



Satisfaction with Democracy in Australia: Pulse report, March 2026

Executive summary

After a statistically significant decrease in overall satisfaction with democracy in February 2026, results in March 2026 show a rebound in satisfaction, increasing to 62.7% in March 2026 from 58.7% in February 2026. This remains below the high recorded in January 2026 (64.8%) and is the second highest result since the survey began.

The proportion of respondents who were “very satisfied” increased to 21.2% in March 2026, the highest level recorded since the survey began. The proportion who were “satisfied” also increased (41.5% in March 2026 from 40.6% in February 2026), while the proportion who were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied declined (19.9% in March 2026 from 22.6% in February 2026). The proportion who were “very dissatisfied” declined by 1.1 percentage points in March 2026 to 4.6%.

Across demographic groups, satisfaction increased for most groups in March. The largest increases were among women (+8.1 percentage points to 57.4%), people born overseas (+12.5 percentage points to 69.5%), and people living in regional areas (+7.9 percentage points to 54.8%). Satisfaction among men remained steady and relatively high (-0.4 percentage points to 68.4%).

Perceived performance improved in March for most democratic elements following the decline in February 2026. However, the largest gaps between importance and performance continue to be concentrated in areas related to democratic integrity and fairness, including whether there are enough checks on political power, whether the law is applied impartially, whether courts are free from political influence, and whether the law is applied impartially. By contrast, elements related to information access, media, and learning about democracy showed relatively small gaps, and in some cases performance exceeded perceived importance.

Trust in institutions also increased for most institutions in March 2026, moving back toward levels observed in January 2026. The largest increase was recorded for Ombudsmen, while ambulance, fire, and other emergency services remained the most trusted institutions and political parties remained the least trusted.

The next wave is planned for June 2026.



Results

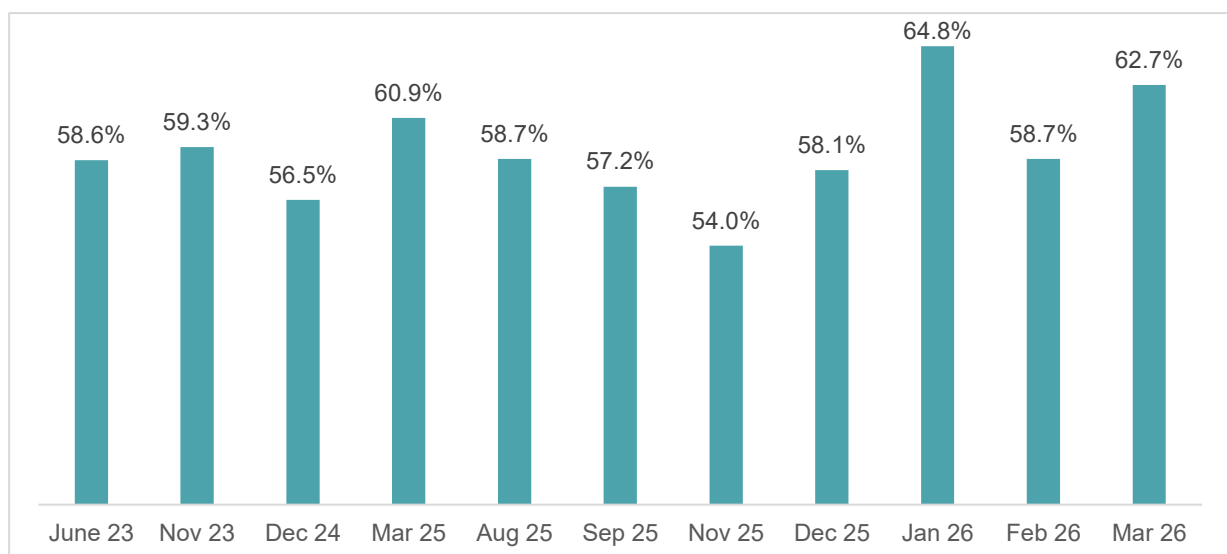
Satisfaction with democracy

Overall satisfaction (“satisfied” + “very satisfied”) has increased 4.0 percentage points in March 2026 from February 2026 (62.7% from 58.7%). It remains 4.6 percentage points above December 2025 (58.1%).

