

4th Seniors Sentiment Index

A report by

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Executive Summary

Introduction

- The Seniors Sentiment Index is a summary measure of how older Australians (50 years and over) view different aspects of their lives.
- The Index is calculated based on self-assessments of financial, health and social wellbeing and is complimented with Prospective Indices that consider how these facets are expected to be in five years time.
- This report presents findings from the Fourth Seniors Sentiment Index; it follows from the previous analyses of the Index in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Data and methodology

- The data for the Seniors Sentiment Index were derived from the National Seniors Social Survey Wave 5, conducted from 20 November 2015 to 4 January 2016, among members of National Seniors Australia aged 50 years and over.
- A total of 9,854 members were invited to complete the survey, with 2,915 valid responses received (a response rate of 30 per cent).
- A total of 1039 participants responded to both the National Seniors Social Survey Wave 4 and Wave 5.
- The Domain Indices for Social, Financial, and Health were calculated using a formula that standardises responses to a distribution of 0 per cent to 100 per cent, where 0 per cent is the lowest possible satisfaction and 100 per cent is the highest possible satisfaction.
- The Sentiment Index is the average of the Social, Financial and Health Domain Indices.
- A Prospective Sentiment Index was also computed to assess how older Australians expect their social, financial and health wellbeing will be five years from now.

Results

- The Sentiment Index moved from 71.2 per cent in 2014 to 69.4 per cent in 2015, a statistically significant decline. This was only the second statistically significant change in the Sentiment Index since the first comparisons in 2012 to 2013.
- There was also a significant decline in the Social Domain Index from 77.1 per cent in 2014 to 70.8 per cent in 2015. This was the first significant change in average Domain Indices since 2012 to 2013. The Financial Domain Index decreased from 64.0 per cent in 2014 to 63.9 per cent in 2015 and the Health Domain Index increased from 72.4 per cent to 73.5 per cent, though these differences were not statistically significant.
- The Prospective Sentiment Index continued an approximately linear decline evident in previous survey waves, falling slightly from 43.5 per cent in 2014 to 42.4 per cent in 2015. This was the first statistically significant year to year decline in the Prospective Sentiment Index. The Prospective Health Domain Index declined significantly over this timeframe (from 41.5 per cent to 39.0 per cent). The Prospective Financial Domain Index also decreased (from 43.0 per cent to 41.3 per cent), although not at a statistically significant level and the Social Domain Index remained stable.
- Present life satisfaction decreased slightly between 2014 and 2015, with the proportion of 'somewhat' or 'very satisfied' respondents falling from 80 per cent to 79.3 per cent.
- Among the longitudinal sample, there was a significant decline in the Social Domain Index (from 80.2 per cent in 2014 to 72.7 per cent in 2015) and the Sentiment Index (from 73.3 per cent to 71.3 per cent) but the Health Domain Index increased significantly (from 72.7 per cent to 74.3 per cent).
- There were some clear differences in the Sentiment Index between different socio-economic and demographic groups. The Sentiment Index, Social Domain Index and, in particular, Financial Domain Index were lowest among people aged 50-64 years. Men had a higher Financial Domain Index scores than women but slightly lower Social and Health Index scores. These patterns reflect findings of earlier survey waves.

- Stability in the Financial Domain Index between 2014 and 2015 can be contextualised by the general steadiness in the proportion of older Australians having difficulties paying for both basic and non-essential household expenses, and their ability to save for future spending needs over this period.
- There was almost no change in the confidence of both pre-retirees and retirees in the adequacy of superannuation for their retirement.
- However, among retired people, the proportion who were at least somewhat confident of income from all sources being adequate for retirement decreased from 64 per cent in 2014 to 53.8 per cent in 2015.
- Of concern is that 39.2 per cent of non-retired people were not very or not at all confident of the adequacy of their income from all sources for retirement.
- The significant decline in older Australians' social wellbeing did not appear to result from more frequent experiences of social isolation. Responses indicated fewer experiences of social isolation than in previous waves of the survey suggesting that the quality of social interactions may be declining.

Conclusion

- Decline in scores on the Seniors Sentiment Index between December 2014-January 2015 and November 2015-January 2016 followed from stable Index scores evident in the two preceding waves of the survey.
- The Social Domain Index declined significantly during 2015 whereas the Health and Financial Domain indices did not change significantly.
- The Prospective Sentiment Index remained below 50 per cent, continuing an approximately linear downward trend, which means that older Australians are slightly more pessimistic than optimistic about their future across the three domains.
- The stability of financial wellbeing since 2013 came after significant increases from 2012 to 2013. Superannuation fund balances grew in 2015 (5.6 per cent), whereas in 2014 they grew by 7.5 per cent and in 2013 they grew at over 16 per cent.
- Subsequent surveys of National Seniors' members will seek to better understand the psycho-social landscape being experienced by older Australians.

Introduction

As the number of Australians aged over 50 grows¹, it is important to regularly assess their experiences and attitudes across a range of areas. Such assessments are particularly valuable given rapid changes in Australia's economic and political landscape and the pressures related to population ageing that are and will be brought to bear on this landscape.

The Seniors Sentiment Index, presented in this report, is a summary measure of how older Australians view different aspects of their lives. It is based on self-assessments of their financial, health and social wellbeing, both presently and in the near future. Each of these areas plays an important role in the quality of life of older Australians. Financial wellbeing provides peace of mind that they have the resources presently and in the future to allow them to afford necessities, and therefore satisfy the basic psychological need for security, as well as more discretionary items (for example, travel) which satisfy less fundamental psychological needs.² Health status is also important as it has a direct influence on quality of life. Social wellbeing encompasses older Australians' interactions with family and friends (relationships) and society more generally (for example, satisfaction with their community and other institutions).

The Seniors Sentiment Index is based on data from the National Seniors Social Survey Wave 5, a survey of almost 3,000 older Australians completed between November 2015 and January 2016. It is the Fourth Seniors Sentiment Index, following on from the first three Seniors Sentiment Indices in August 2012, September-October 2013 and December 2014-January 2015. This is a timely assessment of changes in older Australians' perceptions of their financial, health and social wellbeing given the growing policy focus on the role population ageing takes in political and economic domains. Over one-third of respondents (n = 1039) to the latest survey also answered the survey in 2014. This allows the experiences and attitudes of these older people to be tracked over the period.

The Seniors Sentiment Index adds to a range of other measures of wellbeing in Australia. These include the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index, developed by the Australian Centre on Quality of Life at Deakin University, which monitors personal wellbeing and national wellbeing in Australia, and the Herald Age Lateral Economics (HALE) index of Australia's wellbeing, which has measured both economic and non-economic wellbeing (e.g. environment, health, political and social capital) using a national accounts approach.^{3,4} Internationally, the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), based on a life expectancy index, education index and GDP index, has allowed for cross-country comparison of wellbeing.⁵ However, there has been less focus on people aged over 50. The Stanford Center on Longevity and Population Reference Bureau's Index of Wellbeing has measured wellbeing of older people across 12 countries based on four domains - material, physical, social and emotional wellbeing.⁶

The first three measurements of the Seniors Sentiment Index found that older Australians are broadly positive about their lives, with the Index increasing from 65.9 per cent in 2012 to 71.7 per cent in 2013 and then falling marginally in 2014 to 71.2 per cent. This small decline was followed by a further decrease to 69.4 per cent in 2015. Tracking the changes in the Domain indices can account for the annual fluctuations in the Sentiment Index. For example, an increase in social wellbeing during 2012 to 2013 evident in the Social Domain Index increasing from 68.1 per cent to 77.4 per cent, accounts for much of the change in the Sentiment Index during this period, although the Financial Domain Index (from 58.9 per cent to 63.3 per cent) and the Health Domain Index (from 70.7 per cent to 74.3 per cent) increased also. Domain Index scores were more consistent during 2013 to 2014. However, a significant decline in the Social Domain Index (from 77.1 per cent to 70.8) explained the decline in Sentiment Index scores (from 71.2 per cent to 69.4 per cent) during 2015. Despite the modest and isolated changes observed during 2015 there were significant differences across socio-economic groups, with greater wellbeing of people earning higher incomes and those with higher education.

