

Cost of living Survey report

Western Australia
September 2024



Methodology



Statewide survey

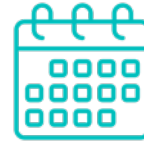
Results in this report are based upon questions asked in a Talbot Mills Research state-wide online survey. The basis of the sample is n=1074 respondents in Western Australia 18 years of age and over.



Representative sample

Interlocked age, gender and regional quotas were used during sampling. Weighting was further used to enhance how closely the results represent the adult population of Western Australia

The maximum sampling error for a sample size of 1074 at the 95% confidence level is $\pm 3.1\%$.



Fieldwork dates

Fieldwork for the questions in this report was conducted between the 18th – 29th July 2024.



Reporting

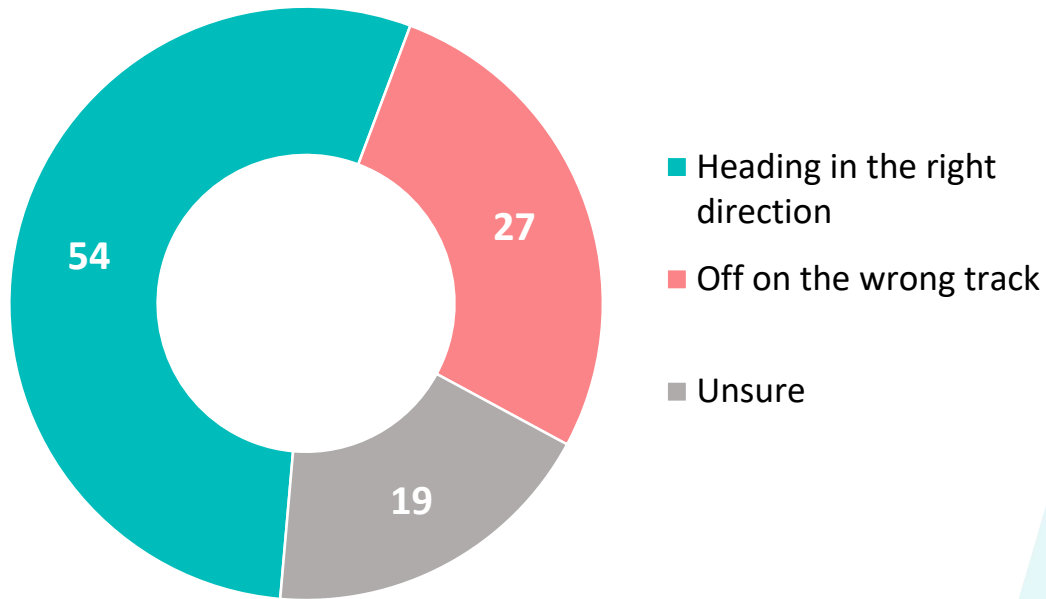
All numbers are shown rounded to zero decimal places. Hence specified totals are not always exactly equal to the sum of the specified sub-totals. The differences are seldom more than 1%. (For example: $2.7 + 3.5 = 6.2$ would appear: $3 + 4 = 6$).

Political context



The mood

Generally speaking, are things in Western Australia heading in the right direction or are they off on the wrong track? (%)



Those living in inner city Perth were more likely to say WA is heading in the right direction (66%) compared to those in the suburbs (53%) or outside Perth (50%)

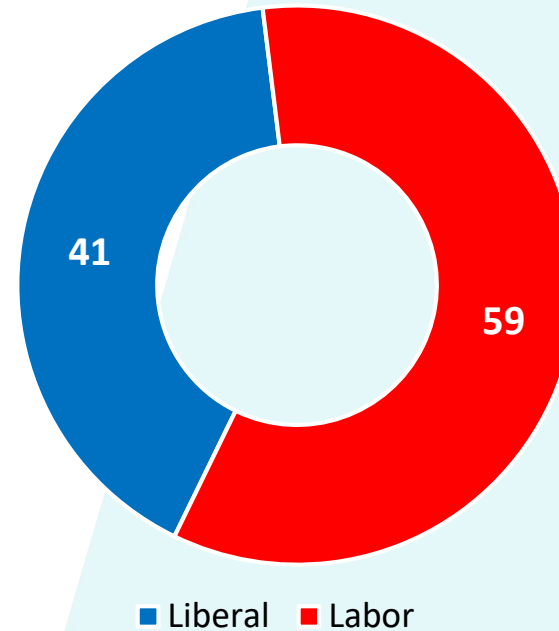
Right direction by party support:

- Greens 49%
- Labor 68%
- Liberal 54%
- Nationals 51%
- One Nation . . . 33%



WA state vote

In a state election you must give a preference. When giving a preference who would you put ahead? (%)



