



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional
Development
Australia



MID NORTH COAST

Regional Strategic Plan

2023 - 2026

October 2023

Local people developing local solutions rda.gov.au

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Acknowledgments

Acknowledge of Country

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land and Elders past and present.

Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast works throughout the nations of the Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti and Biripi peoples.

Acknowledgment to our Community

We acknowledge the many stakeholders who have supported, promoted, and contributed to the work of Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast.

Our stakeholders range from elected members of State, Federal and Local government, government and government agency employees, representatives of industry groups, business owners and community.

From the Chair

Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast (RDAMNC) is a Commonwealth funded independent body advocating for and promoting the development of the regions of the Mid North Coast, Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island.

It provides links to opportunities for regional growth between all levels of government, business, not-for-profits, and the general community, as well as being an advocate and facilitator of change on key issues affecting the regions. These issues include housing, skills and workforce, circular economy issues including renewable energy and many more crucial issues impacting the people and prosperity of the region.

Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast represents one of the most environmentally abundant regions in Australia, from the lush farming pastures of the Dorrigo and Wingham communities to the marine sanctuaries of Solitary Islands and Lord Howe Islands to the pristine waterways which join the region's mountains to the sea.

The Mid North Coast offers an enviable lifestyle, with a beautiful natural environment, thriving regional towns and cities, and friendly communities.

However, in many ways the region is fragmented, with some communities isolated and resistant to change in a world that is changing rapidly around them. Building partnerships and relationships between communities is central to the work of RDAMNC, as we believe that a united regional voice is both more efficient and more effective in generating positive outcomes for the region.

Building these partnerships is the central goal of RDAMNC.

The drought, bushfires, floods, and Covid-19 of the past 4 years have changed the region and the RDAMNC team has worked in an effort to turn these changes into real positives that can take our communities forward, working together for the greater good of our people.

Introduction

During the 2021-2022 period, under the previous government, Regional Development Australia committees were required to produce a regional plan for the areas they support. RDA Mid North Coast prepared the Regional Plan 2022-2032 against the 6 priorities specified for RDAs. The plan was developed with consultation throughout the region and a considerable amount of effort was made to consolidate the Regional Economic Development Strategies of the NSW Government into a single view of economic priorities for the region.

At the federal budget of 2023-2024 the Regional Investment Framework was launched by the present government. This framework is now the guiding logic for the federal investment in regional priorities.

Consequently, the Regional Plan for the Mid North Coast has now been recast in line with the Regional Investment Framework. During the period of May and June 2023, a series of stakeholder workshops were held with the community to prioritise the actions identified in the previous regional plan. This stakeholder input has formed the basis for how the Regional Investment Framework has been brought to life for the Mid North Coast in combination with data on how the region is faring.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the challenges faced by local communities are multifaceted. Many of the structural issues the nation is experiencing (e.g., housing and workforce shortages, cost of living crisis, increasing complexity in waste management) are reflected in each of the 6 local government areas covered by the Mid North Coast RDA. These challenges and many others are shared issues that cross local government boundaries and have multi-agency responsibility. To address these complex challenges, the region's governments at all levels need to work with communities and industry to identify where investment is needed, and innovation is possible.

The federal government is wanting to work with regional Australia in two ways:

- Place based initiatives
- Coordinated and joined up efforts.

Across the Mid North Coast, we have several agencies with a regional view and when we work across the traditional borders and work on mutually beneficial outcomes, we can help to shift the dial on some of the multi-faceted problems we face. RDA Mid North Coast sees this Regional Plan to bring the regions needs into view, to work collaboratively with our peer agencies, and to set a positive direction for regional investment and development.

An avenue to deliver on a regional vision is to ensure that the Mid North Coast is represented in the federal government's grants pipelines for regional development. The re-envisioned grant programs of the Growing Regions Fund and the Regional Precincts and Partnerships grant represent opportunity for our region to deliver on some of the sizeable and complex challenges. There are also strongly aligned opportunities in the Housing Support Fund, and the Housing Australia Future Fund. The Housing Accord is also another avenue for our region to tackle one of the major issues – housing affordability and accessibility.

Overview of the Mid North Coast

RDAMNC represents local government areas from the Coffs Harbour to MidCoast Council Local Government Areas (LGAs).



MNC Snapshot

Local Government Areas

Bellingen
Coffs Harbour
Kempsey
Midcoast
Nambucca Valley
Port Macquarie-Hastings

Commonwealth Electorates

Lyne
Cowper

State Electorates

Coffs Harbour
Oxley
Port Macquarie
Myall Lakes
Upper Hunter
Port Stephens

Land Mass (approx.)

2.13m hectares
*Source: Remplan October 2023

Population

326,488
*Source: Remplan October 2023

Unemployment Rate

Australia	3.6%
Bellingen	4.3%
Coffs Harbour	3.7%
Kempsey	5.7%
Midcoast	4.5%
Nambucca Valley	6.0%
Port Macquarie-Hastings	2.8%

*Source: LGA Unemployment Dashboard October 2023

Employers

Industry	No. Jobs	%
Health care and social assistance	24,757	19.5%
Retail Trade	13,681	10.79%
Construction	12,653	9.98%
Education & Training	11,900	9.396%

*Source: Remplan October 2023

Value Added to the economy

Industry	\$	%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$3.10B	16.8%
Health care & social assistance	\$2.65B	14.3%
Construction	\$1.82B	9.9%
Education & Training	\$1.32B	7.1%

*Source: Remplan October 2023

Gross Regional Product (GRP)

GRP	Total Output
\$20.2B	\$38B

*Source: Remplan October 2023

Regional Exports

\$8.5B
*Source: Remplan October 2023

The role of Regional Development Australia

The following section explains the role of Regional Development Australia committees, which are non-profit organisations funded by the federal government to support effort and investment in regional Australia. The committees are key in providing regional intelligence to assist the federal government in their planning and delivery for the regions. The Charter was redeveloped by the government and launched on 27 July 2023.

RDA Charter

The Government's vision for regional Australia is one of strong, connected regions that shape our economic growth and wellbeing; are resilient and responsive to economic and environmental shocks; are inclusive, vibrant, and diverse. Regions that our First Nations people have every opportunity to engage in and shape, and where people, businesses and investments thrive.

Regional Development Australia Committees (RDAs) are critical to the delivery of this vision, including supporting the successful implementation of the Australian Government's Regional Investment Framework (RIF), which will guide a more coordinated approach to regional development, underpinned by local engagement.

RDAs play a role in helping to drive economic growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship in regions through facilitating investment in community, industry, and the environment. RDAs assist to bridge the regional development gaps in regions by working with a broad range of stakeholders across sectors and supporting the delivery of identified Australian Government strategic priorities.

As representatives of their local communities, RDAs will:

- focus their activities and strategy on delivery of the RIF in their region, including investment in people, places, services, and industries and local economies.
- support regional stakeholders, including local government and the not-for-profit-sector, to seek grant opportunities that advance strategic regional priorities.
- support decarbonisation efforts and the transformation to a net zero economy and enable regional linkages between sectors to achieve these aims
- build the evidence for economic development, including innovation and diversification strategies.
- facilitate meaningful engagement across the three levels of government to ensure investments deliver better outcomes for regions, and
- contribute relevant data and local intelligence to support the evidence base to inform regional development strategies, program design and policy responses.

RDAs use their local, cross-sector expertise and regional voice to:

- collaborate with integrity, transparency, respect, and accountability.
- engage with diverse communities, especially First Nations people.
- support the Government's ambition of 'no one held back, and no one left behind', and
- support gender equality opportunities in their regions.

The Charter demonstrates the facilitative nature of the RDA remit and reflects the organisational and funding structure. RDAs are small entities; each RDA looks different in each region and many RDAs run multiple programs in addition to their RDA responsibilities.

All RDAs work regionally and there is a need for joined up planning and a consultative approach to regional development efforts. In the Mid North Coast this is true, and the following section details the key regional players in supporting regional development.

Key MNC Regional Entities

The Federal Government's new RDA Charter emphasises the role of RDAs in working with local governments to achieve regional outcomes. RDA Mid North Coast works in partnership with the local government areas of:

- Bellingen Shire Council
- City of Coffs Harbour
- Kempsey Shire Council
- MidCoast Council
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
- Nambucca Valley Council
- Lord Howe Island Board

The key NSW State agencies of health, education, justice and community services and Regional NSW are important partners for RDA Mid North Coast to deliver investment in the regions in line with the RIF.

The four major stakeholders in regional economic planning in the Mid North Coast are:

- The Department of Regional NSW
- Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO)
- Business NSW
- Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast (RDAMNC).

Department of Regional NSW

The Department of Regional NSW is a central agency for regional issues, building resilient regional economies and communities, strengthening primary industries, managing the use of regional land, overseeing the state's mineral and mining resources, and ensuring that government investment into regional NSW is fair and delivers positive outcomes for local communities and businesses.

The Department of Regional NSW has numerous agencies located within the Mid North Coast. The agencies, and local government representatives speak to the Regional Leaders Group on a range of set and ad-hoc matters.

The Department of Regional NSW also facilitates numerous resilience and recovery meetings, particularly those meetings prominent through the Covid-19 lockdowns and following disasters.

The Department of Regional NSW delivers to the North Coast Regional Plan, which is produced by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

Mid North Coast Joint Organisation

At the time this document was created, the MNCJO represents members from Bellingen, Kempsey, and Port Macquarie-Hastings Councils. Nambucca and Coffs Harbour are not currently represented by the Joint Organisation.

Business NSW

Business NSW represents businesses in the state. It is a not-for-profit organisation that canvases the needs of its members and advocates for the right outcomes for the business community. They provide supportive programs and networks to ensure that the conditions for operating business in NSW are as optimal as possible.

Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast

RDA Mid North Coast (RDAMNC) is an independent not for profit organisation. Our funding is primarily from the Federal Government.

Our team works all throughout the region of the MNC encompassing the local government areas of Port Macquarie – Hastings, Kempsey Shire, Nambucca Shire, Bellingen Shire, Coffs Harbour, Midcoast Council, Lord Howe Island, and Norfolk Island.

RDAMNC is a voice and an advocate for the MNC region. We act as a link between all levels of government, industry, and our community, analysing local priorities, communicating the issues clearly and bringing key players together to produce real outcomes for the region.

Our primary focus and projects are aligned with the needs of the region and the Australian Government's [Regional Investment Framework](#) to invest in people, places, services and industry and local economies. RDAMNC is a collaborative organisation; we always work in partnership with others to achieve positive outcomes for the MNC.

Priorities for the MNC from the previous Government

The initial consultation on the Mid North Coast Regional Plan was based on the priorities and charter set out by the previous Government. This planning logic resulted in a series of actions/priorities that were put to the region in a broad consultation. The table below sets out this structure.

Priority (defined by the Commonwealth)	MNC Strategic Priority
PRIORITY 1 Connectivity and Infrastructure incorporating digital connectivity, transport links and freight and supply chain infrastructure	1a: Infrastructure prioritisation 1b: Connectivity: Digital 1c: Connectivity: Physical
PRIORITY 2 Human capital and skills to provide skilled and adaptable workforces, regional universities and training and schooling	2a: Skills 2b: Access to regional data
PRIORITY 3 Regional employment and business to develop regional businesses and industry, local R&D and innovation and a strategic regional vision	3a: Strengthen business. 3b: Local spend. 3c: Industry attraction
PRIORITY 4 Leadership and collaboration by investing in regional leadership, capable local government, and the Indigenous community	4a: Identity 4b: Governance
PRIORITY 5 Amenity and Liveability providing services, facilities and liveability and support for local priorities	5a: Housing 5b: Health Services 5c: Cost of living 5d: Amenity 5e: Connection to community 5f: Lifestyle and opportunity 5g: Dedicated and permanent liveability/resilience staff in local government
PRIORITY 6 Sustainable natural resources to build future resilience, ensure sustainable foundations and provide economic opportunities and jobs	6a: Food security 6b: Water security 6c: Improve resilience to natural disaster and climate change. 6d: Create a circular economy. 6e: Enhance access to renewable energy sources

Appendix A details the actions/areas identified under the previous Strategic Regional Plan. These Key Strategic Actions were consulted upon by RDA Mid North Coast across the region and the consolidated community feedback is presented as part of Appendix A. Following the release of the Regional Investment Framework, RDA Mid North Coast have re-evaluated the previous plan and have consolidated these into a series of activity Focus Areas, based on the priorities identified in our consultations across the region. These Focus Areas are provided in the quadrant below, in line with the Regional Investment Framework.

Regional Investment Framework Overview

The Federal Government in May 2023 issued their overarching framework that will guide their investment in regional Australia. Their focus is investing in people, services, places and local industries and economies. This Regional Plan takes the regional research and consultation undertaken between 2021-2023 and the Strategic Regional Plan 2023-2033 developed under the previous government's planning logic and the new Regional Investment Framework and considers the current needs and emerging challenges and opportunities facing the Mid North Coast. Below is a description of the Federal Government's program priorities within the Regional Investment Framework.

Investing in People

People are the bedrock of vibrant, safe, and inclusive communities, and the Regional Investment Framework aims to ensure regional communities are safe, supported and have the ability to take up opportunities and to participate at their full potential by:

- Improving outcomes for First Nations people in all domains by advancing the Closing the Gap agenda
- First Nations community owned and controlled services
- Improving access to domestic and family violence services
- Supporting veterans and their families
- Support for funding education options
- National Skills Agreement, supporting vocational education and investing in trainees and apprentices.
- Addressing labour shortages across the region

Investing in Services

Quality services and amenities underpin the sustainability and success of communities and regions. The Regional Investment Framework sets out to improve the accessibility, connectivity, and equity of services in regional Australia. The focus areas include:

- Core utilities such as power and water
- Access to health and community services
- Reducing cost of living pressures
- Improving the regional health workforce
- Regional mental health services
- Workforce shortages in Early Childcare and improving the workforce availability in regional and remote areas.
- Telecommunications and internet services improvements
- Supporting infrastructure and freight logistics

Investing in Places

The Federal Government prioritises places and supports the regions through a range of investments that help communities to thrive, harness local competitive advantages, improve infrastructure and enhance liveability.

The types of investments are:

- Community led initiatives such as the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative.
- Whole of Government Framework to Address Community Disadvantage
- Supporting economic diversification of mining dependent communities
- Housing Australia Future Fund and other housing related initiatives
- A significant infrastructure program to ensure communities are connected, liveable and safe.
- Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program
- National Park support
- Disaster Ready Fund
- Arts, cultural and inclusivity support for communities

Investing in Industries and Local Economies

The Government is seeking to make future-focused investments in the regions to secure a productive and sustainable future for the nation. A significant focus of this is the transition to Net Zero. The sorts of investments that are being supported are as follows:

- Preparing relevant regions to be clean energy exporters
- Hydrogen Headstart investment program
- Net Zero Economy Taskforce and Net Zero Authority
- National Reconstruction Fund
- Critical minerals sector support
- Australian Strategic Capabilities Accelerator and ADF support
- Agricultural sustainability fund
- Expansion and improvement on the PALM scheme

Regional Investment Framework and the MNC

Key area indicators have been pulled together in regional snapshots included in this Regional Plan. Appendix B provides these regional snapshots for reference. A selection of each local government area's key data as of September 2023 has been presented to contextualise the RIF for our region.

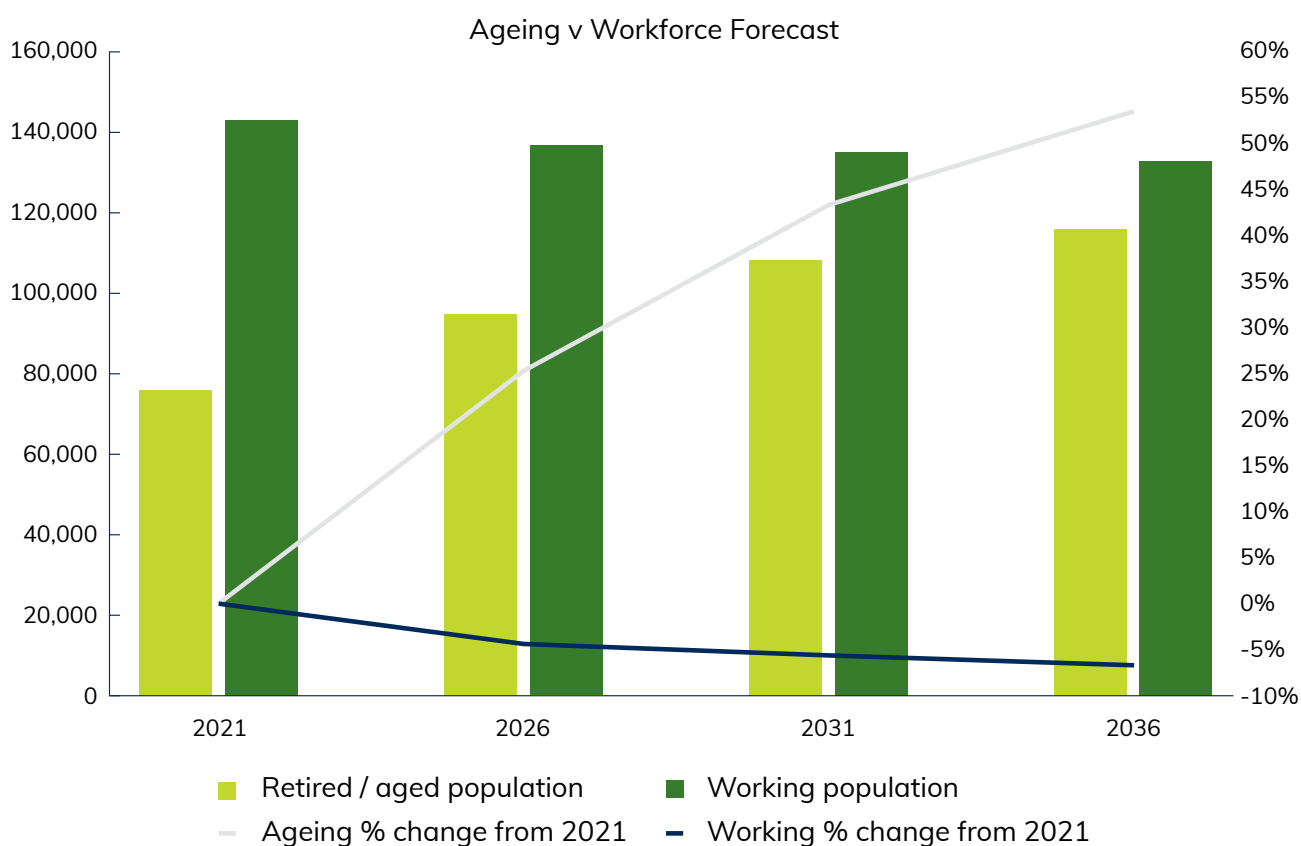
Areas of standout from this analysis applied to the RIF are outlined below.

People

The Mid North Coast is a diverse population with multifaceted needs. We have pockets of affluence combined with pockets of deeply socioeconomically disadvantaged communities – in fact, some of the least advantaged regions in NSW are in the Mid North Coast. However, we have a range of strengths to be capitalised on, a strong care economy, and a decent economic base that is poised to grow should some of the key enablers of labour participation be resolved. Some key points to note are:

1. Our region has the lowest labour participation rate within New South Wales, ranging from an annual average of 42.9% in the Mid North Coast and 55.4% in Coffs Harbour-Grafton.

2. Our region is ill-equipped to cater for the demand projections for aged care services.
3. We have comparatively high numbers of people requiring assistance with day-to-day life and/or living with chronic illnesses.
4. We have insufficient childcare and early childhood services in much of our region which is a handbrake on our economy and is compounding cost of living issues.
5. Our workforce is already under strain, and we will be highly impacted by the next wave of retirement in the next 10 -20 years.
6. We have a relatively high population of First Nations people throughout the region, with a strong series of leaders who are working tirelessly to improve the conditions and outcomes for their communities, and working to support First Nations peoples continued self-determination is critical for the region.
7. We have young people in our region who need investment and a sense of hope. The region needs to work collectively to help young people transition well into adulthood. We have increasing opportunities for young people in the region and helping make the links is essential.
8. The Mid North Coast has some challenges that require a regional approach. Working with Councils across the region to identify areas for collaboration is a key factor for improved regional development.



Services

There are differing service stories among the local government areas. The Mid North Coast is composed of 3 larger Councils and 3 smaller Councils. As a generalisation, the 3 larger Councils are quite well connected to services for regional communities, however these services are under significant strain from a lack of staff and increasing population pressures associated with an ageing population, a relatively unwell population (as seen by the number of residents living with chronic conditions), and an increasing population. These challenges are magnified again by the shortage of housing and the inability to attract and retain new staff into the region due to the inability to house these new residents in a cost-effective manner. With rental affordability at an all-time low across the North Coast of NSW and availability at record breaking lows, the

Mid North Coast services are very strained.

Another challenge in the region is a significant lack of childcare options, which is most acute in the 0-2 years age bracket. This results in parents needing to return to the workforce but being unable to do so due to seriously limited options for childcare. This is putting very high levels of strain on the community with 86% of survey respondents in the Mid North Coast Unmet Childcare Demand Study indicating they are missing out on much needed work due to limited childcare.

To another dimension of services, the power supply to the region is under significant strain. Industry is unable to source the required power to run their firms at full capacity. With the necessary transition to Net Zero, the investment in regional power production and improved transmission is essential to keep the economy operating, improve productivity and ensure that the cost of power for residents in the Mid North Coast is within the reach of everyday people.

Below are some areas in which services need to be addressed on the Mid North Coast:

1. Improving the availability of early childhood education and care services
2. Improving staffing of aged care services and catering for unmet demand
3. Improving power supply and transmission into the region
4. Supporting Local Governments to deliver key services (e.g., water and sewer upgrades) to bring ailing infrastructure into decent operational status and ensure that our region can support the population growth underway.
5. Ensure the development of appropriate housing stock for social housing – increasing density and reducing dwelling size (with the exception of First Nations housing which requires different design considerations)
6. The delivery of Key Worker accommodation for the region to ensure we can staff the hospitals, allied health services, aged care services, early childhood services, education, police and justice, and emergency services workers in an era of peak unaffordability.
7. Support the improvement of waste processing facilities and innovation in waste management to ensure the Mid North Coast can move to a more circular and sustainable economy.