In terms of individual categories:

- the proportion of those who were “very satisfied” (21.2%) increased 3.1 percentage points, the highest it has been since the survey began
- the proportion of those who were “satisfied” increased 0.9 percentage points to 41.5% in March 2026
- the proportion of those who were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” decreased 2.7 percentage points to 19.9%
- the proportion of those who were “dissatisfied” increased 0.1 percentage points to 10.5%, which is 1.9 percentage points higher than January 2026 (8.6%).
- the proportion of those who are “very dissatisfied” decreased 1.1 percentage points to 4.6%.

Figure 1: Proportions of overall satisfaction over waves



Note: Proportions show those who responded “satisfied” or “very satisfied” to “how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Australia?”



Table 1: Satisfaction with democracy

Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Very satisfied	12.0	15.4	20.5	17.8	18.1	17.4	17.5	18.4	18.6	18.1	21.2
Satisfied	46.6	44.0	36.0	43.1	40.6	39.8	36.5	39.7	46.3	40.6	41.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	25.2	24.1	25.6	22.3	23.7	22.8	22.9	23.1	19.1	22.6	19.9
Dissatisfied	10.2	10.3	10.8	10.7	10.9	11.4	11.2	10.8	8.6	10.4	10.5
Very dissatisfied	3.1	2.9	4.3	3.8	3.9	5.4	9.2	4.6	4.4	5.7	4.6
Not sure	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.3	2.8	3.3	2.7	3.4	3.0	2.6	2.3

Individual characteristics of satisfaction

After declines in overall satisfaction for most groups in February 2026, there were increases in satisfaction, and in some cases significant increases, for every demographic group in March 2026 except men (-0.4 percentage points). However, men’s satisfaction remains higher than women’s and higher than most other demographic cohorts. Women’s satisfaction increased significantly by 8.1 percentage points (57.4%).

After a decrease in satisfaction of 4.7 percentage points in January 2026 and a further decrease of 5.6 percentage points in February 2026, satisfaction for people born overseas increased significantly by 12.5 percentage points in March 2026. Satisfaction for people born overseas is now 8.0 percentage points higher than people born in Australia, which reflects similar differences in satisfaction between these two groups for most of 2025. These cohorts had swapped over in January 2026 and February 2026, when people born in Australia had higher satisfaction than people born overseas for the first time since November 2023. Satisfaction for people born in Australia continues to be higher than December 2025 (+5.6 percentage points).

Satisfaction increased significantly for people living in regional areas (+7.9 percentage points to 54.8%). The difference in satisfaction between people living in metropolitan areas and



people living in regional areas has now narrowed to 10.6 percentage points, which is the lowest it has been since June 2023.

People aged 35-54 had an increase in satisfaction of 5.3 percentage points (to 60.6% in March). This age group has had the highest satisfaction of the age groups for 8 out of 11 waves. Satisfaction also increased for people aged 65+ (+4.0 percentage points; 62.3% in March), as well as for people aged 18-34 (1.8 percentage points; 66.4% in March).

Table 2: Overall satisfaction with democracy split by demographic group

Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Men	65.2	63.3	63.2	66.7	65.7	65.7	59.9	66.8	72.2	68.8	68.4
Women	52.8	55.3	50.2	55.6	52.1	48.9	48.5	50.0	57.8	49.3	57.4
18-34	58.4	59.2	67.0	63.2	63.2	63.4	57.1	65.5	75.3	64.6	66.4
35-64	57.0	56.1	49.9	58.5	55.3	52.1	49.7	55.1	61.3	55.3	60.6
65+	62.7	66.8	56.9	63.1	59.8	59.8	59.4	54.8	58.4	58.3	62.3
Metro	60.6	63.3	61.9	64.7	63.1	60.0	58.7	62.4	68.4	62.4	65.4
Regional	50.9	43.4	42.1	48.5	44.7	46.0	41.8	46.9	50.5	46.9	54.8
Did not finish Grade 12 equivalent	47.2	50.1	44.7	44.5	42.9	34.2	34.2	37.6	43.4	34.4	43.0
Finished Grade 12 or equivalent	60.4	60.5	58.4	63.8	61.5	60.1	57.9	62.7	67.7	62.4	65.8
Australian born	57.4	60.2	55.9	59.9	56.3	55.0	52.3	55.9	65.3	58.9	61.5
Born overseas	63.8	56.0	58.7	65.1	67.8	65.0	61.1	67.3	62.6	57.0	69.5



Note: proportions show those who selected “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied” to the question “How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Australia?”

