Using the AUO to help your community meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

How can the Australian Urban Observatory help you meet the **Sustainable Development Goals**?

What is the Australian Urban Observatory?

The Australian Urban Observatory (AUO) is an important new **digital planning tool** that maps **liveability** across **Australia's 21 largest cities**.

These 21 cities, including 8 **capital cities** and 13 other **major regional cities** with a population of 80,000 or more, link the AUO to the National Cities Performance Framework. We map to three levels of detail, covering 170 **Local Government Areas**, 3,101 **Suburbs** and 39,967 **Neighbourhoods** (ABS SA1s). You can download our most up to date list of AUO Indicators here.

The AUO's liveability indicators are underpinned by years of **policy-relevant urban research** by **RMIT University**. Research that connects the **built environment** with **public health**, **social equity**, **sustainability** and the UN **Sustainable Development Goals**.

The AUO has **two levels of accessibility**. All LGA indicators, as well as the Liveability and Social Infrastructure Indices for Suburbs and Neighbourhoods, are available without charge. All other detailed indicators are available through AUO Paid Partnerships.

Evaluation & Monitoring

All of our indicators are linked to specific and **measurable targets** to help you act for the SDGs. Our indicators show you where the **liveability strengths and weaknesses** are in your community to support **partnership** and identify direction for **future infrastructure investment**.

The AUO indicators currently show data for 2018. In the coming months we will be releasing 2019 and 2020 liveability measures, enabling organisations to **evaluate change over time** and see improvements, or deterioration, of local liveability issues.

Our purpose is to provide decision-makers and everyday citizens with the very best **urban indicators** to **promote health and wellbeing** in their communities and help them **prioritise actions** that support healthy liveable cities.

Founded in the Social Determinants of Health

At the AUO we are guided by our understanding that health is influenced by **individual** personal factors, social and **community supports** and broader socioeconomic, cultural and environmental **conditions** – known collectively as the **social determinants of health**.

Our **definition of liveability**, adopted into key Victorian Government public health and planning documents, considers the **underlying conditions that support health**. We focus on **equity** and recognise that where you live can predict health outcomes and life expectancy.

Linking AUO Indicators to specific SDGs

✅ Liveability

Our overarching Liveability Index connects the AUO to 10 of the SGDs:

Our Liveability indicators are:

- Liveability Index

🚶 Walkability

Our Walkability indicators are calculated based on three key factors:

• something to walk to (land use mix and services of daily living)
• a way to get there (street connectivity)
• dwelling density

They connect the AUO to 3 of the SGDs:

Our Walkability indicators are:

- Walkability for Transport Index
- Average dwelling density per hectare
- Average street connectivity per square kilometre
- Average number of daily living destinations present (0-3) within 1600 m
- Average distance to closest activity centre

🏫 Social Infrastructure

Our Social Infrastructure indicators measure community and individual support services such as health, education, early childhood, community development, culture, sport and recreation, parks and emergency services.

These Social Infrastructure indicators connect the AUO to 6 of the SDGs:

Our Social Infrastructure indicators are:

- Social Infrastructure Index
- Average distance to closest playground

🚆 Transport

Living close to public transport supports health in two significant ways: by encouraging walking and reducing people's dependence on cars. Efficient and accessible public transport reduces inequities by allowing access to services, education and jobs for those without a car and people with restricted mobility.

Our Transport indicators connect the AUO to 4 of the SDGs:

Our Transport indicators are:

- Average distance to closest public transport stop
- % of dwellings within 400 m of a bus stop
- % of dwellings within 400 m of public transport with a regular 30-minute weekday service (7am and 7pm)
- Average distance to closest train station
- Average distance to closest bus stop with usual daytime weekday service frequency of 15 mins or better
- Average distance to closest bus stop with usual daytime weekday service frequency of 30 mins or better
- Average distance to closest bus stop with usual daytime weekday service frequency of 45 mins or better
- % of employed persons aged 15 and over using active transport to travel to work
- % of employed persons aged 15 and over using public transport to travel to work
- % of employed persons aged 15 and over using private vehicle/s to travel to work

🍎 Food

Access to fresh food is positively correlates with improvements in health and well-being. Fresh food provides residents with the opportunity to purchase nutritional foods which support healthy eating behaviours and lifestyles.

Our Food indicators connect the AUO to 5 of the SDGs:

Our Food indicators are:

- % of dwellings without any food outlet within 3.2km
- % of dwellings within 1km of a supermarket
- Average distance to closest healthy food outlet (supermarket or greengrocer)
- Average distance to closest fast food outlet
- Average count of fruit and vegetable grocers within 1.6km
- Average count of fast food outlets within 1.6km
- Percentage of dwellings with no availability of food within 1.6km
- Average distance to closest dining establishment

Alcohol

Access to fresh food is negatively correlates with improvements in health and well-being. Long term and excessive use of alcohol can cause extreme harm to physical and mental health is strongly associated with liver disease, stroke, numerous types of cancer and depression.

