The State of the Community Service Sector in the Australian Capital Territory, 2016

Prepared for:
ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

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Suggested citation
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# Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACNC</td>
<td>Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACTCOSS</td>
<td>ACT Council of Social Service Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSI</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTIQ</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDIA</td>
<td>National Disability Insurance Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDIS</td>
<td>National Disability Insurance Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPRC</td>
<td>Social Policy Research Centre</td>
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Foreword

This State of the Sector Report pulls together for the first time a comprehensive picture of those vital organisations in the ACT that provide community services, speak out on social issues, and represent the interests of their members in decision-making processes. We thank Volunteering and Contact ACT for helping us identify the 401 ACT community service organisations that were sent the survey. We are deeply grateful to the 166 organisations that took the time and were willing to share their perspectives so that we can build a more thorough understanding of community services, their strengths and challenges.

As the peak body for the community sector in the ACT, ACTCOSS has led the call for a strategic approach to the development of community services. ACTCOSS was an active contributor to development of the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026 that was released in July 2016. This State of the Sector Report addresses a need identified in the Industry Strategy to gather detailed information on the state of the community service sector in the ACT. ACTCOSS took immediate action to implement this, engaging the experienced team at the UNSW Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) to conduct the State of the Sector Survey in August-September 2016.

The Industry Strategy outlines the following vision for community services in our city and region:

An inclusive, equitable and sustainable Community Services Industry will:

- deliver quality services to create more connected communities which will support vulnerable individuals and families to be empowered and to fully participate in their communities and to take charge of their own future
- undertake community development to create social value, build social capital and improve living conditions
- put the needs of our clients and communities at the centre of everything we do
- be a trusted voice on the needs of our communities with a strong evidence base that will shape policies and engage in social planning for the Territory and its regions.

The report findings will help inform decisions about what investments are needed to ensure service providers, voluntary associations, advocacy organisations, peak bodies and consumer and carer organisations are able to deliver on this vision.

Susan Helyar, ACTCOSS Director
This report provides critical information about the strengths of organisations, the challenges they face, and the need for development of human capital and organisational capacity in the sector. It also debunks some myths about the sector.

The report shows that a key strength of our sector is the diversity of the community service workforce (voluntary and paid, in governance, management and front line roles). The majority of ACT community service organisations engage volunteers, employ staff, and have board members with lived experience of disadvantage or as service users. Despite struggling to attract staff due to low wages, insecurity of work and limited career pathways, employers are more successful in retaining staff. Our sector is way out in front of other sectors on gender equity in senior management roles. However, leaders are concerned about the lack of women and young people in governance roles, and identify a need for support to build the legal and financial capability of people on governing bodies.

Collaboration is another key strength of our sector. This report shows that collaboration in policy development with the ACT Government and on advocacy and workforce development through peak bodies is extremely common. Collaboration in direct service provision is growing both in quantity and quality. However, this report tells us leaders want better data sharing by government and more time, skills and experience to grow collaborative capability.

Relationships with the ACT Government were generally rated as positive—and as being more positive than those with the Australian Government—highlighting the value of a partnership approach between government and the sector under the Social Compact. Though, as one organisation noted, there is still room for improvement:

Community organisations need to be routinely recognized and engaged as partners in the policy process, not just service delivery. ACT Government agencies need to work better with each other and present a real ‘One ACT Government’ approach. Have been talking about this for years, but progress is painfully slow. The Better Services [Human Services Blueprint] is showing some good early signs of good progress, but needs to be sustained.

This report raises real concerns about the adequacy of government funding for the sector to meet demand. Almost a quarter of organisations reported a reduction in ACT Government funding over the past 12 months, with 64% indicating that ACT Government funding did not cover costs of service delivery and 61% indicating that this funding was not adequate to meet levels of demand. The findings of this report also suggest that government funding precludes organisations building up financial reserves as a buffer or safety net.

