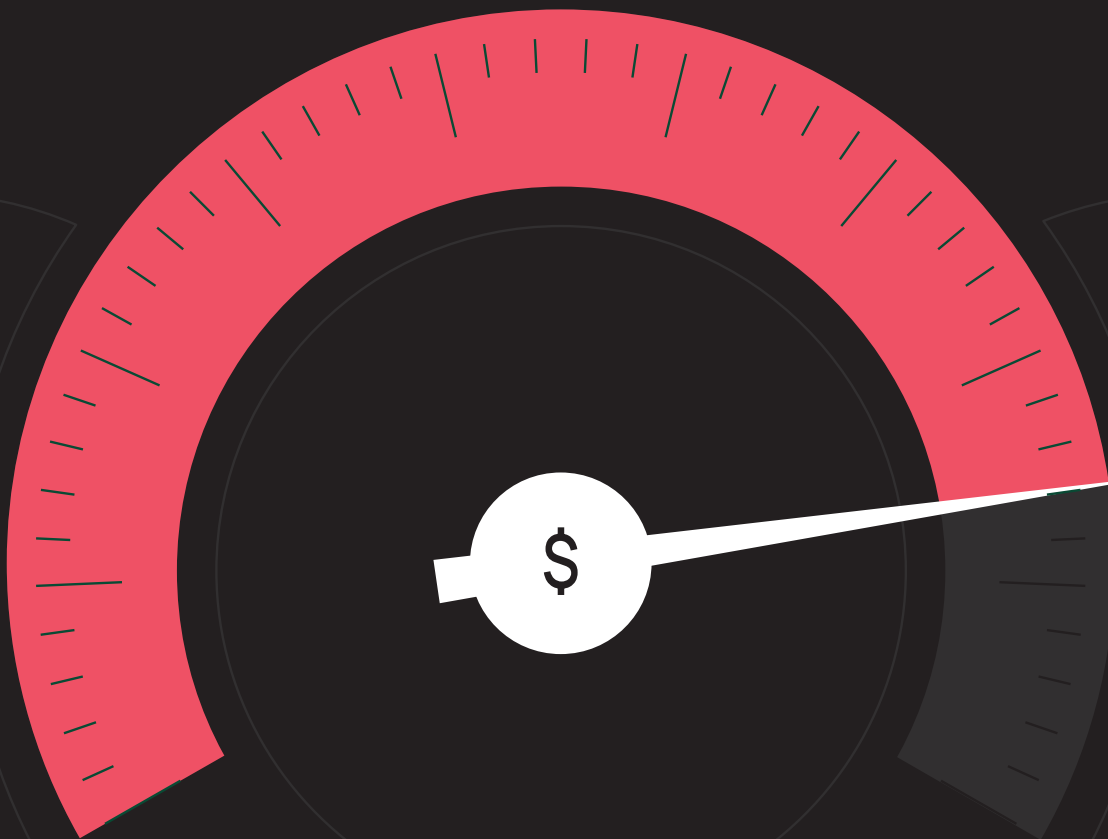


# Transport Affordability Index

Q1  
2022

QUARTER 1, 2022  
Released May 2022





The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) Transport Affordability Index is based on modeling commissioned by the AAA and developed by SGS Economics and Planning.

---

## CONTENTS

- 
- 02** Foreword

---

  - 03** Key figures

---

  - 04** Annual transport costs

---

  - 06** Weekly transport costs

---

  - 08** Transport affordability

---

  - 10** Transport costs by category

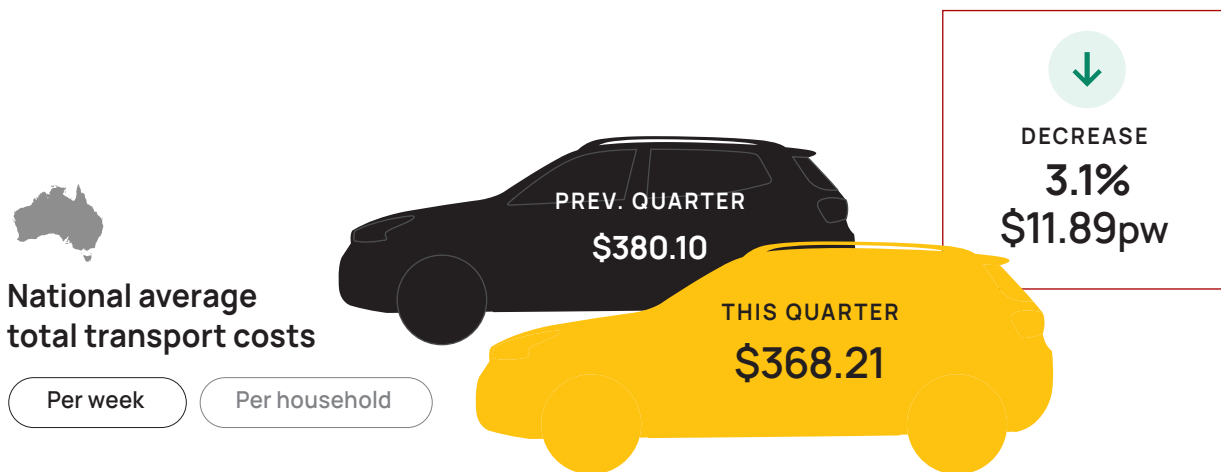
---

  - 19** States and territories comparison

---

  - 28** Background and methodology

# Transport costs are continuing to rise



The latest edition of the AAA Transport Affordability Index shows average weekly household transport costs in capital city households is now \$401.05 a week and \$330.67 a week in regional areas.

This means an Australian metropolitan household now pays \$20,855 in average annual transport costs, while in regional cities the average is \$17,195 per year.

The latest results include the impact of global price shocks flowing from the war in Ukraine, and changing vehicle purchase patterns, which in turn impact car repayments.

Rising fuel prices continue to be a significant contributor to cost of living pressures across both regional and metropolitan Australia.

Fuel prices have risen an average of \$26.49 to \$93.87 per week over the past twelve months in capital cities with Hobart (\$100.18 pw), Sydney (\$94.80 pw), Darwin (\$94.36 pw) and Brisbane (\$93.93 pw) the most expensive cities.

Regionally prices are more expensive rising on average \$27.89 to \$96.65 per week with Bunbury (\$116.31 pw), Geelong (\$110.69 pw – Melbourne was \$92.07) and Launceston (\$109.37) the highest.”

Car loan repayments is the main cost component that has declined across the country due to a greater proportion of new car buyers choosing cheaper vehicles.

Sydney is still Australia's most expensive capital city for transport costs averaging \$474.43 per week, followed by Melbourne (\$447.83) and Brisbane (\$445.69).

The introduction of a zone cap for public transport in Perth has also had an impact with the Western Australian capital dropping a spot on the rankings list to fifth, with Canberra now more expensive.

Bunbury is Australia's most expensive regional city at \$352.06 per week followed by Alice Springs (\$350.45) and Geelong (\$347.69).

Nationally transport costs are 14.7% of household income. The Tasmanian cities of Launceston (18.1%) and Hobart (17.9%), followed by Brisbane (17.1%) had the highest transport costs as a proportion of household income.



**Michael Bradley**  
Managing Director  
Australian Automobile Association

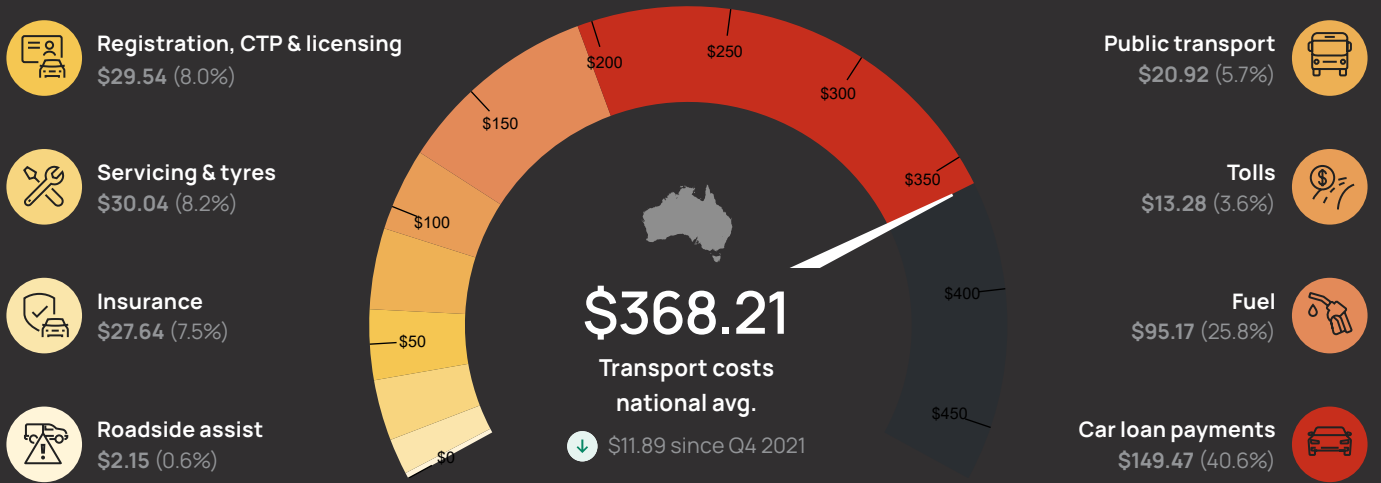
KEY FIGURES

# Quarter 1 2022

## Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



### Capital cities

### Regional

**Total costs**

AVERAGE	HIGHEST	LOWEST
<p><b>\$401.05</b> ↓ -\$12.66 Since Q4 2021</p>	<p><b>Sydney</b> ↓ -\$10.70</p>	<p><b>Hobart</b> ↓ -\$9.31</p>

**Total costs**

AVERAGE	HIGHEST	LOWEST
<p><b>\$330.67</b> ↓ -\$11.00 Since Q4 2021</p>	<p><b>Bunbury</b> ↓ -\$8.82</p>	<p><b>Wagga Wagga</b> ↓ -\$17.76</p>

**Affordability (% of income)**

<p><b>15.2%</b> ↓ -0.7% Since Q4 2021</p>	<p><b>Hobart</b> ↓ -0.3%</p>	<p><b>Canberra</b> ↓ -1.2%</p>
---	----------------------------------	------------------------------------

**Affordability (% of income)**

<p><b>14.0%</b> ↓ -0.6% Since Q4 2021</p>	<p><b>Launceston</b> ↓ -0.4%</p>	<p><b>Wagga Wagga</b> ↓ -0.8%</p>
---	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

# Total transport costs

Per year

Per household

VIEW COSTS PER WEEK (PAGE 6) →



## Capital cities

### Capital average











**\$20,855**

↓ \$659 since Q4 2021

In the March quarter, the typical Australian city household's average annualised cost of transport decreased by \$659 to \$20,855. Transport taxes – in the form of fuel excise, registration, compulsory third party (CTP) insurance and licensing – cost the typical two-car family \$2,734.

The greatest decrease in transport costs was recorded in Perth – equivalent to \$1,518 per year. This was mainly due to lower public transport costs resulting from the zone cap introduced from 1 January 2022.