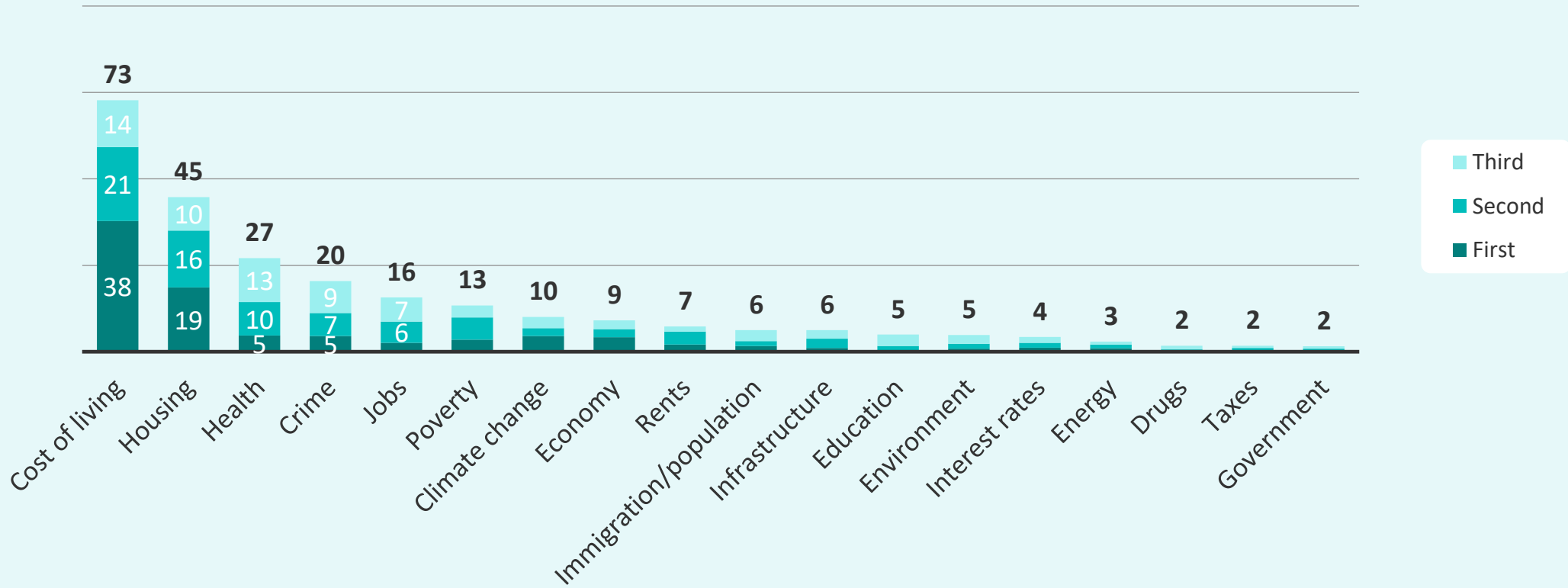
Most important issue

What are the three most important issues facing Western Australia right now? (Most important)



