2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey

Ararat Rural City Council

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

JWS RESEARCH

Contents

Background and objectives 3

Key findings and recommendations 6

Detailed findings 14

- Overall performance 15
- Customer service 33
- Communication 39
- Council direction 44
- Individual service areas 50
  - Community consultation and engagement 51
  - Lobbying on behalf of the community 55
  - Decisions made in the interest of the community 59
  - Condition of sealed local roads 63
  - Informing the community 67
  - Condition of local streets and footpaths 71
  - Elderly support services 75
  - Recreational facilities 79
  - Appearance of public areas 83
  - Art centres and libraries 87
  - Community and cultural activities 91
  - Waste management 95
  - Business and community development and tourism 99
  - Planning and building permits 103
  - Environmental sustainability 107
  - Emergency and disaster management 111
  - Roadside slashing and weed control 115
  - Maintenance of unsealed roads 119

Detailed demographics 123

Appendix A: Index scores, margins of error and significant differences 125

Appendix B: Further project information 129

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-sixth 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 26 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 26 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.

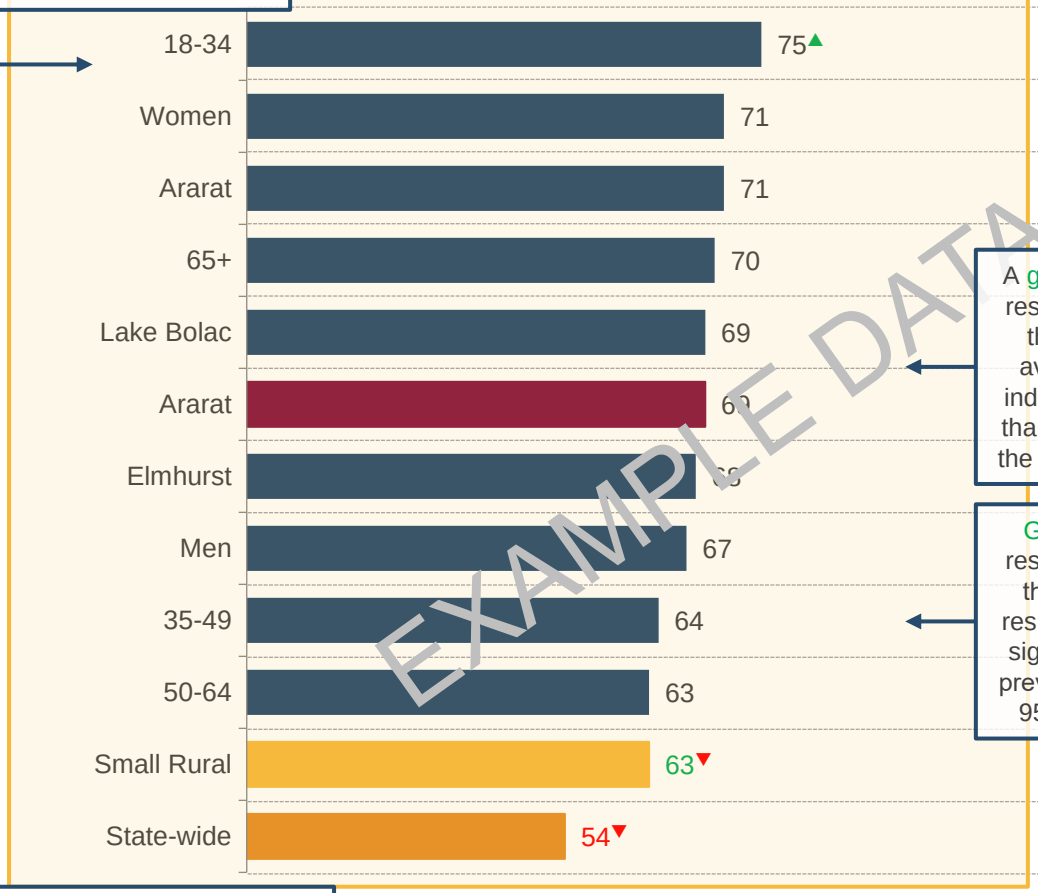
Participation in the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is optional. Participating councils have various choices as to the content of the questionnaire and the sample size to be surveyed, depending on their individual strategic, financial and other considerations.

How to read index score charts in this report

Main chart shows the results among the total sample, subgroups, group average and State-wide average

Chart title explains the data shown in the chart

Previous results



2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
70	73	72	75	71	74	72	77	73
69	72	72	72	74	73	74	71	74
69	70	72	71	70	72	73	71	74
				72	71	71	71	76
				72	72	70	71	73
				71	72	71	72	73
				70	72	71	72	72
				67	71	69	72	73
				71	74	72	69	70
				67	66	70	66	73
62	65	67	66	67	65	64	66	67
56	59	61	58	60	59	59	59	60

A green arrow indicates the result is significantly higher than the overall council average and a red arrow indicates significantly lower than the council average, at the 95% confidence interval.

Green text indicates the result is significantly higher than the previous year's result and red text indicates significantly lower than the previous year's result, at the 95% confidence interval.

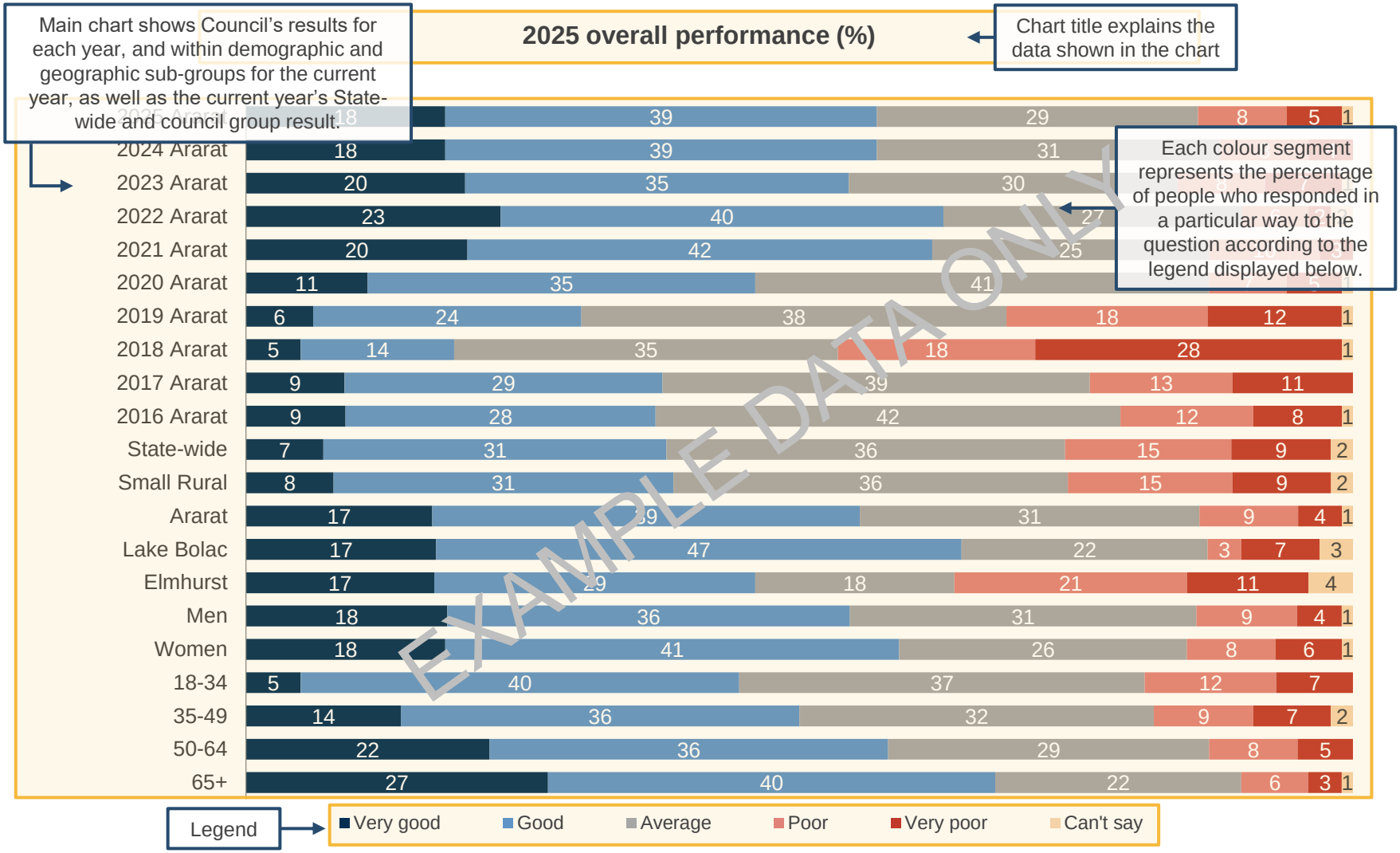
EXAMPLE DATA ONLY

Question asked and base size(s)

Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Ararat Rural 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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

How to read stacked bar charts in this report

Main chart shows Council's results for each year, and within demographic and geographic sub-groups for the current year, as well as the current year's State-wide and council group result.



EXAMPLE DATA ONLY

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Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Key findings and recommendations

Ararat Rural City Council – at a glance

Overall council performance

Results shown are index scores out of 100.

Ararat 64

Small Rural 54

State-wide 53

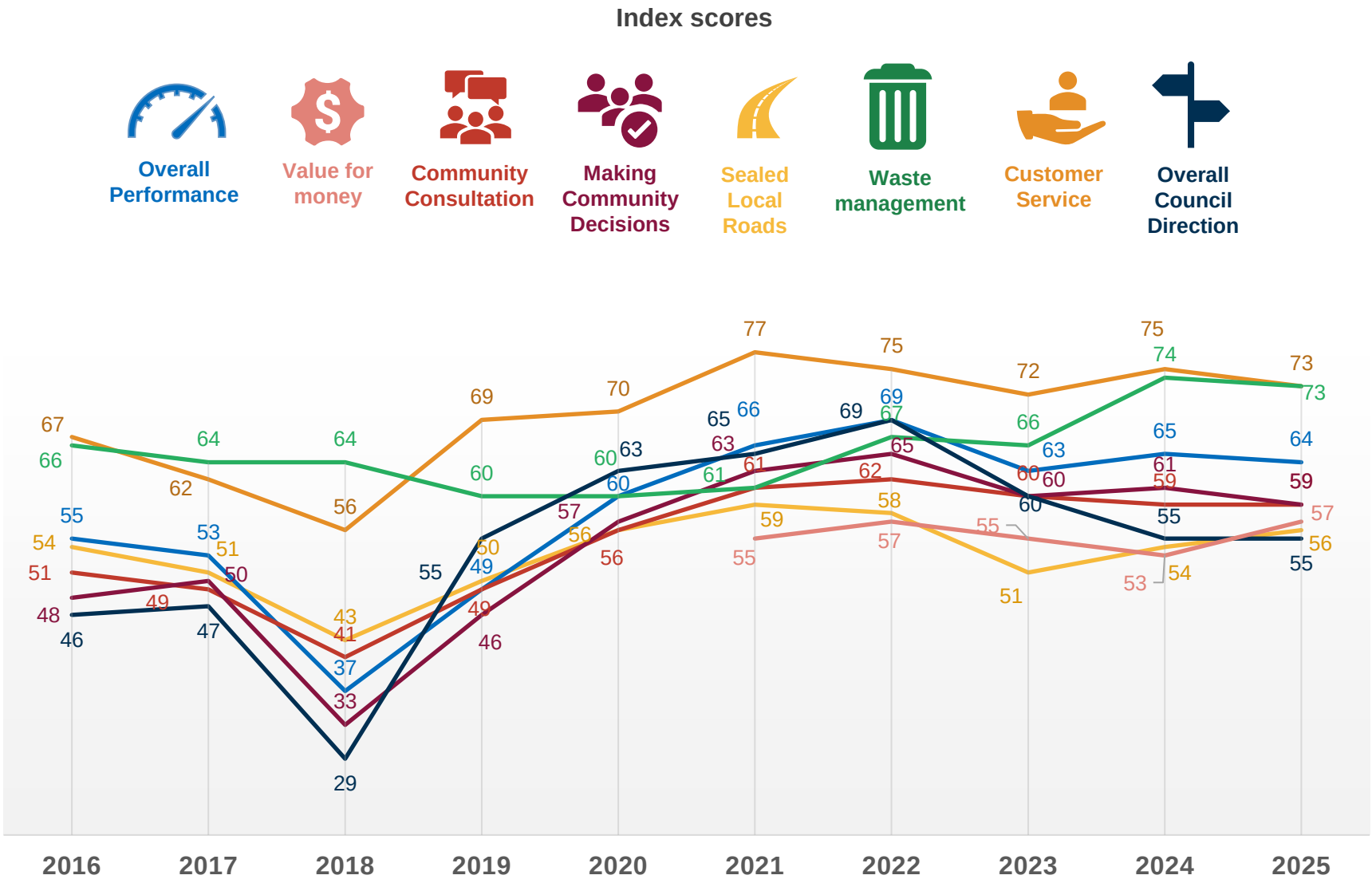
Council performance compared to group average

Top 3 performing areas	
Art centres & libraries	▲ higher
Emergency & disaster mngt	▲ higher
Waste management	▲ higher

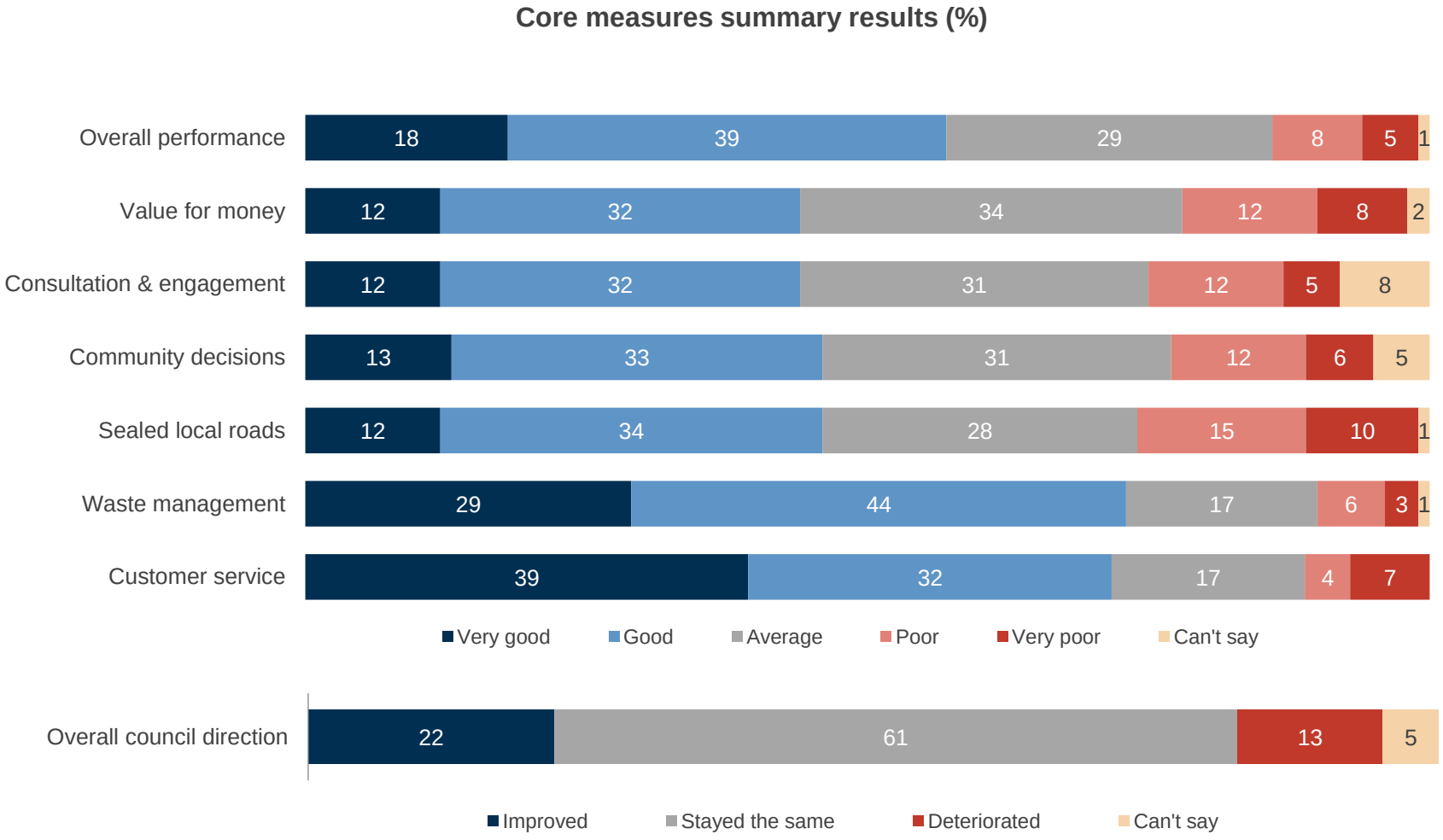
Bottom 3 performing areas	
Unsealed roads	▲ higher
Planning & building permits	▲ higher
Slashing & weed control	▲ higher

Customer service	▲ higher

Summary of core measures



Summary of core measures



Summary of Ararat Rural City Council performance

Services		Ararat 2025	Ararat 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025	Highest score	Lowest score
	Overall performance	**64**	65	54	53	65+ years	18-34 years
	Value for money	**57**	53	47	47	65+ years	18-34 years
	Overall council direction	**55**	55	46	46	65+ years	18-34 years
	Customer service	**73**	75	65	66	Women	Men
	Art centres & libraries	**75**	78	72	73	50+ years, Women	18-34 years
	Emergency & disaster mngt	**75**	76	66	65	65+ years	35-49 years
	Waste management	**73**	74	66	65	65+ years	35-49 years
	Recreational facilities	**72**	73	66	67	50-64 years	35-49 years
	Appearance of public areas	**71**	72	70	68	50-64 years	18-34 years
	Elderly support services	**67**	68	66	63	65+ years	18-34 years

Significantly higher / lower than Ararat Rural City Council 2025 result at the 95% confidence interval.
Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Summary of Ararat Rural City Council performance

Services		Ararat 2025	Ararat 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025	Highest score	Lowest score
	Community & cultural	**66**	67	68	65	65+ years	18-34 years
	Environmental sustainability	**64**	63	58	59	50-64 years	35-49 years
	Bus/community dev./tourism	**63**	66	57	56	65+ years	18-34 years
	Informing the community	**61**	61	57	56	65+ years	35-49 years
	Lobbying	**60**	60	51	49	65+ years	18-34 years
	Community decisions	**59**	61	50	49	65+ years	18-34 years
	Consultation & engagement	**59**	59	51	50	65+ years	18-64 years
	Local streets & footpaths	**59**	57	53	52	50-64 years	18-34 years
	Sealed local roads	**56**	54	44	45	50-64 years	18-34 years
	Slashing & weed control	**53**	48	49	47	65+ years	35-49 years

Significantly higher / lower than Ararat Rural City Council 2025 result at the 95% confidence interval.
Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Summary of Ararat Rural City Council performance

Services	Ararat 2025	Ararat 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025	Highest score	Lowest score
Planning & building permits	**51**	54	43	43	65+ years	50-64 years
Unsealed roads	**48**	45	40	38	65+ years	18-34 years

Significantly higher / lower than Ararat Rural City Council 2025 result at the 95% confidence interval.
Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Focus areas for the next 12 months

Overview

Ararat Rural City Council's overall performance index of 64 experienced a (not significant) one-point decline since the previous result. Performance perceptions on most individual service areas are not significantly different to 2024, with the exceptions of slashing and weed control, where performance ratings improved significantly, and art centres and libraries, where performance ratings declined significantly.

Key influences on perceptions of overall performance

Council should focus on maintaining and improving performance in the individual service area that most influences perception of overall performance, namely, decisions made in the interest of the community. Following this, the more moderately influential but related service areas of consultation and engagement, and informing the community, should be prioritised as areas for improvement in the year ahead. Communication with residents in Council decision making is important to ensure residents feel heard on key local issues.

Comparison to state and area grouping

Importantly, Council performs significantly higher than both the Small Rural group and State-wide averages in almost all areas evaluated. Council performs in line with the group average but significantly higher than the State-wide average in the appearance of public areas and elderly support services. Community and cultural activities is the only service area where Council performs in line with the Small Rural group and State-wide averages.

Maintain gains achieved to date

Over the next 12 months, Council should look to uphold and build upon its relatively strong performance across many service areas, particularly waste management, and emergency and disaster management (both of which are influential in perceptions of overall performance). A focus for Council should be to abate the significant declines in perceptions among 18 to 34 year olds in several service areas, including community decisions and lobbying, to shore up the overall positive assessment achieved this year.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Overall performance

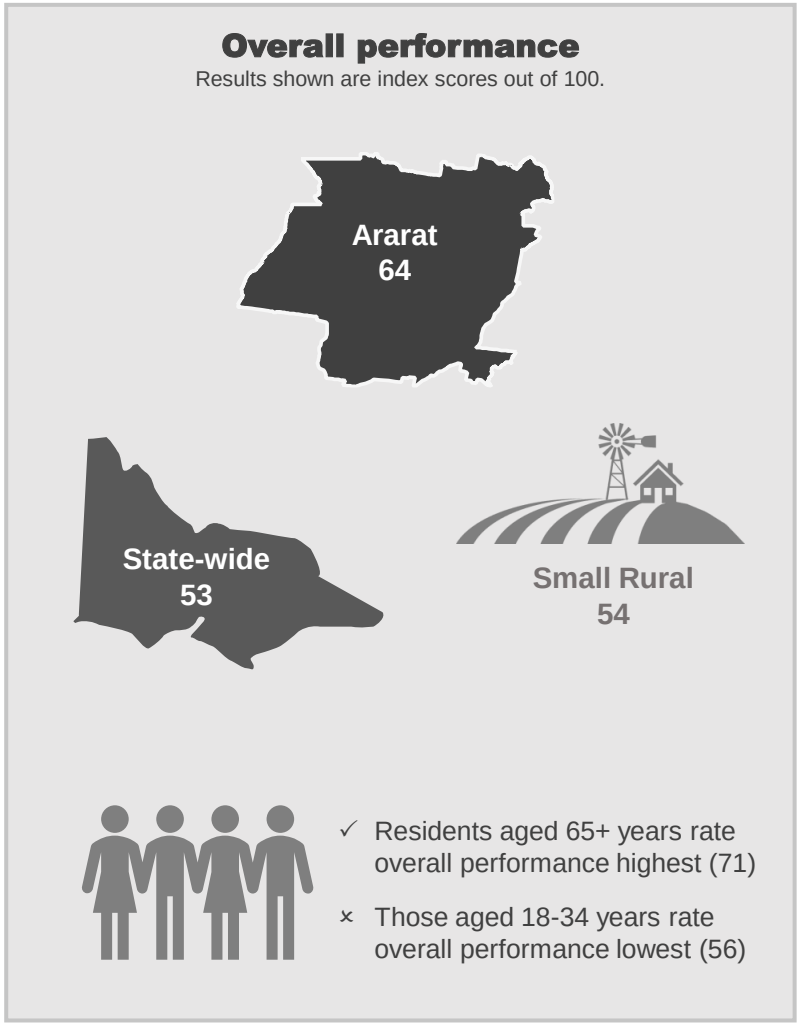
Overall performance

The overall performance index score of 64 for Ararat Rural City Council is mostly consistent with 2024, albeit a one-point decline.

Council's overall performance is rated statistically significantly higher (at the 95% confidence interval) than both the State-wide and Small Rural council group averages (index scores of 53 and 54 respectively).

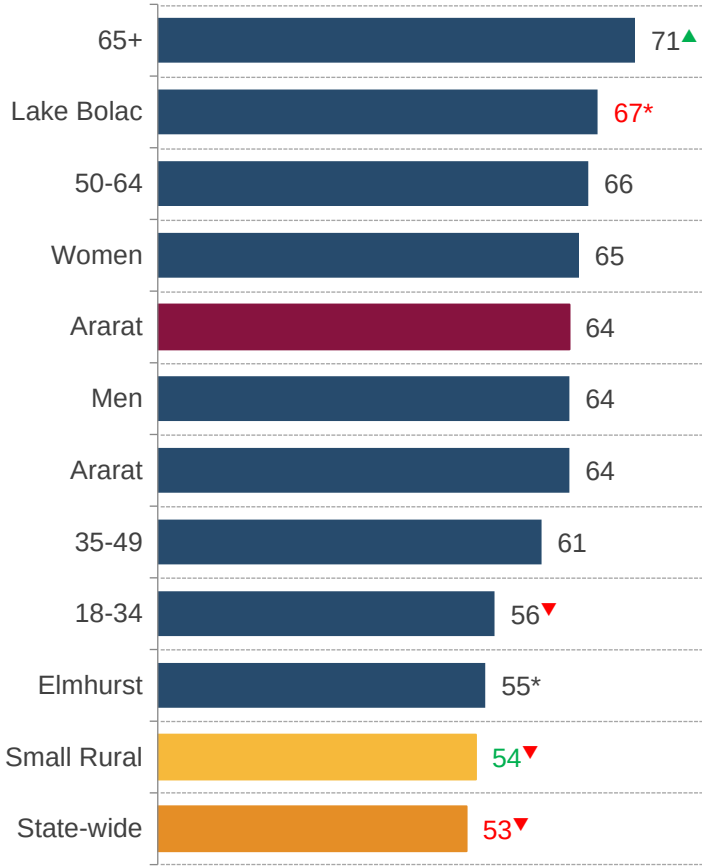
- Overall performance ratings are significantly higher than average among residents aged 65 years and over (index score 71) and significantly lower among 18 to 34 year olds (56).
- Elmhurst residents provide the lowest ratings (55 – noting this is a small sample size and should be viewed with caution).
- While based on a small sample size, ratings among Lake Bolac residents (index score of 67) experienced a significant 16-point decline since the last evaluation (but remain above average).

More than four in ten residents (44%) rate the value for money they receive from Council in infrastructure and services provided to their community as 'very good' or 'good'. This is more than twice as many as those who rate Council as 'very poor' or 'poor' (20%). A further 34% rate Council as 'average' in terms of providing value for money.



Overall performance

2025 overall performance (index scores)

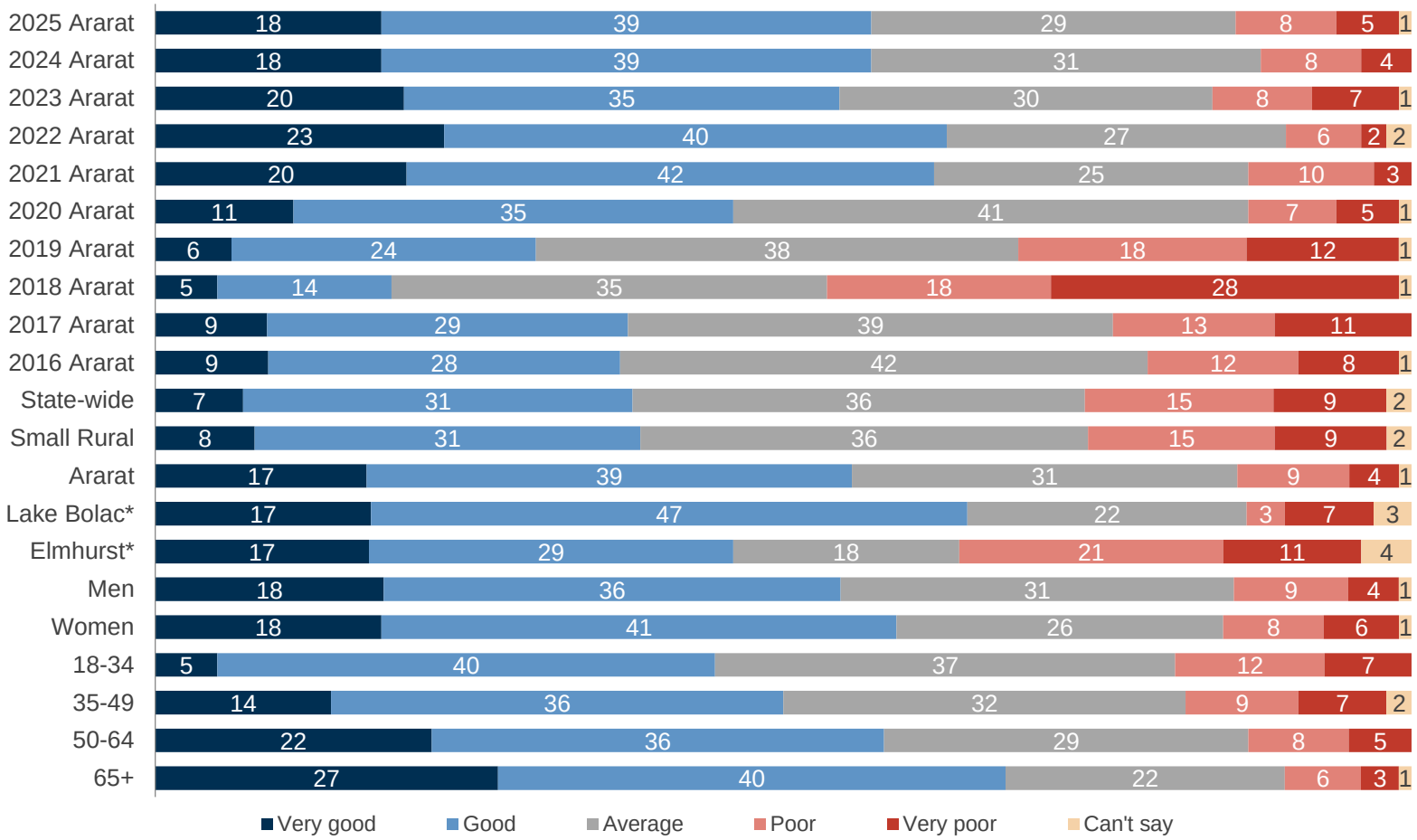


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	69	70	75	73	63	52	41	54	57
Lake Bolac	83	74	70	72	32	29	19	48	53
50-64	62	61	66	63	61	50	39	54	54
Women	64	63	69	67	62	50	43	56	55
Ararat	65	63	69	66	60	49	37	53	55
Men	66	63	69	65	58	48	33	50	55
Ararat	64	63	70	66	61	51	41	54	55
35-49	61	50	62	62	53	40	27	50	53
18-34	62	65	70	63	60	52	42	53	56
Elmhurst	58	53	67	82	54	66	38	50	71
Small Rural	53	55	58	60	56	58	56	58	57
State-wide	54	56	59	61	58	60	59	59	59

Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Ararat Rural 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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Overall performance

2025 overall performance (%)



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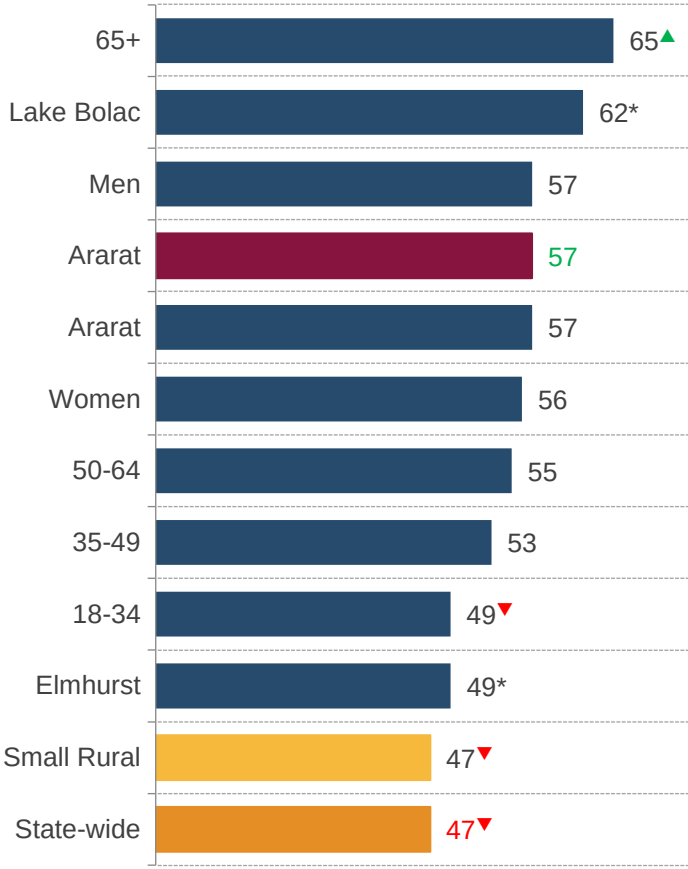
Value for money in services and infrastructure

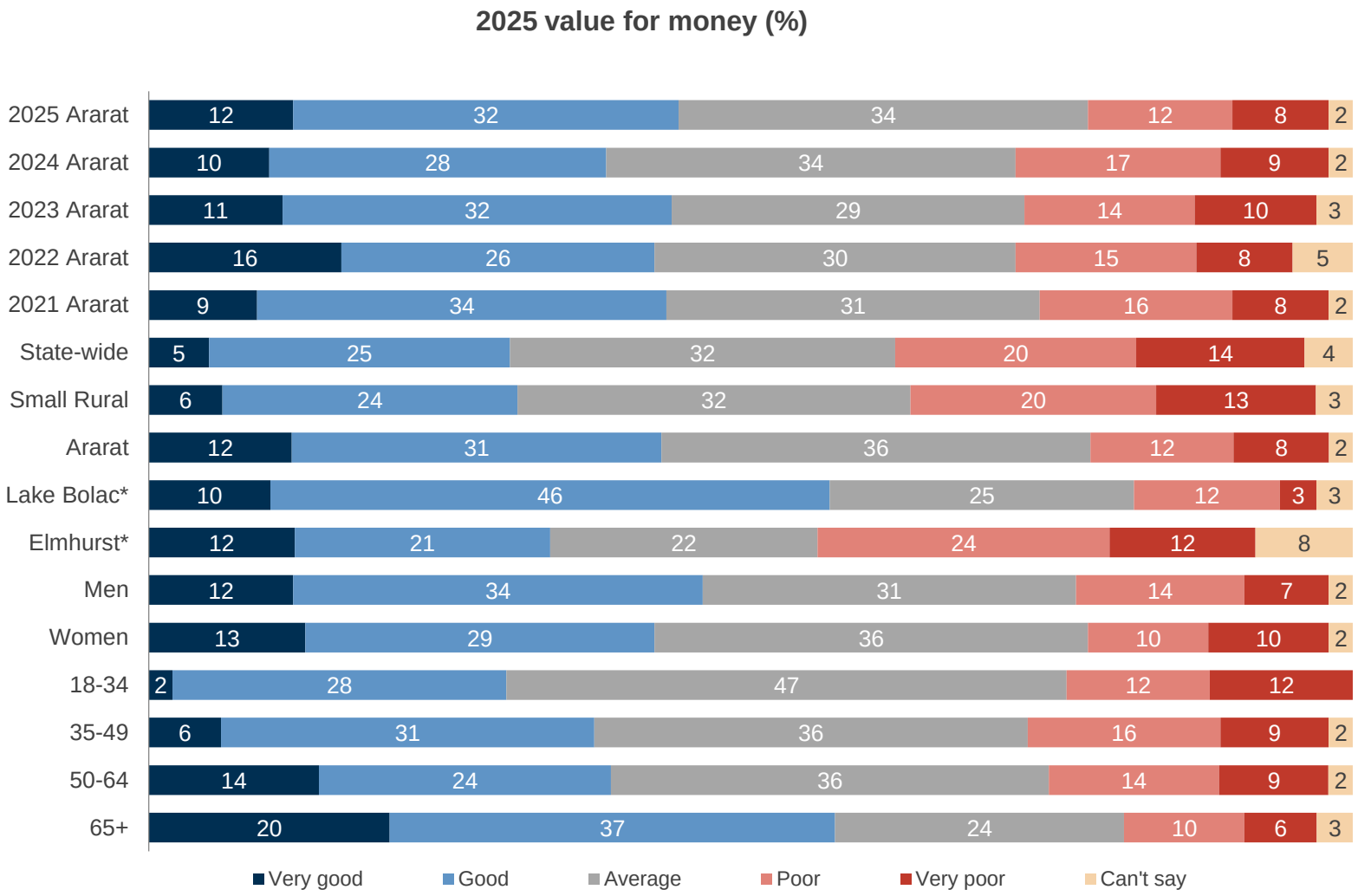
2025 value for money (index scores)



	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	61	64	66	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake Bolac	61	55	48	41	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	53	55	55	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	53	55	57	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	53	55	60	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	52	55	60	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	47	54	54	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	46	39	41	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	48	54	61	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmhurst	46	45	47	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	47	49	51	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	48	49	53	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q3b. How would you rate Ararat Rural City Council at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 55 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Value for money in services and infrastructure



Q3b. How would you rate Ararat Rural City Council at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 55 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Top performing service areas

Council performs best in the areas of art centres and libraries, and emergency and disaster management (both with an index score of 75). Council continues to performs significantly higher than the State-wide and Small Rural group averages in these service areas.

In the area of art centres and libraries, however, Council's rated performance declined significantly by three points in the current evaluation, negating the significant improvement in the previous evaluation.

- Contributing to this result are significantly declined ratings among residents aged 18 to 34 years and those in the Ararat area.

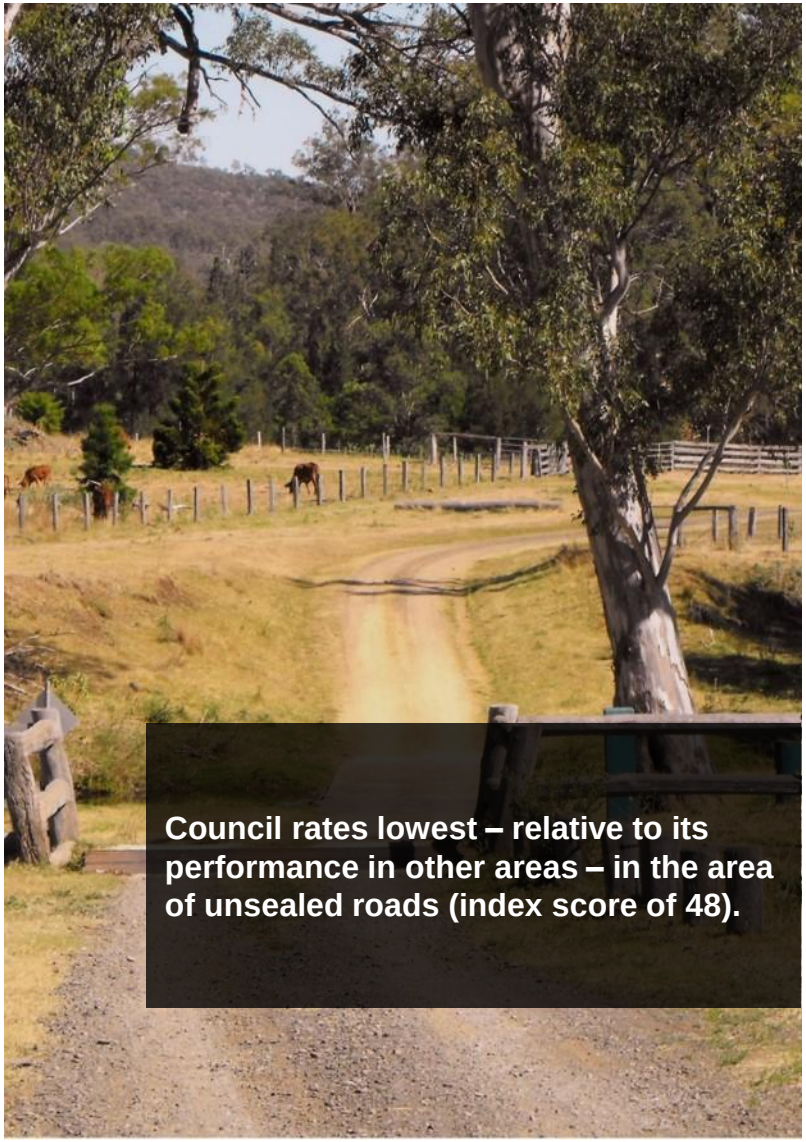
Council's rated performance in emergency and disaster management also significantly declined among 18 to 34 year olds, but significantly improved among residents of Lake Bolac (noting the latter is based on a small sample size and should be interpreted with caution).

Waste management is Council's next highest-rated service area. Here, Council also performs significantly higher than the State-wide and Small Rural group averages.

- In each of the aforementioned areas, performance is rated highest among residents aged 65 years and over (significantly higher in emergency and disaster management, and waste management).

Art centres and libraries, and emergency and disaster management (both with an index score of 75) are the areas where Council performed best in 2025.

Low performing service areas



Maintenance of unsealed roads (index score of 48) remains the area where Council rates lowest, despite a (not significant) three-point improvement this year.

- This service area continues to exhibit the greatest disparity between perceived community importance and Council performance (36-point net differential).

Planning and building permits is Council's next lowest-rated service area (index score of 51, down three points from 2024).

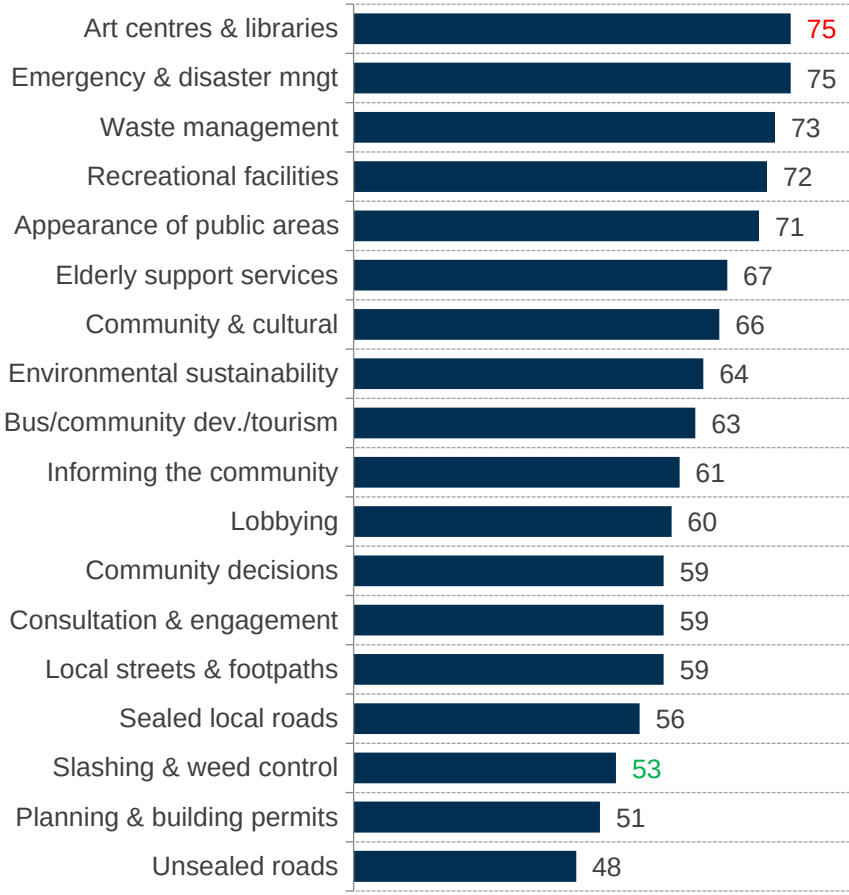
- Since the last evaluation, ratings of this service area declined significantly among women.

Slashing and weed control (index score of 53) is another service area where Council performs relatively less well. Promisingly, ratings in this area experienced a significant five-point increase since the last evaluation.

- Contributing to this improved result are significantly increased ratings among residents aged 50 to 54 years and those in the Ararat area.
- While based on a small sample size, ratings among Lake Bolac residents are significantly below average and at the lowest levels to-date. Given Lake Bolac is the only location where residents' perceptions have worsened, service enhancements in this area should be prioritised in the year ahead.

