



2023 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey

Merri-bek City Council

Coordinated by the Department of
Government Services on behalf of
Victorian councils



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Background and objectives

The Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) creates a vital interface between the council and their community.

Held annually, the CSS asks the opinions of local people about the place they live, work and play and provides confidence for councils in their efforts and abilities.

Now in its twenty-fourth year, this survey provides insight into the community's views on:

- councils' overall performance, with benchmarking against State-wide and council group results
- value for money in services and infrastructure
- community consultation and engagement
- decisions made in the interest of the community
- customer service, local infrastructure, facilities, services and
- overall council direction.

When coupled with previous data, the survey provides a reliable historical source of the community's views since 1998. A selection of results from the last ten years shows that councils in Victoria continue to provide services that meet the public's expectations.

Serving Victoria for 24 years

Each year the CSS data is used to develop this State-wide report which contains all of the aggregated results, analysis and data. Moreover, with 24 years of results, the CSS offers councils a long-term measure of how they are performing – essential for councils that work over the long term to provide valuable services and infrastructure to their communities.

Participation in the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is optional.

Participating councils have various choices as to the content of the questionnaire and the sample size to be surveyed, depending on their individual strategic, financial and other considerations.

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Key findings and recommendations



Merri-bek City Council – at a glance

Overall council performance

Results shown are index scores out of 100.



Merri-bek 51



Metropolitan 62



State-wide 56

Council performance compared to group average

Top 3 performing areas



Community & cultural

▼ lower



Family support services

= on par



COVID-19 response

▼ lower

Lowest 3 performing areas



Population growth

▼ lower



Town planning policy

▼ lower



Parking facilities

▼ lower



Customer service

▼ lower



Summary of core measures

Index scores



**Overall
Performance**



**Value for
money**



**Community
Consultation**



**Making
Community
Decisions**



**Sealed
Local
Roads**



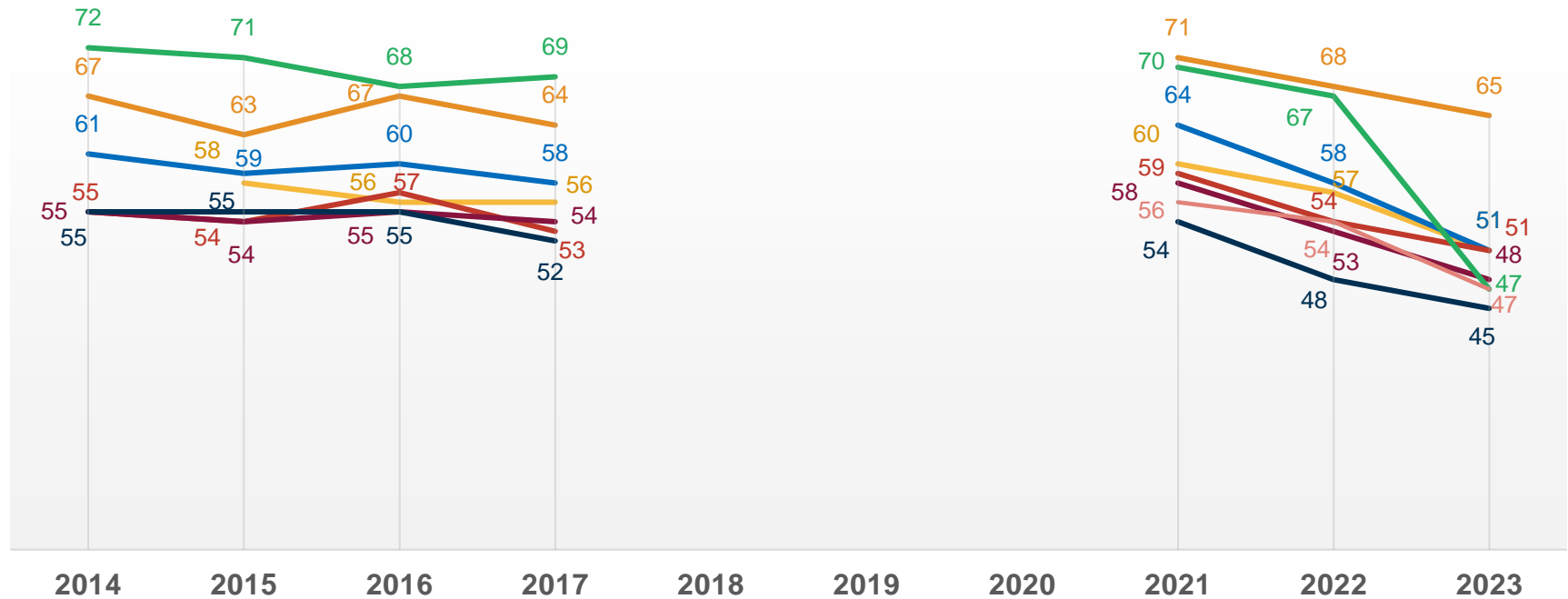
**Waste
management**



**Customer
Service**



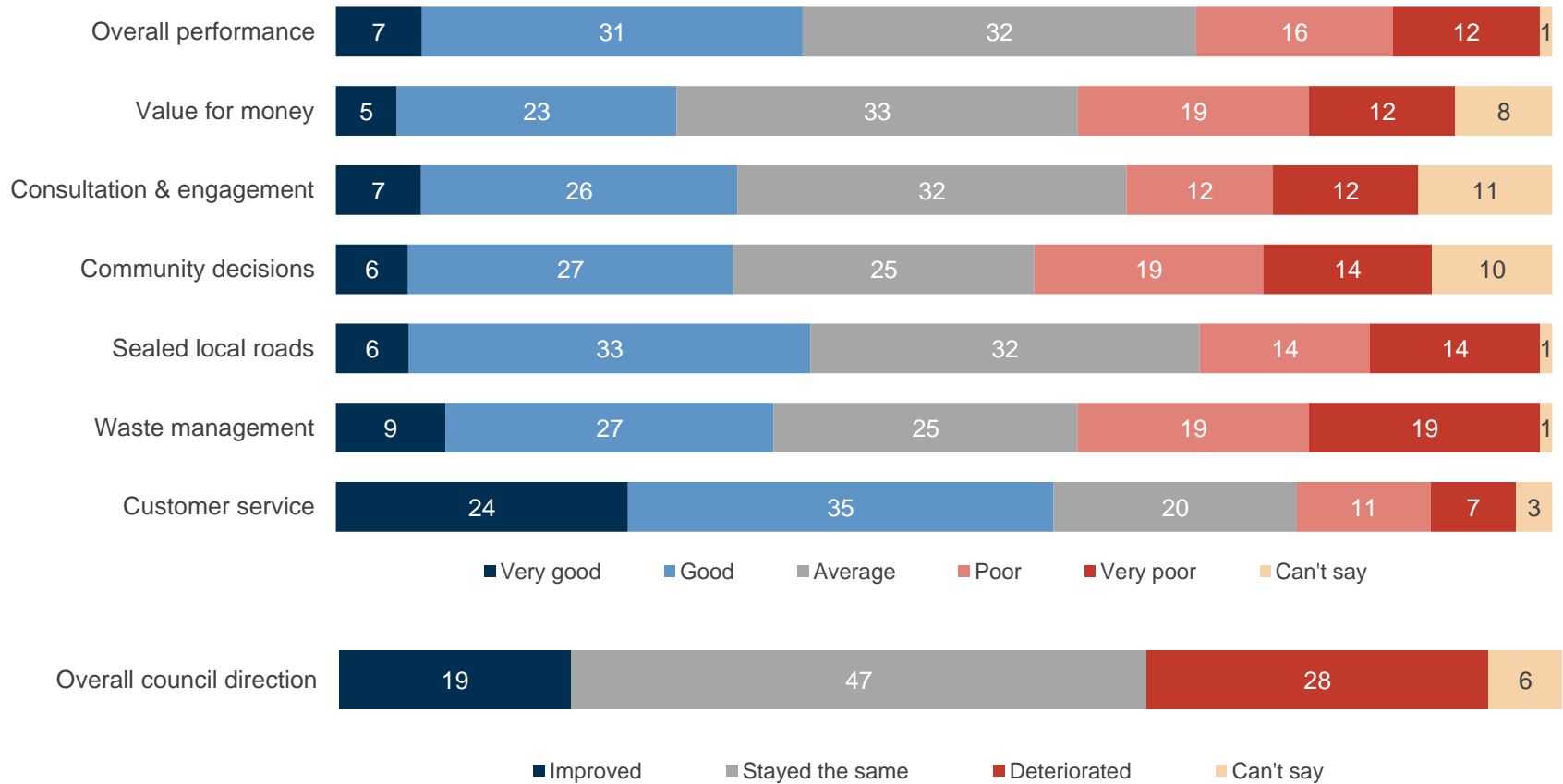
**Overall
Council
Direction**















Summary of core measures

Core measures summary results (%)













Summary of Merri-bek City Council performance

Services		Merri-bek 2023	Merri-bek 2022	Metro 2023	State-wide 2023	Highest score	Lowest score
	Overall performance	51	58	62	56	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Value for money	47	54	56	49	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Overall council direction	45	48	49	46	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Customer service	65	68	71	67	Women	Men, Aged 65+ years
	Community & cultural	64	65	67	66	Aged 35-49 years	Aged 65+ years
	Family support services	63	65	65	63	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	COVID-19 response	61	68	65	67	Women, Aged 35-49 years	Aged 50-64 years, Men
	Environmental sustainability	58	62	62	60	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Informing the community	56	61	60	57	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 65+ years
	Sealed local roads	51	57	61	48	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years



Summary of Merri-bek City Council performance

Services		Merri-bek 2023	Merri-bek 2022	Metro 2023	State-wide 2023	Highest score	Lowest score
	Consultation & engagement	51	54	55	52	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 65+ years
	Traffic management	49	53	55	55	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Community decisions	48	53	55	51	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50+ years
	Lobbying	47	53	53	51	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Waste management	47	67	68	66	Southern Suburbs residents	Northern Suburbs residents
	Parking facilities	46	52	54	55	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50+ years
	Town planning policy	45	48	52	50	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years
	Population growth	44	49	49	48	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 50-64 years



Focus areas for the next 12 months

Overview

Perceptions of Council's overall performance have declined significantly for two years running and are now at an all time low (across the seven years of measurement since 2014). This pattern of decline is consistent with the Metropolitan (and State-wide) group average. That said, Merri-bek City Council's overall performance is rated significantly lower than the Metropolitan group and State-wide averages. Furthermore, the decline in perceptions has been greater for Merri-bek compared to the Metropolitan group average.

Key influences on perceptions of overall performance

Council should focus on improving performance in the individual service areas that most influence perceptions of overall performance. Decisions made in the interest of the community has the strongest influence overall – communicating with residents about decision making is important to ensure residents feel heard. Improving performance on the condition of sealed local roads, and the related areas of traffic management and parking facilities, are also likely to positively impact overall performance and should be a focus.

Comparison to state and area grouping

Council performs significantly lower than the Metropolitan group average on all core measures and service areas evaluated with the exception of family support services. In this service area, Council performs in line with both the State-wide and Metropolitan group averages. Council outperforms the State-wide average in the area of sealed local roads.

A clear message from residents on waste management

Council needs to arrest declines on major pain points, most notably in the area of waste management. Perceptions of Council performance have declined a significant 20-index points in the past year. While perceptions of waste management have also declined significantly across the Metropolitan group, the magnitude of change has been far greater in Merri-bek City Council. Residents in the Northern Suburbs are most critical of Council's performance and should be the primary focus for waste management remediation.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Overall performance



Overall performance

The overall performance index score of 51 for Merri-bek City Council represents a significant seven point decrease on the 2022 result, continuing a trend of decline for a second year running. This follows the pattern of declining performance seen across the State.

- Overall performance is at its lowest level across the seven years it has been measured.

Notwithstanding the overall State-wide decline, Merri-bek City Council's overall performance is rated statistically significantly lower (at the 95% confidence interval) than the Metropolitan group and State-wide averages (index scores of 62 and 56 respectively).

- Perceptions of overall performance declined significantly among all demographic and geographic cohorts in the past year, except those aged 50+ years where non-significant declines are noted.
- Despite a significant decrease, ratings among 18 to 34 year olds are significantly higher than average (58, down eight index points from 2022).

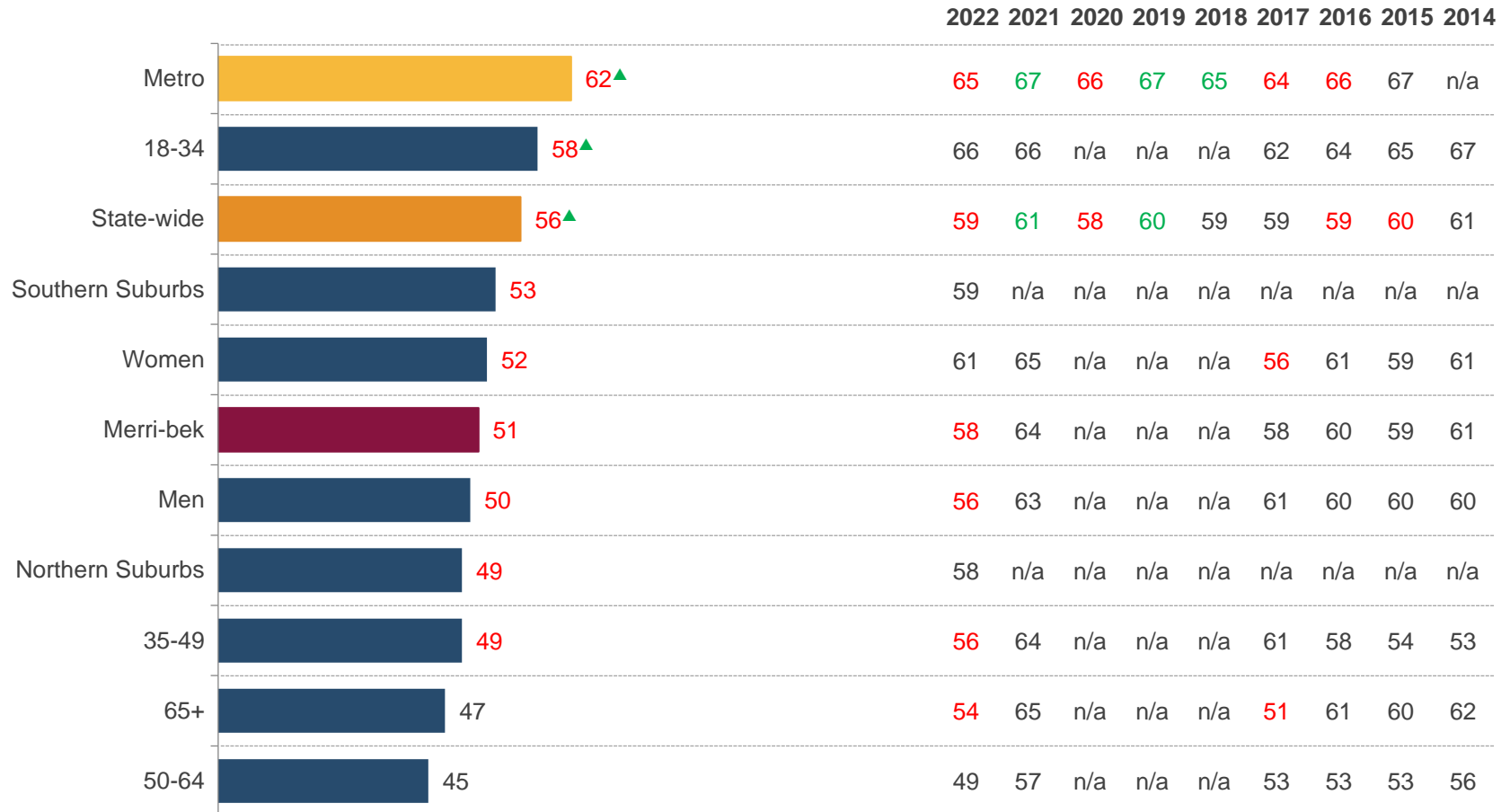
More than one in four residents (28%) rate the value for money they receive from Council in infrastructure and services provided to their community as 'very good' or 'good'. Slightly more residents rate Council as 'very poor' or 'poor' (31%). A further 33% rate Council as 'average' in terms of providing value for money.





Overall performance

2023 overall performance (index scores)



Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Merri-bek City Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?

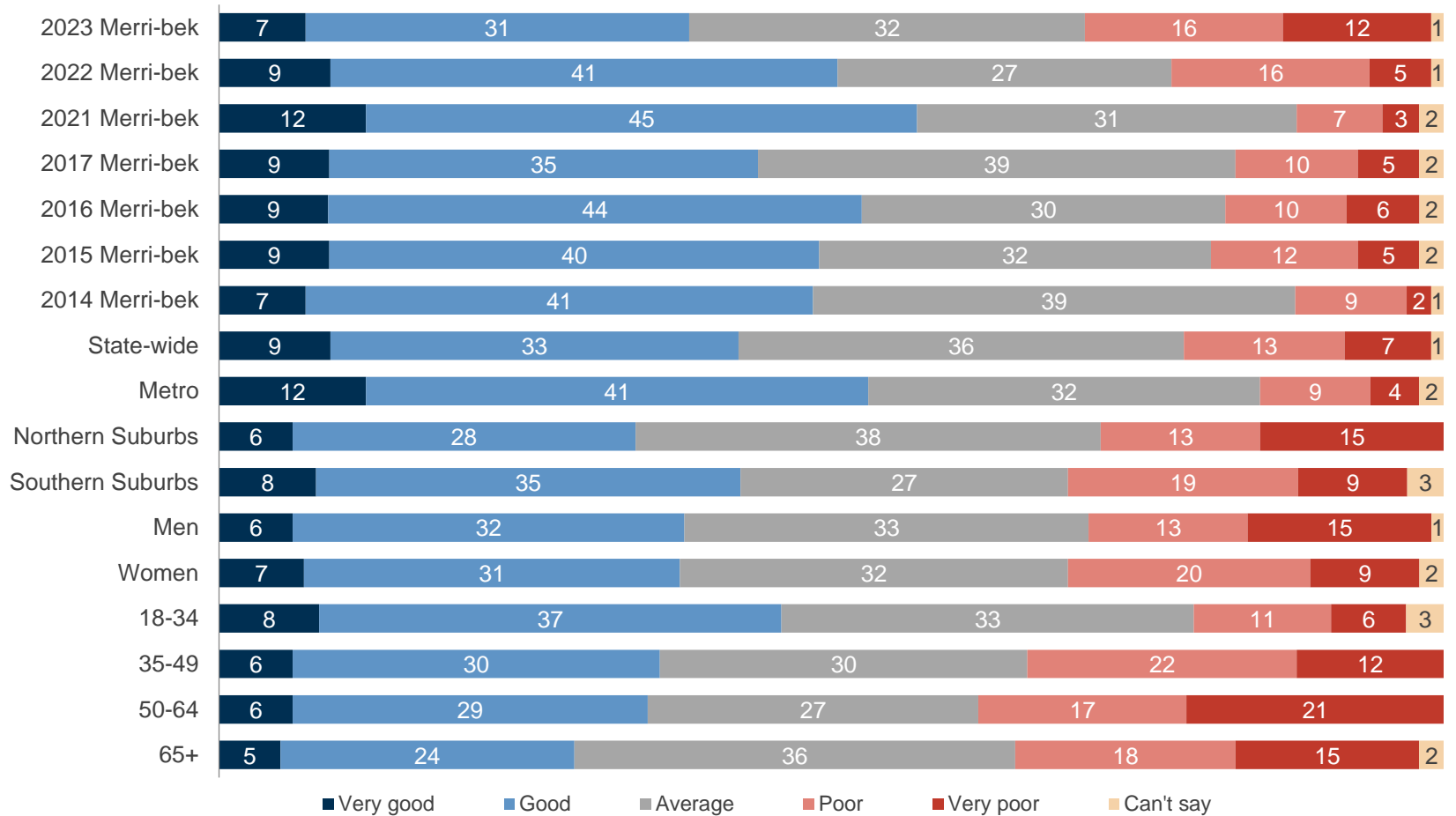
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Overall performance

2023 overall performance (%)



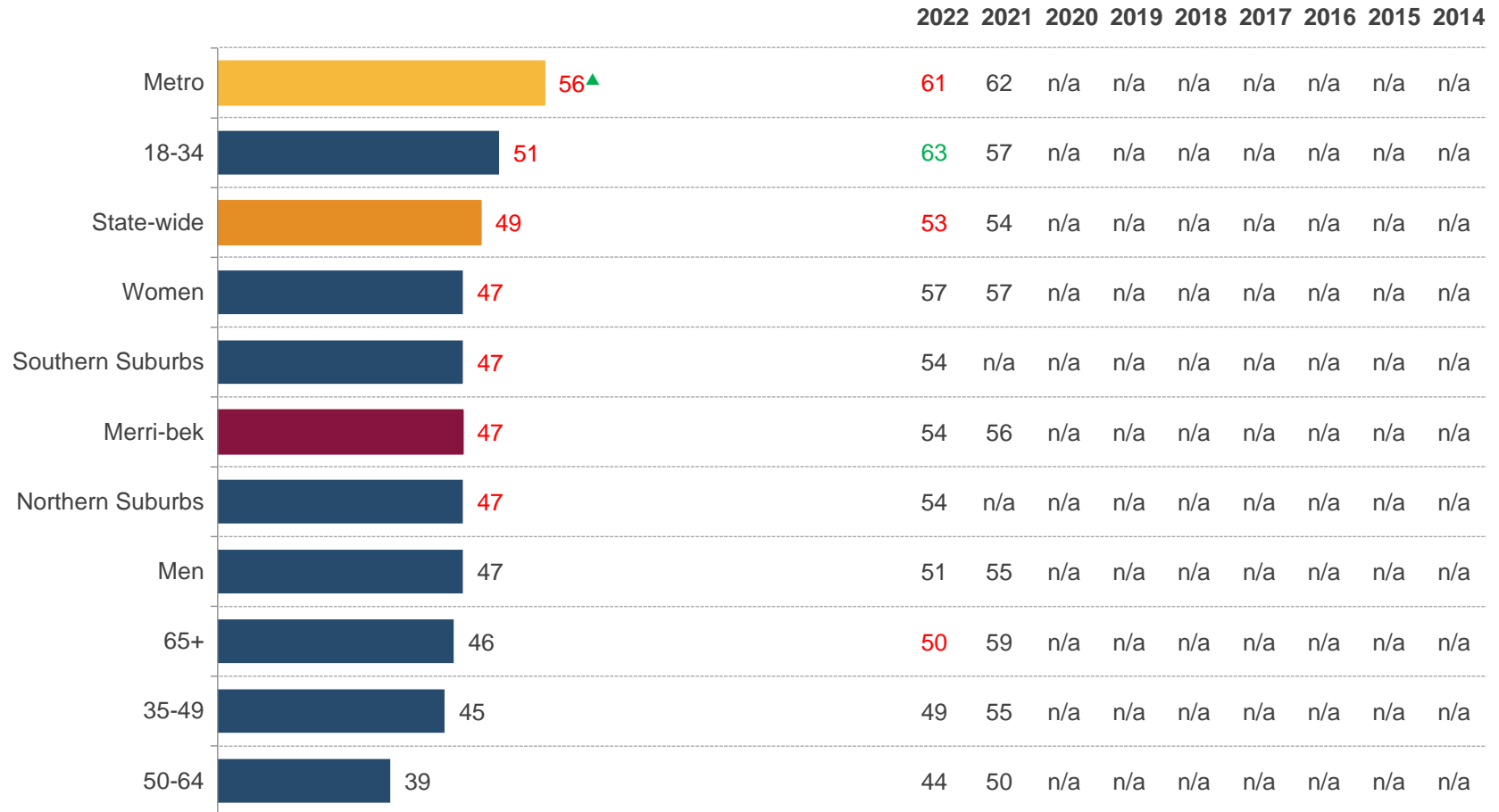
Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Merri-bek City Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16



Value for money in services and infrastructure

2023 value for money (index scores)



Q3b. How would you rate Merri-bek City Council at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?

