



THE AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE IN MEASURING GOVERNANCE

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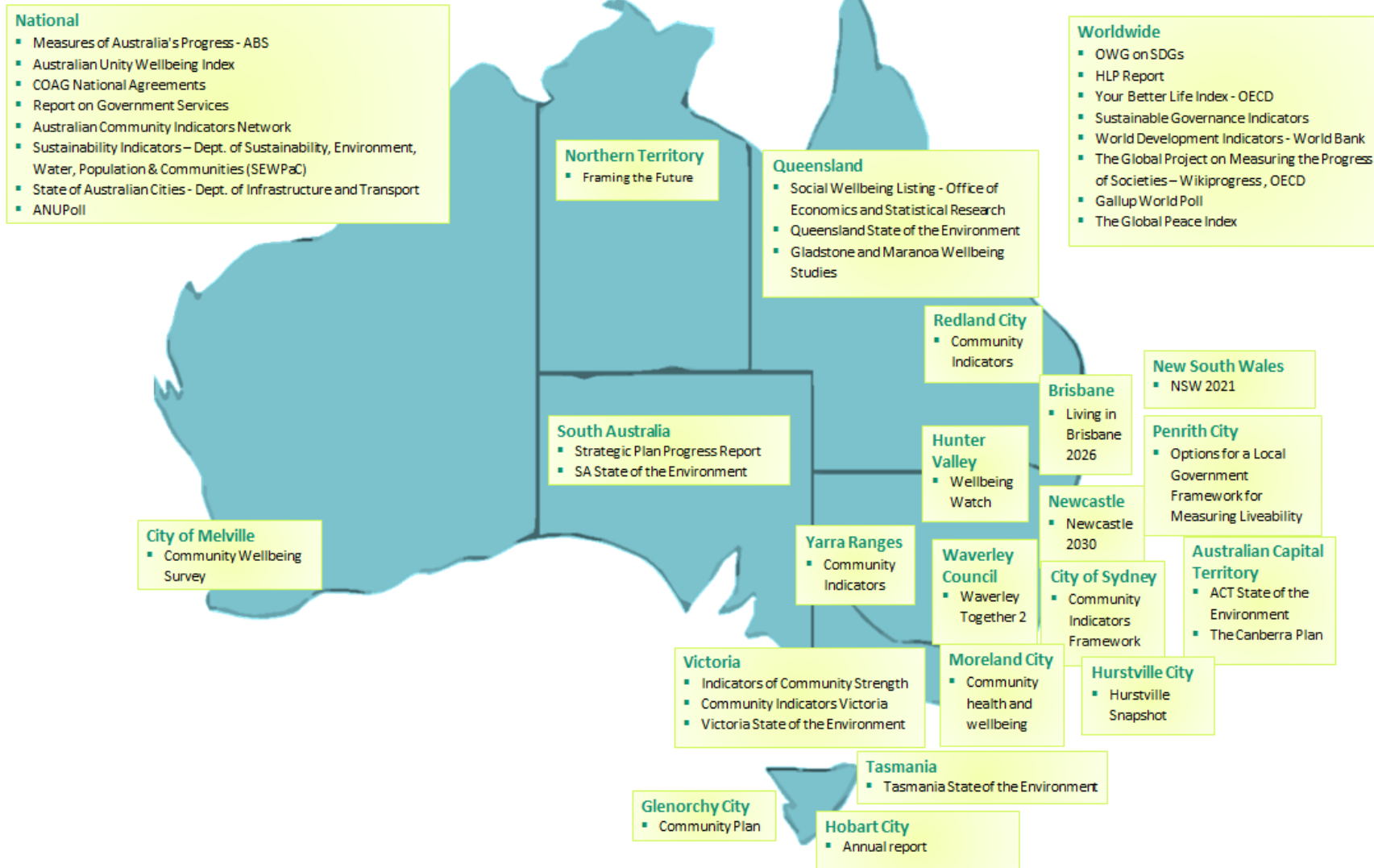
In this presentation

- Why measure Governance?
- Measuring Governance in Australia
- What is the ABS doing in this space?
- Measuring progress in Governance

WHY MEASURE GOVERNANCE?