Government funders have argued that organisations have not focused sufficiently on diversifying their funds and that this has led to unsustainable business models. What this report tells us is that 71% of organisations generate income from the market (with 30% stating this income source has grown over the past 12 months) and 56% are the beneficiaries of philanthropic funding. Community service organisations do have diverse income streams, but the quantum of income from these sources is not sufficient to shift the need for adequate government funding to meet demand for services, undertake community development, be a trusted voice on the needs of our communities and build the evidence base.
This report shows there is strong consensus within the sector around financial sustainability as a top organisational priority over the next three years and that small financial reserves and uncertainty about medium to long term finances threaten sector sustainability and adaptability to changing circumstances. The Industry Strategy identifies government procurement processes as a key factor impacting the sustainability of the sector and seeks an outcome whereby industry and government work together on procurement models which support sustainability. This report highlights the urgency of this task.

ACTCOSS believes this report adds significantly to the evidence base that can guide implementation of the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026. This report provides a baseline for monitoring the impact of the strategy and future surveys undertaken on a regular basis would enable us to track changes over the life of the strategy. I look forward to hearing the reflections, insights and suggestions it generates amongst our members, the broader sector, government, philanthropic funders, and the wider community.
1 Executive Summary

This report profiles non-government community service organisations in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). It uses data collected from leaders of 166 of the 401 organisations identified as operating in the ACT in 2016 (response rate of 41.4%). The report shows the organisational, workforce, governance and financial characteristics of responding organisations, and their leaders’ perspectives on the operational environment, and priorities for the future.

About responding organisations

The 166 responding organisations were spread across the ACT. Almost half (46.4%) operated in the ACT only, and not in any other State or Territory. Most responding organisations (148, or 89.2%) were non-profit, and 121 (81.8%) were registered charities. Responding organisations delivered a diverse range of services. Disability service provision, community development, and policy advocacy, were the most common service types. Almost 1 in 3 organisations (31.3%) were registered providers of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in the ACT. The median income, or mid-point among all responding organisations, was $438,000, indicating that half of organisations received less than this figure. Many were much smaller: 20% of organisations had annual incomes under $25,000. The largest 20% of organisations had annual incomes over $3.5 million.

Involvement of volunteers

One way that community service organisations foster community building, inclusion and wellbeing is through volunteering. The majority of community service organisations in the ACT reported engaging volunteers in the last year (83.1%). A substantial number of organisations (20.5%) had more than 50 volunteers involved. Around 3 in 5 organisations (58.9%) engaged volunteers with lived experience of disadvantage and / or experience as service users. Although most responding organisations engaged volunteers, only 1 in 3 (35.8%) had a dedicated volunteer coordinator. Organisations with a volunteer coordinator were more likely than others to engage volunteers with lived experience, and to feel their organisation was adequately resourced to involve and effectively manage volunteers.

Paid employees in the ACT community service sector

Around 4 in 5 organisations had one or more paid employees (80.7%). On average, organisations had 34.9 paid staff, but this was affected by a small number of large employers. The median number of staff was 6.5: half of organisations had fewer than 6.5 paid staff. Overall, 58.1% of staff in responding organisations were employed part time. Small organisations had higher proportions of part-time staff.

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1 Median income is the mid-point of all incomes arranged in order from smallest to largest. Half of all organisations have an income lower than the median, half have an income higher. This differs from mean income which is the average determined by adding all incomes then dividing by the number of organisations who provided income data.
Among responding organisations, around 2 in 3 employees were employed on a permanent or ongoing basis, while 1 in 4 were employed casually. This varied across the sector. A relatively high proportion of staff in organisations whose main service type was ‘information, advocacy, legal and peaks’ were employed on a permanent or ongoing basis.

**Employment diversity in the ACT community service sector**

Like in other jurisdictions, the ACT community service sector workforce is numerically dominated by women. On average, organisations reported that 77% of their employees were female, although the median was slightly higher (80%). Around 1 in 4 organisations (24.8%) reported that all paid employees in their organisation were female. Only 8.4% were male dominated. More than 2 in 3 community service organisations in the ACT were led by women (68.2%).