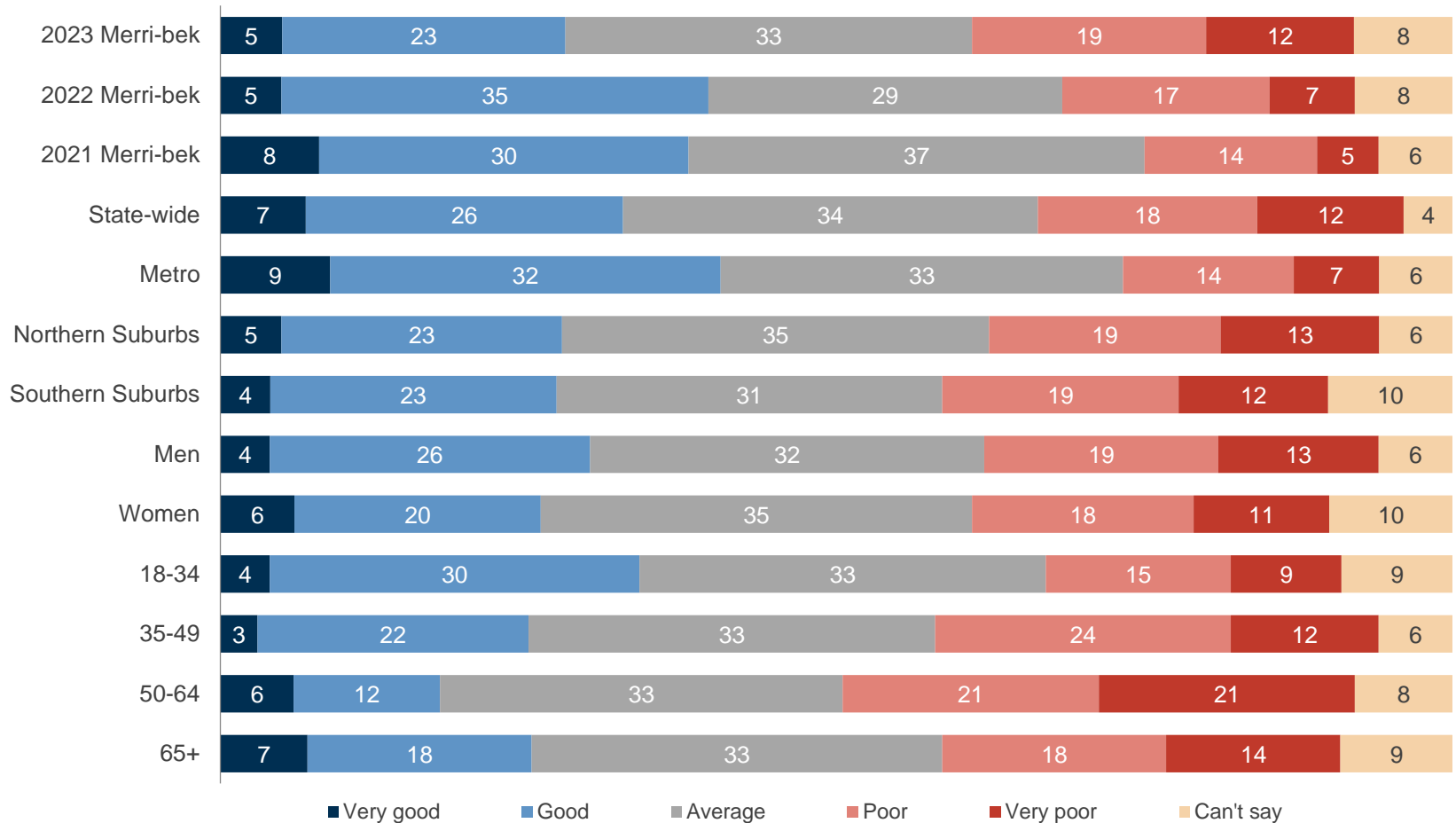
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 65 Councils asked group: 15

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Value for money in services and infrastructure

2023 value for money (%)



Q3b. How would you rate Merri-bek City Council at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 65 Councils asked group: 15



Top performing service areas

Community and cultural activities, and family support services (index scores of 64 and 63 respectively) are the areas where Council performed best in 2023. These are two of four service areas evaluated that did not experience significant declines in the past year.

In the area of community and cultural activities, Council is performing significantly below the Metropolitan group average (index score of 67).

- Residents aged 65+ years are significantly more critical compared to the Council average (index score of 56 compared to the average of 64).

Perceptions of Council's performance in family support services is on par with the Metropolitan group and State-wide averages. No significant differences are evident among the different demographic and geographic groups compared to the average.

Despite significant declines over the last 12 months, Council's next highest rated service areas are:

- COVID-19 response (61, down seven points)
- Environmental sustainability (58, down four points)
- Informing the community (56, down five points).

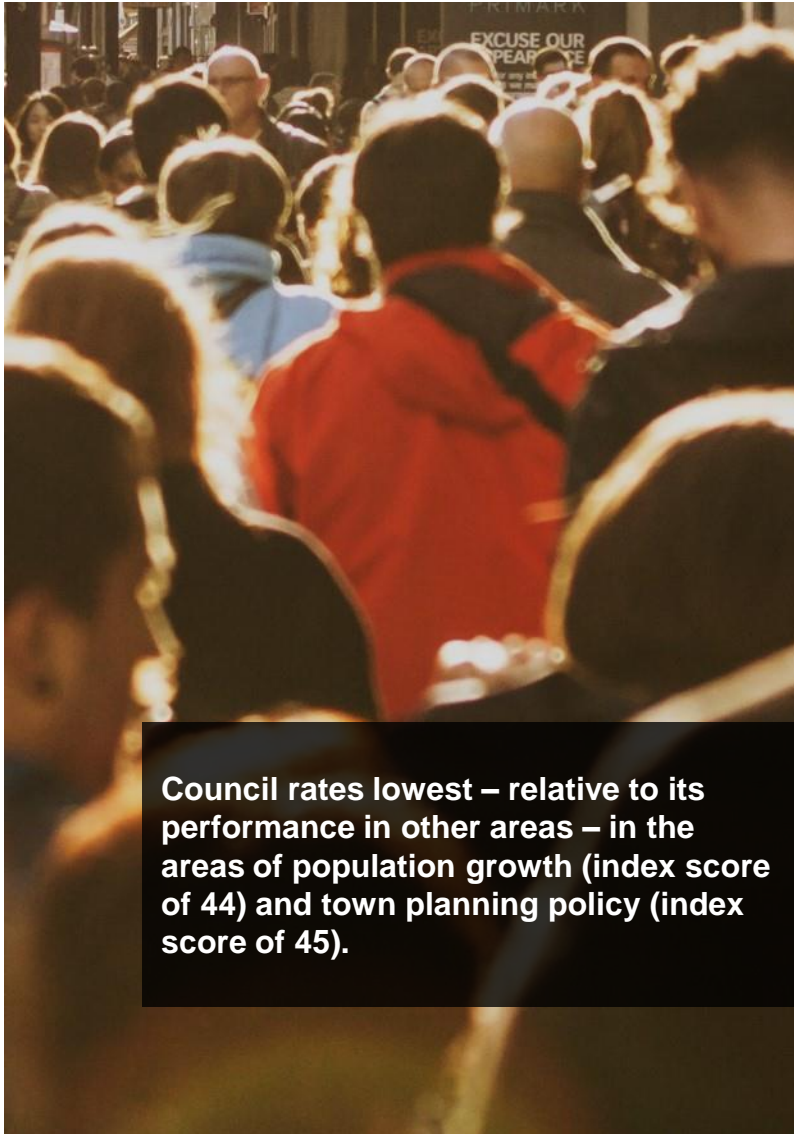
On these latter two service areas, the decline in perceptions are greatest among residents in the Northern Suburbs more so than the Southern Suburbs.



Community and cultural activities (index score of 64) is the area where Council performed best in 2023.



Low performing service areas



Council rates lowest – relative to its performance in other areas – in the areas of population growth (index score of 44) and town planning policy (index score of 45).

Council experienced significant declines in performance ratings for 10 of the 14 service areas measured.

Council rates lowest in the areas of population growth (index score of 44, down five points) and town planning policy (index score of 45, down three points – noting this is not a significant decline). Council's next lowest rated performing areas are:

- Parking facilities (46, down six points)
- Waste management (47, down 20 points)
- Lobbying (47, down six points).

Council rates significantly lower than State-wide and Metropolitan group averages on each of the aforementioned service areas.

Council performance in waste management declined considerably, with significant declines noted across all demographic and geographic subgroups.

- Residents from the Northern Suburbs are significantly more critical about Council performance in waste management than average (41, down 27 points).

More than one in five residents (21%) volunteer waste management as Council areas in need of improvement.



Individual service area performance

2023 individual service area performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Community & cultural	64	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	70	72	n/a	72
Family support services	63	65	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	69	69	69
COVID-19 response	61	68	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Environmental sustainability	58	62	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	66	61	64
Informing the community	56	61	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	61	n/a	58
Sealed local roads	51	57	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	56	58	n/a
Consultation & engagement	51	54	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	57	54	55
Traffic management	49	53	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	50	51	53
Community decisions	48	53	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	54	55	54	55
Lobbying	47	53	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	54	57	57	54
Waste management	47	67	70	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	68	71	72
Parking facilities	46	52	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	52	52	52
Town planning policy	45	48	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	49	51	51	50
Population growth	44	49	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	50	50	49

Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?

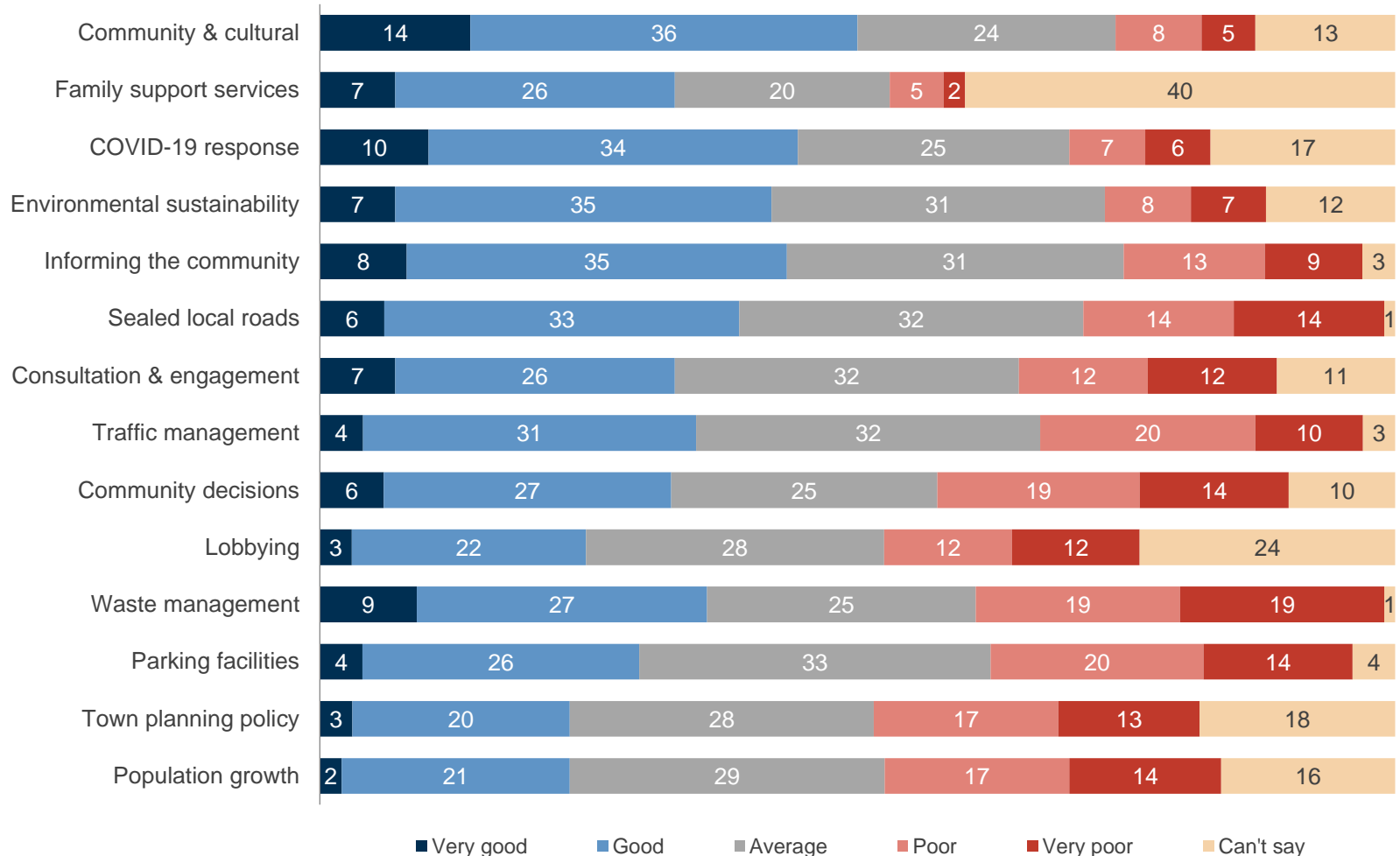
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Individual service area performance

2023 individual service area performance (%)





Influences on perceptions of overall performance

The individual service area that has the strongest influence on the overall performance rating (based on regression analysis) is:

- Decisions made in the interest of the community.

Good communication and transparency with residents about decisions Council has made in the community's interest provides the greatest opportunity to drive up overall opinion of Council's performance. Currently, this is one of Council's poorer performing areas (index score of 48).

Following on from that, other individual service areas with a moderate to strong influence on the overall performance rating are:

- The condition of sealed local roads
- Traffic management
- Lobbying on behalf of the community
- Community consultation and engagement
- Parking facilities
- Environmental sustainability.

Looking at these key service areas only, Council performs best on environmental sustainability (index of 58), which is a moderate influence on overall performance.

Maintaining this positive result should remain a focus – but there is greater work to be done elsewhere.

Service areas where Council performs less well include sealed local roads, a strong influence on overall performance ratings, and community consultation, a more moderate influence (index of 51 for each).

Ensuring sealed roads are well maintained and consulting residents on key local issues can also help shore up positive overall opinion of Council.

However, in addition to Council decision making, most in need of attention are local parking facilities, Council lobbying and traffic management. These are rated as poor (performance index of 46, 47 and 49 respectively) and are moderate influences on overall community opinion.

It will be important to address resident concerns about parking and traffic, and to demonstrate Council efforts to advocate for the community to help improve overall ratings of Council performance.



Regression analysis explained

We use regression analysis to investigate which individual service areas, such as community consultation, condition of sealed local roads, etc. (the independent variables) are influencing respondent perceptions of overall council performance (the dependent variable).

In the charts that follow:

- The horizontal axis represents the council performance index for each individual service. Service areas appearing on the right side of the chart have a higher performance index than those on the left.
- The vertical axis represents the Standardised Beta Coefficient from the multiple regression performed. This measures the contribution of each service area to the model. Service areas near the top of the chart have a greater positive effect on overall performance ratings than service areas located closer to the axis.

The regressions are shown on the following two charts.

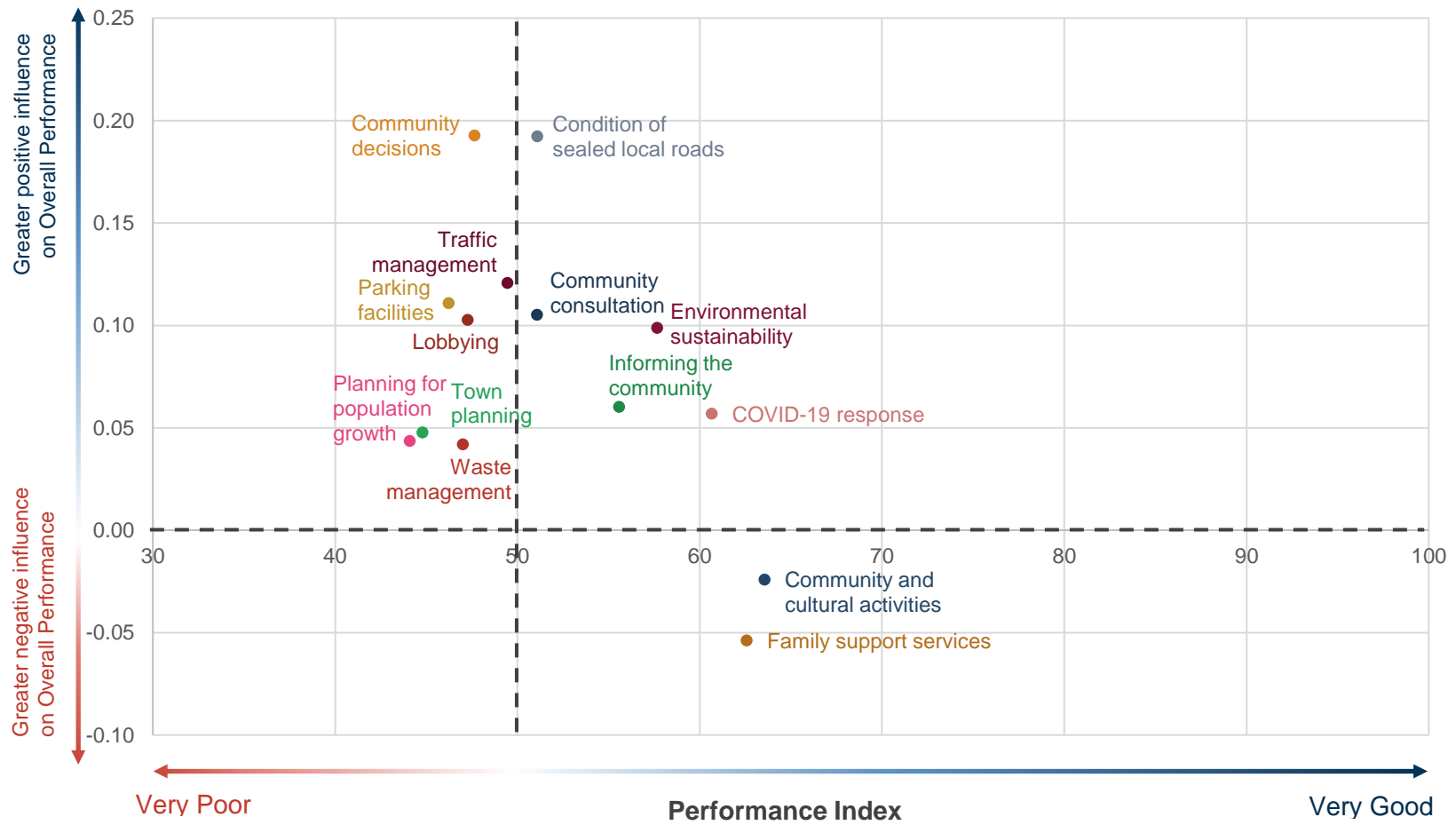
1. **The first chart** shows the results of a regression analysis of *all* individual service areas selected by Council.
2. **The second chart** shows the results of a regression performed on a smaller set of service areas, being those with a moderate-to-strong influence on overall performance. Service areas with a weak influence on overall performance (i.e. a low Standardised Beta Coefficient) have been excluded from the analysis.

Key insights from this analysis are derived from the second chart.



