

# Why Local Government Matters



## Full Report 2015

## *Acknowledgements*

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The research team acknowledges the valuable contribution of the ACELG Research Advisory Committee and ACELG as the funding body for this research and the Commonwealth Government as the ACELG funding body.

## *Citing this report*

Ryan, R., Hastings, C., Woods, R., Lawrie, A., Grant, B. 2015 *Why Local Government Matters: Summary Report 2015* Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney Australia

Published JUNE 2015

Document version

1.0



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# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



As a councillor for 14 years before entering the Federal Parliament, I know first-hand the great honour it is to serve the community at the level of government closest to them. I also understand the pressures and complexity of the issues councils seek to resolve.

Local government plays a critical role in maintaining and developing the social and economic fabric of regions, bringing communities together and producing local solutions to local problems.

There is now a once in a generation opportunity for us to rethink the way we as governments do business and serve our communities. The Government is providing the forum to discuss change through our White Papers on the Reform of the Federation and Taxation.

Our Federation has served our nation well for over 100 years and has shown some flexibility to deal with issues of concern over the years. But the balance of constitutional responsibility and revenue raising capability has becoming increasingly grotesque.

Reforming the Federation is vital if we are to deliver our publicly funded services to the Australian people more effectively, more efficiently and more fairly.

The Australian Government is investing a record \$50 billion across Australia to deliver vital infrastructure communities need to secure a prosperous future. Our infrastructure commitments are not limited to big ticket items, but also deliver for every local government in Australia.

To support Local Government deliver productive infrastructure that will drive local growth, this Government is delivering billions of dollars through various funding programmes including:

- \$9.45 billion in Financial Assistance Grants;
- The \$2.1 billion Roads to Recovery Programme;
- The \$1 billion National Stronger Regions Fund;
- The \$300 million Bridges Renewal Programme;
- An additional \$200 million each for the Black Spot and Heavy Vehicle and Safety & Productivity Programmes;
- \$100 million for beef roads; and
- \$45 million under the Stronger Communities Fund.

For these reasons I am delighted to introduce Why Local Government Matters. Why Local Government Matters raises a range of issues and provides data relevant to the future of local government to think about in the context of the White Papers and more broadly.

The research produced by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government will support local government in its continued and significant contribution to enhance the strength, diversity and prosperity of Australia.

I congratulate the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government for its initiative and efforts in undertaking this valuable research.

**The Hon Warren Truss MP**

Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



There is an acceptance by individuals and communities that local government is always 'there' for a range of local needs, yet it is less clear how citizens identify with this crucial level of government.

This national study addresses a significant gap in the sector and research about how Australians value local government. This is an important question for today's polity. The findings will help more clearly define how, where and to what extent local government can further respond to local needs and influence broader political and public debate in Australia. Project findings will also assist scholarly research into local government.

The project builds upon research undertaken by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) to provide practical support for the local government sector across a number of themes, and utilises the considerable experience in social survey research of UTS and its investigators located in the Centre for Local Government.

Findings from *Why Local Government Matters* will be communicated in all jurisdictions and key literature. Project results will be benchmarked with comparable work of councils, local government organisations and researchers, and will inform further Centre work on themes such as sustainable governance, service delivery, leadership and community values.

I trust that the release of this research will substantially contribute to the greater understanding of the attitudes towards local government and the role of this tier of government in the federation and leadership of Australia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roberta Ryan', followed by a long horizontal stroke.

**Associate Professor Roberta Ryan**

Director, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government and  
Centre for Local Government, University of Technology, Sydney.

## Executive summary

*Why Local Government Matters* is a major piece of social research on community attitudes to local government undertaken by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG). The research aims to better understand how and why the activities of local governments, and their roles in society, are valued by communities.

The research investigates:

1. local government's role as a 'place shaper' and its importance in meeting the needs of citizens that drive their attachment to, and satisfaction with, the areas in which they live
2. the preferences of communities for how their services are delivered at the local level and the ability of local governments to offer flexible and community specific service delivery
3. theories of governance, particularly community beliefs about big versus small government and its role in the market, the appropriate role for the private sector in local service provision, the preferred extent of public participation in government decision making, and preferences for the realisation of public value
4. community knowledge of local government, ranked importance of services which can be delivered by local government in different jurisdictions, and attitudes about amalgamation
5. the attributes of individuals which are theorised to interact with or influence their attitudes and beliefs about each of the areas above, including demographic factors, levels of community participation, person values and political leanings.

This report presents the main findings of the 2014 survey, stage one of a longitudinal social research project which will also incorporate a qualitative phase in 2015.

### What does place mean to people?

Local governments matter because of their roles as 'place-shapers' and their importance in meeting the needs that most drive people's attachment to, and satisfaction with, the areas in which they live. To better understand what matters to Australians about the place – or local area – in which they live, respondents were first asked their level of agreement with nine statements describing ways their local area may contribute to personal identity, emotional attachment and connection to the community.

- Australians feel strong emotional connections to the local areas in which they live, providing them improved emotional wellbeing and a stronger sense of their personal identity. These feelings of attachment are generally stronger for people living in rural and remote areas, people who own their homes rather than rent, Liberal/National Coalition voters, and those who are more active in the community. They are generally weaker for people living in Western Australia.
- In their local area, the most important things for Australians are a safe environment, the availability of health care, levels of water, air and noise pollution, and being able to afford appropriate housing. There are significant differences in what is important for Australians depending on where they live (rural/remote compared with metropolitan areas); political affiliation; employment status; age; housing type; family type; and length of time living in the local area.
- In general people are satisfied with the environment around them. However Australians are less satisfied with the local economy and infrastructure than with the availability of local

services. In general, residents of rural and remote local government areas are less satisfied with the level of services and infrastructure in their local area.

### **Role of government**

All governments make choices about the part they play in service delivery based on their understanding of the role of government from an economic and ideological perspective. In order to tease out how Australians think about some of the key arguments in this area, respondents were asked a series of questions about service delivery, the role of government and how they wish to participate with governments in decision-making.

- There is strong support for the role of government in service delivery, particularly in health and education.
- Australians do not agree that the private sector or the market necessarily deliver the best or most efficient services, although there is a moderate correlation between political affiliation and the responses to these questions. Older Australians tend to be less supportive of private sector models for the delivery of public services.
- There is enormous support for government to provide services that deliver a healthier and fairer society, and for the view that decisions about services should not be made just on value for money. Australians agree that governments should be actively seeking to deliver public value.
- Australians believe it is important that local governments deliver a diversity of activities, with planning for the future being amongst the most important considerations.

### **How do people want their services delivered?**

Australians want more than just basic services from government.

- A majority of respondents agree that taxes should pay for more than basic services and most say they are prepared to pay more taxes to receive a broader range of services. Older Australians and those with more education are more likely to agree.
- There is strong agreement for governments to work with each other and with service providers to provide local services.
- Public services don't need to be delivered by government; instead there is support for delivery of public services by a mixture of public, private and not-for-profit organisations.

Responses to these questions did differ on the basis of political affiliation, but to a surprisingly small degree.

### **How do people want to be involved in government?**

There is strong support for very participatory styles of democratic engagement by government with its people. Australians want government involve them in making decisions about what services are delivered in their local area.

- Australian communities want to be involved with government in making decisions about how and what services should be delivered in their local area. This view is strongest among people living in rural and remote council areas, and those who have lived longer in their area. It is less strong for those on higher incomes and with more education.
- Good decisions are best made by involving communities, experts and government together in the process.

- Community and people using services are considered to have the best knowledge of what services are needed and how they should be delivered, followed by service providers and finally people who work in government. There are some differences in the ways these questions were answered depending on gender, age, education, family type and council type.

#### **What do people think about local government?**

- Australians think that local government is the best level of government to make decisions about the local area. Residents of rural and remote areas are a little less likely to nominate local government and more likely to nominate state government.
- Australians believe it is important that local governments deliver a diversity of activities, with planning for the future being amongst the most important considerations. People's expectations about what is best delivered by local government seem to be influenced by what is typically considered to be a role of local government in that jurisdiction.

Respondents living in rural and remote areas are generally more concerned about the consequences of amalgamation on local representation, cost of rates and services and their sense of belonging to the local area. People who have lived in an area longer than 10 years and who are active participants in the community are also more likely to think that their feeling of belonging to the area will be negatively impacted by amalgamation





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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

What do people really think about local government? What are community views about amalgamation? Would people be happy to pay more rates for better services?

*Why Local Government Matters* is a major piece of social research on community attitudes to local government undertaken by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG). The research aims to investigate how and why the activities of local governments, and their roles in society, are valued by communities. The research covers a range of areas including community views about what they value about where they live, how they want to engage in decision-making, service delivery preferences, what role they would like to see local government play and what they think about local government amalgamations.

This sector-influencing research draws on the successful examples of major research projects that have been used to articulate the value of largely intangible outcomes across diverse policy fields such as the arts, disability and the environment. Examples of these projects include *Who Cares About the Environment?* (NSW Office of Environment and Heritage) and *More than Bums on Seats* (Australia Council for the Arts).

A literature review was conducted to identify key themes in Australian and international research on local government and governance relevant to the aims of the study. The focus of the review was on research studies and theoretical or conceptual frameworks that have been applied to citizens' perceptions of local government and governance. The review also considered the range and focus of existing national and international surveys on the roles and functions of local and other levels of government.

The review identified a well-established body of surveys on citizen satisfaction with local government function, services and outcomes. However, the review also identified a significant gap in knowledge about how citizens' connections with local representation, democracy, governance, place and public services affect whether and why local government matters to them. Understanding how these connections influence perceptions of the importance and outcomes of local government is crucial to helping policy makers across all levels of government to deliver policy outcomes that respond to the needs of communities and the public sector.

This research is therefore not about performance of or satisfaction with local government; instead it is about *why local government matters* to people across the whole spectrum of its activities. It aims to establish benchmarks of the community's attitudes, values and priorities regarding quality of life and in relation to areas influenced by local government.

## 1.2 Research objectives

The aims of the research are to:

1. Investigate the social context for interactions between Australian communities and their local governments in order to:
  - a. build understandings and stimulate discussion amongst stakeholders of key issues for the sector
  - b. inform planning, implementation and review of activities research and capacity building activities
  - c. provide input to policy debates on the status of local government and key issues for managing change
  - d. contribute to the development of research on local government and support the work of professional networks and knowledge communities.

2. Establish benchmarks of the community's:
  - a. **awareness**, knowledge and understandings of the status, governance roles and service functions of Australian local government
  - b. **attitudes**, values and priorities regarding quality of life and wellbeing in the area in which they live and in relation to the aspects of their local area that are influenced by local government
  - c. interest, engagement and **participation in** the local area, and their self-reported experiences and behaviours in relation to local activities and councils.
3. Promote awareness of the role of the ACELG in facilitating innovation and best practice and in providing professional leadership to support effective local government in Australia.

## 1.3 Methodology

In April/May 2013, a literature review of predominantly survey research on 'citizen perceptions of local government' was undertaken to both inform the development of the research project and ensure that it was not replicating work already undertaken in Australia or internationally. A condensed version of this literature review can be found at Section 2 of this report.

Consultation with the sector was facilitated by ACELG over a period of ten months from May 2013. The discussion focussed on the value of local government; the relationship of local government to the community; community values around governance and service delivery; place making by local government; and the relationship of people to the places in which they live. From this process a conceptual framework for the research was developed (discussed in detail in Section 1.4 below) and circulated to jurisdictional associations for comment.

The research is conceived as a staged, mix methods project over two to three years.

### Stage 1: National CATI survey Version 1

A survey instrument using computer-aided telephone interviews (CATI) was written by ACELG, tested in sections through three online panel surveys and analysis of results, and then fielded to 2006 people nationally in October/November 2014 by market research company UMR. A fuller discussion of the survey methodology can be found in Appendix 2.

This report is a summary of the survey data from Stage 1 of the project.

### Stage 2: Qualitative data collection: national focus groups

ACELG will be conducting focus groups nationally in 2015. This stage of the research project will unpack the results of the survey and allow for greater understanding of the attitudes of the community to local government according to different contexts and in more depth than is possible through quantitative data alone.

### Stage 3: National CATI Survey Version 2

In late 2015, ACELG will field a revised and shortened version of the Stage 1 CATI survey nationally to a sample of at least 2000 adults. Revisions to the survey instrument will be made on the basis of an evaluation of the 2014 question set and outcomes of the qualitative phase of the research. The survey will deliver a national data set against which local jurisdictions can benchmark.

### Stage 4: A survey instrument for local jurisdictional or local government area use

ACELG will make available the questions from the Stage 3 version of the survey and the complete national dataset to local governments and jurisdictional bodies who would like to conduct their own local research off the back of the national project.

## 1.4 Conceptual framework

Developing the conceptual framework for the research project involved consultation with the sector and a steering group of ACELG research staff and associates. Based on these discussions, five key areas of enquiry emerged:

1. local government's role as a place shaper and its importance in meeting the needs of citizens that drive attachment and satisfaction with the area in which they live
2. the preferences of communities for how their services are delivered at the local level and the ability of local governments to offer flexible and community specific service delivery
3. theories of governance, particularly community beliefs about big versus small government and its role in the market, the appropriate role for the private sector in local service provision, the preferred extent of public participation in government decision making, and preferences for the realisation of public value
4. community knowledge of local government, ranked importance of services which can be delivered by local government in different jurisdictions, and attitudes about amalgamation
5. those attributes of individuals which are theorised to interact with or influence their attitudes and beliefs about each of the areas above, including demographic factors, levels of community participation, and personal values and political leanings.

See Appendix D for diagrammatic representation of the conceptual framework.

A literature review of key theoretical areas – place attachment; service delivery and governance – was an important part of the development of the conceptual framework and how constructs were to be measured in the survey instrument. Key elements of this literature review are presented below.

### 1.4.1 Place attachment

Place attachment has been defined in a number of different ways as it has been researched widely across a number of disciplines. The discussion which follows is not an exhaustive review of the literature about attachment to place; it is rather a synthesis of the literature that directly informed the development of this study.

Place attachment is a positive emotional bond that develops between people and their environments (Steadman 2003). Attachment to place can be conceived as a strong fusion of aesthetic, emotional and instrumental attachment (Savage 2010). Aesthetic and emotional dimensions of attachment are the psychological connections people make to the areas in which they live, linked to identity and to the bonds people make between themselves and places (Stedman 2003). Culture and identity are not just about social relationships, but are also profoundly spatial, with self-identity linked to place-identity (Stephenson 2010). Aesthetic responses to landscape and the built environment encompass how an area looks, how it feels to be in it, or what it looked like in the past (Stephenson 2010). Instrumental dimensions of attachment are linked to the capacity of a place to meet our needs; it is a multidimensional judgement about the quality of a setting which is often described as place satisfaction (Stedman 2002).

A neighbourhood or local area can serve several different functions for community members: relaxation and re-creation of self; making connections with others; fostering attachment and belonging; and demonstrating or reflecting one's values (Kearns and Parkinson 2001). Attachment to place, the local area in which we live, can act to support and develop aspects of personality and identity through the principles of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and self-efficacy. As described by Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996), the first principle of identity is the desire to maintain personal *distinctiveness* or uniqueness, which means that a resident's association with a specific town, and the lifestyle that is possible there, enables them to differentiate themselves from people from other areas or regions. Second, place is inextricably linked with the development and maintenance of *continuity* of self through preservation of a continuity with either specific places that have emotional significance or characteristics of places which are generic and transferable from

one place to another. Third, *self-esteem* – a person's feeling of worth or social value – can be supported by a favourite environment, meaning that living in a certain area makes someone feel good about themselves. The final principle of *self-efficacy*, which means that an individual has belief in their ability to meet situational demands. With respect to the environment, or the local area in which someone lives, feelings of self-efficacy are maintained if the environment facilitates, or at least does not hinder, a person's everyday lifestyle.

In other literature, the dimensions of place that promote or inhibit self-efficacy are called instrumental (Savage 2010; Steadman 2003). These instrumental dimensions of place attachment or satisfaction include a range of areas that are directly impacted by local government service delivery and urban planning, or indirectly by local governments' advocacy on behalf of their communities. They are reflective of the types of themes that are common in community strategic planning and other aspects of what local communities desire from their local governments.

Savage (2010) argues that attachment based on principles of identity (aesthetic and emotional dimensions of attachment) is essentially a middle class luxury as 'the ability to value places is dependent on having a wide enough set of reference points to allow comparison and evaluation' (p.118). He also argues that how people respond and connect to their local area will be influenced by their length of association with the neighbourhood (how long they have been resident) and whether they have chosen to be there, or have been 'fixed' there by their life circumstances. Atkinson (2010) notes that "whatever people elect to do, to be and to reside in remains deeply influenced by class dispositions, by social networks and by financial resources that vary dramatically". On the other hand, place satisfaction (or instrumental attachment) is less sensitive to socio-economic indicators – as the functional aspects of the place in which someone lives impact directly their daily lives, self-efficacy and satisfaction regardless of their life circumstances (Savage 2010).

#### 1.4.2 Service delivery and governance

This part of the research is based on the proposition that individual local governments need to make strategic decisions about how they manage local service delivery. They need to answer questions such as:

- What types of services are needed?
- What level of service delivery is required and how should they meet the community's expectations?
- What are the priorities for service delivery?
- How should services be delivered and by whom?
- Who should pay for services? What mixture of private and public money is appropriate?
- Who should decide on the answers to these questions?

Each local government will answer these questions on the basis of prevailing political, social and public administration ideologies, as well as the values held by staff and elected members (or those of the jurisdictional government under which they are constituted). Their opinions about the roles and value of local government; the appropriate role of community participation in decision-making; the role of the market in service provision; the aspects of different public management 'paradigms' under which they operate; and how they value different sources of knowledge (e.g. community opinion vs. expert or academic knowledge) will impact on how they answer each of these questions about service delivery, and consequently how services are delivered in the local community.

Drawing on debates about the role and value of local government that have been prominent since the early 1800s, Chandler (2010: 6) points to a widely-held view that the roles of local government jurisdictions should be based on 'the benefit areas of local public goods' in order to ensure efficient delivery of services (Chandler 2010: 6). As summarised by Watt (2006: 8), the major advantage of local government is that 'it allows the local public goods and services it provides to be adjusted to suit the tastes and the preferences of local residents'. Ideally, local governments are established so that local residents both pay for and vote to decide on the local public goods they receive (Watt 2006: 9).

Writing within the Australian context, Colebatch and Degeling (1986) argue the importance of tailored local service provision as a justification for local government. At one level, local governments are agencies of state governments and are given specified powers – and in some cases funds – to provide nominated services or exercise particular powers. Since many government services are offered directly or indirectly by other tiers of government, it is not the only possible agent. On the other hand, within local communities each council is viewed as a legal entity and as a political body with elected representatives, but also crucially as a service body. This creates a unique kind of relationship between itself and the people of its locality: as well as being ‘voters’ and ‘ratepayers’, citizens are ‘customers’ of the council’s services (Colebatch and Degeling 1986).

The view that local governments are the best placed organisations to tailor local services to meet the preferences of local communities questioned, largely on the grounds that in a globalising world it is not possible to constitute a spatial community. As noted by Chandler (2010: 10), many commentators have pointed to vast differences between a sedentary rural life on the one hand, and the industrialised mass communication age of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries on the other. They have argued that ‘advances in modern communications made community governments based on the village or suburb an outmoded entity’.

In the past few decades this has led to debates on local government needing to be engaged in networks and partnerships; with discussions of ‘governance’ than ‘government’. Networked community governance has the goal of meeting community needs as defined by the community and as set out in the context of the demands of ‘a complex system of multi-level governance’ (Stoker 2011: 17). This governance is always an interactive process and involves various forms of partnership. According to Stoker (2011: 20–23), the move towards networked community governance has also encouraged a vision of the role of local government as ‘place-shaping’.

Place-shaping refers to the creative use of power and influence to promote the general wellbeing of a community and its citizens, and may include building and shaping local identity, regulating harmful and disruptive behaviours and helping to resolve disagreements (Lyons 2007: 3). Place-shaping helps to identify the special characteristics of local places, including neighbourhoods or defined parts of a local government area, so that action can be taken on economic, social and environmental fronts to enhance the quality of the place and the quality of life of its people (McKinlay et al 2011: 4; Rablen 2012: 303–305).

Discussion of ‘public value’ has been widespread in public policy debates since a conceptual framework was put forward for it by Mark Moore in 1995 (Williams and Shearer 2011; Alford and O’Flynn 2009). Moore’s work, *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government* describes ‘a *philosophy* of public management – an idea of what we citizens should expect of public managers, the ethical responsibilities they assume in taking office, and what constitutes virtue in the execution of their offices’ (1995: 1). There is strong support in the literature for suggesting that adopting public value as a guiding theme or principle for local government practice enhances democratic and service provision outcomes for local communities (see Benington 2009). Politics is central in a public value paradigm. While private sector firms may focus on efficiency, quality, security and reliability, public managers must combine these concerns with a striving for accountability, as well as attention to public preferences (Benington 2009).

Stoker's (2006: 44; after Kelly and Muers 2002) summary contrasting the key features of traditional public administration, new public management and the public value management paradigms illustrates the way that different perspectives on public management impact on the role that local governments will play in their communities.

**Table 1: 'Paradigms' of management**

	Traditional Public Administration	New Public Management (NPM)	Public Value
Key objectives	Politically provided inputs; service monitored through bureaucratic oversight	Managing inputs and outputs in a way that ensures economy and responsiveness to consumers	The overarching goal is achieving public value that in turn involves greater effectiveness in tackling the problems the public most cares about; stretches from service delivery to system maintenance
Role of managers	To ensure rules and procedures are followed	To help define and meet performance targets	To play an active role in steering networks of deliberation and delivery and maintain overall capacity of the system
Definition of public interest	By politicians or experts; little in the way of public input	Aggregation of individual preferences, in practice captured by senior politicians or managers supported by evidence about customer choice	Individual and public preferences captured through a complex process of interaction that involves deliberative reflection over inputs of opportunity costs
Approach to public service ethos	Public sector has a monopoly on service ethos and all public bodies have it	Sceptical of public sector ethos (leads to inefficiency and empire building); favours customer service	No one sector has a monopoly on public sector ethos; maintaining relationships through shared values is seen as essential
Preferred system for service delivery	Hierarchical department or self-regulating profession	Private sector or tightly defined arms-length public agency	Menu of alternatives selected pragmatically and a reflexive approach to intervention mechanisms to achieve outputs
Contribution of the democratic process	Delivers accountability; Competition between elevated leaders provides an overarching accountability	Delivers objectives: Limited to setting objectives and checking performance, leaving managers to determine the means	Delivers dialogue: Integral to all that is undertaken, a rolling and continuous process of democratic exchange is essential

*Source: Stoker (2006)*

Within these paradigms, local governments can take different approaches to how they interact with the community with regards to the community's role in decision-making about service delivery. Governments can consult with the community by seeking the views of stakeholders in order to improve outcomes, with the mode of consultation sitting within a continuum of possible approaches to community participation, as illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Extent of community participation in public value**



A key trend since the late 1980s has been the 'marketising' of public services, driven by the forces of 'privatisation' and 'liberalisation' (Warner and Clifton 2013: 48). Three common responses by local governments to these trends have been:

- **Hollowing out** – Declines in property tax revenues and reductions in inter-governmental transfers have forced local governments to 'hollow out' their services through service cutbacks, restructuring local government away from traditional public service obligations, and increasing user fees.
- **Riding the wave** – Some municipalities use privatisation as a two-edged sword by harnessing the market toward more public ends. Services may be contracted out, but councils at the same time pay attention to the need to create markets for public services. They allow competitive bidding from in-house teams, and carefully monitor all processes to ensure service quality and cost savings for rate payers.
- **Pushing back** – Often encouraged by social action undertaken by citizens, many local governments have pushed back against market encroachment and state pressure to cut back and privatise. This has led to initiatives such as establishing multi-sectoral coalitions of citizens, non-profit organisations and government, for example as regards housing and economic development strategies (Warner and Clifton 2013: 52–57).

There are several examples of councils successfully taking advantage of economies of scale through shared service provision (Aulich et al. 2011). The threshold population sizes for particular services are different, and this is a key factor in determining whether shared service arrangements can lead to improvements. Avenues for delivering shared services include: two or more councils co-ordinating production activities; two adjacent councils organising a single production unit; and one council contracting services from another council or another government agency.

The case for shared services rests on two main propositions, namely the valuing of the continued existence of small autonomous councils based on the principle of 'subsidiarity' i.e. that government powers should be exercised at the lowest level of government possible; and that the optimal number of production units depends on the trade-off between scale economies and coordination economies (Dollery, Akimov and Byrnes 2009).

## 1.5 This report

This report presents the main findings of the 2014 Survey.

Section 2 contains a short version of the literature review on community research on local government which was undertaken at the commencement of the project. Sections 3 to 8 present the distribution of responses to each question in the survey.

Associations between demographic, values and community participation responses and the answers to questions in Sections 3 to 7 are presented throughout the report. These differences have been reported when they reach a significance of  $p \leq 0.05$  on the two-tail Chi-squared test of association; and when there is a magnitude of difference between categories or between a category and the national average of 5% or more.

The demographic, community participation and values questions response categories are defined as follows and the distributions of responses can be found in Section 8.

Gender	Male Female
Community Participation	Have been actively involved in any service club or sporting, social, welfare, emergency services or recreation group in the community in the past 12 months
Age	18–29 30–39 40–49 50–59 60–69 70 and over
Politics	Normally vote for, or most identify with:  Liberal National Labor Greens Other (please specify) None – change from election to election
Knowledge of Mayor's name	Able to give Mayor's name:  Correctly Not <i>completely</i> wrongly Wrongly Don't know Abusive answer
Non-English speaking background	Speak a language other than English at home
Educational attainment	Highest level of educational qualification completed:  School education level Certificate level Diploma and Advanced Diploma level Bachelor degree level Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma level Postgraduate Degree level



<b>Income</b>	Total combined household income before tax:
	Less than \$10,000
	\$10,000 to \$19,999
	\$20,000 to \$29,999
	\$30,000 to \$39,999
	\$40,000 to \$49,999
	\$50,000 to \$59,999
	\$60,000 to \$69,999
	\$70,000 to \$79,999
	\$80,000 to \$89,999
	\$90,000 to \$99,999
	\$100,000 to \$149,999
	\$150,000 to \$199,000
	\$200,000 to \$299,000
	\$300,000 or more
<b>Employment status</b>	Employed for wages
	Self-employed
	Out of work and looking for work
	Out of work but not currently looking for work
	A homemaker
	A student
	Retired
<b>Housing tenure</b>	Unable to work
	Mortgaged or owned outright
	Being rented
	Other
<b>Dwelling type</b>	Separate house
	Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc
	Flat, unit or apartment (3 stories or less)
	Flat, unit or apartment (4 stories or more)
	Other dwelling
<b>Family Type</b>	Couple with no children
	Couple with children
	One parent family
	Other type of family household
	Lone person household
	Group household (non-family)
<b>Length of time living in the local area</b>	Less than 2 years
	More than 2 and less than 5 years
	More than 5 and less than 10 years
	More than 10 years
<b>Council type</b>	Urban Capital City
	Urban Development Small/Medium
	Urban Development Large/Very Large
	Urban Regional
	Urban Fringe
	Rural
	(Please refer to Appendix E for definitions of these Australian Classification of Local Government types)

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 Rationale and method

Literature published from 1995 to 2013 was reviewed to identify key themes in Australian and international research on local government that are relevant to the aims of the study. The focus was on research studies and theoretical or conceptual frameworks that have been applied to citizens' perceptions of local government, as well as on survey models and approaches. These were used to inform the design of the study's research questions and to provide a literature-based framework for discussing its findings.

Using a wide range of search terms and databases, literature was included that met the following criteria:

- academic literature, reports and papers published in English
- literature available in the public sphere
- studies that focused on community or citizen perceptions of local government
- the presence of conceptual frameworks that have been applied to citizen perceptions of local government.

A table of evidence (see Appendix B) summarises those studies accessed in the literature review that empirically explored citizen attitudes towards local government.

### 2.2 Australian research

Drawing on the evidence obtained through the literature review, the following are key insights into the state of research – particularly survey research – that focuses on citizens' perceptions of Australian local government, and possible reasons for why their local councils might matter to them.

An observation that can be made with a degree of confidence is that the citizens of Australia are periodically surveyed to express their views on public services and governments, including local governments. In state and territory jurisdictions throughout the country, the focus of surveys is for the most part on ascertaining levels of community satisfaction with the services and facilities provided by their local governments. Statewide surveys on services, facilities and other issues relating to councils are carried out on a regular basis by state governments or local government associations in jurisdictions including Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria (Elton Consulting 2010). In jurisdictions including New South Wales, local governments conduct citizen satisfaction surveys on a council-by-council basis, often contracting out the research to independent providers.

Data from the longitudinal *Public Attitudes Survey* (Crime and Misconduct Commission, Queensland 2011) suggests that Australians generally expect that encounters with government employees will be accessible, efficient and effective. Most respondents (86%) believed there will always be some corruption in local government, and half the respondents (49%) believed that not enough is being done about corruption in local government (Crime and Misconduct Commission, Queensland 2011).

In a nationwide survey, Gray and Brown (2008) found that, although respondents' perceptions of their sense of belonging to their local areas was high (83.6%), it was less than their sense of belonging to their state/territory (89.1%), and even less than their sense of belonging to Australia as a nation (94.6%).

Based on research carried out by McGregor Tan Research (2006) in South Australia, findings show that more than half of surveyed respondents believed that their local councils were the best placed tier of government to provide a range of services such as libraries, home care services for the elderly, the monitoring and policing of pollution, crime prevention or neighbourhood watch and childcare services.

In Tasmania, Myriad Research (2011) longitudinally measures citizen satisfaction with a range of core local government services, activities and programs, but the 2011 study also aimed to assess community views in relation to local government in the Australian Constitution and direct federal funding. The data showed that two in three respondents felt it was important for local government to be recognised in the Australian Constitution, and that close to 80% of respondents considered it important that the federal government should be able to directly fund the local government sector.

Taking into consideration a range of these studies and their longitudinal application, there are gaps in the available data relating to:

- community views on the importance of development assessment and planning
- views on the ability of local governments to support the future needs of communities
- perceived ability of local councils to deliver services and infrastructure efficiently and timeously
- perceived ability of councils to deliver more locally specific services and infrastructure, such as economic development
- willingness of communities to pay more for higher levels of service
- importance of local representation to communities
- clearer understanding of views relating to local government boundary changes (Elton Consulting 2012).

The literature review provides no evidence that any nationwide study has been carried out which addresses the objectives of the present study in the decades preceding 2013.

## **2.3 Key themes from the literature**

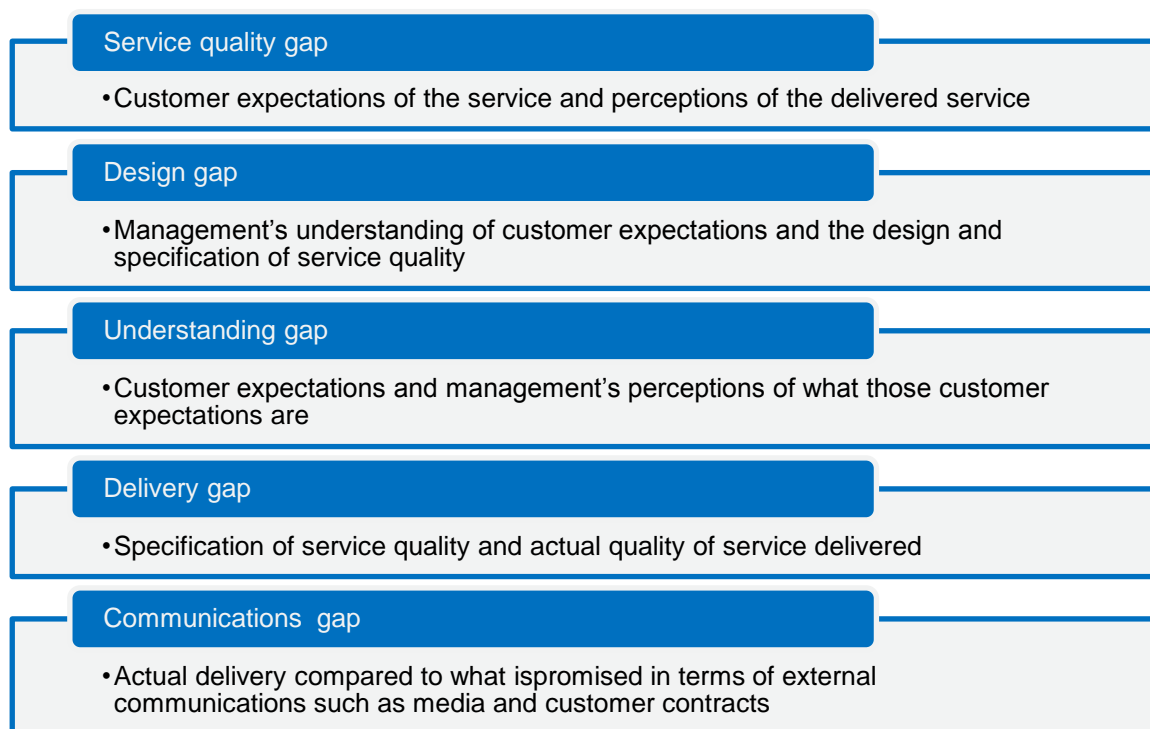
The focus in this section is on considering what can be drawn out from extant studies carried out in Australia and internationally in terms of themes and areas of interest adopted by researchers, conceptual frameworks used to frame research designs and methodologies, and key findings. These findings informed the research design and methodology for the 'Why Local Government Matters' study.

### **2.3.1 Knowledge of local government**

Research suggests that key to exploring citizens' knowledge of local government is to explore their understandings of local government function, and this literature provides examples for classifying the roles and responsibilities of local government (Myriad Research 2011; McGregor Tan Research 2006; Elton Consulting 2010; Ipsos Social Research Institute 2010).

According to Donnelly et al. (1995), research has been used to explore people's perceptions of gaps in services provision, as illustrated in the figure below:

**Figure 2: Typology of measurable gaps in service provision**



Source: Donnelly et al. (1995)

### **2.3.2 Attitudes toward local government**

Researchers such as Glaser and Denhardt (2000) point out that many of the conditions that help to explain attitudes toward local government and perceptions of local government performance are not under the direct control of, and cannot be easily manipulated by, the local governments themselves. This suggests that citizens are prepared to hold local government agencies responsible for general quality of life issues, even when such issues are not under the direct control of their local authorities. In order to deal with this methodologically, Glaser and Denhardt (2000) distinguish between 'controllable' variables that can be affected by local government itself (such as information flow); and 'non-controllable' variables, which are the trends and events beyond the control of local government, including broad social and economic trends. It is important for research in this area to be able to distinguish between the differing effects of these two types of variables.

Evidence from studies carried out in the US (Piotrowski and van Ryzin 2008; James 2010; Glaser and Denhardt 2000) suggests that citizens' priorities, values and attitudes could be linked to their perceptions of transparency at the local government level, which is measurable. Piotrowski and van Ryzin (2008), for example, carried out research which suggests that citizens' desire for transparency at the local level can usefully be measured and analysed on the basis of the following dimensions:

- demand for fiscal transparency
- health and safety information
- principled transparency (disclosing information and operating in the open)
- transparency around governance.

International research (Ipsos Social Research Institute 2010) finds that drivers of satisfaction with local government can be categorised into six dimensions, namely overall service quality; direct communication and engagement; perceived value for money and/or absence of corruption; clean, safe and strong communities, which create a sense of 'liveability'; media coverage; and background factors such as affluence and diversity.

### 2.3.3 Measuring the outcomes of public service delivery as citizens perceive them

It is widely recognised that the outcomes of many government services are difficult to measure objectively and are often 'elusive' (Van Ryzin 2013: 597). Public performance has always tended to be measured by means of 'hard' indicators such as resources and outputs. However the increased attention being paid to public sector accountability, and the problems that have emerged in relating inputs, activities and outputs to their impacts and outcomes, have encouraged the use of 'soft' indicators such as 'satisfaction', 'trust' and 'quality of life' (Bouckaert and van de Walle 2003: 229).

The citizen satisfaction survey is a method of measuring the outcomes of public service delivery as citizens perceive them (Kelly and Swindell 2002: 273). Citizen satisfaction with service quality can be described as an 'external measure of value creation' or a 'proxy measure', and can be compared with internal performance measures upon which managers focus in order to achieve performance goals (Kelly 2005: 77). A direct causal relationship is presupposed between the quality of delivery of a given service or range of services, and user satisfaction with that delivery. The underlying premise is that increasing the quality of local government governance and service provision will increase public satisfaction and that satisfaction indicators can therefore be used as proxies for good governance.

Approaches to citizen satisfaction surveys include models which make explicit links between:

- individuals' satisfaction with services in relation to the amount of importance that they give to each service (van Ryzin and Immerwahr 2007)
- citizen expectations of a service and their levels of satisfaction with the service (Van Ryzin 2004; James 2009)
- citizen evaluations of service quality compared with indicators of internal service performance (Im and Lee (2012).

There is a growing body of research on the use of citizen satisfaction surveys in local government. In Queensland, for example, researchers make use of a model that allows both for the measuring of community perceptions of the importance of a local government function and for ratings of citizen satisfaction which measure community members perceptions of how well a council is performing each function. This allows for the 'gap' between perceptions of importance and satisfaction ratings to be calculated in respect of a range of services and categories of services. Since surveys occur periodically, comparisons are possible over time (Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) (2011).

### 2.3.4 Skills and competencies in dealing with local councils and local issues

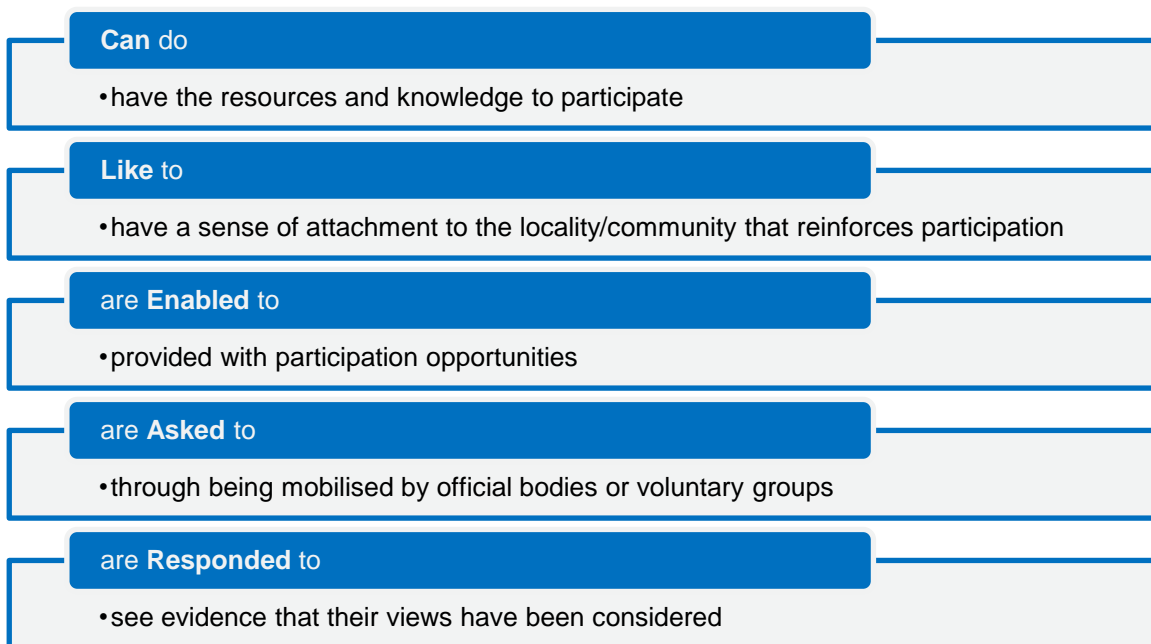
There is evidence from studies in several Australian jurisdictions that many people do have direct contact with their local councils. For example, Victorian research (JWS Research 2012) found that across all Victorian councils, 61% of residents had contact with their council in 2011–2012. The Crime and Misconduct Commission, Queensland (2011) notes on the basis of a survey (see table of evidence in Appendix B) that 41% of respondents reported some contact with a local government employee at some stage in their life.

Studies suggest that citizens allow their personal experiences to affect their views of government, especially in regard to local issues that are concrete and direct for community residents. For example, drawing on findings from research conducted in the USA, Orr and West (2007) conclude that local government is the level of the public sector closest to the people, and that individuals surveyed at the local level are more likely than those surveyed in connection with higher tiers of government to let their personal experiences affect their views of government. Research which seeks to identify citizens' skills and competencies in dealing with local government could benefit from also focusing on citizens' perceptions of procedural fairness and the ways in which people manage 'uncertainty' (Herian, Hamm, Tomkins and Pytlik Zillig 2012).

### 2.3.5 Personal behaviour of respondents at the local level

The reviewed studies do not provide accessible models for gathering data on the personal behaviour of respondents in their contact with local council or their use of local facilities. While some of the studies included in this review point to the value citizens place on resident involvement in local decision-making (see e.g. Myriad Research 2011), there is a gap in exploring people's perceptions of their actual participation in local governance, local events and various forms of activism.

At the same time, there is a large body of academic literature focusing on facilitating citizen participation in local governance and enhancing social capital (Berner, Amos and Morse 2011; Cuthill and Fien 2005). A diagnostic tool – the CLEAR model – has been developed in the UK on the basis of 'the theoretical and empirical insights of a large body of research into participation' (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker 2006: 286). The CLEAR model argues that participation is most effective when citizens:



**Figure 3: The CLEAR Model**

Source: Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker (2006: 286–289)

This is a potentially useful comparative model, which the authors describe as a diagnostic tool that 'enables policy makers to look at citizens and ask questions about their capacities, their sense of community and their civic organisations' (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker 2006: 289).

In terms of a willingness to pay more for services, research carried out by JWS Research in Victoria (2012) indicates that ratepayers expect councils to live within their current means and that service improvements should be moderate rather than substantial. In a review of recent Australian community surveys on the role of local government also referred to above, Elton Consulting (2010) note that there is a lack of research on the perceived ability of local councils to deliver services and infrastructure efficiently and in a timely manner, and the perceived ability of councils to deliver more locally specific services and infrastructure, such as economic development.

### 2.3.6 Additional frameworks for understanding local government

The review of the literature also considered several concepts and frameworks that may be useful for the study. In the literature these frameworks were found to focus on:

- elements of an effective system of local government in the Australian context (Independent Local Government Review Panel 2012)
- aspects of public goods and services that contribute to local communities being good places in which to live (Local Government Association of Queensland 2011; Ipsos Social Research Institute 2010)
- the value of local governments engaging in ongoing communication with their constituents (James 2010), including reporting performance information that is service-specific and developed in response to the concerns of local residents (Darlow, Hawtin and Jassi 2008)
- making use of concepts from marketing research – see Gardiner (2009) for a discussion of the themes that may be needed in order to develop a model for the marketing of local government<sup>1</sup>; and the use of marketing research methods to analyse data on citizens' perceptions of the importance they attach to, and their satisfaction with, local government services (Social Dimensions 2010).

## 2.4 Challenges in ascertaining citizens' perceptions

As regards citizen satisfaction surveys, several limitations have been identified in the literature, and a range of issues need to be considered in respect of further development of survey design and methodology. Although they draw on market research models derived from the private sector, researchers draw attention to the differences between the private and the public sectors when adopting this approach in the public sector (Herian and Tomkins 2012: 66; Kelly and Swindell 2002: 273; Kelly 2005: 79).

Glaser and Denhardt (2000) write that the 'nature of public products' makes citizen assessments of them difficult, and that government performance is value-laden. For example, citizens who have negative views of federal or state government may characterise local government similarly. According to Roefs and Atkinson (2010: 44), there are several analytical difficulties in unpacking citizens' attitudes towards government. For local government this may be particularly difficult to achieve, due to uncertainties such as the following:

- To what extent do citizens shape their views about local government according to the actual performance of local councils?
- Can citizens differentiate the performance of councils from that of other levels of government?
- Do people know what councils actually do, and what their problems and constraints are?
- How involved are people with their local government, and do they feel they can influence it?
- How does satisfaction with service delivery relate to less tangible and instrumental aspects of government, such as trust in government?

Moving beyond local government to focus on democratic governance generally, Ariely (2013) calls for more research on the associations between citizens' perceptions of public administration (bureaucracy), the actual quality of bureaucratic performance, and citizen satisfaction with democracy. In a pioneering cross-national study, he finds evidence for the central importance of public administration in sustaining citizen support of democracy.

There is much debate as to whether citizen satisfaction surveys are adequate in achieving their primary intended purpose, namely assessing and gathering data for improving public sector performance. Many researchers (see Stipak 1979; Bouckaert and van de Walle 2003) have suggested, for example, that the results

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<sup>1</sup> These themes include goal congruence, product type, recognition that there were elements of citizen and customer markets being served by local government, and acknowledgement of the complex 'marketing exchange that takes place involving the elected members, the administration and the ratepayers' (Gardiner 2009).

of citizen surveys more closely reflect the characteristics and attitudes of respondents, rather than the actual quality of government services.

There is a call for greater methodological rigour (van Ryzin 2013) that takes into account the socio-economic characteristics of respondents and local characteristics, such as the size of local government areas. Other methodological issues include the location of questions in often quite lengthy survey instruments (Van de Walle and Van Ryzin 2011), statistical complications that result from the non-experimental nature of the research (Stipak 1979: 48–49), and questions of sample size and make-up (Swindell and Kelly 2005: 709–710).

More research is needed on how citizens' personal experiences with services may affect their evaluations of them; what effect the aggregation of citizen evaluations and performance benchmarks has on the accuracy and usefulness of data; and the relationships between citizen expectations of local government, user satisfaction with local government services and internal measures of local government performance. Wider issues of 'trust in government' and citizen satisfaction with democracy may also need to be considered in the design of citizen surveys.

## 2.5 Conclusion

There is an established and growing body of literature that focuses on citizens' perceptions of local government, but the majority of the research designs and data generated focus on citizen satisfaction with local government services, to a lesser degree on perceptions of local representation and democracy, and to an even less degree on whether local government matters to them and if so, why it matters. The conduct of the literature review gives grounds for suggesting that the study described below fills a gap, not only in the in the Australian, but also the international literature.



## 3 Governance and service delivery preferences

All governments make choices about the part they play with respect to service delivery, based on their understanding of the role of government from an economic and ideological perspective. In order to tease out how Australians think about some of the key theories in this area, respondents were asked a series of questions about service delivery, the role of government and how they wish to participate with governments in decision-making. The questions were designed to provide a better understanding of both community attitudes about service delivery and underlying governance preferences.

The questions do not specify which level of government is being asked about, although they often refer explicitly to the 'local area' or 'local community'. Questions were not framed to be about local government specifically, but Australians' views on these issues are of direct relevance to local governments as they are well placed to be responsive to the views of their own communities.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to 25 statements about the role of government in providing services to the community. Although the questions in the section were randomised in the administration of the survey, they have been grouped in this report to highlight how they are linked conceptually.

### 3.1 Level of agreement with individual governance and service delivery statements

*Question 3 of the survey asked:*

*Thinking about the role of government in the provision of services to the community, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

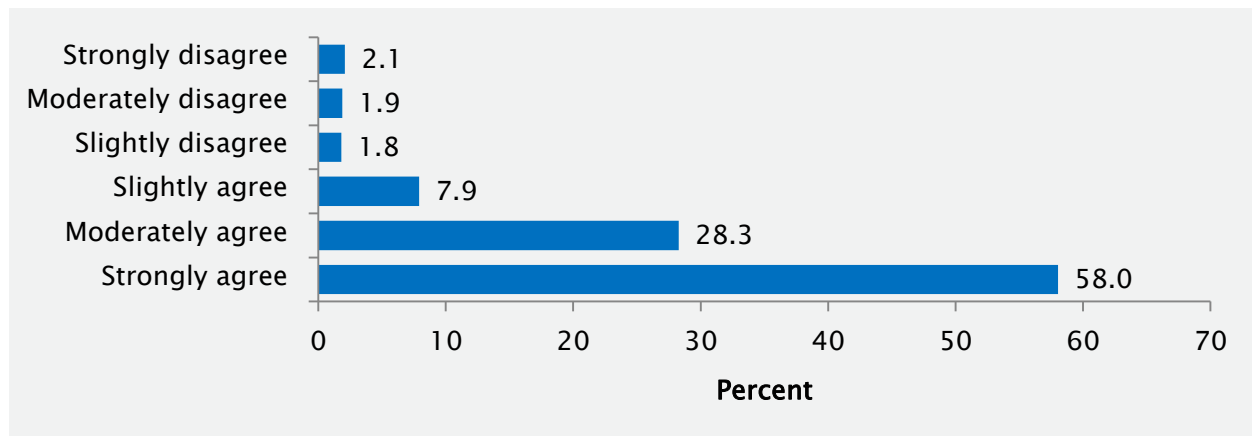
#### 3.1.1 Community participation in decision-making

Australian communities want to be involved with government in making decisions about how and what services should be delivered in their local area. They think good decisions are made by involving communities, experts and government together in the process. Communities and people using services are considered to have the best knowledge of what services are needed and how they should be delivered, followed by service providers and finally people who work in government.

### Communities need to work with experts and public servants to make good decisions about what services they need

Overwhelmingly, people think that communities need to work with experts and public servants for good decisions to be made about what services are needed. Overall agreement is very high, with 58 per cent of respondents strongly agreeing and a further 28 per cent moderately agreeing that communities, experts and governments should be working together.

Figure 4: Q3\_1 Communities need to work with experts and public servants to make good decisions about what services they need (n=1983)



#### Association highlights

*Communities need to work with experts and public servants to make good decisions about what services they need*

##### Politics

People who would normally vote for **Labor (62%)** are more likely than people who vote for the **Liberal/National Coalition (55%)** to strongly agree.

##### Employment status

When compared with the **general community (58%)**, **students (66%)** are more likely to strongly agree. Age, however, is not a significant factor.

##### Length of time living in the local area

Strong agreement is less likely among people who have lived in the area for **less than 2 years (43%)** than those who have lived in their community for **more than 10 years (59%)**.

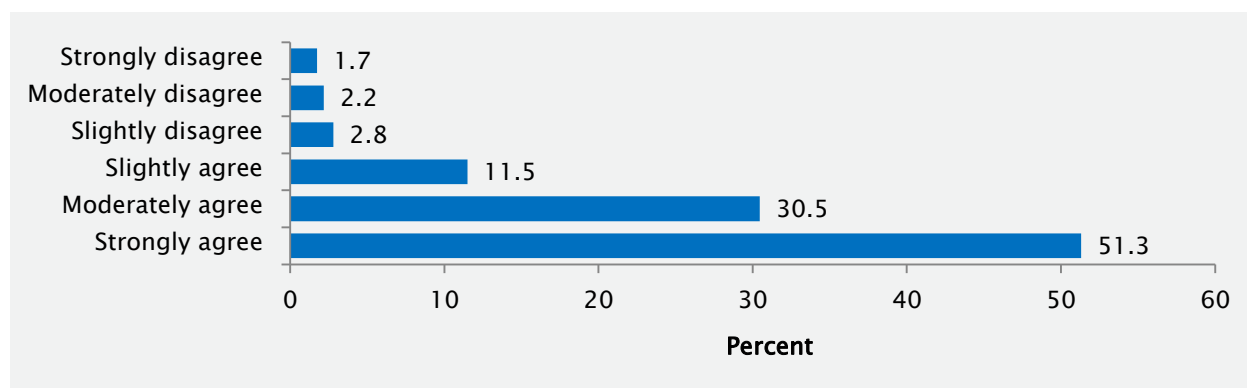
##### Council type

Respondents living in **urban capital cities (51%)** and **rural and remote councils (53%)** are less likely to strongly agree when compared **nationwide (58%)**.

