

FOODBANK HUNGER REPORT 2023

National Key Findings Report

25 September, 2023

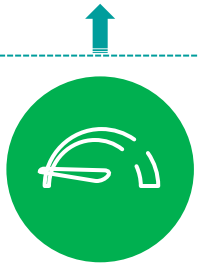


GAME CHANGERS



The *Foodbank Hunger Report* is an annual program of research providing insights into Australian households' experience with food affordability and their access to safe, nutritious food using a validated Food Security measurement framework.

USDA 18-point Household Food Security Measurement Framework (adopted since 2022)



Highly food secure

- Household had no indicator of problems or anxiety about consistently accessing adequate food.



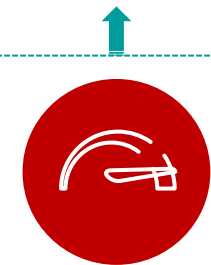
Marginally food secure

- Household had problems at times, or anxiety about accessing adequate food, but the quality, variety and quantity of their food was not substantially reduced.
- Somehow worry about whether food would run out before getting money to buy more.
- Occasionally couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.



Moderately food insecure

- Household reduced the quality, variety, and desirability of their diets, but the quantity of food intake and normal eating patterns were not substantially disrupted.
- The food they bought wouldn't last and they were unable to afford more.
- Cut the size of meal/s for household (including children).



Severely food insecure

- At times during the year, eating patterns of one or more household members disrupted and food intake reduced because household lacked money or other resources for food.
- Going hungry and didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food (incl. children), or not eating for a whole day because of not enough money.
- Household member lost weight because they couldn't afford enough food.

Source: *Measuring Food Security in the United States: Guide to Measuring Household Food Security, Revised 2000, United States Department of Agriculture*

This report presents key findings from the *Foodbank Hunger Report 2023* research.



4,342

Australians aged 18 years or older surveyed online via research-only online panel, about their households' experience with food (in)security over the last 12 months.

2022 sample size: n=4024



Nationally representative sample by age, gender and location (capital city/ rest of state) in each major state*.

Stratified quotas to ensure all major states have a robust minimum sample of n=600+, and for Tasmania and the Northern Territory to have a minimum sample of n=100+.



Data weighted to nationally representative proportion of age, gender, state, location (capital city/ rest of state) and household composition.



Fieldwork dates:

2023: 12th July – 31st July, 2023

*2022 fieldwork dates:
11th July – 28th July, 2022*

**Major states referred to include NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and WA*



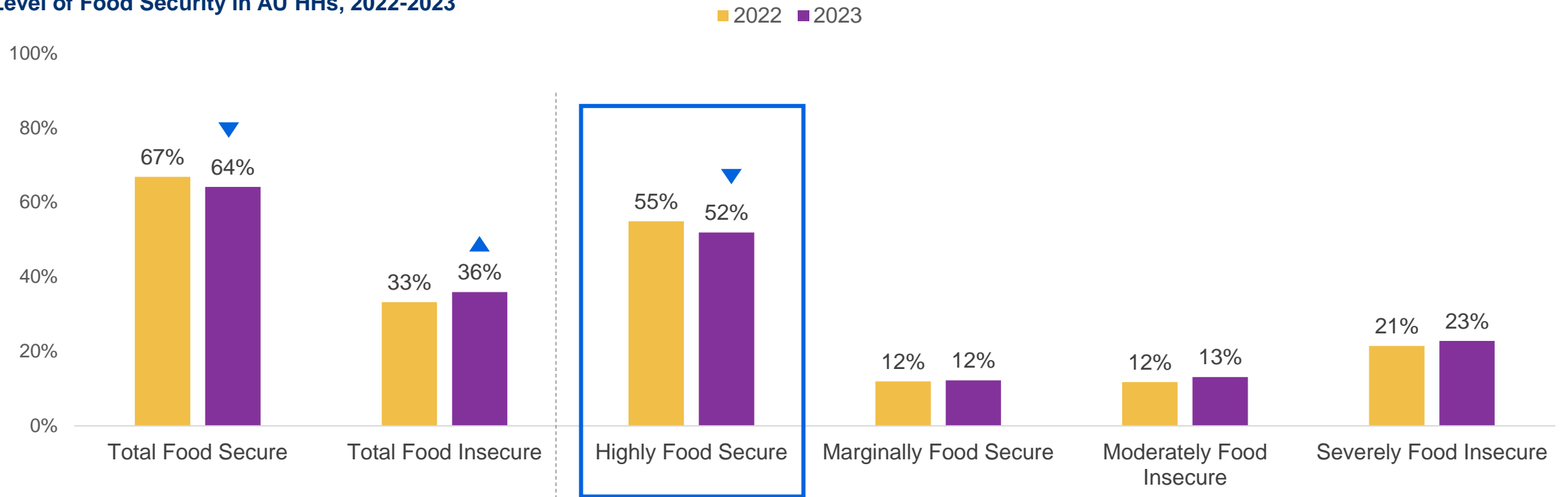
3.7 million

households in Australia experienced moderate- to severe-level food insecurity in the last 12 months.

Food security in Australian households has weakened over the last 12 months, as the prevalence of food insecurity increased significantly to 36% in 2023 vs. YAGO.

Concurrent to the rise of overall food insecurity was a significant decrease in the highly food secure segment (from 55% to 52% in 2023), which means a significant number of households previously having no problems with or needing to worry about affordability and access to adequate food are now having to do so to some extent.

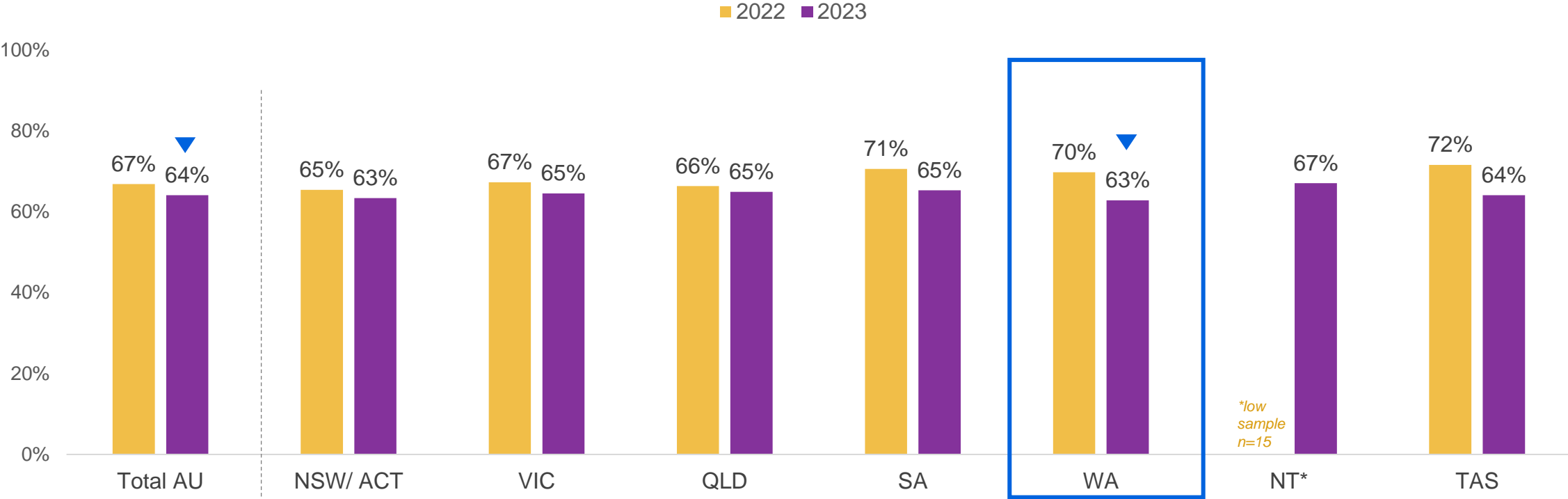
Level of Food Security in AU HHs, 2022-2023



Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; USDA Segment Summary (based on 18-point HFSSM questions). Base: Total AU 18+, 2022 n=4024, 2023 n=4342

The overall food security level has trended down across states and territories in 2023, with WA reporting the most significant hit.

Level of Food Security in AU HHs by state, 2022-2023
(%) Total Food Secure



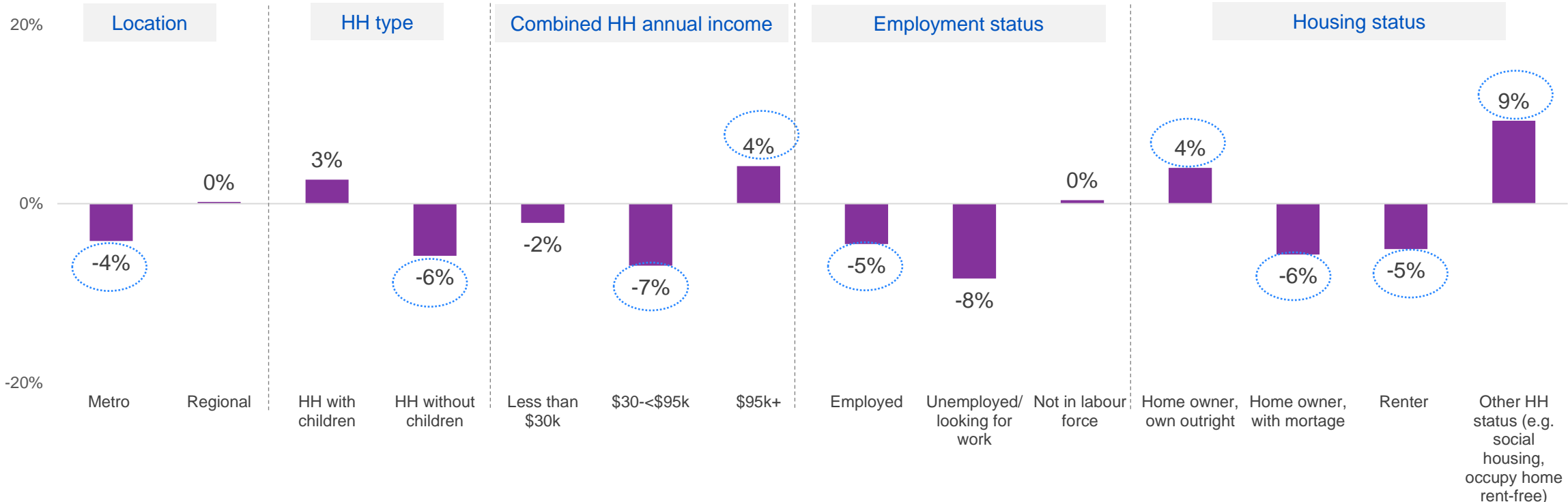
Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; USDA Segment Summary (based on 18-point HFSSM questions).
 Base: Total AU 18+, 2022 n=4024, 2023 n=4342; NSW/ ACT 2022 n=1255, 2023 n=1113; VIC 2022 n=853, 2023 n=878; QLD 2022 n=702, 2023 n=701; SA 2022 n=603, 2023 n=605; WA 2022 n=604, 2023 n=626; NT 2022 n=15, 2023 n=121; TAS 2022 n=134, 2023 n=272



As food security level declined, metro, middle-income, employed, mortgage-holding or renting households were amongst the most significantly disrupted.

Associated with this was the significant decrease of food security level amongst households *without* children, although typically this group was less likely to struggle with food insecurity than those with children (as revealed in the FHR 2022 report).

Level of Food Security in AU HHs by socio-economic characteristics, 2022-2023
 (%) Total Food Secure – Percentage point changes in 2023 (+/-)

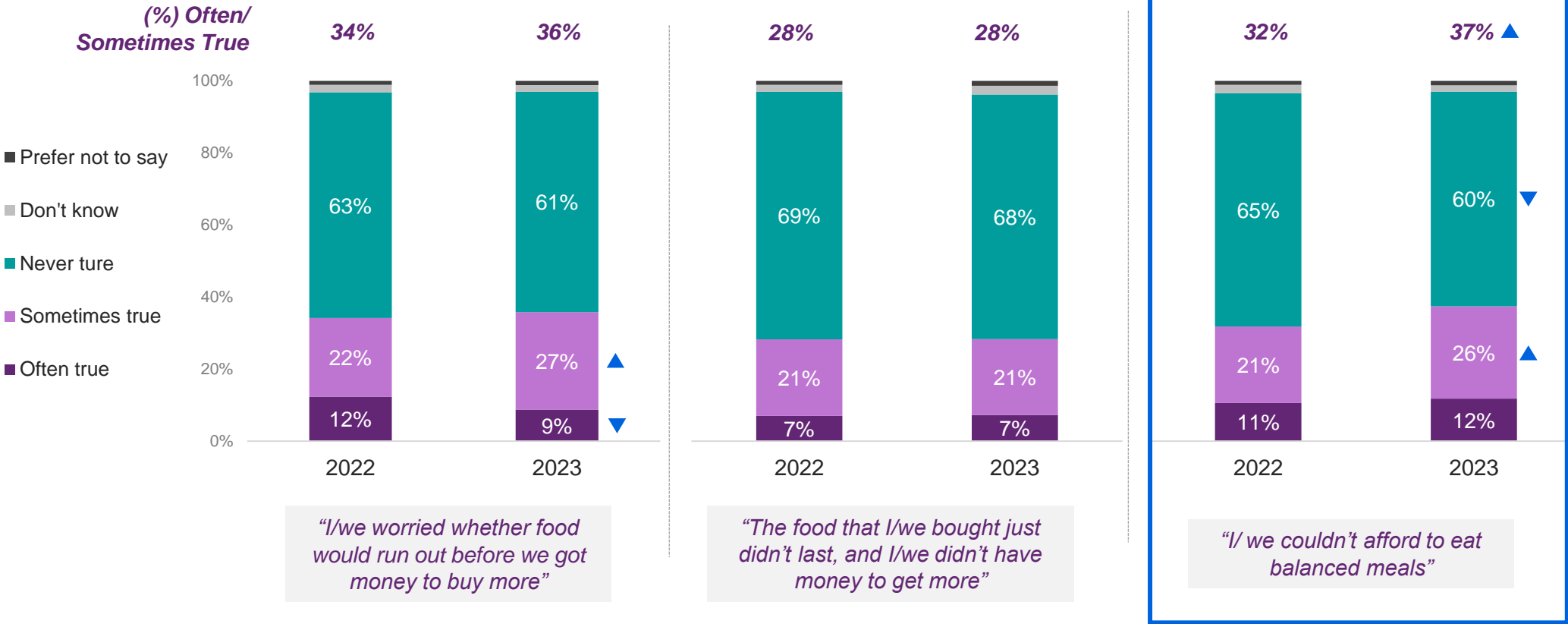


Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; USDA Segment Summary (based on 18-point HFSSM questions).
 Base: Metro 2022 n=2776, 2023 n=3087; Regional 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1255; HH with children 2022 n=1286, 2023 n=1283; HH without children 2022 n=2738, 2023 n=3059; <\$30K 2022 n=656, 2023 n=660; \$30-<\$95K 2022 n=1696, 2023 n=1918; \$95K+ 2022 n=1353, 2023 n=1415; Employed 2022 n=2116, 2023 n=2422; UnN 2022 n=205, 2023 n=256; Not in labour force 2022 n=1589, 2023 n=1558; Home owner 2022 n=1370, 2023 n=1189; Mortgage 2022 n=1040, 2023 n=1164; Renter 2022 n=1040, 2023 n=1416; Other 2022 n=431, 2023 n=395

Amidst recent shifts in the profile of disrupted households, not surprisingly, affordability of balanced food/meals was the key pain point seeing significant YoY increase of impacted households.

