

2019 IPAA Future Leaders Program

TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

WITH RANDALL BRUGAUD, MARK EVANS,
BERNADETTE McDONALD & MELINDA SMITH



Panel context – governing in times of mistrust

For the past four years UC-IGPA and MoAD have conducted a range of surveys with Ipsos on the relationship between trust in the political system and attitudes towards democracy in Australia to inform public exhibitions such as **Democracy**.
Are you in?

The findings presented here are from research conducted in July 2018 (**prior to the Liberal Party's leadership spill**) and include data from a quantitative survey of a representative sample of 1021 Australians and 34 focus groups which are ongoing.





Democracy 2025

TRUST AND DEMOCRACY IN AUSTRALIA

Democratic decline and renewal

Gerry Stoker, Mark Evans and Max Habischs
December 2018

Report No. 1



DEMOCRATIC SATISFACTION IN AUSTRALIA 1996 TO 2018



WHY POLITICS MATTERS

- Making
- Democracy
- Work

GERRY STOKER

2nd Edition

Evidence-based policy making in the social sciences

Methods that matter

Edited by
Gerry Stoker, Mark Evans



HOW AUSTRALIANS IMAGINE THEIR DEMOCRACY: THE 'POWER OF US'

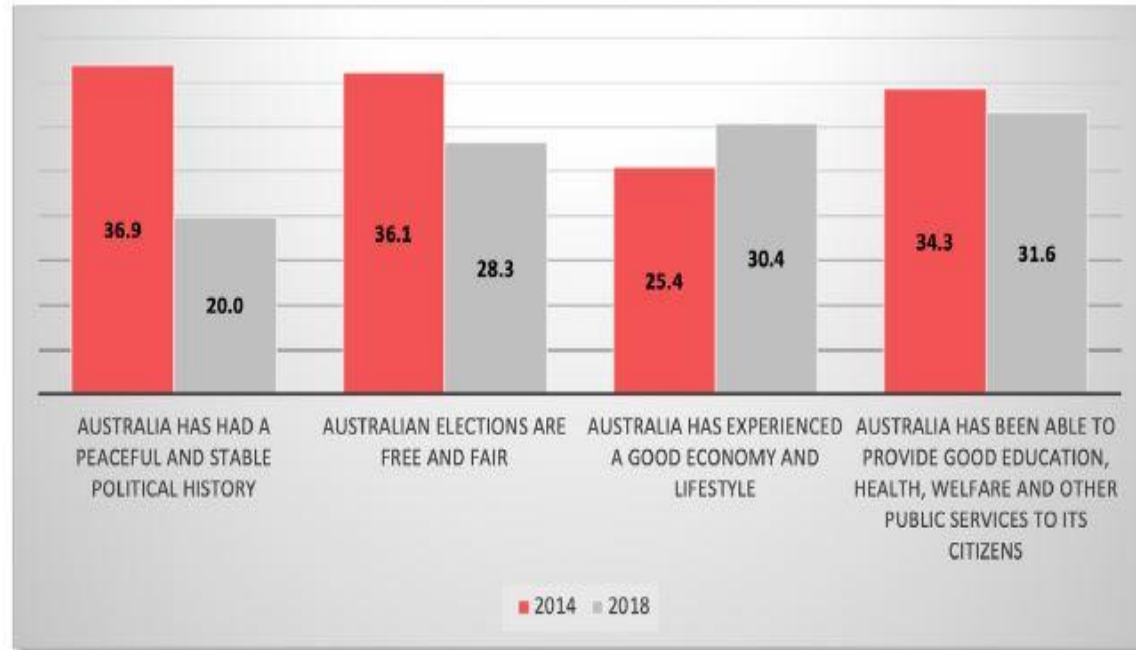
Edited by Mark Yalovsky and Gregyn Tucker