### I want government to involve me in making decisions about what services are delivered in my local area

There is strong support for very participatory styles of democratic engagement by government with its citizens. Australians want to be involved by government in making decisions about what services are delivered in their local area. Nearly all (93 per cent) want to be personally involved with over half (51 per cent) reporting they strongly agree that government should involve them in decision-making.

Figure 5: Q3\_2 I want government to involve me in making decisions about what services are delivered in my local area (n = 1983)



#### Association highlights

*I want government to involve me in making decisions about what services are delivered in my local area*

##### Gender

**Women (55%)** are more likely than **men (48%)** to strongly agree.

##### Age

Respondents between the ages of **60 to 69 (57%)** are more likely to strongly agree than respondents between the ages of **30 and 39 (47%)** and **70+ (47%)**.

##### Education attainment

Increased levels of educational attainment lower the likelihood of strong agreement. (**56% for those with a school education level** compared with **47% for those with postgraduate degrees**).

##### Household income

People with **\$300,000 or more (44%)** in household income are less likely to strongly agree than respondents who earn **\$30,000 to \$39,999 (51%)**.

##### Employment status

People who are **unable to work (68%)** and **homemakers (67%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with the **general community (52%)**.

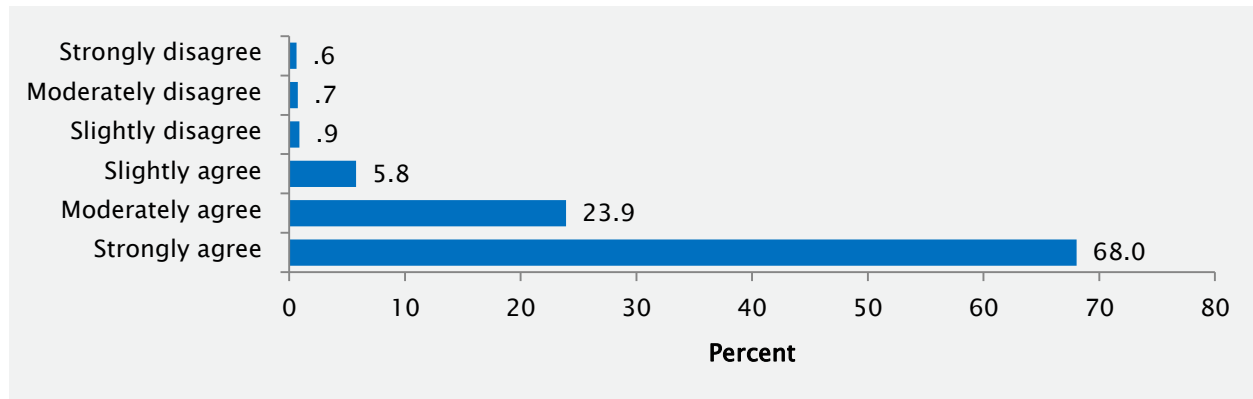
##### Family type

Respondents living in **group (non-familial) households (59%)** are more likely to strongly agree than the **general community (52%)**.

### Governments and communities should make decisions together about how services are delivered

A majority of respondents (68%) strongly agree that governments and communities should make decisions together about how services are delivered, while a further 24% moderately agree.

Figure 6: Q3\_3 Governments and communities should make decisions together about how services are delivered (n=1994)



#### Association highlights

##### *Governments and communities should make decisions together about how services are delivered*

###### Gender

**Women (72%)** are more likely than **men (64%)** to strongly agree.

###### Age

Respondents aged **18–29 (62%)** and **70 over (62%)** are less likely to strongly agree than respondents **aged 50–59 (75%)**.

###### Education attainment

Respondents with a **school education level (74%)** are more likely to strongly agree than respondents with a **bachelor degree level qualification (63%)**, **graduate certificate or graduate diploma level qualification (65%)** or **postgraduate degree (65%)**.

###### Employment status

**Homemakers (79%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people **out of work but not currently looking for work (54%)**. Compared with the **general community (68%)**, **homemakers (79%)** also have the strongest level of agreement.

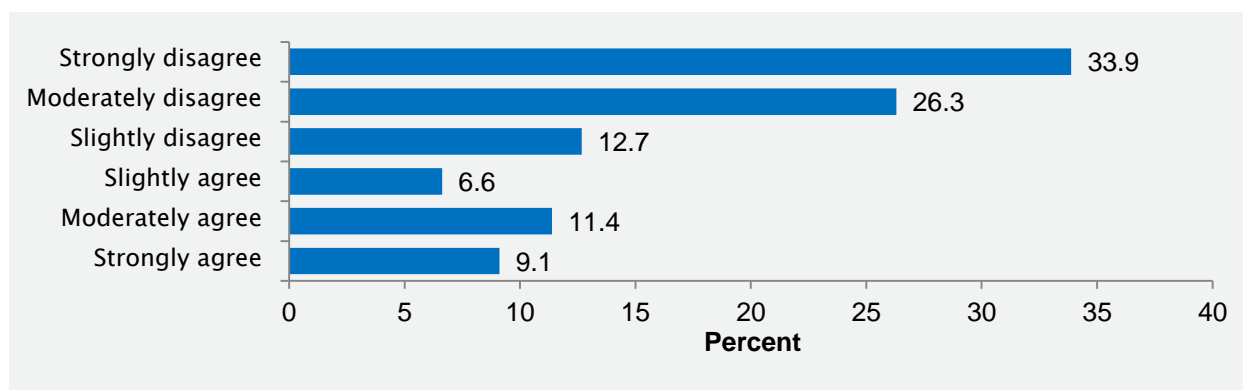
### 3.1.2 The role of the market in service delivery

Respondents do not agree that the private sector or the market are best placed to deliver services in their local area.

#### Government should only provide services where the private sector doesn't

It is argued by some that government's role in the delivery of services should be limited, for example, to areas of 'market failure', where the private sector is not able to supply goods or services to meet levels of demand. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of Australians disagree that government should only provide services where the private sector doesn't.

Figure 7: Q3\_4 Government should only provide services where the private sector doesn't (n=1940)



#### Association highlights

##### *Government should only provide services where the private sector doesn't*

###### Community participation

People are more likely to strongly disagree when they have been actively involved in their community in the past 12 months (38% compared with 31% not actively involved).

###### Politics

Voters for the **Greens** (45%) and the **Labor Party** (42%) are more likely to strongly disagree. **Liberal/National Coalition** (23%) voters are less likely to strongly disagree.

###### Age

Respondents **aged 40–49** (40%) and **60–69** (41%) have the highest levels of strong disagreement, while respondents aged **18–29** (28%) and **70+** (25%) show the lowest levels of strong disagreement.

###### Education attainment

As education attainment rises, strong disagreement increases. Respondents with **postgraduate degrees** (42%) disagree more strongly than those with **school education levels** (28%).

###### Employment status

Those who are **out of work but not currently looking for work** (21%) have the lowest levels of strong disagreement compared with those **who are out of work and looking for work** (43%) and those who are **unable to work** (41%).

###### Working in government or non-profit

People who **work in government, a public institution or a non-profit organisation** (40%) are more likely to strongly disagree than people who **do not work in those areas** (31%).

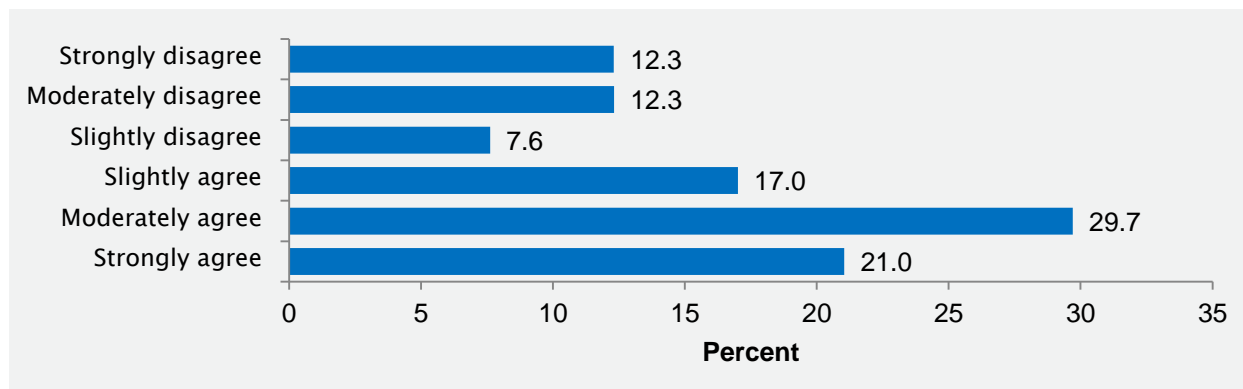
###### Family type

**Lone person households** (26%) are less likely to strongly disagree than **couples with children** (36%) and the **general community** (34%).

## The market should decide what services are delivered based on levels of demand

There is some support from respondents for the idea that levels of demand should impact on what services are delivered by the market. 21% of respondents strongly agree that the market should decide what services are delivered based on levels of demand, while a larger proportion 30% moderately agree. 12% of respondents strongly disagree that the market should decide what services are delivered based on demand.

Figure 8: Q3\_5 The market should decide what services are delivered based on levels of demand (n=1907)



### Association highlights

#### *The market should decide what services are delivered based on levels of demand*

##### Politics

**Greens (12%)** voters recorded lower levels of strong agreement than voters for **Liberal/National Party Coalition (26%)** or **Labor Party (20%)**.

##### Knowledge of Mayor's name

Respondents who **cannot correctly recall the name of their local mayor (26%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **do so correctly (19%)**.

##### Age

As age increases, levels of strong agreement rise. **People 70 and older (25%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those in the **18–29 group (20%)**.

##### Non-English speaking background

People **who speak a language other than English (33%)** at home are more likely than those who **only speak English at home to strongly agree (20%)**.

##### Education attainment

As educational attainment levels rise, levels of strong agreement fall (**23% for school education** compared with **14% for postgraduate degrees**).

##### Employment status

**People who are out of work but not currently looking for work (30%)** and **homemakers (32%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people who are **out of work and looking for work (11%)** and **students (14%)**.

##### Working in government or non-profit

People who **do not work in the government, a public institution or a non-profit (23%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those **who work in those areas (17%)**.

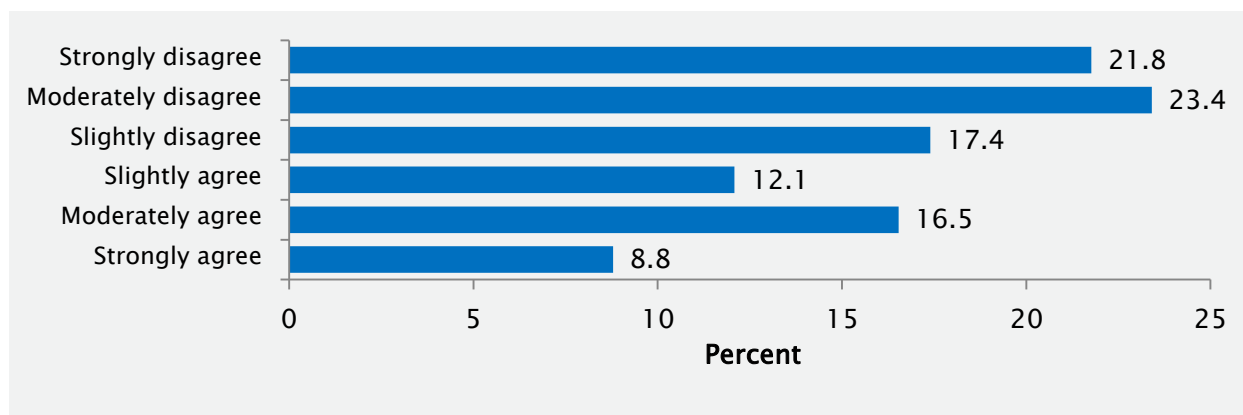
##### Dwelling type

People who live in a **group household (9%)** are much less likely to strongly agree (compared with **21% nation-wide**).

### The private sector delivers the best value services

Although there is some agreement by Australians that the private sector delivers the best value services, a large majority (63%) disagree with this statement.

Figure 9: Q3\_6 The private sector delivers the best value services (n=1852)



### Association highlights

#### *The private sector delivers the best value services*

##### Politics

**Labor Party (30%)** voters have higher levels of strong disagreement than **Liberal/National Coalition voters (11%)**.

##### Age

Respondents in the **60–69 age group (29%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than respondents in the **18–29 age group (13%)**.

##### Education attainment

As education attainment rises, levels of strong disagreement also rise (**16% for school education level** compared with **25% for postgraduate degree holders**).

##### Household income

Respondents who earn a household income of **\$300,000 or more (9%)** are less likely to strongly disagree (**compared with 22% nationwide**).

##### Employment status

People **unable to work (29%)** and **out of work and looking for work (28%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than people **out of work but not looking for work (10%)**.

##### Working for the government or non-profit

People who **work for the government, public institutions or non-profit organisations (26%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than those who do not (**17%**).

##### Length of time living in local area

Respondents who have lived in their local area for **more than 10 years (23%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than respondents who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (16%)** or those who have lived in their local area for **more than 2 but less than 5 years (16%)**.

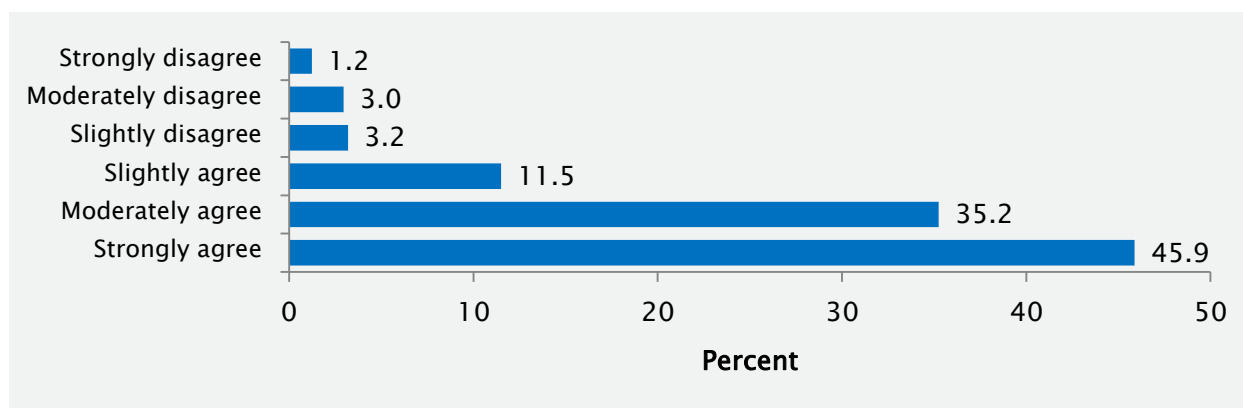
### 3.1.3 The role of the government in service delivery

There is strong support for government playing a role in service delivery, particularly in health and education.

#### There is a role for government in providing any of the services the community needs

Australians overwhelmingly want their governments to play a role in providing many of the services the community needs, with 93% of respondents agreeing to this statement.

Figure 10: Q3\_7 There is a role for government in providing any of the services the community needs (n=1961)



#### Association highlights

*There is a role for government in providing any of the services the community needs*

##### Community participation

People who have been **active in their community over the past year (49%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not been active (43%)**.

##### Politics

**Labor Party (52%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than **Liberal/National Coalition** voters (43%).

##### Age

As age increases, levels of agreement rise. People **aged 18 to 29 (36%)** are less likely to strongly agree than those who are **70 and over (50%)**.

##### Employment status

People **out of work but not currently looking for work (28%)** and those **who are out of work and looking for work (35%)** are less likely to strongly agree than the **general community (46%)**.

##### Dwelling type

People who live in a **flat, unit or apartment with 4 stories or more (38%)** are less likely to strongly agree (compared with **46% community-wide**).

##### Family type

**One parent households (52%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **couples with no children (44%)** and **lone person households (43%)**.

##### Length of time living in local area

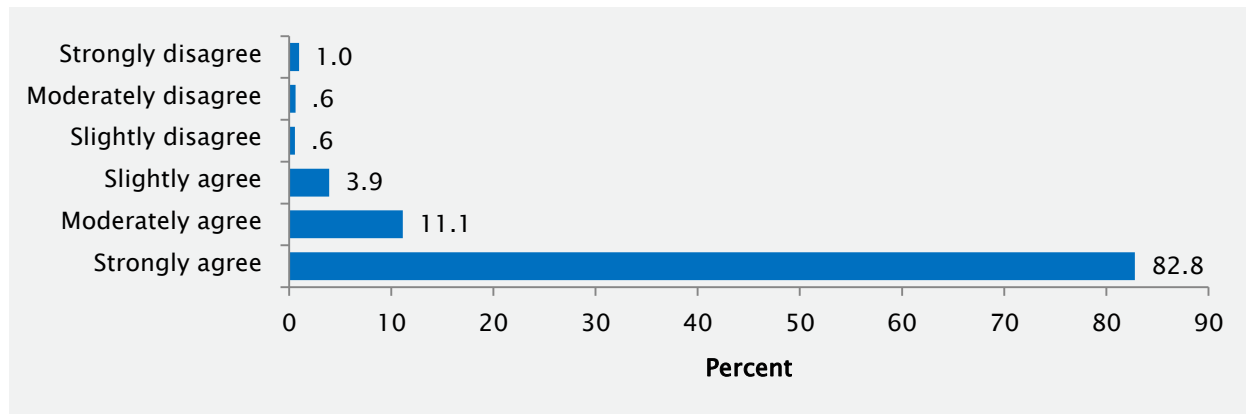
People who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (38%)** are less likely to strongly agree (**46% community-wide**).



### There are some things like health care and education that governments should deliver

A very high proportion of Australians support the idea that health care and education should be delivered by government, with 83% strongly agreeing and almost all (98%) agreeing to some extent.

Figure 11: Q3\_8 There are some things like health care and education that governments should deliver (n=1988)



#### Association highlights

*There are some things like health care and education that governments should deliver*

##### Politics

People who normally vote for the **Labor Party (86%)** and the **Greens (89%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people who normally vote for the **Liberal/National Party (78%)**.

##### Age

Respondents who are 70 and over are less likely to strongly agree (**76% compared with 83% nationwide**).

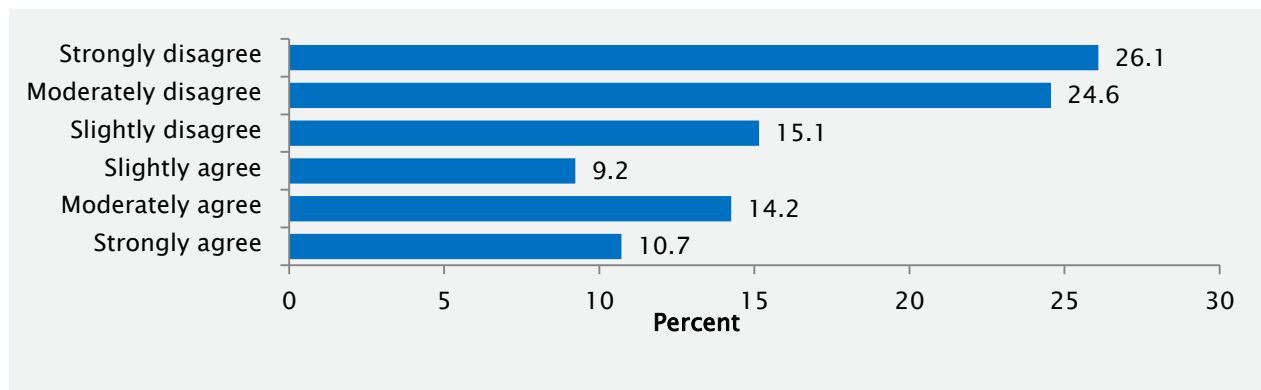
### 3.1.4 Paying for services through taxation

A majority of respondents agree that taxes should pay for more than basic services and many are prepared to pay more taxes to receive a broader range of services.

#### My taxes should only pay for basic services

The level of support for the idea that taxes should only pay for basic services is relatively low, with just 25% of Australians either moderately or strongly in agreement. In contrast, 51% of respondents strongly or moderately disagree.

Figure 12: Q3\_9 My taxes should only pay for basic services (n=1907)



## Association highlights

### *My taxes should only pay for basic services*

#### Community participation

People who have **participated in community services in the past year (29%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than people **who have not participated (23%)**.

#### Politics

**Labor Party (33%)** or **Greens (44%)** voters are more likely to strongly disagree than **Liberal/National Coalition (15%)** voters.

#### Age

There is a trend for disagreement to rise between the ages **18–69 (23%)** and **60–69 (30%)**. Levels of strong disagreement fall for people **70 and older (22%)**.

#### Non-English speaking background

People who **speak a language other than English at home (20%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **people who speak English only (10%)**.

#### Educational attainment

Respondents with a university degree level qualification such as **Bachelor's degree (26%)** and **Postgraduate degree (31%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than people who have completed **school level education (21%)**.

#### Employment status

**Homemakers (21%)**, people who are **self-employed (16%)** or **retired (14%)** are much more likely to strongly agree than **students (3%)**.

#### Family type

People who are part of a **non-family group household (2%)** are less likely to strongly agree than the **general community (11%)**.

#### Length of time living in the local area

Respondents who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (21%)** are more likely to strongly agree (compared with **11% nationwide**).

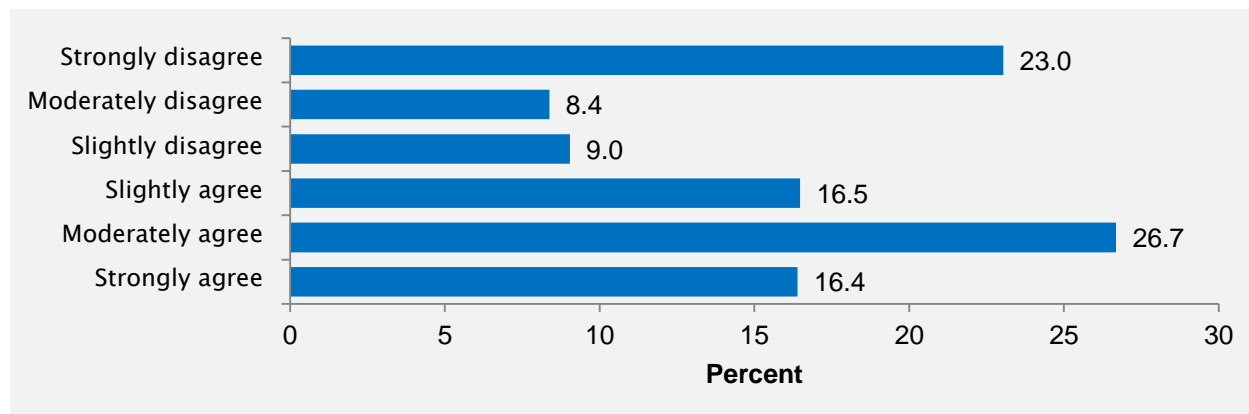
#### Council type

People from **capital cities (32%)**, **large/very large urban developments (29%)** and **rural/remote areas (28%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than people who live in **urban regional (24%)** areas or the **urban fringe (22%)**.

### I am prepared to pay more taxes to get a broader range of public services

27% of respondents moderately agree that they are prepared to pay more taxes to receive a broader range of public services, while a further 16% percent of respondents strongly agree. However, a quarter of respondents (23%) strongly disagree that they are prepared to pay more services for a broader range of public services.

Figure 13: Q3\_10 I am prepared to pay more taxes to get a broader range of public services (n=1908)



#### Association highlights

##### *I am prepared to pay more taxes to get a broader range of public services*

###### Community participation

People who **have been active in the community in the past year (19%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not been active (14%)**.

###### Politics

**Greens (28%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than people who vote for the **Labor Party (21%)** or the **Liberal/National Coalition (13%)**.

###### Age

People aged **60–69 (21%)** are more likely to strongly agree (compared with **16% nationwide**).

###### Education attainment

There is a positive relationship between level of agreement and education attainment: people with a **postgraduate degree (22%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people with a **school educational level (12%)**.

###### Household income

The data shows no clear association between income levels and willingness to pay more taxes. Likelihood to strongly agree ranged from 10% to 33% with no clear trend in direction.

###### Employment status

**Homemakers (34%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than **students (6%)**.

###### Dwelling type

People who live in a **separate house (16%)** are less likely to strongly agree than those who live in a **semi-detached or similar house (23%)** or a **flat, unit or apartment (21%)**.

###### Council type

Respondents who live in a **large/very large urban development (24%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who live in the **urban fringe (10%)**.

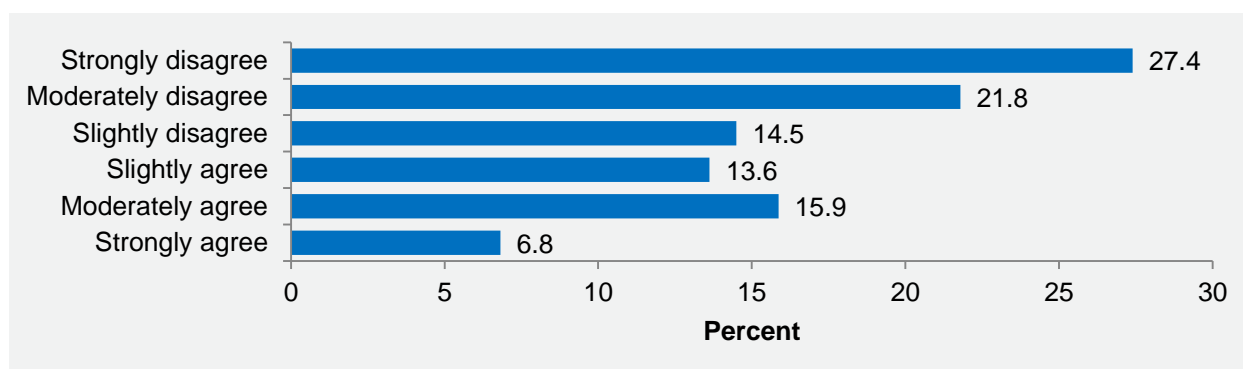
### 3.1.5 Who has the knowledge needed to make decisions about what services are needed in the local area?

Communities and people using services have enough or the best knowledge about what services are needed and how they should be delivered. Service providers are considered to have not as much knowledge and people who work in government even less.

#### People who work in government have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed in my area

Only 23% of respondents strongly or moderately agree that people who work in government have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed in their area.

**Figure 14: Q3\_11 People who work in government have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed in my area (n=1945)**



#### Association highlights

*People who work in government have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed in my area*

##### Council type

**Urban regional (32%)** and **rural and remote (32%)** council areas show the highest levels of strong disagreement.

##### Age

Levels of agreement change with age. It rises for **18–29 year olds (17%)** to **50–59 (36%)** and decreases again (**31% for people 70+**).

##### Education attainment

As education attainment increases, levels of strong agreement decrease. People with **school education (11%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people with **postgraduate degrees (3%)**.

##### Employment status

People who are **unable to work (50%)** have the strongest level of strong disagreement (**compared with 27% nationwide**).

##### Housing tenure

People who **mortgage or outright own their dwelling (29%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than **renters (20%)**.

##### Family type

**Couples with no children (31%)** and **one parent families (30%)** have similar levels of strong disagreement, while **couples with children (25%)**, **lone person households (26%)** and **group households (23%)** are less likely to strongly disagree.

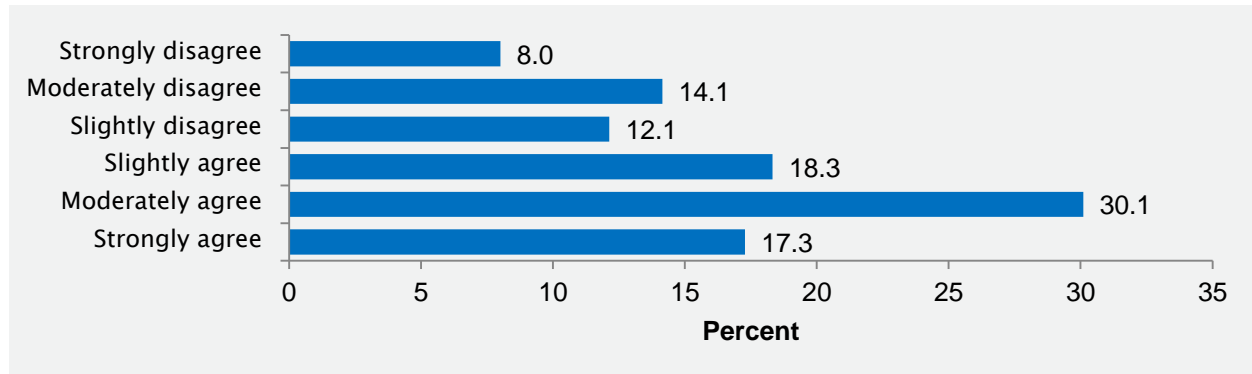
##### Gender

**Women (31%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than **men (24%)**.

### Service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered

Service providers are considered by respondents to have more knowledge than government employees about how services should be delivered. 30% of respondents moderately agree and 17% of respondents strongly agree that service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered

Figure 15: Q3\_12 Service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered (n=1938)



#### Association highlights

*Service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered*

##### Politics

**Greens (13%)** voters are less likely to strongly agree than those who vote for **Labor (18%)** or the **Liberal/National Coalition (23%)**.

##### Knowledge of Mayor's name

People who can **correctly identify their mayor's name (19%)** are less likely to strongly agree than those who **are incorrect (26%)**.

##### Gender

**Women (20%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **men (15%)**.

##### Age

As age increase, levels of strong agreement also rise (**17% for people aged 18–29** compared with **24% for people 70 and over**).

##### Non-English speaking background

People who **speak a language other than English at home (23%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **only speak English (17%)**.

##### Employment status

People **employed for wages (16%)** and **homemakers (16%)** share similar levels of strong agreement; **students (8%)** agree least; and people **unable to work (30%)** agree most.

##### Dwelling type

People who live in a **flat unit or apartment of 4 stories or more (9%)** are less likely to strongly agree (compared with **17% community-wide**).

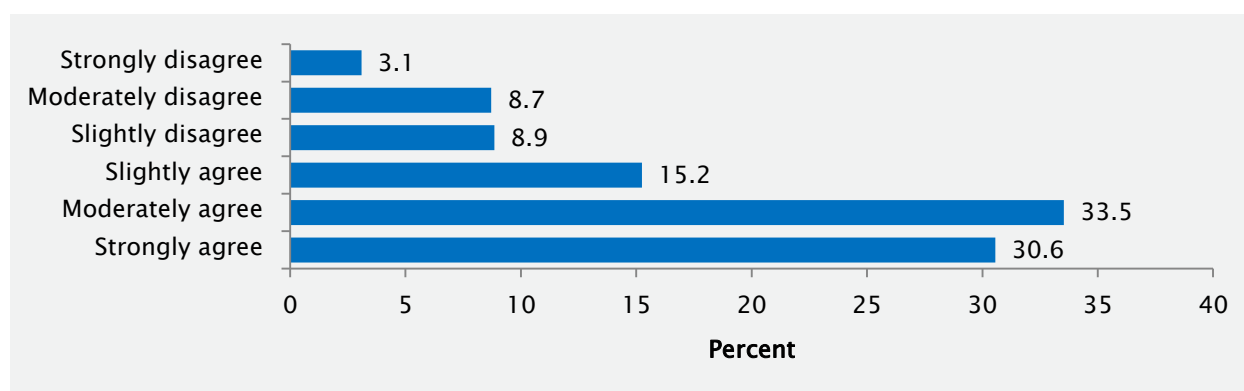
##### Length of time living in local area

Respondents who have lived in their local area for less than **2 years (23%)** are more likely to strongly agree (compared with **17% community-wide**).

### People who are using a particular service will know best how much of that service is needed

Two-thirds of respondents either strongly agree (31%) or moderately agree (34%) that people who are using a particular service will know best how much of that service is needed.

**Figure 16: Q3\_13 People who are using a service will best know how much of any particular service is needed (n=1926)**



### Association highlights

*People who are using a particular service will know best how much of that service is needed*

#### Gender

**Female (33%)** respondents are more likely to strongly agree than **male (28%)** respondents.

#### Age

Respondents **60 years and older (36%)** are more likely to strongly agree than younger respondents (**31% nationwide**).

#### Education attainment

As education levels rise, strong agreement levels decrease. Respondents with **school-level (36%)** education agree more strongly than respondents with **postgraduate (20%)** degrees.

#### Household income

Level of strong agreement generally falls as household income rises. Respondents with **\$30–39,999 (41%)** in household income most strongly agree, and those with **\$200–299,000 (17%)** in household income least strongly agree.

#### Employment status

**Homemakers (41%)** and **retired (38%)** respondents have the highest strong agreement. Respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (17%)** and **out of work and looking (20%)** have the lowest strong agreement.

#### Family type

Respondents with a **one-parent family (42%)** have the highest level of strong agreement. **Couples with no children (28%)**; **couples with children (30%)**; and **lone-person (31%) households** report lower levels of strong agreement (compared to **30% nationwide**).

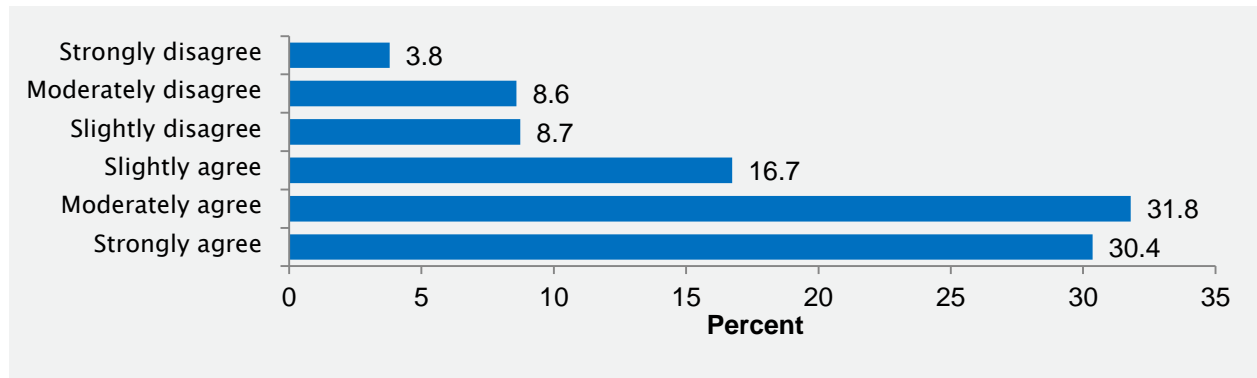
#### Council type

Respondents in **large–very large urban developments (37%)** are most likely to strongly agree, followed by respondents of **urban fringe (33%)**; **urban regional (31%)**; and **rural and remote (29%)** councils. Respondents in **urban capital cities (25%)** report the lowest level of strong agreement.

### Communities know enough to make good decisions about what services they need

Close to two-thirds of respondents either strongly agree (30%) or moderately agree (32%) that communities know enough to make good decisions about what services they need.

**Figure 17: Q3\_14 Communities know enough to make good decisions about what services they need (n=1936)**





## Association highlights

### *Communities know enough to make good decisions about what services they need*

#### Community participation

Respondents who have **actively participated (34%)** are more likely to strongly agree than respondents who had **not participated (27%)** in local clubs or groups.

#### Politics

**Liberal/National Coalition (35%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than **Labor (28%)** voters; respondents whose **votes change from election to election (27%)**; and **Greens (27%)** voters.

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who **correctly (32%) name their mayor** are less likely to strongly agree compared with those who do so **incorrectly (39%)**.

#### Gender

**Male (25%)** respondents are less likely to report strong agreement than **female (35%)** respondents.

#### Age

Strong agreement increases with age. Respondents aged **70 and over (40%)** most strongly agree, and **18–29 (22%)** year old respondents least strongly agree.

#### Education attainment

As education levels rise, strong agreement falls. **School education (38%)** level holders have the highest strong agreement, and **postgraduate (20%)** and **bachelor (23%)** degree-holders have the lowest.

#### Household income

In general, strong agreement decreases as household income increases. Respondents with household incomes of **\$10–\$19,000 (40%)**; **\$20–\$29,000 (47%)**; and **\$30–\$39,000 (48%)** have the highest strong agreement. Those with household incomes of **\$150–\$199,000 (17%)**; **\$200–\$299,000 (17%)**; and **\$300,000 or more (22%)** have the lowest.

#### Employment status

Respondents who are **retired (41%)**; **unable to work (41%)**; and **homemakers (39%)** report the highest levels of strong agreement. Respondents who **are students (22%)**; **employed for wages (26%)**; and **out of work but not currently looking (33%)** report the lowest levels of strong agreement.

#### Family type

Respondents of **one-parent families (38%)** are most likely to strongly agree. **Couples with children (28%)** and **couples with no children (31%)** have lower levels of strong agreement, while **non-family group households** have the lowest (17%).

#### Council type

Strong agreement is lowest in **urban capital cities (22%)** and **small/medium urban development (24%)** councils. It is highest at **urban regional (36%)**, followed by **rural and remote (35%)** councils.

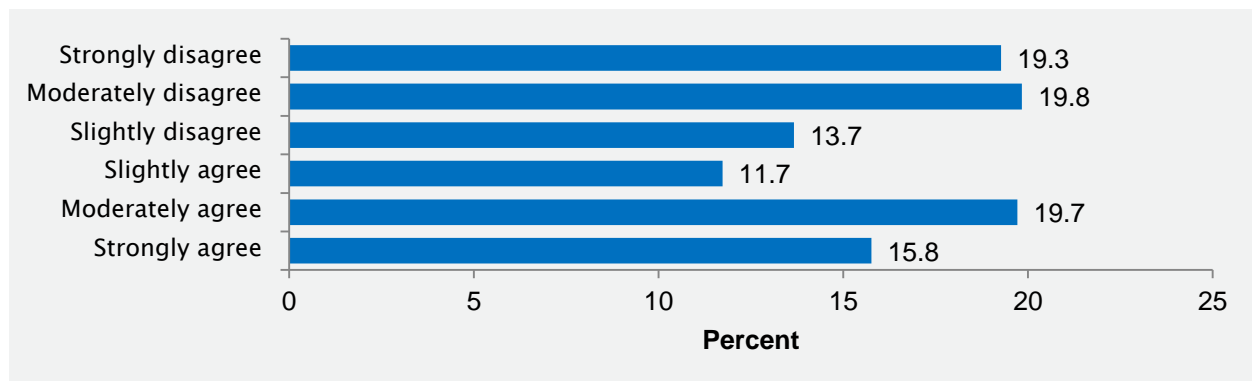
### 3.1.6 Public value

The following questions relate to different aspects of the role of government, in part as theorised by the concept of 'public value', that is, positive social and economic outcomes valued by the community.

#### **Decisions about how services are delivered in my area should be made primarily on value for money**

20% of respondents moderately agree that decisions about how services are delivered in their area should be made primarily on value for money, while 16% of respondents strongly agree. A slightly larger proportion (39%) either strongly disagree (19%) or moderately disagree (20%).

**Figure 18: Q3\_15 Decisions about how services are delivered in my area should be made primarily on value for money (n=1934)**



## Association highlights

*Decisions about how services are delivered in my area should be made primarily on value for money*

### Politics

**Liberal/National Coalition (21%)** voters are most likely to strongly agree, followed by respondents whose votes **change from election to election (19%)** and **Labor (14%)** voters. **Greens (3%)** voters have the lowest level of strong agreement.

### Knowledge of mayor's name

Those who **name their mayor incorrectly (21%)** have the highest strong agreement compared with all other respondents (**16% nationwide**).

### Age

Strong agreement rises with age. Respondents aged **18 to 49 (range of 11% to 13%)** have the lowest levels of strong agreement. Respondents aged **70 and over (27%)** have the highest strong agreement.

### Non-English Speaking Background

Respondents of **non-English speaking backgrounds (28%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **English-only (15%)** speakers.

### Family type

**Lone-person (18%)** households and **couples with no children (18%)** report higher levels of strong agreement compared with **one-parent families (8%)** and **couples with children (13%)**.

### Employment status

Respondents who are **retired (24%)** are most likely to strongly agree, followed by those who are **self-employed (19%)** and **unable to work (19%)**. **Students (4%)** are least likely to strongly agree, followed by respondents who are **out of work and looking (8%)**.

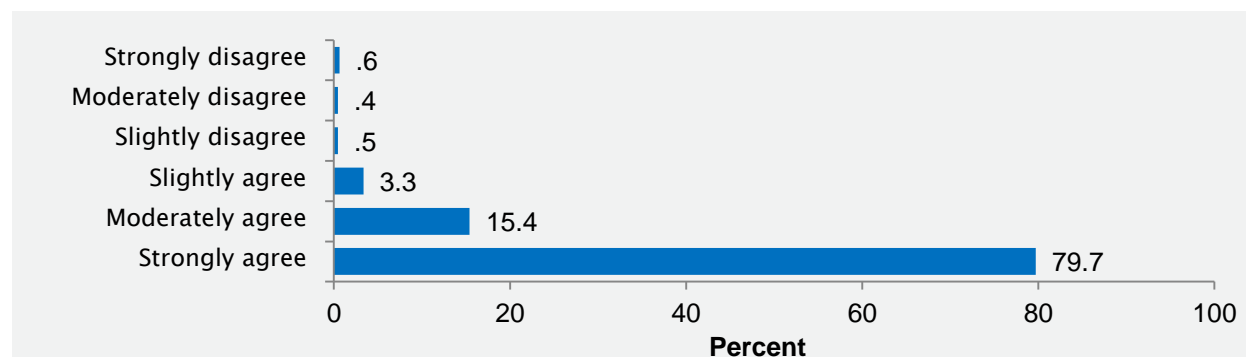
### Household income

Overall, as household income rises, strong agreement falls. Strong agreement is highest amongst respondents with household incomes between **\$10,000 and \$49,999 (range of 21% to 23%)**. Strong agreement is lower amongst respondents with household incomes between **\$150–\$199,000 (12%)** and **\$300,000 or more (8%)**.

### I want governments to deliver services that contribute to a healthier and fairer society

The majority of respondents (80%) strongly agree that they want governments to deliver services that contribute to a healthier and fairer society, while 15% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 19: Q3\_16 I want governments to deliver services that contribute to a healthier and fairer society (n=1989)



#### Association highlights

##### *I want governments to deliver services that contribute to a healthier and fairer society*

###### Politics

**Greens (95%)** voters are most likely to strongly agree, followed by **Labor (85%)** voters and respondents whose voting preferences **change from election to election (81%)**. **Liberal/National Coalition (72%)** voters express lower strong agreement.

###### Gender

**Female (83%)** respondents report higher strong agreement compared with **male (77%)** respondents.

###### Employment status

Respondents who are **out of work and looking for work (87%)**; **students (83%)**; and **employed for wages (82%)** most strongly agree. Respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (60%)** least strongly agree.

###### Working in government and Not-for-Profit

Respondents who work for the **government and/or not-for-profit organisations (84%)** are more likely to report strong agreement compared with respondents who **work for other organisations (79%)**.

###### Housing tenure

**Renters (85%)** are more likely to express strong agreement compared with respondents whose homes are **on a mortgage or owned outright (79%)**.

###### Family type

Respondents of **one-parent family (86%)** households have the highest strong agreement (compared with **80% nationwide**).

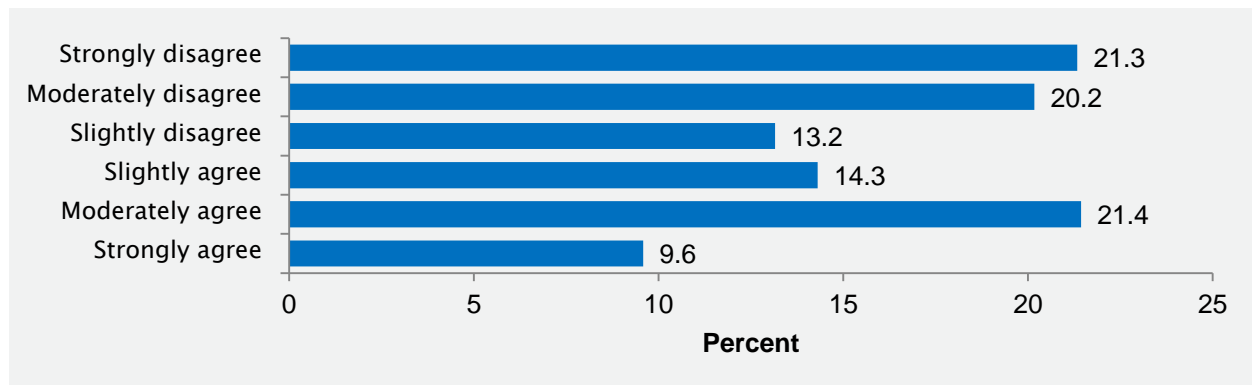
###### Council type

**Urban development small/medium (82%)**; **urban regional (82%)**; and **urban development large/very large (81%)** councils report higher levels of strong agreement. Respondents of **urban capital cities (75%)** report the lowest levels of strong agreement.

### The government of my local area has enough ability to deliver services by itself

Just under a third of respondents either strongly (10%) or moderately (21%) agree that the government of their local area has enough ability to deliver services by itself. A larger proportion (42%), strongly or moderately disagree.

Figure 20: Q3\_17 The government of my local area has enough ability to deliver services by itself (n=1853)



### Association highlights

#### *The government of my local area has enough ability to deliver services by itself*

##### Community participation

Respondents who **have actively participated (24%)** in the community are more likely to strongly disagree compared with respondents who **have not actively participated (19%)** in community clubs, services or groups.

##### Politics

**Greens (23%)** and **Liberal/National Coalition (22%)** voters are most likely to strongly disagree. **Labor Party voters (18%)** are least likely to strongly disagree.

##### Age

Levels of strong disagreement generally rise with age. Strong disagreement is highest amongst **60–69 (29%)** year olds and lowest amongst **18–29 (12%)** year olds.

##### Household income

Levels of strong disagreement rise from household incomes of **less than \$10,000 (15%)** to peak at household incomes of **\$40–\$49,000 (33%)**. Then strong disagreement falls overall for respondents with household incomes between **\$50–\$59,999 (22%)** and **\$300,000 or more (13%)**.

##### Family type

Respondents from **couples with no children (24%)** and **couples with children (22%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than respondents of **one-parent families (17%)**.

##### Council type

Respondents of **urban regional (27%)** and **rural and remote (26%)** councils most strongly disagree most. Those of **urban capital city (15%)** and **urban development small/medium (16%)** councils strongly disagree least often.

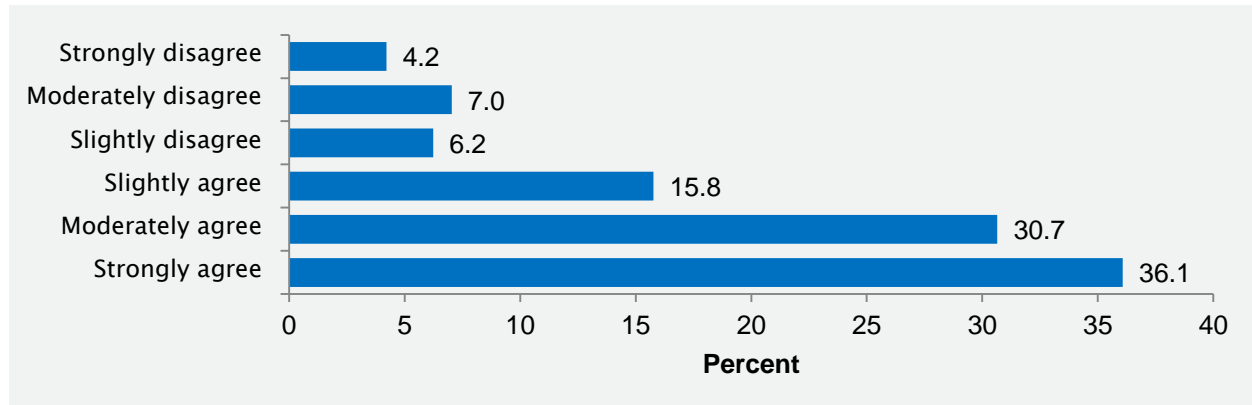
##### Employment status

The **self-employed (29%)** have the highest levels of strong disagreement, followed by those **who are out of work but not currently looking (26%)**; **retired (25%)**; and **homemakers (25%)**. **Students (11%)** have the lowest level of strong disagreement, followed by those who are **employed for wages (19%)**; **out of work and looking (20%)**; and **unable to work (21%)**.

### There are some services that governments can provide at a higher quality than the private sector

A majority of respondents agree that there are some services that governments can provide at a higher quality than the private sector. 36% of respondents strongly agree and a further 31% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 21: Q3\_18 There are some services that governments can provide at a higher quality than the private sector (n=1874)



#### Association highlights

*There are some services that governments can provide at a higher quality than the private sector*

##### Politics

**Greens (49%)** and **Labor Party (40%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree. **Liberal/National voters (27%)** are least likely to strongly agree.

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who **incorrectly name their local mayor (42%)** are most likely to strongly agree (**36% state wide**).

##### Age

Respondents between **18–29 (36%)** and **60–69 (39%)** years of age report similar levels of strong agreement. Level of strong agreement drops amongst respondents older than **70 years (30%)**.

##### Employment status

The level of strong agreement is highest amongst **homemakers (48%)**. It is lowest amongst respondents who are **unable to work (27%)**.

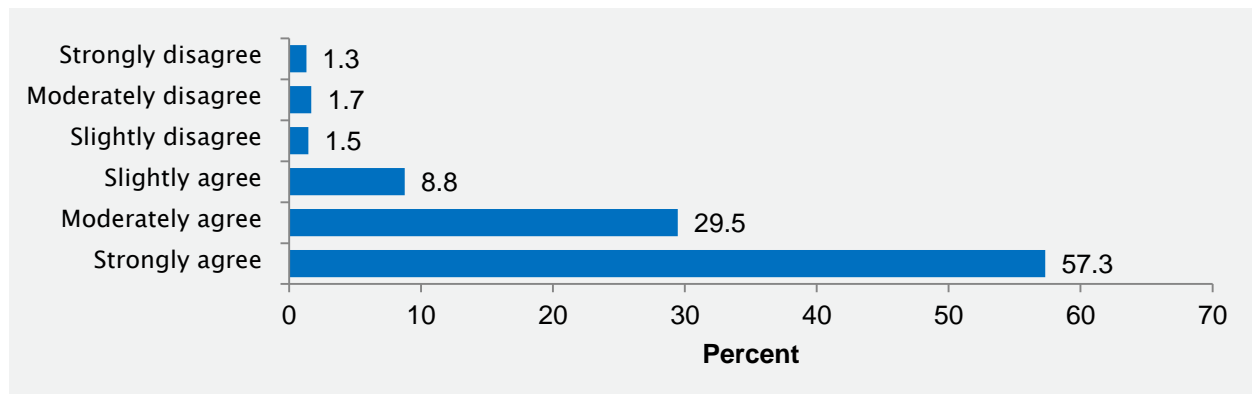
##### Length of time living in the local area

Respondents who have lived in their local area for a period of **less than two years** are less likely to strongly agree (**31% compared with 36% nationwide**).

### Government should be advocating for the needs of my local community

There is also strong support for the idea that government should be advocating for the needs of the local community (96% agreement).

Figure 22: Q3\_19 Government should be advocating for the needs of my local community (n=1950)



### Association highlights

#### *Government should be advocating for the needs of my local community*

##### Community participation

Respondents who **have actively participated** (62%) in clubs, services or groups in their local community are more likely to strongly agree than those who have **not actively participated** (53%).

##### Gender

**Female** (61%) respondents are more likely to strongly agree compared with **male** (54%) respondents.

##### Age

**50–59** (64%) year old respondents have the highest level of strong agreement compared with those aged **70 years and over** (48%) or **18–29** (54%).

