

2024 GEN Z WELLBEING INDEX

year  | scape





FOUNDED IN 2011, YEAR13 IS A GEN Z PUBLISHER AND ED-TECH WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO LIVE HAPPIER, HEALTHIER AND MORE FULFILLED LIVES, AND WHOSE MISSION IS TO UPGRADE THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION.

Year13 also operates Career Tools, Australia's largest career development platform, with over 1250 subscribing schools. In 2023, Year13 acquired Good Education Group, Australia's most comprehensive directory of schools, universities and training providers.



SCAPE AUSTRALIA HAS A VISION TO BE THE EARTH'S BEST LIVING COMPANY WITH A PURPOSE TO CREATE BETTER LIVING EXPERIENCES FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET.

Their ambition is to be the world leader in residential community design where people feel proud to live.

As Australia's largest owner and operator of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), Scape currently serves over 17,000 residents across 36 locations nationwide.

2024 GEN Z WELLBEING INDEX



CONTENTS

02 Methodology

06 Introduction

09 Mental health

41 Exercise

55 Sleep

65 Diet

80 Final Thoughts

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Reference as: Walker, I, (2024). '2024 Gen Z Wellbeing Index', Year13, Australia.
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METHODOLOGY

One national survey of Australian youth & Scape residents conducted by Year13 and Scape in May 2024.

Total responses = 3345

Australian youth = 2093

Scape residents = 1252

This survey formed the basis of this research paper and was designed to gather comprehensive information about the wellbeing of youth in Australia. One national sample of youth was surveyed as well as a national sample of Scape residents to compare their state of wellbeing. All respondents for this survey were aged 18-24 and have finished high school. This survey was conducted online and respondents were sourced via email and social media. Youth quotes featured throughout this report were sourced from extended response questions included in the survey, some of which have been edited for clarity and brevity.

A total of 2200 survey responses provides a large enough sample size to draw valid conclusions that represent Australia's youth population. With a sample size of at least $n=2093$ we can be 95% confident that the metrics are within $+3/-3\%$ of the result had we surveyed all 2,900,000 Australian youth aged 18 to 24.

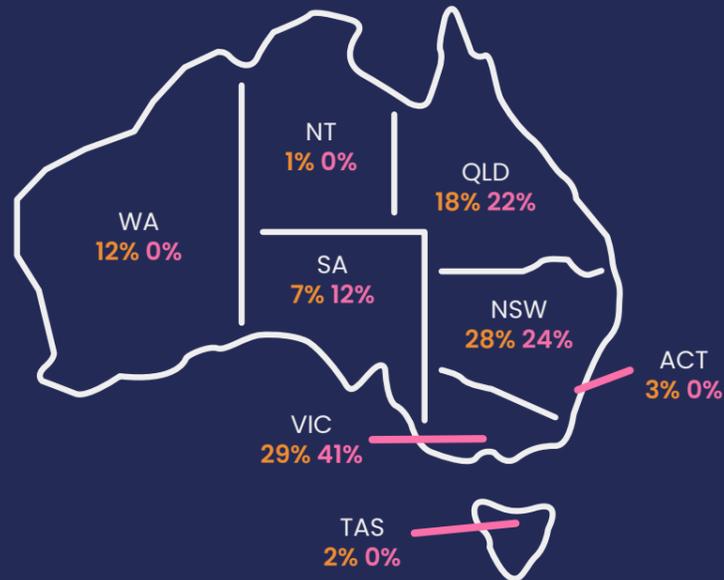
In addition to descriptive statistics for each survey question the analysis includes statistically significant differences across the following variables/groups: year on year differences between 2023 and 2024 and state differences between NSW, VIC, QLD and SA. Any relevant and significant differences amongst these variables and groups compared to the average have been highlighted.

See the next page for combined demographics of these surveys.

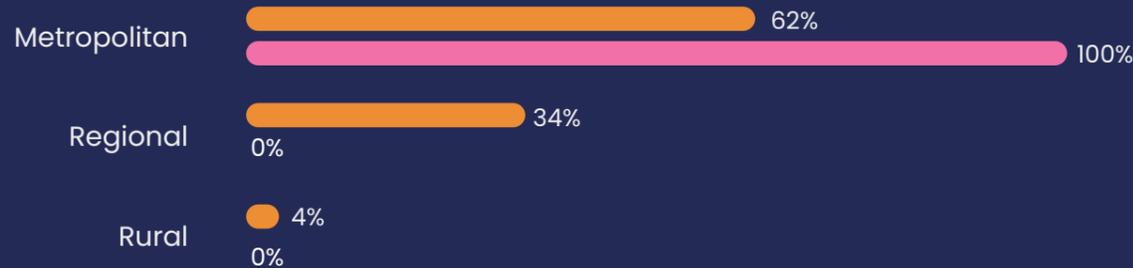
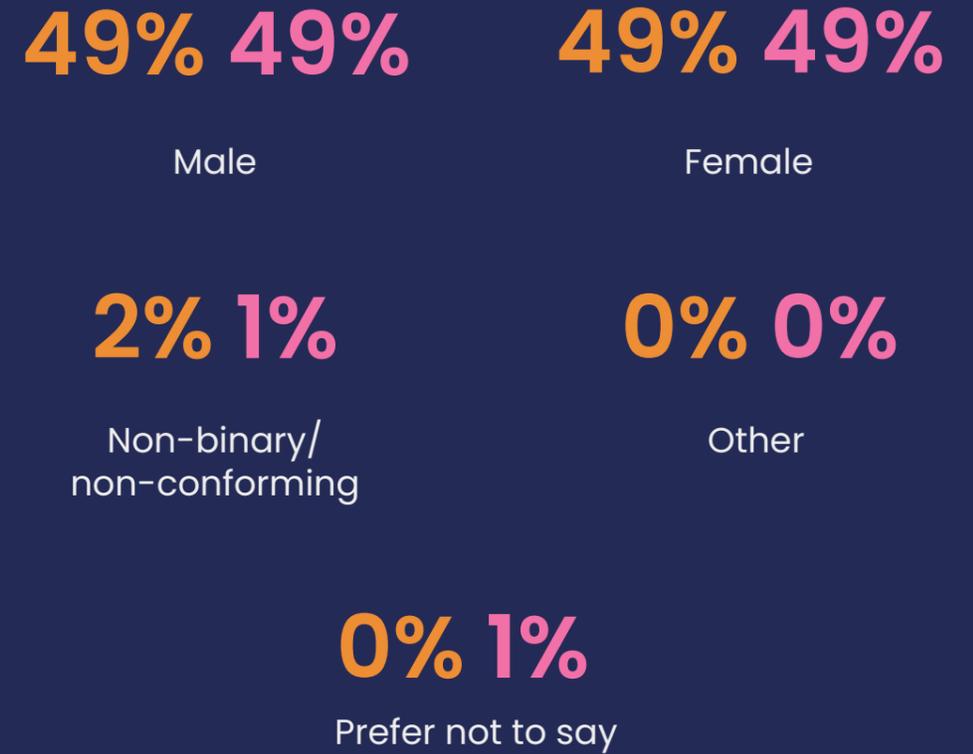
Demographic breakdown

● National ● Scape

LOCATION BREAKDOWN



GENDER BREAKDOWN



OUR RESPONDENTS



AGE BREAKDOWN





INTRODUCTION

Turning 18 brings with it a lot of big questions. All of a sudden thoughts like “what am I going to do next with my life?”, “why am I so tired all the time?” and “can I even afford this?” are on young people’s minds a whole lot more than they used to be. With the structure of school, and for many life at home with the family, in the rearview mirror, it’s a period where young people increasingly start making their own decisions about how they live their lives. On top of that, they also begin to increasingly be impacted by the forces of the world which they were previously more protected from. In many ways, it’s when life really begins.

To get a clear picture of how these personal choices and local and global forces are impacting the wellbeing of young Australians we can divide them into a handful of main categories for investigation in this report - mental health, physical health, sleep and diet. On an individual level these areas have a significant impact on where a young person’s life is heading and how much happiness they’re getting out of life in the present. Taken collectively however they can impact the future health and productivity of the nation. Because of this a yearly measure of youth wellbeing can help to provide insights into their challenges and successes to highlight key areas of concern that need to be addressed so we can improve the overall health and wellbeing of young Australians and Australia as a whole.

In this second edition of the Gen Z Wellbeing Index, made in collaboration

with student accommodation provider Scape, we will be able to provide a snapshot of how life is for young people aged 18 to 24 across Australia as well as for those of the same age bracket staying in Scape’s student accommodation in 2024. For the first time we will also provide a year-on-year analysis comparing the results from this year’s study to last year’s 2023 study to show the significant positive and negative changes which have occurred, letting us see which areas of young people’s lives have improved and which haven’t over the previous 12 months. If no change is mentioned it can be assumed there is no statistically significant evidence of change occurring between 2023 and 2024.

In this report you will see the national wellbeing survey results representing young Australians compared side by side with the results of young people staying with Scape, who each took the same survey at the same time. Being responsible for housing tens of thousands of young Australian and international students means Scape places wellbeing at the centre of what they do. By being able to see how the wellbeing of their residents compares to the national average, Scape are able to use this data to see where they can help make a positive change with their residents, as well as see the areas where they are currently having success in.

When it comes to young Australians in 2024 it’s been found more than two

in five say they aren't in good mental health, more than a quarter say they aren't in good physical health, two thirds say they don't get enough sleep, four in five say they don't have a very healthy diet, more than half say they suffer from anxiety, two in five say they are struggling to make friends and feeling lonely, while two thirds say they don't have a purpose in life, all of which will be explored more in depth in the pages ahead. The findings in this report will highlight where wellbeing intervention most needs to be targeted as supporting young people's wellbeing is vital to improving outcomes across all aspects of their lives.

While there are many similarities in the wellbeing results between Scape residents and young Australians more broadly, a number of key differences can be seen. The data revealed young people living in Scape purpose-built student accommodation are on average in better mental health, sleep better, have a healthier diet, are more likely to cook for themselves, and are less likely to suffer from loneliness and have issues making friends than the average young Australian. This means a young person staying with Scape is more likely to have an overall better level of wellbeing, a testament to the wellbeing initiatives Scape has in place.

Based on the findings of the Year13 & Scape Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2023, Scape implemented a range of initiatives to better support resident wellbeing. This resulted in over 10,000 Scape residents attending 527 Scape events to build social connectedness and community in the first quarter of 2024. Part of this included 200 orientation and welcome events designed to connect residents with their community and roommates, orientation of the building and

neighbourhoods, local transport, retail and services so they can feel confident and at home.

Scape also implemented new wellbeing programs like SafeTALK peer suicide prevention workshops and Velocity Empowerment physical, emotional and mental relationship self-defence workshops, while Sonder, Scape's dedicated safety and wellbeing app, had an increase in usage of over 500% year on year, engaging more residents than ever before. Further, in 2024 Scape will be launching its market-first integrated safety system Scape Safe Hub, a centralised control room that brings together all of its safety services and initiatives in the one place.

And for those who aren't exactly clear on what wellbeing is, or that other often used word, wellness, it's easiest to imagine wellbeing as a state and wellness as a process. Wellbeing therefore is your feeling of happiness and healthiness, the state of which is impacted by your wellness habits of sleep, diet, exercise and relationships. It's possible to have wellness without wellbeing, like someone who is ultra healthy but who is unhappy in their job, and it's also possible to have wellbeing without wellness, like someone who is unhealthy but ultimately content in life. For most people most of the time however wellness and wellbeing are intimately linked and throughout this report we'll investigate how these are going for young people in 2024.



01 MENTAL HEALTH

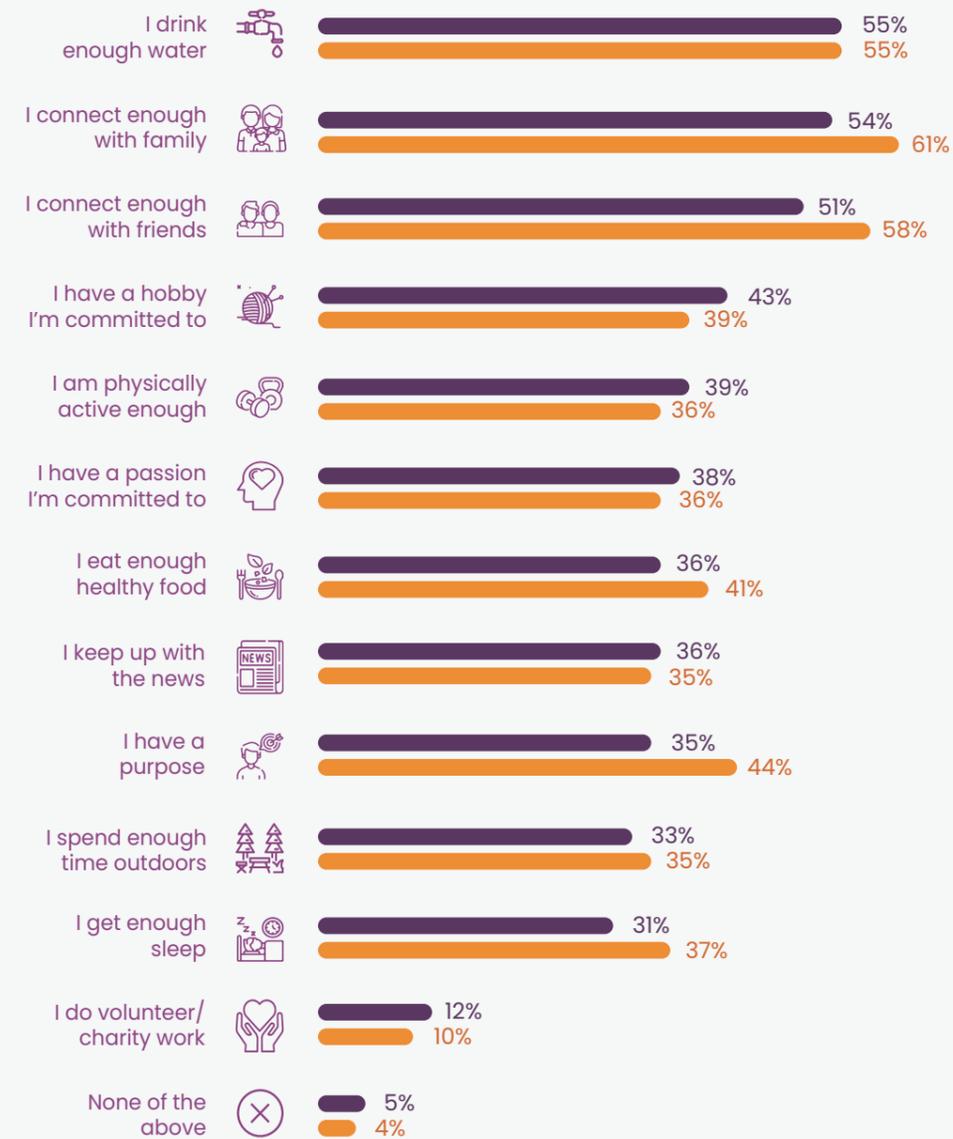
In 2024 Gen Zs are increasingly seeking out mental health therapy as rates of youth anxiety and depression have decreased compared to last year while rates of body dysmorphia, ADHD, anorexia and bulimia have increased. Presently, more than half of young Australians say they suffer from anxiety, two in five say they are struggling to make friends, more than a third say they are suffering from loneliness, while two in five say their mental health is only fair or poor. The top factors negatively impacting youth wellbeing this year are figuring out their future, fatigue, burnout and cost of living, while the major societal and world issues Gen Zs are most worried about are cost of living, housing/rental affordability, violence against women and mental health, with a significant rise also occurring in those concerned about war and terrorism compared to last year.



Which of the following key wellbeing indicators apply to you?

(Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



Scape residents report better connections with family and friends, a stronger sense of purpose, healthier eating habits and more adequate sleep than the national average, while reporting lower engagement with news and slightly lower participation in volunteer/charity work.

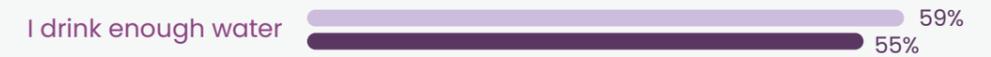
Which of the following key wellbeing indicators apply to you?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 there has been a significant decrease in young Australians reporting they drink enough water. For Scape residents there have been significant improvements in those saying they have a purpose and spend enough time outdoors, while there has been a significant decline in those getting enough sleep.

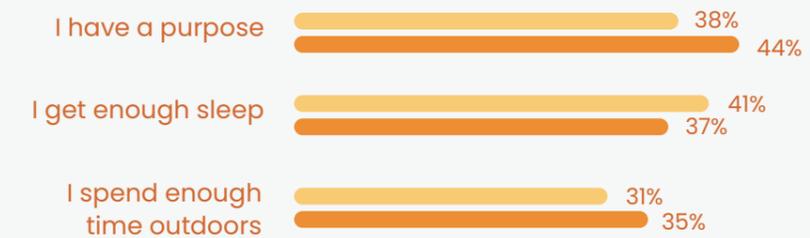
National

● 2023 ● 2024



Scape

● 2023 ● 2024



How is your mental health currently?

● National ● Scape



Scape residents are significantly more likely to self report better mental health compared to the national average.

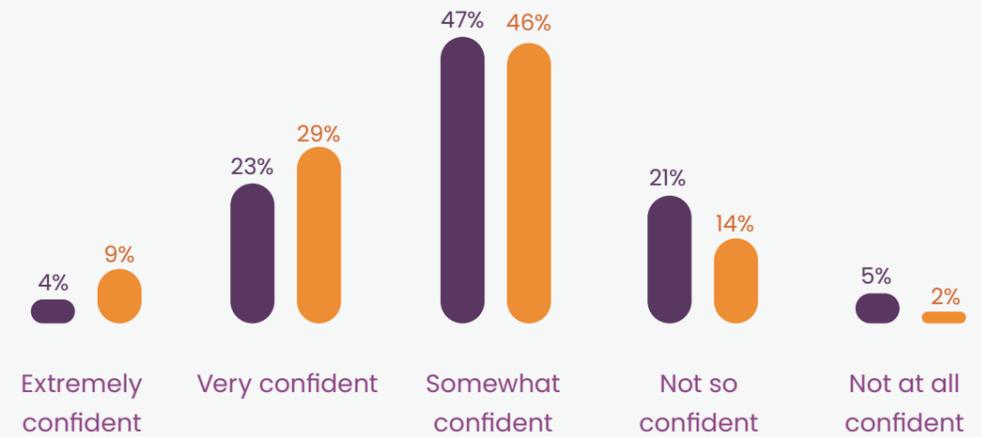
How confident are you in your physical appearance?