1	2	3	4
 <p><b>Sydney</b> <b>\$24,670</b></p> <p>↓ -\$556 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Melbourne</b> <b>\$23,287</b></p> <p>↓ -\$483 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Brisbane</b> <b>\$23,176</b></p> <p>↓ -\$469 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Canberra</b> <b>\$19,843</b></p> <p>↓ -\$738 since Q4 2021</p>
5	6	7	8
 <p><b>Perth</b> <b>\$19,371</b></p> <p>↓ -\$1,518 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Adelaide</b> <b>\$19,300</b></p> <p>↓ -\$510 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Darwin</b> <b>\$18,757</b></p> <p>↓ -\$511 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Hobart</b> <b>\$18,432</b></p> <p>↓ -\$484 since Q4 2021</p>

## Average taxes



### Fuel excise

\$1,162

↑ \$24.00  
since Q4 2021

+



### Registration, CTP and licensing

\$1,572

↓ \$7.00 since Q4 2021

=

### Household total

\$2,734

↑ \$16.00 since Q4 2021

# Total transport costs

Per year

Per household

VIEW COSTS PER WEEK (PAGE 6) →



## Regional

### Regional average











**\$17,195**

↓ -\$572 since Q4 2021

The average annual cost of transport for the typical regional household decreased by \$572 to \$17,195. Of this, transport taxes cost regional families \$2,715.

The greatest decrease was recorded in Wagga Wagga, where annual transport costs dropped by \$923 when compared to the previous quarter.

1	2	3	4
 <p><b>Bunbury</b> <b>\$18,307</b></p> <p>↓ -\$459 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Alice Springs</b> <b>\$18,223</b></p> <p>↓ -\$542 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Geelong</b> <b>\$18,080</b></p> <p>↓ -\$498 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Mount Gambier</b> <b>\$17,220</b></p> <p>↓ -\$481 since Q4 2021</p>
5	6	7	 <p>Explore the interactive data</p> <p>DATA.AAA.ASN.AU</p>
 <p><b>Launceston</b> <b>\$16,947</b></p> <p>↓ -\$460 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Townsville</b> <b>\$16,118</b></p> <p>↓ -\$642 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Wagga Wagga</b> <b>\$15,469</b></p> <p>↓ -\$923 since Q4 2021</p>	

## Average taxes



### Fuel Excise

\$1,219

↑ \$25.00 since Q4 2021

+



### Registration, CTP and Licensing

\$1,496

↓ -\$8.00 since Q4 2021

=

### Household total

\$2,715

↑ \$17.00 since Q4 2021

# Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



## Capital cities









### Capital average



**\$401.05**

↓ -\$12.66 since Q4 2021

The March quarter of 2022 saw Perth become cheaper than Canberra for total transport costs. Sydney remained the most expensive and Hobart remained the cheapest.

1	2	3	4
 <b>Sydney</b> <b>\$474.43</b> ↓ -\$10.70 since Q4 2021	 <b>Melbourne</b> <b>\$447.83</b> ↓ -\$9.29 since Q4 2021	 <b>Brisbane</b> <b>\$445.69</b> ↓ -\$9.01 since Q4 2021	 <b>Canberra</b> <b>\$381.59</b> ↓ -\$14.19 since Q4 2021
5	6	7	8
 <b>Perth</b> <b>\$372.53</b> ↓ -\$29.18 since Q4 2021	 <b>Adelaide</b> <b>\$371.15</b> ↓ -\$9.81 since Q4 2021	 <b>Darwin</b> <b>\$360.72</b> ↓ -\$9.83 since Q4 2021	 <b>Hobart</b> <b>\$354.45</b> ↓ -\$9.31 since Q4 2021



# Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



## Regional









### Regional average



**\$330.67**

↓ -\$11.00 since Q4 2021

Transport in the regional centres was, on average, \$70.38 a week cheaper than in the capitals. Bunbury replaced Alice Springs as the regional centre with the highest total weekly transport costs (previously second-highest). All other rankings remained unchanged.

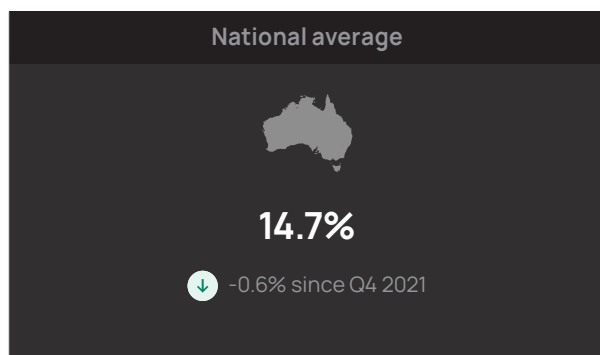
1	2	3	4
 <b>Bunbury</b> <b>\$352.06</b> ↓ -\$8.82 since Q4 2021	 <b>Alice Springs</b> <b>\$350.45</b> ↓ -\$10.43 since Q4 2021	 <b>Geelong</b> <b>\$347.69</b> ↓ -\$9.58 since Q4 2021	 <b>Mount Gambier</b> <b>\$331.15</b> ↓ -\$9.25 since Q4 2021
5	6	7	
 <b>Launceston</b> <b>\$325.90</b> ↓ -\$8.85 since Q4 2021	 <b>Townsville</b> <b>\$309.96</b> ↓ -\$12.34 since Q4 2021	 <b>Wagga Wagga</b> <b>\$297.48</b> ↓ -\$17.76 since Q4 2021	 Explore the interactive data <a href="https://data.aaa.asn.au">DATA.AAA.ASN.AU</a>

# Transport affordability

## Costs as a percentage of income

Per week

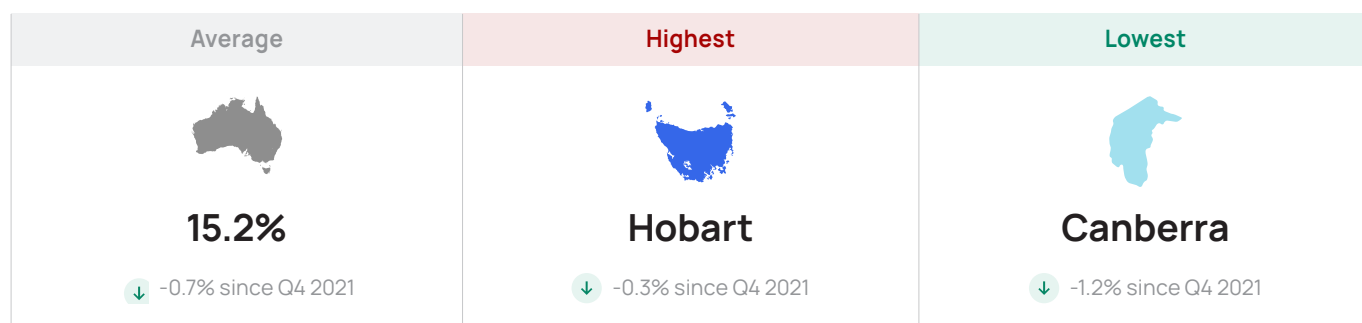
Per household



The relationship between a region's income and costs determines local purchasing power – or affordability. For example, in dollar terms Hobart had the lowest total transport costs, while Sydney had the highest. But when this cost is measured as a percentage of typical household income, Hobart – not Sydney – ranked as the Australian city with the least affordable transport costs.



### Capital cities



### Rank

		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
1	Hobart	18.1%	17.5%	18.2%	17.9%
2	Brisbane	17.4%	17.3%	17.7%	17.1%
3	Melbourne	15.8%	16.4%	16.7%	16.0%
4	Darwin	15.0%	15.2%	15.8%	15.3%
5	Sydney	15.6%	15.5%	15.7%	15.1%
6	Adelaide	14.7%	14.3%	15.1%	14.6%
7	Perth	14.9%	14.4%	14.9%	13.8%
8	Canberra	13.5%	13.7%	14.1%	12.9%
	Capital avg.	15.5%	15.5%	15.9%	15.2%

# Transport affordability

## Costs as a percentage of income

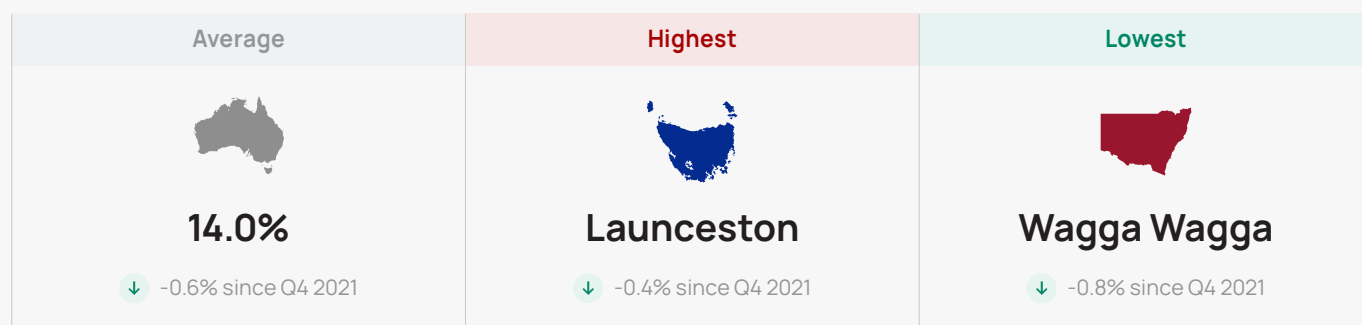
Per week

Per household









Across Australia, regional households earned \$228 per week less than their city counterparts (based on ABS data). But the difference was more pronounced in New South Wales and South Australia. Households in Wagga Wagga and Mount Gambier earned considerably less per week than their city counterparts: \$275 and \$270 per week less on average, respectively.

Nationally, the average cost of transport cost took up 14.7 per cent of the typical household's income – 15.2 per cent in the capital cities and 14.0 per cent in regional centres.

### Regional



### Rank

		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
1	 <b>Launceston</b>	18.2%	17.8%	18.5%	18.1%
2	 <b>Alice Springs</b>	15.3%	15.5%	16.3%	15.9%
3	 <b>Mount Gambier</b>	14.7%	14.4%	15.0%	14.5%
4	 <b>Bunbury</b>	14.3%	13.9%	14.4%	14.1%
5	 <b>Geelong</b>	12.5%	13.0%	13.6%	12.9%
6	 <b>Townsville</b>	12.7%	12.6%	13.1%	12.4%
7	 <b>Wagga Wagga</b>	11.1%	11.0%	11.2%	10.4%
8	 <b>Regional avg.</b>	14.1%	14.0%	14.6%	14.0%



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household

↑ Overall, there was an increase in household average weekly transport expenses.

The decrease in transport costs over the quarter was driven by changes in these cost categories:

- **Car loan payments** -the average upfront cost for purchasing new cars decreased in all locations.
- **Registration, CTP and licensing** -costs increased slightly in South Australia, but decreased slightly in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.
- **Car maintenance** - costs decreased slightly in all locations.

→ **Public transport** - costs decreased considerably in Perth due to the zone cap introduced from 1 January 2022.