Many community service organisations employ people with lived experience. Around 7 in 10 organisations reported that they employed a staff member with lived experience of disadvantage or experience as a service user (70.6%). Private for-profit organisations were less likely to do so (50.0%).

**Recruitment and retention challenges**

Around 2 in 3 respondents said their organisation had difficulty attracting staff in the last 12 months (68.7%). However, difficulties retaining staff were less widespread, reported by just over half of organisations (53.7%). Most commonly, recruitment and retention difficulties related to frontline practitioners (with or without degree level qualifications), but many organisations also had difficulty attracting and retaining managers and administrative staff. Those in organisations which had experienced staff turnover described how it placed pressure on remaining staff. Many respondents were concerned about the resources required to recruit and train new staff, and the impact of turnover on clients. Training and development opportunities, working hours and work locations were seen as attractive features of community service jobs, while salaries, job security and career paths were more commonly seen to hinder, rather than help, recruitment and retention efforts.

**Governance of community service organisations in the ACT**

The vast majority of organisations reported having a current strategic or business plan (77.6%), and 90.4% said they had a Board or Management Committee. Most organisations engaged a Board or Management Committee member with lived experience of disadvantage and/or experience of service use (60.4%). Engagement of Board or Committee members with lived experience was most common in organisations with incomes under $1 million.

Respondents reported high levels of confidence in their organisation’s governance. More than 4 in 5 (82.0%) agreed that their Board or Committee had good understanding of sector issues, and more than 3 in 4 (78.8%) felt there was good collaboration and flow of information between the Board and management. Some described difficulties finding Board or Committee members with relevant skills or lived experience. For a number of organisations, recruiting board members with
financial or legal knowledge was especially difficult, while others spoke of the challenge of attracting specific groups, such as young people or women.

Collaboration

Community service organisations collaborate to fill service gaps, support clients and achieve their mission. The majority of organisations operating in the ACT collaborate through affiliation with a peak body (84.3%). One in five (19.9%) collaborate through shared services. Around 3 in 5 agreed that their organisation is collaborating more often than a year ago, and the same number felt they were collaborating more effectively. Several respondents described constraints of time, skills and experience as barriers to collaboration.

Relationships with Government

The majority of organisations had some involvement with the ACT Government in the last 12 months (81.5%), most commonly through a service funding agreement (51.8%). Relationships with the ACT Government around policy advice and development, communication and consultation, and cooperation and collaboration to deliver services were generally rated positively. Cross-sectoral relationships around data sharing could be improved. The sector reported less positive relationships with the Australian Government. There is considerable scope to improve relationships with the Australian Government around collaborative service delivery, and negotiation of key performance indicators.

Income diversification

Community service organisations draw on income from public, philanthropic, and market sources. While income from government remains the most important income stream (received by 76.5% of responding organisations), there are some signs of diversification, with around 3 in 10 organisations reporting growth in market income in the last year.

Income from government

In the 2015-16 financial year, most responding organisations received ACT Government funding (59.9% of organisations) and 43.8% received Australian Government funding. However, 1 in 4 organisations said funding from the ACT Government had decreased in 2015-16 compared to the previous year, and many were concerned about the adequacy of government funding. Almost 2 in 3 (64.3%) said that ACT Government funding does not cover the true cost of delivering services. More than 3 in 5 organisations (61.5%) felt funding did not enable the sector to meet levels of demand in the ACT. High proportions of organisations also felt funding was insufficient to allow their organisation to purchase necessary capital, or maintain suitable facilities.

