# Trust in Australian public services survey methodology 2022-2023

## Survey history and wave frequency

The Survey was trialled in two pilot waves (of 2,500 people) in November 2018 and February 2019. Findings from these pilot waves were used to test and refine the Survey, and the first full wave of the Survey was held in March 2019. The sample size of the March 2019 wave was doubled to 5,000 people, and this wave is used as a baseline. The sample size then reverted to 2,500 respondents.

Following the baseline, survey waves were held approximately every four months, with eight waves (and over 30,000 responses) collected between March 2019 and June 2021. Commencing November 2020, the sample size was doubled to 5,000 people per wave, to allow for more detailed insights in citizen experience.

From July 2021, the Survey has been undertaken monthly with a sample size of approximately 1000 per wave. This enables ‘pulse’ checks of overall citizen satisfaction with, and trust in services, and provides more timely and nuanced data on the impact of any significant events on satisfaction with and trust in services.

**Wave details for 2022-2023 financial year**

| **Wave** | **Soft Launch** | **Full Launch** | **Survey Close** | **Final responses** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **July 2022** | 7-Jul-22 | 8-Jul-22 | 28-Jul-22 | 1,039 |
| **August 2022** | 1-Aug-22 | 2-Aug-22 | 29-Aug-22 | 1,062 |
| **September 2022** | 5-Sep-22 | 6-Sep-22 | 28-Sep-22 | 1,059 |
| **October 2022** | 1-Oct-22 | 2-Oct-22 | 25-Oct-22 | 1,020 |
| **November 2022** | 1-Nov-22 | 4-Nov-22 | 27-Nov-22 | 1,031 |
| **December 2022** | 1-Dec-22 | 2-Dec-22 | 20-Dec-22 | 1,036 |
| **January 2023** | 5-Jan-23 | 6-Jan-23 | 30-Jan-23 | 1,041 |
| **February 2023** | 1-Feb-23 | 2-Feb-23 | 28-Feb-23 | 1,053 |
| **March 2023** | 1-Mar-23 | 3-Mar-23 | 29-Mar-23 | 1,114 |
| **April 2023** | 3-Apr-23 | 5-Apr-23 | 28\_apr-23 | 1,077 |
| **May 2023** | 1-May-23 | 4-May-23 | 30-May-23 | 1,061 |
| **June 2023** | 5-Jun-23 | 6-Jun-23 | 30-Jun-23 | 1,054 |

## Survey respondents

The Survey targets adults (aged 18 years or older) who may access Australian public services. The majority of survey participants are Australian citizen residents, but it also captures permanent residents, citizens living abroad (including special visas), and visitors to Australia.

The design of the Survey ensures Australians reflect on their experiences with Australian public services (also known as Commonwealth, federal or national public services) and not state, territory or local public services. Respondents do not need to have accessed Australian public services; those who have not are still asked for their general opinions of Australian public services.

The Survey uses an established online panel, consisting of people who answer surveys in exchange for minor rewards (e.g. gift cards, airline miles). Panellists are recruited to the panel via online marketing and direct email. Respondents are subject to a number of guidelines to ensure that the responses are of a high quality. These guidelines include age restrictions, quality expectations and communication standards. In addition, the Survey has a 12-month exclusion period – people who complete it cannot answer another survey wave until at least a year has passed. The Survey is currently delivered in English only.

## Sampling methodology

Panel participants are asked to complete the Survey via email, with an attached survey link, and they may commence the Survey directly from the link or by logging into their accounts. Participants are able to complete the Survey via desktop, mobile or tablet devices. Responses are confidential, and the Survey does not collect information that could reasonably be used to identify a participant by people who are permitted access to the data.

The Survey waves are ‘soft launched’ (tested on a small number of people) prior to full launch. Three key areas of testing are undertaken as part of the soft launch:

1. Ensuring there are no errors in the Survey programming (e.g. misrouting, errors in survey logic).
   1. Screen outs are working as intended for those who:
      1. Are under the age of 18
      2. Are not within the targeted scope of Australian citizenship, residency or visa status.
   2. Respondents who have qualified for the Survey are correctly flowing through to the end of the Survey.
   3. Respondents who are meant to skip survey questions or sections based on their responses do so and are not shown questions they are not meant to be shown.
2. Ensuring the Survey is yielding quality responses.
   1. Median survey length (time to complete) is reasonable.
   2. Respondents are able to complete longer questions without dropping out.
3. Checking incidence rates from which to update assumptions relating to total targeted sample.
   1. Review all screen outs to conclude they are legitimate.

Once the review of the data from the soft launch has concluded, and any required updates to the Survey have been made, the Survey is full launched targeting the full number of respondents.