● National ● Scape



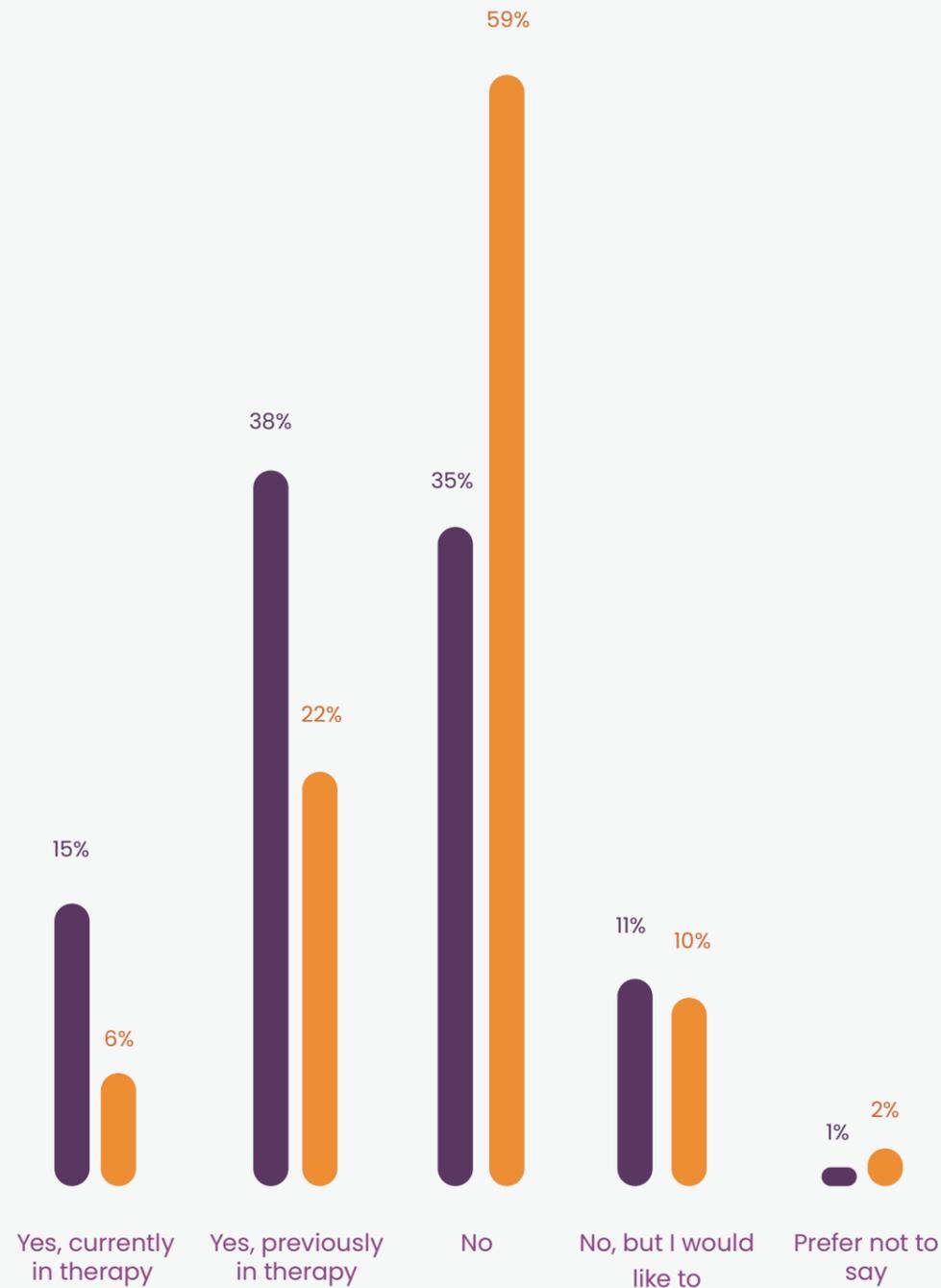
Besides physical appearance, how confident are you in yourself generally?

● National ● Scape



Have you had mental health therapy?

● National ● Scape



Have you had mental health therapy?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

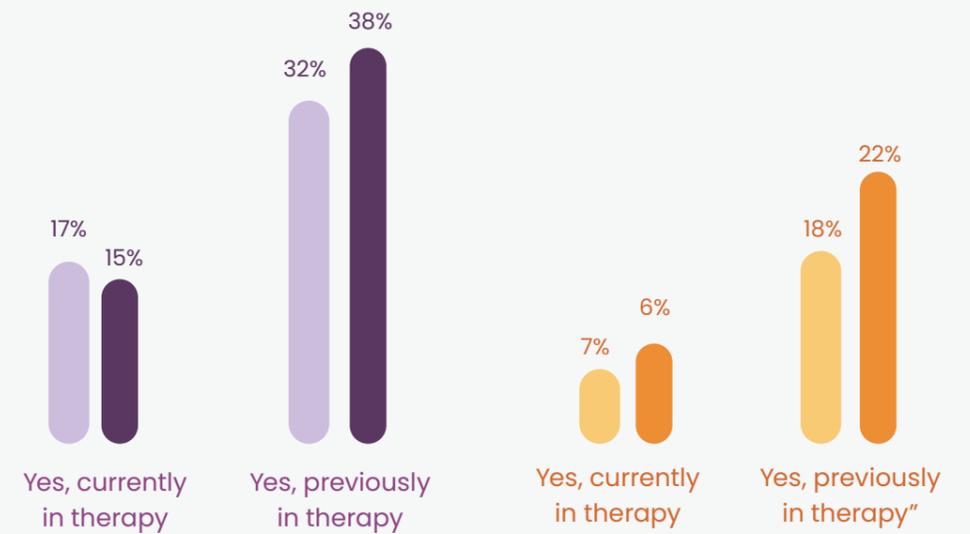
Between 2023 and 2024 the amount of young Australians who are currently or previously in mental health therapy significantly increased from 48% to 53%, while for Scape residents it increased from 25% to 28%.

National

● 2023 ● 2024

Scape

● 2023 ● 2024



SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

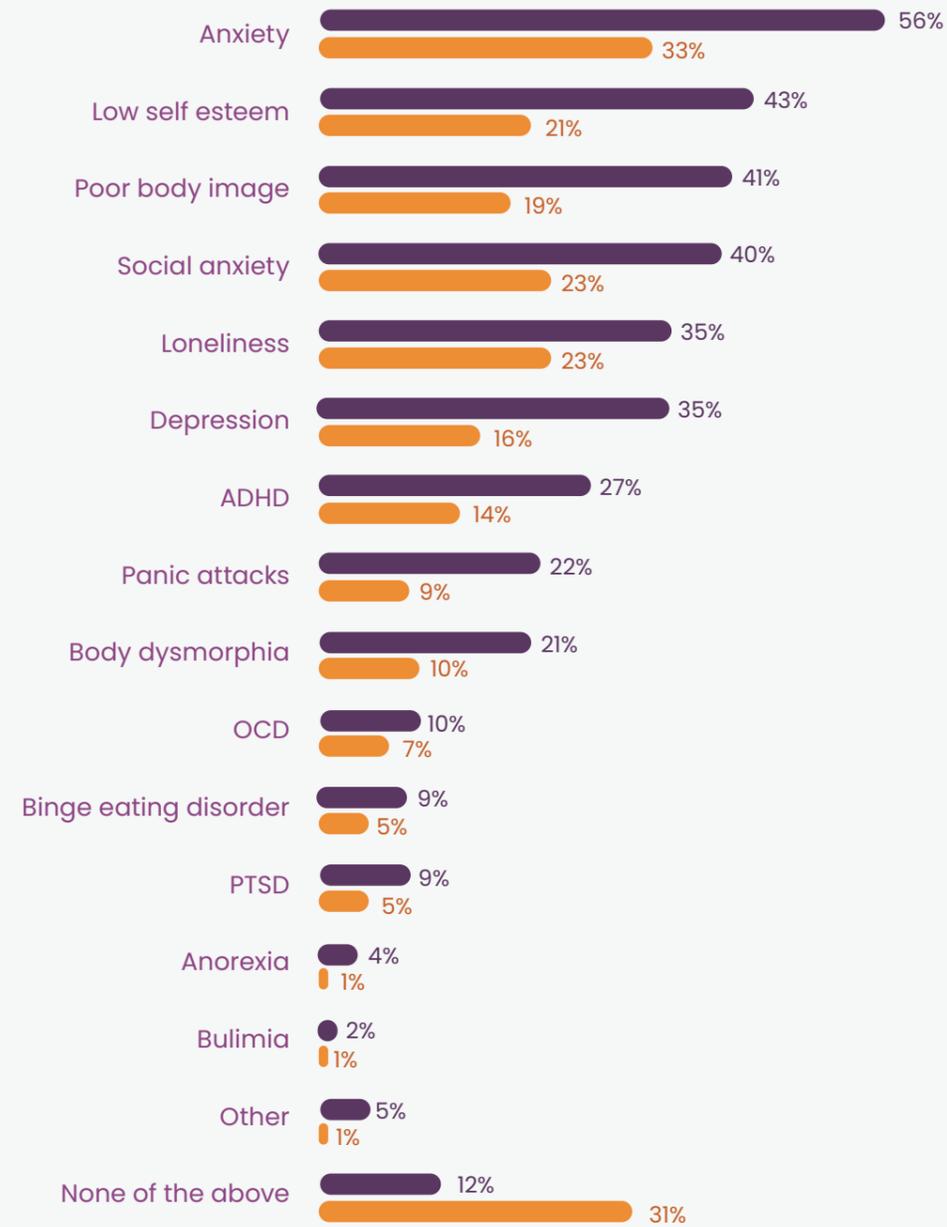
National

Yes, currently in therapy



Which of the following do you experience in your life currently? (Tick all that apply)

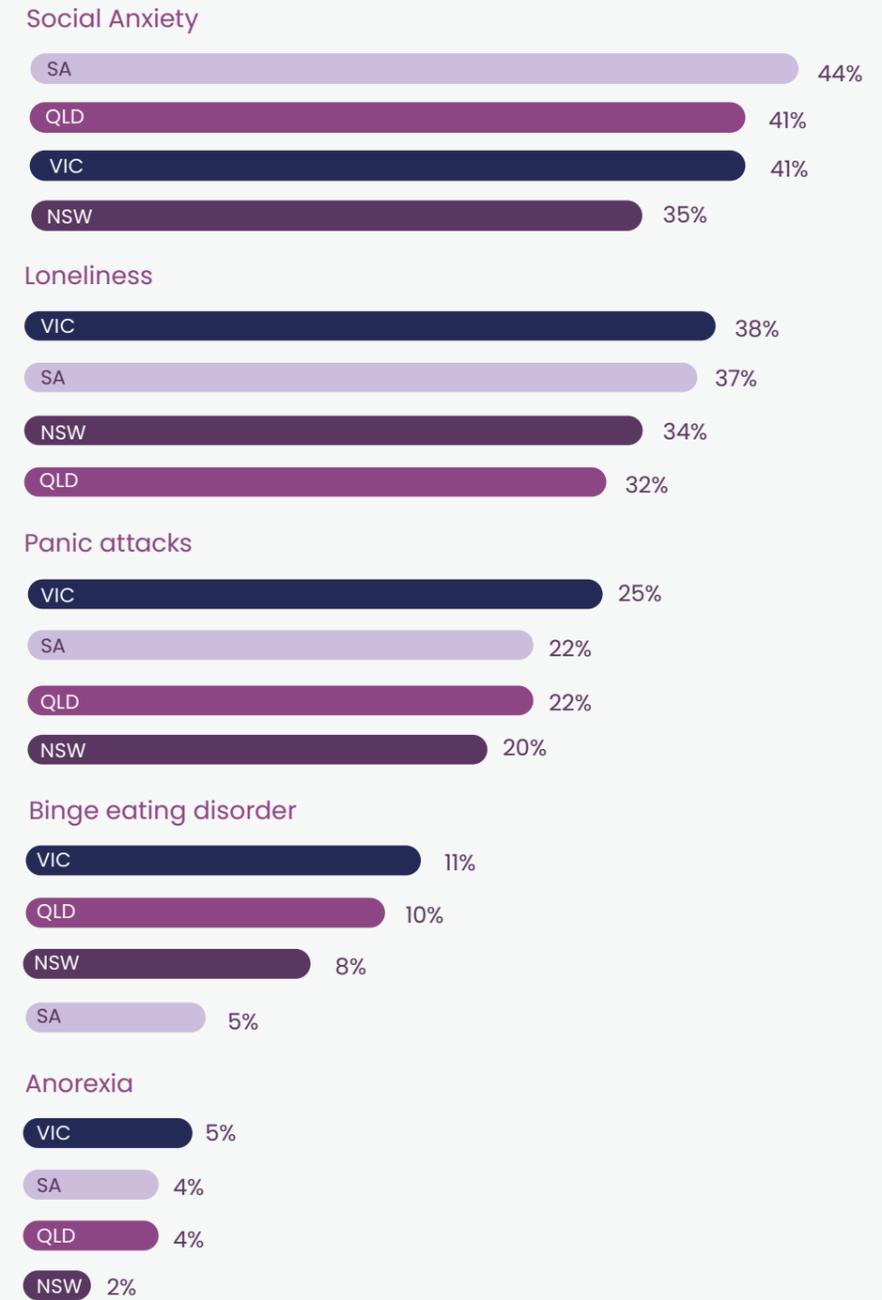
● National ● Scape



Which of the following do you experience in your life currently?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National



Which of the following do you experience in your life currently?

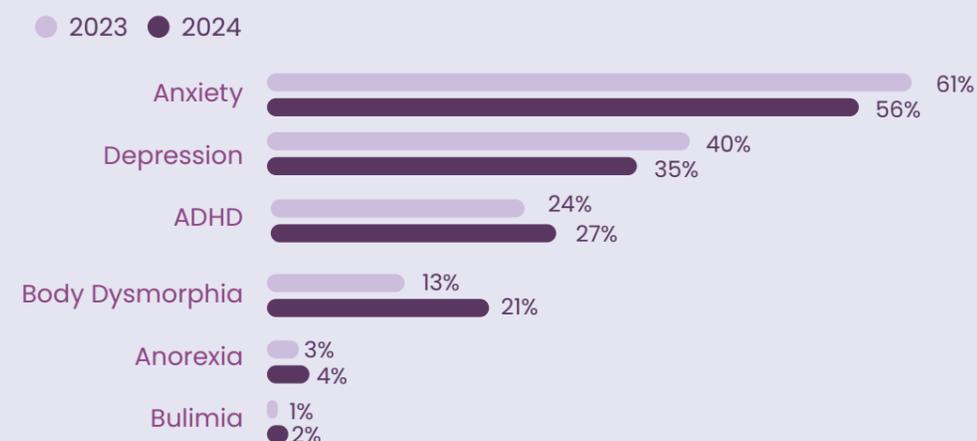
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 there has been a significant increase in young Australians reporting body dysmorphia, ADHD, anorexia and bulimia while there has been a significant decrease in the prevalence of anxiety and depression. For Scape residents there has also been a significant rise in those reporting body dysmorphia while there has been a significant drop in the prevalence of anxiety, loneliness, social anxiety, low self-esteem, poor body image, depression and panic attacks.



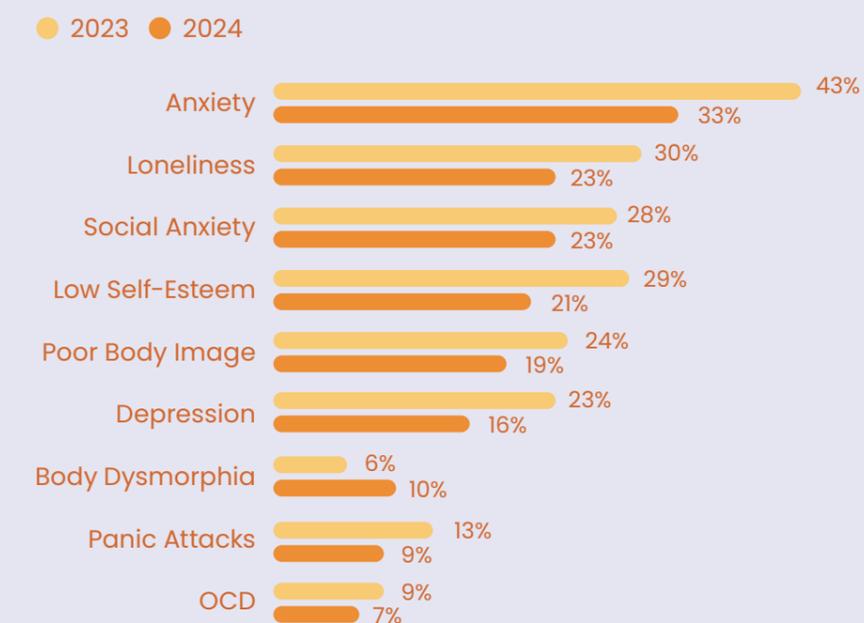
Which of the following do you experience in your life currently?

National



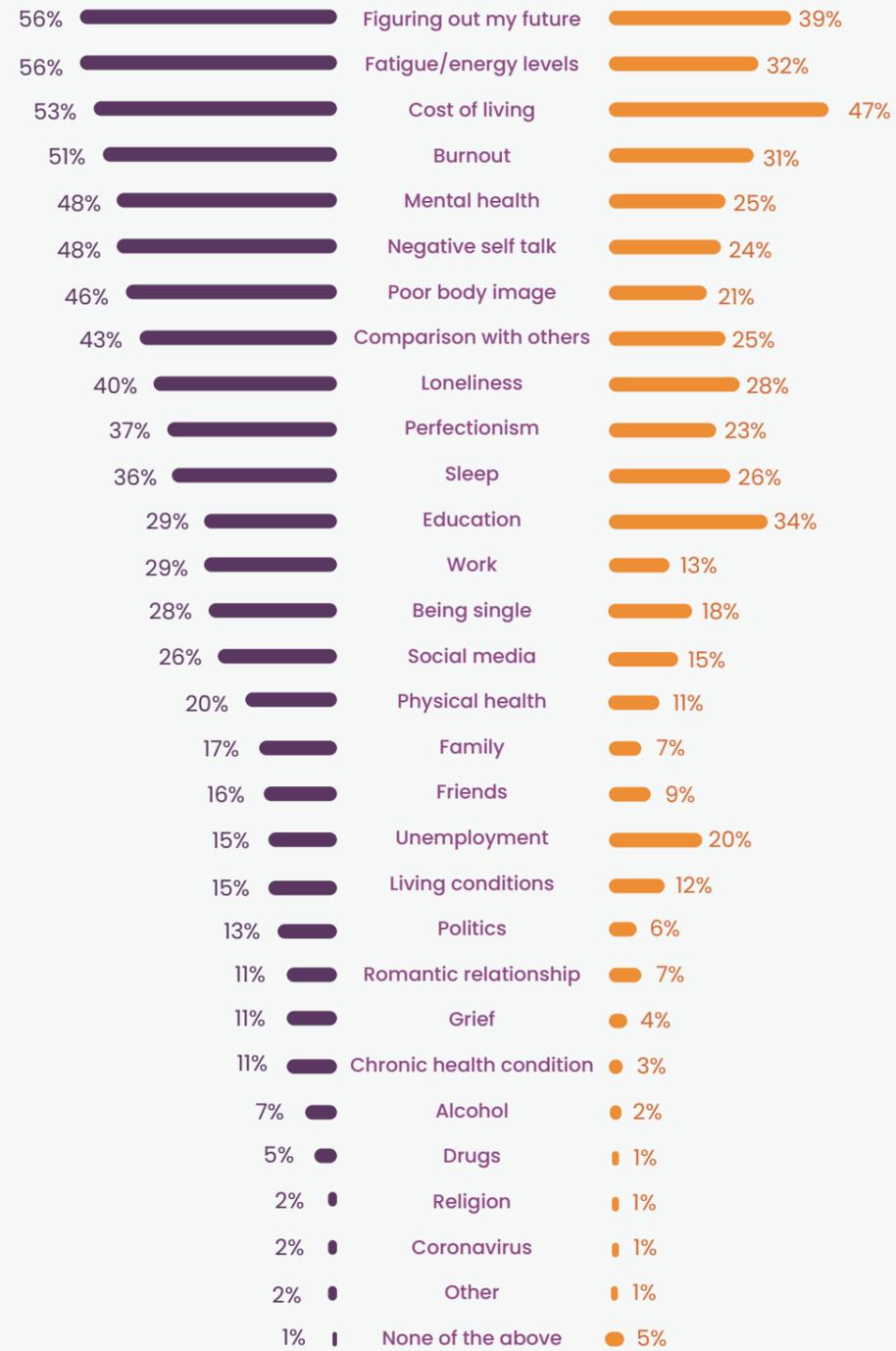
Which of the following do you experience in your life currently?

