



STATE OF THE OLDER NATION 2023

Presentation of Topline Results

*Prepared for the **Councils on the Ageing Federation***



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Research Methodology



Tracking survey

This is the **third wave** of the study.



Online survey

Participants sourced from an ISO accredited market research panel.



Representative sample

n = 2,750 Australians aged 50+

Quotas set on gender, age and location. Data weighted to ABS Census population statistics on age, gender & location.

The following demographics related to cultural and linguistic diversity were achieved:

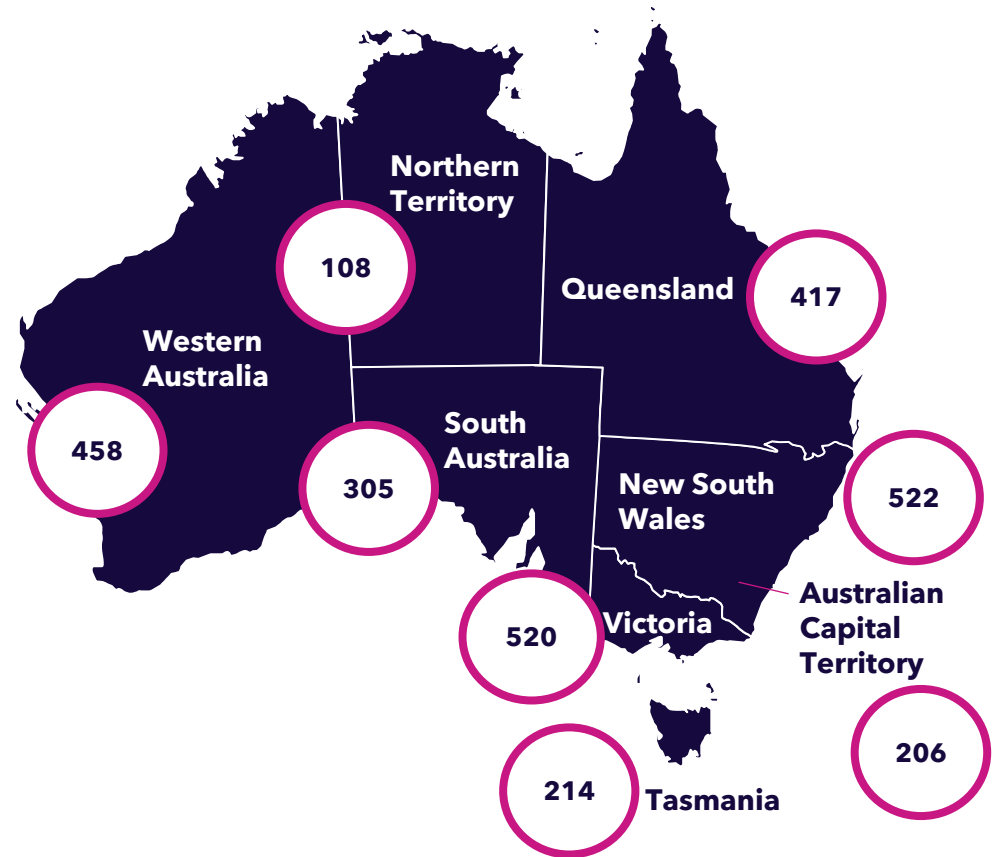
- **27%** were born overseas
- **42%** have one or more parents born overseas
- **7%** prefer to speak a language other than English at home or with close family members
- **1%** identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



Fieldwork dates

8 November to 13 December 2022

Sample breakdown by location (n)



This presentation includes only high-level findings from the 2023 State of the Older Nation research presented by SEC Newgate Research to COTA. For a more in-depth analysis of the results and a detailed explanation of the methodology, please refer to the Full Report.

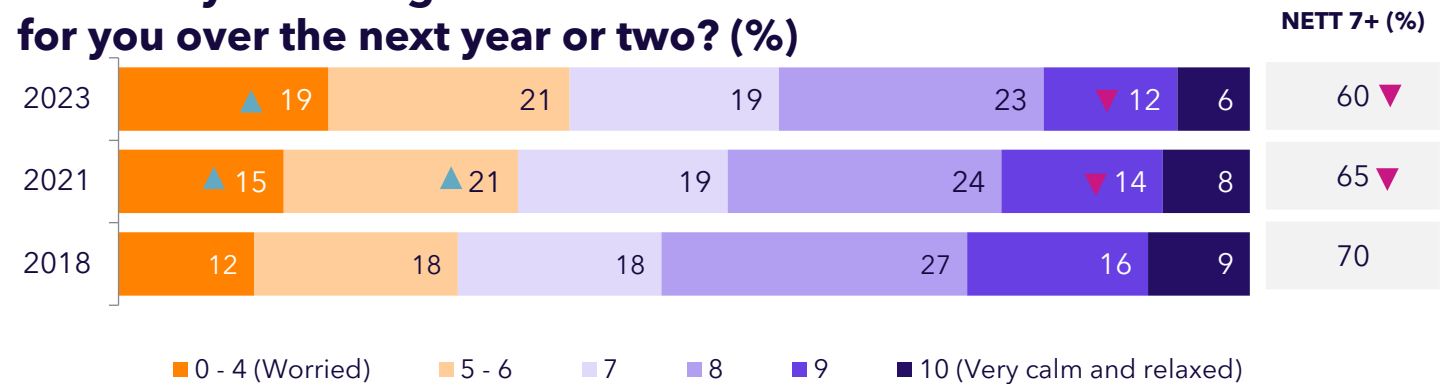
*After another year living with COVID-19, combined with natural disasters at home, conflict overseas and cost-of-living pressures, including an energy crisis, it is perhaps unsurprising that **COTA's 2023 State of the Older Nation** report tells the story of **a cohort who aren't feeling as good about the future as they used to.***



Future outlook

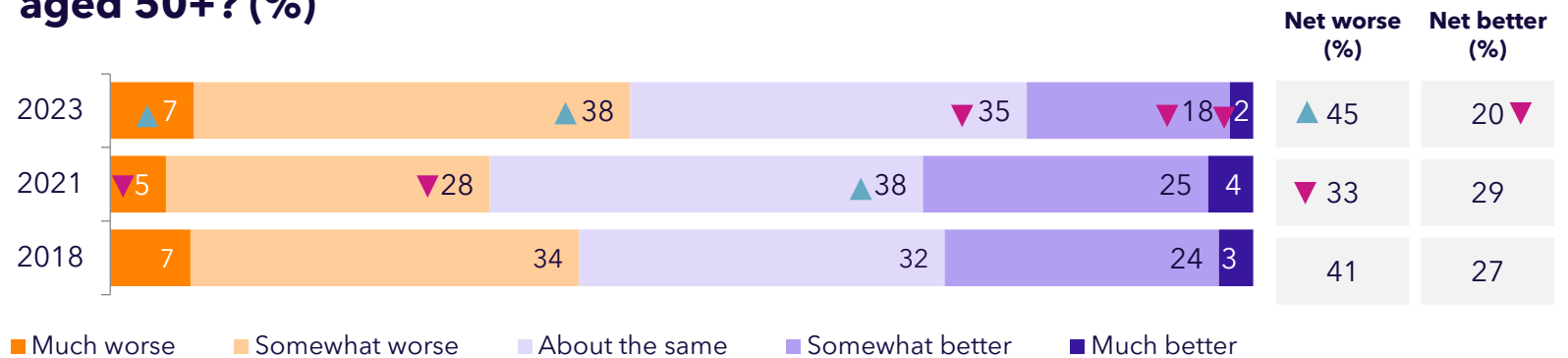
There has been a **significant decline** wave-on-wave in the **proportion of those feeling positive** above what the **future personally holds for them**, from 70% in 2018, to only 60% in 2022.

How are you feeling about what the future holds for you over the next year or two? (%)



And almost **half (45%)** feel things are **getting worse for older Australians** - significantly more than 2021 (33%).