Individual service area performance

2025 individual service area performance (index scores)

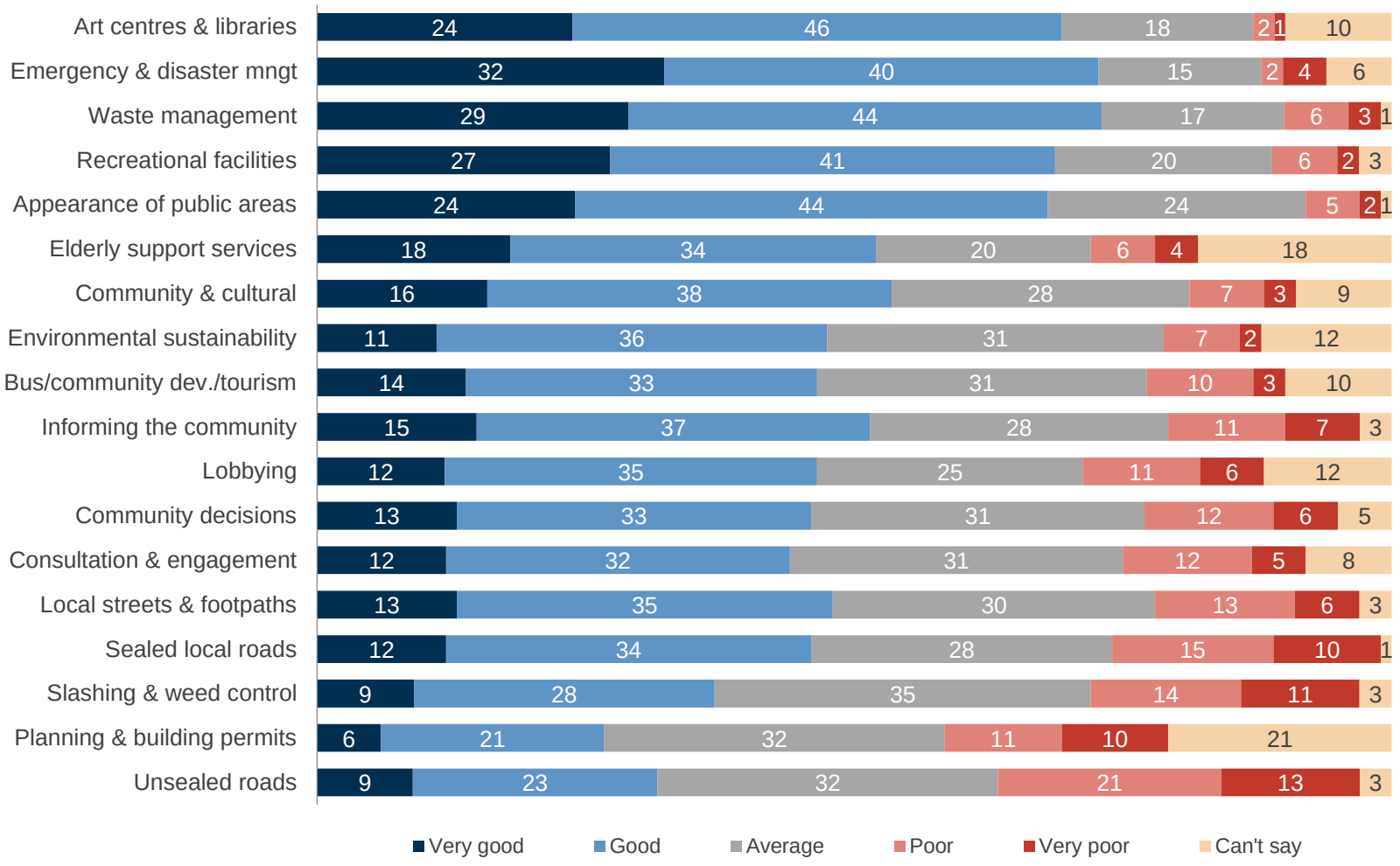


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Art centres & libraries	78	75	75	74	78	76	70	70	69
Emergency & disaster mngt	76	72	74	75	74	73	70	72	72
Waste management	74	66	67	61	60	60	64	64	66
Recreational facilities	73	71	75	74	71	68	64	65	65
Appearance of public areas	72	70	76	75	73	69	65	66	72
Elderly support services	68	66	71	72	68	65	64	67	68
Community & cultural	67	65	65	64	63	63	n/a	n/a	n/a
Environmental sustainability	63	63	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bus/community dev./tourism	66	65	69	65	61	61	57	60	61
Informing the community	61	60	64	63	58	49	44	50	56
Lobbying	60	61	64	63	56	50	44	53	54
Community decisions	61	60	65	63	57	46	33	50	48
Consultation & engagement	59	60	62	61	56	49	41	49	51
Local streets & footpaths	57	55	63	62	62	55	53	55	59
Sealed local roads	54	51	58	59	56	50	43	51	54
Slashing & weed control	48	52	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Planning & building permits	54	54	58	59	51	52	46	50	51
Unsealed roads	45	42	47	50	44	39	33	38	40

Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Individual service area performance

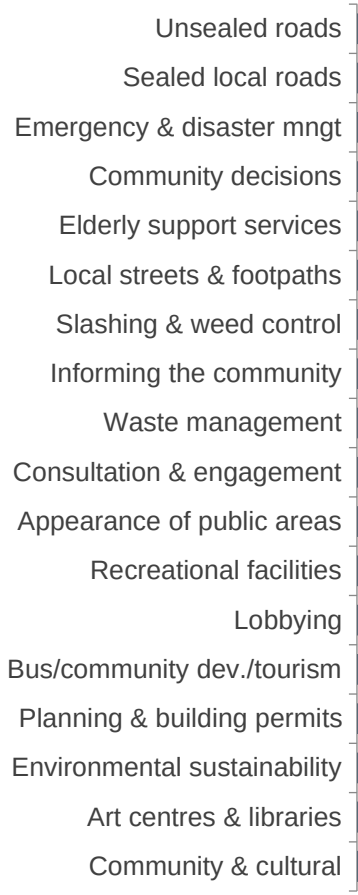
2025 individual service area performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Individual service area importance

2025 individual service area importance (index scores)

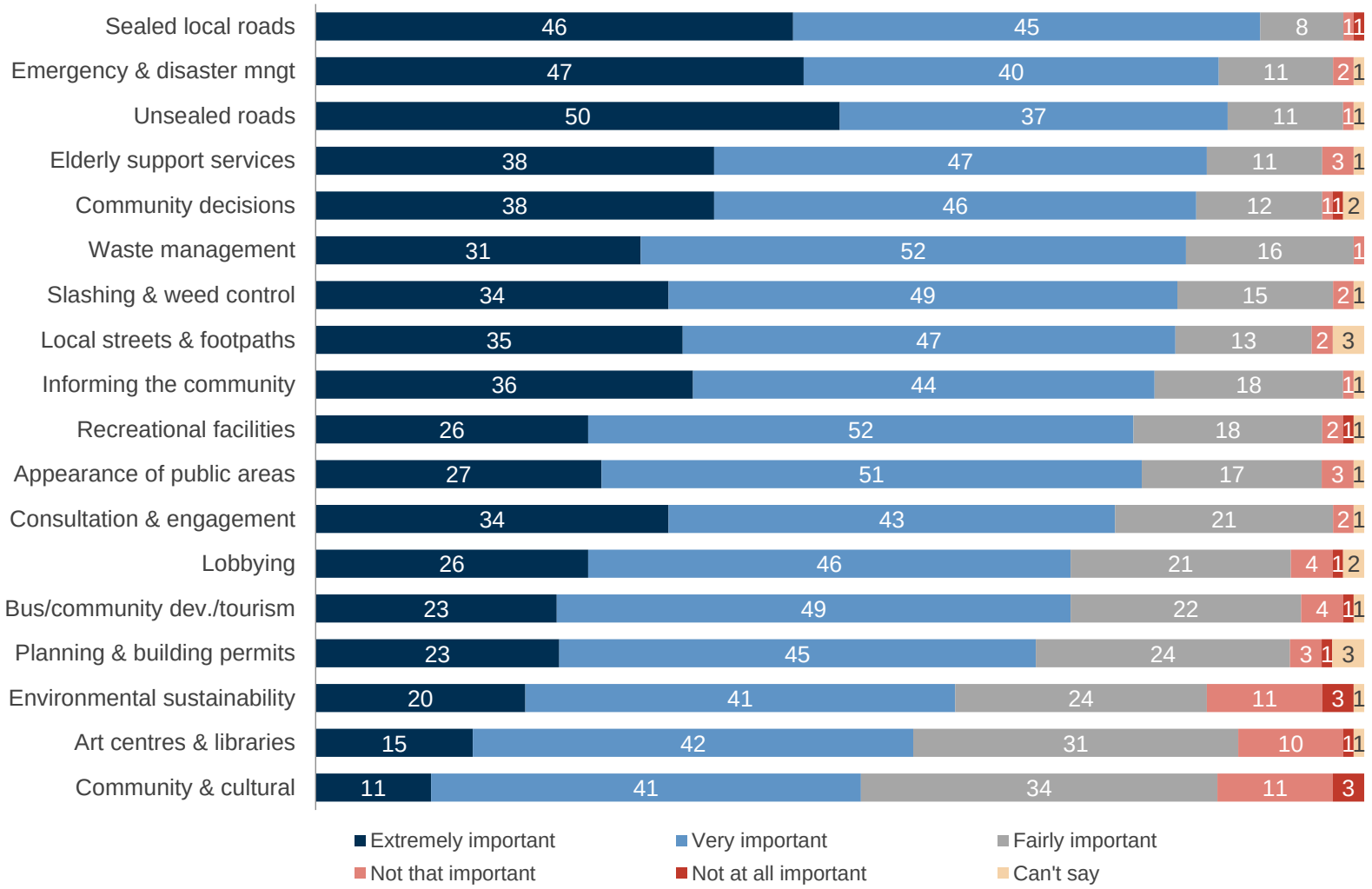


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Unsealed roads	83	86	85	81	81	84	86	83	80
Sealed local roads	82	84	82	80	81	82	n/a	n/a	n/a
Emergency & disaster mngt	85	81	80	79	82	81	80	83	80
Community decisions	81	83	80	78	83	82	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elderly support services	82	83	82	82	79	79	80	79	79
Local streets & footpaths	78	80	79	77	76	77	77	77	76
Slashing & weed control	79	80	80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Informing the community	80	79	79	77	76	77	76	76	75
Waste management	82	80	81	80	80	79	79	76	76
Consultation & engagement	77	79	76	75	74	78	74	74	75
Appearance of public areas	75	76	76	74	74	72	74	74	75
Recreational facilities	76	75	77	74	73	71	75	73	74
Lobbying	74	75	74	71	71	69	70	70	70
Bus/community dev./tourism	74	73	73	72	72	68	72	71	71
Planning & building permits	70	73	71	69	68	65	68	66	68
Environmental sustainability	68	69	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art centres & libraries	64	62	63	61	59	59	60	60	61
Community & cultural	61	64	64	62	60	60	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Individual service area importance

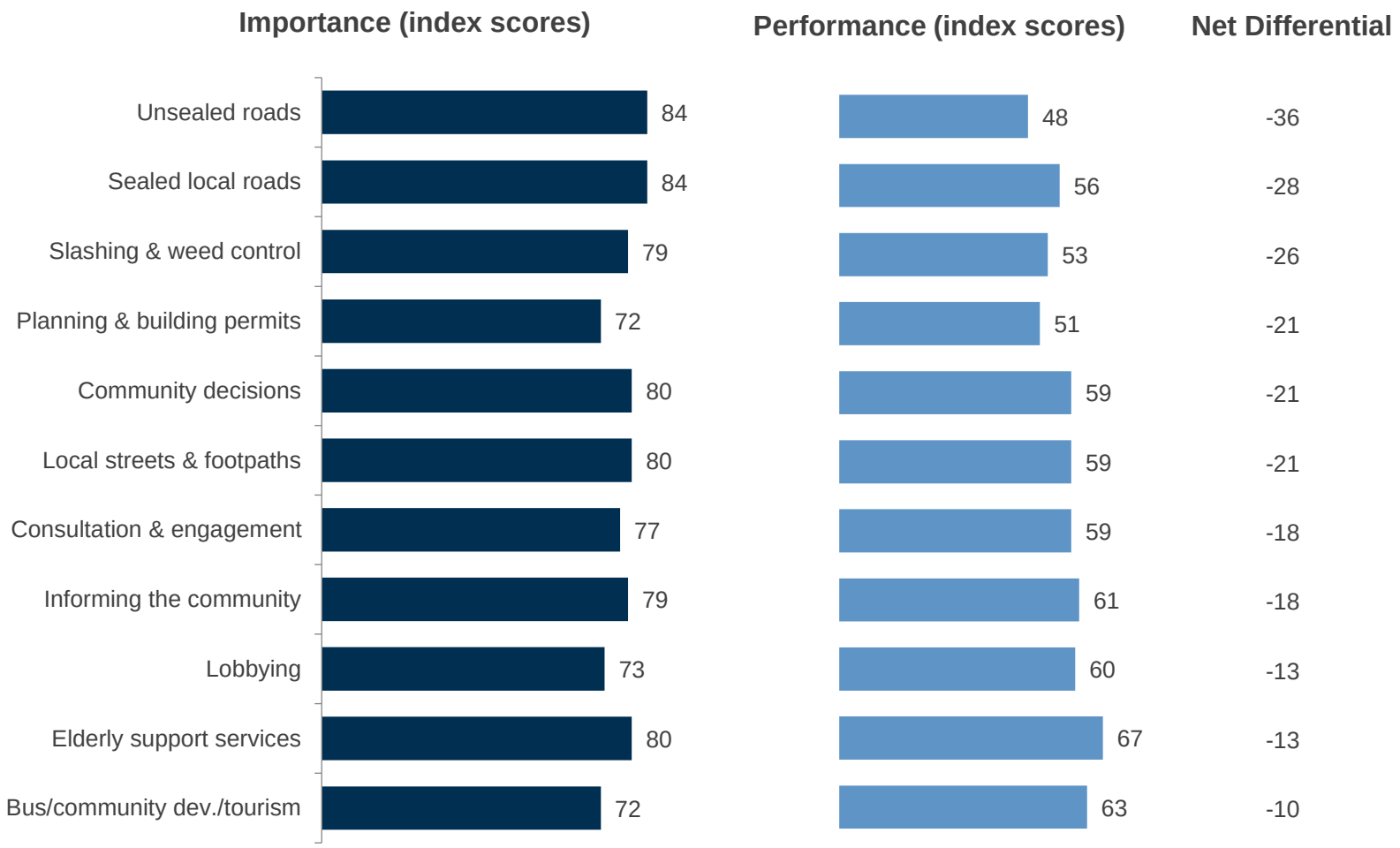
2025 individual service area importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7

Individual service areas importance vs performance

Service areas where importance exceeds performance by 10 points or more, suggesting further investigation is necessary.



Note: Net differentials are calculated based on the un-rounded importance and performance scores, then rounded to the nearest whole number, which may result in differences of +/-1% in the importance and performance scores and the net differential scores.

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.

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

- Informing the community
- Emergency management
- Waste management
- Community consultation and engagement.

Looking at these key service areas only, Council performs best on emergency management and waste management (index scores of 75 and 73 respectively).

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

Other service areas that have a more moderate influence on overall perceptions, but where Council performs relatively less well, are informing the community and community consultation (index scores of 61 and 59 respectively).

Ensuring residents are kept well informed and consulting residents about key local issues and Council activities can also help to shore up positive overall ratings of performance.

Regression analysis explained

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

In the charts that follow:

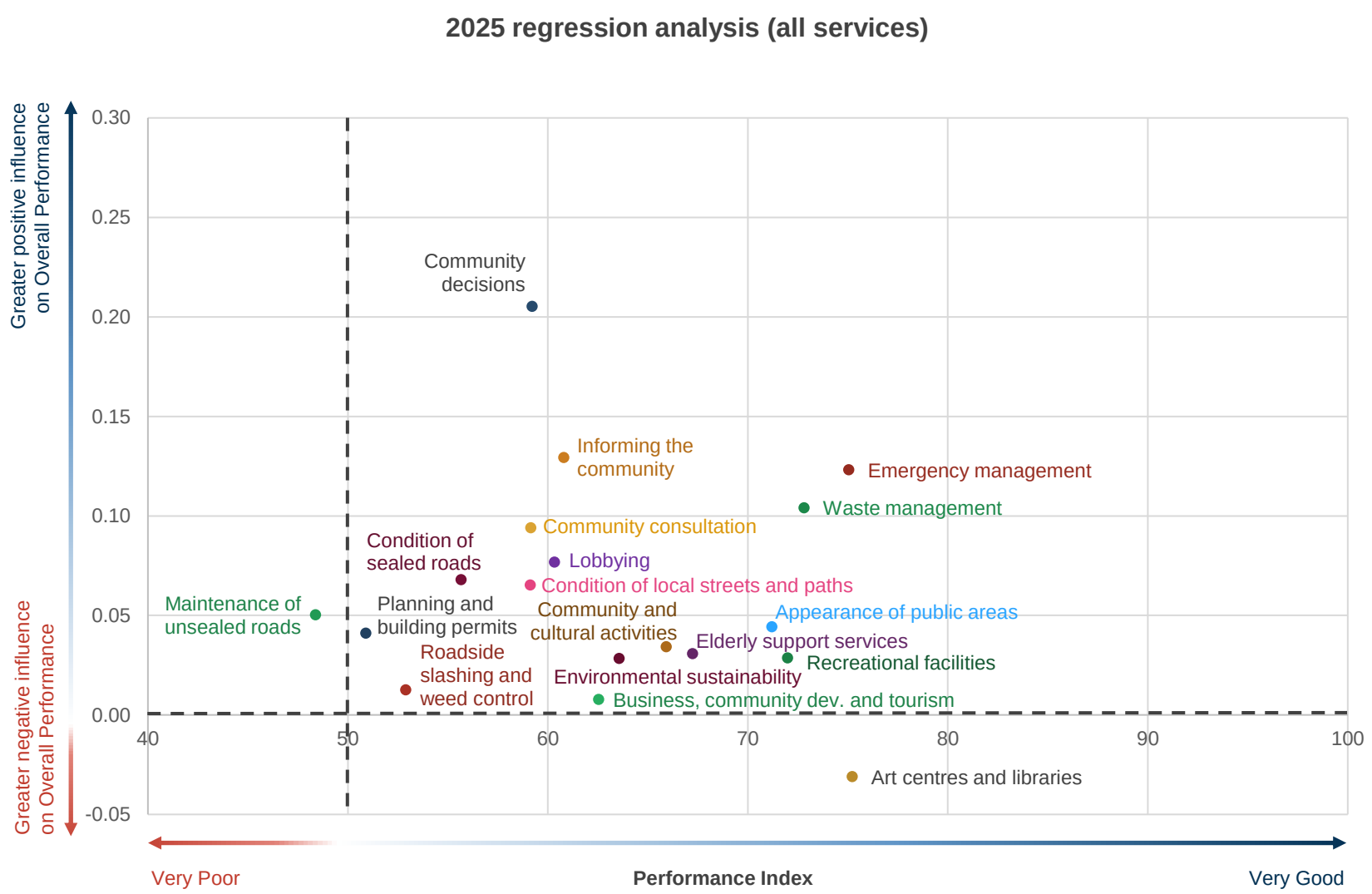
- The horizontal axis represents Council's performance index score for each individual service. Service areas appearing on the right side of the chart have a higher index score than those on the left.
- The vertical axis represents the Standardised Beta Coefficient from the multiple regression performed. 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 those 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 weaker influence on overall performance (i.e. a low Standardised Beta Coefficient) have been excluded from the analysis.

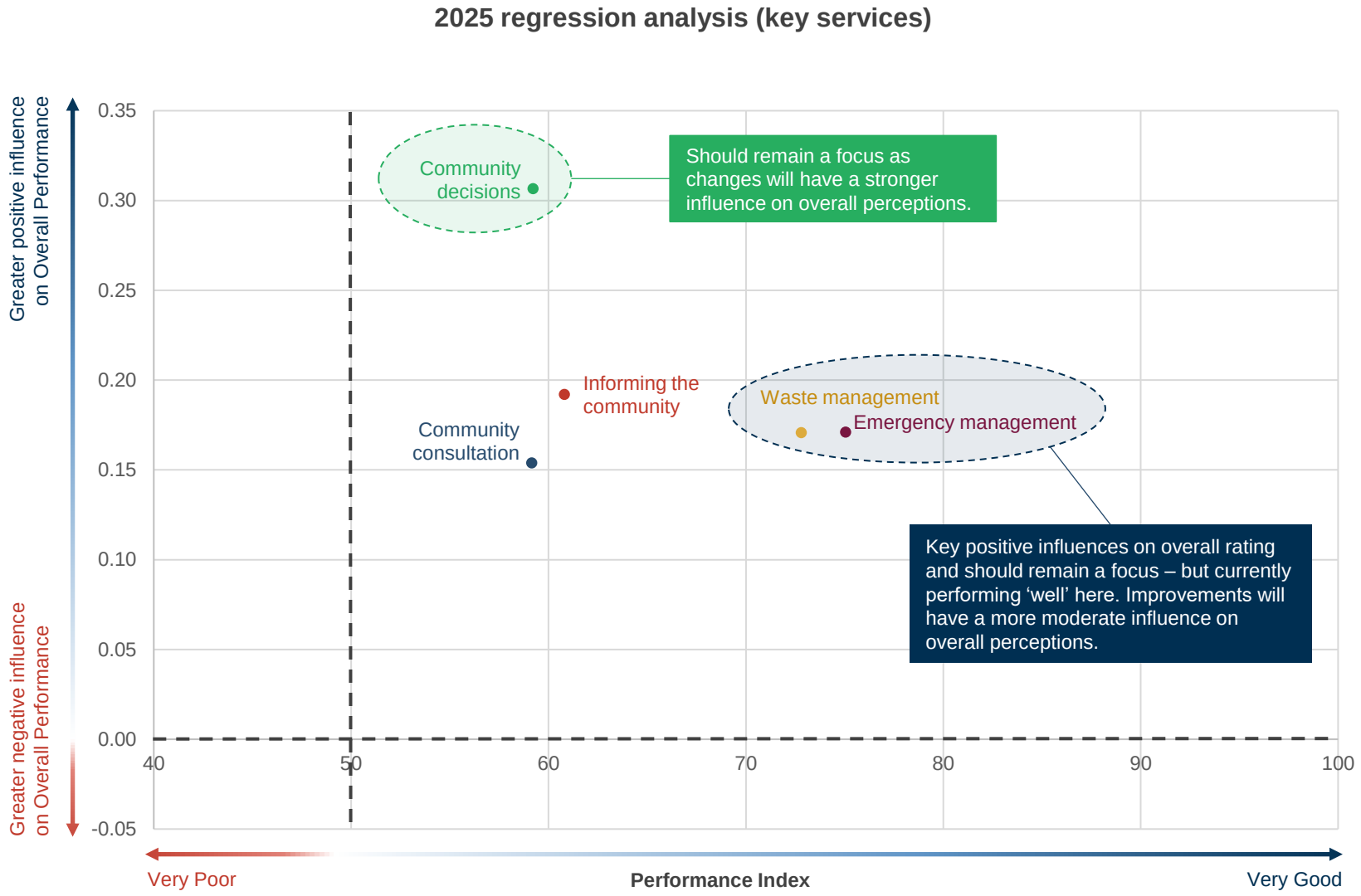
Key insights from this analysis are derived from the second chart.

Influence on overall performance: all services



The multiple regression analysis model above (all service areas) has an R^2 value of 0.674 and adjusted R^2 value of 0.659, which means that 66% 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 = 43.84.

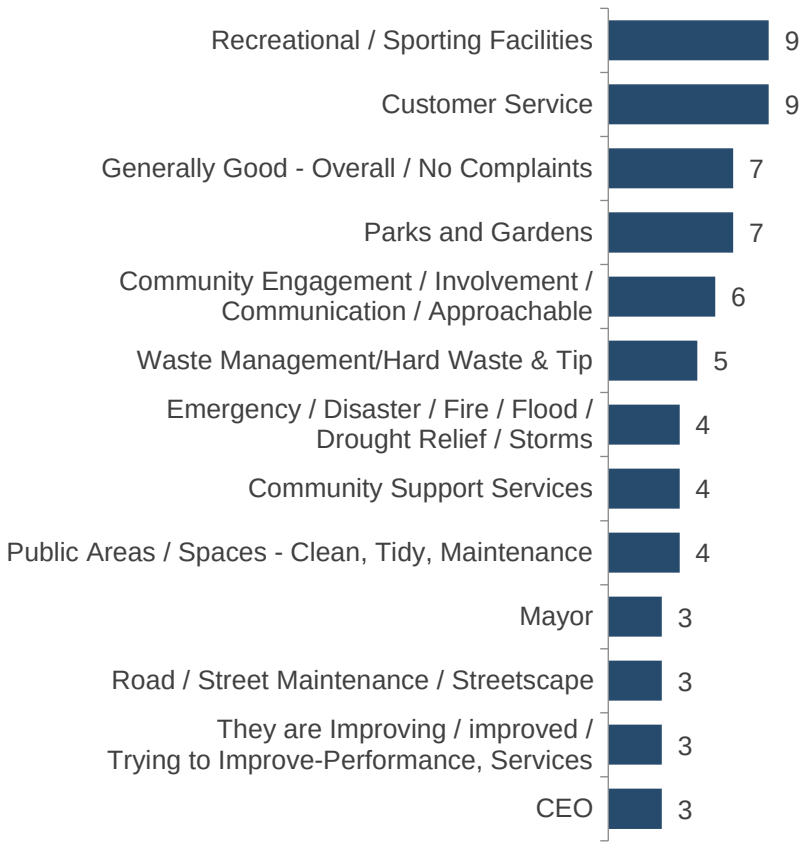
Influence on overall performance: key services



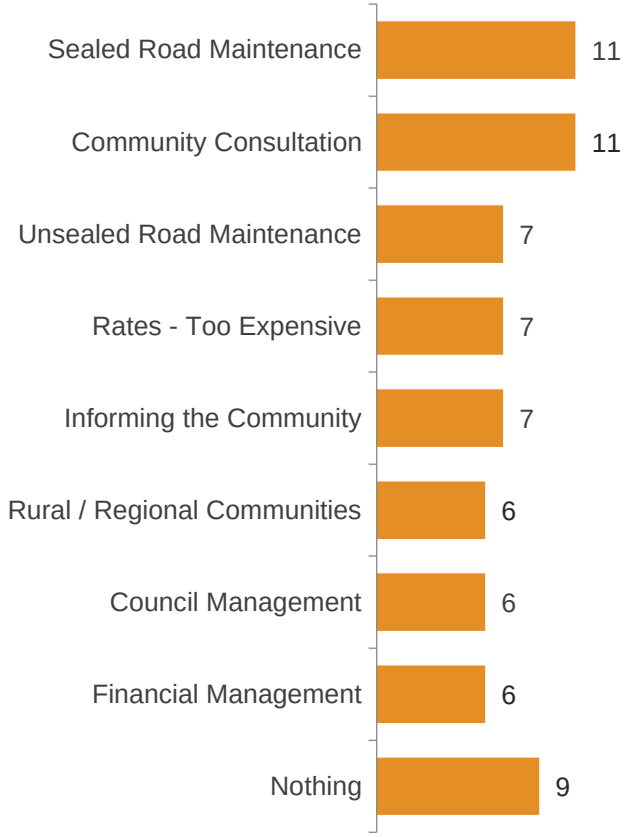
The multiple regression analysis model above (reduced set of service areas) has an R^2 value of 0.641 and adjusted R^2 value of 0.636, which means that 64% of the variance in community perceptions of overall performance can be predicted from these variables. The overall model effect was statistically significant at p = 0.0001, F = 140.48.

Best things about Council and areas for improvement

2025 best things about Council (%)
- Top mentions only -



2025 areas for improvement (%)
- Top mentions only -



Q16. Please tell me what is the ONE BEST thing about Ararat Rural City Council? It could be about any of the issues or services we have covered in this survey or it could be about something else altogether?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 29 Councils asked group: 10
Q17. What does Ararat Rural City Council MOST need to do to improve its performance?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 44 Councils asked group: 14
A verbatim listing of responses to these questions can be found in the accompanying dashboard.

Customer service

Contact with council and customer service

Contact with council

More than three in five households (62%) have had contact with Council in the last 12 months – largely in line with previous rates of contact.

- Rate of contact is significantly higher than average among residents aged 35 to 49 years (78%).

Customer service

Ararat Rural Council’s customer service index of 73 is mostly consistent with 2024 but has declined slightly by two index points.

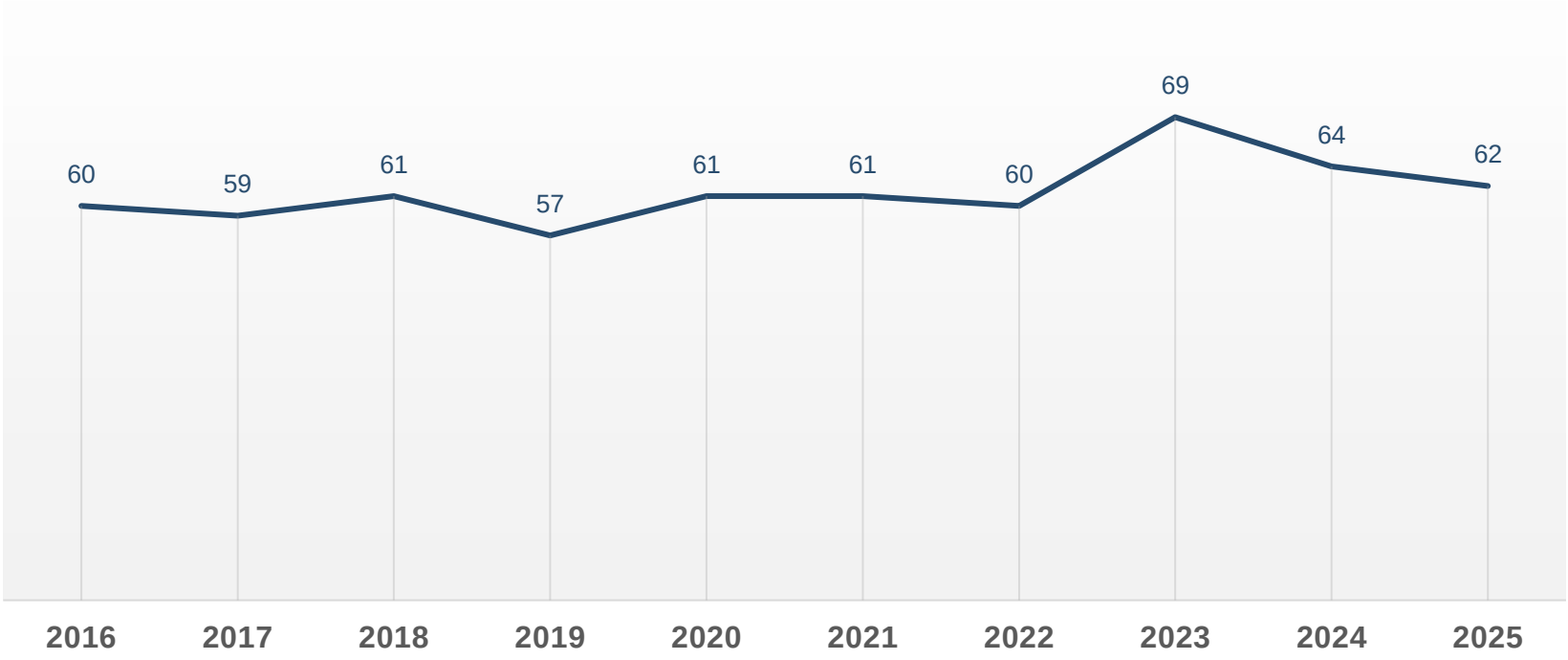
Positively, Council’s customer service continues to rate significantly higher than both the State-wide and Small Rural group averages (index scores of 66 and 65 respectively).

- Customer service ratings across demographic and geographic cohorts are not significantly different from the Council average. However, similar to overall performance perceptions, customer service is rated higher among residents in Lake Bolac and lowest among those in Elmhurst (noting these are small sample sizes and should be considered with caution).

Importantly, among those who have had contact with Council, seven in ten (71%) provide a positive customer service rating, far outweighing the 11% who provide a ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ customer service rating. Furthermore, 9% of all residents cite customer service as the best thing about Council.

Contact with council

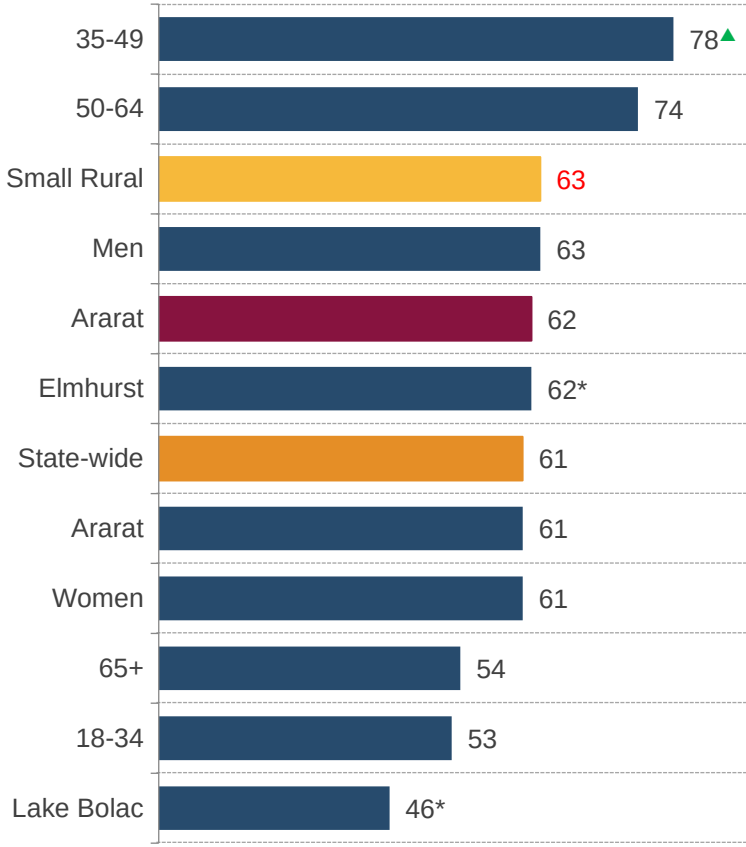
2025 contact with council (%)
Have had contact



Q5. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with Ararat Rural City Council? This may have been in person, in writing, by telephone conversation, by text message, by email or via their website or social media such as Facebook or Twitter?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 32 Councils asked group: 14

Contact with council

2025 contact with council (%)

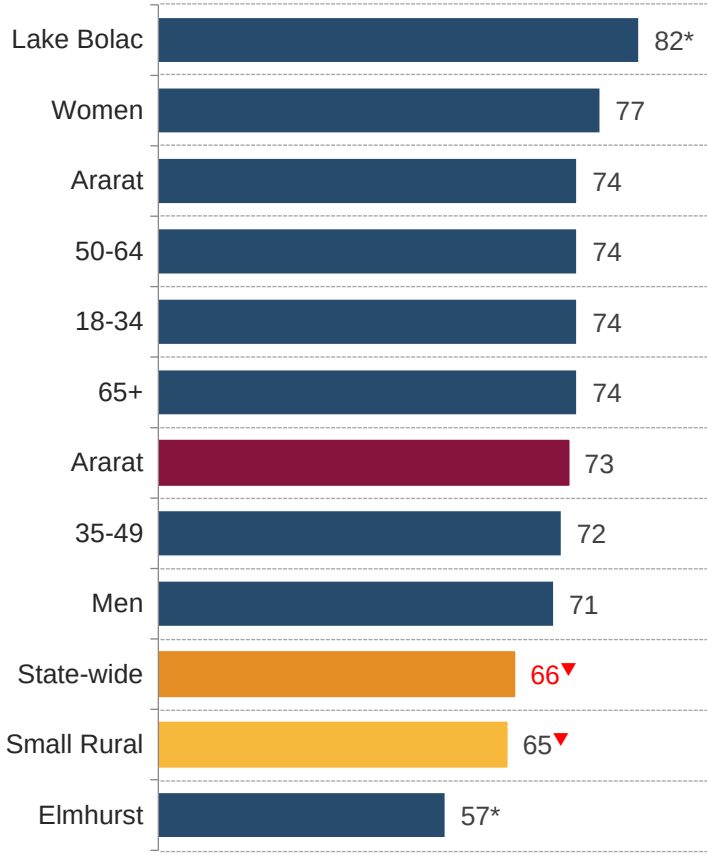


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
35-49	74	74	56	67	67	64	74	67	70
50-64	75	78	68	68	66	61	67	59	67
Small Rural	65	66	63	63	66	63	64	65	60
Men	64	68	58	61	62	57	63	60	61
Ararat	64	69	60	61	61	57	61	59	60
Elmhurst	64	90	80	64	69	51	31	18	22
State-wide	62	62	60	61	63	61	61	61	60
Ararat	63	64	57	61	61	57	59	58	59
Women	64	70	63	62	60	56	58	57	58
65+	59	69	57	56	56	54	53	56	50
18-34	57	57	63	57	59	49	49	54	57
Lake Bolac	77	94	74	69	100	72	69	71	62

Q5. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with Ararat Rural City Council? This may have been in person, in writing, by telephone conversation, by text message, by email or via their website or social media such as Facebook or Twitter?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 32 Councils asked group: 14
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Customer service rating

2025 customer service rating (index scores)

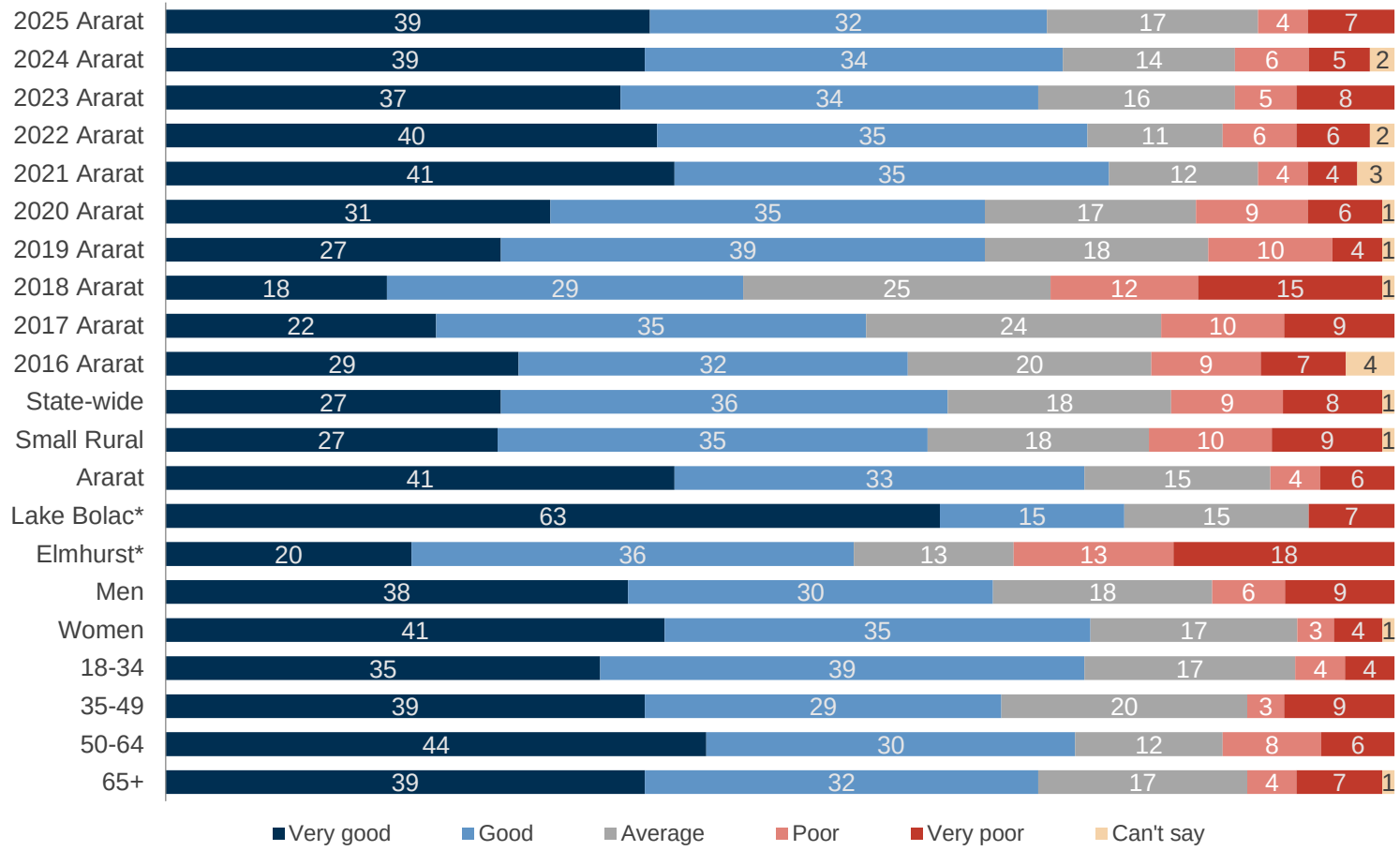


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	83	72	75	78	32	56	38	61	64
Women	77	72	77	80	68	70	61	64	73
Ararat	73	71	75	76	71	70	59	63	68
50-64	78	73	69	73	67	69	63	67	69
18-34	75	70	76	69	78	71	63	68	62
65+	77	73	76	85	73	74	56	64	67
Ararat	75	72	75	77	70	69	56	62	67
35-49	69	70	77	77	61	63	44	53	69
Men	72	72	73	74	71	69	51	61	62
State-wide	67	67	68	70	70	71	70	69	69
Small Rural	66	65	67	69	70	70	69	69	69
Elmhurst	76	73	73	88	55	77	12	100	75

Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Ararat Rural 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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Customer service rating

2025 customer service rating (%)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Ararat Rural 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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Communication

Communication

The preferred form of communication from Ararat Rural City Council about news and information and upcoming events is a newsletter sent via email (27%).

Preference for emailed newsletters continues to steadily increase over time (up from 18% in 2020). In contrast, preference for mailed newsletters has waned, dropping from 26% to 19% over the last two years.

The next preferred channels are advertising in local newspapers (17%) and social media (16%), which have also lost some appeal since the last evaluation.

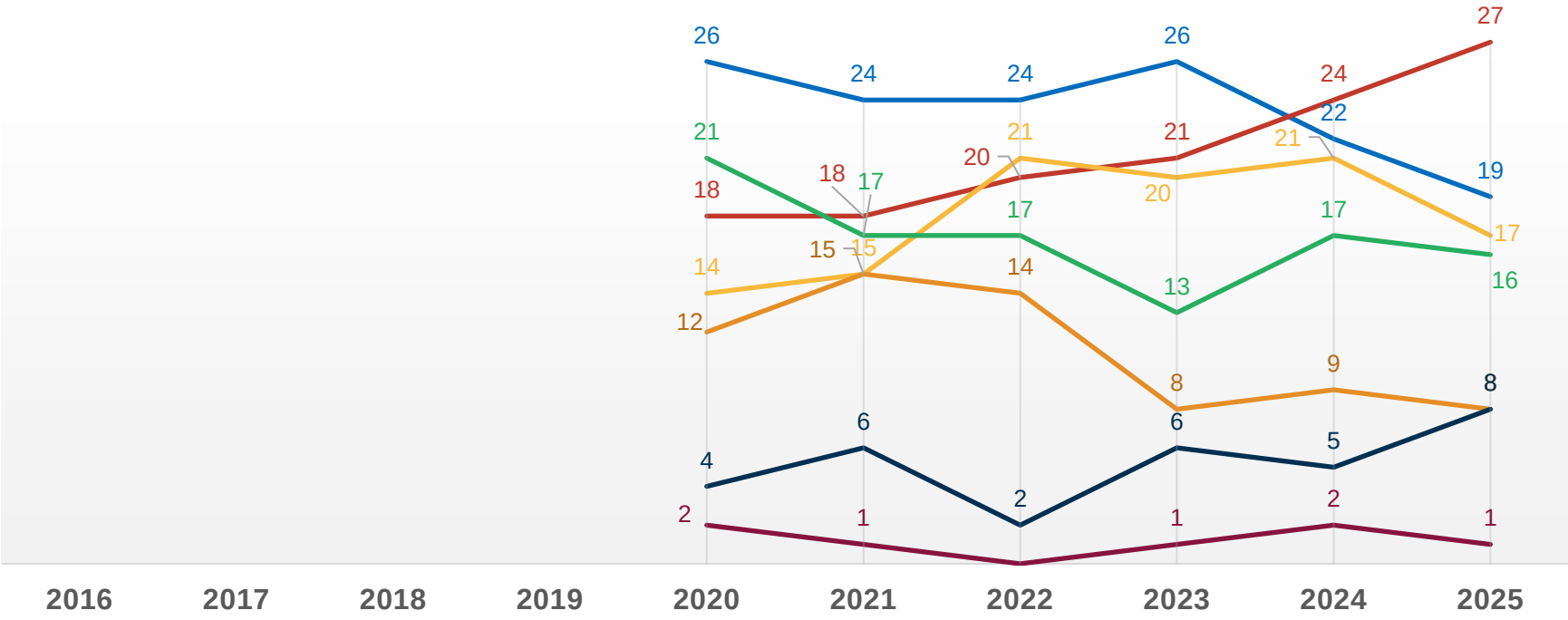
- Among residents aged under 50 years, preference for a newsletter sent via email (27%) is now preferred over social media (23%, down from 33% in 2024) and mailed newsletters (19%, up from 13%).
- Among those aged 50 years and over, emailed newsletters are also preferred (26%) ahead of advertising in local newspapers (22%, down from 28%) and mailed newsletters (19%, down from 29%). Appetite for communication via social media has also increased among residents aged 50 years and over (11%, up from 4%).

Demand for receiving Council news and information from the Council website remains low (1%). This suggests residents want Council to push key information to them, rather than proactively seeking it out.