##### Employment status

**Homemakers** (67%) report the highest level of agreement, followed by those who are **unable to work** (62%) and **out of work and looking** (61%). **Students** (47%) report the lowest level with those who are **out of work but not currently looking for work** (52%).

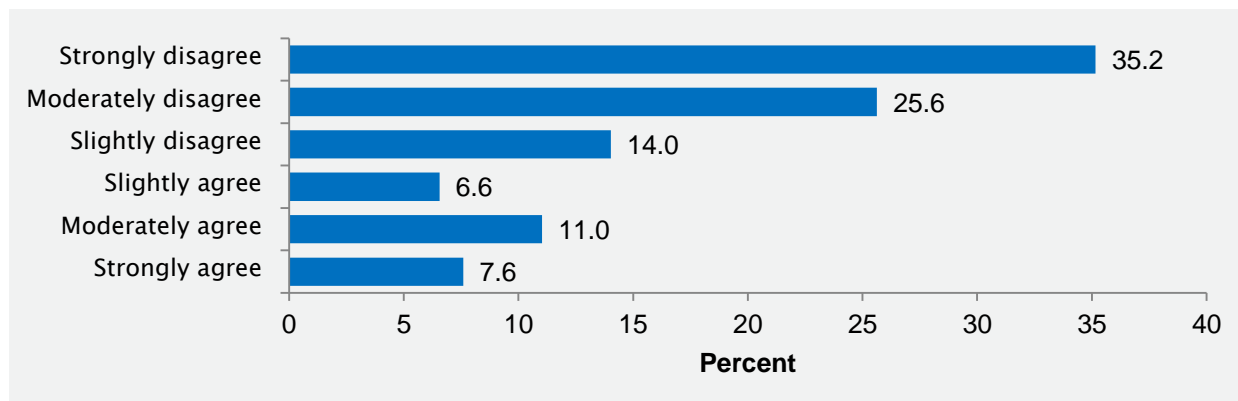
##### Length of time living in the local area

Respondents who have lived in their local area for a **period of less than 2 years** (46%) have lower levels of strong agreement compared with all other respondents (**57% nationwide**).

### Government should focus on providing only basic services

35% of respondents strongly disagree that government should focus on providing only basic services, while 26% moderately disagree.

Figure 23: Q3\_20 Government should focus on providing only basic services (n=1960)



### Association highlights

#### *Government should focus on providing only basic services*

##### Politics

**Labor (45%)** voters are more likely to strongly disagree (compared with **35% state wide**). Respondents who prefer **Liberal/National Coalition (24%)** are less likely to strongly disagree.

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who name their mayor **correctly (37%)** are more likely to strongly disagree than those who do so **incorrectly (24%)**.

##### Gender

**Female (40%)** respondents are more likely to strongly disagree than **male (31%)** respondents.

##### Age

**50–59 (41%)** and **40–49 (40%)** year old respondents have the highest levels of strong disagreement. Respondents aged **18–29 (28%)** and **70 and over (33%)** have the lowest.

##### Employment status

The highest level of strong disagreement is reported by **homemakers (47%)**, followed by those who are **unable to work (42%)** and **out of work but not currently looking (40%)**. **Students (24%)** are least likely to strongly disagree along with those who are **self-employed (30%)**.

##### Family type

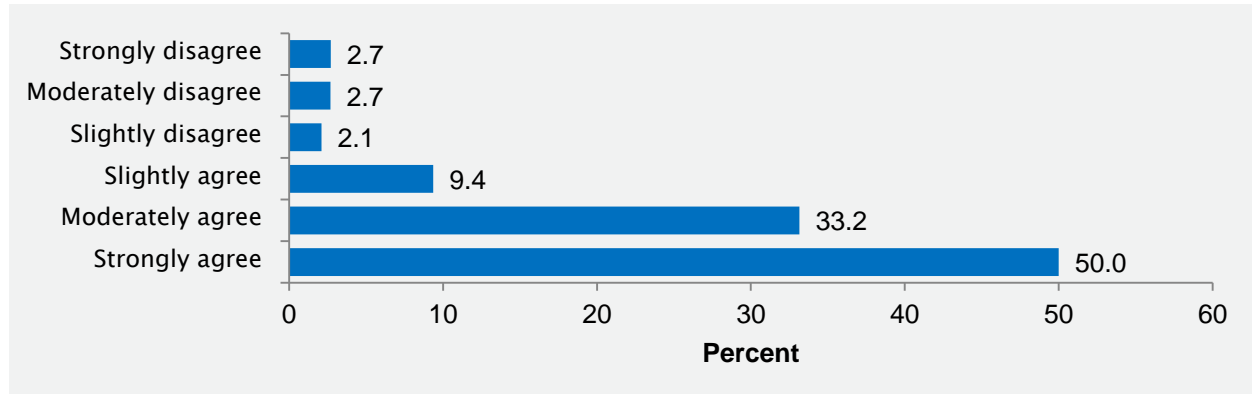
Respondents who belong to a **one-parent family (43%)** have the highest level of strong disagreement. Respondents living in households of a **couple with children (36%)**; **couple with no children (35%)**; and **lone-person households (33%)** report lower levels of strong disagreement.



### Governments should use a mixture of public, private and not-for-profit organisations to deliver public services in my area

50% of respondents strongly agree that governments should use a mixture of public, private and not-for-profit organisations to deliver public services in their area, while 33% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 24: Q3\_21 Governments should use a mixture of public, private and not-for-profit organisations to deliver public services in my area (n=1960)



#### Association highlights

*Governments should use a mixture of public, private and not-for-profit organisations to deliver public services in my area*

##### Politics

Respondents whose voting preferences **change from election to election (56%)** are most likely to strongly agree. **Liberal/National Coalition (52%)** and **Labor Party (51%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than **Greens (39%)** voters.

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who **correctly (52%)** name their mayor are more likely to strongly agree than those who name their mayor **incorrectly (46%)**.

##### Employment status

**Homemakers (54%)** and respondents who are **retired (52%)** are more likely to strongly agree. Respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (44%)**; **students (46%)**; and those who are **out of work and looking (48%)** are less likely to strongly agree.

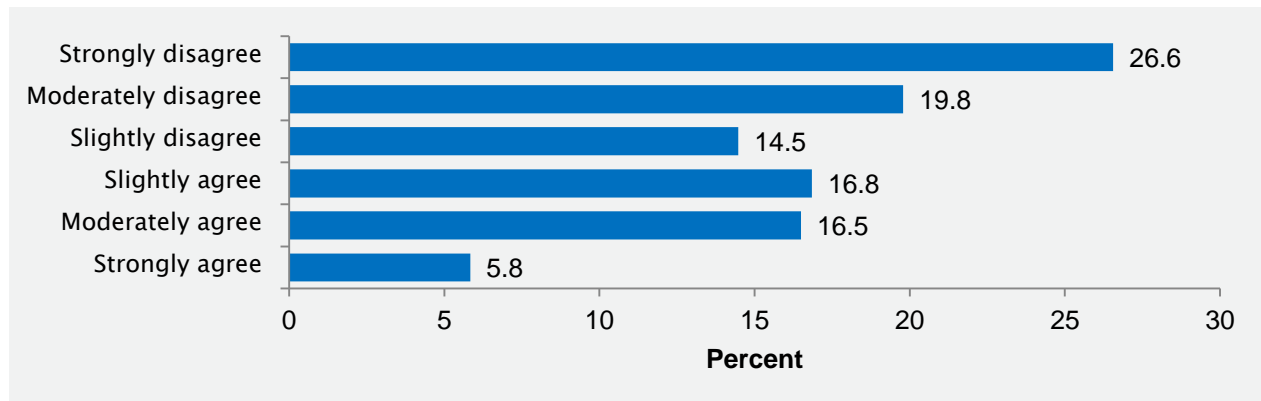
##### Family type

**Couples with no children (56%)**; **non-family group households (56%)**; and **one-parent families (53%)** are more likely to strongly agree. Respondents of **lone-person households (44%)** are less likely to strongly agree.

### There are times when government exceeds my expectations

A higher proportion of respondents disagree with this statement than agree. 27% of respondents strongly disagree that there are times when government exceeds their expectations and 20% of respondents moderately disagree.

Figure 25: Q3\_22 There are times when government exceeds my expectations (n=1940)



## Association highlights

*There are times when government exceeds my expectations*

### Politics

**Labor Party (27%)** voters are more likely to strongly disagree than **Greens (21%)** and **Liberal/National Coalition (22%)** voters. Respondents whose party preferences **change from election to election (33%)** have the highest level of strong disagreement.

### Age

Levels of strong agreement rise from **18–29 (13%)** year olds to **60–69 (38%)** year olds, then fall for respondents **70 and over (32%)**.

### Education attainment

Overall, as the level of education rises, strong disagreement decreases. Respondents with **certificate (31%)** level qualifications are most likely to strongly disagree, and **postgraduate (20%)** and **bachelor (21%)** degree holders are least likely to strongly disagree.

### Household income

As incomes rise, levels of disagreement fall. Respondents with a household income of **\$20–\$29,999 (40%)** are most likely to strongly disagree, while those who earn **\$300,000 or more (12%)** are least likely to do so.

### Employment status

Respondents who are **unable to work (48%)** and **retired (36%)** are most likely to strongly disagree. **Students (15%)** and individuals who are **out of work and looking (18%)** are least likely to strongly disagree.

### Housing tenure

Compared with **renters (22%)**, respondents with a **mortgage or a dwelling owned outright (27%)** are more likely to strongly disagree.

### Family type

Compared with **one-parent families (32%)**; **couples with no children (30%)**; and **lone-person households (29%)**, respondents whose family consists of a **couple with children (23%)** are likely to have lower levels of strong disagreement.

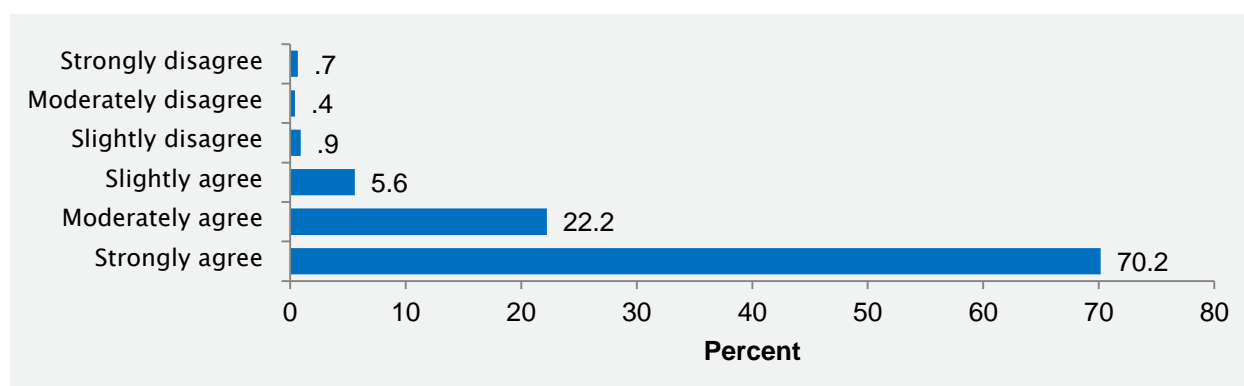
### Council type

Respondents of **urban regional (36%)** councils have the highest level of strong disagreement, followed by **rural and remote (29%)** and **urban fringe (29%)** councils. Respondents in **urban development small/medium (19%)**; **urban capital city (21%)**; and **urban development large/very large (22%)** councils have lower levels of strong disagreement.

### Governments should work with each other and other service providers to provide local services

The majority of respondents, 70% strongly agree that governments should work with each other and other service providers to provide local services, while 22% moderately agree.

Figure 26: Q3\_23 Governments should to work with each other and other service providers to provide local services (n=1993)



#### Association highlights

##### *Governments should to work with each other and other service providers to provide local services*

###### Age

Levels of strong agreement rise between **18–29 year olds (64%)** and **50–59 year olds (75%)**, then fall for those **aged over 70 (68%)**.

###### Employment status

Individuals who are **unable to work (75%)**; **homemakers (73%)**; **employed for wages (72%)**; and **retired (71%)** are more likely to have higher levels of strong agreement. Those who are **out of work but not currently looking (57%)**; **students (59%)**; and **out of work and looking (59%)** have lower levels of strong agreement.

###### Dwelling type

**Dwellers of flats, units or apartments of 4 stories or more (85%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with respondents living in a **separate house (71%)** and **dwellers of flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (65%)**.

###### Family type

**Non-group family households (75%)** have the highest strong agreement, followed by **couples with no children (74%)** and **couples with children (72%)**. Individuals of **lone-person households (66%)** and **one-parent families (68%)** voice lower levels of strong agreement.

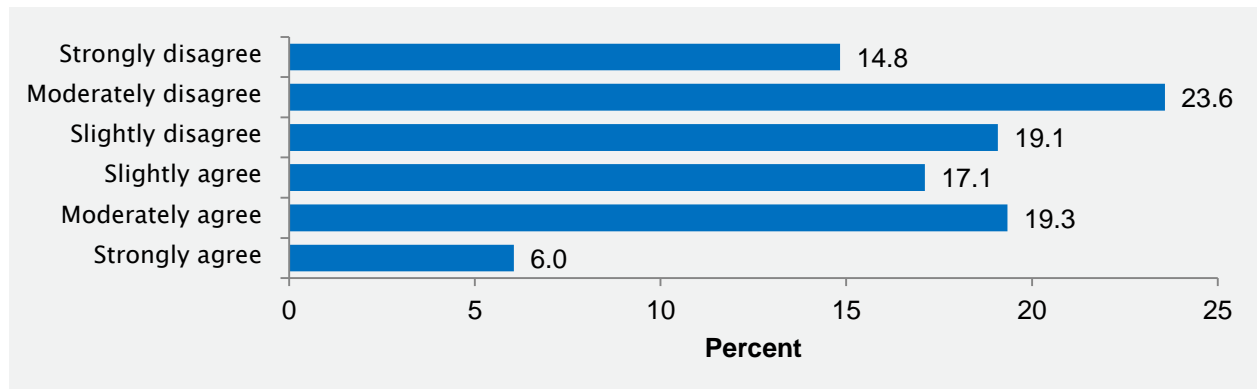
###### Length of time living in the local area

Individuals who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (62%)** have low levels of strong agreement in comparison with all other respondents (**70% community-wide**).

### Government delivers the best quality services

A high proportion of respondents disagreed that government delivers the best quality services with 24% of respondents moderately disagreeing and a further 15% of respondents strongly disagreeing. Only 6% of respondents strongly agree and 19% of respondents moderately agree that government delivers the best quality services.

Figure 27: Q3\_24 Government delivers the best quality services (n=1869)



### Association highlights

#### *Government delivers the best quality services*

##### Age

Levels of strong disagreement increase between **18–29 year olds (6%)** and **60–69 year olds (26%)**. Strong disagreement then decreases amongst respondents aged **70 and over (18%)**.

##### Employment status

**Students (2%)** have the lowest level of strong disagreement (compared with **15% nationwide**).

##### Family type

Respondents of **non-family group households (24%)** have the highest strong agreement, followed by those of **lone-person (18%) households**. Families of **couples with children (13%)** have the lowest level.

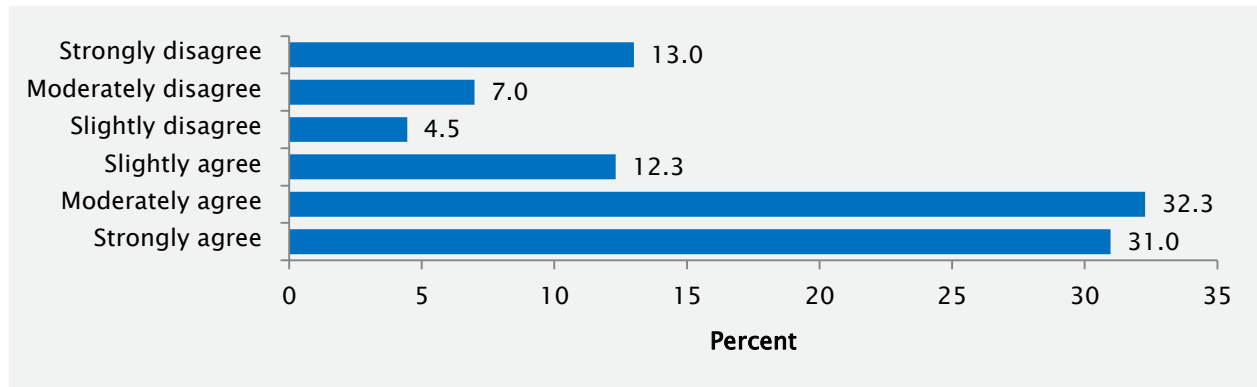
##### Length of time living in the local area

Strong disagreement increases with length of residency in local area. Respondents with residencies **more than 10 years (16%)** have the highest level of strong disagreement, while those with residencies **less than 2 years (11%)** have the lowest.

### It is acceptable for services in one area to be delivered differently to services in another area

32% of respondents moderately agree that it is acceptable for services in one area to be delivered differently to services in another area, while 31% of respondents strongly agree.

Figure 28: Q3\_25 It is acceptable for services in one area to be delivered differently to services in another area (n=1947)



#### Association highlights

*It is acceptable for services in one area to be delivered differently to services in another area*

##### Community participation

People who **have been actively involved in the community in the past year (33%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not been active (28%)**.

##### Politics

**Liberal/National Coalition (34%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than people who vote for the **Greens (28%)**.

##### Education attainment

People with university degrees are more likely to strongly agree compared with those who have school level education (**27% for school level qualifications** compared with **42% for postgraduate degree level** qualifications).

##### Employment status

People **employed (33%)**, **self-employed (35%)**, **homemakers (33%)** or **retired (30%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who are **out of work but not currently looking for work (13%)** and **unable to work (13%)**.

##### Dwelling type

People who live in a **separate house (32%)** or **semi-detached, row or terrace house (32%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **apartment dwellers (27%)**.

##### Family type

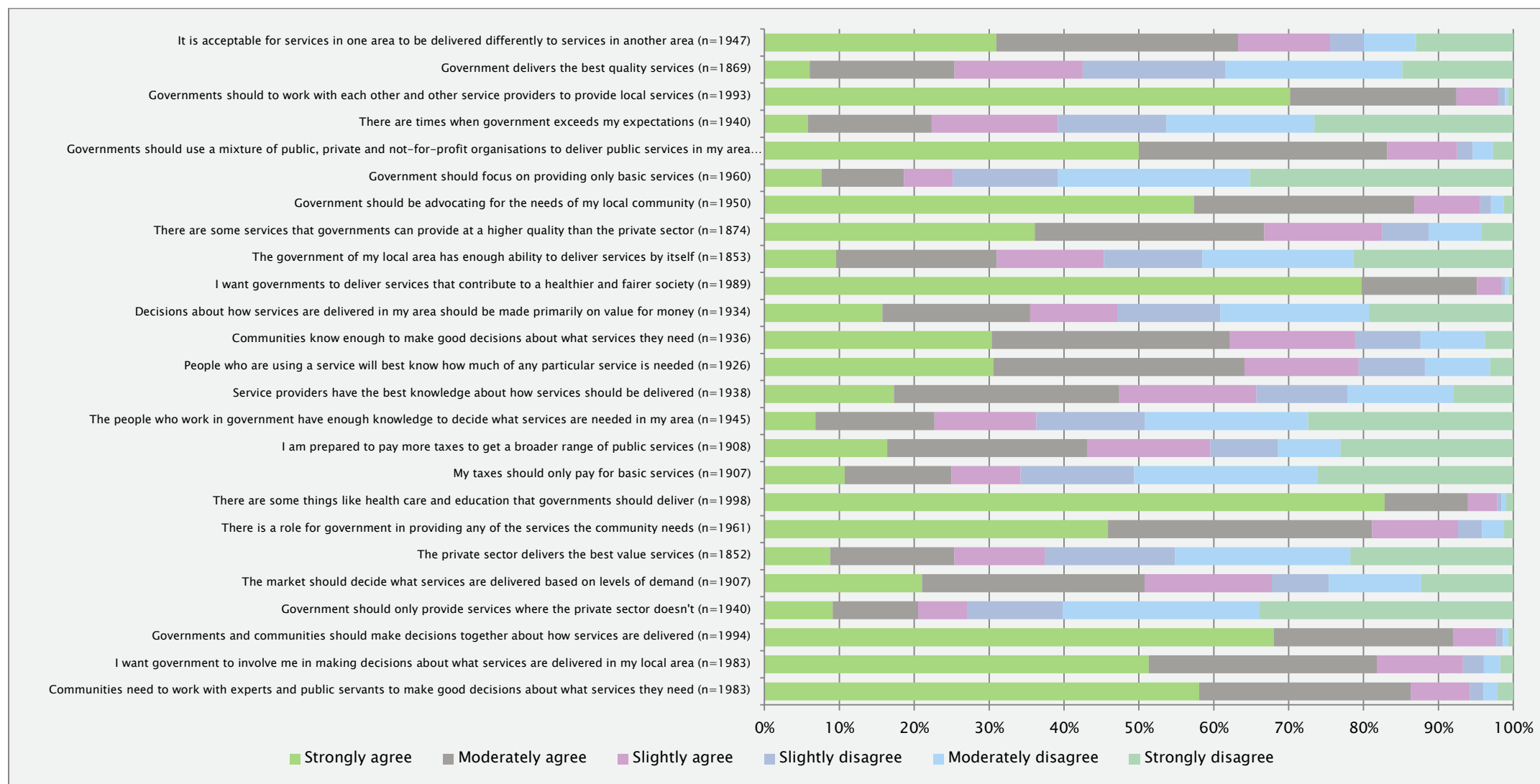
**Group households (38%)** are more likely to strongly agree than the **general community (31%)**.

##### Length of time living in local area

People who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (25%)** show the lowest levels of strong agreement (**31% nationwide**).

## 3.2 Relative level of agreement across the 25 governance and service delivery statements

Figure 29: Relative level of agreement with service delivery questions



## 4 Place attachment – emotional

Place attachment is the emotional bond between a person and a place. Place attachment is generally viewed as having positive effects for individuals, helping to enrich lives with meaning, values and significance, thus contributing to health and wellbeing. Local governments matter because of their role as ‘place-shapers’ and their importance in meeting the needs that most drive people’s attachment to, and satisfaction with, the area in which they live.

To better understand what matters to Australians about the place – or local area – in which they live, respondents were first asked their level of agreement with nine statements describing ways their local area may contribute to personal identity, emotional attachment and connection to the community.

Participants were asked to think about the local area in which they live and answer questions around their connection, attachment and sense of identity to the locality, and if the area expressed the qualities they valued (emotional attachment).

### 4.1 Level of agreement with individual statements

*Question 7 of the survey asked:*

*Thinking about the local area in which you live, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

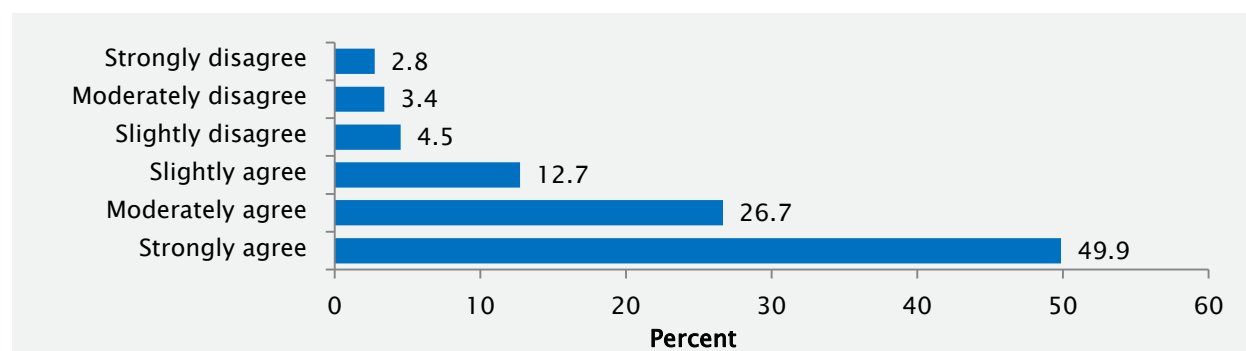
#### 4.1.1 Place attachment – personal Identity

Overwhelmingly, Australians feel at home in the place where they live. They feel their sense of identity and emotional wellbeing are supported by the attributes of the local area in which they live.

##### **There is something about the landscape around me that makes me feel good**

50% of respondents strongly agree that there is something about the landscape around them that makes them feel good and 27% of respondents moderately agree.

**Figure 30: Q7\_1 There is something about the landscape around me that makes me feel good (n=1993)**





## Association highlights

*There is something about the landscape around me that makes me feel good*

### Community participation

People who **have been active in their community in the past year (54%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not (46%)**.

### Politics

**Labor (53%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree when compared with **Greens (47%)** voters or **those who change from election to election (46%)**.

### Knowledge of mayor's name

Those that can **correctly identify the name of their local mayor (55%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who are **incorrect (47%)**.

### Age

Levels of strong agreement increase with age. (**36% for people aged 18–29** compared with **64% for people 70 and older**).

### Education attainment

**Bachelor degree level holders (43%)** have lower levels of strong agreement compared with the **general community (50%)**.

### Employment status

People **self-employed (56%)**, **unable to work (58%)** or **retired (65%)** have higher levels of strong agreement compared with those **out of work and looking for work (36%)** and **students (34%)**.

### Housing tenure

Levels of strong agreement are higher for people who **mortgage or own their home outright (52%)** than **renters (40%)**.

### Dwelling type

Levels of strong agreement are lower for those living in a **separate house (52%)** and in a **semi-detached or similar house(41%)**, than those in a **flat, unit, or apartment with 4 stories or more (66%)**.

### Family type

**Couples with no children (56%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **one parent families (45%)** and **group households (38%)**.

### Length of time living in local area

Levels of strong agreement increase with length of residency. People who have been living in the local area for **less than 2 years (23%)** have lower levels of strong agreement than those living in the area for **more than 10 years (54%)**.

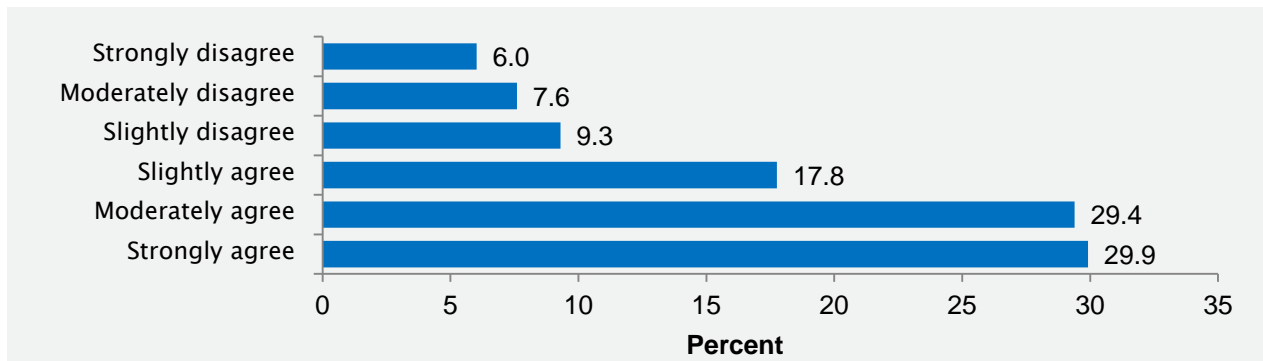
### Council type

People living in **rural and remote areas (58%)** and **urban regional areas (58%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those living in **urban capital cities (41%)** or **large/very large urban developments (41%)**.

**It reflects the type of person I am**

30% of respondents strongly agree their local area reflects the type of person they are and 29% of respondents moderately agree.

**Figure 31: Q7\_2 It reflects the type of person I am (n=1950)**



## Association highlights

*It reflects the type of person I am*

### Community participation

Those who **have been actively involved in their community in the past year (34%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not been active in their community (27%)**.

### Politics

**Liberal/National (33%) Party** voters are more likely to strongly agree than those who vote for the **Greens (25%)**.

### Knowledge of mayor's name

People who can **correctly (35%) name their mayor** have higher levels of strong agreement than those who are **incorrect (32%)** or **didn't know (26%)**.

### Gender

**Women (33%)** are more likely than **men (27%)** to strongly agree.

### Age

Strong agreement increases with age, with those aged **18–29 (21%)** less likely to strongly agree than those who are **70 years and older (41%)**.

### Education attainment

People with vocational qualifications are more likely to strongly agree than those who have university level qualifications (**34% for school level education** compared with **24% for postgraduate degrees**).

### Employment status

**Students (12%)** have the lowest levels of strong agreement, and those who are **out of work and looking for work (21%)** are also less likely to strongly agree. People who are **retired (40%)** show the highest levels of strong agreement with the statement.

### Housing tenure

People who **mortgage or own their home** are more likely to strongly agree than **renters (31% compared with 25%)**.

### Family type

**Couples with no children (34%)** and **lone person households (33%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **non-family group households (15%)**.

### Length of time living in local area

People who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (21%)** are less likely to strongly agree than people who have lived in their local areas for **more than 10 years (34%)**.

### Council type

Respondents from **urban regional (35%)** and rural and **remote areas (33%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those from **urban capital cities (27%)** and **small to large urban developments (26%–27%)**.

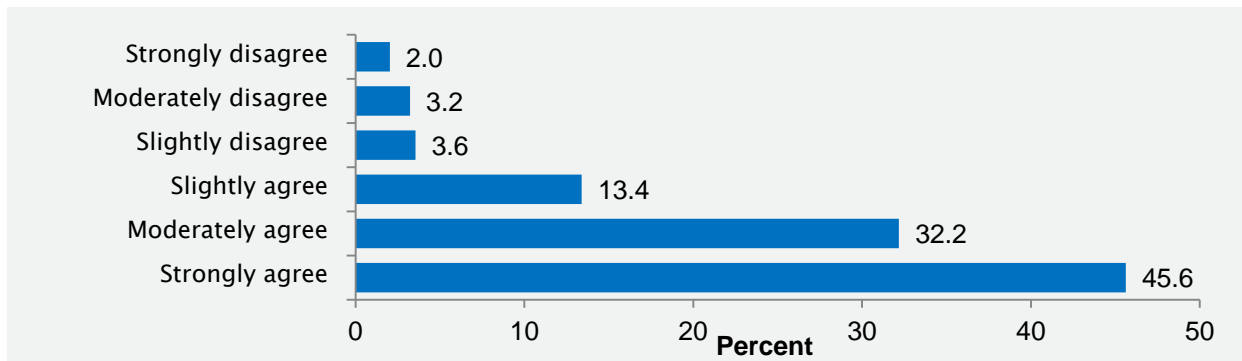
### State

Respondents living in **Western Australia (23%)** are less likely to strongly agree (compared with **30% nationwide**).

### The area in which I live has the qualities I value

46% of respondents strongly agree that the area in which they live has the qualities they value and 32% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 32: Q7\_3 The area in which I live has the qualities I value (n=1979)



## Association highlights

*The area in which I live has the qualities I value*

### Community participation

People who **have participated in community activities (50%)** are more likely than those who **have not (42%)** to strongly agree.

### Politics

**Liberal/National coalition voters (55%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **Labor (44%)** voters.

### Age

As age increases, levels of strong agreement also rise (**29% for people aged 18–29** compared with **44% for people aged 40–49** and **65% for people 70 and over**).

### Housing tenure

People who **mortgage or own their home outright (49%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people who are **renting (33%)**.

### Dwelling type

People who live in a **flat, unit or apartment of 4 stories or more (76%)** are more likely to strongly agree (**45% community-wide**).

### Family type

**Couples with no children (52%)** and **lone person households (51%)** have higher levels of strong agreement, compared with **non-family group households (16%)**.

### Length of time living in local area

As length of residency increases, levels of strong agreement also rise (**23% for those living in their local area for less than 2 years** compared with **35% for those who have lived in their local area for 2–5 years** and **50% for those living in their local area for more than 10 years**).

### Council type

Respondents living in **rural and remote areas (54%)** have higher levels of strong agreement than those who live in **small/medium urban developments (42%)** and the **urban fringe (41%)**.

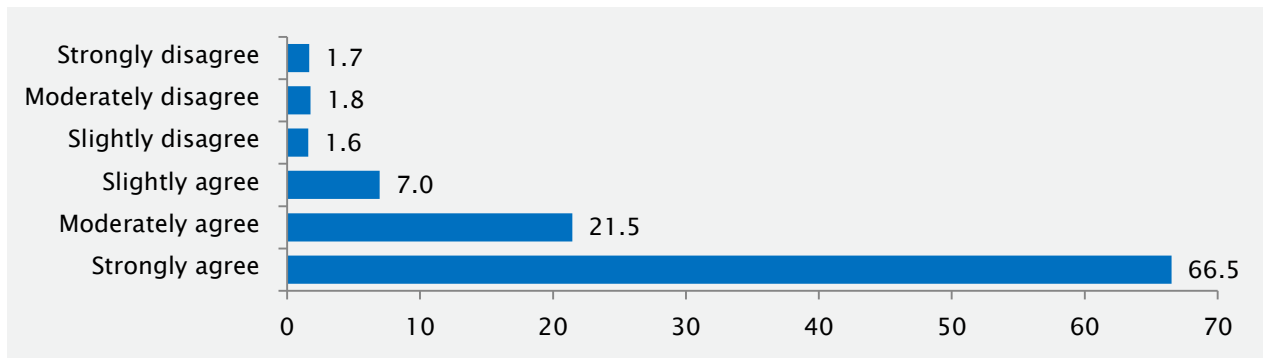
### State

People living in **Western Australia (33%)** have the lowest level of agreement (**compared with 45% nationwide**).

### I feel at home there

67% of respondents strongly agree that they feel at home in their local area and 22% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 33: Q7\_5 I feel at home there (n=1995)



## Association highlights

### *I feel at home there*

#### Community participation

People who **have participated in their community in the past 12 months (71%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not participated (63%)**.

#### Politics

**Greens voters (62%)** and those who **change from election to election (58%)** are less likely to strongly agree (**compared with 67% nationwide**).

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

People who **correctly name their local mayor (73%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with people who **do not know (60%) the name of their local mayor**.

#### Age

Strong agreement increases with age with younger respondents less likely to strongly agree than older respondents (**56% for 18–29 year olds** compared with **78% for people 70 and older**).

#### Employment status

People **out of work but not currently looking for work (46%)** and **students (48%)** are less likely to strongly agree than people who are **retired (78%)** or **self-employed (74%)**.

#### Housing tenure

People with **mortgaged or owned outright homes (70%)** are more likely than **renters (52%)** to strongly agree.

#### Family type

People who live in **group households (non-family)** are less likely to strongly agree (**17% compared with 67% nationwide**).

#### Length of time living in local area

Strong agreement increases as residency increases (**36% for people who have lived in their local area for less than 2 years** compared with **73% for people who have lived in their local area for more than 10 years**).

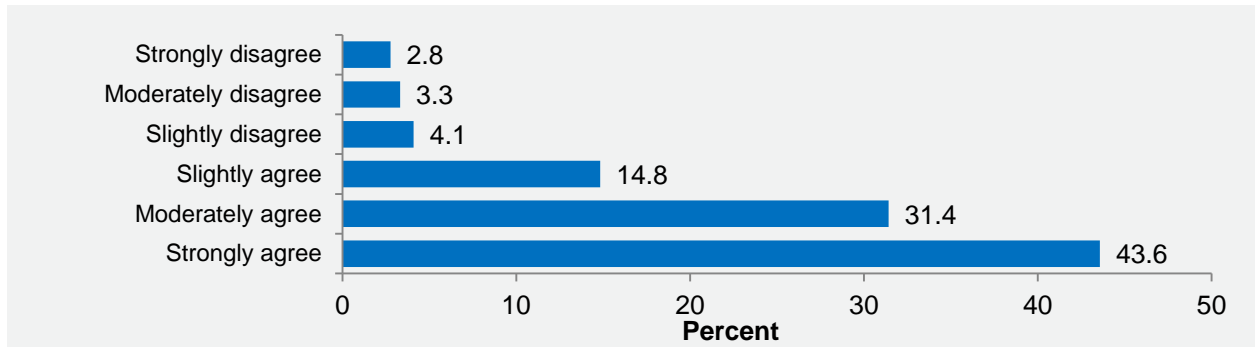
#### State

People living in **Western Australia** are less likely to strongly agree (**60% compared with 66% nationwide**).

### I feel connected locally to friends and neighbours

44% of respondents strongly agree that they feel connected locally to friends and neighbours and 31% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 34: Q7\_7 I feel connected locally to friends and neighbours (n= 1992)





## Association highlights

### *I feel connected locally to friends and neighbours*

#### **Community participation**

People who **have participated in their community in the past 12 months (51%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not participated (37%)**.

#### **Politics**

**Greens (39%)** voters are less likely to strongly agree than people who vote **Liberal/National Coalition (47%)** or **Labor (48%)**.

#### **Knowledge of mayor's name**

People who **correctly name their local mayor (50%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with people who **do not know (38%)** or **incorrectly (41%) named their mayor**.

#### **Gender**

**Women (47%)** are more likely than **men (40%)** to strongly agree.

#### **Age**

Strong agreement increases with age. Younger respondents less likely to strongly agree than older respondents (**30% for 18–29 year olds** compared with **60% for people 70 and older**).

#### **Employment status**

**Students (24%)**, people **out of work and looking for work (33%)** or **employed for wages (40%)** are less likely to strongly agree than the **self-employed (55%)**, **retired (54%)** or people **unable to work (53%)**.

#### **Housing tenure**

People with **mortgaged or owned outright homes (47%)** are more likely than **renters (29%)** to strongly agree.

#### **Dwelling type**

Respondents who live in **apartments with 4 stories or more (54%)** are more likely to strongly agree (**compared with 44% community-wide**).

#### **Family type**

Lowest levels of strong agreement come from **group households (20%)** followed by **one parent families (37%)** compared with **44% nationwide**.

#### **Length of time living in local area**

As length of residency increases, agreement levels rise (**21% for people who have lived in their local area for less than 2 years** compared with **50% for people who have lived in their local area for more than 10 years**).

#### **Council type**

People who live in **rural and remote areas (50%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people who live in **urban capital cities (38%)**.

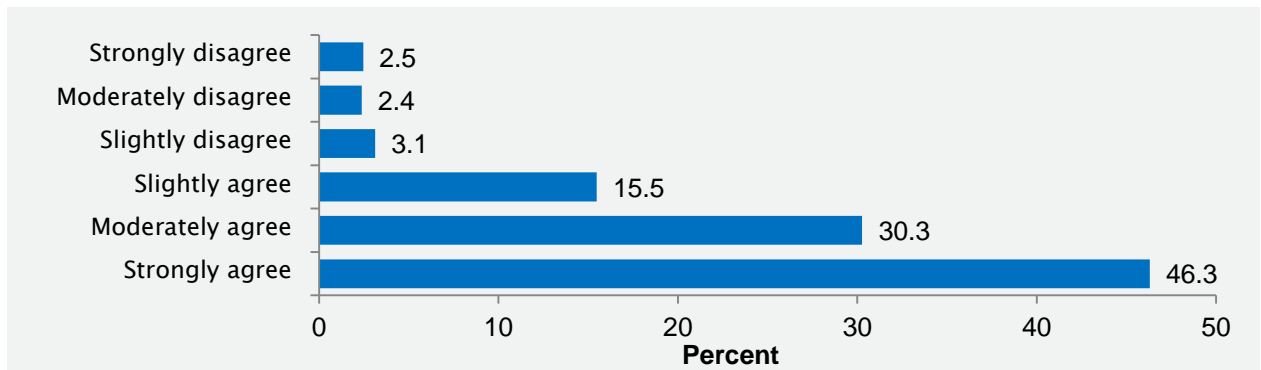
#### **State**

People living in **New South Wales (50%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people living in **Western Australia (33%)**.

### Living there makes me feel good about myself

46% of respondents strongly agreed that living in their local area makes them feel good about themselves and 30% of respondents moderately agreed.

Figure 35: Q7\_8 Living there makes me feel good about myself (n=1954)



## Association highlights

### *Living there makes me feel good about myself*

#### Community participation

People who **have actively participated in their community in the past year (51%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not participated (42%)**.

#### Politics

**Liberal/National Coalition (53%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than people who identify with **Labor (48%)** or the **Greens (37%)**.

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

People who can **correctly identify (51%)** the name of their local mayor are more likely to strongly agree than people are **incorrect (40%)** or **don't know (43%)**.

#### Age

As age increases levels of strong agreement also rise (**28% for 18–29 year olds** compared with **64% for people 70 and older**).

#### Education attainment

As education attainment rise levels of strong agreement fall (**48% for school education qualifications** compared with **43% for postgraduate degree holders**).

#### Employment status

Respondents who are **retired (64%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with **students (23%)** and those who are **out of work and looking for work (22%)**.

#### Housing tenure

People who **mortgage or own their home (49%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with **renters (34%)**.

#### Dwelling type

Respondents who live in **apartments of 4 stories or more** are more likely to strongly agree (**60% compared with 46% nationwide**).

#### Family type

**Group households (23%)** are less likely to strongly agree compared with the **general community (47%)**.

#### Length of time living in local area

As respondents' residency increases, levels of strong agreement also rise (**27% for less than 2 years** compared with **51% for more than 10 years**).

#### State

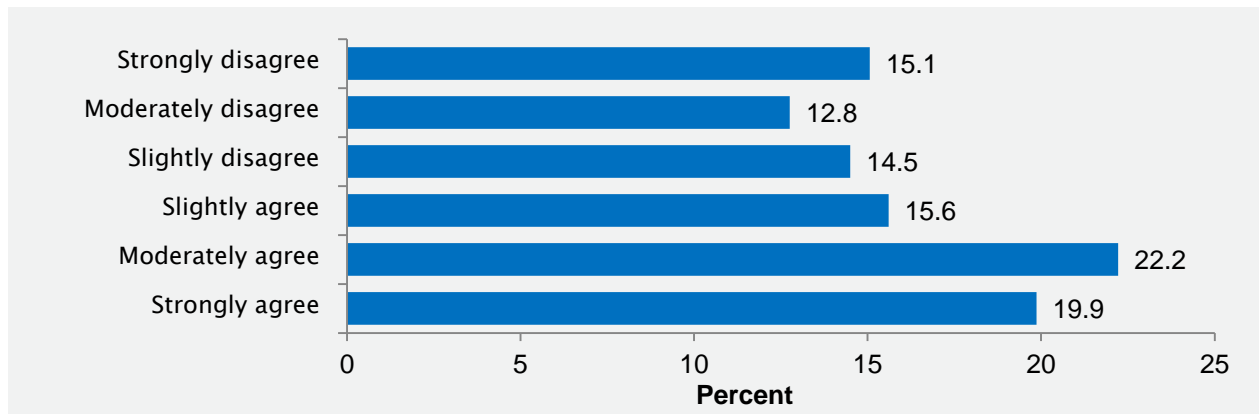
People living in **Western Australia** are less likely to strongly agree (**40% compared with 46% nationwide**).

#### 4.1.2 Place Attachment – emotional connection

##### I feel a part of the history of the place

20% of respondents strongly agree that they feel part of the history of the place in which they live and 22% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 36: Q7\_4 I feel part of the history of the place (n=1983)



## Association highlights

### *I feel a part of the history of the place*

#### **Community participation**

People who **have participated in their community in the past 12 months (24%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not participated (16%)**.

#### **Politics**

**Liberal/National Coalition** voters (25%) are more likely than **Labor (20%)** or **Greens (11%)** voters to strongly agree.

#### **Knowledge of mayor's name**

People who **did not know (14%)** the name of their local mayor are much less likely to strongly agree than those who are **correct (26%)**.

#### **Age**

Strong agreement increases with age with younger respondents less likely to strongly agree than older respondents (12% for 18–29 year olds compared with 37% for people 70 and older).

#### **Household Income**

As household income rises there is a general decline in strong agreement (35% for incomes of \$10,000–\$19,999 compared with 19% for incomes of \$300,000 or more).

#### **Employment Status**

**Students (4%)** have the lowest level of strong agreement while people who are **retired (32%)** have the highest level of strong agreement.

#### **Housing tenure**

People with **mortgaged or owned outright (22%)** houses are more likely than **renters (12%)** to strongly agree.

#### **Family type**

**Couples with children (16%)** are less likely to strongly agree when compared with **couples with no children (24%)**, **lone person households (23%)**, **non-family group households (22%)** and **one parent families (22%)**.

#### **Length of time living in local area**

People living in an area for **more than 10 years (26%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people living in an area for **less than 2 years (6%)**.

#### **Council type**

**Rural and remote areas (25%)** are more likely to strongly agree (20% for the general community).

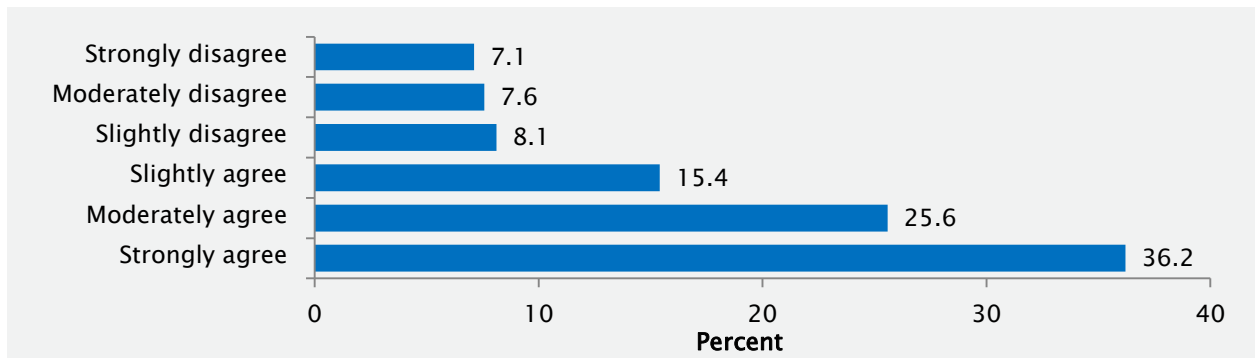
#### **State**

People living in **Western Australia (12%)** are less likely to strongly agree (compared with 20% nationwide).

### The area in which I live is full of important memories and stories

36% of respondents strongly agree that the area in which they live is full of important memories and stories and 26% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 37: Q7\_6 The area in which I live is full of important memories and stories (n=1969)



## Association highlights

*The area in which I live is full of important memories and stories*

### Community participation

People who **have participated in their community in the past 12 months (40%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not participated (32%)**.

### Politics

**Greens (32%)** voters or voters who **change from election to election (28%)** are less likely to strongly agree than **Liberal/National Coalition (42%)** voters.

### Knowledge of mayor's name

People who **correctly name their local mayor (42%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with those who **do not know (31%)** or **incorrectly reported (35%)** who their local mayor is.

### Gender

**Women (40%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **men (33%)**.

### Age

Generally, as age increases, levels of strong agreement also increase, (**28–34% for 18–39 year olds** compared with **46% for people 70 and older**).

### Education attainment

Generally, strong agreement decreases as education attainment increases (**40% for school education** compared with **35% for bachelor degrees** and **24% postgraduate degrees**).

### Employment status

Respondents **out of work but not looking for work (44%)**, **retired (43%)** or **self-employed (42%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people **out of work and looking for work (28%)** and **students (25%)**.

### Housing tenure

People who **mortgage or own their home (39%)** are more likely to strongly agree than **renters (26%)**.

### Family type

**Group households (16%)** are less likely to strongly agree compared with the **general community (36%)**.

### Length of time living in local area

Strong agreement increases as length of residency increases (**8% for people who have lived in their local area for less than 2 years** compared with **46% for people who have lived in their local area for more than 10 years**).

### Council type

People who live in **rural and remote areas (44%)** are more likely to strongly agree than people who live in **urban capital cities (28%)**.

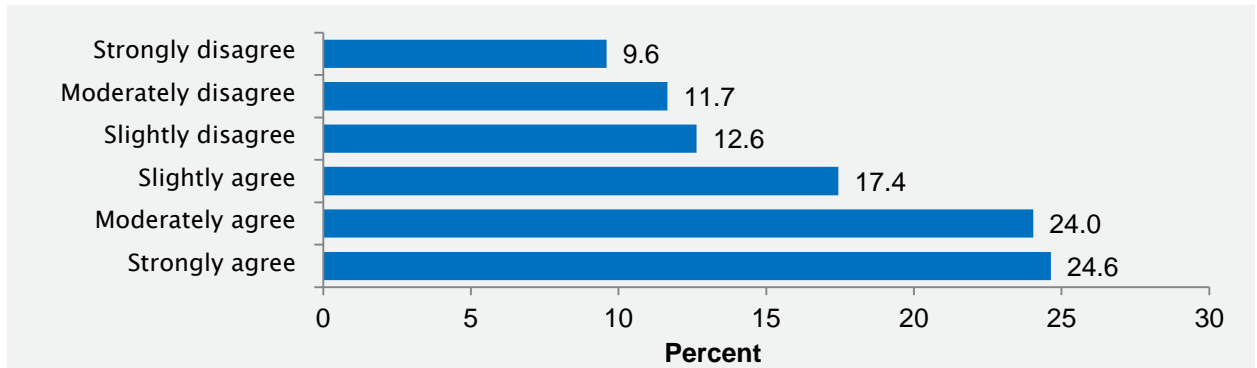
### State

People living in **Western Australia** are less likely to strongly agree (**27% compared with 36% nationwide**).

### I feel a cultural connection to the area

25% of respondents strongly agree that they feel a cultural connection to the area in which they live and 24% of respondents moderately agree.

Figure 38: Q7\_9 I feel a cultural connection to the area (n=1963)





## Association highlights

### *I feel a cultural connection to the area*

#### Community participation

People who **have actively participated in their community in the past year (30%)** are more likely to strongly agree than those who **have not participated (20%)**.

#### Politics

**Liberal/National Coalition (31%)** voters are more likely to strongly agree than people who identify with **Labor (24%)** or the **Greens (21%)**.

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

People who **correctly identify (30%)** the name of their local mayor are more likely to strongly agree than people are **incorrect (26%)** or **don't know (20%)**.

#### Gender

**Women (28%)** are more likely than **men (21%)** to strongly agree.

#### Age

As age increases levels of strong agreement increase (**13% for 18–29 year olds** compared with **39% for people 70 and older**).

#### Education attainment

Strong agreement is more likely among people with **school education (27%)** and **certificate (26%)** level qualifications compared with **bachelor (21%)** or **postgraduate (21%)** degree holders.

#### Employment status

Respondents who are **retired (35%)**, **self-employed (34%)** or **unable to work (32%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with **students (14%)**.

#### Housing tenure

People who **mortgage or own their home (27%)** are more likely to strongly agree compared with **renters (15%)**.

#### Dwelling type

Respondents who live in **apartments of 4 stories or more** are more likely to strongly agree (**30%** compared with **25% community-wide**).

