Ipsos

Social Research Institute
Understanding Society

Delivering Digital Government: The Australian Public Scorecard

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UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

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1. Executive summary

1.1. The purpose of this report

Telstra has partnered with the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis (IGPA) to conduct the latest round of quantitative research of the Australian public to garner further, refreshed evidence in relation to the role of technology in government service delivery.

Since 2011, Telstra has been undertaking substantial quantitative and qualitative studies of the Australian public to develop a body of evidence on the use, perceptions and expectations of government services. The research focused on a range of topics, helping provide insights into:

- Frequency and nature of interactions with government services at both federal and state levels;
- The Australian public's attitudes towards digital service delivery;
- The channel preferences for interactions for different types of government services;
- The public's views of how services meet their needs;
- The service experience rating;
- Comparative data of government service delivery with private sector service delivery.

The evidence highlighted that the Australian public is, in general, satisfied with existing digital government service delivery in Australia, and has big expectations of significant increases in digital government service delivery in the future.

It also confirmed that most Australians would prefer for most government services to be delivered predominantly online or in person, with only limited support for service delivery via phone and post. This implied that the high expectations of the Australian public for digital service delivery, in terms of both capacity and expected efficiency and convenience, may prove difficult for governments to fulfil without an overarching strategy and framework spanning across the digital service delivery domain.

The purpose of the current research project is to both benchmark and build upon these findings to develop further insights into the role of technology and service delivery performance in shaping the Australian public's view of the public sector, public institutions and the social fabric at large. The findings will also contribute to the development of a Digital Readiness Index, tracking the demand gap between existing service availability and public expectations, and the impact of such unmet demand.

It should be noted at the outset that the current study took place at a time when public trust in government and politicians in Australia was at a low point.

Australia has suffered a period of democratic decline, and the depth of that decline has increased since 2007. The level of democratic satisfaction has decreased steadily across each government from 85.6% in 2007 (Howard), to 71.5% in 2010 (Rudd), 61.7% in 2013 (Abbott) and 58% in March 2016 under Malcolm Turnbull. Other key measures of democratic decline reveal a similar pattern of discontent.

Levels of traditional forms of political participation, partisan alignment and trust in politicians and political institutions have reached a low point.

Although there is compelling evidence that shows that the majority of other mature democracies are experiencing similar patterns of democratic malaise, most of these countries were adversely impacted by the Global Financial Crisis. It is particularly perplexing that Australia has developed a strong culture of democratic disenchantment in a period of economic growth.[1] The key findings that follow should therefore be understood taking into account the latent dispositions from within this context.

1.2. Key findings

Australian attitudes toward alternative service delivery systems

The main finding arising from the current study is an emphatic endorsement from the Australian public to accelerate the process of public service reform and embrace digitisation.

The evidence demonstrates a sustained interest and demand amongst the Australian public to use digital services to access public policy programs (see Figures 5 to 7). This trend remains consistent since 2011, when the research program began.

In short, the Australian public is up for change, and has been ready for a while.

Indeed Australians would overwhelmingly prioritise the delivery of on-line services over other channels, with "face to face" and telephone the main secondary choices (see Figures 9 and 11). In terms of the perception of the different modalities, the Australian public makes far more positive associations with online channels (see Figure 10), while phone channels continue to draw a significantly negative perception.

Previous Telstra research – as well as anecdotal evidence – shows that the public's expectations of digital service delivery are shaped by their interactions with private sector service providers. As a result, public sector services are generally regarded to fall below the benchmark set by private sector providers.[2]

The latest results show a consistent trend in this regard. The public sector is still perceived to be behind the private sector on key measures of service delivery …on "meeting needs: (-12), and "preferences" (-20), on delivering "personalised services" (-11) and on "involving citizens" (-19) (Figure 2). Moreover, as Figure 3 shows, among those who recognise a difference in service experience, the public sector across various channels of service delivery is twice to three times more likely to be judged to be worse than the private sector. Once again these findings are in keeping with previous Telstra findings.

If we compare these findings with results from the United Kingdom in 2016 (after years of public service cuts) the differences on these measures are much less (-2 on needs; -9 on preferences; -10 on personalised services and -0 on involving citizens). This is explained by the observation that the public sector is performing better in the UK and the private sector marginally worse on these measures.[3]

It is worth noting though that these findings should not be constructed to advocate a wholesale "lift and shift" of services to private sector, rather that genuine parterships across sectors would benefit both the

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[1] See Evans, M., Stoker, G. and Halupka, M. (2016), "A Decade of Democratic Decline: How Australians Understand and Imagine Their Democracy", in C. Aulich, ed., *From Abbott to Turnbull. A New Direction*?

[2] See Telstra Connected Government: The Innovation Dimension Report (2016)

[3] See Deloitte, 2016.

public – through a better experience and more tailored channels - and the public sector – through improved trust and confidence from the public.

Indeed, we found that confidence in government to deliver effective public policy outcomes is very low (see Figure 14), reaching only 4 in 10 once and mostly around 2 in 10. As noted above, this finding needs to be understood in context, taking into account the democratic disengagement and the level of discontent with government as the background against which both this study and the latent dispositions of the public occur.

In such an environment, given the positive public perceptions of on-line service delivery identified above, we strongly believe that digitisation could be used as a very effective tool for rebuilding trust with the public.

Moreover, we pay close consideration to the strong level of support we see from the public for innovation not only in service delivery, but, importantly, in policy development and experimentation. (see Figures 12 and 16).

More detail on these and other findings follow.

There are limited demographic differences in public attitudes on this issue

When data was analysed by age, it emerged that younger Australians have a higher opinion of service delivery by both the public and private sector against all of the criteria than all other age groups, and that older Australians have a poorer opinion in a number of areas.

Findings were also relatively consistent by state, but there were some differences by income. Those with a high weekly household income were significantly more likely than all others to say that the public sector delivers services that 'work with other public services' (35% compared to an average of 26%), 'listen to your preferences' (21% compared to an average of 14%) and 'offer you a personalised service' (20% compared to an average of 14%). Such findings can be explained by the different profile of services that are generally accessed by people in different income brackets and by the increased complexity of services that are needed by the older, lower income segments of the population.

Citizens have a preference for private sector provision

Participants were most likely to say that government departments and the private sector were 'about the same' in terms of delivery through each of the channels.

The only area where there was a more decisive view was in relation to telephone usage, where 48% of participants said that the government was worse (either 'much worse' or 'worse') than the private sector.

Equally significant, when taking into account the public that did notice a difference between the public and private sectors service delivery, only a very small proportion felt that the government was better than the private sector in relation to any of the channels listed, while the majority indicated that the private sector provides a better or much better experience of services compared to the public sector.

There were no significant differences by age, location or income in relation to perceptions of channel delivery between the public and private sector.

Citizens have a preference for localised channels of service delivery

All survey participants were then asked how well they feel their state or territory government compares to the federal government in delivery of services through the same channels listed above.

In relation to all channels of service delivery, around two-thirds of participants said that their state/territory government and the federal government were 'about the same' in the delivery of services (ranging from 64% in relation to 'in person' or 'via telephone' to 68% in relation to 'via email' or 'via a mobile app').

Despite a tendency to see experience of dealing with services as the same, perceptions of state and territory government service delivery through all of the channels appears to be more positive than perceptions of federal government delivery.

Again, there were no significant differences by age, location or income in relation to perceptions of channel delivery between the public and private sector. It is interesting to note that results did not vary significantly by state, suggesting that state and territory governments are similarly perceived by their residents in terms of channel delivery across the nation.

These findings remain consistent with previous research, highlighting again the impact that frequency of use and locality of service have on shaping the perceptions of the public.

Age and income still matters in terms of contacting and channel use with government services

All survey participants were asked if they had registered for a range of online government services.

The most common online service was 'myGov', used by over three quarters (76%) of participants. The majority had also registered for the 'Do Not Call Register' (56%).

There were a number of significant differences by age. Younger participants (particularly those aged 18-34) were significantly more likely to use 'myGov' (80% compared to an average of 76%) and 'E-Tax' (62% compared to 45%), while those aged 65 and over were significantly more likely to have used the 'Do Not Call Register' (70% compared to an average of 56%).

Similar to other results, income was correlated with use of tax services, with those on a middle or high household income significantly more likely than all others to have used 'E-tax' (52% and 55% respectively compared to an average of 45%). The most common activity was 'completed or lodged a tax assessment', with three-quarters (75%) completing this task at least once in the past 12 months. As expected, this was a fairly infrequent behaviour, with 67% doing this only once in the past 6 months. Licence renewal (72%), the purchase of transport tickets or passes (63%) and claiming Medicare rebates (63%) were also activities that had been performed by the majority of participants at least once in the past six months.

Contact with government departments and services varied considerably by age. There were a number of activities more likely to be engaged in by younger Australians at least once per year than older Australians. In particular, those aged 18-34 were significantly more likely than all others to have e.g. completed a tax assessment (87%) or purchased public transport tickets (70%). There were no areas where 50-64 year-olds or 65+ year-olds were any more likely to participate in any of these activities than other age groups.

There were a number of differences by location in terms of completing government activities at least once a year. Unsurprisingly, participants from more urban states were significantly more likely than all others to have purchased public transport tickets (69% at least once a year amongst those from New South Wales and 75% from Victoria compared to an average of 63% nationally). By contrast, those from Western Australia were significantly more likely to have renewed a licence (83% compared to a national average of 72%). Those from Western Australia were also significantly more likely to have paid government issued bills, fines or penalties (61% compared to a national average of 48%). There was also a relationship between income and engagement with government activities, with higher income Australians significantly more likely to engage with a number of the listed government activities than those on lower incomes.

For each government activity participants indicated they had undertaken, participants were asked which channel they had used to complete this activity. There was considerable variation depending on the activity. The activities most likely to be completed online - and by a majority - were payment of government fines and completion of a tax assessment (69%) for both, followed by submitting information relating to government allowances (52%) and requesting information about government services (49%), although online does appear to be the most common channel overall. There were two activities which were most likely to be accessed in person: seeking help from public health care services (51%), and purchasing public transport tickets (51%). Notwithstanding this, it is important to highlight the proportion of digital channel usage (23% and 43% respectively) for these services as well.

Online service engagement breeds digital habits

Those participants who advised that they had completed a government service in the past twelve months were plotted against the proportion of those who mainly completed that service online.

Those who completed a tax assessment in the past twelve months (75%) were the group most likely to complete this transaction online (69%). While fewer paid government issued bills, fines or penalties in the past twelve months (48%), more than two-thirds who did (69%) completed this payment online.

In contrast, almost one out-of-every two people surveyed sought public health advice (48%), but only 21% utilised an online platform to receive that service, highlighting that digital public health is still in its emerging phase.

Citizens prefer online channel preferences for contact with government services

'Online' was the channel most likely to be a preference for almost all activities. The only exception was in relation to seeking help or advice from public health care services, where 'in person' was slightly higher as a preference (45% compared to 43% for online services).

The online channel has the the most positive perception, while at the other end, telephone is the most negatively perceived channel by the Australian public.

Digitisation and innovation are the key to improving government service delivery

Online services were ranked as the highest priority overall (2.4), followed, closely, by walk-in services and call centres (2.5 each).

Differences by age reflected the communication preferences by age outlined elsewhere in this report, with younger people favouring online and mobile channels and older people more traditional channels.

We also sought the views of the public on public sector risk taking and innovation, with encouraging results.

All respondents were asked for their level of agreement with the statement "We need to empower public servants to experiment and maybe even fail, as long as it leads to better services" on a scale where 1 was 'strongly agree' and 5 was 'strongly disagree'.

The largest proportion of responses have been positive, with 47% endorsing the need to empower the public sector to take risks and innovate. This was followed by a detached contingent (36% - over a third) who provided a neutral response of '3', suggesting they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Overall, agreement was highest among those aged 65 and over (55%), and there was no significant variation by state or income.

Citizens are very positive about on-line government services

All participants were asked how they would rate the information and services currently provided over the internet by government departments, agencies or services.

Just over half (51%) rated these as 'good' or 'very good'.

The only difference by age was that those aged 65 and over were significantly less likely than all others to provide a rating of 'good' (31% compared to an average of 39%).

Results were consistent by state, but there were some differences by income. Those on lower incomes were significantly less likely than all others to rate government services as 'good' (34% compared to an average of 39%). This may be a result of higher complexity of interaction with, and dependency on, government services.

All participants were asked for the degree to which they agree or disagree that more government services online would lead to a range of outcomes, some positive and some negative.

The results suggest that there is a high level of positivity in relation to increasing online government services, with the majority agreeing with all of the positive statements. In particular, around three

quarters agreed (either ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’) that the delivery of more government services online would ‘be more convenient’ (76%): ‘save me time’ (73%) and, ‘save the government money’ (73%).

Citizens’ confidence is influenced by latent dispositions

We mentioned earlier the context of public latent dispositions and the background of discontent. While this study does not model any moderation effects, it is worthwhile highlighting some of the findings in this space.

Overall, confidence in government’s ability to deal with big public policy problems was low, with fewer than two in-five rating their confidence as 4 (i.e. ‘confident’) or 5 (i.e. ‘very confident’) in relation to any of the issues listed.

Participants were most likely to be confident about the government’s ability to address ‘national security’ (39%) and ‘develop national infrastructure’ (28%), and least likely in relation to ‘address domestic violence’ (18%) and ‘the environment’ (20%). Interestingly, 18-34 year-olds – also the group with the most positive views of government services – were most confident in the government.

There were no significant differences by state in terms of net confidence, and only one difference by income: those on higher incomes were significantly more likely to say they were confident in the government’s ability to address ‘national security’.

The government has public permission to engage in policy innovation

Against the background of reduced confidence, there is an interest in a number of innovative policy choices that seem to resonate with the Australian public.