Best form of communication

2025 best form of communication (%)

Advertising in a Local Newspaper
Council Newsletter via Mail
Council Newsletter via Email
Council Newsletter as Local Paper Insert
Council Website
Text Message
Social Media

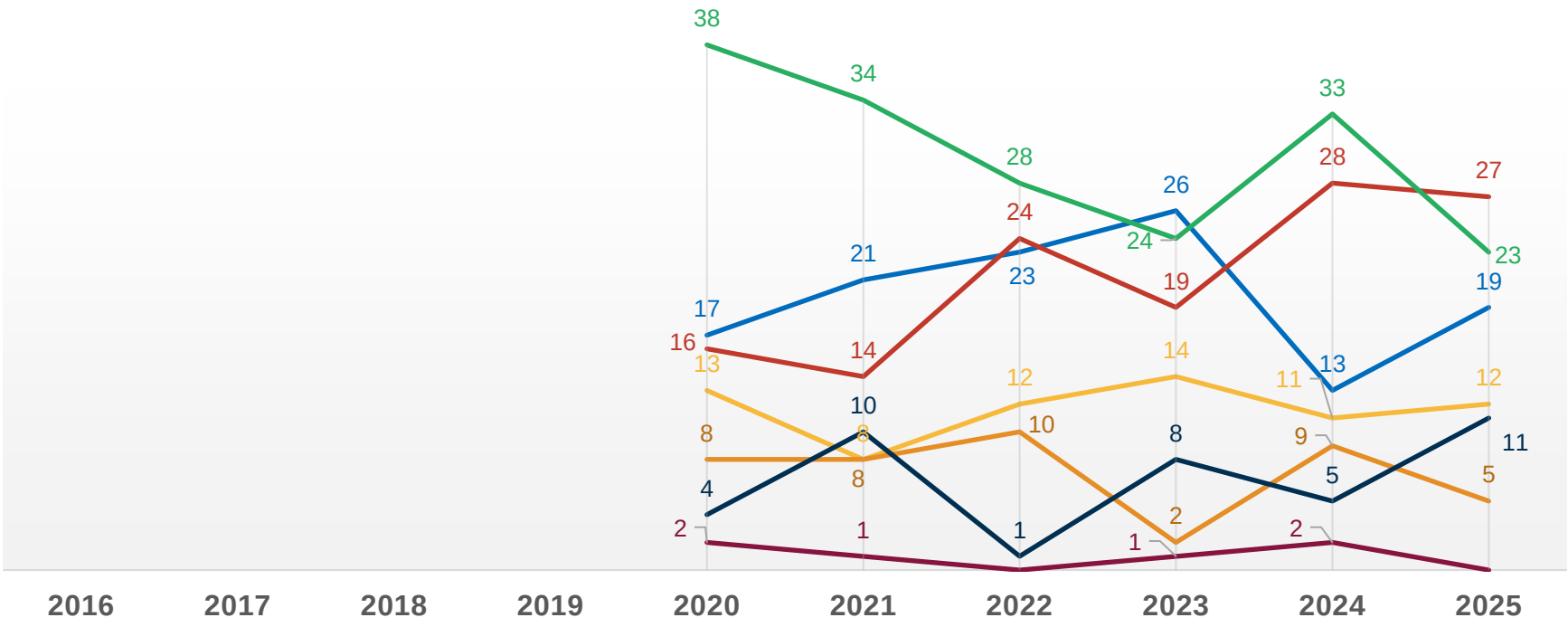


Q13. If Ararat Rural City Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 12

Best form of communication: under 50s

2025 under 50s best form of communication (%)

Advertising in a Local Newspaper
Council Newsletter via Mail
Council Newsletter via Email
Council Newsletter as Local Paper Insert
Council Website
Text Message
Social Media

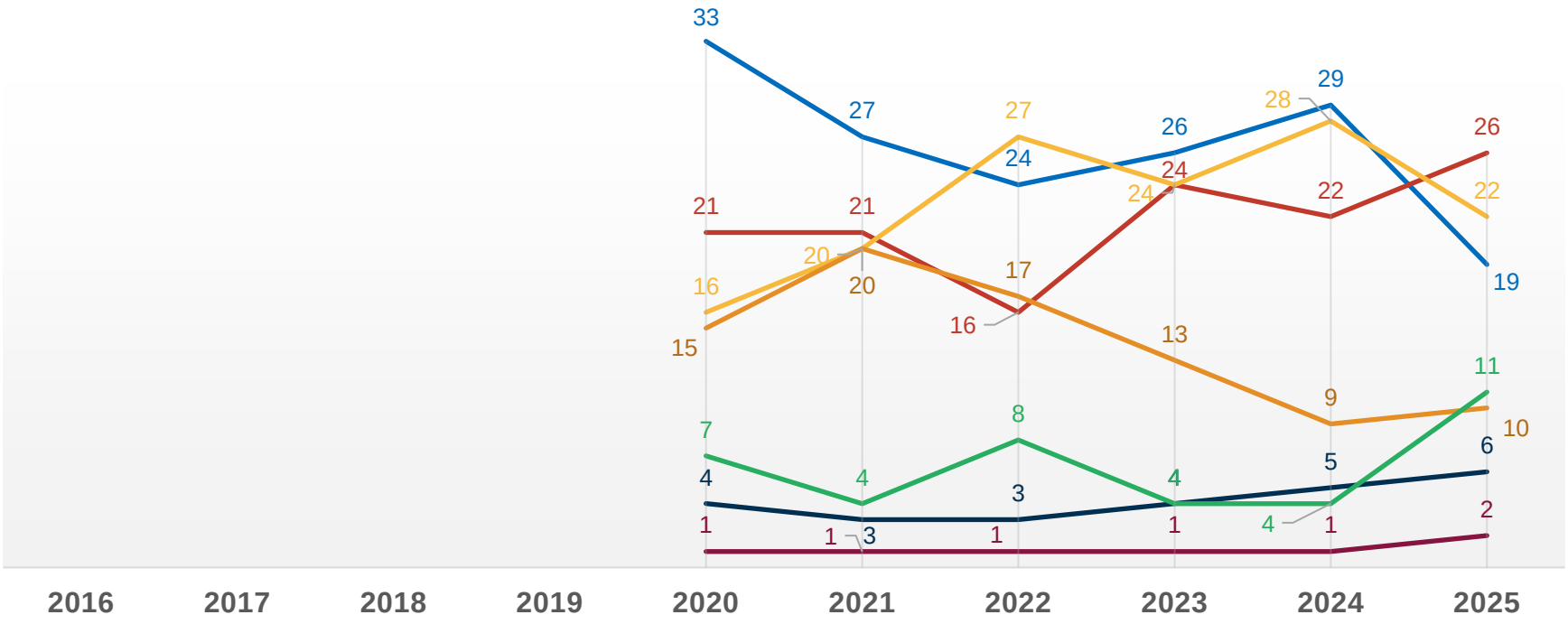


Q13. If Ararat Rural City Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?
Base: All respondents aged under 50. Councils asked State-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 12

Best form of communication: 50+ years

2025 50+ years best form of communication (%)

Advertising in a Local Newspaper
Council Newsletter via Mail
Council Newsletter via Email
Council Newsletter as Local Paper Insert
Council Website
Text Message
Social Media



Q13. If Ararat Rural City Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?
Base: All respondents aged 50+ years. Councils asked State-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 12.

Council direction

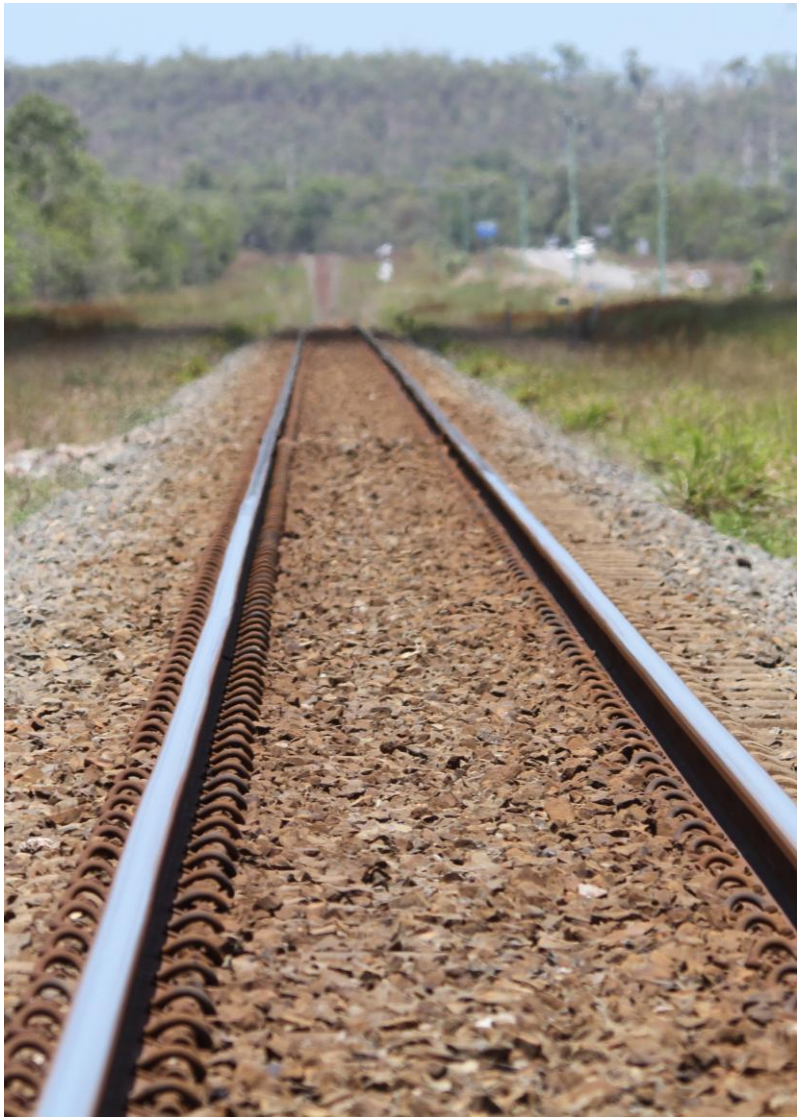
Council direction

Perceptions of the direction of Ararat Rural City Council's overall performance (index score of 55) is equal to last year. Council continues to perform significantly above the State-wide and Small Rural council group averages (index scores of 46 each).

Over the last 12 months, 22% believe the direction of Council's overall performance has improved (down four percentage points from 2024). An increased majority of residents think it has stayed the same (61%, up five percentage points), while a further 13% feel it has deteriorated (compared to 16% in 2024).

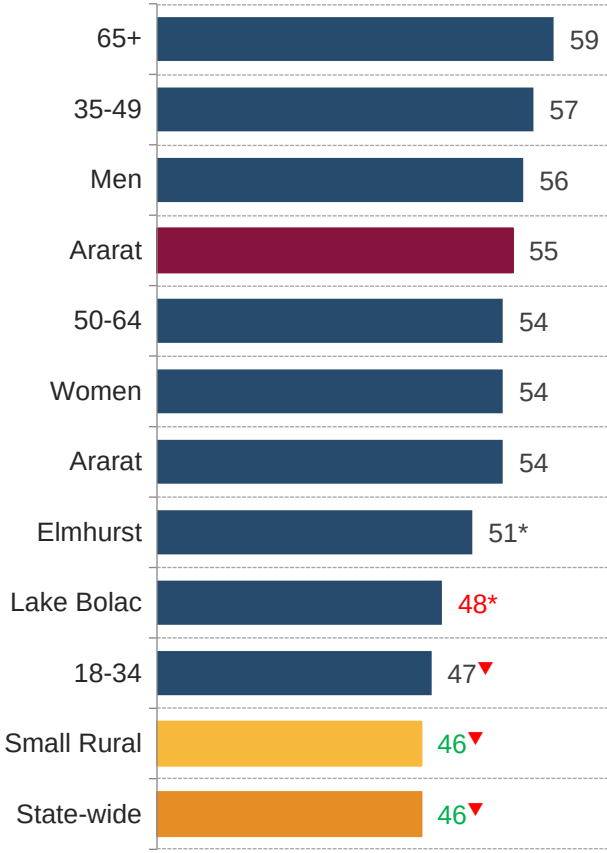
- The most satisfied with council direction are those aged 65 years and over (index score of 59).
- The least satisfied with council direction are those aged 18 to 34 years (index score of 47), significantly lower than average.
- Since last year, views of the direction of Council's overall performance declined significantly among Lake Bolac residents (noting this result is based on a small sample size).

Similar to previous evaluations, almost half of residents (49%) think there is 'a lot' of room for improvement in Council's overall performance, while the majority (70%) say Council is generally heading in the right direction.



Overall council direction last 12 months

2025 overall council direction (index scores)

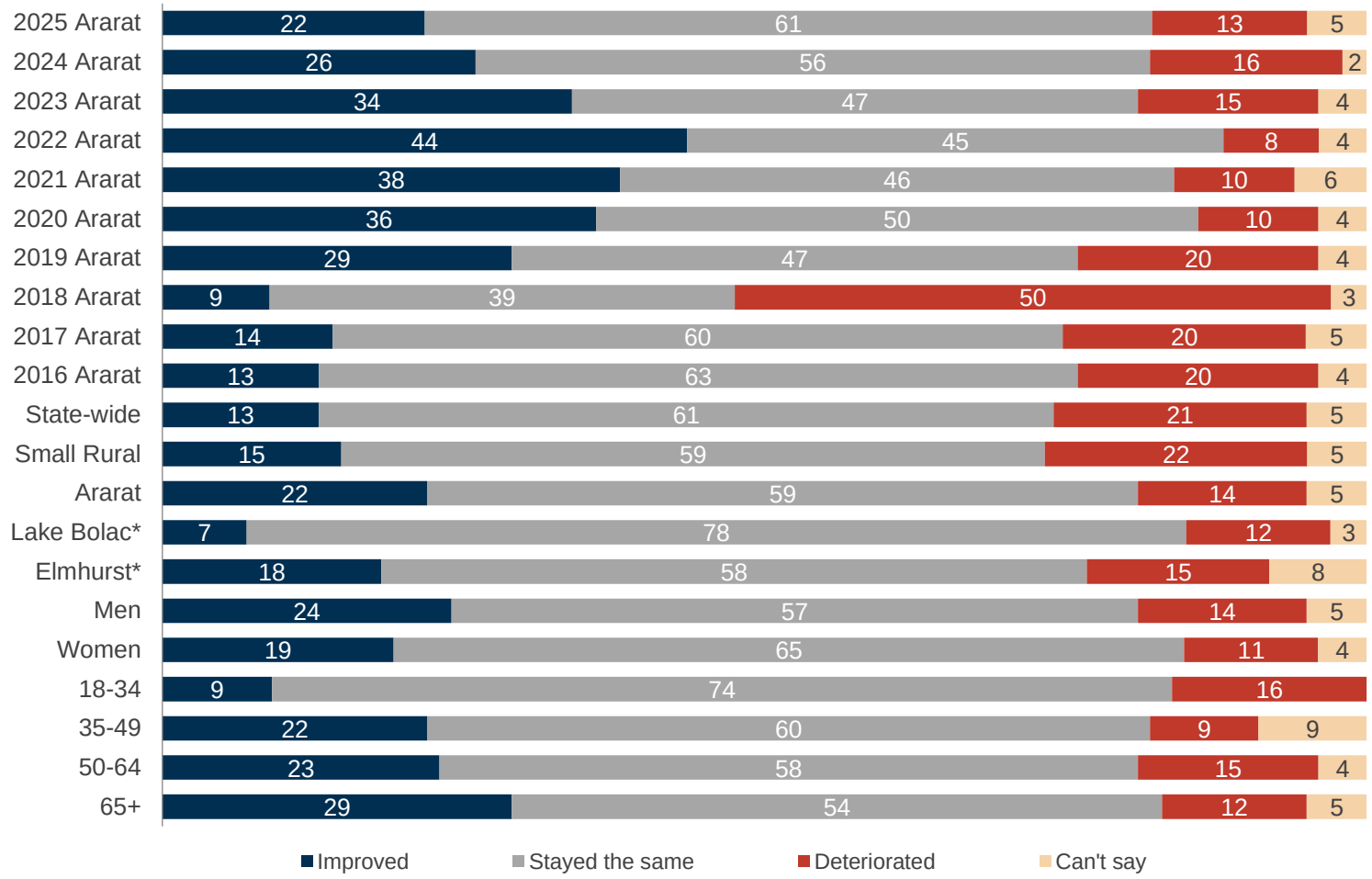


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	60	66	73	75	66	60	32	45	46
35-49	58	50	64	60	60	38	19	47	45
Men	56	61	68	65	63	55	24	44	44
Ararat	55	60	69	65	63	55	29	47	46
50-64	50	58	64	61	65	55	29	45	44
Women	54	58	70	65	64	55	34	49	48
Ararat	54	59	68	63	63	57	30	45	46
Elmhurst	52	55	71	91	60	41	32	50	50
Lake Bolac	71	70	69	81	82	47	26	57	48
18-34	49	58	70	58	61	65	36	50	52
Small Rural	44	47	51	53	50	53	50	52	50
State-wide	45	46	50	53	51	53	52	53	51

Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Ararat Rural City Council's overall performance?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Overall council direction last 12 months

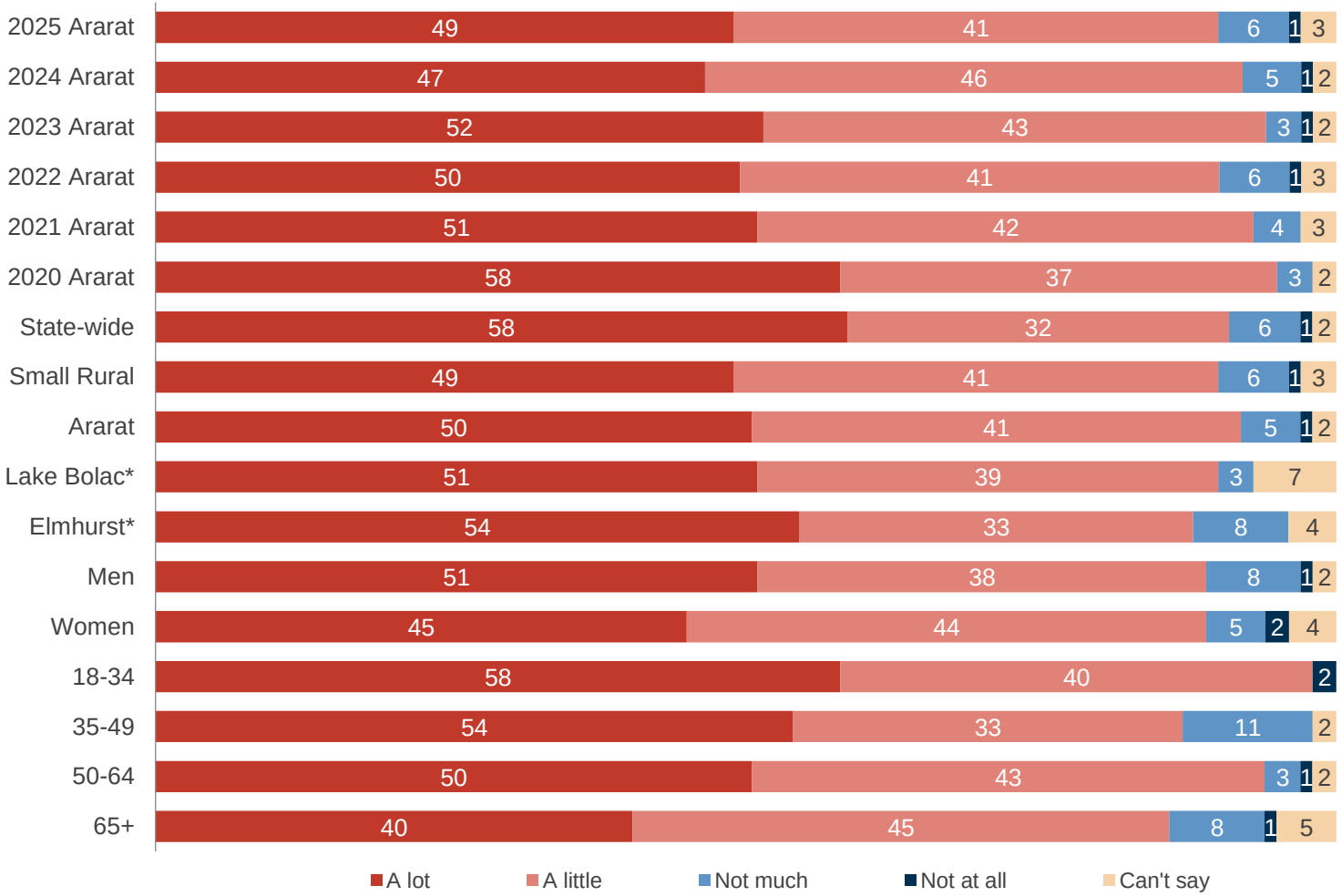
2025 overall council direction (%)



Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Ararat Rural City Council's overall performance?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Room for improvement in services

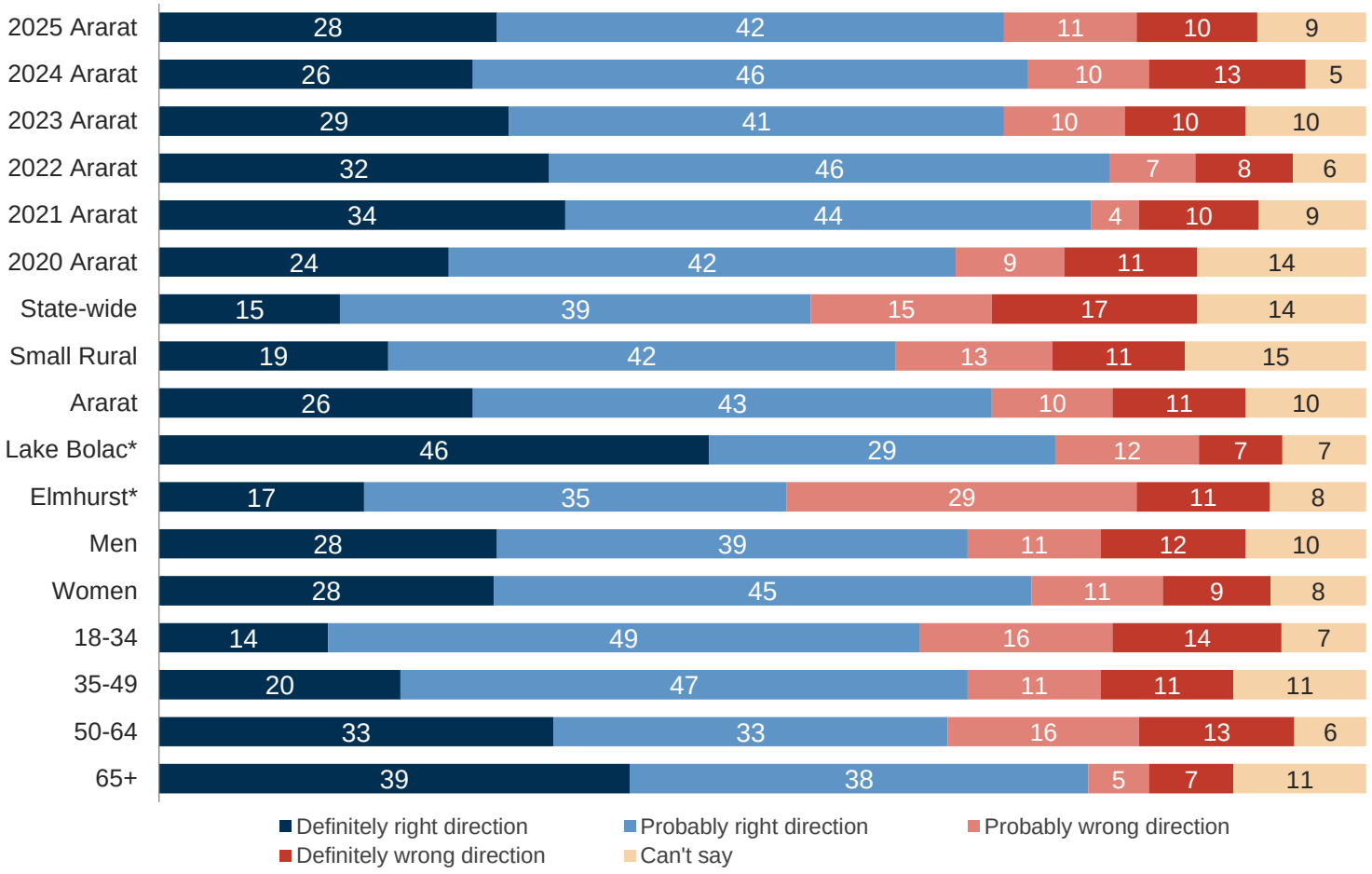
2025 room for improvement in services (%)



Q7. Thinking about the next 12 months, how much room for improvement do you think there is in Ararat Rural City Council's overall performance?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 2 Councils asked group: 1
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Right / wrong direction

2025 right / wrong direction (%)

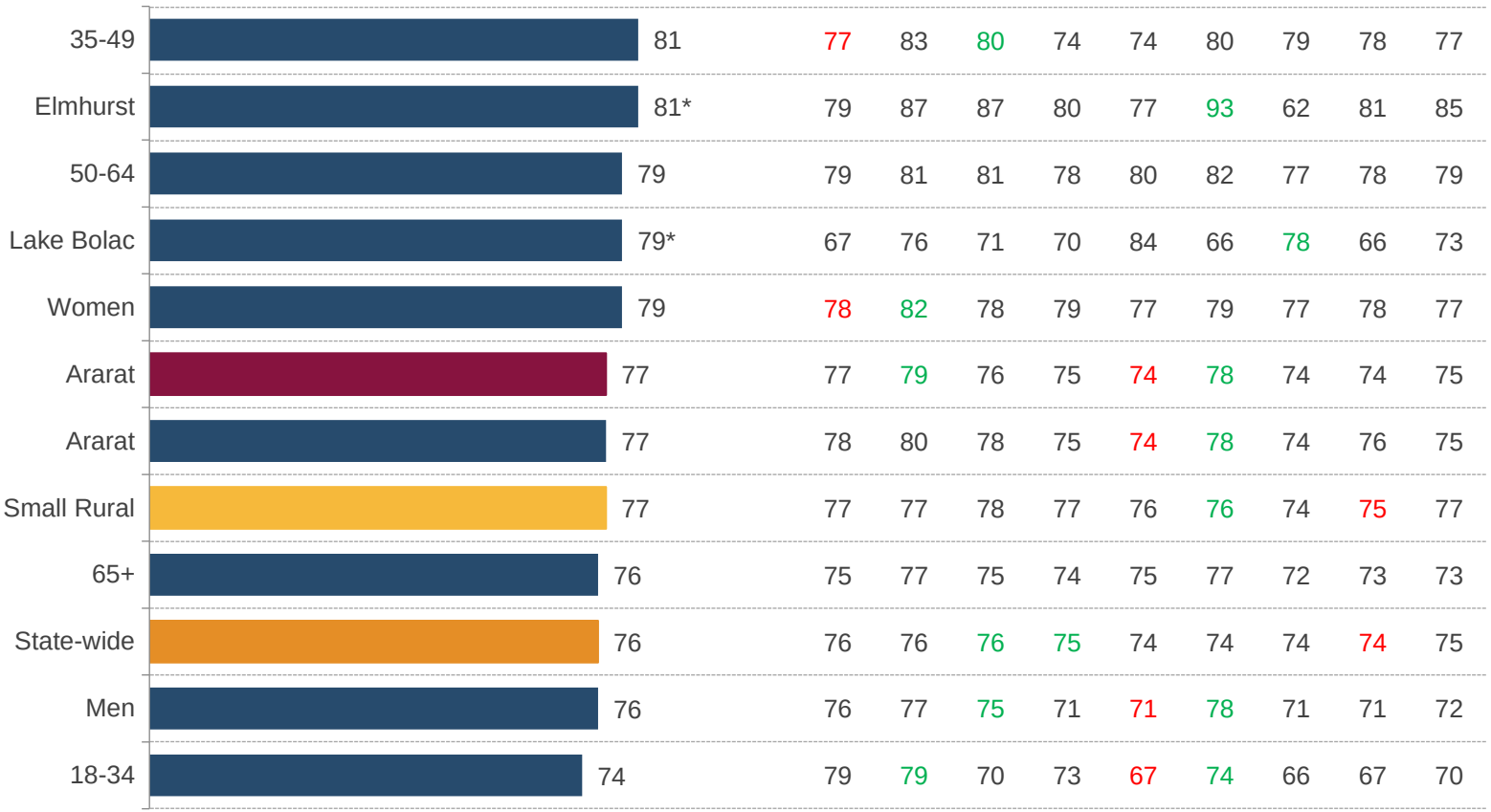


Q8. Would you say your local Council is generally heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 8 Councils asked group: 3
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Individual service areas

Community consultation and engagement importance

2025 consultation and engagement importance (index scores)

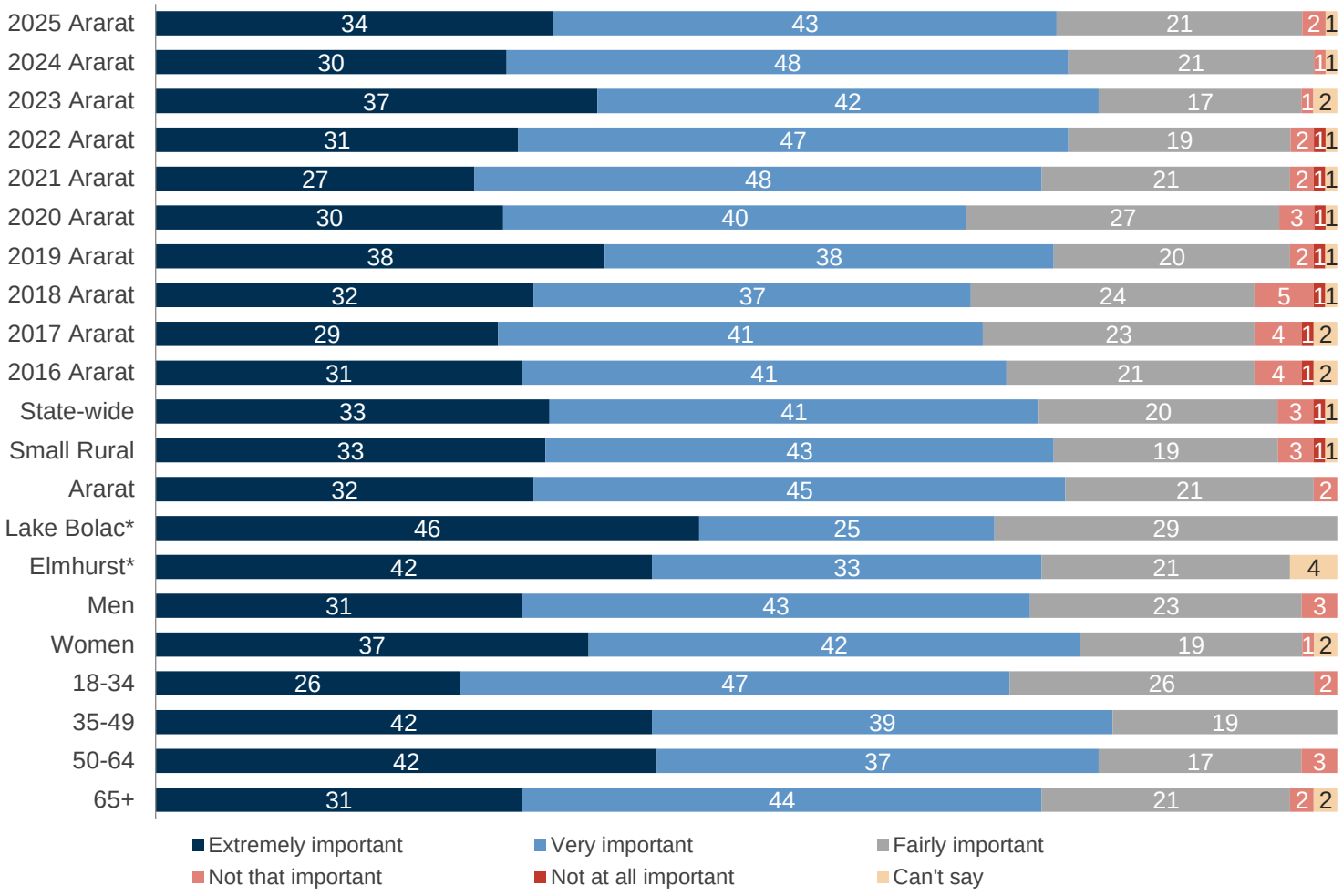


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
35-49	77	83	80	74	74	80	79	78	77
Elmhurst	79	87	87	80	77	93	62	81	85
50-64	79	81	81	78	80	82	77	78	79
Lake Bolac	67	76	71	70	84	66	78	66	73
Women	78	82	78	79	77	79	77	78	77
Ararat	77	79	76	75	74	78	74	74	75
Ararat	78	80	78	75	74	78	74	76	75
Small Rural	77	77	78	77	76	76	74	75	77
65+	75	77	75	74	75	77	72	73	73
State-wide	76	76	76	75	74	74	74	74	75
Men	76	77	75	71	71	78	71	71	72
18-34	79	79	70	73	67	74	66	67	70

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Community consultation and engagement' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 6
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community consultation and engagement importance

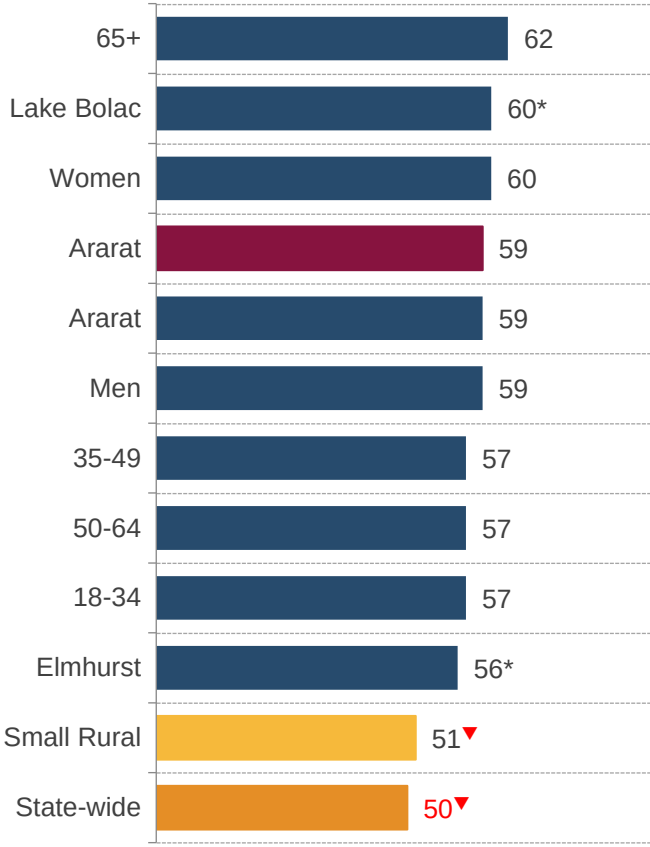
2025 consultation and engagement importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Community consultation and engagement' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 6
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community consultation and engagement performance

2025 consultation and engagement performance (index scores)

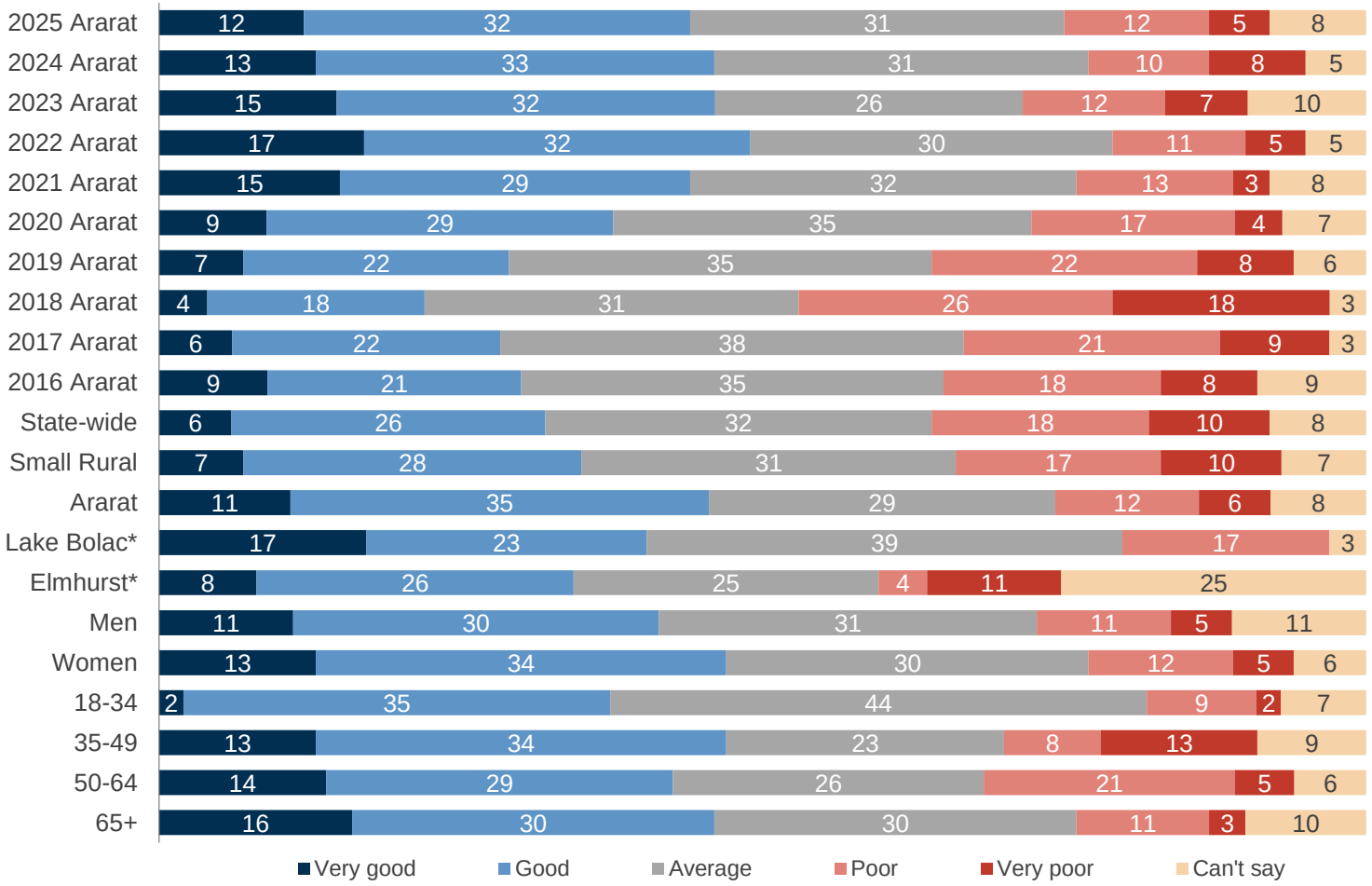


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	62	66	66	67	56	55	46	49	55
Lake Bolac	58	75	67	77	16	47	22	51	49
Women	58	57	61	60	56	50	43	52	55
Ararat	59	60	62	61	56	49	41	49	51
Ararat	58	58	61	60	58	51	45	49	51
Men	59	63	63	62	57	49	39	46	48
35-49	54	50	54	65	56	44	32	45	49
50-64	54	59	57	56	56	48	42	49	49
18-34	60	59	67	52	58	49	42	52	50
Elmhurst	52	61	48	81	55	48	53	51	65
Small Rural	51	53	54	56	54	56	54	55	55
State-wide	51	52	54	56	55	56	55	55	54

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community consultation and engagement performance

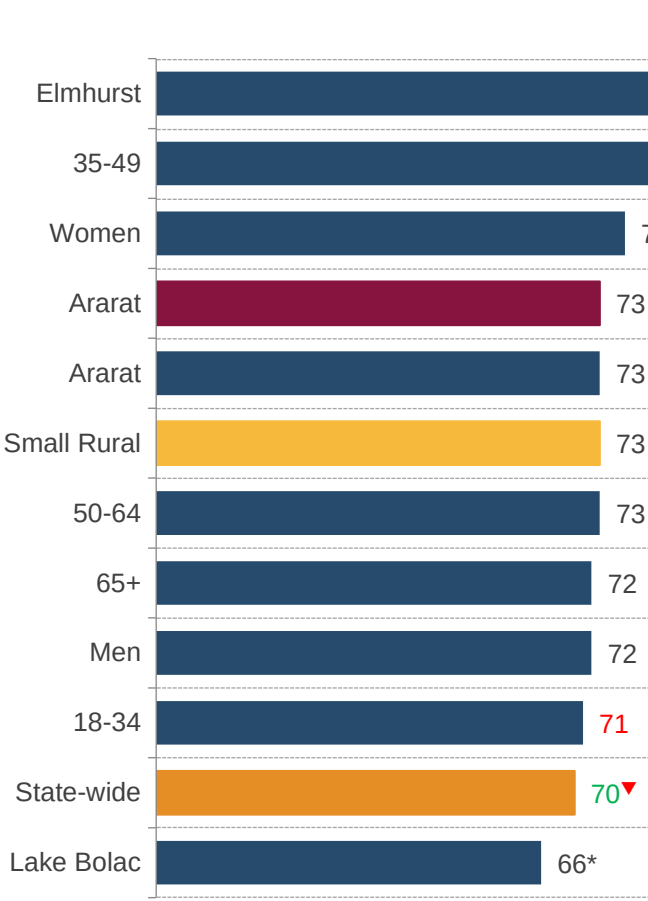
2025 consultation and engagement performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Lobbying on behalf of the community importance

2025 lobbying importance (index scores)

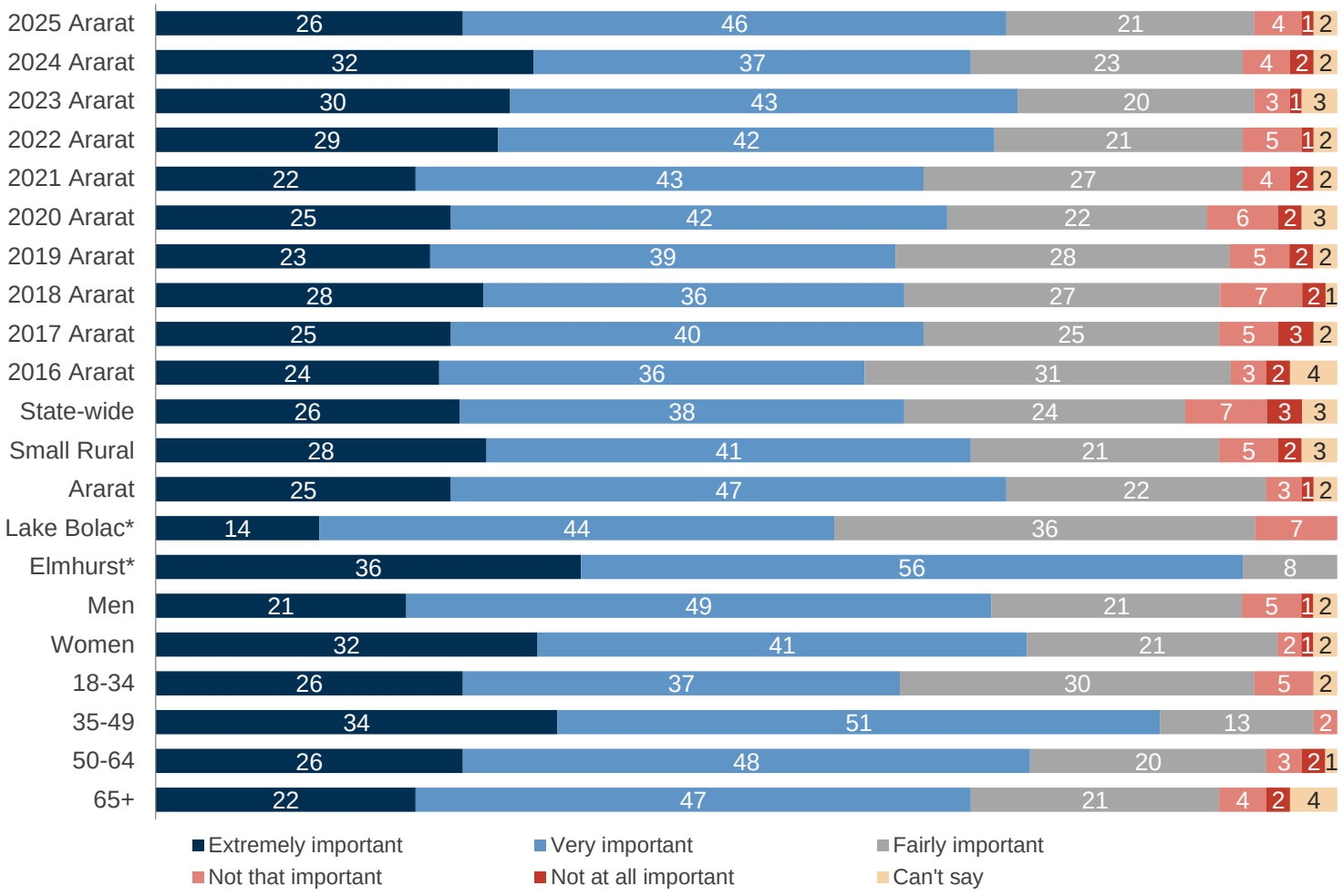


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	82*▲	77	71	76	68	77	76	56	70	71
35-49	79▲	76	78	78	69	72	72	72	73	74
Women	76	76	78	74	75	74	72	73	74	71
Ararat	73	74	75	74	71	71	69	70	70	70
Ararat	73	74	75	75	71	72	70	71	72	70
Small Rural	73	72	73	74	71	73	70	70	70	71
50-64	73	72	78	78	74	77	73	71	71	72
65+	72	69	73	71	71	69	65	68	69	67
Men	72	72	72	74	66	69	67	68	67	69
18-34	71	82	75	71	68	70	70	71	69	67
State-wide	70▼	68	68	71	69	68	67	68	69	69
Lake Bolac	66*	64	83	60	65	34	60	69	63	77

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 19 Councils asked group: 4
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Lobbying on behalf of the community importance

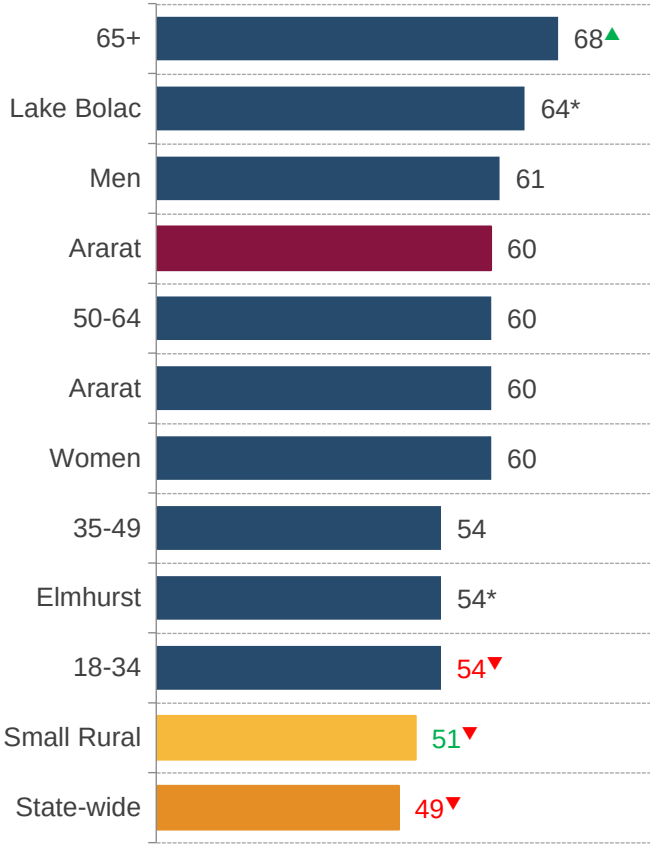
2025 lobbying importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 19 Councils asked group: 4
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Lobbying on behalf of the community performance

2025 lobbying performance (index scores)