#### Family type

**Group households (11%)** are less likely to strongly agree compared with the **general community (25%)**.

#### Length of time living in local area

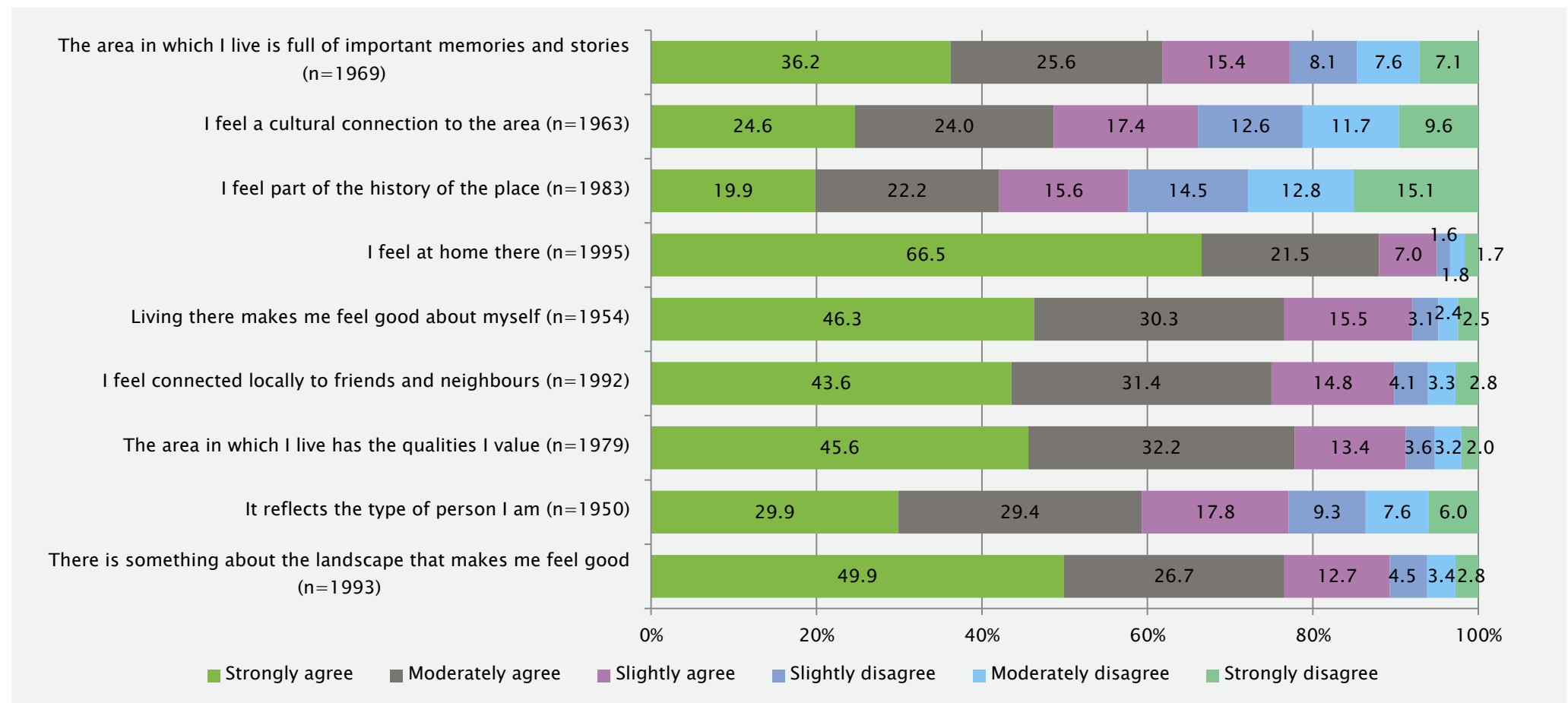
Generally, as respondents' length of residency increases, levels of strong agreement rise (**13% for less than 2 years** compared with **30% for more than 10 years**).

#### State

People living in **Western Australia** are less likely to strongly agree (**16% compared with 25% nationwide**).

## 4.2 Relative level of agreement across the nine emotional place attachment statements

Figure 39: Relative level of agreement across the nine emotional place attachment statements



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## 5 Place attachment – instrumental

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of, and their satisfaction with, 15 different areas of service delivery, infrastructure and community services that are typically provided by local government, or over which local government exerts an influence through planning, policy, and advocacy. These are all aspects of the 'instrumental' features of place that drive our satisfaction with the area in which we live, and have been shown to be the most important triggers for people moving to, or aspiring to move to, another area.

### 5.1 Level of importance of each individual dimension of place attachment

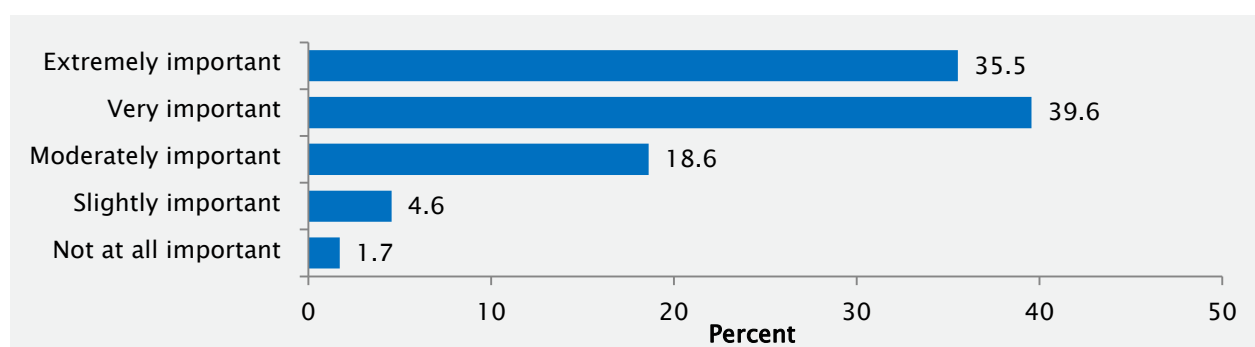
*Question 8 of the survey asked:*

*Thinking about the local area in which you live, how important are each of the following to you?*

#### **Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces**

36% of respondents feel the presence of recreational areas in their local area is extremely important, and 40% feel it to be very important.

**Figure 40: Q8\_1 Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces (n=2004)**



## Association highlights

### *Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces*

#### **Politics**

**Greens (40%)** and **Labor (39%)** voters are more likely think it is extremely important compared with **Liberal/National (34%)** voters. Respondents whose **votes change from election to election (31%)** are least likely.

#### **Age**

Ratings of extremely important are lower amongst **18–29 (31%)** year olds and respondents aged **70 and over (29% vs. 36% nationwide)**.

#### **Education attainment**

**Bachelor (31%)** degree holders are less likely to rate these facilities as being extremely important compared with all other respondents (**36% nationwide**).

#### **Employment status**

Respondents who are **unable to work (42%)** and **self-employed (40%)** have the highest 'extremely important' ratings. Those who are **out of work but not currently looking (25%)** and **out of work and currently looking (29%)** report the lowest.

#### **Family type**

**Couples with no children (36%)**; **couples with children (39%)**; and **one parent families (41%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than **lone-person households (26%)**.

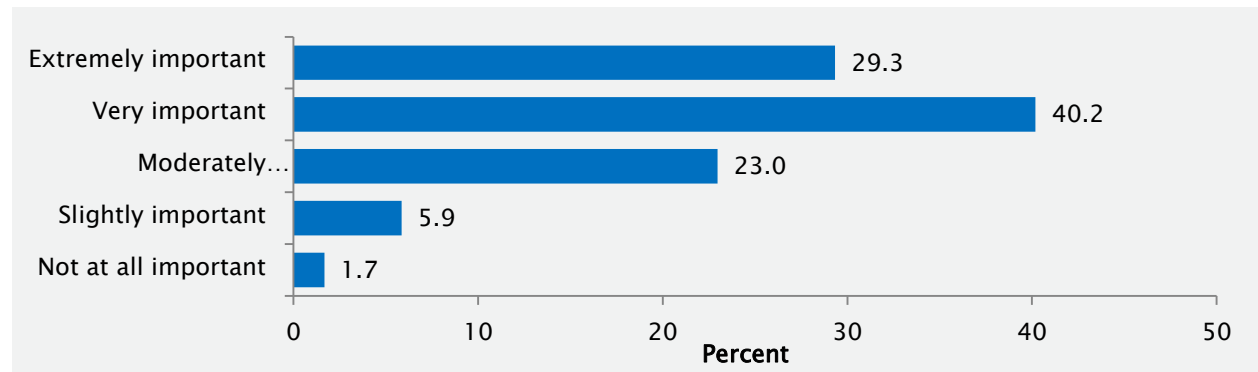
#### **Council type**

Respondents in **urban development small/medium (39%)** councils report the highest extreme importance, while those in **urban capital cities (33%)** and **urban development large/very large (33%)** councils report the lowest.

### Availability of appropriate public services

29% of respondents feel the availability of appropriate public services in their local area is extremely important, a further 40% felt it to be very important.

Figure 41: Q8\_2 Availability of appropriate public services (n=2000)



### Association highlights

#### Availability of appropriate public services

##### Politics

**Labor (34%)** and **Greens (31%)** voters are more likely to report these services being extremely important compared with **Liberal/National (26%)** voters and individuals whose **votes change from election to election (27%)**.

##### Gender

**Female (34%)** respondents are more likely to rate these services as being extremely important compared with **male (24%)** respondents.

##### Education attainment

**School-level (30%)**; **certificate (36%)**; and **diploma/advanced diploma (32%)** qualification holders are more likely to report extreme importance than **bachelor (23%)** and **postgraduate (26%)** degree holders.

##### Employment status

Ratings of extreme importance are highest amongst respondents who are **unable to work (44%)** and **homemakers (43%)**. It is lowest amongst **students (22% vs. 29% nationwide)**.

##### Housing tenure

**Renters (33%)** report higher levels extreme importance than respondents whose homes are **mortgaged or owned outright (28%)**.

##### Dwelling type

Ratings of 'extremely important' are higher for respondents living in **flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (35%)** and **4 stories or more (33%)** compared with those who live in **semi-detached, townhouse etc. (25%)** and **separate houses (29%)**.

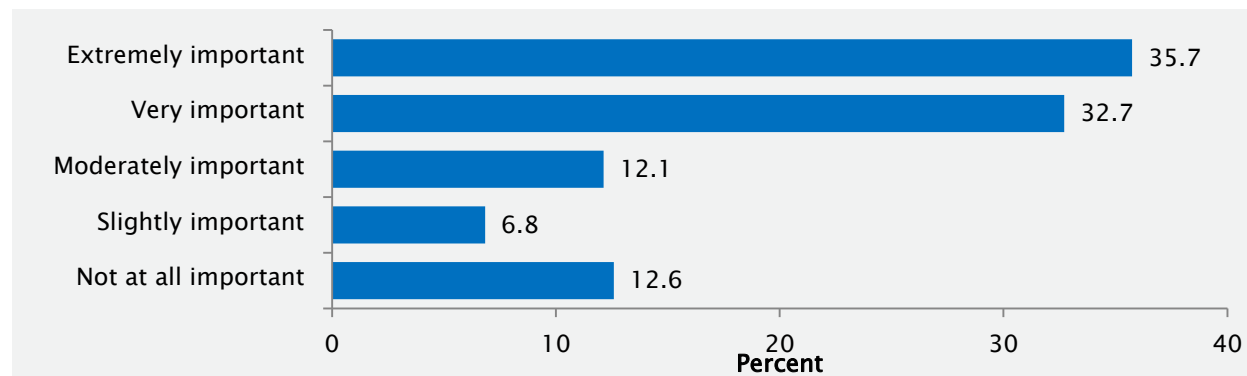
##### Council type

The highest 'extremely important' level is reported by **respondents of urban regional (34%)** councils and the lowest by respondents of **urban development small/medium (24% vs. 29% nationwide)**.

### Availability of good schools

36% of respondents feel the availability of good schools in their local area is extremely important, while 33% feel it to be very important.

Figure 42: Q8\_3 Availability of good schools (n=1994)



### Association highlights

#### Availability of good schools

##### Politics

**Labor (41%)** and **Greens (38%)** voters are most likely to report extreme importance compared with **Liberal/National (32%)** voters and respondents whose **votes change from election to election (33%)**.

##### Gender

**Female (40%)** respondents report higher of extreme importance than **male (32%)** respondents.

##### Age

Ratings of extreme importance generally decrease with age. **30–39 (48%)** year old respondents are most likely to report extreme importance compared with respondents **aged 70 and over (20%)**.

##### Non-English speaking background

Respondents who **speak a language other than English (44%)** have higher ratings of extreme importance compared with **English-only (35%)** speakers.

##### Education attainment

Respondents with **bachelor (31%)** degree qualifications are less likely to have 'extremely important' ratings compared with all other respondents (**36% nationwide**).

##### Household income

Overall, ratings of extreme importance increase with income levels. Ratings of 'extremely important' are lower for respondents with household incomes of **\$10–\$19,000 (26%)**; **\$20–\$29,000 (30%)** and higher for those with household incomes of **\$200–\$299,000 (40%)**; and **\$300,000 or more (53%)**.

##### Employment status

'Extremely important' ratings are highest for **homemakers (57%)**; respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (50%)**; and **unable to work (49%)**. They are lowest for respondents who are **out of work and looking (24%)**; **retired (24%)**; and **students (31%)**.

##### Family type

Respondents whose families consist of **one parent (48%)** and **couples with children (47%)** report higher extreme importance compared with **lone person households (18%)**; **non-family group households (21%)**; and **couples with no children (28%)**.

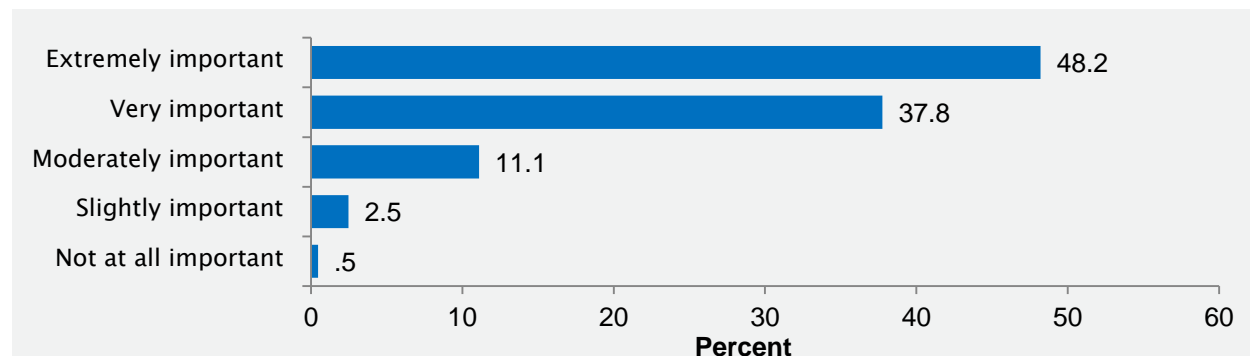
##### Council type

Respondents of **urban capital cities (28%)** and **urban development small/medium (29%)** councils have the lowest 'extremely important' ratings. Those in **urban regional (41%)** and **rural and remote councils (39%)** have the highest.

## Availability of healthcare

48% of respondents feel the availability of healthcare in their local area is extremely important, while 38% feel it to be very important.

Figure 43: Q8\_4 Availability of healthcare (n=2003)



## Association highlights

### Availability of healthcare

#### Politics

**Labor (52%)** voters and respondents whose **voting preferences change from election to election (50%)** are more likely than **Liberal/National (45%)** and **Greens (45%)** voters to believe this is extremely important.

#### Gender

**Female (51%)** respondents report higher extreme importance compared with **male (45%)** respondents.

#### Education attainment

Respondents with **diploma/advanced diploma (54%)**; **school (52%)**; and **certificate (50%)** level qualifications have higher levels of extreme importance compared with **bachelor (39%)** and **postgraduate (46%)** degree holders.

#### Employment status

The highest level of extreme importance is reported by respondents who are **unable to work (63%)**, followed by **homemakers (52%)** and **retired (52%)**. The lowest is reported by respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (36%)**, followed by those who are **out of work and looking (43%)**.

#### Housing type

Respondents who live in **flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (53%)** and **4 stories and more (53%)** are more likely to report higher extreme importance than those who live in **semi-detached or similar (43%)** and **separate houses (48%)**.

#### Council

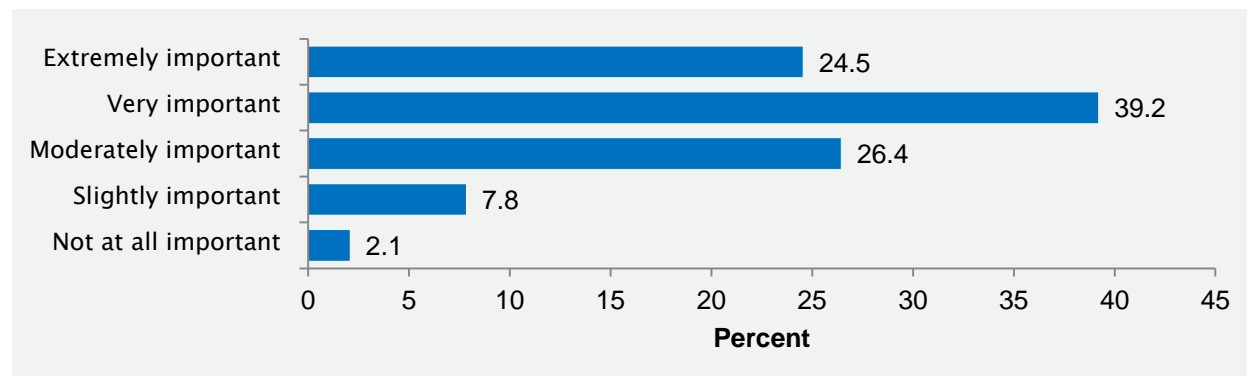
Individuals living in **urban regional (53%)**; **rural and remote (52%)**; and **urban fringe (49%)** councils are more likely to have higher 'extremely important' ratings than those in **urban capital cities (35%)**



### A supportive and cohesive community

25% of respondents feel the presence of a supportive and cohesive community in their local area is extremely important, while 39% feel it to be very important.

Figure 44: Q8\_5 A supportive and cohesive community (n=1995)



### Association highlights

#### A supportive and cohesive community

##### Community participation

Ratings of 'extremely important' are likely to be higher amongst respondents who have **actively participated (29%)** than those who have **not actively participated (21%)** in clubs, services or groups in the community.

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who name their mayor **incorrectly (33%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with those who **do not know (22%)** or **correctly (26%)** do so.

##### Gender

**Female (27%)** respondents have higher extreme importance than **male (22%)** respondents.

##### Education attainment

Extreme importance is higher amongst **certificate (30%); diploma/advanced diploma (30%); and school-level (26%)** qualification holders compare with respondents who have **postgraduate (20%)** and **bachelor degrees (20%)**.

##### Employment status

Individuals who **are unable to work (50%)** report the highest extreme importance. **Students (17%)** report the lowest **(25% community wide)**.

##### Housing type

Extreme importance is highest for respondents who live **in flats, units or apartments of 4 stories or more (29%)** compared with those living in **semi-detached and similar houses (20%)**, **flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (24%)**, and **separate houses (25%)**.

##### Family type

Respondents of **one-parent families (32%)** are most likely to report extreme importance, followed by **couples with children (26%)** and **couples with no children (25%)**. Respondents from **lone-person households (18%)** are least likely to report extreme importance, followed by those of **non-family group households (21%)**.

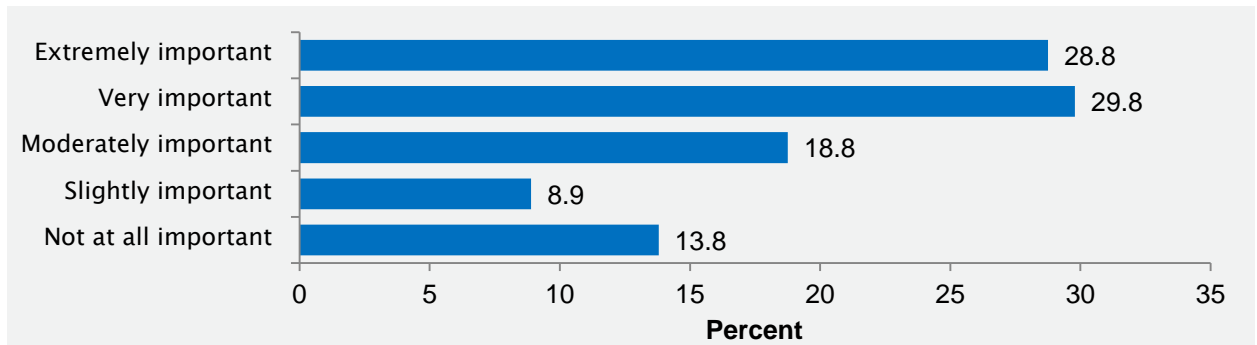
##### Council type

Ratings of extreme importance are highest amongst respondents in **urban regional (29%)** councils and lowest for those in **urban development small/medium (18%)** and **urban capital city (22%)** councils.

### Job opportunities

29% of respondents feel the availability of job opportunities in their local area is extremely important, while 30% feel it to be very important. Nearly a quarter of respondents feel the availability of jobs is either only slightly important (9%) or not at all important (14%).

Figure 45: Q\_6 Job opportunities (n=1993)



## Association highlights

### *Job opportunities*

#### Politics

**Labor (34%)** voters and respondents whose **votes changed from election to election (32%)** are most likely to report high extreme importance. **Liberal/National (24%)** and **Greens (24%)** voters are least likely to report high extreme importance.

#### Gender

Extreme importance is higher amongst **female (33%)** respondents compared with **male (24%)** respondents.

#### Age

Overall, 'extremely important' ratings decline with age. **18–29 (35%)** year olds report higher ratings, and respondents aged **70 and over (13%)** report the lowest.

#### Non-English speaking background

Ratings of 'extremely important' are higher amongst respondents who **speak a language other than English (38%)** compared with **English-only (28%)** speakers.

#### Education attainment

Respondents with **certificate (37%)** and **diploma/advanced diploma (31%)** level qualifications report the highest extreme importance. Those with **bachelor (24%)** and **postgraduate (24%)** degrees report the lowest.

#### Employment status

The highest levels of extreme importance are reported by respondents who are **homemakers (42%)**; **out of work but not currently looking (40%)**; and **unable to work (39%)**. **Retired (14%)** respondents report the lowest, followed by respondents who are **self-employed (25%)** and **students (26%)**.

#### Housing type

Individuals who reside in **flats, units or apartments of 4 stories or more (36%)** are more likely to have higher 'extremely important' levels than those who live in **semi-detached and related houses (22%)**; **flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (24%)**; and **separate houses (30%)**.

#### Family type

Extreme importance is higher amongst **one-parent families (44%)**; **non-family group households (33%)**; and **couples with children (31%)**. They are lower amongst **lone-person households (20%)** and **couples with no children (24%)**.

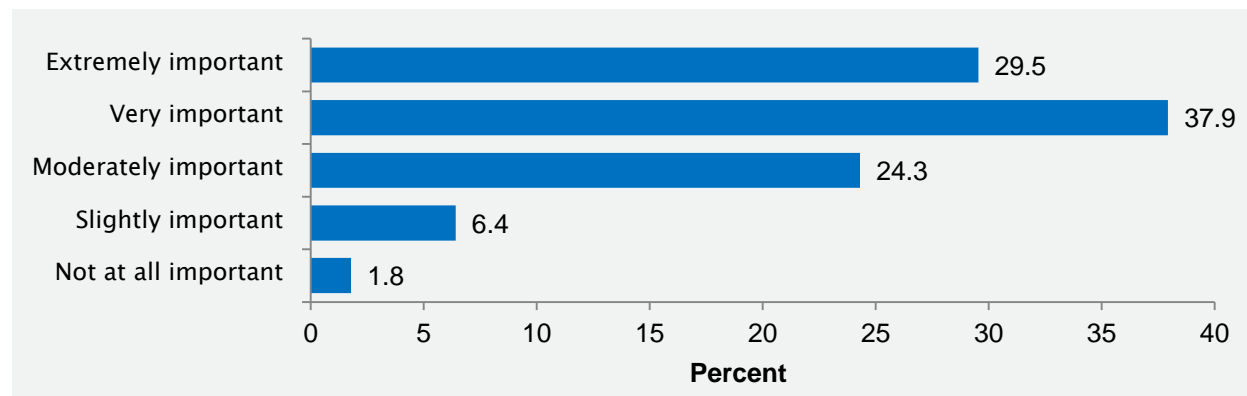
#### Council type

Respondents of **urban regional (33%)** and **urban fringe (33%)** councils have the highest 'extremely important' ratings. Those living in **urban development small/medium (24%)** councils and **urban capital cities (24%)** have the lowest.

## A positive economic outlook

30% of respondents feel the presence of a positive economic outlook in their local area is extremely important, while 38% feel it to be very important.

Figure 46: Q8\_7 A positive economic outlook (n=1979)



## Association highlights

### A positive economic outlook

#### Politics

**Liberal/National (34%)** voters are most likely to have higher 'extremely important' ratings. **Greens (24%)** voters have the lowest, followed by respondents whose **votes change from election to election (28%)** and **Labor (29%)** voters.

#### Age

Extreme importance rises from **18–29 (26%)** years of age, peaks at **50–59 (35%)** years, then falls again for respondents aged **70 and over (25%)**.

#### Education attainment

**Diploma/advanced diploma (34%)**; **certificate (33%)**; and **school–education (31%)** level holders report higher extreme importance compared with **postgraduate (24%)** and **bachelor (24%)** degree holders.

#### Employment status

Respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (44%)** have the highest ratings of extreme importance, followed by those who are **unable to work (39%)** and **self-employed (36%)**. **Students (17%)** and **retired (26%)** respondents have the lowest.

#### Family type

Families of **couples with children (32%)**; **couples with no children (31%)**; and **one–parent only (29%)** report higher extreme importance compared with respondents of **lone–person households (23%)**.

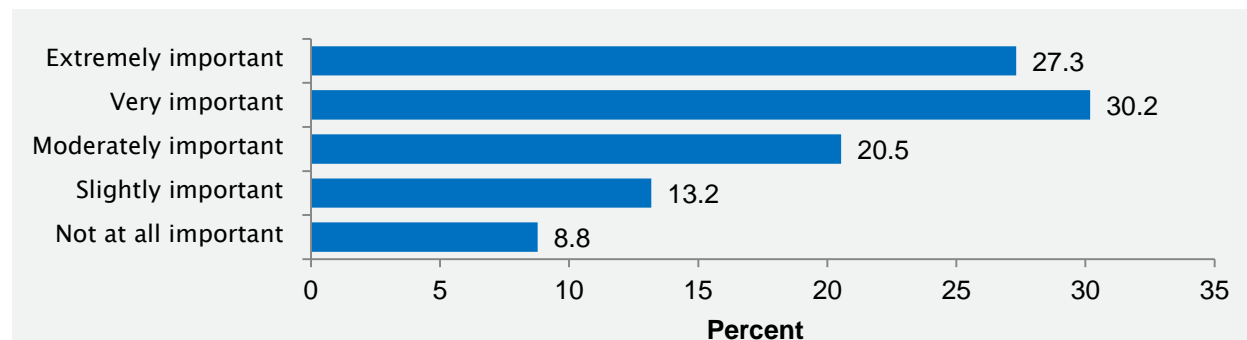
#### Council type

**Urban regional (34%)**; **rural and remote (32%)**; and **urban fringe (31%)** council respondents are more likely to report extreme importance compared with those of **urban capital cities (25%)**; **urban development small/medium (26%)**; and **urban development large/very large (27%)** councils.

### Availability of good home care or aged care

27% of respondents feel the availability of good home care or aged care in their local area is extremely important, while 30% feel it to be very important.

Figure 47:Q8\_8 Availability of good home or aged care (n=1989)



### Association highlights

#### Availability of good home or aged care

##### Politics

**Labor (31%)** voters and respondents whose votes **change from election to election (28%)** are most likely to report higher extreme importance, compared with **Greens (19%)** and **Liberal/National (25%)** voters.

##### Gender

**Female (31%)** respondents report higher extreme importance compared with **male (23%)** respondents.

##### Age

Overall, ratings of extreme importance rise with age. The highest ratings are amongst respondents **aged 70 and over (36%)** and the lowest amongst **30–39 (20%)** year-old respondents.

##### Education attainment

Respondents who have **certificate (35%)**; **school (33%)**; and **diploma/advanced diploma (30%)** level qualifications report higher levels of extreme importance than those with **postgraduate (16%)** and **bachelor (19%)** degrees.

##### Income

Levels of extreme importance fall with rising household income: for example, **\$10–\$19,999 (35%)** and **\$300,000 or more (17%)**.

##### Employment status

The highest rating of extreme importance is reported by respondents who are **unable to work (50%)**, followed by those who are **retired (36%)** and **homemakers (34%)**. **Students (16%)** have the lowest rating, followed by respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (20%)** and **self-employed (23%)**.

##### Family type

Respondents of **group households (36%)**; **one-parent families (35%)**; and **couples with no children (32%)** are more likely to report extreme importance, compared with **couples with children (23%)** and **lone-person households (28%)**.

##### Length of time living in the local area

'Extremely important' ratings are lower for respondents resident for **less than 2 years (26%)** than **longer than 10 years (31%)**.

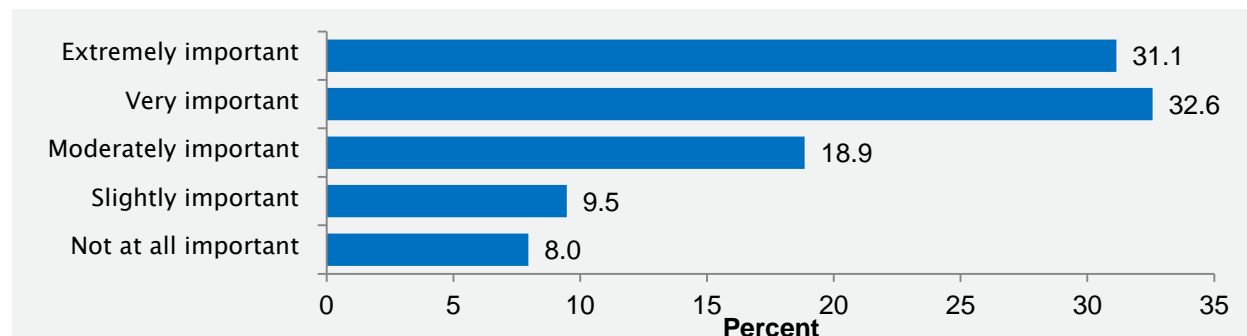
##### Council type

Respondents of **urban regional (32%)** and **rural and remote (30%)** councils are more likely to report higher extreme importance than those of **urban capital cities (21%)** and **urban development small/medium (22%)** councils.

## Convenient public transport

31% of respondents feel the availability of convenient public transport in their local area is extremely important, while 33% feel it to be very important.

Figure 48: Q8\_9 Convenient public transport (n=1998)



## Association highlights

### Convenient public transport

#### Politics

Ratings of 'extremely important' are higher amongst **Labor (37%)** and **Greens (36%)** voters. They are lower amongst **Liberal/National (28%)** voters and respondents whose **votes change from election to election (30%)**.

#### Non-English speaking background

Respondents who speak **a language other than English (37%)** are more likely to report higher extreme importance than **English-only (31%)** speakers.

#### Education attainment

'Extremely important' ratings are higher amongst **school-education (35%)**; **diploma/advanced diploma (35%)**; and **certificate (31%)** level qualifications. Ratings are lower amongst **bachelor (24%)** and **postgraduate (29%)** degree holders.

#### Employment status

Extreme importance is highest for respondents who are **students (41%)**; **homemakers (38%)**; and **out of work and looking for work (36%)**. It is lowest for respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (17%)** compared with **31% nationally**.

#### Dwelling type

Respondents who live in **flats, units or apartments of 4 stories or more (41%)** are more likely to report higher extreme importance than those who live in **separate houses (30%)**.

#### Family type

**Group households (46%)** and **one-parent families (44%)** have higher ratings of extreme importance than **couples with children (29%)**; **lone-person households (30%)** and **couples with no children (31%)**.

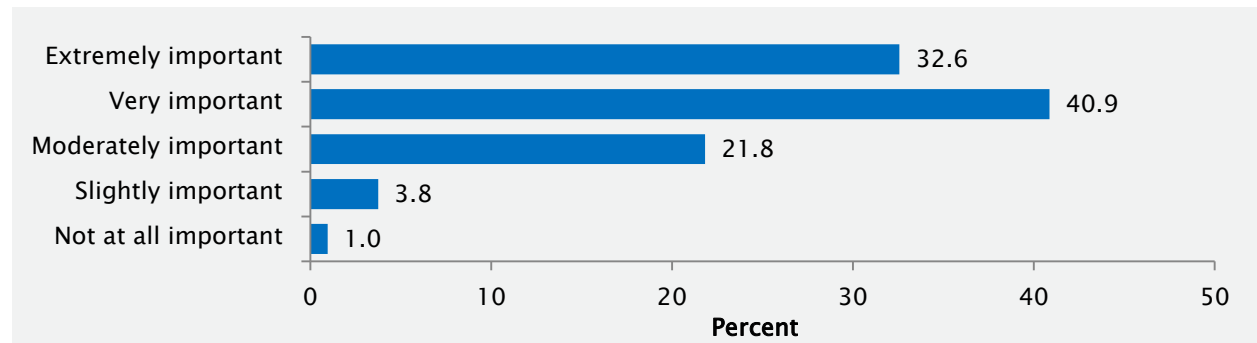
#### Council type

Extreme importance is lower amongst respondents of **urban regional (24%)** and **rural and remote (27%)** councils compared with all other council types (**31% community wide**).

### Good quality roads and bridges

33% of respondents feel the availability of good quality roads and bridges in their local area is extremely important, while a further 41% feel it to be very important.

Figure 49: Q8\_10 Good quality roads and bridges (n=2003)



### Association highlights

#### Good quality roads and bridges

##### Politics

**Greens (23%)** voters report the lowest extreme importance compared with all other respondents (**33% state wide**).

##### Gender

**Female (36%)** respondents have higher 'extremely important' ratings than **male (29%)** respondents.

##### Age

Overall, extreme importance rises between respondents aged **18–29 (26%)** and **50–59 (39%)** then decreases with age (**70+ years – 33%**).

##### Education attainment

**Diploma/advanced diploma (39%)**; **certificate (39%)**; and **school level (38%)** qualification holders report higher extreme importance than respondents with **postgraduate (21%)** and **bachelor (24%)** degrees.

##### Employment status

**Homemakers (41%)** have the highest ratings of 'extremely important'; **students (17%)** have the lowest ratings (compared with **33% statewide**).

##### Working in government and NFP

Respondents who work for **private sector (37%)** organisations are more likely to report higher extreme importance than those **who do not (29%)**.

##### Dwelling type

Ratings of 'extremely important' drop from respondents living in **separate houses (34%)** and **flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (25%)**. Then ratings rise again for those living in **flats, units or apartments of 4 stories or more (32%)**.

##### Family type

**Lone-person householders (27%)** report the lowest levels of extreme importance, and **non-family group householders (43%)** report the highest (**33% state wide**).

##### Length of time living in the local area

Levels of extreme importance generally rise with length of residency: for example, **less than 2 years (26%)** vs. **more than 10 years (34%)**.

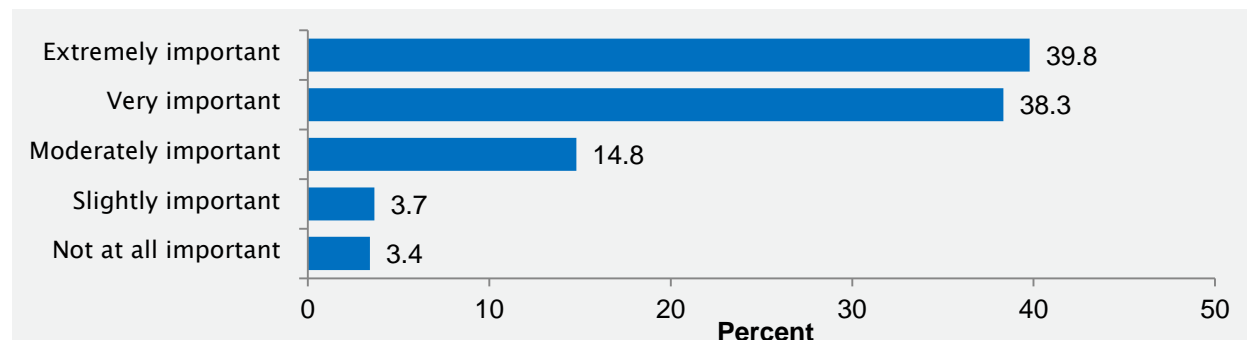
##### Council type

Respondents in **rural and remote (40%)**; **urban regional (35%)**; and **urban fringe (38%)** councils have higher extreme importance than those in **urban capital cities (22%)**; **urban development small/medium (25%)**; and **urban development large/very large (31%)** councils.

### Being able to afford appropriate housing

40% of respondents feel that being able to afford appropriate housing in their local area is extremely important, while 38% feel it to be very important.

Figure 50: Q8\_11 Being able to afford appropriate housing (n=1995)



### Association highlights

#### *Being able to afford appropriate housing*

##### Gender

**Female (45%)** respondents are more likely to report extreme importance than **male (35%)** respondents.

##### Age

'Extremely important' ratings fall between **18–29 (43%)** year olds and respondents who are **70 years and over (28%)**.

##### Education attainment

Ratings of extreme importance are higher for those who have **certificate (48%)** and **diploma/advanced diploma (45%)** qualifications, compared with those who have **bachelor (32%)** and **postgraduate (38%)** degrees.

##### Employment status

**Homemakers (56%)** report the highest extreme importance, followed by respondents who are **unable to work (47%)** and **out of work and currently looking (47%)**. Respondents who are **retired (33%)**; **self-employed (34%)**; and **out of work but not currently looking (36%)** report the lowest.

##### Housing tenure

**Renters (51%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with respondents who have a **mortgage/own their homes outright (37%)**.

##### Dwelling type

Ratings of 'extremely important' are highest for respondents living in **flats, units or apartments of 3 stories or less (51%)**, and lowest for those living in **flats, units or apartments of 4 stories or more (27%)**.

##### Length of time living in local area

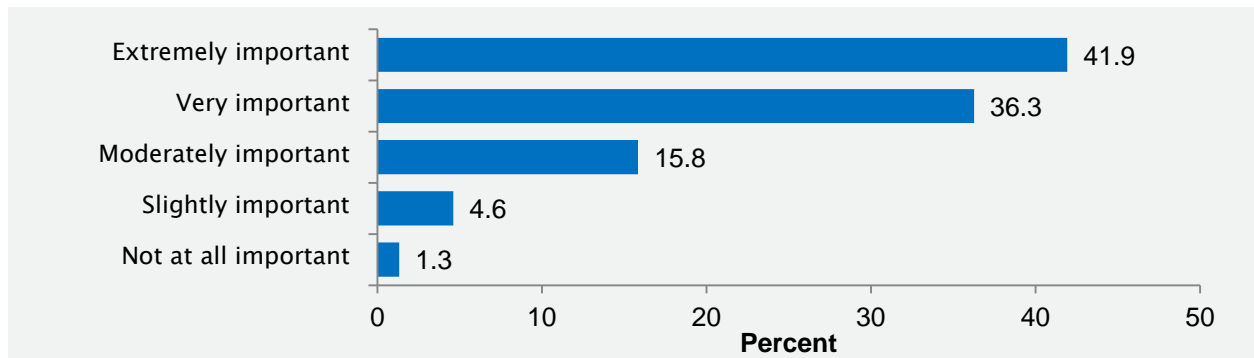
Extreme importance drops between respondents whose residencies are **more than 2 and less than 5 (50%)**; **more than 5 and less than 10 (40%)**; and **more than 10 years (38%)** in length.



### Levels of water, air and noise pollution

42% of respondents feel that seeing to the levels of water, air and noise pollution in their local area was extremely important, while 36% feel it to be very important.

Figure 51: Q8\_12 Levels of water, air and noise pollution (n=1995)



### Association highlights

#### Levels of water, air and noise pollution

##### Politics

**Greens (52%)** voters report the highest 'extremely important' levels, compared with **Labor (44%)** and **Liberal/National (38%)** voters.

##### Gender

**Female (45%)** respondents are more likely than **male (39%)** to report extreme importance.

##### Age

**50–59 (49%) year old respondents** report the highest extreme importance, and respondents who are **70 years and over (30%)** are least likely to report extreme importance compared with **all other respondents (42%)**.

##### Employment status

**Homemakers (53%)** are most likely to report extreme importance, followed by respondents who are **self-employed (45%)** and **employed for wages (43%)**. Respondents who are **out of work but not currently looking (24%)** are least likely to report extreme importance, followed by **students (33%)** and those who are **unable to work (34%)**.

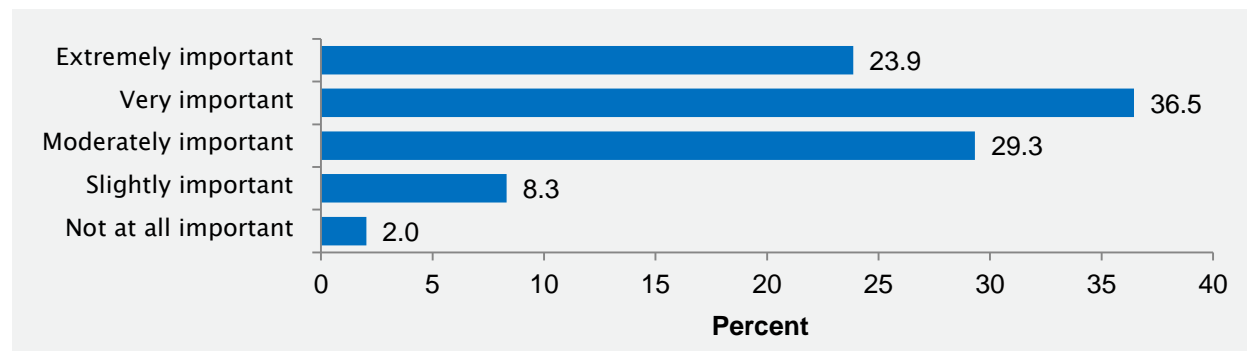
##### Council type

'Extremely important' ratings are highest amongst respondents **of urban development large/very large (46%)** and **urban regional (45%)** councils. They are lowest amongst those of **urban capital cities (32%)**.

### Shops located close by that are suitable to my needs

24% of respondents feel that having shops located close by that are suitable to their needs in their local area is extremely important, while 37% feel it to be very important.

Figure 52: Q8\_13 Shops located close-by that are suitable to my needs (n=2002)



### Association highlights

#### *Shops located close-by that are suitable to my needs*

##### Politics

**Liberal/National (26%)** and **Labor (26%)** voters have the highest ratings of 'extremely important.' **Greens (14%)** voters have the lowest.

##### Gender

**Female (27%)** respondents are more likely to report extreme importance than **male (21%)** respondents.

##### Age

Respondents between the ages of **18 (22%)** and **49 (20%)** years of age report lower levels of extreme importance, whilst those between **50 (27%)** and **70 years and over (31%)** report the highest.

##### Education attainment

In general, extreme importance falls with rising qualifications: **school education (30%)** compared with **postgraduate degree (21%)**.

##### Household income

Overall, ratings of 'extremely important' fall as household income increases: **\$10–\$19,000 (30%)**; **\$20–\$29,000 (29%)**; and **\$30–\$39,000 (30%)** compared with **\$150–\$199,000 (18%)**; **\$200–\$299,000 (23%)**; and **\$300,000 or more (17%)**.

##### Employment status

The highest ratings of 'extremely important' are reported by respondents who are **unable to work (41%)** and **out of work and looking (38%)**. The lowest ratings are from those who are **students (17%)**; **self-employed (20%)**; and **employed for wages (21%)**.

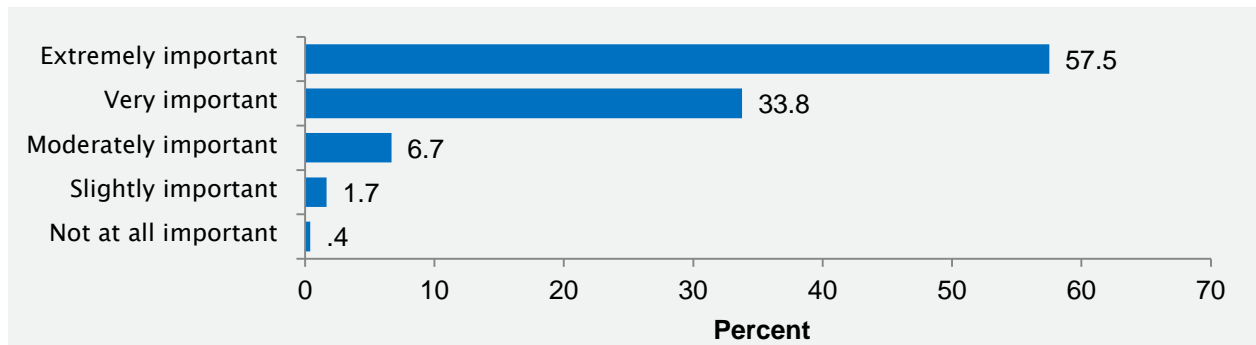
##### Council type

Respondents of **urban development large/very large (27%)** and **urban fringe (26%)** councils have the highest 'extremely important' ratings. Respondents of **rural and remote (21%)** and **urban regional (22%)** councils have the lowest 'extremely important' ratings.

## A safe environment

58% of respondents feel that having a safe environment is extremely important, while 34% feel it to be very important.

Figure 53: Q8\_14 A safe environment (n=2002)



## Association highlights

### A safe environment

#### Politics

**Liberal/National (59%)** and **Labor (59%)** voters are more likely to report higher extreme importance than **Greens (54%)** voters.

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who **correctly (60%)** name their mayor are more likely to have higher 'extremely important' ratings than those who do so **incorrectly (53%)**.

#### Gender

**Female (61%)** respondents are more likely than **male (54%)** respondents to report higher extreme importance.

#### Age

Ratings of extreme importance generally fall with rising age: the highest is reported by **30–39 (64%)** year olds, and the lowest by respondents **aged 70 and over (47%)**.

#### Employment status

**Homemakers (78%)** and those who are **unable to work (72%)** report the highest extreme importance, compared with respondents who are **out of work and looking (47%)** and **students (49%)**.

#### Working in government and NFP

Respondents working for the **private sector (61%)** are more likely than those working for the **government/NFP sector (56%)** to report higher extreme importance.

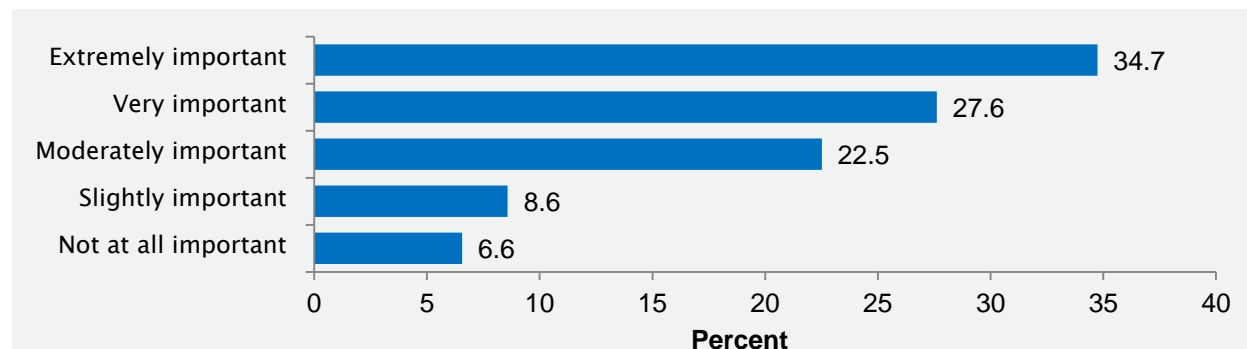
#### Family type

**Couples with children (62%)** and **one-parent families (62%)** are more likely than **couples with no children (57%)** to report extreme importance. Respondents of **lone-person households (45%)** are least likely to report extreme importance.

## Being close to my family

35% of respondents feel that being close to their family is extremely important, while 28% feel it to be very important.

Figure 54: Q8\_15 Being close to my family (n=1987)



## Association highlights

### Being close to my family

#### Politics

**Labor (39%)** voters are most likely to report extreme importance, followed by **Liberal/National (36%)**. **Greens (28%)** voters are less likely to report extreme importance.

#### Non-English speaking background

Ratings of 'extremely important' are higher amongst respondents who speak a **language other than English (42%)** compared with **English-only (34%)** speakers.

#### Education attainment

'Extremely important' ratings decrease as education qualifications increase. **Certificate (38%); diploma/advanced diploma (40%); and school (41%)** education holders are more likely to report higher extreme importance than those with **bachelor (27%)** and **postgraduate (30%)** degrees.

#### Employment status

Respondents who are **unable to work (53%), homemakers (48%)** and **out of work but not currently looking (46%)** have the highest ratings of 'extremely important'. Those who are **out of work and looking (29%)** and **students (29%)** have the lowest.

#### Dwelling type

Respondents living in **separate houses (36%)** have the highest ratings of extremely important. Extremely important ratings are lower amongst those who live in a **semi-detached or similar (26%)** house; flats, units or apartments of **4 stories or more (27%);** and flats, units or apartments of **3 stories or less (30%)**.

#### Family type

**Couples with children (39%)** report the highest extreme importance level, followed by **one-parent families (35%)** and **couples with no children (34%)**. Respondents of **group households (10%)** and **lone-person households (25%)** report lower levels of extreme importance.

#### Length of time living in the local area

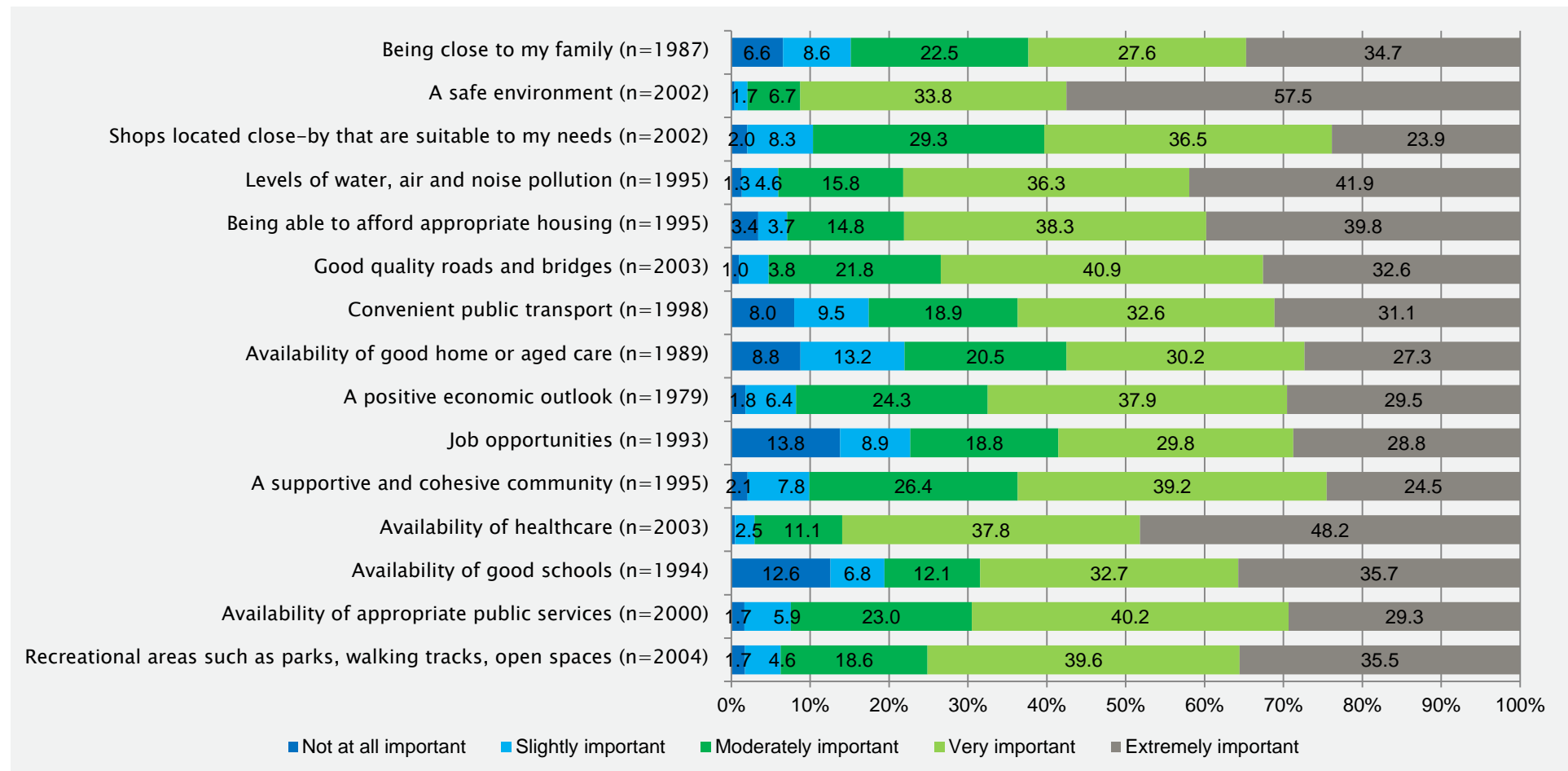
In general, 'extremely important' ratings rise with length of residency: **less than 2 years (26%)** compared with **more than 10 years (36%)**.

