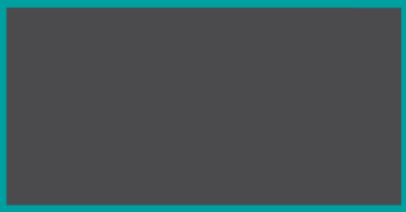
Quantitative & Qualitative report (2015)

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) 2015 Research:

Public trust and confidence in Australian charities



Australian Government

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

ChantLink

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Project number:	3646
Date:	18th June 2015

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1 Executive summary

1.1 Background

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) was established on 3 December 2012 as the independent national regulator of charities. One of the objects of the ACNC Act is to "maintain, protect and enhance public trust and confidence in Australian Not-for-profit sector". In 2013 the ACNC commissioned ChantLink to conduct research amongst the general public in order to investigate Australian consumers' attitudes towards charities and the factors that influenced this, and to provide benchmark measurements. ChantLink repeated this research in April and May 2015, in order to track changes in consumer knowledge and attitudes since 2013.

This document presents the findings of this research, showing comparisons between 2013 and 2015. The research was conducted in two phases:

- **Qualitative research**, consisting of two focus groups and twelve depth interviews, aimed at exploring attitudes to charities, factors which influence trust and confidence in charities, and responses to the idea of an online searchable charities register. One of the group discussions and eight of the interviews were conducted in Melbourne and the remainder were conducted in Bendigo, Victoria to ensure that regional views were also captured.
- A **quantitative survey** of the Australian public's attitudes to charities. The survey was conducted online and 1,761 responses were obtained (including a pilot phase of 189 responses).

1.2 Overall trust in the Australian charities sector

Few immediate concerns: It was apparent from the **qualitative research** that there were few 'top of mind' concerns about charities, with the majority of respondents assuming charities were responsible and honest, and consequently, trustworthy. Many acknowledged that they had given little thought to the issue of trust, as they assumed that charities in general were trustworthy. Further, many supported only charities that they felt they knew and believed to be trustworthy, and had not considered the broader issue of charities in general.

Trust relatively strong: Overall, results from the **quantitative research** indicated that trust in the Australian charities sector was quite strong, although it appeared that there had been a small decline in trust from 2013 to 2015, with mean scores of 6.6 and 6.4 respectively. There were small declines in many other related measures between 2013 and 2015. We note however, that data has only been collected over two time periods, and it therefore not possible to determine whether the apparent decline in mean scores is indicative of a downward trend, or is due to chance variations in the sample.

While a mean score of 6.4 indicates that there is room for improvement in overall trust, it appears that Australians generally are not highly trusting of many organisations or institutions.

Respondents were also asked to rate their level of trust in a range of other organisations and institutions. Charities ranked third in terms of trust amongst all organisations assessed, after doctors (mean score 7.1) and police (mean score 6.9). This was the same ranking as 2013. By comparison, State Parliament, Federal Parliament, religious organisations and the news media all received mean trust scores of less than 5.

Knowledge of regulation increased trust: It was evident that awareness of and knowledge about the ACNC increased overall levels of trust.

Amongst those who claimed to be aware that there is a charities regulator, the mean score for level of trust in charities was 6.8. This was significantly higher than the mean score for the majority of respondents, who were not aware of a charities regulator, and whose initial mean score (prior to being informed of the ACNC and its activities) for level of trust in charities was 6.2.

Further, those who considered themselves to be informed about the ACNC rated their level of trust in charities as higher than those who considered themselves uninformed, and those who were not aware of the ACNC at all, with mean scores of 7.5, 6.5 and 6 respectively.

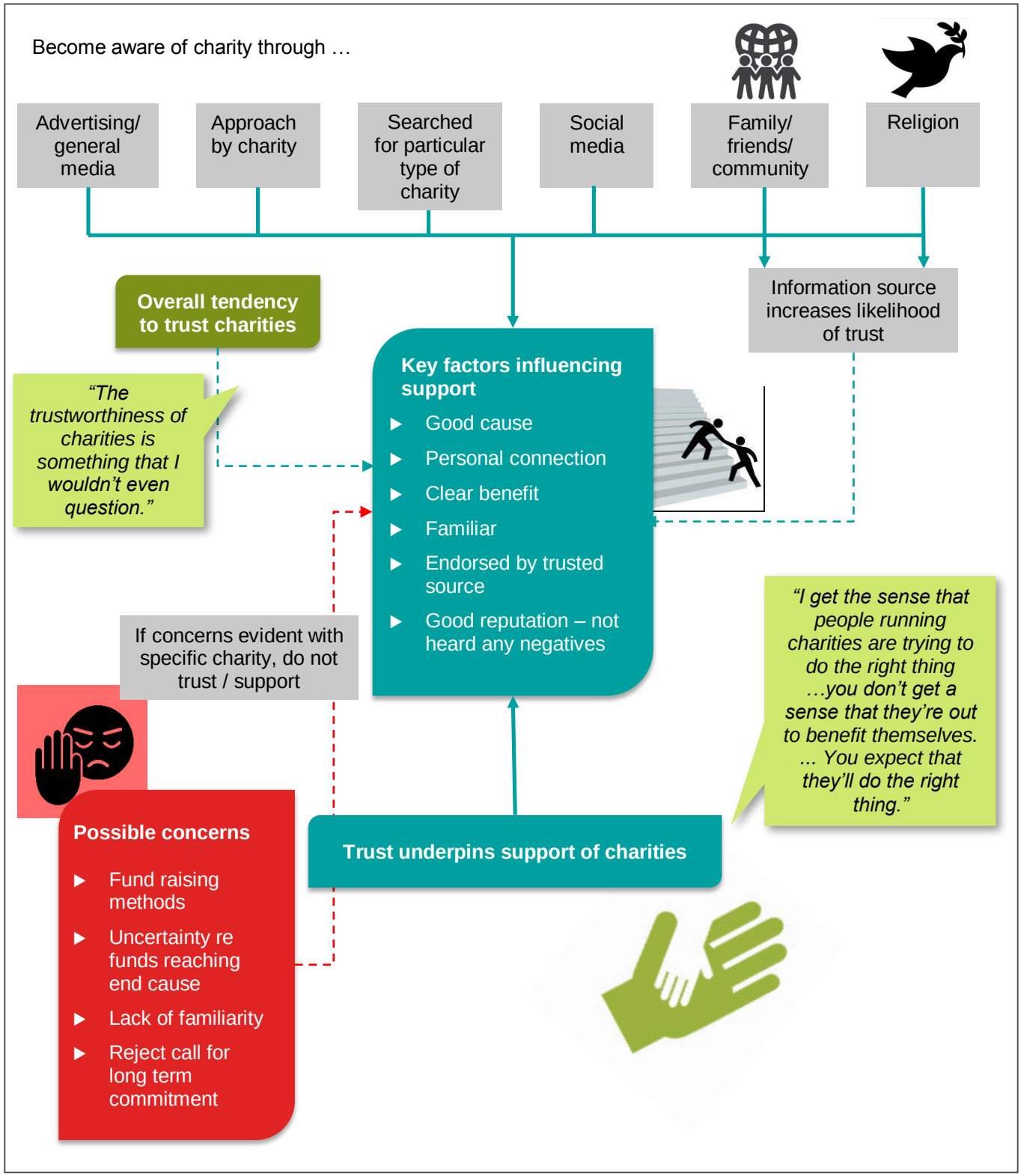
Across the total sample, including those who claimed awareness of a regulator, as well as those who did not, overall level of trust increased from 6.4 to 6.7 once the ACNC and its role was explained.

1.3 Factors influencing support and trust in the Australian charities sector

The **qualitative research** indicated that support of charities is closely entwined with trust. While respondents did not typically think consciously about whether they trusted specific charities, the factors that influenced their choice of charities to support were very similar to factors identified as leading to trust.

The figure overleaf presents an overview of the relationship between support and trust, and the factors that drive or inhibit support of specific charities, based on an analysis of the qualitative data. It illustrates that for the majority of respondents, trust tended to be implicit when thinking about charities, unless they had a specific reason not to trust charities or a specific charity.

Figure 1: Factors leading to support and trust of specific charities



Responses in the **qualitative research** were consistent with those in the **quantitative research**. Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about charities. The statements that received the highest levels of agreement across the sample were related to the charity being effective in relation to a good cause, and providing information about how its money, including donations, is used. The five statements receiving the highest level of agreement were:

- I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed (mean score 7.2).
- I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for (mean score 7.0).
- I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources, including money from donations (mean score of 6.9).
- I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds (mean score of 6.9).
- I trust charities to act in the public interest (mean score of 6.9).

The statements that were most agreed with in 2015 were similar to those agreed with in 2013, with the exception of 'I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds', which increased substantially in importance, ranked 15th in 2013 and 4th in 2015. This suggests that the way charities raise funds is becoming more of a focus when considering charities, and this was also apparent in the qualitative research.

1.4 Impact of social networks, religiosity and social media

Social networks did not appear to have a significant direct influence on trust for the majority of respondents. However, they did have an impact on behaviour in that some became aware of specific charities through their social networks; sponsored friends who were raising money for various charities through participation in fun runs, bike rides, etc., supported local organisations they had some connection with, and/or supported charities that were promoted in some way by local organisations or contacts.

Further, stronger social networks were associated with higher levels of activity and knowledge on a range of other measures related to charities. Those who participated in various community groups were more likely than those who did not participate in community groups to:

- Volunteer at a charity at least weekly
- Have a higher level of trust and confidence in charities, and a higher level of trust and confidence in a broad range of organisations and institutions
- Express higher levels of trusts across a range of aspects associated with charities
- Believe they were well informed about charities they supported
- Be aware that there is a charities regulator

- Recognise the ACNC name
- Claim higher levels of knowledge about the ACNC.

Reliogisity: Those who regarded themselves as having a commitment to their religion tended to be influenced in one or both of two ways in relation to charities:

- **Created awareness of specific charities:** A few said they became aware of particular charities though their religion, and once aware, decided to support them because they believed the charity represented a worthy cause.
- **Assumed trustworthy:** Some said that they assumed that a charity associated with their religion would share their values, and would therefore be a good charity to support. They tended to assume that such charities would be trustworthy, although they did not necessarily know much about them.

Further, religiosity was associated with higher levels of activity and knowledge on a range of other measures related to charities. Those who regarded themselves as religious were more likely than those who did not regard themselves as religious to:

- Volunteer at a charity at least monthly
- Have a higher level of trust and confidence in charities, and a higher level of trust and confidence in a broad range of organisations and institutions
- Express higher levels of trusts across a range of aspects associated with charities
- Believe they were well informed about charities they supported
- Ask for additional information from a charity prior to supporting it
- Be aware that there is a charities regulator
- Recognise the ACNC name
- Claim higher levels of knowledge about the ACNC.

There did not appear to be a relationship between use of **social media** and trust and confidence in charities, nor with charities supported, although there were some individual exceptions to this. Further, usage of social media did not appear to have an impact on responses to most other issues explored in this research. (We note that due to length constraints in the questionnaire, the only question about social media was a broad based one about the frequency with which respondents used social media. It is possible that a more detailed analysis of social media usage would identify differences between different types of users.)

1.5 Drivers of trust

Analysis of the **quantitative data** provided a more detailed assessment of the factors driving trust.

A combination of linear regression and factor analysis was used to identify the key drivers of trust in charities, and to determine whether there were any changes in the key drivers from 2013 to 2015. The same analysis technique was used in 2013 and 2015, to ensure direct comparisons could be made between the two waves of research.

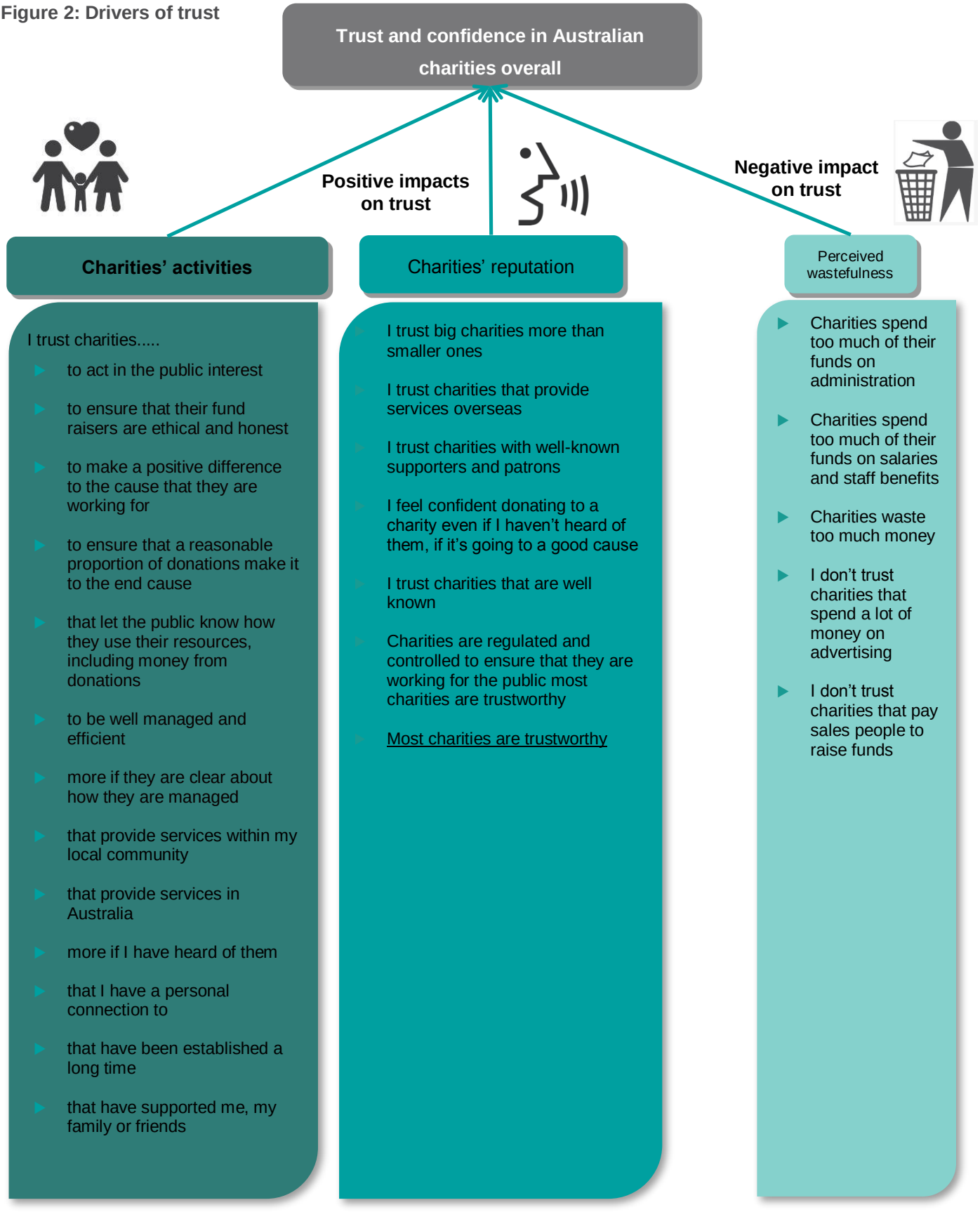
Three key dimensions: The model identified three dimensions that affect levels of trust (as measured prior to being given any information about ACNC or its activities) and a number of elements that contributed to these.

These are illustrated in the exhibit overleaf, and in brief show:

- **Charities' activities** were the most important driver of trust.
- **Charities' reputation** was identified as the second most important driver of trust.
- **Perceptions of wastefulness** had a negative effect on trust in charities; that is, a belief that charities spend too much on administration, salaries, advertising and fundraising or general wastefulness could result in respondents trusting charities less.

A similar outcome in 2015: The model generated in 2015 was almost identical to that generated in 2013. The only variation to the model developed in 2013 is the attribute 'Most charities' are trustworthy', which in 2013 was classified under 'charities activities' and is now classified under 'charities' reputation'.

Figure 2: Drivers of trust



1.6 Involvement with and knowledge of the sector

Most have some charities contact: Respondents were asked about their involvement in and knowledge of charities and were classified as 'high' or 'low' involvement to aid in the analysis of their responses. While only one fifth had direct involvement in the sector (for example, as volunteers, employees, board members), 87% had made some form of contribution in the previous year, for example by donating goods or money. Across the total quantitative sample, 35% were classified as high involvement, and 65% as low involvement. These proportions were the same as those found in 2013 (36% and 64% respectively).

Supporters considered themselves reasonably knowledgeable: 78% claimed to support at least one charity regularly (not all were classified as high involvement as some donated only small amounts, donated used goods, etc., and were classified as low involvement). Of those who supported specific charities regularly, three quarters claimed that they knew at least a reasonable amount about a charity before supporting it, and placed high importance on charities communicating information about how they used donations (mean score 8.5), the proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work (mean score 8.1), and the impact of their work (mean score 8.0).

While respondents were generally satisfied with the information they received from charities they supported (mean score 7.4), there was a broader perception that charities overall do not perform well in supplying information (mean scores for performance ranged from 5.2 to 6.5, depending on information type).

1.7 Regulation and the ACNC

Small but significant increase in awareness: While there was relatively low awareness of a national regulator of charities, and specifically the name of the ACNC, awareness had increased by 5% between 2013 and 2015 (from 37% to 42%). Only 8% could recall the name ACNC, although 21% recognised it when asked if they recognised the name.

Low knowledge about the ACNC: All respondents were asked to rate how much they knew about the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, using a scale of 0 (never heard of them) to 10 (fully informed). Most respondents assessed themselves as having very low knowledge about the ACNC. 40% of the sample rated their knowledge at 0 (never heard of the ACNC), while the mean score across the total sample was 2.5.

Knowledge level improved since 2013: Notwithstanding the very low knowledge base, there was a small but significant increase in mean score between 2013 and 2015, from 2.2 to 2.5.

Role of the ACNC: Respondents placed high importance on having a regulator that performed the ACNC's functions (mean score 8.2), although this was a little lower than the mean score of 8.6 in 2013. As discussed previously, knowledge of a regulator significantly improved trust and confidence in Australian charities.

Respondents were asked to select the three functions that they considered most important to maintain, protect and enhance public trust and confidence in the Australian Not-for-profit sector. The most commonly selected functions were also those most commonly selected in 2013 - keeping a register of charities (58%), policing charity fundraising (55%) and handling complaints about charities (53%).

1.8 ACNC Register

Some awareness of register: 18% of respondents claimed to be aware that there is a public register of charities available. Awareness was much higher amongst those who claimed to be aware that there is a charities regulator (35% compared with 7% of those who were not aware of a charities regulator).

Concept of register supported: Reaction to the concept of a charities register was very positive across respondents in both the qualitative and quantitative research phases, regardless of whether they thought they would personally use it. The availability of a register was seen to increase transparency in the sector and was therefore approved.

In the quantitative phase, 73% of respondents rated the importance of such a register very highly (score of 8-10), and the mean score across the total sample was 8.4 (similar to the 2013 mean score of 8.5).

Use: No respondents in the qualitative research had used the register. However, 36% of those who claimed awareness of the register in the quantitative research claimed to have used the register (this equated to 7% of the total 2015 sample).

Ease of use: The majority of those who had used the register had found it reasonably easy to use, with a mean score of 7.2.

2 Introduction

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) was established in December 2012. A key statutory object for the Commission is "maintaining, protecting and enhancing public trust and confidence" in the sector. The ACNC commissioned ChantLink to conduct research amongst the general public in March and April 2013 in order to investigate Australian consumers' attitudes towards charities and the factors that influenced this, and to provide benchmark measurements.

The ACNC commissioned ChantLink to conduct a second wave of this research in 2015. This research largely replicated the research approach used in 2013, although some new questions were added to the questionnaire and the qualitative discussion guide was changed substantially, to include a focus on how social media, community participation and religiosity might affect perceptions of the Australian charities sector.

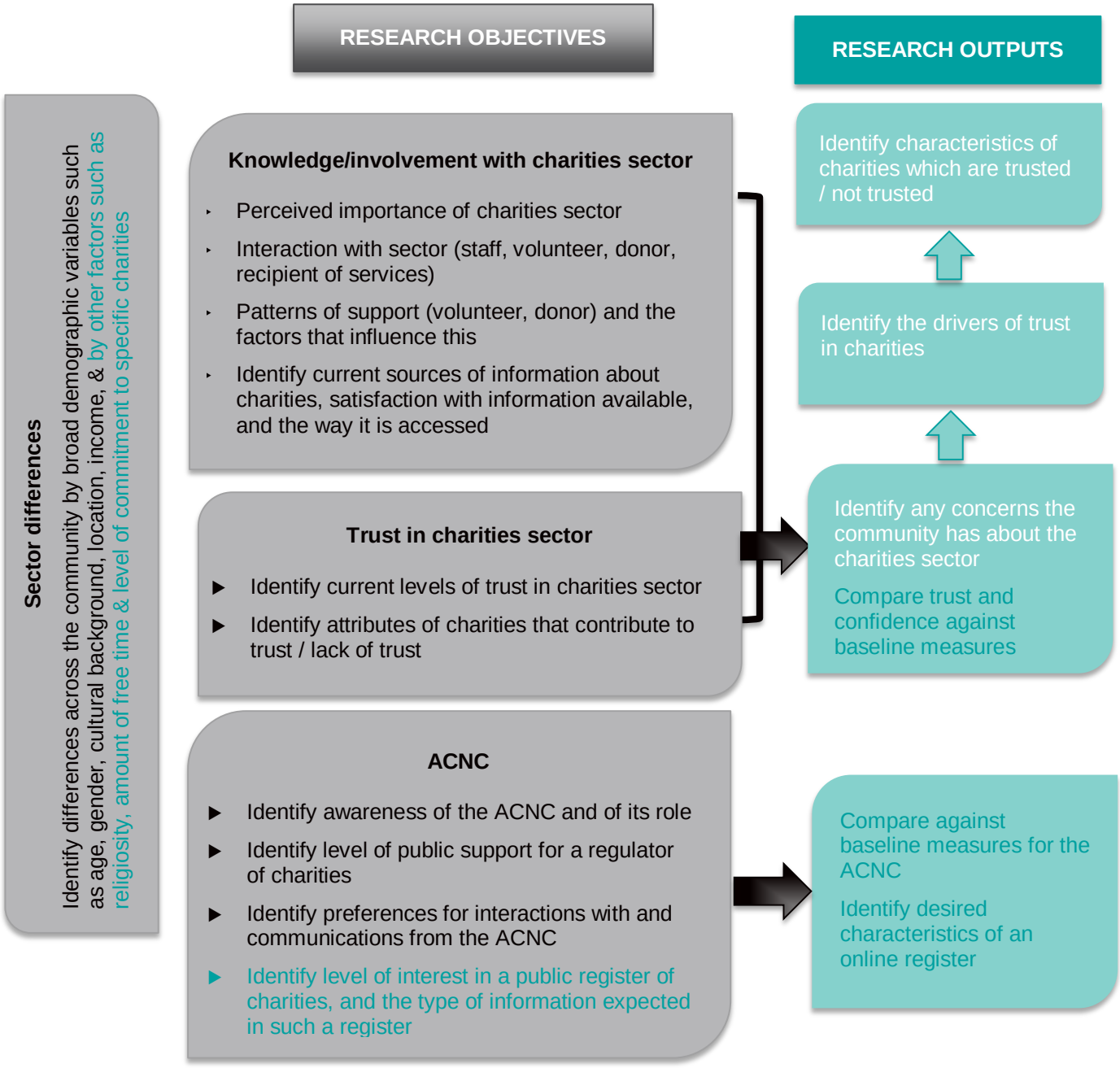
The research was conducted in two phases:

- **Qualitative research** conducted from 23rd April 2015 until the 8th May 2015. The research consisted of two focus groups and twelve depth interviews, aimed at exploring attitudes to charities, factors which influence trust and confidence in charities, and responses to the idea of an online searchable charities register. One of the group discussions and eight of the interviews were conducted in Melbourne and the remainder were conducted in Bendigo, Victoria to ensure that regional views were also captured.
- A **quantitative online survey** of 1,761 randomly selected respondents (including a pilot phase of 189 responses) from the SSI research panel. The full launch of the survey was conducted from Tuesday 28th April until Friday 1st May 2015.

This document presents the findings of this research, showing comparisons between 2013 and 2015.

3 Research objectives

The majority of objectives for this project were similar to those specified in 2013. Objectives which were new or changed in 2015 are shown in teal.



4 Research approach

The research approach involved both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

4.1 Qualitative methodology

As with the previous wave, qualitative research was conducted with the general public to explore attitudes towards charities, the factors that drive trust and confidence in Australian charities, and response to the ACNC's online charities register. In 2015 the qualitative research also explored the effect of social media and religiosity. Respondents were recruited based on their level of involvement in charities, the frequency with which they accessed social media, their involvement in the community and their 'religiosity'.

The qualitative research was conducted from 23rd April 2015 until the 8th May 2015 and involved two group discussions with respondents classified as having 'low involvement' in charities, and 12 face to face interviews with 'high involvement' individuals:

Fieldwork was undertaken in Melbourne and Bendigo. Respondents were recruited by a specialist recruitment agency (Focus People).

4.2 Quantitative methodology

The 2015 quantitative approach was very similar to the 2013 approach:

- The survey was conducted online with consumers from the Survey Sampling International's® Australian panel
- The questionnaire was largely unchanged from 2013 (although new questions were added to cover community participation, social media use and religiosity, and questions about the ACNC register were modified).

A nationally representative sample of 1,761Australian adults aged over 18 years was undertaken from Tuesday 28th April until Friday 1st May 2015. The median time taken to complete the survey was 14 minutes.

The questionnaire is shown in the Appendix to this report.

4.3 Analysis and reporting methodology

The sample was selected to be nationally representative by state. Whilst a higher proportion of respondents was female, this is typical of online surveys. Comparisons of weighted and unweighted data indicated that weighting was not necessary and, as weighting the data would have reduced the 'effective sample size', it was concluded that it was unnecessary to weight the data.

All quantitative questions were analysed by frequency and mean scores were calculated for scale questions (that is, questions where respondents were asked to provide a score between 0 and 10). The following analysis was also conducted.

4.3.1 Statistical testing

Statistical testing was conducted using Q software's False Discovery Rate function. This method has been used as it is less likely to report false discoveries (e.g. reporting a significant difference where the difference is actually due to chance) than the more traditional planned testing method often used in Market Research.

The statistical differences reported were $p<0.05$, which represents the probability that an observed difference being due to chance was less than 5 in 100. These differences are highlighted in charts via red (denoting significantly lower) or green (denoting significantly higher). The following conventions have been used:

- Where one subgroup's difference is significantly higher or lower compared to all other subgroups, (e.g. where those under 35 years of age are significantly more likely to assign a lower score than all other age groups), only that score is highlighted.
- Where one subgroup is significantly different from only one or two other subgroups, each of the specific groups that are significantly different is discussed. For example, where those under 35 years are significantly more likely to assign a lower score than those between 55 and 64 years and those over 65 years, each of these is flagged as significantly different.

4.3.2 Subgroup comparisons

Throughout this report subgroup analysis was conducted for the following key groups:

- **Age:** This has been collapsed into <35 years, 35 - 44 years, 45 - 54 years, 55 - 64 years, >65 years
- **Australian State:** Collapsed into NSW & ACT, VIC & TAS, QLD, SA; WA, NT & Other Territories
- **Gender** (Male / female)
- **Family situation:** Analysis was conducted based on:
  - All possible responses for D5 (i.e. Married or in a de-facto relationship [with dependent children], married or in de-facto relationship [with no dependent children], single parent, single [no dependent children]
  - Responses collapsed to those with dependent children versus those without**.**
- **Location:** Metropolitan, regional, rural
- **Work status:** Collapsed into full time, part time, home duties, unemployed & other responses, student, retired
- **Household income:** Collapsed into less than $40K, $40,000 - $59,999, $60,000 - $79,999, $80,000 - $99,999, $100K or over and Prefer not to answer

- **Involvement in charities:** Respondents were classified as high involvement and low involvement, based on their responses to Q1 (type of contact with charity), Q2 (volunteer effort) and Q3 (donation behaviour). Those classified as ***high involvement*** met one or more of the following criteria:
  - Paid employee of a charity
  - Trustee of a charity
  - Member of a charity's executive, governing body or management committee
  - Provided professional services to a charity
  - Volunteered for a charity at least monthly
  - Received money, support and/or help from a charity
  - Made regular monthly donations to a charity
  - Sponsored a child or animal via a charity
  - Participated in some form of activism such as writing letters or coordinating a petition.

  Those classified as ***low involvement*** did not meet any of the above criteria.
- **Religiosity:** Respondents classified themselves as very religious, moderately religious, or not religious at all.

Differences between groups have only been discussed where statistically significantly differences were observed. Where a question or measure is not discussed in terms of differences between subgroups, this indicates that no differences were observed. Typically subgroup differences are only discussed in the commentary and not illustrated in graphical format.

4.3.3 Comparing research waves

- Comparisons to the 2013 findings have been made where the question remains largely unchanged.
- Sample base: As no changes were made to the questionnaire as a result of the pilot, the entire 2015 sample has been used throughout (depending on 'skip' instructions within the questionnaire). Note, however, that in 2013 some alterations were made after the pilot, and as a result, for a small number of questions affected, only the 'full launch' 2013 sample are reported on.

Throughout the report, the 2013 data series within charts is shown in **black** and the current data series is shown in **teal**.

5 Main findings

5.1 Importance of charities sector

There was widespread agreement, especially amongst high involvement respondents, that the charities sector is a very important component of Australian society.

Many commented that Australia, as a relatively wealthy country, had an obligation to support those in Australia who needed additional support. Some, but not all, extended this to an obligation to assist those in other countries in need of assistance.

A small number of low involvement respondents placed less emphasis on the importance of the charities sector, with a belief that only some specific types of charities (based on personal experience) were important.

"Yes, absolutely, it's very important]. Well, the government isn't going to do it, so someone has to." (High involvement)

"I guess it depends on the charity. Like the Prostate Cancer one [indicates another respondent who is a prostate cancer survivor] – if you have a personal connection." (Low involvement)

While most did not think the importance of charities had changed substantially in recent years, a few felt the importance of the charities sector was increasing because of:

- A reduction in government funding for many programs, where charities were necessary to fill the gaps
- An increase in world population
- An aging population.

5.2 Involvement in the charity sector

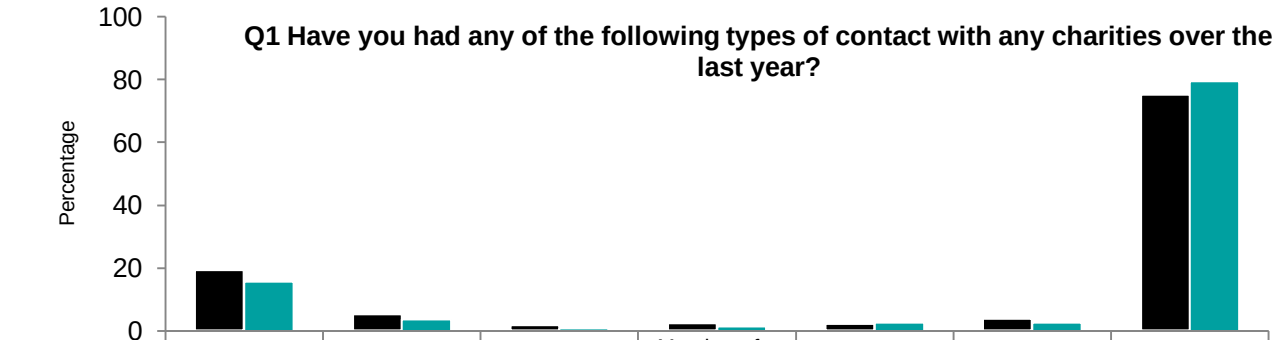
In the **qualitative research**, all those who participated in depth interviews were classified as **high involvement**, specifically selected as they had involvement with at least one charity as a volunteer, and/or made regular or substantial donations to at least one charity.

