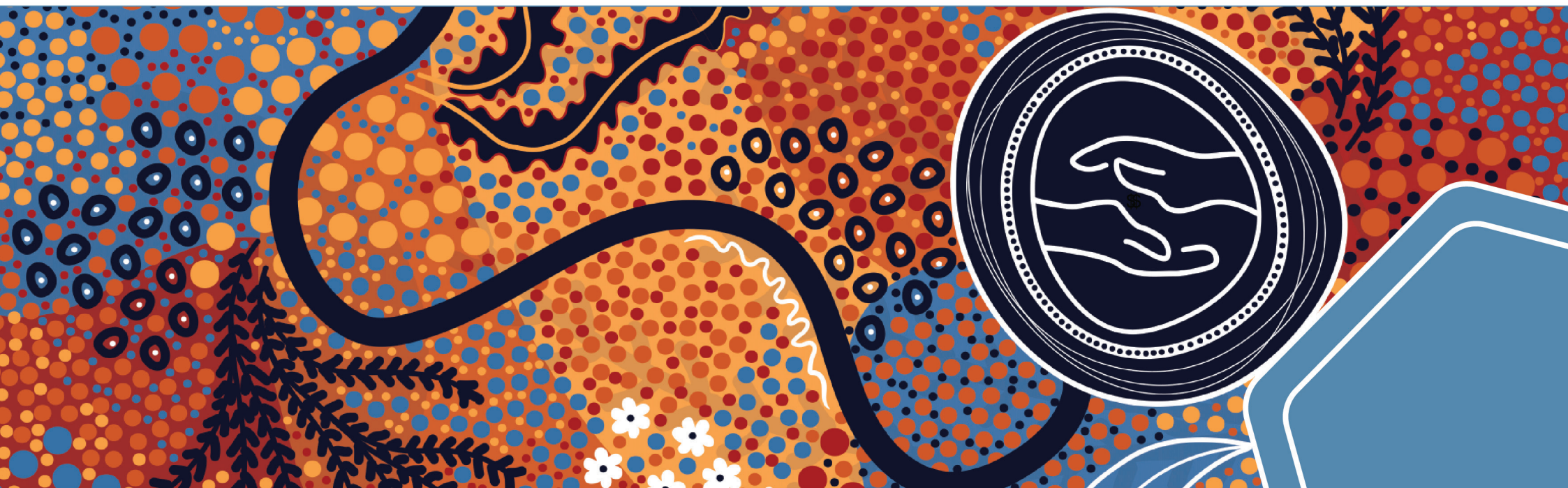




Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission



Trust in Australian public services

2024 Annual Report

© Commonwealth of Australia 2024

ISBN: 978-1-7635508-7-2



With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and where otherwise noted, all material presented in the *Trust in Australian public services: 2024 Annual Report* by the Australian Public Service Commission is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY 4.0). To view a copy of this licence, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Enquiries

For enquiries concerning reproduction and rights in Commission products and services, please contact: externalcomms@apsc.gov.au

Cover artwork

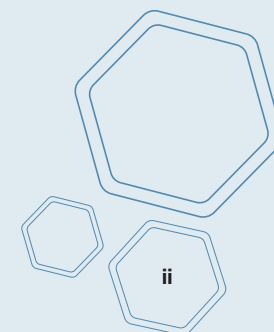
Leading Towards Reconciliation, Kayannie Denigan, 2024

APSC Trust in Australian public services



Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Public Service Commission proudly acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea, waterways, skies, and songlines woven throughout. We recognise and value the ongoing leadership, contributions and work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We celebrate the rich cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations and pay our respects to their Elders past and present, for they are the holders of knowledge and wisdom.



About the Survey of Trust in Australian public services

Over **67,000 responses** collected since March 2019.



Feedback on Australian public services, also known as **Federal, National or Commonwealth services**.



National representative samples based on quotas for age, gender and location.

Feedback on all **services accessed in the past year**, and information on the life events that led to accessing.



Quality assured by the **Australian Bureau of Statistics**.



Tested through two pilots.

Independent review of methodology by **ANU Centre for Social Research & Method** in 2019.



For more details about the survey, visit:

<https://www.apsreform.gov.au/research/trust-in-australian-public-services>
or email TrustandTransparency@apsc.gov.au



About the report



Reporting on over **11,000 responses** from **July 2023 to June 2024**, as well as additional analysis from previous years.



Data collected from approximately **1,000 people each month**, reporting their experience from the past year.



Report shows feedback on **16 public services**.

Method changes this year; previous years' results in this report have been adjusted to reflect these changes and they are not directly comparable to our previously published results.

See Appendix for more information





Key insights

Overall trust in Australian public services has remained steady at 58%¹, with no change since last year.

Trust in specific services used has remained stable at 71%² in 2024, compared to 70% in 2023.

The most trusted services were provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), and Medicare.



Satisfaction with public services has remained stable at 68%³ in 2024, the same as in 2023.

Respondents were:

- most satisfied⁴ with the services provided by Australian Electoral Commission, Medicare, DFAT, and PBS
- most satisfied⁵ with respectful interactions with staff and the accuracy of information provided
- least satisfied⁶ with elements of service processes, such as the amount of time it took to reach an outcome and being kept informed of progress and wait times.

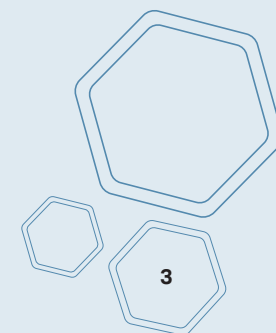


Trust and satisfaction are linked to people's individual characteristics, reasons for accessing services and service access experiences.

Consistent with previous years, trust in public services strongly related to individual characteristics like life satisfaction, trust in others, age, and major life events.

On average, women trusted public services less than men (53% to 63%), similar to 2023.

On average, people who lived in regional areas trusted public services less than people who lived in metro areas (53% to 60%).



In 2024...

58%¹ of people reported trusting public services in 2024, while only **13%**⁷ reported distrust.



68%³ of people who accessed public services reported being satisfied with them.



86% of people who reported trusting public services were also satisfied with them, while **30%** of people who distrusted services were still satisfied with services.



How do we compare?

OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions

In July 2024, the OECD launched the [OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions: 2024 Results](#). Key findings for Australia include:

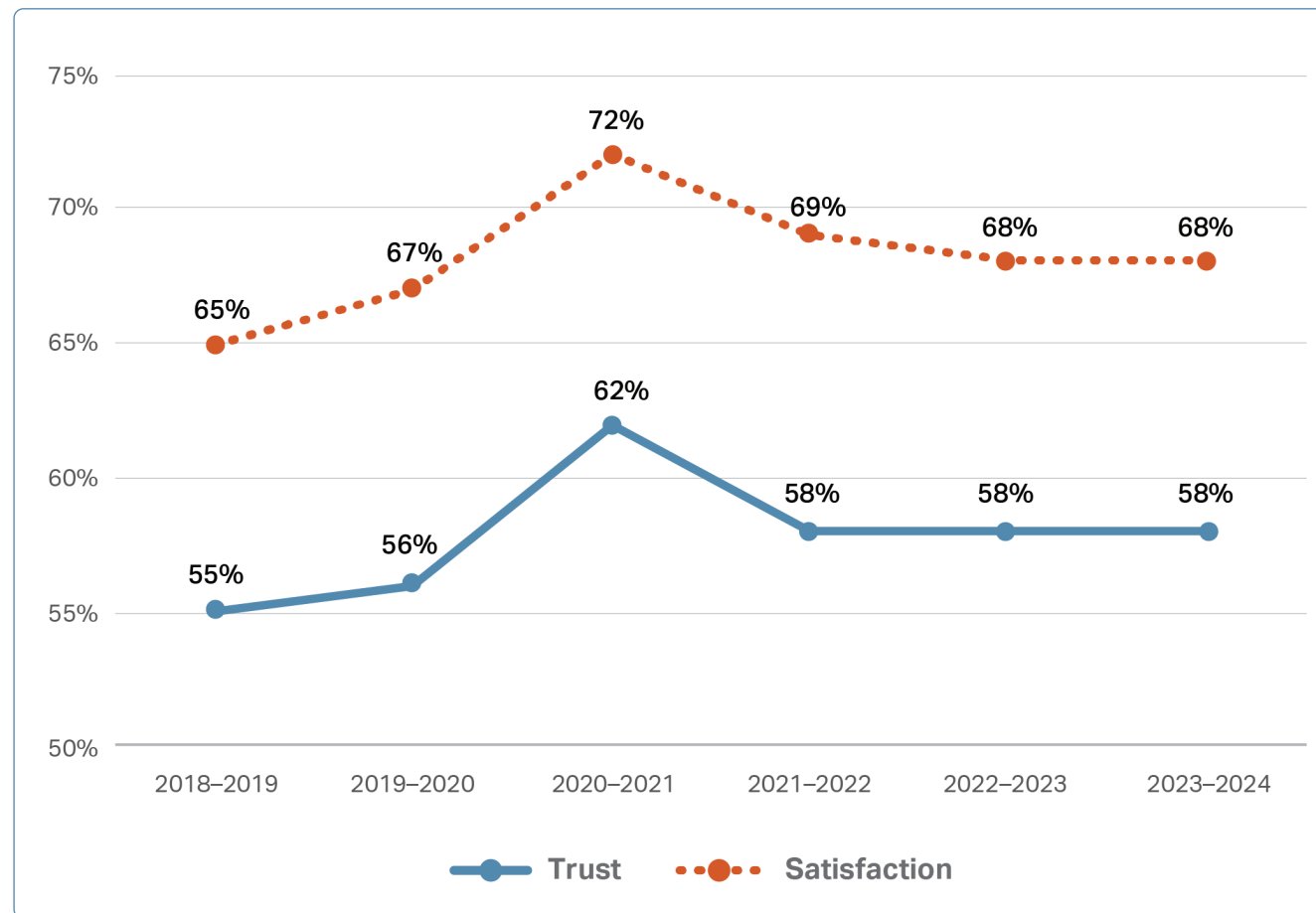
- Australians' trust in the federal government was 46% in 2023, exceeding the OECD average of 39%, and ranking 9th out of the 30 countries surveyed.
- For all the considered measures, Australians' satisfaction with day-to-day interactions with government was above the OECD average.

New Zealand's Kiwis Count Survey

- The [Kiwis Count](#) survey measures the trust and confidence of New Zealanders in the Public Service, based on their most recent service experience and perception of the Public Service overall.
- Latest results as of June 2024 show that 56% of New Zealanders trust Public Service overall and 80% report trust in public services based on their most recent experience.

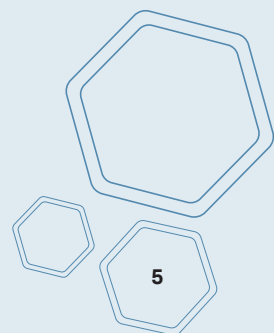
Trust and satisfaction remain stable

Figure 1: Trust and satisfaction



Trust¹ in and satisfaction³ with Australian public services has remained stable since 2022.

As outlined in our conceptual model (see Appendix for more details), trust reflects people's expectations that their needs will be met, while satisfaction is determined by how well services meet those expectations. The stability suggests that public services are keeping pace with expectations. As expectations tend to grow over time, public services need to improve their performance to maintain trust and satisfaction.



Who trusts?



Life Satisfaction

71% of people who were satisfied with life⁸ reported trust in public services¹, compared with **36%** of people who were dissatisfied with life.



Income

65% of those earning a weekly wage of \$1,250 and above reported trust in public services compared to **59%** of people earning less than \$1,250 weekly.



Age

Trust in public services was higher for people aged 18–34 (**61%**) and 65+ (**60%**) than those aged 35–64 (**55%**).