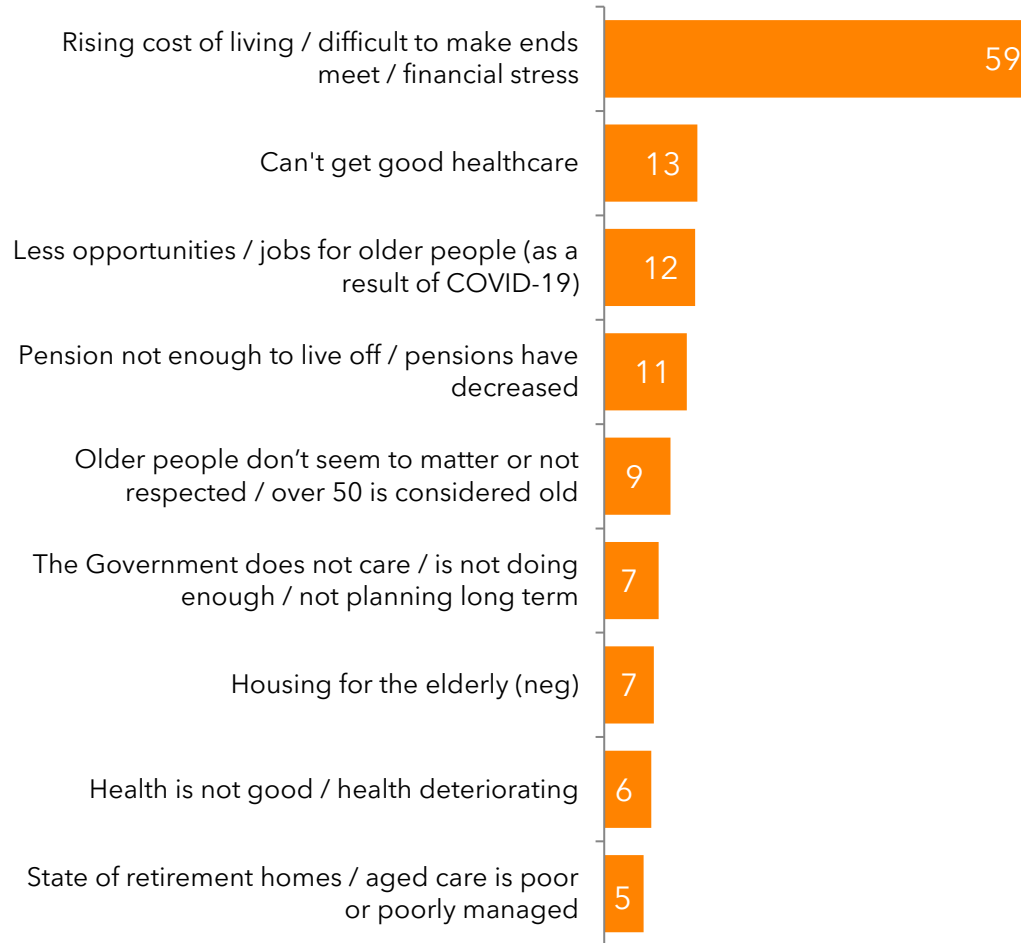
Are things getting better or worse for Australians aged 50+? (%)



Reasons for rating

Reasons why things are getting worse - unprompted (%): Among the **45%** who feel things are getting worse

n=1,263



Older Australians are increasingly feeling the **cost of living crisis**, with financial stress being the key reason for feeling like things are getting worse – 59% mentioned this, compared to 31% in 2021.

SEC Newgate's Mood of the Nation results

Cost of living is the biggest unprompted concern for people aged 50 and over, followed by healthcare – which is a significantly higher concern compared to those who are aged 49 and younger.

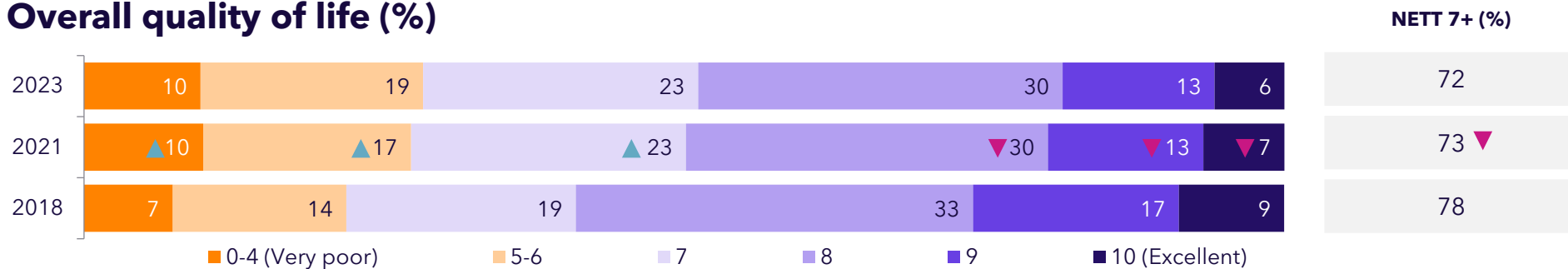
Specific mentions at a total level



Issue: % mentioning each	Aged 50+	Under 50
Cost of living	54 ▼	60
Healthcare	29 ▲	14
Climate change	17	17
Housing affordability	17 ▼	24
Interest rates	14	14
Government performance	13	9
Crime	13 ▲	6
Energy prices	13 ▲	6
Economy	12 ▲	7
Grocery prices	10	8

Current quality of life

Overall quality of life (%)



While most older Australians rate their current quality of life highly (at least a 7 or more out of 10), **levels of satisfaction are still slightly down compared to pre-pandemic.**

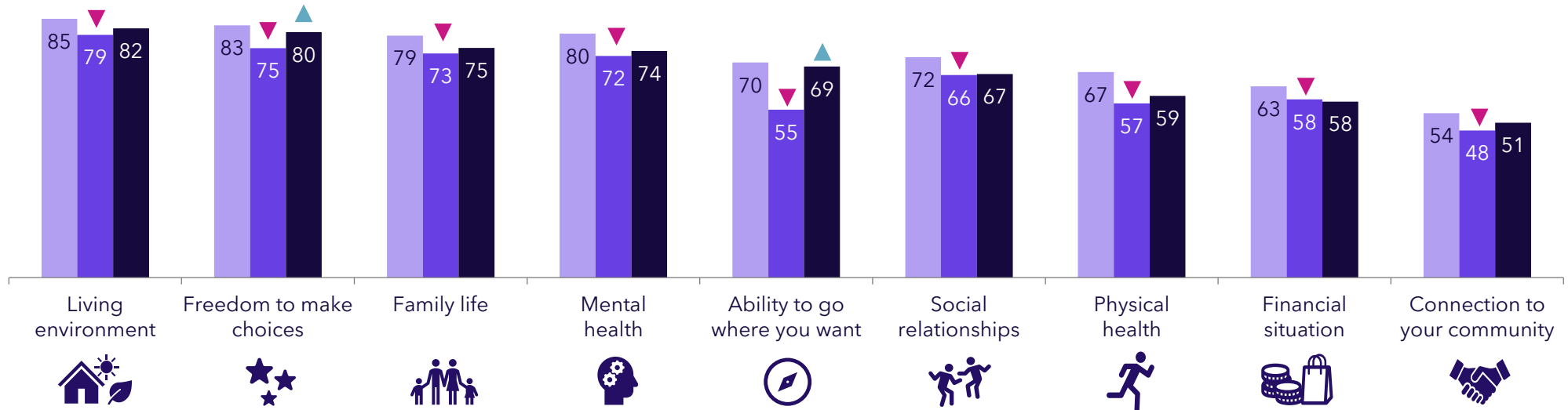
Quality of life is linked to quality of health: Health is a strong indicator of overall quality of life.

Cost of living pressures are impacting quality of life: As cost of living impacts continue to bite, older Australians who report to be in a poor financial situation are more likely to report a lower quality of life.