We sought to understand the appetite for innovation in public policy by asking all participants whether they approved or disapproved of a range of policy choices, spanning a diverse range of domains of interest, from wellbeing and public health to participation in policy development and the use of technology in delivering services.

There was majority support for all policy choices listed, with the highest level of support expressed in relation to public participation in policy development and process innovation: ‘any new major policy decisions must include a 6 week online public consultation period to allow direct input from all Australians’ (78% approving), and ‘all citizens are automatically enrolled as voters at 18 and do not have to register’ (76% approving).

The findings were generally consistent by age, although those aged 65 and over were significantly more likely than all others to approve of: ‘governments should nudge the public towards making choices for their own good’ (80% compared to an average of 74%) and significantly less likely to approve of: ‘all citizens are automatically enrolled as voters at 18 and do not have to register’ (71% compared to an average of 76%).

2. Background and research objectives

Telstra, through the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis (IGPA), commissioned the Ipsos Social Research Institute (Ipsos) to conduct an online survey exploring the community's perceptions of online government services between 21 November and 5 December 2016. The survey instrument was designed by Telstra and IGPA. The survey aimed to "conduct quantitative research amongst the Australian public to garner further, refreshed insight into their preferences and expectations with regard to the digital delivery of government services".

Since 2011, Telstra has been undertaking substantial quantitative and qualitative studies with the Australian public to develop insights into the use, perceptions and expectations of public sector services. The research highlighted that the Australian public is, in general, satisfied with existing digital government service delivery in Australia. It also confirmed that most Australians would prefer for most government services to be delivered predominantly online or in person, with only limited support for service delivery via the other channels, including phone, postal, email and mobile applications. This implied that the high expectations of the Australian public for digital service delivery, in terms of both capacity and expected efficiency and convenience, may prove difficult for governments to fulfil.

The findings will also contribute to the development of a Digital Readiness Index, tracking the demand gap between existing service availability and public expectations, and the impact of such unmet demand over time.

3. Methodology

Telstra and IGPA developed a draft questionnaire of approximately 10 minutes in length that was provided to Ipsos. Ipsos refined the questionnaire to ensure that the questions were appropriate to meet the research objectives in an online survey environment. The final questionnaire used to collect data is available at the Appendix in Section 8.

3.1. Data collection

The survey was administered to an online panel between 21 November and 5 December 2016. In total, 1,987 Australians completed the survey.

Online panels consist of members of the public who have signed up to complete surveys online. All participants received survey 'points' for participating, which can be combined with points from completing other surveys to obtain cash and other incentives.

3.2. Sample composition

Minimum quotas were set to ensure a robust sample of Australians by age, gender and location. The sample frame was designed to reflect the Australian population, while still providing a sufficient sample

in each group of interest (age, gender and location). For example, this involved boosting the sample for smaller states and decreasing it for larger states, in order to allow for comparison by location.

Intended quotas were achieved for all participating states, with the exception of the Northern Territory. Although a range of online panels were used to meet quotas, sufficient completes were unable to be achieved in the time frames provided, particularly in areas outside of Darwin.

Table 1. Sample composition

Location	Male		Female		Total
	18-50	50+	18-50	50+	
SYDNEY	94	97	100	101	392
REST OF NSW	54	54	55	56	219
HOBART	4	11	5	7	27
REST OF TAS	6	7	7	7	27
DARWIN	5	5	4	7	21
REST OF NT	0	1	5	3	9
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY	12	13	12	13	50
Other	1	1	0	1	3
MELBOURNE	89	91	92	93	365
REST OF VIC	29	29	28	26	112
BRISBANE	47	47	49	49	192
REST OF QLD	52	52	52	52	208
ADELAIDE	27	27	28	28	110
REST OF SA	8	8	8	8	32
PERTH	43	44	40	43	170
REST OF WA	12	13	12	11	48
Total	483	500	497	505	1985

Data validation

In order to ensure the validity of the data, 'skimmers' were deleted from the data-file to provide a total sample of n=1,987. Thirteen participants who completed the survey in less than three minutes – i.e.,

those who were considered to not have taken adequate time to read and properly respond to the questions – were removed from the sample.

3.3. Weighting

As part of data preparation, demographic or other variables of interest are also examined to ensure they accurately reflect the population of interest. If the data is skewed in terms of these variables, results from the survey may not accurately reflect the views of the wider population of interest.

In order to avoid this issue, 'weights' can be applied to the data. Weights are calculated based on the difference between the proportion of a certain type of respondent in the sample and the proportion of that type of respondent in the population. In essence, applying weights to a dataset readjusts the achieved sample to resemble the population, removing any skew in the results.

All data was weighted by age, gender and location to ensure it accurately reflects the Australian population composition when data is presented at the national level.

4. Analysis

All statistical significance testing in this report was performed using Q computer software package[4] and SPSS. Significance testing between independent subgroups was performed using independent samples, t-tests for comparison of means and z-tests for comparisons of proportions, all conducted at the 95% confidence level using the effective sample size. Coding, editing and weighting of variables and statistical manipulations were conducted as appropriate. All questions were analysed by the following variables:

- Age
- Location
- Income

Results are presented by age in tables and charts throughout the report, with significant differences noted in the commentary. Significant differences by location and income are noted in the commentary. Where there is no mention of a difference by location and income, this is because significant differences did not exist.

4.1. Significance testing

Tests of significance were conducted between key groups of interest (e.g. age groups) at the 95% confidence level and are reported where appropriate. Where significance testing has occurred between more than two categories within a group (e.g. age), significance testing has been used that tests one category against the average of the other categories (i.e. against the total excluding itself). Such a test is ideal for multiple comparisons as it reduces the likelihood of displaying a significant difference where one does not exist.

A 'significant difference' means that we can be 95% confident that the difference observed between the two samples reflects a true difference in the population of interest, and is not a result of chance. Such

[4] Q Professional. Version: 4.5.5.0. 2003-2014 Numbers International Pty Ltd. Key developers (in alphabetical order): O. Bock, T. Bock, J. Kurianski

descriptions are not value judgements on the importance of the difference. The reader is encouraged to make a judgement as to whether the differences are 'meaningful' or not.

4.2. How to interpret this report

For each question, data has been presented in a combination of tables and charts at the overall level and by age. In tables, significant differences by age have been identified using red text to indicate that a result is significantly lower among that group than all other groups, and blue to indicate that it is significantly higher.

In addition, significant differences in relation to the other variables examined have been noted in the commentary. This is also indicated in some graphics with the addition of upward and downward pointing arrows.

Due to rounding, responses may not always add up to 100%, and NETs (e.g. 'very satisfied' + 'fairly satisfied') may not appear to be an exact addition of the two responses included.

Throughout this report, the following language is used to describe income:

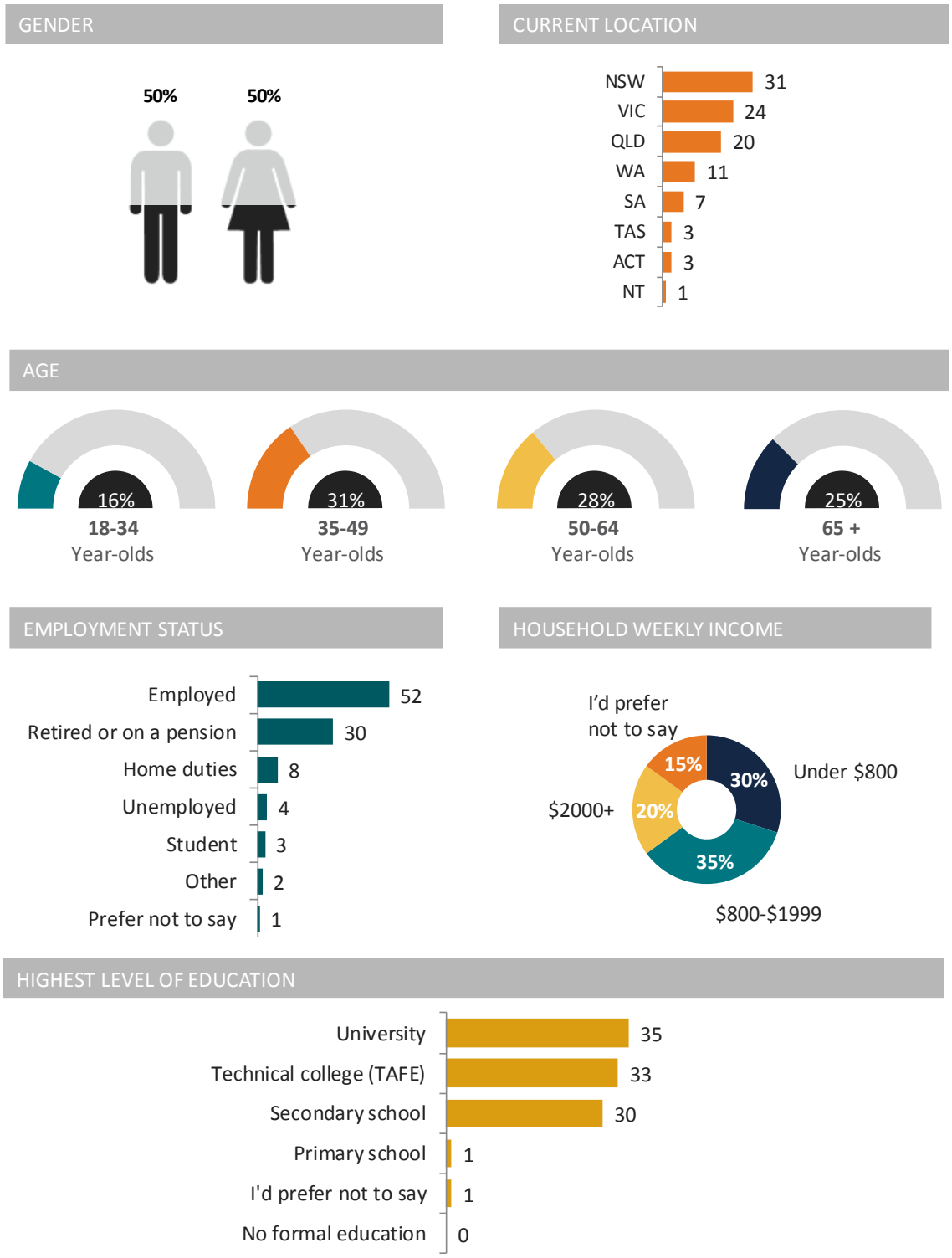
- Low – Under $800 household income per week
- Middle - $800-$1999 household income per week
- High - $2000+ household income per week

All 'don't know'/'not applicable' answers have been removed from results presented here. As such, the sample size for each question varies and has been included below for each chart or table.

5. Survey sample

Figure 1, below, outlines the demographics of the survey sample (n=1,987), in terms of gender, location, age, employment status, household income and level of education. All data is unweighted.

Figure 1. Survey sample composition (%)



6. Findings

6.1. Sector comparisons of service delivery

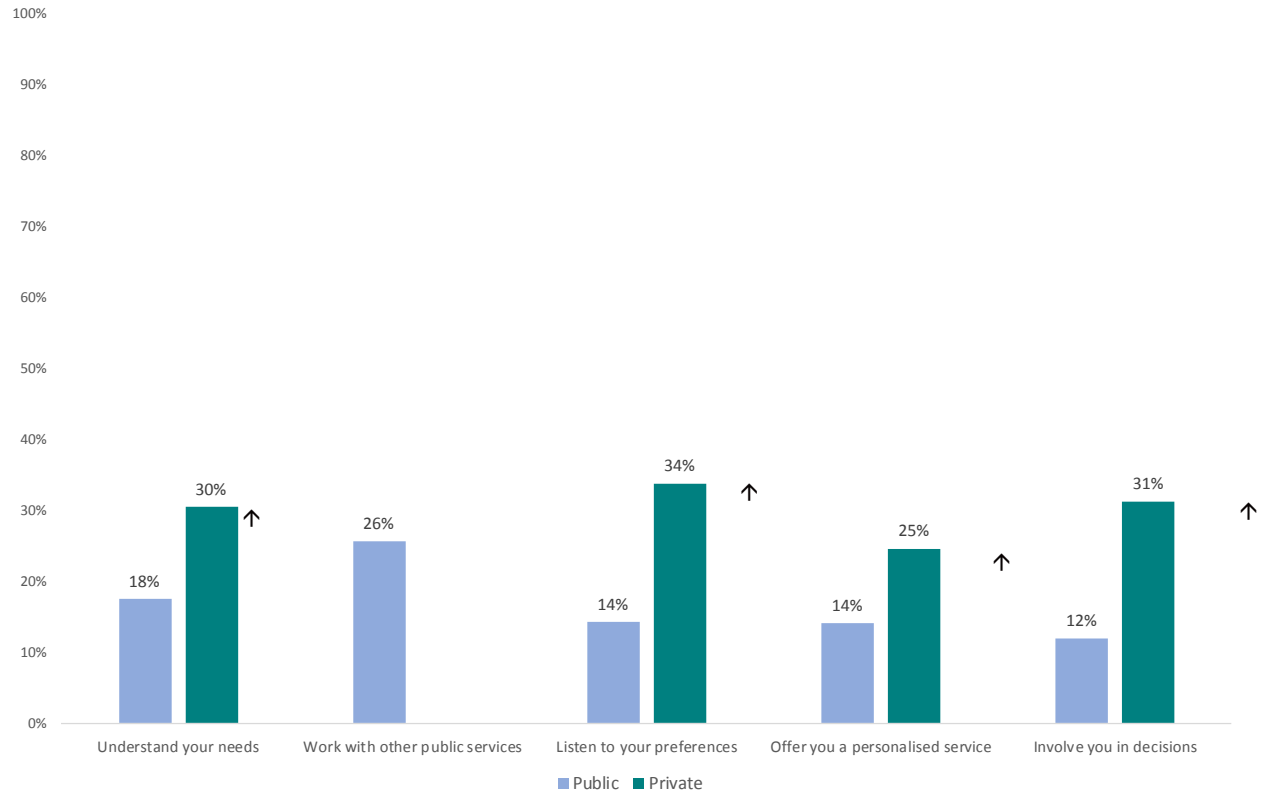
All survey participants were asked how well they feel public sector organisations deliver services against a number of criteria, unrelated to specific channel delivery. They were then asked the same questions of private sector services. Figure **2**, below, compares the proportion of participants who said that public services always, or often meet these criteria, and against the proportion of participants who said the same of the private sector.