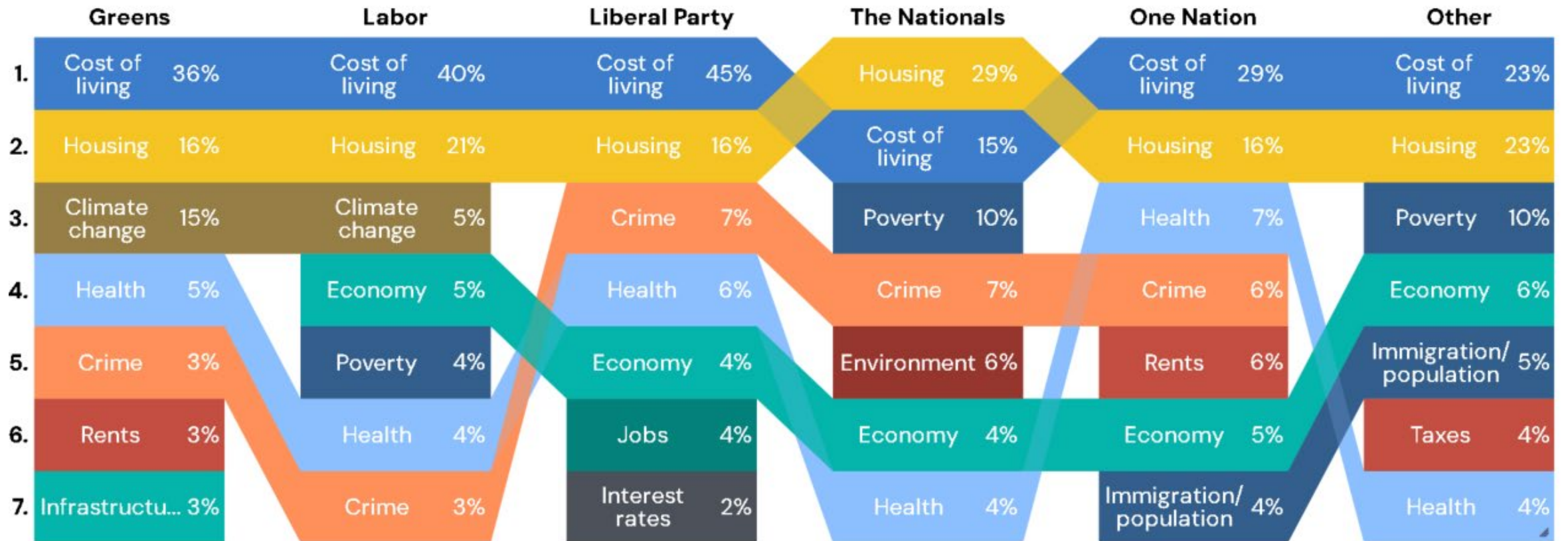
Most important issues

What are the three most important issues facing Western Australia right now? (% coded)



Issues – by party vote

What are the three most important issues facing Western Australia right now? (Most important: %)



Cost of living: *experience*



People's experience of the cost of living

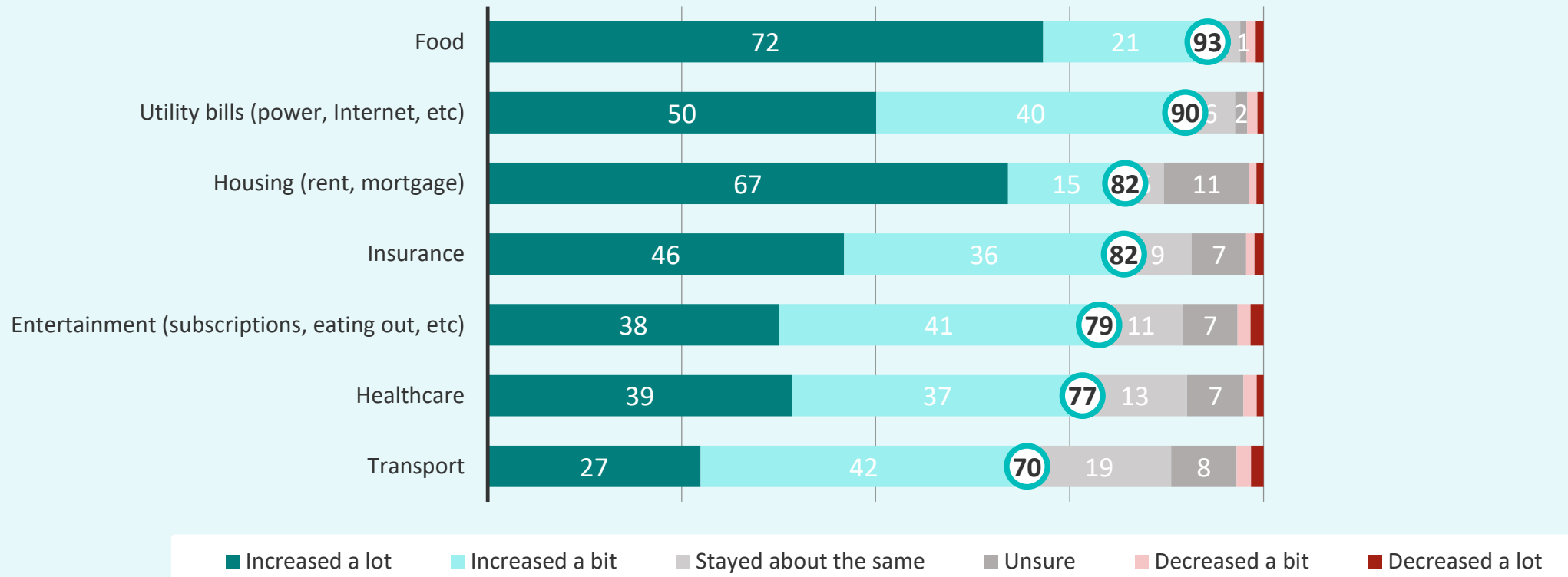
- Strong majorities of respondents reported almost all areas of core spending have increased in the past year. Specifically, 93% said Food and 90% said utility bills have increased, while 82% said housing and insurance. Entertainment (79%), health (77%) and transport (70%) were slightly lower.
- Besides transport (51%) and entertainment (45%) around two thirds or more expressed concern (very or moderate) about their ability to meet the costs of the various types tested. Food (73%) and Utility bills (71%) had the highest levels of concern.
- Around half said they have had to cut back 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' on entertainment (52%) and food (51%) in the past year. These received the highest amount of people making substantial cutbacks, likely explained by the others being generally fixed cost.