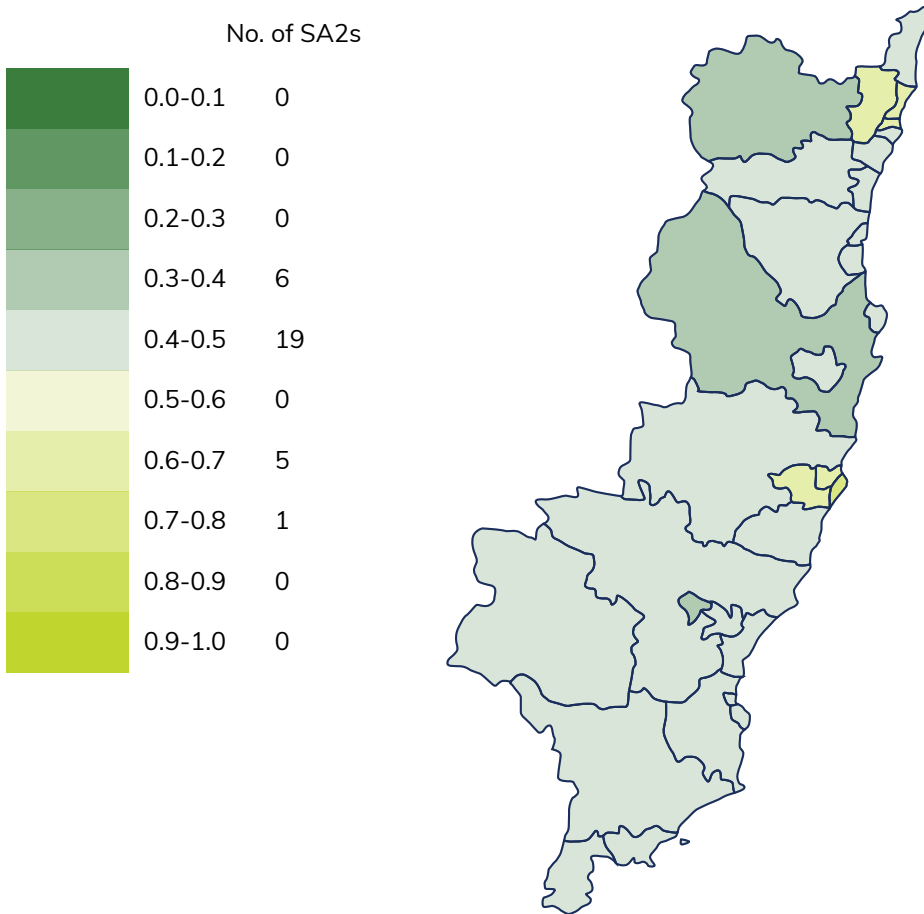
Places

The Mid North Coast is celebrated for its beauty and diversity. Bordered by the Great Dividing Range, the hinterland, escarpments, rivers, forests, and oceans have been a place of plenty and beauty for as long as the First Nations people of the Gumbaynggirr, Biripi, Worimi, and Dunghutti nations cared for this land. This has provided an exceptional backdrop for the growth of an important tourism industry which saw an average of 6.7m visitors to the Mid North Coast and a spend of \$2.1 billion across the region from 2016-2019 (Australian Trade and Investment Commission, Tourism Research Australia, Local Government Profiles: accessed October 2023).

Along with this environmental beauty comes risk. The Mid North Coast has suffered successive bushfires, floods, severe storms, and a total of 14 natural disaster events resulting in 48 local government area disaster declarations since 2018. The communities of the Mid North Coast, are in the main, listed as low resilience to natural disasters, which indicates that beyond the affluent urban areas of Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie cities, the area is vulnerable to the effects of the changing climate. This vulnerability index assesses areas as low resilience where there are “areas of low socioeconomic status, lower access to services, lower community cohesion and lesser opportunities for adaptive learning and problem solving”.

Disaster Resilience Data Report

Map of New South Wales for selected areas.



*Source: Australian Disaster Resilience Index – Mid North Coast, date accessed October 2023

As part of Investing in Places, the federal government is working to boost housing supply in the regions, a much-needed investment for the region of the Mid North Coast. Like most of regional Australia, historical underinvestment in social and affordable housing is coming to fruition with the private market under strain. This in turn is putting pressure on service delivery, with essential workers struggling to obtain accommodation and relocate to the area to uptake vacant positions. Beyond social and affordable housing, key worker accommodation needs to be provided to ensure the population services can be delivered to the growing community. As above, this is also a matter that concerns the types of stock developed and delivered, with a move to medium density smaller dwellings needed to complement the current housing provision of large family houses in new estates.

To support any of this housing stock growth, many Councils in our region need assistance with the development of the underlying infrastructure that will release the land we have available for such developments. It is also necessary to remediate the aged and seriously under capacity infrastructure that exists in the region. With Council's now under increasing financial pressure, this investment seems out of reach without assistance. This is recognized by the government and the Mid North Coast area, particularly the small Councils within the area will be supported to attract such assistance.

The quality of life in a place matters. Investment in arts and culture is a key component of ensuring vibrance and liveability and the Mid North Coast has a growing community of artists and performers. There are many assets on the Mid North Coast and some significant potential investments in the industry for the region, should the planning and economics stack up. It is important to continue to seek clever use of spaces for the artistic community to both create and showcase their work, and to ensure that the arts ecosystem in the region is growing. Partners in this work include Arts Mid North Coast and the Councils with support from state and federal agencies.

Areas for increased place-based investment are:

1. Improved infrastructure linkages between regional centres and towns with a greater emphasis and strategic use of the Highway and industrial precincts
2. Support regionally significant infrastructure projects, especially those which will support housing outcomes.
3. Support regional resilience and recovery needs by working with agencies and communities in preparedness and recovery.
4. Awareness/celebration / protection of First Nations cultural sites and supporting the development of cultural tourism within the region which is a significant growth industry.
5. Support and advocate for improved housing outcomes working to ensure that social and affordable housing outcomes are less stigmatised and good quality advice is provided into planning and design processes, so communities are set up to flourish, rather than excluding people from the basic need and right of housing.
6. Support liveability and cultural program growth by working with stakeholders and partners to increase awareness and investment in the cultural landscape.
7. Environmental protection and celebration to preserve the beauty and amenity that the region is renowned for.
8. Climate change adaptation support including seeking better outcomes in waste processing, energy production and storage and ensuring the region is not left out of the necessary structural transition.

Industries and Local Economies

Across the Mid North Coast manufacturing and construction are two of the industries which provide the greatest output per annum. However, as with most regions, the largest employing industry is health and social care. Tourism is also a significant contributor to gross regional product and accommodation services is identified as the economic sector with the greatest value add.

Consultation with industry in the region highlights the following challenges in all sectors:

- Workforce – employers are struggling to fill positions, people wanting to relocate to the area cannot access housing, employers are competing for the same labour pool and cost of living challenges are making people leave sectors such as aged care and childcare.
- Red tape – bureaucratic interactions are making keeping up with innovation and change needs difficult, with slow Development Application approvals, increasing regulation, and the increasing cost of doing business with changes to insurance costs and leave provisions, for example.
- Access to education and training, particularly trade-based education is in the wrong places for employers – this adds to the cost burden to train staff, it reduces the productivity of firms and makes it difficult for young people to stay in region to get the qualifications they seek. Furthermore, the training being delivered through the VET system is on antiquated machinery which is leaving employers with staff that are not quite job ready for modern industry.
- Childcare shortages are a significant challenge across the Mid North Coast with people ranging from GPs and other health professionals to teachers to hospitality and aged care staff unable to return to work despite the need to support families with increasing cost of living pressures.
- Powering industry – it does not bode well for transition to have the power supply challenges already affecting industry on the Mid North Coast. Effort must be focused on improving transmission capability in the area and preparing for greater local production and storage if the Mid North Coast industry is to remain viable in a net zero future.

The Mid North Coast is fortunate to have industries that are strong and capable. The underlying factors supporting industry are struggling to keep up with the industry needs to see the maximum productivity and output. Areas for consideration include:

1. Industry clustering and collaboration will see a better use of the resources and capabilities of the regional industries.
2. Better integration and collaboration of industry allows for supply chain optimization and resilience building.
3. Local production and storage of energy opportunities must be pursued locally to retain competitiveness and viability of industry into the long-term.
4. Regional tourism is a significant industry that is not readily visible in economic data. The region has great prospects for tourism with particular emphasis on ecotourism, cultural and sporting tourism products.
5. In several LGAs there is a strong agribusiness sector and greater potential for value-added activities and manufacturing. Supporting this industry is strategically important for both productivity and food security.
6. Growing the region's sophistication and capability in waste management, landfill diversion and complex waste processing is key to having a viable, environmentally sound, and circular economy.
7. Micro to medium enterprises are the backbone of the regional economy. Supporting small business to increase in resilience and innovation is important, as well as providing opportunities for business collaboration.

RDA Mid North Coast Focus Areas

Feedback from the community and Local Government consultations on the initial regional strategic plan demonstrated that people wanted RDA Mid North Coast to produce annual action plans demonstrating progress in the Focus Areas. Annually, an action plan will be produced in line with these action areas, and a report on outcomes will be developed to retain accountability against these focus areas.

It is important to note that these Focus Areas cannot be addressed by any entity alone and they require collaboration across all levels of government and in many areas across all three sectors of the economy – private, non-profit and government. RDA Mid North Coast commits to acting as a facilitator and connector for driving opportunities forward and helping to advocate for improvements and changes in areas the Mid North Coast communities need to see action.

Summary of Key Focus Areas aligned with the Regional Investment Fund

Investing in People	Investing in Services
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding and supporting regional skill needs – present and future. 1.2 Support for First Nations Communities to upskill and invest in future potential. 1.3 Collaborate to improve industry, student, and skill pathways. 1.4 Support Regional collaboration and integration. 1.5 Workforce attraction support. 1.6 Support Local Government Collaboration. 1.7 Support First Nations community controlled organisations e.g. Rangers, health, tourism. 1.8 Supporting regional youth. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Better connections to education campuses. 2.2 Improve digital capacity, telecommunications, and skills. 2.3 Accessible Transportation options and solutions. 2.4 Supporting regional ageing requirements. 2.5 Improve access to early childhood education. 2.6 Support Social housing increase 2.7 Improving access to health and allied health services.
Investing in Places	Investing in Industries and Local Economies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Improved infrastructure linkages between regional centres and towns. 3.2 Support regionally significant infrastructure projects. 3.3 Support regional resilience and recovery needs. 3.4 Awareness/celebration / protection of First Nations cultural sites. 3.5 Support and advocate for improved housing outcomes. 3.6 Support liveability and cultural program growth. 3.7 Environmental protection and celebration 3.8 Climate change adaptation support. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Support Industry collaboration and clustering 4.2 Support supply chain understanding and resilience. 4.3 Regional renewables opportunity identification, support and collaboration – net zero transition. 4.4 Support regional tourism-ecotourism/ cultural/sporting 4.5 Support Agribusiness and food manufacturing (food security monitoring and support) 4.6 Regional collaboration in circular economy 4.7 Strengthening small business

2023-2024 Business Plan

Projects

Project title	Focus Area Alignment	Description
People		
MNC Skills Audit	1.1, 1.2, 1.4	Charles Sturt University and RDA will be consulting with the industries of the Mid North Coast to identify the skills needs of the region.
Labour Participation Study	1.4	Regional Australia Institute is undertaking a study into Labour Participation given the MNC is the lowest participation rate in NSW.
Services		
Unmet demand analysis – Childcare	1.1, 1.4, 2.5	CRDA are conducting a study into unmet demand for Childcare on the Mid North Coast. This research will be used to advocate and work to provide local solutions for this significant workforce and cost of living challenge.
Places		
Renewables Opportunity Mapping	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 4.3	Australian National University has been contracted to provide an assessment of the Mid North Coast and the opportunities for renewable energy production and storage. Oven Mountain Pumped Hyrdo is an opportunity that has been previously identified and is now under development within our region that RDAMNC will continue to support.
Industry and Local Economies		
Manufacturing sector support	4.1, 4.2	Industry MNC Inc., Regional Growth Systems and RDA are undertaking a research study to identify the capability, capacity, and skill base of MNC manufacturing.
Accelerator Program	4.7	Alt Collective, Yep Careers, RDA, PMHC and CHCC are collaborating to provide an Ideate to Accelerate program for small businesses and innovators.

Advocacy, scoping and grant support

Activity	Focus Area Alignment	Description
InterCouncil collaboration and support	1.3, 1.5	RDA is working to establish multi-Council partnerships and projects. The Economic Development Managers regional forum is a longstanding intel sharing and opportunity identifying group.
Young people – transition and workforce integration	1.7, 2.1, 1.4	RDA has been scoping the program for 2023-2024 with workforce integration, pathways, and opportunity recognition high on the agenda. Creating multiagency partnerships to deliver a program in 2024-2025.
Southern Mid North Coast Complex Waste Project	3.1, 3.2,3.7, 3.8, 4.3	Supporting the development of a project to identify ways to collaborate and achieve economies of scale with complex waste streams in the southern Mid North Coast.
Valla Urban Growth Area	1.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.6	Supporting project development and progress for the Valla Growth Area in order to progress ambitions for greater housing supply, especially key worker, affordable and social housing opportunities.
Skilling and educating industry in Mid North Coast	1.4, 2.1, 1.1, 1.2	Collaborating with Industry MNC Inc. to support the clear need for innovation in training and education access for skilling workers in regional industry.
Transitioning Mining Economies – Supporting Gloucester’s ‘Next Economy’	3.2, 3.3,4.1, 4.3	Supporting the Gloucester community champions to navigate the complex transition of mining economy to a still prosperous future.
MNC Housing Advocacy	2.4,2.6, 3.6, 1.4	Working with state government agencies, local private sector agents and local governments to support housing diversification efforts – e.g., medium density, smaller sized developments, purpose built independent living for healthy ageing, social housing opportunity support and affordable housing developments.

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- State of New South Wales (Department of Premier and Cabinet). (2018). Nambucca Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022. www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/Nambucca%20REDS.pdf
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- The Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts (2023) *Regional Development Australia Charter*
<https://www.rda.gov.au/about-rda/what-we-do>
<https://www.rda.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/rda-charter.pdf>



Appendix A – Key action areas from previous strategic plan



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MID NORTH COAST

Launch Outcome Summary

Mid North Coast Regional Plan Launch and Consultation

Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast engaged with the region during May and June 2023 to launch the Regional Plan. The launches took place in the six local government areas, with events held for communities and Councils to provide input into the priorities identified.

In the May 2023 Budget, the federal government released its new Regional Investment Framework (RIF) which views regional investment through the lens of Investing in People, Services, Places and Local Industry and Economies. The RIF has become the foundation of RDAs Charter and the Regional Plan will be recast in line with the RIF.

We were grateful for the fantastic participation in the Regional Plan consultations. The prioritisation of action areas produced a picture both of variation and similarity between regions. The clear standout priority areas are housing, workforce and infrastructure.

Next steps

The Regional Plan will be redrafted in line with the federal Regional Investment Framework. This will also require some further discussions with local governments and community stakeholders around the strengths and challenges of the regional localities in the areas of:

1. People
2. Services
3. Places
4. Local industry and economy

The action areas identified above will be incorporated into an action plan with regional stakeholders identified as collaborative partners. Once these two aspects have been completed, the Regional Plan and its action tracker will be circulated to the stakeholders for consultation and endorsement. Regional Development Mid North Coast intends to complete development of these action plans by early 2024.

RDAMNC is grateful for the engagement we have received so far in the development of this Regional Plan. Our landscape is continually shifting, as it is for local and state governments. The Regional Plan must be adaptable to change and new challenges. This Regional Plan is, and will continue to be, a living document aiming to harness collaborations and efforts at a regional level.

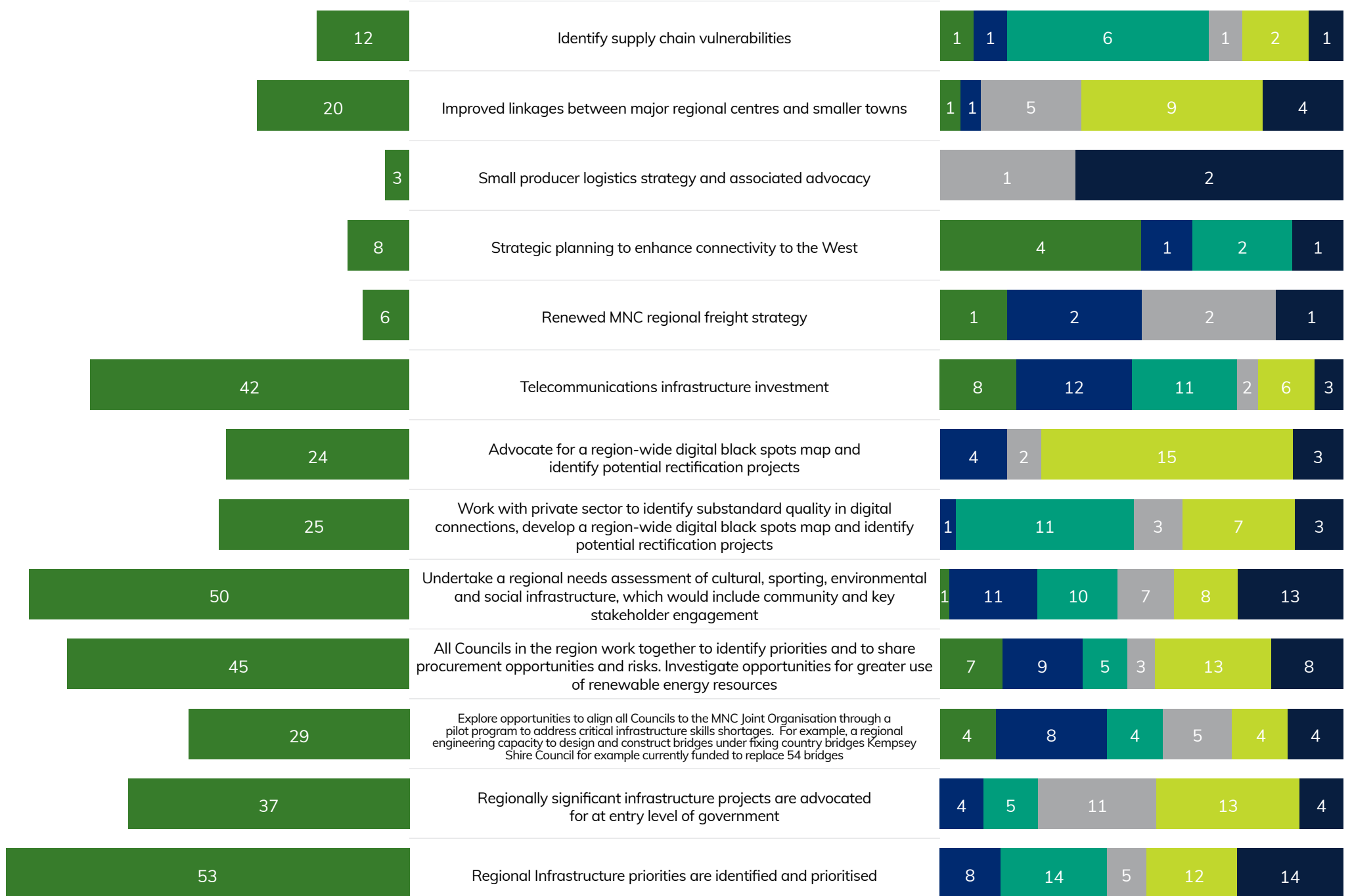
Consultation feedback

The results of the feedback from Councils and community stakeholders follows. If you would like to discuss this process with RDA Mid North Coast, please contact us (02) 5525 1500 or email at operations@rdamnc.org.au.