Income from market sources

Around 7 in 10 organisations (71.0%) received income from a commercial, or market source. Most often, this was income from user fees or charges. In most cases, market income made a minor contribution to total income. Around 3 in 10 organisations (29.0%) received no market income. For
A further 27.8% of organisations, it made a very small contribution to organisational resources, constituting less than 10% of total income. However, many organisations were highly dependent on commercial income. For almost 1 in 8 organisations (11.7%), commercial income constituted more than 90% of total income. Further, commercial income is growing for many organisations. Compared to the previous year, 29.1% of organisations reported that income from market sources had grown in 2015-16.

**Income from philanthropic sources**

More than half of organisations (55.6%) reported income from philanthropic sources in the 2015-16 financial year. Most often this was from donations and fundraising (received by 46.3% of organisations). Around 1 in 3 organisations received grants from philanthropic foundations and funds, but these generally made only a small contribution to total income.

**Financial status**

Many community service organisations operate with minimal financial reserves: 1 in 3 reported keeping less than three months of spending in reserve. Many also expressed uncertainty about future financial sustainability. While 36.1% were positive about their finances over the next year, lower numbers had positive 3- and 5-year outlooks.

**Perceptions of policy settings in the ACT**

The ACT Portable Leave Scheme was generally seen to have a positive impact on the sector, especially by respondents in organisations that were registered under the Scheme. Many organisations were concerned about the impact of the transition to the NDIS in the ACT. Of the 153 organisations that answered the question, 37.9% felt the implementation of NDIS had negatively impacted the sector. A concerning finding is that this figure was higher among organisations that provide disability services. Among disability service providers, 55.1% felt NDIS implementation was having a negative impact.
2 Introduction

Community services work to build fairer, more equitable societies, through a range of initiatives and programs aimed at improving wellbeing and health, promoting inclusion, strengthening communities, and shaping government policy and planning. This report provides a profile of the status of non-government community service organisations in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) in 2016, using data collected from leaders of 166 organisations. It contributes new information about the organisational, workforce, governance and financial characteristics of community service organisations operating in the ACT; and their leaders’ perspectives on policy, partnerships and resource arrangements, and priorities for the future.

Like in other Australian jurisdictions and in other countries, community services in the ACT work in partnership with community members and government to address complex disadvantage. The landmark ACT Community Services’ Industry Strategy 2016-2026 (JCGRG, 2016), which was developed through extensive consultation and collaboration among sector stakeholders, outlines the factors impacting on community service provision, and the values, capabilities and infrastructure required to achieve the shared vision of an inclusive, equitable and sustainable industry. The Industry Strategy 2016-2026 highlights patterns of disadvantage affecting residents of the Territory, including rising housing stress, and highlights the challenges of emerging models of government contracting and service delivery.

In particular, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) introduces higher levels of choice and control through client-centred funding and market-based service delivery. The Scheme is facilitating unprecedented sector growth, and has catalysed major institutional change, including withdrawal of the ACT Government from direct provision of disability services. The number of registered NDIS providers in the ACT doubled over two years to 261 in June 2016, and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) estimates that ACT services will need between 1,000 and 1,500 more workers to meet demand under the full implementation of the NDIS (NDIA, 2016). The NDIS is also requiring many organisations to develop new administrative and funding arrangements, and to restructure key relationships, including those with government agencies, collaborating organisations, clients, and the workforce.

Recognising the importance of the community service sector and the context of growth and change affecting its operations, this research was designed to provide current, accurate and relevant information about the sector in the ACT, including its strengths, and the challenges faced by organisations. The material highlights the status of the industry at a time which corresponds to the commencement of the Industry Strategy 2016-2026. As such, the findings can be considered a baseline for monitoring of future trends in the industry, and the impact of the Industry Strategy.

The findings attest to the many sources of strength and resilience in the structure and operations of the ACT community service sector. Partnerships with consumers, volunteers, other providers, and government, are defining features of the sector. People with lived experience of disadvantage play key roles in service governance and in service delivery, as paid staff and volunteers. Further, there is high confidence in the governance of community service organisations. While many organisations found recruiting staff difficult, retention difficulties were less widespread. Relationships with the ACT Government are seen more positively than those with the Australian
Government, although many organisations have concerns about the adequacy of ACT Government funding. Many community service organisations are operating with low financial reserves and concerns about their financial outlook for the medium and longer term, suggesting possible threats to sector sustainability and growth.

