



Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission

Understanding our workforce: Employees with disability in the Australian Public Service

December 2021

Research Note 31-21



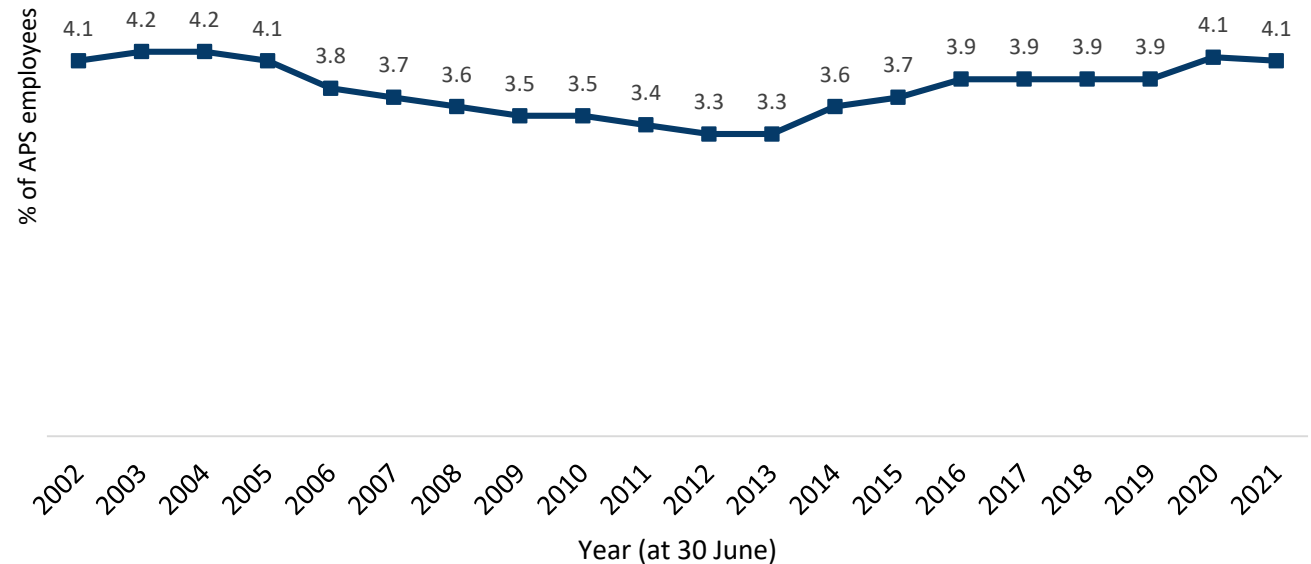
The proportion of APS employees with disability has remained relatively steady since 2002

The proportion of APS employees with disability reported in agency human resources systems is 4.1%.

In comparison, 9.3% of respondents to the 2021 APS Employee Census identified as having an ongoing disability.

