



# Huber Social Treasury Submission: Measuring what matters

**Equitable, evidence based and sustainable: A framework that accounts for the diversity of what matters to Australians now and in the future.**

## Summary

This submission focuses on addressing the challenge of developing a framework that adequately reflects the diversity of what matters to Australians. To ensure the framework is fit-for-purpose to inform decisions to improve the lives of people across Australia, the approach is grounded in achieving three outcomes: equity, evidence-based justifiability and sustainability (in terms of practical measurement and management).

To achieve these outcomes and deliver a framework that accounts for the diversity of what matters to Australians, there are three elements to the proposed approach. Each element includes a rationale and guidance for practical application.

1. **Practice cultural safety** - to support progress on addressing social issues, measurement needs to account for, and not reinforce, the systemic conditions and power relations that sustain inequality.
2. **Equitable engagement** - Engagement strategies must account for inequality in access to information and deliberately perform outreach activities with key barriers to access in mind, such as location, time of the day, language and power dynamics.
3. **Subjective wellbeing evaluation** - to identify predictors of wellbeing unique to Australians, both collectively and by subgroups, statistical wellbeing evaluation provides an evidence base for factors not necessarily reflected in existing frameworks such as the OCED Framework for Measuring Well-being and Progress.<sup>1</sup>

## Huber Social

Working across the private and social sector globally, Huber Social holds 'wellbeing' as the measure of success for humanity and works with organisations to measure and create social value.

Huber Social has extensive experience measuring the wellbeing of people, having completed over 100 research projects across 10 countries. Recent projects include the atWork Australia's Job Seeker Wellbeing Index, developing a draft wellbeing framework for the NSW government, measuring the contribution to community wellbeing by Kainga Ora (NZ government's social housing agency), as well as supporting Indigenous Business Australia, to embed impact in terms of wellbeing into the organisation's Portfolio Budget Statements and Corporate Reporting. For more examples of our work visit [www.hubersocial.com.au](http://www.hubersocial.com.au)

Recognised as an authority in social impact measurement, Huber Social led the drafting of Standards Australia's Handbook, *'Measuring and Valuing Social Impact – Guidance on approach and Methodologies'*,<sup>2</sup> along with our partners Oxford University Blavatnik School of Government and industry partners. The Handbook was published in December 2022 and supports development of measurement approaches that are 'fit for purpose' across principles of scientific, ethical, and cultural integrity.

Through Huber Social's growing network of Accredited Impact Consultants, Huber Social is currently establishing the Wellbeing Intelligence Network, a wellbeing database, to inform decision making at every level – from service delivery, to investment, to policy. Huber Social is also a member of the UN SDG Impact Assurance Advisory Committee and Co-Convenor of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance Australia Hub.

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2020). *Better Life Initiative: Measuring Well-Being and Progress*.

<sup>2</sup> Standards Australia (2022). Handbook – Measuring and valuing social impact – Guidance on approach and methodologies. SA HB 204:2022. Prepared by the Standards Australia PC-001, Measuring Social Value Committee. <https://www.standards.org.au/standards-catalogue/sa-snz/other/pc-001/sa-hb-204-colon-2022>



## Overview

As governments around the world<sup>3</sup> incorporate a wellbeing approach to inform decision making across allocation of resources, policy design and appraisal, a common challenge is accounting for the diversity of what we value, the weighting of these values, and how these change over time<sup>4</sup>. In the endeavour for practical utility, it is recognised that measurement needs to be scalable to survey a large and geographically dispersed population and to provide comparable insights to inform policy at a macro national government level. However, what is often sacrificed in the development of frameworks are the nuanced conceptualisations of wellbeing at the community and citizen level. Wellbeing is a value-laden ‘thick’ concept that both describes and evaluates simultaneously.<sup>5</sup> Any considerations about measuring what matters must therefore capture the values and priorities of the people whose wellbeing it is supposed to represent, and represent a certain level of consensus, not just a sum of individual wellbeing.<sup>6</sup>

It is anticipated that following the conclusion of the public consultation process and review of frameworks from other jurisdictions, Treasury will be faced with an abundance of factors for consideration for a national framework that reflects the diversity of what matters to improving the lives of all Australians. Treasury will then need to embark on a process to refine, validate and justify selected wellbeing factors to inform the development of a national framework. This approach comes with the risk of the consultation process becoming a technical exercise, where the resulting indicators and metrics are determined by the value-judgements of a group of ‘dispassionate experts’ and not necessarily aligned with the values and priorities of citizens and communities.<sup>7</sup>

It also poses the risk of the selected factors assuming, reflecting and imposing dominant cultural norms with regard to the fundamental inputs into peoples’ wellbeing<sup>8</sup>. In doing so, this excludes the lived experience of those not reflected in such norms; often communities most likely to be disadvantaged by the current system we are seeking to improve.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, until wellbeing measurement at the macro level accounts for the diversity of ‘valued capabilities’<sup>10</sup> at a micro/meso level, it will fail to enrich important aspects of our lives, not achieve the desired outcomes and impact, and leave the most disadvantaged communities behind. This also has implications when measurement data is used to inform strategies and interventions that come from a place where there are value judgements about what ‘is good’ for a person or community.

Recognising and addressing this challenge up front has been demonstrated as a critical success factor for other jurisdictions that have already embarked on this journey. For example, since launching a framework based on factors deemed fundamental to all, the New Zealand Government has subsequently needed to develop separate frameworks to adequately address the needs of key groups including children’s wellbeing and te ao Māori and Pacific Peoples.<sup>11</sup> This has added complexity and cost, not to mention the criticism for a lack of cultural awareness in the consultation and development process for the initial framework. To help overcome the complexity of separate frameworks addressing different conceptualisations of wellbeing the New Zealand government has recently landed on employing subjective wellbeing evaluation to identify the predictors of wellbeing across diverse groups<sup>12</sup>. The approach outlined in this submission has subjective wellbeing evaluation at its core, enabling government to adopt a data driven approach to identify the factors that matter across different contexts and their weightings.

<sup>3</sup> Exton, C. & Shinwell, M. (2018). Policy use of wellbeing metrics: Describing countries’ experiences, *OECD Statistics Working Papers*, No. 2018/07, OECD Publishing, Paris.

<sup>4</sup> As Oman (2021) indicates the supposedly neutral wellbeing frameworks that inform policy actions are never truly impartial. Choices have to be made about what is measured, what is included or excluded, and what proxies are used. See: Oman, S. (2021). *Understanding Wellbeing Data: Improving Social & Cultural Policy, Practice and Research*. Macmillan. pp.58. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-72937-0>

<sup>5</sup> Alexandrova, A. & Fabian, M. (2022). Democratising Measurement: or Why Thick Concepts Call for Coproduction. *European Journal for Philosophy of Science*. 12, 7. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13194-021-00437-7>

<sup>6</sup> Alexandrova, A. & Fabian, M. (2022). *The Science of Wellbeing*. The John Templeton Foundation.

<sup>7</sup> Fabian, M., Alexandrova, A., Coyle, D., Agarwala, M. & Felici, M. (2022). Respecting the subject in wellbeing public policy: beyond the social planner perspective. *Journal of European Public Policy*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13501763.2022.2093947>

<sup>8</sup> As Oman (ibid, pp.) states, the essence of wellbeing as it is generally understood (particularly subjective wellbeing) is not only attached to the lived experience but should encompass it. Instead, in many contexts wellbeing has assumed its own agency, detached from people’s lived experience and become an object of politics with recourse to ‘objective indicators’.

<sup>9</sup> Ritchie (2021) states this is particularly acute in policy design related to Indigenous Australians, for example, which excludes the knowledge and insights of Indigenous people. See: Ritchie, C. (2021). The path is made by walking: knowledge, policy design and impact in Indigenous policymaking, *Policy Design and Practice*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 413-25. Online: <https://doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2021.1935025>

<sup>10</sup> Sen, A. (1993). Capability and Wellbeing. In M. Nussbaum & Sen, A (Eds), *The Quality of Life*. United States: Oxford University Press; Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Knopf.

<sup>11</sup> New Zealand Government, The Treasury (2021), ‘The Living Standards Framework (LSF) 2021’. Available at: ‘<https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/tp/living-standards-framework-2021-html>’

<sup>12</sup> New Zealand Government, The Treasury (2022). ‘Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Population Segmentation Analysis. Background paper to Te Tai Waiora: Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand 2022. Available at: <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2022-10/bp-population-segmentation-analysis.pdf>



Based on Huber Social's extensive experience as independent wellbeing measurement experts, this submission provides an approach for Treasury that draws upon the critical success factors learnt from other jurisdictions. In order to ensure that Treasury can effectively measure *the diversity of* what matters to Australians, there are three elements included in this approach.

1. Cultural safety
2. Equitable community engagement
3. Subjective wellbeing evaluation

We contend that adopting these elements is a critical step in the process to facilitating a more informed and inclusive policy dialogue for improving the quality of life and what matters to all Australians.

## Outcomes

The proposed approach will deliver a framework that adequately measures the diversity of what matters for Australians and achieves the following outcomes:

- **Equity** – does not assume, impose or reflect a normative approach to measuring what matters, reflecting wellbeing factors that are both common and unique to Australians, so that no one is left behind.
- **Evidence based justifiability**– the framework is based on data driven evidence of what matters to Australians.
- **Sustainability** - the scope of the framework is sustainable for Treasury to measure and manage.

## Approach

### Cultural Safety

***To support progress on addressing social issues, measurement needs to account for, and not reinforce, the systemic conditions and power relations that sustain inequality.***

To ensure the framework reflects the needs and values of the diversity of Australians, it is critical that cultural safety is practiced throughout the development, measurement and management of the framework.

However, what matters to people is often assessed using a framework and approach that is based on an established norm or the cultural ideals of others, usually those funding the initiative(s). If the measurement approach is built on measuring what matters to outsiders and not measuring what matters to those impacted in a particular context, the measurement, at best, creates an unhelpful reporting burden, wastes resources and fails to identify what is needed or what is actually working.

Ensuring wellbeing measurement reflects the people impacted, and not the implicit or explicit norms of others involves more than simply involving stakeholders in the process. To achieve this principle, people involved in measurement should understand the concept of cultural safety, which extends beyond acquiring knowledge about other cultures to actively acknowledging and addressing biases and stereotypes.<sup>13</sup> Individuals involved in measurement should acknowledge and address their own biases, attitudes, assumptions, prejudices, structures and characteristics, that may affect how the measurement is done and its impact on participants. They need to cultivate an appreciation for the multifaceted nature of individuals, and a capacity for ongoing self-reflection and self-awareness. Ultimately, the conditions of cultural safety can only be assessed by the group impacted.

The practical application of this should involve, but is not limited to, taking a co-construction approach, involving the diversity of people across the community, so that metrics, tools, activities and approach are culturally and linguistically appropriate, accurate and safe. This may entail considering what needs to be done for the measurement to be well received and for people to feel safe and respected to participate, as well as the translation of communications and measurement tools including question sets and supporting material.