#### Council type

**Urban regional (41%); urban development large/very large (39%);** and **rural and remote councils (38%)** have the highest ratings of extremely important. Respondents of **urban capital cities (24%)** and **urban development small/medium (27%)** have the lowest.

## 5.2 Relative level of importance of each instrumental dimension of place attachment

Figure 55: Relative level of importance of each instrumental dimension of place attachment



## 5.3 Level of satisfaction with each individual dimension of instrumental place attachment

Associations between the questions relating to level of satisfaction with each dimension of instrumental place attachment and council type (according to the Australian local government classification system) are reported.

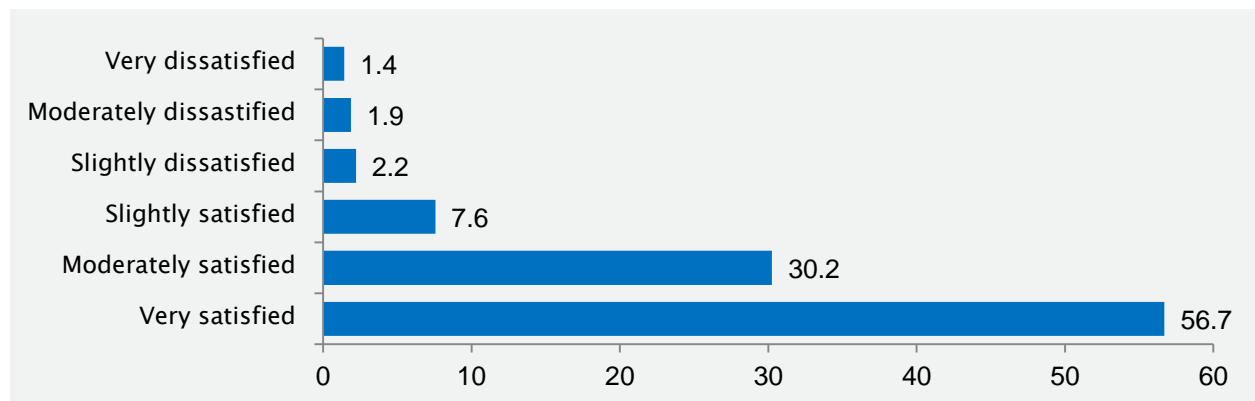
*Question 9 of the survey asked:*

*Thinking about the local area in which you are currently living, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the provision of each of the following?*

### Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces

57% of respondents are very satisfied with the existing recreational areas in their local area, while 30% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 56: Q9\_1 Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces (n=1992)



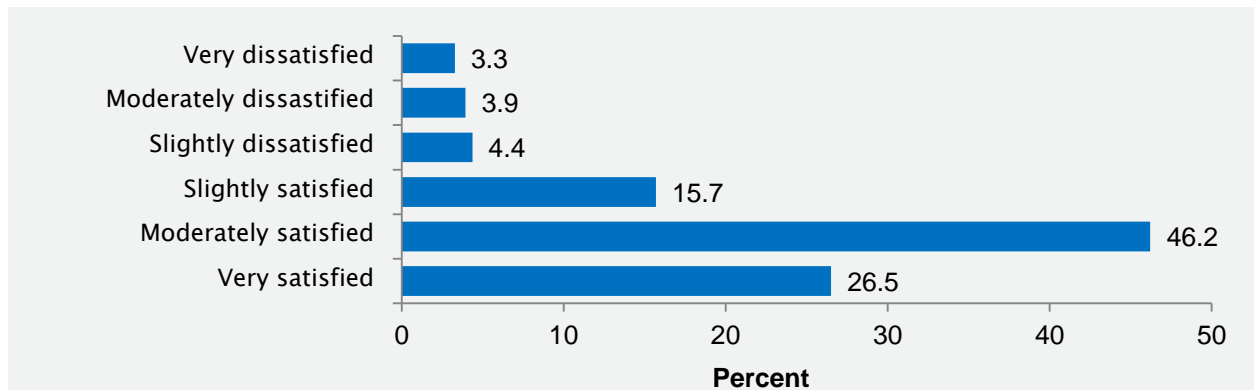
### Council type

Respondents of **urban development small/medium (65%)** and **large/very large (63%)** have the highest 'very satisfied' levels. 'Very satisfied' levels are lowest amongst **rural and remote (51%)** and **urban capital city (51%)** councils.

### Availability of appropriate public services

27% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of appropriate public services in their local area, while 46% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 57: Q9\_2 Availability of appropriate public services (n=1965)



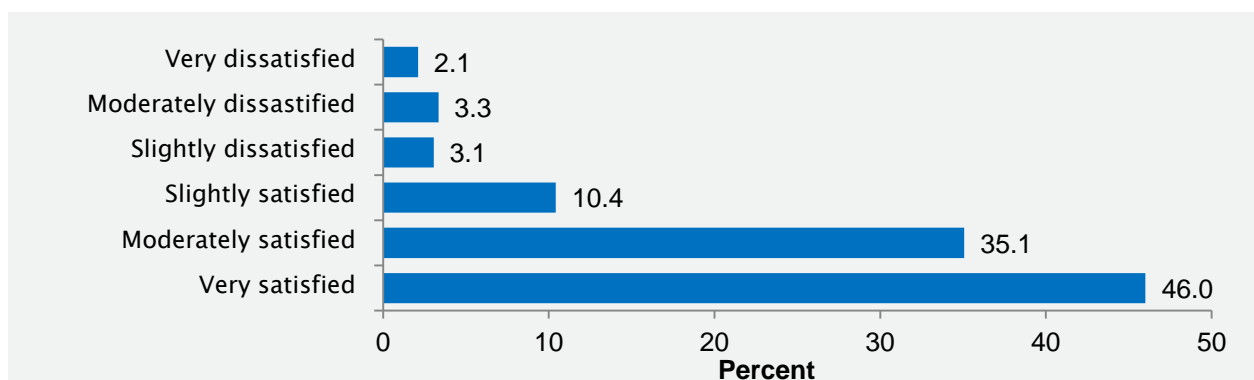
### Council type

Respondents from **urban development small/medium (35%)** and **large/very large (33%)** local government areas have the highest levels of being 'very satisfied.' Respondents of **rural and remote (18%)** and **urban regional (20%)** councils have the lowest.

### Availability of good schools

46% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of good schools in their local area, while 35% are moderately satisfied. A large number of respondents (173 or 8.6%) chose not answer this question (n=1833), suggesting that they thought this item not applicable to their circumstances.

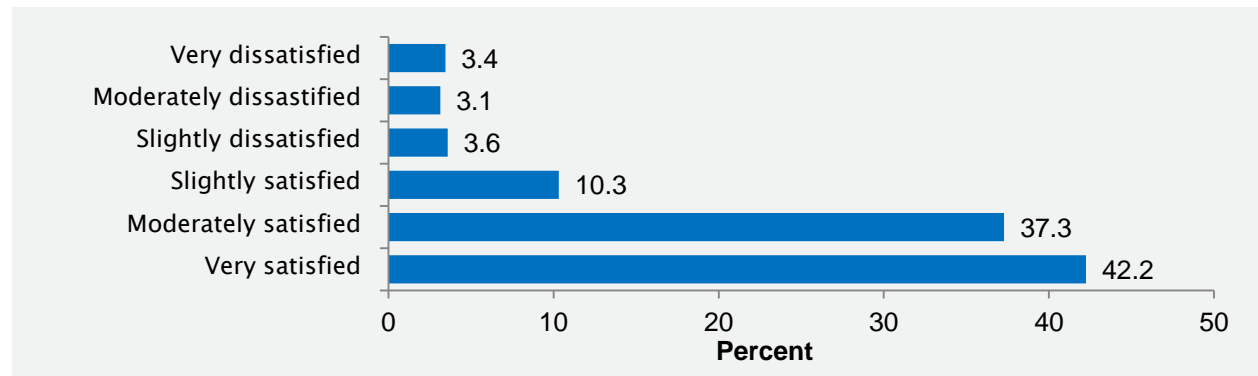
Figure 58: Q9\_3 Availability of good schools (n=1833)



### Availability of healthcare

42% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of healthcare in their local area, while 37% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 59: Q9\_4 Availability of healthcare (n=1988)



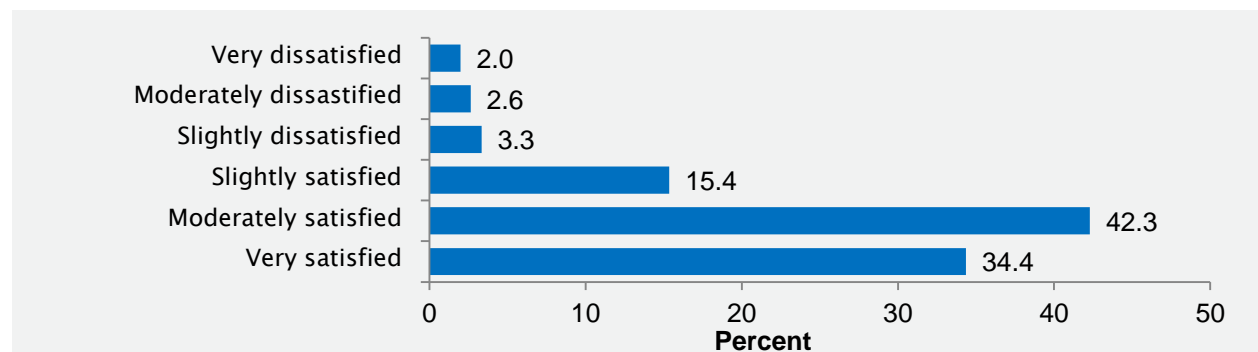
### Council type

Reports of being 'very satisfied' are highest for respondents in **urban development small/medium** (51%) and **large/very large** (46%) councils. They are lowest for those in **rural and remote** (36%) and **urban regional** (39%) councils.

### A supportive and cohesive community

34% of respondents are very satisfied with the existing level of community support and cohesion in their local area, while 42% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 60: Q9\_5 A supportive and cohesive community (n=1949)



### Council type

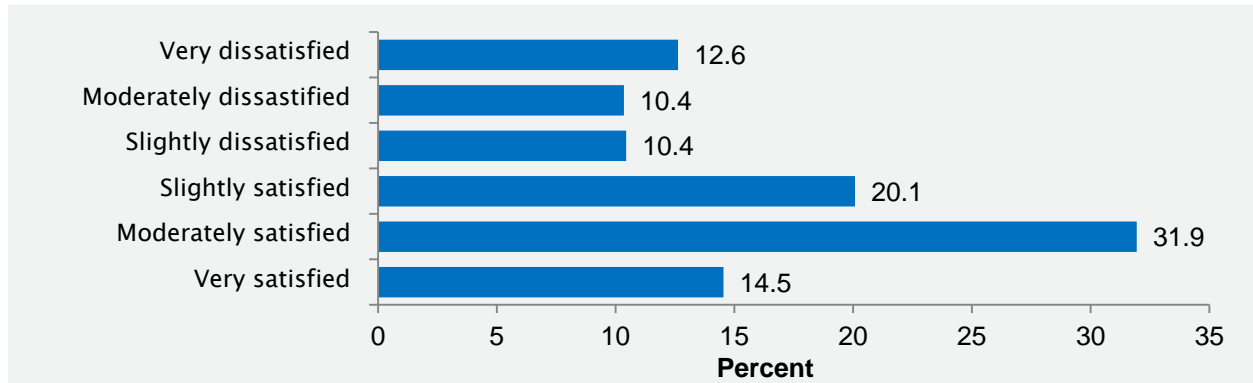
Respondents from urban development **large/very large** (39%) and **small/medium** (37%) are most likely to be very satisfied, while those in **rural and remote** (32%) and **urban regional** (33%) are least likely to be so.



### Job opportunities

15% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of job opportunities in their local area, while 32% are moderately satisfied. A large proportion of respondents (273 or 13.6%) did not answer this question, suggesting that this topic is not relevant to their personal circumstance or they do not have enough information to answer.

Figure 61: Q9\_6 Job opportunities (n=1793)



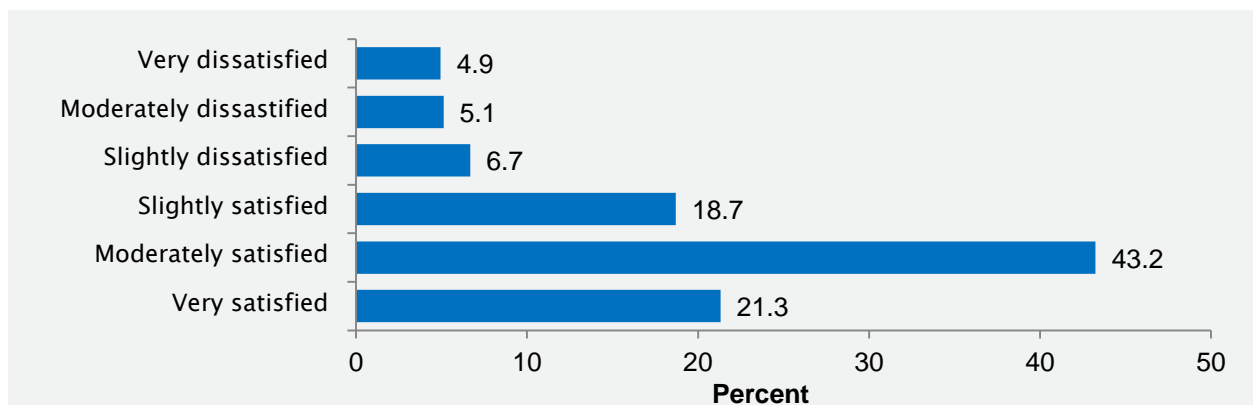
### Council type

The highest ratings of 'very satisfied' are reported by respondents of **urban capital city (21%)** and **urban development small/medium (21%)** councils. Respondents in **urban regional (9%)** and **urban fringe (11%)** report the lowest.

### A positive economic outlook

21% of respondents are very satisfied with the positive economic outlook in their local area, while 43% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 62: Q9\_7 A positive economic outlook (n=1912)



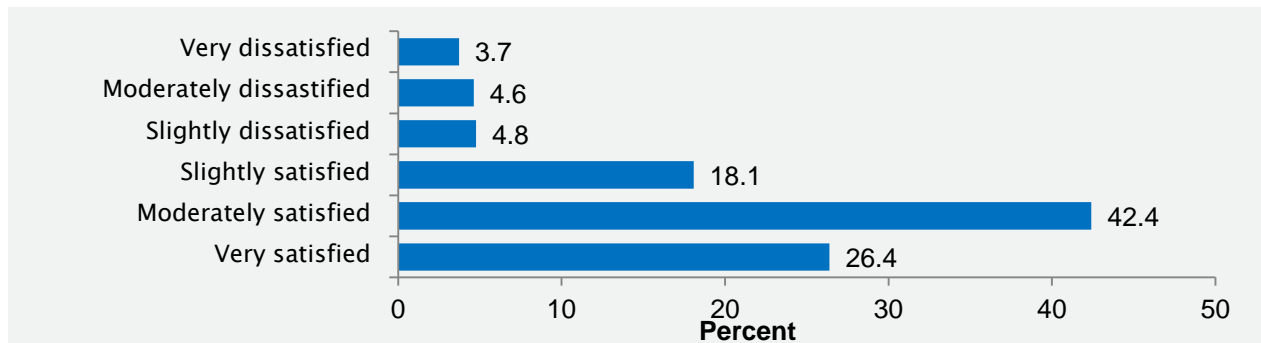
### Council type

Reports of being 'very satisfied' are highest for respondents of **urban development large/very large (30%)** and **small/medium (27%)** councils, and lowest for those of **rural and remote (16%)** and **urban fringe (17%)** councils.

### Availability of good home care or aged care

26% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of good home care or aged care in their local area, while 42% are moderately satisfied.

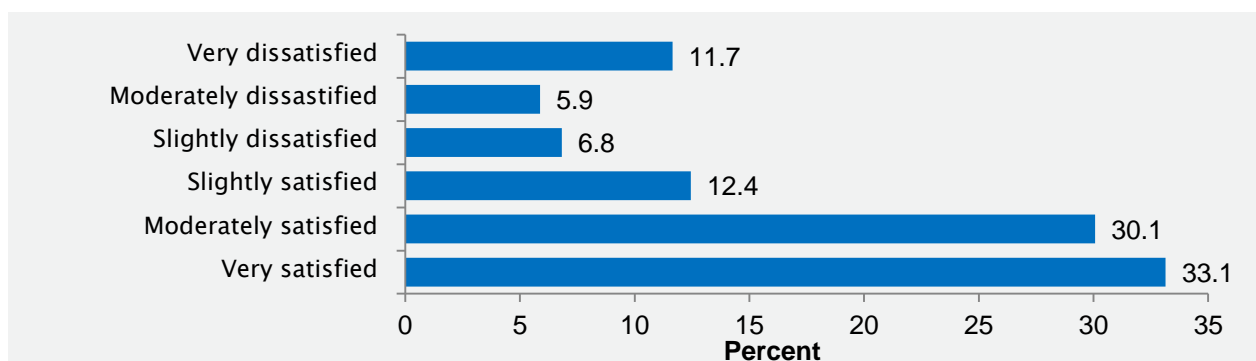
Figure 63: Q9\_8 Availability of good home or aged care (n=1912)



### Convenient public transport

33% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of convenient public transport in their local area, while 30% are moderately satisfied. However, 12% of respondents are very dissatisfied with the availability of convenient public transport in their local area.

Figure 64: Q9\_9 Convenient public transport (n=1941)



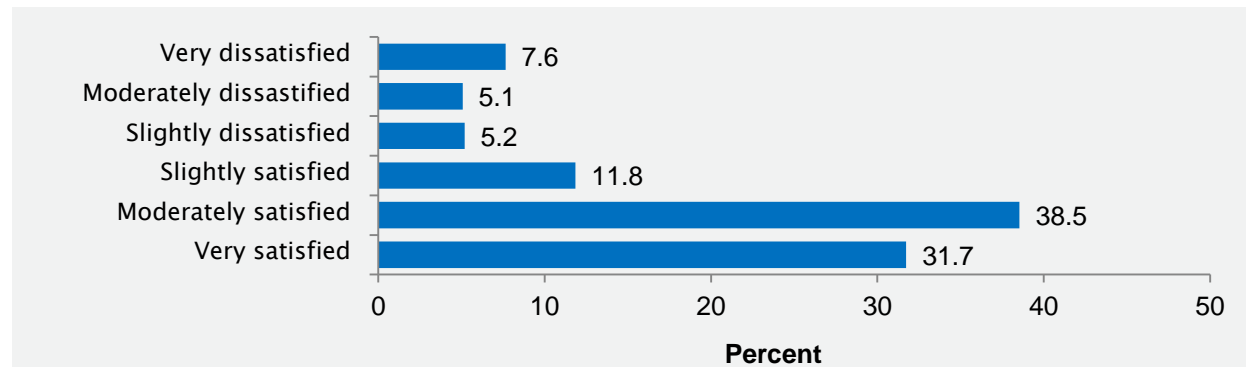
### Council type

Respondents living in **urban capital cities (49%)** and **small/medium urban developments (51%)** are more likely to report being 'very satisfied' compared with people living in **urban regional (19%)** areas or **rural and remote areas (17%)**.

### Good quality roads and bridges

32% of respondents are very satisfied with the availability of good quality roads and bridges in their local area, and 39% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 65: Q9\_10 Good quality roads and bridges (n=1995)



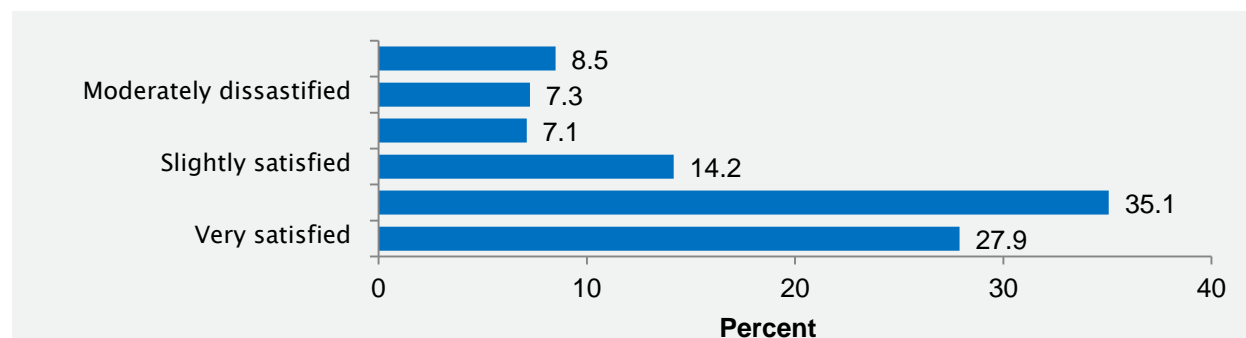
### Council type

Respondents living in **urban capital cities (32%)** and **small/medium urban developments (46%)** are more likely to report being 'very satisfied' compared with people living in **rural and remote areas (21%)**.

### Being able to afford appropriate housing

28% of respondents are very satisfied with being able to afford appropriate housing in their local area, while 35% are moderately satisfied. 9% of respondents are very dissatisfied with being able to afford appropriate housing in their local area. A relatively large proportion of respondents (78 or 3.9%) did not answer this question suggesting that availability of affordable housing is not a concern of theirs or something about which they do not have enough knowledge to answer.

Figure 66: Q9\_11 Being able to afford appropriate housing (n=1929)



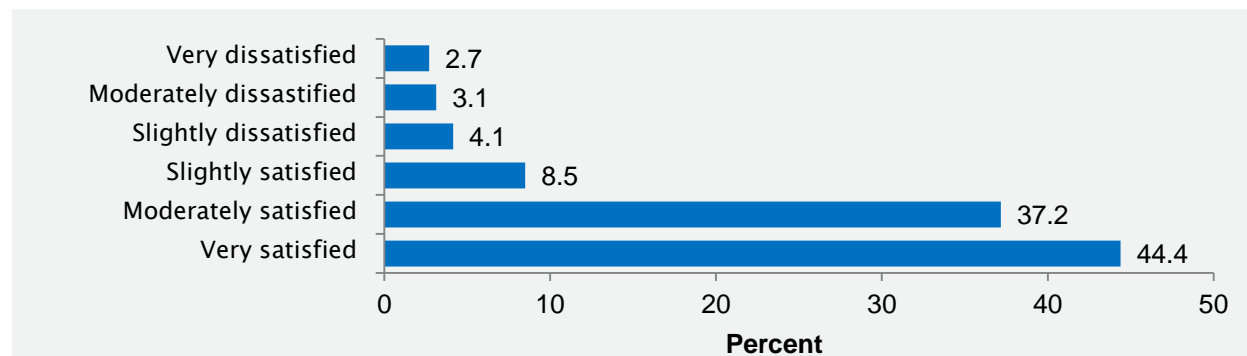
### Council type

Respondents living in **rural and remote areas (32%)**, **the urban fringe (30%)** and **urban regional areas (29%)** are more likely to report being 'very satisfied' compared with people living in **urban capital cities (24%)** or **small/medium urban developments (24%)**.

### Levels of water, air and noise pollution

44% of respondents are very satisfied with the levels of water, air and noise pollution in their local area, while 37% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 67: Q9\_12 Levels of water, air and noise pollution (n=1980)



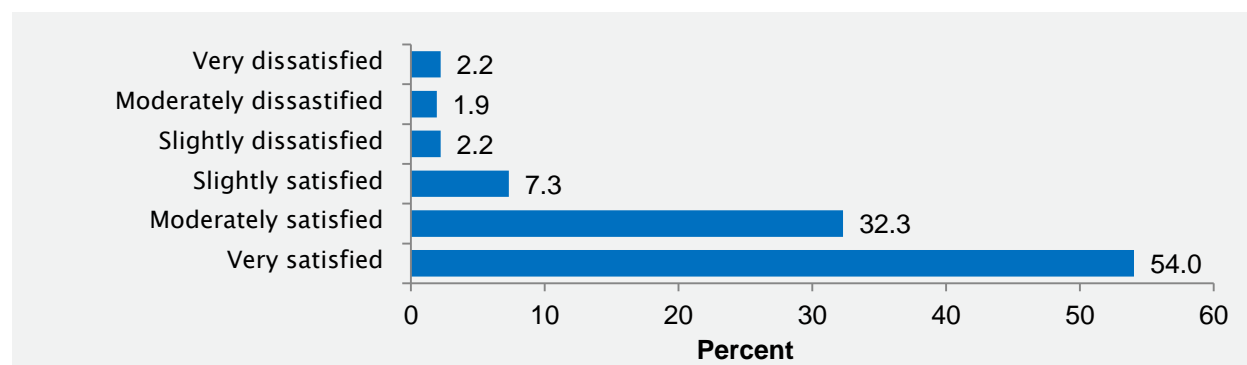
### Council type

Respondents living in **rural and remote areas (47%)** and **large/very large urban developments (49%)** are more likely to report being 'very satisfied' compared with people living in **urban capital cities (33%)**.

### Shops located close-by that are suitable to my needs

54% of respondents are very satisfied with having shops located close by that are suitable to their needs in their local area, while 32% are moderately satisfied.

Figure 68: Q9\_13 Shops located close-by that are suitable to my needs (n=1993)



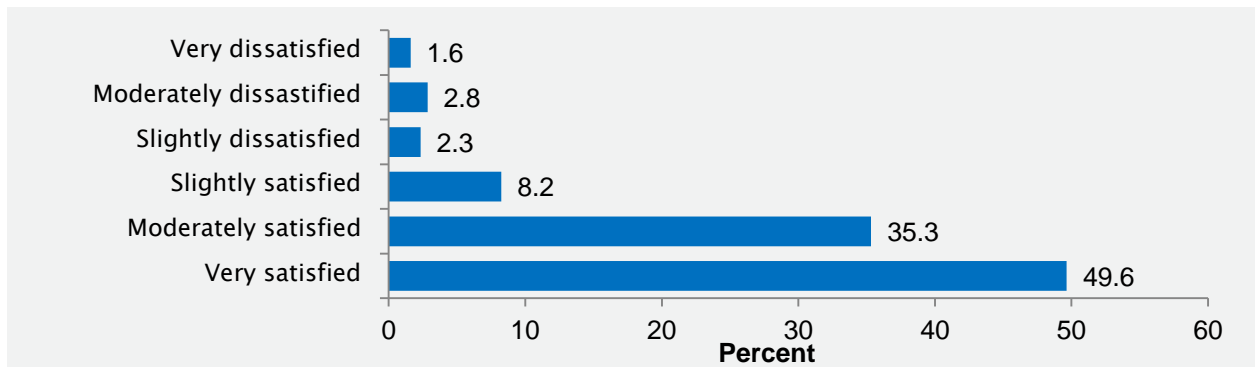
### Council type

Respondents living in **urban capital cities (61%)**, **small/medium urban developments (62%)** and **large/very large urban developments (63%)** are more likely to report being 'very satisfied' compared with people living in **urban regional (48%)**, **urban fringe (56%)** and **rural and remote areas (40%)**.

### A safe environment

50% of respondents are very satisfied with the safety of their local area, while 35% are moderately satisfied.

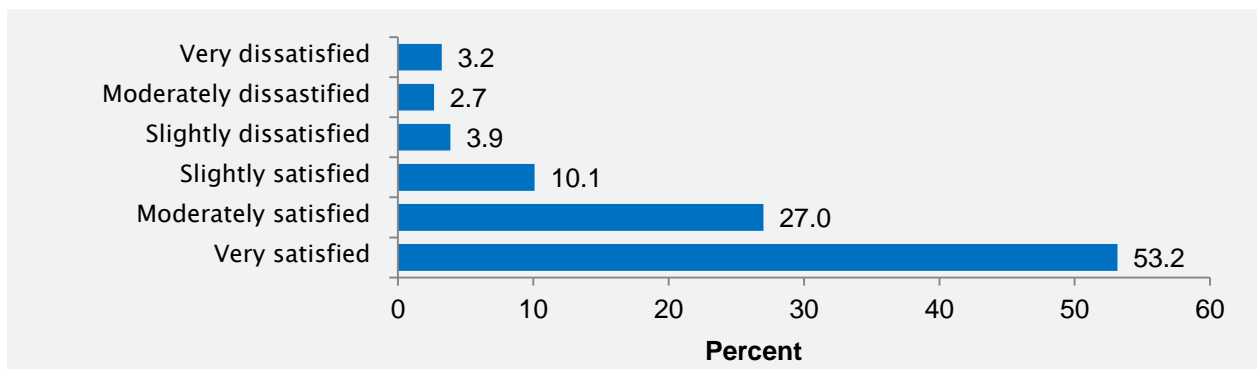
Figure 69: Q9\_14 A safe environment (n=1995)



### Being close to my family

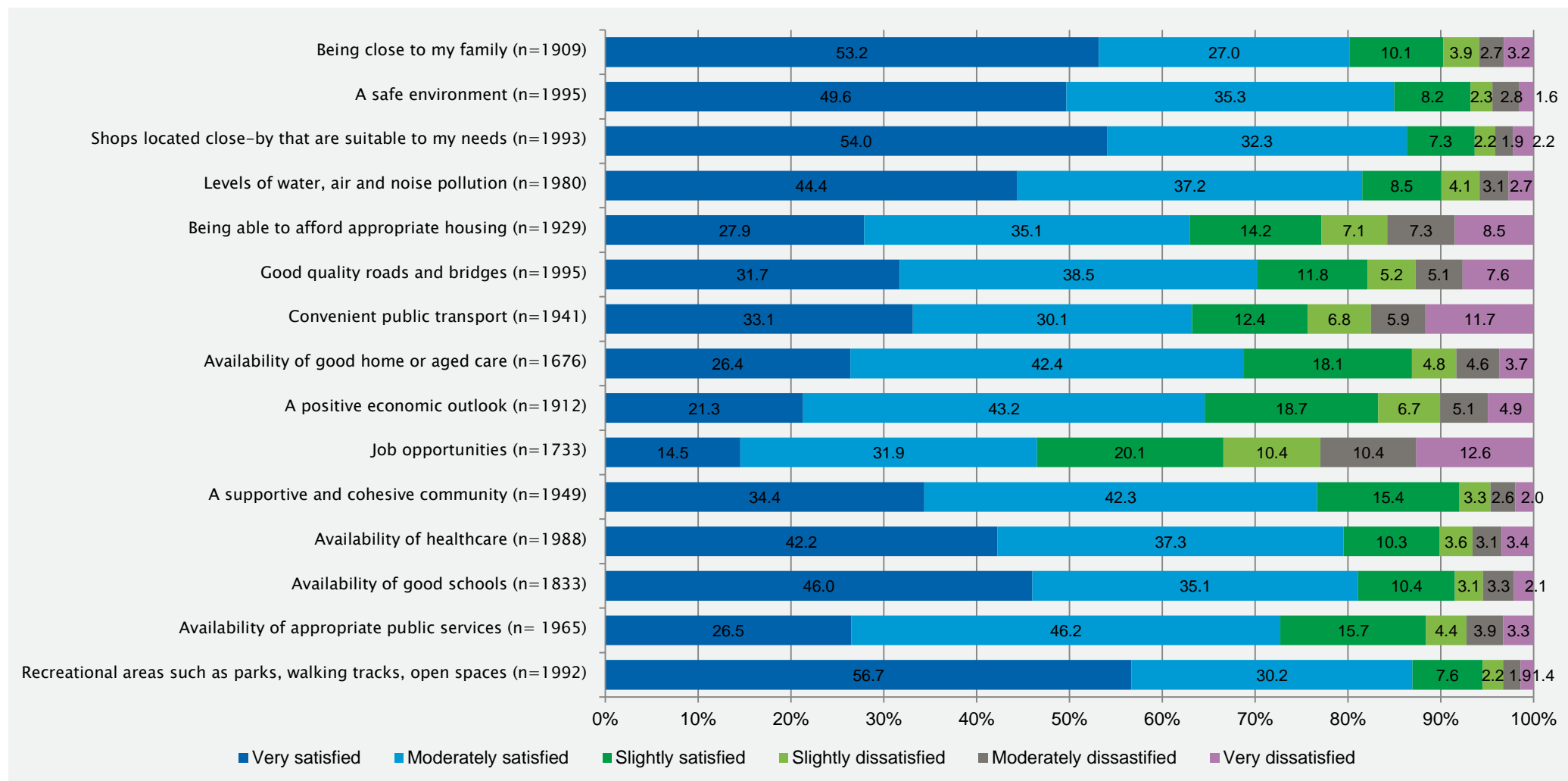
53% of respondents are very satisfied with the closeness of their family, while 27% are moderately satisfied. A relatively large proportion of respondents (97 or 4.8%) did not answer this question, which suggests that being close to family is not a relevant concern for them.

Figure 70: Q9\_15 Being close to my family (n=1909)



## 5.4 Relative level of satisfaction with each dimension of instrumental place attachment

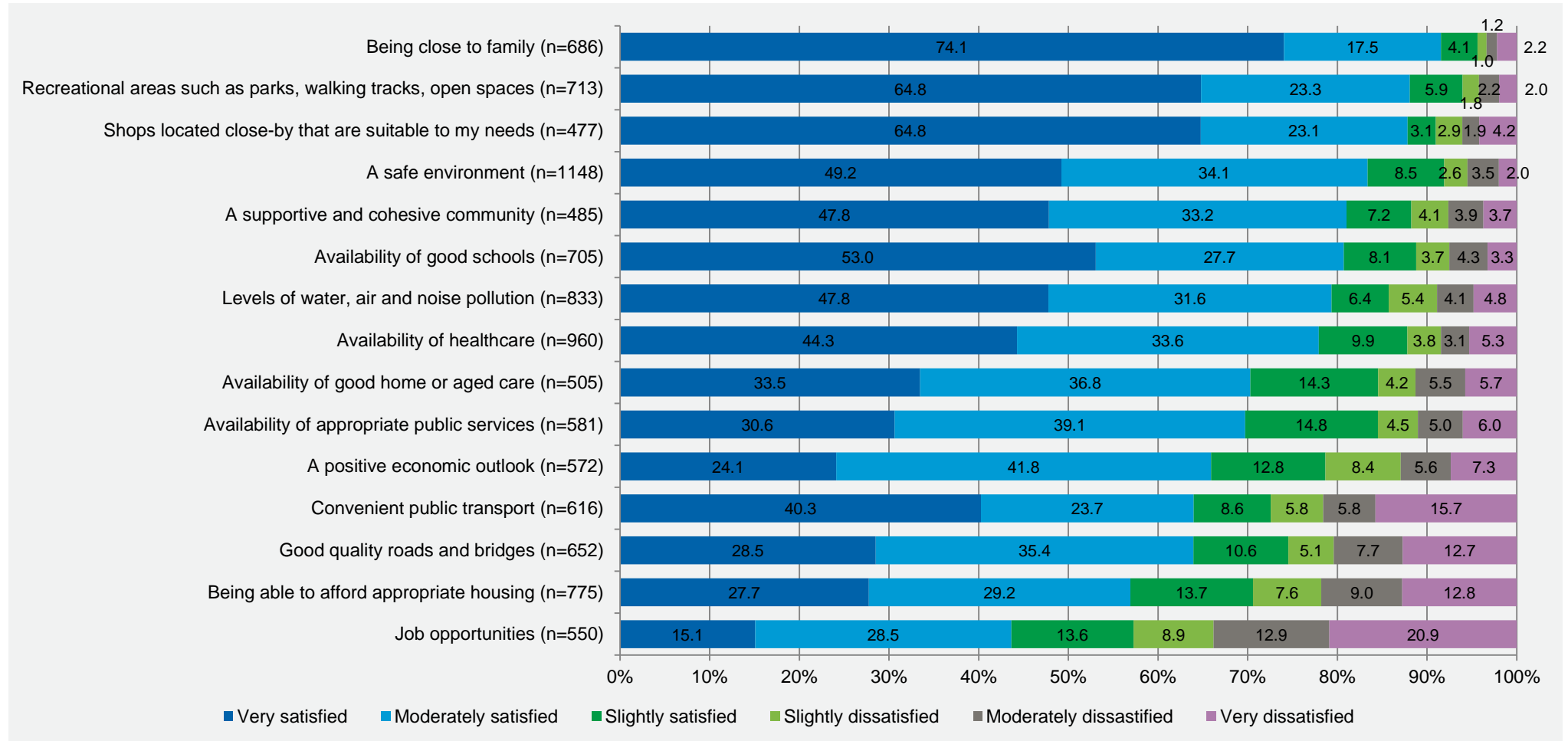
Figure 71: Relative levels of satisfaction with each dimension of instrumental place attachment



## 5.5 Importance and satisfaction

In order to provide context and meaning to the satisfaction ratings given by respondents, only the answers given by people who valued each factor as extremely important are given in

Figure 72: Satisfaction with dimensions of instrumental place attachment for respondents who rated their importance as 'extremely important'

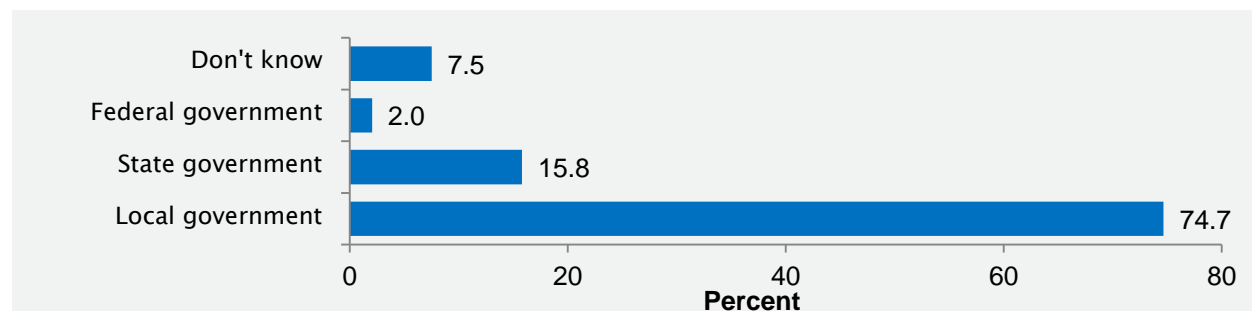


## 6 Local government

### 6.1.1 Level of government best able to make decisions about the local area

*Question 10: Thinking about where you live, which level of government is best able to make decisions about your local area?*

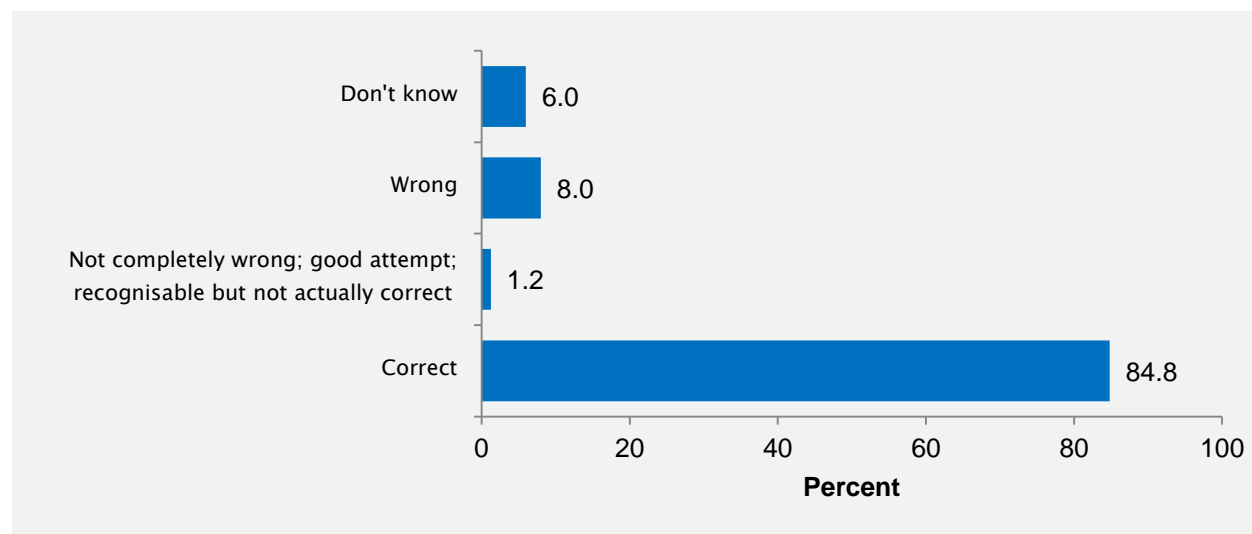
Figure 73: Q10 Thinking about where you live, which level of government is best able to make decisions about your local area? (n=2006)



### 6.1.2 Knowledge questions

*Question 11: What is the name of your local council/shire?*

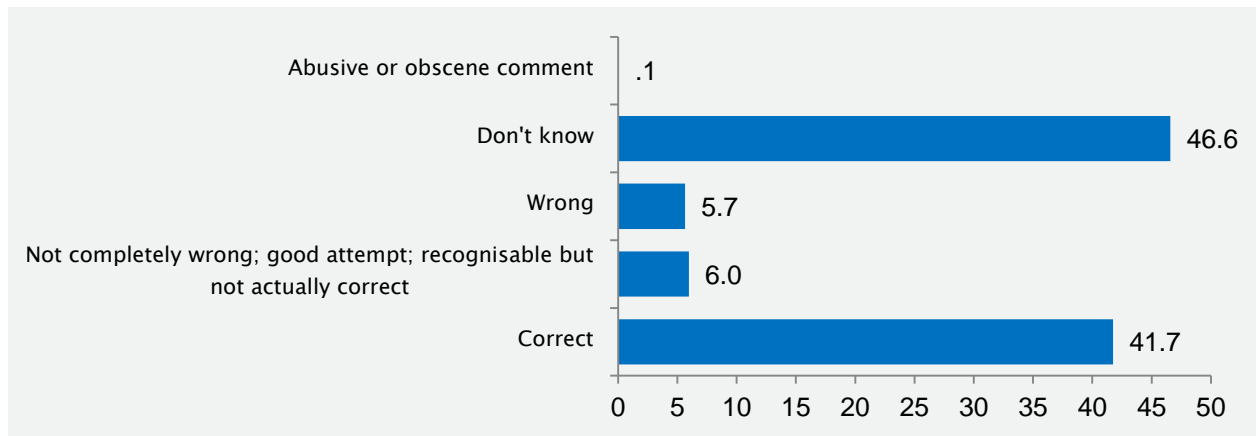
Figure 74: Q11 What is the name of your local Council/Shire? (n=2006)





**Question 12: What is the name of the mayor/president of your local council/shire?**

**Figure 75: Q12 What is the name of the mayor/president of your local council/shire? (n=2006)**

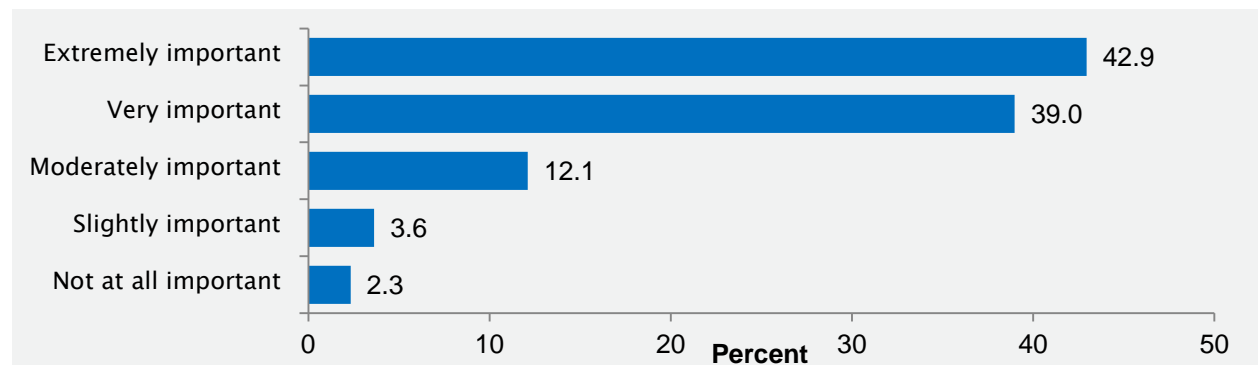


### 6.1.3 Importance of tasks being done by local government

*Question 13: How important it is to you that local government does each of these things*

**Water, sewage, stormwater, drainage**

**Figure 76: Q13\_1 Water, sewage, stormwater, drainage (n=1995)**



#### Association highlights

*Water, sewage, stormwater, drainage*

##### Politics

'Extremely important' ratings are more likely in **Liberal/National Party (46%)** voters or the **Greens Party (45%)** voters compared with **Labor (39%)** voters.

##### Age

'Extremely important' ratings rise between the ages of **18–59 (37%–49%)** and then decrease for people between the ages of **60–70 and older (41%–44%)**.

##### Employment status

**People who are out of work but not currently looking (67%)** have the highest rating of extreme importance while **students (28%)** have the lowest.

##### Council type

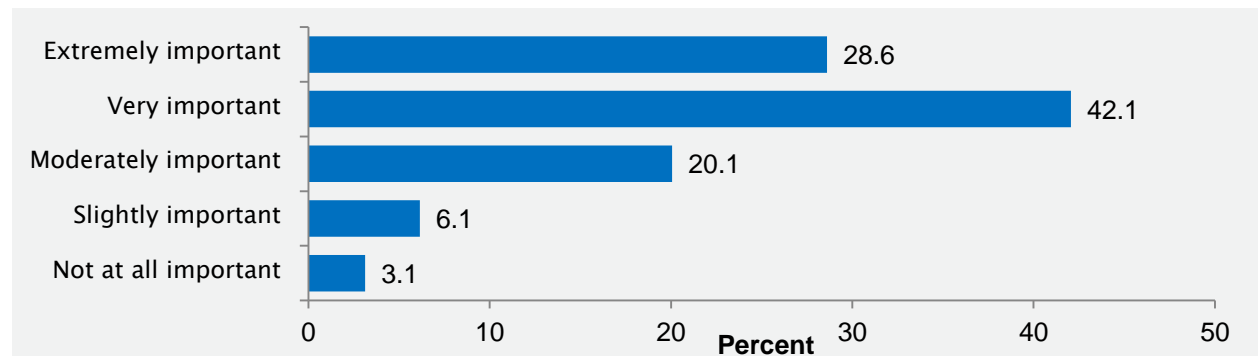
People living in **rural and remote (50%)** councils are more likely to rate extreme importance compared with those living in **urban capital cities (43%)** or **small/medium (37%)** to **large/very large (36%)** urban developments.

##### State

'Extremely important' ratings are more likely in respondents living in **New South Wales (50%)** compared with **Queensland (42%)**, **Victoria (41%)** or **Western Australia (37%)**

## Roads and bridges

Figure 77: Q13\_2 Roads and bridges (n=1993)



## Association highlights

### Roads and bridges

#### Politics

'Extremely important' ratings are less likely in people who vote for the **Greens Party (20%)** compared with **29% community-wide**.

#### Gender

**Women (31%)** are more likely than **men (26%)** to rate roads and bridges as 'extremely important'.

#### Age

Ratings of 'extremely important' rise between the ages of **18–59 (20%–36%)** and then decrease for people aged **60–70 and older (32%–29%)**.

#### Employment status

**Students (14%)** are less likely to rate roads and bridges as being 'extremely important' compared with the **general community (29%)**.

#### Council type

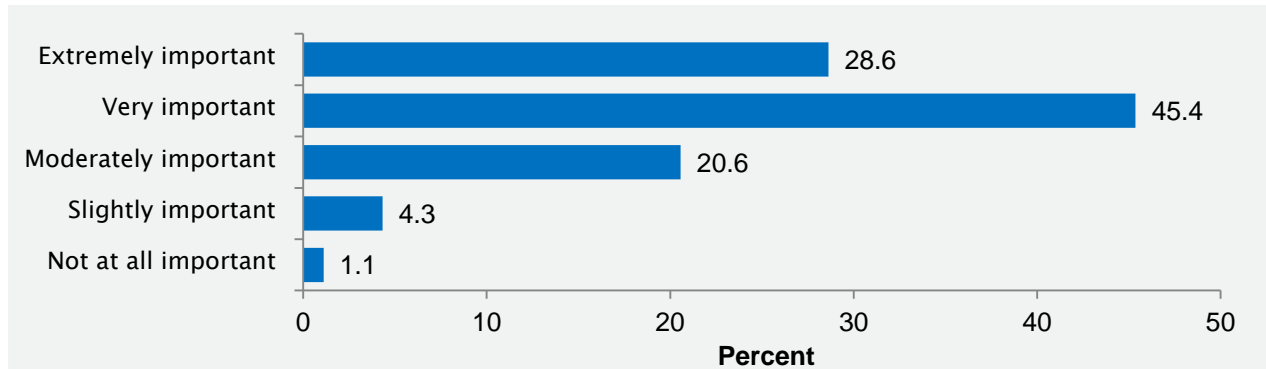
People living in **rural and remote (33%)** and **urban regional (35%)** councils are more likely to rate extremely importance compared with **urban capital cities (23%)** or **small/medium (19%)** urban developments.

#### State

'Extremely important' ratings are more likely in respondents living in **New South Wales (33%)** compared **Western Australia (19%)**

## Parks

Figure 78: Q13\_3 Parks (n=1997)



### Association highlights

#### Parks

##### Politics

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among **Greens Party (37%)** voters compared with **Labor (30%)** or the **Liberal/National (28%)** voters.

##### Age

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely among people aged **30–39 (35%)** when compared with the **general community (29%)**.

##### Non-English speaking background

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely among **English only speakers (30%)** compared with those who speak **another language other than English (20%)**.

##### Education attainment

As education levels rise, ratings of extreme importance also increase (**26% for school level education** compared with **36% for postgraduate degree holders**).

##### Household income

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely in the income brackets of **\$50,000–\$59,999 (37%)** and **\$80,000–\$89,999 (40%)**.

##### Dwelling type

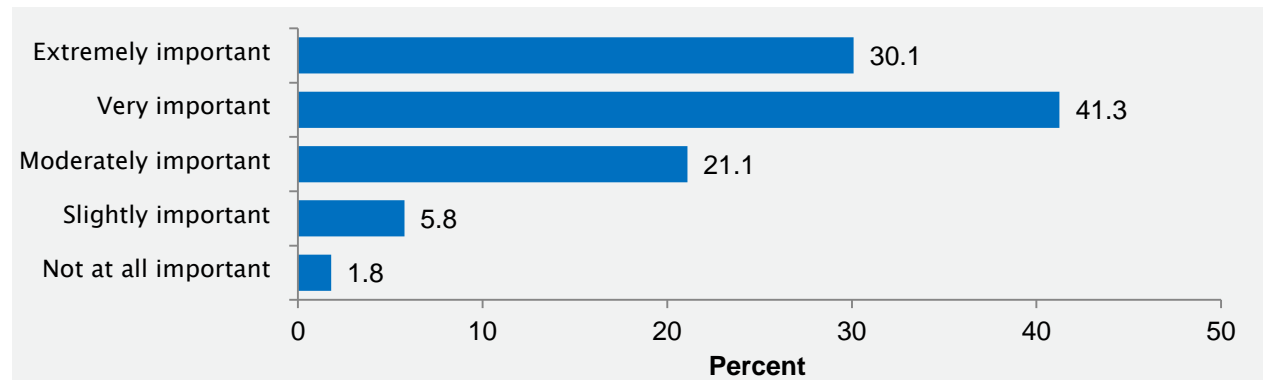
People who live in **separate houses (30%)** are more likely to rate extreme importance compared with **apartment dwellers (21%–24%)**.