Current quality of life

Proportion rating aspects of their lives highly (% rating 7-10)

■ 2018 ■ 2021 ■ 2023



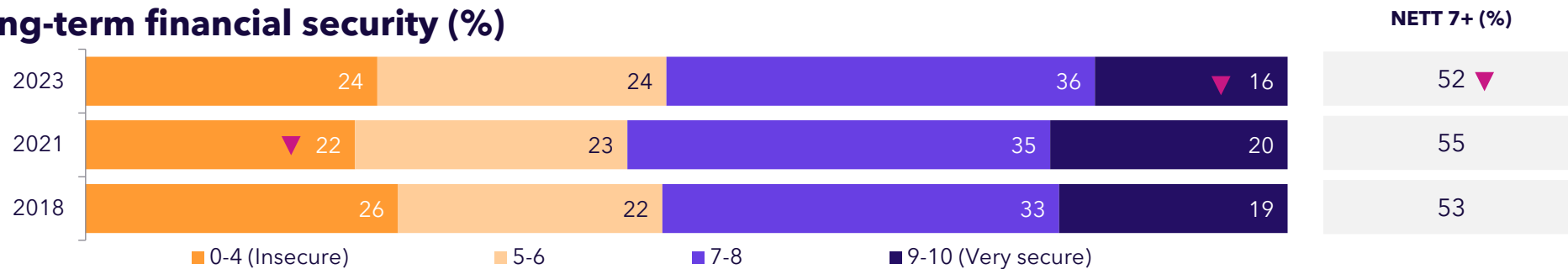
Older Australians have taken advantage of post-lockdown freedoms and significantly more feel they have the freedom to make choices and go where they want. Despite this, **many social, health and financial aspects have not seen marked improvements from 2021.**

There are some differences between subgroups:

- **70+** are more positive about all aspects of life
- **Regional residents** more positive about their living environment
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**[^] less likely to feel they have the ability to go where they want, when they want and have poorer mental health ratings
- **Those with a disability** much worse outcomes across the board

Financial security

Long-term financial security (%)



Older Australians' long-term financial outlook has decreased and there are **now fewer who see themselves as 'very' financially secure.**



24% rated their long term financial security as poor (0-4).

This was more prevalent among those who...

- Gave their financial situation a poor rating (of 0-4/10): **87%**
- Worry about risk of homelessness in the next 12 months: **80%**
- Gave their quality of life a poor rating (of 0-4/10): **77%**
- Gave their mental health a poor rating (of 0-4/10): **70%**

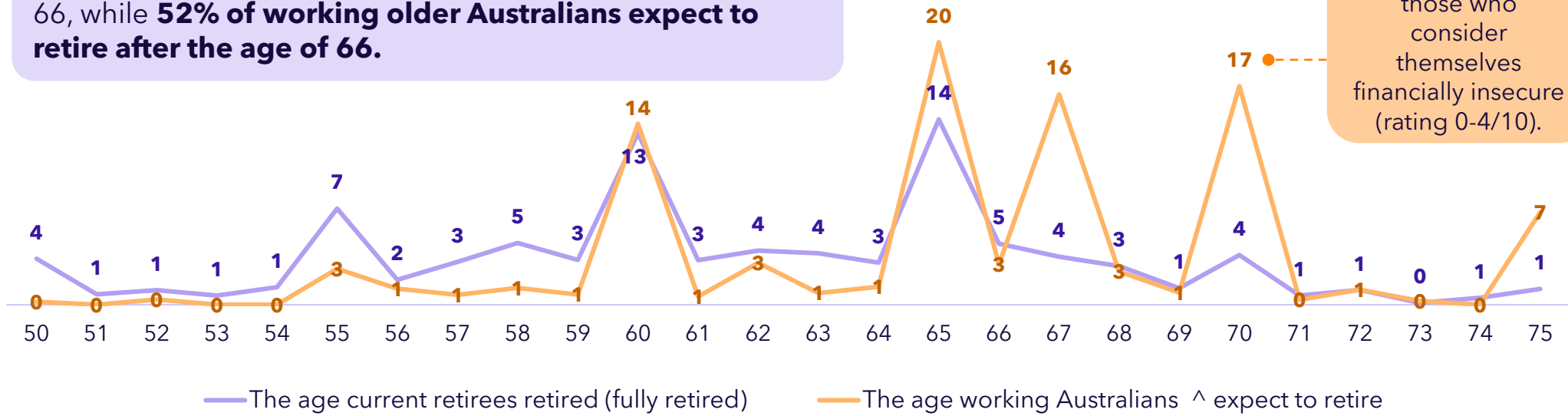
18% have overdue bills due to payment difficulties and the average number of bills overdue was **3.5**

Employment

Age at which Australians have fully retired, or expect to retire (%)

78% of those who are *fully* retired did so before the age of 66, while **52% of working older Australians expect to retire after the age of 66.**

24% amongst those who consider themselves financially insecure (rating 0-4/10).



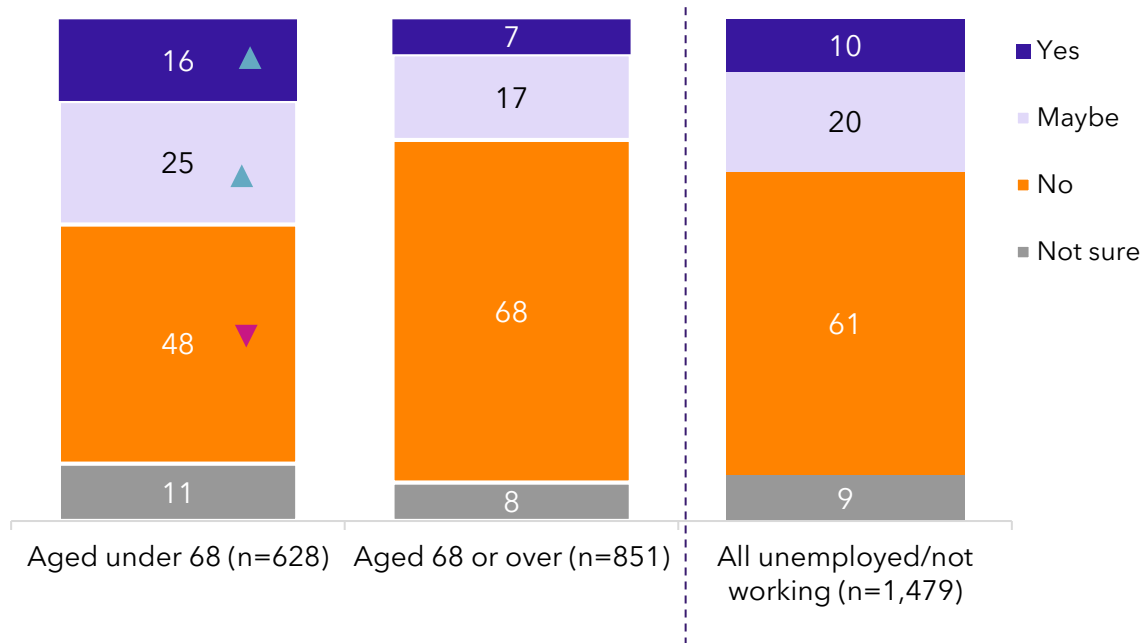
Concerningly, **around a quarter (23%) of those who are still working feel they will never retire**, with those in financially precarious or vulnerable positions significantly more likely to feel this way (e.g. almost half of those on the Age Pension and a third of those with a disability felt they would never retire).

Around half (49%) are doing some unpaid work - volunteering continues to be the most common type (21% volunteer) and caring for a partner is the most time intensive (averaging 32 hours a week).

This year volunteering hours are down slightly, and caring for grandchildren hours are significantly up (though not dissimilar to 2018 levels).

Employment

Considering going back to or entering the workforce (%): Among those not employed



Considering a re-entry to the workforce is relatively low amongst those who aren't working (10% would consider it), but those aged under 68 are more likely to consider it (16%).

The biggest **barriers** to rejoining are health or mobility issues, a lack of needing to work and the perception that they are 'too old'.