Utility bills (40%), health (36%) and insurance (35%) featured next while 33% said they have cut back 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' on housing and 32% on transport.

- Around one in five (18%) say they always find it difficult to pay their bills. A further 19% said they find an unexpected bill puts a lot of pressure on them, 37% said they are under a bit of pressure but can generally cope with an unexpected bill and 24% said they either well off or reasonably comfortable financially.
- 37% said they do not have enough in their accounts to cover an unexpected bill of \$500 without borrowing, selling something or putting it on a credit card.
- 49% said they and their family is worse off than a year ago, 37% said they are about the same and only 13% said they are better off.
- Respondents were generally not optimistic about the future either, 39% said they think they will be worse off next year, 34% about the same and only 19% better off.

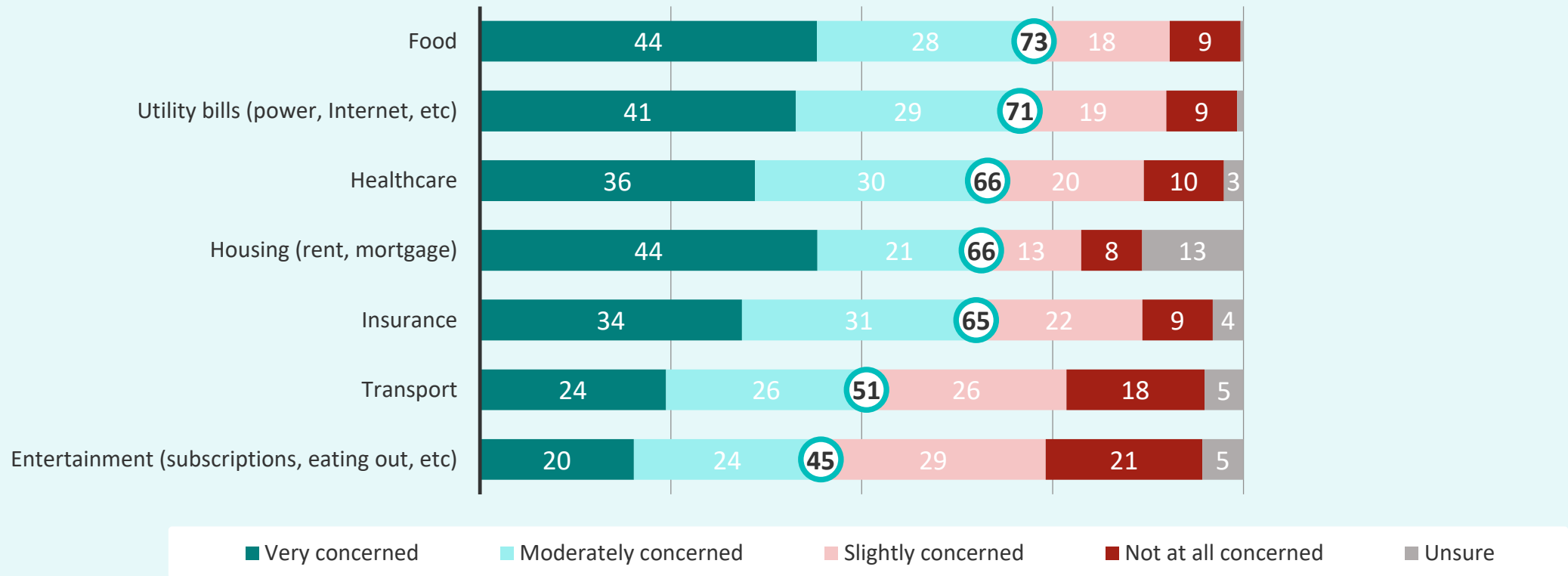
Cost changes

Over the past year how much have each of the following costs changed? (%)