Priority 1: Connectivity and Infrastructure

Totals

Per region

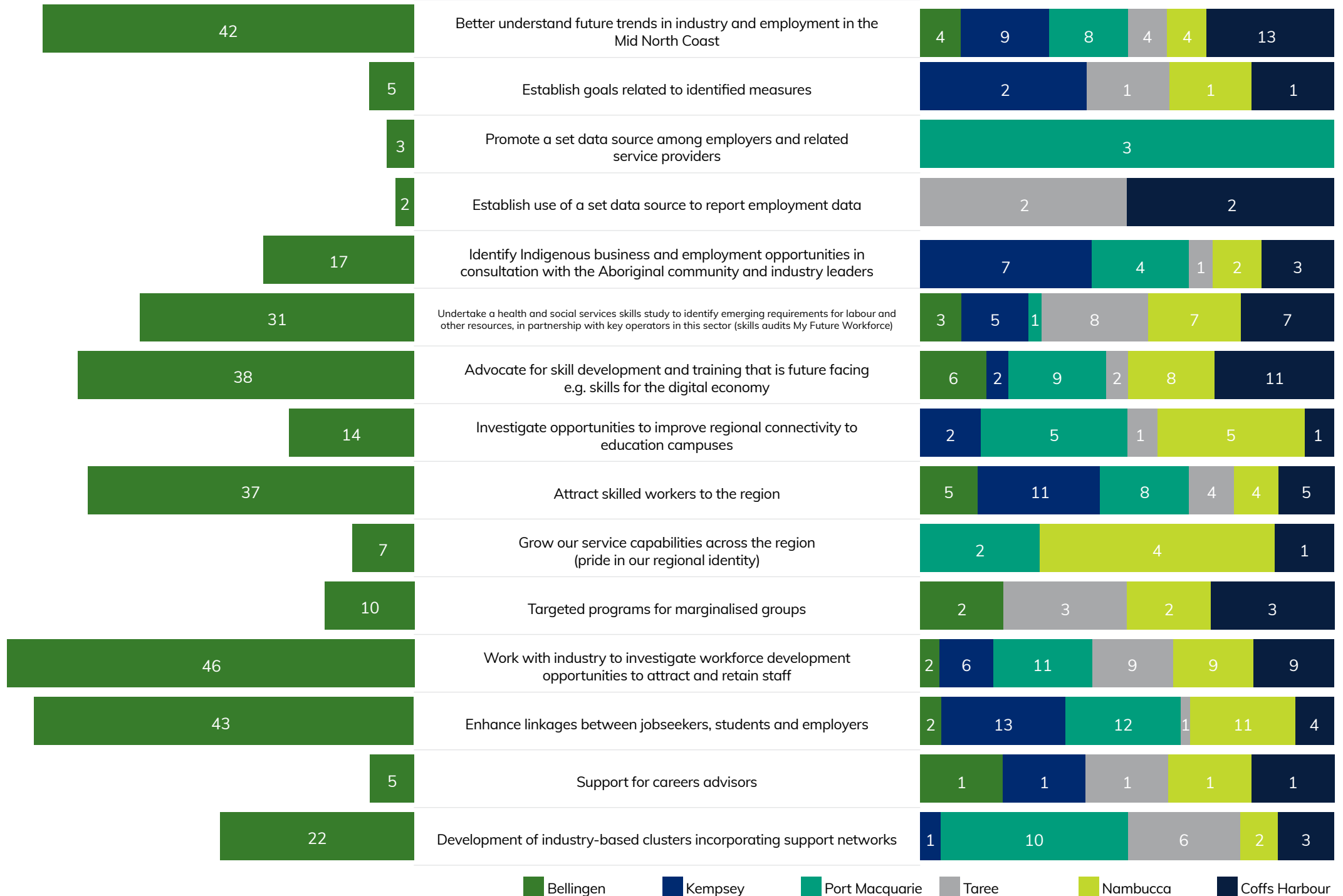


■ Bellingen
 ■ Kempsey
 ■ Port Macquarie
 ■ Taree
 ■ Nambucca
 ■ Coffs Harbour

Priority 2: Human Capital and Skills

Totals

Per region



Bellingen

Kempsey

Port Macquarie

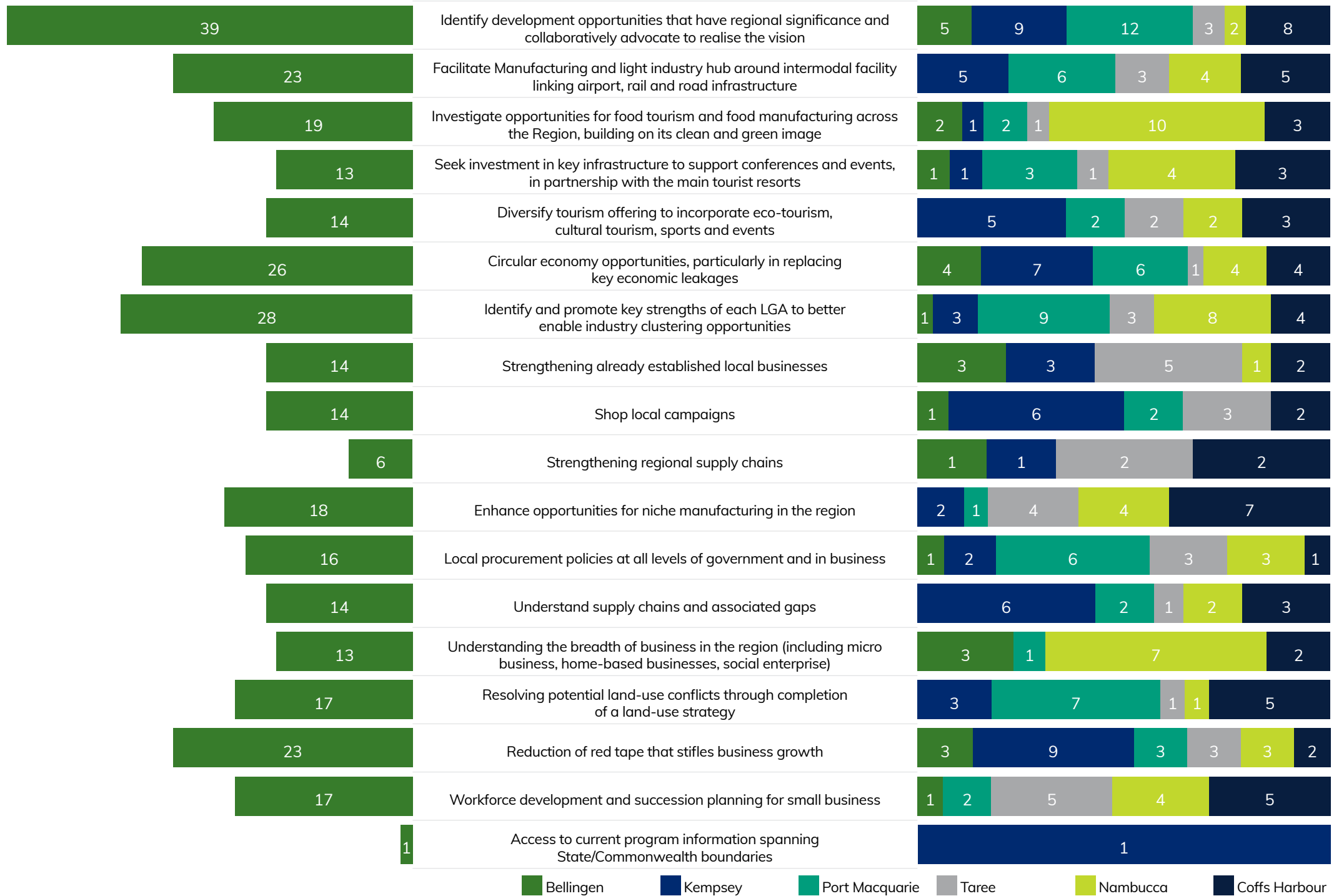
Taree

Nambucca

Coffs Harbour

Priority 3: Regional Employment & Business Totals

Per region



■ Bellingen
 ■ Kempsey
 ■ Port Macquarie
 ■ Taree
 ■ Nambucca
 ■ Coffs Harbour

Priority 4: Leadership and Collaboration

Totals

Per region

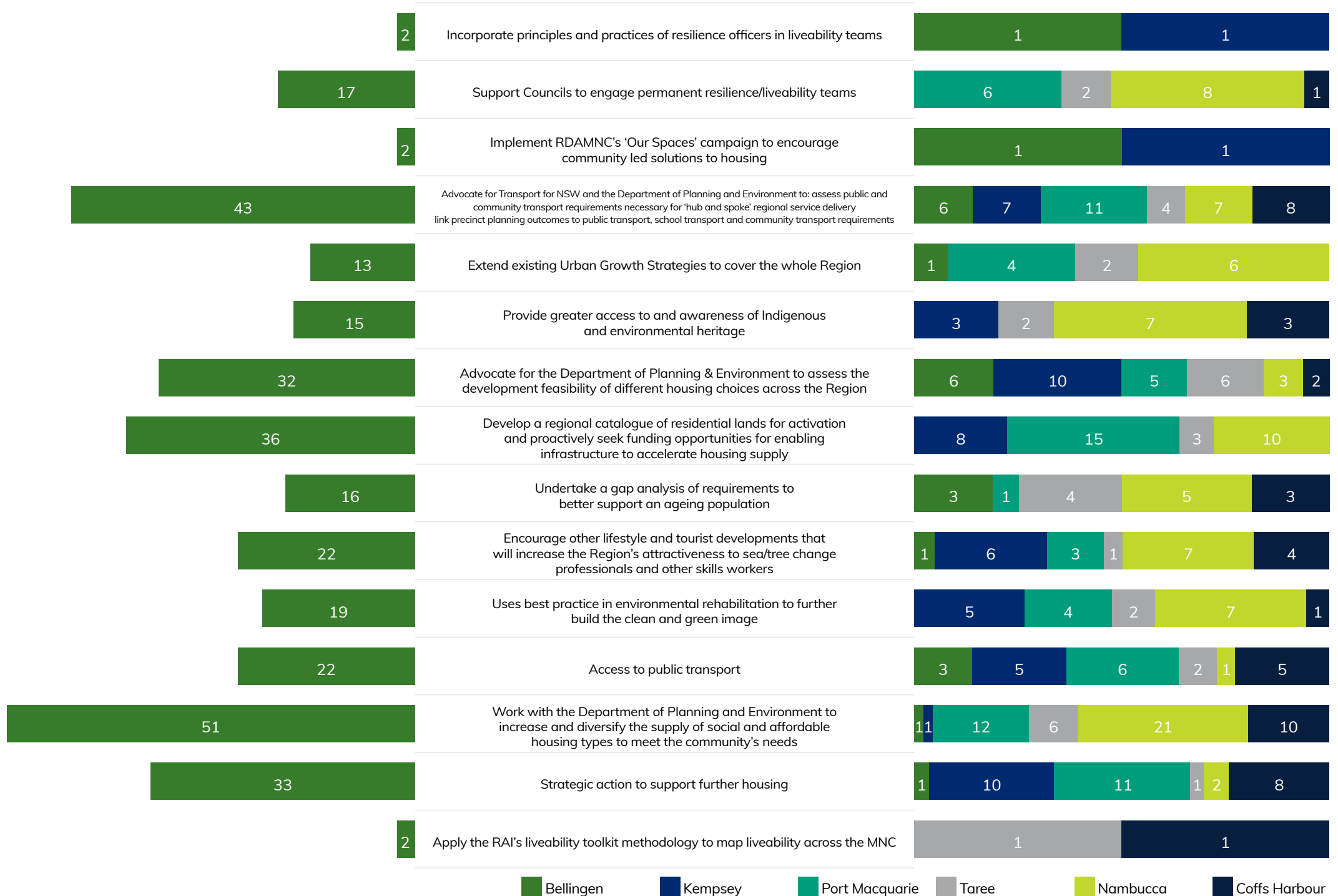


■ Bellingen
 ■ Kempsey
 ■ Port Macquarie
 ■ Taree
 ■ Nambucca
 ■ Coffs Harbour

Priority 5: Amenity and Liveability

Totals

Per region



Bellingen

Kempsey

Port Macquarie

Taree

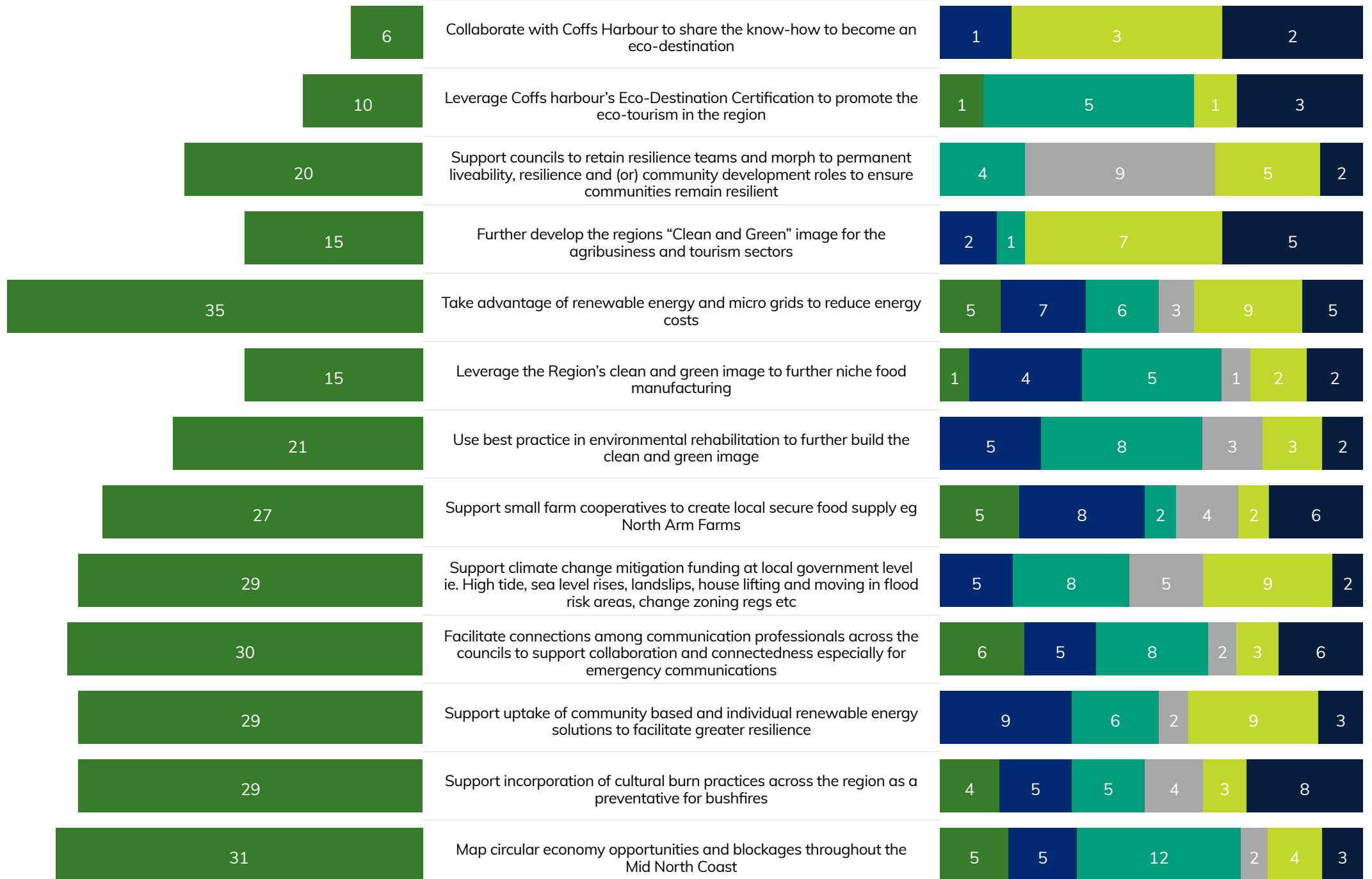
Nambucca

Coffs Harbour

Priority 6: Sustainable Natural Resources

Totals

Per region



■ Bellingen
 ■ Kempsey
 ■ Port Macquarie
 ■ Taree
 ■ Nambucca
 ■ Coffs Harbour



Appendix B – LGA Snapshots



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Regional Snapshot

Bellingen LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Bellingen LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	13,253
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	0.9%
Median Age	50 years
Median Weekly Income	\$614
Labour force participation	51.34%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Bellingen LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	44.74%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	4.18%
% of households with two people	41.72%
% of families not in the labour force	18.29%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	10.97%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	6.26%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	31.61%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	39.97%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	74.49%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	981
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	283/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Manufacturing
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, hiring & real estate services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & social assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Society & Culture

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAS in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	6	8	28
Disability Services	2	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	8	8	43
Primary School	9	12	30
High School	2	3	9
Special Schools	1	1	1
Higher education	0	2	4
Hospitals	2	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	5	10	23
Pharmacies	3	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	0	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	3	5	22

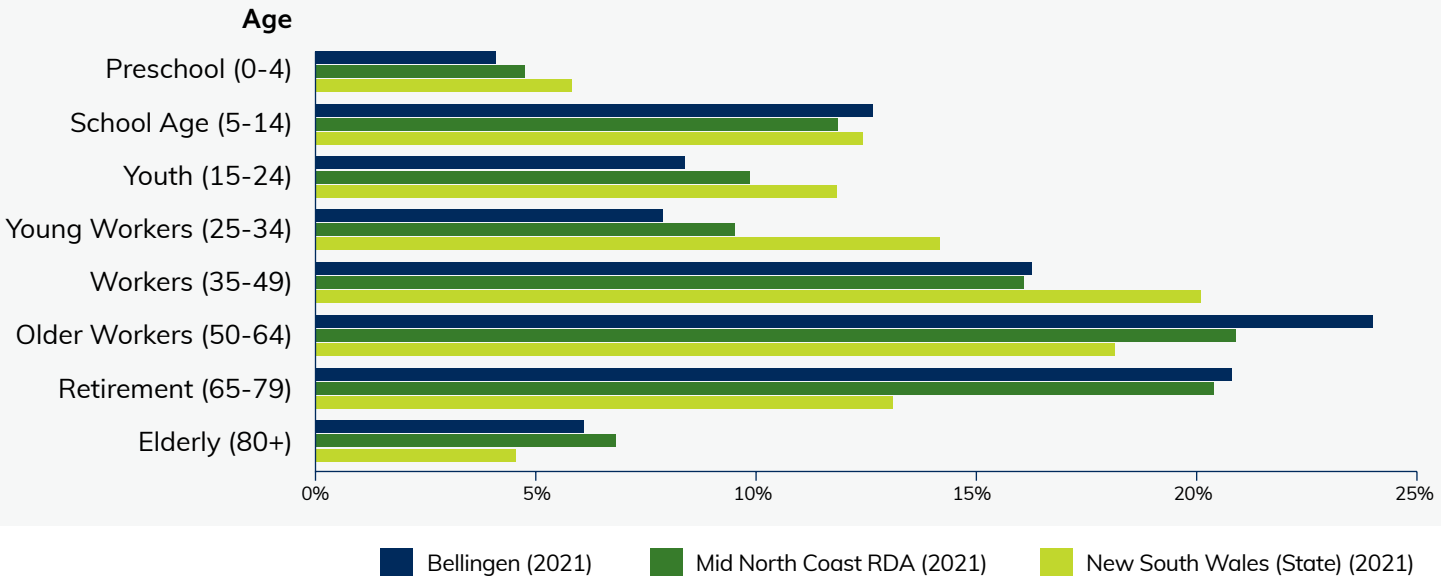
Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	3	4	20
Service NSW	1	1	2
Accountants	3	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	6	7	26
Financial planners	0	3	11
Transport Services	7	6	10
Major shopping centres	0	0	3
Supermarkets	6	7	16
Department stores	0	0	3
Sporting Clubs	27	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	3	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

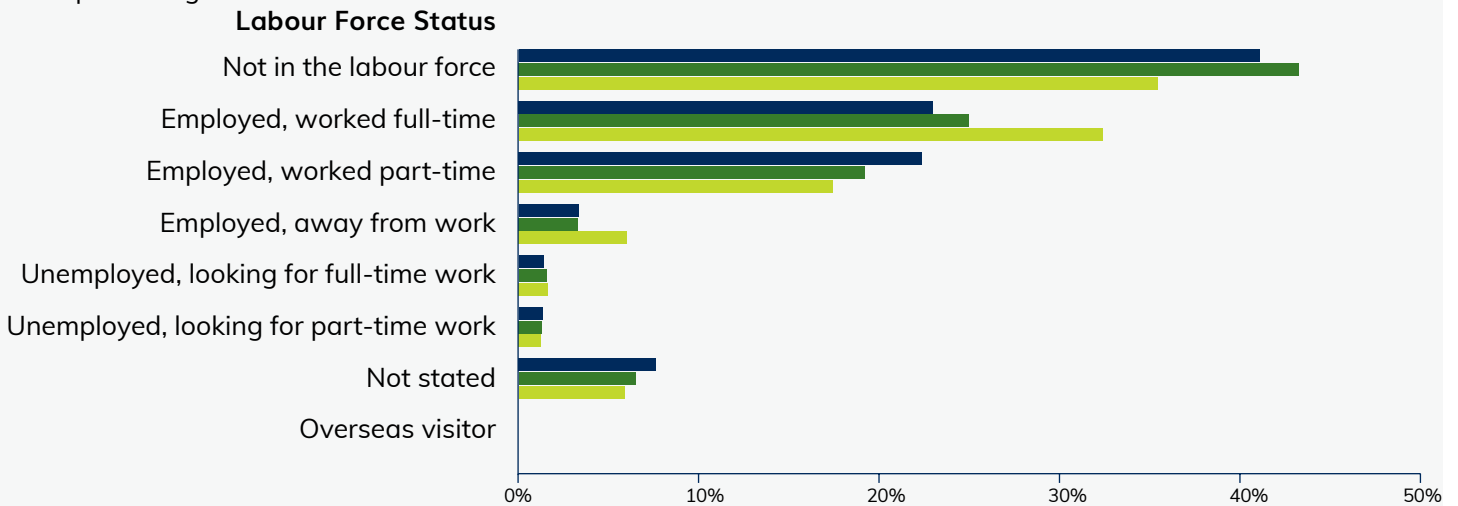
Population by Life Stage

Bellingen has 44.87% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



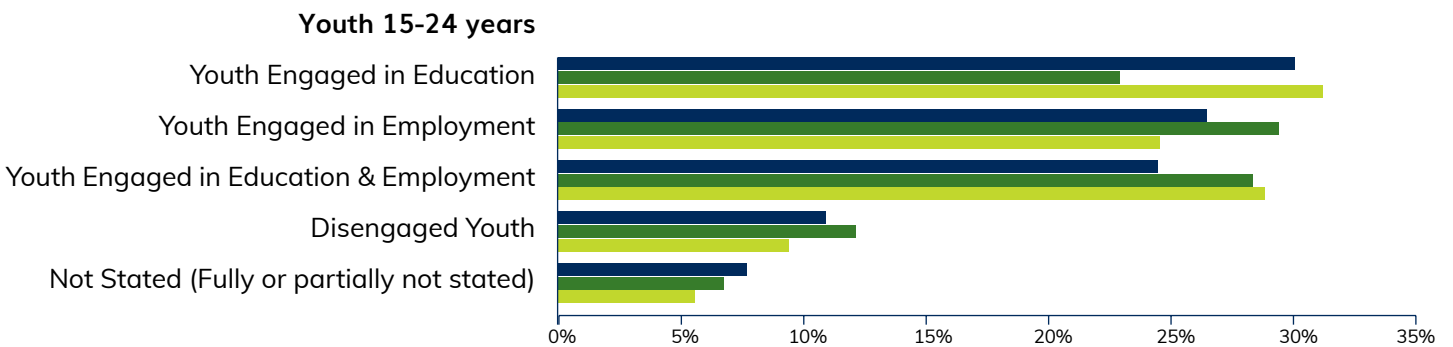
Population by Labour Force

Bellingen has 41.53% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison the MNC has 43.24% and NSW has 35.33%. Bellingen's full-time workforce percentage is less than the MNC overall and significantly lower than the state percentage.



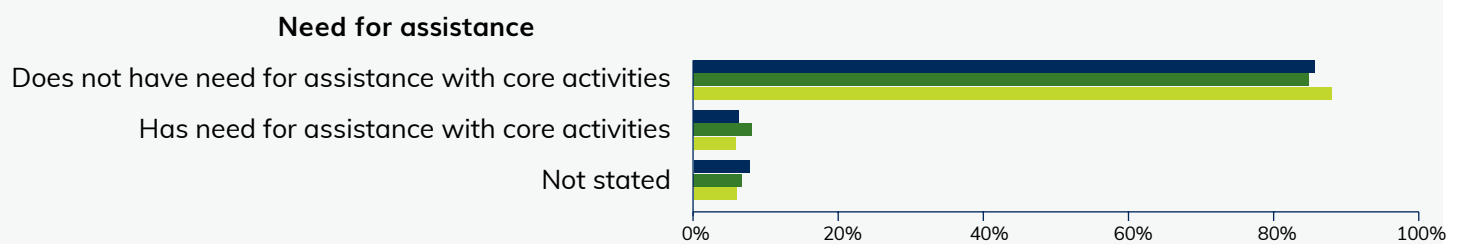
Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

10.97% of Bellingen's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.



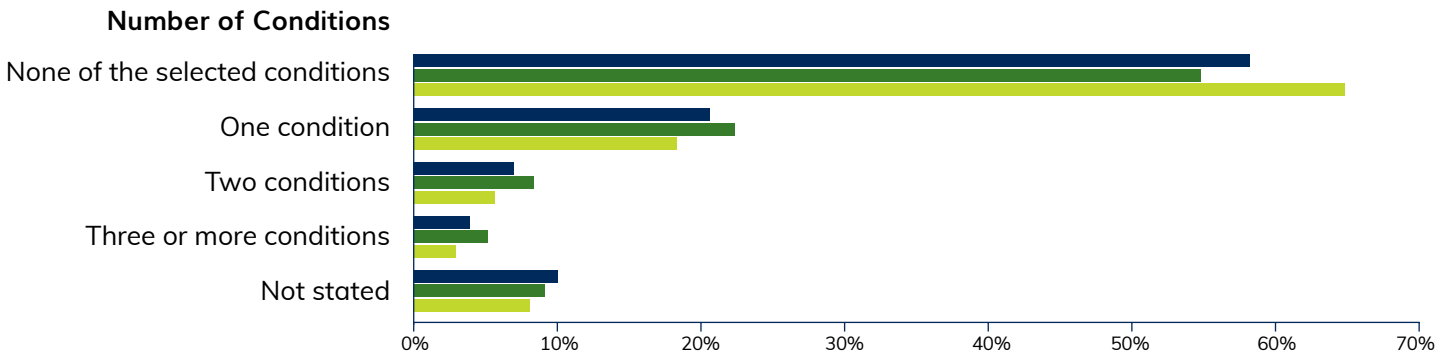
Need for assistance

Bellingen LGA has 6.26% of it's population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.



