



Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission

Understanding our workforce: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Australian Public Service

January 2023

Research Note 13-22



Cultural and linguistic diversity comprises a number of elements captured within HR and employee survey data

Cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) is a characteristic comprised of multiple aspects.

Human resources (APS Employment Database) and employee survey (APS Employee Census) data includes three categories to assess CALD in the APS workforce:

- Identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- Country of birth
- First language spoken / Language spoken at home*

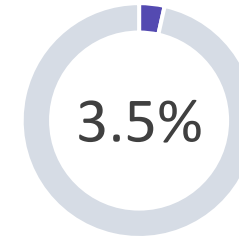
These categories align with guidance provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on how to collect CALD information**. The Australian Public Service Commission, however, is continuing to review how CALD can be best and most appropriately measured for the APS workforce.

*The APS Employment Database records first language spoken while the 2022 APS Employee Census captured main language spoken at home.

**[*Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity*](#)

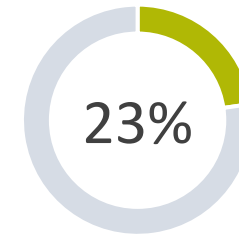
A considerable proportion of APS employees identified as having cultural and linguistic diversity

3.5% of APS employees identified as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.



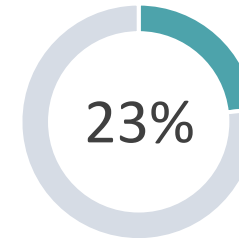
Identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person

23% of APS employees were born outside of Australia.