Employment

Things that might encourage entering the workforce (prompted %): Among those not employed



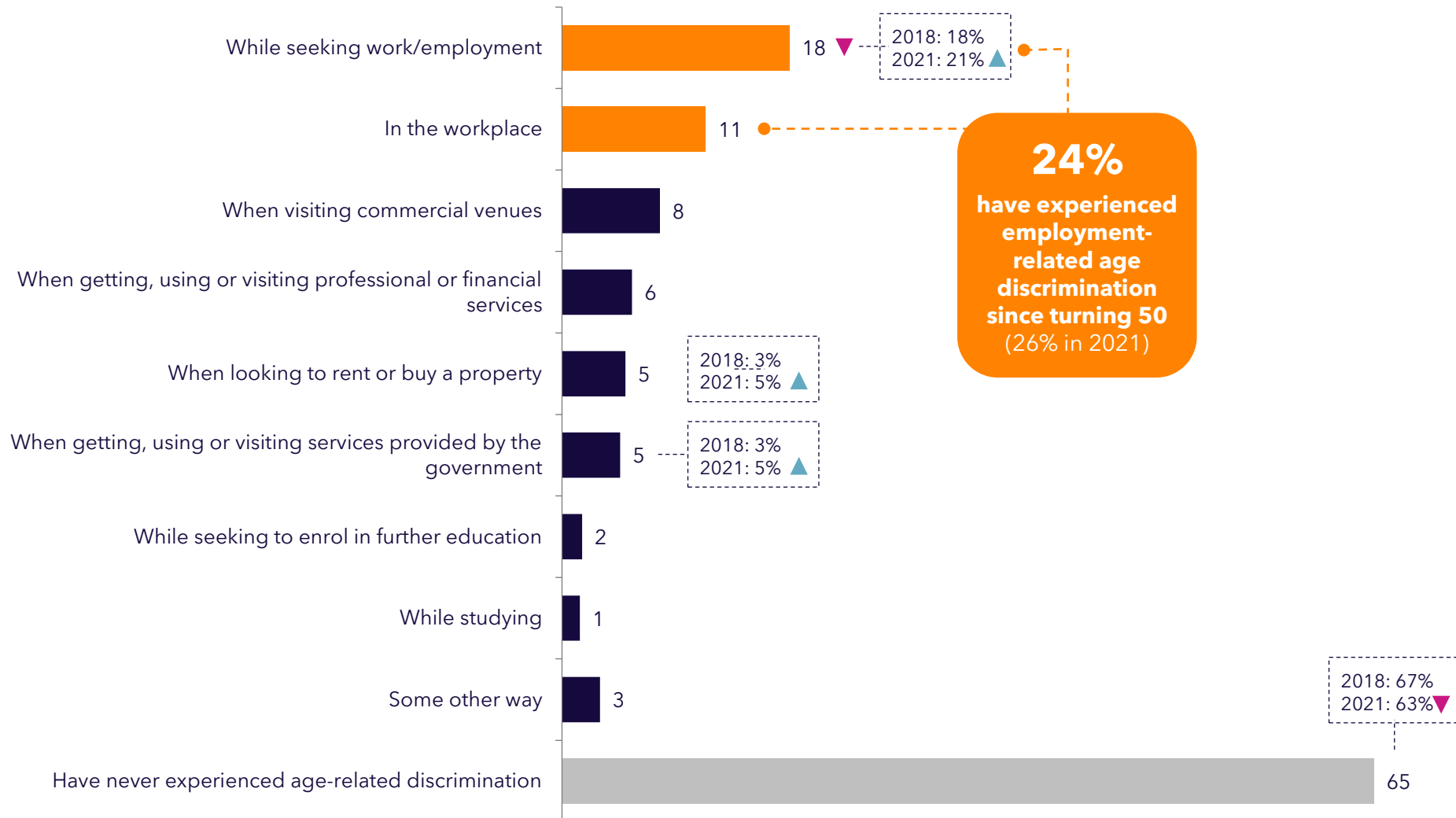
**NETT 52%
mentioned
flexibility-related
factors**

However, things that would encourage people to re-enter the workforce were very **individual to the person.**

Age-related discrimination

Consistent with 2021, more than a third of older Australians reported having experienced age-related discrimination, with **employment-related discrimination** being the most common form.

Experienced a sense of discrimination due to age (Prompted %)

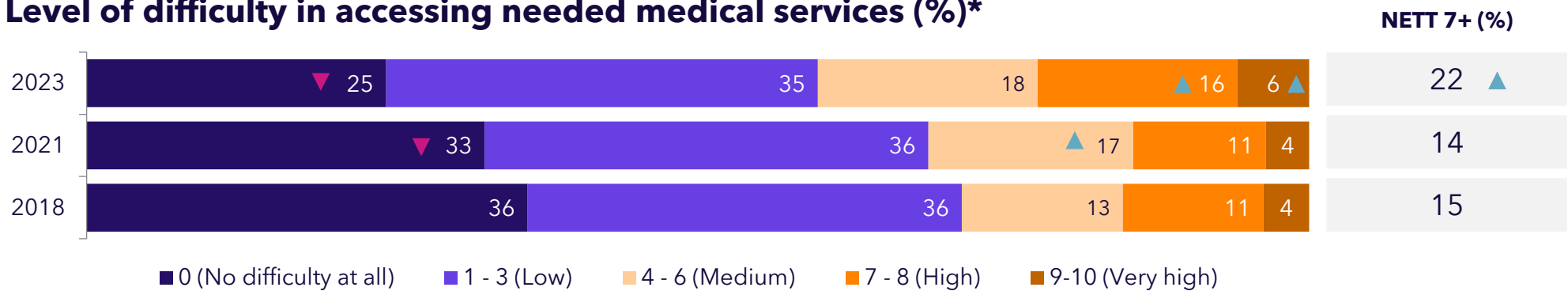


Healthcare



Older Australians report **increasing difficulty in accessing health services**, with more than a fifth (22%) having issues, compared to only 14% in 2021.

Level of difficulty in accessing needed medical services (%)*



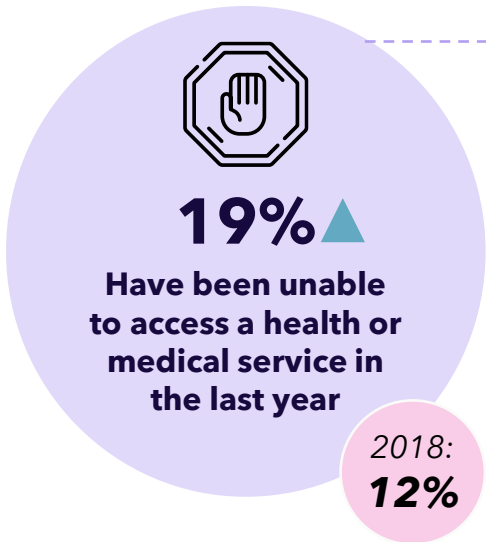
* **10%** ▼ said they did not need to access medical services (down from 13% in 2021)



Difficulty is primarily due to **long waiting lists** and **cost**, and is markedly **more likely to be experienced by some more vulnerable groups**.

