher inflation typically hits the lower-income people harder because they’re spending more of their income on essentials.”²⁹

²⁹ [ParlInfo - Standing Committee on Economics : 09/02/2024 : Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia Annual Report 2023 \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/standing_committees/economics/09/02/2024/review_of_the_reserve_bank_of_australia_annual_report_2023)

118. The view is corroborated by the ABS National Accounts distributional publication, which can be used to calculate consumption category shares of household income by income quintile.³⁰ The lowest two quintiles show broadly similar consumption patterns, with Rent and other dwelling services, Food, and Transport being among the top 5 largest shares of household consumption (see Figure 51 and Figure 52) for financial year 2021-22, which covers a period of accelerating inflation, prior to its peak in December 2022.

Figure 51: Consumption as a share of income – lowest quintile

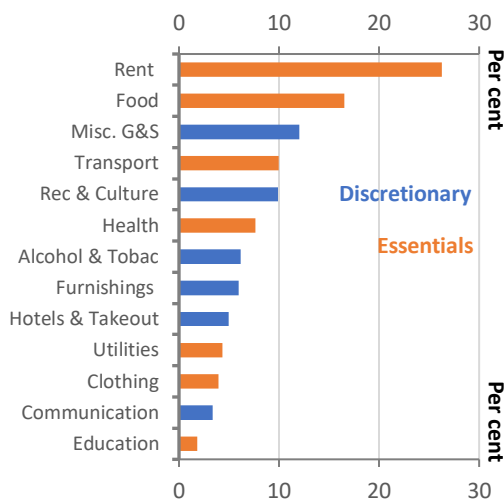
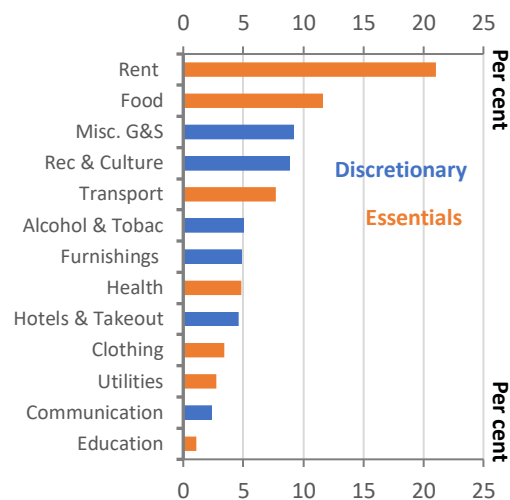


Figure 52: Consumption as a share of income – second quintile



Source: ABS National Accounts: Distribution of Household Income, Consumption and Wealth & ACTU calculations

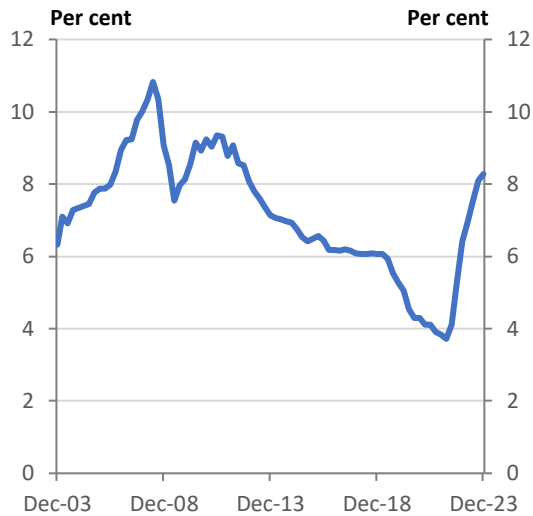
119. Adding to budgetary pressures on households, the increases in the RBA cash rate over the last two years have led to an acceleration in interest payments as a share of income, which has risen to 8.3 per cent as of the December quarter 2023, the highest it has been since September 2012 (see Figure 53).

³⁰ Note: the lowest quintile will include households that are retired and living off pension or superannuation income and may be asset rich. The shares of consumption should be considered illustrative rather than categorical.

120. Interest on mortgages has been a large part of this, with total scheduled mortgage repayments accelerating to 9.7 per cent of disposable income and interest charged on mortgages rising to 6.2 per cent of disposable income in the December quarter (see Figure 54).

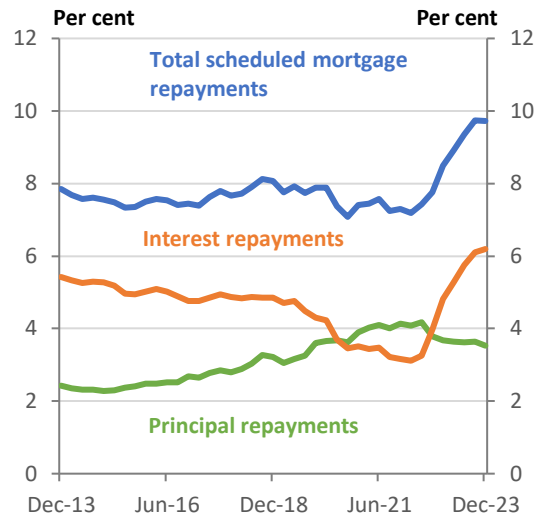
121. In addition to rapid price growth in essential spending categories and higher interest payments, workers are also facing higher taxes as a share of gross income than they have in decades. Total tax payable as a share of gross income has risen to 16.9 per cent, the highest it has been since June 2002 (see Figure 55).

Figure 53: Debt servicing ratio



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 54: Mortgage repayments as a share of income



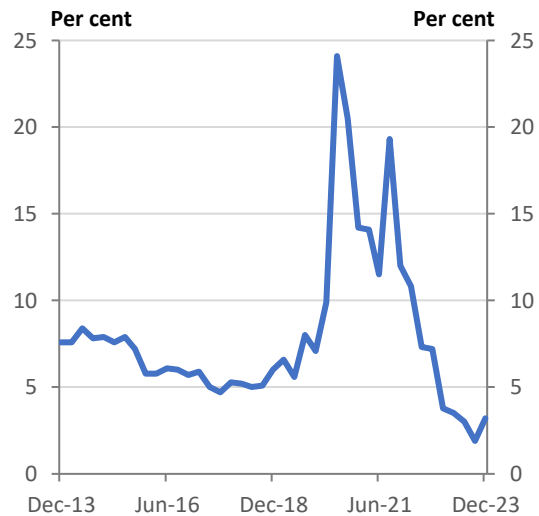
Source: RBA Housing Loan Payments, ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 55: Tax payable as a share of gross income



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 56: Household savings ratio



122. Increased price pressures, higher interest rates and taxes weighing on disposable income have driven the household savings ratio to decadal lows, declining to 1.1 per cent in September 2023 before ticking up slightly to 3.2 per cent in December as gross disposable income outpaced consumption. However, the savings ratio is still well below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 6.7 per cent (see Figure 56), suggesting household budgets are stretched from price pressures and interest costs.
123. The combination of these factors has weighed heavily on household consumption. Real household final consumption expenditure increased only slightly in December, rising 0.1 per cent in the quarter and 0.1 per cent year on year. The slight increase in December followed an outright decline of 0.2 per cent quarter on quarter, the first decline since the September 2021 lockdowns. Growth in the December quarter was also well below the quarterly 10-year pre-pandemic average of 0.6 per cent and year on year average of 2.5 per cent (see Figure 57).
124. However, the aggregate does conceal the sharpness of the cost of living crisis for households. Domestic consumption by Australian citizens and residents rose for the first time in twelve months in the December quarter, rising 0.4 per cent on a quarterly basis, although was still down 0.9 per cent compared to December 2022 (see Figure 58). This suggests that households are scaling back under the weight of cost of living pressures and the severe decline in real wages.
125. Nevertheless, spending domestically still managed to increase in annual terms in December, rising by 1.3 per cent year on year after a 1.8 per cent rise in September. Spending in Australia has been supported by the rapid recovery in in-bound tourism, more than offsetting the decline in annual spending by Australian residents (see Figure 59).
126. Inbound tourism has also been the main engine of growth in year on year spending in Australia over the last twelve months, completely offsetting the declines in spending by Australian residents in Australia in three of the last four quarters. The recovery in inbound tourism has been rapid since the borders reopened, returning to 96.4 per cent of its December 2019 levels as of December 2023 (see Figure 60). It is this factor that has supported business conditions and

profitability domestically in some industries, even in the face of a severe cost of living crisis for Australia's workers.

Figure 57: Growth in real household consumption

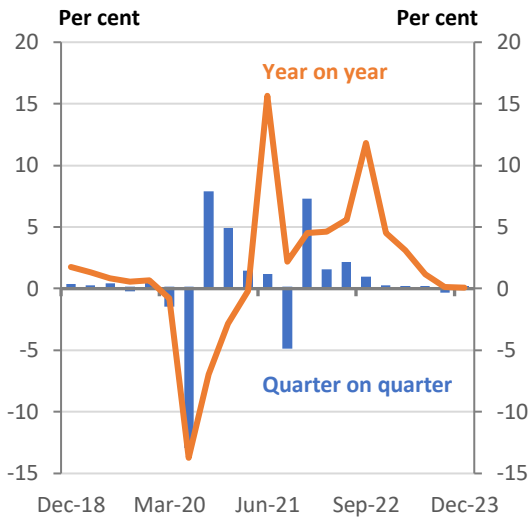


Figure 58: Growth in real domestic resident consumption

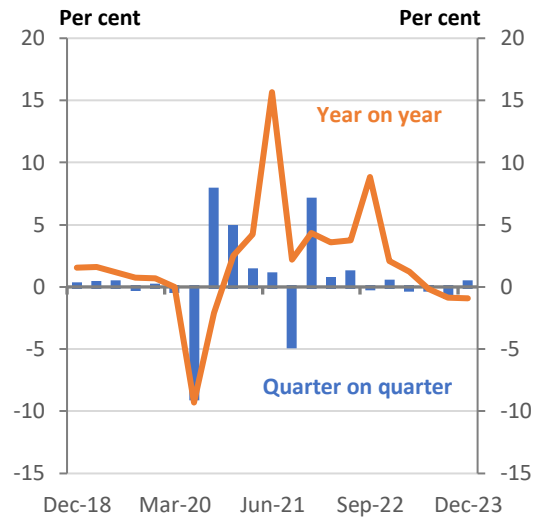


Figure 59: Contributions to year on year real domestic spending growth

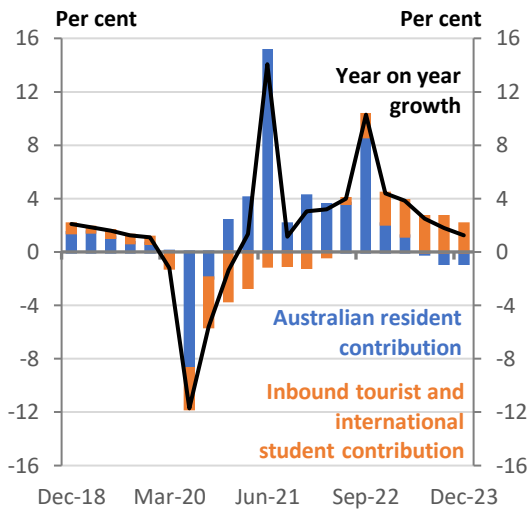


Figure 60: Index of real tourism exports and imports



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Balance of Payments and International Investment Position & ACTU calculations

127. Disaggregating spending in Australia this way helps to explain why business capacity utilisation and aggregate profitability has been so solid despite the cost of living crisis that is weighing so heavily on Australia’s workers. It also points to the need for award and minimum wages to increase by the magnitude argued for in this submission to support Australia’s lowest paid workers in managing the on-going cost of living pressures they had no hand in creating.

2.7 Performance relative to forecasts: the economy has slowed in expected ways

128. In assessing how the economy has performed relative to forecasts, it is instructive to examine the most recent forecasts prior to the Review decision in June 2023 and to place those forecasts in the context of the most recently published forecasts by the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia.

129. The economy has evolved broadly as the official sector forecasts suggested just prior to the June 2023 Review decision, notwithstanding some upside surprises on employment growth, wages growth and labour supply.

130. The Government’s 2023-24 *Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook* noted that:

“The Australian economy is slowing in expected ways, given high but moderating inflation, higher interest rates and global economic uncertainty.”³¹

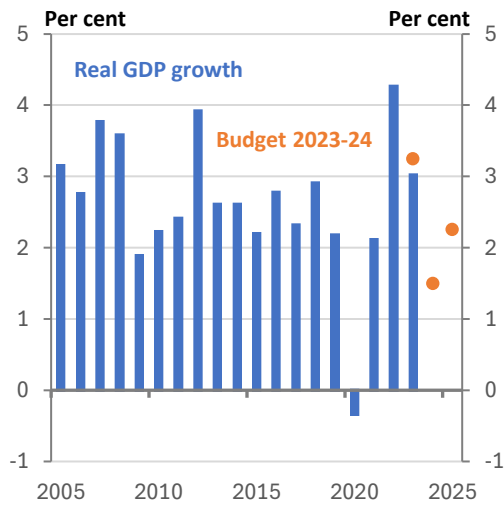
131. Real GDP growth has evolved broadly as expected. Treasury forecast for financial year 2023-24 was slightly stronger than the outcome, with forecast growth of 3¼ per cent beating the actual outcome of 3.0 per cent for the financial year (see Figure 61. For the RBA, real GDP growth was slightly stronger than expected, growing 2.0 per cent year on year in June 2023 compared to forecast growth of 1.7 per cent and 1.5 per cent in the year to December 2023 compared to a forecast 1.2 per cent (see Figure 62).

³¹ [Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023–24 \(budget.gov.au\)](https://budget.gov.au)

132. The unemployment rate has tracked broadly as expected, averaging 3.6 per cent in June 2023 compared to Treasury's forecast of 3½ per cent and the RBA's forecast of 3.6 per cent. The RBA's forecast of 4.0 per cent for December 2023 was broadly consistent with the average for the December quarter of 3.9 per cent.

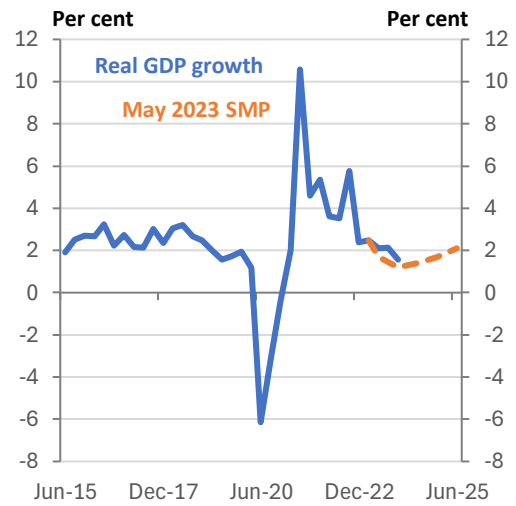
133. Employment growth has been slightly stronger than expected, likely driven by stronger than expected demand for labour as the after-effects of the COVID-19 related disruptions flow through the economy. Employment growth averaged 3.4 per cent year on year in June 2023 compared to Treasury's Budget forecast of 2½ per cent and the RBA's forecast of 2.5 per cent. Employment growth in December averaged 3.0 per cent year on year, above the RBA's forecast of 1.6 per cent in their May 2023 *Statement on Monetary Policy* (see Figure 65 and Figure 66).

Figure 61: Real GDP forecasts (Treasury)



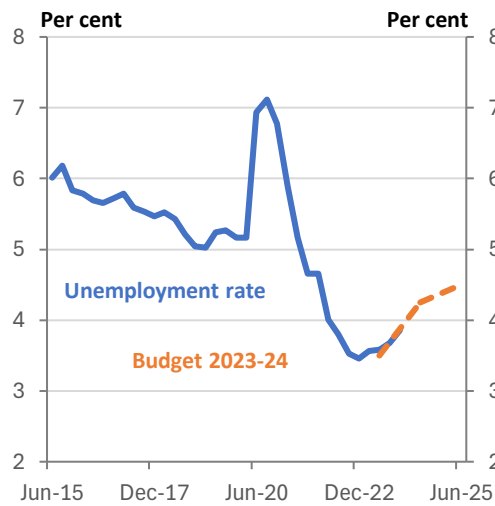
ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, Budget 2023-24 & ACTU calculations

Figure 62: Real GDP forecasts (Reserve Bank)



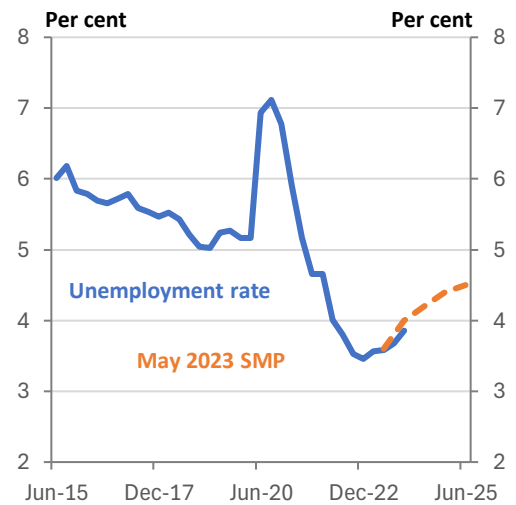
ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Balance of Payments, RBA May 2023 SMP & ACTU calculations

Figure 63: Unemployment rate (Treasury)



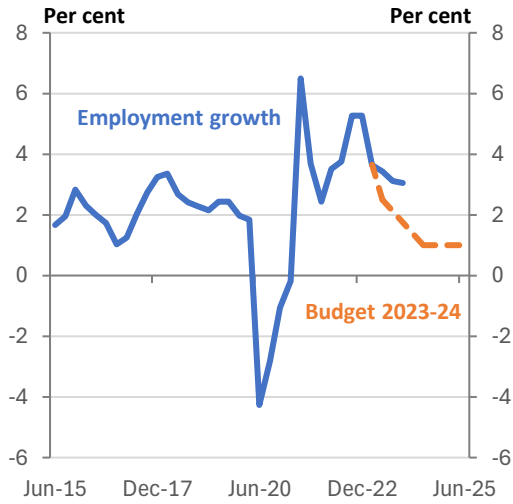
ABS Labour Force, Australia, Budget 2023-24 & ACTU calculations

Figure 64: Unemployment rate (Reserve Bank)



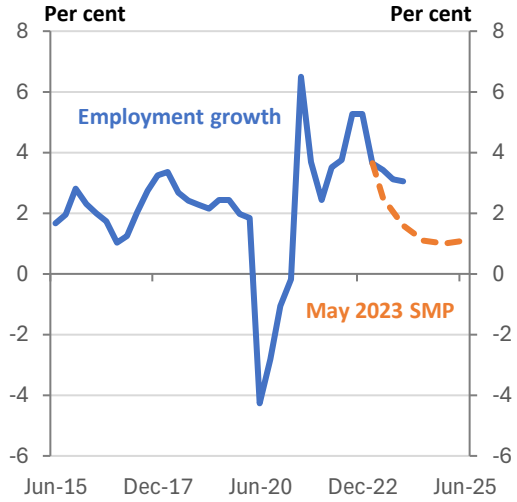
ABS Labour Force, Australia, RBA May 2023 SMP & ACTU calculations

Figure 65: Employment growth (Treasury)



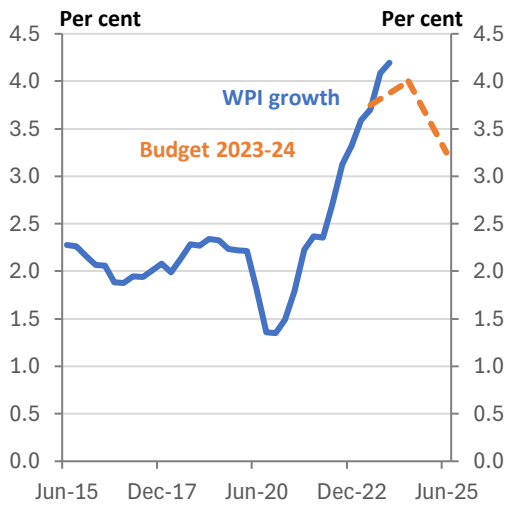
ABS Labour Force, Australia, Budget 2023-24 & ACTU calculations

Figure 66: Employment growth (Reserve Bank)



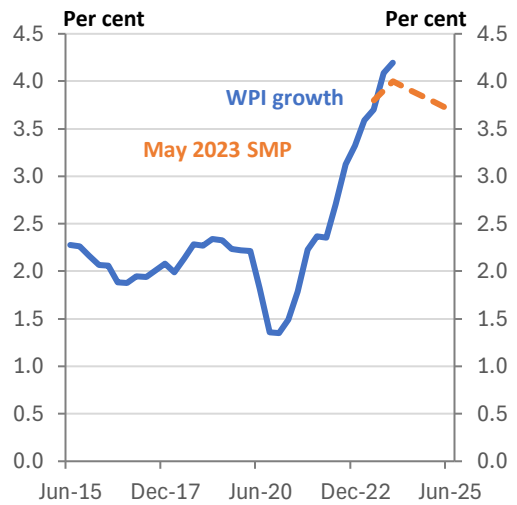
ABS Labour Force, Australia, RBA May 2023 SMP & ACTU calculations

Figure 67: Wages growth (Treasury)



ABS Wage Price Index, Australia, Budget 2023-24 & ACTU calculations

Figure 68: Wages growth (Reserve Bank)

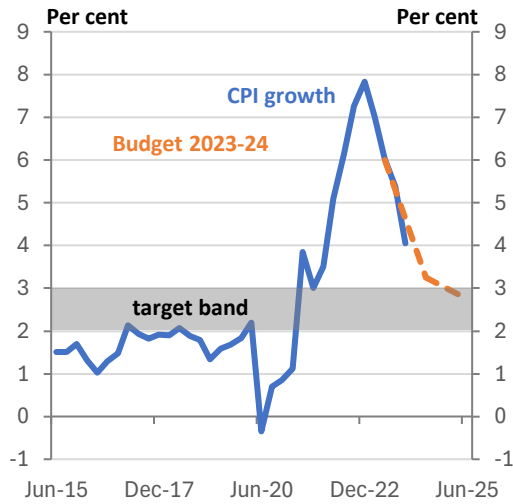


ABS Wage Price Index, Australia, RBA May 2023 SMP & ACTU calculations

134. Stronger than expected employment growth has shown the resilience of the Australian economy despite the on-going cost of living crisis for workers, and fed through to stronger than expected wages growth. Wages grew 4.2 per cent in the December quarter, compared to a forecast 4.0 per cent by the RBA, although there is still space for wages growth to ease to 4.0 per cent by June 2024, as Treasury expects.

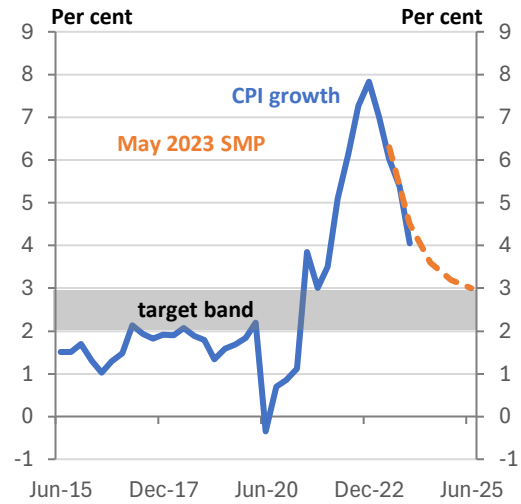
135. Despite stronger wage growth, inflation has grown broadly as expected, albeit falling slightly faster than forecast before the Panel's last decision. Headline inflation grew 6.0 per cent in June 2023, in line with Treasury's Budget forecast of 6.0 per cent and slightly lower than the RBA's forecast of 6.3 per cent in the May 2023 SMP. Headline inflation growth eased to 4.1 per cent in December 2023, lower than the expected 4.5 per cent in the RBA's May SMP (see Figure 69 and Figure 70).

Figure 69: Inflation forecast (Treasury)



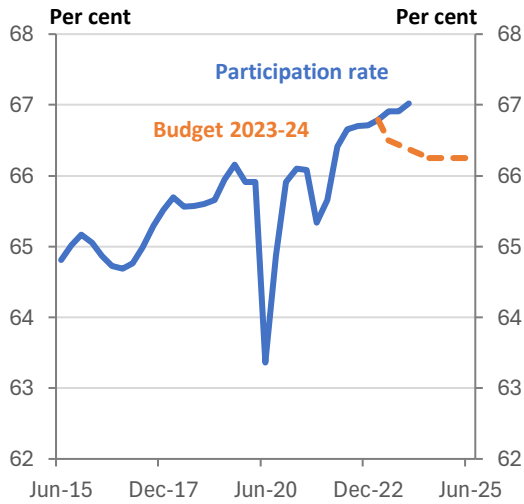
Source: ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, Budget 2023-24 & ACTU calculations

Figure 70: Inflation forecast (Reserve Bank)



Source: ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, RBA May 2023 SMP & ACTU calculations

Figure 71: Participation rate (Treasury)



ABS Labour Force, Australia, Budget 2023-24 & ACTU calculations

136. Part of the reason for inflation outcomes being lower than expected is the stronger than expected labour supply. Treasury forecast at Budget a participation rate of 66½ per cent for June 2023, beaten by the outcome of 66.9 per cent. Labour supply has broadly increased since then, currently well above the 66¼ per cent expected by June 2024, having reached 67.0 per cent on average in the December quarter 2023 (see Figure 71).
137. The result should hardly be surprising, as the cost of living crisis should induce labour supply in a tight labour market as workers try to maintain or otherwise restore real incomes. Given the widespread vacancy rates across industries and the labour supply response to date, the Panel should feel encouraged that a robust increase in minimum and award wages, as argued for by the ACTU, should lead to further labour supply as a counter to falling real incomes and strained household budgets.
138. Further, given the currently low unemployment and underemployment rates and stronger than expected employment growth, the Panel should feel comfort that no dis-employment effects have manifested as a result of quite robust increases in award and minimum wages in the previous two years. The implication from the analysis presented here and elsewhere in the submission is that profitability remains sturdy, and businesses are willing to hire (as can be inferred by high vacancy rates). Another substantial increase in the minimum wage, of the size argued for in this submission, is unlikely to cause any disturbance to the current expected path of the economy.
139. In any event, the forecasts remain largely unchanged compared to when the Panel made its last decision. Treasury forecast at MYEFO 2023-24 that inflation will return to the RBA's target band by June 2025, with the forecast unchanged at 2¾ per cent. The RBA's forecasts have been revised up slightly for June 2025, forecast to be 3.1 per cent year on year growth in headline inflation compared to 3.0 per cent in May 2023 SMP, but with inflation returning to the target band in December 2025, forecast to be 2.8 per cent annual growth.

140. Treasury's wages forecasts were unchanged between Budget 2023-24 and MYEFO 2023-24, while the February 2024 SMP revised wages growth up to 4.1 per cent from 3.9 per cent for June 2024 but also revised down wages for December to 3.7 per cent, down from 3.8 per cent and for June 2025 to 3.6 per cent, down from 3.7 per cent in May 2023.

141. It is worth treating these forecasts with appropriate caution, a warning noted by Governor Bullock in testimony in front of the House of Representatives Economics Committee:

“...you'll see it in the statement of monetary policy, that, as you go further out, the bands of error around the forecasts broaden. It could be lower; it could be higher.”³²

142. Nevertheless, the expected path of the economy remains broadly unchanged between when the Panel took its last decision and the most recent forecasts, suggesting its decision had no impact on the expected return of inflation to the target band in a reasonable timeframe and in an orderly way.

143. In comparing recent outcomes to the official forecasts, it is clear that the labour supply response and employment growth have both been stronger than expected, wages growth has been slightly stronger than expected – while remaining consistent with the inflation target – and inflation has come down faster than either the Reserve Bank or the Treasury expected prior to the Panel's last decision.

144. Further, these stronger than expected labour market outcomes are consistent with the aims of the Reserve Bank Board. Shortly before taking office as Governor, then-Deputy Governor Michele Bullock told the Ai Group that:

“... the Board has been willing to accept a somewhat more gradual return of inflation to target than many other central banks. A faster return to target would likely mean more job losses in the short term. Our judgement is that if we can return inflation to target in

³² [ParlInfo - Standing Committee on Economics : 09/02/2024 : Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia Annual Report 2023 \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/standing_committees/economics/09/02/2024/review_of_the_reserve_bank_of_australia_annual_report_2023)

a reasonable timeframe – while preserving as many of the employment gains as we can – that would be a better outcome.”³³

145. The Panel should be contented that the major outcomes since its decision have been an increase in labour supply, stronger than expected employment outcomes, and a faster than expected reduction in inflation – outcomes that are consistent with the RBA Board’s current inflation reduction strategy.

146. Beyond this, these outcomes point towards an economy that is broadly resilient in aggregate, particularly for businesses, even while Australia’s workers are enduring a severe cost of living crisis and doing what they can to counter it by supplying more labour for gainful employment and seeking higher wages where possible, despite these gains being quickly swallowed up by rising inflation.

2.8 International forecasts

147. Internationally, Australia’s real GDP growth for calendar year 2023 of 2.0 per cent compares favourably with the projected growth of 1.7 per cent for the OECD for calendar year 2023.³⁴ However, growth for the G20 economies in 2023 is projected to be higher at 3.1 per cent.

148. Australia’s labour market fared better than the OECD average over 2023, with the projected unemployment rate of 4.8 per cent for the OECD economies higher than Australia’s average unemployment rate over calendar year 2023 of 3.7 per cent.

149. Looking further out, the OECD’s *Economic Outlook* for November 2023 projects growth of 1.4 per cent for Australia, lower than the G20 economies projected growth of 2.8 per cent but in line with the OECD economies projected growth of 1.4 per cent. The OECD expects Australian growth

³³ [Achieving Full Employment | Speeches | RBA](#)

³⁴ [OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2023 Issue 2 | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#)

to pick up in 2025, rising to 2.1 per cent, above the OECD average of 1.8 per cent, although still below the 3.0 per cent projected for the G20 economies.³⁵

150. Driving slower growth forecasts by the OECD are higher interest rates and cost of living pressures weighing on households with fewer accumulated savings. Continued strong working-age population growth and higher exports as foreign student arises will partly offset these headwinds, providing an on-going demand impulse that will support firms' income. The OECD expects inflation to moderating, aided by abating global inflationary pressures and the OECD expects inflation to fall to the top of the RBA target band by early 2025.

151. The OECD's projections are in line with those of the IMF, which projects 1.4 per cent growth for calendar year 2024 followed by a pick-up in growth to 2.0 per cent in 2025 for Australia. This compares favourably to the outlook for advanced economies in the most recent IMF *World Economic Outlook* for January 2024, which forecasts 1.5 per cent growth for 2024 and 1.8 per cent for 2025.³⁶

152. The deceleration in growth projected by the IMF is driven by tightening monetary conditions, with faltering private consumption acting as a drag on growth as household struggle with higher mortgage costs amidst lower real wages and depleting savings. The IMF expects business investment to remain resilient even as a slowdown in China dampens Australia's trade growth. The IMF expects weakness in goods exports to be offset by the continuing rebound in tourism flows. The IMF's outlook is broadly consistent with the analysis in this submission, in that the cost of living crisis is acting as a drag on workers amidst a reasonable business outlook arising from solid investment and tourism exports supporting firms' income.

153. The IMF is projecting broadly stable growth for calendar year 2024 and 2025 for the global economy. It is forecasting growth of 3.1 per cent and 3.2 per cent respectively, driven by elevated

³⁵ [OECD Economic Outlook](#)

³⁶ [World Economic Outlook Update, January 2024: Moderating Inflation and Steady Growth Open Path to Soft Landing \(imf.org\)](#)

central bank policy rates to fight inflation, a withdrawal of fiscal support amid high debts, and low underlying productivity growth.

154. In line with Australia's experience, the IMF notes in its most recent *Outlook* publication that inflation is falling faster than expected in most regions, amidst the unwinding of supply side issues and restrictive monetary policy.

2.9 Performance of Award reliant industries

155. While the economy in aggregate has remained resilient in the face of high interest rates and the severe cost of living crisis being endured by Australia's workers, there will be a range of different experiences across industries. This section will examine the six industries with the highest share of employees reliant on awards, in order of the share of employees on awards – although given its unique nature, Health care and social assistance will be treated last.

156. Broadly speaking, Award reliant industries have performed solidly since the Panel's last decision. In general, real gross value added and employment have picked up; profit to income ratios have stabilised and profits have been solid relative to pre-COVID levels; vacancies are elevated and underutilisation rates below pre-pandemic averages; and nominal wages growth has picked up but not enough to prevent workers in all sectors from feeling the bite of cost of living pressures as real wages have declined severely.

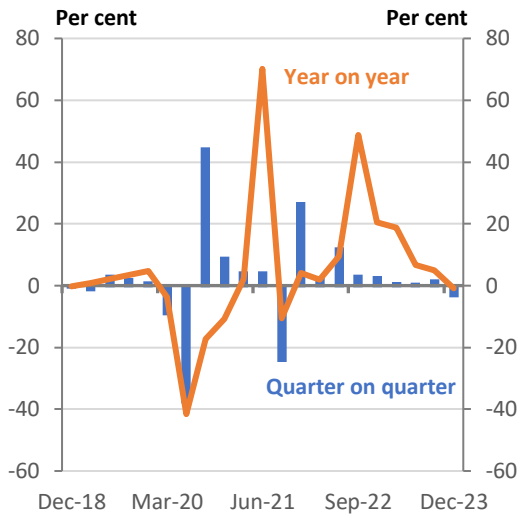
2.9.1 Accommodation and food services

157. Real gross value added has increased around 10.8 per cent since December 2019, just prior to the beginning of lockdowns that plagued the sector and has seen annual growth of 7.4 per cent on average over the last twelve months (see Chart X and Chart X). GVA growth declined by 0.9 per cent year on year in the December quarter, coming off a very high base, reflecting a pull-back in discretionary spending as cost of living pressures weigh on workers and the pent-up demand post-COVID eases off.

158. Reflecting a combination of difficulties finding labour after the borders were closed and a shift in preferences by employees, employment growth has recovered more slowly than real GVA, reaching pre-pandemic levels by March 2023, although employment growth has been solid over the last twelve months, averaging 5.9 per cent annual growth over the period (see Figure 72 and Figure 73). The decline in employment in the December quarter likely reflects the shift in demand conditions and normalisation of spending patterns discussed earlier.

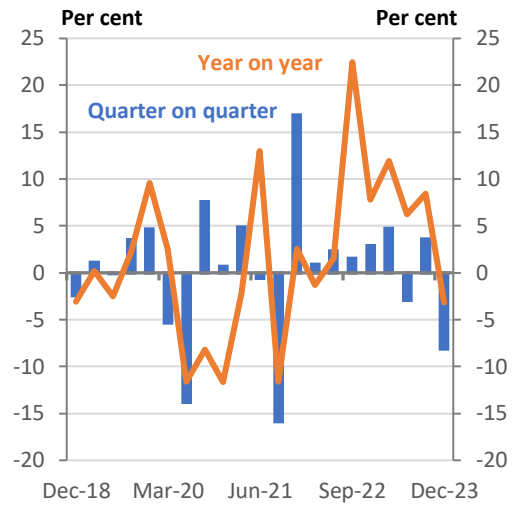
159. Nominal income growth in the sector has been driven mainly by a recovery in volumes since the bounce back from COVID-19, with prices making a more modest contribution to year on year nominal income growth (see Figure 75). However, in the December quarter, income growth was driven entirely by price growth, with volumes detracting from nominal income growth for the reasons discussed earlier.

Figure 72: Growth in real gross value added in Accommodation and food services



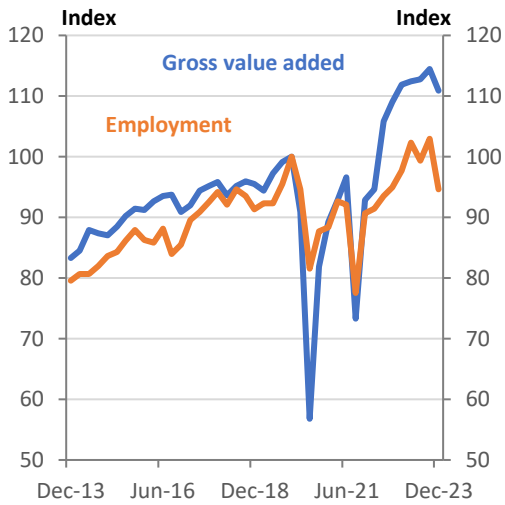
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 73: Growth in employment in Accommodation and food services



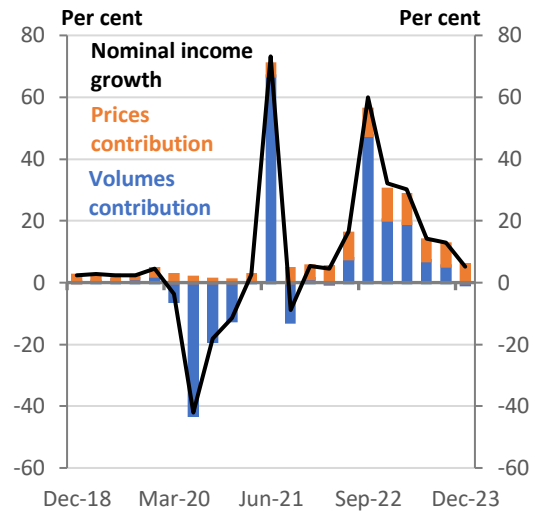
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 74: Index of real GVA and employment in Accommodation and food services



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 75: Year on year nominal income growth in Accommodation and food services

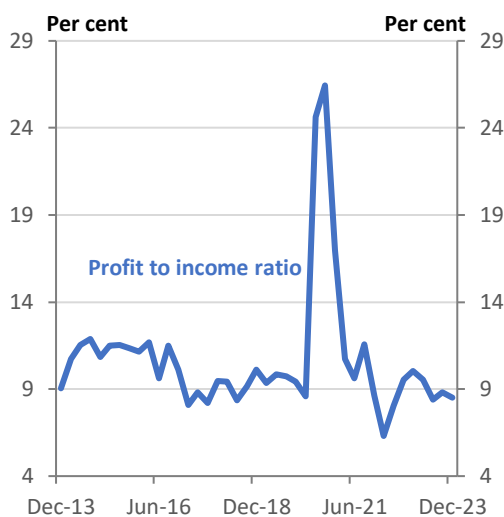


Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

160. The profit to income ratio has been broadly stable over the last twelve months, averaging 8.8 per cent over the past twelve month and easing off slightly to 8.5 per cent in the December quarter as the industry goes through a process of adjustment (see Figure 76).

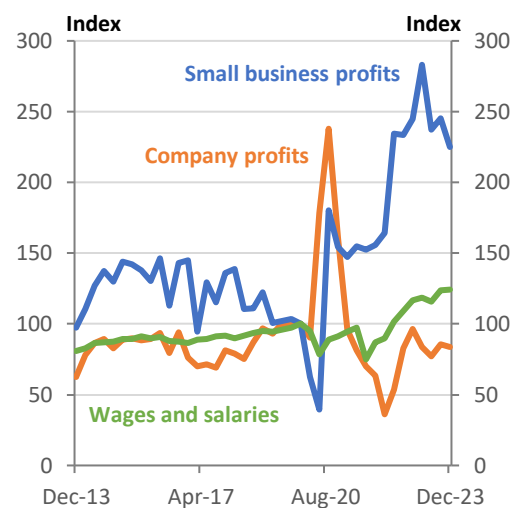
161. Unincorporated enterprises have fared more favourably post-COVID, with gross operating profits of these entities increasing 125.0 per cent since December 2019 and having averaged 17.5 per cent annual growth over the past twelve months (see Figure 77). Unincorporated enterprise profit growth declined in the most recent quarter was line with the previously discussed trends.

Figure 76: Profit to income ratio in Accommodation and food services



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 77: Profits & Wages and Salaries in Accommodation and food services



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

162. Larger businesses have not fared as well, having declined 16.4 per cent since December 2019, although have shown notable growth over the past twelve months, seeing annual growth of 41.2 per cent on average, despite the December quarter decline. Wages and salaries have increased 24.3 per cent since December 2019, growing 6.5 per cent year on year in September 2023.

Figure 78: Underemployed persons and job vacancies in Accommodation and food services



Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 79: Underutilisation rates in Accommodation and food services

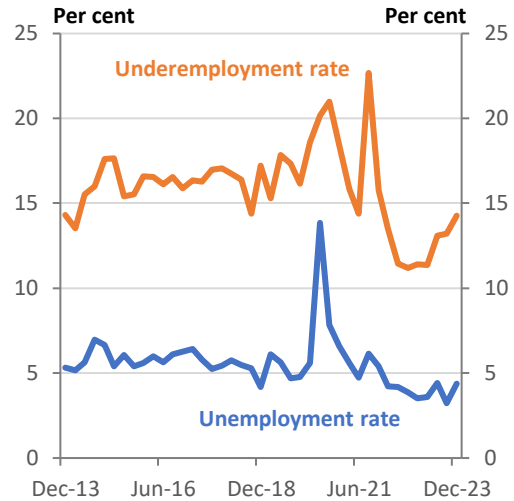
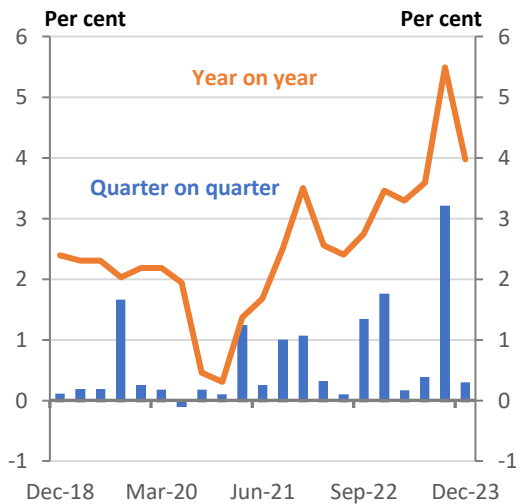
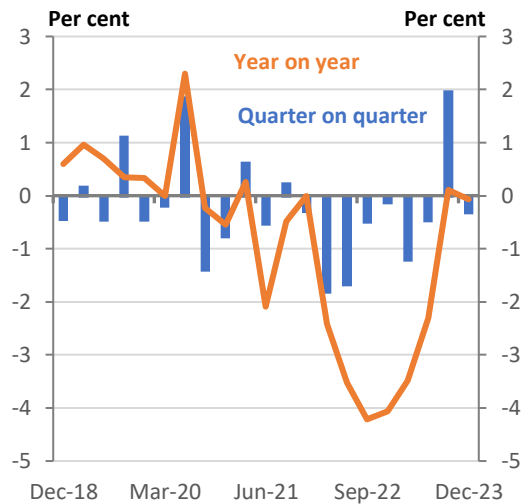


Figure 80: Nominal wages growth in Accommodation and food services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 81: Real wages growth in Accommodation and food services



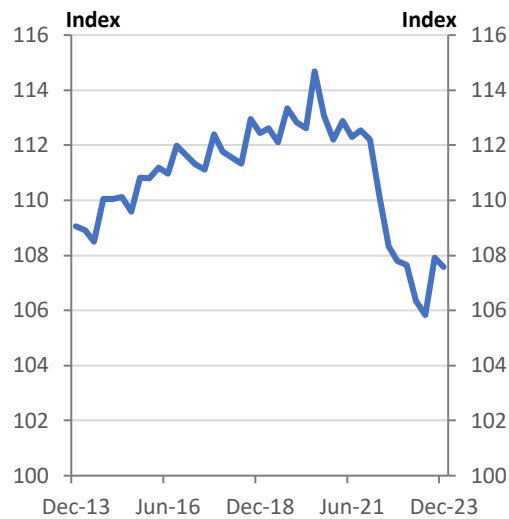
Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

163. Job vacancies in the sector have declined over recent quarters, having fallen 30.8 per cent since December 2022, although vacancies still remain 171.1 per cent higher than December 2019.

Reflecting the wide-spread vacancies, underemployed persons in the sector have declined since March 2021, as the tight labour market allowed people who had been underemployed before the pandemic to pick up extra hours to stave off cost of living pressures and support businesses requiring extra staff, despite a slight uptick over 2023 (see Figure 78).

164. Reflecting the pull-back of discretionary spending, the easing off of post-COVID pent up demand and the overall slowing in the economy, both the unemployment rate and underemployment rate have risen, the unemployment rate having to above where it was in March 2022 (see Figure 79). However, both are still below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 5.3 per cent and 15.4 per cent respectively.
165. Nominal wages growth in the sector has picked up, partly reflecting the now easing labour shortages post-COVID, but also partly reflecting the decisions of the Panel during Reviews. Wages growth rose 4.0 per cent year on year in December 2023, following solid growth of 5.5 per cent in September 2023 as the previous decision was implemented (see Figure 80).
166. However, nominal wages have not kept pace with inflation and real wages have declined severely. Real wages growth has been negative in 9 of the last twelve quarters on both a quarterly basis and a year on year basis (see Figure 81). The sector also did not see annual real wages growth in December 2023, running against the overall trend in the quarter.
167. Further, real wages are now 4.7 per cent below where they were in March 2021 – just prior to the inflationary episode that triggered the cost of living crisis – and are the lowest they have been since June 2011 (see Figure 82).

Figure 82: Real wage level in Accommodation and food services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

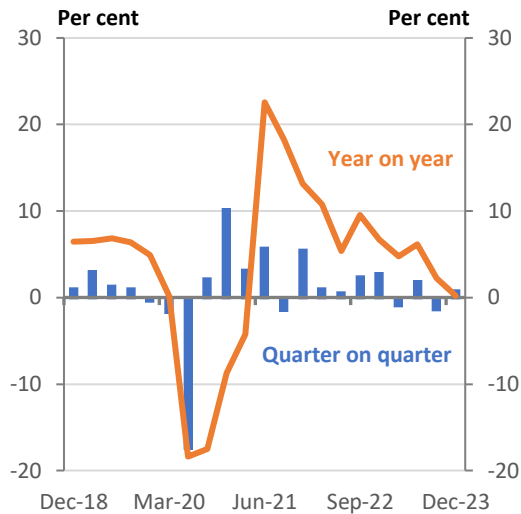
168. The performance of Accommodation and food services sector has been solid over the last twelve months, although the sector is now going through an adjustment due to the cost of living crisis, the general slowing in the economy, and as the post-COVID rebound in services spending eases off to more normal conditions. However, underutilisation remains below pre-pandemic levels and vacancies are still elevated. The sector has also seen a severe decline in real wages alongside stabilisation in profit to income ratios.

2.9.2 Administrative and support services

169. Real gross value added has increased around 10.5 per cent since December 2019 and has seen annual growth of 3.3 per cent on average over the last twelve months. There was a slight slowing of growth in December, with a rise of only 0.2 per cent year on year (see Figure 83). Year on year growth has eased since the initial recovery in June 2021, broadly reflecting a return to more normal conditions in the sector in combination with the general slowdown in the economy.

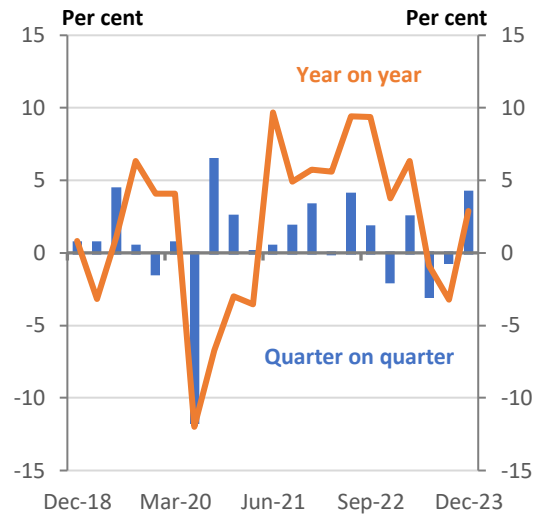
170. Employment growth picked up slightly in December, rising 4.2 per cent in the quarter and 2.9 per cent over the year, moving back to be broadly in line with industry gross value added (Figure 84 and Figure 85).

Figure 83: Growth in real gross value added in Administrative and support services



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 84: Growth in employment in Administrative and support services



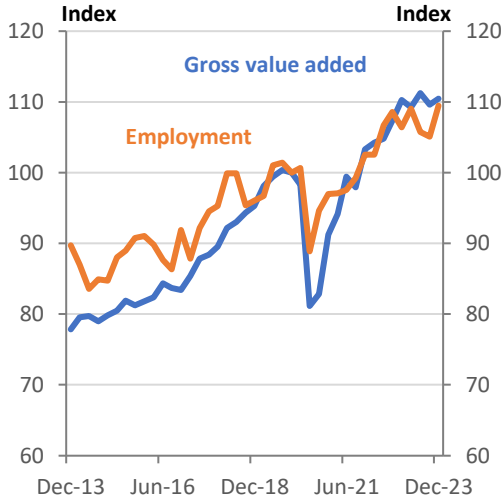
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

171. Nominal income growth in the sector has also been driven by a recovery in volumes since the bounce back from COVID-19, with the contribution from prices modest but increasing over recent quarters (see Figure 86). Prices drove growth in nominal income entirely in the December quarter 2023.

172. Reflecting strong overall demand conditions, particularly in the business sector, the profit to income ratio has picked up in recent quarters, rising to 8.9 per cent as of December 2023, up from 7.0 per cent a year earlier and well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 4.8 per cent (see Figure 87).

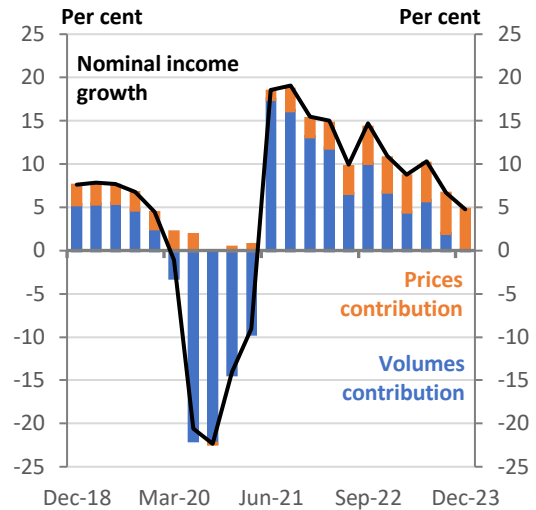
173. Profit growth in the sector has been broad based across incorporated and unincorporated enterprises. Company gross operating profits are up 48.1 per cent compared to December 2019 and rose 40.4 per cent year on year in December 2023. Gross operating profits of unincorporated enterprises are up 88.5 per cent compared to December 2019 and were up 4.9 per cent over the year to December 2023 (see Figure 88).
174. Wages and salaries have increased only 18.2 per cent since December 2019, growing 5.7 per cent year on year in December 2023, despite not performing as robustly as gross operating profits in the industry.
175. Job vacancies declined in the last twelve months, having fallen 23.3 per cent since December 2022 and have fallen 6.7 per cent relative to December 2019 levels. Despite still relatively high vacancies, the number of unemployed persons has ticked up over the last twelve months, returning to around where it was in December 2019 (see Figure 89).

Figure 85: Index of real GVA and employment in Administrative and support services



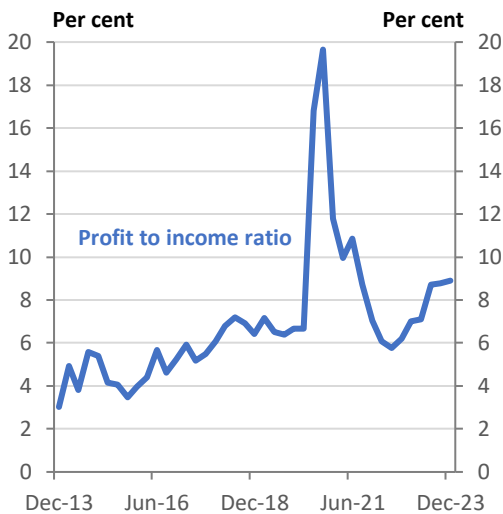
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 86: Year on year nominal income growth in Administrative and support services



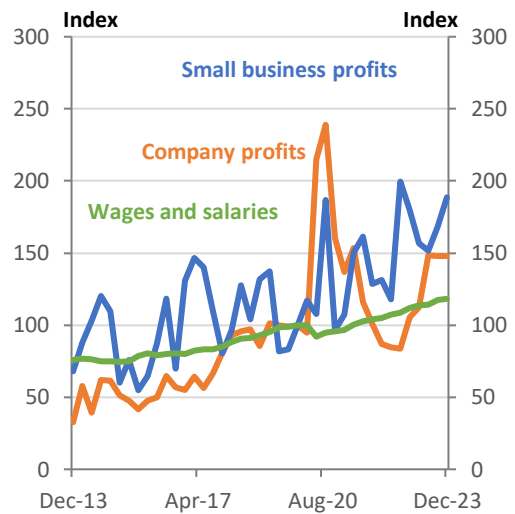
Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 87: Profit to income ratio in Administrative and support services



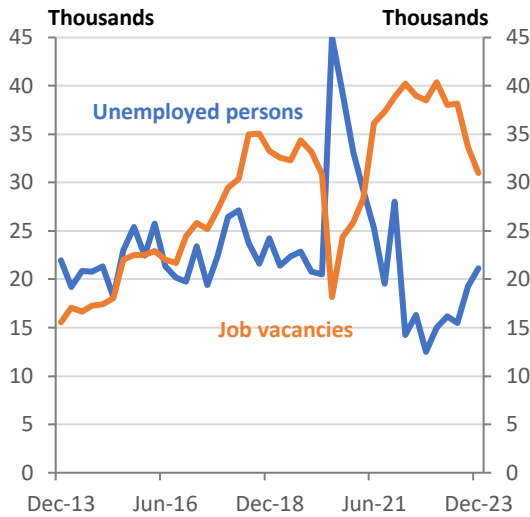
Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 88: Profits & Wages and salaries in Administrative and support services



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 89: Unemployed persons and job vacancies in Administrative and support services



Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 90: Underutilisation rates in Administrative and support services

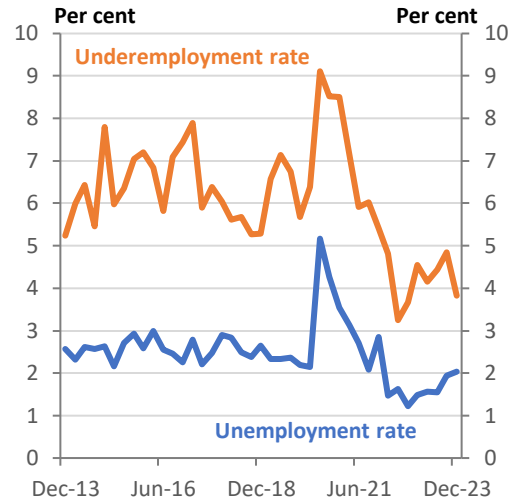
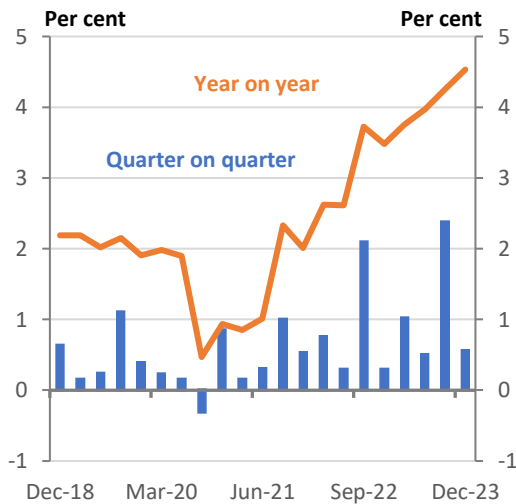
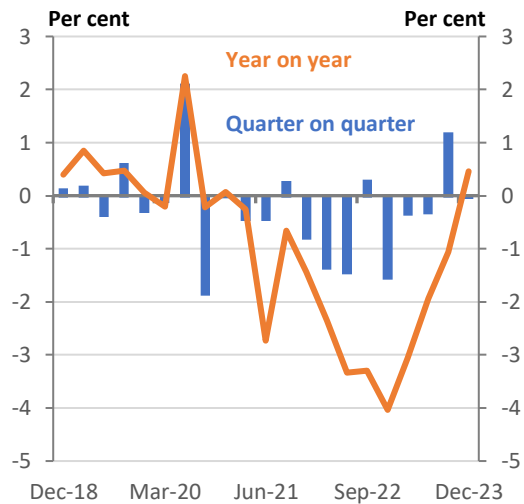


Figure 91: Nominal wage growth in Administrative and support services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 92: Real wage growth in Administrative and support services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

176. The sector is similar to the aggregate economy in that the unemployment and underemployment rates have declined to below pre-COVID levels as demand for labour has driven a supply impulse

by workers seeking to battle against declining real incomes due to high inflation. The unemployment rate ticked up slightly in December to 2.0 per cent, although is still below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 2.5 per cent. However, the underemployment rate declined to 3.8 per cent in December, well below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 6.3 per cent (see Figure 90).

177. Nominal wages growth in the sector has picked up, also partly reflecting tighter labour market conditions but also the decisions of the Commission during the 2022-23 Review. Wages growth rose 4.5 per cent in December 2023, a pick up from growth of 4.3 per cent in September (see Figure 91).

178. As with most sectors of the economy, nominal wages have not kept pace with inflation and the sector is also seeing severe declines in real wages. Real wages growth has been negative in eight of the last twelve quarters on a quarterly basis and eleven of the last twelve on a year on year basis (see Figure 92). The sector was able to see modest real wage growth of 0.5 per cent in annual terms in December 2023, supported in part by the continued flow through of the Fair Work Commission's previous decision.

179. As with most sectors in the economy, the level of real wages is 4.6 per cent below where it was in March 2021 and is the lowest it has been since December 2006 (see Figure 93).

Figure 93: Real wage level in Administrative and support services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

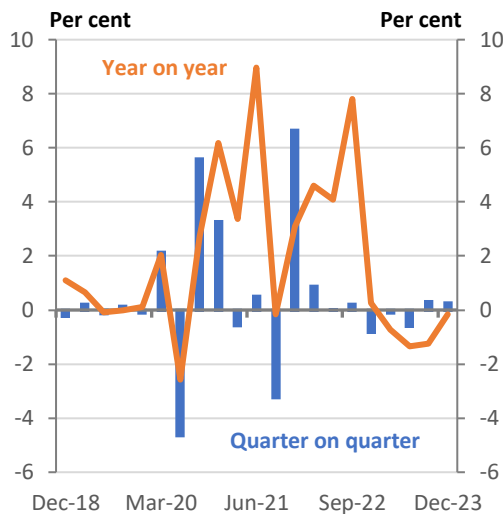
180. The Administrative and support services sector has stabilised somewhat even as the profit to income ratio has picked up, reflecting solid profit growth for both companies and unincorporated enterprises. Vacancies have come off, although are still comparatively high, with low underutilisation rates in the sector. However, the sector’s workers are seeing decadal lows in the level of real wages as the cost of living crisis weighs heavily on them.

2.9.3 Retail trade

181. Real gross value added has increased around 9.6 per cent December 2019, although has eased off in recent quarters as households adjust back towards consumption of services over goods and as the cost of living crisis begins to weigh more heavily on discretionary spending. Real GVA declined 0.2 per cent year on year in December 2023, although quarterly growth was slightly positive in both September and December at 0.3 per cent apiece (see Figure 94).

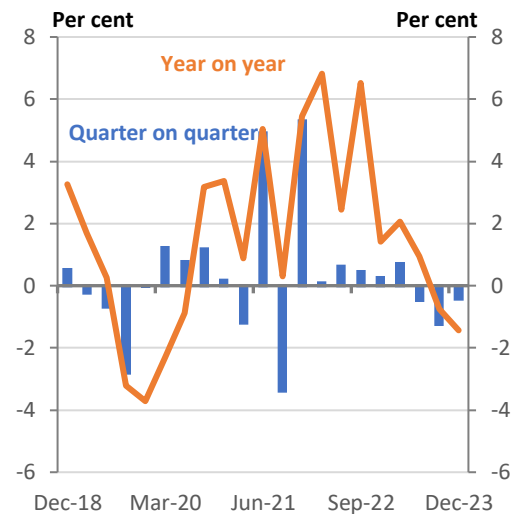
182. Reflecting the shift back to more normal consumption patterns post-COVID and the decline in real income weighing on discretionary spending, driving the slowdown in the economy, employment declined 1.4 per cent year on year in December 2023, although still remains 9.0 per cent above pre-COVID levels (see Figure 95 and Figure 96).

Figure 94: Growth in real gross value added in Retail trade



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 95: Growth in employment in Retail trade



Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

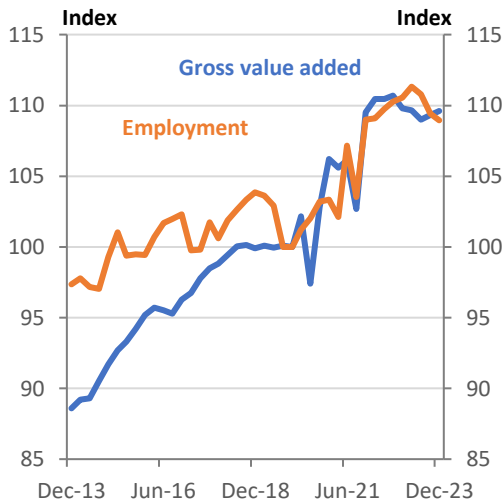
183. Nominal income growth in the sector has been driven almost entirely by prices and retail businesses appear to have passed on both cost increases and to some extent improved margins in the recent inflationary episode. Nominal income growth was solid at 3.8 per cent year on year in December 2023, following a robust 5.1 per cent year on year growth rate in both September and June 2023 (see Figure 97).

184. The profit to income ratio declined in the December quarter, falling to 5.8 per cent and returning to be broadly in line with the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 5.9 per cent, although averaged 6.4 per cent over the last twelve months (see Chart X).

185. Companies have seen a steady pick-up in profits post-COVID, having increased 27.3 per cent since December 2019, seeing 1.4 per cent year on year growth in December 2023 and an average of 9.2 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months (see Figure 98).

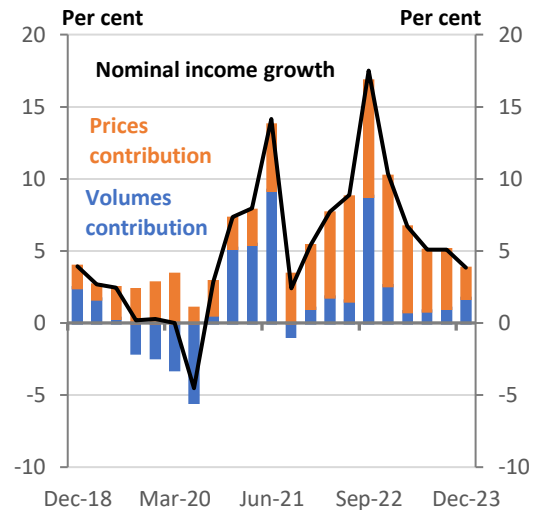
186. Profits for unincorporated enterprises have been very volatile post-COVID, reflecting pent-up demand after movement restrictions were eased over 2022 followed by a scaling back in discretionary spending as the cost of living crisis sharpened. Unincorporated enterprise gross operating profits are up 19.7 per cent since December 2019 but have seen falls in recent quarters as workers pulled back on discretionary purchases in the face of declining real wages.

Figure 96: Index of real GVA and employment in Retail trade



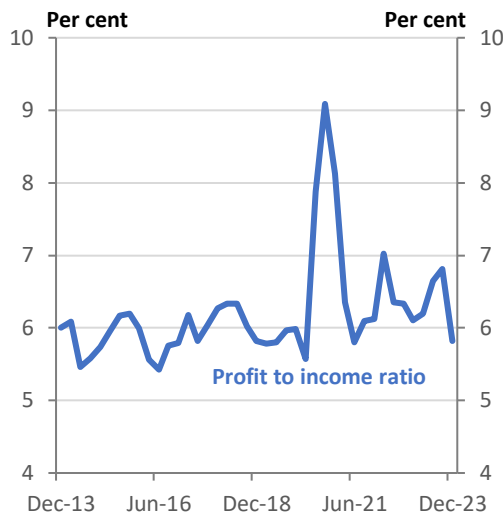
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 97: Year on year nominal income growth in Retail trade



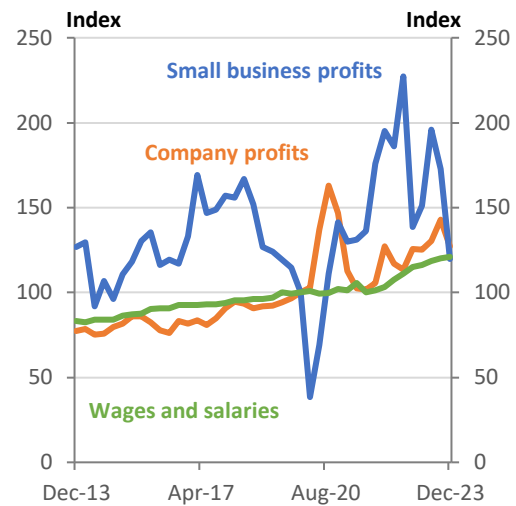
Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 98: Profit to income ratio in Retail trade



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 99: Profits & wages and salaries in Retail Trade



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

187. Wages and salaries in Retail trade have increased 21.0 per cent since pre-COVID, seeing modest growth of 5.3 per cent in December 2023, partly reflecting the Panel’s previous decision.

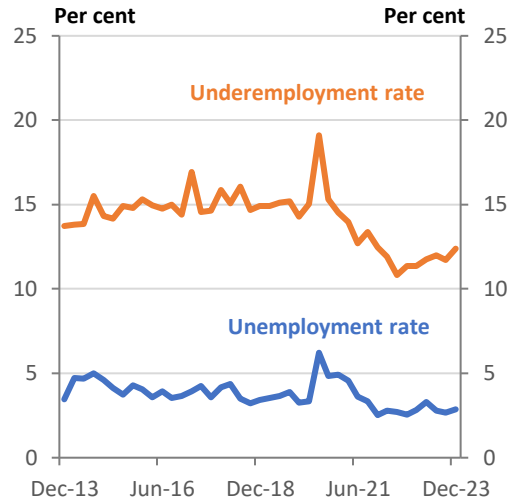
188. As with most other industries, and reflecting the greater availability of labour and a slowing economy, job vacancies have eased, declining 25.2 per cent year on year in December 2023. However, job vacancies are still 52.6 per cent above pre-COVID levels. Reflecting a combination of widespread vacancies and easing in retail conditions as workers pull back on discretionary spending, the number of unemployed persons ticked up slightly as 2023 came to a close, but is still below pre-COVID levels (see Figure 100).

Figure 100: Unemployed persons and job vacancies in Retail trade



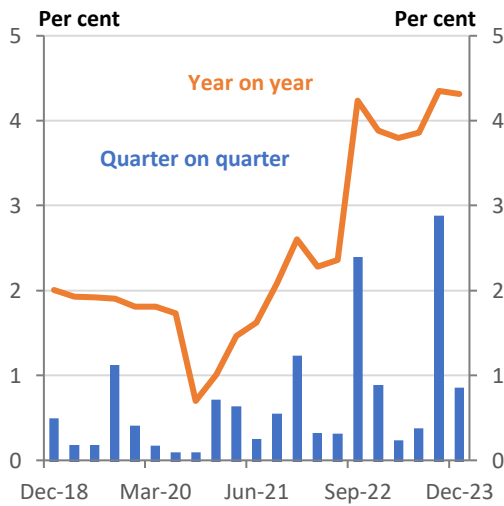
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 101: Underutilisation rates in Retail trade



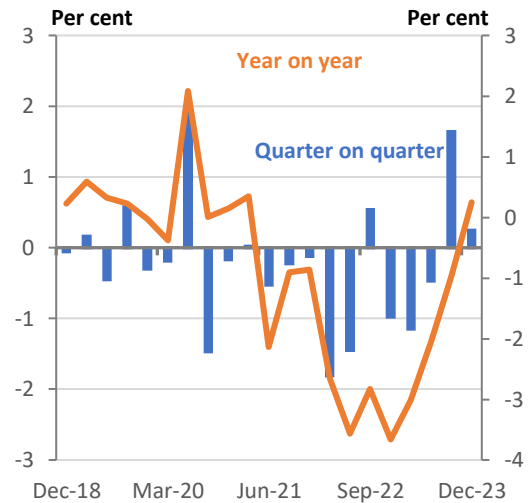
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 102: Nominal wages growth in Retail trade



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 103: Real wages growth in Retail trade



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

189. The unemployment rate has been broadly stable over the past twelve months, ticking up slightly to 2.9 per cent in December 2023, up from 2.8 per cent in December 2022. The unemployment rate remains below the pre-pandemic 10 year average of 3.8 per cent. The underemployment rate has declined more severely relative to pre-COVID levels, despite a gentle rise over 2023 to close the year at 12.4 per cent, up from 11.3 per cent in December 2022. As with the unemployment rate, the underemployment rate remains below the pre-pandemic average of 13.9 per cent (see Figure 101).
190. Nominal wages growth has been solid in Retail trade, reflecting tighter labour market conditions. The Panel's annual decision on award wages has also contributed to solid wage growth, with wages increasing 4.3 per cent over the year to December, down slightly from 4.4 per cent year on year growth in September (see Figure 102).
191. As is the case for most workers in the economy, nominal wages have been outpaced by inflation and real wages have declined. Quarterly real wage growth has been negative in eight of the last twelve quarters and annual growth negative in ten of the last twelve quarters (see Figure 103). Annual real wages were slightly positive in December 2023, growing by a modest 0.3 per cent in line with the narrowing gap between inflation and wages growth.,
192. However, similar to the economy-wide figure, the level of real wages is 4.3 per cent lower than it was in March 2021 and the lowest it has been since September 2008, despite the slight uptick following the increases award in last year's Review decision flowing through in the September quarter 2023 (See Figure 104).

Figure 104: Real wage level in Retail trade



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

193. The Retail sector has seen demand ease off in line with a transition away from elevated goods consumption and as cost of living pressures result in pull back in discretionary spending. The profit to income ratio remains in line with pre-COVID averages and Retail companies are enjoying solid profits. As with other sectors, underutilisation rates remain below pre-COVID levels, vacancies have come off but remain high, and real wages are at decade lows, putting pressure on the sectors' workers and their families.

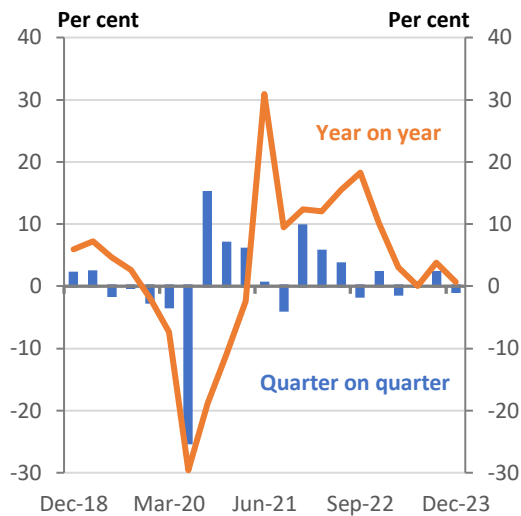
2.9.4 Arts and Recreational services

194. Real gross value added has increased around 10.9 per cent since December 2019 and grew 0.7 per cent over the year to December 2023. Year on year growth has averaged 0.9 per cent over the last twelve months, below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 2.4 per cent year on year

and reflecting a slower recovery as consumption habits were not able to fully adjust post-COVID before the effects of the cost of living crisis set in (see Chart X and Chart X).

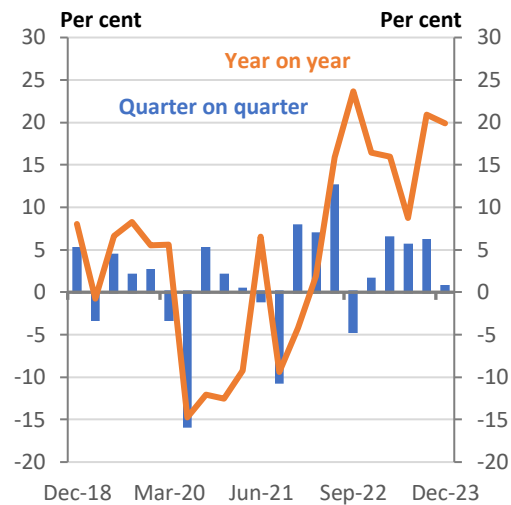
195. Employment has grown solidly since movement restrictions were eased and workers returned to services consumption following the lockdown period. Employment is up 17.0 per cent since December 2019 and increased 19.9 per cent over the year to December 2023. Employment growth has also averaged 15.4 per cent year on year over the last twelve months, well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 2.2 per cent annual growth (see Figure 105 and Figure 106).

Figure 105: Growth in real gross value added in Arts and recreational services



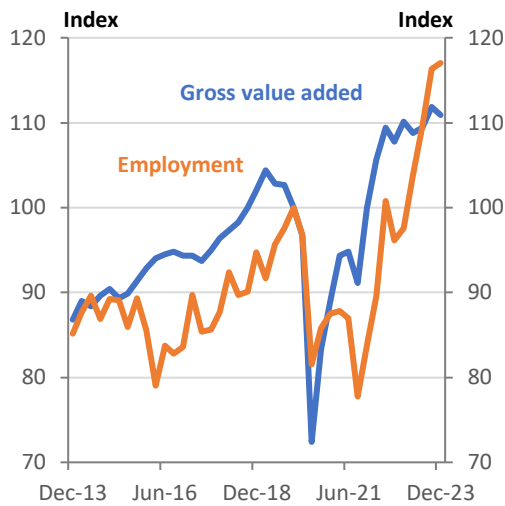
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 106: Growth in employment in Arts and recreational services



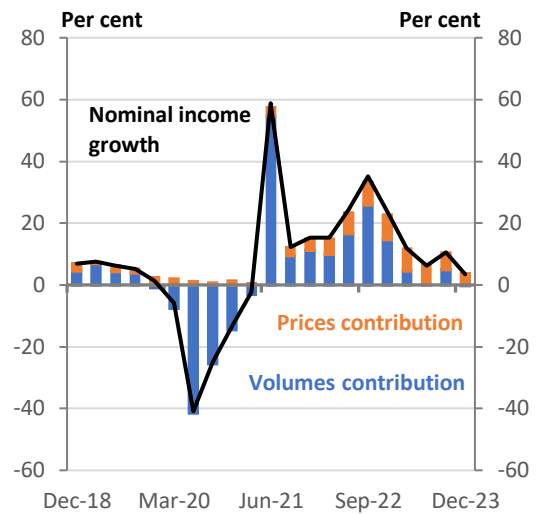
Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 107: Index of real GVA and employment in Arts and recreational services



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 108: Year on year nominal income growth in Arts and recreational services

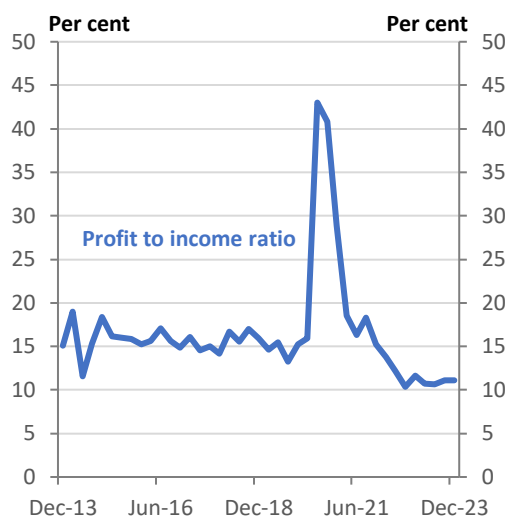


Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

196. In annual terms, nominal income growth has been driven by strong price growth in the sector, following two years of a sharp recovery in volumes. Income growth eased slightly in the final quarter of 2023 as part of the cost of living crisis driven slowdown. Income growth averaged 8.0 per cent year on year growth over the last twelve months, above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 4.3 per cent annual growth (see Figure 108).

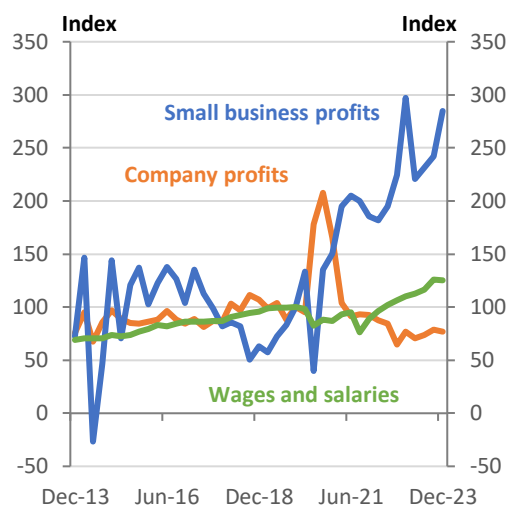
197. The profit to income ratio was flat in December 2023 at 11.1 per cent. The ratio has broadly stabilised and has averaged around 10.9 per cent over the last twelve months (see Figure 109) although still below the 10-year pre-pandemic average. The slower recovery compared to other sectors is likely driven by the scaling back in discretionary spending by workers in the face of the cost of living crisis, which set in before consumption habits were able to normalise and the COVID-era shift towards discretionary goods was able to unwind.

Figure 109: Profit to income ratio in Arts and recreational services



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 110: Profits & Wages and salaries in Arts and recreational services



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

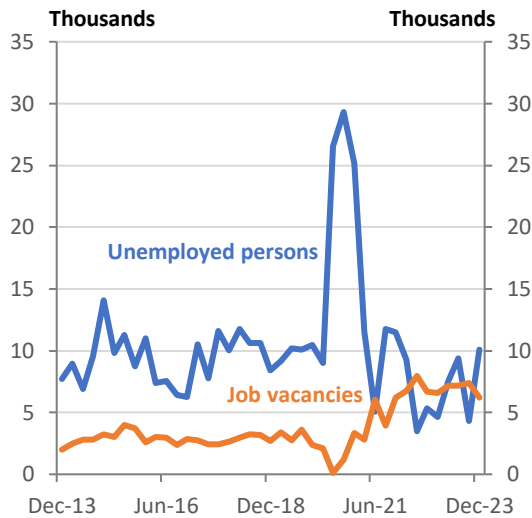
198. As with Accommodation and food services, unincorporated enterprises have fared more favourably post-COVID, with gross operating profits up 184.4 per cent relative to December 2019, despite a slight decline of 4.2 per cent in the final quarter of 2023 (see Figure 110). Annual growth for unincorporated enterprises averaged 10.9 per cent over the last twelve months, suggesting healthy growth in spite of the scaling back by workers of discretionary spending to manage the cost of living crisis.

199. By contrast, company operating profits are down 23.3 per cent relative to December 2019 and saw no annual growth in December 2023 (see Figure 110). Wages and salaries were up only 25.4 per cent compared to December 2019, well below the increase in unincorporated enterprise profits, although were up 13.7 per cent in the year to December 2023.

200. Job vacancies declined in December, falling 5.0 per cent year on year. Job vacancies are still 159.7 per cent higher than December 2019 (see Figure 111).

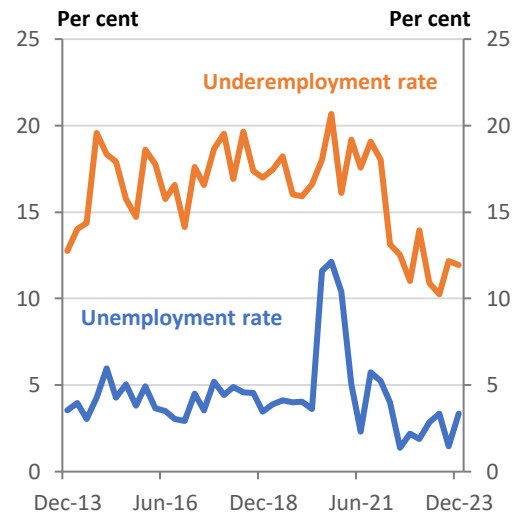
201. The unemployment rate ticked up slightly in December to 3.4 per cent, although remains below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 3.8 per cent. By contrast, the underemployment rate has declined slightly in December, falling to 12.0 per cent, below the pre-pandemic average of 14.9 per cent (see Figure 112). Despite an uptick in the number of unemployed persons in the sector, strong employment growth and below average unemployment and underemployment rates point to still robust labour market conditions.

Figure 111: Unemployed persons and job vacancies in Arts and recreational services



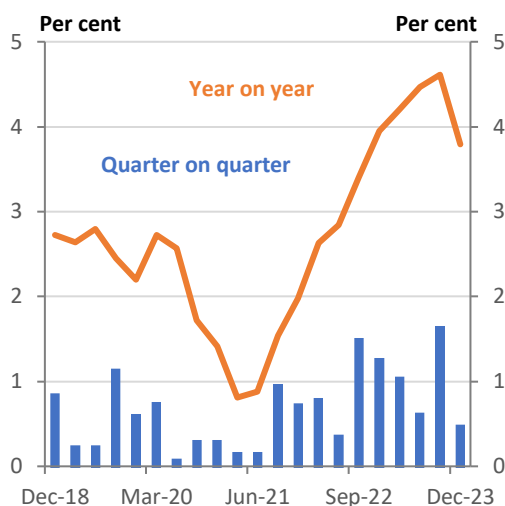
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 112: Underutilisation rates in Arts and recreational services



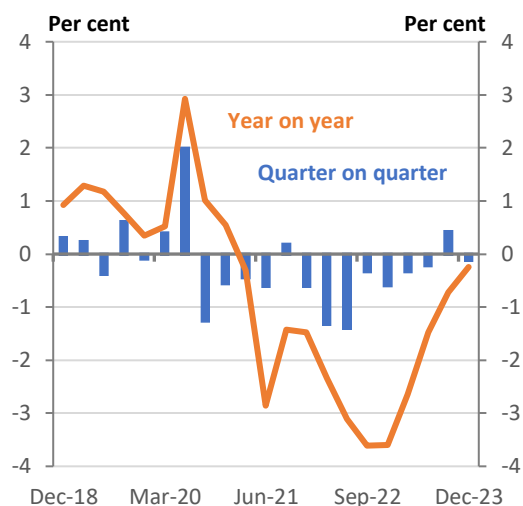
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 113: Nominal wages in Arts and recreational services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 114: Real wage growth in Arts and recreational services

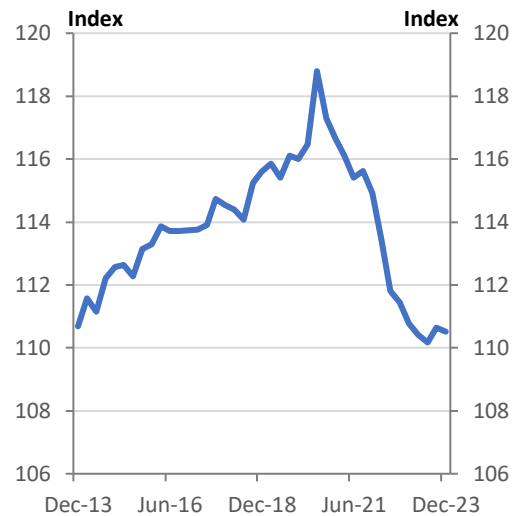


Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

202. Nominal wage growth in the sector appears to have peaked, reaching a high of 4.6 per cent in September 2023, driven by tight labour market conditions – exemplified by the uptick in job vacancies – and by the Commission’s decision during the previous Review (see Figure 113).

203. Real wages have failed to keep pace with inflation and real wages have fallen. Real wages have fallen in 10 of the previous twelve quarters on a quarterly basis and in all twelve quarters on an annual basis. Arts and recreational services was one of the few industries not to enjoy annual real wage growth in December 2023 (see Figure 114).

Figure 115: Real wage level in Arts and recreational services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

204. Real wages are 4.8 per cent below where they were in March 2021 and are at the lowest level they have been since September 2012 (see Figure 115), suggesting that workers are struggling with the cost of living crisis and have gone backwards since inflation left the target band in June 2021, as is the case in the other award reliant sectors.

205. Overall demand and the profit to income ratio appears to have stabilised in the sector alongside a pick-up in employment. The sector is facing challenges as workers under pressure from cost of living pull back on discretionary spending, although underutilisation rates remain low and vacancies stay elevated, which points to some underlying momentum in the sector.

2.9.5 Other services

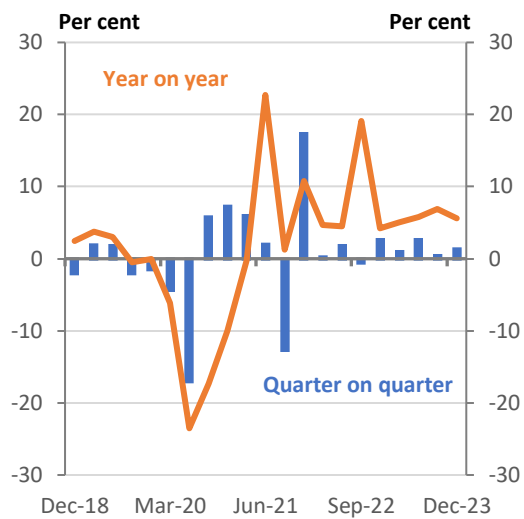
206. Real gross value added has increased by around 9.7 per cent since December 2019 and grew 5.6 per cent year on year in December 2023, having averaged 5.8 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months (see Figure 116 and Figure 118).

207. Employment growth picked up in the final quarter of 2023, rising 3.8 per cent over the year to December and ending the year 7.5 per cent higher than December 2019 (see Figure 117 and Figure 118).

208. Nominal income growth has been driven by a solid recovery in volumes over the last twelve months, with prices only becoming the main contributor to income growth as of December 2023. Nominal income was 11.7 per cent higher over the year in December 2023, having averaged 11.9 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months.

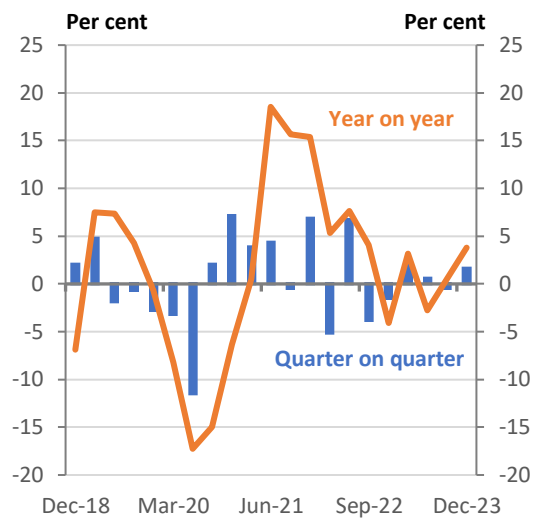
209. The profit to income ratio declined slightly to 15.3 per cent in December 2023, down from 15.7 per cent a quarter earlier but still well above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 9.3 per cent (see Figure 120).

Figure 116: Growth in real gross value added in Other services



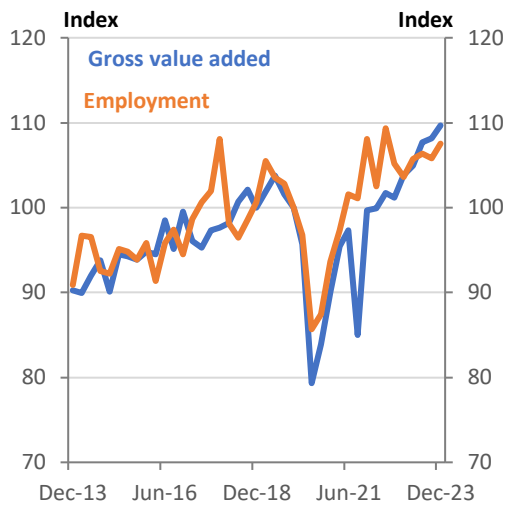
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 117: Growth in employment in Other services



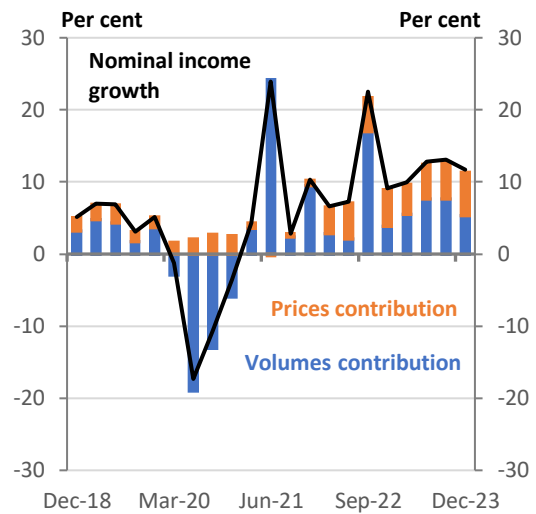
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 118: Index of real GVA and employment in Other services



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product, ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 119: Year on year nominal income growth in Other services

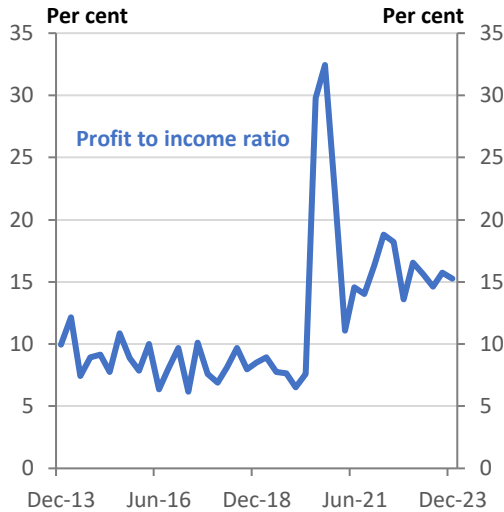


Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

210. Both companies and unincorporated enterprises have seen a pick-up in profits post-COVID. Company gross operating profits have increased 188.5 per cent since December 2019 and came in 9.7 per cent higher than a year ago in December 2023. Company gross operating profits have averaged 30.4 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months. Unincorporated enterprises' profits have increased 329.7 per cent since December 2019, although were 22.1 per cent lower than a year ago in December 2022 (see Figure 121).

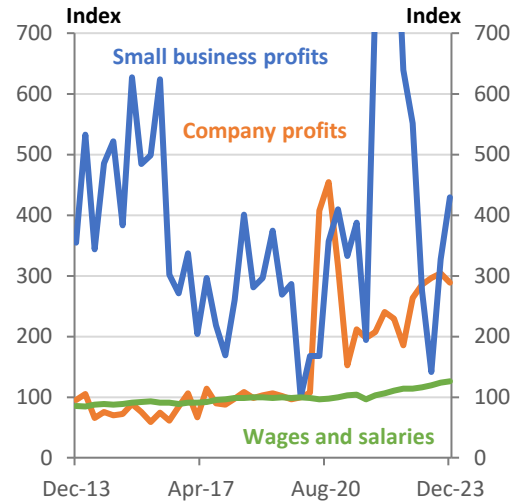
211. Wages and salaries have only increased 26.0 per cent since December 2019, although rose 10.7 per cent year on year in December 2023, having averaged 9.1 per cent annual growth over the twelve months to December.

Figure 120: Profit to income ratio in Other services



Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 121: Profits & Wages and salaries in Other services



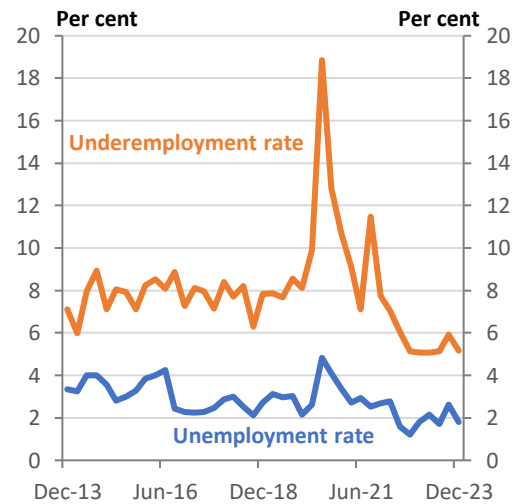
Source: ABS Business Indicators Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 122: Unemployed persons and job vacancies in Other services



Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 123: Underutilisation rates in Other services

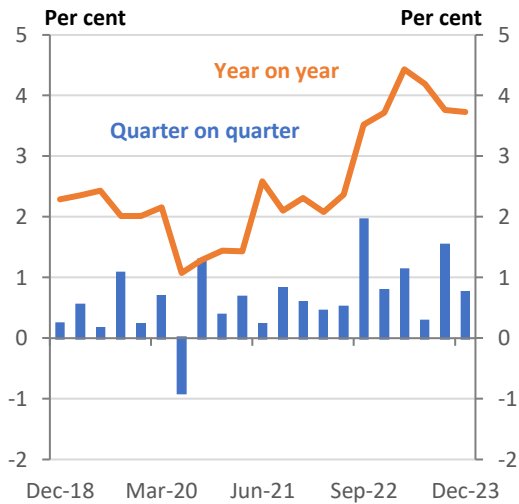


Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

212. As with other industries, job vacancies have been declining in recent quarters as labour supply has picked up, borders reopened, and labour market conditions ease as the economy slows. Job vacancies fell 24.8 per cent over the year to December 2023, although still remain 22.3 per cent higher than December 2019 (see Figure 122).

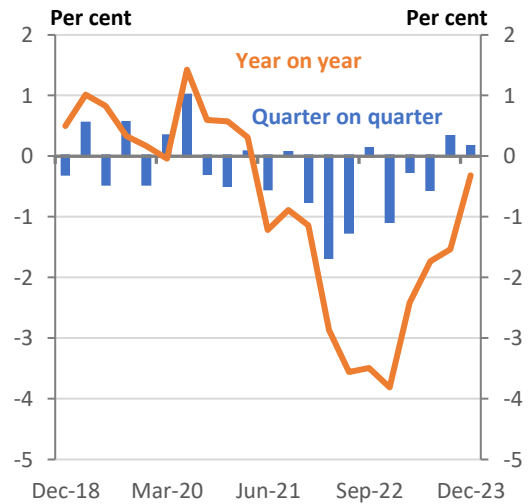
213. The unemployment rate in Other services declined slightly as 2023 came to a close, falling to 1.8 per cent, the same level it was in December 2022. The unemployment rate remains lower than 10-year pre-pandemic average of 3.0 per cent. The underemployment rate has declined more robustly, falling to 5.2 per cent in December and remaining well below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 7.3 per cent (see Figure 123).

Figure 124: Nominal wages growth in Other services



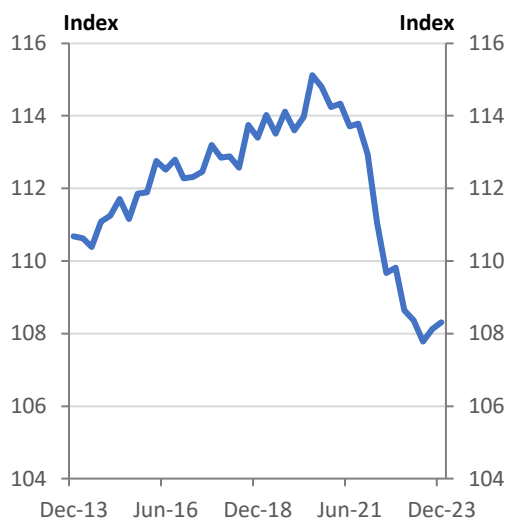
Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 125: Real wages growth in Other services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

Figure 126: Real wage level in Other services



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

214. Nominal wages growth in the sector has eased from a peak in March 2023, coming in 3.7 per cent higher than a year ago in December 2023, while still solid as labour market conditions remain broadly favourable (see Figure 124).

215. As with other Award reliant sectors, real wages have declined severely. Real wage growth was negative in seven of the last twelve quarters on a quarterly basis and negative in eleven of the previous twelve quarters on a year on year basis. In December 2023, real wages were 0.3 per cent lower than they were a year ago (see Figure 125).

216. Real wages are 5.3 per cent below March 2021 levels and are at their lowest level since March 2011 as the cost of living crisis weighs heavily on workers in this sector despite high vacancies and a lower underemployment rate (see Figure 126).

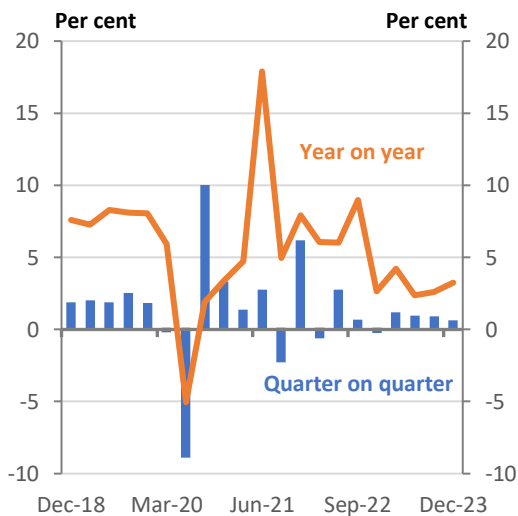
217. The Other services sector is enjoying sturdy growth in real GVA and employment. Income is growing at a brisk pace and the profit to income ratio is elevated above pre-COVID levels. Underutilisation rates are below pre-COVID levels and while vacancies are still high they coming off slightly as the economy slows. The cost of living crisis and inflationary pressures are off-setting otherwise solid nominal wages growth.

2.9.6 Health care and social assistance

218. Given the sector’s high degree of government funding, this section will examine Health care and social assistance using a similar range of metrics, but with important omissions because of a differing set of data sources.

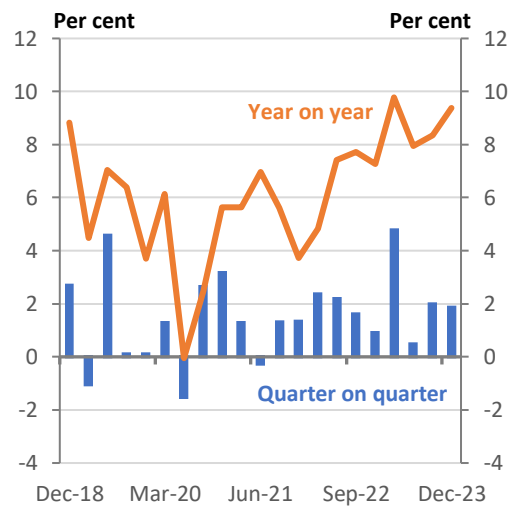
219. Real gross value added has increased by around 18.2 per cent since December 2019 and grew 3.2 per cent year on year in the December quarter. Annual growth in real GVA has averaged 3.1 per cent over the last twelve months (see Figure 127).

Figure 127: Growth in real gross value added in Health care and social assistance



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 128: Growth in employment in Health care and social assistance

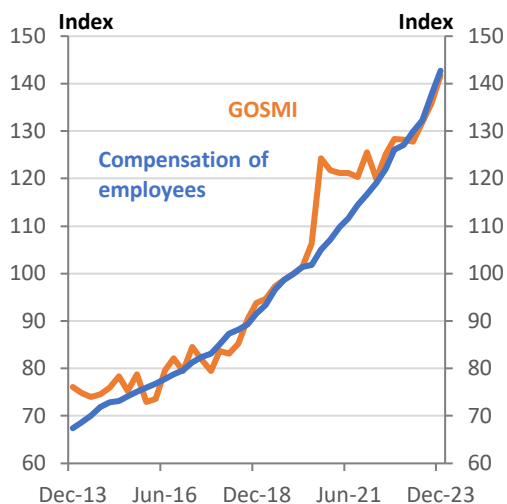


Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

220. Employment growth in the sector has been solid, rising 9.4 per cent year on year in December and averaging 8.9 per cent annual growth over the last twelve months. Employment has increased 28.5 per cent since December 2019, growing faster than real gross value added (see Figure 128).

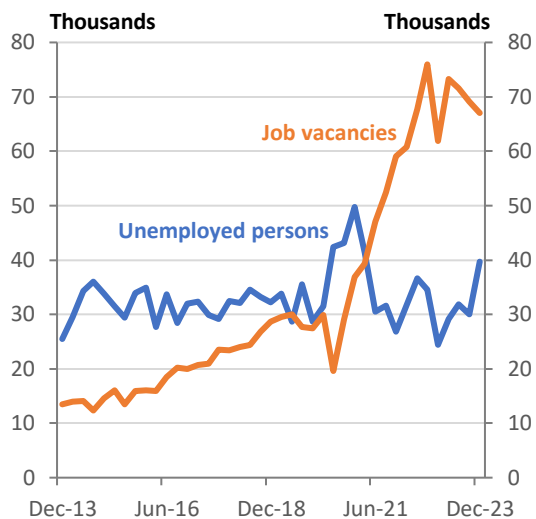
221. Gross operating surplus and mixed income has increased broadly in line with compensation of employees since COVID-19, with compensation of employees having increased 42.7 per cent and GOSMI increasing 41.8 per cent over the period (see Figure 129).