Meanwhile, 2023 also saw a significant increase of households (27%) reporting to now 'sometimes' worry about access to enough food before they have money to buy more.

Household Food Security Measures in detail, 2022-2023



Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; USDA Segment Summary (based on 18-point HFSSM questions).
 Base: Total AU 18+, 2022 n=4024, 2023 n=4342;



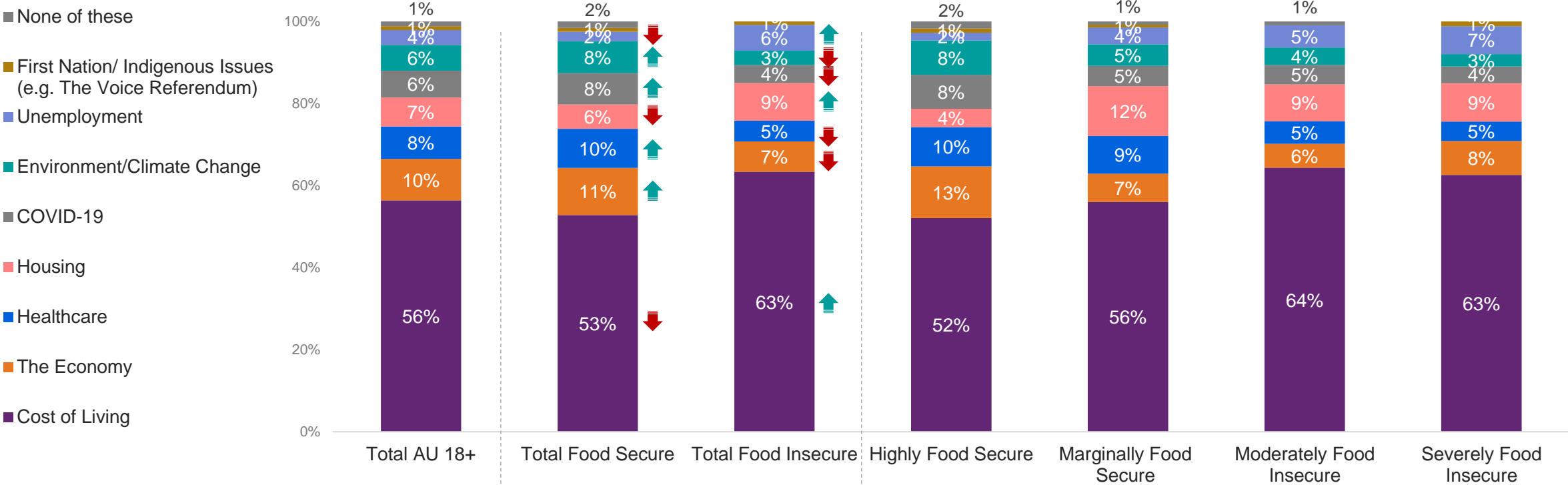


Cost of living

adding pressure to existing struggle with food insecurity, while shifting the profile of food insecure households in 2023.

Cost of living was rated the topmost important issue Australians were concerned about over the last year – even more so for nearly two thirds of Food Insecure households.

The cost of living in Australians’ “share of mind” vs. other social issues, by Food Security status, 2023 (%) ranked as the no.1 most important issue concerned about over the last 12 months



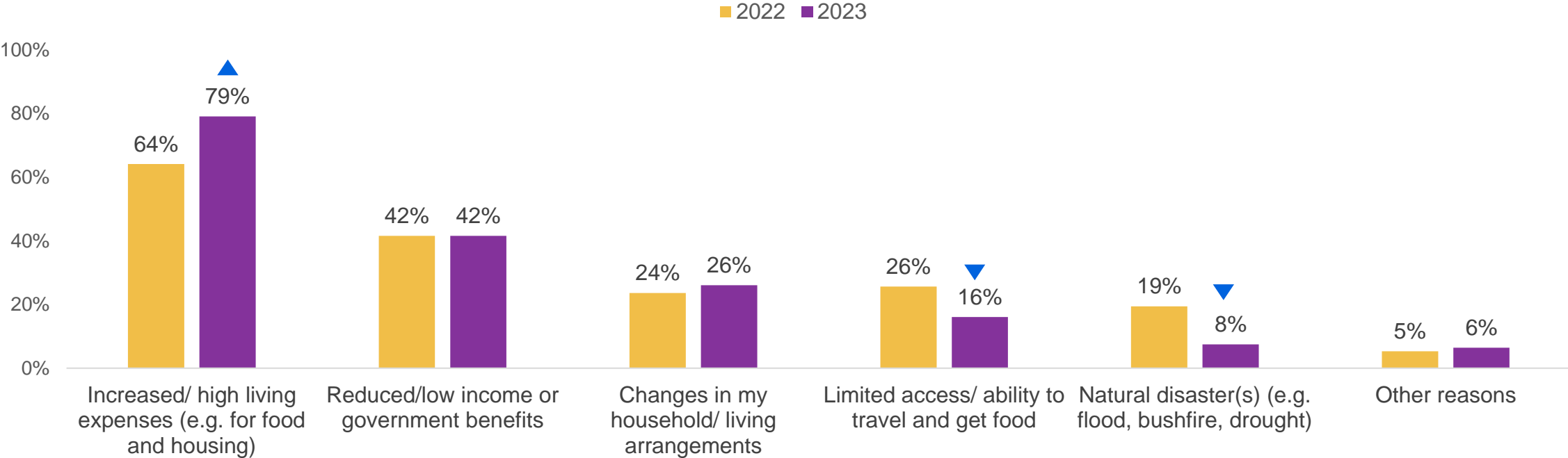
Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; CL1 - Which of the following would you consider as the most important issues you and/or your household have been concerned about over the last 12 months?
 Base: Total AU 18+, 2023 n=4342;



Cost of living was the most common reason for food insecurity in 2023. As travel and disaster-driven food insecurity appeared to recede, even more food insecure households now perceive cost of living as the key contributor to their situation.

Meanwhile, consistently 2 in 5 (42%) food insecure households attributed their situations to income/ benefit-related changes

Reason(s) contributing to Food Insecure situations in the household, 2022-2023
Amongst Food Insecure Households



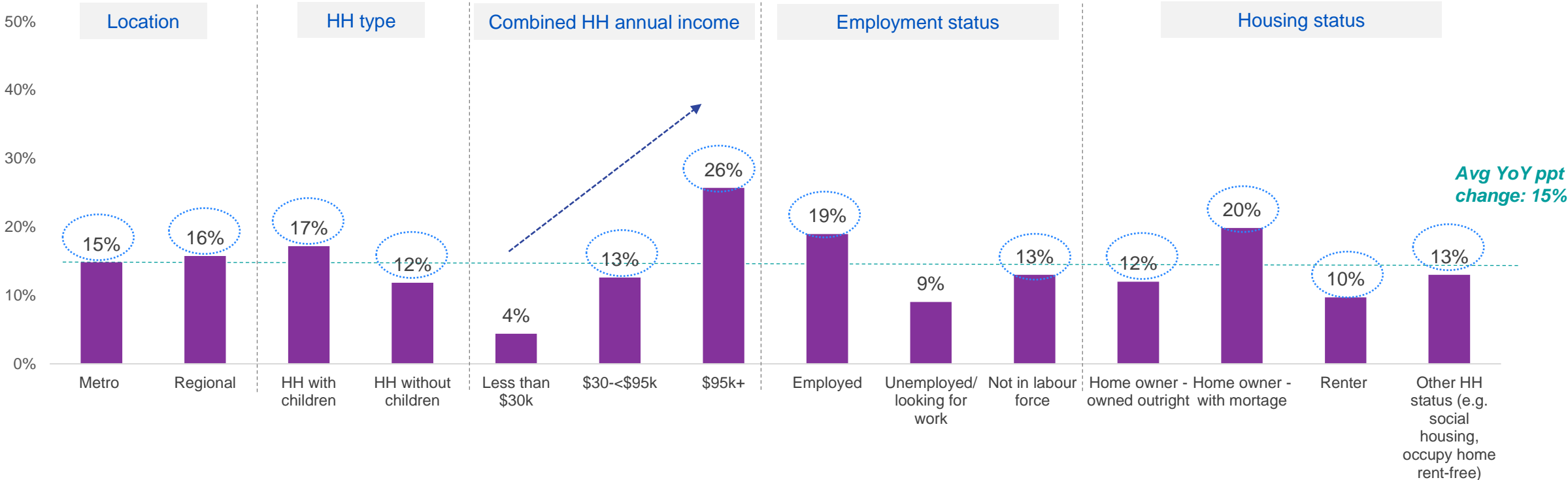
Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40 In the last 12 months, which of the following do you think have contributed to the situation(s) where you and/or your household could not afford enough food?
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514



Food insecure households that were employed, higher-income or holding a mortgage in 2023 were even more likely to consider themselves pressured into the situation by increased/high cost of living.

Although attribution to cost of living pressure generally increased from food insecure households across demographics.

'Increased/ high cost of living' as a reason for Food Insecure situation, amongst Food Insecure households by socio-economic characteristics, 2022-2023
 (% Total Food Insecure within subgroup – Percentage point changes in 2023 +/-)



Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40 In the last 12 months, which of the following do you think have contributed to the situation(s) where you and/or your household could not afford enough food?
 Base: Total Food Insecure HHs 2022 n= 1248 ; 2023 n=1514



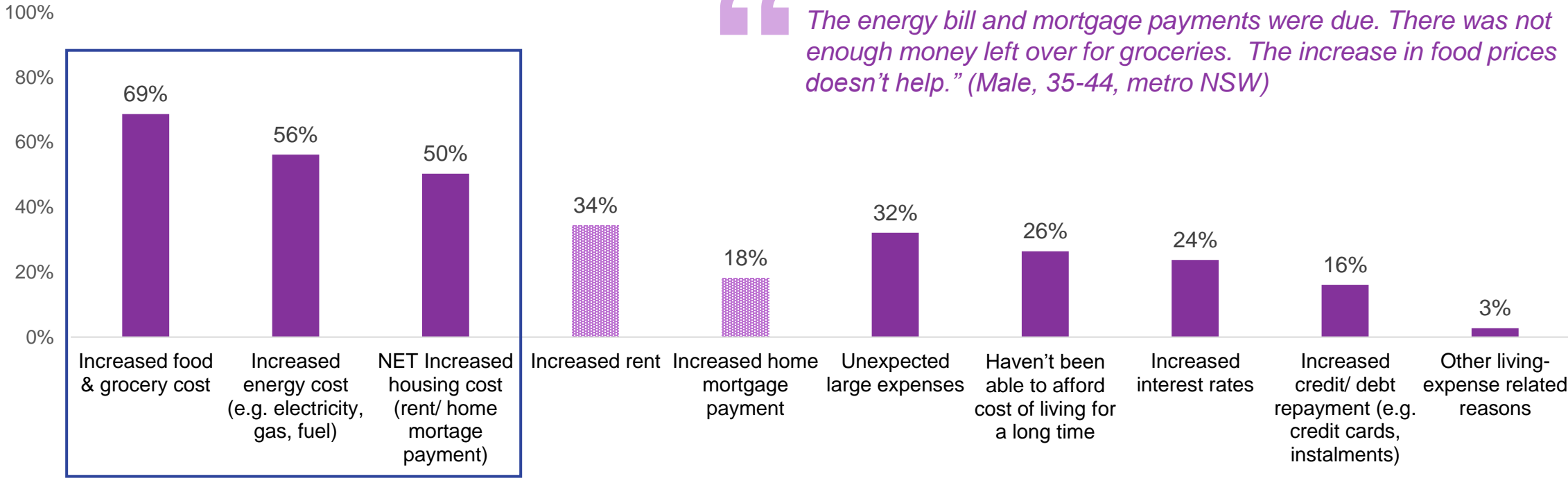
Majority of food insecure households mentioned increased food & grocery, energy and housing costs as the key reasons why they struggled to afford food amongst other living expenses in the last 12 months.