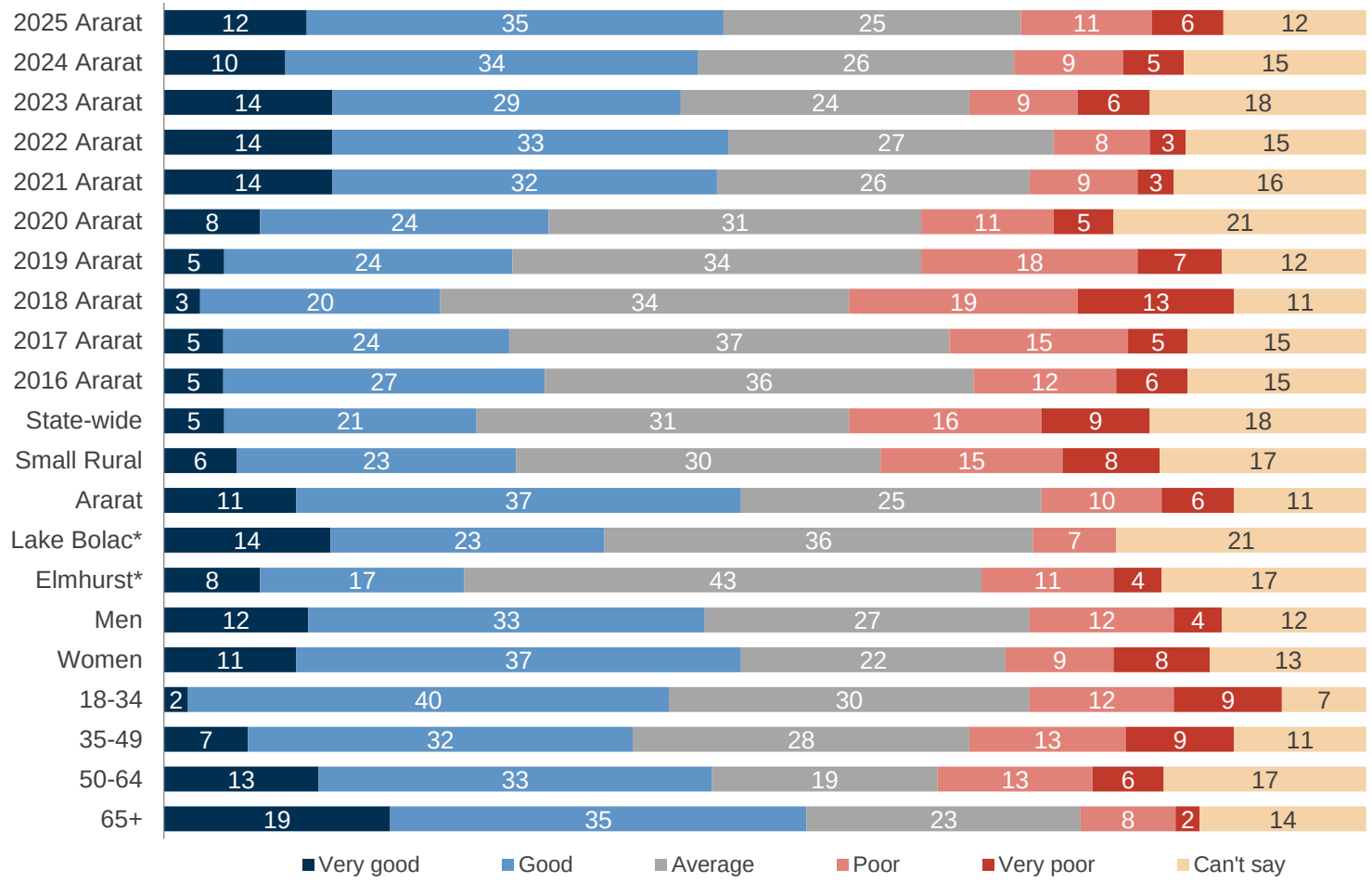


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	64	67	66	70	57	51	52	54	56
Lake Bolac	67	60	70	64	n/a	42	24	46	51
Men	62	63	65	65	56	50	42	52	52
Ararat	60	61	64	63	56	50	44	53	54
50-64	60	61	60	62	54	53	45	53	55
Ararat	60	61	64	63	56	52	48	54	55
Women	58	58	63	61	56	51	47	53	56
35-49	52	45	58	61	54	44	34	49	50
Elmhurst	44	56	56	75	58	48	40	51	69
18-34	62	62	68	54	56	53	46	54	55
Small Rural	50	52	54	55	52	55	53	55	54
State-wide	50	51	53	55	53	54	54	54	53

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 41 Councils asked group: 14
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Lobbying on behalf of the community performance

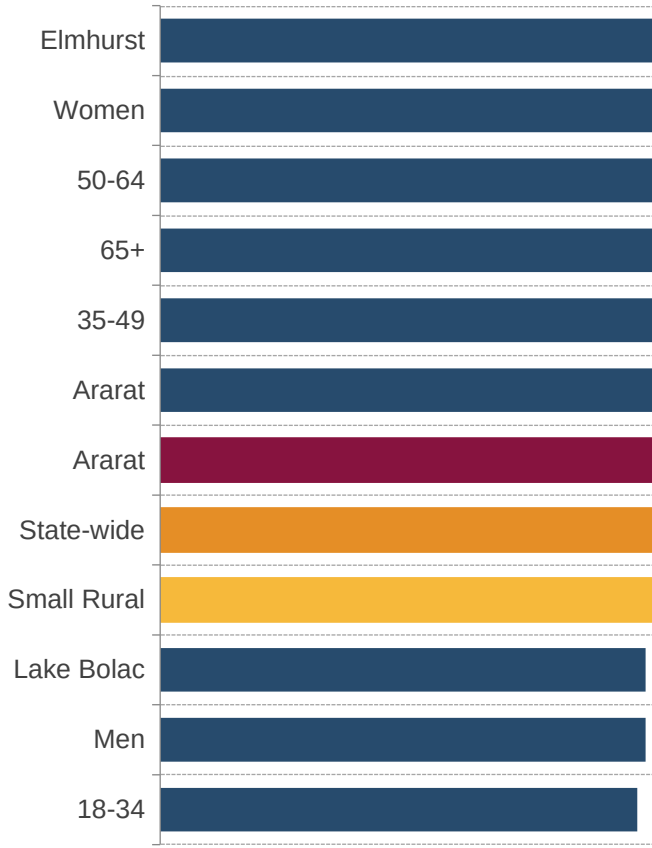
2025 lobbying performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 41 Councils asked group: 14
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Decisions made in the interest of the community importance

2025 community decisions made importance (index scores)

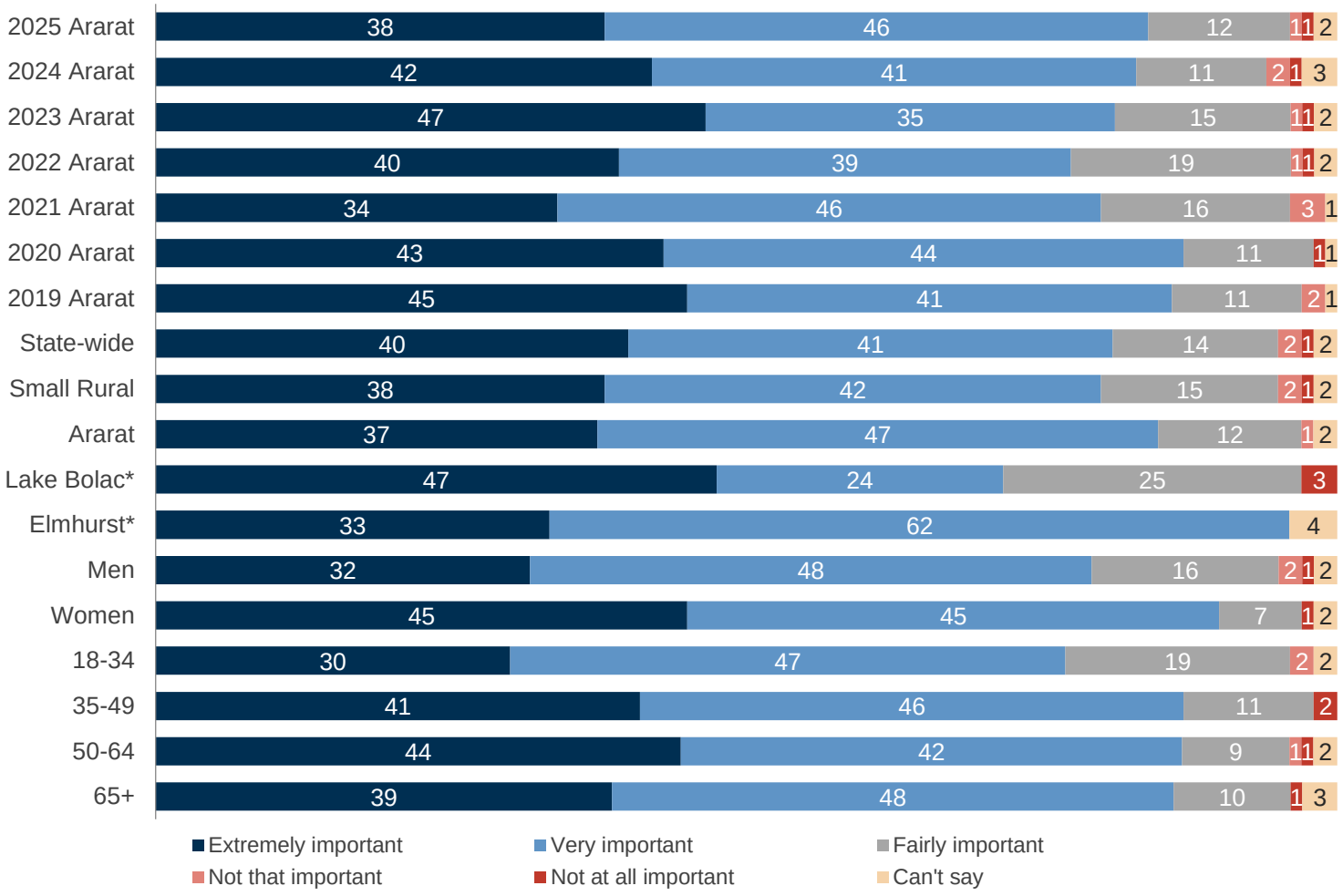


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	80	92	75	84	85	88	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	84	84	80	81	84	84	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	80	82	86	82	84	86	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	80	78	75	78	80	80	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	84	88	85	80	84	80	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	81	82	80	78	82	83	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	81	83	80	78	83	82	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	80	80	81	81	80	80	80	79	80
Small Rural	80	82	82	80	82	81	77	78	n/a
Lake Bolac	87	89	66	73	84	77	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	79	81	79	76	81	81	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	82	84	76	73	84	85	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 3
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Decisions made in the interest of the community importance

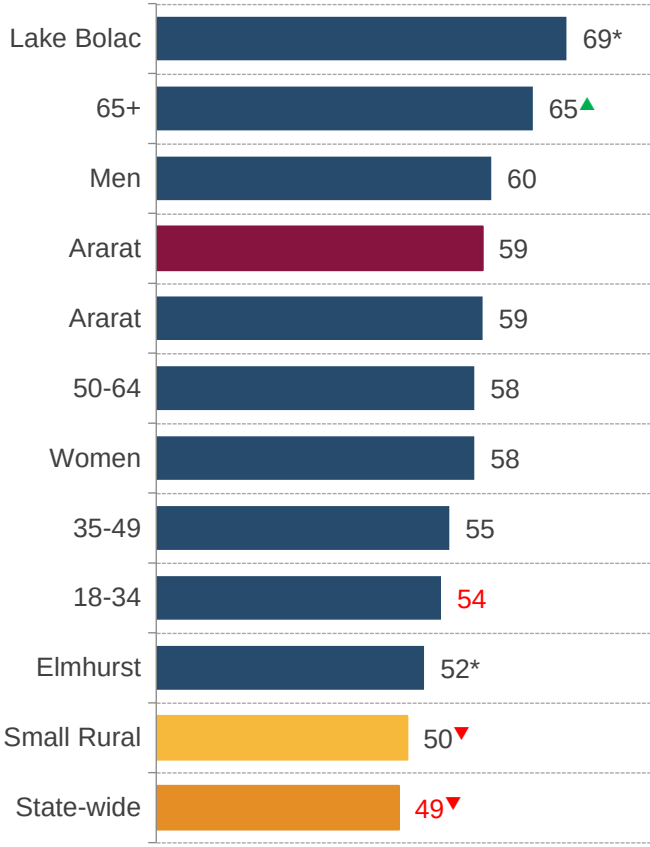
2025 community decisions made importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 3
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance

2025 community decisions made performance (index scores)

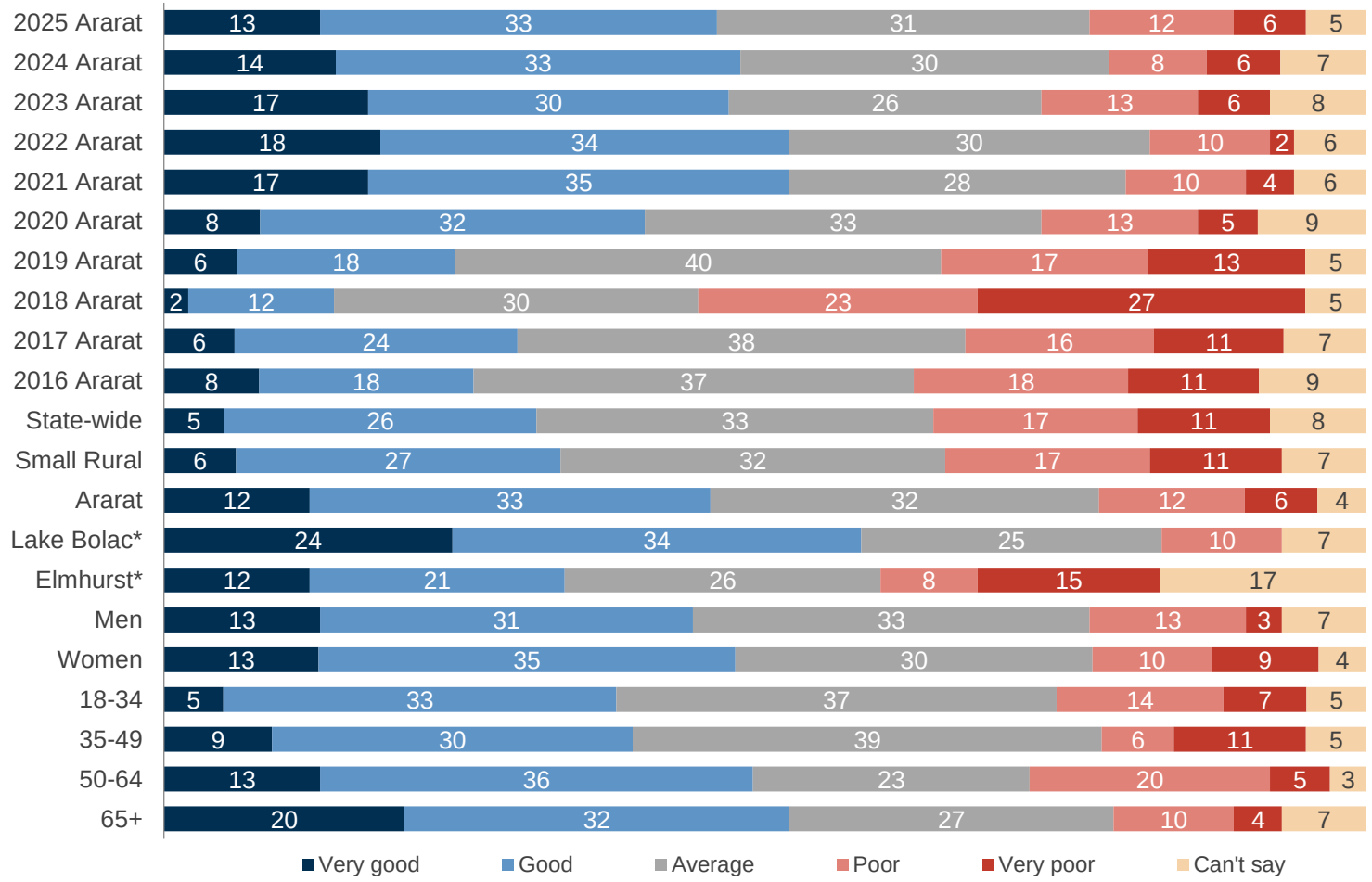


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	70	71	68	79	32	21	17	48	39
65+	66	68	69	71	59	50	38	52	50
Men	61	61	66	64	56	45	28	48	44
Ararat	61	60	65	63	57	46	33	50	48
Ararat	61	60	67	62	57	48	36	50	49
50-64	58	60	59	60	58	47	39	48	51
Women	61	60	65	63	58	48	39	51	53
35-49	54	48	57	62	52	41	22	48	45
18-34	62	58	72	56	57	47	33	50	46
Elmhurst	49	44	42	75	52	59	36	50	51
Small Rural	50	52	54	56	53	55	52	55	53
State-wide	50	51	54	56	53	55	54	54	54

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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance

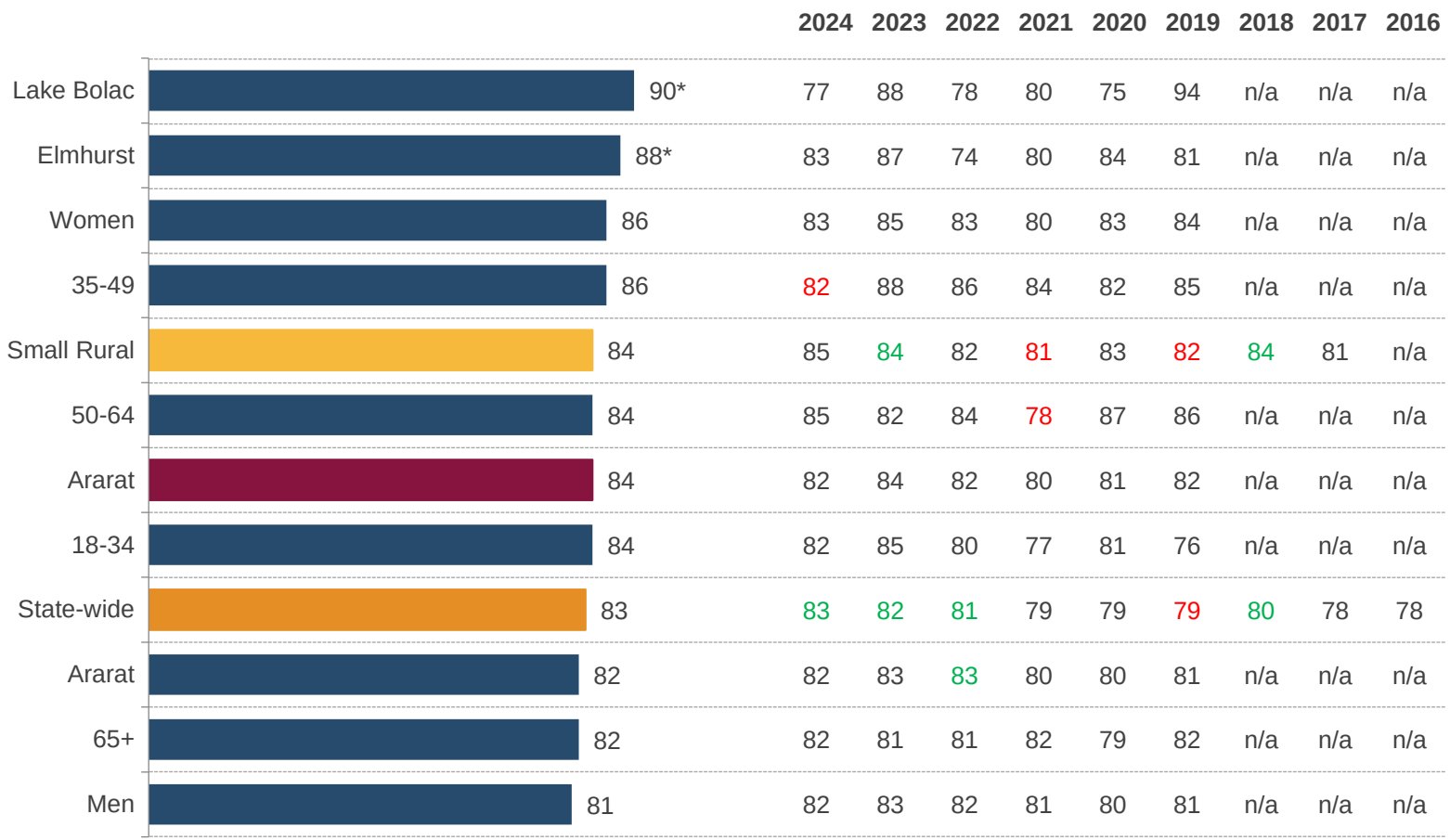
2025 community decisions made performance (%)



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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of sealed local roads in your area importance

2025 sealed local roads importance (index scores)

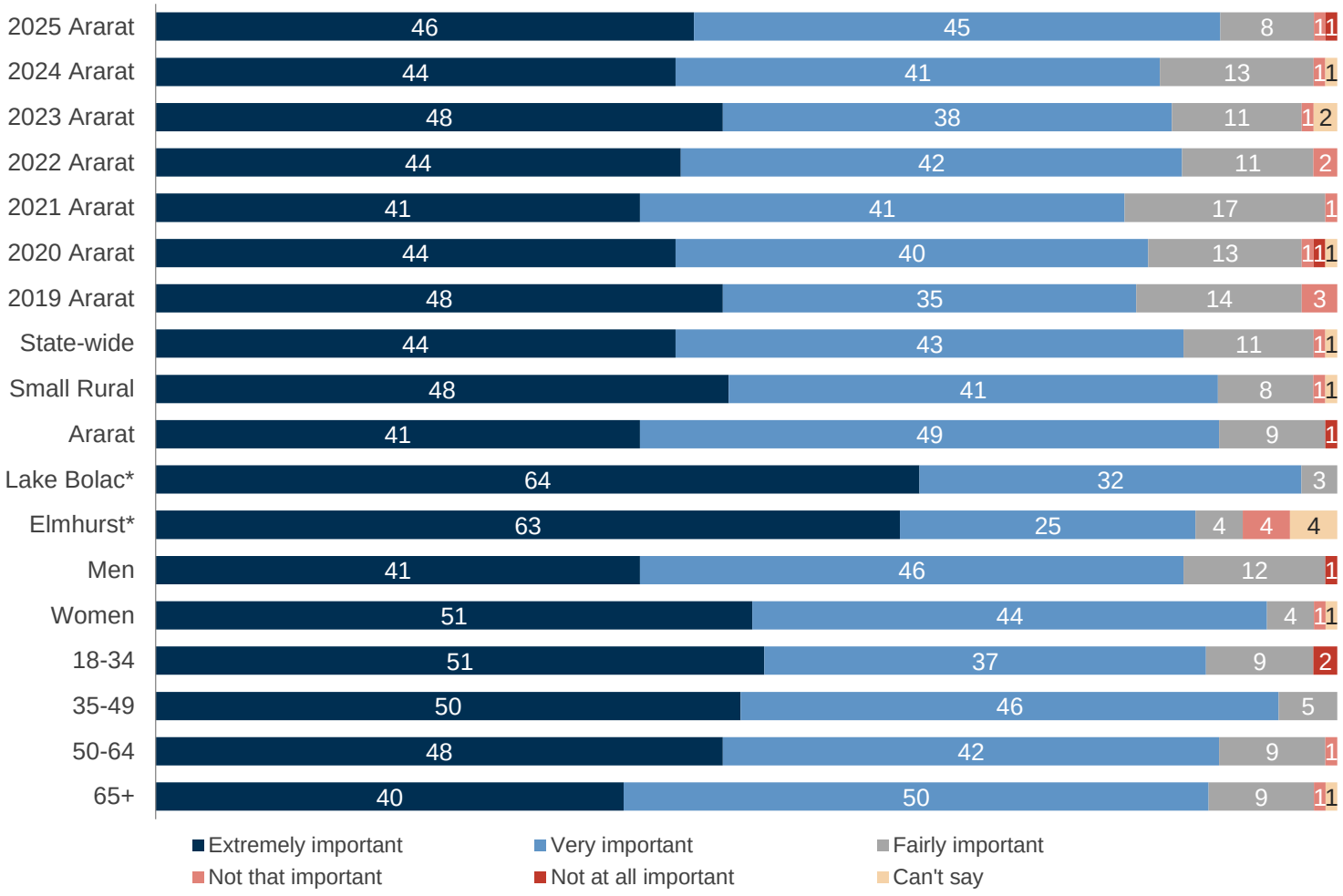


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	77	88	78	80	75	94	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmhurst	83	87	74	80	84	81	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	83	85	83	80	83	84	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	82	88	86	84	82	85	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	85	84	82	81	83	82	84	81	n/a
50-64	85	82	84	78	87	86	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	82	84	82	80	81	82	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	82	85	80	77	81	76	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	83	82	81	79	79	79	80	78	78
Ararat	82	83	83	80	80	81	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	82	81	81	82	79	82	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	82	83	82	81	80	81	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of sealed local roads in your area importance

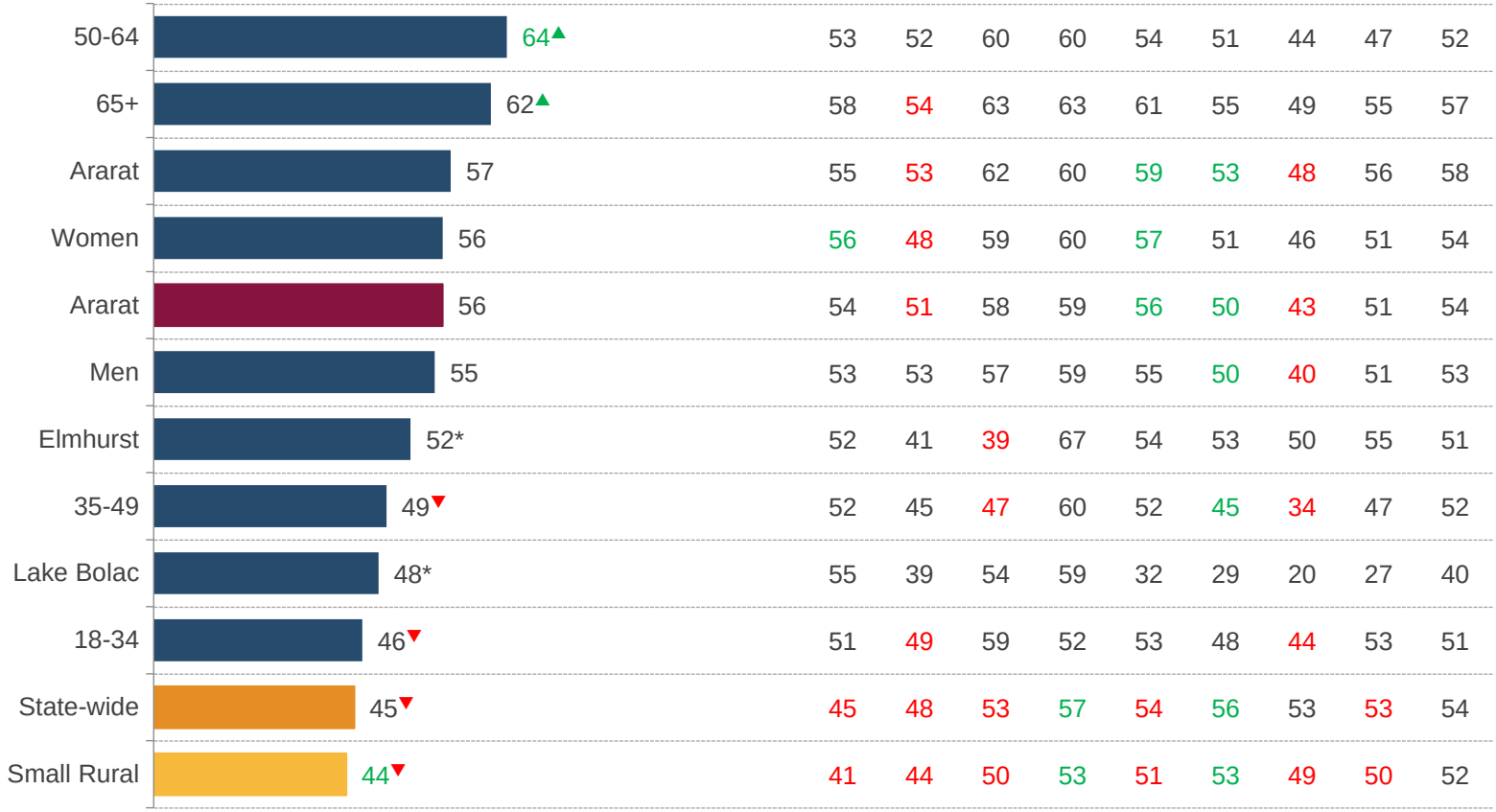
2025 sealed local roads importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance

2025 sealed local roads performance (index scores)

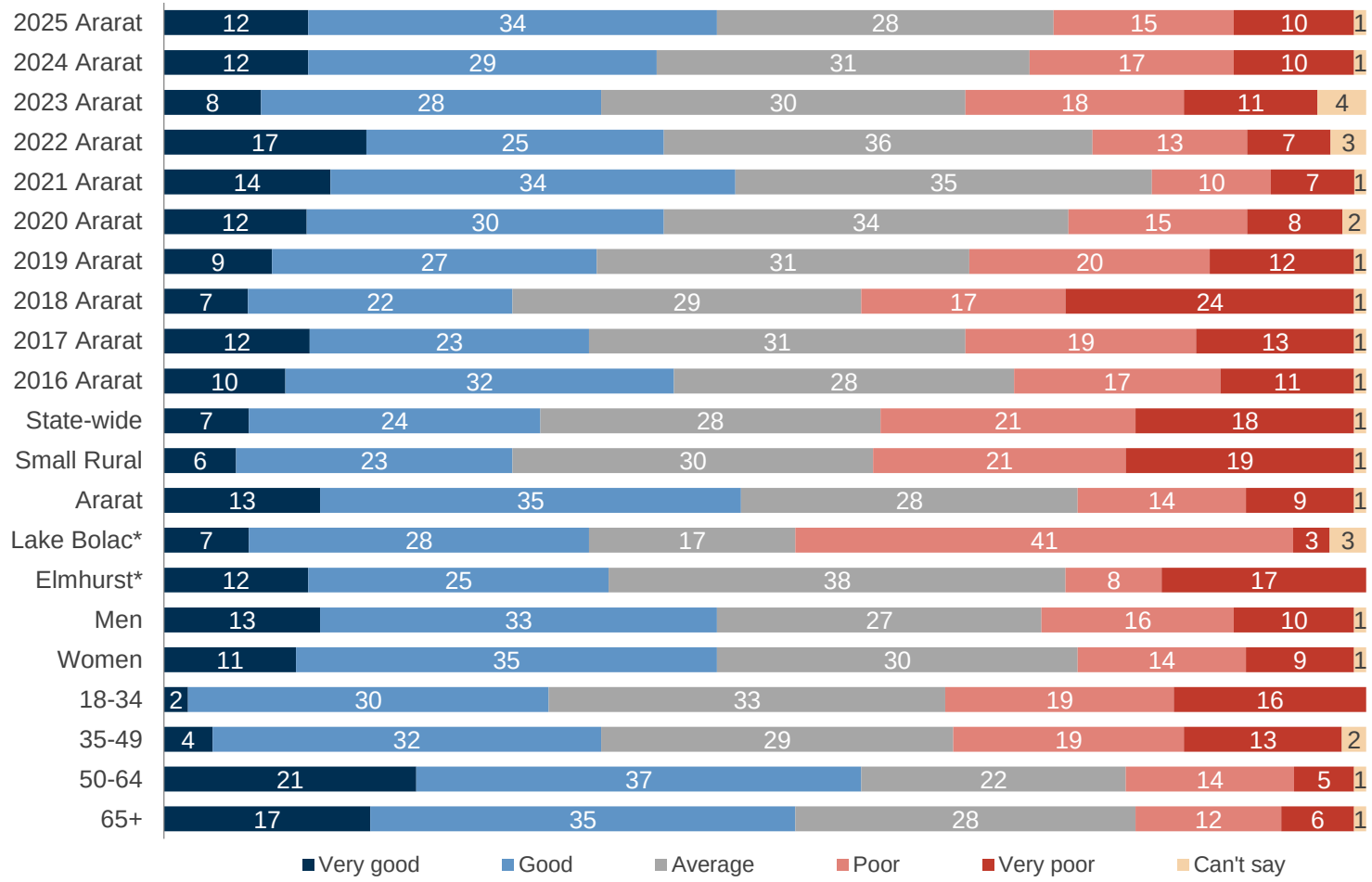


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
50-64	64▲	53	52	60	60	54	51	44	47	52
65+	62▲	58	54	63	63	61	55	49	55	57
Ararat	57	55	53	62	60	59	53	48	56	58
Women	56	56	48	59	60	57	51	46	51	54
Ararat	56	54	51	58	59	56	50	43	51	54
Men	55	53	53	57	59	55	50	40	51	53
Elmhurst	52*	52	41	39	67	54	53	50	55	51
35-49	49▼	52	45	47	60	52	45	34	47	52
Lake Bolac	48*	55	39	54	59	32	29	20	27	40
18-34	46▼	51	49	59	52	53	48	44	53	51
State-wide	45▼	45	48	53	57	54	56	53	53	54
Small Rural	44▼	41	44	50	53	51	53	49	50	52

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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance

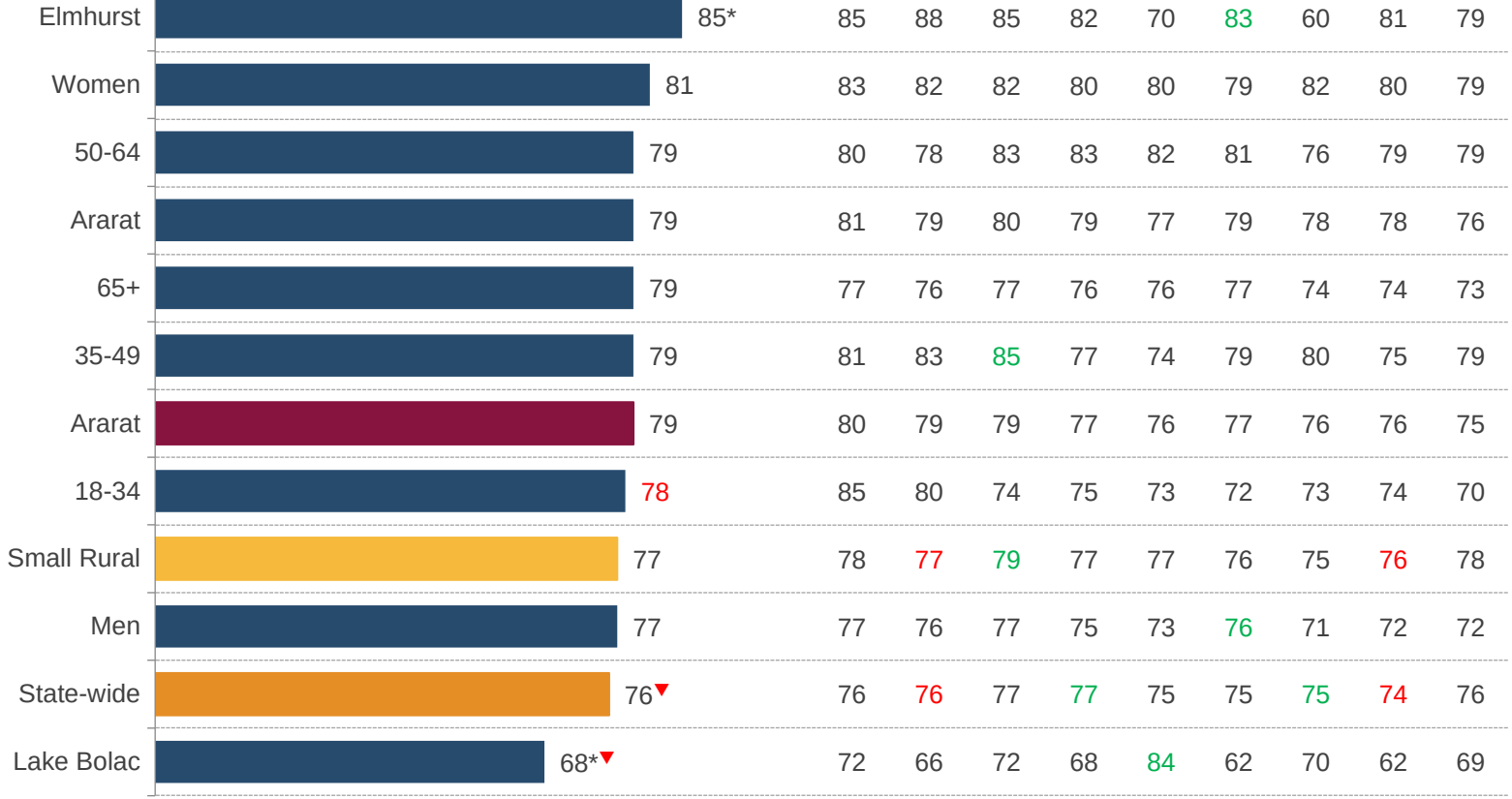
2025 sealed local roads performance (%)



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: 56 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Informing the community importance

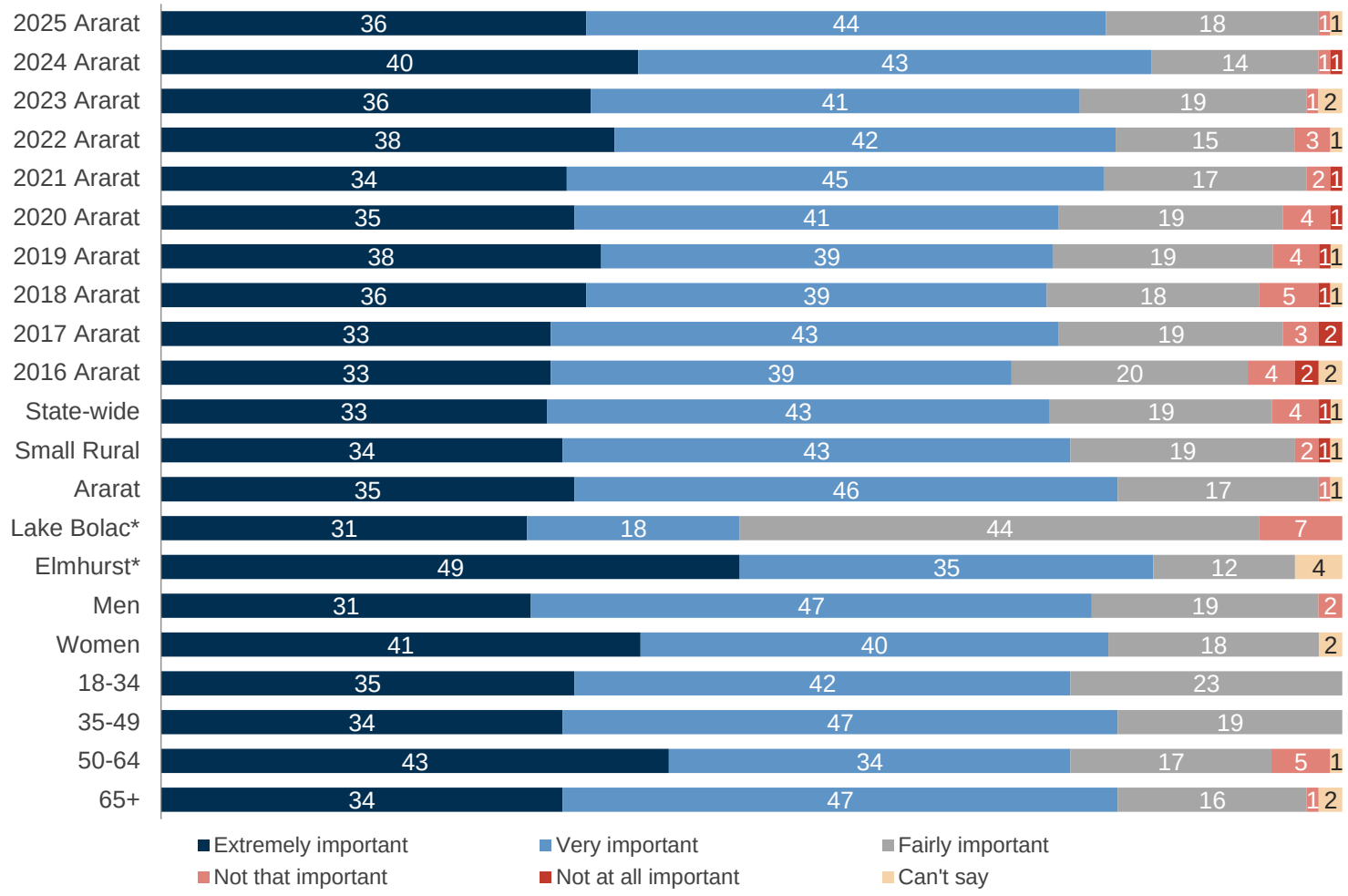
2025 informing community importance (index scores)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Informing the community' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 4
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Informing the community importance

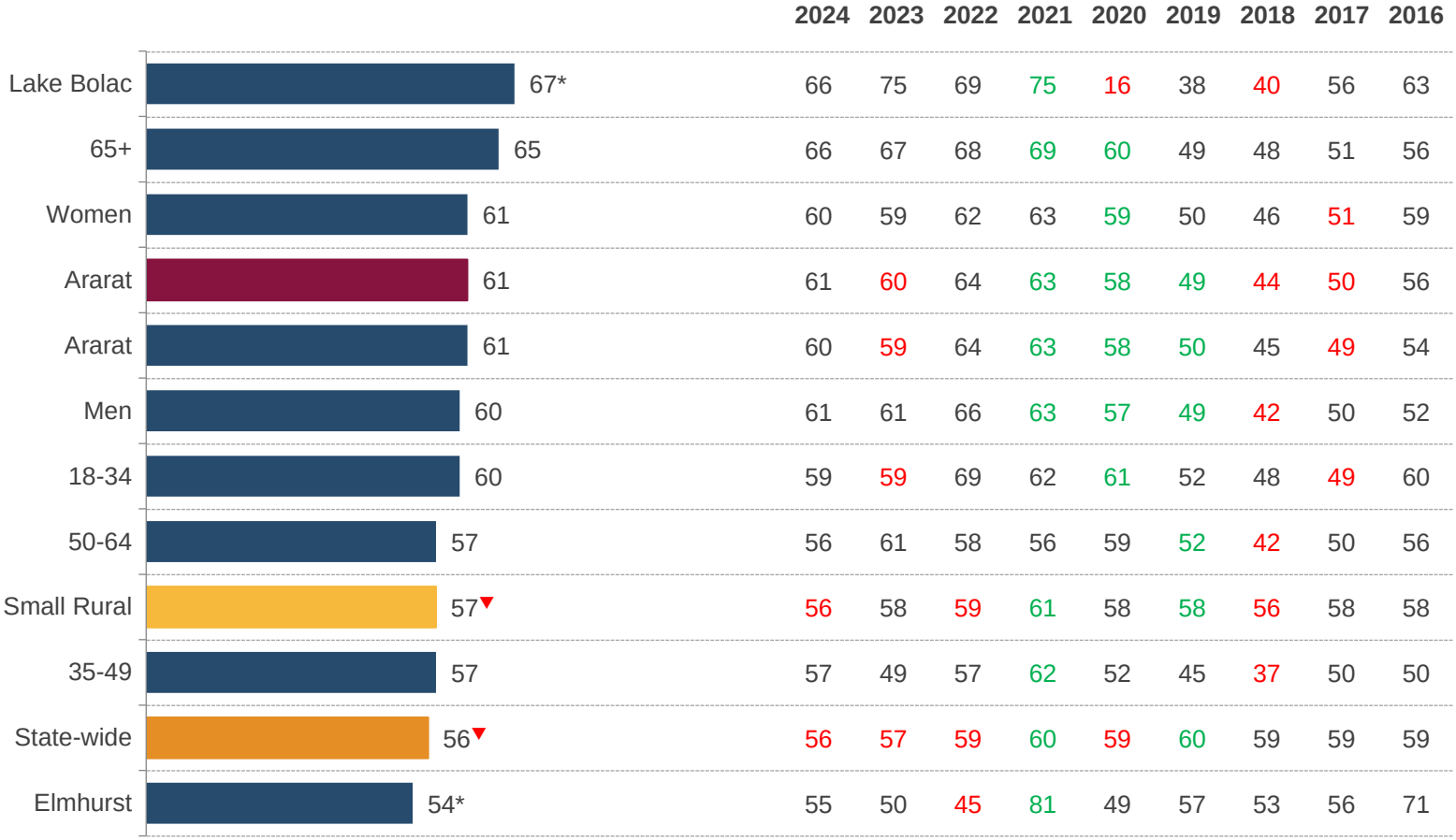
2025 informing community importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Informing the community' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 4
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Informing the community performance

2025 informing community performance (index scores)

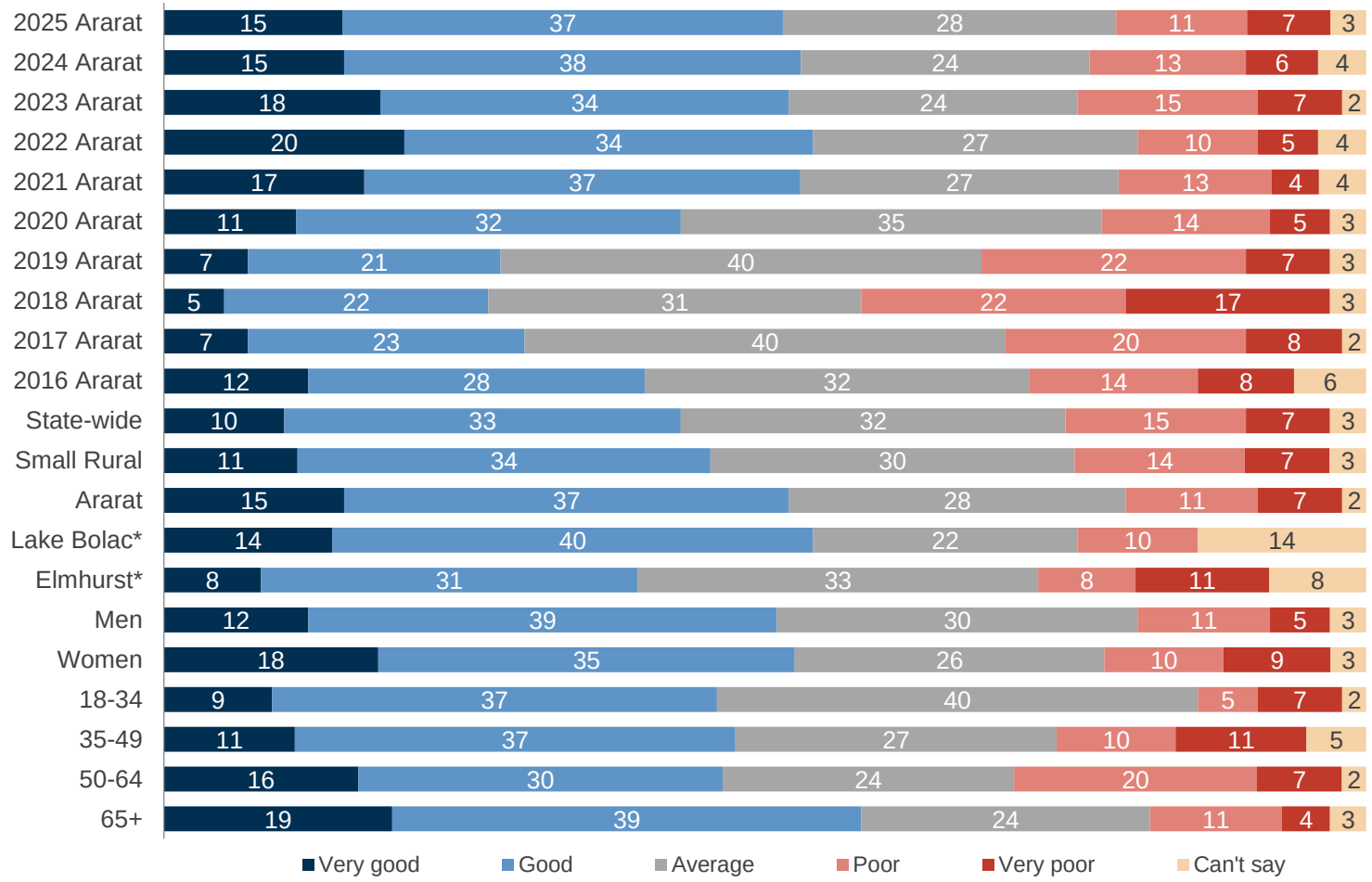


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	66	75	69	75	16	38	40	56	63
65+	66	67	68	69	60	49	48	51	56
Women	60	59	62	63	59	50	46	51	59
Ararat	61	60	64	63	58	49	44	50	56
Ararat	60	59	64	63	58	50	45	49	54
Men	61	61	66	63	57	49	42	50	52
18-34	59	59	69	62	61	52	48	49	60
50-64	56	61	58	56	59	52	42	50	56
Small Rural	56	58	59	61	58	58	56	58	58
35-49	57	49	57	62	52	45	37	50	50
State-wide	56	57	59	60	59	60	59	59	59
Elmhurst	55	50	45	81	49	57	53	56	71