Figure 129: GOSMI & Compensation of Employees in Health care and social assistance



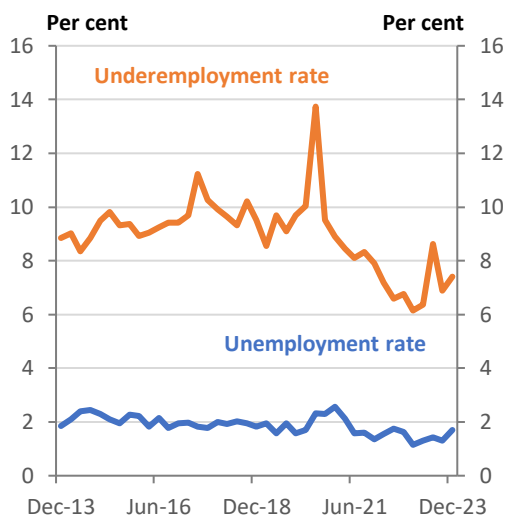
Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

Figure 130: Unemployed persons and job vacancies in Health care and social assistance



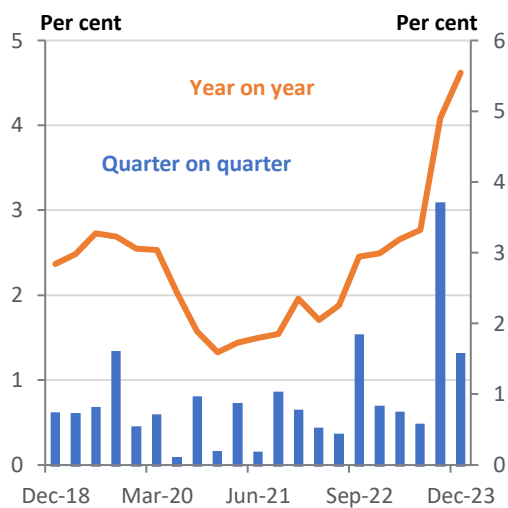
Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 131: Underutilisation rates in Health care and social assistance



Source: ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 132: Nominal wage growth in Health care and social assistance



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

222. Job vacancies in the sector have accelerated and health care facilities are facing a chronic shortage of staff and exceedingly high levels of overwork. Vacancies are 143.8 per cent above

where they were in December 2019 and increased 8.3 per cent over the year to December 2023, bucking the national trend (see Figure 130). The number of job vacancies is well above the number of unemployed persons in the sector, which increased in December to above pre-pandemic levels.

223. The sectoral unemployment rate has declined to below the pre-pandemic average of 2.0 per cent, partially reflecting staff shortages. However, the unemployment rate rose slightly to 1.7 per cent in December 2023. The underemployment rate has declined more sharply relative to pre-COVID, picking up slightly in December to 7.4 per cent but still well below the pre-pandemic average of 9.1 per cent (see Figure 131).

224. Job vacancies have remained high despite very strong nominal wages growth. Wages growth picked up in December 2023 to 5.5 per cent year on year, driven by the implementation of enterprise agreements in the sector following changes to state-based wage policies (see Figure 132).³⁷ The December result was up from 4.9 per cent year on year in September, a result driven by both the Fair Work Commission's Review decision and the application of the Aged Care Work Value case.

³⁷ [Wages rise 0.9 per cent in December quarter 2023 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/australian-bureau-of-statistics/news-items/2023/12/wages-rise-0.9-per-cent-in-december-quarter-2023)

Figure 133: Real wage growth in Health care and social assistance

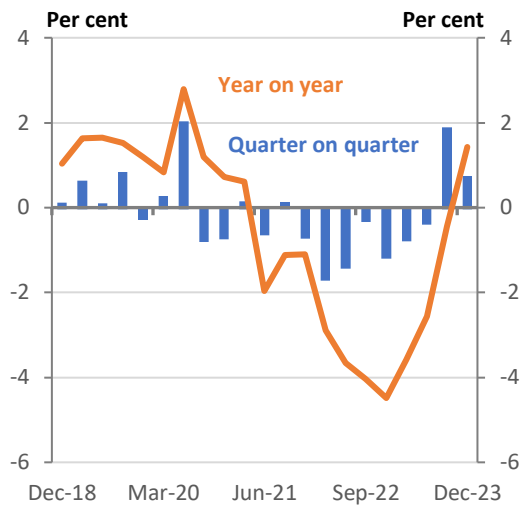
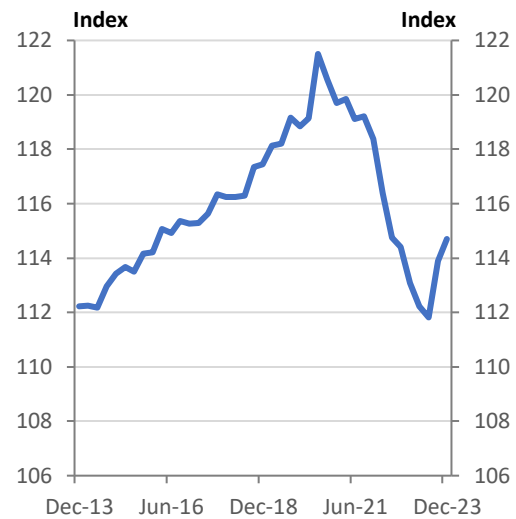


Figure 134: Real wage level in Health care and social assistance



Source: ABS Wage Price Index, Australia & ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia & ACTU calculations

225. Despite the decisions to significantly increase wages the sector, real wage growth has been negative in eight of the last twelve quarters on a quarterly basis and ten of the last twelve quarters on an annual basis (see Figure 133). The sector saw real wage growth of 1.4 per cent year on year in December 2023 following the changes to state-based wage caps.

226. The level of real wages is 4.3 per cent below the level prevailing in March 2021 and are at the lowest level since they have been since December 2015 (see Figure 134).

227. Despite data limitations, it would appear the Healthcare and social assistance sector is in a similar position to other Award reliant sectors. Real GVA and employment continue to grow solidly, underutilisation rates are below pre-pandemic levels, and vacancies are elevated. Nominal wages growth has been healthy, but the cost of living crisis and inflationary pressures have weighed on real wages, putting pressure on the sector’s workers and their ability to make ends meet.

2.10 Productivity: Short term growth rates have been volatile

228. In previous Reviews, the Panel has adopted a cautious approach in interpreting short-term fluctuations in productivity measures, noting that productivity is best measured over a productivity cycle.³⁸ The Panel has also expressed the view that, over the medium to long term, it would be desirable for real modern award minimum wages to move in line with the trend rate of national productivity growth.³⁹ More generally, it has accepted that increases in minimum wages are more likely to stimulate productivity measures by some employers directly affected by minimum wage increases, rather than inhibit productivity.⁴⁰

229. The Treasury noted in the Economic Outlook section of Budget 2023-24 that it assumes that in the long run, underlying productivity is assumed to grow at 1.2 per cent per annum, which is around the average growth rate in labour productivity over the last 20 years.⁴¹

230. Due to the significant disruptions arising from efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 during 2020 and their gradual unwinding over subsequent years, measurement of near-term productivity growth has become more challenging. But recent outcomes point towards a normalisation of productivity outcomes as these effects unwind.

231. Dr Marion Kohler, Head of Economic Analysis Department at the RBA, highlighted some of the challenges in interpreting recent movements in productivity growth in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in recent testimony to the House of Representatives Economics committee:

“...the recent weakness in productivity is likely to be a by-product of the pandemic and of the economic cycle...we've seen the supply constraints, the capacity challenges that firms faced related to the pandemic and also the weather disruptions in Australia. These are hopefully things that will drop out and have more of a temporary nature. The second one is that we've been through a period where the increase in hours worked outpaced the

³⁸ [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [100]

³⁹ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [10]

⁴⁰ [2017] FWCFB 3500 at [227], [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [236], [2013] FWCFB 4000 at [[175]

⁴¹ [Budget Paper No. 1](#)

growth in the capital stock...you've had a lot more workers come online, and the capital stock hasn't caught up with that yet. But we do see investment happening at a higher level at the moment, so I think there's some prospect that, over the forecast period, that will be catching up...The third one is [...] that we've had a very tight labour market, where we've seen higher turnover and strong jobs growth, and that means that there were a lot of new employees coming in—people who've changed job or people coming new into the labour market—and that requires training initially. Obviously as they get used to their job, they will become more productive.”⁴²

232. As already touched on earlier in the submission (see section 2.2 above), the improved supply of capital goods facilitating investment should assist in allowing firms to undertake capital deepening. As Dr Kohler has argued, these two COVID-related effects are unwinding, and productivity should return to a more normal growth pattern over the coming period. It is worth noting at this juncture that imports of capital goods have increased 23.8 per cent since December 2019 and have seen annual growth of 5.2 per cent on average over the past two years.

233. Further, the volume of hours worked has begun to normalise over the past two quarters, moving closer into line with real output (see Figure 135). Real output as of December 2023 was 9.1 per cent higher than December 2019, while hours worked was 9.4 per cent higher than December 2019.

234. It is noteworthy that hours worked fell further than real output during each of the lockdown periods, as well as recovering more slowly. This outcome and its reversal will have had distortive effects on measured productivity in the national accounts.

235. There are also compositional effects at play disrupting the near-term measurement of productivity. As noted by the Productivity Commission, the pandemic caused larger disruptions

⁴² [ParlInfo - Standing Committee on Economics : 09/02/2024 : Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia Annual Report 2023 \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/standing_committees/economics/09/02/2024/review_of_the_reserve_bank_of_australia_annual_report_2023)

in firms and parts of the service sector that have traditionally lower productivity.⁴³ As vaccinations became widespread and movement restrictions were eased, the services sector rebounded rapidly (see section 2.9) and the compositional shifts began to unwind, with measured productivity undertaking a period of adjustment.

Figure 135: Index of real GDP and hours worked

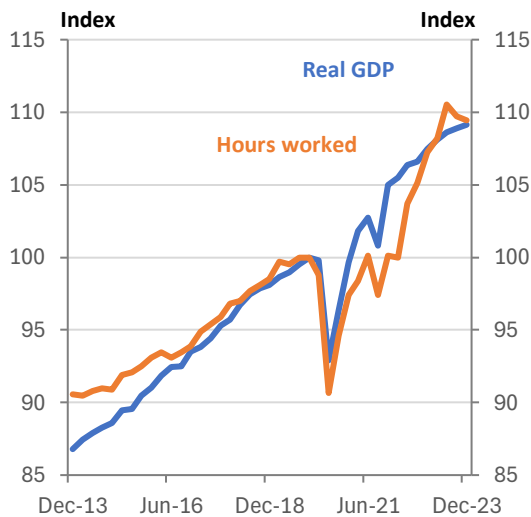
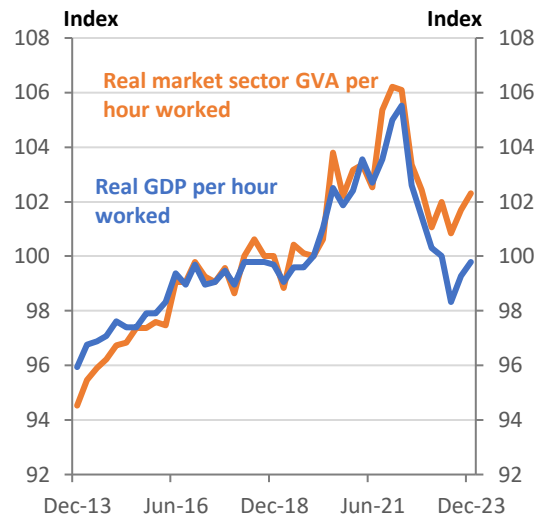


Figure 136: Measures of labour productivity



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

236. The unwinding of these factors is starting to become evident in near-term measured productivity. Both real GDP per hour worked and market sector real GVA have seen an uptick in recent quarters. Real GDP per hour worked has risen to be only 0.2 per cent below its December 2019 level and market sector GVA per hour worked is 2.3 per cent above December 2019 levels, despite the unwinding of the precipitous rise earlier in the pandemic (see Figure 136). This is an analysis recently confirmed by the Productivity Commission in its *Annual Productivity Bulletin 2024*.⁴⁴

⁴³ [Bulletin 2023 - PC Productivity Insights](#)

⁴⁴ Productivity Commission (27 March 2024), *Annual Productivity Bulletin 2024*, page 3: <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/productivity-insights/bulletins/bulletin-2024/productivity-bulletin-2024.pdf>

237. Growth in real GDP per hour worked has also turned positive on a quarterly basis, rising 0.5 per cent in December 2023 after a 1.0 per cent rise in September, although was still 0.5 per cent lower than December 2022 (see Figure 137). For the market sector, growth also turned positive in the latter half of 2023, with real GVA per hour worked rising 0.6 per cent in December after 0.8 per cent growth in the September quarter. Encouragingly, annual growth in market sector labour productivity was 1.3 per cent in December 2023 (see Figure 138).

Figure 137: Growth in real GDP per hour worked

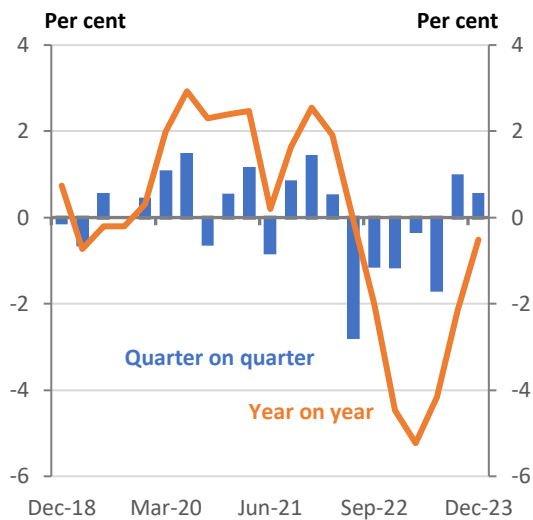
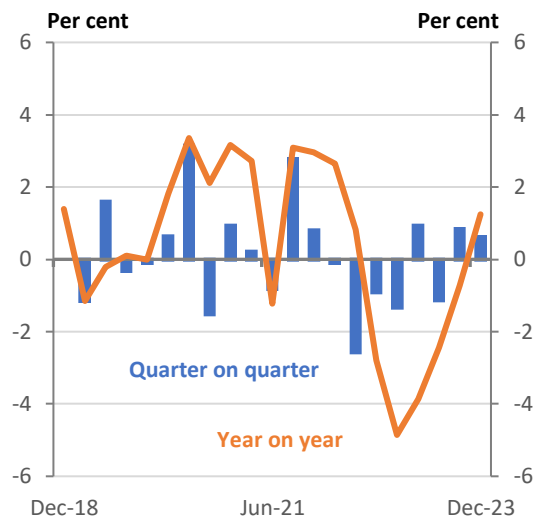


Figure 138: Growth in market sector real GVA per hour worked



Source: ABS National Accounts: Income, Expenditure and Product & ACTU calculations

238. Beyond the normalisation of productivity outcomes as the effects of COVID-19 unwind, the Albanese Government committed to a five pillar productivity agenda in the recent white paper on full employment *Working Future*. The pillars of creating a more dynamic and resilient economy; building a skilled and adaptable workforce; harnessing data and digital technology; delivering quality care more efficiently; and investing in cheaper, clearing energy and the net zero transformation provide the architecture to consolidate and extend the recent recovery in productivity growth.

239. Based on the available evidence of a normalisation of productivity outcomes and the commitment by the current Government to a genuine productivity agenda, the Panel should have grounds to take an optimistic view of the path of productivity over the coming years and not be troubled that a reasonable increase in award and minimum wages will affect either the orderly return of inflation to the RBA's target band in a reasonable timeframe or disturb the foundations for productivity growth over the coming years. The Panel could take the view that a rise of the magnitude argued for in this submission will have a positive impact on both these factors by inducing further labour supply and by driving firms to seek productivity improvements as a result.

240. Notwithstanding the normalisation of productivity outcomes post-COVID and the grounds for optimism about the outlook for productivity, an examination of long-run trends in productivity and its relationship to wages growth bears consideration and will be dealt with in the next section.

2.11 Productivity: Long-term trends and relationship to wages growth

241. In a short note published in September 2023, the Productivity Commission (PC) examined the relationship between productivity growth and real wages growth. The PC's main contention was that an aggregate view of Australia's economy masks significant differences between wage and productivity growth between sectors, and that outside the commodity exports sectors of Mining and Agriculture, forestry and fishing (where the price of commodities is driven by factors emanating from international markets) there has not been significant decoupling of wage growth from productivity growth.⁴⁵

242. Following the same methodology used by the PC, this submission will examine the pattern of real wages growth and productivity growth over a longer time horizon.

⁴⁵ [Productivity growth and wages – a forensic look – PC Productivity insights](#)

243. Figure 139 to Figure 142 present different aggregations of the level of productivity, consumer real wages and producer real wages indexed to financial year 1997-98. The four aggregations are total real GDP per hour worked and real compensation per hour worked (Figure 139); real GDP per hour worked and real compensation per hour ex. the commodities sectors (Figure 140); market sector real GVA per hour worked and real compensation per hour worked (Figure 141); and market sector real GV per hour worked ex. commodity sectors and real compensation per hour worked ex. commodity sectors (Figure 142).

244. There would appear to be a substantial change in the relationship between output per hour in the economy and consumer real wages after financial year 2011-12. From FY12, real consumer wages generally stagnate until around financial year 2018-19. Thereafter, consumer real wages pick-up alongside an acceleration in output per hour worked, driven by COVID-related disruptions canvassed earlier.

Figure 139: Real GDP per hour worked and real compensation per hour worked

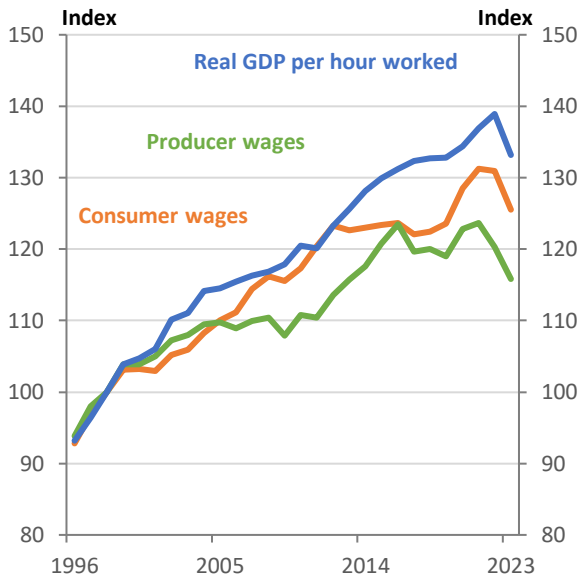
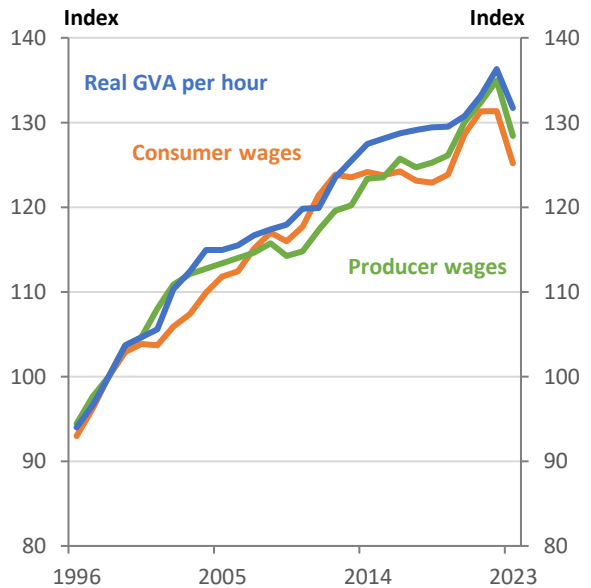


Figure 140: Real GDP per hour worked and real compensation per hour ex. commodity sectors



Source: ABS Australian System of National Accounts, ABS Labour Account Australia, ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Productivity Commission & ACTU calculations

Figure 141: Market sector GVA and real compensation per hour

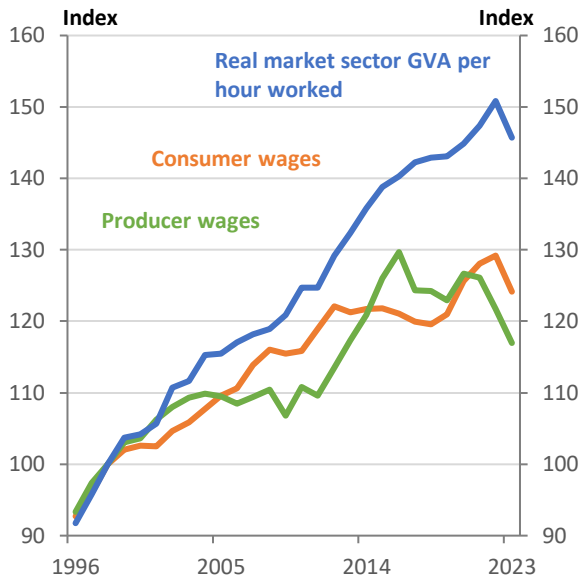
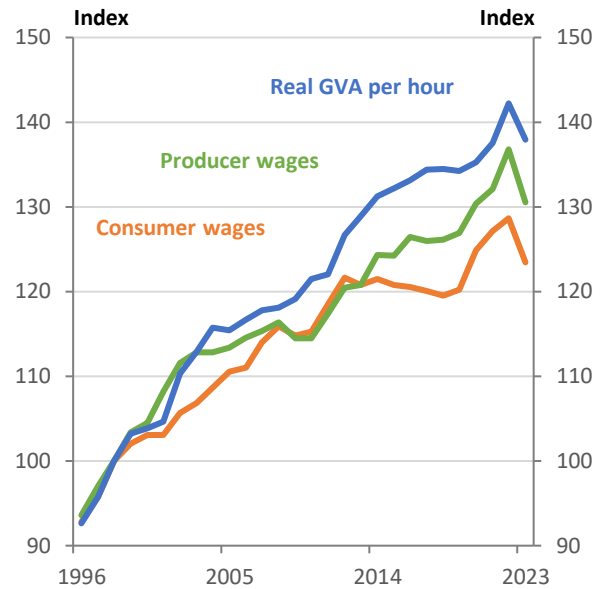


Figure 142: Market sector GVA and real compensation per hour ex. commodity sectors



Source: ABS Australian System of National Accounts, ABS Labour Account Australia, ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Productivity Commission & ACTU calculations

245. Over the period of the available data series to which the PC refers, total growth in labour productivity generally outpaces real compensation per hour, on both a consumer wage and producer wage basis (see Figure 143 and Figure 144).

246. For the whole economy, real GDP per hour worked increased 44.9 per cent over FY95 to FY23, while consumer wages increased 35.6 per cent and producer wages 25.6 per cent. For the economy less commodity sectors, output per hour increased 41.3 per cent over the period while consumer wages increased 35.5 per cent and producer wages 38.4 per cent.

247. For the market sector less commodities sectors, output per hour worked increase 50.5 per cent, while consumer wages increased 34.7 per cent and producer wages increased 42.9 per cent. In the sectors of the economy that are not heavily reliant on Awards that are outside commodity

exporting, output per hour worked increased 45.7 per cent, while consumer wages increased 34.9 per cent and producer wages 40.3 per cent.

248. Reflecting the different institutional arrangements of wage setting for Awards and the more thorough information set available during the deliberations, output per hour has been better aligned with consumer and producer wages. In the Award reliant sector of the economy, output per hour increased 42.8 per cent over FY95 to FY23, while consumer wages increased 44.2 per cent and producer wages 38.9 per cent.

Figure 143: Growth in real output per hour and consumer real wages per hour between FY95 and FY23

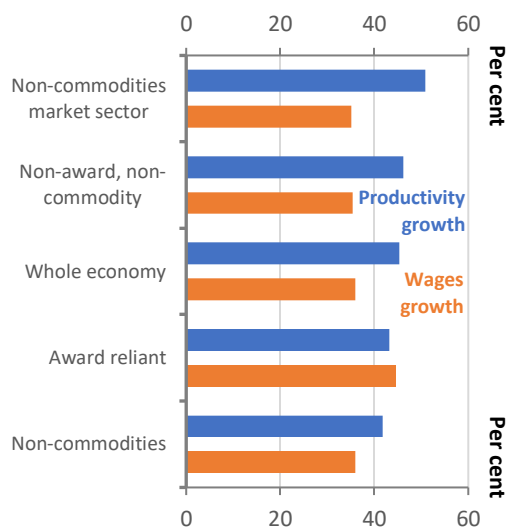
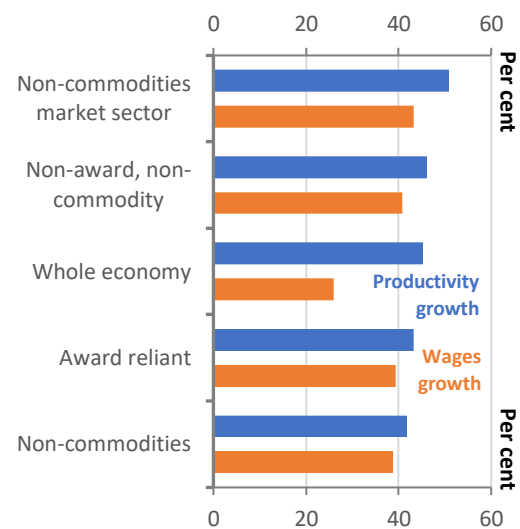


Figure 144: Growth in real output per hour and producer real wages per hour between FY95 and FY23



Source: ABS Australian System of National Accounts, ABS Labour Account Australia, ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Productivity Commission & ACTU calculations

249. Narrowing in on a more recent period, specifically the one covering the changed relationship between consumer real wages and real output per hour worked from FY12 onwards, a broadly similar pattern emerges, although with more egregious gaps between consumer real wages and output per hour (see Figure 145 and Figure 146).

250. Between FY12 and FY23, for the economy as a whole, real GDP per hour worked rose 8.0 per cent while consumer wages rose 1.8 per cent and producer wages 1.9 per cent, consistent with the PC's findings. Further, the non-commodities segment of the economy saw real output growth of 6.6 per cent over the period, compared to consumer wage growth of 1.1 per cent and producer wage growth of 7.4 per cent, although the difference here appears to be the effects of the Award reliant sectors.
251. For the market sector less commodities sectors, output per hour worked increased 8.9 per cent, while consumer wages increased 1.5 per cent and producer wages increased 8.5 per cent. In the sectors of the economy that are not heavily reliant on Awards that are outside commodity exporting, output per hour worked increased 5.6 per cent, while consumer wages declined 0.9 per cent and producer wages rose 4.5 per cent over the period.
252. Again reflecting the institutional arrangements of wage setting for Awards that gives workers a more significant voice and better information available for consideration, output per hour is less misaligned. In the Award reliant sector of the economy, output per hour increased 13.8 per cent over FY12 to FY23, while consumer wages increased 6.8 per cent and producer wages 16.3 per cent.
253. To supplement the analysis of total growth, it is worth considering how average growth over a long period has fared between real wages and real output per hour.
254. Figure 147 presents average growth over the 20 years prior to financial year 2018-19 inclusive, just prior to the onset of the distortive effects of the pandemic. It shows that on average real output per hour grew more than real producer wages, with the largest difference being 0.5 percentage points on average for the whole economy (arising from the effects of commodity prices) and the second largest difference of 0.3 percentage points on average in the market sector excluding commodities.

255. The pattern remains broadly the same for consumer wages. Figure 148 indicates that the largest differences between average growth in real output per hour and real consumer wages per hour were in the non-commodities market sector, with a gap of 0.5 percentage points and the second largest gap is the non-award reliant sectors that are outside of commodity exporting, with a difference of 0.4 percentage points.

Figure 145: Growth in real output per hour and consumer real wages per hour between FY12 and FY23

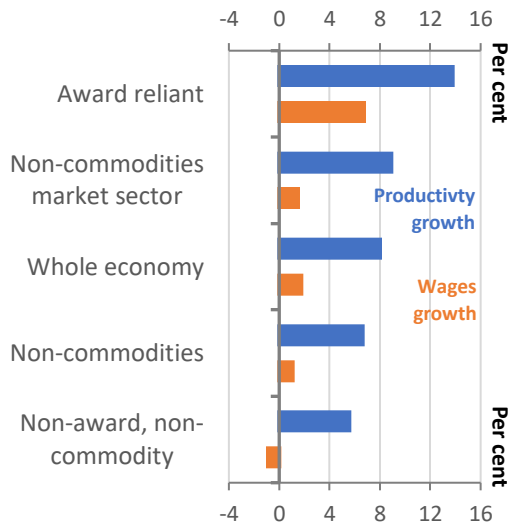
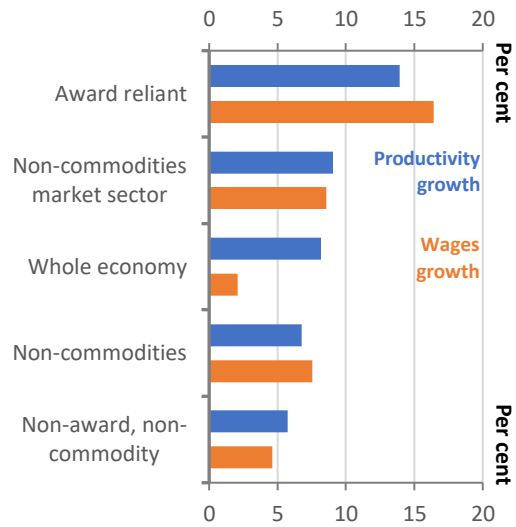


Figure 146: Growth in real output per hour and producer real wages per hour between FY12 and FY23



Source: ABS Australian System of National Accounts, ABS Labour Account Australia, ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Productivity Commission & ACTU calculations

Figure 147: 20-year average growth in output per hour and real compensation per hour (producer wage basis)

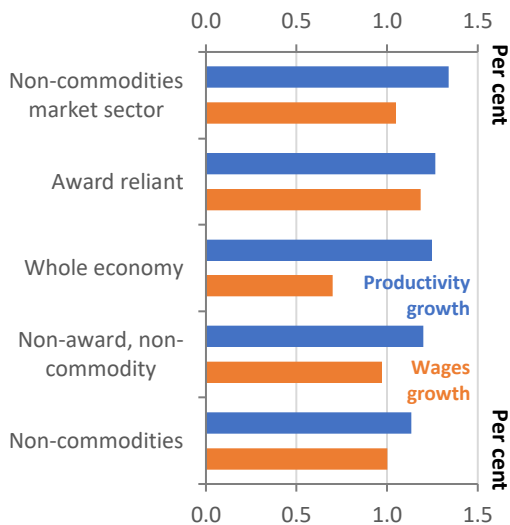
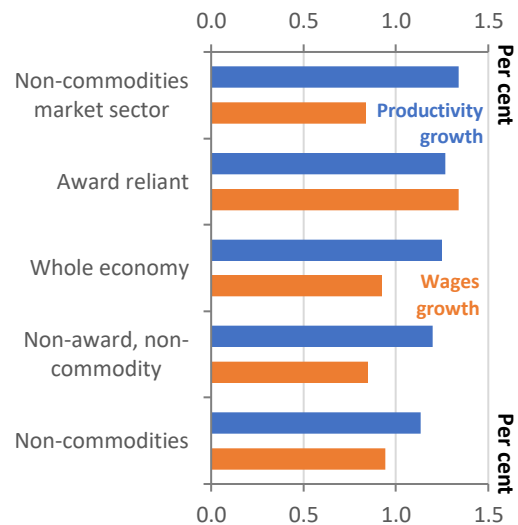


Figure 148: 20-year average growth in output per hour and real compensation per hour (consumer wage basis)



Source: ABS Australian System of National Accounts, ABS Labour Account Australia, ABS Consumer Price Index, Australia, ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Productivity Commission & ACTU calculations

256. From the information present in this section, which uses the methodology of the Productivity Commission, it is not unreasonable to conclude that both on average and over long spans of time, productivity has grown faster in aggregate than have real wages, on either a producer or a consumer basis.
257. The notable gap between consumer real wage growth and productivity growth in the FY12 to FY23 period is unsurprising and can be straight forwardly linked to a combination of stagnant wages between late 2013 and early 2022 and the onset of the cost of living crisis from June 2021 onwards.
258. The evidence presented here is also broadly consistent with the notion that workers are enduring a severe cost of living crisis that is particularly acute for Australia's lowest income workers and with the notion that the aggregate economy has been resilient because of a business sector in good health.

3. RELATIVE LIVING STANDARDS

259. The minimum wage and modern award objectives require the Panel to consider the distinct but related concepts of “relative living standards” and “the needs of the low paid” when setting minimum rates of pay.⁴⁶ This Chapter examines relative living standards of workers who most directly benefit from the Panel’s decision compared to other groups, including through measures of earnings dispersion and inequality, consistent with the Panel’s identification that what is required is “essentially a consideration about income distribution”.⁴⁷
260. The contents of this Chapter in our view support the Panel making the following key findings:
- a. Whilst the population directly impacted by the Panel’s decision is diverse, it includes a majority of workers who are women, or are working part time hours, or in casual jobs.
 - b. The earnings of award reliant workers are naturally lower than other groups, however the extent of this is concerning – with over three quarters low paid and on average clustered in or adjacent to age brackets that are usually associated with peak career earnings.
 - c. The range of earnings for award reliant workers is demonstrably narrower than for non-award reliant workers, whether analysed by occupation, industry, form of employment or age, and this does not appear to be an artefact of hours of work effects.
 - d. Recent increases in the level of award reliance have brought the overall level to what it was around 2 decades ago, with the most recent shifts related to traditionally award reliant industries remaining more so.
 - e. The system of Annual Wage Review under the FW Act has, outside of the pandemic, been reasonably successful at maintaining the minimum wage bite, but not at restoring its long term decline prior to that change in institutional arrangements. Whilst last year’s uprating and re-benchmarking of the minimum wage is a welcome development, there remains a high disparity between paid rates generally and award rates for skilled work, and for some skill levels above ANZSCO 5 the relative position has worsened over the last year. Relatedly, the award rate at which an employee can meet the uprated *Budget Standards* has shifted from C11 to C10.

⁴⁶ [2020] FWCFB 3500 at [338].

⁴⁷ [2017] FWC 3500 at [453]

- f. Australia’s position on the minimum wage bite relative to other nations is one of convergence over the long term with some evidence that Australia lost its edge during the Pandemic. This is a combination of Australia’s long-term decline as well as a period of more aggressive uprating resulting in relative improvements elsewhere.
 - g. Tax and transfer policy changes since the last review do not provide a justification for restraint in this Review. This is partly because the Panel’s moderation on account of past beneficial tax -transfer changes (which we show for particular award reliant groups were more beneficial in nominal terms than those which will take effect in the year ahead) was never rebalanced once those measures were withdrawn, and because of the cost of living impacts discussed elsewhere in this submission.
261. The evidence we present in this Chapter together with the broader social and economic context in which this year’s review takes place, as discussed in the other Chapters of this submission, provide an opportunity for the Panel to make tangible improvements to the relative living standards of the employees effected by its decision.

3.1 The employees affected by the decision

262. As with prior reviews, we present data from the ABS Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH), last conducted in May of 2023. The objective of this analysis is to provide an understanding of how these employees differ in the characteristics and earnings to other employees, and how this has changed over time.
263. Absent microdata that will not be released until later in the year, our analysis is unable to distinguish between the State and Federal categories of what the ABS defines as “awards” for the purposes of the EEH, being “legally enforceable determinations made by Federal or State tribunals or authorities that set the terms of employment (pay and/or conditions) usually in a particular industry or occupation”. For that reason, the analysis we offer as to award reliant employees relates both to modern award reliant employees as well as employees reliant on State Awards.

264. The analysis conducted by Yuen and Tomlinson⁴⁸ on the 2021 issue of EEH suggests that the following may be said about the differences between the two categories, and the effects of combining them:

- a. At least 89% of the award reliant category is covered by modern awards, with the remainder covered by state awards or modern enterprise awards or state reference public sector awards⁴⁹;
- b. In most industries, there is a difference of less than 2% (if any) between the share of employees who are modern award reliant, versus those who are award reliant. The exceptions are Health Care and Social Assistance (23% modern award reliant vs. 33.3% award reliant) and public administration and safety (4% modern award reliant vs. 13% award reliant)⁵⁰.

265. In our experience, large sections of the NSW public sector are state award reliant, but most of the state awards covering that sector are consent awards which offer paid rather than minimum rates (with most registered collective agreements for employees in NSW being confined to local government). It is our expectation that a considerable share of the differences in modern award reliance versus award reliance in the Health Care & Social Assistance and Public Administration & Safety industries is a result of NSW public sector employees in these industries in NSW being covered by NSW State Awards. At an aggregate level and at the industry level for those two industries, this may mean that earnings estimated from EEH for award reliant employees in total may be slightly elevated compared to what would be the case if they were limited only to modern award reliant employees. Certainly, using 2021 EEH data and the data in Table B9 of Yuen & Tomlinson, it is clear there is a premium from being on an award that is not a modern award, and also a premium for being award reliant in NSW, given that:

- a. Average hourly total earnings across all modern awards was \$28.70, versus \$31.80 for awards generally; and
- b. Average hourly total earnings for award reliant employees was highest in NSW, at \$35.60

Moreover, the average total hourly earnings for award reliant employees in Public Administration & Safety and Health Care and Social Assistance were highest in the 2021 data,

⁴⁸ Yuen, K. and Tomlinson, J., "A profile of employee characteristics across modern awards", Fair Work Commission, March 2023.

⁴⁹ At p 13.

⁵⁰ At 13-14

and substantially higher in the public sector for award reliant employees (\$51.60) than in the private sector (\$29.10). Indeed the public sector average hourly earnings for employees on collective agreements were almost equal (\$51.50) to those on awards.

266. In the 2023 data, whilst we do not have the benefit of a de-composition of modern award reliant earnings, the indications are that a similar NSW public sector effect is at play:

- a. Average hourly total earnings for award reliant employees was highest in NSW, at \$36.30;
- b. Average total hourly earnings for award reliant employees in Public Administration & Safety and Health Care and Social Assistance were highest of all industries;
- c. Average total hourly earnings for award reliant employees in the public sector (\$54.10) were substantially higher than for those in the private sector (\$30.70) and very close to those for employees on collective agreements (\$55.40).

267. In this review, the Panel also has the benefit of additional insights into the group of employees who are covered by the national minimum wage, courtesy of the analysis by Tomlinson⁵¹. We refer to this analysis below, although we are unable to estimate how this may have changed over time.

3.1.1 Snapshot view

268. With the benefit of Tomlinson's analysis (albeit on 2021 data), some comparisons can be made between the key characteristics of award reliant employees, NMW employees and the general workforce.

⁵¹ Tomlinson J., *Characteristics of employees on the National Minimum Wage*, Fair Work Commission Research Report 1/2024, February.

Table 2: Characteristics of employees by method of setting pay

	NMW Order reliant*	Award Reliant	Not Award Reliant
Share of workforce (%)	0.7%	23.2%	76.8%
Works full time hours (%)	15.6%	33.3%	66%
Works part time hours (%)	84.4%	66.7%	34%
Average hours paid for (hrs)	19.9	25.2^	32.8^
Casual employees (%)	66.6%	48.3%	13.9%
Average age (yrs)	36.7	34.7	41.1
Proportion female (%)	52.9%	59.7%	50%
Average weekly total cash earnings (Full time)	-	\$1,387.10	\$2,015.17
Average weekly total cash earnings (part time)	-	\$603.70	\$939.80
Approximate proportion paid below low paid threshold#	100%+	76.1%	35.3%

Source: Tomlinson (2024), ABS EEH. *2021 estimate, relies on "Individual arrangement" characterisation as signifying coverage by the National Minimum Wage Order. # EEH Estimate of 2/3rd median weekly earnings (per Table 8.2 in statistical report is 1131.33), however we use \$1,100 as the closest available cut-off point in the publicly available distributional data). ^Measure is only available in public data in respect of non-managerial employees. + Assumed.

269. Whilst it is to be expected that employees to whom the decision is directed are lower paid than their counterparts in the general market, the data does highlight indicators of broader disadvantage, in terms of higher exposure to part time hours and casual work, high exposure to gendered disadvantage and earnings well below the low paid threshold of 2/3rds of median weekly total cash earnings of full time non-managerial adult employees derived from the *EEH* dataset.

270. The modern award system has carried over and formalised the predecessor federal award system's tendency to exclude managerial and professional employees from award coverage.⁵² As a consequence, we find that modern award density is higher among occupations with lower formal skill or qualification levels. Those in occupations involving higher formal qualification or skills levels are evidently more successful at bargaining rates of pay through collective or individual bargaining, as shown in Table 3.

⁵² FW Act s. 143(7).

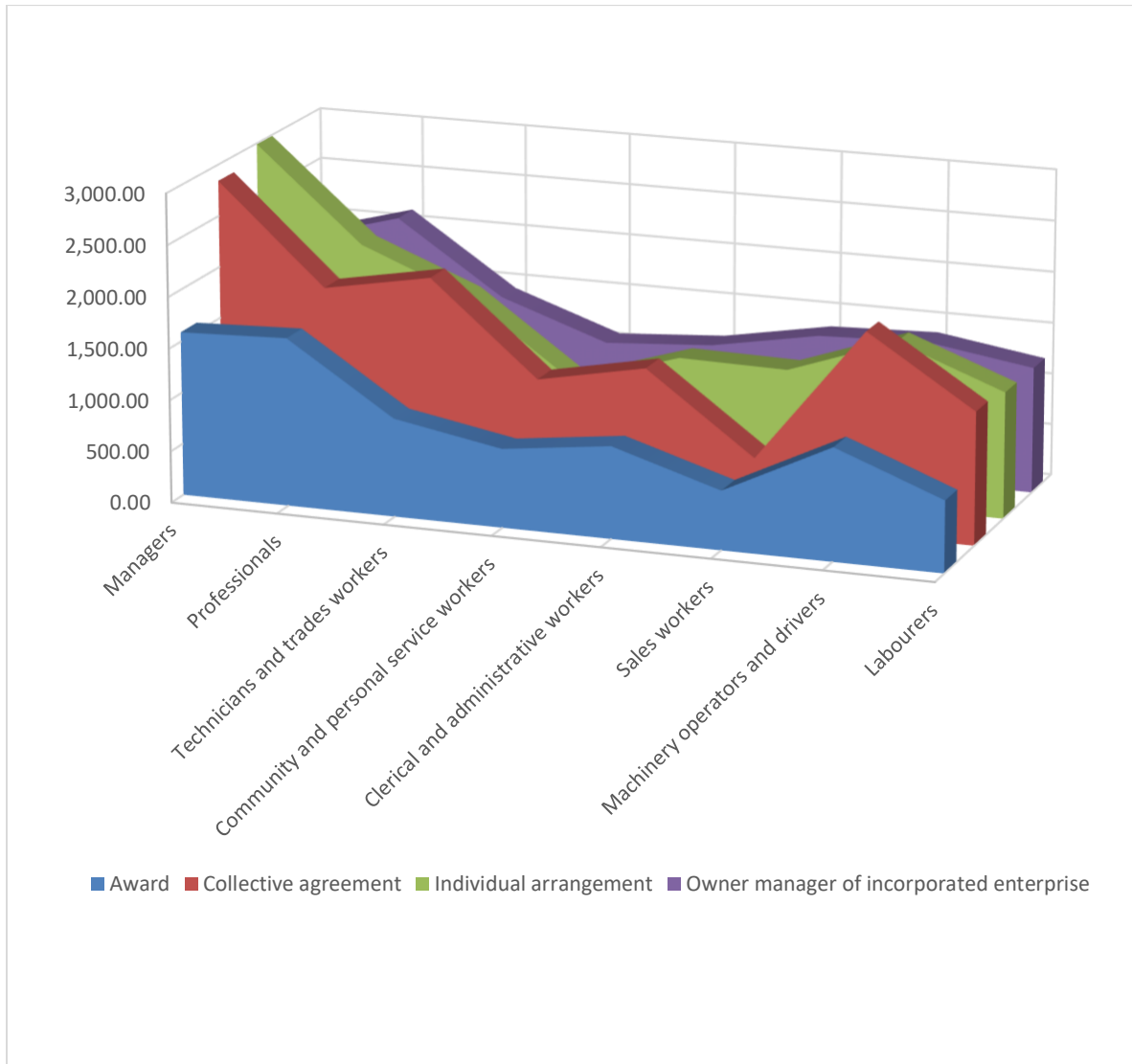
Table 3: Density of method of setting pay by occupation.

	Proportion Reliant on Awards (%)	Proportion Reliant on Collective Agreements (%)	Proportion Reliant on Individual Agreements (%)	Proportion that are OMIEs
Managers	4.04	20.44	58.81	16.72
Professionals	9.50	46.02	40.52	3.96
Technicians and trades workers	19.65	23.51	51.07	5.77
Community and personal service workers	45.66	37.36	16.51	0.47
Clerical and administrative workers	16.74	30.67	49.49	3.09
Sales workers	37.25	34.55	26.69	1.50
Machinery operators and drivers	18.66	36.06	42.01	3.27
Labourers	41.70	27.55	29.00	1.75

Source: ABS EEH. OMIE= Owner Manager of Incorporated Enterprise

271. Moreover, the distribution of earnings across occupations, on an average weekly total cash earnings basis, is far more compressed for the award reliant category than other methods of setting pay. The minimal skill premiums for award reliant work are associated with a substantial mismatch in relative earnings in all major occupational categories and a failure to distinguish at all between managers (who have particular skill sets but not necessarily advanced formal qualifications) and professionals (who likely have both).

Figure 149: Average weekly total cash earnings by occupation and method of setting pay



Source: ABS EEH

272. Award reliant employees account for 25.04% of non-managerial employees. These award reliant employees are heavily concentrated in particular service-based industries, but present in substantial numbers in all industries, as shown below. Only five industries contain a density of 30% or more award reliant employees, and only six have a density over 25% or more. The four industries with the highest density of award reliant employees also employ just over two thirds (67.83%) of all award reliant non-managerial employees.

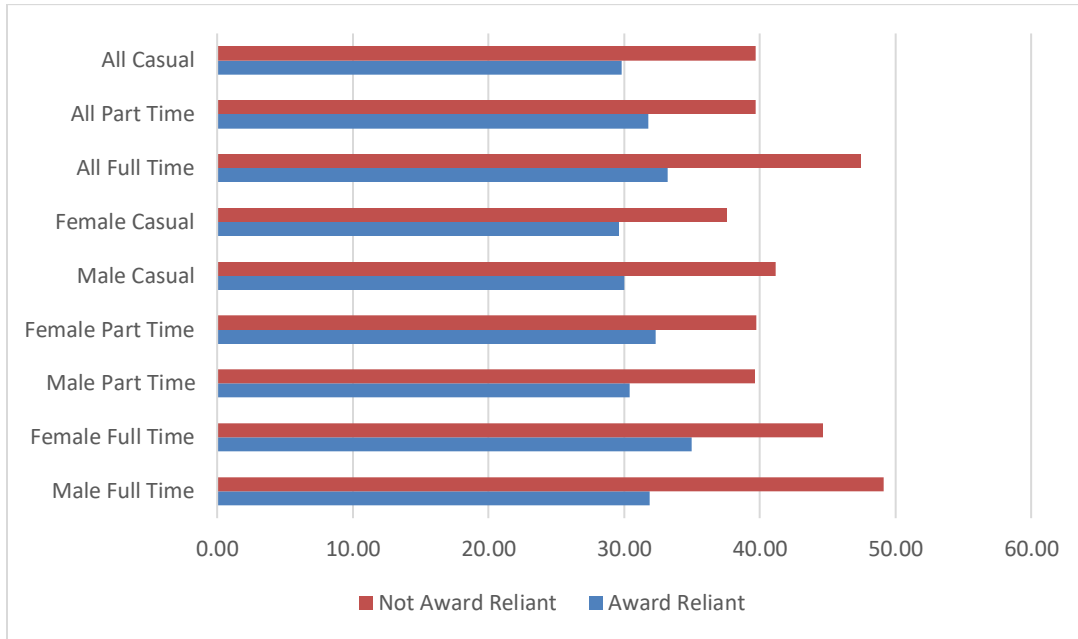
Table 4: Award reliance by industry

	Number of employees	Number of Award Reliant Employees	Density of Award Reliant Employees in Industry (%)	Industry's share of the Award Reliant Workforce (%)
Accommodation & Food Services	908,400	576,200	63.43	19.76
Administrative and support services	704,400	285,100	40.47	9.78
Retail trade	1,253,500	439,400	35.05	15.07
Health care and social assistance	1,934,500	676,800	34.99	23.22
Arts & recreation services	196,900	64,300	32.66	2.21
Other Services	385,300	120,800	31.35	4.14
Rental, hiring and real estate services	213,000	40,700	19.11	1.40
Manufacturing	720,700	134,600	18.68	4.62
Construction	802,900	130,400	16.24	4.47
Public administration and safety	697,900	106,200	15.22	3.64
Transport, Postal and warehousing	423,200	62,300	14.72	2.14
Wholesale trade	456,700	62,800	13.75	2.15
Professional, scientific and technical services	939,000	92,800	9.88	3.18
Information media and telecommunications	159,600	15,300	9.59	0.52
Education and training	1,120,700	82,500	7.36	2.83
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	117,600	5,800	4.93	0.20
Financial and insurance services	410,300	14,700	3.58	0.50
Mining	196,900	4,900	2.49	0.17

Source: ABS EEH. Industries are ranked according to the density of award reliant employees in the industry.

273. As was seen in Figure 149 in relation to occupational earnings between methods of setting pay, there is also a more compressed range of earnings for award reliant employees across types of employment, as shown in Figure 150 below, which is based on average hourly total cash earnings to compensate for hours of work effects.

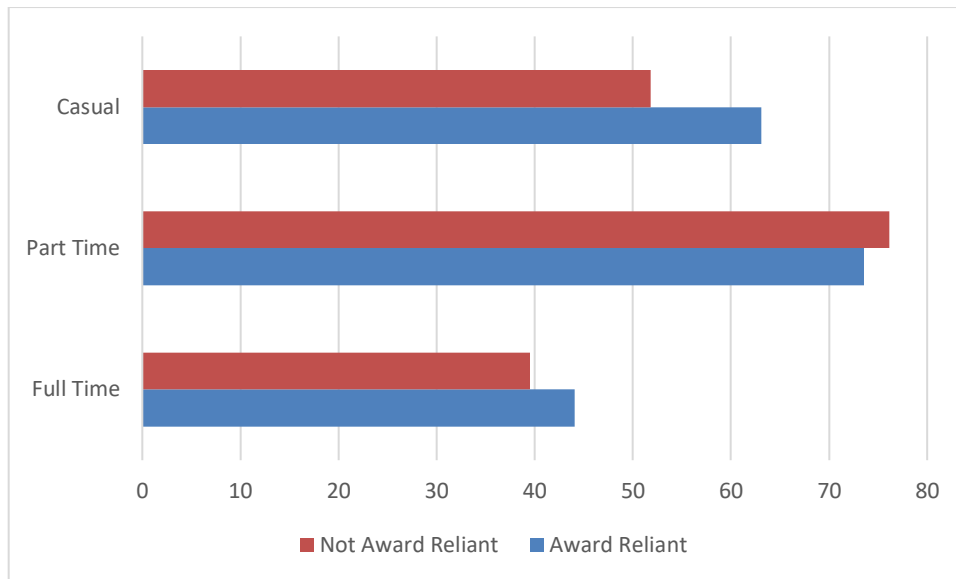
Figure 150: Average hourly total cash earnings, by type of employment, sex and method of setting pay



Source: ABS EEH. OMIEs and other managerial employees are excluded.

274. It is also evident that, outside of casual work, award reliant women tend to have higher hourly earnings than award reliant men in the same form of employment and that there is clearly something of a “wage penalty” for casual work generally notwithstanding the casual loading, particularly in award reliant work. Casual work is also where we find the highest disparity between the proportion of women in award reliant work versus that in non-award reliant work, as shown in Figure 151 below. Part time and casual work are female dominated both at the award reliant and non-award reliant level, compared to full time work which is male dominated at both levels and particularly at the non-award reliant level. It should be noted that the highest paying award reliant work for women – full time work (\$35ph average) – remains lower paid than the lowest paid categories of non-award reliant work for men (part time \$39.65, casual \$41.15).

Figure 151: Proportion of women (%) in selected forms of employment.



Source: ABS EEH; ACTU calculations. OMIEs and other managerial employees are excluded.

275. It is difficult to advance a single explanation for the observations that:
- Award reliant casual work pays slightly less for women than men, and is female dominated;
 - Award reliant part time work pays more for women than men, and is female dominated
 - Award reliant full time work pays more women than men, and is male dominated.

The likelihood is that women continue to be engaged more frequently than men at all skill levels and particularly at higher levels of skill on awards, rather than other instruments, as the Panel has previously found.⁵³ The effect of this is to raise the average earnings of award reliant women relative to award reliant men, with men more likely to benefit from the significantly higher rates of pay offered by the general market. The difference, albeit slight, observed in relation to casual employees may be an artefact of occupational segregation. For example, using 2021 data Yuen and Tomlinson were able to show that employees reliant on the Road Transport (Long Distance Operations) award were among the highest earning of award reliant employees (\$43.10 vs an average of \$30.80 across all modern awards) and around 70% male dominated. That award also only offered full time or casual employment prior to 2018, and it was expected that there would only be “limited opportunities” for part time work to be utilised.⁵⁴ Even a small category of

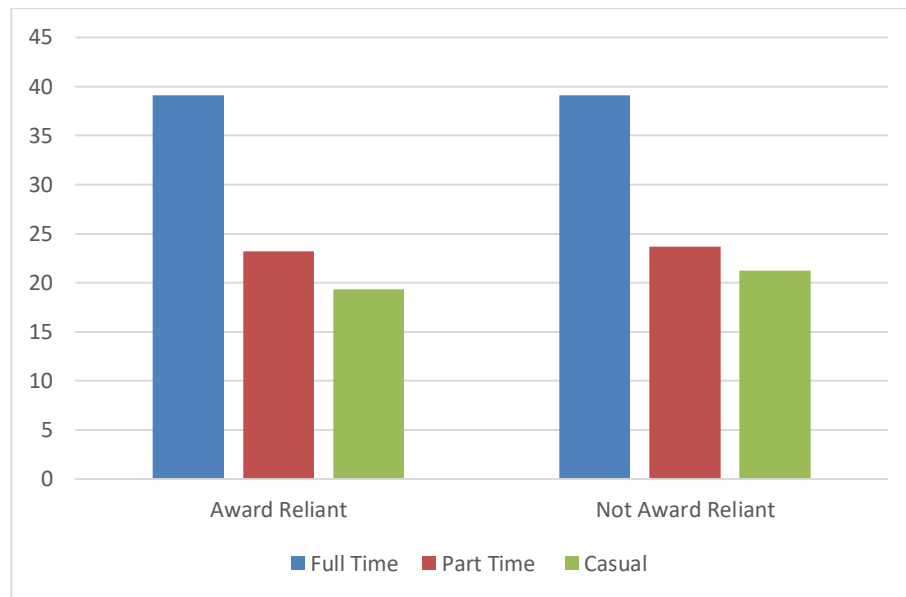
⁵³ [2023] FWCFB 3500 [43]

⁵⁴ [2017] FWCFB at 3541 at [838]

disproportionately highly paid male casual employees would be expected to have some effect on the averages.

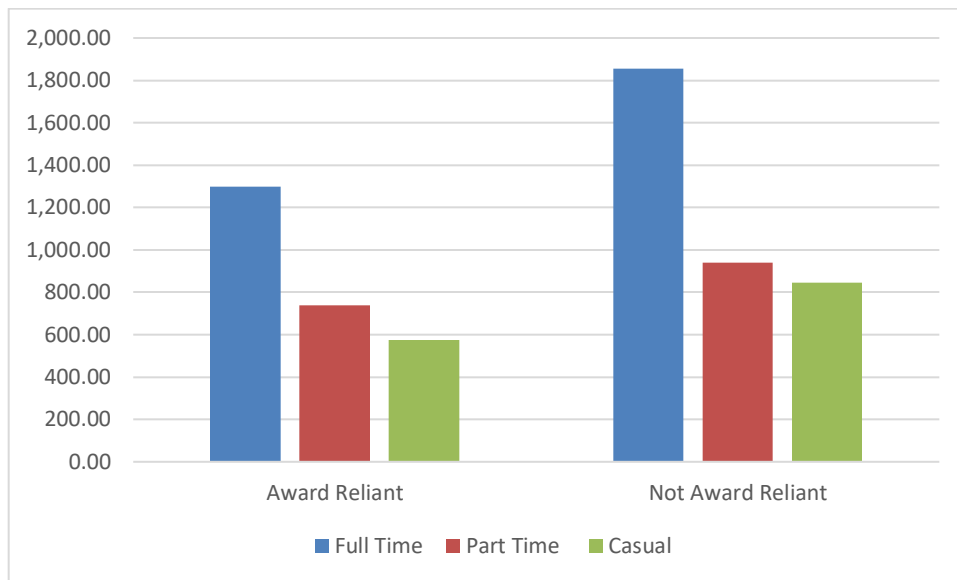
276. Whilst Figure 150 above controls for hours of work effects by relying on average hourly rates of pay, it is important to appreciate how these hours of work effects actually manifest. This is stark through reference to Figure 152 and Figure 153 below. The differences in hours of work performed by employees in award reliant versus non award reliant work are almost imperceptible in Figure 152 – they are equal for full time work, 27 minutes per week different for part time work and 1 hour and 57 minutes per week different for casual work. However, as seen in Figure 153, this translates in the case of non-award reliant work to a \$556 weekly premium for full time work, a \$203 weekly premium for part time work and a \$269 weekly premium for casual work. This surely underscores the fact that the penalty rates, overtime and shift penalties associated with award reliant work are insufficient to lift the earnings of award reliant workers to anything approaching that of non-award reliant employees.

Figure 152: Average weekly total hours paid for, by type of employment and method of setting pay



Source: ABS EEH

Figure 153: Average weekly total cash earnings, by type of employment and method of setting pay

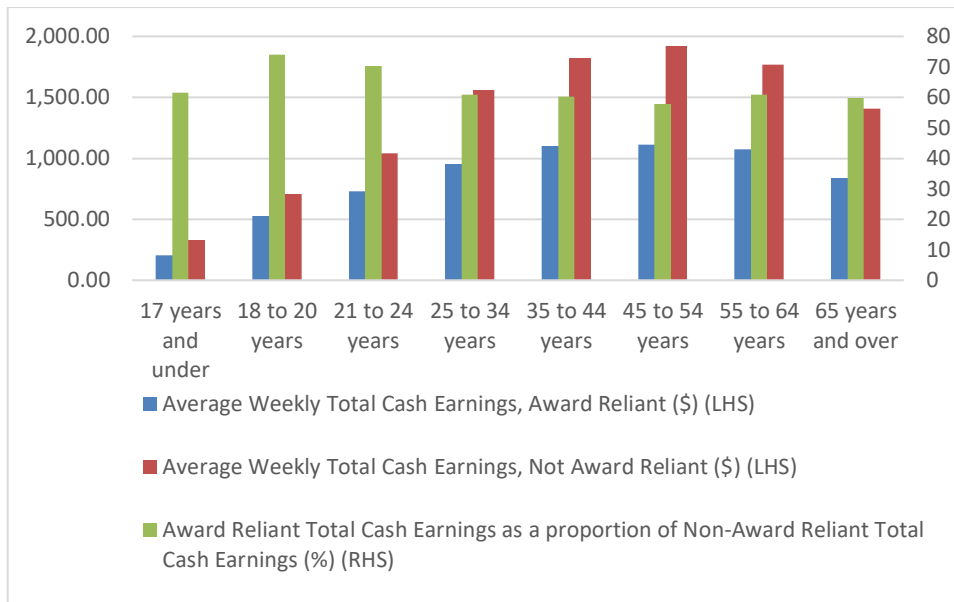


Source: ABS EEH

277. To put the earnings disparity shown in Figure 153 at its most stark, the weekly wage income of a single earner household where the earner is performing full time non-award reliant work is under \$20 less than that of a dual earner household comprised of an award reliant full time employee and an award reliant casual employee.

278. The weekly earnings disparity for award reliant workers appears to worsen after early adulthood, suggesting a lack of reward for experience if not diminishing returns for remaining in award reliant work, as seen in Figure 154 below.

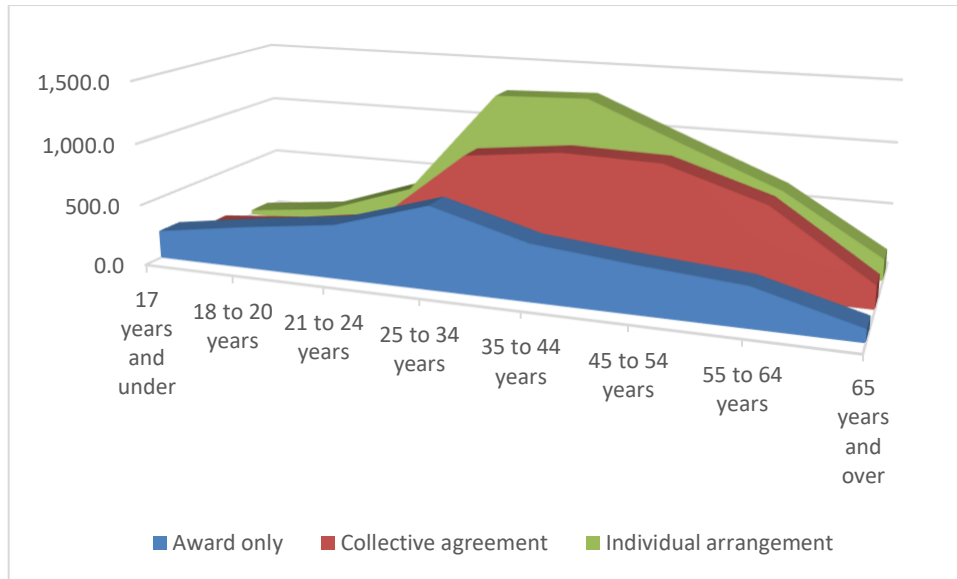
Figure 154: Average Weekly Total Cash Earnings by Age



Source: ABS EEH

279. Modern awards largely reflect the restructuring & efficiency and structural efficiency reforms to federal awards which substantially removed pay seniority by time alone. It is nonetheless both concerning and perplexing that pay progression is minimal for award reliant employees in adulthood relative to non-award reliant employees, notwithstanding their experience in the workforce. Award reliant workers clearly fare worse relative to non-award reliant workers in the prime career years of 35-55. This may in part be a consequence of the prevalence of part time hours and the effects of this on career progression and, intersectionally, the over representation of women. Whilst a longitudinal analysis of inflows and outflows to award reliant work would assist in unpacking the factors at play, it must be said the proposition that workers in their peak earning years voluntarily forgo their earning potential in favour of award reliance is far less intuitive than the prospect that those in award reliant work in their peak years are those have remained there for some time. That is, award reliant work may well function as a bridge for some, but is a trap for others.

Figure 155: Number of employees ('000) by age and method of setting pay



Source: ABS EEH

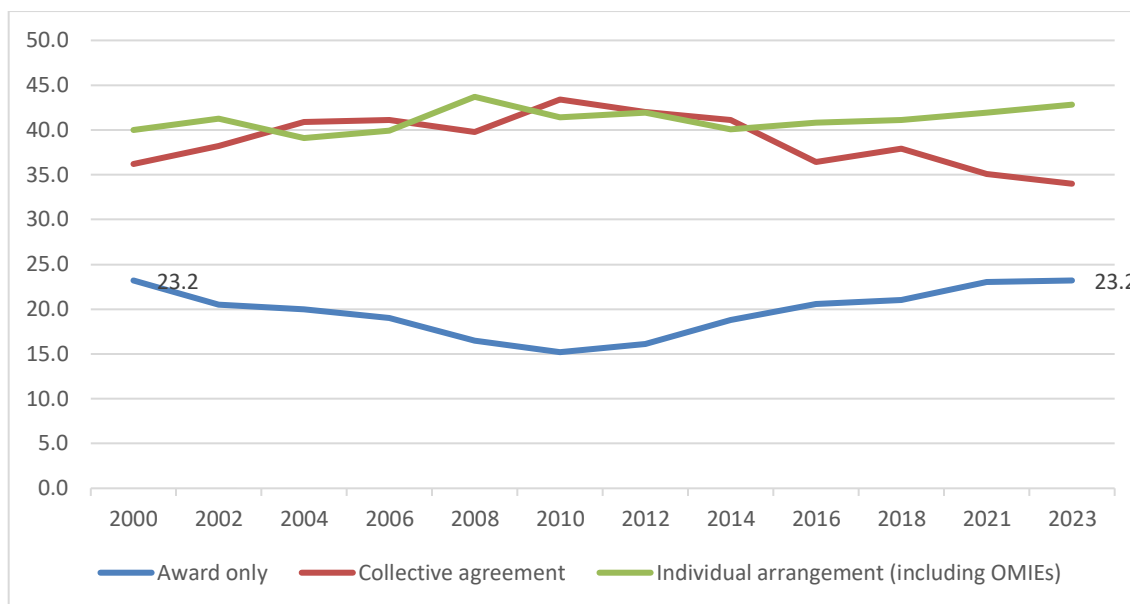
3.1.2 Change over time

280. As is evident from Chart 7.1 of the statistical report, there have been minimal shifts in award reliance since 2021. Over the longer term, since 2014, award reliance has increased (18.8% to 23.2%), with density growing in particular among community and personal service workers, sales workers and labourers over the period, as seen in Table 7.3 of the Statistical Report.

281. At an industry level, the drivers of increased award reliance appear to be rooted in some of the historically more award reliant sectors becoming more so, as shown in Table 7.1 of the statistical report. In particular, arts and recreation services, health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services and retail trade have grown in density between 5% and 17% over the period. This is consistent with growth in the health care and social assistance sector and in particular aged care and NDIS services, together with a modern award system that applies to all new businesses upon entry, in sectors where businesses survival is typically volatile.

282. Taking a longer-term view than that evident in the statistical report, it is striking the share of award reliant employment is identical to that estimated in 2000.

Figure 156: Share of employees by method of setting pay, 2000-2023



Source: ABS EEH. Indicative revisions published in 2018 are used for 2016 estimates.

283. The dip in award coverage between the start and end of the period shown in Figure 156 is likely at least in part related to regulatory change, including a period of new business entrants being federal award free post the 2006 reforms, to increased collective agreement making (or extension and variation of collective agreements) in 2008-2010 to insulate from future modern awards, followed by the re-expansion of the federal award system through non-responsibility based awards thereafter.

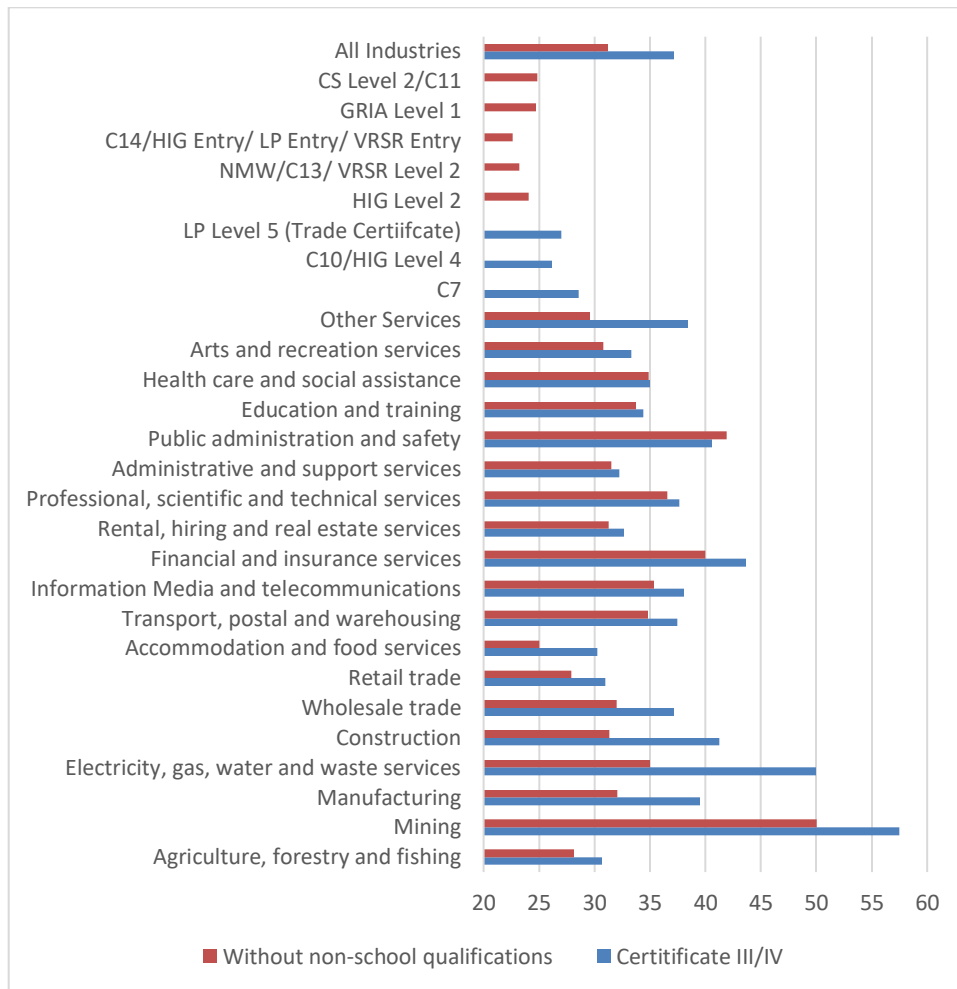
3.2 Relative earnings

284. The minimum wage bite has seen an improvement as a result of its re-alignment to the C13 rate in last year's decision, moving from 54.17% of median earnings of full time employees to 55.18%. As noted in section 3.3 below, the long term position under the FW Act system of adjustment outside of the pandemic period was a relatively stable minimum wage bite, notwithstanding a significant fall in the decade prior.

285. Despite the recent improvement in the minimum wage bite, there remains a clear disparity between median hourly rates of pay in the general market compared to those paid to modern award reliant workers – particularly for skilled work. Figure 157 shows that while median hourly

rates in all industries were between \$6.37 and \$8.63 more for persons with no non-school qualifications compared to key modern award rates, the difference was between \$8.63 and \$11.02 per hour in the general market compared to key modern award rates for certificate III and IV employees.

Figure 157: Median hourly earnings (\$) vs. selected modern award minimum wages, August 2023



Source: ABS Employee Earnings August 2023; FWC Modern Awards. HIG= Hospitality Industry General Award, GRIA=General Retail Industry Award, CS=Cleaning Services Award, LP= Live Performance Award, VRSR=Vehicle Repair, Services & Retail Award.

286. The comparison provided in Figure 157 is limited by not taking into account whether the educational qualifications of the relevant workers are in fact related to and required for their

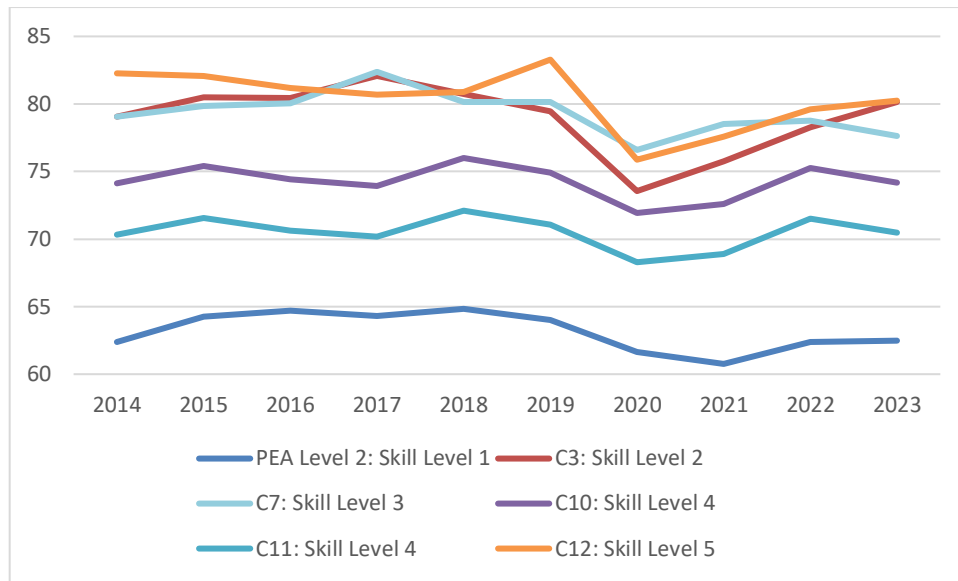
employment, and also by not excluding persons who might be paid on junior rates. Nonetheless, it is striking that:

- a. In five of the six most award reliant industries (per Table 4) the median hourly earnings of certificate III or certificate IV qualified workers are below the median hourly earnings for workers in all industries for that level of qualification, but above those for award classifications for equivalent skill levels;
- b. The C7 (certificate IV), C10/ HIG Level 4 and LP Level 5 rates are far lower than the median hourly rates actually earned by certificate III or certificate IV workers in any industry;
- c. In four of the six most award reliant industries, the median hourly earnings for workers with no non-school qualifications are below the median hourly earnings for workers in all industries for that level of qualification;
- d. The C10 / HIG Level 4 rate is the level at which, on full time work, a worker in a single person household would cross the threshold of meeting the Budget Standards as updated in Table 8.8 of the *Statistical Report* (compared to last year, when a C11 rate was sufficient). This rate exceeds both the median hourly earnings for employees without non-school classifications in the highly award reliant accommodation and food services industry and the level 2 rate in the Hospitality Industry General Award.

287. Earnings data from the ABS *Employee Earnings* series also allows movements in the pay relativities between award rates and median market rates to be tracked over time, back to 2014. In Figure 158 below we have compared the median hourly rates of employees with leave entitlements at the 5 ANZSCO skill levels to selected award rates based on the following alignments:

- a. Skill Level 1 to Professional Level 2, Professional Employees Award;
- b. Skill Level 2 to C3 in the Manufacturing Award;
- c. Skill Level 3 to C7 in the Manufacturing Award;
- d. Skill Level 4 (which specifies *either* an AQF Certificate II or III) to C10 and C11 in the Manufacturing Industry Award; and
- e. Skill level 5 to C12 in the Manufacturing Award.

Figure 158: Relativity between award wages and median wages at elected skill levels, 2014-2023



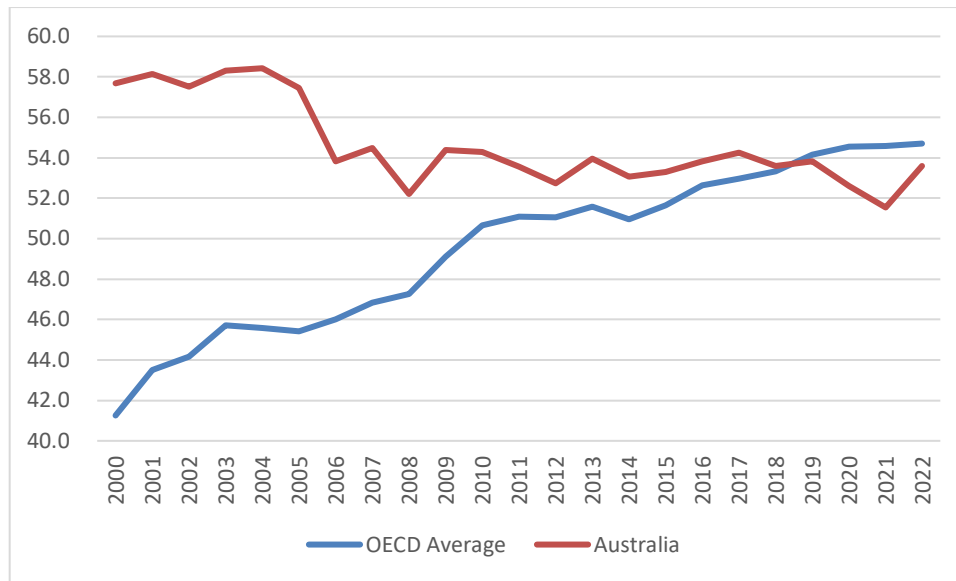
Source: ABS Employee Earnings

288. Whilst there is a great degree of movement in each comparison after 2017, the net result is very little improvement for any skill level at the end of the series compared to the start and in fact a reduction for two: Skill Level 5 (Certificate I, C12, down 2 pts) and skill Level 3 (Certificate IV, C7, down 1.4 pts). Skill level 2 and skill level 5 award classifications saw an increase in the relative value as a result of last year’s decision, however skill level 1 stayed essentially level while skill levels 3 and 4 went backwards. The recent movement for skill level 2 and 5 award classifications more closely resemble those of the minimum wage bite as seen in Figure 159 and Figure 167.

3.3 International comparison

289. Australia’s minimum wage bite out of median earnings has decreased over the last two decades, relative to the average of that measure across OECD countries, as seen in Figure 159.

Figure 159: Minimum wage bite, OECD vs. Australia, 2000-2022

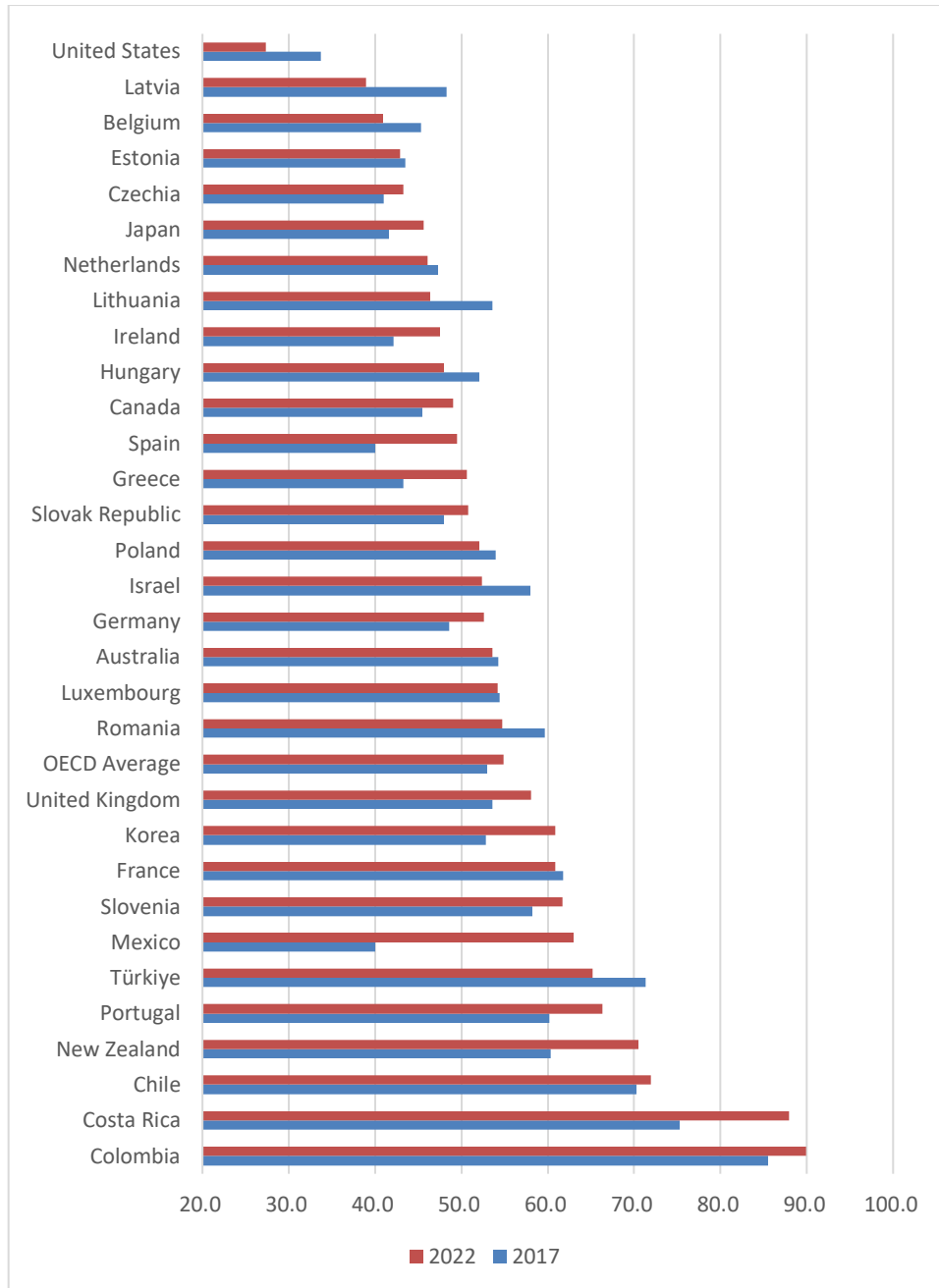


Source: OECD. Some countries excluded where data not available. Bite is measured against a median of gross monthly earnings of full time employees, excluding overtime and bonuses.

290. Whilst the long-term trend from the minimum wage bite in Australia has been a decline contrary to the upward trajectory seen across the average for OECD countries, it is also evident that the system of annual reviews mandated by the FW Act has been reasonably successful at stabilising the erosion of the minimum wage bite, outside of decisions made during the pandemic. It remains to be seen whether the re-basing of the national minimum wage to the C13 rate will be sufficient to allow Australia’s minimum wage bite to rise above the OECD average in the immediate future.

291. OECD data, current to 2022, shows an almost even split between the countries in which the minimum wage bite increased in the last 5 years and those in which it did not, as shown in Figure 160. Australia is one of 14 of 31 countries in the latter category, and remains at around the middle of the pack with a bite of 53.6% against the OECD average of 54.9%. In 2017 Australia at 54.2% was clearly ahead of the OECD average at 53%.

Figure 160: Minimum wage bites, OECD countries, 2017-2022

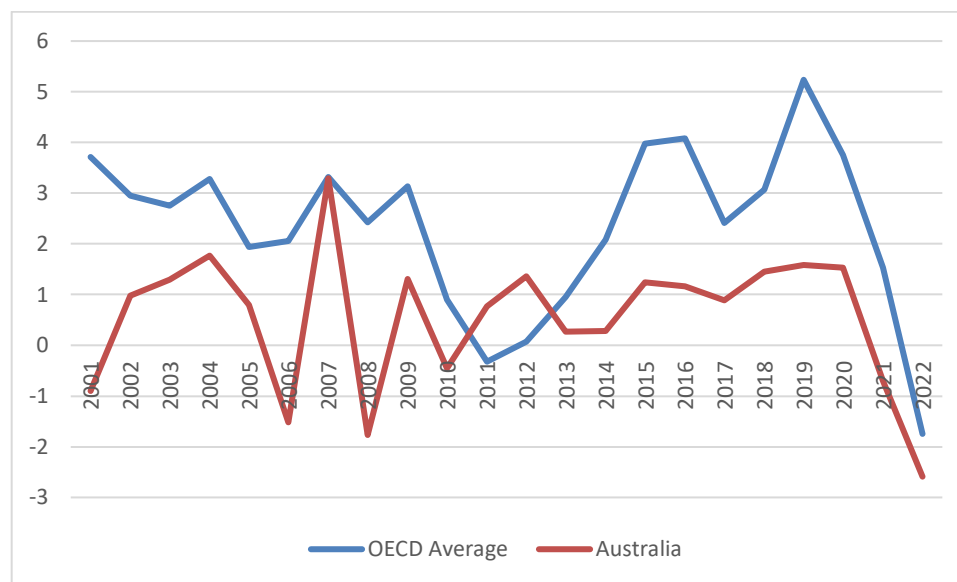


Source: OECD. Some countries excluded where data not available. Bite is measured against a median of gross monthly earnings of full time employees, excluding overtime and bonuses.

292. We acknowledge that minimum wage bite measures during the pandemic were substantially affected by policy decisions in some countries which shifted median earnings (for example by effectively taking a large share of low paid workers out of the labour force).

293. Another indicator of the extent to which minimum wage earners advanced their living standards is real wage growth. The OECD provides such a measure, albeit with some limitations, by deflating minimum wages of each country by their national CPI, then converting the result to US Dollars on a Purchasing Power Parity basis. In Figure 161 we have calculated annual real growth in that measure for Australia and an average of real growth in that measure across the overlapping OECD countries used in the available data for Figure 159 and Figure 160.

Figure 161: Real growth in minimum wages, Australia vs. OECD, 2000-2022

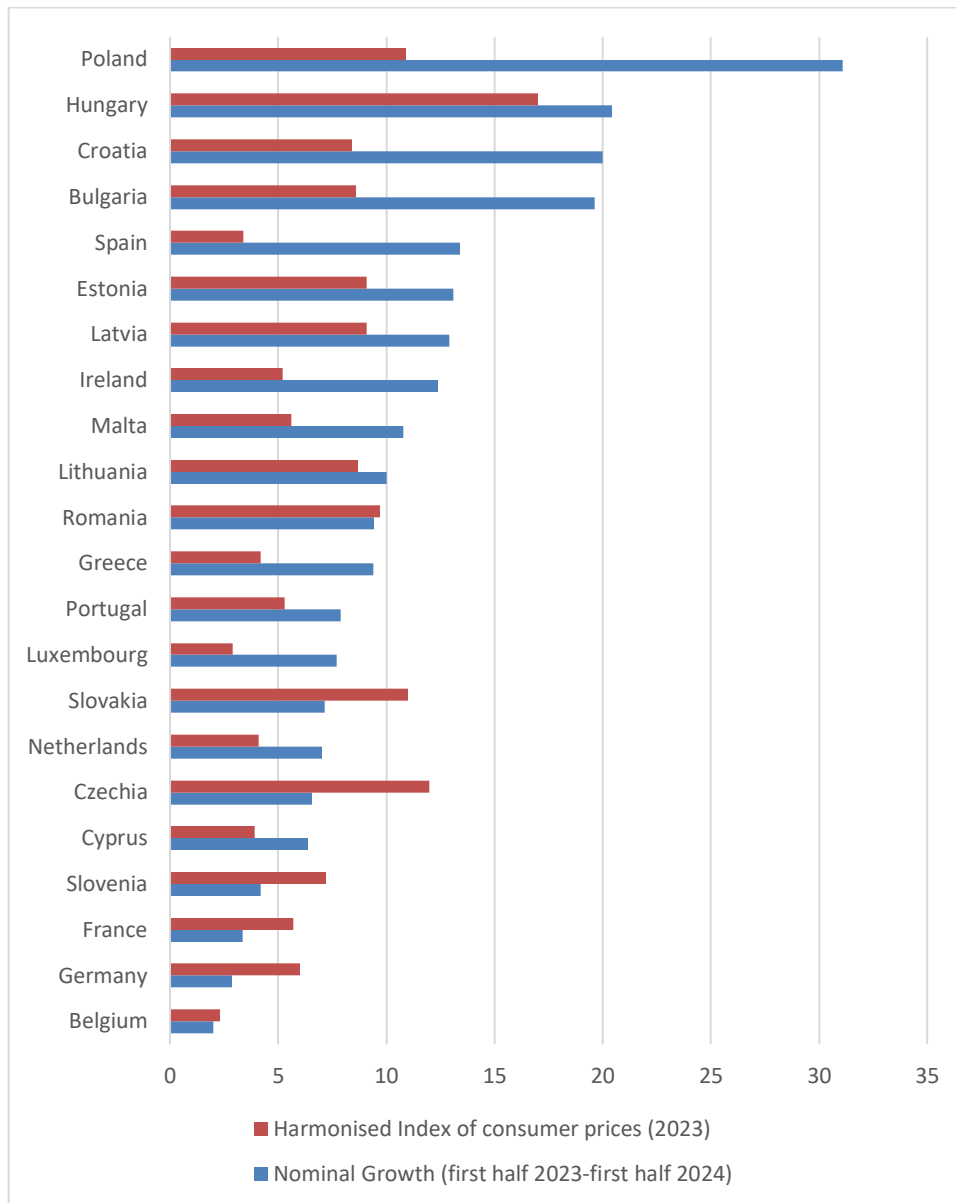


Source: OECD. Data for Romania and Croatia is not available in the OECD real minimum wages dataset.

294. Figure 161 demonstrates that Australia has, outside of the post GFC mining boom, provided consistently lower real growth in the minimum wage than the OECD average, with the gap narrowing in recent years.

295. Only 7 of the 22 European nations with statutory minimum wage fixation systems undershot a real increase in 2023, notwithstanding some uncharacteristically high increases in nominal terms.

Figure 162: 2023-24 Minimum wage growth and inflation, EU



Source; Eurofund; Eurostat; ACTU calculations

296. As to the likely future trajectory of international minimum wages, it should be noted that the European Parliament’s *Minimum Wages Directive* obliges member states to give effect to its provisions in national laws by mid-October of 2024- four years after a draft of the proposed directive was first presented. The *Minimum Wages Directive* does not require the

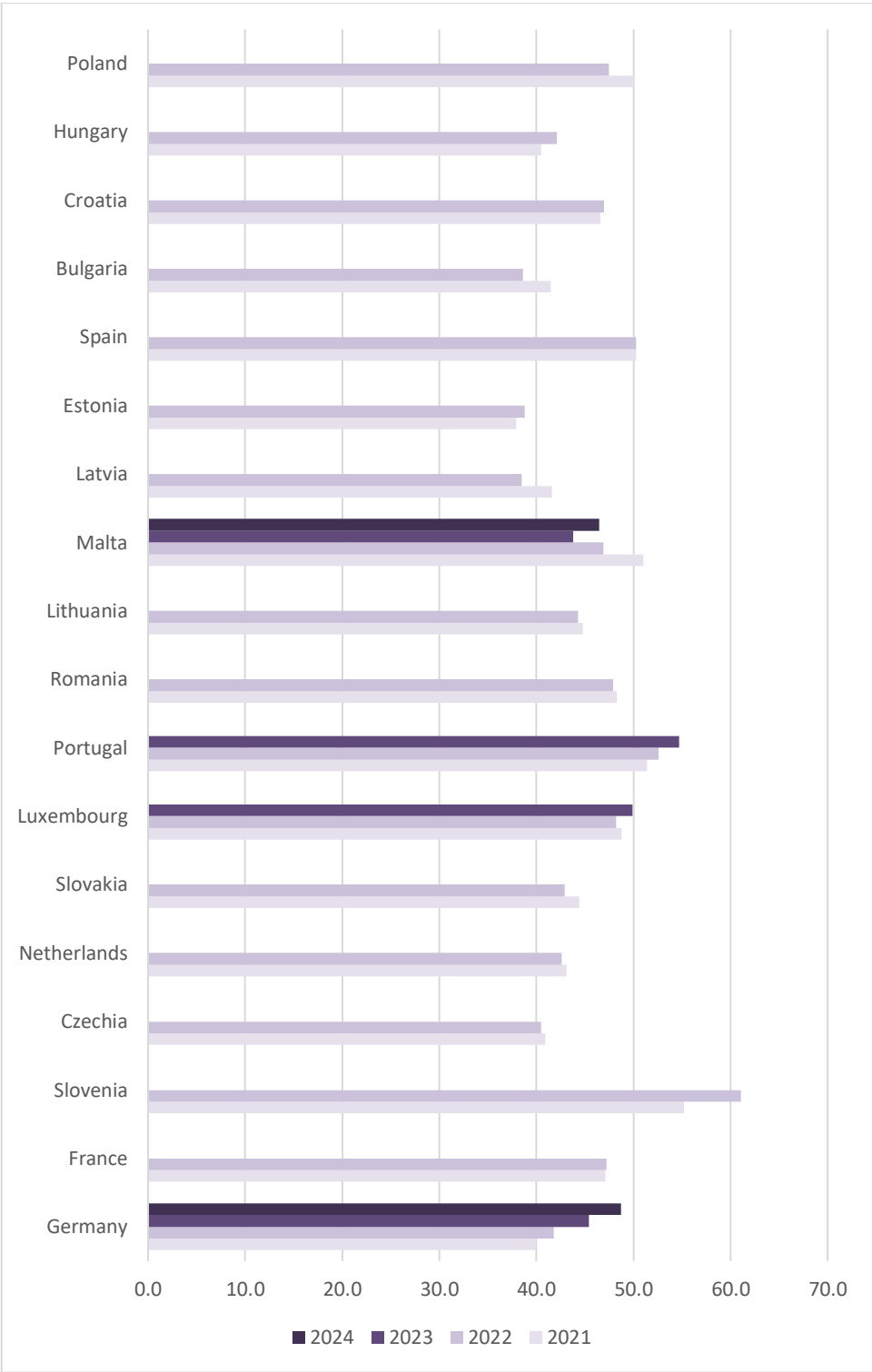
implementation of statutory minimum wage systems, but rather provides criteria that must be met in such systems where they exist, including that setting and updating statutory minimum wages “..shall be guided by criteria set to contribute to their adequacy, with the aim of achieving a decent standard of living, reducing in-work poverty, as well as promoting social cohesion and upward social convergence, and reducing the gender pay gap”⁵⁵. The directive includes the following mandatory reference criteria:

- a. The purchasing power of statutory minimum wages, taking into account the cost of living;
- b. The general level of wages and their distribution;
- c. The growth rate of wages;
- d. Long term nation productivity levels and developments.

The *Minimum Wages Directive* also permits additional automatic indexation (provided it does not lead to decreases) and requires indicative reference values to be used in the assessment of adequacy. Two such reference values are suggested, but are not made mandatory: 60% of the median wage and 50% of the average wage. In terms of whether the EU countries with statutory minimum wage fixation systems are likely to reach either of those targets, centralised data as to the latter is more current, however the dataset is incomplete and few observations are available beyond 2022. The data that is centrally available is shown in Figure 163 below, and suggests that most such nations have a considerable gap to bridge, although 10 of the 18 have either stayed stable or improved when comparing the two most recent measures available. For reference, Australia’s minimum wage at November 2023 was 46.7% of average weekly ordinary time earnings, up from 44.9% in 2022.

⁵⁵ At article 5

Figure 163; EU statutory minimum wages as a share of average wages



Source: Eurostat. No observations available for Cyprus, Greece, Ireland or Belgium

297. Looking beyond the EU, the UK has continued to pursue its aggressive strategy of uprating minimum wages, having surpassed its target of 60% of median earnings and striving (as a result of a policy change in 2020) to reach 66%. The latest estimates from the UK Low Pay Commission are that the target will be narrowly met in respect of the National Living Wage (currently at 65.2% of median earnings and payable to those aged 21 and over) and that it will likely be met for other cohorts with special minimum wage rates (16-17 year olds, 18-20 year olds and apprentices), albeit with less confidence around the estimate.⁵⁶ The UK Government accepted the Low Pay Commission's 2023 advice as to minimum wage rises for 2024, with the result that National Living Wage will rise by 9.8% in April of 2024, the 18-20 year old rate will rise by 14.8% and the 16-17 year old and Apprentice rates will each rise by 21.2%.

298. The situation in the United States is altogether more difficult to predict. The Federal Minimum Wage is set under Federal Law and has not been altered since amendments to the law in 2007 provided for it to reach its present level of \$7.25 in July of 2009 (there have been unsuccessful amendment proposals since). The President of the United States has however relied on executive orders since 2021 to require federal government contractors to pay their employees a higher wage - \$15.00 in 2021 and \$17.20 in January 2024 - although the legality of this approach is being challenged⁵⁷. In addition, 30 States have minimum wages which exceed the federal minimum wage⁵⁸. It is unknown what a change to the Presidency might mean for US minimum wages, however it is understood that the head of former President Trump's National Economic Council has described the federal minimum wage as "a terrible idea".⁵⁹

3.4 Tax/transfer policy

299. At the macro level, the contribution that social assistance benefits make to household income is around the lowest it has been for the last three decades, and appears to have settled at a level well below the spike seen in connection with pandemic related transfer payments.

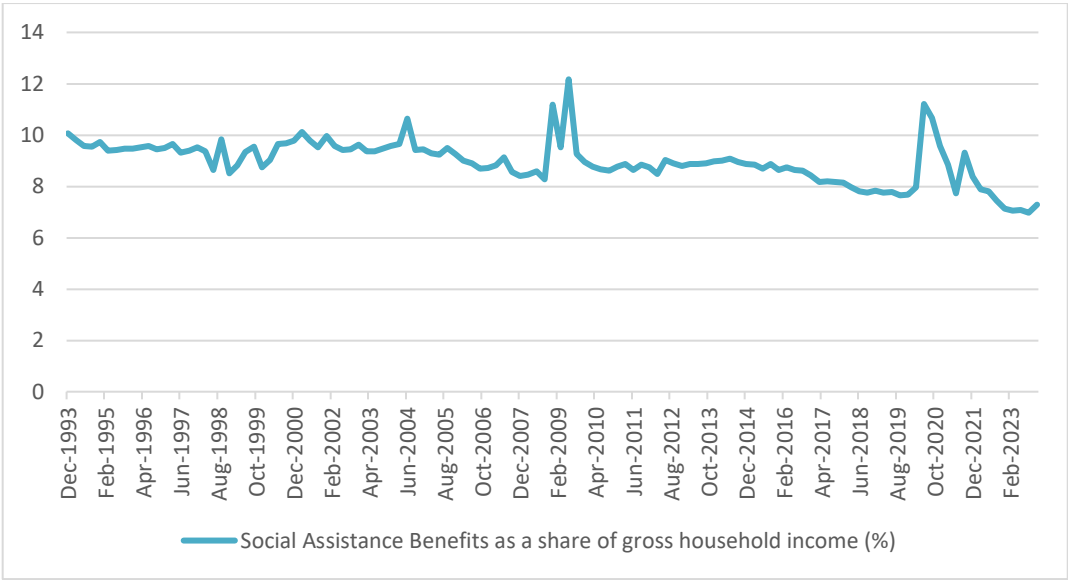
⁵⁶ Low Pay Commission, *National Minimum Wage Report 2023*, March 2024 at page 169

⁵⁷ Wiessner, D., "[US court questions Biden's power to adopt minimum wage for federal contractors](#)", Reuters 7/2/2024.

⁵⁸ Economic Policy Institute, *Minimum Wage Tracker*, 1 March 2024.

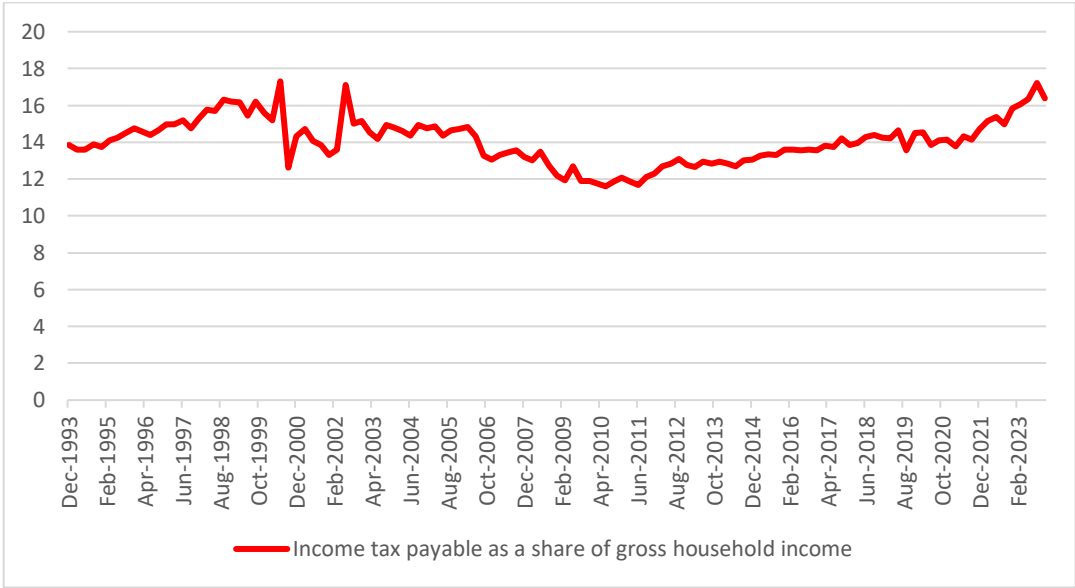
⁵⁹ Centre on Budget and Policy Priorities, [The Minimum Wage](#), December 2018.