Our Alcohol indicators connect the AUO to 4 of the SDGs:

Our Alcohol indicators are:

- Average number of on-licence alcohol outlets within 400m
- Average number of off-licence alcohol outlet within 800m
- Average distance to closest on-licence alcohol outlet
- Average distance to closest off-licence alcohol outlet

Public Open Space

Our Pubic Open Space indicators measure parks and recreational reserves, public gardens, nature reserves, civic areas and promenades where everyone has the right to visit without being excluded due to economic or social conditions.

These indicators connect the AUO to 4 of the SDGs:

Our Public Open Space indicators are:

- Average distance to closest public open space
- % of dwellings within 400 m or less of public open space
- Average distance to closest public open space larger than 1.5 hectares
- % of dwellings within 400 m of public open space larger than 1.5 hectares
- % of dwellings within 400 m or less distance of any local park (> 0.4 to. <= 1 ha)
- % of dwellings within 800 m of less distance of any neighbourhood park (>1 ha to <= 5 ha)
- % of dwellings within 400 m of less distance of a neighbourhood recreation park (> 0.5 ha)
- Average distance to closest public open space with a nearby public toilet (within 100 m)

🧳 Employment

Our Employment indicators measures the percentage of employed persons living and working in the same SA3.

When employees live closer to their workplaces, commuting to work using public transport or active mobility is increased. This reduces traffic congestion and emissions from private vehicles which positively supports the environment and physical and mental health.

These indicators connect the AUO to 9 of the SDGs:

Our Employment indicators are:

- % of employed persons living and working in the same area

🏠 Housing

Our housing affordability indicators are calculated based on the 30:40 ratio - where a household has an income level in the bottom 40% of Australia's income distribution and is paying more than 30% of its income in housing costs.

The AUO enables these housing measures to be placed in the context of other liveability indicators, knowing that affordable housing is not the same as affordable living.

These indicators connect the AUO to 3 of the SDGs:

Our Housing indicators are:

- % of dwellings that are government owned or community housing
- % of households in the bottom 40% of incomes spending more than 30% of income on housing costs
- % of rental households in the bottom 40% of incomes spending more than 30% of income on housing costs
- % of mortgaged households in the bottom 40% of incomes spending more than 30% of income on housing costs
- % of rental or mortgaged households in the bottom 40% of incomes spending more than 30% of income on housing costs
- % of households spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs

SDG Targets met by AUO Indicators

Goal 1: No Poverty

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 1 targets including:

1.2 Reduce at least by half the proportion of people of all ages living in poverty

You can read the Goal 1 targets in detail [here](#).

Goal 2: Zero Hunger

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 2 targets including:

2.1 End hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

You can read the Goal 1 targets in detail [here](#).

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 3 targets including:

3.3 End the epidemics communicable diseases

3.4 Reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health and well-being

3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse

3.6 Halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents

3.7 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage and access to quality essential health-care services

You can read the Goal 3 targets in detail [here](#).

Goal 4: Quality Education

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 4 targets including:

4.1 Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education

4.2 Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education

4.4 Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

You can read the Goal 4 targets in detail [here](#).

🏳️‍🌈 Goal 5: Gender Equality

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 5 targets including:

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources

You can read the Goal 5 targets in detail [here](#).

📈 Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 8 targets including:

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the growth of micro-, small- and medium- enterprises

8.9 Devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism

You can read the Goal 8 targets in detail [here](#).

🏗️ Goal 9: Innovation and Infrastructure

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 9 targets including:

9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product

9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries

9.b Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries

You can read the Goal 9 targets in detail [here](#).

🟰 Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 10 targets including:

10.1 Progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population

10.2 Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all

10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome

10.4 Adopt policies and progressively achieve greater equality

You can read the Goal 10 targets in detail here.

🏙️ Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 11 targets including:

11.2 Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all

11.3 Enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization

11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage

11.7 Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces

11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas

11.b Support integrated policies towards #inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters

You can read the Goal 11 targets in detail here.

♾️ Goal 12: Responsible Consumption

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 12 targets including:

12.3 Halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains

12.5 Substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

You can read the Goal 12 targets in detail here.

👁️ Goal 13: Climate Action

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 13 targets including:

13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

You can read the Goal 13 targets in detail here.

🌳 Goal 15: Life on Land

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 15 targets including:

15.9 Integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts

You can read the Goal 15 targets in detail [here](#).

Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 16 targets including:

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

You can read the Goal 16 targets in detail [here](#).

Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

AUO Indicators will help your organisation meet Goal 17 targets including:

17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building

17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources

17.19 Develop measurements of progress on sustainable development

You can read the Goal 17 targets in detail [here](#).

AUO Voluntary Local Reviews

The value of the VLR, rests not simply in the final report but in the processes of engagement and partnership forged through co-creation of review and action.

Joana Almeida Correia
UN Global Compact, Cities Programme Project Development Manager

Have you heard about SGD Voluntary Local Reviews? Together with our RMIT colleges at the [UN Global Compact - Cities Programme](#), we can prepare a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) with your organisation, helping you understand how your community is tracking against the Sustainable Development Goals and what more needs to be done.

Contact the AUO to learn more about preparing a Voluntary Local Review for your community.