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Informing the community' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 29 Councils asked group: 10
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Informing the community performance

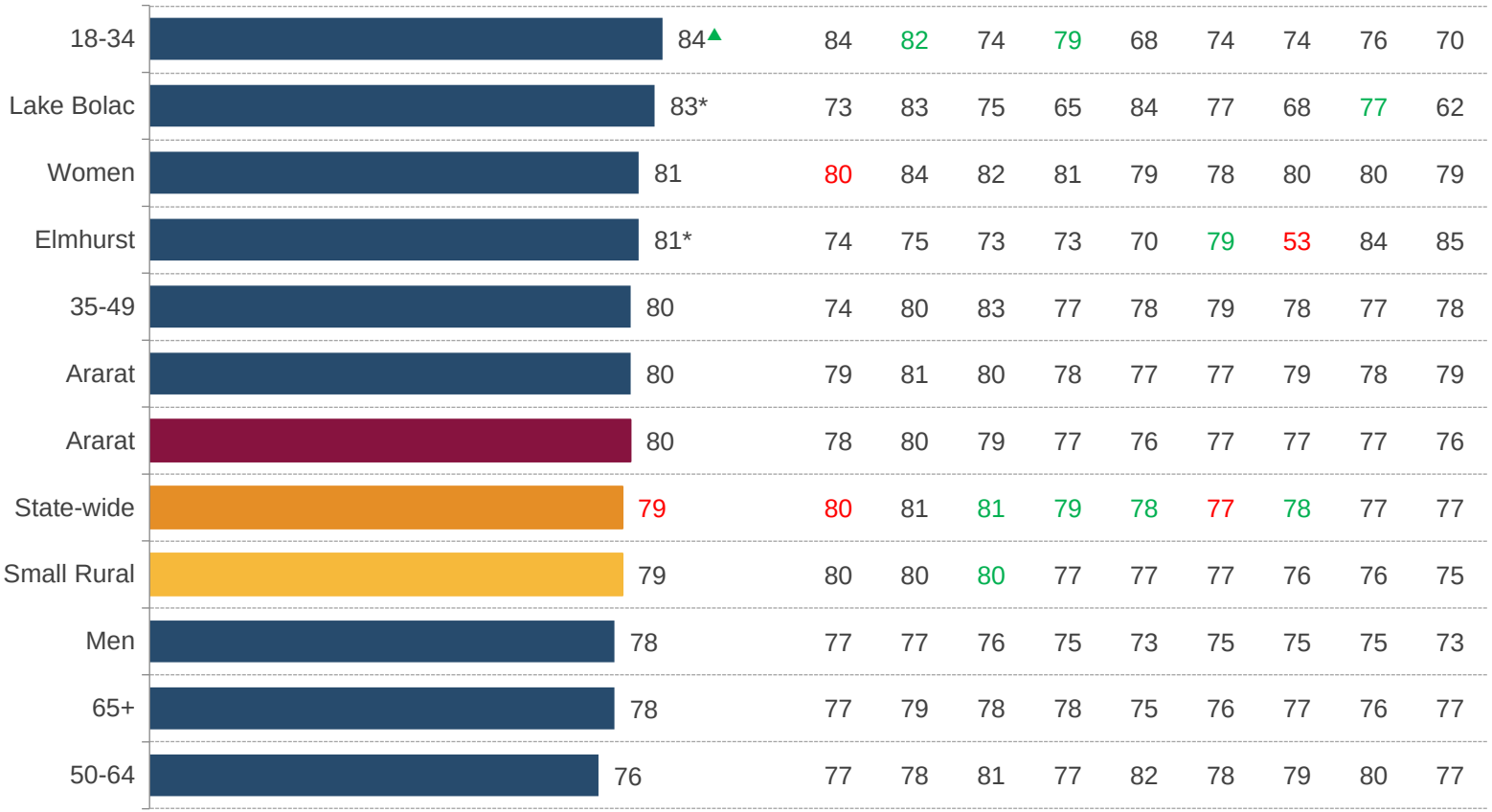
2025 informing community performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Informing the community' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 29 Councils asked group: 10
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area importance

2025 streets and footpaths importance (index scores)

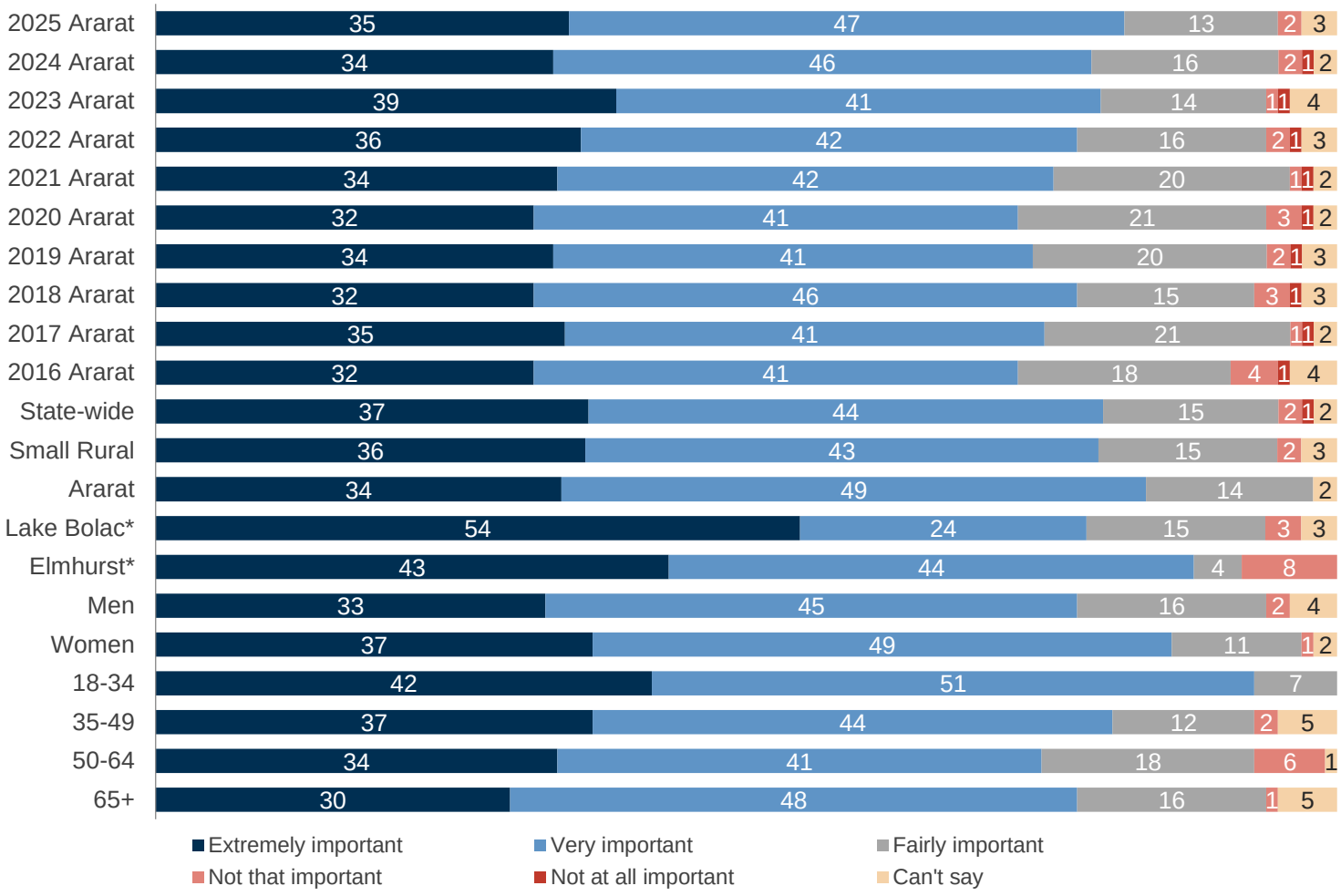


	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
18-34	84▲	84	82	74	79	68	74	74	76	70
Lake Bolac	83*	73	83	75	65	84	77	68	77	62
Women	81	80	84	82	81	79	78	80	80	79
Elmhurst	81*	74	75	73	73	70	79	53	84	85
35-49	80	74	80	83	77	78	79	78	77	78
Ararat	80	79	81	80	78	77	77	79	78	79
Ararat	80	78	80	79	77	76	77	77	77	76
State-wide	79	80	81	81	79	78	77	78	77	77
Small Rural	79	80	80	80	77	77	77	76	76	75
Men	78	77	77	76	75	73	75	75	75	73
65+	78	77	79	78	78	75	76	77	76	77
50-64	76	77	78	81	77	82	78	79	80	77

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area importance

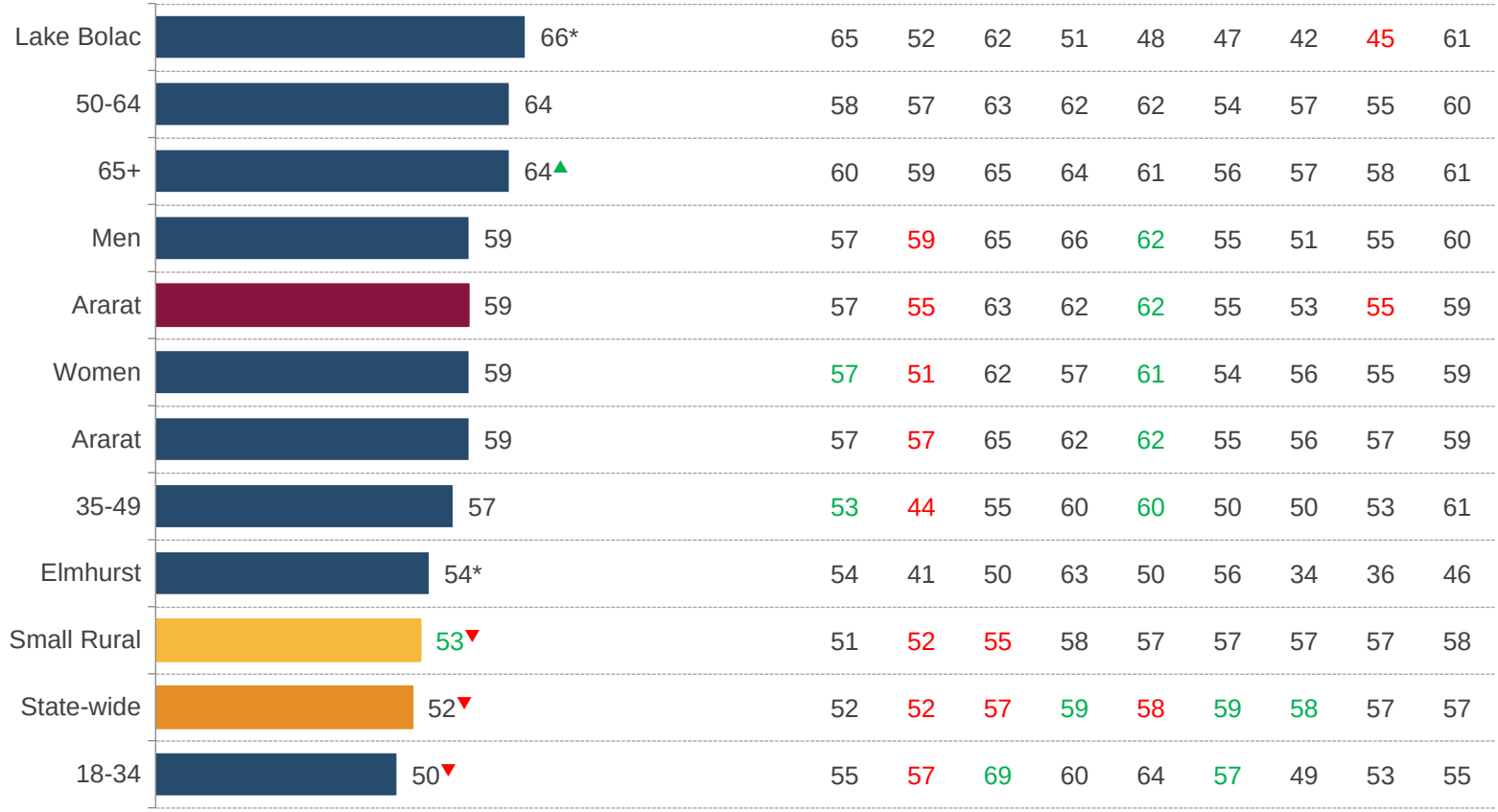
2025 streets and footpaths importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area performance

2025 streets and footpaths performance (index scores)

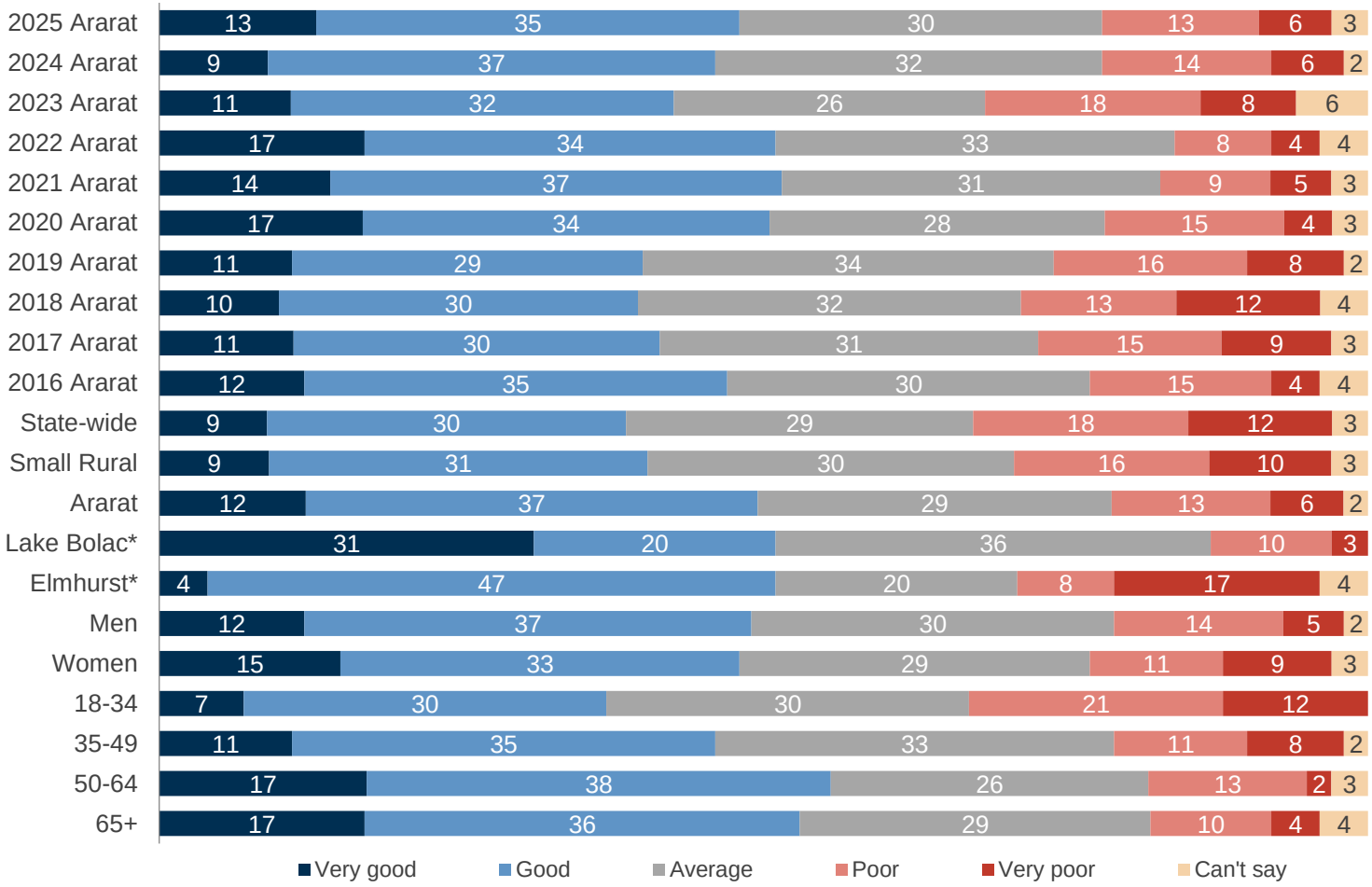


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	65	52	62	51	48	47	42	45	61
50-64	58	57	63	62	62	54	57	55	60
65+	60	59	65	64	61	56	57	58	61
Men	57	59	65	66	62	55	51	55	60
Ararat	57	55	63	62	62	55	53	55	59
Women	57	51	62	57	61	54	56	55	59
Ararat	57	57	65	62	62	55	56	57	59
35-49	53	44	55	60	60	50	50	53	61
Elmhurst	54	41	50	63	50	56	34	36	46
Small Rural	51	52	55	58	57	57	57	57	58
State-wide	52	52	57	59	58	59	58	57	57
18-34	55	57	69	60	64	57	49	53	55

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 27 Councils asked group: 8
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area performance

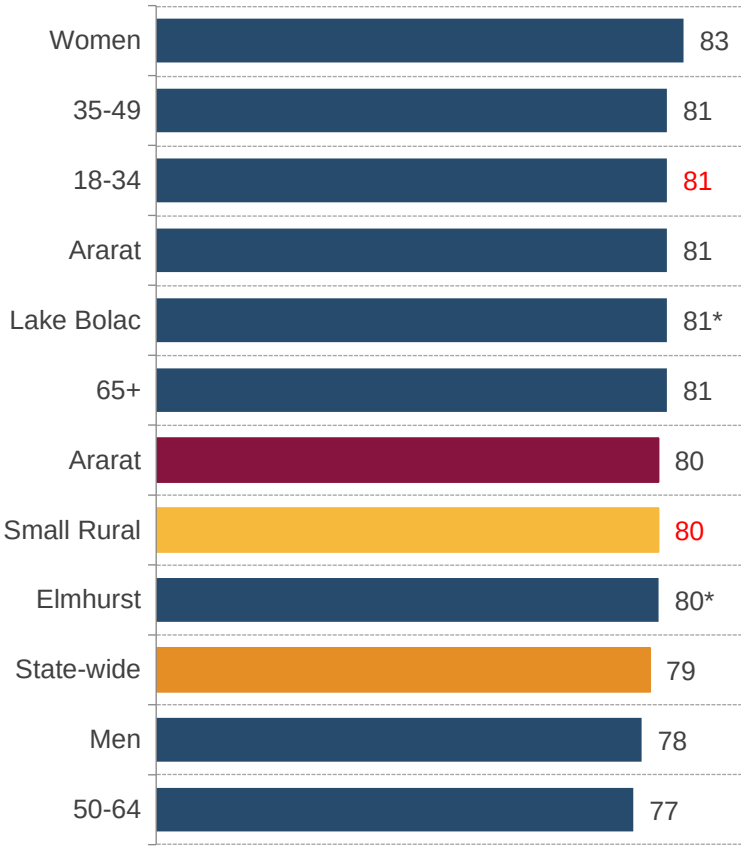
2025 streets and footpaths performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 27 Councils asked group: 8
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Elderly support services importance

2025 elderly support importance (index scores)

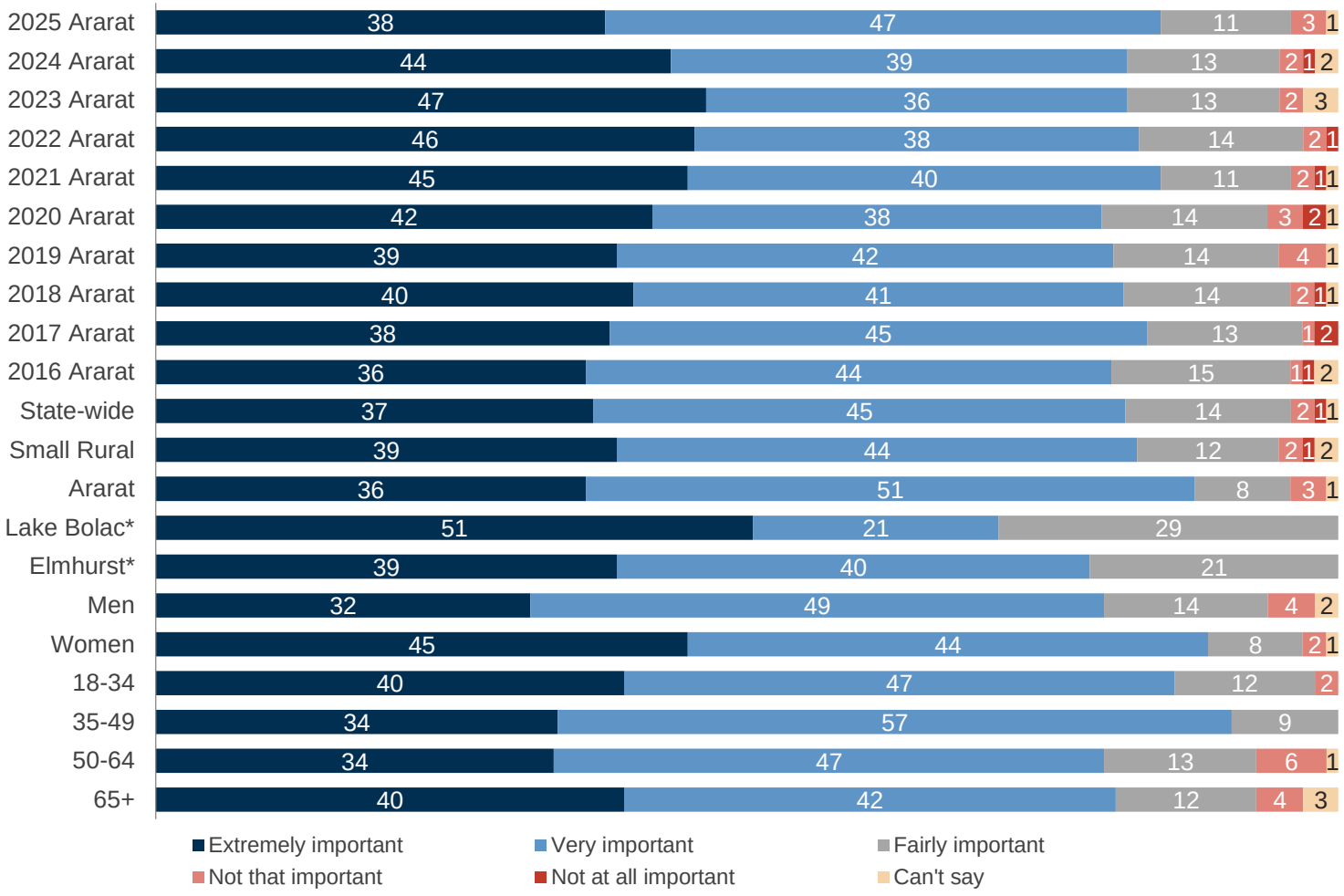


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	86	86	84	87	85	83	84	85	82
35-49	80	85	82	80	78	74	80	79	80
18-34	87	85	82	82	76	76	78	74	77
Ararat	83	83	83	82	80	80	81	80	80
Lake Bolac	70	77	70	83	59	66	74	77	78
65+	80	81	81	82	81	80	79	78	78
Ararat	82	83	82	82	79	79	80	79	79
Small Rural	82	82	82	83	81	80	80	79	79
Elmhurst	80	85	86	90	80	78	52	85	85
State-wide	80	80	82	82	80	80	79	78	78
Men	78	80	79	78	75	76	76	74	76
50-64	81	81	83	84	82	87	82	85	82

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Elderly support services' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 6 Councils asked group: 2
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Elderly support services importance

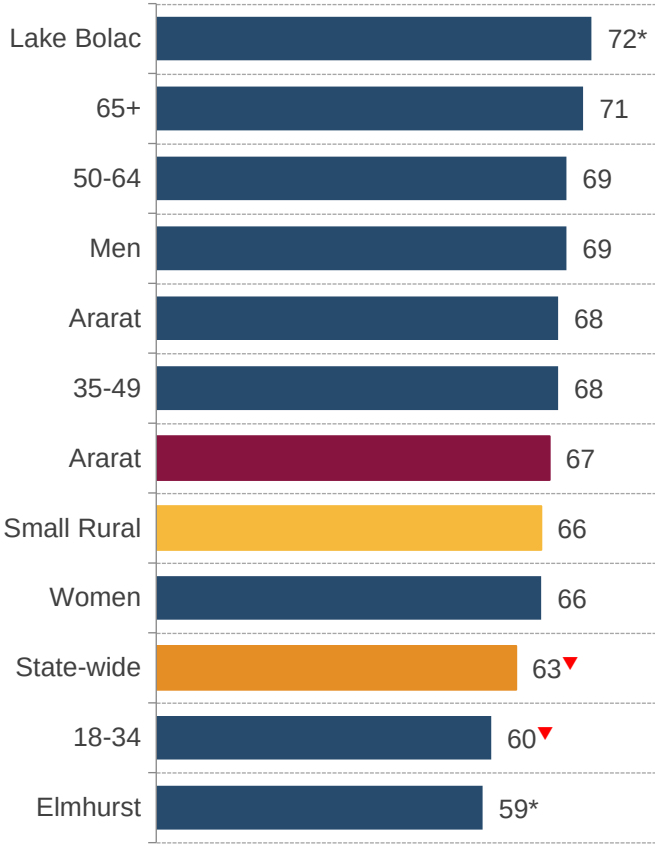
2025 elderly support importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Elderly support services' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 6 Councils asked group: 2
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Elderly support services performance

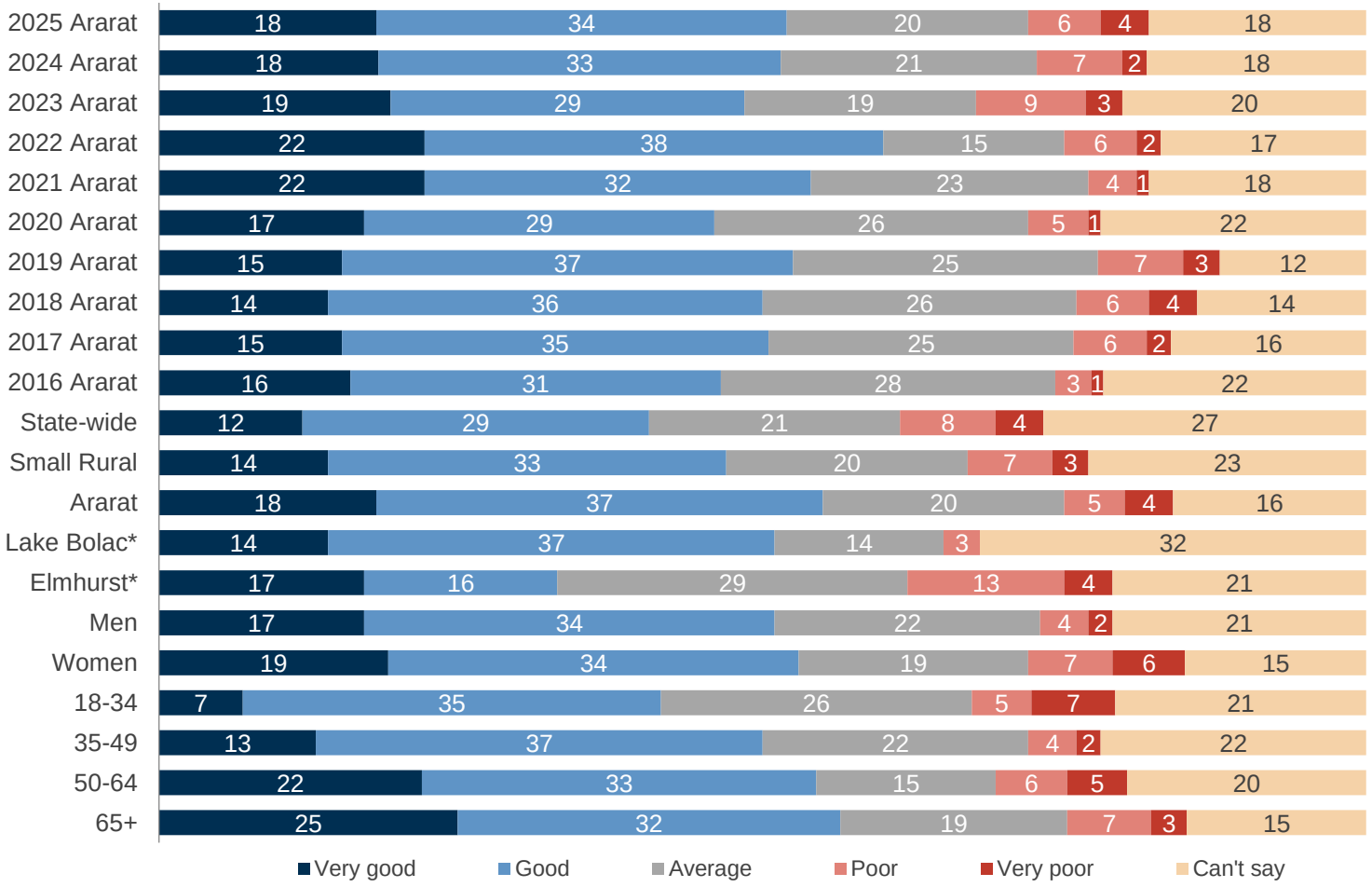
2025 elderly support performance (index scores)



	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	63	63	80	74	n/a	65	51	62	65
65+	72	71	74	78	73	67	69	72	70
50-64	64	65	66	70	70	67	65	66	68
Men	69	70	72	72	71	65	62	66	67
Ararat	68	67	73	72	69	66	65	68	68
35-49	64	54	65	68	63	61	61	62	68
Ararat	68	66	71	72	68	65	64	67	68
Small Rural	65	66	70	72	71	71	69	71	70
Women	65	62	71	72	65	66	67	68	70
State-wide	63	63	67	69	68	68	68	68	68
18-34	65	69	77	66	62	64	62	64	65
Elmhurst	62	58	70	81	67	63	62	57	76

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Elderly support services' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 5
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

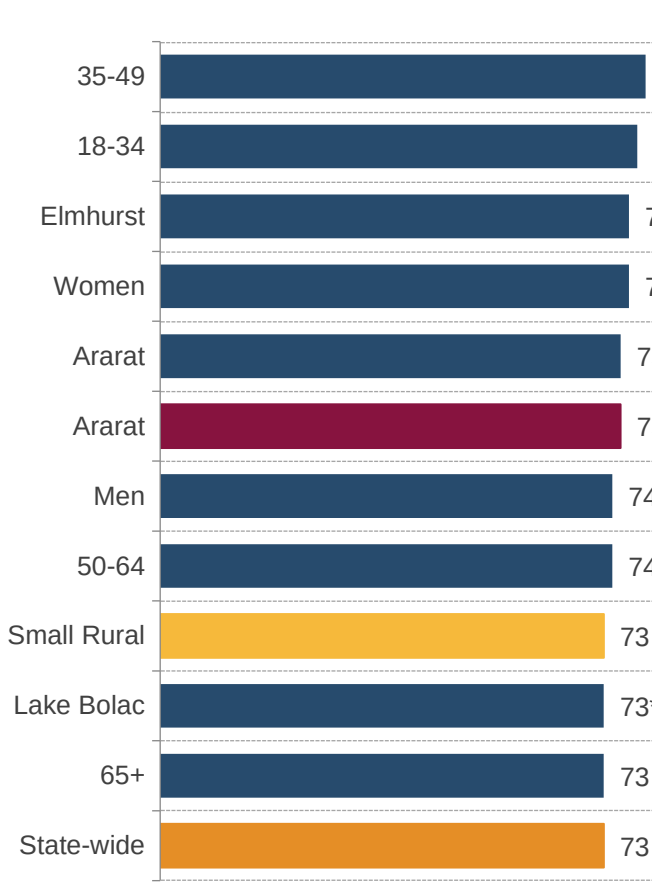
Elderly support services performance



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Elderly support services' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 5
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Recreational facilities importance

2025 recreational facilities importance (index scores)

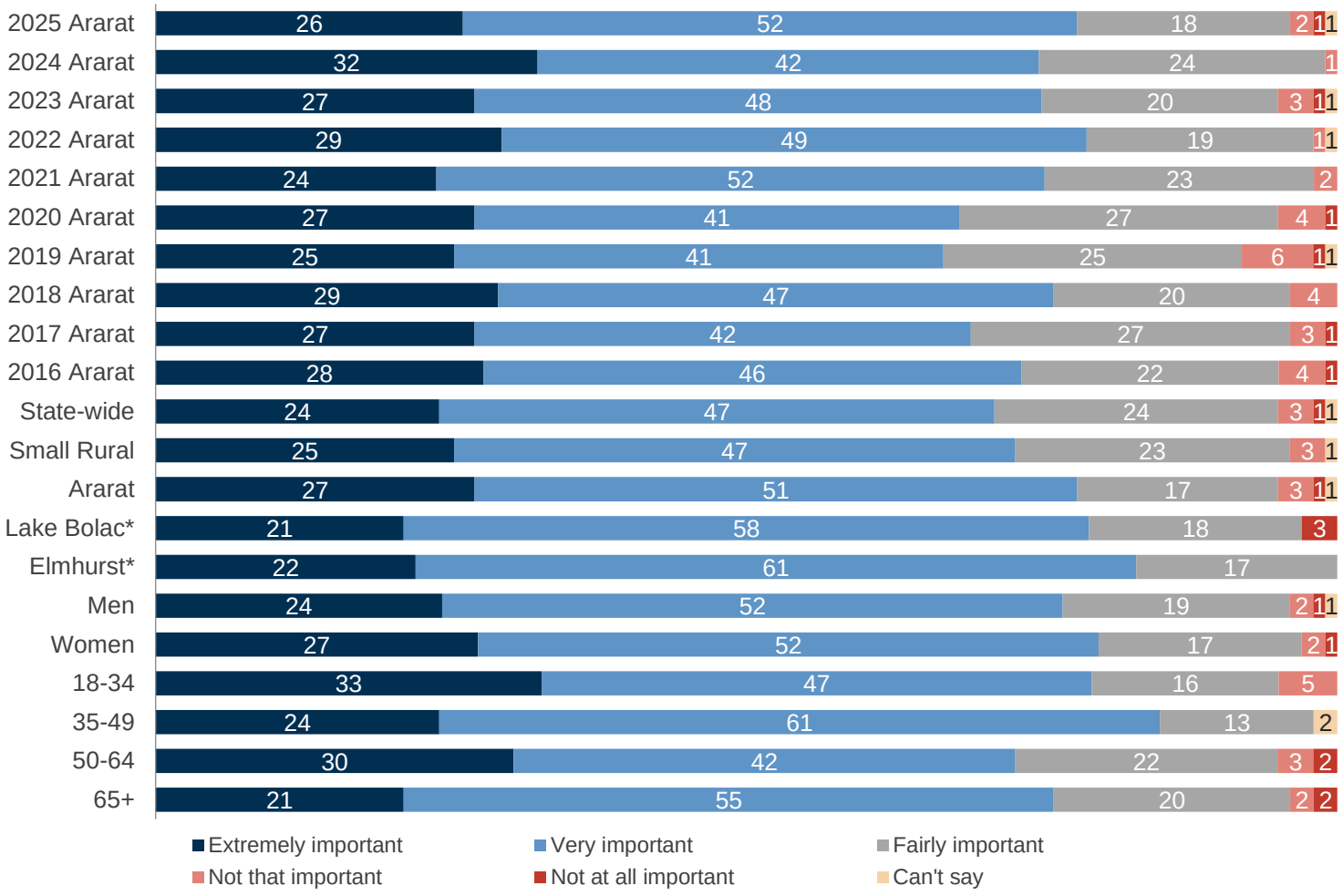


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
35-49	77	77	78	81	74	72	76	77	77
18-34	81	76	81	68	67	71	81	69	75
Elmhurst	68	63	69	72	64	61	68	70	68
Women	79	76	77	76	74	72	77	75	75
Ararat	77	76	78	75	73	71	77	73	76
Ararat	76	75	77	74	73	71	75	73	74
Men	74	73	76	73	72	70	74	72	74
50-64	77	77	76	74	78	73	76	75	75
Small Rural	73	73	74	73	73	72	72	71	72
Lake Bolac	85	68	65	78	68	68	68	73	77
65+	72	71	73	73	72	69	70	72	72
State-wide	73	73	74	74	72	72	73	72	73

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Recreational facilities' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Recreational facilities importance

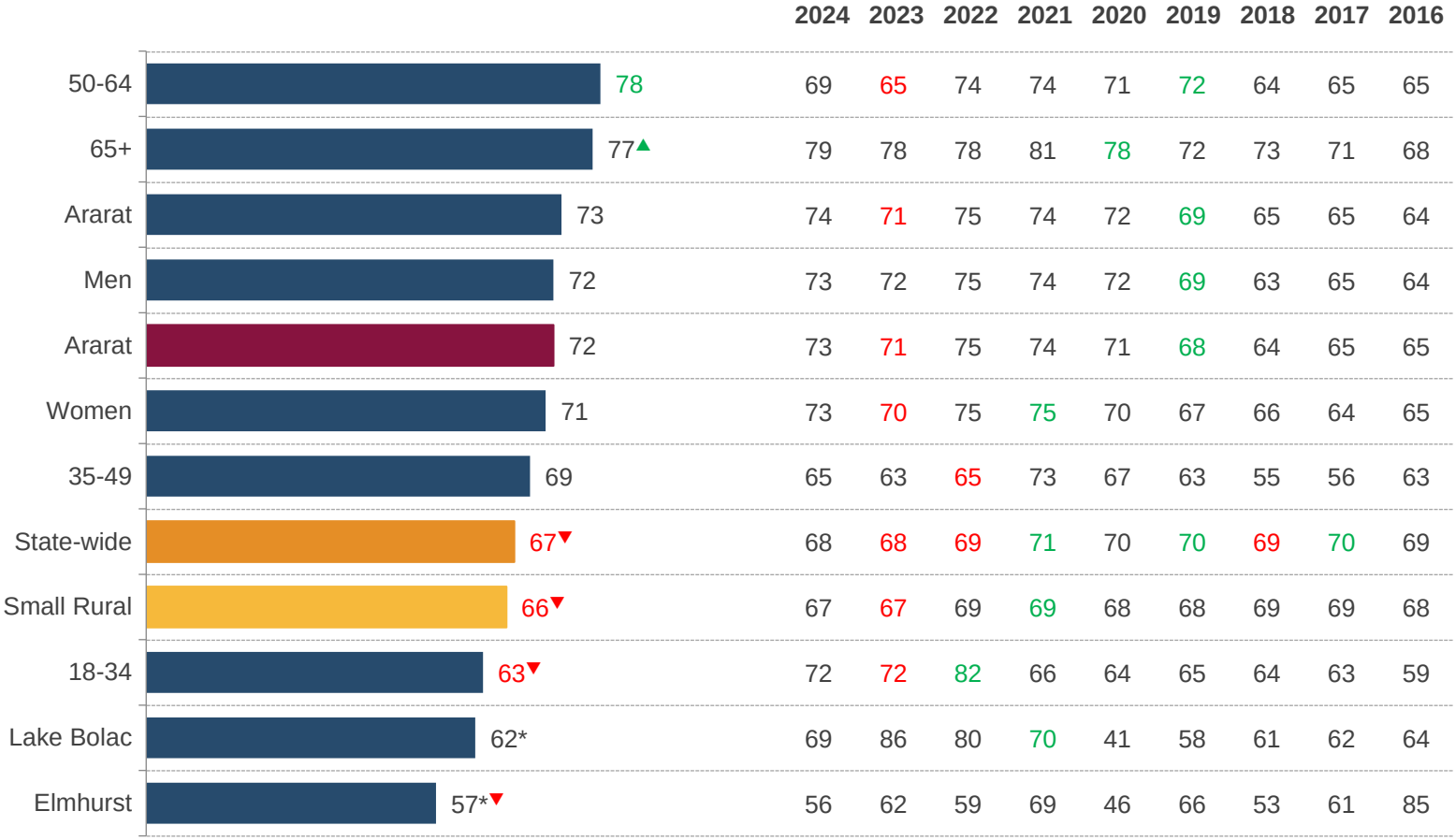
2025 recreational facilities importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Recreational facilities' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Recreational facilities performance

2025 recreational facilities performance (index scores)

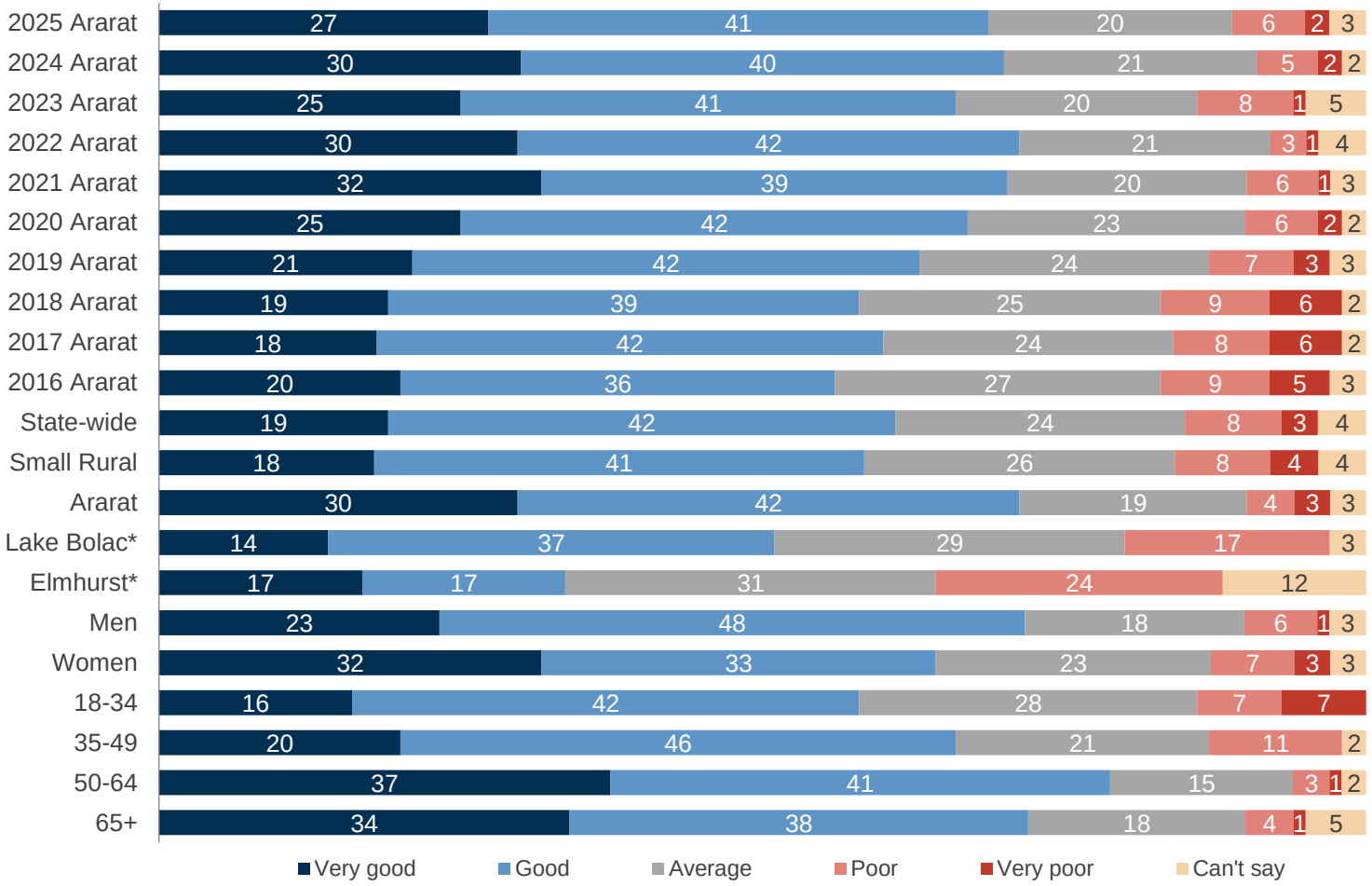


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
50-64	78	69	65	74	74	71	72	64	65	65
65+	77▲	79	78	78	81	78	72	73	71	68
Ararat	73	74	71	75	74	72	69	65	65	64
Men	72	73	72	75	74	72	69	63	65	64
Ararat	72	73	71	75	74	71	68	64	65	65
Women	71	73	70	75	75	70	67	66	64	65
35-49	69	65	63	65	73	67	63	55	56	63
State-wide	67▼	68	68	69	71	70	70	69	70	69
Small Rural	66▼	67	67	69	69	68	68	69	69	68
18-34	63▼	72	72	82	66	64	65	64	63	59
Lake Bolac	62*	69	86	80	70	41	58	61	62	64
Elmhurst	57*▼	56	62	59	69	46	66	53	61	85