Transport costs increased over the quarter in these categories:

- **Comprehensive insurance** - premiums increased in all locations except Canberra and Wagga Wagga.
- **Fuel** -prices increased considerably in all locations.
- **Toll roads** - toll road costs increased for Sydney and Melbourne due to scheduled indexation from 1 January 2022.

Roadside assistance costs remained unchanged over the quarter.



## Capital cities

1	2	3	4
 <p><b>Car loan payments</b> <b>\$149.45</b></p> <p>↓ -\$20.59 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Fuel</b> <b>\$93.87</b></p> <p>↑ \$9.82 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Tolls</b> <b>\$66.38</b></p> <p>↑ \$0.37 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Public transport</b> <b>\$39.23</b></p> <p>↓ -\$2.13 since Q4 2021</p>
5	6	7	8
 <p><b>Servicing &amp; Tyres</b> <b>\$30.84</b></p> <p>↓ -\$0.32 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Insurance</b> <b>\$30.39</b></p> <p>↑ \$0.56 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Registration, CTP &amp; licensing</b> <b>\$30.22</b></p> <p>↓ -\$0.14 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Roadside assist</b> <b>\$2.16</b></p> <p>— Steady since Q4 2021</p>

# Transport costs by category

Per week







Per household

The ranking of average expenses for the typical city and regional families remained the same over the quarter, with the exception of insurance switching ranks with registration, CTP and licensing for the city household. Car loan payments and fuel expenditure remained the largest expense in the representative families' transport budgets, while roadside assistance and insurance were the smallest.

The Index assumes that city and regional households have the same costs for purchasing and financing a new car and for roadside assistance. Because city and regional households drive similar cars, the same assumptions about fuel efficiency and fuel mix are applied.



## Regional

1	2	3
 <p><b>Car loan payments</b> <b>\$149.50</b> ↓ -\$20.62 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Fuel</b> <b>\$96.65</b> ↑ \$9.82 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Serciving &amp; Tyres</b> <b>\$29.13</b> ↓ -\$0.34 since Q4 2021</p>
4	5	6
 <p><b>Registration, CTP &amp; licensing</b> <b>\$28.76</b> ↓ -\$0.15 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Insurance</b> <b>\$24.50</b> ↑ \$0.29 since Q4 2021</p>	 <p><b>Roadside assist</b> <b>\$2.13</b> — Steady since Q4 2021</p>

# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



## Car loan payments

The upfront costs of purchasing a new car decreased in all jurisdictions – on average by \$4,777 – in the March quarter. This was because less expensive vehicles were among the highest selling new cars. As a result, the cost of weekly car loan payments decreased in all locations by \$20.59 per week, or \$1,071 a year on average.

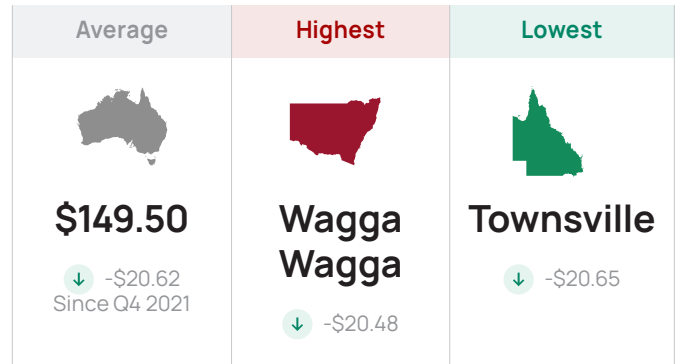
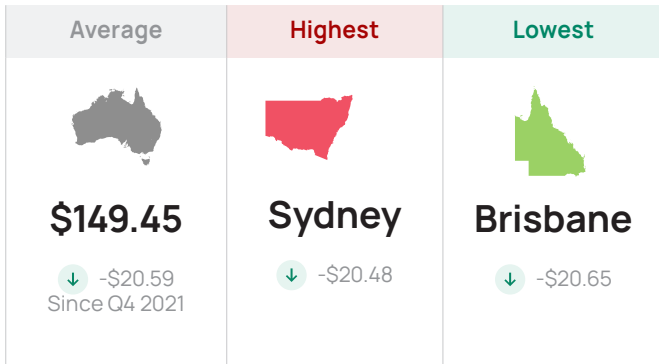
Regional households incurred the same costs in this category as their capital city counterparts because it is assumed that interest rates and new car purchase costs are the same in regional and capital city locations.



### Capital cities



### Regional



Rank

1	↑	Sydney	\$150.48	- \$20.48
2	↓	Perth	\$150.32	- \$21.17
3		Melbourne	\$149.49	- \$20.80
4		Adelaide	\$149.47	- \$20.45
5		Hobart	\$149.23	- \$20.48
6		Canberra	\$149.05	- \$20.37
7	↑	Darwin	\$148.90	- \$20.34
8	↓	Brisbane	\$148.62	- \$20.65
		Capital avg.	\$149.45	- \$20.59

Rank

1	↑	Wagga Wagga	\$150.48	- \$20.48
2	↓	Bunbury	\$150.32	- \$21.17
3		Geelong	\$149.49	- \$20.80
4		Mount Gambier	\$149.47	- \$20.45
5		Launceston	\$149.23	- \$20.48
6	↑	Alice Springs	\$148.90	- \$20.34
7	↓	Townsville	\$148.62	- \$20.65
		Regional avg.	\$149.50	- \$20.62

# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



## Vehicle registration, CTP and driver's licence

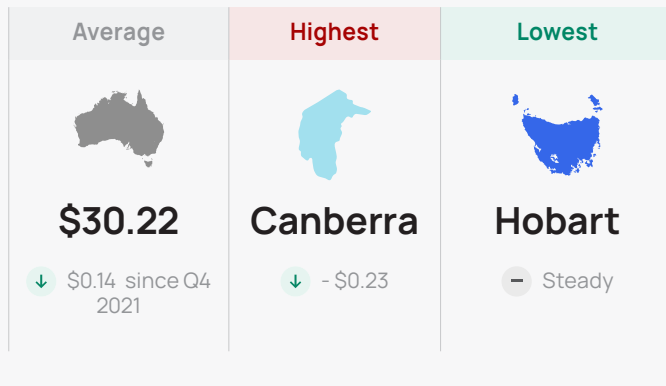
Weekly registration, CTP and licensing costs decreased slightly in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, whilst increasing slightly in South Australia.

Canberra remained the most expensive capital city for registration, CTP and licensing, while Hobart remained the least expensive, with the typical Canberra household spending \$889 more per year than Hobart.









Bunbury remained the most expensive regional centre in this cost category. Mount Gambier remained the regional centre with the lowest registration, CTP and licensing costs. The annualised difference between Bunbury and Mount Gambier was \$584.



### Capital cities

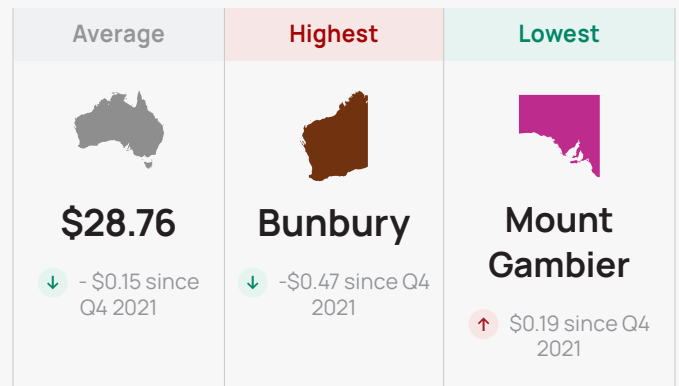


Rank

1		<b>Canberra</b>	\$39.71	<b>-\$0.23</b>
2	↑ 	<b>Melbourne</b>	\$33.61	-
3	↓ 	<b>Perth</b>	\$33.57	<b>-\$0.47</b>
4		<b>Darwin</b>	\$30.74	-
5		<b>Brisbane</b>	\$30.34	<b>-\$0.08</b>
6		<b>Adelaide</b>	\$27.05	<b>+\$0.23</b>
7		<b>Sydney</b>	\$24.16	<b>-\$0.57</b>
8		<b>Hobart</b>	\$22.62	-
		<b>Capital avg.</b>	\$30.22	<b>-\$0.14</b>



### Regional



Rank

1		<b>Bunbury</b>	\$33.57	<b>-\$0.47</b>
2		<b>Geelong</b>	\$31.50	-
3	↑ 	<b>Alice Springs</b>	\$30.74	-
4	↑ 	<b>Townsville</b>	\$30.34	<b>-\$0.08</b>
5	↓ 	<b>Wagga Wagga</b>	\$30.25	<b>-\$0.69</b>
6		<b>Launceston</b>	\$22.62	-
7		<b>Mount Gambier</b>	\$22.33	<b>+\$0.19</b>
		<b>Regional avg.</b>	\$28.76	<b>-\$0.15</b>



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



## Comprehensive car insurance

In the March quarter, the weekly cost of comprehensive insurance for both the benchmark new and used vehicles increased for the typical Australian city household. The largest rise in insurance premiums was observed in Brisbane with costs increasing by \$96 per year. Canberra insurance costs decreased by \$67 per year. Adelaide remained the most expensive city while Perth remained the cheapest, with a typical Adelaide household spending \$1,022 per year more than Perth.

The largest increase among the regional households was in Townsville where costs increased by \$80 per annum. Wagga Wagga insurance costs decreased by \$105 per annum.

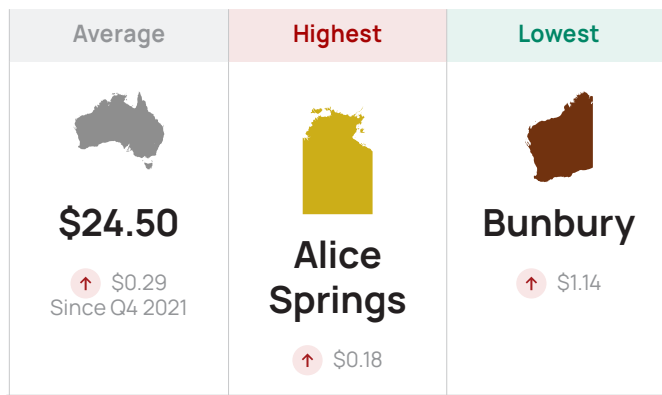
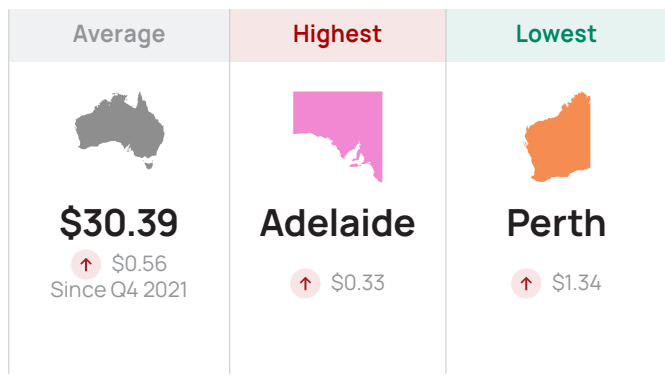
The largest difference between a capital city and its regional counterpart was in Victoria, where a typical Geelong household spends \$698 a year less on comprehensive insurance than Melbourne.