Figure 164: Social Assistance Benefits as a share of gross household income, Dec 1993-Dec 2023



Source: ABS National Accounts, Household Income Account (seasonally adjusted)

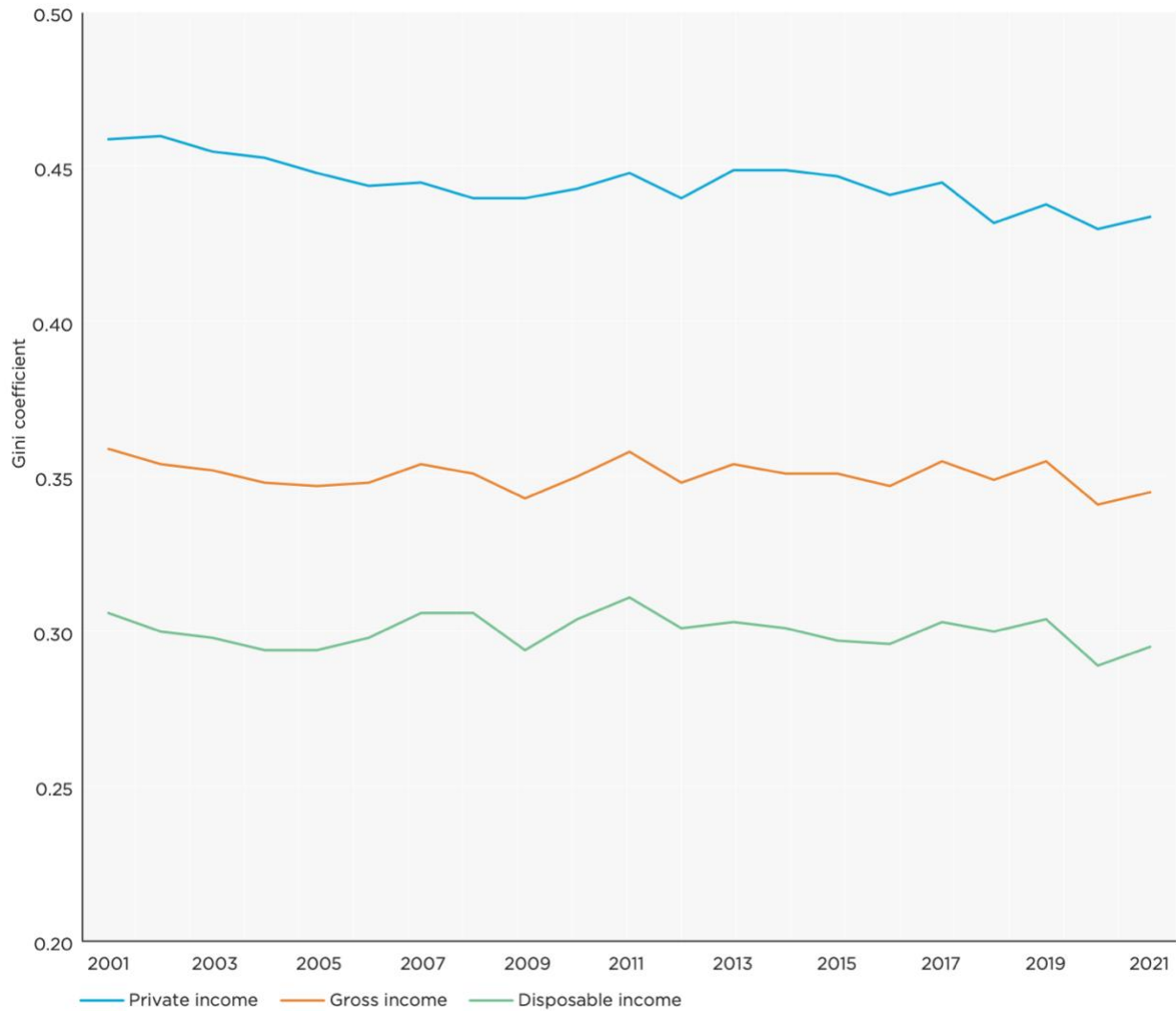
300. Conversely, the share of income tax payable out of gross household income has risen over the last decade in the period, certainly since the pandemic. Whilst the more recent movements are in part reflective of the strength of the labour market, they also reflect policy choices.



Source: ABS National Accounts, Household Income Account (seasonally adjusted)

301. Another way of examining the impact of taxes and transfers is via the Gini coefficient and in particular the gaps between incomes measures. In Figure 165 below, *private income* measures income pre-tax and pre-transfer, *gross income* measures private income plus transfers and *disposable income* measures gross income less taxes. A higher Gini coefficient indicates greater inequality.

Figure 165: Inequality of income before and after taxes and transfers (Gini coefficient)



Source: Reproduced from Wilkins, R., Vera-Toscanom E., Botha, F., 'The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey: Selected Findings from Waves 1 to 21', Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, 2024.

302. Australia’s tax and transfer system is effective at reducing income inequality and this is particularly evident during the pandemic. The measurement lag prevents a clear understanding of how things have settled since the rise in all measures seen in 2021, however it is concerning that the gap between the Gini coefficient for disposable income and private income has narrowed in the time shown – from 0.153 in 2001 to 0.139 in 2021.

303. The most significant, and welcome, change to the tax and transfer system in the year ahead comes in the form of the recently reworked “Stage 3” tax cuts, which make changes to tax brackets and rates as set out below:

Table 5: Stage 3 Tax Cuts

2023-24		2024-25	
Thresholds (\$)	Rates (%)	Thresholds (\$)	Rates (%)
0 – 18,200	Tax free	0 – 18,200	Tax free
18,201 – 45,000	19	18,201 – 45,000	16
45,001 – 120,000	32.5	45,001 – 135,000	30
120,001 – 180,000	37	135,001 – 190,000	37
Over 180,000	45	Over 190,000	45

Source: Treasury

304. It is possible to estimate the impact of these changes on a selection of award reliant workers, by reference to the 2023 earnings data provided in the ABS *Employee Earnings and Hours*. For the purpose of the exercise we have modelled the median earnings of non-managerial full time award reliant workers paid at the adult rate, the average earnings of full time award reliant workers, the average earnings of part time award reliant workers and the average earnings of casual award reliant workers. The earnings used were average weekly total cash earnings, and we have inflated them by 5.75% in an (admittedly imperfect) attempt to take into account the increase awarded in July of last year following the collection of data in May.

Table 6: Modelling the Stage 3 Tax Cuts at selected award reliant earning levels, 2023

	Weekly total cash earnings	Annual total cash earnings	Income Tax Payable, 2023-24 scale	Income Tax Payable, "Stage 3" Scale	Reduction in Annual Income Tax	Reduction in Weekly Income Tax
Full time, non managerial, adult – median	\$1,396.96	\$72,641.79	\$14,075.58	\$12,580.54	\$1,495.05	\$28.75
Works Full Time Hours – Average	\$1,466.86	\$76,276.63	\$15,256.90	\$13,670.99	\$1,585.91	\$30.50
Works Part Time Hours – Average	\$637.67	\$33,158.97	\$2,842.20	\$2,393.44	\$448.77	\$8.63
Casual – Average	\$628.47	\$32,680	\$2,751.31	\$2,318.89	\$434.42	\$8.35

Source: ABS EEH; Treasury; ATO; ACTU calculations

305. The FWC has an established practice of taking such changes into account, albeit not in a mechanistic way⁶⁰, while accepting that it would be inappropriate to apply direct discounts to negate measures that are “plainly intended to benefit low paid households”⁶¹.

306. There can certainly be no doubt that the Stage 3 tax cuts are intended to benefit low paid households: the biggest reduction in tax rates applies for those in the lowest income bracket. Even if that feature of the package and the title of the legislative mechanism, the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Cost of Living Tax Cut) Act 2024*, were taken to be an insufficient indication of its intent, the Treasurer’s second reading speech leaves room no ambiguity:

“This is all about supporting the hard work of people who make our economy and our country strong.

It's all about supporting people who work hard so that they can provide for their loved ones and get ahead.

It's all about doing more than just acknowledging that people are under pressure. It's about doing something about it.

It's about recognising that aspiration in this country is not, and should not, be limited to people who are already doing pretty well.”⁶²

307. Whilst the FWC does not apply direct offsets in respect of direct transfers or tax cuts, it is useful to contextualise the benefits expected from the Stage 3 tax cuts against the last major tax change affecting award reliant workers, which was the Low-Middle Income Tax Offset (LMITO). For

⁶⁰ [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [154]

⁶¹ [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [245]

⁶² Commonwealth of Australia, House of Representatives, February 6, 2024, p. 1.

many award reliant workers, the benefits of the State 3 Tax cuts – even in nominal terms – are less than was available under the LMITO.

308. In its last year of operation, the 2021-22 income year, the LMITO provided differing benefits according to income levels, as follows:

- a. A \$675 benefit for a taxable income of \$37,000 or less
- b. \$675 plus 7.5 cents for every dollar above \$37,000, up to a maximum of \$1,500
- c. \$1,500 for incomes from \$48,001 to \$90,000
- d. \$1,500 minus 3 cents for every dollar above \$90,000

309. Using EEH data, we are able to estimate the LMITO impacts in its final year on the same categories of award reliant workers that were modelled in Table 6. Once again this is based on the average weekly total cash earnings, but inflated by 2.5% to reflect increases awarded by the Panel after the collection of the May 2021 EEH data (which may be an overestimate given the delayed onset of increases in some particularly award reliant industries).

Table 7: Modelling the LMITO at selected award reliant earning levels, 2021

	Weekly total cash earnings	Annual total cash earnings	Income Tax Payable, 2021-22 scale	Income Tax Less Low Income Tax Offset	Effective reduction in Annual Income Tax	Effective reduction in Weekly Income Tax
Full time, non managerial, adult – median	\$1,234.10	\$64,173.20	\$11,323.29	\$9,823.29	\$1,500	\$28.85
Works Full Time Hours – Average	\$1,329.43	\$69,130.10	\$12,934.28	\$11,434.28	\$1,500	\$28.85
Works Part Time Hours – Average	\$595.25	\$30,967.30	\$2,425.79	\$1,750.79	\$675	\$12.98
Casual – Average	\$589.58	\$30,658.18	\$2,367.05	\$1692.05	\$675	\$12.98

Source: ABS EEH; Treasury; ATO; ACTU calculations

310. By comparing the modelling outcomes in Table 6 and Table 7 it is evident that in nominal terms:

- a. Award reliant casual employees (48.3% of Award reliant employees in 2023, per Table 2) stand to benefit \$4.60 per week less under Stage 3 than they did under LMITO;
- b. Award reliant employees working part time hours (66.7% of Award reliant employees in 2023, per Table 2) stand to benefit \$4.35 per week less under Stage 3 than they did under LMITO;

- c. Award reliant employees working full time hours (33.3% of Award reliant employees in 2023, per Table 2) stand to benefit \$1.65 per week more under Stage 3 than they did under LMITO;
- d. Award reliant non managerial employees paid at the adult rate working full time hours (28.32% of award reliant employees) stand to benefit 10 cents per week less under Stage 3 than they did under LMITO.

Therefore, the overwhelming majority of award reliant employees stand to benefit less under Stage 3 than they did under LMITO. Moreover, there are a substantial number of award reliant employees earning below the tax free threshold (equivalent to \$350 per week) who will not benefit from the tax cut at all: In 2023 725,100 award reliant employees earned under \$400 per week and 556,000 earned under \$300 per week.

311. The LMITO was paid to taxpayers after they had they filed their tax returns, such that it was paid in the income year following that in which it was earned. In its final form and in each of its previous iterations, the Panel cited its availability as a moderating factor⁶³, such that the increases it awarded were “lower than they would have been” had the offset not been payable in the year ahead. It stands to reason that, when the LMITO was withdrawn, the absence of these benefits would be taken into account by the Panel. The time for the Panel to take this into account was in last year’s decision: LMITO payments that occurred in respect of 2021-2022 income year were due to be paid from 1 July 2022, had the scheme remained in place the payments would have been made from 1 July 2023.

312. However, there is nothing in last year’s decision to indicate that the withdrawal of the LMITO was in fact taken into account, notwithstanding written submissions being made about the issue⁶⁴. This is contrary to the position taken by the Panel with respect to the rise in the Superannuation Guarantee rate, which was expressly assessed as a moderating factor.⁶⁵

313. In our submission, it would be grossly unfair in the circumstances for the Panel to treat the reworked stage 3 reforms as a moderating factor in this Review. Award reliant workers were

⁶³ [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [241]-[245]; [2020] FWCFB 3500 at [357]; [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [150]-[154]

⁶⁴ ACTU initial submission at [218]-[220], ACTU Supplementary Submission at [30].

⁶⁵ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [176]

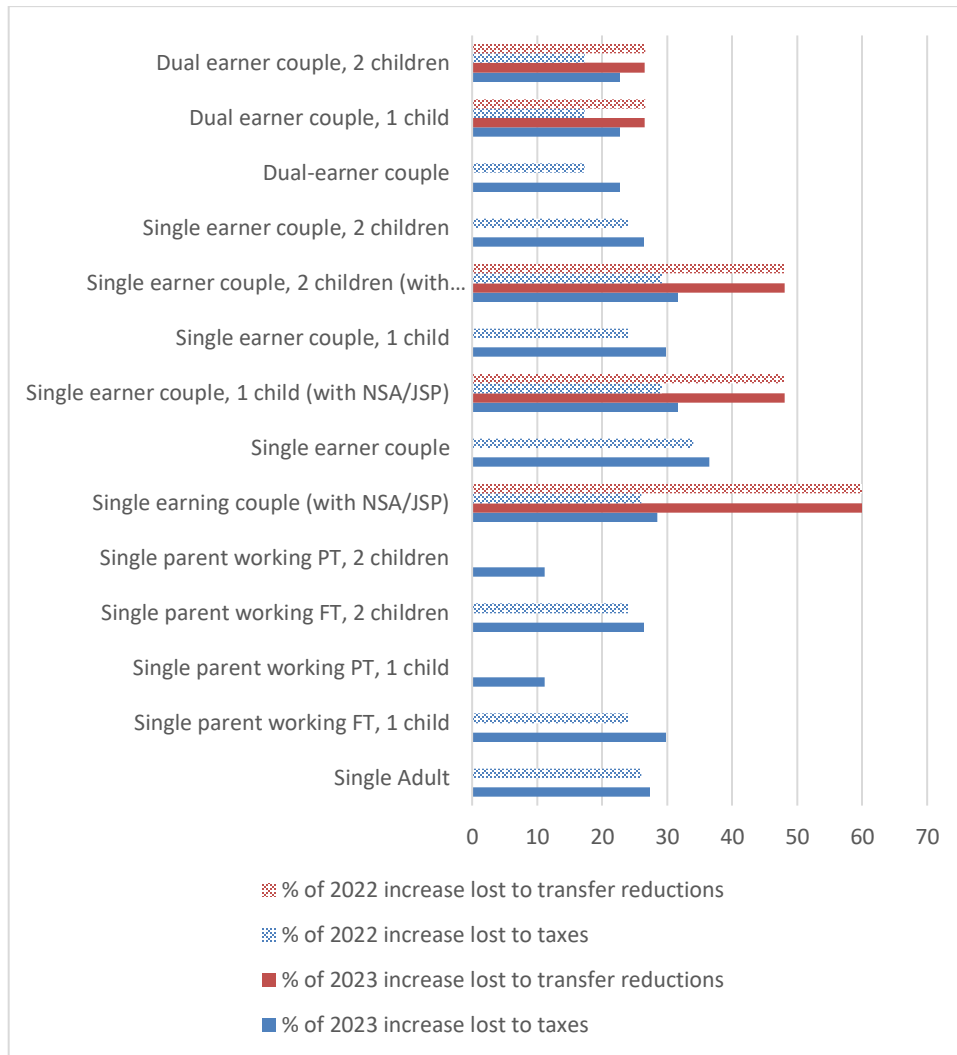
subjected to wage restraint on the basis of the LMITO at its inception and when it was increased, but never compensated in any sense for its withdrawal. To impose further moderation now would amount to penalty upon a penalty.

314. As to other tax and transfer changes, we note that (subject to any further announcement in the budget), energy bill reductions and rebates through the Energy Bill Relief fund will conclude this financial year, at least insofar as they rely on federal funding. The Energy Bill Relief Fund was an initiative involving funding through State, Territory and Federal Governments and was of varying benefit (\$175-500, depending on the State or Territory of Residency). Whilst there was some variability in eligibility criteria, in all States and Territories a person was eligible if they received either of a Family Tax Benefit or Carer Allowance, or had a Low Income Health Care Card. As such persons may be expected to be performing some paid work, award reliant workers may be among those who previously received a benefit from this initiative and who will now see their energy bills higher than they might otherwise be the year head.

315. We recognise that the Panel may treat the legislated increase in the superannuation guarantee rate 11% to 11.5% as a moderating factor in this review, albeit on the basis of its cost to employers rather than its benefit to employees.

316. More broadly, whilst we observe from table 8.5 of the *Statistical Report* that all types of households modelled retained a benefit from last year's increase to the minimum wage, the overall share retained by some households was reduced relative to the position with the 2022 increase, as shown in Figure 166 below.

Figure 166: Tax and transfer impacts on 2022 and 2023 NMW increases for selected NMW households



Source: FWC Statistical Report 2023 v 6; FWC Statistical Report 2024 v 1 (Both at Table 8.5).

317. Whilst it is to be expected that the tax and transfer implications of last year’s upscaling of the NMW would be greater than in previous years, it is notable that:

- a. Single parents working part time, with either one or two children, experienced a reduction due to tax which had not been experienced in 2022;
- b. Single earner couples (with Jobseeker) experienced a reduction due to tax which had not been experienced in 2022;
- c. Single and dual earner couples experienced a larger reduction due to tax compared to what had been experienced in 2022.

4. NEEDS OF THE LOW PAID

318. The minimum wages objective requires the Panel to consider the needs of the low paid.⁶⁶ An assessment of the needs of the low paid involves an examination of the extent to which low-paid workers are able to purchase the essentials for a decent standard of living and to engage in community life, assessed in the context of contemporary norms.⁶⁷

319. The risk of poverty is also relevant in addressing the needs of the low paid⁶⁸, as poverty entails an inability to buy the material resources required to meet basic needs.⁶⁹ Such an inability may be indicated by relative poverty lines and directly measured by surveys of financial stress⁷⁰ and movements in real wages.⁷¹

4.1 The Low Paid

320. The Panel has consistently adopted the threshold of two-thirds of median adult full-time ordinary earnings as the benchmark it uses to identify who is “low paid” for the purposes of this element of its consideration. This is consistent with the practice of the OECD, who also use two-thirds of the median wage as its indicator of low pay.⁷²

321. Whilst it is well established that, for many workers, engagement in low-paid work is temporary, this does not relieve the Panel of the obligation to consider their needs:

“Evidence on the duration of employment in low-paid work points to its role as an entry point into the labour market and a stepping stone for many into better paid work. But a substantial number of low-paid workers either remain in low-paid work for a number of years, or move between low-paid work and no work. We cannot be indifferent to the standard of living of low-paid workers just because many do not stay in that situation for long periods.”⁷³

⁶⁶ FW Act s. 284(1)(c).

⁶⁷ [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [17].

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [429]

⁷⁰ [2017] FWCFB 3500 at [461]. See also [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [431] – [432].

⁷¹ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [97].

⁷² OECD, Wage levels < <https://data.oecd.org/earnwage/wage-levels.htm> > (Accessed on 04 March 2024)

⁷³ [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [71]

4.1.1 Incidence of Low Pay

322. OECD data indicates that 15.5% of Australian workers are low paid. This is higher than the OECD average of 14% and significantly higher than in countries such as Japan (10.3%), France (9.7%), Finland (8.4%), Brazil (7.3%) and New Zealand (2.7%)⁷⁴ As noted in section 3.1.1 above, when examining actual earnings in the ABS Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours, the incidence of low pay for award reliant employees is more than 75%.

323. The following table compares rates of pay in *the Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award 2020* to the median wage (median full time employee (with leave entitlements) earnings).⁷⁵ It shows that workers in the C14 to C8 classifications and remunerated according to the award, are low paid. This same cohort of workers was low paid 1 year ago – in fact, the percentage share of the median wage that each of these classification rates accounts for has decreased over the past year, as discussed later in this chapter.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ OECD, Wage levels < <https://data.oecd.org/earnwage/wage-levels.htm> > (Accessed on 04 March 2024)

⁷⁵ Note: Median Weekly Earnings for Full Time employees with leave entitlements is \$1,624.10: Australian Bureau of Statistics. "Employee earnings." ABS, August 2023, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/employee-earnings/latest-release>.

⁷⁶ See ACTU Submission to 2022/23 Annual Wage Review at [237].

Table 8: Selected Award Rates as % of median weekly employee earnings

Award classification	Weekly Rate (\$)	Percentage of median weekly earnings
C14	859.30	53.71
NMW/C13	882.80	55.18
C12	914.90	57.18
C11	945.00	59.06
C10	995.00	62.19
C9	1026.20	64.14
C8	1057.40	66.09
C7	1085.60	67.85
C6	1140.70	71.29
C5	1164.10	72.76
C4	1195.30	74.71

Source: Manufacturing and Associated Industries Modern Award, ABS, Employee Earnings, ACTU calculations

324. In August 2022, the median wage for full-time adults with leave entitlements was \$1,500, while the NMW was \$812.60, or 54.2% of that median rate.⁷⁷ As the above table shows, the NMW (following last year's increase) is now 55.2% of the median wage for full-time adults with leave entitlements (\$1,600).⁷⁸ However this relative increase is largely because the NMW is now linked to the C13 rate, rather than the C14 rate. For workers who were already paid on the C13 rate, their wages have gone backwards in relation to the median wage. In August 2022, the C13 rate

⁷⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. "Employee earnings." ABS, August 2023, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/employee-earnings/latest-release>.

⁷⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. "Employee earnings." ABS, August 2023, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/employee-earnings/latest-release>.

was \$834.30, or 55.7% of the above median rate (of \$1,500 at the time). As the above table shows, it now accounts for a lesser share of 55.2%.⁷⁹

325. Figure 167 shows the NMW as a share of the median wage, charting the NMW's fall below 60% of the median at about the turn of the century, where it has remained since, and trended broadly downwards. As discussed in the preceding paragraph, the slight increase in the NMW as a share of median wage is attributable to the re-alignment of the NMW to the C13 rate, such re-alignment not carrying across to other award rates.

Figure 167: NMW as share of median wage



Source: ABS Employee Earnings, August 2023, Fair Work Commission (various years) & ACTU calculations
 Note: Data for Aug-96 not collected

⁷⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. "Employee earnings." ABS, August 2023, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/employee-earnings/latest-release>.

4.2 Poverty

326. The previous two AWR decisions have been important and necessary steps towards raising living conditions for the low paid, however as this chapter will show, the cost of living crisis has meant that their position has worsened.

327. Table 8.6 of the Statistical Report measures 14 hypothetical household types earning award wages against the poverty line (equivalised household disposable income less than 60% of median wage).⁸⁰ It shows that five of those household types earning the NMW fall below the poverty line as at September 2023. Four of those households remain below the poverty line even if earning the C10 rate and one falls below even if earning the C4 rate.

328. In general, Table 8.6 shows that the magnitude of last year's AWR decision has had a positive impact, but that more needs to be done to lift many workers out of poverty – particularly given the deterioration of their position between 2018 and 2022.

329. The Panel reaffirmed in its 2021 decision that:

“...we accept that if the low paid live in poverty then their needs are not being met. In measuring poverty we continue to rely on poverty lines based on a threshold of 60 per cent of median equivalised household disposable income and that those in full-time employment can reasonably expect to earn wages above a harsher measure of poverty.”²

330. A comparison with Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) is also a helpful measure of whether or not the NMW is keeping up. The NMW has maintained reasonable stability since around 2010 on this measure but the significant losses since the early 2000's have not been restored, notwithstanding the re-benchmarking in 2023.

⁸⁰ FWC, Statistical Report – Version 1 < <https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/wage-reviews/2023-24/statistical-report-awr-2023-24-version-1.pdf>>

Figure 168: NMW as share of AWOTE



Source: ABS Employee Earnings, August 2023, Fair Work Commission (various years) & ACTU calculations

4.3 Addressing the Needs of the Low Paid

331. An assessment of the needs of the low paid requires an examination of the extent to which low-paid workers are able to purchase the essentials for a decent standard of living and to engage in community life, assessed in the context of contemporary norms.⁸¹

332. Table 8.8 of the FWC statistical report shows an updated budget standards estimate for a single person working full time. The figure arrived at is a weekly requirement of \$948. This amount would not be earned by anyone at or below the C11 rate. This is in contrast to last year’s estimates, which enabled the budget standards to be met (albeit narrowly) at that classification.

⁸¹ 2019] FWCFB 3500 at [17].

333. The risk of poverty is also relevant in addressing the needs of the low paid.⁸² The Panel has previously determined that if the low paid are living in poverty, then their needs are not being met.⁸³ The Panel has further observed that full-time workers can reasonably expect to earn wages above a harsher measure of poverty.⁸⁴

334. This leaves us with two propositions:

- a. For the cohort of low paid workers who are living in poverty; their continuance in a state of poverty demonstrates that their needs are not being met; and
- b. For the cohort of workers who are low paid but are not below the poverty line; their needs would approach being met by an increase in their capacity to purchase basic essential items and participate in community life, but would not be met to the extent that an increase to their wages falls short of realising this.

4.3.1 Financial Stress

335. The Panel has previously looked to indicators of financial stress in assessing the needs of the low paid.⁸⁵

336. In terms of financial stress for low paid employee households, there has been a marked increase in all levels of financial stress since 2021.⁸⁶ Over this period, the percentage of households experiencing any form of household stress rose from 20.3% to 26.9%, those experiencing low stress rose from 14.1% to 19.2%, moderate stress rose from 4.5% to 5% and high stress rose from 1.7% to 2.7%. This means that despite slight falls in these data points between 2020 and 2021 (when Covid-era financial supports were in place), the percentage of low-paid employee households experiencing financial stress now exceeds that of 2020.⁸⁷

337. In terms of specific metrics, every financial stress metric in Table 13.2 of the FWC Statistical Report has recorded an increase from 2021 to 2022 bar one – 10.6% of households could not raise \$4,000 in an emergency (up from 8.3% in 2021), 11.6% couldn't pay bills on time (up from

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [70] - [71]

⁸⁴ [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [71]

⁸⁵ [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [77]-[79]

⁸⁶ FWC, Statistical Report – Version 1, Table 13.2, p 102 < <https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/wage-reviews/2023-24/statistical-report-awr-2023-24-version-1.pdf> >

⁸⁷ Ibid.

10.7% in 2021), 4.9% (up from 2.9%) of households have sought assistance from a welfare or community organisation and 12.3% (up from 8.2%) of households have sought financial help from friends or family.⁸⁸ Given that this data is from 2022, a continuation of this trend would see an even greater level of financial stress manifesting for low paid employees at the current time. The particular impact on low paid employees manifests in circumstances where the prevailing high levels of inflation have been concentrated primarily in essential goods and services, as demonstrated in section 2.6 of Chapter 2.

338. The NAB Australian Wellbeing Survey for Q4 2023 contains the following summary:⁸⁹

Wellbeing is at its lowest point since the onset of COVID. The unemployed, renters & low income earners among the lowest. Victoria lagging other states. Household financial stress is highest since mid-2016. 1 in 3 Australians believe they are worse off financially compared to a year ago. Concern over income at a survey high.

339. On household financial stress, the NAB survey indicates that:⁹⁰

‘Household financial stress levels increased for all index components in the December quarter, with stress levels for all components printing above survey average...’

340. The NAB survey also shows that financial stress is felt disproportionately by some groups, such as women and those with lower incomes:⁹¹

‘Financial stress levels increased in the lower income group in December (58.2 pts up from 55.1 pts) but fell in the higher income group (44.3 pts vs. 45.2 pts) - though still trending well above average. As a result, the “stress gap” between lower and higher income groups widened to an above average 13.4 pts. People in the lower income group reported higher stress for all index components, with the biggest gap in stress levels for raising \$2,000 for an emergency (62.3 pts vs. 42.1 pts), food & basic necessities (55.0 pts vs. 36.8 pts), normal monthly utility bills (57.4 vs. 40.5 pts) and major household items (62.7 pts vs. 45.8 pts).’

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ National Australia Bank (NAB), Australian Wellbeing Survey Q4-2023, 1 < <https://business.nab.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NAB-Australian-Wellbeing-Survey-Q4-2023.pdf> >

⁹⁰ National Australia Bank (NAB), Australian Wellbeing Survey Q4-2023, 6 < <https://business.nab.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NAB-Australian-Wellbeing-Survey-Q4-2023.pdf> >

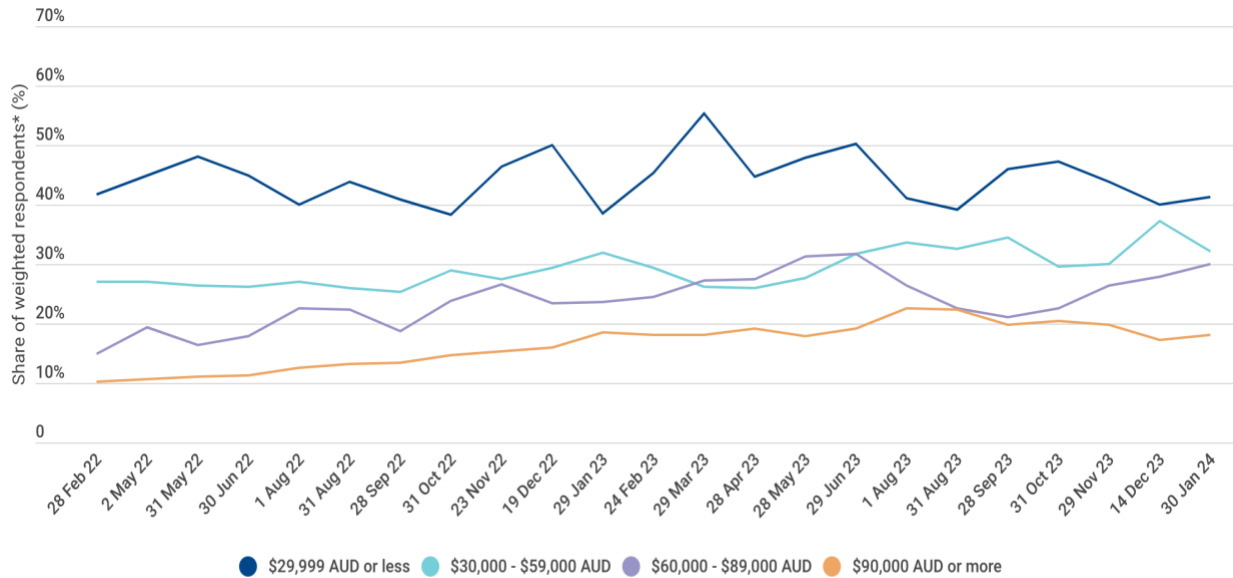
⁹¹ National Australia Bank (NAB), Australian Wellbeing Survey Q4-2023, 7 < <https://business.nab.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NAB-Australian-Wellbeing-Survey-Q4-2023.pdf> >

341. A Melbourne Institute “Taking the Pulse of the Nation” report (looking at data from August 2022, February 2023 and August 2023) shows that:⁹²
- a. Compared to 6 months beforehand, in August 2023 there were increases reported in challenges associated with covering housing/utilities and seeing a doctor;
 - b. While for many groups in the survey sample, challenges associated with getting enough food had declined, these challenges remain high.
 - c. In particular, individuals reporting financial stress also reported higher levels of food insecurity;
 - d. 45% of young (18-24 year old) respondents reported having either eaten less, skipped meals or done both; and
 - e. Taken together, rates of insecurity for food, housing utilities and financial challenges (as at August 2023) were 55% for those employed part-time and 48% for those employed full-time.
342. Figure 169 shows the proportion of adults who report that they are financially stressed, over time. While those earning under \$30,000 continue to report high levels of financial stress since the series began in early 2022, the cohort earning above that has experienced increasing levels of stress:⁹³

⁹² Botha, Payne, Rondinel, 1 November 2023, *Twelve months later: Most Australians facing high levels of challenges covering housing and/or food costs*, Taking the Pulse of the Nation Report, Melbourne Institute , <https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/data/taking-the-pulse-of-the-nation-2022/2023/ttfn-november-2023>>

⁹³ Melbourne Institute, 2024, Taking the Pulse of the Nation Tracker <<https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/data/ttfn-tracker>>

Figure 169: Proportion of adults who are financially stressed, by income



*Proportion of adults in the population responding they are 'financially stressed' by sub category.

Source: Melbourne Institute: Taking the Pulse of the Nation

343. The Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 indicates that 3.7 million Australian households (36%) experienced moderate to severe food insecurity.⁹⁴ This is an increase from the figure of 3.3 million Australian Households recorded in the Foodbank Hunger Report 2022.⁹⁵

344. The majority of food insecure households attributed the reason for this to increased food and groceries costs, energy costs and housing costs, as Figure 170 demonstrates:⁹⁶

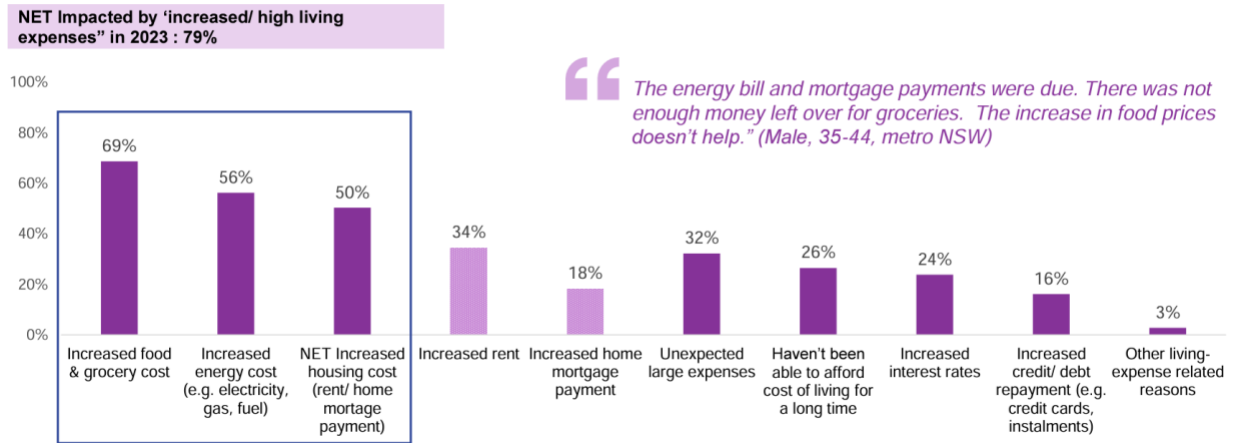
⁹⁴ Foodbank, Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 <<https://reports.foodbank.org.au/foodbank-hunger-report-2023/?state=vic>>

⁹⁵ Foodbank, Foodbank Hunger Report 2022, 5 <<https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2023/03/Foodbank-Hunger-Report-2022.pdf>>; for definition, see United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, Measurement <<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/foodsecurity-in-the-u-s/measurement/#measurement>>

⁹⁶ Foodbank, Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 (Key Findings Report) <https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023_Foodbank_Hunger_Report_IPSOS-Report.pdf>, 13

Figure 170: Foodbank Hunger Report – Reasons cited for Food Insecurity

Detailed reasons how **increased/ high living expenses** has contributed to household food insecure situations, 2023
Amongst Food Insecure Households

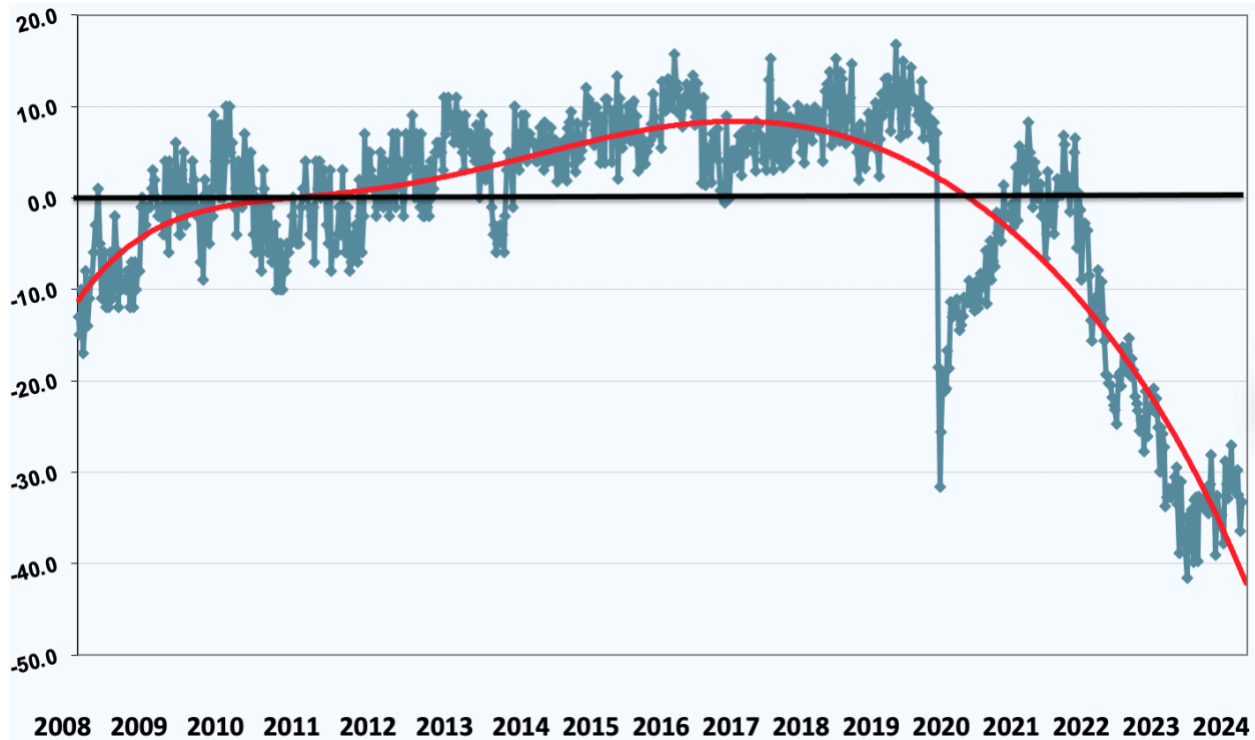


Source: Foodbank Hunger Report 2023

345. As part of the ANZ Roy Morgan consumer confidence survey, they ask respondents: “would you say you and your family are better off financially or worse off than you were at this time last year?” The results (Figure 171) show that there has been a steep decline in people’s assessment of their financial situation over time:⁹⁷

⁹⁷ ANZ Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence Poll, March 12, 2024 <<https://www.roymorgan.com/findings/9435-anz-roy-morgan-consumer-confidence-march-12>>, Underlying Data File: <<https://roymorgan-cms-prod.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/11225120/9435-ANZ-Roy-Morgan-Australian-CC-Data-1986-2024.xlsx>>

Figure 171: ANZ Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence: Better off financially?



Source: ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence, March 2024

346. The ACTU's Attitudes, Sentiments and Knowledge (ASK) survey provides key insights into attitudes around financial wellbeing and cost of living. The ASK Survey is directed at understanding and tracking Australians' perceptions and sentiments on a range of issues, including financial wellbeing and employment. It is a nationally representative sample, with target quotas, which interlock age and gender and overlay location (state/territory). Since Q3 2022, target quotas have been proportionally based on results from the ABS 2021 Census, allowing for robust comparison over time.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Note respondents are able to identify themselves as non-binary, other, or refuse gender identification

347. Results from the ASK survey are provided as Appendix A to this submission in the form of a report (titled: Report of key insights into financial wellbeing & the cost of living (February 2024) (**ASK Survey Report**)) which contains several data tables and source data.

348. The ASK Survey Report's executive summary contains the following:⁹⁹

The ASK research clearly demonstrates that Australian workers continue to face a broad range of significant financial difficulties and stressors.

Nearly four in ten workers disagree that their household will be able to afford housing (39%) in the next twelve months without significant financial stress, and 30% of workers disagree they will be able to afford food and groceries without significant financial stress.

This issue is **even more pronounced among low income earners**. Notably, the proportions of workers with an income below \$52,000 who say they cannot afford housing (46%) and/or food and groceries (40%) without significant financial stress are currently at the highest levels recorded in the ASK research (which has been undertaken every three months since Quarter 4 2021).

349. In terms of financial wellbeing, the results show that 46% of workers surveyed disagree or strongly disagree that their household is better off financially now than at the same time last year.¹⁰⁰ This increases to 50% for workers earning less than \$52,000.¹⁰¹ 17% of workers disagree or strongly disagree with the proposition that they earn enough to pay their bills.¹⁰² Workers in insecure (26%) work are even more likely to indicate that they do not earn enough to pay their bills, as are workers earning less than \$52,000 (29%).¹⁰³

350. 86% of workers surveyed think that the cost of living has become a lot worse (63%) or a little worse (23%).¹⁰⁴ Only 25% of workers believe that wages have gotten better in the past 12 months, 42% think they have gotten worse, and 32% think there has been no change.¹⁰⁵ Notably, the percentage of respondents in award-reliant industries who think that wages have got a lot or a little worse is slightly higher at 44%.¹⁰⁶ That this attitude is present *despite* the actual

⁹⁹ ASK Survey Report, 2, emphasis added

¹⁰⁰ ASK Survey Report, 2, 4 (table 1)

¹⁰¹ ASK Survey Report, 4 (table 1)

¹⁰² ASK Survey Report, 4 (table 2)

¹⁰³ ASK Survey Report, 4 (table 2)

¹⁰⁴ ASK Survey Report, 4-5 (chart 2)

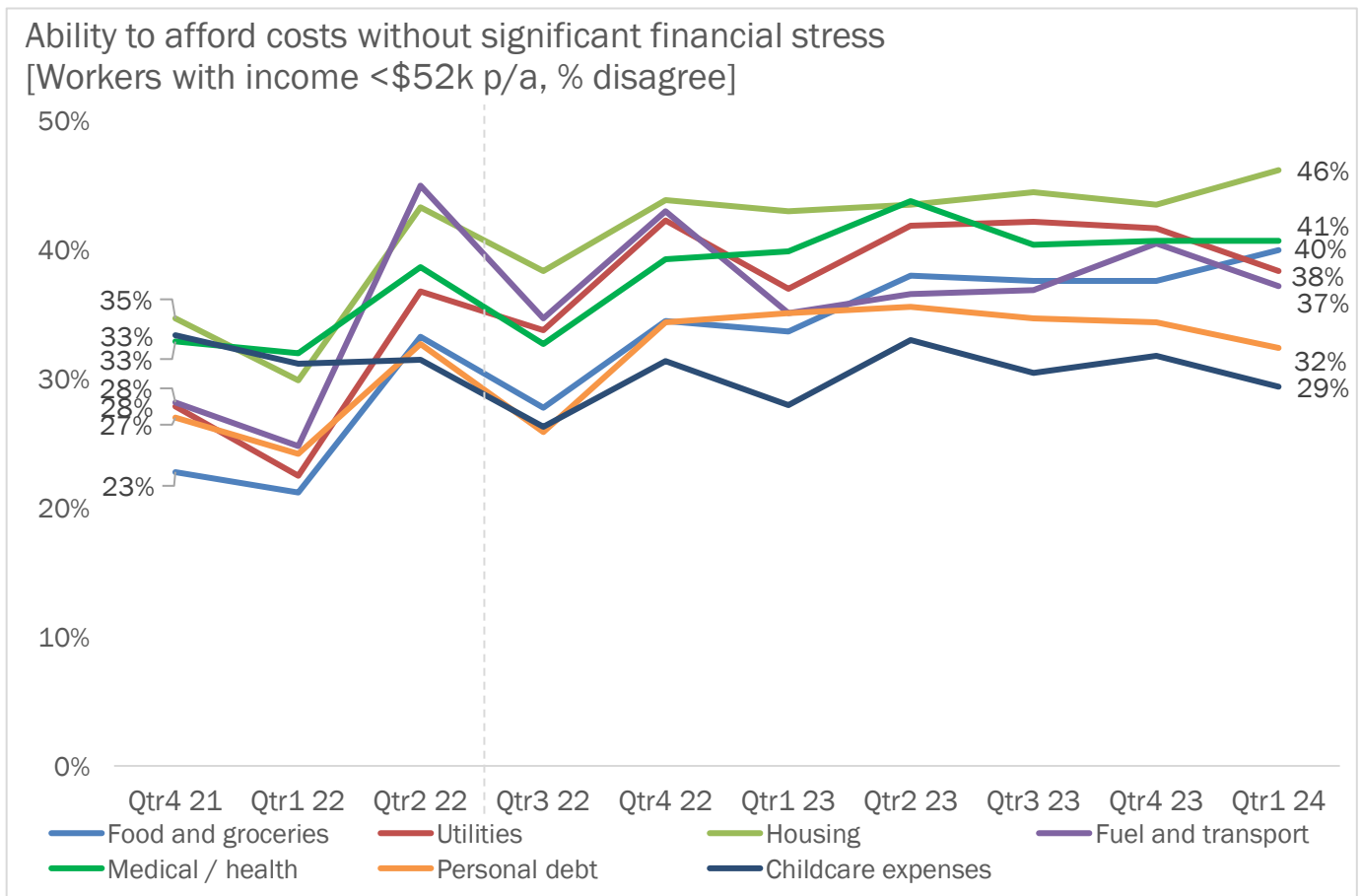
¹⁰⁵ ASK Survey Report, 4-5 (chart 2)

¹⁰⁶ ASK Survey Report, 2

increase in award minimum wages awarded in last year’s Review speaks volumes to the cost of living pressures currently being experienced by award-reliant workers.

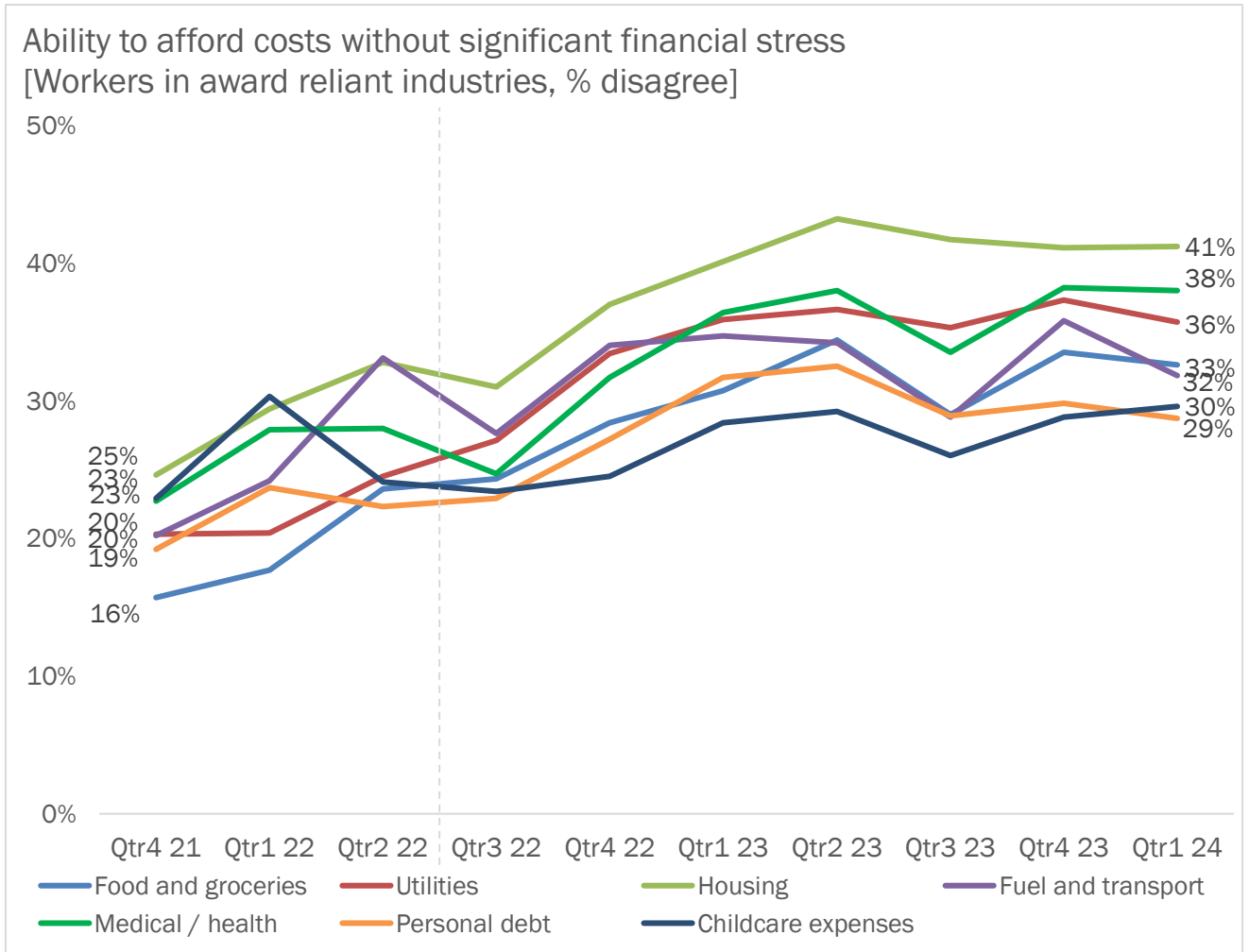
351. Figure 172 shows a steady upwards trend over time in the number of respondents (who earn less than \$52,000 *per annum*) who *disagree* that they are able to afford various household expenses. This is complemented by Figure 173, showing a significant rise in the number of workers with incomes under \$52,000 who report that they do not have the ability to afford various household items without significant financial stress.

Figure 172: Ability to afford costs without significant financial stress (% disagree) Workers with income of less than \$52k per year



Source: ASK Survey Report

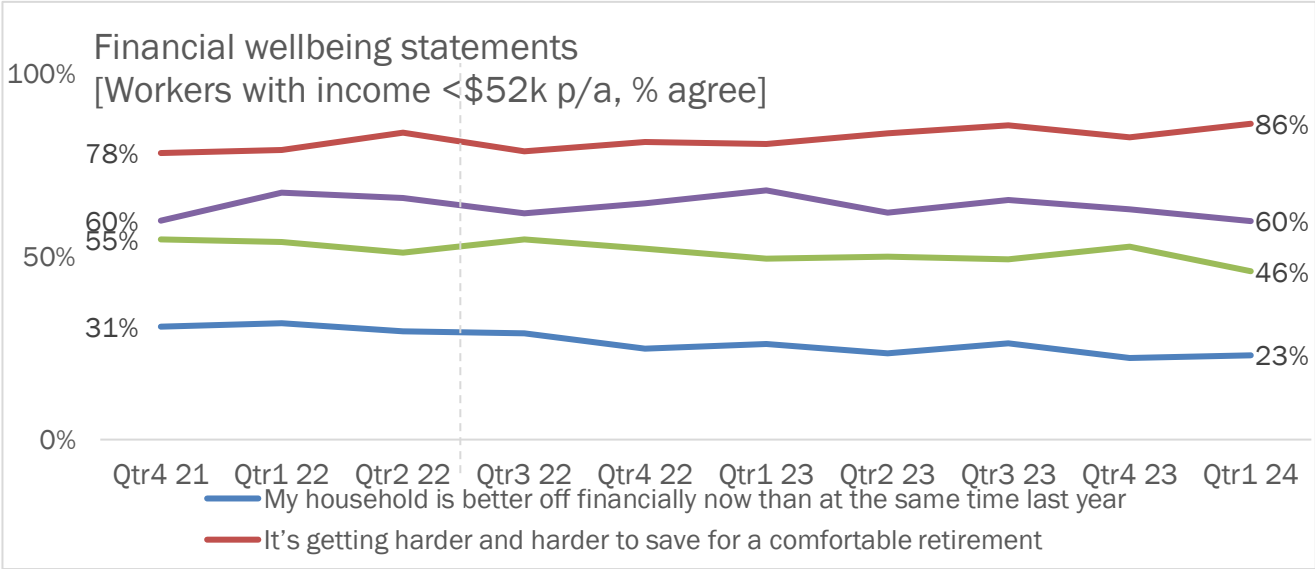
Figure 173: Ability to afford costs without significant financial stress (% disagree) workers in award reliant industries



Source: ASK Survey Report

352. Figure 174 shows that over time, the number of surveyed workers who earn below \$52,000 *per annum* who agree with positive financial wellbeing statements (household better off financial now, earning enough to pay bills) has decreased, while the number of surveyed workers agreeing with negative financial wellbeing statements (harder and harder to save for retirement, financial getting along) has stayed flat or decreased.

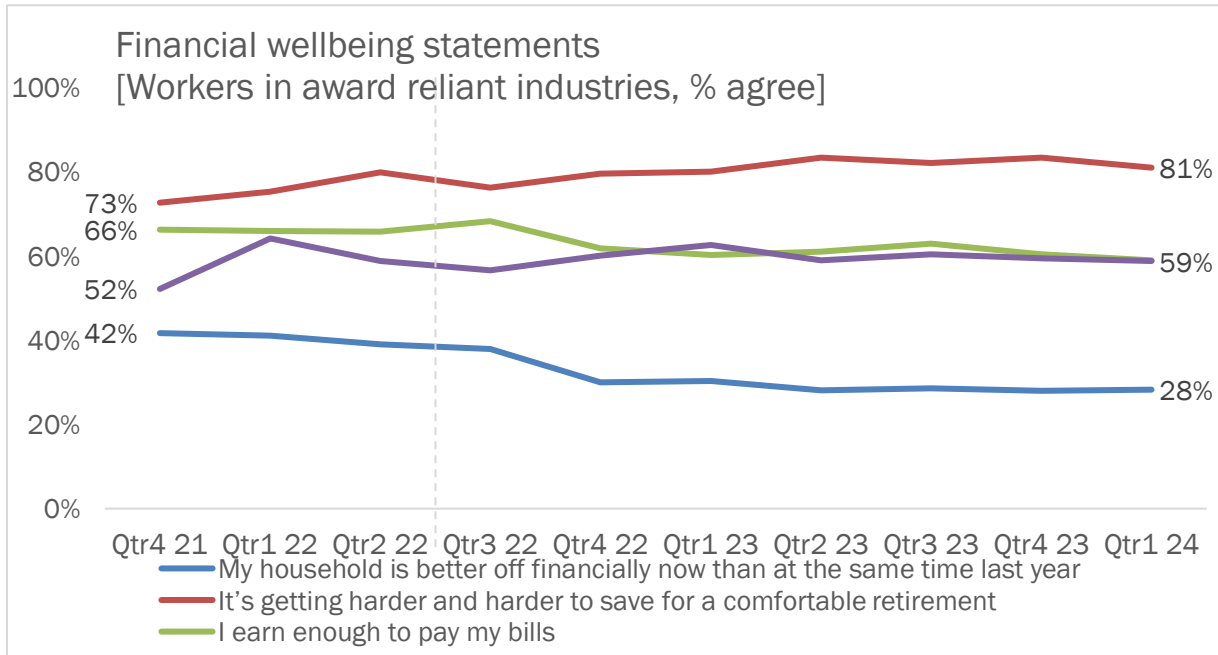
Figure 174: Financial wellbeing statements (% strongly agree or agree) - Workers with income of less than \$52k per year



Source: ASK Survey Report

353. The survey results for workers in award reliant industries show a similar pattern, although the number of workers who report that they are “just getting along” has increased and there has been a greater fall in the number of those workers who report that they are better off financially than they were 12 months ago.

Figure 175: Financial wellbeing statements (% strongly agree or agree) - Extended time series
Workers in award reliant industries - Extended time series



Source: ASK Survey Report

4.3.2 Cost of Living

354. Inflation is discussed extensively in section 2.4 of Chapter 2. The Consumer Price Index rose by 4.1% in the year to the December 2023 quarter.¹⁰⁷ During this period the trimmed mean rose by 4.2%.¹⁰⁸ Both of these increases are lower than a year earlier.¹⁰⁹

355. Notwithstanding the lower increase to CPI in 2023 by comparison to 2022, 2023's increase is still notably large - the increase to CPI in 2023 is higher than the increase in 2021 and significantly higher than in prior years (for example, CPI rose by 0.9% in 2020).¹¹⁰ At any rate, the lesser increase to CPI does not mean that cost of living pressures are alleviated for workers, but rather

¹⁰⁷ FWC Statistical Report – Version 1, 33 (Table 4.1)

¹⁰⁸ FWC Statistical Report – Version 1, 33 (Table 4.1)

¹⁰⁹ FWC Statistical Report – Version 1, 33 (Table 4.1)

¹¹⁰ FWC Statistical Report – Version 1, 33 (Table 4.1)

that things are getting worse slightly less quickly, or that real wage growth in minimum and award wages are yet to offset the loss in earlier years in the real value of these wages. To appreciate this practically, if a worker earning the average award wage in May 2021 of \$849.20 received pay increases at the rate of CPI, instead of via AWR decisions, they would have been \$5,243 better off over that three year period.¹¹¹

356. Further, the real cost to workers is likely to be higher than CPI would indicate. In the year to December 2023, the ABS' Living Cost Index for employee households rose by 6.9 per cent following an increase of 9.0 per cent in the year to September 2023.¹¹² Over two year from December of 2021, the rise has been 16.2%, reflecting a 102% rise in mortgage repayments and an 11.7% rise in consumer credit, among other items. Non-discretionary inflation – which accounts for a greater share of spending in low paid households – was 4.8% in the year to December 2023, compared to 2.4% for discretionary inflation excluding tobacco.¹¹³

357. Rental prices rose 7.3% in the year to December 2023, outpacing overall CPI.¹¹⁴ Electricity prices also outpaced CPI, rising by 6.9% in the year to December 2023.¹¹⁵ Over the same period insurance prices rose by a whopping 16.2%.¹¹⁶ CoreLogic's *Hedonic Rental Value Index*, which measures rental value based on listings while taking into account quality differentials and other attributes, recorded an 8.5% annual rise to February 2024, or 9.7% in capital cities.¹¹⁷ Similarly, the SQM research weekly rent index, using a more conventional stratified methodology of advertised rents, shows an 8.9% increase over the year to 20 March, or 11.6% in capital cities.¹¹⁸

358. The significant rises in the costs of rents needed to be understood against the context of rental affordability for low income workers. The Brotherhood of St Laurence, in partnership with SGS

¹¹¹ ACTU calculations based on ABS EEH and ABS CPI out to June 2024, assuming that inflation for FY2023-24 comes in at Treasury estimates.

¹¹² FWC Statistical Report – Version 1, 33 (Table 4.1)

¹¹³ FWC Statistical Report – Version 1, 34 (Chart 4.5)

¹¹⁴ ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, December 2023 Quarter <<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release>>

¹¹⁵ ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, December 2023 Quarter <<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release>>

¹¹⁶ ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, December 2023 Quarter <<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release>>

¹¹⁷ CoreLogic, Monthly Housing Chart Pack, March 2024.

¹¹⁸ SQM Research Weekly Rents Index to 20 March 2024

Economics and National Shelter, produces an annual rental affordability index, current to June. The timing of the report gives some insight into the position of renters prior to them experiencing the full extent of the rent rises referred to in the previous paragraph. The authors note that:

“Low income households paying close to 30% or more of their income on rent are generally seen to be in housing stress. Under those circumstances, the costs of housing affects a household’s ability to pay for other primary needs, including (but not limited to): food, power and water, health services and medication, travel and transport, education, household goods (such as cars, washing machines, fridges, stoves computers), debt repayments”¹¹⁹

359. The modelling in the report includes a “Hospitality worker” with a gross income of \$62,800 seeking a 1 bedroom dwelling, and a “Minimum wage couple” both working full time with a combined gross income of \$91,800 seeking a two bedroom dwelling. The authors’ findings in respect of capital city rentals for these two groups are set out Table 9 in below. These figures should be contextualised against those in Table 2 in the previous Chapter that show the earnings of 76% of award reliant workers were below \$1,100 per week (\$57,200) at the relevant time.

¹¹⁹ SGS Economics, Brotherhood of St Laurence, National Shelter & Beyond Bank, “Rental Affordability Index Report 2023, at page 7.

Table 9: Rental affordability in capital cities, June 2023

	Hospitality Worker		Minimum Wage Couple	
	Rent as a Share of Income	Relative Unaffordability Rating	Rent as a Share of Income	Relative Unaffordability Rating
Greater Sydney	43%	Severely Unaffordable	37%	Unaffordable
Greater Melbourne	36%	Unaffordable	30%	Moderately Unaffordable
Greater Brisbane	39%	Severely Unaffordable	31%	Unaffordable
Greater Adelaide	31%	Unaffordable	24%	Acceptable
Greater Perth	45%	Severely Unaffordable	30%	Unaffordable
Greater Hobart	26%	Moderately Unaffordable	26%	Moderately Unaffordable
ACT	41%	Severely Unaffordable	32%	Unaffordable

Source: SGS, BSL, National Shelter & Beyond Back, Rental Affordability Index Report 2023, at Table 10, Table 11. The authors report that the index for Perth was based on median rents for all dwelling types due to data limitations.

360. The cost of living crisis very much remains despite the rate at which CPI has increased easing slightly. Low paid workers are continuing to bear the brunt of this. The Final Report of the Inquiry into Price Gouging and Unfair Trading Practices, chaired by Professor Alan Fels, makes the following observation:

“What we have seen over recent years is a dramatic increase in costs paid by consumers.

Some of the highest price increases occur in sectors which are characterised by having disproportionate market power, a level of power over their consumers, or a level of monopsony power over their supply chain and workforce.

At the same time as consumers experience significant increases in costs. Across food and grocery, energy, and financial services corporate profits are up.

Normally, inflation is a distributed experience, and the experience of those without market power being both squeezed on the supply and demand side is evidence of that. Some of Australia's largest businesses, often supplying inelastic goods, are maintaining or even increasing margins in response to the global inflationary episode."¹²⁰

361. Table 10 shows – irrespective of the cause – just how significantly certain household expenses have risen in the past few years:

¹²⁰ Alan Fels (Chair), February 2023, Inquiry Into Price Gouging and Unfair Pricing Practices, Final Report, 3
<https://pricegouginginquiry.actu.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/InquiryIntoPriceGouging_Report_web.pdf>

Table 10: Price increases between March 2021 and December 2023.

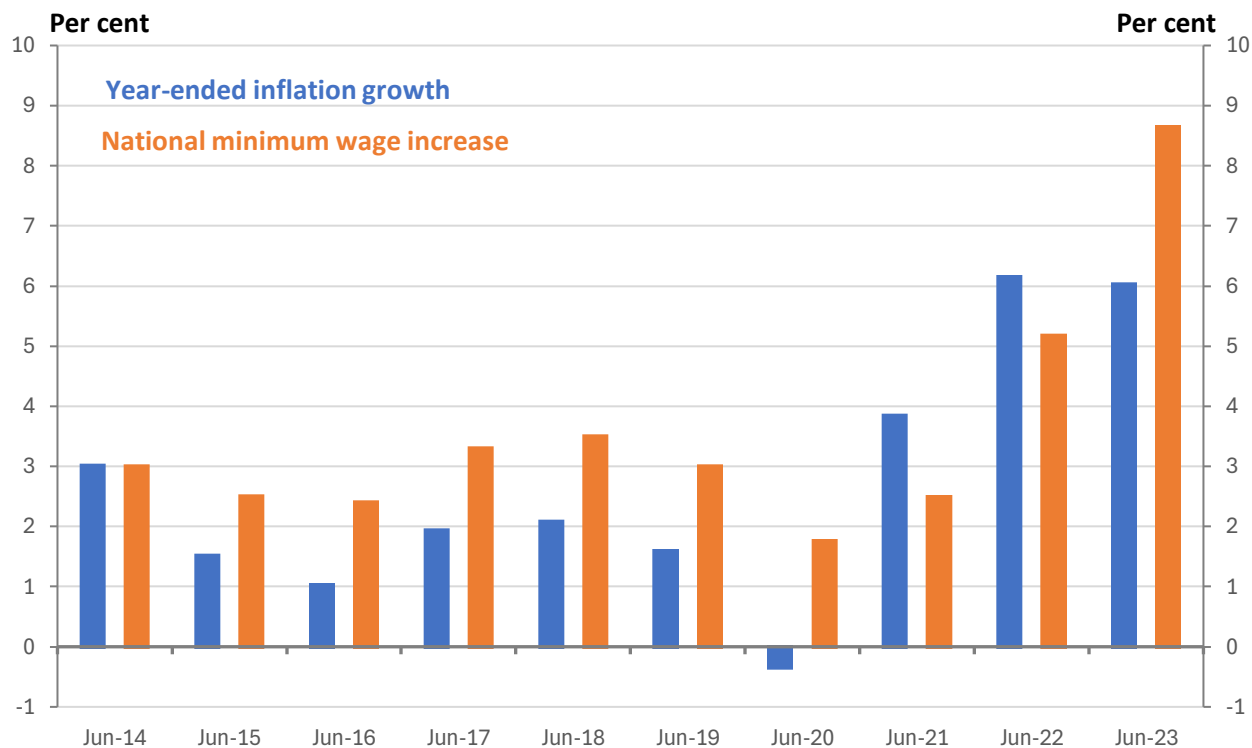
Item	Increase
Automotive Fuel	45.1%
International Travel and Accom	34.2%
Gas and Other Household Fuel	34.4%
Electricity	24.0%
Oils and Fats	35.9%
Insurance	27.2%
New Dwelling Purchases by Owner-Occupiers	33.2%
<u>Groceries:</u>	
Cheese	26.7%
Bread	24.9%
Milk	24.4%
Ice cream and dairy products	23.6%
Eggs	23.7%
Breakfast cereals	26.0%

Source: Alan Fels (Chair), February 2023, Inquiry Into Price Gouging and Unfair Pricing Practices, Final Report, 13, Updated for CPI December Quarter 2023 (ACTU Calculations).

362. Over the last decade, the Panel has generally granted increases to the NMW that are above June quarter year-ended inflation. Over the last three Reviews, the NMW fell behind inflation before recovering in last year's Review, as seen in Figure 176. The recovery in real wages at this level was a product of the re-alignment of the NMW, and did not flow through to employees paid on modern award rates of pay, as shown in Figure 44, Figure 47 and Figure 48 in Chapter 2. This suggests both a sustained decline in real wages and an increased difficulty in the needs of the low paid being met, clearly matters that were of concern to the Panel in last year's Review¹²¹. The Panel should act to ameliorate these pressures on the low paid in this Review.

¹²¹ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [165].

Figure 176: Inflation and NMW increases.



Source: Consumer Price Index, NMW Decisions

4.4 Review of NMW

363. We note that last year’s decision recognised the desirability of “a comprehensive review of the NMW... by reference to the budget standards research and other relevant material to arrive at a NMW amount which is set having proper regard to the needs of the low paid and the other considerations of s.284”.¹²² We support such a review being undertaken.

364. Such a review would be within the broad powers of the FWC to inform itself in relation to matters before it, and is capable of initiation under the FWC President’s powers to direct investigations and reports (s 290) and to give directions as to how the FWC performs its functions.

¹²² [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [108].

365. Such a review would also be consistent with the likely greater significance that budget standards research will assume in wage setting globally, following the endorsement this month by the ILO governing body of an outcome of Meeting of Experts on wage policies.¹²³ That outcome provided for “living wages” to be estimated and operationalised incrementally, including through statutory minimum wage fixation systems, providing that:

“Methodologies to estimate living wages should be based on an identification and assessment of a basket of goods, using local prices of the costs of at least the following components: food, housing, health and education, and other necessary goods and services, in accordance with national circumstances. This basket should provide for a decent living standard of the worker and his/her family. For some elements in this basket, international standards are well-established and should be used. Furthermore, the methodology should be clear on the family size and the number of wage earners. Living wage estimates should be disaggregated by components and presented in various wage units, including hourly, monthly, quarterly and annual figures, and should be the result of robust empirical analysis of the population, including surveys and censuses, at country or regional level.”¹²⁴

¹²³ ILO, “[ILO reaches agreement on the issue of living wages](#)”, 15/3/2024

¹²⁴ ILO Governing Body, [Report of the Meeting of Experts on wage policy, including living wages](#), 5/3/2024, Appendix.

5. GENDER EQUALITY

366. This is the second Review in which the Panel is obliged to take into account the concepts and objectives of gender equality introduced by the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs Better Pay) Act 2022* (Cth). The amendments relevantly:

- a. Expand the object of the FW Act include the provision of “...workplace relations laws that...promote gender equality”.¹²⁵ The object of the FW Act must be taken into account by the FWC in performing its functions and exercising its powers.¹²⁶
- b. Modify the minimum wages objective, by explicitly requiring the Panel when establishing and maintaining a safety net of fair minimum wages to take into account “the need to achieve gender equality, including by ensuring equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value, eliminating gender-based undervaluation of work and addressing gender pay gaps”.¹²⁷
- c. Modify the modern awards objective, by explicitly requiring the FWC when ensuring that modern awards meet the objective, to take into account “the need to achieve gender equality in the workplace by ensuring equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value, eliminating gender-based undervaluation of work and providing workplace conditions that facilitate women's full economic participation”.¹²⁸
- d. Identify a range of considerations that the FWC may take into account in deciding whether there is “equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value”, including by making comparisons between occupations and industries and other matters which may expose whether work has been or is undervalued on the basis of gender.¹²⁹

These amendments have a considerable impact on the Panel’s approach to the Review.

367. In the *2022–2023 Annual Wage Review* decision, the Panel conducted a thorough examination of the new provisions and their impact on the functions of the FWC in the Review. A number of relevant principles emerge from that decision, and from the recent examination by the FWC of historical approaches to wage-fixing by the Commission and its predecessors.

¹²⁵ FW Act s 3(a).

¹²⁶ FW Act s 578(a).

¹²⁷ FW Act s 284(1)(aa).

¹²⁸ FW Act s 134(1)(ab).

¹²⁹ FW Act s 302(3A)-(4A).

368. **Gender equality.** The concept of ‘gender equality’ in the FW Act is grounded in Australia’s international obligations¹³⁰ and means, relevantly, ensuring equality between men and women of employment opportunity and of treatment in employment. Equality as to remuneration is one of the ways by which gender equality may be achieved; others include the elimination of gender-based undervaluation of work, and the elimination of gender pay gaps. However, the FWC is not limited to taking just these matters into account when considering the need to achieve gender equality pursuant to the amended minimum wages objective.¹³¹

369. **Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value** means equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal or comparable value.¹³² In the past, the Panel has frequently observed that the predecessor equal remuneration principle in s 134(1)(e) and s 284(1)(d) were of limited utility in addressing systematic gender-based undervaluation in the context of the Review.¹³³ However, as the Panel observed in the *Annual Wage Review 2022-2023*, the amendments to s 284(1) mean that proposition is no longer sustainable.¹³⁴ The legislative amendments mean the concept of ‘equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value’ has been detached from the previous requirement to identify a male comparator for the purpose of increasing wages in a female-dominated industry on work value grounds;¹³⁵ a requirement that itself risked reinforcing gender-based undervaluation of work. The concept of ‘equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value’ now clearly intersects with the concept of gender undervaluation of work.¹³⁶

370. **Gender-based undervaluation of work.** The concept of ‘gender-based undervaluation of work’ is statutorily novel but well-established industrially.¹³⁷ “Undervaluation occurs when work value is assessed with gender-biased assumptions”, meaning that “the skill level of occupations, work

¹³⁰ The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (**UN Convention**); the International Labour Organisation Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (No 11) (**ILO Convention**); see *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [34].

¹³¹ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [33], [36], [45].

¹³² FW Act s 302(1).

¹³³ See the *Annual Wage Review Decision 2017–2018* [2018] FWCFB 3500 at [35] (adopted in [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [388], [2020] FWCFB 3500 at [399], [2021] FWCFB 3500 at [162] and [2022] FWCFB 3500 at [87]).

¹³⁴ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [40].

¹³⁵ FW Act s 302(3B)(b).

¹³⁶ FW Acts 302(3A)(a), (b); *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [32].

¹³⁷ See *Re Aged Care Award 2010* [2024] FWCFB 150 (**Aged Care Stage 3 decision**) at [16].

or tasks is influenced by subjective notions about gender and gender roles in society” (eg, that women are natural carers and so caring work involves little skill).¹³⁸ In the context of the Review, it requires the Panel to take into account if minimum award rates have been founded on a historic undervaluation of the work that has occurred for gender related reasons.¹³⁹ This “adds an important new dimension to the Review;”¹⁴⁰ the FWC is required to consider whether the existing minimum wage rates the subject of the Review “constitute a properly valued and non-gender based foundation upon which to make any wages adjustment”.¹⁴¹ Issues of gender-based undervaluation of work must be resolved in Reviews or other Commission proceedings.¹⁴² The FWC has acknowledged that “there may be a systemic problem, of pre-FW Act origins, concerning the way in which modern award minimum wages in female-dominated industries have been set which involves gender undervaluation and unequal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value”.¹⁴³ Proper consideration and weighing of the elimination of gender-based undervaluation of work requires a substratum of factual findings upon which to proceed.¹⁴⁴

371. **Gender pay gaps.** It has long been recognised by the FWC that, because women are disproportionately award-reliant, “any increase to modern award minimum wage rates will provide a disproportionate benefit to female workers, and may contribute to narrowing the aggregate gender pay gap across the entire employee workforce”.¹⁴⁵ The Panel appears to have taken the view that the explicit requirement to consider “addressing gender pay gaps”, when taking into account “the need to achieve gender equality” as part of the amended minimum wages objective, can be met by continuing to apply the same analytical approach to the gender pay gap as it did when the gender pay gap was taken into account on the basis of the overall objective of fairness and the requirement to consider “social inclusion through increased workforce participation”.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ *Re Aged Care Award 2010* [2022] FWCFB 200 (**Aged Care Stage 1 decision**) at [42(2)], [42(3)]; and see *Aged Care Stage 3 decision* [2024] FWCFB 150 at [13], [156(1)] (“This mischaracterisation and disregard of ‘invisible’ skills lies... at the heart of gendered undervaluation of work”).

¹³⁹ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [32], [37]-[38].

¹⁴⁰ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [40].

¹⁴¹ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [40].

¹⁴² *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [11], [120].

¹⁴³ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [133].

¹⁴⁴ *Aged Care Stage 1 decision* [2022] FWCFB 200 at [22].

¹⁴⁵ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [9], [114]-[115], [117].

¹⁴⁶ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [42]-[44], [117]-[119].

372. **Workplace conditions that facilitate women’s full economic participation.** In the *Annual Wage Review 2022-2023*, the FWC observed that this provision (in s 134(1)(ab)) is more likely to relate to conditions of work rather than rates of pay.¹⁴⁷ We agree. The conditions of work (such as rostering, span of hours, overtime, on call, travel time, minimum engagements and so on) also directly impact on the amount of *earnings available* to women in female dominated industries under the awards that cover those industries and thereby also the extent of their economic participation. There are stark gendered differences in these conditions, with awards covering male dominated industries having far more favourable conditions that lead to increased earnings and greater job security - for example: longer minimum engagement periods; much narrower spans of hours that mean overtime is payable on far more hours than in many female dominated awards; and payment of ordinary rates for on call work (as opposed to an allowance in many female dominated awards). We refer to the Job Security and Work and Care streams of the Modern Award Review where these issues are being canvassed, and to the submissions of the ACTU and its affiliates in those streams. Accordingly, for some feminised awards, fixing the rates of pay is only part of the puzzle.

5.1 Giving effect to the amended objectives in this Review

373. In our correspondence of 21 December 2023¹⁴⁸ responding to the draft research program and draft timetable for this Review, the ACTU raised concerns about:

- a. the practicability of comprehensively identifying and addressing gender-based undervaluation in the modern award system to finality within the timeframe of this Review; and
- b. ensuring that all parties have a fair opportunity to advance their case and be heard in respect of those issues.

374. In the Statement on 2 February 2024,¹⁴⁹ the President stated that while it would be a matter for the Expert Panel constituted for the 2024 Review, he anticipated that not all issues of gender

¹⁴⁷ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [41].

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/wage-reviews/2023-24/c20241-corr-actu-211223.pdf>

¹⁴⁹ [2024] FWC 278.

based undervaluation would be addressed comprehensively to finality in this Review. However, the FWC anticipated that at least two issues considered in last year's decision would receive further consideration. Those issues are:

- a. the potential gender-based undervaluation arising from the fixation of rates of pay in modern awards relative to the classifications in the former *Metal Industry Award*; and
- b. the failure to properly recognise undergraduate qualifications in modern award rates of pay.

375. We set out below the ACTU's preliminary views on how these issues might be approached in this Review. We note that the Stage 2 Gender Pay Equity research report (**Stage 2 Gender Research**) is currently in progress and expected to be published in early April. We have not yet had the benefit of that research, and reserve our rights in this regard.

376. The approaches for which we contend below may involve the Panel issuing determinations to vary modern award minimum wages which are specific to particular awards or groups of awards. We acknowledge that while it is open to the Panel to determine award-specific adjustments to modern awards in the Review, it has traditionally elected not do so in the interests of fairness between awards and stability of the modern awards system. This rationale was described in the *2015–2016 Annual Wage Review* in the following way:

“The Act does not compel the variation of modern award minimum wages in *all* modern awards. The Panel has a discretion to vary some or all modern award minimum wages in the context of a Review. However, in exercising that discretion considerations of fairness and stability tell against an award-by-award approach to minimum wage fixation. As the Panel observed in the 2012–13 Review decision:

‘If differential treatment was afforded to particular industries this would distort award relativities and lead to disparate wage outcomes for award-reliant employees with similar or comparable levels of skill ... It is also relevant that in establishing and maintaining the minimum wages safety net, the Panel must take into account the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value. Such a principle supports the determination of consistent minimum rates for work of equal or comparable value. The maintenance of consistent minimum wages in modern awards and the need to ensure a stable and sustainable modern award system would be undermined if the Panel too readily acceded to requests for differential treatment.

... Enterprise level collective bargaining is the primary means by which the statutory framework envisages differential treatment based on the circumstances in particular enterprises, which would be influenced by relevant sectoral considerations.”¹⁵⁰

377. The ACTU recognises the importance of concepts of fairness and stability in the Panel’s decision-making in the Review, both as a statutory requirement and as a broader aim. However, in considering these matters it should not be assumed that stability guarantees fairness, or that the relativities presently expressed in modern awards ensure equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value (indeed, the recent legislative amendments appear to acknowledge the possibility of the contrary view). In what follows, we advocate for a process that may involve adjustments to particular awards or classifications within them, which are additional to (i.e. do not offset against) any general increase otherwise deemed appropriate for modern award minimum wages in this Review.

5.1.1 Undervaluation by reference to *Metal Industry* classifications

378. In the Aged Care Stage 1 decision, cited in last year’s Review decision, the Full Bench found a clear example of historical undervaluation of work in the *Aged Care Award*, notwithstanding a conventional pay and classification alignment in that award to the qualifications contained in the *Metal Industry* classifications (which are now set out in the *Manufacturing and Associated Industries Award (Manufacturing Award)*).

379. The classification structure in the Manufacturing Award is relevantly comprised of two major parts: Training requirements (Schedule A, clause A.3) and classification definitions (Schedule A, clause A.4). There are further provisions which assign special additional rates in respect of some supervision/training roles,¹⁵¹ or discounted rates on the basis of a lack of experience.¹⁵² The classification definitions generally differentiate based on skill requirements which can be categorised as (a) level of supervision required; (b) level of judgement; (c) capacity to work in a

¹⁵⁰ *Annual Wage Review 2015–2016* [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [134]. See also *Annual Wage Review 2013–2014* [2014] FWCFB 3500 at [517]-[518].

¹⁵¹ Clause 20.1(g), Schedule A clause A.3.3.

¹⁵² Clause 20.1(e)-(f).

team; (d) quality control; (d) operation of machinery; (e) responsibility for training / supervising others; and (f) task complexity.

380. Beyond this, compensation for the nature of the work and conditions under which the work is done is largely determined outside of the base classifications, by a comprehensive array of 49 specific non-expense related allowances set out in clauses 30.3(g)-(i) and 30.4.

381. It should be noted that the process of classifying employees under the Manufacturing Award employees (or at least those employees outside of vehicle manufacturing employees or those employees whose level is not determined by the *National Metal and Engineering Competency Standards*) may in many cases turn exclusively on their level of training. So much was acknowledged by the Full Bench in the Aged Care Stage 3 decision.¹⁵³ The classification exercise in the Manufacturing Award arises by virtue of clause 20.5(b)(iii)-(iv), which relevantly provides as follows.

“(iii) Where there is agreement to implement the competency standards at the enterprise, or in the event that the classification of an employee is called into question, the issue is to be settled by the application of competency standards in accordance with clause 20.5(b) and the National Metal and Engineering Competency Standards Implementation Guide or by reference to the minimum training requirement in the relevant classification definition, except as provided in clause 20.5(b)(iv) .

(iv) Where the employee has a relevant qualification recognised as a minimum training requirement for the level at which the employee seeks to be classified and the employee is exercising or will be required to exercise the skills and knowledge gained from that qualification necessary for that level of work, the employee must be classified appropriately. It is up to the employer to demonstrate reasons for a qualification that is a recognised minimum training requirement not being regarded as relevant for an employee’s work.”¹⁵⁴ (emphasis added)

¹⁵³ Aged Care Stage 3 decision [2024] FWCFB 150 at [84].

¹⁵⁴ See also clause 20.5(b)(i), 20.5(c)-(d).

382. In circumstances where a classification might be assigned in the Manufacturing Award on the basis of a training (qualification) level alone, a real question arises as to whether classification structures in other awards that have been aligned to that structure through matching key classifications have been aligned to anything beyond a training standard, thereby failing to adequately or holistically account for work value.¹⁵⁵ Whilst addressing that more fundamental difficulty would assist in achieving gender equality and reducing the gender pay gap by virtue of the overrepresentation of women in award reliant work, it also warrants consideration on the basis of more general notions of fairness, as captured in *chapeau* to both the modern awards objective and the minimum wages objective.
383. In the Aged Care Stage 1 decision, the Full Bench identified a multitude of reasons justifying the conclusion that an interim increase ought to be awarded to direct care workers on work value grounds, including changes in the nature of the work over time.¹⁵⁶ Importantly however, the FWC recognised that the existing alignment of pay and classifications against masculinised benchmarks in the Manufacturing Award either undervalued or failed to recognise skills practiced in feminised work, being skills which were identified and measured in the evidence presented concerning direct care work in the aged care industry.¹⁵⁷ We concur with the observations of the Full Bench in the 2023 Review decision and the Aged Care Stage 3 decision that the historical approach of embedding these masculinised benchmarks via the MRA across the award system likely involved “gender-based assumptions about relative work value”,¹⁵⁸ and contributed to the “permeation of gender assumptions into the industrial arbitration system”.¹⁵⁹
384. The predicament we presently face is that, due to both a lack of available data and the resources required to properly undertake the exercise, we are not in a position to measure the disparity between the assumption that the alignment of rates in modern awards with the C10 classification has embedded gender-based undervaluation of work and the reality, with certainty across the award system in this Review. That predicament might be settled if the Panel is inclined

¹⁵⁵ See Aged Care Stage 3 decision [2024] FWCFB 150 at [84]–[85], [92].

¹⁵⁶ Aged Care Stage 1 decision [2022] FWCFB 200 at [922].

¹⁵⁷ Aged Care Stage 1 decision [2022] FWCFB 200 at [758(6)(iii)]; see also Aged Care Stage 3 decision [2024] FWCFB 150 at [19].

¹⁵⁸ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [124].

¹⁵⁹ See Aged Care Stage 3 decision [2024] FWCFB 150 at [96].

to accept that a precise measurement of the ultimate distance to be travelled is not a prerequisite to satisfying itself that some progress should be made.

385. That certainly seems to be the approach that the Full Bench adopted in the Aged Care Stage 1 decision, where the Full Bench applied a 15% interim increase across *all* direct care classifications (albeit following a work value analysis based on voluminous evidence). This had the same quantitative effect as would have been obtained if the Full Bench had explicitly applied the first two steps of the MRA process discussed at *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [121]-[123] to the C10 aligned classification in the *Aged Care Award*, and flowed it on in the conventional way. That is, both approaches ensure the internal relativities of the award are preserved, notwithstanding that those internal relativities or the structure itself may require some more fundamental redesign at a later stage. It was observed in the Aged Care Stage 1 decision that the interim increase was set at a level “comfortably below” the level of increase that may be determined on a final basis, without certainty as to what that final figure may be.¹⁶⁰

386. A convenient approach therefore would be to use the current Review process to identify, where possible, a non-masculinised benchmark to which some or all other awards affected by gender-based undervaluation may be aligned. We note that in the Aged Care Stage 3 decision, the Full Bench determined to replace the C10 classification benchmark in the *Aged Care Award* with a new benchmark found in the *Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Award 2010* (**SCHADS Award**) at level 2, pay point 1 of the social and community services stream.¹⁶¹ The basis for selection of the new benchmark was that the rates applicable to the level 2 classification in the SCHADS Award are subject to an equal remuneration order (**ERO**) and accordingly “have been authoritatively determined to be rates which ensure equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value” and are therefore “free of assumptions based on gender”.¹⁶² The Full Bench explicitly acknowledged that, given the FWC’s statements in the 2023 Review, “there is likely to be further consideration of the question of whether female-dominated ‘caring’ work covered by other modern awards has been the subject of gender undervaluation”, and accordingly, the new

¹⁶⁰ Aged Care Stage 1 decision [2022] FWCFB 200 at [938].

¹⁶¹ See SCHADS Award cl 15.8.

¹⁶² Aged Care Stage 3 decision [2024] FWCFB 150 at [172].

benchmark may provide “a stable anchor point” for the rectification of the problem of gender-based undervaluation of work in the modern award system.¹⁶³

387. In respect of the new benchmark, we make the following observations:
- a. for modern awards which cover female-dominated ‘caring’ work, the reasoning in the Aged Care Stage 3 decision offers a compelling justification for the application of the new benchmark where rates in those awards are low;
 - b. in respect of those awards at least, an interim increase reflecting the application of the new benchmark could be awarded in this Review, subject to (d) below;
 - c. for modern awards which are female-dominated but do not prima facie involve ‘caring’ work (for example, the *General Retail Industry Award 2010*), the SCHADS Level 2 (ERO) benchmark is not readily applicable, and it will be necessary to consider whether the C10 Manufacturing Award benchmark is appropriate, and if not, to identify a new benchmark. In this respect, the Spotlight tool and the Stage 2 Gender Research report may assist;
 - d. in modern awards which cover female-dominated work (both ‘caring’ and otherwise), it is still necessary for a work value analysis to be conducted and to ascertain if the rates in those awards have been subject to gender-based undervaluation (including inquiring whether the rates in those awards have ever been properly valued), and if so, to correct them above any interim increase already awarded.

5.1.2 Modern awards covering female-dominated ‘caring’ work

388. The Stage 1 Gender Research identified modern awards that contain a high level of gender based occupational segregation.¹⁶⁴ Based on this work, we consider the following awards cover ‘caring’ work and are female-dominated: the *Animal Care and Veterinary Services Award*, the *Children’s Services Award*, the *Educational Services (Schools) General Staff Award*, the *Health Professionals and Support Services Award*, the *Nurses Award*, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services Award* and the SCHADS Award. These awards should be included in any interim increase granted in this Review, save for where alternative applications to address gender-based undervaluation in those awards

¹⁶³ Aged Care Stage 3 decision [2024] FWCFB 150 at [173].

¹⁶⁴ At Table 5.2.

are at an advanced stage or have already been resolved (we have excluded the *Aged Care Award* and the *Educational Services (Teachers) Award* from this list for that reason).

389. We acknowledge that a potential difficulty with an interim increase in these awards in this Review is that such a step effectively assumes that the hitherto invisible skills are exercised with increasing complexity as one moves from lower to higher levels of the classification structure. This may not be a safe assumption in all cases, and we note that the evidence in the Aged Care case suggested that there was a considerable overlap between the most frequently exercised skill level at lower and higher skill classifications.

390. However, the potential for skills to be exercised at a more uniform level across classifications than the application of existing internal relativities would compensate is not a reason for not taking such steps as may be available in this Review to achieve gender equality, but rather an indication that the steps that might be practicable in this Review for a particular modern award would not address the issue to finality. Incremental progress by way of an adjustment in this Review followed by such further or other steps as the interested parties and the Commission deem appropriate is consistent with the requirement in s 302(4) of the FW Act to take into account the reasons for orders and determinations made in Reviews. It is also compatible with a subsequent work value assessment pursuant to s 157(2)-(2A) to have regard to previous adjustments made during a Review, so as to avoid any double counting.¹⁶⁵

5.1.3 Modern awards which are female-dominated

391. Based on the Stage 1 Gender Research Report,¹⁶⁶ the following modern awards contain a high level of gender based occupational segregation, but do not prima facie involve ‘caring’ work: the *General Retail Award*, the *Hair and Beauty Award*, the *Legal Services Award*, and the *Pharmacy Industry Award*. These awards should be designated as priority awards for the purpose of assessing whether the C10 benchmark is appropriate and if not, identifying a replacement benchmark (as the first stage in rectifying any gender-based undervaluation of work).

¹⁶⁵ 4 Yearly Review of Modern Awards – Pharmacy Industry Award [2018] FWCFB 7621 at [168].

¹⁶⁶ At Table 5.2.

392. However, just because the occupations covered by these awards do not on their face involve caring work, it does not follow that this work does not involve the application of ‘invisible skills’ that are occupation-specific, and have not historically been valued when setting modern award minimum rates. It is still necessary to conduct a fact-finding exercise to enable the proper consideration and weighing of the steps necessary to achieve elimination of gender-based undervaluation of work.¹⁶⁷ In this regard, the Spotlight tool identified by Professor Junor in her report for the *Aged Care Award* case, may be deployed to valuable effect.¹⁶⁸ Further, it may be that the Stage 2 Gender Research assists in identifying some non-masculinised skills that have been taken into account in some of the historical work value assessments of the awards, which are generic enough to form the subject of targeted consultations as to their utilisation in other awards.

393. We note that the Stage 1 Gender Research Report may also be of some assistance in this respect. It refers to a framework for the undervaluation of women’s work, which points to the ‘Five V’s’, of visibility, valuation, vocation, value-adding and variance, which result in women’s work being poorly recognised, misunderstood and underpaid.¹⁶⁹ It also contains some detail regarding potential invisible skills in relation to Beauty Therapists, who are almost exclusively women (97.2% female).¹⁷⁰ This workforce has high reliance on awards, with 69.7% having pay set by an Award only.¹⁷¹ They have low earnings, with the average total weekly ordinary time earnings being \$839, placing them in the bottom quartile of the earnings distribution for all employees.¹⁷² A Certificate III or IV is usually required to undertake this work, and there are national workforce shortages.¹⁷³

394. The Stage 1 Gender Research Report refers to research undertaken about the Beauty Therapist workforce, which emphasises the following skills, which are unlikely to have been properly

¹⁶⁷ Aged Care Stage 1 decision [2022] FWCFB 200 at [22].

¹⁶⁸ Annexure 4 – Spotlight Framework - Junor, A, [Report prepared on behalf of Unisearch Expert Opinion Services](#), 28 October 2021.

¹⁶⁹ Cortis, N, Naidoo, Y. & Bradbury, B., “[Gender Based Occupational Segregation: A National Data Profile](#)”, UNSW Social Policy Research Centre, 6 November 2023 at pages 13-14.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid at page 7.

¹⁷¹ Ibid at page 8.

¹⁷² Ibid at page 60.

¹⁷³ Ibid at page 74.

valued, having regard to the historical matters referred to at paragraphs [84]-[92] of the Aged Care Stage 3 decision:

- a. The role of emotional labour and making customers feel better – working with the body as well as with feelings, generating positive emotions in clients, offering stress relief and building confidence, and building the relationships needed to secure a personal clientele and repeat business;¹⁷⁴
- b. Relational work requiring interactional competencies to ensure non-routine responses, reassurance around client’s concerns, and treating clients as individuals by relating to them personally and tailoring the service around client preferences;¹⁷⁵
- c. Being trusted with sensitive client disclosures, and facilitating bonding and identity formation in marginalised communities. As people in frequent and intimate contact with diverse community members, they can act as informal helpers around medical and social issues, including family and domestic violence.¹⁷⁶

395. One further comment is necessary. As the authors of the Stage 1 Gender Research report noted, the threshold of excluding occupations from that study was highly exclusionary and based, among other things, on locating industry classes (4 digit ANZSIC level) in which the female workforce was both at least 10,000 and 60% of the total, and from that group isolating occupations which contained 10,000 employees or more and were at least 80% female.¹⁷⁷ A limitation of this approach acknowledged by the authors is that it excluded the many smaller highly feminised occupations, as well as occupations which are fragmented across industries but which together would be considered large (for example receptionists, personal assistants, clerical workers and secretaries.) The justification for this approach was that it “...was necessary to ensure the subsequent analysis focused on industry classes employing significant numbers of women to assist the FWC with identifying priority areas” (emphasis added).¹⁷⁸ In our view, the identification of ‘priority awards’ ought also take into account the coverage of modern awards at the front end of the filtering process. An award that covers a highly feminised workforce within its classification structure provides a clear opportunity to make targeted progress toward gender

¹⁷⁴ Ibid at pages 74-75.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid at pages 18-19 (methodology), part 4.4 (limitations).

¹⁷⁸ Ibid at page 18 (emphasis added).

equality in the modern award system, which in our submission ought to be a focus of any proceeding which culminates in a discretion to vary modern award minimum wages independently of the number of employees potentially affected. Moreover, it is important to not lose sight of the “safety net” character which the modern award objective enshrines – the function of the safety net is to catch *everyone* who might otherwise fall, not just “significant numbers” of them.

396. An illustration of the gaps created by the methodology relates to airline cabin crew. These workers are subject to a single modern award that applies *only* to their occupation: the *Aircraft Cabin Crew Award*. That occupation aligns closely with and likely dominates ANZSCO Group 4517 “Travel attendants”, which applies to persons who “provide services for the safety and comfort of passengers in aircraft, ships and railway sleeping cars”.¹⁷⁹ The census data cited in the Stage 1 Gender Research report indicated that the occupation was, on census night in August 2021, 76.1% female, with total workforce of 6,610 made up of 5,027 females and 1,582 males.¹⁸⁰ This accords reasonably well with the 70.2% figure for this occupation in the ABS *Labour Force Detailed* data for August 2021¹⁸¹ The February quarter 2020 figures in that dataset, immediately prior to the COVID lockdowns which caused mass layoffs and stand downs in the aviation sector, indicates that there were 8,400 females alone working in that occupation, dropping to 3,300 in August 2021 (rising to 9,200 in the most recent November 2023 observations¹⁸²). This is, by any measure, a highly gender segregated workforce covered almost exclusively by a single modern award¹⁸³ with a workforce only just shy of the “significant number” threshold. Perhaps this and other gaps could be filled through the same data set used by the authors of the Stage 1 Gender Research report, by adopting the following approach:

- a. identifying all occupations at the 4 digit ANZSCO level which are 70% or more female;¹⁸⁴
- b. cross referencing these to 4 digit ANZIC codes in the census data for female employees;
- c. map those 4 digit ANZIC codes to modern awards based on EEH data and the FWC’s mapping exercise to identify modern awards;¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁹ [ANZSCO](#) First Edition, Revision 1

¹⁸⁰ Table A.4 in Appendix A.

¹⁸¹ Data cube EQ08.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Some travel attendants may also be covered by the *Marine Tourism Award*.

¹⁸⁴ See Table A.4 and A.3 in Appendix A.

¹⁸⁵ The methodology for achieve this would be similar to that described in Chapter 5.2 of the Stage 1 Gender Research report.

- d. include any award so identified which is additional to those already identified in the Stage 1 Gender Research report in the consultation process described above, if it contains any classification that obviously overlaps with the cross referencing in paragraph (b) above;
- e. also include any occupation-based award where any classification therein self-evidently overlaps with an occupation identified in paragraph (a) above (eg. *Clerks – Private Sector*).

397. To resolve the problem identified above, and in addition to the approach already suggested, we consider there could be targeted consultations concerning the utilisation of ‘invisible’ skills in other awards. The purpose of those consultations would be to establish a consensus as to a common denominator of skills exercised but not recognised in the classification structures of the relevant awards. Once that common denominator is identified, it can be valued conservatively and that value added to the key classification in the relevant stream, then other classifications in that stream adjusted according to their existing internal relativities. This process would constitute an interim step in the Review toward fully addressing undervaluation.

398. Whilst the process we have foreshadowed is directed to ensuring gender equality, we accept that the separate considerations of the modern awards objective and the minimum wages objective are not themselves to be confused with or given primacy over the objectives themselves,¹⁸⁶ which are concerned with the fairness and relevance of the safety net. Nonetheless, the Panel has previously accepted that:

“...the creation by statute of a regulatory function to centrally set and maintain “fair” minimum wages is a labour market intervention that stems from the legislature taking the position that in the absence of such an intervention, the minimum wages of employees would not (or at least might not) be fair. If one accepts that proposition, it cannot follow that “relevant” centrally determined minimum wages—minimum wages that are suited to contemporary circumstances—must always follow, predict or seek to reproduce the trends observed in market wages. Rather, contemporary circumstances may demand that the intervention enabled by the legislation be exercised to a much fuller extent, including an extent that results in a major disparity between market wage movements and movements in minimum wages.”¹⁸⁷ (emphasis added).

¹⁸⁶ Preliminary Hearing for the 2016–2017 Annual Wage Review [2017] FWCFB 1931 at [66]

¹⁸⁷ *Annual Wage Review 2016–2017* [2017] FWCFB 3500 at [144]-[145].

399. That being the case, the proposition that the nascent obligation to take into account “the need to achieve gender equality...by eliminating gender-based undervaluation” might necessitate fewer and more significant steps rather than interminable incremental adjustments, ought not be considered a radical one. It should further be noted that, subject to the Panel’s continued application of a more accommodating “exceptional circumstances” test set out in s 286 of the FW Act,¹⁸⁸ the novel utilisation of the discretion to make “one or more determinations varying modern awards...” in s 205(2)(b) thereof would enable any interim adjustments deemed necessary through this Review in respect of a particular award to be staged throughout the 2024/25 financial year.

5.1.4 Failure to recognise undergraduate classifications.

400. As noted in the 2023 Review, an undervaluation issue exists in respect of work that requires a degree level qualification, in that:

“...employees with degree qualifications were meant to be aligned with a theoretical C1 classification, with relativities to C10 in the range of 180-210 percent. However, for most degree-qualified classifications in awards, this process was never carried through and they were never placed in the appropriate relativity to C10”.¹⁸⁹

401. The approach taken by the Full Bench in *Independent Education Union – Application for an Equal Remuneration Order* [2021] FWCFB 2051 (**Teachers decision**) to address the undervaluation of degree qualified work involved aligning the rate of pay of the C1(a) classification to a classification in the Award that applied to a degree qualified teacher who “...is fully qualified and capable of exercising the skills and discharging the responsibilities of the profession in an entirely unsupervised and autonomous way”,¹⁹⁰ and adjusting the “graduate level” pay rate to align with the C2(b) classification.¹⁹¹

402. In our view, the approach taken in the Teachers decision (and endorsed in the Stage 3 Aged Care decision¹⁹²) provides a sound basis to adjust degree-qualified rates in all modern awards, on an interim basis in this Review. That is, we would support:

¹⁸⁸ See Appendix B to the ACTU’s [Submission](#) to the 2022-23 Annual Wage Review.

¹⁸⁹ At [134].

¹⁹⁰ Teachers decision [2021] FWCFB 2051 at [653].

¹⁹¹ Teachers decision [2021] FWCFB 2051 at [656].

¹⁹² [2024] FWCFB 150 at [203]-[204]

- a. degree-qualified rates applying to professionals who are fully qualified and capable of exercising the skills and discharging the responsibilities of the profession in an entirely unsupervised and autonomous way, being subject to a minimum pay alignment to the C1(a) classification (currently \$1470.80 per week); and
- b. graduate entry rates for degree qualified employees, requiring supervision or some further accreditation, being subject to minimum pay alignment to the C2(b) classification (currently \$1345.60 per week).

403. However, we would not support this Review carrying any such adjustments through to non-degree qualified classifications in modern awards where they exist.

404. We regard an alignment on this basis as an interim one for the following reasons. First, the Teachers decision was finalised prior to the 'gender equality' legislative amendments taking effect. Second, there were three reasons identified in the Teachers decision which justified intervention, being:

- a. the rates of pay in the predecessor federal award were not properly fixed minimum rates, having regard to the MRA process;
- b. there had not been a comprehensive work value assessment of the work of teachers in the fixation of rates in the modern award or the predecessor federal award (with the former simply adopting the latter with safety net adjustments);
- c. there had been substantial changes in the nature of the work of teachers and their skills and responsibility which had not been taken into account in the rates of pay in the modern award.¹⁹³

405. However (and this was not suggested in the Teachers decision), the realignment of the classifications for degree-qualified professionals alone is not a substitute for an assessment of work value, nor a comprehensive means of addressing gender-based undervaluation.¹⁹⁴

406. As already suggested above in relation to the adjustment of modern award minimum wages by reference to a non-masculinised benchmark, there may be mechanisms available to phase in the impact of necessary adjustments over the year ahead. As to which awards containing undergraduate classifications ought to be the subject of a variation in this way, we suggest that

¹⁹³ Teachers decision [2021] FWCFB 2051 at [645].

¹⁹⁴ See *Aged Care Stage 1 decision* [2022] FWCFB 200 at [124].

the Panel might be more readily assured that it was taking an interim step toward gender equality by limiting itself to only acting in respect of an award which is both:

- a. among those 29 that contain classifications requiring undergraduate qualifications;¹⁹⁵ and
- b. appears in a list comprised of the modern awards identified in Table 5.2 of the Stage 1 Gender Research *plus any* additional awards identified through the process we suggest at paragraph 0 above.

407. As with the proposal at paragraph 388 above, we consider this approach should be qualified whereby any award is excluded from an adjustment through this process if any alternative application to consider work value in that award has already been undertaken or is at an advanced stage.