This report considers the Seniors Sentiment Index of Australians aged 50 and over across three domains as well as perceptions of related factors that provide context for changes in Domain Index scores. These include assessments of the experiences of social isolation and indicators of perceived financial position including the ability to save and confidence in the adequacy of retirement income.

It also assesses trends in these indices since 2012, how they differ across socio-economic groups, and also assesses changes among participants tracked as part of the longitudinal component of the survey.

¹ ABS, 3101.0 - Australian Demographic Statistics, June 2016.

² Howell, R. T., Kurai, M., & Tam, L. (2013). Money buys financial security and psychological need satisfaction: Testing need theory in affluence. *Social Indicators Research*, 110(1), 17-29.

³ International Wellbeing Group (2006) 'Personal wellbeing index: 4th edition' Australian Centre on Quality of Life, Deakin University: Melbourne.

⁴ Lateral Economics (2011) 'The Herald/Age-Lateral Economics index of Australia's wellbeing: final report', [www.lateraleconomics.com.au/outputs/Fairfax per cent20Lateral per cent20Economics per cent20of per cent20Australia's per cent20Wellbeing per cent20Final per cent20Report.pdf](http://www.lateraleconomics.com.au/outputs/Fairfax%20per%20cent20Lateral%20per%20cent20Economics%20per%20cent20of%20per%20cent20Australia's%20per%20cent20Wellbeing%20per%20cent20Final%20Report.pdf).

⁵ United National Development Program (2007) 'Fighting climate change: human solidarity in a divided world' in *Human Development Report 2007/2008*, Watkins: New York, USA.

⁶ Kaneda, T., Lee, M., & Pollard, K., (2011) 'SCL and PRB index of well-being in older populations' Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau.

Data and methodology

National Seniors Social Survey Wave 5

The findings presented come from the National Seniors Social Survey Wave 5. The survey was conducted from November 2015 to January 2016, among members of National Seniors Australia aged 50 and over. A total of 9,854 members were invited to complete the survey. Of these, 1,433 respondents who completed the National Seniors Social Survey Wave 4 in 2014 who indicated in that survey they would like to participate in future waves of the survey and whose membership number was in the National Seniors membership database, were invited to complete the survey. The remaining 8,421 respondents who were invited were selected from the National Seniors Australia membership database. The number of respondents allocated to each of the 48 strata (3 age groups x 2 genders x 8 states/territories) was calculated proportionally to reflect the Estimated Resident Population in Australia aged 50 years and over in June 2015. The respondents within each stratum were selected randomly from the database. Selection was undertaken to ensure two members from the same family were not invited to participate.

A paper survey was mailed to each of the selected members. Some 2,915 completed surveys were returned. This represents a response rate of approximately 30 per cent. Survey weights were applied to each combination of age, gender and state/territory, to adjust for differences in response rates by these population groups and to make the results representative of the Australian Estimated Resident Population aged 50 years and over in June 2015.

A total of 1039 participants responded to both the National Seniors Social Survey Wave 4 and Wave 5. This represents 72.5 per cent of Wave 4 participants invited to participate in Wave 5. Few respondents were retained from earlier waves of the survey (from Waves 2 and 3) precluding the possibility of detailed analysis of longitudinal trends in these respondents' Index scores. Nevertheless, specific analysis of changes in responses of the 1039 participants followed across Wave 4 and 5 were conducted.

The National Seniors Social Survey Wave 5 included items the financial, health and social domains, as well as a range of demographic and socio-economic measures.

Each module comprised a summary indicator relating to that particular domain. The indicators were as follows:

- Financial: Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your overall financial wellbeing at present.
- Health: Please indicate your health status at present.
- Social: Considering satisfaction with your community, relationships and your sentiment towards institutions, please indicate your level of satisfaction with your overall social wellbeing at present.

Each of these indicators was used to construct a Domain Index, from which the Seniors Sentiment Index was calculated (see below). These indicator items were the same as for earlier waves of the survey.

For each summary domain indicator, respondents were also asked how they believed their wellbeing would be five years in the future compared with the present. The Prospective Sentiment Index was derived from these data to gain insights into how people believe their wellbeing will change over time.

There were a number of questions on specific issues that could provide evidence on the factors related to the sentiments of older Australians. These are also presented in the Results section of this report.

The survey was approved by the Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee.

Method

The indices discussed in this report are the Sentiment Index and Prospective Sentiment Index. The Sentiment Indices were the same as those used previously. A Domain Index was measured for each of the social, financial and health domains. The Sentiment Index is the average of the three Domain Indexes.

Each Domain Index was calculated from a variable measured on a five-point response scale. For example, financial wellbeing was answered on a scale of (1) Very dissatisfied, (2) Somewhat dissatisfied, (3) Neutral, (4) Somewhat satisfied, and (5) Very satisfied. The following formula was used, adapting the approach from the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index:⁷

$$\frac{X - k^{\min}}{k^{\max} - k^{\min}} \times 100$$

where X is the mean score of all respondents, k^{\min} is the minimum score on the scale (i.e. 1 on a scale of 1 to 5), and k^{\max} is the maximum score on the scale (i.e. 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).⁸

The Index was standardised to a distribution of 0 per cent to 100 per cent, where 0 per cent is the lowest possible satisfaction and 100 per cent is the highest possible satisfaction. For example, a score of 100 per cent is achieved if all respondents answered “very satisfied”. If the mean score is 3.5, the Index is 62.5 per cent.

The Prospective Sentiment Index was constructed using the same method, using questions of how respondents think their wellbeing in each domain will change over the next five years.

Statistical tests were conducted to ascertain whether changes in average scores in the Domain Indices, the Sentiment Index and Prospective Sentiment Index between 2014 and 2015 were statistically significant (denoted in Figures and Tables as * for $p < 0.05$ and ** where $p < 0.01$).

The longitudinal sample was used to assess trends in the Domain Indices, the Sentiment Index and Prospective Sentiment Index between 2014 and 2015. The demographic characteristics of the longitudinal sample are shown in Table 10.

All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 23. The Appendix contains tables presenting complete output from the various survey questions referred to in this report.

Comparison of 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 full samples

This report draws on data collected in the 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 surveys. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the sample from each survey wave. Age, sex and state of residence are presented unweighted because weightings were calculated using these variables. The state and gender composition of the sample is very similar across the four surveys. The proportion of respondents aged 50-64 fell somewhat between 2012 and 2013, but remained relatively consistent in the two subsequent waves. Changes in the proportion of respondents in the two older age groups across the waves were minor, remaining more consistent in recent years. These differences are inconsequential to the analyses presented in this report as weights were applied to make the findings representative of the Australian population aged 50 and over. Weighted results of other basic characteristics of the full samples obtained in the earlier waves show that the characteristics are very similar, with only minor shifts in educational attainment evident in the most recent survey.

⁷ International Wellbeing Group 2006, ‘Personal wellbeing index: 4th edition’ Australian Centre on Quality of Life, Deakin University: Melbourne.

⁸ ‘Can’t say’ responses are not included and also removed from response options for Wave 5.