Scape



What is negatively impacting your wellbeing? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape

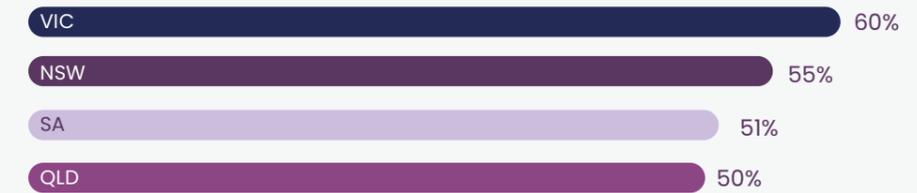


What is negatively impacting your wellbeing?

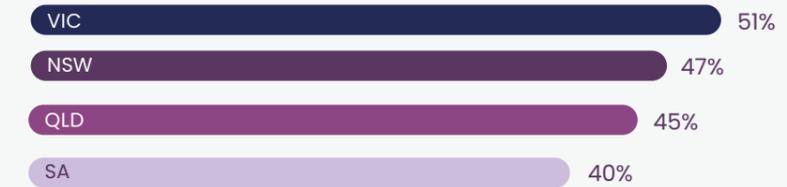
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National

Figuring out my future



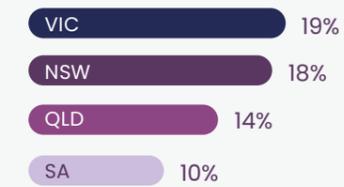
Mental Health



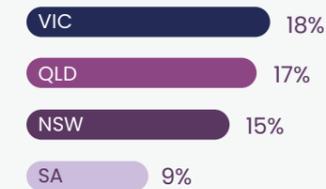
Comparison with others



Family



Unemployment



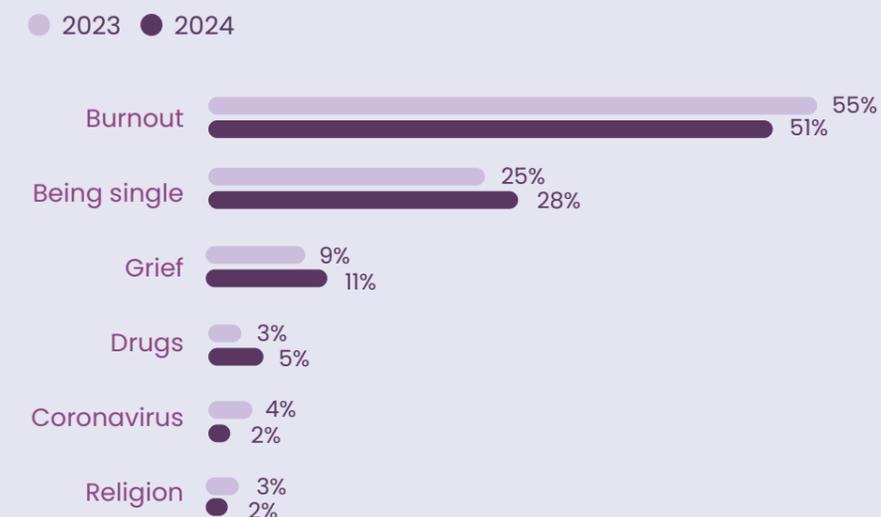
What is negatively impacting your wellbeing?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 there has been a significant increase in young Australians reporting their wellbeing being negatively impacted by being single, grief and drugs, while there has been a significant decrease in those negatively affected by burnout, Coronavirus and religion. For Scape residents there has been a significant rise in those saying figuring out their future is negatively impacting their wellbeing, while there have been significant falls in those negatively affected by family, alcohol, Coronavirus and religion.

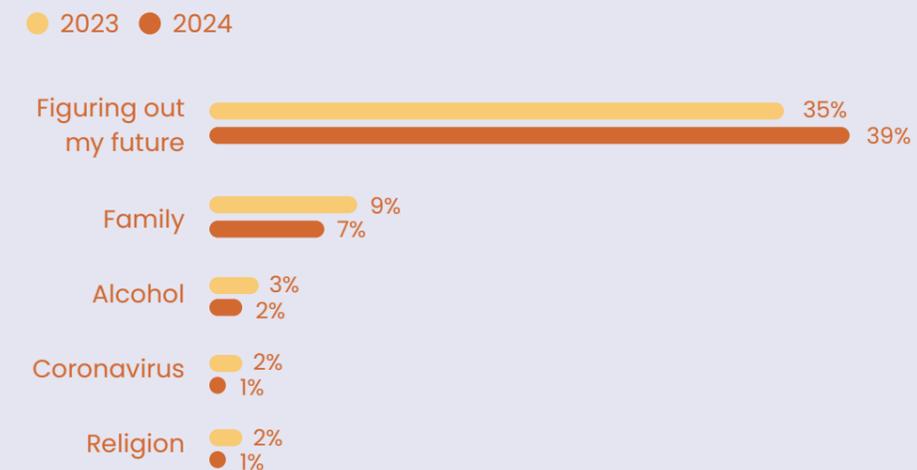
What is negatively impacting your wellbeing?

National



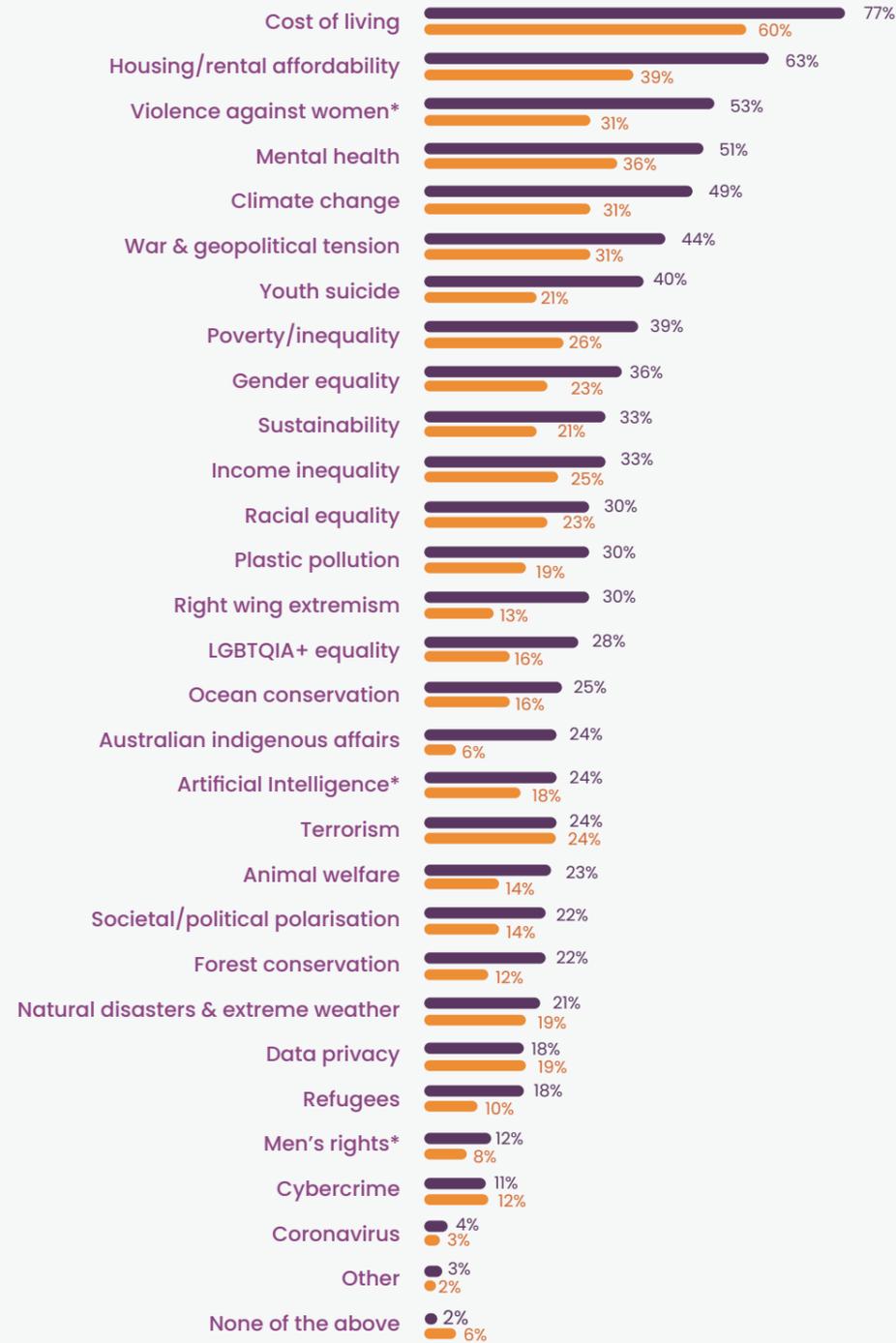
What is negatively impacting your wellbeing?

Scape



Which of these major societal/world issues worry you the most? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape *Added in 2024

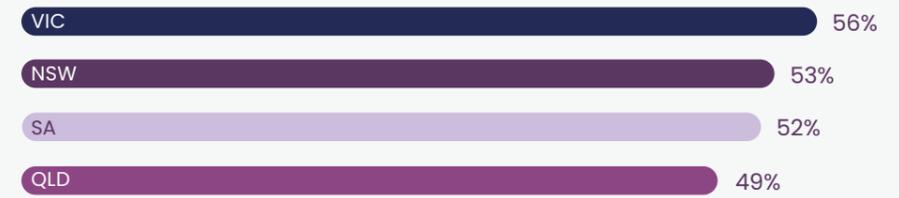


Which of these major societal/world issues worry you the most?

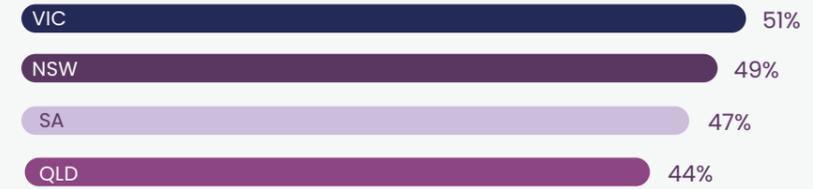
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National

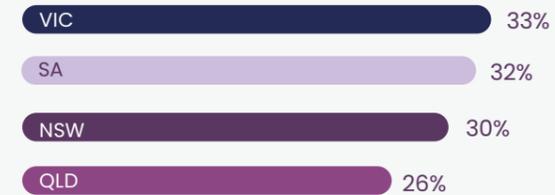
Violence against women



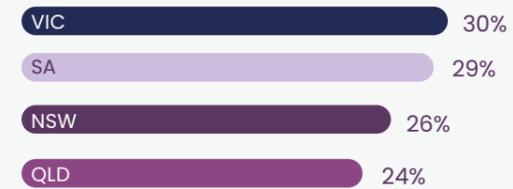
Climate change



Racial equality



LGBTQIA+ equality



Which of these major societal/world issues worry you the most?

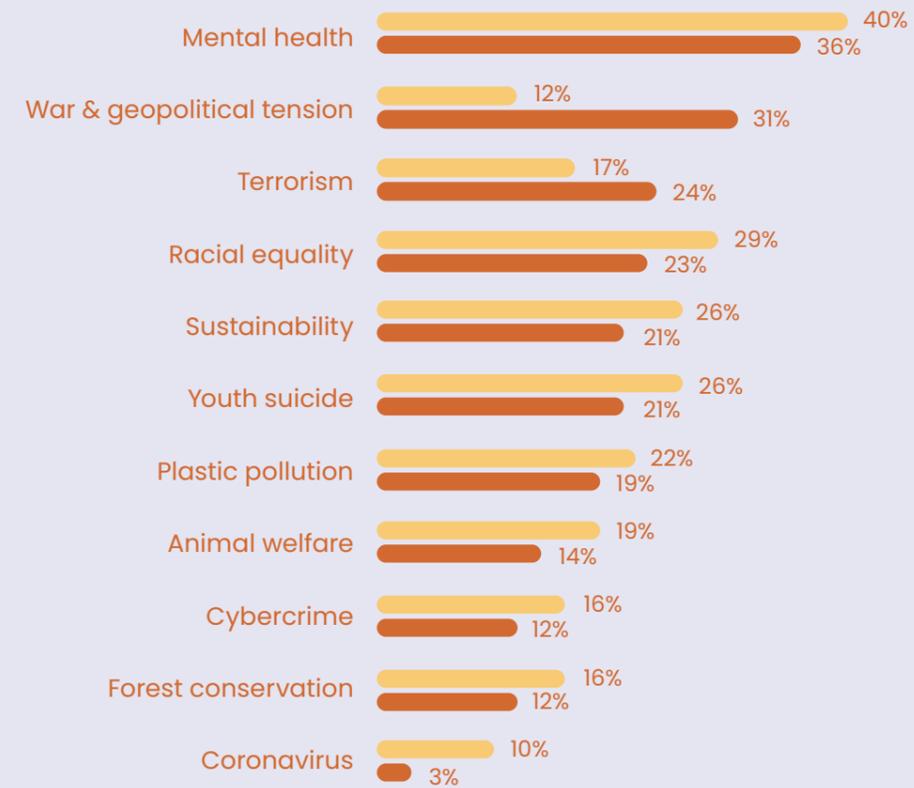
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 there has been a significant increase in young Australians worried about war & geopolitical tension and terrorism, while those with concerns about issues related to the environment, mental health, equality, Coronavirus, and online privacy and security have significantly decreased. Similarly, the number of Scape residents concerned about war & geopolitical tension and terrorism significantly rose, while those with worries about mental health, racial equality, sustainability, youth suicide, animal welfare and cybercrime dropped significantly.

Which of these major societal/world issues worry you the most?

Scape

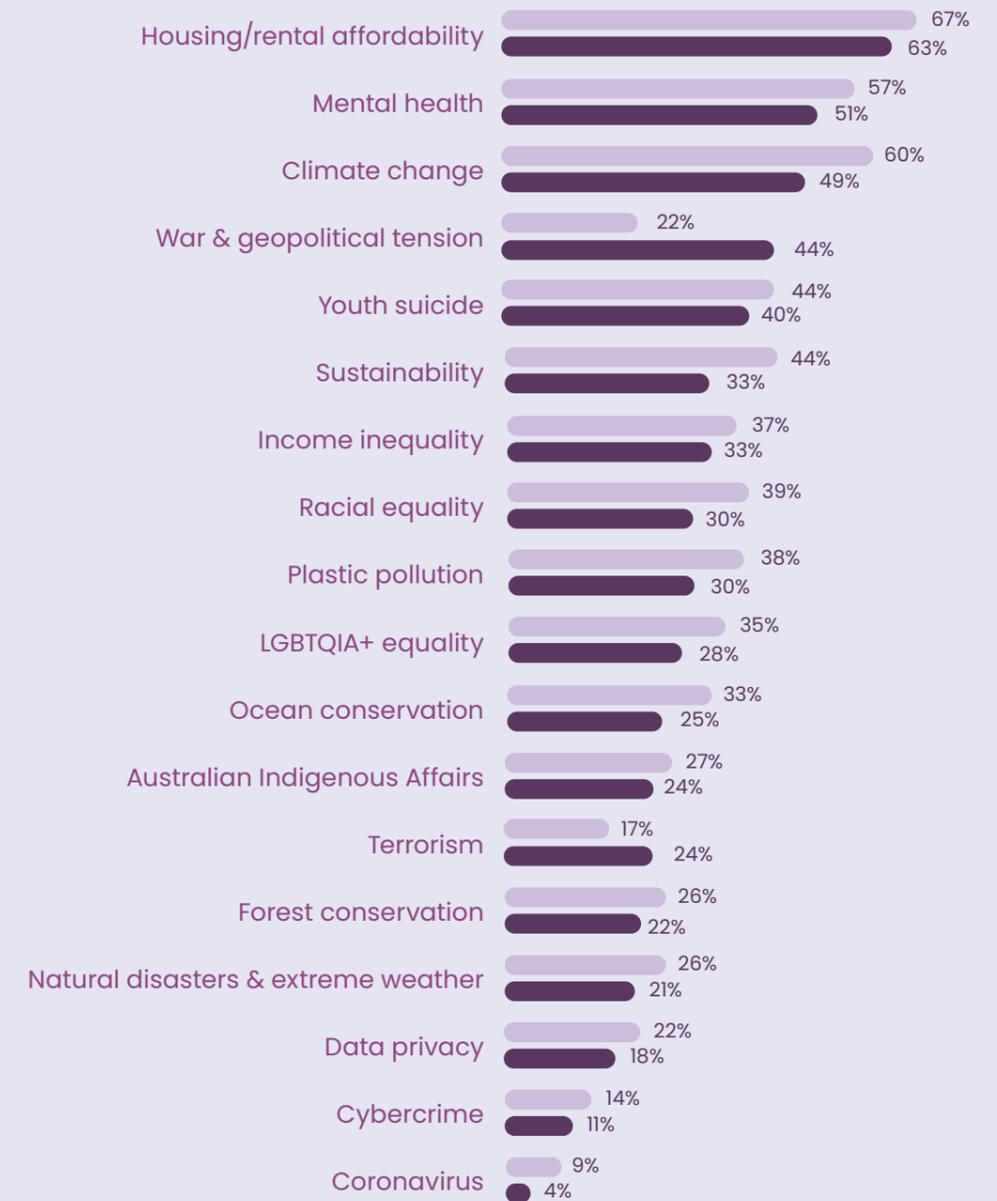
● 2023 ● 2024



Which of these major societal/world issues worry you the most?