408. We would not resist the Panel taking a broader approach to the selection of awards in the interests of fairness, provided it was explicitly recognised that the broader issues of work value beyond qualifications alignment had not been thereby explored or addressed to finality in any award, irrespective of the relative gender representation among the workforce covered.

5.2 The gender pay gap

409. The need to consider the gender pay gap arises as a consideration under the minimum wages objective as a means to “achieve gender equality”, and as an incident of the requirement for fairness in both the minimum wages objective and the modern awards objective.¹⁹⁶ The gender pay gap also has significance for the Panel’s consideration of “promoting social inclusion through increased workforce participation”,¹⁹⁷ because it may have an effect on female participation in the workforce.¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, as identified in paragraph 0 above¹⁹⁹, raising modern award minimum rates may be expected to have some impact on reducing the gender pay gap.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ Set out in 4 Yearly Review of Modern Awards – Pharmacy Industry Award 2010 [2019] FWC 5934 at Attachment A.

¹⁹⁶ *Annual Wage Review 2017–2018* [2018] FWCFB 3500 at [36].

¹⁹⁷ FW Act s 284(1)(b), 134(1)(c).

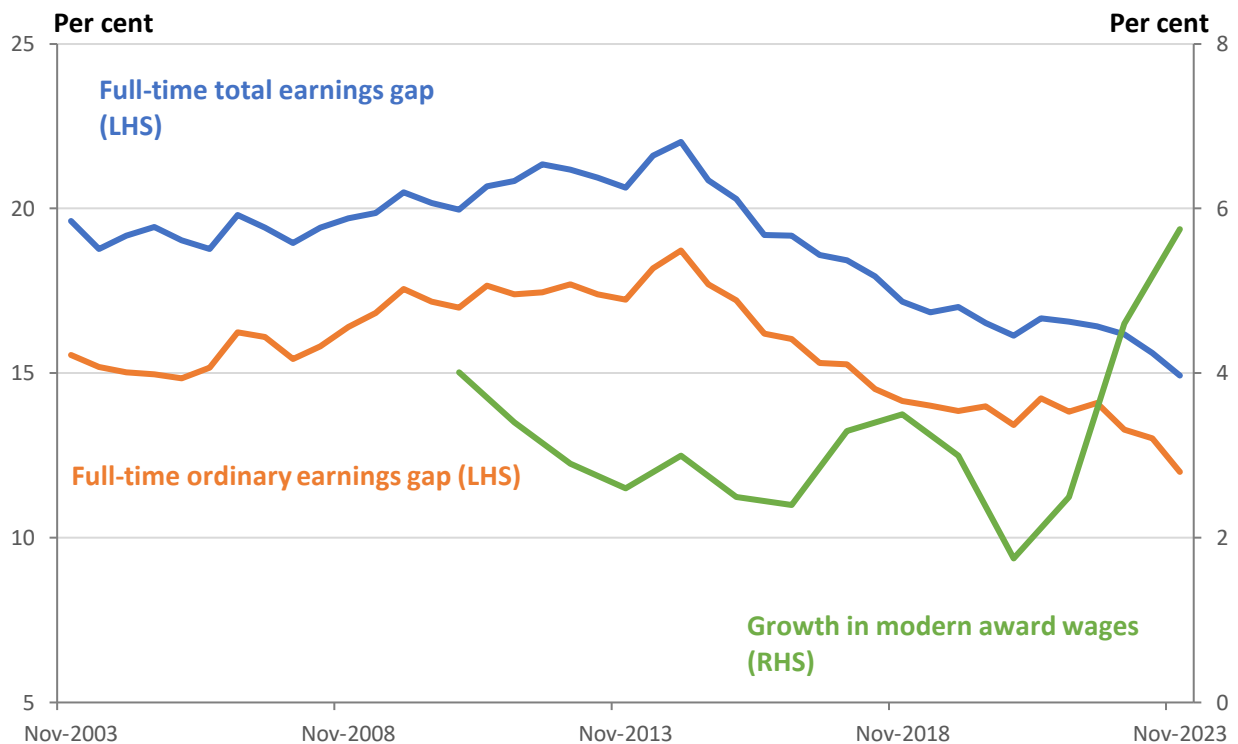
¹⁹⁸ *Annual Wage Review 2016–2017* [2017] FWCFB 3500 at [77].

¹⁹⁹ See also Chapter 3.

²⁰⁰ *Annual Wage Review 2022–2023* [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [9].

410. The gender pay gap is conventionally measured as a percentage measure of the difference between male and female full time average ordinary time weekly earnings. This is presented in Figure 177 below, along with a measure of movements in modern award minimum wages. The true gender pay gap, factoring in hours worked and all pay earned, is 26.7%²⁰¹ (falling from 28.1% in the last 12 months). Australia’s position relative to other nations has also improved recently: after falling from 15th to 43rd in the World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report over the 16-year period from 2006 to 2022, Australia has risen by 17 places to be ranked 26th in 2023.²⁰²

Figure 177: Gender pay gap (AWOTE FT), modern award wages



Source: ABS 6302 (seasonally adjusted, break in series at May 2012), FWC. % Adjustments for modern award minimum wages at the C10% level, to account for flat/hybrid increases in 2010 and 2022.

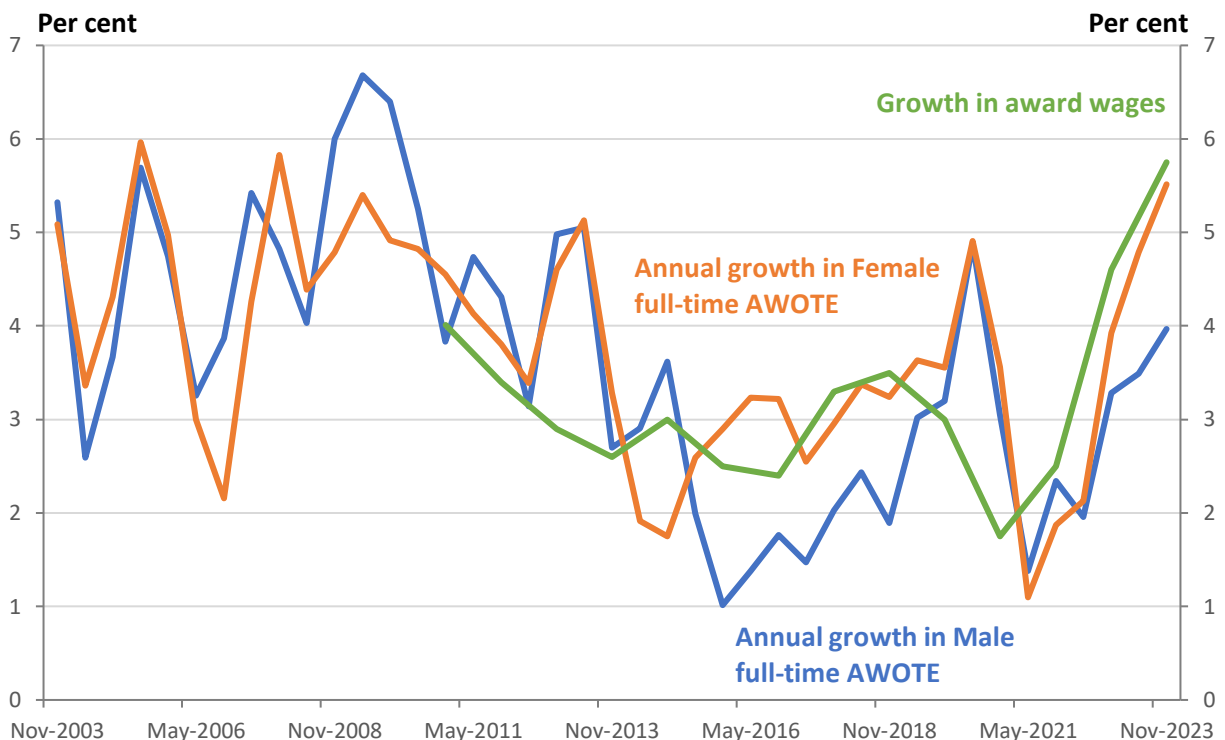
411. It should be noted that from the 2006-2010 period shown above, rates of pay were stripped from pre-modern awards and (in the federal system) relocated to the “Australian Pay and Classification Scales”, which were often not published (or not updated to reflect adjustments). This presented compliance barriers, particularly for businesses created after March 2006 which were not bound

²⁰¹ ABS (2024) Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, November 2023, Gender Pay Gap Measures.

²⁰² World Economic Forum (July 2023) [Global Gender Gap Report 2023](#).

by federal awards and may not have been familiar with the award from which an APCS was derived. By making some allowance for the unusual movements in earnings accompanying the mining boom and the regulatory response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there does appear to be some association between the maintenance and regular adjustment of modern award minimum wages and the levelling off thereafter reduction of the gender pay gap shown in Figure 177. The divergence in male and female wages associated with the mining boom is visible in Figure 178 below, along with a light pull factor on growth in female AWOTE from the Panel's decisions.

Figure 178: AWOTE FT (Male/Female) & growth, modern award wages



Source: ABS 6302 (seasonally adjusted, break in series at May 2012), FWC. % Adjustments for modern award minimum wages at the C10% level, to account for flat/hybrid increases in 2010 and 2022.

412. The most recent measures of the gender pay gap to November 2023 reflect not only the more substantial increases awarded in last year's Review, but likely also an impact from the 15% increase from July 2023 to aged care workers engaged in direct care. The current gender pay gap on a full time AWOTE basis is 12%, the lowest in the period shown above and the "lowest on

record” according to the ABS commentary accompanying the release of the data,²⁰³ falling from 13.3% in the last 12 months. On a total earnings basis for full time employees (i.e. including overtime, bonuses etc), the gender gap has fallen from 16.2% to 14.9%.

413. The WGEA also reports gender pay gap data from 2022-23, but for the private sector the aggregated published data only captures employers with 100 employees or more during the reporting period. In addition, rather than separating full time employees as the ABS earnings data does (which would itself tend to exclude a high proportion of women), it annualises and reports its data on a full-time equivalent basis,²⁰⁴ including average (mean) and median gender pay gap measures for both base salary and total remuneration. Each of these aggregate measures has modestly improved over the last 12 months and are the lowest WGEA has published to date (mean measures were available from 2013/14 and median measures from 2020/21).

Figure 179: Gender pay gap, WGEA aggregate measures, 2021/22 - 2022/23



Source: WGEA [Data Explorer](#)

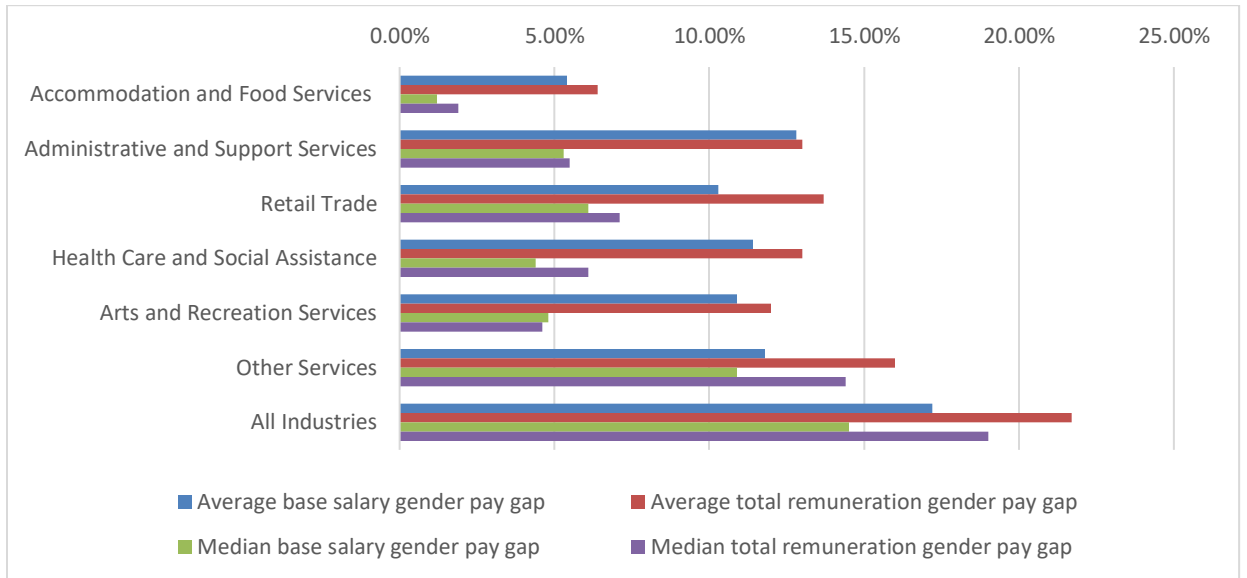
414. As stated above, WGEA reporting, and therefore the data, is limited to businesses with over 100 employees. Whilst this threshold is likely to exclude a proportion of award-reliant employers, there does seem to be a reduced gender pay gap on all measures in the more award reliant

²⁰³ <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/strong-growth-average-weekly-earnings>

²⁰⁴ See WGEA, [Employer Gender Pay Gap, Technical Guide](#).

industries relative to all industries, which is not reflected as strongly in the ABS data presented in Chart 11.1 of the *Statistical Report*.

Figure 180: Gender Pay Gap (WGEA measures), Award reliant industries



Source: WGEA Data explorer, ABS EEH. Top 6 most award reliant industries are ranked above from most award reliant to the least.

415. While the above would tend to indicate that the rates of pay set through the award system are more effective at addressing the gender pay gap for those who are award reliant, the reality of total earnings disparity between males and females continues to reflect a more fundamental imbalance not only in occupational segregation but also in workforce participation, forms of employment (and associated working hours) and caring responsibilities.

Table 11: Participation, earnings and award reliance measures, by gender

	Males	Females
Employment to population ratio (working age) ^(a)	82.8%	74.4%
Participation rate (working age) ^(b)	81.6%	77.3%
Proportion of award reliant workforce ^(c)	40.3%	59.7%
Proportion of casual award reliant workforce ^(d)	38.7%	61.3%
Average total cash earnings (weekly), award reliant ^(c)	\$934.50	\$817.10
Share of the low paid adult workforce ^(e)	45.1%	54.9%

Source: ^(a) Statistical Report (V1); Table 6.5-6.6; ^(b) Statistical Report (V1) Table 6.7; ^(c) ABS EEH (DC2, T1); ^(d) ABS EEH (DC2, T2); ^(e) Statistical Report (V1) Table 8.8.

416. The lesser opportunity for women to earn has lifelong and compounding effects, starkly visible when examining the superannuation balances of men and women at various age groups, as shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Superannuation balances by age and sex

Age	Males		Females		Gap (%) on Median	Gap (%) on Mean
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean		
15+	\$ 68,645.00	\$ 189,892.00	\$ 53,731.00	\$ 150,922.00	21.7	20.5
30 - 34	\$ 41,849.00	\$ 56,344.00	\$ 35,716.00	\$ 46,289.00	14.7	17.8
60-64	\$ 211,996.00	\$ 402,838.00	\$ 158,806.00	\$ 318,203.00	25.1	21.0

Source: [AFSA Superannuation Statistics, September 2023](#), ACTU calculations

417. The interaction of these earning effects with caring responsibilities for children is manifest, with the average age of award reliant women being 35.4 (men 33.7²⁰⁵) and the average age of first-time mothers being 29.7 years.²⁰⁶ The out-of-pocket costs of childcare have risen over recent years notwithstanding subsidies. Table 13 below estimates the proportion of weekly disposable income that would be required to be spent net of subsidies at two income levels, based on one child attending centre based care for 30 hours per week.

²⁰⁵ ABS EEH DC2, T1.

²⁰⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [Australia's Mothers and Babies](#), December 2023.

Table 13: Out of pocket costs for centre based care, proportion of disposable income, 2021-2023

	2021	2022	2023
Proportion (%) of \$55,000 gross income	4.1	4.2	4.5
Proportion (%) of \$55,000 net income	4.8	5.0	5.3
Proportion (%) of \$35,000 gross income	4.5	4.7	4.9
Proportion (%) of \$35,000 net income	5.0	5.2	5.4

Source: Productivity Commission, [Report on Government Services 2024](#) at Chapter B3, Table 3.4B; ATO [Personal Tax rates 2021-2023](#); ACTU calculations.

418. In 2023, 23.4% (± 4.9) of persons not in the labour force due to childcare responsibilities had that status due to the cost of childcare, up from 21.4% ($\pm 21.4\%$) in 2022.²⁰⁷ As well as impacting workforce participation, cost is a driver of decisions in partnered households as to which partner should take leave, and how much each should take. Whilst the statutory paid parental leave scheme and supporting unpaid parental leave entitlements in the FW Act are more flexible than in the past so as to support a less unequal distribution of caring roles, the most recent data (2021) suggests such flexible leave is poorly utilised, with only 9.6% of paid parental leave claims involving a component of flexible leave.²⁰⁸ The payment of the paid parental leave at the National Minimum Wage represents a key barrier to incentivising the more equitable distribution of caring roles. In the absence of employer specific schemes or a change to the statutory scheme, generous increases to the National Minimum Wage through the Panel's decision are the sole pathway to reducing the earnings gap associated with care and incentivising the more equitable distribution of caring roles.

²⁰⁷ Productivity Commission, Data Table 3A.38 in [Report on Government Services 2024](#) and [Report on Government Services 2023](#).

²⁰⁸ Baird, M. & Hill, E. (2022), [Next Steps for paid parental leave in Australia](#), A report commissioned by the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, November 2022, The University of Sydney, at Table 3.

6. SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH INCREASED WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION.

419. Past decisions of the Panel have held that the obligation in sections 134(1)(c) and 284(1)(b) of the Act to “take into account... the need to promote social inclusion through increased workforce participation” requires the Panel to consider the potential employment impacts of any increase to the NMW and modern award minimum wages, and that broader consideration of social inclusion is required when assessing other criteria:

“...We accept that our consideration of “social inclusion” in the context of s.284(1)(b) is limited to increased workforce participation. On that basis it is obtaining employment which is the focus of s.284(1)(b). This involves a consideration of the increased incentives that higher minimum wages can provide to those not in employment to seek paid work, balanced against potential impacts on the demand for low-paid workers and hence the supply of low-paid jobs, from large increases in minimum wages.

However, we also accept that modern award rates of pay impact upon an employee’s capacity to engage in community life and the extent of their social participation. These are matters that can be appropriately taken into account in our consideration of the legislative requirement to “maintain a safety net of fair minimum wages” and to take into account “the needs of the low paid” (s.284(1)(c)). Further, the broader notion of promoting social inclusion is also relevant to the fixation of minimum wages, quite apart from the more limited construct reflected in s.284(1)(b). One of the objects of the Act is to promote “social inclusion for all Australians by” (among other things) “ensuring a guaranteed safety net of fair, relevant and enforceable minimum terms and conditions through...modern awards and national minimum wage orders” (s.3(b)).²⁰⁹

420. Consistent with these observations, a broader assessment of social inclusion, including social exclusion resulting from income levels which “...limit employee’s capacity to engage in social, cultural, economic and political life”²¹⁰ is provided in Chapters 3 and 4. In this Chapter, we review the performance of the labour market by reference to the usual indicators and comment on its likely influences. We additionally review research on the interaction between minimum wages and employment.

²⁰⁹ [2013] FWCFB 4000 at [101]-[102]

²¹⁰ [2022] FWCFB 200 [1031], [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [119] - [122], [467]

421. Last year’s decision to significantly adjust the national minimum wage and modern award minimum wages was made with clear appreciation of the labour market context, the Panel observing that the labour market was “close to its strongest point in about 50 years, but has begun to show signs of weakening”²¹¹, with “slowing economic growth depressing demand for labour and increased immigration increasing supply.”²¹² Conditions this year have indeed weakened as the Panel predicted, but this does not rule out a further meaningful adjustment.

422. Indeed, the unemployment rate only has only risen above 4 per cent once since last year’s decision, an increase that can be attributed to a higher than usual number of people who were not employed but were starting a new job or returning to work in the near future.²¹³ The official forecasts relied on in the Panel’s decision may have set expectations too pessimistically.

6.1 Employment growth and participation

423. As elucidated in Chapter 2, the labour market has remained remarkably resilient in the face of an easing in growth and the on-going cost of living crisis, although as expected by official forecasters there are signs of cooling.

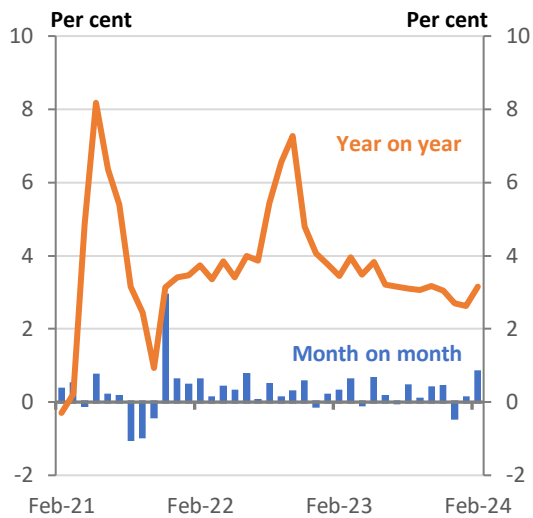
424. Employment growth eased over 2023, although picked up in February 2024 with an annual growth of 3.2 per cent, which is above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 1.8 per cent (see Figure 181). The unemployment rate remains below the pre-pandemic average (see Figure 5 Chapter 2).

²¹¹ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [71].

²¹² [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [73]

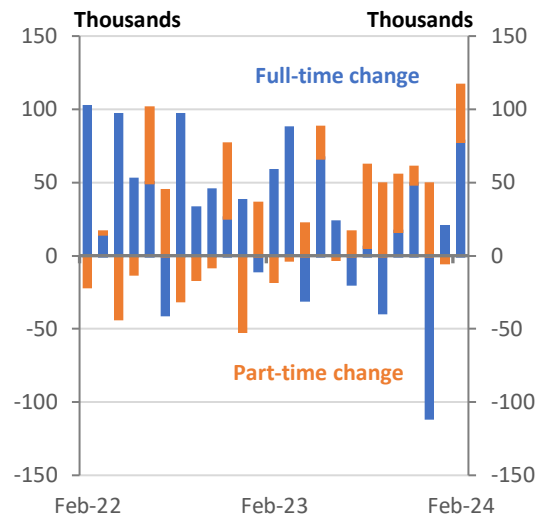
²¹³ [Unemployment rate rises to 4.1 per cent in January | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](https://abs.gov.au/news-releases/unemployment-rate-rises-to-4.1-per-cent-in-january)

Figure 181: Employment growth



ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 182: Level change in employment



425. Strength in labour market conditions since COVID-19 (see Figure 8 in Chapter 2) has provided opportunities for full-time work and employment more generally for those cohorts that usually have less favourable labour market opportunities. For example, full-time employment has grown more strongly for females post-COVID than has part-time work (see Figure 184).

Figure 183: Index of male employment by type

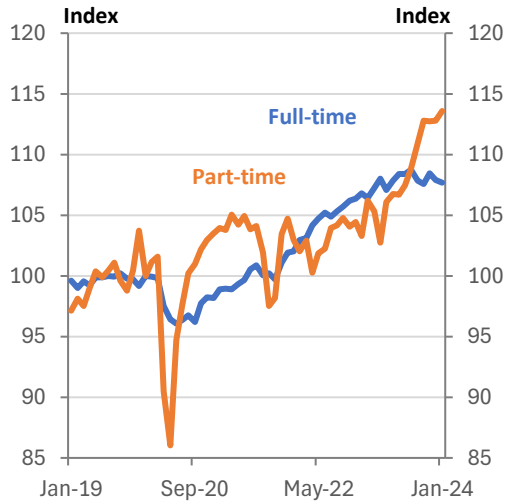


Figure 184: Index of female employment by type

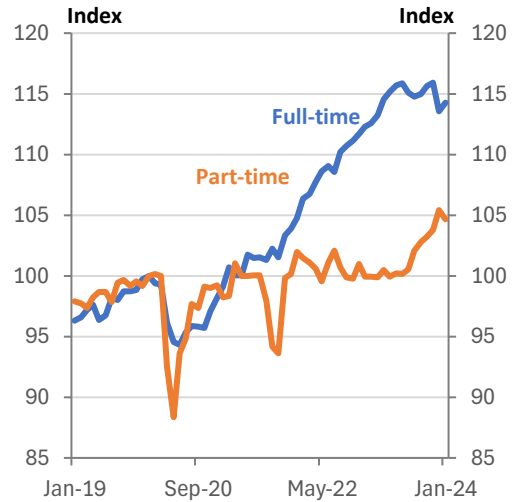


Figure 185: Index of male youth employment by type

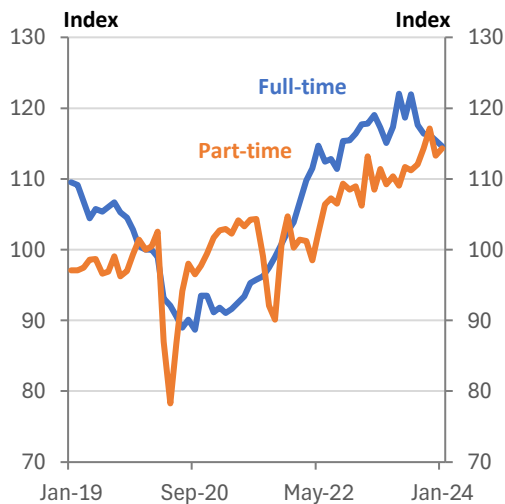
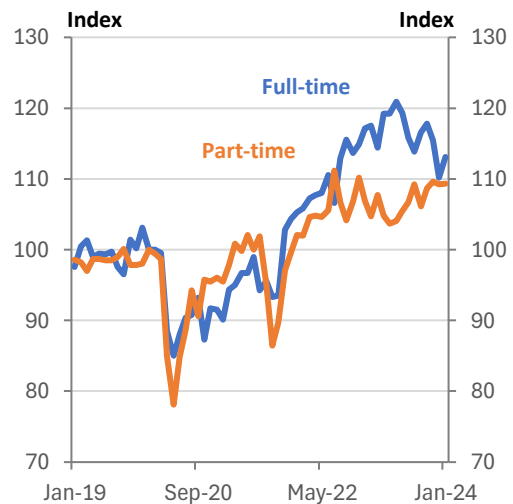


Figure 186: Index of female youth employment by type

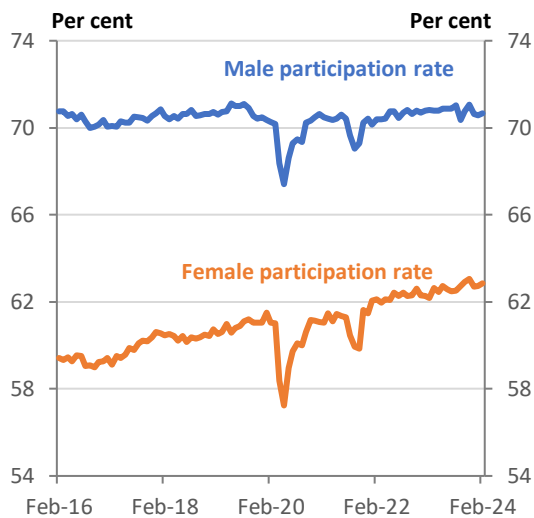


ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU Calculations

426. Further, a widening gap emerged between increases in full-time and part-time employment for females aged 15-24 from around December 2022. For males aged 15-24 increases in full-time work outpaced part-time work from early 2022 (see Figure 185 and Figure 186). However, these marked gaps have narrowed as the economy has come off the boil and labour market conditions have eased as expected, while remaining well above pre-COVID levels.

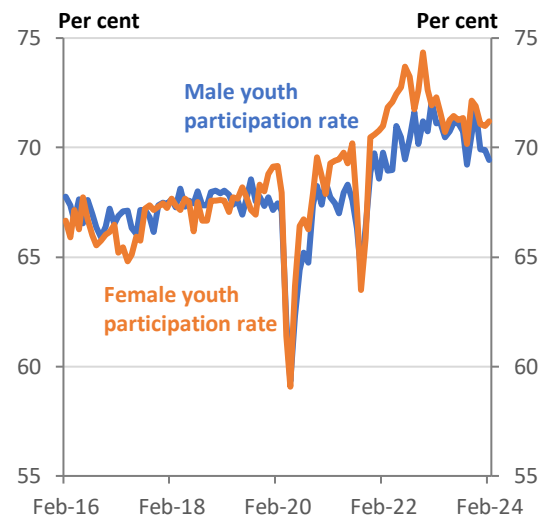
427. Consistent with the aggregate economy (see Figure 6 in Chapter 2), the strong demand for labour that increased overall participation elicited a response that favoured similar cohorts to those securing increased full-time work. While male participation stayed around the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 71.3 per cent, the female participation rate picked up, peaking at 63.0 per cent in November 2023 and easing only slightly to 62.8 per cent in February 2024, above the pre-pandemic average of 59.3 per cent (see Figure 187).

Figure 187: Participation rate by sex



ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 188: Youth participation rate by sex



428. The pick-up in the male youth participation rate after COVID-19 was more pronounced as labour market conditions tightened, staying above the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 67.9 per cent over 2022 and 2023 before easing off to 69.4 per cent in February 2024. A similar outcome emerged for female youth participation, which was above the pre-pandemic average of 66.9 per cent from the closing months of 2021 through to 2023, remaining above that average in February 2024 when the participation rate rose to 71.2 per cent (see Figure 188).

429. That female and male youth participation and full-time employment remain above pre-pandemic levels, even as labour demand slows as expected, shows a remarkable resilience in the economy. It also reflects a supply impulse likely driven by young workers seizing of the best

opportunity in decades to enter the labour market alongside the driving need to combat cost of living by working more hours as real income slips.

6.2 The unemployment rate is below pre-pandemic averages

430. Consistent with the aggregate picture (see Figure 5 in Chapter 2), declines in unemployment and underemployment have been broad based and remain well below pre-pandemic averages.
431. In aggregate, the unemployment rate rose over the course of 2023, as expected by official forecasters, although has remained below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 5.5 per cent, having averaged 3.7 per cent over the last twelve months. The faster than expected decline in inflation alongside an increase in labour supply would suggest the economy is able to maintain an unemployment rate below the level prevailing prior to the pandemic that is consistent with price stability and inflation within the RBA's target band.
432. The unemployment rate for males has ticked up slightly in line with the expected easing in labour market conditions, although declined slightly to 3.8 per cent in February 2024, having been within the range of 3.2 per cent to 4.2 per cent since January 2022, still well below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 5.5 per cent (see Figure 189).

Figure 189: Unemployment rate by sex

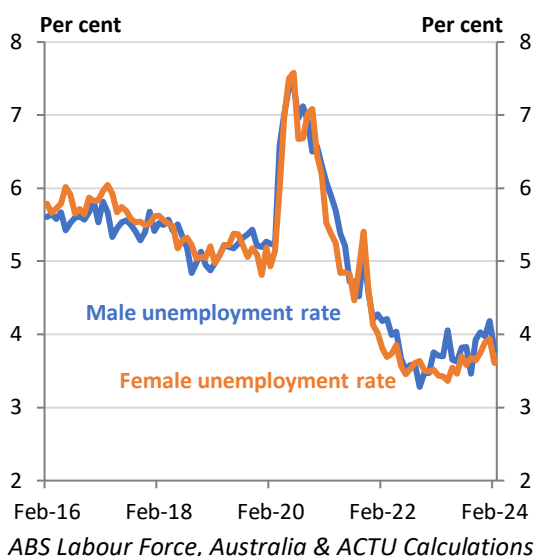
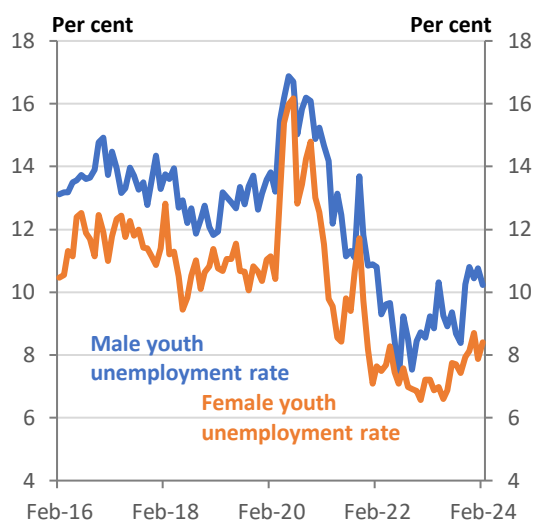


Figure 190: Youth unemployment by sex

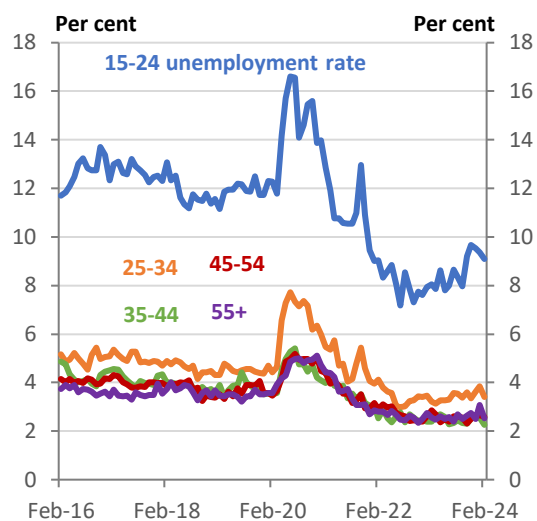


433. The unemployment rate for females has followed the same trajectory, also declining slightly in February 2024 to 3.6 per cent even as the economy slows. The February result was well below the pre-pandemic average of 5.6 per cent (see Figure 189). The female unemployment rate has been within the range of 3.3 per cent to 4.0 per cent since January 2022.

434. Youth unemployment rates have also ticked up slightly while remaining below pre-pandemic averages (see Figure 190). The male youth unemployment rate declined to 10.2 per cent in February 2024, up from 9.2 per cent a year earlier, although is still below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 13.1 per cent. The female youth unemployment rate increased to 8.4 per cent in the second month of 2024, up from 7.2 per cent in February 2023 but remaining below the 11.3 per cent average prevailing before the pandemic.

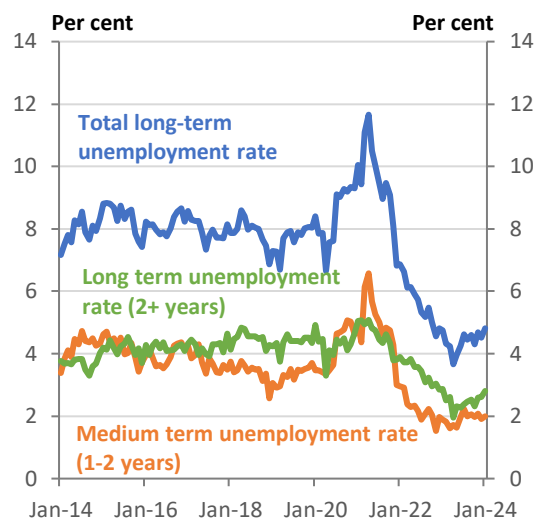
435. Declines in the unemployment rate have also been broad based across age cohorts, with the decline most pronounced for those between 15-24 years of age (see Figure 191). Across all five age cohorts the February 2024 unemployment rate was below the 10-year pre-pandemic average.

Figure 191: Unemployment rate by age bracket



ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 192: Long-term unemployment rates



ABS Labour Force, Detailed, Australia & ACTU Calculations

436. Strong labour market conditions have also provided opportunities for the long-term unemployed to re-enter the workforce, precipitating falls in the long-term unemployment rate. The unemployment rate for workers out of employment for 1-2 years has remained broadly steady at 2.0 per cent as of January 2024, up slightly from 1.9 per cent in January 2023 and well below the 3.5 per cent unemployment rate prevailing on average in the 10 years prior to the pandemic (see Figure 192).

437. Similarly, the unemployment rate for workers out of employment for 2+ years has declined to 2.8 per cent as of January 2024, down slightly down on the 2.9 per cent prevailing in January 2023 and also below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 3.6 per cent.

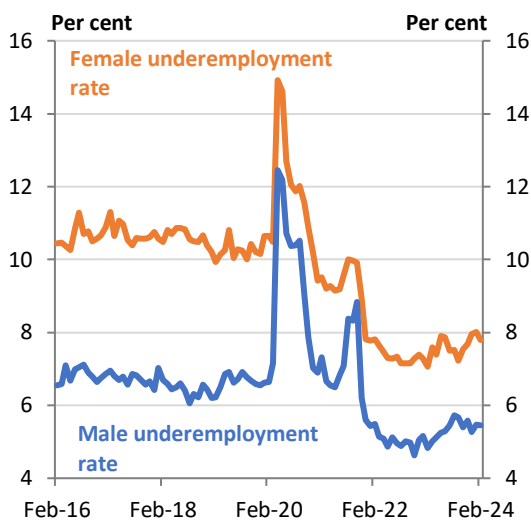
6.3 The underemployment rate is also below pre-pandemic averages

438. The underemployment rate has also ticked up for a broad range of cohorts over recent months, consistent with the RBA’s analysis that hours worked ‘have continued to act as an important margin of adjustment to the moderation in labour demand growth in recent months.’²¹⁴

²¹⁴ [Economic Conditions | Statement on Monetary Policy – February 2024 | RBA](#)

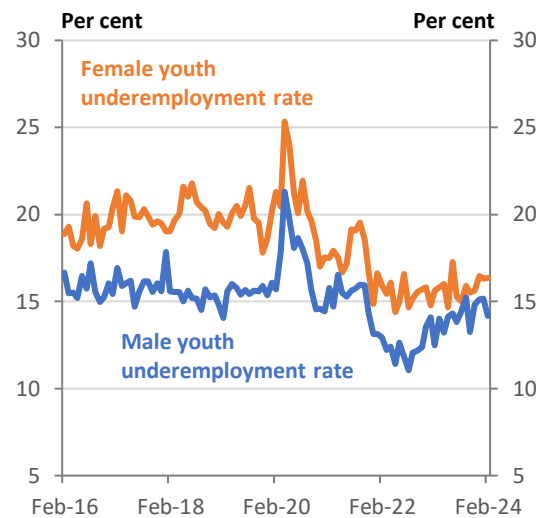
439. For males, the underemployment rate was flat in February 2024 at 5.5 per cent, although up from 4.8 per cent a year earlier while remaining below the pre-pandemic average of 6.1 per cent. For females, the underemployment rate declined to 7.8 per cent in February compared to January, although was up from 7.1 per cent in February 2023 and also notably below the 10-year pre-pandemic average of 10.0 per cent (see Figure 193).

Figure 193: Underemployment rate by sex



ABS Labour Force, Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 194: Youth underemployment rate by sex



440. Consistent with hours being adjusted as the economy slows, female youth underemployment was steady at 16.3 per cent in January and February 2024, while remaining below the pre-pandemic average of 18.0 per cent (see Figure 194). The male youth underemployment rate declined in February to 14.2 per cent, although is above the 10-year pre pandemic average of 13.9 per cent.

441. The upwards arc in unemployment and underemployment rates over 2023, alongside a narrowing gap between full-time and part-time employment, are both consistent with the expected easing in labour market conditions as the economy slows. However, unemployment rates and underemployment rates across a broad range of cohorts remaining below pre-pandemic averages is consistent with on-going strength in labour demand and a solid supply

response as workers endure the current cost of living crisis and seek more hours to pay bills and make ends meet as real income declines and the price of essentials increases.

6.4 Labour market conditions across industries

442. The resilience of the labour market and the drive to seek employment to manage rising living costs alongside a slowing in growth is reflected in the broad based growth in employment across industries.

443. Employment growth over the year to December 2023 has been sturdy, rising in annual terms in eleven industries. Those industries seeing annual declines in employment are as expected with the economy adjusting to slower growth and reversing some post-COVID shifts in patterns of activity, for example as conditions in the housing construction sector become more challenging; as consumers gradually begin to shift away from goods based consumption in sectors such as Retail trade and Wholesale trade to more services based consumption (noting the cost of living crisis has changed the pace of this process); and as the cost of living crisis results in a scaling back in some discretionary industries after a rapid post-COVID boom in industries such as Accommodation and food services (see Figure 195 and Figure 196).

Figure 195: Employment growth in non-award reliant industries, Dec-23

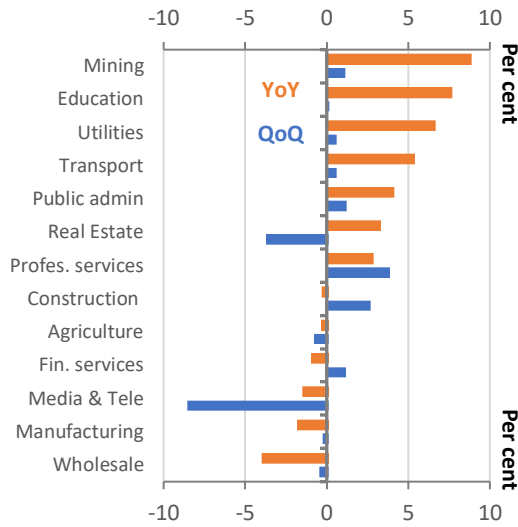
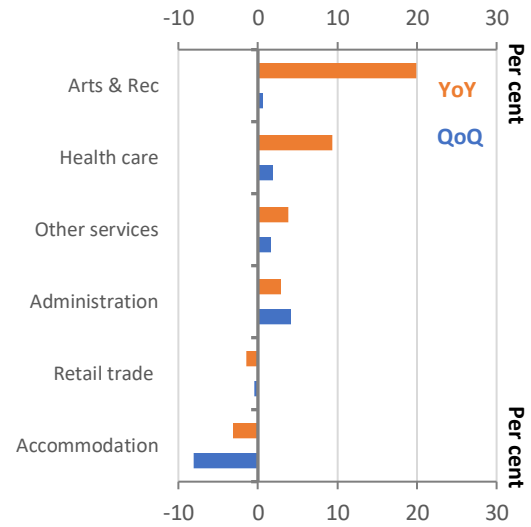


Figure 196: Employment growth in award reliant industries, Dec-23



ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations
 Note: Utilities refers to Electricity, gas, water and waste services

444. Employment growth across industries can be explained entirely with reference to on-going macroeconomic processes and adjustments, most notably the cost of living crisis and rebound in net migration and inbound tourism exports, suggesting there no dis-employment effects from the Panel’s most recent Review decision.

445. It is worth noting that almost all industries, apart from Accommodation and food services, have experienced solid growth since COVID-19, reflecting overall positive business conditions and adequacy of demand after movement restrictions were lifted and borders reopened (see Figure 197 and Figure 198).

Figure 197: Employment growth in non-award reliant industries since Dec-19

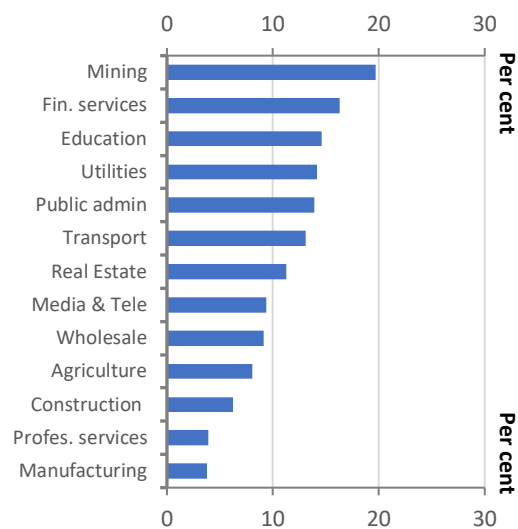
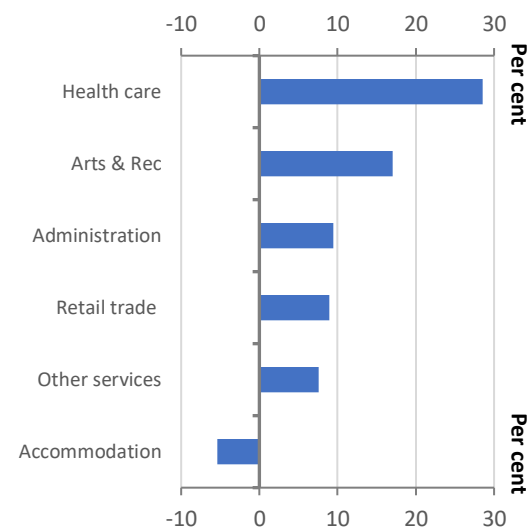


Figure 198: Employment growth in award reliant industries since Dec-19



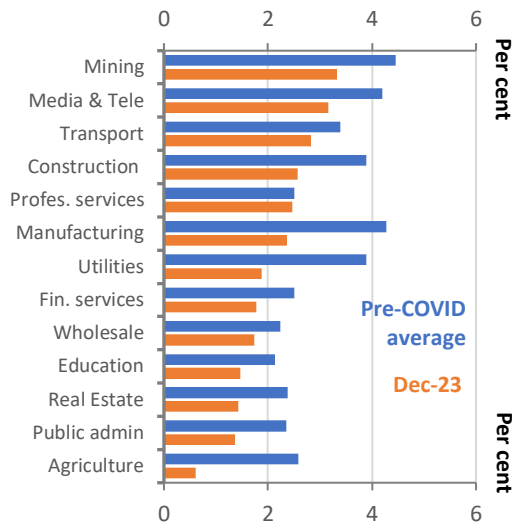
ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

446. The decline relative to Dec-19 in Accommodation and food services has only occurred as of the December quarter 2023, likely due to workers scaling back discretionary spending as conditions become more challenging amidst the cost of living crisis. As of September 2023, employment in this industry was 3.0 per cent higher than Dec-19.

447. Further reflecting favourable labour market conditions across industries, the unemployment rate is below 10-year pre-pandemic averages in almost all industries (Figure 199 and Figure 200), with Professional, scientific and technical services the only industry with a comparable unemployment rate.

448. Across industries, the underemployment rate is also generally below the 10-year pre-pandemic average. As with the unemployment rate, Professional, scientific and technical services is one of the few industries with a comparable underemployment rate to the pre-pandemic average. Electricity, gas, water and waste services is the only industry with an underemployment rate above the pre-pandemic average (see Figure 201). Importantly, the underemployment rate as of December 2023 is below the 10-year pre-pandemic average for all award reliant industries (see Figure 202).

Figure 199: Unemployment rates compared to pre-COVID average for non-Award reliant industries



ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 200: Unemployment rates compared to pre-COVID average for Award reliant industries

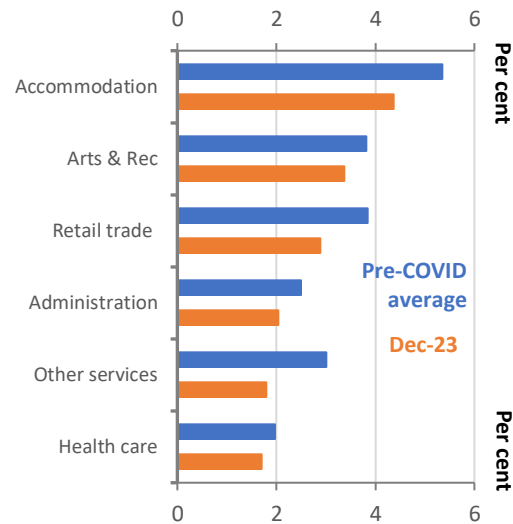
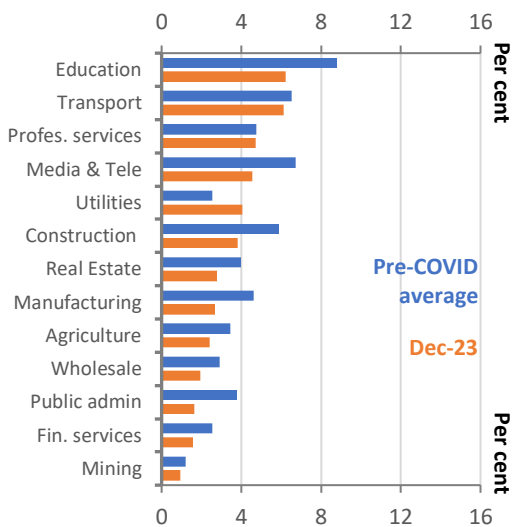
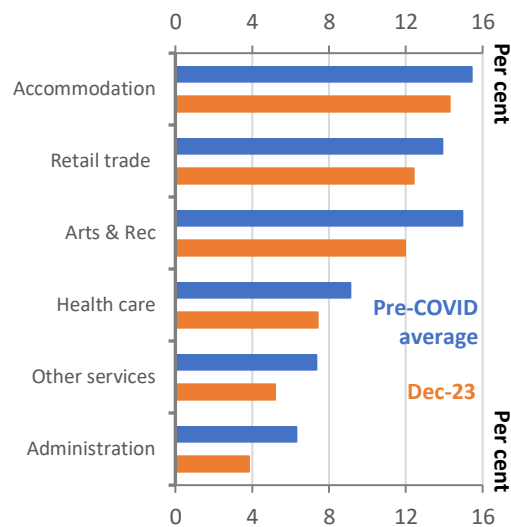


Figure 201: Underemployment rates compared to pre-COVID average for non-Award reliant industries



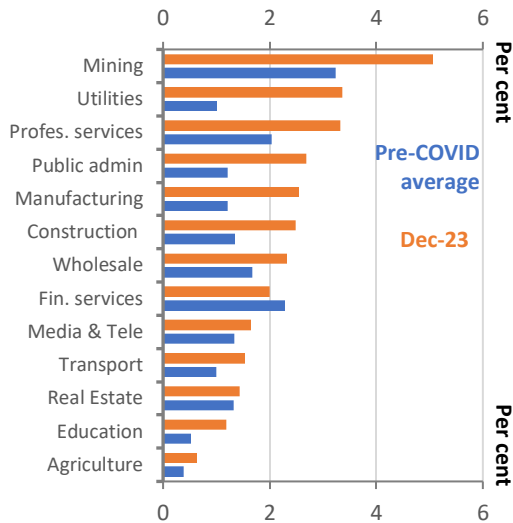
ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 202: Underemployment rates compared to pre-COVID average for Award reliant industries



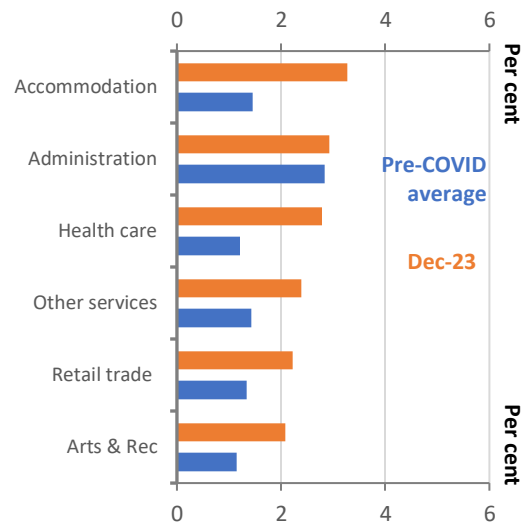
449. Perhaps illustrating the convergence of positive business conditions and profitability; favourable labour market conditions; and a cost of living crisis for workers is the combination of elevated job vacancy rates with above average multiple job holding rates.

Figure 203: Vacancy rates compared to pre-COVID average for non-Award reliant industries



ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

Figure 204: Vacancy rates compared to pre-COVID average for Award reliant industries



450. In all industries except Financial services, the job vacancy rate as of December 2023 exceeds that of the 10-year pre-pandemic (see Figure 203) and Administrative and support services and Rental, hiring and real estate services are the only industries with a vacancy rate on par with the pre-pandemic average, although the current vacancy does just barely exceed that of the pre-pandemic average. In seven industries the difference between the most recent vacancy rate and the pre-pandemic average exceeds one percentage point and in another three it is very close to one percentage point.

451. Alongside the elevated vacancy rate, which suggests on-going demand for labour and the capacity to pay for those workers by business, is an increase in the multiple job holding rate in every industry relative to pre-pandemic averages. In all nineteen industries the most recent rate of multiple job holding exceeds that of the 10-year pre-pandemic average and in all but one industry by at least 0.5 percentage points (see Figure 205 and Figure 206).

452. The most straightforward interpretation of increases in multiple job holding across all industries relative to pre-COVID averages is that workers are making the most of the current labour market

conditions to work the hours they wish, an opportunity available to them for the first time in decades. In addition to this, many will be doing so to ensure they are earning enough income to combat the cost of living crisis workers are currently enduring, a cost of living crisis due to high inflation that workers had no hand in causing.

Figure 205: Multiple job holding rate compared to pre-COVID average for non-Award reliant industries

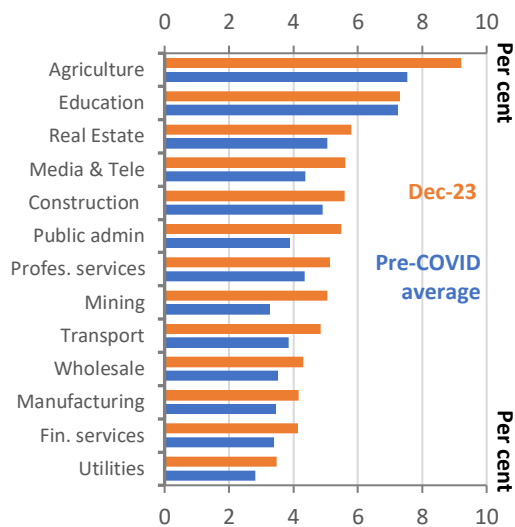
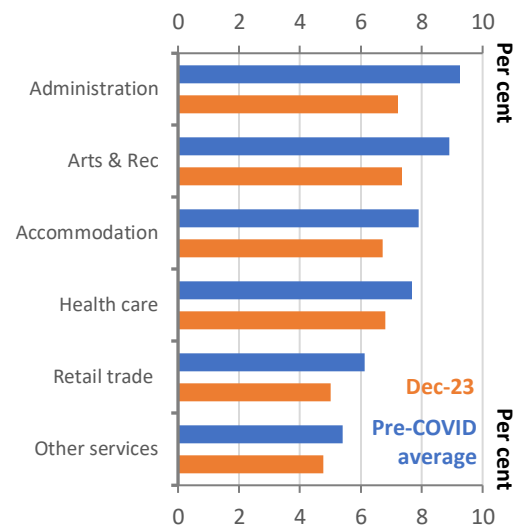


Figure 206: Multiple job holding rate compared to pre-COVID average for Award reliant industries



ABS Labour Account Australia & ACTU Calculations

453. Given the on-going cost of living crisis and the apparent need for businesses to bring on more labour to meet demand (a level of demand which remains solid even as the economy slows in expected ways), an increase in minimum and award wages consistent with the rise argued for in this submission may provide additional incentive for more workers to enter the workforce to fill these vacancies while also providing support to workers currently struggling to make ends meet in the current cost of living crisis.

454. Such a rise would also be consistent with the Federal Government’s overall economic strategy, while remaining consistent with a return of inflation to target in a reasonable timeframe. Treasurer Jim Chalmers told a press conference following the release of the December national accounts, referring to the revised Stage 3 tax cuts that:

“...one of our defining economic goals...is to get take-home pay stronger so people can deal with these cost of living pressures, provide for their loved ones and get ahead.”²¹⁵

455. Further, given the remarkable resilience of the labour market alongside an easing in inflation, it has become plausible that estimates of the sustainable rate of unemployment consistent with price stability may be lower than previously supposed. The view is consistent with that of the Treasury Secretary, Dr. Steven Kennedy, who told the Senate Economics Legislation Committee on 14 February 2024 that:

“What appears to be the case is that...we can sustain an unemployment rate in the low fours on an ongoing basis.”²¹⁶

456. It is not implausible that one the reasons the unemployment rate was so high prior to the pandemic was because of insufficient demand, in part driven by the previous Government’s desire to maintain a low rate of wage growth (see Chapter 2).

457. This would suggest that key to maintaining a lower unemployment rate and underemployment rate is sufficient demand, with a solid increase in award and minimum wages as argued for in this submission potentially able to contribute to such an outcome rather than putting the current low unemployment rate in jeopardy, given the lack of evidence for any dis-employment effects arising from the Panel’s previous decisions – a proposition supported by the increase in the participation rate since September 2023.

458. Whether Dr Kennedy’s estimate of low fours proves to be accurate or if the number is indeed lower than a four remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the Panel should have confidence that a plausible outcome of increasing minimum and award wages is a further inducement of labour supply to fill business’ vacancies; the maintenance of sufficient demand to maintain low unemployment and underemployment rates; and the provision of support for workers at the lower end of the income distribution currently struggling with elevated living costs.

²¹⁵ [Press conference, Canberra | Treasury Ministers](#)

²¹⁶ [ParlInfo - Economics Legislation Committee : 14/02/2024 : Estimates : TREASURY PORTFOLIO : Department of the Treasury \(aph.gov.au\)](#)

7. SECURE WORK

459. The requirement to take into account “the need to improve access to secure work”²¹⁷ applies in relation to modern award minimum wages. As noted by the Panel in last year’s decision, this is an element of the modern awards objective which is most relevant when considering the terms of modern awards that impact the capacity of employees to choose to enter into secure work, and is of limited relevance to the adjustment of modern award minimum wages, except perhaps the casual loading.²¹⁸ The degree to which modern awards provide secure work has been recognised as relating to how those awards govern the regularity and predictability of hours of work and income, and restrict the capacity of employers to terminate at will.²¹⁹ The availability of secure work has also been recognised as a potential factor in workforce participation and retention.²²⁰

460. The presence or absence of paid leave entitlements is generally the proxy used to distinguish casual employment from other forms of work. As noted in Chapter 3, an overwhelming and disproportionate share of award reliant workers are engaged in casual work: 66.6 per cent of National Minimum Wage employees are casual, 48.3 per cent of award reliant employees are casual, yet only 13.9 per cent of non-award reliant employees are casual. This is reflected somewhat in the relationship between the distribution of earnings of employees and the availability of leave entitlements, as shown in Figure 207 below.

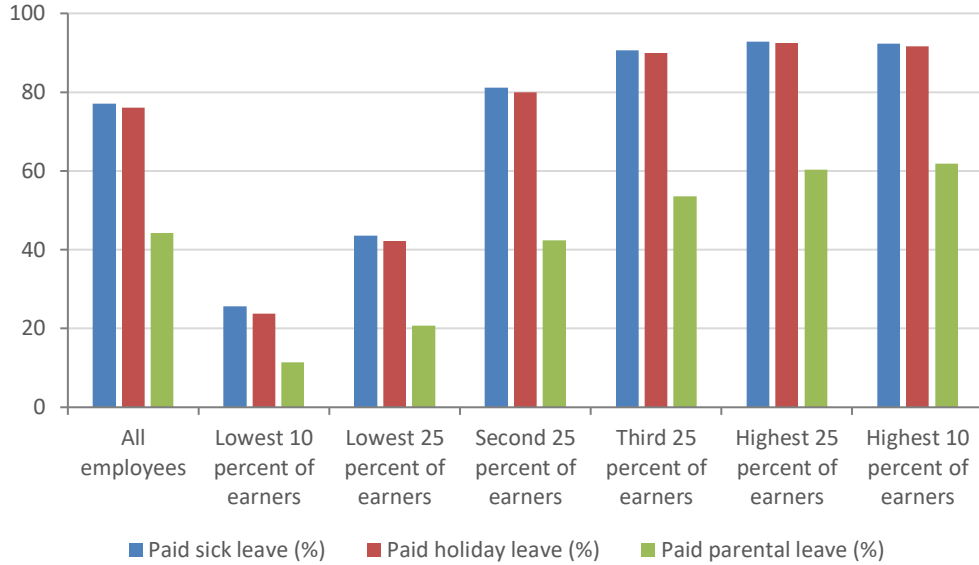
²¹⁷ FW Act s. 134(1)(aa)

²¹⁸ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [30]

²¹⁹ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [28].

²²⁰ [2023] FWCFB 93 at [171].

Figure 207: Paid leave by lower and higher paid workers (2022)



Source: Reproduced from ABS, Working Arrangements, August 2023

461. Whilst the definition of casual employment was subject to legislative intervention in 2022 and there are further amendments to take effect in August of this year, it remains in both practical and legal terms characterised in part by an absence of an advance commitment to ongoing work and, in most contexts, an absence of paid leave entitlements.

462. The amendments due to take effect in August 2024 will alter the operation of the statutory pathway from which a casual employee can become a permanent employee with their existing employer. Beyond this pathway to secure work, there are less formal pathways available to existing employees at the workplace level, as well as pathways available by transitioning from one employer to another, or from unemployment to secure work.

463. From the data presented in Chart 12.2 of the statistical report, it is clear that casual work is predominantly done by those working less than full-time hours, particularly women. It is also evident from Charts 12.1 and 12.2 of the statistical report that the share of casual work appears to be settling at below its pandemic average. As we have demonstrated in Chapter 2 and 6, full-time employment growth has been strong post the pandemic recovery. On a seasonally adjusted

basis, there were 147,000 more people in full time work over the year to February. Quarterly labour force detailed data shows growth of 4.6 per cent in the number of employees with paid leave entitlements over the year to November, relative to the 0.1 per cent growth in employees without those entitlements over that period. It is not reasonable to conclude from this that the increase in wages awarded in last year's Review reduced the choice of employees to engage in secure work. Whilst we accept that transitions in and out of non-casual work are largely a function of demand in labour intensive service industries, it is also true that demand shocks (outside of the pandemic shock that were induced by public health orders) are more likely to be accompanied by changes in hours of work rather than job losses under present workplace relations settings.²²¹

464. A recent examination of the stepping stone effect of casual employment by Cai²²², using HILDA data, is illuminating. The stepping stone effect which the study is designed to test for is the extent to which a casual employee has better prospects of transitioning into permanent work than a person who is unemployed, on a year on year basis. Cai directs some criticism to other authors for focussing on essentially the wrong question, by modelling only the transitions of casual employees to other labour market states. We suggest that both issues may be of interest to the Panel, particularly the second in connection with the requirement to take into account the need to improve access to secure work. The results presented by Cai address both.

465. Cai builds on previous examinations with the benefit of a longer period of observations in the HILDA data, and posits that the difference observed in results of an earlier study by Wooden *et al* are sensitive to differences in labour market performance between the HILDA Waves occurring before and after the "great recession" following the GFC. Cai adopts a similar modelling technique to Wooden, and finds the following stepping stone effects:

- a. For the period 2002 to 2008, findings broadly consistent with Wooden:
 - i. Casually employed males had a 5.8 per cent greater chance, compared to unemployed males, of transitioning into permanent employment in one year to the next;

²²¹ Productivity Commission 2015, Workplace Relations Framework, Final Report, Canberra, at 128-129.

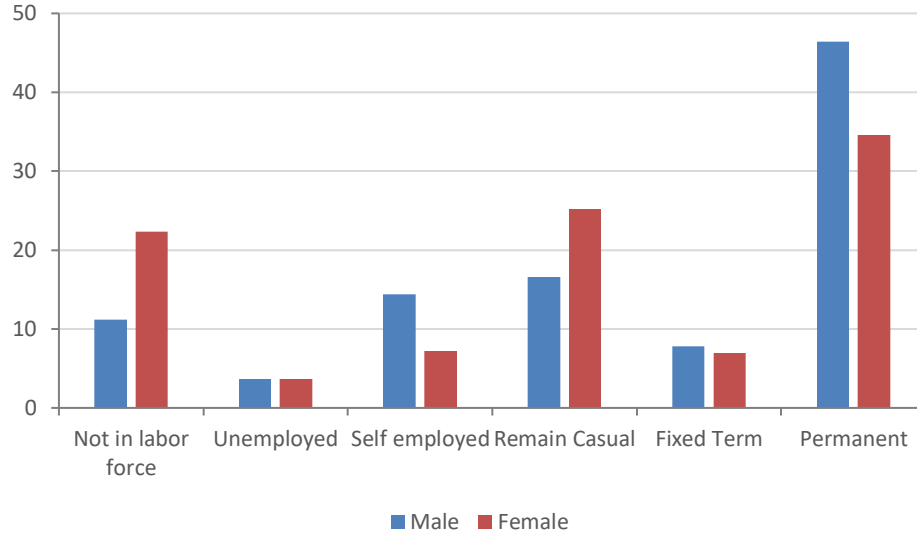
²²² Cai, L., "The Steppingstone effect of Casual Employment in Australia: A Re-examination".

- ii. Casually employed females had a 0.5 per cent lesser chance, compared to unemployed females, of transitioning to permanent employment in one year to the next.
- b. For the period the 2009-2019:
 - i. Casually employed males had a 6.4 per cent greater chance, compared to unemployed males, of transitioning into permanent employment in one year to the next;
 - ii. Casually employed females had a 4.3 per cent greater chance, compared to unemployed females, of transitioning into permanent employment in one year to the next.
- c. For the entire 2002-2019 period:
 - i. Casually employed males had a 5.9 per cent greater chance, compared to unemployed males, of transitioning into permanent employment in one year to the next;
 - ii. Casually employed females had a 4.3 per cent greater chance, compared to unemployed females, of transitioning into permanent employment in one year to the next.

466. On further investigation, Cai finds that the stepping stone effect for women is entirely a result of the second period, perhaps more significantly, entirely attributable to a downward shift in the probability of unemployed women finding a permanent job in the second period (down from 35.2 per cent to 28.3 per cent), rather than an improvement in the prospects of casually employed females finding permanent work (which in fact decreased over the period from 34.6 per cent to 32.6 per cent). The comparative probabilities calculated by Cai include those which relate to the prospects of casually employed workers transitioning to different labour market states in either period.

467. Figure 208 below, based on the first period of Cai's analysis, coincided with stronger labour market performance than the second. A clear gendered effect is evident in the much stronger likelihood of women to remain in casual employment or exit the labour force compared to men in this period.

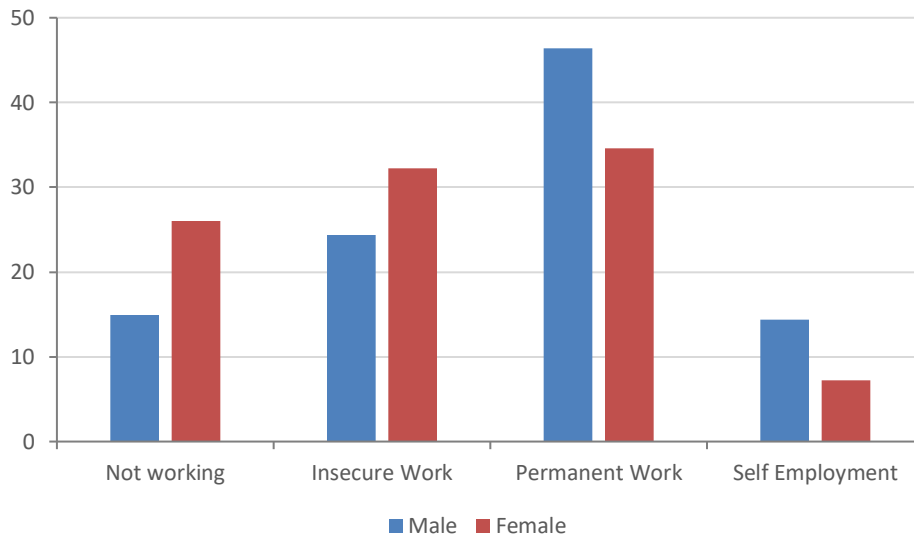
Figure 208: Labour Market Transitions of Casual Employees, 2002-2008



Source: Cai (2023), Table 4

468. By summing the categories of transition, as in Figure 209 below, a clear picture emerges of men having a far greater pathway to secure work than women, with women having close to an even chance of finding permanent work versus remaining in insecure work.

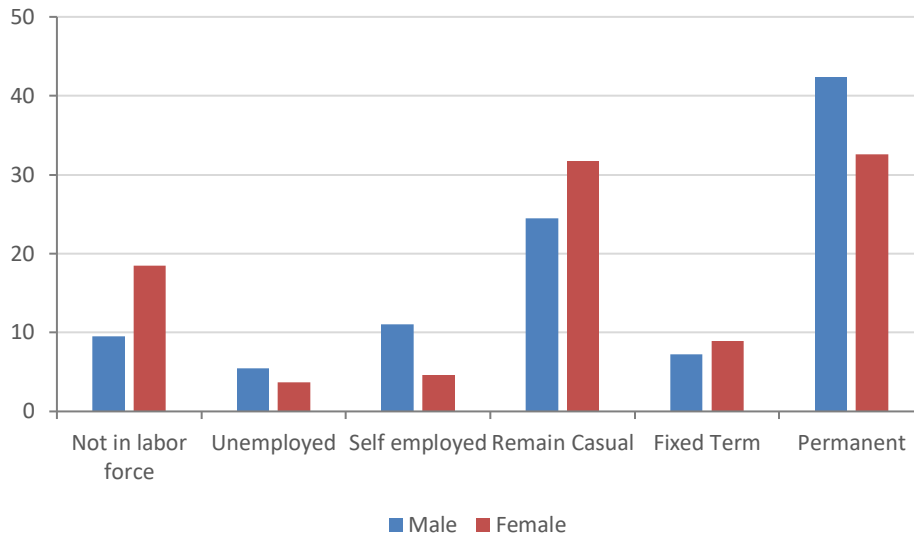
Figure 209: Labour Market Transitions of Casual Employees, 2002-2008 (summed categories)



Source: Cai (2023), Table 4. Categories: Not working=Unemployed+NILF; Insecure Work=Remain Casual+Fixed term.

469. A similar gendered pattern is seen in the results for the second period of Cai’s analysis, although the probability of both men and women remaining in casual employment is higher and the probability of transitioning to permanent work is lower.

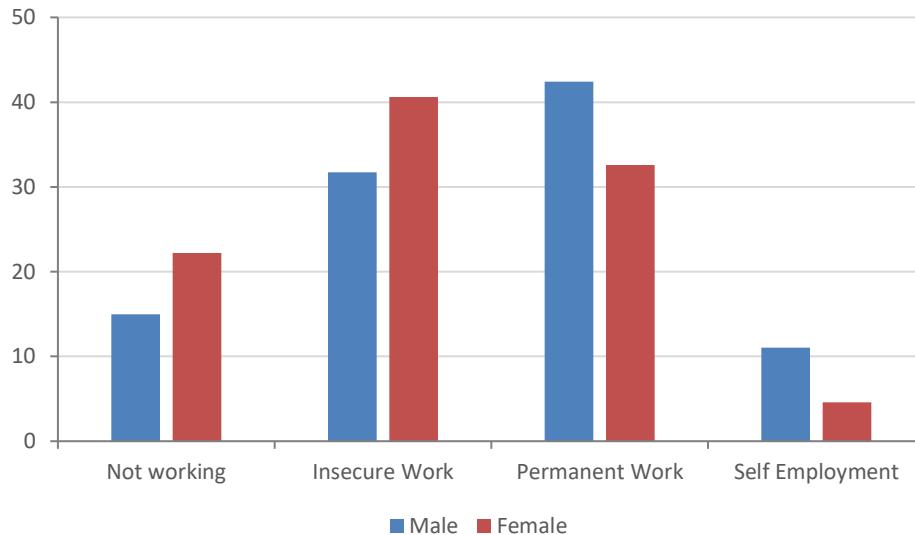
Figure 210: Labour Market Transitions of Casual Employees, 2009-2019



Source: Cai (2023), Table 4.

470. The summation of categories for this period reveals that for women the probability of remaining in insecure work is in fact higher than remaining in permanent work, and the gap between those two options for men has narrowed considerably.

Figure 211: Labour Market Transitions of Casual Employees, 2009-2019 (summed categories)



Source: Cai (2023), Table 4. Categories as per Figure 209.

471. As noted above, the explanation posited by Cai of the differing results between periods is broadly weaker labour market performance in the 2009-2019 period. In our view, it is also possible that regulatory factors are also at play at different times in the period analysed.
472. From the commencement of Cai’s first period of analysis in 2002 until 2006, at least some State and Federal Awards provided for a pathway from casual employment to permanent employment via casual conversion terms. From March 2006, casual conversion terms in Federal Awards ceased to be allowable award matters by virtue of sections 515(1)(b) and 525 of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* as amended by the *Workplace Relations (Work Choices) Amendment Act 2005*. However, they remained effective in the “Notional Agreements Preserving State Awards” that were based on the content of State Awards in effect prior to the amendment.
473. Casual conversion entitlements were reinstated in federal modern awards effective from 2010 only where the Award Modernisation Full Bench took the view that they were an industry standard, or in exceptional circumstances. The result was a somewhat narrower coverage (in terms of employee numbers) of casual conversion clauses in State and Federal Awards, particularly as Federal Modern Awards supplanted the transitional “Division 2B State Awards”

briefly preserved until 2011. It was not until 2017 that the Commission decided that it would introduce a model term for casual conversion across modern awards, and not until October 2018 that the model term became effective.

474. In this sense, the impacts of regulated casual conversion might be assumed to be greater in the first period of analysis than the second. Correspondingly, the transitions observed in the second period are more likely to be driven either by informal transitions with the same employer, or alternately the changing of jobs.

475. Since the commencement of the model casual conversion clause in October 2018, until and beyond August of this year, casual employees will have had *some* regulated option to convert to permanent employment without changing employers. In our view, this is a most desirable outcome in the sense that it reduces frictions, is less disruptive and allows for productivity enhancing and continuing workplace development.

476. Once the legislative amendments commencing in August of this year have had some time to bed in, it would be informative to conduct the econometric modelling utilised by Cai on further waves of HILDA data. One might reasonably expect that the positive labour market conditions in the post-pandemic period, combined with broad based rights to conversion, have improved the prospects of transition to secure work. Such an improvement is certainly needed, particularly for women. A useful modification of the design would be to distinguish between transitions to permanency that required and did not require a change of employer.

8. ENCOURAGING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

477. The Panel has identified two sources of its obligation to consider encouraging collective bargaining in the course of a Review.

478. The first is the obligation in section 134 of the Act to “...ensure that modern awards, together with the National Employment Standards, provide a fair and relevant safety net of terms and conditions, taking into account... the need to encourage collective bargaining”.²²³

479. The second is a reference in the object of the Act to “...provide a balanced framework for cooperative and productive workplace relations that promotes national economic prosperity and social inclusion for all Australians by...achieving productivity and fairness through an emphasis on enterprise level collective bargaining...” in conjunction with a consideration of the purpose of the Act as a whole.²²⁴

480. It is uncontroversial that a corollary of the above considerations is that the Panel must take into account the extent to which (if any) its decision might discourage collective bargaining. Certainly for the period 2000-2016 in relation to which a detailed study has been undertaken as to the influences on collective bargaining coverage, the Panel has been satisfied that the level of minimum wages have not had any significant effect.²²⁵

481. In its most recent Review decision, the Panel observed that:²²⁶

We have no sound basis to consider that, within a reasonable range, any increase we order to the NMW and modern award minimum wage rates will either encourage or discourage enterprise bargaining. Accordingly, this is not a matter to which we give any significant weight in reaching our decision in this Review.’

It is submitted that a similar approach should be adopted in this year’s review.

²²³ [2021] FWCFB 3500 at [135]; [2020] FWCFB 3500 at [206]; [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [7]; [2018] FWCFB 3500 at [11]

²²⁴ [2021] FWCFB 3500 at [156]; [2020] FWCFB 3500 at [207]; [2019] FWCFB 3500 at [7], [364]; [2018] FWCFB 3500 at [11]

²²⁵ [2017] FWCFB 3500 at [632]

²²⁶ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [155]

482. For completeness, we note that the FWC statistical report, chart 10.1 shows:²²⁷
- a. Increases in the quarterly number of agreements approved between 2015 and 2016;
 - b. followed by falls from 2016 to 2018;
 - c. a sharp increase increases again between 2018 and 2019;
 - d. followed by a sharp fall into December 2020;
 - e. a sharp increase until December 2021;
 - f. from which point the rate trended downwards, but appears to be rising now; and
 - g. that approval rates are close to consistent with 2016 levels.

483. Table 10.1 of the statistical report shows that after a significant fall from 2019 to 2020 (the most covid affected year), the number of employees covered by enterprise agreements has risen (noting that the figures for 2023 only cover 3 quarters of data).²²⁸

484. During this period there was:

- a. A global pandemic;
- b. Significant industrial reforms aimed at promoting levels of collective bargaining;
- c. Annual wage cases with very different outcomes in terms of quantum of increase; and
- d. A very different set of circumstances in relation to cost of living, wage increases generally and other economic factors.

485. Accordingly, on the available data there is no evidence that the Panel's decisions have had an impact on the degree collective bargaining.

²²⁷ FWC, Statistical Report – Version 1 <<https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/wage-reviews/2023-24/statistical-report-awr-2023-24-version-1.pdf>>, Chart 10.1, p89

²²⁸ FWC, Statistical Report – Version 1 <<https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/wage-reviews/2023-24/statistical-report-awr-2023-24-version-1.pdf>>, Table 10.1, p90

9. LIKELY IMPACT ON BUSINESS

486. The requirement in section 134(1)(f) to consider the “likely impact of any exercise of modern award powers on business, including on productivity, employment costs and the regulatory burden” self-evidently arises in relation to reviewing of modern award minimum wages, rather than setting the national minimum wage.

487. Nonetheless, the FWC does have an obligation to consider the effect of its decisions on national economic prosperity arising from the minimum wages objective.²²⁹ As explained in last year’s decision, the number of persons reliant on the national minimum wage – based on data available at the time – was considered so small that “..it cannot be concluded that any adjustment to the NMW considered in isolation will have discernible macroeconomic effects”²³⁰. Additional research by Tomlinson provides estimates of the number of adult employees receiving the NMW which are marginally smaller than those which were before the Panel in last year’s Review.²³¹

488. In this Chapter, we offer some views as to whether award reliant industries have faced a more or less difficult environment over the last year, whether recent minimum wages have adversely impacted on their performance and related measures²³². We also provide a review of recent literature on the impacts of minimum wage increases.

9.1 Impact on businesses

489. As elucidated in Chapter 2 of this submission, the Australian economy in aggregate has stayed resilient in the face of high interest rates and considerable cost of living pressures.

²²⁹ [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [34]

²³⁰ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [47]

²³¹ Tomlinson J., *Characteristics of employees on the National Minimum Wage*, Fair Work Commission Research Report 1/2024, February. Estimate therein was 181,500 employees of whom 76,700 received the NMW pursuant to an Individual Arrangement, which was equated to reliance on the National Minimum Wage Orders. The Australian Government Estimates, before the Panel last year, were 184,00 and 79,200 respectively. Both estimates based on 2021 data.

²³² [2016] FWCFB 3500 at [92]

490. A driving factor behind the economy-wide resilience has been solid business investment, which is laying the foundations for future productivity growth, and healthy business profits (see **Business investment** and **Business profitability** sections in Chapter 2).
491. With the non-mining sector as the major contributor to income and profit growth, which has been broad-based both across industries as well as across small and large businesses, these outcomes suggest that the large effective increase in the minimum wage of 8.6 per cent and the increase for awards of 5.75 per cent last year have had no discernible impact on the prospects for Australian businesses.
492. The contention is supported by Treasury's assessment of strong business balance sheets and an upward revision in expected expenditure on capital in the most recent ABS capex survey (see **Business investment** section in Chapter 2).
493. The combination of these factors suggests a capacity to pay by businesses for an increase in minimum and award wages of the size argued for in this submission, with no adverse impacts on business viability.
494. Further, labour market outcomes have stayed solid, with annual growth in employment above the 10-year pre-pandemic average even as the economy slows in expected ways. Employment growth has tended to favour women and the young, those who could be expected to be employed in award reliant industries and at the outer edge of the labour market.
495. The unemployment rate is below the 10-year pre-pandemic average in all industries and the underemployment rate is in a similar position in most industries. The official forecasts (see **Performance relative to forecasts** section in Chapter 2) have the unemployment rate rising as the economy slows, but the unemployment rate is expected to return to below levels prevailing before the pandemic. This suggests the unemployment rate that is consistent with price stability has shifted downwards, notwithstanding several notable increases in minimum and award

wages, and that there have been no discernible dis-employment impacts from previous minimum and award wage increases – and nor should any be expected from future increases.

496. Inflation has come in lower than expected by the official forecasts and is expected to return to the RBA's target band in a timeframe consistent with the RBA Board's objectives, as set out under the previous Governor Philip Lowe and continued under Governor Michele Bullock.

497. Further, according to analysis by the Centre for Future Work, a significant increase in minimum and award wages would 'not have a significant effect on inflation' and a large increase in award wages could be offset entirely by a small reduction in corporate profits (Stanford and Jericho 2024)²³³, providing further support for the viability of an increase in minimum and award wages of the size argued for in this submission.

498. One of the potential effects of last year's decision which the Panel was concerned with was the extent to which it might "...send a 'signal' to the labour market concerning expectations for wage increases which may influence the outcome of current or future enterprise bargaining and individual employment contract negotiations."²³⁴

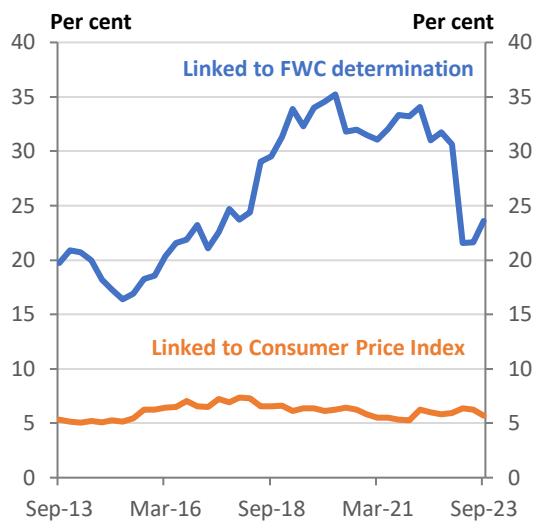
499. There is no indication that this is the case. Wages grew 4.2 per cent in December 2023, below the 5.75 per cent growth rate of award wages and less than the effective increase in the minimum wage of 8.6 per cent.

500. Official forecasts have wage growth peaking by the middle of 2024 before easing off as the labour market softens. The peak in the wage forecast for both the RBA and Treasury is below the Panel's increase in the 2022-23 Review, suggesting no benchmarking effect for future wage outcomes is expected.

²³³ [The Irrelevance of Minimum Wages to Future Inflation | The Australia Institute's Centre for Future Work](#)

²³⁴ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [57]

Figure 212: Current private sector EBAs linked to Fair Work Commission determination and CPI



Source: Department of Employment Workplace Agreement Database & ACTU calculations

Note: Calculated as share of employees on EBAs

501. Further supporting this view is the share of current private enterprise agreements linked to the Fair Work Commission’s determination. The share of current enterprise agreements linked to the determination ticked up slightly to 23.6 per cent in September 2023, but is still well below the average of 32.5 per cent prevailing in the four quarters to September 2022 (see Figure 212).

502. As explained in the **Productivity** section of Chapter 2, volatility in measured near-term productivity is likely to subside as the effects of COVID-19 disruptions wash out of the statistical measures, hours worked normalise and as the earlier mentioned business investment flows through to measured productivity in the coming quarters and years. The Panel should be encouraged that productivity grew in the two quarters immediately following the most recent Review decision.

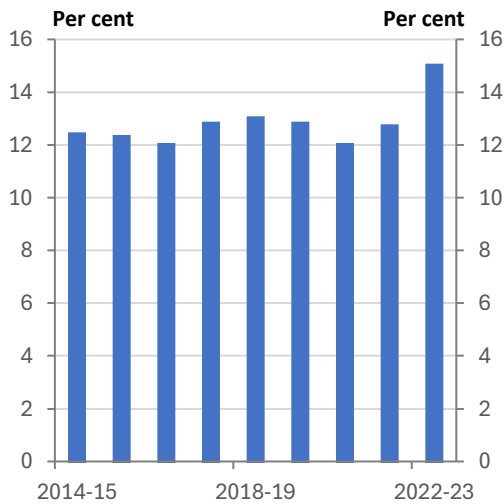
503. The Panel should not contemplate the notion that the recent volatility in productivity growth, which is undergoing a process of normalisation, should act as a barrier to an increase in minimum and award wages of the size argued for in this submission.

9.2 Recent outcomes in firm entries and exits

504. In aggregate, there was a pick-up in exit rates in 2022-23, with the exit rate rising from 12.7 per cent in 2021-22 to 15.0 per cent in 2022-23 (see Figure 213). The pick-up in exit rates can be partially attributed to a combination of macroeconomic factors, among them increases in non-labour costs like electricity, insurance and rents (see **Inflation** section of Chapter 2). The exit rate can also be partly explained by the unwinding of the uptick in new businesses during the COVID-19 period, likely related to the structure of incentives available based on changes in turnover.
505. There are additional considerations, such as the unwinding of a range of business support measures during the pandemic era. In attempting to mitigate the effects of the pandemic the previous government implemented and then extended the Small and Medium Enterprise Recovery Loan Scheme, which included repayment holidays of up to 24 months and refinancing of pre-existing debts.²³⁵ Treasury also applied “Safe Harbour II” reforms from 25 March 2020 to 31 December 2020, which provided directors with protection from insolvent trading liability. The effect of this would likely have been to delay some business exits that might have otherwise taken place earlier.

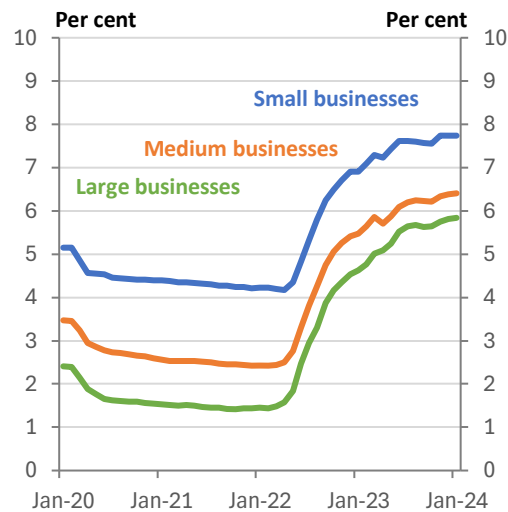
²³⁵ [Extending support for small and medium sized businesses | Treasury Ministers](#)

Figure 213: Business exit rate



Source: ABS Counts of Businesses, including entries and exits & ACTU calculations

Figure 214: Variable business loans by firm size



Source: Reserve Bank of Australia & ACTU calculations

506. Further explanation can be found in the combination of low interest rates in the pre-pandemic period, when the cash rate was around 1.5 per cent and inflation was below the RBA’s target band, and the emergency policy support provided by the Reserve Bank during the COVID-19 period that helped businesses remain afloat during exceptional economic circumstances.

507. The run up in interest rates resulting from monetary policy tightening in the wake of inflation driven by overseas supply shocks is likely to have pushed a number of businesses past the point of operational viability that had previously been supported by low interest rates prevailing during and prior to the pandemic (see Figure 214). These instances are likely to have pushed up exit rates for financial year 2022-23, a factor unrelated to wage costs.

508. Research by the Productivity Commission also indicates that shifts in employer wages and pensions are unlikely to be the main driver of a decision by a firm to declare bankruptcy. The PC writes:

“The implication of the likely negative value of expected entrepreneurial returns for a near-bankrupt firm is that any shifts in employer wages, pensions or other returns outside of the firm are unlikely to have any additional impact on the decision to declare

bankruptcy. Accordingly, while a variable such as the ratio of average entrepreneurial returns to wages and salaries may be useful in predicting the frequency of voluntary exits of reasonably solvent firms, it is unlikely to have much value in predicting the frequency of bankruptcies.”²³⁶

509. Quarterly data on counts of businesses indicates that over calendar year 2023 growth in total businesses operating picked up, having been positive on a quarterly basis in all four quarters, rising from 0.2 per cent in March to 1.0 per cent quarter on quarter in December 2023. Further, annual growth has been positive over the past twelve months, rising to 2.8 per cent in December, above the 5-year pre-pandemic average of 2.6 per cent annual growth (see Figure 215).

510. It is also noteworthy that when examined based on employment size, the highest exit rate is in non-employing businesses, which picked up from 16.2 per cent in 2021-22 to 19.2 per cent in 2022-23. Firms employing 1-4 employees saw a more modest increase in the exit rate, from 8.9 per cent in 2021-22 up to 10.2 per cent in 2022-23. Firms that employ more than 20 employees saw no change in the exit rate in 2022-23 from 2021-22 (see Figure 216).

511. The number of businesses operating employing 1-4 employees declined by 3.5 per cent in 2022-23, while those employing 5-19 employees rose 1.8 per cent. Those employees greater than 20 employees increased by 8.7 per cent in 2022-23.

²³⁶ Bickerdyke, I., Lattimore R. and Madge, A. 2000, Business Failure and Change: An Australian Perspective, Productivity Commission Staff Research Paper, AusInfo, Canberra, at page 176.

Figure 215: Growth in total businesses operating

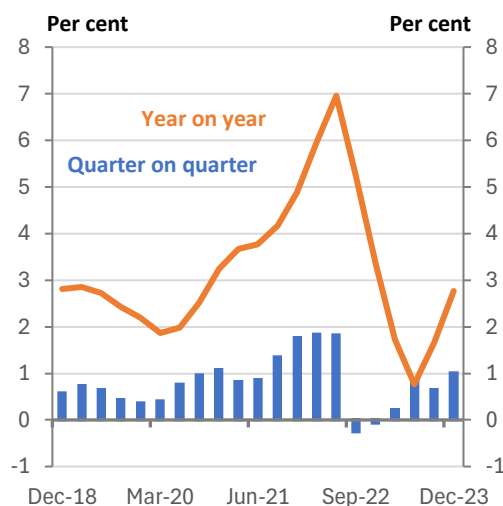
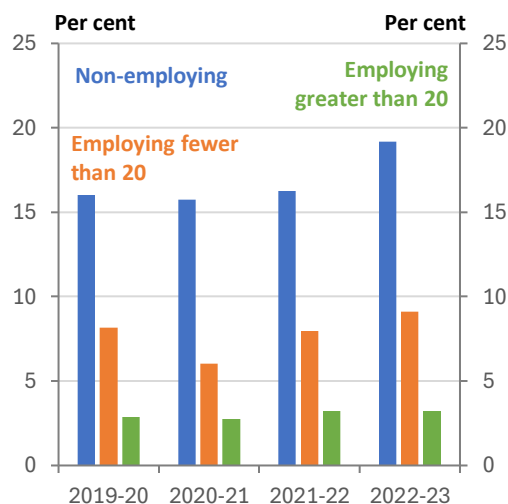


Figure 216: Exit rate by employment size



Source: ABS Counts of Businesses, including entries and exits & ACTU calculations

512. The ABS’s Employee Earnings and Hours survey indicates that around 70 per cent of award reliant employees come from businesses with 20 employees or more. Given the nil change in exit rates of businesses this size between 2021-22 and 2022-23, alongside the healthy growth rate in the total number of businesses operating with 20 employees or more, it is difficult to suppose there is a causal link between increases in minimum and award wages arising from the Review process and increased firm exits.

513. According to the RBA’s latest Financial Stability Review, company insolvencies have returned to normal levels, reflecting the removal of significant support measures that were put in place during the pandemic; more challenging trading conditions as the economy has slowed in the face of high inflation and tighter monetary policy; and the Australian Tax Office resuming enforcement activities on unpaid taxes.²³⁷

²³⁷ Reserve Bank of Australia, *Financial Stability Review: March 2024*, available: [Resilience of Australian Households and Businesses | Financial Stability Review – March 2024 | RBA](#)

514. This notwithstanding, the RBA notes that insolvencies remain below the pre-pandemic trend on a cumulative basis and the construction sector accounts for the largest share of insolvencies, even as conditions in parts of the industry are beginning to stabilise.
515. The analysis presented in this section does not indicate that increases in minimum and award wages in previous Reviews have contributed to increases in firm exits. Instead, the unwinding of CPOVID-era policy support and changing macroeconomic circumstances can account for the uptick in the exit rate in financial year 2022-23.
516. Further, the quarterly estimates of the total number of firms in operating is consistent with evidence presented in Chapter 2 of this submission, which argues that businesses are profitable and engaging in forward-looking investment. The Panel should not be troubled that an increase in minimum and award wages of the size argued for in this submission should have any adverse impact on existing businesses or business formation.

9.3 Research into the impacts of minimum wage increases

517. Minimum wage policies have been actively and increasingly applied in most industrial countries, and a growing number of developing countries, in recent years. This policy activism continues to spark a wide and growing research literature on the varied economic and social consequences of minimum wage policies. This section briefly reviews some of the most pertinent findings of recent contributions to this body of published research.
518. One enduring theme in this research is the effect of increases in minimum wages on employment or unemployment: testing the orthodox (but now widely rejected) hypothesis that higher wages necessarily result in reduced labour demand and hence disemployment. Recent studies on the employment impacts of minimum wage policies have reinforced the broad consensus that has emerged over the last quarter-century (following from the early work of Card and Kruger²³⁸) that

²³⁸ Card D and Krueger AB (1995), *Myth and Measurement: The New Economics of the Minimum Wage* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

the employment effects of moderate minimum wage increases are negligible, and in some cases can be positive.

519. Several newly published studies in the past year found an absence of significant employment effects from higher minimum wages. Wiltshire et al's (2024)²³⁹ comprehensive analysis of increases in state minimum wages in the U.S. found no significant disemployment effects. In Canadian panel data, Brochu et al (2023)²⁴⁰ found no evidence of abnormal job leaving after minimum wage increases. Garcia-Louzau and Tarasonis (2023)²⁴¹ found no negative aggregate employment effects arising from higher minimum wages in Lithuania. Analysis of minimum wage changes in Argentina by Abbate et al (2023)²⁴² I found no impact of higher minimum wages on employment separations; indeed, during the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, higher minimum wages were found to reduce employment separations.

520. Several recent studies have examined the employment impacts of minimum wages using disaggregated approaches, in an effort to capture possible differential impacts of minimum wage policies on various labour market segments or sectors. Even with a multi-dimensional disaggregation of U.K. labour market outcomes (by region, gender, and age), Butcher and Dickens (2023)²⁴³ still found no evidence of negative employment effects from the UK's living wage policy. Their analysis also noted positive impacts of higher minimum wages on labour force participation. Some studies (such as Fossati and Marchand 2024²⁴⁴, and Taylor and West 2023²⁴⁵) suggest that urban labour markets are least susceptible to negative employment effects from minimum wages – perhaps because the proportion of employees working at or near the

²³⁹ Wiltshire JC, McPherson C, Reich M, Sosinskiy D (2024), "Minimum Wage Effects and Monopsony Explanations," University of California Davis Working Paper, 27 February.

²⁴⁰ Brochu P, Green D A, Lemieux T and Townsend J (2023), "The Minimum Wage, Turnover, and the Shape of the Wage Distribution," IZA Discussion Paper No. 16514, October.

²⁴¹ Garcia-Louzao J and Tarasonis L (2023), "Wage and Employment Impact of Minimum Wage: Evidence from Lithuania," *Journal of Comparative Economics*, Elsevier, vol. 51(2), pages 592-609.

²⁴² Abbate N, Silva J, and Tibaldo B (2023), "Do minimum wage hikes lead to employment destruction?: evidence from a regression discontinuity design in Argentina," *Documentos de Trabajo del CEDLAS*; no. 310.

²⁴³ Butcher T and Dickens R (2023), "Impact of the National Living Wage using geographic, age and gender wage variation," *Low Pay Commission*, September.

²⁴⁴ Fossati S and Marchand J (2024), "First to \$15: Alberta's minimum wage policy on employment by wages, ages, and places," *ILR Review* 77(1), pp. 119-142.

²⁴⁵ Taylor GC and West JE (2023), "Minimum wage effects within Census Based Statistical Areas: A matched pair cross-border analysis," *Economic Letters* 229.

minimum is lower than in rural regions. Wursten and Reich (2023)²⁴⁶ analyse the impacts of minimum wage increases on employment by firm size. They find larger impacts of higher minimum wages on wage payments in small firms, but no significant negative employment effects in either large or small firms.

521. Some studies have reviewed the employment effects of higher minimum wages on particular sectors. For example, Brown and Herbst (2023)²⁴⁷ review the impact of higher minimum wages on child care centres in the U.S. (where most group child care is provided by private firms); they find no negative employment effects and improvements in quality (mostly resulting from greater staff retention), but higher child care fees. Allegretto (2023)²⁴⁸ considers the differential impacts of multi-tiered minimum wages, and finds that lower-tier wage policies (such as lower minimum wages covering workers who also receive customer tips) have reduced impact on final net incomes of covered workers.

522. Several hypotheses have been advanced to account for the absence of negative employment effects from higher minimum wages – and even, in some cases, for positive employment effects. The exercise of monopsony power by large employers in concentrated labour markets can serve to suppress both wages and employment below normal competitive levels, as firms use their market power to reduce wages but at the cost of curtailed employment.²⁴⁹ In these circumstances, a wage increase imposed through minimum wage policy can neutralize the ability of large firms to suppress wages through reduced job offers, and thus lead to both higher wages and higher employment. Many of the studies cited above (such as Wiltshire et al 2024) ascribe the absence of observed negative employment effects to these monopsonistic behaviours.

523. Aggregate demand considerations provide another plausible mechanism through which higher minimum wages could have a neutral or even positive effect on employment. By strengthening incomes among lower-income households (which have a higher propensity to spend), higher

²⁴⁶ Wursten J and Reich M (2023), "Small Businesses and the Minimum Wage," IRLE Working Paper No. 102-23, University of California Berkeley.

²⁴⁷ Brown J H and Herbst C M (2023), "Minimum wage, worker quality, and consumer well-being: evidence from the child care market," IZA Discussion Paper No. 16257, June.

²⁴⁸ Allegretto S (2023), "The Subminimum Wage Plus Tips: A Bad Bargain for Workers," New Labor Forum, 10 May.

²⁴⁹ See Manning (2021) for a recent survey of research on monopsonistic power in labour markets, including implications for minimum wage policy.

minimum wages can modestly stimulate overall purchasing power conditions and thus help to sustain employment. This ‘wage-led’ mechanism is likely to be more powerful when economies are producing below full-employment and/or facing other shocks to investment and output.²⁵⁰

524. Indeed, in the wake of the macroeconomic aftershocks from the Covid-19 pandemic, these aggregate demand considerations are especially important. Australia’s economy, like many others, has experienced very slow economic growth and rising unemployment in the face of high interest rates and other post-pandemic headwinds. In this context, international economic organizations have emphasized the importance (for both equity and economic reasons) of supporting real incomes for low-wage workers through regular adjustments to statutory minimum wages. The OECD (2023) has reported that relatively ambitious minimum wage increases in most member countries have largely protected real incomes for low-wage workers, and urges member governments to sustain those efforts:

“In a context of high inflation, it remains important to ensure regular adjustments of statutory minimum wages to maintain their usefulness as a policy instrument and protect, at least partially, the most vulnerable workers from rising prices.”²⁵¹

525. Previous OECD research (2022) on the impact of minimum wages in the context of post-Covid inflation also stressed the importance of minimum wage increases for stabilizing aggregate demand conditions and preserving living standards for low-wage workers. Meanwhile, the IMF (2023a, 2023b) confirms that despite higher minimum wages in many countries, there is no evidence of wage-price spirals taking hold in industrial countries:

“To date, wage-price spirals—wherein prices and wages accelerate together for a sustained period—do not appear to have taken hold in the average advanced economy, and longer-term inflation expectations remain anchored.”²⁵²

526. Another fruitful area of research on the effects of minimum wage policies has been their impact on income distribution and inequality. Lifting living standards for lower-wage workers, and moderating the gap between low- and high-income segments of society, is an important motive

²⁵⁰ See Lavoie (2017) for a theoretical and empirical survey of research on wage-led macroeconomic regimes.

²⁵¹ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2023), *OECD Employment Outlook 2023: Artificial Intelligence and the Labour Market* (Paris: OECD), at p54.

²⁵² International Monetary Fund (2023), *World Economic Outlook Update: Near-Term Resilience, Persistent Challenges*, IMF, Washington, D.C, July, at p 2.

for strong minimum wage policies. Empirical research continues to demonstrate that higher minimum wages do indeed have powerful equality-enhancing effects.

527. For example, recent research by Bossler and Schank (2023)²⁵³ documents the strong reductions in wage inequality in Germany after a minimum wage was introduced there. Oliveira (2023)²⁵⁴ finds strong evidence of reduced wage inequality in Portugal following several increases in the minimum wage after 2006. Of course, minimum wage increases interact with other labour market pressures in shaping overall wage inequality. In the case of Portugal, Oliveira concludes that minimum wages account for over one-third of a broader reduction in wage inequality. In the U.S. experience, very tight labour markets after the Covid-19 pandemic have also lifted wages for low-income earners and compressed the wage distribution. Minimum wage increases in many U.S. states are shown to have reduced wage inequality before the pandemic.²⁵⁵ Since then, wage compression has also occurred in states which did not increase their minimum wages²⁵⁶, reflecting the impact of low unemployment on the bargaining power of low-wage workers. Campos-Vazquez (2023)²⁵⁷ finds that Mexico's large recent minimum wage increases had a major impact in reducing the incidence of poverty.

