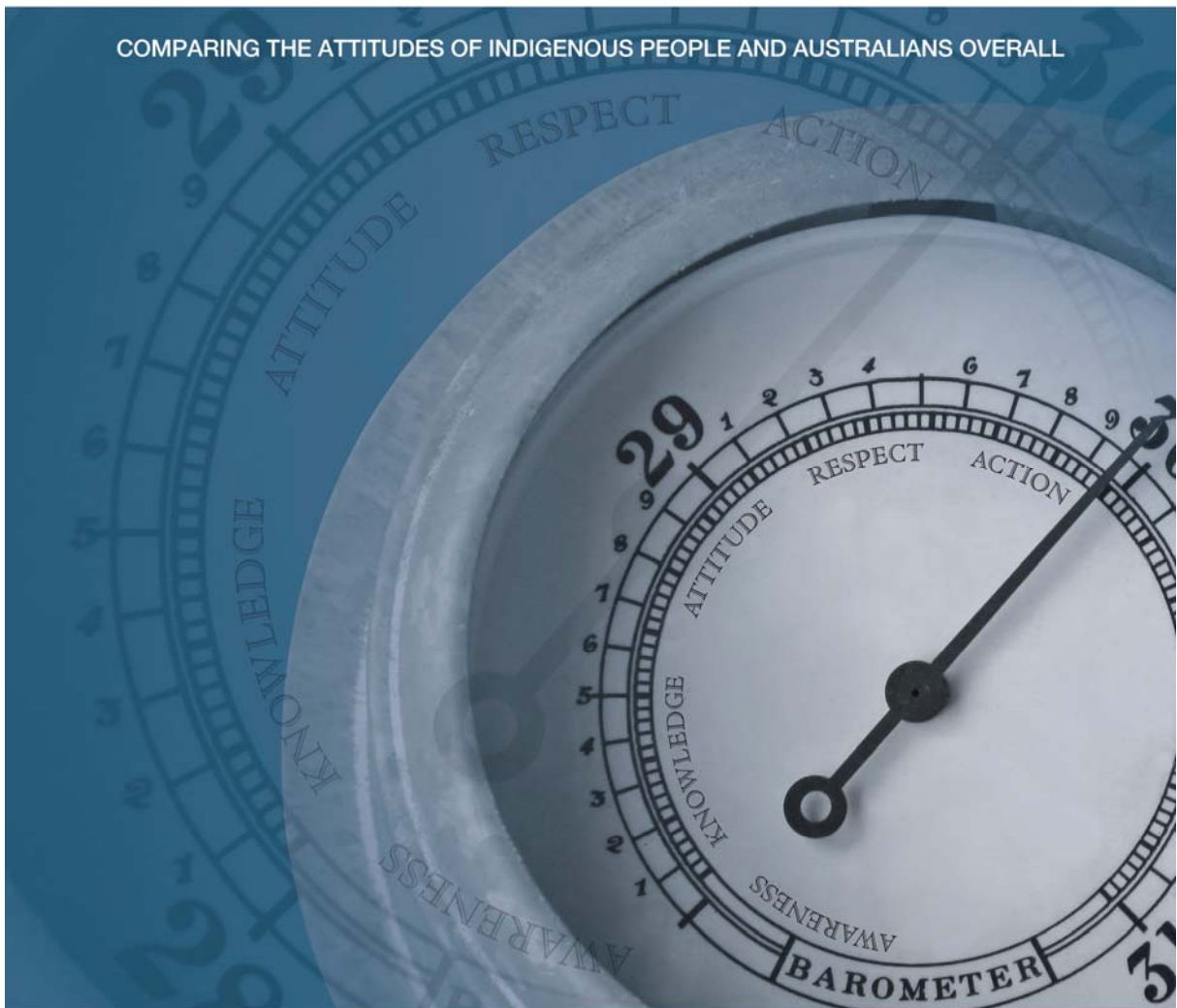




# Australian Reconciliation Barometer: Indigenous Sample Results

COMPARING THE ATTITUDES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND AUSTRALIANS OVERALL



PREPARED BY AUSPOLL PTY LTD FOR RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA • FEBRUARY 2009

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 3. AWARENESS—KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS

#### 3.1 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Not surprisingly, *'personal experiences'* constitute the main source of information about Indigenous people, with around two thirds (63%) of respondents selecting this option. *'Parents and family'* is the second most common source, with around a quarter (27%) of Indigenous respondents nominating this as their main source of information. Younger people are more likely to nominate options other than *'personal experiences,'* as their main source of information about Indigenous people. For example 49% of 18-29 year olds nominate other sources, whereas only 26% of those aged 50-59 nominate other sources as their main source of information.

#### 3.2 LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT INDIGENOUS HISTORY AND CULTURE

##### a. Knowledge about the history of Indigenous people in Australia

Most respondents feel they are knowledgeable about Indigenous history, with 9 out of 10 believing they either have 'very high' (50%) or 'fairly high' (40%) knowledge of Indigenous history. Perceived levels of knowledge increases with age. For example around two thirds of respondents (64%) aged 60 or over claim to have very high levels of knowledge compared to only around one third of 18-29 year olds (36%).

##### b. Knowledge about Indigenous culture

Most respondents believe they know a lot about Indigenous culture with more than 8 out of 10 claiming to have 'very high' (44%) or 'fairly high' (44%) levels of knowledge. There is also a clear relationship between increasing age and perceived levels of cultural knowledge. For example, only a third of younger people (18 – 29 years) claim to have 'very high' levels of knowledge, compared to around half (52%) of those aged 50 - 59 years. Those living in rural or remote locations are also more likely to claim to have high levels of knowledge of Indigenous culture than city or regional dwellers.

##### c. Comparing knowledge about Indigenous history and culture

Perceived levels of knowledge about Indigenous history and culture are broadly similar although respondents are somewhat more likely to have 'very high' levels of knowledge of Indigenous history (50%) than culture (44%). Around 9 out of 10 Indigenous respondents believe their knowledge levels are either 'very high' (50% for history and 44% for culture) or 'fairly high,' (40% for history and 44% for culture).

#### 3.3 IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE AMONG ALL AUSTRALIANS ABOUT INDIGENOUS HISTORY AND CULTURE

##### a. The history of Indigenous people in Australia

All respondents agree that it is important for all Australians to know about Indigenous history. 95% consider it to be 'very important' and the remaining 5% consider it 'fairly important.' Differences amongst sub groups are minor with women slightly more likely to believe it is 'very important' than men, and older respondents slightly more likely to believe it is 'very important' than younger people.

##### b. Indigenous culture

Participants also believe that it is vital for all Australians to know about Indigenous culture, in fact 99% agree that it is 'important'. Women are somewhat more likely than men to think that knowledge about Indigenous culture is 'very important' for all Australians: 90% compared to 76% of men.

##### c. Comparing the importance of knowledge about history and culture

Virtually all respondents think it is important for Australians to know about Indigenous history (100%) and culture (99%). However, respondents are slightly more likely to think that knowledge of history is 'very important' compared to knowledge of culture (95% compared to 85%).

#### 3.4 SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS HISTORY AND CULTURE IN AUSTRALIA

##### a. Stolen generations

Most Indigenous respondents are aware of how recently Indigenous Australians were affected by the stolen generations policies. Over half of respondents (54%) answered correctly, and 86% answered correctly or within one decade of the correct answer.

**b. Mabo**

Almost all respondents understand what the Mabo legislation relates to with 95% correctly nominating *'Indigenous land rights and native title.'* While the instance of correct answers generally increases with age, less than 10% of the youngest group (18 – 29 years old) answered incorrectly.

**c. The Dreamtime**

When asked about their knowledge of the 'Dreamtime,' more than 9 out of 10 Indigenous participants correctly identified it as *'history or creation according to Indigenous spiritual beliefs'*.

**3.5 KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS LIVES AND LIFESTYLES**

There is strong agreement among Indigenous respondents of three key aspects of Indigenous life and identity—the importance of the connection to traditional lands as part of Indigenous identity (96% agree) and the Indigenous tendency to have close family and extended family relationships which involve taking responsibility for other family members (97% agree). Most also agree there is a continuing effect of race based policies on some Indigenous people living today (96%).

We put three statements to participants relating to their perceptions of lifestyles in Indigenous Australia. Almost 8 of ten (79%) respondents agree that Indigenous people have a diverse range of lifestyles and occupations like other Australians. Three quarters of respondents (75%) believe that Indigenous people are mostly disadvantaged and live on the edge of mainstream society but very few believe that Indigenous people live mostly traditional lives in tribal groups (15%).

**3.6 SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS SOCIAL INDICATORS**

**a. Size of Indigenous population**

Most respondents are aware of the Indigenous proportion of the Australian population. Two thirds (67%) answered correctly, selecting either 2 or 3% of the population (the real figure is 2.4%). 1 in 5 people overestimate the Indigenous proportion of the total Australian population to be 5% or more, while less than 1 in 10 (8%) underestimate it.

**b. Male life expectancy**

Around 1 in 3 respondents answered correctly that Indigenous males live 17 yrs less than other males in Australia. However, almost half of all respondents underestimate the life expectancy of Indigenous males, with 44% believing that Indigenous males live 20 or 23 years less than other males in Australia. Conversely, around a quarter of respondents (24%) overestimate Indigenous life expectancy, believing that Indigenous males live between 5 and 15 years less than other males in Australia.

**3.7 SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS ACHIEVEMENT AND ROLE MODELS**

The majority of respondents can think of Indigenous people who set an example for others in each of the specific areas of achievement that were presented to them. The most visible is 'sport,' with virtually all respondents (99%) able to think of an Indigenous role model. 'The Arts' and 'service to the community' also rate very highly with 97% and 94% respectively recalling people who set an example for others. There is somewhat less recognition of role models in 'politics and government' (85%) and for Indigenous achievement in 'business,' with 1 in 5 (21%) not able to recall a business leader who sets an example for others.

**3.8 COMPARING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS**

When comparing achievements of Indigenous people to the rest of the population, respondents think Indigenous people are more successful in some areas than others. Indigenous achievement is seen to be strongest in 'sport' and 'the Arts', with most respondents believing that Indigenous achievement is greater than that of other Australians in these areas. However, the opposite applies in the areas of 'politics and government', and 'business', where around 7 in 10 respondents believe that Indigenous people achieve less than other Australians. Opinions relating to 'community service' achievement are more evenly spread with around a third of respondents (37%) believing Indigenous achievement is above average, 32% believing it is equal, and 27% believing it is below the level of other Australians.

## 4. ACCEPTANCE—SHAPING VALUES AND ATTITUDES

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### 4.1 VALUING INDIGENOUS CULTURE AND HISTORY IN AUSTRALIA

Responses to six statements about the place of Indigenous history and culture reveal strong support among Indigenous respondents for compulsory teaching of Indigenous history in schools (94% strongly agree), and strong recognition of the importance of Indigenous culture to our national identity (92% strongly agree). Most respondents also feel proud of Indigenous culture (92% strongly agree) and also believe that Australia has a richer culture because of our Indigenous heritage (77% strongly agree).

Interestingly, while more than 9 in 10 will strongly agree that they feel personally proud of Indigenous culture, less than half (47%) strongly agree with the idea that Indigenous people are open to sharing their culture with others. This may shed light onto one of the gaps that needs to be filled if we are to reach a point where all Australians share pride in Indigenous culture.

Most also agree that Australia is better off because we have many cultures (35% strongly agree and 34% agree). Although there is less support for this statement, only 7% of respondents disagree with it.

### 4.2 PERCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS

Indigenous respondents are almost evenly divided in their views of the quality of the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians. Approximately half rate it as 'good' (49%) and the other half rate it 'poor' (51%). Men tend to be more positive about the quality of the relationship than women and younger people are also more likely to think the relationship is 'good'.

### 4.3 IMPORTANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS FOR THE NATION

Indigenous respondents consider the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians as paramount for the nation. While perceptions about the quality of the relationship are divided, there is overwhelming agreement that the relationship itself is either very important (95% agree) or important (5% agree) for Australia as a nation.

### 4.4 LEVELS OF TRUST BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS

#### a. Trust that other Australians have for Indigenous people

Respondents believe that Australians, in general, have low levels of trust for Indigenous people with 9 out of 10 believing the level of trust is very low (44%) or fairly low (47%). This view is consistent across all demographic groups although men are slightly more inclined to believe that levels of trust are higher.

#### b. Trust that Indigenous people have for other Australians

In a similar pattern, most participants also believe that Indigenous people have a low level of trust towards other Australians. More than four fifths of respondents (86%) believe that Indigenous people have a 'low' level of trust for other Australians (55% 'fairly low' and 31% 'very low'). Differences between demographic groups are small, although young people (aged 18-29) and those aged 60 and over are slightly more likely to think levels of trust are higher.

#### c. Comparison of perceived levels of trust

It is clear that respondents view the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians as being characterised by mutual mistrust. They think that Indigenous people have very little trust for other Australians (86% low), and other Australians have even lower levels of trust for Indigenous people (91% low). The proportions of 'very low' responses shows that respondents are somewhat more likely to believe that the level of trust that other Australians have for Indigenous people is lower than the level of trust that Indigenous people have for other Australians (31% 'very low' compared with 44% 'very low').

#### 4.5 LEVELS OF PREJUDICE BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS

##### a. Level of prejudice between Australians and Indigenous people

Prejudice is also considered a very significant factor in the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians. Almost all respondents (94%) believe that there are 'high' levels of prejudice held by other Australians towards Indigenous people. Interestingly, three quarters (75%) also believe that Indigenous people have 'high' levels of prejudice towards other Australians. The differences in perceived prejudice are more obvious when examining levels of 'very high' prejudice. Around half the respondents (51%) think that the other Australians have 'very high' levels of prejudice towards Indigenous people, whereas only one in five (19%) think that Indigenous people have 'very high' levels of prejudice towards other Australians.

#### 4.6 GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS

##### a. General impressions of all Australians

Participants tend to view Australians generally as being good at sport, proud, easy going, good humoured, friendly and hard working. More than half of participants also see Australians as family-orientated, welcoming and co-operative. In contrast, less than a third consider Australians to be disciplined or respectful.

##### b. General impressions of Indigenous people

Participants have a more positive image of Indigenous people than they do of other Australians across all personality attributes. Indigenous people most often associate themselves with being good at sport, family-orientated, good humoured, friendly and proud. Most also believe Indigenous people are easy going, welcoming, respectful, cooperative and hard working. On the other hand, only about one third believe that Indigenous people are disciplined.

##### c. Comparing general impressions of all Australians and Indigenous Australians

Respondents rate Indigenous people more highly on all of the attributes presented to them. The differences between perceptions of Indigenous people and perceptions of other Australians were largest for 'hardworking', 'respectful' and 'welcoming'. In contrast the attributes with the greatest commonality were 'good at sport', 'friendly' and 'easy going'. However, the factor of greatest commonality concerns what Indigenous and other Australians are considered not to be: disciplined.

#### 4.7 COMPARING THE LIVES OF INDIGENOUS AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS

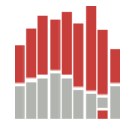
When comparing Indigenous people to other Australians on a range of social and personal indicators, most respondents believe that Indigenous levels are lower than those occurring among the rest of the population and, in many cases, the level is perceived as being much lower.

Around 9 out of every 10 respondents believe Indigenous people have a lower level on virtually every indicator (housing, employment, education, health, self esteem and access to opportunities). Furthermore, more respondents see these levels as being 'much lower' than 'slightly lower'. The sole exception was 'personal pride' with only 54% of respondents thinking Indigenous levels of pride were lower than other Australians.

The areas of greatest perceived difference between the two groups are housing, employment, education and health. For all these indicators, over three quarters of participants perceive Indigenous levels to be 'much lower' than other Australians.

Indigenous people are also seen to be well behind in terms of access to opportunities with two thirds of respondents seeing Indigenous levels as 'much lower' and another quarter as 'slightly lower.'

The personal attributes of self esteem and personal pride are viewed somewhat differently. Regarding self esteem, Indigenous people are seen to fall behind the rest of the population, with 90% believing Indigenous people have lower levels than others. However, Indigenous people are thought to exhibit greater personal pride, with almost half of respondents believing Indigenous levels are the same or better than other Australians.



#### **4.8 REASONS BEHIND INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE**

Most participants believe that there are many different factors that have created the disadvantage experienced by some Indigenous people today, with over 85% of respondents thinking each factor was 'important' in creating disadvantage. More than three quarters of participants believe that the factors which have been 'very important' in creating the situation of disadvantage for some Indigenous people today are: discrimination, race-based policies of the past, poor access to health and education, lack of respect, ineffective government policies, alcohol and substance abuse and inadequate living conditions. Even the personal factors of lack of confidence and lack of personal responsibility are considered 'very important' by two thirds and half of respondents respectively.

#### **4.9 VALUES UNDERLYING ATTITUDES TO RECONCILIATION**

Nine of every ten respondents agree with a fundamental aspect of Indigenous Australia: that Indigenous people hold a special place as the first Australians (92% agree). However, despite this 'special place' most also believe it is harder for an Indigenous person to achieve in Australia today (70% agree).

More than half of the respondents (56%) perceive the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians as improving with only 16% believing it is getting worse. This clearly bodes well for the future prospects of reconciliation in Australia.

Not surprisingly more than 8 out of 10 respondents reject the statement that non-Indigenous Australians are superior to Indigenous Australians.

## 5. ACTION—TAKING AND SUPPORTING ACTION

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### 5.1 ACTION AND PROGRESS TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

Responses to five statements can be seen as indicators of action and progress towards reconciliation.

Understandably, almost all respondents agree that they would feel fine if their child married an Indigenous person (93% agree). There is also broad recognition of the notion that some Indigenous people need specific help to achieve equality with other Australians (91% agree).

When it comes to Indigenous people and leaders working together and with non-Indigenous people to overcome problems, respondents are far less likely to agree. Responses are divided as to whether *'Indigenous people are good at working together to address the problems that confront them'*; around half agree with this statement (52%) while a quarter disagree (25%) and another quarter (23%) neither agree nor disagree. Only 22% of people believe *'there is good cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in Australia'* and around half (48%) of participants *'disagree'*.

The media is not regarded as presenting *'a balanced view of Indigenous Australia'*, with 8 of 10 respondents disagreeing and almost half (47%) strongly disagreeing with this statement.

### 5.2 COMPARISON OF CURRENT AND DESIRED FUTURE LEVELS OF CONTACT WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

As expected, almost all Indigenous respondents have frequent contact with other Indigenous people and desire to continue this way.

### 5.3 INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

There is a high level of personal engagement and action relating to reconciliation among Indigenous respondents with 99% having taken steps to advance reconciliation or to help disadvantaged people in the last 12 months. The most common actions relate to talking to people, advocating, building relationships and supporting children, with around 8 of every 10 respondents taking these sorts of actions. Specific actions such as donating time, supporting the arts, educating oneself and implementing employment strategies have also been made by more than 60% of respondents. The activities that are engaged in least often are donating money and reconsidering one's view about Indigenous Australia.

### 5.4 DESIRE FOR PERSONAL AND GOVERNMENT ACTION

Participants believe that the government has a responsibility to help disadvantaged Indigenous people and they support specific measures to overcome disadvantage (76% strongly agree). There is also a great deal of interest in taking personal action (68% strongly agree). However, respondents are slightly less sure of what they can personally do to help disadvantaged people (49% strongly agree).

### 5.5 GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ADDRESS INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE

Indigenous respondents generally believe that government programmes designed to address Indigenous disadvantage have been *'unsuccessful'* (74%). This result is relatively consistent across all groups, however, those in rural and remote areas are slightly more positive about the impact of projects, with around one third (32%) seeing them as *'successful'*.

### 5.6 PRIORITISING MEASURES TO ADDRESS INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE

Respondents overwhelmingly believe the government should give high priority to a range of measures to deal with Indigenous disadvantage. Equality in health, education, life expectancy and employment are considered a *'high priority'* or *'fairly high priority'* by all respondents. Measures to reach equality in housing and leadership skills are also supported by over 97% of respondents.

### 5.7 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE APOLOGY

Indigenous respondents appreciate the importance of the 2008 apology to members of the stolen generations both from the perspective of Indigenous people (93% think this was *'very important'*) and for relations with other Australians (80% think this was *'very important'*).