Importance of democratic elements

Perceived importance was broadly stable in March 2026. The largest increases were for “people get a say on the government’s priorities” (+2.4 percentage points to 58.3%) and “people of all ages can easily learn how democracy works” (+2.2 percentage points to 57.0%). The biggest decrease was for “there are enough checks to ensure politicians and government officials can’t abuse their power” (-3.9 percentage points to 66.1%).

Respondents continue to assign the highest importance to core democratic safeguards and fairness-related elements, particularly whether elections are fair (72.7% in March), whether the law is applied impartially (69.6%), whether courts are free from political influence (69.0%), and whether public services are reliable (68.8%). Lower importance continued to be attached to more participatory or expressive elements, including whether people can freely express political opinions (55.2%), whether people get a say on the government’s priorities (58.3%), whether there is a free and independent media (56.2%), and whether people of all ages can easily learn how democracy works (57.0%). This suggests that Australians continue to place greater emphasis on fairness, integrity and institutional protections than on voice and expression, with fair elections standing out as an important exception.

Table 3: Importance of democratic elements (%)

Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
People can freely express political opinions and ideas about society	64.7	58.8	53.3	56.4	60.0	52.8	56.2	54.9	55.7	54.3	55.2
Elections are fair	80.4	77.3	67.2	69.9	72.7	67.4	68.5	68.0	73.1	71.8	72.7
The courts and law system are free from political influence, bias, and external pressures	77.8	73.4	65.9	69.3	70.8	67.3	66.0	66.0	72.1	68.9	69.0



Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Public services are reliable	73.0	69.9	64.5	66.4	68.2	65.4	63.2	65.5	69.6	67.3	68.8
People get a say on the government's priorities	63.8	59.2	56.7	55.4	62.9	57.2	59.8	55.1	55.9	55.9	58.3
Everyone is treated fairly regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or other characteristics	75.3	71.3	65.1	68.3	70.5	68.1	65.4	63.4	67.8	69.0	66.3
There are enough checks to ensure politicians and government officials can't abuse their power	75.9	72.9	66.3	68.5	71.0	69.8	68.3	66.4	71.6	70.0	66.1
The law is applied impartially regardless of who you are	76.9	72.6	67.0	66.8	67.5	67.3	64.3	64.7	70.8	69.9	69.6
People of all ages can easily learn how democracy works	58.7	60.8	53.2	55.4	57.2	56.9	56.6	51.6	58.4	54.8	57.0
A free and independent media	60.2	63.2	56.7	56.9	57.4	58.2	57.4	54.6	58.4	55.9	56.2
Free access to information	69.5	70.3	59.8	63.4	63.9	64.5	62.4	60.6	63.6	63.1	63.5



Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Human rights are protected	79.6	74.8	66.6	68.5	70.0	68.5	65.3	66.9	66.9	66.7	67.9

Performance of democratic elements

After slight declines in February 2026, the perceived performance (“good” + “very good”) of various key elements of democracy improved in March 2026 for most elements, although these changes were mostly modest and within the margin of error. The biggest increases were for “there are enough checks to ensure politicians and government officials can’t abuse their power” (+3.4 percentage points to 49.3% in March), and “the law is applied impartially regardless of who you are” (+3.2 percentage points to 56.0%). The biggest decline was “people can freely express political opinions and ideas about society” (-2.0 percentage points to 59.6% in March).

Despite these improvements, perceived performance continues to vary considerably across democratic elements. In March 2026, the highest performance ratings were for “elections are fair” (67.3%), “public services are reliable” (66.6%), “free access to information” (65.8%), and “human rights are protected” (65.7%). The weakest-performing elements continue to relate to voice, accountability, and institutional integrity, indicating that these remain key areas of concern. These are: “people get a say on the government’s priorities” (48.8%), “there are enough checks to ensure politicians and government officials cannot abuse their power” (49.3%), and “the courts and law system are free from political influence, bias, and external pressures” (54.3%).