Democracy 2025

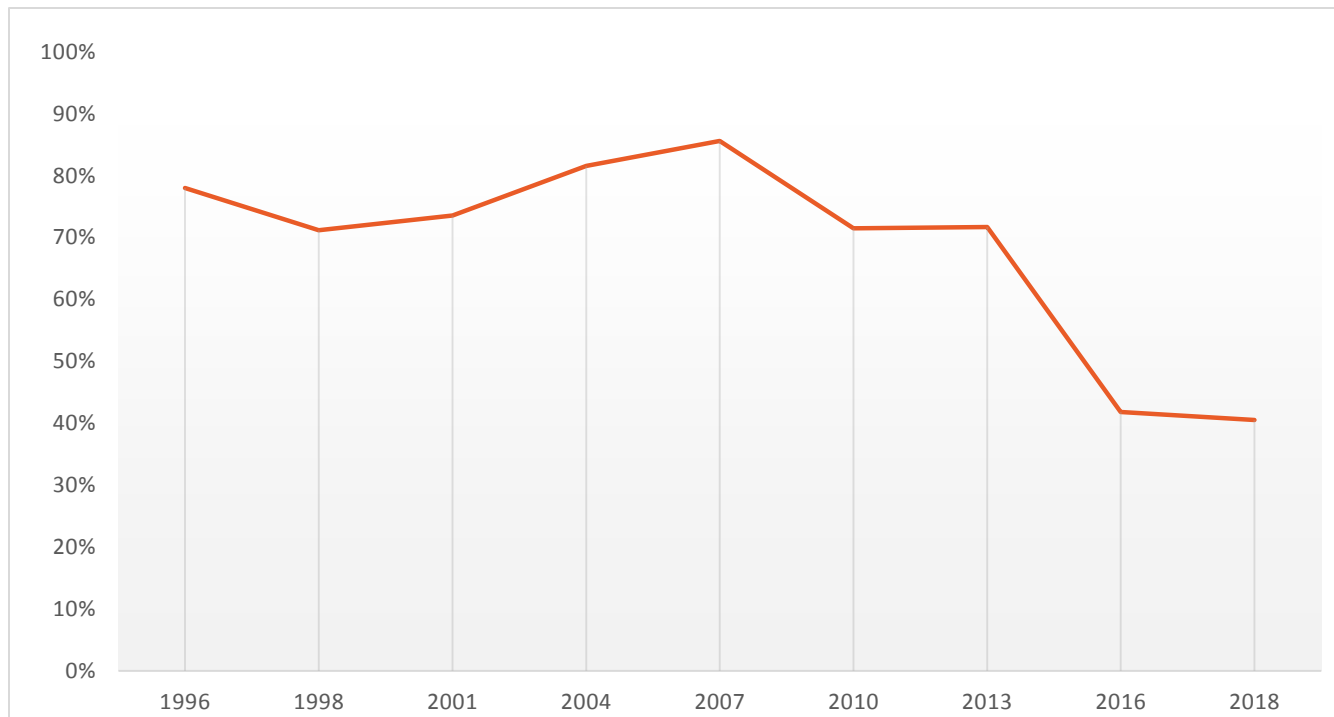
Democracy 2025 reports and blogs can be found at:
www.democracy2025.gov.au

Australians are happy with underlying democratic values and infrastructure



Q: What do you like about the way democracy works in Australia today? Please select up to three responses that you believe are most important

But deeply unhappy with democratic politics (a decade of decline)



Levels of trust in government, politicians and media are at their lowest levels since time series data has been available