## 2. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

This research was conducted by Auspoll on behalf of Reconciliation Australia. The results are based on a quantitative questionnaire that was completed by 617 Indigenous Australians aged 18 and over. The survey was conducted between June 25<sup>th</sup> and July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Participants were recruited through Indigenous networks throughout Australia with an open invitation distributed by email. The questionnaires were completed online by participants. Previous studies have shown that online research produces research which is at least as accurate (and sometimes more accurate) than telephone research. Another benefit of this approach is the removal of any interviewer bias that may be introduced when discussing sensitive issues. However, it is possible that this methodology over samples the computer literate population which tends to be more highly educated.

The indicative margin of error for a sample size of 617 is +/- 3.9 per cent at the 95% confidence interval. This means that if the true value in the population is 50% and a survey was repeated 20 times then on 19 of those occasions the survey would return a result between 53.9% and 46.1%. A correspondingly higher margin of error would apply to subgroup analyses so care should be taken in the interpretation of subgroup findings.

### 2.2 Sample characteristics

The following table outlines the demographic characteristics of the survey sample compared to statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

	Survey sample	Indigenous population (over 18 years ABS)
Male	32%	49%
Female	68%	51%
18 – 29	12%	29% (20 – 29 years)
30 – 39	32%	26%
40 – 49	31%	21%
50 – 59	22%	13%
60+	4%	10%
Capital city	33%	31% (Major city)
Regional centre	38%	45% (Regional)
Rural/remote	29%	24% (Remote/very remote)

### 3. AWARENESS—KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS

#### 3.1 Sources of information

Which of the following is your main source of information about Indigenous people?

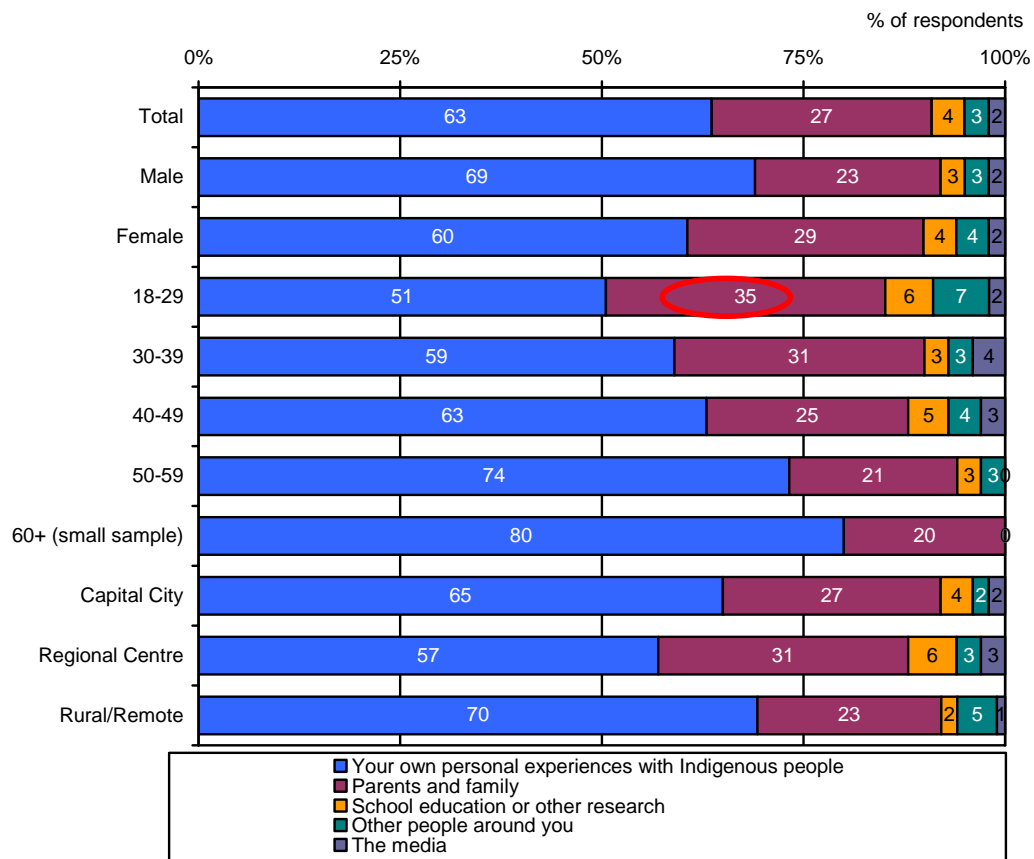
Your own personal experiences with Indigenous people

The media

School education or other research

Other people around you

Parents and family



## KEY FINDINGS:

Not surprisingly, *'personal experiences'* constitute the main source of information about Indigenous people, with around two thirds (63%) of respondents selecting this option. *'Parents and family'* is the second most common source, with around a quarter (27%) of Indigenous respondents nominating this as their main source of information. Younger people are more likely to nominate options other than *'personal experiences,'* as their main source of information about Indigenous people. For example 49% of 18-29 year olds nominate other sources, whereas only 26% of those aged 50 – 59 nominate other sources as their main source of information.

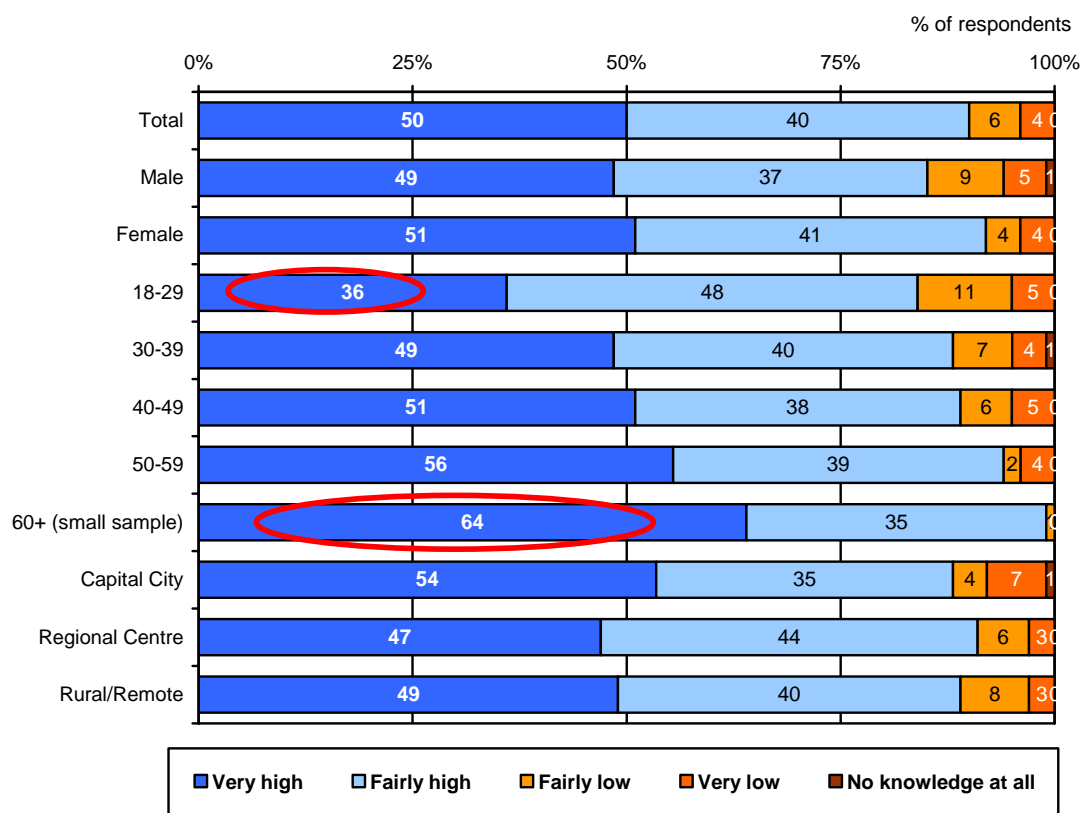
- Two thirds of Indigenous respondents (63%) claim that their *'own personal experiences with Indigenous people'* are their main source of information, while 27% nominated *'parents and family'* as their main source of information.
- The other three options were nominated by very few respondents, *'school education or other research'* was nominated by 4%, *'other people'*, by 3% and *'the media'* by only 2%.
- Younger people are more likely than other age groups to nominate sources other than their own experiences as their main source of information. 18-29 year olds, in particular, are the most likely to nominate other sources of information. Over a third of this group (35%) selected *'parents and family as their main source of information,'* 7% nominated *'other people around you'*, 6% nominated *'school education'* and 2% nominated *'the media.'*

### 3.2 Level of knowledge about Indigenous history and culture

How would you describe your level of knowledge about the following topics?

- Knowledge about the history of Indigenous people in Australia
- Knowledge about Indigenous culture

#### a. Knowledge about the history of Indigenous people in Australia

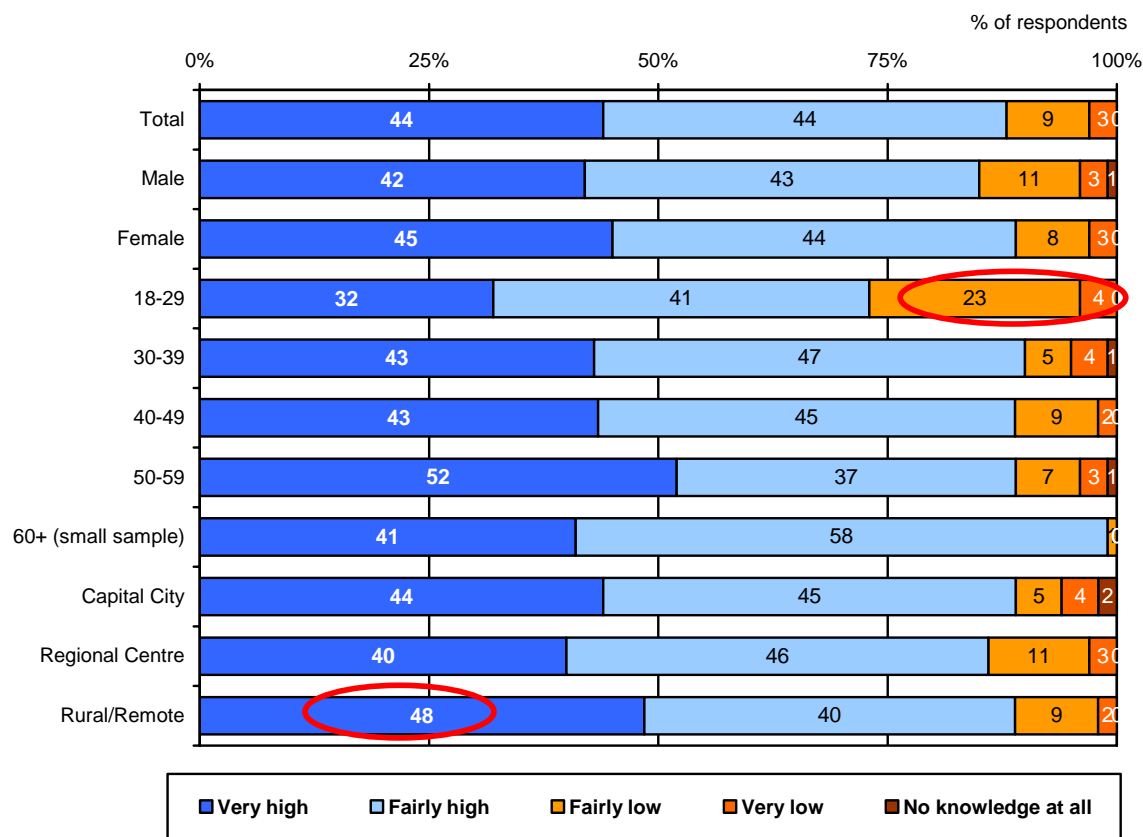


#### KEY FINDINGS:

Most respondents feel they are knowledgeable about Indigenous history, with 9 out of 10 believing they either have 'very high' (50%) or 'fairly high' (40%) knowledge of Indigenous history. Perceived levels of knowledge increase with age. For example around two thirds of respondents (64%) aged 60 or over claim to have 'very high' levels of knowledge compared to only around one third of 18-29 year olds (36%).

- Around half of all respondents (51%) think they have 'very high' knowledge of Indigenous history.
- Only 10% believe they have a low level of knowledge, with 6% of respondents claiming to have a 'fairly low' level of knowledge and 4% claiming to have a 'very low' level of knowledge.
- Younger Indigenous people (18 – 29 years old) have lower levels of perceived knowledge than other age groups. Only 36% of this group believe they have a 'very high' level of knowledge and 16% feel they have either 'fairly low' or 'very low' knowledge of Indigenous history.

## b. Knowledge about Indigenous culture

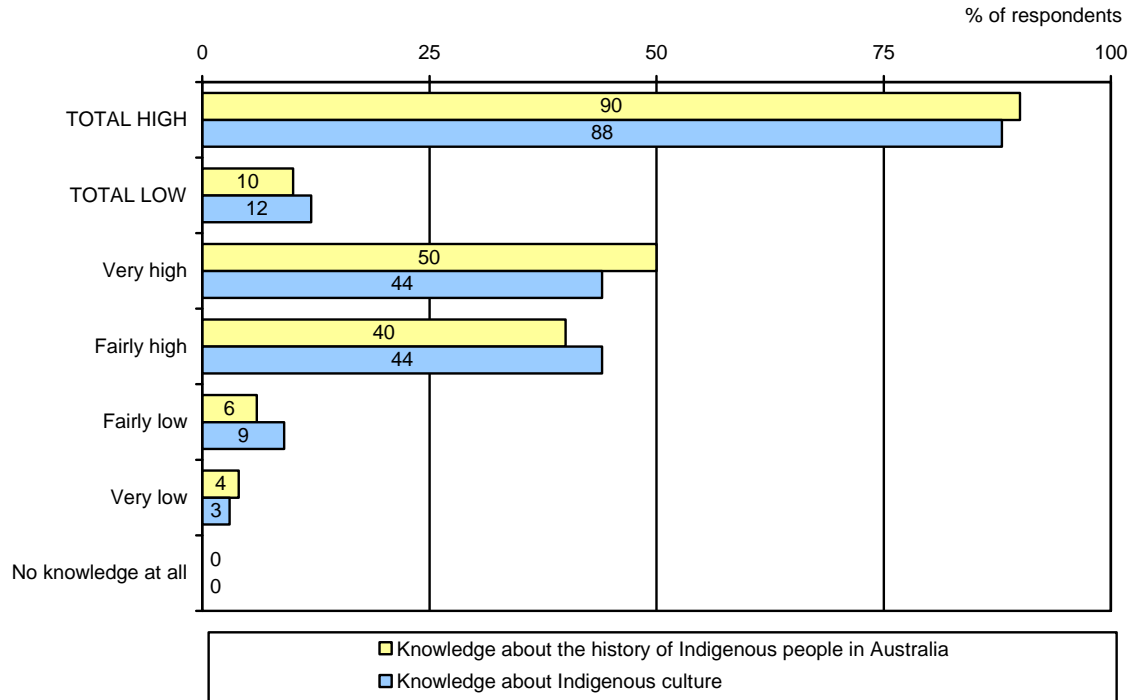


### KEY FINDINGS:

**Most respondents believe they know a lot about Indigenous culture with more than 8 out of 10 claiming to have a ‘very high’ (44%) or ‘fairly high’ (44%) level of knowledge. There is also a clear relationship between increasing age and perceived levels of cultural knowledge. For example, only a third of younger people (18 – 29 years) claim to have ‘very high’ levels of knowledge, compared to around half (52%) of those aged 50 - 59 years. Those living in rural or remote locations are also more likely to claim to have high levels of knowledge of Indigenous culture than city or regional dwellers.**

- All respondents claim to have some knowledge of Indigenous culture. Nearly half of all respondents (44%) believe they have a ‘very high’ level of knowledge of Indigenous culture and another 44% believe they have a ‘fairly high’ level of knowledge.
- Only around 1 in 10 respondents claim to have either ‘fairly low’ (9%) or ‘very low’ (3%) levels of knowledge of Indigenous culture.
- Knowledge of Indigenous culture is significantly lower amongst respondents aged 18 – 29. Over a quarter of them (27%) claim to have ‘fairly or very low’ knowledge of Indigenous culture compared to only 12% of respondents overall. Levels of knowledge generally increase with age, although middle aged people (50 – 59 years old) are the most likely to claim to have ‘very high’ levels of knowledge of Indigenous culture; 52% claim to have ‘very high’ levels of knowledge.
- Geographical differences are relatively minor, although rural and remote respondents have the highest perceived levels cultural knowledge, with almost half (48%) having ‘very high’ levels of knowledge compared to only 44% of the overall population.

### c. Comparing knowledge about Indigenous history and culture



#### KEY FINDINGS:

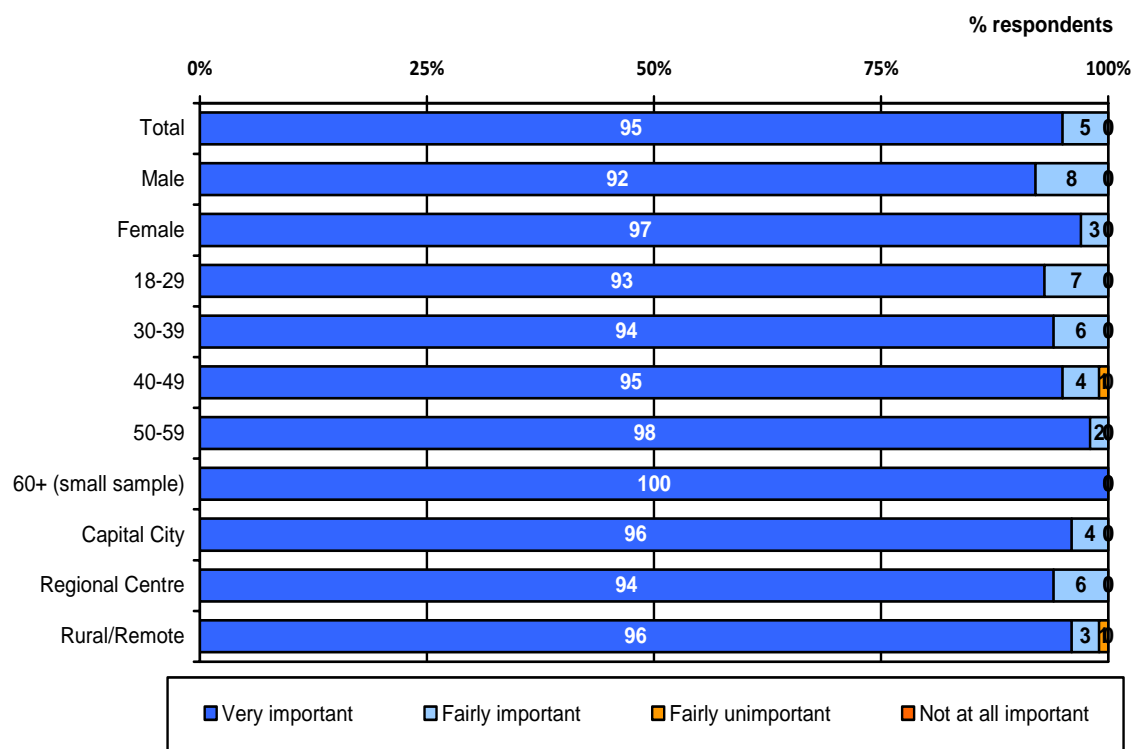
Perceived levels of knowledge about Indigenous history and culture are broadly similar although respondents are somewhat more likely to have ‘very high’ levels of knowledge of Indigenous history (50%) than culture (44%). Around 9 out of 10 Indigenous respondents believe their knowledge levels are either ‘very high’ (50% for history and 44% for culture) or ‘fairly high’ (40% for history and 44% for culture).

### 3.3 Importance of knowledge among all Australians about Indigenous history and culture

How important is it that all Australians know about the following topics?