Influence on overall performance: all service areas

2023 regression analysis (all service areas)

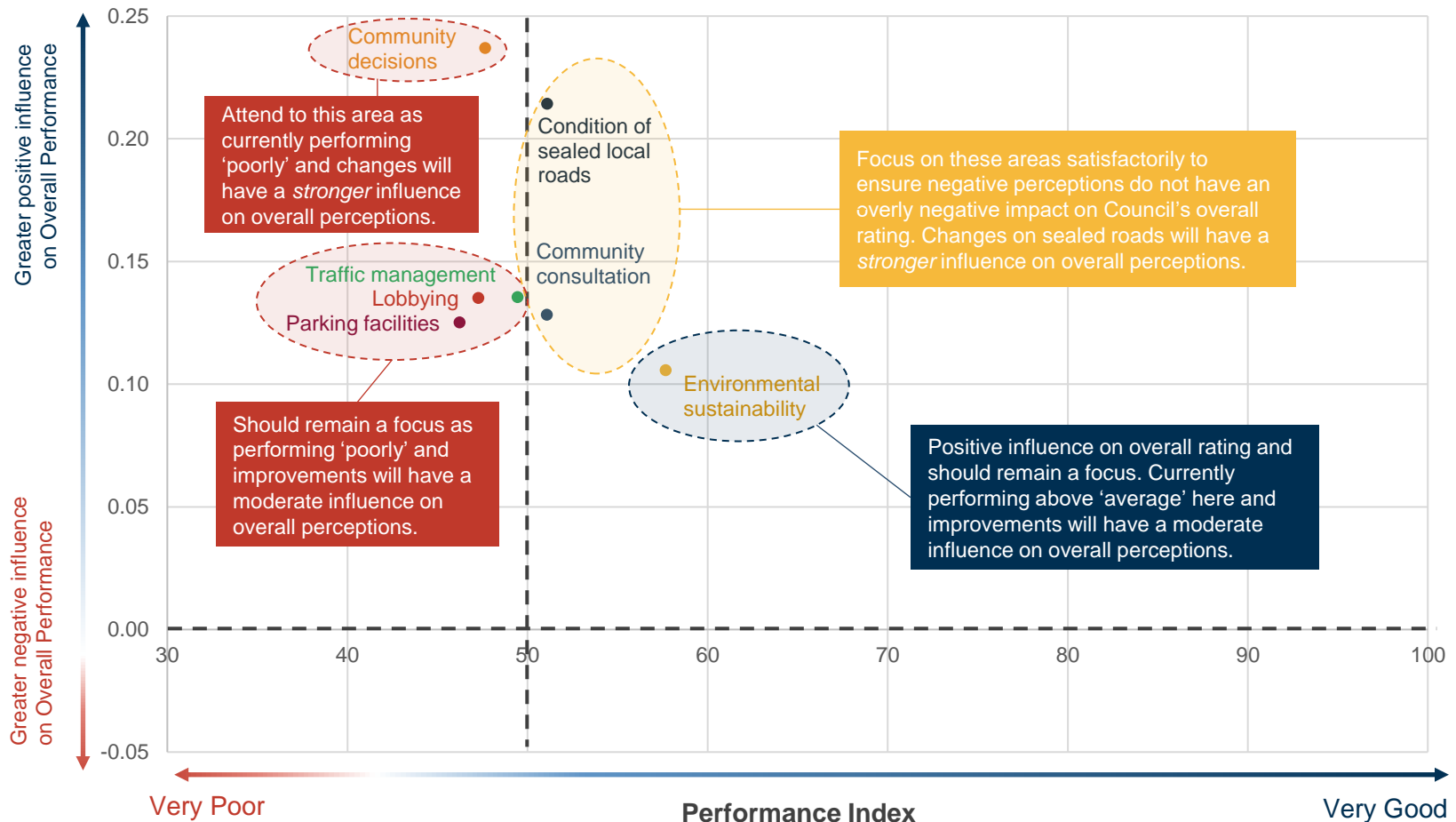


The multiple regression analysis model above (all service areas) has an R^2 value of 0.648 and adjusted R^2 value of 0.635, which means that 64% of the variance in community perceptions of overall performance can be predicted from these variables. The overall model effect was statistically significant at $p = 0.0001$, $F = 50.80$. This model should be interpreted with some caution as some data is not normally distributed and not all service areas have linear correlations.



Influence on overall performance: key service areas

2023 regression analysis (key service areas)



The multiple regression analysis model above (reduced set of service areas) has an R^2 value of 0.638 and adjusted R^2 value of 0.632, which means that 63% of the variance in community perceptions of overall performance can be predicted from these variables. The overall model effect was statistically significant at $p = 0.0001$, $F = 99.04$.



Areas for improvement

2023 areas for improvement (%)
- Top mentions only -





Customer service



Contact with council and customer service

Contact with council

Almost two in three Council residents (65%) have had contact with Council in the last 12 months. Rate of contact has increased over the last two years from 61% in 2021.

- Compared to the average, residents aged 50 to 64 years (83%) had a significantly higher rate of contact with Council, and those aged 65+ years (53%) had significantly less contact.



Among those residents who have had contact with Council, 59% provide a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good', including 24% of residents who rate Council's customer service as 'very good'.

Customer service

Council's customer service index of 65 is the result of a trend of non-significant declines for two years running.

Customer service is rated in line with the State-wide average, but significantly below the Metropolitan group average (index scores of 67 and 71 respectively).

Almost six in ten residents (59%) provide a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good'.

- Perceptions of customer service are equally positive among residents from different demographic and geographic groups.

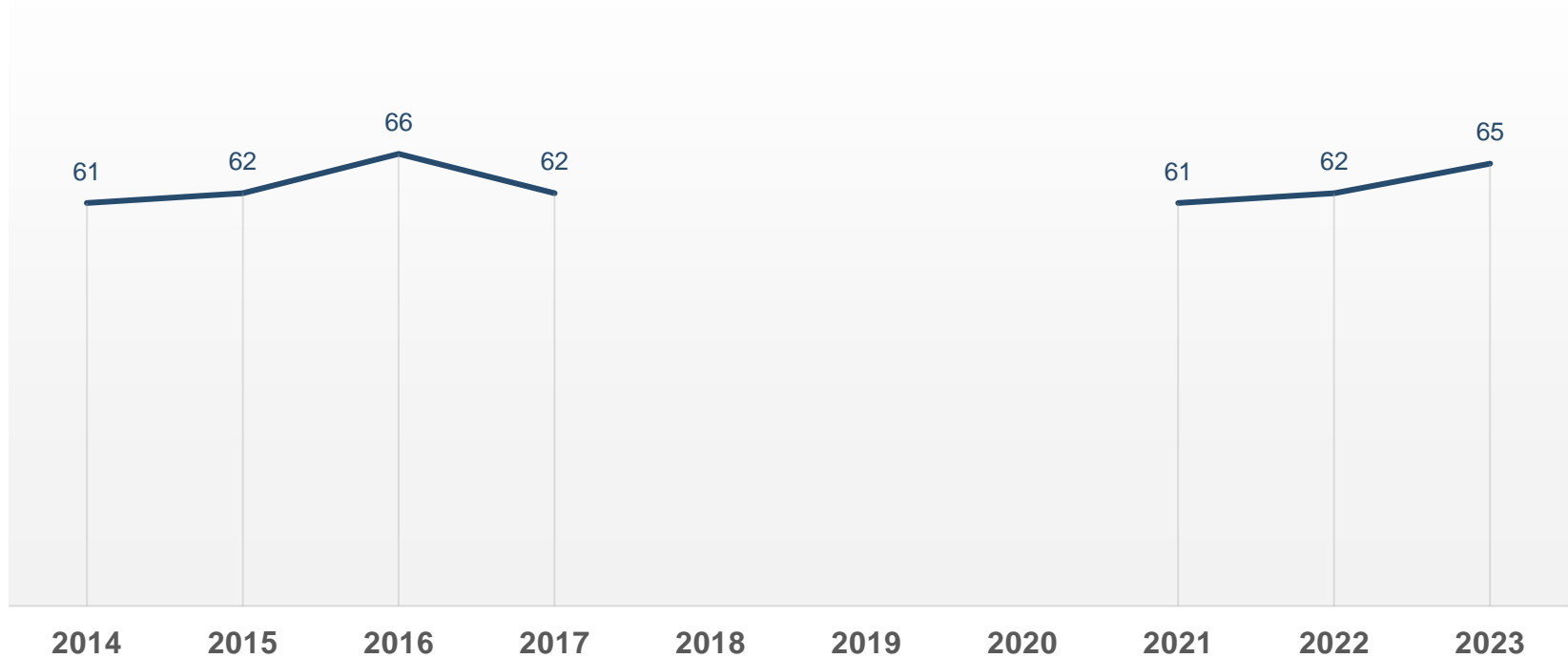
Both telephone and email continue to be the main methods of contacting Council, with more use of telephone this year (37%, up five percentage points) and a commensurate decrease in contact by email (18%). The website is the next most recently used method to contact Council (13%), followed by in person (10%) and in writing (9%).

Customer service ratings continue to be highest among residents who communicate with Council in-person (index score of 73) – noting this is based on a small sample size. Of concern, given its more frequent use, is the significant decline in perceptions of customer service transactions that occur through email (index score of 52, down 16 points).



Contact with council

2023 contact with council (%) Have had contact



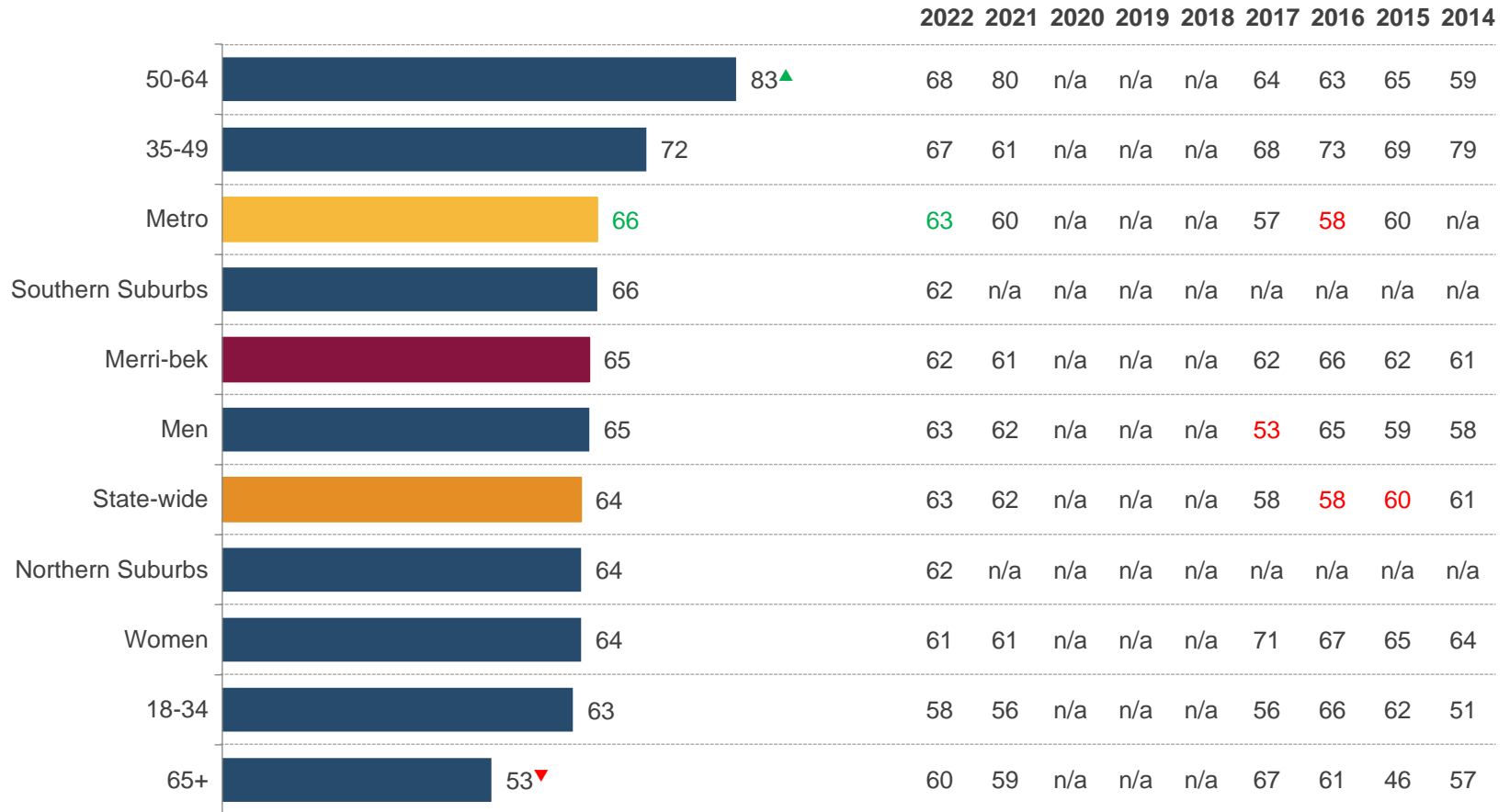
Q5a. Have you or any member of your household had any recent contact with Merri-bek City Council in any of the following ways?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 25 Councils asked group: 8



Contact with council

2023 contact with council (%)



Q5a. Have you or any member of your household had any recent contact with Merri-bek City Council in any of the following ways?

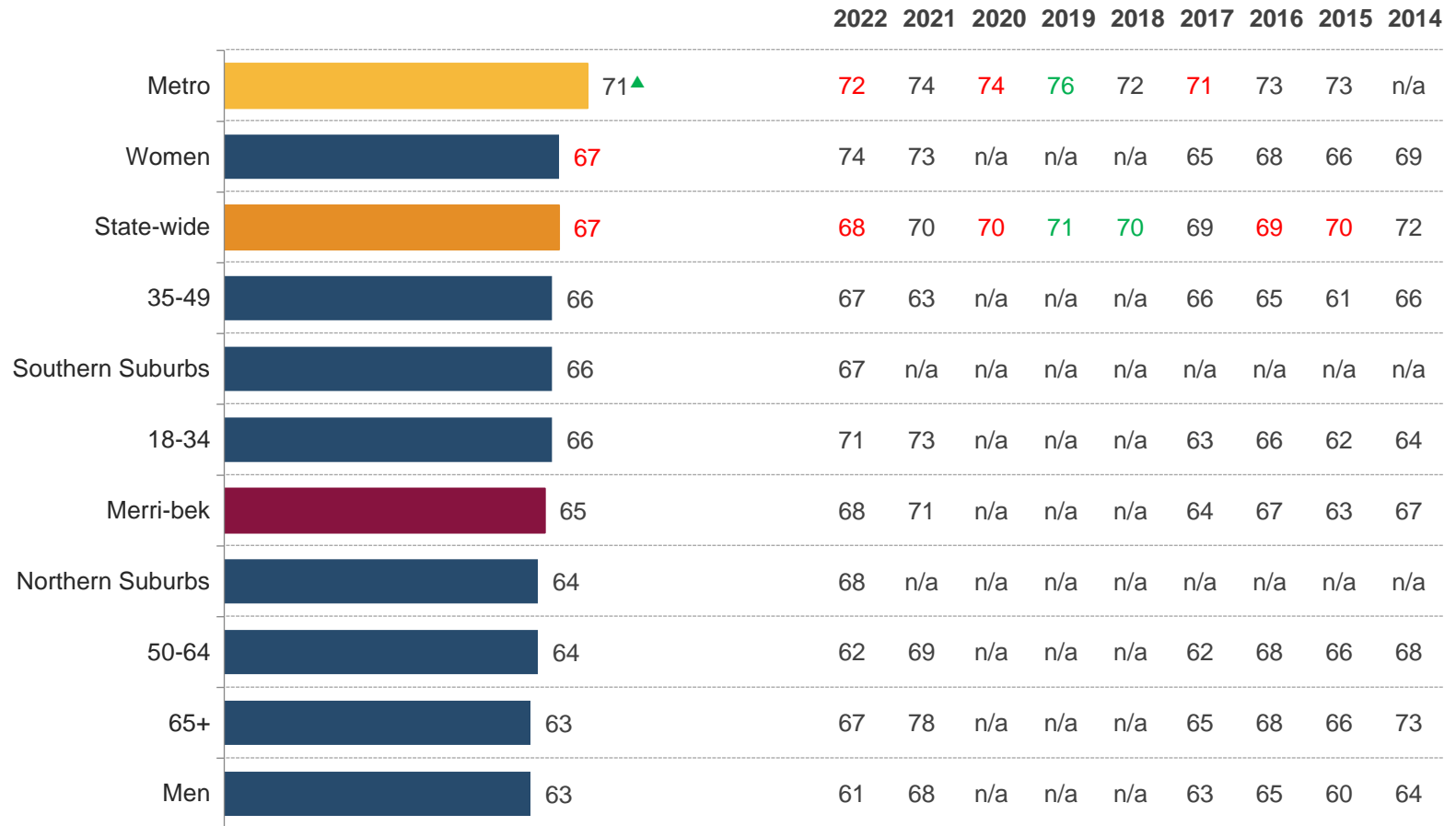
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 25 Councils asked group: 8

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Customer service rating

2023 customer service rating (index scores)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Merri-bek City Council for customer service?

Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

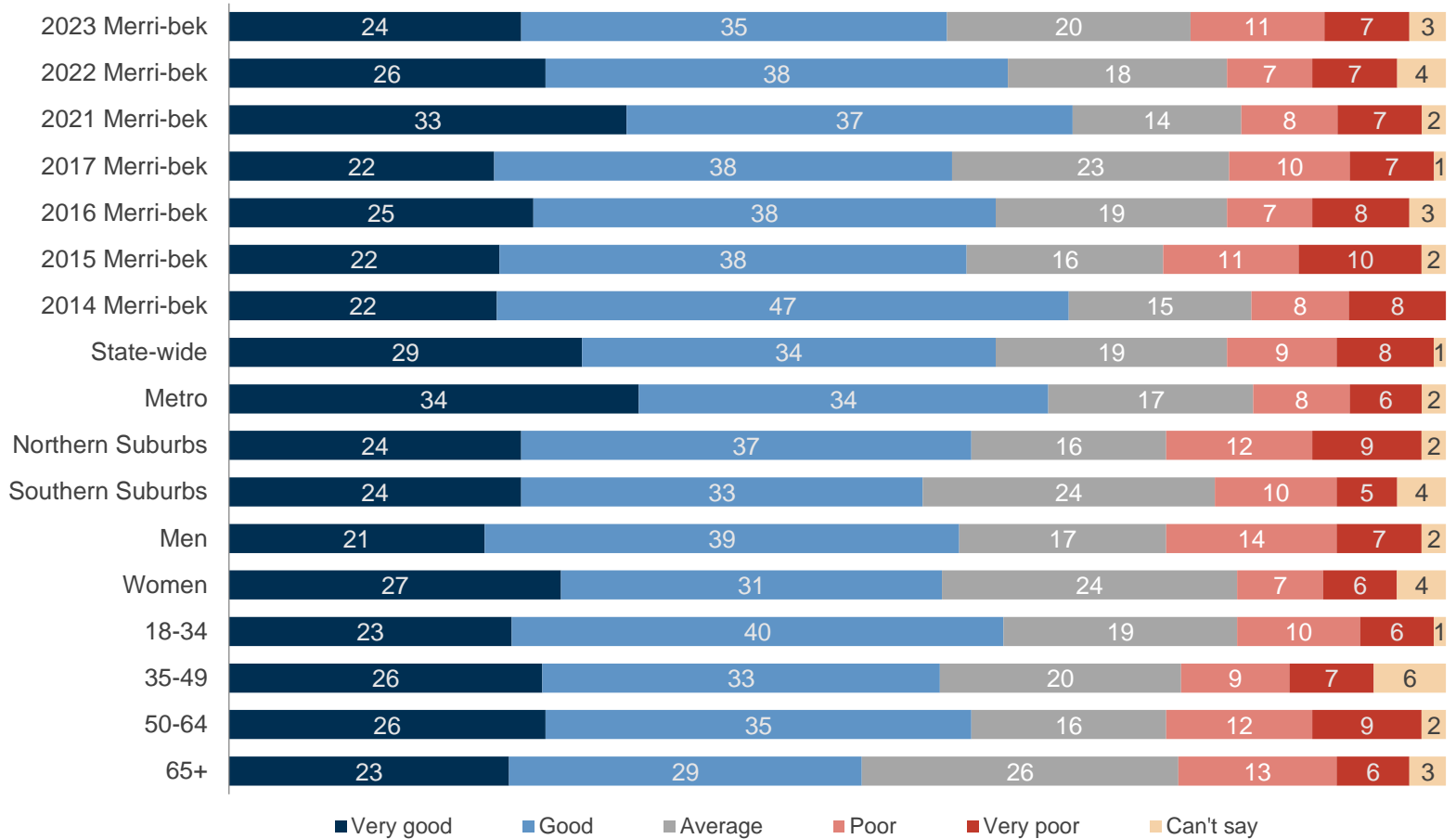
Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Customer service rating

2023 customer service rating (%)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Merri-bek City Council for customer service?

Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16



Method of contact with council

2023 method of contact (%)



In Person



In Writing



By Telephone



By Text Message



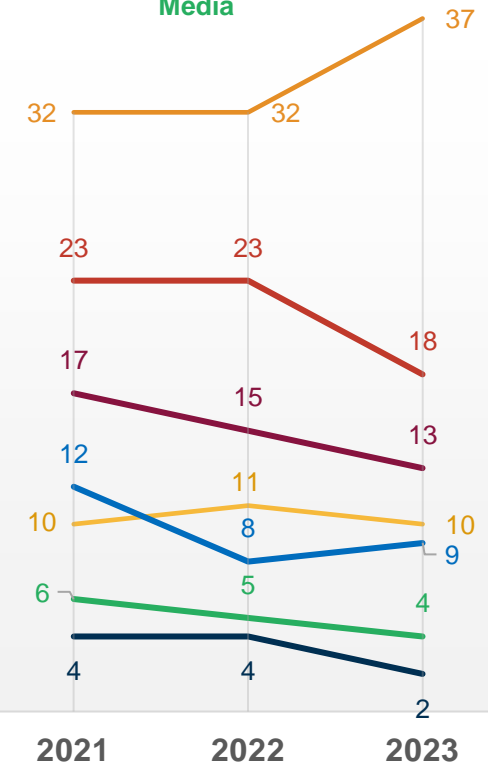
By Email



Via Website



By Social Media



Q5a. Have you or any member of your household had any recent contact with Merri-bek City Council in any of the following ways?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 25 Councils asked group: 8

Note: Respondents could name multiple contacts methods so responses may add to more than 100%



Customer service rating by method of last contact

2023 customer service rating (index score by method of last contact)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Merri-bek City Council for customer service?

Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked State-wide: 25 Councils asked group: 8

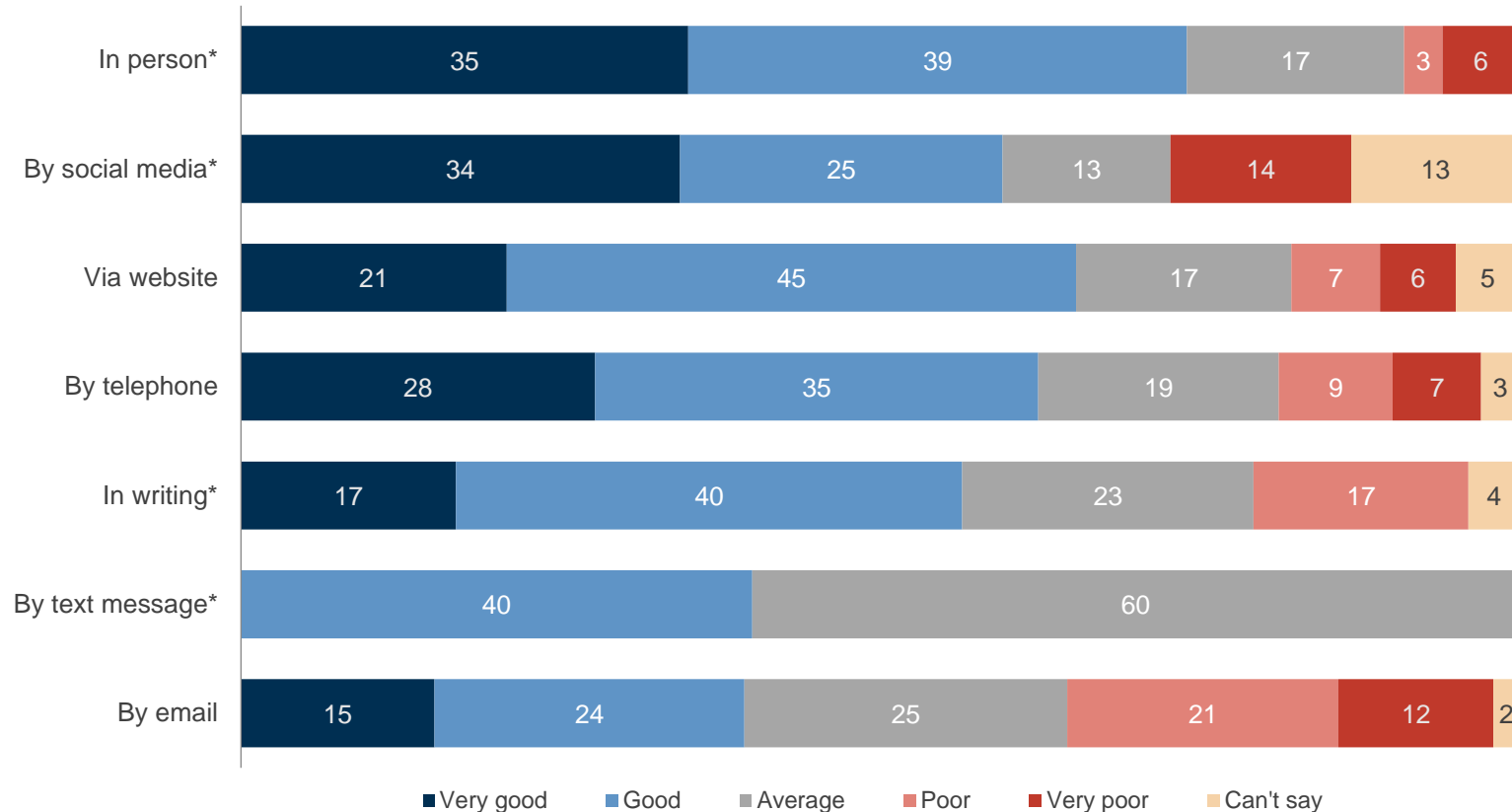
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

*Caution: small sample size < n=30



Customer service rating by method of last contact

2023 customer service rating (% by method of last contact)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Merri-bek City Council for customer service?

Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked State-wide: 25 Councils asked group: 8

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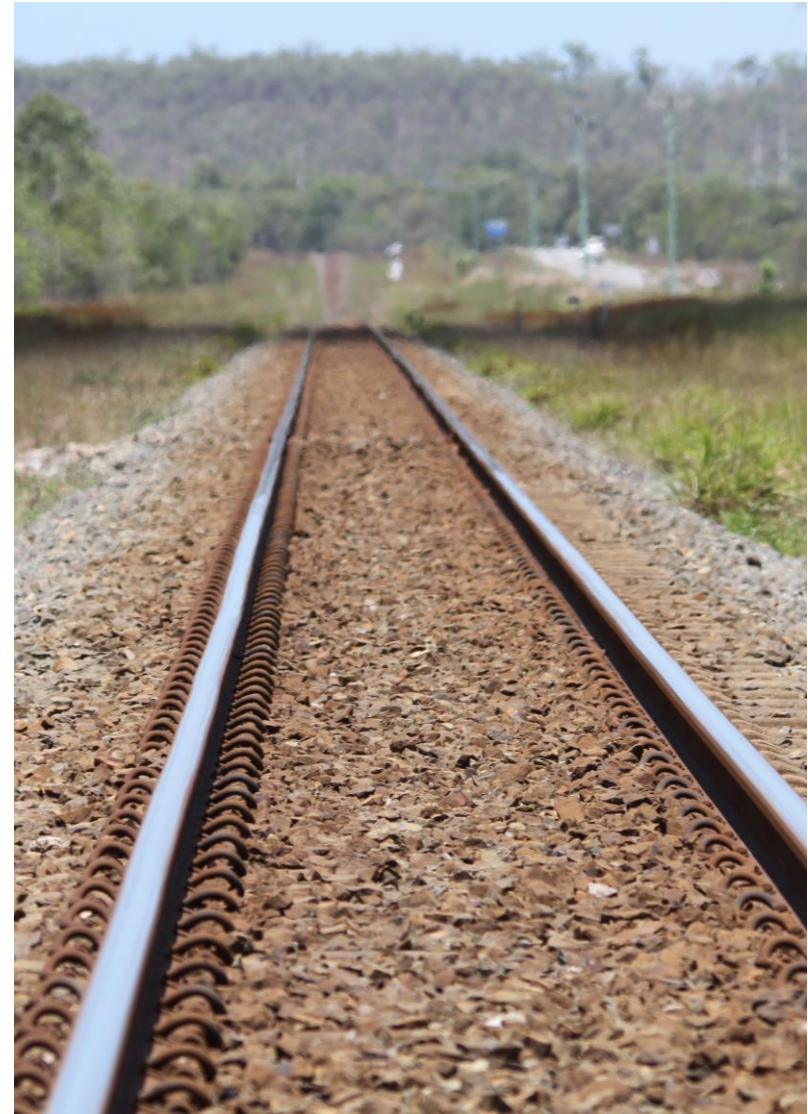
Council direction



Council direction

Over the last 12 months, 47% of residents believe the direction of Council's overall performance has stayed the same, down 10 percentage points on 2022.

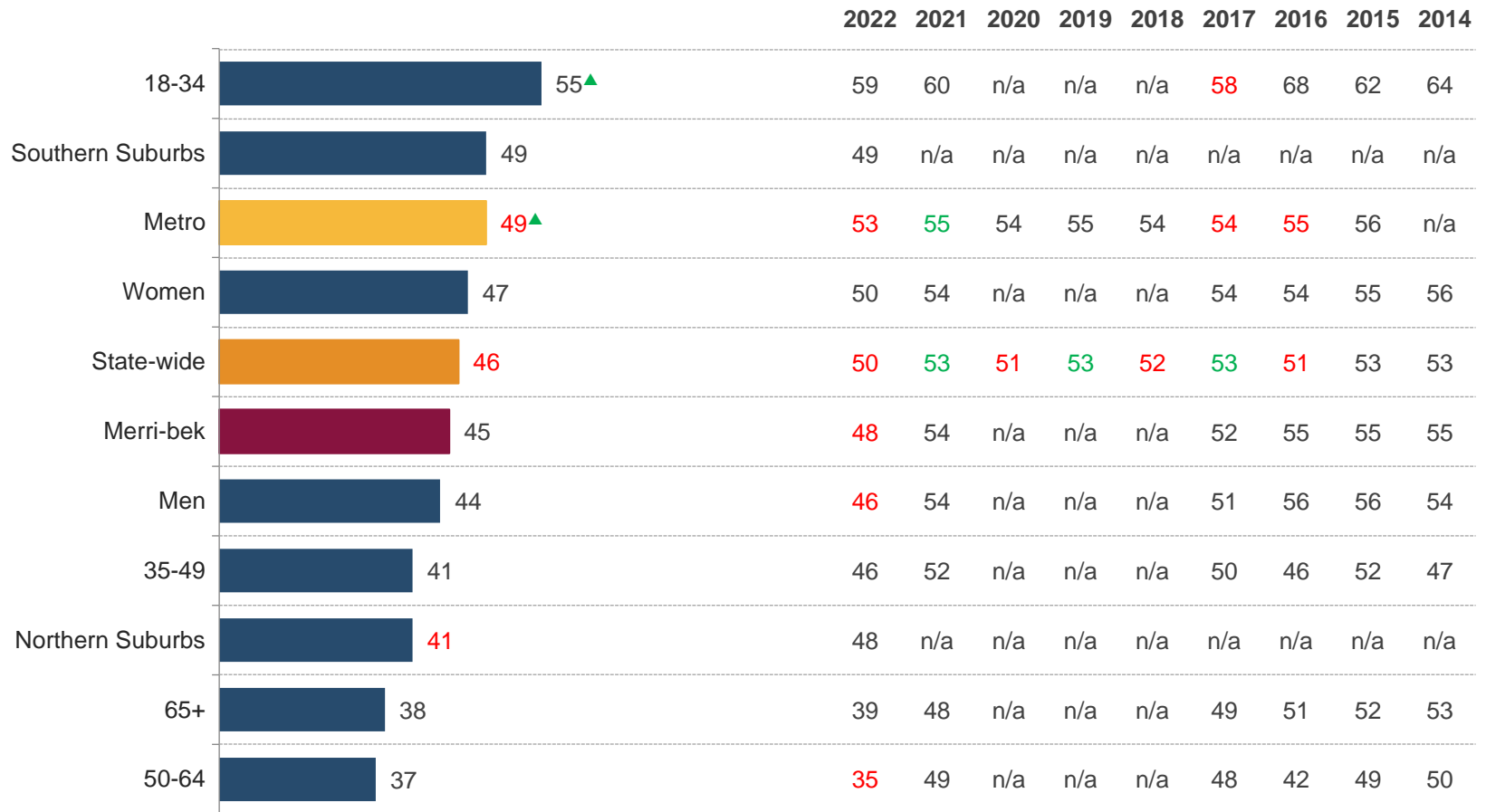
- 19% believe the direction has improved in the last 12 months (up three percentage points on 2022).
- 28% believe it has deteriorated, up nine percentage points on 2022.
- The most satisfied with council direction, and significantly more so than the average, are residents aged 18 to 34 years (index score of 55).
- The least satisfied with council direction are residents aged 50 to 64 years (index score of 37) and those aged 65+ years (index score of 38).
- Perceptions of Council's overall direction have declined significantly this year among Northern Suburbs residents (index score of 41, down seven points).





Overall council direction last 12 months

2023 overall council direction (index scores)



Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Merri-bek City Council's overall performance?

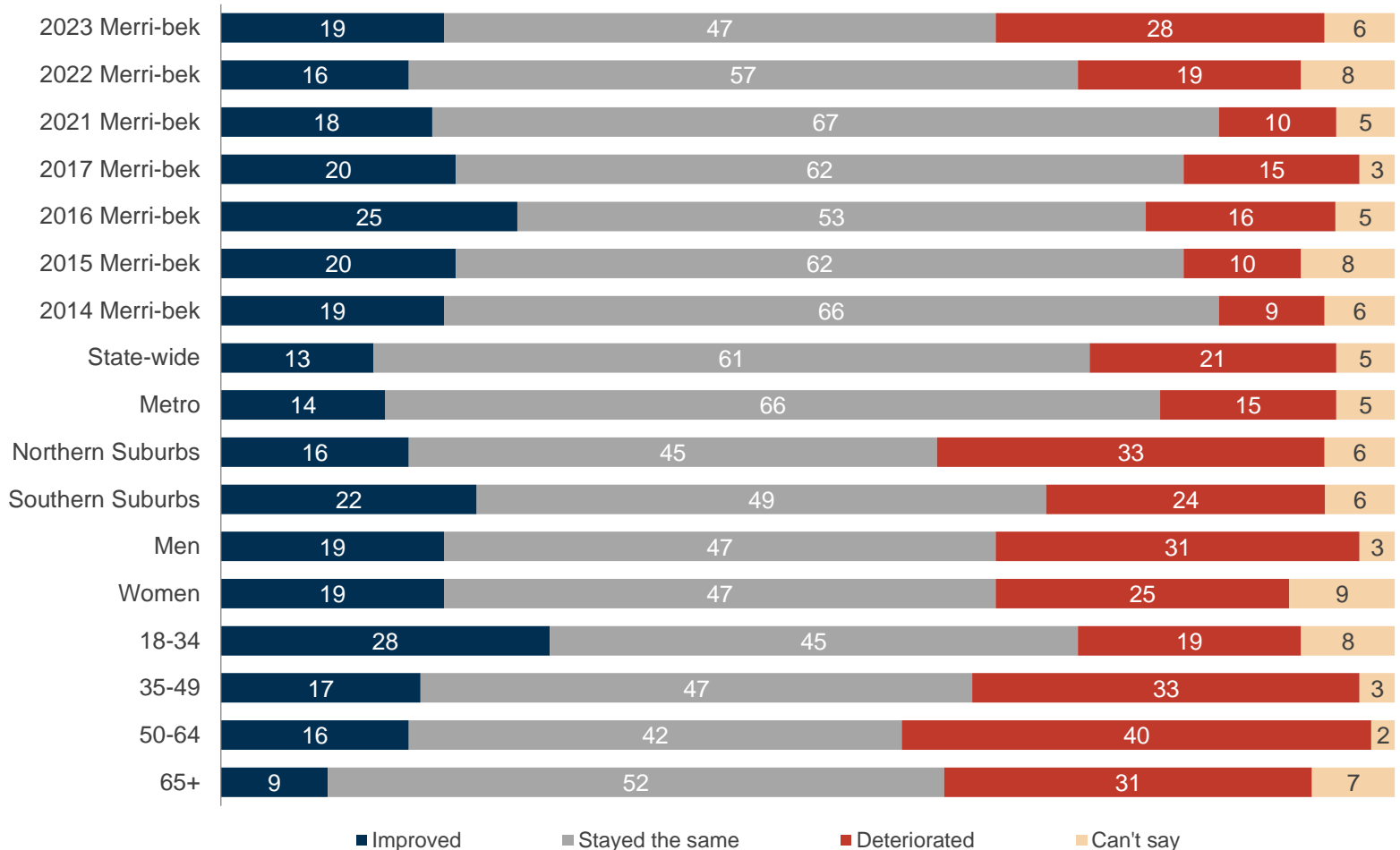
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Overall council direction last 12 months

2023 overall council direction (%)



A large, dark blue, stylized letter 'W' graphic that spans the right side of the slide. It has a glowing, network-like pattern of white lines and nodes within its structure, resembling a map or a data network.

Individual service areas



Community consultation and engagement performance



2023 consultation and engagement performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Metro	55▲	58	59	58	58	57	57	58	58	n/a
18-34	55	61	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	55	63	59	59
Southern Suburbs	54	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	53	55	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	53	50	51
Men	52	53	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	52	56	54	55
State-wide	52	54	56	55	56	55	55	54	56	57
Merri-bek	51	54	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	57	54	55
Women	50	56	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	59	54	55
50-64	49	40	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	47	51	50	52
Northern Suburbs	48	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	45	48	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	50	56	53	57

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

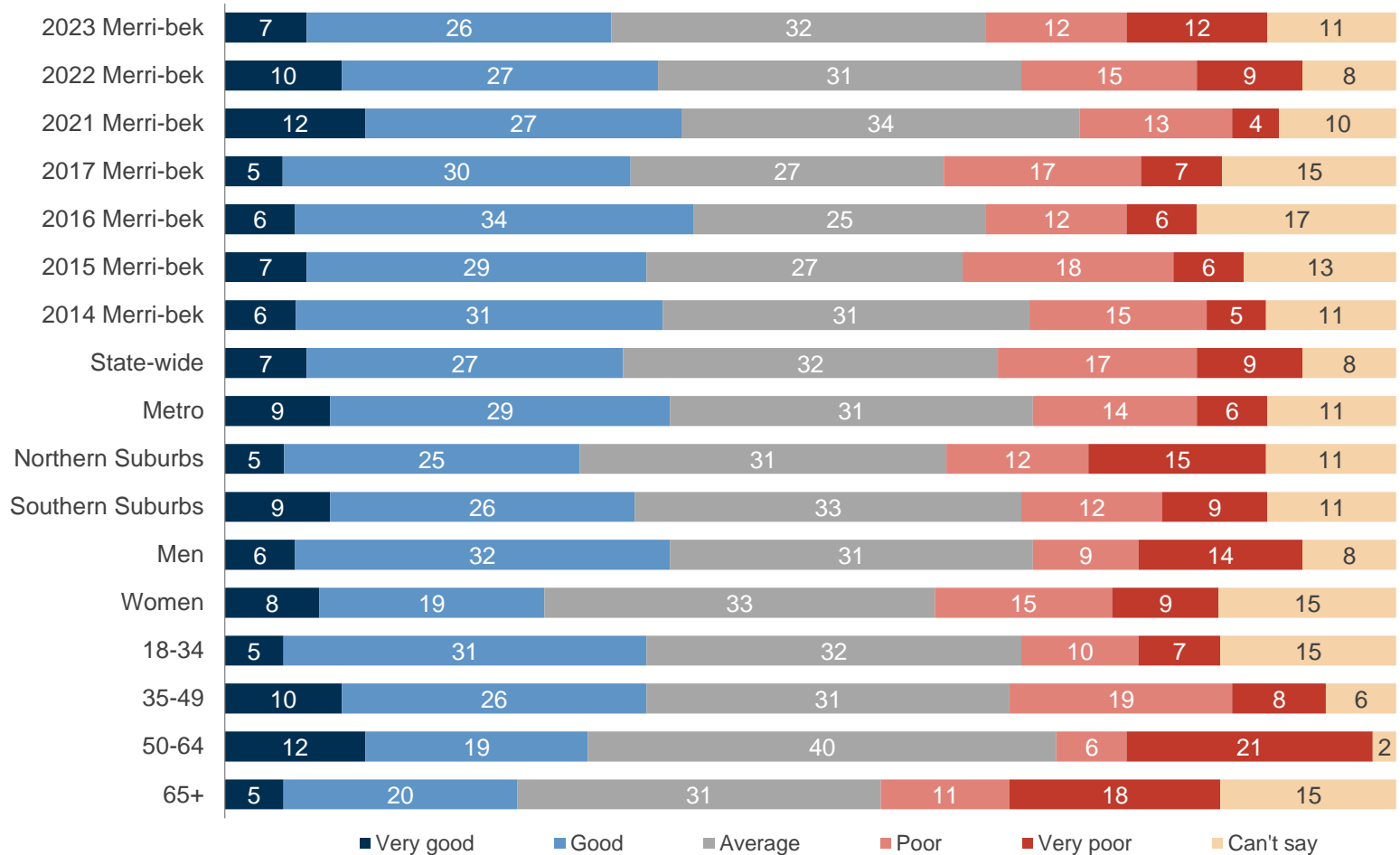
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Community consultation and engagement performance



2023 consultation and engagement performance (%)