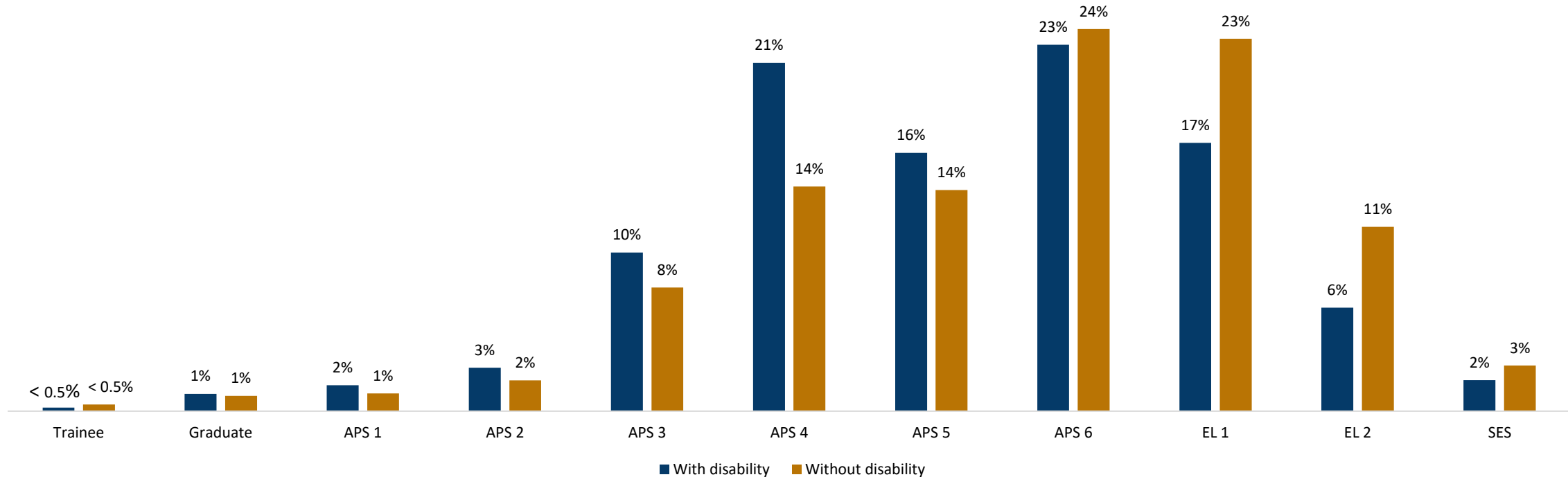
This difference in rates has been consistently reported and could be the result of a number of issues. One reason is that disability is not necessarily static. Employees who acquire disability during their career may not update their HR record. In other cases, employees may be concerned about including their disability in