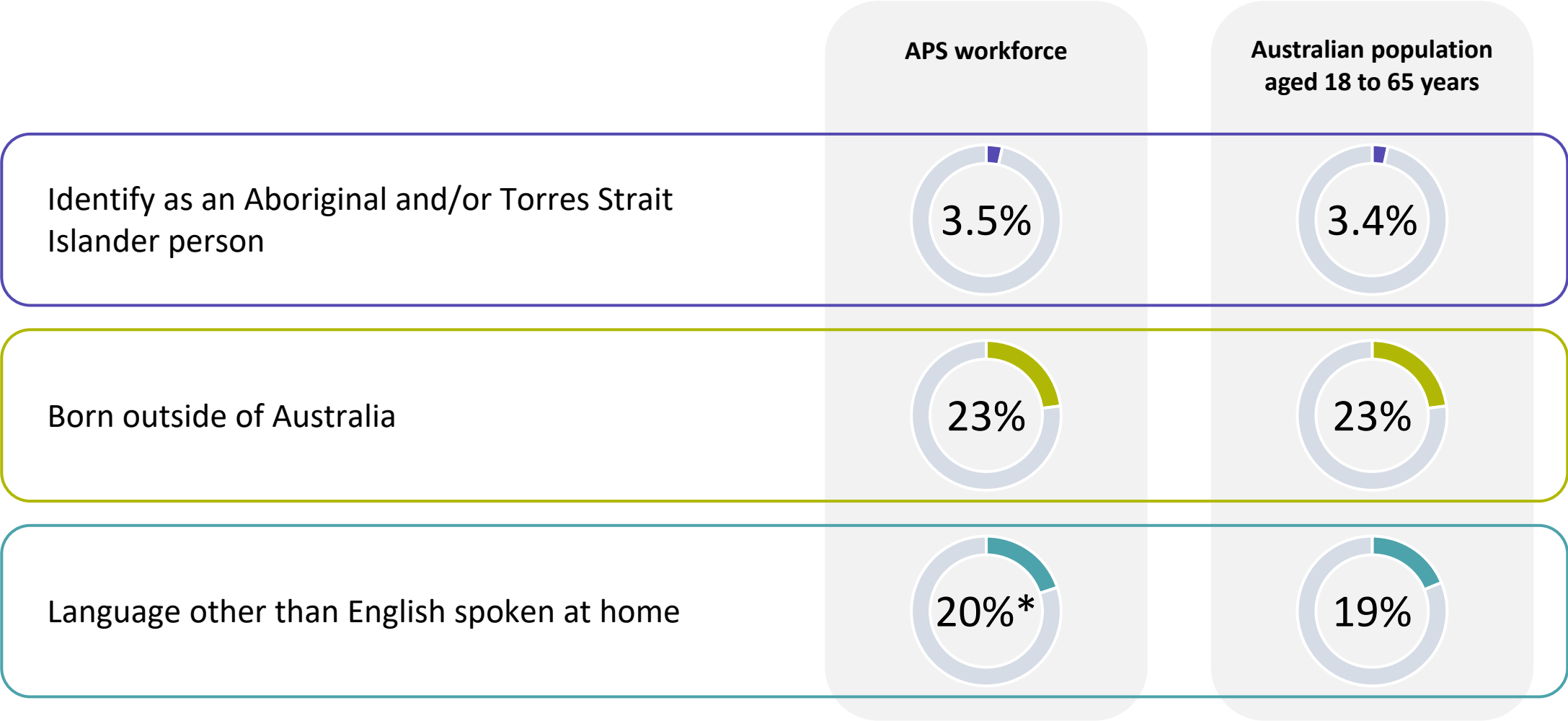
Born outside of Australia

23% of APS employees first spoke a language other than English.



First spoke a language other than English

The cultural and linguistic diversity of the APS is largely reflective of Australians aged between 18 and 65 years



Source: APS Employment Database, 30 June 2022, 2022 APS Employee Census, 2021 Census of Population and Housing

*To enable comparisons with available data, 2022 APS Employee Census results are reported.