##### Family type

**Non-family group households (20%)** are less likely to report extreme importance when compared with the **general community (28%)**.

## Footpaths

Figure 79: Q13\_4 Footpaths (n=2000)



## Association highlights

### Footpaths

#### Politics

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among people who identify with the **Liberal/National Party (33%)** compared with the **Greens Party (27%)**.

#### Gender

**Women (34%)** are more likely than **men (27%)** to rate footpaths as 'extremely important'.

#### Age

In general, ratings of extreme importance increase with respondents' age (**24% for 18–29 year olds** compared with **34% for people 70 and older**).

#### Education attainment

Respondents with **bachelor degree qualifications (23%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared with the **general community (30%)**.

#### Employment status

People who are **retired (36%)**, **homemakers (36%)** and **self-employed (35%)** are more likely to rate extreme importance compared with **students (15%)**.

#### Housing tenure

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among people who **mortgage or own (31%)** their home compared with **renters (25%)**.

#### Length of time living in local area

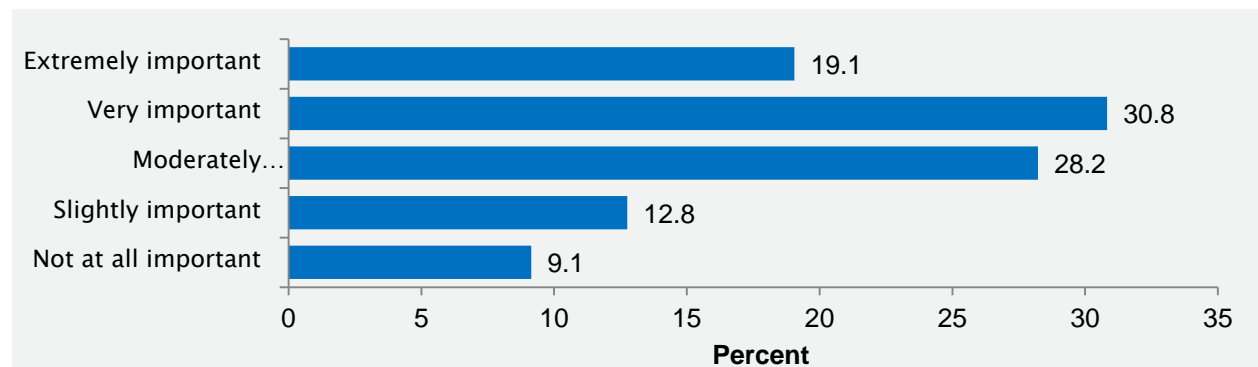
People who have lived in their local area for **less than 2 years (33%)** are more likely than people who have lived in their local area for **more than 2 and less than 5 years (27%)** to rate footpaths as being extremely important.

#### Council type

People living in the **urban fringe (34%)** are more likely to have rate extreme importance compared with people in **urban capital cities (26%)** and **rural and remote areas (27%)**.

## Cycleways

Figure 80: Q13\_5 Cycleways (n=1989)



### Association highlights

#### Cycleways

##### Community participation

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among people who have **actively participated in their community in the past year (22%)** compared with **those who have not (17%)**.

##### Politics

Ratings of extreme importance are less likely among **Liberal/National Party (15%)** voters compared with voters for the **Labor (21%)** or **Greens (28%)** Party.

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who **correctly name their local mayor (22%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than those who **did not know (16%)** the local mayor's name.

##### Age

Ratings of extreme importance are less likely for those aged **70 and older (15%)** compared with the **general community (19%)**.

##### Employment status

**Homemakers (25%)** and **people who are out of work and looking (24%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with **students (11%)** and **people out of work but not currently looking (13%)**.

##### Dwelling type

People living in a **separate house (20%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with people living in an **apartment with 3 stories or less (14%)**.

##### Family type

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely among **group households (36%)** compared with the **general community (19%)**.

##### Council type

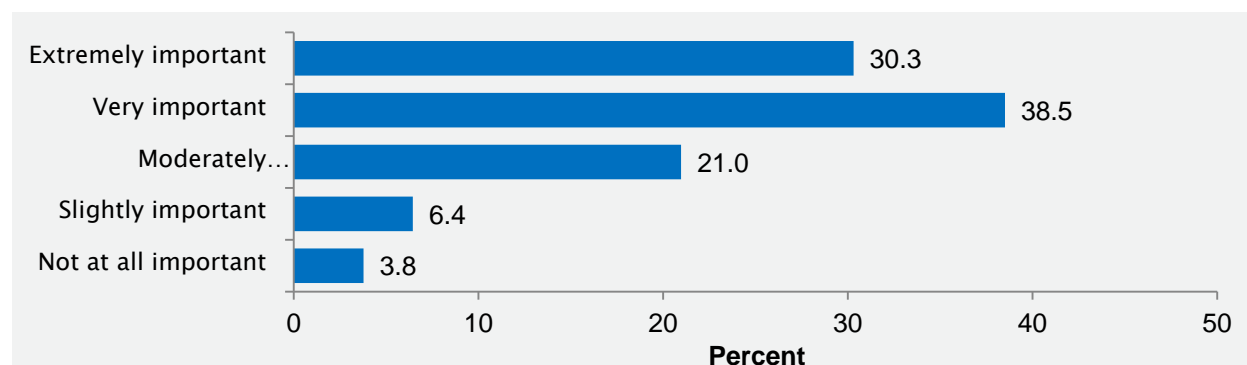
People living in an **urban capital city (26%)** are more likely to rate extreme importance compared with people in **rural or remote areas (15%)**.

##### State

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely among people living in **Western Australia (24%)** compared with people living in **New South Wales (16%)** or **Victoria (18%)**.

## Land use planning and development applications

Figure 81: Q13\_6 Land use planning and development applications (n= 1975)



### Association highlights

#### *Land use planning and development applications*

##### **Community participation**

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among people who have **actively participated in their community in the past year (34%)** compared with **those who have not (27%)**.

##### **Knowledge of mayor's name**

Respondents who **correctly name their local mayor (34%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than those who **did not know (27%)** the local Mayor's name.

##### **Age**

Ratings of extreme importance increase between ages **18–49 (21%–34%)** then plateau until they decrease for people aged **70 and older (28%)**.

##### **Education attainment**

In general, as education attainment increases, ratings of extreme importance also rise (**27% for school education level** compared with **38% for postgraduate degree**).

##### **Employment status**

**Students (16%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared with the **general community (30%)**.

##### **Working in government or non-profit**

**People working in government or a non-profit (34%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with **people who don't work in those areas (29%)**.

##### **Dwelling type**

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely among **people who mortgage or own their own home (32%)** compared with **renters (25%)**.

##### **Family type**

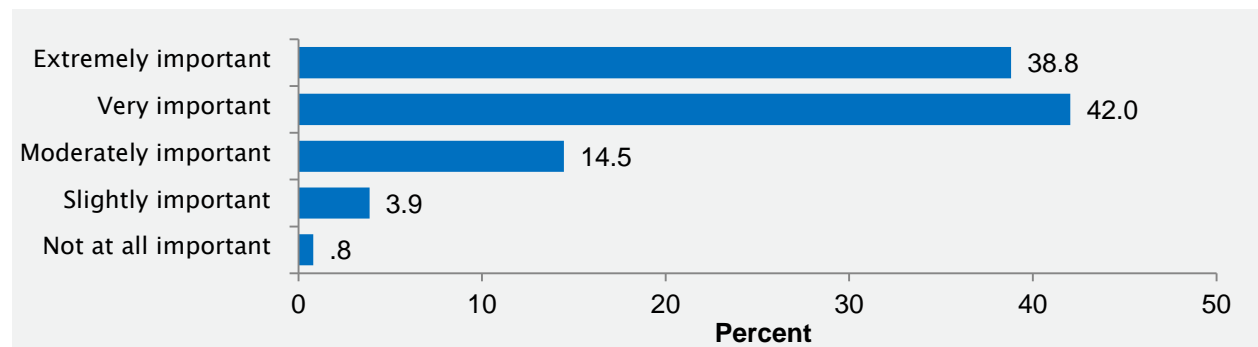
**Lone person (25%)** and **group households (25%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared with the **general community (30%)**.

##### **Council type**

People living in an **urban capital city (34%)**, **urban regional (34%)** and **urban fringe (33%)** areas are more likely to report extreme importance compared with people living in small/ **medium urban developments (27%)**, **large/very large urban developments (28%)** and **rural and remote areas (27%)**.

## Street cleaning and waste management

Figure 82: Q13\_7 Street cleaning and waste management (n=2001)



### Association highlights

#### *Street cleaning and waste management*

##### Politics

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among **Greens Party (44%)** voters compared with voters who identify with the **Liberal/National (39%)** or **Labor (39%)** party.

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who **correctly name their local mayor (42%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than those who **did not know (36%)** the local mayor's name.

##### Age

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely for people ages **50–59 (45%)** and **60–69 (45%)** compared with younger people **18–29 (31%)**.

##### Non-English speaking background

People who **speak only English at home (40%)** are more likely than those who **also speak another language (30%)** to report extreme importance.

##### Employment status

**Students (30%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared with people who are **out of work but not currently looking for work (48%)** and people who are **unable to work (58%)**.

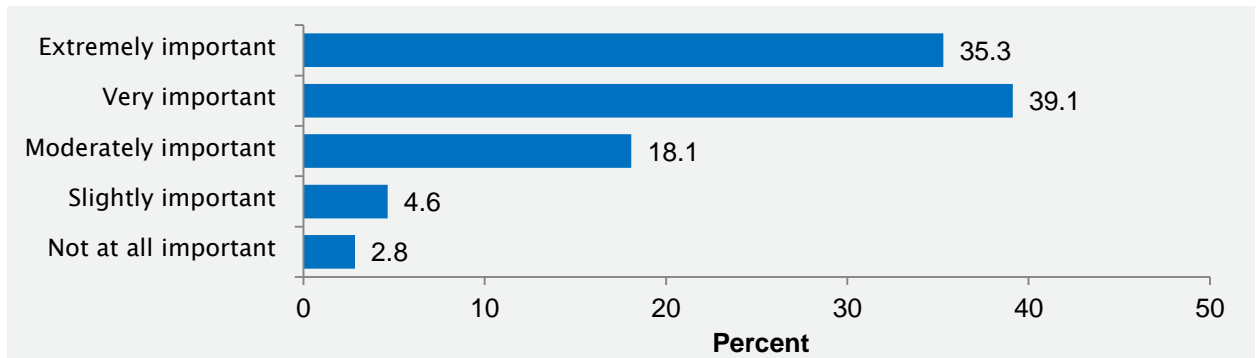
##### State

People living in **Victoria (36%)** and **Queensland (34%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared with people living in **New South Wales (43%)** and **Western Australia (40%)**.



### Health and environmental management

Figure 83: Q13\_8 Health and environmental management (n=1991)



*Please see the following page for association highlights*

## Association highlights

### *Health and environmental management*

#### **Politics**

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among **Greens Party (45%)** voters compared with voters who identify with the **Liberal/National (31%)** or **Labor (36%)** party.

#### **Gender**

**Women (39%)** are more likely than **men (32%)** to report extreme importance.

#### **Age**

People aged **70 and older (29%)** are less likely to rate extreme importance when compared with the **general population (35%)**.

#### **Education attainment**

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely for those with **school education (38%)** and **vocational qualifications (41% for diploma/advanced diploma level)** compared with people with University qualifications (**29% for bachelor degree; 34% for postgraduate degree**).

#### **Household income**

Ratings of extreme importance rise as income rises; peak for earners between **\$90,000–\$99,999 (51%)**; then fall (**22% for \$150,000–\$199,000** and **31% for \$300,000 or more**).

#### **Employment status**

People who are **out of work but not currently looking (52%)**; **out of work and looking for work (49%)**; **homemakers (45%)**; and **unable to work (45%)** are more likely to report extreme importance when compared with **students (28%)**.

#### **Working in government or non-profit**

Ratings of extreme importance are higher in people who **work for government or a non-profit organisation (38%)** compared with people **who do not work in those areas (31%)**.

#### **Dwelling type**

**Renters (41%)** are more likely than people with **mortgage homes (34%)** to report extreme importance.

#### **Family type**

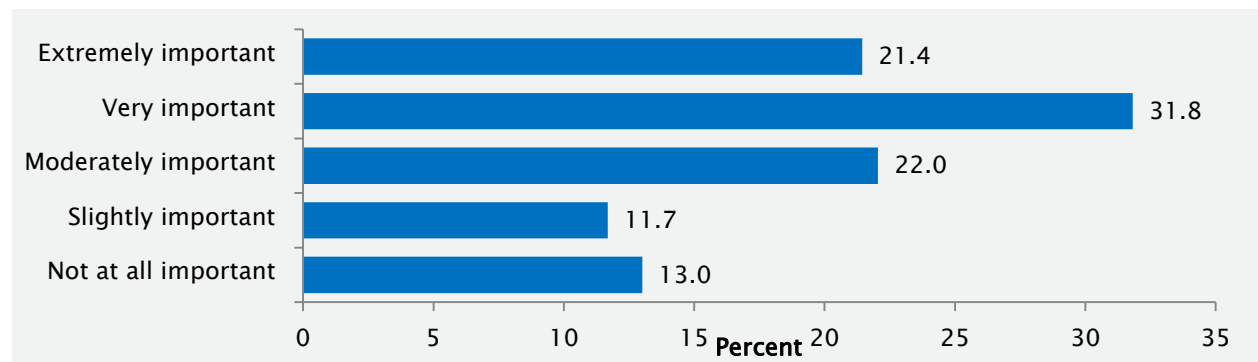
**Non-family group households (44%)** and **one parent families (43%)** are more likely to report extreme importance when compared with the **community (35%)**.

#### **Council type**

People living in **urban capital cities (32%)** or **small/medium urban developments (30%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared with people living in **urban regional (39%)** or **rural and remote areas (39%)**.

## Child care

Figure 84: Q13\_9 Child care (n=1974)



## Association highlights

### Child care

#### Politics

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among **Labor Party (25%)** voters and people **change from election to election (25%)** compared with **Liberal/National voters (18%)**.

#### Gender

**Women (25%)** are more likely than **men (18%)** to report extreme importance.

#### Non-English speaking background

People with a **non-English speaking background (30%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with those who speak **English only (21%)**.

#### Employment status

Ratings of extreme importance are highest among **homemakers (34%)** and people who are **unable to work (31%)**.

#### Family type

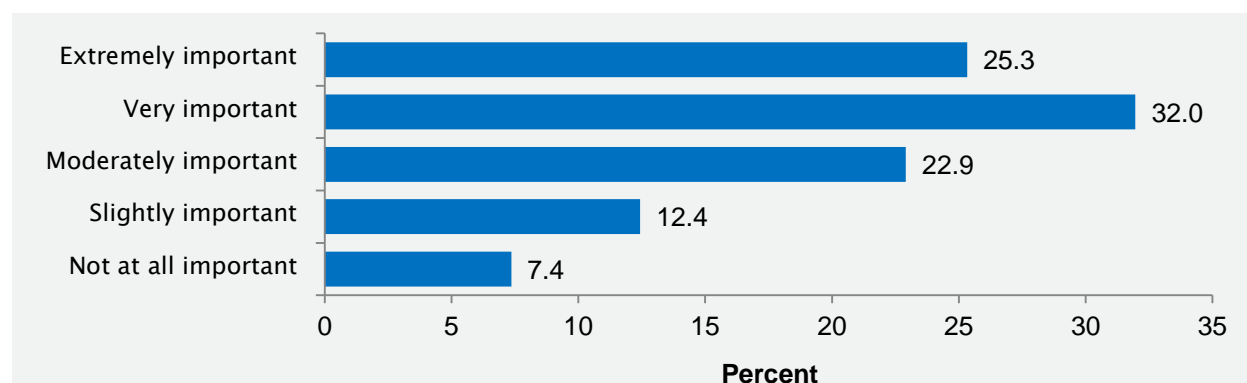
Ratings of extreme importance are highest among **one parent families (28%)** and **couples with children (24%)** compared with **group households (13%)** and **lone person households (16%)**.

#### State

People living in **Victoria (26%)** and **New South Wales (24%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with people in **Western Australia (15%)** and **Queensland (19%)**.

## Aged care

Figure 85: Q13\_10 Aged Care (n=1976)



## Association highlights

### Aged care

#### Politics

Ratings of extreme importance are higher among **Liberal/National Party (27%)** voters and **Labor Party (26%)** voters compared with **Greens Party (19%)** voters.

#### Gender

**Women (30%)** are more likely than **men (21%)** to report extreme importance.

#### Age

As age increases, levels of extreme importance also rise (**18% for 18–29 year olds**; **29% for 50–59 year olds**; **40% for people 70 and older**).

#### Education attainment

In general, as education attainment increases, levels of extreme importance decrease (**33% for school education levels**, **28% for diplomas/advanced diploma** compared with **16% for bachelor degree level** and **18% for postgraduate degree level**).

#### Household income

In general, as household income rises levels of extreme importance decrease (**41% for \$10,000–\$19,999**; **26% for \$70,000–\$79,999**; **8% for \$300,000 or more**).

#### Employment status

Ratings of extreme importance are highest among **people unable to work (50%)** and people who are **retired (38%)** compared with **students (12%)**; people **employed for wages (21%)**; or **self-employed (21%)**.

#### Dwelling type

Ratings of extreme importance are more likely among people living in an apartment or flat (**33% for apartments 4 stories or more**) compared with **26% for people living in a separate house**.

#### Council type

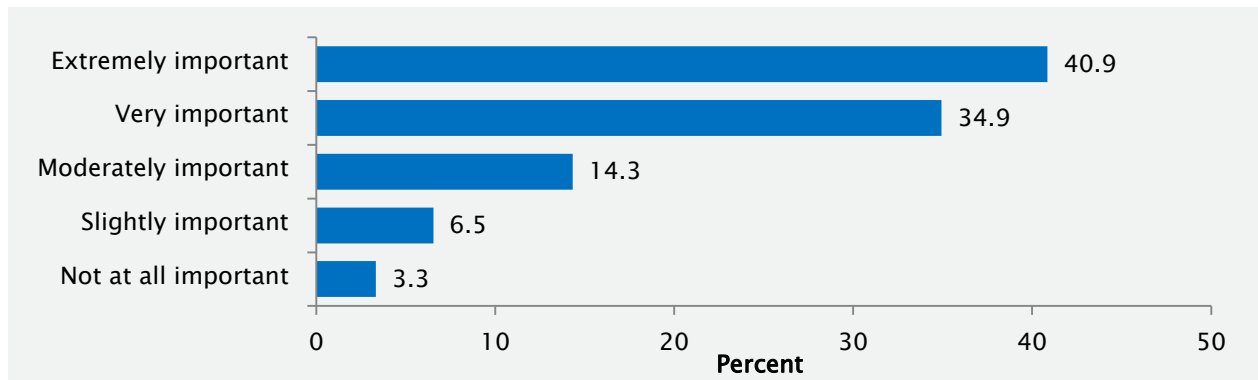
People living in an **urban capital city (13%)** are less likely to report extreme importance than people living in **urban regional (29%)**, **urban fringe (29%)** or **rural and remote areas (28%)**.

#### State

People living in **New South Wales (28%)** and **Victoria (27%)** are more likely to report extreme importance compared with people in **Western Australia (22%)** and **Queensland (21%)**.

## Emergency and disaster management

Figure 86: Q13\_11 Emergency and disaster management (n=1991)



### Association highlights

#### *Emergency and disaster management*

##### Gender

**Women (47%)** are more likely than **men (35%)** to report extreme importance.

##### Education attainment

In general, as education attainment increases, extreme importance decreases (**44% for school education levels and 41% for diplomas/advanced diploma** compared with **35% for bachelor degree level and 36% for postgraduate degree level**).

##### Employment status

Ratings of extreme importance are highest among respondents who are **unable to work (55%)** and **homemakers (54%)** compared with **students (28%)**.

##### Family type

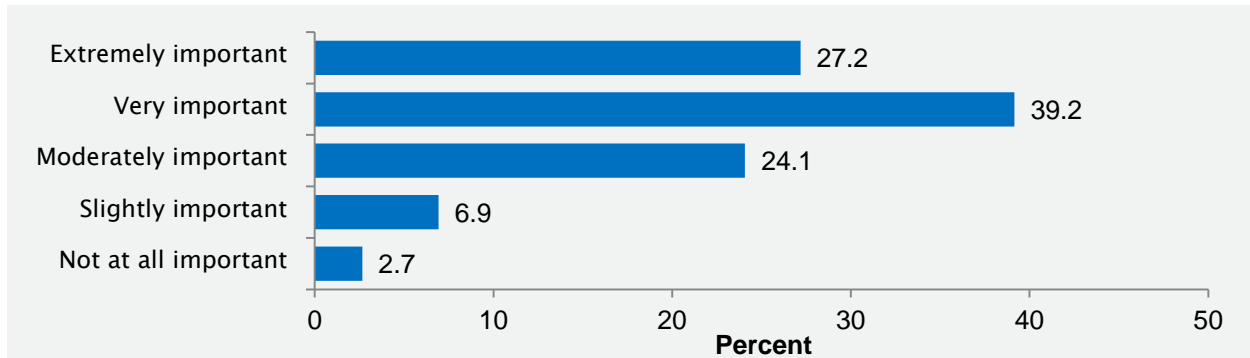
Ratings of extreme importance are highest among **group households (47%)** compared with the **general community (41%)**.

##### Council type

People living in **urban capital cities (36%)** are less likely to report extreme importance compared to people living in the **urban fringe (48%), urban regional (44%)** and **rural and remote areas (44%)**.

## Libraries

Figure 87: Q13\_12 Libraries (n=1997)



## Association highlights

### Libraries

#### Politics

**Greens (37%)** voters report the highest levels of extremely important, followed by respondents whose votes **change from election to election (30%)**. **Liberal/National (24%)**. **Labor (26%)** voters report lowest levels.

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who name their mayor **correctly (31%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than those who **do not know (23%)** or do so **incorrectly (24%)**.

#### Gender

'Extremely important' ratings are higher amongst **female (31%)** respondents compared with **male (23%)** respondents.

#### Age

Extreme importance increase with age: **18–29 (22%)** year olds vs. respondents aged **70 and over (30%)**.

#### Employment status

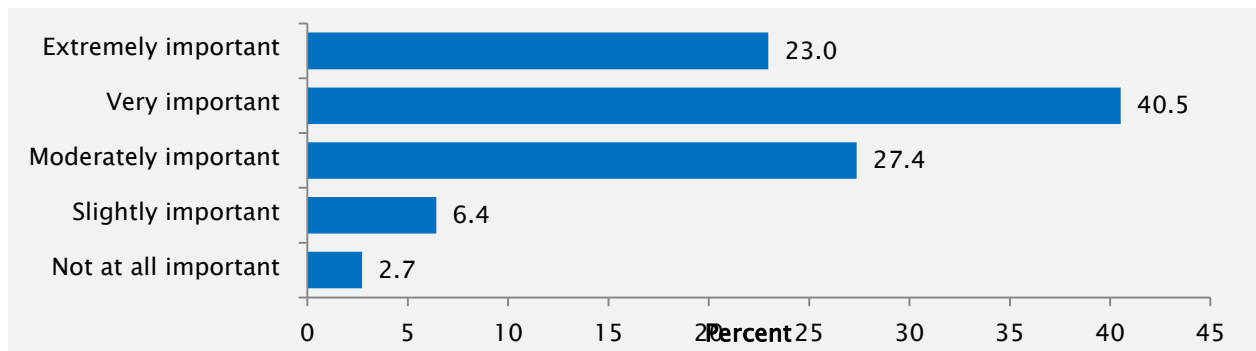
Respondents who are **unable to work (34%)**; **homemakers (34%)**; and **self-employed (32%)** have the highest ratings of extreme importance. Those who are **students (19%)** and **out of work and not currently looking (21%)** have the lowest.

#### Dwelling type

Overall, 'extremely important' ratings increase between respondents living in **separate houses (28%)**; flats, units or apartments of **3 stories and less (30%)**; and flats, units or apartments of **4 stories or more (38%)**. Ratings are lowest for respondents living in **semi-detached and similar houses (18%)**.

### Sporting and recreation facilities

Figure 88: Q13\_13 Sporting and recreation facilities (n=1999)



*Please see the following page for association highlights*

## Association highlights

### *Sporting and recreation facilities*

#### **Community participation**

Respondents who have **actively participated (27%)** in community clubs, services and groups are more likely to report extreme importance than those who had **not participated (19%)**.

#### **Politics**

Ratings of 'extremely important' are higher amongst **Labor (26%)** voters; respondents whose votes **change from election to election (24%)**; and **Liberal/National (23%)** voters. **Greens (19%)** voters have the lowest ratings.

#### **Knowledge of mayor's name**

Respondents who **incorrectly (29%)** name their mayor are more likely to report extreme importance (compared with **23% state wide**).

#### **Age**

'Extremely important' ratings rise from **18–29 (16%)**; peak at **50–59 (27%)** years of age; and then fall once more between **60 and 70 years and over (21%)**.

#### **Employment status**

'Extremely important' ratings are highest amongst respondents who are **unable to work (31%)** and **homemakers (29%)**. They are lowest amongst **students (14%)** and respondents who are **out of work and looking (17%)**.

#### **Housing tenure**

Respondents whose homes are **mortgaged or owned outright (25%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than respondents who are **renting (16%)**.

#### **Dwelling type**

Respondents who live in **separate houses (24%)** are more likely to have higher 'extremely important' ratings than those who live in **semi-detached or similar houses (13%)**; flats, units or apartments of **3 stories or less (16%)**; and flats, units or apartments of **4 stories or more (18%)**.

#### **Family type**

**Couples with children (26%)**; **one-parent families (24%)**; and **couples with no children (22%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than respondents of **non-family group (15%)** and **lone-person households (18%)**

#### **Length of time living in the local area**

'Extremely important' ratings rise with length of residency. Respondents whose residencies are **more than 10 years (24%)** report higher levels than those whose residencies are **less than 2 years (18%)** in length.

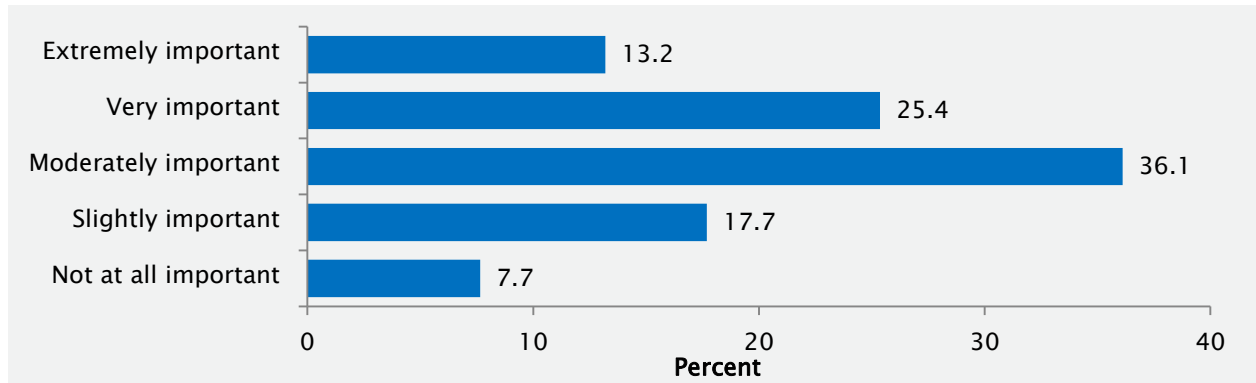
#### **Council type**

Respondents of **urban regional (26%)** councils are most likely to report extreme importance while those in **urban capital cities (19%)** are least likely to do so.



## Arts and culture

Figure 89: Q13\_14 Arts and culture (n=1992)



### Association highlights

#### Arts and culture

##### Politics

**Greens (23%)** voters have the highest 'extremely important' ratings. **Labor (13%)** and **Liberal/National (10%)** voters have the lowest.

##### Employment status

Respondents who are **unable to work (29%)**; **out of work but not currently looking (24%)**; and **out of work and looking (23%)** report higher 'extremely important' ratings than respondents who are **students (10%)**; **employed for wages; (11%)** and **self-employed (12%)**.

##### Working in government and NFP

Respondents who work for **government and/or the not-for-profit sector (14%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than those who **work for the private sector (9%)**.

##### Family type

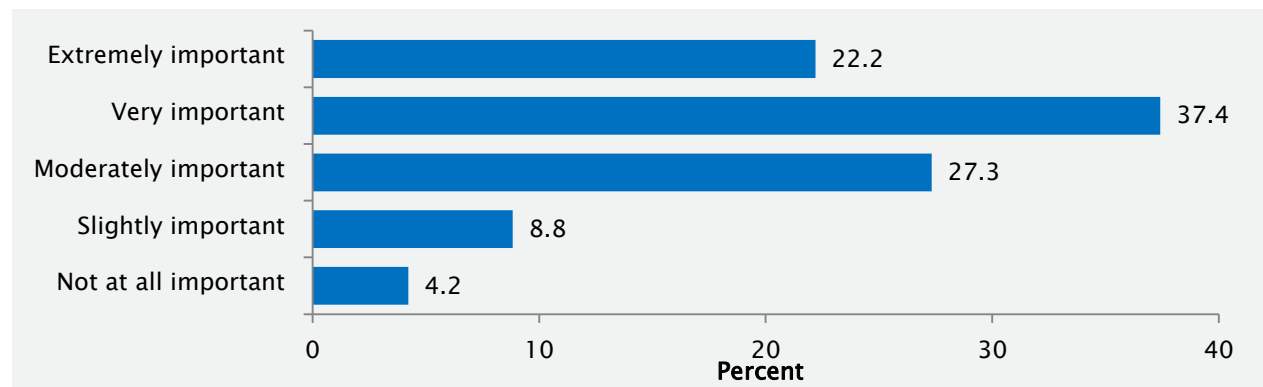
Respondents of **one-parent families (24%)** have the highest 'extremely important' ratings, compared with families of **couples with children (11%)**; **couples with no children (12%)**; and **lone-person households (15%)**.

##### Length of time living in the local area

Repondents whose residency is **less than 2 years (23%)** in length are more likely to report extreme importance compared with all other respondents (**13% nationwide**).

## Economic development

Figure 90: Q13\_15 Economic development (n=1971)



### Association highlights

#### *Economic development*

##### Politics

Respondents whose votes **change from election to election (28%)** are most likely to have higher 'extremely important' ratings, followed by **Liberal/National (24%)** and **Labor (22%)** voters. **Greens (13%)** voters have the lowest 'extremely important' ratings.

##### Age

Ratings of 'extremely important' are higher amongst respondents of **50–59 (29%)** years than all other respondents (**22% community wide**).

##### Non-English speaking background

Respondents who speak a **language other than English (29%)** are more likely than those who are **English-only (22%)** speakers to report extreme importance.

##### Education attainment

Extreme importance is higher amongst **school (25%)**; **diploma/advanced diploma (25%)**; and **certificate (24%)** level holders compared with **bachelor (18%)** and **postgraduate (19%)** degree holders.

##### Employment status

Respondents who are **unable to work (24%)**; **self-employed (24%)**; and **homemakers (24%)** have the highest ratings of 'extremely important' compared with those who are **students (14%)** and **out of work but not currently looking (17%)**.

##### Family type

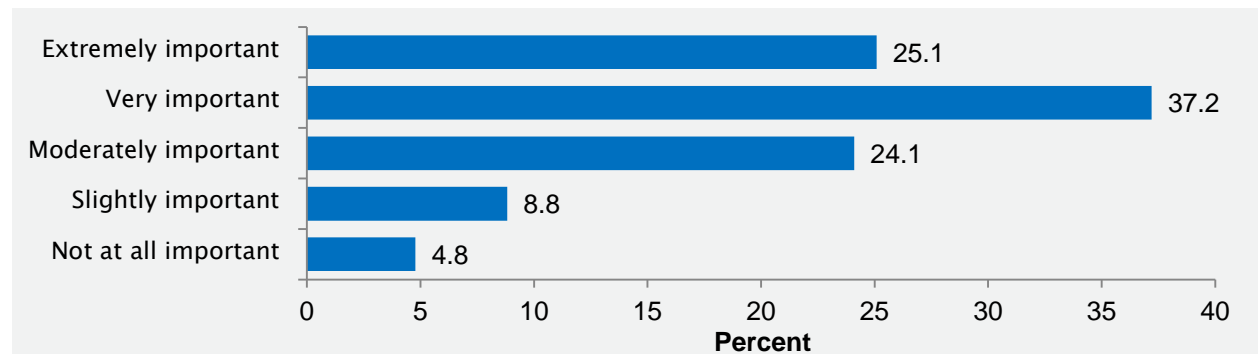
Households of **non-family groups (29%)** and **couples with no children (23%)** have the highest 'extremely important' ratings, followed by **couples with children (23%)** and **one-parent families (20%)**. Respondents of **lone-person households (16%)** have the lowest ratings.

##### Council type

Respondents of **urban regional (27%)**; **rural and remote (24%)**; and **urban fringe (23%)** councils are more likely to report extreme importance than those of **urban capital cities (16%)**; **urban development small/medium (19%)**; and **urban development large/very large (20%)** councils.

## Youth services

Figure 91: Q13\_16 Youth services (n=1976)



## Association highlights

### Youth services

#### Age

Extreme importance is highest amongst respondents aged **40–49 (29%)**, and lowest amongst respondents aged **70 and over (19%)** and **18–29 (21%)**.

#### Education attainment

**Diploma/advanced diploma (31%)**; **certificate (27%)**; and **school education (27%)** level holders are more likely to report extreme importance than **postgraduate (20%)** and **bachelor (20%)** degree holders.

#### Employment status

Respondents who are **unable to work (47%)** report the highest rating of extreme importance, followed by those who are **out of work but not currently looking (42%)** and **homemakers (36%)**. **Students (13%)**, followed by **retired (21%)** respondents, report the lowest ratings.

#### Family type

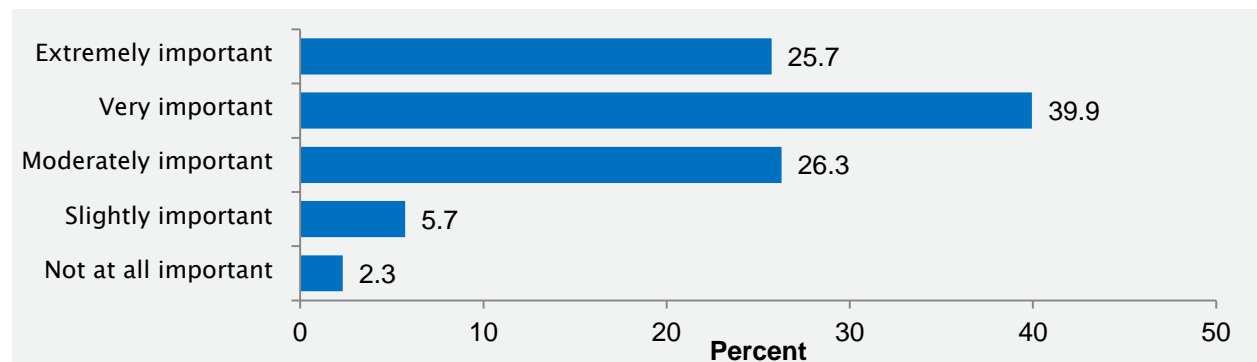
Respondents of **one-parent families (33%)** have the highest 'extremely important' level, followed by non-family **group households (29%)**; **couples with children (27%)**; and **couples with no children (24%)**. Respondents of **lone-person households (19%)** have the lowest level.

#### Council type

Respondents of **urban fringe (30%)**; **rural and remote (27%)**; and **urban regional (27%)** councils have higher ratings of extreme importance, compared with those of **urban capital city (21%)**; **urban development small/medium (21%)**; and **urban development large/very large (23%)** councils.

## Community development

Figure 92: Q13\_17 Community development (n=1979)



### Association highlights

#### Community development

##### Politics

**Greens (34%)** voters report the highest extreme importance compared **with Labor (25%)** and **Liberal/National (26%)** voters.

##### Age

Extreme importance increases from **18–29 (25%)** to peak at **40–49 (29%)** years of age. Then ratings decrease, with the lowest rating reported by respondents aged **70 and over (19%)**.

##### Employment status

Respondents who are **out of work and looking (39%)**; **out of work but not currently looking (33%)**; and **homemakers (29%)** report the highest levels of extreme importance. Respondents who are **students (20%)**; **retired (22%)**; and **self-employed (24%)** report the lowest levels of extreme importance.

##### Family type

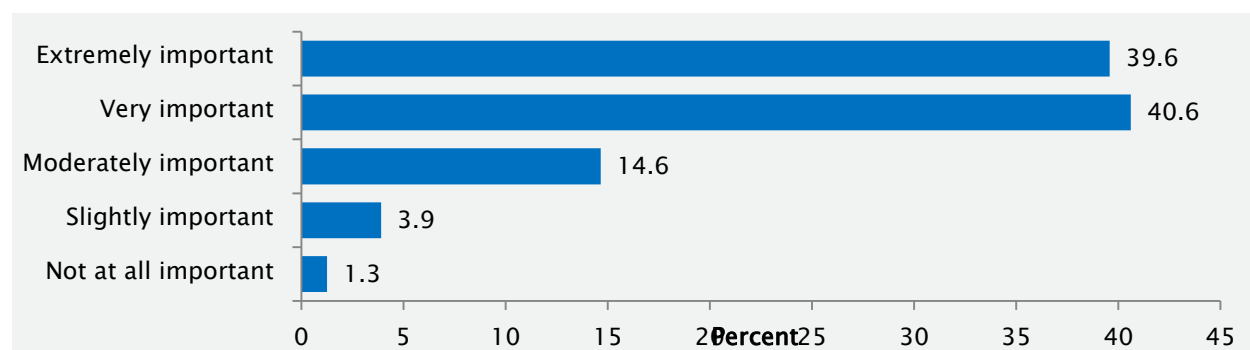
Households of **non-family groups (33%)**; **couples with children (28%)**; and **one-parent families (28%)** are more likely to have higher 'extremely important' ratings compared with **lone-person households (21%)** and **couples with no children (24%)**.

##### Council type

Respondents of **urban fringe (29%)** councils report the highest extreme importance, followed by respondents in **rural and remote (28%)** and **urban regional (27%)** councils. Those in **urban development large/very large (22%)** councils report the lowest, followed by **urban development small/medium (22%)** and **urban capital city (23%)** councils.

## Planning for the future

Figure 93: Q13\_18 Planning for the future (n=1979)



## Association Highlights

### Planning for the future

#### Community participation

Respondents who had **actively participated (44%)** are more likely to report extreme importance than those who had **not participated (36%)** in community services, clubs or groups.

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who name their mayor **correctly (43%)** are more likely to have 'extremely important' ratings than those who name their mayor **incorrectly (35%)**.

#### Age

Extreme importance generally increases from respondents aged **18–29 (38%)** to **50–59 (44%)** years. Levels then decrease again, with the lowest reported by respondents aged **70 and over (35%)**.

#### Employment status

Ratings of 'extremely important' are highest for respondents who are **out of work and looking (57%)**, followed by those who are **unable to work (48%)** and **homemakers (44%)**. Respondents who are **students (31%)**; **out of work but not currently looking (38%)**; and **retired (38%)** have the lowest ratings.

#### Family type

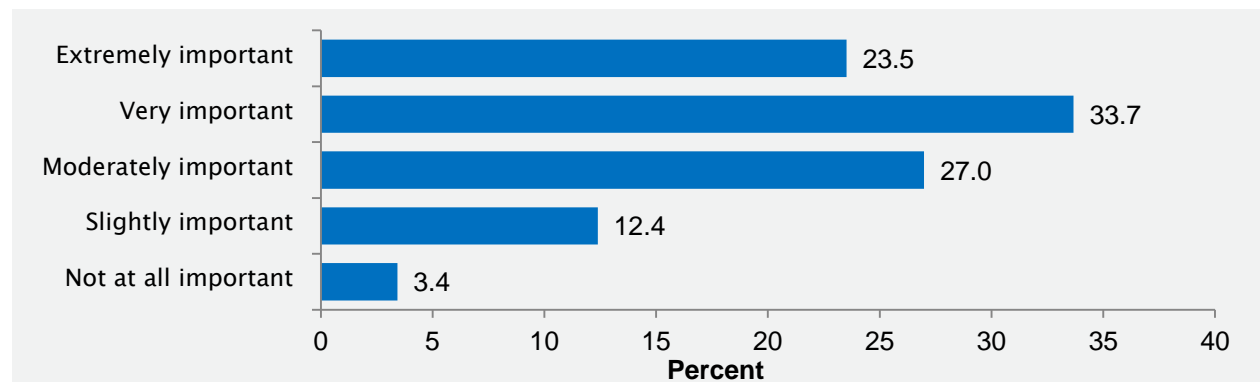
Respondents whose families consist of **one parent (46%)** report the highest extreme importance, followed by families of **couples with no children (41%)** and **couples with children (40%)**. Respondents of **lone-person households (36%)** report lower levels.

#### Council type

'Extremely important' ratings are highest amongst respondents of **urban regional (46%)** and **rural and remote (40%)** councils, and lowest amongst those of **urban development large/very large (35%)** councils.

## Promoting the benefits of the local area

Figure 94: Q13\_19 Promoting the benefits of the local area (n=1992)



### Association highlights

#### *Promoting the benefits of the local area*

##### Politics

Respondents whose votes **change from election to election (28%)** report the highest 'extremely important' ratings, followed by **Liberal/National (25%)** and **Labor (23%)** voters. **Greens (15%)** voters have the lowest 'extremely important' ratings.

##### Age

Extreme importance increases between **18–29 (19%)** and **50–59 (31%)** year old respondents. It then decreases again for respondents who are **70 years and over (18%)**.

##### Education attainment

Extreme importance is higher for respondents with **diploma/advanced diploma (31%)**; **certificate (28%)**; and **school-level (23%)** qualifications. It is lowest for **bachelor (18%)** and **postgraduate (18%)** degree holders.

##### Employment status

Respondents who are **out of work and looking (36%)**; **unable to work (33%)**; and **homemakers (31%)** have the highest 'extremely important' ratings. Those who are **out of work but not currently looking (16%)** and **students (16%)** have the lowest.

##### Family type

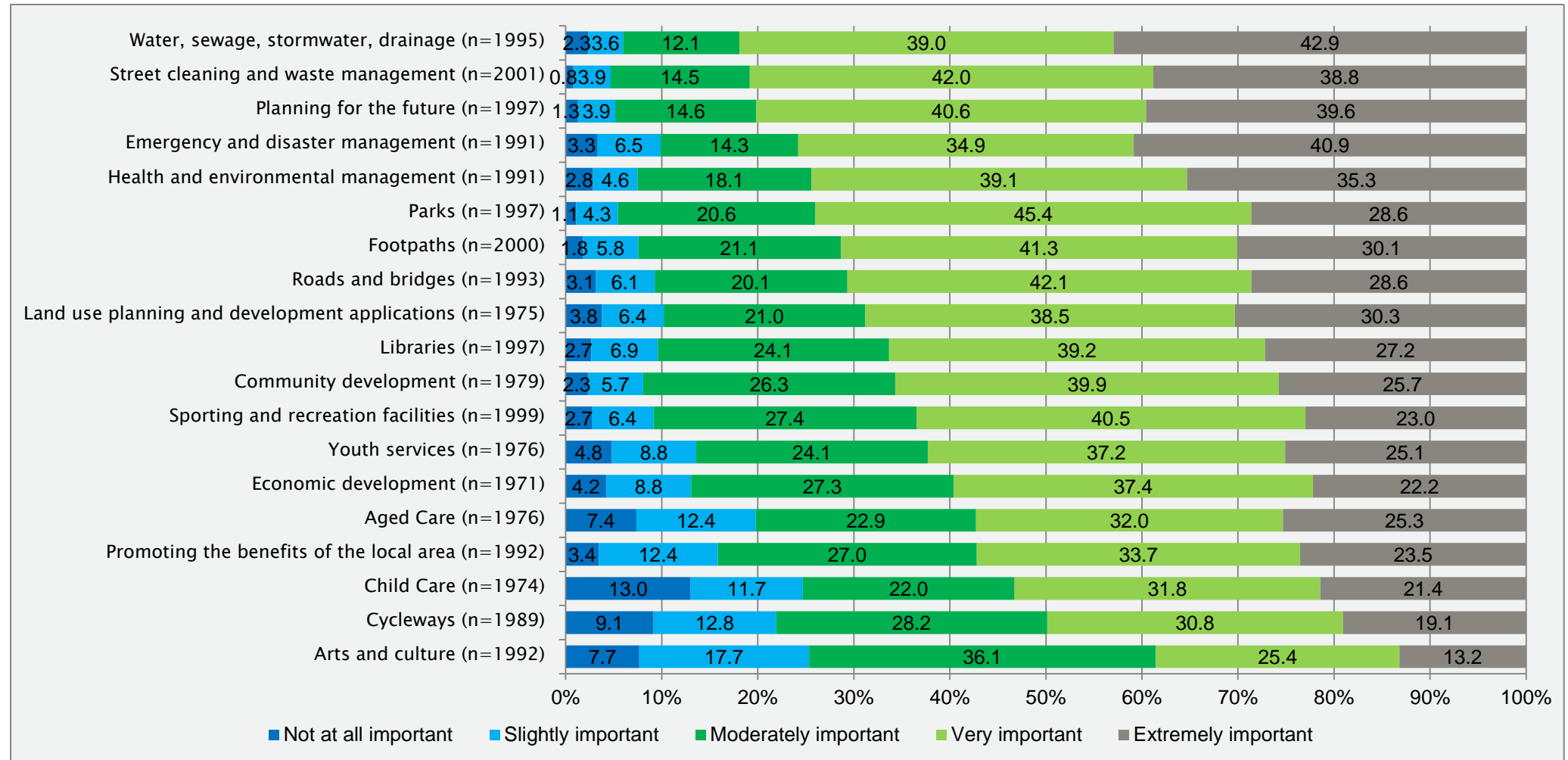
Respondents whose families consist of **one parent (32%)** report the highest extreme importance. Families of **couples with no children (25%)** and **couples with children (23%)** have lower levels, with respondents of **lone-person households** reporting the lowest (20%).

##### Council type

Extreme importance is highest amongst respondents of **rural and remote (29%)** and **urban regional (29%)** councils. It is lowest amongst respondents of **urban capital city (16%)** councils.

## 6.1.4 Relative level of importance of each task being done by local government

Figure 95: Relative importance of each task being done by local government

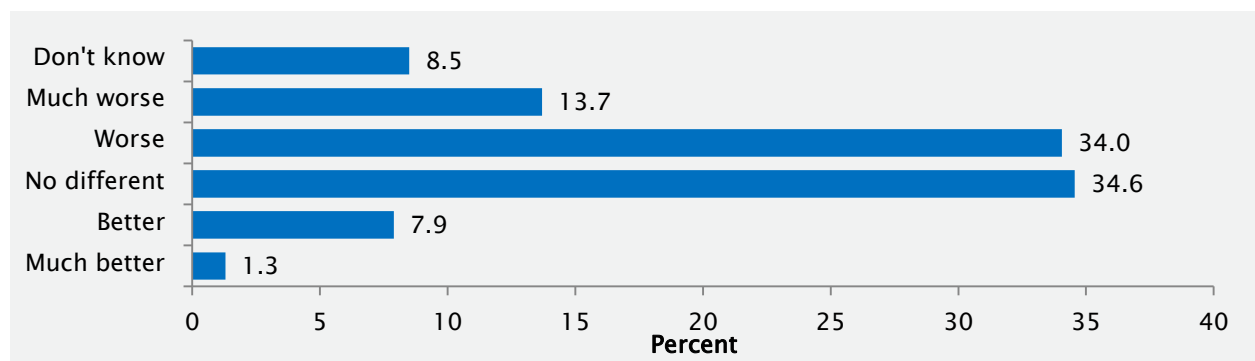


### 6.1.5 Amalgamation

**Question 15: Imagine that your local government is to be merged or amalgamated with another to form a new local government area. For each of the questions below, tell me if the amalgamation would make each of the following things much better, better, no different, worse or much worse?**

#### How my interests are represented by councillors

Figure 96: Q15\_1 How my interests are represented by councillors (n=2006)



#### Association highlights

##### *How my interests are represented by councillors*

###### Politics

People who would normally vote for or most identify with the **Greens** are more likely to think representation will get worse or much worse (**58%** compared to **52% community-wide**).

###### Non-English speaking background

People who **speak a language other than English at home** are more likely than those who speak only English to think that representation will get better or much better (**20%** compared with **9% of English speakers**).

###### Council type

Respondents living in **rural and remote councils** are more likely to believe representation will be much worse after amalgamation (**21%** compared to **15% nationwide**). However residents of **large/very large urban** councils are less likely to do so (**9%**).

###### Employment status

**Homemakers (9%)** and **students (6%)** are less likely to think that representation will get much worse compared to **self-employed (22%)** or the **general community (15%)**.

###### Dwelling type

People living in a **separate house** are more likely than those who live in a **flat, unit or apartment (4 stories or more)** to think representation will get much worse (**16%** compared to **3%**).

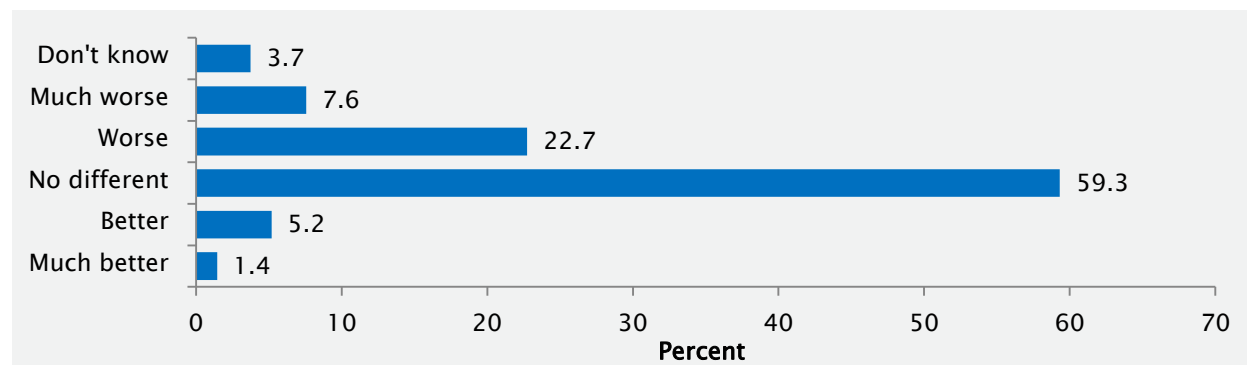
###### State

People living in **Western Australia (7%)** and **Queensland (8%)** are less likely to think representation will get better or much better compared to those living in **New South Wales (13%)** and **Victoria (10%)**.