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

NET Impacted by ‘increased/ high living expenses’ in 2023 : 79%



“The energy bill and mortgage payments were due. There was not enough money left over for groceries. The increase in food prices doesn’t help.” (Male, 35-44, metro NSW)



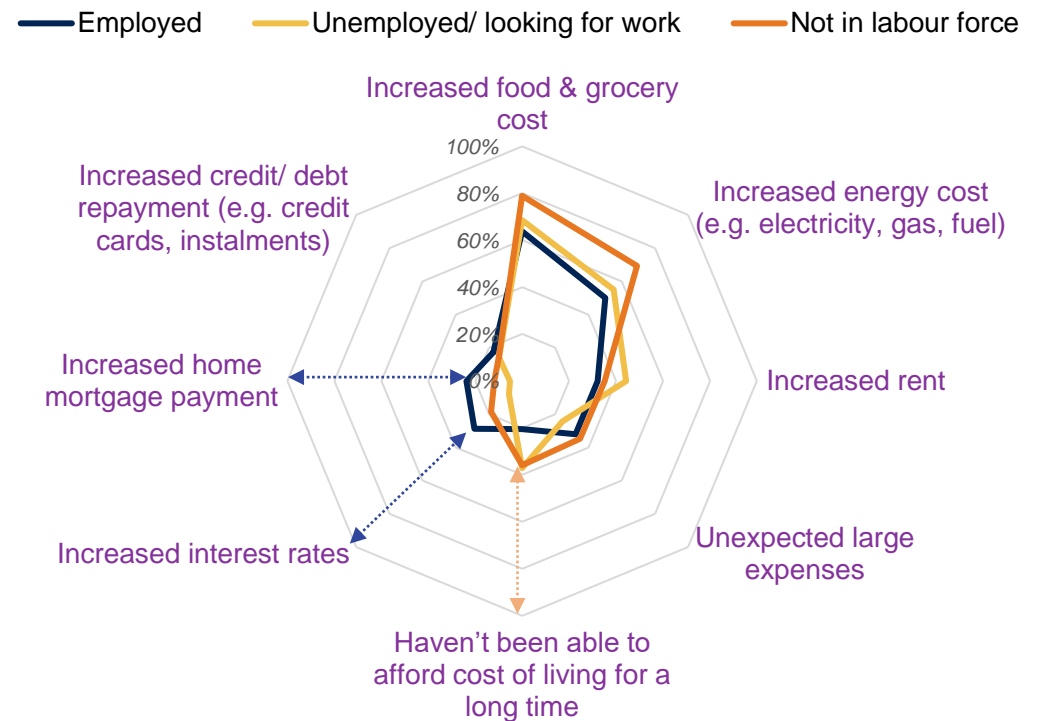
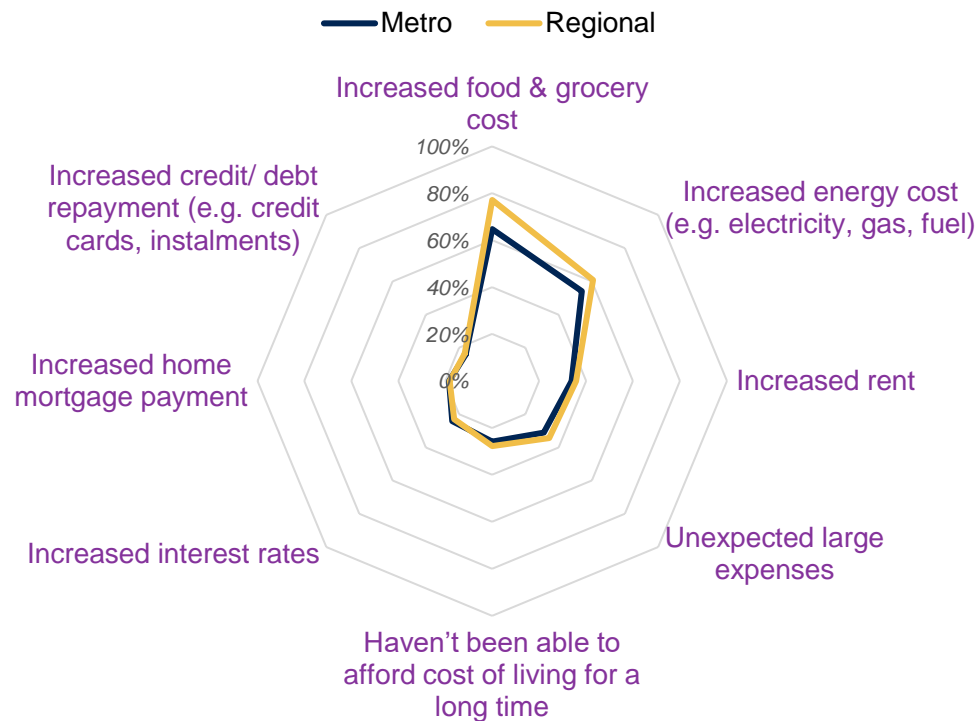
Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40B - Can you tell us more in what way increased/ high living expenses (e.g. for food and housing) contributed to your food situation(s) in the past 12 months?
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2023 n=1514. *Note – direct comparison to 2022 not available due to code frame changes

Food & grocery as well as energy costs were the top-two reasons impacting food insecure households across metro and regional Australia.

While over a quarter of employed households with food insecure experience over the last 12 months mentioned impact from increased interest rates and home mortgage payments.

Detailed reasons how food insecure households were impacted by increased/ high living expenses, 2023

Food insecure households by demographics



Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40B - Can you tell us more in what way increased/ high living expenses (e.g. for food and housing) contributed to your food situation(s) in the past 12 months?
 Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514

Meanwhile, low/ reduced income or government benefits continued to add to the struggle of every two in five food insecure households.

Individual households were impacted for a variety of reasons from job loss/ unemployment, reduced pay/ access to government benefits, medical reasons and more ...

Detailed reasons how reduced/ low income or government benefits has contributed to household food insecure situations, 2022 - 2023 Amongst Food Insecure Households

NET Impacted by 'reduced/ low income or government benefits' in 2023: 42%



Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40A - Can you tell us more in what way reduced/low income or government benefits contributed to your food situation(s) in the past 12 months ?
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514.

Changes in household/ living arrangements were an important factor impacting over a quarter of food insecure households.

And the compounding effect from increased cost of living (in food, housing, energy etc.) was adding extra complexity to individual experiences during this time.

Detailed reasons how changes in your household/ living arrangement has contributed to household food insecure situations, 2023 Amongst Food Insecure Households

NET Impacted by ‘changes in household/ living arrangement’ in 2023: 26%



A combination of a number of factors. Being on aged pensions, taking in granddaughter and great granddaughter due to family violence issues, depletion of any savings, using credit cards to pay for increased expenses like insurances, utilities clothing and food. Have needed to seek food share a couple of times. (Male, 65-74, regional VIC, aged pensioner)



I was running out of savings quickly for a few months after moving to Canberra and taking a higher paying job but my share house dissolved and I couldn't find cheaper accommodation because I had a dog. And then my car was stolen. Mostly I was okay but if I didn't factor in bills then sometimes I'd accidentally leave myself without enough food for a few days before I got paid. I could never keep up and get on top. (Female, 25-34, ACT, full-time employed)

Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40C - Can you tell us more in what way changes in your household/ living arrangement contributed to your food situation(s) in the past 12 months?
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2023 n=1514. *Note – direct comparison to 2022 not available due to code frame changes

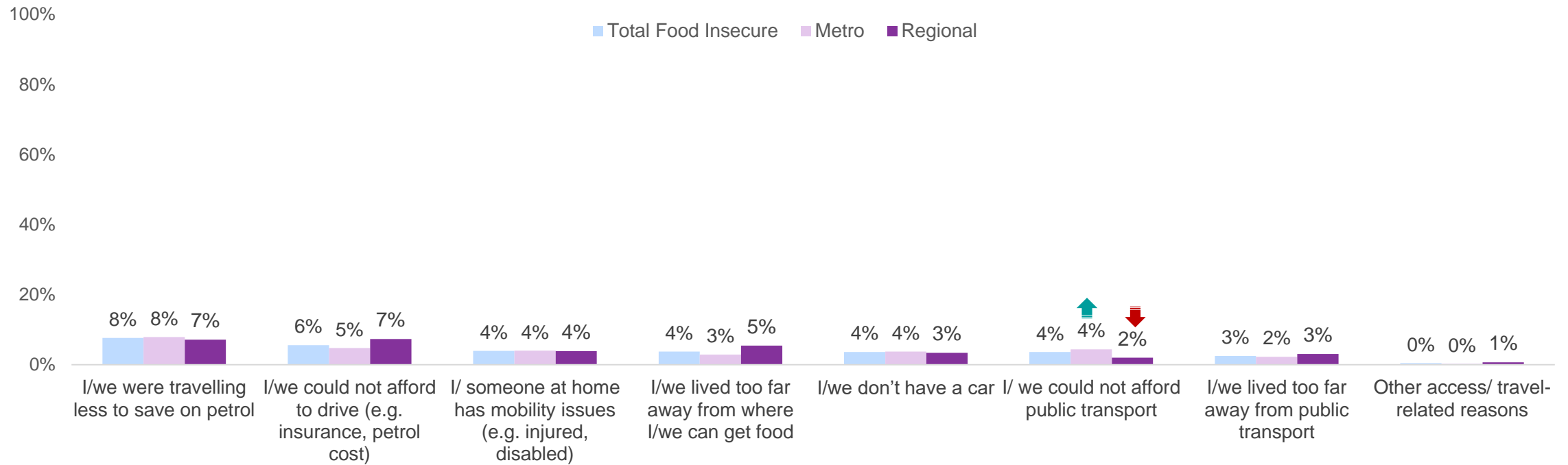


Across metro and regional Australia, limited access/ cost of travel to get food also impacted one in six households struggling with food insecurity.

With food insecure households living in metro Australia also more likely to report inability to afford public transport as a contributing factor.

Detailed reasons how limited access/ ability to travel and get food has contributed to household food insecure situations, 2023
Amongst Food Insecure Households

NET Impacted by 'limited access/ ability to travel' in 2023: 16%



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than comparison subgroup

Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q40D - Can you tell us more in what way limited access/ ability to travel and get food contributed to your food situation(s) in the past 12 months?

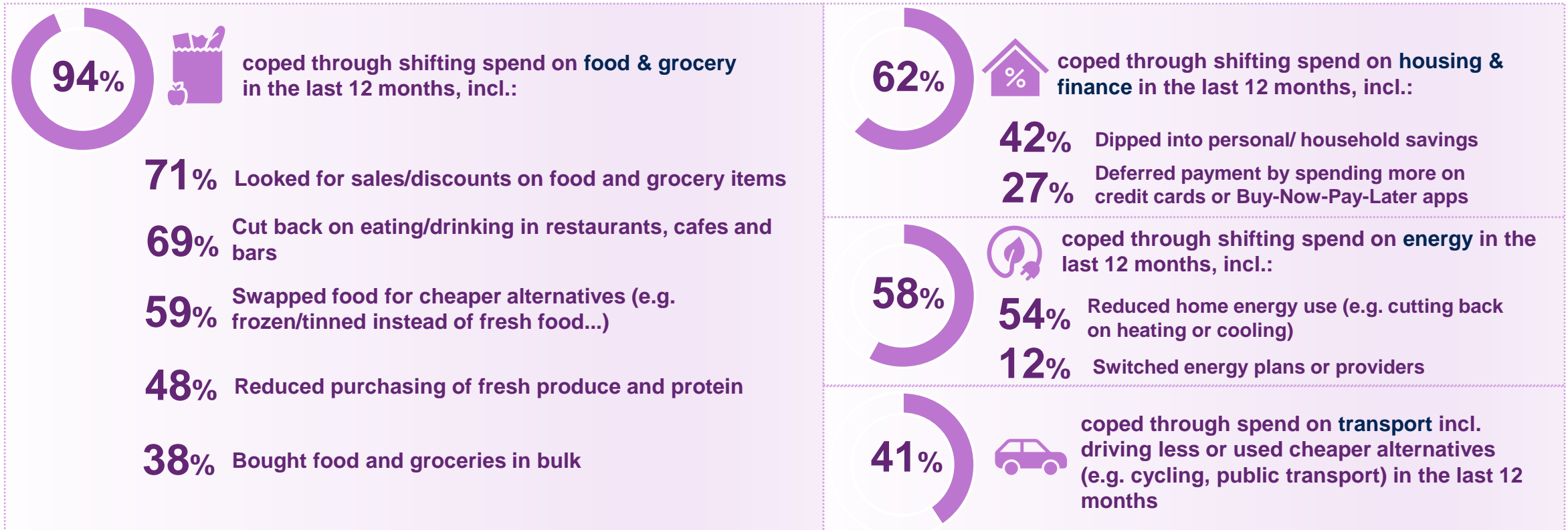
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2023 n=1514. *Note – no comparison to 2022 available (new question asked in 2023)



To cope with higher cost of living, food & grocery were the first category tapped into – 94% of food insecure households reported to have cut back on food in the last 12 months.

Followed by six in ten food insecure households that also have had to shift spending in housing, finance and energy.

Coping strategies used to manage cost of living over the last 12 months, 2023 Amongst Food Insecure households



Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; CL2 Thinking of the last 12 months, which, if any, of the following have you used to manage the cost of living for yourself and/or your household?
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2023 n=1514. *Only coping strategies reported by over 10% food insecure households are shown on slide

Spectrum of possible trade-offs to forced sacrifices within households as they were hit by food insecurity.

With various factors coming into decision-making from household structure, nutrition, typical day activities, support networks, pets and the like, versus budgets.