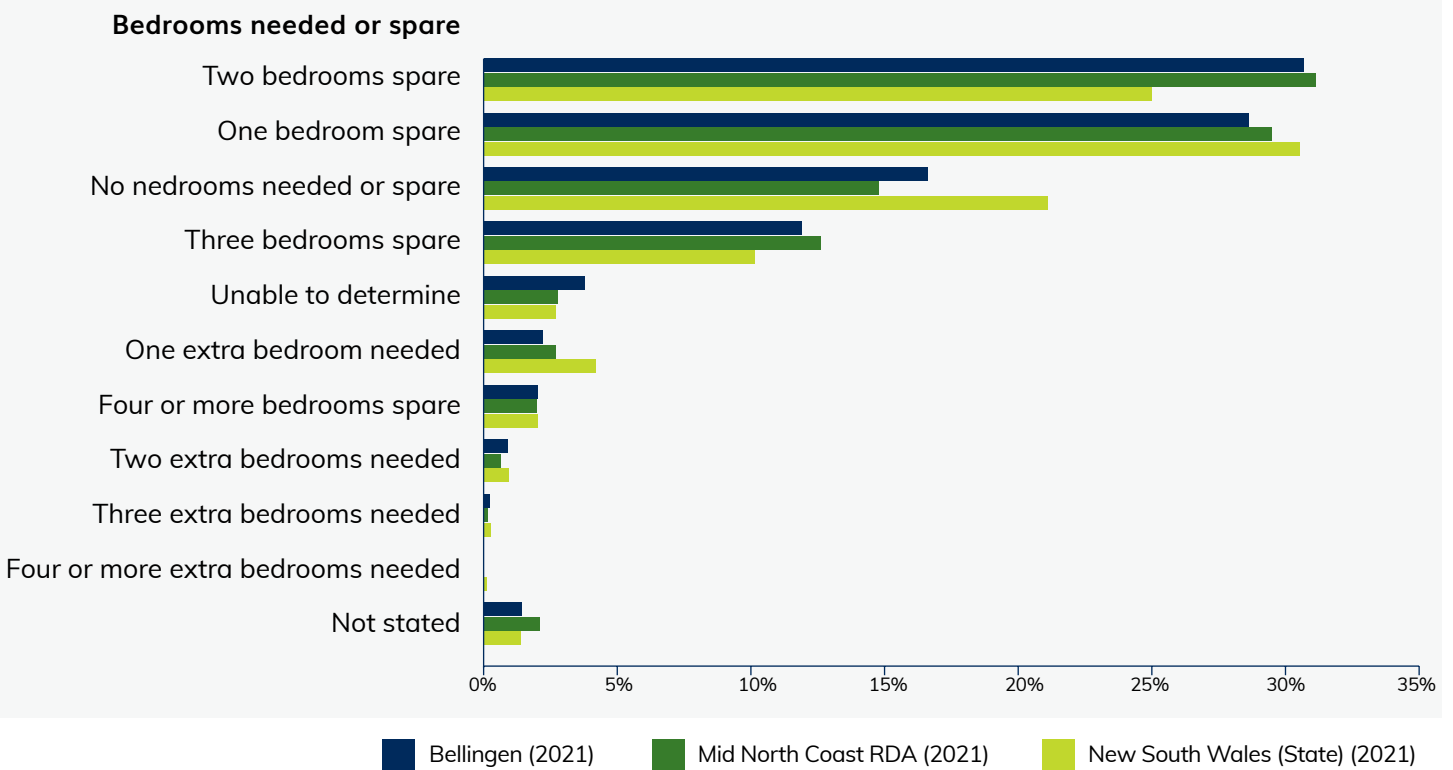
Long Term Health Conditions

There are 31.61% of Bellingen’s population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC’s overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in Bellingen, 74.49% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 3.37% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in Bellingen, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In Bellingen, 16.89% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparitively, the MNC is less at 15.02% but NSW is 21.48%



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. Bellingen’s SEIFA score is 283 / 547. Meaning, there are 264 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and 282 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

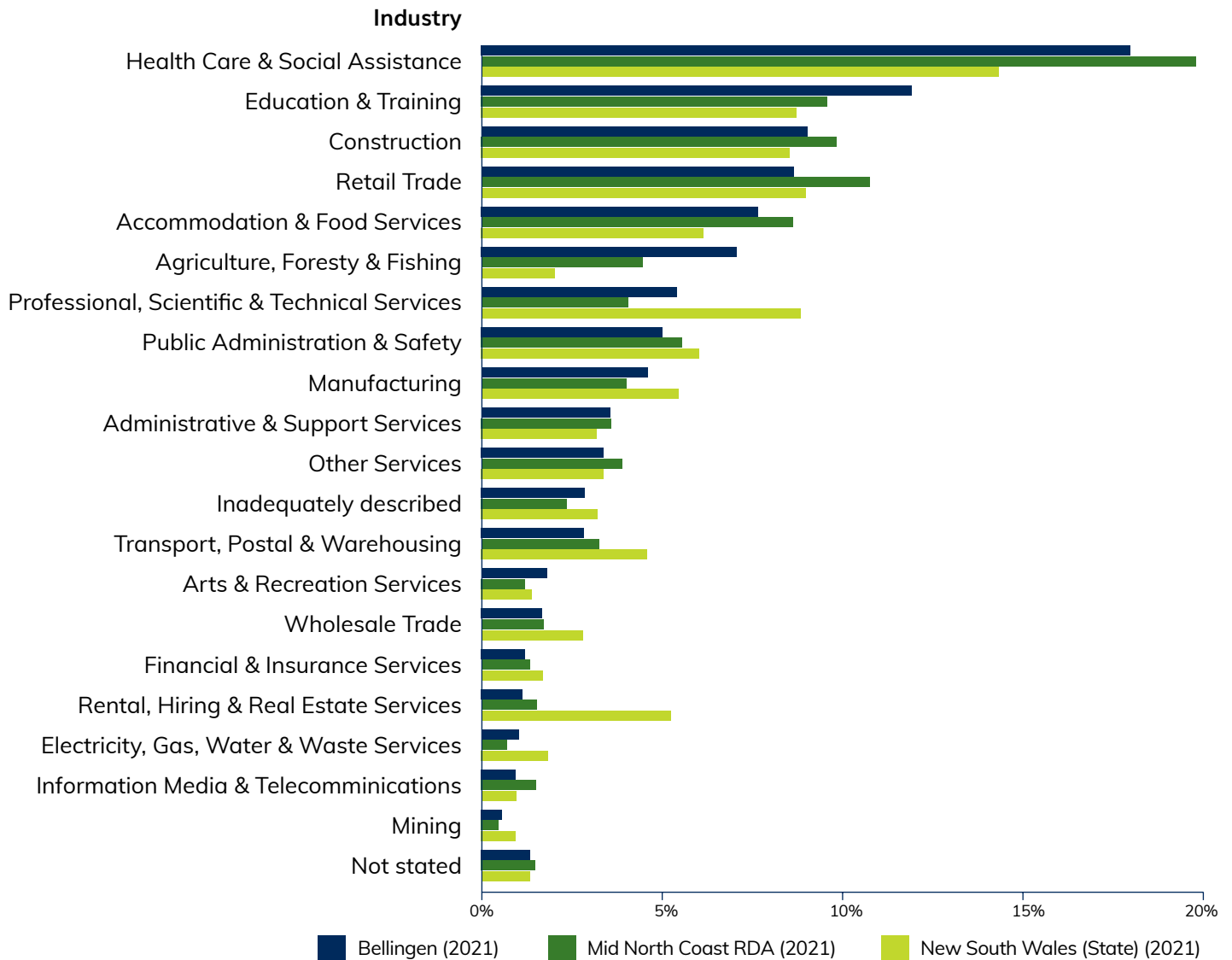
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in Bellingen are Health Care & Social Assistance, Education & Training and Construction. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as it's top industry of employment, however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical services are there other top two industries



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for Bellingen LGA:

- Has the smallest population in the MNC region.
- Has 4th largest land area in the region.
- Is the second highest level of advantage in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that Bellingen LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.



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Regional Snapshot

Coffs Harbour LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Coffs Harbour LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	78,759
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	1.5%
Median Age	44 years
Median Weekly Income	\$688
Labour force participation	55.51%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Coffs Harbour LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	36.9%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	5.79%
% of households with two people	37.33%
% of families not in the labour force	17.44%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	11.22%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	6.88%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	41.89%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	30%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	74.9%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	972
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	243/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Construction
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & Social Assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Management & Commerce

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAs in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	20	8	28
Disability Services	14	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	43	8	43
Primary School	27	12	30
High School	8	3	9
Special Schools	1	1	1
Higher education	3	2	4
Hospitals	3	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	15	10	23
Pharmacies	17	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	15	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	29	5	22

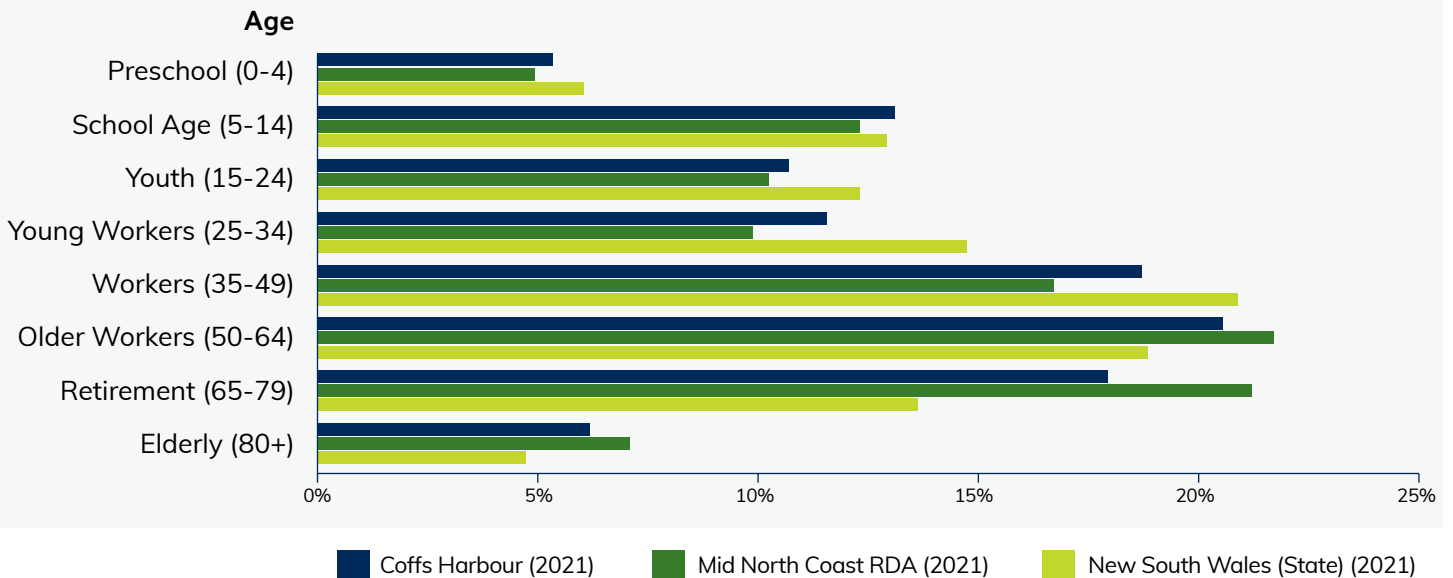
Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	5	4	20
Service NSW	1	1	2
Accountants	5	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	8	7	26
Financial planners	3	3	11
Transport Services	5	6	10
Major shopping centres	0	0	3
Supermarkets	7	7	16
Department stores	0	0	3
Sporting Clubs	20	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	5	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

Population by Life Stage

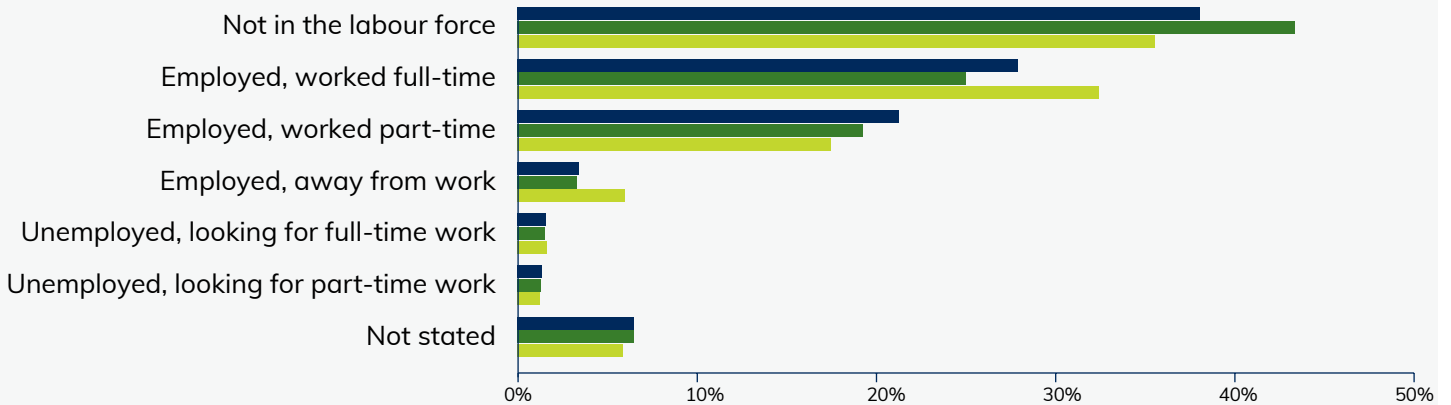
Coffs Harbour LGA has 36.9% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



Population by Labour Force

The Coffs Harbour LGA has 38% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison the MNC has 43.26% and NSW has 35.46%. Coffs Harbour LGA's full-time workforce percentage is greater than the MNC overall but lower than the state percentage.

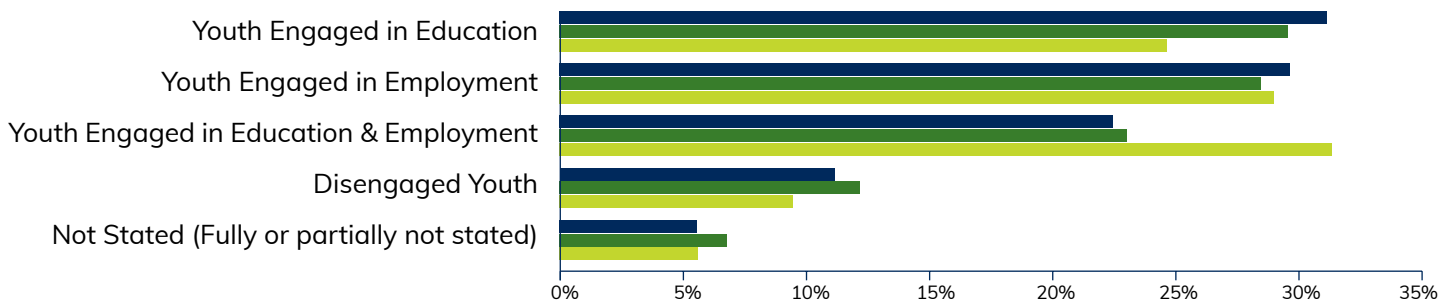
Labour Force Status



Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

11.22% of the Coffs Harbour LGA's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.

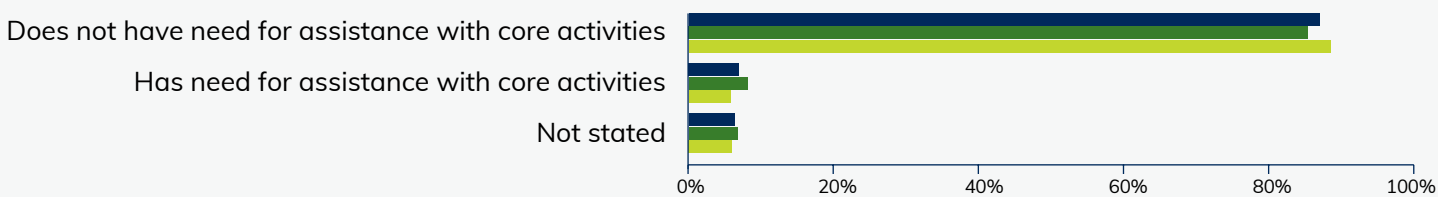
Youth 15-24 years



Need for assistance

Coffs Harbour LGA has 6.88% of its population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.

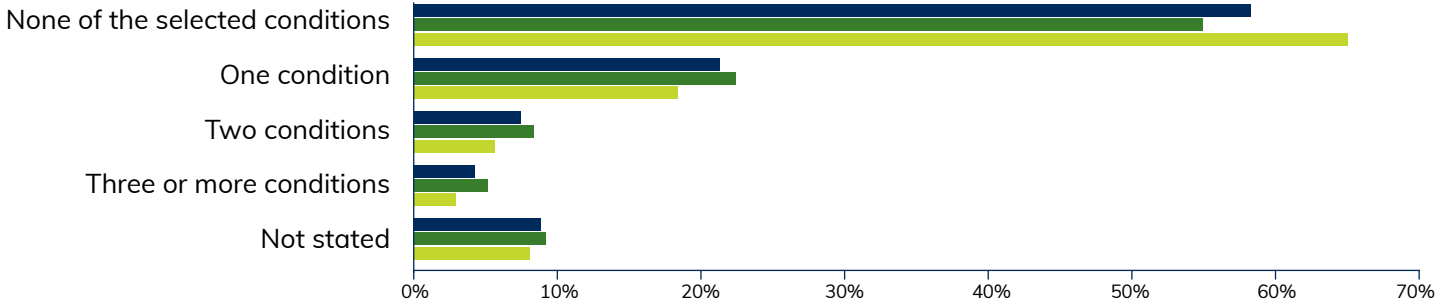
Need for assistance



Long Term Health Conditions

There are 33.03% of the Coffs Harbour LGA's population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC's overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.

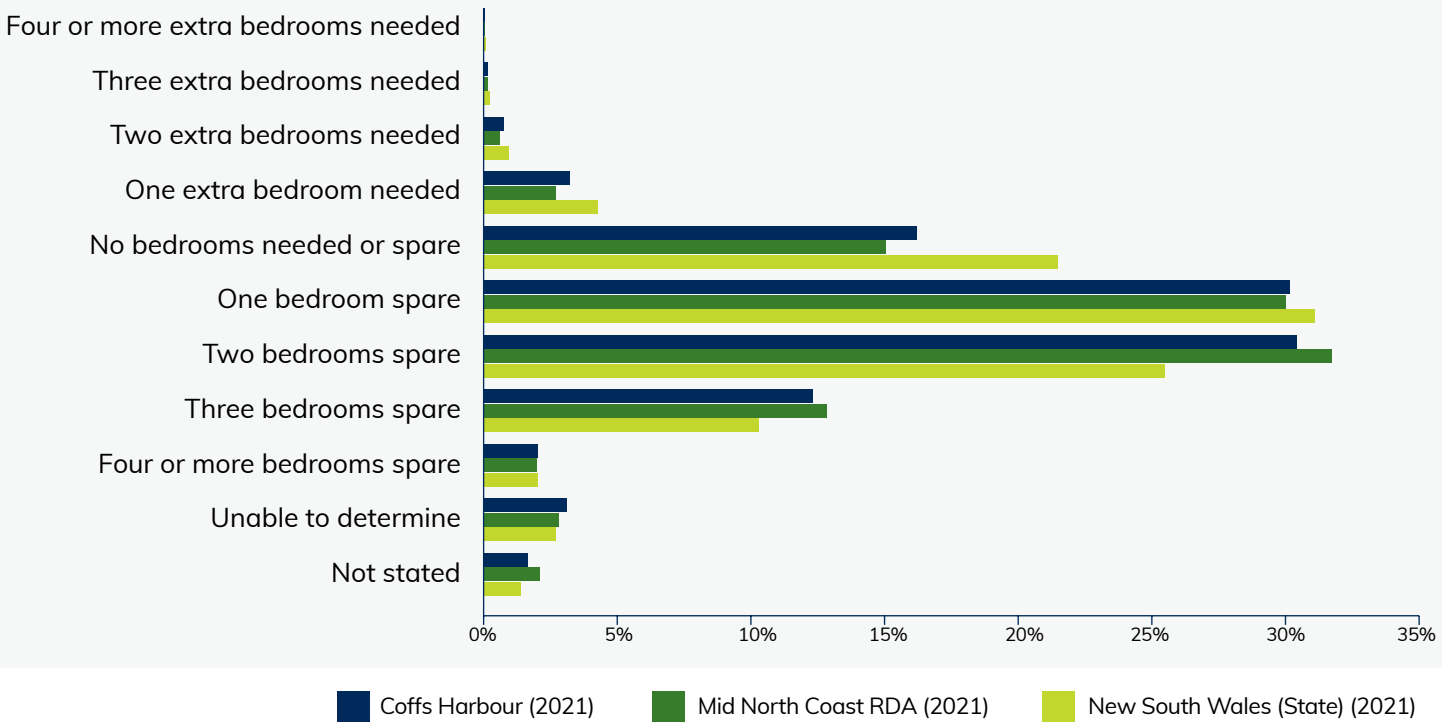
Number of Conditions



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in the Coffs Harbour LGA, 74.9% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 4.15% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in the Coffs Harbour LGA, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In the Coffs Harbour LGA, 16.06% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparitively, the MNC is less at 15.02% but NSW is 21.48%.

Bedrooms needed or spare



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. The Coffs Harbour LGA's SEIFA ranking is 243 / 547. Meaning, there are 304 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and 242 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

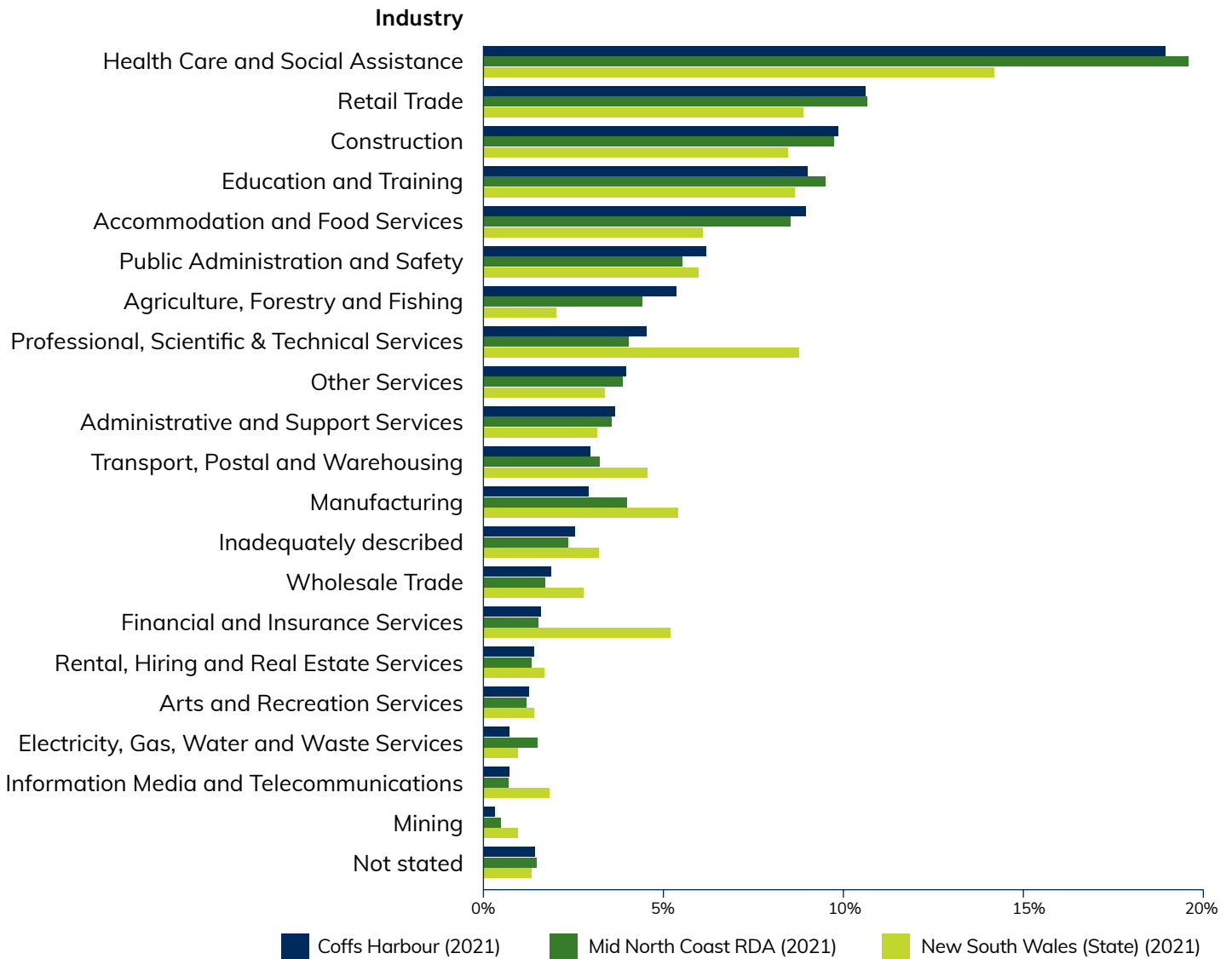
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in the Coffs Harbour LGA are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as its top industry of employment, however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical services are there other top two industries.