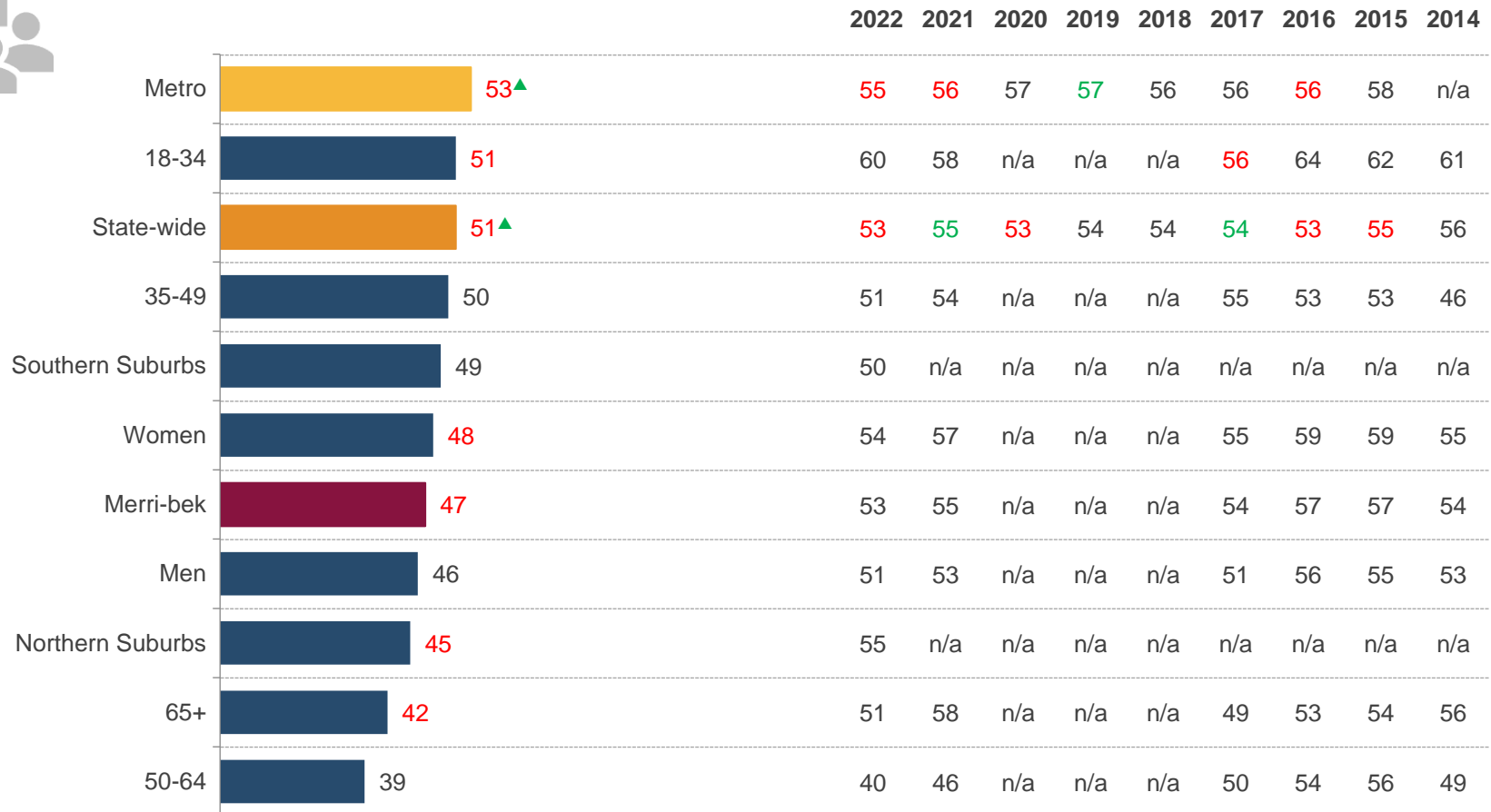




Lobbying on behalf of the community performance



2023 lobbying performance (index scores)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 51 Councils asked group: 13

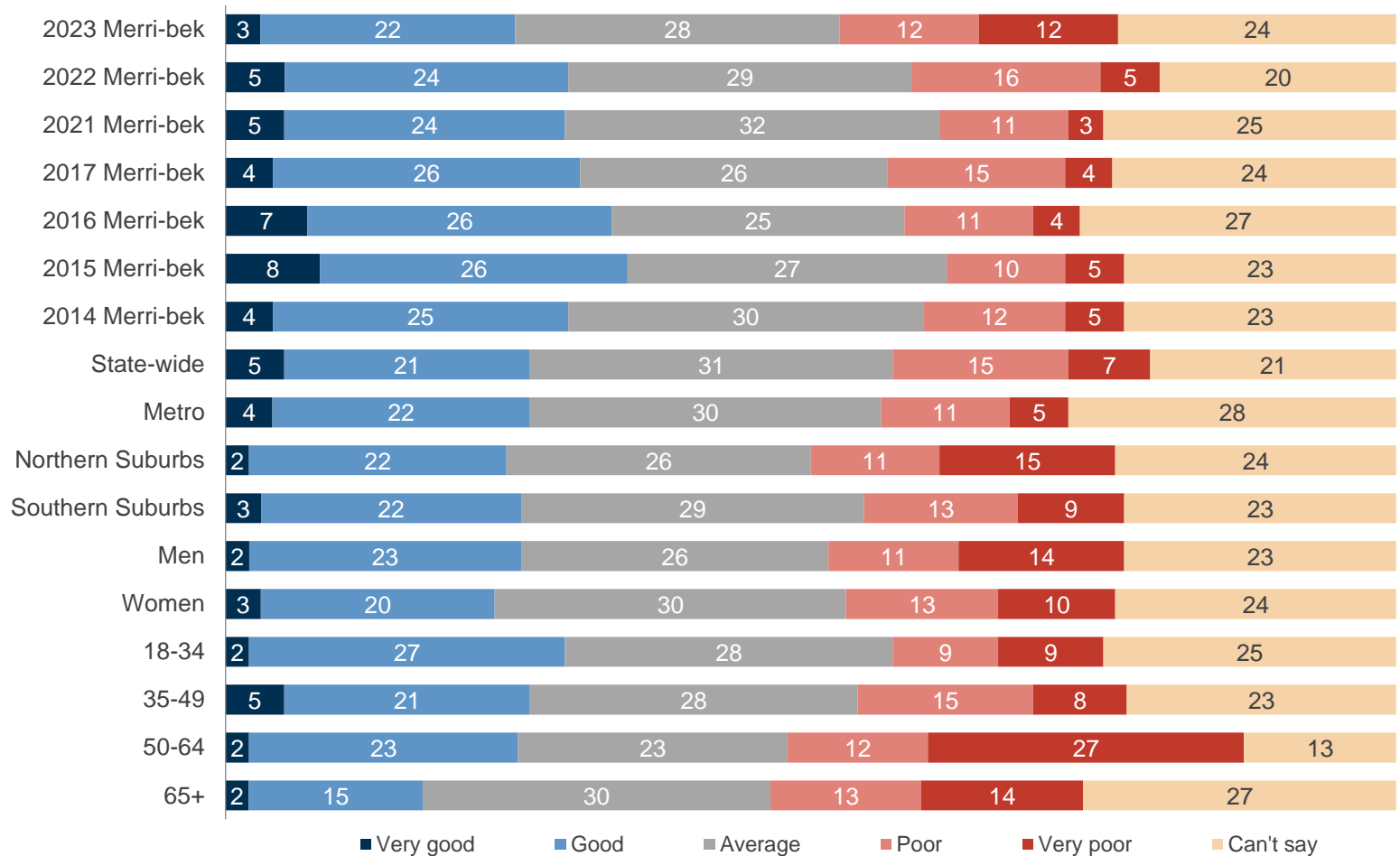
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Lobbying on behalf of the community performance



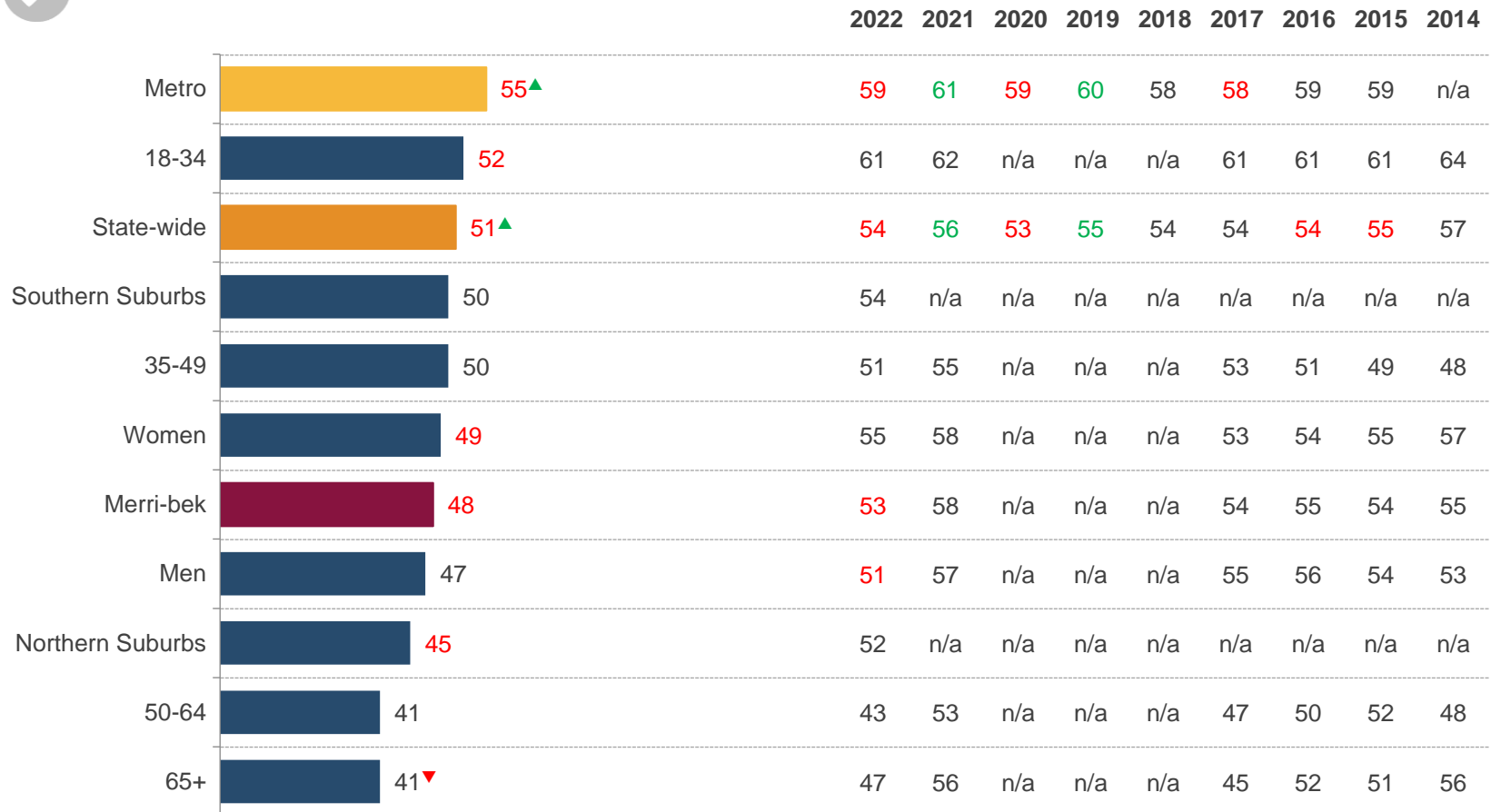
2023 lobbying performance (%)



Decisions made in the interest of the community performance



2023 community decisions made performance (index scores)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' over the last 12 months?

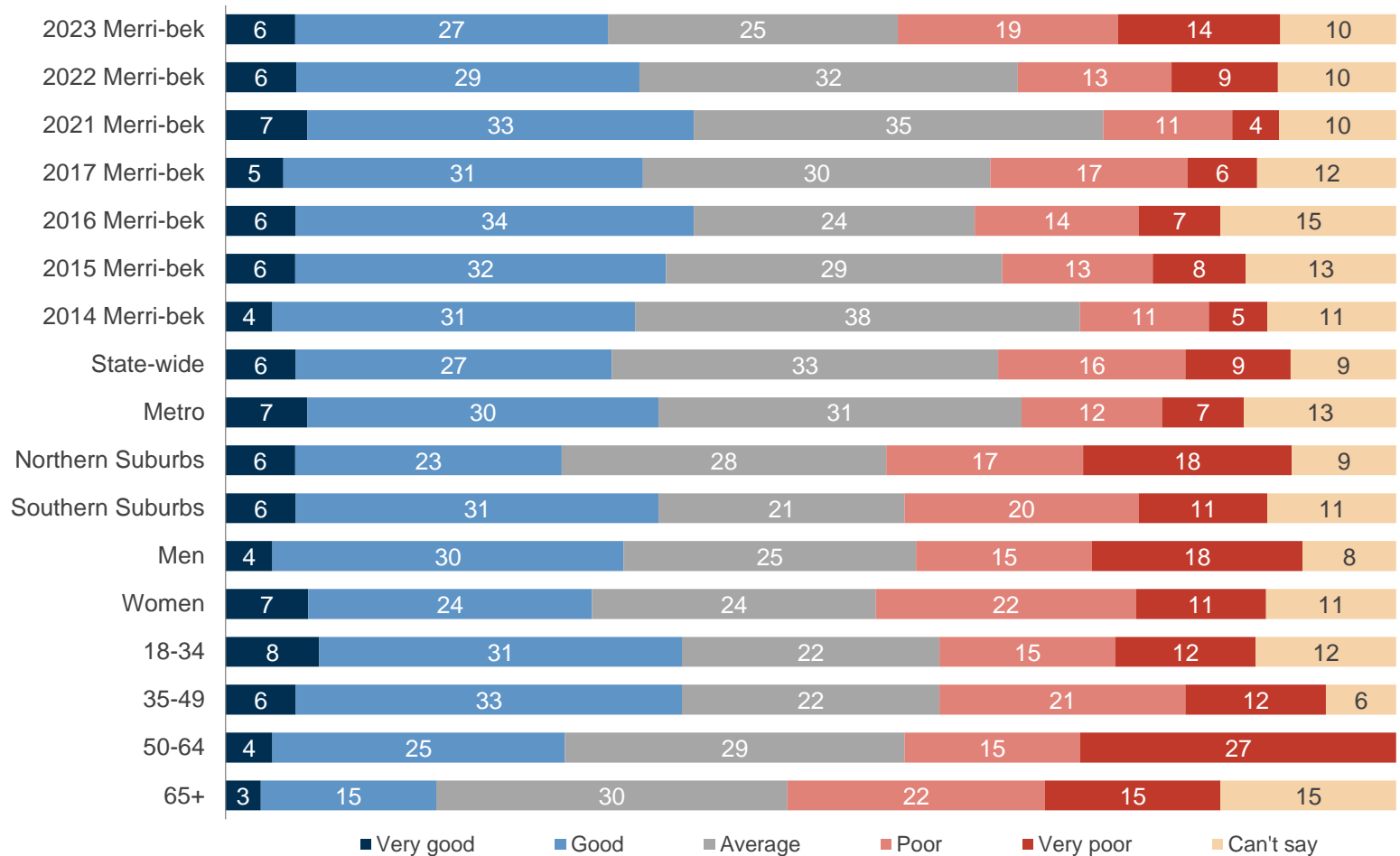
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance



2023 community decisions made performance (%)



The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance



2023 sealed local roads performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Metro	61▲	65	68	67	69	68	66	67	69	n/a
18-34	53	63	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	60	62	n/a
Southern Suburbs	52	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	52	56	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	57	55	56	n/a
35-49	52	56	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	51	53	n/a
Merri-bek	51	57	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	56	58	n/a
Women	50	59	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	57	59	n/a
Northern Suburbs	50	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	50	54	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	61	60	n/a
State-wide	48▼	53	57	54	56	53	53	54	55	55
50-64	47	48	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	50	55	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' over the last 12 months?

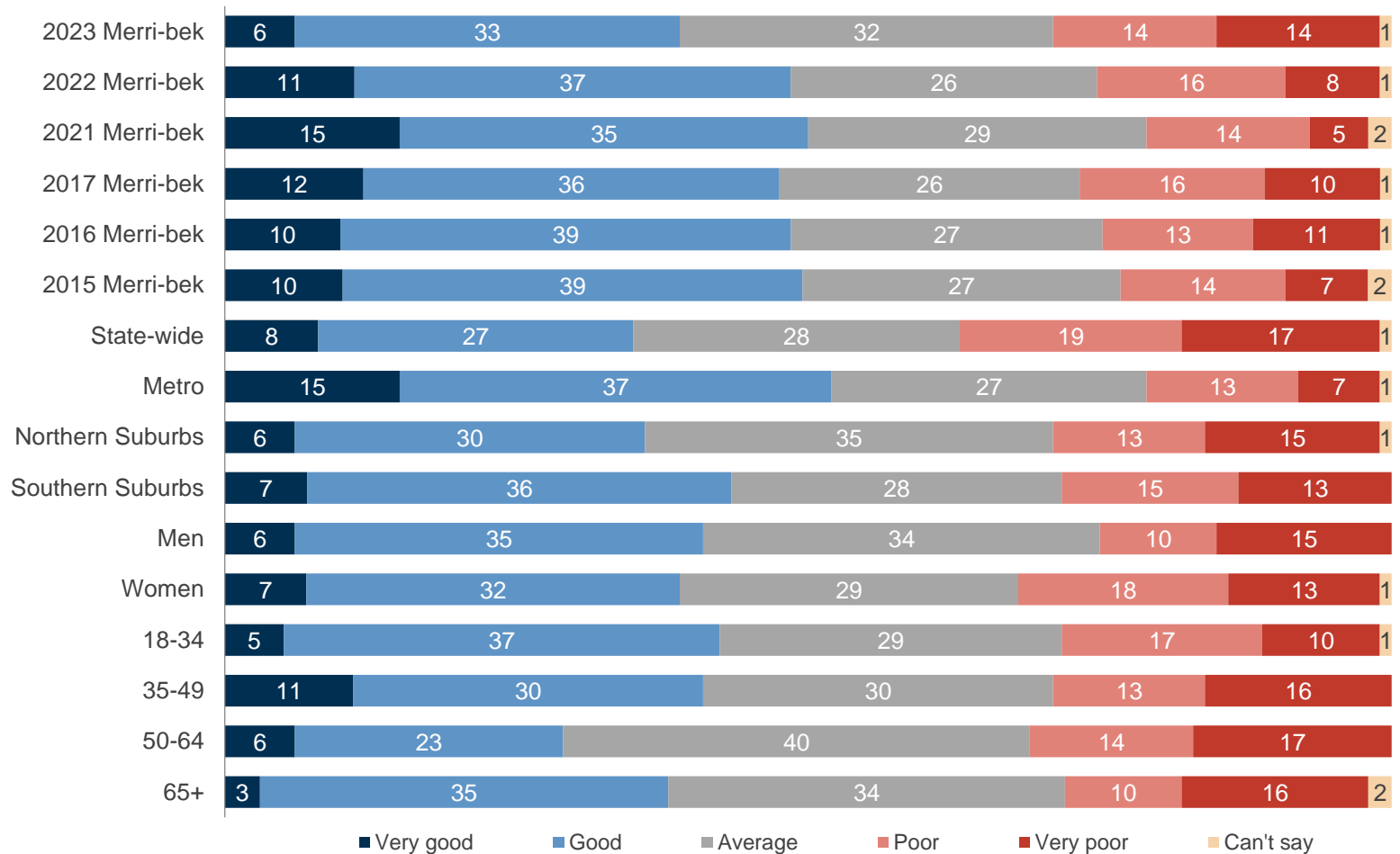
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance



2023 sealed local roads performance (%)





Informing the community performance



2023 informing community performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
18-34	60	68	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	62	n/a	59
Metro	60▲	62	62	62	62	61	61	63	64	n/a
35-49	58	58	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	62	62	n/a	57
Southern Suburbs	57	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	57	59	60	59	60	59	59	59	61	62
Women	57	61	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	62	n/a	59
Merri-bek	56	61	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	61	n/a	58
Men	54	61	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	59	61	n/a	58
Northern Suburbs	54	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	51	53	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	57	57	n/a	56
65+	46▼	56	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	55	63	n/a	62

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Informing the community' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 38 Councils asked group: 12

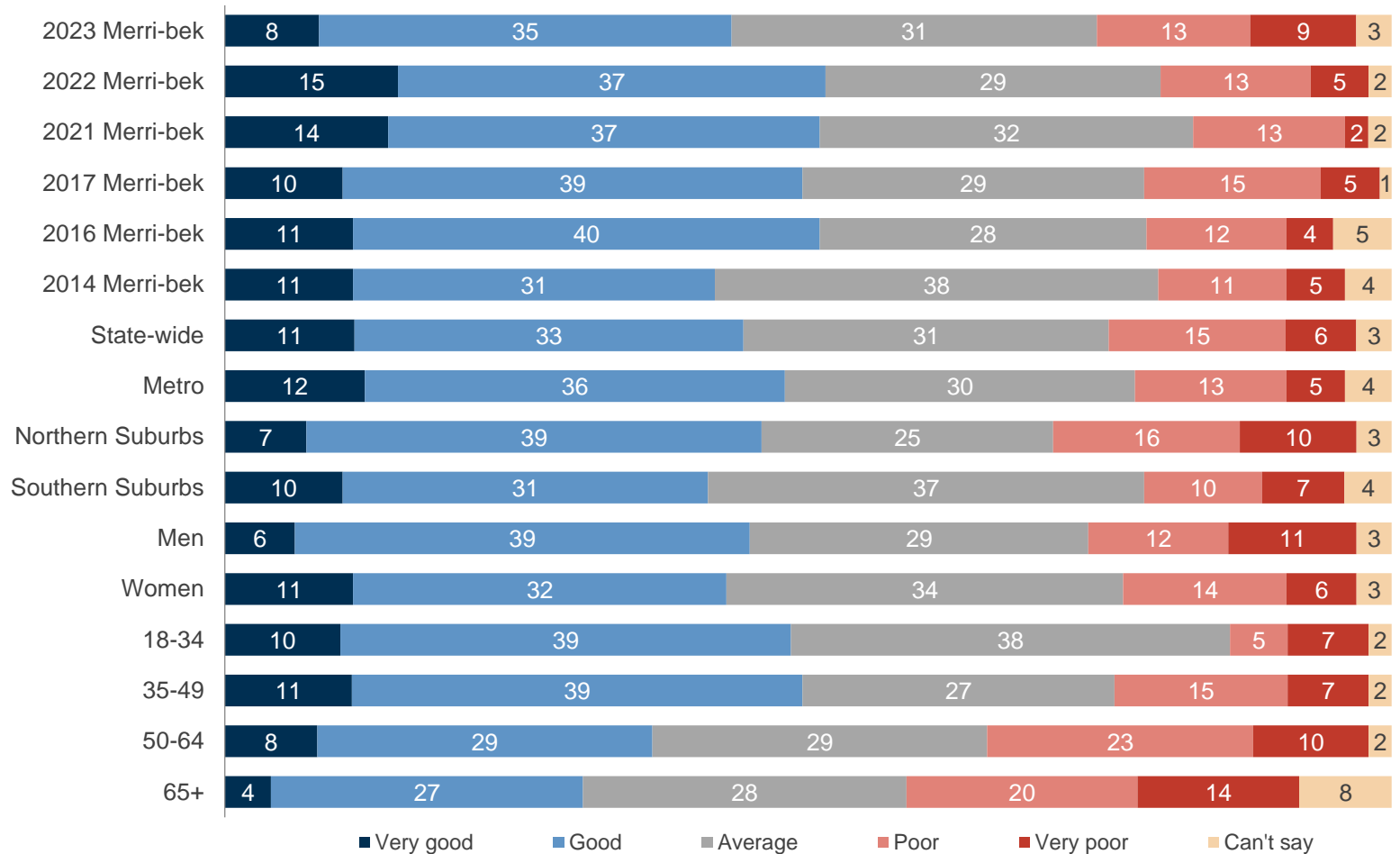
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Informing the community performance