528. The equality-enhancing distributional effects of higher minimum wages are strengthened by spillover or 'trickle-up' effects, in which wages for workers employed well above the minimum wage also experience wage increases as employers preserve internal wage differentials or motivate staff retention. These spillover effects are experienced differently in Australia, of course, as a result of the Awards system, but may still enhance the overall equality-inducing impacts of higher minimum and Award wages. New research by Vogel (2023)²⁵⁸ and Brochu et al (2023)²⁵⁹ suggest these spillover effects are significant in the U.S. and Canadian cases,

²⁵³ Bossler M and Schank T (2023), "Wage inequality in Germany after the minimum wage introduction," *Journal of Labor Economics* 41(3), pp. 813–857.

²⁵⁴ Oliveira C (2023), 'The minimum wage and the wage distribution in Portugal', *Labour Economics*, Vol. 85, December.

²⁵⁵ Gould E and DeCourcy K (2023), "Low-wage workers have seen historically fast real wage growth in the pandemic business cycle," Washington: Economic Policy Institute, 23 March.

²⁵⁶ Autor D, Dube A, and McGrew A (2023), "The Unexpected Compression: Competition at Work in the Low Wage Labor Market." NBER Working Paper 31010.

²⁵⁷ Campos-Vazquez R (2023), "The Effect of the Minimum Wage on Poverty: Evidence from a Quasi-Experiment in Mexico," *Journal of Development Studies* 59(3), pp. 360-380.

²⁵⁸ Vogel J (2023), "The Race Between Education, Technology, and the Minimum Wage," NBER Working Paper No. 31028 March 2023.

²⁵⁹ Brochu P, Green D A, Lemieux T and Townsend J (2023), "The Minimum Wage, Turnover, and the Shape of the Wage Distribution," IZA Discussion Paper No. 16514, October.

respectively, spurring wage increases for workers within a band reaching as high as \$2 per hour above the statutory minimum. Vogel shows that spillover effects get stronger over time. Engbom and Moser (2022)²⁶⁰ find strong improvements in wage equality resulting from higher minimum wages in Brazil, amplified by strong spillover effects experienced surprisingly far up the wage ladder.

529. Finally, other researchers have attempted to document and quantify the beneficial impacts of higher minimum wages on other indicators of personal and social well-being. For example, a growing body of literature attests to a positive correlation between higher minimum wages and health outcomes, experienced either via direct improvements in absolute material living standards for low-wage workers, and/or through well-known health benefits of reduced relative inequality. In a cross-national study of European countries, Lebihan (2023)²⁶¹ concludes that self-reported health, income security, and life satisfaction are all enhanced by higher minimum wage policies – with women and those with less education experiencing the greatest improvements. Palazzolo and Pattabhiramaiah (2021)²⁶² document a correlation between increases in the minimum wage in U.S. states and improved caloric intake for low-income households. Engbom and Moser (2022)²⁶³ also find improved health outcomes arising from higher minimum wages (and resulting spillover effects for medium-wage workers) in Brazil.

530. In sum, ongoing research into the effects of minimum wage policies supports the now-established conclusion that minimum wages are effective in raising incomes for low-income households (including those working for wages somewhat higher than statutory minimums), reduce income inequality, and promote improved social and health conditions. These benefits can be attained without significant negative effects on employment, especially when accompanied by complementary macroeconomic and employment measures. Indeed, in some circumstances stronger minimum wages can have beneficial impacts on employment.

²⁶⁰ Engbom N and Moser C (2022), "Earnings Inequality and the Minimum Wage: Evidence from Brazil." *American Economic Review*, 112 (12), pp. 3803-47.

²⁶¹ Lebihan L (2023), "Minimum wages and health: evidence from European countries," *International Journal of Health Economics and Management*, 23, pp. 85–107.

²⁶² Palazzolo M and Pattabhiramaiah A (2021), "The Minimum Wage and Consumer Nutrition," *Journal of Marketing Research* 58(5), pp. 845-869.

²⁶³ Engbom N and Moser C (2022), "Earnings Inequality and the Minimum Wage: Evidence from Brazil." *American Economic Review*, 112 (12), pp. 3803-47.

10. OTHER MATTERS

531. The National Minimum Wage Order made as a consequence of the Review must set special national minimum wages for award/agreement-free employees who are junior employees, employees to whom a training arrangement applies, and employees with a disability. It must also set the casual loading for award/agreement-free employees.²⁶⁴

532. The Panel's review of modern award minimum wages encompasses casual loadings and piece rates in modern awards, as well as modern award minimum wages for junior employees, employees to whom a training arrangement applies, and employees with a disability.²⁶⁵

533. This chapter sets out the ACTU's position on how these various minimum wages and modern award minimum wages ought to be adjusted in this Review.

10.1 Apprentices and trainees

534. The combination of skills shortages, discounted wages, and assistance programs for employers might reasonably be expected to be drivers of employer's willingness to engage apprentices and trainees. The current incentive system for employers is in a state of transition, such that different supports are available to employers depending on when their apprentices commenced their employment. These supports are shown in Table 14 below

²⁶⁴ FW Act s. 294

²⁶⁵ FW Act s. 285(2), 284(3).

Table 14: Employer incentives for apprentices

Circumstance	Eligibility Period	Assistance available
Employer hires a new or recommencing Australian apprentice not in a priority occupation.	For commencements (or recommencements) after 1 July 2022 but before 1 July 2024.	Two single payments, made 6 months and 12 months after employing an apprentice. Each payment for a full time apprentice is \$1750. Each payment for a part time apprentice is \$875.
Employer employs an Australian Apprentice for an occupation on the Priority List.	For commencements (or recommencements) after 1 July 2022 but before 1 July 2024.	10% subsidy of wages paid to the apprentice, capped at \$1,500 per quarter, for the first two years of the apprenticeship. 5% subsidy of wages paid to the apprentice, capped at \$750 per quarter, for the third year of the apprenticeship
Employer employs an apprentice who completes their apprenticeship for an occupation not on the priority list.	For commencements between 5 October 2020 and 30 June 2022	\$1,500 payment to the employer in respect of part time apprentices. \$2,500 payment to the employer in respect of full time apprentices.
Employer employs an apprentice who completes their apprenticeship for an occupation not on the priority list.	For commencements between 5 October 2020 and 30 June 2022	\$3,000 payment to the employer (irrespective of whether the apprentice is full time or part time).

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, [Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System - Program Guidelines](#); Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian [Apprenticeship Incentives Program – Program Guidelines](#)

535. There has been somewhat less variation in support programs available to apprentices and trainees directly, with most forms of assistance directed to apprentices and trainees working toward a priority application²⁶⁶:

- a. A living away from home allowances is available to apprentices who must leave their parent’s or guardian’s home in order to take up the apprenticeship, paid weekly at \$77.17 in the first year, \$38.59 in the second year and \$24.00 in the third.
- b. Interest free “Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans” of up to \$24,492 paid in monthly instalments are available to apprentices working toward a priority occupation, with a 20 per cent discount on debt if the apprenticeship is completed (no repayments are required unless the repayment threshold of \$51,500 is met).
- c. Support payments are available to apprentices working toward a priority occupation, at two different levels depending on whether the particular occupation is also identified as a “clean energy occupation”. If in the latter category, the payments are \$2000 (full time) or \$1000 (part time) per year for 3 years, an additional payment after 6 months of

²⁶⁶ See apprentices.gov.au

\$2000 (full time) or \$1000 (part time) and a completion bonus of an additional \$2000 (full time) or \$1000 (part time). In the former category there is no completion bonus, and the payments are made six monthly for 24 months at either \$1250 (full time) or \$625 (part time).

536. Subject to any further announcements in the upcoming Budget, the existing system of incentives is likely to remain reasonably stable, given that a ‘Strategic review of Australian Apprenticeships, including the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives system’ will continue into 2024-25.²⁶⁷

537. Employment outcomes for apprentices and trainees have been favourable in recent years, based on the most recent data from NCVER²⁶⁸, current to May of 2022 and derived from the 2022 Student Outcomes Survey relating to persons 15 years old and over who undertook training in 2021. For apprentices and trainees who completed training for a trade occupation, 94.9 per cent were employed after training, up from 94.3 per cent in 2021. This compares to apprentices and trainees for a non-trade occupation, of whom 89.3 per cent were employed following completion, up from 87.6 per cent in 2021. The chances of employment in the occupation for which training was undertaken is poorer, with 75.1 per cent of completed trade apprentices and trainees and 33.8 per cent of completed non-trade being employed in their relevant occupation (72.9 per cent and 35.7 per cent respectively in 2021). The “Trade” and “Non-Trade” designations used by NCVER are based upon whether the intended occupational outcome of the qualification falls under the ANZSCO major group (one digit) of “Technicians and Trades workers” or not. In that sense it is a rough proxy for distinguishing apprenticeships from traineeships.

538. The aggregate numbers of persons in training for an apprenticeship or traineeship and of those who have commenced, completed, cancelled or withdrawn from their training is shown in Figure 217 below, along with the following measures:

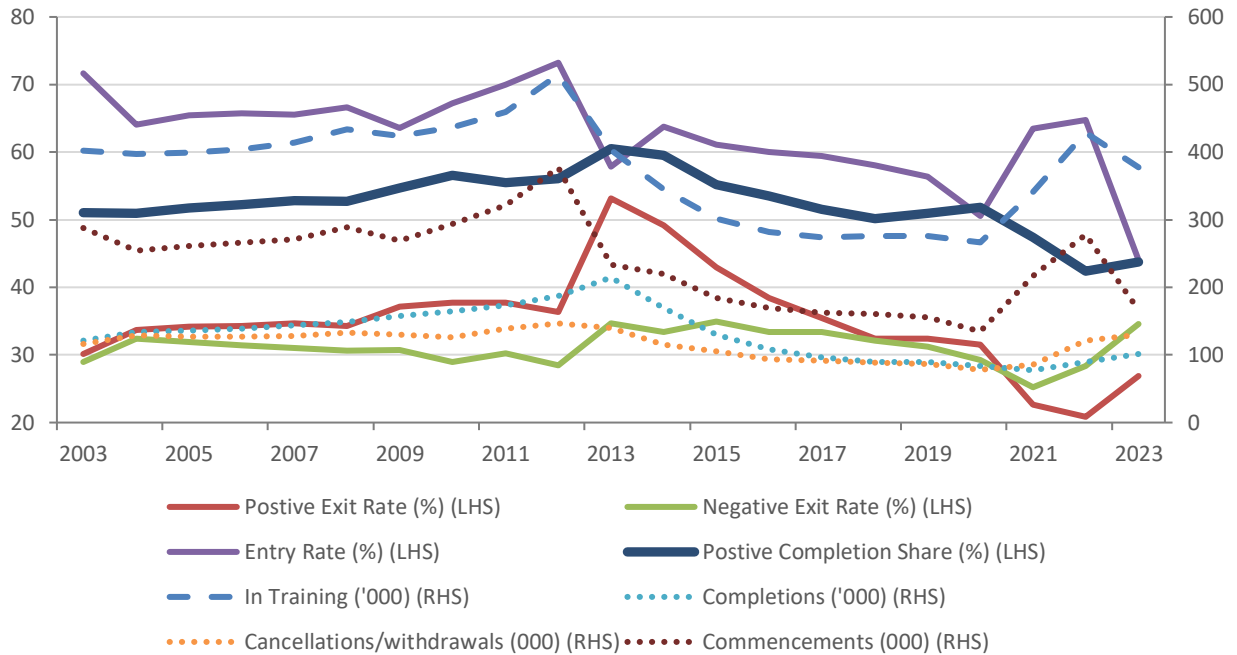
- a. *positive exit rate*: the number of completions as a share of the number of persons in training, expressed as a percentage;
- b. *negative exit rate*: the number of cancellations or withdrawals as a share of the number of persons in training, expressed as a percentage;

²⁶⁷ MYEFO 2023-24 At Appendix A, page 242.

²⁶⁸ See NCVER [DataBuilder](#)

- c. *entry rate*: the number of persons commencing training as a share of the persons in training, expressed as a percentage; and
- d. *positive completion share*: the number of persons who complete the training, as a share of the total of those who both complete or cancel/withdraw.

Figure 217: Apprenticeship and trainee entry and exit (all categories), June Quarter 2003-2023

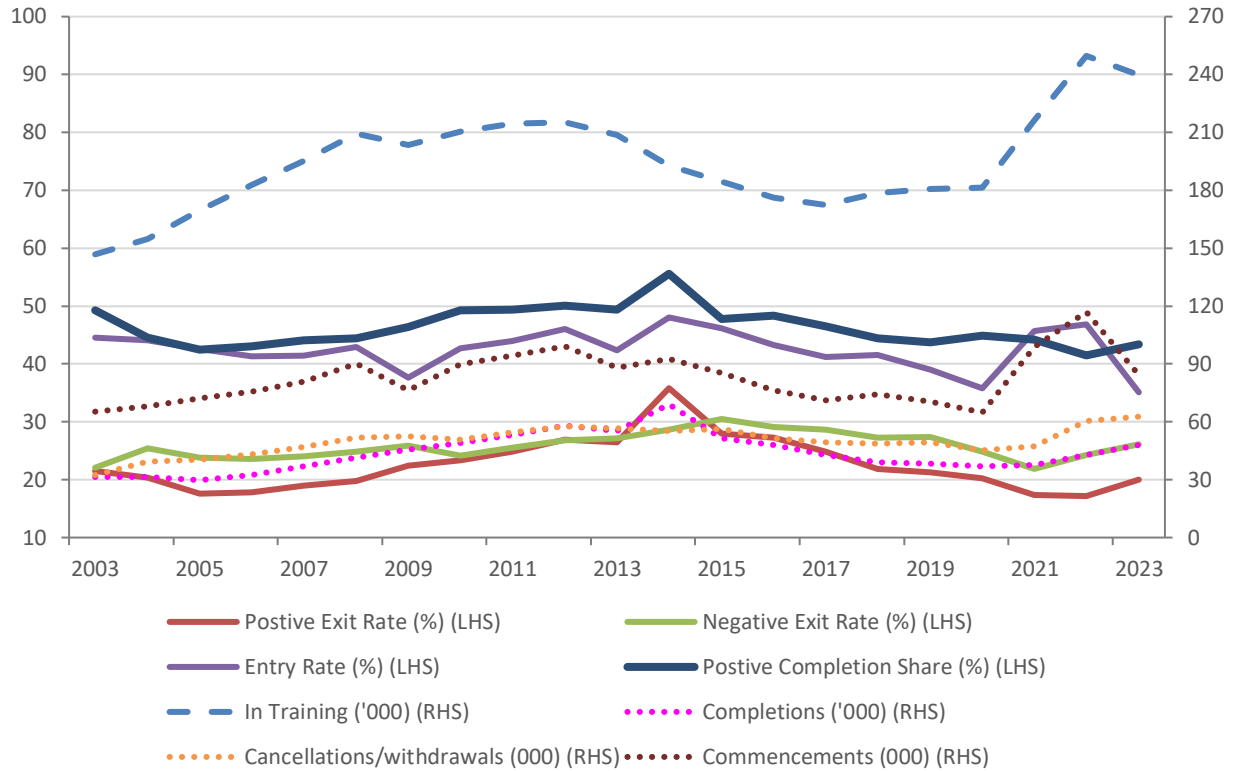


Source: NCVER

539. The positive completion share dropped below 50 per cent for the first time in two decades during the pandemic, however the drop appears to have bottomed out and is recovering. The number of persons in training remains well above the level that might be seen as normal over the last decade, notwithstanding a slight drop in 2023 driven by a decline in commencements to levels only slightly above those typical over that period. The overall number of cancellations and withdrawals is high by medium-term standards and the negative exit rate almost equal to its highest level in the last two decades. The number of completions is low having regard to the elevated number of persons in training, as reflected by the low positive exit rate. The aggregate position is consistent with the incentives to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship lagging those associated with alternative employment in a relatively tight labour market.

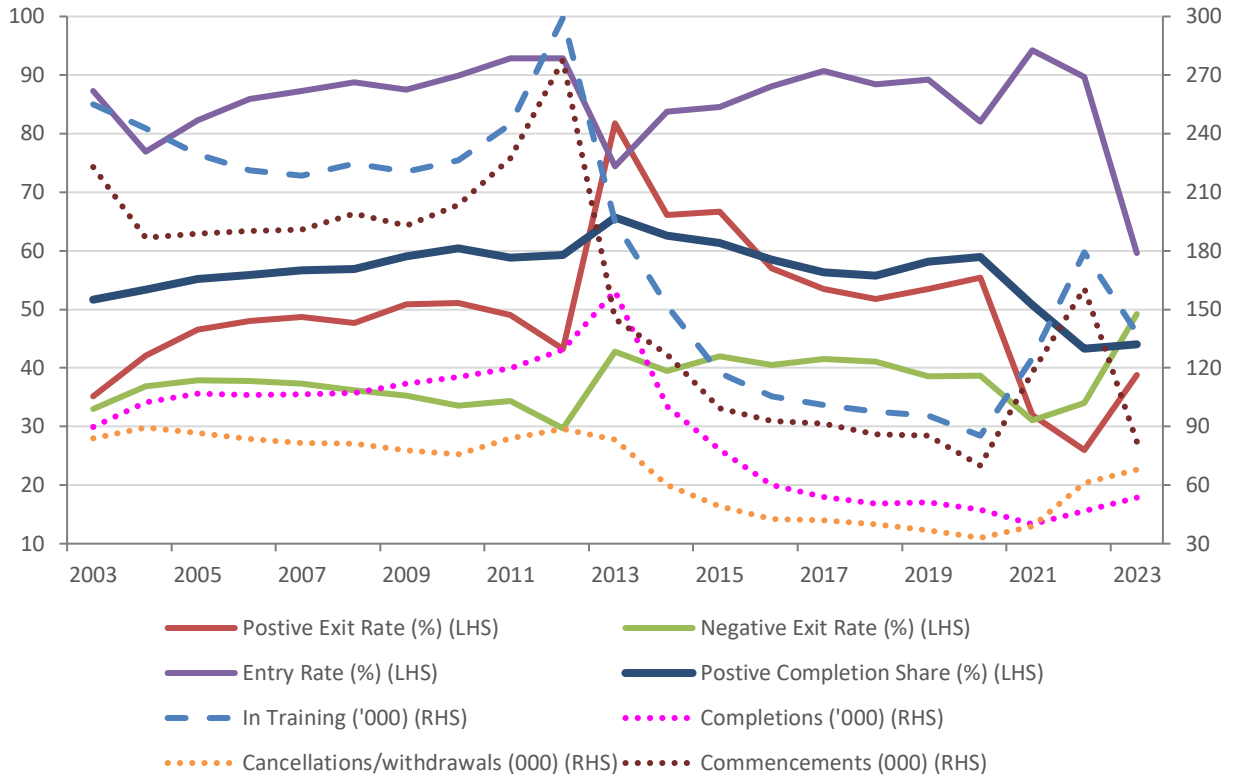
540. A more nuanced position is apparent when examining the trade and non-trade categories of apprenticeships and traineeships. In Figure 218 below, we show the same measures as in Figure 217 but for Trades only. Figure 219 shows these measures for non-trades only.

Figure 218: Apprentice and trainee entry and exit (trade category), June Quarter 2003-2023



Source: NCVET

Figure 219: Apprenticeship and trainee entry and exit (non-trade category), June Quarter 2003-2023



Source: NCVER

541. Comparing our measures between the trade and non-trade categories reveals that while both are showing high numbers of persons in training relative to the last decade, the fall in both commencements and the entry rate for non-trade has been far more severe: trades are still overperforming on commencements relative to the decade, whereas non-trades are not, with commencements having fallen by almost half in the last 12 months. Additionally, since the pandemic the number of cancellations and withdrawals has exceeded the number of completions for the first time in 20 years for non-trades, most likely due to the tight labour market offering better opportunities to earn, driving the negative exit rate and reducing the positive completion share below 50 per cent for the first time. The long-term poor positive completion share for the trades category is consistent with a generally longer period of commitment required, with associated low wages. The rise in the costs of living through 2022-23 has likely been a contributor to the rise in cancellations and withdrawals seen in both categories. This may be particularly acute for younger apprentices and trainees who do not

benefit from adult apprentice or trainee rates of pay: 56 per cent of the trades category and 38 per cent of the non-trades category who commenced training in the twelve months before 30 June 2023 were 19 years old or younger, compared to 5.7 per cent of the employed labour force as of June 2023.²⁶⁹

542. The fact that the completions and the positive completion share lifted from their low base in the last twelve months is a sign of encouragement. The fact these measures across both the trades and non-trades categories reached their lowest points in the two 12 month periods immediately following the smallest annual adjustments to minimum wages since the inception of the Fair Work System is not consistent with minimum wage adjustments being a significant factor in the completion of apprenticeships or traineeships.

543. Based on the above, we recommend that any general increase awarded in this Review be flowed through to apprentice and trainee rates in the usual way. However, we do note the Panel's observation in last year's review that the C14 rate, being the antecedent of the National Minimum Wage, did not appear to have been set with proper regard to the needs of the low paid.²⁷⁰ We suggest that the same criticism may be levelled in respect of rates paid to apprentices and trainees. It would be opportune to revisit the minimum wage safety net for apprentices and trainees in detail once the "Strategic Review" referred to above has been concluded and there is greater certainty and stability as to the framework of supports that will be made available to employers and employees.

10.2 Juniors

544. Labour market data for workers aged 15-19 years old is a relevant consideration for the Panel when considering the adjustment of special national minimum wage 3 and the modern award minimum wages for junior employees.

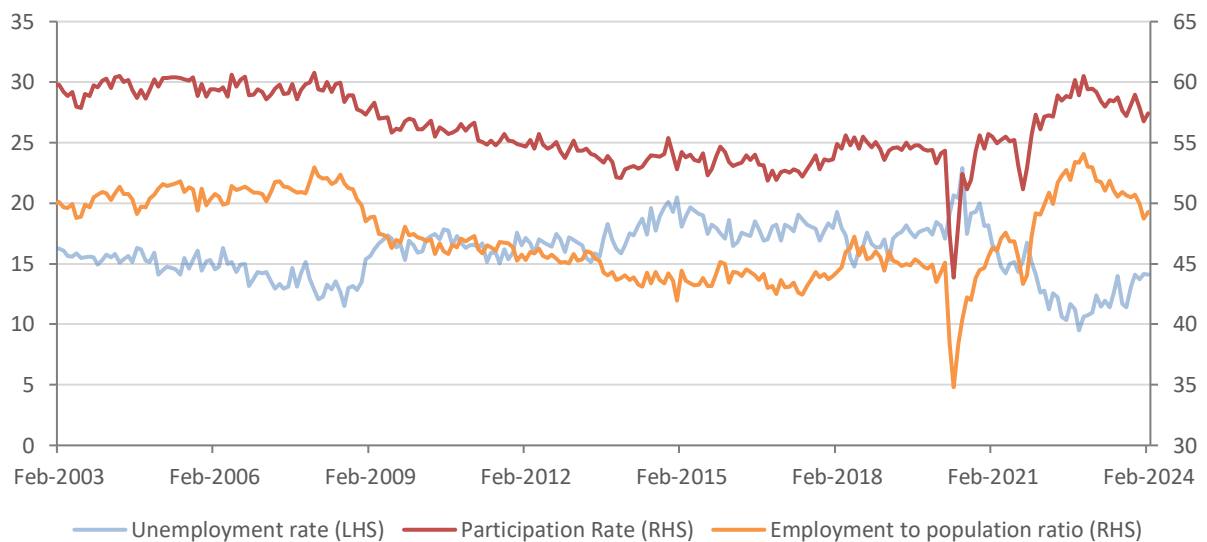
545. The 15-19 year old age group has traditionally faced higher unemployment rates and greater volatility in labour market measures, as evident in Chat 6.12 of the Statistical Report. Prior to

²⁶⁹ ABS Labour Force June 2023; NCVER Historical time series of apprenticeships and traineeships

²⁷⁰ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [105] – [108]

the pandemic, the unemployment rate for 15-19 years old generally moved between the bounds of 15 per cent to 20 per cent, before dropping to very low levels as the economy re-opened. The unemployment rate for this group is on a rising trend, having just reached 14.2 per cent in January 2024 before leveling to 14.1 per cent, around the lower bound of its usual post-GFC, pre-pandemic level. The rise in unemployment ought to be viewed in the context of a usual softening in the summer months and participation rate for this age group that remains quite elevated relative to its usual pre-pandemic levels, as seen in Figure 220. The employment to population ratio for this age group remains at historically high levels of the post GFC period, notwithstanding some softening in the last 12 months. The slight uptick in the employment to population ratio and participation rate combined with a levelling of the unemployment rate in the last month may indicate a shift in seasonal patterns post-pandemic.

Figure 220: Youth (15-19) unemployment and participation, 2003 to 2024



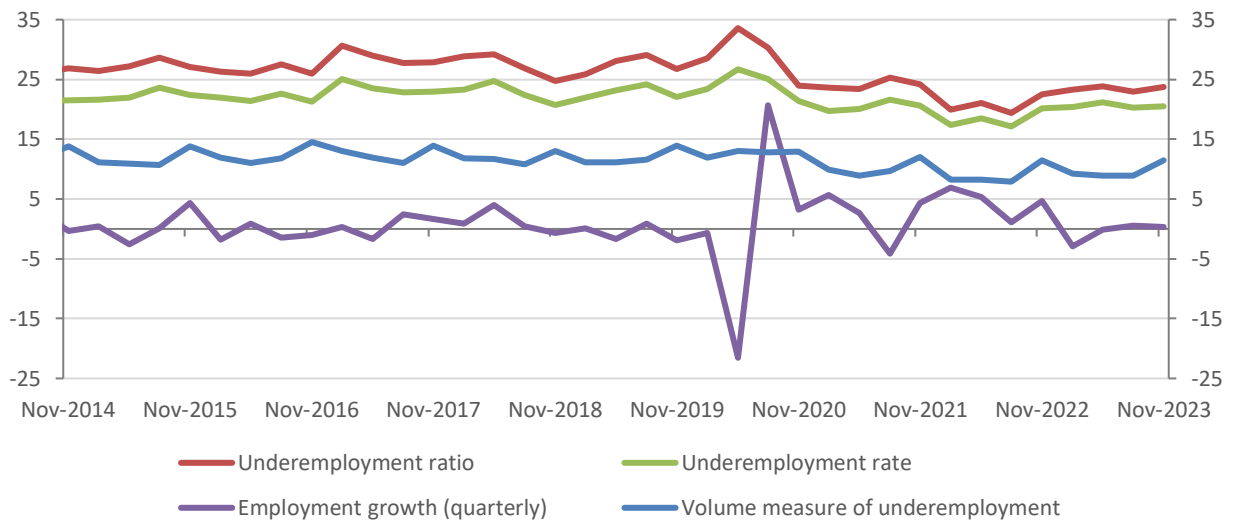
Source: ABS Labour Force, seasonally adjusted

546. Quarterly employment growth for the 15-19 year old cohort is weakly positive as of November 2023, as shown in Figure 221 below. Employment has fallen since, with a decline of 1.1 per cent over the year to February 2024, a period which saw five months of growth (none consecutive). Employed persons in the age group are however around 151,900 above the level

in February 2020, immediately prior to pandemic shut-downs and, as was seen in Figure 220, unemployment remains relatively low.

547. Figure 221 shows three measures of underemployment for the 15-19 year old aged group, each of which are performing better than pre-pandemic. The *underemployment rate* refers to the number of underemployed as a proportion of the 15-19 year old labour force; the *underemployment ratio* refers to the number of underemployed persons as a proportion of employed persons in that age group; and the volume measure of underemployment is a calculation of the hours not worked by underemployed persons as a proportion of the potential hours of employed persons. The volume measure typically peaks in November so might be expected to settle somewhat by February 2024.

Figure 221: Youth (15-19) underemployment and employment growth, 2014-2023



Source: ABS Labour Force; Labour Force Detailed. The volume measure of underemployment is expressed in original terms, others seasonally adjusted.

548. The Panel can in our view comfortably find that aggregate performance of the labour market for 15-19 year olds remains better than usual, albeit not quite as strong as was the case at the comparable time last year. It should also be noted that the August 2023 figures indicate a fall in each of the unemployment rate, the underemployment rate, and the underemployment ratio,

notwithstanding the rise in minimum wages the previous month. Having regard to participation measures, unemployment, underemployment and employment growth, the general picture remains one of good prospects of finding a job for 15-19 year olds, and better prospects of finding suitable hours than might be considered normal.

10.3 Employees with a disability

549. We continue to hold the view that Special Minimum Wage 1 should be set at the level of the National Minimum Wage. Setting a lesser minimum wage for workers with a disability solely as a consequence of their having a disability could lead to an outcome at odds with s. 153 of the *Fair Work Act*. For completeness, we do not resile from the view that it is inappropriate that employees whose disability does not impact their productive capacity are subject to a separately identified minimum wage.²⁷¹
550. Special National Minimum Wage 2 should continue to be set by reference to the National Minimum Wage, as varied in this Review, in conjunction with Supported Wage System assessments.
551. Employees with a disability that affects their productivity who are covered by an award other than the *Supported Employment Services Award* should continue to be remunerated according to the modern award minimum wages as varied in this Review and the Supported in Wage System schedules in those awards, subject to the minimum payment set by reference to the income test free area for disability support pension.²⁷² This is currently \$102 per week but will be indexed on 1 July to March Quarter CPI²⁷³, which we understand will be published on 24 April.
552. The Supported Wages System Schedule that forms part of the *Supported Employment Services Award* does not require the separate adjustment of a minimum weekly payment. However, the minimum hourly rates expressed in clause D.4.1.(b) and D.10.3 do require updating. It appears that these rates were fixed at 12.5 per cent of the Grade 2 rate in that award.²⁷⁴ In this this

²⁷¹ [2017] FWCFB 1931 at [168]-[173]

²⁷² See [2021] FWCFB 3500 at [314]

²⁷³ *Social Security Act 1991* s. 117, s. 1064, s. 1064-E4, s.1190 at Item 20, s. 1191 at Item 14

²⁷⁴ [2022] FWCFB 203 at [253].

Review, those minimum rates should be updated to represent 12.5 per cent of the Grade 2 rate as varied.

10.4 Casual loading

553. The casual loading should be maintained at 25 per cent in this Review. Applications to vary the casual loading in particular awards may follow on from the completion to the 2023-24 Review of Modern Awards.

10.5 Piece rates

554. The adjustments to modern award minimum wages should flow through to piecework rates in the usual way.

10.6 Other instruments

555. The adjustments to modern award minimum wages should flow through to any transitional instruments in the usual way.

556. We will engage with any particular positions put in respect of copied state awards in our reply submissions, subject to any further orders of the Panel as to the programming of such matters should they arise. Our primary position is that, consistent with the views of the Panel in last year's Review, copied state awards should move in line with the general increases determined in the Review, unless a basis for an exception is made.²⁷⁵ Further, we would observe that the mere fact that an employer covered by a copied state award is bargaining pursuant to the *Fair Work Act* ought not be considered an exceptional circumstance within the meaning of that *Act*.

10.7 Future research

557. In our correspondence of 21 December 2023, we raised a number of proposals for future research, including some modifications to the proposed design of the "profile update of

²⁷⁵ [2023] FWCFB 3500 at [199]-[202]

employee characteristics on modern awards” referred to in the “Future research” section of the Research Program and a proposal relating to the updating and review of budget standards. We have also, in Chapter 7, proposed research to estimate the extent of transitions from casual to permanent employment with the one employer versus those that occur in association with a change of employers.

558. Consistent with our previous submissions, the ACTU submits that the obligation to ensure that the safety net is ‘fair and relevant’ also requires the Panel to consider broader equity and diversity issues, including the need to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, and national extraction or social origin.²⁷⁶ This requires – to the extent the data allows – an assessment of the impact of the national minimum wage on different groups. However, there is a significant data gap in Australia regarding the impact of factors such as race, disability and migrant status on wages and employment. There are some efforts underway to address these shortcomings. The review undertaken in 2021 into the effectiveness of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (**WGEA**) recommended that WGEA lead a piece of qualitative research on the best way to collect more diversity data (in addition to gender data) to improve reporting on issues such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, cultural and linguistic diversity, and disability.²⁷⁷ The ACTU has previously called for WGEA to report diversity data where it is provided on a totally voluntary basis by employees, including data on cultural and linguistic diversity, temporary visa or migrant status, disability, LGBTIQ+ status, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status.²⁷⁸ We submit that future research programs undertaken by the FWC should give detailed consideration not only to the relationship between minimum wages and gender, but also factors such as race and disability.

²⁷⁶ FW Act s 578.

²⁷⁷ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, WGEA Review Report - Review of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*, December 2021 at 45-46,

²⁷⁸ ACTU (2021) Submission to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Review 2021, at 29; ACTU submission to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees on the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Bill 2023 at pages 16-17.

address

ACTU

Level 4 / 365 Queen Street

Melbourne VIC 3000

phone

1300 486 466

web



ACTU ASK Research

Report of key insights into financial wellbeing
& the cost of living

Ref: J012

February 2024



Report of key insights into financial wellbeing & the cost of living

Prepared for: Sunil Kempfi, Senior Legal & Industrial Officer, ACTU

Prepared by: ACTU Insights Team:

Date: 29 February 2024

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Report overview

This report is focused on two key questions:

1. What insights about Australian workers can be drawn from the ACTU's research in relation to financial wellbeing, the cost of living, and the ability to meet living expenses?
2. What impact do the key demographic factors of age, gender, job security, income, and sector have on these results, with a specific focus on workers on lower incomes?

Executive summary

The ASK research clearly demonstrates that Australian workers continue to face a broad range of significant financial difficulties and stressors.

Nearly four in ten workers disagree that their household will be able to afford housing (39%) in the next twelve months without significant financial stress, and 30% of workers disagree they will be able to afford food and groceries without significant financial stress.

This issue is even more pronounced among low income earners. Notably, the proportions of workers with an income below \$52,000 who say they cannot afford housing (46%) and/or food and groceries (40%) without significant financial stress are currently at the highest levels recorded in the ASK research (which has been undertaken every three months since Quarter 4 2021).

Only 30% of workers agree that their household is better off financially now than it was at the same time last year, compared to 46% who disagree.

- Female workers (51%) are much more likely to disagree that they are better off than male workers (41%).
- Only 23% of workers with an income below \$52,000 per year agree that they are better off financially now than at the same time last year, compared to 50% who disagree.

Less than two thirds (63%) of workers agree they earn enough to pay their bills, dropping to 53% of those in insecure work and 46% of those who earn less than \$52,000 per year. This is the lowest proportion of workers overall who agree they earn enough to pay their bills throughout the history of the ASK research, highlighting the extreme and cumulative pressures that households continue to face.

86% of workers think that the cost of living has become a lot or a little worse compared to 12 months ago. While this has eased back from the peak of 90% in mid-2023, this compares to 70% of workers who thought the cost of living had worsened in the benchmark wave of the research in Quarter 4 2021.

- Cost of living is a particular issue for insecure workers, with 91% saying it has become worse in the last 12 months, compared to 85% of workers in secure jobs.

This analysis also looked at the experiences of workers in award-reliant industries, which clearly showed the difficulties that workers in these industries are experiencing, and how hardship has increased since the benchmark wave of the research. For workers in award-reliant industries:

- Only 28% agree that their household is better off financially now than at the same time last year (down from 42% in the benchmark wave).
- 81% agree that it is getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement (from 73% in the benchmark wave).
- 59% agree that they earn enough to pay their bills (down from 66% in the benchmark wave).
- 44% of workers in award-reliant industries think that wages have got a lot or a little worse in the last 12 months (up from 36% in the benchmark wave), compared to 41% of workers not in award-reliant industries.

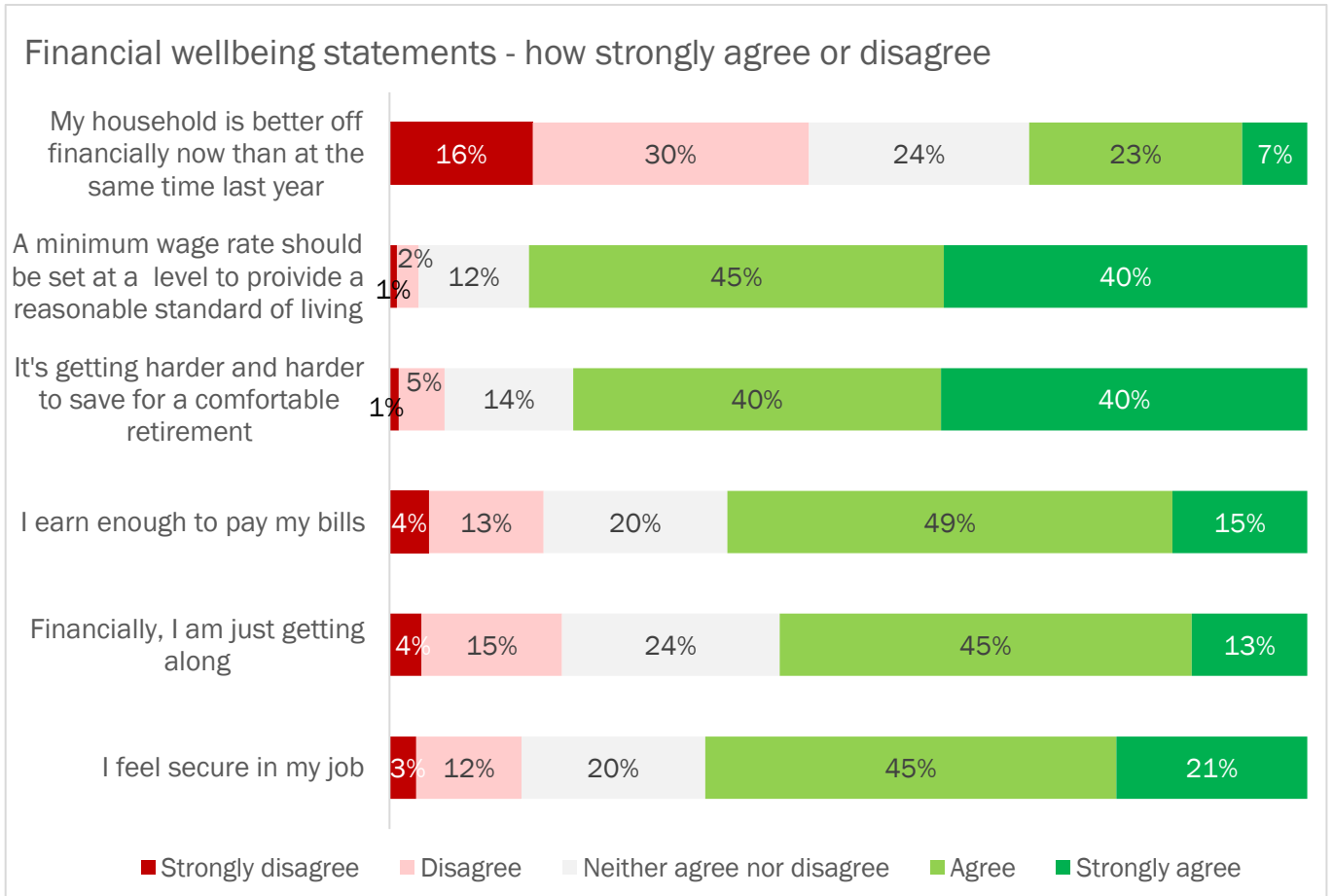
Key findings

Workers are much more likely to disagree (46% strongly disagree or disagree) than agree (30% strongly agree or agree) that their household is better off financially now than at the same time last year.

Four in five workers (80%) say that it is getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement.

A total of 17% of workers disagree that they earn enough to pay their bills.

Chart 1: Financial wellbeing



Reference: WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...
 Base: All workers. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. NA removed. Note: sub-categories may not sum to total or 100%. Note that throughout this report, commentary combines ratings for disagree (strongly disagree / disagree) and agree (strongly agree / agree).
 Source: ACTU ASK, Qtr 1 2024.

Job security, gender, and income level all have a clear impact on financial wellbeing.

For example, people in insecure work are much less likely to agree they earn enough to pay their bills (53%, compared to 65% of those in secure work).

Women are more likely to disagree that they are better off financially now than they were a year ago (51%, compared to 41% for men), and that they earn enough to pay their bills (21%, compared to 13% of men).

Just 23% of workers on an income below \$52,000 per year agree they are better off financially now than a year ago, compared to 38% of those on an income above \$104,000.

Table 1: Financial wellbeing – Better off financially now than at the same time last year

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year [Workers]	Total	In secure work	In insecure work	Women	Men	Income below \$52k	Income \$52k- <\$104k	Income \$104k+
n=	2,129	1,807	322	1,030	1,093	446	883	685
Strongly disagree	16%	15%	17%	19%	13%	20%	17%	11%
Disagree	30%	30%	31%	32%	28%	30%	32%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	24%	27%	23%	25%	27%	21%	24%
Agree	23%	24%	20%	21%	25%	18%	24%	28%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	5%	6%	9%	5%	7%	10%
Nett: Total disagree	46%	45%	48%	51%	41%	50%	49%	39%
Nett: Total agree	30%	31%	25%	26%	34%	23%	30%	38%

Reference: WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...
 Base: All workers. See data tables for definitions. NA removed.
 Note: not all categories shown; sub-categories may not sum to total or 100%.
 Source: ACTU ASK, Qtr 1 2024.

Table 2: Financial wellbeing – I earn enough to pay my bills

I earn enough to pay my bills [Workers]	Total	In secure work	In insecure work	Women	Men	Income below \$52k	Income \$52k- <\$104k	Income \$104k+
n=	2,127	1,806	321	1,031	1,090	446	886	680
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	8%	6%	3%	9%	5%	1%
Disagree	13%	12%	18%	15%	10%	20%	12%	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	20%	22%	21%	19%	25%	21%	16%
Agree	49%	50%	41%	46%	50%	37%	49%	55%
Strongly agree	15%	15%	12%	12%	17%	9%	14%	21%
Nett: Total disagree	17%	15%	26%	21%	13%	29%	17%	9%
Nett: Total agree	63%	65%	53%	58%	68%	46%	62%	76%

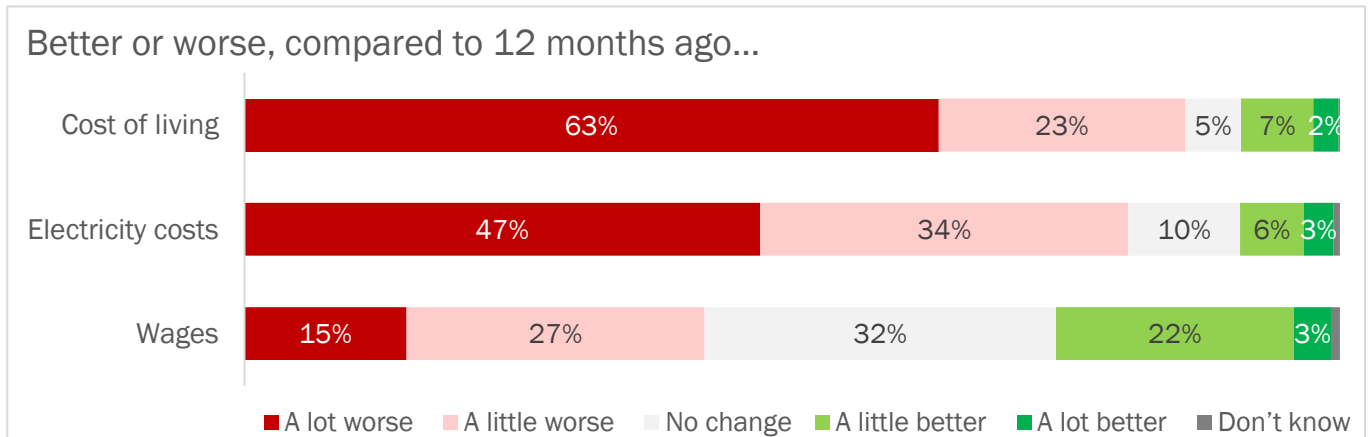
Reference: WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...
 Base: All workers. See data tables for definitions. NA removed.
 Note: not all categories shown; sub-categories may not sum to total or 100%.
 Source: ACTU ASK, Qtr 1 2024.

A total of 86% of workers think that the cost of living has become a lot or a little worse compared to 12 months ago, and 81% think that electricity costs have got worse.

Only 25% think that wages have got a lot or a little better in the last 12 months, compared to 42% who think they have got worse and 32% who think there has been no change.

The proportion of workers who think that the cost of living has become a lot or a little worse than 12 months ago is higher among insecure workers (91%, compared to 85% for those in secure work) and women (89%, compared to 82% for men). (Note: these figures are not charted; see demographic cuts available in the data tables.)

Chart 2: Change over last 12 months



Reference: WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...? Labels not shown where <2%.

Base: All workers. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. Note: sub-categories may not sum to total or 100%.

Source: ACTU ASK, Qtr 1 2024.

Workers in insecure work are more likely to disagree that they can afford day-to-day living expenses without significant financial stress than those who are in secure work. This includes 38% of insecure workers who disagree that they can afford utilities without stress (compared to 32% of secure workers).

Women are notably more likely to experience significant financial stress on these costs than men across all measures, particularly in their ability to afford medical and health costs without stress.

Those with an income below \$52k also consistently expect greater hardship on day-to-day expenses than those on higher incomes, including 46% for housing and 40% for food & groceries.

Table 3: Affordability – Ability to afford costs without significant financial stress [% disagree]

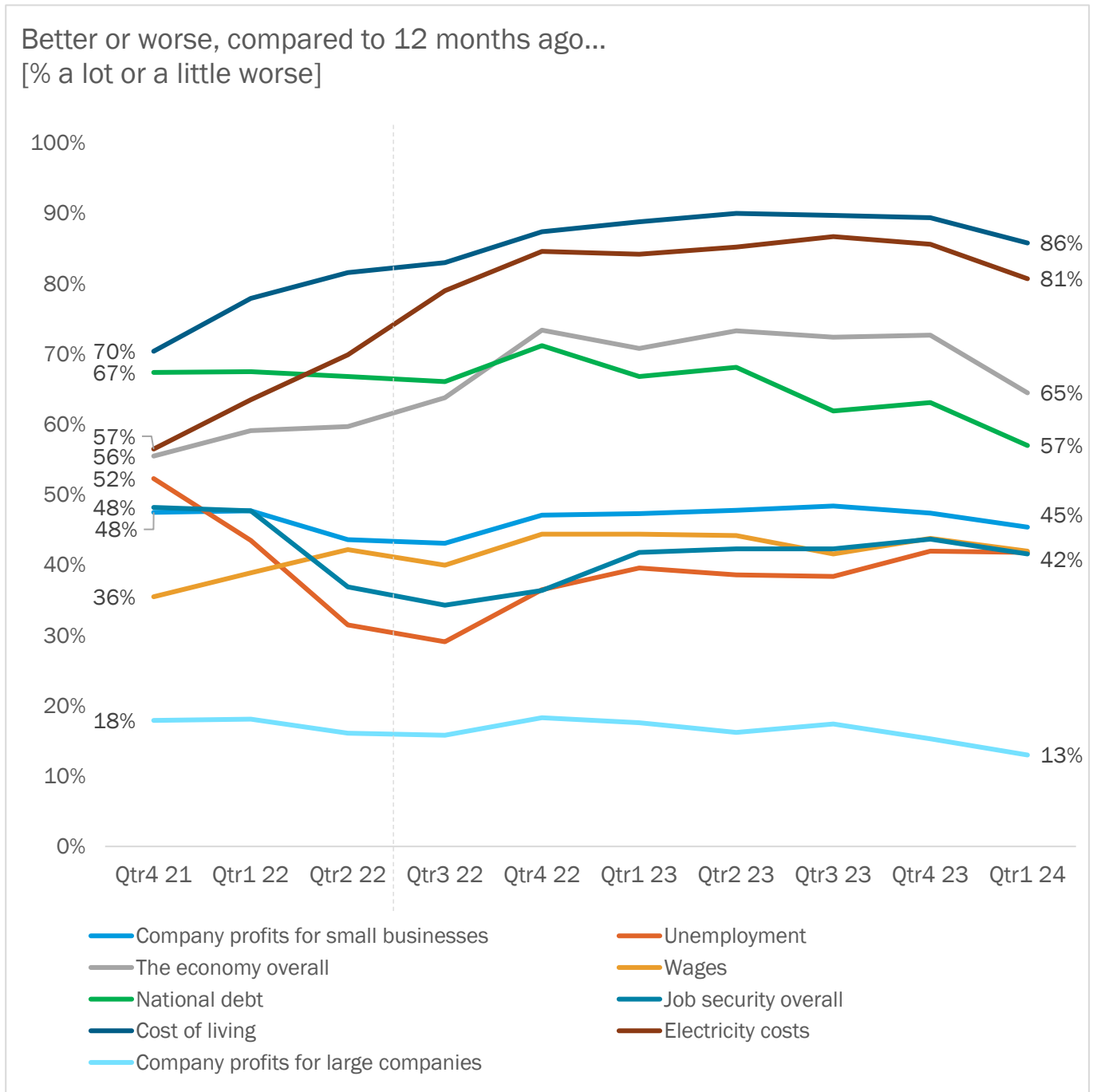
% disagree - My household can afford the following costs without significant financial stress [Workers]	Total	In secure work	In insecure work	Women	Men	Income below \$52k	Income \$52k- <\$104k	Income \$104k+
Housing	39%	39%	42%	45%	34%	46%	44%	30%
Medical / health	35%	34%	41%	43%	27%	41%	39%	25%
Utilities	33%	32%	38%	38%	28%	38%	35%	25%
Food & groceries	30%	30%	35%	36%	25%	40%	31%	22%
Fuel & transport	29%	29%	34%	33%	25%	37%	31%	22%
Childcare	27%	27%	30%	29%	26%	29%	32%	20%
Personal debt	26%	25%	33%	30%	23%	32%	30%	18%

Reference: WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your household will be able to afford the following costs without significant financial stress...? Shows total % strongly disagree / disagree. Note: not all categories shown; sub-categories may not sum to total or 100%.

Base: All workers. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. NA removed.

Source: ACTU ASK, Qtr 1 2024.

Chart 3: Change over last 12 months (% worse, all workers) - Extended time series



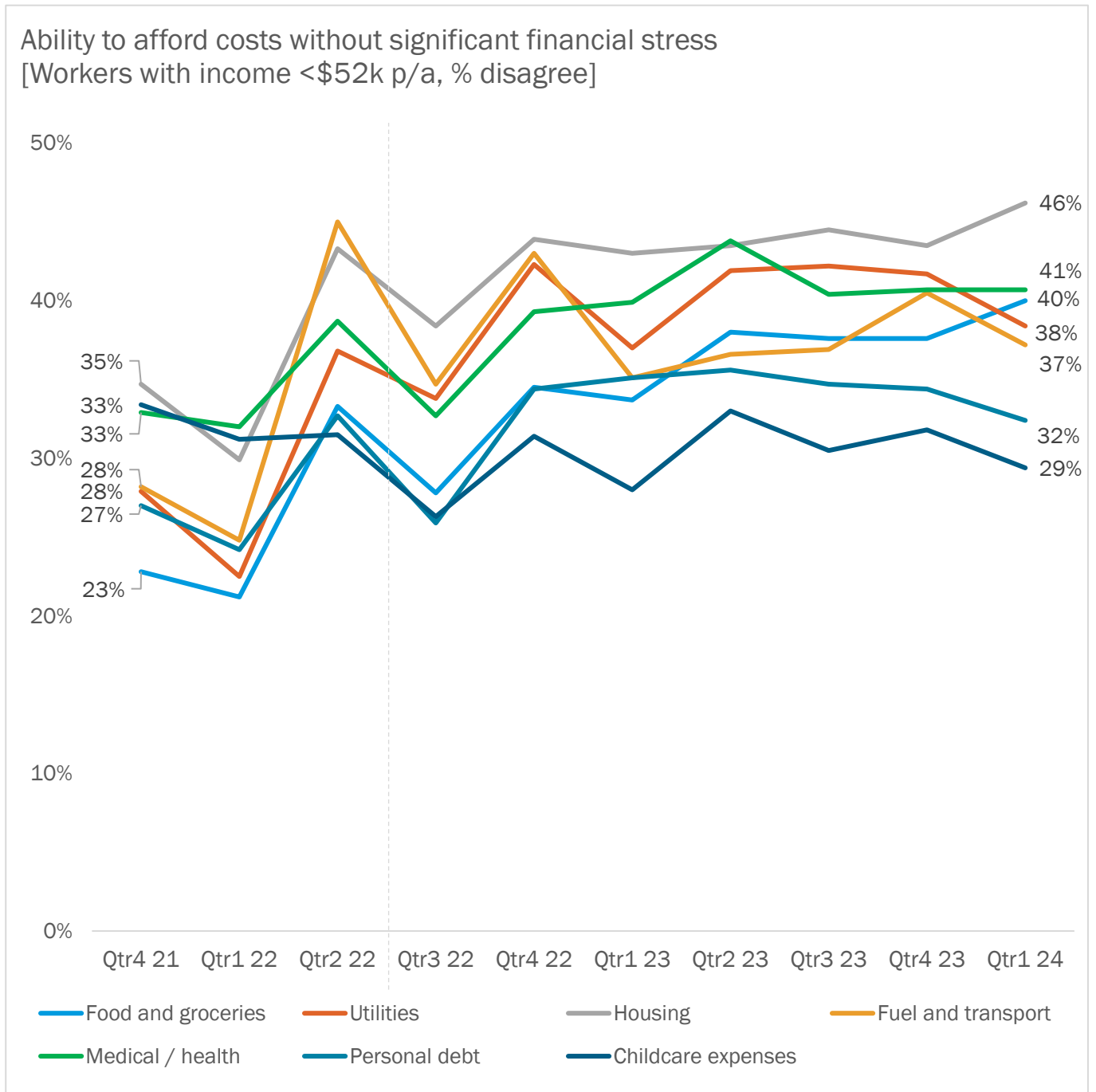
Reference: WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All workers. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions.

Note: In Q3 2022, a methodological change was made to the sampling for the research, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a break in the time series data and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution. Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.

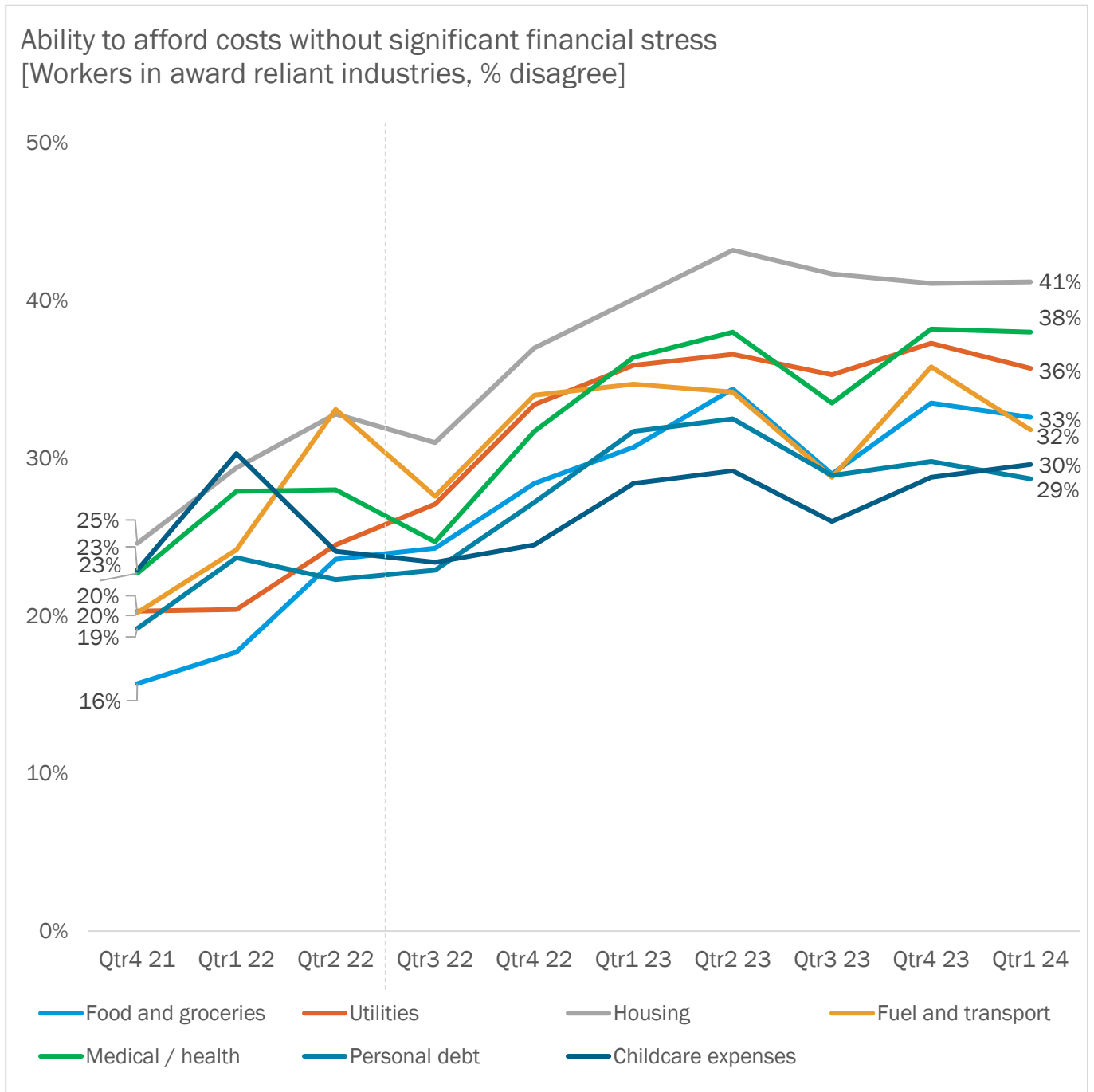
Source: ACTU ASK.

Chart 4: Ability to afford costs without significant financial stress (% disagree)
Workers with income of less than \$52k per year - Extended time series



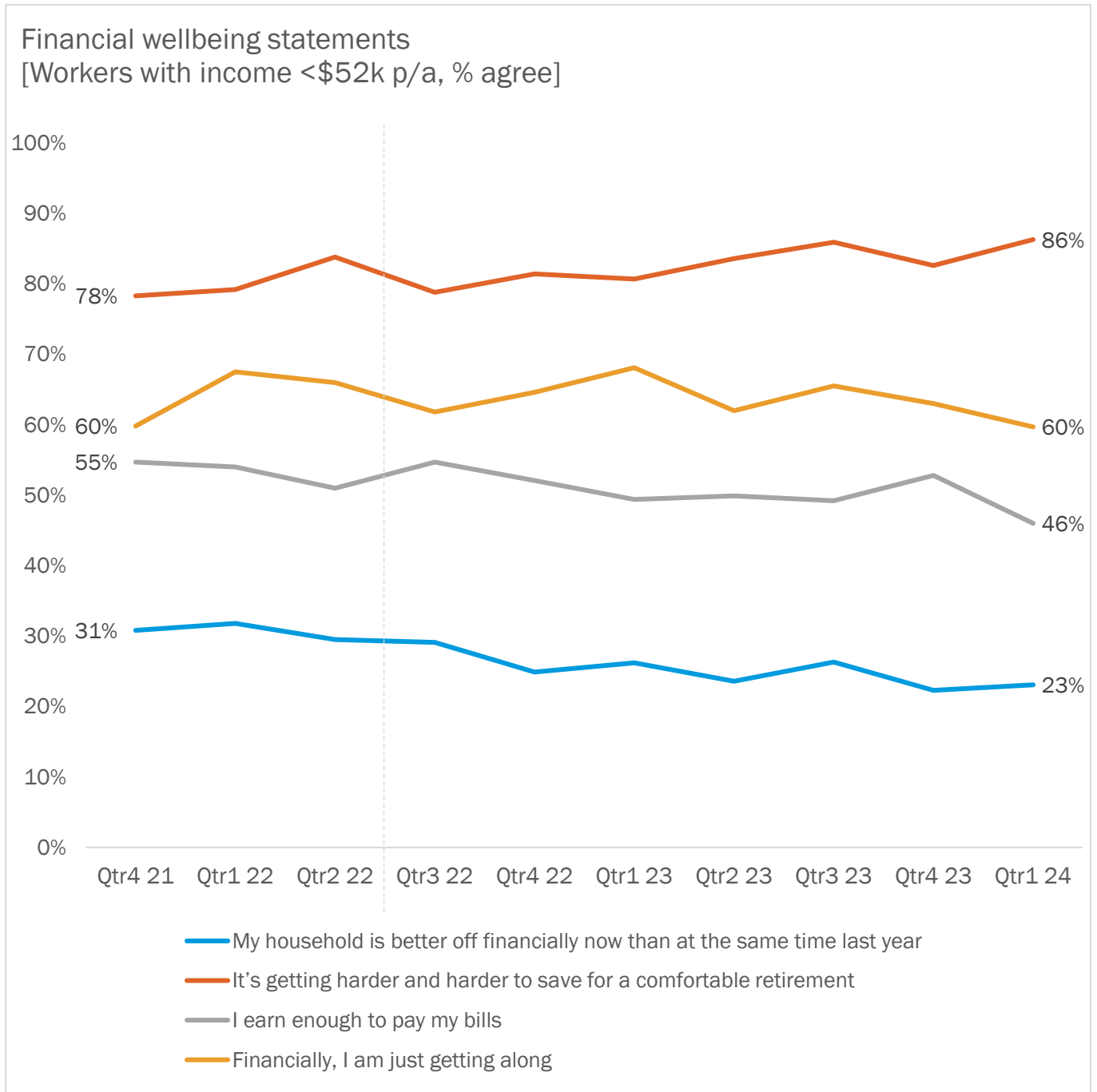
Reference: WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your household will be able to afford the following costs without significant financial stress...?
 Shows % strongly disagree / disagree that costs can be afforded without significant financial stress.
 Base: All workers with personal income of less than \$52k. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. NA removed.
 Note: In Q3 2022, a methodological change was made to the sampling for the research, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a break in the time series data and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution. Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.
 Source: ACTU ASK.

Chart 5: Ability to afford costs without significant financial stress (% disagree)
Workers in award reliant industries - Extended time series



Reference: WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your household will be able to afford the following costs without significant financial stress...?
 Shows % strongly disagree / disagree that costs can be afforded without significant financial stress.
 Base: All workers in award reliant industries. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. NA removed.
 Note: In Q3 2022, a methodological change was made to the sampling for the research, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a break in the time series data and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution. Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.
 Source: ACTU ASK.

Chart 6: Financial wellbeing statements (% strongly agree or agree) - Extended time series
Workers with income of less than \$52k per year - Extended time series



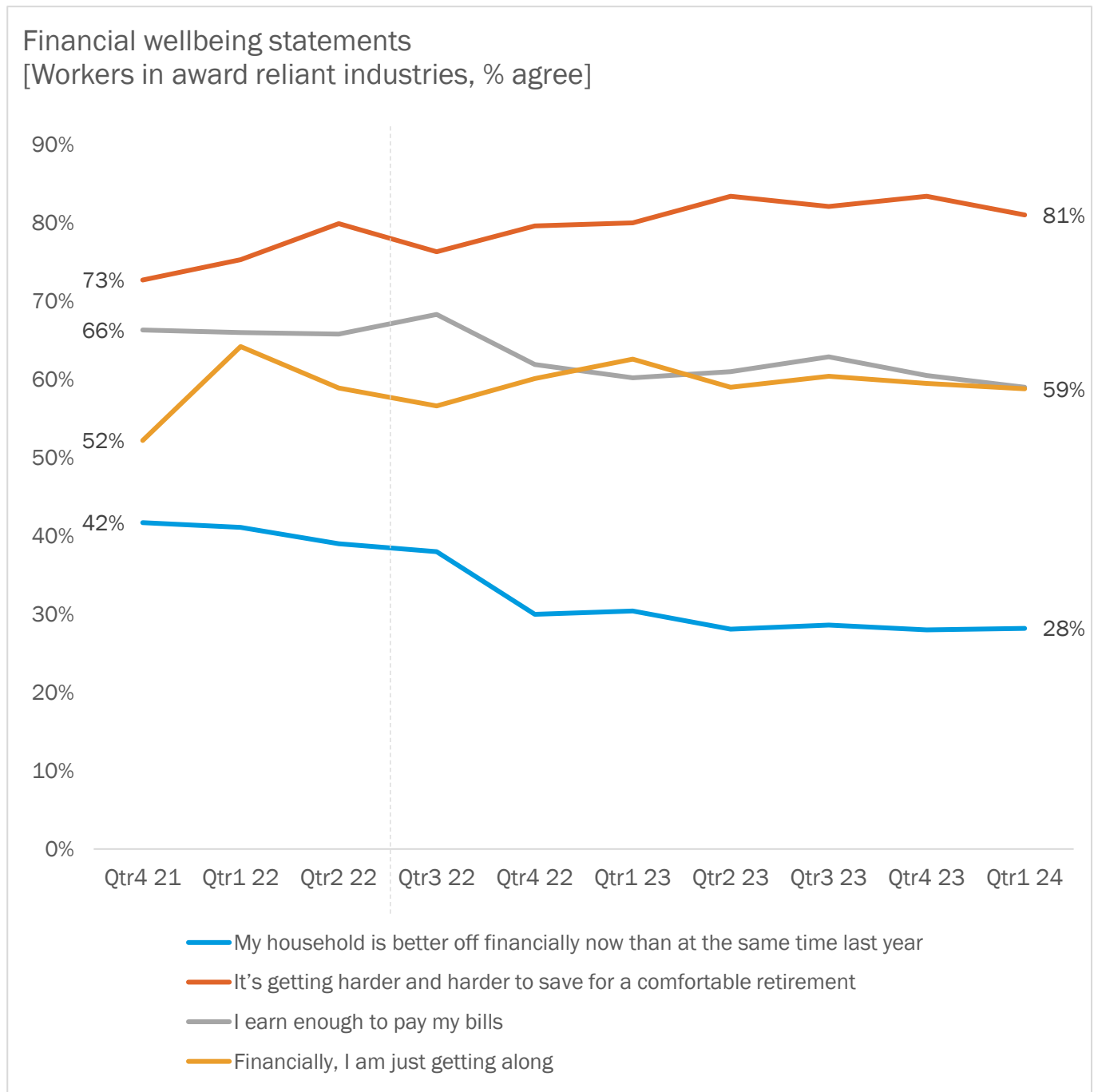
Reference: WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree... Shows % strongly agree or agree.

Base: All workers with personal income of less than \$52k. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. NA removed.

Note: In Q3 2022, a methodological change was made to the sampling for the research, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a break in the time series data and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution. Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.

Source: ACTU ASK.

**Chart 7: Financial wellbeing statements (% strongly agree or agree) - Extended time series
Workers in award reliant industries - Extended time series**



Reference: WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree... Shows % strongly disagree or disagree.

Base: All workers in award reliant industries. See data tables for sample sizes and definitions. NA removed.

Note: In Q3 2022, a methodological change was made to the sampling for the research, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a break in the time series data and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution. Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.

Source: ACTU ASK.

About the research

All data referenced in this report is sourced from the J012 ACTU ASK Research, which aims to understand and track Australians' perceptions and sentiments on a range of issues, including financial wellbeing and employment.

All base module questions are repeated from wave to wave to ensure consistency over time and to ensure comparability to previous waves of data. This allows for trend series data to determine any changes over time.

Point in time results in this report are drawn from the most recent wave (Wave 10, Quarter 1 2024), with fieldwork conducted between 01-14 February 2024. Some data in this report has been compared to previous waves to show changes over time.

ASK methodology

The ASK research consists of a 15-minute online survey, which includes ongoing tracking and topical question modules.

The survey has target quotas, which interlock age x gender and overlay location (state/territory). Since Wave 8, the location quotas have also been interlocked. Targets are proportionally based on results from the ABS 2021 Census. Note that respondents are able to identify themselves as non-binary, other, or refuse gender identification, which may cause some fluctuations in quota cells.

This research is conducted in accordance with The Research Society's Code of Professional Behaviour.

Sample

The ASK Research is conducted with a robust sample of ~n=3,000 per wave (bar the second wave, Quarter 1, 2022, which had n=800 responses). Surveys are conducted with people in Australia aged 18+, using sample from an accredited online panel sample provider (Pure Profile).

Notes on interpreting the data

When interpreting the results, it should be noted that online panel samples represent a broad spectrum of the population but are opt in and may have some distinct characteristics from the overall population. However, sample is balanced to proportionally represent key demographics such as age, gender and location, to align with the overall population.

Statistical tests based on random samples do not technically apply to research using panel sample but provide a broad guide to expected confidence and survey variability levels. For ASK, the expected accuracy levels for a random sample of n=3,000 would be $\pm 2\%$ at the 95% confidence level, based on a proportion of 50% for the population of 20.1 million people aged 18+ in Australia.

Supporting data tables

This report is supported by a comprehensive set of data tables for Waves 6-10, also provided. This gives a full breakdown of the metrics reported across all data breaks, as well as details on elements such as question wording, sample sizes, and key definitions. Please refer to these tables for further information.



PLEASE CONTACT THE ACTU INSIGHTS MANAGER IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE ANY FURTHER DETAIL
SRössER@ACTU.ORG.AU

ACTU ASK Tracker

About the research

All data shown is from J012 ACTU ASK Tracking Research, conducted by ACTU Insights on behalf of the ACTU.

The objective of the research is to understand and track Australians' perceptions and sentiments on a range of issues, including financial wellbeing and employment.

This data is provided for research purposes only and caution should be used when interpreting results.

Methodology

The ASK research consists of a 15 minute online survey, which includes ongoing tracking and topical question modules. Data in this report is primarily sourced from Waves 4-10. The worksheet containing extended time series data contains results from Waves 1-10.

Quarter 1, 2024 (Wave 10) fieldwork was conducted between 01-14 Feb 2024.

Quarter 4, 2023 (Wave 9) fieldwork was conducted between 01-14 Nov 2023.

Quarter 3, 2023 (Wave 8) fieldwork was conducted between 01-14 Aug 2023.

Quarter 2, 2023 (Wave 7) fieldwork was conducted between 01-10 May 2023.

Quarter 1, 2023 (Wave 6) fieldwork was conducted between 14-21 Feb 2023.

Quarter 4, 2022 (Wave 5) fieldwork was conducted between 31 Oct to 14 Nov 2022.

Quarter 3, 2022 (Wave 4) fieldwork was conducted between 12-22 Aug 2022.

Quarter 2, 2022 (Wave 3) fieldwork was conducted between 23-30 May 2022.

Quarter 1, 2022 (Wave 2) fieldwork was conducted between 17-24 February 2022.

Quarter 4, 2021 (Wave 1) fieldwork was conducted in November 2021.

The ASK Research is conducted with a sample of ~n=3,000 per wave (except for the second wave, which had n=800 responses).

Surveys are conducted with people in Australia aged 18+, using sample from an accredited online panel sample provider (Pure Profile).

When interpreting the results, it should be noted that online panel samples represent a broad spectrum of the population but are opt in and may show some different characteristics. However, sample is balanced to proportionally represent key demographics such as age, gender and location, to align with the overall population. Statistical tests based on random samples do not technically apply to research using panel sample but provide a broad guide to expected confidence and survey variability levels. For ASK, the expected accuracy levels for a random sample of n=3,000 would be $\pm 2\%$ at the 95% confidence level, based on a proportion of 50% for the population of 20.1 million people aged 18+ in Australia.

The survey has target quotas, which interlock age x gender and overlay location (state/territory). Since Wave 8, the location quotas have also been interlocked. Targets are based on results from the ABS 2021 Census.

Note that respondents are able to identify themselves as non-binary, other, or refuse gender identification and there may be fluctuations in quota cells due to this.

It should be noted that in Q3 2022, a **methodological change was made to the sampling for the research**, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a **break in the time series data** and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution.

The ACTU is a client partner of The Research Society and all members of the ACTU Insights Team are full members of the Research Society. Three out of the four members hold QPR (Qualified Practising Researcher) status.

The ASK research is conducted in accordance with The Research Society's Code of Professional Behaviour.

All members of the ACTU Insights Team have a minimum of 18 years experience up to 27 years experience working in the field of research and insights

[For more information on this research, please contact the ACTU Insights, Member Experience and Data Manager, Simone Rosser \(srosser@actu.org.au\)](mailto:srosser@actu.org.au)

Definitions

Banner sections

Total
Work status
Work security (workers)
Work type (workers)
Gender (workers)
Age (workers)
Location (workers)
Personal annual pre-tax income (workers)
Industry type (workers)

Definition

All respondents (Australians 18+), with question filters as outlined.
Currently in paid work, or not (see banner categories for further detail).
Whether in secure or insecure work (see banner categories for further detail).
Current main work status. Please note that not all options are included in the banner categories due to low sample sizes (i.e. gig workers & PT fixed term paid contract workers not shown).
Self identified gender. Please note that not all options are included in the banner categories due to low sample sizes (i.e. refused & non-binary / intersex / own identity not shown).
Grouped into categories (age ranges) shown.
State based on postcode and grouped into categories shown.
Personal annual pre-tax income. Note that respondents may choose to not give this information.
Whether in award reliant work, or not (see banner categories for further detail).

Banner categories

Total
Not currently working
All workers (Workers)
Workers in secure work
Workers in insecure work
Permanent FT paid workers
Permanent PT paid workers
Casual paid workers
FT fixed term contract paid workers
PT fixed term contract paid workers
Gig workers
Independent contractors
Workers - Women
Workers - Men
Workers - Other/refused gender
Workers aged 18-29
Workers aged 30-44
Workers aged 45-59
Workers aged 60+
Workers in NSW/ACT
Workers in QLD
Workers in WA
Workers in VIC/TAS
Workers in SA/NT
Workers with income below \$52k
Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k
Workers with income \$104k+
Workers preferring not to say income

Workers in award reliant industries

Workers not in award reliant industries

Definition

All respondents answering question.
Main work status is retired or not currently working/not being paid.
Main work status is currently in paid work. Includes FT permanent paid work, PT permanent paid work, casual paid work, FT fixed term contract paid work, PT fixed term contract paid work, gig work, independent contractors.
Currently in FT or PT permanent paid work.
Workers who are not currently in FT or PT permanent paid work (i.e. casual paid work, FT fixed term contract paid work, PT fixed term contract paid work, gig work, independent contractors).
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Selected category as current main work status.
Current workers who self-identify as female.
Current workers who self-identify as male.
Current workers who do not self-identify as female or male (i.e. refused / non-binary / intersex / own identity).
Current workers in nominated age range.
Current workers in nominated age range.
Current workers in nominated age range.
Current workers in nominated age range.
Current workers in nominated location.
Current workers in nominated location.
Current workers in nominated location.
Current workers in nominated location.
Current workers in nominated location.
Current workers who gave their personal annual pre-tax income in the outlined bands.
Current workers who gave their personal annual pre-tax income in the outlined bands.
Current workers who gave their personal annual pre-tax income in the outlined bands.
Current workers who refused to provide their personal annual pre-tax income.

Current workers who are mainly working in 'award reliant' industries, i.e. administration & professional services / community & disability services / entertainment, arts & recreation / health / hospitality, tourism & food services / retail.

Current workers who are not mainly working in 'award reliant' industries, i.e. agriculture, forestry & fishing / construction / education / finance, banking & insurance / manufacturing / media & communications / mining / property & other services / public services / transport / utilities / warehousing & logistics / trades & trades assistants.

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Total

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100%, due to rounding and some categories being hidden due to low sample.

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,950	2,957	2,969	2,973	2,972	2,966	2,972	1,026	999	958	948
Strongly disagree	11%	15%	15%	17%	16%	18%	17%	16%	21%	19%	21%
Disagree	29%	31%	33%	34%	33%	32%	31%	35%	35%	35%	37%
Neither agree nor disagree	30%	27%	26%	25%	25%	26%	26%	35%	27%	30%	28%
Agree	23%	21%	20%	19%	20%	19%	20%	12%	14%	13%	11%
Strongly agree	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	46%	48%	51%	49%	50%	49%	51%	56%	54%	58%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	30%	27%	26%	24%	26%	24%	26%	14%	17%	16%	13%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.4

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,946	2,944	2,966	2,968	2,953	2,952	2,968	1,012	993	959	950
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Disagree	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	12%	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%	11%	9%	11%	9%
Agree	45%	46%	47%	46%	47%	45%	45%	45%	44%	43%	47%
Strongly agree	40%	38%	40%	40%	39%	40%	41%	42%	44%	45%	42%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	85%	84%	86%	87%	86%	86%	86%	87%	88%	88%	89%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,861	2,877	2,857	2,874	2,877	2,884	2,889	928	921	851	856
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Disagree	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%	6%	5%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	17%	15%	13%	13%	16%	14%	17%	17%	18%	14%
Agree	41%	41%	41%	40%	43%	41%	39%	40%	38%	36%	38%
Strongly agree	34%	36%	38%	40%	38%	38%	40%	34%	39%	39%	41%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	10%	7%	7%	6%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	75%	76%	79%	80%	81%	78%	79%	74%	76%	75%	80%
Mean score [1-5]	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,765	2,763	2,775	2,804	2,802	2,830	2,823	832	807	768	781
Strongly disagree	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	9%	10%	8%	8%
Disagree	11%	13%	14%	15%	13%	13%	13%	13%	16%	18%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	21%	21%	21%	21%	20%	20%	27%	23%	22%	26%
Agree	47%	46%	45%	46%	46%	47%	47%	37%	38%	39%	37%
Strongly agree	18%	15%	15%	14%	15%	14%	14%	13%	14%	13%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	18%	19%	19%	18%	19%	19%	22%	26%	26%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	61%	60%	60%	61%	61%	61%	50%	51%	51%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3

Financially, I am just getting along	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,958	2,963	2,964	2,965	2,971	2,973	2,980	1,020	1,001	956	939
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Disagree	17%	16%	15%	15%	17%	16%	16%	18%	16%	17%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	23%	22%	22%	23%	24%	23%	24%	21%	23%	20%
Agree	41%	44%	45%	46%	44%	44%	44%	38%	43%	39%	45%
Strongly agree	13%	14%	14%	12%	12%	13%	13%	15%	16%	14%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	20%	19%	20%	21%	19%	20%	23%	22%	24%	21%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	58%	59%	58%	57%	57%	57%	53%	58%	53%	60%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5

I feel secure in my job	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,360	2,388	2,392	2,446	2,420	2,449	2,460	431	437	389	431
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	6%	8%	8%	8%
Disagree	8%	8%	10%	12%	10%	11%	12%	10%	9%	12%	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	29%	26%	28%	28%	27%	26%	63%	62%	59%	63%
Agree	40%	40%	44%	39%	41%	41%	41%	16%	16%	16%	13%
Strongly agree	20%	19%	17%	18%	18%	18%	19%	5%	5%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	11%	12%	14%	16%	13%	15%	15%	16%	17%	19%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	60%	59%	61%	57%	59%	58%	59%	21%	22%	22%	18%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much the same?

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	2,874	2,914	2,897	2,909	2,900	2,906	2,917	986	987	942	919
A lot worse	22%	32%	27%	28%	23%	27%	19%	25%	36%	28%	28%
A little worse	36%	42%	42%	40%	41%	40%	37%	34%	39%	43%	36%
No change	17%	12%	13%	13%	16%	15%	17%	15%	11%	14%	13%
A little better	21%	13%	15%	17%	19%	16%	24%	23%	12%	14%	21%
A lot better	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	58%	74%	70%	68%	63%	67%	56%	59%	75%	71%	64%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	25%	15%	17%	19%	21%	18%	27%	26%	14%	15%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.3

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of other issues is expected to drop.

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
Increasing wages	29%	31%	33%	31%	29%	27%	26%	19%	19%	19%	18%
Supporting small business	14%	13%	12%	13%	12%	10%	11%	12%	12%	11%	12%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	2%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	24%	21%	21%	19%	18%	18%	18%	41%	34%	36%	33%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	19%	19%	18%	18%	18%	17%	18%	24%	23%	24%	21%
Improving job security	12%	12%	12%	11%	11%	10%	10%	7%	8%	8%	6%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	14%	13%	13%	14%	12%	13%	14%	13%	13%	13%	16%
Making workplaces safer	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Ensuring gender equality	8%	8%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	5%	3%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	11%	12%	11%	11%	12%	10%	11%	13%	16%	15%	13%
Reducing the cost of childcare	9%	8%	9%	8%	8%	8%	8%	7%	5%	6%	7%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	10%	9%	8%	10%	10%	10%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	12%	12%	12%	14%	14%	15%	14%	15%	14%	14%	14%
Ensuring national security	15%	15%	14%	15%	13%	14%	14%	19%	18%	17%	18%
Reducing the cost of living	58%	60%	63%	63%	66%	63%	63%	59%	60%	61%	64%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	16%	15%	16%	15%	14%	14%	15%	17%	16%	18%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	22%	21%	20%	21%	20%	19%	18%	34%	31%	34%	34%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	30%	27%	24%	25%	25%	25%	24%	31%	30%	25%	25%
Preventing family and domestic violence	18%	17%	19%	19%	19%	19%	16%	18%	19%	20%	20%
Managing the economy	31%	30%	31%	31%	32%	31%	29%	33%	31%	32%	32%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	-	-	-	22%	25%	-	-	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	31%	33%	35%	39%	39%	37%	38%	28%	32%	34%	39%
Preventing wage theft	6%	7%	8%	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%	4%	5%	4%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	12%	13%	13%	13%	14%	12%	12%	9%	10%	9%	10%
Reducing personal income tax rates	13%	15%	15%	17%	17%	17%	17%	6%	9%	6%	8%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	7%	7%	7%	6%	7%	8%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	35%	34%	37%	37%	36%	34%	34%	46%	44%	48%	48%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Work status

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	All workers			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	933	883	843	1,924	1,958	2,011	2,025	2,039	2,083	2,129	1,616
Strongly disagree	20%	20%	21%	9%	12%	14%	15%	14%	16%	16%	9%
Disagree	37%	35%	35%	25%	29%	32%	33%	31%	31%	30%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	31%	29%	28%	27%	24%	23%	24%	24%	24%	27%
Agree	12%	11%	13%	28%	25%	23%	22%	23%	22%	23%	29%
Strongly agree	3%	3%	3%	10%	8%	8%	7%	8%	7%	7%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	57%	55%	56%	34%	41%	45%	47%	46%	48%	46%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	15%	14%	15%	38%	33%	31%	29%	31%	29%	30%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.4	2.4	2.4	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	3.1

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	All workers			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	930	886	844	1,934	1,951	2,007	2,018	2,023	2,066	2,124	1,625
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	8%	11%	9%	13%	14%	12%	11%	13%	12%	12%	14%
Agree	46%	45%	44%	45%	47%	48%	46%	48%	46%	45%	46%
Strongly agree	43%	43%	45%	38%	35%	37%	40%	37%	39%	40%	38%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	90%	87%	89%	84%	83%	86%	85%	84%	85%	85%	83%
Mean score [1-5]	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	All workers			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	857	813	759	1,933	1,956	2,006	2,018	2,020	2,071	2,130	1,627
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Disagree	5%	5%	7%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	19%	14%	16%	17%	14%	13%	13%	14%	14%	15%
Agree	43%	37%	37%	42%	42%	43%	41%	43%	42%	40%	43%
Strongly agree	38%	37%	41%	34%	35%	37%	40%	38%	38%	40%	34%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	6%	7%	9%	8%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	8%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	80%	74%	77%	76%	77%	80%	81%	81%	80%	80%	77%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0

I earn enough to pay my bills	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	758	746	696	1,933	1,956	2,007	2,023	2,044	2,084	2,127	1,632
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	9%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Disagree	18%	14%	16%	10%	12%	13%	14%	12%	13%	13%	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	24%	19%	17%	20%	20%	18%	20%	19%	20%	16%
Agree	36%	40%	43%	51%	50%	48%	49%	50%	50%	49%	52%
Strongly agree	13%	13%	13%	20%	16%	16%	15%	16%	14%	15%	21%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	24%	25%	13%	15%	17%	18%	15%	17%	17%	11%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	53%	56%	70%	66%	64%	64%	65%	64%	63%	73%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.8

Financially, I am just getting along	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	937	886	853	1,938	1,962	2,008	2,026	2,034	2,087	2,127	1,629
Strongly disagree	5%	6%	7%	4%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Disagree	19%	19%	17%	17%	16%	14%	16%	16%	14%	15%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	22%	20%	25%	24%	22%	23%	23%	25%	24%	24%
Agree	41%	41%	41%	43%	45%	48%	46%	46%	45%	45%	43%
Strongly agree	13%	13%	15%	12%	12%	13%	11%	12%	13%	13%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	24%	24%	20%	19%	17%	19%	19%	17%	19%	21%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	54%	56%	55%	58%	62%	57%	58%	58%	57%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4

I feel secure in my job	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	389	369	335	1,929	1,951	2,003	2,015	2,031	2,080	2,125	1,625
Strongly disagree	6%	6%	6%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%
Disagree	12%	8%	12%	7%	8%	10%	12%	10%	11%	12%	6%
Neither agree nor disagree	60%	65%	62%	21%	22%	19%	20%	21%	20%	20%	20%
Agree	17%	17%	16%	45%	46%	49%	44%	46%	45%	45%	46%
Strongly agree	5%	5%	4%	23%	22%	19%	21%	20%	20%	21%	25%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	14%	18%	10%	11%	13%	15%	13%	15%	14%	9%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	22%	21%	20%	69%	68%	68%	65%	66%	65%	66%	71%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	904	871	827	1,888	1,927	1,955	1,990	1,996	2,035	2,090	1,587
A lot worse	24%	29%	23%	21%	30%	27%	28%	22%	26%	17%	21%
A little worse	37%	38%	35%	36%	43%	42%	42%	42%	41%	39%	36%
No change	19%	15%	15%	18%	12%	13%	13%	15%	16%	17%	19%
A little better	19%	17%	25%	20%	13%	16%	15%	19%	15%	24%	20%
A lot better	2%	1%	3%	5%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	5%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	61%	67%	57%	58%	73%	69%	70%	65%	67%	56%	57%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	20%	18%	28%	25%	15%	19%	17%	21%	18%	27%	25%
Mean score [1-5]	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.5

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	King			All workers								
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>												
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637	
Increasing wages	17%	14%	14%	34%	37%	39%	37%	35%	33%	31%	35%	
Supporting small business	11%	9%	9%	14%	14%	13%	13%	13%	11%	12%	15%	
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	3%	2%	2%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	33%	31%	32%	15%	14%	13%	13%	11%	13%	13%	14%	
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	23%	20%	20%	16%	16%	15%	16%	16%	16%	17%	16%	
Improving job security	7%	6%	6%	15%	14%	14%	13%	13%	12%	11%	15%	
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	13%	15%	15%	14%	13%	13%	12%	12%	12%	14%	15%	
Making workplaces safer	3%	5%	4%	7%	7%	7%	5%	7%	6%	6%	8%	
Ensuring gender equality	5%	5%	3%	9%	8%	7%	7%	7%	6%	5%	9%	
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	17%	14%	14%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	9%	10%	10%	
Reducing the cost of childcare	5%	5%	5%	10%	10%	11%	9%	9%	10%	9%	10%	
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	10%	10%	8%	12%	11%	11%	12%	12%	10%	10%	12%	
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	15%	18%	15%	10%	11%	11%	13%	13%	13%	13%	10%	
Ensuring national security	17%	17%	18%	13%	14%	13%	13%	11%	13%	12%	13%	
Reducing the cost of living	64%	62%	63%	57%	60%	64%	63%	66%	64%	64%	57%	
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	3%	2%	1%	5%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	13%	14%	17%	15%	15%	15%	15%	14%	13%	17%	
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	33%	32%	30%	16%	16%	14%	14%	15%	14%	13%	15%	
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	28%	26%	25%	29%	26%	24%	24%	24%	24%	23%	29%	
Preventing family and domestic violence	22%	22%	18%	18%	16%	18%	18%	18%	17%	15%	17%	
Managing the economy	32%	31%	31%	30%	30%	30%	31%	33%	31%	28%	31%	
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	26%	30%	-	-	-	-	-	21%	23%	-	
Addressing housing affordability	37%	35%	36%	32%	33%	35%	39%	39%	38%	38%	32%	
Preventing wage theft	4%	4%	5%	7%	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	7%	
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	9%	7%	8%	13%	14%	15%	15%	16%	15%	14%	14%	
Reducing personal income tax rates	9%	8%	8%	17%	19%	20%	21%	21%	20%	21%	17%	
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	5%	7%	4%	8%	7%	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	7%	
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	4%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	5%	
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	44%	43%	45%	30%	29%	31%	31%	32%	30%	30%	29%	

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Work security (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,660	1,707	1,669	1,710	1,770	1,807	308	298	304	356	329
Strongly disagree	12%	14%	14%	14%	16%	15%	11%	11%	14%	16%	17%
Disagree	28%	31%	32%	31%	31%	30%	28%	34%	36%	35%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	24%	23%	24%	24%	24%	32%	26%	24%	25%	26%
Agree	26%	24%	23%	24%	23%	24%	23%	20%	19%	20%	20%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%	9%	8%	4%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	45%	46%	45%	47%	45%	39%	46%	49%	51%	49%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	33%	32%	31%	31%	30%	31%	30%	29%	27%	24%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,654	1,701	1,662	1,696	1,758	1,805	309	297	306	356	327
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Disagree	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	0%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	12%	12%	13%	12%	13%	13%	15%	11%	10%	11%
Agree	47%	49%	46%	48%	46%	45%	44%	47%	45%	43%	46%
Strongly agree	35%	36%	39%	36%	39%	39%	41%	35%	42%	44%	43%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%	2%	4%	1%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	83%	85%	85%	84%	85%	84%	85%	82%	87%	87%	89%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.3

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,657	1,702	1,657	1,695	1,761	1,809	306	299	304	361	325
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%
Disagree	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%	5%	3%	5%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	15%	14%	13%	14%	14%	20%	17%	13%	11%	13%
Agree	42%	44%	41%	44%	43%	41%	36%	43%	40%	43%	35%
Strongly agree	35%	36%	40%	37%	37%	39%	35%	35%	42%	39%	45%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	9%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	76%	80%	80%	81%	80%	80%	72%	78%	82%	82%	80%
Mean score [1-5]	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,659	1,704	1,663	1,713	1,772	1,806	301	297	303	360	331
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	7%	4%	5%	7%
Disagree	11%	12%	13%	10%	12%	12%	16%	14%	21%	19%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	18%	20%	18%	20%	23%	25%	25%	20%	22%
Agree	51%	50%	50%	51%	52%	50%	44%	44%	34%	45%	40%
Strongly agree	16%	16%	16%	17%	14%	15%	13%	11%	16%	11%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	14%	15%	17%	13%	16%	15%	20%	21%	25%	24%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	66%	66%	68%	66%	65%	57%	55%	51%	56%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,663	1,703	1,666	1,703	1,774	1,807	309	299	305	360	331
Strongly disagree	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%	4%
Disagree	16%	14%	15%	16%	13%	16%	15%	15%	14%	19%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	22%	23%	24%	25%	24%	27%	23%	20%	24%	20%
Agree	46%	48%	47%	46%	45%	45%	43%	42%	49%	42%	46%
Strongly agree	12%	13%	11%	11%	13%	13%	11%	15%	14%	11%	15%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	17%	19%	19%	17%	19%	19%	19%	17%	23%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	58%	61%	58%	57%	58%	58%	54%	57%	63%	53%	61%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.5

I feel secure in my job	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,657	1,701	1,663	1,706	1,772	1,808	304	294	302	352	325
Strongly disagree	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	5%	5%	7%	7%	6%
Disagree	7%	9%	11%	9%	10%	11%	13%	16%	17%	20%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	18%	19%	20%	19%	19%	29%	30%	27%	26%	29%
Agree	47%	51%	46%	48%	47%	46%	39%	36%	39%	36%	35%
Strongly agree	23%	20%	23%	22%	21%	22%	15%	12%	11%	12%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	11%	13%	11%	13%	13%	18%	21%	23%	26%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	71%	71%	69%	70%	68%	68%	54%	49%	50%	48%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,636	1,667	1,641	1,681	1,733	1,776	301	291	288	349	315
A lot worse	30%	27%	28%	22%	25%	17%	23%	32%	25%	30%	22%
A little worse	43%	42%	43%	42%	42%	38%	38%	44%	42%	40%	43%
No change	12%	13%	13%	14%	16%	17%	15%	10%	14%	12%	16%
A little better	13%	16%	15%	19%	15%	25%	21%	12%	17%	16%	18%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	73%	69%	70%	64%	67%	55%	61%	76%	68%	70%	65%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	19%	17%	21%	17%	28%	24%	14%	18%	18%	19%
Mean score [1-5]	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.3

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
Increasing wages	38%	40%	38%	37%	35%	33%	28%	35%	34%	32%	27%
Supporting small business	13%	13%	12%	12%	11%	12%	12%	18%	14%	19%	16%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	7%	3%	6%	4%	4%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	13%	13%	12%	9%	12%	12%	23%	18%	15%	17%	18%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	16%	15%	16%	16%	16%	18%	18%	17%	15%	17%	17%
Improving job security	13%	14%	14%	13%	12%	11%	15%	16%	15%	11%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	12%	13%	12%	11%	12%	13%	11%	14%	13%	15%	13%
Making workplaces safer	7%	6%	5%	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%	8%	6%	4%
Ensuring gender equality	8%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	7%	8%	8%	8%	4%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%	10%	10%	12%	12%	10%	9%
Reducing the cost of childcare	10%	12%	10%	10%	10%	9%	8%	8%	7%	5%	6%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	10%	11%	12%	11%	10%	10%	11%	12%	10%	13%	14%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	11%	11%	13%	13%	13%	13%	11%	12%	9%	12%	14%
Ensuring national security	13%	13%	13%	11%	13%	12%	12%	15%	12%	12%	11%
Reducing the cost of living	59%	64%	63%	66%	64%	64%	57%	64%	61%	64%	68%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	7%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	4%	2%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	15%	15%	15%	14%	13%	19%	14%	15%	17%	16%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	16%	14%	13%	14%	13%	12%	20%	16%	16%	19%	18%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	26%	23%	24%	23%	23%	23%	31%	29%	32%	27%	29%
Preventing family and domestic violence	16%	18%	19%	17%	16%	14%	18%	17%	15%	17%	19%
Managing the economy	31%	31%	31%	33%	31%	28%	25%	25%	27%	30%	31%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	-	-	20%	23%	-	-	-	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	33%	35%	39%	38%	38%	38%	33%	33%	36%	40%	43%
Preventing wage theft	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%	8%	8%	6%	7%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	15%	15%	16%	16%	15%	15%	10%	11%	14%	11%	12%
Reducing personal income tax rates	19%	21%	22%	22%	21%	21%	16%	17%	13%	15%	15%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	6%	7%	6%	8%	8%	8%	10%	10%	12%	9%	6%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	8%	7%	4%	6%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	29%	31%	30%	31%	29%	29%	36%	30%	34%	37%	36%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	313	322	1,222	1,267	1,294	1,229	1,312	1,329	1,394	394	393
Strongly disagree	21%	17%	8%	10%	14%	13%	14%	15%	14%	9%	17%
Disagree	32%	31%	22%	28%	30%	31%	31%	30%	30%	33%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	27%	27%	27%	23%	23%	22%	23%	23%	27%	26%
Agree	19%	20%	30%	27%	25%	25%	24%	24%	25%	26%	22%
Strongly agree	4%	5%	12%	9%	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%	5%	4%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	53%	48%	30%	38%	44%	45%	45%	45%	44%	42%	48%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	23%	25%	42%	36%	33%	33%	32%	32%	33%	31%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.6	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.7

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	308	319	1,229	1,264	1,289	1,222	1,301	1,318	1,391	396	390
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Disagree	1%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	5%	15%	16%	12%	12%	13%	13%	14%	9%	9%
Agree	45%	47%	47%	48%	50%	45%	48%	46%	46%	43%	46%
Strongly agree	40%	45%	35%	34%	35%	39%	36%	38%	37%	45%	41%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	85%	92%	82%	81%	84%	84%	84%	84%	83%	88%	87%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	310	321	1,230	1,264	1,290	1,225	1,301	1,319	1,394	397	393
Strongly disagree	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Disagree	6%	5%	7%	6%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	14%	16%	17%	14%	14%	12%	15%	14%	15%	14%
Agree	36%	36%	42%	42%	44%	40%	45%	43%	41%	47%	40%
Strongly agree	43%	44%	34%	33%	37%	40%	37%	37%	39%	32%	39%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	6%	6%	9%	7%	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	79%	80%	76%	75%	80%	80%	81%	79%	80%	79%	79%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	312	321	1,234	1,264	1,291	1,228	1,316	1,331	1,391	398	395
Strongly disagree	7%	8%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	5%	4%
Disagree	20%	18%	7%	9%	11%	11%	9%	11%	10%	13%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	22%	15%	18%	19%	19%	19%	18%	19%	18%	20%
Agree	42%	41%	53%	53%	50%	51%	51%	51%	52%	51%	46%
Strongly agree	12%	12%	23%	18%	17%	17%	19%	16%	17%	14%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	26%	9%	12%	14%	14%	11%	15%	13%	17%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	53%	76%	70%	67%	68%	70%	67%	68%	65%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.5

Financially, I am just getting along	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	313	320	1,230	1,267	1,292	1,228	1,308	1,331	1,392	399	396
Strongly disagree	4%	5%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Disagree	19%	14%	18%	17%	15%	16%	17%	14%	15%	17%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	24%	25%	24%	23%	24%	24%	25%	24%	22%	24%
Agree	43%	46%	40%	45%	47%	47%	45%	45%	45%	49%	47%
Strongly agree	13%	10%	14%	12%	13%	11%	11%	13%	13%	9%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	19%	21%	19%	17%	19%	20%	17%	18%	20%	17%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	57%	54%	57%	60%	58%	56%	58%	58%	58%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

I feel secure in my job	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	308	317	1,229	1,266	1,288	1,226	1,310	1,330	1,393	396	391
Strongly disagree	8%	7%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Disagree	19%	16%	6%	6%	8%	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	25%	19%	20%	18%	18%	20%	18%	19%	22%	21%
Agree	33%	39%	46%	48%	51%	46%	48%	48%	47%	48%	47%
Strongly agree	12%	13%	27%	24%	21%	24%	22%	22%	23%	20%	21%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	23%	8%	9%	10%	12%	11%	13%	12%	11%	12%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	52%	73%	72%	72%	70%	70%	70%	70%	67%	68%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.4	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	302	314	1,202	1,254	1,272	1,214	1,294	1,314	1,374	385	382
A lot worse	31%	20%	20%	29%	27%	27%	23%	24%	16%	22%	32%
A little worse	36%	41%	34%	43%	41%	42%	42%	42%	38%	43%	42%
No change	13%	16%	20%	12%	12%	14%	14%	16%	17%	14%	13%
A little better	19%	21%	21%	13%	16%	15%	20%	15%	27%	18%	12%
A lot better	1%	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	1%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	67%	61%	54%	72%	68%	69%	65%	66%	53%	65%	74%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	20%	24%	26%	16%	20%	17%	22%	18%	30%	21%	13%
Mean score [1-5]	2.2	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.1

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Permanent FT paid workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
Increasing wages	23%	23%	34%	38%	42%	39%	38%	35%	33%	40%	36%
Supporting small business	13%	15%	15%	13%	13%	13%	11%	11%	12%	16%	12%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	3%	3%	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%	4%	5%	3%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	15%	15%	12%	10%	11%	10%	9%	11%	11%	17%	22%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	18%	17%	18%	16%	15%	17%	16%	16%	18%	11%	16%
Improving job security	11%	12%	16%	14%	14%	14%	13%	12%	11%	10%	10%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	12%	16%	15%	12%	12%	11%	11%	12%	13%	14%	12%
Making workplaces safer	5%	5%	7%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%	9%	6%
Ensuring gender equality	5%	4%	9%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	9%	8%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	11%	11%	11%	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%	10%	8%	11%
Reducing the cost of childcare	9%	8%	10%	11%	11%	10%	10%	10%	10%	13%	10%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	13%	10%	12%	10%	11%	12%	10%	9%	10%	13%	11%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	13%	12%	10%	11%	11%	14%	13%	13%	12%	9%	13%
Ensuring national security	13%	12%	13%	14%	12%	12%	11%	12%	12%	12%	11%
Reducing the cost of living	63%	65%	55%	58%	64%	62%	65%	63%	64%	65%	63%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	2%	3%	5%	7%	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	6%	5%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	13%	15%	17%	15%	14%	15%	14%	15%	13%	16%	19%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	16%	17%	15%	14%	12%	12%	13%	11%	10%	16%	22%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	27%	26%	28%	25%	23%	23%	23%	23%	22%	32%	27%
Preventing family and domestic violence	24%	19%	16%	16%	18%	18%	16%	14%	13%	20%	18%
Managing the economy	30%	29%	31%	32%	32%	32%	34%	32%	29%	32%	27%
Keeping communities safe from crime	22%	23%	-	-	-	-	-	19%	23%	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	40%	40%	32%	32%	35%	38%	38%	38%	38%	33%	37%
Preventing wage theft	6%	6%	7%	8%	9%	7%	8%	7%	8%	5%	7%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	11%	12%	14%	15%	15%	16%	16%	15%	15%	13%	12%
Reducing personal income tax rates	15%	16%	18%	21%	22%	24%	22%	23%	24%	13%	13%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	7%	9%	8%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	8%	6%	5%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	7%	5%	5%	6%	6%	7%	8%	7%	7%	5%	5%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	38%	33%	27%	28%	29%	30%	30%	27%	28%	33%	32%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Work type (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	413	440	398	441	413	193	183	199	179	192	144
Strongly disagree	13%	16%	12%	17%	18%	10%	13%	16%	14%	17%	17%
Disagree	34%	35%	32%	36%	32%	31%	30%	40%	39%	37%	38%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	24%	27%	25%	25%	31%	27%	22%	24%	26%	19%
Agree	21%	19%	23%	19%	21%	21%	21%	18%	21%	17%	22%
Strongly agree	7%	6%	6%	4%	5%	7%	9%	5%	3%	4%	4%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	48%	51%	44%	53%	50%	41%	43%	56%	53%	54%	56%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	28%	25%	29%	23%	26%	28%	30%	23%	24%	20%	25%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	412	440	395	440	414	194	181	201	180	192	140
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Disagree	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	9%	9%	13%	11%	11%	13%	16%	10%	9%	9%	14%
Agree	46%	50%	49%	46%	41%	42%	45%	45%	42%	44%	44%
Strongly agree	42%	38%	35%	43%	44%	43%	37%	43%	44%	46%	39%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	88%	88%	84%	88%	86%	86%	82%	88%	86%	90%	83%
Mean score [1-5]	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	412	432	394	442	415	192	183	200	182	192	143
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Disagree	5%	7%	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	11%	15%	13%	13%	21%	16%	12%	13%	14%	16%
Agree	43%	43%	43%	45%	41%	37%	43%	41%	46%	35%	36%
Strongly agree	35%	38%	38%	38%	40%	37%	35%	43%	37%	47%	43%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	6%	8%	4%	4%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	79%	81%	81%	83%	81%	73%	78%	84%	83%	82%	79%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