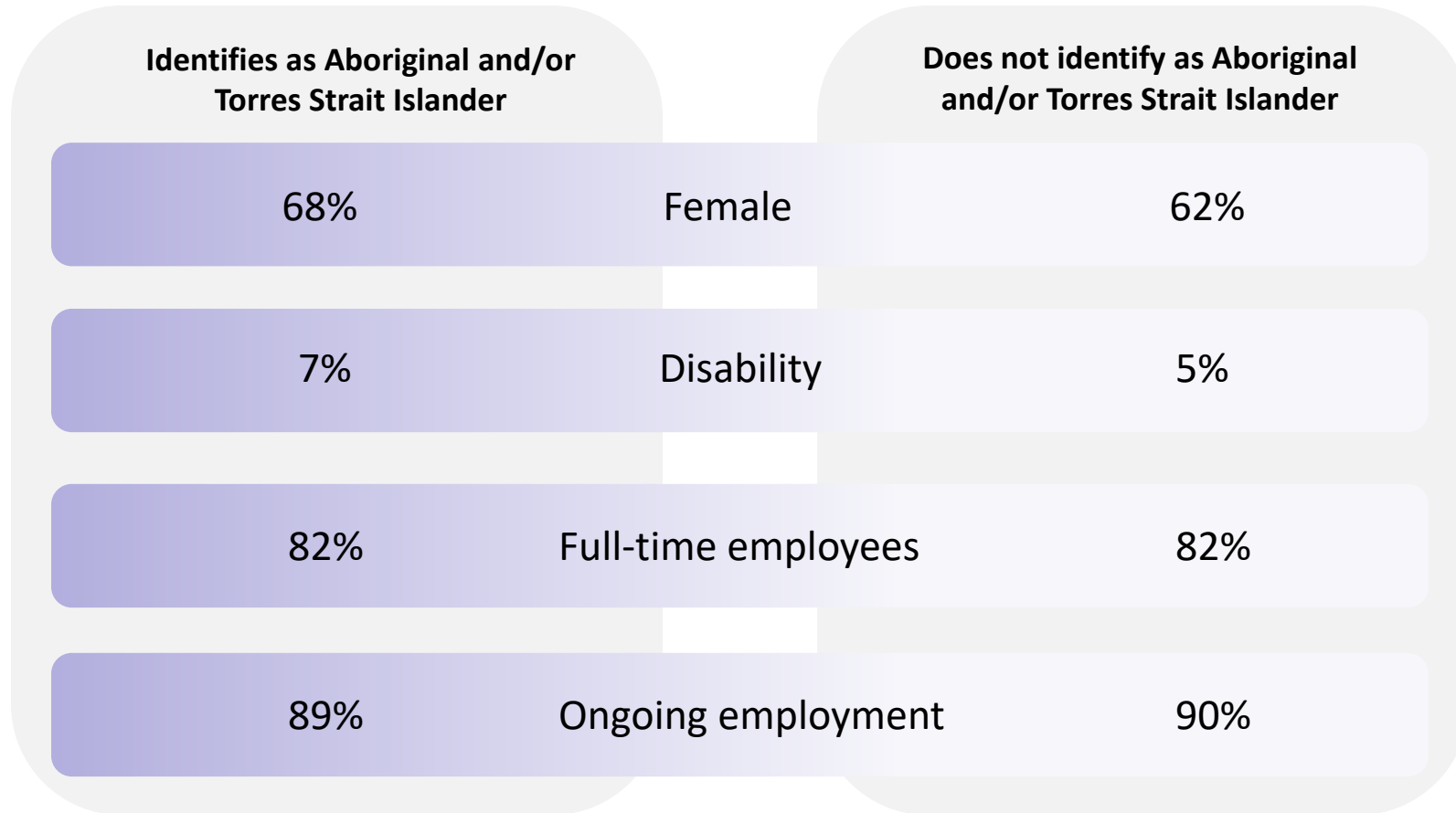


While employees with cultural and linguistic diversity have roles across all APS classification levels, fewer are represented at senior levels

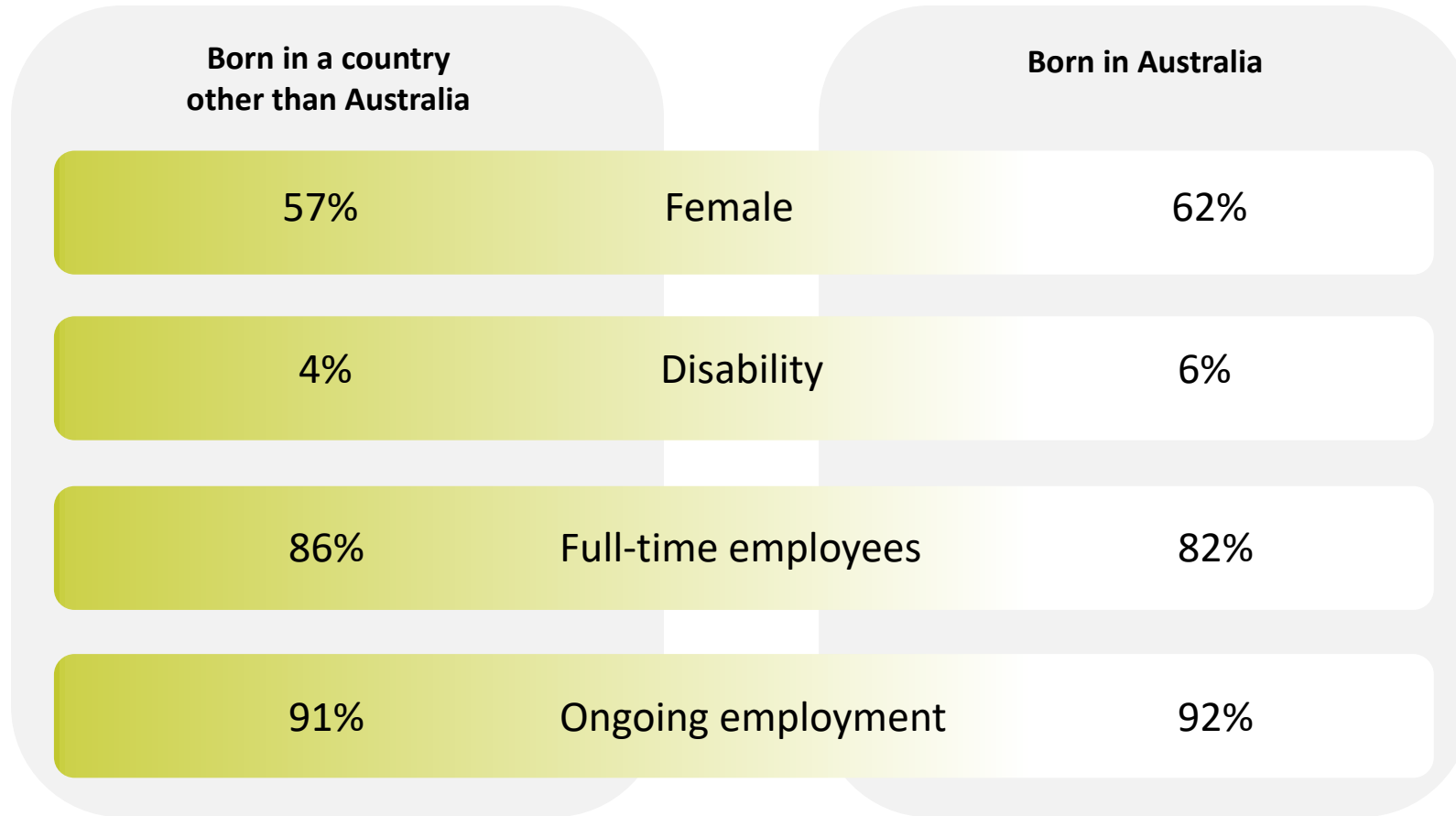
Proportion of employees by actual classification