What food insecure household did in the most recent moment they struggled to afford food, 2023 Amongst Food Insecure households

I ordered bulk food ingredients from HelloFresh, split out the ingredients into different packets of food along the lines of basic food groups. I then mix and matched various ingredients from the different packets at different times of the day to have different foods for say breakfast. Higher levels of nutrition at breakfast and lunch, than dinner. After all, people sleep at night. The need for higher nutrition levels at night is lower than morning or lunch. (Male, 45-54, regional VIC, self-employed)

I worked Uber Eats to earn more money and get paid the same day [for food]. (Male, 25-34, regional QLD, self-employed)

I just didn't eat for 3 days and when I did eat I'd try to only eat small amounts to do my best to make the food last (Female, 25-34, metro VIC, employed full-time)

Made sure my wife and son had enough to eat I choose to go without I didn't let them know. I also picked up more hours at work. (Male, 25-34, regional NSW, employed full-time)

I got help from parents, they had me over for dinner more and gave me some food. I Afterpay groceries through DoorDash. I pre-make bulk batches of soup when I can afford the extra ingredients. (Female, 25-34, metro NSW, employed full-time)

Focused on feeding the children and pets because although uncomfortable the adults could wait/ eat less and by doing so the children and pets are unaware of the stressful situation (Female, 25-34, metro SA, home duties)

I went hungry which caused an insulin overdose and had to be rushed to hospital. Luckily I was able to get some food in hospital. (Male, 25-34, metro NSW, employed full-time)

My wife and I just shared meals so there was plenty for the kids and we would only eat once a day (Male, 45-54, metro NSW, employed full-time)

Skipped meals, making large amounts in bulk when I do have enough for groceries and eating a large amount when I can to make up for skipped meals (Female, 18-24, metro NSW, employed full-time)

Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q50 Thinking of the last time you could not afford enough food for yourself and/or your household, what did you do?
Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2023 n=1514.



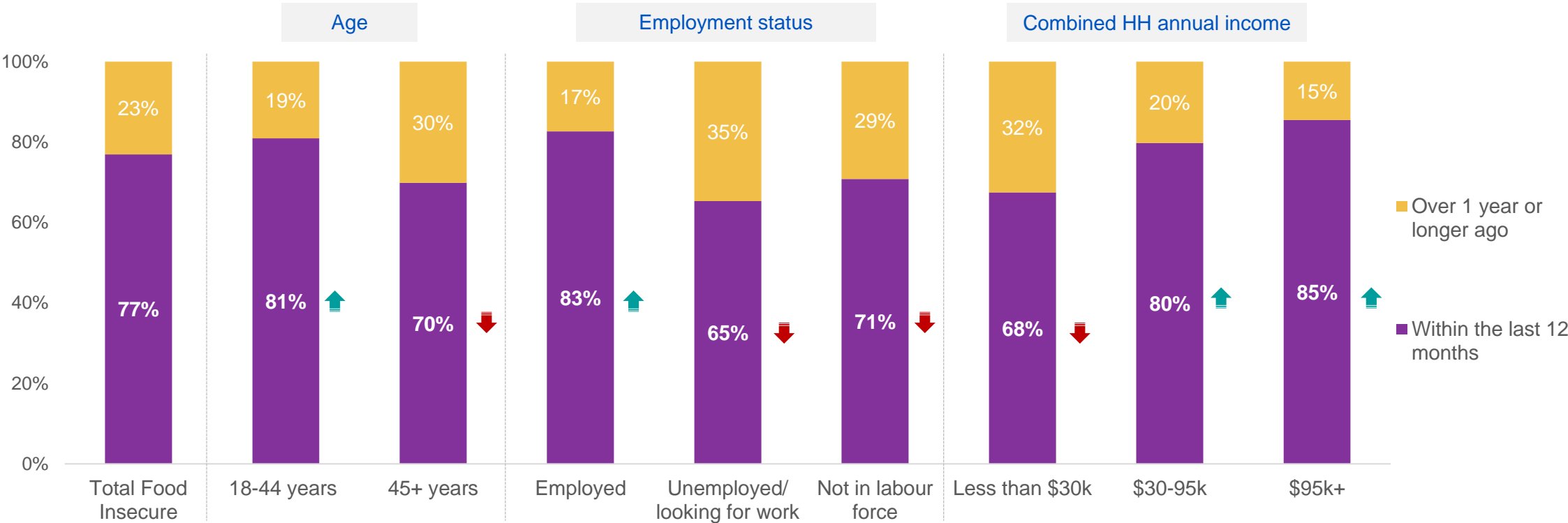
The struggle with Food Insecurity in 2023

**Unchanging nature of the experience in a
changed reality.**

On average 77% food insecure households in 2023 experienced this for the first time within the last 12 months.

Consistent with the shifting profile of impacted households under cost of living pressure since last year, households experiencing food insecurity for the first time were more likely to be those younger (aged <45s), employed or with mid- to higher- annual gross household income.

Timing first experienced food insecurity in the household, 2023
Amongst Food Insecure households



Source: FHR 2023 Research; Q36 Approximately, when was the first time [pipe: HIDQ36] experienced not being able to afford enough food for yourself?.
Base: Total Food Insecure households n=1514; 18-44 n=2064, 45+ n=2278; Employed n=2422, UnN n=256, Not in labour force n=1558; Less than \$30L n=660, \$30-\$95K n=1918, \$95K+ n=1415

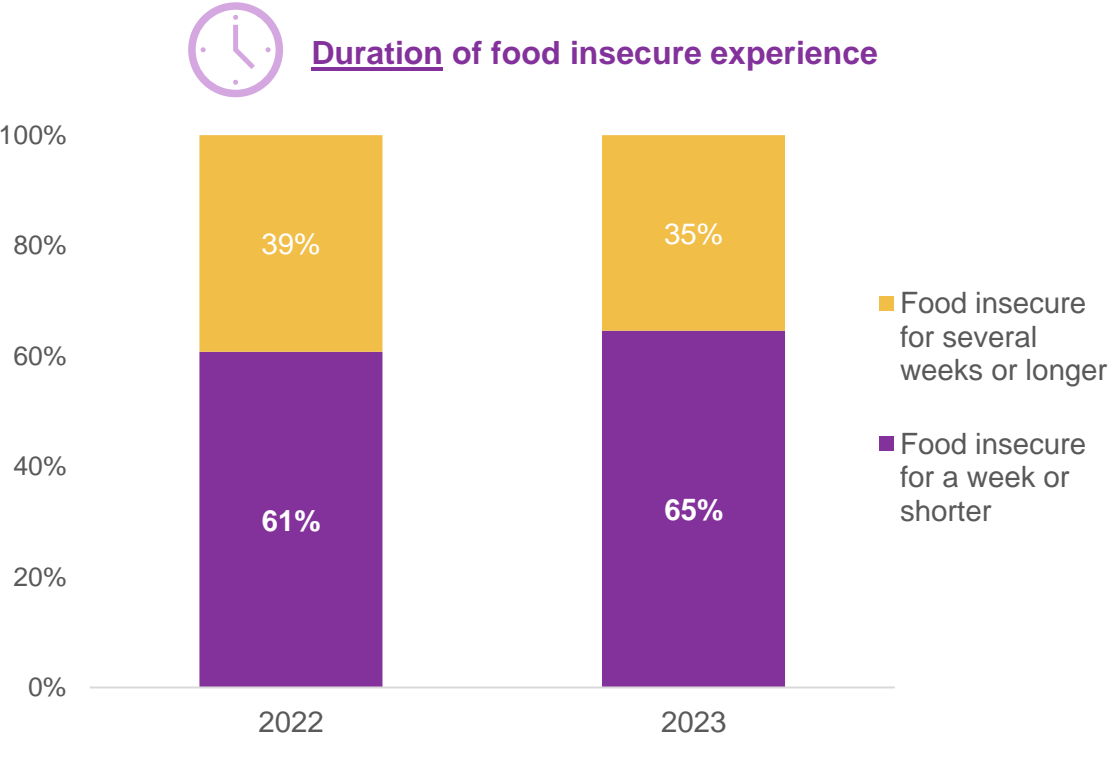
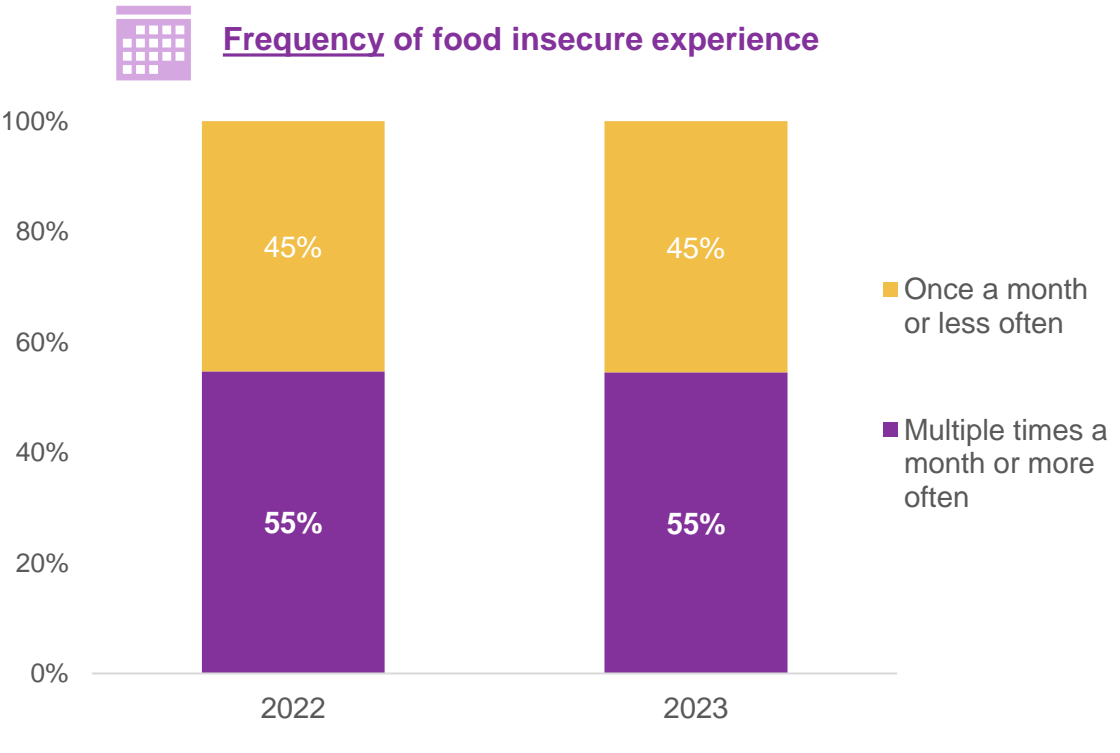
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than comparison subgroup



For those who encountered food insecurity within the household, the nature of the struggle remained largely unchanged.

Majority of households hit by food insecurity typically struggled multiple times a month or more often, and for most, each struggle typically last within a week (although for a substantial third, the experience could last for several weeks or even longer).

Frequency and Duration of food insecurity experience within the household, 2022-2023
Amongst Food Insecure households

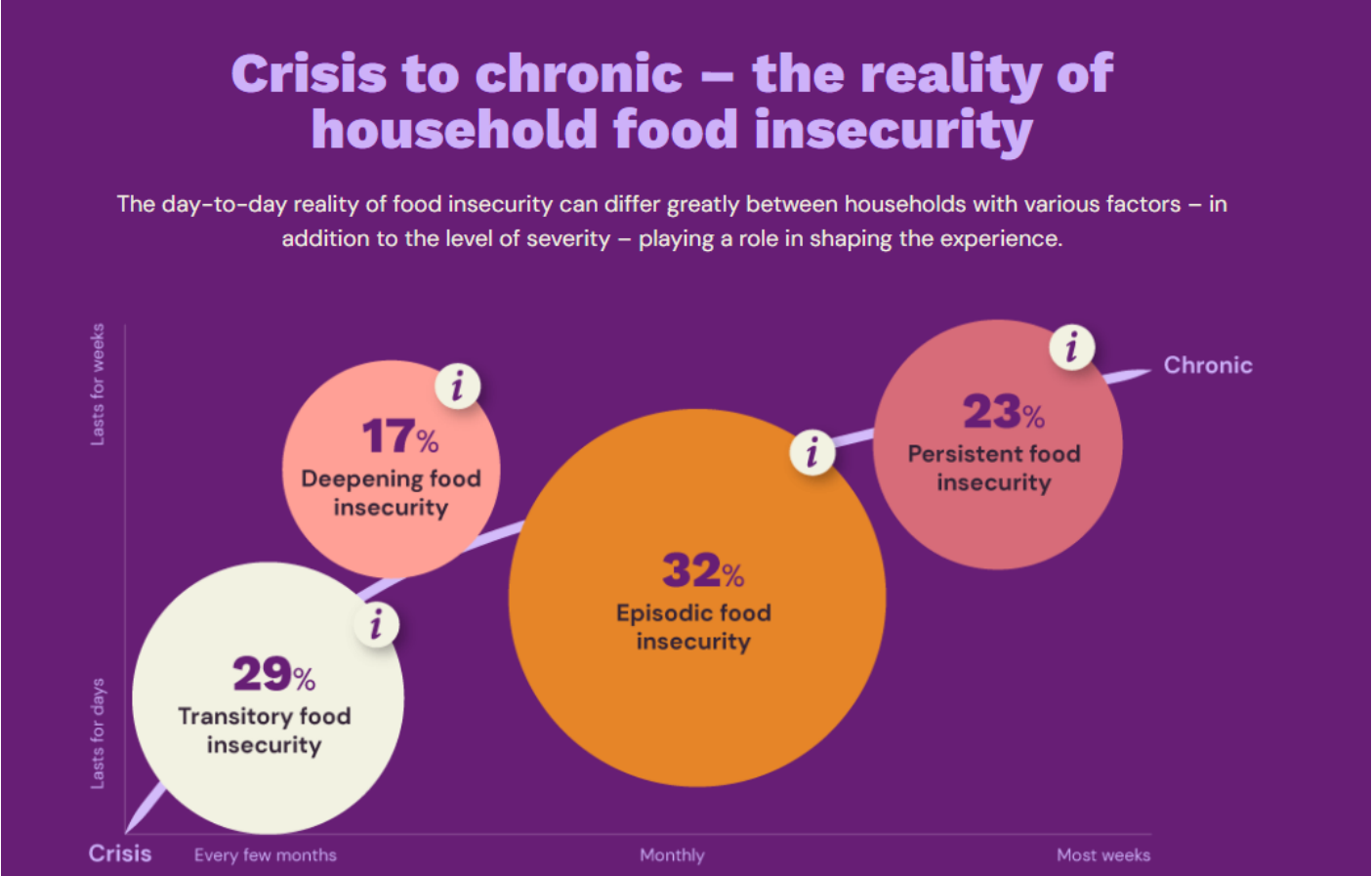


Source: FHR 2023 Research; Q37 - And in the last 12 months, how often have you found [pipe: HIDQ37] in such a situation(s)? Q38 - Thinking of the last time you couldn't afford enough food [pipe: HIDQ38] how long were you in that situation? Base: Total Food Insecure households 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514



