How common is food insecurity in Australia?

3.6 million Australians (15%) have experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months.

- Daily: 11%
- A few times a week: 4%
- Once or twice a year: 29%
- Quarterly: 10%
- Monthly: 16%
- Fortnightly: 18%
- Once a week: 11%

Of these, 3 in 5 experience food insecurity at least once a month.

How many people are receiving food assistance?

When individuals are faced with food insecurity, seeking food relief from a charity is not the most common first point of call.

- 46% in fact, less than half of food insecure Australians (46%) have sought assistance from a charity.

This is because they feel:

- Embarrassed: 42%
- Ashamed: 36%
- Others need help more than they do: 33%

Foodbank provides food assistance to over 652,000 Australians every month, of whom 27% are children.

Proportion of individuals assisted in each age group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-64</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Charities are struggling to meet the rising need for food relief

- 10%: The increase in the number of individuals seeking food relief from charities in the last 12 months.
- 65,000: The number of people seeking food relief each month who are unable to be assisted by charities.
- 37%: The percentage of charities meeting the full needs of the people they assist.

It’s not always who you expect

The face of food insecurity is diverse in Australia.

- Almost half (48%) of food insecure Australians are employed in some way, (either full-time, part-time, casually or self-employed).
- 2 in 5 households (40%) experiencing food insecurity are families with dependent children. Most of these children (89%) are below the age of 12.
- Almost a third of Australians (29%) experiencing food insecurity live in regional and remote areas.
- Australia’s young adults are also at risk of food insecurity. They (Gen Z & Gen Y) represent:
  - 28% of the Australian population
  - 38% of those experiencing food insecurity
Unexpected expense or large bill
Just not enough money in the first place
Had to pay rent/mortgage payment
Food too expensive/can’t afford to buy enough
I/my partner got sick or injured and couldn’t work

Many Australians (45%) experiencing food insecurity have skipped a meal... and 28% have gone for an entire day without eating.

Lack of food can significantly impact quality of life

- 42% Lethargy or tiredness
- 38% Decline in mental health
- 35% Loss of confidence

Stress and depression are common emotions for those without adequate food

- 53% Depressed
- 52% Stressed
- 44% Embarrassed
- 44% Sad
- 39% Hopeless
- 38% Ashamed

In times where they are unable to buy enough food, food insecure Australians experience a range of negative emotions.

More than four out of five recipients of food relief (83%) say the benefits of this assistance made a difference in their life for a week or more.

Foodbank is the largest hunger relief organisation in Australia, providing food for 172,000 meals a day to over 2,600 charities nationally.

**Methodology**

Data for this infographic has been sourced from two online surveys:
Foodbank Welfare Agency Survey of 1,123 agencies registered with Foodbank about their current operating performance, clientele and needs. In field December 2016 – July 2017
Survey of Australians experiencing food insecurity: survey of 511 Australians who experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months. In field 31 July – 7 August 2017