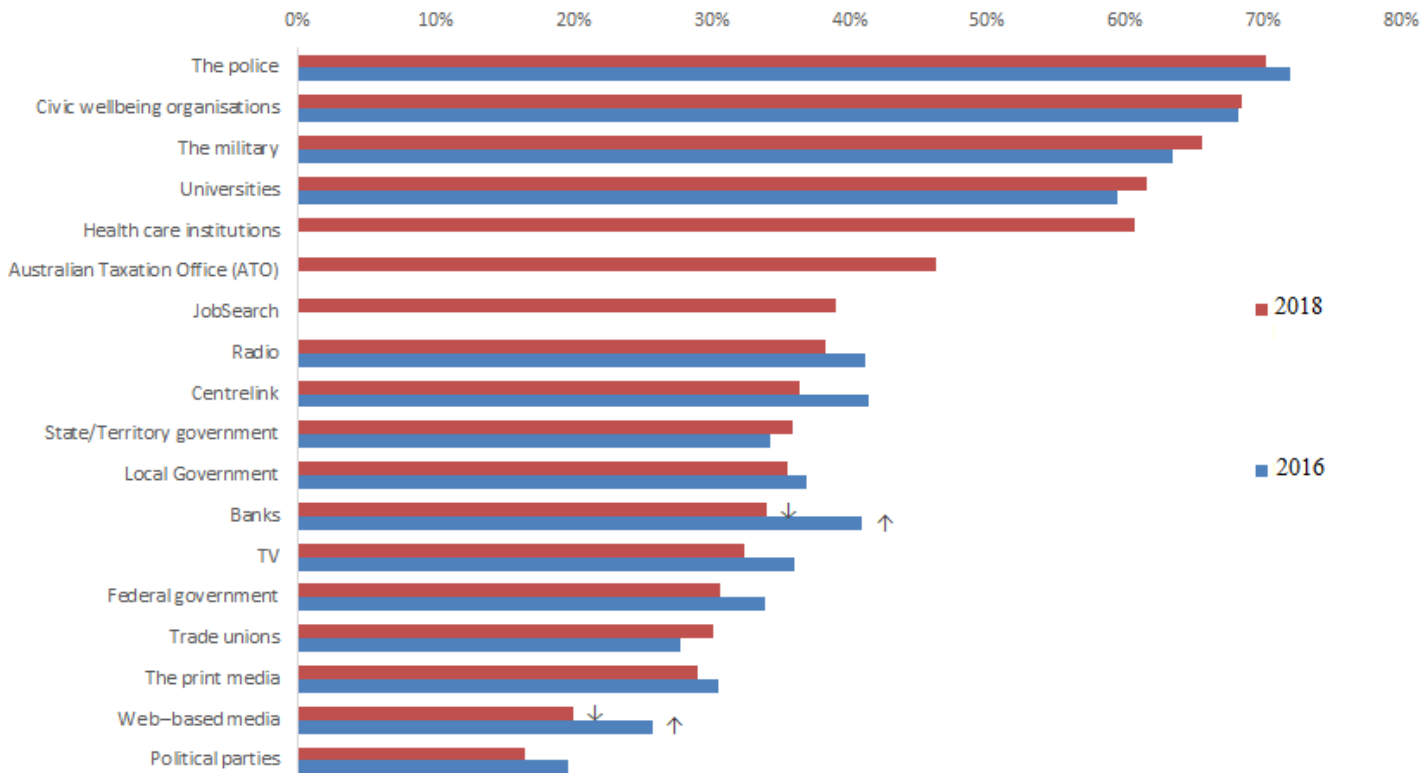
- Federal government is trusted by just 31% of the population while state and local government perform little better with a third of people trusting them.
- Ministers and MPs (whether federal or state) rate at just 21%
- More than 60% believe that the honesty and integrity of politicians is very low.
- 20% trust web based media.
- 29% trust print media.
- 32% trust TV media.






Political trust is a relational concept about:

- ‘Keeping promises and agreements’ (Hetherington 2005: 1). This is in keeping with the OECD’s definition where trust is ‘holding a positive perception about the actions of an individual or an organization’ (OECD 2017: 16).

Who do we trust? The police, the military, civic & health care organisations and universities



A country divided?

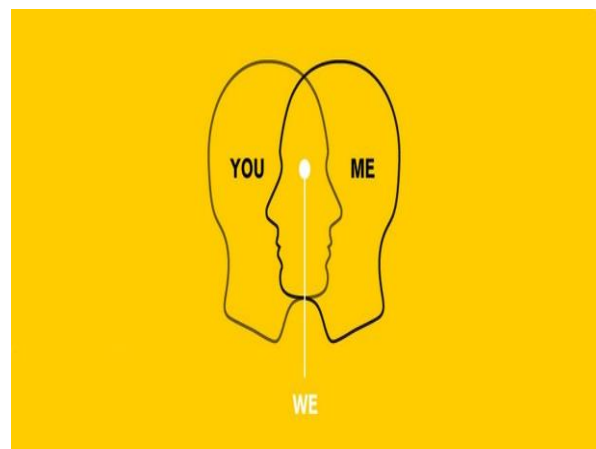
Most trusting	Less trusting	Least trusting
<p>Baby Boomers (+55) Earning + \$200k a year; National or Liberal Party supporter; Immigrants. Gen Z is the most politically trusting cohort, with highest levels of trust in political institutions</p> 	<p>Gen X (31%) Women less satisfied with democracy (3 times less likely to be “very satisfied”), more distrusting of politicians and political institutions (“Me too” effect?)</p> 	<p>Disconnected voters completely switched-off from traditional politics (10%) Critics of the Two Party System The largest group - up for a new politics (30%) Tactical voters looking to bring resources to the community</p> 

The relationship between declining political and social trust is becoming more significant

- Social trust between people has fallen below 50% for the first time to 47%.
- Although a majority still believe that people in their neighbourhood would help others out – except for the very rich (47%).
- Political trust declines by social income.
- The gap between the poor and the poorest of the poor is increasing.