- Community and government interest
- Good governance and sustainable development go hand-in-hand
- To encourage “good governance”
 - Accountability
 - Transparency
 - Openness
 - Trust

MEASURING GOVERNANCE IN AUSTRALIA



COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

Voting

Effectiveness of
policies and
programs

Women
in
leadership
positions

Have a say
on important
issues

Information
accessible to
make informed
decisions

Satisfied with the
provision of
services

Justice
and fairness

Reporting on
activities of
governance
institutions

I am a member of
community
organisation or
decision making body

WHAT HAS THE ABS BEEN DOING IN THIS SPACE?

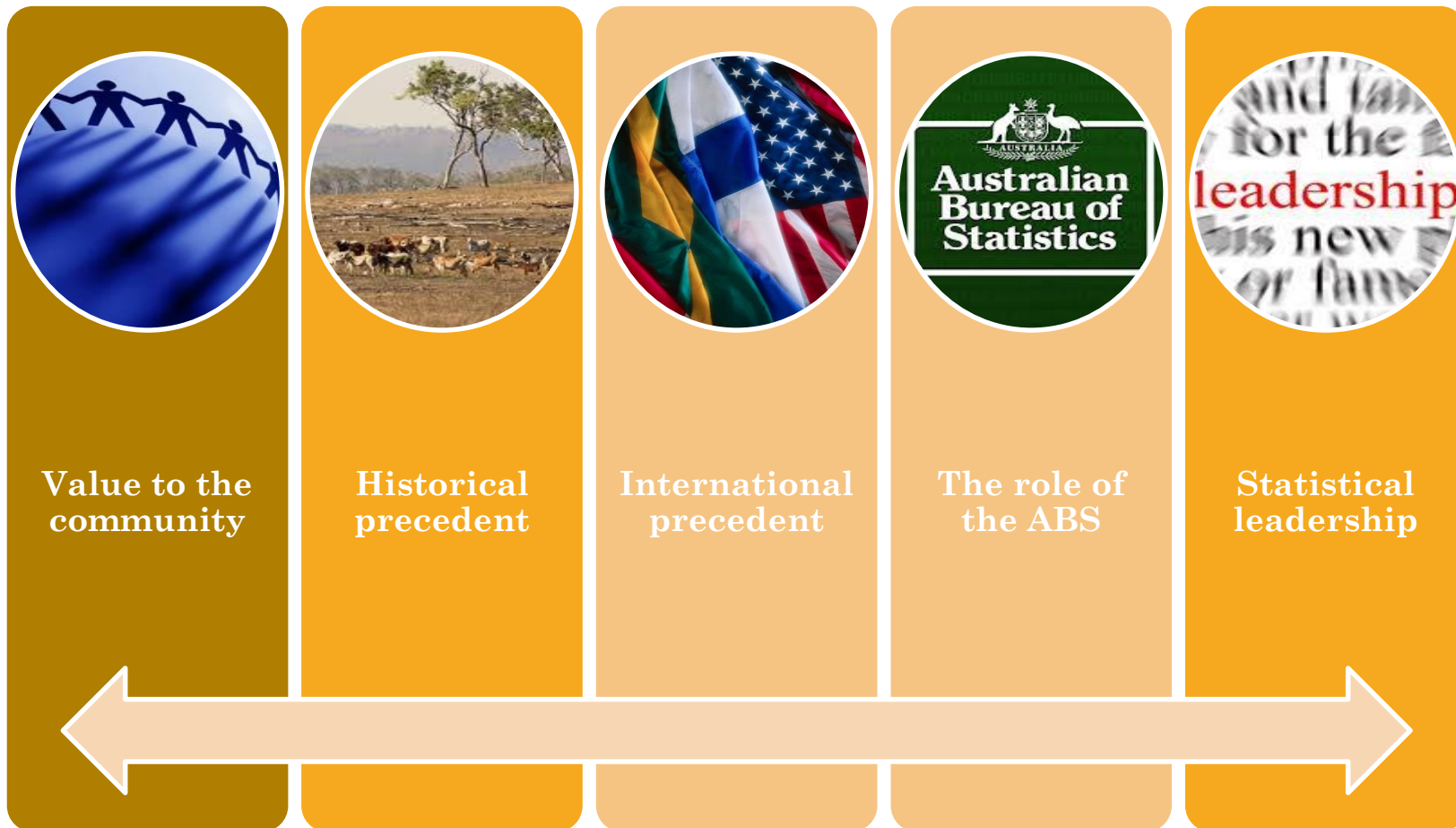


Measures of Australia's Progress 2013

Is life in Australia getting better?

Why does the ABS measure progress?

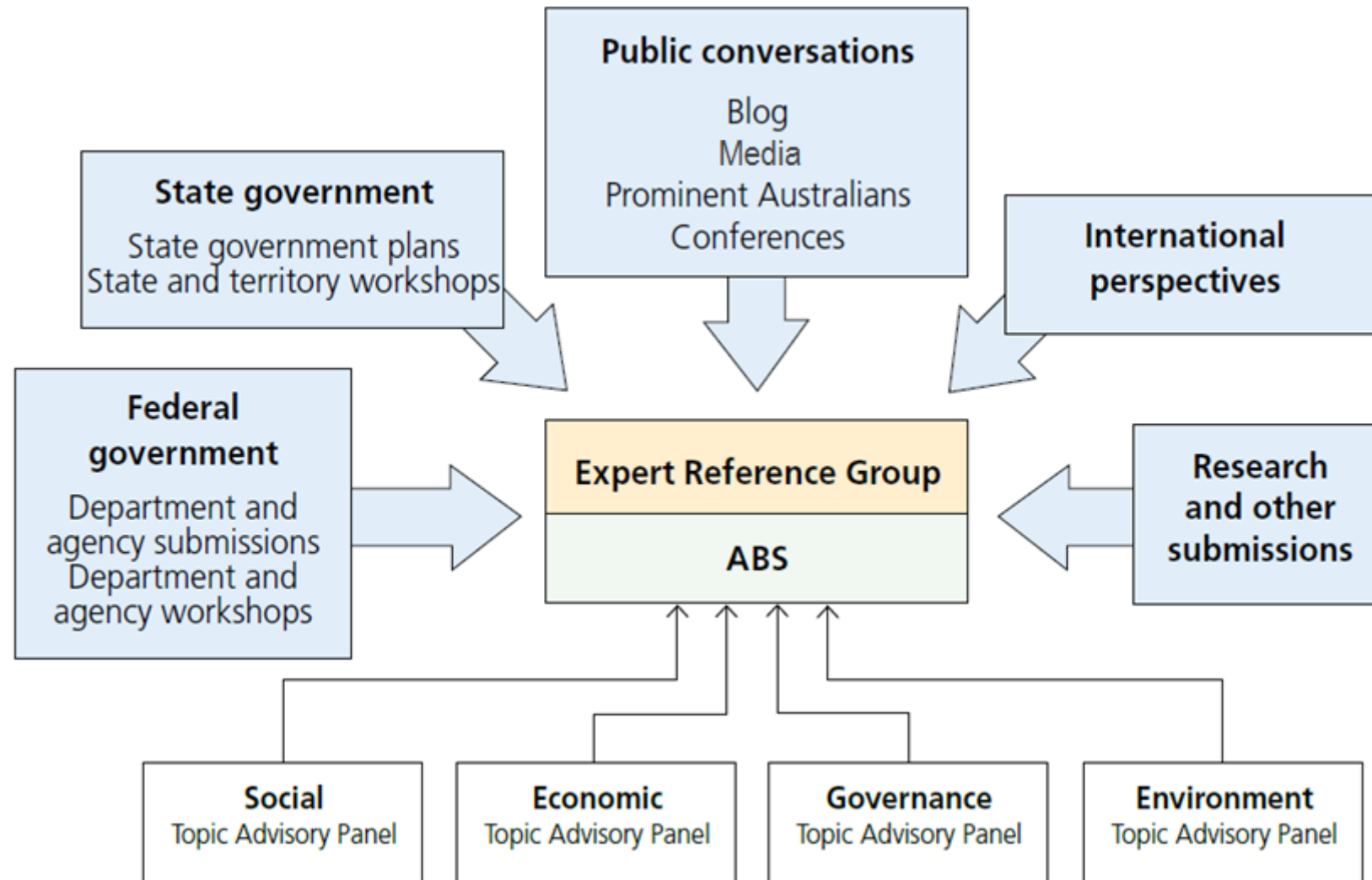
'Measuring progress – providing information about whether life is getting better – is perhaps the most important task a national statistical agency undertakes' – Brian Pink, Australian Statistician, 2012