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<sup>13</sup> Curtis, E., Jones, R. and Tipene-Leach, D., et al. (2019), 'Why cultural safety rather than cultural competency is required to achieve health equity: A literature review and recommended definition', Int J Equity Health. 18, 174. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-019-1082-3>



## Equitable Engagement

***Engagement strategies must account for inequality in access to information and deliberately perform outreach activities with key barriers to access in mind, such as location, time of the day, language and power dynamics.***

To ensure the framework supports equity and inclusion, the diversity of people living in Australia needs to be reflected in every stage of framework, including: community voices in development of the framework, indicators and measures that represent the varying inputs to wellbeing; measures and data which are deep and broad enough to provide insights at a community level (community of interests, places or cultures); and transparent communication back to the public about any insights into the distribution of wellbeing outcomes and inequality within the community.

In the Australian context, adopting a wellbeing approach is an opportunity to more effectively understand and address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who remain some of the most disadvantaged in our community. For instance, the lack of recognition for past trauma caused, continues to remain a barrier for healing and progress for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.<sup>14</sup> Through a wellbeing lens, this recognition, along with other key aspects of wellbeing, such as connection to land, language and culture, may finally be adequately valued and therefore represented in policy and decision making.

Guidance from the Wellbeing Economy Alliance sets out a range of ways to engage with community, including public forums, citizens assemblies, focus groups, participatory budgeting, public policy conferences, citizen conferences, on and off-line decision-making spaces.<sup>15</sup>

**“Equity prioritises action to ensure everyone has a fair opportunity to attain their full wellbeing potential and that no one is disadvantaged in achieving this potential if it can be avoided.”<sup>16</sup>**

Importantly, to ensure the framework promotes equity, Treasury should prioritise engaging with marginalised groups, or groups that are unlikely to engage with institutional approaches such as the current formal written submission. These groups may include (but are not limited to) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with a disability, the elderly, people in remote or rural areas, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to ensure that from the outset, the Framework is representative and inclusive. Importantly, engagement strategies must account for inequality in access to information and deliberately perform outreach activities with key barriers to access in mind, such as location, time of the day, language and power dynamics.

Communications about the Framework, its development and use, must also reflect the diversity of people living in Australia, both their voices and their values.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Atkinson, J., Nelson, J. and Atkinson, C. (2010), ‘Trauma, Transgenerational Transfer and Effects on Community Wellbeing’ (n 8).

<sup>15</sup> Wellbeing Economy Alliance (2017), ‘Wellbeing Economy Policy Design Guide’, p32-33. Available at: [https://wellbeingeconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/Wellbeing-Economy-Policy-Design-Guide\\_Mar17\\_FINAL.pdf](https://wellbeingeconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/Wellbeing-Economy-Policy-Design-Guide_Mar17_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> The George Institute for Global Health (November 2021), ‘Integrating wellbeing into the business of government: The feasibility of innovative legal and policy measures to achieve sustainable development in Victoria’, page 14 (principle 1). Available at: <https://cdn.georgeinstitute.org/sites/default/files/final-integrating-wellbeing-into-the-business-of-government.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> The George Institute for Global Health (November 2021), ‘Integrating wellbeing into the business of government: The feasibility of innovative legal and policy measures to achieve sustainable development in Victoria’ (n 20).



## Subjective Wellbeing Evaluation

***Employ statistical subjective wellbeing evaluation to identify the predictors of wellbeing unique to Australians collectively and by subgroups, working to continually validate the framework now and in the future.***

Subjective wellbeing is a person's own assessment of the satisfaction with life, drawing on the criteria which is most important to them, whether consciously or subconsciously. While there is global recognition as to the importance of measuring wellbeing, the role of subjective wellbeing differs between jurisdictions. The OECD recognises three characterisations of subjective wellbeing<sup>18</sup>, (1) Evaluative or life satisfaction, (2) Experiential (or Hedonic) relates to someone's feelings, states and emotions (both positive and negative) and (3) Eudaimonia relates to intrinsic aspirations and whether life has meaning. Most jurisdictions acknowledge subjective wellbeing as an important input to understanding wellbeing, yet there are some advocates that elevate subjective wellbeing as an overall measure of human wellbeing and endorse using it to inform all policy.<sup>19</sup>

The rationale for this is grounded in the principle that an assessment of someone's overall wellbeing is best carried out by that person based on how they are experiencing their life, and should not be ordained by someone else's assessment. Rather than using an index-based approach, which uses assumptions to create artificial metrics for wellbeing, subjective wellbeing evaluation seeks to avoid imposing cultural norms or prescribe notions of what a 'good life' should constitute. Instead, statistical analysis of the relationship between wellbeing inputs, and the overall score of subjective wellbeing, reveals the nuances of what matters for people's wellbeing across different contexts and has the utility of being a comparable metric across different people, places, programs and sectors. Included with this submission is the *atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Index*, developed by Huber Social that provides a case study of how subjective wellbeing evaluation can work to identify factors that are consistent across the collective, as well as the factors that are unique to different subgroups.

Placing subjective wellbeing as an overarching indicator of human wellbeing enables Government decision-makers to use statistically verified insights that demonstrate the relationship between subjective wellbeing and particular domains and indicators to determine policy priorities and strategy. Furthermore, while policy decisions are traditionally based on the avoidance of negative social outcomes, such as poverty, understanding the drivers of wellbeing as provided by the lived experience of people in Australia may reveal a need to focus on positive wellbeing outcomes (as the result of particular strengths-based policy interventions, for example) which might not otherwise be obvious.<sup>20</sup>

**“Subjective questions allow people to express the quality of their own lives, reflecting their own histories, personalities, and preferences. They reflect what people think is important and desirable, rather than what experts or governments think should define a good life.”<sup>21</sup>**

Although subjective wellbeing measures how an individual is experiencing their life, its use as a common yardstick to measure overall wellbeing does not intend to prioritise the individual over the community. Instead, this recognises that the best measure we have of collective wellbeing are data and insights that illustrate the collective of individual subjective wellbeing (expressed through aggregate data at a community level). This is particularly important to acknowledge in recognition of cultures that value community wellbeing over the individual. Indeed, for people whose personal wellbeing is inseparable to community and kin wellbeing, it is expected that the value of this will be evident in subjective wellbeing evaluation. If community wellbeing is suffering, so too will individual wellbeing.

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<sup>18</sup> Stiglitz, J., J. Fitoussi and M. Durand (2018), 'Beyond GDP: Measuring What Counts for Economic and Social Performance', OECD Publishing (n 6).

<sup>19</sup> Including the UK Treasury, the 2009 Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussie report which founded the Beyond GDP movement, and the OECD.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Finance Canada (2021), 'Measuring What Matters: Toward a Quality-of-Life Strategy for Canada'. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/services/publications/measuring-what-matters-toward-quality-life-strategy-canada.html>

<sup>21</sup> Adler, A., and Seligman, M. (2016), 'Using wellbeing for public policy: Theory, measurement, and recommendations', *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 6(1), 1-35.





Notably, subjective wellbeing acts as a measure of human wellbeing and incorporates environmental wellbeing through the lens of how it affects people. This recognises the need to consider both human and non-human wellbeing and does not see planetary wellbeing as important only to the extent that it contributes to human wellbeing. This view is aligned with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective of wellbeing that acknowledge and value the needs of both human and nonhuman wellbeing (and the inherent interconnectedness between the two) for their own sake for intergenerational sustainability.<sup>22</sup> Whilst subjective wellbeing can be used as an overall lighthouse measure of progress, both subjective and objective measures can be incorporated into a wellbeing framework. For example, Multi Criteria Assessment can be undertaken drawing together subjective wellbeing evaluation in tandem with scientifically-backed domains and indicators to determine the state of the environment.<sup>23</sup>

The following section outlines practical guidance on how subjective wellbeing evaluation may be employed to both establish the wellbeing framework as well as continually validate it over time; the measurement and management.

Following adequate engagement to determine the holistic scope of wellbeing factors to be measured, a baseline should be measured with a focus on ensuring the composition and size of the measurement sample adequately reflects the Australian population.

Subjective wellbeing evaluation may then be employed to identify predictors of wellbeing that are (1) consistent to all Australians and (2) unique for specified sub-groups, providing the target outcomes for government, helping to inform policy, procurement and budget allocation. Where a factor is identified as a predictor of wellbeing, and is also scoring low, this helps to inform a priority need. In terms of reporting and sustainability, these predictors provide a focus for what is reported on and included in dashboards for monitoring and evaluation. The use of statistical subjective wellbeing evaluation to identify predictors of wellbeing will provide an evidence base for factors that are unique to Australians not necessarily reflected in existing frameworks such as the OECD Framework for Measuring Well-being and Progress.<sup>24</sup>

For impact management, subjective wellbeing evaluation then provides the means to monitor progress, as well as continually evaluate the target outcomes. Ongoing measurement can track 'shifts' in overall subjective wellbeing as an indicator of whether Australian's wellbeing is improving overall, and analysis can check whether predictors of wellbeing have changed, to continually confirm or redefine priority needs. This methodology can also reveal whether the scope of wellbeing factors measured is comprehensive enough to identify what matters for Australians. Where there is a lack of factors with a significant relationship to predict overall subjective wellbeing, it can highlight a gap in the framework and therefore the need to engage communities to ensure factors are relevant and sufficient. Subjective wellbeing evaluation therefore provides an iterative approach to ensuring that what is measured reflects both current and intergenerational wellbeing priorities as expressed by people across Australia. This can be utilised as a powerful mechanism to identify where resources should be directed for the greatest impact.

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<sup>22</sup> JYU.Wisdom community (2021). Planetary well-being. *Humanit Soc Sci Commun* 8, 25. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-00899-3>

<sup>23</sup> Cresswell, D., Janke, T., & Johnston, E (Lead Authors). (2022) *Australia State of the Environment Report 2021*. Commonwealth of Australia <https://soe.dceew.gov.au/>

<sup>24</sup> OECD (2020). *Better Life Initiative: Measuring Well-Being and Progress*.



# The atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Index

Measuring the Wellbeing of  
Job Seekers Across Australia

October 2021

Prepared by



atWork  
AUSTRALIA

WORK'S FOR EVERYONE

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# Improving the wellbeing of job seekers in Australia

Beyond vocational skills and expertise, job seekers also require the social, mental and physical capabilities to engage with and maintain employment opportunities.

It also matters that people find the right job, not just any job. atWork Australia believes that people who find jobs that contribute to their wellbeing are more likely to be successful in those jobs and stay employed longer.

Therefore, in an effort to better support people in overcoming barriers to employment and help place them in the best position to fulfil their potential, the atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Index ('the Index') has been created. It provides a holistic and data-driven approach to understanding the needs of job seekers and aims to:

- Inform employment services design and delivery to support more sustainable employment solutions across Australia
- Provide a baseline against which the effectiveness of employment initiatives can be assessed, and
- Identify current and future labour sector capability gaps to identify what should be done to address immediate needs and establish the work force of the future.

The Index measures wellbeing in terms of satisfaction with life, as well as the factors in each person's lived experience that drive it. With this information, employment services providers can better direct their resources to have the greatest impact on job seeker wellbeing.