their agency's HR system but may be comfortable including that information in a confidential survey.

Proportion of employees with disability



Employees with disability are most commonly employed at the APS 4 and APS 6 classification levels

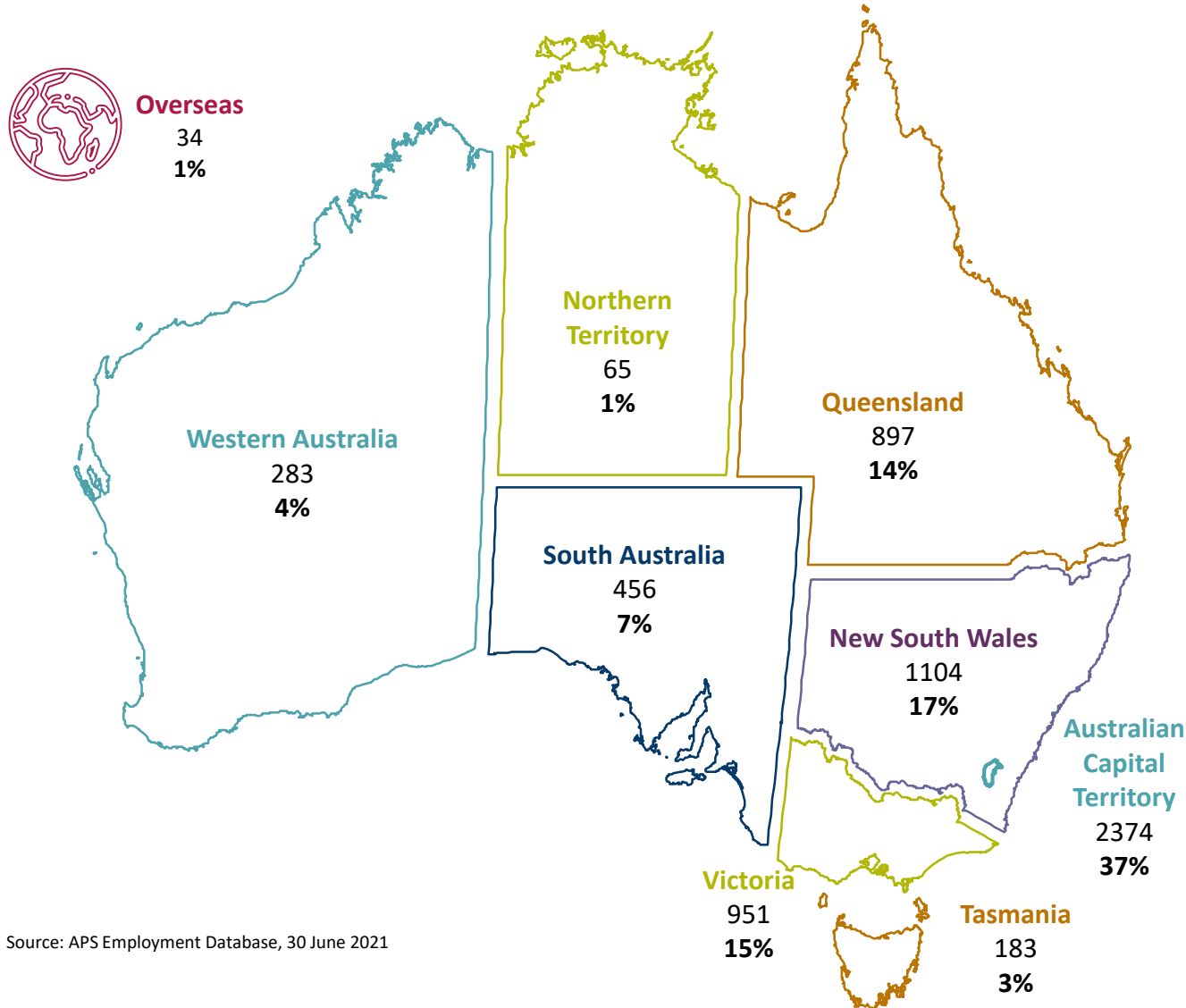
Proportion of employees with and without disability by actual classification