To conceptualise the experience of household food insecurity on a daily basis, the FHR 2022 proposed an exploratory framework with the attempt to understand the nuance of the experience by differences in frequency and duration of such experience

From crisis to chronic food insecurity: an exploratory framework to conceptualise the nature of food insecure experience Amongst Food Insecure households

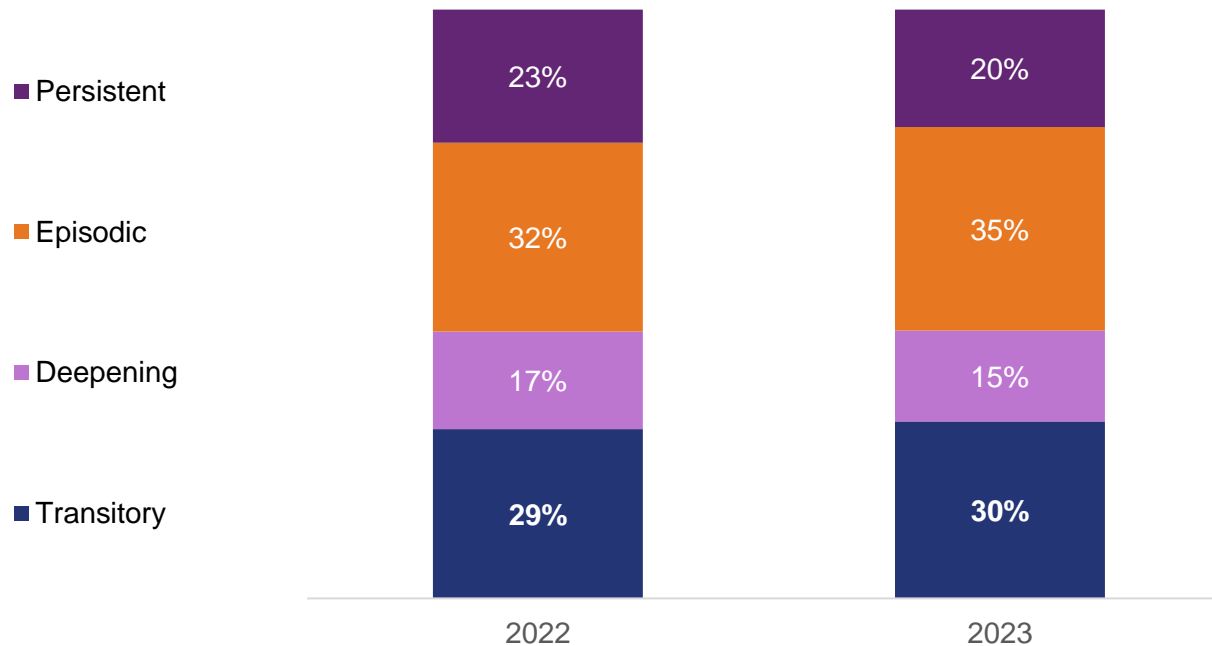


Source: Foodbank Australia/ FHR 2022 Report <https://reports.foodbank.org.au/foodbank-hunger-report-2022/>



No significant change in the proportion of chronic- vs. crisis-driven household experience with food insecurity in 2022

Crisis vs. chronic food insecurity within the household, 2022-2023
Amongst Food Insecure households



Source: FHR 2023 Research; Q37 - And in the last 12 months, how often have you found [pipe: HIDQ37] in such a situation(s)? Q38 - Thinking of the last time you couldn't afford enough food [pipe: HIDQ38] how long were you in that situation? Base: Total Food Insecure households 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514

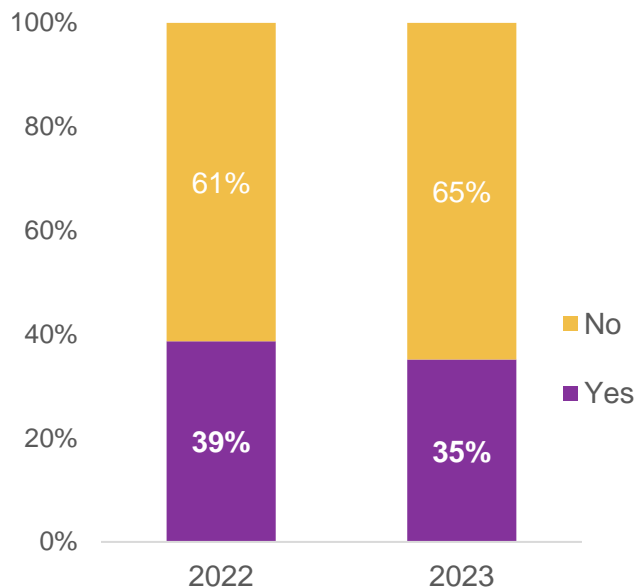
Meanwhile, consistently just over a third of food insecure households broadly knew where to get help in food insecure situations.

In line with the shifting profile of food insecure households to include those who were newer/less experienced with food insecurity, when further prompted, over 1 in 10 food insecure households reported being unaware of formal food relief sector support, while the majority (55%) didn't receive any help from either formal or informal channels in the past 12 months.

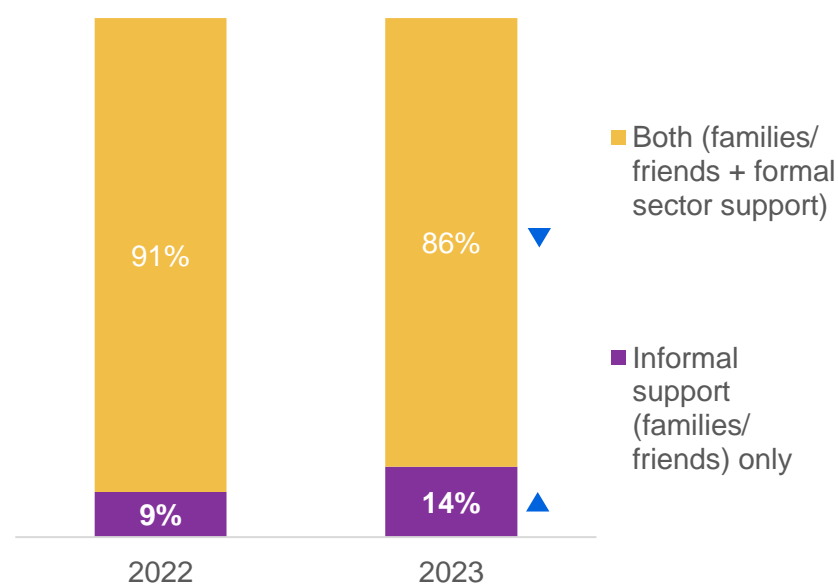
Household awareness and experience with the Food Relief support sector, 2022-2023 Amongst Food Insecure households



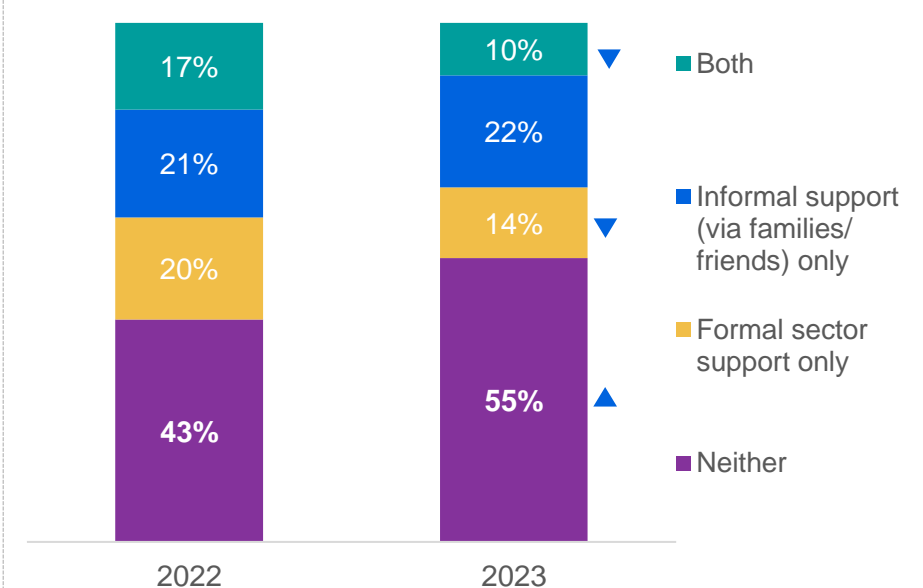
(%) claimed to know where to get help for food insecure situations



Awareness of Food Relief sector support - summary formal vs. informal channels (families/ friends)



Receipt of Food Relief sector support in the P12M – summary formal vs. informal channels (families/ friends)



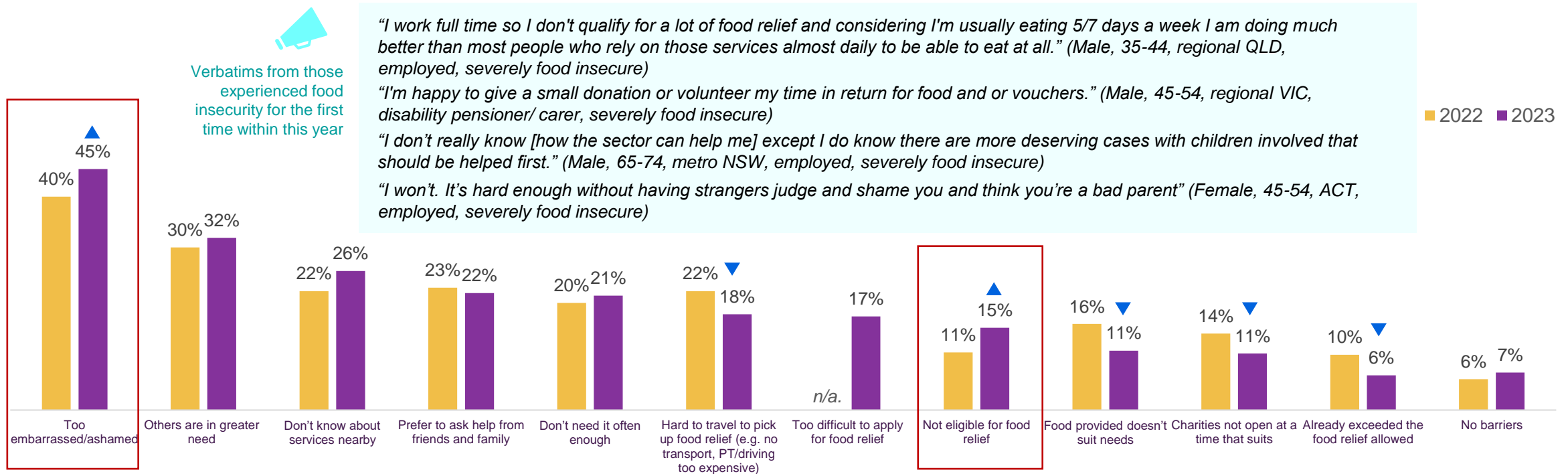
“Formal sector support” defined as food relief support from churches, community groups and/or services (e.g. the local community centre), general charity organisations (e.g. the Salvation Army, Anglicare), food relief organisations and/or services (e.g. Foodbank, OzHarvest), and charity supermarket (self-service)/ food pantry.

Source: FHR 2023 Research; Q47 In the situation(s) where you could not afford enough food for yourself and/or your household, do you know of anywhere you could get any food relief help or support? Q48. Which of the following are you aware of for providing food relief support and which have you used for food relief? Base: Total Food Insecure households 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514

Perceptions of shame/embarrassment, as well as the belief that others are in greater need of assistance, remained the primary barriers for food insecure households to seek sector support in 2023.

A range of practical barriers reported in 2022 subsided (e.g. food provided doesn't suit needs, charities not open at time that suits), while more households (15%) mentioned the belief they were not eligible for food relief as a barrier to seek help this year.