Gender

63% of men reported trust in public services compared to **53%** of women.



Language spoken at home

76% of people who primarily speak a language other than English at home reported trust in Australian public services, compared to **57%** who primarily speak English at home.



Education levels

60% of those who graduated year 12 reported trust in public services compared to **49%** of people who left education before year 12.



Regional and Metro areas

More people who live in Metro areas reported trust in public services (**60%**) than people who live in regional areas (**53%**).



Trust in people

75% of people who trusted others⁹ also reported trust in public services, compared with **38%** for those who distrusted others.

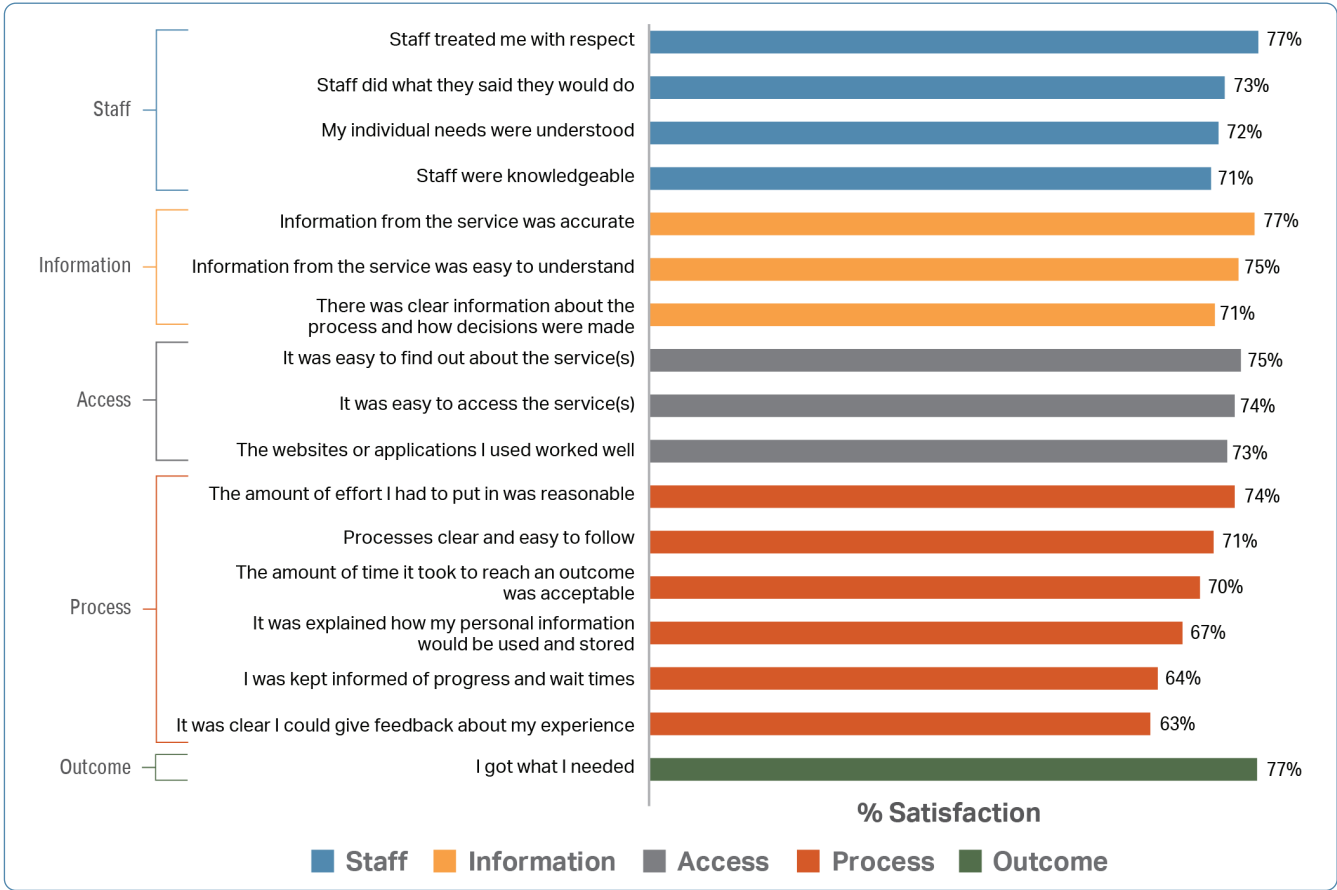


Country of Birth

65% of people born in a country other than Australia reported trust in Australian public services compared with **56%** people born in Australia.

What aspects of services were people satisfied with?

Figure 2: Proportion of people who were satisfied with the service



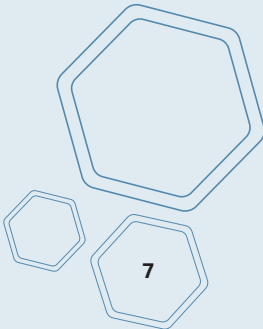
In 2024, people were **most satisfied**⁵ with:

- their respectful interactions with staff
- the accuracy of information provided.

People were **least satisfied**⁶ with elements of service processes, such as:

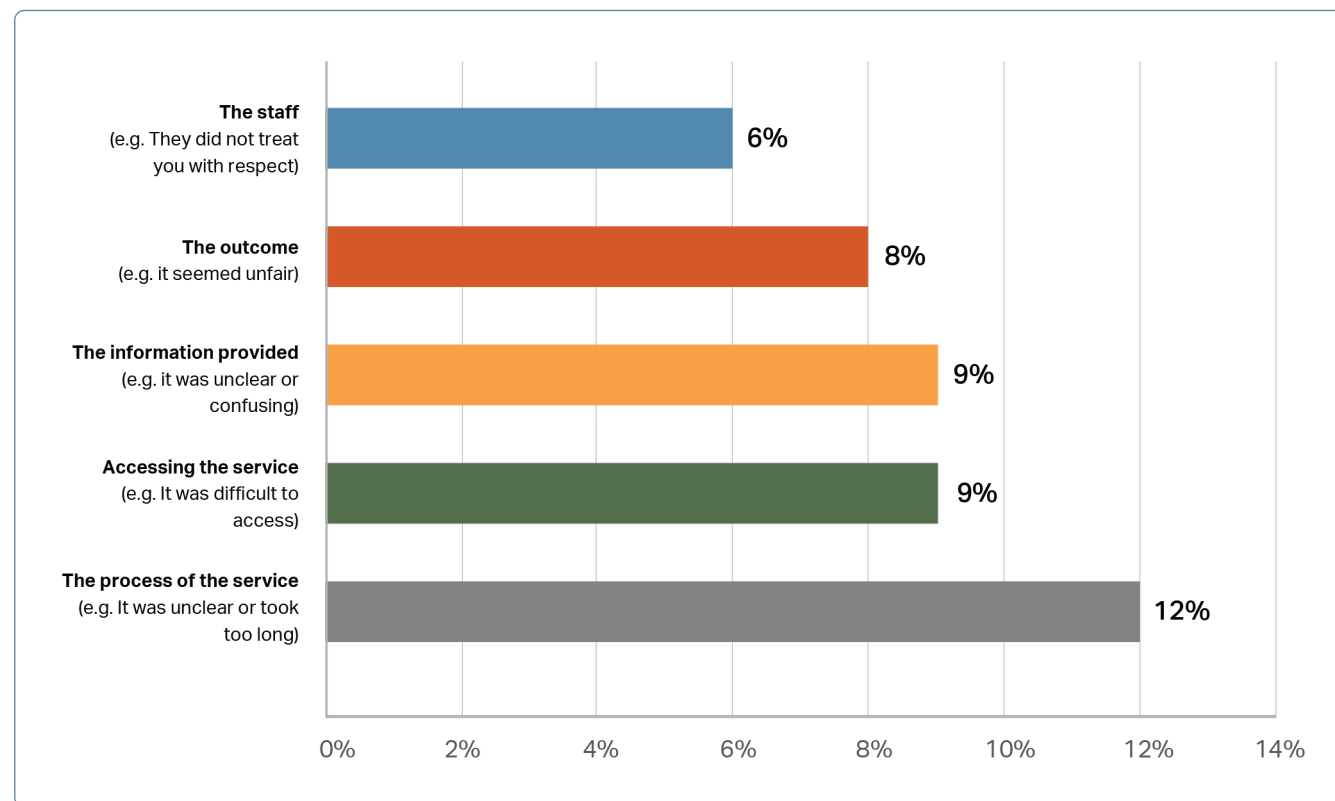
- being kept informed of progress and wait times
- the amount of time it took to reach an outcome
- clarity that they could give feedback about their experience.

77% of people indicated that they got what they needed. This represents one of the strongest satisfaction elements.

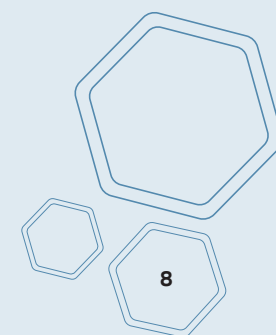


What aspects of services were people dissatisfied with?

Figure 3: Reasons for dissatisfaction

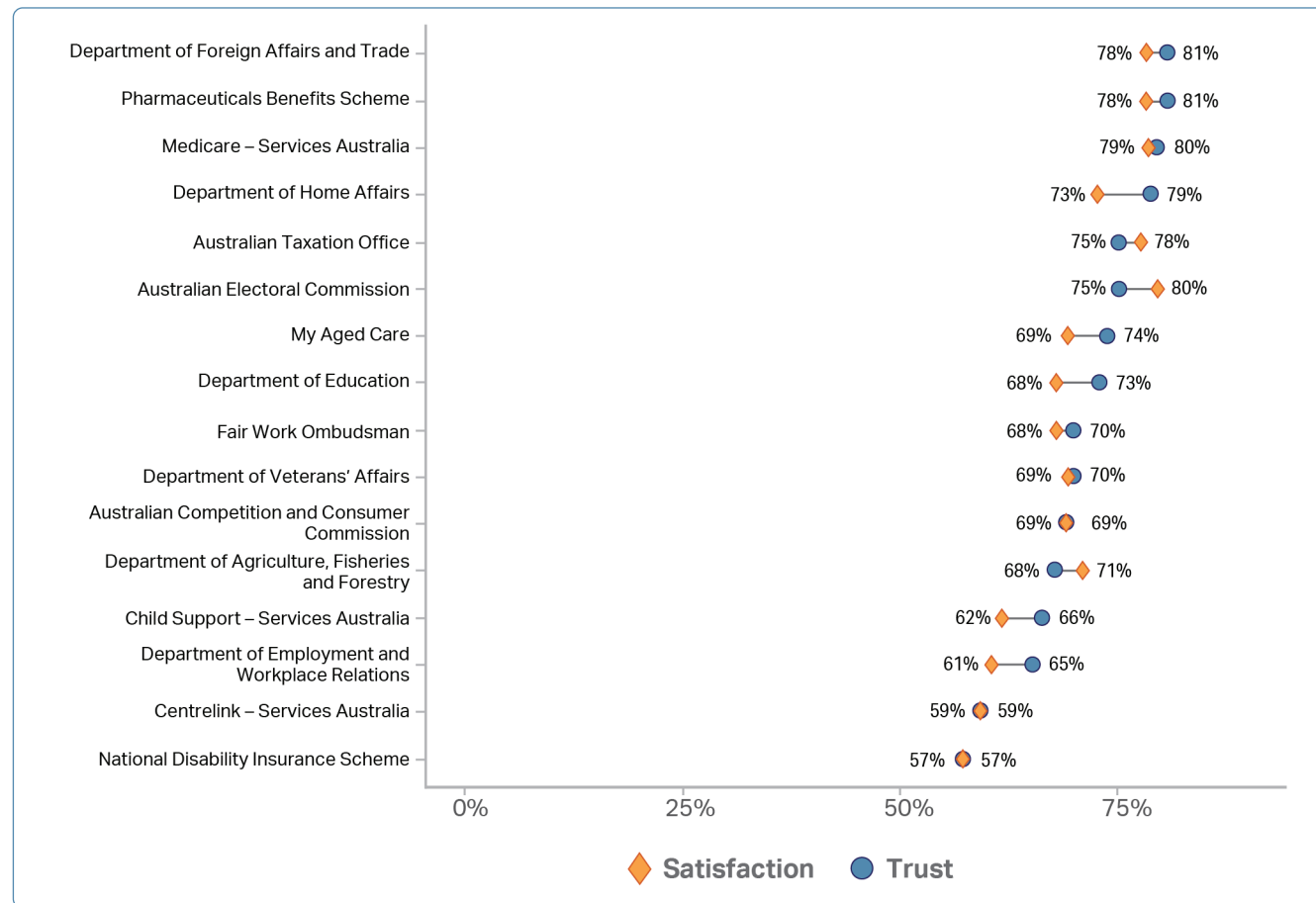


One in five people who accessed services reported dissatisfaction with at least one of these service¹⁰. We followed these people up with a question that asked which aspect of the service they were most dissatisfied with¹¹. 12% of people reported their dissatisfaction related to the process, and 9% said that it was related to access.