Table 1: Basic characteristics of NSSS sample (%), 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 full sample

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Age (unweighted)				
50-64	48.0	42.2	44.7	43.9
65-79	40.9	42.8	43.8	43.3
80+	11.2	15.0	11.6	12.8
Sex (unweighted)				
Male	45.7	44.1	46.7	45.8
Female	54.3	55.9	53.3	54.2
State (unweighted)				
NSW	29.9	28.8	29.5	30.7
VIC	25.8	25.8	25.9	24.7
QLD	17.1	18.1	17.4	18.7
SA	9.6	9.5	9.3	9.3
WA	10.3	11.1	10.1	11.2
TAS	4.1	4.1	3.5	3
ACT	2.2	2.0	2.3	2
NT	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.4
Education (weighted)				
Not finished high school & no other qualification	20.5	20.4	17.3	17.2
Not finished high school & other qualification	31.6	29.7	31.7	25.1
Finished high school	47.9	49.9	51.0	57.7
Employment (weighted)				
Employed	43.2	41.5	40.3	40.5
Not employed	55.1	58.4	59.5	59.5
Can't say	1.7	0.1	0.2	-
Place of residence (weighted)				
Capital city	48.7	47.8	50.5	48.6
Not capital city	51.3	52.2	49.5	51.4
Country of birth (weighted)				
Australia	77.6	80.9	80.8	79.6
Other	18.9	19.1	11.7	20.4
Can't say	3.6	0.0	7.5	-
Marital status (weighted)				
Married/ de facto	62.3	63.7	63.6	63.5
Divorced/ Separated, never married, widowed	36.4	35.8	36.4	36.7
Can't say	1.4	0.5	0.0	-

Results

Sentiment Index

Comparisons of the Sentiment Index and the Domain Index scores from 2014 and 2015 revealed a number of statistically significant differences in average scores. The comparison of these Indices was completed by first separating participants into those who completed surveys at Wave 4 and Wave 5 and those who only responded at Wave 5. It was necessary to analyse the longitudinal participants' responses separately for methodological reasons⁹ but also because these participants had various Domain Index scores that were significantly different from the rest of the sample at Wave 5 (details presented below). Taking the single wave respondents first, a statistically significant decline in Sentiment Index scores between 2014 and 2015 resulted from a decrease in the Social Domain Index. As presented in Figure 1, The Financial and Health Domain Indices were stable from 2014 to 2015. However, the Social Domain Index fell from 77.1 per cent in 2014 to 70.8 per cent in 2015, producing the significantly lower Sentiment Index (69.4 per cent) for 2015. As evident in Figure 3, changes in the Social Domain Index during 2015 can be accounted for by the smaller proportions of respondents endorsing the 'very satisfied' response option (from 37.2 per cent in 2014 to 29.4 per cent in 2015) and larger proportions endorsing the 'neutral' response option. Comparing this to previous waves, there were no significant changes in the Sentiment Index or the Domain Indexes between 2013 and 2014. There had been significant increases in the Sentiment Index and each Domain Index from 2012 to 2013. Presented in Figure 2 and Figure 4 are the distributions of responses to financial wellbeing indicator item and the health domain indicator item respectively.

Figure 1: Domain Indexes and Sentiment Index, at present (%), 2012 to 2015



* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$. Significance testing for 2013 figures is a comparison with 2012 figures. No significance differences were found between 2014 and 2013 for any of the indices. Significance testing for 2015 figures is a comparison with 2014 figures
Note: Confidence intervals are shown in Table 12.

⁹ To consider longitudinal respondents as part of a 'cross-sectional' dataset and analyse responses as such would violate the assumption of independence of observations underpinning between-groups analysis of variance used to test for mean differences.

Figure 2: Satisfaction with overall financial wellbeing, at present and five years from now (%), 2012 to 2015

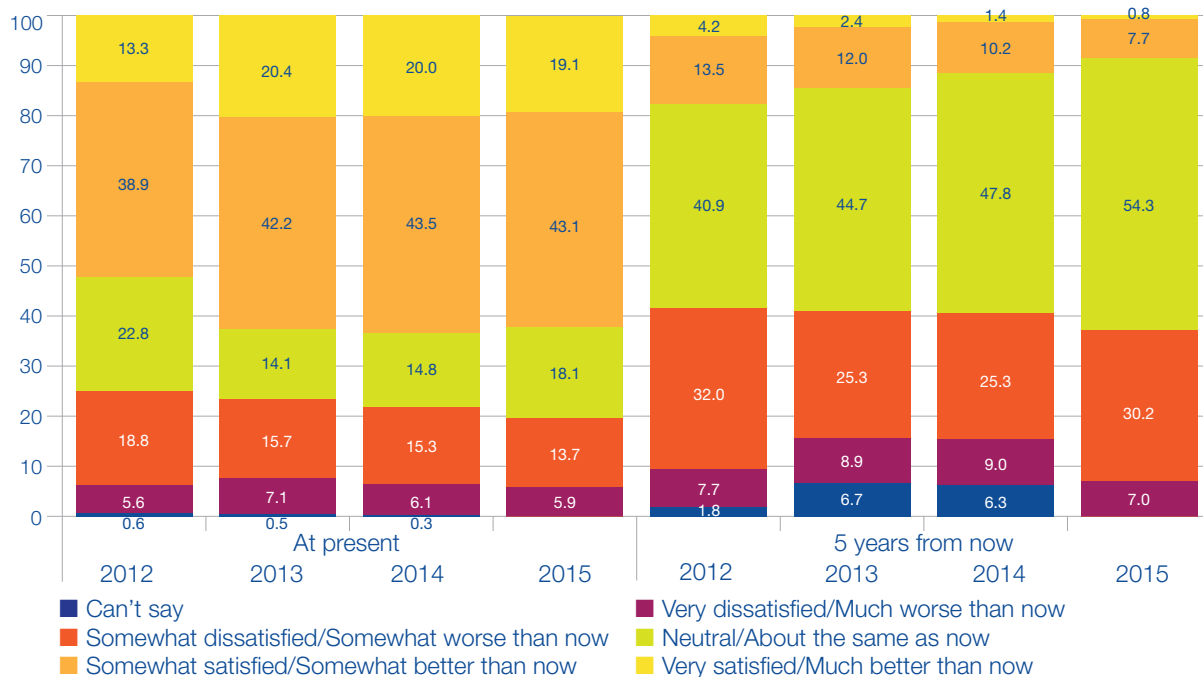


Figure 3: Satisfaction with overall social wellbeing, at present and five years from now (%), 2012 to 2015