Barriers to seeking food relief support from the formal Food Relief sector, 2022-2023 Amongst Food Insecure Households



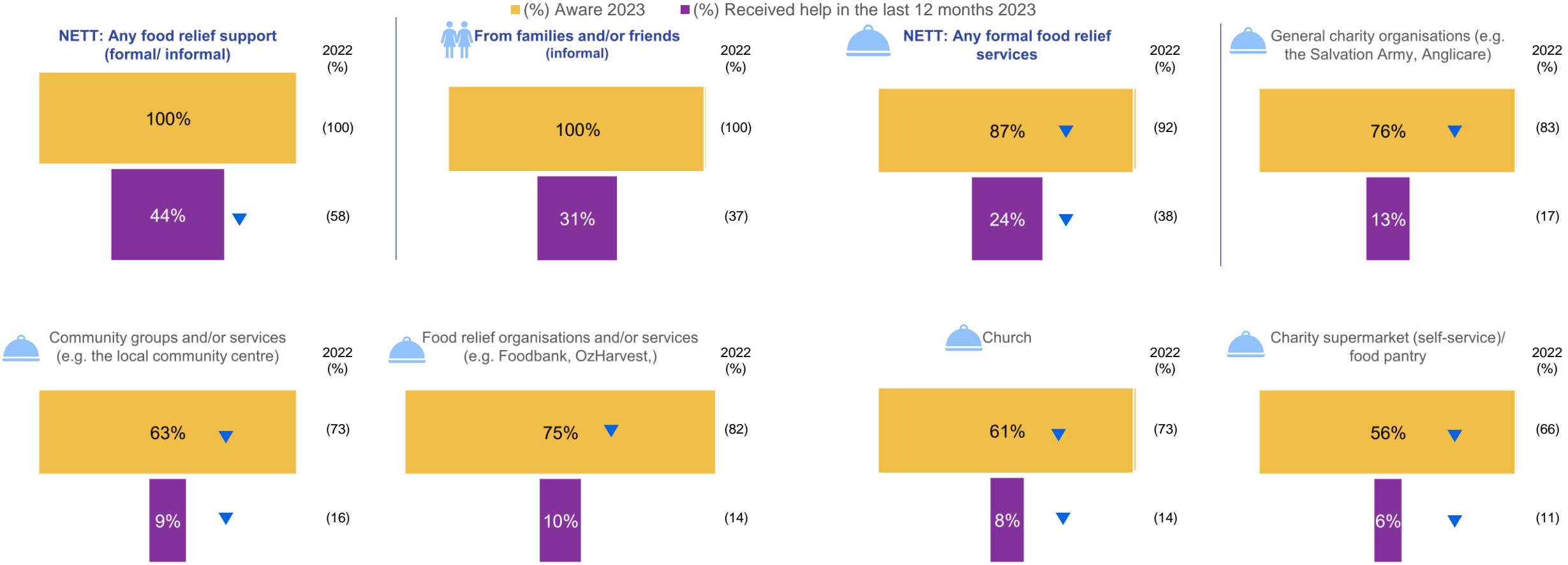
Source: FHR 2022-2023 Research; Q54 Which of the following are barriers for you in seeking food relief from a charity or community organisation? Q55a In your own words, what kind of things would make it easier for you to get food relief when you need it? Base: Total Food Insecure Households, 2022 n=1248, 2023 n=1514



Implications for the Food Relief Support sector

Just over 2 in 5 food insecure households received any food relief support in 2023, a significant decline from 2022 driven by lowered awareness and experience having received support from the Formal relief sector

Awareness and receipt of food relief in last 12 months



Base: Food insecure Australians who have received formal food relief support in the last 12 months 2022 n=483, 2023 n=333

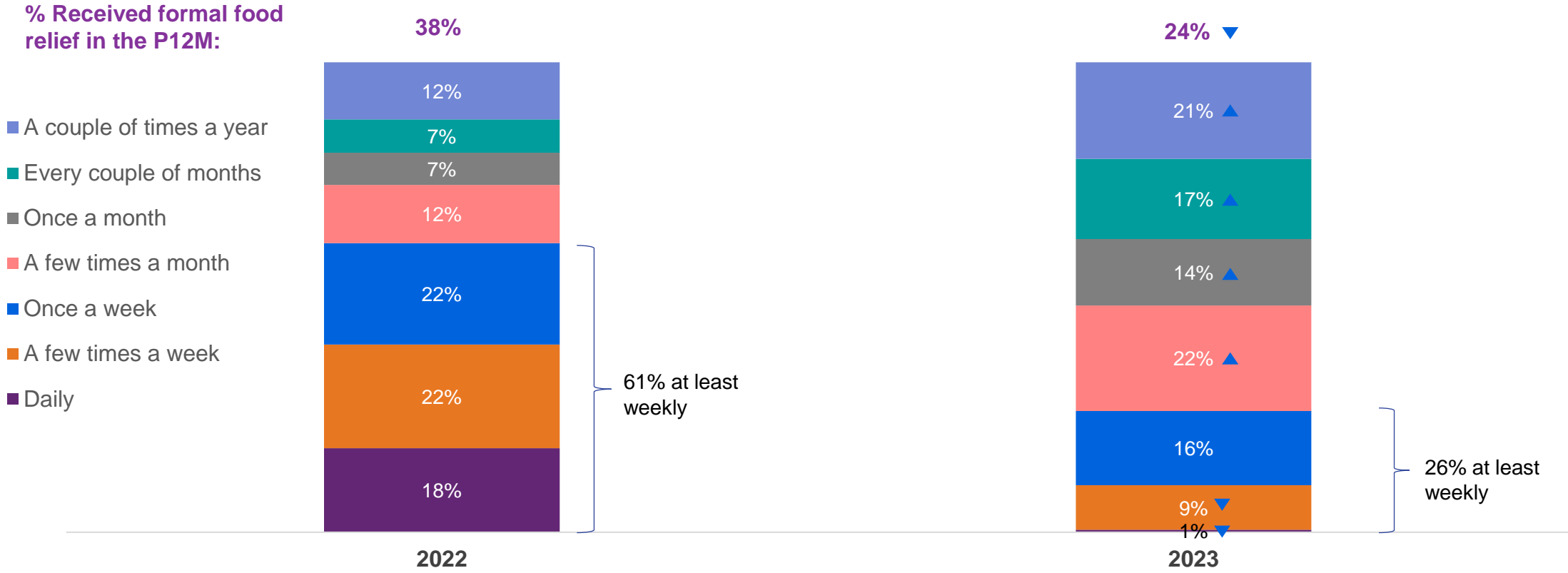
Q48 Which of the following are you aware of for providing food relief support and which have you used for food relief

Q49. In the last 12 months, how often have you received food relief from a charity or community organisation for yourself and/or your household? For example, visiting food relief services to get groceries or a prepared meal.



Of those who did receive support from the sector, their frequency of engagement has also reduced compared to 2022

Frequency of receiving food relief, 2022 – 2023
 Amongst Food Insecure households who have received formal food relief in the last 12 months



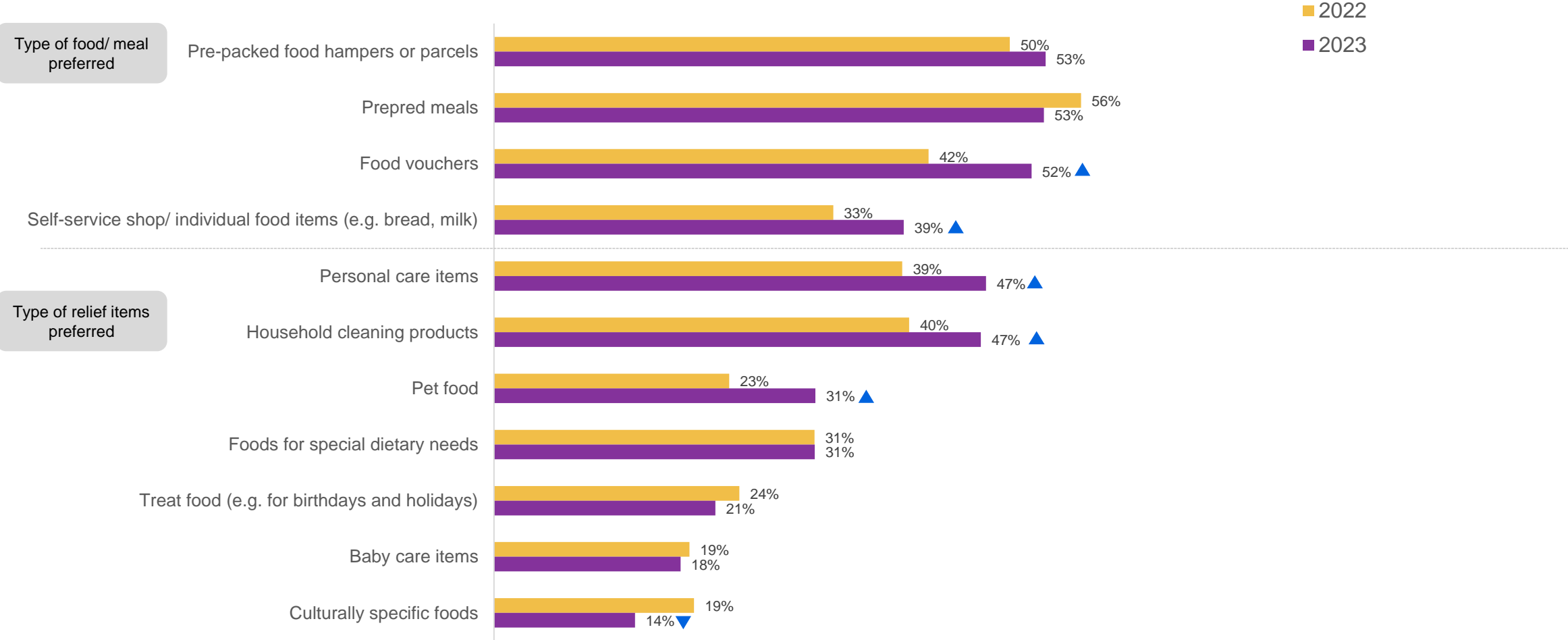
Base: Food insecure Australians who have received formal food relief support in the last 12 months 2022 n=483, 2023 n=333
 Q49. In the last 12 months, how often have you received food relief from a charity or community organisation for yourself and/or your household? For example, visiting food relief services to get groceries or a prepared meal.

Recipients of sector support have also shifted in their profile as outlined below

Profile of formal-sector Recipients (P12M), 2022 vs. 2023 – Column %		2022	2023
GENDER	Male	66%	51% ▼
	Female	34%	49% ▲
AGE	18-24	26%	16% ▼
	25-44	54%	51%
	45-54	10%	20% ▲
	55+	10%	13%
LOCATION	Cap cities	67%	68%
	Rest of states	33%	32%
STATE	NET NSW/ACT	35%	33%
	NSW	34%	33%
	VIC	25%	29%
	QLD	23%	19%
	SA	6%	6%
	WA	10%	11%
	TAS	1%	1%
	NT	0%	0%
EMPLOYMENT	Employed full-time	42%	30% ▼
	Employed part-time/ casual	13%	17%
	Self-employed	6%	10%
	NET EMPLOYED (FT/PT/SELF)	61%	57%
	Not employed/ looking for work	6%	12% ▲
	NET NOT IN LABOUR FORCE	30%	30%
HH INCOME	Less than \$30,000	17%	27% ▲
	NET \$30-<95k	31%	54% ▲
	NET \$95k+	50%	16% ▼
HOUSING STATUS	I own my home outright	25%	11% ▼
	I own my home with a mortgage	18%	19%
	Renters	35%	53% ▲
	NET Other Housing Status	21%	16%
HH WITH CHILD/REN	No children at home	36%	55% ▲
	NET Have children at home	64%	45% ▼
FOOD INSECURITY SEG (USDA)	NET FOOD INSECURE	100%	100%
	Moderate food insecurity (low)	24%	30%
	Severe food insecurity (very low)	76%	70%
FOOD INSECURITY SEG (Q37 x Q38) [HH WTS]	Deepening	12%	16%
	Persistent	33%	23% ▼
	Transitory	14%	25% ▲
	Episodic	40%	36%

There has been a shift in the type of food relief support / items with the shift in the profile of food insecure population

TYPES OF FOOD RELIEF MEALS AND ITEMS INTERESTED IN

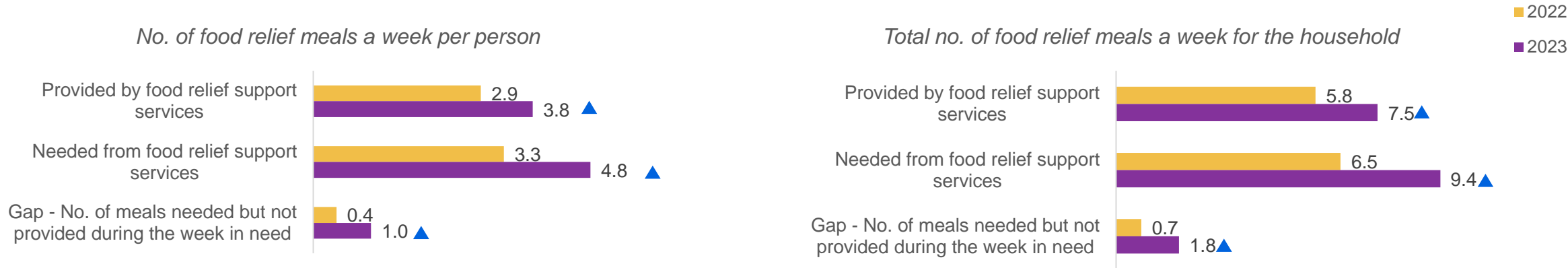


Base: Food insecure Australians (excluding those who ever received help from friends and families only) 2022 n=1005, 2023 n=1633
 Q56. What types of food relief for you and/or your household would you like to see more of from charities and community groups?
 Q58. Which of the following items would you like to see more of from charities and community groups for your use or your household's use?



The gap of self-reported demand of food relief meals vs. supplied has widened in 2023 – in part however could be due to shifted profile of the new recipients who were less familiar with the sector hence less able to provide accurate self-estimate?

Self-reported volume of formal food relief meals received vs. needed per person and per food insecure household



Base: Food insecure Australians who have received formal food relief support in the last 12 months 2022 n=483, 2023 n=333
 Q52a/b. Now think of the most recent week you received food relief. Approximately how many equivalent meals did you/ your household receive in that week in the form of food relief?
 Q53aa. In the most recent week you need food relief, you mentioned you received <insert answer at Q52b> meal(s) that week for yourself/ each person at home. Did the food relief you receive meet the needs of yourself/ your household?
 Q59b/c. You mentioned earlier that you received food relief support from family and/or friends in the last 12 months. Thinking of the most recent week when this happened, approximately, how many equivalent meals did you receive from family and/or friends for you and/or your household?



In 2023, the Food Relief Support sector helped 24% of food insecure households over the last 12 months.

While severely food insecure households have been a core target serviced by the Food Relief Support sector in the past. In 2023 the new reality of food insecurity opens up opportunities for engagement and advocacy for the Food Relief Support sector as a whole.

Food Security is now an issue that fundamentally *matters* to everyone in the community, rather than just being a problem experienced by a few.

However, alongside the lift in the experience of food insecurity amongst middle-Australia, there is a concerningly large group of people unwilling to access food relief support due to perceptual barriers of embarrassment and stigma.