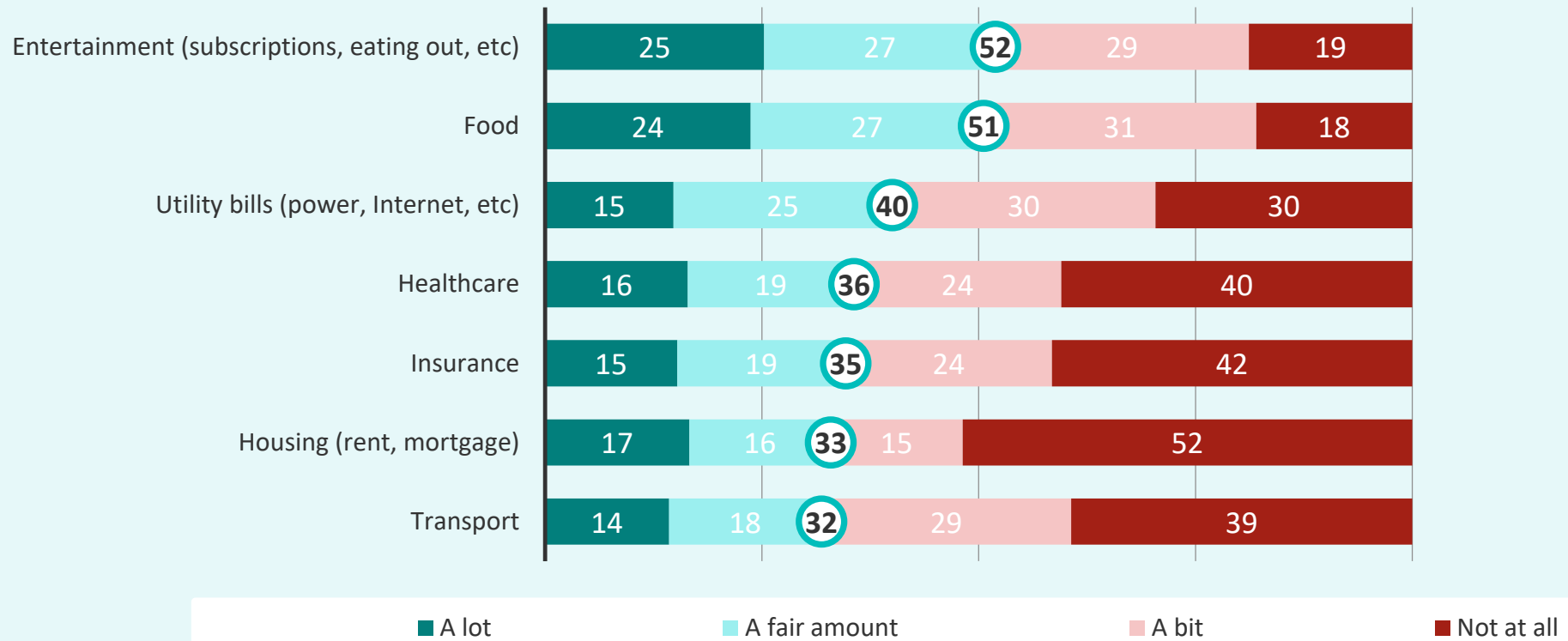
Concern

How concerned are you about you and your families ability to meet the costs of the following? (%)



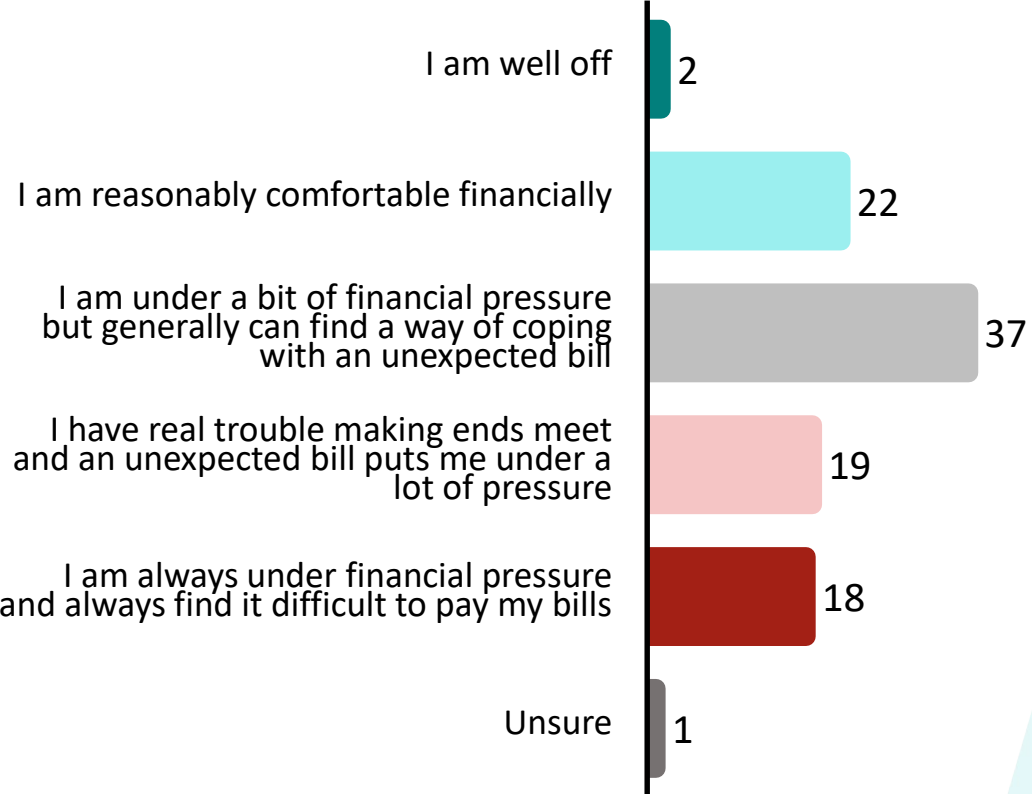
Cutting back

How much, if at all, have you had to cut back on the following costs in the past year? (%)