A greater proportion of employees with disability are employed at the APS 1- 5 levels, whilst proportionately fewer are employed at the EL1 and EL2 levels.



Employees with disability work in various locations across Australia and overseas

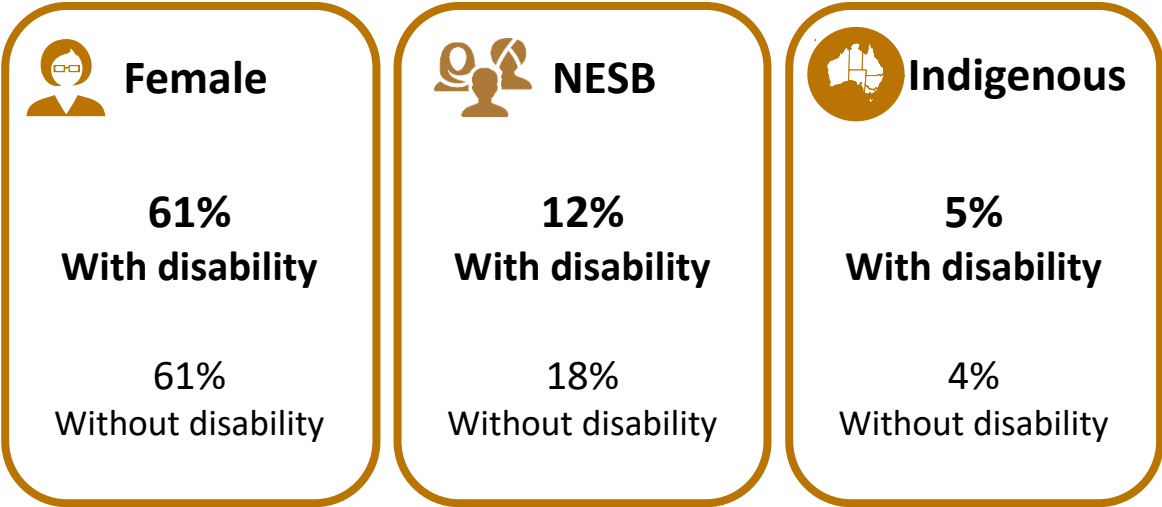
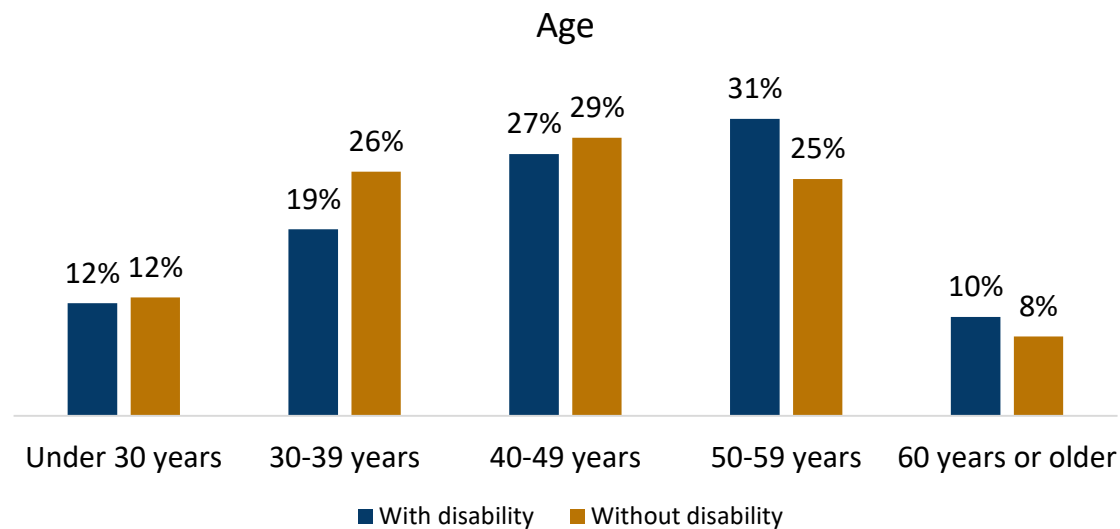


Source: APS Employment Database, 30 June 2021

A larger proportion of employees with disability are located in regional areas (18%) than employees without disability (10%).



The employment profile of employees with disability is similar to those without disability



Median length of service in the APS

13.4 years
With disability

12.1 years
Without disability

Employed on ongoing basis

90%
With disability

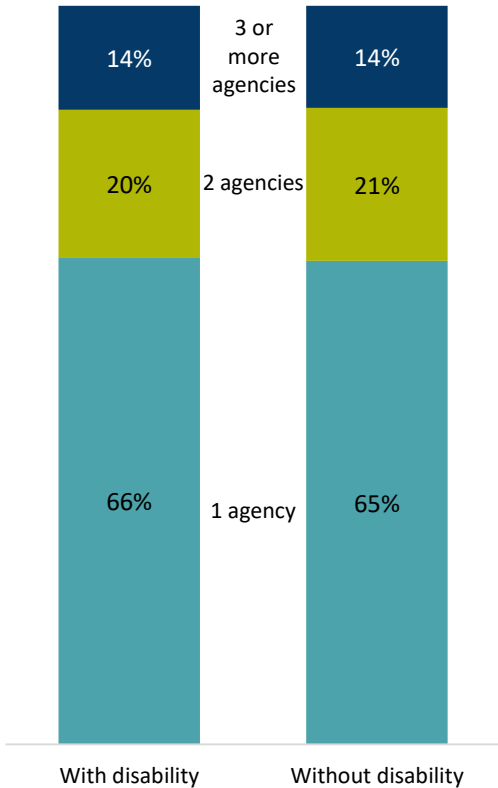
90%
Without disability

Employed full time

78%
With disability

82%
Without disability

Number of agencies worked in



Employees with and without disability differed in their perceptions of how their health and wellbeing was supported by their agencies

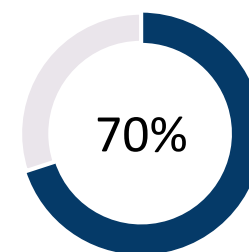
Employee Engagement Index scores reflect whether respondents feel emotionally connected and committed to their organisation.