The main barrier is the social stigma. If there was a way to do it anonymously it would help.” (Male, 35-44, metro NSW)

Being able to access it online or in some anonymous way. I am too embarrassed and ashamed to physically go somewhere and show my face.” (Female, 35-34, metro NSW)

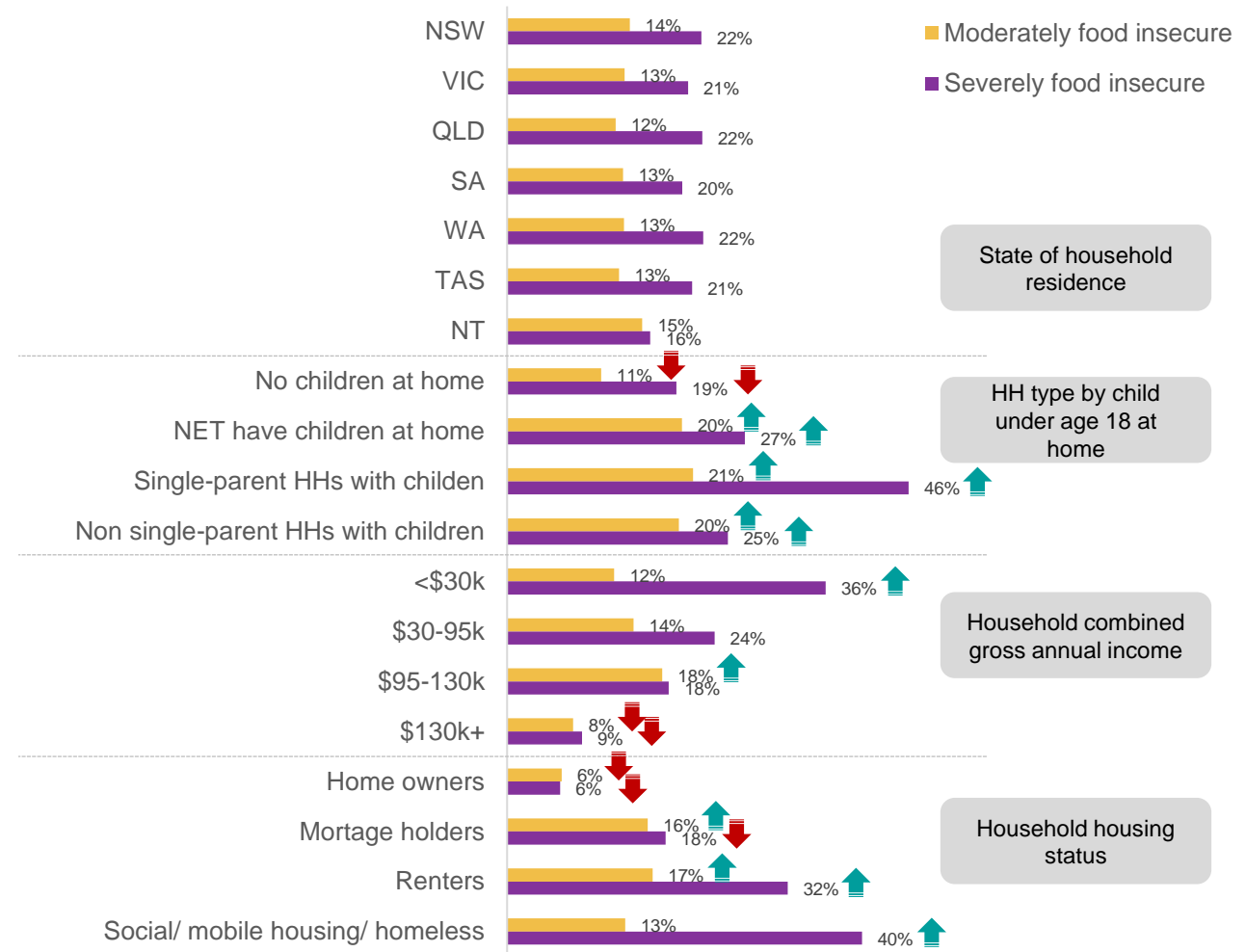
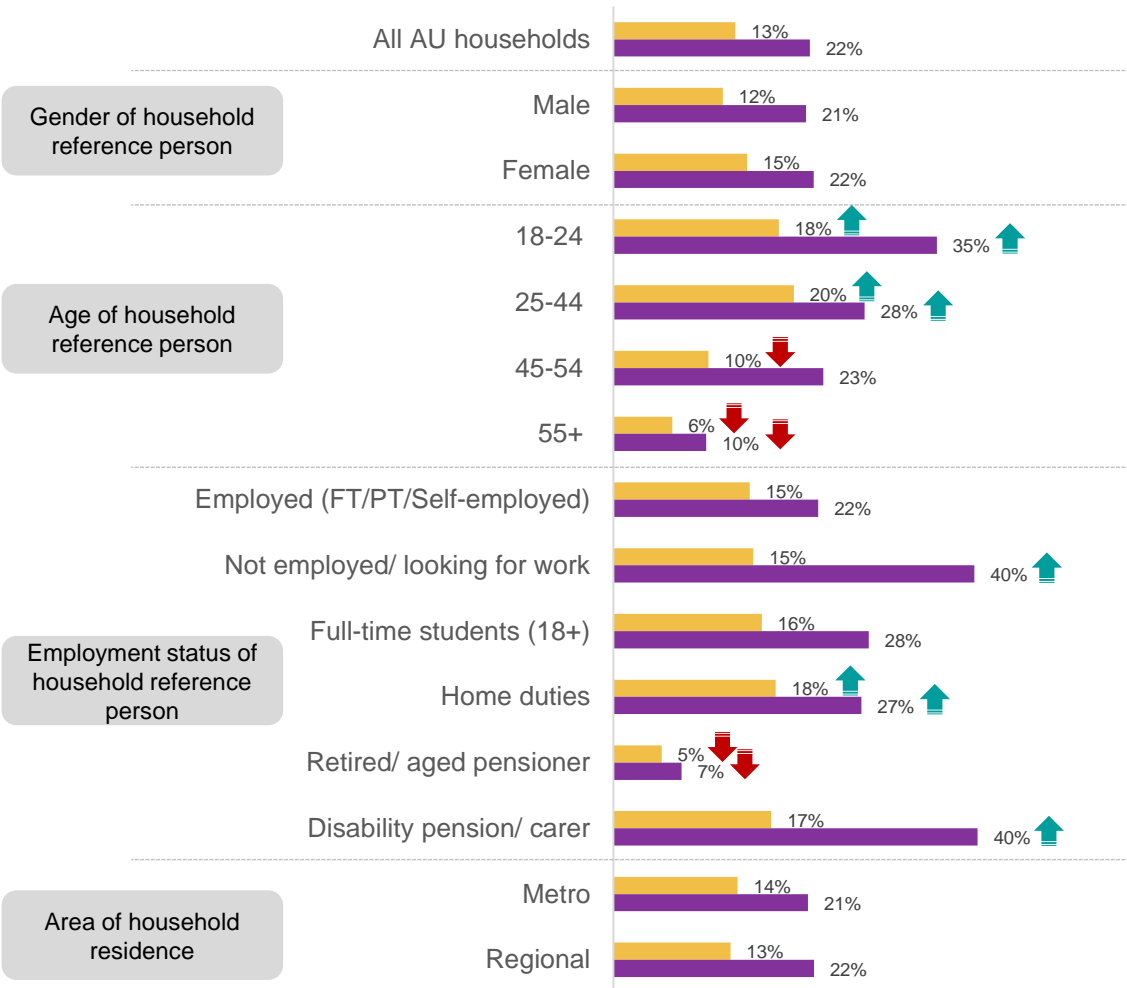
Breaking down these barriers will be important to help food insecure households over the next 12 months.



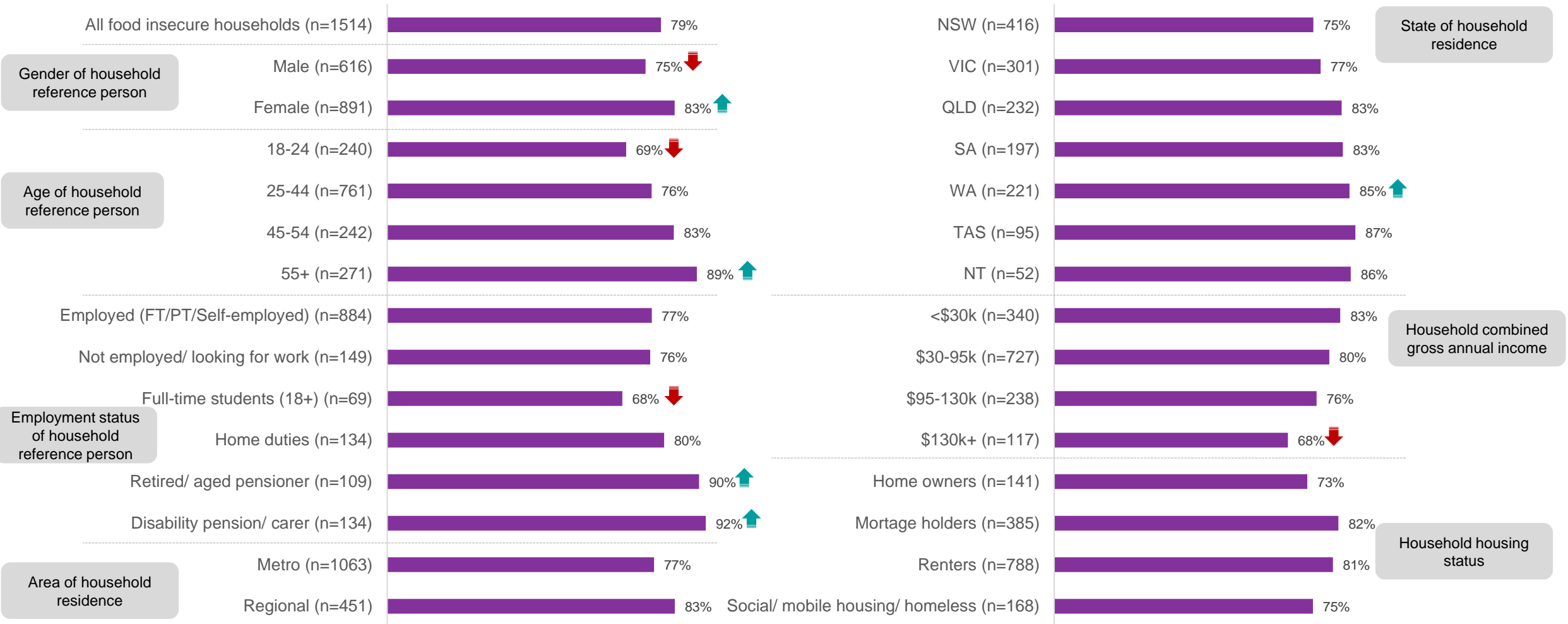
APPENDIX A:

Demographic analysis of key questions

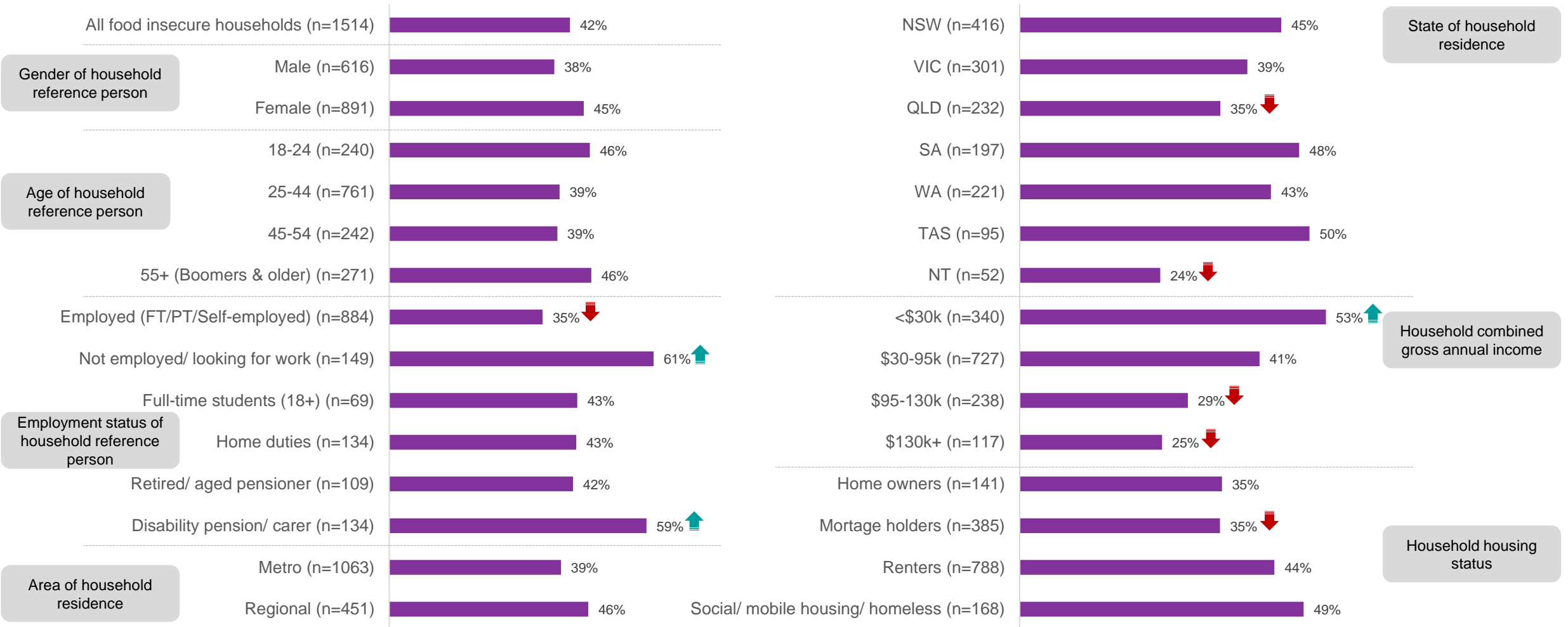
LEVEL OF HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY – BY DEMOGRAPHICS