2.1 Research aims

The research arose from a partnership between the ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) and the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) to survey community service organisations operating in the ACT, so as to better understand their characteristics, strengths and challenges. The research was modelled on similar surveys conducted in NSW in 2014 and 2015, and in Tasmania in 2015 (see Cortis & Blaxland, 2014; 2015; 2016). However, the survey was carefully adapted in close consultation with ACTCOSS to explore the issues affecting organisations in the ACT and align with priorities of the Industry Strategy 2016-2026.

Specifically, the project aimed to:

- establish a database of core sector information, which identified the characteristics of the ACT community service sector, and the diversity in issues and challenges faced by different parts of the sector
- develop an understanding of current models of engagement between the ACT community service sector and Government, including what is working well and how engagement, capacity and sustainability can be improved
- give voice to a diverse range of sector leaders on key aspects of service delivery in the ACT, and how these can be improved, and
- build resources with which to raise awareness of current issues affecting community service organisations in the ACT, and strategies for building strong, capable and high quality organisations to address inequality and disadvantage.

2.2 Methods

In partnership with ACTCOSS, the research team developed a survey particular to the current needs and interests of the community service sector in the ACT. The survey was designed around a series of modules, covering organisational characteristics and service types, volunteering, paid staff, governance, engagement with government, financial resources, and future priorities. Particular effort was made to build on and not duplicate information available elsewhere, including employment indicators available from administrative data collected as part of the ACT’s Community Sector Industry Portable Long Service Leave Scheme (ACT Leave, 2016), or information reported by registered charities to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). The survey methodology was approved by the UNSW Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel (Health, Medical, Community and Social), approval number HC15074.
Sampling frame and distribution

A comprehensive sampling frame was developed, drawing on several sources. A list of organisations delivering community services in the ACT was assembled using information from ACTCOSS and Volunteering and Contact ACT, along with publicly available lists of organisations and businesses registered to deliver the NDIS in the ACT, and ACT Government announcements of successful tenderers. Unlike the surveys in Tasmania and NSW, residential aged care, long day care, and employment service providers were included in the sampling frame.

The aggregated list of organisations from these sources was cleaned in collaboration with ACTCOSS to ensure that only community service organisations providing health or welfare services to the ACT community, or peak body services, were invited to complete the survey. Government providers were excluded. Most services located outside the ACT were excluded, except where some located near the ACT border were deemed to operate as part of the ACT sector. The list of NDIS providers was cleaned to ensure that only businesses whose primary focus was providing services were included, and that those providing supports other than services, such as equipment, were excluded.

Finally, the consolidated list was cleaned to remove duplicate records, including listings of programs rather than organisations. This was indicated by identical Australian Business Numbers, other organisational details, and the local knowledge of ACTCOSS staff. This approach ensured only one survey was sent to each organisation. As the survey was aimed at the leader of the organisation, it was sent to the CEO where their email address was available. Where a CEO email address was unavailable, the invitation was sent to a senior manager, Chair of the Board or Management Committee, or to an administrative address for the organisation.

Invitations to participate in the survey and unique survey links were distributed to email addresses on the final list. Addresses that bounced back were checked and replaced where possible, resulting in a final sampling frame of 401 organisations, 166 of which provided complete, usable survey responses (a 41.4% response rate).

Strategies to maximise survey response

To help achieve the high survey response, ACTCOSS provided advance notice of the survey through its networks, including through newsletters and communications with member organisations and the wider sector. ACTCOSS also updated contact details and liaised with ACT Government agencies to reinforce to their community partners the importance of participating in the survey.