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for the Coffs Harbour LGA:

- Has the third highest population in the MNC region.
- Has the smallest land area in the region.
- Is the third most advantaged LGA in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that the Coffs Harbour LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.



An Australian Government Initiative



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MID NORTH COAST

Regional Snapshot

Kempsey Shire LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Kempsey Shire LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	30,688
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	1.2%
Median Age	48 years
Median Weekly Income	\$550
Labour force participation	44.88%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Kempsey Shire LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	42.1%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	12.91%
% of households with two people	37.26%
% of families not in the labour force	21.26%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	16.52%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	9.52%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	36.4%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	36.35%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	73.91%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	903
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	67/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Construction
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & Social Assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Engineering & related technologies

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAs in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	3	8	28
Disability Services	3	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	16	8	43
Primary School	16	12	30
High School	4	3	9
Special Schools	1	1	1
Higher education	2	2	4
Hospitals	1	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	11	10	23
Pharmacies	11	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	0	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	4	5	22

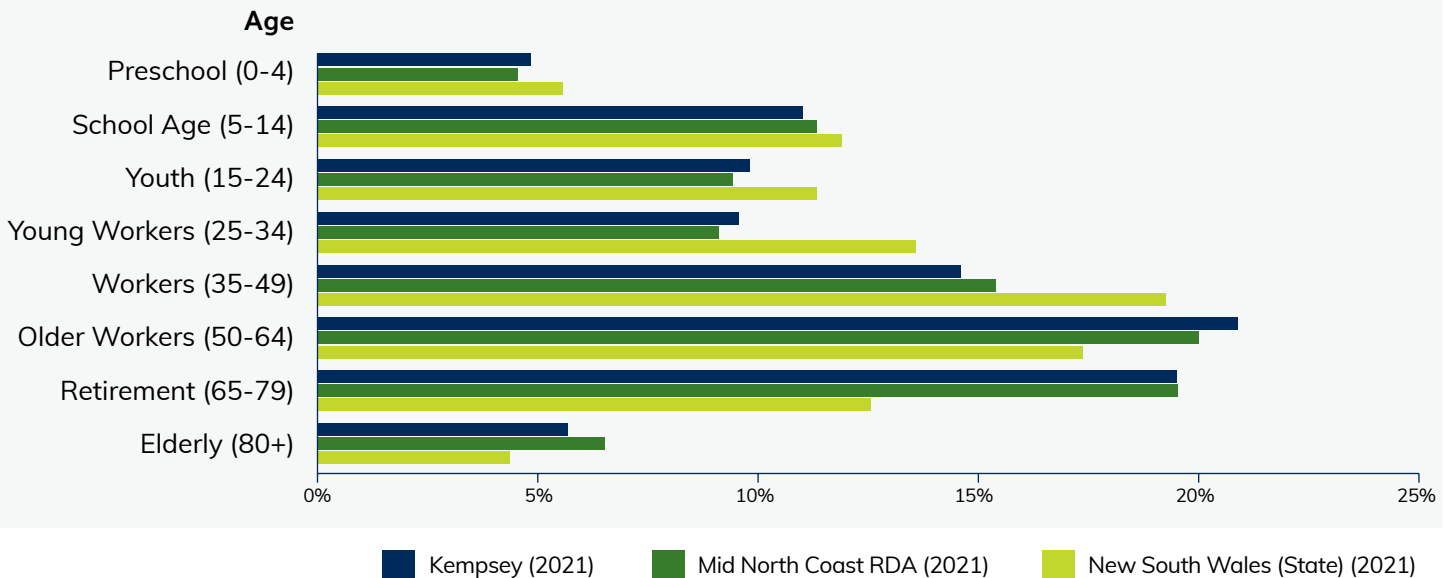
Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	5	4	20
Service NSW	1	1	2
Accountants	13	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	7	7	26
Financial planners	5	3	11
Transport Services	5	6	10
Major shopping centres	0	0	3
Supermarkets	8	7	16
Department stores	1	0	3
Sporting Clubs	23	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	6	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

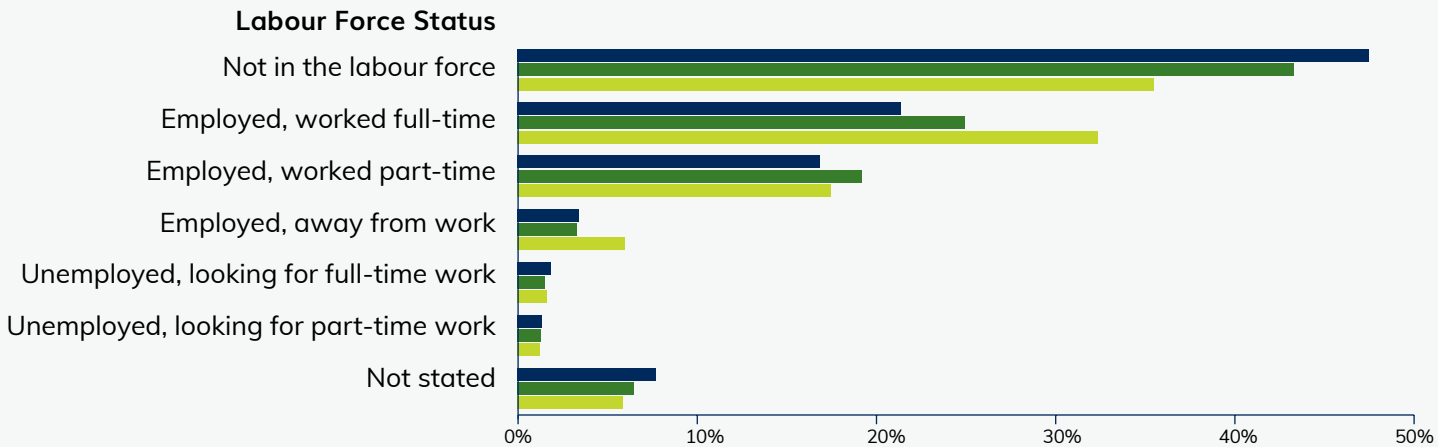
Population by Life Stage

Kempsey LGA has 42.1% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



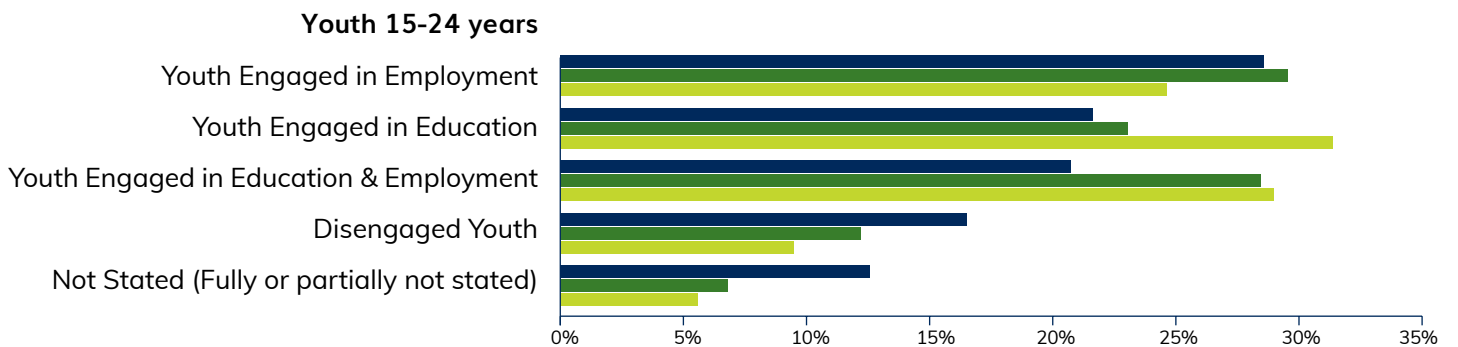
Population by Labour Force

The Kempsey Shire LGA has 47.43% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison the MNC has 43.26% and NSW has 35.46%. Kempsey Shire LGA's full-time workforce percentage is lower than both the MNC and New South Wales.



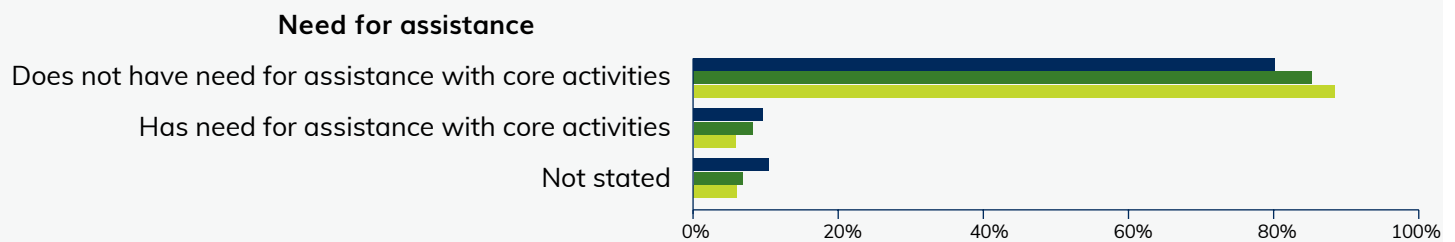
Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

16.52% of the Kempsey Shire LGA's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.



Need for assistance

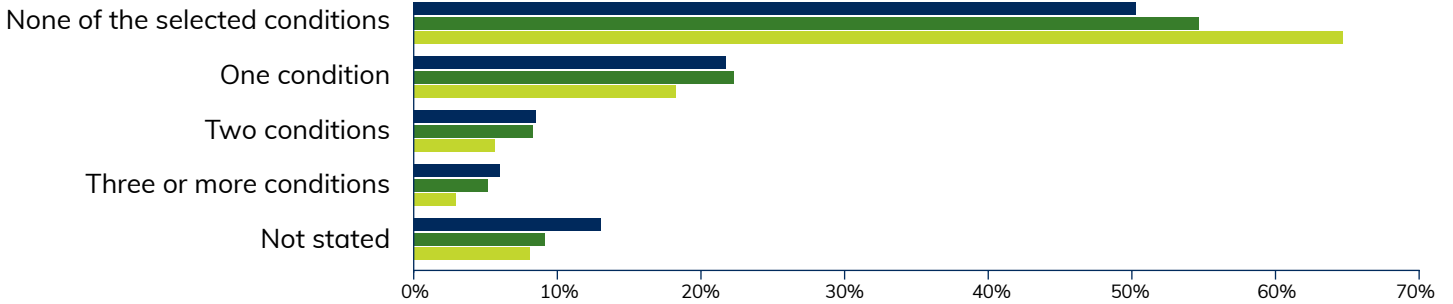
Kempsey Shire LGA has 9.52% of its population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.



Long Term Health Conditions

There are 36.4% of the Kempsey Shire LGA's population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC's overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.

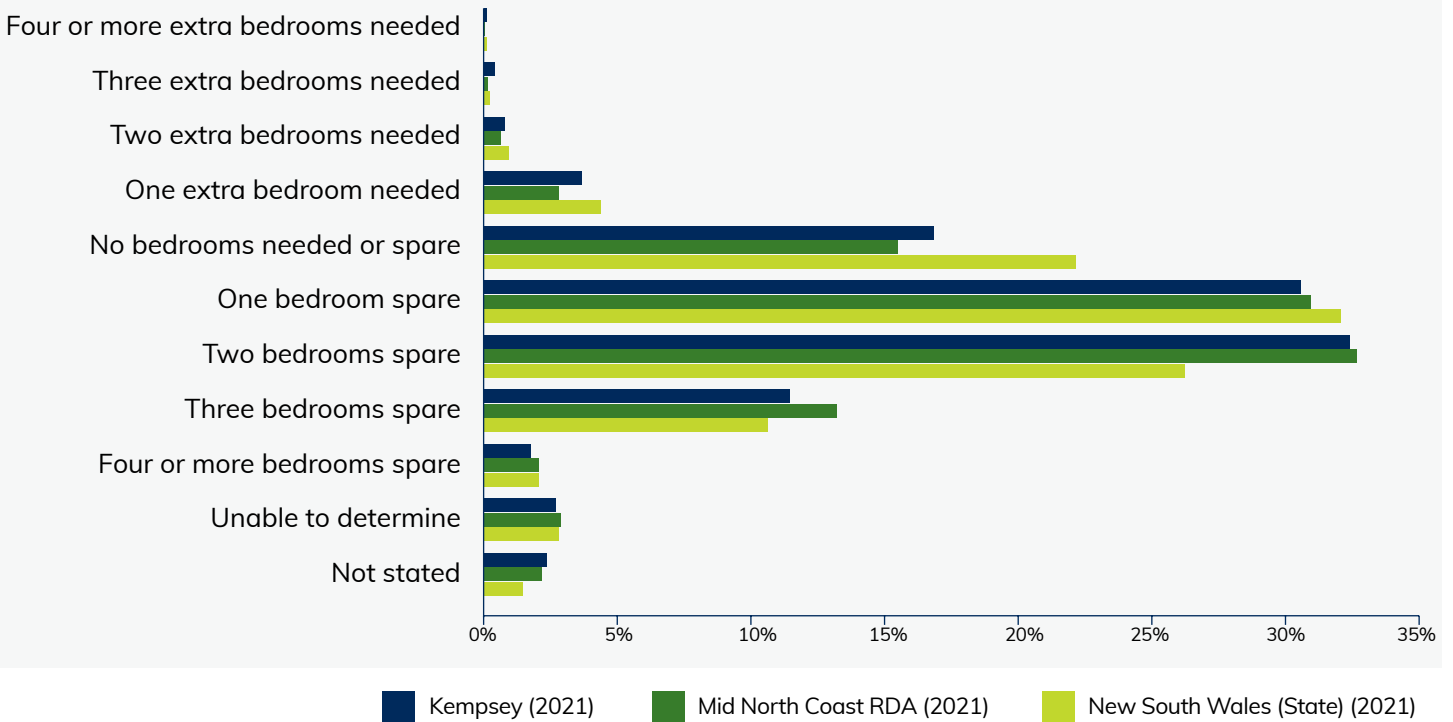
Number of Conditions



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in the Kempsey Shire LGA, 73.91% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 4.83% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in the Kempsey Shire, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In the Kempsey Shire LGA, 16.33% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparitively, the MNC is less at 15.02% but NSW is 21.48%.

Bedrooms needed or spare



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. The Kempsey Shire LGA's SEIFA ranking is 67 / 547. Meaning, there are 480 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and only 66 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

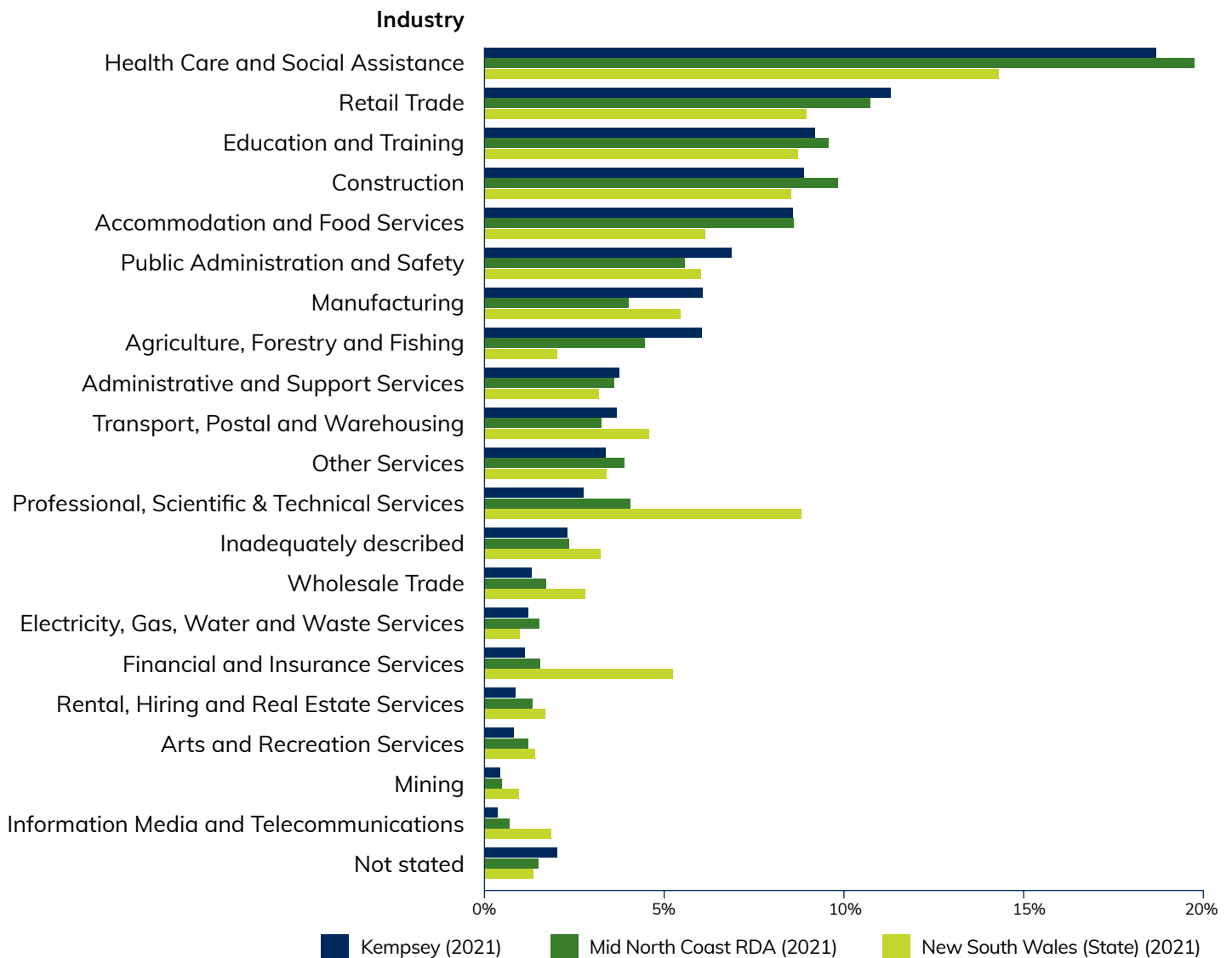
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in the Kempsey Shire LGA are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Education & Training. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as its top industry of employment, however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical services are there other top two industries.



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for the Kempsey LGA:

- Has the fourth highest population in the MNC region.
- Has the third largest land area in the region.
- Is the most disadvantaged LGA in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that the Kempsey Shire LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional Development Australia

MID NORTH COAST

Regional Snapshot

Midcoast LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services, and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Midcoast LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	96,579
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	1.4%
Median Age	54 years
Median Weekly Income	\$564
Labour force participation	43.94%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Midcoast LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	46.91%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	7.27%
% of households with two people	47%
% of families not in the labour force	26.68%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	14.44%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	9.02%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	39.13%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	39.68%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	78.62%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	943
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	138/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Construction
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, hiring & real estate services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & social assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Engineering & Related Technologies

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAs in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen, and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	38	8	28
Disability Services	13	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	46	8	43
Primary School	38	12	30
High School	8	3	9
Special Schools	0	1	1
Higher education	5	2	4
Hospitals	5	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	26	10	23
Pharmacies	26	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	7	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	18	5	22

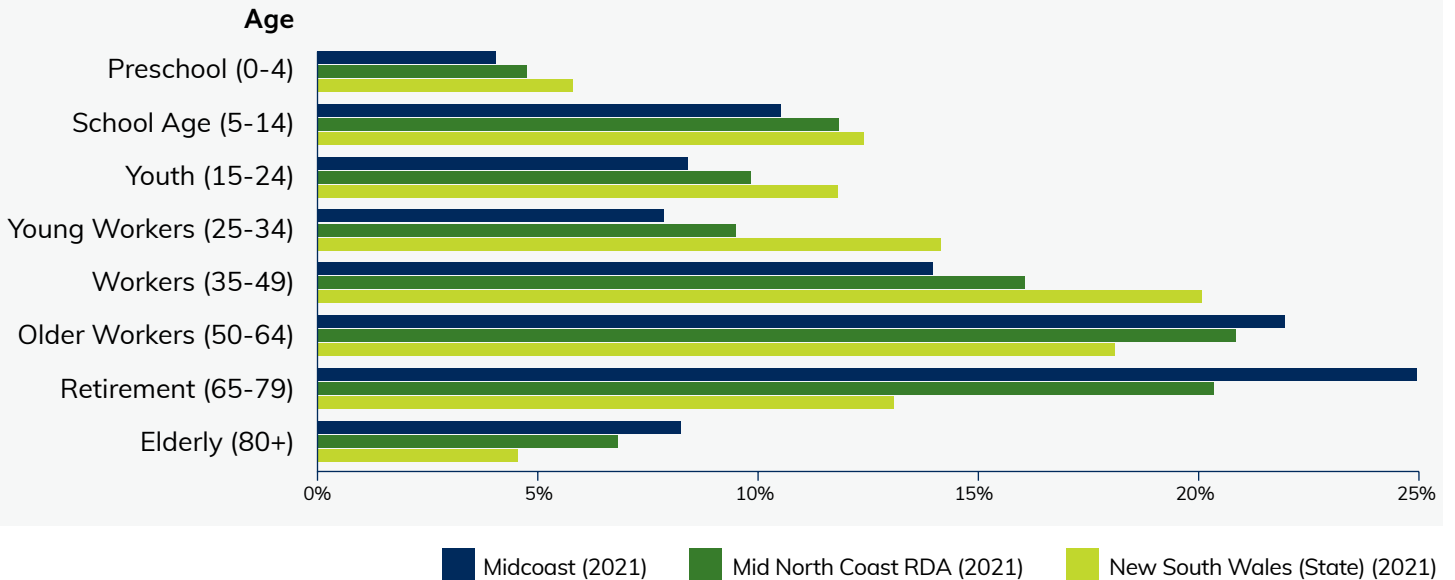
Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	14	4	20
Service NSW	3	1	2
Accountants	23	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	23	7	26
Financial planners	10	3	11
Transport Services	11	6	10
Major shopping centres	4	0	3
Supermarkets	18	7	16
Department stores	3	0	3
Sporting Clubs	76	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	24	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

Population by Life Stage

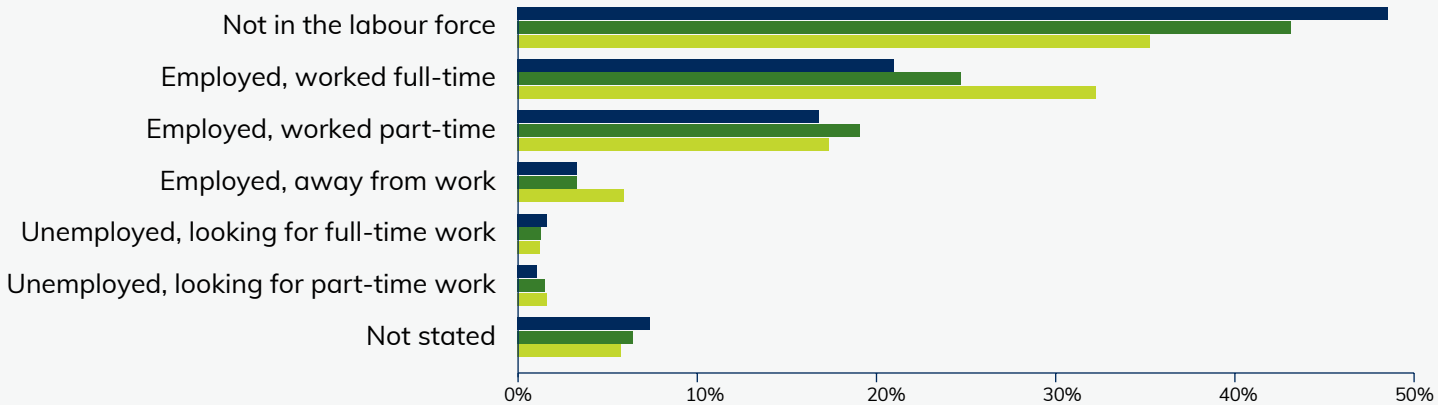
Midcoast LGA has 46.91% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



Population by Labour Force

The Midcoast LGA has 48.64% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison, the MNC has 43.26% and NSW has 35.46%. Midcoast full-time workforce percentage is higher than the MNC overall and lower than the state percentage.