The Index measures a representative sample of job seekers across Australia, including eight key subgroups: females, First Nations peoples, people living with disability, injury or health condition, youth, mature age, the culturally and linguistically diverse, refugees, and people with prior justice system experience.

Measured annually, the Index will create a valuable longitudinal data set for employment services providers, policy-makers, community organisations and supports, and Government.

This inaugural measurement of the Index reveals that the wellbeing of job seekers is significantly lower than that of employed people. Of particular concern are the 9.4% of job seekers who rate their satisfaction with life at the lowest level on the scale. This translates to about 60,000 job seekers across Australia who are truly struggling with their wellbeing<sup>1</sup>.

The key predictors of wellbeing are largely the same for all job seekers: being proud of one's achievements; having a sense of purpose; having sufficient financial resources; self-love; being heard and respected. Beyond these, salient differences emerge amongst the subsequent needs of each job seeker subgroup. This means that common actions can be taken to improve the wellbeing of all job seekers, which can then be complemented by improvements tailored to specific demographics to further improve wellbeing.

Having sufficient financial resources was also identified as a priority need because it is strongly correlated with wellbeing and has one of the lowest average scores. This data is supported by the qualitative feedback from survey respondents, and reinforces the significance of the financial assistance that atWork Australia provides clients during the job search process, and to sustain their job.

The data from the Index lends credence to atWork Australia's underpinning philosophy, particularly when considering that atWork Australia jobactive clients stay in employment longer than any other service provider.\* Connecting people with work that fits not only their skills but also their aspirations and values enables both them and the businesses they work for to thrive. There is potential for future work on the Index, aimed at further understanding and improving this holistic and practical approach to employment services, for the benefit of all job seekers and communities.

1. As of July 2021, total unemployed is 639,200 people. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). Labour Force, Australia. Available at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release>

\*For most reporting periods since 2017, atWork Australia has been ranked number one nationally for placing jobactive clients into work that achieves long-term employment outcomes. For example, the 5th September 2021 reporting period indicates that atWork Australia had a 12-week employment outcomes conversion rate of 64.1% for jobactive clients compared to the national average of 56.5%; and a 26-week employment outcomes conversion rate of 46.5% for atWork Australia jobactive clients compared to the national average of 39.7%. Source: Australian Government, Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Employment Services Outcomes Report. Available at: <https://www.dese.gov.au/employment-research-and-statistics/esor>

# Key findings from the Index

In order to achieve the best employment outcomes for the individual and the employer, the following key findings aim to identify (a) the needs of job seekers entering employment services and (b) what candidates require from the employment opportunities that they seek.

## On average, the wellbeing of job seekers is low

The average wellbeing of Australian job seekers is low (2.81 out of 5) when compared to the wellbeing of employed Australians (3.46 out of 5). Within this, certain demographic groups were found to have lower than average wellbeing; job seekers living with disability, injury or health condition (2.50), those with prior justice system experience (2.51), and mature aged (2.77). Further, almost 10% of job seekers are severely struggling with their wellbeing (1 out of 5).

## Across all job seekers, the primary needs to address this are consistent

The following five factors consistently emerged as having a strong correlation with overall wellbeing for all job seekers, both on average and among key job seeker subgroups:

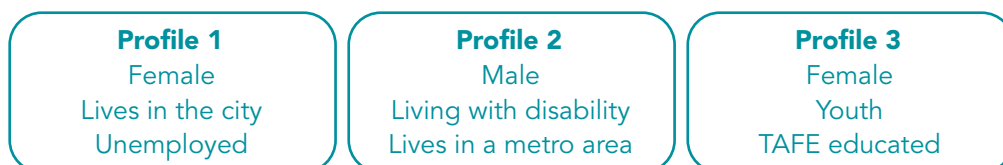


## Beyond primary needs, key subgroups have unique needs

To better understand the specific needs of all job seekers, analysis was performed across key subgroups of job seekers and revealed that, beyond primary needs, each group has unique needs as well. The key subgroups include: (1) Females, (2) First Nations peoples, (3) People living with disability, injury or health condition, (4) Mature aged, (5) Youth, (6) Cultural and linguistically diverse, (7) Refugees, and (8) People who have past experience with the justice system.

## To inform targeted holistic services, key profiles of job seekers were identified

Recognising people fall under multiple demographic groups, the most common sets of intersecting attributes were identified to develop key profiles of Australian job seekers and their needs.



## atWork Australia's focus on wellbeing delivers better employment outcomes

atWork Australia focuses on what a person needs to thrive, not just get a job. This holistic approach to employment services is one reason why they are a leading provider of employment services. For example, atWork Australia is a leading provider for the longest-lasting job placements (for jobactive clients), and for Disability Employment Services clients, they place and sustain people at a higher level than their portion of the total DES cohort (as at July 2021). This is an indication that atWork Australia's focus on wellbeing achieves better employment outcomes overall, and ongoing measurement will seek to strengthen this conclusion.



atWork Australia's purpose

To connect people  
and business,  
so both can thrive.



# About atWork Australia

**atWork Australia seeks to improve participation in society for people living with disability, injury, health condition or disadvantage.**

At the heart of atWork Australia's purpose is the belief that employment and occupation transform lives, not just for the individual concerned, but for their families, friends and communities.

Work should be for everyone. By acting with integrity, compassion and determination, atWork Australia is able to identify more opportunities for clients and help find the right job for them.

As a leading national provider of employment services<sup>2</sup>, atWork Australia understands that beyond vocational skills and expertise, a person requires the social, mental and physical capability to engage with the opportunity and maintain employment, and all the positive outcomes that come with it.

This is reflected in atWork Australia's practical and holistic approach to employment services. Each Job Coach begins by understanding their client's goals and aspirations before working to build their capability and confidence and to match them with the right opportunities. Candidates are not only well suited for their role but are more likely to remain committed to a job that nurtures their wellbeing.

To demonstrate the value of this approach and strengthen their role as a market leader, atWork Australia has partnered with social impact measurement experts Huber Social to identify the needs of Australian job seekers that, when satisfied, will improve wellbeing and place all people in a position to fulfil their potential and live a life they value.



2. For most reporting periods since 2017, atWork Australia has been ranked number one nationally for placing jobactive clients into work that achieves long-term employment outcomes. For example, the 5th September 2021 reporting period indicates that atWork Australia had a 12-week employment outcomes conversion rate of 64.1% for jobactive clients compared to the national average of 56.5%; and a 26-week employment outcomes conversion rate of 46.5% for atWork Australia jobactive clients compared to the national average of 39.7%. Source: Australian Government, Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Employment Services Outcomes Report. Available at: <https://www.dese.gov.au/employment-research-and-statistics/esor>



# How wellbeing was measured

## Impact

The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework™ recognises that the overall goal of all social impact is to put people in the best position to fulfil their potential and live a life that is valuable to them. This is our definition of wellbeing, and is also what we consider to be the ultimate impact worth measuring.

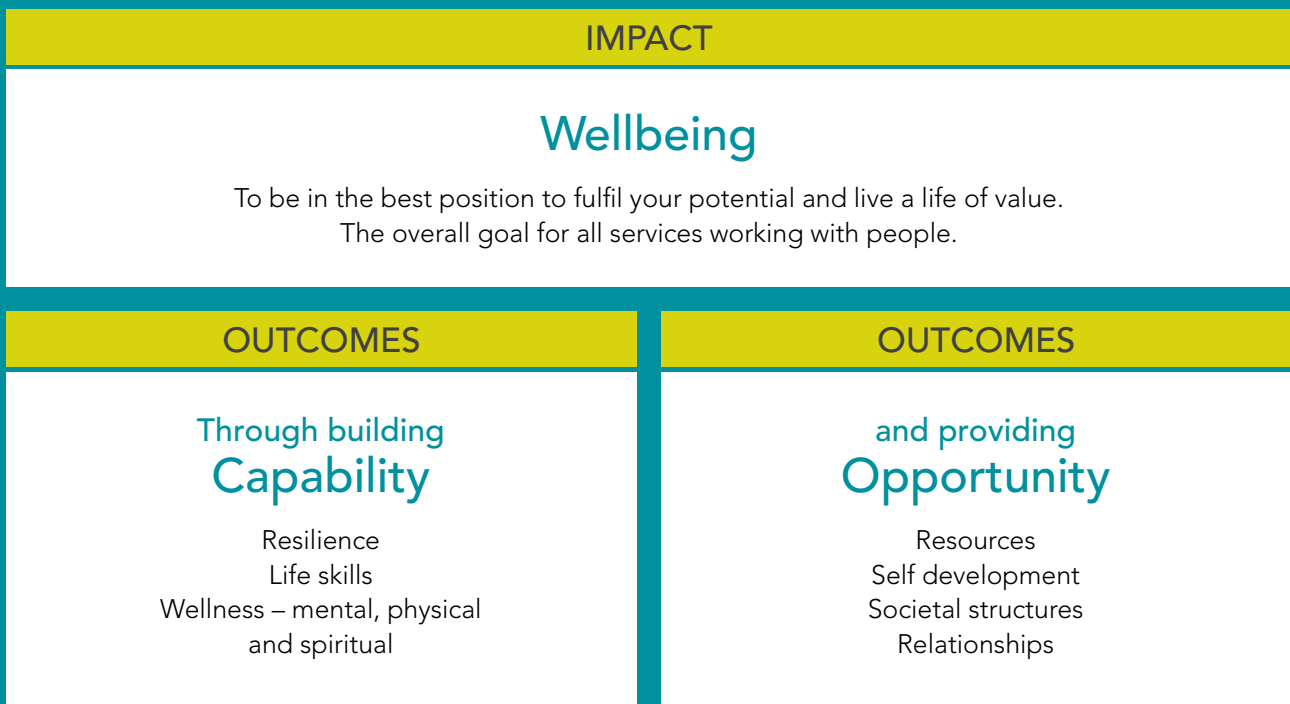
To measure wellbeing, the Satisfaction with Life scale was used.<sup>3</sup> A globally recognised and validated scale, it uses a set of five questions that ask people to reflect and score their level of satisfaction with their life at this time.

## Outcomes

To understand what a person needs to be in the best position of wellbeing, the second part of the framework measures a person's level of 'capability' and 'opportunity'. At this level, the framework is a holistic and comprehensive list of human needs.

The level of each capability and opportunity need was measured through self assessment using the atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Survey. Data analysis then identified those needs which have a significant relationship with job seekers' wellbeing.

## The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework



3. Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), Ed Diener, Robert A. Emmons, Randy J. Larsen and Sharon Griffin as noted in the 1985 article in the Journal of Personality Assessment. For more information on methodologies, see the 'Measurement Activities' section.

# The Index demographics

The Index is based on the direct input of the over 1,200 Australians who responded to the atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Survey. To ensure the Index provides reliable insights, we endeavoured to obtain a representative sample of job seekers throughout Australia. For more information on sampling and data collection, please refer to the *Measurement Activities* section on page 32.