Measuring Progress in Governance

- *Progress* is the **movement** of society in a positive direction - an improvement
- *Governance* - Australians aspire to a free society where governance processes are **trusted** and everyone is able to **participate** in decision making which affects their lives.

Our consultation channels



Broad consultation findings



New set of aspirations for national progress

- We now know what is important to Australians and why these things matter for national progress



Gaps in the current picture of social progress

- e.g. the built environment
- Intangible things that enrich people's lives



A new domain of progress

- Governance



Relationship and tensions between the areas of Society, Economy, Environment and Governance



Recurring themes for progress

- e.g. sustainability, resilience and equity

MAP RESULTS: THEMES & ELEMENTS - GOVERNANCE

Trust

- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Trust in governance processes and systems



Effective governance

- Effective governance
- Ease of interactions
- Protection
- Seamless interactions
- Balance between regulation and freedom
- Resilience



Participation

- Involvement in decision making
- Awareness and understanding
- Access and opportunity to contribute to decision making
- Taking responsibility



Informed public debate

- Open and informed debate
- Freedom to pursue and access truth/facts
- A free media
- Effective regulation



People's rights and responsibilities

- Rights and responsibilities upheld
- National laws and standards
- Access to justice
- Freedom of expression
- International conventions and laws









SELECTING NEW GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

- Best available indicator
- Do not need to be 'all-encompassing'
- Time series can grow over time
- Acceptable quality

Specifying new indicators

No indicators of 'limited quality' are proposed for inclusion, as the ABS does not believe that they would be suitable measures of progress in an official statistical release. For more information about the qualities that constitute high and acceptable quality please see the [ABS Data Quality Framework](#) (cat. No. 1520.0).

Target Diagram	Type of Indicator
	Direct measure
	Partial measure
	Indirect measure
Scale diagram	Quality of data source
	High quality
	Acceptable quality
	Limited quality

There are gaps in our Governance progress story...

1. Where there is a clear concept, but data of sufficient quality is not available to inform on progress;
2. The element or theme is conceptually challenging or complex and development is required to identify an appropriate indicator to measure its progress; or
3. The concept is important for progress, as a feature or enabler, but may not lend itself to meaningful statistical measurement.



Society

- ✓ Health
- ~ Close relationships
- ~ Home
- ~ Safety
- ✓ Learning and knowledge
- ~ Community connections and diversity
- ? A fair go
- ? Enriched lives

Environment

- ? Healthy natural environment
- ~ Appreciating the environment
- ? Protecting the environment
- ✗ Sustaining the environment
- ✓ Healthy built environments
- ? Working together for a healthy environment

Economy

- ✓ Opportunities
- ✓ Jobs
- ✓ Prosperity
- ✗ A resilient economy
- ✓ Enhancing living standards
- ~ Fair outcomes
- ✓ International economic engagement