In addition, two group discussions were conducted with those classified as **low involvement**, that is, people who had intermittent, irregular or no contact at all with charities. In fact, virtually all had some involvement with charities.

Types of contact (Q1, Q2 & Q3): In the **quantitative research** the majority (80%) had not had direct contact with a charity in the previous year (including volunteer work, employees, trustees, and recipients of support from a charity). There was little change from 2015. The graph below shows the proportion of respondents who had direct contact with charities in 2015 and 2013.

There were some differences across demographic groups in the likelihood of direct contact with charities. Those who were **significantly less likely** to select 'none of these' were as follows:

- Those were **under 35 years** were significantly less likely than those aged **45 or more years** of age (67% of those under 35 compared to 84% of those aged 45 or more).
- **Students** compared to **retirees** (68% of students compared to 84% of retirees).
- **Males** compared to **females** (75% of males compared to 83% of females).
- Respondents who participated in **one or more community groups** (66% of those who participated in 1 or more community groups compared to 86% of those who did not participate in any groups).
- Respondents who **use social media** (77% of those who use social media compared to 87% of those who did use social media).
- The **more religious** respondents assessed themselves as, the more likely they were to have at least one of these forms of contact (67% of those who were very religious selected 'none of these', compared to 77% of those who were moderately religious and 84% of those who were not at all religious).



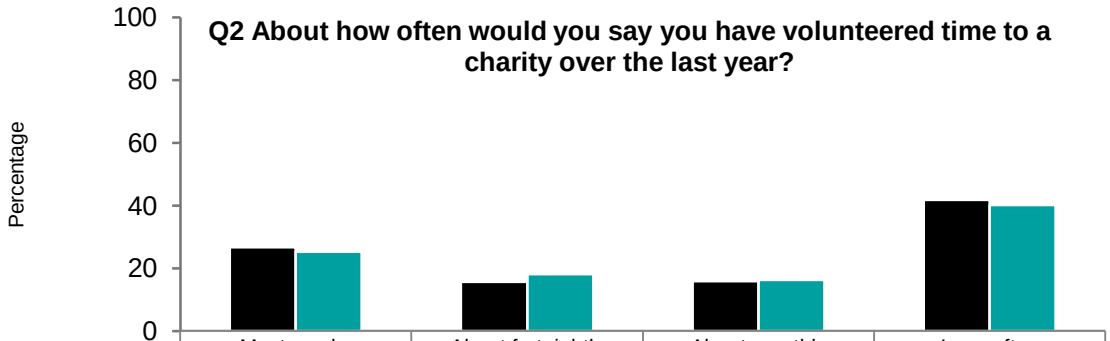
	Volunteer for a charity	Paid employee of a charity	Trustee of a charity	Member of a charity's executive, governing body or management committee	Provide professional services to a charity	Received money, support and/or help from a charity	None of these
2013, n=1624	19	5	2	2	2	4	75
2015, n=1761	16	4	1	1	2	2	80

Base: Total sample

Volunteering behaviour (Q2): As shown in the previous graph, 16% of the total sample in 2015 said they had volunteered for a charity in the last 12 months (a little less than the 19% in 2013). More than half of those who had volunteered for a charity in the past 12 months had done so at least monthly (60%).

Differences between sub-groups (Q2): There were few differences in volunteering behaviour by different demographic groups. The only significant differences identified were:

- **Participation in community groups:** Those who participated in more than one community group were most likely to say they volunteered at least weekly (39% compared with 21% of those involved with no or only one community group).
- **Religiosity:** Those who regarded themselves as very or moderately religious were more likely to volunteer at least monthly than those who regarded themselves as not religious at all (65% and 51% respectively)



	Most weeks	About fortnightly	About monthly	Less often
2013, n=314	27	16	16	42
2015, n=276	25	18	16	40

Base: Those who had volunteered

5.3 Support of charities

5.3.1 Type of support

Across the sample, there were a number of different types of support identified, as shown in the following table.

Table 1: Types of support

Type of support		High Involvement	Low involvement
Monetary	Small donations, often identified as "loose change". Most likely donated when the donor was out and approached by a person collecting for a charity, or where there was a donation box at a shop or outlet the donor visited.	Most	Most
	Larger one off donations to specific causes	Many	Some
	Donation to a specific charity on a regular basis	Many	None (by definition)
Time	Volunteer on a regular basis	Many	None (by definition)
	Volunteer occasionally; e.g., participate in fund raising event once a year; sell raffle tickets	Some	Some
Goods	Donating used clothes, toys, furniture, etc.	Many	Many

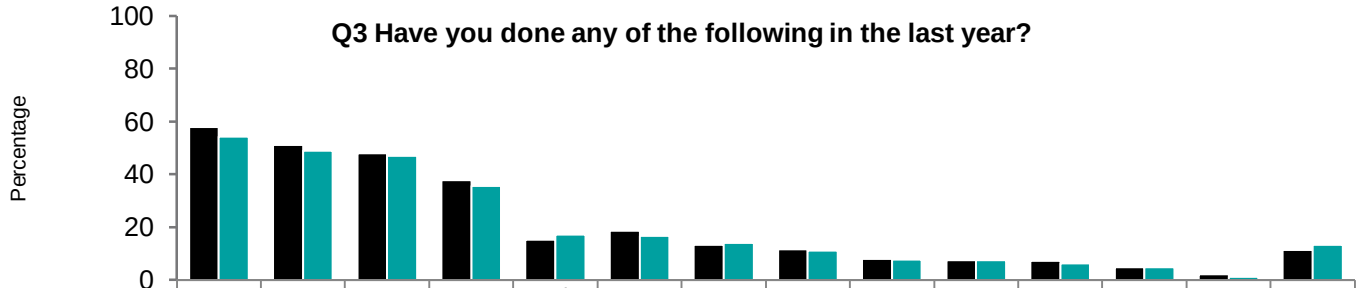
In the **quantitative research** the majority (87%) of respondents said they had made some form of contribution to the charities sector in the past year, as shown in the graph below.

The most common forms of support, mentioned by a third to a half of the total sample in both 2015 and 2013 were:

- Donating goods to a charity
- Making one off or occasional donations
- Buying raffle tickets
- Buying goods from a charity.

There were no significant differences in frequency of charity related activities between 2013 and 2015.

'Other, please specify' responses included: *volunteered (n=5), provided ongoing support to local church (n=2), blood donor, assisted with grant applications, contributed through a group, donate to a worthy recipient that is not part of a charity, help my community through volunteer work, physical work, serve dinner to the homeless, sponsored community, veterans Support Group.*



	Donate goods	Once off donation	Bought raffle tickets	Bought goods from a charity	Made regular donations to a charity	Sponsor someone	Attend fundraising event	Conduct other fundraising	Sponsor a child	Donate to a TV charity appeal	Activism	Sponsor an animal	Other, please specify	None of the above
2013, n=1562	58	51	48	38	15	19	13	12	8	7	7	5	2	11
2015, n=1761	54	49	47	36	17	17	14	11	8	7	6	5	1	13

Base: 2013 Full launch; 2015 Total sample

Differences between sub-groups (Q3): The following significant differences between subgroups were observed:

- **High involvement** respondents were significantly more likely than low involvement respondents to have undertaken all activities listed, except make one off or occasional donations and buy raffle tickets, where there were no significant differences between high and low involvement respondents.
- **Age:** Those who were under 35 years were significantly less likely to have:
  - Donated goods (41% compared to 62% of those 55 or older)
  - Made a one off or occasional donation (39% compared to 53% of those 55 or older)
  - Bought raffle tickets (35% compared to 55% of those 55 or older)
  - Bought goods from a charity (29% compared to 42% of those 55 or older).
- **Gender:** Females were significantly more likely than males to have:
  - Donated goods (65% compared to 47% of males)
  - Made a one off or occasional donation (52% compared to 44% of males)
  - Bought raffle tickets (51% compared to 41% of males)
  - Bought goods from a charity (43% compared to 25% of males).
- There were several differences by **working status**:
  - **Retirees** were significantly more likely to have:
    - Donated goods (65% compared to 41% of students and 48% of full time workers)
    - Made a one off or occasional donation (57% compared to 28% of students)
    - Bought raffle tickets (52% compared to 30% of students)
    - Bought goods from a charity (43% compared to 29% of full time workers).
  - **Full time workers** were significantly more likely to attend fundraising events compared to retirees and those on home duties or unemployed (19% of full time workers, compared to 10% of retirees and 9% of those at home).
- Those who participated in **community group(s)** were significantly more likely to have undertaken all activities compared to those with little or no involvement (only 5% of those who participated in a group selected 'none of the above', compared to 17% of those who did not participate in any community groups).

5.3.2 Reasons for support

Most/all charities considered deserving of support: As was the case in 2013, in the **qualitative research** the majority of respondents were of the view that all or most charities were deserving of support. A number acknowledged that they had limited resources and could therefore support only one or a small number of charities. The issue for respondents was therefore which specific charities they would choose to support.

The charities respondents chose to support were dependent on:

- **The type of support provided:** In the case of small donations, particularly requests for donations in shops or on the street, respondents tended to give little consideration to their action, often giving small amounts although they might know little or nothing about the charity. Indeed, some were willing to give small amounts to individuals asking for money, knowing that those people were not part of an identified charity. Most thought as they were giving only small amounts, the specific details about the charity were relatively unimportant. As the level of commitment increased (size of the donation or time commitment), the importance of knowing something about the charity increased.
- Whether respondents were **high or low involvement**, with some differences here, related primarily to the size of commitment:
  - **A considered decision:** High involvement respondents tended to have specific charities that they supported regularly over time. When asked what made them choose to support specific charities, respondents identified a range of factors, many of which contributed to a level of trust in the charity. In general, these decisions tended to be relatively considered, although few had investigated the charity in detail prior to deciding to support it.
  - **Spontaneous decision:** Low involvement respondents tended to donate to a range of charities from time to time, but were less likely to have specific charities they wished to support in the longer term. Decisions to support a specific charity tended to be more spontaneous. This was also true of many high involvement respondents, who from time to time gave small amounts of support to a range of other charities, and their choices here tended to be more spontaneous.

Factors influencing the decision to support a charity: In addition, a number of key factors were identified by both high and low involvement respondents in the decision to support a specific charity. Trust was not raised specifically as a factor in a decision to support specific charities, but was implicit in the factors identified by respondents as important in their decision process. Most factors raised were also identified in 2013, and were as follows:

- **Good cause:** The charity was seen to support a cause that the donor regarded as important.

- They had some type of **personal connection** with the charity. This was often a key reason for supporting specific charities. In some cases, the connection was close and long term, whereas in others, it was relatively transient.

  "I donate to Yooralla, because my friend's daughter has a disability." (Low involvement)

  "I do cancer [charities], because my Dad and a few other family members died of cancer." (Low involvement)

  "I've started giving to the Smith Family. The only reason is that one of my children is a single mum, and she has had that much help through lots of groups, and the Smith Family is one of them that has helped her and the kids with school expenses … I don't know how much of what they are getting they give [to people like my daughter], but I can see that it is going where it is supposed to go." (Low involvement)

  "My father died during World War Two before I was born, and Legacy was always very good to mum and made sure we were OK. … so when I was looking for a charity to support, they were an obvious one." (High involvement)

  "I know that my friend's grandchild went [to the Royal Children's Hospital], so I always support them … So, it's probably a lot about exposure, and personal experiences. (High involvement)

  "Our club supports a charity associated with pancreatic cancer. The wife of one our members had pancreatic cancer so we decided to do that, but we trusted him that the charity was OK. We know it provided his wife with support." (High involvement)

  In a few cases, a personal connection had a negative impact, with a couple of respondents saying they wouldn't support specific charities because they had negative experiences with them.

- **Clear benefit:** The belief that a charity provided a clear, tangible benefit was very important to many, as they wanted to be as confident as possible that their donation would have a positive effect. However, while identified as an important factor, only a small number had specifically explored whether this was in fact the case with charities they supported. Most trusted that the charities they supported did provide clear benefits (with trust predicated on a number of factors discussed in Section 5.4.5).

  "They're very effective. They're well-funded and they have lots of programs, and you can see the effect of the programs." (High involvement)

  "Once I start working, I'd love to sponsor a child. I love the fact that you are tangibly assisting one person for a better life. And having children myself, I have a bit of a soft spot for children … and I love the idea of getting updates [about the child]. … A couple of my friends, they sponsor children. Regularly they get updates [to say] 'your money has gone to this school' and they'll get a picture of the school, or 'now you've got enough for the child's college fund'. It seems to be beneficial – even if it's just one person, it's better than there never being enough, and trying to help a continent. So I think that the smaller goals are more helpful." (High involvement)

"Our daughter is on the committee of the school (her children go to) and is involved in the fund raising. We know the money they raise is used in the school because she tells us what happens, and we see the things they spend the money on. … it is all quite transparent." (High involvement)

A small number said that they did not support charities where a tangible benefit was not clearly evident, even though they might consider that charity to be supporting a worthwhile endeavour.

"Even those that are legitimate, but their purpose is to raise awareness of some cause, so they are not actually saying that they are doing anything at all to help people with whatever, all they are doing is increasing awareness. So that translates to 'we're a marketing company' but they are passed off as a charity" (Low involvement)

- **Familiarity:** The charity was well-known and familiar to the donor. In many cases, this also meant the charity was large, although this was not true for all.

"I think you can trust the larger ones more, because you recognise it and you can see that it's probably not going to be a scam." (Low involvement)

"I tend to work from home during the day and I'll get calls particularly at lunch time … and it will be a charity that I don't know, and they'll ostensibly be for a good cause, like mental health or something like that, but you'll never have heard of them, so I won't give to them." (Low involvement)

"I think it must be harder for small charities, to show that they are trustworthy, when they don't have the budget that the bigger ones do, so that they can put the advertising out there." (Low involvement)

- **Endorsement** by a personally known organisation (e.g. childrens' school), or a family member or friend often acted as a surrogate measure for a worthwhile charity, if the charity was not known to the donor.
- **Serendipity:** The donor was approached at the 'right' time, when they felt they could afford to donate.
- **Convenience:** This was particularly important when donating clothing or goods, with respondents selecting charities which had outlets convenient for them, or charities which collected goods from them.

"I also [donate goods] to Diabetes Australia … for a really bad reason – because they pick up from your door. It sounds horrible! I think it's a good cause." (High Involvement)

"I take all our used clothes and toys to the Salvos because they have a shop just near our home, and I do think it's a good cause." (High involvement)

Results from the **quantitative research** (Q4) were consistent with the qualitative findings. Respondents were presented with a list of possible reason for supporting a charity, and asked to select all those that applied to them. The most common reason identified for supporting a charity was that the **charity's work was considered important,** with two thirds (67%) of respondents selecting this.

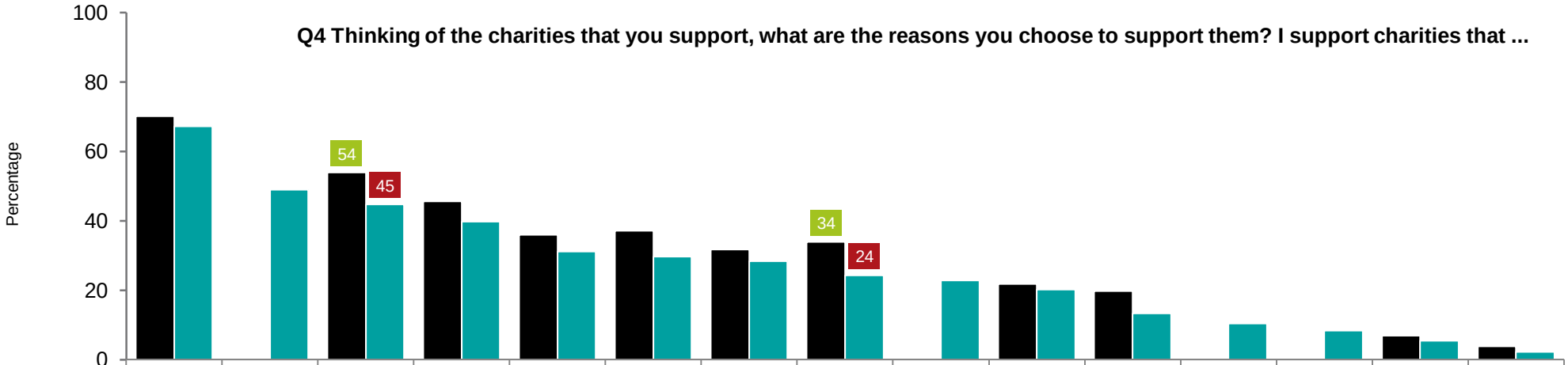
Other important factors were:

- To provide support to Australians (this option was introduced in 2015 as a result of findings in 2013) (49% of respondents)
- I trust the charity to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for (45% of respondents)
- The charity has a good reputation (40% of respondents).

All results are shown in the graph following.

In addition to the options presented to respondents, **'Other, please specify' responses** included: *No reason (n=4), support animal welfare (n=4), I can get cheap goods (n=3), school activity (n=2), I like the competitions (n=2), it's my civic duty, I'm shamed into it, they do not waste donations, I don't like charities, I don't support any charities, I support charities that don't spend much on advertising, I'm in a better financial position to give now than I was years ago, as part of my workplace, the charity spends wisely, the charity telephones me, I only donate to charities that do not telephone me.*

Q4 Thinking of the charities that you support, what are the reasons you choose to support them? I support charities that ...



	I feel their work is import.	Provide support to Australians*	Makes a positive difference	Have a good reputation	Are well known	Match my beliefs	I enjoy supporting	Advises how they use their resources	Provide support to overseas causes *	I have a personal connection	Have supported me or close family or friends	Are supported by a religious organisation I belong to*	Are supported by my friends*	Have well known supporters	Other, please specify
2013, n=1453	70	0	54	46	36	37	32	34	0	22	20	0	0	7	4
2015, n=1539	67	49	45	40	31	30	28	24	23	20	13	10	8	5	2

* Introduced in 2015

Base: Those who had some contact with charities over the last year

Differences between sub-groups: The following significant differences were observed:

- **Gender:** Females were significantly more likely than males to support charities which they felt were important (73% compared to 60% of males), supported Australians (53% compared to 43%) or where they trusted the charity to make a positive difference (49% compared to 39% of males).
- **Work status:** Retirees were significantly more likely to have supported a charity because they felt that the charity's work was important (77% compared to 67% of the overall sample) or because the charity supported Australians or Australian causes (59% compared to 49% of the total sample).
- **Age**: The most substantial differences between age groups were between the youngest age groups and the older age groups, as shown in the following table.

Reasons by age	Total	>55 years	< 35 years
Feel the charity's work is important	67	74	56
Provide support to Australians	49	57	40
Have a good reputation	40	45	32
Well known	31	36	25
Column n	**979**	**658**	**321**

- **High involvement respondents** were significantly more likely than low involvement respondents to be influenced by a wide variety of reasons, as shown in the table below.

Reasons by level of involvement	Total	High	Low
Makes a positive difference	45	53	39
Match my beliefs	30	39	23
I enjoy supporting	28	36	23
Advises how they use their resources	24	30	21
Provide support to overseas causes	23	33	16
I have a personal connection	20	27	16
Supported by religious organisation I belong to	10	15	7
Supported by my friends	8	11	6
Column n	**1539**	**620**	**919**

- **Participation in community groups:** Those involved in community groups were significantly more likely than those who were not involved in community groups to be influenced by a variety of reasons, including, not surprisingly, reasons associated with their wider network of family and friends. Significant differences are shown in the table below

Reasons by community participation	Total	1 group or more	None
Makes a positive difference	45	50	42
Match my beliefs	30	40	24
I enjoy supporting	28	36	24
Advises how they use their resources	24	28	22
Provide support to overseas causes	23	28	20
I have a personal connection	20	26	17
Have supported me, close family or friends	13	16	12
Supported by a religious organisation I belong to	10	16	7
Supported by my friends	8	13	6
Column n	**1539**	**542**	**997**

- **Religiosity:** Those who assessed themselves as being very or moderately religious were significantly more likely than those who regarded themselves as not religious to support their charity for the following reasons.

Reasons by religiosity	Total	Very / Moderately religious	None
Match my beliefs	30	35	24
I enjoy supporting	28	31	25
Provide support to overseas causes	23	28	18
Supported by a religious organisation I belong to*	10	19	1
Column n	**1539**	**800**	**739**

5.3.3 Impact of social networks

No direct influence on trust: Social networks did not appear to have a significant direct influence on trust for the majority of respondents.

Some impact on behaviour: However, they did have an impact on behaviour for many in the following ways:

- Many supported/sponsored friends who were raising money for various charities through participation in fun runs, bike rides, etc. In these cases they did not consciously think about whether they trusted the charity; they were simply supporting their friends. However, when asked directly, respondents said trusted their friends' judgement that the charity supported was worthwhile.
- Many supported local organisations they had some connection with, such as their local school, and/or supported charities that were promoted in some way by local organisations or contacts. This was for multiple reasons:
  - They were more likely to be aware of locally based charities or charities supported by their personal contacts.
  - Some preferred to support locally based charities because they felt they had a better understanding of the cause and how money raised was used, or because they wanted to support charities in their local community.
  - Again, most did not consciously think about whether they trusted the charity prior to supporting it; but when asked directly, often said they trusted locally based charities or charities sponsored supported by people or organisations they knew.

"Generally my [support of] charities tends to be associated with friends or places that I tend to go. Like, my Yoga school, they tend to raise money for India." (Low involvement)

"My local community is very important and influences who I support. I prefer to support local charities I have a connection with … and if a friend who knows my priorities recommends a charity, I'd support it." (High involvement)

"My hairdresser is from Bosnia and they had terrible floods last year. She had a fund raising afternoon, and she advertised it in the local paper. She raised a few thousand dollars and she went back to Bosnia and gave it to people who needed it. ... that wasn't done through a specific charity – she did it herself, but I know her and trust her, and she knew where the money would do some good." (High involvement)

5.3.4 Impact of social media

In the **qualitative research** respondents were selected to include a mix of those who used social media regularly, and those who did not. Amongst those who used social media, the most regular sites identified were Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, and for a few, Instagram.

No direct influence on trust: For the majority of respondents, social media did not appear to have an impact on trust, nor on charities supported, although there were some exceptions to this.

Respondents varied in how they used social media sites, particularly in their use of Facebook and Twitter:

Facebook: Most used Facebook primarily to keep in touch with family and friends. Some also used it as a source of information about local events of interest to them, and a couple used it to keep abreast of current affairs.

The majority of Facebook users in the qualitative research did not spend a great deal of time exploring Facebook, and did not necessarily come into contact with other products or services (including charities) through Facebook.

"I look at it daily – because I've got kids. I put things up that I'm proud of, pictures and such. And it's a good way to stay in touch with friends and family – we've got family in Italy." (High Involvement)

"I'm not all that active myself on Facebook … my wall is pretty bare. I'm on Facebook too much, but I don't post that much on it. I like looking at the newsfeeds, and I like looking at the world news that way. I know it's bad … the second something happens that dramatic in the world, someone will paste a link to the article. I don't read the newspaper because I can see things instantaneously this way." (High Involvement)

"I do lots of stuff on Facebook. I post stuff, and check out everyone else's things, play games – I've really gotten into Candy Crush and that Scrabble with friends … I comment on pages, check out all the places that I use, like Coles and check out what people are complaining about today." (High involvement)

Some awareness of charities via Facebook: There were however, a few exceptions, where respondents had become aware of specific charities via Facebook, because they had been tagged or referred to by friends or by those they were following.

"I found the Million Paws walk. My girlfriend and I are going to do that for the first time. I found that out on social media. I looked into that when I first saw it, and I'm looking forward to it. I think that one of my friends said that they were going to do it, like they shared an article." (Low involvement)

"Yes, a couple of times my friends have 'liked' a charity in Facebook. But they are one off ones, for a goal. Sometimes my best friend will 'tag' me in … put my name underneath it so that it comes up on my wall. And I've tagged charities – mostly the Children's Hospital in Melbourne." (High involvement)

One respondent who appeared to be unusual in that she had undertaken a lot of research before deciding which charities she would support, had undertaken much of this research via social media, first becoming aware of several charities via Facebook, and then following them on Twitter. She now volunteered one day a week at a charity she had researched in this manner.

"I first heard about (charity) because the CEO is very active on Facebook. I read a number of articles and liked what he was saying so I followed him on Twitter for about a year and read a lot about the organisation. …. Then I went and did an induction program which all their volunteers have to do." (High involvement)

Facebook considered inappropriate: A few they would never read anything about charities that came up on Facebook because they were using it to keep in touch with friends, and did not want to be thinking about any other external factors at the time.

"I would never donate to a charity that was promoting itself on Facebook. That's not why I use social media. I'm not in that frame of mind when I'm looking at Facebook." (High involvement)

"I'm a bit wary of social media. It's good to look at, but I don't even like doing online banking. So I try not to do too much, because I don't want people to know too much about my personal life. Facebook for me is just for friends and family and pictures and good stories and things like that. I do read everything that comes up on my wall, though." (High Involvement)

Some caution: Further, a few said that they had become cautious about charities who had a presence on Facebook, although this appeared to be related more to a general caution about any activities, particularly financially related, via the internet.

"I've seen charities pop up just in general internet use, but it's hard to tell if they are legitimate or not because there is so much fake stuff in the online space." (Low involvement)

"There have been dodgy charities going around our neighbourhood lately, I've heard that on the Facebook Hub … just that someone has been going around, knocking on doors and pretending to be [a charity]. I remember reading something about that the other day. But I can't remember whether it was a charity or not [i.e. it could have been roof repairers or electrical companies." (Low involvement)

Twitter: With the exception of the respondent mentioned above who followed the CEO of a charity she was interested in via Twitter, none of the other respondents in the qualitative research had used or considered Twitter as a source of information in relation to charities.

Linked In was seen as a site for professional networking and obtaining information relevant to work, and as such was not considered by any as a source of information about charities.

Despite this largely neutral response to the impact of social media on awareness/support of charities, it must be remembered that this is based on a small sample of people. It is clear that social media does have a major impact on many people's lives, although there is enormous variation across individuals in the way it used. As discussed in Section 5.9, 52% of the quantitative sample said they used social media every day or nearly every day, and usage was higher amongst the younger age groups. While it might be expected that usage rates would be higher amongst those who are willing to complete an online survey, these figures are consistent with statistics on social media usage in Australia, indicating high levels of usage across the population.

Social Media Statistics for May 2015[1] estimated the following number of active users in Australia for key social media sites, indicating large and increasing usage.

5.3.5 Impact of religiosity

In the **qualitative research** respondents were selected to include a mix of people who regarded themselves as having a strong commitment to their religion, a moderate commitment, and not being religious at all. This distinction was made in order to explore the impact that religiosity had on support and trust of charities.

Those who regarded themselves as having a commitment to their religion tended to be affected in one or both of two ways:

- **Created awareness of specific charities:** A few said they became aware of particular charities though their religion, and once aware, decided to support them because they believed the charity represented a worthy cause.

[1] http://www.socialmedianews.com.au/social-media-statistics-australia-may-2015

- **Assumed trustworthy:** Some said that they assumed that a charity associated with their religion would share their values, and would therefore be a good charity to support. They tended to assume that such charities would be trustworthy, although they did not necessarily know much about them.

"There is the Melbourne Jewish Charity Fund, I give a lot of money there. I know it's reputable, and that the money will go to poor people. Sometimes I'm scared that the money won't go where people say it's going. But with this one, I know it's reputable." (High Involvement)

"I trust organisations rather than people and I trust organisations I have a connection with. If I hear about a charity through my local synagogue, I'm more likely to support it." (High involvement)

"If a charity is associated with my church, I assume it's going to have the same values that I have." (High involvement)

A few who regarded themselves as religious referred to the Royal Commission into the failure of various institutions, including churches, to prevent abuse of children. They had found this upsetting, and although they said they did not see this as representative of religion overall, it was apparent that it had to some extent undermined their trust in the clergy and other community leaders,

"It does shake you up a bit. … It's devastating the way some people have behaved. But it's not the organisation overall."(High involvement)

A few rejected religious based charities: A few respondents who regarded themselves as not at all religious rejected religious based charities either because:

- They disagreed with the values of a specific religion or religions, or
- One respondent felt religious based charities were less trustworthy than non religious based charities.

"I've come across that [prejudice in a charity], with churches mainly. They say that they understand, but then they find out that someone [is gay], then you look around and they are not there [being helped by the charity] anymore." (Low involvement)

"I don't get the whole thing with religions and tax exemptions. …. I don't trust religious organisations. ..there seems to be a lot of confusion between spreading the word and altruistic motives. Charity is supposed to be about helping people, not enlightening them. I think there's a conflict there… and if you look at the Salvos or the church, I know it was only a few people – not the whole organisation, and I'm sure there's a lot of religious organisations that do great work, but it still puts you off them. I'd rather put my money somewhere else." (High involvement)

5.3.6 Charities rejected

In the **qualitative research**, some found this a difficult concept, as they could not think of any specific reasons why they might reject particular charities, and could not think of any charities they would actively decide not to donate to. This was similar to the findings in 2013, where few top of mind concerns about charities were identified, with the majority of respondents assuming charities were responsible and honest.

The issue for most was that they could only support a limited number of charities with the resources they had, and they therefore wanted to donate to those charities they felt were most deserving or that they felt some sort of connection with.

However, on discussion, a number of reasons for rejecting specific charities or types of charities were identified across the sample. Respondents in general did not specifically think in terms of trust, although most of the reasons identified did in fact go to the level of trust in specific charities or types of charities.

- **Fund raising methods:** The most commonly mentioned reason for rejecting a specific charity was associated with the way funds were raised. Many respondents disliked being approached in a shopping centre or on the street to support a specific charity. This was related to two factors:
  - A belief that these charities were using paid employees to fundraise. Many respondents felt that too much money was spent on fund raising, and too little of the money raised was actually used for the cause supported by the charity.
  - A dislike of being approached, particularly by a charity they felt they knew little or nothing about.

  "I don't like those ones that approach you when you are trying to get into the supermarket. I find them really in your face." (Low involvement)

  "If I have someone asking me in person for a donation, and I feel that they are paid, then I'm not interested." (Low involvement)

  "I will reject anyone who door knocks on my house, because it's really annoying." (Low involvement)

  "I don't support charities that have fund raisers in the street. But it's not because I don't trust them. I just don't like that method of fund raising." (High involvement)

  Some respondents also said that they disliked charities which regularly approached them to donate once they had made one donation. While they were accepting of a small number of approaches per year, where they felt they were being continually asked for more, some rejected that charity and decided to no longer support it.

  "When I was younger, and single, and I had money, I used to do the right thing, and I use to give a monthly donation to (charity). Back when I was trying to do the right thing. But then you get hassled to give more, and you get so much stuff in the mail, and you start thinking [against donating]." (Low involvement)

"You give once, and they just keep on hassling you." (Low involvement)

- **Uncertainty about funds reaching cause:** Where there was a concern about how much of the donated funds were actually used for the end cause, respondents were less inclined to support the charity. This was related in part to the way funds were raised, as discussed above, but also related to other factors such as perceptions of expensive offices or high salaries, and ease of understanding how funds were used. Some respondents related stories they had heard about specific charities where there was a belief that a large proportion of the funds were not used for the cause supported, but in general respondents were vague about the details, relating stories they half remembered from seeing something in the media, or from something someone had told them at some stage.