Job Seeker demographics		% of the Index
<b>Gender</b>	Female	68.6%
	Male	29.3%
	Non-binary	0.8%
<b>Location</b>	Metro	74.6%
	Regional or remote	24.9%
<b>Age</b>	15-17 years old	1.5%
	18-24 years old	26.7%
	25-34 years old	18.0%
	35-44 years old	17.2%
	45-54 years old	16.0%
	55-64 years old	17.1%
	65+ years old	4.7%
<b>Education</b>	Secondary education	14.6%
	TAFE or apprenticeship	25.8%
	Undergraduate	13.5%
	Postgraduate	16.0%
<b>Accommodation</b>	Renting	35.9%
	Home owner	23.4%
	Long-term stay with friends or family	16.8%
	Government housing	3.2%
	No permanent accommodation	2.4%
<b>Caregiver</b>	Part or full time caregiver	25.6%
	Not a caregiver	60.9%
<b>Out of work</b>	Less than a year	40.1%
	More than a year	59.9%



# Overall wellbeing of job seekers

To assess wellbeing, participants were asked to evaluate their satisfaction with life at this moment. The average overall wellbeing of job seekers was 2.81 out of 5, indicating that job seekers are somewhat dissatisfied with their current situation.

In comparison, employed Australians who participated in this study had an average overall wellbeing of 3.46, 23% higher than that of job seekers.<sup>4</sup>

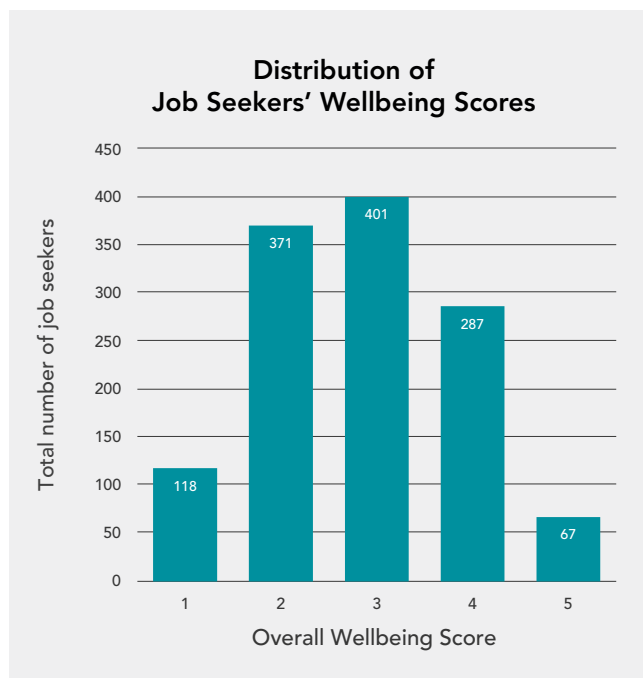
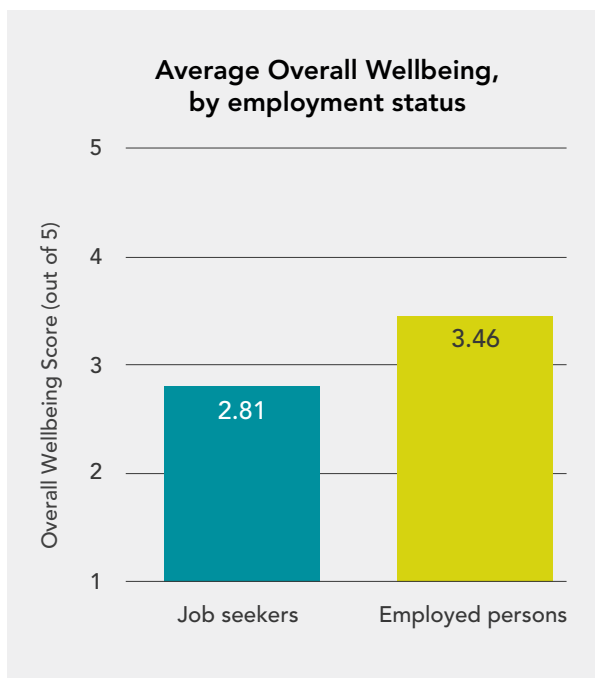
Distribution of job seekers', wellbeing scores were slightly skewed, with a relatively higher proportion of job seekers towards the lower end of the wellbeing spectrum.

Of significance is the fact that almost 10% of Australian job seekers have rated their wellbeing at the lowest level possible. In the authors' experience scores like these are rarely seen, even with the scale's global use across differently resourced populations.

Regardless of employment status, everyone requires their specific needs to be satisfied in order to be in the best position to fulfil their potential. This is important not only for their ability to secure employment but to thrive.

The evidence suggests that some 60,000 Australian job seekers are at their lowest, and that their wellbeing needs are not being met; thus they are in no position to find longlasting employment.

Through lifting the wellbeing of job seekers, employment services providers can support people to be better placed to secure and maintain employment, delivering better outcomes for the individual, the employer and the community.



4. Average wellbeing of employed Australians is 3.46 ( $t=4.96$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Average wellbeing is calculated from Overall Wellbeing Scores data from the atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Survey ( $n=84$ ) and the 2020 SoWell Australian Wellbeing Check ( $n=89$ ). Overall wellbeing is assessed using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS); scores are based out of five. See the Measurement Activities page in the report Appendix for more information on methodology.

# Predictors of wellbeing for job seekers

In order to inform how to best support job seekers, analysis was performed to understand the needs that have a significant relationship with overall satisfaction with life and wellbeing. These driving factors can be used by employment services providers to understand what matters most to the wellbeing of all job seekers and to inform and target service design and delivery.

The following five outcomes emerged as the strongest predictors of wellbeing among all fifty-five outcomes measured. These indicate needs that are important to job seekers both while looking for employment and what they are hoping to find in their new role. These predictors of wellbeing are:

Being proud of one's achievements



Being heard and respected by others



Sufficient financial resources



Self-love



Having a sense of purpose



Overall, job seekers who are proud of their accomplishments, who have a strong sense of purpose and self-love, who feel they have sufficient financial resources and who feel respected by others are more likely to have higher levels of wellbeing compared to other job seekers.

By matching job seekers with employment opportunities that successfully contribute towards satisfying these needs, employment services providers can improve the sustainability of their employment solutions and support the overall wellbeing of their job seekers, to the benefit not only of the individual but also their employment partners and the broader community. atWork Australia delivers a variety of tailored programs to help different groups of job seekers identify their goals and aspirations, build their employability skills, and support them through the job application process into employment.



# Financial assistance is a priority need for job seekers

A priority need is an outcome that has a statistically strong correlation with high overall wellbeing (see page 9), but which scored low among job seekers. This need is therefore not being satisfied, and can be considered a priority need that, when improved upon, is more likely to lead to an increase in overall wellbeing.

**Having access to sufficient financial resources is a predictor of wellbeing but was one of the lowest scoring outcomes across all job seekers, indicating that this need is not currently being met.**

Job seekers are not looking for just any job, but one that will allow them to live a comfortable life with fewer financial worries.

However, current financial hardship may prevent job seekers from accessing employment opportunities, or limit them to accept any job rather than the best job for them, and their needs and goals. Increasing access to financial assistance presents a clear opportunity for employment services providers to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of their job seekers.

atWork Australia's practical and holistic approach successfully addresses this need among its job seekers. Their clients cite access to financial assistance for covering background checks, transport costs, and work attire as some of the most meaningful support provided by their employment services provider.<sup>5</sup> By increasing access to short-term financial solutions, atWork Australia supports their clients to find the right job that will satisfy more of their wellbeing needs, including long-term financial security for them and their families.



“Financial assistance for police checks and certificates, possibly financial help for getting to interviews. It’s the biggest barrier to gaining employment, especially when undergoing financial hardship.”

**MALE JOB SEEKER, METRO-BASED, CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE**

5. This is supported by Mission Australia's research which emphasises the significance of financial support towards the costs of the job application and recruitment process for people experiencing economic disadvantage. Source: Mission Australia (2018) The Next Generation of Employment Services: Employment Services Review 2018 - Submission. Available at: <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/submissions-and-reports/employment-skills-and-training>

# Wellbeing needs of key job seeker subgroups

The primary wellbeing needs of job seekers are relatively consistent. However, beyond the five primary predictors of wellbeing, the needs of job seekers become more diverse across particular demographic characteristics.

Recognising the individuality and diversity of job seekers<sup>6</sup>, the Index provides a deeper analysis of eight key subgroups of job seekers who identify as:

- **Female**
- **First Nations peoples**
- **People living with disability, injury or health condition**
- **Youth (under 25 years old)**
- **Mature aged (over 45 years old)**
- **Culturally and linguistically diverse**
- **Refugee**
- **People with prior justice system experience**

While each of the following pages examines the ten strongest predictors of wellbeing for these subgroups, a full list of all strong and moderate predictors of wellbeing for each sub group can be found in the report Appendix.



6. These include many of the groups that the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and Jobs Australia (2020) report are most at risk of long-term unemployment. For example, mature age job seekers, people living with disability, injury or health condition, principal carers of children, First Nations peoples, people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people residing outside metropolitan areas. Source: ACOSS & Jobs Australia, Faces of Unemployment Report 2020. Available at: <https://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Faces-of-Unemployment-2020-v3.pdf>

# Job seeker subgroups and wellbeing

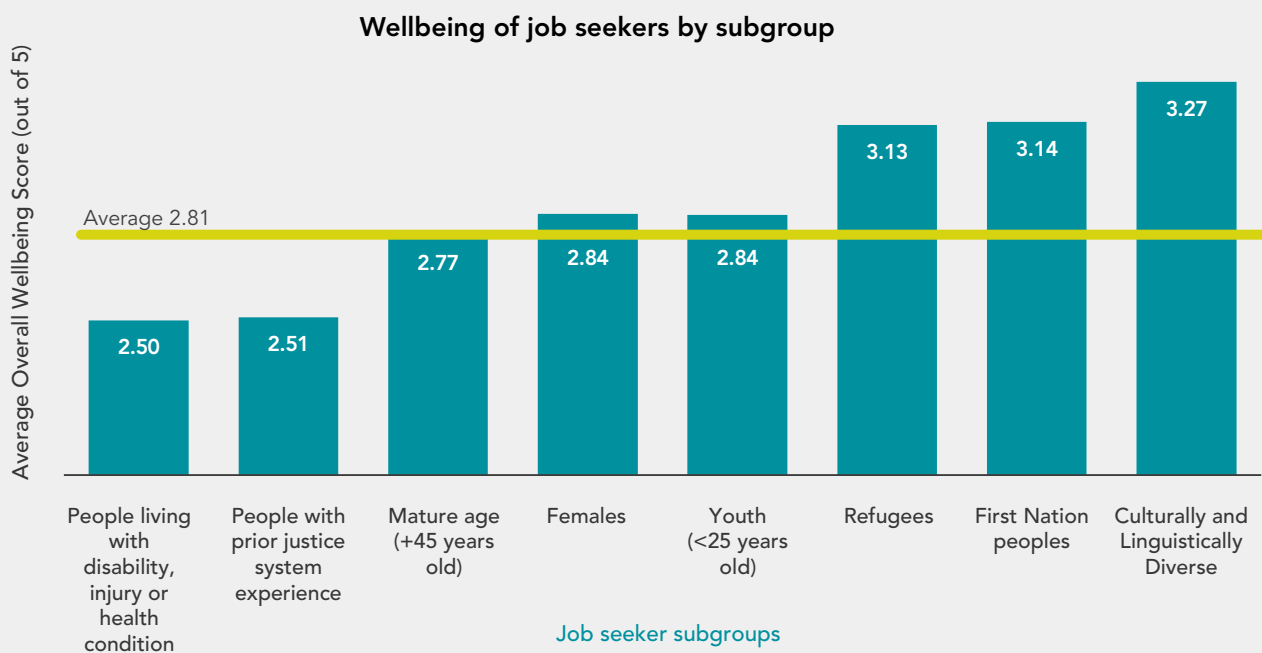
Levels of wellbeing across the target demographic groups differ largely. This demonstrates that job seekers in these subgroups approach employment from different starting points, some more challenged than others. These results may inform where to prioritise services to support the most vulnerable job seekers as well as highlight areas for further investigation.