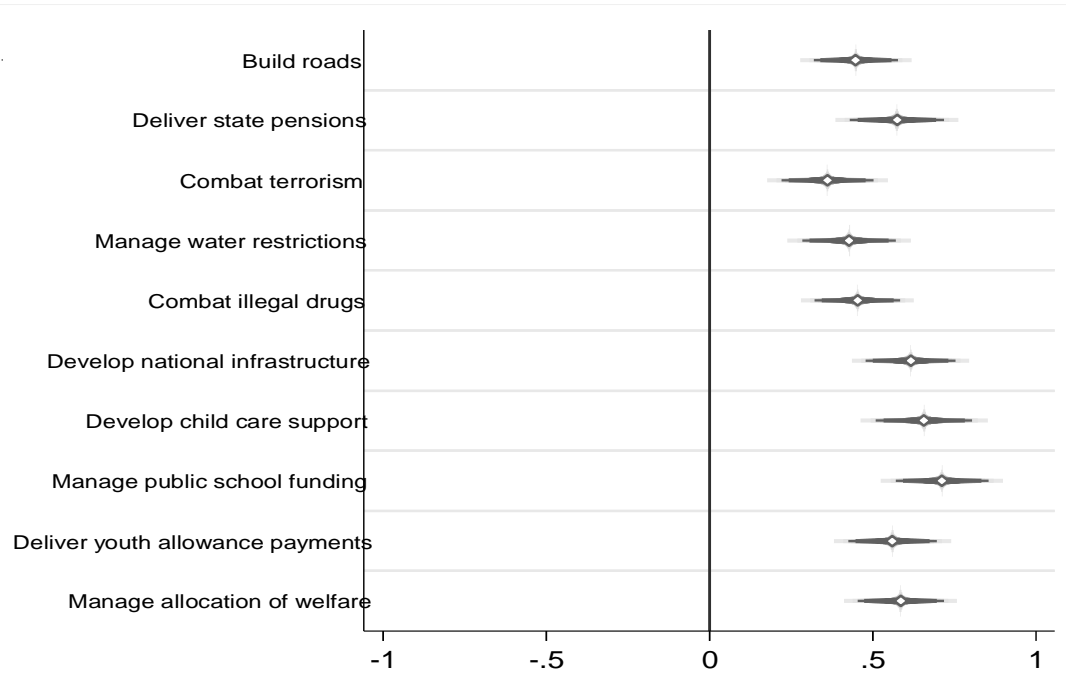


A perfect storm for independents that act with integrity and empathy and deliver for the community



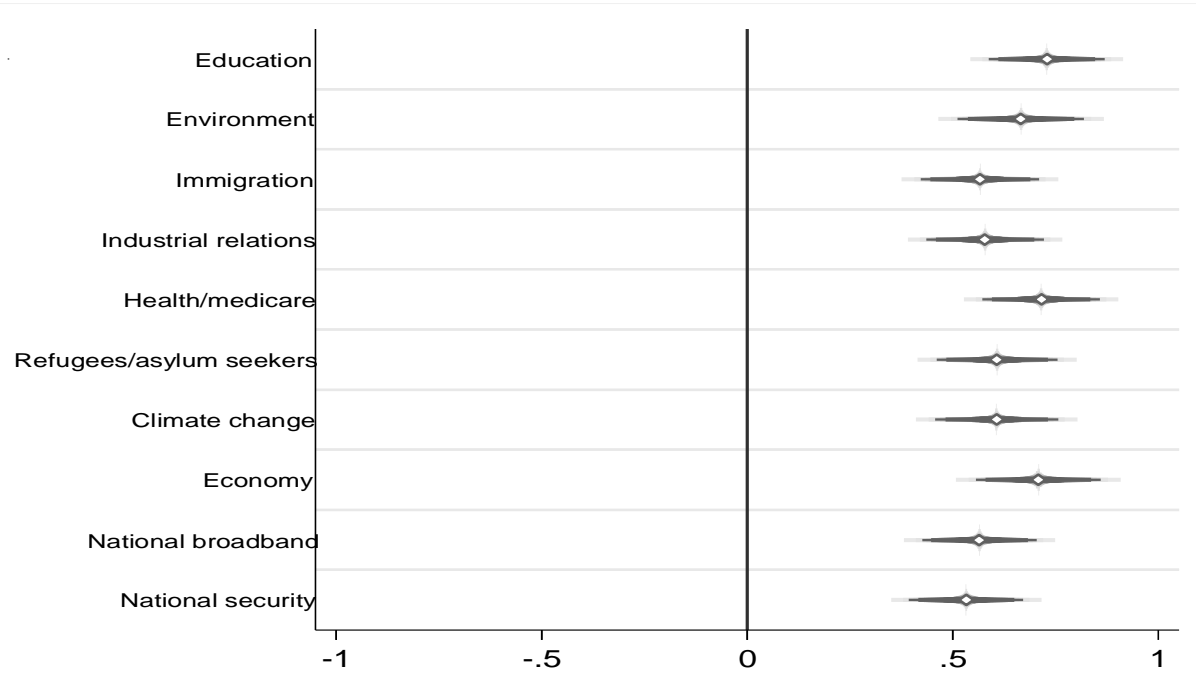
Trust drives limited public confidence in the ability of government to perform core tasks