  "Some of the bigger charities, like World Vision – you have to wonder where the money goes. And you hear these stories that the money ends up going to the wrong place. It's just the bigger charities, because you don't know where the money is going." (Low involvement)

  "There is stuff that you don't hear much about, you don't hear what they are actually doing. I think that comes down to the bigger charities taking a bigger slice of the pie, because they can afford to plaster themselves all over the media … before I give to a charity, I'll look into it, because I did see that 40% is all that they are legally required to handover. So I probably wouldn't go with a charity that is taking 60% and putting it into their pocket. It completely defeats the purpose of giving them money, you're just paying for their advertising and functions and their parties and stuff like that." (Low involvement)

  Related to this, some said they did not support charities whose primary areas of operations were overseas, because:

  - They felt it was too difficult to know if the money actually went to the cause or not, and/or
  - They felt they did not know enough about the charity and what it did, and/or
  - They preferred to support locally based charities.

  "Too many layers. There's a lot of steps to go through before the money gets to where it's supposed to go. … there's more opportunity for the value to be eroded." (High involvement)

  "And maybe it's also because it all seems remote to us. We don't travel overseas, so our donations are concentrated locally, in Australia." (High involvement)

  "I would probably be more inclined to think locally rather than globally. I think it comes back to that old adage about changing things at home [first]." (High involvement)

- **Lack of familiarity:** Many rejected approaches by charities that they were not familiar with. For most, this meant that in order to support a charity, particularly for a more substantial donation, it was important that they knew the name, were aware at least in broad terms of what the charity did, and thought the charity had a good reputation (or as a minimum had not heard anything negative about it).

  "I've had some come to the door and I've just brushed them off straight away. But they weren't big, known charities. So long as I'm aware of them and know how long they've been operating, there is a certain degree of trust." (High Involvement)

  "I'm sure I've seen a couple of dodgy ones on the roads. I think 'I've never heard of these ones before', and they're rattling cans, and you just think 'really?' Smaller ones like that, with not much branding and stuff. I'm sure that it is an area that can be easily abused, because there isn't much regulation around a lot of that stuff." (Low involvement)

  "I wouldn't give money to a charity that I wasn't aware of, that had just approached me in the street and said 'oh, give money to the Leukaemia whatever'. And I would be thinking 'Who is the Leukaemia association, and how legitimate are you?" (Low involvement)

  "If I don't know the charity or the people I'll just ignore them. … like you'll see lots of people collecting at the lights, but you don't know who they are. If it's something like the Good Friday Appeal, that's different because that's very well publicised and you know where the money is going." (High involvement)

- **Long term commitment:** A few rejected anything that involved payment of regular donations

  "I personally don't like to do those things where you are paying $30 per month. Like, if someone comes to me and I think it's valid at the time, I'll donate to it." (Low involvement)

- **Unnecessary:** A few said they would not support charities that were perceived to receive sufficient support already

  "I have to confess, I avoid the children ones. Because I just feel that they are pretty well catered for, on TV and stuff. And I don't have children, so the people with kids can look after that." (Low involvement)

5.4 Trust and confidence

5.4.1 Overall trust and confidence in the charities sector

Public trust in charities is clearly important for the charities sector, and maintaining, protecting and enhancing public trust and confidence is a key statutory object for the ACNC. Measuring public trust was therefore a key objective for this survey. In addition to measuring overall trust, the survey gathered comparative information about levels of trust in other key societal institutions such as government, the media, doctors and police.

High levels of trust: As was the case in 2013, responses from the **qualitative research** indicated there were few 'top of mind' concerns about charities, with the majority of respondents assuming charities were responsible and honest.

Many acknowledged that they had given little thought to this topic, particularly as they tended to donate only to charities that they felt they knew.

Trustworthiness was a 'given': As was the case in 2013, responses from the **qualitative research** indicated there were few 'top of mind' concerns about charities, with the majority of respondents assuming charities were responsible and honest.

"The trustworthiness of charities is something that I wouldn't even question." (High involvement)

Many acknowledged that they had given little thought to the issue of trust, assuming that charities in general were trustworthy. Further, many supported only charities that they felt they knew and believed to be trustworthy, and did not give any consideration to the issue of trust in relation to other charities.

"I don't go out of my way to examine everything that comes in front of me. I have my charities that I know that I give to, and if there is a world event like tsunamis, I might help with that. But the Red Cross generally handle that [and I trust them], so I don't go and say 'Oh, I wonder what that charity does?' (Low involvement)

"I think so [i.e. bigger charities are trustworthy]. Otherwise ASIC or someone would have come down on them, and there would be something in the newspaper. Like that girl who pretended that she cured herself of cancer … anything that is big, if it's fake, there would have been a huge media scandal. So if a charity was a scam, and the head of it was taking all the money to the Cayman Islands, then I feel that would have come out, so I don't have to worry." (High Involvement)

"I have limited resources so it's a matter of giving as well as I can. … but choosing charities isn't to do with trust. It's just a matter of limited resources." (High involvement)

"I've never done any due diligence on the charities I support. … I've always just relied on personal experience and their reputation." (High involvement)

"I get the sense that people running charities are trying to do the right thing. You don't get a sense that they're out to benefit themselves. ... you expect that they'll do the right thing." (High involvement)

Results from the **quantitative research** indicated that overall, trust in the Australian charities sector was quite strong, although it appeared that there had been a small decline in trust and some related measures from 2013 to 2015. We note however, that data has only been collected over two time periods, and it therefore not possible to determine whether the apparent decline in mean score is indicative of a downward trend, or is due to chance variations in the sample.

Trust and confidence in charities in 2015 continued to be higher once ACNC introduced (Q7A and Q21)

Respondents were asked how much trust and confidence they had in Australian charities prior to being advised of the ACNC, and then asked again once the ACNC had been introduced and explained to them. In summary:

- Mean scores for both trust and confidence measures declined significantly in 2015, however
- Respondents continued to express significantly higher levels of trust and confidence once told about the ACNC. Across the total sample, trust increased from a mean score of 6.4 to 6.7, once respondents were told about the presence and role of the ACNC.
- Further, amongst those who claimed to be aware that there was a regulator, the mean score for level of trust in charities was 6.8. This was significantly higher than the mean score for the majority of respondents who were not aware of a charities regulator, and whose initial mean score for level of trust in charities was 6.2.

Knowledge of regulation increased trust: Amongst those who believed they were well informed about the ACNC (Q16; score of 6-10), overall levels of trust in charities were higher. The mean score for level of trust amongst those who considered themselves to be informed about the ACNC was 7.5, compared with 6.5 for those who considered themselves to be poorly informed (score of 1-5), and a mean score of 6 amongst those were not aware of the ACNC at all (score of 0).

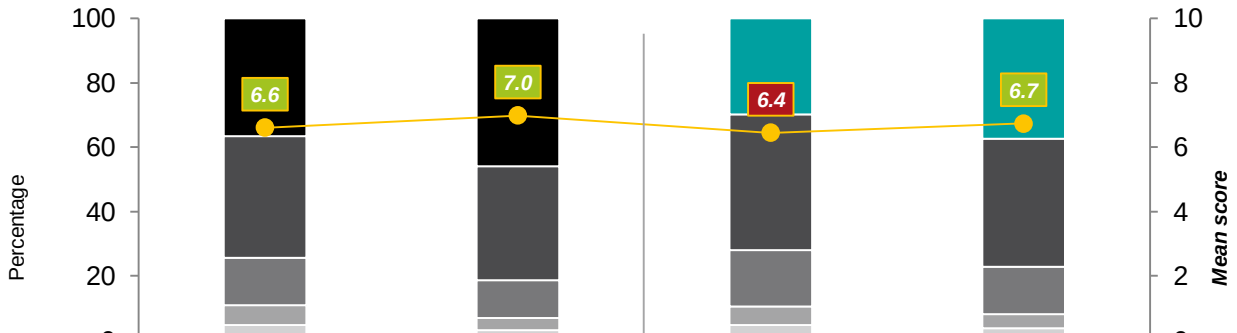
Differences between sub-groups: The following significant differences were observed between subgroups' trust in Australian charities, both for the initial question and after the ACNC was described (note only the mean scores for the initial question are shown below):

- **Involvement:** Those with higher involvement in charities expressed significantly higher levels of trust compared to those with less involvement (high involvement mean score; 7.0 compared to low involvement mean score; 6.2)
- **Religiosity:** The more religious a respondent assessed themselves to be, the higher the mean score for trust and confidence (those who were very religious; mean score 7.2, compared to those who were moderately religious; mean score 6.7 and those who were not religious at all; mean score 6.1).

- **Participation in community groups:** Those with less participation had, on average, less trust and confidence (i.e. those involved in more than one community group mean score; 7.0, compared to those who were only involved in one group mean score; 6.8 and those with no involvement in community groups mean score; 6.2)
- **Social media use:** Those who used social media expressed higher levels of trust on average (mean score; 6.6) compared to those who did not mean score; (6.1)
- **Family situation:** Those with dependent children expressed higher levels of trust on average (mean score; 6.6) compared to those without (mean score; 6.4)
- **Age:** Those under 35 years expressed higher levels of trust on average (mean score; 6.7) compared to those aged between 55 plus 64 (mean score; 6.4).

The chart below shows overall levels of trust and confidence in charities, comparing ratings early in the survey (Q7A), to later ratings once respondents had been told that Australian charities are regulated by the ACNC (Q21).

Trust and confidence in charities (initial and after explanation of ACNC)



	Q7A - Trust & confidence in Australian charities, 1st mention, n=1624	Q21 - Trust & confidence in Australian charities, after ACNC discussion, n=1624	Q7A - Trust & confidence in Australian charities, 1st mention, n=1761	Q21 - Trust & confidence in Australian charities, after ACNC discussion, n=1761
	2013		2015	
Very high (8-10)	37	46	30	37
High (6-7)	38	35	42	40
Mid point (5)	15	12	17	15
Low (3-4)	6	4	6	4
Very low (0-2)	5	3	5	4
Mean score	6.6	7.0	6.4	6.7

Note on significant differences: Both the mean scores for 2013 were significantly higher the mean scores for 2015. The mean score for Q21 (2015) is shown as green to indicate that it is significantly higher than Q7A (2015)

Base: Total sample

5.4.2 Comparison to other institutions and organisations (Q7B)

While a mean score of 6.4 indicates that there is room for improvement in overall trust in charities, it appears that Australians generally are not highly trusting of many organisations or institutions. Respondents were also asked to rate their level of trust in a range of other organisations and institutions.

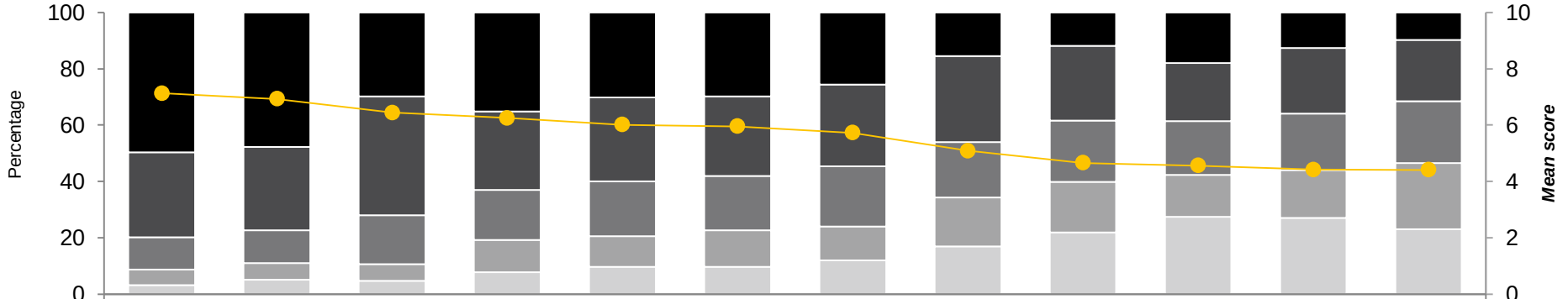
Doctors, police and charities continued to be the most trusted organisations

Charities ranked third in terms of trust among all organisations assessed, after doctors (mean score 7.1) and police (mean score 6.9). This was the same ranking as 2013. By comparison, State Parliament, Federal Parliament, religious organisations and the news media all received mean trust scores of less than 5.

Respondents' levels of trust, on average, were similar to those expressed in 2013. The only significant differences in 2015 were:

- Trust and confidence in Australian charities fell from a mean score of 6.6 in 2013 to 6.4 in 2015 (as previously discussed).
- Trust in State Parliament, while still low, rose from a mean score of 4.4 in 2013 to 4.7 in 2015.

Q7A & Q7B How much trust and confidence do you have in the following institutions and organisations



	Doctors	Police	Charities	High Court	ABC	Reserve Bank	ATO	Local council	State Parliament	Relig orgs	Federal Parliament	News media
Very high (8-10)	50	48	30	35	30	30	26	16	12	18	13	10
High (6-7)	30	30	42	28	30	28	29	31	26	21	23	22
Mid point (5)	11	12	17	18	20	19	21	20	22	19	20	22
Low (3-4)	6	6	6	11	11	13	12	17	18	15	17	24
Very low (0-2)	3	5	5	8	10	10	12	17	22	27	27	23
Mean score	7.1	6.9	6.4	6.3	6.0	6.0	5.7	5.1	4.7	4.6	4.4	4.4

Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

Consistent with external data: Whilst not directly comparable, these finding are consistent with research conducted by Swinburne University late in 2014[2]. In a telephone survey of 800 people, they found that almost two thirds of people said they did not trust politicians. However, 81% said community leaders (heads of charities and community groups) were very or somewhat trustworthy (using a five point scale), compared with 35% who said politicians were very or somewhat trustworthy, and 49% who regarded religious leaders as very or somewhat trustworthy.

Differences between sub-groups (Q7B): A number of significant differences were observed between subgroups in the assessment of institutions and organisations (other than charities). Those where there were a number of differences or a clear pattern are discussed below:

- **Involvement in charities:** Those with higher involvement in charities expressed significantly more trust in all organisations mentioned with the exception of doctors, police, news media and the Reserve Bank:

Trust of institutions and organisations by level of involvement	Mean score		
	Total	High involvement	Low involvement)
Religious organisations	4.6	5.0	4.3
The High Court	6.3	6.5	6.1
Local council	5.1	5.3	5.0
State Parliament	4.7	4.9	4.5
Federal Parliament	4.4	4.6	4.3
The ABC	6.0	6.3	5.8
ATO	5.7	6.0	5.6
Column n	**1761**	**620**	**1141**

- **Age:** There were a number of significant differences observed between age groups, in particular:
  - **Those under 35 years** expressed significantly more trust in the news media (although still a low mean score of less than 5) , local council, State Parliament, Federal Parliament and the ABC
  - **Those 65 and older** expressed significantly more trust, on average, in doctors, the police, religious organisations, the Reserve Bank, the High Court and the ATO.

[2] The Swinburne Leadership Survey 2015

Trust of institutions and organisations by age (years)	Mean score					
	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
Doctors	7.1	7.2	6.8	7.2	7.0	7.6
Police	6.9	6.8	6.5	7.0	6.9	7.3
Religious organisations	4.6	4.7	4.1	4.5	4.3	5.2
The Reserve Bank	6.0	5.9	5.5	6.0	5.9	6.5
The High Court	6.3	6.4	6.1	6.2	6.0	6.6
News media	4.4	4.8	4.3	4.6	4.1	4.3
Local council	5.1	5.7	4.9	4.7	4.9	5.1
State Parliament	4.7	5.5	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.8
Federal Parliament	4.4	5.2	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.7
The ABC	6.0	6.3	5.9	6.1	5.9	5.8
ATO	5.7	6.0	5.4	5.6	5.5	6.2
Column n	**1761**	**386**	**322**	**325**	**382**	**346**

- **Family situation:** As shown in the following table, respondents who were married or in a de-facto relationship expressed significantly higher levels of trust in all organisations (with the exception of the ABC), when compared to single respondents, regardless of whether they had dependent children or not.

Trust of institutions and organisations by family situation	Mean score		
	Total	Married (with or without children)	Single (with or without children)
Doctors	7.1	7.3	6.9
Police	6.9	7.2	6.6
Religious organisations	4.6	4.8	4.2
News media	4.4	4.5	4.2
The High Court	6.3	6.4	6.0
The Reserve Bank	6.0	6.2	5.6
Local council	5.1	5.2	4.9
State Parliament	4.7	4.8	4.4
Federal Parliament	4.4	4.6	4.0
ATO	5.7	5.9	5.5
Column n	**1761**	**1086**	**675**

- **Participation in community groups:** As shown in the following table, respondents who were involved in at least one community group expressed significantly higher levels of trust in all organisations (with the exception of the doctors and police), when compared to those who were not involved in community groups.

Trust of institutions and organisations by community group involvement	Mean score		
	Total	Involved with 1 group or more	Little or no involvement
Religious organisations	4.6	5.3	4.2
News media	4.4	4.7	4.3
The High Court	6.3	6.5	6.1
The Reserve Bank	6.0	6.2	5.8
Local council	5.1	5.4	5.0
State Parliament	4.7	5.0	4.5
Federal Parliament	4.4	4.8	4.3
The ABC	6.0	6.3	5.9
ATO	5.7	6.0	5.6
Column n	**1761**	**568**	**1193**

- **Social media use:** With the exception of doctors, the High Court and the Reserve Bank, those who used social media expressed significantly higher levels of trust in other organisations and institutions compared to those who did not use social media.

Trust of institutions and organisations by social media use	Mean score		
	Total	Use social media	Rarely or never used
Police	6.9	7.0	6.7
Religious organisations	4.6	4.7	4.3
News media	4.4	4.5	4.1
Local council	5.1	5.2	4.7
State Parliament	4.7	4.8	4.2
Federal Parliament	4.4	4.5	4.1
The ABC	6.0	6.1	5.7
ATO	5.7	5.8	5.5
Column n	**1761**	**1317**	**444**

- **Religiosity:** The more religious a respondent assessed themselves to be, the more likely they were (on average) to express trust in organisations and institutions.

Trust of institutions and organisations by religiosity	Mean score			
	Total	Very religious	Moderately religious	Not at all religious
Doctors	7.1	7.5	7.2	7.0
Police	6.9	7.5	7.1	6.7
Religious organisations	4.6	7.4	5.7	3.1
News media	4.4	5.5	4.8	3.9
The High Court	6.3	6.9	6.4	6.0
The Reserve Bank	6.0	6.8	6.2	5.6
Local council	5.1	6.1	5.3	4.7
State Parliament	4.7	5.8	4.9	4.2
Federal Parliament	4.4	5.7	4.7	3.9
The ABC	6.0	6.3	6.1	5.9
ATO	5.7	6.7	5.9	5.4
Column n	**1761**	**175**	**699**	**887**

- **Location:** The five least trusted organisations (based on mean score) were significantly less likely (on average) to be trusted by regional respondents compared to metropolitan respondents.

Trust of institutions and organisations by location	Mean score			
	Total	Metropolitan	Regional	Rural
Religious organisations	4.6	4.7	4.2	4.2
News media	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.4
Local council	5.1	5.2	4.7	4.8
State Parliament	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.3
Federal Parliament	4.4	4.6	4.1	3.9
Column n	**1761**	**1287**	**360**	**114**

5.4.3 Factors contributing to trust

A key requirement of this research was to identify factors which influenced trust in charities. The factors that contributed to trust identified in the **qualitative research** were very similar to those that influenced which charities individuals choose to support (discussed in section 5.3.2). Although most respondents did not consciously consider whether they trusted specific charities, trust in a charity was implicit in their decision to support that charity.

Trust strongly related to how charities spend money: As was the case in 2013, results from the qualitative research indicated that trust and money were intertwined, with trust being strongly aligned with views of how charities spent their money. These outcomes were largely supported by the quantitative research.

Key factors contributing to trust identified in the qualitative research in both 2013 and 2015 were:

- **Majority of funds raised going to cause:** The most significant factor in determining trust appeared to be beliefs about the proportion of donations which actually went to the cause that the charity was supporting. Related to this was a belief that the charity did not waste money. It was important to nearly all respondents that the 'majority' of funds found their way to those in need. This was also raised as important in 2013, although the sentiment was perhaps a little stronger in 2015.

  There appeared to be some indications that some respondents were becoming more suspicious about where the funds went. While most expended little effort in determining exactly how a charity did spend its money, visible signs of charities spending on things other the cause (buildings, salaries, commissions, etc.), and few visible signs of charity success in relation to their cause could lead to suspicion and mistrust.

  "I know that charities have to get the word out there, or no one is going to know about them. But at the same time, there is a lot of giving away free stuff, a lot of hiring random people to come and stand in places … there seems to be lot of money spent on [those sorts of things] and … it just seems to be 'we need more money, we need more money' and you don't tend to hear where it has gone and what it has done." (High involvement)

  "When they say 'donate $30 to save a child', well, how much do … they [i.e. the child] get of that?. That's the big thing for me, I don't mind giving $30, but I don't know how much of that they get." (Low involvement)

  "I read something about (charity) that said only 10c in the dollar raised goes to the actual cause. I would never give them money but it's not because I don't trust them. I think what they're doing is legitimate. … I just view them as a business and I think my charity dollar can best be spent somewhere else." (High involvement),

- **Fund raising techniques:** As mentioned previously, many rejected charities which used fund raising techniques they regarded as annoying or unethical. In particular, fund raising techniques that appeared to cost a lot of money led to a lack of trust. This was generally related to a belief that most of the money collected may not go to the charitable cause, or that indeed, those collecting might not be collecting on behalf of a charity at all. This was more likely to be a concern if the charity was unknown to the respondent.

  "I don't trust people collecting in the street. I never give them money." (High involvement)

- **Familiarity:** As noted previously, familiarity with a charity was generally important in decisions to support a charity, particularly where support went beyond some loose change. Some level of familiarity was also important for trust, and this was often related to the size of the charity, and how long it had been established.

- Charities that respondents had **personal experience** with.

  "I know how much support they provided to me and my mother (when respondent was a child). … I've had life long experience with them and they have always been a trustworthy organisation." (High involvement)

- Charities that their **friends appeared to trust** (because their friends supported them).

  "I have friends who do the Oxfam walk each year and I always sponsor them. I don't really know anything about Oxfam, but I trust them that's it's a good cause."

- Charities that had a **good reputation**, with a lack of any negative publicity

  "You never hear anything negative about (a specific charity), and they have been going a very long time. If there was any impropriety it was either very well covered up, or it never happened. … They have an iconic status … you trust them by default … and they're always first on the scene if there's any disaster." (High involvement)

Other issues raised by only a small number of respondents were:

- **Refusal of donations:** Some charities specify a minimum amount to be donated, or refuse receipt of goods considered to be in good condition by the potential donor, which both annoyed some respondents, and in some cases generated some suspicion about the charity.

  "It's disappointing [that charities are so fussy about donated goods], because you think surely there is someone out there who it would be useful to." (High Involvement)

- **Duplication of effort:** Where multiple charities addressed the same cause respondents found it difficult to identify which would be the "best" charity to support, and a few expressed distrust of some of these charities.

  "It would be really good if they would just get along and pool their funds, just imagine what could happen." (Low involvement)

"Many of them are doing the same sorts of things. [For example] cancer raising charities – there is a million of them. You have to wonder what they're all doing." (Low involvement)

A factor which was raised relatively frequently in 2015, but rarely in 2013 was:

- **Charities which has the backing of a respected body**, for example, an appeal where people could donate at any of the banks. The backing of a known and trusted organisation acted as reassurance that the charity was trustworthy.

  "There are things like the Bendigo Community Banks. People will bank with an organisation like that because they know that part of the profits will go to something. But you're leaving it up to the board members to decide who it will go to, and so you're trusting that it will go to the right place." (Low involvement)

  "The fish and chip shop has a little tin collecting for Nepal. I would probably put money in that tin, because I know that the fish and chip shop people wouldn't allow anything unless they know the people." (Low involvement)

  "Through the school and that sort of thing, that's where I'd be more open to giving … because they are trusting [the charity] as well, they are putting their name behind it, so that is a bit more reassuring as well." (High Involvement)

  "I would choose a charity if I knew that it was backed by business, and they contributed to it. That would make me more comfortable, because obviously they are going to have done the research on your behalf … where the business has made a donation from their own profits." (Low involvement)

In the **quantitative research**, Q8 was designed to identify the factors which had influence on whether respondents trusted a charity or not. The response set was changed in 2015 from an open ended question to a nominal question; that is, respondents were asked to select from a list of possible responses, based on responses collected in 2013 (and including "other, please specify"). As a result, direct comparisons cannot be made to the 2013 responses.

Respondents were asked to select as many influences as applied to them. On average, respondents selected 5 influences. However, 18% (nearly 1 in five) indicated only one influence.

At least half of the 2015 sample indicated that the following had an influence on their trust:

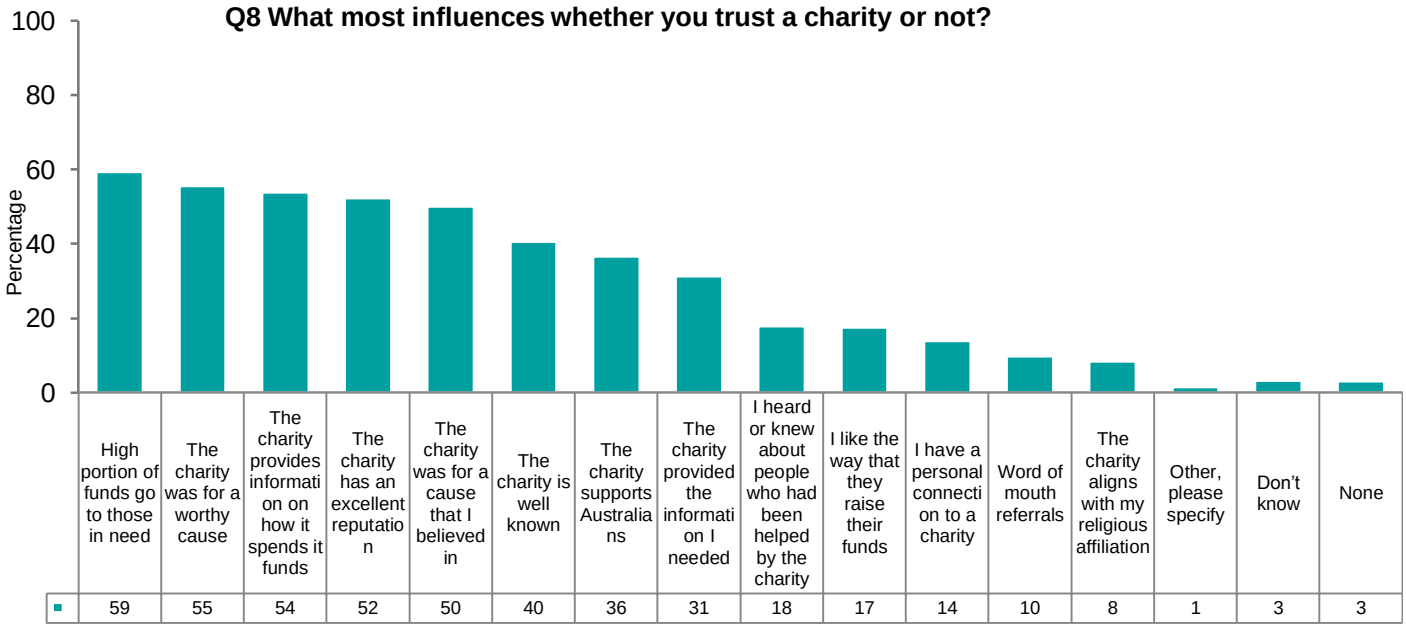
- High portion of funds go to those in need
- The charity was for a worthy cause
- The charity provides information on how it spends it funds
- The charity has an excellent reputation
- The charity was for a cause that I believed in.

While direct comparisons with 2013 cannot be made, these influencers were all identified as important by substantial proportions of the sample in 2013.

Differences between sub-groups (Q8): The following significant differences amongst subgroups were observed for influences on trust.

- **Involvement:** Those with higher involvement in charities selected, on average, more influences on their trust (high involvement respondents selected 5 influences, on average, compared to only 4 for those with less involvement). Further, they were significantly more likely to select influences relating to beliefs about the value of the charity and influences leading to an emotional connection, than low involvement respondents.

Influences on trust by level of involvement	Total	High	Low
The charity was for a worthy cause	55	64	51
The charity provides information on how it spends its funds	54	61	50
The charity was for a cause that I believed in	50	58	45
The charity provided the information I needed	31	40	27
I like the way that they raise their funds	17	23	15
I have a personal connection to a charity	14	20	11
Column n	**1761**	**620**	**1141**



The 2015 response set was changed & cannot be compared to the previous year

Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

Differences between sub-groups (Q8) … continued

- **Age**: Respondents 65 years and older were significantly more likely than younger respondents, particularly those aged less than 35 years, to select the influences shown in the following table.

Influences on trust by age (years)	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
High portion of funds go to those in need	59	51	53	60	63	70
The charity was for a worthy cause	55	48	51	60	56	63
The charity provides information on how it spends its funds	54	45	48	54	58	63
The charity has an excellent reputation	52	46	42	54	57	62
The charity was for a cause that I believed in	50	39	45	53	53	60
The charity supports Australians	36	23	30	40	45	46
Column n	**1761**	**386**	**322**	**325**	**382**	**346**

- **Gender:** Females' level of trust had more influences, on average, compared to males (females selected 5 influences, on average compared to only 4 by males). Females' level of trust was significantly more likely to be influenced by the following:
  - The charity provides information on how it spends its funds (59% of females compared to 47% of males)
  - The charity was for a cause that they believed in (56% of females compared to 42% of males)
  - The charity supports Australians or Australian causes (40% of females compared to 31% of males).
- **Work status:** Retirees' levels of trust were significantly more likely to be influenced by the following
  - High portion of funds go to those in need (67%, compared to 59% of the overall sample)
  - The charity provides information on how it spends its funds (60%, compared to 48% of full time workers)
  - The charity supports Australians (46% compared to 31% of full time workers, or only 22% of students).
- **Participation in community groups:** The level of trust of respondents who were involved in one or more community groups' was influenced by more factors, on average than those not involved in community groups (those involved in one or more groups selected 5 influences, on average, compared to only 4 by those with little or no involvement). Those with involvement in community groups were more likely to select:
  - The charity was for a cause that I believed in (56%, compared to only 47% of those with little or no involvement)
  - The charity provided the information I needed (37%, compared to only 28% of those with little or no involvement).

- **Religiosity:** Those respondents who regarded themselves as very religious were significantly more likely to be influenced by the charity aligning with their religious affiliation (40% compared to 8% of the overall sample) and by liking the way that the charity raised its funds (25%, compared to 15% of those who were not at all religious).
- **Location:** Respondents in regional areas were more likely to trust charities that supported Australians or Australian charities (47%, compared to 33% of respondents in metropolitan areas).

5.4.4 Aspects of trust in charities (Q9)

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with 27 statements regarding different aspects of trust. While this question remained largely unchanged from the 2013 question, in 2015 respondents were also given the option of providing a 'don't know response'. (Don't know responses are not included in the graphs following.)

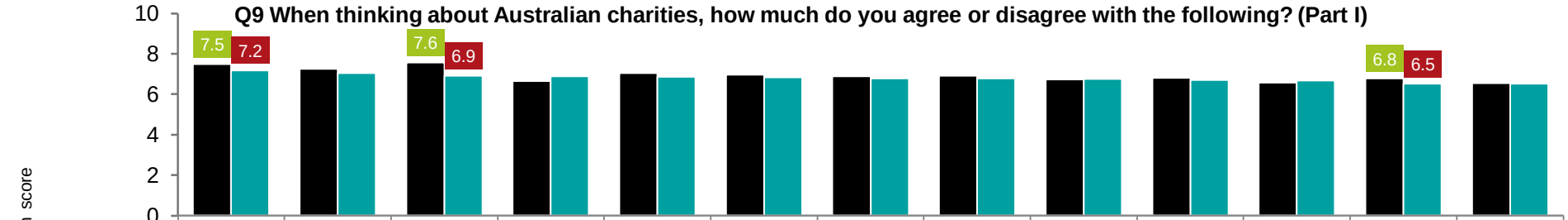
The statements that were most agreed with in 2015 were similar to those agreed with in 2013, with the exception of the fourth most agreed statement, which increased substantially in importance. This suggests that the way charities raise funds is becoming more of a focus when considering charities.