For groups with lower wellbeing this may be reflective of barriers and discrimination they may face more broadly in their community, such as feeling socially isolated or facing challenges in accessing community services to support their needs.

For groups with higher wellbeing further analysis may reveal that employment has less of a driving relationship with wellbeing or that there are other factors that support wellbeing despite unemployment. This reinforces the importance of atWork Australia's strengths-based approach for working with different groups of job seekers.

## Key findings among overall wellbeing

- **Age:** Young job seekers have higher overall wellbeing than mature aged job seekers.
- **First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse peoples:** First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers were both found to have significantly higher wellbeing than the average job seeker. Their higher overall wellbeing is driven by higher scores across their strongest predictors of wellbeing, indicating they fare better across the factors that matter most for their wellbeing compared to other groups when seeking employment.
- **Disability, injury or health condition:** Job seekers living with disability, injury or health condition have significantly lower wellbeing than the average job seeker.
- **Prior justice system experience:** Job seekers with prior justice system experience have lower wellbeing than those with no justice system experience.



*Note: There was no significant difference in average overall wellbeing of job seekers based on gender, location, housing type, education level, time out of work or reception of Centrelink benefits. For more information on data analysis performed, see the report Appendix.*

# Female job seekers

Even though labour force participation for women is at a ten-year high, women are still underemployed and underpaid compared to their male counterparts<sup>7</sup>. Understanding the wellbeing needs of female job seekers is one step in an effort to reduce these gender inequalities and support more women to enter and thrive in employment.

Average overall wellbeing among female job seekers is 2.84, slightly higher than the average overall wellbeing of all job seekers (2.81). As over two-thirds of the total job seeker population surveyed identified as female, the strongest predictors of wellbeing are well-aligned with those of the average job seeker.

Beyond the principle five predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers, the following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for female job seekers:



Feeling appreciated and cared for by others



Having hope for the future



Connection to land and place



Belonging to a community



Treated fairly by potential employers

Unique to female job seekers' wellbeing is the need for connection, from personal to community-level. Female job seekers who feel appreciated by others, and in particular treated fairly by potential employers, are more likely to have higher wellbeing as compared to other female job seekers. Beyond this, connection to their land and their community are just as important to wellbeing as are professional connections.

Employment services providers can set female job seekers up for success by identifying sectors and employers that value connection and view their employees as members of a community. Establishing a personal connection, listening to and appreciating their experiences, and maintaining hope for the future are just some of the ways to address female job seeker needs and support their wellbeing.

atWork Australia supports the needs of female job seekers through their 'Jobs Now' program. This is a jobs preparation program delivered through peer to peer sessions (both online and face to face) which can facilitate the need for connection amongst this subgroup. Sessions are also provided for female job seekers at local Community Hubs which can facilitate engagement with service providers who can support them on their job seeking journey.

7. According to ABS, in 2019-2020 two-thirds of women (67.6%) aged 20-74 years old participated in the labour force; this rate is the highest for women during the past 10 years. However, women's full time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings were 86% of that of men, and employed women are almost three times more likely than men to be working part-time. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020). Gender Indicators, Australia - Reference Period 2020. Available at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/gender-indicators-australia/latest-release>





## “ They treat you like family. ”

“atWork Australia is by far one of the best providers I have been with. atWork Australia has a team of professionals who not only do their job but they treat you like family. You walk into their office and straight away you are greeted with a warm, welcoming smile and the atmosphere is very welcoming, very family orientated. They actually listen to you and try to help you in more ways than one. They go out of their way for you and understand you, they put themselves in your shoes so to speak.”

FEMALE JOB SEEKER,  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# First Nations job seekers

In 2018, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders employment rate was less than 50%, remaining relatively unchanged since the decade prior<sup>8</sup>. This evidence supports the need for a new approach to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in their employment journey. By first understanding which factors are most important to the wellbeing of First Nations job seekers, employment services providers can better direct their resources to support their clients and help close the gap and achieve equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in employment.

Average overall wellbeing among job seekers who identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origins is 3.14. This is significantly higher than those who do not identify as a First Nations job seeker, and higher than the average overall wellbeing of job seekers (2.81).

Beyond the principle five predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers, the following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers:



Access to the employment services needed



Adaptability



Problem-solving



Affordable housing



Job opportunities in the community

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers, access to the right employment services and affordable housing have a much stronger association with wellbeing as compared to other job seeker groups, indicating that when these needs are satisfied, wellbeing for these job seekers will likely improve.

Resilience is also a key driver of wellbeing; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers who reported being adaptable in uncertainty and having strong problem-solving skills had significantly higher wellbeing.

Factors related to community connection, emotional wellness and resilience, and access to other support services all had a stronger relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seeker wellbeing than employment factors. This reinforces the need for a holistic approach to employment services, as simply placing someone in a job may not be enough to improve their wellbeing.

atWork Australia supports its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients' needs through its direct-to-employer advocacy, team member representation (2.5% First Nations staff), and services offered through its Indigenous Connections team. Through these efforts, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers have greater access to the right employment services and job opportunities in their communities, and are therefore more likely to have higher wellbeing and a greater chance of finding successful employment that works for them.

8. "In 2018, the Indigenous employment rate was around 49 per cent compared to around 75 per cent for non-Indigenous Australians. Over the past decade (2008–2018), the employment rate for Indigenous Australians increased slightly (by 0.9 percentage points)." Source: Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Closing the Gap Report 2020. Available at: <https://ctgreport.niaa.gov.au/employment>

# Job seekers living with disability, injury or health condition

Among labour force participation, Australians living with disability, injury or health condition are met with some of the most extreme social inequalities, with lower employment rates and higher underemployment. As a result of challenges faced in the labour force people living with disability are more likely to experience poorer health, discrimination, and violence<sup>9</sup>.

It is therefore unsurprising to see that overall wellbeing of job seekers living with disability, injury or health condition are more likely to have lower wellbeing when compared to any other subgroup. With an average overall wellbeing of 2.50, it is imperative that actions are taken to improve the status quo of employment services providers to ensure they address the holistic needs of people living with disability, injury or health condition.

Beyond the principle five predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers, the following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for these job seekers:



Feeling appreciated and cared for by others



Having hope for the future



Belonging to a community



Problem-solving



Healthy relationships

For job seekers living with disability, injury or health condition, relationships are key to higher wellbeing. Those who feel appreciated, who are part of a community, and who have different types of healthy relationships are more likely to have higher overall wellbeing. These are key areas that employment services providers should focus on addressing first and foremost to better serve their clients living with disability, injury or health condition. Furthermore, compared to all other job seeker subgroups measured factors relating to employment had the strongest relationship with wellbeing for job seekers living with a disability, injury or health condition. Employment matters most for these job seekers, and will likely have a greater impact on their wellbeing when satisfied.

atWork Australia believe that work is for everyone. atWork Australia supports its clients with programs like 'Positivum', a health and wellness coaching platform that helps clients build upon their confidence and mental wellbeing, and reevaluate their perceptions relating to work and health. Through public campaigns, Disability Awareness Training, and specialised recruitment strategies, atWork Australia is improving community attitudes towards the power and potential of a diverse and inclusive workforce, thus creating the necessary opportunities for people living with disability, injury or health condition to find the right job and improve their wellbeing.

<sup>9</sup> Less than half (48%) of working age people living with disability are employed, as compared to 80% of those living without disability. Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018). Older Australians at a glance - Employment & economic participation. Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/contents/social-and-economic-engagement/employment-and-economic-participation>





“ She didn't make me feel bad about my situation. ”

“I went to atWork Australia and saw a nice lady. I was really anxious to go there. I told her my situation and she made me feel at ease and made a job plan to fit to my current study commitments and mental health appointments. She didn't make me feel bad about my situation (I've had people make me cry before from being overwhelmed), and I actually felt better after going to see her.”

FEMALE JOB SEEKER, YOUTH,  
LIVING WITH DISABILITY



# Youth job seekers

In the past year, young people have been particularly impacted by the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, with under 25 unemployment rising to a record high at 16.4% in July 2020<sup>10</sup>. Even as the nation recovers, youth job seekers must still confront obstacles to entering the labour force due to perceived lack of work experience, qualifications, or access to local job opportunities.<sup>11</sup>

In recognising these challenges, atWork Australia has commissioned an additional study on the wellbeing of young job seekers. The atWork Australia Youth Survey built upon the Index's initial findings for this subgroup, with a particular emphasis on identifying wellbeing needs of young job seekers in priority regions marked by high youth unemployment rates.

The study found average overall wellbeing of young job seekers to be 2.84, slightly higher than that of the average job seeker (2.81). Among them, those who identify as LGBTQIA+ or living with disability, injury or health condition is significantly lower at 2.49 and 2.34, respectively, and these two subgroups should be a priority focus for employment services providers.

While young job seekers' wellbeing is driven by many of the same capabilities and opportunities as the average job seeker, there are needs unique to this group as well.

Beyond the principle five predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers, the following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for youth job seekers:



Having the right job is important to young people, but is just one of many factors important to their wellbeing. Mental wellness and community connection are also key drivers for this subgroup, indicating a need for employment services that support the whole individual and not just their work capabilities.

For this reason, atWork Australia's holistic and inclusive approach to employment services will better support young job seekers' wellbeing, by addressing their need for connection, holistic wellness and work readiness through their Youth Hubs. With this model, job seekers will have access to Job Coaches, in-house psychological support services, and a community of other young people, all in one place. Through supporting their wellbeing needs, atWork Australia can help young people across the country enter the labour force with greater confidence and ability to fulfil their potential.

10. The Brotherhood of St. Lawrence (2021). Youth Unemployment Monitor - December 2020. Available at: <https://www.bsl.org.au/about/advocacy/youth-unemployment-monitor/>  
11. Mission Australia Youth Survey Report 2020. Available at: <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-impact-policy-advocacy/youth-survey>

# Mature aged job seekers

Australians are not just living longer; they're working longer too. In 2017, 20% of Australians say they intend to work past the age of 70 years old, compared to 8% the decade prior.<sup>12</sup> However, older Australians can face many barriers to employment, with one-third having experienced discrimination based on age when applying for work.<sup>13</sup>

Average overall wellbeing among job seekers over 45 years old is 2.77; this is slightly lower than the average of all job seekers (2.81). Given that mature aged job seekers have lower wellbeing compared to their younger colleagues, this group deserves particular attention and support in continuing their employment journey.