Table 4: Performance of democratic elements (%)

Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
People can freely express political opinions and ideas about society	67.0	72.2	61.0	60.5	62.1	58.1	58.3	60.2	61.9	61.6	59.6
Elections are fair	70.1	73.2	64.5	63.3	65.9	60.5	58.0	61.9	69.6	65.3	67.3



Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
The courts and law system are free from political influence, bias, and external pressures	55.5	59.5	50.1	49.5	50.7	48.6	48.1	49.4	56.9	55.7	54.3
Public services are reliable	56.0	61.9	60.5	59.1	60.1	59.0	56.3	57.4	65.7	64.8	66.6
People get a say on the government's priorities	45.2	48.7	48.6	45.1	46.4	44.6	44.1	47.5	50.7	46.3	48.8
Everyone is treated fairly regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or other characteristics	55.3	57.7	55.4	53.9	56.1	53.1	50.8	52.9	58.3	56.8	56.0
There are enough checks to ensure politicians and government officials can't abuse their power	40.5	48.2	46.5	43.9	44.7	42.6	40.9	43.4	45.8	45.9	49.3
The law is applied impartially regardless of who you are	50.1	56.0	51.2	51.2	52.5	50.0	49.0	50.7	55.6	52.8	56.0
People of all ages can easily learn how democracy works	64.1	68.6	62.2	60.1	63.3	57.6	57.9	60.2	67.7	64.1	64.7



Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
A free and independent media	52.6	59.3	52.7	51.2	51.8	51.8	50.7	50.5	56.1	54.6	56.8
Free access to information	64.4	67.0	63.4	62.4	63.8	60.0	57.0	61.3	66.2	62.9	65.8
Human rights are protected	68.0	67.8	60.9	62.5	61.8	61.7	58.6	60.8	66.0	64.5	65.7

The gap between importance and performance

The importance-performance gap is measured by subtracting perceived importance from perceived performance for each element each month. This gives an indication as to whether people feel different elements of our democracy are stacking up to their expectations of how they should be performing.

The largest gaps continue to be concentrated in areas related to democratic integrity and fairness, although there were improvements for two out of the three biggest gaps: “there are sufficient checks on politicians’ power” (–16.8 percentage points in March, a reduction of 7.3 points from its gap of –24.1 percentage points in February), “the law is applied impartially” (–13.6 percentage points in March, a reduction of 3.5 points from its gap of –17.1 points in February), and “courts are free from political influence” (–14.7 percentage points in March, an increase of 1.5 percentage points from its gap of -13.2 points in February). Democratic elements related to information access and service delivery continue to show much smaller gaps.

Two elements that performed above their perceived importance in February continued in March: “people of all ages can easily learn how democracy works” (+7.7 points) and “people can freely express political opinions and ideas about society” (+4.4 points), although these positive gaps reduced for both elements in March (from +9.3 points and +7.3 points respectfully). Two elements that had negative gaps in February have performed above their perceived importance in March, although their improvements were small: “free and independent media” (+0.6 points, an improvement of 1.9 percentage points in March) and “free access to information” (+2.3 points, an improvement of 2.1 percentage points in March).



Trust in institutions

Trust increased by around one to two percentage points for most institutions in March 2026, although not statistically significant, moving closer to levels observed in January 2026.

Ombudsmen recorded the biggest increase in trust with a 4.3 percentage point increase (from 61.8% in February 2026 to 66.1% in March 2026). The only institution for which trust decreased is public servants, although its 1.0 percentage point decrease remains within the margin of error (52.1% in March 2026).

Ambulance, fire, and other emergency services continue to have the highest trust of any institution (87.5%). Political parties continue to have the lowest trust (32.9%).

Across institutions from December 2024 to March 2026, most show either an increase or broad stability in trust. Fourteen institutions increased by more than two percentage points, three changed by less than two percentage points, and none declined by more than two percentage points. The largest increases were for state or territory government (+6.2 percentage points), the Reserve Bank of Australia (+5.9 points), police and law enforcement (+5.5 points), the Australian Defence Force (+5.1 points), and Commonwealth/Federal Parliament, local council, courts and legal system, and public broadcasters, which each increased by 4.9 points.

Table 5: Trust in various institutions (%)

Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Commonwealth / Federal Government	50.1	51.2	44.2	49.0	48.2	46.7	44.0	49.1	49.8	45.8	48.9
Commonwealth / Federal Parliament	44.1	46.0	42.9	45.2	46.0	43.7	43.2	47.7	47.8	46.4	47.8
Your state or territory government	49.3	45.5	46.1	49.2	48.4	46.7	43.9	49.7	52.2	50.9	52.3



Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Your state or territory parliament	46.2	44.0	46.6	48.4	45.2	45.9	45.4	47.5	52.9	49.8	50.4
Your local council	48.5	49.1	47.1	48.0	46.3	45.5	42.5	48.3	53.0	49.9	52.0
Political parties	25.6	30.1	33.4	31.7	30.3	28.0	28.3	32.7	34.0	32.4	32.9
Public servants	45.3	47.5	48.7	50.6	50.8	50.1	46.8	51.9	56.7	53.1	52.1
Courts and legal system	54.3	54.3	52.1	54.6	53.8	53.0	47.3	56.1	57.3	54.8	57.0
Police and law enforcement	67.3	63.0	67.0	70.3	66.9	66.7	62.8	66.4	69.6	69.2	72.5
Public health institutions	72.1	69.1	64.9	69.9	66.7	64.8	62.2	67.0	70.9	68.1	69.5
Ombudsmen	62.1	59.4	63.6	64.2	62.2	60.4	57.0	63.4	64.4	61.8	66.1
Ambulance, fire, and other emergency services	88.5	85.1	85.1	87.7	87.5	87.1	84.2	86.2	87.9	87.4	87.5



Response category	Jun 2023 (%)	Nov 2023 (%)	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
Reserve Bank of Australia	38.5	42.4	48.1	51.2	53.2	50.4	49.5	54.1	59.1	53.8	54.0
Australian Electoral Commission	61.5	58.8	64.9	63.8	65.2	61.8	59.2	63.1	67.5	64.6	66.5
Australian Human Rights Commission	60.7	58.0	59.9	60.2	60.1	57.4	56.6	62.5	62.5	59.6	60.5
Australian Defence Force	72.1	69.8	72.6	76.6	74.6	74.4	71.2	73.4	74.3	74.7	77.7
Public broadcasters (e.g. ABC, SBS)	52.8	55.2	50.5	50.7	52.1	52.9	50.3	55.9	56.2	53.2	55.4

What are the views of those who are not satisfied with democracy?

The proportion of respondents who are not satisfied (either "very dissatisfied", "dissatisfied", "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", or "not sure") but believe "we need to continue building upon what we've got to improve democracy in Australia" decreased by 6.0 percentage points (from 45.2% in February 2026 to 39.2% in March 2026). This represents a drop of 4.1 percentage points across the whole sample.

The proportion of respondents who believe "we need to remove what we've got and start again to improve democracy in Australia" increased by 2.5 percentage points (27.5% in March 2026). As a percentage of the whole sample it is the same as February (10.3%).

The proportion of respondents who believe "there are political systems other than democracy that will work better in Australia" remains the same at 7.4% in March 2026, which represents a slight drop (0.2 percentage points) when compared to the whole sample.

Table 6: Preferences for democracy for those not satisfied with democracy (%)



Response category	Dec 2024 (%)	Mar 2025 (%)	Aug 2025 (%)	Sep 2025 (%)	Nov 2025 (%)	Dec 2025 (%)	Jan 2026 (%)	Feb 2026 (%)	Mar 2026 (%)
We need to continue building upon what we've got to improve democracy in Australia	47.4 (20.6)	44.5 (17.4)	45.6 (18.8)	44.6 (19.1)	40.0 (18.4)	41.9 (17.6)	42.5 (14.9)	45.2 (18.7)	39.2 (14.6)
We need to remove what we've got and start again to improve democracy in Australia	22.0 (9.6)	20.7 (8.1)	22.8 (9.4)	23.4 (10.0)	26.5 (12.2)	24.1 (10.1)	26.0 (9.1)	25.0 (10.3)	27.5 (10.3)
There are political systems other than democracy that will work better in Australia	6.2 (2.7)	7.8 (3.1)	8.1 (3.3)	7.4 (3.2)	8.5 (3.9)	6.1 (2.6)	4.5 (1.6)	7.4 (3.0)	7.4 (2.8)
Not sure	20.6 (9.0)	22.6 (8.8)	20.0 (8.3)	19.6 (8.4)	21.6 (9.9)	23.2 (9.7)	22.1 (7.8)	19.5 (8.1)	22.5 (8.4)
Other	3.9 (1.7)	4.4 (1.7)	3.5 (1.4)	4.9 (2.1)	3.4 (1.6)	4.7 (2.0)	5.0 (1.8)	2.9 (1.2)	3.4 (1.3)

Note: only respondents who previously selected "Very dissatisfied", "Dissatisfied", and "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" for the prior satisfaction in democracy question answered this question ("You indicated that you are [Very dissatisfied / Dissatisfied / Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied] with the way democracy works in Australia. Which of the following best reflects your opinion about democracy in Australia?"). Wave 1 and 2 responses excluded as the question was asked differently in those waves. Numbers in brackets reflect that response category's percentage of the whole sample.