### Capital cities




### Regional



Rank

1		<b>Adelaide</b>	\$37.63	<b>+\$0.33</b>
2		<b>Melbourne</b>	\$36.29	<b>+\$0.35</b>
3		<b>Brisbane</b>	\$35.48	<b>+\$1.86</b>
4		<b>Darwin</b>	\$33.48	<b>+\$0.39</b>
5		<b>Sydney</b>	\$31.87	<b>+\$1.47</b>
6		<b>Canberra</b>	\$27.66	<b>-\$1.29</b>
7		<b>Hobart</b>	\$22.69	-
8		<b>Perth</b>	\$17.98	<b>+\$1.34</b>
		<b>Capital avg.</b>	\$30.39	<b>+\$0.56</b>

Rank

1		<b>Alice Springs</b>	\$33.25	<b>+\$0.18</b>
2		<b>Mount Gambier</b>	\$30.94	<b>+\$0.27</b>
3		<b>Townsville</b>	\$29.04	<b>+\$1.54</b>
4		<b>Geelong</b>	\$22.86	<b>+\$0.22</b>
5		<b>Wagga Wagga</b>	\$21.80	<b>-\$2.03</b>
6		<b>Launceston</b>	\$18.79	<b>+\$0.70</b>
7		<b>Bunbury</b>	\$14.81	<b>+\$1.14</b>
		<b>Regional avg.</b>	\$24.50	<b>+\$0.29</b>



# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



## Servicing and tyres

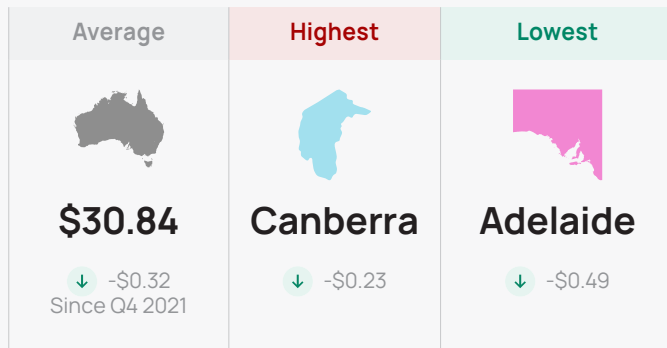
The cost of servicing and tyres decreased slightly over the March quarter for both the typical capital city and regional households.

Among the regional locations Bunbury remained the household with the highest costs. Launceston remained the cheapest, with families in Bunbury paying \$590 more on an annual basis.

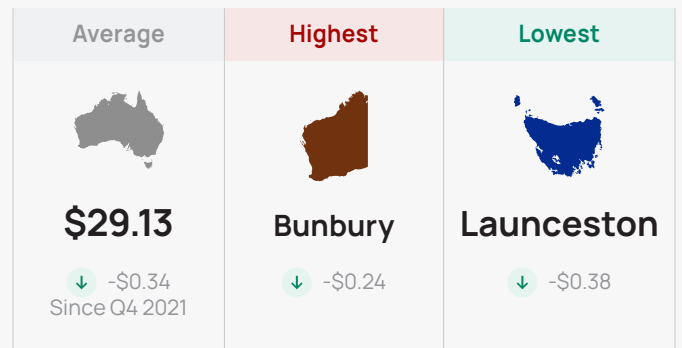
Overall, the cost of maintaining a representative new and used car remained highest in Canberra and lowest in Adelaide, with a typical Canberra household paying \$801 more per year than Adelaide.












### Capital cities



### Regional



Rank

1		<b>Canberra</b>	\$40.25	- \$0.23
2	↑ 	<b>Melbourne</b>	\$32.30	- \$0.17
3	↓ 	<b>Perth</b>	\$32.27	- \$0.28
4	↑ 	<b>Darwin</b>	\$31.34	- \$0.18
5	↓ 	<b>Sydney</b>	\$31.18	- \$0.53
6		<b>Hobart</b>	\$29.40	- \$0.27
7		<b>Brisbane</b>	\$25.16	- \$ 0.43
8		<b>Adelaide</b>	\$24.85	- \$0.49
		<b>Capital avg.</b>	\$30.84	- \$0.32

Rank

1		<b>Bunbury</b>	\$34.92	- \$0.24
2		<b>Alice Springs</b>	\$34.71	- \$0.11
3		<b>Geelong</b>	\$30.89	- \$0.20
4		<b>Wagga Wagga</b>	\$29.18	- \$0.54
5		<b>Townsville</b>	\$25.66	- \$0.42
6		<b>Mount Gambier</b>	\$24.96	- \$0.49
7		<b>Launceston</b>	\$23.57	- \$0.38
		<b>Regional avg.</b>	\$29.13	- \$0.34



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



## Fuel

The average Australian capital city retail price of regular unleaded petrol rose by 18.8 cents to 185.3 cents per litre, costing the typical city household \$511 more per year. Hobart remained the capital city with the highest fuel expenditure; its average petrol price was up 22.0 cents to 197.9 cents per litre in the March quarter. Adelaide remained the city with the lowest fuel prices and expenditure, paying 178.5 cents per litre, up 20.4 cents from the December quarter.

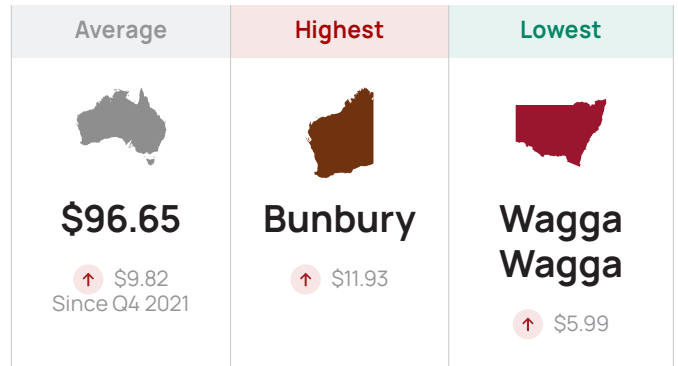
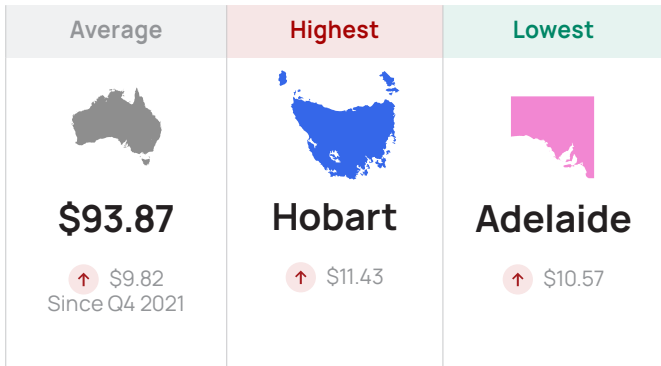
Averaged across the regions, the cost of petrol increased by 17.8 cents to 181.7 cents per litre. Launceston replaced Alice Springs as the centre with the highest prices (previously second-highest) at 191.8 cents per litre while Geelong remained the cheapest at 173.0 cents per litre. The typical household in Bunbury continued to have the highest fuel expenditure among the regional centres, at \$6,048 per year, because research shows that Bunbury residents tend to drive longer distances than people in the other centres. Wagga Wagga continued to have the lowest expenditure at \$3,300 per year because its residents typically drive less.











## Capital cities











## Regional



Rank

1		<b>Hobart</b>	\$100.18	<b>+ \$11.43</b>
2		<b>Sydney</b>	\$94.80	<b>+ \$8.69</b>
3	↑ 	<b>Darwin</b>	\$94.36	<b>+ \$10.30</b>
4	↑ 	<b>Brisbane</b>	\$93.93	<b>+ \$10.29</b>
5	↓ 	<b>Canberra</b>	\$92.89	<b>+ \$7.93</b>
6		<b>Perth</b>	\$92.15	<b>+ \$9.40</b>
7		<b>Melbourne</b>	\$92.07	<b>+ \$9.93</b>
8		<b>Adelaide</b>	\$90.59	<b>+ \$10.57</b>
		<b>Capital avg.</b>	\$93.87	<b>+ \$9.82</b>

Rank

1		<b>Bunbury</b>	\$116.31	<b>+ \$11.93</b>
2		<b>Geelong</b>	\$110.69	<b>+ \$11.20</b>
3		<b>Launceston</b>	\$109.37	<b>+ \$11.30</b>
4	↑ 	<b>Mount Gamier</b>	\$101.40	<b>+ \$11.23</b>
5	↓ 	<b>Alice Springs</b>	\$100.95	<b>+ \$9.83</b>
6		<b>Townsville</b>	\$74.37	<b>+ \$7.27</b>
7		<b>Wagga Wagga</b>	\$63.46	<b>+ \$5.99</b>
		<b>Regional avg.</b>	\$96.65	<b>+ \$9.82</b>

# Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



## Public transport

The cost of public transport decreased considerably in Perth in the March quarter, dropping by \$18.00 per week (\$936 per year) due to the introduced zone cap from 1 January 2022. As such Perth dropped from the most expensive capital city for public transport to the fourth-most expensive. Melbourne public transport costs also increased slightly by \$1.00 per week (\$52 per year). All other public transport costs remained unchanged. With the lowest expenditure, the typical Darwin household spent \$36.52 per week (\$1,899 per year) less on public transport costs than its equivalent household in Brisbane, which became the city with the most expensive public transport costs.



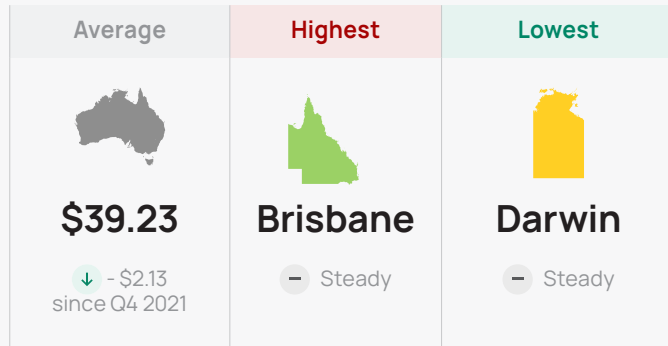
## Toll roads

Only three Australian cities – Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane – use toll roads. Costs increased by \$37 per year in Sydney and increased by \$21 per annum in Melbourne due to a scheduled price adjustment.

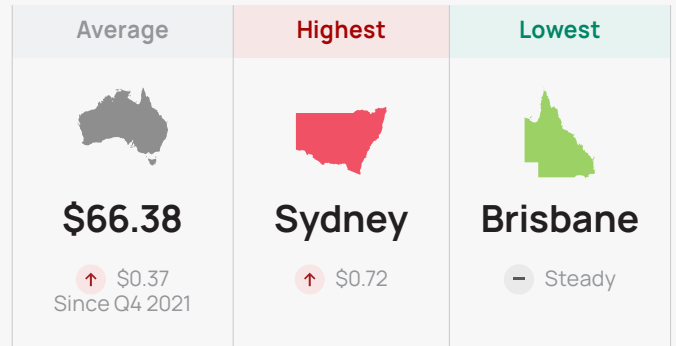
The typical Sydney household continued to incur the greatest costs for toll roads, while Brisbane remained the one with the lowest toll costs. The typical Brisbane household spent \$35.94 per week (or \$1,869 per year) less on tolls than the one in Sydney.