The Employee Engagement Index score for the APS overall is 73%.

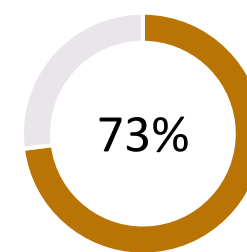
Wellbeing Index scores reflect whether respondents feel their health and wellbeing is supported.

The Wellbeing Index score for the APS overall is 68%.

Employee Engagement Index score

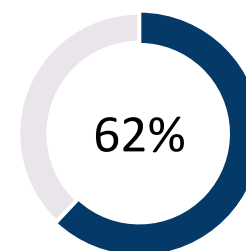


With disability

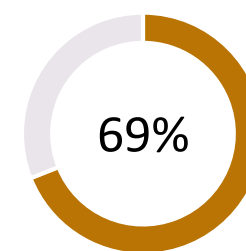


Without disability

Wellbeing Index score



With disability

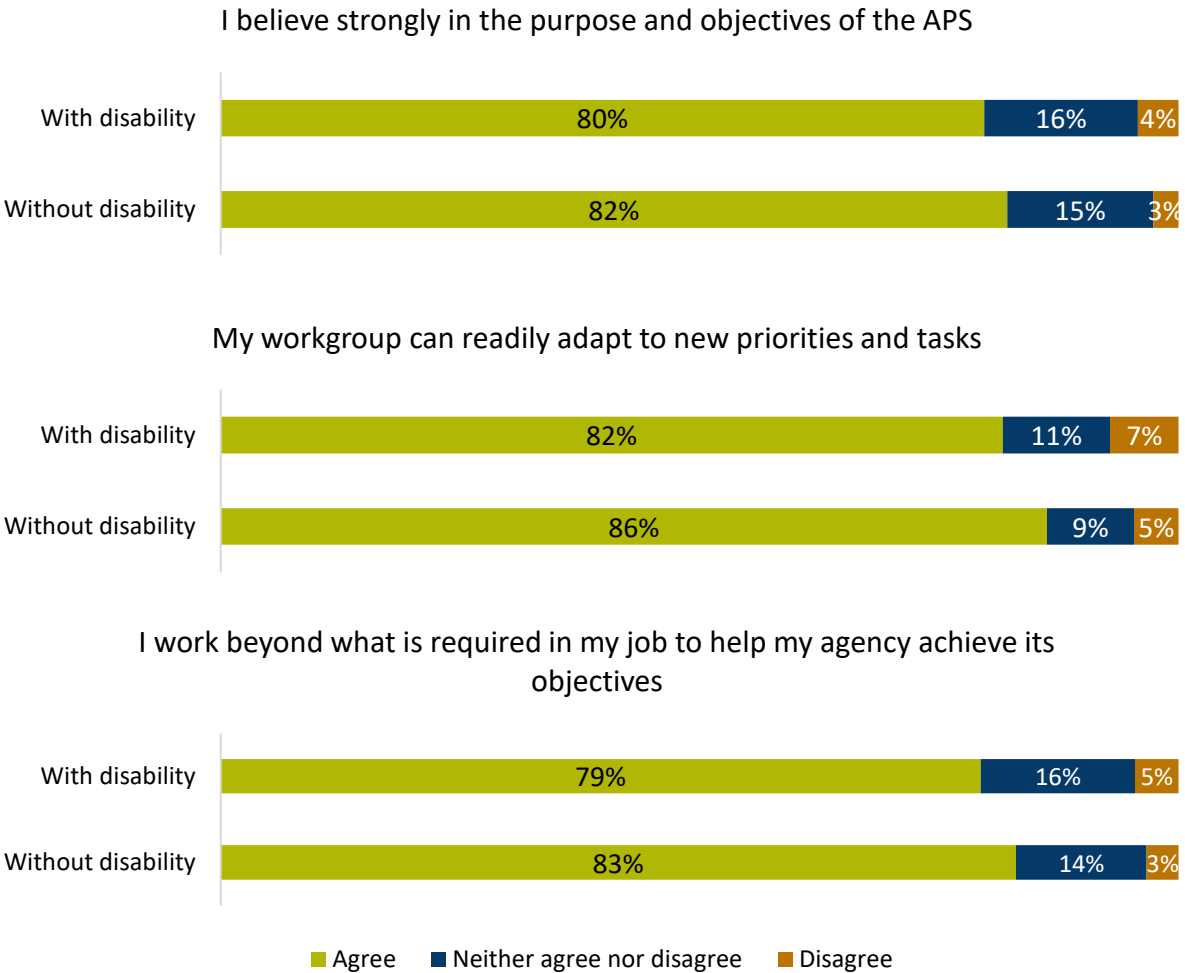