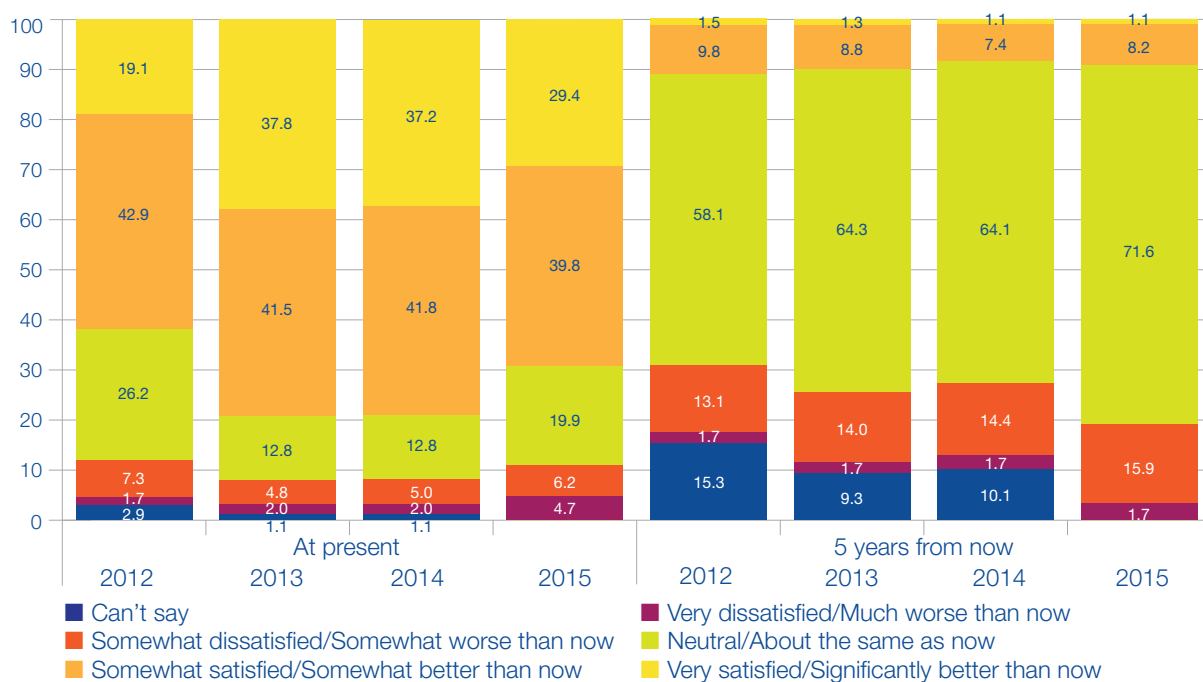
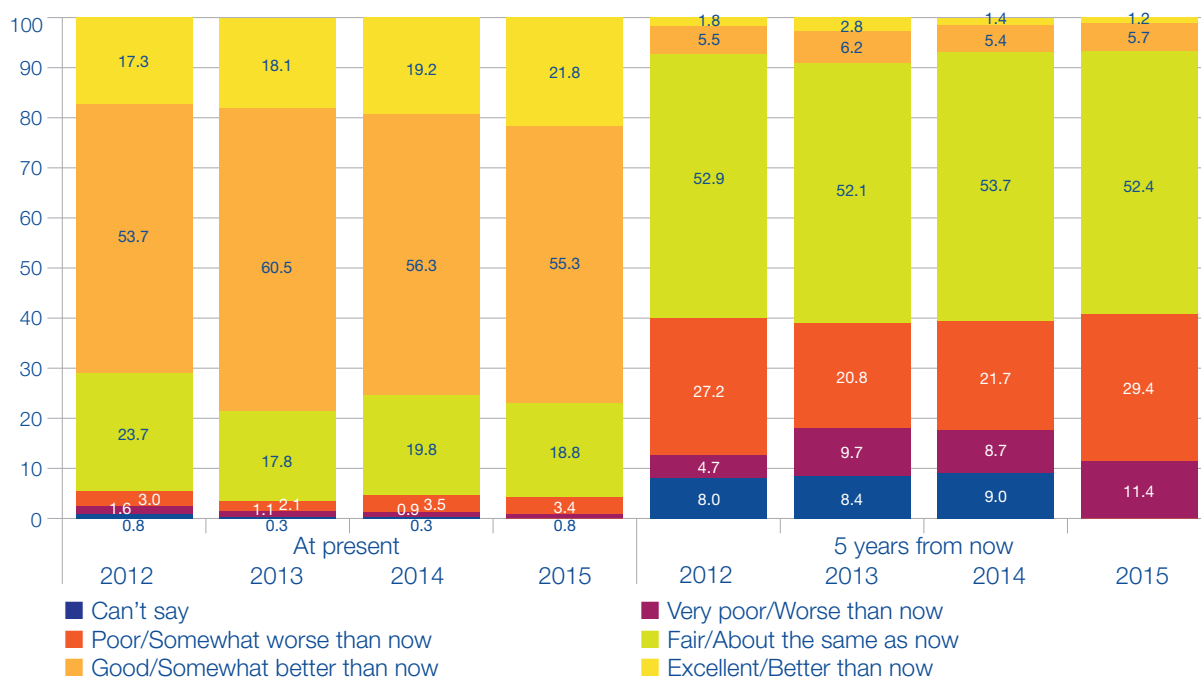


Figure 4: Rating of health status, at present and five years from now (%), 2012 to 2015



The comparison of Domain and Sentiment Indices for respondents who participated in both Wave 4 and Wave 5 (n = 1039) revealed significantly more favourable perceptions of health status (from 72.7 per cent in 2014 to 74.3 per cent in 2015) but less satisfaction with social wellbeing (from 80.2 per cent in 2014 to 72.7 per cent in 2015). The magnitude of the change in the Social Domain Index carried over to the Sentiment Index, which was also significantly lower in 2015 (71.3 per cent) than in 2014 (73.3 per cent). Taking these findings together with the decline in Social Domain Index scores for non-longitudinal participants at Wave 5, it appears that older Australians are generally less satisfied with some aspects of their social lives. While the results are far from suggesting a problematic deficit in social wellbeing among older Australians, questions regarding a slippage of optimal social wellbeing appear warranted. The finding of a significant pattern of decline among the Sentiment and the Domain Indices is particularly noteworthy given that no significant change in the Domain Indexes between 2013 and 2014 was found in the longitudinal sample. The tabulated results of this and previous waves longitudinal analyses are presented in the Appendix, in Table 12.

Prospective Sentiment Index

The Prospective Sentiment Index continued an approximately linear decline, evident in Figure 5, from 43.5 per cent in 2014 to 42.4 per cent in 2015. This change in the average score was not statistically significant. For the first time, a statistically significant change in a Prospective Domain Index average was found in comparing the 2014 and 2015 responses. Respondents in 2015 were significantly less optimistic about the expected state of their health in five years time than those in 2014. Referring to Figure 4, a larger proportion of respondents in 2015 indicated they expected their health to be 'somewhat worse than now' in five years time (21.7 per cent in 2014 to 29.4 per cent in 2015). While this may reflect a genuine deterioration in optimism about their health status it is noted that the 2015 survey omitted the 'can't say' response option from this item (which accounted for 9 per cent of responses in 2014) and responses may reflect this methodological change. Considering that respondents chose the 'somewhat worse than now' as opposed to the 'about the same' response option suggest they were in reality more pessimistic about their health status in the near future. Turning to the overall Prospective Sentiment Index, 42.4 per cent indicates that older Australians are slightly more pessimistic than optimistic about their future across the three domains.¹⁰

¹⁰ A Prospective Index of 50 per cent would indicate that equal proportions of people believe their wellbeing will improve over the next 5 years.

The Prospective Domain Indices were similar for each of the three domains, the highest for Social. This trend is evident in each of the previous waves also. The proportions of older Australians who think their lives will get better five years from now across the domains remains low. For the Prospective Financial Domain Index (Figure 2) only 8.5 per cent were expecting improvement while 37 per cent expected their situation to worsen. Over the successive waves of the survey, larger proportions of respondents have expected their financial situation to remain the same (from 40.9 per cent in 2012 to 54.3 per cent in 2015) in five years time. Given that the majority of respondents (62.3 per cent) were 'somewhat satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their current financial situation, the expectation of a stable financial situation in five years time can perhaps be considered as a relatively optimistic prospect. For the Prospective Social Domain Index (Figure 3), 9 per cent of respondents expected improved and 19 per cent expected deteriorated satisfaction in five years. Again, with a high percentage of respondents expecting their social wellbeing to be about the same in five years time (71.6 per cent) and a similarly high proportion being satisfied with their current social lives (69.2 per cent) this is interpreted as a relatively optimistic expectation. Finally, for the Prospective Health Domain Index (Figure 4) only 7 per cent expected improvement whereas 40.8 per cent expected worsening health. A slight majority (52.4 per cent) expected no change in five years' time, again interpreted as a relatively optimistic expectation given that almost 80 per cent of respondents considered themselves to be in 'excellent' or 'good' health currently.