2023 informing community performance (%)





Traffic management performance



2023 traffic management performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
State-wide	55▲	58	59	58	58	57	59	59	60	60
Metro	55▲	58	59	59	58	57	56	56	57	n/a
18-34	54▲	54	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	57	54	55	59
Southern Suburbs	51	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	50	55	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	51	53	55
Merri-bek	49	53	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	50	51	53
Men	49	50	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	54	48	48	52
35-49	49	54	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	54	45	49	48
Northern Suburbs	48	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	46	52	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	50	49	53
50-64	44	47	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	48	46	49

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Traffic management' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 10

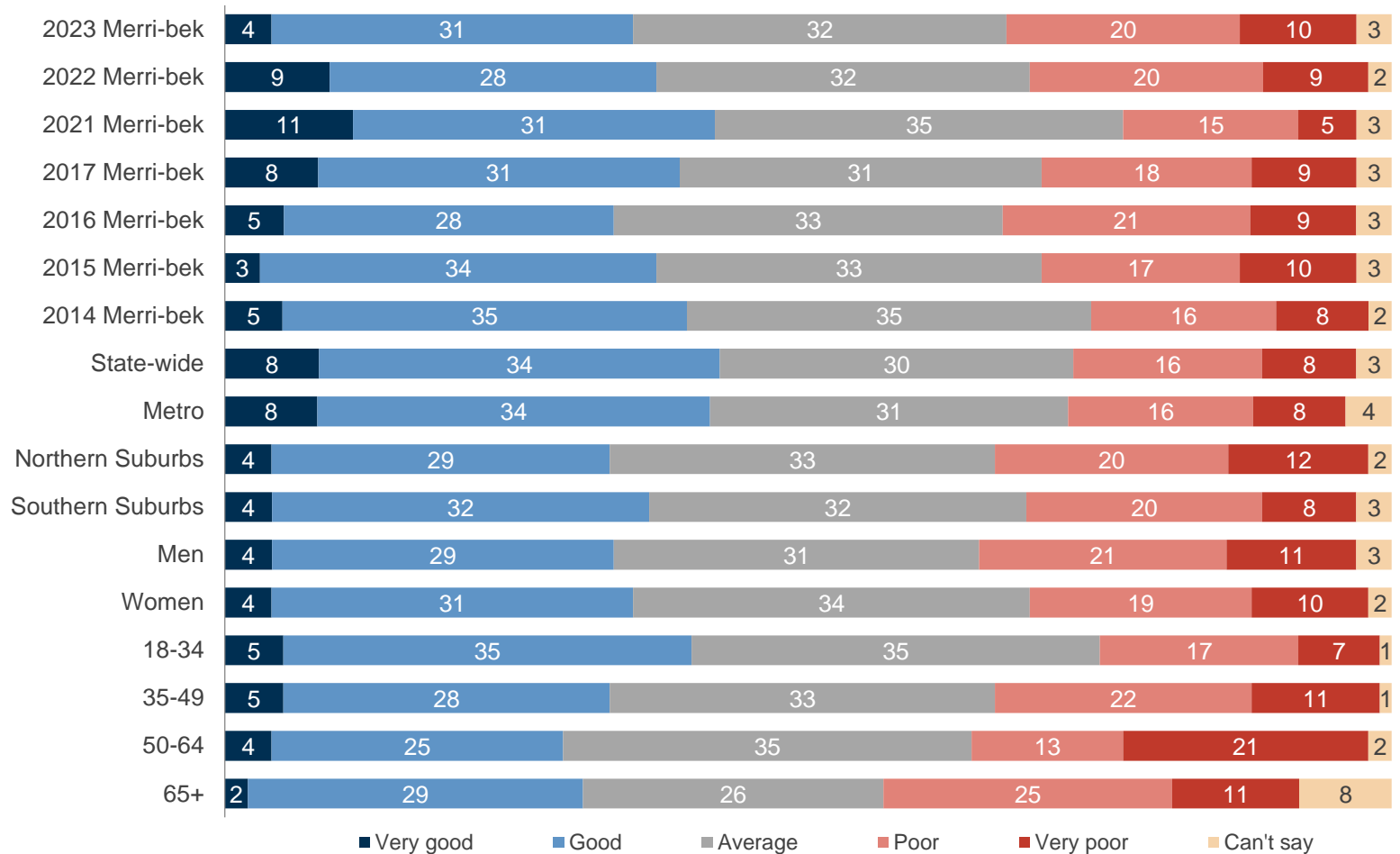
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Traffic management performance



2023 traffic management performance (%)





Parking facilities performance



2023 parking performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
State-wide	55▲	57	58	55	56	56	55	56	57	57
Metro	54▲	58	58	56	55	55	53	54	55	n/a
18-34	50	58	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	49	54	60	54
Southern Suburbs	48	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	47	52	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	49	55	49	53
Women	46	53	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	45	50	52	52
Merri-bek	46	52	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	52	52	52
Men	46	51	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	51	54	53	52
Northern Suburbs	44	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	41	46	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	47	50	47	49
50-64	41	41	45	n/a	n/a	n/a	45	46	45	49

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Parking facilities' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 9

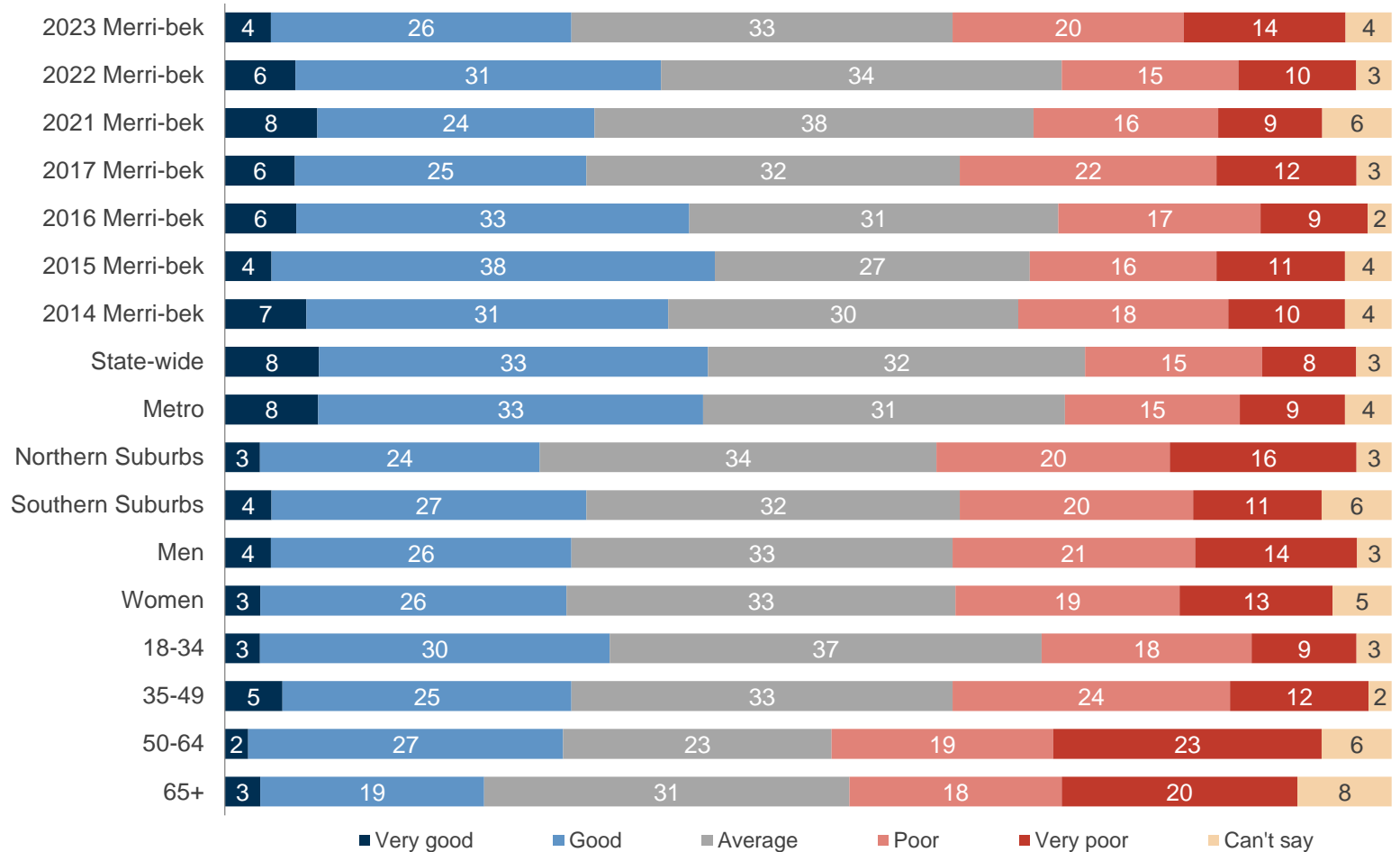
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Parking facilities performance



2023 parking performance (%)





Family support services performance



2023 family support performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Metro	65	66	67	69	69	68	68	69	68	n/a
18-34	65	66	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	69	71	69
Women	64	67	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	72	69	69
Northern Suburbs	63	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	63	65	66	66	67	66	67	66	67	68
65+	63	65	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	70	68	70
Merri-bek	63	65	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	69	69	69
Southern Suburbs	62	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	61	63	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	66	69	68
35-49	61	64	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	72	68	68
50-64	60	64	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	63	63	66	65

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Family support services' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 30 Councils asked group: 8

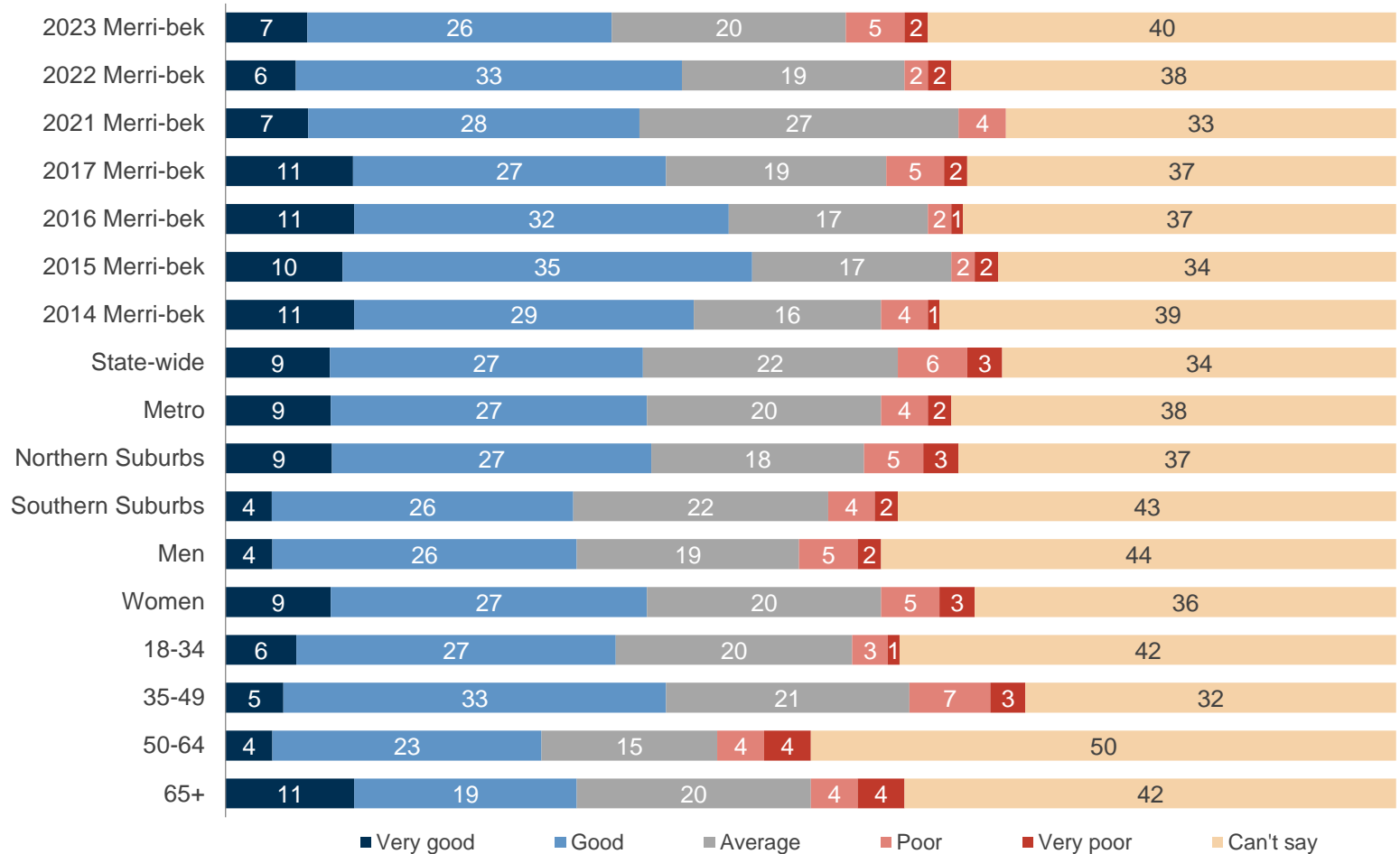
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Family support services performance



2023 family support performance (%)

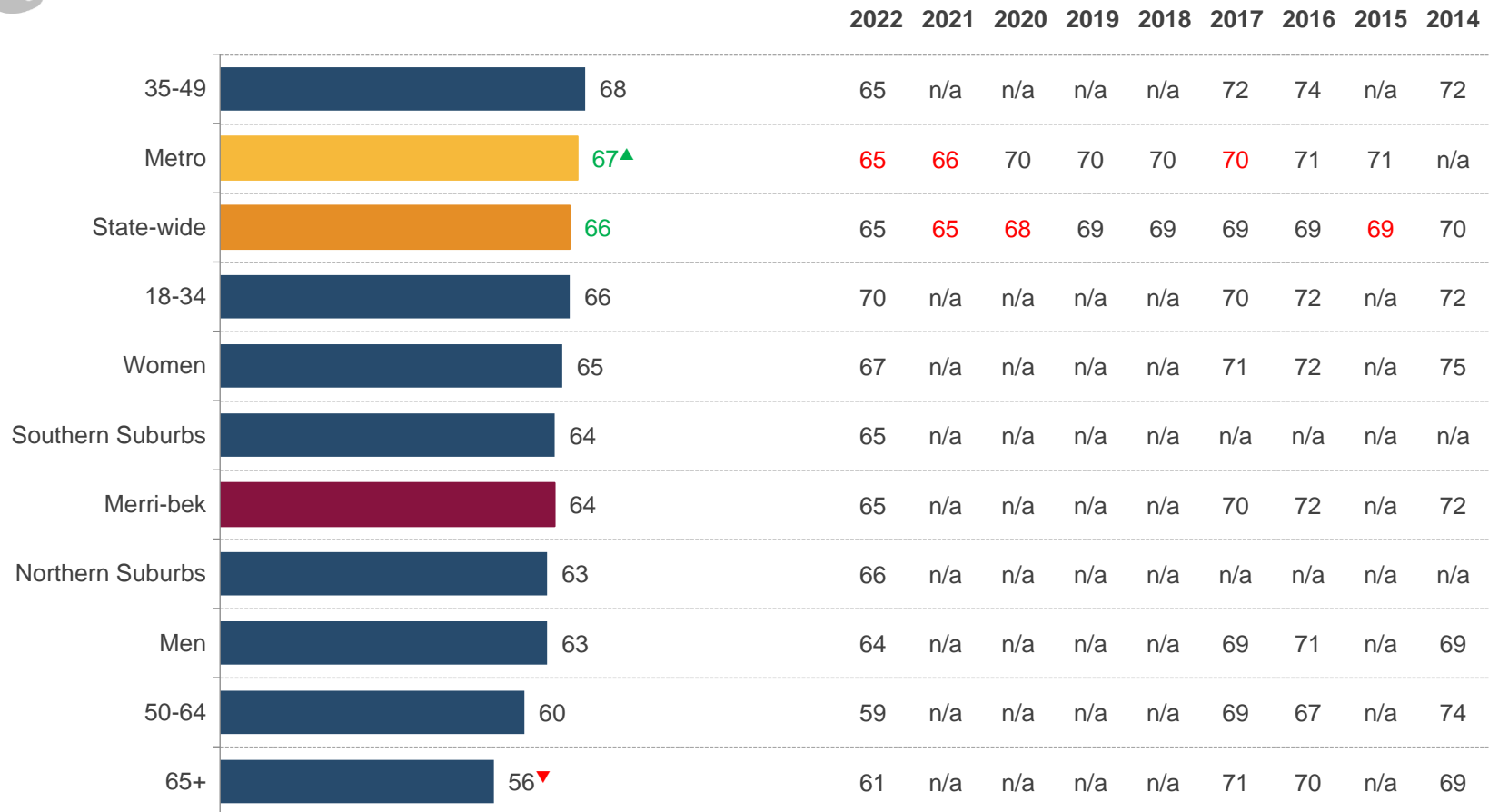




Community and cultural activities performance



2023 community and cultural activities performance (index scores)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community and cultural activities' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 31 Councils asked group: 13

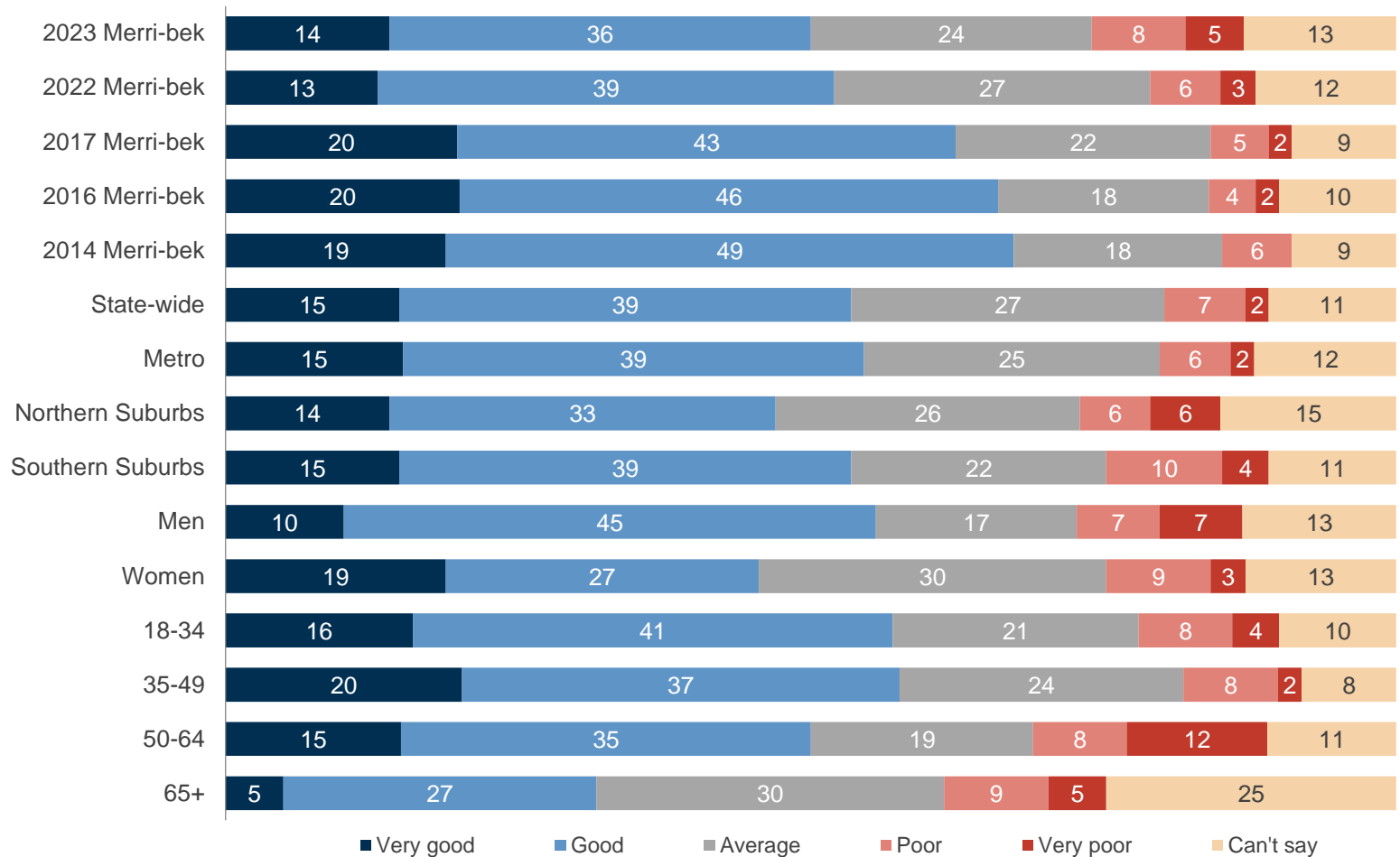
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Community and cultural activities performance