Governance

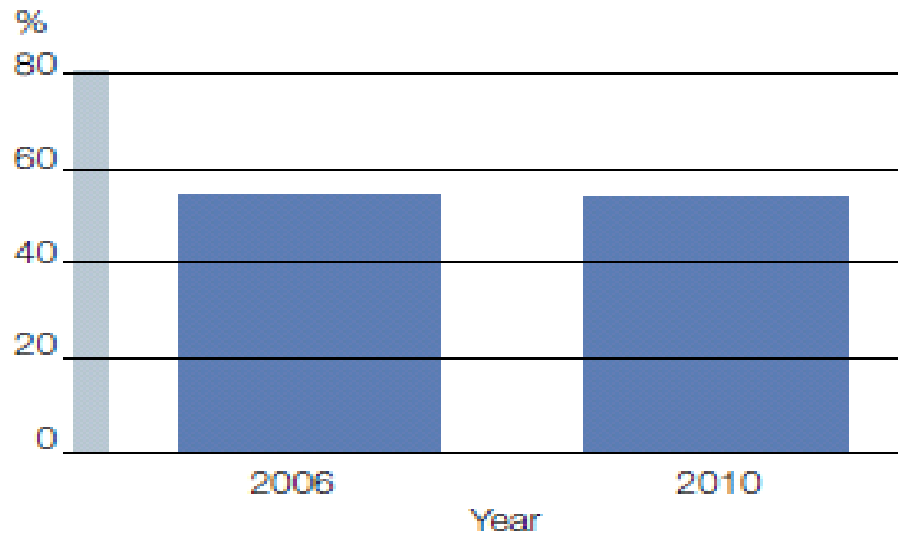
- ~ Trust
- ? Effective governance
- ✓ Participation
- ? Informed public debate
- ? People's rights and responsibilities

Legend:

- ✓ The headline progress indicator for this theme has shown **progress**.
- ✗ The headline progress indicator for this theme has shown **regress**.
- ~ The headline progress indicator for this theme has **not changed greatly**.
- ? There is a **data gap** for this theme as there is currently no headline progress indicator.

Headline Indicator: Trust

Level of generalised trust(a)



Footnote:

(a) Proportion of persons that agree or strongly agree that most people can be trusted.

Source:

ABS General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2006 & 2010 (cat. no. 4159.0)

AUSTRALIANS
ASPIRE TO
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PROCESSES THEY
CAN TRUST AND
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TRUST HAS
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RECENT YEARS





Trust

Australians aspire to institutions and governance processes they can trust and hold to account

Overall progress?

Integrity

Transparency

Accountability

Processes and systems



Trust has **not changed greatly** in Australia in recent years

Indicator: Level of generalised trust

Why is this theme important?

Australians told us that governance systems and processes needed to be open, honest, unbiased and trusted by society. This related to government, non-government bodies and with people within communities. People wanted governance processes to be free from corruption, favouritism and conflict of interest. They wanted government and private institutions to behave responsibly and with integrity in support of societal wellbeing. Where governance processes impact on society, people wanted information about this to be transparent to the public. In addition, trust between members of the community was also seen as an essential aspect of the general idea of trust, ensuring communities and societies functioned effectively.

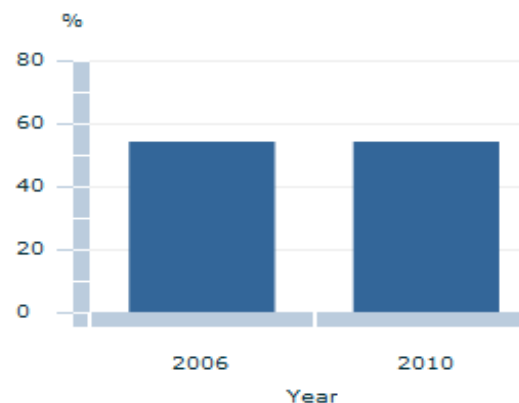
How have we decided things haven't changed greatly?

We have decided that there has been little change in trust in Australian institutions and governance processes in recent years because the level of generalised trust (our headline progress indicator for trust) hasn't moved much.

For trust in Australian institutions and governance processes to improve, we would expect to see an increase in the level of generalised trust, indicating that people in the community were more trusting of one another.

In 2010, 54% of Australians agreed or strongly agreed that most people could be trusted, the same proportion seen four years earlier in 2006.

Level of generalised trust(a)



■ Generalised trust

Footnote (a) Proportion of persons that agree or strongly agree that most people can be trusted.