Figure 5: Prospective Domain Indexes and Prospective Sentiment Index, five years from now compared with the present (%), 2012 to 2015



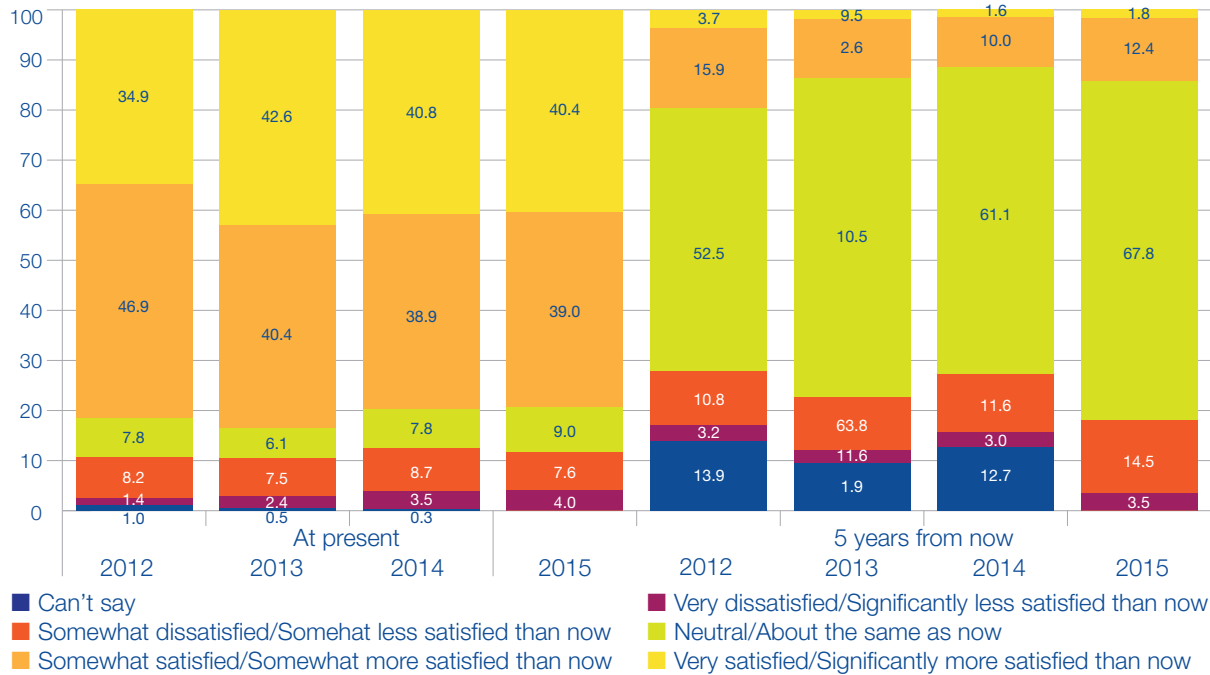
Note: No significant differences were found between 2012 and 2013 nor between 2013 and 2014 for any of the prospective indexes. A significant fall in the average Prospective Health Domain Index and the Prospective Sentiment Index were detected in comparing the 2014 and 2015 waves. Confidence intervals are shown in Table 13.

A significant decrease in the average Prospective Health Domain Index and the Prospective Sentiment Index between 2014 and 2015 was found in the longitudinal sample (Table 13). Similarly to the non-longitudinal respondents, the Prospective Health Domain Index fell during 2015 (from 41.1 per cent in 2014 to 38.7 per cent in 2015). The Prospective Sentiment Index also fell significantly during 2015 (from 43.4 per cent to 42 per cent in 2015) indicating that respondents were marginally less optimistic regarding their health and overall sentiment than they were a year prior. These findings are noteworthy despite the small magnitude of the changes in Index scores because these are the first Prospective Index averages to change significantly year to year. It is unclear why both the longitudinal and non-longitudinal respondents were less optimistic in the current survey wave, particularly around issues of health, when such a large proportion of respondents indicated that they were currently in 'good' or 'excellent' health (Figure 4).

Overall life satisfaction

As presented in Figure 6, current satisfaction with life as a whole remained stable during 2015 after decreasing marginally between 2013 and 2014. The proportion of participants endorsing the 'somewhat' or 'very satisfied' response options fell from 83 per cent (2013) to 80 per cent (2014) and then to 79.4 per cent (2015). The Prospective Life Satisfaction index remained stable at 49.1 per cent in 2015. Analysis of variance confirmed that the changes in both of these measure during 2015 were not statistically significant. Analysis of the longitudinal participants' responses indicated that neither their current nor prospective life satisfaction changed significantly over 2015.

Figure 6: Satisfaction with life as a whole, at present and five years from now (%), 2012 to 2015



Note: No significant differences were found between 2012 and 2013, between 2014 and 2013 or between 2015 and 2014 for life satisfaction, both at present and five years later. Confidence intervals are shown in Table 12 and Table 13.

Socio-economic and demographic differences in Sentiment Index scores

Presented in Table 2 are the average Domain Index and Sentiment Index scores for different demographic groups, comparing 2014 and 2015 responses. Differences exist between these groups in the Sentiment Index and Domain Index scores. In terms of the three broad age groups, average scores for the Social, Financial and Sentiment Indices increased with age whereas the Health Domain Index decreased. Comparing to scores from 2014, respondents aged 65 to 74 had the largest changes in the Social, Financial and Sentiment Indices. Notably, respondents aged 50 to 64 had a small increase in the Health Domain Index in 2015. Largely replicating the 2014 patterns, female participants had higher average Social, Health and Sentiment Index scores but males had higher average Financial Domain Index scores. Both male and female participants had lower Social Domain Index scores in 2015, although the Financial and Health Domain Index scores were stable between 2014 and 2015. Respondents with higher personal incomes had higher average scores on all indices and had smaller decreases in Social Domain Index scores when comparing 2014 and 2015. Residents of capital cities also reported higher average scores on all indices compared to respondents residing in other parts of the country. Comparing 2014 and 2015 averages, residents of capital cities also tended to have more favourable difference scores than other participants. Respondents who were married or in de-facto relationships had higher average scores on all indices compared to those not in such relationships (whether divorced, never married or widowed), although the differences were modest in comparison to other demographic group differences observed. Greater educational attainment was also associated higher index scores, although these differences were modest.

Table 2: Socio-economic differences in three Domain Indexes and Sentiment Index (%), 2014 and 2015

Socio-economic Characteristics	2015				2014				Percentage point change from 2014 to 2015			
	Social	Financial	Health	Sentiment Index	Social	Financial	Health	Sentiment Index	Social	Financial	Health	Sentiment Index
Age group (years)												
50-64	68.4	60.1	74.8	67.8	74.5	60.0	72.7	69.1	-6.1	0.1	2.1	-1.3
65-74	70.9	64.3	72.8	69.4	80.4	67.5	72.9	73.6	-9.5	-3.2	-0.1	-4.2
75+	73.6	71.9	66.6	70.5	80.1	73.5	69.6	74.4	-6.5	-1.6	-3.0	-3.9
Gender												
Male	68.7	64.1	71.8	68.2	76.3	65.8	71.7	71.3	-7.6	-1.7	0.1	-3.1
Female	71.1	62.3	74.1	69.2	77.9	62.4	73.1	71.1	-6.8	-0.1	1.0	-1.9
Personal income												
< \$20k	67.9	51.7	68.8	62.7	75.3	51.1	69.0	65.1	-7.4	0.6	-0.2	-2.4
\$20k-\$39,999	70.0	62.4	71.7	68.1	78.7	63.6	72.5	71.6	-8.7	-1.2	-0.8	-3.5
\$40k-\$59,999	72.0	65.7	76.1	71.2	78.3	66.7	72.6	72.5	-6.3	-1.0	3.5	-1.3
\$60k or more	71.6	71.0	76.2	72.9	76.6	70.9	75.5	74.3	-5.0	0.1	0.7	-1.4
Residential location												
Capital	70.9	64.6	73.7	69.7	77.5	65.9	72.3	71.9	-6.6	-1.3	1.4	-2.2
Not capital	69.2	61.8	72.4	67.8	77.4	62.3	72.1	70.6	-8.2	-0.5	0.3	-2.8
Employment status												
Not employed	69.9	60.7	78.0	69.5	78.0	67.1	70.3	71.8	-8.1	-6.4	7.7	-2.3
Employed	70.3	65.0	70.1	68.5	75.7	59.4	75.7	70.3	-5.4	5.6	-5.6	-1.8
Marital status												
Married/De facto	70.5	64.3	74.1	69.6	77.5	65.3	73.7	72.2	-7.0	-1.0	0.4	-2.6
Divorced/Not married	69.2	60.9	71.2	67.1	76.4	62.1	70.2	69.6	-7.3	-1.3	1.0	-2.5
High school education												
Not finish HS & no other qualifications	68.3	63.0	71.0	67.4	74.5	61.9	71.1	69.2	-6.2	1.1	-0.1	-1.8
Not finish HS & other qualifications	68.8	60.4	72.4	67.2	75.1	60.4	70.9	68.8	-6.3	0.0	1.5	-1.6
Finished High School	71.2	64.7	74.1	70.0	79.4	67.0	73.9	73.4	-8.2	-2.3	0.2	-3.4