- a. The history of Indigenous people in Australia
- b. Indigenous culture

#### a. The history of Indigenous people in Australia

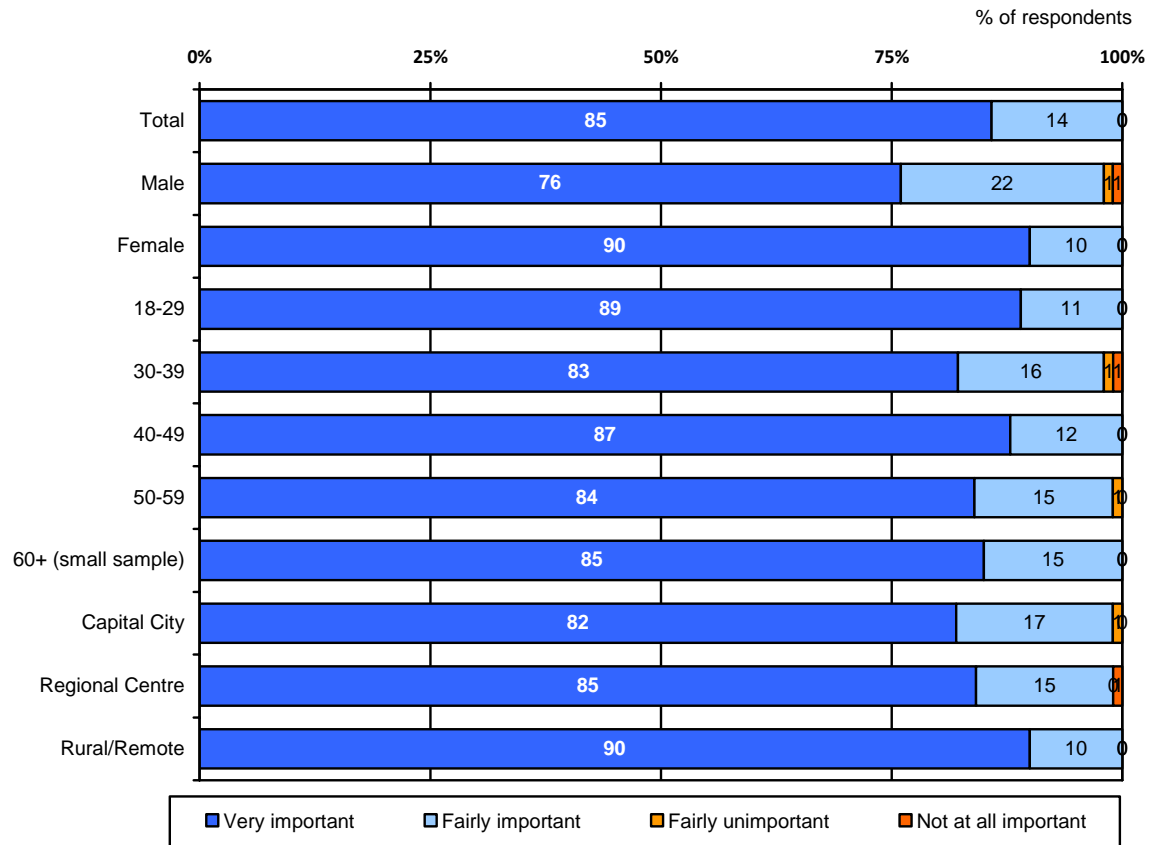


#### KEY FINDINGS:

All respondents agree that it is important for all Australians to know about Indigenous history. 95% consider it to be 'very important' and the remaining 5% consider it 'fairly important'. Differences amongst sub groups are minor with women slightly more likely to believe it is 'very important' than men, and older respondents slightly more likely to believe it is 'very important' than younger people.

- All respondents think it is either 'very important' (95%) or 'fairly important' (5%) for all Australians to know about Indigenous history.
- Women are slightly more likely than men to think that it is important to know about Indigenous history: 97% of women think it is 'very important' compared to 92% of men.
- Older respondents are also somewhat more likely to think it is important for Australians to know about indigenous history.
  - 93% of 18 – 29 year olds believe it is 'very important'
  - 94% of 30 – 39 year olds believe it is 'very important'
  - 95% of 40 – 49 year olds believe it is 'very important'
  - 98% of 50 – 59 year olds believe it is 'very important'
  - 100% of those aged 60 or older believe it is 'very important'

## b. Indigenous culture



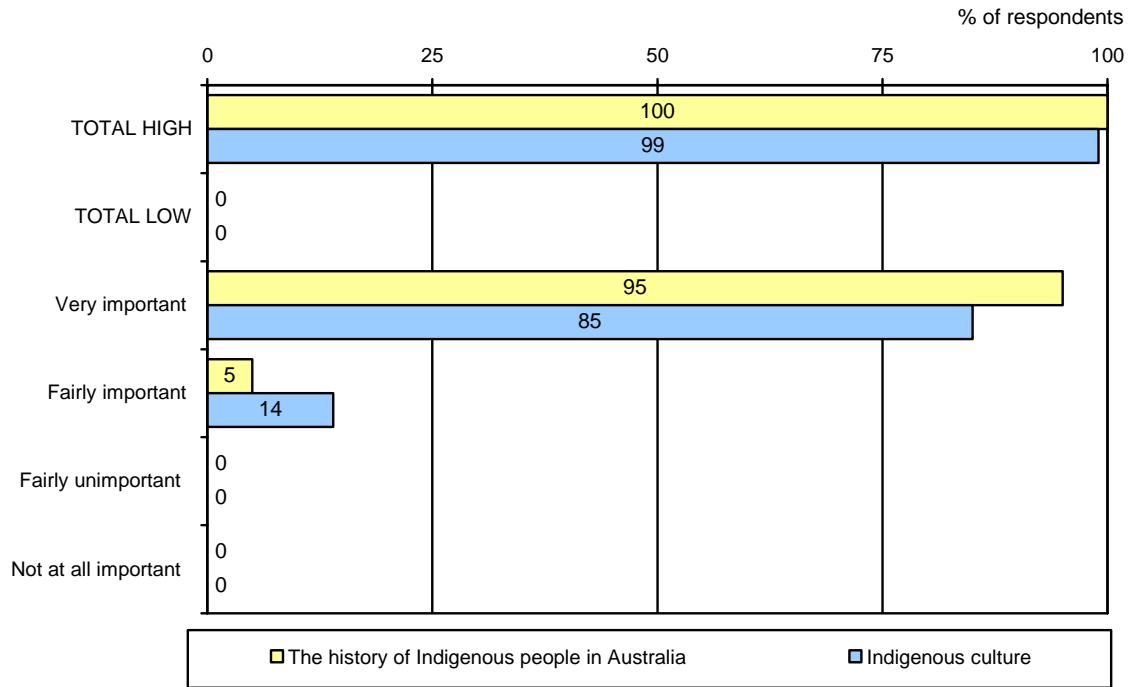
### KEY FINDINGS:

**Participants also believe that it is vital for all Australians to know about Indigenous culture – in fact, 99% agree that it is ‘important’. Women are somewhat more likely than men to think that knowledge about Indigenous culture is ‘very important’ for all Australians: 90% compared to 76% of men.**

- Virtually all respondents (99%) believe that it is important for all Australians to know about Indigenous culture.
  - 85% of Australians believe it is ‘very important’.
  - 14% of Australians believe it is ‘fairly important’.
- Women are more likely than men to think that it is important to know about Indigenous culture.
  - 90% of women believe that it is ‘very important’ compared to only 76% of men.



**c. Comparing the importance of knowledge about history and culture**



**KEY FINDINGS:**

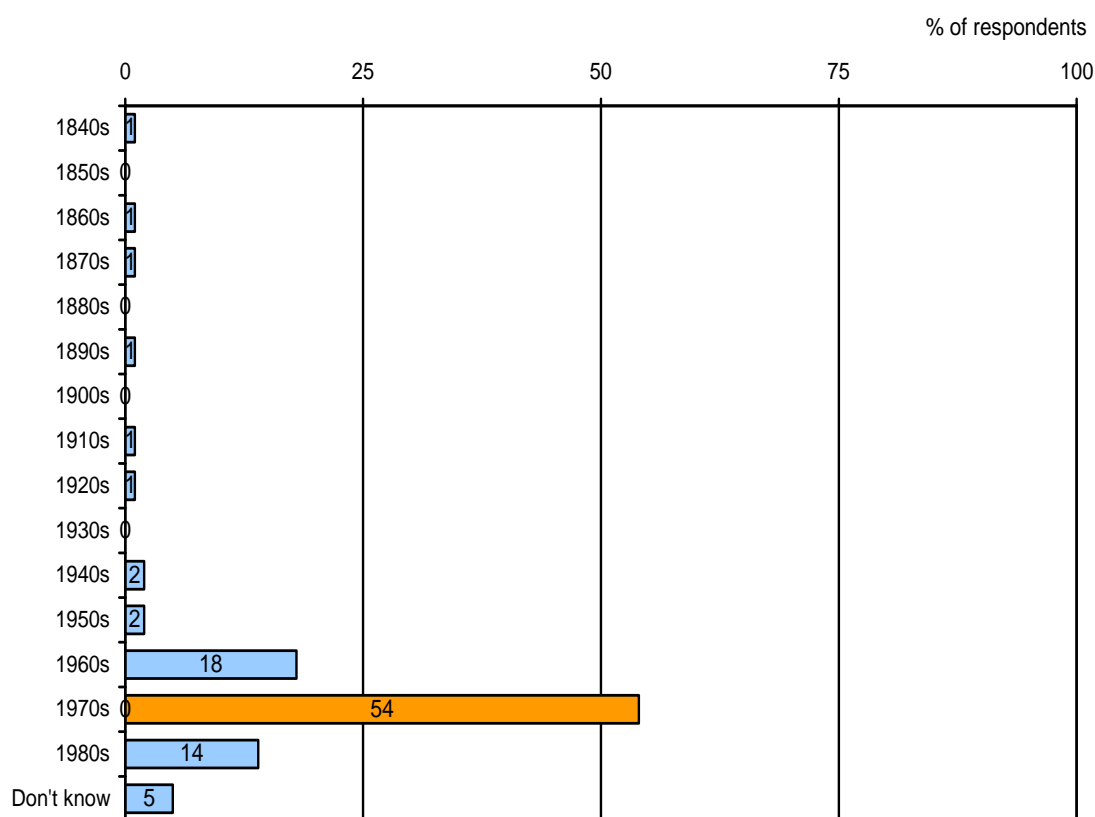
**Virtually all respondents think it is important for Australians to know about Indigenous history (100%) and culture (99%). However, respondents are slightly more likely to think that knowledge of history is 'very important' compared to knowledge of culture (95% compared to 85%).**

### 3.4 Specific knowledge of Indigenous history and culture in Australia

During the survey, participants were asked a series of questions to determine their actual knowledge about aspects of Indigenous history and culture in order to understand how it compares to their perceived levels of knowledge. The results of these questions draw attention to knowledge gaps and possible targets for further communications.

#### a. Stolen generations

*In February 2008, the Australian Parliament apologised to members of the stolen generations for past policies that separated many Indigenous people from their families and homelands. In which decade did these policies end?*



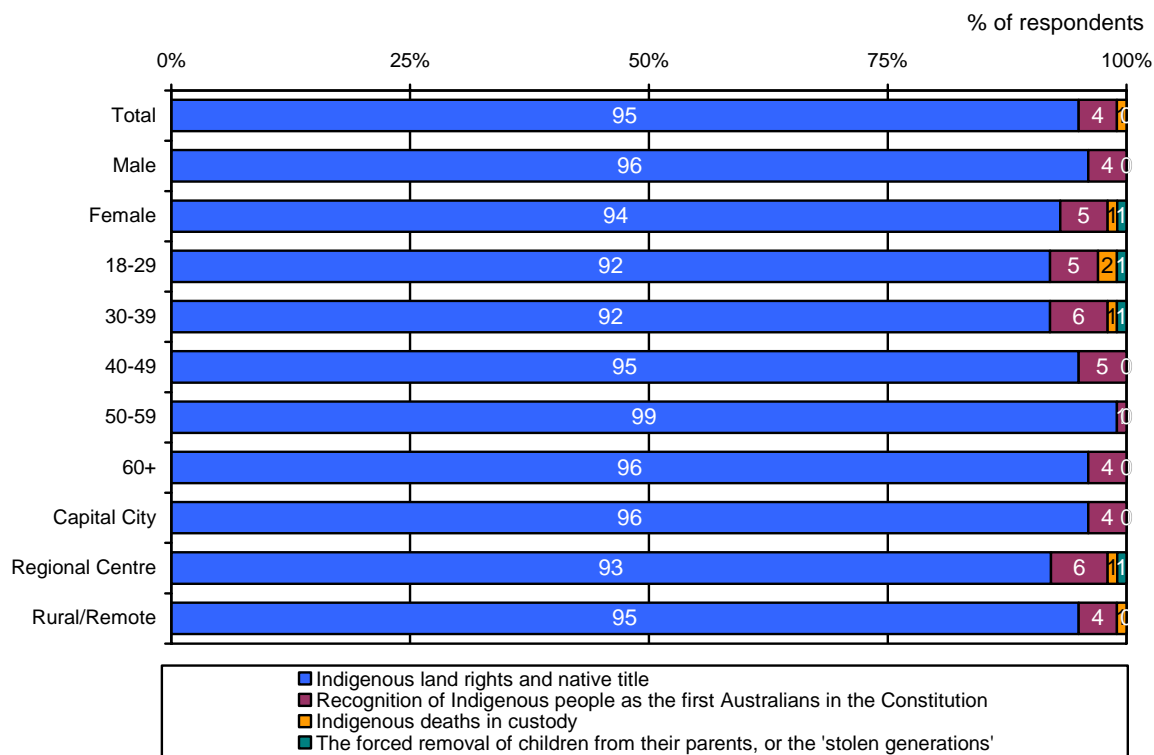
#### KEY FINDINGS:

**Most Indigenous respondents are aware of how recently Indigenous Australians were affected by the stolen generations policies. Over half of respondents (54%) answered correctly, and 86% answered correctly or within one decade of the correct answer.**

- When asked about when the stolen generation policies ended, over half (54%) of the respondents correctly identified that they ended in the 1970s. Another third (32%) answered either the 1960s (18%) or the 1980s (14%). Only 5% claimed not to know.

## b. Mabo

*In 1992, the High Court of Australia passed a decision known as 'Mabo'. Do you think that this decision relates to....*



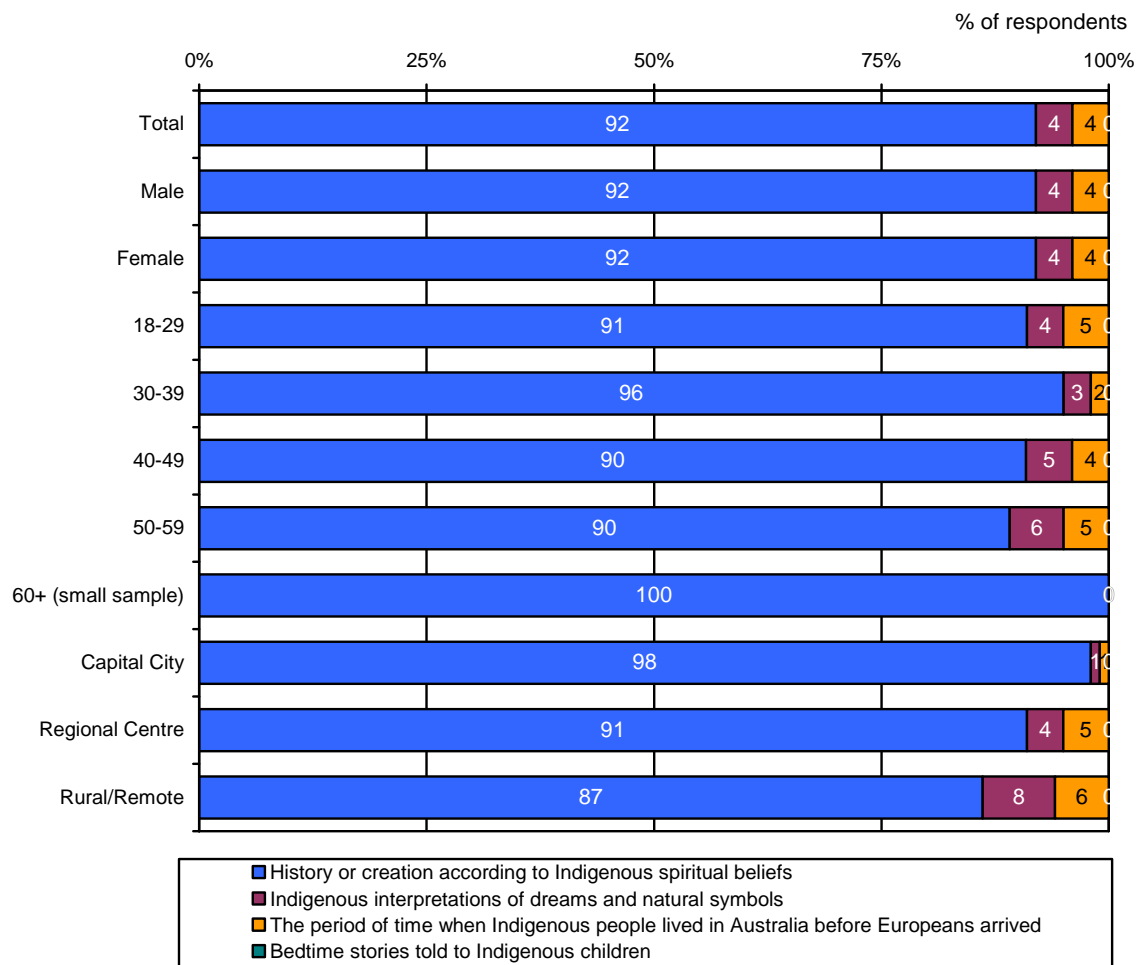
### KEY FINDINGS:

**Almost all respondents understand what the Mabo legislation relates to with 95% correctly nominating *'Indigenous land rights and native title.'* While the instance of correct answers generally increases with age, less than 10% of the youngest group (18 – 29 years old) answered incorrectly.**

- Effectively all respondents (95%) answered correctly that the 'Mabo' decision relates to Indigenous land rights and native title.
- Younger Australians are slightly more likely to give an incorrect answer than other groups, although 92% of them still answered correctly.

### c. The Dreamtime

*Which statement best describes the meaning of the Dreamtime?*



### KEY FINDINGS:

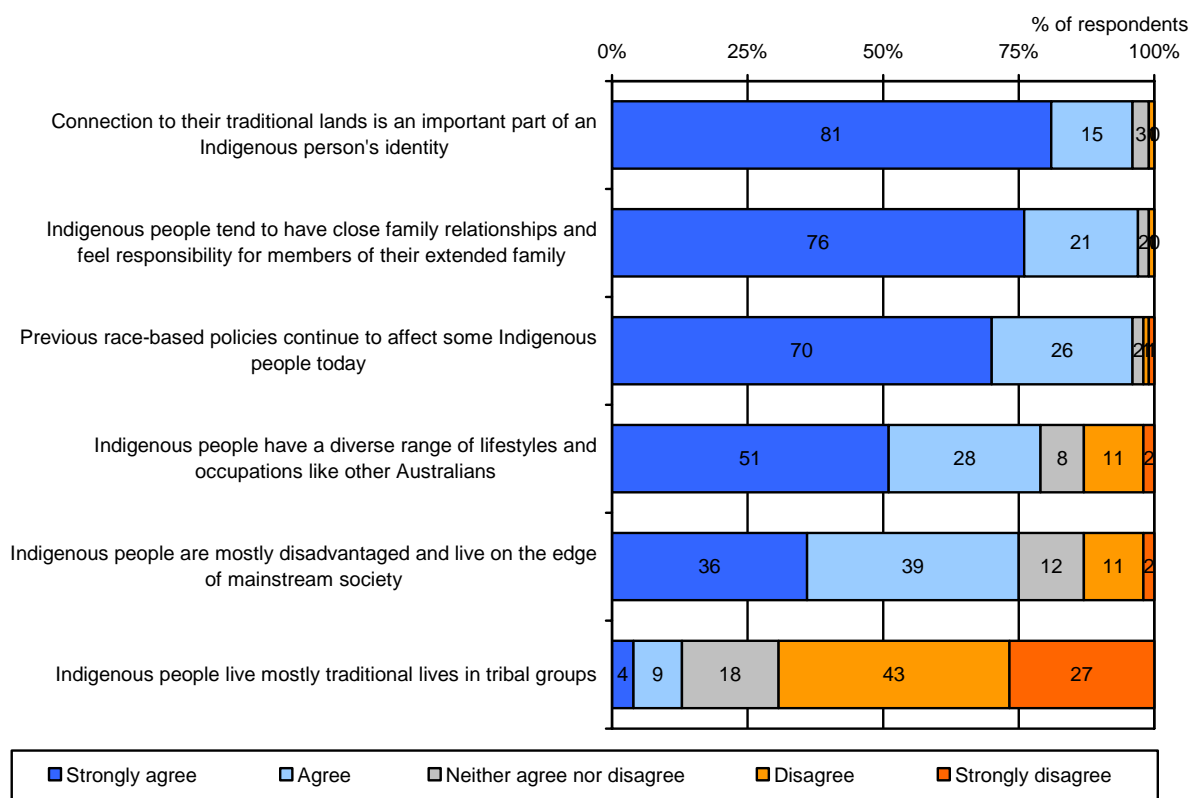
**When asked about their knowledge of the ‘Dreamtime,’ more than 9 out of 10 Indigenous participants correctly identified it as ‘*history or creation according to Indigenous spiritual beliefs.*’**

- 92% of Indigenous respondents correctly answered that the ‘Dreamtime’ is ‘*history or creation according to Indigenous spiritual beliefs.*’
- The most common misconceptions were ‘*Indigenous interpretations of dreams and natural symbols*’ (4%) and ‘*the period of time when Indigenous people lived in Australia before Europeans arrived*’ (4%).