Overall, neither public nor private sector organisations were particularly well regarded in these areas, but the private sector is clearly performing better than the public sector.

For each of the criteria (with the exclusion of 'work with other public services' which was only asked in relation to the public sector), the private sector was significantly more likely to be described as delivering 'always' or 'often' than the public sector.

The difference was most pronounced in relation to whether or not organisations deliver services that 'listen to your preferences', with only 14% saying that public sector organisations 'always' or 'often' do this, compared to 34% in relation to private sector organisations, a 20 percentage point difference. This was followed by 'involve you in decisions', with 31% saying that private sector organisations deliver this 'always' or 'often' compared to only 12% in relation to the public sector. The area of greatest strength for the public sector was in relation to 'work with other public services', with just over a quarter saying public sector organisations do this 'always' or 'often'.

Figure 2. Sector comparisons of channel delivery – NET always + often



*QB1. How often do **public** sector organisations (e.g. government departments, agencies or services) deliver services that…?*

*QB2. How often do **private** sector organisations (e.g. banks, retailers, telcos and insurers) deliver services that…?*

Note: Arrows indicate significant differences.

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

Demographic differences

When data was analysed by age, it emerged that younger Australians have a higher opinion of service delivery by both the public and private sector against all of the criteria than all other age groups, and that older Australians have a poorer opinion in a number of areas.

For example, 19% of 18-34 year-olds felt that public sector organisations 'often' or 'always' 'involve you in decisions' compared to only 7% of those aged 50-64. In relation to the private sector, those aged 50-64 were particularly negative, and significantly less likely to say that private sector organisations 'often' or 'always' delivered services against all criteria than all other age groups. See Table 2 and Table 3, below.

Findings were relatively consistent by state, but there were some differences by income. Those with a high weekly household income were significantly more likely than all others to say that the public sector delivers services that 'work with other public services' (35% compared to an average of 26%), 'listen to your preferences' (21% compared to an average of 14%) and 'offer you a personalised service' (20% compared to 14%).

Table 2. Public sector comparisons of channel delivery by age – NET always + often

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
Understand your needs	23% ↑	15%	15%	15%	18%
Work with other public services	31% ↑	26%	25%	18% ↓	26%
Listen to your preferences	20% ↑	13%	10% ↓	12%	14%
Offer you a personalised service	21% ↑	12%	10% ↓	12%	14%
Involve you in decisions	19% ↑	12%	7% ↓	7% ↓	12%

*QB1. How often do **public** sector organisations (e.g. government departments, agencies or services) deliver services that…?*

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

Table 3. Private sector comparisons of channel delivery by age – NET always + often

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
Understand your needs	38% ↑	27%	25% ↓	30%	30%
Listen to your preferences	39% ↑	33%	29% ↓	33%	34%
Offer you a personalised service	32% ↑	22%	19% ↓	23%	25%
Involve you in decisions	39% ↑	28%	25% ↓	31%	31%

*QB2. How often do **private** sector organisations (e.g. banks, retailers, telcos and insurers) deliver services that…?*

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

Overall, the discrepancy between public and private sector across the different elements of the service and engagement experience offers a good snapshot for the areas where public sector services can improve and adopt some of the practices found in the private sector. The good news, as the next section

shows, is that the differences between sectors, while significant, may not be as dramatic as some may fear.

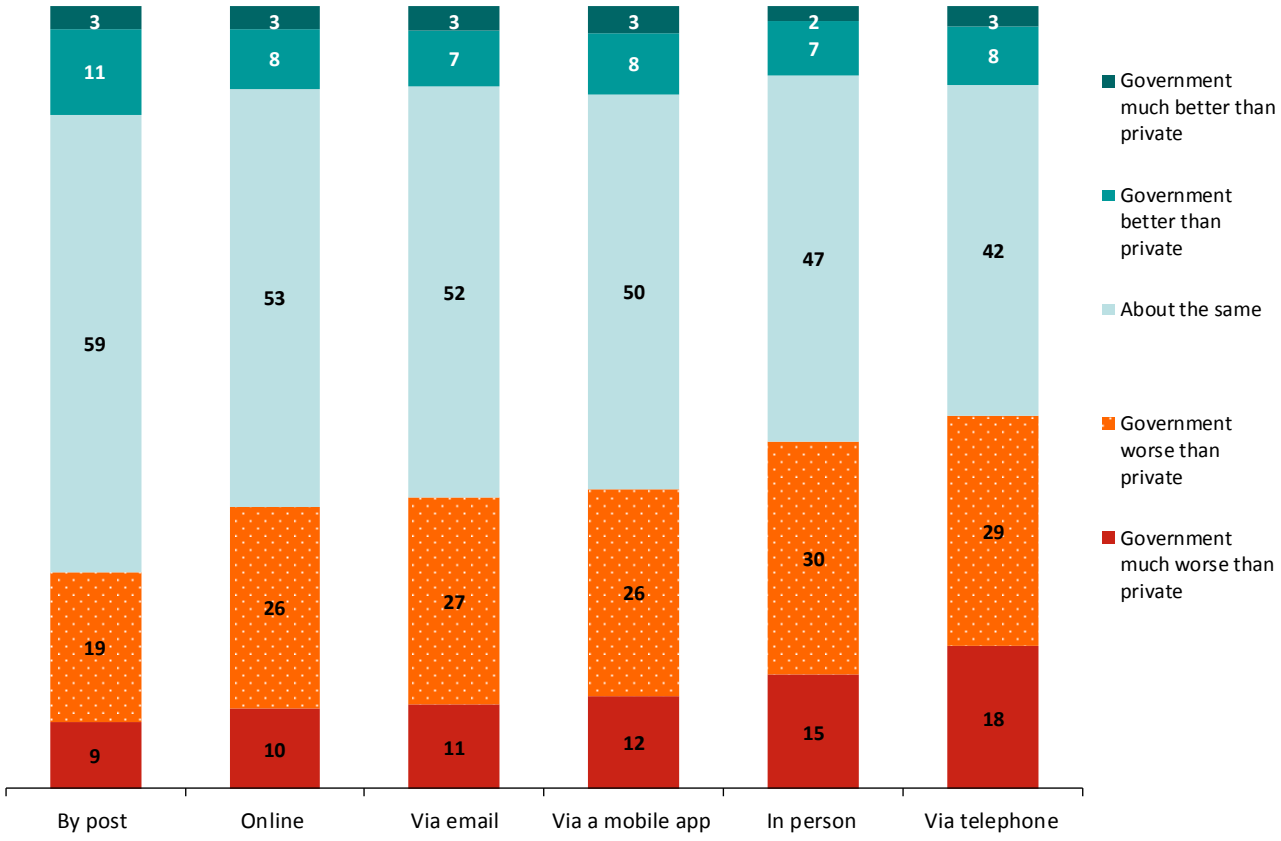
6.2. Sector comparisons of channel delivery

After answering questions about their general perceptions of service delivery by public and private organisations, survey participants were then asked how they would rate dealing with government departments through a range of channels compared to the private sector.

Generally, participants were most likely to say that government departments and the private sector were 'about the same' in terms of delivery through each of the channels. The only area where there was a more decisive view was in relation to telephone, where 48% of participants said that the government was worse (either 'much worse' or 'worse') than the private sector. Only a very small proportion felt that the government was better than private in relation to any of the channels listed.

Leaving aside the segment of the public that didn't see significant differences between the sectors, it is clear, however, that for those who did, the public sector fares signficantly worse than the private sector.

Figure 3. Dealing with government departments, agencies or services vs. private sector (%)



*QB3. In comparison to the private sector, how would you rate **dealing with government departments, agencies or services** through the following methods?*

Sample: n = 1021 to 1743 (excluding don't knows and not applicable)

Weighted by age, gender and location

Demographic differences

There were no significant differences by age, location or income in relation to perceptions of channel delivery between the public and private sector.

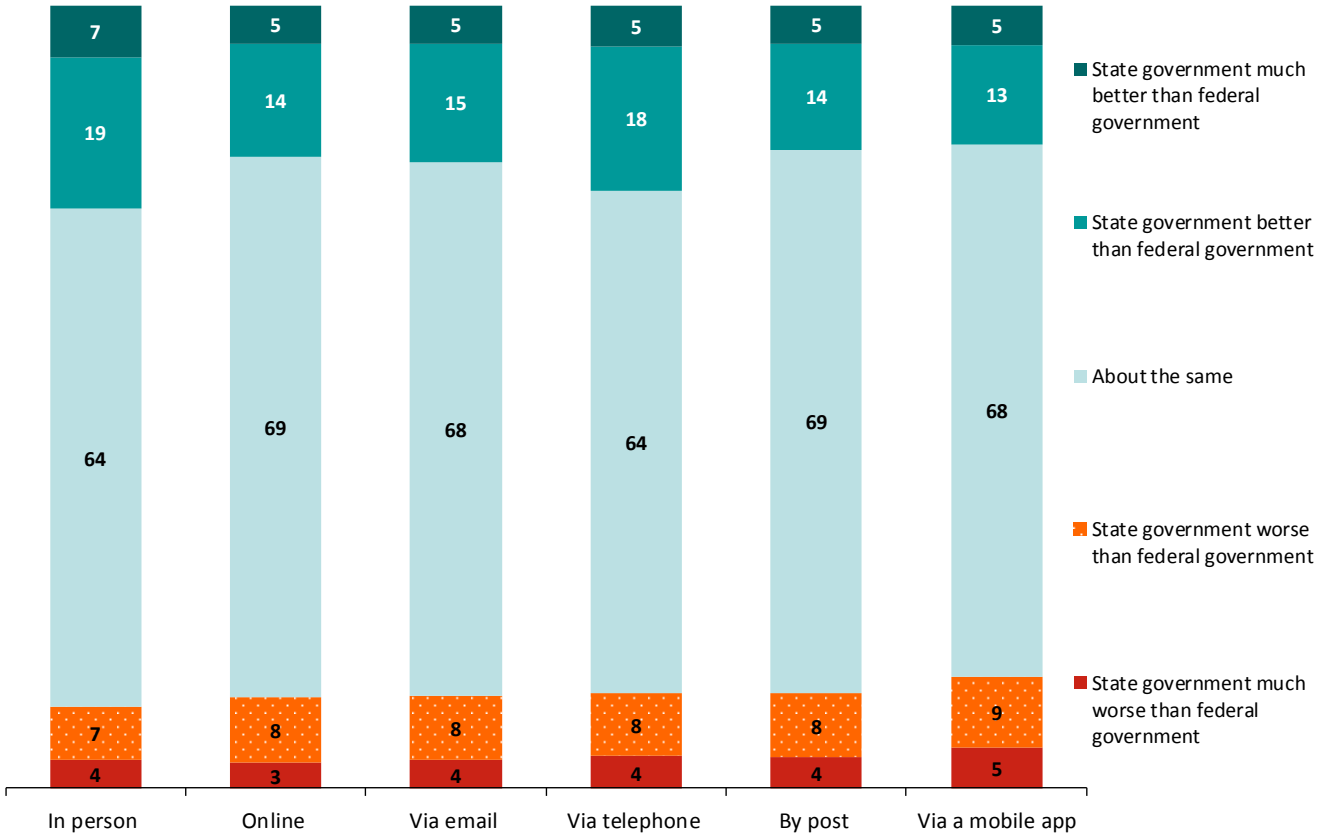
6.3. Sector comparisons of channel delivery by jurisdiction

All survey participants were then asked how well they feel their own state or territory government compares to the federal government in delivery of services through the same channels listed above. We asked this question despite previous findings which show that, by and large, the Australian public does not differentiate between the different levels of government when accessing services.

As such, there was no surprise that the findings remain consistent. In relation to all channels, around two-thirds of participants said that their state/territory government and the federal government were 'about the same' in the delivery of services (ranging from 64% in relation to 'in person' or 'via telephone' to 68% in relation to 'via email' or 'via a mobile app'.

Despite a tendency to see experience of dealing with services as the same, perceptions of state and territory government service delivery through all of the channels appears to be more positive than perceptions of federal government delivery. Participants were more likely to say that state (or territory) government delivered services through each of the channels was better than the federal government. This was particularly the case in relation to 'in person' service delivery (26% stating their state/territory government was 'better' or 'much better' than the federal government).

Figure 4. Dealing with government departments, agencies or services vs. participant's state/territory government (%)



QB4. In comparison to the services provided by the Federal Government departments (such as ATO, Medicare, Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Child Support or Australian Passport Office), how would you rate dealing with services provided by your State/Territory Government through the following methods?

Sample: n = 968 to 1612 (excluding don't knows and not applicables)

Weighted by age, gender and location

Demographic differences

Again, there were no significant differences by age, location or income in relation to perceptions of channel delivery between the public and private sector. It is interesting to note that results did not vary significantly by state, suggesting that state and territory governments are similarly perceived by their residents in terms of channel delivery across the nation.