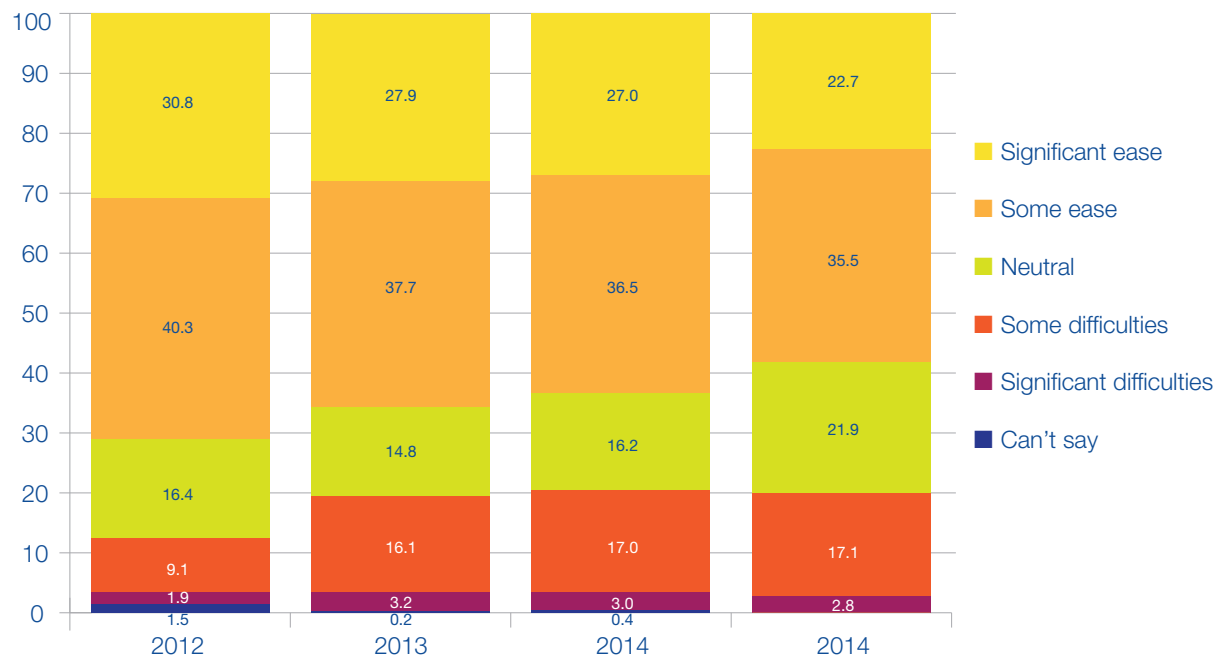
Overall, major changes between 2014 and 2015 were predominantly evident in the Social Domain Index scores, which were generally consistent across the different demographic groups, reflecting the pattern observed in the aggregate data.

Factors underpinning Index scores

Financial situation of older Australians

Visual inspection of Figure 7 reveals that the trend in older Australians' ability to pay for basic household expenses, specifically decreasing proportions that indicate they can meet these expenses with 'some' or 'significant' ease, continued through 2015. The proportion of respondents that endorsed the 'significant ease' response fell from 27 per cent to 22.7 per cent and those that endorsed the 'some ease' response fell from 36.5 per cent to 35.5 per cent during 2015. While the proportion of respondents who indicated they were having difficulties paying for basic expenses remained stable over this time period, the proportion that indicated neither ease nor difficulty (neutral response option) increased from 16.2 per cent to 21.9 per cent. The long-term trend in responses to this item suggests that older Australians are predominantly well positioned to pay for basic expenses but are increasingly doing so with less ease.

Figure 7: Ability to pay for basic household expenses at present (%), 2012 to 2015



The items respondents had most difficulties paying for were house repairs/auto repairs/maintenance (23.9 per cent sometimes, 4.7 per cent regularly), utility bills (16.4 per cent sometimes, 3.2 per cent regularly), health care or medications (15.1 per cent sometimes, 3.2 per cent regularly) and rates (14.8 per cent sometimes, 3.9 per cent regularly). These proportions are presented in Table 3. The prevalence of these difficulties was very similar in 2015 compared with 2014, although smaller proportions of respondents had difficulties paying for house repairs/auto repairs/maintenance and 'other' basic expenses.

Table 3: Frequency of experiencing difficulties paying for items (%), 2014 and 2015

	2014		2015	
	Sometimes	Regularly	Sometimes	Regularly
Food/groceries	11.2	1.9	10.4	2.3
Utility bills (e.g. electricity, gas)	18.8	3.2	16.4	3.2
Mortgage/rent	6.0	1.4	5.3	1.2
Other loans	7.7	1.6	7.0	1.8
Health care/medications	16.3	2.7	15.1	3.2
House repairs/ auto repairs/ maintenance	28.0	5.9	23.9	4.7
Transport	9.4	2.3	9.1	1.9
Rates (e.g. council rates)	16.4	4.0	14.8	3.9
Other	9.9	9.0	1.6	1.1

Presented in Table 4 are the proportions of respondents who had experienced difficulties paying for non-essential household expenses. There were only minor changes in the proportion of respondents indicating different levels of difficulties paying for non-essential household expenses between 2014 and 2015. A smaller proportion indicated they found it 'very easy' to afford such items (from 19.1 per cent in 2014 to 15.9 per cent in 2015) and a larger proportion indicated that it was neither easy nor difficult (from 24.8 per cent in 2014 to 29.9 per cent in 2015).

Table 4: Ability to pay for non-essential household expenses at present (%), 2014 and 2015

	2014	2015
Very difficult	4.7	5.9
Somewhat difficult	16.4	15.0
Neutral	24.8	29.9
Somewhat easy	34.3	33.4
Very easy	19.1	15.9
Can't say	0.6	-
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: The 'can't say' response option was omitted from the 2015 survey.

Presented in Table 5 are the proportions of participants reporting different levels of difficulties saving for future needs. There was little change in the ability of older Australians to save for future spending needs between 2014 and 2015. Of concern were small decreases in the proportion of respondents endorsing the 'somewhat able' and the 'very able' response options.

Table 5: Ability to save for future spending needs (%), 2014 and 2015

	2014	2015
Unable	13.0	13.4
Somewhat unable	13.4	13.7
Neutral	18.4	21.8
Somewhat able	36.2	33.4
Very able	18.3	15.9
Can't say	0.8	-
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: The 'can't say' response option was omitted from the 2015 survey.

Following an increase in confidence in the adequacy of superannuation among non-retired people from 2012 to 2013 and then almost no change to 2014, responses to the 2015 survey suggest a modest erosion in confidence in superannuation adequacy. As presented in Table 6, among respondents in paid employment for whom superannuation is expected to be the main source of income in retirement, 45.9 per cent were at least somewhat confident of its adequacy. Among people who stated that superannuation was a source of income for retirement, 34.2 per cent were at least somewhat confident of its adequacy. Erosion in confidence in the adequacy of superannuation was evident in larger proportions of 2015 respondents indicating they were 'not very confident' and those endorsing the 'neutral' response option among those for whom superannuation was the main expected source of retirement income. It is noted that fewer of these respondents were 'not at all confident' in the adequacy of superannuation in 2015. For respondents for whom superannuation was expected to be a source of income in retirement (but not necessarily the main source) a larger proportion also endorsed the 'not very confident' and 'neutral' response option compared to 2014.