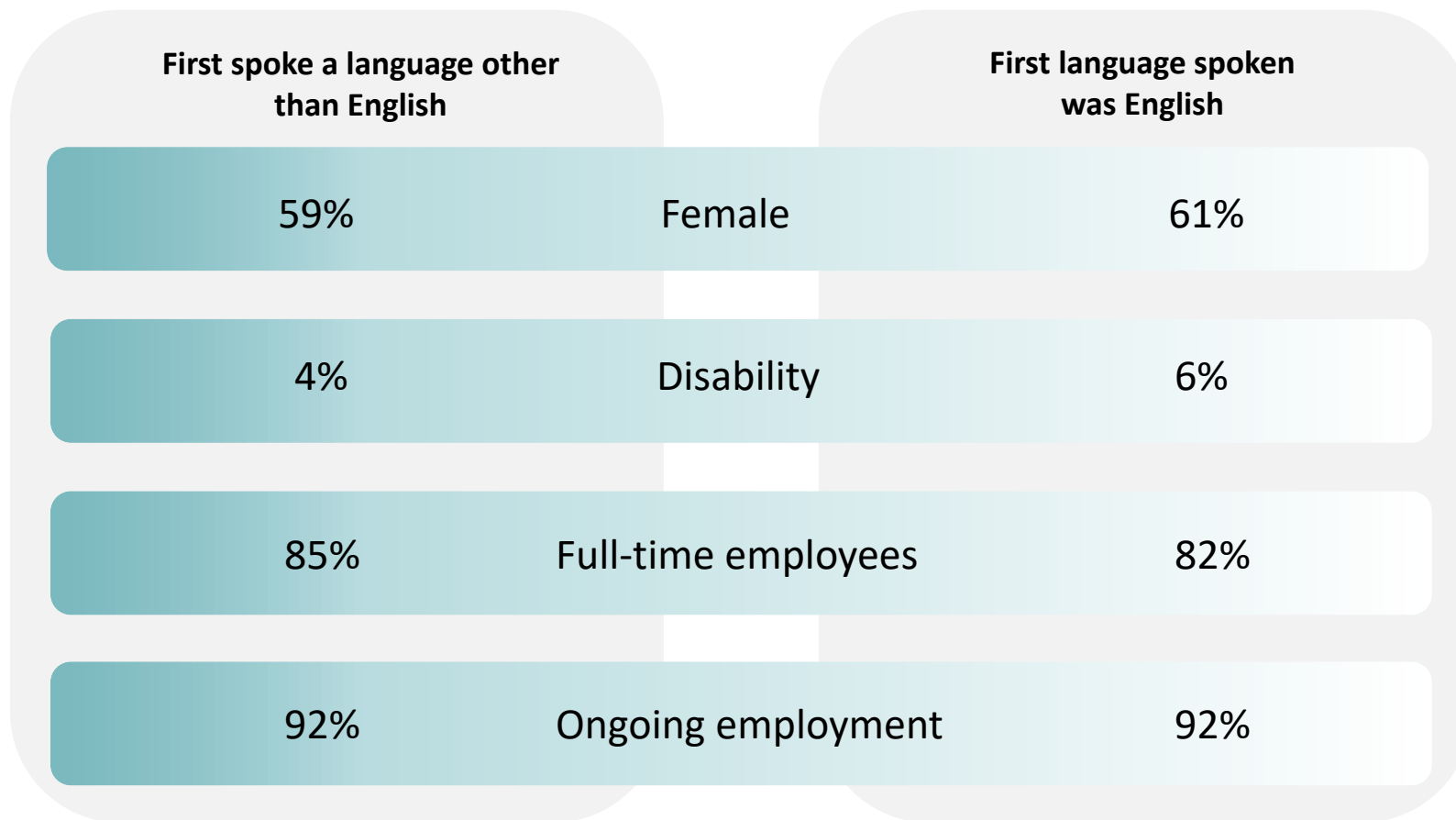
A larger proportion of First Nations employees were female