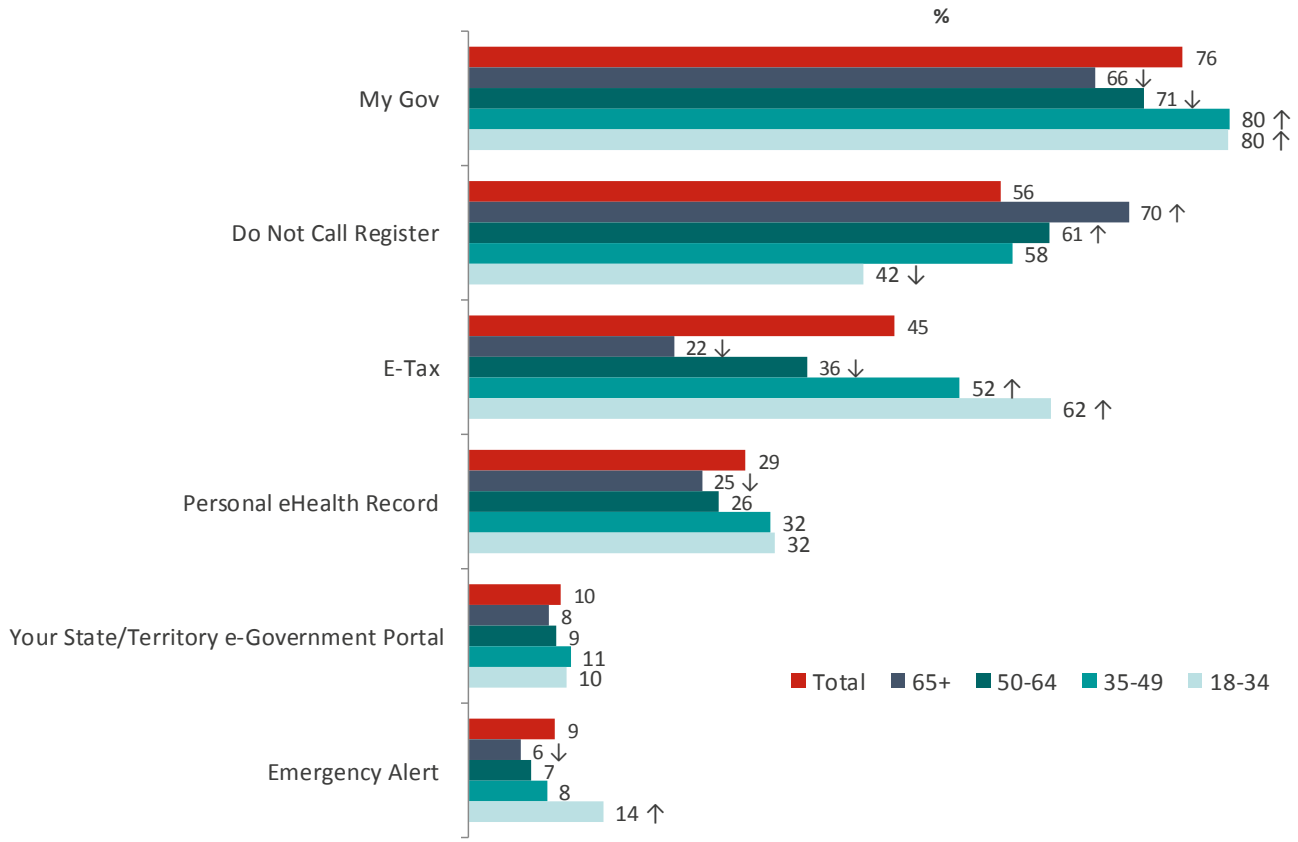
6.4. Current contact and channel use with government services

All survey participants were asked if they had registered for a number of online government services. The most common online service was 'myGov', used by over three quarters (76%) of participants. The majority had also registered for the 'Do Not Call Register' (56%).

There were a number of significant differences by age. Younger participants (particularly those aged 18-34) were significantly more likely to use 'myGov' (80% compared to an average of 76%) and 'E-Tax' (62% compared to 45%), while those aged 65 and over were significantly more likely to have used the 'Do Not Call Register' (70% compared to an average of 56%).

Similar to other results, income was correlated with use of tax services, with those on a middle or high household income significantly more likely than all others to have used 'E-tax' (52% and 55% respectively compared to an average of 45%)

Figure 5. Registering for government services by age (%)



QC2. Have you registered for, or used, the following online government services?

Sample: n = 1591 to 1912 (excluding don't knows)

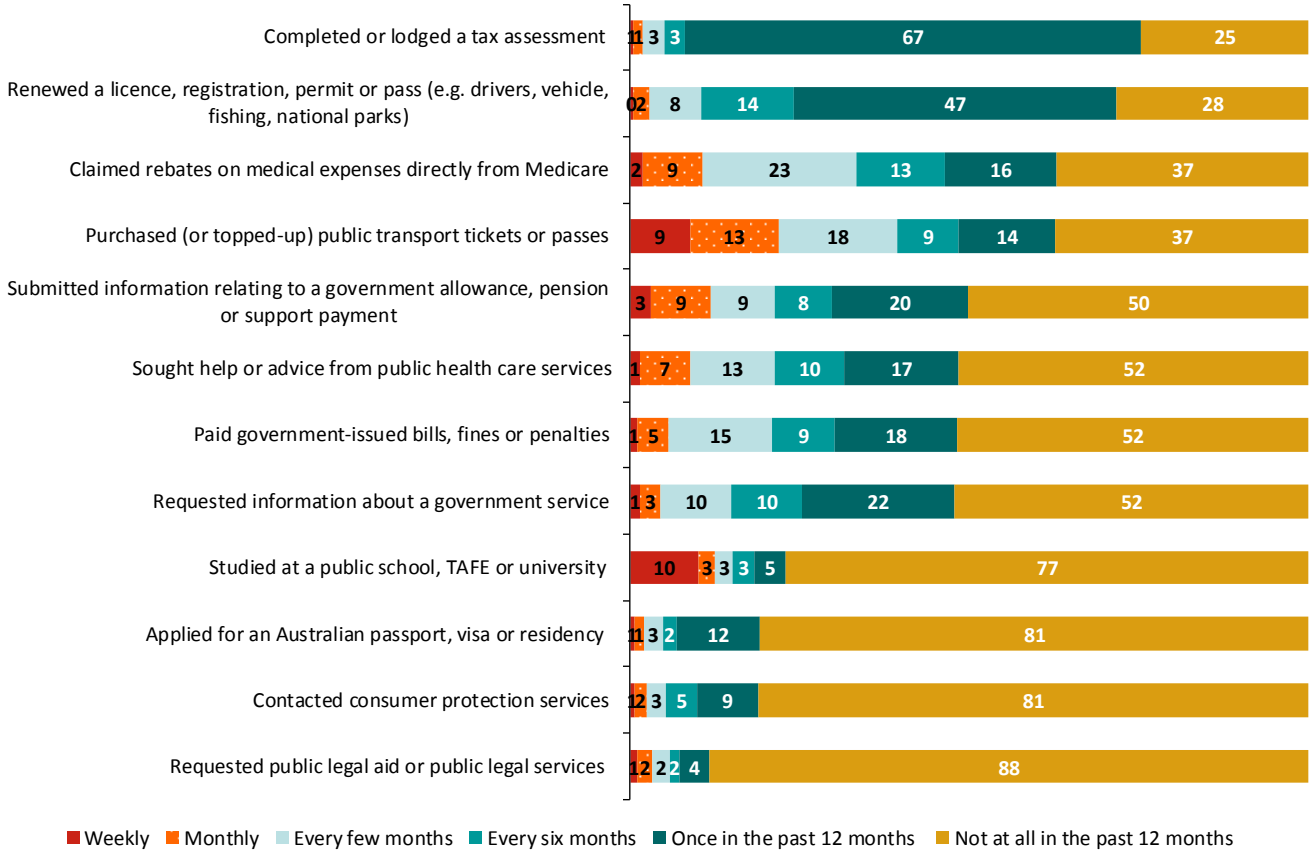
Weighted by age, gender and location

All survey participants were asked how often they and their family had undertaken a range of activities with federal or state/territory government departments, agencies or services.

As outlined below in Figure 6, there was a real range in terms of how frequently these activities had been completed.

The most common activity was 'completed or lodged a tax assessment', with three-quarters (75%) completing this task at least once in the past 12 months. As expected, this was a fairly infrequent behaviour, with 67% doing this only once in the past 6 months. Licence renewal (72%), the purchase of transport tickets or passes (63%) and claiming Medicare rebates (63%) were also activities that had been performed by the majority of participants at least once in the past six months.

Figure 6. Current contact and channel use with government services (%)



*QC1. **In the last 12 months,** how often have you or members of your household undertaken each of the following activities with government departments, agencies or services?*

Sample: 1805 to 1909 (excluding don't knows)

Weighted by age, gender and location

Demographic differences

Contact with government departments and services varied considerably by age. There were a number of activities more likely to be engaged in at least once per year by younger Australians than older Australians. In particular, those aged 18-34 were significantly more likely than all others to have:

- completed a tax assessment (87%);
- purchased public transport tickets (70%);
- sought help from public health care services (54%);
- paid government fines (54%);
- studied at a public institution (44%);
- applied for a passport (32%);
- contacted consumer protection (33%); or
- requested public legal aid (25%).

By contrast, there were no areas where 50-64 year-olds or 65+ year-olds were any more likely to participate in any of these activities than other age groups.

Further, there were a number of differences by location in terms of completing government activities at least once a year. Unsurprisingly, participants from more urban states were significantly more likely than all others to have purchased public transport tickets (69% at least once a year amongst those from New South Wales and 75% from Victoria compared to an average of 63% nationally). By contrast, those from Western Australia were significantly more likely to have renewed a licence (83% compared to a national average of 72%). Those from Western Australia were also significantly more likely to have paid government issued bills, fines or penalties (61% compared to 48%).

There was also a relationship between income and engagement with government activities, with higher income Australians significantly more likely to engage with a number of the listed government activities than those on lower incomes. Those with a high household income were significantly more likely than all others to have:

- completed a tax assessment (88%);
- purchased public transport tickets (71%);
- claimed Medicare rebates (71%);
- paid government fines (57%); or
- studied at a public institution (31%)

The only activity which those on a low income were significantly more likely to have completed than all others was ‘submitting information relating to a government allowance’.

Table 4. Current contact and channel use with government services by age – NET at least once in the past 12 months

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
Completed or lodged a tax assessment	87% ↑	83% ↑	73%	49% ↓	75%
Renewed a licence, registration, permit or pass (e.g. drivers, vehicle, fishing, national parks)	74%	68%	72%	72%	72%
Claimed rebates on medical expenses directly from Medicare	68%	59%	60%	64%	63%
Purchased (or topped-up) public transport tickets or passes	70% ↑	61%	60%	57% ↓	63%
Submitted information relating to a government allowance, pension or support payment	53%	48%	44% ↓	54%	50%
Sought help or advice from public health care services	54% ↑	55% ↑	41% ↓	41% ↓	48%
Paid government-issued bills, fines or penalties	54% ↑	48%	45%	43%	48%
Requested information about a government service	50%	49%	48%	43%	48%
Studied at a public school, TAFE or university	44% ↑	22%	14% ↓	1% ↓	23%
Applied for an Australian passport, visa or residency	32% ↑	16%	14% ↓	10% ↓	19%
Contacted consumer protection services	33% ↑	15%	13% ↓	9% ↓	19%
Requested public legal aid or public legal services	25% ↑	9%	5% ↓	2% ↓	12%

*QC1. **In the last 12 months,** how often have you or members of your household undertaken each of the following activities with government departments, agencies or services?*

Sample: 1805 to 1909 (excluding don't knows)

Weighted by age, gender and location

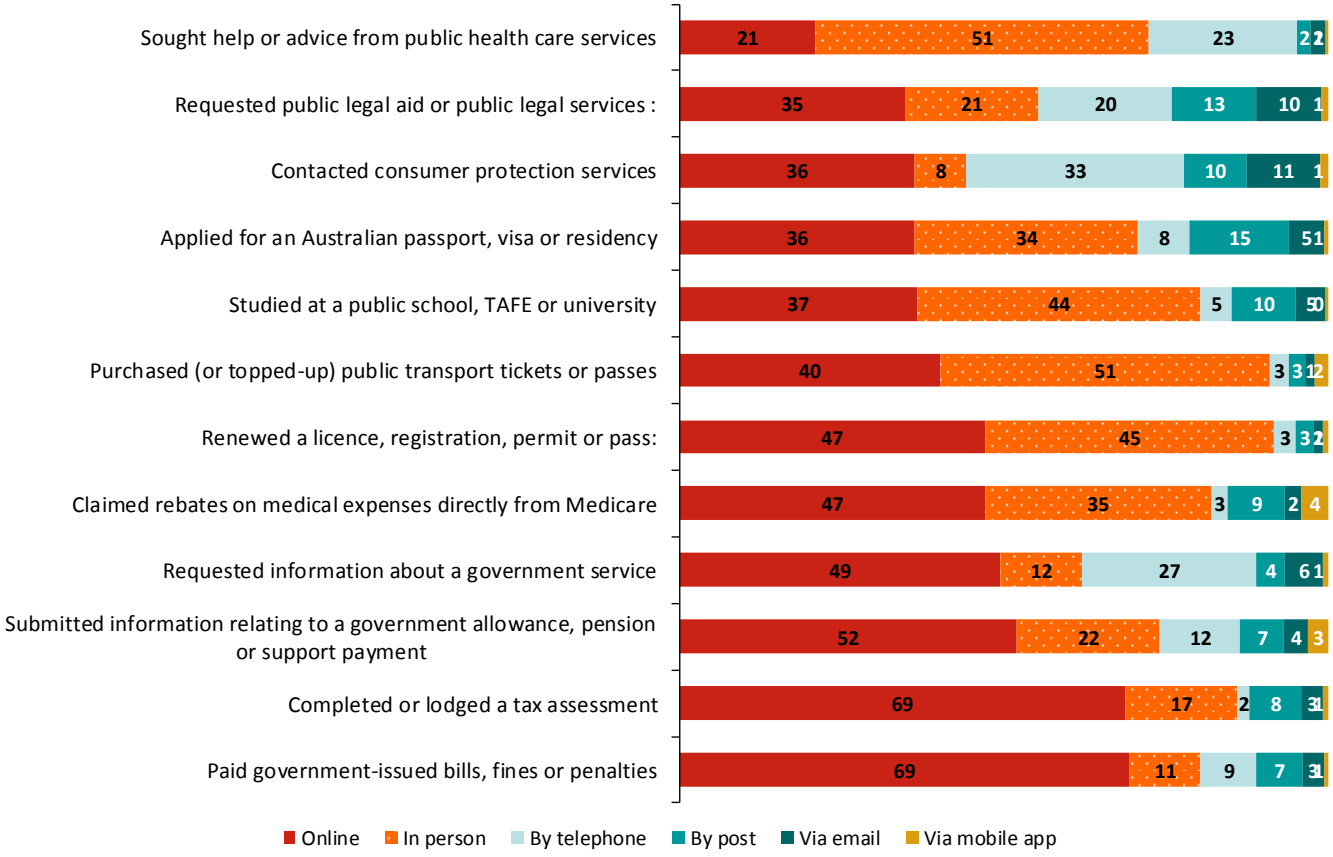
For each government activity participants indicated they had undertaken in question C1 (above), participants were asked which channel they had used to complete this activity.