Table 6: Confidence in superannuation to be adequate for retirement (%), not retired, 2012 to 2015

	Super is MAIN source of income				Super is a source of income			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Very confident	5.8	10.5	10.5	7.9	4.0	7.7	7.2	5.6
Somewhat confident	35.7	37.9	37.3	38.0	26.6	29.8	28.6	28.6
Neutral	14.2	13.3	11.6	17.7	12.2	13.1	10.6	13.9
Not very confident	24.9	22.6	23.0	28.3	25.6	27.5	27.5	31.5
Not at all confident	18.4	15.8	16.7	8.2	30.0	21.7	25.3	20.4
Can't say	0.9	0.0	0.8	-	1.7	0.2	0.8	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The 'can't say' response option was omitted from the 2015 survey.

Among respondents no longer in paid employment, confidence in superannuation being adequate for retirement showed minor shifts from 2014 to 2015 following a relatively stable position the previous year. As evident in Table 7, for both respondents for whom superannuation was their main retirement income and those for whom it was an income source in retirement, fewer respondents were confident in its adequacy and larger proportions indicated they were not confident about its adequacy. As with previous waves of the survey, confidence in superannuation was significantly higher among retirees than non-retirees (65 per cent at least somewhat confident of its adequacy for retirement if superannuation was their main source of income, 52.8 per cent at least somewhat confident if superannuation was a source of income).

Table 7: Confidence in superannuation to be adequate for retirement (%), retired, 2012 to 2015

	Super is MAIN source of income				Super is a source of income			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Very confident	16.5	26.6	23.5	19.1	11.3	20.9	19.8	14.3
Somewhat confident	39.5	44.4	47.3	45.9	32.6	40.1	42.5	38.5
Neutral	13.3	10.5	11.1	15.9	14.2	13.3	10.7	16.0
Not very confident	21.3	13.3	12.5	15.2	24.3	15.1	15.3	17.9
Not at all confident	7.1	4.6	4.7	3.9	13.2	9.9	11.0	13.4
Can't say	2.3	0.6	0.8	-	4.3	0.7	0.8	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The 'can't say' response option was omitted from the 2015 survey.

When asked about their confidence in income from all sources in retirement, 43.4 per cent of non-retired participants said they were at least somewhat confident compared with 53.8 per cent of retired participants (*Table 8*). For retired respondents, this decreased from 63.6 per cent in 2014. Of concern is that 39.2 per cent of non-retired people were not very or not at all confident of the adequacy of their income from all sources for retirement.

Table 8: Confidence in income from all sources to be adequate for retirement by retirement status (%), 2012 to 2015

	Not retired				Retired			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Very confident	4.5	9.5	8.3	8.3	10.5	17.7	18.3	16.3
Somewhat confident	29.6	32.5	34.8	35.1	34.8	37.5	45.3	37.5
Neutral	12.8	13.9	12.0	17.4	16.7	15.4	10.7	18.6
Not very confident	31.0	24.6	23.4	25.0	24.1	14.9	14.3	16.9
Not at all confident	19.5	17.2	19.7	14.2	10.0	11.2	9.4	10.8
Can't say	2.7	2.2	1.8	-	3.9	3.3	2.0	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The 'can't say' response option was omitted from the 2015 survey.

Older Australians and social isolation

A prominent finding among the year to year comparisons of Domain and Sentiment Index scores was the decline in the Social Domain Index during 2015, a decline that appeared consistent across the range of demographic groups compared in Table 2. While the survey did not contain a similar range of related questions to contextualise findings regarding the Social Domain and Health Domain indices as was the case with the Financial Domain Index, one aspect of older Australians' social lives can be assessed over several waves of the survey. Social isolation is considered particularly problematic for older Australians from a psychological wellbeing perspective and more frequent experiences of this may explain the decline in the Social Domain Index scores. Presented in Table 9 are the proportions (%) of respondents who endorsed different frequencies of experiences of 'a lack of companionship or feeling lonely' for 2013, 2014 and 2015. It is evident in this table that social isolation was being experienced less frequently than in previous years, with larger proportions indicating they never experience such feelings and fewer indicating they experience this 'often'. Similarly, a smaller proportion of respondents indicated they experienced social isolation 'rarely' in 2015. These response patterns suggest that increased social isolation does not explain recent changes in the Social Domain Index. It may be that the quality of social interactions older Australians have with their community is decreasing, producing the decline the Social Domain Index scores though data on the quality of social interactions are not presently collected in the Social Survey.

Table 9: Proportions (%) of respondents who endorsed different frequencies of experiences of 'a lack of companionship or feeling lonely' for 2013, 2014 and 2015

	2013	2014	2015
Never	28.7	30.8	36.6
Rarely	39.6	33.8	30.2
Occasionally	20.4	27.4	27.4
Often	7.6	7.4	5.9
Can't say	3.8	0.6	-

Note: Approximately 5 per cent of responses from 2013 were excluded to optimise comparability of response options used in the different waves.

Conclusion

There was a modest decline in the Seniors Sentiment Index between December 2014-January 2015 (71.2 per cent) and November 2015-January 2016 (69.4 per cent), following from no change in the average Index score in the preceding year. There was also a significant decline in the average Social Domain Index in 2015, for both the single wave participants and longitudinal participants. A significant increase in the average Health Domain Index was also found for longitudinal participants. However, this was smaller than declines in the Social Domain and Sentiment Indices. The Prospective Sentiment Index decreased slightly from 43.5 per cent in 2014 to 42.4 per cent in 2015, continuing the approximately linear decline in this measure observed since 2012. This average value suggests that older Australians are slightly more pessimistic than optimistic about their future across the Financial, Health and Social domains.

The stability of financial wellbeing continued during 2015, coming after significant increases from 2012 to 2013. This result is encouraging, as it signifies the previous year's increase was a reliable indication of older Australians financial wellbeing. Superannuation funds returned 5.6 per cent during 2015, a decline from the 7.5 per cent during 2014 and 16 per cent return in 2013.¹¹ Given that indicators of consumer sentiment can be turbulent, for example the Westpac- Melbourne Institute Consumer Sentiment Index showed large variation in declining from 108.3 in October 2013 to 93.2 in January 2015,^{12,13,14} stable scores for the financial wellbeing index over longer time-frames suggests it is an accurate indicator of older Australians' financial position. However, the significant level of concern of pre-retirees about their retirement income (39 per cent are not very or not at all confident of its adequacy) shows that the future outlook for many older Australians remains uncertain.

A key finding of the analysis of the Domain and Sentiment Indices was the comparably sharp decline in the average Social Domain Index score during 2015. This year to year change is one of the largest observed across the four waves since the Sentiment and Domain Indices were first measured, was found among the longitudinal participants and was consistent across a range of demographic groups. Additional analysis exploring participants' experiences of social isolation indicated that such experiences were becoming less frequent, precluding this as an explanation for declining average Social Domain Index scores. Given that the frequency of social interactions older Australians have with their community appears to be increasing, a plausible explanation for declining Social Domain Index scores may be the quality of these social interactions. For example, the increasing uptake of communication technologies provides older Australians with alternative means of interacting with their community even in the context of issues of distance or mobility. While such technologies provide opportunities for more frequent contact, it is unclear whether the medium of communication meaningfully impacts the quality of interactions. Studies suggest that it is the quality, not quantity of interactions (particularly with family and others with close social relationships) that is associated with greater quality of life and self-esteem outcomes¹⁵. Recent analysis of the National Seniors Social Survey highlighted the importance of the social landscape to successful ageing¹⁶ and therefore encourages further exploration of this change and careful monitoring of the Sentiment and Domain Indices.

The Seniors Sentiment Index continues to provide valuable insights into the experiences and attitudes of older Australians. As well as showing the sentiment of a large sample of older Australians, the inclusion of the longitudinal sample in the survey allows for the sentiment of individuals to be tracked over time. While there has not been a significant change in overall Sentiment of respondents in the preceding analyses of these measures, some significant changes were detected in this fourth wave that will drive the refinement of future Social Surveys and research initiatives. The four versions of the Index have shown that external factors such as changes in Government and economic conditions can affect older Australians' outlook. The Index will be able to track how older Australians' sentiment changes in coming years as economic and political conditions change and Australia continues to face the challenges of an ageing population.