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Recreational facilities' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 36 Councils asked group: 13
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Recreational facilities performance

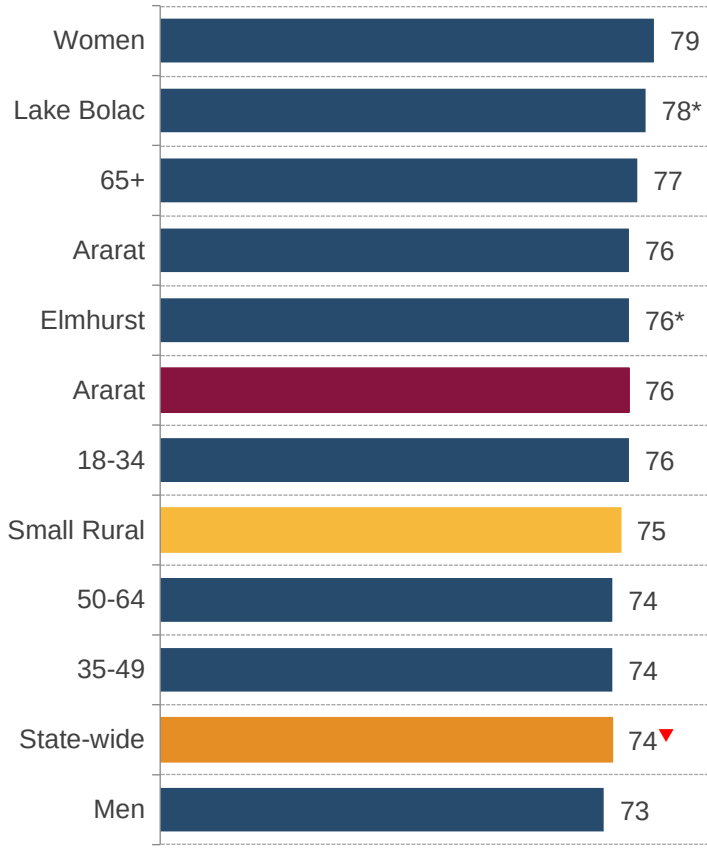
2025 recreational facilities performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Recreational facilities' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 36 Councils asked group: 13
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The appearance of public areas importance

2025 public areas importance (index scores)

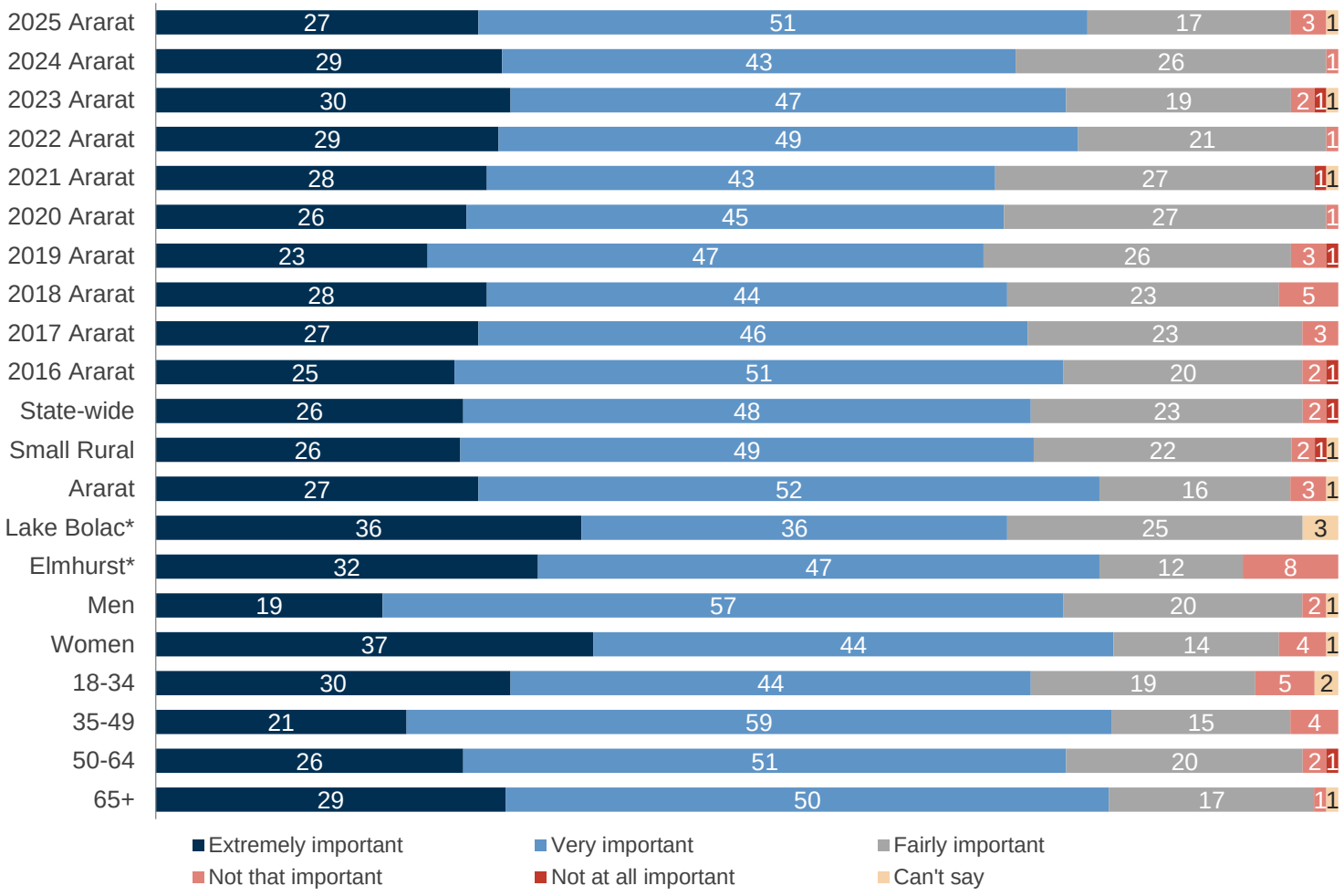


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	78	77	78	79	75	76	78	76	77
Lake Bolac	65	66	69	82	59	59	72	67	75
65+	74	73	77	75	74	71	74	74	74
Ararat	76	77	79	75	75	74	75	77	77
Elmhurst	68	75	84	75	63	59	49	81	74
Ararat	75	76	76	74	74	72	74	74	75
18-34	75	79	73	70	72	71	74	68	69
Small Rural	74	74	74	74	74	74	74	74	74
50-64	76	77	78	73	77	74	73	76	76
35-49	75	79	77	78	73	73	73	77	79
State-wide	74	74	75	75	74	73	74	74	74
Men	73	76	75	70	73	69	70	72	73

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The appearance of public areas' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The appearance of public areas importance

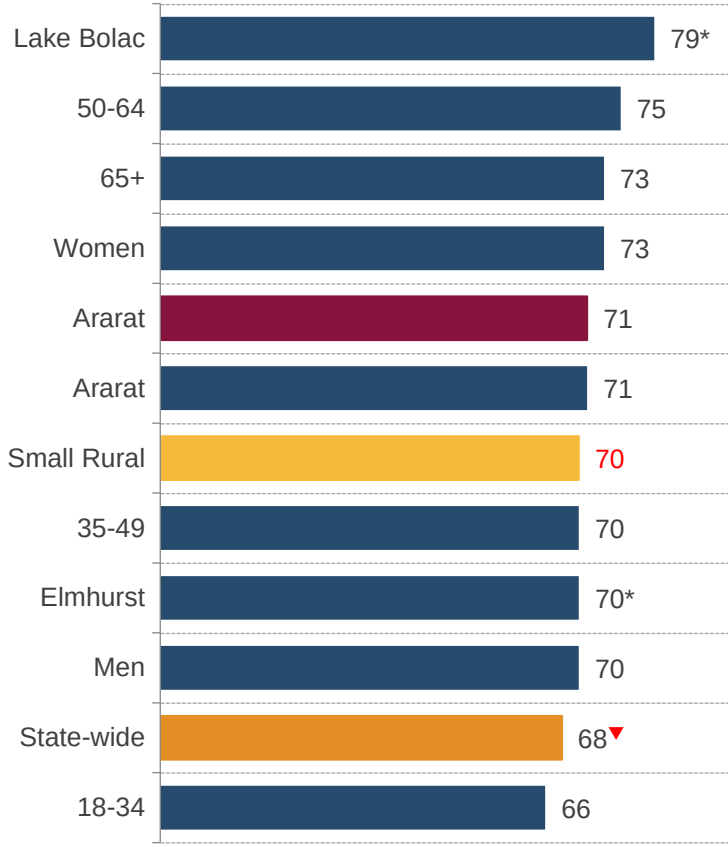
2025 public areas importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The appearance of public areas' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

The appearance of public areas performance

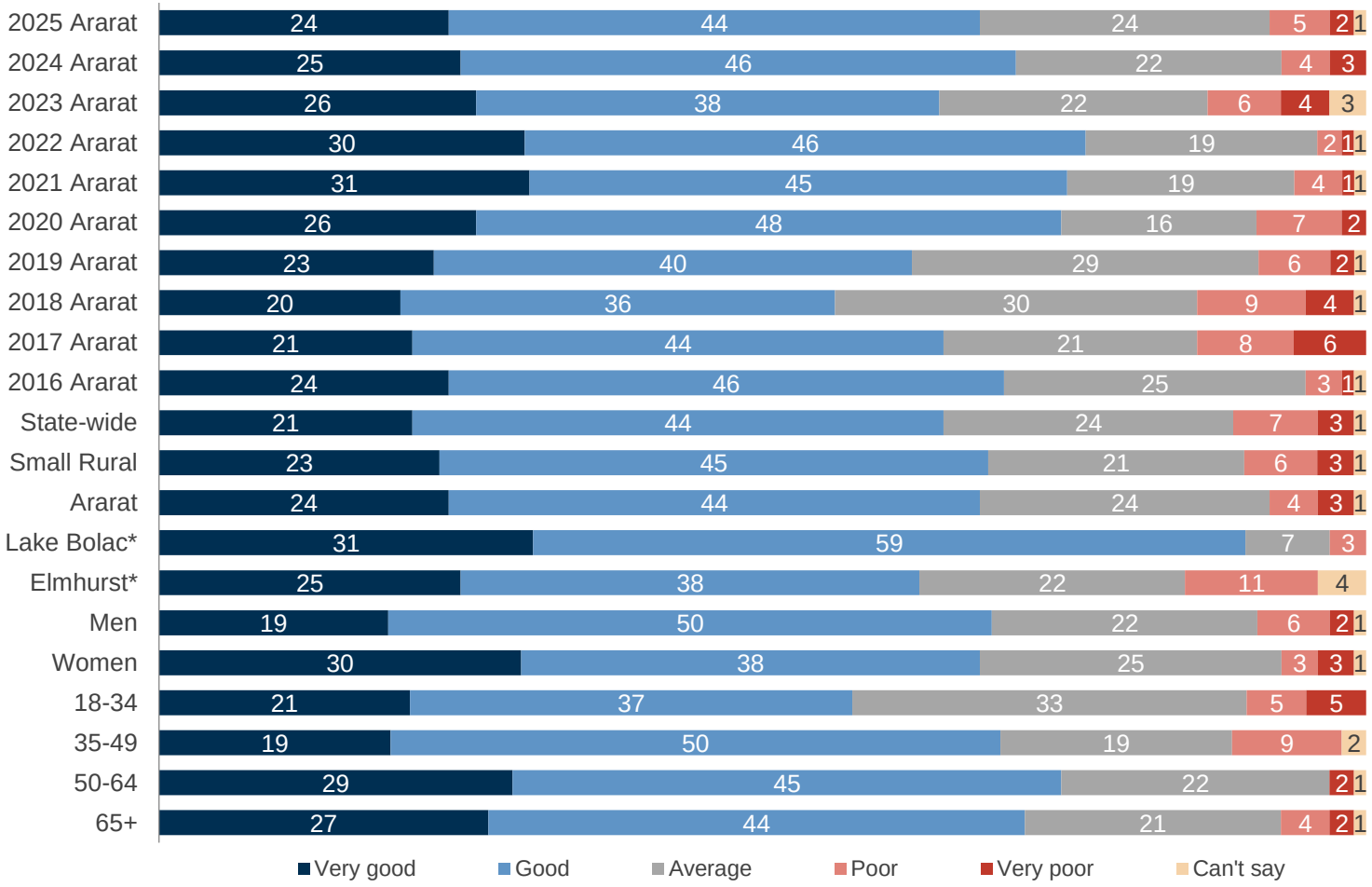
2025 public areas performance (index scores)



	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	68	85	77	82	48	68	61	71	69
50-64	72	67	74	75	73	69	64	64	70
65+	76	75	77	79	73	71	69	70	74
Women	71	67	75	75	71	70	68	69	74
Ararat	72	70	76	75	73	69	65	66	72
Ararat	72	69	76	75	73	69	66	65	73
Small Rural	71	71	73	75	72	73	72	74	73
35-49	67	64	72	73	73	66	60	69	71
Elmhurst	57	54	71	74	75	79	59	65	81
Men	72	72	77	76	74	69	63	64	71
State-wide	68	67	71	73	72	72	71	71	71
18-34	69	67	79	74	70	71	66	60	73

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The appearance of public areas' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 37 Councils asked group: 14
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

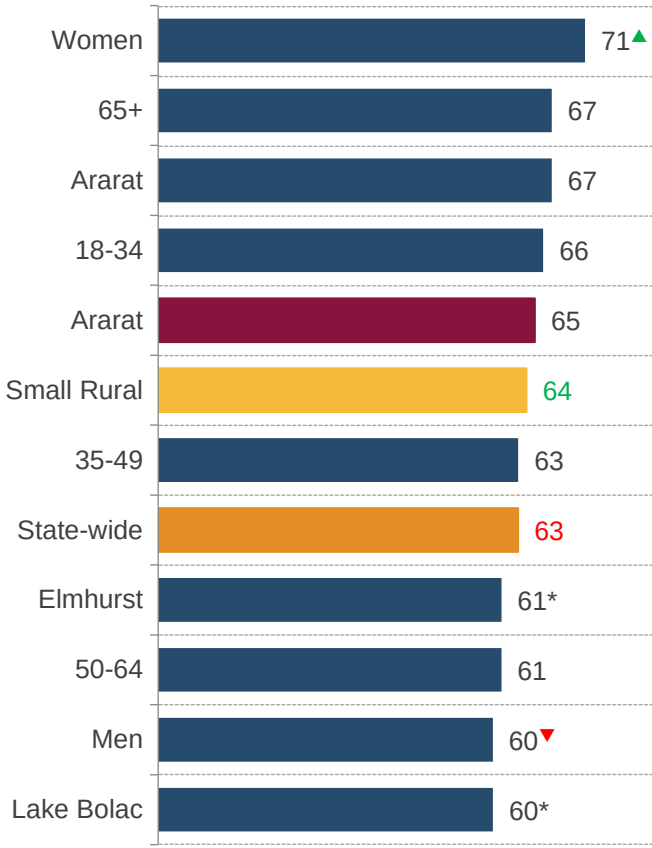
The appearance of public areas performance



Q2. How has Council performed on 'The appearance of public areas' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 37 Councils asked group: 14
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Art centres and libraries importance

2025 art centres and libraries importance (index scores)

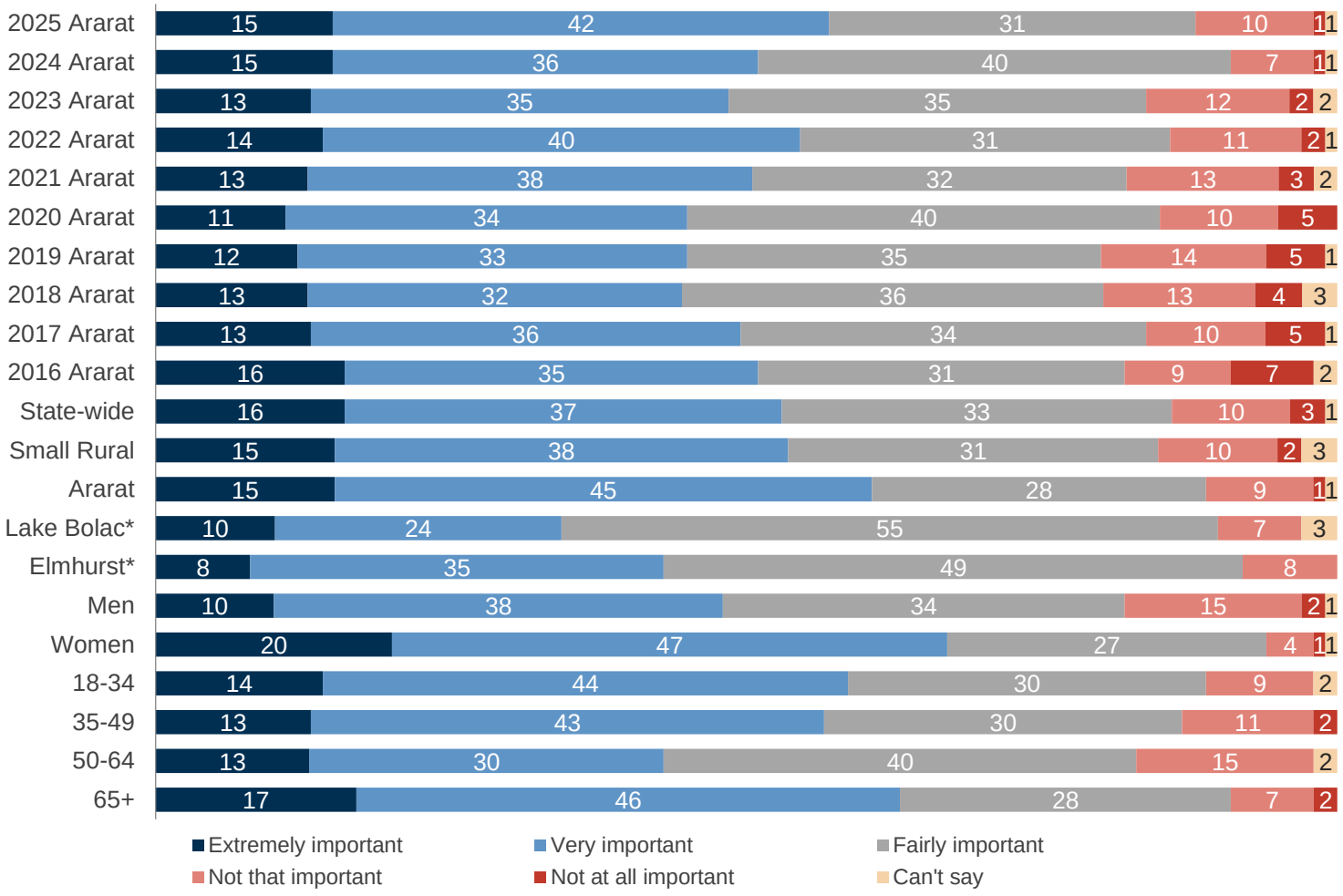


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	67	67	70	65	64	65	67	67	69
65+	63	63	66	63	63	58	62	60	62
Ararat	65	64	64	62	59	60	61	62	64
18-34	65	61	63	58	50	60	57	56	64
Ararat	64	62	63	61	59	59	60	60	61
Small Rural	61	60	63	63	60	63	61	61	65
35-49	65	61	59	62	57	56	58	64	59
State-wide	64	65	67	67	65	65	65	64	66
Elmhurst	58	47	72	70	60	65	50	55	71
50-64	64	61	64	62	65	62	61	60	60
Men	61	57	58	58	55	53	53	54	54
Lake Bolac	60	47	53	60	75	39	53	53	62

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Art centres and libraries' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 14 Councils asked group: 3
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Art centres and libraries importance

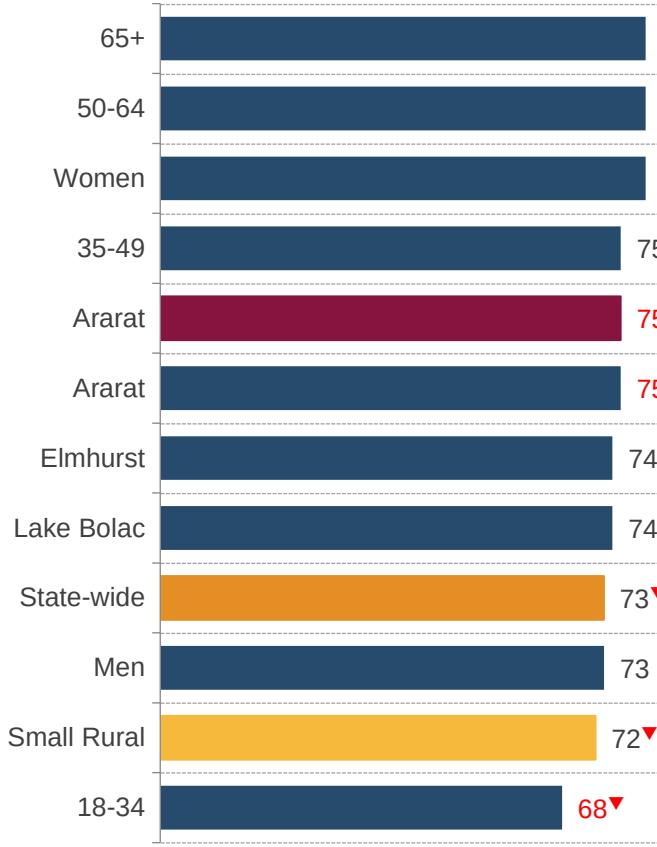
2025 art centres and libraries importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Art centres and libraries' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 14 Councils asked group: 3
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Art centres and libraries performance

2025 art centres and libraries performance (index scores)

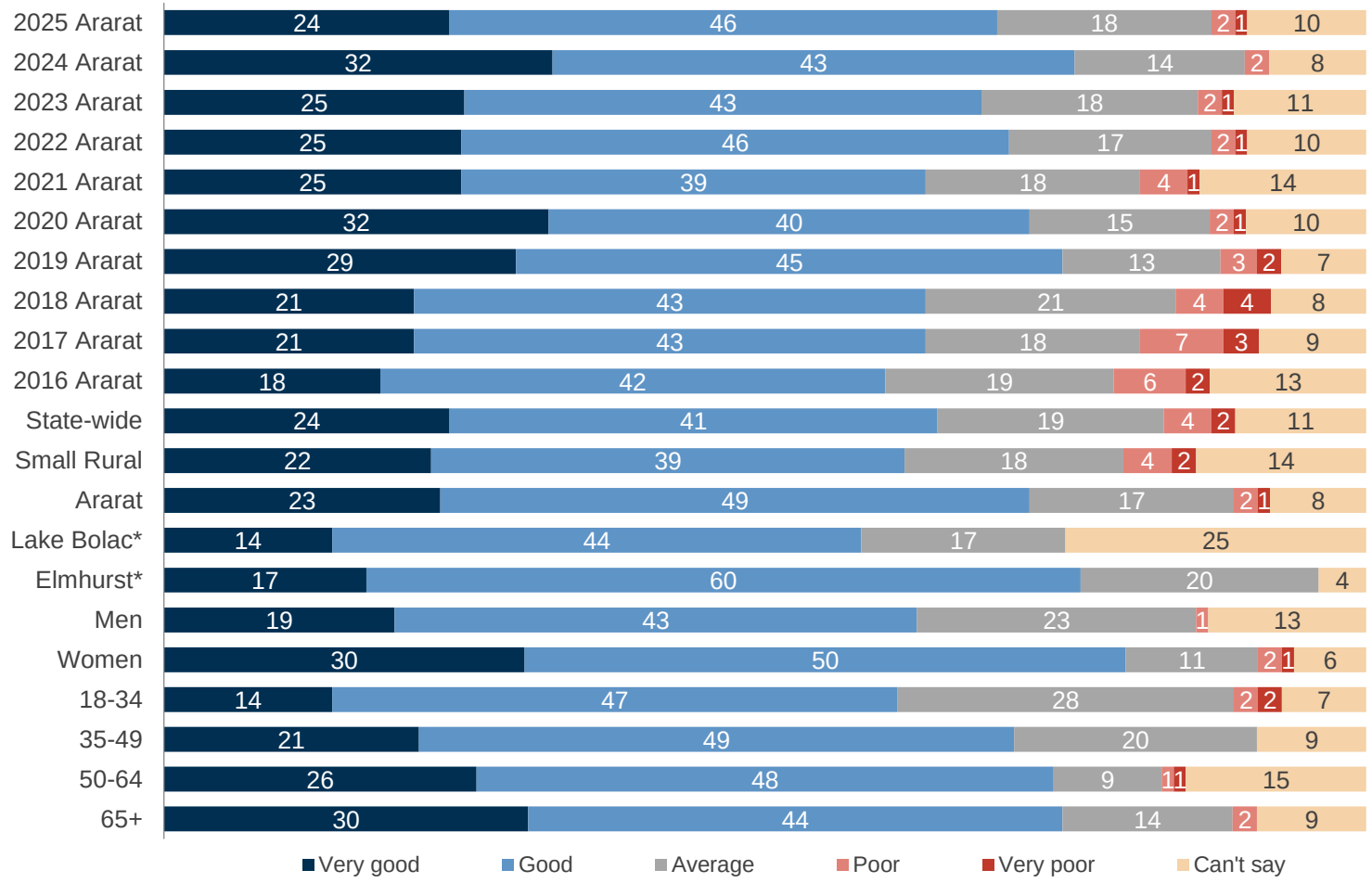


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	79	76	78	78	78	77	73	76	74
50-64	78	75	75	76	80	77	71	67	70
Women	81	76	78	77	79	77	74	71	72
35-49	76	71	69	75	81	72	65	69	70
Ararat	78	75	75	74	78	76	70	70	69
Ararat	79	75	76	73	78	76	70	70	70
Elmhurst	66	72	70	86	57	88	70	88	78
Lake Bolac	80	75	76	83	41	70	63	68	71
State-wide	73	73	73	73	74	74	74	73	72
Men	76	73	73	73	76	74	66	69	67
Small Rural	73	73	71	72	74	74	73	72	71
18-34	79	77	78	67	71	77	69	66	60

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Art centres and libraries' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Art centres and libraries performance

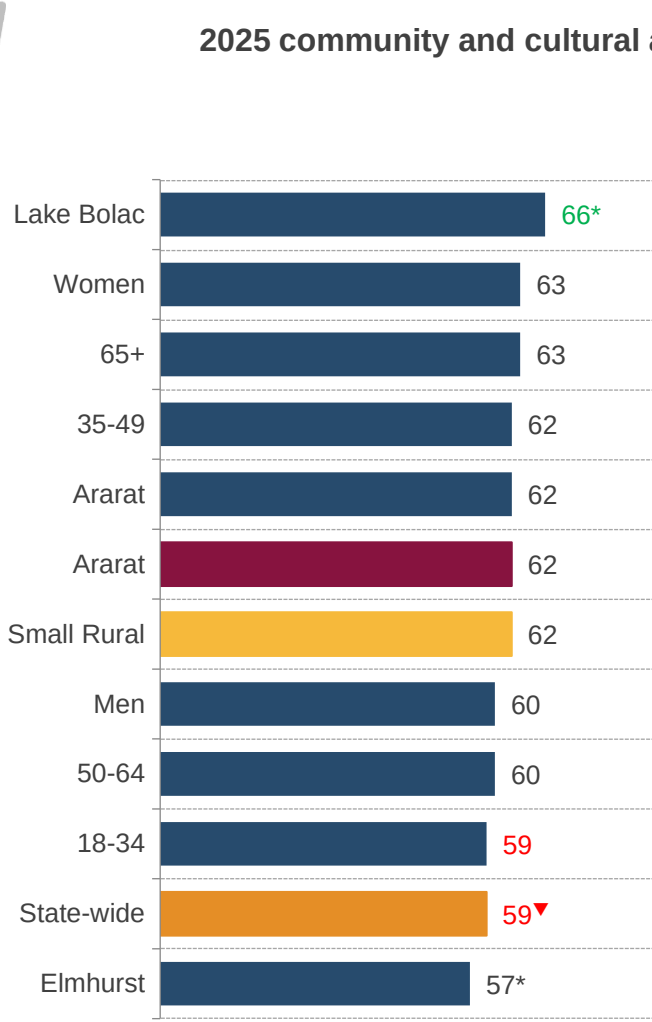
2025 art centres and libraries performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Art centres and libraries' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community and cultural activities importance

2025 community and cultural activities importance (index scores)

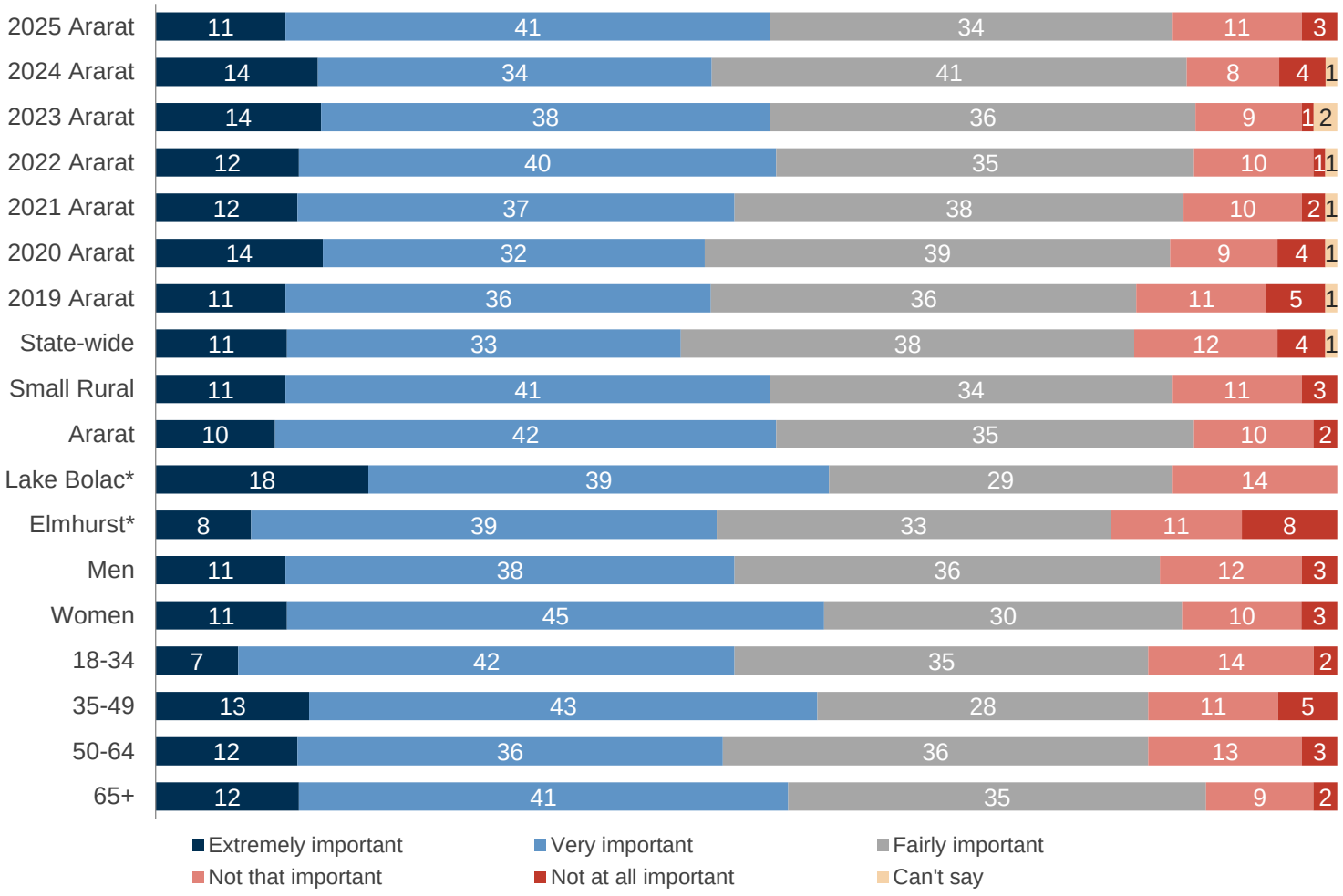


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	45	52	59	59	59	40	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	63	67	65	65	65	64	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	59	63	62	63	60	57	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	62	65	64	63	60	55	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	63	65	65	63	61	61	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	61	64	64	62	60	60	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	61	64	64	62	60	62	60	62	64
Men	60	62	63	59	57	56	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	58	63	65	63	67	64	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	68	67	66	57	57	64	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	60	62	64	64	62	61	61	61	62
Elmhurst	63	62	65	65	54	57	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Community and cultural activities' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 11 Councils asked group: 1
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community and cultural activities importance

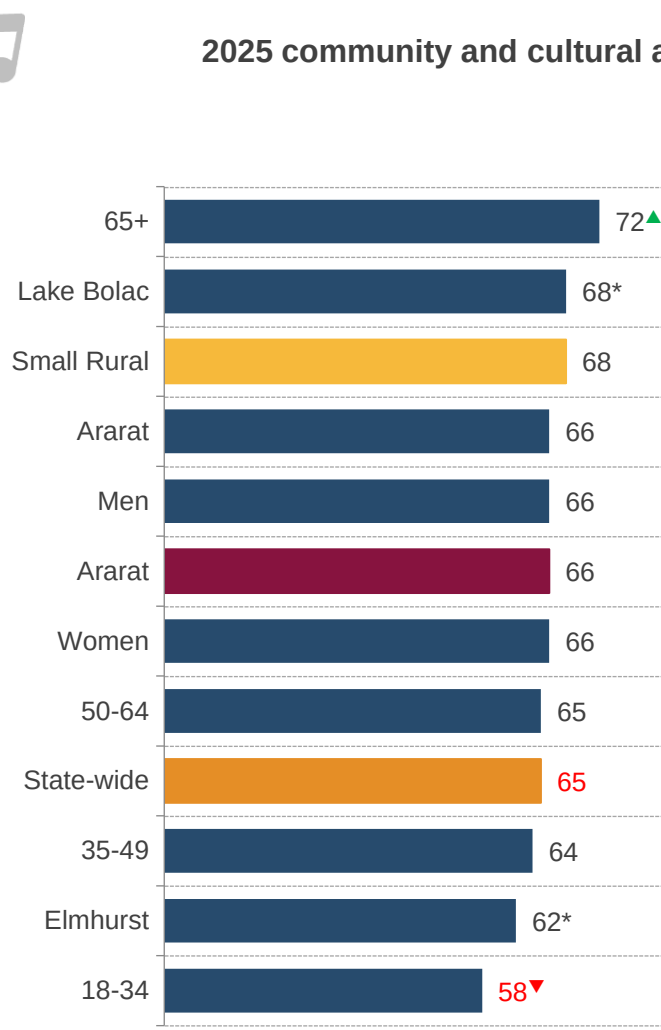
2025 community and cultural activities importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Community and cultural activities' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 11 Councils asked group: 1
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community and cultural activities performance

2025 community and cultural activities performance (index scores)

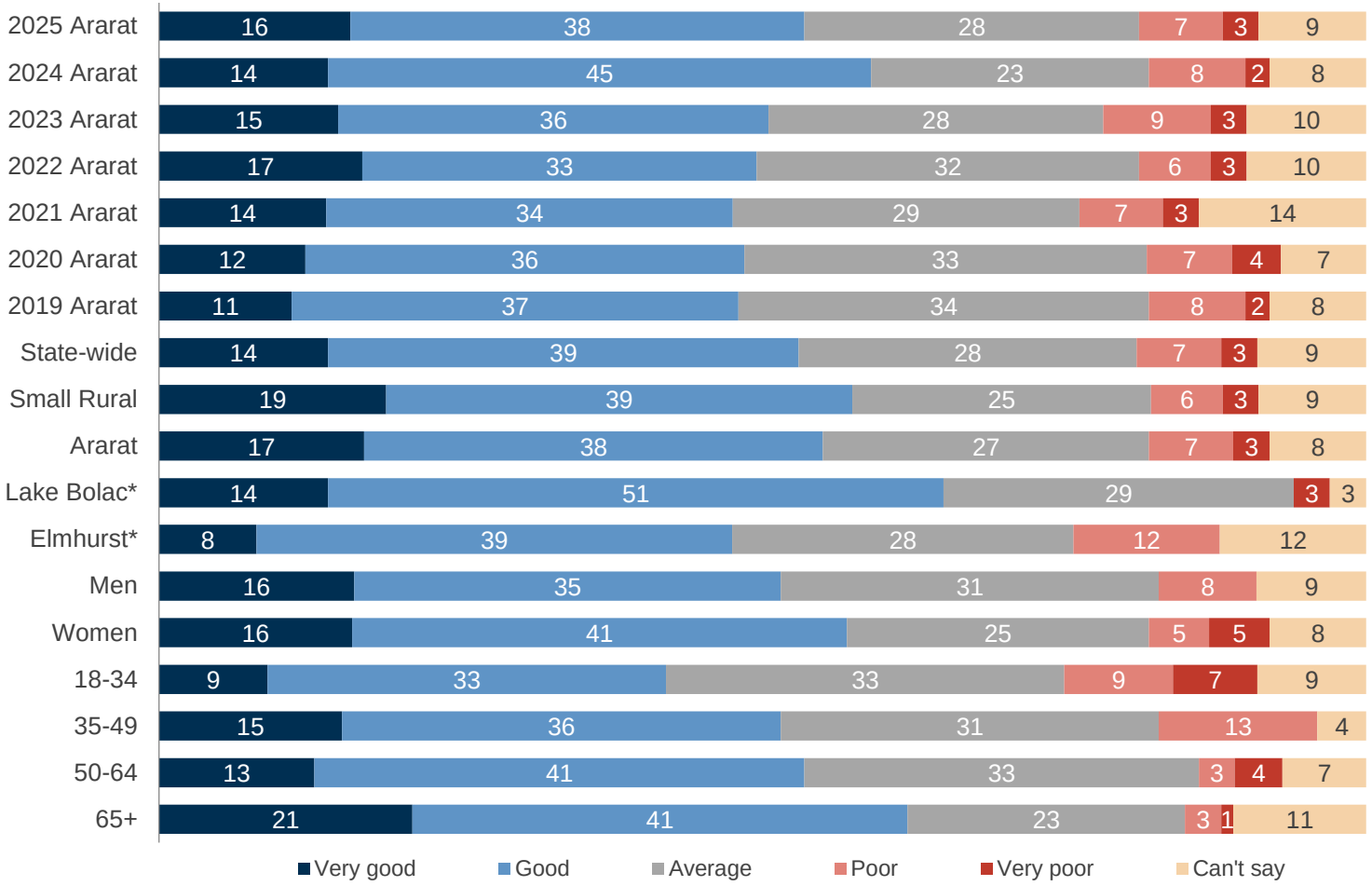


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	71	70	68	68	67	66	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake Bolac	60	69	75	75	32	58	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	69	70	68	67	68	66	69	69	65
Ararat	68	65	65	63	63	63	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	68	64	64	65	60	62	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	67	65	65	64	63	63	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	65	65	66	63	66	64	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	61	63	63	64	63	65	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	66	66	65	65	68	69	69	69	69
35-49	61	57	60	67	61	59	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmhurst	52	61	54	71	70	84	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	68	63	66	55	58	60	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community and cultural activities' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 20 Councils asked group: 2
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Community and cultural activities performance

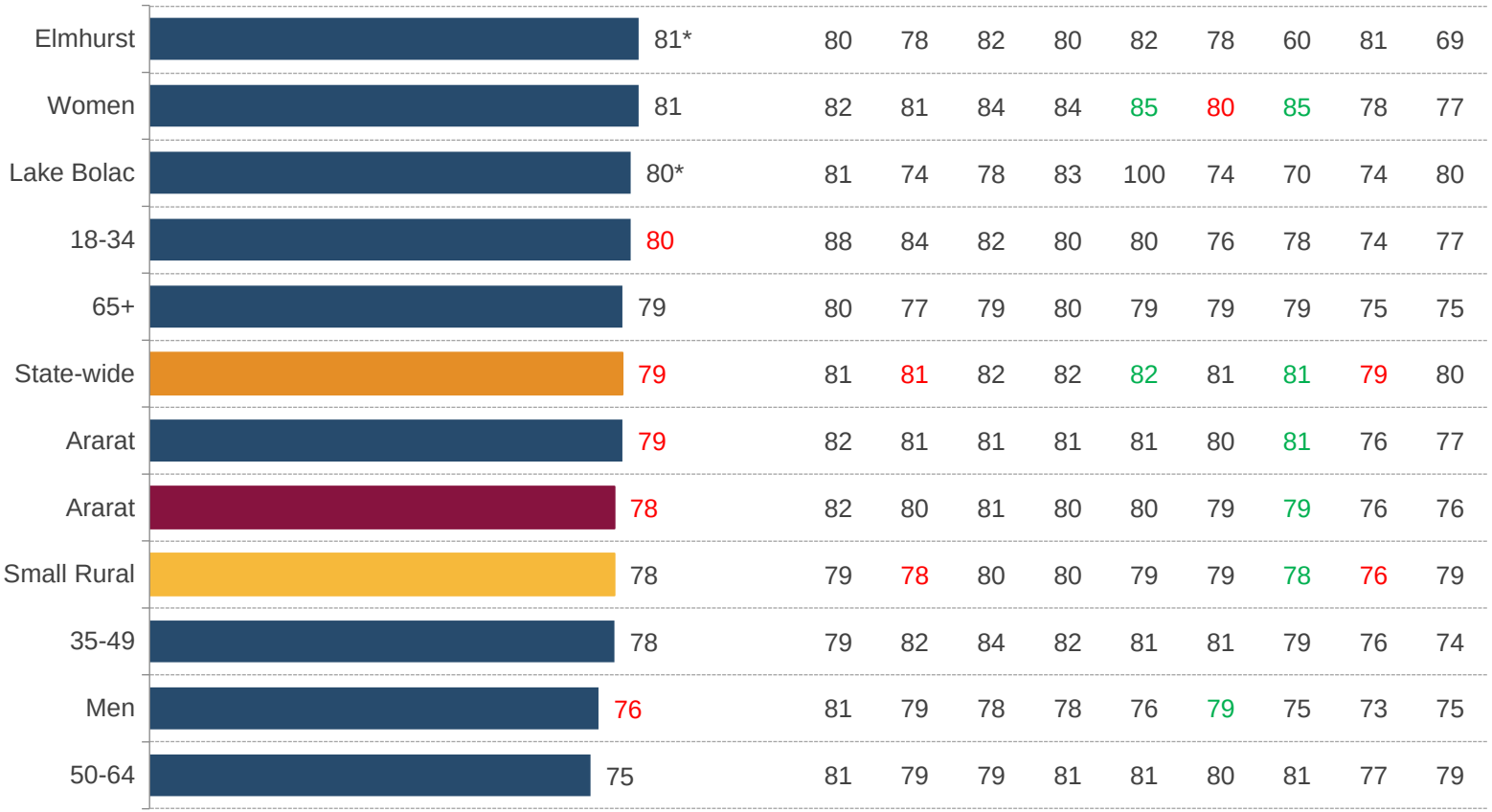
2025 community and cultural activities performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community and cultural activities' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 20 Councils asked group: 2
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Waste management importance

2025 waste management importance (index scores)

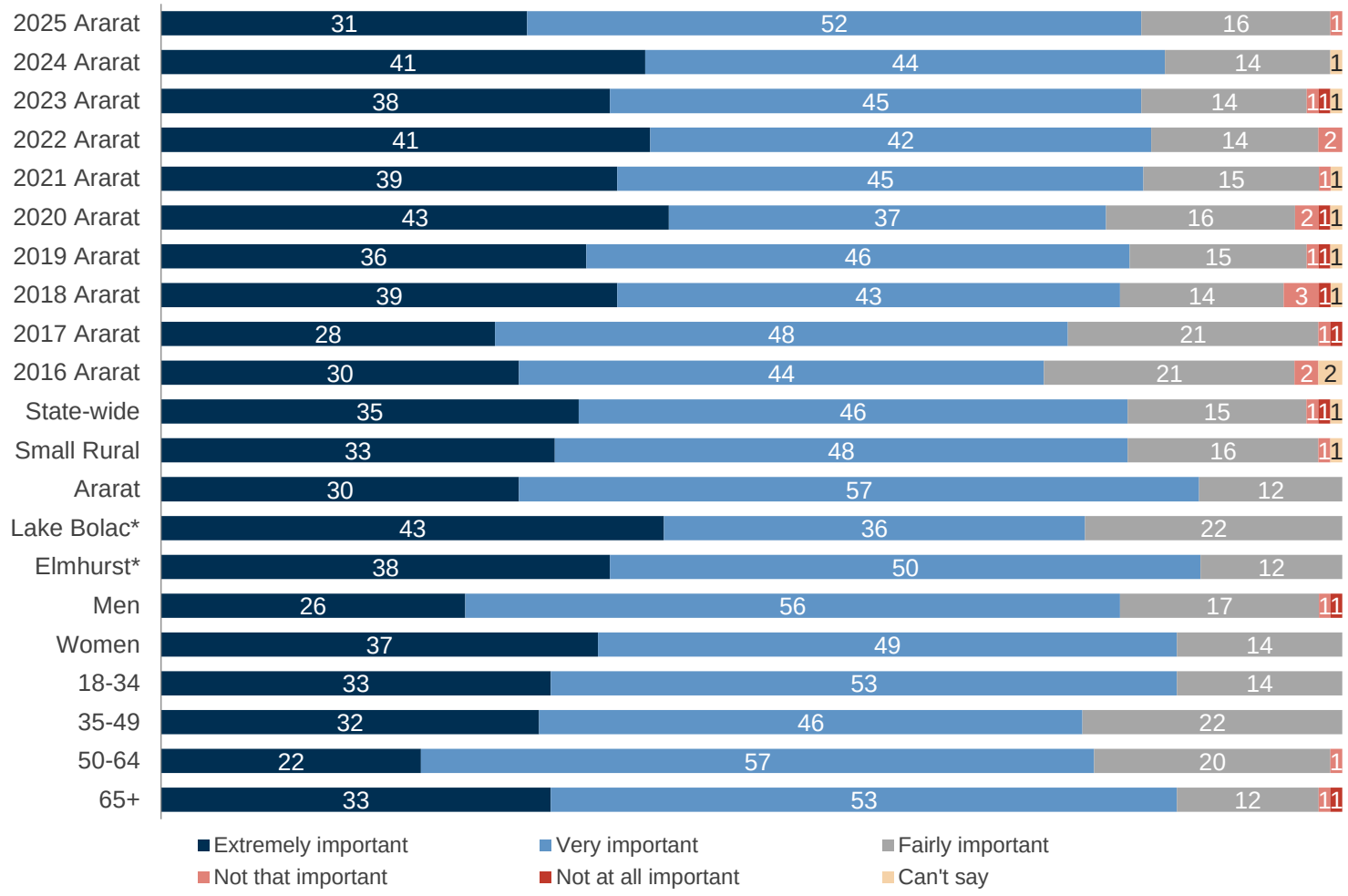


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	80	78	82	80	82	78	60	81	69
Women	82	81	84	84	85	80	85	78	77
Lake Bolac	81	74	78	83	100	74	70	74	80
18-34	88	84	82	80	80	76	78	74	77
65+	80	77	79	80	79	79	79	75	75
State-wide	81	81	82	82	82	81	81	79	80
Ararat	82	81	81	81	81	80	81	76	77
Ararat	82	80	81	80	80	79	79	76	76
Small Rural	79	78	80	80	79	79	78	76	79
35-49	79	82	84	82	81	81	79	76	74
Men	81	79	78	78	76	79	75	73	75
50-64	81	79	79	81	81	80	81	77	79