There was considerable variation depending on the activity, as outlined **Figure 7**. The activities most likely to be completed online – and by a majority - were payment of government fines and completion of a tax assessment (69%) for both, followed by submitting information relating to a government

allowance, pension or support payment (52%) and requesting information about government services (49%), although online does appear to be the most common channel overall.

There were two activities which were most likely to be accessed in person: seeking help from public health care services (51%), and purchasing public transport tickets (51%).

Figure 7. Main way completing activities with government departments (%)



*QC3. In the past 12 months, what was the **main way** (in person, by telephone, post, email or online or via mobile app) you completed each of the following activities with government departments, agencies or services?*

Sample: n = 144 to 1333 (excluding don't knows)

Weighted by age, gender and location

Table 5. Main way completing activities with government departments (Online) by age

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Total
Paid government-issued bills, fines or penalties	65%	77% ↑	71%	64%	69%
Completed or lodged a tax assessment	69%	73%	65%	64%	69%
Submitted information relating to a government allowance, pension or support payment	56%	61% ↑	49%	39% ↓	52%
Requested information about a government service	50%	59% ↑	47%	38% ↓	49%
Claimed rebates on medical expenses directly from Medicare	45%	50%	46%	48%	47%
Renewed a licence, registration, permit or pass	51%	51%	44%	39% ↓	47%
Purchased (or topped-up) public transport tickets or passes	39%	43%	40%	38%	40%
Studied at a public school, TAFE or university	43% ↑	24% ↓	29%	100%	37%
Applied for an Australian passport, visa or residency	35%	39%	38%	30%	36%
Contacted consumer protection services	40%	36%	32%	23%	36%
Requested public legal aid or public legal services	36%	39%	31%	9%	35%
Sought help or advice from public health care services	29% ↑	22%	12% ↓	13%	21%

QC3. In the past 12 months, what was the main way (in person, by telephone, post, email or online or via mobile app) you completed each of the following activities with government departments, agencies or services?

Sample: n = 144 to 1333 (excluding don't knows)

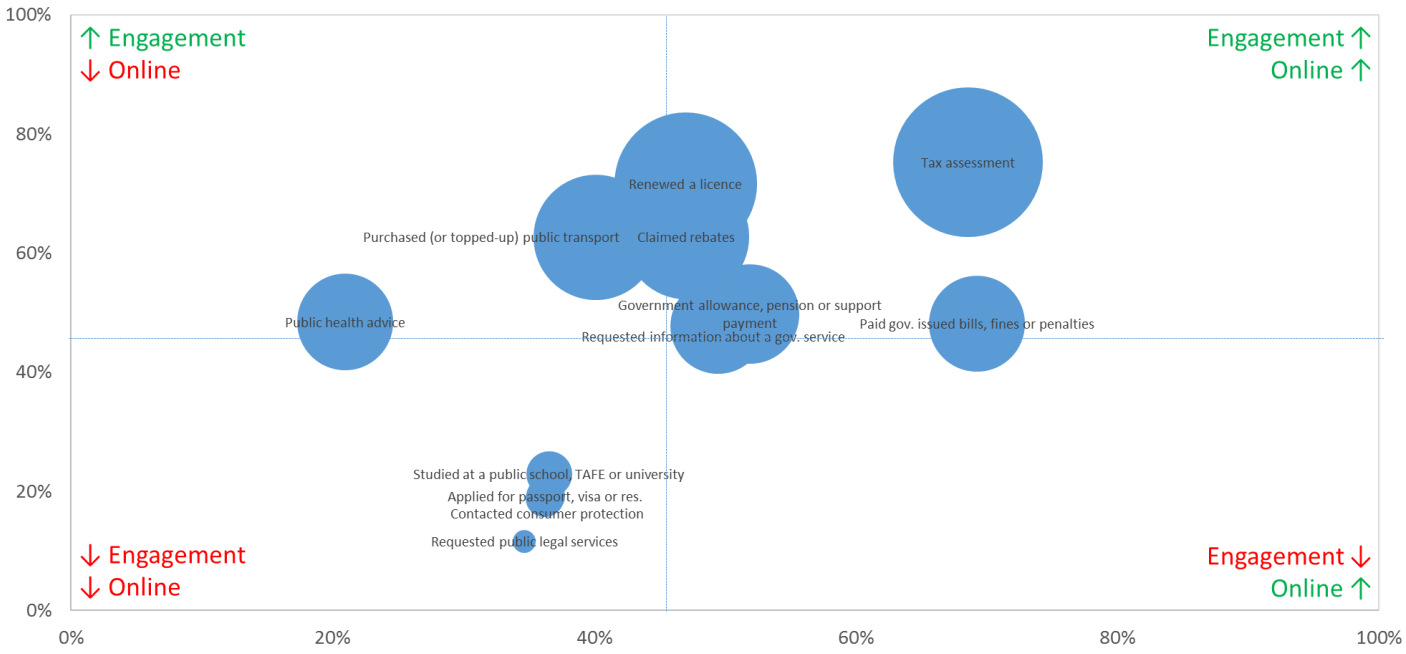
Weighted by age, gender and location

6.5. Engagement with government services online

Those participants who advised that they had completed a government service in the past twelve months were plotted against the proportion of those who mainly completed that service online.

Referencing Figure 8 below, it should be noted that those who completed a tax assessment in the past twelve months (75%) were the group most likely to complete this transaction online (69%). While fewer paid government issued bills, fines or penalties in the past twelve months (48%), more than two-thirds who did (69%) completed this payment online. In contrast, almost one out-of-every two people surveyed sought public health advice (48%), but very few (21%) actually utilised an online platform to receive that service.

Figure 8. Engagement with Government Service + Online Main Transaction Vehicle Matrix



6.6. Channel preferences for contact with government services

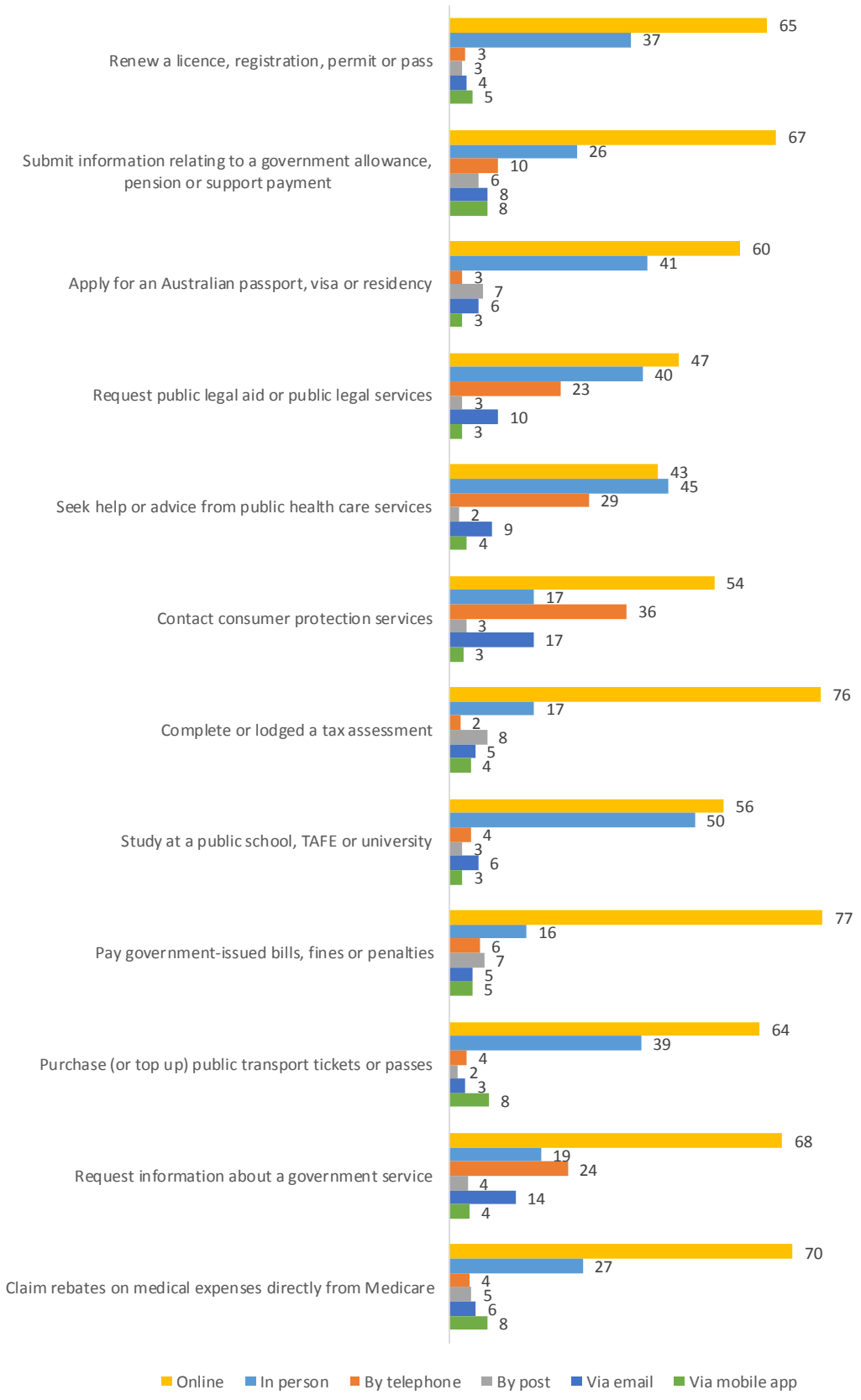
All participants were asked how they would prefer to complete the same list of activities as in Figure 7 above, in future, if they needed to. Multiple responses could be selected (and as in the rest of this report 'don't know' and 'none of these' responses have been removed).

As outlined in Figure 9, below, 'online' was the channel most likely to be a preference for almost all activities. The only exception was in relation to seeking help or advice from public health care services, where 'in person' was slightly higher as a preference (45% compared to 43% for online services).

The majority nominated that 'online' would be one of their preferences in relation to

- Pay government-issued bills, fines or penalties (77%)
- Complete or lodge a tax assessment (76%)
- Claim rebates on medical expenses directly from Medicare (70%)
- Request information about a government service (68%)
- Submit information relating to a government allowance, pension or support payment (67%)
- Renew a licence, registration, permit or pass (65%)
- Purchase (or top up) public transport tickets or passes (64%)
- Apply for an Australian passport, visa or residency (60%)
- Study at a public school, TAFE or university (56%)
- Contact consumer protection services (54%)

Figure 9. Future channel preferences for contact with government services (%)



*QD1. If **in the future** you had to undertake the following activities with a government department, agency or service, would you prefer to complete it in person, by telephone, by post, by email or online or via mobile app?*

Sample: n = 1142 to 1808

Weighted by age, gender and location

This is a strong endorsement of, and mandate for, the digital transformation of public sector services.