I earn enough to pay my bills	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	413	435	397	441	415	186	182	199	181	194	143
Strongly disagree	5%	5%	3%	5%	6%	4%	7%	6%	3%	7%	8%
Disagree	14%	20%	15%	15%	17%	20%	14%	25%	22%	20%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	16%	21%	18%	22%	24%	23%	26%	24%	24%	26%
Agree	48%	49%	52%	53%	44%	40%	48%	33%	43%	41%	36%
Strongly agree	14%	11%	10%	10%	11%	12%	8%	11%	8%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	24%	18%	19%	23%	25%	21%	31%	25%	27%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	62%	60%	62%	63%	55%	52%	57%	43%	51%	49%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.2

Financially, I am just getting along	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	411	438	395	443	415	195	184	201	181	194	143
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	1%	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	3%	2%	4%
Disagree	12%	15%	14%	11%	17%	10%	14%	12%	16%	14%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	22%	24%	24%	23%	27%	23%	22%	23%	21%	23%
Agree	51%	49%	50%	48%	44%	46%	42%	49%	46%	45%	39%
Strongly agree	13%	12%	11%	12%	13%	12%	16%	12%	12%	18%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	18%	15%	15%	21%	15%	19%	16%	19%	16%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	65%	60%	61%	61%	57%	58%	59%	61%	58%	63%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.4

I feel secure in my job	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	413	437	396	442	415	192	181	198	176	191	140
Strongly disagree	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	5%	5%	8%	4%	5%	10%
Disagree	11%	12%	9%	11%	14%	16%	18%	18%	23%	17%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	21%	22%	22%	21%	27%	30%	28%	26%	28%	26%
Agree	51%	47%	49%	46%	43%	39%	38%	38%	35%	40%	37%
Strongly agree	17%	19%	19%	18%	20%	14%	10%	9%	11%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	14%	11%	14%	17%	21%	23%	25%	27%	22%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	68%	66%	68%	64%	63%	52%	48%	47%	47%	50%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	395	427	387	419	402	188	180	185	174	182	138
A lot worse	26%	28%	21%	27%	21%	22%	29%	24%	25%	21%	29%
A little worse	44%	44%	42%	43%	40%	38%	44%	47%	40%	45%	34%
No change	13%	10%	16%	15%	18%	16%	14%	12%	14%	15%	14%
A little better	15%	16%	19%	13%	18%	20%	11%	15%	19%	18%	23%
A lot better	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	70%	72%	63%	71%	61%	61%	73%	71%	65%	66%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	17%	18%	21%	14%	20%	23%	13%	16%	21%	19%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
Increasing wages	34%	38%	33%	34%	32%	33%	40%	38%	39%	29%	31%
Supporting small business	14%	9%	15%	9%	12%	10%	17%	13%	11%	11%	10%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	7%	3%	6%	6%	3%	3%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	18%	15%	11%	15%	17%	19%	15%	16%	18%	21%	16%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	13%	15%	15%	16%	17%	16%	17%	12%	13%	16%	16%
Improving job security	11%	13%	13%	10%	10%	17%	17%	16%	15%	16%	13%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	16%	14%	12%	11%	13%	13%	14%	12%	15%	13%	14%
Making workplaces safer	6%	5%	7%	5%	6%	5%	8%	6%	5%	5%	6%
Ensuring gender equality	6%	7%	7%	4%	5%	9%	8%	9%	8%	3%	8%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	10%	9%	10%	8%	10%	9%	10%	12%	9%	9%	10%
Reducing the cost of childcare	13%	11%	10%	11%	8%	7%	8%	10%	7%	4%	8%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	13%	11%	14%	11%	10%	10%	14%	11%	15%	14%	17%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	11%	12%	15%	14%	17%	9%	11%	11%	11%	12%	15%
Ensuring national security	13%	16%	12%	14%	11%	8%	12%	12%	12%	11%	10%
Reducing the cost of living	66%	65%	69%	67%	63%	61%	66%	62%	68%	72%	64%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	5%	4%	3%	3%	7%	4%	5%	6%	6%	2%	2%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	15%	15%	14%	14%	19%	13%	14%	14%	16%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	20%	17%	17%	20%	20%	20%	16%	15%	14%	16%	16%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	23%	26%	24%	25%	24%	35%	23%	35%	30%	29%	23%
Preventing family and domestic violence	21%	21%	20%	22%	17%	20%	17%	17%	18%	22%	23%
Managing the economy	26%	30%	29%	28%	23%	21%	25%	25%	24%	30%	29%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	-	24%	21%	-	-	-	-	-	19%
Addressing housing affordability	34%	43%	38%	36%	38%	35%	35%	36%	43%	43%	43%
Preventing wage theft	8%	8%	7%	5%	7%	5%	9%	8%	9%	8%	8%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	15%	15%	16%	18%	13%	13%	10%	14%	12%	14%	10%
Reducing personal income tax rates	17%	18%	20%	15%	13%	18%	15%	13%	13%	17%	15%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	8%	4%	9%	8%	8%	12%	11%	10%	9%	7%	6%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	4%	4%	3%	3%	8%	7%	10%	6%	4%	5%	8%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	36%	33%	33%	33%	34%	35%	25%	32%	35%	31%	29%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	164	33	37	39	26	23	29	35	60	54	50
Strongly disagree	20%	3%	0%	5%	-	-	-	11%	20%	17%	16%
Disagree	28%	24%	49%	23%	-	-	-	11%	25%	35%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	30%	19%	28%	-	-	-	40%	30%	26%	26%
Agree	18%	36%	19%	31%	-	-	-	29%	20%	15%	12%
Strongly agree	6%	6%	14%	13%	-	-	-	9%	5%	7%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	48%	27%	49%	28%	-	-	-	23%	45%	52%	48%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	24%	42%	32%	44%	-	-	-	37%	25%	22%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	2.6	3.2	3.0	3.2	-	-	-	3.1	2.7	2.6	2.8

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	163	33	37	39	28	23	29	33	60	55	50
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	0%	0%	-	-	-	0%	2%	2%	2%
Disagree	2%	3%	5%	0%	-	-	-	6%	3%	4%	0%
Neither agree nor disagree	5%	9%	8%	13%	-	-	-	9%	13%	15%	14%
Agree	45%	46%	65%	44%	-	-	-	42%	47%	51%	48%
Strongly agree	48%	42%	22%	44%	-	-	-	42%	35%	29%	36%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	3%	5%	0%	-	-	-	6%	5%	6%	2%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	93%	88%	87%	87%	-	-	-	85%	82%	80%	84%
Mean score [1-5]	4.4	4.3	4.0	4.3	-	-	-	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	32	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
Strongly disagree	0%	6%	0%	0%	-	-	-	0%	2%	2%	8%
Disagree	4%	3%	8%	3%	-	-	-	11%	15%	2%	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	16%	8%	8%	-	-	-	9%	18%	24%	18%
Agree	36%	44%	46%	44%	-	-	-	40%	28%	42%	28%
Strongly agree	46%	31%	38%	46%	-	-	-	40%	37%	31%	44%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	9%	8%	3%	-	-	-	11%	17%	4%	10%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	82%	75%	84%	90%	-	-	-	80%	65%	73%	72%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	3.9	4.1	4.3	-	-	-	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.0

I earn enough to pay my bills	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	163	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	54	49
Strongly disagree	10%	0%	0%	3%	-	-	-	0%	7%	13%	0%
Disagree	21%	6%	11%	8%	-	-	-	14%	12%	7%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	12%	30%	26%	-	-	-	6%	30%	32%	20%
Agree	39%	64%	38%	41%	-	-	-	49%	42%	37%	33%
Strongly agree	7%	18%	22%	23%	-	-	-	31%	10%	11%	27%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	6%	11%	10%	-	-	-	14%	18%	20%	20%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	82%	60%	64%	-	-	-	80%	52%	48%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.9	3.7	3.7	-	-	-	4.0	3.4	3.3	3.7

Financially, I am just getting along	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	163	32	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	54	49
Strongly disagree	6%	9%	3%	0%	-	-	-	3%	3%	6%	2%
Disagree	15%	19%	22%	15%	-	-	-	23%	23%	15%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	19%	22%	18%	-	-	-	23%	33%	26%	16%
Agree	42%	50%	49%	51%	-	-	-	43%	32%	43%	47%
Strongly agree	13%	3%	5%	15%	-	-	-	9%	8%	11%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	20%	28%	24%	15%	-	-	-	26%	27%	20%	20%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	53%	54%	67%	-	-	-	51%	40%	54%	63%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.7	-	-	-	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.6

I feel secure in my job	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	164	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	57	53	49
Strongly disagree	7%	3%	0%	8%	-	-	-	3%	5%	8%	4%
Disagree	15%	12%	16%	10%	-	-	-	14%	4%	6%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	21%	27%	26%	-	-	-	17%	40%	38%	25%
Agree	40%	52%	41%	41%	-	-	-	51%	33%	30%	41%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	16%	15%	-	-	-	14%	18%	19%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	15%	16%	18%	-	-	-	17%	9%	13%	20%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	64%	57%	56%	-	-	-	66%	51%	49%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.5	-	-	-	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	159	32	37	39	28	22	29	34	59	52	48
A lot worse	21%	19%	35%	23%	-	-	-	3%	27%	44%	35%
A little worse	41%	53%	38%	28%	-	-	-	35%	29%	37%	33%
No change	16%	0%	8%	21%	-	-	-	29%	17%	0%	17%
A little better	18%	25%	16%	26%	-	-	-	32%	25%	17%	13%
A lot better	3%	3%	3%	3%	-	-	-	0%	2%	2%	2%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	62%	72%	73%	51%	-	-	-	38%	56%	81%	69%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	28%	19%	28%	-	-	-	32%	27%	19%	15%
Mean score [1-5]	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.6	-	-	-	2.9	2.5	2.0	2.1

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
Increasing wages	26%	36%	30%	31%	46%	39%	17%	17%	15%	24%	20%
Supporting small business	9%	3%	5%	10%	7%	0%	14%	9%	20%	27%	26%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	2%	6%	3%	8%	11%	4%	0%	0%	5%	4%	4%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	18%	15%	11%	8%	4%	17%	0%	0%	37%	33%	18%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	14%	15%	14%	21%	21%	13%	14%	11%	23%	20%	22%
Improving job security	15%	27%	27%	21%	18%	17%	24%	3%	3%	9%	10%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	13%	15%	11%	10%	21%	22%	10%	29%	8%	16%	16%
Making workplaces safer	6%	12%	5%	15%	7%	13%	3%	3%	5%	6%	8%
Ensuring gender equality	5%	12%	11%	15%	18%	13%	3%	6%	2%	2%	2%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	7%	12%	16%	13%	11%	13%	7%	20%	10%	9%	14%
Reducing the cost of childcare	7%	18%	11%	3%	7%	13%	17%	14%	5%	6%	4%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	11%	15%	22%	8%	18%	13%	17%	6%	7%	7%	8%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	10%	12%	14%	0%	14%	30%	7%	6%	15%	18%	4%
Ensuring national security	15%	6%	11%	5%	0%	9%	7%	14%	28%	18%	18%
Reducing the cost of living	63%	55%	70%	51%	50%	52%	72%	63%	55%	58%	62%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	3%	0%	8%	3%	7%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	4%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	19%	12%	19%	8%	14%	22%	10%	9%	25%	13%	22%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	21%	12%	5%	18%	14%	17%	14%	3%	20%	26%	20%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	24%	27%	35%	28%	21%	35%	35%	49%	25%	29%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	24%	24%	11%	8%	11%	26%	14%	17%	10%	15%	14%
Managing the economy	24%	27%	8%	21%	25%	13%	21%	31%	33%	40%	36%
Keeping communities safe from crime	25%	-	-	-	-	-	21%	26%	-	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	39%	36%	41%	33%	36%	44%	59%	43%	27%	24%	30%
Preventing wage theft	8%	6%	5%	13%	4%	4%	7%	6%	7%	6%	2%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	12%	9%	5%	23%	25%	17%	24%	17%	3%	13%	6%
Reducing personal income tax rates	13%	9%	24%	10%	21%	4%	17%	17%	17%	18%	16%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	10%	9%	8%	21%	11%	4%	7%	9%	5%	0%	16%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	6%	9%	0%	10%	11%	4%	10%	9%	7%	7%	6%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	30%	27%	30%	26%	25%	39%	21%	29%	40%	49%	46%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Gender (

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	132	103	119	106	931	943	950	959	978	1,018	1,030
Strongly disagree	19%	18%	26%	16%	10%	14%	17%	18%	17%	20%	19%
Disagree	35%	24%	26%	43%	31%	34%	37%	37%	35%	35%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	29%	30%	22%	26%	24%	21%	21%	23%	22%	23%
Agree	17%	20%	13%	16%	25%	23%	19%	19%	19%	19%	21%
Strongly agree	4%	9%	4%	3%	9%	5%	7%	5%	6%	5%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	54%	42%	52%	59%	41%	48%	54%	55%	51%	55%	51%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	21%	29%	18%	19%	34%	28%	26%	24%	26%	23%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.8	2.4	2.5	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	129	102	118	106	928	941	948	954	968	1,007	1,027
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	10%	14%	12%	4%	10%	11%	10%	8%	10%	9%	9%
Agree	42%	51%	44%	53%	44%	48%	46%	43%	47%	44%	44%
Strongly agree	47%	35%	42%	41%	45%	39%	42%	47%	41%	45%	45%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	2%	0%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	88%	86%	86%	93%	89%	86%	88%	90%	88%	89%	89%
Mean score [1-5]	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	132	99	117	104	933	942	946	953	971	1,012	1,035
Strongly disagree	3%	6%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Disagree	6%	9%	7%	6%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Neither agree nor disagree	8%	7%	13%	17%	12%	12%	11%	10%	10%	11%	10%
Agree	39%	35%	37%	34%	43%	41%	43%	41%	41%	41%	40%
Strongly agree	44%	42%	43%	41%	40%	42%	41%	44%	45%	44%	45%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	15%	8%	8%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	83%	78%	80%	75%	82%	83%	84%	85%	86%	85%	85%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3

I earn enough to pay my bills	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	132	103	119	106	932	944	949	958	983	1,015	1,031
Strongly disagree	8%	6%	8%	8%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	6%	6%
Disagree	14%	19%	17%	14%	11%	15%	17%	18%	14%	17%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	19%	17%	24%	16%	19%	20%	19%	20%	18%	21%
Agree	49%	34%	43%	43%	52%	51%	47%	48%	50%	48%	46%
Strongly agree	14%	21%	15%	12%	17%	11%	12%	11%	11%	11%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	25%	25%	22%	15%	20%	21%	23%	18%	23%	21%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	55%	58%	55%	69%	62%	59%	59%	61%	59%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4

Financially, I am just getting along	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	132	103	120	105	936	946	948	960	977	1,018	1,028
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	3%	5%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Disagree	18%	15%	17%	11%	18%	15%	13%	17%	15%	14%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	20%	27%	26%	23%	23%	21%	21%	22%	22%	22%
Agree	40%	45%	42%	53%	45%	47%	50%	48%	48%	47%	47%
Strongly agree	11%	13%	12%	5%	12%	13%	13%	12%	13%	13%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	22%	20%	16%	21%	17%	15%	20%	17%	18%	18%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	57%	53%	58%	56%	60%	64%	59%	61%	61%	60%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

I feel secure in my job	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	129	100	118	101	928	937	947	954	973	1,013	1,029
Strongly disagree	8%	5%	3%	6%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Disagree	13%	15%	19%	16%	8%	9%	12%	13%	10%	12%	12%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	29%	31%	28%	20%	21%	18%	20%	22%	20%	20%
Agree	35%	28%	28%	34%	48%	47%	49%	44%	47%	44%	44%
Strongly agree	16%	23%	20%	17%	22%	20%	18%	21%	17%	19%	21%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	20%	22%	22%	11%	12%	15%	16%	13%	16%	15%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	51%	48%	51%	70%	67%	67%	65%	65%	64%	65%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	128	100	116	105	904	921	919	933	946	979	1,007
A lot worse	38%	27%	32%	25%	25%	36%	30%	31%	23%	30%	19%
A little worse	40%	41%	40%	39%	39%	44%	45%	43%	43%	42%	41%
No change	9%	13%	15%	12%	16%	10%	10%	11%	16%	14%	17%
A little better	13%	18%	14%	21%	17%	9%	13%	14%	17%	12%	21%
A lot better	0%	1%	0%	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	78%	68%	72%	64%	64%	79%	75%	74%	66%	72%	60%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	13%	19%	14%	24%	21%	10%	15%	15%	18%	14%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.5

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035
Increasing wages	22%	20%	15%	18%	38%	43%	43%	40%	37%	37%	33%
Supporting small business	33%	28%	19%	28%	13%	12%	15%	11%	11%	11%	10%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	2%	6%	3%	4%	6%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	19%	14%	17%	17%	16%	14%	15%	14%	12%	14%	13%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	20%	18%	22%	24%	13%	13%	11%	14%	13%	14%	16%
Improving job security	5%	10%	6%	5%	12%	12%	13%	11%	12%	10%	10%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	15%	12%	11%	14%	14%	13%	13%	13%	12%	11%	14%
Making workplaces safer	5%	2%	2%	3%	6%	7%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%
Ensuring gender equality	5%	4%	3%	3%	11%	9%	9%	10%	8%	7%	7%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	11%	9%	13%	13%	8%	9%	9%	7%	8%	7%	10%
Reducing the cost of childcare	4%	8%	8%	8%	12%	11%	12%	11%	11%	10%	10%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	9%	12%	8%	8%	12%	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%	9%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	14%	13%	9%	18%	8%	11%	11%	12%	13%	14%	13%
Ensuring national security	14%	11%	17%	9%	11%	10%	11%	11%	10%	11%	10%
Reducing the cost of living	61%	65%	61%	70%	65%	66%	68%	68%	70%	68%	67%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	1%	1%	3%	3%	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	24%	14%	12%	11%	14%	15%	14%	14%	14%	13%	12%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	25%	21%	16%	17%	16%	16%	15%	16%	15%	16%	16%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	23%	27%	26%	22%	33%	29%	26%	26%	26%	26%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	18%	14%	27%	14%	24%	19%	23%	24%	23%	22%	19%
Managing the economy	40%	38%	36%	35%	27%	26%	24%	24%	28%	24%	23%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	27%	22%	-	-	-	-	-	20%	24%
Addressing housing affordability	38%	40%	34%	37%	39%	38%	39%	44%	45%	42%	42%
Preventing wage theft	3%	7%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	5%	6%	5%	5%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	8%	9%	8%	7%	15%	15%	16%	16%	17%	15%	16%
Reducing personal income tax rates	17%	14%	15%	19%	16%	17%	19%	18%	20%	20%	18%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	8%	5%	9%	9%	7%	8%	9%	7%	8%	8%	10%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	3%	8%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	5%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	41%	48%	53%	43%	33%	33%	33%	35%	34%	34%	32%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	983	1,007	1,054	1,061	1,052	1,054	1,093	515	482	527	505
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	11%	12%	12%	13%	13%	6%	8%	8%	8%
Disagree	20%	25%	27%	29%	28%	28%	28%	21%	23%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	30%	29%	27%	25%	25%	26%	25%	26%	26%	26%	28%
Agree	32%	26%	27%	25%	26%	25%	25%	36%	32%	32%	29%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	9%	9%	9%	8%	9%	11%	11%	10%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	34%	38%	41%	40%	41%	41%	27%	31%	32%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	37%	36%	34%	35%	34%	34%	47%	44%	42%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.1

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	996	1,002	1,052	1,059	1,046	1,048	1,091	520	479	529	503
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Disagree	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	13%	14%	15%	15%	15%	13%	15%	11%	14%
Agree	48%	47%	51%	48%	49%	48%	46%	41%	44%	46%	41%
Strongly agree	32%	32%	33%	33%	33%	34%	34%	43%	36%	40%	40%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	79%	79%	83%	81%	81%	81%	81%	83%	80%	86%	81%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	990	1,006	1,053	1,060	1,040	1,048	1,089	519	483	529	500
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Disagree	8%	7%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	21%	17%	16%	16%	18%	18%	17%	16%	14%	15%
Agree	41%	42%	43%	42%	44%	43%	40%	41%	42%	44%	42%
Strongly agree	29%	28%	34%	35%	32%	31%	35%	35%	36%	37%	39%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	11%	9%	6%	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%	5%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	70%	70%	76%	77%	76%	75%	75%	76%	79%	81%	81%
Mean score [1-5]	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	991	1,004	1,051	1,060	1,052	1,058	1,090	515	480	526	504
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%
Disagree	8%	8%	10%	11%	9%	10%	10%	12%	11%	13%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	21%	20%	18%	20%	19%	19%	18%	20%	22%	21%
Agree	50%	49%	48%	51%	49%	52%	50%	49%	52%	48%	47%
Strongly agree	22%	20%	20%	18%	20%	17%	17%	18%	14%	15%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	10%	10%	13%	13%	11%	12%	13%	15%	13%	16%	18%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	72%	69%	68%	68%	70%	69%	68%	67%	67%	62%	61%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.5

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	992	1,008	1,053	1,061	1,048	1,058	1,093	521	484	529	505
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Disagree	16%	16%	15%	15%	17%	15%	16%	15%	12%	12%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	24%	22%	25%	25%	27%	25%	22%	22%	21%	22%
Agree	41%	43%	47%	45%	45%	43%	43%	44%	49%	52%	49%
Strongly agree	13%	12%	13%	11%	10%	13%	12%	16%	15%	13%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	20%	20%	18%	19%	20%	17%	20%	18%	14%	13%	18%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	55%	60%	56%	55%	56%	55%	60%	64%	65%	61%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5

I feel secure in my job	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	991	1,006	1,049	1,056	1,049	1,056	1,091	521	481	525	505
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Disagree	6%	7%	8%	12%	9%	10%	11%	8%	8%	8%	12%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	22%	21%	21%	20%	20%	20%	21%	22%	18%	21%
Agree	43%	45%	49%	45%	45%	47%	46%	46%	46%	55%	47%
Strongly agree	25%	23%	20%	21%	23%	20%	21%	23%	22%	17%	19%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	10%	11%	14%	12%	13%	14%	10%	10%	10%	14%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	68%	69%	69%	66%	68%	67%	66%	69%	68%	72%	66%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	976	998	1,030	1,052	1,041	1,045	1,077	512	476	518	502
A lot worse	18%	25%	24%	25%	21%	21%	16%	17%	21%	20%	24%
A little worse	34%	43%	40%	42%	41%	41%	37%	37%	41%	44%	40%
No change	21%	13%	15%	14%	14%	17%	18%	18%	18%	14%	15%
A little better	22%	16%	19%	17%	22%	19%	27%	24%	16%	21%	18%
A lot better	6%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%	2%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	51%	67%	63%	66%	63%	62%	52%	54%	62%	63%	64%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	28%	19%	22%	19%	24%	21%	30%	27%	20%	23%	21%
Mean score [1-5]	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
Increasing wages	30%	32%	35%	35%	33%	29%	30%	42%	42%	47%	41%
Supporting small business	16%	15%	12%	15%	14%	11%	14%	13%	17%	16%	11%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	4%	3%	7%	5%	5%	5%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	14%	14%	12%	11%	10%	11%	12%	8%	9%	7%	8%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	19%	19%	18%	18%	19%	18%	19%	14%	12%	11%	12%
Improving job security	17%	15%	15%	15%	15%	13%	12%	18%	17%	18%	15%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	14%	13%	13%	12%	11%	12%	14%	14%	10%	12%	11%
Making workplaces safer	9%	7%	9%	6%	8%	6%	6%	10%	10%	10%	9%
Ensuring gender equality	6%	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	14%	11%	13%	9%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	12%	11%	11%	12%	12%	10%	11%	8%	9%	8%	9%
Reducing the cost of childcare	8%	9%	10%	8%	8%	9%	8%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	12%	10%	12%	13%	12%	10%	10%	14%	13%	13%	17%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	12%	11%	11%	14%	13%	12%	13%	7%	7%	7%	10%
Ensuring national security	15%	17%	14%	15%	13%	15%	14%	8%	10%	6%	10%
Reducing the cost of living	50%	54%	60%	59%	63%	61%	61%	58%	55%	63%	59%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	7%	7%	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%	6%	9%	5%	6%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	20%	16%	15%	17%	16%	15%	14%	14%	13%	12%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	16%	15%	13%	13%	15%	11%	10%	8%	9%	8%	6%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	25%	23%	23%	23%	23%	22%	22%	31%	25%	27%	23%
Preventing family and domestic violence	12%	14%	14%	13%	13%	13%	11%	18%	16%	17%	19%
Managing the economy	34%	34%	36%	38%	37%	36%	33%	24%	25%	23%	27%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	-	-	-	21%	22%	-	-	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	26%	29%	32%	35%	34%	35%	34%	37%	38%	39%	42%
Preventing wage theft	9%	10%	11%	8%	9%	7%	9%	8%	10%	10%	11%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	12%	13%	13%	14%	15%	14%	13%	12%	13%	15%	15%
Reducing personal income tax rates	17%	21%	21%	23%	21%	21%	23%	16%	17%	19%	21%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	8%	6%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%	11%	10%	12%	7%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	7%	7%	8%	7%	8%	8%	9%	5%	6%	8%	8%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	27%	26%	30%	28%	30%	27%	28%	25%	19%	21%	23%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Age (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	510	514	523	669	703	704	682	711	730	748	522
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	9%	10%	13%	16%	16%	15%	18%	17%	10%
Disagree	26%	25%	25%	22%	27%	30%	34%	30%	32%	29%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	26%	25%	24%	26%	22%	20%	20%	20%	21%	33%
Agree	29%	32%	28%	32%	27%	22%	23%	26%	24%	26%	18%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	12%	12%	8%	10%	8%	9%	7%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	34%	34%	32%	40%	46%	50%	46%	50%	46%	41%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	40%	40%	44%	34%	32%	31%	34%	31%	33%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	507	515	523	673	699	701	679	710	720	744	524
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	15%	12%	14%	15%	12%	12%	13%	13%	13%	13%
Agree	41%	41%	39%	46%	48%	48%	47%	47%	46%	47%	50%
Strongly agree	42%	42%	47%	38%	34%	37%	38%	37%	37%	37%	33%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	82%	83%	86%	83%	82%	85%	85%	84%	84%	84%	84%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	504	516	523	673	700	699	684	712	725	748	525
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Disagree	4%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	17%	15%	14%	16%	13%	12%	11%	13%	14%	15%
Agree	40%	40%	38%	42%	44%	43%	40%	44%	42%	39%	45%
Strongly agree	41%	39%	42%	37%	34%	40%	42%	39%	40%	42%	30%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	5%	5%	5%	7%	6%	4%	5%	6%	6%	5%	10%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	81%	79%	81%	79%	78%	82%	82%	83%	82%	81%	75%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.9

I earn enough to pay my bills	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	510	517	524	676	703	703	682	717	730	743	525
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%
Disagree	12%	13%	13%	8%	14%	13%	15%	12%	14%	13%	10%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	18%	22%	19%	19%	21%	17%	19%	19%	19%	16%
Agree	48%	50%	45%	50%	48%	48%	51%	49%	49%	49%	52%
Strongly agree	16%	15%	17%	20%	15%	14%	15%	17%	14%	15%	19%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	14%	16%	17%	11%	18%	17%	18%	15%	19%	18%	13%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	63%	65%	62%	70%	63%	62%	66%	66%	63%	64%	71%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.7

Financially, I am just getting along	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	508	520	524	675	703	702	683	711	728	745	524
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Disagree	11%	14%	13%	16%	16%	13%	13%	14%	14%	15%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	25%	24%	24%	22%	21%	23%	23%	23%	22%	28%
Agree	49%	45%	45%	45%	46%	50%	48%	49%	46%	46%	40%
Strongly agree	14%	14%	16%	13%	12%	14%	13%	11%	14%	14%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	13%	16%	15%	18%	19%	15%	16%	17%	17%	18%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	63%	59%	60%	58%	59%	65%	61%	61%	60%	60%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3

I feel secure in my job	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	510	520	524	672	702	702	681	713	728	746	523
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%
Disagree	11%	11%	12%	6%	8%	9%	13%	9%	12%	11%	9%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	20%	18%	20%	21%	19%	20%	23%	20%	20%	24%
Agree	50%	45%	47%	46%	49%	50%	44%	44%	47%	46%	46%
Strongly agree	18%	21%	22%	25%	19%	19%	21%	22%	17%	20%	20%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	14%	14%	14%	9%	11%	12%	15%	12%	16%	13%	11%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	66%	68%	71%	68%	69%	65%	66%	64%	67%	65%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	500	506	517	655	691	681	667	696	710	727	511
A lot worse	18%	21%	16%	21%	29%	28%	27%	23%	24%	18%	25%
A little worse	43%	37%	39%	32%	45%	41%	42%	42%	42%	37%	41%
No change	15%	20%	19%	20%	12%	12%	12%	14%	15%	15%	17%
A little better	22%	20%	24%	21%	12%	15%	16%	19%	15%	26%	14%
A lot better	2%	3%	3%	7%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	61%	58%	54%	53%	74%	69%	70%	65%	67%	55%	65%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	23%	27%	28%	15%	20%	19%	22%	18%	30%	18%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.3

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	18-29			Workers aged 30-44							Qtr3 22
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
Increasing wages	42%	40%	38%	34%	40%	44%	41%	40%	37%	37%	34%
Supporting small business	11%	10%	10%	14%	12%	13%	14%	13%	11%	13%	15%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	6%	5%	6%	7%	5%	3%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	5%	8%	7%	11%	11%	11%	9%	10%	10%	10%	20%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	15%	13%	16%	14%	15%	13%	15%	13%	15%	16%	18%
Improving job security	16%	15%	16%	16%	14%	15%	15%	14%	12%	10%	13%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	12%	13%	13%	15%	11%	13%	13%	12%	12%	15%	14%
Making workplaces safer	10%	7%	8%	8%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Ensuring gender equality	10%	8%	6%	9%	10%	6%	8%	8%	8%	6%	6%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	11%	8%	11%	9%	10%	8%	10%	8%	8%	11%	12%
Reducing the cost of childcare	12%	12%	11%	16%	15%	16%	15%	13%	14%	14%	3%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	15%	13%	13%	12%	13%	11%	12%	12%	11%	10%	11%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	9%	11%	11%	10%	12%	10%	12%	11%	12%	12%	10%
Ensuring national security	8%	8%	8%	12%	12%	11%	12%	11%	12%	10%	18%
Reducing the cost of living	65%	62%	62%	54%	62%	66%	66%	65%	67%	64%	61%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	12%	13%	11%	15%	15%	14%	15%	13%	14%	12%	22%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	9%	8%	8%	15%	12%	10%	11%	10%	10%	8%	19%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	23%	28%	21%	28%	27%	23%	22%	25%	22%	25%	27%
Preventing family and domestic violence	18%	17%	17%	18%	18%	19%	19%	17%	16%	13%	14%
Managing the economy	27%	29%	22%	28%	30%	30%	30%	34%	30%	30%	36%
Keeping communities safe from crime	0%	16%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	17%	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	43%	41%	40%	31%	35%	34%	41%	39%	39%	39%	33%
Preventing wage theft	8%	8%	10%	7%	8%	9%	7%	9%	6%	8%	6%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	13%	12%	12%	14%	12%	13%	13%	16%	14%	14%	14%
Reducing personal income tax rates	19%	20%	18%	20%	20%	21%	23%	21%	23%	22%	17%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	12%	13%	11%	8%	8%	7%	6%	8%	7%	9%	5%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	7%	8%	9%	6%	6%	4%	6%	7%	6%	6%	5%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	22%	21%	25%	25%	25%	30%	27%	31%	27%	26%	34%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	543	545	551	561	567	573	218	230	235	287	257
Strongly disagree	12%	16%	19%	19%	21%	21%	12%	14%	15%	14%	12%
Disagree	36%	39%	37%	34%	36%	32%	31%	34%	37%	37%	38%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	21%	21%	24%	26%	25%	34%	30%	30%	28%	28%
Agree	19%	19%	19%	17%	13%	18%	21%	16%	14%	17%	17%
Strongly agree	6%	6%	4%	5%	5%	4%	3%	7%	4%	4%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	48%	55%	56%	53%	56%	53%	43%	48%	52%	51%	49%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	25%	25%	23%	22%	18%	22%	24%	22%	18%	21%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	543	544	551	552	561	573	217	230	233	285	254
Strongly disagree	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Disagree	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	12%	11%	9%	13%	11%	13%	13%	12%	11%	9%	9%
Agree	50%	49%	47%	50%	48%	48%	45%	45%	53%	46%	58%
Strongly agree	35%	36%	40%	34%	39%	35%	41%	39%	34%	43%	32%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%	4%	1%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	85%	85%	87%	85%	87%	83%	86%	84%	87%	89%	89%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	543	544	549	552	561	573	216	230	234	285	252
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Disagree	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%	7%	11%	9%	6%	9%	7%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	15%	12%	12%	13%	13%	23%	17%	18%	13%	17%
Agree	41%	43%	40%	43%	42%	39%	34%	37%	42%	46%	44%
Strongly agree	34%	37%	40%	38%	39%	39%	31%	34%	32%	31%	30%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	8%	6%	7%	7%	6%	8%	12%	11%	8%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	75%	80%	81%	81%	81%	79%	65%	72%	74%	77%	74%
Mean score [1-5]	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	543	544	551	560	566	574	217	230	234	286	257
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%
Disagree	10%	15%	15%	11%	14%	13%	7%	7%	8%	10%	9%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	19%	19%	20%	19%	20%	14%	19%	16%	16%	18%
Agree	52%	45%	49%	51%	50%	49%	56%	48%	50%	51%	51%
Strongly agree	15%	17%	12%	13%	12%	12%	21%	21%	22%	19%	20%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	13%	19%	20%	16%	20%	19%	9%	12%	11%	14%	12%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	62%	61%	64%	62%	62%	77%	69%	73%	70%	71%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	542	549	558	567	573	218	229	235	289	257
Strongly disagree	4%	3%	5%	4%	4%	5%	7%	6%	4%	5%	4%
Disagree	19%	16%	19%	19%	13%	18%	20%	14%	20%	17%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	22%	22%	25%	26%	24%	25%	30%	26%	30%	20%
Agree	43%	47%	45%	42%	44%	43%	38%	39%	37%	39%	41%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	9%	10%	13%	10%	10%	11%	13%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	19%	24%	23%	16%	23%	27%	20%	24%	22%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	59%	55%	52%	58%	53%	48%	50%	49%	48%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3

I feel secure in my job	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	544	544	549	558	563	571	213	224	232	280	250
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%
Disagree	8%	14%	13%	9%	12%	13%	5%	9%	7%	10%	10%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	20%	19%	23%	20%	22%	24%	18%	21%	21%	18%
Agree	44%	44%	45%	47%	45%	41%	40%	38%	43%	40%	42%
Strongly agree	22%	18%	20%	19%	19%	19%	28%	30%	25%	26%	27%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	11%	18%	17%	12%	16%	18%	9%	14%	11%	13%	13%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	66%	62%	65%	65%	64%	60%	68%	68%	68%	66%	69%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	534	525	540	550	557	566	210	226	231	281	250
A lot worse	37%	31%	33%	26%	31%	19%	23%	36%	29%	29%	22%
A little worse	42%	41%	43%	42%	40%	39%	38%	45%	44%	43%	42%
No change	9%	13%	13%	15%	14%	17%	16%	7%	13%	10%	14%
A little better	11%	14%	11%	16%	13%	22%	21%	11%	14%	17%	20%
A lot better	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	79%	72%	76%	68%	72%	59%	61%	81%	72%	72%	64%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	15%	12%	18%	15%	24%	23%	12%	15%	18%	21%
Mean score [1-5]	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.5	2.4	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.4

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
Increasing wages	36%	36%	38%	31%	31%	26%	17%	23%	15%	19%	15%
Supporting small business	13%	12%	12%	12%	10%	13%	19%	14%	14%	18%	15%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	3%	5%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	4%	1%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	17%	16%	13%	13%	16%	16%	31%	28%	26%	30%	21%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	18%	16%	19%	17%	19%	20%	26%	24%	23%	21%	23%
Improving job security	13%	11%	11%	12%	10%	11%	6%	8%	7%	8%	9%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	16%	15%	14%	12%	12%	14%	14%	14%	12%	11%	9%
Making workplaces safer	7%	6%	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	5%
Ensuring gender equality	5%	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	1%	3%	3%	5%	2%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	11%	10%	9%	12%	9%	8%	13%	12%	17%	13%	11%
Reducing the cost of childcare	5%	6%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	6%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	8%	10%	9%	9%	8%	7%	12%	6%	9%	8%	8%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	12%	12%	16%	17%	14%	13%	17%	15%	18%	16%	18%
Ensuring national security	15%	17%	15%	12%	13%	15%	16%	23%	21%	19%	18%
Reducing the cost of living	61%	65%	63%	71%	65%	67%	55%	59%	55%	62%	62%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	5%	4%	6%	5%	4%	4%	2%	4%	4%	1%	1%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	17%	16%	17%	16%	16%	15%	22%	19%	22%	17%	22%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	20%	17%	18%	19%	18%	16%	31%	32%	30%	28%	31%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	25%	24%	25%	24%	22%	20%	29%	28%	24%	29%	26%
Preventing family and domestic violence	16%	18%	20%	17%	18%	15%	22%	14%	19%	14%	19%
Managing the economy	32%	31%	33%	32%	31%	28%	40%	38%	43%	38%	42%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	-	0%	25%	-	-	-	-	-	0%
Addressing housing affordability	29%	35%	37%	39%	39%	37%	23%	26%	30%	36%	34%
Preventing wage theft	7%	9%	4%	6%	6%	5%	5%	7%	5%	4%	5%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	19%	15%	18%	18%	17%	17%	14%	13%	15%	13%	15%
Reducing personal income tax rates	23%	23%	23%	25%	22%	24%	8%	13%	11%	12%	15%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	4%	5%	7%	5%	6%	6%	5%	2%	6%	6%	6%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	5%	6%	4%	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	38%	37%	36%	36%	34%	34%	44%	43%	45%	48%	42%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	272	285	717	714	703	703	706	719	692	374	365
Strongly disagree	15%	13%	8%	11%	14%	13%	14%	18%	14%	12%	10%
Disagree	34%	38%	26%	29%	33%	32%	31%	29%	30%	25%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	28%	27%	28%	22%	25%	24%	25%	26%	27%	29%
Agree	18%	18%	26%	24%	23%	25%	24%	22%	22%	28%	27%
Strongly agree	5%	4%	13%	8%	8%	6%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	50%	51%	34%	41%	46%	45%	45%	47%	44%	37%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	22%	21%	39%	32%	31%	31%	31%	29%	30%	36%	34%
Mean score [1-5]	2.6	2.6	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	270	284	719	718	701	703	700	712	691	374	363
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Disagree	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	9%	8%	14%	16%	11%	13%	13%	14%	14%	14%	12%
Agree	50%	48%	46%	46%	48%	46%	45%	44%	45%	47%	46%
Strongly agree	39%	42%	37%	35%	38%	37%	38%	40%	38%	36%	38%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	89%	90%	83%	80%	86%	83%	83%	84%	83%	84%	85%
Mean score [1-5]	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	269	286	719	715	702	704	698	714	695	376	364
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Disagree	6%	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	8%	6%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	14%	16%	18%	16%	11%	16%	16%	16%	15%	15%
Agree	46%	48%	44%	43%	39%	46%	38%	39%	41%	40%	41%
Strongly agree	29%	30%	32%	34%	40%	37%	41%	39%	37%	35%	35%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	7%	8%	8%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	75%	78%	76%	76%	79%	83%	79%	78%	78%	75%	77%
Mean score [1-5]	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	271	286	719	713	701	703	708	719	693	376	365
Strongly disagree	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%	3%
Disagree	8%	9%	9%	12%	12%	13%	12%	13%	12%	10%	10%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	21%	18%	20%	23%	21%	22%	19%	22%	15%	20%
Agree	53%	52%	51%	51%	46%	50%	46%	49%	48%	50%	48%
Strongly agree	18%	16%	19%	14%	16%	14%	18%	15%	14%	21%	19%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	11%	11%	12%	16%	15%	16%	14%	17%	17%	14%	13%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	71%	68%	70%	65%	62%	63%	64%	64%	62%	71%	67%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.7

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	272	285	721	717	702	704	702	719	691	376	366
Strongly disagree	6%	6%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	5%	5%	3%
Disagree	18%	15%	17%	13%	15%	15%	17%	14%	16%	18%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	26%	25%	26%	24%	23%	23%	22%	21%	27%	24%
Agree	43%	45%	42%	47%	46%	47%	45%	48%	46%	42%	43%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	14%	12%	14%	11%	12%	13%	12%	9%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	21%	20%	16%	16%	18%	20%	17%	20%	22%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	53%	55%	59%	60%	59%	57%	61%	59%	51%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.5

I feel secure in my job	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	269	284	720	712	700	698	705	714	693	371	364
Strongly disagree	3%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Disagree	9%	10%	7%	9%	8%	11%	8%	11%	11%	6%	7%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	21%	21%	18%	22%	23%	21%	21%	25%	19%
Agree	42%	45%	47%	49%	50%	44%	45%	46%	46%	39%	48%
Strongly agree	25%	24%	21%	18%	21%	20%	21%	19%	20%	28%	24%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	12%	11%	11%	12%	11%	14%	11%	15%	14%	8%	10%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	69%	68%	67%	71%	64%	66%	65%	65%	67%	72%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	262	280	701	708	689	693	686	697	681	365	354
A lot worse	26%	15%	20%	28%	23%	24%	21%	26%	16%	24%	31%
A little worse	49%	40%	29%	43%	44%	40%	42%	39%	38%	42%	44%
No change	12%	19%	24%	13%	13%	15%	15%	16%	17%	13%	10%
A little better	13%	24%	21%	13%	17%	19%	20%	17%	26%	19%	13%
A lot better	0%	2%	7%	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	75%	55%	49%	71%	66%	65%	62%	65%	54%	66%	75%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	13%	26%	28%	16%	21%	21%	23%	19%	29%	21%	16%
Mean score [1-5]	2.1	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.3	2.1

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers in NSW/ACT										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
Increasing wages	13%	15%	31%	37%	40%	34%	34%	32%	33%	34%	40%
Supporting small business	14%	13%	14%	13%	13%	14%	13%	11%	15%	13%	12%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	3%	1%	6%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	23%	23%	14%	13%	14%	12%	10%	13%	12%	13%	13%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	21%	20%	14%	16%	17%	15%	16%	15%	16%	22%	19%
Improving job security	6%	7%	14%	14%	13%	12%	14%	12%	11%	15%	12%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	9%	11%	16%	15%	13%	14%	11%	14%	14%	12%	12%
Making workplaces safer	5%	6%	8%	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%
Ensuring gender equality	4%	2%	9%	10%	8%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%	7%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	14%	11%	11%	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%	12%	11%	10%
Reducing the cost of childcare	5%	4%	11%	10%	11%	10%	9%	11%	11%	10%	10%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	8%	8%	12%	10%	13%	14%	13%	9%	9%	9%	12%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	17%	20%	9%	11%	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%	9%	12%
Ensuring national security	25%	17%	13%	15%	11%	13%	10%	13%	13%	15%	15%
Reducing the cost of living	59%	61%	54%	58%	62%	59%	66%	61%	64%	62%	60%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	0%	4%	5%	8%	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%	3%	6%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	15%	19%	18%	14%	15%	18%	15%	15%	12%	16%	19%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	25%	29%	17%	15%	14%	12%	13%	15%	13%	17%	15%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	27%	28%	27%	26%	23%	22%	23%	24%	23%	27%	26%
Preventing family and domestic violence	20%	16%	14%	14%	14%	16%	16%	17%	13%	21%	21%
Managing the economy	36%	35%	31%	31%	30%	30%	33%	31%	29%	34%	30%
Keeping communities safe from crime	30%	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	-	-	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	29%	32%	33%	32%	33%	39%	41%	39%	33%	37%	39%
Preventing wage theft	5%	5%	7%	8%	10%	8%	8%	6%	7%	6%	7%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	17%	12%	14%	13%	16%	14%	15%	16%	15%	14%	13%
Reducing personal income tax rates	10%	13%	16%	19%	21%	23%	22%	23%	19%	22%	17%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	6%	5%	7%	6%	8%	7%	8%	8%	9%	7%	5%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	46%	42%	29%	26%	28%	31%	30%	29%	28%	27%	32%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Location (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	398	408	408	392	176	180	194	187	209	211
Strongly disagree	15%	16%	13%	15%	17%	7%	11%	13%	14%	14%	18%
Disagree	29%	34%	34%	33%	30%	23%	32%	33%	34%	31%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	22%	23%	22%	21%	31%	24%	24%	24%	23%	23%
Agree	23%	22%	21%	22%	26%	31%	23%	21%	21%	23%	21%
Strongly agree	9%	6%	8%	8%	6%	8%	9%	9%	8%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	44%	50%	47%	48%	47%	30%	43%	46%	48%	45%	49%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	31%	28%	30%	30%	32%	39%	32%	30%	28%	33%	28%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	395	406	401	389	177	180	193	187	207	213
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Disagree	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	10%	11%	13%	12%	14%	12%	14%	9%	10%	10%
Agree	51%	47%	52%	46%	44%	45%	51%	42%	40%	45%	46%
Strongly agree	33%	39%	34%	38%	41%	38%	34%	42%	47%	43%	40%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	84%	87%	87%	84%	85%	83%	84%	83%	87%	88%	86%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	388	397	404	406	389	177	182	193	188	206	212
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Disagree	4%	5%	6%	4%	7%	3%	6%	6%	4%	6%	7%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	14%	12%	14%	16%	24%	17%	10%	12%	9%	17%
Agree	43%	41%	43%	43%	34%	39%	43%	45%	44%	48%	40%
Strongly agree	37%	39%	38%	37%	43%	32%	34%	39%	39%	35%	37%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	6%	6%	7%	5%	7%	5%	6%	6%	5%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	80%	80%	81%	81%	77%	71%	77%	84%	82%	83%	76%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	387	398	409	406	390	176	182	194	186	208	212
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	4%	5%	3%	5%
Disagree	16%	14%	13%	14%	12%	11%	15%	12%	14%	12%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	18%	19%	20%	21%	14%	18%	18%	16%	13%	17%
Agree	50%	49%	50%	49%	49%	55%	50%	49%	51%	52%	53%
Strongly agree	16%	15%	15%	14%	15%	18%	13%	18%	15%	21%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	17%	16%	17%	16%	13%	19%	16%	19%	15%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	66%	64%	65%	63%	64%	73%	63%	66%	66%	73%	64%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.5

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	386	397	404	410	392	179	182	194	188	208	212
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	2%	4%	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%	6%	4%
Disagree	15%	19%	14%	12%	16%	16%	14%	14%	16%	20%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	23%	25%	28%	24%	24%	25%	19%	24%	21%	27%
Agree	47%	42%	49%	42%	44%	41%	47%	50%	47%	41%	39%
Strongly agree	12%	12%	11%	15%	13%	15%	10%	12%	10%	12%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	18%	23%	16%	16%	19%	21%	18%	19%	19%	26%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	59%	54%	60%	57%	57%	56%	58%	62%	57%	53%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4

I feel secure in my job	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	387	397	403	408	389	178	180	191	186	208	213
Strongly disagree	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%
Disagree	11%	13%	9%	11%	11%	7%	9%	11%	17%	6%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	21%	20%	20%	23%	20%	18%	18%	21%	21%
Agree	47%	44%	46%	45%	45%	37%	48%	48%	42%	47%	43%
Strongly agree	20%	21%	22%	21%	23%	32%	20%	19%	20%	24%	21%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	16%	11%	14%	12%	8%	12%	15%	20%	8%	15%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	65%	69%	65%	68%	69%	68%	68%	62%	71%	64%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	379	396	398	403	379	174	181	187	181	205	211
A lot worse	30%	35%	23%	24%	19%	20%	30%	25%	24%	21%	28%
A little worse	41%	39%	44%	44%	41%	39%	44%	44%	51%	42%	46%
No change	14%	12%	13%	15%	14%	12%	11%	11%	11%	15%	12%
A little better	14%	12%	19%	15%	24%	28%	14%	19%	12%	20%	14%
A lot better	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	71%	74%	68%	68%	60%	58%	75%	69%	75%	63%	73%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	16%	14%	20%	17%	26%	31%	15%	20%	14%	22%	15%
Mean score [1-5]	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.2

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
<i>n=</i>	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
Increasing wages	36%	37%	34%	34%	29%	42%	39%	40%	41%	37%	37%
Supporting small business	14%	13%	12%	11%	10%	12%	13%	15%	16%	11%	9%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	6%	3%	3%	6%	2%	3%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	13%	16%	13%	11%	15%	23%	20%	13%	15%	13%	13%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	12%	18%	16%	16%	18%	17%	17%	14%	19%	17%	13%
Improving job security	14%	13%	10%	8%	10%	17%	16%	13%	10%	12%	12%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	15%	13%	13%	12%	12%	13%	10%	15%	12%	16%	13%
Making workplaces safer	6%	5%	7%	4%	5%	9%	5%	5%	3%	4%	5%
Ensuring gender equality	6%	5%	7%	5%	4%	15%	6%	6%	7%	5%	7%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%	7%	9%	7%	10%	5%	9%
Reducing the cost of childcare	10%	9%	11%	10%	9%	12%	9%	12%	5%	7%	8%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	10%	10%	9%	11%	7%	14%	8%	10%	11%	10%	13%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	12%	17%	14%	12%	14%	14%	10%	7%	13%	13%	12%
Ensuring national security	15%	12%	12%	12%	11%	8%	10%	9%	14%	12%	14%
Reducing the cost of living	63%	67%	67%	69%	66%	53%	64%	66%	61%	71%	62%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	3%	7%	4%	4%	4%	6%	6%	5%	4%	7%	5%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	14%	13%	13%	11%	13%	12%	17%	13%	13%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	17%	17%	16%	12%	14%	15%	16%	14%	18%	14%	16%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	23%	20%	22%	25%	22%	29%	33%	26%	29%	29%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	24%	19%	22%	18%	16%	18%	18%	19%	22%	20%	16%
Managing the economy	31%	31%	32%	28%	26%	29%	26%	28%	30%	31%	32%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	0%	0%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	-
Addressing housing affordability	38%	43%	43%	42%	46%	28%	30%	33%	38%	38%	39%
Preventing wage theft	5%	6%	5%	8%	6%	8%	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	16%	16%	16%	15%	13%	12%	19%	17%	15%	21%	18%
Reducing personal income tax rates	18%	20%	19%	16%	22%	18%	19%	24%	18%	21%	20%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	6%	4%	9%	8%	6%	10%	8%	7%	6%	5%	7%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	6%	5%	6%	5%	8%	6%	6%	7%	5%	3%	9%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	34%	31%	32%	29%	29%	28%	33%	35%	30%	33%	29%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in VIC/TAS									W	
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22		Qtr4 22
n=	223	516	556	567	577	567	585	659	141	143	158
Strongly disagree	16%	9%	13%	13%	16%	15%	16%	15%	7%	13%	13%
Disagree	31%	25%	29%	33%	32%	31%	33%	32%	25%	30%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	28%	25%	25%	23%	25%	23%	24%	33%	24%	23%
Agree	28%	30%	24%	22%	20%	22%	22%	22%	32%	24%	27%
Strongly agree	5%	9%	9%	8%	9%	7%	5%	7%	3%	10%	4%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	48%	34%	42%	45%	48%	46%	49%	47%	32%	43%	45%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	33%	38%	33%	30%	29%	29%	27%	29%	35%	34%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.0	2.9	2.8

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers in VIC/TAS									W	
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22		Qtr4 22
n=	222	520	547	566	574	564	581	659	144	143	158
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Disagree	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	0%	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	9%	12%	13%	10%	10%	14%	10%	11%	11%	15%	15%
Agree	47%	44%	50%	49%	47%	48%	48%	44%	43%	42%	49%
Strongly agree	40%	40%	33%	39%	41%	36%	40%	41%	44%	42%	35%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	5%	4%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	87%	85%	83%	88%	88%	84%	88%	85%	87%	84%	84%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in VIC/TAS									W	
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22		Qtr4 22
n=	222	518	553	567	569	564	581	660	143	142	156
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%
Disagree	8%	8%	6%	4%	6%	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	10%	15%	18%	13%	15%	10%	12%	12%	16%	11%	16%
Agree	45%	41%	42%	47%	37%	48%	46%	42%	39%	39%	47%
Strongly agree	36%	35%	34%	35%	41%	36%	37%	41%	40%	43%	32%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	9%	7%	6%	8%	6%	6%	5%	5%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	81%	76%	75%	81%	78%	83%	82%	83%	79%	82%	79%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	221	518	552	567	575	571	587	660	144	144	158
Strongly disagree	5%	2%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	2%	1%	1%
Disagree	12%	10%	9%	13%	17%	10%	12%	13%	11%	14%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	16%	20%	21%	16%	23%	18%	17%	25%	19%	18%
Agree	47%	49%	50%	45%	47%	50%	51%	49%	51%	50%	54%
Strongly agree	14%	23%	17%	17%	17%	13%	15%	16%	11%	16%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	17%	12%	14%	18%	20%	14%	16%	18%	13%	15%	15%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	61%	72%	66%	62%	64%	63%	66%	65%	62%	66%	67%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	222	518	552	568	577	571	586	659	144	145	158
Strongly disagree	5%	3%	5%	3%	5%	4%	2%	3%	2%	1%	0%
Disagree	16%	17%	19%	13%	16%	14%	17%	15%	16%	15%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	25%	22%	21%	22%	24%	25%	25%	19%	17%	15%
Agree	43%	43%	42%	49%	47%	46%	45%	45%	51%	53%	58%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	13%	14%	10%	13%	11%	13%	13%	14%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	20%	24%	16%	21%	18%	19%	18%	18%	16%	15%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	55%	54%	63%	57%	59%	56%	58%	63%	67%	70%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7

I feel secure in my job	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	222	518	552	568	573	567	586	658	142	143	157
Strongly disagree	5%	1%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%	1%
Disagree	11%	8%	7%	11%	13%	14%	11%	12%	11%	8%	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	19%	23%	20%	19%	21%	19%	20%	21%	26%	24%
Agree	43%	49%	41%	49%	45%	45%	45%	46%	49%	39%	49%
Strongly agree	20%	22%	25%	17%	21%	18%	21%	20%	17%	24%	15%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	16%	9%	11%	14%	15%	17%	15%	15%	13%	11%	12%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	63%	71%	66%	66%	66%	62%	66%	66%	66%	63%	64%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	222	508	541	546	565	563	567	648	140	143	154
A lot worse	21%	22%	33%	32%	29%	24%	25%	17%	19%	27%	19%
A little worse	37%	40%	43%	39%	43%	42%	42%	38%	41%	39%	47%
No change	15%	17%	12%	13%	12%	16%	18%	21%	18%	15%	14%
A little better	23%	17%	11%	15%	15%	17%	15%	23%	19%	14%	18%
A lot better	5%	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	6%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	57%	62%	76%	71%	72%	66%	66%	54%	61%	66%	66%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	28%	21%	13%	17%	17%	19%	16%	25%	21%	20%	21%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.4

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers in VIC/TAS								Workers in QLD		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
Increasing wages	32%	33%	35%	41%	38%	36%	30%	32%	43%	38%	37%
Supporting small business	9%	16%	14%	13%	11%	12%	11%	12%	15%	20%	15%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	7%	5%	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	6%	2%	1%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	14%	15%	14%	12%	10%	9%	14%	11%	17%	14%	15%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	21%	17%	16%	15%	15%	14%	17%	17%	10%	12%	12%
Improving job security	9%	13%	13%	14%	16%	15%	13%	12%	19%	17%	16%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	14%	14%	12%	12%	12%	11%	10%	15%	12%	12%	12%
Making workplaces safer	5%	8%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	10%	4%
Ensuring gender equality	3%	8%	8%	7%	9%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	7%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	10%	9%	9%	10%	8%	11%	8%	9%	8%	12%	10%
Reducing the cost of childcare	8%	9%	9%	11%	11%	9%	9%	8%	8%	14%	11%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	9%	13%	10%	10%	12%	11%	9%	12%	15%	17%	10%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	13%	11%	12%	11%	11%	14%	16%	12%	8%	12%	10%
Ensuring national security	8%	14%	13%	13%	13%	11%	13%	11%	8%	12%	14%
Reducing the cost of living	62%	57%	61%	64%	64%	66%	66%	64%	67%	57%	68%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	7%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	9%	6%	2%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	14%	18%	16%	13%	15%	16%	15%	15%	17%	17%	13%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	13%	16%	17%	12%	15%	14%	11%	13%	13%	17%	12%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	20%	33%	24%	27%	29%	26%	25%	24%	30%	23%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	16%	19%	16%	19%	20%	17%	18%	16%	17%	14%	18%
Managing the economy	27%	29%	33%	32%	34%	34%	31%	29%	25%	25%	29%
Keeping communities safe from crime	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	-	-	-	-	-
Addressing housing affordability	35%	29%	32%	36%	38%	36%	34%	39%	35%	31%	36%
Preventing wage theft	10%	6%	8%	8%	7%	8%	5%	7%	10%	7%	11%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	14%	13%	14%	12%	15%	15%	12%	14%	15%	13%	11%
Reducing personal income tax rates	22%	13%	21%	17%	20%	21%	21%	20%	17%	17%	21%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	10%	8%	8%	10%	9%	9%	7%	9%	8%	7%	7%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	9%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	5%	8%	7%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	31%	33%	30%	34%	32%	32%	31%	31%	33%	28%	31%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	160	149	160	163	470	442	488	479	445	444	446
Strongly disagree	14%	19%	15%	20%	12%	16%	14%	18%	17%	20%	20%
Disagree	34%	26%	28%	22%	28%	32%	35%	39%	31%	35%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	23%	28%	28%	31%	27%	25%	19%	26%	23%	27%
Agree	24%	26%	25%	23%	23%	17%	19%	19%	21%	19%	18%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	4%	7%	6%	8%	7%	4%	6%	4%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	48%	45%	43%	42%	40%	49%	49%	57%	48%	55%	50%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	32%	29%	30%	29%	25%	26%	24%	26%	22%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.6

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	159	146	159	163	474	439	488	479	446	442	446
Strongly disagree	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	16%	17%	12%	11%	11%	9%	10%	12%	13%	7%
Agree	42%	47%	45%	49%	42%	44%	45%	42%	43%	43%	41%
Strongly agree	40%	36%	35%	39%	45%	42%	44%	45%	43%	42%	48%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	1%	4%	1%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	82%	84%	79%	88%	86%	86%	89%	87%	86%	85%	90%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	160	148	158	164	472	442	486	477	439	443	446
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	18%	12%	14%	16%	14%	15%	12%	11%	15%	10%
Agree	38%	40%	43%	35%	42%	41%	39%	41%	40%	38%	40%
Strongly agree	44%	39%	41%	47%	36%	41%	42%	43%	46%	45%	47%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	81%	79%	84%	82%	79%	81%	81%	84%	86%	83%	86%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	148	160	163	470	443	488	477	447	443	446
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	6%	3%	5%	6%	5%	7%	7%	7%	9%
Disagree	13%	10%	14%	12%	17%	19%	22%	23%	21%	19%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	14%	18%	23%	24%	24%	24%	20%	23%	21%	25%
Agree	55%	57%	51%	49%	44%	42%	40%	41%	40%	46%	37%
Strongly agree	11%	15%	11%	13%	11%	10%	10%	9%	9%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	17%	14%	21%	15%	22%	24%	26%	30%	28%	26%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	65%	72%	62%	62%	55%	52%	49%	50%	49%	53%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	160	149	160	163	476	444	489	481	446	446	444
Strongly disagree	1%	3%	4%	1%	3%	4%	2%	3%	2%	4%	5%
Disagree	13%	15%	12%	14%	12%	11%	12%	13%	12%	11%	12%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	25%	24%	28%	23%	21%	18%	22%	20%	21%	23%
Agree	49%	49%	47%	44%	47%	49%	52%	48%	50%	48%	47%
Strongly agree	14%	9%	13%	14%	15%	16%	16%	14%	15%	15%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	14%	17%	16%	15%	15%	14%	14%	16%	14%	16%	17%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	63%	58%	60%	57%	62%	65%	68%	62%	66%	63%	60%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5

I feel secure in my job	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	148	159	163	469	441	485	474	445	444	446
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	6%	3%	3%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Disagree	8%	10%	10%	15%	12%	11%	13%	17%	14%	15%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	17%	20%	17%	26%	25%	22%	23%	25%	26%	26%
Agree	49%	52%	52%	41%	42%	41%	46%	41%	42%	41%	37%
Strongly agree	22%	18%	13%	25%	16%	18%	15%	15%	14%	14%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	10%	14%	16%	17%	15%	17%	18%	21%	19%	20%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	71%	70%	65%	66%	59%	59%	60%	56%	56%	55%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	155	144	157	160	462	432	461	463	430	428	430
A lot worse	28%	22%	30%	15%	22%	35%	23%	29%	24%	29%	23%
A little worse	44%	41%	38%	43%	35%	39%	45%	37%	41%	39%	38%
No change	11%	13%	14%	13%	21%	15%	13%	15%	17%	17%	19%
A little better	12%	24%	13%	26%	21%	10%	17%	16%	16%	15%	18%
A lot better	5%	1%	5%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	72%	63%	68%	58%	57%	74%	69%	66%	65%	67%	61%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	17%	25%	19%	29%	22%	11%	18%	19%	19%	16%	21%
Mean score [1-5]	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.5	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.4

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
Increasing wages	44%	36%	38%	29%	36%	38%	38%	39%	32%	34%	33%
Supporting small business	17%	15%	14%	13%	14%	16%	16%	14%	14%	13%	13%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	4%	3%	5%	2%	5%	4%	5%	5%	3%	3%	5%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	11%	10%	9%	13%	20%	21%	16%	20%	14%	19%	15%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	17%	20%	21%	20%	13%	14%	12%	14%	15%	16%	16%
Improving job security	12%	19%	13%	16%	14%	11%	15%	12%	15%	10%	12%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	8%	9%	8%	11%	12%	12%	13%	12%	13%	11%	14%
Making workplaces safer	2%	7%	5%	7%	7%	5%	7%	5%	7%	5%	8%
Ensuring gender equality	6%	7%	3%	5%	8%	6%	9%	7%	6%	5%	4%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	12%	11%	13%	11%	9%	12%	9%	10%	10%	10%	9%
Reducing the cost of childcare	6%	7%	10%	9%	9%	7%	11%	8%	8%	9%	8%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	12%	14%	16%	9%	13%	11%	12%	13%	15%	11%	10%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	16%	17%	14%	20%	11%	10%	12%	12%	12%	14%	14%
Ensuring national security	16%	14%	13%	13%	12%	12%	11%	12%	10%	11%	11%
Reducing the cost of living	69%	63%	62%	60%	61%	66%	66%	69%	73%	64%	64%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	3%	2%	1%	2%	4%	4%	7%	4%	2%	3%	6%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	14%	13%	15%	17%	13%	14%	16%	15%	12%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	12%	20%	15%	15%	19%	18%	14%	14%	15%	18%	17%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	22%	22%	18%	24%	29%	26%	26%	25%	24%	27%	22%
Preventing family and domestic violence	19%	12%	15%	13%	17%	16%	18%	19%	19%	22%	17%
Managing the economy	28%	35%	29%	24%	26%	26%	22%	25%	31%	27%	23%
Keeping communities safe from crime	0%	0%	18%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	23%	22%
Addressing housing affordability	39%	32%	37%	38%	35%	40%	36%	41%	45%	36%	40%
Preventing wage theft	4%	7%	6%	7%	6%	8%	11%	8%	7%	6%	8%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	15%	13%	15%	15%	13%	10%	13%	12%	13%	12%	11%
Reducing personal income tax rates	24%	20%	19%	24%	14%	13%	17%	15%	17%	13%	13%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	5%	5%	11%	4%	8%	8%	10%	6%	7%	8%	9%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	4%	9%	6%	6%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%	6%	5%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	34%	38%	36%	35%	29%	30%	31%	33%	33%	33%	34%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Personal annual pre-tax income (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income \$104k to less than \$150k			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	787	786	884	872	911	869	883	538	592	522	555
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	16%	14%	16%	18%	17%	6%	8%	10%	11%
Disagree	27%	31%	30%	32%	32%	29%	32%	21%	25%	31%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	25%	24%	25%	23%	24%	21%	26%	27%	22%	22%
Agree	29%	26%	23%	22%	22%	21%	24%	34%	29%	26%	29%
Strongly agree	9%	6%	7%	7%	7%	8%	7%	14%	12%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	43%	46%	46%	48%	47%	49%	27%	32%	42%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	32%	31%	29%	30%	29%	30%	48%	41%	36%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.3	3.1	2.9	3.0

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income \$104k to less than \$150k			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	787	781	880	869	905	858	882	539	593	522	552
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	12%	11%	10%	12%	13%	12%	14%	17%	14%	13%
Agree	45%	46%	45%	46%	48%	42%	42%	51%	52%	55%	47%
Strongly agree	39%	38%	40%	41%	38%	43%	43%	31%	28%	28%	35%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	84%	85%	86%	87%	86%	85%	86%	82%	80%	83%	82%
Mean score [1-5]	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income \$104k to less than \$150k			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	788	784	880	868	905	858	884	541	592	522	554
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Disagree	6%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	10%	8%	6%	7%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	17%	12%	12%	12%	13%	13%	17%	17%	16%	15%
Agree	42%	39%	43%	41%	43%	43%	38%	43%	47%	47%	42%
Strongly agree	36%	39%	40%	42%	40%	40%	43%	28%	26%	30%	33%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	8%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%	12%	11%	8%	10%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	78%	78%	83%	83%	83%	83%	81%	71%	72%	76%	75%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	789	785	881	871	916	868	886	542	590	522	555
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%	5%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Disagree	8%	11%	13%	13%	11%	13%	12%	5%	6%	6%	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	20%	18%	19%	20%	20%	21%	12%	14%	18%	16%
Agree	55%	52%	49%	53%	53%	49%	49%	52%	54%	52%	52%
Strongly agree	19%	14%	16%	12%	15%	14%	14%	30%	24%	23%	24%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	11%	14%	18%	16%	13%	18%	17%	6%	8%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	74%	66%	65%	66%	68%	63%	62%	82%	78%	76%	75%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.5	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.9

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	790	784	880	871	909	867	885	540	595	522	554
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	7%	4%	3%	6%
Disagree	16%	14%	12%	16%	15%	13%	13%	24%	21%	21%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	22%	23%	23%	23%	25%	21%	24%	24%	22%	24%
Agree	45%	49%	49%	47%	48%	46%	47%	34%	41%	43%	45%
Strongly agree	12%	13%	14%	11%	11%	14%	15%	12%	10%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	18%	16%	14%	19%	18%	15%	17%	30%	25%	24%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	57%	62%	63%	59%	58%	60%	62%	46%	51%	54%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.3

I feel secure in my job	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	787	782	882	870	908	866	885	539	592	519	552
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Disagree	6%	8%	10%	11%	9%	10%	11%	5%	5%	7%	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	21%	19%	19%	21%	19%	19%	14%	18%	16%	17%
Agree	47%	48%	49%	46%	47%	46%	46%	46%	47%	54%	46%
Strongly agree	23%	21%	20%	21%	21%	21%	21%	33%	28%	22%	25%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	11%	13%	13%	11%	13%	14%	7%	7%	9%	13%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	70%	68%	69%	68%	68%	67%	67%	79%	76%	76%	71%
Mean score [1-5]	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.8

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	763	774	870	861	897	857	872	535	591	518	549
A lot worse	22%	31%	26%	28%	23%	26%	19%	18%	26%	28%	27%
A little worse	37%	42%	41%	44%	44%	42%	41%	36%	47%	41%	42%
No change	18%	12%	13%	11%	14%	15%	16%	16%	9%	12%	12%
A little better	20%	15%	17%	14%	18%	15%	23%	21%	13%	14%	18%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	8%	5%	5%	1%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	59%	72%	68%	72%	67%	68%	59%	54%	73%	69%	69%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	16%	19%	17%	20%	17%	25%	30%	18%	19%	19%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.2	2.3	2.2

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
Increasing wages	37%	42%	43%	40%	40%	35%	36%	28%	31%	34%	33%
Supporting small business	13%	13%	13%	13%	12%	10%	12%	18%	12%	12%	13%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	6%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	15%	11%	12%	11%	10%	11%	12%	11%	13%	11%	7%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	17%	15%	15%	16%	16%	17%	18%	18%	19%	16%	19%
Improving job security	15%	17%	15%	14%	14%	14%	12%	14%	12%	13%	12%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	14%	10%	12%	12%	11%	11%	12%	16%	16%	15%	13%
Making workplaces safer	7%	7%	7%	6%	8%	7%	5%	8%	7%	6%	4%
Ensuring gender equality	8%	9%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	9%	9%	6%	6%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	8%	10%	11%	9%	10%	8%	10%	12%	10%	7%	12%
Reducing the cost of childcare	11%	11%	9%	10%	9%	10%	8%	11%	10%	14%	10%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	13%	10%	11%	12%	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%	10%	11%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	10%	12%	11%	13%	14%	13%	13%	10%	12%	11%	14%
Ensuring national security	11%	13%	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%	17%	16%	14%	16%
Reducing the cost of living	58%	61%	63%	65%	67%	68%	66%	52%	54%	60%	54%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	5%	7%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	7%	8%	4%	5%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	16%	16%	15%	14%	14%	15%	13%	18%	15%	14%	19%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	14%	14%	13%	12%	15%	12%	12%	16%	16%	14%	17%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	29%	26%	23%	24%	25%	21%	20%	30%	26%	26%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	20%	17%	18%	19%	18%	18%	15%	15%	16%	18%	17%
Managing the economy	31%	29%	29%	30%	29%	29%	29%	35%	35%	39%	38%
Keeping communities safe from crime	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	23%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Addressing housing affordability	35%	36%	36%	42%	40%	44%	40%	26%	26%	34%	33%
Preventing wage theft	6%	7%	8%	6%	7%	6%	8%	8%	9%	7%	8%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	13%	16%	14%	15%	17%	15%	14%	15%	14%	16%	16%
Reducing personal income tax rates	17%	20%	22%	24%	22%	23%	23%	19%	23%	21%	22%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	8%	7%	7%	7%	9%	8%	7%	8%	7%	8%	7%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	5%	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	8%	8%	7%	6%	8%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	31%	28%	31%	29%	31%	28%	30%	27%	29%	31%	32%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	550	630	685	129	138	117	119	133	140	115	958
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	11%	9%	15%	9%	17%	14%	19%	16%	10%
Disagree	30%	31%	28%	23%	28%	33%	35%	35%	33%	30%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	22%	24%	40%	33%	29%	34%	32%	31%	39%	27%
Agree	28%	27%	28%	20%	20%	23%	13%	15%	14%	11%	29%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	10%	8%	4%	6%	3%	5%	4%	4%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	43%	39%	32%	43%	42%	51%	49%	51%	45%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	35%	38%	28%	24%	29%	15%	20%	18%	16%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	3.0

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	543	628	683	134	138	117	118	129	138	113	961
Strongly disagree	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Disagree	4%	3%	4%	0%	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	11%	15%	20%	25%	15%	16%	12%	17%	15%	13%
Agree	51%	54%	51%	40%	45%	56%	47%	50%	41%	49%	43%
Strongly agree	30%	32%	30%	39%	28%	27%	35%	35%	40%	35%	41%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	5%	4%	4%	1%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	80%	86%	81%	79%	73%	83%	81%	85%	81%	84%	84%
Mean score [1-5]	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	546	629	685	132	138	118	119	130	141	115	960
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%	0%	1%	2%
Disagree	9%	8%	7%	4%	5%	3%	5%	5%	6%	2%	6%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	16%	18%	24%	23%	22%	12%	17%	14%	17%	16%
Agree	46%	44%	42%	32%	41%	41%	45%	38%	43%	45%	41%
Strongly agree	29%	30%	32%	39%	30%	32%	36%	39%	38%	35%	35%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	11%	10%	8%	5%	5%	5%	7%	7%	6%	3%	8%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	75%	74%	74%	71%	72%	73%	82%	76%	81%	80%	76%
Mean score [1-5]	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0

I earn enough to pay my bills	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	549	632	680	132	138	116	120	132	141	115	960
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	5%	6%	3%	6%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Disagree	5%	9%	8%	11%	12%	7%	19%	13%	17%	14%	10%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	13%	16%	26%	27%	30%	22%	29%	27%	19%	18%
Agree	52%	55%	55%	46%	46%	48%	43%	49%	47%	55%	48%
Strongly agree	25%	21%	21%	12%	9%	11%	11%	7%	6%	8%	20%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	7%	10%	9%	16%	17%	10%	25%	15%	20%	18%	13%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	77%	76%	76%	58%	56%	60%	53%	56%	53%	63%	68%
Mean score [1-5]	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.7

Financially, I am just getting along	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	547	633	684	132	139	117	120	132	141	114	965
Strongly disagree	5%	5%	3%	1%	4%	5%	2%	2%	1%	1%	4%
Disagree	21%	17%	20%	14%	19%	13%	18%	11%	19%	18%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	25%	26%	29%	40%	29%	30%	31%	31%	32%	24%
Agree	39%	43%	40%	47%	31%	46%	39%	49%	40%	45%	43%
Strongly agree	11%	11%	11%	9%	7%	7%	11%	7%	8%	5%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	22%	23%	15%	22%	18%	20%	13%	21%	18%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	53%	51%	56%	38%	53%	50%	56%	48%	50%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.5

I feel secure in my job	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	548	630	680	134	136	117	119	130	140	114	962
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	1%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	5%	1%	3%
Disagree	8%	11%	10%	8%	10%	9%	10%	10%	13%	7%	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	15%	17%	37%	32%	30%	29%	27%	30%	27%	23%
Agree	47%	48%	48%	40%	43%	43%	38%	48%	39%	51%	46%
Strongly agree	25%	24%	25%	13%	14%	15%	19%	14%	13%	14%	21%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	10%	13%	11%	11%	11%	12%	13%	12%	18%	8%	11%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	72%	72%	73%	52%	57%	58%	57%	62%	52%	65%	67%
Mean score [1-5]	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.7	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	544	625	681	128	130	106	117	125	125	107	940
A lot worse	20%	22%	14%	25%	29%	37%	27%	22%	30%	10%	22%
A little worse	41%	42%	34%	40%	49%	36%	44%	44%	42%	51%	35%
No change	14%	16%	18%	16%	17%	13%	18%	14%	13%	18%	19%
A little better	24%	17%	31%	14%	5%	14%	9%	19%	14%	21%	20%
A lot better	2%	3%	4%	5%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	5%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	61%	64%	48%	65%	78%	73%	72%	66%	72%	62%	57%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	26%	21%	35%	19%	5%	14%	10%	19%	15%	21%	25%
Mean score [1-5]	2.5	2.4	2.8	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.5	2.5

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
Increasing wages	30%	29%	24%	34%	33%	34%	30%	32%	36%	28%	33%
Supporting small business	13%	10%	13%	13%	12%	12%	15%	14%	14%	11%	15%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	6%	4%	4%	5%	0%	3%	1%	2%	4%	4%	6%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	8%	9%	11%	19%	13%	18%	19%	14%	17%	17%	14%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	15%	16%	18%	18%	17%	17%	15%	22%	16%	19%	15%
Improving job security	11%	10%	11%	13%	12%	8%	12%	19%	9%	4%	15%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	12%	14%	15%	14%	14%	12%	14%	8%	12%	17%	14%
Making workplaces safer	6%	5%	6%	10%	8%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	7%
Ensuring gender equality	6%	7%	6%	11%	4%	5%	12%	6%	5%	6%	9%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	11%	9%	12%	15%	8%	9%	7%	13%	9%	8%	9%
Reducing the cost of childcare	11%	10%	11%	3%	12%	11%	6%	8%	8%	5%	10%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	12%	10%	10%	11%	11%	9%	10%	15%	10%	9%	13%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	12%	12%	12%	10%	8%	8%	15%	17%	14%	13%	11%
Ensuring national security	14%	17%	14%	11%	12%	17%	17%	11%	13%	13%	12%
Reducing the cost of living	60%	58%	59%	58%	61%	70%	65%	71%	70%	72%	59%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	6%	4%	7%	1%	0%	6%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	15%	13%	13%	19%	18%	20%	10%	20%	20%	16%	17%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	14%	14%	11%	16%	21%	22%	19%	17%	14%	18%	17%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	24%	26%	27%	27%	28%	20%	24%	21%	21%	30%	28%
Preventing family and domestic violence	16%	15%	13%	14%	14%	14%	17%	16%	11%	13%	18%
Managing the economy	39%	36%	30%	26%	32%	36%	35%	35%	31%	25%	29%
Keeping communities safe from crime	0%	21%	23%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	21%	24%	0%
Addressing housing affordability	35%	33%	35%	33%	25%	25%	39%	29%	35%	31%	34%
Preventing wage theft	8%	6%	6%	7%	9%	10%	4%	11%	5%	5%	7%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	16%	16%	16%	13%	17%	16%	19%	14%	18%	17%	13%
Reducing personal income tax rates	22%	22%	23%	17%	17%	15%	20%	22%	20%	18%	16%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	8%	9%	9%	7%	3%	6%	7%	2%	9%	8%	8%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	9%	7%	8%	2%	4%	9%	3%	5%	9%	3%	6%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	33%	30%	28%	37%	36%	37%	37%	28%	34%	32%	31%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Industry type (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	926	958	942	949	1,020	1,001	966	1,032	1,053	1,083	1,090
Strongly disagree	12%	14%	15%	14%	17%	17%	8%	12%	13%	14%	15%
Disagree	31%	32%	34%	34%	31%	31%	25%	28%	32%	32%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	24%	23%	24%	24%	24%	29%	26%	24%	24%	24%
Agree	24%	23%	23%	21%	23%	22%	28%	26%	23%	22%	24%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	6%	7%	5%	7%	10%	9%	9%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	46%	49%	48%	48%	48%	33%	39%	45%	46%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	30%	30%	28%	29%	28%	28%	38%	35%	31%	31%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	922	954	939	941	1,016	997	973	1,029	1,053	1,079	1,082
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Disagree	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	10%	10%	12%	11%	10%	13%	14%	13%	12%	13%
Agree	46%	48%	45%	48%	44%	45%	48%	48%	48%	47%	48%
Strongly agree	36%	39%	42%	38%	43%	43%	36%	35%	35%	38%	36%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	83%	87%	87%	86%	87%	88%	84%	83%	84%	84%	83%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	925	952	937	941	1,014	1,004	973	1,031	1,054	1,081	1,079
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Disagree	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	7%	7%	5%	6%	6%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	15%	11%	13%	13%	13%	16%	17%	14%	14%	13%
Agree	44%	43%	43%	43%	43%	39%	42%	40%	43%	40%	42%
Strongly agree	36%	37%	40%	39%	41%	42%	33%	33%	37%	39%	37%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%	9%	10%	6%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	80%	80%	83%	82%	83%	81%	75%	74%	80%	79%	80%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	928	955	942	952	1,021	1,001	973	1,028	1,052	1,081	1,092
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	4%	3%	6%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Disagree	14%	15%	15%	13%	14%	14%	9%	9%	12%	14%	10%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	21%	19%	21%	20%	22%	16%	19%	19%	17%	19%
Agree	47%	46%	49%	50%	49%	46%	53%	52%	49%	49%	49%
Strongly agree	14%	15%	12%	13%	12%	13%	19%	17%	18%	17%	19%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	18%	19%	20%	16%	19%	19%	12%	13%	14%	16%	13%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	62%	60%	61%	63%	61%	59%	72%	69%	67%	66%	68%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	929	957	943	948	1,024	999	973	1,033	1,051	1,083	1,086
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Disagree	14%	14%	16%	14%	12%	15%	19%	17%	15%	16%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	21%	23%	23%	25%	23%	25%	24%	22%	24%	24%
Agree	47%	50%	48%	49%	47%	47%	42%	44%	47%	45%	44%
Strongly agree	13%	13%	11%	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%	14%	12%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	16%	16%	18%	17%	16%	18%	22%	21%	17%	21%	21%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	60%	63%	59%	60%	60%	59%	53%	55%	61%	56%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4

I feel secure in my job	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	921	955	940	945	1,022	999	967	1,030	1,048	1,075	1,086
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Disagree	9%	11%	13%	11%	11%	12%	6%	7%	9%	12%	9%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	22%	22%	22%	22%	20%	22%	19%	19%	21%
Agree	46%	48%	46%	46%	44%	46%	45%	46%	50%	43%	46%
Strongly agree	21%	18%	17%	18%	19%	17%	26%	22%	20%	24%	22%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	12%	14%	15%	14%	15%	15%	9%	10%	12%	15%	11%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	66%	63%	64%	63%	63%	71%	68%	70%	67%	68%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	909	925	923	921	991	978	948	1,018	1,030	1,067	1,075
A lot worse	30%	26%	29%	21%	27%	19%	21%	30%	28%	27%	23%
A little worse	43%	44%	42%	43%	42%	41%	38%	44%	40%	42%	42%
No change	13%	12%	13%	17%	14%	16%	17%	11%	13%	12%	12%
A little better	12%	15%	14%	18%	16%	22%	20%	13%	17%	16%	20%
A lot better	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	73%	70%	71%	64%	68%	60%	58%	73%	68%	69%	65%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	14%	18%	16%	19%	18%	24%	24%	16%	20%	19%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.4

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023</i>											
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
Increasing wages	37%	39%	40%	36%	34%	32%	35%	38%	40%	35%	34%
Supporting small business	14%	15%	13%	13%	11%	11%	14%	13%	12%	13%	12%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	14%	13%	15%	12%	13%	15%	16%	14%	13%	11%	10%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	15%	13%	15%	15%	16%	17%	17%	17%	16%	17%	17%
Improving job security	13%	13%	14%	12%	12%	11%	14%	14%	14%	12%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	12%	12%	11%	10%	9%	13%	15%	13%	15%	14%	13%
Making workplaces safer	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	7%	5%	7%
Ensuring gender equality	8%	8%	7%	7%	5%	5%	8%	8%	6%	7%	6%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	9%	10%	8%	9%	9%	11%	10%	11%	9%	11%	11%
Reducing the cost of childcare	10%	9%	11%	8%	11%	9%	10%	11%	13%	8%	10%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	12%	11%	13%	12%	11%	9%	12%	10%	11%	11%	11%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	11%	12%	14%	12%	13%	13%	10%	12%	10%	13%	14%
Ensuring national security	14%	10%	11%	11%	12%	10%	14%	13%	15%	14%	12%
Reducing the cost of living	64%	66%	64%	68%	64%	67%	56%	56%	62%	62%	65%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	6%	5%	4%	5%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%	13%	17%	17%	16%	16%	16%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	15%	15%	13%	15%	13%	14%	15%	16%	13%	15%	14%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	27%	25%	25%	25%	24%	23%	30%	25%	24%	24%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	16%	19%	19%	20%	18%	16%	17%	16%	17%	17%	16%
Managing the economy	28%	28%	29%	32%	30%	26%	32%	32%	32%	34%	33%
Keeping communities safe from crime	0%	0%	0%	0%	21%	23%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Addressing housing affordability	35%	36%	41%	41%	39%	39%	31%	31%	34%	37%	38%
Preventing wage theft	8%	8%	8%	8%	6%	7%	7%	8%	9%	6%	7%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	13%	15%	15%	14%	14%	14%	14%	15%	15%	15%	17%
Reducing personal income tax rates	16%	19%	20%	21%	20%	20%	17%	22%	21%	22%	20%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	8%	10%	7%	9%	9%	7%	8%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	5%	6%	5%	5%	7%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	7%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	30%	33%	31%	32%	31%	31%	29%	29%	30%	31%	31%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Financial wellbeing metrics

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Financial Wellbeing

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,063	1,128
Strongly disagree	16%	14%
Disagree	31%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	24%
Agree	21%	25%
Strongly agree	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	47%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	29%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	2.8

A minimum wage rate should be set at a level to provide a reasonable standard of living		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,050	1,127
Strongly disagree	1%	1%
Disagree	2%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	14%
Agree	48%	46%
Strongly agree	35%	37%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	3%	4%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	83%	82%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.1

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,057	1,126
Strongly disagree	1%	1%
Disagree	6%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	15%
Agree	41%	41%
Strongly agree	35%	38%

Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	8%	6%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	77%	79%
Mean score [1-5]	4.0	4.1

I earn enough to pay my bills		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,063	1,126
Strongly disagree	3%	4%
Disagree	13%	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	19%
Agree	51%	51%
Strongly agree	16%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	15%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	68%	67%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7

Financially, I am just getting along		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,063	1,128
Strongly disagree	3%	3%
Disagree	16%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	25%
Agree	44%	43%
Strongly agree	13%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	57%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.5

I feel secure in my job		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,058	1,126
Strongly disagree	3%	3%
Disagree	11%	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%
Agree	47%	44%
Strongly agree	21%	24%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	14%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	68%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7

WQ3. Over the next 12 months, do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much

Base: All respondents. Single response. DK has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 a lot worse to 5 a lot better.

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,044	1,112
A lot worse	25%	16%
A little worse	41%	37%
No change	17%	18%
A little better	15%	26%
A lot better	3%	3%

Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	53%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	29%
Mean score [1-5]	2.3	2.6

PQ1. Thinking about the following issues facing Australia today, which would be your top five priorities?

Note: In Q4 2023 'Keeping communities safe from crime' was added. This is a break in the time series and selection of

Base: All respondents. Multiple response (minimum 1 to maximum 5 selections allowed).

Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q4 2023		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,068	1,133
Increasing wages	32%	31%
Supporting small business	11%	13%
Improving the treatment of asylum seekers	4%	4%
Increasing the age pension and other welfare benefits	12%	11%
Cracking down on tax avoidance by corporations	17%	18%
Improving job security	11%	12%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's education system (schools, TAFEs and universities)	15%	14%
Making workplaces safer	5%	6%
Ensuring gender equality	7%	5%
Stopping the privatisation of public services and assets	9%	9%
Reducing the cost of childcare	9%	9%
Reducing unemployment and underemployment	9%	10%
Reducing excessive executive salaries and bonuses	13%	13%
Ensuring national security	14%	13%
Reducing the cost of living	63%	61%
Reversing cuts in penalty rates	3%	4%
Protecting Australian jobs and local industries	14%	14%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's aged care system	14%	12%
Acting on climate change and protecting the environment	24%	24%
Preventing family and domestic violence	16%	14%
Managing the economy	31%	30%
Keeping communities safe from crime	21%	22%
Addressing housing affordability	37%	37%
Preventing wage theft	6%	8%
Ensuring people have enough superannuation to retire comfortably	16%	15%
Reducing personal income tax rates	21%	21%
Supporting justice for Indigenous Australians	7%	9%
Tackling excessive corporate power through regulation	5%	7%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	29%	30%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Total

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100%, due to rounding and some categories being hidden due to low sample.