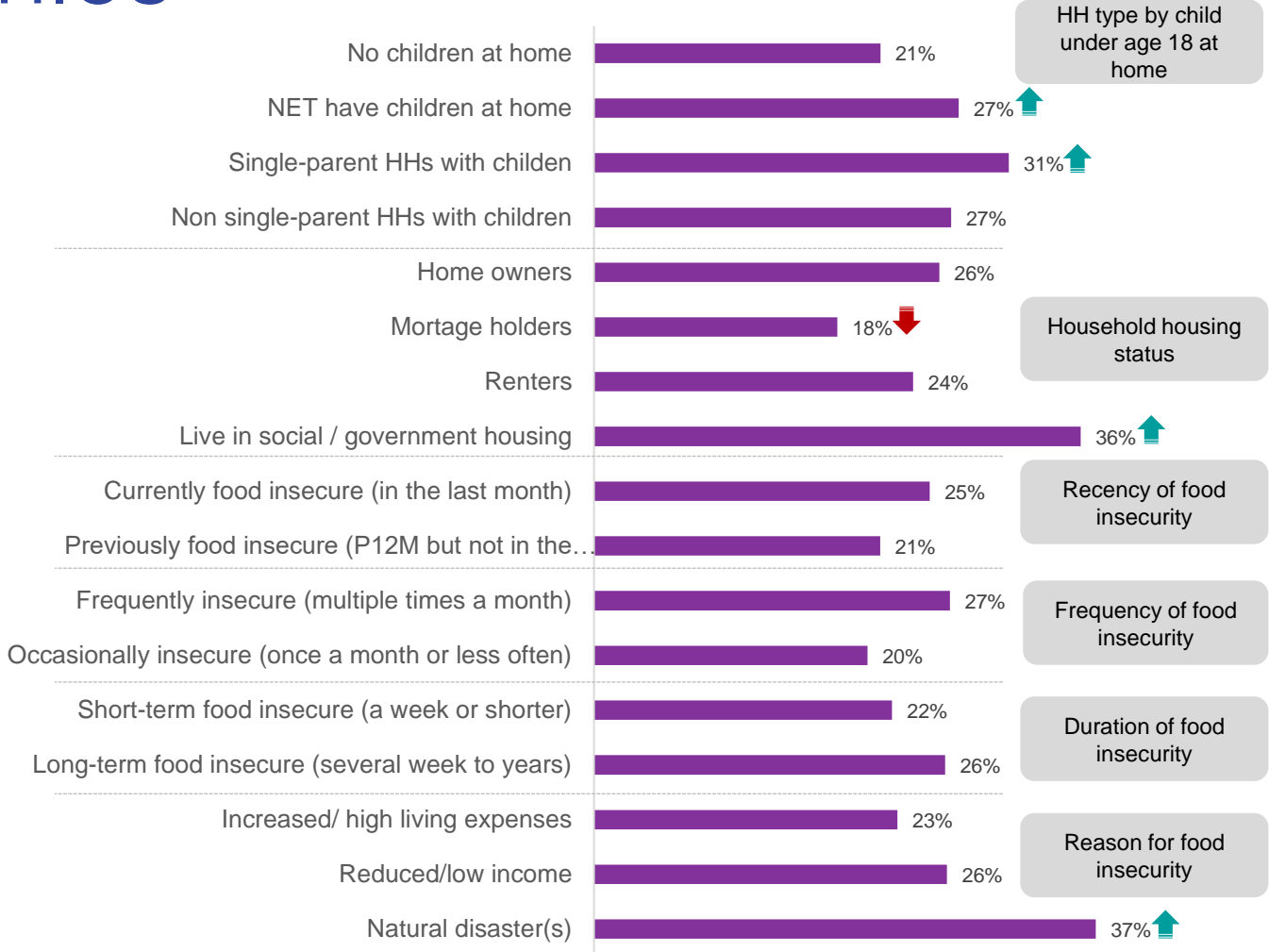
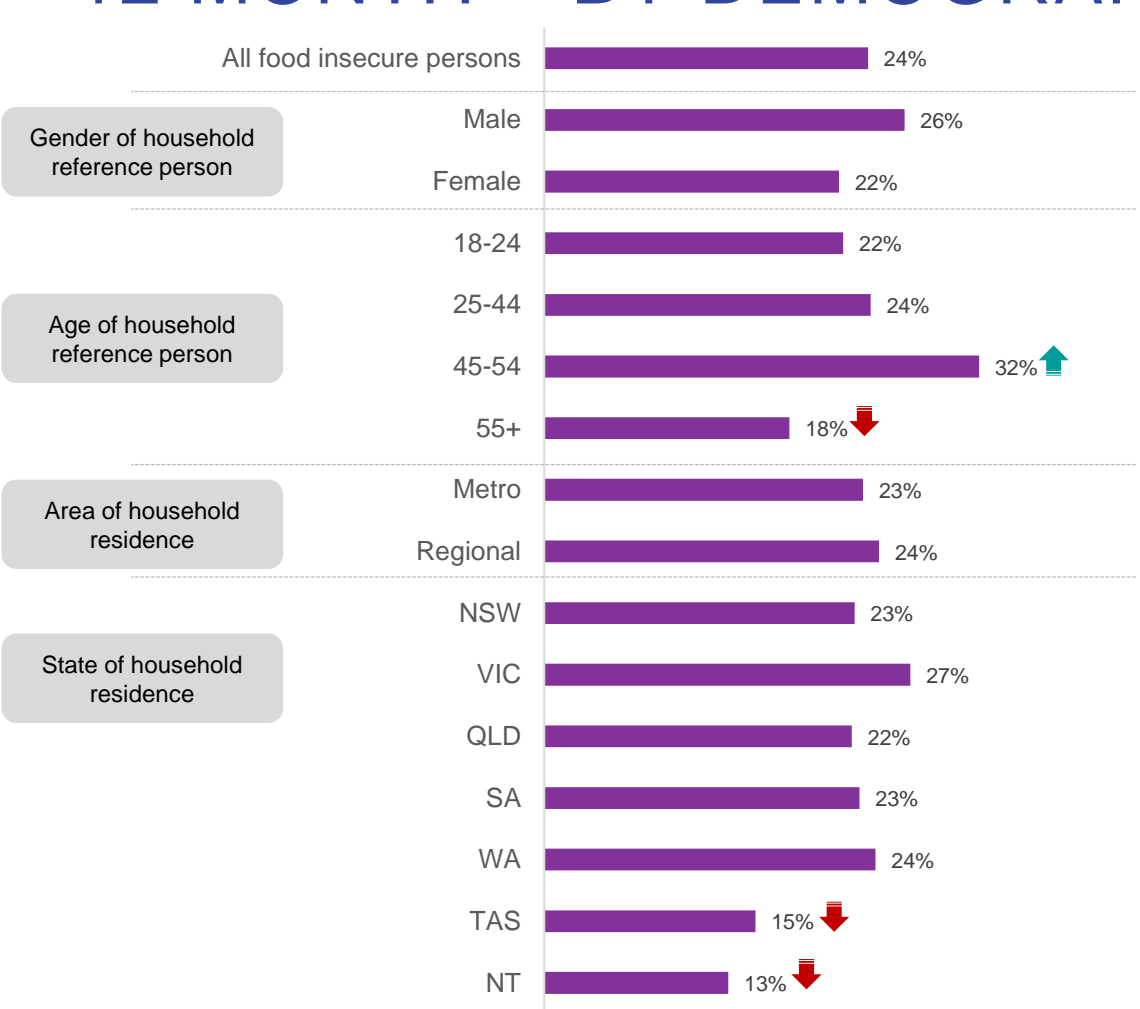
INCREASED/HIGH COST OF LIVING AS REASON FOR FOOD INSECURITY – BY DEMOGRAPHICS



REDUCED/LOW INCOME OR GOVERNMENT BENEFITS AS REASON FOR FOOD INSECURITY – BY DEMOGRAPHICS



FOOD INSECURE (FORMAL FOOD RELIEF SERVICE) IN LAST 12 MONTH – BY DEMOGRAPHICS



Base: Total Food Insecure Households n=1514
Q48 Which of the following are you aware of for providing food relief support and which have you used for food relief?



APPENDIX B:

Background
Methodology
2023 Respondent profile

BACKGROUND

The Foodbank Hunger Report series has been released annually since 2012, dedicated to shedding light on the lived experience of food insecure Australians. The 2023 Foodbank Hunger Report presents the latest results from the research series.

According to the United Nations Food & Agriculture Organisation, a person is food insecure when they lack regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. This may be due to unavailability of food and/or lack of resources to obtain food. For the purpose of categorising food insecurity in Australia, the 2023 Foodbank Hunger Report has utilised the validated United States Department of Agriculture Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM), which assesses food security based on the household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food. (Details about the HFSSM measurement of household food security can be found in the ‘About this report’ section below.)

The annual Foodbank Hunger Report has contributed to growing recognition and understanding of food insecurity by adopting evolving approaches and assessment tools over time. In 2022, the severity of experience of food insecurity at the household level in Australia, both nationally and for each state was explored for the first time. This approach has been replicated in the 2023 Foodbank Hunger Report.

ABOUT FOODBANK

The annual Foodbank Hunger Report is an initiative of Foodbank which is the largest food relief organisation in Australia. It currently provides support to more than one million vulnerable Australians every month by working with the food and grocery industry including farmers, wholesalers, manufacturers and retailers. Foodbank acts as a bridge between this sector and frontline charities, community organisations and schools which provide critical food relief to people in need.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report presents key findings from the *2023 Foodbank Hunger Report* research.

METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork

The research was conducted between 12 and 31 July 2023, through an online survey of 4,342 Australians aged 18 years or older. The sample was nationally representative by age, gender and location (capital city / rest of state) in each major state, with stratified quotas in place based on the ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) projections to ensure all major states have a robust minimum sample size of n=600 or above. In 2023 an additional n=150 boost was conducted in each of NT and TAS. The data was weighted to nationally representative proportion of age, gender, state and location (capital city/ rest of state).

Fieldwork was largely managed by Dynata who also conducted the majority of fieldwork. However Dyanta partnered with The Octopus Group who conducted fieldwork in the NT and TAS.

Questionnaire

The survey was designed and developed in consultation with Foodbank. As was the case in 2022, Foodbank instructed that the introduction and literal execution of the HFSSM module would form the core of the Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 survey. This has been implemented and reflected in the survey design based on thorough review of the official survey instrument and the guide to survey execution and analysis by USDA Economic Research Service (ERS¹). The table below provides a summary of definition for each of the food security categories as per ERS instructions.

	Level of impact	Label as per HFSSM	Definition
Food Secure	Highly food secure	High food security	No reported indications of food-access problems or limitations.
	Marginally food secure	Marginal food security	One or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.
Food Insecure	Moderately food insecure	Low food security	Reports of reduced quality, variety or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake
	Severely food insecure	Very low food security	Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

The average survey length for food secure households was 6 minutes, and the average length for food insecure households – as identified during the survey – was 12 minutes.

1. The full USDA survey instrument and the guide to implementation can be found available on the website of USDA ERS <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/survey-tools/>

A summary of all HFSSM indicators used to measure household level of food security is provided here.

Each indicator, if receiving an affirmative response from the survey respondent, will be coded with a score of one for the relevant respondent.

Depending on their levels of household food security, and whether there are children in the households, the food insecure households can receive a raw score of minimum three to maximum eighteen for those living with children, and a raw score of minimum three to maximum ten for those without.

Referenced household members	Indicators	Definition of affirmative responses for each indicator
Anyone in the household	Agree with the statement that they "worried whether my/our food would run out before I/we got money to buy more"	Sometimes true/ often true
	Agree with the statement that "the food that I/we bought just didn't last, and I/we didn't have money to get more"	Sometimes true/ often true
	Agree with the statement that "I/we couldn't afford to eat balanced meals"	Sometimes true/ often true
Any adult(s) in the household	The respondent, or any other adult in their household, have had experience ever cutting the size of meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food in the last 12 months	Self-reported "yes"
	The frequency of experience cutting the size of meals/ skipping meals because there wasn't enough money for those who did undergo such situation in the last 12 months	Experience happened more often than 'only 1 or 2 months'
The adult respondent themselves	Experience in the last 12 months of ever eating less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food	Self-reported "yes"
	Experience in the last 12 months of ever being hungry but did not eat because there wasn't enough money for food	Self-reported "yes"
	Experience in the last 12 months of ever losing weight because there wasn't enough money for food	Self-reported "yes"
Any adult(s) in the household	The respondent, or any other adult in their household, have had experience ever not eating for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food	Self-reported "yes"
	The frequency of experience not eating for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food, for those who did undergo such situation in the last 12 months	Experience happened more often than 'only 1 or 2 months'
Any children in the household (for households with children)	Agree with the statement that they "relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed the child/ren because of running out of money to buy food"	Sometimes true/ often true
	Agree with the statement that they "couldn't feed the child/ren a balanced meal, because I/we couldn't afford that"	Sometimes true/ often true
	Agree with the statement that their child/ren "were not eating enough because I/we just couldn't afford enough food"	Sometimes true/ often true
	Experience of the respondent ever cutting the size of their child/ren's meals because there wasn't enough money for food in the last 12 months	Self-reported "yes"
	Experience of the child/ren ever skipping meals because there wasn't enough money for food in the last 12 months	Self-reported "yes"
	The frequency of the child/ren's experience ever skipping meals because there wasn't enough money for food for those who did in the last 12 months	Experience happened more often than 'only 1 or 2 months'
	Experience of the child/ren ever being hungry in the last 12 months because the respondent "just couldn't afford more food"	Self-reported "yes"
	Experience of the child/ren ever not eating for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food in the last 12 months	Self-reported "yes"

SUMMARY OF FINAL ACHIEVED SAMPLE PROFILE BY KEY DEMOGRAPHIC TARGETS

The data was weighted to be nationally representative of age, gender, state and location (capital city/rest of state), and the profile of respondents is summarised here.

Category	Sub-group	Sample size n=4,329	Total weighted %
Gender	Male	2088	48%
	Female	2241	51%
Age	18-24	448	9%
	25-44	1616	36%
	45-54	675	16%
	55+	1603	39%
State	NSW	1068	31%
	VIC	878	26%
	QLD	701	20%
	SA	605	7%
	WA	626	10%
	TAS	272	2%
	NT	121	1%
	ACT	71	1%
Location	Metropolitan	3087	67%
	Regional	1255	33%