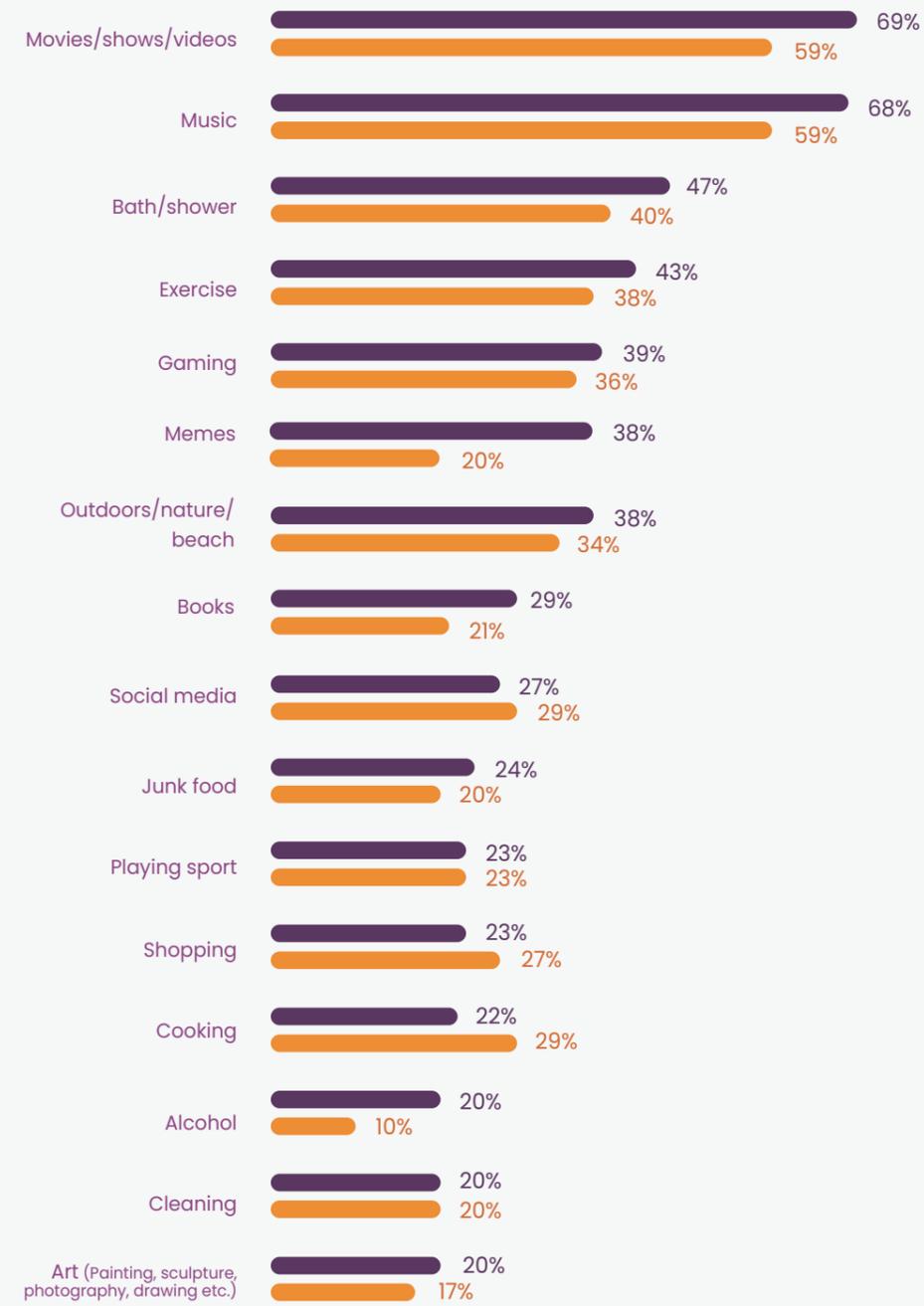
National

● 2023 ● 2024



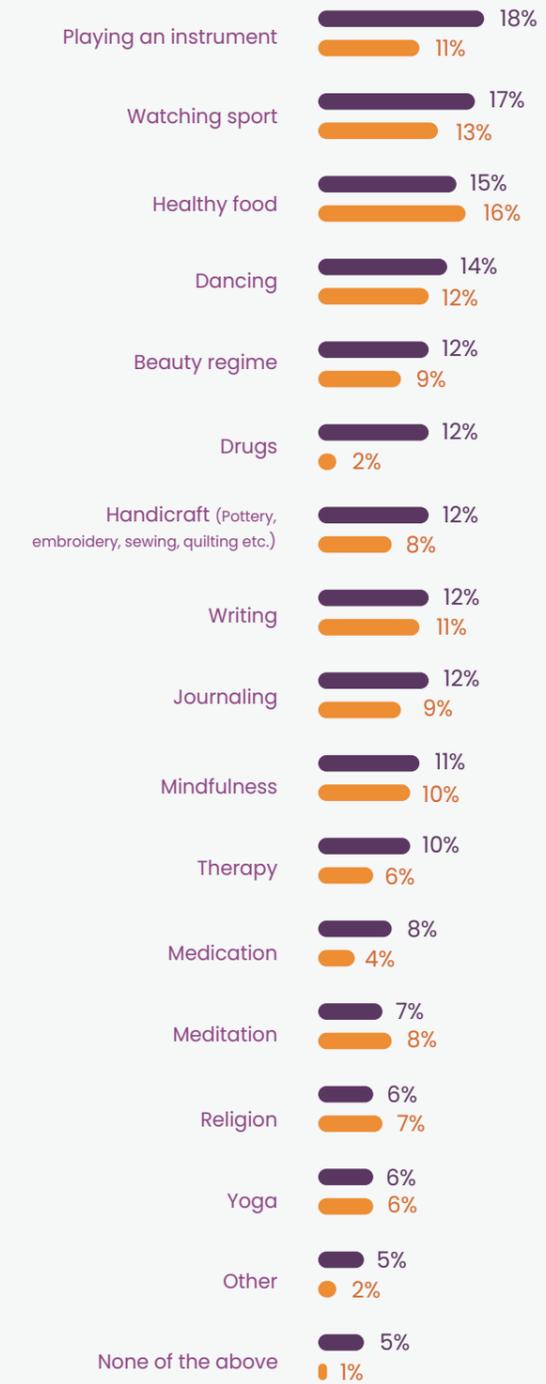
What helps you de-stress and relax? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



What helps you de-stress and relax? (Chart continued here)

● National ● Scape

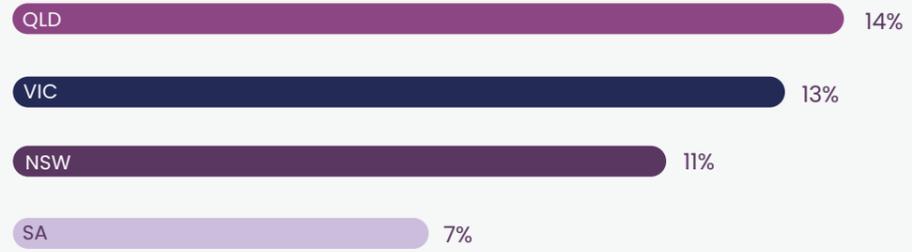


What helps you de-stress and relax?

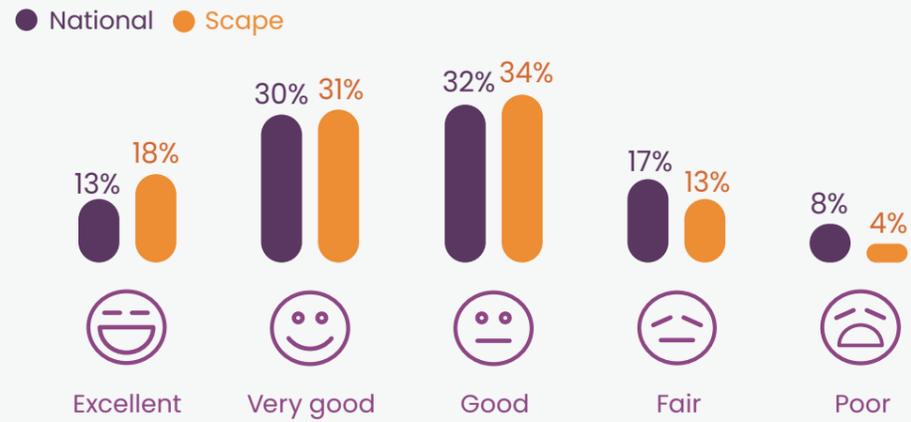
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National

Drugs

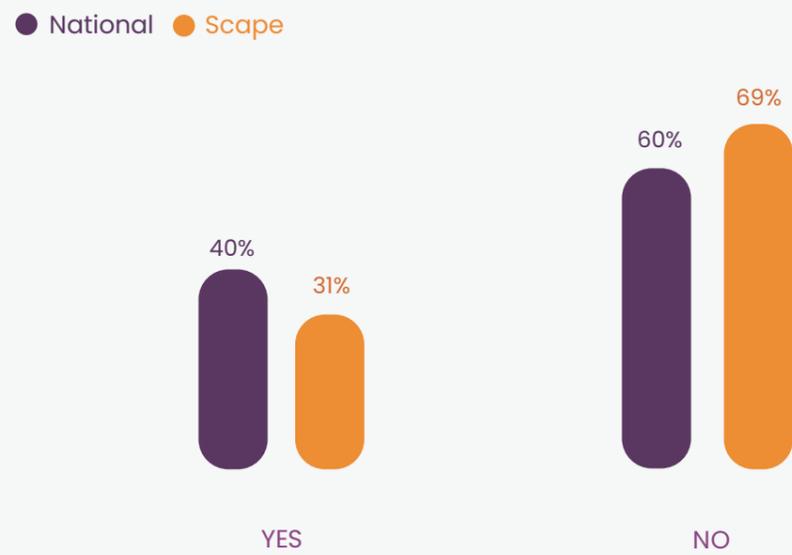


How is your social health currently? *Social health is the state of someone's friendships and social connections

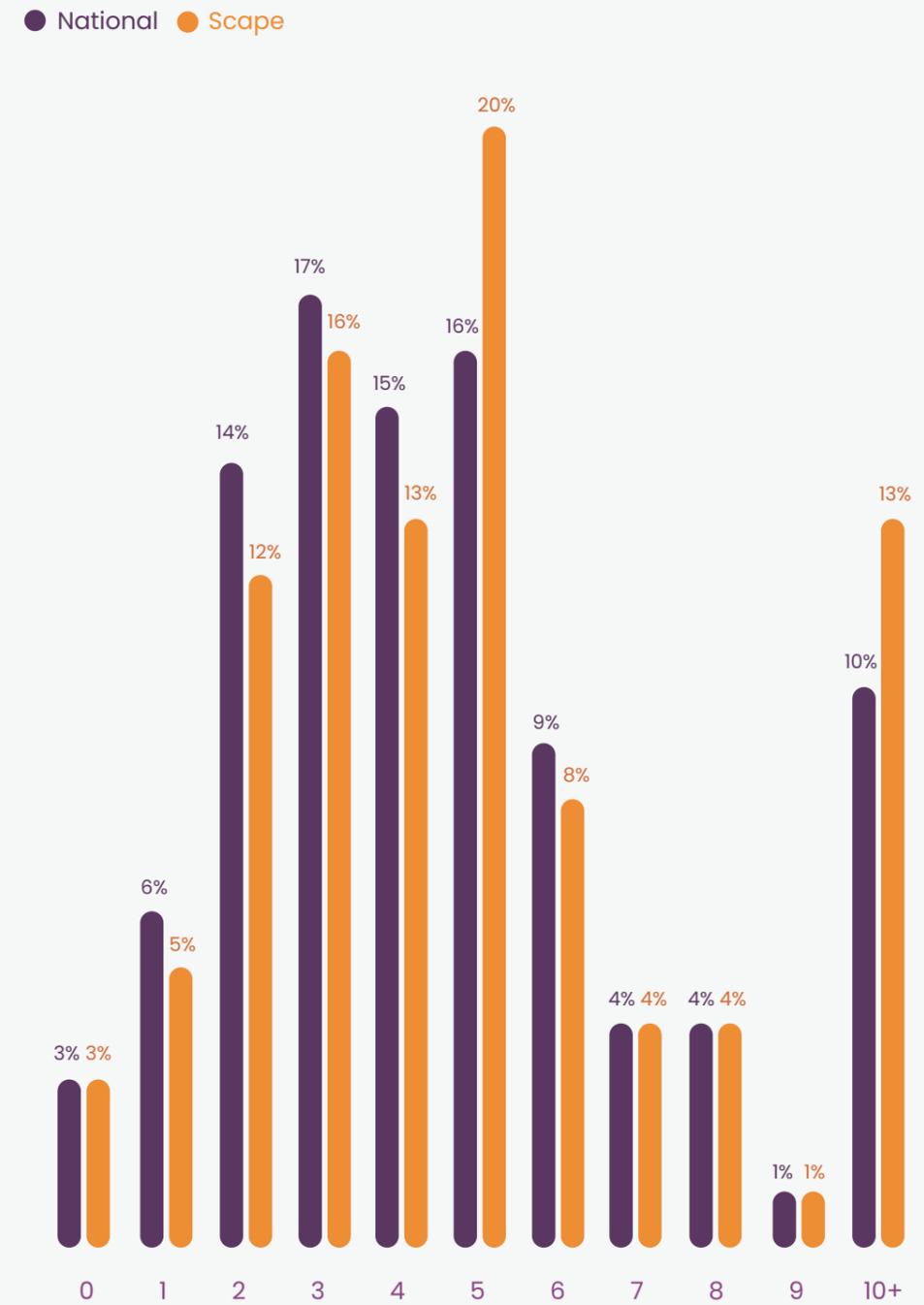


Scape residents are significantly more likely to be in better social health compared to the national average.

Are you currently struggling to make friends?

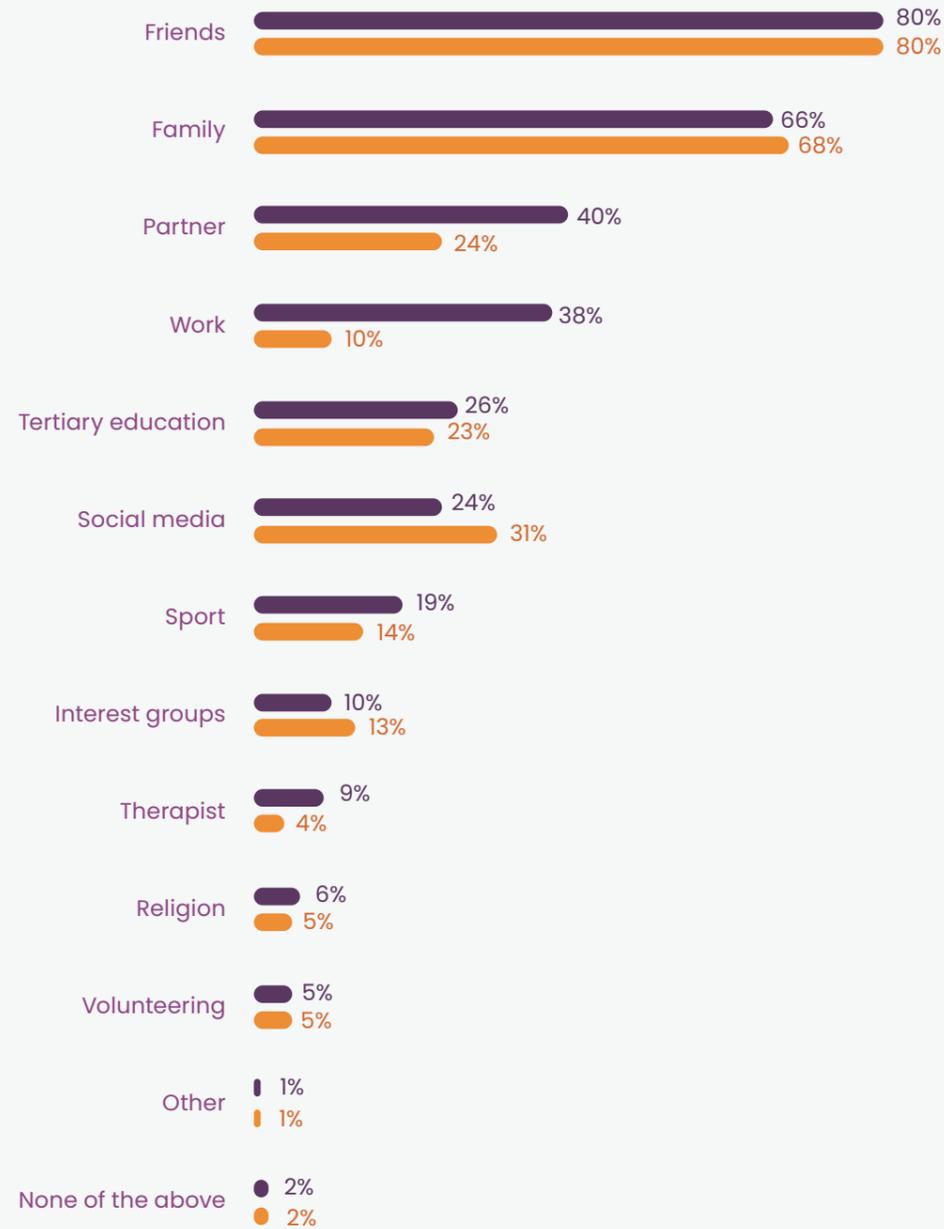


How many close friends do you have roughly?



Where do you have strong social connections and support networks? (Tick all that apply)

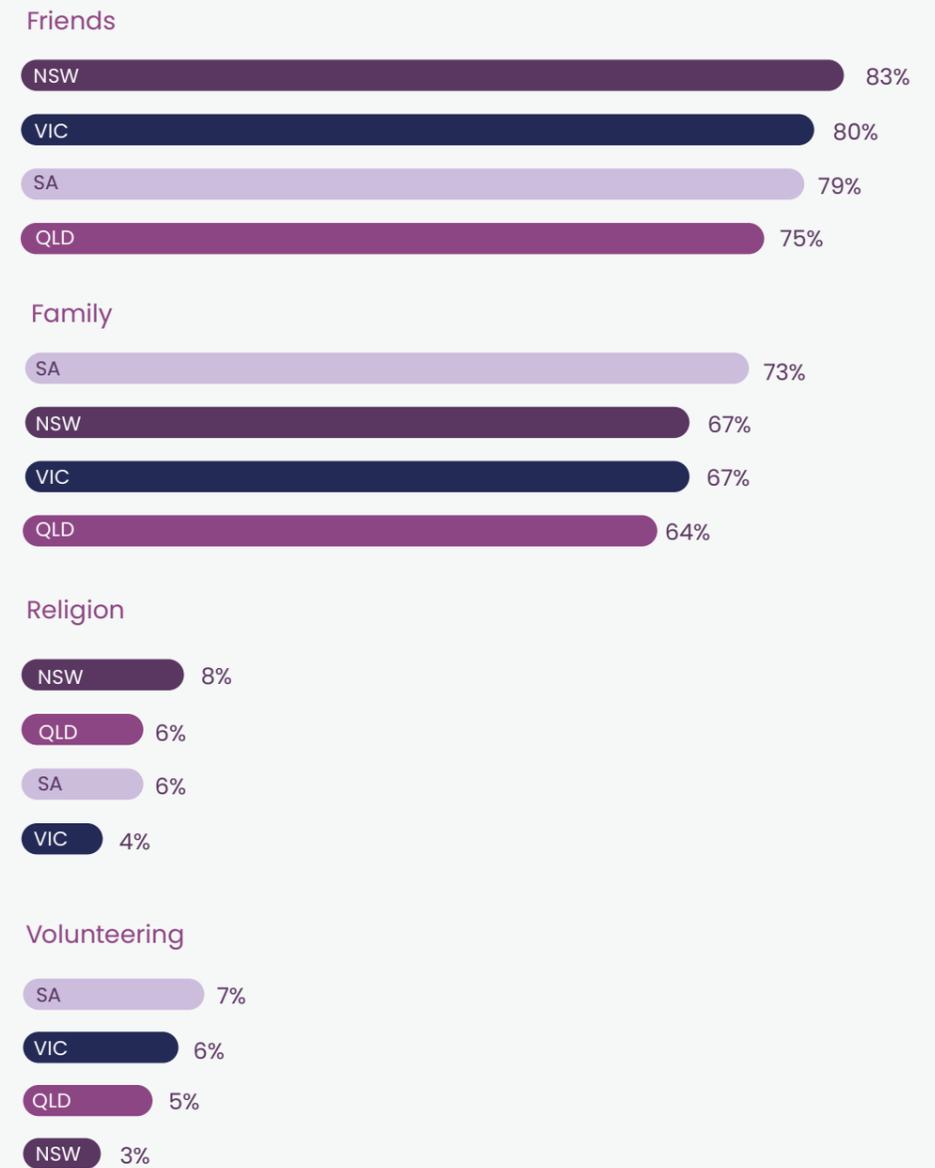
● National ● Scape



Where do you have strong social connections and support networks?