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	14%	15%	13%	15%	14%	14%	12%	16%	15%	14%	16%
A little worse	30%	33%	34%	35%	34%	34%	34%	31%	33%	34%	36%
No change	26%	28%	26%	25%	27%	27%	27%	25%	24%	24%	22%
A little better	17%	15%	17%	16%	15%	15%	16%	13%	12%	15%	14%
A lot better	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	5%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Don't know	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	12%	13%	12%	9%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	44%	47%	47%	49%	48%	48%	46%	47%	48%	48%	52%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	22%	19%	19%	20%	19%	20%	21%	17%	15%	17%	17%

Unemployment	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	11%	13%	13%	13%	12%	13%	12%	12%	15%	16%	15%
A little worse	18%	23%	26%	26%	26%	27%	29%	16%	20%	24%	24%
No change	21%	24%	25%	27%	28%	30%	31%	18%	20%	23%	23%
A little better	33%	28%	25%	25%	26%	23%	22%	34%	29%	25%	28%
A lot better	15%	9%	7%	7%	5%	4%	4%	16%	11%	7%	8%
Don't know	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%	5%	6%	5%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	29%	36%	40%	39%	38%	40%	41%	28%	35%	39%	39%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	48%	37%	32%	32%	31%	27%	26%	50%	40%	32%	35%

The economy overall	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	28%	35%	33%	36%	33%	34%	29%	30%	40%	35%	35%
A little worse	38%	39%	38%	38%	38%	38%	36%	39%	37%	37%	40%
No change	14%	11%	14%	11%	12%	14%	15%	12%	9%	15%	10%
A little better	14%	11%	12%	12%	13%	11%	17%	13%	10%	11%	13%
A lot better	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%

Don't know	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	4%	3%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	75%	71%	74%	71%	72%	65%	69%	77%	72%	75%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	13%	14%	14%	15%	13%	19%	15%	11%	12%	15%

Wages	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	16%	18%	17%	17%	14%	16%	15%	17%	19%	16%	16%
A little worse	26%	27%	26%	27%	26%	27%	26%	27%	28%	25%	27%
No change	31%	34%	34%	34%	30%	32%	31%	31%	32%	36%	30%
A little better	21%	16%	17%	18%	25%	20%	23%	17%	13%	16%	19%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Don't know	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	8%	7%	7%	6%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	42%	45%	43%	44%	40%	43%	41%	44%	46%	40%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	18%	19%	20%	27%	23%	26%	18%	14%	17%	21%

National debt	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	41%	44%	36%	38%	30%	34%	28%	49%	50%	40%	44%
A little worse	30%	29%	33%	32%	31%	30%	31%	29%	26%	33%	29%
No change	16%	15%	17%	16%	18%	19%	21%	12%	11%	15%	13%
A little better	7%	7%	7%	8%	13%	9%	13%	3%	6%	5%	8%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	70%	73%	69%	70%	62%	64%	59%	78%	76%	73%	73%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	9%	9%	10%	16%	12%	16%	4%	7%	6%	9%

Job security overall	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	12%	14%	13%	14%	12%	14%	12%	15%	20%	16%	16%
A little worse	24%	24%	30%	29%	30%	29%	31%	23%	21%	27%	29%
No change	31%	33%	32%	33%	34%	34%	35%	29%	28%	30%	30%
A little better	22%	20%	18%	17%	17%	15%	17%	18%	18%	16%	16%
A lot better	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	7%	3%	2%	3%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	9%	10%	9%	7%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	36%	38%	42%	43%	42%	44%	42%	38%	40%	43%	44%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	29%	25%	22%	21%	21%	18%	20%	24%	21%	18%	19%

Cost of living	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	61%	65%	67%	70%	68%	69%	65%	66%	70%	71%	71%
A little worse	25%	25%	25%	22%	23%	22%	24%	28%	24%	25%	25%
No change	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	3%	3%	2%
A little better	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	1%	1%	1%
A lot better	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	87%	90%	91%	92%	91%	91%	88%	93%	95%	96%	96%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	7%	3%	2%	1%	2%

Electricity costs	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	50%	57%	51%	53%	60%	58%	50%	58%	63%	58%	60%
A little worse	34%	30%	37%	35%	28%	30%	33%	34%	29%	35%	34%
No change	8%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	9%	5%	5%	6%	4%
A little better	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	1%	1%	1%	2%
A lot better	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	83%	87%	87%	88%	89%	88%	83%	92%	92%	93%	94%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Company profits for large companies	Total							Not currently wor			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	3,002	3,002	3,011	3,006	3,009	3,001	3,004	1,054	1,034	995	970
A lot worse	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%
A little worse	10%	12%	12%	10%	10%	8%	7%	8%	10%	10%	8%
No change	28%	28%	26%	23%	23%	21%	22%	25%	26%	23%	21%
A little better	26%	26%	26%	26%	26%	25%	27%	24%	22%	23%	24%
A lot better	24%	23%	25%	30%	29%	35%	35%	27%	26%	29%	33%
Don't know	8%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	12%	10%	11%	9%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	15%	17%	17%	15%	16%	14%	12%	12%	16%	15%	13%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	51%	49%	52%	56%	55%	60%	62%	51%	48%	52%	57%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Work status

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	All workers			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	15%	13%	13%	14%	15%	13%	14%	13%	14%	12%	14%
A little worse	31%	36%	35%	30%	33%	35%	34%	36%	34%	34%	29%
No change	27%	22%	24%	27%	29%	28%	26%	27%	29%	29%	28%
A little better	13%	14%	14%	19%	16%	18%	17%	16%	15%	17%	20%
A lot better	3%	5%	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%	5%	5%	6%	6%
Don't know	11%	10%	10%	5%	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	46%	49%	48%	43%	47%	47%	48%	48%	47%	45%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	16%	19%	18%	25%	20%	21%	21%	21%	20%	23%	26%

Unemployment	All workers			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	13%	15%	13%	11%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%
A little worse	24%	20%	28%	18%	25%	27%	27%	27%	30%	30%	18%
No change	24%	28%	27%	22%	27%	26%	29%	30%	31%	32%	21%
A little better	29%	27%	24%	33%	27%	25%	24%	24%	21%	21%	33%
A lot better	6%	5%	4%	14%	8%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	14%
Don't know	5%	5%	4%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	35%	40%	29%	37%	40%	39%	38%	42%	42%	29%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	34%	32%	28%	47%	36%	32%	30%	30%	25%	25%	48%

The economy overall	All workers			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	32%	38%	34%	27%	33%	32%	36%	34%	32%	27%	27%
A little worse	36%	31%	33%	37%	40%	39%	37%	39%	40%	37%	37%
No change	13%	14%	13%	15%	12%	13%	12%	12%	14%	15%	15%
A little better	16%	13%	17%	15%	11%	12%	11%	12%	10%	16%	16%
A lot better	1%	2%	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	5%

Don't know	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	68%	69%	67%	64%	73%	71%	73%	72%	73%	65%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	17%	15%	19%	20%	14%	14%	13%	15%	13%	19%	21%

Wages	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	13%	16%	14%	15%	18%	18%	18%	15%	16%	15%	16%
A little worse	23%	24%	24%	25%	27%	27%	26%	27%	27%	27%	24%
No change	30%	32%	27%	32%	35%	34%	36%	31%	33%	32%	32%
A little better	25%	21%	27%	23%	17%	18%	17%	25%	19%	22%	23%
A lot better	2%	1%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Don't know	8%	6%	7%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	36%	40%	38%	40%	44%	44%	44%	42%	44%	42%	40%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	27%	22%	29%	27%	20%	21%	19%	27%	23%	25%	27%

National debt	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	32%	39%	35%	36%	40%	34%	35%	29%	32%	26%	37%
A little worse	28%	29%	29%	30%	31%	33%	33%	33%	31%	31%	29%
No change	16%	14%	15%	18%	16%	19%	18%	19%	21%	23%	17%
A little better	14%	9%	13%	9%	8%	8%	8%	13%	10%	13%	10%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Don't know	7%	7%	7%	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	61%	67%	64%	66%	71%	67%	68%	62%	63%	57%	66%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	17%	11%	15%	13%	10%	11%	10%	16%	12%	16%	13%

Job security overall	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	15%	16%	14%	10%	11%	11%	13%	11%	14%	10%	10%
A little worse	25%	28%	30%	24%	25%	31%	30%	32%	30%	31%	24%
No change	31%	32%	32%	32%	36%	34%	34%	35%	35%	36%	32%
A little better	16%	15%	14%	25%	22%	19%	18%	17%	15%	18%	25%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	7%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	8%
Don't know	10%	8%	9%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	40%	44%	44%	34%	36%	42%	42%	42%	44%	42%	34%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	19%	16%	16%	32%	27%	23%	22%	21%	19%	22%	32%

Cost of living	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	71%	70%	67%	59%	63%	64%	69%	67%	69%	63%	59%
A little worse	23%	25%	27%	24%	25%	25%	21%	23%	21%	23%	23%
No change	3%	3%	3%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	6%
A little better	2%	1%	2%	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	7%	7%
A lot better	1%	0%	1%	4%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	94%	95%	94%	83%	87%	89%	90%	90%	89%	86%	82%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	3%	2%	3%	10%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	9%	11%

Electricity costs	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	67%	65%	57%	45%	54%	47%	49%	57%	55%	47%	45%
A little worse	25%	28%	31%	34%	31%	37%	36%	30%	31%	34%	34%
No change	4%	4%	7%	9%	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%	10%	9%
A little better	2%	2%	3%	8%	6%	5%	4%	5%	4%	6%	8%
A lot better	1%	0%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	93%	93%	89%	79%	85%	84%	85%	87%	86%	81%	79%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	2%	2%	4%	11%	8%	7%	6%	7%	7%	8%	11%

Company profits for large companies	King			All workers							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	960	908	866	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	1,637
A lot worse	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%
A little worse	9%	7%	6%	11%	13%	13%	11%	11%	9%	8%	11%
No change	21%	17%	19%	29%	29%	27%	25%	24%	23%	23%	29%
A little better	22%	22%	24%	27%	28%	28%	27%	29%	26%	28%	28%
A lot better	34%	42%	40%	23%	22%	24%	28%	27%	32%	33%	23%
Don't know	10%	7%	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	14%	12%	10%	16%	18%	18%	16%	17%	15%	13%	16%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	55%	64%	64%	50%	50%	51%	55%	55%	59%	61%	51%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Work security (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	14%	13%	12%	12%	13%	11%	13%	16%	14%	21%	15%
A little worse	33%	34%	34%	36%	33%	34%	33%	33%	36%	33%	35%
No change	30%	28%	27%	27%	29%	28%	26%	27%	25%	25%	26%
A little better	16%	18%	18%	16%	16%	18%	15%	16%	17%	12%	16%
A lot better	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	4%	4%	2%	2%	4%
Don't know	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	8%	5%	7%	7%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	47%	47%	46%	48%	46%	45%	47%	48%	50%	54%	49%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	21%	23%	21%	21%	24%	19%	20%	18%	14%	20%

Unemployment	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	11%	12%	11%	12%	11%	11%	13%	15%	16%	16%	11%
A little worse	24%	27%	27%	26%	30%	30%	19%	28%	30%	27%	30%
No change	28%	27%	30%	30%	32%	33%	26%	21%	21%	26%	30%
A little better	27%	26%	25%	25%	22%	21%	30%	29%	24%	23%	23%
A lot better	9%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	11%	5%	5%	5%	4%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	5%	3%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	35%	39%	38%	38%	41%	40%	32%	43%	46%	43%	41%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	36%	32%	31%	30%	26%	25%	41%	34%	28%	28%	26%

The economy overall	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	33%	32%	35%	33%	31%	26%	30%	36%	33%	42%	35%
A little worse	40%	39%	38%	39%	41%	38%	38%	41%	40%	33%	38%
No change	12%	14%	12%	12%	14%	15%	18%	10%	11%	12%	11%
A little better	11%	13%	11%	12%	10%	16%	11%	10%	11%	12%	12%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%

Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	73%	70%	73%	72%	72%	64%	67%	77%	74%	75%	74%	
Nett: A lot better & a little better	14%	15%	14%	15%	13%	20%	14%	12%	12%	12%	13%	

Wages	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	19%	18%	18%	15%	16%	14%	13%	12%	17%	17%	14%
A little worse	27%	27%	26%	28%	28%	28%	26%	28%	28%	29%	23%
No change	34%	34%	36%	30%	33%	31%	33%	40%	32%	35%	32%
A little better	17%	18%	17%	24%	20%	22%	22%	16%	19%	16%	28%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	45%	44%	44%	42%	44%	42%	40%	40%	45%	46%	38%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	20%	21%	19%	27%	23%	26%	24%	19%	21%	17%	29%

National debt	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	40%	34%	35%	29%	31%	25%	35%	43%	33%	38%	30%
A little worse	31%	33%	33%	33%	32%	31%	32%	30%	33%	31%	33%
No change	16%	19%	18%	19%	21%	23%	20%	15%	18%	18%	20%
A little better	8%	8%	8%	13%	10%	13%	7%	6%	8%	6%	11%
A lot better	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	4%	6%	4%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	71%	67%	68%	62%	63%	56%	67%	73%	66%	69%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	11%	11%	16%	13%	17%	8%	8%	10%	8%	13%

Job security overall	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	11%	10%	12%	10%	13%	9%	13%	14%	15%	17%	15%
A little worse	26%	30%	28%	31%	30%	31%	26%	23%	34%	36%	33%
No change	35%	35%	35%	36%	36%	36%	33%	40%	28%	30%	33%
A little better	22%	19%	19%	18%	16%	19%	22%	19%	16%	13%	15%
A lot better	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	36%	41%	40%	41%	43%	40%	39%	37%	49%	52%	48%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	28%	24%	23%	22%	20%	23%	26%	22%	20%	14%	17%

Cost of living	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	63%	63%	68%	66%	68%	63%	61%	62%	69%	72%	69%
A little worse	24%	25%	21%	22%	21%	22%	26%	30%	23%	21%	26%
No change	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	6%	2%	3%	3%	2%
A little better	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	7%	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	87%	88%	89%	89%	89%	85%	87%	92%	91%	93%	95%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	6%	6%	7%	6%	10%	7%	6%	4%	4%	2%

Electricity costs	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	54%	47%	49%	56%	54%	46%	46%	54%	48%	52%	62%
A little worse	31%	37%	36%	30%	32%	34%	34%	33%	37%	36%	29%
No change	8%	8%	9%	7%	8%	10%	11%	7%	9%	6%	6%
A little better	6%	5%	4%	5%	4%	6%	7%	5%	4%	3%	3%
A lot better	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	84%	84%	85%	86%	85%	80%	80%	87%	85%	88%	90%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	7%	6%	7%	7%	9%	9%	6%	5%	4%	4%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in secure work						Workers in insecure work				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	1,667	1,710	1,674	1,716	1,779	1,815	311	301	306	362	333
A lot worse	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	6%
A little worse	14%	13%	11%	12%	9%	8%	11%	9%	10%	10%	9%
No change	28%	27%	25%	24%	24%	24%	31%	31%	28%	25%	26%
A little better	28%	28%	28%	29%	26%	29%	24%	26%	26%	25%	26%
A lot better	22%	23%	28%	27%	32%	32%	24%	22%	27%	29%	27%
Don't know	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%	3%	7%	6%	4%	5%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	19%	18%	16%	18%	15%	13%	15%	15%	16%	16%	15%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	50%	51%	55%	56%	58%	61%	47%	48%	53%	54%	53%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	17%	18%	13%	14%	12%	12%	12%	13%	11%	16%	17%
A little worse	38%	32%	28%	32%	36%	34%	35%	32%	32%	32%	34%
No change	25%	29%	29%	30%	27%	28%	28%	30%	29%	24%	28%
A little better	9%	12%	20%	17%	18%	18%	17%	17%	18%	19%	13%
A lot better	5%	4%	7%	5%	4%	4%	5%	6%	7%	2%	3%
Don't know	7%	6%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	6%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	54%	49%	41%	46%	48%	46%	46%	45%	43%	49%	51%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	14%	16%	27%	22%	22%	22%	22%	23%	25%	22%	17%

Unemployment	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	19%	20%	9%	10%	11%	10%	12%	11%	10%	15%	14%
A little worse	31%	30%	18%	24%	27%	27%	26%	30%	29%	19%	25%
No change	25%	26%	22%	29%	27%	32%	31%	33%	33%	19%	23%
A little better	19%	20%	34%	26%	26%	24%	24%	21%	23%	33%	30%
A lot better	4%	2%	15%	9%	7%	7%	6%	4%	4%	12%	7%
Don't know	4%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	49%	50%	27%	34%	38%	36%	37%	40%	39%	33%	38%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	21%	49%	36%	34%	31%	30%	25%	26%	44%	37%

The economy overall	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	40%	33%	24%	32%	32%	35%	33%	30%	24%	34%	35%
A little worse	40%	35%	36%	40%	38%	38%	39%	40%	38%	38%	41%
No change	10%	15%	16%	13%	13%	13%	12%	15%	16%	11%	9%
A little better	9%	15%	17%	11%	13%	11%	13%	10%	17%	13%	11%
A lot better	1%	1%	6%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	2%	2%

Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	79%	68%	60%	72%	70%	72%	72%	71%	62%	72%	76%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	16%	23%	15%	16%	14%	16%	14%	21%	14%	13%

Wages	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	18%	18%	16%	18%	19%	19%	15%	16%	14%	16%	19%
A little worse	25%	22%	24%	27%	27%	26%	29%	28%	29%	27%	27%
No change	34%	38%	33%	33%	33%	36%	29%	32%	30%	29%	36%
A little better	18%	18%	23%	18%	17%	17%	23%	20%	22%	25%	14%
A lot better	4%	2%	5%	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%
Don't know	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	43%	40%	39%	45%	46%	44%	44%	45%	43%	43%	47%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	20%	27%	22%	20%	19%	26%	23%	26%	27%	16%

National debt	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	41%	30%	34%	40%	34%	34%	29%	29%	24%	45%	41%
A little worse	26%	31%	29%	31%	33%	34%	33%	32%	31%	29%	32%
No change	19%	20%	19%	17%	19%	19%	19%	21%	24%	12%	16%
A little better	8%	11%	10%	9%	8%	8%	14%	11%	14%	9%	6%
A lot better	2%	2%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	1%	3%
Don't know	5%	6%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	67%	61%	63%	70%	66%	68%	61%	61%	55%	74%	73%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	13%	15%	11%	11%	11%	17%	14%	18%	10%	9%

Job security overall	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	20%	18%	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%	12%	8%	13%	13%
A little worse	31%	32%	22%	25%	30%	28%	32%	30%	31%	30%	27%
No change	33%	35%	34%	35%	34%	36%	35%	36%	35%	28%	34%
A little better	12%	13%	26%	22%	19%	19%	18%	16%	20%	23%	22%
A lot better	3%	1%	9%	7%	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	50%	49%	31%	35%	40%	40%	42%	42%	40%	42%	40%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	14%	14%	34%	29%	24%	23%	22%	21%	24%	27%	25%

Cost of living	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	73%	66%	56%	61%	62%	68%	67%	67%	62%	67%	67%
A little worse	21%	25%	24%	24%	25%	21%	22%	20%	23%	22%	24%
No change	2%	4%	7%	7%	5%	5%	4%	6%	5%	3%	3%
A little better	3%	4%	8%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	8%	6%	5%
A lot better	1%	1%	5%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	94%	91%	80%	86%	87%	89%	88%	87%	84%	89%	90%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	4%	5%	12%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	11%	7%	7%

Electricity costs	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	61%	52%	44%	53%	46%	48%	56%	52%	46%	48%	57%
A little worse	27%	32%	33%	31%	37%	36%	30%	32%	33%	37%	29%
No change	6%	10%	10%	8%	9%	9%	7%	8%	11%	8%	6%
A little better	5%	3%	9%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	7%	5%	6%
A lot better	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	88%	84%	77%	84%	83%	84%	85%	84%	79%	85%	86%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	6%	5%	13%	8%	8%	7%	7%	8%	10%	6%	7%

Company profits for large companies	Permanent FT paid workers										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	314	323	1,238	1,271	1,296	1,232	1,317	1,336	1,400	399	396
A lot worse	6%	8%	4%	5%	4%	5%	7%	6%	5%	7%	6%
A little worse	10%	5%	10%	14%	13%	11%	12%	9%	8%	14%	14%
No change	19%	19%	29%	28%	27%	24%	23%	24%	23%	26%	29%
A little better	27%	25%	28%	28%	29%	28%	30%	26%	30%	29%	28%
A lot better	35%	38%	25%	23%	24%	29%	27%	33%	31%	17%	19%
Don't know	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	7%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	16%	13%	14%	19%	17%	16%	18%	15%	13%	21%	19%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	62%	63%	52%	51%	53%	57%	57%	59%	61%	46%	47%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Work type (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	14%	13%	14%	14%	10%	15%	16%	13%	17%	13%	16%
A little worse	30%	34%	40%	37%	39%	31%	32%	37%	34%	36%	39%
No change	32%	22%	24%	29%	27%	26%	29%	25%	29%	29%	25%
A little better	17%	19%	14%	13%	16%	14%	14%	15%	12%	14%	8%
A lot better	1%	5%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%
Don't know	6%	7%	4%	4%	3%	10%	6%	9%	7%	5%	8%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	44%	47%	54%	51%	50%	45%	48%	50%	51%	50%	55%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	24%	17%	16%	20%	18%	17%	16%	14%	17%	13%

Unemployment	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	13%	15%	12%	11%	12%	16%	17%	18%	15%	10%	21%
A little worse	28%	26%	28%	32%	33%	19%	32%	28%	35%	35%	34%
No change	28%	24%	27%	28%	33%	26%	20%	22%	25%	27%	21%
A little better	24%	27%	26%	23%	16%	27%	23%	20%	20%	23%	17%
A lot better	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	10%	5%	5%	3%	4%	3%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	7%	3%	2%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	41%	41%	41%	43%	45%	36%	49%	46%	50%	45%	55%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	28%	32%	30%	27%	21%	36%	29%	25%	23%	26%	19%

The economy overall	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	32%	36%	35%	33%	34%	30%	36%	33%	40%	39%	44%
A little worse	40%	39%	39%	41%	35%	37%	41%	41%	32%	39%	37%
No change	14%	11%	13%	14%	14%	18%	10%	11%	15%	10%	9%
A little better	11%	11%	10%	10%	12%	11%	10%	10%	12%	11%	8%
A lot better	1%	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%

Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	4%	1%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	72%	75%	73%	75%	69%	67%	77%	74%	71%	77%	81%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	13%	12%	11%	16%	13%	11%	11%	13%	11%	9%

Wages	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	14%	16%	14%	17%	15%	14%	12%	16%	15%	13%	19%
A little worse	26%	27%	23%	26%	25%	20%	27%	29%	26%	24%	26%
No change	37%	37%	34%	35%	34%	38%	41%	30%	37%	31%	31%
A little better	21%	19%	26%	20%	23%	22%	17%	20%	19%	31%	20%
A lot better	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	40%	43%	37%	42%	40%	34%	38%	46%	42%	36%	45%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	20%	29%	21%	25%	26%	20%	22%	20%	32%	22%

National debt	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	35%	35%	29%	35%	27%	31%	41%	34%	33%	31%	39%
A little worse	34%	31%	33%	32%	33%	31%	31%	32%	33%	34%	33%
No change	16%	17%	20%	21%	23%	22%	15%	20%	22%	19%	14%
A little better	9%	8%	12%	7%	9%	8%	6%	8%	6%	10%	9%
A lot better	1%	3%	3%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Don't know	5%	6%	3%	5%	5%	7%	5%	6%	4%	4%	6%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	69%	67%	62%	66%	60%	61%	72%	66%	66%	66%	72%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	11%	15%	8%	12%	9%	8%	9%	8%	12%	9%

Job security overall	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	10%	14%	9%	13%	11%	14%	13%	18%	15%	15%	24%
A little worse	31%	28%	30%	30%	32%	25%	22%	32%	36%	29%	29%
No change	37%	33%	37%	37%	39%	31%	43%	26%	32%	39%	32%
A little better	18%	18%	18%	16%	15%	23%	17%	18%	13%	14%	10%
A lot better	3%	4%	5%	3%	2%	6%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Don't know	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%	2%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	41%	42%	38%	43%	43%	39%	35%	50%	51%	44%	52%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	22%	23%	18%	17%	29%	20%	20%	14%	16%	13%

Cost of living	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	66%	69%	65%	73%	67%	61%	62%	71%	71%	71%	75%
A little worse	26%	23%	25%	21%	21%	27%	29%	21%	21%	24%	23%
No change	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%	6%	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%
A little better	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%	4%	3%	4%	6%	3%	1%
A lot better	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	92%	91%	90%	93%	87%	87%	91%	92%	92%	95%	98%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	4%	5%	7%	3%	7%	7%	6%	4%	6%	3%	1%

Electricity costs	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	48%	50%	57%	58%	47%	45%	50%	48%	45%	61%	58%
A little worse	38%	36%	31%	31%	37%	33%	36%	37%	39%	29%	32%
No change	7%	9%	6%	7%	9%	11%	7%	8%	9%	6%	6%
A little better	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	9%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%
A lot better	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	86%	86%	88%	89%	84%	78%	87%	85%	83%	90%	90%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	6%	5%	7%	4%	6%	10%	5%	6%	6%	4%	4%

Company profits for large companies	Permanent PT paid workers					Casual paid workers					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	414	442	399	443	415	196	185	201	182	195	144
A lot worse	7%	7%	5%	7%	4%	3%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%
A little worse	14%	9%	12%	8%	8%	11%	9%	10%	8%	9%	12%
No change	28%	26%	27%	25%	25%	30%	31%	26%	29%	28%	17%
A little better	25%	28%	25%	26%	26%	23%	25%	27%	25%	29%	26%
A lot better	20%	24%	26%	30%	34%	25%	20%	27%	26%	25%	34%
Don't know	7%	6%	5%	4%	2%	8%	9%	4%	6%	4%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	20%	17%	17%	15%	12%	14%	15%	16%	15%	15%	18%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	45%	52%	51%	56%	61%	48%	45%	54%	51%	53%	60%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	17%	9%	19%	10%	-	-	-	3%	12%	13%	18%
A little worse	30%	30%	35%	28%	-	-	-	31%	48%	36%	40%
No change	27%	33%	14%	28%	-	-	-	43%	20%	27%	24%
A little better	14%	21%	24%	26%	-	-	-	14%	15%	16%	12%
A lot better	5%	3%	3%	5%	-	-	-	0%	0%	6%	2%
Don't know	7%	3%	5%	3%	-	-	-	9%	5%	2%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	47%	39%	54%	39%	-	-	-	34%	60%	49%	58%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	19%	24%	27%	31%	-	-	-	14%	15%	22%	14%

Unemployment	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	23%	15%	11%	5%	-	-	-	14%	7%	7%	16%
A little worse	28%	15%	35%	31%	-	-	-	43%	20%	15%	42%
No change	24%	12%	11%	13%	-	-	-	26%	27%	27%	18%
A little better	22%	49%	30%	41%	-	-	-	11%	32%	46%	20%
A lot better	1%	9%	11%	10%	-	-	-	0%	13%	4%	0%
Don't know	2%	0%	3%	0%	-	-	-	6%	2%	2%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	51%	30%	46%	36%	-	-	-	57%	27%	22%	58%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	58%	41%	51%	-	-	-	11%	45%	49%	20%

The economy overall	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	35%	27%	35%	18%	-	-	-	17%	37%	42%	46%
A little worse	30%	46%	43%	44%	-	-	-	54%	32%	38%	38%
No change	13%	12%	8%	18%	-	-	-	11%	20%	7%	6%
A little better	17%	15%	5%	15%	-	-	-	17%	8%	11%	6%
A lot better	2%	0%	5%	5%	-	-	-	0%	3%	2%	2%

Don't know	2%	0%	3%	0%	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	73%	78%	62%	-	-	-	71%	68%	80%	84%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	19%	15%	11%	21%	-	-	-	17%	12%	13%	8%

Wages	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	17%	9%	14%	18%	-	-	-	17%	15%	13%	20%
A little worse	22%	30%	41%	21%	-	-	-	17%	40%	22%	30%
No change	38%	33%	30%	36%	-	-	-	49%	25%	46%	36%
A little better	20%	24%	11%	21%	-	-	-	17%	17%	16%	10%
A lot better	1%	0%	5%	3%	-	-	-	0%	0%	4%	2%
Don't know	2%	3%	0%	3%	-	-	-	0%	3%	0%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	39%	54%	39%	-	-	-	34%	55%	35%	50%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	24%	16%	23%	-	-	-	17%	17%	20%	12%

National debt	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	30%	36%	38%	26%	-	-	-	26%	52%	62%	44%
A little worse	33%	42%	35%	39%	-	-	-	29%	25%	18%	24%
No change	16%	9%	16%	21%	-	-	-	26%	17%	13%	14%
A little better	14%	6%	3%	8%	-	-	-	6%	5%	6%	8%
A lot better	1%	3%	5%	8%	-	-	-	6%	0%	0%	2%
Don't know	6%	3%	3%	0%	-	-	-	9%	2%	2%	8%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	64%	79%	73%	64%	-	-	-	54%	77%	80%	68%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	9%	8%	15%	-	-	-	11%	5%	6%	10%

Job security overall	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	17%	12%	16%	3%	-	-	-	11%	13%	16%	12%
A little worse	32%	33%	24%	44%	-	-	-	37%	27%	22%	40%
No change	35%	42%	38%	26%	-	-	-	34%	35%	31%	34%
A little better	14%	6%	19%	15%	-	-	-	9%	20%	24%	4%
A lot better	1%	3%	3%	13%	-	-	-	3%	2%	6%	6%
Don't know	1%	3%	0%	0%	-	-	-	6%	3%	2%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	49%	46%	41%	46%	-	-	-	49%	40%	38%	52%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	9%	22%	28%	-	-	-	11%	22%	29%	10%

Cost of living	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	64%	64%	65%	62%	-	-	-	60%	62%	64%	72%
A little worse	26%	27%	24%	18%	-	-	-	23%	28%	29%	24%
No change	4%	3%	3%	8%	-	-	-	11%	7%	2%	2%
A little better	6%	3%	8%	8%	-	-	-	3%	3%	6%	0%
A lot better	1%	0%	0%	5%	-	-	-	3%	0%	0%	2%
Don't know	0%	3%	0%	0%	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	90%	91%	89%	80%	-	-	-	83%	90%	93%	96%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	3%	8%	13%	-	-	-	6%	3%	6%	2%

Electricity costs	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	52%	42%	51%	39%	-	-	-	29%	52%	66%	60%
A little worse	31%	42%	35%	39%	-	-	-	54%	33%	22%	32%
No change	10%	12%	5%	18%	-	-	-	11%	10%	7%	4%
A little better	4%	3%	5%	3%	-	-	-	3%	3%	4%	4%
A lot better	1%	0%	3%	3%	-	-	-	0%	2%	2%	0%
Don't know	2%	0%	0%	0%	-	-	-	3%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	83%	85%	87%	77%	-	-	-	83%	85%	87%	92%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	6%	3%	8%	5%	-	-	-	3%	5%	6%	4%

Company profits for large companies	FT fixed term contract paid workers								Indep		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	165	33	37	39	28	23	29	35	60	55	50
A lot worse	9%	9%	3%	5%	-	-	-	11%	3%	4%	6%
A little worse	7%	6%	16%	13%	-	-	-	3%	12%	4%	8%
No change	18%	33%	27%	36%	-	-	-	20%	33%	36%	30%
A little better	26%	24%	24%	26%	-	-	-	34%	22%	27%	22%
A lot better	35%	21%	27%	21%	-	-	-	29%	23%	27%	30%
Don't know	6%	6%	3%	0%	-	-	-	3%	7%	2%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	15%	15%	19%	18%	-	-	-	14%	15%	7%	14%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	61%	46%	51%	46%	-	-	-	63%	45%	55%	52%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Gender (

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035
A lot worse	30%	21%	19%	25%	17%	18%	17%	17%	15%	18%	15%
A little worse	37%	32%	37%	36%	31%	35%	33%	36%	39%	37%	36%
No change	18%	23%	25%	24%	26%	27%	27%	25%	25%	26%	27%
A little better	6%	18%	9%	8%	16%	14%	16%	14%	12%	11%	14%
A lot better	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Don't know	8%	3%	6%	6%	7%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	67%	53%	56%	60%	48%	53%	50%	52%	54%	54%	50%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	21%	13%	10%	19%	16%	18%	17%	16%	15%	19%

Unemployment	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035
A lot worse	19%	14%	18%	18%	14%	15%	16%	16%	15%	16%	16%
A little worse	18%	23%	24%	31%	19%	26%	30%	27%	29%	33%	31%
No change	25%	35%	32%	26%	20%	23%	23%	26%	28%	25%	29%
A little better	28%	21%	17%	19%	35%	28%	23%	23%	22%	20%	19%
A lot better	6%	3%	7%	3%	10%	6%	5%	6%	4%	3%	3%
Don't know	5%	5%	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	37%	42%	49%	34%	41%	45%	43%	44%	49%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	34%	24%	23%	22%	45%	34%	28%	29%	25%	23%	22%

The economy overall	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035
A lot worse	48%	34%	38%	38%	32%	39%	39%	41%	40%	40%	34%
A little worse	33%	38%	43%	35%	40%	42%	40%	37%	37%	40%	37%
No change	8%	13%	9%	18%	12%	9%	10%	11%	11%	10%	12%
A little better	8%	14%	8%	9%	12%	8%	9%	9%	9%	7%	13%
A lot better	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%

Don't know	2%	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	81%	71%	82%	73%	72%	81%	79%	78%	77%	79%	71%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	9%	14%	9%	9%	15%	9%	10%	10%	11%	9%	16%

Wages	endent contractors				Workers - Women							
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035	
A lot worse	18%	15%	16%	18%	18%	19%	21%	21%	16%	20%	17%	
A little worse	35%	23%	23%	24%	25%	27%	27%	27%	27%	28%	29%	
No change	31%	35%	38%	37%	31%	37%	32%	36%	31%	32%	33%	
A little better	11%	24%	12%	16%	23%	15%	18%	14%	23%	17%	18%	
A lot better	2%	0%	6%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%	
Don't know	5%	3%	5%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	53%	39%	39%	42%	43%	46%	48%	47%	43%	47%	46%	
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	24%	18%	20%	25%	16%	19%	15%	25%	20%	20%	

National debt	endent contractors				Workers - Women							
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035	
A lot worse	47%	34%	46%	33%	39%	44%	38%	36%	29%	36%	28%	
A little worse	31%	34%	19%	28%	31%	32%	33%	32%	35%	30%	31%	
No change	12%	14%	23%	24%	17%	15%	17%	19%	18%	19%	23%	
A little better	3%	11%	6%	9%	7%	5%	6%	7%	10%	7%	10%	
A lot better	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	
Don't know	5%	7%	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	77%	67%	65%	61%	70%	76%	71%	68%	64%	66%	59%	
Nett: A lot better & a little better	5%	12%	8%	11%	9%	6%	8%	9%	13%	10%	13%	

Job security overall	endent contractors				Workers - Women							
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035	
A lot worse	18%	16%	18%	21%	12%	13%	13%	16%	13%	18%	14%	
A little worse	36%	39%	33%	28%	27%	29%	33%	32%	33%	32%	34%	
No change	29%	26%	34%	38%	31%	34%	30%	31%	33%	31%	33%	
A little better	9%	13%	9%	11%	23%	20%	18%	16%	17%	14%	16%	
A lot better	2%	3%	3%	1%	5%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Don't know	5%	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	54%	56%	50%	49%	39%	42%	46%	48%	45%	50%	48%	
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	15%	13%	12%	29%	24%	22%	19%	20%	17%	18%	

Cost of living	endent contractors				Workers - Women							
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	
n=	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035	
A lot worse	74%	66%	75%	69%	68%	70%	72%	74%	73%	77%	70%	
A little worse	21%	28%	16%	26%	22%	24%	22%	18%	20%	16%	20%	
No change	3%	5%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	
A little better	1%	1%	5%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	5%	
A lot better	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	
Don't know	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	96%	94%	91%	94%	90%	94%	93%	93%	93%	93%	89%	
Nett: A lot better & a little better	1%	1%	7%	3%	6%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	7%	

Electricity costs	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035
A lot worse	65%	65%	68%	60%	51%	59%	50%	54%	62%	60%	52%
A little worse	29%	27%	20%	24%	35%	31%	39%	36%	28%	30%	33%
No change	3%	6%	5%	11%	7%	5%	7%	6%	5%	6%	8%
A little better	1%	2%	3%	2%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
A lot better	1%	0%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Don't know	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	95%	92%	88%	84%	86%	90%	89%	90%	90%	90%	84%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	2%	2%	7%	5%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	7%

Company profits for large companies	endent contractors				Workers - Women						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	133	104	120	106	938	949	953	966	984	1,019	1,035
A lot worse	5%	7%	8%	7%	5%	5%	6%	6%	8%	8%	6%
A little worse	14%	12%	8%	5%	12%	14%	14%	11%	12%	10%	8%
No change	23%	26%	19%	19%	28%	30%	26%	26%	25%	23%	21%
A little better	24%	20%	25%	21%	27%	27%	27%	25%	26%	24%	27%
A lot better	29%	30%	36%	43%	22%	19%	22%	27%	24%	33%	33%
Don't know	5%	6%	4%	6%	7%	5%	5%	6%	5%	3%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	19%	18%	16%	11%	17%	19%	20%	17%	20%	18%	14%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	53%	50%	61%	64%	48%	46%	49%	52%	51%	56%	60%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	11%	12%	9%	12%	10%	10%	10%	13%	13%	11%	12%
A little worse	28%	31%	36%	32%	33%	31%	31%	25%	28%	32%	30%
No change	29%	31%	28%	28%	29%	32%	30%	28%	31%	27%	29%
A little better	22%	18%	19%	20%	20%	19%	19%	23%	19%	23%	20%
A lot better	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	7%	6%	7%	3%	5%
Don't know	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	6%	3%	5%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	42%	45%	44%	43%	41%	41%	38%	41%	43%	42%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	29%	24%	23%	25%	25%	25%	26%	28%	25%	26%	24%

Unemployment	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%	8%	9%	15%	15%	15%	15%
A little worse	18%	24%	25%	26%	24%	28%	28%	23%	31%	28%	29%
No change	24%	30%	29%	32%	32%	36%	35%	22%	24%	22%	28%
A little better	31%	27%	28%	26%	27%	23%	23%	28%	22%	26%	21%
A lot better	18%	10%	8%	7%	7%	4%	4%	10%	8%	6%	7%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	25%	32%	34%	34%	33%	36%	38%	38%	46%	42%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	49%	37%	35%	32%	34%	27%	27%	38%	30%	32%	27%

The economy overall	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	23%	28%	26%	31%	28%	25%	21%	25%	30%	29%	33%
A little worse	34%	39%	38%	38%	41%	41%	38%	37%	37%	38%	35%
No change	18%	14%	17%	14%	13%	17%	18%	16%	14%	14%	15%
A little better	18%	14%	15%	14%	15%	13%	19%	15%	12%	15%	13%
A lot better	6%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	2%	4%

Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	56%	67%	64%	69%	68%	66%	59%	63%	67%	67%	68%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	19%	19%	16%	18%	16%	23%	19%	18%	18%	17%

Wages	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	12%	16%	15%	16%	13%	13%	13%	13%	13%	15%	15%
A little worse	25%	27%	27%	26%	28%	28%	25%	20%	26%	26%	27%
No change	33%	33%	35%	36%	30%	34%	32%	31%	32%	33%	33%
A little better	22%	18%	19%	20%	27%	22%	26%	29%	21%	23%	22%
A lot better	6%	6%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%	6%	2%	3%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	43%	41%	42%	40%	40%	38%	33%	40%	41%	41%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	28%	24%	22%	22%	29%	26%	30%	34%	27%	25%	25%

National debt	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	34%	37%	30%	35%	29%	28%	23%	26%	34%	28%	28%
A little worse	28%	30%	33%	34%	31%	33%	32%	30%	29%	33%	34%
No change	18%	17%	20%	18%	20%	22%	23%	22%	20%	20%	21%
A little better	11%	11%	10%	9%	15%	12%	15%	11%	11%	11%	9%
A lot better	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%
Don't know	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	7%	2%	4%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	62%	67%	63%	68%	60%	61%	55%	57%	62%	61%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	16%	14%	14%	12%	18%	15%	19%	15%	16%	15%	13%

Job security overall	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	8%	10%	9%	10%	9%	9%	7%	12%	10%	9%	13%
A little worse	22%	22%	29%	27%	30%	28%	29%	24%	28%	31%	29%
No change	34%	37%	37%	38%	37%	40%	39%	29%	31%	33%	33%
A little better	26%	23%	19%	19%	18%	17%	20%	26%	23%	20%	19%
A lot better	9%	7%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	7%	7%	5%	5%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	30%	32%	38%	38%	40%	38%	36%	36%	38%	40%	41%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	34%	30%	24%	24%	23%	22%	25%	33%	30%	25%	24%

Cost of living	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	51%	55%	57%	64%	61%	62%	57%	58%	54%	60%	64%
A little worse	25%	26%	28%	24%	26%	24%	25%	21%	24%	23%	20%
No change	9%	8%	6%	5%	5%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%
A little better	10%	7%	6%	6%	6%	5%	9%	8%	9%	6%	8%
A lot better	5%	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	5%	2%	3%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	76%	81%	85%	88%	87%	86%	82%	79%	78%	84%	83%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	11%	8%	7%	8%	7%	11%	12%	14%	9%	10%

Electricity costs	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	39%	48%	44%	45%	52%	50%	43%	34%	38%	30%	34%
A little worse	34%	32%	36%	36%	31%	32%	35%	35%	35%	44%	42%
No change	12%	10%	10%	11%	8%	9%	12%	16%	11%	14%	14%
A little better	10%	8%	7%	5%	6%	6%	7%	11%	11%	9%	6%
A lot better	5%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	72%	80%	80%	81%	83%	82%	78%	69%	73%	74%	75%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	10%	10%	8%	9%	9%	10%	14%	15%	11%	10%

Company profits for large companies	Workers - Men							Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	1,000	1,011	1,056	1,065	1,056	1,063	1,097	526	484	530	508
A lot worse	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	8%
A little worse	10%	13%	12%	11%	10%	8%	7%	12%	16%	14%	11%
No change	30%	27%	28%	24%	24%	24%	24%	31%	28%	29%	28%
A little better	28%	28%	29%	29%	31%	29%	30%	27%	31%	30%	28%
A lot better	24%	24%	25%	29%	29%	32%	32%	19%	19%	17%	22%
Don't know	4%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	6%	2%	4%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	15%	17%	16%	16%	15%	13%	12%	17%	20%	21%	19%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	52%	53%	54%	58%	59%	62%	62%	46%	50%	47%	50%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Age (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	18-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	9%	11%	11%	12%	15%	15%	12%	13%	13%	11%	16%
A little worse	32%	34%	29%	29%	31%	34%	33%	34%	32%	32%	31%
No change	29%	30%	28%	25%	30%	28%	28%	27%	29%	31%	30%
A little better	21%	15%	20%	22%	17%	17%	18%	17%	16%	17%	16%
A lot better	6%	4%	7%	8%	3%	4%	4%	6%	7%	6%	4%
Don't know	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	41%	45%	41%	41%	46%	48%	45%	47%	45%	44%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	27%	20%	27%	30%	20%	21%	23%	23%	23%	23%	19%

Unemployment	18-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	15%	15%	17%	9%	12%	13%	11%	12%	10%	10%	10%
A little worse	30%	30%	32%	20%	23%	29%	27%	28%	34%	31%	13%
No change	24%	29%	28%	23%	28%	27%	30%	31%	32%	32%	23%
A little better	24%	19%	17%	31%	28%	24%	24%	21%	19%	21%	38%
A lot better	4%	4%	4%	15%	8%	6%	6%	6%	4%	5%	14%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	45%	45%	50%	29%	35%	41%	38%	40%	44%	41%	23%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	29%	23%	21%	47%	36%	30%	29%	26%	23%	26%	52%

The economy overall	18-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	33%	31%	26%	26%	31%	32%	36%	34%	30%	25%	31%
A little worse	35%	34%	37%	32%	42%	39%	37%	37%	42%	37%	38%
No change	13%	16%	16%	15%	12%	13%	11%	12%	14%	17%	15%
A little better	14%	14%	16%	19%	12%	11%	12%	13%	10%	17%	13%
A lot better	4%	4%	4%	7%	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%

Don't know	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	68%	64%	63%	57%	73%	71%	72%	71%	73%	62%	69%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	18%	20%	26%	15%	14%	15%	16%	13%	20%	16%

Wages	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	13%	17%	15%	14%	18%	18%	19%	16%	15%	16%	19%
A little worse	24%	25%	27%	24%	25%	28%	23%	26%	30%	27%	27%
No change	29%	29%	32%	32%	36%	32%	38%	31%	34%	29%	32%
A little better	29%	25%	21%	24%	18%	16%	17%	23%	17%	22%	19%
A lot better	5%	5%	5%	6%	3%	5%	3%	3%	4%	5%	2%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	41%	42%	38%	43%	46%	42%	43%	45%	43%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	34%	29%	26%	30%	21%	21%	19%	26%	21%	27%	21%

National debt	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	24%	26%	24%	32%	37%	33%	31%	29%	28%	23%	46%
A little worse	36%	29%	33%	29%	32%	33%	33%	29%	32%	30%	27%
No change	20%	24%	24%	17%	19%	20%	21%	21%	23%	26%	17%
A little better	15%	12%	11%	13%	8%	8%	9%	13%	10%	13%	5%
A lot better	3%	4%	5%	6%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	2%
Don't know	3%	6%	4%	3%	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	59%	55%	57%	61%	69%	66%	65%	58%	60%	53%	73%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	16%	15%	19%	10%	11%	12%	17%	13%	18%	7%

Job security overall	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	11%	13%	12%	8%	11%	11%	11%	12%	13%	10%	12%
A little worse	33%	31%	31%	24%	25%	32%	31%	32%	32%	31%	25%
No change	30%	30%	31%	30%	34%	35%	37%	34%	38%	35%	38%
A little better	19%	18%	20%	27%	24%	16%	17%	18%	13%	18%	20%
A lot better	6%	6%	4%	9%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	44%	43%	44%	32%	36%	43%	42%	43%	44%	41%	36%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	24%	24%	36%	30%	21%	20%	22%	17%	24%	25%

Cost of living	1-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	61%	61%	61%	56%	63%	65%	69%	67%	69%	62%	64%
A little worse	21%	20%	20%	21%	23%	23%	21%	22%	19%	21%	26%
No change	6%	8%	7%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	6%	6%	6%
A little better	7%	7%	9%	11%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	8%	3%
A lot better	4%	3%	3%	6%	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	82%	81%	81%	77%	86%	87%	90%	89%	88%	82%	89%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	10%	12%	17%	8%	8%	6%	7%	7%	12%	4%

Electricity costs	18-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	42%	37%	33%	43%	51%	48%	45%	56%	52%	44%	55%
A little worse	35%	38%	37%	31%	33%	36%	38%	29%	32%	35%	36%
No change	12%	12%	17%	10%	8%	9%	9%	6%	8%	10%	5%
A little better	8%	8%	8%	10%	6%	5%	6%	6%	5%	7%	4%
A lot better	4%	4%	3%	7%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	5%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	77%	75%	70%	74%	84%	84%	83%	85%	84%	79%	90%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	12%	11%	17%	8%	7%	7%	8%	8%	12%	4%

Company profits for large companies	18-29			Workers aged 30-44							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	513	521	527	677	706	704	685	717	731	750	527
A lot worse	6%	7%	7%	4%	6%	5%	6%	7%	5%	7%	5%
A little worse	11%	8%	8%	10%	14%	14%	10%	11%	10%	7%	12%
No change	27%	26%	24%	26%	29%	27%	24%	23%	25%	23%	29%
A little better	28%	26%	24%	30%	28%	26%	28%	30%	26%	31%	25%
A lot better	25%	31%	35%	26%	21%	25%	29%	27%	32%	30%	23%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	17%	15%	15%	14%	20%	19%	16%	18%	15%	14%	17%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	53%	56%	59%	56%	48%	51%	57%	57%	58%	61%	48%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	16%	13%	17%	14%	15%	14%	15%	13%	11%	16%	15%
A little worse	37%	36%	37%	38%	35%	37%	40%	37%	39%	38%	45%
No change	29%	29%	24%	29%	27%	28%	28%	24%	26%	22%	22%
A little better	13%	13%	15%	12%	15%	13%	10%	15%	16%	13%	12%
A lot better	3%	4%	3%	3%	5%	5%	1%	6%	2%	4%	2%
Don't know	3%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	7%	6%	6%	8%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	52%	49%	53%	52%	51%	51%	55%	50%	50%	54%	60%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	16%	17%	18%	15%	19%	18%	11%	20%	18%	17%	14%

Unemployment	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	9%	10%	11%	11%	11%	12%	8%	10%	11%	10%	8%
A little worse	23%	26%	24%	22%	30%	28%	15%	21%	25%	28%	28%
No change	30%	29%	31%	34%	31%	35%	19%	21%	27%	24%	27%
A little better	28%	24%	28%	26%	22%	21%	36%	38%	29%	26%	32%
A lot better	8%	7%	5%	5%	3%	2%	20%	9%	7%	9%	5%
Don't know	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	4%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	32%	37%	35%	33%	41%	39%	23%	32%	35%	38%	35%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	36%	31%	33%	31%	26%	24%	56%	46%	36%	35%	37%

The economy overall	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	37%	34%	40%	34%	35%	31%	26%	38%	34%	37%	35%
A little worse	39%	38%	38%	43%	42%	36%	49%	44%	41%	41%	41%
No change	11%	13%	13%	11%	13%	14%	14%	9%	13%	9%	11%
A little better	10%	11%	8%	9%	9%	16%	11%	7%	11%	12%	12%
A lot better	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	76%	73%	77%	77%	78%	67%	75%	82%	75%	78%	75%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	13%	9%	11%	10%	17%	11%	9%	11%	13%	13%

Wages	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	20%	21%	20%	17%	19%	15%	16%	20%	15%	18%	8%
A little worse	29%	26%	30%	28%	30%	29%	32%	29%	28%	26%	35%
No change	36%	36%	35%	31%	33%	34%	34%	37%	35%	39%	31%
A little better	14%	16%	14%	23%	17%	20%	15%	11%	19%	15%	25%
A lot better	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	48%	47%	50%	44%	48%	44%	48%	50%	43%	44%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	17%	14%	25%	19%	21%	16%	13%	20%	15%	26%

National debt	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	44%	36%	43%	32%	39%	28%	51%	56%	45%	43%	36%
A little worse	32%	34%	31%	34%	30%	31%	37%	28%	33%	32%	33%
No change	14%	18%	16%	17%	17%	21%	8%	7%	12%	11%	15%
A little better	7%	8%	5%	11%	8%	13%	3%	3%	6%	7%	11%
A lot better	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	3%	1%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	1%	3%	5%	5%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	76%	69%	74%	67%	69%	59%	87%	85%	78%	75%	69%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	9%	6%	13%	10%	15%	3%	5%	6%	9%	12%

Job security overall	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	12%	13%	15%	10%	17%	11%	11%	11%	10%	13%	10%
A little worse	26%	31%	29%	32%	30%	33%	24%	19%	27%	31%	27%
No change	39%	33%	35%	40%	35%	38%	35%	44%	33%	29%	40%
A little better	18%	18%	16%	15%	15%	15%	24%	20%	25%	20%	19%
A lot better	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	6%	4%	3%	4%	3%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	4%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	38%	44%	43%	42%	47%	44%	35%	30%	37%	43%	37%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	22%	21%	20%	18%	17%	16%	29%	24%	28%	24%	22%

Cost of living	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	69%	67%	72%	71%	75%	70%	61%	65%	64%	70%	69%
A little worse	26%	26%	21%	23%	20%	23%	34%	30%	30%	27%	28%
No change	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
A little better	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	3%	2%	1%
A lot better	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	94%	93%	93%	94%	95%	92%	94%	95%	95%	97%	97%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	5%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%

Electricity costs	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	66%	58%	63%	65%	66%	59%	56%	66%	57%	62%	71%
A little worse	25%	33%	31%	28%	26%	29%	38%	29%	36%	32%	25%
No change	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%	5%	1%	3%	4%	2%
A little better	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%
A lot better	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	91%	90%	93%	93%	93%	89%	94%	95%	94%	93%	96%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%	5%	1%	3%	3%	3%	2%

Company profits for large companies	Workers aged 45-59						Workers aged 60+				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	546	546	554	561	568	574	218	232	236	289	258
A lot worse	4%	5%	5%	6%	7%	4%	6%	5%	3%	2%	5%
A little worse	11%	12%	10%	11%	9%	7%	9%	12%	9%	13%	14%
No change	30%	29%	25%	23%	22%	22%	32%	26%	21%	22%	25%
A little better	26%	27%	27%	29%	26%	28%	25%	25%	33%	24%	26%
A lot better	24%	25%	30%	28%	34%	35%	22%	24%	30%	34%	27%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	4%	6%	7%	5%	6%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	15%	16%	15%	16%	16%	11%	15%	17%	11%	15%	19%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	51%	52%	57%	57%	60%	63%	47%	50%	63%	57%	53%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	17%	11%	11%	13%	11%	12%	12%	13%	12%	13%	15%
A little worse	36%	38%	27%	33%	32%	33%	35%	34%	31%	30%	34%
No change	28%	25%	29%	28%	29%	26%	29%	28%	29%	28%	32%
A little better	13%	17%	22%	18%	19%	19%	16%	14%	20%	18%	13%
A lot better	3%	5%	8%	5%	4%	5%	5%	7%	6%	6%	4%
Don't know	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	6%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	52%	48%	37%	46%	44%	45%	47%	47%	42%	43%	49%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	16%	22%	29%	23%	22%	24%	21%	21%	26%	23%	17%

Unemployment	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	10%	10%	8%	8%	12%	10%	12%	10%	11%	11%	15%
A little worse	23%	25%	17%	25%	27%	29%	28%	30%	32%	19%	22%
No change	29%	33%	24%	28%	28%	30%	27%	32%	33%	20%	25%
A little better	30%	27%	35%	28%	24%	24%	26%	21%	19%	34%	31%
A lot better	6%	3%	14%	9%	6%	6%	6%	4%	4%	15%	7%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	33%	35%	25%	33%	39%	39%	40%	41%	42%	29%	37%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	36%	30%	49%	37%	30%	30%	31%	25%	23%	49%	38%

The economy overall	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	36%	28%	25%	31%	30%	32%	30%	32%	25%	28%	36%
A little worse	44%	41%	34%	41%	39%	38%	40%	39%	37%	40%	38%
No change	11%	12%	16%	12%	13%	13%	12%	14%	16%	14%	11%
A little better	8%	17%	18%	12%	14%	14%	13%	12%	18%	14%	11%
A lot better	1%	2%	6%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%

Don't know	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	80%	69%	59%	71%	69%	69%	70%	71%	62%	68%	74%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	19%	24%	16%	16%	17%	17%	14%	21%	17%	15%

Wages	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	15%	11%	16%	19%	17%	16%	15%	17%	13%	13%	15%
A little worse	22%	23%	23%	27%	29%	26%	26%	26%	27%	27%	26%
No change	39%	39%	31%	33%	33%	38%	30%	33%	33%	31%	38%
A little better	21%	25%	24%	16%	17%	17%	25%	19%	25%	24%	19%
A lot better	2%	2%	5%	5%	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	33%	39%	46%	46%	42%	42%	44%	39%	40%	41%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	22%	27%	29%	21%	21%	19%	28%	23%	28%	27%	21%

National debt	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	41%	33%	33%	37%	33%	31%	28%	29%	21%	42%	43%
A little worse	33%	31%	26%	33%	33%	33%	30%	31%	30%	30%	28%
No change	14%	17%	22%	17%	17%	21%	20%	22%	27%	14%	15%
A little better	8%	14%	12%	9%	11%	11%	15%	10%	13%	7%	9%
A lot better	1%	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%
Don't know	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	74%	64%	59%	69%	66%	63%	57%	59%	51%	73%	71%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	9%	16%	16%	12%	14%	14%	19%	14%	17%	11%	12%

Job security overall	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	11%	8%	9%	10%	12%	13%	11%	13%	10%	10%	10%
A little worse	25%	28%	22%	26%	29%	30%	32%	30%	29%	24%	25%
No change	40%	43%	33%	37%	34%	34%	33%	36%	36%	34%	39%
A little better	17%	20%	25%	21%	19%	19%	18%	16%	21%	25%	21%
A lot better	4%	1%	9%	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	6%	5%
Don't know	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	36%	32%	36%	41%	42%	44%	42%	39%	33%	34%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	21%	34%	26%	24%	23%	23%	20%	25%	32%	25%

Cost of living	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	70%	59%	53%	58%	62%	64%	67%	63%	59%	64%	66%
A little worse	28%	32%	24%	27%	25%	23%	22%	25%	23%	22%	25%
No change	0%	5%	9%	7%	6%	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%	4%
A little better	2%	4%	9%	6%	4%	6%	5%	4%	10%	4%	3%
A lot better	1%	1%	5%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	97%	91%	77%	84%	86%	86%	88%	88%	81%	87%	91%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	2%	5%	14%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%	13%	7%	5%

Electricity costs	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	71%	57%	41%	53%	47%	44%	59%	51%	45%	52%	55%
A little worse	24%	33%	32%	28%	35%	37%	27%	33%	32%	34%	34%
No change	3%	6%	11%	9%	10%	11%	6%	8%	12%	7%	5%
A little better	1%	4%	10%	8%	6%	5%	5%	4%	8%	5%	4%
A lot better	2%	0%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	1%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	95%	90%	73%	81%	82%	81%	86%	85%	76%	86%	89%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	2%	4%	15%	10%	9%	7%	8%	8%	11%	7%	6%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in NSW/ACT										
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
n=	273	287	724	718	704	709	710	721	696	379	366
A lot worse	6%	2%	4%	5%	4%	6%	7%	5%	6%	3%	5%
A little worse	8%	8%	11%	16%	12%	11%	10%	9%	8%	10%	11%
No change	20%	22%	30%	25%	28%	25%	22%	23%	24%	31%	28%
A little better	28%	32%	29%	27%	29%	27%	30%	28%	29%	24%	32%
A lot better	34%	32%	22%	23%	24%	27%	29%	32%	31%	26%	20%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	5%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	15%	11%	15%	21%	16%	17%	17%	14%	13%	13%	16%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	62%	64%	51%	51%	53%	54%	58%	60%	60%	51%	53%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Location (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	14%	15%	14%	14%	11%	18%	19%	12%	16%	10%	12%
A little worse	35%	37%	37%	34%	37%	29%	30%	39%	33%	35%	34%
No change	27%	27%	24%	28%	29%	26%	31%	29%	28%	27%	34%
A little better	18%	16%	18%	16%	14%	18%	15%	17%	14%	19%	14%
A lot better	3%	2%	4%	4%	6%	4%	1%	2%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%	4%	2%	5%	4%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	49%	52%	52%	47%	49%	47%	49%	51%	50%	45%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	18%	22%	20%	19%	22%	16%	19%	18%	23%	17%

Unemployment	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	13%	14%	12%	11%	14%	11%	10%	12%	11%	10%	19%
A little worse	27%	25%	27%	31%	28%	14%	24%	27%	27%	25%	24%
No change	25%	32%	29%	30%	33%	24%	26%	22%	27%	30%	30%
A little better	27%	23%	27%	21%	21%	33%	30%	30%	27%	24%	24%
A lot better	7%	5%	3%	5%	4%	14%	8%	5%	6%	8%	4%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	38%	40%	41%	42%	24%	34%	40%	37%	35%	42%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	34%	28%	29%	26%	25%	47%	38%	35%	33%	32%	28%

The economy overall	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	34%	40%	39%	32%	30%	25%	34%	25%	34%	28%	32%
A little worse	39%	36%	37%	42%	38%	37%	44%	43%	40%	40%	40%
No change	14%	12%	9%	12%	18%	13%	10%	18%	13%	13%	18%
A little better	11%	10%	13%	9%	12%	17%	9%	11%	10%	16%	8%
A lot better	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	5%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%

Don't know	1%	0%	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	72%	76%	76%	73%	68%	62%	78%	69%	75%	68%	72%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	13%	12%	14%	12%	14%	22%	10%	12%	11%	18%	9%

Wages	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	15%	19%	15%	15%	14%	13%	19%	19%	18%	14%	18%
A little worse	26%	26%	29%	28%	29%	23%	25%	27%	24%	29%	25%
No change	35%	36%	26%	32%	35%	33%	32%	31%	37%	31%	33%
A little better	21%	17%	28%	20%	18%	24%	22%	21%	18%	23%	23%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	4%	5%	5%	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	41%	45%	44%	43%	43%	36%	44%	45%	42%	43%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	19%	30%	23%	23%	29%	24%	23%	20%	26%	24%

National debt	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	33%	36%	31%	30%	28%	34%	37%	31%	37%	21%	32%
A little worse	32%	36%	35%	32%	31%	33%	34%	34%	31%	32%	29%
No change	22%	17%	14%	22%	23%	16%	19%	22%	18%	29%	24%
A little better	7%	7%	15%	9%	13%	8%	7%	6%	7%	13%	11%
A lot better	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	1%	2%
Don't know	6%	3%	3%	4%	2%	7%	2%	5%	3%	4%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	65%	72%	66%	62%	59%	67%	71%	64%	68%	52%	61%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	8%	18%	13%	16%	11%	9%	9%	11%	15%	14%

Job security overall	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	11%	13%	10%	13%	10%	14%	10%	13%	12%	8%	16%
A little worse	32%	29%	34%	29%	37%	21%	28%	25%	32%	27%	26%
No change	30%	38%	33%	38%	35%	30%	31%	37%	32%	39%	38%
A little better	20%	17%	19%	14%	15%	26%	26%	20%	17%	21%	15%
A lot better	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%	5%	5%	4%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	44%	42%	44%	42%	46%	35%	38%	38%	44%	34%	42%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	19%	22%	19%	18%	32%	31%	23%	22%	25%	19%

Cost of living	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	67%	72%	67%	73%	70%	61%	69%	62%	70%	65%	71%
A little worse	26%	21%	23%	17%	19%	22%	22%	29%	23%	26%	20%
No change	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	6%	3%	4%	2%	3%	5%
A little better	4%	3%	5%	4%	4%	7%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%
A lot better	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	92%	93%	90%	90%	89%	82%	91%	91%	94%	91%	91%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	11%	6%	4%	4%	5%	4%

Electricity costs	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	49%	56%	56%	55%	53%	34%	49%	35%	44%	41%	47%
A little worse	37%	34%	31%	30%	32%	39%	37%	49%	39%	46%	39%
No change	9%	5%	7%	8%	8%	12%	8%	6%	11%	7%	10%
A little better	4%	3%	5%	6%	5%	8%	4%	8%	2%	4%	2%
A lot better	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	86%	91%	88%	84%	85%	73%	86%	84%	84%	87%	85%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	5%	4%	6%	7%	7%	12%	6%	9%	5%	6%	5%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in QLD					Workers in WA					
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	389	399	409	411	393	180	183	194	189	209	213
A lot worse	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	8%	4%	3%	5%	6%	9%
A little worse	14%	13%	13%	10%	8%	12%	11%	13%	7%	9%	6%
No change	27%	24%	24%	23%	21%	28%	32%	32%	25%	23%	24%
A little better	30%	27%	31%	27%	24%	23%	26%	27%	29%	28%	24%
A lot better	20%	28%	24%	31%	38%	23%	22%	22%	30%	29%	35%
Don't know	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	6%	4%	4%	4%	5%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	19%	18%	19%	16%	14%	19%	15%	16%	12%	15%	15%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	51%	55%	54%	58%	63%	46%	49%	49%	59%	57%	59%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	14%	17%	15%	15%	15%	14%	14%	12%	12%	16%	10%
A little worse	31%	33%	32%	35%	33%	36%	35%	35%	30%	31%	36%
No change	27%	23%	28%	25%	25%	27%	28%	29%	32%	28%	30%
A little better	18%	17%	16%	16%	16%	14%	17%	15%	17%	15%	18%
A lot better	7%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%	6%	3%	8%	2%
Don't know	3%	5%	4%	5%	6%	4%	3%	4%	6%	2%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	46%	51%	47%	50%	49%	50%	49%	47%	41%	47%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	25%	21%	21%	20%	20%	19%	20%	20%	20%	23%	20%

Unemployment	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	9%	13%	13%	12%	13%	12%	12%	14%	18%	16%	12%
A little worse	30%	19%	25%	29%	27%	27%	32%	29%	27%	32%	27%
No change	31%	20%	26%	24%	27%	33%	30%	32%	27%	24%	34%
A little better	23%	32%	25%	25%	24%	22%	20%	22%	21%	20%	22%
A lot better	6%	14%	9%	7%	7%	5%	3%	2%	6%	6%	3%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	32%	38%	41%	40%	38%	43%	43%	45%	48%	39%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	29%	46%	34%	32%	31%	27%	24%	24%	27%	26%	25%

The economy overall	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	27%	31%	35%	38%	40%	38%	33%	29%	24%	32%	27%
A little worse	36%	37%	40%	35%	37%	37%	43%	37%	40%	40%	46%
No change	14%	15%	12%	11%	11%	14%	13%	14%	17%	15%	15%
A little better	18%	13%	10%	12%	9%	8%	9%	16%	12%	10%	10%
A lot better	4%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%

Don't know	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	4%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	62%	68%	75%	73%	77%	75%	76%	66%	64%	72%	72%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	22%	16%	12%	14%	11%	11%	11%	19%	15%	12%	13%

Wages	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	18%	17%	17%	19%	19%	14%	15%	16%	13%	17%	20%
A little worse	25%	26%	28%	26%	29%	27%	29%	28%	27%	24%	26%
No change	30%	33%	36%	34%	34%	34%	35%	31%	31%	39%	37%
A little better	21%	20%	15%	17%	16%	23%	19%	22%	26%	15%	16%
A lot better	5%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	6%	1%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	43%	44%	46%	45%	48%	40%	44%	44%	40%	41%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	26%	23%	17%	20%	17%	25%	20%	24%	27%	20%	17%

National debt	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	24%	41%	45%	37%	41%	35%	37%	31%	23%	39%	32%
A little worse	27%	30%	30%	34%	32%	36%	32%	33%	40%	28%	31%
No change	24%	15%	15%	15%	17%	15%	18%	19%	21%	19%	23%
A little better	15%	7%	5%	8%	5%	9%	8%	12%	8%	8%	9%
A lot better	6%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	5%	3%
Don't know	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	2%	4%	3%	6%	2%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	50%	72%	75%	71%	72%	71%	69%	65%	63%	66%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	10%	7%	10%	7%	12%	10%	14%	10%	13%	12%

Job security overall	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	12%	10%	14%	10%	13%	12%	13%	12%	10%	12%	7%
A little worse	25%	27%	24%	34%	30%	32%	33%	32%	30%	26%	31%
No change	40%	31%	32%	32%	33%	39%	34%	35%	34%	38%	42%
A little better	18%	25%	22%	18%	18%	13%	15%	18%	19%	19%	15%
A lot better	5%	5%	6%	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%	4%	3%	4%
Don't know	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	36%	37%	38%	44%	43%	44%	46%	44%	41%	38%	38%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	30%	28%	22%	22%	17%	18%	20%	23%	22%	19%

Cost of living	Workers in VIC/TAS										
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	66%	61%	64%	67%	72%	68%	72%	63%	68%	63%	63%
A little worse	21%	25%	24%	22%	18%	23%	19%	25%	23%	22%	25%
No change	3%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	3%	4%	4%
A little better	9%	7%	4%	4%	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%	6%	4%
A lot better	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	5%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	87%	86%	89%	89%	91%	91%	91%	88%	91%	85%	89%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	9%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	7%	6%	11%	6%

Electricity costs	Workers in VIC/TAS								Workers in WA		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	41%	49%	57%	49%	53%	61%	59%	47%	42%	49%	50%
A little worse	36%	34%	30%	38%	34%	27%	28%	36%	40%	33%	35%
No change	13%	8%	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%	10%	12%	8%	8%
A little better	6%	7%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	7%	5%
A lot better	4%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	77%	83%	87%	87%	87%	88%	87%	83%	82%	82%	85%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	9%	7%	5%	6%	5%	6%	7%	6%	9%	7%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in VIC/TAS								Workers in WA		
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
n=	223	520	556	571	578	572	588	662	145	145	158
A lot worse	3%	7%	5%	7%	5%	6%	6%	5%	1%	5%	7%
A little worse	7%	11%	13%	13%	11%	13%	10%	8%	13%	11%	12%
No change	19%	26%	30%	23%	24%	26%	24%	25%	30%	37%	31%
A little better	30%	29%	26%	27%	28%	26%	25%	30%	27%	27%	22%
A lot better	39%	22%	22%	25%	28%	26%	32%	30%	22%	17%	23%
Don't know	3%	6%	4%	5%	5%	3%	2%	3%	7%	3%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	10%	18%	18%	20%	16%	19%	16%	13%	14%	16%	19%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	69%	51%	48%	52%	56%	52%	58%	59%	49%	44%	45%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	11%	12%	19%	12%	15%	17%	12%	17%	16%	15%	14%
A little worse	33%	36%	29%	32%	29%	32%	34%	30%	35%	33%	34%
No change	28%	30%	26%	26%	28%	29%	29%	26%	26%	31%	28%
A little better	19%	13%	15%	17%	18%	16%	17%	15%	16%	11%	15%
A lot better	5%	3%	8%	6%	4%	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Don't know	5%	5%	4%	7%	7%	4%	6%	9%	4%	5%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	44%	48%	48%	44%	43%	48%	46%	48%	50%	48%	49%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	17%	23%	23%	22%	19%	19%	17%	20%	15%	20%

Unemployment	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	15%	12%	13%	13%	15%	17%	17%	16%	13%	14%	18%
A little worse	22%	22%	33%	29%	20%	27%	27%	31%	29%	31%	30%
No change	28%	34%	24%	30%	23%	25%	28%	24%	28%	29%	33%
A little better	27%	24%	21%	23%	30%	24%	21%	21%	23%	19%	16%
A lot better	6%	5%	6%	3%	9%	7%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	4%	3%	3%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	37%	34%	46%	42%	35%	43%	44%	47%	42%	45%	47%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	33%	28%	27%	26%	39%	30%	24%	26%	27%	23%	19%

The economy overall	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	35%	28%	36%	24%	30%	35%	30%	40%	38%	39%	35%
A little worse	37%	42%	34%	41%	37%	38%	41%	34%	36%	35%	32%
No change	14%	13%	11%	14%	16%	12%	14%	11%	13%	14%	15%
A little better	11%	15%	14%	17%	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%	11%	14%
A lot better	1%	2%	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%

Don't know	2%	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	72%	71%	69%	65%	67%	74%	71%	73%	74%	74%	67%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	17%	18%	20%	15%	13%	12%	15%	13%	11%	17%

Wages	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	20%	13%	19%	17%	15%	18%	15%	16%	15%	18%	18%
A little worse	21%	26%	29%	27%	24%	26%	27%	24%	25%	24%	23%
No change	35%	34%	24%	31%	31%	36%	36%	40%	29%	34%	35%
A little better	21%	23%	20%	18%	23%	17%	18%	16%	27%	20%	21%
A lot better	1%	4%	6%	6%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Don't know	3%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	41%	38%	49%	44%	40%	43%	42%	41%	40%	41%	41%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	22%	27%	26%	24%	26%	20%	20%	18%	29%	23%	23%

National debt	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	32%	22%	36%	21%	34%	39%	31%	37%	29%	35%	28%
A little worse	34%	32%	30%	37%	30%	31%	36%	27%	34%	31%	32%
No change	16%	26%	16%	20%	19%	17%	19%	20%	19%	20%	23%
A little better	9%	12%	9%	9%	10%	8%	8%	8%	11%	8%	10%
A lot better	1%	1%	3%	7%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	2%	3%
Don't know	8%	7%	6%	6%	5%	3%	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	54%	66%	58%	64%	70%	67%	64%	63%	66%	60%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	13%	12%	16%	12%	10%	9%	11%	14%	10%	13%

Job security overall	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	12%	12%	17%	7%	13%	16%	13%	16%	16%	16%	15%
A little worse	27%	25%	33%	34%	29%	26%	32%	32%	30%	32%	32%
No change	37%	37%	28%	38%	29%	35%	35%	32%	35%	33%	36%
A little better	18%	21%	17%	15%	22%	19%	16%	13%	14%	14%	14%
A lot better	2%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%	2%
Don't know	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	37%	49%	42%	42%	43%	45%	48%	45%	48%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	20%	23%	21%	17%	26%	22%	18%	16%	18%	17%	16%

Cost of living	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	69%	64%	70%	68%	60%	64%	65%	71%	68%	72%	63%
A little worse	24%	24%	19%	22%	24%	25%	27%	20%	24%	20%	24%
No change	3%	2%	6%	4%	7%	4%	4%	3%	4%	5%	6%
A little better	4%	7%	3%	6%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	6%
A lot better	1%	4%	3%	1%	2%	3%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	93%	87%	89%	90%	85%	89%	92%	91%	91%	92%	87%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	4%	11%	5%	7%	8%	7%	3%	6%	5%	4%	7%

Electricity costs	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	46%	56%	65%	52%	44%	52%	44%	49%	58%	55%	48%
A little worse	39%	29%	23%	34%	37%	33%	40%	36%	29%	31%	34%
No change	9%	8%	4%	7%	8%	8%	11%	8%	7%	8%	12%
A little better	3%	5%	6%	4%	7%	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%
A lot better	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	85%	85%	88%	86%	82%	85%	84%	85%	88%	86%	82%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	6%	7%	8%	7%	9%	6%	5%	6%	5%	7%	5%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in SA/NT				Workers with income below \$52k						
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	161	149	160	164	477	445	489	483	449	446	448
A lot worse	8%	3%	7%	7%	5%	6%	6%	8%	8%	7%	7%
A little worse	8%	9%	8%	7%	16%	12%	13%	9%	12%	8%	7%
No change	27%	28%	23%	18%	29%	30%	30%	24%	27%	25%	26%
A little better	25%	30%	26%	29%	24%	27%	26%	27%	24%	27%	27%
A lot better	27%	25%	33%	34%	20%	22%	19%	26%	25%	30%	30%
Don't know	6%	5%	4%	5%	6%	4%	5%	7%	5%	3%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	15%	13%	15%	15%	21%	18%	19%	17%	20%	15%	15%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	52%	55%	58%	63%	44%	48%	45%	53%	49%	57%	56%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months
Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Personal annual pre-tax income (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100
See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.
Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	13%	15%	14%	14%	12%	14%	14%	13%	13%	12%	11%
A little worse	32%	33%	34%	35%	36%	34%	33%	26%	31%	36%	35%
No change	27%	28%	26%	25%	29%	27%	29%	27%	31%	29%	28%
A little better	19%	16%	18%	18%	15%	17%	15%	23%	18%	16%	17%
A lot better	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	6%	8%	5%	5%	6%
Don't know	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	45%	48%	48%	49%	48%	48%	47%	39%	44%	48%	46%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	20%	21%	22%	20%	22%	21%	31%	23%	22%	23%

Unemployment	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	10%	12%	13%	13%	13%	13%	14%	7%	7%	8%	8%
A little worse	19%	25%	28%	26%	26%	30%	29%	16%	24%	26%	25%
No change	22%	26%	23%	29%	30%	31%	29%	21%	27%	29%	35%
A little better	34%	28%	27%	26%	24%	21%	22%	34%	30%	27%	24%
A lot better	12%	7%	6%	7%	4%	3%	3%	21%	12%	9%	7%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	30%	38%	41%	38%	39%	43%	44%	23%	30%	34%	33%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	47%	35%	34%	32%	28%	24%	25%	55%	42%	35%	31%

The economy overall	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	27%	34%	33%	37%	36%	33%	30%	22%	30%	32%	31%
A little worse	40%	40%	38%	39%	37%	42%	39%	34%	41%	37%	39%
No change	14%	13%	13%	11%	12%	12%	13%	16%	10%	13%	15%
A little better	15%	9%	13%	11%	12%	9%	14%	20%	15%	14%	12%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	8%	4%	4%	2%

Don't know	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	67%	74%	71%	75%	73%	75%	69%	56%	71%	70%	70%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	12%	15%	13%	14%	12%	17%	28%	19%	17%	14%

Wages	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	16%	19%	20%	19%	17%	16%	15%	14%	15%	17%	17%
A little worse	25%	27%	27%	27%	27%	29%	29%	24%	27%	26%	27%
No change	33%	35%	33%	35%	31%	32%	31%	31%	33%	32%	35%
A little better	23%	15%	17%	16%	23%	19%	20%	24%	20%	21%	19%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%	2%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	41%	47%	46%	46%	44%	46%	44%	37%	42%	43%	44%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	26%	17%	20%	18%	25%	22%	24%	31%	25%	24%	21%

National debt	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	38%	41%	35%	34%	30%	33%	30%	36%	39%	34%	36%
A little worse	29%	31%	32%	36%	32%	30%	30%	30%	30%	33%	34%
No change	18%	17%	18%	18%	18%	20%	22%	15%	16%	19%	17%
A little better	8%	7%	8%	7%	13%	9%	11%	11%	10%	10%	9%
A lot better	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%	4%	3%	2%
Don't know	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	67%	72%	67%	70%	63%	63%	60%	65%	69%	67%	70%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	9%	11%	9%	15%	13%	15%	17%	14%	13%	12%

Job security overall	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	10%	11%	12%	11%	11%	14%	11%	8%	7%	8%	12%
A little worse	23%	29%	30%	31%	32%	30%	33%	21%	20%	30%	26%
No change	34%	33%	33%	33%	35%	35%	35%	33%	39%	35%	38%
A little better	25%	22%	19%	19%	18%	17%	17%	27%	25%	19%	20%
A lot better	7%	5%	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	11%	8%	8%	4%
Don't know	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	33%	39%	42%	42%	42%	44%	44%	29%	27%	38%	38%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	31%	27%	23%	24%	22%	20%	20%	37%	33%	26%	24%

Cost of living	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	62%	65%	66%	70%	71%	71%	66%	52%	58%	60%	64%
A little worse	23%	24%	22%	21%	20%	19%	22%	25%	27%	28%	23%
No change	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	4%	6%
A little better	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	10%	6%	4%	5%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%	6%	4%	4%	1%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	85%	88%	88%	91%	90%	91%	88%	77%	84%	87%	87%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	9%	6%	7%	5%	6%	5%	7%	16%	10%	8%	7%

Electricity costs	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	46%	54%	48%	49%	57%	56%	49%	42%	53%	47%	49%
A little worse	34%	32%	37%	37%	31%	30%	33%	31%	28%	35%	34%
No change	9%	6%	7%	9%	6%	7%	10%	11%	9%	8%	8%
A little better	8%	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%	5%	9%	7%	6%	5%
A lot better	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	7%	3%	3%	2%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	80%	86%	85%	86%	88%	86%	82%	74%	81%	82%	83%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	8%	7%	5%	6%	6%	8%	15%	10%	9%	7%

Company profits for large companies	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k							Workers with income			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
n=	792	787	886	875	916	871	888	544	597	523	557
A lot worse	5%	5%	5%	5%	7%	6%	6%	4%	5%	4%	5%
A little worse	10%	14%	12%	10%	10%	8%	8%	10%	14%	13%	13%
No change	28%	29%	24%	24%	21%	24%	21%	30%	27%	29%	28%
A little better	30%	28%	28%	28%	32%	26%	26%	27%	29%	30%	27%
A lot better	22%	20%	27%	31%	27%	34%	35%	26%	24%	22%	26%
Don't know	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	14%	19%	17%	15%	16%	15%	14%	14%	18%	17%	18%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	52%	49%	55%	58%	59%	60%	62%	53%	53%	52%	54%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	12%	11%	9%	13%	13%	11%	15%	14%	15%	7%	15%
A little worse	36%	33%	33%	34%	38%	34%	31%	36%	38%	39%	27%
No change	25%	30%	28%	27%	28%	25%	26%	26%	24%	28%	29%
A little better	18%	17%	20%	10%	14%	17%	15%	14%	9%	15%	18%
A lot better	6%	6%	7%	5%	1%	2%	4%	5%	4%	3%	5%
Don't know	3%	2%	3%	10%	6%	12%	8%	7%	10%	9%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	48%	44%	42%	47%	51%	45%	46%	50%	53%	46%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	23%	27%	16%	15%	19%	19%	18%	13%	17%	23%

Unemployment	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	7%	8%	6%	11%	11%	6%	11%	17%	16%	7%	12%
A little worse	26%	28%	30%	18%	23%	31%	26%	28%	36%	32%	18%
No change	31%	32%	35%	24%	32%	26%	26%	32%	23%	33%	23%
A little better	27%	24%	22%	31%	26%	25%	26%	19%	18%	22%	31%
A lot better	9%	6%	5%	10%	7%	5%	6%	4%	2%	2%	14%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	6%	2%	6%	6%	2%	5%	4%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	33%	37%	36%	29%	34%	37%	36%	44%	52%	39%	30%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	36%	30%	28%	42%	32%	31%	32%	23%	21%	24%	45%

The economy overall	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	28%	27%	19%	33%	34%	35%	39%	29%	35%	24%	28%
A little worse	42%	40%	39%	35%	44%	42%	35%	46%	47%	40%	37%
No change	11%	16%	16%	16%	12%	10%	15%	14%	11%	19%	15%
A little better	14%	12%	21%	11%	7%	9%	7%	11%	5%	13%	15%
A lot better	4%	4%	4%	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	3%	4%

Don't know	1%	1%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	0%	1%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	70%	67%	58%	67%	78%	77%	74%	75%	82%	64%	65%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	16%	25%	13%	7%	9%	9%	11%	6%	16%	19%

Wages	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	10%	14%	12%	16%	18%	15%	19%	16%	24%	14%	15%
A little worse	29%	28%	27%	31%	29%	28%	28%	28%	23%	31%	23%
No change	31%	34%	31%	33%	37%	36%	33%	34%	31%	36%	31%
A little better	27%	21%	25%	16%	14%	14%	17%	22%	16%	17%	26%
A lot better	4%	3%	4%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	4%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	6%	3%	0%	3%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	42%	39%	47%	47%	43%	47%	44%	48%	45%	38%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	31%	24%	30%	17%	14%	15%	17%	23%	19%	17%	30%

National debt	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	26%	27%	20%	36%	46%	36%	38%	35%	37%	22%	35%
A little worse	34%	33%	32%	32%	35%	30%	28%	27%	28%	37%	28%
No change	20%	22%	25%	17%	12%	20%	20%	20%	18%	23%	19%
A little better	15%	12%	16%	5%	3%	6%	7%	10%	6%	10%	10%
A lot better	4%	4%	5%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Don't know	2%	3%	3%	7%	4%	8%	5%	8%	10%	8%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	60%	61%	51%	68%	81%	65%	66%	62%	65%	58%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	19%	15%	21%	7%	4%	7%	9%	11%	6%	11%	13%

Job security overall	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	8%	12%	7%	11%	15%	7%	14%	10%	14%	8%	11%
A little worse	32%	29%	29%	24%	27%	34%	30%	34%	30%	35%	24%
No change	35%	38%	36%	33%	42%	26%	35%	41%	36%	41%	31%
A little better	20%	15%	23%	22%	12%	26%	13%	13%	15%	12%	25%
A lot better	5%	5%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	1%	7%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	4%	1%	3%	4%	1%	3%	4%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	40%	41%	36%	36%	42%	41%	44%	44%	44%	43%	35%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	25%	21%	28%	27%	15%	30%	17%	15%	17%	13%	33%

Cost of living	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	60%	62%	59%	67%	68%	69%	69%	69%	75%	70%	58%
A little worse	27%	23%	22%	22%	23%	23%	23%	24%	18%	22%	25%
No change	4%	6%	5%	5%	7%	4%	3%	5%	3%	6%	7%
A little better	6%	5%	11%	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%	4%	2%	7%
A lot better	3%	3%	3%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	87%	86%	81%	88%	91%	92%	92%	93%	93%	92%	83%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	9%	9%	13%	6%	1%	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	10%

Electricity costs	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	53%	51%	43%	50%	58%	52%	57%	66%	60%	55%	44%
A little worse	30%	32%	34%	34%	32%	40%	32%	26%	31%	36%	34%
No change	8%	8%	11%	9%	6%	4%	7%	5%	6%	7%	10%
A little better	7%	5%	9%	4%	4%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	8%
A lot better	2%	3%	4%	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	83%	84%	77%	84%	89%	92%	89%	92%	91%	90%	79%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	9%	9%	13%	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	11%

Company profits for large companies	\$104k+			Workers preferring not to say income							
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	551	635	687	135	139	118	121	133	141	115	970
A lot worse	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%	7%	4%
A little worse	14%	11%	8%	10%	12%	10%	12%	8%	11%	5%	11%
No change	26%	24%	22%	29%	32%	30%	24%	26%	16%	25%	30%
A little better	27%	27%	33%	20%	22%	21%	25%	29%	26%	26%	26%
A lot better	27%	32%	32%	26%	24%	25%	26%	26%	33%	34%	24%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	12%	5%	9%	8%	7%	7%	3%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	19%	16%	11%	13%	17%	16%	17%	13%	18%	12%	15%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	54%	59%	64%	46%	45%	46%	50%	54%	59%	60%	50%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Industry type (workers)

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	16%	13%	14%	12%	14%	12%	12%	13%	12%	14%	13%
A little worse	34%	35%	35%	37%	34%	35%	32%	31%	34%	33%	34%
No change	28%	27%	27%	26%	28%	27%	26%	30%	28%	26%	28%
A little better	14%	17%	16%	16%	15%	16%	20%	18%	18%	18%	16%
A lot better	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	4%	3%	4%	5%
Don't know	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%	5%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	50%	48%	49%	50%	49%	47%	44%	45%	47%	47%	47%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	19%	20%	20%	20%	19%	22%	26%	22%	22%	22%	22%

Unemployment	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	13%	14%	14%	10%	14%	13%	10%	10%	11%	11%	13%
A little worse	25%	27%	28%	29%	31%	31%	19%	25%	28%	26%	25%
No change	26%	26%	29%	29%	30%	32%	21%	27%	27%	29%	31%
A little better	27%	25%	23%	24%	20%	20%	34%	28%	26%	25%	24%
A lot better	8%	5%	4%	5%	3%	3%	14%	9%	7%	8%	6%
Don't know	1%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	38%	41%	41%	40%	45%	44%	28%	35%	39%	37%	37%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	35%	30%	28%	29%	23%	23%	49%	36%	33%	33%	30%

The economy overall	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	33%	32%	37%	34%	36%	30%	26%	33%	33%	35%	33%
A little worse	40%	41%	38%	38%	38%	37%	37%	40%	37%	37%	40%
No change	12%	13%	11%	13%	14%	14%	16%	11%	14%	13%	11%
A little better	10%	12%	10%	11%	9%	15%	15%	12%	13%	13%	13%
A lot better	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	5%	3%	2%	2%	3%

Don't know	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	74%	72%	75%	72%	74%	67%	63%	73%	70%	72%	73%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	13%	14%	12%	13%	12%	18%	20%	15%	15%	14%	16%

Wages	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	16%	18%	18%	13%	19%	16%	16%	19%	17%	17%	16%
A little worse	28%	27%	27%	26%	27%	28%	27%	26%	27%	26%	28%
No change	36%	33%	36%	32%	31%	32%	32%	34%	34%	36%	29%
A little better	17%	18%	16%	26%	19%	20%	20%	17%	18%	18%	24%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	44%	45%	45%	39%	46%	44%	42%	45%	44%	43%	44%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	20%	21%	17%	29%	22%	23%	24%	20%	21%	20%	26%

National debt	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	40%	34%	34%	29%	32%	27%	37%	40%	34%	36%	29%
A little worse	30%	34%	33%	32%	33%	32%	31%	32%	32%	33%	33%
No change	17%	18%	19%	20%	20%	21%	16%	16%	19%	17%	18%
A little better	7%	8%	7%	11%	10%	12%	9%	8%	9%	9%	14%
A lot better	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Don't know	3%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	70%	68%	67%	62%	65%	59%	69%	72%	66%	69%	62%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	10%	9%	14%	11%	15%	12%	11%	12%	11%	17%

Job security overall	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	13%	12%	15%	10%	15%	11%	10%	10%	10%	11%	12%
A little worse	26%	30%	31%	32%	31%	33%	24%	25%	31%	29%	31%
No change	35%	33%	34%	36%	34%	36%	33%	36%	34%	35%	35%
A little better	21%	19%	15%	17%	15%	16%	24%	22%	18%	20%	18%
A lot better	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	7%	6%	5%	4%	4%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	38%	42%	46%	42%	46%	45%	34%	35%	42%	40%	43%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	26%	23%	18%	21%	19%	19%	30%	28%	23%	24%	22%

Cost of living	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	63%	65%	70%	68%	71%	66%	60%	62%	64%	68%	66%
A little worse	25%	26%	21%	24%	19%	22%	22%	25%	24%	22%	22%
No change	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%
A little better	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%	7%	4%	5%	5%	4%
A lot better	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	87%	91%	91%	91%	90%	88%	83%	88%	87%	89%	88%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	5%	5%	5%	5%	8%	11%	7%	7%	6%	7%

Electricity costs	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	54%	47%	47%	57%	54%	50%	46%	53%	47%	52%	56%
A little worse	30%	39%	39%	30%	32%	32%	34%	32%	36%	33%	30%
No change	7%	8%	8%	7%	8%	10%	9%	7%	8%	9%	7%
A little better	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	8%	5%	6%	4%	5%
A lot better	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	84%	85%	86%	87%	86%	82%	79%	85%	83%	85%	86%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	8%	5%	6%	6%	6%	8%	11%	7%	8%	6%	7%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in award reliant industries						Workers not in award reliant industries				
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
n=	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005	978	1,036	1,057	1,088	1,095
A lot worse	5%	4%	6%	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%	6%	5%	7%
A little worse	13%	14%	11%	11%	8%	8%	12%	14%	12%	10%	12%
No change	28%	27%	25%	25%	22%	23%	28%	29%	27%	24%	24%
A little better	28%	28%	26%	29%	27%	26%	28%	28%	28%	28%	28%
A lot better	22%	23%	28%	27%	33%	34%	22%	21%	24%	28%	27%
Don't know	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%	5%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	17%	18%	18%	16%	14%	14%	17%	19%	17%	15%	19%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	50%	50%	54%	56%	60%	60%	50%	49%	53%	56%	55%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Changes in last twelve months

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Changes in last twelve months

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	13%	12%
A little worse	33%	32%
No change	30%	30%
A little better	15%	17%
A lot better	6%	6%
Don't know	3%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	46%	44%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	23%

Unemployment		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	10%	11%
A little worse	29%	29%
No change	31%	32%
A little better	23%	22%
A lot better	5%	4%
Don't know	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	39%	40%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	28%	26%

The economy overall		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	29%	25%
A little worse	43%	38%
No change	14%	16%
A little better	11%	17%
A lot better	3%	3%

Don't know	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	72%	62%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	14%	21%

Wages		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	14%	14%
A little worse	28%	27%
No change	35%	32%
A little better	20%	23%
A lot better	3%	3%
Don't know	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	42%	40%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	27%

National debt		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	32%	25%
A little worse	29%	30%
No change	22%	24%
A little better	10%	13%
A lot better	4%	4%
Don't know	4%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	61%	55%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	14%	17%

Job security overall		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	12%	9%
A little worse	30%	30%
No change	37%	36%
A little better	16%	20%
A lot better	4%	4%
Don't know	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	42%	39%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	20%	24%

Cost of living		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	67%	61%
A little worse	22%	23%
No change	4%	6%
A little better	4%	8%
A lot better	3%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	89%	84%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	10%

Electricity costs		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	55%	45%
A little worse	30%	35%
No change	7%	10%
A little better	5%	6%
A lot better	3%	3%
Don't know	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	85%	80%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	9%

Company profits for large companies		
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,068	1,133
A lot worse	6%	6%
A little worse	10%	7%
No change	25%	22%
A little better	26%	30%
A lot better	32%	32%
Don't know	2%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	16%	13%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	57%	62%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Total

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100%, due to rounding and some categories being hidden. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your household will be able to afford the following costs with
 Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	2,994	2,995	3,008	2,998
Strongly disagree	7%	10%	9%	11%
Disagree	20%	22%	23%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	16%	16%
Agree	43%	40%	42%	39%
Strongly agree	13%	10%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	33%	32%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	51%	52%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	2,983	2,988	2,999	2,992
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	10%	12%

Disagree	22%	26%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	18%	17%	16%
Agree	40%	35%	39%	37%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	38%	35%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	44%	47%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	2,569	2,586	2,577	2,598
Strongly disagree	11%	14%	15%	19%
Disagree	22%	25%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	22%	21%	19%
Agree	35%	30%	33%	30%
Strongly agree	10%	9%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	39%	40%	43%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	39%	40%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.8

Fuel and transport	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	2,942	2,964	2,969	2,960
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	9%	10%
Disagree	23%	25%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	18%	19%	17%
Agree	38%	36%	39%	38%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	37%	34%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	45%	48%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	2,950	2,949	2,974	2,974
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	11%	12%
Disagree	20%	23%	24%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	24%	21%	21%
Agree	38%	34%	35%	33%
Strongly agree	11%	8%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	34%	35%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	43%	43%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	2,545	2,613	2,591	2,624
Strongly disagree	7%	10%	8%	10%
Disagree	17%	19%	21%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	29%	26%	26%
Agree	38%	33%	36%	34%
Strongly agree	12%	9%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	29%	29%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	43%	45%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.1

Childcare expenses	Total			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	1,731	1,837	1,724	1,794
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	9%	11%
Disagree	17%	18%	20%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	43%	45%	42%	47%
Agree	23%	21%	23%	19%
Strongly agree	9%	7%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	27%	29%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	28%	29%	25%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100% due to low sample.
 See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.
 Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your household without significant financial stress...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	3,001	2,993	2,999	1,051
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	9%	10%
Disagree	23%	22%	23%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	17%	16%	16%
Agree	42%	39%	41%	38%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	11%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	34%	33%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	49%	52%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	2,998	2,986	2,991	1,044
Strongly disagree	12%	13%	10%	13%

Disagree	25%	25%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	16%	19%
Agree	35%	36%	39%	35%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	38%	35%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	45%	49%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	2,595	2,595	2,615	739
Strongly disagree	15%	16%	16%	14%
Disagree	27%	24%	24%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	22%	20%	27%
Agree	28%	30%	30%	29%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	40%	40%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	36%	38%	39%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	2,958	2,964	2,968	1,013
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	8%	11%
Disagree	23%	25%	23%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	17%	18%	20%
Agree	40%	38%	41%	34%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	37%	32%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	46%	51%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	2,974	2,959	2,979	1,021
Strongly disagree	10%	12%	11%	10%
Disagree	25%	24%	25%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	21%	21%	24%
Agree	36%	35%	35%	34%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	36%	36%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	43%	44%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	2,605	2,602	2,633	786
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	8%	9%
Disagree	20%	19%	20%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	27%	26%	32%
Agree	34%	35%	36%	31%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	30%	28%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	43%	46%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1

Childcare expenses

	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	1,760	1,755	1,761	392
Strongly disagree	8%	11%	10%	13%
Disagree	18%	17%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	45%	45%	45%	50%
Agree	22%	21%	21%	13%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	27%	28%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	29%	28%	27%	18%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.8

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Not currently working			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	1,032	994	968	955
Strongly disagree	14%	13%	14%	14%
Disagree	27%	24%	26%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	18%	15%	16%
Agree	34%	36%	35%	35%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	37%	40%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	46%	45%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Not currently working			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	1,029	987	964	955
Strongly disagree	16%	13%	16%	17%

Disagree	29%	27%	26%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	16%	18%
Agree	29%	34%	33%	30%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	45%	40%	42%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	43%	42%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.8

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Not currently working			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	723	686	674	647
Strongly disagree	18%	20%	24%	20%
Disagree	26%	24%	22%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	22%	22%	25%
Agree	23%	27%	23%	23%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	44%	43%	46%	46%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	31%	34%	32%	29%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7

Fuel and transport	Not currently working			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	1,004	963	946	931
Strongly disagree	16%	12%	12%	13%
Disagree	28%	25%	29%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	18%	19%
Agree	30%	35%	33%	32%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	37%	41%	41%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	43%	42%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Not currently working			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	1,005	971	955	939
Strongly disagree	14%	14%	14%	13%
Disagree	27%	25%	28%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	22%	21%	22%
Agree	30%	30%	30%	30%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	39%	41%	41%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	39%	38%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

Not currently working

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	797	743	737	720
Strongly disagree	14%	10%	11%	13%
Disagree	21%	18%	21%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	30%	28%	30%
Agree	27%	31%	30%	30%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	28%	32%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	36%	42%	40%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0

Childcare expenses

Not currently working

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	424	352	376	363
Strongly disagree	12%	14%	13%	11%
Disagree	20%	19%	15%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	51%	49%	57%	53%
Agree	14%	14%	10%	16%
Strongly agree	4%	5%	5%	2%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	33%	29%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	18%	19%	14%	18%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Work status

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	905	866	1,943	1,963
Strongly disagree	15%	13%	6%	9%
Disagree	24%	25%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	15%	17%	17%
Agree	36%	38%	45%	44%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	14%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	38%	24%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	48%	59%	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	900	860	1,939	1,959
Strongly disagree	16%	13%	7%	10%

Disagree	26%	27%	20%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	13%	19%	19%
Agree	33%	38%	42%	38%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	12%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	40%	27%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	47%	54%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.3	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	620	582	1,830	1,863
Strongly disagree	20%	21%	9%	13%
Disagree	21%	24%	22%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	20%	22%	21%
Agree	28%	26%	37%	33%
Strongly agree	6%	9%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	45%	31%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	35%	48%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.0

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	887	843	1,929	1,960
Strongly disagree	14%	12%	7%	10%
Disagree	28%	25%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	15%	20%	18%
Agree	35%	39%	40%	39%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	37%	28%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	49%	52%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	881	849	1,929	1,944
Strongly disagree	13%	13%	7%	9%
Disagree	23%	25%	18%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	21%	23%	24%
Agree	33%	31%	40%	37%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	38%	25%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	41%	52%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	683	643	1,759	1,816
Strongly disagree	14%	10%	6%	8%
Disagree	21%	21%	16%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	28%	25%	28%
Agree	32%	31%	41%	36%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	13%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	31%	21%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	41%	54%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.2

Childcare expenses

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	334	322	1,339	1,413
Strongly disagree	14%	13%	7%	8%
Disagree	16%	17%	16%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	54%	52%	41%	43%
Agree	13%	15%	26%	24%
Strongly agree	4%	3%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	30%	23%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	17%	18%	36%	31%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	2,014	2,030	2,046	2,088
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	7%	10%
Disagree	23%	23%	21%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	17%	16%	17%
Agree	45%	41%	45%	41%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	32%	29%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	51%	56%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	2,012	2,028	2,043	2,086
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	10%	11%

Disagree	25%	24%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	18%	18%
Agree	41%	39%	38%	38%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	34%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	49%	47%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	1,891	1,924	1,948	1,975
Strongly disagree	13%	17%	14%	15%
Disagree	26%	26%	28%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	18%	21%	21%
Agree	35%	32%	30%	31%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	42%	42%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	40%	38%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9

Fuel and transport	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	2,006	2,014	2,027	2,077
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	7%	12%
Disagree	25%	24%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	18%	18%
Agree	41%	41%	44%	39%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	33%	29%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	50%	53%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	2,003	2,019	2,035	2,078
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	9%	11%
Disagree	24%	24%	23%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	22%	22%	21%
Agree	38%	34%	38%	35%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	36%	32%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	43%	46%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	1,848	1,887	1,885	1,919
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	8%	10%
Disagree	22%	21%	20%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	24%	27%	27%
Agree	38%	36%	35%	36%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	30%	28%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	45%	45%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1

Childcare expenses	All workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	1,372	1,418	1,397	1,421
Strongly disagree	8%	11%	8%	10%
Disagree	20%	17%	18%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	40%	45%	43%	43%
Agree	25%	21%	24%	23%
Strongly agree	7%	6%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	28%	26%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	27%	32%	30%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n=</i>	2,133	1,633	1,663	1,708
Strongly disagree	8%	5%	8%	7%
Disagree	23%	18%	20%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	18%	17%	15%
Agree	42%	46%	44%	46%
Strongly agree	11%	14%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	23%	28%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	60%	55%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n=</i>	2,131	1,630	1,660	1,706
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	10%	8%

Disagree	24%	19%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	19%	18%	18%
Agree	40%	43%	39%	41%
Strongly agree	10%	12%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	26%	34%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	56%	48%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n=</i>	2,033	1,550	1,590	1,616
Strongly disagree	15%	8%	13%	13%
Disagree	24%	21%	24%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	22%	20%	20%
Agree	32%	38%	33%	35%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	29%	37%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	49%	43%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.0

Fuel and transport	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n=</i>	2,125	1,620	1,662	1,700
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	10%	7%
Disagree	22%	20%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	20%	17%	19%
Agree	42%	41%	40%	41%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	27%	33%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	53%	50%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23

<i>n</i> =	2,130	1,621	1,650	1,699
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	9%	9%
Disagree	25%	17%	21%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	24%	24%	21%
Agree	36%	40%	38%	38%
Strongly agree	9%	12%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	24%	30%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	52%	46%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	1,990	1,490	1,537	1,578
Strongly disagree	7%	6%	8%	7%
Disagree	19%	15%	18%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	24%	28%	24%
Agree	37%	41%	37%	39%
Strongly agree	10%	14%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	21%	26%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	55%	46%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.2

Childcare expenses	Work			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	1,439	1,156	1,220	1,180
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	8%	7%
Disagree	18%	16%	18%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	43%	40%	42%	40%
Agree	23%	27%	25%	25%
Strongly agree	7%	10%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	23%	26%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	30%	37%	32%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Work securi

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,669	1,713	1,775	1,811
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	10%	7%
Disagree	23%	21%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	16%	17%	17%
Agree	41%	45%	42%	42%
Strongly agree	11%	11%	11%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	27%	31%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	56%	52%	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,671	1,712	1,776	1,810
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	11%	9%

Disagree	24%	24%	24%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	18%	18%	18%
Agree	39%	38%	39%	40%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	34%	34%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	48%	48%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,598	1,642	1,686	1,737
Strongly disagree	17%	13%	15%	15%
Disagree	25%	29%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	21%	20%	21%
Agree	32%	30%	32%	32%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	42%	40%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	38%	40%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0

Fuel and transport	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,658	1,699	1,768	1,806
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	11%	7%
Disagree	23%	20%	22%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	19%	18%	19%
Agree	41%	44%	40%	43%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	27%	34%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	54%	49%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24

<i>n</i> =	1,664	1,708	1,770	1,810
Strongly disagree	11%	9%	10%	10%
Disagree	24%	22%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	22%	20%	21%
Agree	35%	40%	36%	37%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	31%	35%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	48%	45%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,567	1,582	1,648	1,694
Strongly disagree	9%	8%	10%	7%
Disagree	21%	20%	18%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	27%	27%	26%
Agree	37%	36%	37%	38%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	9%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	27%	28%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	46%	46%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3

Childcare expenses	ers in secure work			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,195	1,198	1,244	1,257
Strongly disagree	11%	8%	9%	9%
Disagree	17%	18%	17%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	44%	42%	43%	43%
Agree	21%	25%	24%	23%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	25%	26%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	28%	33%	31%	30%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

ty (workers)

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	310	300	306	361
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	9%	10%
Disagree	18%	19%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	18%	16%	17%
Agree	43%	42%	40%	41%
Strongly agree	14%	10%	11%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	30%	33%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	57%	53%	51%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	309	299	306	357
Strongly disagree	10%	12%	12%	12%

Disagree	22%	22%	26%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	22%	16%	16%
Agree	35%	34%	39%	39%
Strongly agree	12%	9%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	34%	38%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	43%	46%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	280	273	275	326
Strongly disagree	13%	15%	14%	17%
Disagree	24%	23%	30%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	23%	20%	22%
Agree	34%	31%	30%	31%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	37%	44%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	39%	36%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	309	298	306	356
Strongly disagree	10%	15%	8%	9%
Disagree	23%	23%	30%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	13%	19%
Agree	35%	34%	42%	40%
Strongly agree	13%	8%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	38%	38%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	42%	49%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	308	294	304	355
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	12%	15%
Disagree	21%	25%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	27%	20%	23%
Agree	38%	30%	37%	32%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	8%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	34%	36%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	39%	44%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.1	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	269	279	270	320
Strongly disagree	7%	8%	9%	12%
Disagree	18%	20%	24%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	29%	26%	27%
Agree	38%	33%	35%	33%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	28%	33%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	43%	41%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.0

Childcare expenses	Workers in insecure			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	183	193	192	223
Strongly disagree	5%	10%	13%	10%
Disagree	19%	12%	15%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	44%	52%	41%	48%
Agree	22%	17%	24%	21%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	7%	3%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	22%	28%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	25%	31%	24%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	work			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	333	313	322	1,234
Strongly disagree	10%	13%	11%	5%
Disagree	25%	26%	24%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	12%	18%	16%	18%
Agree	44%	36%	38%	45%
Strongly agree	9%	6%	11%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	40%	35%	21%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	42%	49%	61%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	2.9	3.2	3.5

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	work			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	331	310	321	1,233
Strongly disagree	15%	15%	10%	7%

Disagree	25%	28%	28%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	19%	15%	19%
Agree	35%	34%	37%	44%
Strongly agree	8%	4%	10%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	43%	38%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	38%	47%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.8	3.1	3.4

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		work			
		Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>		306	289	296	1,193
Strongly disagree		17%	19%	16%	8%
Disagree		24%	25%	26%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree		23%	23%	19%	23%
Agree		30%	27%	30%	38%
Strongly agree		5%	6%	9%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		41%	44%	42%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		36%	33%	39%	50%
Mean score [1-5]		2.8	2.7	2.9	3.3

Fuel and transport		work			
		Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>		328	309	319	1,224
Strongly disagree		10%	15%	8%	7%
Disagree		26%	29%	26%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree		15%	18%	16%	20%
Agree		42%	34%	40%	42%
Strongly agree		7%	5%	10%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		36%	44%	34%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		49%	39%	50%	55%
Mean score [1-5]		3.1	2.9	3.2	3.4

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		work			
		Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	327	308	320	1,225
Strongly disagree	10%	14%	13%	7%
Disagree	31%	25%	28%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	24%	19%	24%
Agree	31%	32%	33%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	6%	8%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	38%	41%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	38%	40%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.4

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	: work			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	303	271	296	1,136
Strongly disagree	11%	13%	9%	5%
Disagree	22%	22%	24%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	29%	24%	24%
Agree	32%	30%	34%	41%
Strongly agree	8%	6%	10%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	35%	33%	20%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	37%	43%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.5

Childcare expenses	: work			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	199	177	182	894
Strongly disagree	8%	17%	15%	7%
Disagree	19%	15%	15%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	49%	48%	44%	38%
Agree	20%	16%	20%	28%
Strongly agree	5%	5%	7%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	32%	30%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	25%	21%	26%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.2

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Permanent FT paid workers			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	1,268	1,295	1,228	1,314
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	9%	7%
Disagree	19%	22%	22%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	15%	17%	16%
Agree	44%	45%	41%	46%
Strongly agree	12%	10%	11%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	29%	31%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	56%	52%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Permanent FT paid workers			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	1,265	1,293	1,232	1,314
Strongly disagree	9%	8%	9%	10%

Disagree	23%	24%	24%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	17%	17%
Agree	39%	42%	39%	39%
Strongly agree	10%	9%	10%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	32%	34%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	51%	49%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Permanent FT paid workers			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	1,227	1,246	1,192	1,270
Strongly disagree	12%	13%	17%	13%
Disagree	24%	26%	26%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	19%	16%	19%
Agree	33%	36%	32%	30%
Strongly agree	10%	7%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	38%	43%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	43%	41%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9

Fuel and transport	Permanent FT paid workers			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	1,267	1,288	1,223	1,303
Strongly disagree	10%	8%	8%	7%
Disagree	22%	23%	23%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	19%	18%	19%
Agree	40%	42%	41%	44%
Strongly agree	10%	9%	10%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	30%	31%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	51%	51%	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Permanent FT paid workers			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	1,259	1,288	1,225	1,309
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	10%	9%
Disagree	21%	23%	24%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	22%	21%	22%
Agree	38%	38%	36%	40%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	32%	34%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	46%	45%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

Permanent FT paid workers

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	1,184	1,212	1,167	1,228
Strongly disagree	8%	6%	9%	8%
Disagree	17%	21%	20%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	23%	23%	26%
Agree	38%	41%	38%	36%
Strongly agree	10%	9%	11%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	27%	29%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	50%	48%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2

Childcare expenses

Permanent FT paid workers

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	943	905	893	925
Strongly disagree	7%	8%	11%	8%
Disagree	18%	21%	16%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	40%	45%	41%
Agree	25%	24%	20%	24%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	29%	27%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	32%	28%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	1,333	1,397	399	395
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	6%	8%
Disagree	21%	21%	22%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	17%	17%
Agree	42%	44%	48%	42%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	28%	27%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	56%	56%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	1,333	1,397	397	395
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	8%	11%

Disagree	24%	22%	25%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	18%	17%
Agree	40%	42%	41%	37%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	30%	32%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	52%	50%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	1,289	1,358	357	363
Strongly disagree	15%	14%	9%	14%
Disagree	25%	23%	27%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	21%	20%	19%
Agree	32%	33%	37%	33%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	37%	36%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	42%	44%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	1,329	1,394	396	395
Strongly disagree	11%	7%	8%	10%
Disagree	22%	20%	26%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	19%	15%
Agree	40%	44%	41%	40%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	27%	34%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	54%	48%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	1,329	1,395	396	391
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	7%	12%
Disagree	24%	23%	22%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	21%	23%	23%
Agree	37%	38%	39%	38%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	32%	29%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	48%	49%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	1,250	1,309	354	353
Strongly disagree	9%	6%	7%	10%
Disagree	18%	19%	18%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	26%	27%	29%
Agree	38%	39%	42%	33%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	25%	25%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	50%	48%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.0

Childcare expenses

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	963	994	262	277
Strongly disagree	9%	9%	7%	9%
Disagree	16%	17%	20%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	42%	47%	40%
Agree	25%	24%	22%	22%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	5%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	26%	27%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	33%	32%	26%	31%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	413	441	399	442
Strongly disagree	6%	10%	7%	11%
Disagree	25%	24%	23%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	17%	16%	17%
Agree	46%	40%	44%	40%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	34%	30%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	50%	54%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	413	439	398	443
Strongly disagree	8%	13%	8%	14%

Disagree	26%	22%	27%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	21%	20%
Agree	39%	40%	36%	36%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	35%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	49%	44%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	370	406	372	397
Strongly disagree	12%	16%	12%	14%
Disagree	24%	23%	28%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	20%	24%	24%
Agree	33%	33%	29%	29%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	39%	40%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	41%	37%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9

Fuel and transport	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	412	435	396	439
Strongly disagree	6%	12%	7%	12%
Disagree	27%	23%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	15%	21%	19%
Agree	39%	41%	44%	38%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	36%	27%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	49%	53%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	411	439	399	441
Strongly disagree	10%	12%	8%	11%
Disagree	27%	26%	25%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	21%	22%	20%
Agree	36%	33%	38%	34%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	39%	33%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	41%	45%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	366	400	354	398
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	5%	12%
Disagree	25%	22%	21%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	26%	31%	28%
Agree	32%	34%	34%	34%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	31%	26%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	43%	43%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1

Childcare expenses	Permanent PT paid workers			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	275	302	273	281
Strongly disagree	6%	10%	5%	10%
Disagree	20%	20%	17%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	41%	41%	44%	44%
Agree	28%	25%	28%	20%
Strongly agree	5%	5%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	30%	22%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	33%	30%	34%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.1	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Wor

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100
 See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.
 Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	414	195	184	201
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	10%	9%
Disagree	28%	19%	17%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	15%	23%	19%
Agree	39%	42%	41%	39%
Strongly agree	9%	14%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	29%	27%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	56%	50%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	413	195	183	201
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	10%	11%

Disagree	28%	24%	26%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	22%	24%	17%
Agree	36%	35%	32%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	8%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	34%	36%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	44%	40%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n=</i>	379	176	165	182	
Strongly disagree	16%	14%	15%	12%	
Disagree	26%	27%	22%	35%	
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	19%	27%	21%	
Agree	30%	32%	29%	29%	
Strongly agree	6%	8%	7%	4%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	41%	36%	47%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	36%	40%	36%	32%	
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	

Fuel and transport		Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n=</i>	412	194	183	201	
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	14%	9%	
Disagree	27%	27%	25%	30%	
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	22%	16%	
Agree	39%	34%	31%	40%	
Strongly agree	8%	11%	9%	5%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	38%	39%	39%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	45%	39%	45%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	