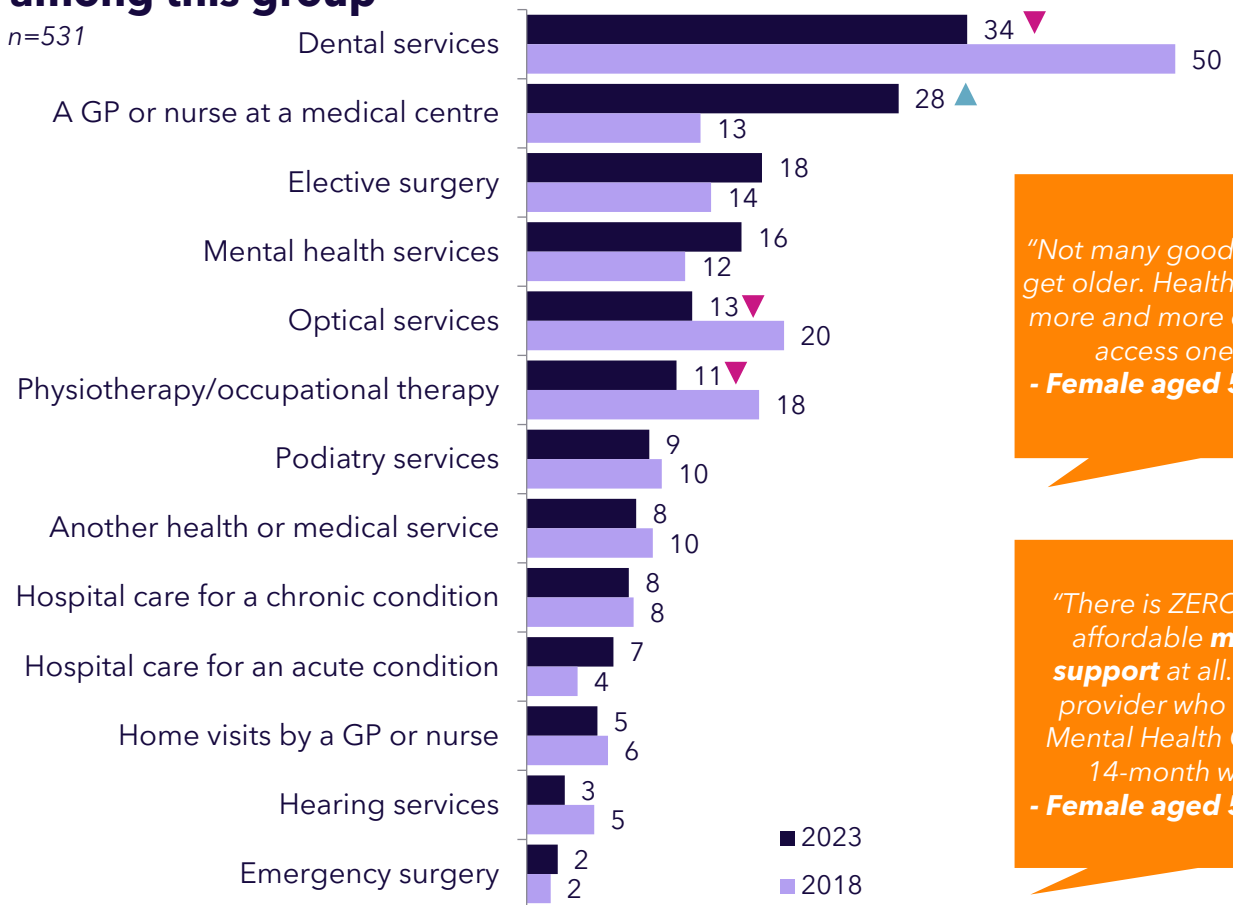
Healthcare

One in five older Australians have been unable to access a health or medical service in the last year, and this has increased since 2018. The proportion of those unable to access a GP or nurse at a medical centre has more than doubled since then.



Health and medical services they were unable to access (%): among this group

n=531



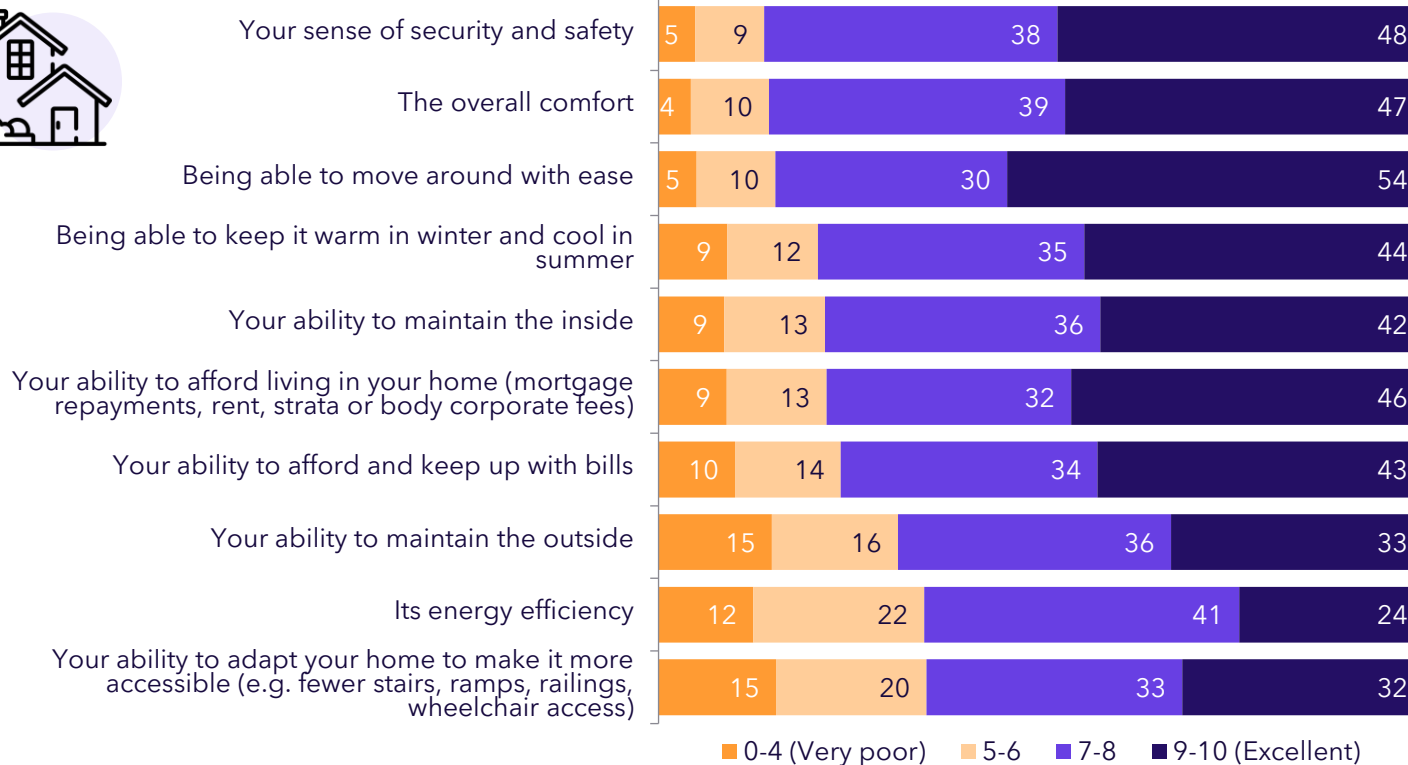
"Not many good GPs bulk bill as I get older. Health costs are getting more and more expensive and to access one is difficult."
- Female aged 51 in metro ACT

"There is ZERO available and affordable mental health support at all. The only local provider who works within a Mental Health Care Plan has a 14-month waitlist now."
- Female aged 52 in metro WA

Housing

The majority rated their sense of security, safety and overall comfort in their homes highly. Pain points included energy efficiency, ability to maintain the outside and adapt the home for accessibility.