Trust and satisfaction in specific services

Figure 4: Service Trust and Satisfaction



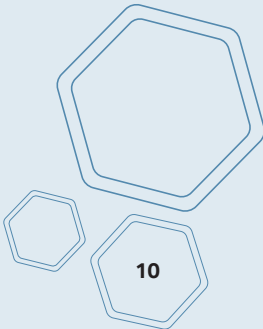
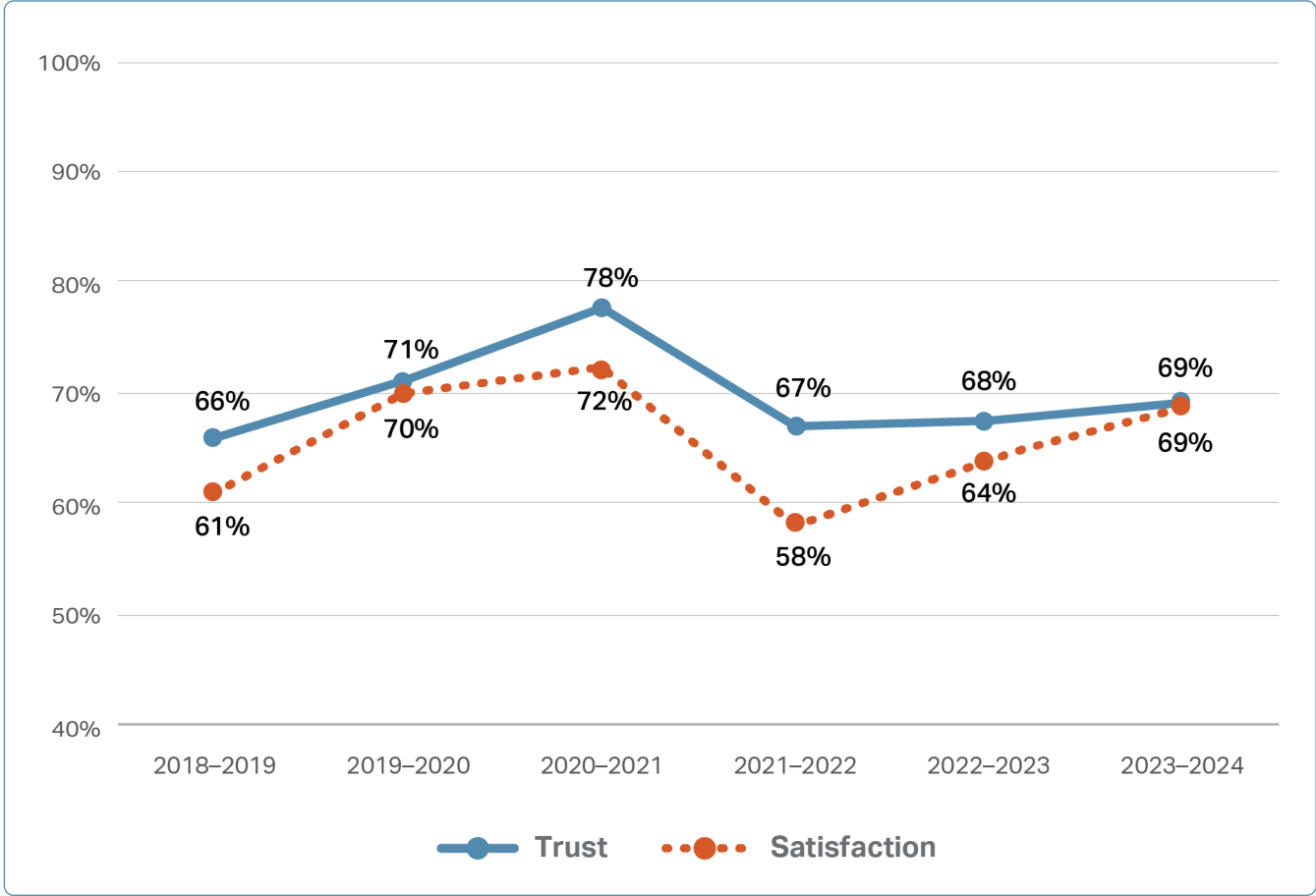
Want more detail on services?

More results for each service are available online through our [interactive dashboard](#)



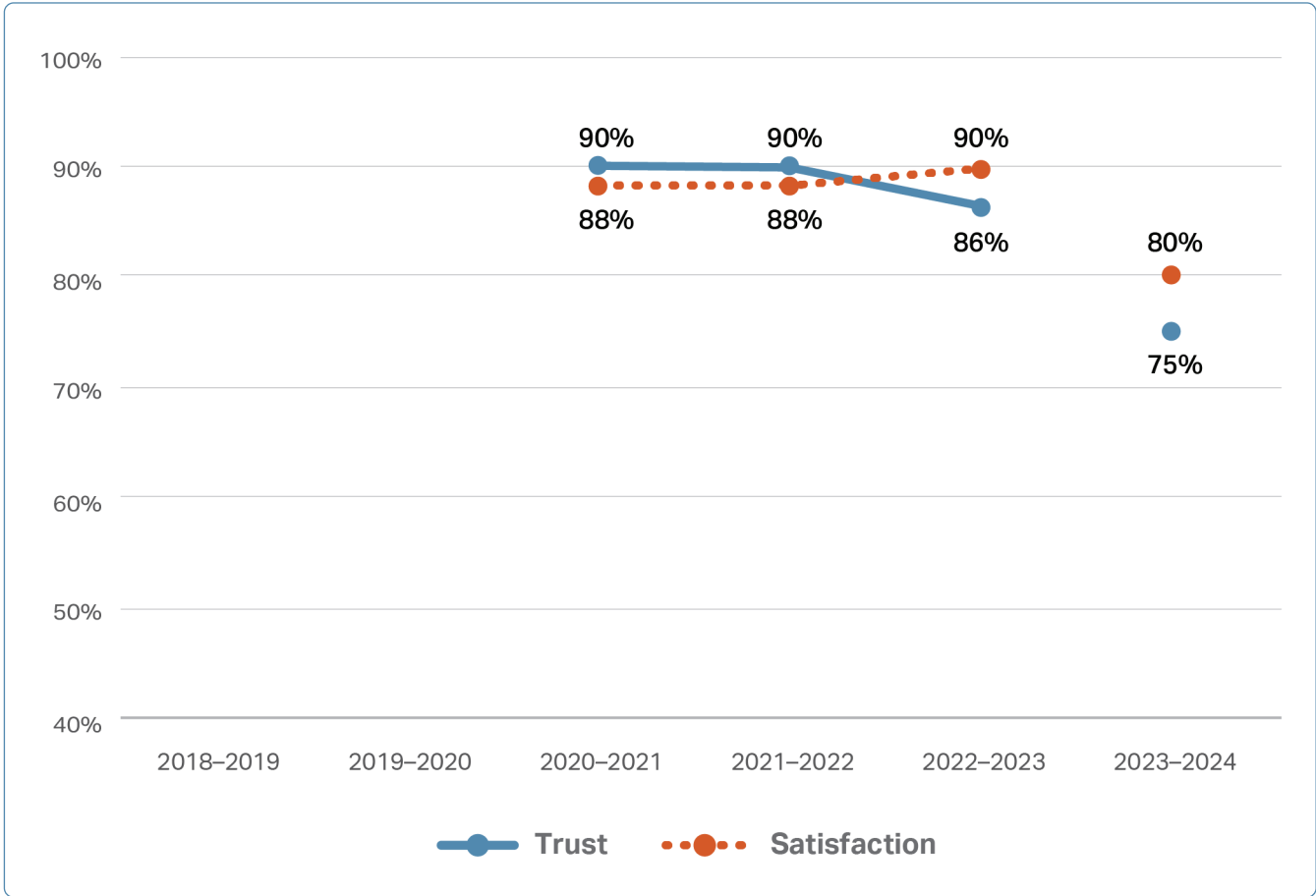
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission



Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Australian Electoral Commission



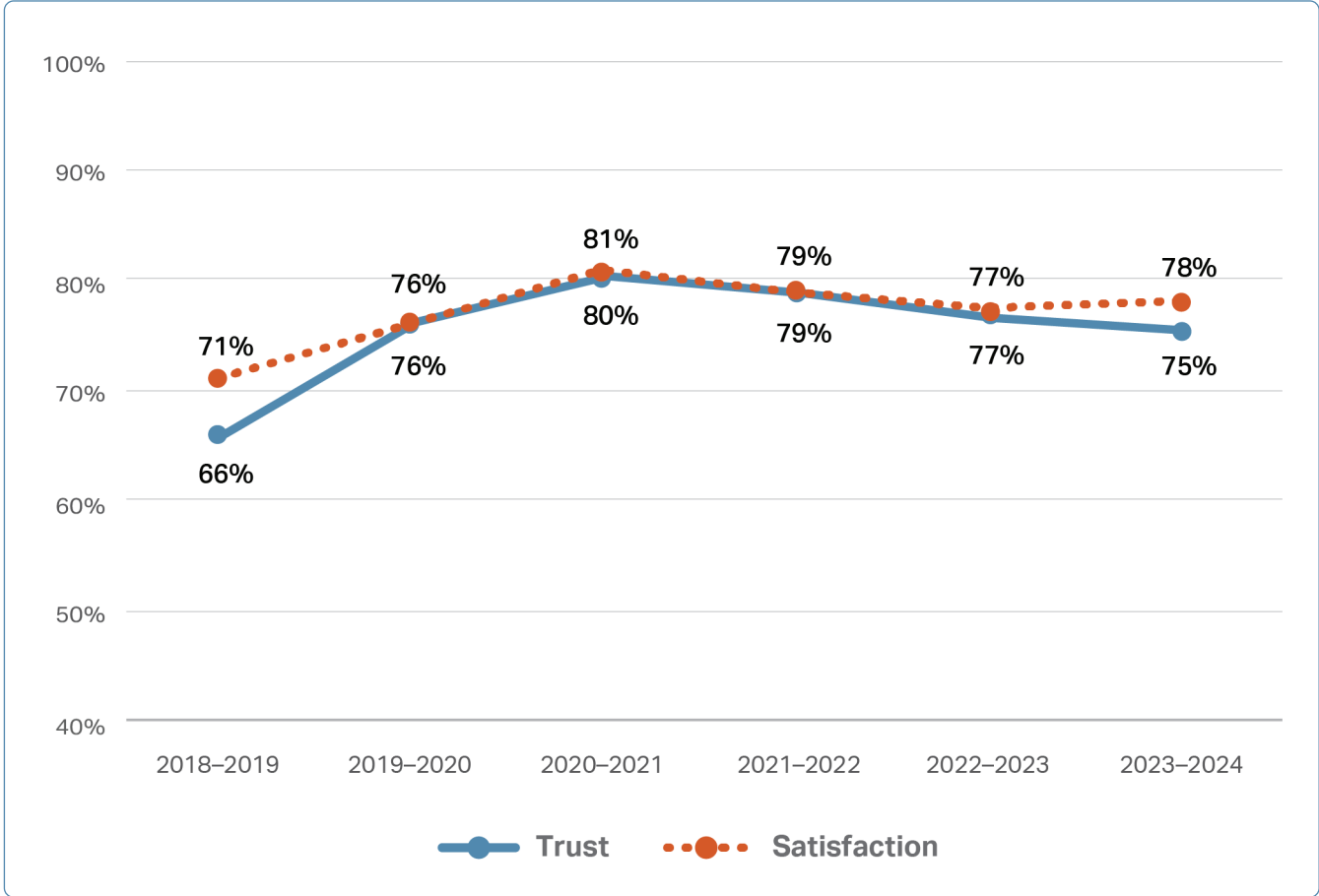
Note: A method change affected findings for the Australian Electoral Commission in the 2023–2024 financial year. The change led to over 20 times as many people answering questions about the service. This resulted in reported trust and satisfaction for the agency becoming much more neutral.