¹¹ SuperRatings, *Top performing super funds in 2015*, Media release, 20 January 2016, <http://www.superratings.com.au/media/mediarelease/200116>

¹² Westpac Bulletin, *Modest lift in consumer sentiment*, 21 January 2015, <http://www.westpac.com.au/docs/pdf/aw/economics-research/er20150121BullConsumerSentiment.pdf>

¹³ Westpac Bulletin, *Consumer Sentiment shows modest retreat*, 9 October 2013, <http://www.westpac.com.au/docs/pdf/aw/economics-research/er20131009BullConsumerSentiment.pdf>

¹⁴ Westpac Bulletin, *Consumer Sentiment back in positive territory*, 10 August 2016, https://melbourneinstitute.com/downloads/media_release/2016/CSI/PressReleaseCSI20160810.pdf

¹⁵ Juth, V., Smyth, J. M., & Santuzzi, A. M. (2008). *How Do You Feel?: Self-esteem Predicts Affect, Stress, Social Interaction, and Symptom Severity during Daily Life in Patients with Chronic Illness*. *Journal of health psychology*, 13(7), 884-894.

¹⁶ McLoughlin, C. and Taylor, P. E. (2016) *Don't go it alone: Life satisfaction among older Australians according to the National Seniors Social Survey*. Melbourne: National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre.

Appendix

Table 10: Basic demographic characteristics (%), full sample and longitudinal respondents, 2015

	Full sample	Longitudinal		Full sample	Longitudinal
Age (unweighted)			Employment (weighted)		
50-64	49.0	34.7	Employed	43.6	34.4
65-79	38.7	51.5	Not employed	56.4	65.6
80+	12.2	13.8	Total	100	100
Total	100	100	Place of residence (weighted)		
Sex (unweighted)			Capital city	47.5	50.8
Male	45.8	45.7	Not capital city	52.5	49.2
Female	54.2	54.3	Total	100	100
Total	100	100	Marital status (weighted)		
State (unweighted)			Married*	65.7	59.1
NSW	31.8	28.8	Not married**	34.3	40.9
VIC	23.4	27.0	Total	100	100
QLD	19.4	17.5	Education (weighted)		
SA	9.2	9.5	Not finished high school & no other qualification	18.1	15.4
WA	11.6	10.5	Not finished high school & other qualification	25.1	25.0
TAS	2.5	3.8	Finished high school	56.8	59.7
ACT	1.7	2.5	Total	100	100
NT	0.4	0.4			
Total	100	100			

For longitudinal respondents, characteristics are as at 2015.

* Includes de facto ** Includes Divorced/ Separated, never married, widowed

Sentiment indexes – full sample

Table 11: *Sentiment Index, Prospective Sentiment Index, Domain Indices and life satisfaction 2012 to 2015*

		Present			
	Finances	Health	Social	Sentiment Index	Life satisfaction
2015					
Index	63.9	73.5	70.8	69.4	75.3
95 per cent CI Lower	64.6	74.4	69.1	69.8	74.3
95 per cent CI Upper	61.9	72.5	71.6	68.9	76.3
Significant difference 2015 v 2014	No	No	**	*	No
2014					
Index	64.0	72.4	77.1	71.2	76.3
95 per cent CI Lower	61.9	70.4	75.2	70.0	74.4
95 per cent CI Upper	66.2	74.4	79.0	72.3	78.3
Significant difference 2014 v 2013	No	No	No	No	No
2013					
Index	63.3	74.3	77.4	71.7	78.6
95 per cent CI Lower	61.2	72.3	75.9	70.5	76.8
95 per cent CI Upper	65.5	76.1	79.6	72.7	80.4
2012					
Index	59.0	70.7	68.1	65.9	76.7
95 per cent CI Lower	56.8	68.6	66.0	64.7	74.7
95 per cent CI Upper	61.2	72.7	70.3	67.1	78.6
Significant difference 2013 v 2012	**	*	**	**	No
		Prospective			
2015					
Index	41.3	39.0	47.0	42.4	49.1
95 per cent CI Lower	40.5	38.3	46.3	42.2	48.3
95 per cent CI Upper	42.3	40.2	47.7	42.6	50.0
Significant difference 2015 v 2014	No	*	No	No	No
2014					
Index	42.0	41.5	47.0	43.5	48.7
95 per cent CI Lower	39.7	39.1	44.7	42.1	46.3
95 per cent CI Upper	44.3	43.8	49.3	44.8	51.1
Significant difference 2014 v 2013	No	No	No	No	No
2013					
Index	43.0	42.2	48.0	44.4	49.9
95 per cent CI Lower	40.7	40.0	45.7	43.1	47.6
95 per cent CI Upper	45.2	44.4	50.3	45.7	52.2
2012					
Index	43.5	42.5	48.6	44.9	51.8
95 per cent CI Lower	41.2	40.3	46.2	43.6	49.3
95 per cent CI Upper	45.8	44.7	51.0	46.2	54.3
Significant difference 2013 v 2012	No	No	No	No	No

* p<0.05

**p<0.01

Note: 95 per cent CI: 95 per cent confidence interval.

Sentiment indexes – longitudinal respondents

Table 12: Domain Indexes and Sentiment Index (%), longitudinal respondents, 2013, 2014 and 2015

	2013		2014		2015	
	Index	95 per cent CI	Index	95 per cent CI	Index	95 per cent CI
Social	80.0	77.2-82.8	79.3	76.5-82.3	72.1**	70.5-73.8
Financial	67.2	63.9-70.5	65.8	62.5-69.2	65.5	63.7-67.2
Health	73.7	70.5-76.7	73.6	70.5-76.7	74.2**	73.1-75.4
Sentiment Index	73.6	71.8-75.4	72.9	71.1-74.7	70.6**	69.6-71.7
Overall life satisfaction	78.8	75.9-81.7	78.3	75.4-81.2	77.3	75.7-79.0

Note: 95 per cent CI: 95 per cent confidence interval.

Statistically significant differences in the mean Index scores for longitudinal participants were detected for the Social, Health and Sentiment Indices from 2014 to 2015. These differences were significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Table 13: Prospective Domain Indexes and Prospective Sentiment Index (%), longitudinal respondents, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

	2013		2014		2015	
	Index	95 per cent CI	Index	95 per cent CI	Index	95 per cent CI
Social	48.8	45.2-52.3	48.0	44.3-51.7	45.9	45.0-46.9
Financial	43.5	40.0-47.2	42.2	38.7-45.8	41.0	39.9-42.0
Health	43.2	39.5-46.8	41.9	38.3-45.5	38.8**	37.6-40.0
Prospective Sentiment Index	45.2	43.1-47.2	44.0	41.9-46.1	41.9**	41.1-42.7
Overall life satisfaction	50.3	46.4-50.3	48.9	45.1-52.6	47.8	46.7-48.8

Note: Prospective Sentiment Index is the average of the three domain indexes.

95 per cent CI: 95 per cent confidence interval.

Statistically significant differences in the mean Prospective Health Domain Index score and the Prospective Sentiment Index score for longitudinal participants from 2014 to 2015 were detected. These differences were significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

ABOUT NATIONAL SENIORS AUSTRALIA

National Seniors Australia is the leading independent voice of the over 50s, with more than 200,000 members nationwide. As the country's largest not-for-profit organisation for the over 50s, we represent the views of older Australians and their families to governments of all levels, on issues such as age discrimination, mature age employment, superannuation, pension increases, health and aged care. Founded in 1976, we provide unrivalled access to policy makers, innovative and practical research and a raft of commercial benefits to our members. Every day, National Seniors Australia seeks to improve the quality of life for mature age Australians.

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