Personal finance

Which of these statements best describes your financial situation? (%)



Renters were much less likely to say they are well off or reasonably comfortable (11%) compared to those with a mortgage (23%) and those who own their home outright (47%)

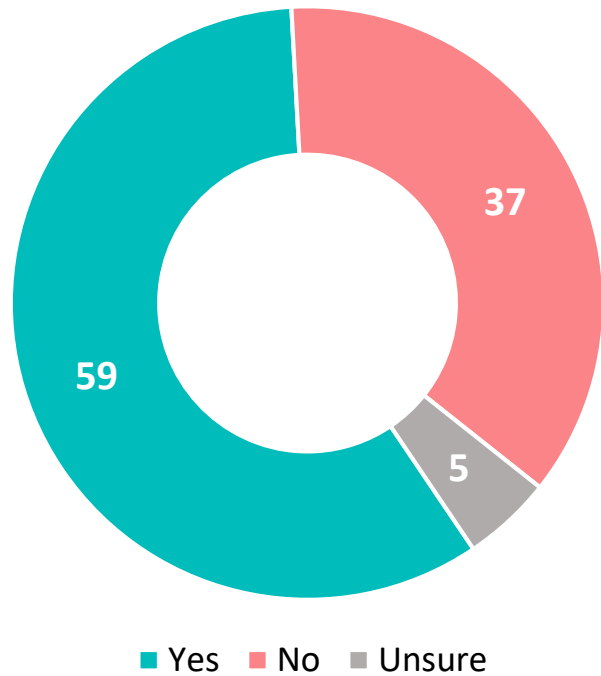
Older respondents were more likely to say they are well off or comfortable:

- Under 30 13%
- 30-44 15%
- 45-59 25%
- 60+ 39%



Covering an unexpected \$500

Would you have enough in your accounts to cover an unexpected bill of \$500 without borrowing it, selling something, or putting it on a credit card? (%)



Renters were much less likely to say can cover \$500 (45%) compared to those with a mortgage (59%) and those who own their home outright (80%)

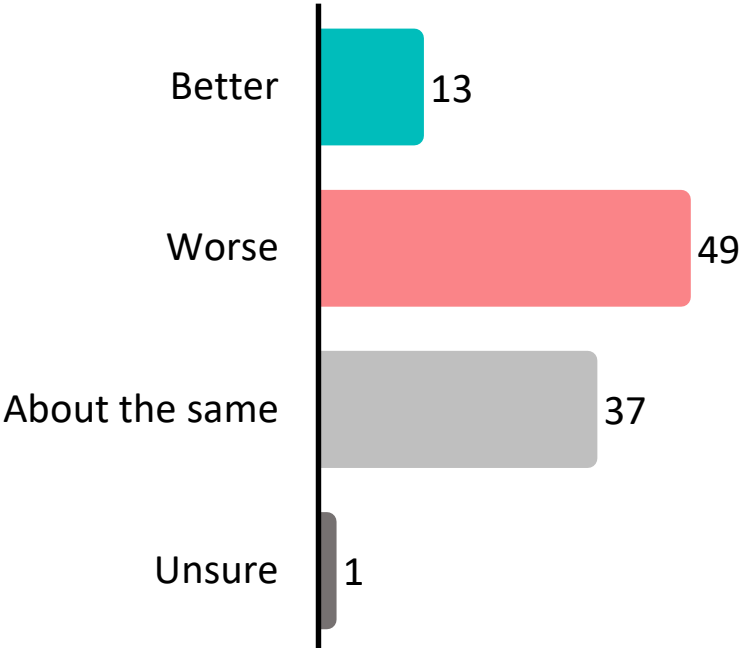
Older respondents were more likely to say they could cover \$500:

Under 30	42%
30-44	51%
45-59	61%
60+	73%



Better or worse of than a year ago

Are you and your family better or worse off than a year ago?
(%)