## My feeling of belonging to the local area

Figure 97: Q15\_2 My feeling of belonging to the local area (n=2006)



## Association highlights

### *My feeling of belonging to the local area*

#### Community participation

People who have **participated in their local community** in the last 12 months are more likely, compared to those who haven't, to think that amalgamation will make their feeling of belonging to the local area worse or much worse (**33%** compared to **30%**).

#### Politics

People who would normally vote for or most identify with the political party the **Greens** are more likely to think their feeling of belonging to the local area will get much worse (**11%** compared with **8% community-wide**).

#### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who could **correctly answer the name of their local mayor** are more likely than those who didn't know the name to think their feeling of belonging will get worse or much worse (**34%** compared with **28%**).

#### Non-English speaking background

People who speak **a language other than English** at home are more likely than those who don't to think that their feeling of belonging will get better or much better (**20%** compared with **6% of English speakers**).

#### Educational attainment

People with a **post-graduate degree level qualification** more likely to think their feeling of belonging to the local area will get worse or much worse after amalgamation (**37%** compared with **32% nationwide**).

#### Council type

Respondents living in **rural and remote** councils are more likely to think their feeling of belonging will be much worse after amalgamation (**12%** compared to **8% nation-wide**).

#### Employment status

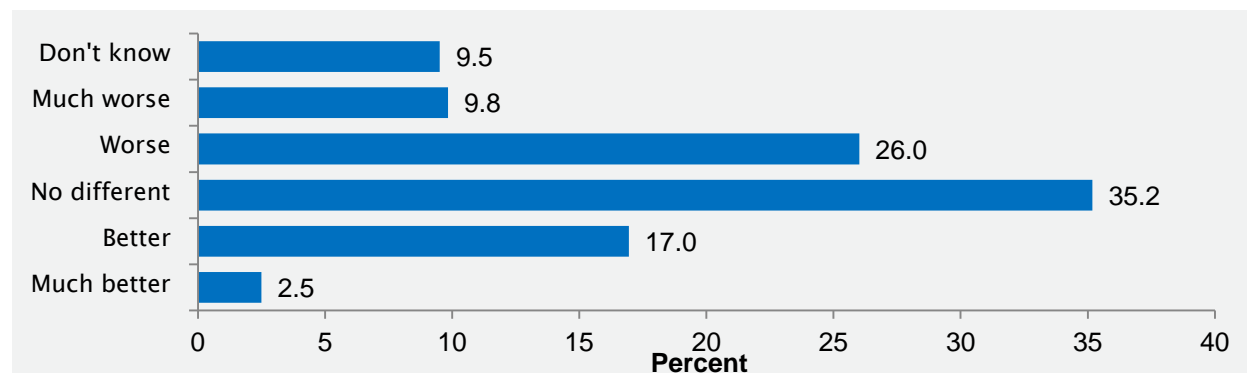
People **out of work and looking for work** (**19%**) and **students** (**19%**) are less likely to think feelings of belong to the local area will get much worse compared with the **general community** (**32%**).

#### Length of time living in the local area

Concerns that feelings of belonging will get worse or much worse are higher among people who have **lived in the area 10 years or more** compared with those who **have lived in the area for less than two years** (**35%** compared with **16%**).

## The way services are delivered

Figure 98: Q15\_3 The way services are delivered (n=2006)



### Association highlights

#### *The way services are delivered*

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who could **correctly answer the name of their local mayor** are more likely than those who don't know the name to think the way services are delivered will get worse or much worse (**46%** compared with **35%**).

##### Age

People **aged 70 and over** are more likely than those **aged 18–29 years old** to think the way services will be delivered after amalgamation will get worse or much worse (**42%** compared with **29%**).

##### Non-English speaking background

People who speak **a language other than English at home** are more likely than those who don't to think that services will be delivered better or much better (**37%** compared with **20%**).

##### Housing tenure

Respondents who have a **mortgage or own their dwelling outright** are more likely than **renters** to think the way services are delivered will get worse or much worse (**42%** compared with **27%**).

##### Dwelling type

People living in a **separate house (41%)** are more likely than those who live in a **flat, unit or apartment of 4 stories or more (32%)** or in a **semi-detached house (27%)** to think service delivery will get worse or much worse.

##### Family type

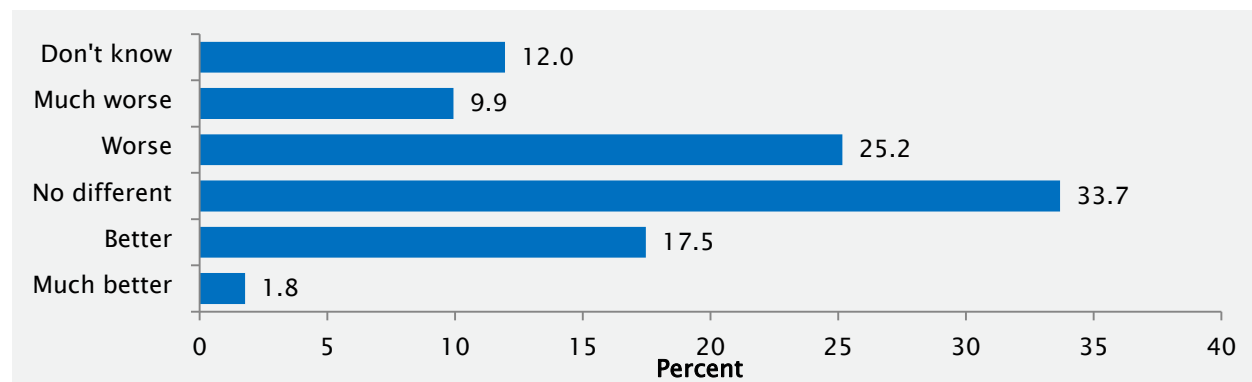
Belief that the way services are delivered will get better or much better is more likely among people in **one parent families** than **lone person households (32% compared with 15%)**

##### Council type

Respondents living in **rural and remote** councils are more likely to believe service delivery will be worse or much worse after amalgamation (**47%** compared to **40% nationwide**).

## The cost to me for local services

Figure 99: Q15\_4 The cost to me for local services (n=2006)



### Association highlights

#### *The cost to me of local services*

##### Knowledge of mayor's name

Respondents who can **name their mayor** are more likely to think the cost of services would be worse or much worse (**46%**) compared with those who **don't know the mayor's name**(**34%**).

##### Gender

**Men** are more likely than **women** to think that the cost to them of local services will get better or much better (**25%** compared with **18%**).

##### Age

There is an inverse relationship between age and how respondents think amalgamation will impact on the cost of local services to them. Those aged **70 and over** are more likely than those aged **18–29** to think things will get worse or much worse (**49%** compared with **25%**).

##### Non-English speaking background

Respondents from a **non-English speaking background** are more likely to think the cost to them of services will get better or much better (**30%** compared with **21%** of those from an **English speaking background**)

##### Family type

People living as part of a **couple with children** (**26%**) are more likely than a **lone parent** (**13%**) or person **living alone** (**14%**) think the cost of local services will be better or much better after amalgamation.

##### Length of time living in the local area

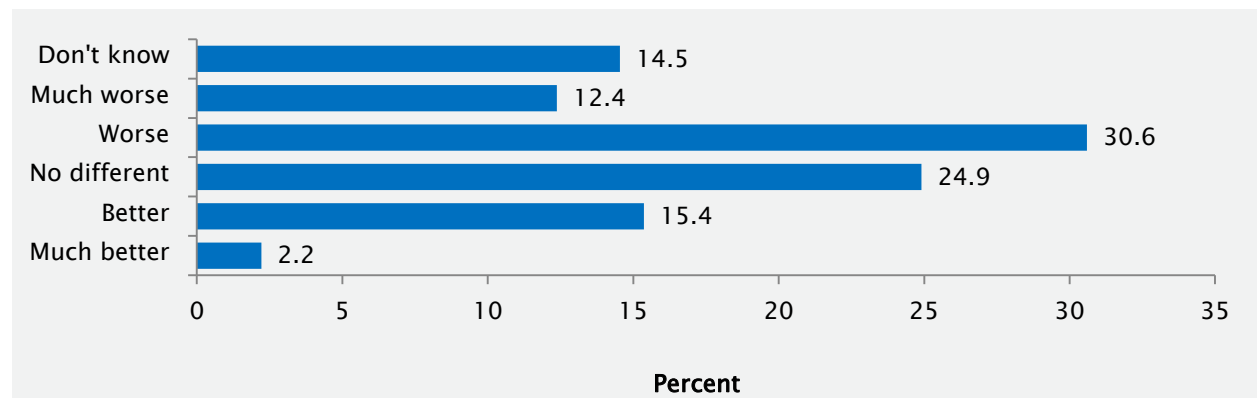
People who have **lived less than two years** in the local area are more likely to think the cost of local services to them will get better or much better (**29%** compared to **22% community-wide**).

##### Council type

People living in **urban regional** (**17%**) and **rural and remote local government areas** (**19%**) are less likely to think that the cost of local services will get better or much better compared with those in **urban development local government areas** (**26%**).

## The cost of council rates

Figure 100: Q15\_5 The cost of council rates (n=2006)



### Association highlights

#### *The cost of council rates*

##### Gender

**Male** respondents are more likely than **females** to think the cost of council rates will get better or much better (**25%** compared to **16%**).

##### Age

As people get older they are less likely to think that the cost of council rates will improve with amalgamation, with **12%** of respondents aged **70 and over** thinking the cost of council rates will get better or much better compared to **33%** of those aged **18–29**.

##### Non-English speaking background

People who speak **a language other than English at home** are more likely than those who don't to think that the cost of council rates will get better or much better (**29%** compared with **20%** of **English only speakers**).

##### Education

People with a higher level of education are less likely to think that the cost of council rates will get worse or much worse (**52%** of those with **school education** compared with **41%** of those with a **post-graduate degree**).

##### Employment status

**Students** are more likely to think that the cost of council rates will get better or much better after amalgamation (**38%** compared to **20%** of the overall population)

##### Dwelling type

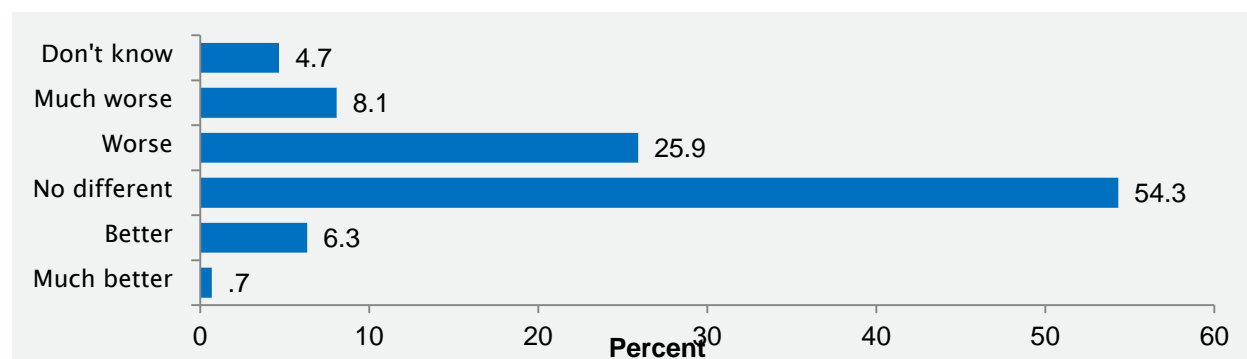
People who live in **a flat, unit or apartment (4 stories or more)** are much more likely to think the cost of council rates will be worse or much worse (**70%** compared with **50%** **community-wide**)

##### Council type

People in **urban regional (56%)** and **rural and remote (57%)** councils are more likely to think the cost of council rates will get worse or much worse compared with those in **urban development small/medium (49%)** and **large/very large (46%)** councils.

## My sense of local community

Figure 101: Q15\_6 My sense of local community (n=2006)



## Association highlights

### My sense of local community

#### Community participation

People **actively involved in the community** are more likely than those who are not to think their sense of local community will get worse or much worse after amalgamation (**38%** compared with **34%** of those **not actively involved**).

#### Age

As people get older they are more likely to think their sense of local community will get worse, with **42%** of those **aged over 70** compared to **26%** of those **aged 18–28** thinking it will get worse or much worse.

#### Non-English speaking background

People who **speak a language other than English at home** are more likely to think that their sense of local community will get better or much better (**19%** compared with **6%** of those who **speak English at home**).

#### Employment status

People who **are unemployed** are less likely to think their sense of local community will get worse or much worse (**21%** compared to **36% community-wide**) and more likely to believe amalgamation will make no difference (**67%** compared to **57% community-wide**).

#### Housing tenure

Those living in a dwelling that is **mortgaged or owned outright** are more likely than those who are **renting** to think their sense of local community will get worse or much worse (**37%** compared with **29%**).

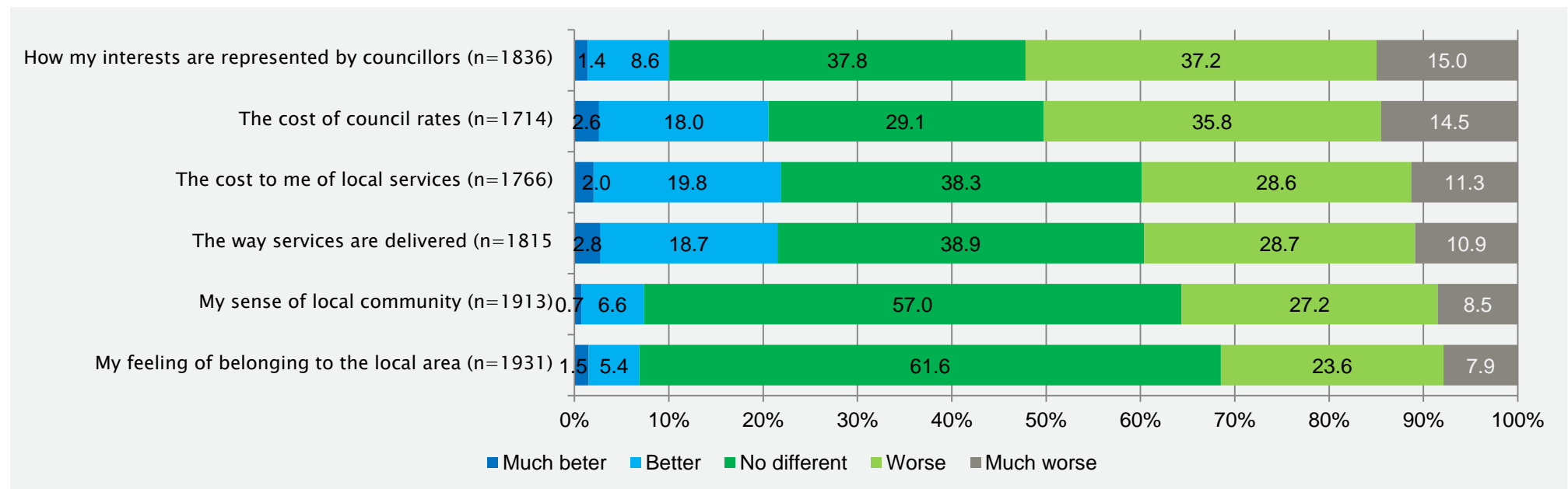
#### Length of time living in the local area

People who have lived for **more than 10 years in the area** are more likely to think their sense of community will get worse or much worse compared to those who have lived in the area **for less than 2 years** (**39%** compared with **31%**).

### 6.1.6 Relative perception of impact of amalgamation on respondents

The impact of amalgamation that respondents are most concerned about is on how their interests are represented by councillors. Over half (52%) think that representation of their interests will get worse or much worse. A similar proportion (50%) is concerned that the cost of council rates will be worse or much worse. By contrast, between a half and two-thirds of respondents believe that their sense of local community (57%) and their feeling of belonging to the local area (62%) will be no different after amalgamation. Respondents were most positive about the impact of amalgamation on the cost of council rates, the cost to them of local services and the way services are delivered, with approximately 20% thinking that these things will get better or much better.

Figure 102: Q15 Relative perception of impact of amalgamation (excluding don't know responses)



Please note that the numbers in this figure will not match those in Section 6.1.5, as 'don't know' responses have been excluded from this comparative figure.

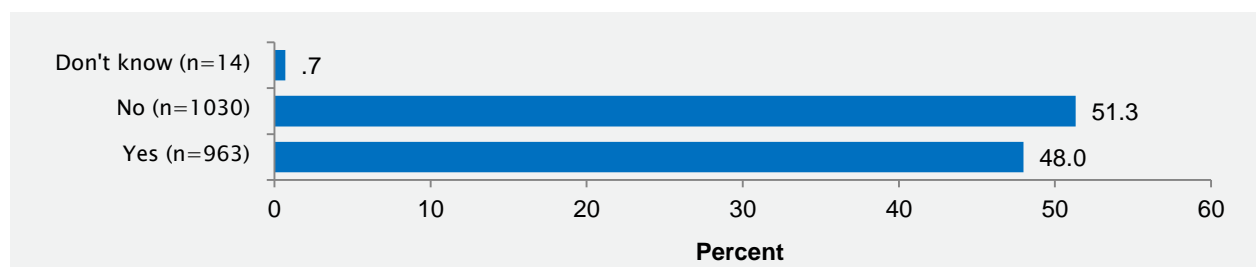
## 7 The respondents

### 7.1 Community participation and values

#### 7.1.1 Community participation

*Question 1: In the past 12 months, have you been actively involved in any service club or sporting, social, welfare, emergency services or recreation group in your community? Yes/No*

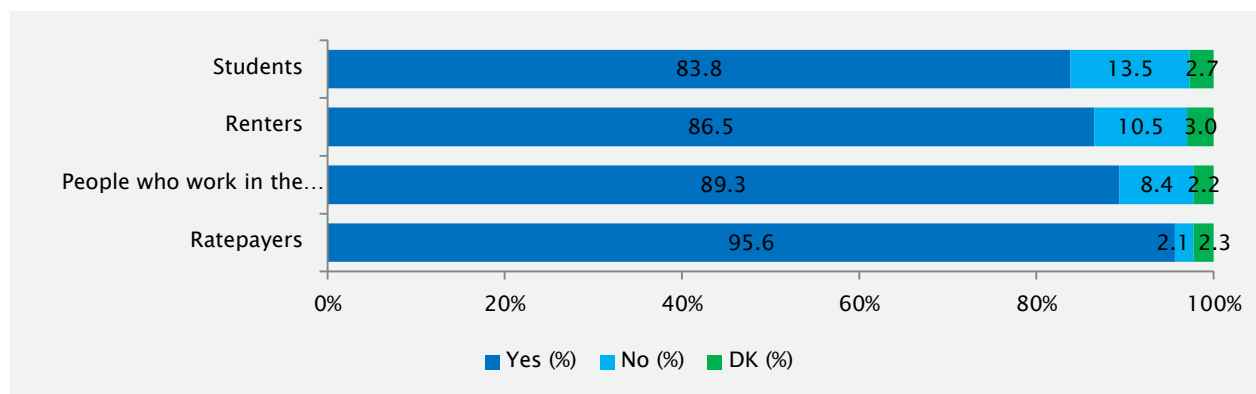
Figure 103: Q1 Community participation (n=2006)



#### 7.1.2 Community members

*Question 2: Thinking about your local area, which of the following people are part of your community?*

Figure 104: Q2 Thinking about your local area, which of the following people are part of your community (n=2006)

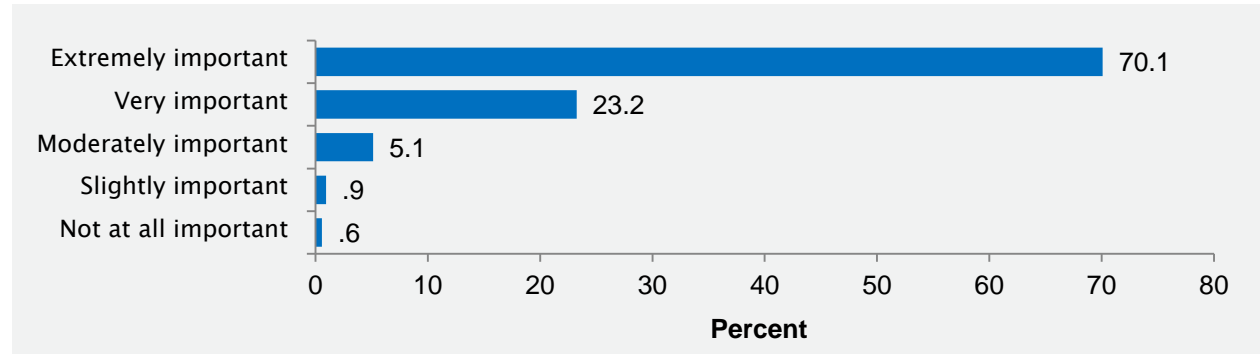


### 7.1.3 Important things in life

*Question 4: How important is each of the following in your life?*

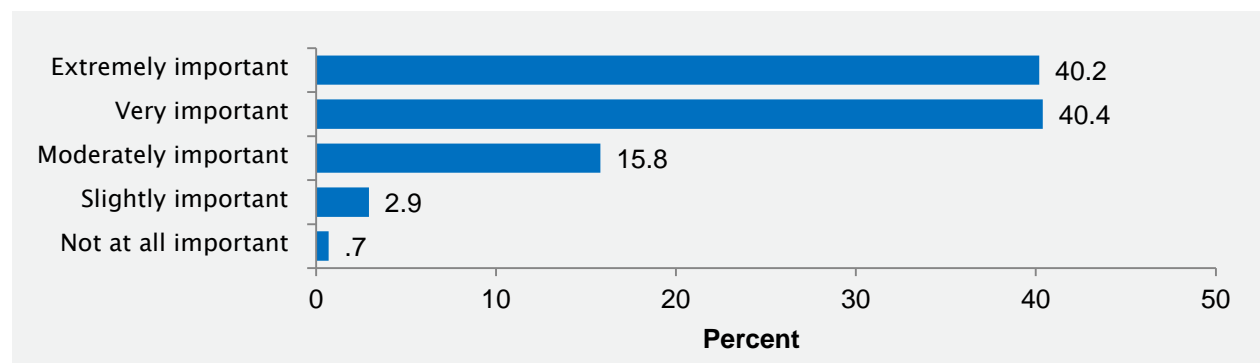
#### Family

Figure 105: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Family (n=2002)



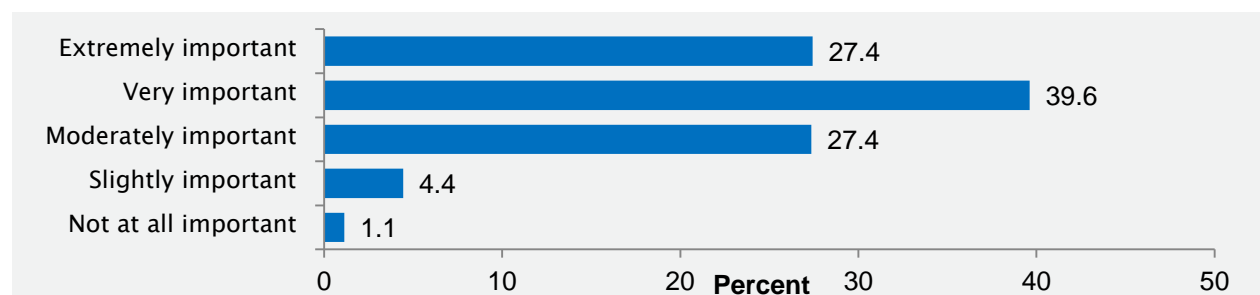
#### Friends

Figure 106: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Friends (n=2006)



#### Leisure time

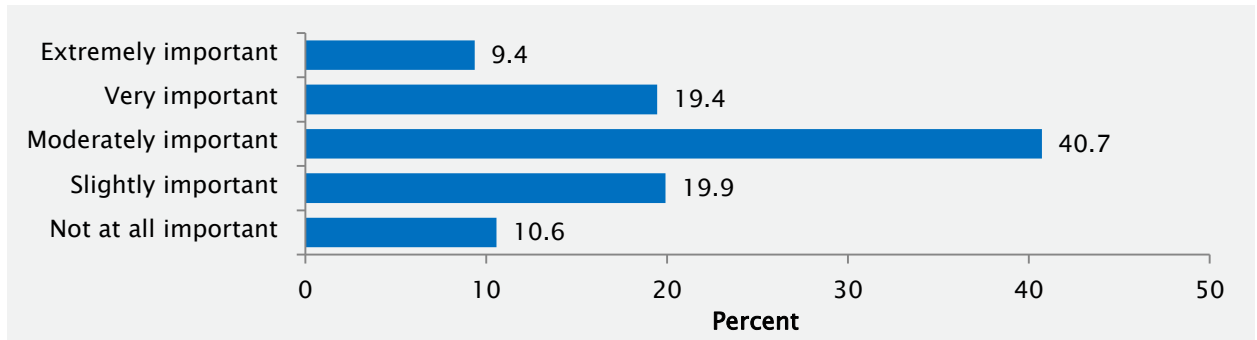
Figure 107: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Leisure time (n=2005)





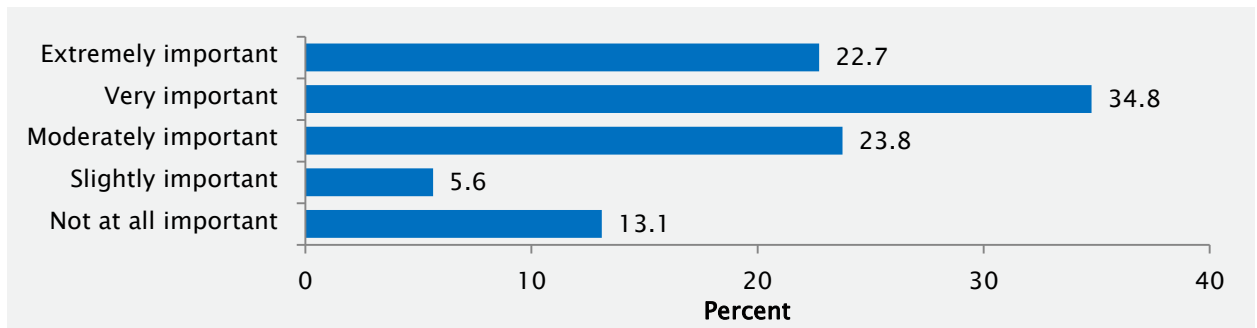
### Politics

Figure 108: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Politics (n=1991)



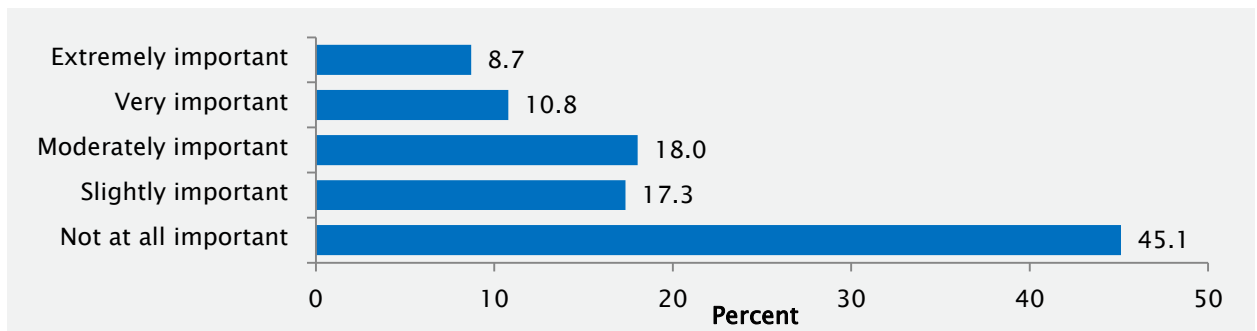
### Work

Figure 109: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Work (n=1998)



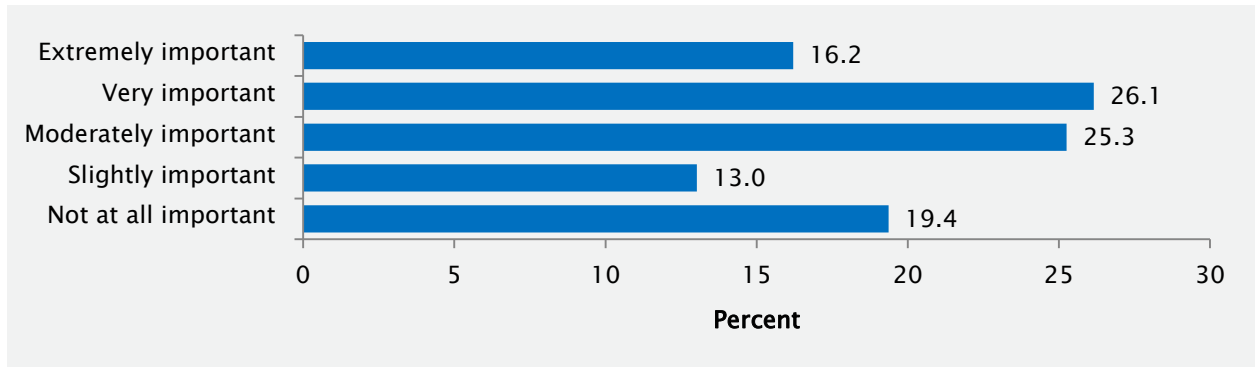
### Religion

Figure 110: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Religion (n=1994)



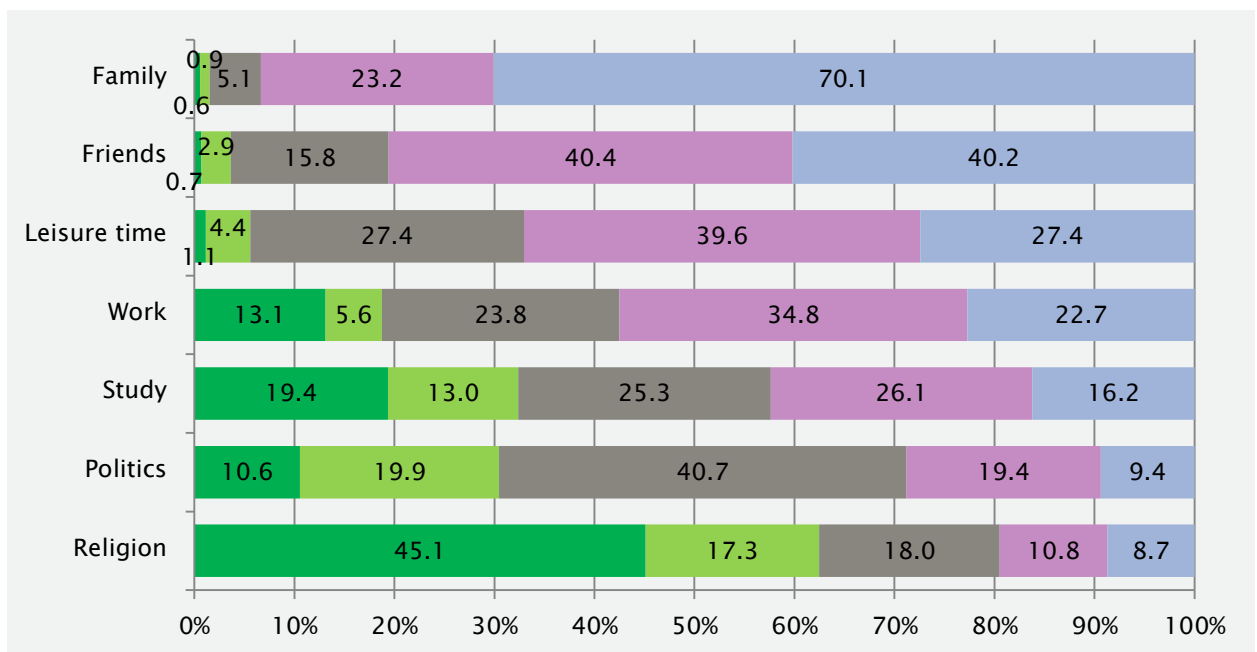
## Study

Figure 111: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Study (n=2001)



## Relative Importance of each thing in life

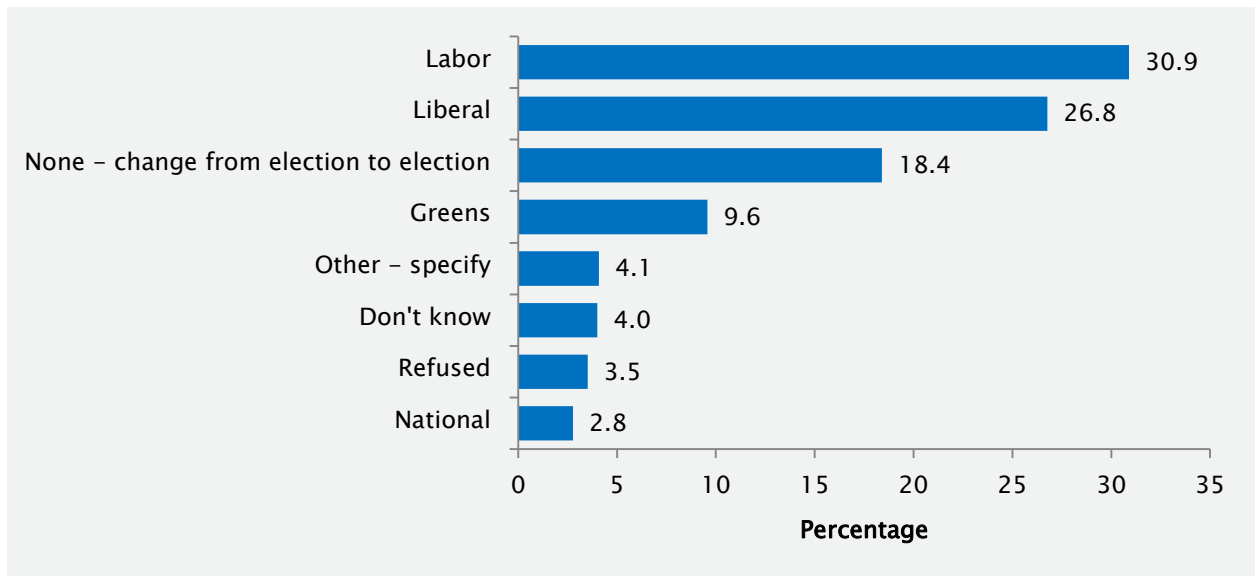
Figure 112: Q4 How important is each of the following in your life? Relative importance ordered from most to least important



#### 7.1.4 Political orientation

*Question 5: What political party do you normally vote for, or most identify with?*

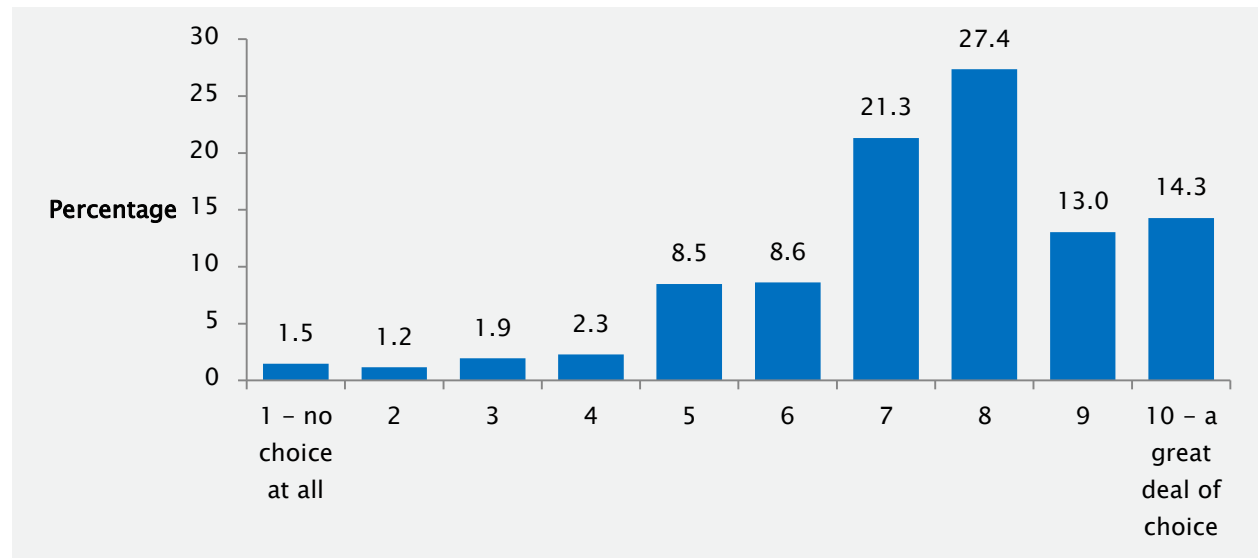
Figure 113: Q5 What political party do you normally vote for, or most identify with? (n=2006)



### 7.1.5 Freedom of choice and control

*Question 10: Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means “no choice at all” and 10 means “a great deal of choice”, how much freedom of choice and control do you have over the way your life turns out?*

Figure 114: Q10 Freedom of choice and control (n=1991)



## 8 Profile of the respondents

### 8.1 Demographics

#### 8.1.1 Gender

- 51% of respondents (n=1026) were female
- 49% of respondents (n=981) were male

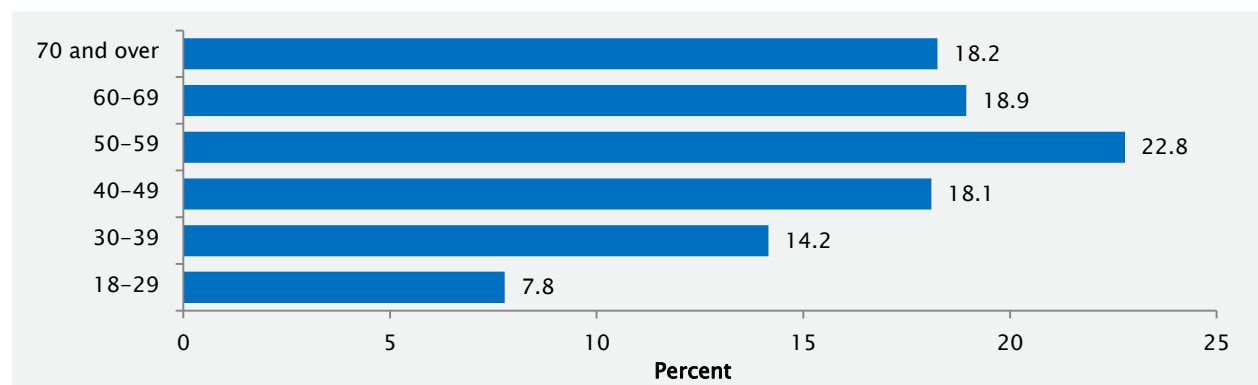
#### 8.1.2 Age

##### *Question 16: In what year where you born*

Responses to the question on age were coded to 5 categories. A discussion of the post-stratification weighting applied to the data can be found in Appendix C.

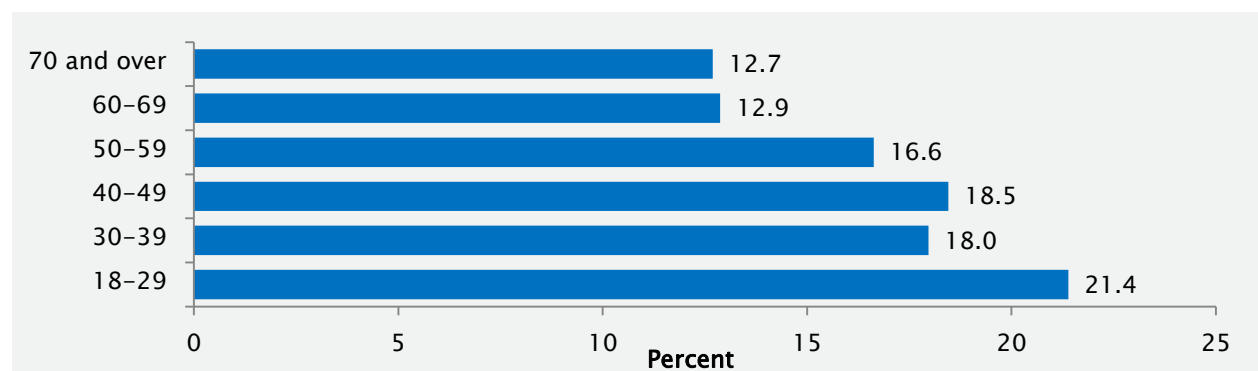
##### **Unweighted ages**

**Figure 115: Q16 In what year were you born? Unweighted ages (n=2006)**



##### *Post-stratification weighted ages (used in univariate and bivariate analysis)*

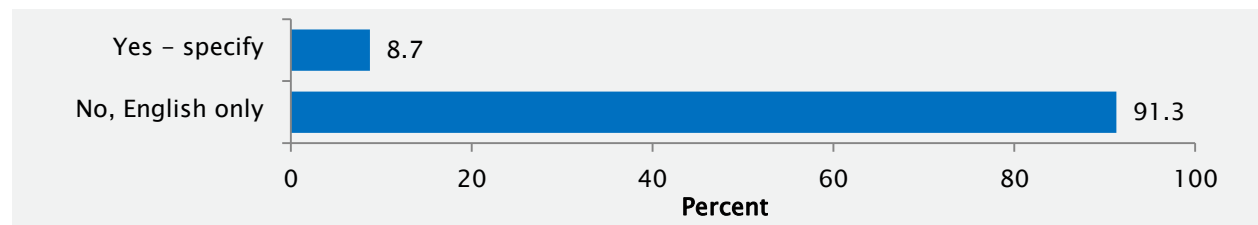
**Figure 116: Q16 In what year where you born? (n=2006) NB: Coded to categories and weighted to general population**



### 8.1.3 Non-English speaking background (NESB)

*Question 17: Do you speak a language other than English at home?*

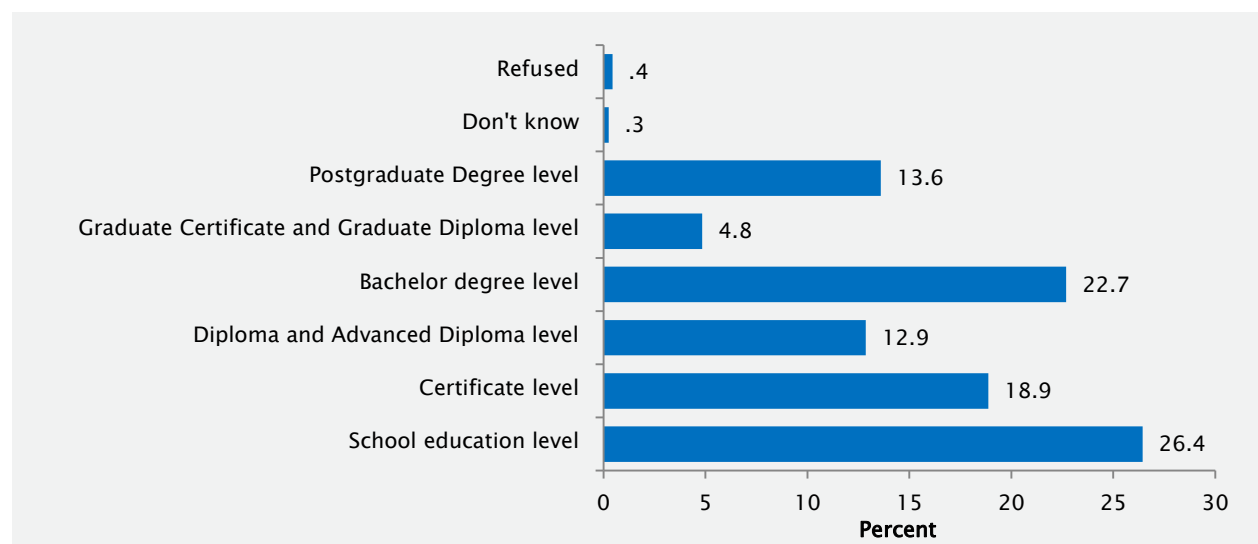
Figure 117: Q17 Do you speak a language other than English at home? (n=2006)



### 8.1.4 Educational qualifications

*Question 18: What is the highest level of educational qualification you have completed?*

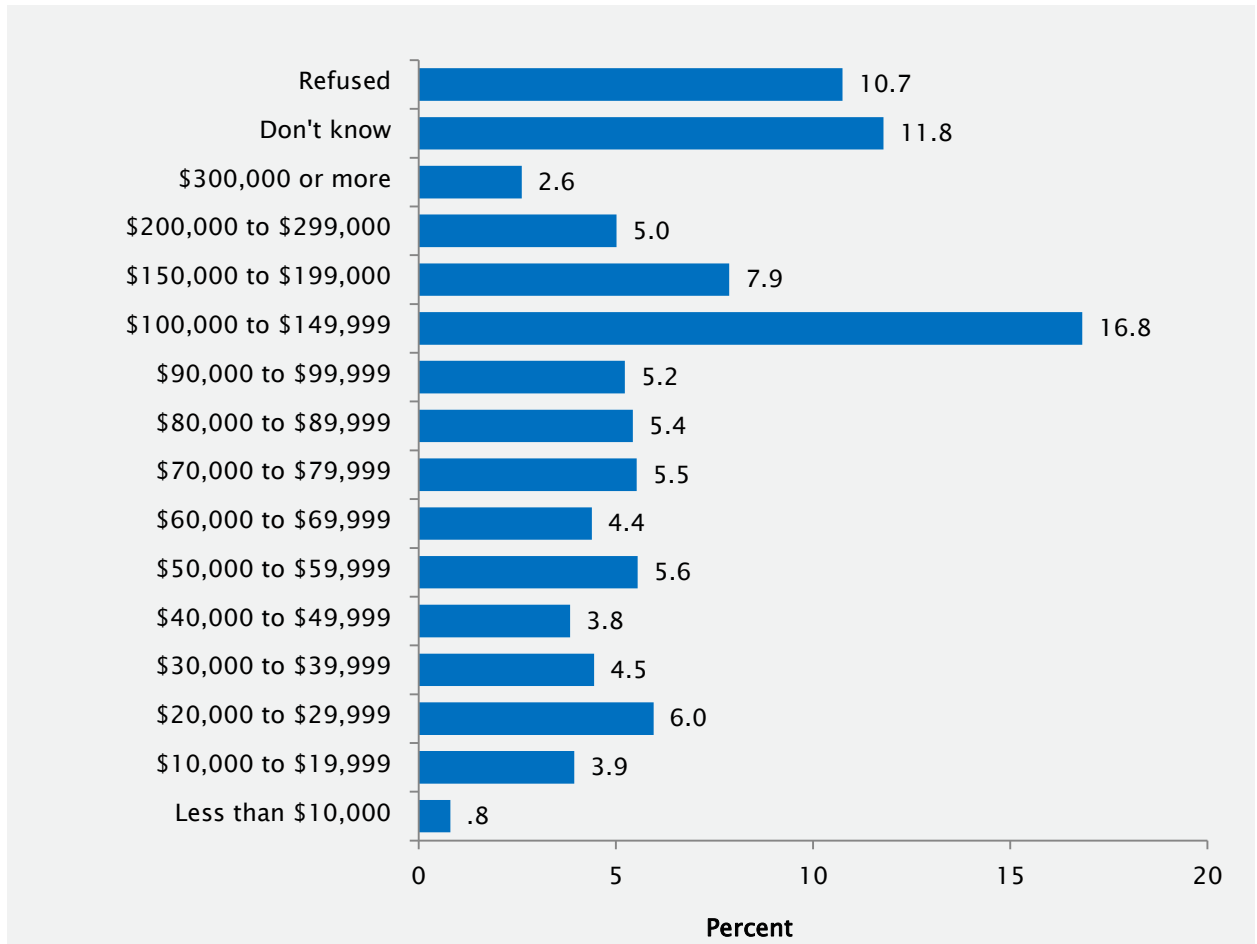
Figure 118: Q18 What is the highest level of educational qualification you have completed? (n=2006)



### 8.1.5 Income

**Question 19: What is the total combined income of everyone in your household, before tax and other deductions? Please include income from all sources including wages, investments and government pensions and benefits.**

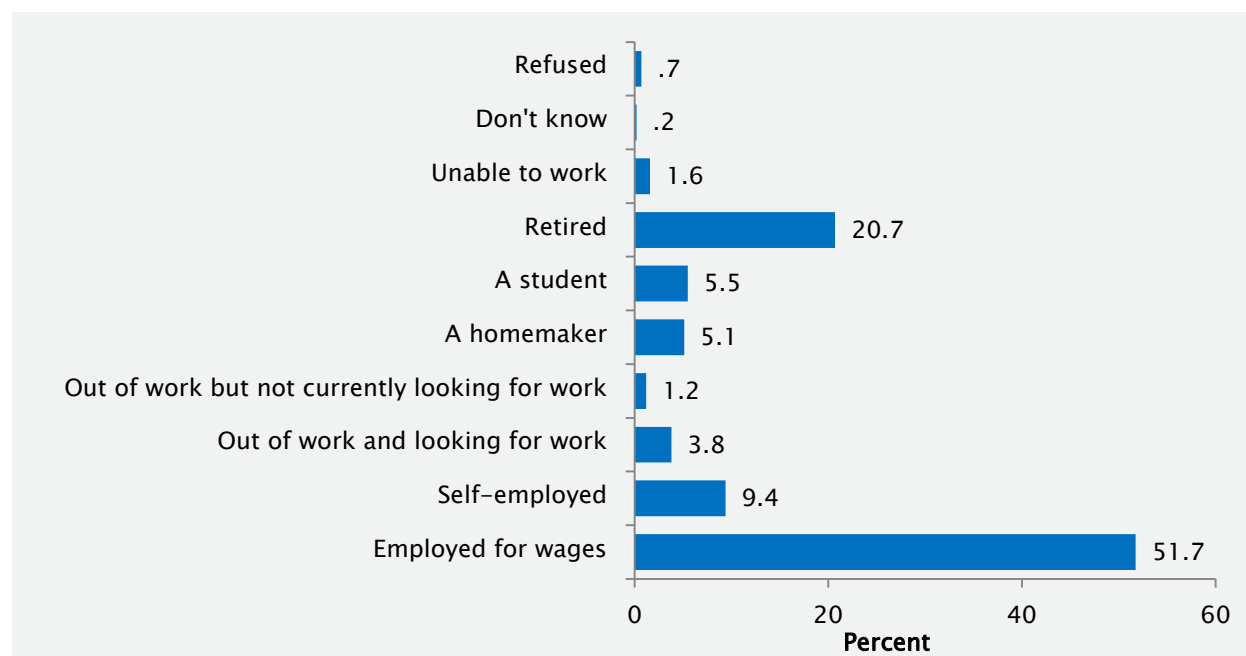
**Figure 119: Q19 What is the total combined income of everyone in your household, before tax and other deductions? (n=2006)**



### 8.1.6 Employment status

*Question 20: What is your employment status; are you currently ...*

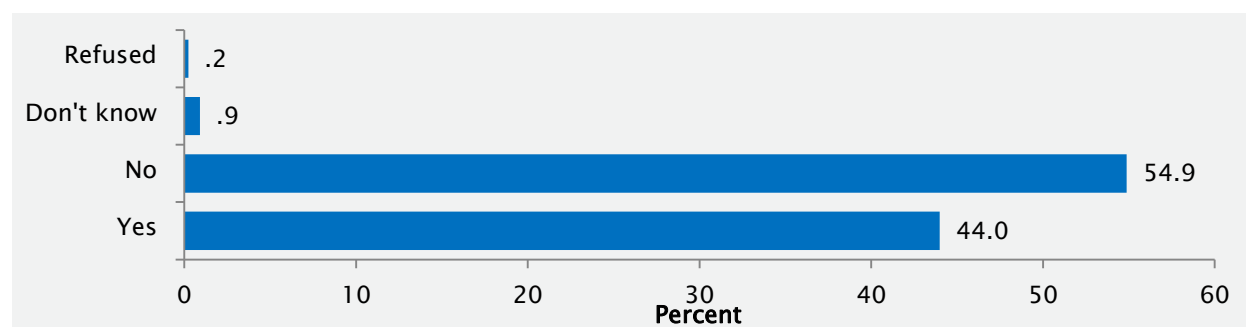
Figure 120: Q20 What is your employment status? (n=2006)