Without disability

Employees with disability believe strongly in the APS and are a vital part of an adaptive workforce striving to achieve its objectives

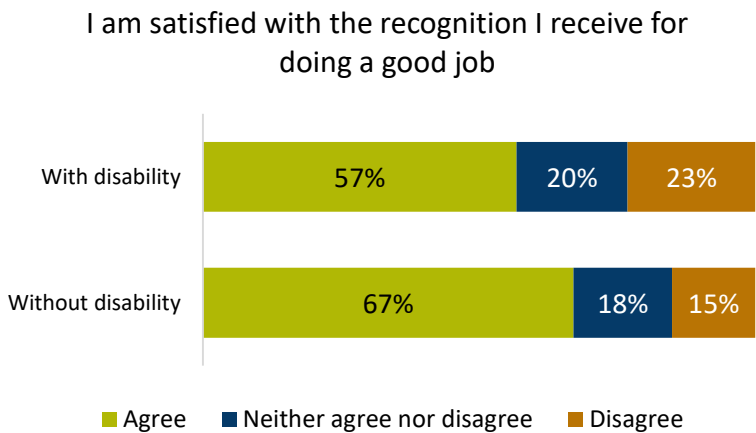
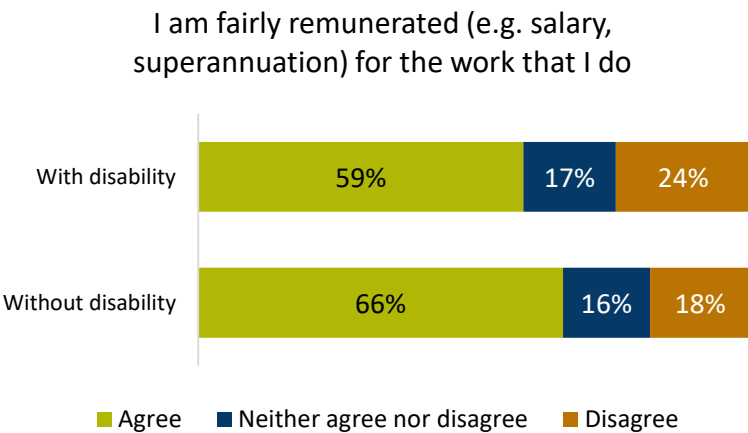
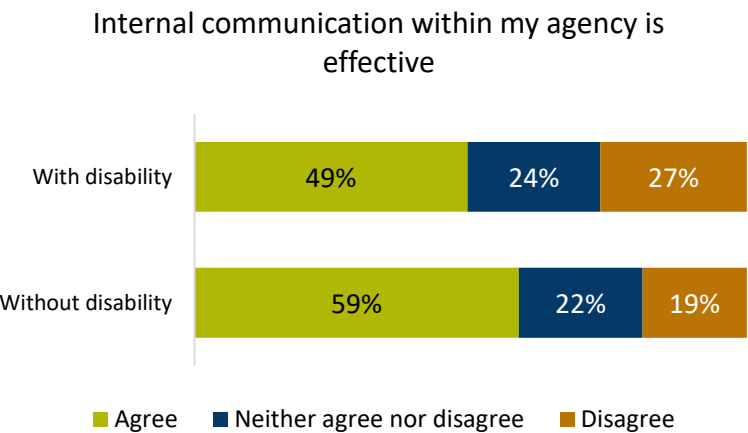
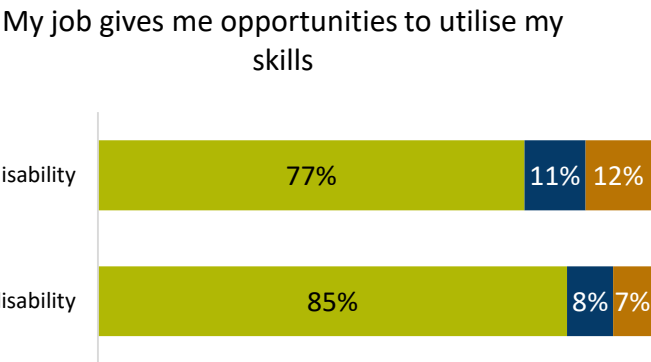
Similar to their colleagues without disability, APS employees with disability show strong belief (80%) in the purpose and objectives of the APS.