As such, the current year findings are not directly comparable to previous years.

More details about the method changes can be found in Appendix and Supplementary Material.

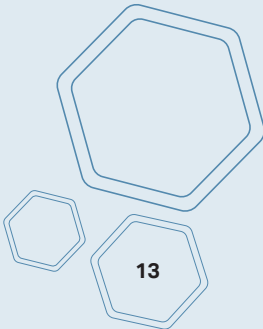
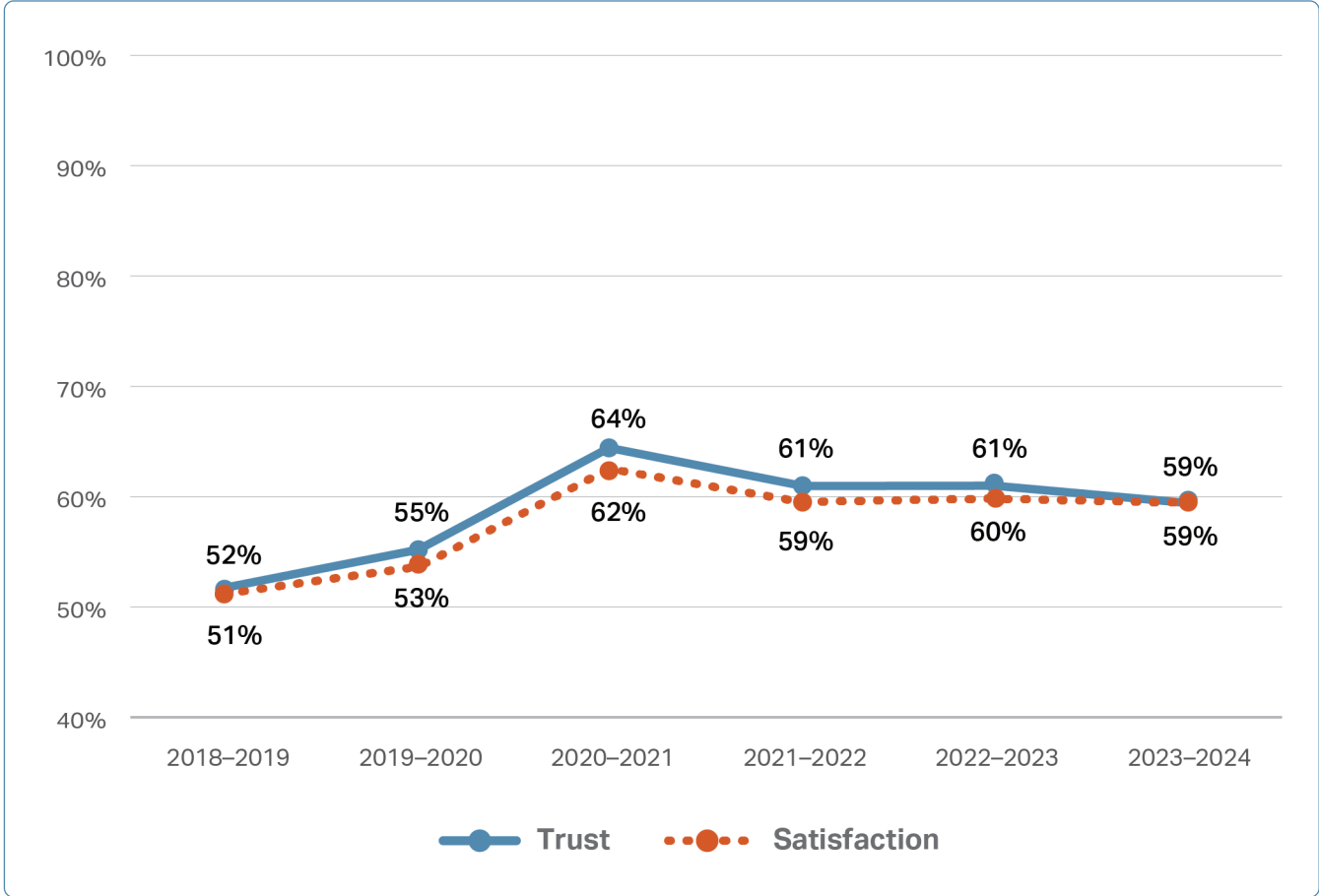
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Australian Taxation Office



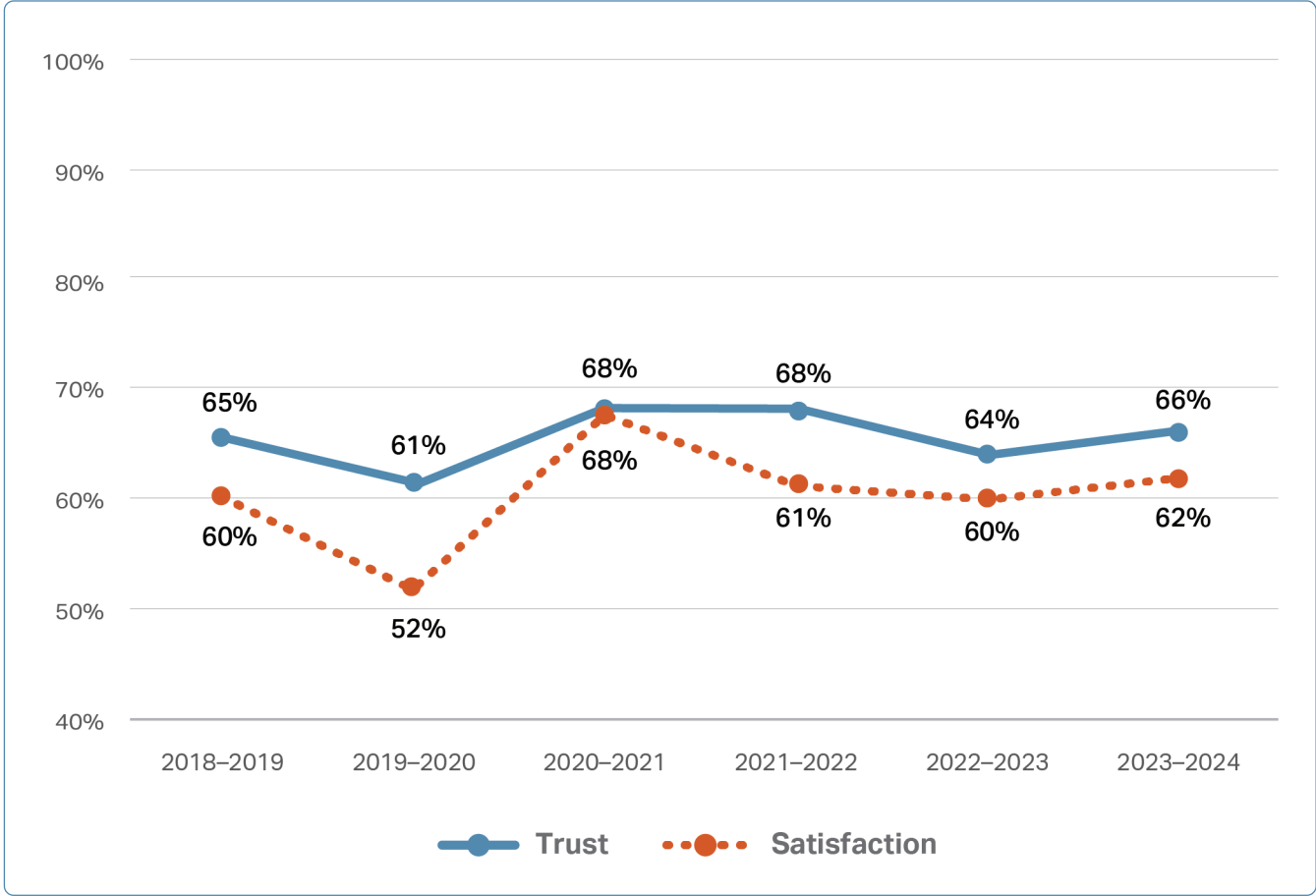
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Centrelink – Services Australia



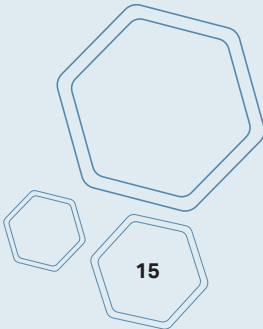
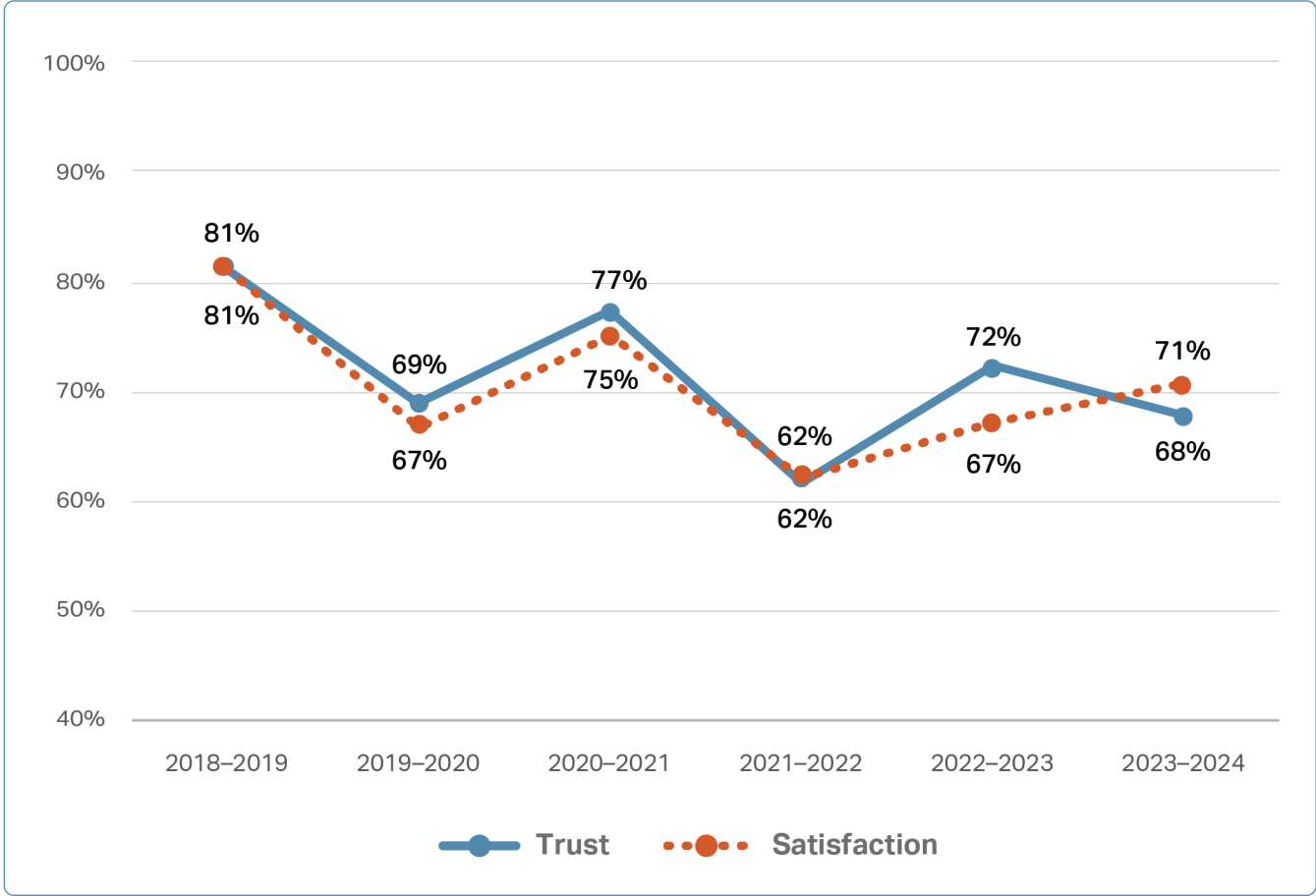
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Child Support – Services Australia