- I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed (2015 mean score 7.2 compared to 2013 mean score 7.5)
- I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for (2015 mean score 7.0 compared to 2013 mean score 7.2)
- I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources, including money from donations (2015 mean score 6.9 compared to 2013 mean score of 7.6)
- I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds (2015 mean score 6.9 compared to 2013 mean score of 6.7, ranked 15th in terms of agreement in 2013)
- I trust charities to act in the public interest (2015 mean score 6.9, compared to 2013 mean score 7.1).

Aspect of trust	Decrease in mean score 2013 to 2015*	Aspect of trust	Decrease in mean score 2013 to 2015
I trust charities that let the public know **how they use their resources**	0.6	I trust charities that provide services **within my local community**	0.3
I trust charities with **well-known supporters and patrons**	0.4	I trust charities that provide **services in Australia**	0.3
I trust charities that I have a **personal connection to**	0.4	I trust charities that have been **established a long time**	0.3
I trust charities more if they are **clear about how they are managed**	0.3	I trust charities that have **supported me or close family or friends**	0.3

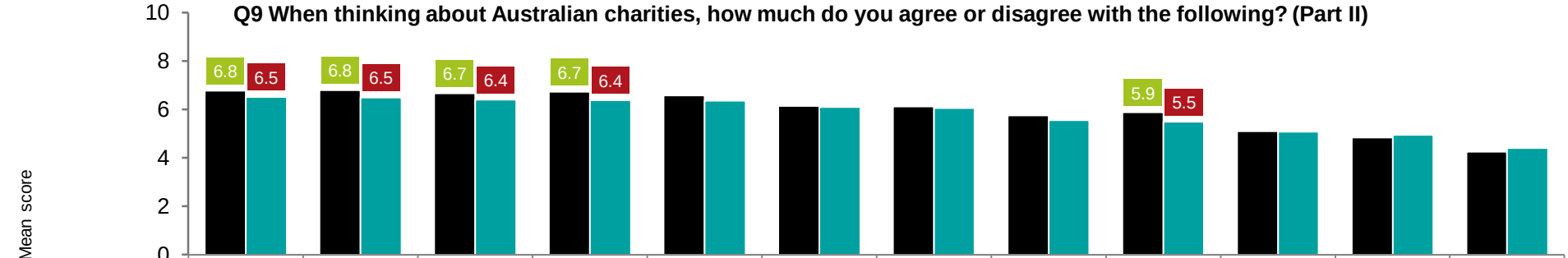
* Decrease in mean score 2013 to 2015 may appear to vary to the gap shown in the following charts; due to rounding of the data.

Q9 When thinking about Australian charities, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? (Part I)



	I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed, n=1704	I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for, n=1702	I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources, n=1700	I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds, n=1655	I trust charities to act in the public interest, n=1698	I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical & honest, n=1690	I trust charities more if I have heard of them, n=1690	I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause, n=1690	I trust charities to be well managed and efficient, n=1684	Charities spend too much of their funds on administratio n, n=1623	I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising, n=1676	I trust charities that have been established a long time, n=1709	Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries, n=1620
2013, n=1562	7.5	7.2	7.6	6.7	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.9	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.8	6.5

Q9 When thinking about Australian charities, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? (Part II)



	I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends, n=1596	I trust charities that provide services within my local community, n=1694	I trust charities that provide services in Australia, n=1703	I trust charities that I have a personal connection to, n=1649	I trust charities that are well known, n=1706	Most charities are trustworthy, n=1689	Charities waste too much money, n=1625	Charities are regulated and controlled, n=1634	I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons, n=1684	I trust big charities more than smaller ones, n=1677	I trust charities that provide services overseas, n=1684	Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause, n=1686
2013, n=1562	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.1	6.1	5.7	5.9	5.1	4.8	4.3
2015 (see x axis for n)	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.1	6.1	5.5	5.5	5.1	4.9	4.4

Base: 2013 Full launch; 2015 Total sample excl DK responses

Differences between sub-groups (Q9): The following significant differences were observed between subgroups in their level of agreement with various statements.

- **Involvement:** As seen in 2013, those with higher involvement in charities were significantly more likely to agree with different statements of trust compared to those with low involvement in charities (as shown below). The only three measures where there were not significant differences based on level of involvement were:
  - I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds
  - I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising, and
  - I trust big charities more than smaller ones.

Aspects of trust by level of involvement	Mean Score		
	Total	High	Low
I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed	7.2	7.5	7.0
I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	7.0	7.4	6.9
I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources	6.9	7.3	6.7
I trust charities to act in the public interest	6.9	7.1	6.7
I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical & honest	6.8	7.1	6.7
I trust charities more if I have heard of them	6.8	7.0	6.7
I trust charities to ensure a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause	6.8	7.0	6.6
I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	6.7	7.0	6.6
I trust charities that have been established a long time	6.5	6.8	6.4
I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends	6.5	6.7	6.4
I trust charities that provide services within my local community	6.5	6.7	6.3
I trust charities that provide services in Australia	6.4	6.7	6.2
I trust charities that I have a personal connection to	6.4	6.8	6.1
I trust charities that are well known	6.4	6.6	6.2
Most charities are trustworthy	6.1	6.5	5.9
Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure they are working for the public benefit	5.5	6.0	5.3
I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons	5.5	5.8	5.3
I trust charities that provide services overseas	4.9	5.4	4.7
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	4.8	4.2
Charities spend too much of their funds on administration	6.7	6.5	6.8
Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries	6.5	6.3	6.6
Charities waste too much money	6.1	5.8	6.2
Column n	**1355**	**496**	**859**

- **Age:** As illustrated below, those under 45 years continued to appear to be significantly less likely to agree with measures relating to information about the charity's allocation of funds compared to at least some of the older age groups, whilst they were more likely to trust large, well known charities.

Aspects of trust by age (years)	Mean score					
	Total	<35	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65 +
I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds	6.9	6.4	6.6	7.0	7.1	7.3
Charities spend too much of their funds on administration	6.7	6.1	6.3	6.8	7.0	7.2
I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising	6.7	6.2	6.2	6.7	7.0	7.2
Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries	6.5	6.1	6.1	6.5	6.8	7.1
Charities waste too much money	6.1	5.7	5.6	6.1	6.4	6.5
Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure they are working for the public benefit	5.5	6.0	5.6	5.5	5.2	5.4
I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons	5.5	6.0	5.6	5.5	5.0	5.2
I trust big charities more than smaller ones	5.1	5.6	5.0	5.2	4.7	4.8
I trust charities that provide services overseas	4.9	5.7	4.8	4.9	4.6	4.8
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	5.4	4.6	4.3	3.8	3.9
Column n	**1355**	**304**	**257**	**243**	**287**	**264**

- **Gender:** Females were more likely to agree on a number of different aspects of trust compared to males, but less likely to feel confident donating to unfamiliar charities (table on next page).

Aspects of trust by age	Mean score		
	Total	Female	Male
I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed	7.2	7.4	6.9
I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	7.0	7.3	6.7
I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources	6.9	7.1	6.7
I trust charities to act in the public interest	6.9	7.1	6.6
I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical & honest	6.8	7.1	6.5
I trust charities more if I have heard of them	6.8	7.0	6.5
I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause	6.8	7.1	6.4
I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	6.7	7.0	6.4
I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising	6.7	6.9	6.4
I trust charities that have been established a long time	6.5	6.7	6.3
I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends	6.5	6.6	6.3
I trust charities that provide services within my local community	6.5	6.6	6.3
I trust charities that are well known	6.4	6.5	6.2
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	4.3	4.6
Column n	**1355**	**740**	**615**

- **Work status:** Retirees were significantly less likely to trust charities that were 'wasteful' (e.g. spent too much on advertising or administration), and they were significantly less likely to trust bigger charities or unfamiliar ones (although respondents in general tended to disagree with these two statements).

Aspects of trust by work status	Mean score					
	Total	Full time	Part time	Home duties etc.	Student	Retired
I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds	6.9	6.8	7.0	6.5	6.3	7.3
Charities spend too much of their funds on administration	6.7	6.4	6.9	6.5	6.0	7.3
Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries	6.5	6.3	6.6	6.2	5.9	7.1
Charities waste too much money	6.1	5.8	6.3	5.8	5.4	6.6
I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising	6.7	6.5	6.9	6.4	6.2	7.2
I trust big charities more than smaller ones	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.2	4.7
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	4.7	4.6	4.3	4.7	3.9
I trust charities that provide services overseas	4.9	5.1	4.9	4.8	5.6	4.7
Column n	**1355**	**454**	**240**	**250**	**77**	**334**

- **Participation in community groups:** Respondents with little or no community participation in general were significantly more likely to express some form of distrust.

Aspects of trust by community participation	Mean score			
	Total	>1 group	1 group	None
Charities spend too much of their funds on administration	6.7	6.6	6.5	6.8
I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed	7.2	7.5	7.3	7.1
I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	7.0	7.4	7.2	6.9
I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources	6.9	7.3	7.2	6.8
I trust charities to act in the public interest	6.9	7.1	7.1	6.7
I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical & honest	6.8	7.1	7.0	6.7
I trust charities more if I have heard of them	6.8	7.2	6.9	6.7
I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause	6.8	7.1	7.0	6.6
I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	6.7	6.9	7.1	6.6
I trust charities that have been established a long time	6.5	6.8	6.7	6.4
I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends	6.5	7.0	6.7	6.4
I trust charities that provide services within my local community	6.5	7.0	6.8	6.3
I trust charities that provide services in Australia	6.4	6.6	6.6	6.3
I trust charities that I have a personal connection to	6.4	7.1	6.7	6.1
I trust charities that are well known	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.3
Most charities are trustworthy	6.1	6.5	6.2	6.0
Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure they are working for the public benefit	5.5	6.1	5.8	5.3
I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons	5.5	5.9	5.8	5.3
I trust big charities more than smaller ones	5.1	5.4	5.2	5.0
I trust charities that provide services overseas	4.9	5.6	5.4	4.7
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	5.2	4.6	4.2
Column n	**1355**	**164**	**287**	**904**

- **Social media use:** Those who used social media, if only irregularly, were significantly more likely to agree on almost every aspect of trust and confidence in charities compared to those who did not use social media. However, they were just as likely to express some form of distrust relating to charities spending behaviour as those who did not use social media (and so measures pertaining to this are not shown here).

Aspects of trust by social media use	Mean score		
	Total	Use social media	Rarely or never used
I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed	7.2	7.3	6.9
I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	7.0	7.2	6.7
I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources	6.9	7.0	6.6
I trust charities to act in the public interest	6.9	7.0	6.5
I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical & honest	6.8	7.0	6.5
I trust charities more if I have heard of them	6.8	6.9	6.5
I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause	6.8	6.9	6.4
I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	6.7	6.9	6.4
I trust charities that have been established a long time	6.5	6.6	6.3
I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends	6.5	6.6	6.2
I trust charities that provide services within my local community	6.5	6.6	6.2
I trust charities that provide services in Australia	6.4	6.5	6.1
I trust charities that I have a personal connection to	6.4	6.5	5.9
I trust charities that are well known	6.4	6.4	6.1
Most charities are trustworthy	6.1	6.2	5.8
Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure they are working for the public benefit	5.5	5.7	5.0
I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons	5.5	5.7	4.8
I trust big charities more than smaller ones	5.1	5.2	4.8
I trust charities that provide services overseas	4.9	5.1	4.4
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	4.6	3.8
Column n	**1355**	**1017**	**338**

- **Religiosity:** Those who assessed themselves as being very or moderately religious were significantly more likely than those who regarded themselves as not religious to agree on almost every aspect of trust and confidence in charities.

Aspects of trust by religiosity	Mean Score			
	Total	Very religious	Moderately religious	Not at all religious
I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed	7.2	7.8	7.3	6.9
I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	7.0	7.6	7.2	6.8
I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources	6.9	7.5	7.1	6.7
I trust charities to act in the public interest	6.9	7.5	7.2	6.5
I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical & honest	6.8	7.5	7.1	6.5
I trust charities more if I have heard of them	6.8	7.4	7.0	6.5
I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause	6.8	7.5	7.1	6.4
I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	6.7	7.5	6.9	6.4
I trust charities that have been established a long time	6.5	7.2	6.7	6.2
I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends	6.5	7.1	6.7	6.3
I trust charities that provide services within my local community	6.5	7.1	6.7	6.2
I trust charities that provide services in Australia	6.4	6.9	6.6	6.1
I trust charities that I have a personal connection to	6.4	7.4	6.5	6.0
I trust charities that are well known	6.4	7.0	6.6	6.0
Most charities are trustworthy	6.1	7.0	6.3	5.7
Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure they are working for the public benefit	5.5	6.7	5.8	5.1
I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons	5.5	6.6	5.6	5.1
I trust big charities more than smaller ones	5.1	5.6	5.2	4.8
I trust charities that provide services overseas	4.9	6.4	5.1	4.5
Confident donating even if unfamiliar if it's going to a good cause	4.4	5.6	4.7	3.9
Column n	**1355**	**133**	**551**	**671**

5.4.5 Drivers of trust and confidence

Analysis of data using a combination of linear regression and factor analysis was conducted to identify the key drivers of trust in charities, and to determine whether there were any changes in the key drivers from 2013 to 2015.

Explanation of the driver analysis

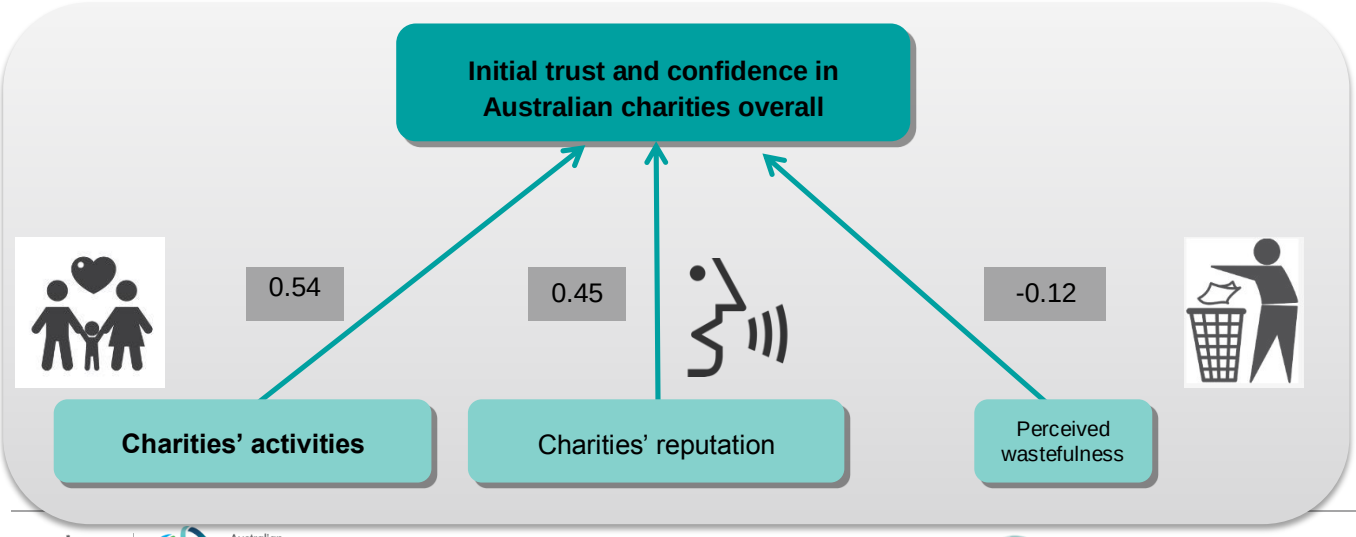
The analysis technique used in 2013 was used again in 2015, to ensure direct comparisons could be made between the two waves of research.

The analysis aimed to find a relationship between the dependant variable (trust and confidence in Australian charities overall – measured prior to being informed of the ACNC and its role) and the various aspects of trust covered in Q9. The factor analysis allowed a large number of variables (i.e. those in Q9) to be grouped into dimensions (as shown below). This was achieved by summarising underlying patterns of correlation and grouping together related items. Thus, a series of attributes as measured in Q9 were related to each of the 3 dimensions identified.

Linear regression was then performed on these 'dimensions' to determine which had the greatest effect on initial trust and confidence in Australians charities overall. That is, where scores in Q9 increased or decreased, there was a corresponding increase or decrease in initial trust and confidence in Australian charities overall. Thus measures from Q9 that are described as having a strong influence on initial trust and confidence in Australian charities overall will not necessarily have the highest mean score for the highest levels of agreement.

Regression outcomes

A similar outcome in 2015: The model generated in 2015 was almost identical to that generated in 2013. The 2015 model was able to account for 51% (R^2=0.51) of the variation in respondents' trust and confidence in the charities sector. We note that the 'goodness of fit' is very similar to 2013 model (in 2013 the R^2 was 0.56). This model identified three key drivers of trust, as illustrated below and described in more detail on the following pages.



Comparison to the 2013 model: The only variation to the model discussed in 2013 is the underlined attribute 'Most charities' are trustworthy', which in 2013 fell under 'charities activities' and now falls under 'charities' reputation'.

Beta scores explained: Note that the grey boxes indicate beta scores for each of the dimensions (shown in the light teal boxes). Beta scores indicate the strength of the relationship between the dimension and the dependent variable (i.e. trust and confidence). Thus, the dimension of 'charities' activities' (beta score of .55) had the strongest relationship with trust in charities.

The higher the beta score, the stronger the effect. A general rule is that any score (either positive or negative) between 0.1 and 0.3 is considered a small effect, anything between 0.3 and 0.6 is considered a moderate effect, and anything above 0.6 is considered a strong effect.

As the diagram shows, charities' activities have the strongest positive influence on the level of trust respondents feel in them. Charities' reputation also has a moderate positive influence. Perceptions of wastefulness have a negative effect on levels of trust but this effect is small.

The list of attributes which contributed to each driver are shown overleaf. Those shown in **bold** contributed most strongly to trust.

Initial trust and confidence in Australian charities overall

Positive impacts on trust

Negative impact on trust

Charities' activities

I trust charities.....

- **to act in the public interest**
- **to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical and honest**
- **to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for**
- **to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause**
- **that let the public know how they use their resources, including money from donations**
- **to be well managed and efficient**
- **more if they are clear about how they are managed**
- that provide services within my local community
- that provide services in Australia
- more if I have heard of them
- that I have a personal connection to
- that have been established a long time
- that have supported me, my family or friends

Charities' reputation

- I trust big charities more than smaller ones
- I trust charities that provide services overseas
- I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons
- I feel confident donating to a charity even if I haven't heard of them, if it's going to a good cause
- I trust charities that are well known
- Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure that they are working for the public most charities are trustworthy
- Most charities are trustworthy

Perceived wastefulness

- Charities spend too much of their funds on administration
- Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries and staff benefits
- Charities waste too much money
- I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising
- I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds

5.4.6 Changes in the charities environment

In the **qualitative research**, the majority found it difficult to identify any changes that had occurred in the charities environment in recent years. This was largely because they paid little attention to the charities sector overall.

However, on discussion, several factors were identified by some respondents.

- **Increasing number of charities:** A number commented that there appeared to be an increasing number of charities. However, attitudes towards this appeared to vary between high and low involvement respondents. The high involvement respondents appeared to be more accepting of the need for a large number of charities, although they saw it creating a more complex environment, where it was becoming increasingly difficult to decide which specific charities to support. Partially as a response to this, many high involvement respondents had selected specific charities they chose to support, and tended to ignore most other charities.

  Conversely, low involvement respondents tended to focus more on apparent duplication of effort across charities, which led to a greater reluctance to support those charities, and perhaps a somewhat lower level of trust.

  "I think that the hardest thing for charities is that they seem to be competing for the same dollar … I had a friend who worked for the Bendigo Bank, and he talked to a number of charities but he just couldn't get them to cooperate [with each other]. They didn't like each other, they wouldn't share. Everyone is competing." (Low involvement)

- **Scams:** A small number expressed concern about scams, particularly online scams. On discussion it became apparent that this tended to be a concern about online scams in general, and was not specific to charities, although it had some impact on trust of charities.

  "Absolutely [i.e. there are more online scams]. I'm really hesitant to give out my bank details online, that's for sure." (Low involvement)

  While most respondents saw scams as inevitable, most also felt they were relatively rare. The majority gave this issue, specifically in relation to charities, little thought, although awareness of scams made some more vigilant about the specific charities they supported. Several respondents mentioned Belle Gibson (who said she was raising money for charity but then didn't pass it on) as an example of a high profile scammer.

  A small number had some recollection of specific scams occurring, but could not remember the details. They had only vague recollections of hearing a story, but had not paid a great deal of attention, and thus had difficulty describing the scam in any detail. Nevertheless, for some, this created a residual feeling of concern and perhaps a lower level of trust in charities overall.

"There was that one where funds have not been released. They have supposedly collected $100,000, but no one has received it. But I don't remember what the charity was. It was before Nepal." (Low involvement)

"There was that story about that Islamic centre that said it was collecting money for education, but was actually sending the money to ISIS." (High involvement)

5.5 Knowledge and information

Respondents were asked a number of questions about the information required in order for them to support charities.

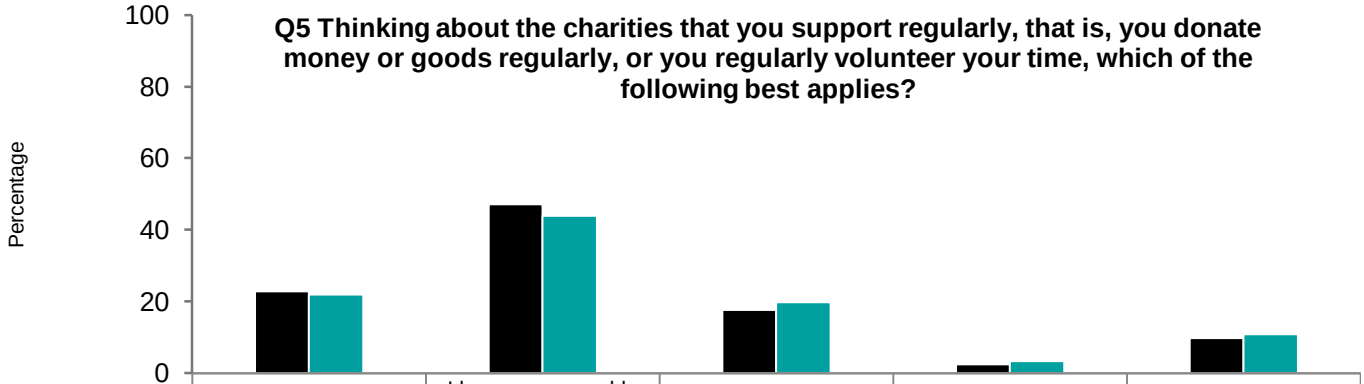
5.5.1 Knowledge of charities (Q5)

The **quantitative research** results appeared to be somewhat in conflict with the qualitative research in that the **majority believed that they knew a reasonable amount or a lot about a charity before they supported it.**

As was the case in 2013, outputs from the **qualitative research** indicated that the majority actually knew relatively little about the charities they supported. However, respondents were comfortable with the level of knowledge they had, and thus might be expected to respond in a survey that they "knew a reasonable amount". A major factor here was that respondents tended to assume that if there was a problem they would have heard about it.

In the **quantitative research**, respondents were asked several questions about how much they knew about the charities they supported regularly, and how satisfied they were with the information provided.

Responses to these questions indicated that the majority of respondents believed that they did know a reasonable amount or a lot about a charity before they supported it, and there was little change here from 2013



	I know quite a lot about a charity before I decide to support it	I know a reasonable amount about a charity before I decide to support it	I know a little bit about a charity before I decide to support it	I know very little about a charity before I decide to support it	Not applicable; I do not support specific charities regularly
2013, n=1453	23	47	18	2	10
2015, n=1539	22	44	20	3	11

Base: Those who had some contact with charities over the last year

Differences between sub-groups: The following significant differences between subgroups were observed:

- **Involvement:** As might be expected, those with a high involvement in a charity continued to be significantly more likely to believe they were knowledgeable about a charity before supporting it (28% said they knew quite a lot compared to only 18% of those with lower involvement in charities).
- **Age:** Those under 35 years were significantly more likely to say they knew only a little about a charity before supporting it (26% compared to 10% of those 65 years and older).
- **Participation in community groups:** Those involved in more community groups were also more likely to assess themselves as having more knowledge of the charity before supporting it.

Knowledge of charities by community participation	%			
	Total	> 1 group	1 group	None
I know quite a lot about a charity before I decide to support it	22	39	21	19
I know a reasonable amount about a charity before I decide to support it	44	45	51	41
I know a little bit about a charity before I decide to support it	20	10	20	22
Not applicable; I do not support specific charities regularly	11	4	5	14
Column n	**1539**	**196**	**346**	**997**

- **Religiosity:** Those respondents who regarded themselves as very religious were significantly more likely to indicate that they knew quite a lot about a charity prior to supporting it.

Knowledge of charities by community participation	%			
	Total	Very religious	Moderately religious	Not at all religious
I know quite a lot about a charity before I decide to support it	22	39	19	21
I know a reasonable amount about a charity before I decide to support it	44	43	50	39
I know a little bit about a charity before I decide to support it	20	13	19	22
I know very little about a charity before I decide to support it	3	2	3	4
Not applicable; I do not support specific charities regularly	11	4	9	14
Column n	**1539**	**164**	**636**	**739**

5.5.2 Satisfaction with information provided by charities supported (Q6)

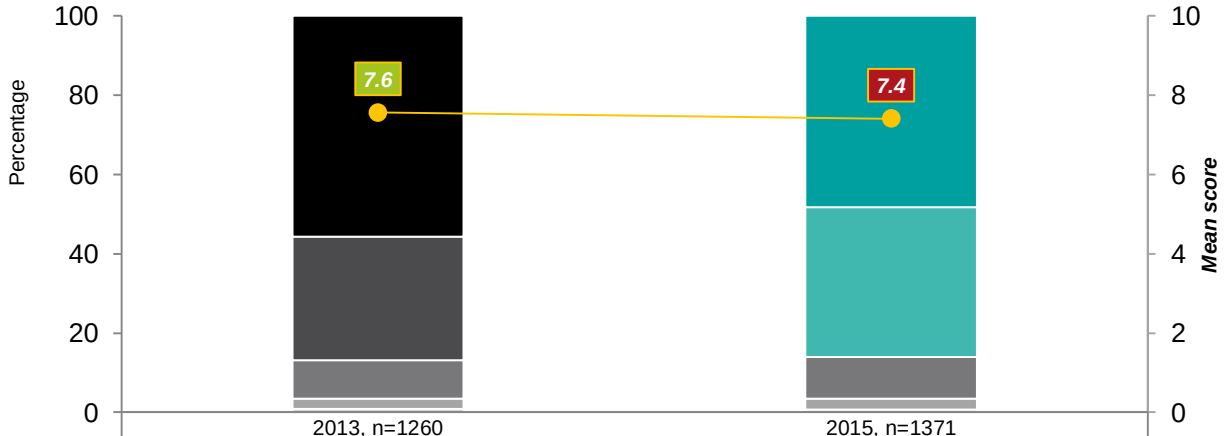
Respondents were then asked how satisfied they were with the information provided by charities they supported regularly.

Satisfaction with the information received from the charities respondents supported was high, but a little lower than 2013.

Differences between sub-groups: The following differences were observed:

- **Involvement:** Those with **higher involvement** in charities expressed significantly higher levels of satisfaction on average compared to those with less involvement (high involvement mean score = 7.8 compared to low involvement mean score 7.1).
- **Religiosity:** The extent to which respondents regarded themselves as religious was related to satisfaction with information provided (those who regarded themselves as very religious had a mean score of 7.9, compared to those who regarded themselves as not at all religious; significantly lower mean score of 7.3).
- **Gender:** Females expressed significantly higher satisfaction (mean score 7.5) compared to males (mean score 7.2).

Q6 Thinking about the charities that you support regularly, that is, you donate money or goods regularly, or you regularly volunteer your time, how satisfied are you with the information that those charities provide?



	2013, n=1260	2015, n=1371
Very high (8-10)	56	48
High (6-7)	31	38
Mid point (5)	10	10
Low (3-4)	3	3
Very low (0-2)	1	1
Mean score	7.6	7.4

Those who knew something about the charity before supporting it (2013 base full launch only)

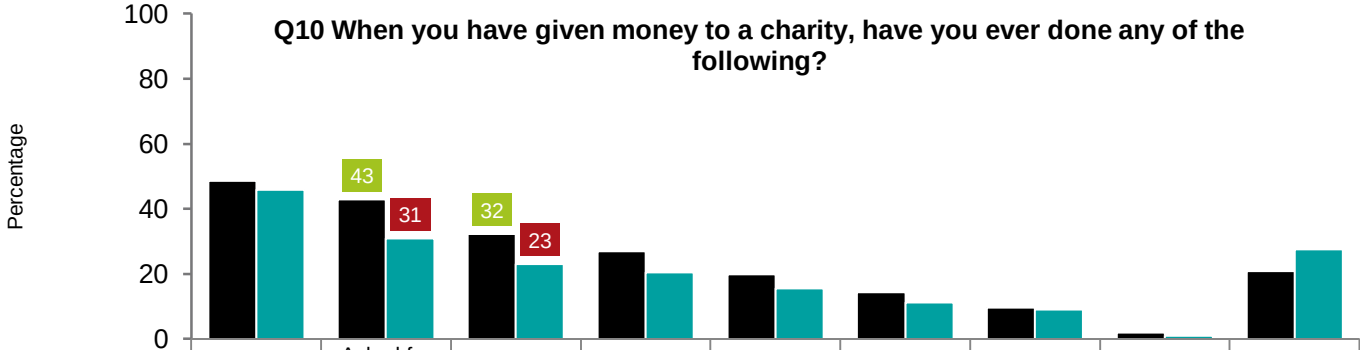
5.5.3 Seeking additional information or documentation (Q10 & Q10B)

When giving money to a charity, nearly three-quarters (72%) said they had sought at least some information

Compared with 2013, there were few differences in behaviour in 2015, as shown in the chart below.

In 2015, significantly fewer respondents had asked for proof of identification (down 8%) or checked that it was a genuine charity (down 9%).

'Other, please specify' responses included: *Queried whether the fundraiser was volunteer or an employee (n=3), queried how the funds were spent (n=3), queried how the funds were spent (n=3), investigating the charity before contributing to it (n=2), checked the annual report, sought online contact details, expressed a preference for online information rather than hard copy, determined whether the charity was a good cause, checked the annual report, general reading on charities' activities, investigated the charity on the internet, read information on the charity's website or Facebook page.*



	Claimed a tax refund	Asked for proof of identification of the person who has approached you	Checked that it was a genuine charity	Asked how your money would be spent	Found out how the charity was run	Checked to see if the charity was registered	Given to a charity you hadn't heard of	Other	None of the above
2013, n=1624	49	43	32	27	20	14	10	2	21
2015, n=1761	46	31	23	20	15	11	9	1	28

Base: Total sample

Differences between sub-groups: The following significant differences between subgroups were observed:

- **Involvement:** Those with high involvement in charities were significantly more likely to say they had sought a range of information about the charity.