They demonstrate this purpose through their flexibility to prioritise and adapt with colleagues to complete workgroup tasks, and their willingness to work beyond what is required by their job to help achieve their agency’s objectives.



Employees with disability expressed lower satisfaction with aspects of work such as recognition and remuneration

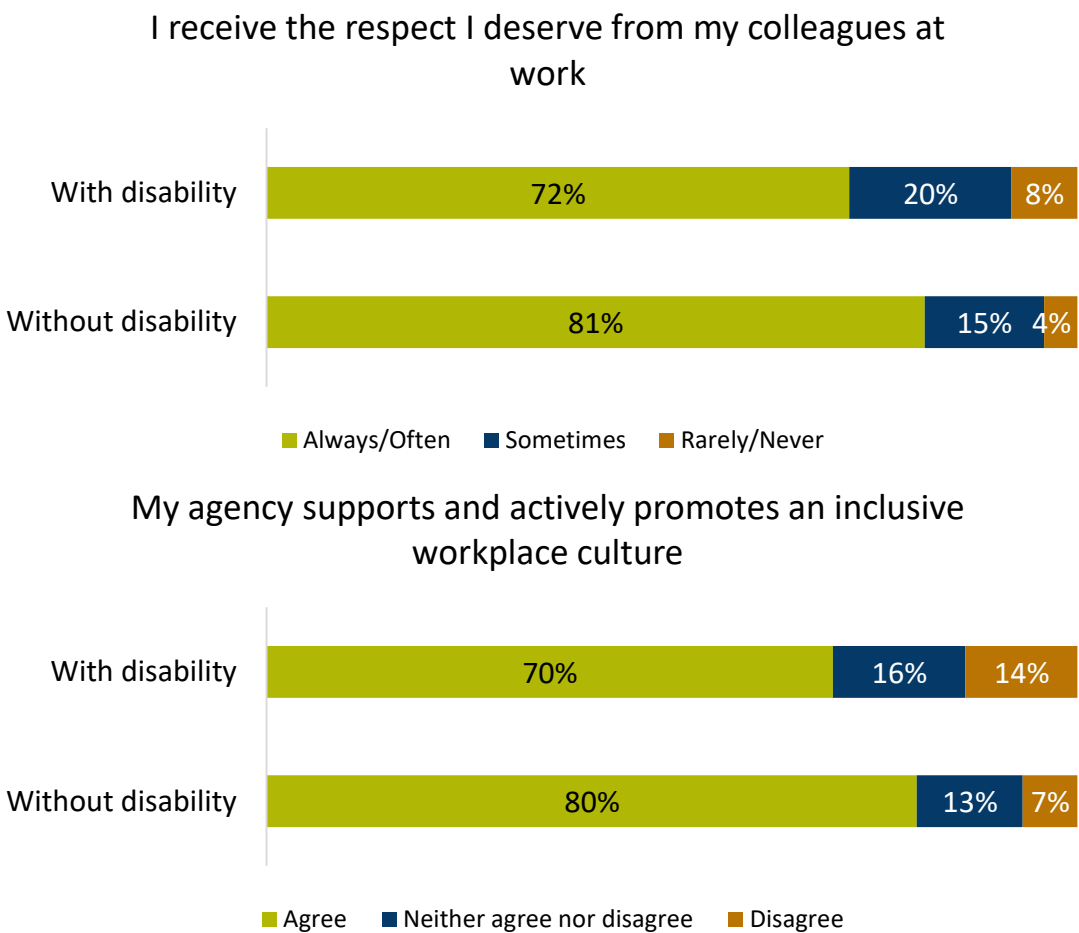
Employees who identified as having an ongoing disability had lower levels of agreement across many questions in the 2021 APS Employee Census. Questions with the largest difference between groups related to aspects of work such as recognition, remuneration, communication, and type of work.