2023 community and cultural activities performance (%)





Waste management performance



2023 waste management performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Metro	68▲	71	72	70	73	75	75	76	77	n/a
State-wide	66▲	68	69	65	68	70	71	70	72	73
Southern Suburbs	53▲	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	50	69	67	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	67	75	72
65+	50	68	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	74	72	74	75
Men	48	65	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	70	66	73	72
Merri-bek	47	67	70	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	68	71	72
Women	46	68	71	n/a	n/a	n/a	68	69	70	71
50-64	43	66	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	70	66	65	72
35-49	42	63	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	71	67	70	69
Northern Suburbs	41▼	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Waste management' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

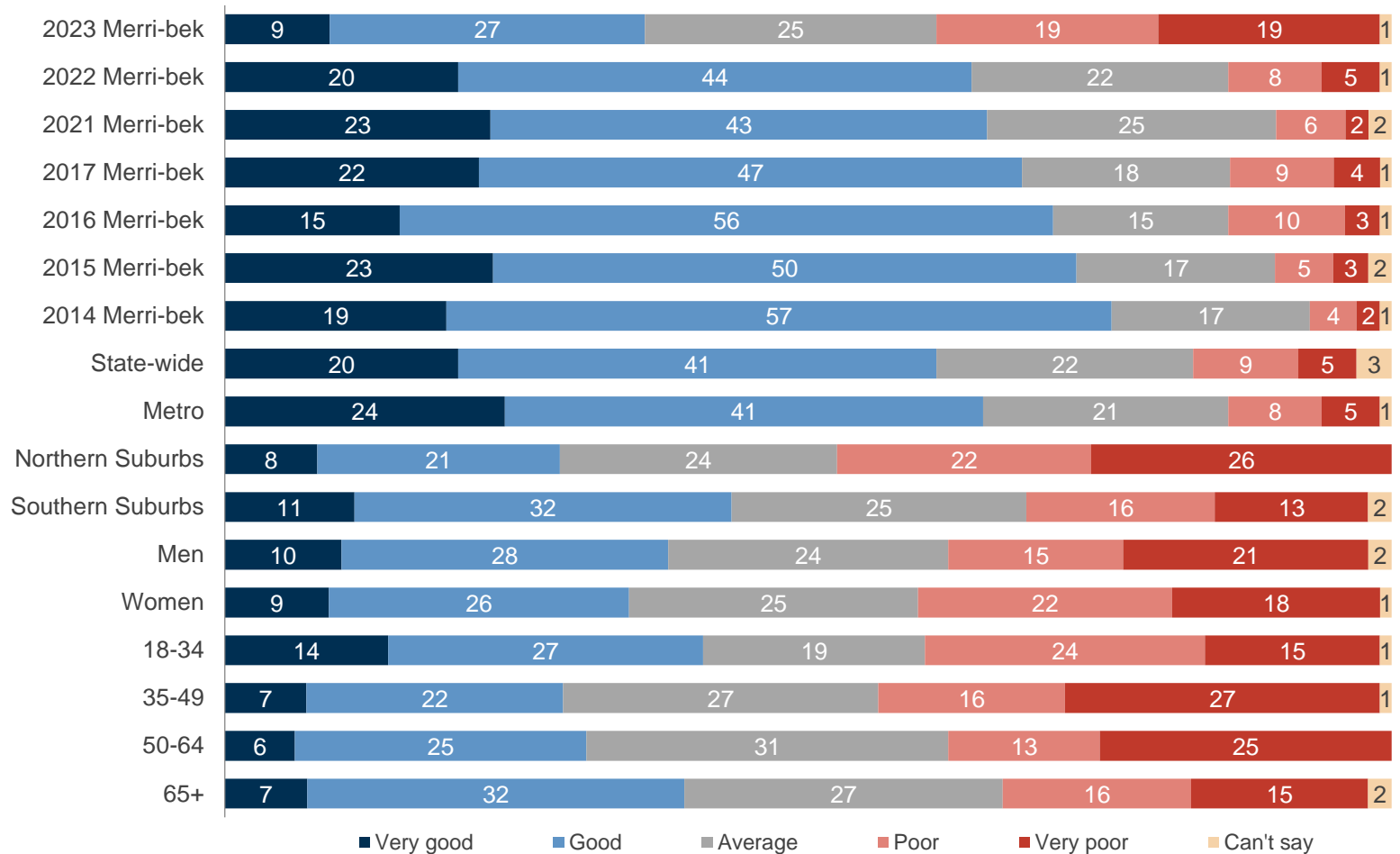
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Waste management performance



2023 waste management performance (%)

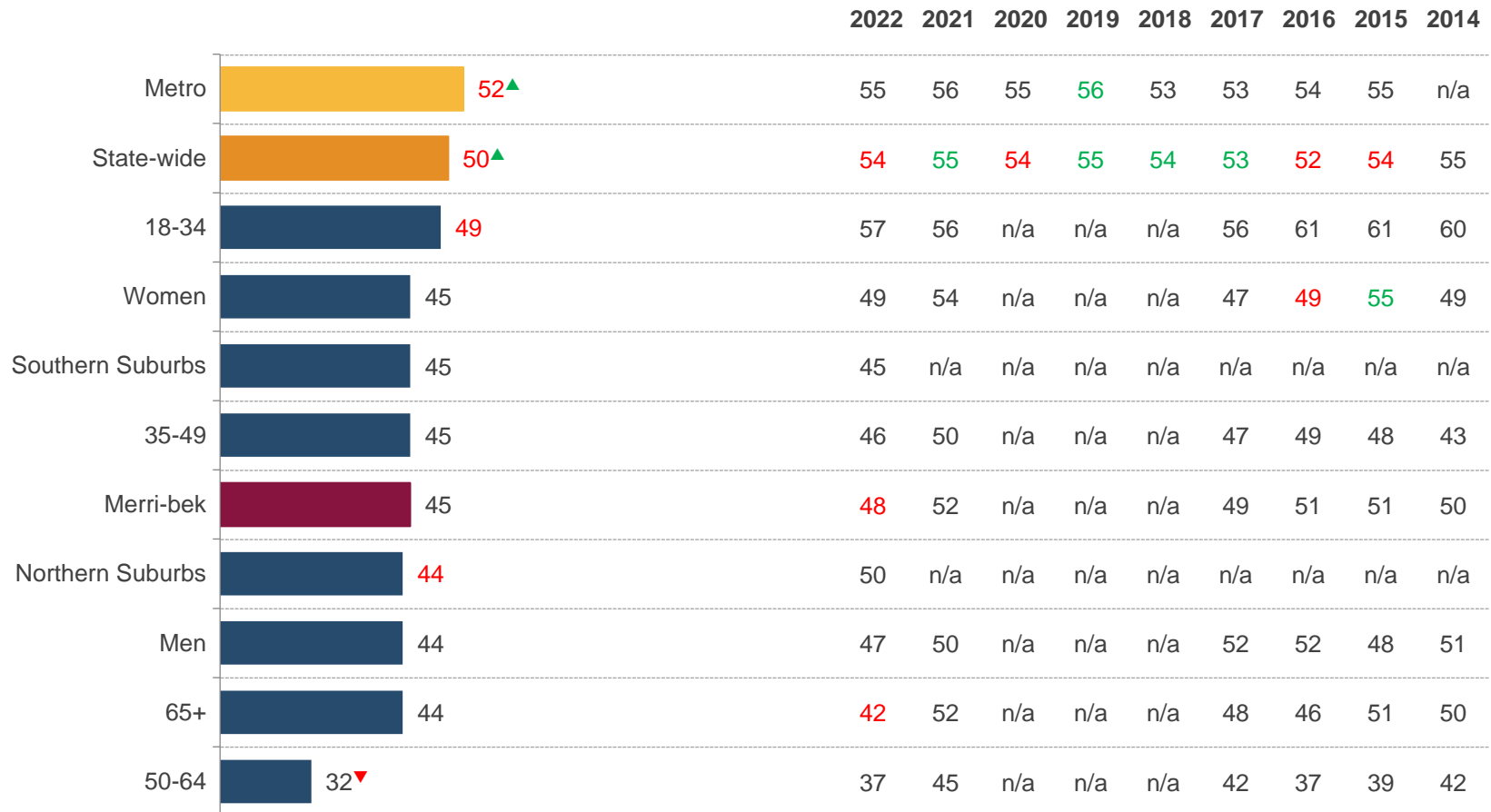




Council's general town planning policy performance



2023 town planning performance (index scores)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Council's general town planning policy' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 10

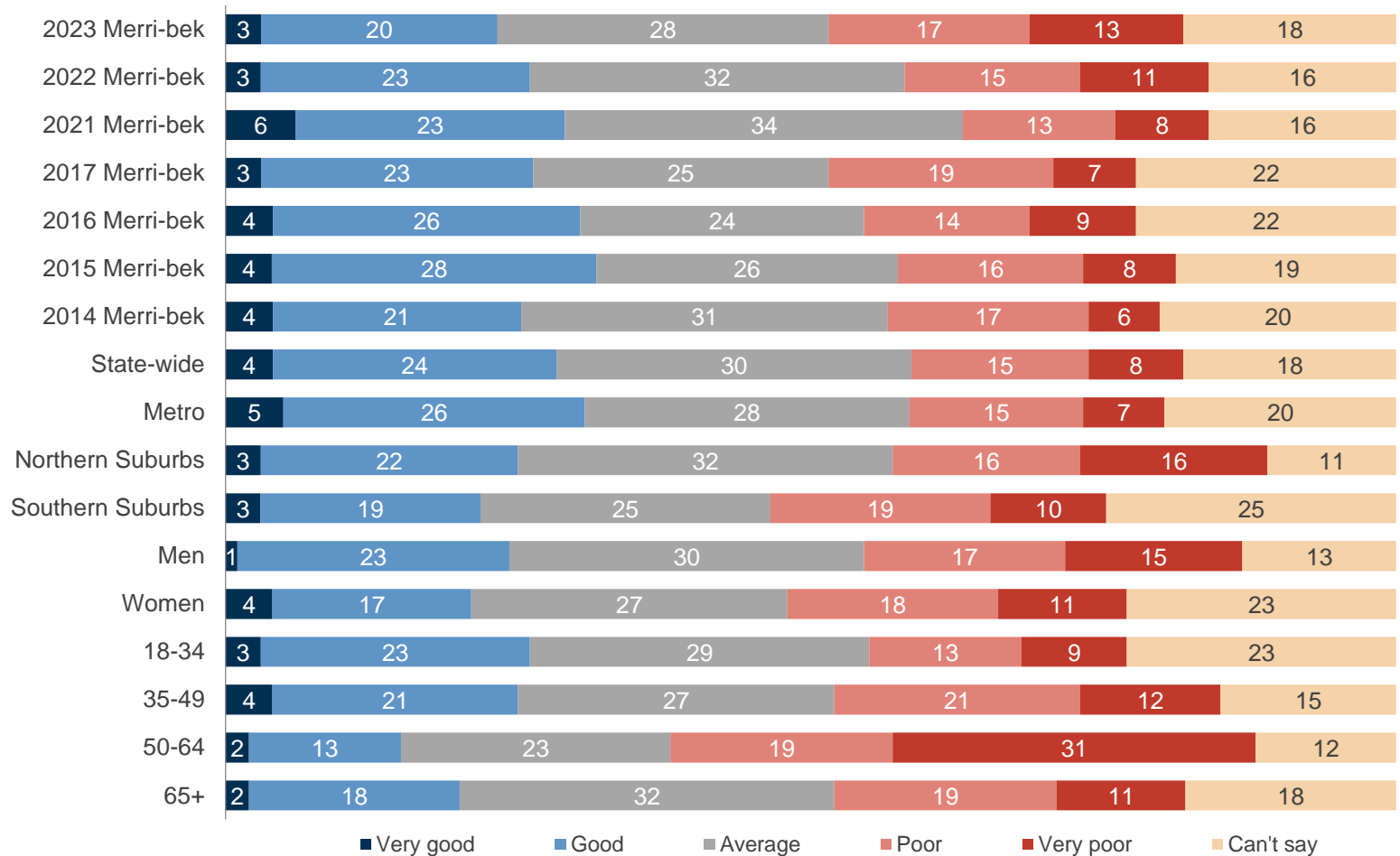
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Council's general town planning policy performance



2023 town planning performance (%)





Environmental sustainability performance



2023 environmental sustainability performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
18-34	63▲	66	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	68	61	66
Metro	62▲	63	64	62	64	64	64	64	65	n/a
State-wide	60	61	62	60	62	63	64	63	64	64
Men	60	60	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	67	65	63	63
Southern Suburbs	60	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Merri-bek	58	62	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	66	61	64
35-49	57	60	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	67	66	63	64
Women	56	64	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	67	59	65
Northern Suburbs	56	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	54	58	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	62	61	62	59
50-64	50	58	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	65	60	63

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Environmental sustainability' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 39 Councils asked group: 13

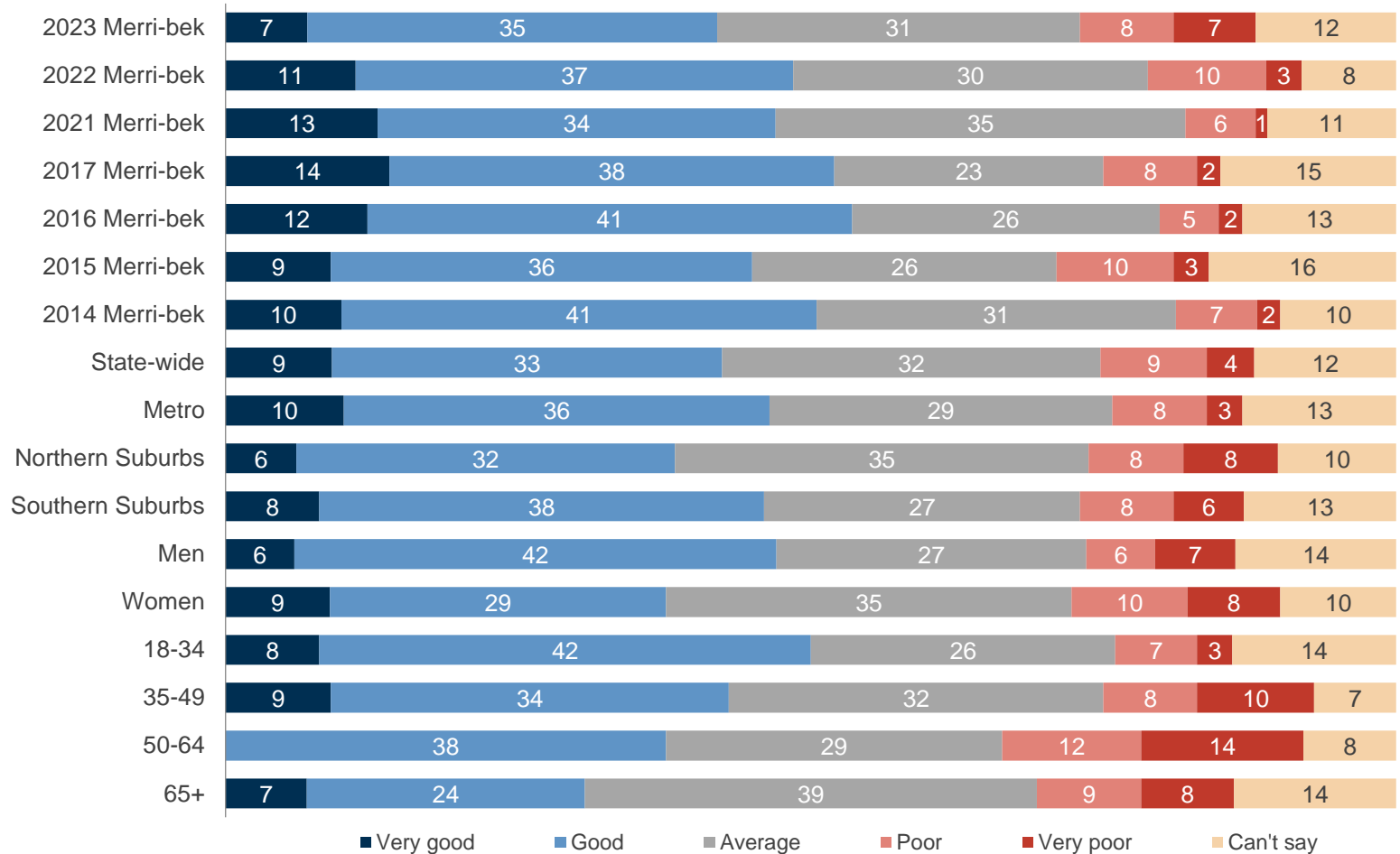
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Environmental sustainability performance



2023 environmental sustainability performance (%)





Planning for population growth in the area performance



2023 population growth performance (index scores)

		2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Metro	49▲	52	53	52	52	50	51	51	54	n/a
State-wide	48▲	52	53	51	52	52	52	51	54	54
18-34	47	58	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	55	53	56	56
Southern Suburbs	46	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	46	53	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	47	47	52	51
Merri-bek	44	49	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	50	50	49
65+	43	46	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	45	46	51	49
35-49	43	45	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	44	50	46	42
Men	43	45	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	49	53	47	47
Northern Suburbs	42	49	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	37	37	47	n/a	n/a	n/a	41	44	41	45

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Planning for population growth in the area' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 20 Councils asked group: 7

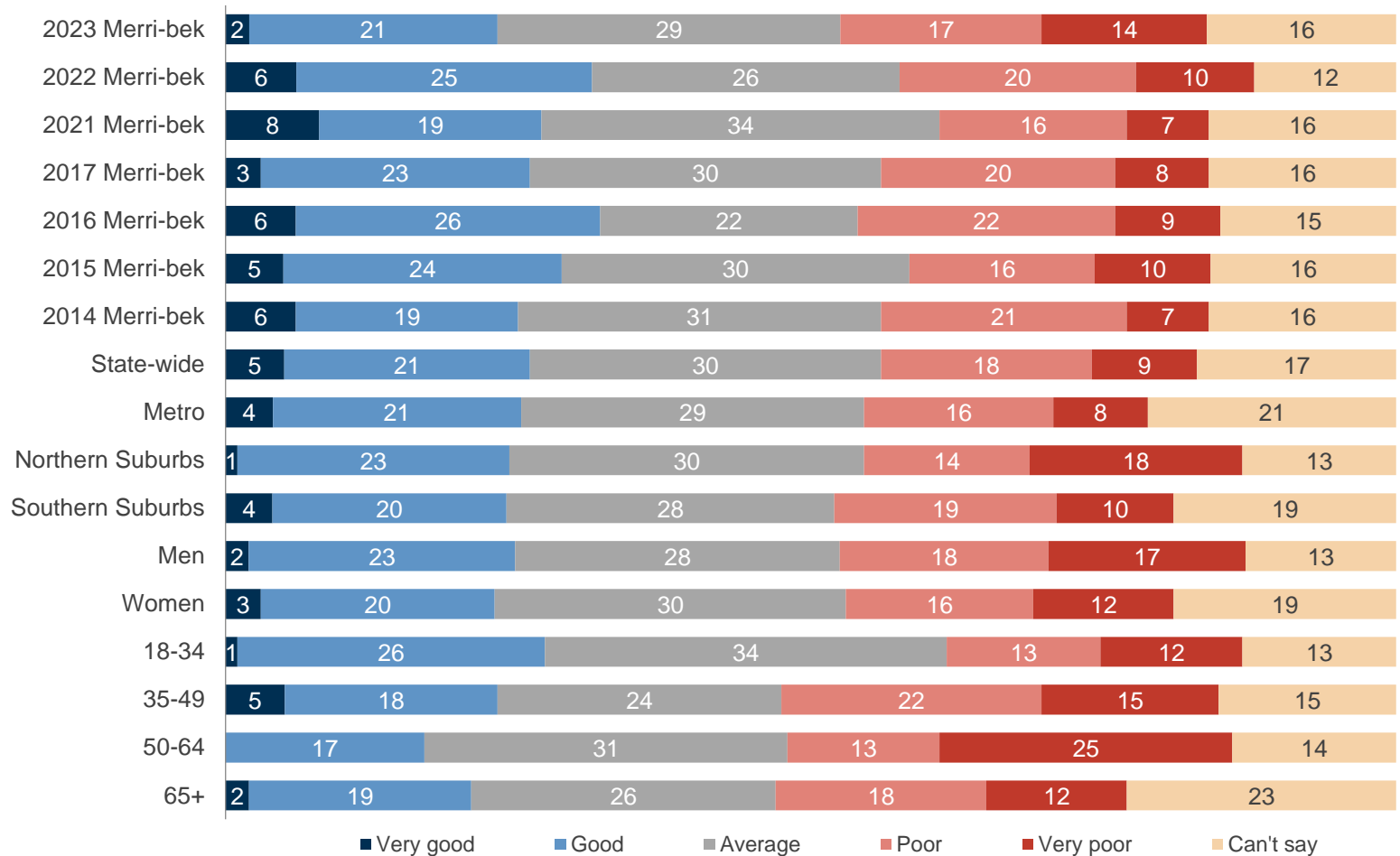
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Planning for population growth in the area performance