Ratings of the following aspects of their home (%)*



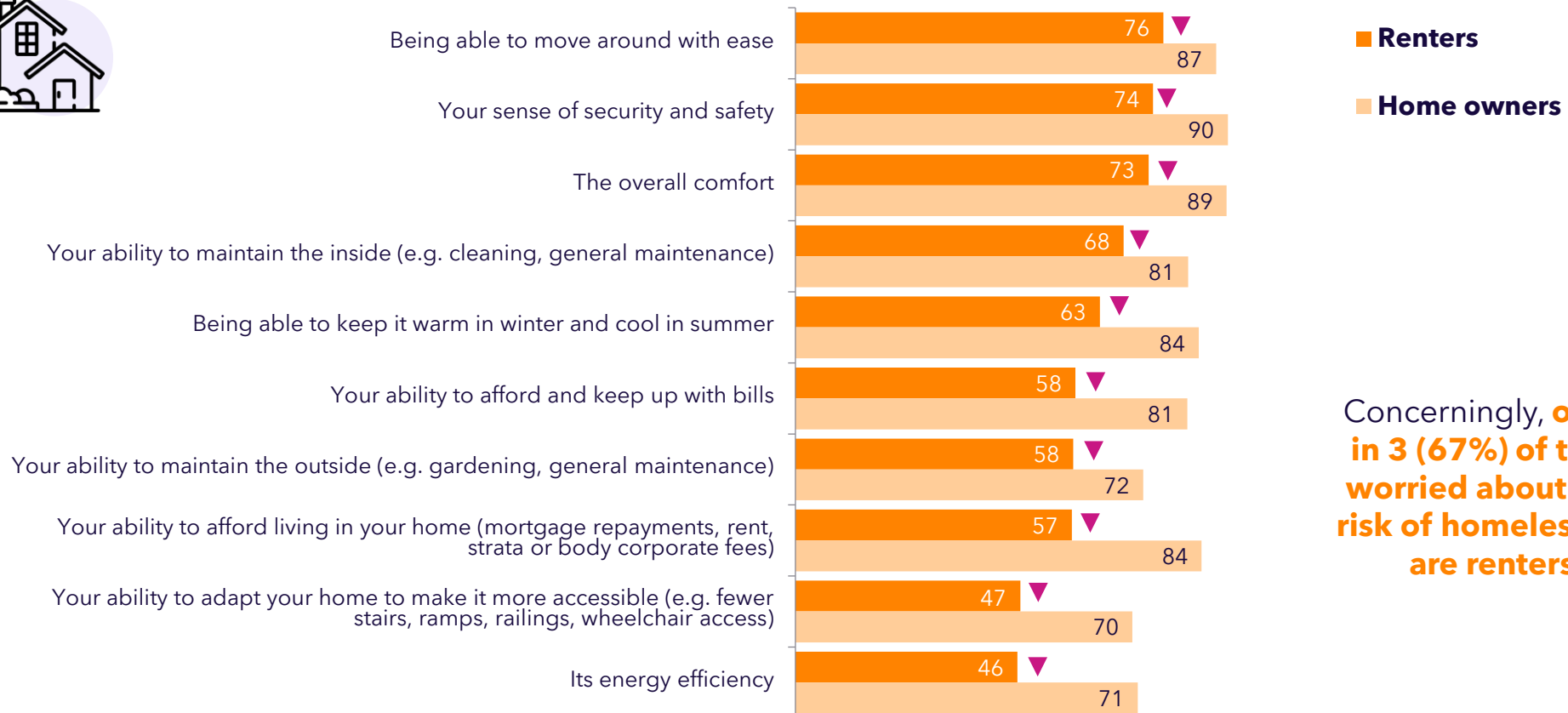
Total sample	NETT 7+ (%)*	
	Under 70	Aged 70+
86	83 ▼	92 ▲
86	82 ▼	93 ▲
85	84	86
79	75 ▼	87 ▲
78	77	80
78	73 ▼	88 ▲
76	73 ▼	83 ▲
69	69	68
65	62 ▼	72 ▲
65	61 ▼	72 ▲

Nearly one in seven older Australians (15%) rated their ability to adapt their home to make it more accessible as poor (0-4/10).

Housing

Over 1 in 5 (22%) older Australians surveyed are **renting**, with many vulnerable groups significantly more likely.

Ratings of the following aspects of their home (% rating 7+ out of 10)*

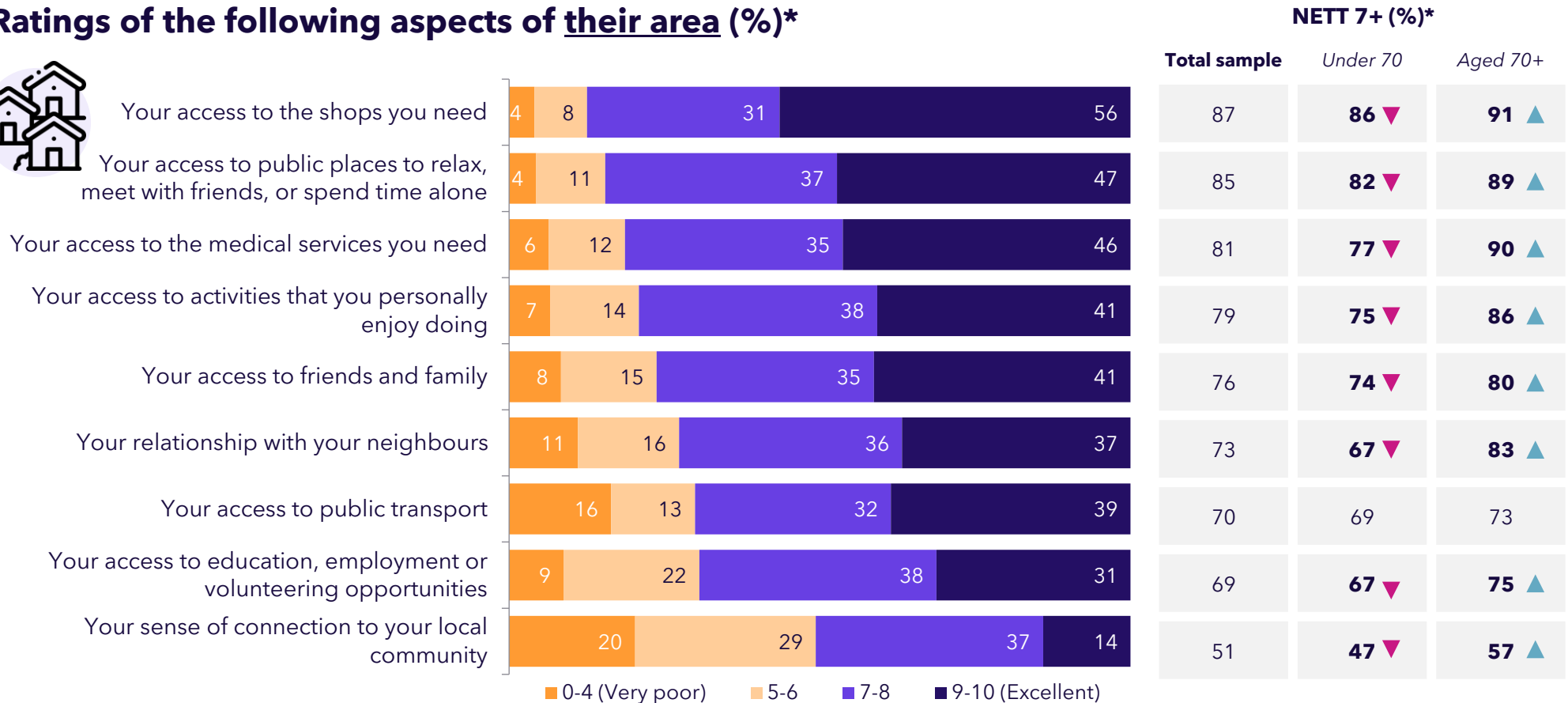


Concerningly, **over 2 in 3 (67%) of those worried about their risk of homelessness are renters.**

Housing

Older Australians are generally satisfied with **the area in which they live**, especially those aged 70 and over.

Ratings of the following aspects of their area (%)*



Homelessness

1 in 20 older Australians (5%) worry about their risk of homelessness in next 12 months, and 1% have experienced it in the last 12 months.

Feeling at risk of homelessness in the next 12 months is more prevalent among those who:	
Have experienced domestic violence in the last 12 months (21% of them are worried about their risk)*	
Have experienced the death of a spouse or partner in the last 12 months (21%)	
Identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander [^] (17%)	
Those who are renting (16%)	
Primary income is the carer's allowance or payment (14%)	
Primary income is another government payment (not an Age Pension) e.g. disability support pension or widow allowance (12%)	
Have a disability (10%)	
Divorced / separated (10%)	
Identify as LGBTQ+ (10%)	
Not in paid employment (9%)	
Aged under 65 (7%)	
Living alone (7%)	
Women (6%)	

[^] Note relatively low sample (n=37, 1% of participants)
^{*} i.e. 21% of those in our sample who had experienced domestic violence are worried about their risk of homelessness, 16% of renters in our overall sample were worried about their risk of homelessness, etc.

Homelessness

Those who worry they are at risk are **struggling in nearly all aspects of their lives**

People who are at risk of homelessness are more likely to encounter the following experiences:



They are significantly **more likely to rate their current quality of life as poor** (0-4 out of 10) - 39%, compared to 8% who do not feel at risk. **70% rate their financial situation as poor** (0-4 out of 10), compared to 16% of those who do not feel at risk.