Employees with disability responded less positively to questions about respect and inclusion

When compared to those without disability, a smaller proportion of employees with disability felt that they always or often received the respect they deserved from colleagues at work.

A smaller proportion of those with disability also agreed their agency supported and promoted an inclusive workplace culture.



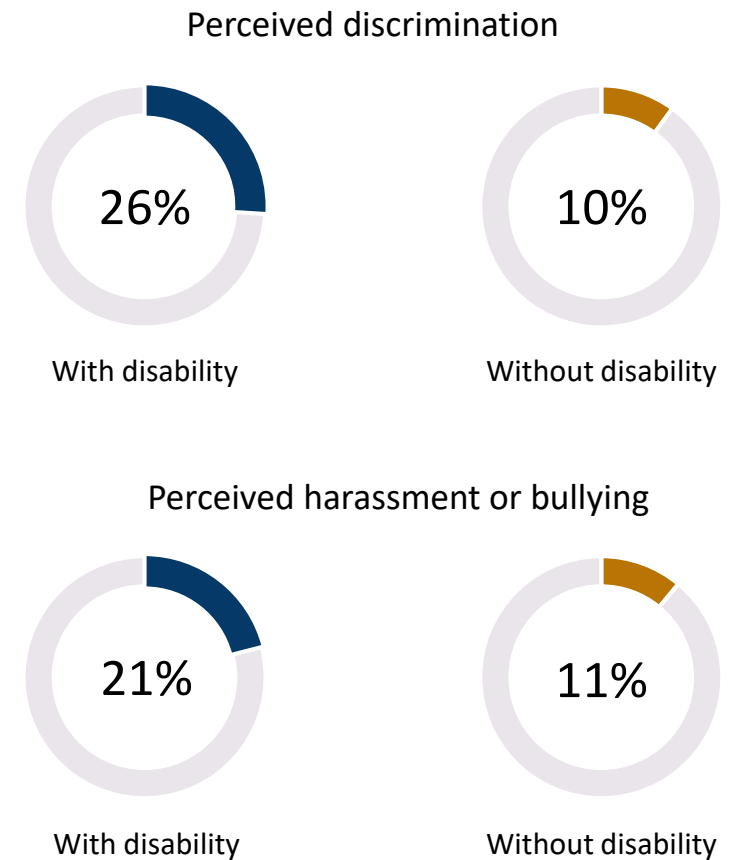
Source: 2021 APS Employee Census



When compared to others, larger proportions of employees with disability had perceived discrimination and harassment or bullying

One in four employees with disability perceived discrimination on the basis of their background or a personal characteristic in the course of their employment over the previous 12 months. The most common form of perceived discrimination was on the basis of disability status (53%).

One in five employees with a disability perceived that they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace during the previous 12 months.



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