## Capital cities







## Capital cities



Rank

1	↑		<b>Brisbane</b>	\$56.52	-
2	↑		<b>Sydney</b>	\$50.00	-
3	↑		<b>Melbourne</b>	\$46.00	+ \$1.00
4	↓		<b>Perth</b>	\$44.10	- \$18.00
5			<b>Adelaide</b>	\$39.50	-
6			<b>Canberra</b>	\$29.72	-
7			<b>Hobart</b>	\$28.00	-
8			<b>Darwin</b>	\$20.00	-
			<b>Capital avg.</b>	\$39.23	- \$2.13

Rank

1		<b>Sydney</b>	\$89.64	+ \$0.72
2		<b>Melbourne</b>	\$55.80	+ \$0.40
3		<b>Brisbane</b>	\$53.70	-
		<b>Avg.</b>	\$66.38	+ \$0.37



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

# Transport costs by category

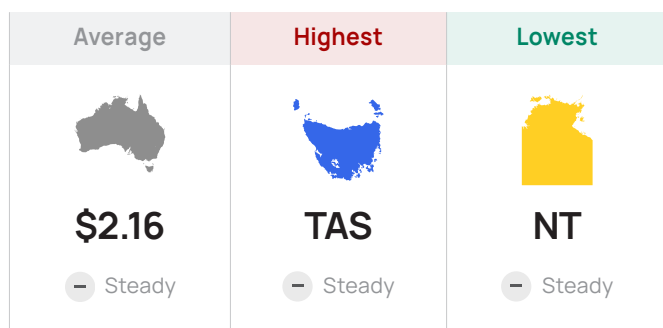
Per week

Per household



## Roadside assistance

The differences between states for roadside assistance costs are not large. Tasmania had the highest ongoing roadside assistance costs at \$121 per year, while the Northern Territory had the lowest at \$99 per year. Roadside assistance costs are based on state and Northern Territory motoring clubs' basic or standard packages, but services included in these packages vary from club to club. The Index assumes that the regional households face the same costs as their capital city counterparts because roadside assistance providers offer standard state-wide pricing.

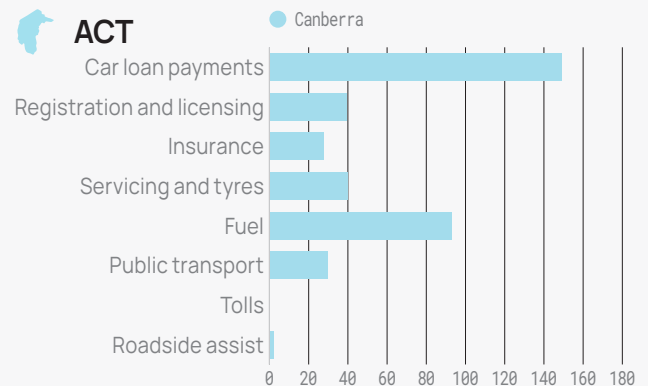
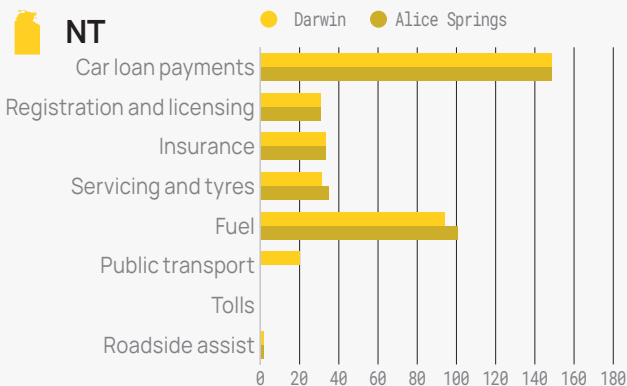
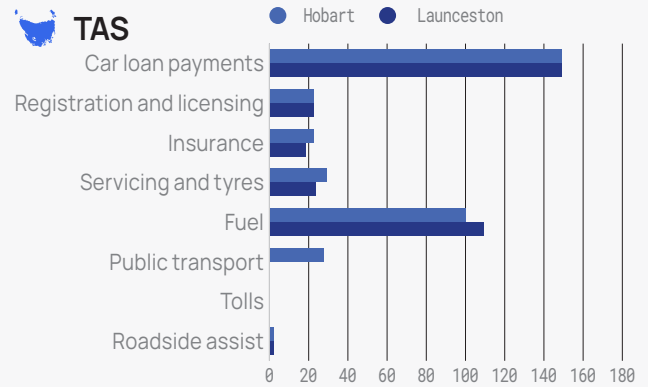
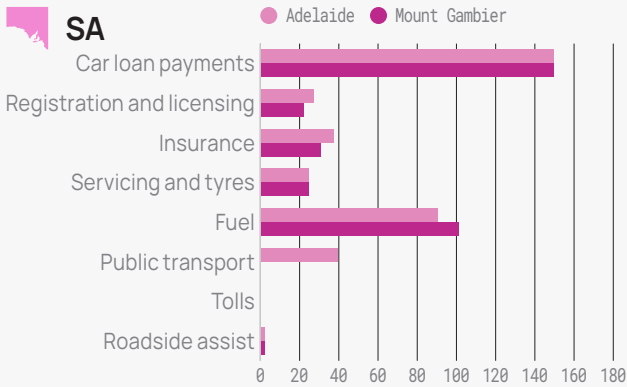
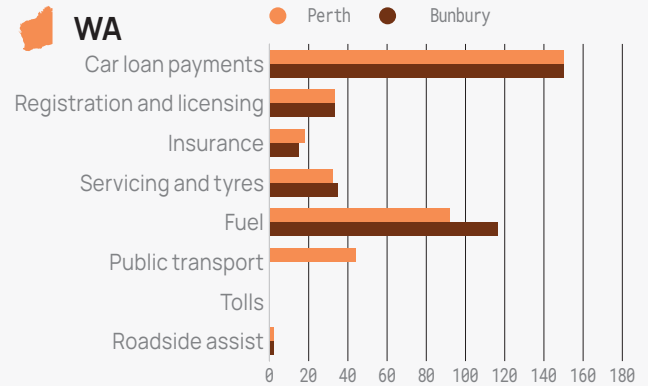
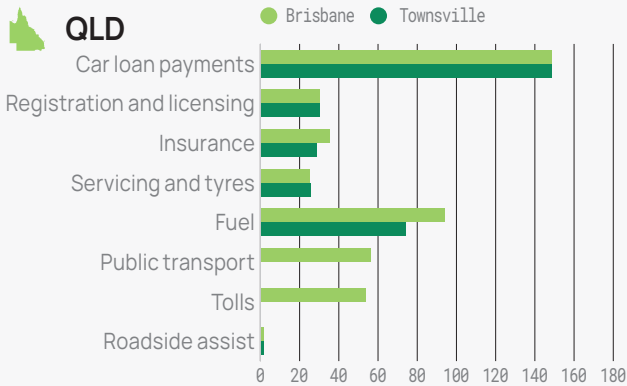
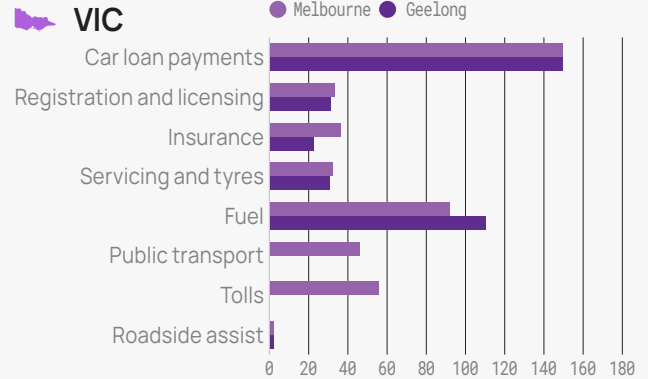
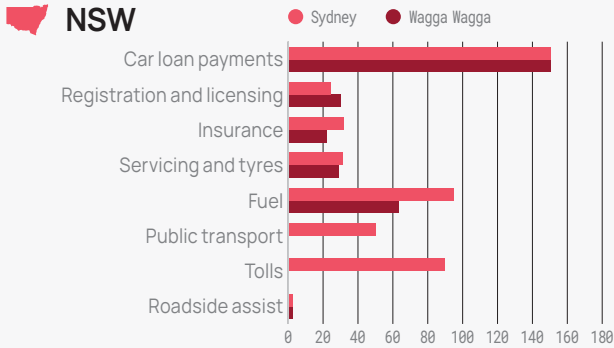


### Rank

1		<b>TAS</b>	\$2.33	-
2		<b>NSW</b>	\$2.31	-
2		<b>ACT</b>	\$2.31	-
4		<b>VIC</b>	\$2.27	-
5		<b>WA</b>	\$2.13	-
6		<b>SA</b>	\$2.06	-
7		<b>QLD</b>	\$1.94	-
8		<b>NT</b>	\$1.90	-
		<b>Avg.</b>	\$2.16	-

# State by state overview

## Capital city vs regional centre comparison





# NSW weekly transport costs

Per week

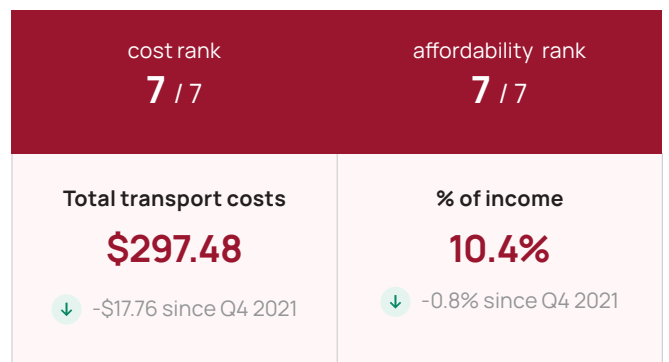
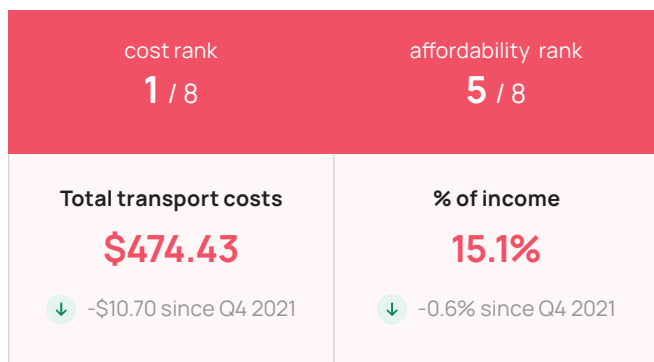
Per household