### 3.5 Knowledge of Indigenous lives and lifestyles

Research participants were asked for their level of agreement with a set of statements relating to awareness of the lives of Indigenous people today.

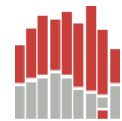
*Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.*



#### KEY FINDINGS:

There is strong agreement among Indigenous respondents of three key aspects of Indigenous life and identity – the importance of the connection to traditional lands as part of Indigenous identity (96% agree) and the Indigenous tendency to have close family and extended family relationships which involve taking responsibility for other family members (97% agree). Most also agree there is a continuing effect of race based policies on some Indigenous people living today (96%).

We put three statements to participants relating to their perceptions of lifestyles in Indigenous Australia. Almost 8 of ten (79%) respondents agree that Indigenous people have a diverse range of lifestyles and occupations like other Australians. Three quarters of respondents (75%) believe that Indigenous people are mostly disadvantaged and live on the edge of mainstream society, but very few believe that Indigenous people live mostly traditional lives in tribal groups (15%).



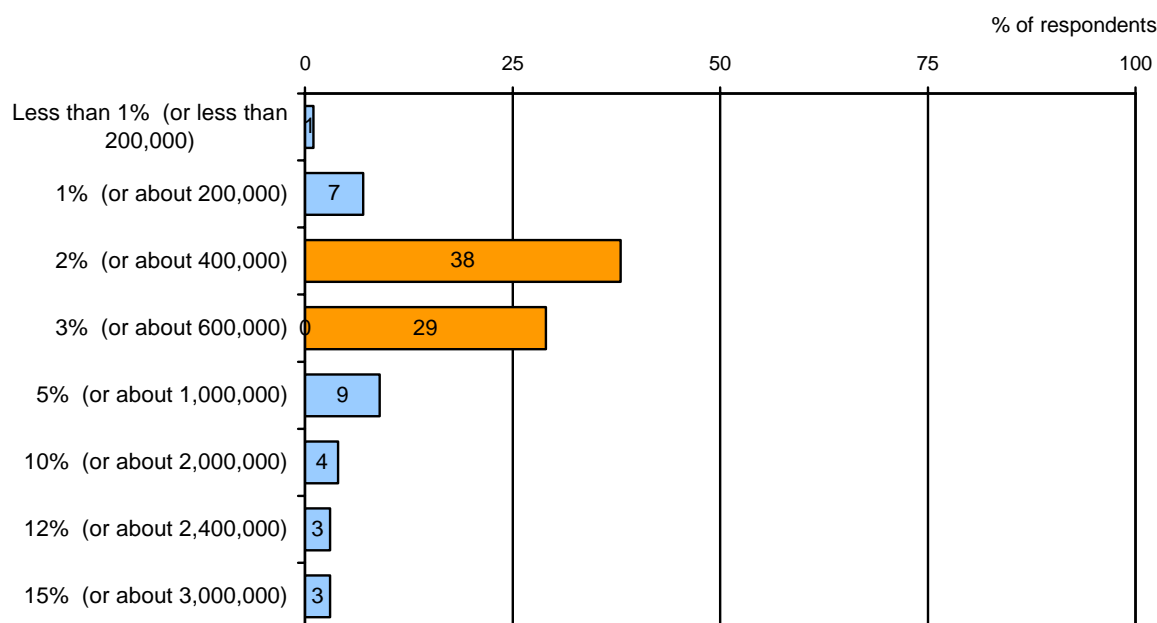
**When all the previous statements are considered, the following levels of agreement apply:**

- Over 95% of respondents either 'agree or strongly agree' with the following statements:
  - *'Connection to their traditional lands is an important part of an Indigenous person's identity'* (81% strongly agree and 15% agree)
  - *'Indigenous people tend to have close family relationships and feel responsibility for members of their extended family'* (76% strongly agree and 21% agree)
  - *'Previous race-based policies continue to affect some Indigenous people today'* (70% strongly agree and 26% agree)
  - *'Indigenous people have a diverse range of lifestyles and occupations like other Australians'* (51% strongly agree and 28% agree)
  - *'Indigenous people are mostly disadvantaged and live on the edge of mainstream society'* (36% strongly agree and 39% agree)
- Conversely, the majority of respondents disagree with the statement:
  - *'Indigenous people live mostly traditional lives in tribal groups'* (43% disagree and 27% strongly disagree)

### 3.6 Specific knowledge of Indigenous social indicators

#### a. Size of Indigenous population

*What proportion of Australia's population is Indigenous?*



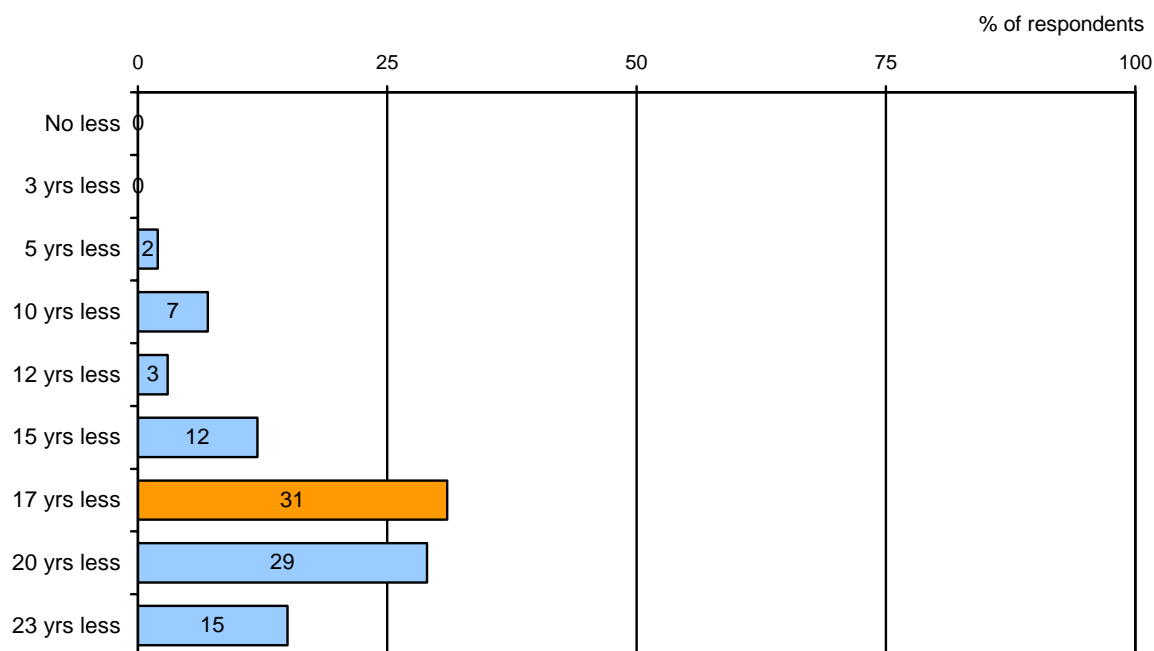
#### KEY FINDINGS:

**Most respondents are aware of the Indigenous proportion of the Australian population. Two thirds (67%) answered correctly, selecting either 2 or 3% of the population (the real figure is 2.4%). 1 in 5 people overestimate the Indigenous proportion of the total Australian population to be 5% or more, while less than 1 in 10 (8%) underestimate it.**

- 67% of respondents answered within 1% of the correct answer that 2.4% of the Australian population is Indigenous:
  - 38% answered 2% of the population
  - 29% answered 3% of the population

## b. Male life expectancy

*The average life expectancy of males in Australia today is around 72 years old. How much less is the life expectancy of Indigenous males?*



### KEY FINDINGS:

**Around 1 in 3 respondents answered correctly – that Indigenous males live 17 yrs less than other males in Australia. However, almost half of all respondents underestimate the life expectancy of Indigenous males, with 44% believing that Indigenous males live 20 or 23 years less than other males in Australia. Conversely, around a quarter of respondents (24%) overestimate Indigenous life expectancy, believing that Indigenous males live between 5 and 15 years less than other males in Australia.**

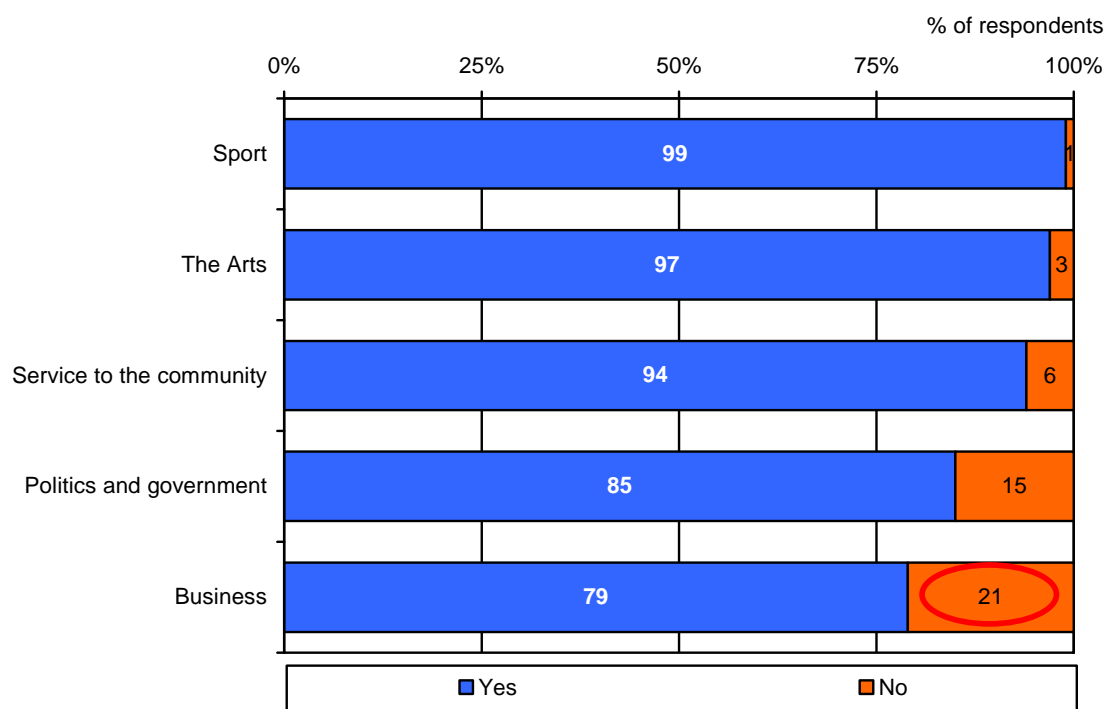
- 31% of respondents correctly estimated that Indigenous males live 17 years less than other males in Australia.
- Indigenous respondents are more likely to underestimate the life expectancy of Indigenous males than overestimate it. Other than the correct answer of 17 years less, the most common answers were:
  - 20 years less (29%)
  - 23 years less (15%)



### 3.7 Specific knowledge of Indigenous achievement and role models

Can you think of Indigenous people who set an example for others in the following areas?

- Sport
- The Arts
- Service to the community
- Politics and government
- Business



#### KEY FINDINGS:

The majority of respondents can think of Indigenous people who set an example for others in each of the specific areas of achievement that were presented to them. The most visible is 'sport,' with virtually all respondents (99%) able to think of an Indigenous role model. 'The Arts' and 'service to the community' also rate very highly with 97% and 94% respectively recalling people who set an example for others. There is somewhat less recognition of role models in 'politics and government' (85%) and for Indigenous achievement in 'business,' with 1 in 5 (21%) not able to recall a business leader who sets an example for others.

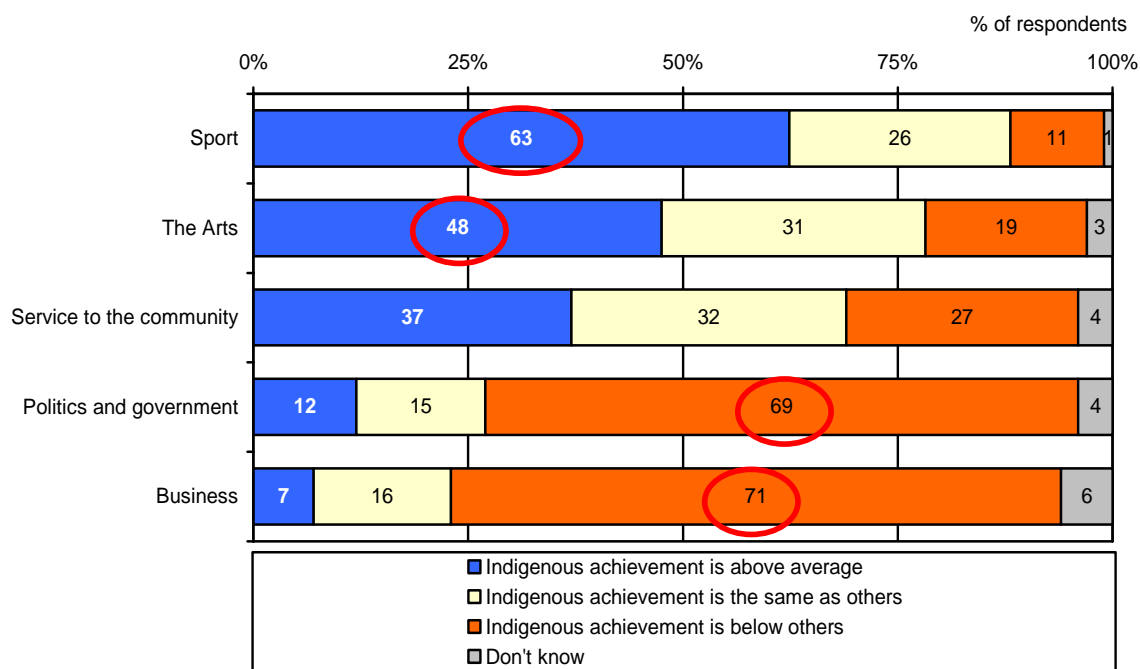
- There is strong visible achievement of Indigenous people in 'sport', 'The Arts', and 'service to the community', with over 94% of respondents recalling Indigenous people setting examples in these areas.
  - 99% can think of Indigenous people who set examples in 'sport.'
  - 97% can think of Indigenous people who set examples in 'The Arts.'
  - 94% can think of Indigenous people who set examples in 'service to the community.'
- Recollection of role models in 'politics and government' is slightly less universal but is still high (85%).
- Perceptions of achievement in 'business' is slightly lower, with one fifth (21%) of respondents unable to think of Indigenous people who set an example for others in business.

### 3.8 Comparing achievement among Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

How would you describe the achievements of Indigenous people compared to the rest of the Australian population in the following areas?

Sport  
The Arts  
Service to the community

Politics and government  
Business



#### KEY FINDINGS:

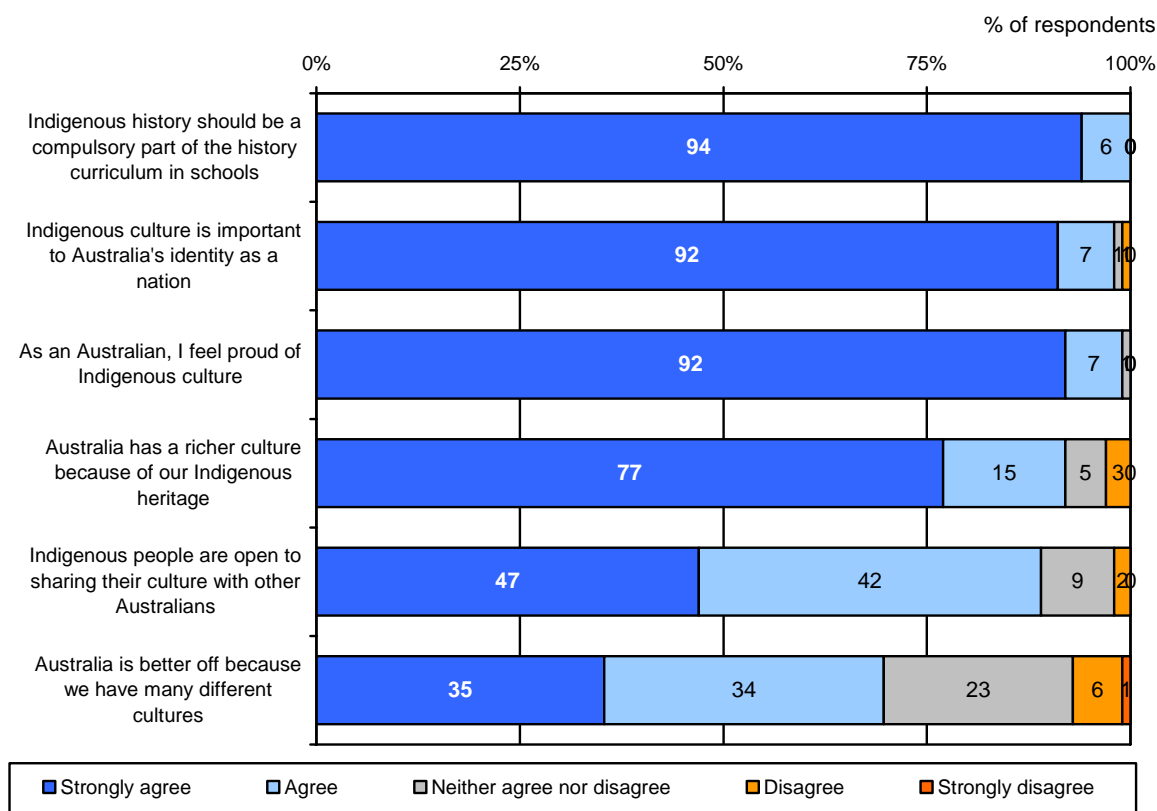
When comparing achievements of Indigenous people to the rest of the population, respondents think Indigenous people are more successful in some areas than others. Indigenous achievement is seen to be strongest in ‘sport’ and ‘the Arts’, with most respondents believing that Indigenous achievement is greater than that of other Australians in these areas. However, the opposite applies in the areas of ‘politics and government’, and ‘business’, where around 7 in 10 respondents believe that Indigenous people achieve less than other Australians. Opinions relating to ‘community service’ achievement are more evenly spread with around a third of respondents (37%) believing Indigenous achievement is above average, 32% believing it is equal, and 27% believing it is below the level of other Australians.

- Around two thirds of respondents (63%) believe that Indigenous achievement in ‘sport’ is above the Australian average (63%) with another 26% believing it is the same.
- Nearly half (48%) also believe that Indigenous achievement is above average in ‘the Arts’, with 31% believing it is the same.
- Attitudes to Indigenous achievement in ‘service to the community’ is more varied with 37% of respondents considering Indigenous achievement to be above average, 32% seeing it as the same and 27% believing it is below average.
- Across the other areas, achievement is more likely to be seen by most as being ‘below average.’
  - 69% believe Indigenous achievement in ‘politics and government’ is ‘below average.’
  - 71% believe Indigenous achievement in ‘business’ is ‘below average.’