Effect of trust on confidence in government to perform core tasks



Trust drives limited public confidence in government to address public policy fundamentals

Trust in federal government on confidence in ability of government to address issues



But trust is not yet driving political participation – logistic regression of forms of political participation (odds ratio)

key: + $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

	Non-participation	Conventional participation	Protest	Online engagement
Trust in federal government	1.017 (0.076)	0.897 (0.064)	0.989 (0.086)	0.999 (0.070)
Trust people in government to do the right thing	0.978 (0.115)	1.164 (0.121)	1.108 (0.142)	1.040 (0.109)
Age: 50 and above	1.122 (0.190)	1.307 (0.204)+	1.353 (0.259)	0.547 (0.088)***
Male	0.897 (0.140)	1.000 (0.142)	0.653 (0.116)*	1.201 (0.176)
Income: <A\$50,000	1.049 (0.167)	0.835 (0.127)	0.887 (0.174)	0.937 (0.139)
Education: school	0.975 (0.179)	0.929 (0.161)	0.710 (0.155)	0.990 (0.167)
Education: degree	0.718 (0.133)+	1.045 (0.186)	1.403 (0.286)+	1.422 (0.247)*
Recent arrivals	1.171 (0.247)	0.919 (0.185)	1.079 (0.268)	0.914 (0.182)
Indigenous	0.694 (0.177)	1.247 (0.265)	1.417 (0.363)	1.389 (0.306)
English not spoken at home	1.979 (0.354)***	0.518 (0.090)***	0.521 (0.121)**	0.669 (0.115)*
Don't care about election result	1.892 (0.503)*	0.610 (0.170)+	0.900 (0.333)	0.557 (0.150)*
Ideology: right	0.909 (0.048)+	1.030 (0.050)	1.104 (0.064)+	1.070 (0.053)
De-aligned (does not identify with party)	2.115 (0.383)***	0.410 (0.076)***	0.604 (0.155)*	0.628 (0.113)**
Dissatisfied with democracy	1.016 (0.083)	1.025 (0.079)	1.125 (0.100)	1.068 (0.081)
Interest in politics	0.401 (0.083)***	2.230 (0.373)***	2.944 (0.546)***	2.396 (0.424)***
Politics run for big interests	0.882 (0.098)	1.089 (0.112)	1.327 (0.171)*	1.108 (0.112)
N	1,244	1,244	1,244	1,244
Pseudo R-squared	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.07

HOWEVER, public appetite for renewal is very strong

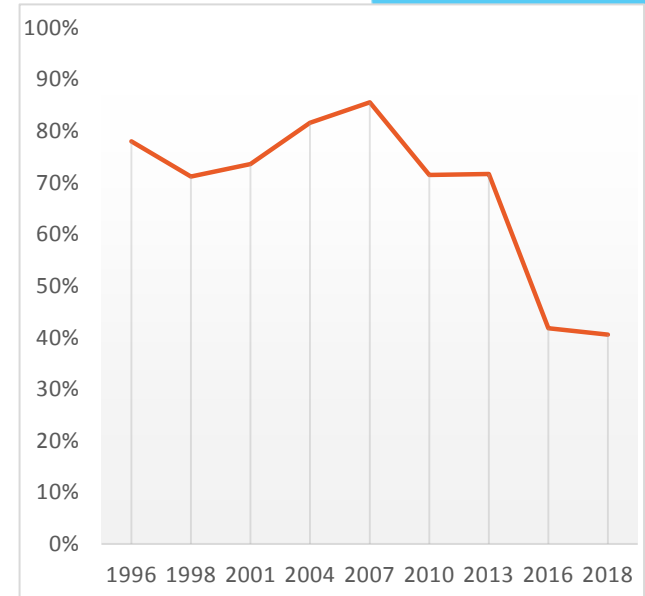
- 9 out of 15 proposed reforms received net agreement rates of +50%
- Reforms aimed at improving the practice of representative politics were the most popular, followed by reforms aimed at giving citizens a greater say.
- There were also strong levels of support for reforms aimed at creating a stronger community or local focus to decision-making.