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Waste management' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Waste management importance

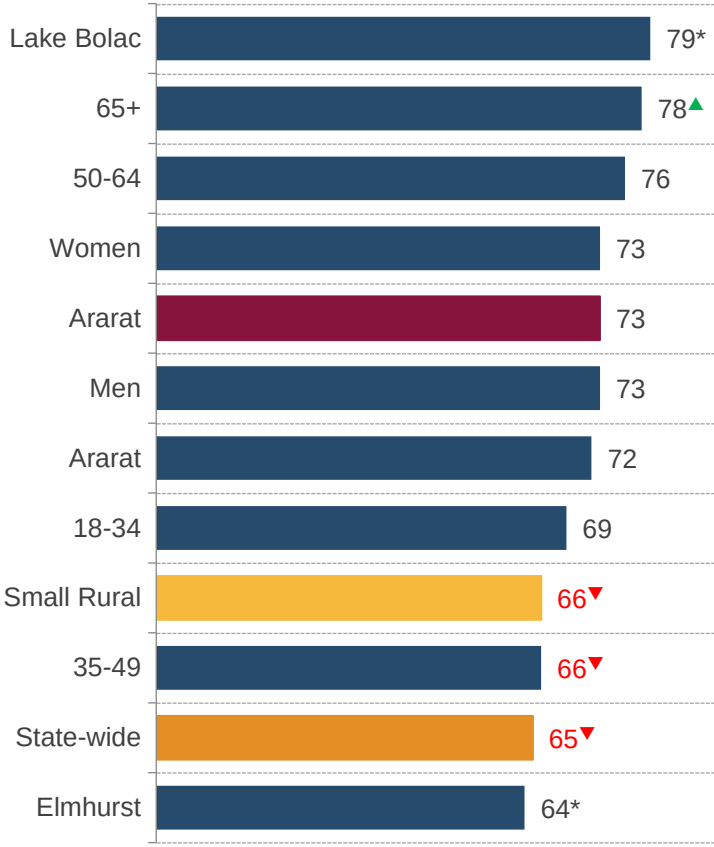
2025 waste management importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Waste management' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Waste management performance

2025 waste management performance (index scores)

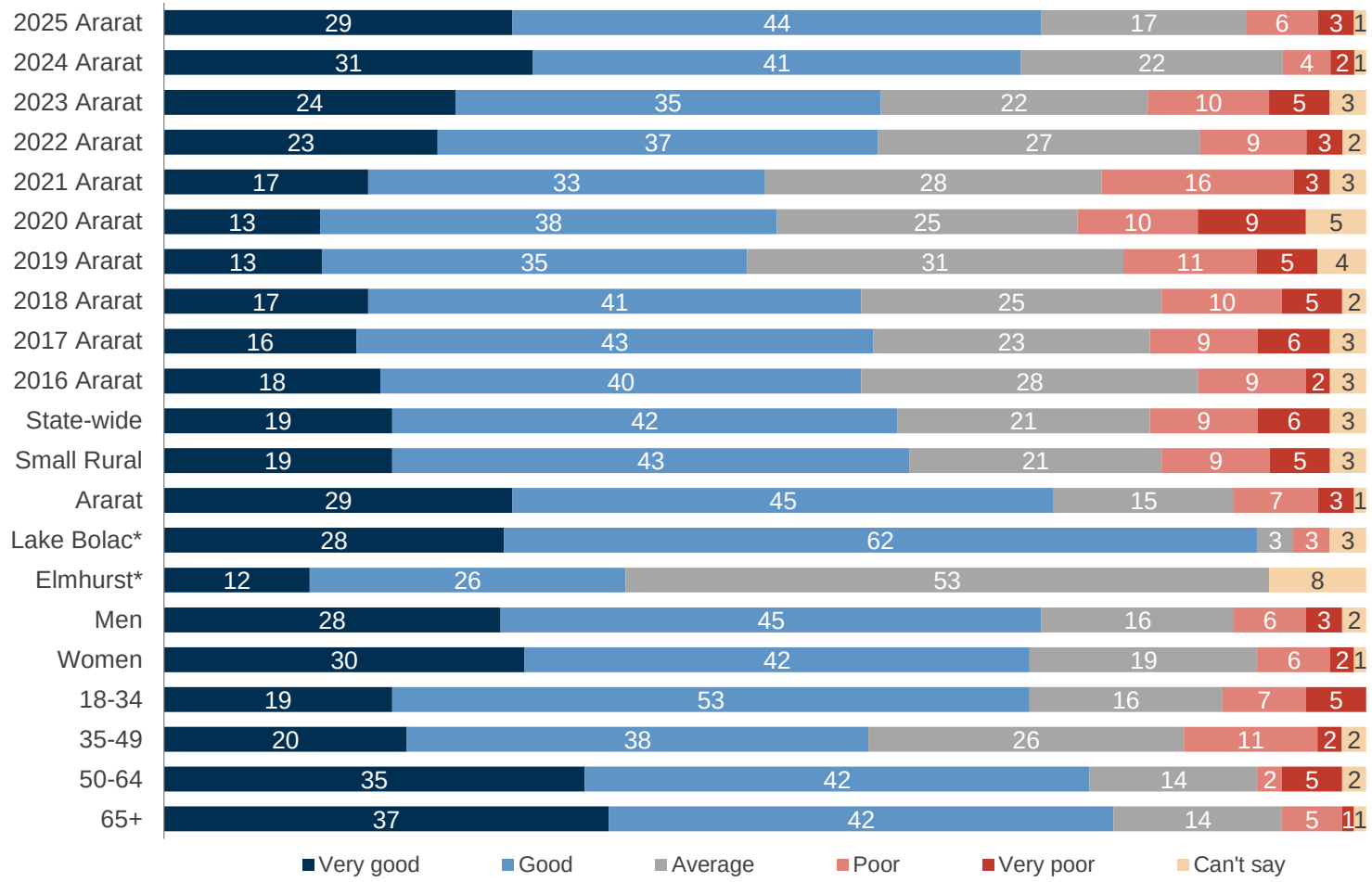


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	78	90	64	65	16	49	49	55	58
65+	78	73	70	71	65	63	69	69	72
50-64	75	64	63	57	59	58	61	61	66
Women	74	63	68	61	60	59	61	64	68
Ararat	74	66	67	61	60	60	64	64	66
Men	74	69	67	62	60	61	66	63	65
Ararat	74	66	69	61	61	63	66	65	67
18-34	67	61	75	55	57	65	65	62	62
Small Rural	67	66	68	68	64	66	69	70	69
35-49	73	60	58	56	56	55	59	60	63
State-wide	67	66	68	69	65	68	70	71	70
Elmhurst	72	67	62	68	35	62	64	39	76

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Waste management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Waste management performance

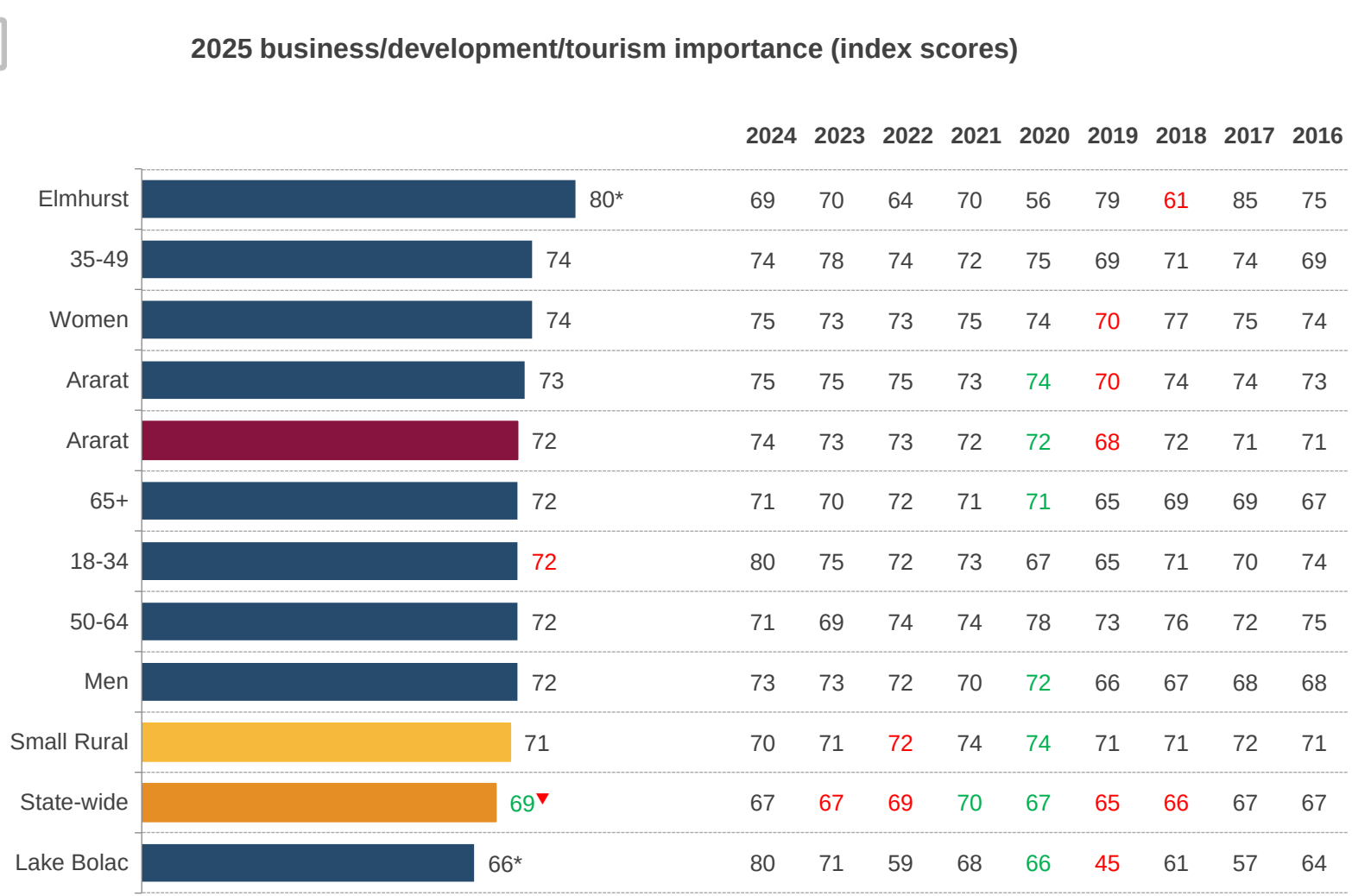
2025 waste management performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Waste management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Business and community development and tourism importance

2025 business/development/tourism importance (index scores)

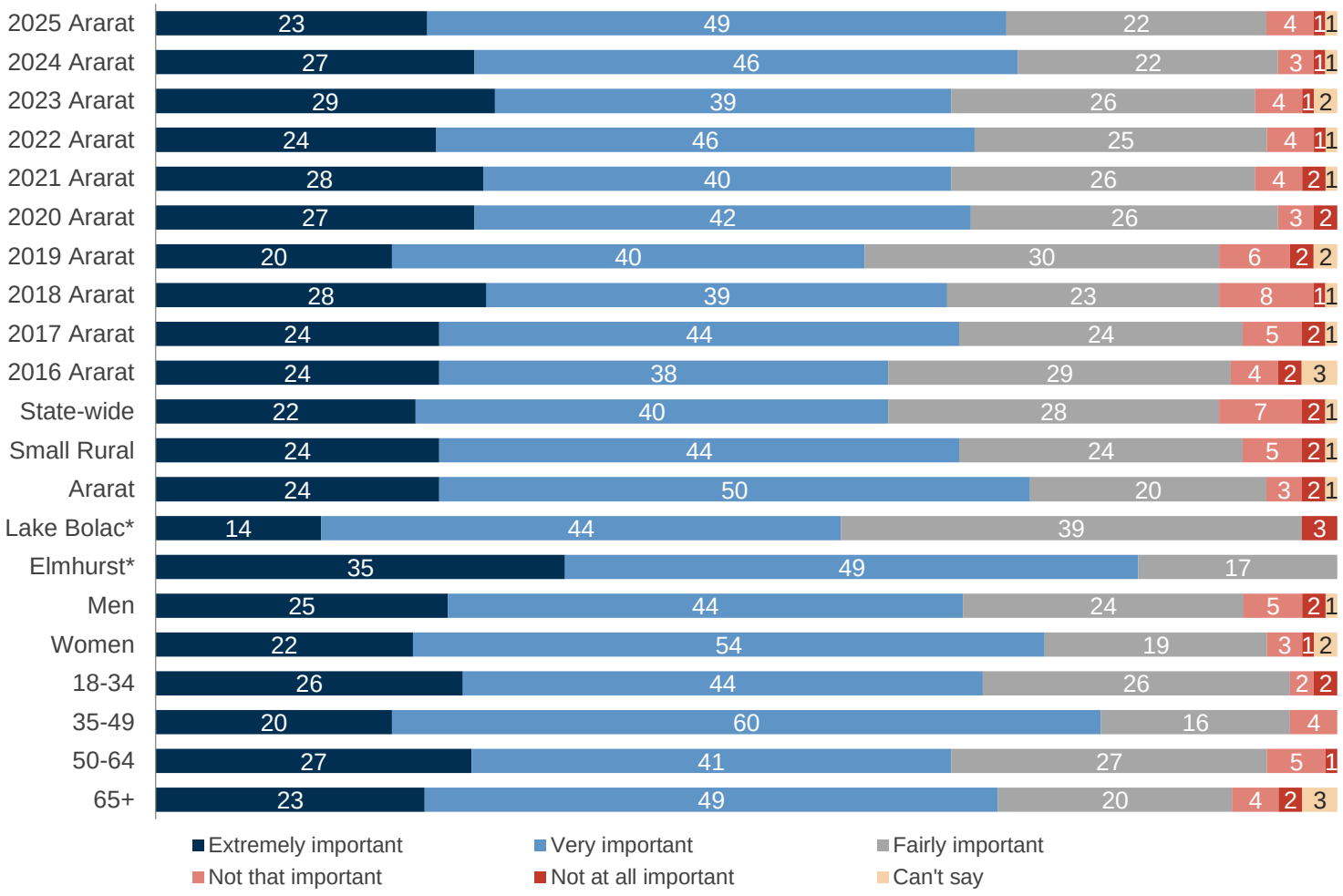


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	69	70	64	70	56	79	61	85	75
35-49	74	78	74	72	75	69	71	74	69
Women	75	73	73	75	74	70	77	75	74
Ararat	75	75	75	73	74	70	74	74	73
Ararat	74	73	73	72	72	68	72	71	71
65+	71	70	72	71	71	65	69	69	67
18-34	80	75	72	73	67	65	71	70	74
50-64	71	69	74	74	78	73	76	72	75
Men	73	73	72	70	72	66	67	68	68
Small Rural	70	71	72	74	74	71	71	72	71
State-wide	67	67	69	70	67	65	66	67	67
Lake Bolac	80	71	59	68	66	45	61	57	64

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Business and community development and tourism' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 5
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Business and community development and tourism importance

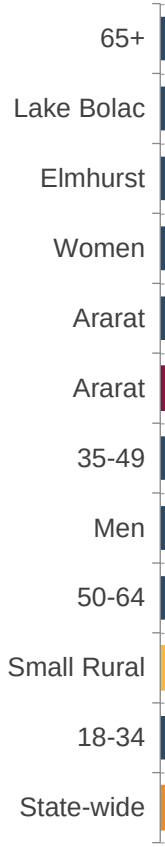
2025 business/development/tourism importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Business and community development and tourism' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 5
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Business and community development and tourism performance

2025 business/development/tourism performance (index scores)

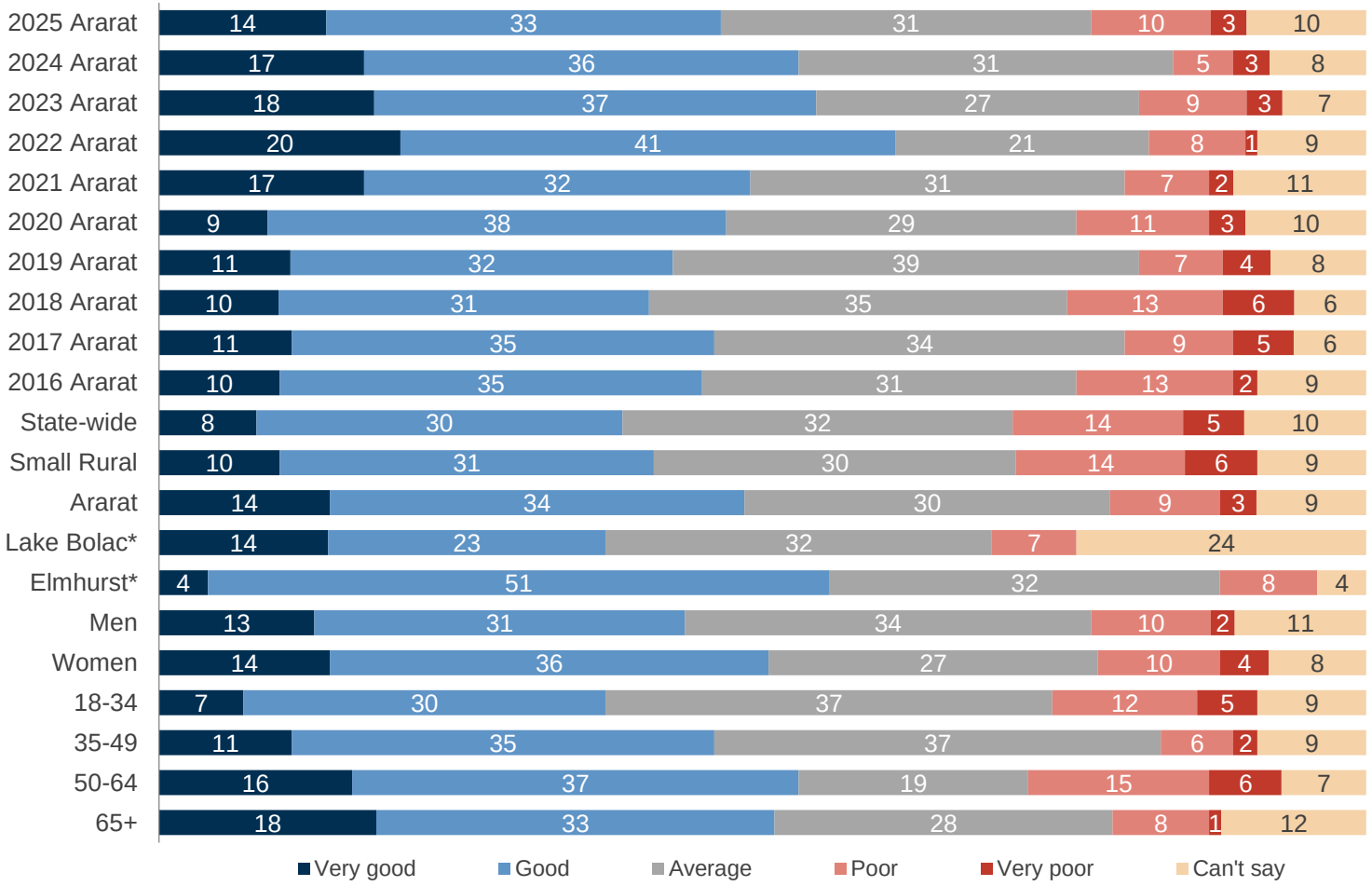


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	70	70	72	71	64	63	59	64	61
Lake Bolac	62	65	70	63	32	44	49	60	56
Elmhurst	47	53	65	71	43	60	61	65	92
Women	67	66	70	65	59	62	61	62	64
Ararat	67	66	70	65	61	62	58	61	62
Ararat	66	65	69	65	61	61	57	60	61
35-49	63	61	67	63	55	56	51	57	59
Men	65	65	69	66	62	60	53	58	58
50-64	64	63	65	64	62	60	56	59	64
Small Rural	59	61	63	62	58	59	59	64	61
18-34	65	63	71	60	62	63	61	58	59
State-wide	57	59	60	61	59	61	60	61	60

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Business and community development and tourism' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 23 Councils asked group: 8
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Business and community development and tourism performance

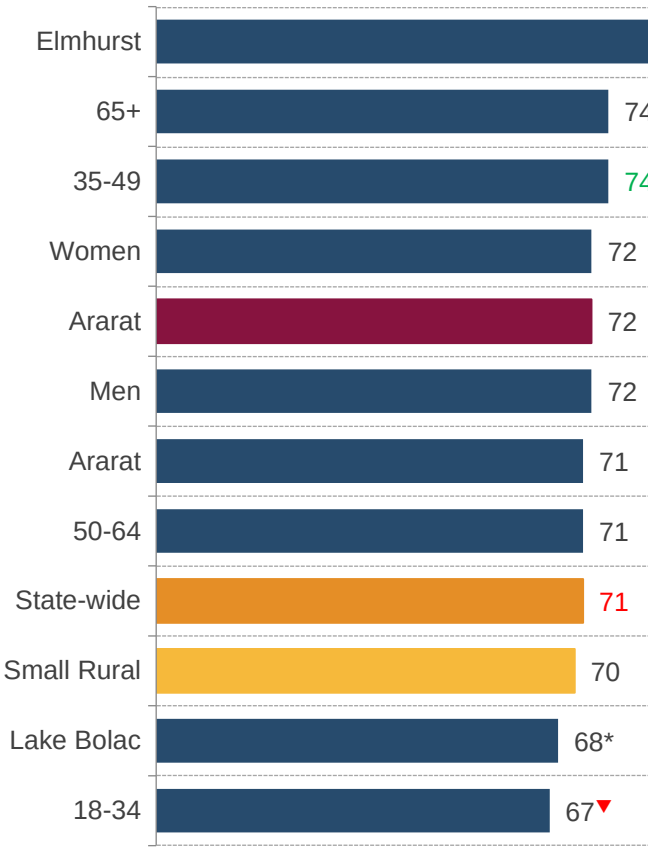
2025 business/development/tourism performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Business and community development and tourism' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 23 Councils asked group: 8
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Planning and building permits importance

2025 planning and building permits importance (index scores)

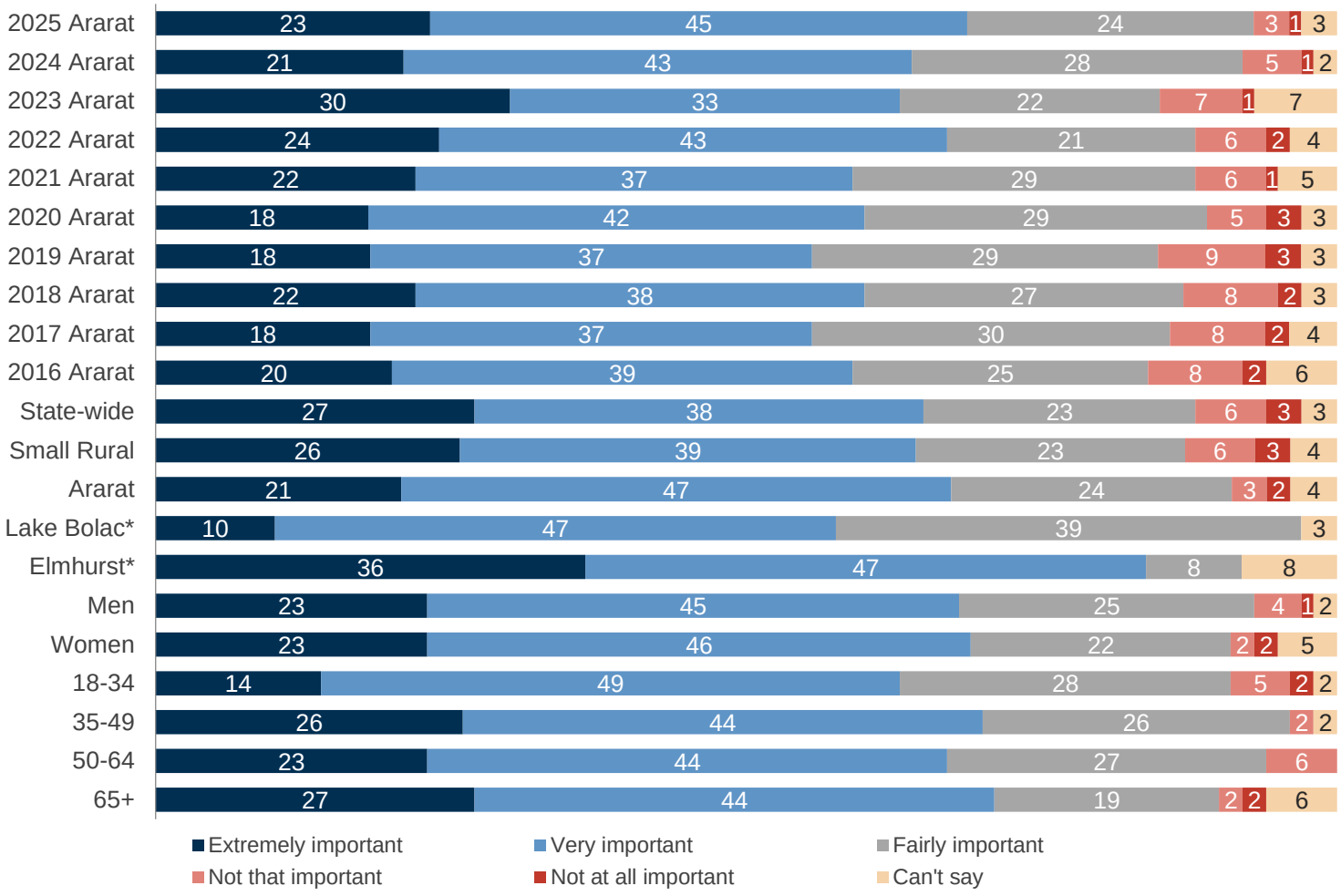


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	67	68	74	81	57	56	62	64	63
65+	73	72	73	69	68	67	72	68	66
35-49	64	74	71	71	67	64	64	70	72
Women	70	73	75	72	67	70	73	70	70
Ararat	70	73	71	69	68	65	68	66	68
Men	70	72	68	66	68	62	64	63	66
Ararat	72	75	73	70	69	68	69	68	70
50-64	73	68	76	74	74	69	72	66	68
State-wide	72	72	73	73	71	71	71	72	71
Small Rural	70	71	73	71	68	70	68	68	71
Lake Bolac	71	48	65	66	66	52	71	59	67
18-34	68	75	64	63	61	61	64	61	67

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Planning and building permits' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 18 Councils asked group: 6
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Planning and building permits importance

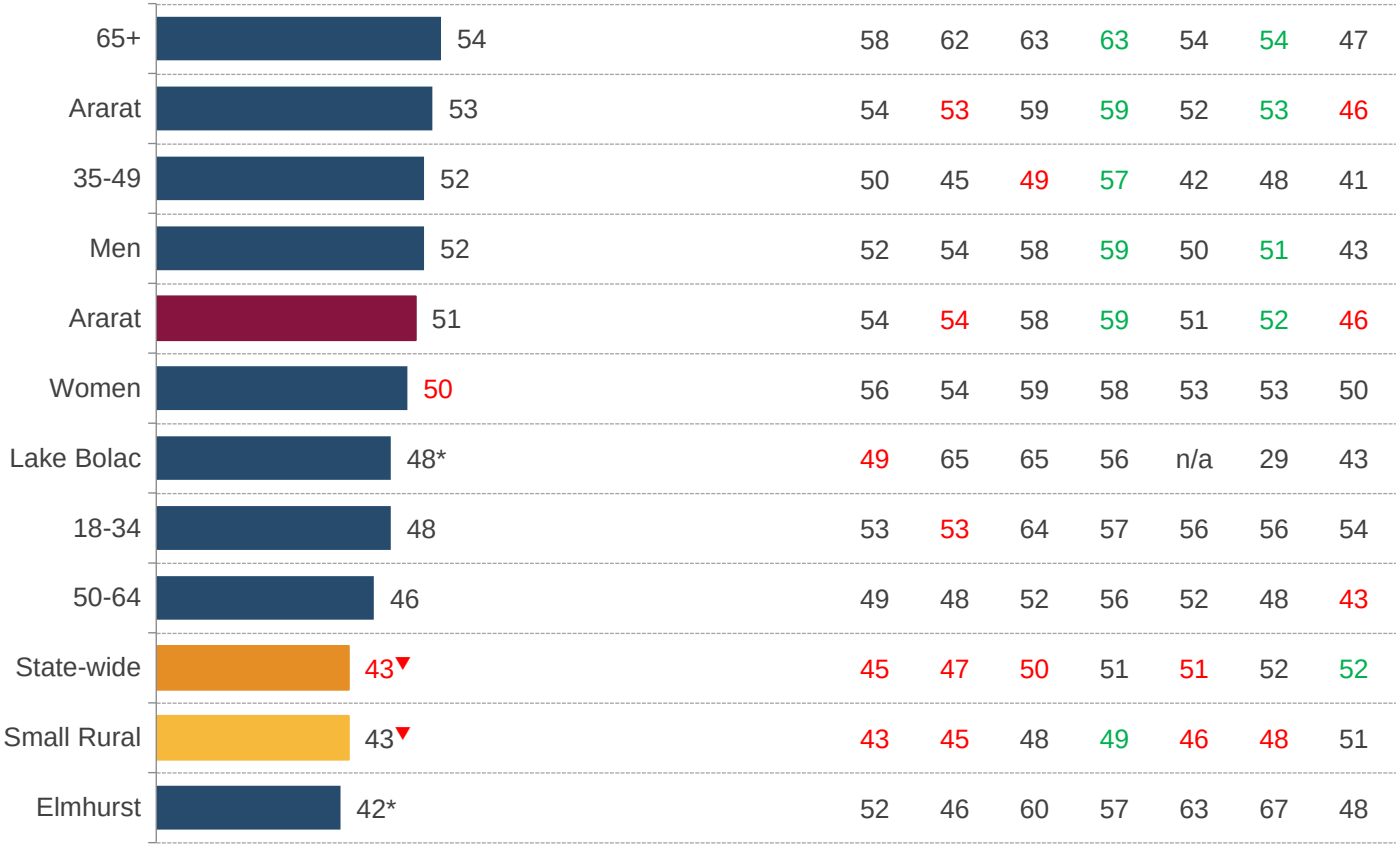
2025 planning and building permits importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Planning and building permits' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 18 Councils asked group: 6
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Planning and building permits performance

2025 planning and building permits performance (index scores)

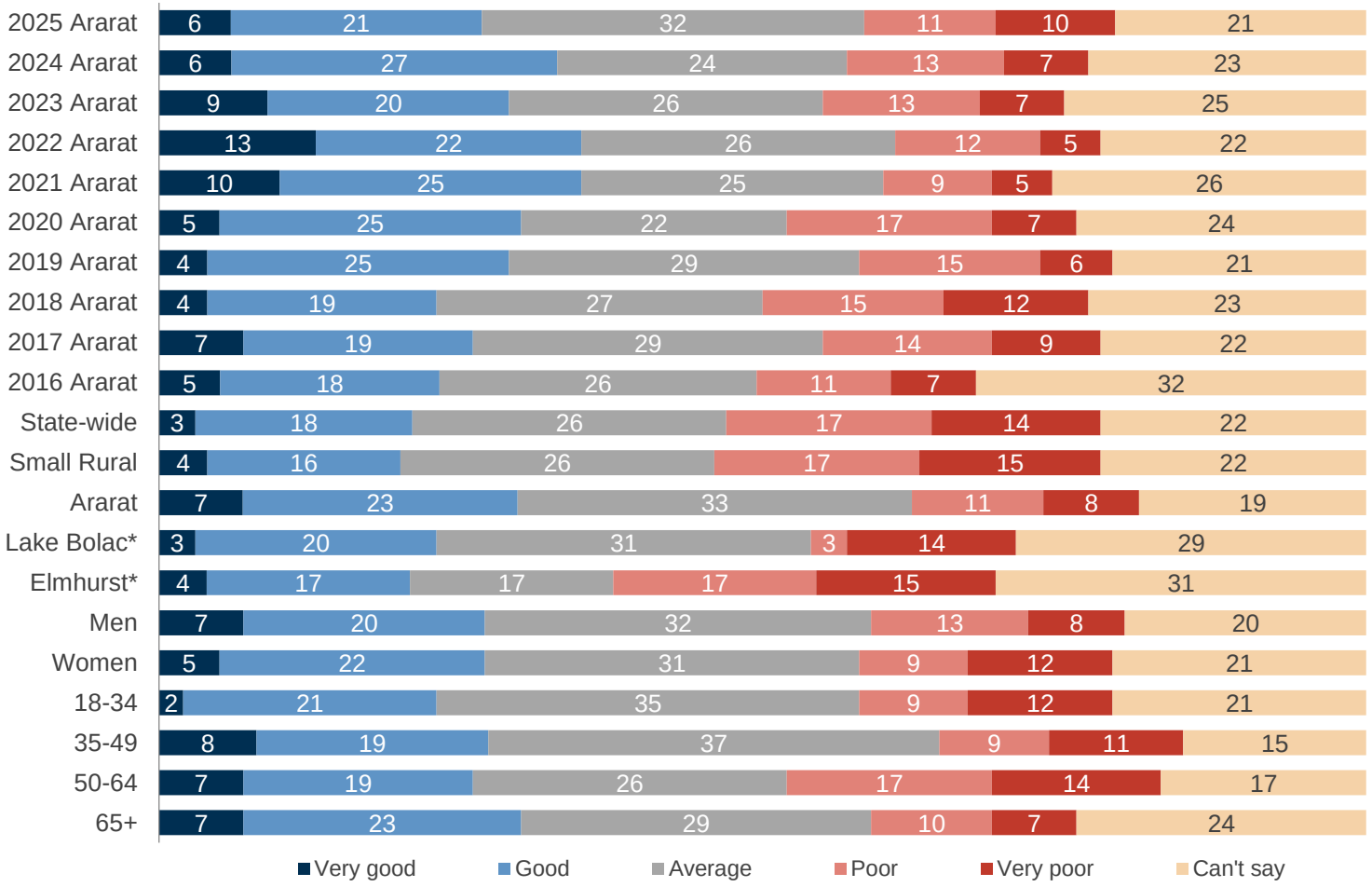


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	58	62	63	63	54	54	47	51	49
Ararat	54	53	59	59	52	53	46	51	52
35-49	50	45	49	57	42	48	41	48	49
Men	52	54	58	59	50	51	43	46	45
Ararat	54	54	58	59	51	52	46	50	51
Women	56	54	59	58	53	53	50	55	58
Lake Bolac	49	65	65	56	n/a	29	43	44	38
18-34	53	53	64	57	56	56	54	47	54
50-64	49	48	52	56	52	48	43	54	54
State-wide	45	47	50	51	51	52	52	51	50
Small Rural	43	45	48	49	46	48	51	51	50
Elmhurst	52	46	60	57	63	67	48	77	77

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Planning and building permits' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 8
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Planning and building permits performance

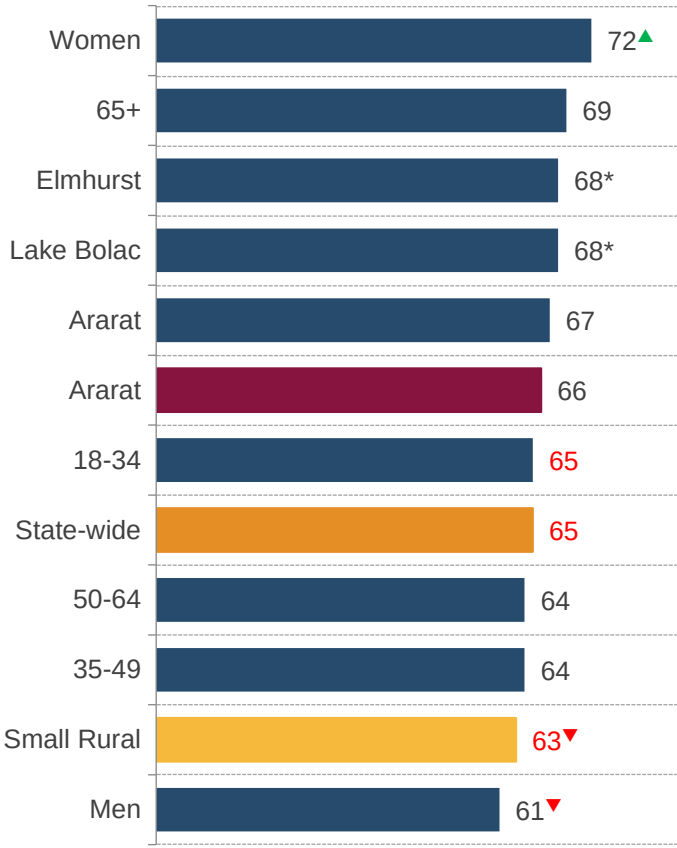
2025 planning and building permits performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Planning and building permits' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 8
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Environmental sustainability importance

2025 environmental sustainability importance (index scores)

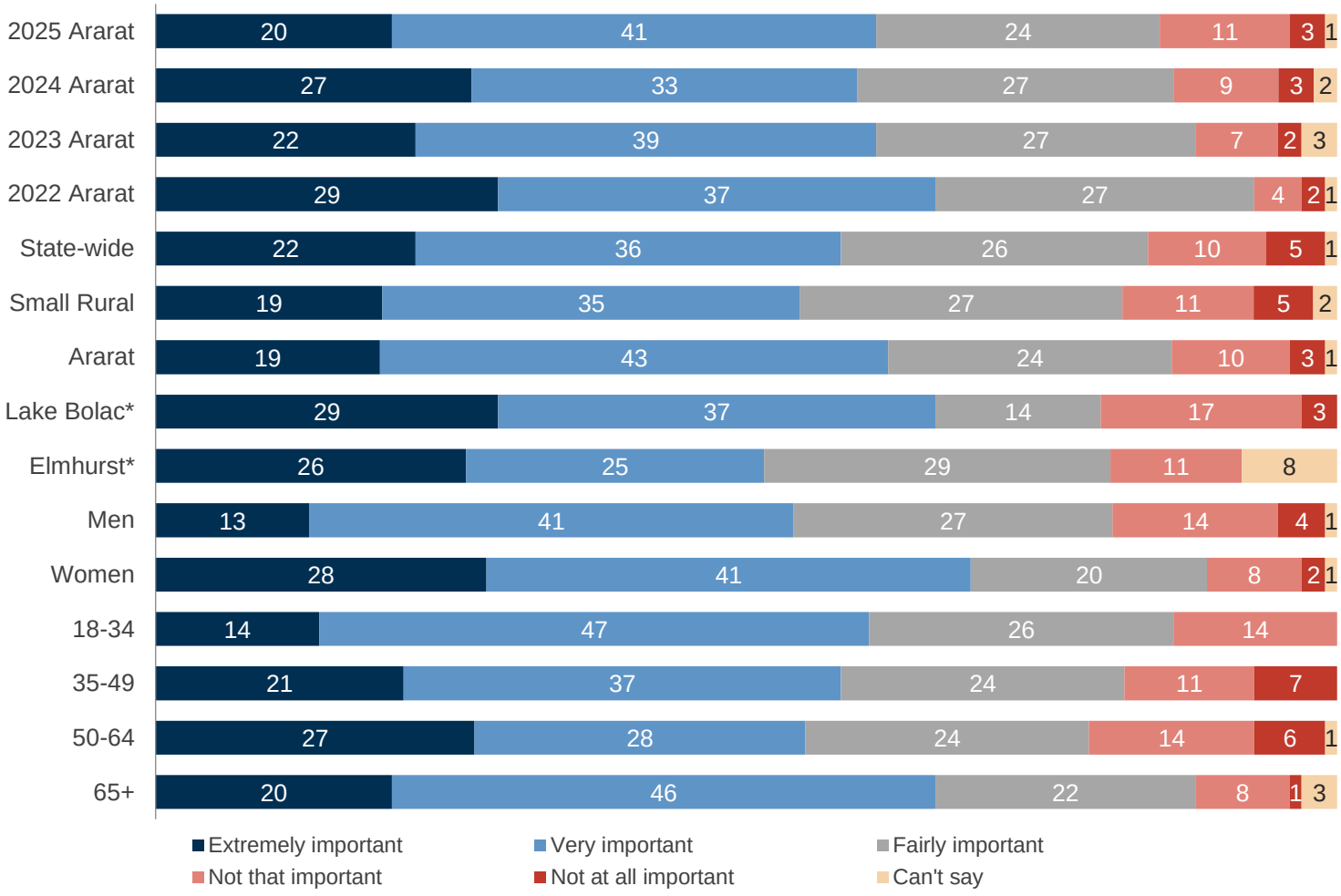


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	72	73	75	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	64	67	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmhurst	62	68	75	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake Bolac	59	63	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	69	69	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	68	69	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	80	69	77	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	68	70	73	74	74	74	73	72	73
50-64	68	69	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	64	71	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	66	67	70	71	70	72	70	70	74
Men	65	65	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Environmental sustainability' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 19 Councils asked group: 4
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Environmental sustainability importance

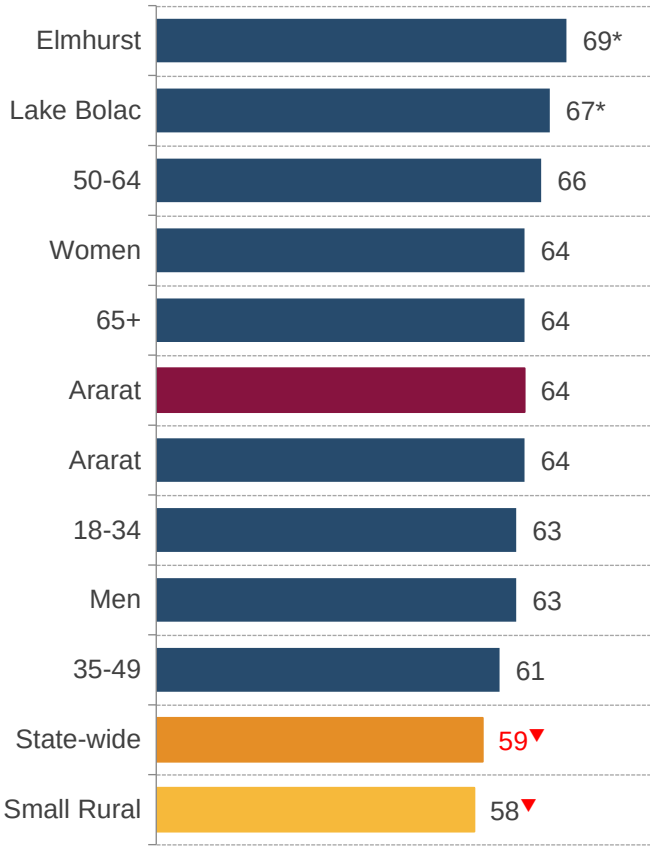
2025 environmental sustainability importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Environmental sustainability' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 19 Councils asked group: 4
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Environmental sustainability performance

2025 environmental sustainability performance (index scores)

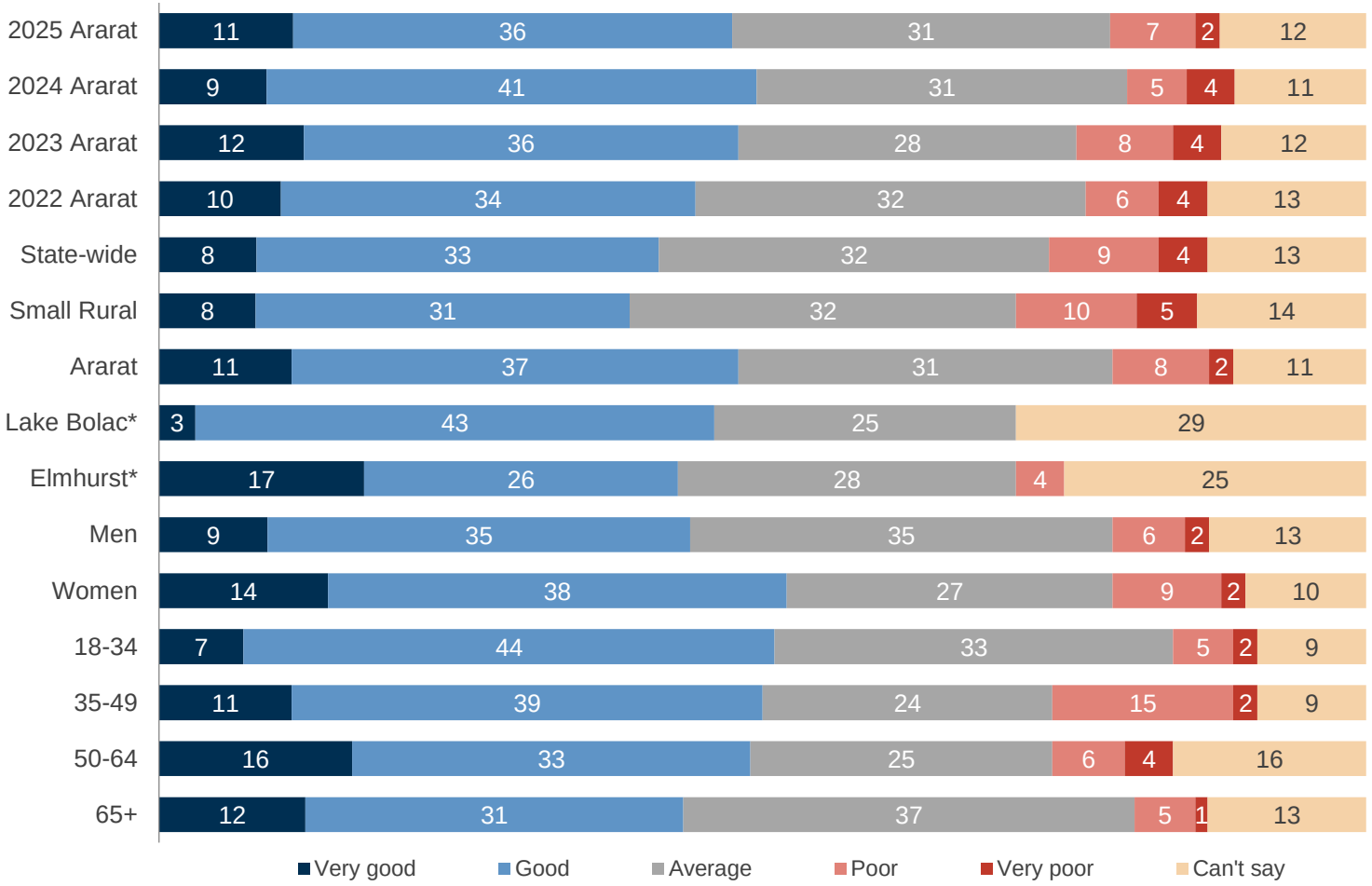


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	54	65	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake Bolac	69	65	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	62	63	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	65	61	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	67	66	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	63	63	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	63	62	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	63	65	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	61	64	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	56	53	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	60	60	61	62	60	62	63	64	63
Small Rural	59	59	59	61	57	59	62	63	61