## 4. ACCEPTANCE - SHAPING VALUES AND ATTITUDES

### 4.1 Valuing Indigenous culture and history in Australia

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.



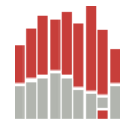
#### KEY FINDINGS:

Responses to six statements about the place of Indigenous history and culture reveal strong support among Indigenous respondents for compulsory teaching of Indigenous history in schools (94% strongly agree), and strong recognition of the importance of Indigenous culture to our national identity (92% strongly agree). Most respondents also feel proud of Indigenous culture (92% strongly agree) and also believe that Australia has a richer culture because of our Indigenous heritage (77% strongly agree).

Interestingly, while more than 9 in 10 will strongly agree that they feel personally proud of Indigenous culture, less than half (47%) strongly agree with the idea that Indigenous people are open to sharing their culture with others. This may shed light onto one of the gaps that needs to be filled if we are to reach a point where all Australians share pride in Indigenous culture.

Most also agree that Australia is better off because we have many cultures (35% strongly agree and 34% agree). Although there is less support for this statement, only 7% of respondents disagree with it.

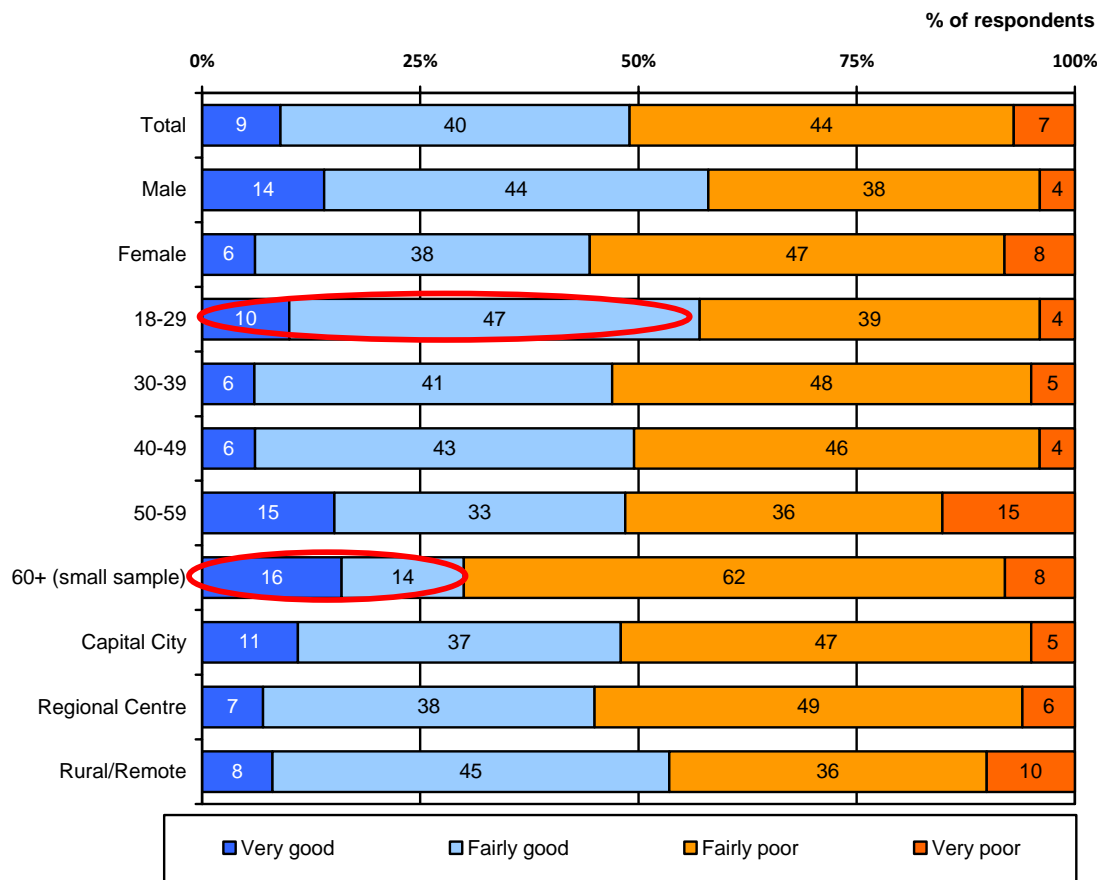
- All Indigenous respondents agree that Indigenous history should be a compulsory part of the school curriculum; 94% strongly agree and the other 6% agree.



- Only 1% of respondents do not agree that Indigenous culture is important to Australia's identity as a nation, while 92% strongly agree and 7% agree that it is important.
- There is a similarly strong response when it comes to feeling personally proud of Indigenous culture; 92% strongly agree and 7% agree they feel proud.
- 92% of Australians also think that *'Australia has a richer culture because of our Indigenous culture'* (77% strongly agree and 15% agree).
- Although most respondents agree that *'Indigenous people are open to sharing their culture with other Australians,'* their level of agreement is somewhat less than the previous statements with 47% strongly agreeing and 42% agreeing with it.
- Most respondents agreed with the statement that *'Australia is better off because we have many different cultures'*. However this statement had the least support overall with 35% strongly agreeing, 34% agreeing and another 23% who neither agree nor disagree with it.

## 4.2 Perceptions of the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians

Overall, would you say that the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians today, is...?



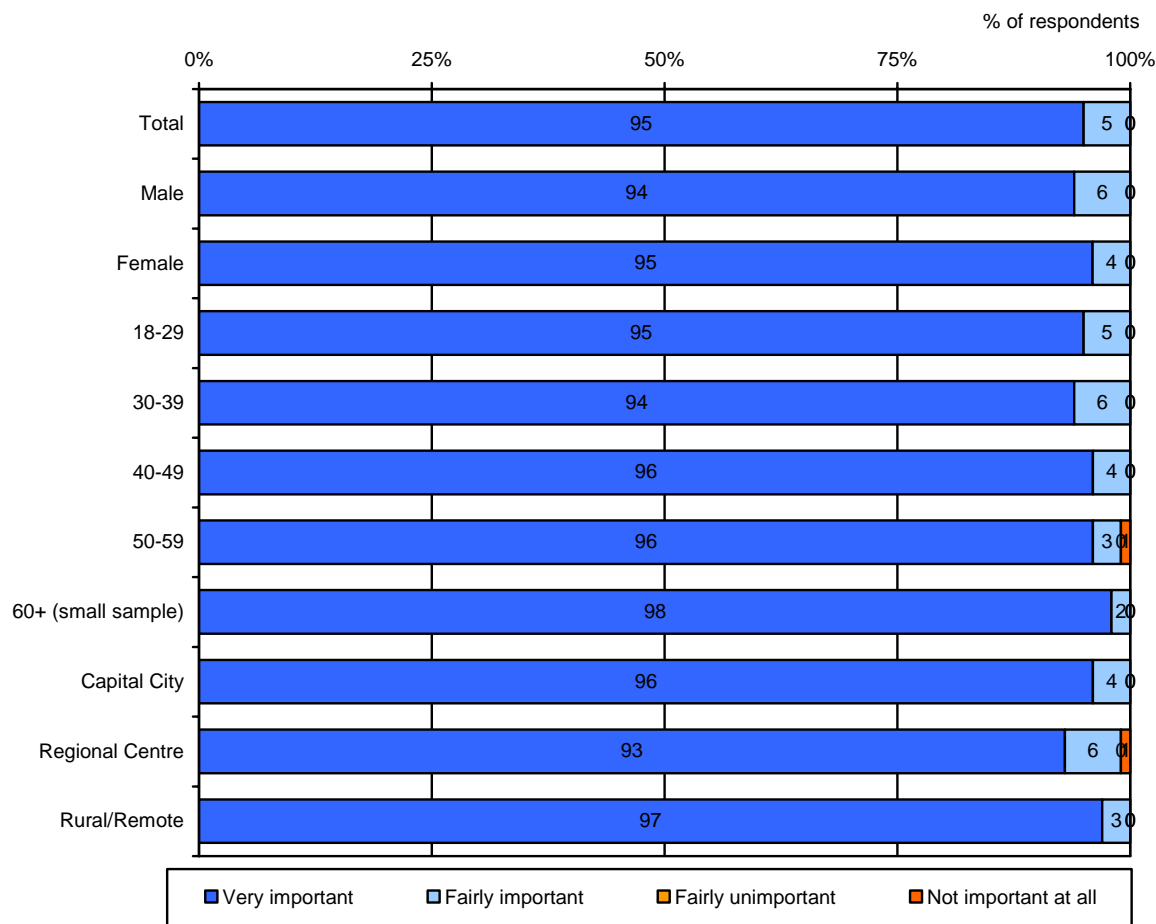
### KEY FINDINGS:

**Indigenous respondents are almost evenly divided in their views of the quality of the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians. Approximately half rate it as 'good' (49%) and the other half rate it 'poor' (51%). Men tend to be more positive about the quality of the relationship than women, and younger people are also more likely to think the relationship is 'good'.**

- The relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians is currently rated as 'good' by 40% of the population and 'poor' by 44%. Relatively few people adopt the extreme positions of considering it to be 'very good' (9%) or 'very poor' (7%).
- Gender appears to have the greatest impact on how the relationship is considered;
  - Men tend to be most positive, with 14% categorising the relationship as 'very good' and another 44% as 'fairly good.'
  - Only 6% of women categorise the relationship as 'very good' and 38% as 'fairly good.'
- Younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to think the relationship is good and they are also less likely to hold extreme positions (either 'very good' or 'very bad');
  - Younger Australians (18 – 29 years) are the most positive about the relationship, with 10% perceiving it to be 'very good' and 47% 'fairly good'.
  - Of 30 – 39 year olds, 6% think it is 'very good' and 41% 'fairly good'.
  - Of 40 – 49 year olds, 6% think it is 'very good' and 43% 'fairly good'.
  - Of 50 – 59 year olds, 15% think it is 'very good' and 33% 'fairly good'.
  - Of those over 60 years old, only 16% think it is 'very good' and 16% 'fairly good,' with 70% thinking it is poor.

### 4.3 Importance of the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians for the nation

*How important is the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians for Australia as a nation?*



#### KEY FINDINGS:

**Indigenous respondents consider the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians as paramount for the nation. While perceptions about the quality of the relationship are divided, there is overwhelming agreement that the relationship itself is either very important (95% agree) or important (5% agree) for Australia as a nation.**

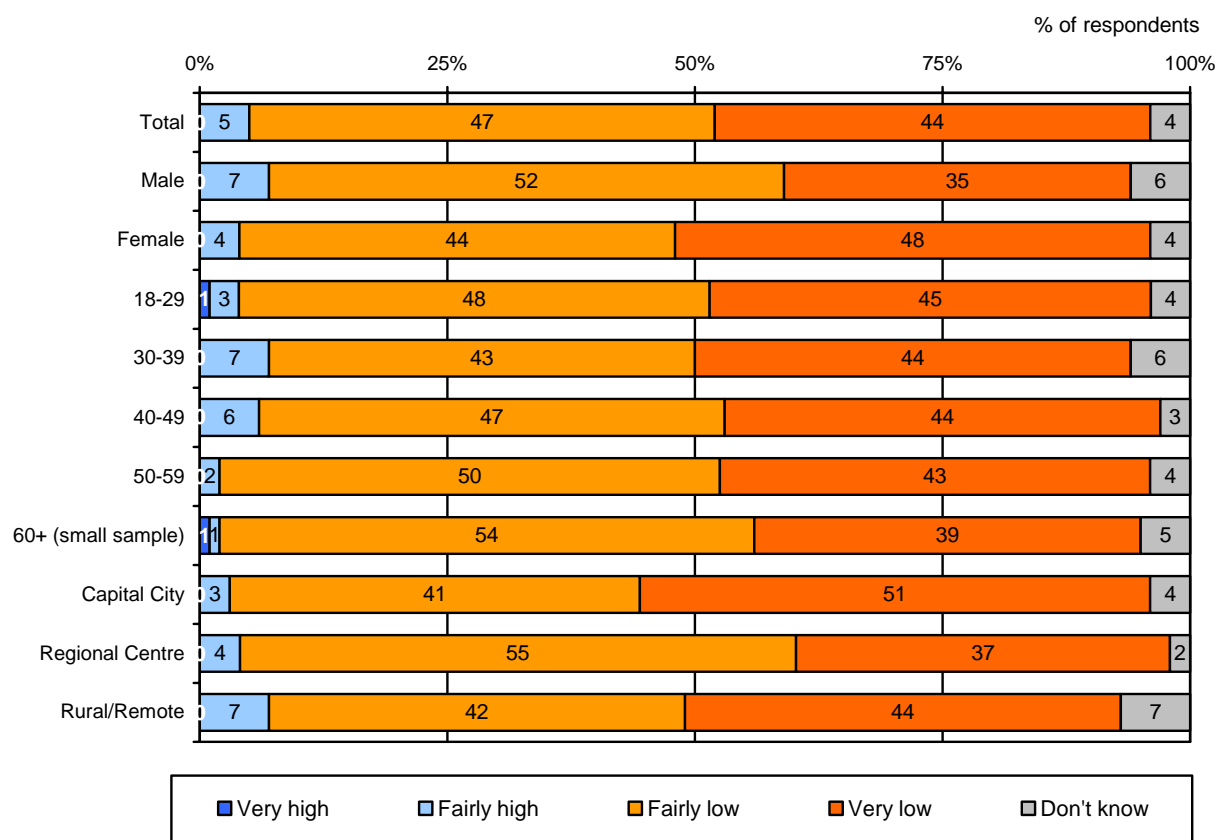
- Respondents across all demographic groups agree that the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians is very important for Australia. At an overall level:
  - 95% of Indigenous respondents consider it 'very important'.
  - 5% of Indigenous respondents consider it 'important'.

## 4.4 Levels of trust between Indigenous people and other Australians

How would you describe the level of trust between the following groups of people?

- Trust that other Australians have for Indigenous people
- Trust that Indigenous people have for other Australians
- Comparison of perceived levels of trust

### a. Trust that other Australians have for Indigenous people

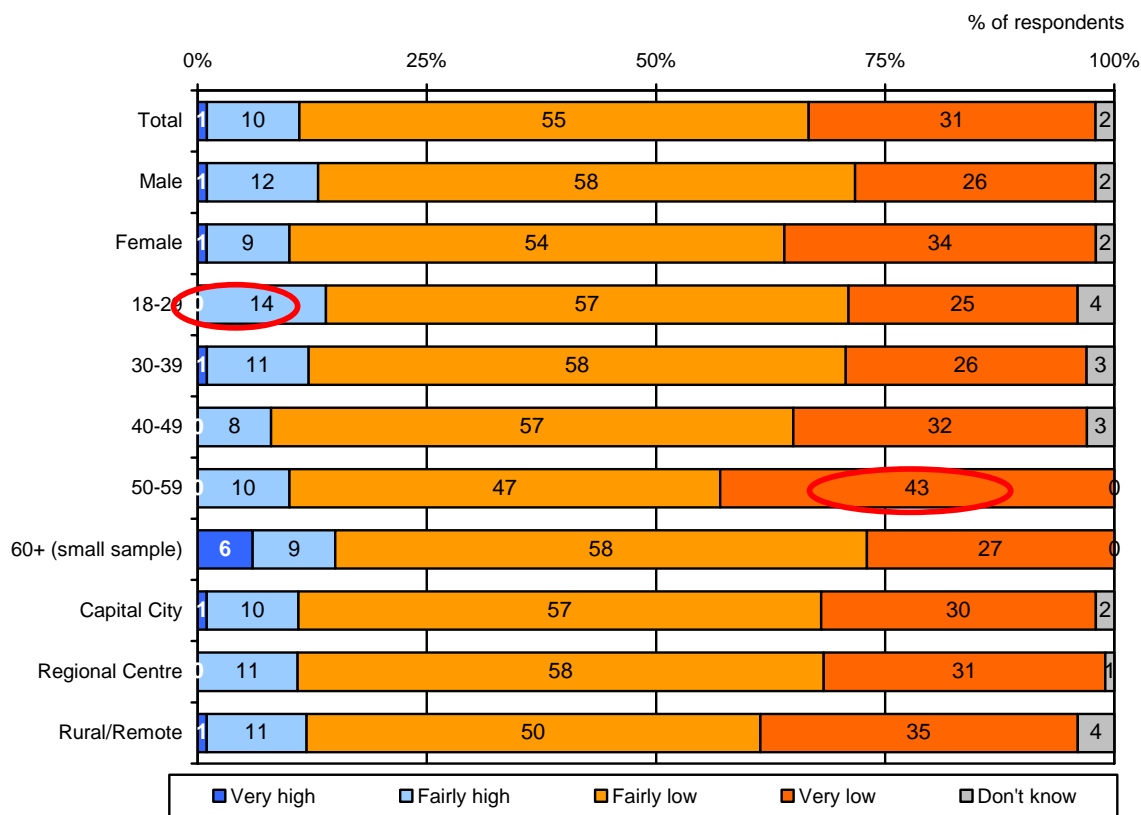


### KEY FINDINGS:

Respondents believe that Australians, in general, have low levels of trust for Indigenous people with 9 out of 10 believing the level of trust is very low (44%) or fairly low (47%). This view is consistent across all demographic groups although men are slightly more inclined to believe that levels of trust are higher.

- A convincing majority (91%) believe that non-Indigenous people have a 'low' level of trust for Indigenous people. 47% think that the level of trust is 'fairly low' and 44% consider it to be 'very low.'
- Women are slightly more pessimistic than men when it comes to perceived levels of trust;
  - 48% of women consider the level of trust to be 'very low', compared to 35% of men.
  - 44% of women consider the level of trust to be 'fairly low', compared to 52% of men.

## b. Trust that Indigenous people have for other Australians



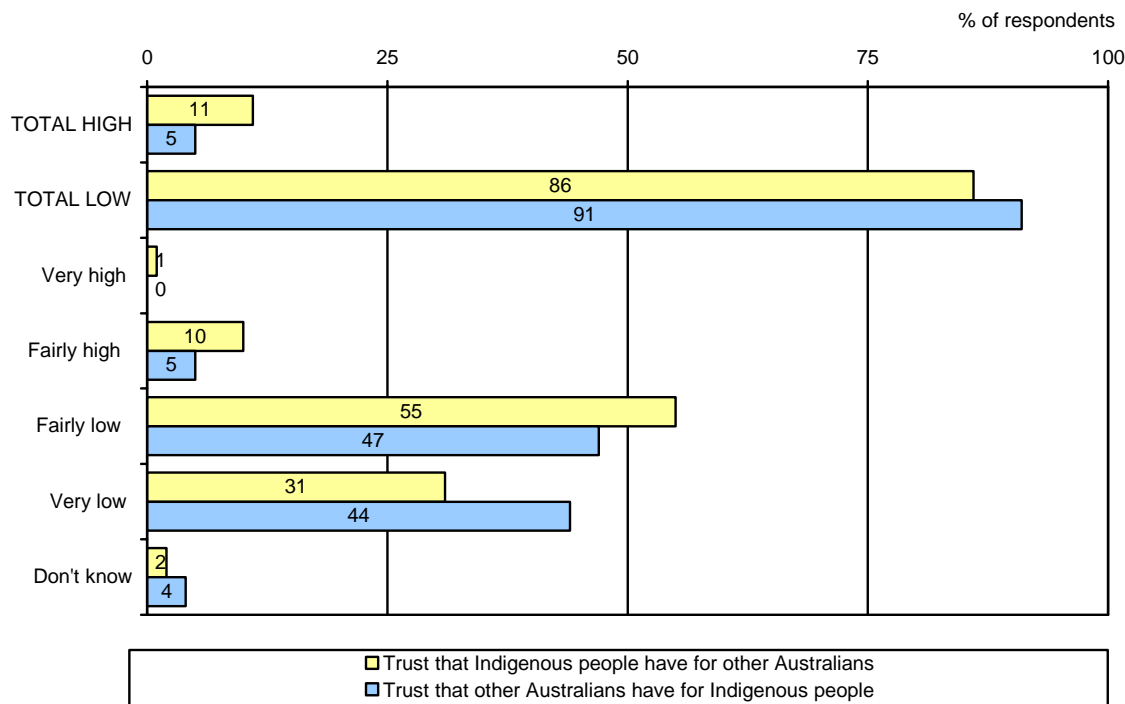
### KEY FINDINGS:

In a similar pattern, most participants also believe that Indigenous people have a low level of trust towards other Australians. More than four fifths of respondents (86%) believe that Indigenous people have a 'low' level of trust for other Australians (55% 'fairly low' and 31% 'very low'). Differences between demographic groups are small, although young people (aged 18-29) and those aged 60 and over are slightly more likely to think levels of trust are higher. Only 11% of respondents believe the level of trust Indigenous people have for other Australians is 'high.'