The Top 5 reforms

- limiting money donated to parties and spent in elections
- the right for voters to recall ineffective local MPs
- giving all MPs a free vote in parliament
- co-designing policies with ordinary Australians
- citizen juries to solve complex problems that parliament can't fix

Tipping point

- A culture shift has occurred in Australia from an “allegiant” to a “divergent” democratic culture precipitated by declining social & political trust.
- Australians dislike the conflictual democratic politics of the Federal Parliament but don’t dislike politics per se or democracy.
- Growing numbers of Australians support a new politics that ensures greater political accountability, open and devolved government and consensual decision-making in the national interest.
- If current trends continue by 2025 fewer than 1 in 10 Australians will trust their politicians and key political institutions.

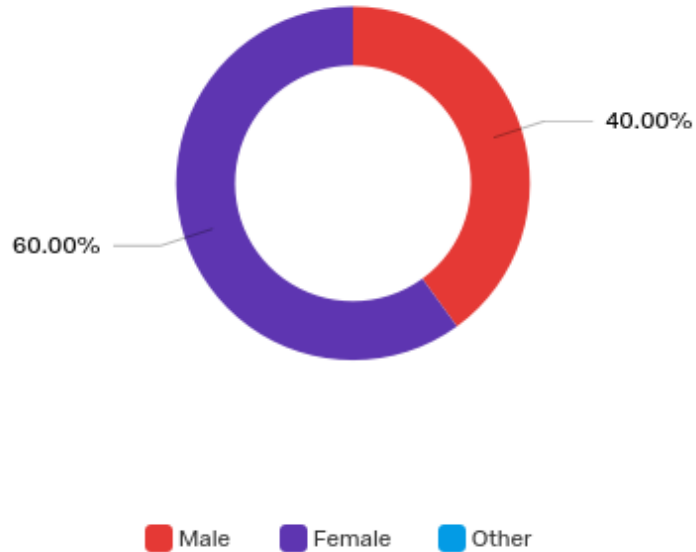




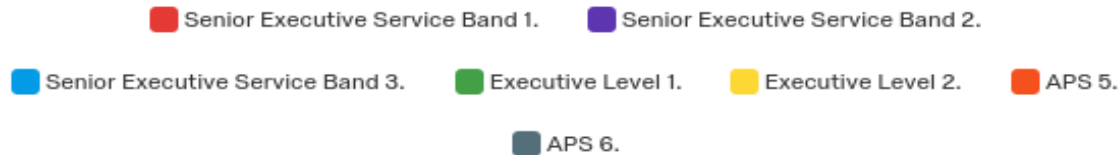
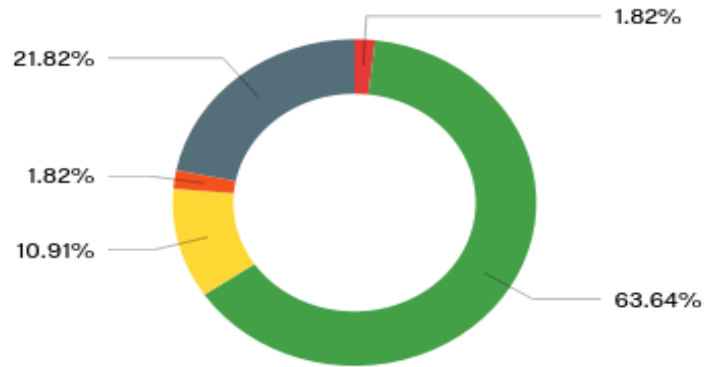
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