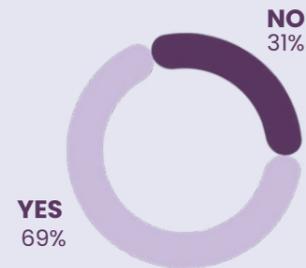
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National



In your everyday life do you feel a general sense of inclusion and belonging?

National

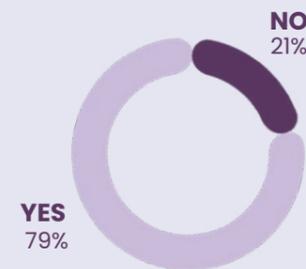


Scape



In your everyday life do you feel like diversity is embraced and respected?

National



Scape



In your everyday life do you feel like diversity is embraced and respected?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National

Yes





"I'm just anxious all the time. I also have been having fatigue problems and don't know the cause yet, so I can't fix it. I miss my friends. I hardly see them now that we aren't forced together at school and that sucks. I pretty much always feel like I'm missing something. Like, I'm not doing the things I really want to do. Do I really want to go to uni? Because I hate doing assignments. Do I really want to do science? Because I hate looking at data. And every now and again I feel empty and unfulfilled because of that. My tip for other people struggling with mental health is to go to therapy. It helps so much."

Female, 20, ACT, metropolitan

"My mental health is something I've really had to focus on. There have been times when the pressure has felt overwhelming, and I've found myself struggling with symptoms of depression and anxiety. Reaching out for support from a counsellor has made a huge difference. Having that outlet to process my feelings and learn healthy coping strategies has been a game-changer. I also try to make time for mindfulness practices like meditation which help me stay grounded and present."

Male, 21, QLD, metropolitan

"I barely talk to anyone at uni and it feels isolating. So instead of talking to others I've been talking to myself and with no one to regulate my thoughts, I often put myself down. This negative self-talk has led to many other changes in my life, like more binge eating at night, less motivation to exercise daily like I used to do easily, and less sleep because I'm relying on social media to cheer me up before I go to bed. However, I have found ways to deal with this because I got to a point where I just knew it wasn't sustainable to live like this. Really the biggest thing that helped was just talking to other people like my family and friends. Talking to them brought me out of my head and gave me a new perspective on myself and life in general. Something else that helped was going back to doing what I love. I love dancing and for a while I abandoned it. But when I started choreographing and doing Zumba at home again I felt so energised and good about myself."

Female, 20, VIC, metropolitan

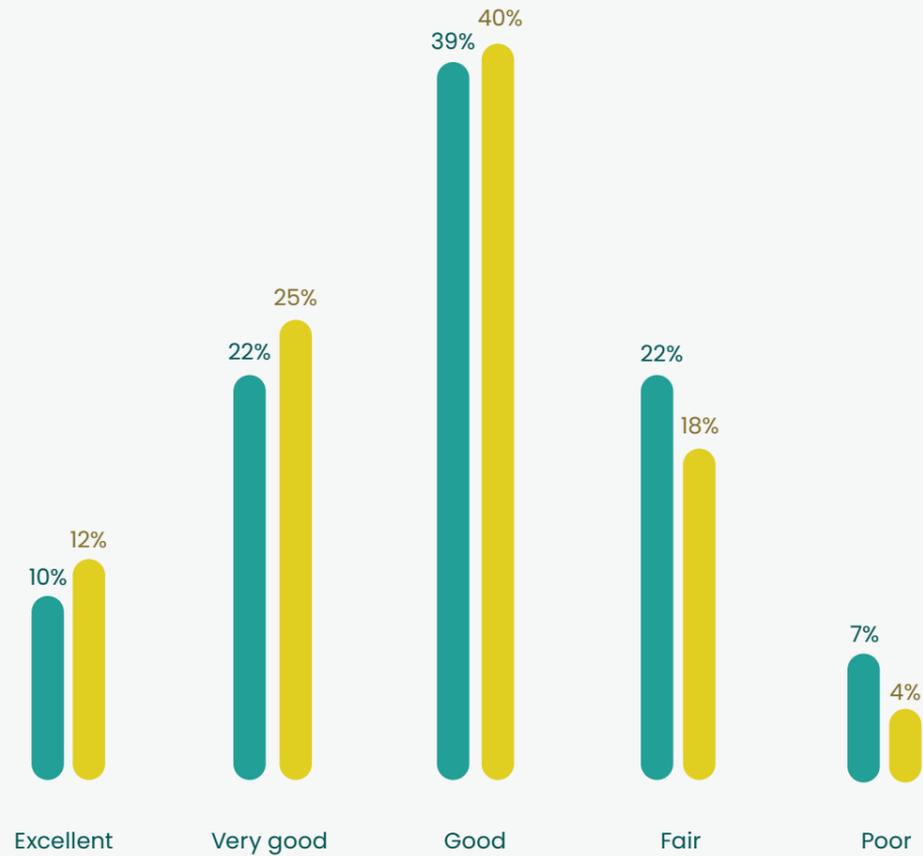
02 EXERCISE

In 2024 more than a quarter of Gen Zs say they aren't in good physical health, with this number dropping from 2023 representing an improvement over the previous 12 months. Three in five young people also say they aren't physically active enough, however most are active to a degree with four in five exercising or playing sport on a weekly basis, with this representing a slight increase from 2023 providing further evidence of improving exercise habits amongst young Australians. The top nine exercises and sports young people engage in are all largely considered individual pursuits, even though some may be done with others, with these including walking, weights, running, stretching, bush walking, swimming, cycling, dancing and Pilates, while basketball is the only team sport to make the top 10, making it the most played team sport in Australia amongst this demographic. The top motivations for exercising are fitness, mental health, appearance and confidence, with the gym being the place where they prefer to exercise most compared to at home or outdoors.



How is your physical health?

● National ● Scape

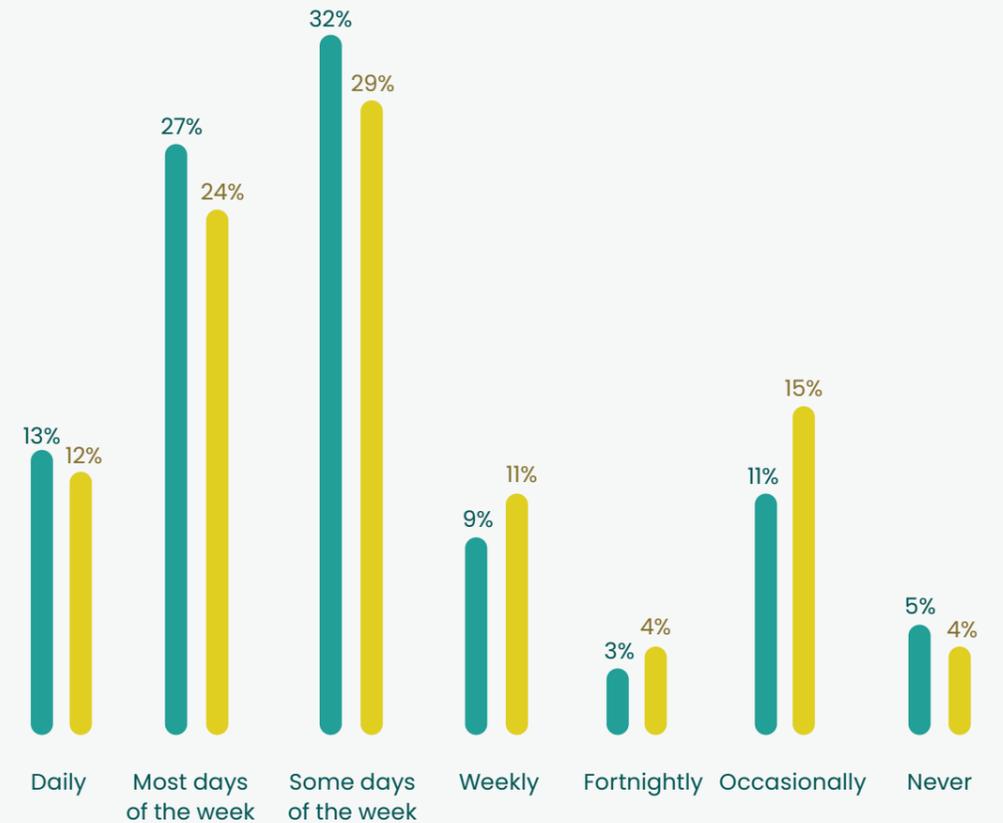


SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 the number of young Australians reporting their physical health as fair or poor significantly decreased from 33% to 29%.

How often do you exercise and play sport?

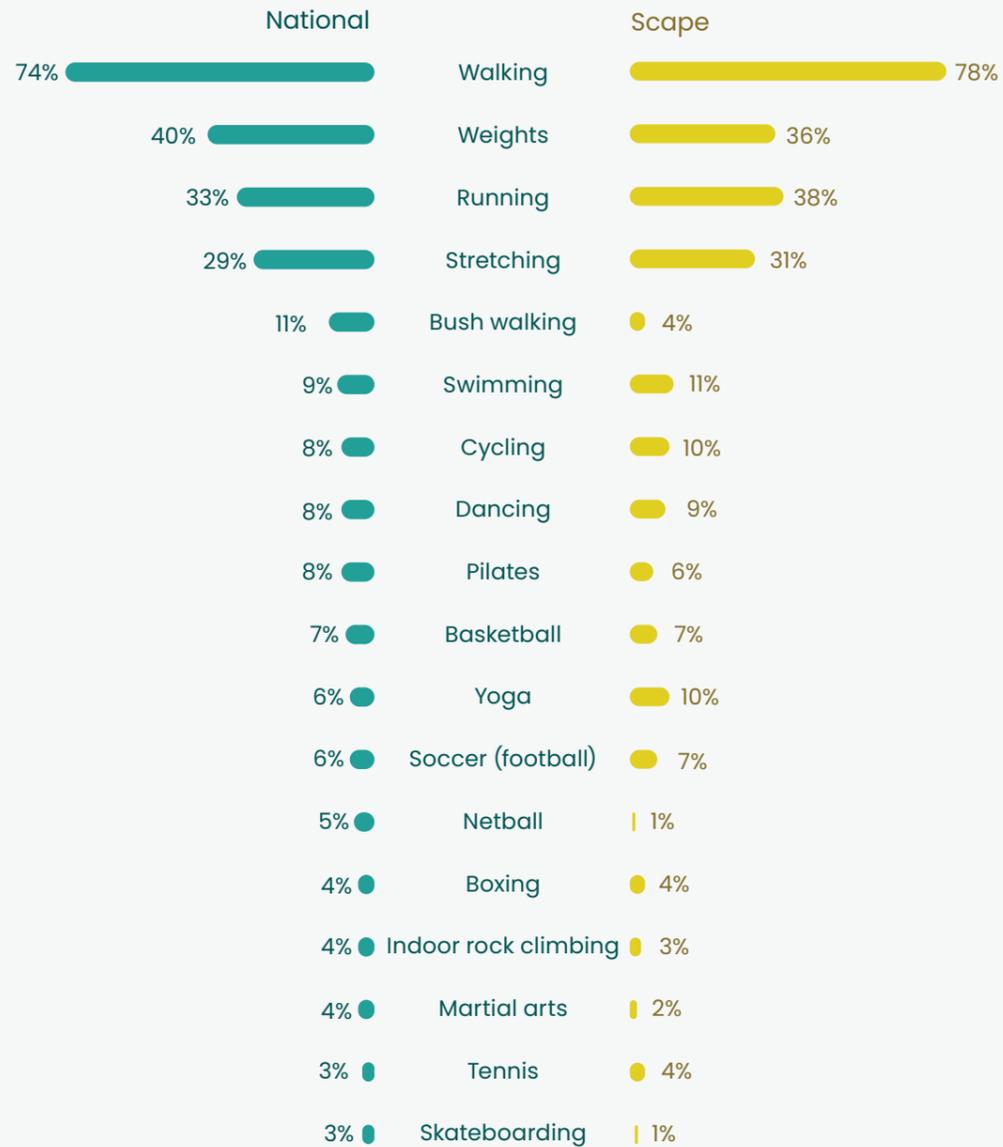
● National ● Scape



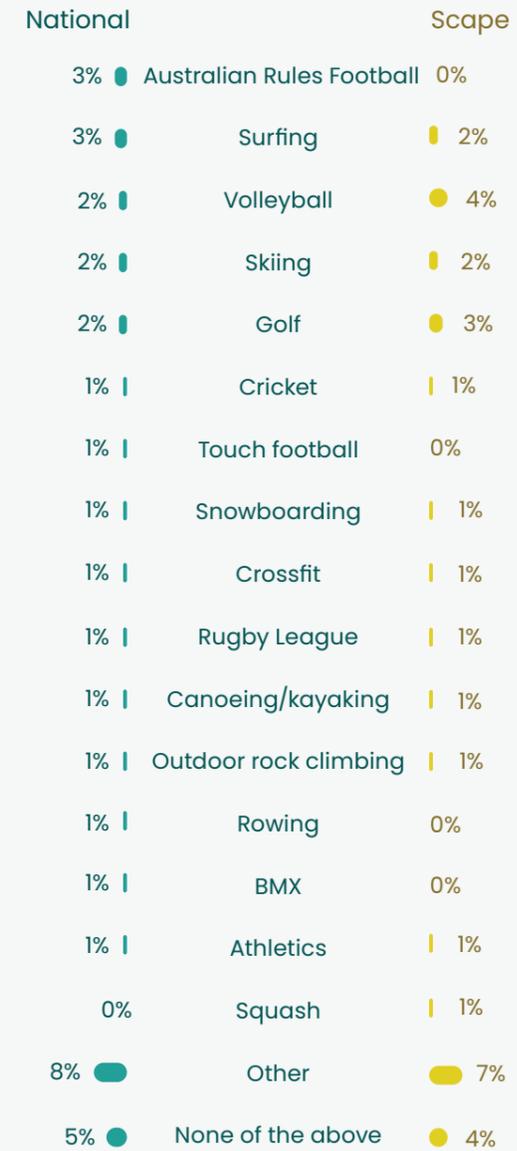
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 the number of young Australians reporting they exercise at least weekly significantly increased from 78% to 81%.

Which of the following exercises and sports do you do? (Tick all that apply)



Which of the following exercises and sports do you do? (Chart continued here)



Which of the following exercises and sports do you do?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

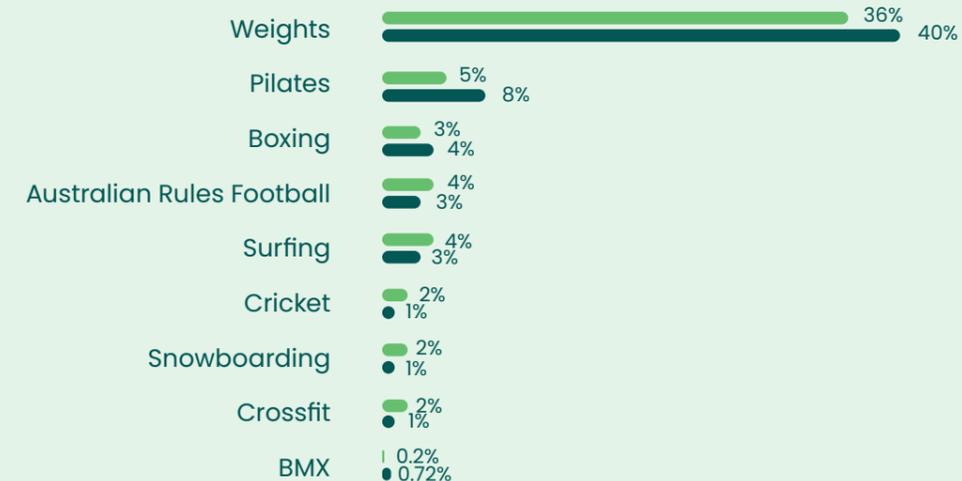
Between 2023 and 2024 there has been a significant increase in young Australians doing weights, Pilates, boxing and BMX, while there has been a significant decrease in those doing Australian Rules Football, surfing, cricket, snowboarding and Crossfit. For Scape residents there has been a significant rise in those doing weights, stretching, yoga, golf and rugby league, while there has been a significant drop in those doing basketball, martial arts, cricket, athletics and rowing.



Which of the following exercises and sports do you do?

National

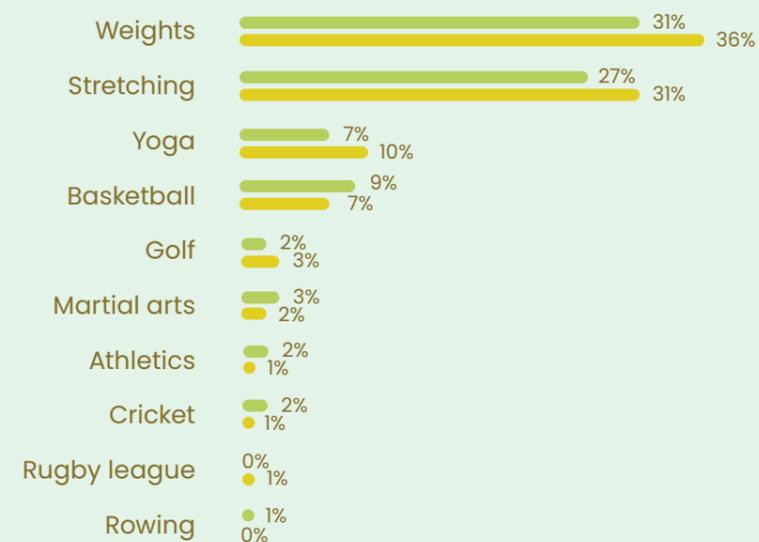
● 2023 ● 2024



Which of the following exercises and sports do you do?