- Of the 86% who believe the level of trust is low, 55% think it is 'fairly low' and 31% 'very low.'
- Differences between demographic groups are small, although there appears to be some differences related to age:
  - Younger respondents are the most positive, with 14% of 18-29 year olds believing that Indigenous people have a 'fairly high' level of trust for other Australians.
  - Middle aged respondents (40-59 years old) seem to be the least positive, with only 8% of Australians aged 40-49 years old believing that the levels of trust are 'fairly high.'
  - Older Indigenous respondents (aged 60+) perceive slightly higher levels of trust with 15% thinking the level of trust is 'high,' including 6% who consider it 'very high.'



### c. Comparison of perceived levels of trust



#### KEY FINDINGS:

It is clear that respondents view the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians as being characterised by mutual mistrust. They think that Indigenous people have very little trust for other Australians (86% low), and other Australians have even lower levels of trust for Indigenous people (91% low).

The proportions of 'very low' responses show that respondents are somewhat more likely to believe that the level of trust that other Australians have for Indigenous people is lower than the level of trust that Indigenous people have for other Australians (31% 'very low' compared with 44% 'very low').

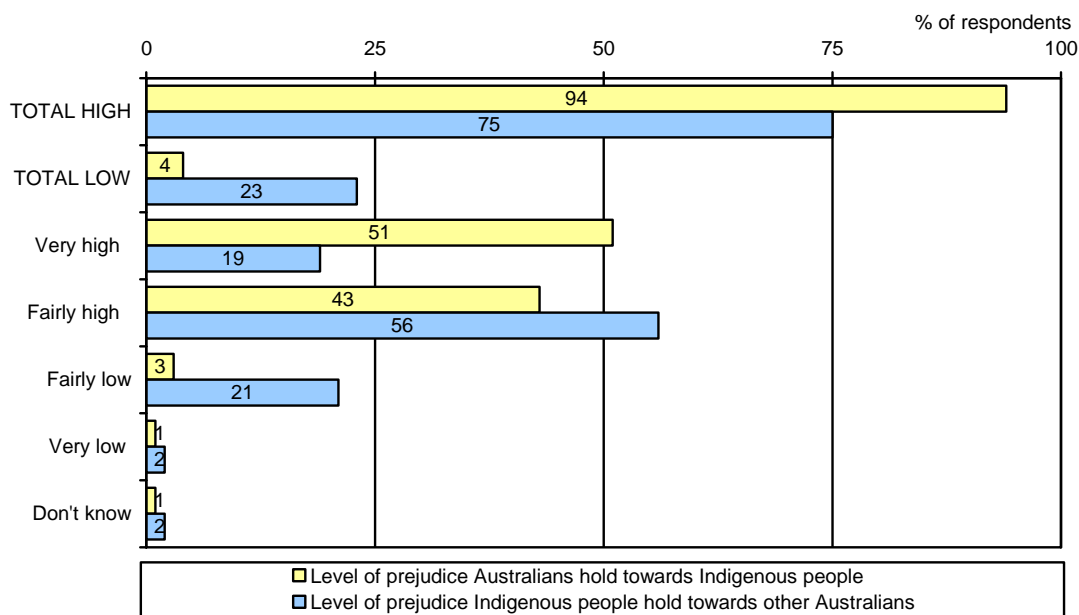
- Respondents perceive a similarly low level of trust from Indigenous people to other Australians and vice versa;
  - 55% of respondents believe Indigenous people have 'fairly low' levels of trust for other Australians and another 31% believe they have 'very low' levels of trust.
  - 47% of respondents believe other Australians have 'fairly low' levels of trust for Indigenous people and another 44% believe they have 'very low' trust.
- Conversely, respondents are slightly more likely to believe that Indigenous people have a high level of trust for other Australians than vice versa. Only 5% of participants think Australians have a 'high' level of trust for Indigenous people, compared to 11% who believe Indigenous people have a 'high' level of trust for other Australians.

## 4.5 Levels of prejudice between Indigenous people and other Australians

How would you describe the level of prejudice between the following groups of people?

- a) Level of prejudice Australians hold towards Indigenous people  
 b) Level of prejudice Indigenous people hold towards other Australians

### a. Level of prejudice between Australians and Indigenous people



### KEY FINDINGS:

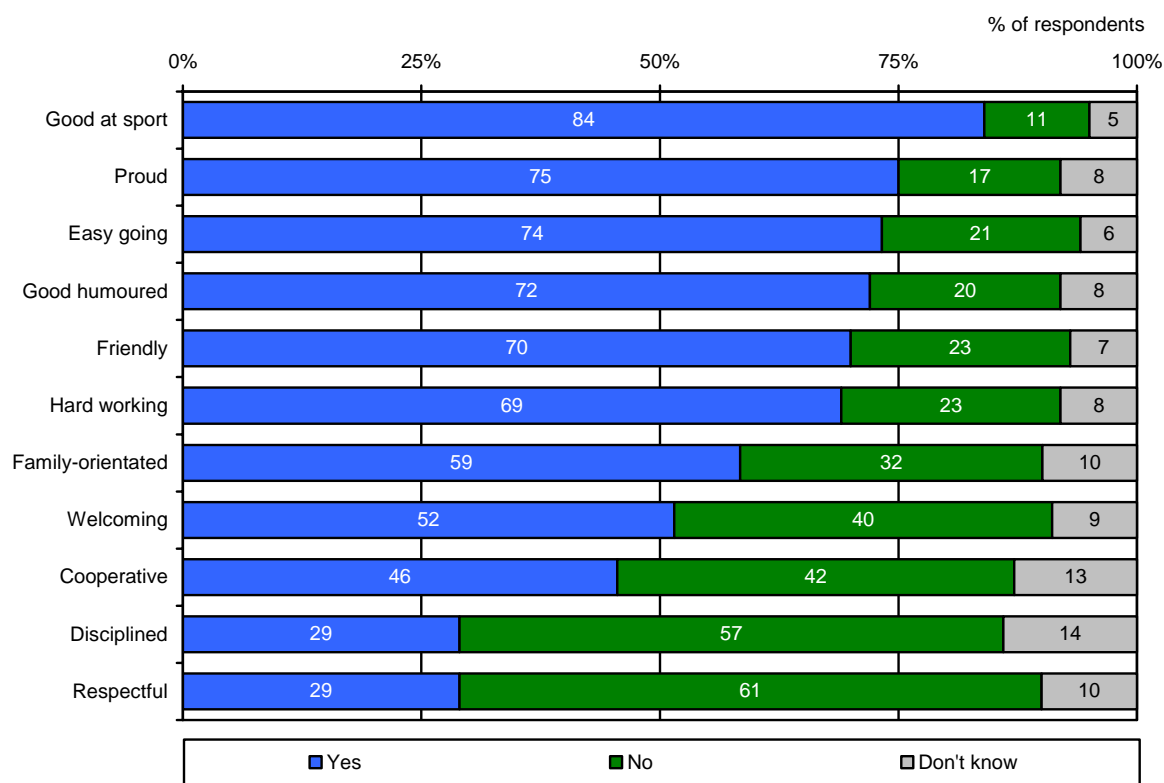
Prejudice is also considered a very significant factor in the relationship between Indigenous and other Australians. Almost all respondents (94%) believe that there are 'high' levels of prejudice held by other Australians towards Indigenous people. Interestingly, three quarters (75%) also believe that Indigenous people have 'high' levels of prejudice towards other Australians. The differences in perceived prejudice are more obvious when examining levels of 'very high' prejudice. Around half the respondents (51%) think that the other Australians have 'very high' levels of prejudice towards Indigenous people, whereas only one in five (19%) think that Indigenous people have 'very high' levels of prejudice towards other Australians.

- The level of prejudice from other Australians to Indigenous people is 'high' according to 94% of Indigenous participants.
- Three quarters of participants (75%) also think there is a 'high' level of prejudice from Indigenous people to other Australians.
- Participants are more likely to believe that other Australians hold 'very high' levels of prejudice towards Indigenous people than vice versa. Specifically,
  - 51% of participants believe that other Australians hold 'very high' levels of prejudice towards Indigenous people, whereas only 19% believe Indigenous people hold 'very high' levels of prejudice towards other Australians.
  - Conversely, 43% of participants believe that Australians hold 'fairly high' levels of prejudice towards Indigenous people, whereas 56% believe Indigenous people hold 'fairly high' levels of prejudice towards other Australians.

## 4.6 General impressions of Indigenous people and other Australians

### a. General impressions of all Australians

*Thinking about your overall impression of Australians, would you say they tend to be...?*



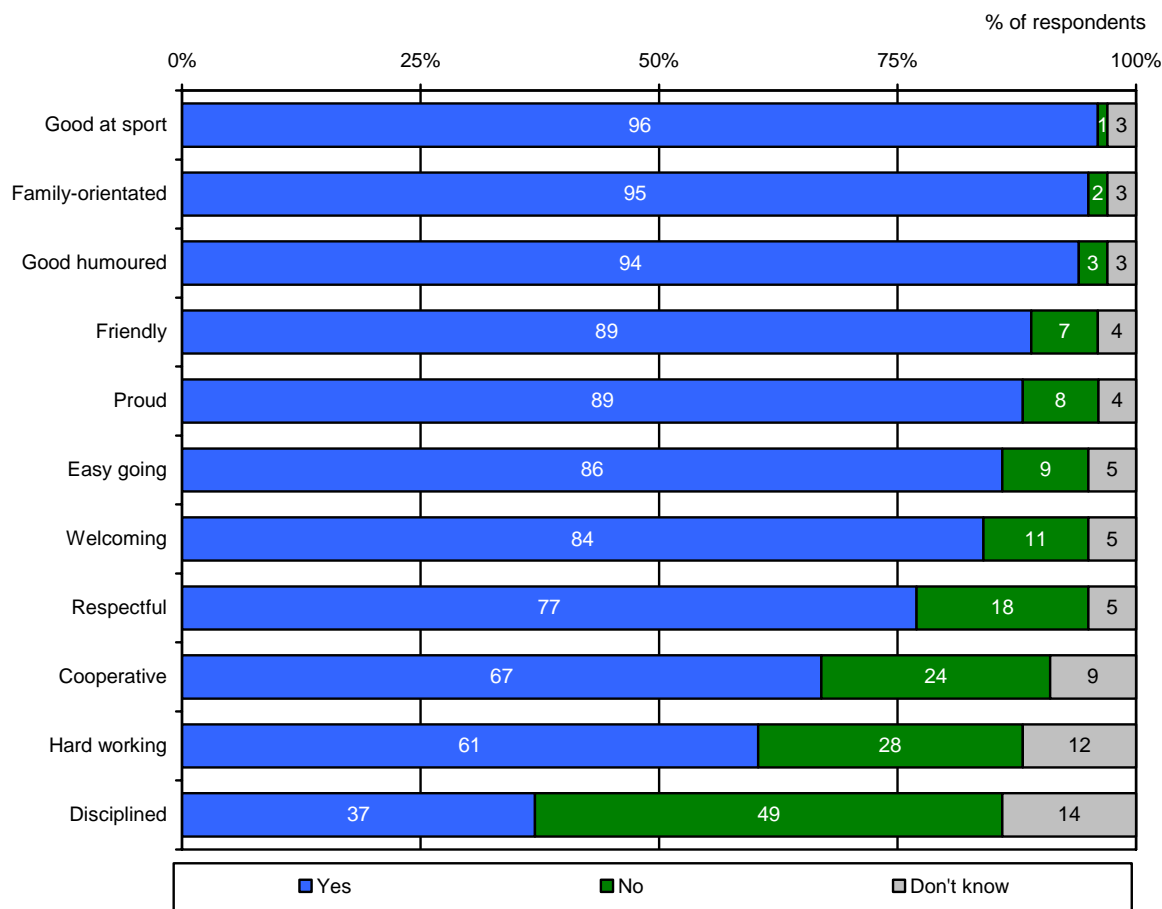
### KEY FINDINGS:

Participants tend to view Australians generally as being good at sport, proud, easy going, good humoured, friendly and hard working. More than half of participants also see Australians as family-orientated, welcoming and co-operative. In contrast, less than a third consider Australians to be disciplined or respectful.

- At least seven in ten Indigenous participants view Australians overall as 'good at sport' (84%), 'proud' (75%), 'easy going' (74%), 'good humoured' (72%), 'friendly' (70%) and 'hard working' (69%).
- Around half of Indigenous respondents believe Australians are 'family-orientated' (59%), 'welcoming' (52%) and 'co-operative' (46%).
- In contrast, only 29% of respondents believe Australians are 'disciplined' and 'respectful'.

## b. General impressions of Indigenous people

*Thinking about your overall impression of Indigenous people, would you say they tend to be...?*

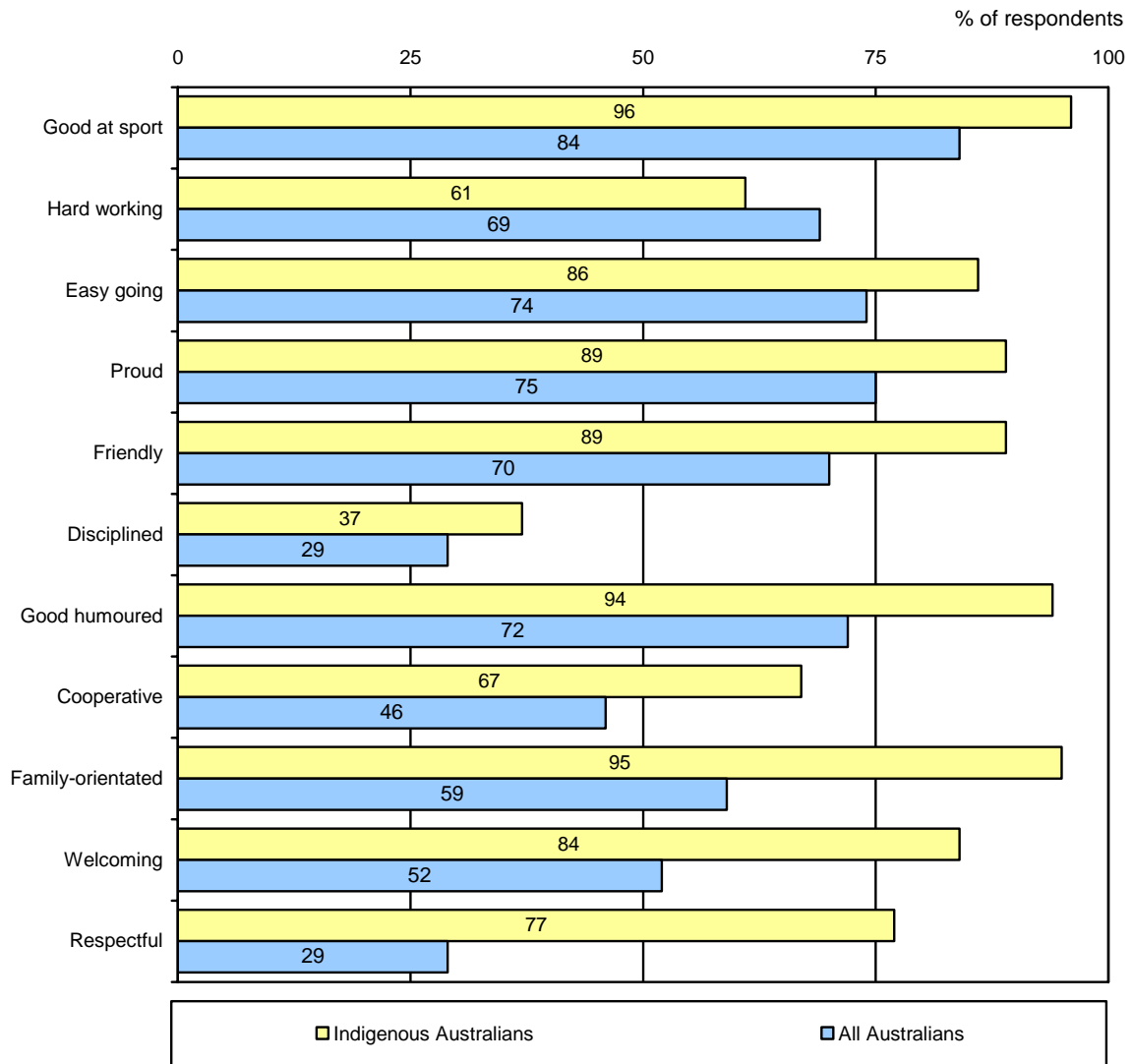


### KEY FINDINGS:

**Participants have a more positive image of Indigenous people than they do of other Australians across all personality attributes. Indigenous people most often associate themselves with being good at sport, family-orientated, good humoured, friendly and proud. Most also believe Indigenous people are easy going, welcoming, respectful, cooperative and hard working. On the other hand, only about one third believe that Indigenous people are disciplined.**

- Around 9 of every 10 respondents believe Indigenous people are 'good at sport' (96%), 'family-orientated' (95%), 'good humoured' (94%), 'friendly' (89%) and 'proud' (89%).
- Around 4 out of 5 also perceive Indigenous people as 'easy going' (86%) and 'welcoming' (84%).
- Around three quarters of respondents see Indigenous people as 'respectful' (77%) and two thirds (67%) see them as 'cooperative'.
- The only attribute not viewed as characteristic of Indigenous people by most respondents is 'disciplined' (37%).

### c. Comparing general impressions of all Australians and Indigenous Australians



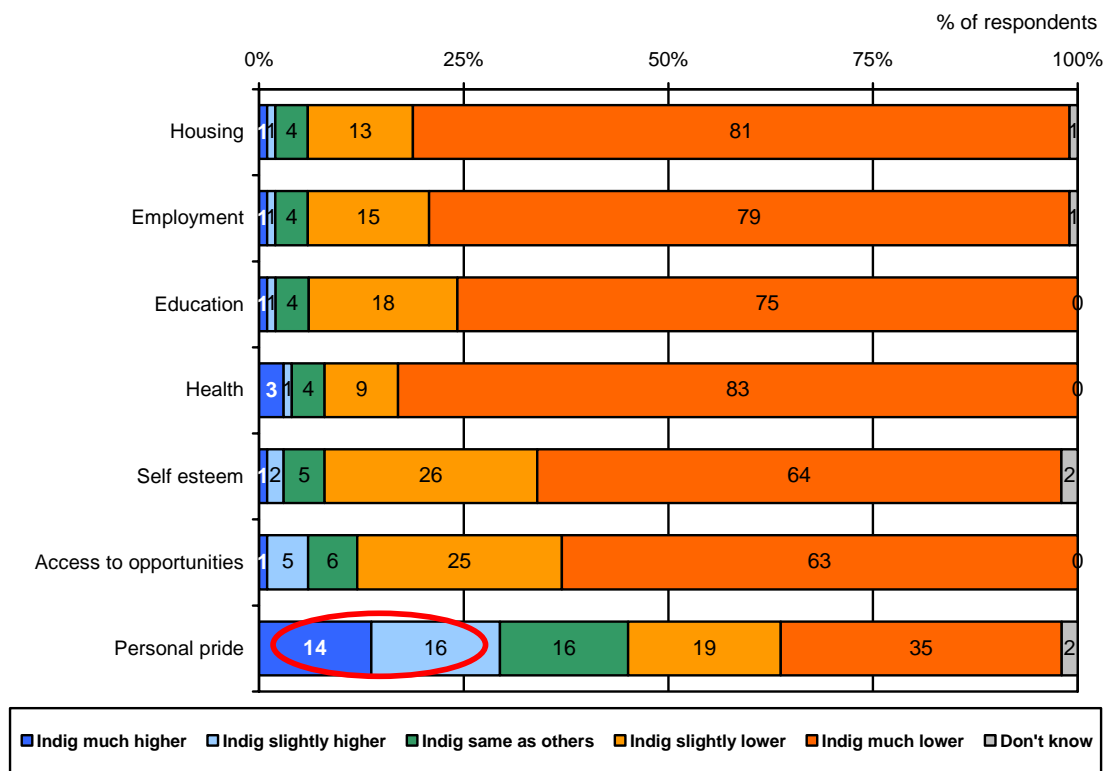
#### KEY FINDINGS:

Respondents rate Indigenous people more highly on all of the attributes presented to them, except for “hard working”. The differences between perceptions of Indigenous people and perceptions of other Australians were largest (on a proportional basis) for ‘respectful’, ‘welcoming’ and ‘family orientated’. In contrast the attributes with the greatest commonality were ‘good at sport’, ‘hard working’ and ‘easy going’. However, the factor of greatest commonality concerns what Indigenous and other Australians are considered not to be: disciplined.