Source ABS General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2006 & 2010 (cat. no. 4159.0)

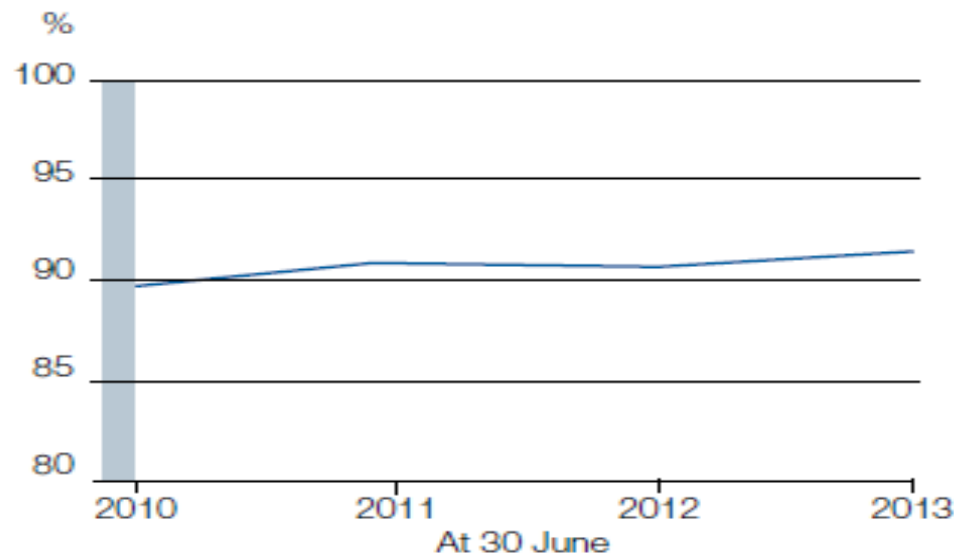
Headline Indicator: Participation

AUSTRALIANS
ASPIRE TO HAVE
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THE
OPPORTUNITY
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MAKING AND
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PROCESSES IN
AUSTRALIA HAS
PROGRESSED IN
RECENT YEARS

Eligible Australians enrolled to vote



Source:

Australian Electoral Commission, National enrolment figures by state/territory, viewed 23 September 2013





Participation

Australians aspire to have the opportunity to have a say in decisions that affect their lives

Overall progress?

Involvement

Awareness

Access and opportunity

Responsibility



The opportunity to participate in decision making and governance processes in Australia has progressed in recent years

Indicator: Proportion of eligible Australians enrolled to vote

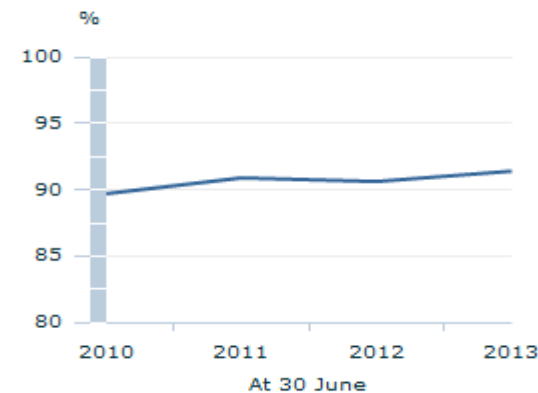
Why is this theme important?

Australians told us that it is important that everyone has the opportunity to participate in decision-making that affects their lives. People thought that participation was important at all levels of society, from formal interactions, such as with government or business sectors, to community level interactions. Australians said they could participate in and influence how society is managed by attending community groups, talking or writing to politicians, signing petitions, voting in elections, and in many other ways. Participation in decision-making was also seen as a personal responsibility by Australians. For example, voting in elections was seen as an important activity Australians were required to undertake. For people to become involved in decision-making and governance, they need to be able to access the necessary information and avenues for participation. People discussed the value of participating in genuine consultation, where all peoples' voices are heard, genuinely considered and a response is received. They also thought that timely decision-making undertaken by elected representatives was important and appropriate. Consultation processes were valuable and complementary to these decision-making initiatives.