COMPARISON WITH APS JURY ON BRIDGING THE TRUST DIVIDE FOR THE SECRETARIES BOARD CONVENED IN FEBRUARY 2019

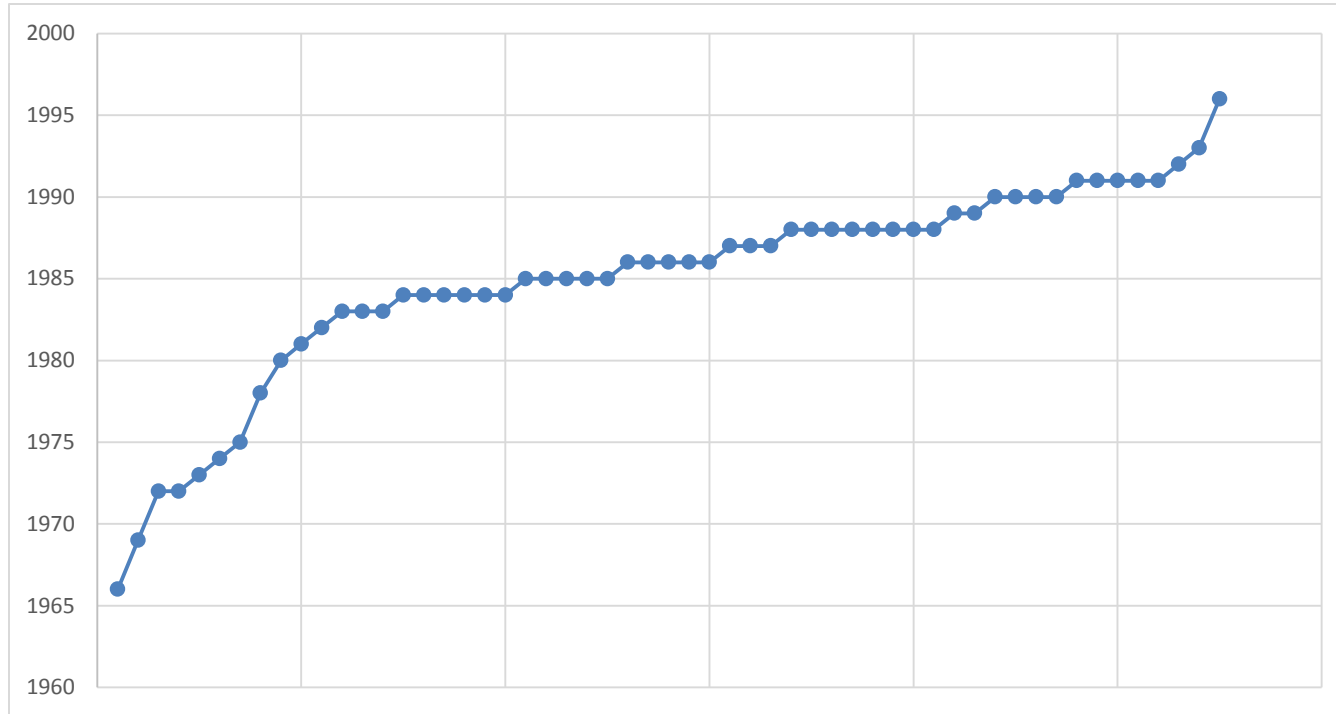
The sample (N=55)



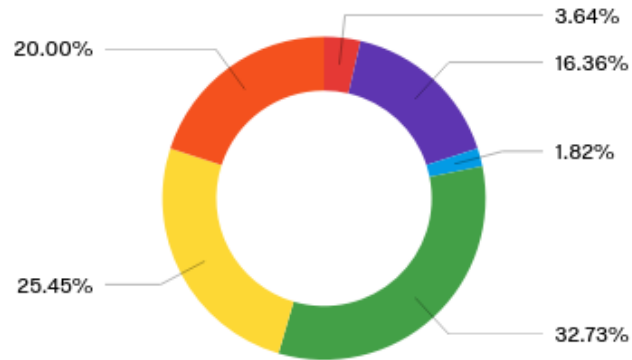
Career level



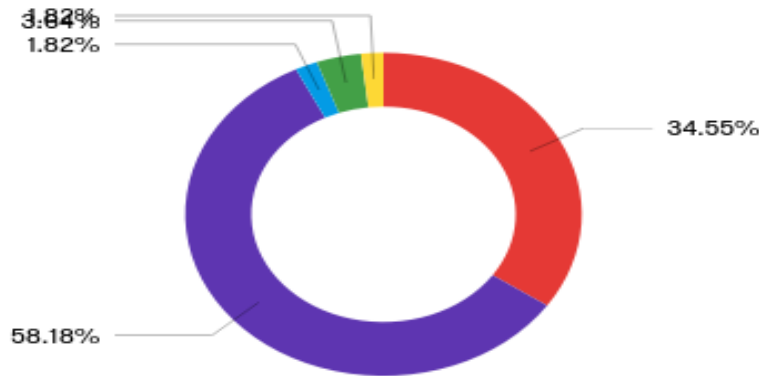
Age



Career families



OVERALL, HOW SIGNIFICANT IS THE DECLINE OF POLITICAL TRUST FOR THE WORK OF THE APS?