This mandate is further validated when we refer to the perception of different channels. All participants were presented with a range of channels and asked which they most associate with a number of words or statements. Results show that, overall, online is the most positively perceived channel and telephone the most negatively perceived. Of the eight **positive** statements presented, online services were most likely to be associated with five, suggesting specifically:

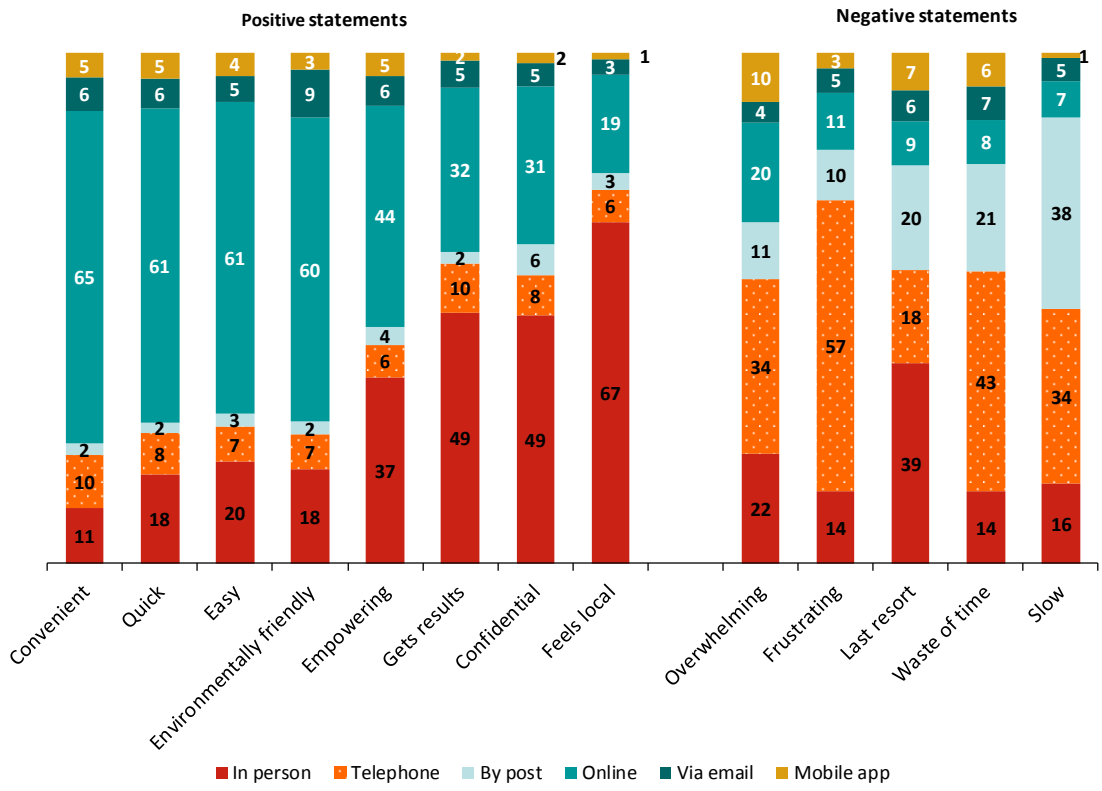
- 'Convenient' (65%)
- 'Quick' (61%)
- 'Easy' (61%)
- 'Environmentally friendly' (60%)
- 'Empowering' (44%)

The three **positive** statements where online was not the leading channel were all words for which 'in person' communication was the most likely to be associated. These were: 'Feels local' (67%), 'Gets results' (49%) and 'Confidential' (49%).

However, 'in person' was also the channel most likely to be associated with the negative term, 'last resort' (selected by 39%), suggesting that many people would prefer not to use this channel, given the high personal interaction cost for the user, but know it can be highly effective.

Telephone was the channel most likely to be associated with three negative statements, specifically: 'Overwhelming' (34% selecting telephone), 'Frustrating' (57%), 'Waste of time (43%). Post was most likely to be associated with the word 'slow' (34%), although this was closely followed by telephone (38%).

Figure 10. Word association with government channels (%)



QD2. Please indicate which way of interacting with government departments or agencies you most associate with the word or statement.

Sample: n = 1240 to 1740 (excluding don't knows)

Weighted by age, gender and location

Improving government service delivery

All survey participants were presented with a number of ways that government departments or agencies could improve the delivery of services across different channels, and asked to rate these on a scale where 1 is the least important priority and 5 is the most important. **Error! Reference source not found.**, below, plots the average for each strategy. Note that the lower the average, the higher the priority in the view of participants. Online services were ranked as the highest priority overall (2.4), followed, closely, by walk-in services and call centres (2.5 each).

Differences by age reflected the communication preferences by age outlined elsewhere in this report, with younger people favouring online and mobile channels and older people more traditional channels. Both 18-34 year-olds and 35-49 year-olds were significantly more likely than all others to prioritise apps (an average of 3.0 and 3.3 respectively, compared to a national average of 3.5), and 35-49 year-olds were more likely to prioritise online services (2.2 compared to an average of 2.4). Those aged 65 and over were significantly more likely to prioritise more traditional channels, specifically walk-in services (2.0 compared to an average of 2.5), call centres (2.3 compared to an average of 2.5) and leaflets (3.9 compared to an average of 4.1).

There were no differences by state or terrortory, but a number by income. Those on low incomes were significantly more likely than all others to prioritise walk-in offices (2.3 compared to an average of 2.5) and leaflets (3.9 compared to 4.1), while those on a high income were more likely to prioritise apps (3.2 compared to 3.5).

Table 6. **Improving government service delivery**

Improvements	Avg
More online/web services including a single 'one stop shop' website offering a whole range of government services	2.4
More walk-in offices where you can interact face to face with a consultant	2.5
More call centres/more staff on duty at call centres	2.5
Services through mobile phone or tablet apps	3.5
More leaflets and information through my letterbox or in the community	4.1

QE1. Thinking about ways that government departments or agencies could improve the delivery of services, on a scale of "1-5", how should government prioritise investment in the following services? Please number the boxes from 1 to 5, where 1 is the most important priority and 5 is the least important priority.

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

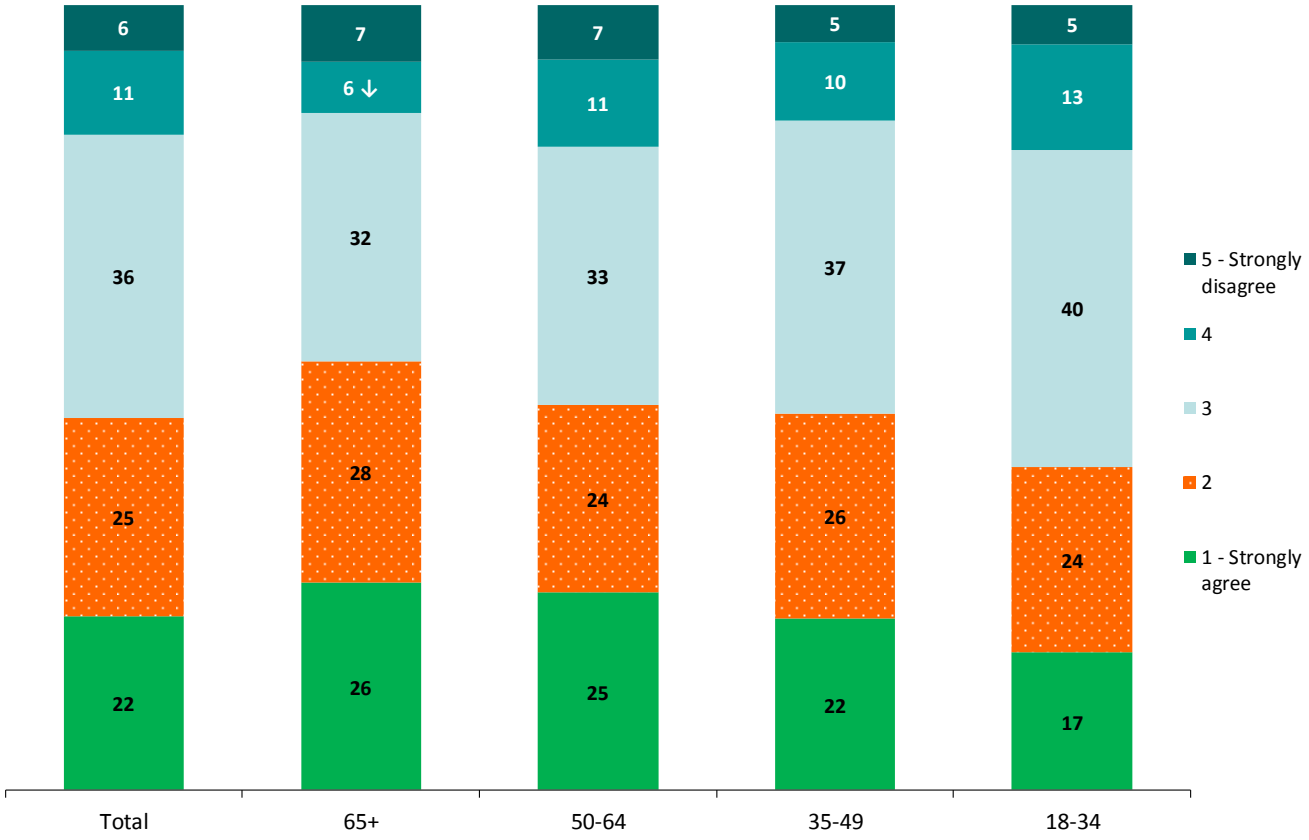
We also sought the views of the public on public sector risk taking and innovation, with encouraging results.

All respondents were asked for their level of agreement with the statement "We need to empower public servants to experiment and maybe even fail, as long as it leads to better services" on a scale where 1 was 'strongly agree' and 5 was 'strongly disagree'.

As outlined in Figure 11, below, the largest proportion of responses have been positive, with 47% endorsing the need to empower the public sector to take risks and innovate. This was followed by a detached contingent (36% - over a third) who provided a neutral response of '3', suggesting they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Overall, agreement was highest among those aged 65 and over (55%), and there was no significant variation by state or income.

Figure 11. Agreement with "We need to empower public servants to experiment and maybe even fail, as long as it leads to better services."



QE2. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is 'strongly agree' and 5 is 'strongly disagree') how much do you agree with the following statement: "We need to empower public servants to experiment and maybe even fail, as long as it leads to better services."

Sample: 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

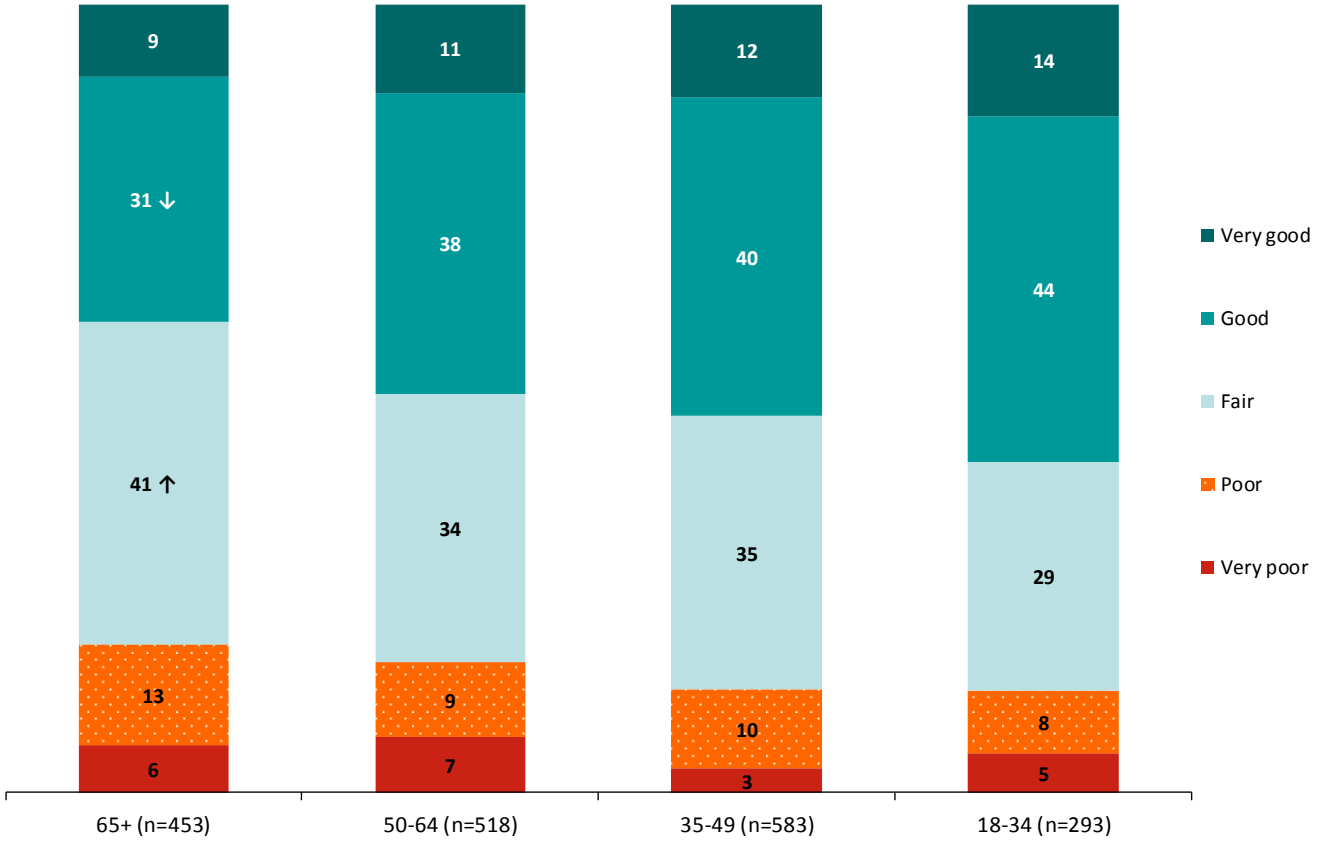
6.7. Attitudes towards government services online

All participants were asked how they would rate the information and services currently provided over the internet by government departments, agencies or services.

Just over half (51%) rated these as 'good' or 'very good', so whether the glass is half empty or half full remains a matter of interpretation for the 32% of people who rated the services as 'fair'.

The only difference by age was that those aged 65 and over were significantly less likely than all others to provide a rating of 'good' (31% compared to an average of 39%). Results were consistent by state, but there were some differences by income. Those on lower incomes were significantly less likely than all others to rate government services as 'good' (34% compared to an average of 39%). This may be a result of the higher complexity and dependency on government services for people in this segment.

Figure 12. Attitudes towards government services online by age (%)



QF1. Overall, how would you rate information and services currently provided over the Internet (i.e. website, email or mobile app) by government departments, agencies or services?

Sample: n = 1847 (excluding don't knows and not applicables)

Weighted by age, gender and location

All participants were asked for the degree to which they agree or disagree that more government services online would lead to a range of outcomes, some positive and some negative.