How have we decided there has been progress?

We have decided that the opportunity to participate in decision making and governance processes in Australia has progressed in the last three years because the proportion of eligible Australians enrolled to vote (our headline progress indicator for participation) has increased.

Eligible Australians enrolled to vote



Eligible Australians

Headline progress indicator

Source Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), National enrolment figures by state/territory, viewed 23 September 2013



Effective governance

Australians aspire to governance that works well

Overall progress?

Effective

Interactions

Protection

Interactions

Balance

Resilience



A data gap currently exists for effective governance

Why is this theme important?

Australians told us that good governance and regulation, within both government and non-government sectors, was important to national progress. People felt that good governance is effective and efficient. Many people in the consultation wanted the systems, processes and institutions that govern and regulate our activity, and protect our rights and freedoms, to be easy for people to access and interact with. They also wanted governance to be appropriate and to allow effective outcomes without overburdening people or institutions. People aspired to have their governance systems aligned, working together and adequately funded. They also wanted governance systems, processes and institutions to be strong and yet adaptable to change and to enable Australian society to bounce back from adversity.

In MAP there are several types of data gaps where:

1. the concept is not yet developed enough to measure;
2. the concept is important for progress but may not lend itself to meaningful measurement;
3. there is no data of sufficient quality to inform on progress; or
4. there is only one data point, so a progress assessment cannot be made.

A range of possible indicators are being considered for assessing effective governance, but the concept is broad and difficult to summarise in any one measure. In order to capture the spirit of this idea in a measure, further development will need to be undertaken. We will continue to explore options for a suitable indicator in the future.

But that is not the whole story...

While there are several elements to this theme of effective governance, each is currently a data gap due to the difficulties in measuring progress in this area. We will continue to explore options for suitable indicators in the future.



Informed public debate

Australians aspire to well-informed and vibrant public debate

Overall progress?

Open and informed

Freedom

Free media

Regulation



A data gap currently exists for informed public debate

Why is this theme important?

Australians told us that public debate should allow a diversity of voices and views to be heard and considered, and that information should be reported accurately, clearly and not be biased by conflicts of interest. They saw public debate as occurring in many places, for example, through the media and electronic information sharing channels, as well as parliamentary and political debating platforms. For this to happen effectively, they thought that these platforms should be effectively regulated whilst allowing people the freedom to access information.

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But that is not the whole story...

While there are several elements to this theme of informed public debate, each is currently a data gap due to the difficulties in measuring progress in this area. We will continue to explore options for suitable indicators in the future.



People's rights and responsibilities

Australians aspire to a society where everyone's rights are upheld and their responsibilities fulfilled

Overall progress?

Rights and responsibilities

Laws

Justice

Freedom

International



A data gap currently exists for people's rights and responsibilities

Why is this theme important?

Australians told us that their rights and responsibilities, as defined and protected by national laws, were important. Australians also thought that international human rights conventions were important and relevant. Many people in the consultation aspired to have their rights upheld by Australian governance systems, and wanted justice systems and processes to be fair and accessible to all Australians. They saw this as a reciprocal relationship, with everyone having the responsibility to abide by Australia's laws. People in the consultation also valued Australia's democratic system of representational government as a means of ensuring rights and responsibilities are upheld and enable participation.

In MAP there are several types of data gaps where:

1. the concept is not yet developed enough to measure;
2. the concept is important for progress but may not lend itself to meaningful measurement;
3. there is no data of sufficient quality to inform on progress; or
4. there is only one data point, so a progress assessment cannot be made.

We consider this theme to be the second type of data gap listed above, i.e. although the concept is important for progress, it may not lend itself to meaningful measurement. This being the case, while we will continue to consider this area of progress, there is no guarantee that we will have a progress indicator for it in the future.

But that is not the whole story...

Look through the other tabs on this page to see where we have been able to track progress for the aspiration of people's rights and responsibilities.

Check out our [further info](#) page for useful links, a glossary and references relating to this chapter.

Questions?



www.abs.gov.au/about/progress