## Sydney

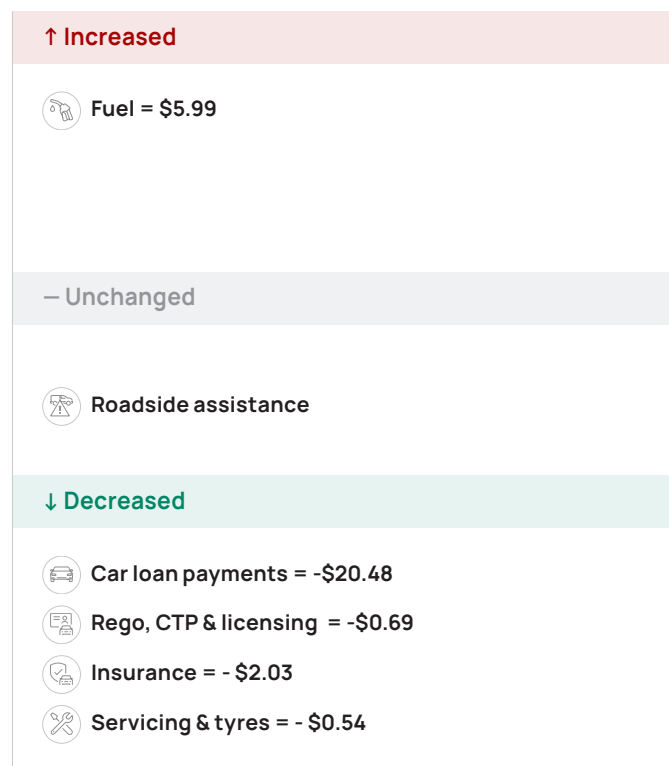
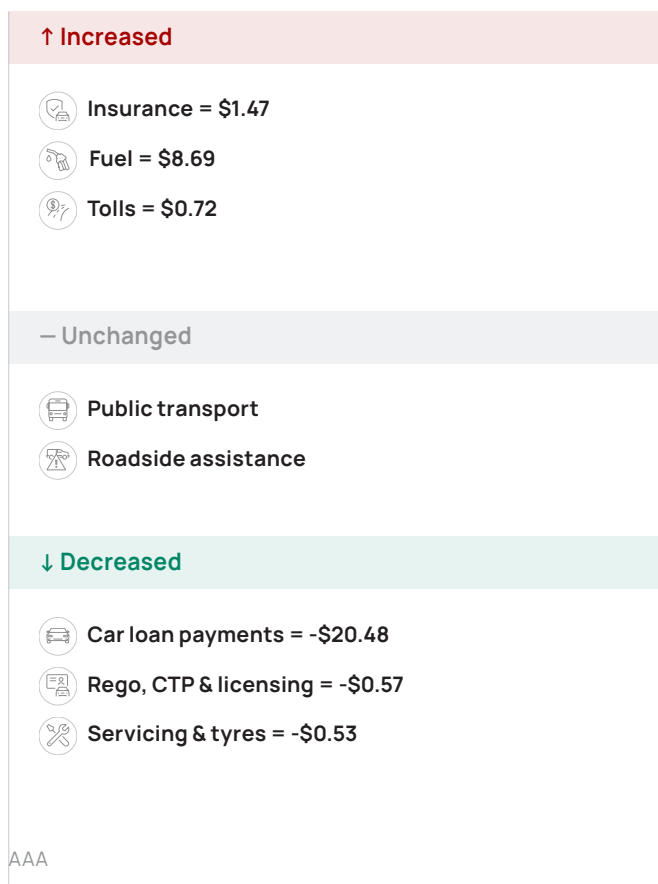
In the March quarter, Sydney transport costs decreased by \$556 per year and it remained Australia's most expensive city for transport. This was mainly due to lower car loan payments which dropped by \$1,065 per year. Fuel expenditure in Sydney increased by \$452 a year.

## Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga remained the benchmark regional centre with the lowest transport costs – both in total cost (at \$15,469 a year) and in terms of the local income-to-cost ratio. Its costs decreased by \$923 per annum, driven by car loan payments which decreased in-line with Sydney. Fuel expenditure in Wagga Wagga increased by \$311 a year.



## Changes in transport category costs



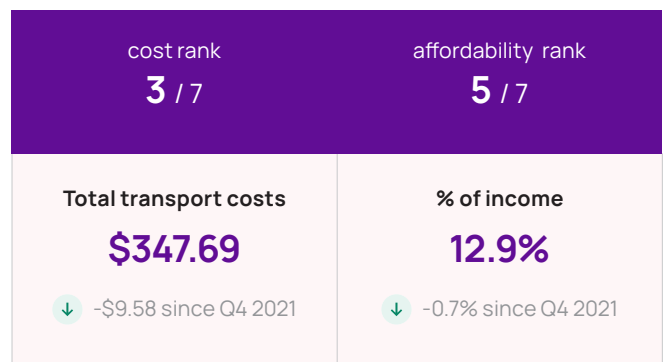
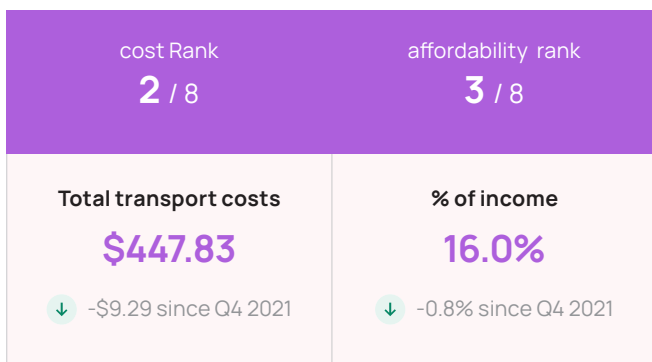


## Melbourne

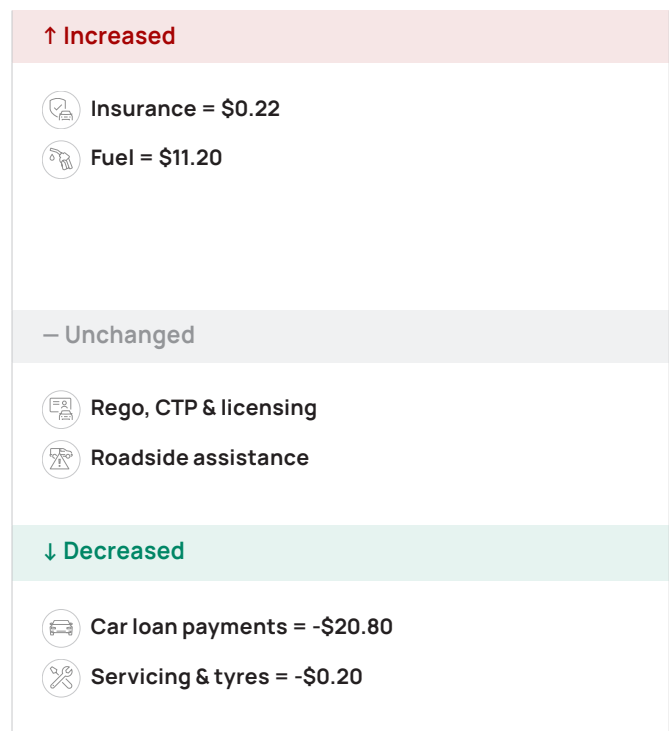
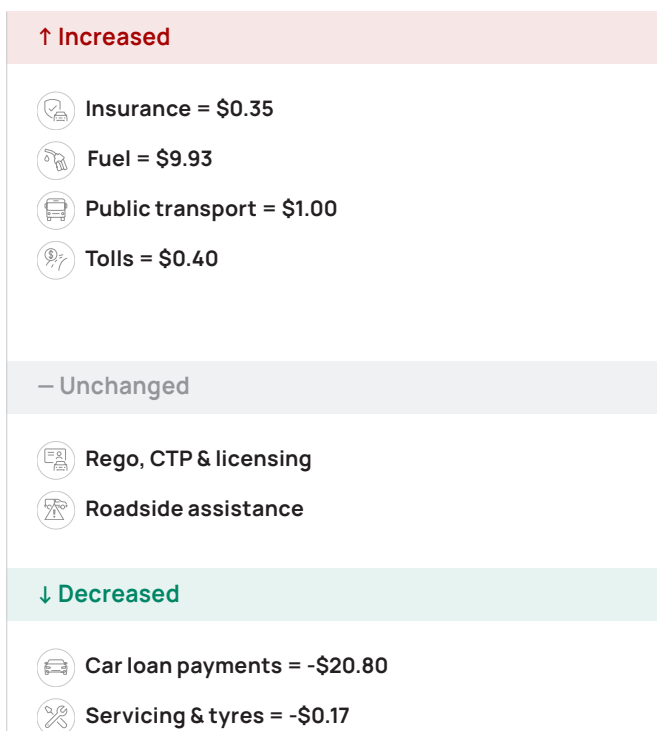
Melbourne remained Australia's second-most expensive city for transport. The typical household spent the equivalent of \$23,287 a year – a decrease of \$483 per annum from the previous quarter. This was due to car loan payments which dropped by \$1,082 per annum. Fuel expenditure in Melbourne increased by \$517 a year.

## Geelong

Geelong had yearly transport costs of \$18,080 and remained the regional centre with the third-highest costs. Geelong's transport costs decreased by \$498 a year, because of car loan payments which decreased in-line with Melbourne. Fuel expenditure in Geelong increased by \$582 a year.



## Changes in transport category costs





# QLD weekly transport costs

Per week

Per household

## Brisbane

Brisbane's typical household had transport costs of \$23,176 a year made it Australia's third highest city for transport costs and second-least affordable capital. Transport costs decreased by \$469 a year, due to car loan payments, which was down \$1,074 a year.

## Townsville

The Townsville typical household's transports costs decreased by \$642 to \$16,118 a year in the March quarter. This decrease was due to car loan payments which dropped in-line with Brisbane, whilst fuel expenditure rose by \$378 per annum. Townsville remained the second least expensive and the second most affordable regional centre.

cost rank <b>3 / 8</b>		affordability rank <b>2 / 8</b>	
Total transport costs <b>\$445.69</b>		% of income <b>17.1%</b>	
↓ -\$9.01 since Q4 2021		↓ -0.6% since Q4 2021	

cost rank <b>6 / 7</b>		affordability rank <b>6 / 7</b>	
Total transport costs <b>\$309.96</b>		% of income <b>12.4%</b>	
↓ -\$12.34 since Q4 2021		↓ -0.7% since Q4 2021	

### Changes in transport category costs

<b>↑ Increased</b>	
Insurance = \$1.86	
Fuel = \$10.29	
<b>– Unchanged</b>	
Public transport	
Tolls	
Roadside assistance	
<b>↓ Decreased</b>	
Car loan payments = -\$20.65	
Rego, CTP & licensing = -\$0.08	
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.43	

<b>↑ Increased</b>	
Insurance = \$1.54	
Fuel = \$7.27	
<b>– Unchanged</b>	
Roadside assistance	
<b>↓ Decreased</b>	
Car loan payments = -\$20.65	
Rego, CTP & licensing = -\$0.08	
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.42	