<i>n</i> =	415	194	178	200
Strongly disagree	11%	10%	8%	9%
Disagree	29%	23%	26%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	19%	30%	20%
Agree	32%	37%	27%	36%
Strongly agree	7%	11%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	34%	34%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	47%	36%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	385	164	173	179
Strongly disagree	11%	8%	6%	9%
Disagree	17%	21%	25%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	28%	26%	25%
Agree	34%	32%	34%	32%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	29%	31%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	43%	43%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0

Childcare expenses	Cas			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	263	106	112	125
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	9%	13%
Disagree	24%	19%	13%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	45%	40%	55%	44%
Agree	18%	24%	14%	21%
Strongly agree	5%	9%	8%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	27%	22%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	23%	33%	22%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.1	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Full-time paid workers

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 Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your income is sufficient to cover your costs?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Full-time paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	182	195	143	165
Strongly disagree	10%	12%	13%	13%
Disagree	26%	28%	27%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	10%	19%	18%
Agree	37%	43%	34%	35%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	6%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	40%	41%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	50%	41%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Full-time paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	178	194	142	164
Strongly disagree	9%	18%	12%	13%

Disagree	29%	26%	30%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	17%	21%	13%
Agree	37%	35%	33%	38%
Strongly agree	6%	5%	4%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	43%	42%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	40%	37%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.8	2.9	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	ual paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	170	178	132	153
Strongly disagree	16%	19%	21%	18%
Disagree	27%	25%	26%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	24%	22%	20%
Agree	28%	29%	26%	29%
Strongly agree	4%	2%	6%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	44%	46%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	32%	32%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8

Fuel and transport	ual paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	180	191	141	163
Strongly disagree	7%	11%	14%	10%
Disagree	27%	29%	28%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	15%	21%	16%
Agree	36%	42%	33%	39%
Strongly agree	7%	4%	5%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	40%	42%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	46%	38%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	ual paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24

<i>n</i> =	180	193	142	164
Strongly disagree	13%	9%	14%	17%
Disagree	31%	31%	22%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	25%	27%	20%
Agree	31%	30%	32%	35%
Strongly agree	3%	5%	5%	4%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	44%	40%	36%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	34%	37%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	ual paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	170	175	120	154
Strongly disagree	12%	10%	14%	12%
Disagree	23%	25%	22%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	31%	32%	24%
Agree	32%	29%	28%	33%
Strongly agree	4%	5%	5%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	35%	36%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	36%	34%	33%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0

Childcare expenses	ual paid workers			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	123	114	84	107
Strongly disagree	10%	8%	16%	17%
Disagree	18%	19%	14%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	48%	54%	51%	44%
Agree	20%	18%	13%	18%
Strongly agree	4%	1%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	27%	30%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	24%	18%	19%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your income is sufficient to cover your costs/expenses?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	FT fixed term contract pay			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	33	37	39	28
Strongly disagree	12%	8%	8%	-
Disagree	15%	14%	18%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	9%	5%	18%	-
Agree	49%	51%	44%	-
Strongly agree	15%	22%	13%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	22%	26%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	73%	56%	-
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.6	3.4	-

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	FT fixed term contract pay			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	33	37	39	28
Strongly disagree	12%	11%	8%	-

Disagree	15%	14%	23%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	9%	24%	23%	-
Agree	36%	38%	39%	-
Strongly agree	27%	14%	8%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	24%	31%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	51%	46%	-
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.3	3.2	-

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	FT fixed term contract pa			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	31	35	38	27
Strongly disagree	16%	11%	11%	-
Disagree	23%	34%	21%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	7%	14%	16%	-
Agree	42%	29%	40%	-
Strongly agree	13%	11%	13%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	46%	32%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	40%	53%	-
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	2.9	3.2	-

Fuel and transport	FT fixed term contract pa			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	33	36	39	28
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	0%	-
Disagree	12%	17%	28%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	22%	13%	-
Agree	46%	36%	51%	-
Strongly agree	18%	14%	8%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	28%	28%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	50%	59%	-
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.3	3.4	-

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	FT fixed term contract pa			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	33	37	39	28
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	10%	-
Disagree	15%	22%	15%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	12%	19%	23%	-
Agree	52%	32%	41%	-
Strongly agree	12%	16%	10%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	32%	26%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	49%	51%	-
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.2	3.3	-

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	FT fixed term contract p			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	30	33	38	24
Strongly disagree	10%	6%	11%	-
Disagree	3%	6%	13%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	42%	29%	-
Agree	60%	27%	40%	-
Strongly agree	13%	18%	8%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	13%	12%	24%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	73%	46%	47%	-
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.5	3.2	-

Childcare expenses	FT fixed term contract p			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	24	29	30	22
Strongly disagree	-	-	10%	-
Disagree	-	-	7%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	40%	-
Agree	-	-	33%	-
Strongly agree	-	-	10%	-
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	17%	-
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	43%	-
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.3	-

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	23	29	35	60
Strongly disagree	-	-	0%	8%
Disagree	-	-	20%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	11%	20%
Agree	-	-	40%	38%
Strongly agree	-	-	29%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	20%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	69%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.8	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	23	29	35	60
Strongly disagree	-	-	3%	10%

Disagree	-	-	14%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	11%	22%
Agree	-	-	49%	32%
Strongly agree	-	-	23%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	17%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	71%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.7	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	23	29	34	54
Strongly disagree	-	-	6%	9%
Disagree	-	-	9%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	27%	24%
Agree	-	-	35%	37%
Strongly agree	-	-	24%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	15%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	59%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.6	3.2

Fuel and transport	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	23	29	35	60
Strongly disagree	-	-	0%	10%
Disagree	-	-	23%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	11%	22%
Agree	-	-	46%	32%
Strongly agree	-	-	20%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	23%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	66%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.6	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	22	29	35	60
Strongly disagree	-	-	6%	7%
Disagree	-	-	14%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	14%	23%
Agree	-	-	43%	37%
Strongly agree	-	-	23%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	20%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	66%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.6	3.2

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	21	27	32	54
Strongly disagree	-	-	3%	7%
Disagree	-	-	19%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	22%	30%
Agree	-	-	38%	35%
Strongly agree	-	-	19%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	22%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	56%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	3.5	3.1

Childcare expenses	aid workers			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	14	23	25	40
Strongly disagree	-	-	-	0%
Disagree	-	-	-	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-	-	58%
Agree	-	-	-	15%
Strongly agree	-	-	-	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	-	-	-	20%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	-	-	-	23%
Mean score [1-5]	-	-	-	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	55	50	133	104
Strongly disagree	13%	16%	10%	8%
Disagree	27%	24%	23%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	11%	6%	14%	12%
Agree	42%	44%	44%	44%
Strongly agree	7%	10%	9%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	40%	33%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	54%	53%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	55	50	133	103
Strongly disagree	22%	22%	15%	12%

Disagree	18%	22%	21%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	10%	14%	14%
Agree	31%	36%	41%	37%
Strongly agree	11%	10%	8%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	44%	36%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	46%	50%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	49	40	113	95
Strongly disagree	12%	25%	18%	14%
Disagree	25%	18%	24%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	20%	17%	20%
Agree	27%	35%	37%	32%
Strongly agree	10%	3%	4%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	43%	42%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	38%	42%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.7	2.9	3.0

Fuel and transport	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	55	50	130	103
Strongly disagree	18%	14%	10%	9%
Disagree	24%	30%	22%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	6%	13%	13%
Agree	36%	40%	49%	41%
Strongly agree	6%	10%	6%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	44%	32%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	50%	55%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	55	49	129	101
Strongly disagree	13%	25%	16%	11%
Disagree	20%	10%	19%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	20%	24%	12%
Agree	31%	37%	35%	33%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	7%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	35%	34%	43%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	45%	42%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	50	39	113	96
Strongly disagree	10%	13%	12%	9%
Disagree	18%	18%	23%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	34%	26%	25%	24%
Agree	28%	39%	34%	33%
Strongly agree	10%	5%	7%	15%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	31%	35%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	44%	41%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.3

Childcare expenses	Independent contractors			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	34	25	67	64
Strongly disagree	6%	-	9%	6%
Disagree	12%	-	16%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	65%	-	55%	44%
Agree	12%	-	19%	19%
Strongly agree	6%	-	0%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	18%	-	25%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	18%	-	19%	31%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	-	2.9	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	120	105	937	947
Strongly disagree	14%	11%	6%	11%
Disagree	23%	25%	20%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	15%	17%	16%
Agree	38%	42%	47%	42%
Strongly agree	4%	8%	11%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	35%	26%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	50%	58%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	119	105	935	945
Strongly disagree	20%	8%	8%	12%

Disagree	25%	33%	22%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	18%	18%	18%
Agree	30%	31%	43%	35%
Strongly agree	4%	10%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	45%	41%	31%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	35%	41%	51%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	3.0	3.2	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	110	93	892	897
Strongly disagree	20%	16%	10%	16%
Disagree	21%	32%	25%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	16%	21%	20%
Agree	28%	26%	36%	31%
Strongly agree	4%	10%	8%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	48%	35%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	36%	44%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	2.8	3.1	2.8

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	118	104	931	946
Strongly disagree	18%	8%	8%	12%
Disagree	29%	25%	24%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	19%	19%	17%
Agree	30%	39%	40%	37%
Strongly agree	4%	9%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	47%	33%	32%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	48%	49%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	116	104	930	939
Strongly disagree	13%	11%	9%	12%
Disagree	27%	37%	21%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	20%	23%	23%
Agree	28%	25%	39%	35%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	47%	30%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	35%	33%	47%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	3.2	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	104	93	835	854
Strongly disagree	13%	9%	7%	11%
Disagree	21%	24%	20%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	27%	26%	30%
Agree	33%	32%	39%	32%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	32%	26%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	41%	48%	38%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.0

Childcare expenses

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	58	39	631	673
Strongly disagree	16%	21%	8%	11%
Disagree	21%	13%	18%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	47%	41%	46%	49%
Agree	14%	18%	22%	18%
Strongly agree	3%	8%	7%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	33%	26%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	17%	26%	29%	23%
Mean score [1-5]	2.7	2.8	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	953	966	982	1,018
Strongly disagree	8%	11%	9%	13%
Disagree	28%	25%	26%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	17%	15%	16%
Agree	43%	39%	42%	39%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	36%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	48%	50%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	952	965	982	1,017
Strongly disagree	10%	13%	11%	14%

Disagree	28%	26%	29%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	15%	18%	16%
Agree	41%	38%	35%	37%
Strongly agree	6%	8%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	39%	40%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	46%	42%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	891	905	937	962
Strongly disagree	16%	19%	16%	19%
Disagree	29%	27%	31%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	21%	20%
Agree	32%	31%	26%	28%
Strongly agree	5%	6%	6%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	45%	45%	47%	46%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	37%	32%	34%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	951	958	971	1,009
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	8%	14%
Disagree	28%	27%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	15%	18%	16%
Agree	41%	39%	42%	38%
Strongly agree	6%	8%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	38%	33%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	47%	49%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	948	957	977	1,013
Strongly disagree	11%	14%	11%	15%
Disagree	28%	28%	28%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	20%	18%
Agree	36%	32%	36%	33%
Strongly agree	6%	8%	5%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	42%	39%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	40%	41%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	866	881	882	916
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	9%	14%
Disagree	26%	23%	24%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	26%	28%	25%
Agree	37%	31%	32%	34%
Strongly agree	6%	8%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	34%	33%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	39%	39%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

Childcare expenses	Workers - Women			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	647	664	662	674
Strongly disagree	8%	11%	8%	14%
Disagree	20%	19%	20%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	44%	47%	46%	44%
Agree	23%	18%	21%	19%
Strongly agree	5%	5%	5%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	30%	28%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	28%	22%	26%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Gender (workers)

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries					
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	1,032	996	1,008	1,054	
Strongly disagree	9%	5%	6%	7%	
Disagree	27%	17%	17%	18%	
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	18%	18%	17%	
Agree	40%	44%	45%	46%	
Strongly agree	10%	17%	15%	12%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	22%	23%	25%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	61%	60%	58%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.5	3.5	3.4	

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)					
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	1,033	994	1,006	1,053	
Strongly disagree	11%	6%	8%	8%	

Disagree	27%	17%	20%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	20%	19%	19%
Agree	39%	41%	41%	41%
Strongly agree	8%	15%	12%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	24%	28%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	57%	53%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.4	3.3	3.3

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n=</i>	976	929	958	993
Strongly disagree	17%	8%	10%	10%
Disagree	27%	18%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	22%	22%	22%
Agree	30%	39%	35%	37%
Strongly agree	7%	13%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	45%	26%	31%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	52%	47%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	3.3	3.2	3.1

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n=</i>	1,029	988	1,006	1,048
Strongly disagree	8%	7%	9%	6%
Disagree	26%	18%	19%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	18%	19%
Agree	40%	41%	42%	42%
Strongly agree	8%	15%	12%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	25%	28%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	55%	54%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23

<i>n</i> =	1,032	989	997	1,048
Strongly disagree	13%	6%	6%	7%
Disagree	29%	15%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	24%	26%	23%
Agree	32%	40%	39%	39%
Strongly agree	7%	16%	12%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	21%	24%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	56%	50%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.4	3.3	3.2

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)				
				V
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	949	916	954	975
Strongly disagree	9%	5%	6%	5%
Disagree	21%	12%	15%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	24%	27%	26%
Agree	34%	42%	40%	40%
Strongly agree	8%	17%	12%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	17%	21%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	59%	52%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.5	3.4	3.3

Childcare expenses				
				V
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	685	703	732	719
Strongly disagree	10%	6%	6%	8%
Disagree	19%	15%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	46%	37%	38%	37%
Agree	19%	30%	29%	27%
Strongly agree	6%	13%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	21%	23%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	26%	43%	39%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,059	1,055	1,060	1,095
Strongly disagree	8%	6%	8%	6%
Disagree	21%	17%	20%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	16%	19%	19%
Agree	42%	47%	42%	44%
Strongly agree	12%	13%	11%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	23%	28%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	61%	53%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,058	1,052	1,059	1,092
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	10%	7%

Disagree	22%	19%	22%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	20%	19%
Agree	40%	41%	39%	41%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	9%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	29%	31%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	53%	49%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	/orkers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,014	1,002	1,003	1,051
Strongly disagree	15%	12%	12%	12%
Disagree	24%	25%	23%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	21%	22%	22%
Agree	34%	34%	34%	33%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	10%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	36%	35%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	43%	44%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1

Fuel and transport	/orkers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	1,051	1,047	1,058	1,090
Strongly disagree	8%	7%	9%	6%
Disagree	21%	18%	22%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	18%	19%	19%
Agree	42%	45%	40%	44%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	9%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	25%	32%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	57%	49%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	/orkers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24

<i>n</i> =	1,057	1,049	1,055	1,092
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	7%	7%
Disagree	21%	19%	23%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	23%	24%	23%
Agree	37%	41%	38%	40%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	26%	29%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	51%	47%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.3

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	/orkers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,001	995	993	1,036
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	7%	5%
Disagree	20%	16%	17%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	27%	29%	25%
Agree	40%	38%	38%	40%
Strongly agree	11%	13%	10%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	23%	24%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	50%	47%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4

Childcare expenses	/orkers - Men			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	749	728	738	751
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	7%	9%
Disagree	15%	16%	16%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	40%	43%	41%
Agree	24%	27%	27%	26%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	24%	23%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	36%	34%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	524	482	529	505
Strongly disagree	5%	5%	3%	3%
Disagree	14%	20%	20%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	16%	19%
Agree	49%	43%	50%	47%
Strongly agree	14%	15%	11%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	25%	23%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	63%	57%	61%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers aged 18+			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	522	482	528	503
Strongly disagree	6%	6%	4%	6%

Disagree	16%	23%	21%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	21%	21%
Agree	45%	39%	45%	46%
Strongly agree	12%	11%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	30%	25%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	58%	50%	54%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.4

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	513	480	520	498
Strongly disagree	9%	9%	9%	11%
Disagree	21%	27%	26%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	23%	21%	19%
Agree	41%	32%	37%	37%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	35%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	43%	44%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1

Fuel and transport	Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	521	483	529	502
Strongly disagree	8%	5%	4%	5%
Disagree	19%	25%	23%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	20%	18%	19%
Agree	41%	38%	46%	44%
Strongly agree	12%	12%	9%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	30%	27%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	50%	55%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	519	481	528	503
Strongly disagree	7%	5%	6%	7%
Disagree	14%	22%	24%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	26%	20%	22%
Agree	42%	36%	41%	40%
Strongly agree	13%	10%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	28%	30%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	47%	50%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	476	458	497	471
Strongly disagree	7%	6%	4%	7%
Disagree	15%	17%	23%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	30%	26%	25%
Agree	44%	39%	40%	41%
Strongly agree	11%	8%	6%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	23%	28%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	47%	47%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.3

Childcare expenses	Workers aged 18			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	381	403	409	393
Strongly disagree	9%	6%	9%	10%
Disagree	18%	20%	20%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	36%	41%	36%	37%
Agree	26%	23%	27%	26%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	26%	30%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	33%	34%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	n=29			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	512	518	525	675
Strongly disagree	5%	7%	6%	6%
Disagree	18%	18%	18%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	19%	19%	16%
Agree	48%	45%	45%	43%
Strongly agree	12%	11%	12%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	25%	23%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	61%	56%	57%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	n=29			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
n=	509	517	525	675
Strongly disagree	6%	7%	7%	7%

Disagree	20%	21%	19%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	21%	20%	19%
Agree	42%	43%	45%	43%
Strongly agree	13%	9%	9%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	27%	26%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	52%	54%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		}-29			
		Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>		505	510	512	663
Strongly disagree		11%	14%	16%	9%
Disagree		27%	22%	22%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree		18%	24%	21%	21%
Agree		34%	32%	34%	37%
Strongly agree		10%	9%	8%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		38%	35%	37%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		44%	41%	41%	48%
Mean score [1-5]		3.0	3.0	3.0	3.2

Fuel and transport		}-29			
		Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>		506	515	526	667
Strongly disagree		4%	9%	4%	7%
Disagree		18%	20%	21%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree		20%	19%	17%	21%
Agree		48%	42%	48%	40%
Strongly agree		11%	10%	10%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		22%	29%	25%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		59%	52%	58%	53%
Mean score [1-5]		3.4	3.2	3.4	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		}-29			
		Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	508	515	523	672
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	10%	7%
Disagree	21%	23%	22%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	23%	23%	21%
Agree	42%	37%	37%	40%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	8%	14%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	32%	32%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	45%	45%	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.4

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	1-29			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	473	482	480	619
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	6%	6%
Disagree	21%	17%	19%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	27%	25%	21%
Agree	35%	39%	40%	41%
Strongly agree	11%	10%	11%	15%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	25%	24%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	49%	51%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4

Childcare expenses	1-29			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	367	378	377	553
Strongly disagree	6%	9%	11%	7%
Disagree	20%	17%	19%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	39%	39%	41%	33%
Agree	26%	27%	23%	32%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	7%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	26%	30%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	35%	35%	30%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.2

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers aged 30-44			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	705	704	683	716
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	10%	7%
Disagree	20%	24%	24%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	14%	17%	15%
Agree	45%	45%	40%	47%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	9%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	31%	34%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	55%	49%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers aged 30-44			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	703	702	684	716
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	11%	10%

Disagree	26%	23%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	17%	19%
Agree	39%	40%	39%	38%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	33%	36%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	49%	47%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers aged 30-44			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	693	686	674	700
Strongly disagree	15%	14%	18%	15%
Disagree	26%	25%	29%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	15%	20%
Agree	33%	34%	31%	29%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	40%	47%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	41%	38%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers aged 30-44			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	704	700	680	715
Strongly disagree	11%	7%	10%	8%
Disagree	24%	23%	23%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	17%	19%
Agree	40%	40%	42%	44%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	8%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	31%	33%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	50%	50%	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers aged 30-44			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	697	700	680	714
Strongly disagree	10%	10%	13%	8%
Disagree	22%	22%	24%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	23%	20%	22%
Agree	38%	37%	35%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	32%	37%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	45%	43%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

Workers aged 30-44

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	654	652	651	673
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	11%	9%
Disagree	20%	22%	22%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	24%	24%	27%
Agree	35%	37%	33%	36%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	29%	33%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	46%	42%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2

Childcare expenses

Workers aged 30-44

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	561	555	549	572
Strongly disagree	10%	8%	15%	8%
Disagree	20%	22%	19%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	36%	34%	36%	34%
Agree	27%	29%	24%	29%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	30%	34%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	36%	31%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	2.9	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Age (workers)

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	730	748	527	544
Strongly disagree	10%	8%	7%	10%
Disagree	23%	20%	21%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	16%	18%	18%
Agree	40%	45%	42%	43%
Strongly agree	9%	12%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	28%	28%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	57%	54%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	729	748	525	543
Strongly disagree	11%	8%	9%	12%

Disagree	25%	22%	24%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	16%	19%	20%
Agree	38%	43%	39%	36%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	31%	33%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	53%	49%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	720	744	489	514
Strongly disagree	15%	14%	9%	14%
Disagree	27%	24%	22%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	21%	25%	20%
Agree	32%	31%	34%	36%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	38%	31%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	41%	44%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	727	744	525	542
Strongly disagree	11%	8%	8%	13%
Disagree	25%	20%	23%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	20%	18%	18%
Agree	39%	43%	40%	39%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	11%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	28%	31%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	53%	51%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	727	748	521	539
Strongly disagree	10%	10%	7%	10%
Disagree	25%	23%	21%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	20%	25%	26%
Agree	37%	37%	38%	35%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	34%	28%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	47%	47%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	685	707	481	501
Strongly disagree	10%	8%	6%	8%
Disagree	21%	19%	16%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	26%	30%	29%
Agree	33%	37%	36%	35%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	13%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	27%	21%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	47%	49%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.2

Childcare expenses

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	578	588	318	358
Strongly disagree	11%	10%	6%	5%
Disagree	17%	19%	13%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	38%	36%	54%	55%
Agree	27%	27%	18%	20%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	29%	20%	18%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	36%	26%	27%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	545	553	560	568
Strongly disagree	11%	13%	9%	13%
Disagree	26%	24%	25%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	15%	17%	17%
Agree	41%	40%	40%	38%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	37%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	48%	48%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	546	552	560	568
Strongly disagree	11%	14%	14%	15%

Disagree	30%	26%	28%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	12%	15%	17%	18%
Agree	39%	37%	34%	34%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	40%	42%	41%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	45%	41%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	506	516	537	529
Strongly disagree	13%	20%	15%	17%
Disagree	29%	23%	29%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	23%	20%
Agree	31%	31%	28%	29%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	43%	43%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	39%	34%	35%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	543	547	553	568
Strongly disagree	10%	12%	9%	15%
Disagree	29%	25%	26%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	16%	19%	16%
Agree	39%	38%	39%	37%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	37%	35%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	47%	47%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	540	551	558	567
Strongly disagree	12%	14%	12%	14%
Disagree	28%	25%	25%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	23%	23%	20%
Agree	34%	32%	34%	33%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	39%	37%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	39%	40%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	497	514	512	518
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	9%	13%
Disagree	24%	20%	22%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	24%	30%	27%
Agree	37%	37%	31%	34%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	31%	31%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	45%	40%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0

Childcare expenses	Workers aged 45-59			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	315	347	349	351
Strongly disagree	6%	7%	8%	7%
Disagree	17%	13%	13%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	52%	62%	56%	54%
Agree	20%	13%	17%	16%
Strongly agree	5%	5%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	20%	21%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	25%	18%	23%	22%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	W			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	573	217	232	236
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	11%	11%
Disagree	27%	15%	18%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	15%	19%	20%
Agree	37%	51%	40%	43%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	21%	29%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	64%	52%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.5	3.2	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	W			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	572	217	231	236
Strongly disagree	12%	8%	15%	12%

Disagree	27%	24%	20%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	16%	16%	18%
Agree	33%	40%	36%	38%
Strongly agree	10%	12%	13%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	32%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	52%	50%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		Weighted			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n=</i>	547	165	176	179	
Strongly disagree	16%	8%	16%	15%	
Disagree	26%	21%	19%	19%	
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	20%	25%	23%	
Agree	30%	42%	28%	38%	
Strongly agree	10%	9%	12%	6%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	29%	35%	34%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	51%	40%	44%	
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.2	3.0	3.0	

Fuel and transport		Weighted			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n=</i>	571	216	231	234	
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	13%	9%	
Disagree	23%	24%	23%	24%	
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	17%	14%	19%	
Agree	38%	41%	39%	41%	
Strongly agree	9%	11%	12%	7%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	31%	36%	33%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	52%	50%	48%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		Weighted			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	

<i>n</i> =	573	217	227	235
Strongly disagree	12%	6%	11%	9%
Disagree	25%	22%	22%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	22%	20%	21%
Agree	34%	38%	37%	40%
Strongly agree	8%	12%	11%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	28%	33%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	50%	48%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)		Weighted			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	546	183	203	202	
Strongly disagree	9%	2%	10%	9%	
Disagree	20%	11%	17%	15%	
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	28%	24%	24%	
Agree	37%	44%	34%	41%	
Strongly agree	9%	15%	15%	11%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	13%	27%	24%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	59%	49%	52%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.3	

Childcare expenses		Weighted			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	346	87	91	93	
Strongly disagree	8%	5%	15%	8%	
Disagree	16%	9%	8%	16%	
Neither agree nor disagree	53%	64%	54%	59%	
Agree	19%	16%	19%	15%	
Strongly agree	4%	6%	4%	2%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	14%	23%	24%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	23%	22%	23%	17%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.9	

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your income is sufficient to cover your costs/expenses?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	289	258	272	287
Strongly disagree	10%	8%	12%	8%
Disagree	25%	24%	20%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	11%	16%	14%
Agree	35%	45%	40%	39%
Strongly agree	13%	11%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	33%	32%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	56%	52%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	289	258	272	286
Strongly disagree	11%	11%	13%	9%

Disagree	27%	26%	25%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	14%	17%	16%
Agree	33%	39%	35%	35%
Strongly agree	13%	10%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	37%	38%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	49%	46%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	236	206	216	230
Strongly disagree	16%	12%	14%	13%
Disagree	23%	25%	20%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	27%	23%	20%
Agree	29%	30%	31%	32%
Strongly agree	11%	6%	12%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	37%	34%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	36%	43%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.1	2.9

Fuel and transport	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	285	253	267	284
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	11%	6%
Disagree	27%	24%	24%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	13%	17%	16%
Agree	35%	45%	38%	37%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	33%	35%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	54%	48%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24

<i>n</i> =	285	255	269	286
Strongly disagree	12%	9%	10%	8%
Disagree	29%	25%	22%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	19%	22%	16%
Agree	27%	37%	34%	36%
Strongly agree	11%	11%	12%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	34%	32%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	48%	45%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	251	227	234	257
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	9%	5%
Disagree	22%	18%	15%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	23%	25%	30%
Agree	34%	41%	40%	34%
Strongly agree	12%	11%	10%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	25%	25%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	52%	50%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3

Childcare expenses	Workers aged 60+			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	129	109	114	128
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	15%	9%
Disagree	13%	18%	16%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	59%	56%	52%	59%
Agree	17%	15%	9%	14%
Strongly agree	2%	4%	9%	2%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	26%	31%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	19%	18%	18%	16%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	723	715	703	709
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	7%	6%
Disagree	19%	19%	25%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	14%	19%
Agree	43%	45%	43%	44%
Strongly agree	16%	10%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	27%	32%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	59%	56%	54%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	720	716	702	707
Strongly disagree	7%	10%	9%	8%

Disagree	20%	23%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	21%	17%	16%
Agree	41%	37%	37%	43%
Strongly agree	14%	9%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	33%	35%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	46%	48%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	694	682	662	681
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	12%	15%
Disagree	21%	23%	25%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	24%	21%	19%
Agree	35%	33%	33%	33%
Strongly agree	12%	9%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	35%	38%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	42%	41%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.9

Fuel and transport	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	716	712	697	703
Strongly disagree	6%	10%	8%	7%
Disagree	21%	22%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	18%	19%
Agree	39%	40%	40%	41%
Strongly agree	14%	8%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	32%	32%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	48%	51%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	718	709	700	705
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	8%	8%
Disagree	15%	20%	26%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	26%	20%	21%
Agree	39%	38%	36%	37%
Strongly agree	14%	8%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	28%	35%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	46%	46%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	670	670	653	671
Strongly disagree	5%	6%	6%	6%
Disagree	15%	18%	22%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	31%	26%	25%
Agree	39%	36%	36%	40%
Strongly agree	16%	9%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	20%	25%	29%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	45%	46%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.3

Childcare expenses	Workers in NSW			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	532	538	499	503
Strongly disagree	5%	8%	7%	10%
Disagree	14%	17%	19%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	40%	41%	39%	41%
Agree	28%	24%	27%	25%
Strongly agree	12%	9%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	20%	25%	26%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	34%	35%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

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Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	709	720	695	378
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	7%	7%
Disagree	21%	22%	22%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	16%	16%	16%
Agree	43%	40%	44%	47%
Strongly agree	12%	11%	12%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	32%	29%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	52%	56%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	710	721	692	377
Strongly disagree	11%	13%	9%	9%

Disagree	25%	23%	22%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	19%	19%
Agree	35%	39%	40%	42%
Strongly agree	12%	9%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	36%	31%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	47%	50%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	679	682	669	352
Strongly disagree	15%	15%	14%	10%
Disagree	29%	24%	26%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	21%	16%
Agree	27%	31%	31%	40%
Strongly agree	8%	10%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	44%	39%	40%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	35%	41%	40%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	3.0	2.9	3.1

Fuel and transport	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	696	713	691	376
Strongly disagree	8%	11%	7%	9%
Disagree	21%	24%	21%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	16%	19%	19%
Agree	42%	41%	43%	43%
Strongly agree	11%	8%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	35%	28%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	50%	53%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.3	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	708	717	693	376
Strongly disagree	9%	12%	9%	7%
Disagree	23%	23%	24%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	20%	21%	22%
Agree	38%	37%	35%	42%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	34%	33%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	46%	46%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	659	665	656	334
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	7%	6%
Disagree	20%	20%	17%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	25%	27%	22%
Agree	35%	37%	37%	45%
Strongly agree	12%	9%	11%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	29%	25%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	46%	49%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.4

Childcare expenses	'ACT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	491	493	482	247
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	9%	9%
Disagree	18%	16%	18%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	37%	42%	40%
Agree	23%	28%	25%	24%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	27%	27%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	37%	32%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	365	389	396	409
Strongly disagree	7%	8%	13%	8%
Disagree	23%	21%	26%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	14%	14%	14%
Agree	43%	48%	38%	50%
Strongly agree	10%	9%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	29%	39%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	57%	47%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.0	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	365	389	397	405
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	14%	10%

Disagree	22%	25%	24%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	19%	17%	16%
Agree	39%	43%	35%	42%
Strongly agree	9%	6%	10%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	32%	39%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	50%	44%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	343	368	379	393
Strongly disagree	13%	15%	22%	13%
Disagree	27%	25%	22%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	20%	16%	22%
Agree	31%	35%	30%	32%
Strongly agree	10%	5%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	40%	44%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	40%	40%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.9

Fuel and transport	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	366	388	395	409
Strongly disagree	9%	6%	13%	8%
Disagree	27%	26%	24%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	19%	17%	18%
Agree	38%	42%	39%	46%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	32%	37%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	50%	46%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	365	387	396	404
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	15%	9%
Disagree	25%	25%	23%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	24%	23%	21%
Agree	34%	33%	32%	39%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	7%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	35%	39%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	41%	39%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	340	359	375	378
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	12%	9%
Disagree	22%	21%	21%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	23%	25%	25%
Agree	38%	40%	33%	38%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	28%	32%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	49%	43%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2

Childcare expenses	Workers in QLD			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	263	266	285	282
Strongly disagree	7%	10%	13%	8%
Disagree	18%	21%	15%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	51%	45%	51%	40%
Agree	21%	18%	17%	25%
Strongly agree	4%	5%	4%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	32%	28%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	24%	23%	21%	31%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.0

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	410	393	178	182
Strongly disagree	9%	8%	5%	10%
Disagree	22%	23%	16%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	18%	15%	20%
Agree	39%	40%	51%	44%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	15%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	31%	20%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	51%	65%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.6	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	408	392	178	182
Strongly disagree	9%	8%	7%	8%

Disagree	26%	27%	15%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	17%	19%
Agree	38%	38%	47%	41%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	15%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	35%	21%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	47%	61%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	381	373	169	175
Strongly disagree	17%	17%	8%	14%
Disagree	27%	21%	17%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	21%	21%	17%
Agree	27%	31%	43%	40%
Strongly agree	8%	11%	11%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	38%	24%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	35%	41%	54%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.0

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	408	392	178	183
Strongly disagree	12%	8%	8%	12%
Disagree	23%	23%	19%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	17%	18%
Agree	38%	40%	40%	43%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	16%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	31%	26%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	49%	56%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	409	392	178	183
Strongly disagree	9%	13%	6%	9%
Disagree	28%	26%	17%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	20%	23%
Agree	36%	33%	42%	42%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	15%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	39%	23%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	41%	57%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	379	371	164	167
Strongly disagree	10%	6%	7%	11%
Disagree	20%	19%	15%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	31%	25%	21%	24%
Agree	33%	38%	42%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	12%	15%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	25%	22%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	50%	57%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.1

Childcare expenses

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	277	268	124	137
Strongly disagree	9%	9%	10%	7%
Disagree	16%	17%	16%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	50%	46%	40%	42%
Agree	20%	21%	21%	28%
Strongly agree	6%	6%	13%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	27%	26%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	25%	27%	34%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Location (workers)

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	194	187	208	212
Strongly disagree	8%	6%	6%	11%
Disagree	21%	24%	20%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	19%	14%	13%
Agree	46%	40%	47%	43%
Strongly agree	11%	12%	13%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	29%	26%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	57%	51%	59%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	194	187	209	211
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	6%	9%

Disagree	21%	21%	20%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	17%	17%	23%
Agree	46%	44%	47%	35%
Strongly agree	11%	10%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	29%	26%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	58%	54%	57%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	182	179	195	202
Strongly disagree	12%	14%	14%	17%
Disagree	27%	30%	28%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	21%	17%	16%
Agree	38%	31%	34%	33%
Strongly agree	8%	5%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	44%	42%	45%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	36%	41%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	193	187	206	212
Strongly disagree	6%	7%	7%	9%
Disagree	22%	22%	20%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	18%	19%
Agree	44%	42%	45%	37%
Strongly agree	10%	9%	11%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	29%	27%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	51%	55%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	193	188	207	212
Strongly disagree	11%	7%	9%	9%
Disagree	19%	23%	19%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	29%	21%	23%
Agree	44%	32%	41%	32%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	11%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	31%	28%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	40%	51%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	173	171	188	206
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	10%	10%
Disagree	22%	23%	15%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	23%	26%	23%
Agree	42%	39%	36%	36%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	13%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	32%	26%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	46%	48%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2

Childcare expenses	Workers in WA			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	132	123	144	155
Strongly disagree	8%	7%	10%	10%
Disagree	21%	21%	16%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	35%	49%	40%	39%
Agree	30%	15%	25%	21%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	29%	26%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	36%	23%	33%	29%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	222	520	556	571
Strongly disagree	11%	6%	9%	8%
Disagree	20%	17%	19%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	19%	17%	17%
Agree	39%	45%	42%	42%
Strongly agree	13%	14%	13%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	23%	28%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	59%	55%	53%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	223	520	554	569
Strongly disagree	9%	8%	11%	11%

Disagree	25%	21%	26%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	19%	15%	18%
Agree	36%	40%	37%	41%
Strongly agree	10%	12%	11%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	28%	37%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	53%	48%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	212	476	528	536	
Strongly disagree	16%	10%	14%	13%	
Disagree	21%	22%	25%	27%	
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	21%	19%	19%	
Agree	33%	37%	32%	35%	
Strongly agree	8%	10%	10%	7%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	32%	39%	39%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	47%	42%	42%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	

Fuel and transport		Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	222	515	555	570	
Strongly disagree	9%	8%	11%	9%	
Disagree	20%	21%	23%	26%	
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	20%	16%	18%	
Agree	39%	40%	39%	40%	
Strongly agree	11%	11%	12%	8%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	30%	34%	35%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	51%	50%	47%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	

<i>n</i> =	222	515	545	567
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	10%	10%
Disagree	22%	21%	22%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	23%	24%	23%
Agree	38%	38%	34%	37%
Strongly agree	8%	12%	10%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	28%	32%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	49%	44%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	207	466	503	525
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	10%	7%
Disagree	21%	16%	16%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	26%	28%	25%
Agree	40%	39%	35%	37%
Strongly agree	9%	12%	12%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	23%	25%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	51%	47%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.1

Childcare expenses	Wo			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	154	352	372	369
Strongly disagree	12%	8%	8%	9%
Disagree	21%	18%	16%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	38%	40%	44%	39%
Agree	21%	28%	23%	25%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	25%	24%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	29%	35%	32%	31%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	rkers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	577	571	588	659
Strongly disagree	11%	7%	11%	8%
Disagree	22%	22%	20%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	18%	19%	16%
Agree	39%	43%	42%	41%
Strongly agree	12%	11%	9%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	29%	30%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	54%	51%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	rkers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	577	570	587	660
Strongly disagree	12%	11%	12%	9%

Disagree	23%	26%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	19%	17%	16%
Agree	39%	35%	39%	41%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	8%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	37%	35%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	44%	48%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	534	541	557	621
Strongly disagree	16%	12%	13%	14%
Disagree	27%	27%	25%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	21%	23%	21%
Agree	33%	30%	32%	31%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	43%	40%	38%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	39%	39%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0

Fuel and transport	Workers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>	571	567	586	657
Strongly disagree	10%	7%	13%	6%
Disagree	23%	22%	22%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	19%	19%	19%
Agree	40%	42%	38%	42%
Strongly agree	11%	10%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	29%	35%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	52%	46%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24

<i>n</i> =	572	567	584	660
Strongly disagree	13%	9%	12%	10%
Disagree	24%	24%	24%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	23%	20%	19%
Agree	34%	38%	35%	37%
Strongly agree	10%	7%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	32%	35%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	45%	44%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	524	522	526	607
Strongly disagree	12%	7%	12%	7%
Disagree	22%	19%	16%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	30%	26%	26%
Agree	33%	34%	38%	37%
Strongly agree	11%	10%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	26%	28%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	44%	46%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2

Childcare expenses	Workers in VIC/TAS			
	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	388	378	387	432
Strongly disagree	12%	6%	10%	9%
Disagree	17%	18%	17%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	47%	48%	45%
Agree	23%	23%	19%	21%
Strongly agree	5%	7%	6%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	24%	27%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	29%	30%	25%	29%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.1	2.9	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	144	145	157	161
Strongly disagree	5%	10%	5%	8%
Disagree	15%	22%	21%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	16%	19%	20%
Agree	50%	40%	50%	39%
Strongly agree	10%	12%	6%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	20%	32%	26%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	60%	52%	56%	50%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.2	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	144	142	158	160
Strongly disagree	6%	11%	6%	11%

Disagree	17%	24%	31%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	17%	17%	21%
Agree	44%	37%	41%	32%
Strongly agree	7%	11%	5%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	35%	37%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	48%	46%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	139	135	143	151
Strongly disagree	7%	11%	8%	12%
Disagree	19%	26%	28%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	19%	24%	21%
Agree	36%	36%	36%	31%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	4%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	37%	36%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	46%	44%	40%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0

Fuel and transport	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	144	144	158	158
Strongly disagree	6%	9%	4%	8%
Disagree	22%	25%	27%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	19%	16%	15%
Agree	46%	36%	49%	42%
Strongly agree	7%	10%	4%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	34%	30%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	47%	54%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	142	142	156	158
Strongly disagree	6%	12%	6%	15%
Disagree	17%	21%	22%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	31%	18%	21%	23%
Agree	37%	38%	47%	30%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	3%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	33%	29%	41%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	49%	50%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.2	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	125	136	138	146
Strongly disagree	5%	8%	7%	10%
Disagree	16%	20%	18%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	29%	27%	30%
Agree	41%	33%	45%	31%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	4%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	28%	25%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	43%	49%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.0

Childcare expenses	Workers in SA/			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	84	103	106	119
Strongly disagree	7%	11%	6%	8%
Disagree	14%	22%	13%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	54%	34%	49%	48%
Agree	20%	24%	27%	19%
Strongly agree	5%	9%	5%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	33%	19%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	25%	33%	32%	24%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	149	158	164	475
Strongly disagree	10%	14%	7%	7%
Disagree	22%	18%	24%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	11%	20%	16%	20%
Agree	46%	41%	43%	43%
Strongly agree	11%	8%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	32%	31%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	48%	54%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	149	159	164	474
Strongly disagree	13%	13%	10%	10%

Disagree	21%	27%	20%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	23%	17%	19%
Agree	39%	33%	43%	38%
Strongly agree	9%	4%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	40%	31%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	37%	53%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	2.9	3.2	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	140	153	158	435
Strongly disagree	11%	18%	14%	12%
Disagree	30%	22%	25%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	18%	16%	22%
Agree	33%	33%	37%	32%
Strongly agree	5%	9%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	40%	39%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	42%	46%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0

Fuel and transport	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	149	158	163	470
Strongly disagree	7%	14%	7%	9%
Disagree	23%	23%	20%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	20%	17%	21%
Agree	48%	35%	47%	37%
Strongly agree	6%	8%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	37%	28%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	43%	56%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	149	156	163	471
Strongly disagree	10%	13%	10%	9%
Disagree	26%	25%	20%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	22%	21%	24%
Agree	38%	33%	42%	35%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	38%	31%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	40%	49%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	138	143	149	413
Strongly disagree	5%	13%	10%	8%
Disagree	26%	13%	19%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	32%	33%	28%	29%
Agree	32%	29%	36%	38%
Strongly agree	5%	12%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	26%	29%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	41%	44%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2

Childcare expenses	NT			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	102	109	103	304
Strongly disagree	7%	11%	12%	8%
Disagree	14%	14%	18%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	48%	42%	46%
Agree	29%	23%	22%	21%
Strongly agree	8%	5%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	25%	29%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	28%	29%	27%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers with income below \$52k			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	443	487	482	449
Strongly disagree	11%	9%	12%	14%
Disagree	24%	25%	26%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	15%	15%
Agree	38%	42%	38%	39%
Strongly agree	9%	7%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	34%	38%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	50%	47%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers with income below \$52k			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	442	489	480	446
Strongly disagree	14%	10%	14%	16%

Disagree	28%	27%	28%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	20%	15%	18%
Agree	30%	37%	35%	33%
Strongly agree	10%	6%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	37%	42%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	43%	43%	40%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		Workers with income below \$52k			
		Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>		410	446	446	418
Strongly disagree		17%	15%	20%	19%
Disagree		27%	28%	24%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree		19%	23%	19%	22%
Agree		29%	29%	32%	28%
Strongly agree		8%	5%	5%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		44%	43%	44%	45%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		38%	34%	37%	34%
Mean score [1-5]		2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8

Fuel and transport		Workers with income below \$52k			
		Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>		444	485	475	442
Strongly disagree		13%	8%	12%	12%
Disagree		30%	27%	24%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree		17%	17%	18%	20%
Agree		31%	41%	38%	36%
Strongly agree		10%	6%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		43%	35%	37%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		40%	48%	46%	44%
Mean score [1-5]		2.9	3.1	3.0	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		Workers with income below \$52k			
		Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	438	486	477	446
Strongly disagree	14%	11%	16%	14%
Disagree	26%	29%	28%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	20%	20%	22%
Agree	30%	35%	29%	30%
Strongly agree	8%	5%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	40%	44%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	40%	36%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

Workers with income below \$52k

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	416	436	433	404
Strongly disagree	12%	8%	13%	13%
Disagree	23%	27%	22%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	26%	26%	29%
Agree	29%	35%	32%	30%
Strongly agree	8%	4%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	35%	36%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	39%	39%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

Childcare expenses

Workers with income below \$52k

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	309	325	321	285
Strongly disagree	11%	11%	15%	11%
Disagree	21%	18%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	44%	43%	40%	42%
Agree	18%	25%	22%	22%
Strongly agree	7%	5%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	28%	33%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	24%	30%	27%	27%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Weighted			
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	444	445	790	787
Strongly disagree	14%	13%	6%	10%
Disagree	23%	27%	19%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	17%	19%	16%
Agree	36%	34%	43%	43%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	13%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	40%	25%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	43%	56%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Weighted			
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	444	445	789	784
Strongly disagree	16%	13%	8%	10%

Disagree	26%	26%	20%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	18%	21%	20%
Agree	33%	36%	41%	38%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	10%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	42%	38%	28%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	43%	51%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				Wo
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	409	409	752	750
Strongly disagree	18%	20%	10%	14%
Disagree	26%	26%	22%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	21%	22%	22%
Agree	27%	27%	37%	32%
Strongly agree	7%	5%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	44%	46%	32%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	33%	46%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.7	3.1	2.9

Fuel and transport				Wo
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	440	443	784	784
Strongly disagree	15%	10%	8%	12%
Disagree	25%	28%	23%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	19%	20%	18%
Agree	34%	37%	38%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	11%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	37%	31%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	44%	49%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				Wo
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	442	447	784	781
Strongly disagree	13%	16%	8%	8%
Disagree	28%	25%	18%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	23%	26%	25%
Agree	33%	30%	38%	37%
Strongly agree	7%	6%	10%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	41%	26%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	36%	49%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.3	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)			Wo	
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	395	414	717	717
Strongly disagree	15%	11%	6%	8%
Disagree	20%	21%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	29%	26%	29%
Agree	30%	32%	38%	35%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	12%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	32%	24%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	39%	50%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.2

Childcare expenses			Wo	
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	277	286	555	563
Strongly disagree	13%	11%	8%	8%
Disagree	18%	19%	18%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	45%	49%	43%	46%
Agree	17%	17%	24%	22%
Strongly agree	6%	5%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	29%	26%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	23%	22%	31%	29%
Mean score [1-5]	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Personal

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100
 See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.
 Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	886	871	916	869
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	6%	11%
Disagree	24%	25%	23%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	16%	16%	18%
Agree	45%	39%	46%	39%
Strongly agree	10%	11%	9%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	34%	29%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	50%	55%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.1

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
n=	883	871	916	868
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	10%	11%

Disagree	26%	25%	25%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	17%	18%
Agree	40%	39%	39%	37%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	36%	35%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	48%	48%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	830	838	879	827
Strongly disagree	13%	16%	14%	18%
Disagree	28%	29%	30%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	20%	20%
Agree	35%	30%	31%	29%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	6%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	45%	44%	44%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	38%	37%	36%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	882	867	909	865
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	7%	12%
Disagree	25%	26%	22%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	17%	18%	18%
Agree	39%	39%	44%	38%
Strongly agree	9%	9%	9%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	35%	29%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	48%	53%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	878	867	910	864
Strongly disagree	10%	12%	9%	12%
Disagree	25%	25%	25%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	23%	20%	22%
Agree	36%	32%	39%	32%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	37%	34%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	40%	46%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k

	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	806	816	842	799
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	8%	10%
Disagree	23%	22%	22%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	23%	27%	28%
Agree	36%	36%	35%	35%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	31%	29%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	46%	44%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1

Childcare expenses

Workers with income \$52k to less than \$104k

	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	601	612	627	581
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	8%	11%
Disagree	22%	19%	17%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%	44%	47%	44%
Agree	21%	20%	23%	23%
Strongly agree	6%	6%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	30%	25%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	27%	26%	29%	28%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.9

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Annual pre-tax income (workers)

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your income is sufficient to cover your costs/expenses?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	886	543	594	523
Strongly disagree	8%	3%	4%	7%
Disagree	23%	14%	16%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	12%	17%	12%
Agree	40%	51%	48%	49%
Strongly agree	10%	21%	16%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	17%	20%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	71%	63%	62%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.7	3.5	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	886	542	594	523
Strongly disagree	10%	5%	6%	7%

Disagree	25%	14%	21%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	14%	15%	13%
Agree	40%	48%	45%	47%
Strongly agree	8%	20%	13%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	19%	27%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	67%	57%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.6	3.4	3.3

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	856	523	575	512	
Strongly disagree	16%	5%	8%	10%	
Disagree	28%	16%	22%	22%	
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	19%	20%	18%	
Agree	30%	44%	39%	41%	
Strongly agree	9%	16%	12%	9%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	44%	21%	29%	32%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	60%	51%	50%	
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.5	3.3	3.2	

Fuel and transport		Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	
<i>n</i> =	885	542	594	523	
Strongly disagree	8%	4%	6%	6%	
Disagree	23%	14%	19%	21%	
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	16%	18%	16%	
Agree	41%	48%	43%	46%	
Strongly agree	9%	17%	14%	11%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	18%	25%	27%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	66%	57%	57%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.3	

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	

<i>n</i> =	885	541	589	523
Strongly disagree	11%	4%	5%	7%
Disagree	28%	12%	18%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	18%	22%	19%
Agree	33%	48%	41%	45%
Strongly agree	8%	19%	13%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	39%	16%	24%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	67%	54%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.7	3.4	3.3

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	826	516	563	504
Strongly disagree	8%	3%	6%	5%
Disagree	22%	10%	13%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	18%	27%	22%
Agree	33%	48%	43%	45%
Strongly agree	11%	21%	12%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	13%	19%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	69%	55%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.7	3.4	3.4

Childcare expenses	Workers			
	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23
<i>n</i> =	586	404	453	383
Strongly disagree	11%	5%	5%	5%
Disagree	21%	12%	16%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	41%	31%	38%	35%
Agree	21%	35%	31%	31%
Strongly agree	6%	17%	10%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	17%	21%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	27%	52%	41%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.5	3.2	3.2

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100
 See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.
 Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		556	548	634	687
Strongly disagree		6%	5%	7%	5%
Disagree		18%	16%	19%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree		19%	15%	15%	14%
Agree		45%	50%	46%	49%
Strongly agree		12%	15%	14%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		24%	21%	25%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		57%	64%	60%	65%
Mean score [1-5]		3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		556	550	633	685
Strongly disagree		6%	7%	8%	6%

Disagree	19%	21%	22%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	18%	17%
Agree	44%	40%	42%	44%
Strongly agree	12%	14%	11%	15%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	28%	29%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	55%	53%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.4

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>		534	533	608	662
Strongly disagree		14%	9%	10%	10%
Disagree		23%	27%	25%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree		16%	21%	19%	22%
Agree		36%	32%	36%	37%
Strongly agree		10%	11%	11%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		37%	36%	35%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		47%	43%	47%	48%
Mean score [1-5]		3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2

Fuel and transport		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n=</i>		553	545	632	683
Strongly disagree		5%	5%	9%	5%
Disagree		20%	16%	20%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree		17%	18%	17%	17%
Agree		46%	48%	44%	47%
Strongly agree		12%	13%	11%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		25%	21%	28%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		58%	61%	55%	61%
Mean score [1-5]		3.4	3.5	3.3	3.5

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24

<i>n</i> =	555	548	632	684
Strongly disagree	7%	5%	7%	6%
Disagree	20%	18%	20%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	22%	20%	18%
Agree	44%	44%	42%	44%
Strongly agree	11%	11%	11%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	23%	27%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	55%	53%	57%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =		527	520	600	647
Strongly disagree		6%	4%	7%	4%
Disagree		19%	16%	18%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree		22%	24%	24%	24%
Agree		41%	39%	41%	44%
Strongly agree		11%	16%	11%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		25%	21%	24%	18%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		53%	55%	52%	58%
Mean score [1-5]		3.3	3.5	3.3	3.5

Childcare expenses		; with income \$104k+			
		Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =		411	408	476	495
Strongly disagree		9%	6%	7%	7%
Disagree		14%	18%	16%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree		44%	36%	38%	42%
Agree		25%	29%	27%	29%
Strongly agree		7%	12%	11%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		23%	24%	24%	20%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		33%	40%	38%	38%
Mean score [1-5]		3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers preferring not to			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	135	139	118	121
Strongly disagree	10%	11%	7%	14%
Disagree	18%	14%	22%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	24%	24%	22%
Agree	46%	43%	36%	40%
Strongly agree	10%	8%	12%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	25%	29%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	51%	48%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.0

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers preferring not to			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	134	139	117	121
Strongly disagree	7%	14%	9%	14%

Disagree	21%	15%	21%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	27%	26%	17%
Agree	37%	36%	33%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	11%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	30%	30%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	44%	44%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.0

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers preferring not to work			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	120	128	103	106
Strongly disagree	9%	18%	10%	21%
Disagree	26%	20%	26%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	29%	31%	27%
Agree	32%	25%	26%	29%
Strongly agree	5%	9%	7%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	35%	38%	36%	39%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	34%	33%	34%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8

Fuel and transport	Workers preferring not to work			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n=</i>	133	138	116	119
Strongly disagree	11%	11%	8%	12%
Disagree	20%	17%	24%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	23%	24%	20%
Agree	35%	41%	35%	37%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	9%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	28%	32%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	49%	44%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.0

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers preferring not to work			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23

<i>n</i> =	133	136	116	120
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	7%	13%
Disagree	22%	15%	22%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	32%	35%	35%	30%
Agree	29%	35%	28%	28%
Strongly agree	8%	4%	8%	4%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	26%	28%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	38%	39%	36%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers preferring not to			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	113	120	102	111
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	6%	9%
Disagree	19%	18%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	34%	33%	34%	37%
Agree	34%	33%	37%	30%
Strongly agree	6%	8%	5%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	26%	24%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	41%	42%	34%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.0

Childcare expenses	Workers preferring not to			
	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23
<i>n</i> =	76	88	63	74
Strongly disagree	8%	13%	3%	4%
Disagree	16%	15%	21%	12%
Neither agree nor disagree	53%	50%	44%	69%
Agree	18%	16%	27%	10%
Strongly agree	5%	7%	5%	5%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	27%	24%	16%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	24%	23%	32%	15%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	133	141	115	968
Strongly disagree	5%	12%	4%	6%
Disagree	22%	17%	35%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	21%	16%	18%
Agree	42%	43%	40%	45%
Strongly agree	10%	6%	5%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%	29%	39%	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	50%	45%	58%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.4

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	131	141	115	966
Strongly disagree	6%	14%	6%	7%

Disagree	28%	20%	34%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	18%	20%	19%
Agree	31%	40%	36%	42%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	4%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	34%	40%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	48%	40%	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.3

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	118	131	106	909
Strongly disagree	10%	16%	9%	9%
Disagree	30%	18%	24%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	25%	32%	24%
Agree	25%	34%	31%	35%
Strongly agree	6%	6%	4%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	40%	34%	33%	31%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	31%	41%	35%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.1

Fuel and transport	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n=</i>	131	140	114	964
Strongly disagree	8%	14%	4%	7%
Disagree	19%	21%	26%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	21%	24%	20%
Agree	47%	40%	41%	40%
Strongly agree	6%	5%	4%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	34%	31%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	45%	46%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.0	3.1	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22

<i>n</i> =	131	140	114	966
Strongly disagree	7%	11%	8%	7%
Disagree	24%	23%	30%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	29%	22%	27%	24%
Agree	37%	37%	32%	39%
Strongly agree	4%	6%	4%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	34%	38%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	44%	35%	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.3

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	119	125	103	865
Strongly disagree	7%	10%	4%	6%
Disagree	18%	14%	20%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	37%	32%	26%	25%
Agree	32%	36%	46%	40%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	4%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	25%	24%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	43%	50%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4

Childcare expenses	› say income			
	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22
<i>n</i> =	77	87	72	654
Strongly disagree	5%	8%	7%	7%
Disagree	18%	16%	25%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	55%	56%	49%	41%
Agree	17%	16%	15%	26%
Strongly agree	5%	3%	4%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	24%	32%	23%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	22%	20%	19%	35%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers in award reliant industries			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	932	958	944	953
Strongly disagree	9%	9%	9%	7%
Disagree	19%	22%	25%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	16%	18%	16%
Agree	45%	43%	40%	46%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	31%	34%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	53%	48%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers in award reliant industries			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	929	957	945	952
Strongly disagree	11%	10%	12%	9%

Disagree	23%	26%	25%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	16%	17%	18%
Agree	38%	40%	39%	40%
Strongly agree	8%	8%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	36%	37%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	47%	48%	47%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers in award reliant industries			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	882	895	907	907
Strongly disagree	13%	14%	18%	13%
Disagree	24%	27%	26%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	20%	18%	21%
Agree	33%	32%	32%	30%
Strongly agree	8%	7%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	40%	43%	42%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	41%	40%	39%	37%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9

Fuel and transport	Workers in award reliant industries			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n=</i>	927	954	937	940
Strongly disagree	11%	9%	10%	7%
Disagree	23%	26%	24%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	18%	19%
Agree	40%	39%	39%	45%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	8%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	35%	34%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	48%	48%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers in award reliant industries			
	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23

<i>n</i> =	922	954	939	945
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	13%	9%
Disagree	22%	26%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	21%	22%	22%
Agree	36%	35%	33%	38%
Strongly agree	7%	7%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	36%	38%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	43%	40%	45%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

Workers in award reliant industries

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	858	873	881	871
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	11%	7%
Disagree	19%	24%	22%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	25%	24%	28%
Agree	36%	36%	36%	35%
Strongly agree	9%	8%	8%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	32%	33%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	44%	43%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2

Childcare expenses

Workers in award reliant industries

	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23
<i>n</i> =	665	644	662	627
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	12%	8%
Disagree	16%	20%	17%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	46%	42%	45%	42%
Agree	23%	22%	20%	26%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	6%	6%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	28%	29%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	30%	30%	26%	32%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Industry type (workers)

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	1,022	1,003	975	1,031
Strongly disagree	12%	9%	6%	8%
Disagree	22%	24%	17%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	16%	16%	16%
Agree	41%	40%	46%	42%
Strongly agree	8%	11%	15%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	34%	33%	23%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	51%	61%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	1,022	1,001	973	1,030
Strongly disagree	13%	9%	8%	9%

Disagree	25%	26%	19%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	17%	19%	17%
Agree	37%	39%	42%	38%
Strongly agree	6%	9%	12%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	36%	27%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	48%	55%	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	965	959	921	981
Strongly disagree	17%	17%	9%	12%
Disagree	25%	24%	21%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	20%	19%	19%
Agree	31%	30%	40%	33%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	41%	41%	30%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	37%	39%	51%	44%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.0

Fuel and transport				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n=</i>	1,015	999	965	1,033
Strongly disagree	12%	7%	8%	10%
Disagree	24%	24%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	18%	19%	17%
Agree	38%	40%	40%	38%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	12%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	36%	32%	29%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	45%	50%	52%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)				
	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22

<i>n</i> =	1,017	1,003	963	1,022
Strongly disagree	12%	11%	7%	8%
Disagree	26%	28%	19%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	20%	23%	23%
Agree	33%	34%	40%	37%
Strongly agree	7%	8%	12%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	38%	25%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	40%	42%	52%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.2

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	930	922	894	958
Strongly disagree	12%	8%	6%	8%
Disagree	17%	21%	14%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	26%	24%	28%
Agree	35%	37%	41%	36%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	15%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	29%	20%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%	46%	56%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.2

Childcare expenses

	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22
<i>n</i> =	676	652	685	748
Strongly disagree	12%	10%	7%	8%
Disagree	17%	19%	16%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	44%	44%	40%	41%
Agree	21%	19%	27%	24%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	10%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%	30%	23%	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	27%	26%	37%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

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WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	1,056	1,086	1,093	1,066
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	8%	9%
Disagree	23%	21%	21%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	17%	15%	17%
Agree	46%	42%	44%	41%
Strongly agree	10%	12%	12%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	30%	29%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	53%	56%	52%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	1,055	1,083	1,091	1,064
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	11%	10%

Disagree	23%	23%	23%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	17%	18%	17%
Agree	42%	40%	36%	39%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	33%	34%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%	51%	48%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	996	1,017	1,041	1,010
Strongly disagree	12%	16%	14%	14%
Disagree	25%	26%	27%	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	18%	21%	20%
Agree	37%	32%	30%	31%
Strongly agree	7%	9%	8%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%	41%	41%	40%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	41%	38%	41%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.0

Fuel and transport	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n=</i>	1,052	1,077	1,087	1,062
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	8%	11%
Disagree	23%	23%	21%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	16%	18%	17%
Agree	43%	42%	42%	40%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	12%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	32%	28%	34%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	52%	54%	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23

<i>n</i> =	1,049	1,080	1,090	1,061
Strongly disagree	8%	11%	9%	10%
Disagree	23%	23%	23%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	22%	22%	20%
Agree	40%	35%	38%	37%
Strongly agree	8%	9%	9%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	34%	31%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	45%	47%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	975	1,006	1,014	989
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	9%	8%
Disagree	21%	20%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	25%	27%	26%
Agree	40%	36%	35%	36%
Strongly agree	9%	11%	11%	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%	28%	27%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%	47%	46%	46%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2

Childcare expenses	Workers not in award reliant industries			
	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23
<i>n</i> =	728	756	770	745
Strongly disagree	7%	10%	7%	8%
Disagree	20%	17%	18%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	39%	44%	44%	42%
Agree	28%	23%	23%	24%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	28%	27%	25%	25%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	34%	29%	31%	33%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Affordability without significant financial stress

Data collected Quarter 3, 2022 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 4-10)

Affordability

Data not shown where $n < 30$. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100. See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data. Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	
	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,130
Strongly disagree	7%
Disagree	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%
Agree	43%
Strongly agree	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	
	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,130
Strongly disagree	9%

Disagree	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%
Agree	41%
Strongly agree	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	51%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	
Qtr1 24	
<i>n=</i>	1,074
Strongly disagree	13%
Disagree	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%
Agree	33%
Strongly agree	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0

Fuel and transport	
Qtr1 24	
<i>n=</i>	1,126
Strongly disagree	7%
Disagree	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%
Agree	44%
Strongly agree	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	
Qtr1 24	

<i>n</i> =	1,127
Strongly disagree	10%
Disagree	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%
Agree	38%
Strongly agree	10%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)

	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	1,068
Strongly disagree	6%
Disagree	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%
Agree	38%
Strongly agree	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	49%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3

Childcare expenses

	Qtr1 24
<i>n</i> =	787
Strongly disagree	9%
Disagree	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	42%
Agree	25%
Strongly agree	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	26%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%
Mean score [1-5]	3.0

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Extended time series data - select groups and metrics
Data collected Quarter 4, 2021 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 1-10)

All workers

Please note: This worksheet contains data across all waves of research for select worker groups.

It should be noted that in Q3 2022, a [methodological change](#) was made to the sampling for the research, updating to latest Census data and adjusting to interlocking age & gender quotas with a state overlay and revised targets. This update should be considered a Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100%, due to rounding and some categories being hidden due to low sample.

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your household will be able to afford the following costs without significant financial stress...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	All workers											
	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
n=	2,294	570	2,287	1,943	1,963	2,014	2,030	2,046	2,088	2,133	491	
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	6%	6%	9%	8%	9%	7%	10%	8%	6%	
Disagree	11%	12%	18%	18%	20%	23%	23%	21%	22%	23%	17%	
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	14%	16%	17%	17%	15%	17%	16%	17%	16%	19%	
Agree	49%	52%	47%	45%	44%	45%	41%	45%	41%	42%	49%	
Strongly agree	18%	18%	13%	14%	11%	10%	10%	11%	10%	11%	10%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	16%	24%	24%	28%	30%	32%	29%	32%	30%	23%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	67%	70%	60%	59%	54%	55%	51%	56%	51%	53%	58%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.4	

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	All workers											
	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
n=	2,290	568	2,282	1,939	1,959	2,012	2,028	2,043	2,086	2,131	488	
Strongly disagree	5%	5%	6%	7%	10%	9%	11%	10%	11%	9%	8%	
Disagree	14%	14%	19%	20%	24%	25%	24%	24%	24%	24%	20%	
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	17%	18%	19%	19%	17%	17%	18%	18%	18%	23%	
Agree	44%	49%	45%	42%	38%	41%	39%	38%	38%	40%	41%	
Strongly agree	16%	16%	12%	12%	10%	9%	10%	10%	8%	10%	9%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	19%	25%	27%	34%	33%	34%	35%	36%	33%	28%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	60%	64%	57%	54%	47%	50%	49%	47%	46%	50%	50%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	All workers											
	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
n=	2,230	553	2,194	1,830	1,863	1,891	1,924	1,948	1,975	2,033	472	
Strongly disagree	9%	11%	10%	9%	13%	13%	17%	14%	15%	15%	14%	

Disagree	15%	15%	22%	22%	24%	26%	26%	28%	25%	24%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	18%	19%	22%	21%	20%	18%	21%	21%	20%	23%
Agree	40%	42%	38%	37%	33%	35%	32%	30%	31%	32%	35%
Strongly agree	14%	15%	10%	11%	9%	7%	8%	8%	8%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	25%	33%	31%	37%	39%	42%	42%	40%	39%	35%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	57%	49%	48%	42%	42%	40%	38%	39%	41%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0

Fuel and transport	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,289	564	2,273	1,929	1,960	2,006	2,014	2,027	2,077	2,125	489
Strongly disagree	6%	7%	10%	7%	10%	7%	9%	7%	12%	7%	10%
Disagree	14%	14%	24%	21%	23%	25%	24%	21%	23%	22%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	18%	16%	20%	18%	18%	17%	18%	18%	19%	25%
Agree	42%	45%	39%	40%	39%	41%	41%	44%	39%	42%	38%
Strongly agree	16%	16%	11%	12%	9%	9%	9%	10%	8%	10%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	20%	21%	33%	28%	34%	32%	33%	29%	35%	29%	28%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	59%	61%	51%	52%	49%	50%	50%	53%	47%	52%	47%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.3	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,282	565	2,271	1,929	1,944	2,003	2,019	2,035	2,078	2,130	484
Strongly disagree	6%	6%	7%	7%	9%	9%	12%	9%	11%	10%	9%
Disagree	16%	20%	21%	18%	22%	24%	24%	23%	25%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	19%	21%	23%	24%	21%	22%	22%	21%	21%	26%
Agree	40%	41%	41%	40%	37%	38%	34%	38%	35%	36%	34%
Strongly agree	15%	14%	11%	12%	9%	8%	8%	8%	8%	9%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	26%	28%	25%	31%	33%	36%	32%	36%	35%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	55%	51%	52%	45%	45%	43%	46%	44%	45%	42%
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,159	502	2,103	1,759	1,816	1,848	1,887	1,885	1,919	1,990	448
Strongly disagree	5%	6%	6%	6%	8%	7%	9%	8%	10%	7%	9%
Disagree	14%	15%	17%	16%	18%	22%	21%	20%	19%	19%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	21%	25%	25%	28%	25%	24%	27%	27%	26%	30%
Agree	41%	44%	42%	41%	36%	38%	36%	35%	36%	37%	37%
Strongly agree	14%	15%	11%	13%	9%	8%	9%	10%	9%	10%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	18%	21%	23%	21%	26%	29%	30%	28%	29%	26%	27%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	59%	52%	54%	45%	46%	45%	45%	44%	48%	43%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.1

Childcare expenses	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	1,700	389	1,663	1,339	1,413	1,372	1,418	1,397	1,421	1,439	347
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	7%	7%	8%	8%	11%	8%	10%	10%	12%
Disagree	14%	16%	17%	16%	18%	20%	17%	18%	17%	18%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	40%	39%	39%	41%	43%	40%	45%	43%	43%	43%	40%
Agree	29%	28%	28%	26%	24%	25%	21%	24%	23%	23%	20%

Strongly agree	10%	8%	9%	10%	8%	7%	6%	8%	7%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	25%	24%	23%	26%	28%	28%	26%	27%	27%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	36%	37%	36%	31%	32%	27%	32%	30%	30%	27%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,292	564	2,272	1,924	1,958	2,011	2,025	2,039	2,083	2,129	493
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	7%	9%	12%	14%	15%	14%	16%	16%	14%
Disagree	18%	19%	24%	25%	29%	32%	33%	31%	31%	30%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	33%	30%	29%	28%	27%	24%	23%	24%	24%	24%	32%
Agree	31%	33%	28%	28%	25%	23%	22%	23%	22%	23%	24%
Strongly agree	12%	10%	11%	10%	8%	8%	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	27%	32%	34%	41%	45%	47%	46%	48%	46%	37%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	43%	43%	39%	38%	33%	31%	29%	31%	29%	30%	31%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.9

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,280	562	2,266	1,933	1,956	2,006	2,018	2,020	2,071	2,130	488
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Disagree	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	20%	15%	16%	17%	14%	13%	13%	14%	14%	17%
Agree	37%	40%	42%	42%	42%	43%	41%	43%	42%	40%	34%
Strongly agree	31%	33%	36%	34%	35%	37%	40%	38%	38%	40%	44%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	9%	7%	8%	8%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	68%	73%	77%	76%	77%	80%	81%	81%	80%	80%	78%
Mean score [1-5]	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2

I earn enough to pay my bills	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,286	565	2,277	1,933	1,956	2,007	2,023	2,044	2,084	2,127	492
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	7%
Disagree	9%	10%	12%	10%	12%	13%	14%	12%	13%	13%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	17%	18%	17%	20%	20%	18%	20%	19%	20%	23%
Agree	48%	48%	50%	51%	50%	48%	49%	50%	50%	49%	43%
Strongly agree	21%	21%	18%	20%	16%	16%	15%	16%	14%	15%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	12%	13%	15%	13%	15%	17%	18%	15%	17%	17%	22%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	68%	70%	68%	70%	66%	64%	64%	65%	64%	63%	55%
Mean score [1-5]	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.4

Financially, I am just getting along	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,279	561	2,272	1,938	1,962	2,008	2,026	2,034	2,087	2,127	490
Strongly disagree	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Disagree	16%	17%	17%	17%	16%	14%	16%	16%	14%	15%	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	19%	23%	25%	24%	22%	23%	23%	25%	24%	26%
Agree	39%	48%	44%	43%	45%	48%	46%	46%	45%	45%	44%
Strongly agree	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%	11%	12%	13%	13%	16%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	22%	21%	20%	20%	19%	17%	19%	19%	17%	19%	14%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	50%	60%	57%	55%	58%	62%	57%	58%	58%	57%	60%
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	18%	19%	13%	14%	15%	13%	14%	13%	14%	12%	21%
A little worse	30%	29%	31%	30%	33%	35%	34%	36%	34%	34%	30%
No change	27%	28%	25%	27%	29%	28%	26%	27%	29%	29%	25%
A little better	17%	14%	22%	19%	16%	18%	17%	16%	15%	17%	15%
A lot better	5%	6%	5%	6%	4%	3%	4%	5%	5%	6%	3%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	5%	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	7%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	48%	48%	44%	43%	47%	47%	48%	48%	47%	45%	51%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	20%	27%	25%	20%	21%	21%	21%	20%	23%	18%

Unemployment	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	21%	16%	12%	11%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	32%
A little worse	32%	28%	20%	18%	25%	27%	27%	27%	30%	30%	32%
No change	22%	26%	22%	22%	27%	26%	29%	30%	31%	32%	16%
A little better	19%	24%	33%	33%	27%	25%	24%	24%	21%	21%	15%
A lot better	5%	4%	12%	14%	8%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	52%	44%	32%	29%	37%	40%	39%	38%	42%	42%	64%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	24%	29%	45%	47%	36%	32%	30%	30%	25%	25%	19%

The economy overall	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	21%	23%	23%	27%	33%	32%	36%	34%	32%	27%	27%
A little worse	35%	36%	37%	37%	40%	39%	37%	39%	40%	37%	37%
No change	20%	18%	16%	15%	12%	13%	12%	12%	14%	15%	18%
A little better	18%	18%	18%	15%	11%	12%	11%	12%	10%	16%	12%
A lot better	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	56%	59%	60%	64%	73%	71%	73%	72%	73%	65%	65%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	21%	22%	20%	14%	14%	13%	15%	13%	19%	16%

Wages	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	12%	12%	17%	15%	18%	18%	18%	15%	16%	15%	17%
A little worse	23%	27%	26%	25%	27%	27%	26%	27%	27%	27%	22%
No change	42%	44%	36%	32%	35%	34%	36%	31%	33%	32%	40%
A little better	17%	13%	16%	23%	17%	18%	17%	25%	19%	22%	17%
A lot better	4%	3%	5%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	36%	39%	42%	40%	44%	44%	44%	42%	44%	42%	39%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	21%	16%	20%	27%	20%	21%	19%	27%	23%	25%	20%

National debt	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494

A lot worse	40%	39%	38%	36%	40%	34%	35%	29%	32%	26%	41%
A little worse	27%	29%	29%	30%	31%	33%	33%	33%	31%	31%	26%
No change	18%	16%	16%	18%	16%	19%	18%	19%	21%	23%	19%
A little better	8%	8%	10%	9%	8%	8%	8%	13%	10%	13%	7%
A lot better	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Don't know	3%	4%	4%	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	67%	68%	67%	66%	71%	67%	68%	62%	63%	57%	67%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	13%	13%	13%	10%	11%	10%	16%	12%	16%	9%

Job security overall	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	17%	14%	12%	10%	11%	11%	13%	11%	14%	10%	26%
A little worse	31%	34%	25%	24%	25%	31%	30%	32%	30%	31%	31%
No change	27%	27%	32%	32%	36%	34%	34%	35%	35%	36%	25%
A little better	17%	19%	24%	25%	22%	19%	18%	17%	15%	18%	12%
A lot better	6%	4%	6%	7%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	48%	48%	37%	34%	36%	42%	42%	42%	44%	42%	57%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	23%	30%	32%	27%	23%	22%	21%	19%	22%	16%

Cost of living	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	30%	40%	55%	59%	63%	64%	69%	67%	69%	63%	41%
A little worse	40%	38%	26%	24%	25%	25%	21%	23%	21%	23%	36%
No change	16%	11%	8%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	14%
A little better	8%	8%	7%	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	7%	7%
A lot better	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	70%	78%	82%	83%	87%	89%	90%	90%	89%	86%	76%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	11%	10%	10%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	9%	9%

Electricity costs	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	20%	21%	29%	45%	54%	47%	49%	57%	55%	47%	25%
A little worse	37%	43%	41%	34%	31%	37%	36%	30%	31%	34%	35%
No change	27%	22%	16%	9%	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%	10%	26%
A little better	10%	10%	9%	8%	6%	5%	4%	5%	4%	6%	9%
A lot better	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	57%	64%	70%	79%	85%	84%	85%	87%	86%	81%	60%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	15%	13%	12%	11%	8%	7%	6%	7%	7%	8%	13%

Company profits for large companies	All workers										
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21
n=	2,307	570	2,292	1,948	1,968	2,016	2,036	2,049	2,093	2,138	494
A lot worse	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%
A little worse	13%	13%	12%	11%	13%	13%	11%	11%	9%	8%	14%
No change	31%	30%	29%	29%	29%	27%	25%	24%	23%	23%	30%
A little better	27%	26%	29%	27%	28%	28%	27%	29%	26%	28%	24%
A lot better	20%	22%	21%	23%	22%	24%	28%	27%	32%	33%	19%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	7%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	18%	18%	16%	16%	18%	18%	16%	17%	15%	13%	20%

Nett: A lot better & a little better

47%

48%

50%

50%

50%

51%

55%

55%

59%

61%

43%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Extended time series data - select groups and metrics
Data collected Quarter 4, 2021 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 1-10)

Personal annual pre-tax income (workers)

Please note: This worksheet contains data across all waves of research for select worker groups.

It should be noted that in Q3 2022, a [methodological change](#) was made to the sampling for the research, updating to a [break in the time series data](#) and comparison with previous waves should be undertaken with caution. Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100

See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.

Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your I

Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries	Workers with income below \$52k											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
n=	151	556	475	443	487	482	449	444	445	1,098	300	
Strongly disagree	6%	9%	7%	11%	9%	12%	14%	14%	13%	5%	3%	
Disagree	15%	25%	20%	24%	25%	26%	24%	23%	27%	11%	14%	
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	18%	20%	18%	17%	15%	15%	19%	17%	20%	14%	
Agree	48%	41%	43%	38%	42%	38%	39%	36%	34%	48%	53%	
Strongly agree	16%	8%	9%	9%	7%	8%	9%	8%	9%	17%	15%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	33%	28%	35%	34%	38%	38%	38%	40%	16%	18%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	64%	49%	52%	47%	50%	47%	48%	44%	43%	65%	68%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.6	3.6	

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)	Workers with income below \$52k											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
n=	151	552	474	442	489	480	446	444	445	1,095	299	
Strongly disagree	5%	11%	10%	14%	10%	14%	16%	16%	13%	5%	5%	
Disagree	17%	26%	24%	28%	27%	28%	27%	26%	26%	15%	16%	
Neither agree nor disagree	23%	17%	19%	18%	20%	15%	18%	19%	18%	22%	16%	
Agree	44%	38%	38%	30%	37%	35%	33%	33%	36%	43%	49%	
Strongly agree	11%	7%	9%	10%	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%	15%	15%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	23%	37%	34%	42%	37%	42%	42%	42%	38%	20%	20%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	55%	46%	48%	40%	43%	43%	40%	39%	43%	58%	63%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.5	3.5	

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)	Workers with income below \$52k											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
n=	144	533	435	410	446	446	418	409	409	1,067	289	
Strongly disagree	15%	17%	12%	17%	15%	20%	19%	18%	20%	9%	12%	

Disagree	15%	27%	26%	27%	28%	24%	25%	26%	26%	15%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	20%	22%	19%	23%	19%	22%	23%	21%	23%	15%
Agree	40%	30%	32%	29%	29%	32%	28%	27%	27%	40%	43%
Strongly agree	13%	7%	8%	8%	5%	5%	6%	7%	5%	13%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	30%	43%	38%	44%	43%	44%	45%	44%	46%	25%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	53%	37%	40%	38%	34%	37%	34%	34%	33%	53%	56%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	2.8	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	3.3	3.3

Fuel and transport											Workers with income below \$52k	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	149	549	470	444	485	475	442	440	443	1,091	297	
Strongly disagree	9%	14%	9%	13%	8%	12%	12%	15%	10%	6%	7%	
Disagree	15%	31%	26%	30%	27%	24%	25%	25%	28%	14%	17%	
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	16%	21%	17%	17%	18%	20%	19%	19%	24%	18%	
Agree	43%	32%	37%	31%	41%	38%	36%	34%	37%	41%	44%	
Strongly agree	13%	8%	7%	10%	6%	8%	7%	7%	7%	15%	14%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	25%	45%	35%	43%	35%	37%	37%	41%	37%	20%	24%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	56%	39%	44%	40%	48%	46%	44%	41%	44%	56%	58%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	2.9	3.1	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.4	3.4	

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)											Workers with income below \$52k	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	150	550	471	438	486	477	446	442	447	1,086	298	
Strongly disagree	8%	12%	9%	14%	11%	16%	14%	13%	16%	6%	6%	
Disagree	24%	27%	24%	26%	29%	28%	27%	28%	25%	16%	22%	
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	21%	24%	23%	20%	20%	22%	20%	23%	26%	20%	
Agree	30%	33%	35%	30%	35%	29%	30%	33%	30%	38%	38%	
Strongly agree	14%	7%	9%	8%	5%	7%	7%	7%	6%	14%	14%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	32%	39%	33%	39%	40%	44%	40%	41%	41%	23%	28%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	44%	40%	44%	38%	40%	36%	37%	39%	36%	52%	53%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.4	3.3	

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)											Workers with income below \$52k	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	128	496	413	416	436	433	404	395	414	1,030	262	
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	8%	12%	8%	13%	13%	15%	11%	6%	5%	
Disagree	16%	23%	18%	23%	27%	22%	21%	20%	21%	14%	19%	
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	27%	29%	29%	26%	26%	29%	28%	29%	28%	18%	
Agree	39%	34%	38%	29%	35%	32%	30%	30%	32%	40%	44%	
Strongly agree	13%	7%	7%	8%	4%	7%	7%	8%	7%	12%	14%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	33%	26%	34%	35%	36%	35%	34%	32%	19%	24%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	52%	40%	46%	37%	39%	39%	36%	38%	39%	52%	58%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.3	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.4	

Childcare expenses											Workers with income below \$52k	
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>												
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	93	387	304	309	325	321	285	277	286	799	201	
Strongly disagree	12%	11%	8%	11%	11%	15%	11%	13%	11%	8%	10%	
Disagree	19%	20%	18%	21%	18%	18%	20%	18%	19%	15%	20%	
Neither agree nor disagree	45%	42%	46%	44%	43%	40%	42%	45%	49%	42%	36%	
Agree	17%	20%	21%	18%	25%	22%	22%	17%	17%	26%	27%	

Strongly agree	7%	7%	7%	7%	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%	10%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	31%	32%	26%	31%	28%	33%	31%	32%	29%	23%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	24%	27%	27%	24%	30%	27%	27%	23%	22%	36%	34%
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.0

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	151	553	470	442	488	479	445	444	446	1,093	297	
Strongly disagree	11%	13%	12%	16%	14%	18%	17%	20%	20%	7%	7%	
Disagree	27%	29%	28%	32%	35%	39%	31%	35%	30%	19%	23%	
Neither agree nor disagree	31%	28%	31%	27%	25%	19%	26%	23%	27%	32%	30%	
Agree	27%	21%	23%	17%	19%	19%	21%	19%	18%	30%	34%	
Strongly agree	5%	8%	6%	8%	7%	4%	6%	4%	5%	12%	7%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	38%	42%	40%	49%	49%	57%	48%	55%	50%	26%	29%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	32%	30%	29%	25%	26%	24%	26%	22%	23%	42%	41%	
Mean score [1-5]	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.6	3.2	3.1	

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	149	544	472	442	486	477	439	443	446	1,089	296	
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	
Disagree	5%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%	3%	5%	5%	
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	13%	16%	14%	15%	12%	11%	15%	10%	20%	18%	
Agree	45%	39%	42%	41%	39%	41%	40%	38%	40%	38%	40%	
Strongly agree	34%	45%	36%	41%	42%	43%	46%	45%	47%	35%	36%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	6%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	7%	6%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	79%	84%	79%	81%	81%	84%	86%	83%	86%	73%	75%	
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.0	

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	150	551	470	443	488	477	447	443	446	1,094	297	
Strongly disagree	8%	7%	5%	6%	5%	7%	7%	7%	9%	3%	3%	
Disagree	13%	22%	17%	19%	22%	23%	21%	19%	20%	10%	10%	
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	20%	24%	24%	24%	20%	23%	21%	25%	21%	21%	
Agree	43%	42%	44%	42%	40%	41%	40%	46%	37%	46%	46%	
Strongly agree	11%	9%	11%	10%	10%	9%	9%	7%	9%	20%	20%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	21%	29%	22%	24%	26%	30%	28%	26%	29%	13%	13%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	54%	51%	55%	52%	49%	50%	49%	53%	46%	66%	66%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.7	3.7	

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22	
n=	151	550	476	444	489	481	446	446	444	1,089	296	
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	2%	4%	5%	5%	3%	
Disagree	13%	14%	12%	11%	12%	13%	12%	11%	12%	14%	17%	
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	17%	23%	21%	18%	22%	20%	21%	23%	28%	16%	
Agree	54%	50%	47%	49%	52%	48%	50%	48%	47%	40%	51%	
Strongly agree	13%	16%	15%	16%	16%	14%	15%	15%	13%	12%	13%	
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	15%	17%	15%	14%	14%	16%	14%	16%	17%	20%	20%	
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	68%	66%	62%	65%	68%	62%	66%	63%	60%	52%	64%	
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.6	

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses <i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Workers with income below \$52k										Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24			
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448		1,101	300
A lot worse	21%	17%	15%	17%	12%	17%	16%	15%	14%		18%	20%
A little worse	33%	32%	29%	32%	34%	30%	35%	33%	34%		30%	27%
No change	23%	21%	28%	29%	29%	26%	26%	31%	28%		28%	30%
A little better	15%	20%	18%	16%	17%	15%	16%	11%	15%		16%	14%
A lot better	3%	5%	4%	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%		5%	4%
Don't know	5%	5%	7%	4%	6%	9%	4%	5%	4%		4%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	54%	49%	43%	48%	46%	48%	50%	48%	49%		48%	47%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	18%	25%	22%	19%	19%	17%	20%	15%	20%		21%	19%

Unemployment <i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Workers with income below \$52k										Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24			
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448		1,101	300
A lot worse	22%	21%	15%	17%	17%	16%	13%	14%	18%		23%	18%
A little worse	35%	22%	20%	27%	27%	31%	29%	31%	30%		29%	30%
No change	19%	15%	23%	25%	28%	24%	28%	29%	33%		21%	25%
A little better	21%	31%	30%	24%	21%	21%	23%	19%	16%		19%	21%
A lot better	2%	9%	9%	7%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%		5%	4%
Don't know	1%	3%	3%	1%	4%	4%	3%	3%	1%		2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	57%	42%	35%	43%	44%	47%	42%	45%	47%		53%	48%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	23%	40%	39%	30%	24%	26%	27%	23%	19%		24%	25%

The economy overall <i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Workers with income below \$52k										Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24			
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448		1,101	300
A lot worse	29%	28%	30%	35%	30%	40%	38%	39%	35%		22%	25%
A little worse	37%	37%	37%	38%	41%	34%	36%	35%	32%		35%	36%
No change	18%	14%	16%	12%	14%	11%	13%	14%	15%		20%	19%
A little better	15%	16%	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%	11%	14%		17%	16%
A lot better	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%		5%	3%
Don't know	1%	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%		2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	65%	67%	74%	71%	73%	74%	74%	67%		57%	61%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	16%	18%	15%	13%	12%	15%	13%	11%	17%		22%	19%

Wages <i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Workers with income below \$52k										Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24			
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448		1,101	300
A lot worse	15%	21%	15%	18%	15%	16%	15%	18%	18%		13%	12%
A little worse	31%	24%	24%	26%	27%	24%	25%	24%	23%		23%	28%
No change	42%	37%	31%	36%	36%	40%	29%	34%	35%		41%	44%
A little better	13%	12%	23%	17%	18%	16%	27%	20%	21%		17%	12%
A lot better	0%	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%		4%	2%
Don't know	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%		2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	45%	45%	40%	43%	42%	41%	40%	41%	41%		36%	40%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	13%	16%	26%	20%	20%	18%	29%	23%	23%		21%	15%

National debt <i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Workers with income below \$52k										Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24			
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448		1,101	300

A lot worse	44%	41%	34%	39%	31%	37%	29%	35%	28%	39%	40%
A little worse	29%	28%	30%	31%	36%	27%	34%	31%	32%	28%	29%
No change	15%	17%	19%	17%	19%	20%	19%	20%	23%	19%	16%
A little better	6%	8%	10%	8%	8%	8%	11%	8%	10%	7%	8%
A lot better	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Don't know	3%	5%	5%	3%	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%	3%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	73%	68%	64%	70%	67%	64%	63%	66%	60%	67%	69%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	9%	10%	12%	10%	9%	11%	14%	10%	13%	11%	12%

Job security overall											
Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448	1,101	300
A lot worse	17%	19%	13%	16%	13%	16%	16%	16%	15%	18%	14%
A little worse	40%	31%	29%	26%	32%	32%	30%	32%	32%	31%	35%
No change	23%	26%	29%	35%	35%	32%	35%	33%	36%	26%	27%
A little better	17%	18%	22%	19%	16%	13%	14%	14%	14%	17%	18%
A lot better	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%	2%	6%	4%
Don't know	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	57%	50%	42%	43%	45%	48%	45%	48%	46%	49%	49%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	19%	22%	26%	22%	18%	16%	18%	17%	16%	23%	22%

Cost of living											
Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448	1,101	300
A lot worse	46%	62%	60%	64%	65%	71%	68%	72%	63%	33%	43%
A little worse	38%	25%	24%	25%	27%	20%	24%	20%	24%	38%	36%
No change	9%	5%	7%	4%	4%	3%	4%	5%	6%	16%	11%
A little better	3%	5%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	6%	9%	7%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	4%	3%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	84%	87%	85%	89%	92%	91%	91%	92%	87%	71%	79%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	6%	7%	8%	7%	3%	6%	5%	4%	7%	13%	10%

Electricity costs											
Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448	1,101	300
A lot worse	22%	33%	44%	52%	44%	49%	58%	55%	48%	19%	22%
A little worse	44%	41%	37%	33%	40%	36%	29%	31%	34%	37%	41%
No change	25%	14%	8%	8%	11%	8%	7%	8%	12%	27%	22%
A little better	6%	6%	7%	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	10%	10%
A lot better	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	2%
Don't know	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	75%	82%	85%	84%	85%	88%	86%	82%	56%	63%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	7%	9%	9%	6%	5%	6%	5%	7%	5%	15%	13%

Company profits for large companies											
Workers with income below \$52k											
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>											
	Qtr1 22	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24	Qtr4 21	Qtr1 22
n=	151	556	477	445	489	483	449	446	448	1,101	300
A lot worse	9%	5%	5%	6%	6%	8%	8%	7%	7%	5%	6%
A little worse	12%	12%	16%	12%	13%	9%	12%	8%	7%	13%	14%
No change	26%	27%	29%	30%	30%	24%	27%	25%	26%	31%	29%
A little better	22%	27%	24%	27%	26%	27%	24%	27%	27%	25%	25%
A lot better	27%	22%	20%	22%	19%	26%	25%	30%	30%	21%	22%
Don't know	5%	7%	6%	4%	5%	7%	5%	3%	3%	4%	5%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	21%	17%	21%	18%	19%	17%	20%	15%	15%	19%	20%

Nett: A lot better & a little better

48%

49%

44%

48%

45%

53%

49%

57%

56%

46%

47%

J012 ASK Tracking Research - Data Tables

Extended time series data - select groups and metrics
Data collected Quarter 4, 2021 to Quarter 1, 2024 (Waves 1-10)

Industry type (workers)

Please note: This worksheet contains data across all waves of research for select worker groups.

It should be noted that in Q3 2022, a [methodological change](#) was made to the sampling for the research, updating to k Qtr 1 2022 (Wave 2) had a lower sample size and is expected to have greater variability.

Data not shown where n<30. Please note that data is included to one decimal place and may not sum to the total or 100
See About the Research and Definitions pages for more information about this data.
Respondents included people living in Australia aged 18+, with sub-sets as outlined.

WQ4. Thinking about your costs/expenses in the next 12 months, to what extent do you agree or disagree that your l
Base: All respondents. Single response. Excludes NA. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Food and groceries		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,156	968	932	958	944	953	1,022	1,003
Strongly disagree		6%	6%	9%	9%	9%	7%	12%	9%
Disagree		18%	19%	19%	22%	25%	22%	22%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree		17%	18%	18%	16%	18%	16%	18%	16%
Agree		46%	45%	45%	43%	40%	46%	41%	40%
Strongly agree		13%	13%	9%	11%	8%	9%	8%	11%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		24%	24%	28%	31%	34%	29%	34%	33%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		60%	58%	53%	53%	48%	55%	49%	51%
Mean score [1-5]		3.4	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.2

Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity, water)		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,154	966	929	957	945	952	1,022	1,001
Strongly disagree		6%	7%	11%	10%	12%	9%	13%	9%
Disagree		19%	20%	23%	26%	25%	26%	25%	26%
Neither agree nor disagree		19%	19%	20%	16%	17%	18%	20%	17%
Agree		45%	42%	38%	40%	39%	40%	37%	39%
Strongly agree		11%	12%	8%	8%	8%	8%	6%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		25%	27%	33%	36%	37%	35%	37%	36%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		57%	54%	47%	48%	47%	47%	43%	48%
Mean score [1-5]		3.4	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1

Housing (e.g. rent or mortgage payments)		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,111	909	882	895	907	907	965	959
Strongly disagree		10%	9%	13%	14%	18%	13%	17%	17%

Disagree	22%	22%	24%	27%	26%	29%	25%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	24%	22%	20%	18%	21%	22%	20%
Agree	38%	35%	33%	32%	32%	30%	31%	30%
Strongly agree	10%	10%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	31%	37%	40%	43%	42%	41%	41%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	48%	45%	41%	40%	39%	37%	37%	39%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9

Fuel and transport		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,150	964	927	954	937	940	1,015	999
Strongly disagree		9%	7%	11%	9%	10%	7%	12%	7%
Disagree		24%	21%	23%	26%	24%	22%	24%	24%
Neither agree nor disagree		16%	20%	18%	17%	18%	19%	19%	18%
Agree		39%	40%	40%	39%	39%	45%	38%	40%
Strongly agree		12%	12%	8%	9%	8%	7%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		33%	28%	34%	35%	34%	29%	36%	32%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		51%	52%	48%	48%	48%	52%	45%	50%
Mean score [1-5]		3.2	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.2

Medical / health (e.g. consultations, medication, other medical expenses, health insurance)		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,148	966	922	954	939	945	1,017	1,003
Strongly disagree		7%	7%	9%	11%	13%	9%	12%	11%
Disagree		21%	17%	22%	26%	25%	24%	26%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree		22%	24%	25%	21%	22%	22%	22%	20%
Agree		40%	39%	36%	35%	33%	38%	33%	34%
Strongly agree		11%	12%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		28%	25%	32%	36%	38%	34%	38%	38%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		50%	51%	43%	43%	40%	45%	40%	42%
Mean score [1-5]		3.3	3.3	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0

Personal debt (e.g. credit card bills, personal loan payments)		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,055	865	858	873	881	871	930	922
Strongly disagree		6%	6%	8%	8%	11%	7%	12%	8%
Disagree		17%	17%	19%	24%	22%	22%	17%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree		26%	25%	28%	25%	24%	28%	28%	26%
Agree		42%	40%	36%	36%	36%	35%	35%	37%
Strongly agree		10%	12%	9%	8%	8%	8%	7%	9%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree		22%	23%	27%	32%	33%	29%	30%	29%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree		52%	52%	45%	44%	43%	43%	42%	46%
Mean score [1-5]		3.3	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2

Childcare expenses		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		834	654	665	644	662	627	676	652
Strongly disagree		7%	7%	8%	9%	12%	8%	12%	10%
Disagree		17%	17%	16%	20%	17%	18%	17%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree		40%	41%	46%	42%	45%	42%	44%	44%
Agree		26%	26%	23%	22%	20%	26%	21%	19%

Strongly agree	10%	10%	7%	8%	6%	6%	6%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	24%	23%	25%	28%	29%	26%	29%	30%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	36%	35%	30%	30%	26%	32%	27%	26%
Mean score [1-5]	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9

WQ1. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

Base: All respondents. Single response. NA has been excluded. Mean score is rating of 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree

My household is better off financially now than at the same time last year	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,152	958	926	958	942	949	1,020	1,001
Strongly disagree	8%	10%	12%	14%	15%	14%	17%	17%
Disagree	26%	26%	31%	32%	34%	34%	31%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	28%	27%	27%	24%	23%	24%	24%	24%
Agree	29%	29%	24%	23%	23%	21%	23%	22%
Strongly agree	11%	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	5%	7%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	33%	35%	43%	46%	49%	48%	48%	48%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	39%	38%	30%	30%	28%	29%	28%	28%
Mean score [1-5]	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7

It's getting harder and harder to save for a comfortable retirement	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,142	960	925	952	937	941	1,014	1,004
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Disagree	6%	6%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	16%	16%	15%	11%	13%	13%	13%
Agree	43%	41%	44%	43%	43%	43%	43%	39%
Strongly agree	37%	35%	36%	37%	40%	39%	41%	42%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	6%	8%	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	80%	76%	80%	80%	83%	82%	83%	81%
Mean score [1-5]	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

I earn enough to pay my bills	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,149	960	928	955	942	952	1,021	1,001
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	6%	5%
Disagree	13%	10%	14%	15%	15%	13%	14%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	18%	21%	21%	19%	21%	20%	22%
Agree	50%	48%	47%	46%	49%	50%	49%	46%
Strongly agree	16%	20%	14%	15%	12%	13%	12%	13%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	17%	13%	18%	19%	20%	16%	19%	19%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	66%	68%	62%	60%	61%	63%	61%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5

Financially, I am just getting along	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,145	965	929	957	943	948	1,024	999
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	4%
Disagree	16%	15%	14%	14%	16%	14%	12%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	24%	24%	21%	23%	23%	25%	23%
Agree	46%	43%	47%	50%	48%	49%	47%	47%
Strongly agree	13%	13%	13%	13%	11%	12%	13%	12%
Nett: Strongly disagree & disagree	19%	19%	16%	16%	18%	17%	16%	18%
Nett: Strongly agree & agree	59%	57%	60%	63%	59%	60%	60%	59%
Mean score [1-5]	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

WQ2. Do you think the following have become better or worse, compared to 12 months ago...?

Base: All respondents. Single response. Includes DK.

Company profits for small businesses		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse		13%	15%	16%	13%	14%	12%	14%	12%
A little worse		32%	27%	34%	35%	35%	37%	34%	35%
No change		26%	29%	28%	27%	27%	26%	28%	27%
A little better		20%	18%	14%	17%	16%	16%	15%	16%
A lot better		5%	5%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%	6%
Don't know		5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse		45%	43%	50%	48%	49%	50%	49%	47%
Nett: A lot better & a little better		25%	23%	19%	20%	20%	20%	19%	22%

Unemployment		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse		12%	12%	13%	14%	14%	10%	14%	13%
A little worse		22%	18%	25%	27%	28%	29%	31%	31%
No change		22%	23%	26%	26%	29%	29%	30%	32%
A little better		32%	31%	27%	25%	23%	24%	20%	20%
A lot better		11%	14%	8%	5%	4%	5%	3%	3%
Don't know		2%	2%	1%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse		34%	30%	38%	41%	41%	40%	45%	44%
Nett: A lot better & a little better		42%	45%	35%	30%	28%	29%	23%	23%

The economy overall		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse		23%	28%	33%	32%	37%	34%	36%	30%
A little worse		37%	37%	40%	41%	38%	38%	38%	37%
No change		16%	15%	12%	13%	11%	13%	14%	14%
A little better		17%	15%	10%	12%	10%	11%	9%	15%
A lot better		5%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Don't know		2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse		60%	65%	74%	72%	75%	72%	74%	67%
Nett: A lot better & a little better		21%	19%	13%	14%	12%	13%	12%	18%

Wages		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse		17%	15%	16%	18%	18%	13%	19%	16%
A little worse		25%	23%	28%	27%	27%	26%	27%	28%
No change		38%	31%	36%	33%	36%	32%	31%	32%
A little better		15%	26%	17%	18%	16%	26%	19%	20%
A lot better		4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Don't know		2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse		42%	38%	44%	45%	45%	39%	46%	44%
Nett: A lot better & a little better		19%	30%	20%	21%	17%	29%	22%	23%

National debt		Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>		Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=		1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005

A lot worse	37%	35%	40%	34%	34%	29%	32%	27%
A little worse	29%	28%	30%	34%	33%	32%	33%	32%
No change	18%	19%	17%	18%	19%	20%	20%	21%
A little better	8%	10%	7%	8%	7%	11%	10%	12%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%
Don't know	5%	4%	3%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	66%	63%	70%	68%	67%	62%	65%	59%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	11%	13%	10%	10%	9%	14%	11%	15%

Job security overall	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse	13%	11%	13%	12%	15%	10%	15%	11%
A little worse	27%	24%	26%	30%	31%	32%	31%	33%
No change	30%	31%	35%	33%	34%	36%	34%	36%
A little better	23%	25%	21%	19%	15%	17%	15%	16%
A lot better	6%	7%	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	40%	35%	38%	42%	46%	42%	46%	45%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	29%	33%	26%	23%	18%	21%	19%	19%

Cost of living	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse	57%	58%	63%	65%	70%	68%	71%	66%
A little worse	26%	25%	25%	26%	21%	24%	19%	22%
No change	8%	7%	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%
A little better	7%	7%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%
A lot better	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	83%	83%	87%	91%	91%	91%	90%	88%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	10%	10%	8%	5%	5%	5%	5%	8%

Electricity costs	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse	28%	44%	54%	47%	47%	57%	54%	50%
A little worse	43%	34%	30%	39%	39%	30%	32%	32%
No change	16%	10%	7%	8%	8%	7%	8%	10%
A little better	9%	8%	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%
A lot better	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	70%	79%	84%	85%	86%	87%	86%	82%
Nett: A lot better & a little better	12%	11%	8%	5%	6%	6%	6%	8%

Company profits for large companies	Workers in award reliant industries							
<i>Interpret with caution with break in time series at Q3 2022</i>	Qtr2 22	Qtr3 22	Qtr4 22	Qtr1 23	Qtr2 23	Qtr3 23	Qtr4 23	Qtr1 24
n=	1,157	970	932	959	948	954	1,025	1,005
A lot worse	4%	4%	5%	4%	6%	5%	6%	6%
A little worse	13%	11%	13%	14%	11%	11%	8%	8%
No change	29%	30%	28%	27%	25%	25%	22%	23%
A little better	28%	26%	28%	28%	26%	29%	27%	26%
A lot better	21%	24%	22%	23%	28%	27%	33%	34%
Don't know	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%
Nett: A lot worse & a little worse	17%	15%	17%	18%	18%	16%	14%	14%

Nett: A lot better & a little better

49%

50%

50%

50%

54%

56%

60%

60%