The main predictors of wellbeing for mature aged job seekers are not so different from the average job seeker. Mature aged job seekers that have a strong sense of purpose, who feel financially secure and who like themselves just as they are, will, on average, have higher wellbeing.

Beyond the principle five predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers, the following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for mature aged job seekers:



Feeling appreciated and cared for by others



Having hope for the future



Belonging to a community



Quality time with loved ones



Feeling less lonely or isolated

Having quality personal connections is a uniquely important driver of wellbeing for the mature aged job seeker. Feeling appreciated and cared for is strongly associated with higher wellbeing, as is being heard by others. Those who report feeling part of a community, who spend quality time with their loved ones, and who feel less lonely or isolated are more likely to have higher wellbeing than other mature aged job seekers.

To improve their wellbeing, mature aged job seekers need to feel a meaningful connection with others throughout the employment journey. atWork Australia's 'Jobs Now' program does just that, offering its clients an opportunity to connect one on one with peers, whereby Job Coaches spend quality time with each client to discuss their job goals, interests, and experiences while working towards job readiness. By taking the time to get to know each client as a whole person, atWork Australia supports its older clients' wellbeing in their employment journey while also helping them find the best job for them.

12. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018). *Older Australians at a glance - Employment & economic participation*. Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/contents/social-and-economic-engagement/employment-and-economic-participation>

13. Australian Human Rights Commission (2016). *Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability (2016)*. Available at: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/publications/willing-work-national-inquiry-employment-discrimination>



## “ Kind and genuinely caring.”

“The lady who interviewed me at atWork Australia has been one of the most empathetic people I’ve ever dealt with and she’s been a godsend in a time of enormous stress and change in my life. First starting a challenging online course and then [going] through homelessness. I really can’t say enough how kind and genuinely caring this woman has been.”

FEMALE JOB SEEKER, MATURE AGED,  
FORMERLY INCARCERATED

# Culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers

Australians from overseas encounter many hurdles to engagement with the labour force, and women disproportionately more so than men, with less than 50% of culturally and linguistically diverse women actively employed.<sup>14</sup> Despite this, average overall wellbeing among job seekers who are culturally and linguistically diverse is 3.27. This is the highest of all the sub-groups and is significantly higher than the overall wellbeing of those who do not identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, and the average overall wellbeing of job seekers (2.81).

The strongest predictors of wellbeing for culturally and linguistically diverse people are quite different from those of other job seekers. Only two of the top five predictors of wellbeing for job seekers on average are included in the top five for culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers.

Beyond the principle five predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers, the following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers:



For culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers, personal wellness and healthy connections are the most important drivers of wellbeing. Job seekers who feel physically healthy, have self-appreciation and a strong sense of purpose are more likely to have higher overall wellbeing. Equally important to their wellbeing is having a strong sense of belonging in their community, access to jobs where they live, and the skills to build healthy relationships.

atWork Australia supports these drivers of wellbeing for culturally and linguistically diverse clients through the cultural diversity and lived experience of their workforce. A survey of atWork Australia Job Coaches indicates that 34% were born outside of Australia, and 27% can speak a language other than English.

To create more sustainable employment solutions for culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers, employment services providers should prioritise connecting these clients with jobs in their communities that will foster professional relationships with their colleagues, secure employment with a diverse and inclusive employer, and allow them to maintain their physical wellness.

14. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Towards 2025 A Strategy to Boost Australian Women's Workforce Participation. Available at: <https://womensworkforceparticipation.pmc.gov.au/culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-women.html#main-content>

# Refugee job seekers

Overall, the wellbeing needs of job seekers who are refugees are entirely different from other job seeker groups.<sup>15</sup> Despite past traumas and present challenges, average overall wellbeing of refugee job seekers remains relatively high at 3.13 out of 5.

Of the five principle needs of job seekers' wellbeing, only pride in one's achievements is strongly associated with refugee job seeker wellbeing – but it has the strongest association with wellbeing of all key job seeker groups.<sup>16</sup>

The following five needs are those which are strongly – and uniquely – associated with their wellbeing:



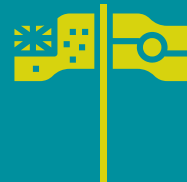
Spirituality or faith



Employment skills



Access to affordable healthcare



Connection to culture and heritage



Access to cultural activities

For refugee job seekers their cultural identity matters, and having a sense of connection to their heritage and the opportunity to participate in cultural activities are key drivers of their wellbeing.

This need for connection extends beyond their personal identity to their community, their land or place, and to something bigger than themselves.

Refugee job seekers' wellbeing is also driven by access to key resources, namely affordable housing and medical care. Refugee job seekers who have access to these services are more likely to have higher wellbeing than those job seekers who do not.

atWork Australia supports its refugee clients by pre-employment support programs which focus on developing employability and foundational skills. Working to identify the strengths and capabilities they currently have and ways to develop new ones for their desired career path directly address the needs of refugee job seekers and support their overall wellbeing.

Employment services providers must take into account the unique needs of this job seeker group and support them in their efforts to maintain traditional connections and foster new ones. By improving access to key social services and skills training, refugee job seekers will be in a better position to search for, and to secure, the job that will fulfil their needs and improve their wellbeing.

15. Given the number of refugee job seekers who responded to the atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Survey (n=24), these results should be considered preliminary.

16. Strength of association is determined by the coefficient value; the larger the value, the stronger the relationship between the outcome measured and wellbeing.



# Job seekers with prior justice system experience

Persons with past experiences with the justice system have often experienced incredible adversity in their life, and as such their wellbeing needs are quite unique compared to other job seekers. When leaving the system, less than one in four persons have organised paid employment starting within two weeks, indicating a considerable need for early access to holistic employment services that will support the entire person during a pivotal life moment.<sup>17</sup>

Average overall wellbeing among job seekers who were released from a correctional facility in the past five years is 2.51. This is the second-lowest of all subgroups measured, and is significantly lower than that of the average job seeker (2.81), providing compelling evidence for targeted support to this subgroup.

The predictors of wellbeing for people with prior justice system experience are entirely different from those of the average job seeker. Only one of the five principle predictors of wellbeing for all job seekers – being heard and respected by others – overlapped with this group's needs. This indicates that a distinct approach to engagement with and services provided for this subgroup is necessary to address their wellbeing needs.

The following needs were identified as having the strongest relationship with wellbeing for job seekers with prior justice system experience:



Affordable housing



Knowledge of family violence services



Knowledge of available education opportunities



Belonging to a community



Affordable childcare

Overall, access to community services is the most important driver of wellbeing for job seekers with prior justice system experience. Access to effective community services for safe housing, relationships, childcare and education are critical needs for these job seekers, and those who have greater access to these key resources within their community are more likely to have higher wellbeing as compared to other job seekers.

To ensure a smoother transition from a correctional facility to the work force, atWork Australia offers workshops on resume writing, addressing skills gaps in résumés and labour market info to people who are currently incarcerated. atWork Australia also identifies specific industries which don't need police clearances (e.g. construction, manufacturing, food and accommodation).

atWork Australia's Community Hubs support clients with past experiences with the justice system. By bringing services providers to the hubs, it enables their clients to access the key allied health, education and social resources they need all in one easy-to-access to help place job seekers in a better position to enter the labour force and fulfil their potential.

17. Given the number of job seekers with prior justice system experience who responded to the atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Survey (n=39), these results should be considered preliminary.

# Job seeker profiles

## Every job seeker is unique.

Because people are more than the sum of their many parts, effective service design requires a holistic approach.

To help inform this holistic approach, the Index also analysed the most commonly occurring sets of job seeker attributes to develop key profiles of Australian job seekers and their needs. By looking at a job seeker as a whole person, employment services providers can more precisely tailor their services to meet individual job seekers' needs. This approach recognises that job seekers may face simultaneous barriers in their quest to find stable and fulfilling employment.<sup>18</sup>

The following profiles present a snapshot of three individual job seekers and what drives their wellbeing.

### 'Jasmine'

Female  
Lives in the city  
Unemployed



### 'Kai'

Male  
Living with disability  
Lives in a metro area



### 'Ava'

Female  
Youth  
TAFE educated



18. Research by the OECD indicates that the most common employment obstacles in Australia are limited work experience, low skills, and poor health. A notable finding is that almost one-third of job seekers face three or more simultaneous barriers, highlighting that these obstacles should not be looked at in isolation. Source: Immervoll, H., D. Pacifico and M. Vandeweyer (2019), "Faces of joblessness in Australia: An anatomy of employment barriers using household data", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 226, OECD Publishing, Paris. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/c51b96ef-en>

# Jasmine is a job seeker

Female | Lives in the city | Unemployed

Jasmine lives in the city. She is currently unemployed and is actively looking for work. She has some work experience and believes she has the skills to start a new job and succeed. Jasmine is looking for someone to give her a chance and to believe in what she has to offer.

Jasmine's overall sense of self-worth is good. She handles life's challenges well, is reliable and feels good about the connections she has with her friends, family and community. Jasmine is sociable, approachable and considers herself to be a team player.

Whilst she has confidence in her own abilities and is proud of her achievements, Jasmine will look for reassurance from a future employer that she is valued and that her work is appreciated.

She will also respond well when she is paid appropriately for her work. Jasmine understands the importance of financial security that a steady job offers. She wants to earn enough money to live comfortably.

Key to Jasmine's success is a continued sense of fulfilment in life. She is confident and ambitious. With the right guidance and support from her employer, Jasmine will be in a stronger position to sustain employment and to achieve her potential. This will have a lasting impact on her overall sense of wellbeing.



# Kai is a job seeker

Male | Living with disability | Lives in a metro area

Kai is from regional Western Australia, but now lives in the city. He is currently unemployed and is looking for work. Kai shows a genuine willingness to learn and to be accepted. He is looking for an employer that can see beyond his physical disability and appreciate everything he has to contribute to the workforce.

Kai performs well when he has a sense of purpose and when he is encouraged to feel proud of what he has achieved. Over the years, workplace discrimination has directly affected Kai's self-esteem. Despite this, Kai is optimistic about his future, and is determined to find and keep a job. Kai has a positive attitude to work and hopes to find the right employer soon.

Important motivators for Kai are acceptance by others and having the opportunity to share his views, without judgement. Kai will thrive in a work environment where connection and respectful relationships are valued and where his contribution is recognised and appreciated by others.

Inclusion and personal fulfilment are key to both Kai's future workplace success and his overall sense of wellbeing.





# Ava is a job seeker

Female | Youth | TAFE Educated

Ava lives in the city. She has recently completed her Certificate III in Aged Care and is actively looking for work in the greater Melbourne area. Ava has a strong work ethic, which has helped her through her studies. This is a strong indicator of her expected future success, as much for her personally as for her future employer.

A TAFE graduate, Ava is proud of her recent achievements. She responds well to having a focus and a sense of meaning in her life. She is keen to start work soon, in order to put her training into practice and to formally embark upon her career.