- According to respondents, the strongest commonalities between Indigenous people and all Australians are:
  - *'Good at sport'* - 96% for Indigenous people compared to 84% for Australians
  - *'Hard working'* - 61% for Indigenous people compared to 69% for Australians
  - *'Easy going'* - 86% for Indigenous people compared to 74% for Australians
  - *'Proud'* - 89% for Indigenous people compared to 75% for Australians
- There is less similarity between the groups when it comes to being
  - *'Friendly'* - 89% for Indigenous people compared to 70% for Australians
  - *'Disciplined'* - 37% for Indigenous people compared to 29% for Australians
  - *'Good humoured'* - 94% for Indigenous people compared to 72% for Australians
  - *'Cooperative'* - 67% for Indigenous people compared to 46% for Australians
- The greatest differences between Indigenous people and all Australians are seen to be:
  - *'Family orientated'* – 95% for Indigenous people compared to 59% for Australians
  - *'Welcoming'* – 84% for Indigenous people compared to 52% for Australians
  - *'Respectful'* – 77% for Indigenous people compared to 29% for Australians

## 4.7 Comparing the lives of Indigenous and other Australians

*How do you think the levels among Indigenous people compare to the levels among other Australians, in the following areas?*



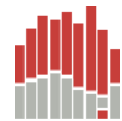
### KEY FINDINGS:

When comparing Indigenous people to other Australians on a range of social and personal indicators, most respondents believe that Indigenous levels are lower than those occurring among the rest of the population and, in many cases, the level is perceived as being much lower.

Around 9 out of every 10 respondents believe Indigenous people have a lower level on virtually every indicator (housing, employment, education, health, self esteem and access to opportunities). Furthermore, more respondents see these levels as being 'much lower' than 'slightly lower'. The sole exception was 'personal pride' with only 54% of respondents thinking Indigenous levels of pride were lower than other Australians.

The areas of greatest perceived difference between the two groups are housing, employment, education and health. For all these indicators, over three quarters of participants perceive Indigenous levels to be 'much lower' than other Australians.

Indigenous people are also seen to be well behind in terms of access to opportunities, with two thirds of respondents seeing Indigenous levels as 'much lower' and another quarter as 'slightly lower.'



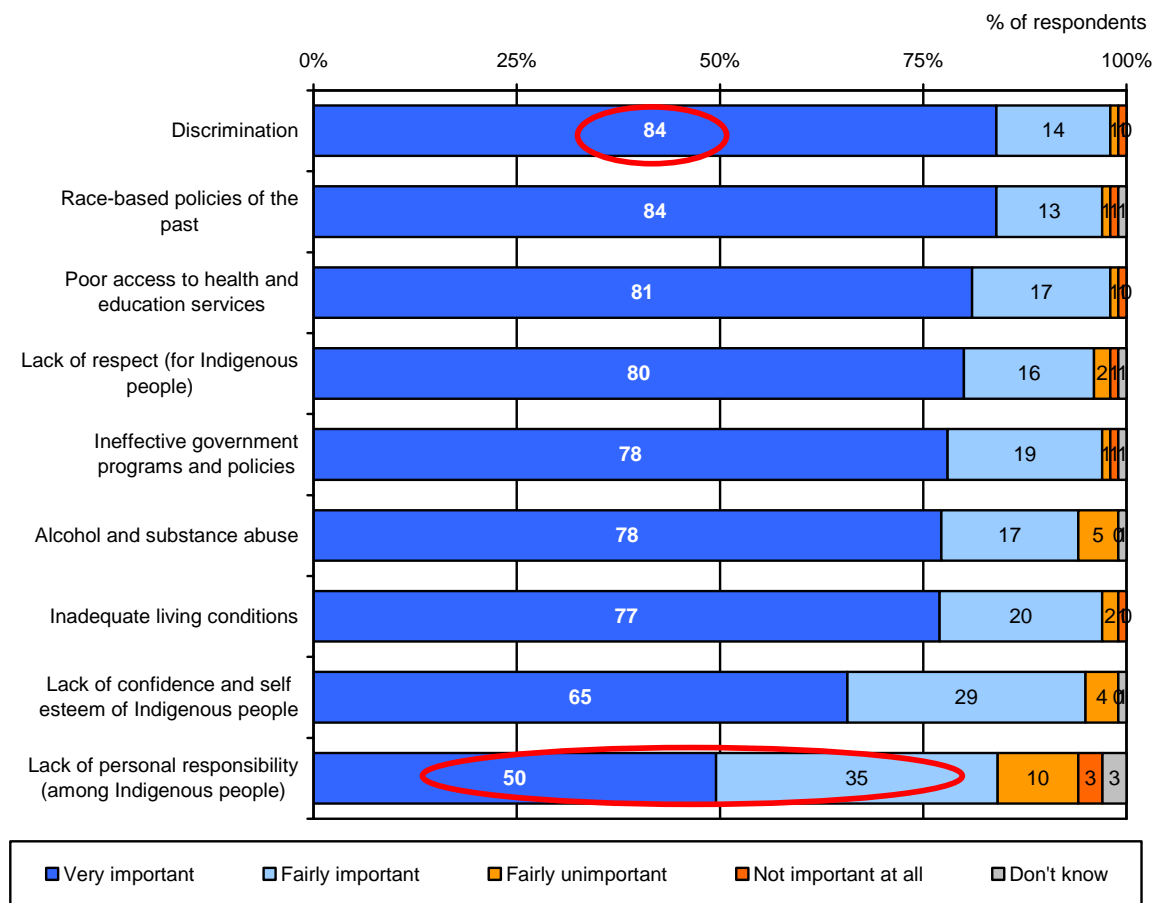
**The personal attributes of self esteem and personal pride are viewed somewhat differently. Regarding self esteem, Indigenous people are seen to fall behind the rest of the population, with 90% believing Indigenous people have lower levels than others. However, Indigenous people are thought to exhibit greater personal pride, with almost half of respondents believing Indigenous levels are the same or better than other Australians.**

- Most view Indigenous levels as lower than other Australians across all indicators:
  - *'Housing'* – 81% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 13% 'slightly lower'
  - *'Employment'* – 79% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 15% 'slightly lower'
  - *'Education'* – 75% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 18% 'slightly lower'
  - *'Health'* – 83% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 9% 'slightly lower'
  - *'Self esteem'* – 64% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 26% 'slightly lower'
  - *'Access to opportunities'* – 63% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 25% 'slightly lower'
- The only real exception relates to *'personal pride.'* In this case, 30% of respondents feel Indigenous people have higher levels than other Australians. However, another 35% believe Indigenous levels are 'much lower' and 19% believe they are 'slightly lower' than other Australians.



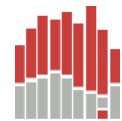
## 4.8 Reasons behind Indigenous disadvantage

*How important do you think the following factors have been in creating the disadvantage suffered by some Indigenous people today?*



### KEY FINDINGS:

Most participants believe that there are many different factors that have created the disadvantage experienced by some Indigenous people today, with over 85% of respondents thinking each factor was 'important' in creating disadvantage. More than three quarters of participants believe that the factors which have been 'very important' in creating the situation of disadvantage of some Indigenous people today are: discrimination, race-based policies of the past, poor access to health and education, lack of respect, ineffective government policies, alcohol and substance abuse and inadequate living conditions. Even the personal factors of lack of confidence and lack of personal responsibility are considered 'very important' by two thirds and half of respondents respectively.

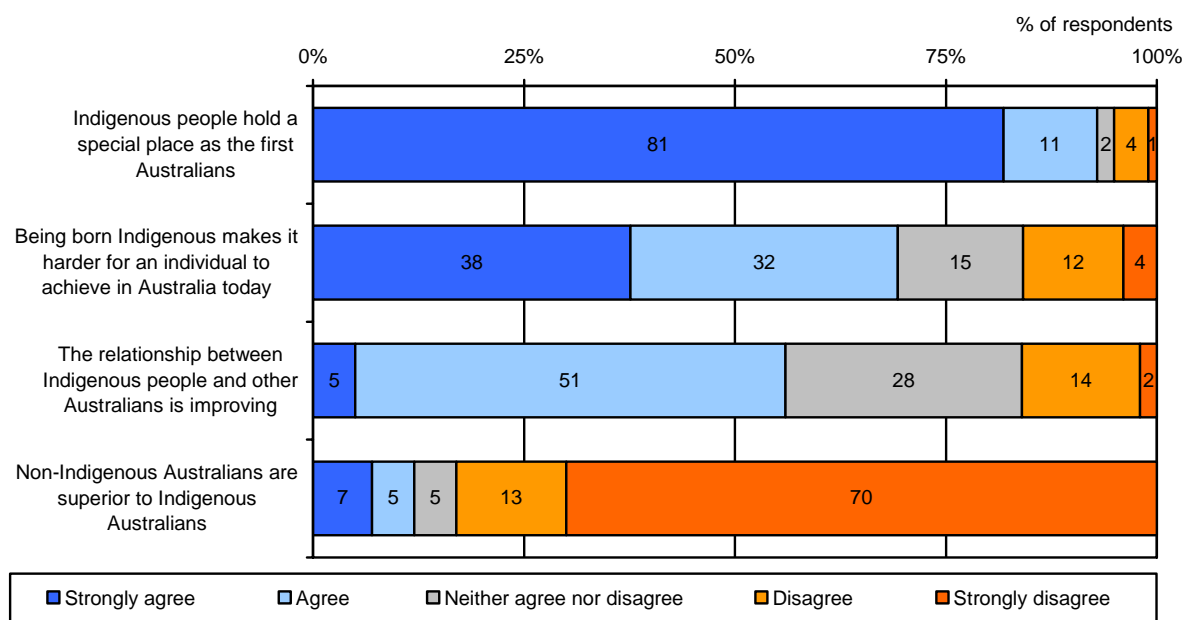


- More than eight of every 10 Indigenous respondents consider the following factors as ‘very important’ in creating the situation of disadvantage suffered by some Indigenous people today;
  - 84% believe ‘*discrimination*’ has been ‘very important’ and 14% ‘fairly important’
  - 84% believe ‘*race-based policies of the past*’ have been ‘very important’ and 13% ‘fairly important’
  - 81% believe ‘*lack of access to services*’ has been ‘very important’ and 17% ‘fairly important’
  - 80% believe ‘*lack of respect*’ has been ‘very important’ and 16% ‘fairly important’
- More than three quarters of participants also consider the following factors as ‘very important’:
  - 78% believe ‘*ineffective government policies*’ have been ‘very important’ and 19% ‘fairly important’
  - 78% believe ‘*alcohol and substance abuse*’ have been ‘very important’ and 17% ‘fairly important’
  - 77% believe ‘*inadequate living conditions*’ have been ‘very important’ and 20% ‘fairly important’
- The personal factors of confidence and lack of responsibility are also recognised by most Indigenous respondents as being ‘important’ in creating the disadvantage experienced by some Indigenous people today;
  - 65% believe ‘*lack of confidence and self esteem*’ have been ‘very important’ and 29% ‘fairly important’
  - 50% believe ‘*lack of personal responsibility*’ has been ‘very important’ and 35% ‘fairly important’
- The two factors that put the onus on Indigenous people themselves are ‘*alcohol and substance abuse*’ and ‘*lack of personal responsibility*.’ Only small numbers of respondents consider these as ‘unimportant’ in creating disadvantage;
  - 13% believe ‘*lack of personal responsibility*’ has been ‘unimportant’
  - 5% believe ‘*alcohol and substance abuse*’ has been ‘unimportant’

## 4.9 Values underlying attitudes to reconciliation

Research participants were asked for their level of agreement with a set of statements relating to their values and attitudes toward Indigenous people in Australia.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.



### KEY FINDINGS:

**Nine of every 10 respondents agree with a fundamental aspect of Indigenous Australia: that Indigenous people hold a special place as the first Australians (92% agree). However, despite this ‘special place’ most also believe it is harder for an Indigenous person to achieve in Australia today (70% agree).**

**More than half of the respondents (56%) perceive the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians as improving, with only 16% believing it is getting worse. This clearly bodes well for the future prospects of reconciliation in Australia.**

**Not surprisingly, more than 8 out of 10 respondents reject the statement that non-Indigenous Australians are superior to Indigenous Australians.**

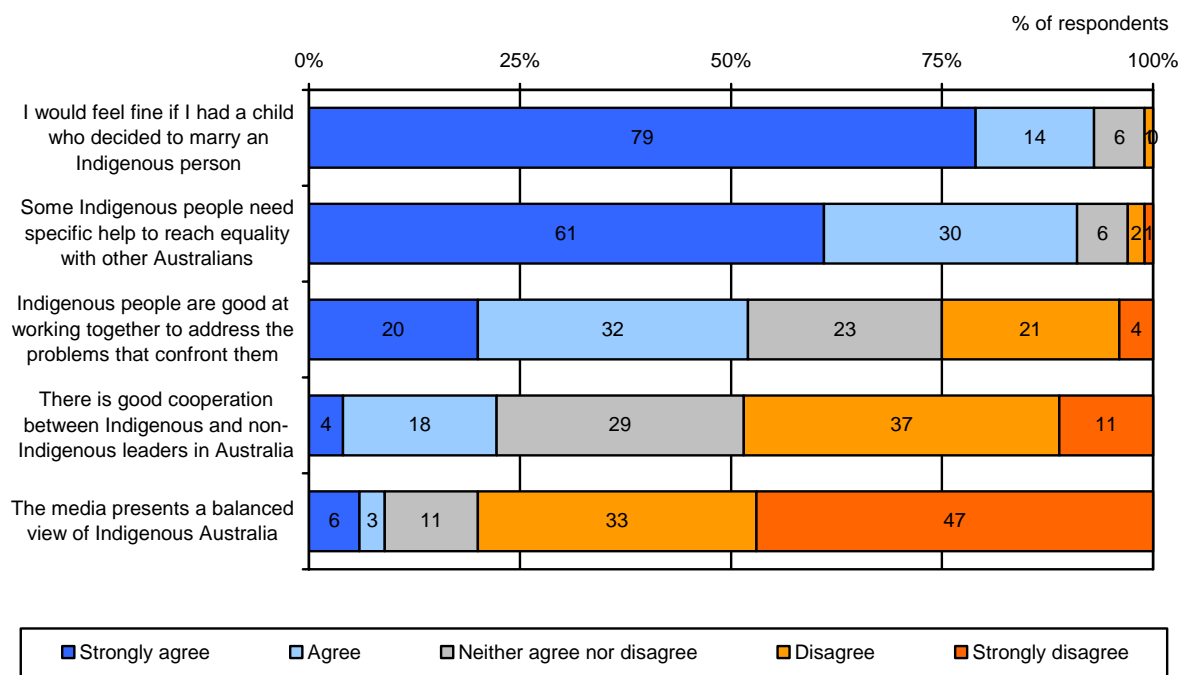
- There is a very high level of agreement (81% strongly agree, 11% agree) with the statement ‘*Indigenous people hold a special place as the first Australians*’ (59%).
- Respondents also agree that ‘*Being born Indigenous makes it harder for an individual to achieve in Australia*’ (38% strongly agree, 32% agree).
- Australians are more divided in their attitudes to whether ‘*the relationship between Indigenous people and other Australians is improving*’ (5% strongly agree, 51% agree, another 28% neither agree nor disagree and 16% disagree).
- 83% of respondents disagree that ‘*non-Indigenous Australians are superior to Indigenous Australians*’ (7% strongly agree and 5% agree).

## 5. ACTION – TAKING AND SUPPORTING ACTION

### 5.1 Action and progress towards reconciliation

Research participants were asked for their level of agreement with a set of statements relating to progress and action toward advancing reconciliation in Australia.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.



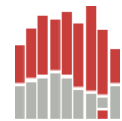
#### KEY FINDINGS:

Responses to five statements can be seen as indicators of action and progress towards reconciliation.

Understandably, almost all respondents agree that they would feel fine if their child married an Indigenous person (93% agree). There is also broad recognition of the notion that some Indigenous people need specific help to achieve equality with other Australians (91% agree).

When it comes to Indigenous people and leaders working together and with non-Indigenous people to overcome problems, respondents are far less likely to agree. Responses are divided as to whether *‘Indigenous people are good at working together to address the problems that confront them’*; around half agree with this statement (52%) while a quarter disagree (25%) and another quarter (23%) neither agree nor disagree. Only 22% of people believe *‘there is good cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in Australia’* and around half (48%) of participants *‘disagree’*.

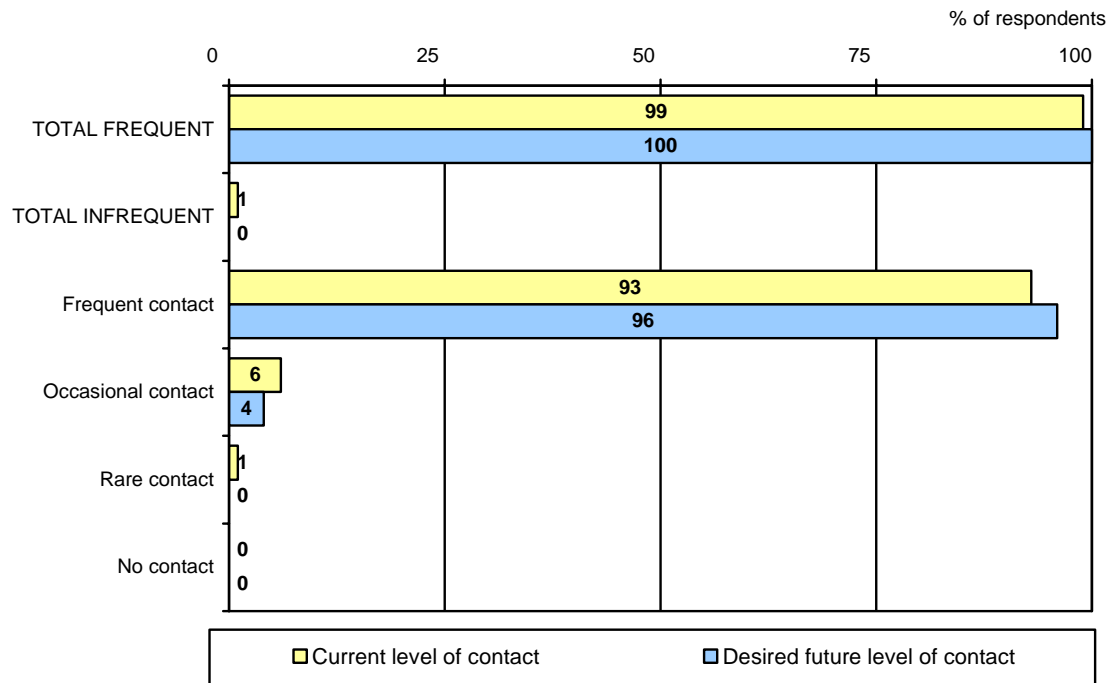
The media is not regarded as presenting *‘a balanced view of Indigenous Australia’*; with 8 of 10 respondents disagreeing and almost half (47%) strongly disagreeing with this statement.