## Quotas

When collecting responses, quotas are placed on the proportions by age, gender, state/territory location, and metro/regional location (based on 2016 ABS Census results).These quotas were updated in September 2022 on the basis of the 2021 ABS Census results. External expert advice recommended that data did not need to be weighted, as using quotas, the demographics of respondents reflect those of the general Australian population.

A hard interlocking quota was used for the intersection of age and gender, with an individual hard quota for state/territory and a soft (varies by +/- 30% per wave) quota for metro/regional location in the 2022-2023 financial year.

*Quota used July and August 2022*

| **n** | **Male** | **Female** | **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **18-24 years** | 60 | 58 | **118** |
| **25-34 year** | 91 | 93 | **184** |
| **35-44 years** | 85 | 88 | **173** |
| **45-54 years** | 83 | 86 | **169** |
| **55-64 years** | 74 | 78 | **152** |
| **65+ years** | 94 | 110 | **204** |
| **TOTAL** | **487** | **513** | **1000** |
| **NSW** | 320 |  |  |
| **Vic** | 255 |  |  |
| **Qld** | 200 |  |  |
| **SA** | 71 |  |  |
| **WA** | 106 |  |  |
| **Tas** | 21 |  |  |
| **NT** | 10 |  |  |
| **ACT** | 17 |  |  |
| **TOTAL** | **1000** |  |  |

*Quota used since September 2022*

| **n** | **Male** | **Female** | **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **18-24 years** | 56 | 53 | **109** |
| **25-34 year** | 92 | 92 | **184** |
| **35-44 years** | 87 | 89 | **176** |
| **45-54 years** | 80 | 82 | **162** |
| **55-64 years** | 73 | 77 | **150** |
| **65+ years** | 102 | 116 | **218** |
| **TOTAL** | **491** | **509** | **1000** |
| **NSW** | 314 |  |  |
| **Vic** | 256 |  |  |
| **Qld** | 203 |  |  |
| **SA** | 71 |  |  |
| **WA** | 106 |  |  |
| **Tas** | 23 |  |  |
| **NT** | 9 |  |  |
| **ACT** | 18 |  |  |
| **TOTAL** | **1000** |  |  |

## Data Quality and limitations

The survey panel used is a non-probability panel. Because respondents must have signed up to complete the Survey, and need internet access to complete it, it is not as representative as randomly selecting participants from the whole population. However, from testing via the phone survey and benchmarking against other surveys, the Department has not detected any major bias in the results. The Survey is delivered in English only, and participants need an internet connection to complete the Survey on their device.

All sample surveys are subject to sampling and non-sampling error. Non-sampling error may occur in any data collection. Possible sources of non-sampling error include errors in reporting or recording of information, occasional errors in coding and processing data, and errors introduced by linkage processes.

The data is not weighted, and uses quotas to ensure the sample is representative on national Australian demographics by age, gender and location.

## Service numbers

For individual service reporting, we do not report on any service where less than 50 people answered questions about that service in a financial year. The number of people who answered questions about each service in each financial year since 2018-2019 is in the table below.

*Individual service numbers*

| **Service** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Australian Competition and Consumer Commission | 239 | 293 | 271 | 156 | 173 |
| Australian Electoral Commission | < 50 | < 50 | 98 | 84 | 70 |
| Australian Taxation Office | 1995 | 1932 | 3401 | 2889 | 2723 |
| Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry | 103 | 120 | 113 | 79 | 101 |
| Department of Education |  |  |  |  | 195 |
| Department of Employment and Workplace Relations |  |  |  |  | 198 |
| Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) | 350 | 346 | 323 | 216 | 372 |
| Department of Home Affairs | 270 | 299 | 393 | 220 | 337 |
| Department of Veterans' Affairs | 123 | 169 | 274 | 190 | 285 |
| Fair Work Ombudsman | 122 | 144 | 295 | 171 | 204 |
| My Aged Care | 252 | 334 | 601 | 414 | 524 |
| National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) | 211 | 222 | 465 | 359 | 424 |
| Parks Australia | 57 | 69 | 87 | 59 | 58 |
| Pharmaceuticals Benefits Scheme | 343 | 290 | 581 | 412 | 535 |
| Services Australia - Centrelink | 2094 | 1971 | 3719 | 3317 | 3350 |
| Services Australia - Child Support | 311 | 284 | 571 | 404 | 541 |
| Services Australia - Medicare | 1781 | 1584 | 2758 | 2720 | 2723 |

The Department of Education and the Department of Workplace Relations were both created in the 2022-23 financial year as a result of machinery of government changes.