# SA weekly transport costs

Per week

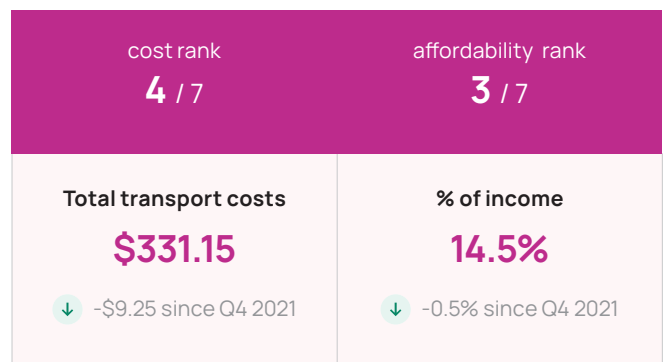
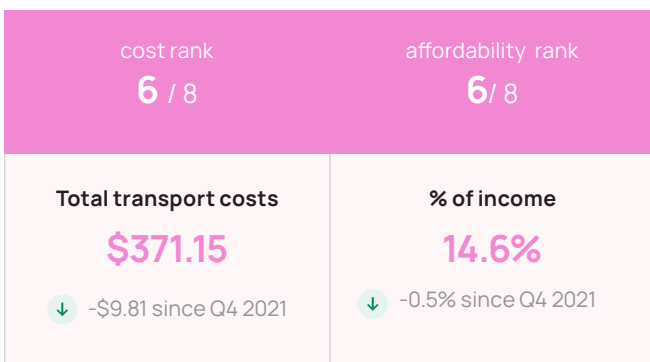
Per household

## Adelaide

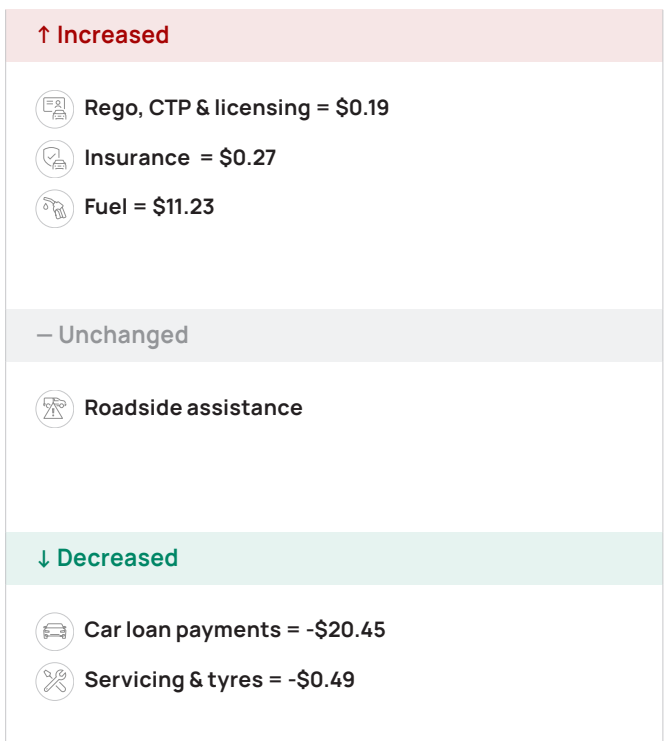
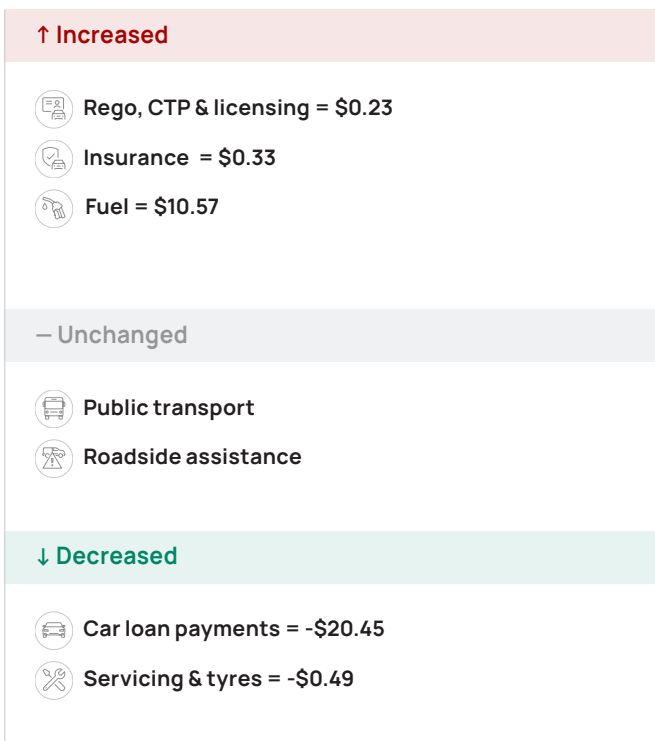
Adelaide's household transport costs decreased by \$510 to \$19,300 per annum. This decrease was mainly due to car loan payments which decreased by \$1,063, whilst fuel expenditure increased by \$549 per year.

## Mount Gambier

Mount Gambier's typical household spent \$17,220 per year on transport – a decrease of \$481 from the previous quarter. This decrease was mainly due to car loan payments (down in-line with Adelaide). Fuel expenditure increased by \$584 per annum.



## Changes in transport category costs





# WA weekly transport costs

Per week

Per household

## Perth

In the March quarter, Perth's typical household saw a decrease in transport costs of \$1,518 to \$19,371 per annum. This decrease was mainly due to car loan payments and public transport fares. Car loan payments decreased by \$1,101 per annum, whilst public transport fares dropped by \$936 per annum due to the introduction of a zone cap from 1 January 2022. Fuel expenditure increased by \$489 per year. Perth replaced Canberra as the capital city with the fourth-lowest transport costs (previously fourth-highest).

cost rank <b>5 / 8</b>		affordability rank <b>7 / 8</b>	
<b>Total transport costs</b>	<b>% of income</b>		
<b>\$372.53</b>	<b>13.8%</b>		
↓ -\$29.18 since Q4 2021	↓ -1.0% since Q4 2021		

## Bunbury

Bunbury's typical household transport costs decreased by \$459 to \$18,307 per annum. The overall decrease was driven by car loan payments which decreased in-line with Perth. Fuel expenditure increased by \$620 per year. Bunbury remained the regional centre with the highest transport costs. Bunbury became less affordable than its equivalent household in Perth, becoming one of three regional centres where transport costs were less affordable than its city counterpart.

cost rank <b>1 / 7</b>		affordability rank <b>4 / 7</b>	
<b>Total transport costs</b>	<b>% of income</b>		
<b>\$352.06</b>	<b>14.1%</b>		
↓ -\$8.82 since Q4 2021	↓ -0.3% since Q4 2021		

## Changes in transport category costs

<b>↑ Increased</b>
Insurance = \$1.34
Fuel = \$9.40
<b>– Unchanged</b>
Roadside assistance
<b>↓ Decreased</b>
Car loan payments = -\$21.17
Rego, CTP & licensing = -\$0.47
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.28
Public transport = -\$18.00

<b>↑ Increased</b>
Insurance = \$1.14
Fuel = \$11.93
<b>– Unchanged</b>
Roadside assistance
<b>↓ Decreased</b>
Car loan payments = -\$21.17
Rego, CTP & licensing = -\$0.47
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.24



# TAS weekly transport costs

Per week

Per household

## Hobart

Hobart's typical household spent \$18,432 per year on transport – a decrease of \$484 from the previous quarter. This was due to car loan payments (down by \$1,065 per annum). Fuel expenditure increased by \$594 per annum. Hobart remained Australia's capital city with the lowest transport costs but was also the least affordable in terms of purchasing power.

cost rank <b>8 / 8</b>	affordability rank <b>1 / 8</b>
<b>Total transport costs</b> <b>\$354.45</b> ↓ -\$9.31 since Q4 2021	<b>% of income</b> <b>17.9%</b> ↓ -0.3% since Q4 2021

## Launceston

Launceston's household transport costs were equivalent to \$16,947 a year – a decrease of \$460 per annum. This was due to car loan payments which decreased in-line with Hobart, whilst fuel expenditure rose by \$587 per year. Launceston had the lowest average earnings among all the cities and centres and remained the least affordable regional centre for transport. Launceston was one of only three regional centres where transport costs were less affordable than its city counterpart.

cost rank <b>5 / 7</b>	affordability rank <b>1 / 7</b>
<b>Total transport costs</b> <b>\$325.90</b> ↓ -\$8.85 since Q4 2021	<b>% of income</b> <b>18.1%</b> ↓ -0.4% since Q4 2021

## Changes in transport category costs

<b>↑ Increased</b>
Fuel = \$11.43
<b>– Unchanged</b>
Rego, CTP & licensing
Insurance
Roadside assistance
<b>↓ Decreased</b>
Car loan payments = -\$20.48
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.27

<b>↑ Increased</b>
Insurance = \$0.70
Fuel = \$11.30
<b>– Unchanged</b>
Rego, CTP & licensing
<b>↓ Decreased</b>
Car loan payments = -\$20.48
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.38



# NT weekly transport costs

Per week

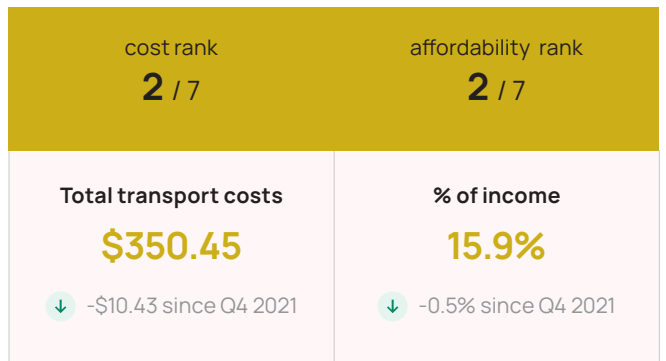
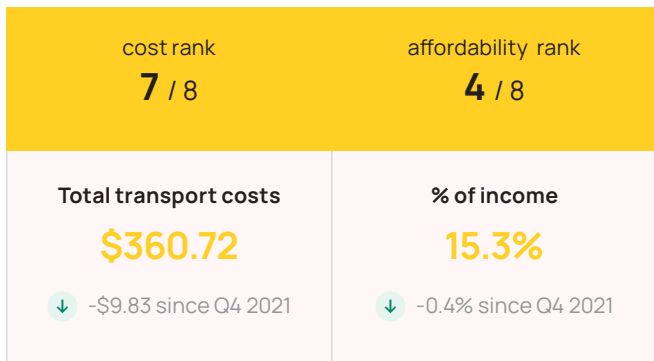
Per household