Seeking additional information by involvement	%		
	Total	High	Low
Claimed a tax refund	46	53	42
Asked for proof of identification of the person who has approached you	31	35	28
Checked that it was a genuine charity	23	32	18
Asked how your money would be spent	20	28	16
Found out how the charity was run	15	26	9
Checked to see if the charity was registered	11	15	9
Given to a charity you hadn't heard of	9	14	6
None of the above	28	15	35
Column n	**1761**	**620**	**1141**

- **Age:** A number of significant differences between age groups were observed:
  - Older respondents were increasingly more likely to claim a tax refund. Significantly fewer of those <35 years selected this option (35%), and significantly more 45 to 54 year olds (54%) and 55 to 64 year olds (55%).
  - Older respondents were also more likely to ask for proof of identification of a fundraiser. Significantly fewer of those < 35 years, and between 35 and 44 years selected this option (16% and 23% respectively), compared to 39% of those aged 55 to 64 and 44% of those aged 65 years plus.
- **Work status:** A number of significant differences between work status were observed:
  - **Full time workers** (53%) were significantly more likely to claim a tax refund compared to students (19%)
  - **Retirees** (41%) were significantly more likely to check the fundraiser's identification compared to those who stayed at home (23%)
  - **Students** (20%) were significantly more likely to give to a charity that they had not heard of compared to the overall sample (9%).
- **Income:** Respondents with a household income of $100,000 or more were significantly more likely to claim a refund (58%) compared to those with a household income of less than $40,000 (34%).

- **Participation in community groups:** Respondents involved in community groups were significantly more likely to seek additional information compared to those who did not participate in community groups.

Seeking additional information by community group participation	%			
	Total	>1 group	1 group	None
Asked for proof of identification of the person who has approached you	31	37	37	28
Checked that it was a genuine charity	23	31	27	20
Asked how your money would be spent	20	39	24	16
Found out how the charity was run	15	30	23	11
Checked to see if the charity was registered	11	19	11	10
Given to a charity you hadn't heard of	9	19	12	6
None of the above	28	11	18	33
Column n	**1761**	**202**	**366**	**1193**

5.5.4 Method of obtaining desired information (Q10B)

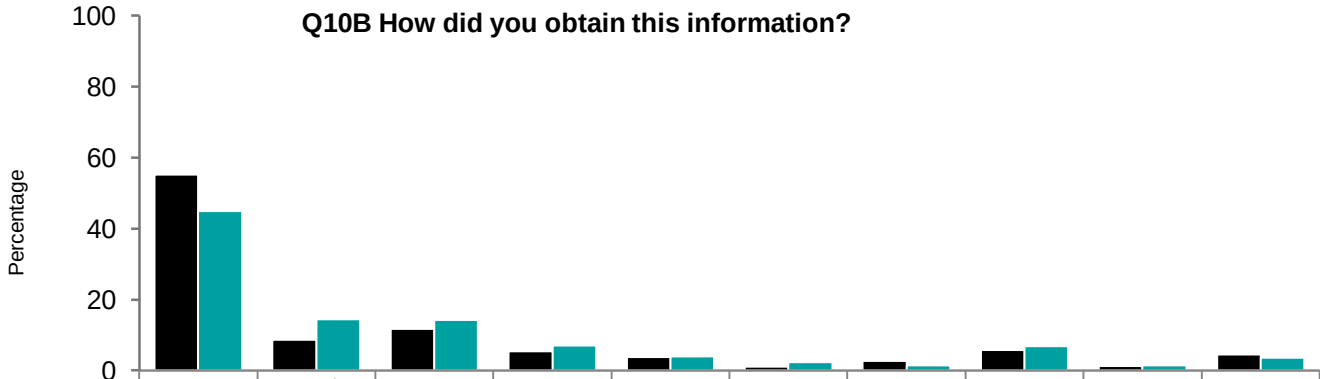
Respondents were also asked how they had obtained desired information in an unprompted fashion (Q10B). This was asked as an opened ended question in both 2013 and 2015, although responses have been coded into the most commonly mentioned categories in the graph following.

Because these responses were 'open ended', no testing was undertaken to identify significant differences between 2013 and 2015, and no subgroup testing was undertaken.

Internet most common source of information: Respondents' sources of information was similar to that observed in 2013 where, not surprisingly, the most common source was an internet search.

'Other', un-coded responses included: *Looked up a government website (other than the ACNC) (n=9), general investigation (n=7), social media (n=3), ACNC website, asked for proof and a receipt, asked how the money was being spent, by checking their records, reading publicly disclosed reports, reading the annual report, spoke with other people, found out through the workplace, received a receipt from the charity, through a church group and people who had worked for the charity, through my accountant, through the major supporter of the charity, I spoke to someone, went to the country itself and asked the people who were supported by the charity.*

Chart shown on the following page.



	Internet search / website	Sought information from the charity (by phone / in person / email)	Sought more information from the fundraiser	Asked for person's ID	From friends or family	Brochures / pamphlets	Media / TV advertising	Other, please specify	Don't know	None
2013, n=760	55	9	12	5	4	1	3	6	1	4
2015, n=565	45	14	14	7	4	2	1	7	1	4

Base: Those who had asked how money was spent, found out how the charity was run or checked that it was genuine or registered (2013 full launch)

5.5.5 Importance and performance of information from charities (Q11)

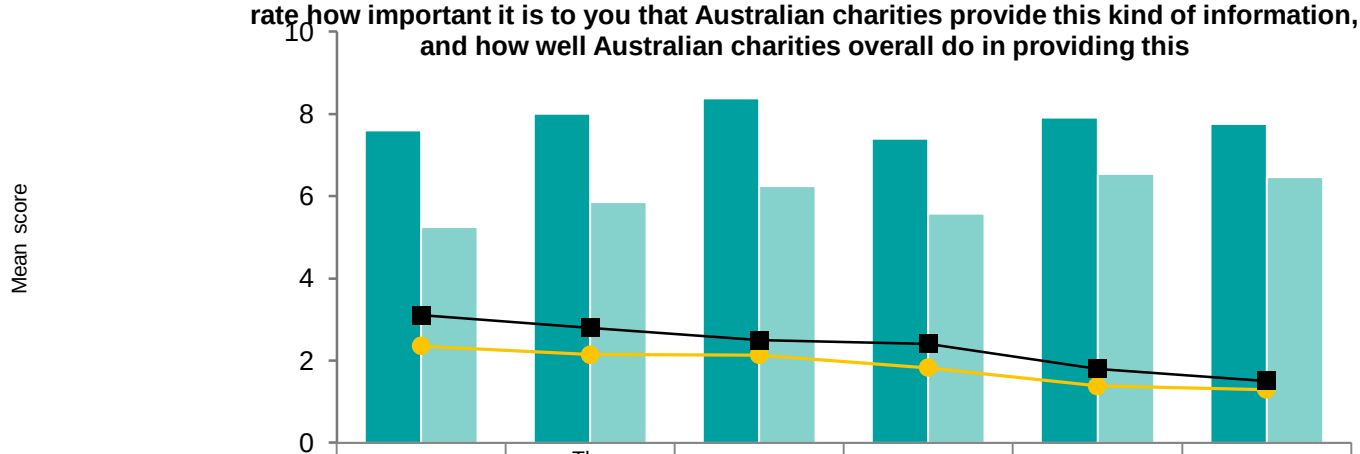
Respondents were asked how important they thought it was that charities provide a variety of different information types, and were then asked how charities performed in providing each of these types of information.

All forms of information assessed continued to be considered very important (based on mean scores), although mean scores for importance were a little lower in 2015 than in 2013.

Overall, charities were not seen to perform particularly well in supplying information, with mean scores on performance ranging between 5.2 for information about the proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs, to 6.5 for information about the impact of charities' work and information about the programs and services the charity delivers.

However, the gaps between stated importance and assessed performance have all reduced between 2013 and 2015, indicating that charities have improved in providing desired information

Q11 Some types of information that charities may provide are described below. Please rate how important it is to you that Australian charities provide this kind of information, and how well Australian charities overall do in providing this



	The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	The proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work	How charities use donations	Charities' fundraising costs	Impact of charities' work	Programs and services the charities deliver
Importance (2015), n=1761	7.6	8.0	8.4	7.4	7.9	7.7
Performance (2015), n varies from =1556-1607	5.2	5.9	6.2	5.6	6.5	6.5
Gap (2015)	2.4	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.4	1.3
Gap (2013)	3.1	2.8	2.5	2.4	1.8	1.5

Base: Importance: Total sample;
Performance: Don't know responses excluded

Differences between sub-groups (Q11); Importance of information: The following significant differences were observed between subgroups' rating of the importance of information.

- **Age:** As illustrated below, respondents 55 and older placed significantly more importance on all information measures, on average, compared to respondents under 35 years.

Importance of information from charities by age (years)	Mean score					
	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
How charities use donations	8.4	7.6	8.2	8.6	8.7	8.8
Programs and services the charities deliver	7.7	6.9	7.7	8.0	8.0	8.2
Charities' fundraising costs	7.4	6.4	7.1	7.5	7.9	8.0
Impact of charities' work	7.9	7.3	7.8	8.1	8.2	8.2
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	7.6	6.6	7.1	7.8	8.1	8.4
The proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work	8.0	7.0	7.8	8.2	8.4	8.7
Column n	**1761**	**386**	**322**	**325**	**382**	**346**

- **Gender:** Females placed higher importance (based on mean score) on all information measures compared to males.

Importance of information from charities by gender	Mean score		
	Total	Female	Male
How charities use donations	8.4	8.7	8.0
Programs and services the charities deliver	7.7	8.0	7.4
Charities' fundraising costs	7.4	7.7	7.0
Impact of charities' work	7.9	8.2	7.6
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	7.6	7.9	7.2
The proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work	8.0	8.3	7.6
Column n	**1761**	**1003**	**758**

- **Family situation:** Those with dependent children placed greater importance, on average on all information measures compared to those without children.

Importance of information from charities by family situation	Mean score		
	Total	Dependent children	No children
How charities use donations	8.4	8.2	8.5
Programs and services the charities deliver	7.7	7.6	7.8
Charities' fundraising costs	7.4	7.1	7.5
Impact of charities' work	7.9	7.7	8.0
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	7.6	7.2	7.8
The proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work	8.0	7.6	8.2
Column n	**1761**	**532**	**1229**

- **Work status:** Retirees placed significantly greater importance on all information measures compared to students based on their mean scores. Full time workers, whilst still indicating that these measures were important, placed significantly less importance on information pertaining to how charities use donations and the proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs or the charity's work in general.

Importance of information from charities by work status	Mean score					
	Total	Full time	Part time	Home duties	Student	Retired
How charities use donations	8.4	8.1	8.4	8.6	7.5	8.7
Programs and services the charities deliver	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.9	7.0	8.1
Charities' fundraising costs	7.4	7.2	7.3	7.3	6.5	7.9
Impact of charities' work	7.9	7.8	8.0	7.9	7.3	8.2
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	7.6	7.2	7.7	7.5	6.5	8.3
The proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work	8.0	7.8	8.0	7.9	6.9	8.6
Column n	**1761**	**560**	**313**	**340**	**104**	**444**

Differences between sub-groups (Q11); Performance of charities in providing information: The following significant differences were observed between subgroups' rating of charities' performance in providing information.

- **Level of involvement:** Those with a high level of involvement in charities assessed charities' performance in providing each type of information significantly more highly than low involvement respondents.

Charities' performance in supplying information by level of involvement	Mean score		
	Total	High	Low
How charities use donations	6.2	6.6	6.0
Programs and services the charities deliver	6.5	6.8	6.2
Charities' fundraising costs	5.6	5.9	5.4
Impact of charities' work	6.5	6.9	6.3
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	5.2	5.6	5.1
Column n	**1477**	**532**	**945**

- **Gender:** Females assessed charities' provision of information as being significantly better than males in two areas:
  - Providing programs and services the charities deliver (females' mean score; 6.6 compared to males' mean score; 6.3)
  - Impact of charities' work (females' mean score; 6.7 compared to males' mean score; 6.3).

- **Use of social media:** Respondents who said they regularly used social media assessed charities' provision of information as being significantly better across all measures than those who did not use social media.

Charities' performance in supplying information by social media use	Mean score		
	Total	Use social media	Rarely or never used
How charities use donations	6.2	6.4	5.8
Programs and services the charities deliver	6.5	6.5	6.2
Charities' fundraising costs	5.6	5.7	5.1
Impact of charities' work	6.5	6.6	6.2
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	5.2	5.4	4.7
Column n	**1477**	**1105**	**372**

- **Religiosity:** Respondents who assessed themselves as being not at all religious rated charities' provision of information significantly lower than those who regarded themselves as moderately or very religious across all measures.

Charities' performance in supplying information by religiosity	Mean score			
	Total	Very religious	Moderately religious	Not at all religious
How charities use donations	6.2	6.7	6.4	6.0
Programs and services the charities deliver	6.5	7.0	6.5	6.3
Charities' fundraising costs	5.6	5.9	5.8	5.3
Impact of charities' work	6.5	7.0	6.7	6.3
The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs	5.2	5.5	5.4	5.0
Column n	**1477**	**153**	**595**	**729**

5.6 Regulation and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

In this section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked about their understanding of regulation of the Australian charities sector.

5.6.1 Awareness of an Australian regulator of charities

Regulation assumed, but not known: As was found in 2013, most respondents in the **qualitative research** assumed that charities in Australia were regulated. However, there was little or no awareness of who the regulator was, or exactly what the regulator did.

In the qualitative research, none of the respondents mentioned ACNC when asked if they knew who the charities regulator was, although a few claimed to recognise the name when told it.

"You have to be registered, but I don't know whether there are any audits as to whether [you are acting as a charity]." (Low involvement)

"You have to register a charity to start with, so surely there is someone there who looks at those registrations, and looks at their ABNs and all that." (Low involvement)

"I'm assuming that there is one, and that they do have to comply with specific regulations and things and that's all in place, but I haven't personally thought about it." (High Involvement)

The assumption that there must be a regulator was based on:

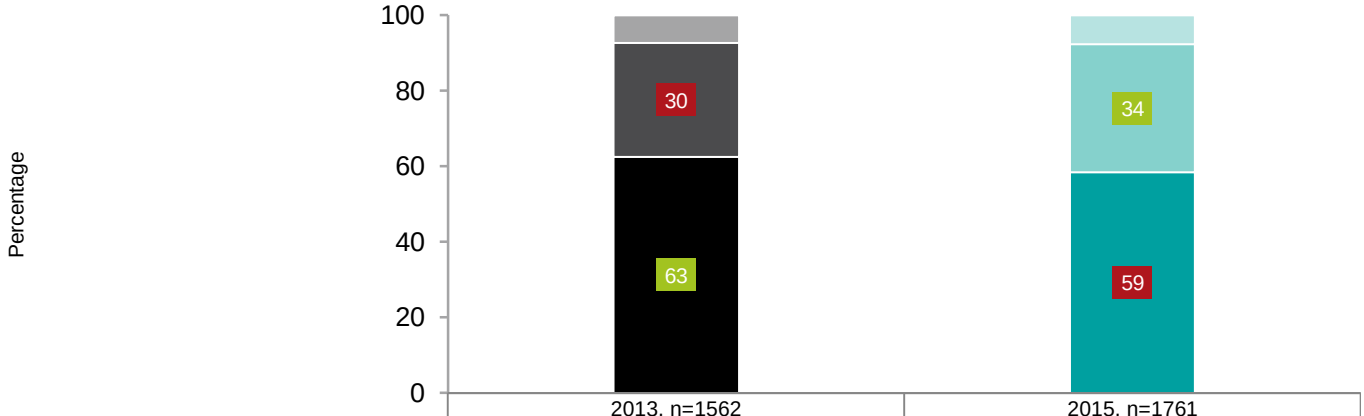
- The knowledge that many industries in Australia are regulated, and a belief that in this respect, charities would be no different.
- Some had noticed that 'approval' had been granted on raffle tickets, and assumed that there would be wider regulation for charities overall.
- Some assumed that tax exemption status was conferred by the ATO, and that this would require some form of regulation/control, possibly by the ATO, possibly by another body.
- A few who volunteered at a charity had become aware that there was a regulator, although they had no direct involvement with the management or regulation of their charity, and thus knew no details.

However, as was the case in 2013, there was very little knowledge about what form such regulation might take.

In the **quantitative** research, respondents were asked about their understanding of regulation of the Australian charities sector. Outcomes for key questions are outlined below.

Small but significant increase in awareness: Between 2013 and 2015 there was a 5% increase in awareness that there is an organisation responsible for regulating charities, although awareness of the ACNC name had changed very little.

Q13 To the best of your knowledge, is there an organisation or agency that is responsible for regulating Australian charities?
Q14 Do you know the name of the organisation or agency responsible for regulating Australian charities?



	2013, n=1562	2015, n=1761
% aware of the name	7	8
% aware of a regulator, but not the name	30	34
% unaware of a regulator	63	59

Base: 2013 Full launch; 2015 Total sample

Differences between sub-groups; awareness of Australian regulator (Q13 & Q14): The following significant differences were observed between subgroups:

- **Involvement:** Those with higher involvement in charities were significantly more likely to believe that:
  - There is a regulator (50% compared to only 37% of those with low involvement in charities)
  - They knew the name of the regulator. Only those who said there was a regulator were asked the name. Of these 25% of those with high involvement compared to only 14% said they knew the name.
- Involvement in community groups and religion appeared to have an impact on knowledge.
  - **Participation in community groups:** Respondents who participated in at least one community group were more likely to know that there was a regulator (49% compared to 38% of those who did not participate in any community groups). Of those who knew there is a regulator, those involved in at least one group were significantly more likely to indicate that they knew the name (30% of those who participated in at least one group believed they knew the name, compared to only 10% of those who did not participate in any community groups).
  - **Religiosity:** Awareness that there was a regulator and of the regulator's name also appeared to increase with respondents' assessment of their religiosity: Those who regarded themselves as very religious were significantly more likely than those who said they were not at all religious to believe that:

- There is a regulator (53% compared to only 38% of those who were not religious)
- They knew the name of the regulator. Only those who said there was a regulator were asked the name. Of these, 30% of those who said they were very religious compared to only 12% of those who said they were not religious said they knew the name.

5.6.2 Awareness and knowledge of Australian regulator of charities (Q15, Q16)

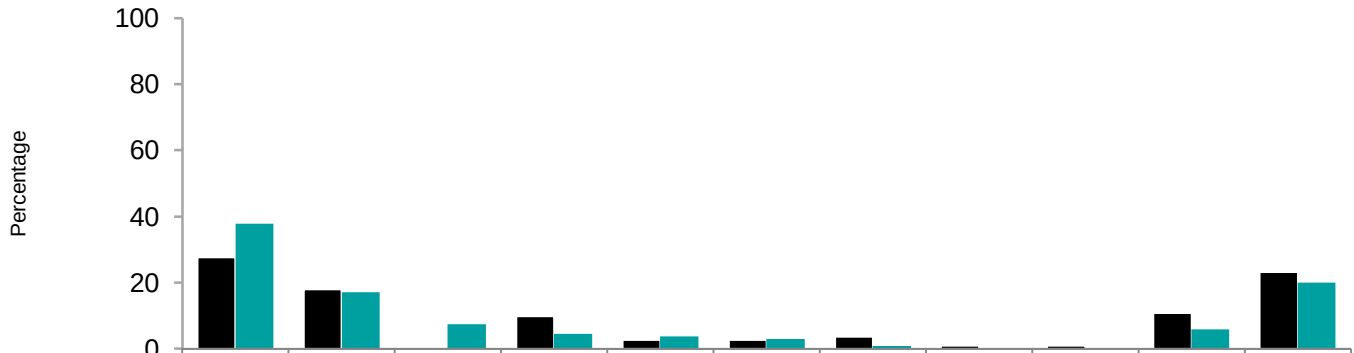
Those who had indicated that they knew the name of the regulator were then asked, unprompted, what that name was. It was clear that the majority did not in fact know the name of the regulator and across the sample a variety of names were indicated. The range and frequency of responses are shown in the graph below.

Only 3% of the full launch sample were able to nominate the ACNC in an unprompted fashion, slightly higher (but not significantly so) from 2013.

However, over one third (38%) of those who were aware that there was a regulator and believed they knew the name were able to nominate the ACNC correctly.

'Other' (un-coded) responses included (note only the understandable responses are shown): *The charity, Charity Safe, Gaming and Racing.*

Q15 What is the name of the organisation or agency?



	ACNC	Named a charity	Other Australian government body	ACCC / Consumer Affairs	ATO	Similar name to ACNC (but incorrect)	ASIC	AUSAid	APRA	Other (un-coded)	Don't know
2013, n=112	28	18	0	10	3	3	4	1	1	11	23
2015, n=135	38	17	7	4	4	3	1	0	0	6	20

Those who believed that they knew the name of the agency (2013 full launch respondents)

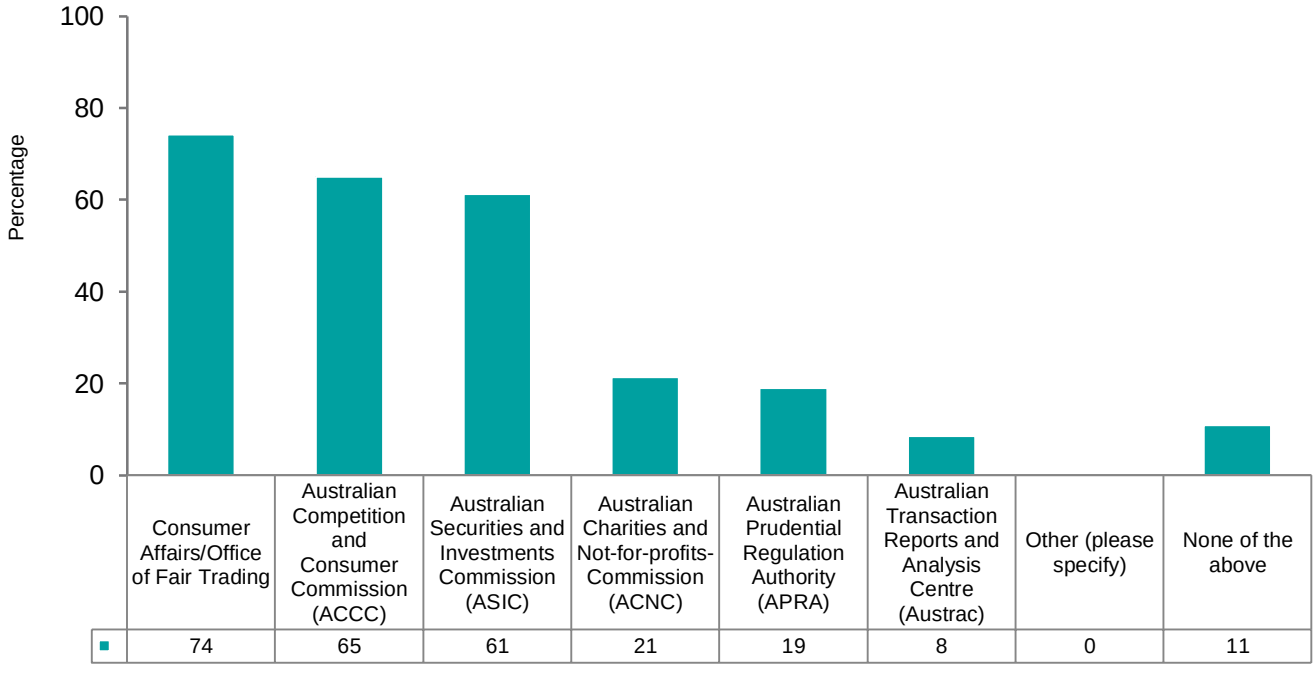
5.6.3 Awareness of other regulatory bodies (Q25)

Respondents were for the first time in 2015 presented with a list of various regulatory bodies, including the ACNC, and asked to nominate all those they had heard of. This provided a measure of prompted recognition of the ACNC, as well as a comparison against awareness of other government regulators.

- **One in five respondents recognised ACNC:** As would be expected, awareness of the ACNC increased when prompted. While only 8% could name the ACNC unprompted, 21% claimed to have heard of it when presented with the name. This is about the same percentage as those who claimed they recognised APRA, an organisation which has been in existence for much longer than the ACNC (since 1998), but which has less direct relevance to consumers.
- The majority (at least 60%) had heard of Consumer Affairs, the ACCC and ASIC.
- Only 11% failed to recognise any of the regulatory bodies listed.

Subgroup analysis is discussed over the page.

Q25 Which of the following regulatory bodies have you heard of?



	Consumer Affairs/Office of Fair Trading	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)	Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)	Australian Charities and Not-for-profits-Commission (ACNC)	Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA)	Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (Austrac)	Other (please specify)	None of the above
■	74	65	61	21	19	8	0	11

Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

Differences between sub-groups (Q25): The following subgroups were significantly more likely to recognise the ACNC:

- Those with **higher involvement** in charities (30% compared to only 17% of those with low involvement in charities).
- **Age:** Respondents who were 65 years or older (29% compared to 21% of the overall sample).
- **Working status:** Retirees (26%), particularly compared to part time workers (a significantly smaller proportion, 15% compared to the overall sample (21%).
- **Participation in community groups:** Respondents who participated in community groups (32%), compared to those who did not participate in community groups (18%).
- **Religiosity:** Respondents who considered themselves **religious** (26% compared to 17% of those who were not at all religious).

5.6.4 Level of knowledge about the ACNC

All respondents were asked to rate how much they knew about the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, using a scale of 0 (never heard of them) to 10 (fully informed).

Very low knowledge: Most respondents assessed themselves as having very low knowledge about the ACNC. 40% of the sample rated their knowledge at 0 (never heard of the ACNC), while the mean score across the total sample was 2.5.

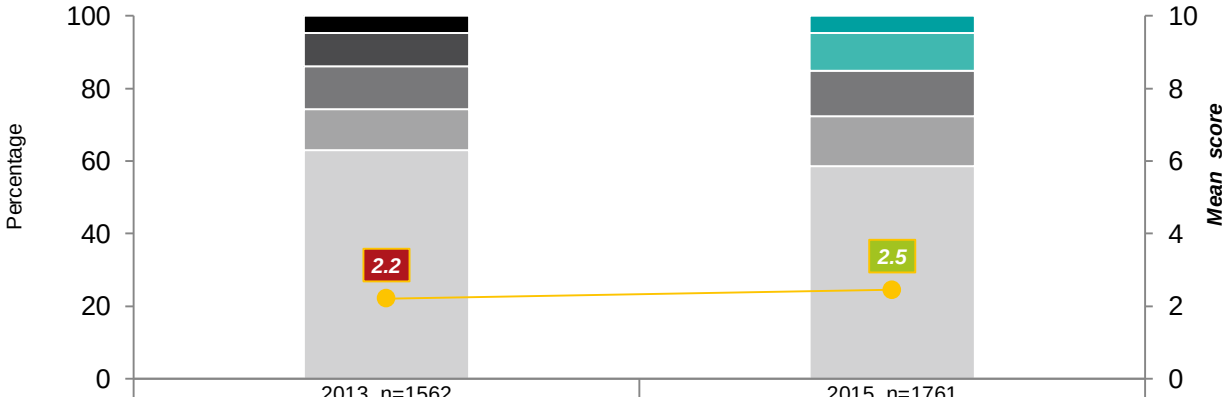
Knowledge level improved since 2013: Notwithstanding the very low knowledge base, there was a small but significant increase in mean score in 2015.

Differences between sub-groups: Level of knowledge about the ACNC (Q16): There were also some significant differences between subgroups. However, it should be noted that in all cases the mean scores were very low for all sub groups.

- **Involvement:** Those with higher involvement in charities claimed higher levels of knowledge on average (high involvement mean score; 3.2 compared to low involvement mean score; 2.0).
- **Age:** Respondents under 35 years claimed higher levels of knowledge (under 35 years mean score; 3.1, compared to those 45 years or older (mean score; 2.2).
- **Gender:** Males claimed higher levels of knowledge (mean score; 2.7 compared to females' mean score; 2.2).

- **Work status:** Full time workers claimed higher levels of knowledge mean score; 2.9 compared to those at home mean score; 2.0).
- **Participation in community groups:** The greater community participation respondents appeared to have, the higher they assessed their knowledge of the ACNC (respondents who participated in more than one group mean score; 3.6, compared to those who participated in one group mean score; 3.0 and those who did not participate in any groups mean score; 2.1).
- **Religiosity:** Those who regarded themselves as very religious claimed higher levels of knowledge (mean score; 3.8) compared to those who regarded themselves as moderately religious (mean score; 2.7) and those who regarded themselves as not at all religious (mean score; 2.0).
- **Social media use:** Those who occasionally, rarely or never used social media assessed themselves as having significantly less knowledge of the ACNC (mean score; 1.9, compared to those who used social media at least weekly (mean score; 2.7).

Q16 How much do you know about the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits-Commission (ACNC)?



	2013, n=1562	2015, n=1761
Very high (8-10)	5	5
High (6-7)	9	10
Mid point (5)	12	13
Low (3-4)	11	14
Very low (0-2)	63	59
Mean score	2.2	2.5

Base: 2013 Full launch; 2015 Total sample

5.6.5 Importance of having a regulator (Q17)

Respondents were asked how important it was to have a regulator that registered organisations as charities, helped charities to meet their obligations and responded to concerns when charities possibly were not meeting their responsibilities.

Still very important, but significantly less so

The mean score for importance was 8.2, which means a charities regulator was regarded as important. Indeed, 70% gave a score of 8 or higher out of 10). However, this score was significantly lower than the mean score of 8.6 from 2013.

While the decline in mean score from 2013 to 2015 may appear disappointing, we note the following:

- The high mean score was supported by the **qualitative research**, where nearly all respondents, both high and low involvement, thought it was important that that there should be a regulator for the charities sector.

  "The technology has grown, so it is easier to be fraudulent." (Low involvement)

  "There will always be people trying to take advantage of other people. At least there is now someone trying to keep an eye on it." (Low involvement)

  "It's good to know that they're out there. It's good to know that they're monitoring [charities]." (High involvement)

  "If you're asking for a donation, it needs to be clear what you're going to do with that money. … There should be requirements in terms of how the charity is run … but I don't know if there are." (High involvement)

  "We need a regulator because there is money involved. So that has to be regulated, or people will take advantage." (High involvement)

  "There's always a temptation for some to abuse trust, so it has to be regulated." (High involvement)

  A few expressed some reservations about regulation, but this was to do with the potential cost burden to charities, rather than a belief that regulation was unnecessary.

  "Isn't it going to make it more expensive for charities? It just means that less money will be going to [the end cause]." (Low involvement)

- Data has only been collected over two time periods; thus it is impossible to tell whether the apparent decline in mean score is indicative of a downward trend.

Chart and subgroup analysis shown on the following page.

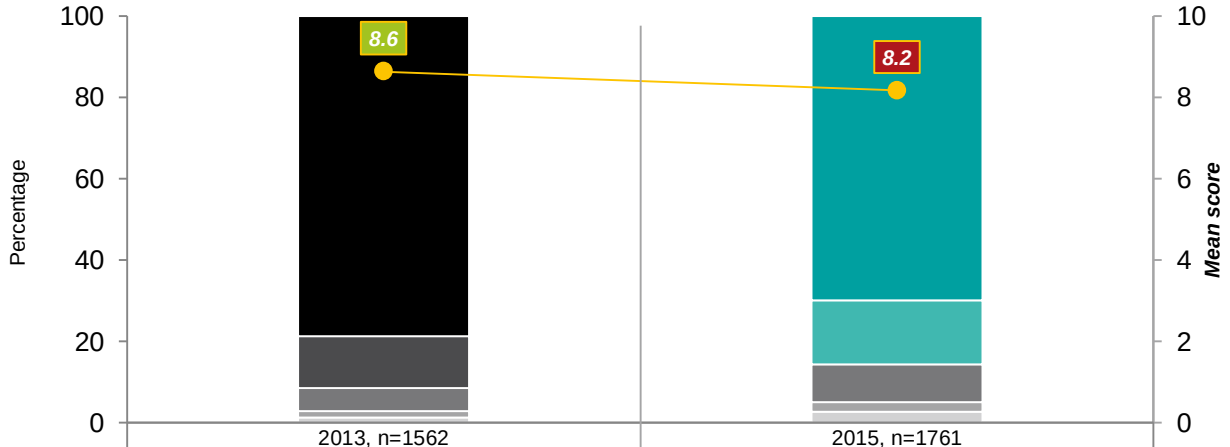
Differences between sub-groups: Importance of having a regulator (Q17): The following significant differences were observed:

- **Age:** Older respondents placed greater importance in having these functions performed as illustrated in the table below.