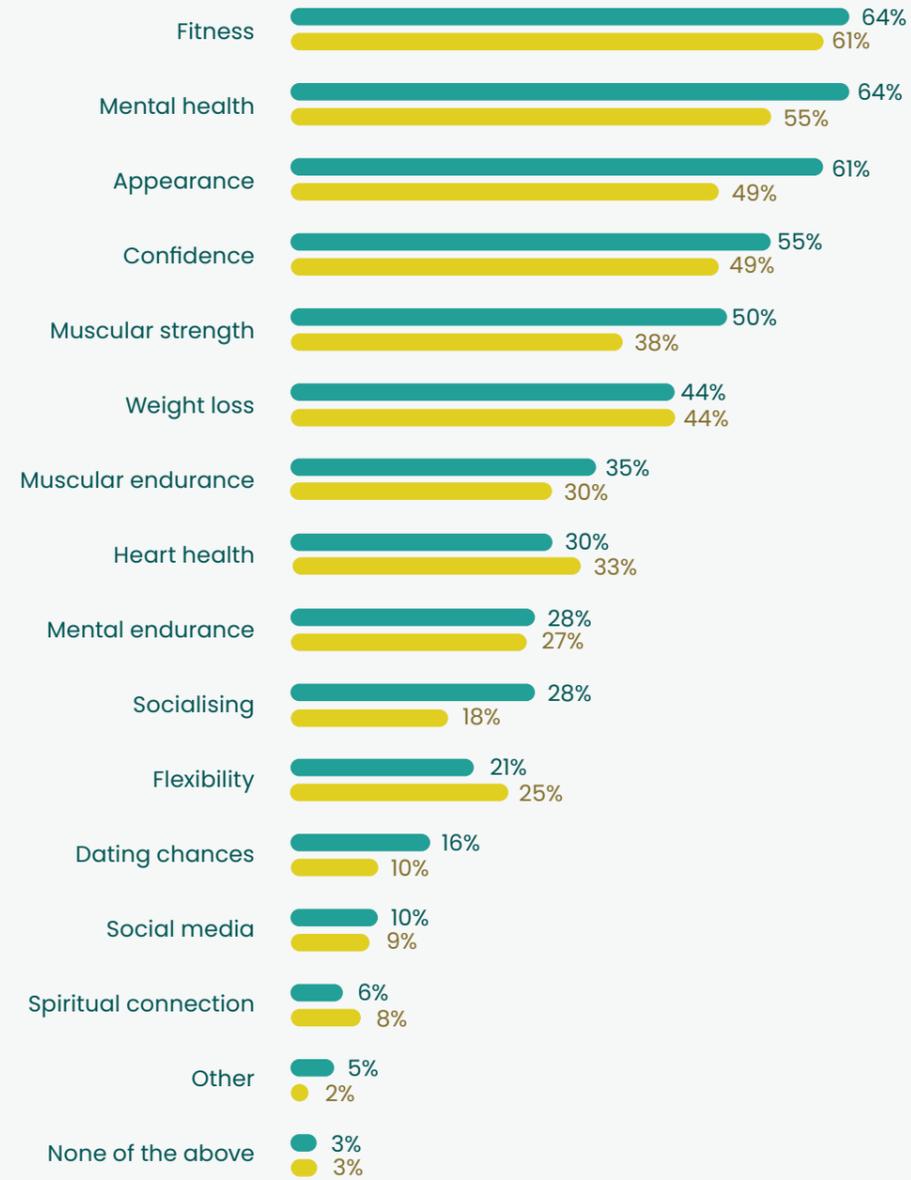
Scape

● 2023 ● 2024



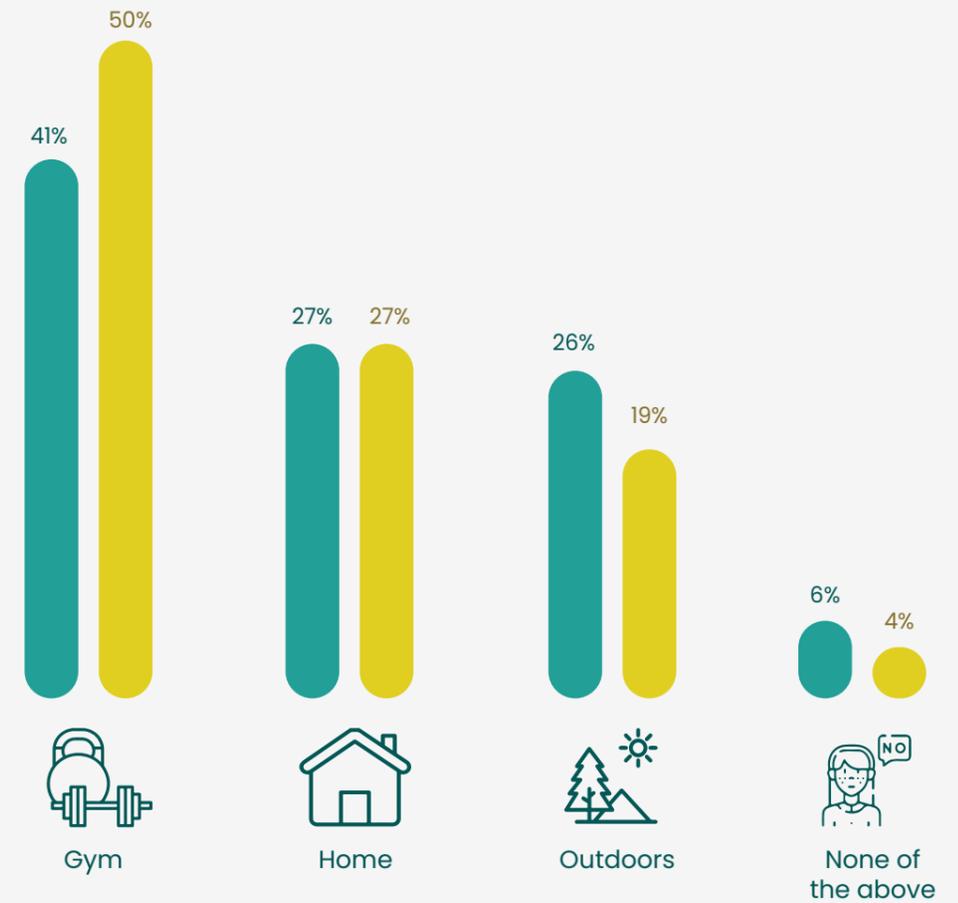
What motivates you most to exercise and play sport? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape

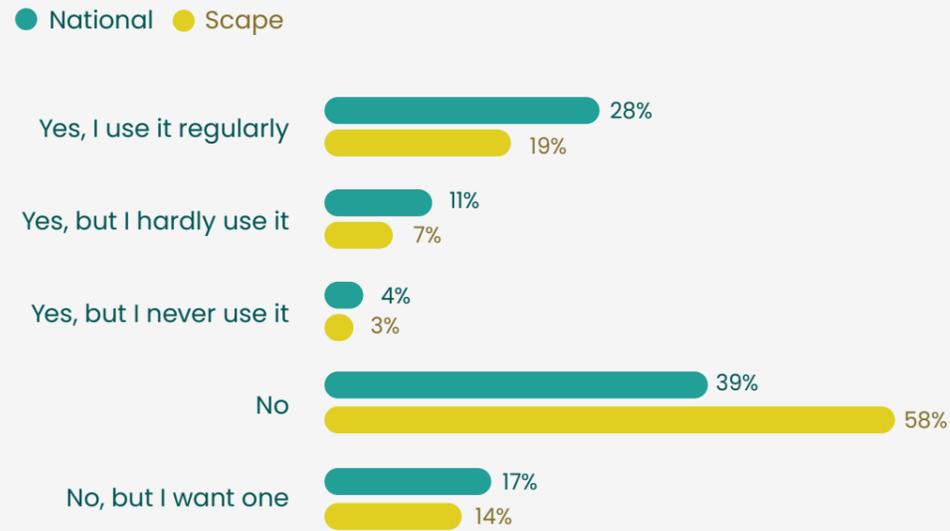


Where do you prefer to exercise?

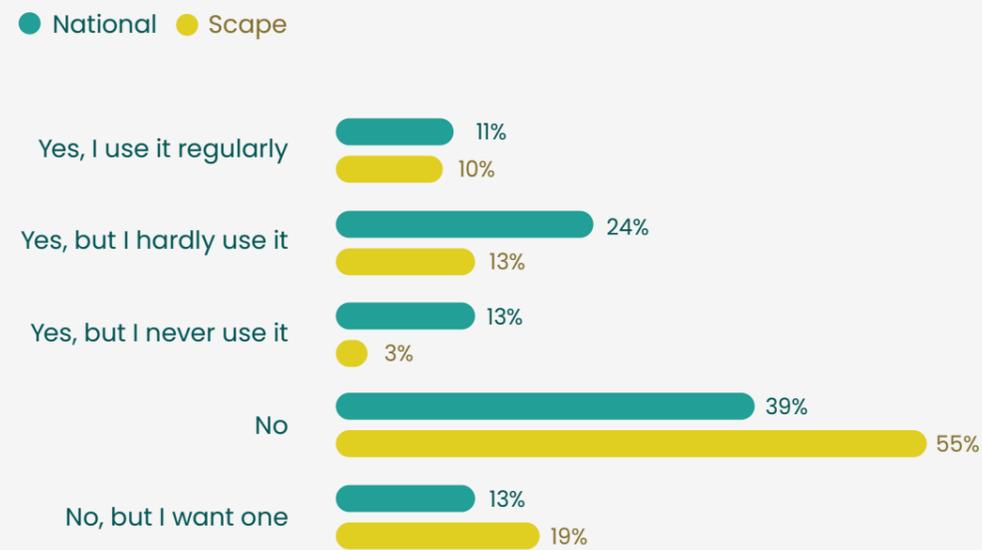
● National ● Scape



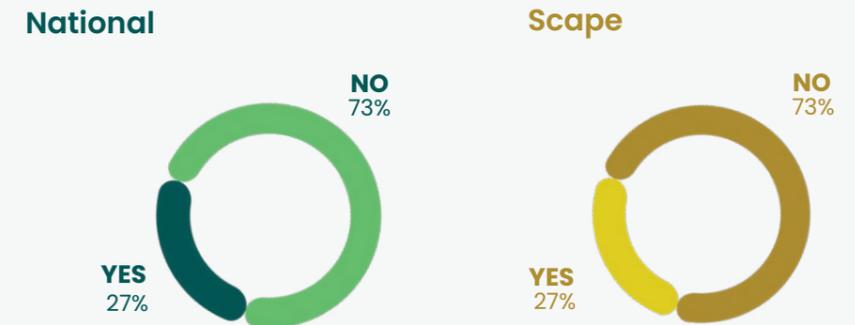
Do you have a gym membership?



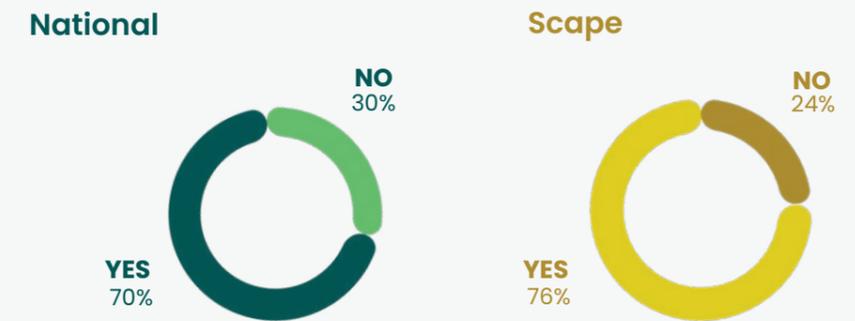
Do you have home exercise equipment?



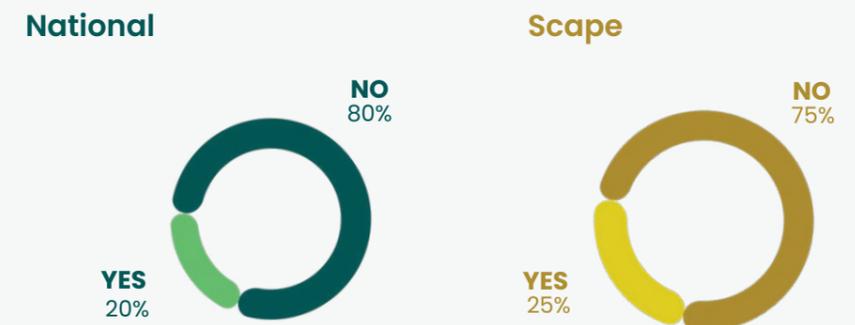
Do you use a fitness tracker?



Does your fitness tracker motivate you to exercise more?*



Do you compete with others over your fitness tracker results?*



*These questions were only answered by young people who said they use a fitness tracker.



"My mental health was terrible, I was in and out of hospital for years. I went to the gym once with my friend because I was bored and I thought why not, I felt better than ever, it was like I was riding a high I never knew existed. It got me out of the house, it got me out of my own head, not overthinking situations and pushing myself for a change, ever since that day I have only skipped a gym day if I'm extremely sick. It has not only changed my appetite but it's also changed my mental health and mindset."

Female, 19, VIC, regional

"I think picking up a social sport has improved my life dramatically. Post covid, I was unfit, depressed and lonely. I picked up bouldering and all of a sudden I was regularly exercising and meeting a lot of people. I feel more confident in myself and have become more adventurous as a result."

Male, 23, VIC, metropolitan

"A current trend such as run clubs are a great example of how you can stay fit, catch up with old friends and continue to make new ones by just partaking in a short weekly activity."

Female, 21, NSW, metropolitan

"The thing positively impacting my overall well being is definitely sports, I signed up to my MMA gym a little over a year ago and it was the best decision I've made. It helped me create a sense of purpose for myself and helped me train discipline more than anything. One tip I'd have for the younger generation is to get themselves into a sports team/family ASAP. Having that ability to train not only your physical wellbeing but also your mental wellbeing through the discipline needed to effectively play sports is extremely beneficial and it also allows you to make new friends and learn new things."

Male, 20, WA, metropolitan

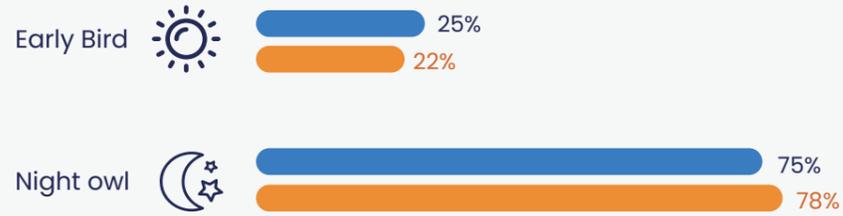
03 SLEEP

In 2024 young Australians get on average seven hours of sleep per night putting them on the lower end of the amount of recommended sleep for young adults, with nearly a third below this threshold. Only a minority of young Australians say they wake up feeling fresh and energised with the majority either feeling tired and lethargic or somewhere in between these two states, revealing sleep quality and duration are major issues for many young Australians. Most young people say they are night owls as opposed to early birds, showing how their preference for later bedtimes might conflict with their study and work schedules. The top factors preventing Gen Zs getting a good night's sleep include their phone usage, stress and anxiety, with phone usage also what they do most in the lead up to going to sleep, showing a conflict between the want to use their phone in bed with a recognition that it is actually preventing them from getting to sleep.



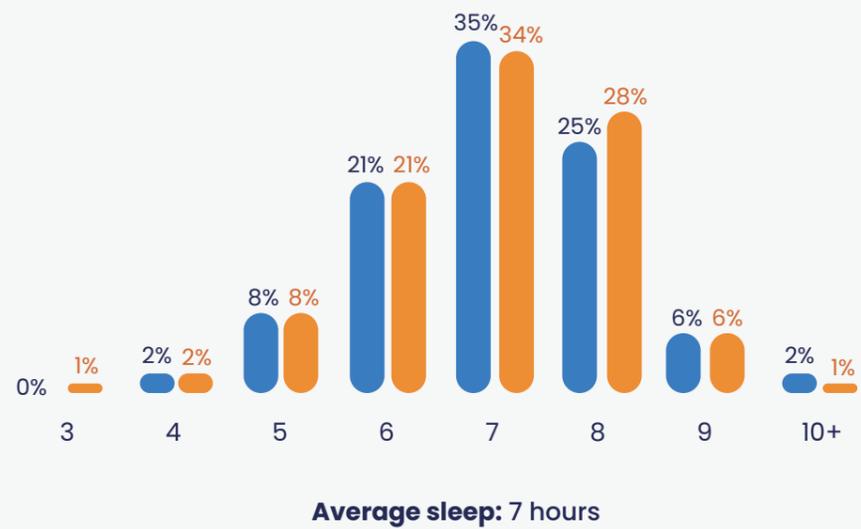
Are you an early bird or a night owl?

● National ● Scape

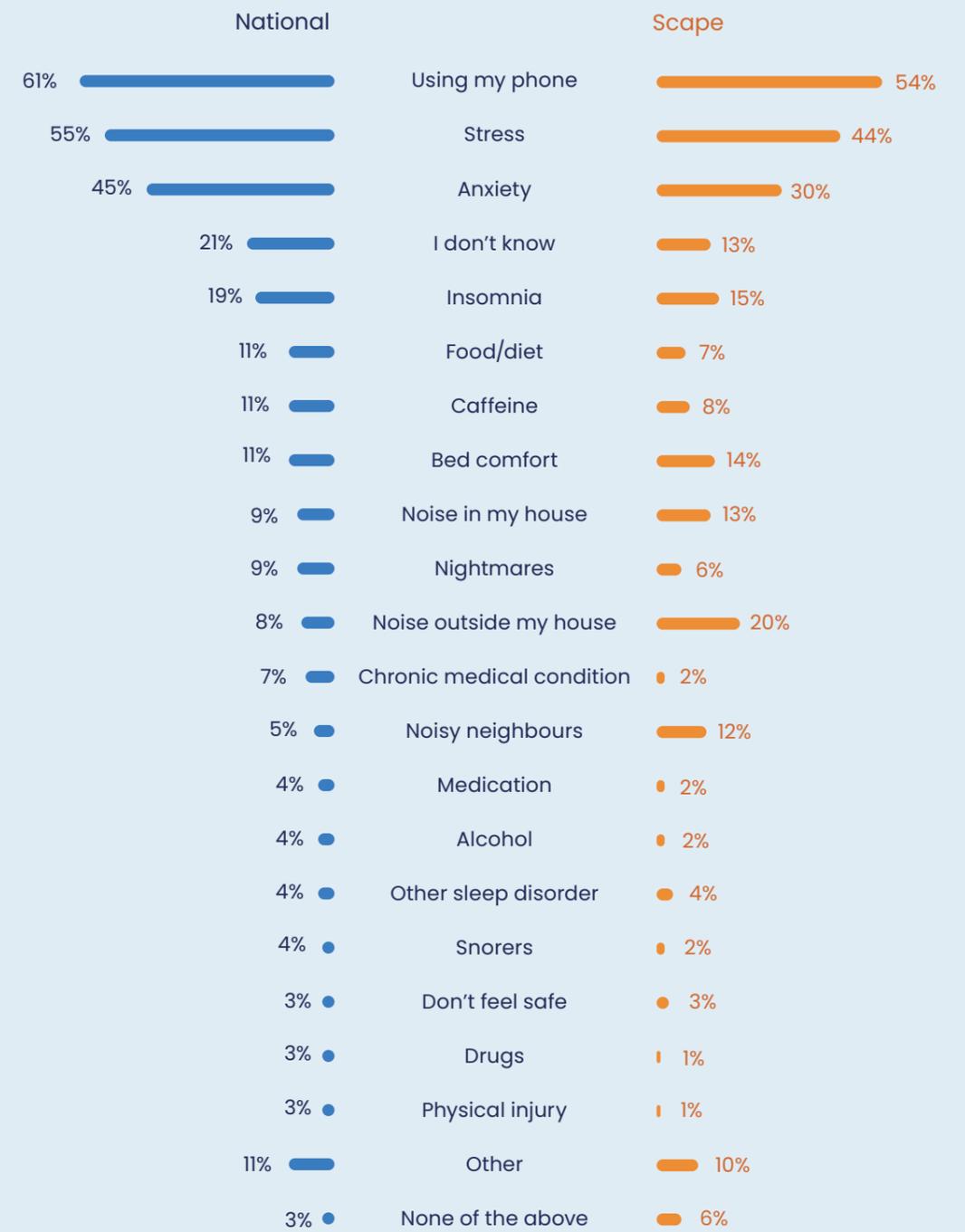


How many hours of sleep do you get per night on average?