They are more socially disconnected: 52% felt they have a poor sense of connection to their local community (0-4 out of 10) compared to those not at risk (19%), poor access to education, employment or volunteering opportunities (32% vs. 7% not at risk), poor level of access to friends and family (26% vs 7% not at risk) and poor relationships with their neighbours (25% vs. 10% not at risk)



35% felt they **didn't have the right skills to re-enter the workforce**, compared to 9% not at risk, and 70% **could not re-enter the workforce due to health and mobility** reasons, compared to 37% not at risk.



42% reported to have **difficulty accessing medical services** (rating a 7 or more out of 10), compared to 21% of those not at risk.



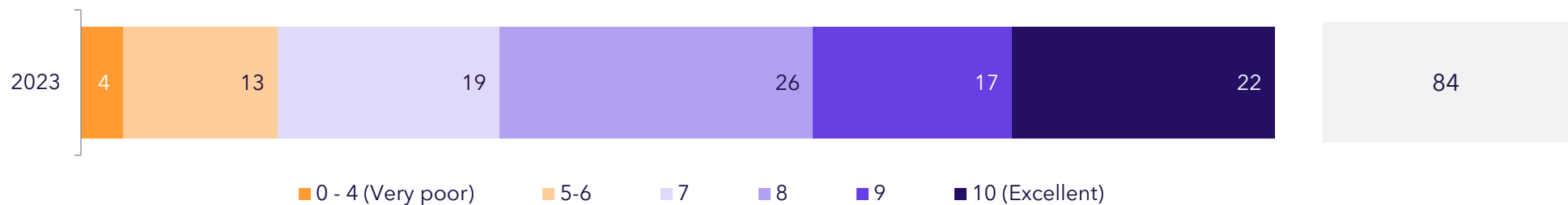
They **spend significantly more time caring for their partner** due to age, illness or disability (60.4 hours per week, vs. 30.1 hours of those not at risk of homelessness).

Technology



It is, however, important to note that this survey was done **online**, so the results may be skewed towards those who are already comfortable using technology and have access to the internet and internet enabled devices such as smart phones, tablets and computers.

Current level of access to technology (%)

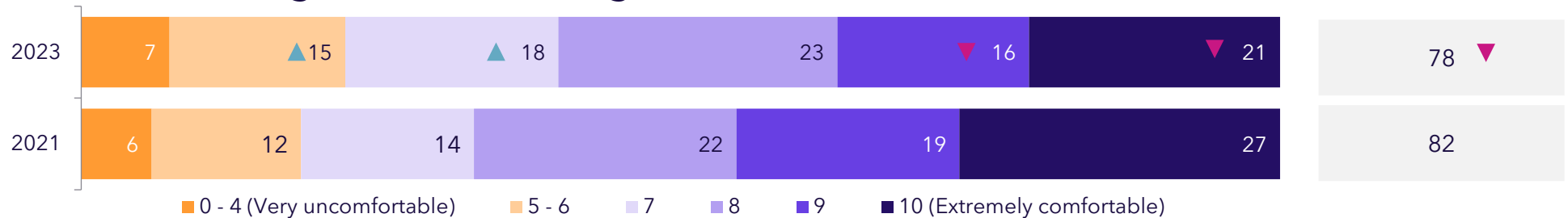


A clear majority felt they had good access to technology (84% rated this a 7 or more out of 10), with **one in five reporting to have 'excellent' access** (22% rating a 10 out of 10).

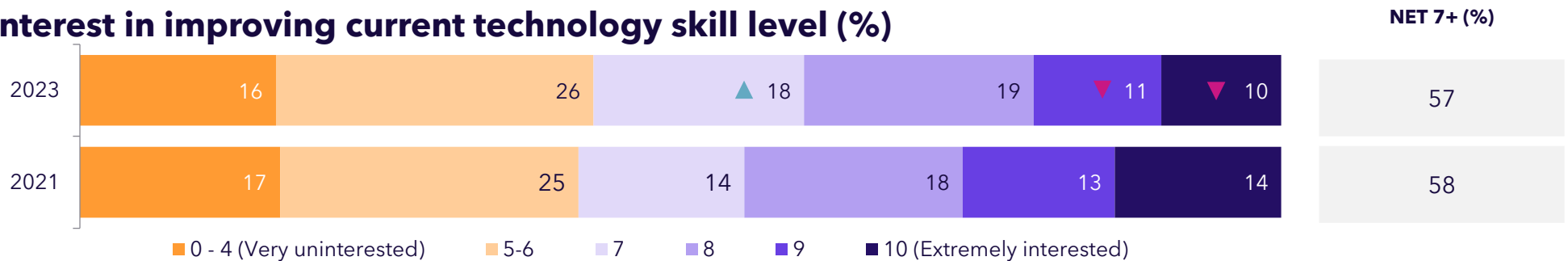
Technology

More than three-quarters (78%) have a high level of comfort with **technology** (rating their comfort a 7 or more out of 10), which was consistent across all age groups. This has, however, dropped significantly since 2021 (when 82% had a high level of comfort).

Comfort level using modern technologies (%)



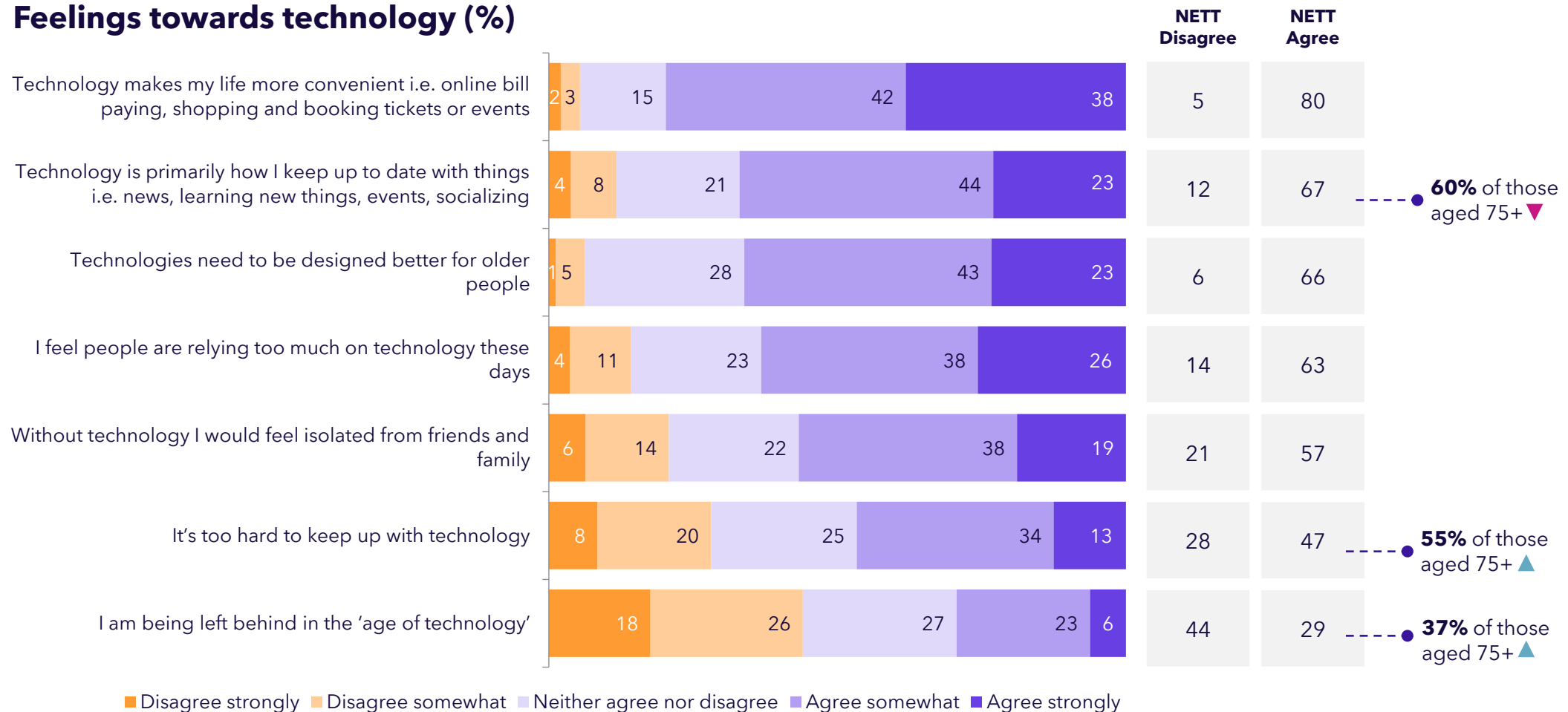
Interest in improving current technology skill level (%)



Technology

While eight in ten (80%) agreed that technology makes their life convenient, two-thirds (66%) also felt technology needs to be better designed for older people.