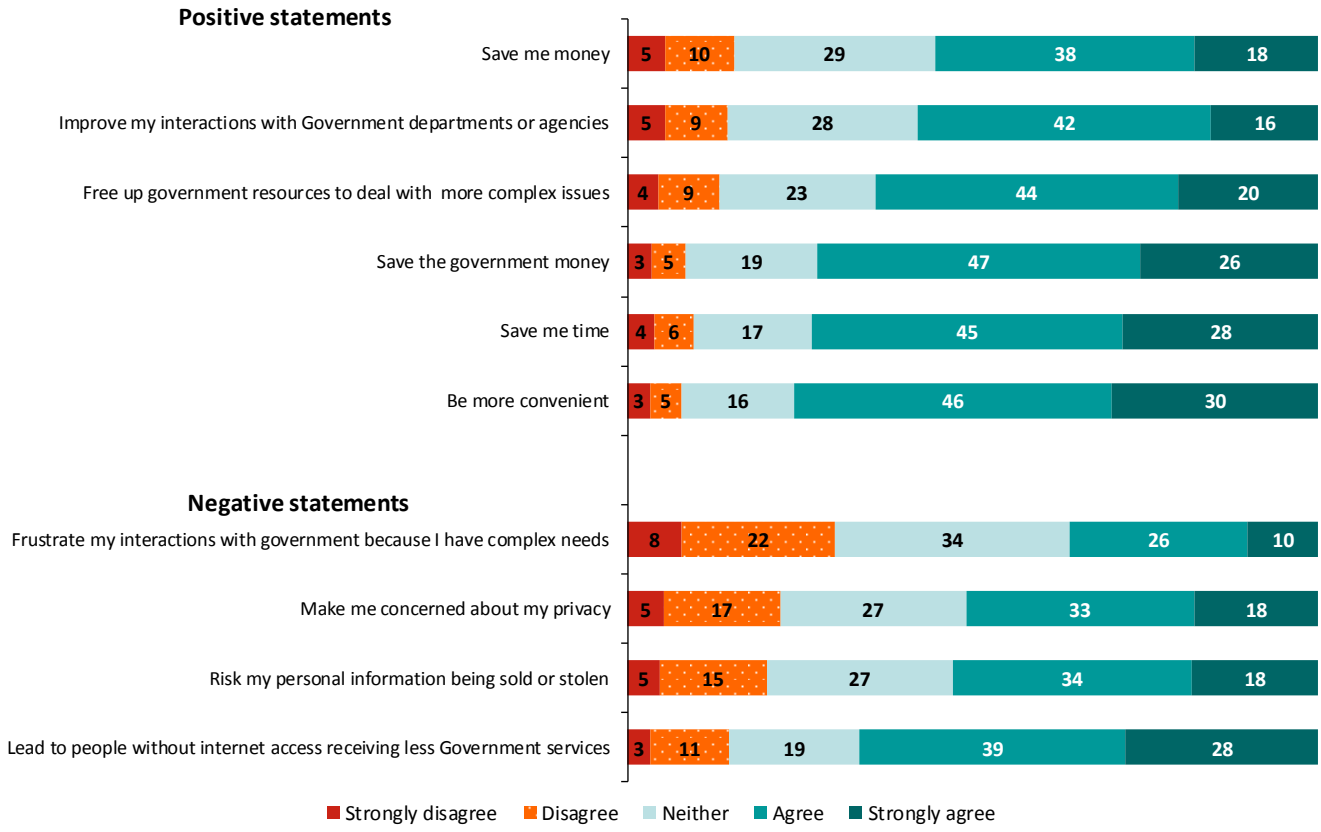
These results suggest that there is a high level of positivity in relation to increasing online government services, with the majority agreeing with all of the positive statements. In particular, around three quarters agreed (either 'agree' or 'strongly agree') that the delivery of more government services online would:

- 'be more convenient' (76%)
- 'save me time' (73%)
- 'save the government money' (73%)

However, there was still concern around some of the more negative repercussions of online government service delivery, particularly in relation to equality and privacy. Two-thirds (66%) agreed that this would 'lead to people without internet access receiving less government services'. Further, a small majority (53%) agreed ('strongly agree' or 'agree') that the delivery of more government services online would 'risk my personal information being sold or stolen' (53%) or 'make me concerned about my privacy' (51%). A smaller, but still notable proportion agreed that this would 'frustrate my interactions with government because I have complex needs' (36%).

Results varied by age, with younger people more likely to agree than others that online services would 'save me money' (62% among 18-34 year-olds and 61% among 35-49 year-olds, compared to an average of 56%). Those aged 65 and over were significantly more likely than all others to agree with some negative statements, specifically that this would 'lead to people without internet access receiving less government services' (75% compared to an average of 66%) and that it would 'risk my personal information being sold or stolen' (59% compared to 53%). There were no significant differences in likelihood to agree by state or income.

Figure 13. Attitudes to delivery of more government services online (%)



*QF2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the delivery of **more government services online** would…*

Sample: n = 1774 to 1892 (excluding don't knows)

Weighted by age, gender and location

Table 7. Attitudes to delivery of more government services online – NET agree + strongly agree

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
Be more convenient	79%	79%	73%	71%	76%
Save me time	76%	78% ↑	70%	66% ↓	73%
Save the government money	75%	73%	72%	68%	73%
Lead to people without internet access receiving less Government services	61% ↓	63%	71%	75% ↑	66%
Free up government resources to deal with more complex issues	68%	68%	60%	59%	64%
Improve my interactions with Government departments or agencies	64%	62%	53%	50% ↓	58%
Save me money	62% ↑	61% ↑	50%	44% ↓	56%
Risk my personal information being sold or stolen	48%	51%	56%	59% ↑	53%
Make me concerned about my privacy	48%	50%	53%	55%	51%
Frustrate my interactions with government because I have complex needs	36%	36%	36%	36%	36%

*QF2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the delivery of **more government services online** would…*

Sample: n = 1774 to 1892 (excluding don't knows)

Weighted by age, gender and location

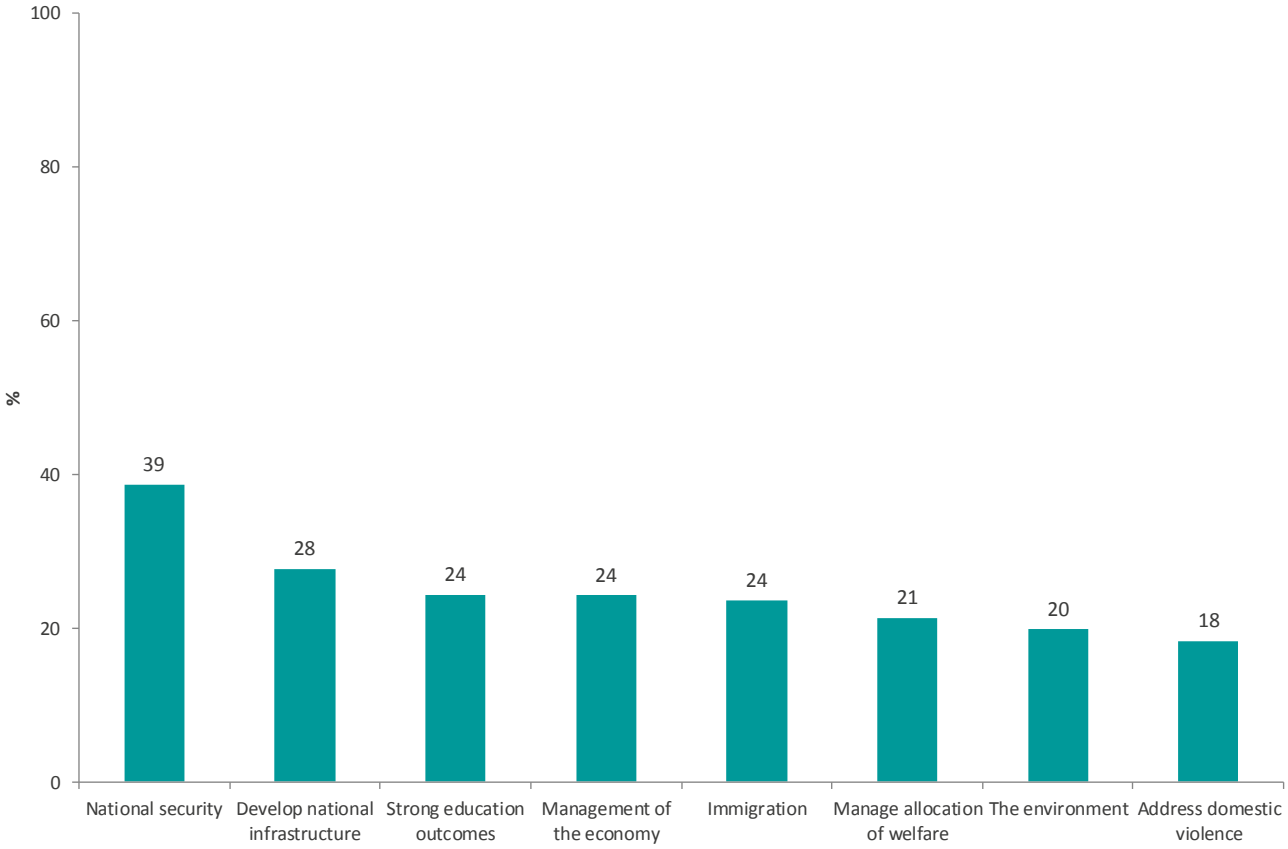
6.8. Confidence in government

All participants were asked how confident they felt in the government's ability to address a range of policy issues on a scale where 1 was 'not at all' confident, and 5 was 'very' confident. Overall, confidence in government was low, with fewer than two-in-five rating their confidence as 4 or 5 in relation to any of the issues listed. Participants were most likely to be confident about the government's ability to address 'national security' (39%) and 'develop national infrastructure' (28%), and least likely in relation to 'address domestic violence' (18%) and 'the environment' (20%).

Interestingly, 18-34 year-olds – also the group with the most positive views of government services – were most confident in the government around a number of issues, specifically:

- 'Management of the economy' (30% compared to an average of 24%);
- 'The environment' (25% compared to 20%); and
- 'Address domestic violence' (23% compared to 18%).
- There were no significant differences by state in terms of net confidence, and only one difference by income: those on higher incomes were significantly more likely to say they were confident in the government's ability to address 'national security'.

Figure 14. Confidence in government (%)



QG1. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is 'not at all' and 5 is 'very') how confident are you in the ability of the government to address the following issues?

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

Table 8. Confidence in government (NET confident 4+5)

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Total
National security	40%	34%	38%	43%	39%
Develop national infrastructure	32%	26%	23%	28%	28%
Strong education outcomes	28%	24%	20%	25%	24%
Management of the economy	30% ↑	22%	20% ↓	25%	24%
Immigration	24%	22%	23%	26%	24%
Manage allocation of welfare	26%	21%	18%	20%	21%
The environment	25% ↑	18%	18%	17%	20%
Address domestic violence	23% ↑	17%	15%	17%	18%

QG1. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is 'not at all' and 5 is 'very') how confident are you in the ability of the government to address the following issues?

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

Against the background of reduced confidence, we sought to understand the appetite for innovation in public policy by asking all participants whether they approved or disapproved of a range of policy choices, spanning a diverse range of domains of interest, from wellbeing and public health to participation in policy development and the use of technology in delivering services.

The policy choices have been selected to cover a range of topics and approaches, including:

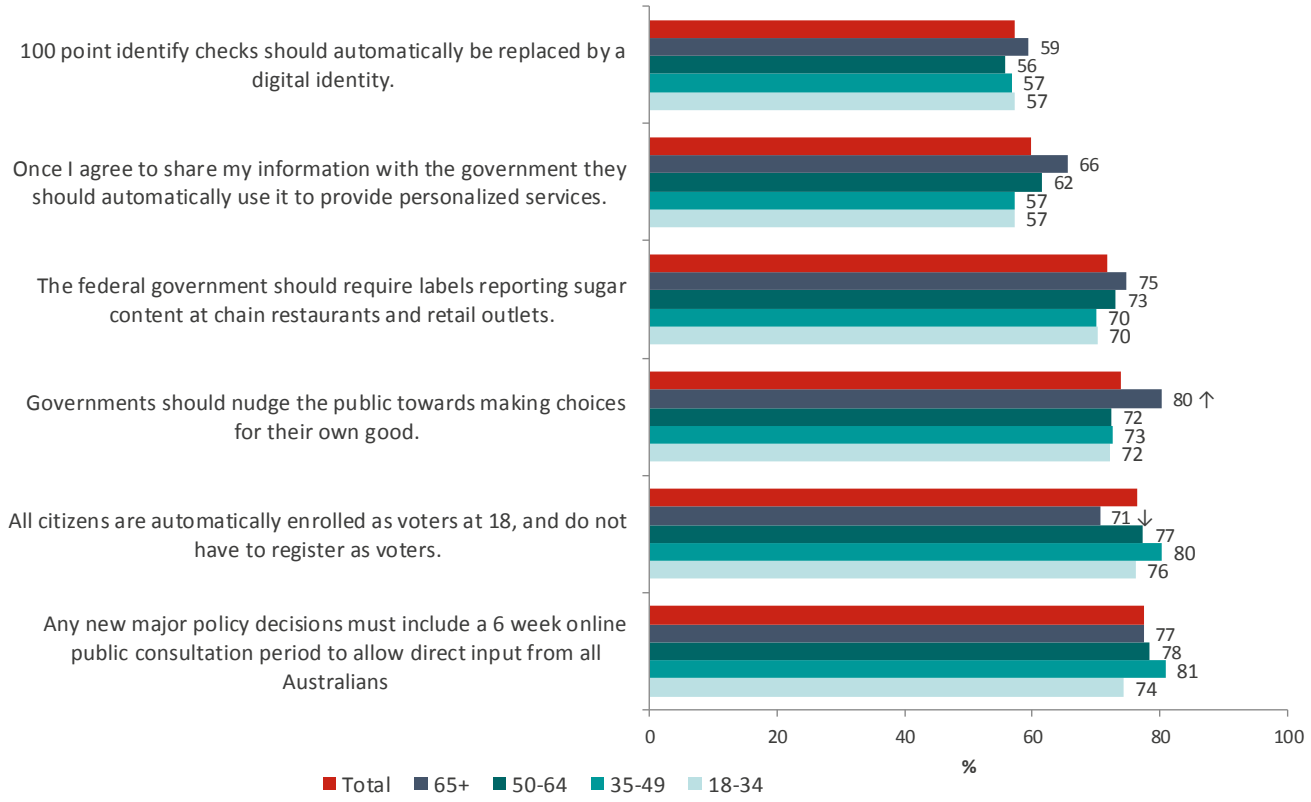
- traditional interventions (public health regulation);
- appetite for innovative instruments (acceptance of behavioural insights as an instrument in policy making and default architecture);
- traditionally controversial policy initatives (digital identity and information sharing);
- public participation in democratic processes (policy development consultation).