Employees born in a country other than Australia were more likely to be employed on a full-time basis



Employees who first spoke a language other than English show similar characteristics to those whose first language was English



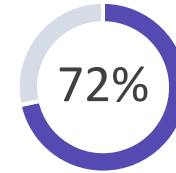
First Nations employees were typically younger than those in other CALD groups



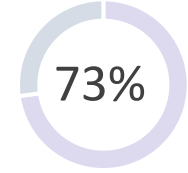
Employees with cultural and linguistic diversity had high levels of employee engagement

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

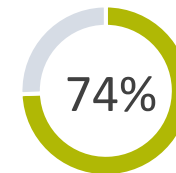
The Employee Engagement Index score for the APS overall is 73%.



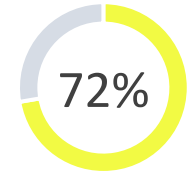
Employees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



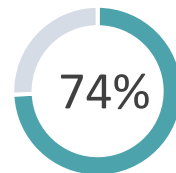
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



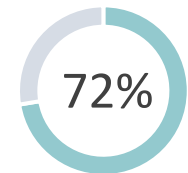
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



Employees who speak a language other than English at home

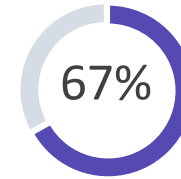


Employees who only speak English at home

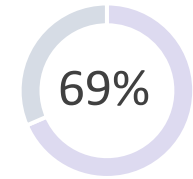
Employees with cultural and linguistic diversity perceived their wellbeing was supported

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

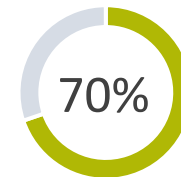
The Employee Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score for the APS overall was 68%.



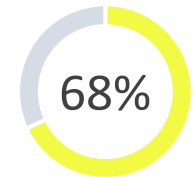
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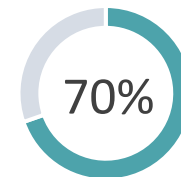
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



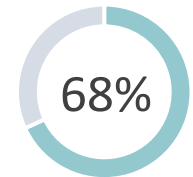
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia

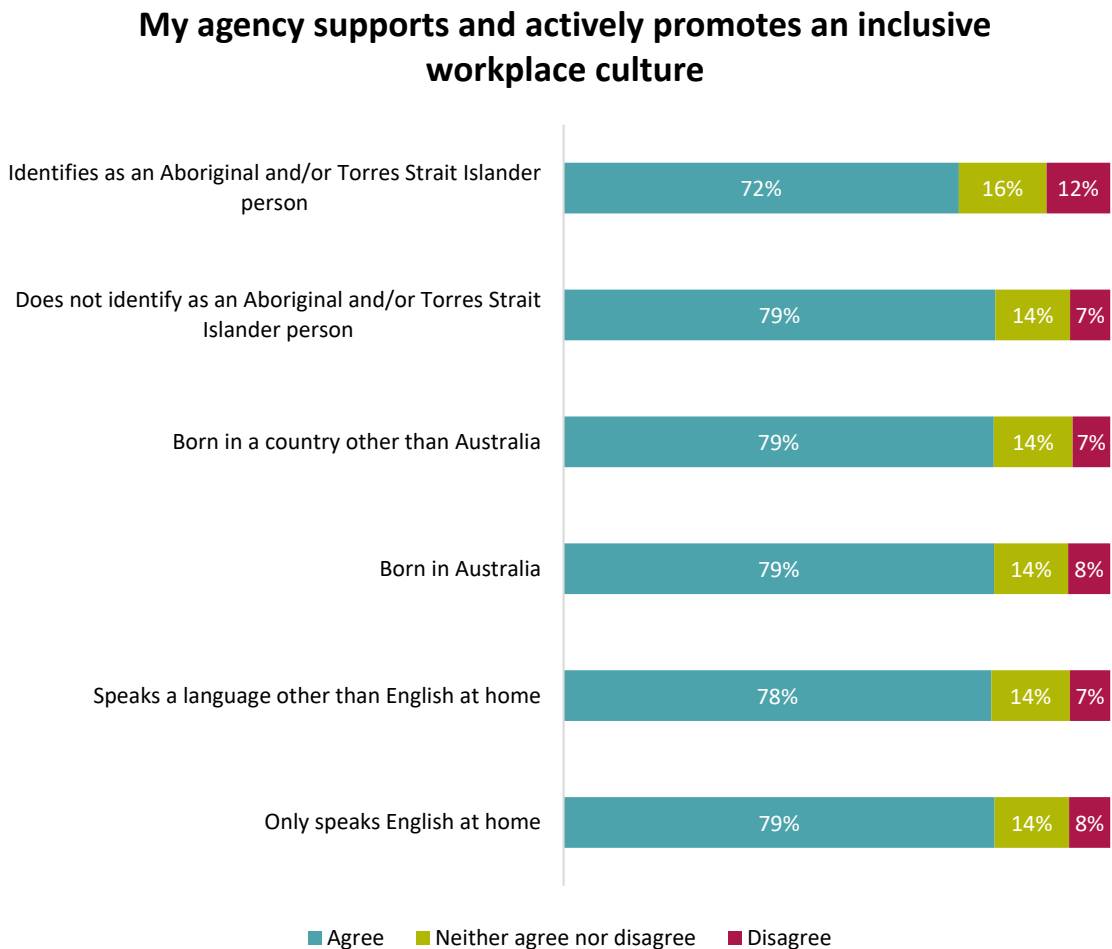


Employees who speak a language other than English at home



Employees who only speak English at home

The majority of employees with cultural and linguistic diversity perceive respect and inclusion in their workplaces



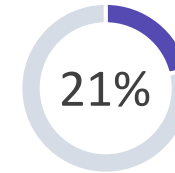
A majority of employees with and without cultural and linguistic diversity agreed their agency supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture.

A smaller proportion of those who identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, however, held this view than those who did not identify as Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

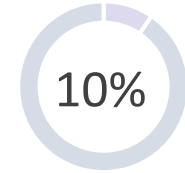
A larger proportion of respondents in CALD groups perceived discrimination over the last 12 months than other employees

Around one in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees 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 discrimination was on the basis of identification as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person (39%).

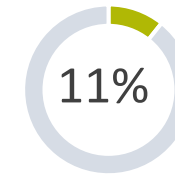
11% of those born overseas and 12% of those who speak a language other than English at home perceived discrimination.



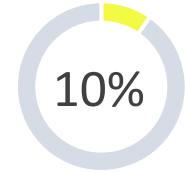
Employees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



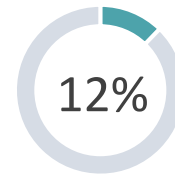
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



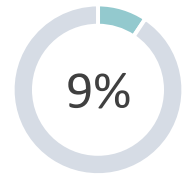
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



Employees who speak a language other than English at home

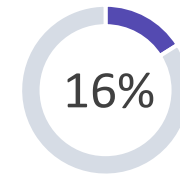


Employees who only speak English at home

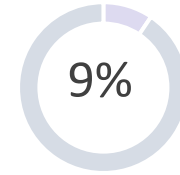
A larger proportion of First Nations employees perceived harassment or bullying

One in six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived that they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace during the previous 12 months.

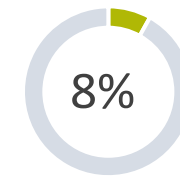
8% of those born overseas and 9% of those who speak a language other than English at home perceived harassment or bullying.



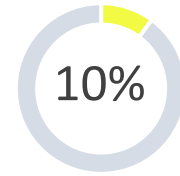
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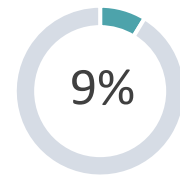
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



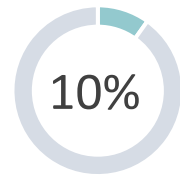
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



Employees who speak a language other than English at home



Employees who only speak English at home

For further information please contact:

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