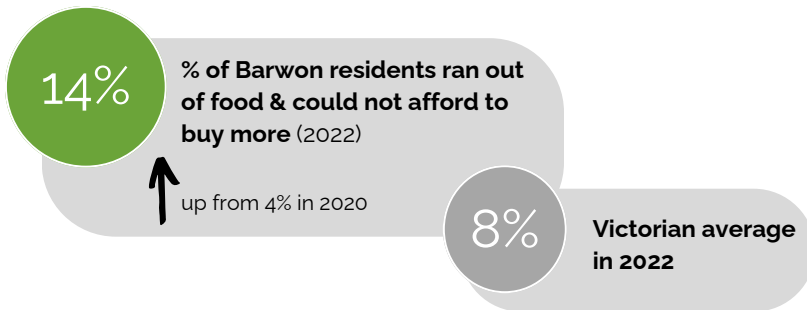




Food insecurity is largely driven by an inability to afford food, signified by **incomes failing to keep pace with the cost of living**. Analysis of data on socio-economic drivers of food insecurity paints a picture of **increasing vulnerability in the G21 region**. The regions of Newcomb – Moolap, Bell Park, Corio, Whittington, and Norlane face amongst the highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage in Victoria.

**“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”<sup>i</sup>**

Residents across our region experienced **significantly higher levels of food insecurity** compared to the Victorian average<sup>ii</sup>:



## Financial Stress



The **risk of food insecurity is increasing**. Economic vulnerability has increased over recent years in the G21 region, due to continuing impacts of COVID-19 and **compounding cost of living** factors. Research undertaken by ACOSS found that 73% of people receiving income support are **eating less or skipping meals** due to the rising cost of living,<sup>iii</sup> while recent CPI figures suggest prices for bread, cereal and dairy products have continued to rise over the past 12 months.<sup>iv</sup>

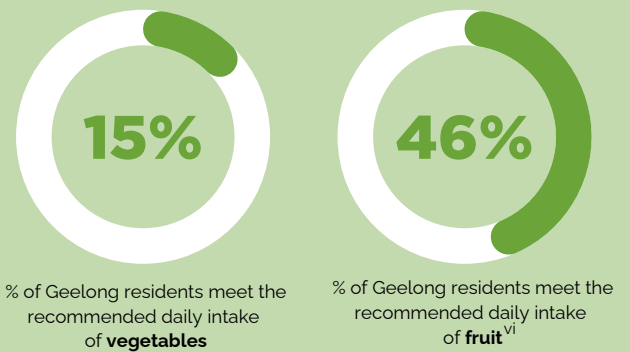
The proportion of G21 residents considered to be **‘struggling’** financially almost quadrupled between March 2020–March 2024.<sup>v</sup>



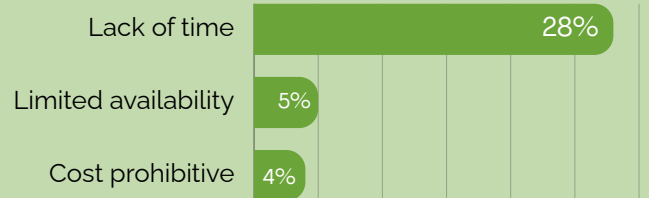
The proportion of G21 residents who are able to **raise funds (\$2,000) in an emergency** has been declining since 2019.<sup>vi</sup>



## Access to healthy foods



Reasons for not meeting recommended intake:<sup>vi</sup>



## Food for Thought research<sup>vi</sup>



**90%** of Geelong food relief agencies have experienced **service demand growth** over the past year

Over **34,293** meals are provided **each week** by food relief agencies

**80%** of agencies are also **purchasing food** to distribute to supplement food donations

Reasons for accessing food relief in Geelong:



**Sources:**  
 ii. Yli, V., Palermo, C., & Kleve, S. (2020). Population based interventions addressing food insecurity in Australia: A systematic scoping review. *Nutrition & Dietetics*, 77(1), 6–18.  
 iii. Victorian Agency for Health Information. (2018–2022) Victorian Population Health Survey 2018 to 2022  
 iv. Australian Council of Social Service. (2023) Research report: It's Not Enough\*. Why More is Needed to Lift People Out of Poverty.  
 v. Australian Bureau of Statistics (March 2024), Consumer Price Index, Australia, ABS Website, accessed 29 May 2024.  
 vi. Roy Morgan. (2024) ANZ Roy Morgan Financial Wellbeing Indicator unpublished data for Geelong region (note: the estimated sample size provided by ANZ is between 500-700 residents).  
 vii. Give Where You Live Foundation (2023) Food for Thought Research Report: 2023