Taken as a whole, and in conjunction with findings in section 6.7 above, the responses to the policy choices offer a much richer picture of preferences, biases and concerns of the public regarding such approaches than often presented in media and public discourse.

There was majority support for all policy choices listed, with the highest level of support expressed in relation to public participation in policy development and process innovation: 'any new major policy decisions must include a 6 week online public consultation period to allow direct input from all Australians' (78% approving), and 'all citizens are automatically enrolled as voters at 18 and do not have to register' (76% approving).

The findings were generally consistent by age, although those aged 65 and over were significantly more likely than all others to approve of: 'governments should nudge the public towards making choices for their own good' (80% compared to an average of 74%) and significantly less likely to approve of: 'all citizens are automatically enrolled as voters at 18 and do not have to register' (71% compared to 76%).

Figure 15. Approval of policy choices by age (%)



QH1. Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following policy choices?

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

Table 9. Approval of policy choices – by age

	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
The federal government should require labels reporting sugar content at chain restaurants and retail outlets.	70%	70%	73%	75%	72%
All citizens are automatically enrolled as voters at 18, and do not have to register as voters.	76%	80%	77%	71% ↓	76%
Once I agree to share my information with the government they should automatically use it to provide personalized services.	57%	57%	62%	66%	60%
Governments should nudge the public towards making choices for their own good.	72%	73%	72%	80% ↑	74%
100 point identity checks should automatically be replaced by a digital identity.	57%	57%	56%	59%	57%
Any new major policy decisions must include a 6 week online public consultation period to allow direct input from all Australians	74%	81%	78%	77%	78%

QH1. Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following policy choices?

Sample: n = 1987

Weighted by age, gender and location

7. Conclusions

In summary then, the findings presented in this report provide an emphatic endorsement from the Australian citizenry to accelerate the process of public service reform and embrace digitisation. They suggest:

- a sustained willingness amongst the Australian citizenry to use online services;
- a preference to prioritise the delivery of on-line services over other delivery channels;
- a perception that the public sector is still perceived to be behind the private sector on key measures of service delivery. The public sector is twice to three times more likely to be judged to be a worse deliverer of services than the private sector;
- limited confidence in government to deliver effective public policy outcomes is very low but a belief that digitisation could be used as an effective tool for rebuilding trust with the citizenry given positive attitudes towards on-line government services; and,
- the Australian public give a big “thumbs-up” to experimentation and policy innovation.

In addition, the data presented here provides us with strong insights into the constituent elements of an Australian Service Quality Index which can be deployed to monitor and evaluate public perceptions of the quality of service provision delivered through different channels over time.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Connected Government Research

Draft Questionnaire for Programming

A: Introduction: Screening and quotas

A1. Are you ...

1 Female

2 Male

3 Other

A2. How old are you today?

1. Enter number

A3. What state or territory do you currently live in?

1. NSW
2. VIC
3. QLD
4. WA
5. SA
6. NT
7. TAS
8. ACT

A4. What is the postcode of the place you usually live?

1. Enter number

B: Sector comparisons of channel delivery

B1. How often do **public** sector organisations (e.g. government departments, agencies or services) deliver services that…

Rotate	Always	Often	About Half the Time	Rarely	Never
Understand your needs					
Work with other public services					
Listen to your preferences					
Offer you a personalised service					
Involve you in decisions					

B2. How often do **private** sector organisations (e.g. banks, retailers, telcos and insurers) deliver services that…

Rotate	Always	Often	About Half the Time	Rarely	Never
Understand your needs					
Listen to your preferences					
Offer you a personalised service					
Involve you in decisions					

B3. In the next question we would like your impressions on how dealing with government departments, agencies or services compares with dealing with the **private sector,** such as banks, retailers, telcos and insurers**.**

In comparison to the private sector, how would you rate **dealing with government departments, agencies or services** through the following methods?

Rotate	Government much worse than private	Government worse than private	About the same	Government better than private	Government much better than private	Don't know	Not applicable
In person	1	2	3	4	5	9	8
Via telephone							
By post							
Online							
Via email							
Via a mobile app							

B4. Next we would like your thoughts on the similarities and differences in dealing with services provided by different levels of government.

Now think about services provided by **your <State/Territory> Government.** This includes services, such **as** vehicle registration, driver licensing, public transport, public hospitals and health services, public schools, public/social housing, as well as emergency services and law enforcement.

In comparison to services provided by the Federal Government departments (such as ATO, Medicare, Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Child Support or Australian Passport Office), how would you rate dealing with services provided by **your <State/Territory> Government** through the following methods?

Rotate	**<State> government much worse than federal government**	**<State> government worse than federal government**	**About the same**	**<State> government better than federal government**	**<State> government much better than federal government**	**Don't know**	**Not applicable**
In person	1	2	3	4	5	9	8
Via telephone							

By post							
Online							
Via email							
Via a Mobile app							

C: Current contact and channel use with government services

The next set of questions are about you and your family's contact with **government** departments, agencies and services.

By government, we mean both the **Federal Government** and **your <State/Territory> government.**

- Examples of **Federal government** departments, agencies and services include Medicare rebates, Centrelink support, Australian Tax Office tax returns, Department of Veterans' Affairs payments and Australian Passport Office services.
- Examples of **State/Territory government** departments, agencies and services include those responsible for vehicle registration, driver licensing, public transport, public hospitals and health services, public schools, public/social housing, as well as Consumer Affairs, emergency services and law enforcement.

Contact with these government departments, agencies and services could have been in person, by post, by telephone, by email or online or via a mobile app. The reason for contact could be anything such as seeking help, advice or information, accessing services, making or receiving payments, or making a complaint.

C1. **In the last 12 months**, how often have you or members of your household undertaken each of the following activities with government departments, agencies or services?

Rotate	Weekly	Monthly	Every few months	Every six months	Once in the past 12 months	Not at all in the past 12 months	Don't know
A. Renewed a licence, registration, permit or pass (e.g. drivers, vehicle, fishing, national parks)							
B. Submitted information relating to a government allowance, pension or support payment (e.g. Centrelink, Veterans, Child Support)							
C. Applied for an Australian passport, visa or residency							
D. Requested public legal aid or public legal services							
E. Sought help or advice from public health care services (e.g. community health clinic, public hospital, health hotline)							
F. Contacted consumer protection services (e.g. Consumer Affairs or an Ombudsman)							
G. Completed or lodged a tax assessment							
H. Studied at a public school, TAFE or university							

I. Paid government-issued bills, fines or penalties							
J. Purchased (or topped-up) public transport tickets or passes							
K. Requested information about a government service							
L. Claimed rebates on medical expenses directly from Medicare							

C2. Have you registered for, or used, the following online government services?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
A. Do Not Call Register			
B. Personal eHealth Record			
C. Emergency Alert			
D. myGov			
E. E-Tax			
F. Your State/Territory e-Government Portal			

C3. In the past 12-months, what was the **MAIN WAY** (in person, by telephone, post, email or online or via mobile app) you completed each of the following activities with government departments, agencies or services?

Display each activity from C1 that respondent had done at least one a year Display in same order as C1	In person	By telephone	By post	Online	Via email	Via mobile app	Don't know
A. Renewed a licence, registration, permit or pass (e.g. drivers, vehicle, fishing, national parks)							
B. Submitted information relating to a government allowance, pension or support payment (e.g. Centrelink, Veterans, Child Support)							
C. Applied for an Australian passport, visa or residency							
D. Requested public legal aid or public legal services							
E. Sought help or advice from public health care services (e.g. community health clinic, public hospital, health hotline)							
F. Contacted consumer protection services (e.g. Consumer Affairs or an Ombudsman)							
G. Completed or lodged a tax assessment							
H. Studied at a public school, TAFE or university							
I. Paid government-issued bills, fines or penalties							
J. Purchased (or topped-up) public transport tickets or passes							
K. Requested information about a government service							
L. Claimed rebates on medical expenses directly from Medicare							

D: Channel preferences for contact with government services

D1. If **in the future** you had to undertake the following activities with a government department, agency or service, would **you prefer** to complete it in person, by telephone, by post, by email or online or via mobile app?

Display in same order as C1	In person	By telephone	By post	Online	Via email	Via mobile app	None of these	Don't know
A. Renew a licence, registration, permit or pass (e.g. drivers, vehicle, fishing, national parks)								
B. Submit information relating to a government allowance, pension or support payment (e.g. Centrelink, Veterans, Child Support)								
C. Apply for an Australian passport, visa or residency								
D. Request public legal aid or public legal services								
E. Seek help or advice from public health care services (e.g. community health clinic, public hospital, health hotline)								
F. Contact consumer protection services (e.g. Consumer Affairs or an Ombudsman)								
G. Complete or lodge a tax assessment								
H. Study at a public school, TAFE or university								
I. Pay government-issued bills, fines or penalties								
J. Purchase (or top-up) public transport tickets or passes								
K. Request information about a government service								
L. Claim rebates on medical expenses directly from Medicare								

D2. Next we would like you to think about the different ways you can interact or do things with government departments and agencies - such as in person, by telephone, by post, by email or online, social media or via mobile app.

Please indicate **which way of interacting with government departments or agencies you most associate with the word or statement**. It doesn't matter if you don't currently do things that way, we are just interested in your first thoughts and impressions.

Please select one response per row.

Rotate – select one option per row	In person	Telephone	By post	Online	Via email	Mobile app	Don't know
A. Frustrating							
B. Empowering							
C. Quick							
D. Slow							
E. Easy							
F. Overwhelming							
G. Environmentally friendly							
H. Confidential							
I. Last resort							
J. Gets results							
K. Waste of time							
L. Convenient							
M. Feels local							

E: Improving government service delivery

E1. Thinking about ways that government departments or agencies could improve the delivery of services, on a scale of "1-5", how should government prioritise investment in the following services?

Please number the boxes from 1 to 5, where 1 is the most important priority and 5 is the least important priority

(Randomise)

More online/web services including a single 'one stop shop' website offering a whole range of government services	
More call centres/more staff on duty at call centres	
Services through mobile phone or tablet apps	
More leaflets and information through my letterbox or in the community	
More walk-in offices where you can interact face to face with a consultant	

E2. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is 'strongly agree', and 5 is 'strongly disagree') how much do you agree with the following statement:

"We need to empower public servants to experiment and maybe even fail, as long as it leads to better services."

F: Attitudes towards government services online

F1. Overall, how would you rate information and services currently provided over the Internet (i.e. website, email or mobile app) by government departments, agencies or services?

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Fair
4. Good
5. Very good
6. Don't know
7. Not applicable (i.e. never dealt with government online)

F2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the delivery of more government services online would…

Rotate	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
A. Save me time						
B. Save me money						
C. Be more convenient						
D. Save the government money						
E. Make me concerned about my privacy						
F. Risk my personal information being sold or stolen						
G. Improve my interactions with Government departments or agencies						
H. Lead to people without internet access receiving less Government services						
I. Free up government resources to deal with more complex issues						
J. Frustrate my interactions with government because I have complex needs						

G: Confidence in Government

G1. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is 'not at all', and 5 is 'very') how confident are you in the ability of the Government to address the following issues?

- The environment
- Immigration
- Management of the economy
- National security
- Strong education outcomes
- Develop national infrastructure
- Manage allocation of welfare
- Address domestic violence

H: Hypothetical Policy

H1. Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following policy choices?

Rotate	Approve	Disapprove
The federal government should require labels reporting sugar content at chain restaurants and retail outlets.		
All citizens are automatically enrolled as voters at 18, and do not have to register as voters.		
Once I agree to share my information with the government they should automatically use it to provide personalized services.		
Governments should nudge the public towards making choices for their own good.		
100 point identity checks should automatically be replaced by a digital identity.		
Any new major policy decisions must include a 6 week online public consultation period to allow direct input from all Australians		

DEM: Demographics

Now we would like to ask some final questions about you just to check we have surveyed a good cross-section of the population…

DEM1. What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?

No formal education	01
Primary school	02
Secondary school	03
Technical College (TAFE)	04
University	05
I'd prefer not to say	06

DEM2. Which one of these BEST describes your employment situation?

1 Employed (full-time, part-time, self-employed, casual)
2 Unemployed
3 Retired or on a pension
4 Student
5 Home duties
6 Other
7 Prefer not to say

DEM3. Which of the following ranges best describes your household's approximate combined weekly income, from all sources, before tax is taken out?

1 Negative Income/Nil Income

2 $1-$199

3 $200-$299

4 $300-$399

5 $400-$599

6 $600-$799

7 $800-$999

8 $1000-$1249

9 $1250-$1499

10 $1500-$1999

11 $2000-$2499

12 $2500-$2999

13 $3000-$3499

14 $3500-$3999

15 $4000-$4999

16 $5000 or more

17 I'd prefer not to say