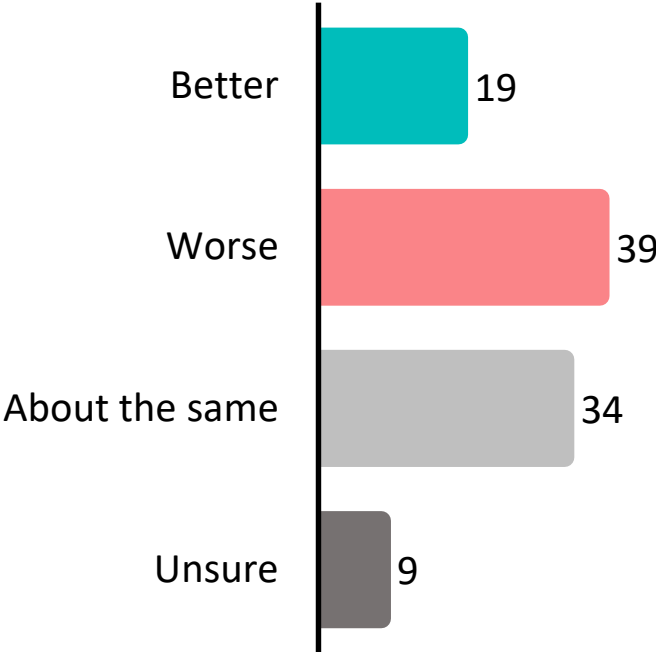
Younger respondents were more likely to say they are better off:

- Under 30 23%
- 30-44 18%
- 45-59 11%
- 60+ 4%



Expectations

Do you expect you and your family to be better or worse off in the next year? (%)



Those in Perth inner city were more likely to say they expect to be better off (28%).

Younger respondents were more likely to say they expect to be better off:

- Under 30 29%
- 30-44 28%
- 45-59 16%
- 60+ 8%



Cost of living: *Government responsibility*



Government's responsibility for the cost of living

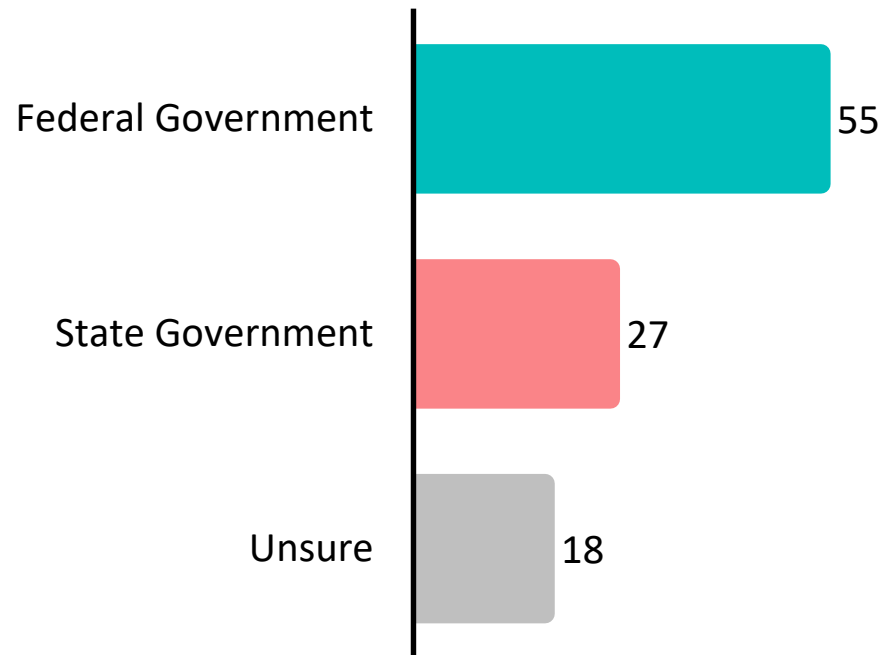
- 55% consider the federal government primarily responsible for addressing cost of living issues and 27% consider it primarily a state government responsibility. 18% were unsure.
- Despite people generally thinking it's a federal responsibility, 87% think the state government should be doing more to help with cost of living pressures.
- Of those who think they should be doing more, people on low incomes (53%), pensioners and retirees (44%) and families with young children (41%) were the most frequently cited as the most important to target.

This was followed by middle income earners (26%), Essential workers (24%), the unemployed/underemployed (23%) and students and young adults (20%).

Evidently respondents tended to self-select the group they thought should be most targeted as amongst those aged under 30, students and young adults were the most common group to be selected (52%) and amongst those aged 60 or over it was pensioners and retirees (68%).