2023 population growth performance (%)





COVID-19 response performance



2023 COVID-19 response performance (index scores)

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
State-wide	67▲	69	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Metro	65▲	67	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	63	69	77	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	63	65	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	61	72	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Southern Suburbs	61	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Merri-bek	61	68	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Northern Suburbs	61	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	59	66	70	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	58	67	70	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	58	64	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'COVID-19 response' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 20 Councils asked group: 5

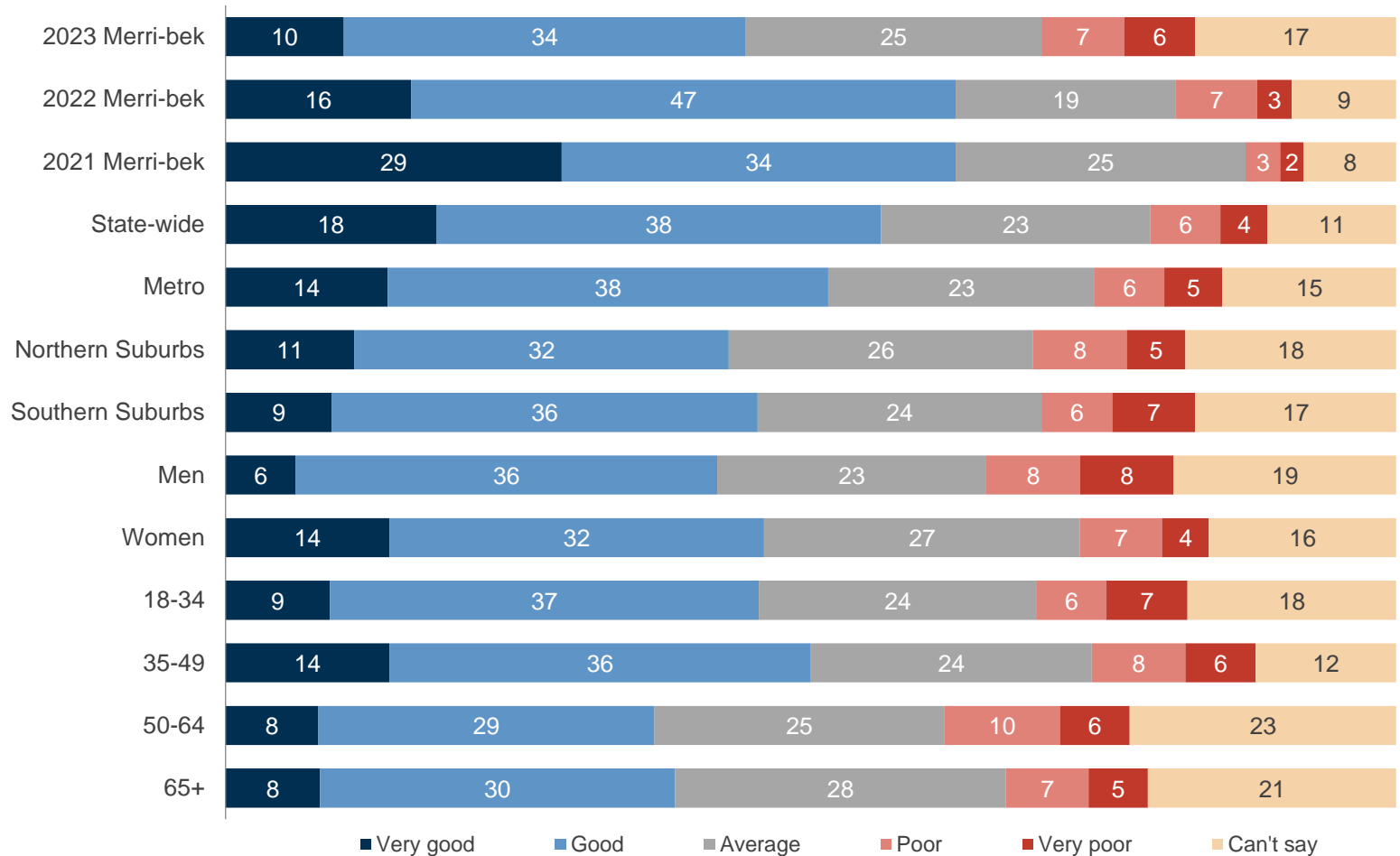
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



COVID-19 response performance



2023 COVID-19 response performance (%)



A large, stylized, dark blue 'W' graphic that spans the right side of the page. Inside the 'W', there is a blurred image of a crowd of people, possibly at a sporting event or a public gathering. The background of the entire slide is white.

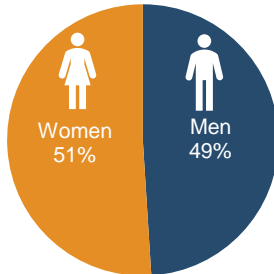
Detailed demographics



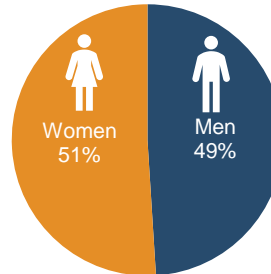
Gender and age profile

2023 gender

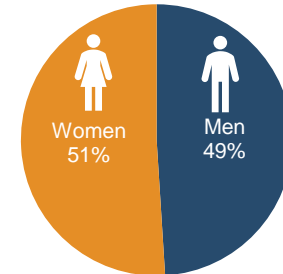
Merri-bek



Metro

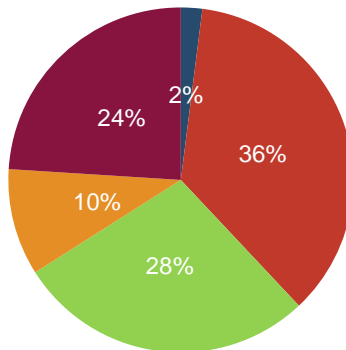


State-wide

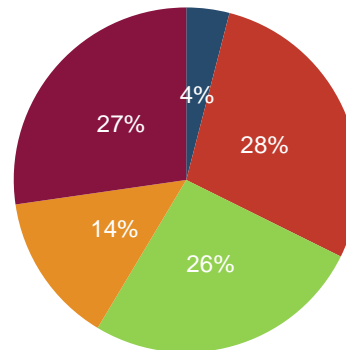


2023 age

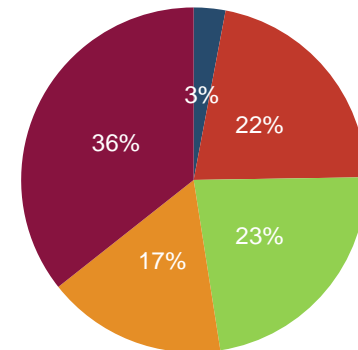
Merri-bek



Metro



State-wide



■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

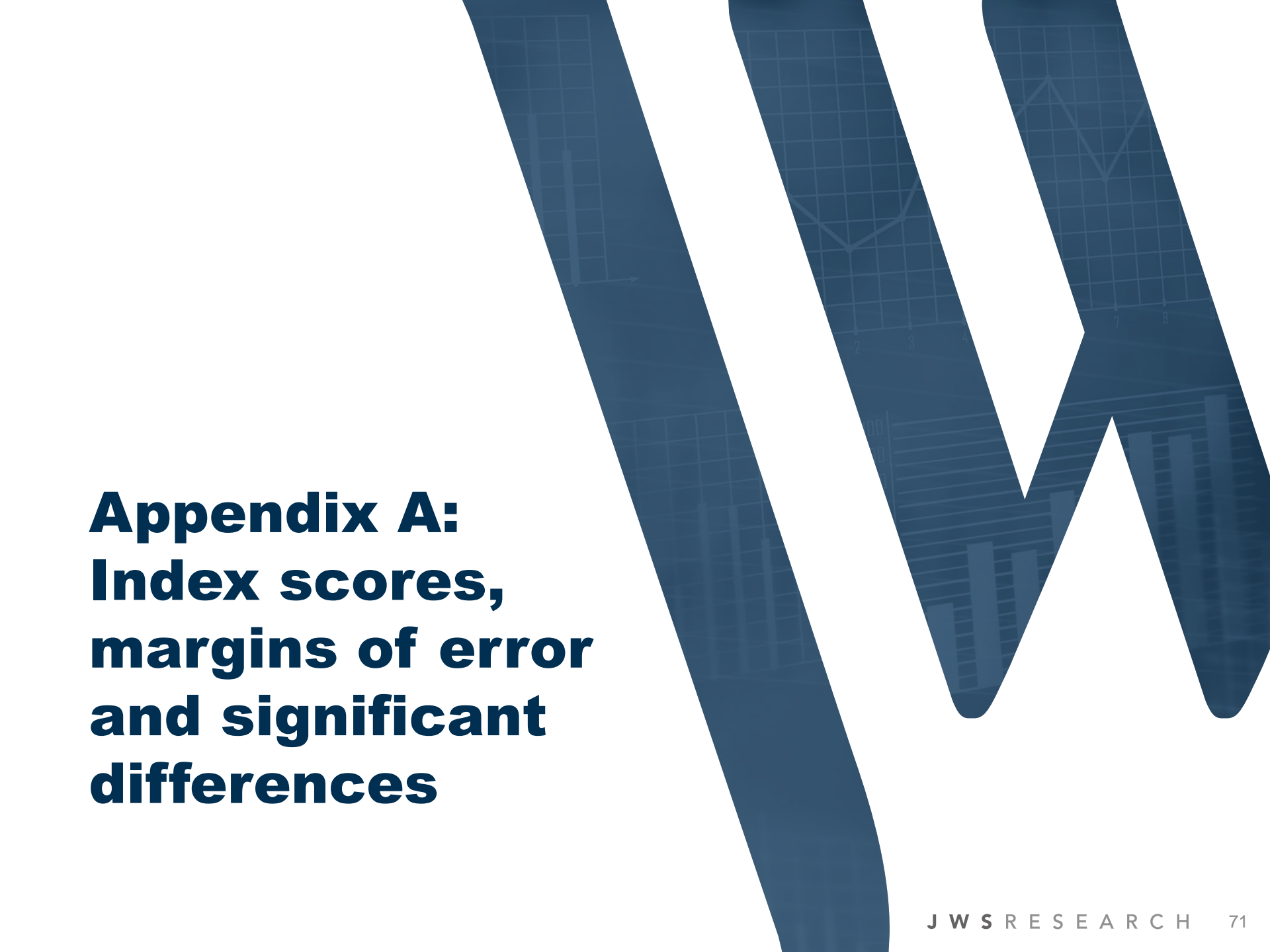
■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

S3. [Record gender] / S4. To which of the following age groups do you belong?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 66 Councils asked group: 16

Please note that for the reason of simplifying reporting, interlocking age and gender reporting has not been included in this report. Interlocking age and gender analysis is still available in the dashboard and data tables provided alongside this report.



Appendix A: Index scores, margins of error and significant differences



Appendix A: Index Scores

Index Scores

Many questions ask respondents to rate council performance on a five-point scale, for example, from 'very good' to 'very poor', with 'can't say' also a possible response category. To facilitate ease of reporting and comparison of results over time, starting from the 2012 survey and measured against the state-wide result and the council group, an 'Index Score' has been calculated for such measures.

The Index Score is calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale), with 'can't say' responses excluded from the analysis. The '% RESULT' for each scale category is multiplied by the 'INDEX FACTOR'. This produces an 'INDEX VALUE' for each category, which are then summed to produce the 'INDEX SCORE', equating to '60' in the following example.

Similarly, an Index Score has been calculated for the Core question 'Performance direction in the last 12 months', based on the following scale for each performance measure category, with 'Can't say' responses excluded from the calculation.

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Very good	9%	100	9
Good	40%	75	30
Average	37%	50	19
Poor	9%	25	2
Very poor	4%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 60

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Improved	36%	100	36
Stayed the same	40%	50	20
Deteriorated	23%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 56



Appendix A: Margins of error

The sample size for the 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey for Merri-bek City Council was n=401. Unless otherwise noted, this is the total sample base for all reported charts and tables.

The maximum margin of error on a sample of approximately n=401 interviews is +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence level for results around 50%. Margins of error will be larger for any sub-samples. As an example, a result of 50% can be read confidently as falling midway in the range 45.1% - 54.9%.

Maximum margins of error are listed in the table below, based on a population of 142,100 people aged 18 years or over for Merri-bek City Council, according to ABS estimates.

Demographic	Actual survey sample size	Weighted base	Maximum margin of error at 95% confidence interval
Merri-bek City Council	401	400	+/-4.9
Men	189	194	+/-7.1
Women	212	206	+/-6.7
Northern Suburbs	205	198	+/-6.9
Southern Suburbs	196	202	+/-7.0
18-34 years	99	152	+/-9.9
35-49 years	120	111	+/-9.0
50-64 years	52	39	+/-13.7
65+ years	130	97	+/-8.6



Appendix A: Significant difference reporting notation

Within tables and index score charts throughout this report, statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level are represented by upward directing green (▲) and downward directing red arrows (▼).

Significance when noted indicates a significantly higher or lower result for the analysis group in comparison to the 'Total' result for the council for that survey question for that year. Therefore in the example below:

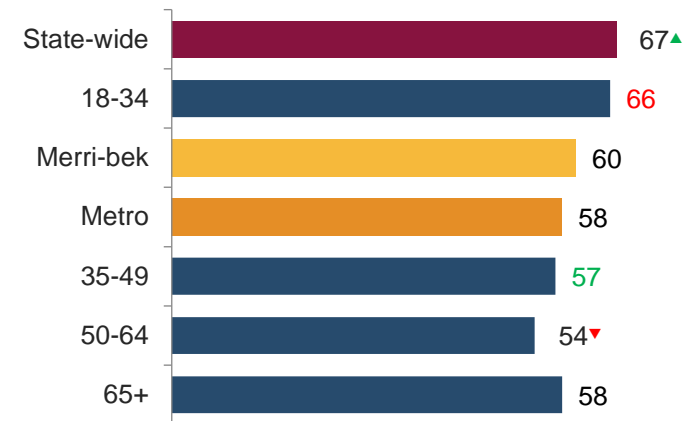
- ▲ The state-wide result is significantly higher than the overall result for the council.
- ▼ The result among 50-64 year olds is significantly lower than for the overall result for the council.

Further, results shown in green and red indicate significantly higher or lower results than in 2022.

Therefore in the example below:

- The result among 35-49 year olds in the council is **significantly higher** than the result achieved among this group in 2022.
- The result among 18-34 year olds in the council is **significantly lower** than the result achieved among this group in 2022.

**2023 overall performance (index scores)
(example extract only)**





Appendix A: Index score significant difference calculation

The test applied to the Indexes was an Independent Mean Test, as follows:

$$Z \text{ Score} = (\$1 - \$2) / \text{Sqrt} ((\$5^2 / \$3) + (\$6^2 / \$4))$$

Where:

- \$1 = Index Score 1
- \$2 = Index Score 2
- \$3 = unweighted sample count 1
- \$4 = unweighted sample count 2
- \$5 = standard deviation 1
- \$6 = standard deviation 2

All figures can be sourced from the detailed cross tabulations.

The test was applied at the 95% confidence interval, so if the Z Score was greater than +/- 1.954 the scores are significantly different.



Appendix B: Further project information



Appendix B: Further information

Further information about the report and explanations about the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey can be found in this section including:

- Background and objectives
- Analysis and reporting
- Glossary of terms

Detailed survey tabulations

Detailed survey tabulations are available in supplied Excel file.

Contacts

For further queries about the conduct and reporting of the 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey, please contact JWS Research on

(03) 8685 8555 or via email:

admin@jwsresearch.com



Appendix B: Survey methodology and sampling

The 2023 results are compared with previous years, as detailed below:

- 2022, n=401 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 27th January – 24th March.
- 2021, n=401 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 28th January – 18th March.
- 2017, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2016, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2015, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2014, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 31st January – 11th March.

Minimum quotas of gender within age groups were applied during the fieldwork phase. Post-survey weighting was then conducted to ensure accurate representation of the age and gender profile of the Merri-bek City Council area.

Any variation of +/-1% between individual results and net scores in this report or the detailed survey tabulations is due to rounding. In reporting, '—' denotes not mentioned and '0%' denotes mentioned by less than 1% of respondents. 'Net' scores refer to two or more response categories being combined into one category for simplicity of reporting.

This survey was conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18+ years in Merri-bek City Council.

Survey sample matched to the demographic profile of Merri-bek City Council as determined by the most recent ABS population estimates was purchased from an accredited supplier of publicly available phone records, including up to 60% mobile phone numbers to cater to the diversity of residents within Merri-bek City Council, particularly younger people.

A total of n=401 completed interviews were achieved in Merri-bek City Council. Survey fieldwork was conducted in the period of 27th January – 19th March, 2023.



Appendix B: Analysis and reporting

All participating councils are listed in the State-wide report published on the DELWP website. In 2023, 66 of the 79 Councils throughout Victoria participated in this survey. For consistency of analysis and reporting across all projects, Local Government Victoria has aligned its presentation of data to use standard council groupings. Accordingly, the council reports for the community satisfaction survey provide analysis using these standard council groupings. Please note that councils participating across 2012-2023 vary slightly.

Council Groups

Merri-bek City Council is classified as a Metropolitan council according to the following classification list:

- Metropolitan, Interface, Regional Centres, Large Rural & Small Rural.

Councils participating in the Metropolitan group are:

- Banyule, Boroondara, Brimbank, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Hobsons Bay, Kingston, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Port Phillip, Stonnington and Whitehorse.

Wherever appropriate, results for Merri-bek City Council for this 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey have been compared against other participating councils in the Metropolitan group and on a state-wide basis. Please note that council groupings changed for 2015, and as such comparisons to council group results before that time can not be made within the reported charts.



Appendix B: 2012 survey revision

The survey was revised in 2012. As a result:

- The survey is now conducted as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18 years or over in local councils, whereas previously it was conducted as a 'head of household' survey.
- As part of the change to a representative resident survey, results are now weighted post survey to the known population distribution of Merri-bek City Council according to the most recently available Australian Bureau of Statistics population estimates, whereas the results were previously not weighted.
- The service responsibility area performance measures have changed significantly and the rating scale used to assess performance has also changed.

As such, the results of the 2012 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey should be considered as a benchmark. Please note that comparisons should not be made with the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey results from 2011 and prior due to the methodological and sampling changes. Comparisons in the period 2012-2023 have been made throughout this report as appropriate.



Appendix B:

Core, optional and tailored questions

Core, optional and tailored questions

Over and above necessary geographic and demographic questions required to ensure sample representativeness, a base set of questions for the 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey was designated as 'Core' and therefore compulsory inclusions for all participating Councils.

These core questions comprised:

- Overall performance last 12 months (Overall performance)
- Value for money in services and infrastructure (Value for money)
- Contact in last 12 months (Contact)
- Rating of contact (Customer service)
- Overall council direction last 12 months (Council direction)
- Community consultation and engagement (Consultation)
- Decisions made in the interest of the community (Making community decisions)
- Condition of sealed local roads (Sealed local roads)
- Waste management

Reporting of results for these core questions can always be compared against other participating councils in the council group and against all participating councils state-wide. Alternatively, some questions in the 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey were optional. Councils also had the ability to ask tailored questions specific only to their council.



Appendix B: Analysis and reporting

Reporting

Every council that participated in the 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey receives a customised report. In addition, the State government is supplied with this State-wide summary report of the aggregate results of 'Core' and 'Optional' questions asked across all council areas surveyed, which is available at:

<https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/our-programs/council-community-satisfaction-survey>

Tailored questions commissioned by individual councils are reported only to the commissioning council and not otherwise shared unless by express written approval of the commissioning council.



Appendix B: Glossary of terms

Core questions: Compulsory inclusion questions for all councils participating in the CSS.

CSS: 2023 Victorian Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.

Council group: One of five classified groups, comprising: metropolitan, interface, regional centres, large rural and small rural.

Council group average: The average result for all participating councils in the council group.

Highest / lowest: The result described is the highest or lowest result across a particular demographic sub-group e.g. men, for the specific question being reported. Reference to the result for a demographic sub-group being the highest or lowest does not imply that it is significantly higher or lower, unless this is specifically mentioned.

Index score: A score calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale). This score is sometimes reported as a figure in brackets next to the category being described, e.g. men 50+ (60).

Optional questions: Questions which councils had an option to include or not.

Percentages: Also referred to as 'detailed results', meaning the proportion of responses, expressed as a percentage.

Sample: The number of completed interviews, e.g. for a council or within a demographic sub-group.

Significantly higher / lower: The result described is significantly higher or lower than the comparison result based on a statistical significance test at the 95% confidence limit. If the result referenced is statistically higher or lower then this will be specifically mentioned, however not all significantly higher or lower results are referenced in summary reporting.

State-wide average: The average result for all participating councils in the State.

Tailored questions: Individual questions tailored by and only reported to the commissioning council.

Weighting: Weighting factors are applied to the sample for each council based on available age and gender proportions from ABS census information to ensure reported results are proportionate to the actual population of the council, rather than the achieved survey sample.

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John Scales
Founder
jscales@jwsresearch.com

Mark Zuker
Managing Director
mzucker@jwsresearch.com

Katrina Cox
Director of Client Services
kcox@jwsresearch.com



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