**The following summarises the level of agreement with each statement:**

- Over nine of every ten respondents either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the following statements:
  - *'I would feel fine if I had a child who decided to marry an Indigenous person'* (93%)
  - *'Some Indigenous people need specific help to reach equality with other Australians'* (91%)
- Indigenous respondents are divided in their attitudes as to whether or not the community is capable of working together and overcoming issues;
  - *'Indigenous people are good at working together to address the problems that confront them'* (20% strongly agree, 32% agree, 23% neither agree nor disagree and 21% disagree)
- There is greater disagreement than agreement with the following statements:
  - *'There is good cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in Australia'* (22% agree or strongly agree, 29% neither agree nor disagree and 48% disagree or strongly disagree)
  - *'The media presents a balanced view of Indigenous Australia'* (80% disagree or strongly disagree)

## 5.2 Comparison of current and desired future levels of contact with Indigenous people



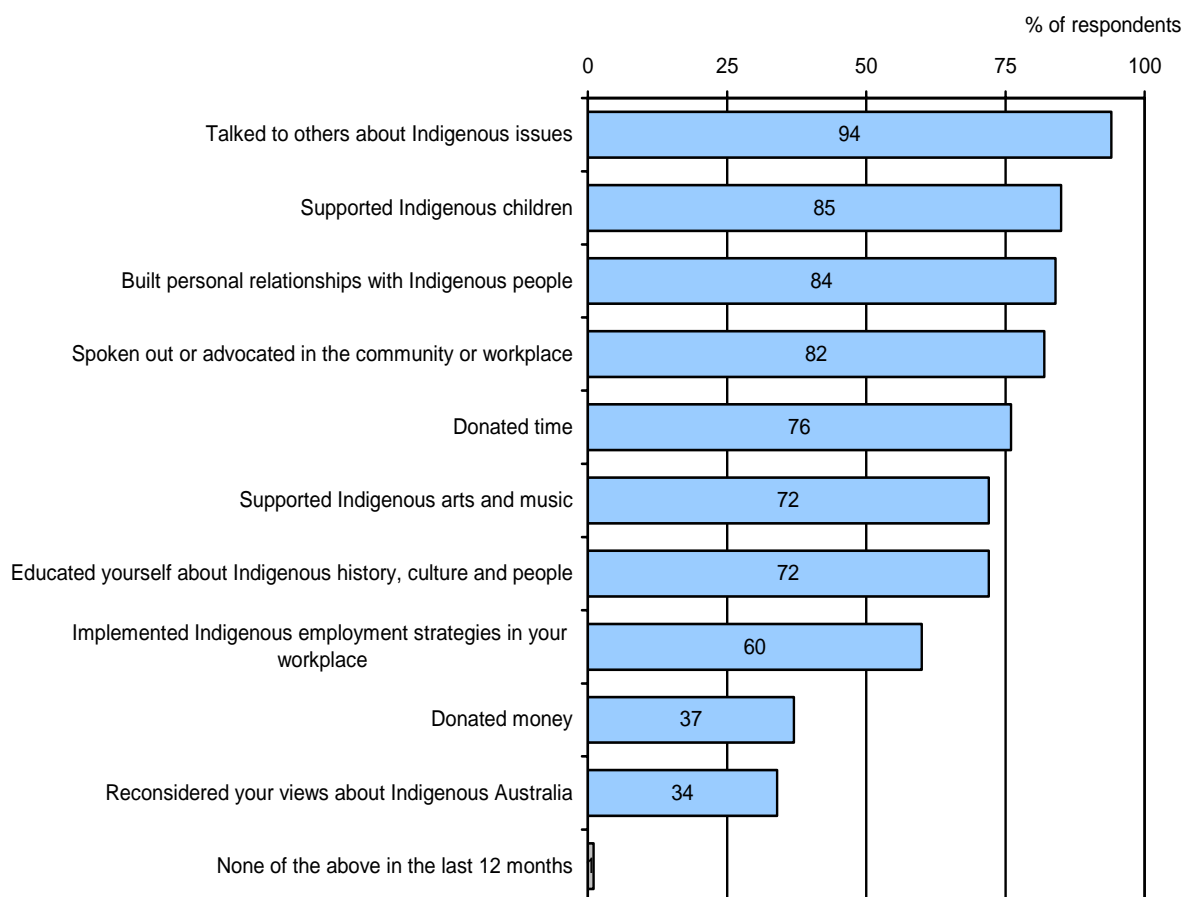
### KEY FINDINGS:

**As expected, almost all Indigenous respondents have frequent contact with other Indigenous people and desire to continue this way.**

- Currently, 93% of respondents report 'frequent' contact with Indigenous people, compared to 6% 'occasional' and 1% 'rare.'
- Desire for the future sees 96% of participants seeking 'frequent' contact and only 4% seeking 'occasional' contact.

### 5.3 Individual involvement in the past 12 months

*Below is a list of things that people can do to advance reconciliation or help disadvantaged Indigenous people. Please indicate whether you have done any of these things in the last 12 months.*



#### KEY FINDINGS:

**There is a high level of personal engagement and action relating to reconciliation among Indigenous respondents, with 99% having taken steps to advance reconciliation or to help disadvantaged people in the last 12 months. The most common actions relate to talking to people, advocating, building relationships and supporting children, with around 8 of every 10 respondents taking these sorts of actions. Specific actions such as donating time, supporting the arts, educating oneself and implementing employment strategies have also been made by more than 60% of respondents. The activities that are engaged in least often are donating money and reconsidering one's view about Indigenous Australia.**

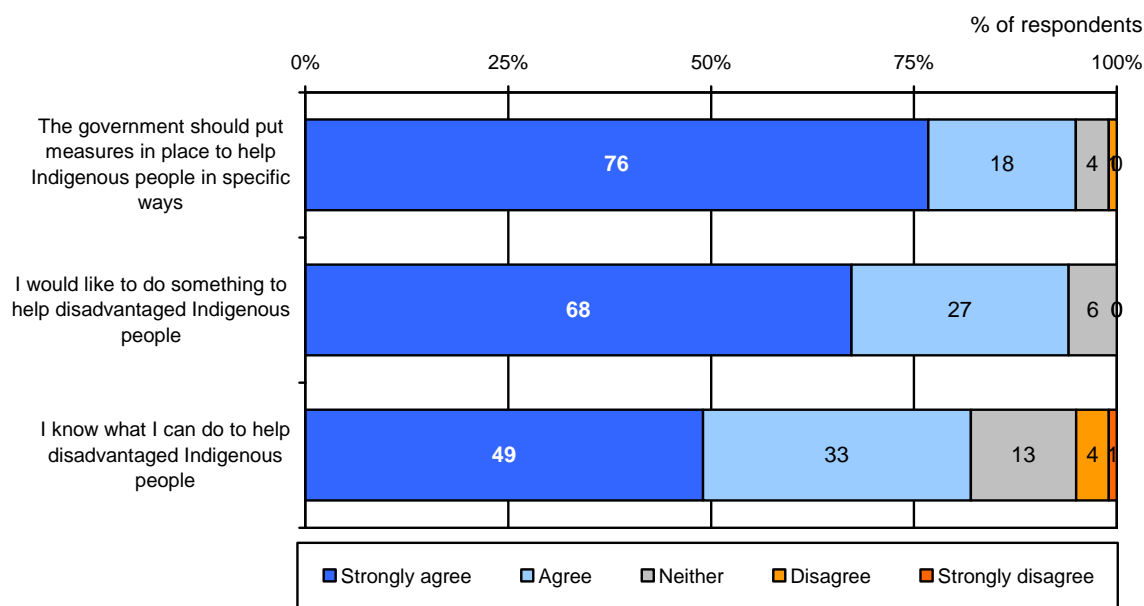
- More than eight of ten respondents have engaged in the following actions in the last year:
  - *Talked to others about Indigenous issues* (94%)
  - *Supported Indigenous children* (85%)
  - *Built personal relationships with Indigenous people* (84%)
  - *Spoken out or advocated in the community or workplace* (82%)

- In the last 12 months most respondents also
  - *Donated time (76%)*
  - *Supported Indigenous arts and music (72%)*
  - *Educated themselves about Indigenous history, culture and people (72%)*
  - *Implemented Indigenous employment strategies in their workplace (60%)*
- Fewer respondents have chosen to engage in a financial capacity, with only a third having '*donated money.*'
- While one might consider it unnecessary for Indigenous people to think again about how they view Indigenous Australia, one third (34%) of participants have '*reconsidered their views about Indigenous Australia.*'



## 5.4 Desire for personal and government action

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.



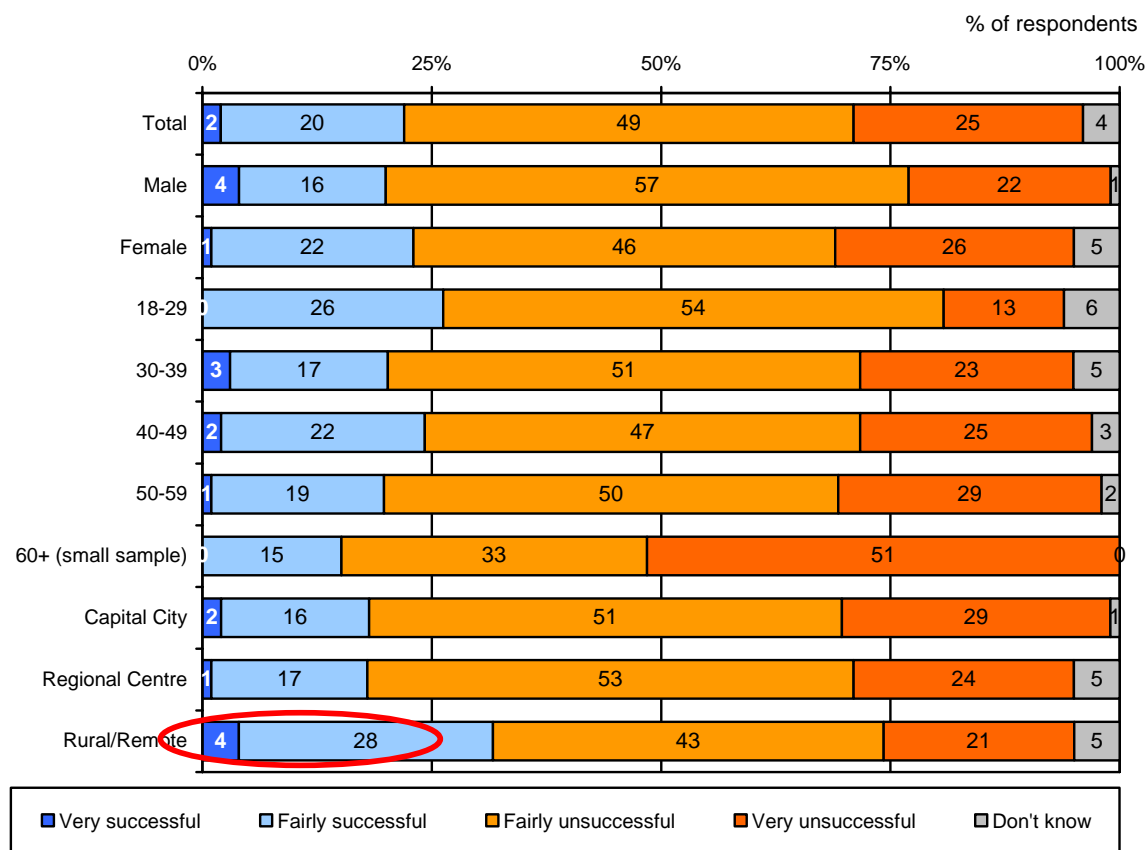
### KEY FINDINGS:

Participants believe that the government has a responsibility to help disadvantaged Indigenous people and they support specific measures to overcome disadvantage (76% strongly agree). There is also a great deal of interest in taking personal action (68% strongly agree). However, respondents are slightly less sure of what they can personally do to help disadvantaged people (49% strongly agree).

- Support for government action is very strong with 94% of respondents believing that *'the government should put measures in place to help Indigenous people in specific ways'*. Only 4% of people take no position in relation to this proposal and only 1% of respondents disagree with it.
- There is also great desire to take personal action to help disadvantaged Indigenous people, and no opposition to it whatsoever;
  - 95% *'would like to do something to help disadvantaged Indigenous people.'*
- There is slightly less clarity in terms of knowing how to help. While half of respondents (49%) *'strongly agree'* that *'I know what I can do to help disadvantaged Indigenous people,'* and 33% agree, 18% disagree or are undecided.

## 5.5 Government action to address Indigenous disadvantage

Overall, would you say that programmes designed to address Indigenous disadvantage have been....?



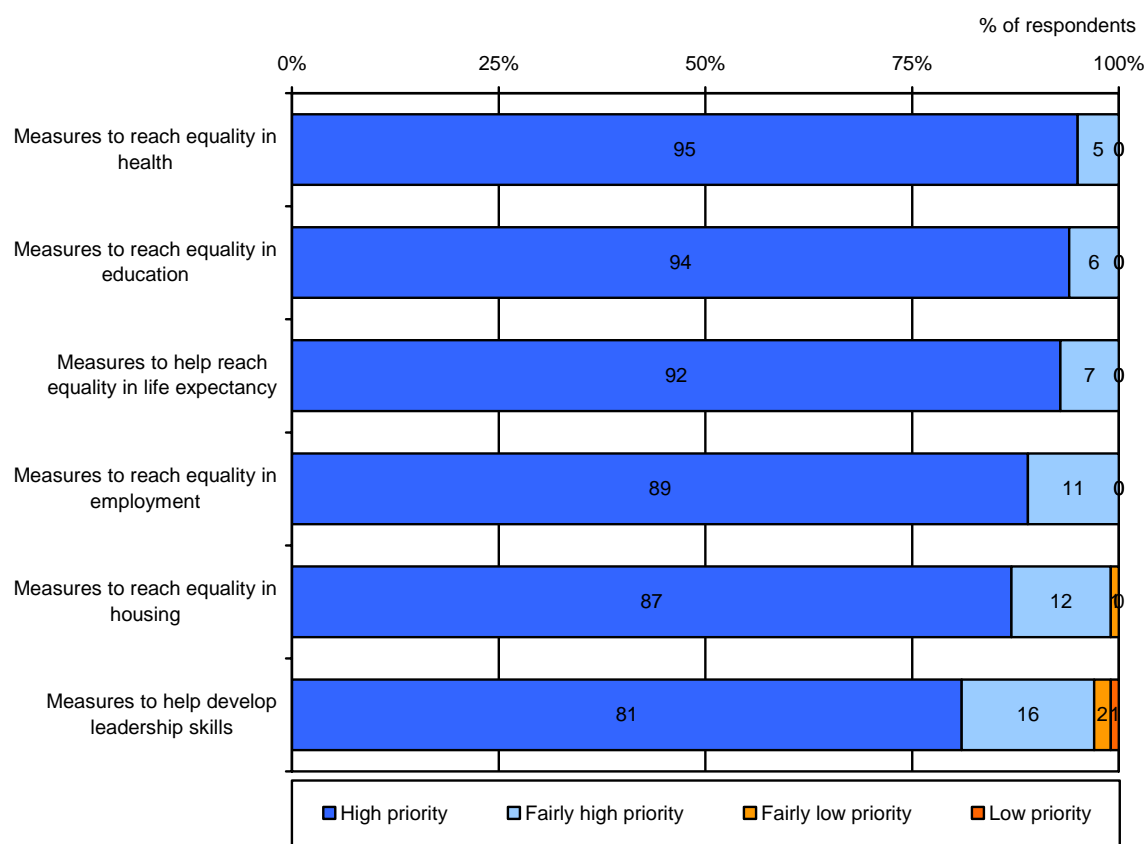
### KEY FINDINGS:

**Indigenous respondents generally believe that government programmes designed to address Indigenous disadvantage have been 'unsuccessful' (74%). This result is relatively consistent across all groups, however, those in rural and remote areas are slightly more positive about the impact of projects, with around one third (32%) seeing them as 'successful.'**

- Three quarters (74%) of Indigenous respondents believe that programmes designed to address Indigenous disadvantage have been 'unsuccessful.'
  - 49% of the population believe that they have been 'fairly unsuccessful'
  - 25% of the population believe that they have been 'very unsuccessful'
- Only about one in five participants (22%) consider programmes designed to address Indigenous disadvantage have been 'very successful' or 'fairly successful.'
- The most critical of programmes so far are those aged over 60 years old; four fifths (84%) claim projects so far have been 'unsuccessful,' with over half (51%) considering them 'very unsuccessful.' (small sample)
- Somewhat more positive about the impact of projects, around one third (32%) of rural and remote dwellers see projects as being 'successful'.

## 5.6 Prioritising measures to address Indigenous disadvantage

*Thinking about ways the government can help Indigenous people, what level of priority do you believe the government should give to each of the following specific measures?*



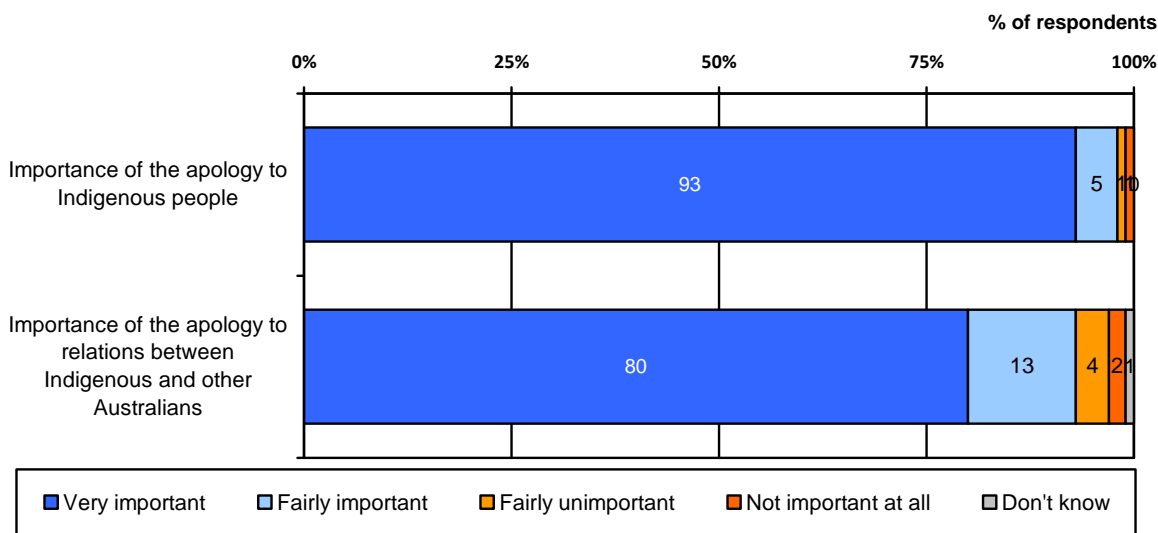
### KEY FINDINGS:

**Respondents overwhelmingly believe the government should give high priority to a range of measures to deal with Indigenous disadvantage. Equality in health, education, life expectancy and employment are considered a 'high priority' or 'fairly high priority' by all respondents. Measures to reach equality in housing and leadership skills are also supported by over 97% of respondents.**

- All the different measures for helping Indigenous people were very strongly supported as priorities for government;
  - 'Measures to reach equality in health' (95% high priority)
  - 'Measures to reach equality in education' (94% high priority)
  - 'Measures to help reach equality in life expectancy' (92% high priority)
  - 'Measures to reach equality in employment' (89% high priority)
  - 'Measures to reach equality in housing' (87% high priority)
  - 'Measures to help develop leadership skills' (81% high priority)

## 5.7 The importance of the apology

*In February 2008, the Australian Parliament apologised to members of the stolen generations for the past government policies that separated many Indigenous people from their families and homelands. How important was this apology?*



### KEY FINDINGS:

**Indigenous respondents appreciate the importance of the 2008 apology to members of the stolen generations both from the perspective of Indigenous people (93% think this was 'very important') and for relations with other Australians (80% think this was 'very important').**

- Over 9 out of every 10 respondents (93%) feel 'the apology' was 'very important' for Indigenous people and 80% believe it was 'very important' for relations between Indigenous and other Australians.
- There is very little opposition to these propositions, with only 6% of participants believing it was 'not important' for relations between Indigenous and other Australians, and 2% claiming it was 'not important' for Indigenous people.

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