Importance of the ACNC's functions by age (years)	Mean score					
	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
Importance	8.2	7.4	7.8	8.2	8.6	8.8
Column n	1761	386	322	325	382	346

- **Gender:** Females placed greater importance (mean score; 8.4) compared to males (mean score; 7.8).
- **Work status:** Retirees placed higher importance (mean score; 8.6), whilst students placed significantly less importance (mean score 7.3), as did full time workers (mean score; 8.0).
- **Involvement:** It was interesting to note that level of involvement in charities did not appear to have a large effect on perceptions of the importance of a regulator, with both high and low involvement respondents rating this as important (high involvement mean score of 8.3; low involvement mean score of 8.1).

Q17 How important do you think it is to have a regulator that performs these functions?



	2013, n=1562	2015, n=1761
Very high (8-10)	79	70
High (6-7)	13	16
Mid point (5)	6	9
Low (3-4)	2	2
Very low (0-2)	1	3
Mean score	8.6	8.2

Base: 2013 Full launch; 2015 Total sample

5.6.6 Expected role of the ACNC

In the **qualitative research**, respondents were asked what roles they would expect a charity regulator to perform.

The majority assumed that its main role would be to **review charities**, with the aim of ensuring that they were acting for truly charitable causes.

"They should be continually looking at charities, and making sure that they are acting appropriately and meeting the criteria, I guess." (High involvement)

"Someone has to get paid, and there are tax cuts for charities, so again, it probably comes back to the ATO, or maybe ASIC, the organisation body, but I doubt that there is any regulator at all that says 'yes, that money is going to a good cause, that's OK." (Low involvement)

Other expected roles that respondents identified were:

- Ensuring donations were distributed according to the charity's objectives

"Checking up on the goings on in the [charities]. Where is that money going? It would be good to know if it's going where they say that it's going." (Low involvement)

"How much that they've raised, and how much that they've sent off to who they've raised it for … I'm sure that there will be a lot of admin costs." (Low involvement)

"They should look into the charities to ensure that money is going where it is supposed to." (High Involvement)

"To ensure that all the money isn't used up just on the rent of the building." (High Involvement)

- Ensuring fundraising was ethical.

"So that they can make sure that [the charities] aren't using dodgy collection methods. So that they won't tell people] things that aren't true [in order] to get money out of them." (Low involvement)

- Providing a level of credibility for charities, particularly smaller charities.

"To make people aware of the smaller charities. I know that they can't advertise, but to let the lesser known charities [say] 'we have been approved by the ACNC]. So that they can have a tick of approval." (High Involvement)

- Ensuring that charity's management acted appropriately with respect to financial management of the charity, including salaries paid to staff.

"Tracking down fraudulent charities." (Low involvement)

In the **quantitative research**, respondents who claimed to know at least something about the ACNC were presented with a range of potential functions for the ACNC, and asked which they thought the ACNC would be responsible for (Q18A). All respondents were then asked to select the three functions which they believed were the most important in order to maintain, protect and enhance public trust and confidence in the Australian Not-for-profit sector (Q18B).

'Keeping a register of charities' and 'handling complaints' were the two most frequently mentioned roles in both 2013 and 2015.

Significantly smaller proportions of the 2015 sample were aware of individual functions than was the case in 2013, but there were no significant changes in perceived importance. This was true both for functions that the ACNC fulfils, and functions that it does not fulfil (i.e. promoting the work of charities, acting as an advocate for the charities sector).

'Keeping a register of charities', 'policing charity fundraising' and 'handling complaints' were identified as the three most important roles roles in both 2013 and 2015.

Differences between sub-groups (Q18A and Q18B): The following significant differences between subgroups were observed:

- **High involvement** respondents were significantly more likely than low involvement respondents to indicate awareness of a number of ACNC functions, as illustrated in the table below.

Awareness of ACNC functions by involvement	%		
	Total	High	Low
Granting charity status	47	52	44
Keeping a register of charities	66	70	63
Handling complaints about charities	61	65	58
Advising Government on charity matters	44	49	40
Training charities	21	24	19
Don't know	15	9	20
Column n	**1048**	**440**	**608**

However, there were no significant differences between high and low involvement respondents in the functions they selected as being most important in order to maintain, protect and enhance public trust and confidence in the Australian Not-for-profit sector.

- **Age:** Younger respondents (particularly those under 35 years) were significantly less likely to indicate awareness of a number of ACNC functions, whilst older respondents (particularly those over 65) indicated that they were more aware. This is illustrated in the following table.

Awareness of ACNC functions by age (years)	%					
	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
Granting charity status	47	37	41	48	51	61
Keeping a register of charities	66	48	56	68	77	82
Handling complaints about charities	61	42	55	64	68	79
Advising Government on charity matters	44	28	39	46	50	59
Policing charity fundraising	48	34	42	53	50	66
Providing information about charities' accounts	41	30	29	41	46	57
Acting as an advocate for the charities sector	32	22	32	36	34	38
Column n	**1048**	**254**	**184**	**184**	**208**	**218**

In terms of perceived importance of various functions, there were some significant differences by age groups, as shown in the table below.

Most important functions by age (years)	%					
	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
Policing charity fundraising	54	44	54	57	58	61
Providing information about charities' accounts	48	43	39	47	55	56
Handling complaints about charities	48	46	54	54	55	56
Granting charity status	25	27	31	22	18	27
Promoting the work of charities	17	27	20	18	12	6
Advising Government on charity matters	17	22	15	15	16	17
Acting as an advocate for the charities sector	15	18	16	15	17	10
Training charities	12	19	18	12	7	7
Column n	**1761**	**386**	**322**	**325**	**382**	**346**

- **Gender:** Females were significantly more likely than males to indicate awareness of a number of ACNC functions, as illustrated in the table below:

Awareness of ACNC functions by gender	%		
	Total	Male	Female
Keeping a register of charities	66	59	71
Handling complaints about charities	61	53	67
Policing charity fundraising	48	42	53
Providing information about charities' accounts	41	36	44
Column n	**1048**	**455**	**593**

In terms of perceived importance of various functions, there were some significant differences between males and females, as shown in the table below.

Most important functions by gender	%		
	Total	Male	Female
Keeping a register of charities	58	53	61
Policing charity fundraising	54	51	57
Providing information about charities' accounts	48	44	52
Granting charity status	25	33	19
Training charities	12	15	11
Column n	**1761**	**758**	**1003**

- **Work status:** Retirees were significantly more likely than those working full time to indicate awareness of a number of ACNC functions. In addition, they were significantly more likely than the total sample to indicate awareness of a couple of ACNC functions. These differences are illustrated in the table below.

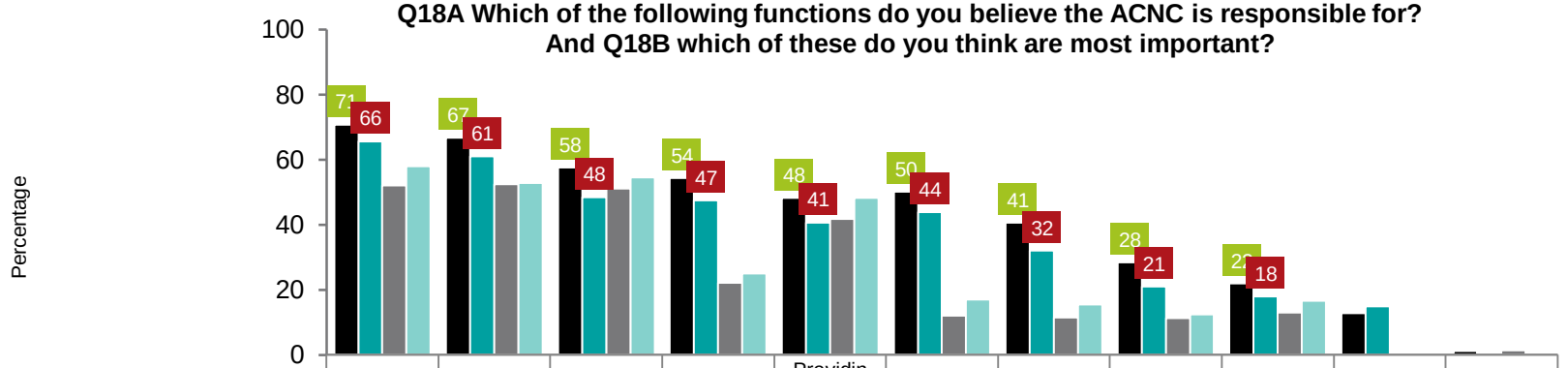
Awareness of ACNC functions by work status (only those subgroups with differences are shown)	%		
	Total	Full time	Retired
Granting charity status	47	46	57
Keeping a register of charities	66	60	79
Handling complaints about charities	61	55	73
Advising Government on charity matters	44	39	58
Policing charity fundraising	48	42	60
Providing information about charities' accounts	41	35	52
Column n	**1048**	**352**	**264**

There were few differences in perceived importance of functions by work status.

Chart for responses of overall sample for both Q18A and Q18B is shown on the following page.

'Other, please specify' responses included: *Audit annual reports, Governance of the charity sector, Keeping charity records up to date on a national database, Investigate how charities raise money, helping charities meet their requirements.*

Q18A Which of the following functions do you believe the ACNC is responsible for? And Q18B which of these do you think are most important?



	Keeping a register of charities	Handling complaints about charities	Policing charity fundraising	Granting charity status	Providing information about charities' accounts	Advising Government on charity matters	Acting as an advocate for the charities sector	Training charities	Promoting the work of charities	Don't know	Other, please specify
ACNC role 2013, n=818	71	67	58	54	48	50	41	28	22	13	1
ACNC role 2015, n=1048	66	61	48	47	41	44	32	21	18	15	1
Important functions 2013, n=1562	52	52	51	22	42	12	12	11	13	0	1
Important functions 2015, n=1761	58	53	54	25	48	17	15	12	17	0	0

Base: Q18A asked of those who had given a score of > 0 at Q16, Q18B asked of all (2013 full launch respondents)

5.7 Public register of Australian Charities

In 2015 respondents were asked a number of new or revised questions about the ACNC's register of charities, thus no comparisons to the 2013 quantitative data have been made for the following questions.

5.7.1 Awareness of register

None of those who participated in the **qualitative research** were aware of the ACNC register. On prompting a couple said they had heard of some type of register, but were unaware of any details about such a register.

"I've heard of a website that actually has where the money goes to, but I've never actually looked at it … an independent website." (Low involvement)

In the **quantitative research**, 18% (n=322) claimed to be aware of the register (this is not shown on a chart). This is a relatively high proportion of the sample, given the newness of the register and the limited publicity of the register. However, this figure should be treated with caution, as the sample was drawn from an online panel, and thus this figure may possibly be inflated compared to the Australian population in general.

Differences between sub-groups: The following significant differences between subgroups were observed:

- **Involvement:** Those with high involvement in charity were significantly more likely to indicate that they were aware of the register (28% compared to only 13% of those with low involvement).
- **Participation in community groups:** Those who participated in one or more community groups were more likely to indicate that they were aware of the register (28% compared to only 13% of those who did not participate in any groups).
- **Religiosity:** Those who assessed themselves as being more religious were more likely to indicate that they were aware of the register (29% of very religious respondents indicated that they were aware of the register, compared to 21% of moderately religious respondents and only 14% of those who were not at all religious).

5.7.2 Importance of having a register

Concept of register supported: Virtually all respondents in the **qualitative research** were very positive about the idea of a register being available, although they did not necessarily think that they personally would use it. The majority did not think they would personally use the register, because they believed they already knew enough about the charities they supported.

Nevertheless, the fact of a register being available, regardless of use, was seen to increase transparency in the charities sector, and was consequently expected to have a positive impact on overall trust in the sector.

In particular, and as was the case in 2013, a number of respondents commented that a register was similar to providing a 'tick of approval', with analogies to the Heart Foundation tick being made. Respondents liked the idea of having some form of easily identifiable "approval" symbol, which would let them quickly and easily know that a specific charity was a registered and legitimate charity.

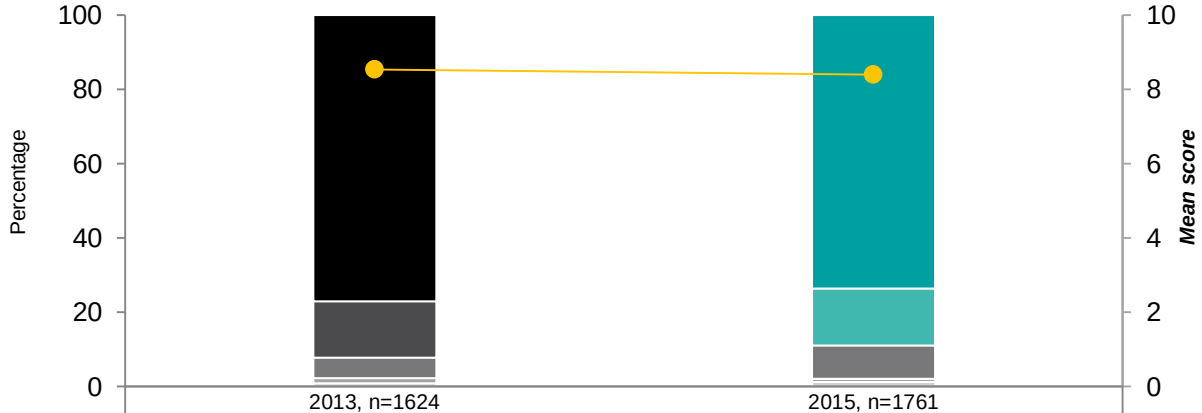
"It would be nice if that [i.e. the register] was put out there though. Saying 'if you're wondering about your charity, go see it here on the register'." (Low involvement)

"I'm fully supportive of there being a register. …. I wouldn't use it because I know enough about the charities I support, but it should be available." (High involvement)

"I trust charities anyway, but it's good that there is a register. …it's good that you can go and check on a charity if you don't know much about them." (High involvement)

These views were consistent with the **quantitative research**, where rated importance of the register was 8.4. It was interesting that the availability of a register was regarded as important by both high and low involvement respondents, although high involvement respondents rated the importance more highly than low involvement (with mean scores of 8.6 and 8.3 respectively).

Q20 How important do you think it is for a register of this type to be made available to the community, regardless of whether you think you would personally use it?



	2013, n=1624	2015, n=1761
Very high (8-10)	77	74
High (6-7)	15	15
Mid point (5)	6	9
Low (3-4)	1	1
Very low (0-2)	1	1
Mean score	8.5	8.4

Base: Total sample

Differences between sub-groups (Q20): The following significant differences between subgroups were observed:

- **Age:** The older respondents were, the more likely they were to rate the importance of the register highly.

Importance of a register by age (years)	Mean score					
	Total	<35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 +
Importance of a register	8.4	7.8	8.1	8.5	8.8	8.9
Column n	**1761**	**386**	**322**	**325**	**382**	**346**

- **Gender:** Females placed significantly higher importance on having a register (mean score =8.7) compared to males (mean score = 8.1).
- **Work status:** Retirees placed higher importance on a register (mean score = 8.8) compared to those who worked full time.

5.7.3 Use & ease of use of the ACNC's register of charities (Q19A, B, C & D)

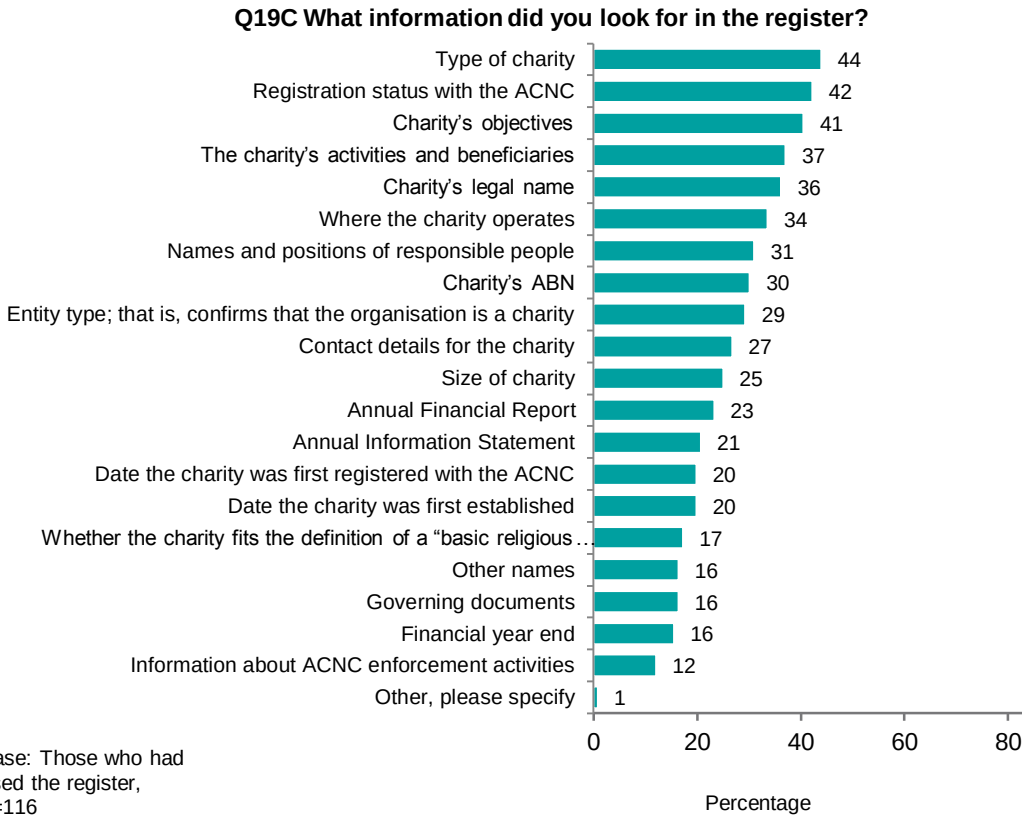
Use: None of those in the **qualitative research** had used the register. However 36% of those who claimed awareness of the register in the **quantitative research** claimed to have used the register (7% of the total 2015 sample) (not shown on a chart).

Type of use: 85% of those who had used the register indicated that they had used it for more than one function, with an average of 4 functions accessed by each user. The top three types of use were:

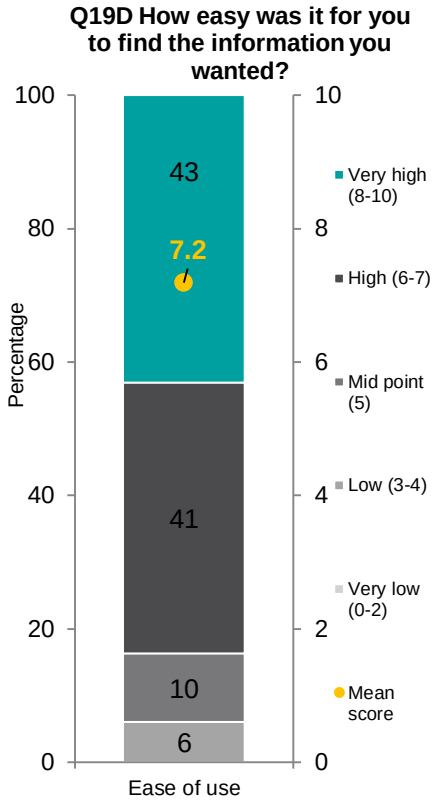
- To look up the type of charity
- To check the registration status of a charity
- To check a charity's objectives.

Ease of use: The majority of those who had used the register had found it reasonably easy to use, with a mean score of 7.2, although this score indicates that users thought there was room for improvement. This view was supported by responses in the qualitative research.

Charts shown over page. Note that subgroups were too small to detect significant differences.



Base: Those who had used the register, n=116



Base: Those who had used the register, n=116

In the **qualitative research** the register was shown to respondents in an online demonstration, and their likely use of the register was discussed. As noted above, the majority view amongst qualitative respondents was that while the availability of a register was desirable, most did not think they would personally use it.

Suggested improvements: Nevertheless, a number had suggestions for improvements to the usability of the register, as discussed below.

- Improve access to **detailed information** about a charity by listing charity websites as a link, rather than just the address.

  "There is no phone number or website. That's annoying. If I was looking up a charity, I'd want their phone number and website." (High involvement)

  Some respondents thought it would be useful to have more detailed information about the charity in terms of its vision and aims, and its process for achieving those aims and measuring success. In part, access to this type of information would be addressed by having easy access to the charity's website.

- Improve the **search functionality** by allowing users to search the directory by key issues; for example, charities split by type of cause – environment, asylum seekers, aboriginal affairs, human rights, etc. (Note: this is available to some extent in Advanced Search, but respondents wanted more detailed search capability.)

  "You want to be able to find charities that are aligned with your interests. …It wouldn't be difficult to tag the charities and then you could go in and say – I want to support say, the environment and search by that for charities that work in that area." (High involvement)

  "Perhaps the charities could be asked to identify say five key tags they might come under, and they could be used for the search engine." (High involvement)

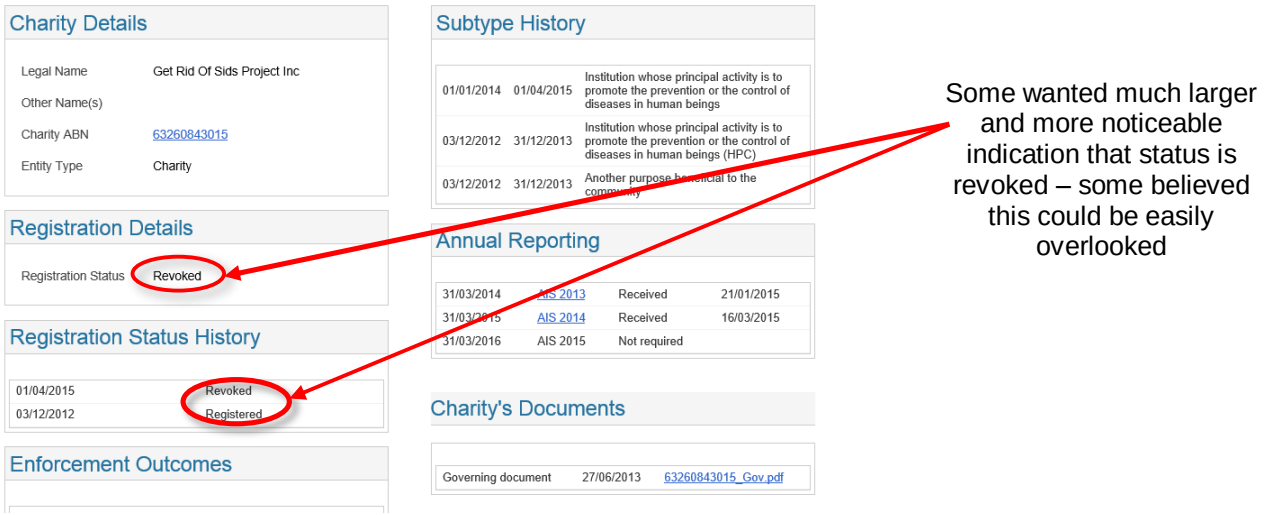
- Include the **logo of each charity**, to facilitate easy identification of specific charities. It was thought this could be particularly useful when multiple charity names came up under a single search.

  "Maybe they should have the logo of the [charity] there [pointing to 'Charity Details' section]. Because when I clicked on it [the charity in the search field] I was wondering whether it was the right one, so if you have the logo, then you'd know if you've got the right one." (High Involvement)

- Provide clearer **de-registration information** when a charity's registration has been revoked. As the following exhibit shows, some respondents felt it would be too easy to not notice the "revoked" status when checking a charity on the register. Note that although the status is shown as revoked on the initial search page, respondents felt this would also be easy to overlook. Some said that if a charity's name came up on a search, they would assume it was registered, without reading the detail.

  "If you've actually gone to the effort of going to the website to look up a charity, you're going to look for it [i.e. the charity's status]. But I reckon that it should be up there in red, flashing." (Low involvement)

  "I probably wouldn't notice it [i.e. the charity's status] … not unless I was looking for it … maybe if it came up in the search as red if it was revoked." (High involvement)



5.7.4 Preference for information to be available on the register (Q19E)

In the **quantitative research,** respondents who had not used the register were asked to rate their level of interest in a number of different types of information that could be available on the register.

As illustrated in the charts below, the most common preferences tended to be related to what the charity did:

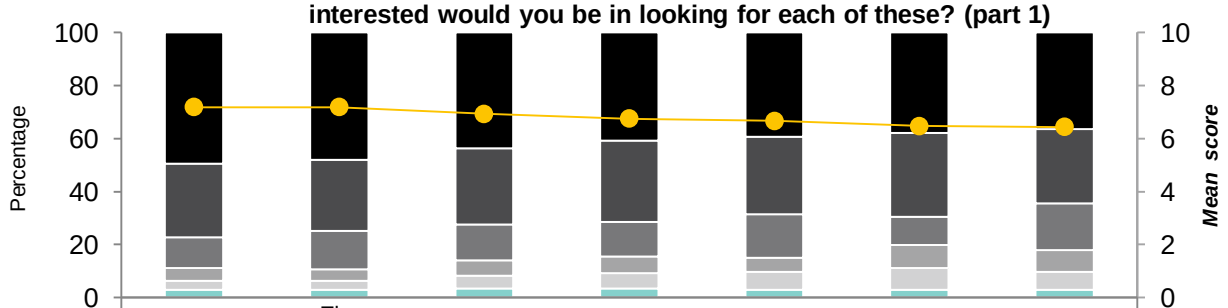
- Charity's objectives (e.g. what the charity is aiming to achieve)
- The charity's activities and beneficiaries (who it helps)
- Type of charity (e.g. welfare, education and training, accommodation, etc.).

Respondents only expressed moderate levels of interest in the other types of information suggested.

Responses to all the statements are illustrated in charts on this and the following page (note statements have been truncated to fit the graphs. The full statements can be seen in the questionnaire in the Appendix).

There were no meaningful 'Other, please specify' responses to report, and no significant differences were observed between subgroups.

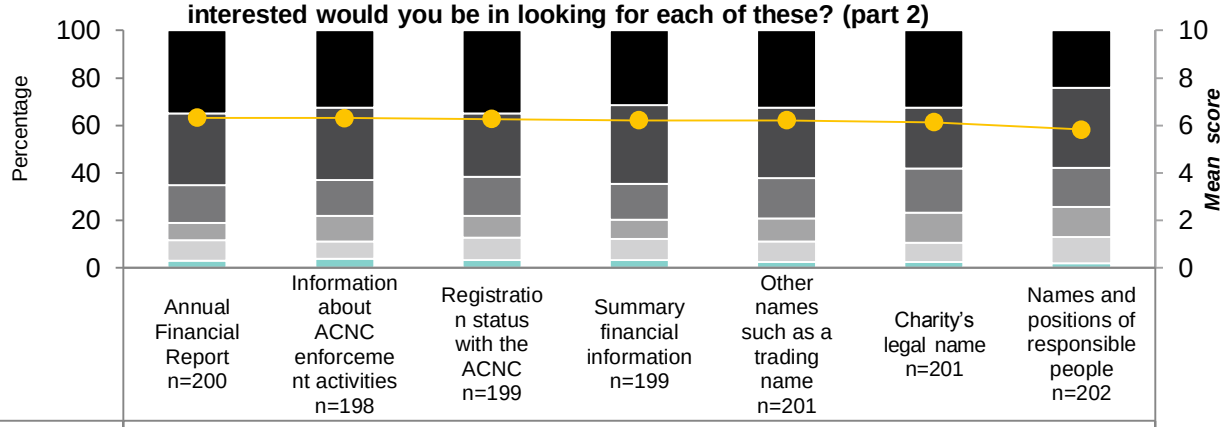
Q19E A list of the type of information available on the register is shown below. How interested would you be in looking for each of these? (part 1)



	Charity's objectives n=200	The charity's activities and beneficiaries n=200	Type of charity n=199	Contact details for the charity n=199	Where the charity operates n=200	Annual Information Statement n=200	Entity type n=200
Very high (8-10)	50	48	44	41	39	38	36
High (6-7)	28	27	29	31	29	32	28
Mid point (5)	12	15	14	13	17	11	17
Low (3-4)	5	4	6	6	5	9	8
Very low (0-2)	3	3	5	6	7	8	7
Don't Know	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Mean score	7.2	7.2	6.9	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.4

Base: Those that had not used the register
(note that n values exclude don't know responses)

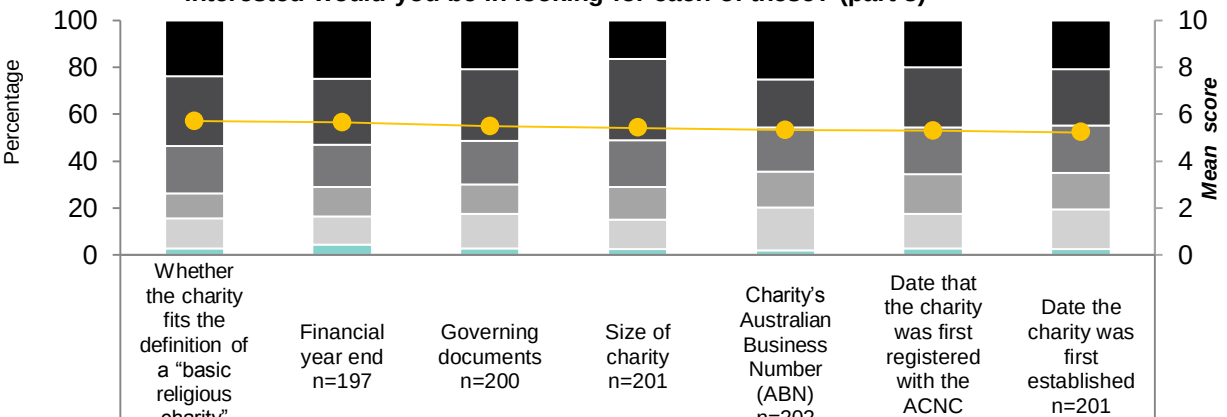
Q19E A list of the type of information available on the register is shown below. How interested would you be in looking for each of these? (part 2)



	Annual Financial Report n=200	Information about ACNC enforcement activities n=198	Registration status with the ACNC n=199	Summary financial information n=199	Other names such as a trading name n=201	Charity's legal name n=201	Names and positions of responsible people n=202
Very high (8-10)	35	33	35	32	33	33	24
High (6-7)	30	31	27	33	30	26	33
Mid point (5)	16	15	17	15	17	18	17
Low (3-4)	7	11	9	8	10	13	13
Very low (0-2)	9	7	9	9	9	8	11
Don't Know	3	4	3	3	2	2	2
Mean score	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.1	5.8

Base: Those that had not used the register
(note that n values exclude don't know responses)

Q19E A list of the type of information available on the register is shown below. How interested would you be in looking for each of these? (part 3)



	Whether the charity fits the definition of a "basic religious charity" n=200	Financial year end n=197	Governing documents n=200	Size of charity n=201	Charity's Australian Business Number (ABN) n=202	Date that the charity was first registered with the ACNC n=200	Date the charity was first established n=201
Very high (8-10)	24	25	21	17	25	20	21
High (6-7)	30	28	31	34	20	26	24
Mid point (5)	20	18	18	20	19	20	20
Low (3-4)	11	13	13	14	15	17	16
Very low (0-2)	13	12	15	13	18	15	17
Don't Know	3	4	3	2	2	3	2
Mean score	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.2

Base: Those that had not used the register
(note that n values exclude don't know responses)

5.7.5 Impact of deregistration of charities

In the **qualitative research**, response to the ACNC's power to revoke an organisation's charity status was explored.