### 8.1.7 Employment in government or not-for-profit areas

*Question 21: Are you currently working for the government, a public institution or a non-profit organisation?*

Figure 121: Q21 Are you currently working for the government, a public institution or a non-profit organisation? (n=2006)

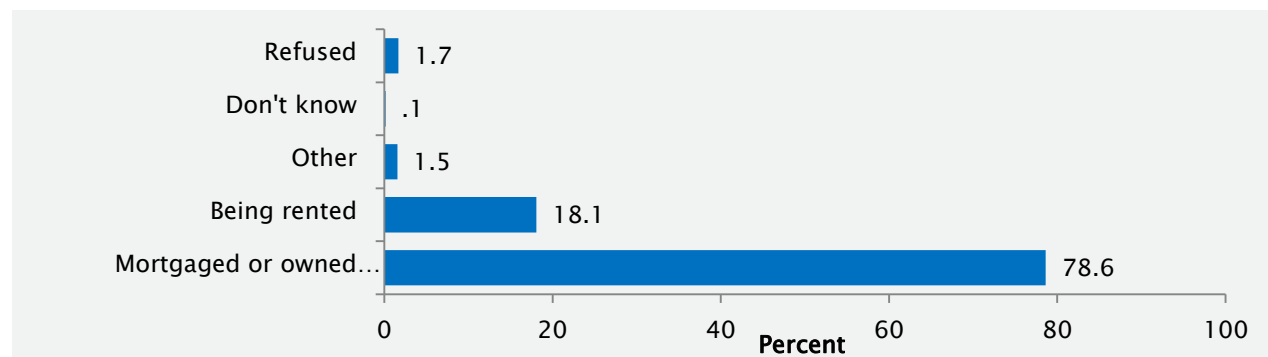




### 8.1.8 Housing tenure

*Question 22: Is the dwelling in which you live...*

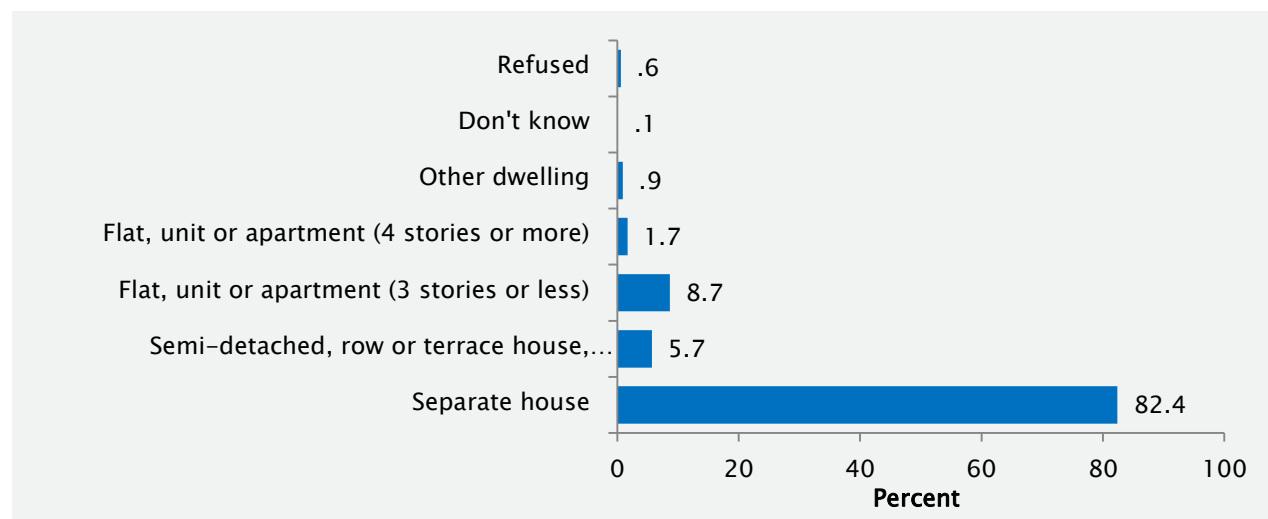
Figure 122: Q22 Is the dwelling in which you live (n=2006)



### 8.1.9 Dwelling - type

*Question 23: What best describes the household in which you live?*

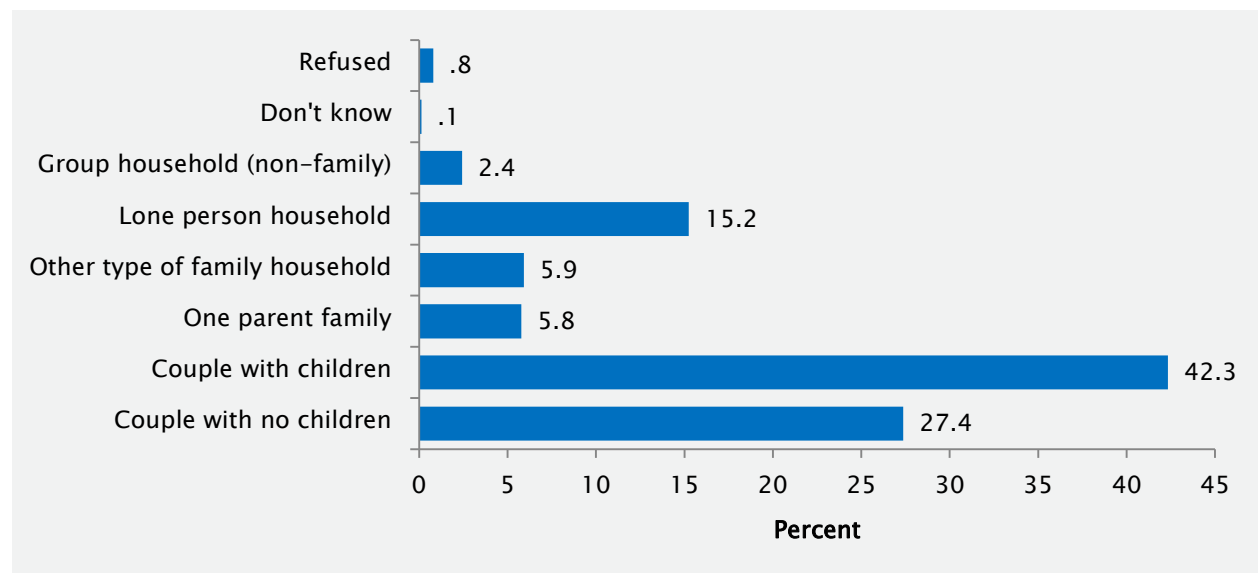
Figure 123: Q23 What best describes the household in which you live? (n=2006)



#### 8.1.10 Household - type

*Question 24: What best describes the household in which you live?*

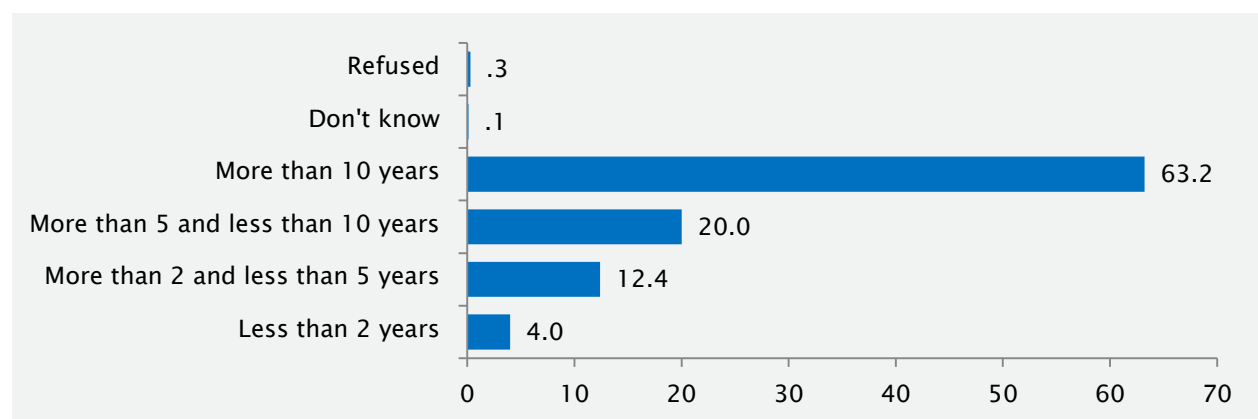
Figure 124: Q24 What best describes the household in which you live? (n=2006)



#### 8.1.11 Length of residency in local area

*Question 25: How long have you lived in your local area?*

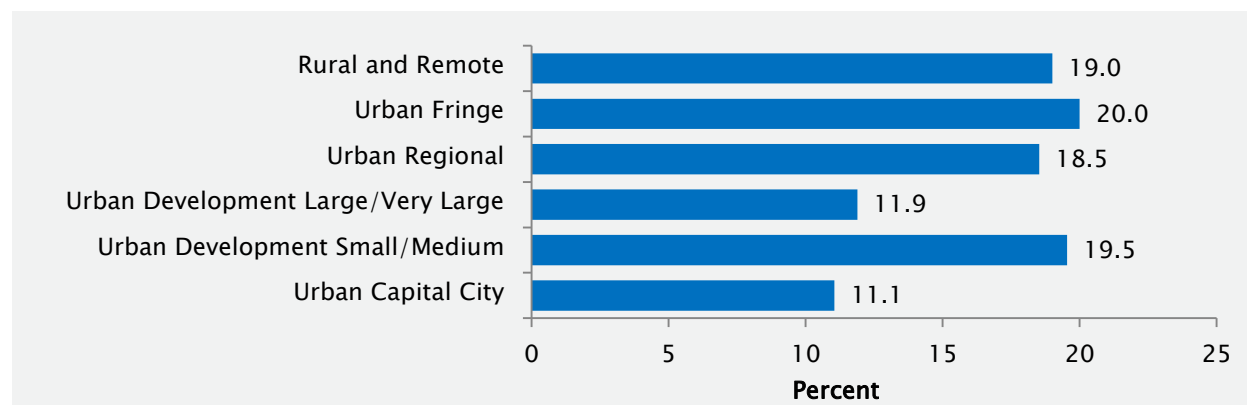
Figure 125: Q25 How long have you lived in your local area? (n=2006)



### 8.1.12 Australian classification of local government

Quotas were established so that six different types of local government classifications would be represented in the respondent sample in adequate numbers to enable comparisons between their responses to questions in the survey. The local government categories are based on the Australian Classifications of Local Government. A guide to this classification system can be found in Appendix E.

**Figure 126: Respondents by their local government classifications**



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## Appendix A Survey instrument



Q.1 In the past 12 months, have you been actively involved in any service club or sporting, social, welfare, emergency services or recreation group in your community? Yes/No

Q.2 Thinking about your local area, which of the following people are part of your community? *Multiple answers possible*

- a) Ratepayers
- b) Renters
- c) Students
- d) People who work in the area

Q.3 Thinking about the role of government in the provision of services to the community, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*Strongly agree*

*Moderately agree*

*Slightly agree*

*Slightly disagree*

*Moderately disagree*

*Strongly disagree*

1. Communities need to work with experts and public servants to make good decisions about what services they need
2. I want government to involve me in making decisions about what services are delivered in my local area
3. Governments and communities should make decisions together about how services are delivered
4. Government should only provide services where the private sector doesn't
5. The market should decide what services are delivered based on levels of demand
6. The private sector delivers the best value services
7. There is a role for government in providing any of the services the community needs
8. There are some things like health care and education that governments should deliver
9. My taxes should only pay for basic services
10. I am prepared to pay more taxes to get a broader range of public services
11. The people who work in government have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed in my area
12. Service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered
13. People who are using a particular service will know best how much of that service is needed
14. Communities know enough to make good decisions about what services they need
15. Decisions about how services are delivered in my area should be made primarily on value for money
16. I want governments to deliver services that contribute to a healthier and fairer society
17. The government of my local area has enough ability to deliver services by itself
18. There are some services that governments can provide at a higher quality than the private sector
19. Government should be advocating for the needs of my local community

20. Government should focus on providing only basic services
21. Governments should use a mixture of public, private and not-for-profit organisations to deliver public services in my area
22. There are times when government exceeds my expectations
23. Governments should to work with each other and other service providers to provide local services
24. Government delivers the best quality services
25. It is acceptable for services in one area to be delivered differently to services in another area

Q.4 How important is each of the following in your life

*Not at all important; slightly important; moderately important; very important, extremely important*

- a. Family
- b. Friends
- c. Leisure time
- d. Politics
- e. Work
- f. Religion
- g. Study

Q.5 What political party do you normally vote for, or most identify with? *[don't read out list?]*

- a) Liberal
- b) National
- c) Labor
- d) Greens
- e) Other (please specify)
- f) None – change from election to election

Q.6 Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means “no choice at all” and 10 means “a great deal of choice”, how much freedom of choice and control do you have over the way your life turns out?

Q.7. Thinking about the local area in which you live, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*Strongly agree*

*Moderately agree*

*Slightly agree*

*Slightly disagree*

*Moderately disagree*

*Strongly disagree*

1. There is something about the landscape around me that makes me feel good
2. It reflects the type of person I am
3. The area in which I live has the qualities I value
4. I feel part of the history of the place
5. I feel at home there
6. The area in which I live is full of important memories and stories

7. I feel connected locally to friends and neighbours
8. Living there makes me feel good about myself
9. I feel a cultural connection to the area

Q.8 Thinking about the local area in which you live, how important are each of the following to you?

*Not at all important; slightly important; moderately important; very important, extremely important*

1. Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces
2. Availability of appropriate public services
3. Availability of good schools
4. Availability of healthcare
5. A supportive and cohesive community
6. Job opportunities
7. A positive economic outlook
8. Availability of good home or aged care
9. Convenient public transport
10. Good quality roads and bridges
11. Being able to afford appropriate housing
12. Levels of water, air and noise pollution
13. Shops located close-by that are suitable to my needs
14. A safe environment
15. Being close to my family

Q.9 Thinking about the local area in which you are currently living, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the provision of each of the following?

*Strongly satisfied*

*Moderately satisfied*

*Slightly satisfied*

*Slightly dissatisfied*

*Moderately dissatisfied*

*Strongly dissatisfied*

1. Recreational areas such as parks, walking tracks, open spaces
2. Availability of appropriate public services
3. Availability of good schools
4. Availability of healthcare
5. A supportive and cohesive community
6. Job opportunities
7. A positive economic outlook
8. Availability of good home or aged care
9. Convenient public transport
10. Good quality roads and bridges

- 11. Being able to afford appropriate housing
- 12. Levels of water, air and noise pollution
- 13. Shops located close-by that are suitable to my needs
- 14. A safe environment
- 15. Being close to family

Q.10 Thinking about where you live, which level of government is best able to make decisions about your local area

- a. Local government
- b. State government
- c. Federal government

Q.11 What is the name of your local council/shire?

- a. Correct
- b. Not completely wrong
- c. Wrong
- d. DK

Q.12 What is the name of the Mayor/President of your local Council/Shire? *Open*

- a) Correct
- b) Not *completely* wrong – good attempt, recognisable but not actually correct
- c) Wrong
- d) DK
- e) Abuse?

Q.13. I'm going to read out a list of different things that local governments can do. How important it is to you that local government does each of these things.

*Not at all important; slightly important; moderately important; very important, extremely important*

- a. Water, sewage, stormwater, drainage
- b. Roads and bridges
- c. Parks
- d. Footpaths
- e. Cycleways
- f. Land use planning and development applications
- g. Street cleaning and waste management
- h. Health and environmental management
- i. Child Care
- j. Aged Care
- k. Emergency and disaster management
- l. Libraries
- m. Sporting and recreation facilities
- n. Arts and culture
- o. Economic development
- p. Youth services
- q. Community development
- r. Planning for the future
- s. Promoting the benefits of the local area

Q.14. Thinking about the previous question, are there any things that your local area doesn't currently have, that you would like? *Open*

Q.15. Imagine that your local government is to be merged or amalgamated with another to form a new local government area. For each of the following, tell me if the amalgamation would make each of the following things much better, better, no different, worse or much worse?

- a) How my interests are represented by councillors
- b) My feeling of belonging to the local area
- c) The way services are delivered
- d) The cost to me for local services

- e) The cost of council rates
- f) My sense of local community

Q7a. Are you male or female?

- a. Male
- b. Female

Q16. In what year were you born? *Open*

Q17. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- a. No, English only
- b. Yes, Which? (Specify)

Q18. What is the highest level of educational qualification you have completed?

- a. School education level
- b. Certificate level
- c. Diploma and Advanced Diploma level
- d. Bachelor degree level
- e. Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma level
- f. Postgraduate Degree level

Q19. What is the total combined income of everyone in your household, before tax and other deductions? Please include income from all sources including wages, investments and government pensions and benefits.

- a. Less than \$10,000
- b. \$10,000 to \$19,999
- c. \$20,000 to \$29,999
- d. \$30,000 to \$39,999
- e. \$40,000 to \$49,999
- f. \$50,000 to \$59,999
- g. \$60,000 to \$69,999
- h. \$70,000 to \$79,999
- i. \$80,000 to \$89,999
- j. \$90,000 to \$99,999
- k. \$100,000 to \$149,999
- l. \$150,000 to \$199,000
- m. \$200,000 to \$299,000
- n. \$300,000 or more
- o. Refuse

Q20. Are you currently...?

- a. Employed for wages
- b. Self-employed
- c. Out of work and looking for work
- d. Out of work but not currently looking for work
- e. A homemaker
- f. A student
- g. Retired
- h. Unable to work

*If answered a,b,c above (working)*

Q21. Are you currently working for the government, a public institution or a non-profit organisation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q22. Is the dwelling in which you live

- a. Mortgaged or owned outright
- b. Being rented
- c. Other

Q23. Is the dwelling in which you live a

- a. Separate house
- b. Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc
- c. Flat, unit or apartment (3 stories or less)

- d. Flat, unit or apartment (4 stories or more)
- e. Other dwelling

Q24. What best describes the household in which you live

- a. Couple with no children
- b. Couple with children
- c. One parent family
- d. Other type of family household
- e. Lone person household
- f. Group household (non-family)

Q25. How long have you lived in your local area

- a. Less than 2 years
- b. More than 2 and less than 5 years
- c. More than 5 and less than 10 years
- d. More than 10 years

The respondent's LGA was noted (from list meta-data) and coded to the following council classifications

- 1. Urban Capital City
- 2. Urban Development Small/Medium
- 3. Urban Development Large/Very Large
- 4. Urban Regional
- 5. Urban Fringe
- 6. Rural

## **Appendix B Table of evidence based on the literature review**

Research literature summarised in the table below is categorised according to whether it reports on Australian studies (7 studies), international studies (5 studies), or studies focusing on specific aspects of local council activity, rather than local governments themselves (2 studies).

**Table 2: Table of evidence – studies which focus on exploring citizen attitudes towards local government**

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
<b>Australian studies</b>				
<b>Elton Consulting (2010)</b>  <b>Australia</b>	<p>To review recent community surveys and polling on the role, expectations and performance of local government in Australia.</p> <p>The study was undertaken in order to provide advice to the Independent Local Government Review Panel in NSW.</p>	<p>Review of recent surveys and polling conducted on local government in Australia. The key questions in the Panel's terms of reference are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>– What are the community's views on local councils' abilities to support current and future needs of the local community?</i></li> <li><i>– Do local councils deliver services and infrastructure efficiently and effectively and in a timely manner?</i></li> <li><i>– In what circumstances would the community be prepared to pay more for a higher level of service?</i></li> <li><i>– How important is local representation</i></li> </ul>	<p>Many local governments in NSW conduct surveys of residents. These focus for the most part on community satisfaction with the services and facilities provided by the local government.</p> <p>In Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria, statewide surveys on services, facilities and other issues relating to councils are carried out on a regular basis by state governments or local government associations.</p> <p>In addition to regular surveys, specific polls relating to council services and other issues have been carried out, particularly in</p>	<p>Drawing on all the surveys and polls reviewed for the study, the researchers put forward the following common themes that are investigated in local government surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– service and infrastructure delivery e.g. waste, roads, libraries</li> <li>– perceptions of financial sustainability</li> <li>– local representation and decision making</li> <li>– boundary changes.</li> </ul> <p>There are gaps in the available data relating to: the importance of development assessment and planning; councils' abilities</p>



Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		<p><i>and community input into decision making by local councils for the services they provide?</i></p> <p><i>– What are the community's views of local council boundary changes?</i></p>	South Australia.	to support the future needs of communities; perceived ability of local councils to deliver services and infrastructure efficiently and timeously; perceived ability of councils to deliver more locally specific services and infrastructure; willingness of communities to pay more for higher levels of service; the importance of local representation to communities; and gaining a clearer understanding of views relating to boundary changes.
<p><b>JWS Research (2012)</b></p> <p><b>Victoria</b></p> <p><b>The study, conducted every year, is auspiced by the Victorian Department of Community Planning and Development.</b></p>	<p>To assess the performance of Victorian local councils across a range of measures and to seek insight into ways to provide improved or more effective service delivery.</p> <p>For the 2012 study, significant changes were</p>	<p>Survey using computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) of a random probability sample of residents aged 18 and over.</p> <p>N=29,384</p> <p>An Index Score (out of 100) is calculated.</p>	<p>Across Victoria, 61% of residents have had contact with their local government in the last 12 months.</p> <p>The Overall Performance Index Score was calculated as 60/100. The Inner Metropolitan group achieved the highest rating</p>	<p>The majority of residents state that there is room for improvement for their council. Rate rises versus service cuts results indicate that ratepayers expect councils to live within their current means.</p> <p>Since local governments</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
	made to the methodology and content of the survey, making comparisons with prior studies difficult. The 2012 study can thus be considered a benchmark.	<p>Councils were categorised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– inner metropolitan</li> <li>– outer metropolitan</li> <li>– rural cities and regional centres</li> <li>– large rural shires</li> <li>– small rural shires</li> </ul>	<p>of 66, while the Large Rural Shires group rated the lowest, at 56. On Overall Performance, 18–34 year olds (rating 65), women aged 18–49 (62), women generally (61) and 65+ year olds all rated above average.</p> <p>Other core performance measures were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 71/100 for Customer Service</li> <li>– 57/100 for Community Consultation and Engagement</li> <li>– 55/100 for Advocacy</li> <li>– 52/100 for Overall Council Direction.</li> </ul> <p>Council Direction was a particular issue of concern for many respondents. The Large and Small Rural Shires groups rated the lowest (48 and 50 respectively), while the Outer and Inner Metropolitan groups rated</p>	score lower on their Overall Performance ratings on measures relating to Community Consultation and Engagement, Advocacy and Council Direction, these are indicative areas for improvement.

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			above average (55 and 54 respectively).	
<b>Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) (2011)</b>  <b>Queensland</b>	<p>To explore community satisfaction with local government services in Queensland.</p> <p>The LGAQ has been conducting this study periodically since 1997.</p>	<p>Telephone surveys of a random cross-section of 700 households.</p> <p>The methodology looks at the importance of a function or service to the community (on a 5-point scale) and the perception of how well council is performing in each (also on a 5-point scale). This enables scores between 1 and 5 to be calculated for participants' ratings of the importance of, and council's performance in, each parameter. It also enables a calculation to be made of the 'gap' between the two.</p> <p>The parameters evaluated were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– basic services and infrastructure</li> <li>– community lifestyle services</li> <li>– managing the shire/city</li> </ul>	<p>The results for 2011 reveal that there has been a marginal increase in the perceived importance of each theme or parameter since 2009. Performance scores show a drop in satisfaction since 2005, 2007 and 2009.</p> <p>Basic services – no services rated below the 'important' score of 4 (mean of 4.49). Overall performance was rated as 'fair' (mean of 3.28) and no element achieved a rating above 4. The gap between importance and performance for Road Maintenance is 1.77 (1.29 in 2009), the highest recorded for any element across all themes and surveys.</p> <p>Community lifestyle – the mean score was</p>	<p>The methodology provides a model for measuring community perceptions of the importance of a local government function and how well a council is performing each function. Since surveys occur periodically, comparisons are possible over time.</p> <p>Infrastructure services are seen by citizens as extremely important, but the perceived performance of these services declined in the 2011 survey.</p> <p>The manner in which local governments engage with their communities continues to receive a relatively low score, but the gap between perceived importance and perceived performance has increased in</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– customer service and communication</li> <li>– qualities of council (councillors, managers, outdoor workers, indoor staff)</li> </ul>	<p>4.14, with Community Safety highest in importance (4.41). Performance was rated as 'fair' (mean of 3.44).</p> <p>Managing the Shire/City – the mean score for the items was 4.37, with Financial Management (4.63) and Town Planning (4.53) the highest. Overall performance was 'fair' (mean of 3.10). Financial Management had a gap of 1.57.</p> <p>Customer service – ranked as important (mean of 4.37). Overall performance was ranked at a mean of 3.19, down from 3.55 in 2005. The gap was highest for Responding to the Community (1.66) and Consulting the Community (1.64).</p> <p>Qualities of council – the Quality of Elected Council was highest in</p>	<p>successive surveys.</p> <p>A significant drop has been measured in public satisfaction with Financial Management and Revenue-raising, which is an issue of concern.</p> <p>With 35% of respondents from amalgamated councils saying their council is performing worse than before, there is a need to build bridges with people in affected communities who opposed the changes.</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			importance (4.57), and this parameter also received the lowest performance rating (3.15), producing a gap of 1.43, higher than 1.16 in 2009.	
<p><b>Crime and Misconduct Commission, Queensland (2011)</b></p> <p><b>Queensland</b></p> <p>This is a periodic survey (the <i>Public Attitudes Survey</i>) which has been conducted by the Crime and Misconduct Commission since 1991</p>	<p>To draw on the <i>Public Attitudes Survey</i> to summarise community responses to local governments and to identify trends over time.</p> <p>The focus of the analysis was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– experiences with local government employees</li> <li>– general perceptions of local government employees, including behaviour, integrity and misconduct</li> <li>– public opinion on, and confidence in, complaints processes.</li> </ul>	<p>Survey based on a representative sample of the Queensland public.</p> <p>N=1,529 (29% response rate, lower than in previous years).</p> <p>For the purposes of the study, Queensland was divided into five regions, with the breakdown of respondents as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brisbane – 33%</li> <li>South-east – 17%</li> <li>South-west – 17%</li> <li>Central – 17%</li> <li>North – 17%</li> </ul>	<p>41% of respondents reported some contact with a local government employee at some stage in their life. Perceptions of local government employees are generally positive, and this is consistent with previous surveys. 87% of respondents believe that employees 'behave well' and 84% believe that employees are honest.</p> <p>Almost two-thirds of respondents who made a complaint (62%) were dissatisfied with how it was handled, which is an increase from the 2008 survey. Respondents are</p>	<p>Australians generally expect that encounters with government employees will be accessible, efficient and effective. The nature of an employee's interactions with the public is clearly important in shaping public perceptions of local government employees.</p> <p>Public perceptions of complaints-processing systems could be improved by informing the public about the internal mechanisms that local governments have in place to prevent, detect and investigate misconduct; and by amending their</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			<p>more likely to report dissatisfaction with a local government employee as a result of unfriendly, rude or arrogant manner, or employee's lack of concern, care or interest.</p> <p>Most respondents (86%) believed there will always be some corruption in local government, and half the respondents (49%) believed that not enough is being done about corruption in local government.</p> <p>Consistent with previous surveys, two-thirds of respondents (64%) disagreed with the statement <i>'There is no point reporting corruption in local government because nothing useful will be done about it.'</i></p>	complaints-processing systems and protocols.
<b>Myriad Research (2011)</b>	To obtain a valid measure of citizen satisfaction for a range of core	Telephone survey with a representative sample of	Satisfaction with councils' overall performance (49%) is markedly lower	Based on the responses to this survey, Tasmanians

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
<p><b>Tasmania</b></p> <p><b>Conducted on behalf of the Local government Association Tasmania (LGAT). The benchmark study was conducted in 2000.</b></p>	<p>council services, activities and programs, compare results with previous years' findings, and identify broad areas for improvement.</p> <p>The study also aimed to assess community views in relation to local government in the Australian Constitution and direct federal funding</p>	<p>randomly selected Tasmanian residents aged 18 and over (N=1,210).</p> <p>Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the level of service provided by their council in relation to each aspect on a 5-point scale.</p> <p>Respondents were classified at the geographical level as resident in a city council, other urban council or rural council; and also as to whether they were from the north, north-west or south of the state.</p>	<p>than in previous years. Satisfaction with overall performance is similar for the three regions of the state.</p> <p>The highest rankings in terms of resident satisfaction (all above 80% satisfied) were given to physical access to council buildings, customer service (staff courtesy, attitude and presentation), and household garbage collection. The lowest rankings (all below 40% satisfied) were for local roads (safety, maintenance), the consistency and appropriateness of planning and development processes, and resident involvement in local decision-making.</p> <p>Two in three respondents felt that it was important for local government to be recognised</p>	<p>demonstrate a real interest in local government issues (90% of respondents indicated availability for follow-up contact).</p> <p>Local governments may need to pay more attention to the involvement of resident in local decision-making; planning/development; local roads; and the collection of household hazardous waste. Road maintenance was regarded as the main area for improvement and for priority over the next two years.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for councils to improve communication to local residents about the range of individual services provided. With the rural result well below the urban result for overall performance, this may be even more important for</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			<p>in the Australian Constitution.</p> <p>Close to 80% of respondents thought that it was important that the federal government should be able to directly fund local government.</p>	rural councils.
<p><b>Gray and Brown (2008)</b></p> <p><b>Australia</b></p>	To explore the relationship between public perceptions of regions, governance and the federal system in Australia	<p>A national telephone survey was carried out (N=1,201) based on a stratified random sample process which involved a quota being set for each capital city and non-capital city area.</p> <p>The survey was carried out by Newspoll during May 2008.</p> <p>The interview schedule was designed following focus groups held in three locations in NSW.</p>	<p>Respondents' 'sense of belonging' to their local areas was 83.6%, less than that toward their state/territory (89.1%) or to Australia as a nation (94.6%).</p> <p>The majority of respondents believed that democracy works very well (27.7%) or quite well (53.1%) in Australia. There was less support for the proposition that the federal system of government works well in Australia, with 23.7% saying it did not work very well and 6.5% saying it did not work well at all.</p> <p>Satisfaction with</p>	<p>Although focused in large part of respondents' views on regional governance, this study some provides evidence that perceptions of Australians towards local government are less favourable than either the state/territory or national tiers of the federation.</p> <p>Over half of the respondents perceive themselves as living in a region and a sense of belonging to a region is just as strong as their sense of belonging to locality.</p>



Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			<p>each level of government was measured – more respondents (35.3%) rated the local level as being the least effective in doing its job.</p> <p>Almost half of the respondent would like to keep a three-tier system of government, and 12% would like a four-tiered system, with regional governments as well as state and local governments.</p>	
<b>McGregor Tan Research (2006)</b> <b>South Australia</b>	To investigate beliefs regarding the role of local services and local governments	<p>The study was undertaken as part of the <i>McGregor Tan Omnibus Survey</i></p> <p>Five questions were asked of residents aged 18 and over in South Australia</p> <p>N=403</p> <p>Participants rated on a 5-point scale (5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree) their level of agreement with a number of</p>	<p>67% of survey respondents believed that their local councils should have a greater say in how state and federal governments' public services and activities, such as public transport, health, community services and education are planned and coordinated. This result was in line with the 2003 survey (66%).</p> <p>There was a very</p>	<p>The findings show that more than half of the respondents believed that their local councils were the best placed tier of government to provide a number of services, including libraries, home care services for the elderly, the monitoring and policing of pollution, crime prevention or neighbourhood watch and</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		statements relating to revenue and the provision of services.	<p>high level of agreement (average rating of 4.2 out of 5) that state and federal governments should share more of their revenue with local councils.</p> <p>Two thirds (65%) of respondents were unable to name any council services that would be better provided by state or federal governments.</p>	childcare services.
<b>International studies</b>				
<b>Ipsos Social Research Institute (2010)</b>  <b>International</b>	<p>To provide a snapshot of the relationship between attitudes towards local (municipal) government and key social outcomes across the world.</p> <p>The study, drawing upon data from the <i>Ipsos Global Advisor Survey</i>, looked at how satisfied people are with their local area and their local government, what drives this satisfaction, and</p>	<p>The methodology is described as 'municipal research', which is a way of understanding citizens' attitudes towards their local area, and ultimately a contribution towards improving their quality of life.</p> <p>The survey was conducted online in 22 countries, including Australia.</p>	<p>Satisfaction with 'local areas as a place to live' and with local government are closely related i.e. countries whose people have high satisfaction with their area tend to also have higher satisfaction with their local government. Establishing cause and effect is not possible.</p> <p>Together with the Netherlands and Canada, Australian respondents</p>	<p>The overall message from the research is that local authorities need to ask citizens what they want, and then tell them what they are doing to achieve it. Core aspects of public services, such as crime reduction, affordable housing, health care, clean streets and public transport are all important in making somewhere a good place to live.</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
	what local services can do about it.	<p>N= 22,000</p> <p>Questions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Overall, how satisfied are you with your local area as a place in which to live?</i></li> <li>– <i>Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with the way your local council runs things?</i></li> <li>– <i>What are the things that are important in making a place a good place to live?</i></li> <li>– <i>What are the things that most need improving in your community?</i></li> </ul>	<p>showed the highest level of satisfaction with both their local areas and their local governments.</p> <p>Perceptions of quality of life are related to contextual factors that are not always in the direct control of local government and services. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Within the total sample, there is little correlation between feeling able to influence decisions and satisfaction with local government, although Australia shows a correlation in this respect.</li> <li>– Satisfaction with local government rises as perceptions of corruption fall.</li> <li>– Residents in countries where there is a high level of perceived community cohesion, including</li> </ul>	<p>On the basis of the study, the researchers put forward a ‘model of municipal government reputation’. The model draws together drivers that service leaders can control, such as the value for money that a local authority offers, and those that they cannot, such as levels of deprivation or diversity within the area they serve.</p> <p>Understanding what drives satisfaction with local government can be categorised into six dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– overall service quality</li> <li>– direct communication and engagement</li> <li>– perceived value for money and/or absence of corruption</li> <li>– clean, safe and strong communities, which create a</li> </ul>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			<p>Australia, are more likely to be satisfied with their local area.</p> <p>The top priorities for local improvement for the Australian respondents were level of crime (36%); road and pavement repairs (35%); and job prospects (33%).</p>	<p>sense of 'liveability'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– media coverage</li> <li>– background factors such as affluence and diversity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>James (2010)</b></p> <p><b>United Kingdom (UK)</b></p>	To evaluate the effects of information cues about local government performance on citizens' perceptions and attitudes towards local government	<p>A field experiment and two laboratory experiments (which could be classified as randomised controlled trials) were conducted in Exeter, UK.</p> <p>Citizens were randomly allocated to groups that were given different cues about local government performance i.e. information cues about the overall relatively good or bad performance of an English local government unit relative to other local governments in England.</p> <p>Participants were</p>	<p>An information cue about relatively good performance raises citizens' assessment of performance. Information about relatively bad performance lowers perceived performance. Information about relatively good performance raises satisfaction and information about relatively bad performance lowers satisfaction.</p> <p>There was insufficient evidence for the effects of information cues on citizens' intentions to vote for the local</p>	<p>Information about the relative performance of local government matters to citizens. If contributes to them shifting their views about performance and influencing their satisfaction with local government services.</p> <p>Giving citizens a simple summary information cue is a low cost way of improving their knowledge and helping to inform their attitudes.</p> <p>Future research could assess the effects of different forms of performance information in</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		then asked how they judged the performance of the local government compared with other local governments of the same type.	incumbent, and thus direct effects on citizens' intention to vote for the local incumbent were not evident. Instead, the results suggested that the cue about 'good performance' is more influential on the perceptions and satisfaction of citizens who already supported the incumbent.	different service contexts coming from different information sources.
<b>Piotrowski &amp; van Ryzin (2008)</b>  <b>United States of America (USA)</b>	To investigate citizens' demands for transparency at the local level.  The study questions were:  – <i>How can we measure citizens' desire for transparency and what are the dimensions to such a demand?</i>  – <i>What personal and contextual factors are correlated with variation in the level of demand for governmental transparency?</i>	Online survey conducted in 2005; participants were members of an online research resource created to provide a general population of volunteers to participate in surveys about local community issues and government performance (thus not a random population sample)  N = 1,819  Transparency was analysed	Fiscal transparency – the more confidence individuals have in their local officials, the lower their demand for fiscal transparency.  Health and safety – being female was the strongest determinant of the desire for health and safety information.  Demand for transparency based on principle is motivated largely by general concerns or	Citizens' desires for transparency at the local level can be measured and analysed on the basis of the following dimensions:  – demand for fiscal transparency  – health and safety information  – principled transparency (disclosing information and operating in the open)  – transparency around

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		<p>according to four levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– demand for fiscal transparency</li> <li>– health and safety information</li> <li>– principled transparency</li> <li>– good governance.</li> </ul>	<p>suspensions about the current practices of government with respect to disclosing information and operating in the open, and none of the demographic variables proved to be statistically significant.</p> <p>Good governance – age, a college education, and political engagement are all positively related to demand for good government transparency.</p>	<p>governance.</p> <p>A range of personal and contextual factors are correlated with measured variations in demands for transparency, including age, gender, level of education, access to government, confidence in local officials, political ideology and political engagement.</p>
<p><b>Glaser &amp; Denhardt (2000)</b></p> <p><b>USA</b></p>	<p>To assess local government performance through the eyes of citizens.</p> <p>The key aim was to better understand what drives citizen perceptions of local government performance.</p>	<p>Mailed survey to registered voters of a county in Florida.</p> <p>N= 1,800 (25% response rate)</p> <p>The analysis used a stepwise multiple regression model to produce a series of prioritised list of predictors of local government performance. This technique loads independent variables into the</p>	<p>The survey made a distinction between ‘controllables’, described as the variables that can be affected by local government itself (such as information flow) and ‘non-controllables’, that is the trends and events which are beyond the control of local government (such as broad social and economic concerns).</p>	<p>In general, the nature of public products makes citizen assessments difficult, and government performance is value-laden. Citizens who have negative views of federal or state government may characterise local government similarly.</p> <p>The most important element in defining citizen perception of local</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		model based on the magnitude of their contributions to explaining variation in the dependent variable (how citizens feel about the performance of local government).	<p>Responsiveness (interest in what citizens have to say and honouring citizen values) was found to be the most important contributor to citizen perceptions. This is a 'controllable' variable i.e. subject to the control of local government.</p> <p>With the exception of responsiveness, the most important drivers of citizen perceptions of local government are not easily controlled by government, namely quality of life, economic conditions, race relations and expected economic improvement of the area.</p> <p>Other 'controllable' items, such as the extent to which citizens believe media accurately present issues involving council and the frequency of contacting</p>	<p>government performance is responsiveness, classified as a 'controllable' item. This suggests that in order to effectively improve the relationship with citizens, local government must honour citizen values by demonstrating that it listens to them and acts on what it hears.</p> <p>Many of the conditions that help to explain citizen perceptions of local government performance cannot be easily manipulated by local government, yet citizens may be prepared to hold local government responsible for quality of life issues, including economic and social concerns.</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			councils, were found to be less influential in driving perceptions.	
<p><b>Donnelly, Wisniewski, Dalrymple, &amp; Curry (1995)</b></p> <p>UK</p>	To explore the use of the SERVQUAL approach to measuring service quality in local government	<p>The report is not based on empirical research, but on the application of a model which has been used to measure service quality in other areas.</p> <p>The SERVQUAL approach identifies five major dimensions on the basis of which customers evaluate service quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– tangibles</li> <li>– reliability</li> <li>– responsiveness</li> <li>– assurance</li> <li>– empathy.</li> </ul>	<p>The researchers discussed the suitability of this model for research into local government.</p> <p>Early results of studies applying the SERVQUAL approach to public sector organisations in the UK indicate that managers frequently over-estimate customer expectations.</p> <p>An adequate understanding of customer expectations as well as their past experiences can allow managerial judgment to be exercised from a position of knowledge rather than guesswork in respect of managing public expectations and resources.</p>	<p>The SERVQUAL model can be used to investigate gaps in the process of service delivery in meeting customer expectations in respect of local government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>service quality gap</b> – gap between customer expectations of the service and perceived service delivered</li> <li>– <b>Understanding gap</b> – gap between customer expectations and management perceptions of what these customer expectations are</li> <li>– <b>Design gap</b> – gap between management's understanding of customer expectations and the design and specification of service quality</li> <li>– <b>Delivery gap</b> –</li> </ul>



Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
				<p>gap between specification of service quality and actual quality of service delivered</p> <p>–</p> <p><b>Communications gap</b> – gap between what is actually delivered and what has been promised in terms of external communications such as media and customer contracts.</p>
<b>Studies focusing on specific aspects of local government functions</b>				
<p><b>MacLennan, Kypri, Langley &amp; Room (2012)</b></p> <p><b>New Zealand</b></p>	<p>Within the context of New Zealand's Local Government Act 2002, which states the purpose of local government as facilitating public decision-making and promoting community wellbeing, the study aimed to describe public sentiment towards alcohol and local government alcohol policies</p>	<p>Cross-sectional survey of residents aged 18 years and over in a diverse set of New Zealand communities (3 rural towns, 3 provincial centres and 2 major metropolitan areas).</p> <p>N=1,372 (59% response rate)</p> <p>Use was made of a self-administered written questionnaire.</p>	<p>In six of the seven communities, the alcohol-related issue considered to be the biggest problem was youth drinking, followed by vandalism, dangerous driving and family violence. The majority of respondents in each area agreed that their local government had a major role to play in ensuring the health and wellbeing of the community and in promoting healthy lifestyles amongst</p>	<p>Many residents in the areas surveyed believe that alcohol plays a major role in a range of problems in their communities and are not supportive of the prevailing liberal alcohol policies in New Zealand.</p> <p>Local governments would be acting in accordance with public opinion if they adopted strategies shown to be effective in reducing alcohol-related harm, such as</p>

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
			<p>citizens.</p> <p>Support for local governments to restrict the number of alcohol outlets in the community was moderate (range: 27–49%). Controls receiving the most support were limiting the operating hours of on–licence premises, the use of liquor bans to control drinking in public places, and stricter enforcement of liquor laws by licencing staff and police.</p>	controlling outlet numbers and density. This would be aided by more enabling central government legislation, because currently by–laws are open to judicial challenge and could be enforced only by prosecution or seeking an injunction.
<b>Orr &amp; West (2007)</b> <b>USA</b>	To examine whether public assessments about local police are linked more to people’s direct experience with crime and the police or whether such impressions are associated with more abstract attitudes about politics and law enforcement	<p>Telephone survey of residents of Providence, Rhode Island aged 18 and older</p> <p>N=509</p> <p>Statistical tests were carried out to test the relationship amongst variables.</p> <p>Symbolic attitudes were measured by indicators designed to measure broad and abstract</p>	Three factors were significantly linked to police performance ratings – age (older people more positive); victims were more likely than non–victims to rate performance negatively; and individuals who held that the job of police was conflict resolution as opposed to law enforcement (more negative ratings).	Policing is not a local government function in Australia, but this study provides evidence that personal experience matters when it comes to concrete, salient and personal issues at the local level. Local government is the level of the public sector closest to the people and individuals at that level are the ones

Author(s) and location	Objective(s)	Methodology	Key Findings	Implications
		<p>conceptions of belief systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– political party identification</li> <li>– political ideology</li> <li>– views on the strictness of police</li> <li>– preferred role orientation for police officers (law enforcement or conflict resolution).</li> </ul>	<p>Personal experience mattered more than symbolic attitudes when it came to views about police courtesy and fairness. The more personal experience individuals had with crime, the more likely they were to say the police were not courteous or fair, and none of the symbolic attitudes affected their assessments of fairness and courtesy.</p> <p>Both personal experience and symbolic attitudes were important in regard to opinions about the seriousness of crime and assessments of overall police performance.</p>	<p>most likely to let their personal experiences affect their view of government.</p> <p>At the local level, there is less room for ideological game playing or public relations strategies involving general feelings about government. Officials will be held accountable based on how they deliver services to residents. This should be a pleasing result for democratic governance – public officials control the fate of the public opinion held towards them on the basis of the manner in which they provide citizens with good services.</p>

## Appendix C Methodology

The survey involved 2,006 computer aided telephone interviews with people aged 18 years and over from all states and territories of Australia (with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory which does not have a local government structure).

A gender quota was established in proportion to the Australian population. Age quotas were set to match the Australian population within six groups 18–29; 30–39; 40–49; 50–59; 60–69; and 70 and over). Additionally, quotas for the type of local government in which each respondent resides were set in order to allow for meaningful comparisons to be made, particularly between those living in regional and remote areas; regional urban areas; and the capital city/urban development areas. It is important to note that these quotas were based on local government type, not the proportion of the population resident in each local government category.

The survey results have been post-weighted by age and gender. Figures for the Australian population based on the 2011 Census were used.

Gender	Unweighted n	Weighted n	Weighted %	NSW population 2011 %
<b>Male</b>	919	979	48.8	48.9
<b>Female</b>	1087	1026	51.2	51.1

Age	Unweighted n	Weighted n	Weighted %	NSW population 2011 %
<b>18–29</b>	156	429	21.4	21.4
<b>30–39</b>	284	361	18.0	18.0
<b>40–49</b>	363	370	18.5	18.5
<b>50–59</b>	457	333	16.6	16.6
<b>60–69</b>	380	258	12.9	12.9
<b>70 +</b>	366	254	12.7	12.7

The average interview length was 26.4 minutes (median length 24.2 minutes).

## Appendix D Conceptual framework

# Why Local Government Matters – Conceptual Framework v.2

Stedman 2003: Sense of place measures: Identity (how strongly I perceive my linkage to the setting to be) & place satisfaction (degree of like or dislike for the setting)

Stephenson 2010: Culture and identity are not just about social relationships but are profoundly spatial.

Savage 2010: Claim of place [is] a fusion of aesthetic, emotional and instrumental attachment

## Dimensions of relationships to place

### INSTRUMENTAL (satisfaction for Stedman?)

- Recreational areas, sporting facilities
- Services
- Proximity to work
- Schools, childcare, home/aged care
- Public transport
- Roads and bridges
- Footpaths/cyclepaths
- Available cultural facilities/opportunities to participate
- Proximity to family
- Availability of housing (quality, size, cost)
- Social environment (levels of crime, racial tension)
- Pollution (noise, air, water etc)
- Parking
- Suitability for older/families/people with disabilities etc
- Economic opportunities

Stedman 2003: place dependence = instrumentality of a place to serve needs (based on other authors)

Twigger-Ross and Uzzell 1996: concept of identity linked to self-efficacy – measure of personal agency; can carry out chosen activities; convenience; not threatened

### AESTHETIC Attachment (influences across instrumental and emotional?)

- Environmental and natural features and characteristics (Stedman 2003:673)
- Feeling, emotional responses
- Historic structures and features
- Contemporary structures and features (Stephenson 2010:12, qualitative coding)

Stephenson 2010 quoting Dakin 2003: aesthetic responses to landscape not just about visual features, but an emotional response, memory of the past and 'ecologically healthy' all at the same time

### EMOTIONAL (Attachment for Stedman?)

#### IDENTITY:

- **Self-esteem:** a boost from the qualities of the place
- **Distinctiveness:** specific type of relationship with his/her home environment (settlement type or specific locality) – "enables people to differentiate themselves from people from other parts of town"
- **Self-efficacy:** can meet situational demands, measure of personal agency
- **Continuity:** a link to past, either a specific place or characteristics of place (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996: 207-209 highly attached, scored highly on 4 x ID dimensions)

#### ATTACHMENT:

- Enjoy, happy, be myself, favourite, things I enjoy, feeling of belonging, personal history, family connections, spiritual connections, stories relating to place, current and traditional activities/cultural practices (Derived from Stephenson 2010 and Stedman 2003)
- Positive trajectory (Kearns & Parkinson 2001:2108 – link to LG reform?)

Stedman 2003: place identity = symbolic bonds between people and place (based on other authors)

## Services/Governance

### Preferred Services

- Type wanted
- Level of service/expectations
- Priorities – most important
- How delivered/by whom
- Who pays – willingness/capacity
- Who decides

### Governance

Arranging how service delivery gets done:

- Efficiency – best value
- Responsiveness – appropriateness
- Effectiveness – best service
- Accountability
- Equity

According to values and ideology about:

- Participatory democracy
  - Extent of public participation in government decision making /realising public value
- Role of government in the market
  - Big vs. small
- Role of knowledge
  - Community, administration, politicians, external specialists/professionals (experts)

### Local Government

- Level of government best able to make decisions on services
- LG capacity – who best placed (LG, State, Federal)
- Knowledge of LGA; mayor
- Time of last contact with LGA
- Why in contact (open with list)
- Ranking of services – importance to you
- Amalgamation (identity, political representation, reduction in costs, impact on services, impact on rates)

## Factors hypothesised to interact

### Demographic factors

- Gender
- Age
- Language other than English at home
- Educational attainment
- Income
- Employment status
- Occupation
- Government/NGO employment
- Housing tenure
- Dwelling type
- Household type
- Adult children at home
- Aged parents at home
- Length of time in area (<2; 2-5; 5-10; >10 yrs)

Yuval Davis 2006 framework for belonging: social location (gender, stage in the life cycle, ethnicity and class tend to shape most people's lives)

Aero 2006: importance of dwelling types in understanding meanings of home, place of living

Allen 2010: type of association to place is socio-economically driven

Savage 2010: middle class get to "choose"; poorer more functional

### Community Participation

- Civil/political groups
- Political action
- Community groups
- Social groups
- Volunteering

### Values/politics

- Personal priorities
- Economic/welfare beliefs
- Democratic government
- Control over life
- Interest in politics
- Level of trust
- Political party

Yuval Davis 2006 framework for belonging: ethical and political values influence the way people judge their social location (gender, class etc) and identifications/emotional attachments

## **Appendix E Australian classifications of local governments**

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Identifiers	Category
<b>URBAN (U)</b>	<b>Capital City (CC)</b>			UCC
Population more than 20 000	<b>Metropolitan Developed (D)</b> Part of an urban centre of more than 1 000 000 or population density more than 600/sq km	Small (S) Medium (M) Large (L) Very Large (V)	up to 30 000 30 001–70 000 70 001–120 000 more than 120 000	UDS UDM UDL UDV
<b>OR</b>				
Population density more than 30 persons per sq km	<b>Regional Towns/City (R)</b> Part of an urban centre with population less than 1 000 000 and predominantly urban in nature	Small (S) Medium (M) Large (L) Very Large (V)	up to 30 000 30 001–70 000 70 001–120 000 more than 120 000	URS URM URL URV
<b>OR</b>				
90 per cent or more of LGA population is urban	<b>Fringe (F)</b> A developing LGA on the margin of a developed or regional urban centre	Small (S) Medium (M) Large (L) Very Large (V)	up to 30 000 30 001–70 000 70 001–120 000 more than 120 000	UFS UFM UFL UFV
<b>RURAL (R)</b>				
An LGA with population less than 20 000	<b>Significant Growth (SG)</b> Average annual population growth more than 3 per cent, population more than 5 000 and not remote	Not applicable		RSG
<b>AND</b>				
Population density less than 30 persons per sq km	<b>Agricultural (A)</b>	Small (S) Medium (M) Large (L) Very Large (V)	up to 2 000 2 001–5 000 5 001–10 000 10 001–20 000	RAS RAM RAL RAV
<b>AND</b>				
Less than 90 per cent of LGA population is urban	<b>Remote (T)</b>	Extra Small (X) Small (S) Medium (M) Large (L)	up to 400 401–1 000 1 001–3 000 3 001–20 000	RTX RTS RTM RTL





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