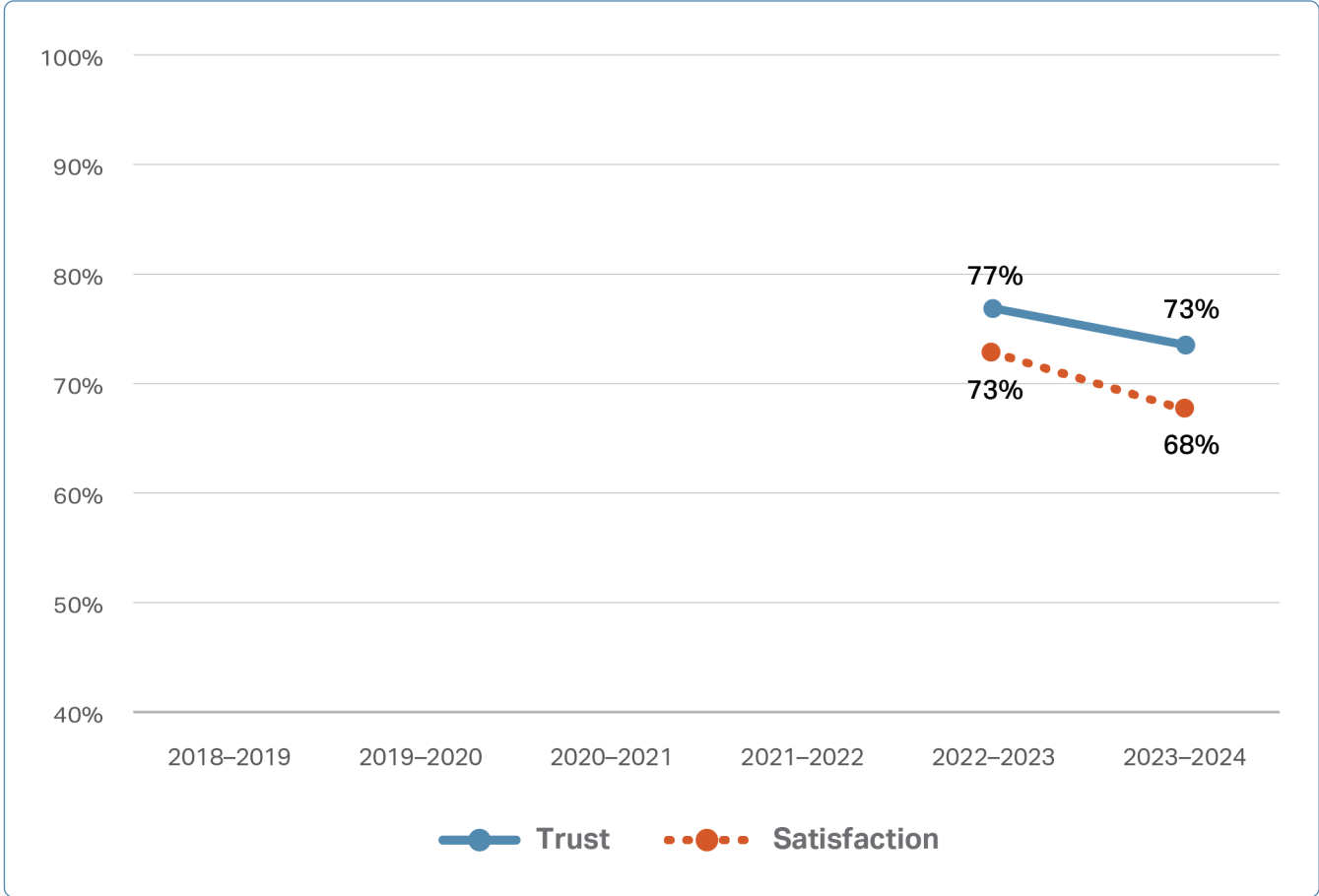
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

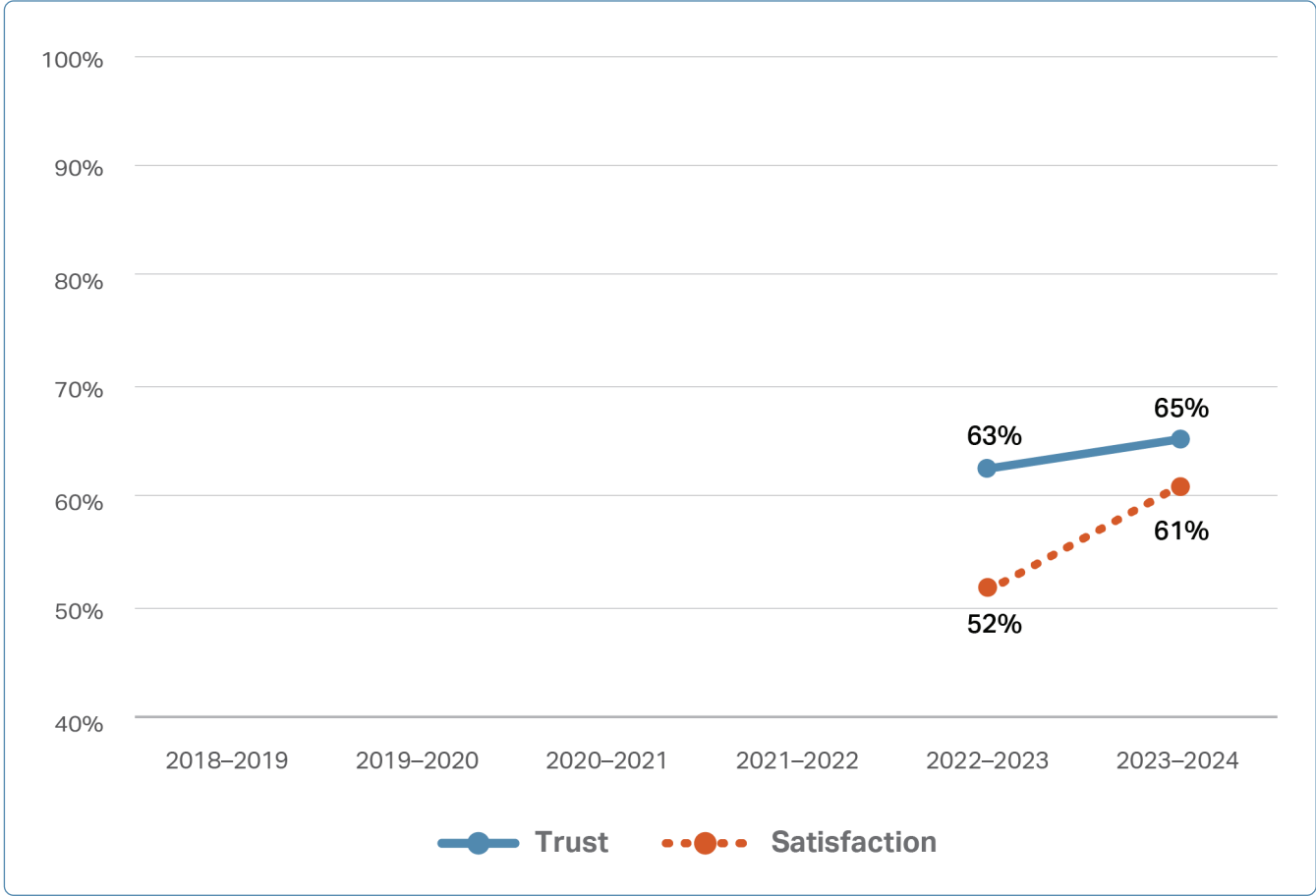
Department of Education



Note: Department of Education was created in the FY2022-23 as a result of machinery of government changes.

Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

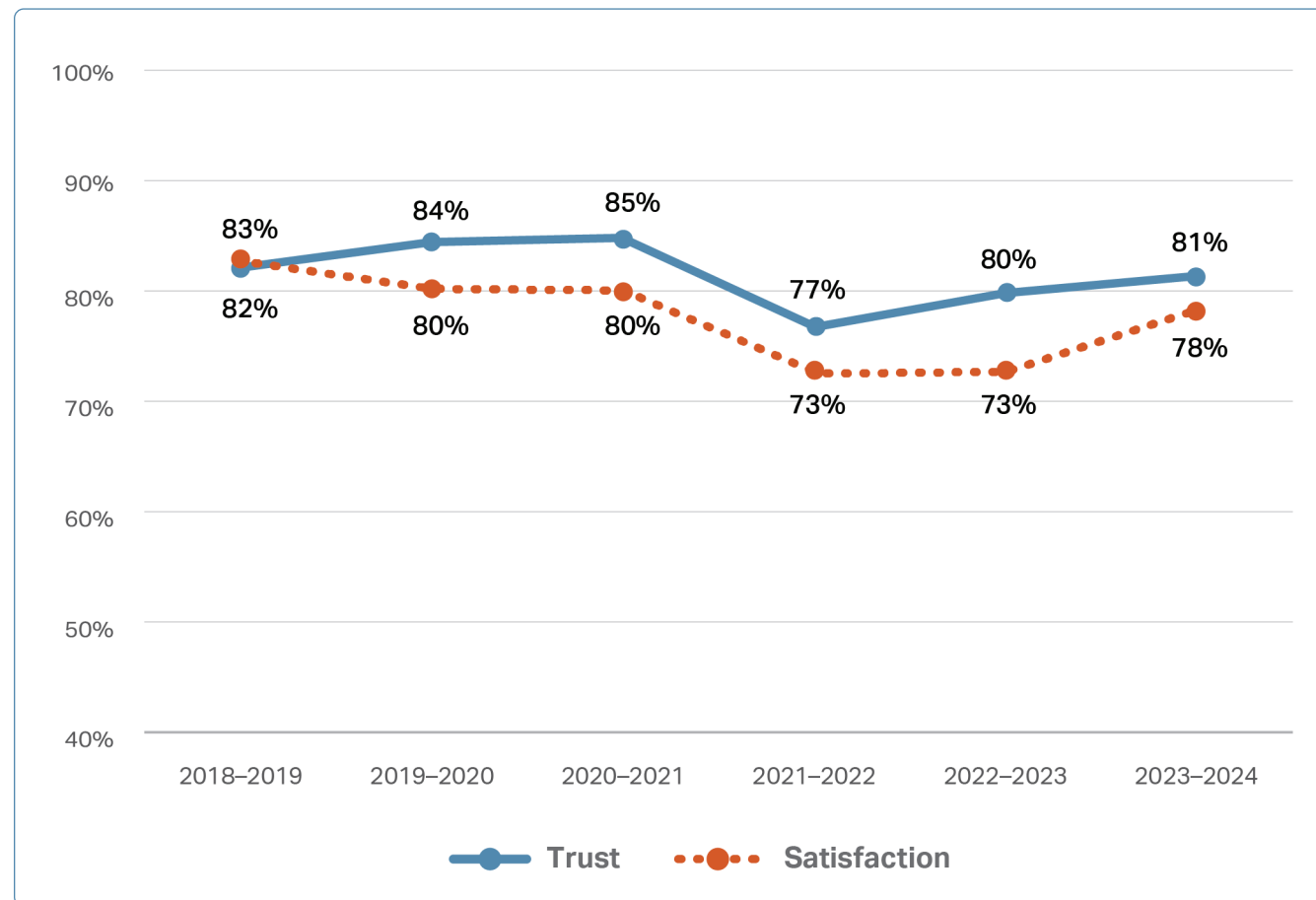
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations



Note: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations was created in the FY2022-23 as a result of machinery of government changes.