Respondents were read or shown a press release as follows:

*"**Charity regulator issues final warning to 6 000 charities***

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) has announced that 6 000 'double defaulter' charities are at risk of losing registration and access to Commonwealth charity tax concessions for failing to meet their reporting obligations for two consecutive years.

The announcement follows the revocation of over 1,300 double defaulter charities at the end of March. The ACNC believes that most of these charities had in fact ceased operation, but had not notified either the ACNC or the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) of this change.

ACNC Commissioner, Susan Pascoe AM, said that the charities were required to complete an Annual Information Statement for the 2013 and 2014 years, and had not done so following an extensive publicity campaign as well as multiple reminders.

"Registered charities that have not lodged their Annual Information Statements for two consecutive years will have their charity status revoked," Ms Pascoe said.

"We have made numerous attempts to contact these charities and have sent them multiple reminders over the past two years. We have also advertised in local press and ran 36 face-to-face sessions across 32 cities and regional centres.

"The ACNC is here to help charities meet their obligations. Any charities that still require assistance should contact us."

Ms Pascoe said that many of these charities may no longer be operating, but others may be deliberately non-complying. "We recognise that there has been a high level of uncertainty around the ACNC's future. It may be that many charities have thought that they would wait and see what happened," Ms Pascoe said.

"If charities wish to remain registered with the ACNC and keep their Commonwealth charity tax concessions, I strongly encourage them to submit their outstanding Annual Information Statements.

"We have extended the due date for these charities a number of times, and there will be no further extensions. If double defaulter charities do not file within 28 days, they will have their charity status revoked.

"The vast majority of Australia's registered charities have successfully completed their annual reporting and have an up-to-date entry on the ACNC Charity Register.

"As well as being a legislative requirement, submitting an Annual Information Statement each year informs the public of the excellent work charities are doing in the community," Ms Pascoe said.

"We publish the information charities provide via the Annual Information Statement on the Charity Register, which has been searched over half-a-million times by the public."

Ms Pascoe said that revoking double defaulter charities is part of the ongoing work to build Australia's first national Charity Register.

"Since its establishment in December 2012, the ACNC has removed or revoked over 7 000 charities as part of our efforts to clean up the Charity Register and provide the public access to a reliable and accurate Charity Register.

"The Charity Register is available at acnc.gov.au/findacharity and we encourage members of the public wanting to make a donation to use it to find legitimate registered charities."

Approximately 3 000 registered charities have already received notices informing them that they will lose their charity status for failing to complete their reporting for two consecutive years. A further 3 000 charities will be issued with notices later in April.

Ms Pascoe stated that charities that have received a notice can avoid revocation by completing their overdue reporting.

"Charities have 28 days from the date of the notice to lodge their outstanding reports.""

Positive response overall: On consideration, the majority of respondents reacted positively to this, as they felt this meant they could be confident that charities which were registered were legitimate charities.

"I wouldn't think badly of the whole [charity] sector, I'd just think badly of those people [those that the ACNC have revoked charity status]. It makes the sector even better, because there are people on top of it." (High Involvement)

"I think it's excellent. It is great to know that they're being scrutinised, and it gives me a lot of confidence [in charities." (High involvement)

"Honestly, it'd probably make me feel better. It means that something is being done." (High involvement)

But initial shock: However, on first receiving this information, the initial reaction of many was shock that such a large number of charities were being de-registered. The initial response tended to be that this meant there were more problems in the charities sector than they had realised.

"[If 6,000 charities have their charity status revoked], then that would make you think that there are a lot of dodgy charities out there. Some people might think 'aren't they [i.e. the ACNC] going overboard?' but you need to know that they are keeping charities honest. I am sure that they will give [charities] a lot of time, and this is a last ditch effort to get them to clean up their act. I think that the ACNC has to do its job and let people know that these companies aren't following regulations, like any normal business." (High Involvement)

"Some of them probably don't exist anymore ... and a charity should be able to provide the information asked for, If it can't you'd worry about how it is run. … This is definitely going in the right direction." (High involvement)

It was only on consideration of the information, and the realisation that there were around 60,000 charities in total that the majority of respondents decided that in fact de-registration was a positive step. A few thought this information would make them more likely to use the register, because it would indicate that there were a substantial number of organisations collecting donations that did not qualify as charities.

"6,000 is a very large number. If I knew this, and I knew there was a register, it would make me more likely to look up charities on the register." (High involvement)

Some concerns raised: On further discussion, a number of concerns were raised across the qualitative sample. It should be noted that these were not top of mind responses to de-registration, but occurred to respondents when the issue was discussed in more detail. We would not expect the majority of people to pay sufficient attention to de-registration in normal day to day life for these concerns to be raised. Nevertheless, they illustrate the types of questions that may occur to people.

- **Length of time:** While some accepted the length of time it had taken to deregister charities as reasonable, others felt the whole process for de-registering charities seemed to have taken too long, and this was particularly the case for respondents in both the low involvement group discussions.
- **Lack of clarity around what revoking a charity's registration means:** Some wanted more information about what revoking a charity's status actually meant, and what powers the ACNC actually had. Some were concerned that the ACNC may not have sufficient powers, and that de-registration would not in fact prevent charities from continuing to operate. As a consequence, some wanted the information on the register to be clearer about the implications of revoking charitable status, and also felt that the press release should contain more information. In particular, questions were raised about:
  - How would the ACNC prevent 'responsible people' of the revoked charities from working for or running other charities?
  - How would the general public be able to tell if a 'responsible person' of a registered charity had also been responsible for a revoked charity?

  This concern appeared to be more likely to be raised by low involvement respondents than high involvement respondents. It is likely this is related to overall levels of trust, where high involvement respondents had higher levels of trust in charities overall than low involvement respondents (see Section 5.4.1).

  "If they've been fraudulent, shouldn't they lose their ABN? Or can they still operate as a business?" (Low involvement)

  "If they have just not submitted an AIS, that's just a bit of paper. But what's behind all of that [i.e. their failure to submit paperwork]? Maybe they've been indulging in a little bit of skulduggery?" (Low involvement)

  "People could be knocking on the door, asking us for money as another charity!" (Low involvement)

  "So does that mean that they lose their ABN? Or do they remain as a business, but they lose their charity status?" (Low involvement)

  "Do they [i.e. the ACNC] oversee rules and regulations that have been put together, and prosecute people who break them?" (Low involvement)

"If this mob [i.e. the ACNC] can't get in contact with the charity, then the charity isn't going to know that they've been de-registered. So they are going to just go on thinking that they are a registered charity." (Low involvement)

- **Allocation of funds raised by deregistered charity:** A few raised the issue of what happened to any funds that had been donated to a charity once it's charitable status was revoked, and were concerned that any such money would not be used for its original intended purpose.

  "How far do they [i.e. the ACNC] go [when they revoke a charity's status]? Where do the funds go?" (Low involvement)

  "The sector obviously needed a shakedown. … I presume a lot of these charities were no longer operating. … my concern is what happens to the donated money they have once a charity is de-registered. I'd like to know that the money is put in a trust fund and distributed to other charities which work in the same area." (High involvement)

Response to specific example of revoking a charity's registration: In addition to discussing this general press release, respondents were also shown or read the specific press release relating to the Get Rid of Sids project, as follows:

"'Get Rid of Sids' charity status revoked

The Australian Charities and Notforprofits Commission (ACNC) has made a decision to revoke the registration of Get Rid of Sids Project Inc (ABN 63 260 843 015) following a review into the organisation's operations and activities. The entity is an association incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Qld) which had deductible gift recipient status as well as tax concessions since it was established in 2010.

It had its charity status revoked by the ACNC and this decision is effective from 01 April 2015. The charity has 60 days to lodge an objection to this decision.

Acting Commissioner David Locke said Australians donate millions of dollars to charity every year and the ACNC is tasked with regulating all registered charities.

"The ACNC is committed to protecting public trust and confidence in the sector, which includes revoking the charity status of organisations which are not operating in accordance with the ACNC Act and Regulations," Mr Locke said.

"All charities have to be established for charitable purpose and for the benefit of the public. Where concerns are raised with the ACNC about a charity's operations, we take these seriously and look into all of the circumstances. We will act firmly and quickly where we believe organisations are not entitled to ongoing charity registration.

"It is important that the public can give confidently to charities on the ACNC Charity Register.

"The ACNC has made a decision to revoke Get Rid of Sids Project's registration as a charity under 3510 (1) (a) of the Australian Charities and Notforprofits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act)," Mr Locke said.

The ACNC is prevented by secrecy provisions in the ACNC Act from disclosing the details of any case. Under the ACNC Act, decisions to use formal powers must usually be published on the ACNC Charity Register."

General support: While respondents were generally supportive of this action, a number of issues similar to those above were raised, specifically:

- **Length of time:** Some felt that it had taken the ACNC too long to take action, and further, it had taken too long to issue a press release.

  "They've revoked them on the 1st of April, but the news release didn't come out until the 8th April. So that is seven days, where they could have been fundraising. And I don't get newspapers, I only see TV, so I would never see these [indicating the ACNC press release] unless I went onto the website and called them up." (Low involvement)

- **Questions re powers held by ACNC:** Again, there were questions about what powers ACNC actually had, and whether the people responsible for the 'Get rid of Sids' charity could just start up another charity.

  "The problem is that if Joe Blow has been running the Sids one, and Sids has been revoked, and he is now working for something else … he might go and start another charity." (Low involvement)

  "The thing that doesn't give me any confidence is that we don't find out why these guys have been de-registered. What is stopping them from starting up another charity? Why is it all secret, why isn't it disclosed?" (Low involvement)

  "And what is going to happen – are they just going to get a slap on the wrist?" (Low involvement)

  "Apart from the fact that they will have their gift giving status revoked, so you can't have tax concession anymore, that is it. They could still go and collect money and just not say that they've been revoked as a charity." (Low involvement)

- **Insufficient information:** Some felt there was insufficient information provided, and in particular felt the press release lacked clarity and questioned why there were secrecy provisions.

  "Why has it been revoked? It might have been revoked because they weren't putting in some statements, they may not have been meeting the ACNC's requirements. But they could very well also be putting money into the right spot – we don't know this." (Low involvement)

  "And what's this 3510 (1) (a)? Why can't they disclose the details?" (High involvement)

5.7.6 Overall support for ACNC

Despite the issues raised above, the majority of respondents in the **qualitative research** were **very supportive** of the charities sector having a regulator, and of the work the ACNC was doing (based primarily on information they received in discussions during the research).

Lack of awareness should be addressed: The major issue raised was an overall lack of awareness of the ACNC, with many saying increased awareness was important, as without this, the ACNC was unlikely to have a significant effect on the public's trust and confidence in Australian charities.

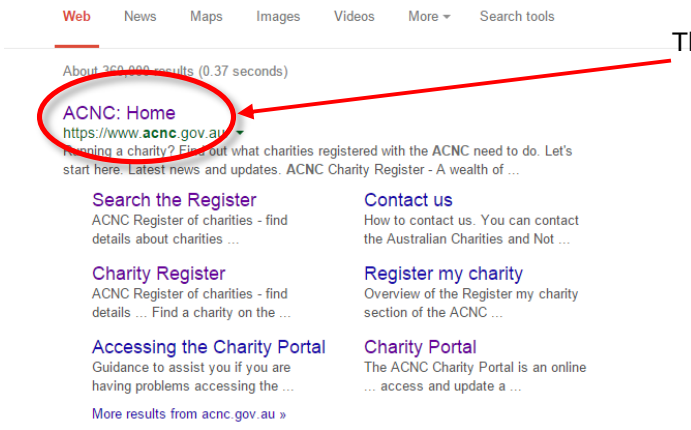
"I think that it should be making itself known. People should be aware that they are there and that they're keeping people honest … if they had a YouTube campaign, then that would go around Facebook as well." (High involvement)

Several suggestions to improve awareness were made across the sample.

- A number of respondents suggested that ACNC should use charities to help promote itself as an organisation, by requiring charities that were registered with the ACNC to use the ACNC logo in a prominent position; e.g., on their letterhead, in promotional material, on their website homepage, etc. The point made here was that over time, the public would become familiar with the ACNC logo and what it stands for, and would learn to look for it as a sign of a legitimate charity. As noted previously, this was suggested as something akin to the Heart Foundation tick.

  "When you sign up to a charity, they could be putting some information [about the ACNC] into a packet. Because you get a kit or pack when you sign up to a charity, so the ACNC should have something there." (High involvement)

- One respondent noted that in an internet search, it was not immediately evident that ACNC was a government organisation, as shown in the following exhibit. This respondent suggested that the search results should explicitly say that the ACNC is the government based regulator of charities.



The URL is the only indication that this is a government website

5.8 Further comments

At the end of the questionnaire in the quantitative phase, respondents were asked: *"Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about the ACNC's regulation of the Australian Charity sector?"*

The majority did not have any further comments, with only 14% responding. The following table summarises the comments made, and gives some examples of those comments.

Responses	% of responses	Examples of comments
ACNC gives confidence / is an important organisation / pleased to hear there is a regulator	31%	Hope that this organisation keeps going as its an invaluable asset to society I am very concerned that some time ago I heard that the Coalition was seeking to do away with the ACNC or limit its powers I think it is good that there is someone like the ACNC that is able to be a watchdog over the charities; can only benefit from this Did not realise that there was a Charity regulator which gives me more confidence in regards to genuine charities and the work they carry out I feel much more confident donating to charities knowing there is a register to guarantee the legitimacy of the charity I'm glad that there is a regulatory body. Relieved even. Wish I knew about it's existence in the past
ACNC needs to be publicised	16%	Need to make themselves more known to the public, what they do and how to access their information They should advertise their existence more. I had no idea about them prior to this survey, and I work in the not-for-profit sector It is pleasing to know that it is now being regulated but it would be great to know more information about the work that they do They should be made more well known so that we feel we can trust charity spend more
More effort or information required to ensure funds go to end cause / /concerns re charity expenses & salaries	11%	It is very important that ACNC's overseeing the Australian Charity sector assures the public that people's donations are applied to the beneficiaries Ensuring that we are aware which are the non for profit organizations. I'd like complete confidence that the money I donate is going where it needs to Not much of the donation actually goes to the charity I think one of the most important aspects of charities is for the public to be aware of the percentage of donation that actually goes toward the nominated area of work.

Responses	% of responses	Examples of comments
Issues relating to how charities deal with donors (i.e., not related to ACNC activities)	10%	Charity collectors at malls are too aggressive Please keep the spruikers off the streets. If I want to donate, I will look for a charity that interests me. When I'm walking around the city, I don't want to be hounded I get frustrated when charities send me goods, unsolicited and then expect me to donate.
Queries re the powers available to the ACNC / the need to investigate / sanction / close some charities	6%	Be more strict on charities wrongdoings I hope the ACNC has the power to investigate charities right to the core - follow their money trail, ensure no-one is 'cooking the books' or 'faking/inventing' uses of where money has gone. They need to be a lot tougher on how much $ and on what the money is actually spent on. There should be criminal laws to regulate maximum on admin/expenses. I would like to see the ACNC regulate charities' use of supporters' personal information.
Concerns expressed re charitable status for (some) religious charities	4%	I feel that we need more policing in the Church Charity sectors; e.g. supposed Charitable Church groups that claim tax free status and charity write offs on absolutely negligible programs Money making churches should not be registered as a charity Religion and their causes should not be considered charities
Concern that a regulator adds bureaucracy/ cost /is unnecessary	4%	Complete waste of taxpayers' money. Let each individual make up their own minds who they want to donate to. Regulatory authorities just mean another layer of bureaucracy Would like to investigate their role further as seemingly they have a low profile and do little or nothing Why? It is just one charity checking on another. It is probably a government run sector, meaning there are many people working there at huge expense and probably being paid also by some of the monies that the charities collect. All looking out for number one - themselves!!
Positive responses to survey	2%	This survey was a good one to do. It has taught me a thing or two You have helped me learn a lot by doing this survey. Thank you.

Responses	% of responses	Examples of comments
Other – this covered a very broad range	20%	I think it's imperative that the ACNC ensures that charities actually pass on assistance to those in genuine need. For example, when I donate goods to a particular charity, I expect that they be given (not sold) to people in need I donate to those I trust, those whose financial dealings are open to public scrutiny I only know about the ACNC because of being on a committee for a Charity organisation. I believe that this is not a well known body, and it would be helpful if it was advertised widely so that people could look up information. It is not the most user-friendly website and it would be good if it was easier to look up info and learn more about charities. It would be great if it was a requirement for charities in their 'pleading letters'/newsletters' and on their websites to refer to it.

5.9 Demographics

Respondents were asked some basic demographic information in order to:

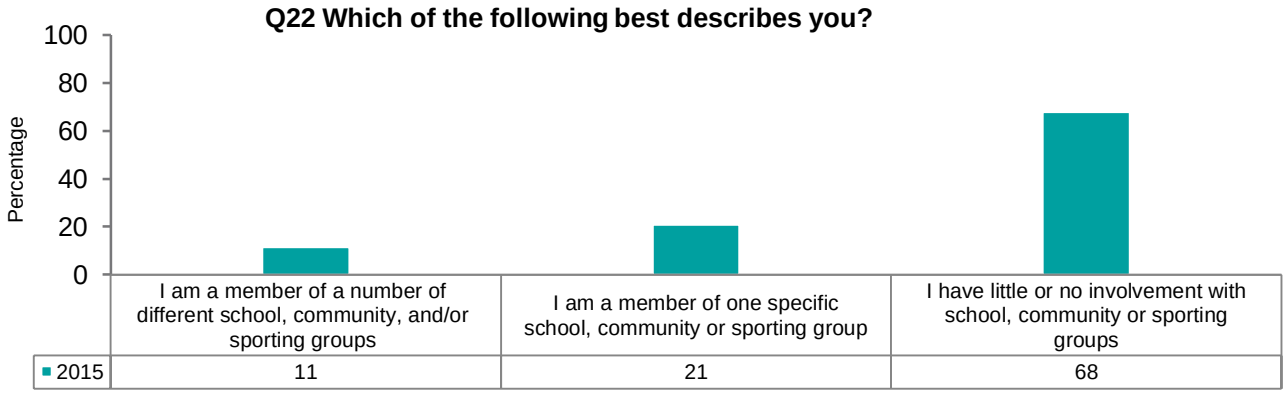
- Ensure that the data was nationally representative
- Ensure that the sample would be comparable to the 2013 data
- Allow subgroup analysis to be conducted.

The sample was generally nationally representative (compared to the data available at the Australian Bureau of Statistics), with the exception of gender. Whilst a higher proportion of respondents were female, this is typical of online surveys, and similar to the sample composition in 2013. Comparisons of weighted and unweighted data indicated that weighting was not necessary.

Demographics are summarised in the following charts.

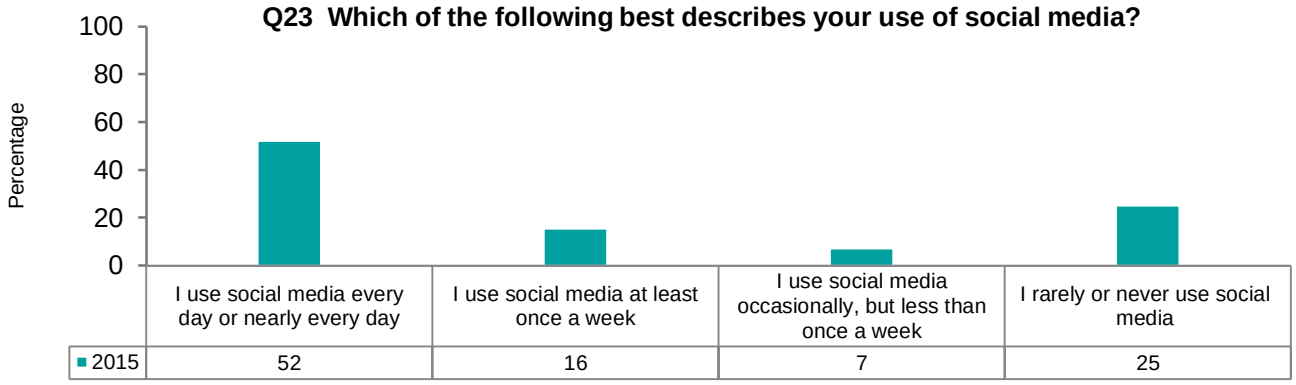
In 2015 respondents were asked a number of new questions about their participation in community groups, their use of social media and their religiosity.

Community participation: Respondents tended to have limited community participation, with two thirds (68%) indicating that they had no involvement with school, community or sporting groups, and a further fifth (21%) indicating involvement with only one such group.



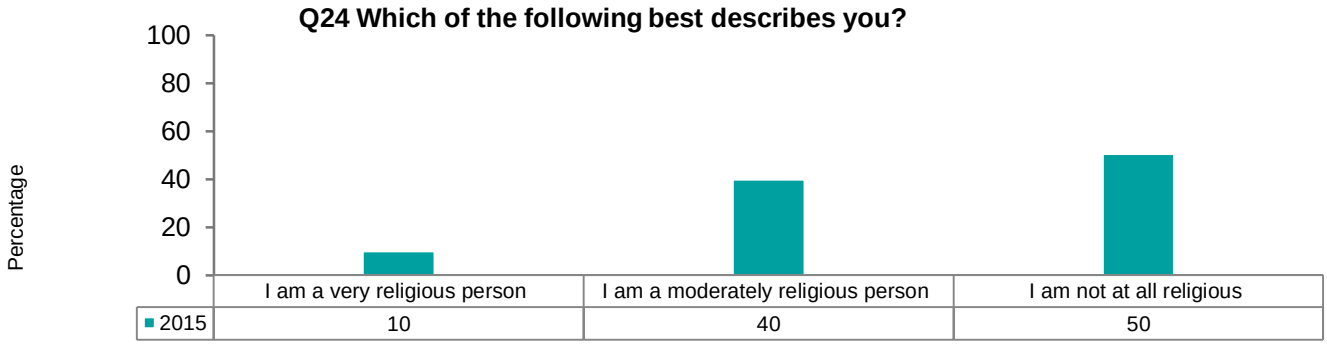
Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

Use of social media: Just over half (52%) indicating that they used social media every day or nearly every day.



Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

Religiosity: While half the sample regarded themselves as "not at all religious", nearly two thirds identified with a religion when asked what their religion was.



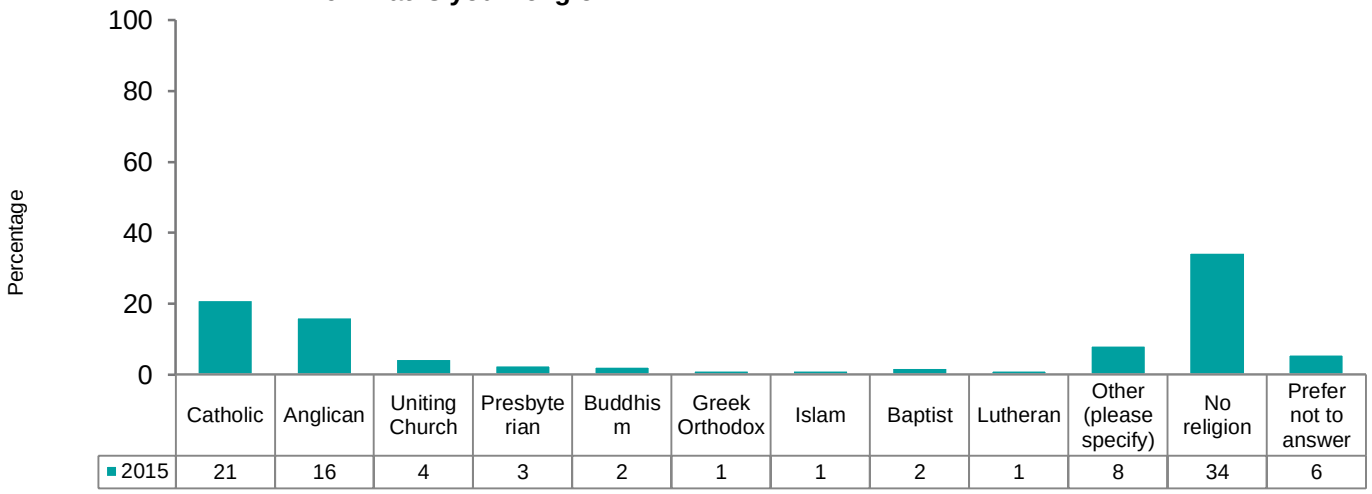
Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

Religious affiliation: Just over one third indicated that they had no religion in D9, which is higher than that reported for the 2011 Australian Census (22% of Australians indicated that they had no religion). However, given that it is now 2015 and the ABS has observed that the rate of 'no religion' has been increasing for some time[3], we believe that the sample is still representative of the Australian population in terms of religious affiliation.

(Chart shown on the following page).

[3] 4102.0 - Australian Social Trends, Nov 2013 located at http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features30Nov+2013#religiousactivity

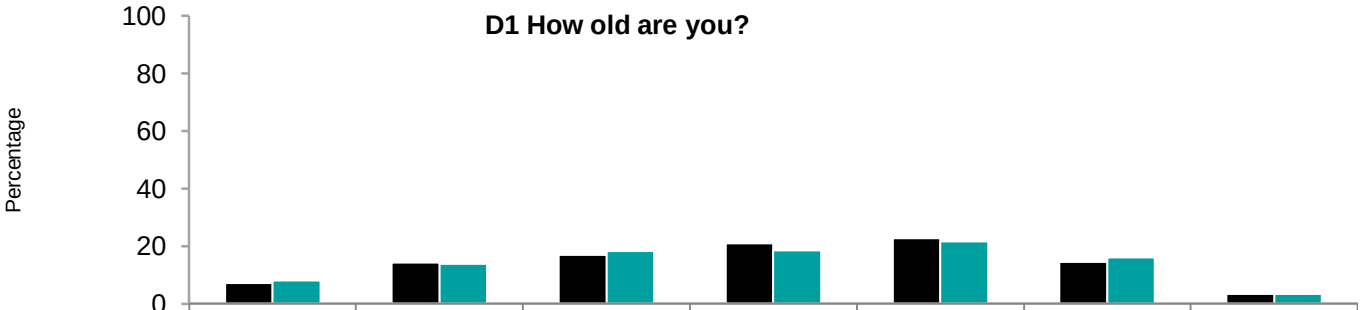
D9 What is your religion?



	Catholic	Anglican	Uniting Church	Presbyterian	Buddhism	Greek Orthodox	Islam	Baptist	Lutheran	Other (please specify)	No religion	Prefer not to answer
2015	21	16	4	3	2	1	1	2	1	8	34	6

Base: Total 2015 sample, n=1761

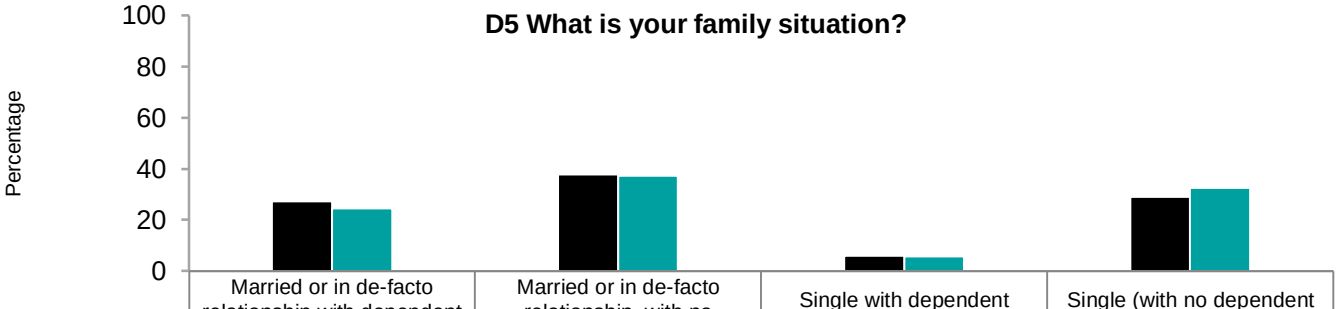
D1 How old are you?



	18 - 24 years old	25 - 34 years old	35 - 44 years old	45 - 54 years old	55 - 64 years old	65 - 74 years old	75 to 84 years old
2013, n=1624	7	14	17	21	23	15	3
2015, n=1761	8	14	18	18	22	16	3

Base: Total sample

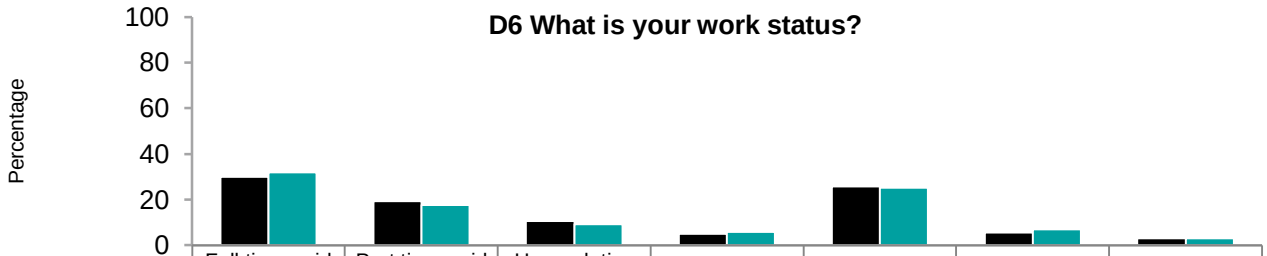
D5 What is your family situation?



	Married or in de-facto relationship with dependent children	Married or in de-facto relationship, with no dependent children	Single with dependent children	Single (with no dependent children)
2013, n=1624	27	38	6	29
2015, n=1761	24	37	6	33

Base: Total sample

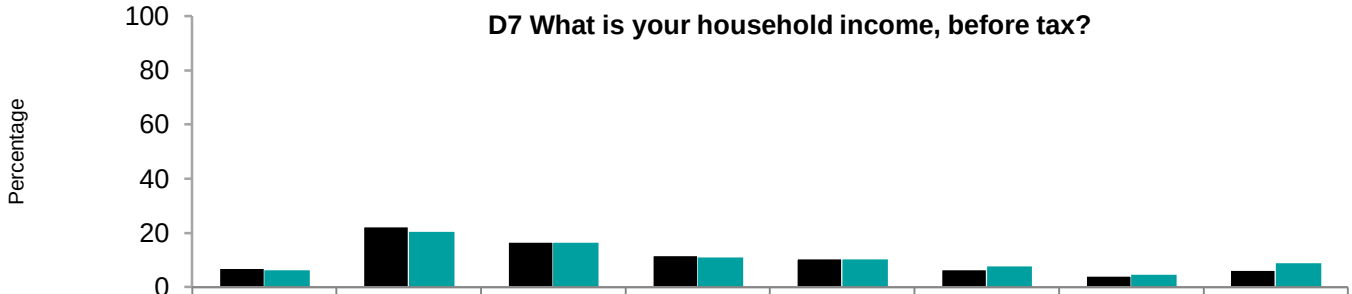
D6 What is your work status?