Ava values knowing that she is making a difference to the lives of the people that she serves. She responds well to opportunities that enable her to share her point of view and feel listened to by others.

Ava enjoys learning and reflecting on how her work is contributing to her personal and professional development. Key to Ava's future wellbeing is setting herself goals and working towards them. As a young woman starting out in her career, Ava is concerned about the cost of housing in the city. Empowering her to grow in her role will give her a sense of greater control over her future and contribute to her overall sense of wellbeing.



# What's next for the Index

The atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Index provides a data driven roadmap for improving job seeker wellbeing. By addressing the most important needs of job seekers, employment services providers can have a real impact on improving job seeker wellbeing and guiding them into the best position to find the right job, not just the first job. As the employment services sector responds to this new approach, the Index can provide an annual metric for tracking the evolution of national job seeker wellbeing and improvements in employment services.

If job seekers are matched with employment opportunities that satisfy their needs, they are more likely to stay in those jobs and have higher wellbeing. atWork Australia knows this from experience; with their needs based approach, their clients are more successful in finding sustainable employment.

atWork Australia clients believe in this holistic approach as well, with over 75% report having had a satisfactory experience with the organisation. In their direct feedback, clients cite examples of how atWork Australia listens to, respects and champions their needs, including those that are most strongly associated with job seeker wellbeing.

To fully understand the impact of practical and holistic employment services to improve job seeker wellbeing, an opportunity exists to measure the wellbeing of recently employed job seekers.

By comparing the overall wellbeing and needs satisfaction among recently employed job seekers, atWork Australia will be able to prove the long-term effectiveness of their unique approach.

In this way, atWork Australia can continue to redefine employment standards for those underserved by the sector, and be a leader for equitable employment opportunities for all people and communities.



“ atWork Australia seems to understand who I am, what I need and what I can do.”

FEMALE JOB SEEKER, LIVING WITH DISABILITY, MATURE AGED

# Get in touch

## atWork Australia

atWork Australia seeks to improve the participation in society for people living with disability, injury, health condition or disadvantage.

To achieve this, atWork Australia works with their clients to identify their goals and aspirations, build skills and job readiness and support them through interviews and into sustainable employment.

At the heart of atWork Australia's purpose is the belief that work is for everyone. atWork Australia know that employment and occupation transform lives. Not just the lives of individuals, but also the lives of their family, friends and the communities in which they live.

[www.atworkaustralia.com.au](http://www.atworkaustralia.com.au)



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## Huber Social

Independent experts in social impact measurement, Huber Social works with clients to measure and maximise social value.

[www.hubersocial.com.au](http://www.hubersocial.com.au)







# Appendix

- Measurement Activities
- Outcomes Measured
- Identifying Predictors of Wellbeing
- Significance Tables
- Data Transparency Page
- atWork Australia's unique service delivery model



# The Index

## measurement activities

The atWork Australia Job Seeker Wellbeing Index was developed through the use of self-reported surveys.

The survey was designed and tested in collaboration with atWork Australia, and was approved by the Huber Social Ethical Review Board. Sample size targets were calculated based on total active atWork Australia caseloads for each job seeker subgroup and total national job seekers.

Data collection took place over four weeks. Surveys were distributed online through two methods. Surveys were first shared through atWork Australia client channels, including email, SMS and social media posts. Surveys were also distributed through data collection company i-Link Research Solutions, enabling the study to achieve representativeness of the national job seeker population, reach targets for job seeker subgroups and allow for meaningful data analysis.

Participation in the study was voluntary and no personal contact information was collected. Informed consent was given by participants before they took the survey. Participants were allowed to stop the survey at any time. Job seekers surveyed through i-Link were compensated through the company's internal rewards system.

In total, 1,264 survey responses were completed with consent. The proportion of job seekers by state or territory is approximately aligned with national population distribution, with the exception of Western Australia which had a higher per capita response rate.

It should also be noted that due to the small sample size, findings related to overall wellbeing and needs of refugee job seekers and people with prior justice system experience are preliminary.

Employment status	# of responses	% of the Index sample
Employed, not looking for work	84	6.7%
Employed, looking for work	185	14.6%
Not employed, looking for work	860	68.0%
Not employed, not looking for work	135	10.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1264</b>	<b>100%</b>

Key job seeker subgroup	# of responses	% of the Index sample
Females	867	68.6%
First Nations peoples	128	10.1%
Living with disability, injury or health condition	223	17.6%
Youth (15 - 24 years old)	356	28.2%
Mature aged (45+ years old)	464	36.7%
Culturally and linguistically diverse	128	8.2%
Refugee	24	1.9%
Prior justice system experience	39	3.1%

Note: Job seeker subgroups are not mutually-exclusive, therefore there will be overlap in group totals.

State or territory	# of the Index	% of national population <sup>^</sup>
Australian Capital Territory	4.83%	1.26%
New South Wales	21.36%	30.49%
Northern Territory	0.24%	0.68%
Queensland	12.34%	21.10%
South Australia	5.70%	7.58%
Tasmania	1.19%	1.97%
Victoria	14.48%	25.93%
Western Australia	39.87%	11.00%

<sup>^</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020). National, state and territory population, released December 2020. Available at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/latest-release>

# Outcomes measured

In total, overall wellbeing was measured against 55 different outcomes, grouped into four composite variables. These outcomes – or needs – were selected based on results from facilitated discussions with atWork Australia staff and clients about their own experiences in the employment services sector in addition to findings from existing research. Outcomes were measured on a five-point Likert scale of agreement, and are listed below:

Employment outcomes
Knowledge and skills to apply for and secure a job
Employment skills
Access to the right employment services
Feeling overwhelmed by requirements as a job seeker
Goal setting
Technology literacy skills
Knowledge of available education opportunities
Being treated fairly by potential employers in job seeking process
Access to job opportunities in the community
Job satisfaction
Access to equal employment opportunities, physical health
Access to equal employment opportunities, mental health
Access to equal employment opportunities, flexible work hours
Access to equal employment opportunities, gender
Access to equal employment opportunities, cultural background

Community services outcomes
Access to transport
Knowledge of housing services
Access to opportunities for self development
Access to affordable medical services
Access to family violence services
Attitudes towards mental health services
Access to affordable childcare
Access to affordable housing
Access to the internet
Access to technology

Life skills, emotions and resilience outcomes
Vulnerability
Communication skills
Financial literacy skills
Having hope for the future
Self-love
Pride in one's achievements
Sense of purpose
Having passions and interests
Feelings of anxiety
Feelings of anger
Good physical health
Coping skills
Adaptability
Self-discipline
Problem solving
Ability to freely practice religion or faith
Access to safe and stable housing
Sufficient financial resources
Ability to manage emotions effectively
Being heard and respected

Connection outcomes
Belonging to a community
Skills to build different types of healthy relationships
Feeling lonely and/or isolated
Feeling connected to one's culture and heritage
Feeling connected to land and place
Access to cultural activities
Having a meaningful connection with something bigger than oneself
Spending quality time with loved ones
Belief in one's ability to have a positive impact on others
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others

# Identifying predictors of wellbeing

In order to inform how to best support job seeker wellbeing, multivariate regression analysis was performed to identify outcomes measured which have a significant relationship with overall wellbeing; these are known as predictors of wellbeing.

The predictors of wellbeing can be found listed in the following tables in order of statistical strength. Association strength is based on both the statistical significance (p-value) and beta coefficient. All of the predictors listed are statistically significant to  $p < 0.001$  (unless otherwise noted), meaning we can be 99% confident that there is indeed a relationship identified between the predictive outcome and wellbeing, rather than due to sampling error or chance. The beta coefficient describes how much we can expect wellbeing to improve given a one unit change in the outcome measured.

The stronger the relationship between an outcome and overall wellbeing, the more confident we can be that a positive change in the outcome will lead to a higher wellbeing. Thus, predictors of wellbeing are only reported if there is a strong or moderate significant association (coefficient  $> 0.4$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

The following pages present all predictors of wellbeing with a moderate to strong relationship with overall wellbeing, for job seekers overall as well as each subgroup.

Predictors of Wellbeing for All Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.637	$p < 0.001$
Sense of purpose	0.571	$p < 0.001$
Sufficient financial resources	0.540	$p < 0.001$
Self-love	0.523	$p < 0.001$
Being heard and respected by others	0.511	$p < 0.001$
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.499	$p < 0.001$
Belonging to a community	0.484	$p < 0.001$
Having hope for the future	0.467	$p < 0.001$
Skills to build different types of healthy relationships	0.443	$p < 0.001$
Feeling connected to land and place	0.436	$p < 0.001$
Being treated fairly by potential employers in job seeking process	0.433	$p < 0.001$
Spending quality time with loved ones	0.424	$p < 0.001$
Access to affordable housing	0.420	$p < 0.001$

# Significance tables

Predictors of Wellbeing for Female Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.658	p<0.001
Sense of purpose	0.58	p<0.001
Sufficient financial resources	0.54	p<0.001
Being heard and respected by others	0.536	p<0.001
Self-love	0.528	p<0.001
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.527	p<0.001
Having hope	0.472	p<0.001
Feeling connected to my land and/or place	0.459	p<0.001
Belonging to a community	0.456	p<0.001
Being treat fairly by potential employers in job seeking process	0.445	p<0.001
Ability to form and maintain different types of healthy relationships	0.435	p<0.001
Good physical health	0.428	p<0.001
Feeling connected to my culture and heritage	0.426	p<0.001
Spending quality time with loved ones	0.423	p<0.001
Access to affordable housing	0.413	p<0.001

Predictors of Wellbeing for First Nations Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.66	p<0.001
Access to the right employment services	0.618	p<0.001
Access to affordable housing	0.606	p<0.001
Self-love	0.604	p<0.001
Sense of purpose	0.597	p<0.001
Being heard and respected	0.586	p<0.001
Sufficient financial resources	0.578	p<0.001
Adaptability	0.568	p<0.001
Problem solving skills	0.557	p<0.001
Access to local employment opportunities	0.554	p<0.001
Being treat fairly by potential employers in job seeking process	0.55	p<0.001
Skills to manage emotions effectively	0.539	p<0.001
Coping skills	0.524	p<0.001
Belonging to a community	0.519	p<0.001
Good physical health	0.519	p<0.001
Skills to build different types of healthy relationships	0.501	p<0.001
Knowledge of available education opportunities	0.498	p<0.001
Having passions and interests	0.498	p<0.001
Self-discipline	0.467	p<0.001
Having hope	0.466	p<0.001
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.465	p<0.001
Employment skills	0.461	p<0.001
Access to safe and stable housing	0.454	p<0.001
Skills to apply for and secure a job	0.448	p<0.001
Access to transport	0.444	p<0.001
Communication skills	0.417	p<0.001
Goal setting	0.412	p<0.001
Access to self-development opportunities	0.411	p<0.001
Job satisfaction	0.404	p<0.001