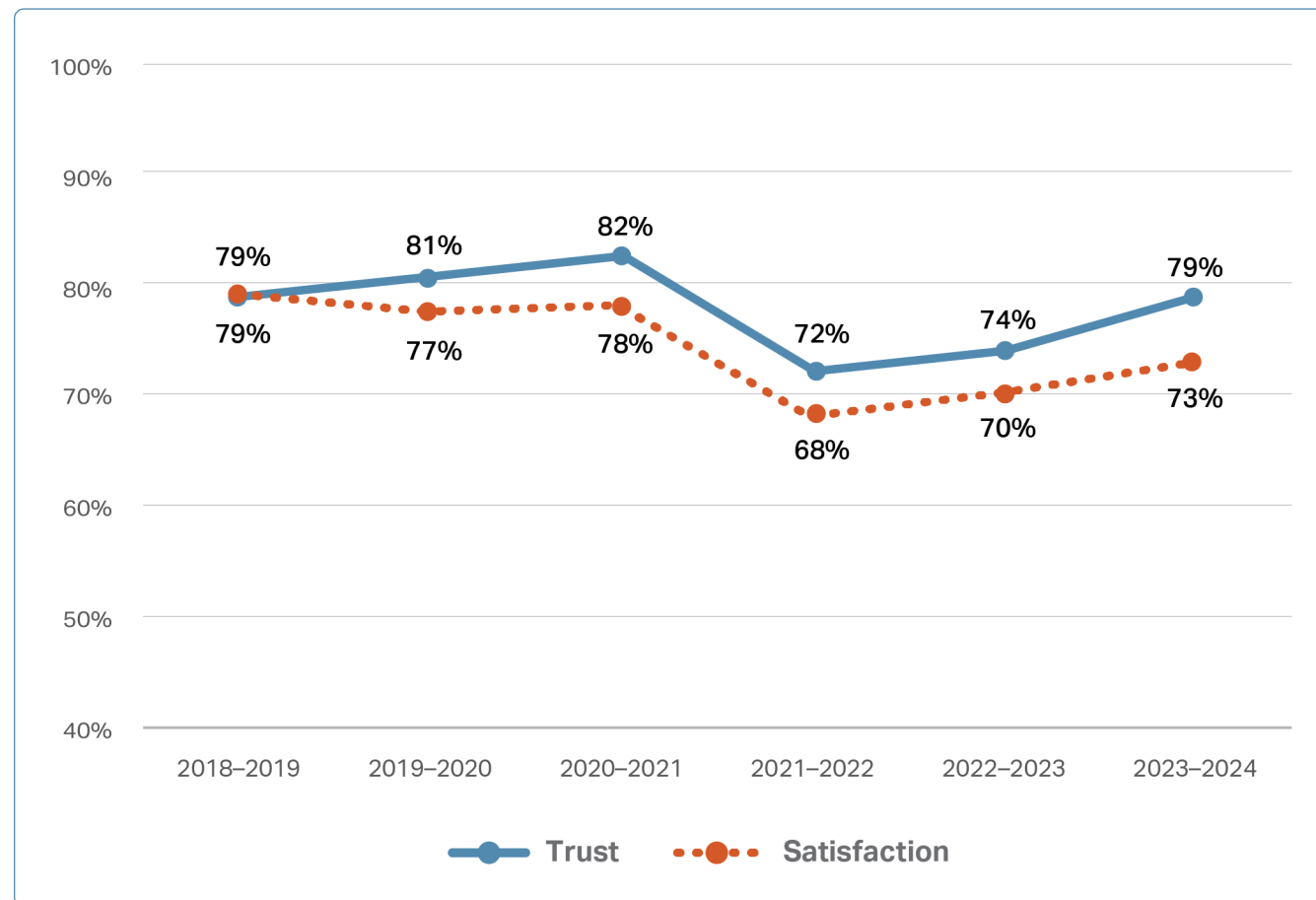
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



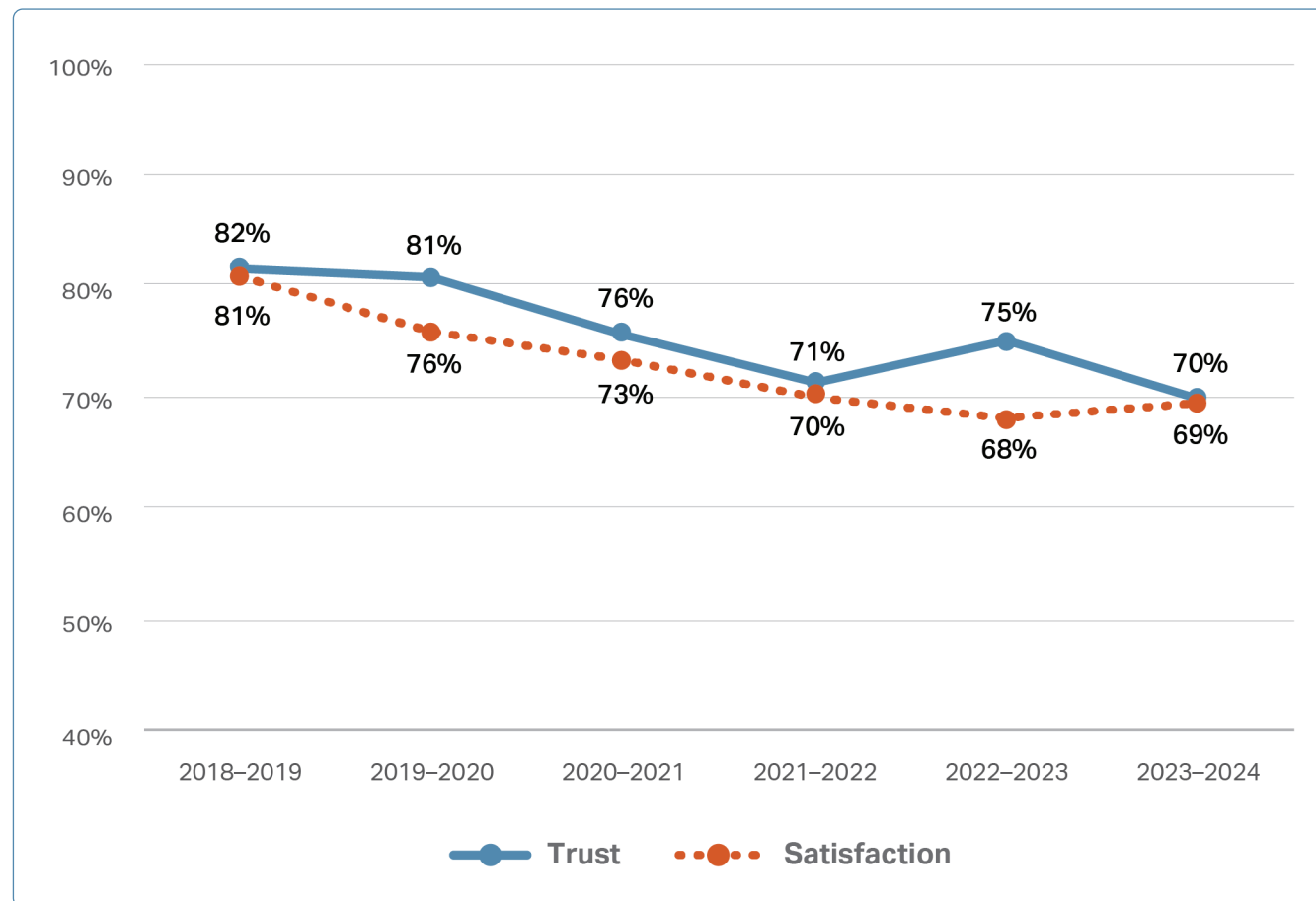
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Department of Home Affairs



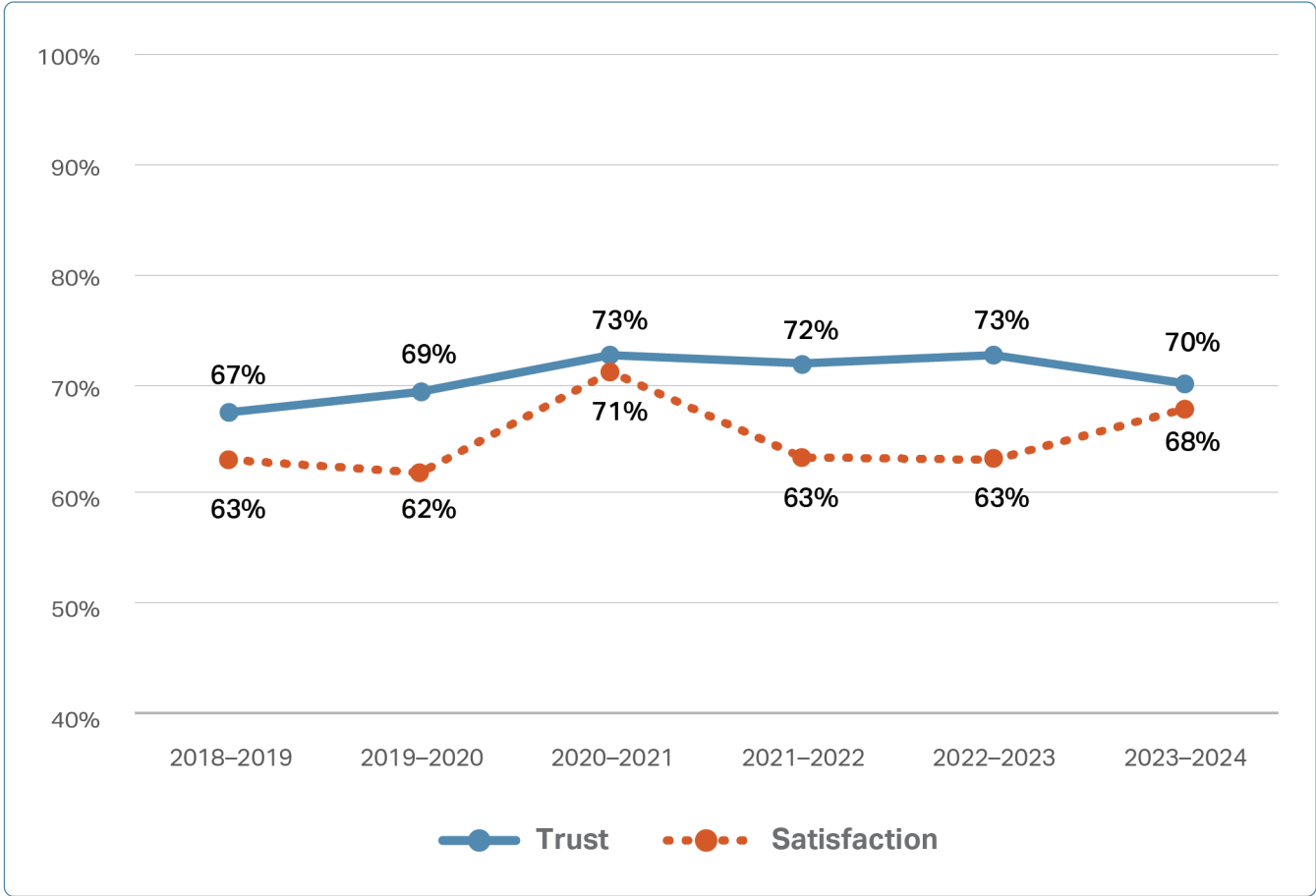
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Department of Veterans' Affairs