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Environmental sustainability' 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.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Environmental sustainability performance

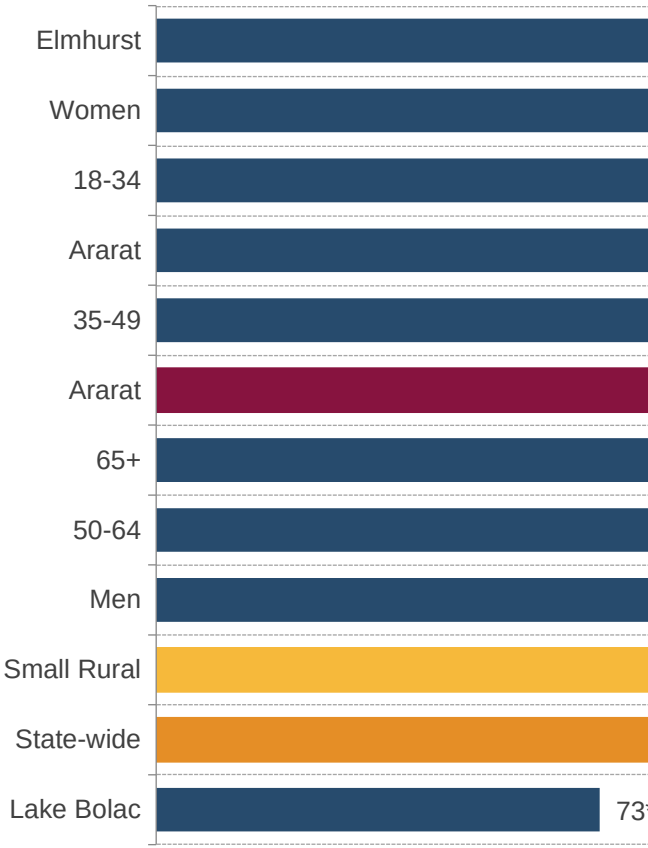
2025 environmental sustainability performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Environmental sustainability' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 30 Councils asked group: 8
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Emergency and disaster management importance

2025 emergency and disaster management importance (index scores)

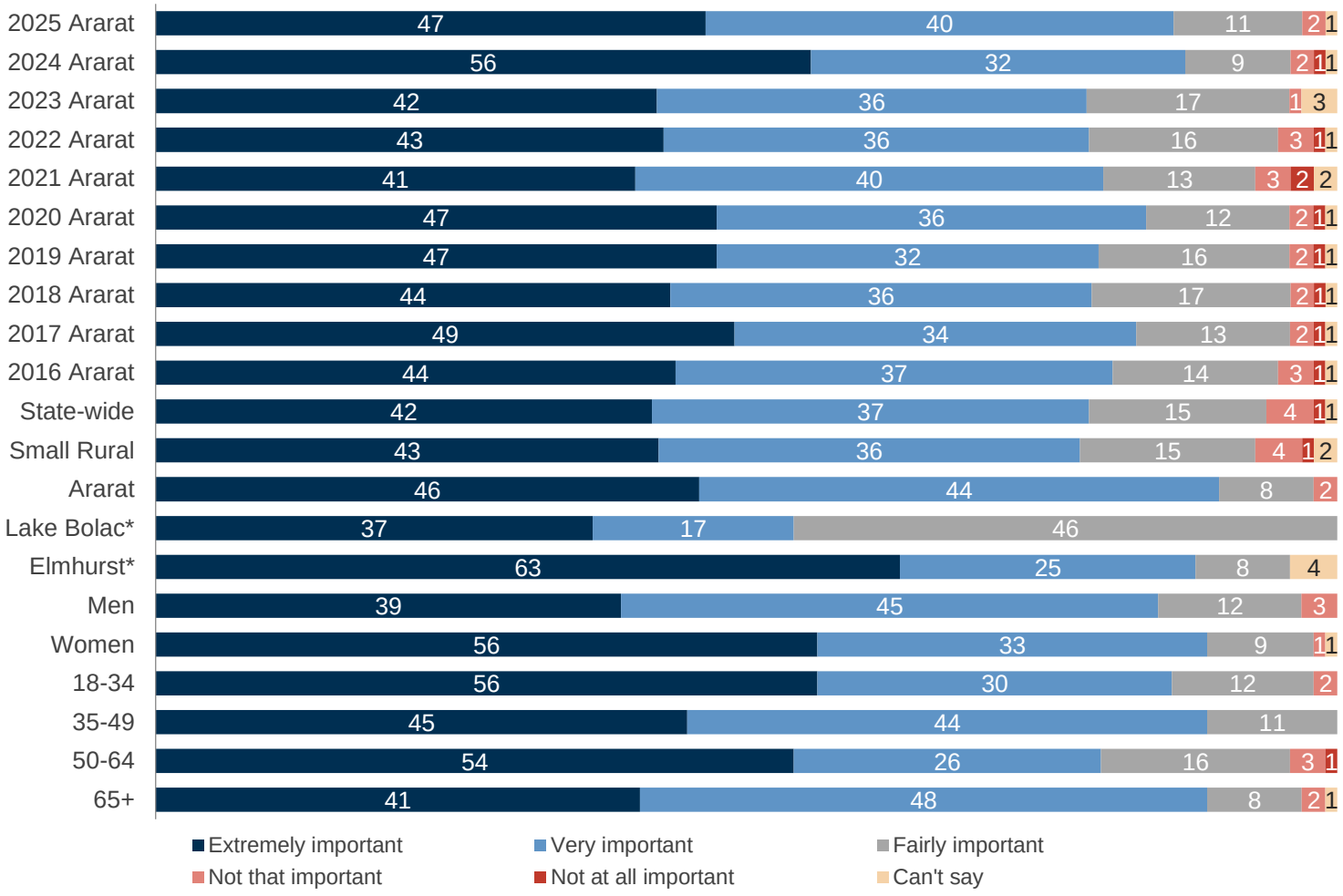


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Elmhurst	81	96	92	92	82	84	66	94	81
Women	89	85	83	85	86	85	84	87	84
18-34	93	81	79	75	81	82	78	85	82
Ararat	86	80	79	79	82	82	81	83	81
35-49	83	80	75	76	80	77	80	85	78
Ararat	85	81	80	79	82	81	80	83	80
65+	84	80	81	81	82	79	80	81	79
50-64	81	84	83	82	84	86	82	83	82
Men	82	77	76	74	78	78	77	79	76
Small Rural	82	80	81	82	82	81	80	81	82
State-wide	80	80	81	81	80	81	81	80	80
Lake Bolac	75	78	79	83	84	75	79	84	77

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Emergency and disaster management' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 12 Councils asked group: 3
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Emergency and disaster management importance

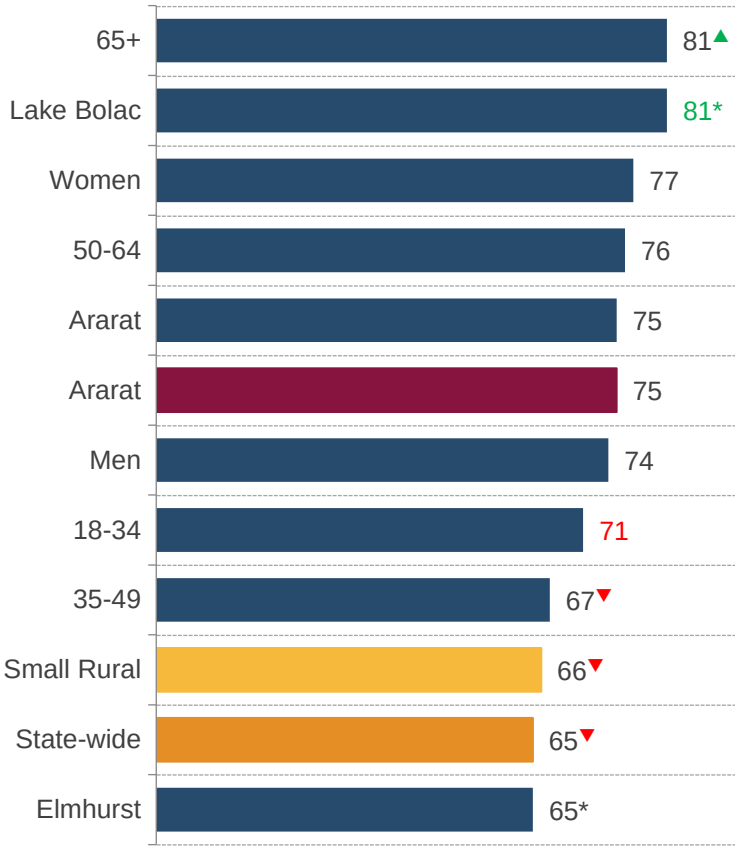
2025 emergency and disaster management importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Emergency and disaster management' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 12 Councils asked group: 3
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Emergency and disaster management performance

2025 emergency and disaster management performance (index scores)

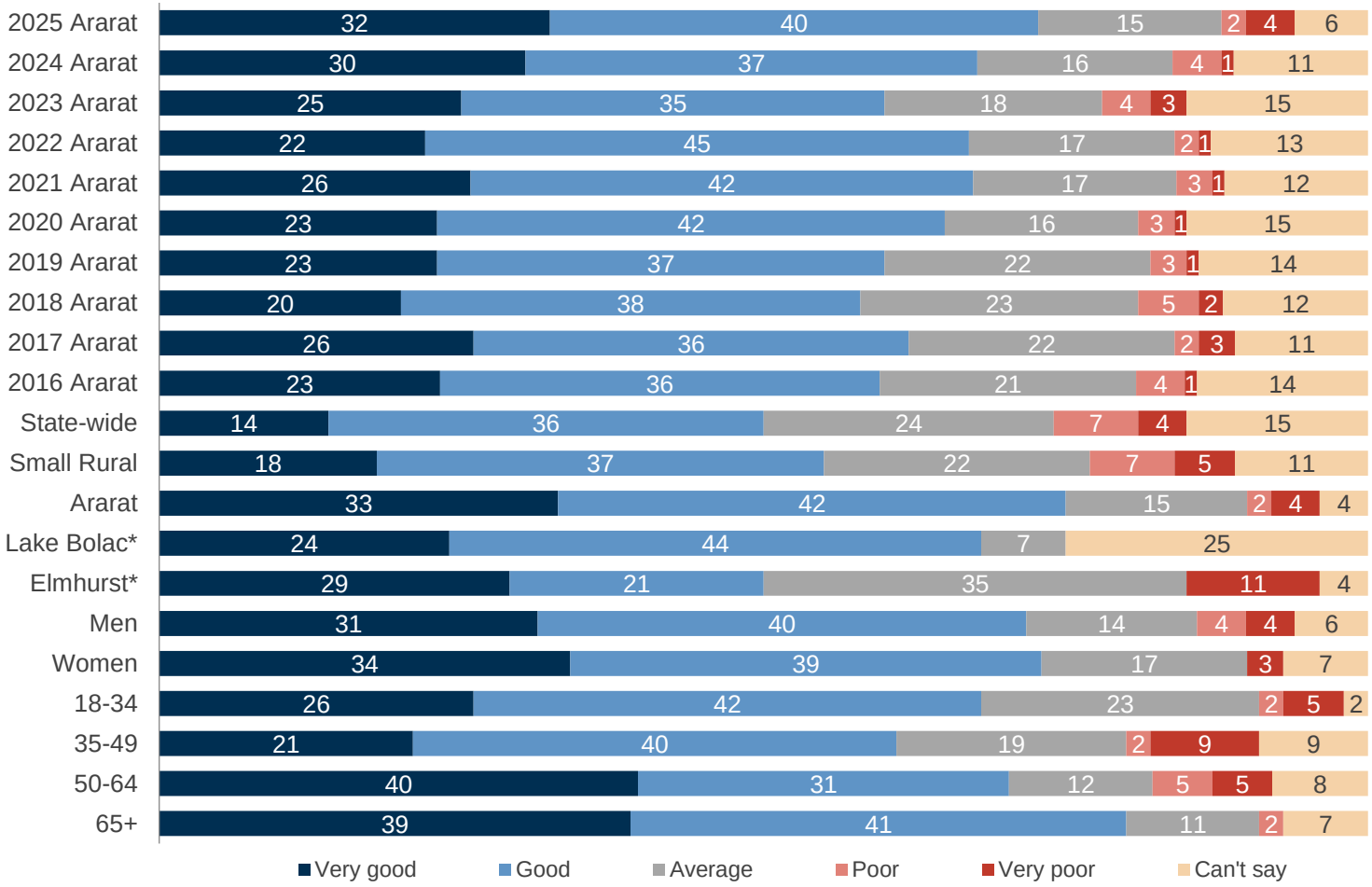


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	77	76	79	79	76	73	72	76	76
Lake Bolac	67	74	72	73	48	66	64	64	75
Women	78	71	74	75	75	74	70	74	76
50-64	75	74	70	76	75	78	74	71	69
Ararat	77	74	75	75	75	73	72	74	73
Ararat	76	72	74	75	74	73	70	72	72
Men	73	74	74	75	73	72	70	70	68
18-34	79	72	77	72	76	72	70	72	67
35-49	71	65	67	72	69	69	63	68	73
Small Rural	66	66	68	72	70	72	72	72	71
State-wide	65	65	66	71	68	72	71	70	69
Elmhurst	57	58	70	89	68	75	63	82	88

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Emergency and disaster management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Emergency and disaster management performance

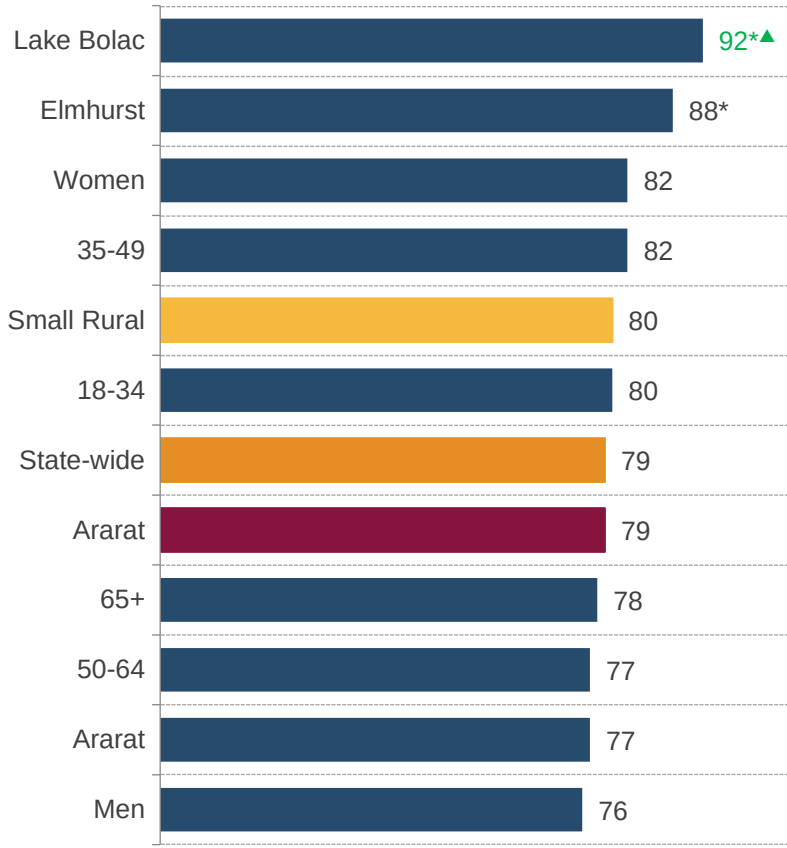
2025 emergency and disaster management performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Emergency and disaster management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Roadside slashing and weed control importance

2025 roadside slashing and weed control importance (index scores)

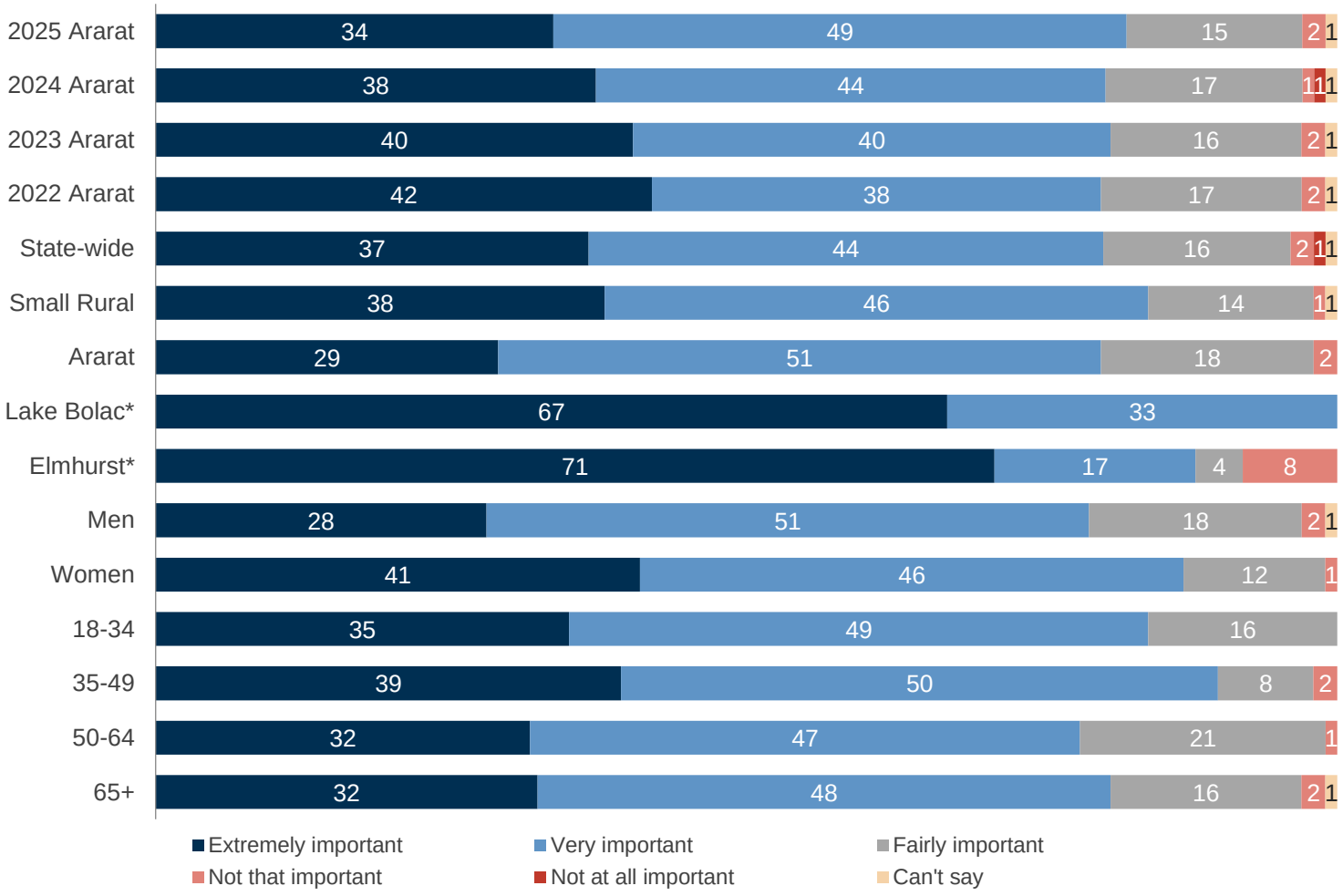


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	66	92	89	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmhurst	87	94	93	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	80	82	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	80	80	86	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	80	81	81	82	80	76	76	76	n/a
18-34	81	83	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	80	79	79	79	78	74	73	74	73
Ararat	79	80	80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	78	77	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	81	82	80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	78	79	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	79	78	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Roadside slashing and weed control' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 6 Councils asked group: 2
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Roadside slashing and weed control importance

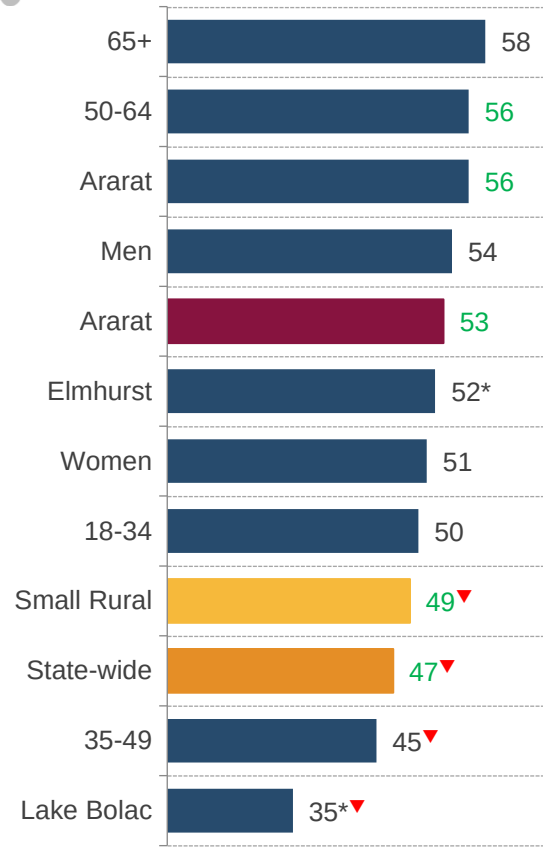
2025 roadside slashing and weed control importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Roadside slashing and weed control' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 6 Councils asked group: 2
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Roadside slashing and weed control performance

2025 roadside slashing and weed control performance (index scores)

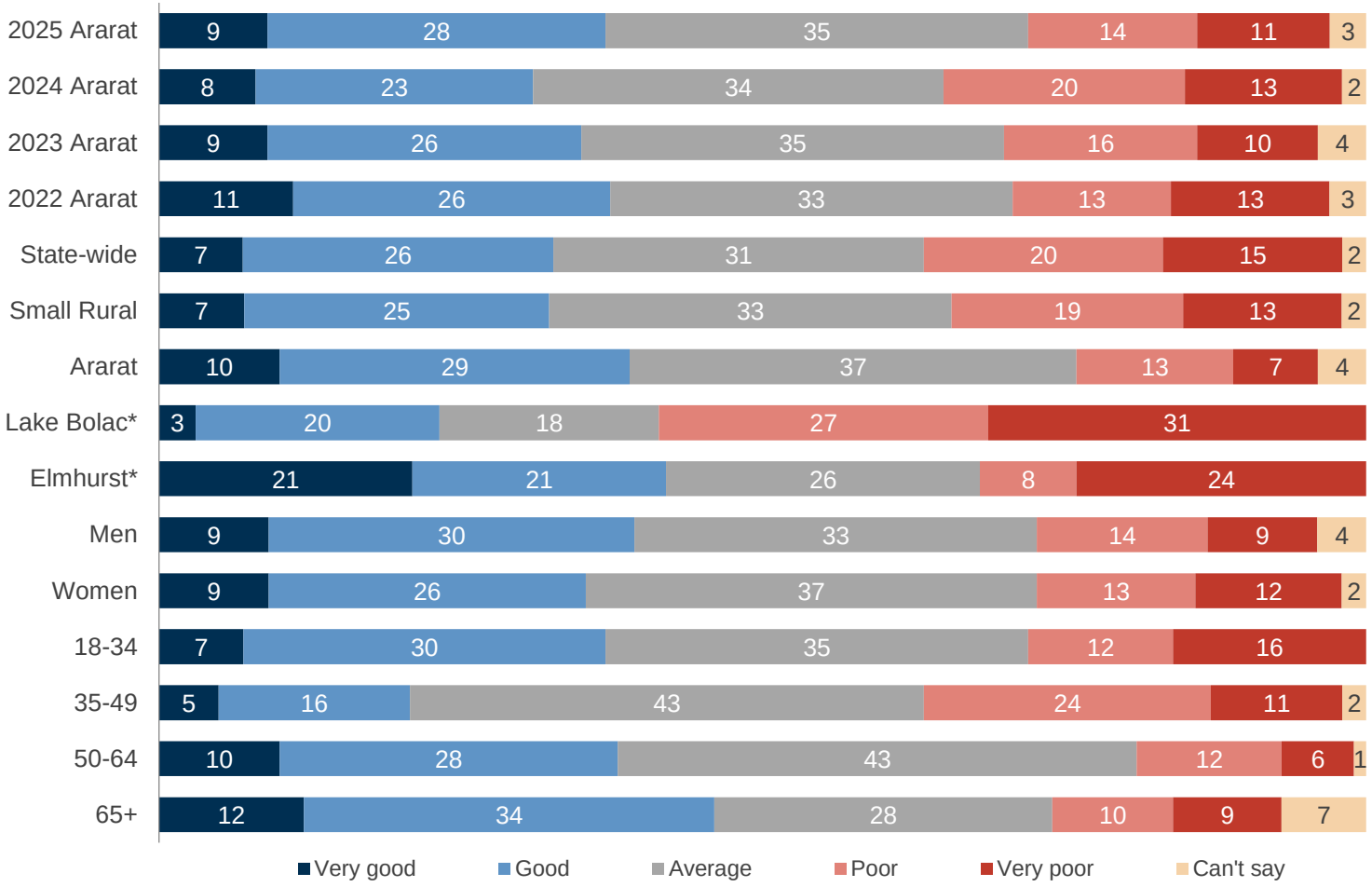


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	53	51	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	46	53	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	48	54	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	49	54	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ararat	48	52	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmhurst	42	49	30	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	47	51	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	43	56	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	46	47	50	49	48	55	54	51	51
State-wide	45	46	49	51	49	56	55	53	56
35-49	46	50	44	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake Bolac	43	39	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Roadside slashing and weed control' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 11 Councils asked group: 5
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Roadside slashing and weed control performance

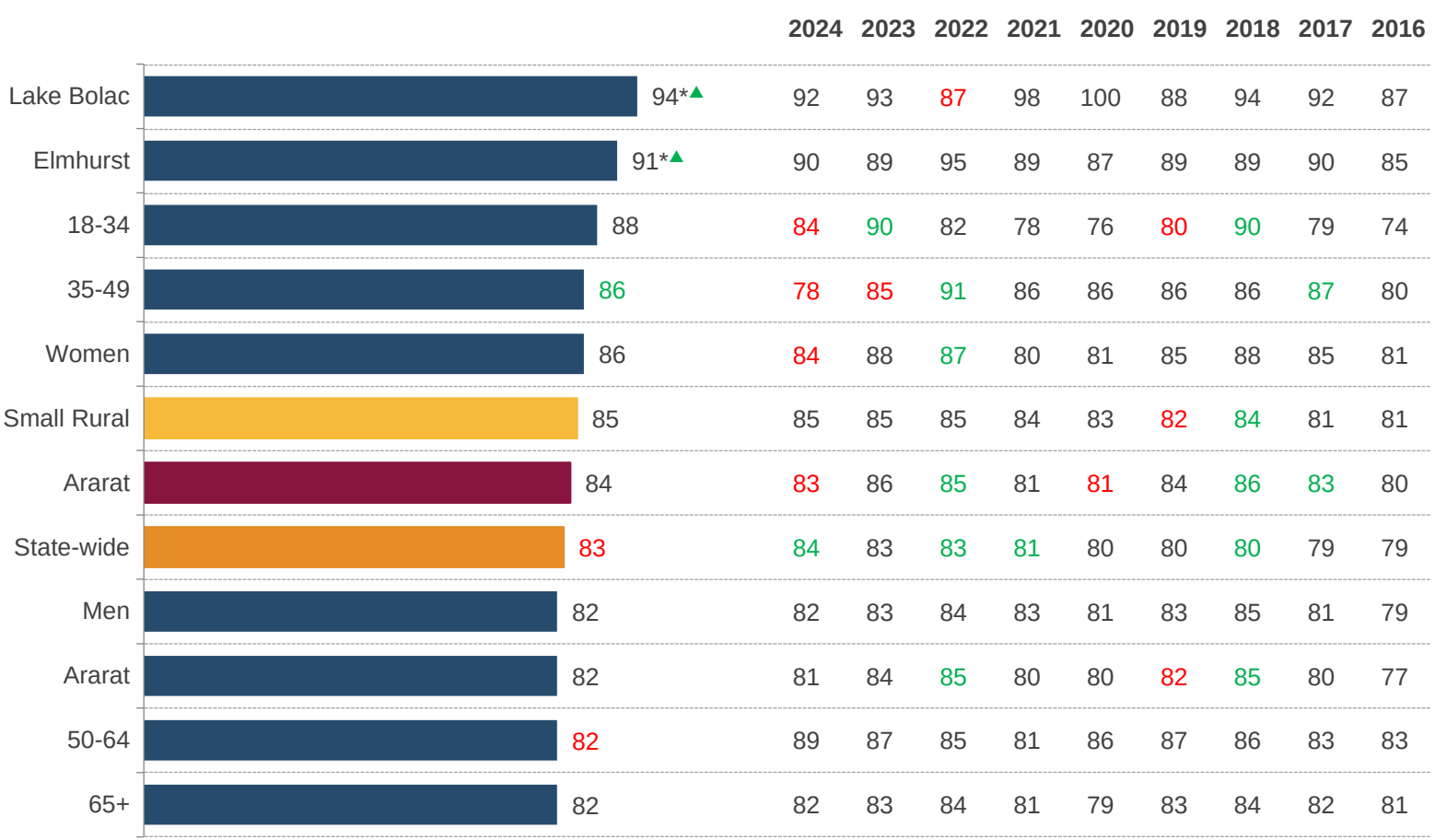
2025 roadside slashing and weed control performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Roadside slashing and weed control' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 11 Councils asked group: 5
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area importance

2025 unsealed roads importance (index scores)

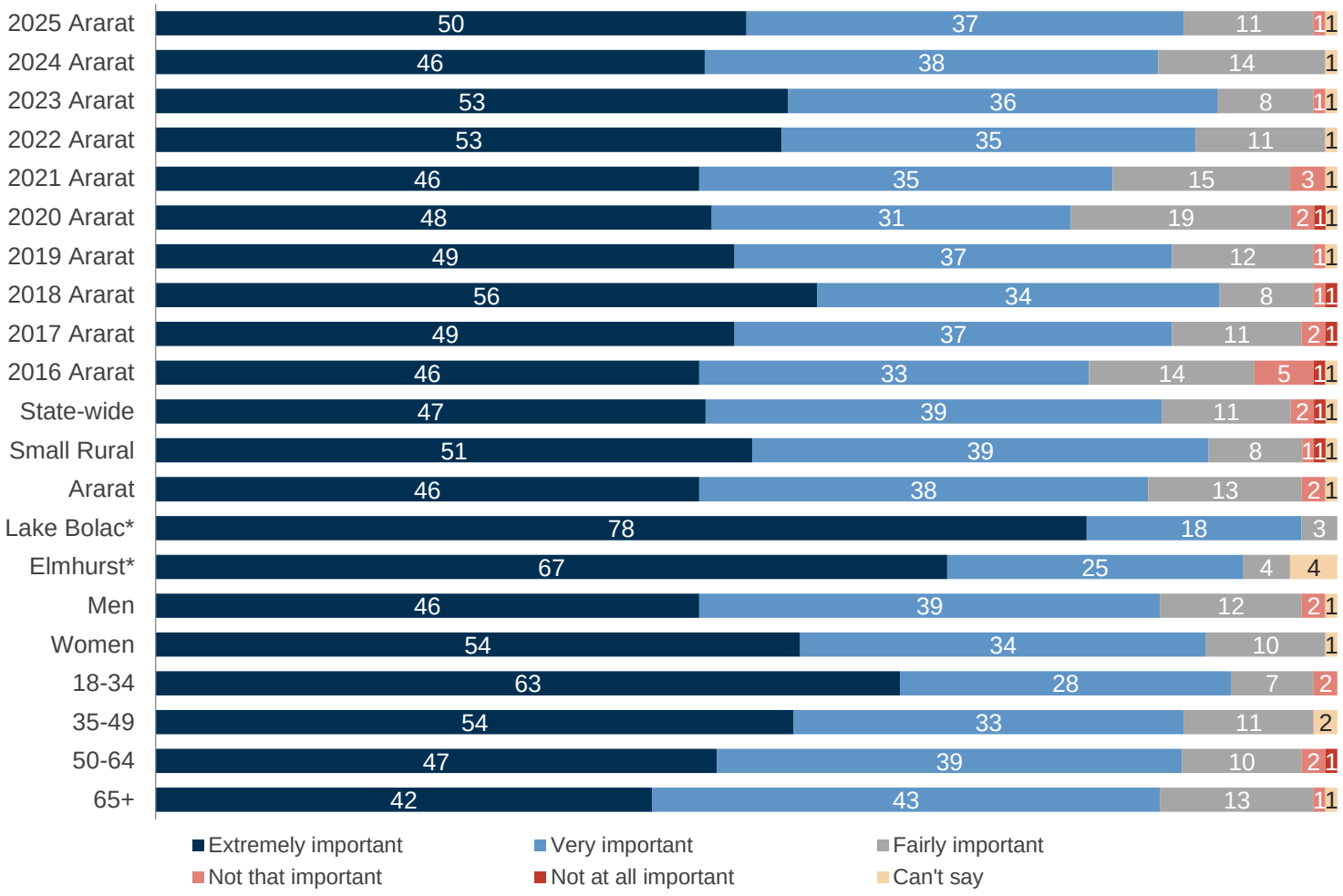


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Lake Bolac	92	93	87	98	100	88	94	92	87
Elmhurst	90	89	95	89	87	89	89	90	85
18-34	84	90	82	78	76	80	90	79	74
35-49	78	85	91	86	86	86	86	87	80
Women	84	88	87	80	81	85	88	85	81
Small Rural	85	85	85	84	83	82	84	81	81
Ararat	83	86	85	81	81	84	86	83	80
State-wide	84	83	83	81	80	80	80	79	79
Men	82	83	84	83	81	83	85	81	79
Ararat	81	84	85	80	80	82	85	80	77
50-64	89	87	85	81	86	87	86	83	83
65+	82	83	84	81	79	83	84	82	81

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 6
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area importance

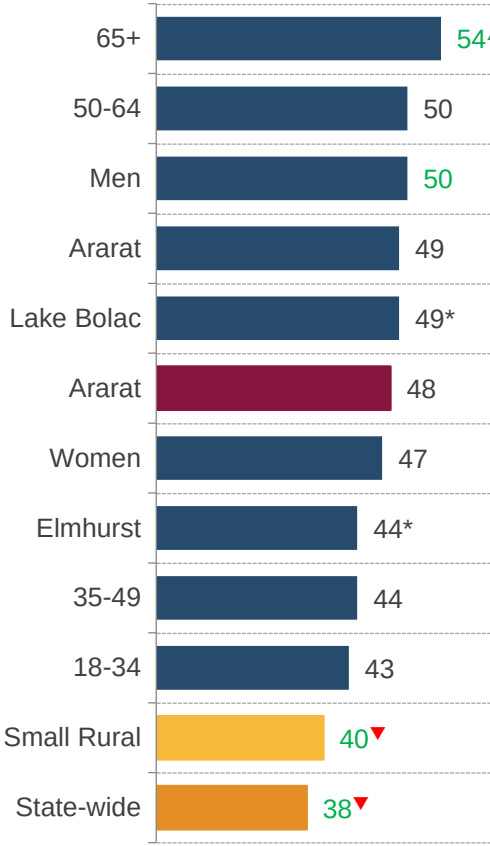
2025 unsealed roads importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 6
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area performance

2025 unsealed roads performance (index scores)

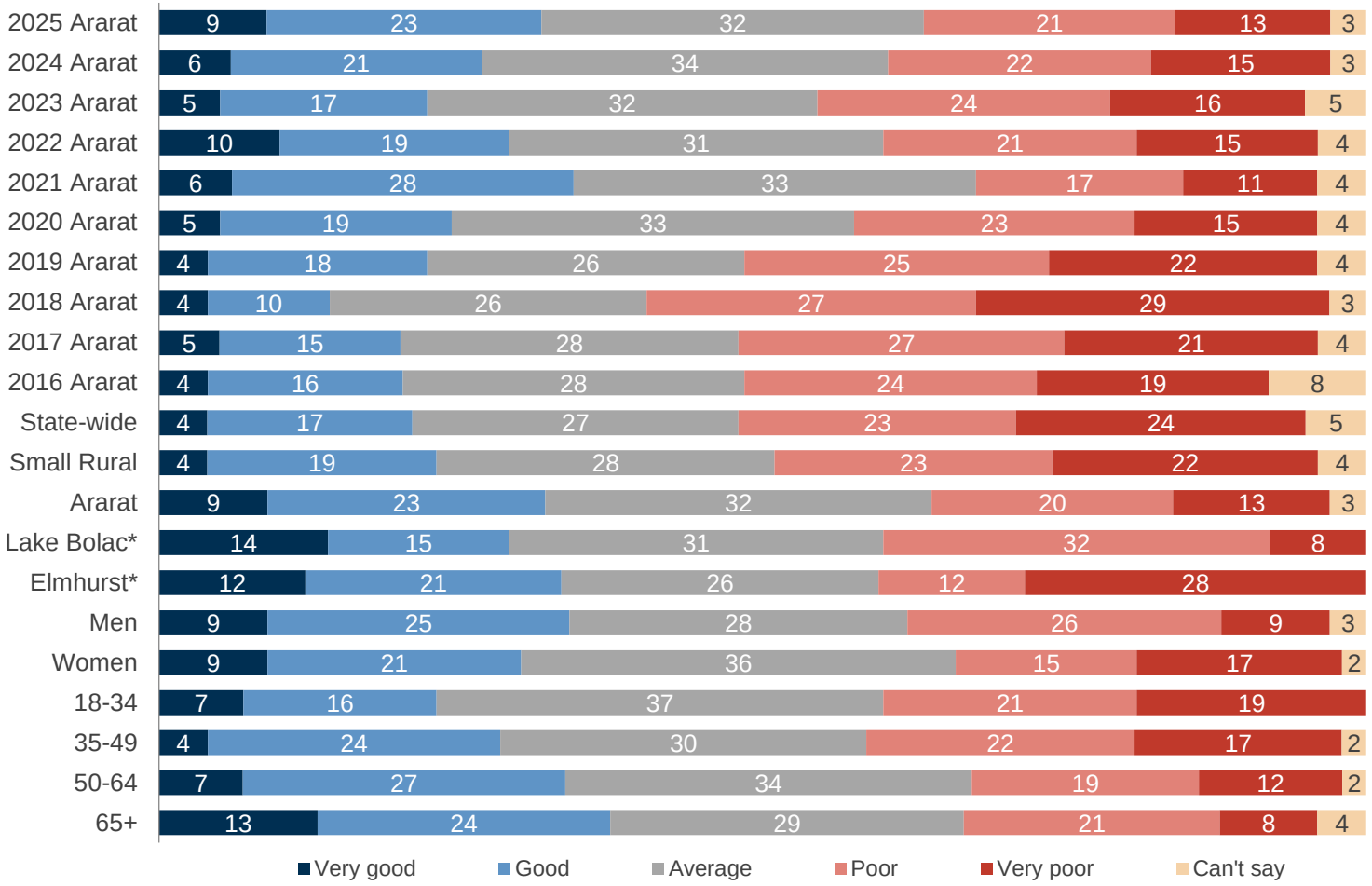


	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	47	48	52	54	46	41	37	39	42
50-64	41	43	48	48	45	39	35	36	42
Men	44	44	45	51	46	41	29	36	37
Ararat	46	45	50	50	45	42	36	42	45
Lake Bolac	56	34	52	46	16	14	19	24	25
Ararat	45	42	47	50	44	39	33	38	40
Women	45	41	50	49	41	36	37	40	42
Elmhurst	34	24	26	51	34	39	21	25	40
35-49	48	34	32	50	37	34	25	36	35
18-34	40	39	54	46	46	40	32	43	39
Small Rural	35	38	42	44	43	43	40	43	44
State-wide	36	37	41	45	44	44	43	44	43

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 28 Councils asked group: 10
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area performance

2025 unsealed roads performance (%)



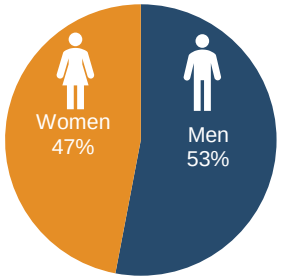
Q2. How has Council performed on 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 28 Councils asked group: 10
**Caution: small sample size < n=30*

Detailed demographics

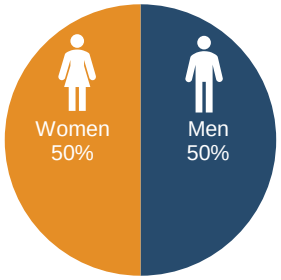
Gender and age profile

2025 gender

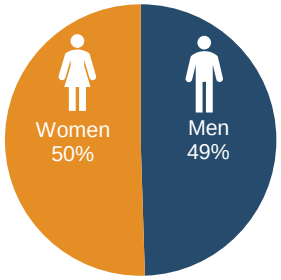
Ararat



Small Rural

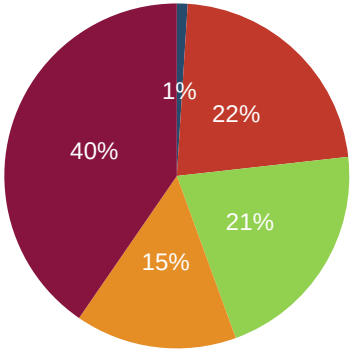


State-wide

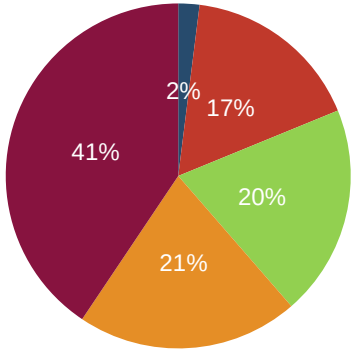


2025 age

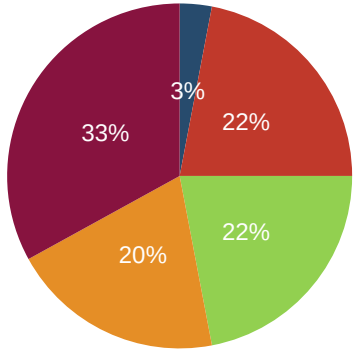
Ararat



Small Rural



State-wide



S3. How would you describe your gender? / S4. To which of the following age groups do you belong?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
An "Other" option has been included for gender, hence the results may not add to 100%.
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

Please note that the horizontal (x) axis of the index score bar charts in this report is displayed on a scale from 20 to 100.

Appendix A: Margins of error

The sample size for the 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey for Ararat Rural City Council was n=400. 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=400 interviews is +/-4.8% 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 45.2% - 54.8%.

Maximum margins of error are listed in the table below, based on a population of 9,700 people aged 18 years or over for Ararat Rural City Council, according to ABS estimates.

Demographic	Actual survey sample size	Weighted base	Maximum margin of error at 95% confidence interval
Ararat Rural City Council	400	400	+/-4.8
Men	210	213	+/-6.7
Women	189	186	+/-7.1
Ararat	308	314	+/-5.5
Lake Bolac	19	21	+/-23.1
Elmhurst	19	17	+/-23.1
18-34 years	43	93	+/-15.1
35-49 years	46	84	+/-14.6
50-64 years	86	61	+/-10.6
65+ years	225	161	+/-6.5

Appendix A:
Index score significant difference calculation

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

Z Score = ($1 - $2) / 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 2025 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 2025 results are compared with previous years, as detailed below:

- 2024, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 29th January – 18th March.
- 2023, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 27th January – 19th March.
- 2022, n=400 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.
- 2020, n=401 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 30th January – 22nd March.
- 2019, n=408 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2018, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th 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.

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 Ararat Rural 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 Ararat Rural City Council.

Survey sample matched to the demographic profile of Ararat Rural 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 55% mobile phone numbers to cater to the diversity of residents within Ararat Rural City Council, particularly younger people.

A total of n=400 completed interviews were achieved in Ararat Rural City Council. Survey fieldwork was conducted in the period of 28th January – 16th March, 2025.

Appendix B: Analysis and reporting

All participating councils are listed in the State-wide report published on the DGS website. In 2025, 56 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 2012-2025 vary slightly.

Council Groups

Ararat Rural City Council is classified as a Small Rural council according to the following classification list:

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

Councils participating in the Small Rural group are:

- Alpine, Ararat, Benalla, Buloke, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Hepburn, Hindmarsh, Indigo, Loddon, Mansfield, Murrindindi, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Queenscliffe, Strathbogie, Towong, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

Wherever appropriate, results for Ararat Rural City Council for this 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey have been compared against other participating councils in the Small Rural 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:
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 2025 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 2025 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 2025 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: 2025 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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