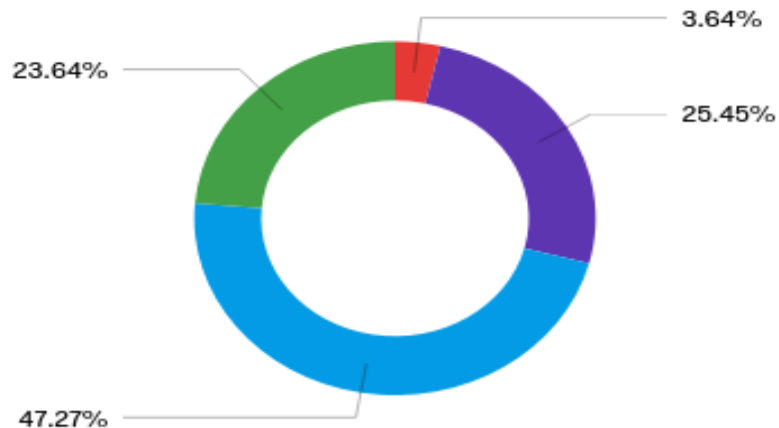


APS Jury
'Very sig': 47%
'Somewhat sig': 47%
'Neither sig/insig': 5%

- Very significant.
- Somewhat significant.
- Neither significant or insignificant.
- Somewhat insignificant.
- Very insignificant.



TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE APS THROUGH ITS ACTIONS (AS OPPOSED TO THOSE OF POLITICIANS) CONTRIBUTED TO THE DECLINE IN TRUST?

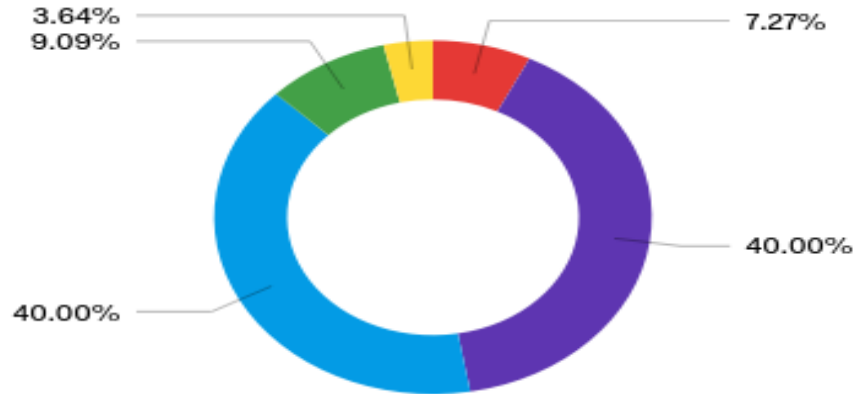


■ A great deal ■ A lot ■ A moderate amount ■ A little ■ None at all

APS Jury
'A lot': 21%
'A moderate amount': 63%
'A little': 15%



TO WHAT EXTENT CAN ACTIONS FROM THE APS BE EXPECTED TO IMPROVE THE TRUST DIVIDE?



APS Jury
'A great deal': 5%
'A lot': 32%
'A moderate amount': 57%

 A great deal  A lot  A moderate amount  A little  None at all



WHAT KEY ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL TRUST ARE BROKEN? (FREQUENCY LEVELS)

YOUR THOUGHTS

1. Distrust in politicians [self-interest, short-termism, political integrity, non-delivery]
2. Not meeting the service promise
3. Not responding to the public interest [community needs/interests of citizens/social licence]
4. Leadership (lack of vision, blurred accountabilities)
5. The absence of a long-term vision
6. Poor communication/engagement with the citizenry
7. Lack of transparency

APS JURY

1. Not meeting the public interest
2. Distrust in politicians and political institutions
3. Competent delivery
4. Citizen engagement
5. Inequitable outcomes
6. Lack of transparency



What specific interventions can the APS introduce to help bridge the trust divide?

YOUR THOUGHTS

- User-centric design/digital design
- Independent advice
- Stronger working relationship with Minister's Office
- Better leadership** (integrity, communication)
- Real community/public engagement
- Strong public voice
- Transparency in decision-making and reporting of outcomes
- Capability to deliver
- Good, simple & accessible public services



APS JURY

- Genuine partnering with citizens through open and proactive co-design at all stages of decision making
- Ensuring continuous high quality, simple and reliable services
- Being open about decisions and the justifications/evidence that supports them
- Ensuring independent institutions can hold Government to account
- Integrity reform



What can the APS do to bridge the trust divide?

WHAT DOES OUR PANEL THINK?