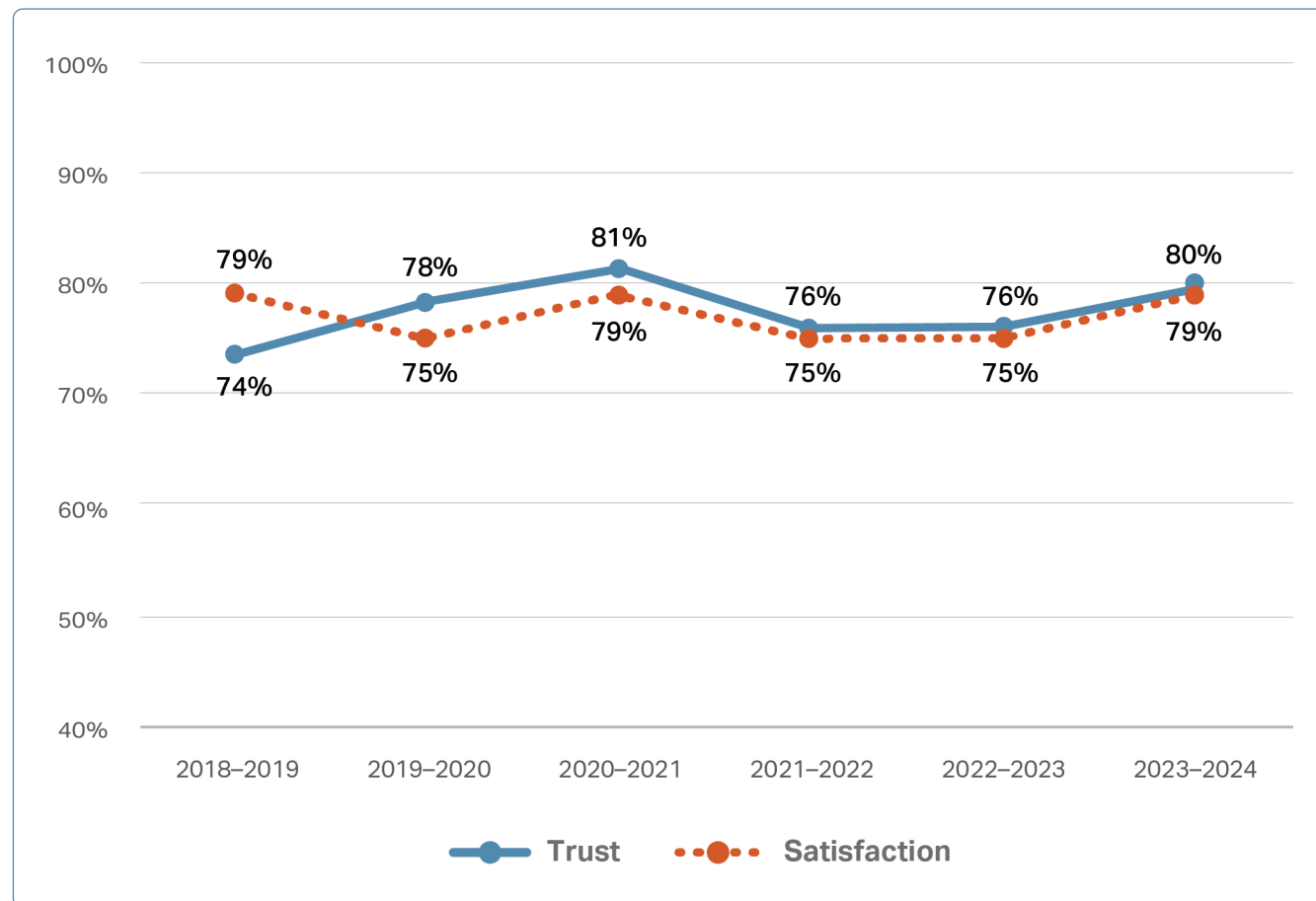
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Fair Work Ombudsman



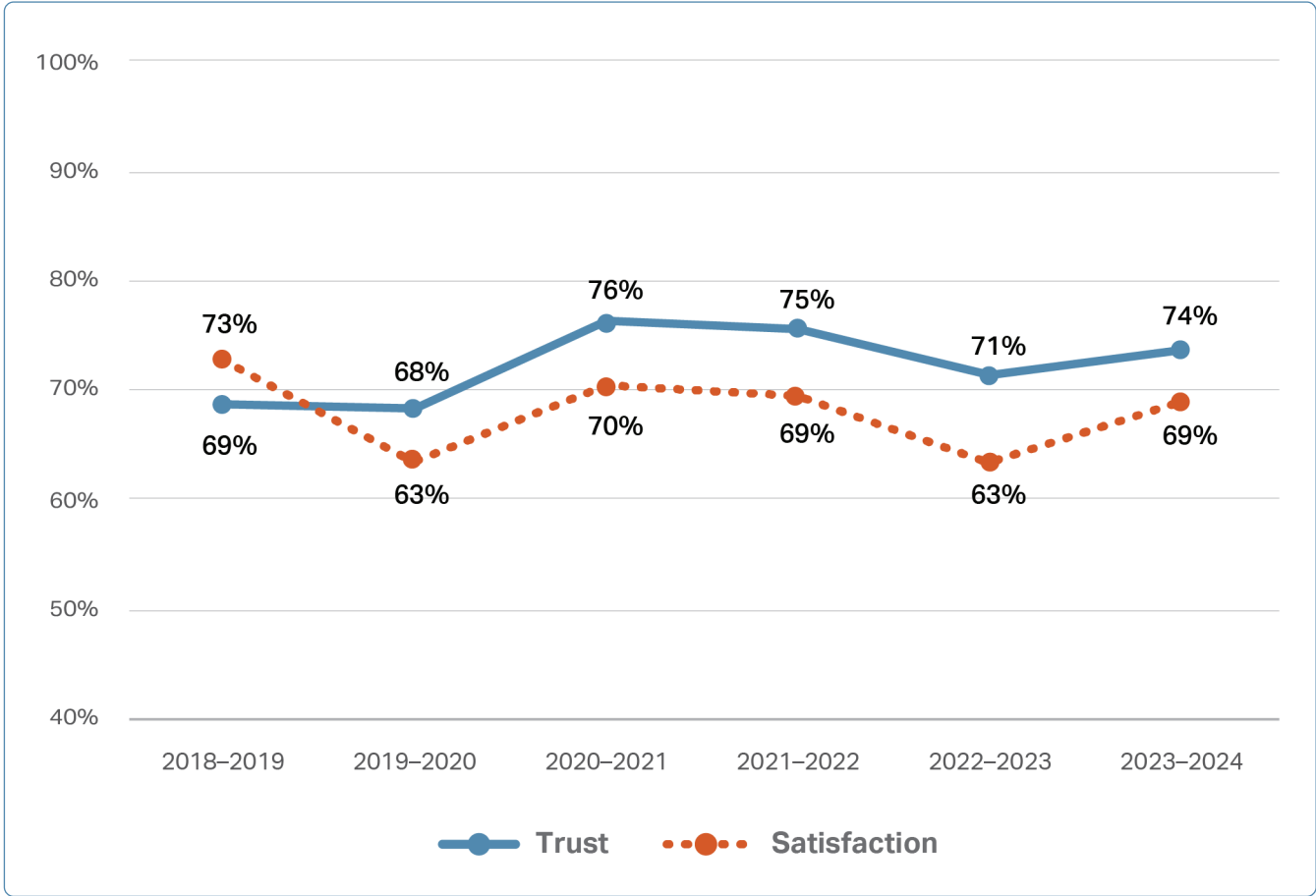
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Medicare – Services Australia



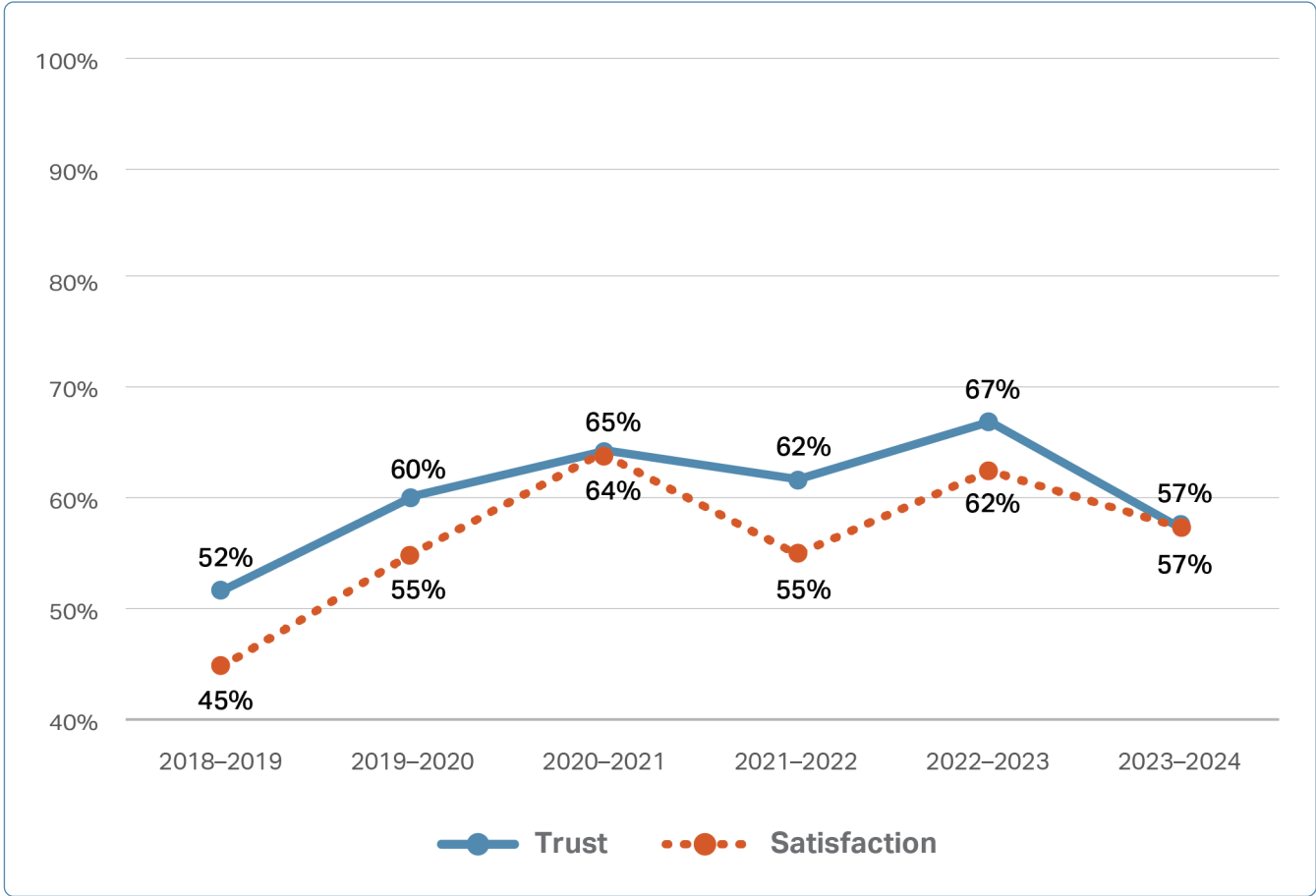
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