● National ● Scape

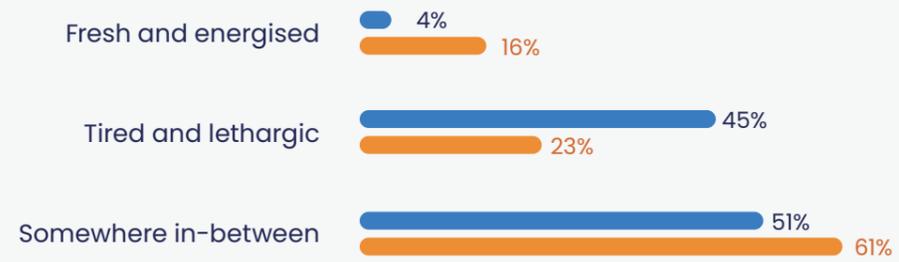


What is preventing you from getting a good night's sleep currently? (Tick all that apply)



How do you usually feel when you wake up?

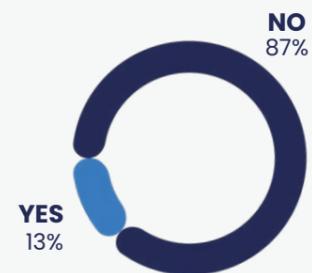
● National ● Scape



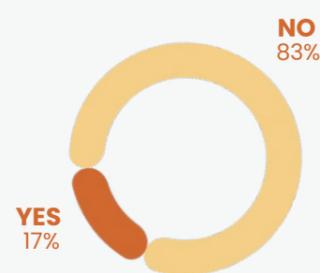
Scape residents are significantly more likely to report waking up feeling fresh and energised and less likely to feel tired and lethargic compared to the national average.

Do you use a sleep tracker?

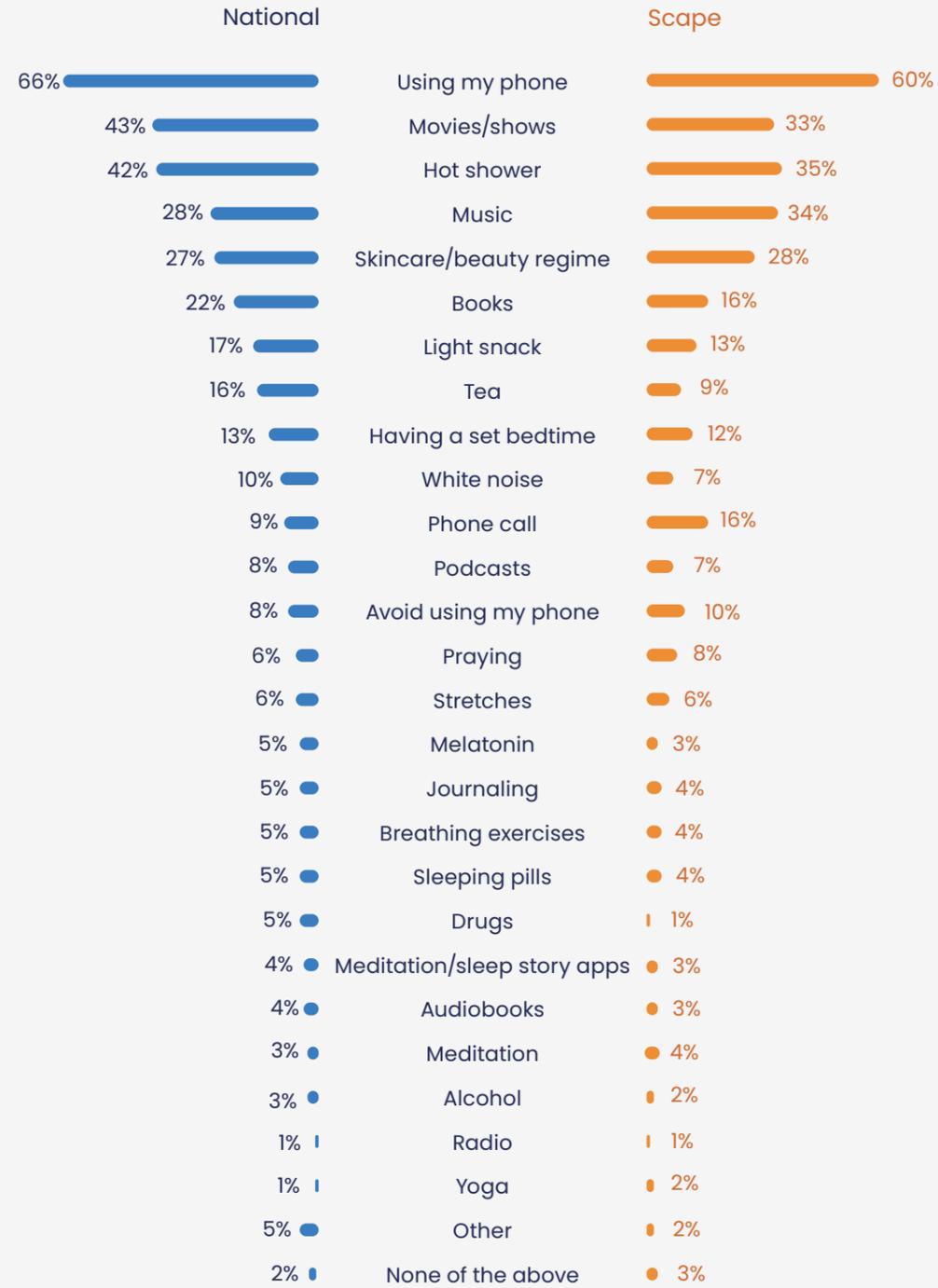
National



Scape



What is part of your nightly bedtime routine? (Tick all that apply)



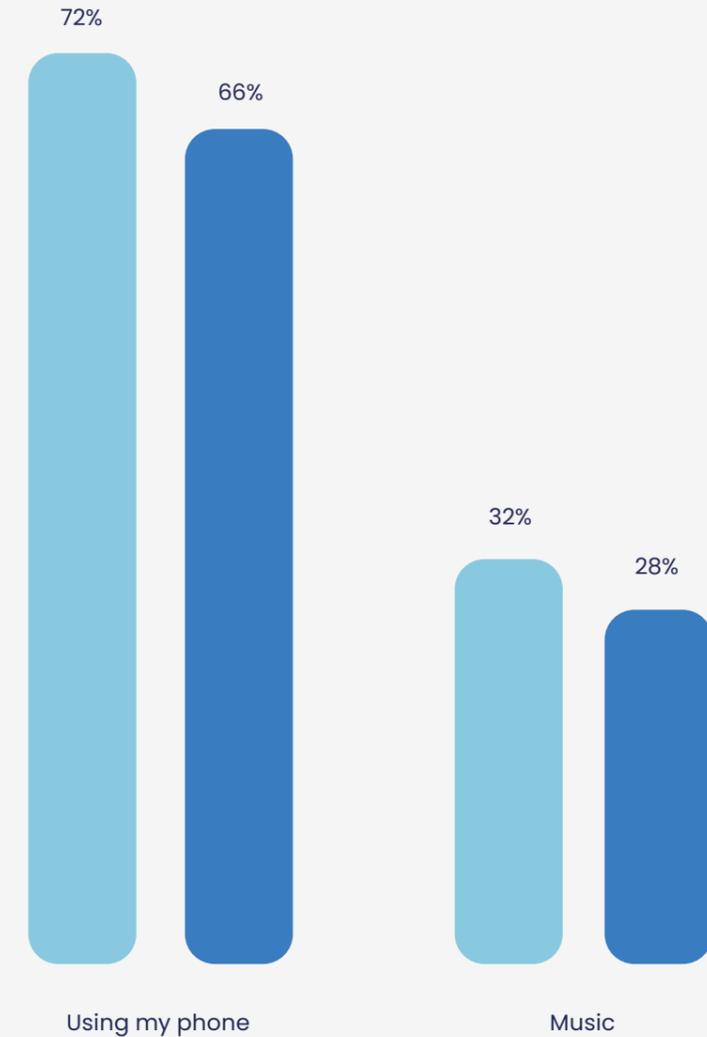
What is part of your nightly bedtime routine?

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 young Australians using their phone as part of their nightly bedtime routine significantly decreased from 72% to 66% while those listening to music decreased from 32% to 28%.

National

● 2023 ● 2024





“Currently I believe my sleep routine is affecting me the most, I believe waking up early allows a person to be successful but I have not been able to do that for a while because of stress. This stress comes from delayed tasks due to procrastination and also small issues that arise with friends/family that affect my mental health. If we removed distractions such as constant use of devices and social media it would be easier to build discipline and thus continue ahead with tasks that aren’t so appealing, and this could improve sleep, mood and a person’s lifestyle in general.”

Female, 18, NSW, metropolitan

“One tip that I would offer to others to improve their wellbeing is to make sure that you are getting enough sleep at night. I usually try to get 8 or 9 hours because that is what makes me well rested. Some people require less than that and some require more. All I know is that it is much easier to enjoy your everyday life if you aren’t so tired all the time.”

Male, 22, NSW, metropolitan

“My wellbeing is being impacted by the length and quality of my sleep. My time in Australia has been very relaxing and has allowed me to sleep and catch up on hours lost during my last semester at university. However, the lack of a healthy diet and lack of exercise have negatively impacted my recent health.”

Female, 21, QLD, metropolitan

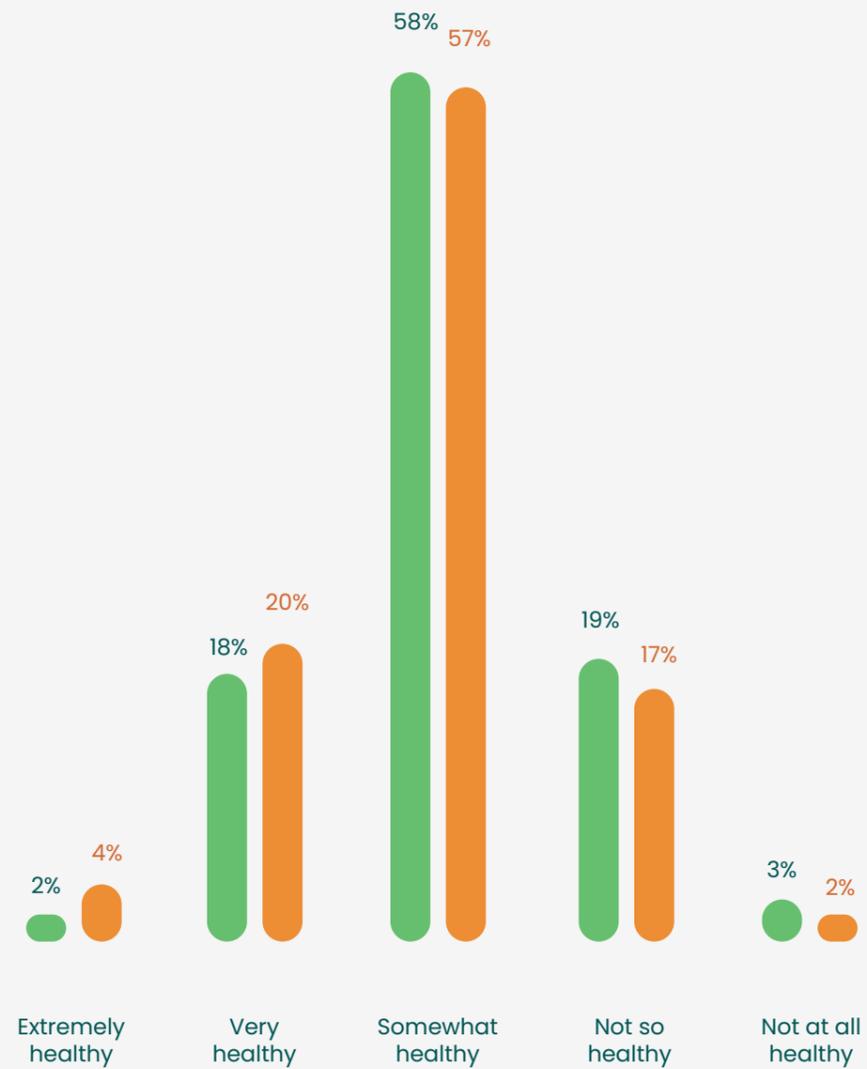
04 DIET

In 2024 over three quarters of Gen Zs say they don't have a very healthy diet showing there is significant room for improvement when it comes to what they eat and drink. This is evidenced by how most young people say they don't eat enough fruit and vegetables each day. Barriers to achieving a healthier diet include lack of willpower, their perception that healthy food costs too much and time constraints, but despite these challenges most young people say they like cooking and cook on a weekly basis. Besides food, on average young Australians drink alcohol weekly and drink coffee some days of the week. When it comes to smoking cigarettes, not taking into account the majority who never smoke, the average frequency of smoking among young people who say they do smoke cigarettes is just occasionally. When it comes to vaping, not taking into account the majority who never vape, the average frequency of vaping among young people who say they do vape is between weekly and occasionally.



How would you describe your diet on average?

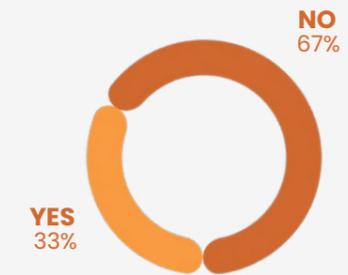
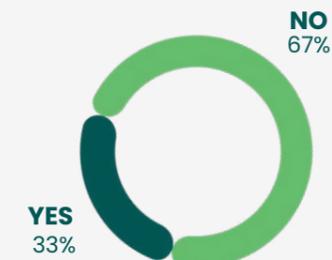
● National ● Scape



On average do you eat the recommended 2 serves of fruit per day?

National

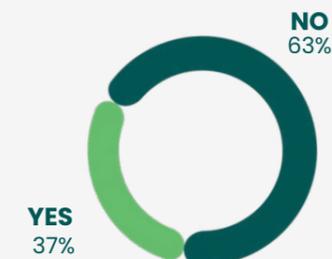
Scape



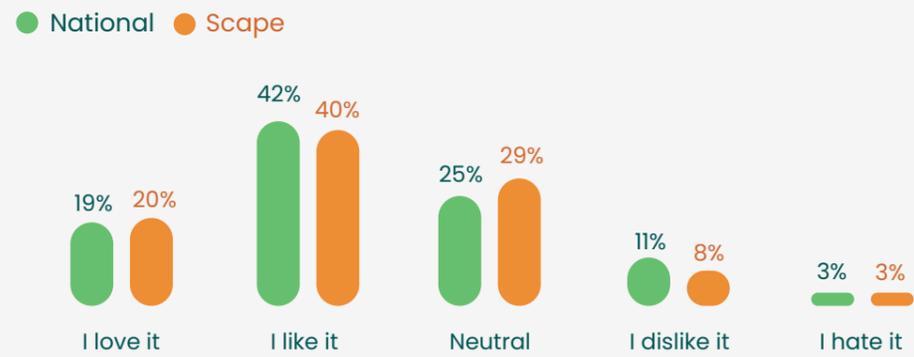
On average do you eat the recommended 5/6 serves of vegetables per day? *5 for females, 6 for males

National

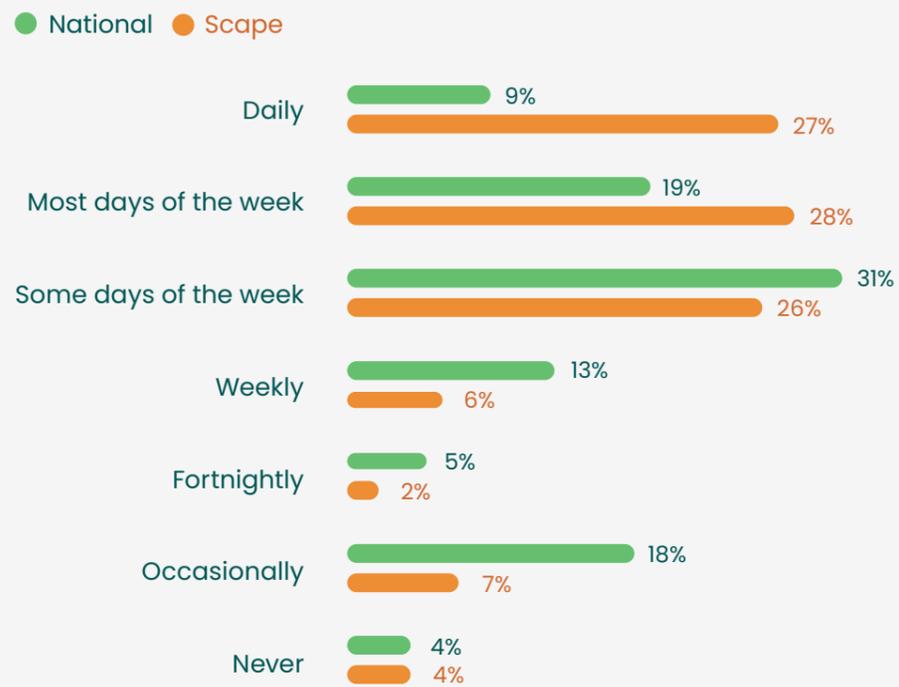
Scape



How much do you like to cook?



How often do you cook on average?