Feelings towards technology (%)



COVID-19



While COVID-19 restrictions were largely lifted in 2022, **the pandemic is of course not entirely over** - perhaps especially in the minds of those older Australians with health issues.

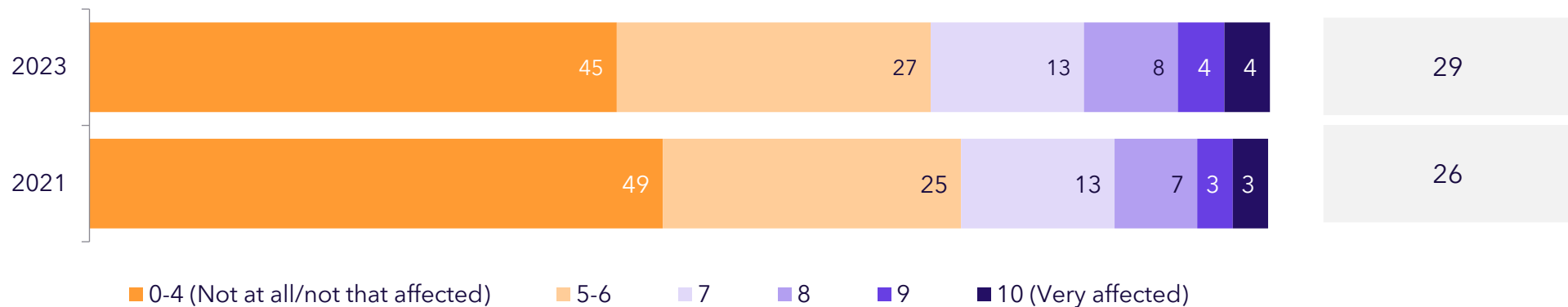


3 in 10 (29%) say they have been personally affected by the pandemic e.g. socially, financially, physically, or mentally - and this is actually up a little from 2021 (26%).



Fewer older Australians are reporting that their household or personal income has decreased since the pandemic (26% vs 29% household; 25% vs 28% personal), and a lower proportion of participants are saying that their visits to the GP have decreased (15% compared to 18% in 2021).

Effects of the coronavirus pandemic (%)



What are the differences by subgroups?



Key Statistics: Results by Subgroup

Key statistics (%)	Age group				Gender		Prefer to speak a language other than English at home		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants [^]	
	Total sample (n=2,750)	50-59 (n=976)	60-69 (n=945)	70-79 (n=676)	80+ (n=153)	Male (n=1,280)	Female (n=1,470)	Yes (n=184)	No (n=2,566)	Yes (n=37)
68% feel younger than their age	63 ▼	70	74 ▲	66	66	69	67	68	51	68
72% rate their quality of life highly (7+/10)	65 ▼	74	78 ▲	73	72	71	74	72	53 ▼	72 ▲
59% say their physical health is very good (7+/10)	55 ▼	61	65 ▲	58	60	59	66	59	45	60
47% do at least two hours of exercise per week	45	53 ▲	47	34 ▼	50 ▲	44 ▼	46	47	39	47
53% have one or more vulnerability indicators	46 ▼	51	60 ▲	64 ▲	50 ▼	56 ▲	100 ▲	50 ▼	100 ▲	53 ▼
45% say things are getting worse for their generation	47	47	46	35 ▼	44	47	39	46	55	45
23% of those still working do not think they will ever retire*	22	20	37	88 ▲	23	24	26	23	40	23
18% have overdue bills due to payment difficulties	29 ▲	17	11 ▼	4 ▼	15 ▼	21 ▲	26 ▲	17 ▼	34 ▲	18 ▼
24% feel insecure about their finances being able to meet their needs throughout the rest of their lives (0-4/10)	29 ▲	24	19 ▼	18	21 ▼	27 ▲	18 ▼	25 ▲	40 ▲	24 ▼

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	50-59 (n=976)	60-69 (n=945)	70-79 (n=676)	80+ (n=153)	Male (n=1,280)	Female (n=1,470)	Yes (n=184)	No (n=2,566)	Yes (n=37)	No (n=2,713)
35% have experienced age-related discrimination since turning 50	37	42▲	31	22▼	34	37	38	35	23	36
24% have experienced employment-related discrimination since turning 50	26	31▲	19▼	11▼	25	23	27	24	16	24
57% have private health insurance	53	59	59	55	59▲	55▼	60	56	25▼	57▲
4% have personally experienced elder abuse	4	4	5	3	3	4	3	4	5	4
8% know someone else who has experienced elder abuse	9	9	6	4	6▼	9▲	8	8	7	8
24% intend to go on a holiday overseas in the next 12 months	27▲	26	22	12▼	26▲	21▼	32▲	23▼	5▼	24▲
27% say they are likely to move house in the next 5 years	34▲	29	21▼	14▼	26	27	29	27	38	27
29% have been quite affected by COVID-19 (7+/10)	31	32	23▼	24	25▼	32▲	40▲	28▼	12▼	29▲
7% have a low level of comfort in using modern technologies (0-4/10)	5▼	8	9	10	7	8	5	8	8	7

Key Statistics: Results by Subgroup

Key statistics (%)	State								Metro/Regional		Identify as LGBTQ+		
	Total sample (n=2,750)	NSW (n=522)	VIC (n=520)	QLD (n=417)	SA (n=305)	WA (n=458)	ACT (n=206)	TAS (n=214)	NT (n=108)	Metro (n=1,852)	Regional (n=898)	Yes (n=110)	No (n=2,640)
68% feel younger than their age		65	69	70	67	69	71	65	70	69	67	66	68
72% rate their quality of life highly (7+/10)		70	74	73	71	71	76	70	71	71	74	60▼	72▲
59% say their physical health is very good (7+/10)		57	62	63	57	57	61	51▼	59	61	57	57	60
47% do at least two hours of exercise per week		45	47	54▲	39▼	43	53	53	43	47	47	57	46
53% have one or more vulnerability indicators		55	50	52	61▲	54	46	51	36▼	51▼	56▲	57	53
45% say things are getting worse for their generation		46	42	47	46	46	39	54	38	43	49	53	45
23% of those still working do not think they will ever retire*		27	21	21	23	20	24	34	27	22	26	24	23
18% have overdue bills due to payment difficulties		18	18	18	20	20	21	16	20	19	17	26▲	18▼
24% feel insecure about their finances being able to meet their needs throughout the rest of their lives (0-4/10)		27	19▼	25	24	26	22	26	23	24	25	34▲	24▼

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35% have experienced age-related discrimination since turning 50	36	31	39	35	37	41	33	42	36	35	46▲	35▼
24% have experienced employment-related discrimination since turning 50	24	21	27	24	28	23	22	35▲	26	22	30	24
57% have private health insurance	54	57	55	55	66▲	65	55	65	62▲	47▼	53	57
4% have personally experienced elder abuse	4	4	4	3	2	4	5	7	4	4	5	4
8% know someone else who has experienced elder abuse	7	7	8	8	8	12	8	15▲	8	8	7	8
24% intend to go on a holiday overseas in the next 12 months	22	25	25	17▼	27	27	18	33▲	26▲	19▼	39▲	23▼
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7% have a low level of comfort in using modern technologies (0-4/10)	8	6	8	6	6	9	9	6	7	8	3	8



Questions?





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