My Aged Care



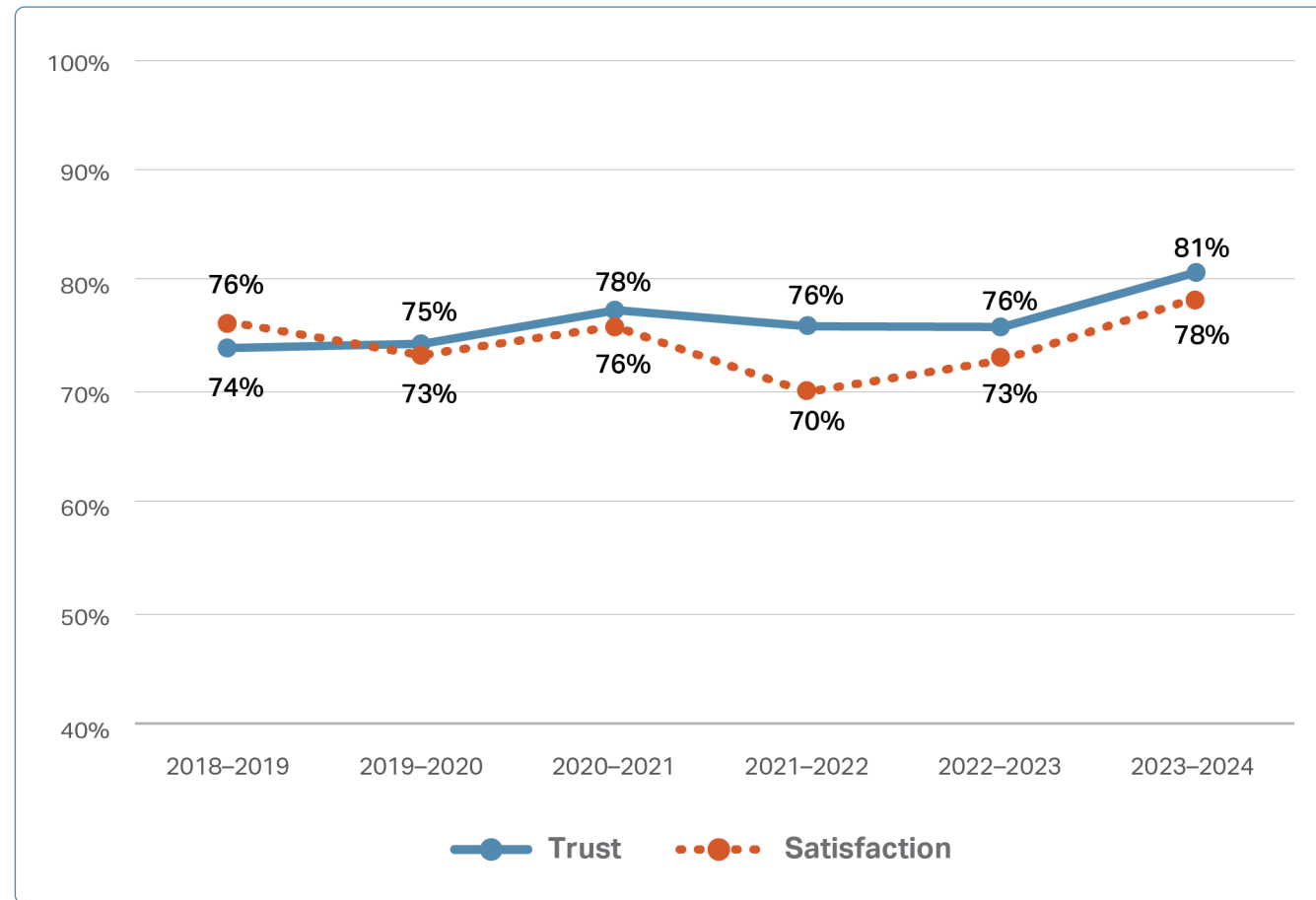
Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

National Disability Insurance Scheme



Trust and satisfaction in each service over time

Pharmaceuticals Benefits Scheme



Further resources on trust and satisfaction

[Trust and Satisfaction in Australian Democracy: 2023 National Survey](#)

In partnership with the Strengthening Democracy Taskforce at the Department of Home Affairs, we engaged with over 6,000 Australians in 2023 to explore their sentiment about Australian democracy. Our report provides a detailed overview, revealing people's satisfaction levels with democracy, underlying their concerns and a resilient desire to strengthen our democracy.

[OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions](#)

- The OECD Trust Survey, launched in 2021, is a biennial survey conducted across the OECD member countries to evaluate trust in public institutions. Australia has participated in the survey since 2021.
- Since 2023, we have collaborated with the OECD on a country study to examine the drivers of trust in public institutions in Australia. The findings from this study will be released in 2025.

[Long-term Insights Briefings – How might AI affect the trustworthiness of public service delivery?](#)

We included three questions in the first wave of the Trust and Satisfaction in Australian Democracy Survey in June 2023, providing data evidence for better understanding the community's views on the use of AI in the delivery of public service.

Continuing data sharing activities to strengthen transparency

- We publish an [Interactive Dashboard](#) on the survey results, which allows people to further explore the data and includes service profile information and demographics.
- Our micro data is made accessible to approved researchers by sharing data with the [Australian Data Archive](#) operated through the Australian National University.

Appendices

- A conceptual model underpins our understanding of trust and satisfaction
- Method changes

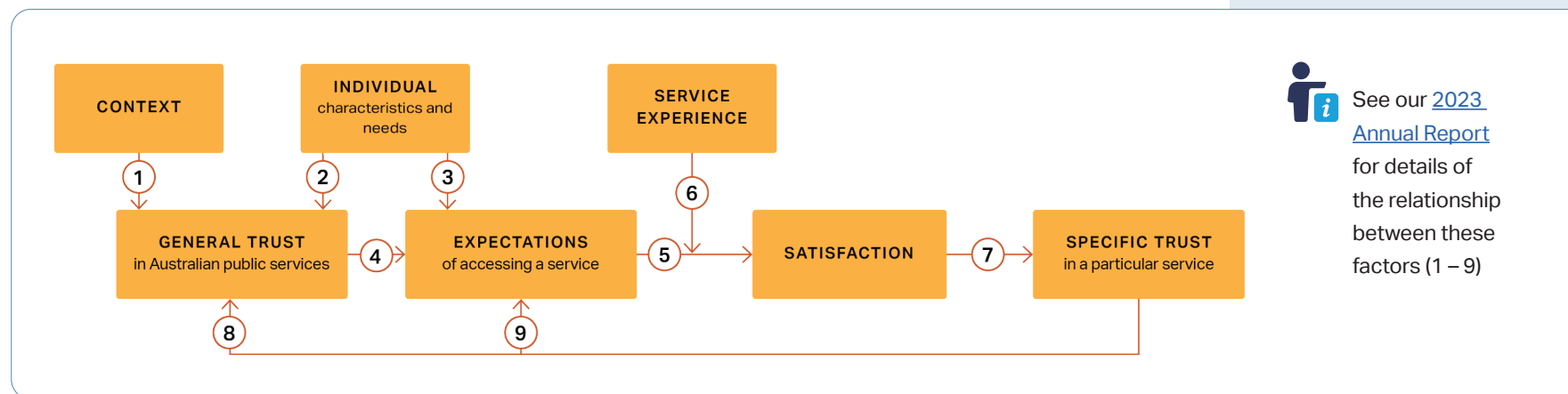


A conceptual model underpins our understanding of trust and satisfaction

The relationship between trust, satisfaction and other important factors is well understood conceptually based on academic research.

- Trust and satisfaction exist in a feedback loop, as set out in the diagram below.
- Trust conveys expectations about needs being met.
- Satisfaction is a product of the extent to which services live up to those expectations.
- Other independent factors feed into that loop and ultimately influence trust, such as the individual characteristics and needs of the person doing the trusting, the action of the trustee (in this case the service experience) and other contextual factors.

Figure 5: Conceptual model of the drivers of trust and satisfaction



Method changes

We made changes to how we measure trust and satisfaction in the survey this financial year.

As such, results in this report are not comparable with previous reports.

The main change is that we now ask respondents to rate their trust and satisfaction on a 5-point scale, rather than the 7-point scale previously used. This resulted in a greater proportion of respondents rating their trust and satisfaction as neutral (i.e. neither agree nor disagree).

To allow for meaningful comparisons, the results presented in this report from previous years have been corrected to put them on an equivalent basis to this year's results.

The correction method assumes that a proportion of respondents in previous years would also have been more neutral in their responses if asked using the 5-point scale, and adjusts the trusting, distrusting, satisfied, and dissatisfied rates accordingly. The method has been quality assured by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

We also changed the way we asked about which services people accessed. For most services this did not affect the results. However, for the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) it resulted in over 20 times as many people answering questions about the service. This resulted in reported trust and satisfaction for the AEC becoming much more neutral.

For more information see the detailed paper on our [website](#)



Endnotes

1. **Q3** – Overall trust is the proportion of people who answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree” when asked “How much do you agree with the following statement – ‘I can trust Australian public services’”. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat agree” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
2. **Q6** – Trust in specific services is the proportion of people who answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree” when asked “How much do you agree with the following statement – ‘The service is trustworthy’” about a specific service. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat agree” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details. The proportion is adjusted pro rata for the amount of services each individual was asked about.
3. **Q4** – Satisfaction is the proportion of people who answered “Completely satisfied” or “Satisfied” when asked “Thinking about your overall experience with the above services, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you?” It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat satisfied” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
4. **Q8** – Satisfaction is the proportion of people who answered “Completely satisfied” or “Satisfied” when asked “Thinking about your experience with the services you accessed from each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you?” about a specific service. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat satisfied” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
5. **Q5 & Q9** – Proportion of people who answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree” when asked how much they agreed with statements about their service experience. The proportion is adjusted pro rata for the amount of services each individual was asked about. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat agree” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
6. **Q5 & Q9** – Proportion of people who answered “Strongly disagree” or “Disagree” when asked how much they agreed with statements about their service experience. The proportion is adjusted pro rata for the amount of services each individual was asked about. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat disagree” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
7. **Q3** – Distrust is the proportion of people who answered “strongly disagree” or “disagree” when asked “How much do you agree with the following statement – ‘I can trust Australian public services’”. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat disagree” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.

8. **D1** – Life satisfaction is the proportion of people who answered “Completely satisfied” or “Satisfied” when asked “Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with life as a whole these days?” It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat satisfied” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
9. **D2** – Trust in other people is the proportion of people who answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree” when asked “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement – ‘Most people can be trusted’”. It also includes a proportion of people who answered “Somewhat agree” before the method changes. See Appendix “Method changes” for more details.
10. **Q8** – Dissatisfaction with a service is the proportion of people who answered “Completely dissatisfied” or “Dissatisfied” when asked “Thinking about your experience with the services you accessed from each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you?”.
11. **Q11** – Proportion of people who answered each statement in the graph for at least one service they accessed when asked “Thinking about your experience with each of the services you accessed, what were you most dissatisfied with?”. The question was only asked of people who answered “Completely dissatisfied” or “Dissatisfied” to Q8 (see note 10). This question was included in the survey between November 2023 and June 2024.