## Darwin

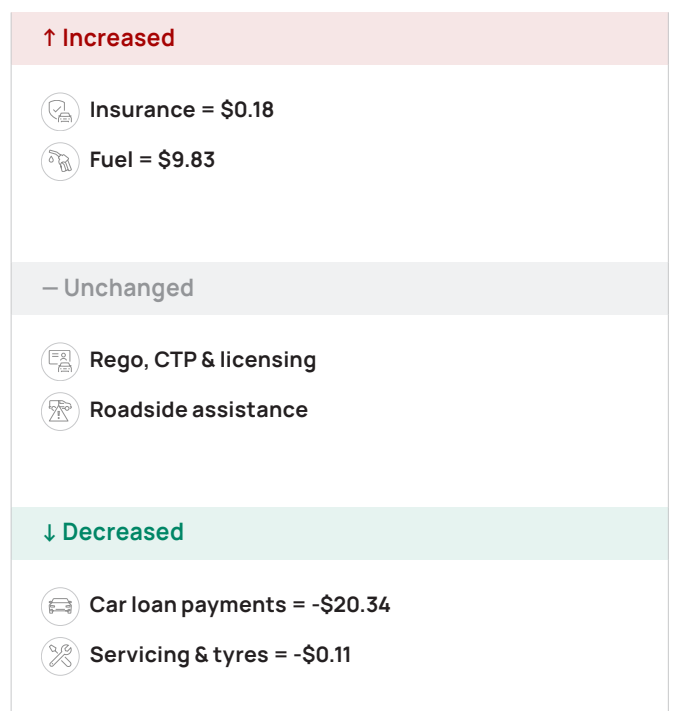
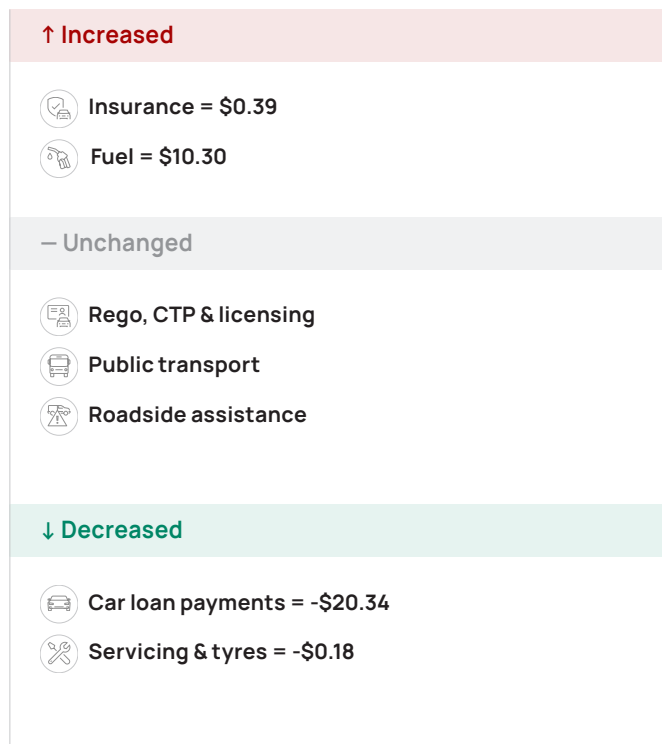
Darwin's typical household spent \$18,757 a year on transport, a decrease of \$511 from the previous quarter. This was due to car loan payments, which were down by \$1,057 per annum, whilst fuel expenditure rose by \$535 per annum. Darwin remained the city with the second lowest transport costs.

## Alice Springs

Alice Springs remained the regional centre with the second-highest transport costs – which equated to \$18,223 a year, \$542 lower than the previous quarter – and one of only three regional centres where transport costs were less affordable than its city counterpart. This quarterly decrease was due to car loan payments which dropped in-line with Darwin. Net fuel expenditure increased by \$511 per annum.



## Changes in transport category costs





## Canberra

Canberra's typical household spent \$19,843 per annum on transport, which was \$738 more than recorded in the previous quarter. This decrease was driven by car loan payments which dropped by \$1,059 per annum. Fuel expenditure increased by \$412 per year. Canberra replaced Perth as the capital city with the fourth-highest transport costs (previously fourth-lowest). Canberra's high median income made it the most affordable city in the March quarter.

cost rank <b>4 / 8</b>	affordability rank <b>8 / 8</b>
<b>Total transport costs</b> <b>\$381.59</b> ↓ -\$14.19 since Q4 2021	<b>% of income</b> <b>12.9%</b> ↓ -1.2% since Q4 2021

## Changes in transport category costs

<b>↑ Increased</b>
Fuel = \$7.93
<b>– Unchanged</b>
Roadside assistance
Public transport
<b>↓ Decreased</b>
Car loan payments = -\$20.37
Rego, CTP & licensing = -\$0.23
Insurance = -\$1.29
Servicing & tyres = -\$0.23

# Background and methodology

## Overview

The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) commissioned SGS Economics and Planning (SGS) to design and develop the Transport Affordability Index. Initially the Index analysed only the capital cities across Australia, but since the June 2017 quarter the Index includes a regional household in every state and the Northern Territory.

The Index provides a snapshot of the costs of transport for typical households in Australia and is regularly updated to show how transport costs change relative to incomes. The baseline is the first quarter (January to March) of 2016 for the city households and the second quarter (April to June) of 2017 for the regional households.

The characteristics of the household reflect the most common or average characteristics of the population. In some cases, household characteristics have been chosen to ensure some typical transport costs are well illustrated, while still being representative. The hypothetical households in different regions are largely identical to allow for ready comparison.

The Index considers a full range of costs families face when they own a car, as well as public transport costs. These fall into two broad categories: upfront costs and ongoing costs. Upfront costs include purchase costs for a new vehicle such as interest payments, registration, stamp duty, compulsory third party (CTP) insurance, driver's licences, comprehensive car insurance and roadside assistance. Ongoing costs (fuel costs, tolls and car maintenance) increase the more the vehicle is driven. Public transport costs for a city household's typical commute to work are also measured, as these form a growing share of weekly expenses.

While the AAA recognises that vehicle depreciation represents a significant, often hidden cost to families, this cost has not been included in the Index. The Index seeks to account for the actual weekly transport cash outflow for an average Australian household, covering costs that must be factored into the weekly family budget; depreciation is not usually accounted for in this way. Similarly, parking costs have not been included in the Index because consistent data is not available.

The Index seeks to compare the affordability of household transport costs across Australia by comparing them with an estimate of the hypothetical household's median weekly income. Total household transport costs in each city are compared with the average income of a typical family in that city to illustrate the proportion of income spent on transport-related costs.

As the Index is updated over time, a clearer picture will emerge of which household transport costs are putting pressure on Australian household budgets, and whether this differs across the country's capital cities and regional centres. The Index allows the AAA to assess the impact of proposed government policies on the average weekly budget. Families will also be better informed about how their decisions about transport affect their overall household budgets.

## The hypothetical household

The hypothetical household is a couple with children, the most common type of household in Australia according to the 2016 census. The couple consists of a 38-year-old woman and a 36-year-old man, which are the average ages for men and women in Australia. They live in a detached house and have two cars. Both are employed.

### City household

In each city, the hypothetical household is assumed to live in middle to outer ring suburbs with relatively high population density, good access to public transport, and in the case of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, that the family uses toll roads to access the CBD. In Sydney, the Index assumes that one member of the family uses toll roads only two days per week to travel to the CBD because toll costs are high and alternate routes are available. It assumes one member of the benchmark household uses toll roads every weekday in Melbourne and Brisbane. (Sydney vehicle owners are also eligible for free vehicle registration costs under the state's Toll Relief Scheme, and this is factored into the calculations.)

A typical Australian passenger vehicle is driven 13,800 kilometres per year and is 9.8 years old. Correspondingly, for the city household, the model assumes that the household's two motor vehicles are driven 15,000 and 10,000 kilometres per year. The car that drives 10,000 kilometres per year is assumed to be 10 years old and owned outright. The car that drives 15,000 kilometres per year is assumed to be a near-new vehicle and financed with a car loan. In addition, one member of the household is assumed to travel by public transport into the CBD and home again, five days per week.

### Regional household

There are key differences between metropolitan and regional households transport costs. The Index assumes that the regional household:

- on average, travels further than the city household
- pays more for petrol than the city household in some locations because they usually drive more and generally face higher fuel prices than their city counterparts
- on average, earns less than their city counterparts
- pays less for insurance because most states offer lower comprehensive premiums on new and used cars in regional areas
- doesn't pay road tolls
- doesn't pay for public transport as there is little or no availability in regional areas.

Registration, CTP and licensing costs are cheaper for regional households in South Australia and Victoria because state government policies impose different regional and metropolitan pricing structures in relation to CTP premiums. At the time of publication, these costs were \$239 cheaper in regional South Australia and \$110 cheaper in Victoria due to lower CTP premiums.

The regional locations chosen for analyses were selected as they have populations of over 10,000 people, have relatively dense population (at the SA2 ABS level), have ages similar to the average ages in the hypothetical city household, have a reasonable proportion of detached housing and have a substantial proportion of couple family households with children.

The regional locations included for comparison are:

- Wagga Wagga
- Geelong
- Townsville
- Bunbury
- Mount Gambier
- Launceston
- Alice Springs

The underlying assumptions for the regional household are largely the same as for the city household, but vehicle use and household income have been adjusted. The Index also assumes that regional households do not use public transport because services are very limited in those areas. As there are no toll roads in any of the regional locations, this cost has also been excluded.

#### **Other considerations**

The method of calculating the car usage for each regional location has been based on BITRE 2015 data that analysed the average commuting distance for each centre based on size and location.<sup>1</sup> These estimated commuting distances were divided by the average commuting distance of the capital city in that jurisdiction. This ratio was then multiplied by the car use distance of the master household to estimate the hypothetical household's car use in regional cities.

Using the BITRE assumptions, all regional households travelled further than their city counterparts, except in Townsville and Wagga Wagga. In these locations, the cities are smaller than the capital city and too far for people to commute to the capital for work or leisure. Households in

Townsville and Wagga Wagga may also drive less during the week to get to work, run errands and access social activities. By comparison, people in Geelong travel more because they are close enough to Melbourne to commute regularly for work or leisure, so total distances travelled are greater. The regional city is selected to be compared to its city counterpart rather than compared to other regional centres given that distances travelled vary.

The cost of servicing a new car is the same across both regional and city locations, as these costs are based on the manufacturers' servicing schedule. Costs associated with the older car, and tyres for both cars, are based on data from the ABS Household Expenditure Survey (HES)<sup>2</sup> and indexed in line with the CPI for maintenance and repair of motor vehicles.<sup>3</sup> The difference between regional and city households is attributable to differences in the cost of servicing the older car and the cost of tyres.

The incomes used for the regional locations have been calculated as a proportion of the average income for the figures used for the capital cities using data from the 2016 Census. For example, the household income of a couple family with children in Wagga Wagga was 91.25 per cent of that of the average Sydney income for a couple family with children. The Index has therefore calculated the income for Wagga Wagga as 91.25 per cent of the city household's income. Using this method, all regional households reported lower weekly earnings than their city counterparts.

For the purposes of this report, the term 'typical household' refers to a hypothetical household as defined above. Further information on the methodology and assumptions used to generate the AAA's Transport Affordability Index can be found in SGS Economics' final report on the AAA's website.



---

## End notes

1. Commonwealth of Australia, 2015. Information Sheet 73: Australia's commuting distance: cities and regions. Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics. Accessed 21 January 2019. [https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/is\\_073.pdf](https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/is_073.pdf)

2. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017. Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results, 2015-2016, cat. no. 6530.0. Accessed 7 February 2020. <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@nsf/Lookup/6530.0Main+Features12015-16?OpenDocument>

3. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019. Consumer Price Index, Australia, Sept 2020, cat. no. 6401.0. Accessed 28 October 2020. <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/mf/6401.0>

4. SGS Economics and Planning, 2016. Transport Affordability Index Final Report. August 2016. Accessed 1 February 2019. <https://www.aaa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/sgs-report-aaa-transport-affordability-index.pdf>