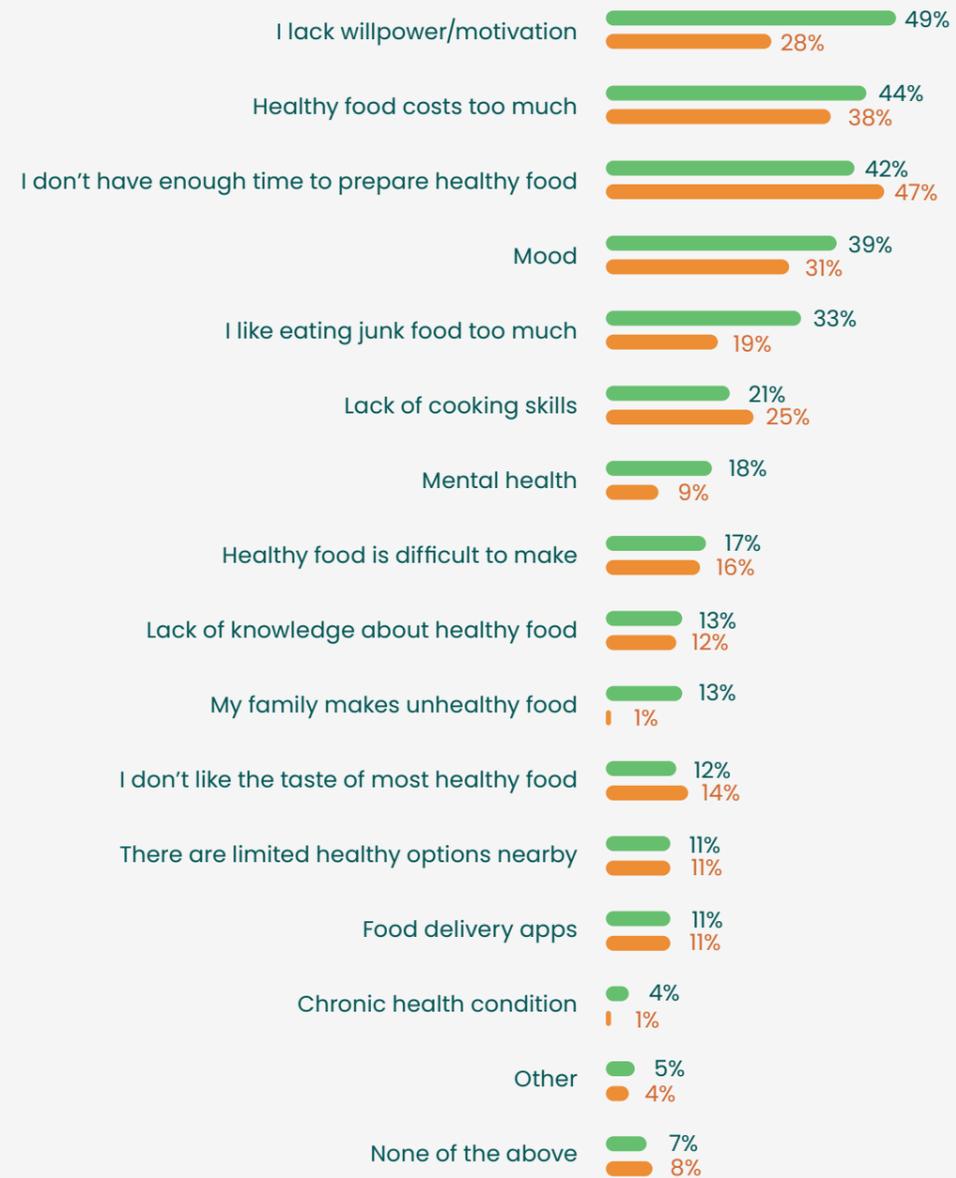


Scape residents are significantly more likely to cook regularly compared to the national average.



What's negatively impacting your diet? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape

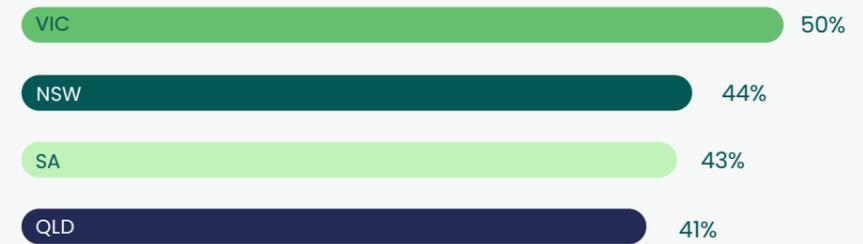


What's negatively impacting your diet?

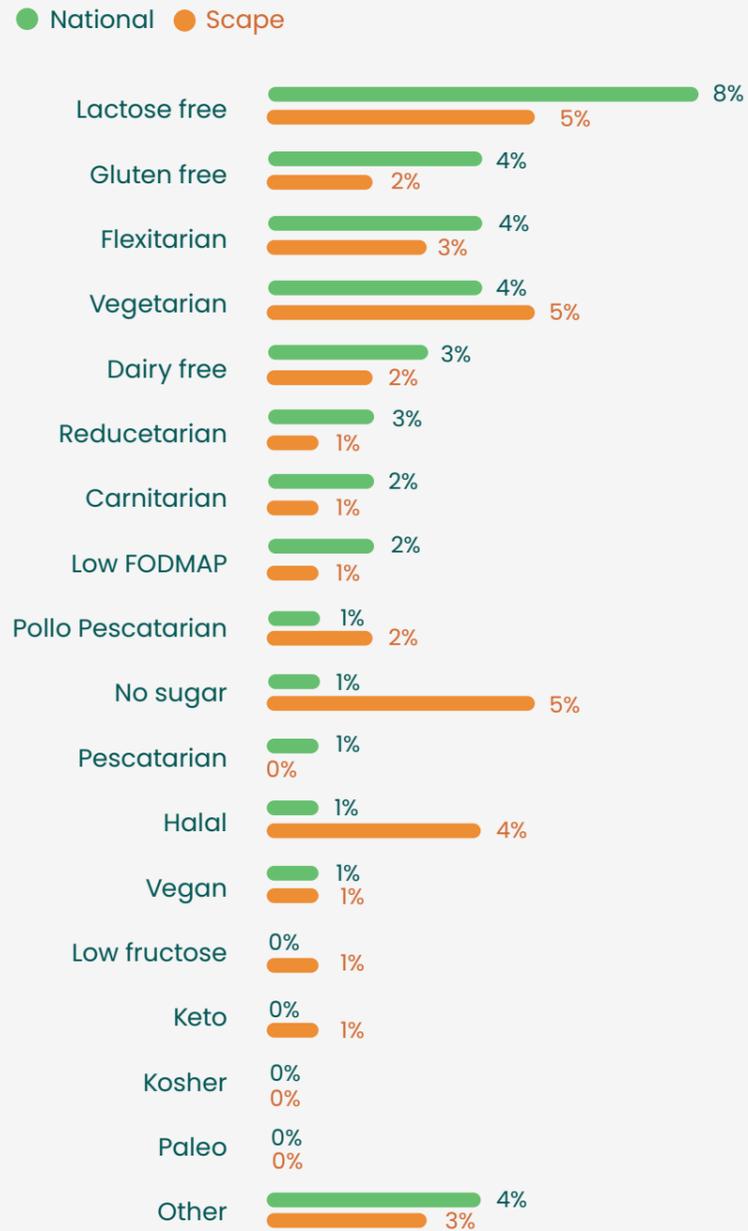
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

National

Healthy food costs too much

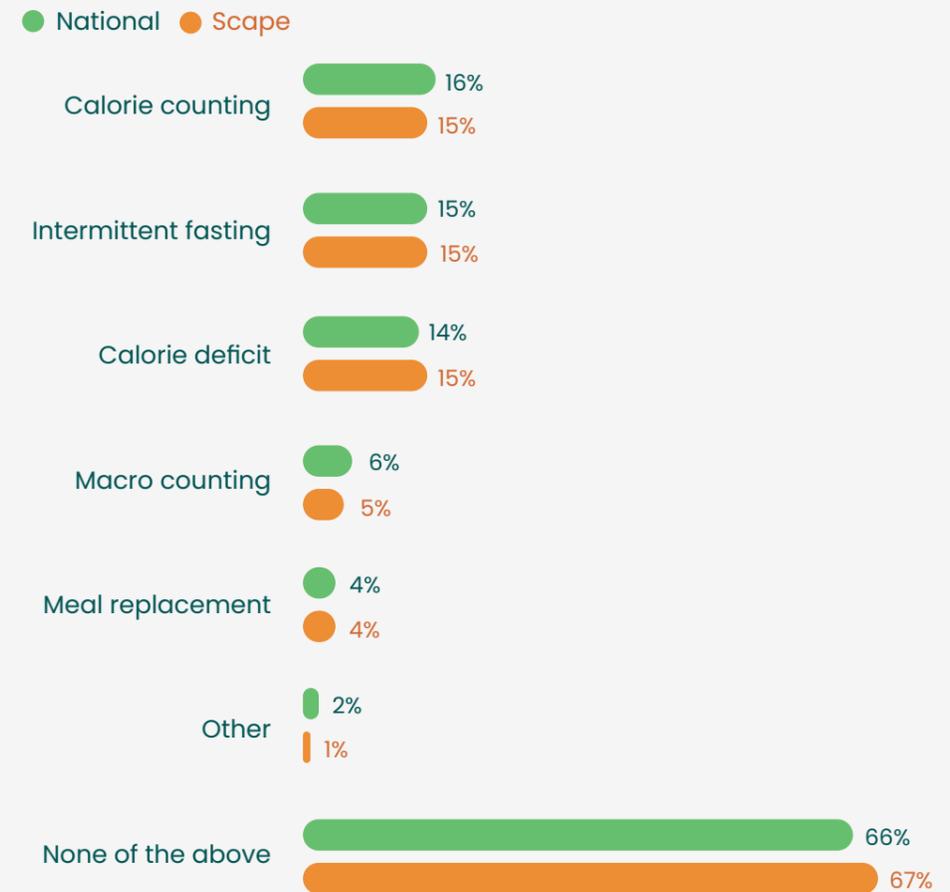


Do you follow any special diets? (Tick all that apply)



71% of young Australians and 69% of Scape residents say they don't follow any special diets.

Do you follow any of these eating habits? (Tick all that apply)



SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2023 & 2024

Between 2023 and 2024 the number of young Australians doing intermittent fasting significantly increased from 11% to 15%.

National

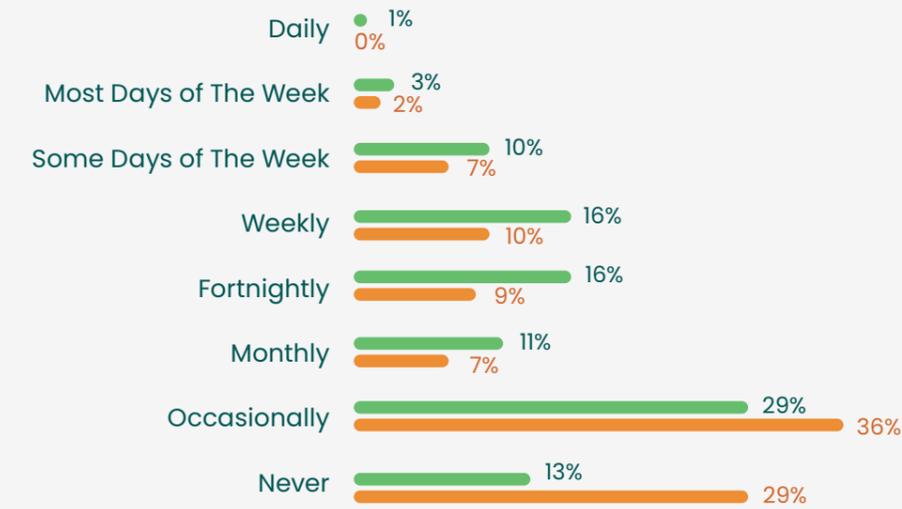
● 2023 ● 2024



How often do you have the following?

Alcohol

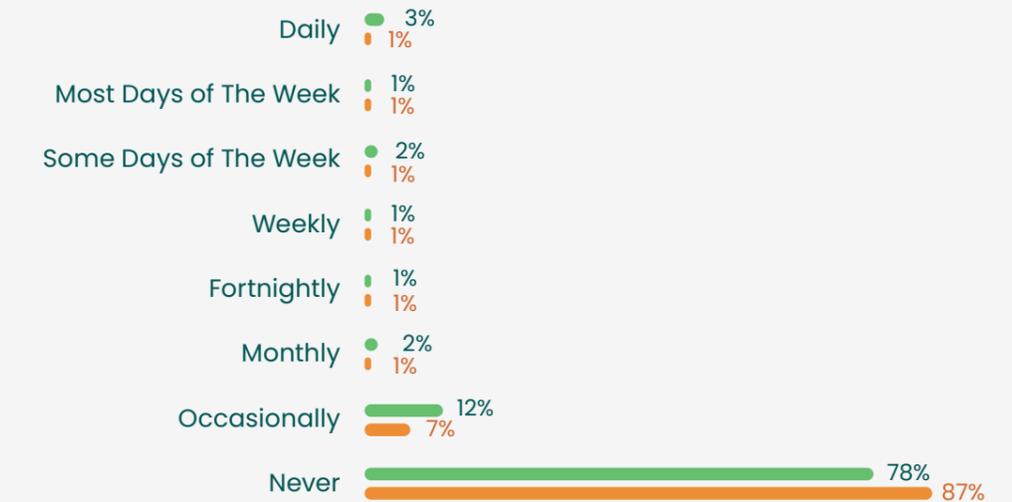
● National ● Scape



How often do you have the following?

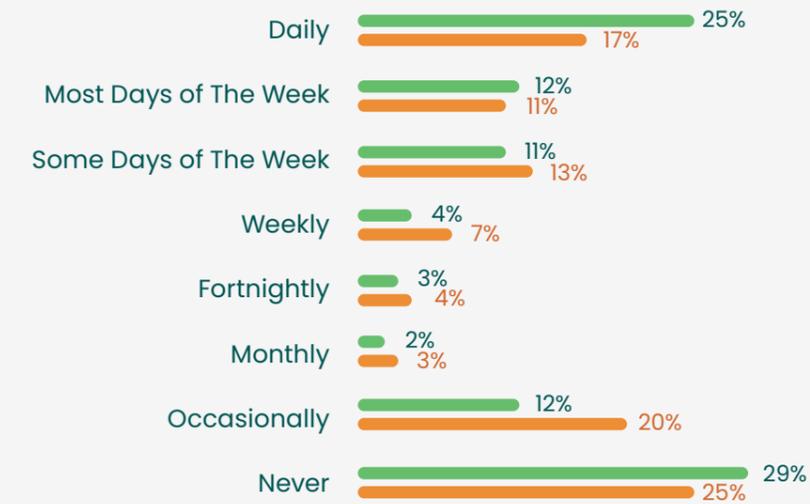
Cigarettes

● National ● Scape



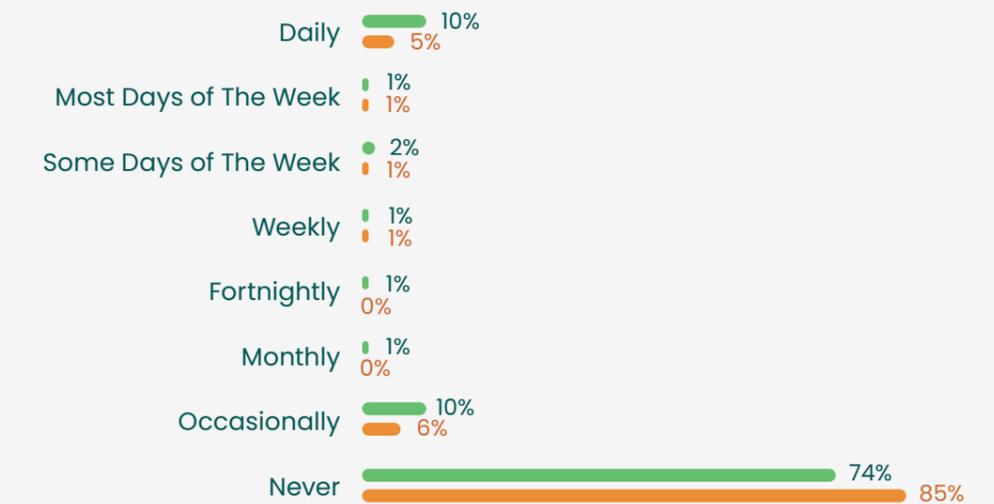
Coffee

● National ● Scape



Vaping

● National ● Scape





"I believe that young people need to be prioritising a healthy diet over anything. Even though I am still working on this myself and have come in and out of health based eating, it is one of the major things that will improve sleep, mental health, physical health etc. which are all massive factors and challenges for people of youth today. My tip would be an apple and a cookie is still better than just a cookie so it's about balance until it's easier to make a positive change."

Female, 18, VIC, regional

"I constantly get told I'm a good person and look well put together but inside I just feel like I can't do anything at all and I'm useless. I haven't cooked a meal for myself in around 7 months, eat basically just takeaway or whatever someone else in the house I live in is eating, or just don't eat at all. And it makes me feel bad and I don't have the motivation to change it cause I'm scared of stuffing up whatever I cook and it just being a waste of time."

Male, 21, TAS, regional

"I believe that cooking healthy food should be advertised to the younger generation more than food delivery services and the prices should be compared. This will make people feel happier and healthier and also find a love of cooking even if it's simple."

Female, 18, SA, regional

"Learning to cook and nourish yourself, especially on a budget, and others is an empowering and essential skill, it's also a good thing to centre community around by getting others involved or treating a friend to tea. Strive for what fulfils your soul."

Male, 24, NSW, metropolitan



FINAL THOUGHTS

The Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2024 by youth engagement platform Year13 and student accommodation provider Scape has provided an in depth look into what's impacting the mental health, exercise, sleep and diet habits and behaviours of young people in Australia aged 18 to 24. In this second edition of the report we have also been able to for the first time provide a year-on-year analysis into these important aspects of young people's lives to see what changes have occurred in the previous 12 months. As the years progress this will help us to track what's improving in young people's lives and what they need help with.

We've found mental health remains a critical concern for young people in 2024 with more than two fifths saying their mental health isn't good. Rates of

anxiety (56%) and depression (35%) are still high despite falling since 2023, while rates of body image issues like body dysmorphia (21%) as well as ADHD (27%) have increased year on year. Positively, more than half of young people now say they have had mental health therapy to help with their mental health, however a further 1 in 10 young adults still say they would like to try mental health therapy for the first time showing the importance of these services to Gen Zs.

Their wellbeing is also being significantly impacted by feelings of fatigue, burnout and negative self-talk, as well as by concerns about figuring out their future and the cost of living, all of which show a need for support systems helping with youth financial, mental health and career planning concerns. On their social health, a third of young people say

they don't have strong support networks with family while a fifth don't with friends, with two in five Gen Zs saying they struggle to make friends and about a third not feeling a sense of inclusion and belonging in their everyday life, all revealing a strong need to help young people with social opportunities.

Positively, Gen Z's physical health and how frequently they exercise both improved from last year, showing this to be one of the major improvement areas in their lives this year. Most young Australians say they are in good physical health with most taking part in some form of physical activity like walking, weight training and running on a weekly basis. However, nearly a fifth of young people saying they would like to get a gym membership reveals strong potential to improve Gen Z's level of physical health even further if more of them can benefit from the positive environment and professional help which gyms can offer.

When it comes to sleep more than two thirds of Gen Zs say they don't get enough of it, with this helping to explain why nearly half say they usually wake up feeling tired and lethargic compared to just the 5% who say they usually start the day feeling fresh and energised. We found just about all young people reported some factor preventing them from getting a good night's sleep with phone usage, stress and anxiety the prime reasons. Positively, however, we saw the number of young people saying they use their phone before bed dropped from 2023, with us interested to see if this trend continues in the years ahead and how this could impact on their sleep quality. Overall, helping Gen Zs sleep better is one of their major wellbeing needs, however, it's their own

phone usage habits which will likely be what's most effective in helping them sleep better.

Young people's dietary habits are what we've found show the most room for improvement, with just 1 in 5 saying they have a very healthy diet and a majority not eating the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables. The cost of healthy food, a lack of time to prepare it and just an overall lack of willpower to eat it are what's getting in the way of most young people eating better, with this showing the need to help young people find affordable healthy food options which are quick and easy to make to fit in with their busy lifestyles and the cost of living crunch they're currently facing.

At Year13 and Scape we are committed to helping young people with their wellbeing as we know a solid base in the fundamentals of mental health, exercise, sleep and diet can be life changing for young people as they go into their futures. We hope the information provided in this report will help anyone with an interest in youth wellbeing to develop their own ideas about how they can help young people with these vitally important areas of their lives. Because by improving the wellbeing of Australian youth we are also improving the health and wellbeing of the country by helping get the next generation of adults started on the right track. This research wouldn't be possible without the more than 3000 Gen Zs who answered our survey telling us about how their lives are and what's impacting them, so as we conclude Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2024 we'd like to offer all of them a sincere thank you for their participation.





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