# Significance tables

Predictors of Wellbeing for Job Seekers Living with Disability, Injury or Health Condition	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.677	p<0.001
Sense of purpose	0.669	p<0.001
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.544	p<0.001
Self-love	0.531	p<0.001
Sufficient financial resources	0.518	p<0.001
Being heard and respected by others	0.505	p<0.001
Having hope	0.488	p<0.001
Belonging to a community	0.487	p<0.001
Skills to build different types of healthy relationships	0.44	p<0.001
Problem solving skills	0.44	p<0.001
Belief in ability to make a positive impact on others	0.432	p<0.001
Having a meaningful connection with something bigger than oneself (spirituality)	0.421	p<0.001
Ability to spend quality time with loved ones	0.417	p<0.001
Feeling connected to land or place	0.415	p<0.001
Access to opportunities to participate in cultural activities	0.4	p<0.001

Predictors of Wellbeing for Youth Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.646	<0.001
Sense of purpose	0.534	<0.001
Being heard and respected by others	0.511	<0.001
Self-love	0.508	<0.001
Sufficient financial resources	0.502	<0.001
Access to the right employment services	0.476	<0.001
Being treated fairly by potential employers in job seeking process	0.462	<0.001
Feeling connection to land or place	0.453	<0.001
Belonging to a community	0.447	<0.001
Access to affordable housing	0.434	<0.001
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.431	<0.001
Good physical health	0.428	<0.001
Problem solving skills	0.422	<0.001
Skills to manage emotions effectively	0.422	<0.001
Coping skills	0.42	<0.001
Knowledge of available education opportunities	0.412	<0.001
Adaptability	0.411	<0.001
Having hope	0.41	<0.001
Access to local job opportunities	0.408	<0.001
Access to opportunities for self development	0.401	<0.001
Having passions and interests	0.401	<0.001
Feeling a meaningful connection with something bigger than oneself (spirituality)	0.4	<0.001

# Significance tables

Predictors of Wellbeing for Mature Aged Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.623	p<0.001
Sense of purpose	0.578	p<0.001
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.529	p<0.001
Self-love	0.511	p<0.001
Sufficient financial resources	0.511	p<0.001
Being heard and respected by others	0.511	p<0.001
Belonging to a community	0.509	p<0.001
Having hope	0.507	p<0.001
Spending quality time with loved ones	0.491	p<0.001
Feeling lonely and/or isolated	0.49	p<0.001
Skills to build different types of healthy relationships	0.477	p<0.001
Feeling connected to land or place	0.415	p<0.001
Access to opportunities to participate in cultural activities	0.414	p<0.001
Feeling connected to one's culture and heritage	0.405	p<0.001
Being treated fairly by potential employers in job seeking process	0.402	p<0.001

Predictors of Wellbeing for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Belonging to a community	0.644	p<0.001
Sufficient financial resources	0.605	p<0.001
Good physical health	0.597	p<0.001
Pride in one's achievements	0.579	p<0.001
Access to local employment opportunities	0.571	p<0.001
Being treated fairly by potential employers in job seeking process	0.561	p<0.001
Self-love	0.546	p<0.001
Sense of purpose	0.545	p<0.001
Problem solving skills	0.538	p<0.001
Skills to build different types of healthy relationships	0.53	p<0.001
Access to affordable housing	0.52	p<0.001
Access to the right employment services	0.516	p<0.001
Skills to manage emotions effectively	0.505	p<0.001
Feeling connected to land or place	0.498	p<0.001
Communication skills	0.498	p<0.001
Feeling connected to one's culture or heritage	0.494	p<0.001
Adaptability	0.488	p<0.001
Having hope for the future	0.485	p<0.001
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.484	p<0.001
Coping skills	0.479	p<0.001
Being heard and respected	0.463	p<0.001
Determination	0.454	p<0.001
Feeling a meaningful connection with something bigger than oneself (spirituality)	0.45	p<0.001
Spending quality time with loved ones	0.435	p<0.001
Belief in one's ability to have a positive impact on others	0.43	p<0.001
Access to safe and stable housing	0.425	p<0.001
Knowledge of available education opportunities	0.407	p<0.001
Vulnerability	0.403	p<0.001

# Significance tables

Predictors of Wellbeing for Refugee Job Seekers	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Pride in one's achievements	0.709	p<0.01
Feeling a meaningful connection with something bigger than oneself (spirituality)	0.631	p<0.01
Spending quality time with loved ones	0.6	p<0.01
Belonging to a community	0.565	p<0.01
Feeling connected to land or place	0.551	p<0.01
Employment skills	0.539	p<0.01
Access to affordable healthcare	0.496	p<0.05
Feeling connected to one's culture and heritage	0.479	p<0.05
Access to opportunities to participate in cultural activities	0.476	p<0.05
Access to affordable housing	0.464	p<0.05
Coping skills	0.464	p<0.05
Knowledge of housing services	0.457	p<0.05
Knowledge of family violence services	0.448	p<0.05
Sense of purpose	0.447	p<0.05
Access to the right employment services	0.442	p<0.05
Feeling appreciated and cared for by others	0.435	p<0.05

Predictors of Wellbeing for Job Seekers with Prior Justice System Experience	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Access to affordable housing	0.494	p<0.01
Knowledge of family violence services	0.479	p<0.01
Knowledge of available education opportunities	0.457	p<0.01
Belonging to a community	0.413	p<0.01
Being heard and respected by others	0.412	p<0.01
Access to affordable childcare services	0.404	p<0.01
Perceived barriers to employment, physical health	-0.439	p<0.01

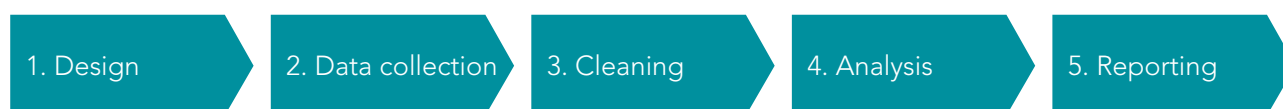
The table below depicts statistical testing results to identify any significant relationships between overall wellbeing and key demographic factors.

Demographic Factor	Average Wellbeing	Beta coefficient	Significance level
First Nations	3.15	t = 3.081	p<0.002
Culturally and linguistically diverse	3.27	t = 4.676	p<0.001
Living with disability, injury or health condition	2.50	t = -5.766	p<0.001
Prior justice system experience	2.51	t = -2.160	p<0.05
Age	-	F = 2.167	p<0.05
Refugee status	3.125	t = 1.439	p>0.05
Centrelink benefits	2.81	t = -0.721	p>0.05
Gender	-	F = 1.268	p>0.05
Employment status	-	F = 0.805	p>0.05
Time out of work	-	F=0.363	p>0.05
State or territory	-	F=0.743	p>0.05
Metro, regional or rural	-	F=0.154	p>0.05
Level of education attainment	-	F=1.292	p>0.05
Caregiver status	-	F=1.232	p>0.05
Living arrangement	-	F=1.232	p>0.05

# Data transparency page

To ensure the integrity of findings, Huber Social always includes a Transparency Page for each report written. This ensures that both the rigour of evidence and rigour of analysis is clear across every stage of the data lifecycle.

## Data lifecycle



Phase	Questions on the Treatment of Data	Points allocated	Yes or No	
Design	SAMPLE	Survey sample population designed to achieve representativeness across population and sub-groups	2	Y
		OR Survey sample population designed to be representative of population only	1	-
		Sample description: <i>1264 surveys nationally representative of Australian job seekers. Segmented sampling method used to achieve sufficient sample sizes for analysis to be performed for key subgroups, of which all but one was achieved (refugee job seekers)</i>	N/A	N/A
	BASELINE OR COUNTERFACTUAL	Control group (independent of the intervention)	3	-
		Group baseline measured (pre-intervention)	2	-
		Baseline inferred from time in program (e.g. 1 vs .3 years)	1	-
EXCLUSIONS	None – needs analysis only	2	Y	
Data collection	DISTRIBUTION	Details of people specifically excluded from the measurement: Participants disqualified if they did not provide consent, or once internal quotas were reached.	N/A	N/A
		Online surveys		Y
		OR hardcopy surveys		-
	ADDITIONAL DATA SOURCES	Data collection supervised by Huber Social consultant	1	-
		Translation or guidance provided	N/A	N/A
		Data mining of other sources	1	Y
CLEANING	Data included from previous years/measurements	2	-	
	Details of other sources used: <i>Data for wellbeing of employed Australians supplemented with data from the SoWell Australian Wellbeing Check survey. atWork Australia data on time in job position used.</i>	N/A	N/A	
	Partial responses removed or no partial responses	1	Y	
Analysis	SHIFT MEASUREMENT	Details of any responses removed: <i>Duplicate responses and partial responses with missing wellbeing data were removed</i>	N/A	N/A
		Calculated on time in program		-
		Calculated on group average	1	-
	TEST APPLIED	Calculated based on individual scores	2	-
		Not applicable – needs analysis only		Y
		Basic analysis		Y
Reporting	REPORTING	Statistical Correlation Test	2	Y
		Multiple Regression or Lasso Regression Test	3	Y
		Client published Outcomes Report (prove)	1	-
		Client received Social Performance Report (improve)	2	-
		Client published full Social Impact Report	3	Y
<b>RIGOUR SCORE: LOW 1-9; MED 10-14; HIGH 15-19</b>		<b>MED</b>	<b>14</b>	



# atWork Australia's unique service delivery model – based on innovation and research

All clients receive a tailored plan to suit their needs, strengths and abilities. To assist with their job search or building skills to be job-ready, atWork Australia offers\*:



## **Bounce Program**

Online work-readiness group training program which assists people looking for work to overcome fears and frustrations and take them on a journey to see their life in a completely different way.\*



## **Positivum™**

Online one on one health and wellbeing coaching developed by atWork Australia in partnership with Monash University. Positivum understands the health and wellness of people looking for work, and supports them to build the right mindset to find work.



## **Ready and Willing**

Targeted Pre-employment Training Program (non-accredited training aimed at improving employability and foundation skills). This soft skills program is focused on interpersonal skills in communication; self management; technology and preparing for work.\*



## **In House Psychology Services and access to other allied health services within atWork Australia's parent company MedHealth**

atWork Australia offer valuable psychological support to clients experiencing personal or emotional concerns, as well as access to allied health services. atWork Australia also support employers to maintain their workforce via a post-placement support service.



## **Work for the Dole Program**

The program places people looking for work in the jobactive program into activities where they can gain skills, recent work experience and core competencies as an employee, which will assist in employability.\*



## **Community Hubs**

These are a one stop shop for people looking for work to access services and resources that they need to support them on their job seeking journey. These local Hubs bring together local community supports related to job seeking in one place.



## **Digitised Résumé Building and Matching**

atWork Australia have systemised processes which enable a résumé to be built on a desktop or mobile device.\*



## **Alex the Avatar**

Developed in collaboration with Clevatar, Alex is assisting with ongoing communication with clients as they move into employment as another way to embrace technology to communicate with clients in the Post Placement Support Service.\*



## **Jobs Now**

Jobs preparation program with peer to peer sessions (online and face to face) focused on getting clients job ready via résumé creation, interview practice and information on accessing the hidden job market.\*

*\*Please note, some of these tools are only available in select regions and within specific employment programs.*



atWork  
AUSTRALIA

**WORK'S FOR EVERYONE**

Prepared by



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