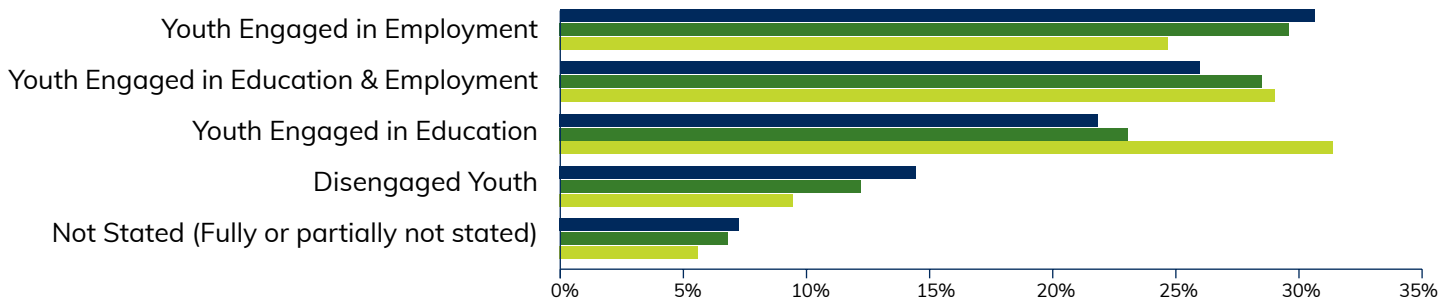
Labour Force Status



Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

14.44% of the Midcoast LGA's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.

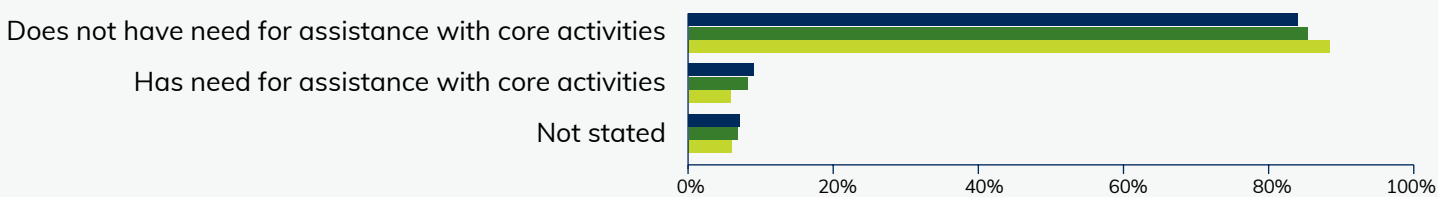
Youth 15-24 years



Need for assistance

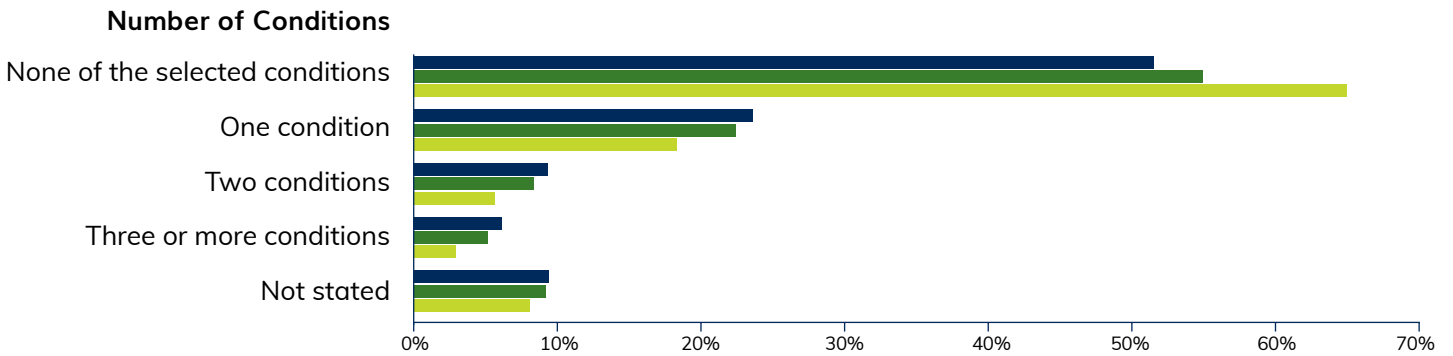
Midcoast has 9.02% of its population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.

Need for assistance



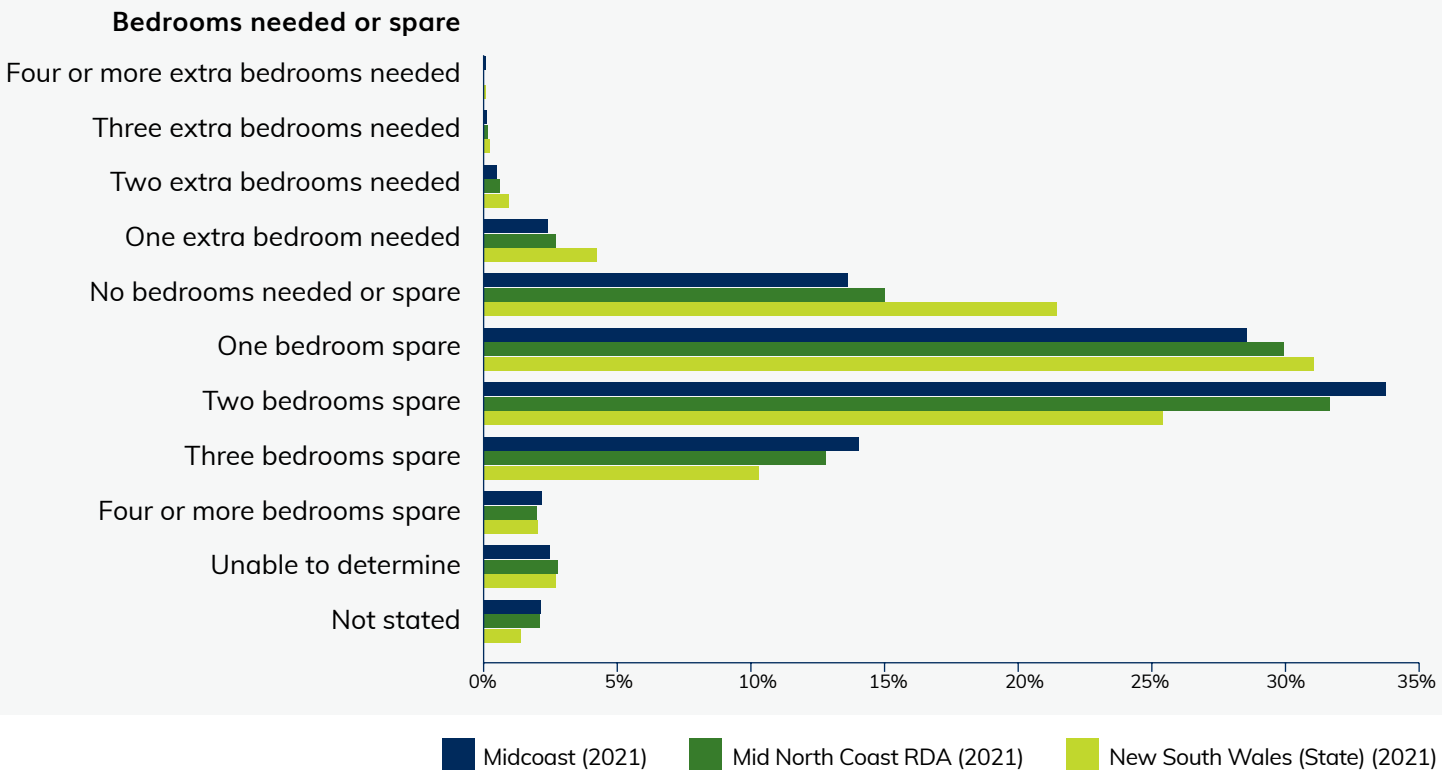
Long Term Health Conditions

There are 39.13% of the Midcoast population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC's overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in the Midcoast LGA, 78.62% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 3.1% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in the Midcoast LGA, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In the Midcoast LGA, 13.64% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparatively, the MNC is more at 15.02% and NSW is 21.48%.



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. The Midcoast LGA SEIFA ranking is 138 / 547. Meaning, there are 409 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and 137 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

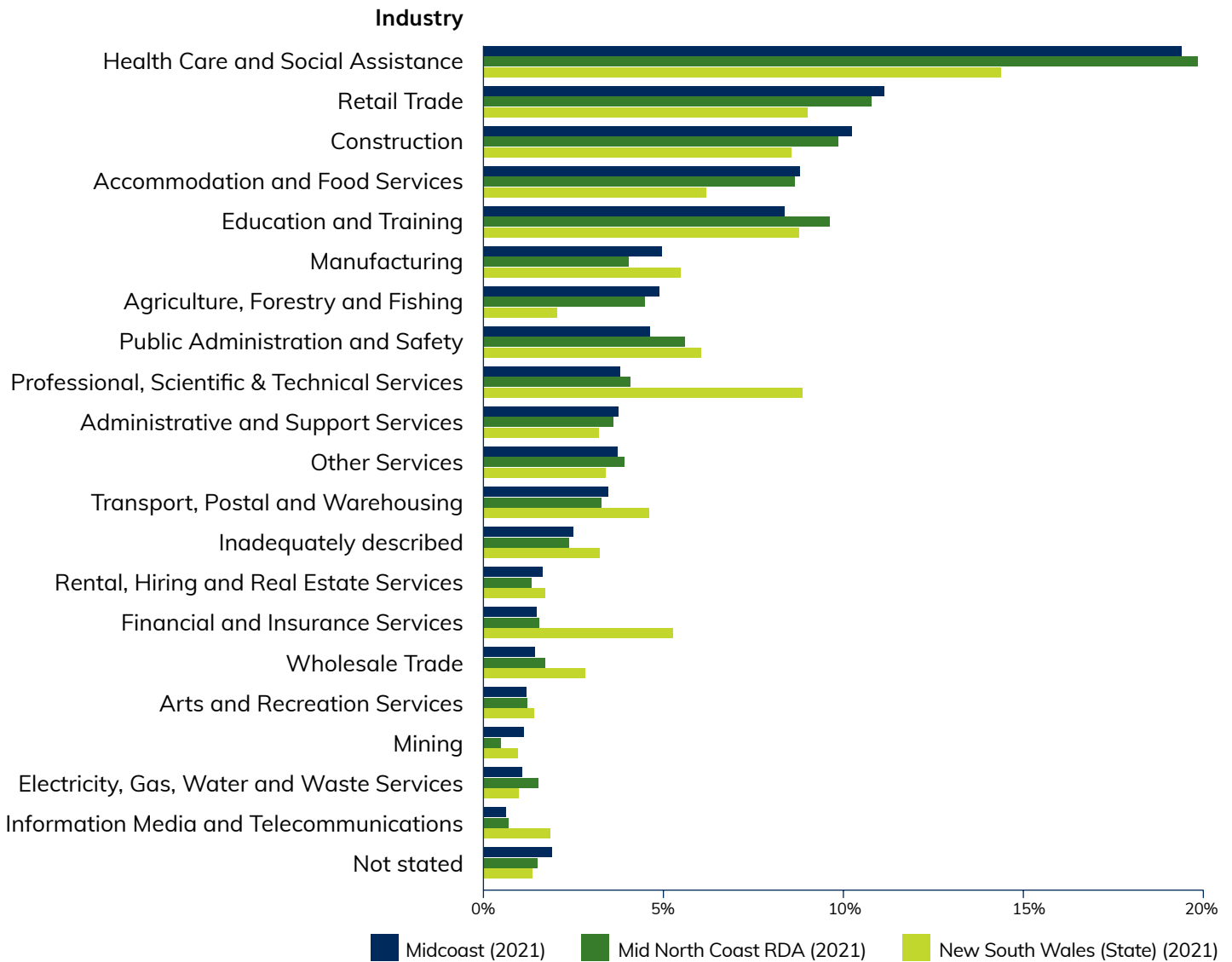
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in the Midcoast LGA are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as its top industry of employment; however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific, and technical services are there other top two industries.



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for the Midcoast LGA:

- Has the largest population in the MNC region.
- Has the largest land area in the region.
- Is the third most disadvantaged LGA in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that the Midcoast LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.



An Australian Government Initiative



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Regional Snapshot

Nambucca LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Nambucca Valley LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	20,407
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	1.2%
Median Age	52 years
Median Weekly Income	\$525
Labour force participation	44.23%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Nambucca Valley LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	45.67%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	8.01%
% of households with two people	42.38%
% of families not in the labour force	22.65%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	14.73%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	9.33%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	37.66%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	38.74%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	74.94%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	920
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	91/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Manufacturing
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, hiring & real estate services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & social assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Engineering & related technologies

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAS in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	10	8	28
Disability Services	6	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	8	8	43
Primary School	10	12	30
High School	4	3	9
Special Schools	0	1	1
Higher education	3	2	4
Hospitals	1	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	14	10	23
Pharmacies	8	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	0	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	9	5	22

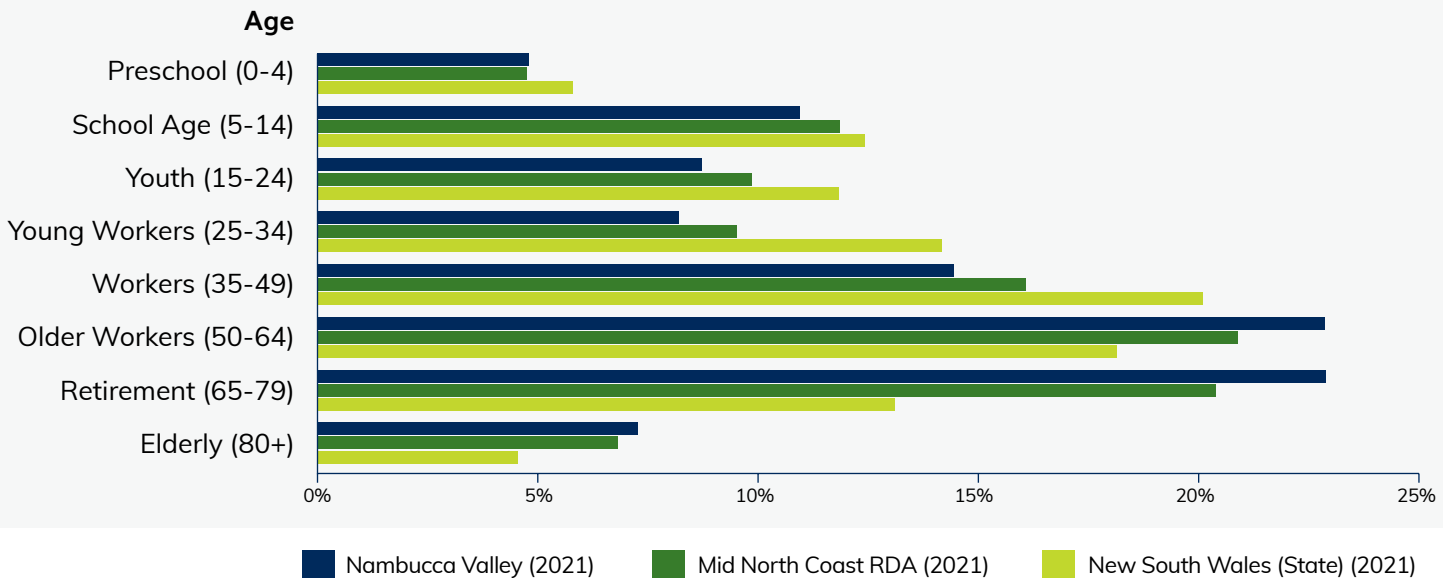
Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	5	4	20
Service NSW	1	1	2
Accountants	5	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	8	7	26
Financial planners	3	3	11
Transport Services	5	6	10
Major shopping centres	0	0	3
Supermarkets	7	7	16
Department stores	0	0	3
Sporting Clubs	20	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	5	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

Population by Life Stage

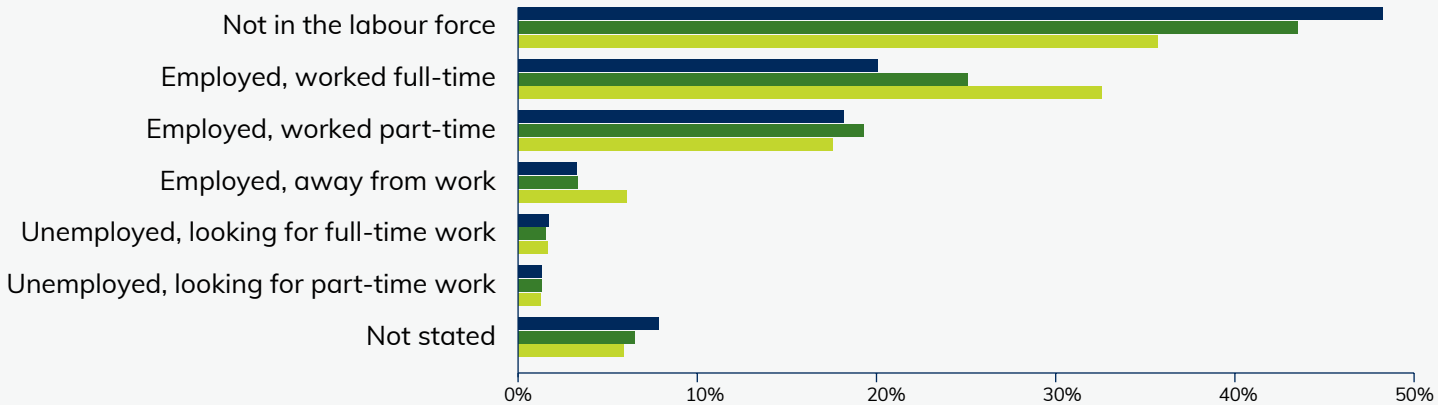
Nambucca Valley has 45.67% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



Population by Labour Force

Nambucca Valley has 47.97% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison the MNC has 43.26% and NSW has 35.46%. Nambucca Valley's full-time workforce percentage is less than the MNC overall and significantly lower than the state percentage.

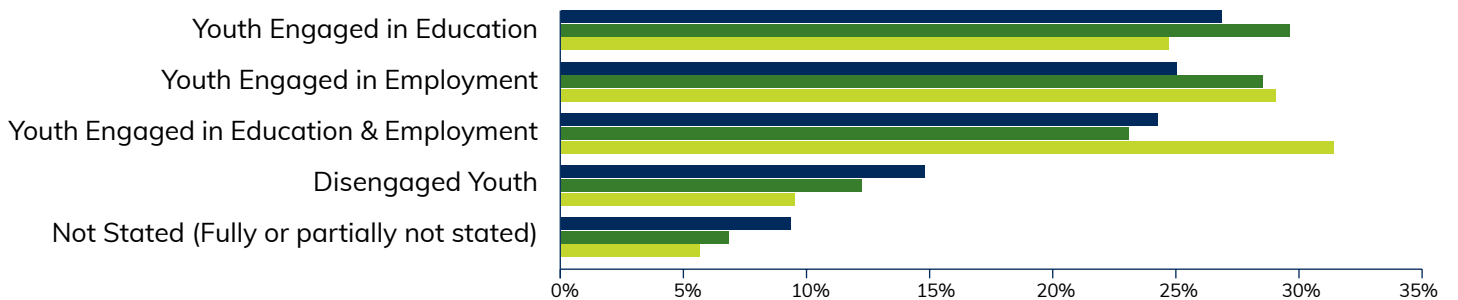
Labour Force Status



Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

14.73% of the Nambucca Valley's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.

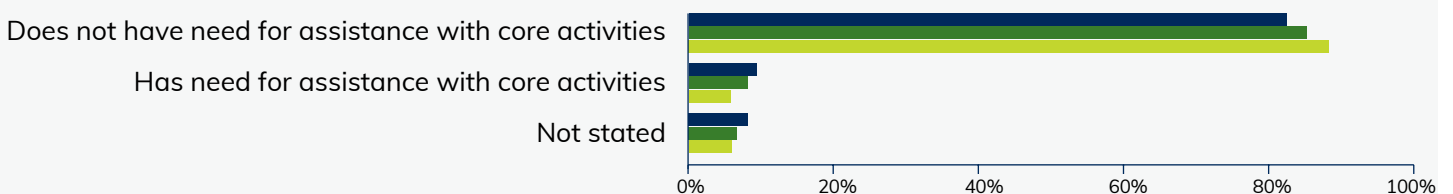
Youth 15-24 years



Need for assistance

Nambucca Valley has 9.33% of its population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.

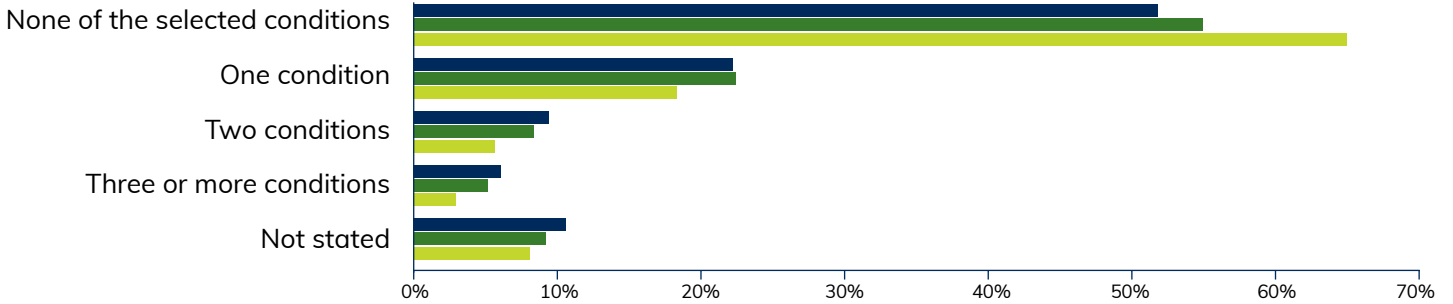
Need for assistance



Long Term Health Conditions

There are 37.66% of the Nambucca Valley’s population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC’s overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.