Appendix

Since 2023, the Australian Public Service Commission in collaboration with the Office for Social Cohesion has surveyed a nationally representative cross-section of Australians on their attitudes toward democracy, trust in public institutions, and satisfaction with democratic processes across the following waves:

- Wave 1: June 2023
- Wave 2: Nov 2023
- Wave 3: Dec 2024



- Wave 4: Mar 2025
- Wave 5: Aug 2025
- Wave 6: Sep 2025
- Wave 7: Nov 2025
- Wave 8: Dec 2025
- Wave 9: Jan 2026
- Wave 10: Feb 2026
- Wave 11: Mar 2026.

Wave 1, conducted in June 2023, and wave 2, conducted in November 2023 were run as their own standalone surveys, with wave 2 providing a post-referendum examination of satisfaction with democracy. These two waves involved a non-representative sample, but data have been weighted to Australian population statistics. The results from the first two waves were reported in detail in our [Trust and Satisfaction in Australian Democracy report](#).

Wave 3 onwards consists of five key questions from the original democracy survey that were placed inside of the TAPS survey, a regular, national, online survey that measures public satisfaction, trust, and experiences with Australian public services. The five questions were selected to be able to capture core elements of the original questionnaire while aligning with existing TAPS questions and themes. TAPS is asked to a sample representative of Australian population statistics across age, gender, and location, thus no weighting has been applied.

While respondents in wave 3 onwards are shown different questions leading up to the democracy questions than those in wave 1 and 2, robustness checks on demographics found that the same characteristics drive satisfaction with democracy, and with similar magnitudes, alleviating some cause for bias concerns, however order effects would still be present.

Democracy Module from Survey of Trust in Australian Public Services Questionnaire

Introduction text

In this section of the survey, we will ask about your experiences and thoughts of democracy in Australia. Australia's democracy is made up of many institutions, processes and principles. Democracy



is a set of institutions and values that allow humans to decide, as equals, how they will live together. We are interested in your personal views about Australia's democracy.

Q1 - In thinking of what democracy means to you, how important do you consider each of the following elements of democracy? [*Scale from Not important at all, Somewhat important, Important, Very important, Not sure for each characteristic*]

- People can freely express political opinions and ideas about society
- Elections are fair
- The courts and law system are free from political influence, bias and external pressures
- Public services are reliable
- People get a say on the government's priorities
- Everyone is treated fairly regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion or other characteristics
- There are enough checks on senior politicians and government officials to ensure they cannot abuse their power
- The law is applied impartially regardless of who you are
- People of all ages can easily learn how democracy works
- A free and independent media
- Free access to information
- Human rights are protected

Q2 - How well do you think Australia performs in each of the following areas of democracy? [*Scale from Very poor, Poor, Fair, Good, Very good, Not sure for each characteristic*]

- People can freely express political opinions and ideas about society
- Elections are fair
- The courts and law system are free from political influence, bias and external pressures
- Public services are reliable
- People get a say on the government's priorities
- Everyone is treated fairly regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion or other characteristics
- There are enough checks on senior politicians and government officials to ensure they cannot abuse their power



- The law is applied impartially regardless of who you are
- People of all ages can easily learn how democracy works
- A free and independent media
- Free access to information
- Human rights are protected

Q3 - How much do you trust or distrust each of the following institutions? [*Scale from Strongly distrust, Distrust, Neither trust nor distrust, Trust, Strongly trust, Not sure for each characteristic*]

- Commonwealth/federal government
- Commonwealth/federal parliament
- Your state or territory government
- Your state or territory parliament
- Your local council
- Political parties
- Public servants (non-elected government employees at federal, state or local levels of government)
- Courts and legal system
- Police and law enforcement
- Public health institutions
- Ombudsman
- Ambulance, fire and other emergency services
- The Reserve Bank of Australia
- The Australian Electoral Commission
- Australian Human Rights Commission
- Australian Defence Force
- Public broadcasters (e.g. ABC, SBS)

Q4 - How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Australia?

Response options:



- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied
- Not sure

Q5 (Ask only for respondents who chose *Very dissatisfied*, *Dissatisfied* or *Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied* for Q4)

Which of the following best reflects your opinion about democracy in Australia?

- We need to continue building upon what we've got to improve democracy in Australia
- We need to remove what we've got and start again to improve democracy in Australia
- There are political systems other than democracy that will work better in Australia
- Not sure
- Other (please specify): _____