	Full time paid work (30+ hours per week)	Part time paid work (less than 29 hours per week)	Home duties (i.e. looking after dependents)	Student	Retired	Unemployed	Other, please specify
2013, n=1624	30	19	11	5	26	6	3
2015, n=1761	32	18	9	6	25	7	3

Base: Total sample

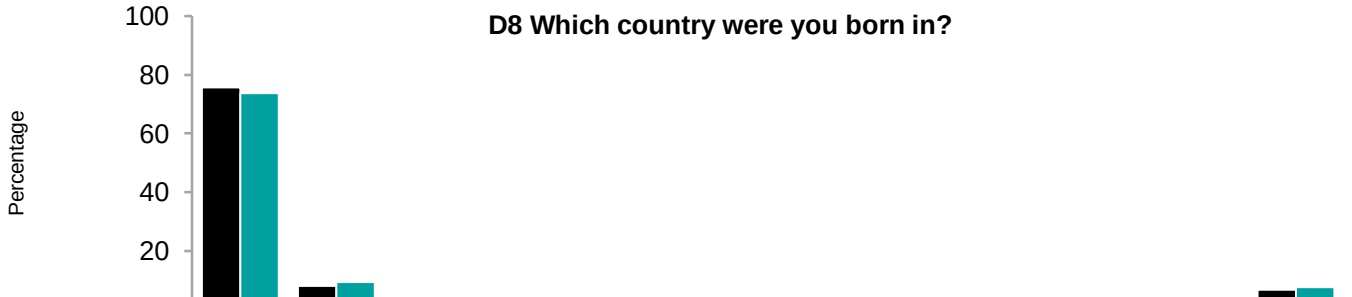
D7 What is your household income, before tax?



	Less than $19,999	$20,000 - $39,999	$40,000 - $59,999	$60,000 - $79,999	$80,000 - $99,999	$100,000 - $119,999	$120,000 - $139,999	$140,000 or over
2013, n=1624	7	22	17	12	10	6	4	6
2015, n=1761	6	20	16	11	10	8	4	9

Base: Total sample

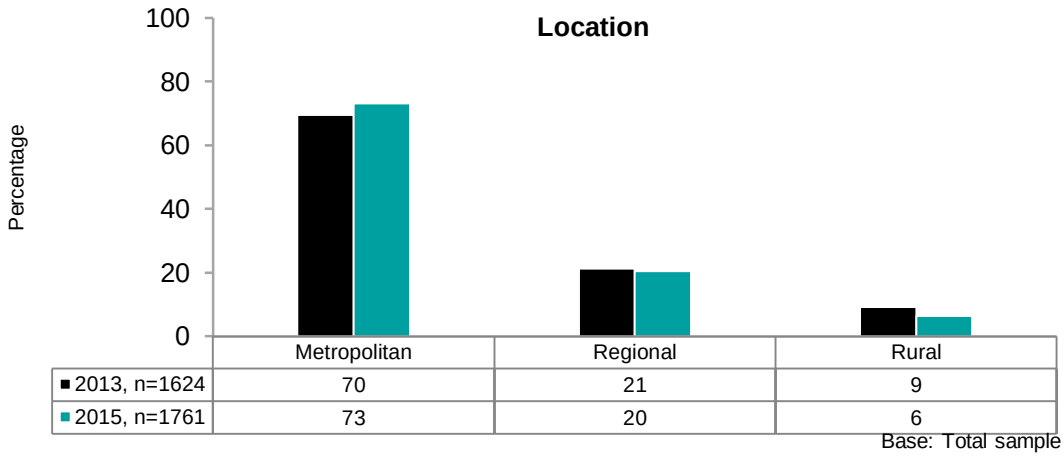
D8 Which country were you born in?



	Australia	United Kingdom	New Zealand	China	India	Vietnam	Italy	Philippines	South Africa	Malaysia	Germany	Other
2013, n=1624	76	8	3	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	7
2015, n=1761	74	9	2	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	7

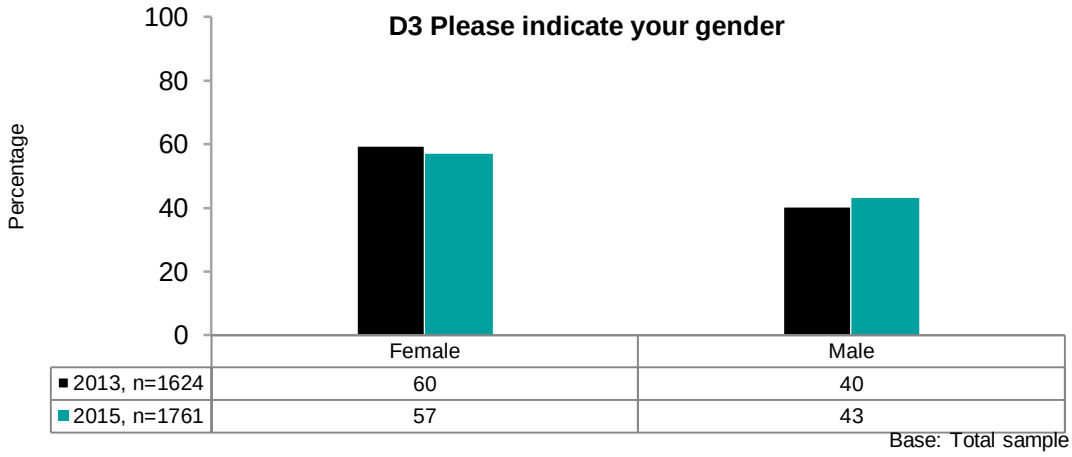
Base: Total sample

'Other, please specify' responses for country born in included: *Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bermuda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Flanders, France, Ghana, Greece, Holland, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Macedonia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South America, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad, UAE, Ukraine, USA, Uruguay, Venezuela.*



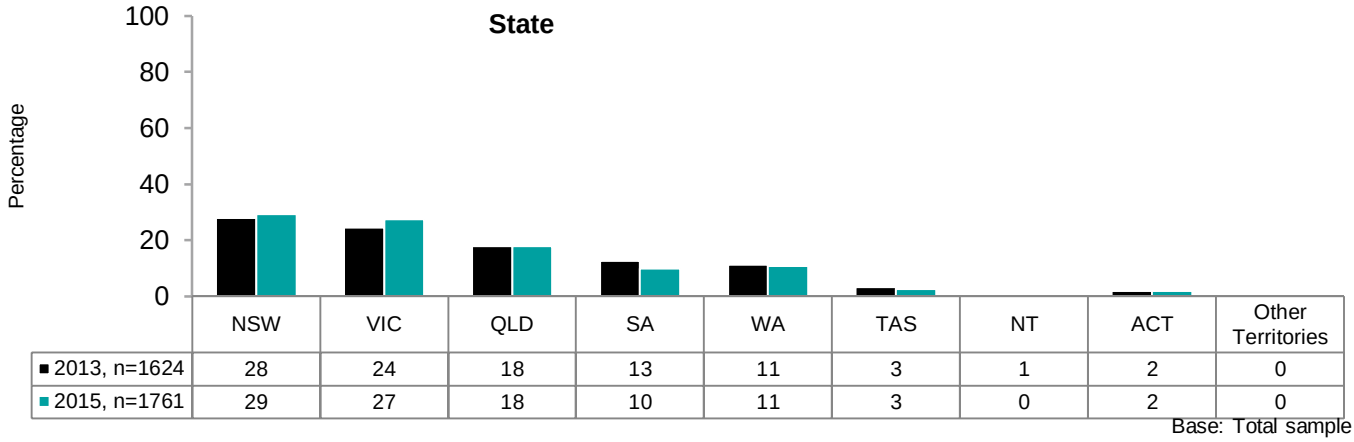
	Metropolitan	Regional	Rural
2013, n=1624	70	21	9
2015, n=1761	73	20	6

Base: Total sample



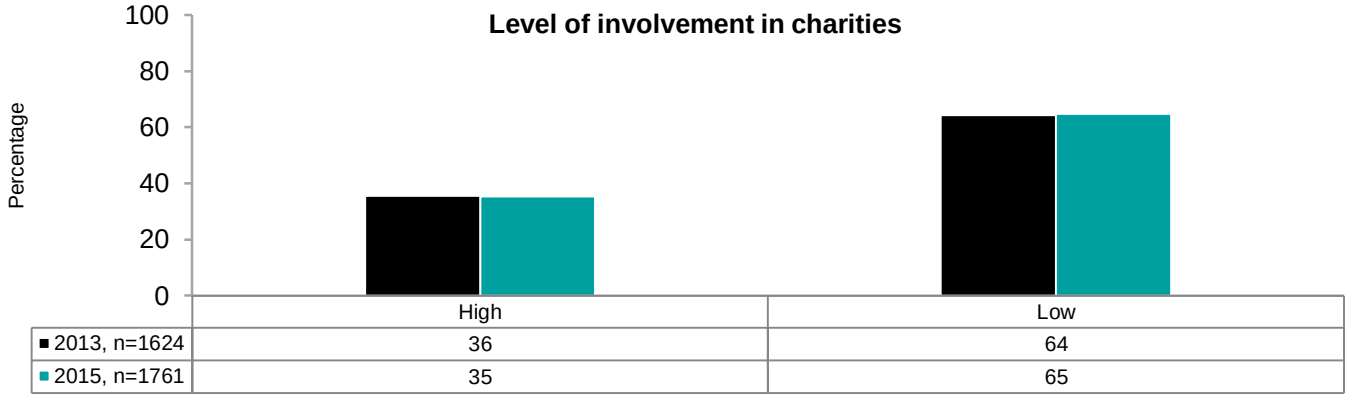
	Female	Male
2013, n=1624	60	40
2015, n=1761	57	43

Base: Total sample



	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Other Territories
2013, n=1624	28	24	18	13	11	3	1	2	0
2015, n=1761	29	27	18	10	11	3	0	2	0

Base: Total sample



	High	Low
2013, n=1624	36	64
2015, n=1761	35	65

Base: Total sample

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix A: Factor analysis outcomes

The key drivers most likely to aid with improving trust and confidence in the charity sector are shown in the following table. The factor loading is a score which provides an indication of the strength of importance each attribute has on the respondents' trust and confidence in charities.

Note that the component analysis uncovered three dimensions (listed below), which loosely match the model hypothesised in the qualitative research. Whilst each dimension is important in explaining respondents' trust and confidence in charities, the dimensions listed below are listed in order of importance, with the most important at the top.

- Charities' activities (e.g. act in the public interest, are ethical, etc.)
- Charities' reputation (e.g. their size, if they are well-known, etc.)
- Perceived wastefulness

This is illustrated in the table over the page.

Drivers of trust and confidence in charities

Questions loading on the three factors (-1.0 to +1.0)	Factor scores for each dimension (-1.0 to +1.0)		
	Charities' activities	Charities' reputation	Perceived wastefulness
I trust charities to act in the public interest	0.8		
I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical and honest	0.8		
I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	0.8		
I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause	0.8		
I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources, including money from donations	0.8		
I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	0.8		
I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed	0.8		
I trust charities that provide services within my local community	0.7		
I trust charities that provide services in Australia	0.7		
I trust charities more if I have heard of them	0.7		
I trust charities that I have a personal connection to	0.6		
I trust charities that have been established a long time	0.6		
I trust charities that have supported me, my family or friends	0.6		
Most charities are trustworthy	0.6	0.6	
I trust big charities more than smaller ones		0.7	
I trust charities that provide services overseas		0.7	
I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons		0.6	
I feel confident donating to a charity even if I haven't heard of them, if it's going to a good cause		0.6	
I trust charities that are well known		0.6	
Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure that they are working for the public benefit		0.6	
Charities spend too much of their funds on administration			0.9
Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries and staff benefits			0.9
Charities waste too much money			0.8
I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising			0.7
I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds			0.7

Note that for the above factor loadings, 1 represents a strong positive relationship, -1 represents a strong negative relationship, whilst 0 represents no relationship. Thus 0.5 represents a moderate, positive relationship.

6.2 Appendix B: Questionnaire

Public trust and confidence in Australian Charities Questionnaire (FINAL)

Introduction

We are inviting you to participate in a 15 minute survey about attitudes towards Australian charities.

Charities include any organisation that is established to pursue a charitable purpose and operates for the public benefit. There are many charities in Australia. Some of the better known ones include the Red Cross, Salvation Army, World Vision, World Wildlife Fund, and the Heart Foundation, but there are many smaller and less well known charities. This research is being conducted to understand attitudes to all types of charities and what people think, regardless of how much involvement they have with charities. For example, we are interested in how and why people choose to support (or not support) charities, how much they trust them, and what it is that makes people feel more comfortable in supporting particular charities.

We sincerely appreciate your assistance in this research.

Programmer: Where the word 'charity' or 'charities' appear, please allow a hover box (or equivalent) with the following definition:

Charities include any organisation that has a charitable purpose and operates for the public benefit. There are of course many charities in Australia. Some of the better known charities include the Red Cross, Salvation Army, World Vision, World Wildlife Fund, and the Heart Foundation, but there are many smaller and less well known charities, and we are interested in attitudes to all types of charities.

Note to client: Question numbering and response sets appear out of order. This is necessary in order to ensure that the data file matches the previous data file & thus ensure that accurate comparisons to previous data are made. When respondents complete the survey, they do not see question numbers, so this does not create any confusion for them.

Introductory questions

To begin with, we have a few questions about you.

D1. How old are you? (Please select one option)

Less than 18 years		Terminate
18 – 24 years old	1	Go to D2
25 – 34 years old	2	
35 – 44 years old	3	
45 – 54 years old	4	
55 – 64 years old	5	
65 – 74 years old	6	
75 to 84 years old	7	
85 years or older	8	

D2. Which Australian state do you live in? (Please select one option)

ACT	1	Go to D4
NSW	2	
NT	3	
QLD	4	
SA	5	
TAS	6	
VIC	7	
WA	8	

D4. What is your postcode?

_____		Allow postcode. This will need to be: 1. Recoded according to **ABS ASGS classification** for Major Urban, Other Urban & Rural Balance 2. Recoded in **Australian State** Go to D3

D3. Please indicate your gender (Please select one option)

Female	1	Go to Q1
Male	2	

Section 1: Awareness and involvement in charities

Programmer note: The data needs to be analysed according to whether respondents have had a high or low involvement in the charities sector, so we need them to be categorised accordingly. Please categorise respondents in the data file as HIGH INVOLVEMENT = 1 and LOW INVOLVEMENT = 2 based on responses to Q1, 2 and 3. If classified as High involvement at any point (e.g. Q1), respondent should be classified as high, regardless of future questions. But still ask those questions, please.

If classified as high involvement at Q1, the respondent stays as high involvement regardless of answers to Q2 and 3.

If classified as high involvement at Q2, the respondent stays as high involvement regardless of answers to Q3.

Q1. Have you had any of the following types of contact with any charities over the last year?

Please select all that apply

Paid employee of a charity	1	High involvement, go to Q3
Trustee of a charity	2	High involvement, go to Q3
Volunteer for a charity	3	Go to Q2
Member of a charity's executive, governing body or management committee	4	High involvement, go to Q3
Provide professional services to a charity	5	High involvement, go to Q3
Received money, support and/or help from a charity	6	High involvement, go to Q3
None of these	7	Go to Q3

Q2. About how often would you say you have volunteered time to a charity over the last year?

Select one response only

Most weeks	1	High involvement
About fortnightly	2	High involvement
About monthly	3	High involvement
Less often	4	Low involvement

Q3. Have you done any of the following in the last year?

Rotate order

Please select all that apply

Donated to a TV charity appeal	1	Low involvement
Bought goods from a charity (e.g. charity shop, charity catalogue, The Big Issue, etc)	2	Low involvement
Made regular monthly donations to a charity	3	High involvement
Sponsored someone in a charity event; e.g., fun run	4	Low involvement
Made a one–off or occasional donations to a charity	5	Low involvement
Sponsored a child via a charity	6	High involvement
Sponsored an animal via a charity	7	High involvement
Sold raffle tickets or conducted other fundraising on behalf of a charity (e.g. participated in a fun run, read-a-thon, etc.)	8	Low involvement
Attended a fundraising event (e.g. charity dinner, auction, trivia night, etc.)	9	Low involvement
Donated goods (e.g. furniture, clothing, food, etc.) to a charity	10	Low involvement
Some form of activism (e.g. writing a letter or coordinating a petition)	11	High involvement
Bought raffle tickets	14	Low involvement
Other (please specify)	12	Low involvement
None of the above [mutually exclusive]	13	Low involvement

If Q1=7 and Q3=13 (i.e. not had contact with a charity or supported a charity), go to Q22

All others go to Q4

Q4. Thinking of the charities that you support, what are the reasons you choose to support them?

Rotate statements
Please select all that apply
I support charities that …

Let the public know how they use their resources, including money from donations	11	Go to Q5 Note that 12 – 15 were introduced in 2015
Match my beliefs	1	
I feel their work is important	2	
I trust to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for	3	
I enjoy supporting	4	
I have a personal connection to	5	
Have a good reputation	6	
Are well-known	7	
Have supported me or close family or friends	8	
Have well-known supporters or patrons	9	
Provide support to Australians or Australian causes	12	
Provide support to people or causes based overseas	13	
Are supported by my friends or social groups I belong to	14	
Are supported by a religious organisation I belong to	15	
Other (please specify)	10	

Q5. Thinking about the charities that you support regularly, that is, you donate money or goods regularly, or you regularly volunteer your time, which of the following best applies?

Select one response only

I know quite a lot about a charity before I decide to support it	1	Go to Q6
I know a reasonable amount about a charity before I decide to support it	2	
I know a little bit about a charity before I decide to support it	3	
I know very little about a charity before I decide to support it	4	
Not applicable; I do not support specific charities regularly	5	Go to Q22

Q6. Thinking about the charities that you support regularly, that is, you donate money or goods regularly, or you regularly volunteer your time, how satisfied are you with the information that those charities provide?

Please use a scale of 0-10, where 0 means you are not at all satisfied, and 10 means you are very satisfied

	0-10 scale	Go to Q22

Programmer, for Q22, insert hover box over 'community' & highlight to indicate that there is help text available. Text should read:

"A community group is a group of people who come together because they are motivated to pursue a common interest. Such groups might be either formal (e.g. an incorporated group, such as a local sporting body), or informal (e.g. mothers group, book group, etc.)."

(NEW) Q22. Which of the following best describes you?

Select one response only

I am a member of a number of different school, community, and/or sporting groups	1	Go to Q23
I am a member of one specific school, community or sporting group	2	
I have little or no involvement with school, community or sporting groups	3	

(NEW) Q23. Which of the following best describes your use of social media? Social media includes, but is not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Flickr, Google+; Linked In, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit, Twitter and Vine.

Select one response only

I use social media every day or nearly every day	1	Go to Q24
I use social media at least once a week	2	
I use social media occasionally, but less than once a week	3	
I rarely or never use social media	4	

(NEW) Q24. Which of the following best describes you?

Select one response only

I am a very religious person	1	
I am a moderately religious person	2	
I am not at all religious	4	

Section 2: Trust

We would now like to ask you some questions about your attitudes towards Australian charities and other organisations.

Q7a. How much trust and confidence do you have in Australian charities overall? Please use a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means you don't trust them at all and 10 means you trust them completely.

	0-10 scale	Go to Q7B

Reporting note: This matches the question used in NZ, UK and Scotland

Q7b. How much trust and confidence do you have in the following institutions and organisations. Please use a scale of 0-10 where 0 means you don't trust them at all and 10 means you trust them completely.

(Rotate list)

1	Doctors	0-10 scale Go to Q8
2	Police	
3	Religious organisations	
4	News media	
5	The High Court	
6	The Reserve Bank	
7	Your local council	
8	State Parliament	
9	Federal Parliament	
10	The ABC	
11	The Australian Taxation Office (ATO)	

(New) Q8. What most influences whether you trust a charity or not?

Please select as many as apply

1	High portion of funds go to those in need	
2	The charity provides information on how it spends it funds	
3	The charity is well known	
4	The charity has an excellent reputation	
5	The charity provided the information I needed	
6	The charity was for a worthy cause	
7	The charity was for a cause that I believed in	
8	I heard or knew about people who had been helped by the charity	
9	I have a personal connection to a charity (e.g. a family member supports it, I know someone who works there, etc.)	Go to Q9
10	I like the way that they raise their funds	
11	Word of mouth referrals	
12	The charity supports Australians	
13	The charity aligns with my religious affiliation	
14	Other, please specify	
15	Don't know / not sure	
16	None	

Q9 When thinking about Australian charities, how much do you agree or disagree with the following.

Rotate statements

Please use scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means that you strongly disagree and 10 means that you strongly agree.

22	I trust charities to be well managed and efficient	0-10 scale	Rotate questions Allow DK Go to Q10 Option 27 introduced in 2015
23	I trust charities to ensure that a reasonable proportion of donations make it to the end cause		
24	I trust charities to ensure that their fund raisers are ethical and honest		
25	I trust charities to act in the public interest		
1	I trust charities more if I have heard of them		
2	I feel confident donating to a charity even if I haven't heard of them, if it's going to a good cause		
3	Charities are regulated and controlled to ensure that they are working for the public benefit		
4	I trust charities that let the public know how they use their resources, including money from donations		
5	Charities spend too much of their funds on salaries and staff benefits		
6	Charities spend too much of their funds on administration		
7	Charities waste too much money		
8	Most charities are trustworthy		
9	I trust big charities more than smaller ones		
10	I trust charities that provide services overseas		
11	I trust charities that provide services in Australia		
12	I trust charities that provide services within my local community		
13	I trust charities that are well known		
14	I trust charities that have been established a long time		
15	I trust charities more if they are clear about how they are managed		
16	I trust charities to make a positive difference to the cause that they are working for.		
18	I trust charities that I have a personal connection to		
19	I trust charities with well-known supporters and patrons		
20	I don't trust charities that spend a lot of money on advertising		
21	I don't trust charities that pay sales people to raise funds		
26	I trust charities that have supported me or close family or friends		
27	Charities provide an important service to the community		

Q10. When you have given money to a charity, have you ever done any of the following?

Please select as many as apply

Asked how your money would be spent	1	IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SELECTED: • 1 (Asked how money spent) • 3 (Found out how charity was run) • 6 (Checked that it was a genuine charity) • 7 (Checked to see if the charity was registered) GO TO Q10B, ELSE Go to Q11
Asked for proof of identification of the person who has approached you	2	
Found out how the charity was run	3	
Given to a charity you hadn't heard of	4	
Claimed a tax refund	5	
Checked that it was a genuine charity	6	
Checked to see if the charity was registered	7	
Other, please specify	9	
None of the above (make exclusive)	8	

Q10B. How did you obtain this information?

Please type in your response

Programmer: Allow no response. Show on same page as Q10.

Open ended		Go to Q11

Q11. Some types of information that charities may provide are described below. Please provide the following ratings:

- **In the first column, please rate how important it is to you that Australian charities provide this kind of information, and**
- **In the second column, please rate how well Australian charities overall do in providing this kind of information**

Please use a scale from 0 to 10 as described below.

		Importance	Performance	
		Where 0 means that providing this type of information is not at all important and 10 means that providing this type of information is very important	Where 0 means that charities are very poor at supplying this type of information and 10 means that charities are very good at supplying this type of information	Rotate order of questions, but importance & performance should be asked together Allow DK for performance Go to Q13
1	How charities use donations			
2	Programs and services the charities deliver			
3	Charities' fundraising costs			
4	Impact of charities' work			
5	The proportion of total funds spent on administrative costs			
6	The proportion of total funds spent on the charity's work			

Section 3: Regulation

Q12 Deleted in 2015

Q13. To the best of your knowledge, is there an organisation or agency that is responsible for regulating Australian charities? (Please select one option)

Yes	1	Go to Q14
No	2	Go to Q25

Q14. Do you know the name of the organisation or agency responsible for regulating Australian charities? (Please select one option)

Yes	1	Go to Q15
No	2	Go to Q25

Q15. What is the name of the organisation or agency? (Please enter the name in the box below)

Allow 100 characters – display available spaces	1	Go to Q25
Don't know	98	

(NEW) Q25. Which of the following regulatory bodies have you heard of?

Please select all you have heard of.

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)	1	Go to Q16
Australian Charities and Not-for-profits-Commission (ACNC)	2	
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA)	3	
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (Austrac)	4	
Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)	5	
Consumer Affairs/Office of Fair Trading	6	
Other (please specify)	7	
None of the above	8	

Q16. How much do you know about the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits-Commission (ACNC)?

Please use scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you have never heard of them, and 10 means that you feel that you are fully informed.

	0-10 scale	GO TO Q17

Q17. The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits-Commission (ACNC) was established on 3 December 2012. The ACNC is the independent national regulator of charities. It registers organisations as charities, helps charities to meet their obligations and responds to concerns when charities may not be meeting their responsibilities. How important do you think it is to have a regulator that performs these functions?

Please use scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means that it is not at all important, and 10 means that it is very important.

	0-10 scale	IF Q16 > 0 GO TO Q18A ELSE GO TO Q18B

Q18A. Which of the following functions do you believe the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits-Commission (ACNC) is responsible for?

Please select all that apply

Granting charity status	1	Rotate order
Keeping a register of charities	2	
Handling complaints about charities	3	Go to Q18B
Advising Government on charity matters	4	
Training charities	5	
Policing charity fundraising	6	
Promoting the work of charities	7	
Providing information about charities' accounts	8	
Acting as an advocate for the charities sector	9	
Other (specify)	10	
Don't know	98	

Q18B. Which of these functions do you think are most important in order to maintain, protect and enhance public trust and confidence in the Australian Not-for-profit sector?

Please select the three functions that you think are most important.

Granting charity status	1	Maintain same order as Q18A but show separately to Q18A For other, show as specified in Q18A Go to Q19A
Keeping a register of charities	2	
Handling complaints about charities	3	
Advising Government on charity matters	4	
Training charities	5	
Policing charity fundraising	6	
Promoting the work of charities	7	
Providing information about charities' accounts	8	
Acting as an advocate for the charities sector	9	
Other	10	

Section 4: Public register of charities

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits-Commission (ACNC) has developed a public register of Australian charities to be available on its website (www.acnc.gov.au). Registered charities are required to report annually to the ACNC, and information they provide is published on the ACNC Register, which anyone is able to look at.

(NEW) Q19a. Were you aware that there is a register of charities, where you can search for information about charities?

Yes	1	Go to Q19b
No	2	Go to Q20

(NEW) Q19b Have you ever gone to this register to look for information about a charity?

Yes	1	Go to Q19c
No	2	Go to Q19e

(If used register)

(NEW) Q19c What information did you look for in the register?

(Rotate list, except for last option)

Please select all that apply

Charity's legal name	1	Go to Q19d
Other names such as a trading name that a charity is publicly known as	2	
Charity's Australian Business Number (ABN)	3	
Entity type; that is, confirms that the organisation is a charity	4	
Contact details for the charity, including website address	5	
Type of charity (e.g. welfare, education and training, accommodation, disability, children, etc.)	6	
Charity's objectives (e.g. what the charity is aiming to achieve)	7	
Where the charity operates (states in Australia, countries overseas)	8	
The charity's activities and beneficiaries (who it helps)	9	
Date the charity was first registered with the ACNC	10	
Date the charity was first established	11	
Size of charity (small, medium, large)	12	
Names and positions of responsible people	13	
Annual Financial Report	14	
Annual Information Statement, showing the charity's activities over the last year	15	
Registration status with the ACNC	12	
Financial year end; that is, the last date of the charity's annual reporting period with the ACNC	13	
Governing documents; e.g. A charity's constitution, rules or trust deed	14	
Information about ACNC enforcement activities such as issuing warnings or directions, making injunctions, suspending or removing a director	15	
Whether the charity fits the definition of a "basic religious charity"	16	
Other, please specify	17	

(NEW) Q19d How easy was it for you to find the information you wanted?

Please use a scale of 0-10, where 0 means it was very difficult to find the information you wanted and 10 means it was very easy.

	0-10 scale	Go to Q20

(If not used register)

(NEW) Q19e. A list of the type of information available on the register is shown below. How interested would you be in looking for each of these types of information?

(Rotate list, except for last option)

Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means that you would be unlikely to look for this information and 10 means that you would be very likely to look for this information.

1	Charity's legal name	0-10 scale, allow DK response	Go to Q20
	Other names such as a trading name that a charity is publicly known as		
2	Charity's Australian Business Number (ABN)		
3	Entity type (.e. confirms that the organisation is a charity)		
4	Contact details for the charity, including website address		
5	Type of charity (e.g. welfare, education and training, accommodation, disability, children, etc.)		
6	Charity's objectives (e.g. what the charity is aiming to achieve)		
7	Where the charity operates (states in Australia, countries overseas)		
8	The charity's activities and beneficiaries (who it helps)		
9	Date that the charity was first registered with the ACNC		
10	Date the charity was first established		
11	Size of charity (small, medium, large)		
12	Names and positions of responsible people		
13	Annual Financial Report		
14	Annual Information Statement; showing the charity's activities over the last year		
15	Registration status with the ACNC		
16	Financial year end; that is, the last date of the charity's annual reporting period with the ACNC		
17	Summary financial information		
18	Governing documents; e.g. A charity's constitution, rules or trust deed		
19	Information about ACNC enforcement activities such as issuing warnings or directions, making injunctions, suspending or removing a director		
20	Whether the charity fits the definition of a "basic religious charity"		
21	Other, please specify	Allow checkbox rather than a scale	

Q20. How important do you think it is for a register of this type to be made available to the community, regardless of whether you think you would personally use it?

Please use scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you do not think it is at all important that this type of information is available, and. 10 means you think it is very important.

	0-10 scale	Go to Q21

Q21. Bearing in mind that Australian charities are regulated by the ACNC, how much trust and confidence do you have in Australian charities overall? Please use a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means you don't trust them at all and 10 means you trust them completely.

	0-10 scale	Go to D5

Section 5: Demographics

D5. What is your family situation? (Please select one option)

Married or in de facto relationship with dependent children	1	Go to D6
Married or in de facto relationship, with no dependent children	2	
Single with dependent children	3	
Single (with no dependent children)	4	

D6. What is your work status? (Please select the one option that most applies to your situation)

Full time paid work (30+ hours per week)	1	Go toD7
Part time paid work (less than 29 hours per week)	2	
Home duties (i.e. looking after dependents)	3	
Student	4	
Retired	5	
Unemployed	6	
Other	7	

D7. What is your household income, before tax? (Please select one option)

Less than $19,999	1	Go toD8
$20,000 - $39,999	2	
$40,000 - $59,999	3	
$60,000 - $79,999	4	
$80,000 - $99,999	5	
$100,000 - $119,999	6	
$120,000 - $139,999	7	
$140,000 or over	8	
Prefer not to answer	9	

D8. Which country were you born in? (Please select the one option that best applies to you)

Australia	1	Go to D9
United Kingdom	2	
New Zealand	3	
China	4	
India	5	
Vietnam	6	
Italy	7	
Philippines	8	
South Africa	9	
Malaysia	10	
Germany	11	
Other (please specify)	12	

(NEW) D9. What is your religion*? (Please select the one option that best applies to you)

Catholic	1	Go to Q29
Anglican (Church of England)	2	
Uniting Church	3	
Presbyterian	4	
Buddhism	5	
Greek Orthodox	6	
Islam	7	
Baptist	8	
Lutheran	9	
Other (please specify)	10	
No religion	11	
Prefer not to answer	12	

*Note: This question has been based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Household Census form in order to make comparisons to the national population.

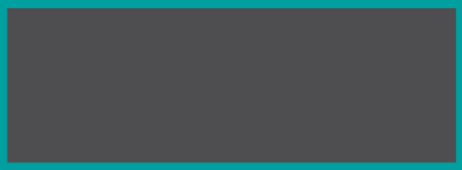
(NEW) Q29. We have one last question to ask... Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about the ACNC's regulation of the Australian Charity sector?

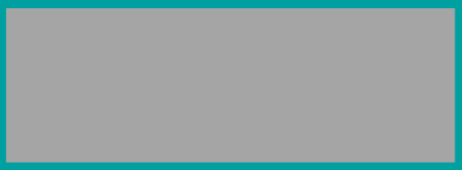
Please spend no more than a few minutes answering this question, or please click on 'I have no further comments' if applicable.

Programmer: Please also include a 'I have no further comments' option on the same page, which is mutually exclusive. Please also show the number of characters available at the bottom of the text box.

Closing statement

Thank you for your assistance in completing this survey.





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