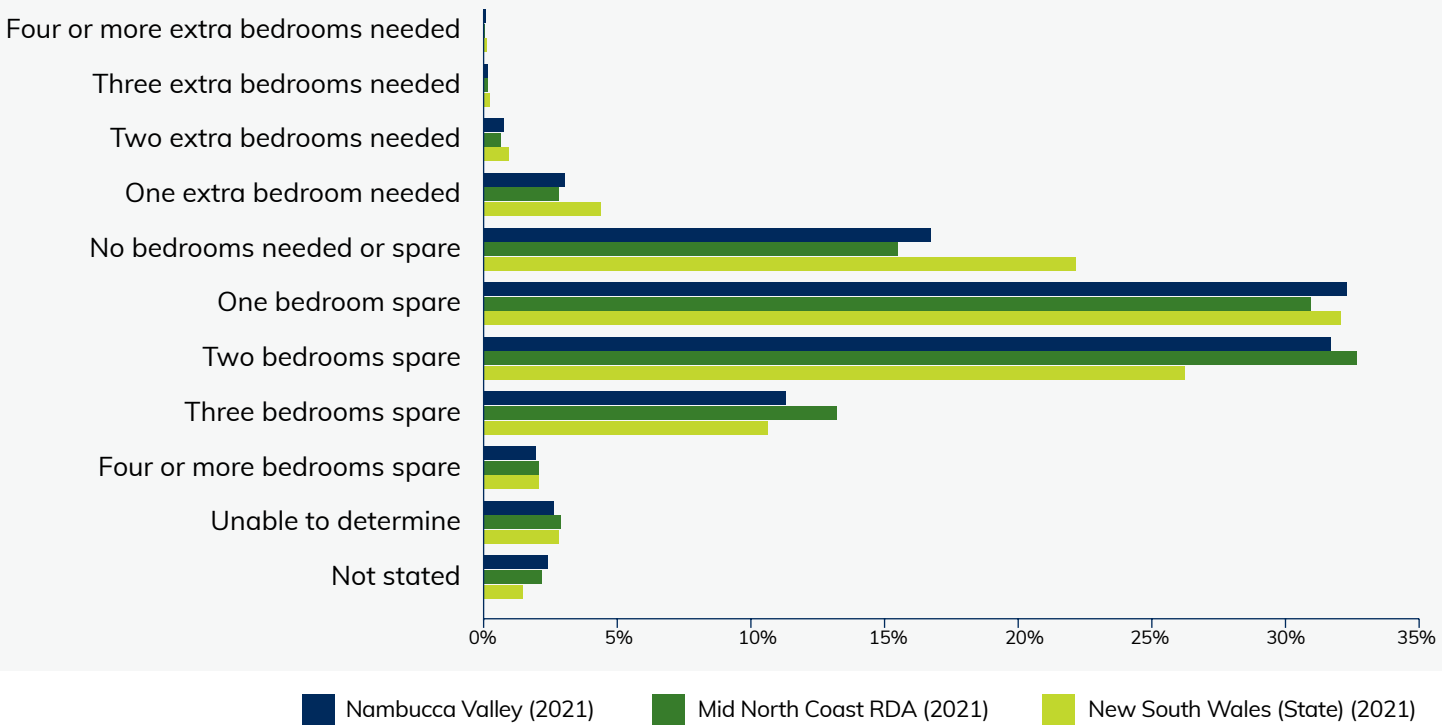
Number of Conditions



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in the Nambucca Valley, 74.94% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 3.93% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in the Nambucca Valley, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In the Nambucca Valley, 16.23% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparitively, the MNC is less at 15.02% but NSW is 21.48%.

Bedrooms needed or spare



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. The Nambucca Valley’s SEIFA ranking is 91 / 547. Meaning, there are 456 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and 90 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

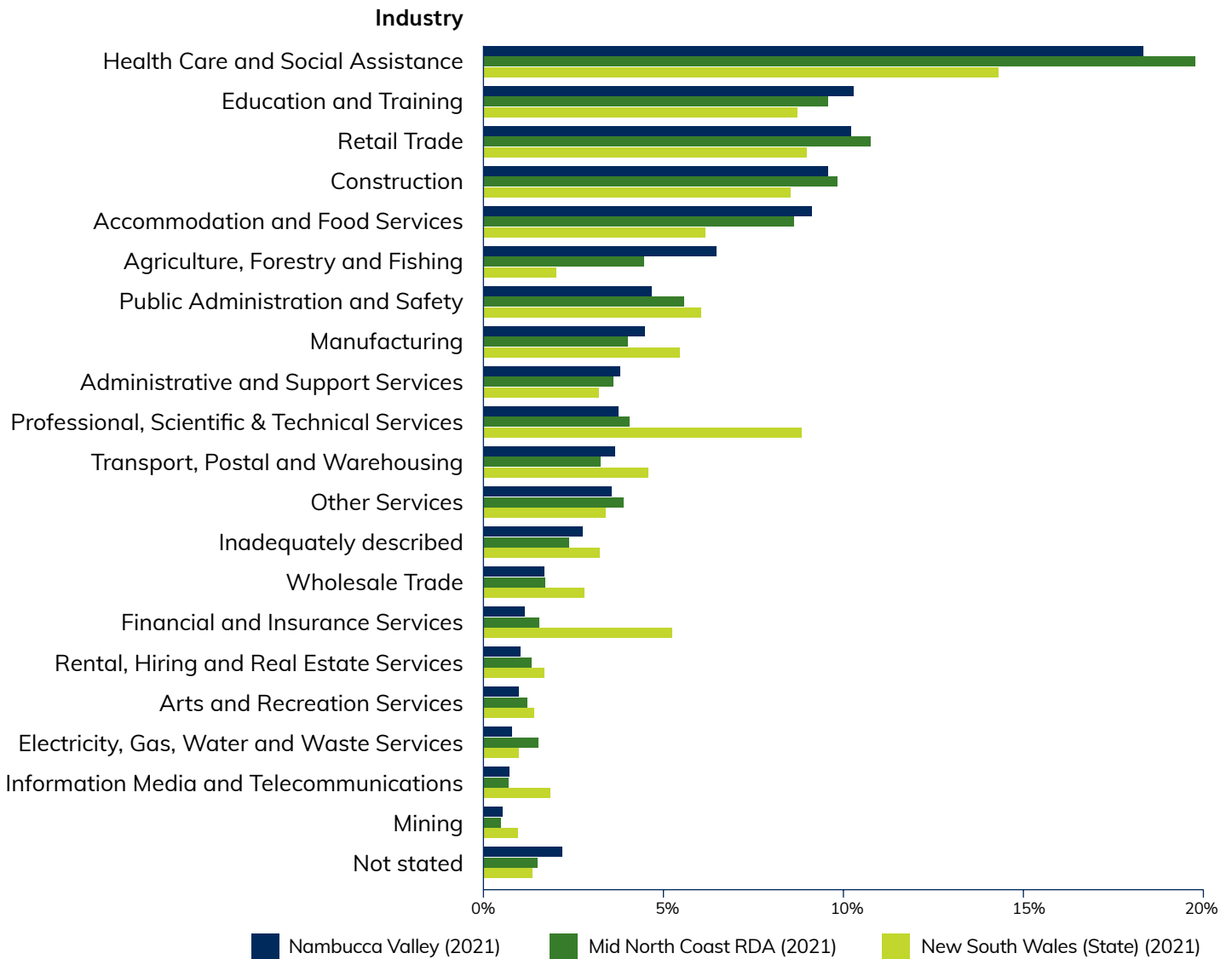
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in the Nambucca Valley are Health Care & Social Assistance, Education & Training and Retail Trade. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as its top industry of employment, however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical services are there other top two industries.



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for the Nambucca Valley LGA:

- Has the second lowest population in the MNC region.
- Has 3rd largest land area in the region.
- Is the second most disadvantaged LGA in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that the Nambucca Valley LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional Development Australia

MID NORTH COAST

Regional Snapshot

Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services, and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	86,762
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	2%
Median Age	49 years
Median Weekly Income	\$647
Labour force participation	51.28%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Kempsley Shire LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	41.43%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	5.45%
% of households with two people	42.31%
% of families not in the labour force	22.16%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	9.23%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	8.28%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	37.17%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	35.07%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	79.1%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	985
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	295/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Construction
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, hiring & real estate services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & social assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Management & Commerce

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAS in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen, and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	26	8	28
Disability Services	13	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	37	8	43
Primary School	25	12	30
High School	10	3	9
Special Schools	2	1	1
Higher education	5	2	4
Hospitals	3	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	29	10	23
Pharmacies	25	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	12	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	19	5	22

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	23	4	20
Service NSW	2	1	2
Accountants	39	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	26	7	26
Financial planners	15	3	11
Transport Services	12	6	10
Major shopping centres	2	0	3
Supermarkets	16	7	16
Department stores	3	0	3
Sporting Clubs	55	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	21	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

Population by Life Stage

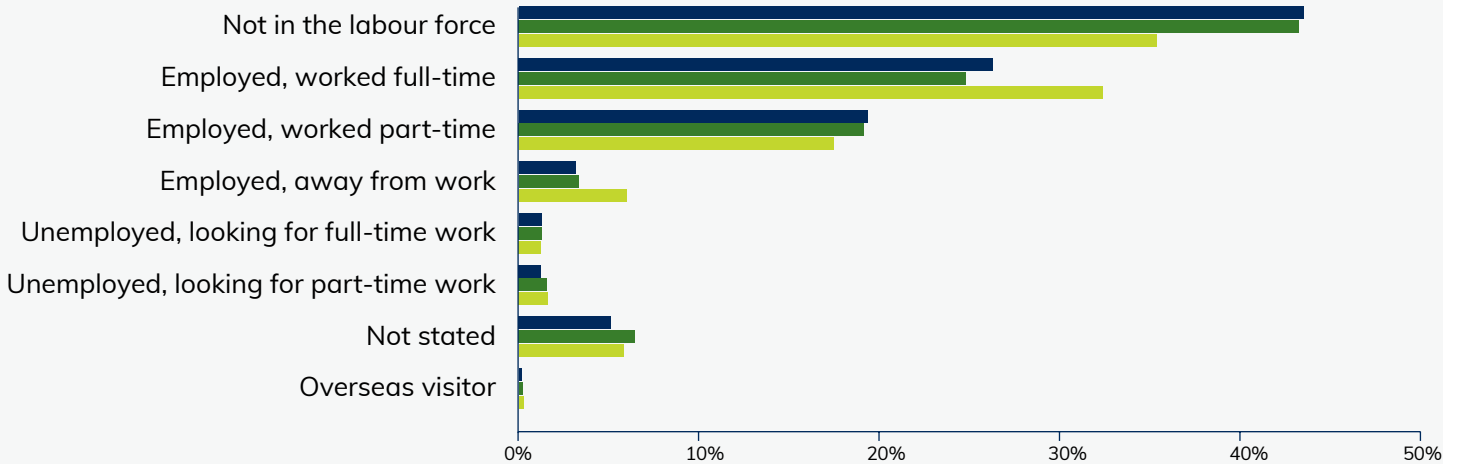
Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA has 41.43% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



Population by Labour Force

The Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA has 43.48% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison, the MNC has 43.26% and NSW has 35.46%. Port Macquarie-Hastings full-time workforce percentage is higher than the MNC overall and lower than the state percentage.

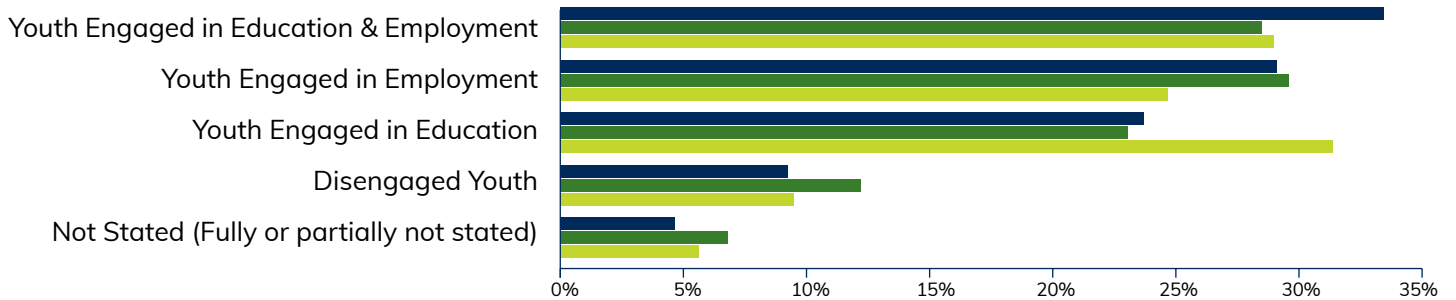
Labour Force Status



Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

9.23% of the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.

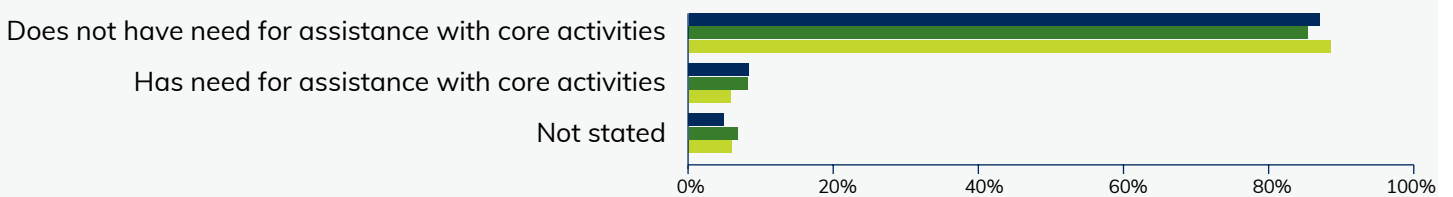
Youth 15-24 years



Need for assistance

Port Macquarie-Hastings has 8.28% of its population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.

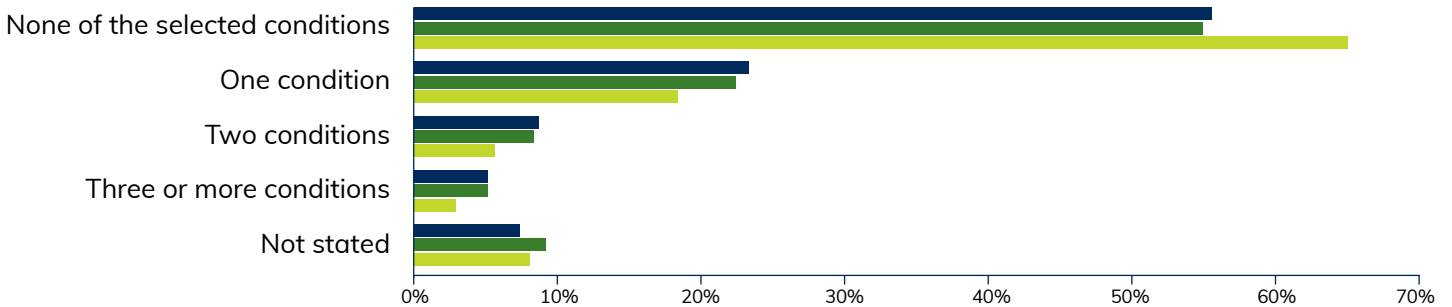
Need for assistance



Long Term Health Conditions

There are 37.17% of the Port Macquarie-Hastings population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC's overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.

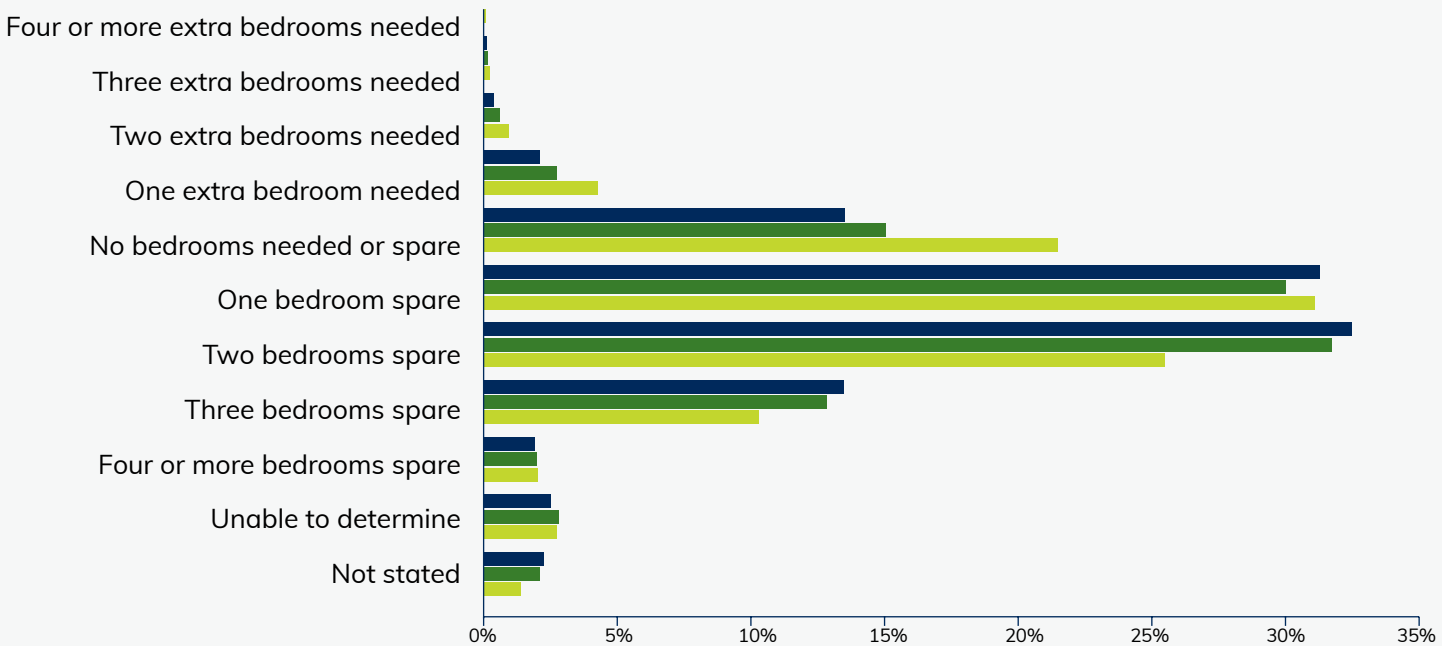
Number of Conditions



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA, 79.1% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 2.64% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA, 13.49% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparatively, the MNC is more at 15.02% and NSW is 21.48%.

Bedrooms needed or spare



■ Port Macquarie-Hastings (2021)
 ■ Mid North Coast RDA (2021)
 ■ New South Wales (State) (2021)

SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. The Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA SEIFA ranking is 295 / 547. Meaning, there are 252 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and 294 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

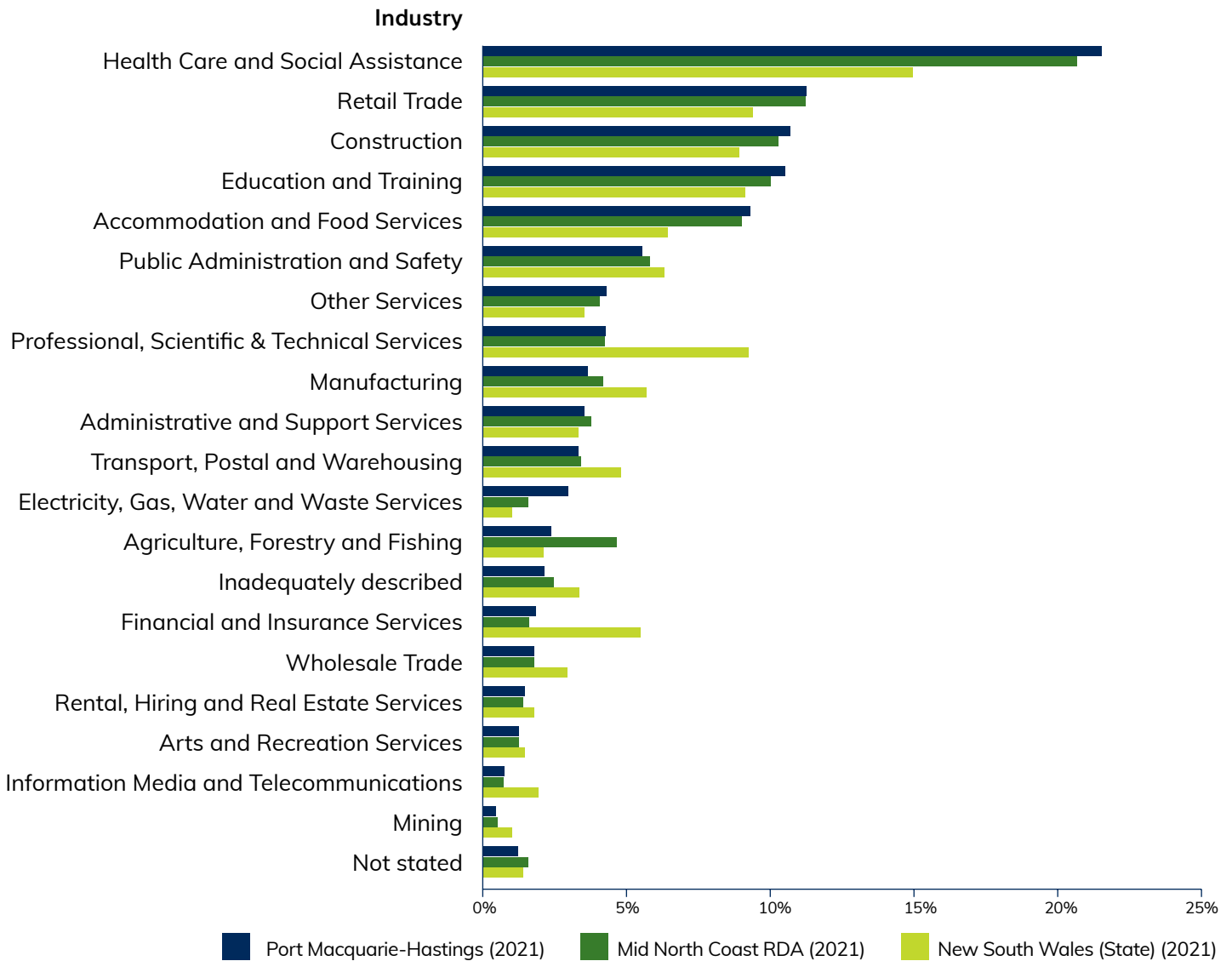
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as its top industry of employment; however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific, and technical services are there other top two industries.