State or federal primarily responsible

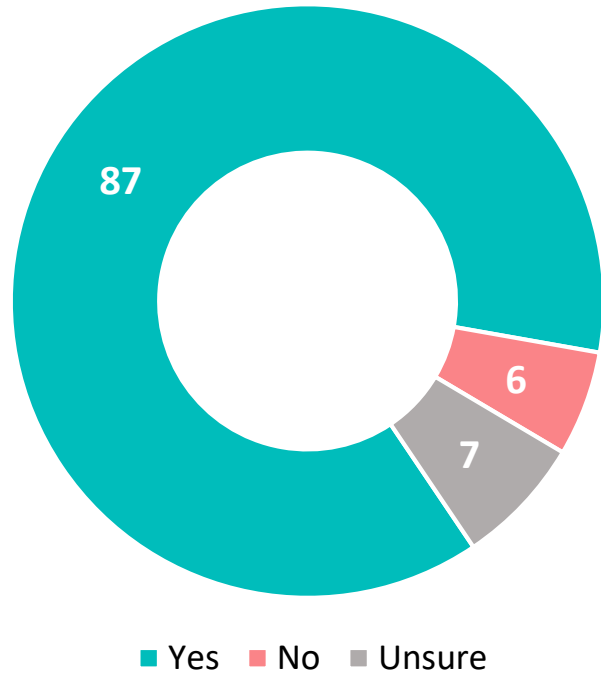
What do you think is primarily responsible for the cost of living issues being experienced by people in WA? (%)



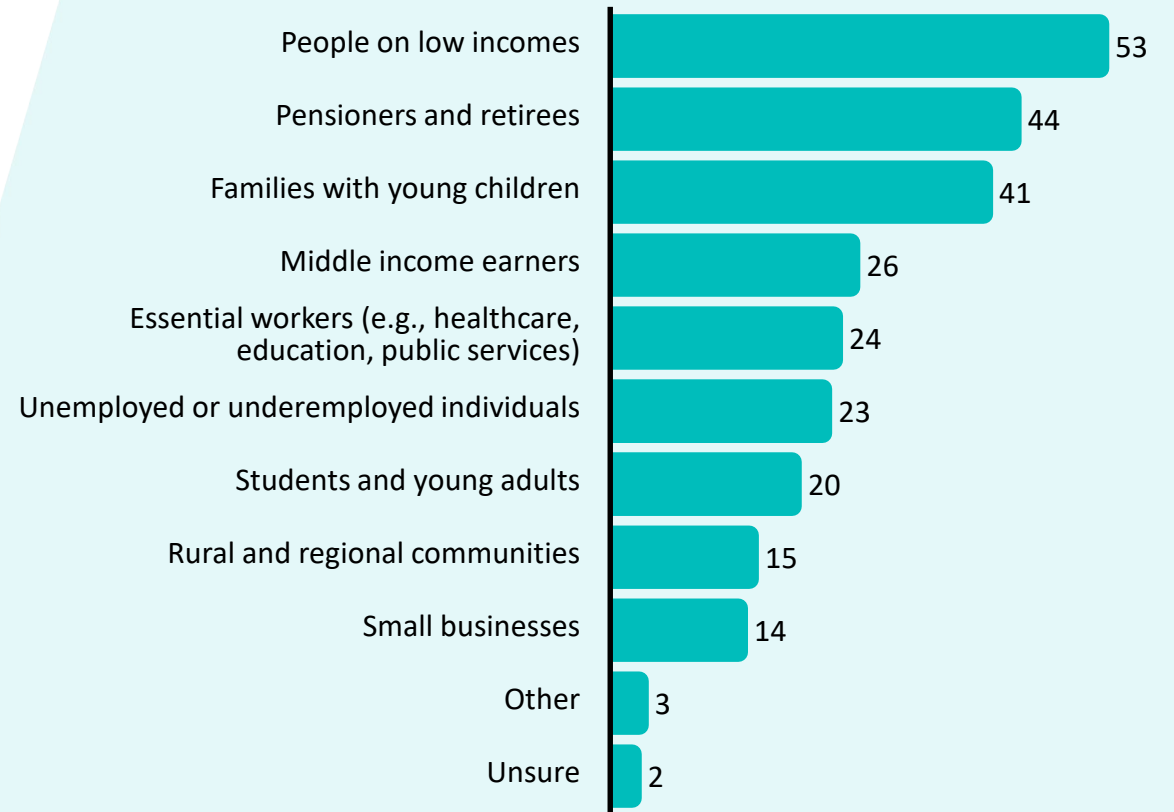
Renters were more likely to say it's the state responsibility (33%) rather than federal (52%) compared to those with a mortgage (27%; 54%) and those who own their home outright (22%; 61%)

Who the state government should be targeting

Should the state government be doing more to help with cost of living pressures? (%)



Which groups should be most targeted by the state government to help with cost of living pressures? (%)



State government targets – by age

Which groups should be most targeted by the state government to help with cost of living pressures? (%)