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA:

- Has the second largest population in the MNC region.
- Has second largest land area in the region.
- Is the most advantaged LGA in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional Development Australia

MID NORTH COAST

Regional Snapshot

Lord Howe Island

September 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services, and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for Lord Howe Island.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	445
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	3.2%
Median Age	45 years
Median Weekly Income	\$946
Labour force participation	65.17%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for Lord Howe Island that are relevant to RDAMNC's work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

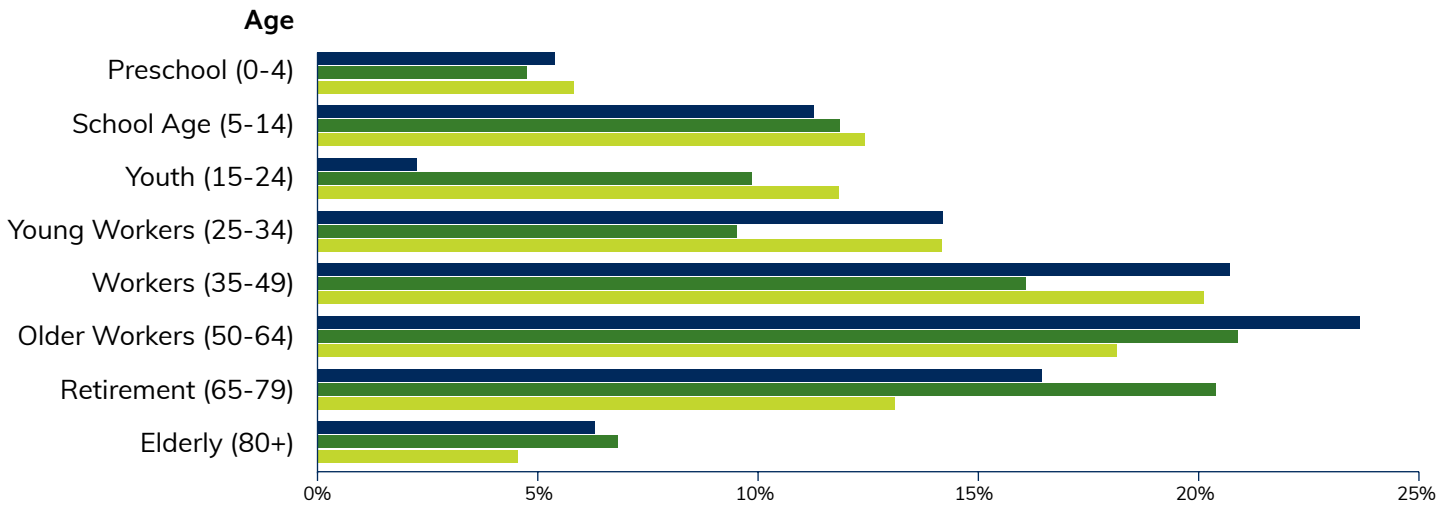
Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	40%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	1.12%
% of households with two people	43.59%
% of families not in the labour force	10.95%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	0%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	2.7%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	21.13%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	35.38%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	67.24%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	1053
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	1726/2353
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Accommodation & Food Services
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Accommodation & Food Services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Accommodation & Food Service
Highest ranking field of study	Engineering & related technologies

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Lord Howe Island Comparisons

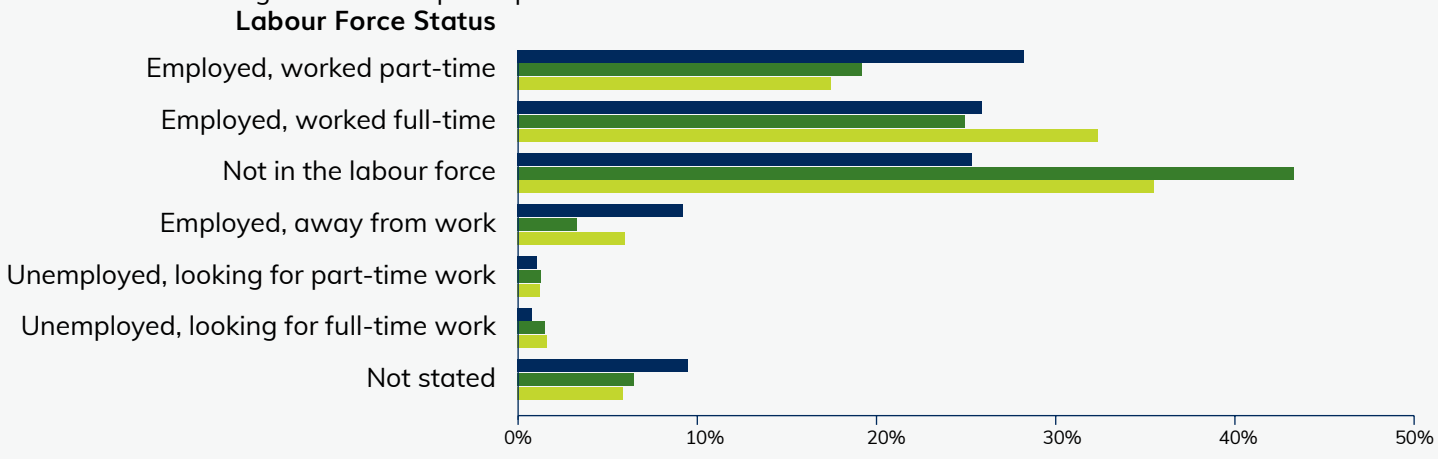
Population by Life Stage

Lord Howe Island has 40% of the population as older workers or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



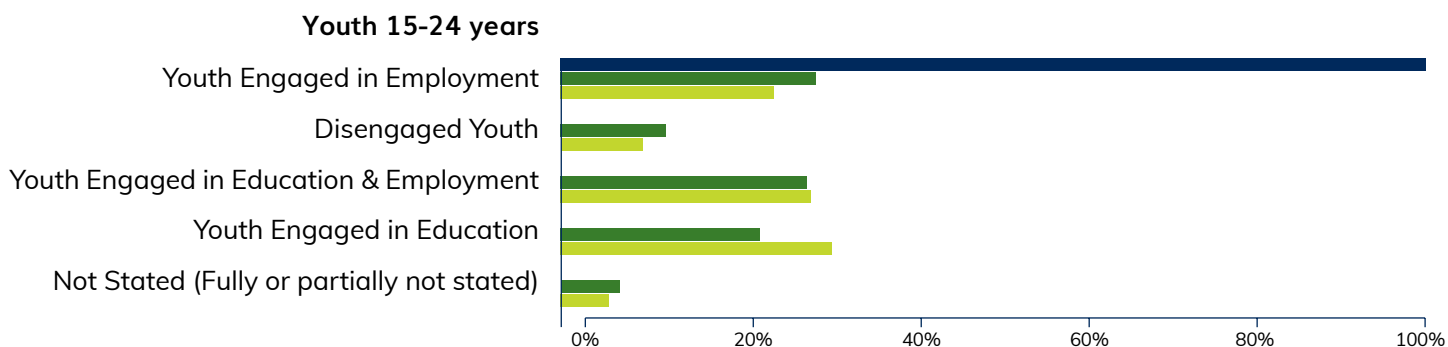
Population by Labour Force

Lord Howe Island has 25.33% of the population not in the labour force. This statistic is in stark contrast to the MNC which has a much higher percentage of the population not in the workforce at 43.26% and NSW has 35.46%. This statistic shows greater labour participation rates on Lord Howe Island than that of the MNC and NSW overall.



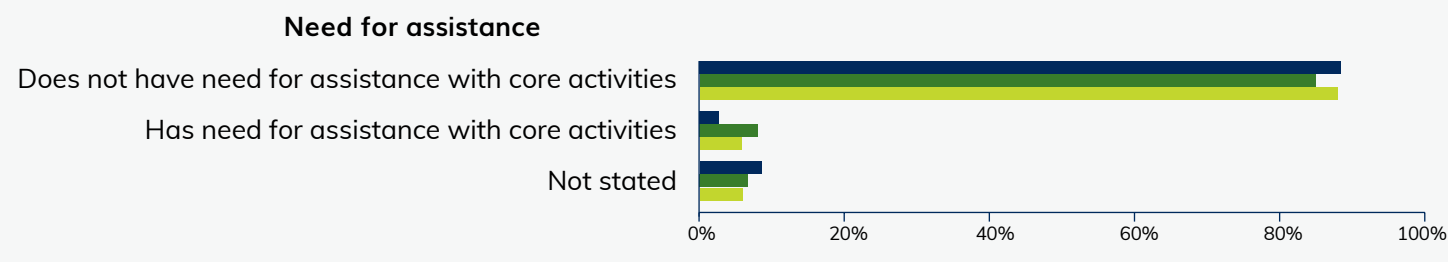
Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

0% of Lord Howe Island's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. The MNC has 12.19% youth disengagement and NSW has 9.46%.



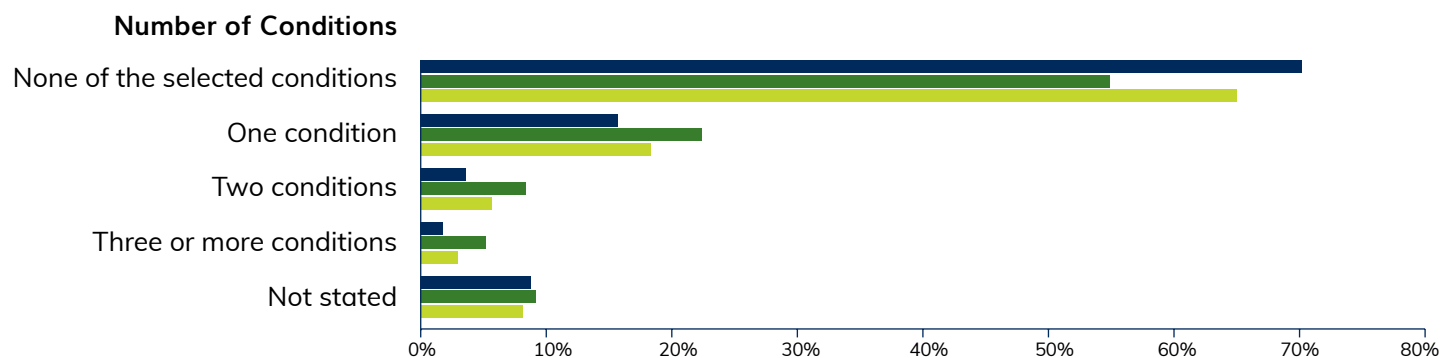
Need for assistance

Lord Howe Island has 2.7% of its population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.



Long Term Health Conditions

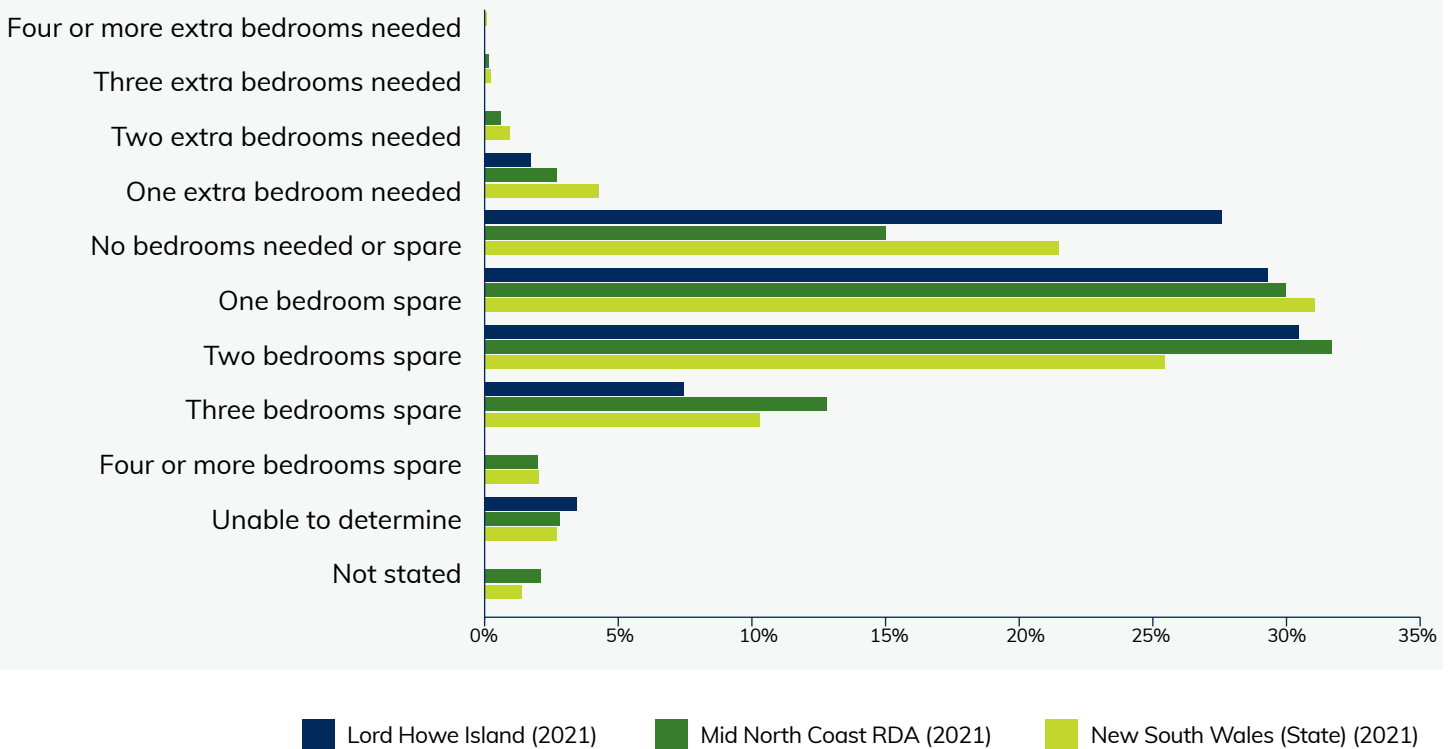
There are 21.13% of Lord Howe Island's population is living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC's overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures on Lord Howe Island, 67.24% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 1.72% of dwellings need additional bedrooms on Lord Howe Island, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. 27.59% of dwellings on Lord Howe Island have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparatively, the MNC is less at 15.02% and NSW is 21.48%.

Bedrooms needed or spare



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. Lord Howe Island's SEIFA score is 1053 and is higher than any of the LGAs on the Mid North Coast, meaning they are classified as being more advantaged than those areas.

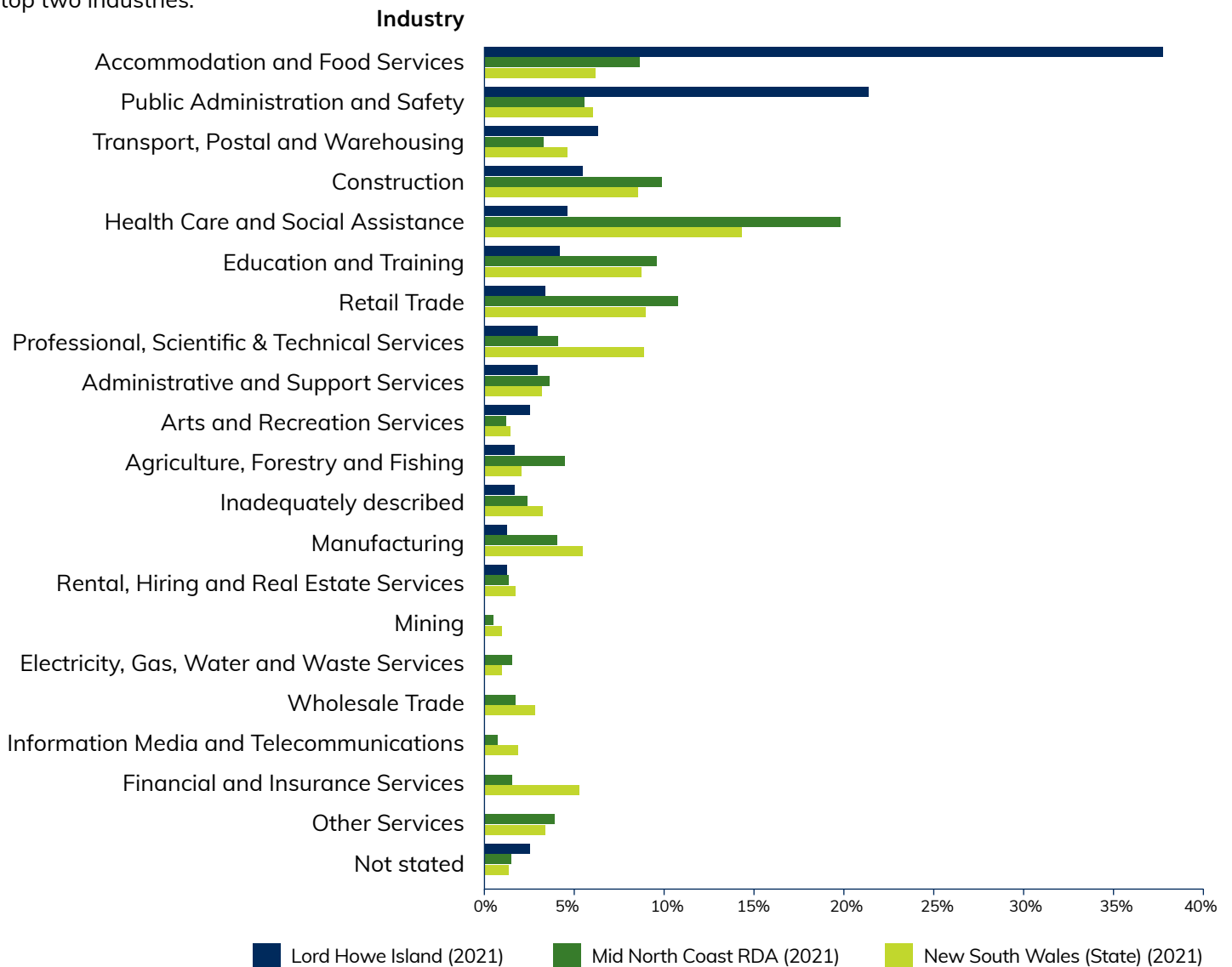
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Lord Howe Island	1053
Port Macquarie – Hastings	985
Bellingen	981
Coffs Harbour	972
Midcoast	943
Nambucca Valley	920
Kempsey	903

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment on Lord Howe Island are Accommodation and Food Services, Public Administration and Safety and Transport, Postal & Warehousing. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as its top industry of employment; however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific, and technical services are there other top two industries.



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for Lord Howe Island:

- The annualised population figure of 3.2% is just over double that of the Mid North Coast and NSW overall.
- According to the SEIFA Index of Disadvantage, Lord Howe Island is a more advantaged region than anywhere on the MNC of NSW.
- Between the MNC, NSW and Lord Howe Island – Lord Howe is utilising it's available housing to a greater capacity.
- Whilst the percentage of the population living with long-term health conditions is significantly lower than that of the MNC or NSW – there is still enough that will require more specialised care into the future which will put increased strain on the island's resources.
- Lord Howe Island's labour force participation rates are significantly greater than the MNC and NSW. Whilst the data suggests that they will continue to meet demand in the future, their difficulties may not be as great as those on the mainland.
- Lord Howe Island has 100% youth engagement – this is not seen anywhere else on the MNC or NSW.



**Appendix C –
REDS Summaries (Regional Endowment,
Mapping Regional Priorities, Economic
Development Priorities – by industry).**

ATTACHMENT 1: Regional endowments

The REDS plans (2018) provides a more specific list of the region's strengths via listing the endowments the region can capitalise on.

Coffs/ Bellinger	Institutional and cultural Southern Cross University; balance of lifestyles; social and economic opportunities; business and industry cooperatives and organisations; local Councils; Gumbaynggirr culture; breadth of creative and cultural industries.
	Physical and geographic Coastal amenity; Bellinger and Kalang rivers; Dorrigo hinterland; arable lands and climate; the harbour and foreshore area; Sydney to Brisbane mid point; eco destination certification.
	Built Pacific highway; Waterfall Way; Coffs Harbour Regional Airport and precinct; accommodation capacity; jetty foreshore precinct; rail line; health precinct; sports facilities; Coffs campus precinct; justice precinct; heritage; NBN; Bellinger Valley precinct.
Kempsey/ PMHC	Institutional and cultural Balance of lifestyle; social and economic opportunities; local councils; state government agencies; universities; rich Aboriginal and European history.
	Physical and geographic Riverine and hinterland amenity; coastal amenity; access to major metropolitan markets; significant arable land; sporting and recreation infrastructure.
	Built Air services; Pacific Highway; rail services; accommodation capacity and capability; health network; education network.
	Human Diverse specialised skill sets.
Nambucca	Physical and geographic Natural amenity; state forests and national parks; arable land; climate and water; midpoint between major metro markets; access to SE QLD markets.
	Built Pacific Highway; private capital investment; Coffs Harbour airport.
	Institutional Nambucca Shire Council; clean, green, organic branding; North Coast Institute of TAFE; Aboriginal cultural heritage.
	Human Balance of lifestyle; social and economic opportunities; specialised skill sets; entrepreneurship.
MidCoast	Land, water and related Agricultural land; estuaries; Gloucester coal basin; key industry specific assets used for processing (including Wingham beef), private saw milling and seafood processing.
	Infrastructure and location Natural resources; Pacific Highway; rail line; easy access to Sydney, the Port of Newcastle and Newcastle airport; local air services; NBN in key townships; Taree's convenient location for freight and transport; Northern Gateway transport and logistics hub; Gloucester easy access to key markets including the New England; availability and affordability of land.
	Lifestyle, institutions and amenity 192km of coastline; Manning and Myall rivers; high profile tourism towns Forster-Tuncurry; marine park tourism; Manning river; tree change lifestyle; notable features such as Barrington Tops World Heritage Park; National Parks, state forests; accessible as a day trip from the Hunter; proximity to Sydney and Newcastle; Taree key regional centre; large regional hospital; access to higher education; Taree Universities Campus.

ATTACHMENT 2: Mapping regional priorities (Regional Economic Development Plans (REDS) 2023 update)

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
Coffs/Bellingen	Grow the year-round visitor economy by further diversifying offerings and connecting businesses in the sector.	Support growth of emerging industries, including knowledge intensive, creative and green economy sectors. Support growth of emerging industries, including knowledge intensive, creative and green economy sectors.	Enhance regional resilience by supporting implementation of sustainable practices in engine industries and investing in robust physical and digital connectivity.	Support skills attraction and retention in population serving sectors, including health care and social assistance and education and training, through delivering sufficient and affordable key worker housing.
Nambucca	Enable the growth of local industry by increasing the supply of industrial land and building on successful local initiatives to connect and train local people for work in key businesses.	Protect and enhance the sustainable utilisation of the region's key endowments which support tourism and agriculture.	Facilitate population growth to expand the shire's internal markets.	
Kempsey/PMHC	Grow the region's skilled labour supply.	Foster industry development in engine and emerging industries, including through growth of industry clusters.	Grow the region's export-based sectors through better connections to markets and understanding of market opportunities.	
MidCoast	Strengthen the region's infrastructure and services offering to attract and retain businesses, residents and visitors.	Invest in workforce development and create opportunities for local businesses to invest and grow.	Actively pursue opportunities to bring investment, businesses and skilled workers to the region.	

ATTACHMENT 3: Economic development priorities (by industry)

Information from Regional Economic Development (REDS) plans 2018-2022

GRP: Gross Regional Product GVA: Gross Value Add

	Strategic priority	Workforce
Construction	MidCoast/Nambucca / Coffs-Bellingen/Kempsey-PMHC	
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate		
Manufacturing	MidCoast/Coffs-Bellingen/Kempsey-PMHC	
Health Care & Social Assistance	MidCoast/Nambucca/Coffs-Bellingen/Kempsey-PMHC	
Electricity, Gas, Water & waste	Kempsey/PMHC	Nambucca
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	MidCoast/Nambucca/Coffs-Bellingen/Kempsey-PMHC	
Public Administration & Safety		Nambucca
Retail Trade		
Education & Training	MidCoast/Coffs-Bellingen	Nambucca/Kempsey-PMHC
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	Coffs-Bellingen	Kempsey-PMHC/MidCoas
Accommodation & Food Services		
Transport, Postal & Housing		Coffs-Bellingen
Financial & Insurance Services		MidCoast
Administration & Support Services		Nambucca
Wholesale Trade		
Other Services		
Information, Media & Telecommunications		Coffs-Bellingen/MidCoast
Arts & Recreations Services		Coffs-Bellingen
Mining		
Tourism	MidCoast/Nambucca/Coffs/Kempsey-PMHC	