Email addresses which bounced back were checked and corrected or substituted where possible. Non-respondents were followed up with two email reminders during the three weeks that the survey was open, along with a notification of a two day extension. In addition, through the survey period, ACTCOSS staff were available by phone and email to provide information to sector organisations about the survey, and provided information about it through the ACTCOSS website, newsletters, social media, and at industry meetings. Finally, to encourage participation, the
research team offered those who completed the survey an opportunity to leave their details to enter a prize draw to win an iPad for their organisation.

Response analysis

Of the 401 organisations in the final sampling frame, 166 surveys were completed, representing a response rate of 41.4%. This is slightly above similar surveys of the community service sector. Results in NSW in 2014 were based on response rates of 37.6% in 2014 (Cortis and Blaxland, 2014) and 35.9% in 2015 (Cortis and Blaxland, 2015). While the ACT response rate was lower than achieved in the Tasmanian equivalent (58.5%), the rate falls well within the range considered acceptable for web-based organisational surveys requiring input from senior executives, and is higher than for other large-scale surveys of the community service sector conducted in Australia. This means the results can be interpreted with confidence.²

As intended, the survey was in most cases completed by a chief executive officer (CEO), executive director, general manager or business owner, (53.6%) or by another senior manager, such as a regional manager responsible for the ACT (19.9%). In other cases, it was completed by a member of the Management Committee or Board (18.1%). In some cases (8.4%), respondents reported being in positions other than these, including team leaders, clinicians, or policy officers. This demonstrates how the survey was, in most cases, completed by those in the best positions to provide accurate information, giving good credibility to the survey results.

Analysis and reporting

Survey responses were analysed to identify key characteristics and perspectives across the ACT community service sector as a whole, and to examine any differences among respondents in different types of organisations. Analysis involved a range of comparisons based on size, main service type, and location. For the purposes of brevity, we report findings as frequencies for all respondents, or with breakdowns where there are differences of interest. Most often, these differences were based on the size of organisations, measured either in terms of income in the last financial year, or staff numbers in the last pay period. For some measures, we report numbers of respondents as well as percentages, but in most cases, where the number of respondents is clear we report percentages only, for purposes of brevity. Where respondents skipped questions, or where questions were asked of only a subset of respondents, the sample for each question may be less than 166, as indicated throughout.

Analysis of quantitative data was conducted using SPSS. Analysis of open-ended questions was conducting using NVIVO. Responses to each of the open-ended questions were coded according to themes as they emerged, and then refined to ensure they reflected the breadth of issues raised by respondents.

² The response rate gives a confidence interval of 5.8, which means we can be 95% certain that results for all 401 organisations would be within 5.8 percentage points of the results reported for the 166 responding organisations.
3 About responding organisations

3.1 Locations of operations

Respondents were asked whether their organisation operated in the ACT only or in other jurisdictions, and which areas within the ACT they operated in. Figure 3.1 shows that a little under half of responding organisations had operations in the ACT only, and did not operate in other jurisdictions (46.4%, or 77 organisations). A further 42.2% of organisations operated in at least one other jurisdiction as well as the ACT, while 19 organisations (11.4%) were national organisations, operating in every Australian state and territory.

Figure 3.1 Operations in the ACT and other parts of Australia (n=166)

Organisations were also asked about the areas of the ACT they operated in. One in four organisations (24.7%) said they operated in all areas of the ACT, while 1 in 3 operated in one area only (34.9%) (see Figure 3.2). Table 3.1 shows the proportion of organisations which reported operating in each area of the ACT. More than half operated in each major population area, suggesting the sector is well spread across the Territory.

Figure 3.2 Number of areas of the ACT organisations operated in (%,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations of operations within the ACT (n=166)</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belconnen</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra City</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woden / Weston Creek / Molongolo</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>57.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuggeranong</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner North</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner South</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gungahlin</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ACT</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Service types

To capture service type, organisations were asked to firstly select all types of services they delivered, then to report which was their main service, such as their main focus or source of income. On average, organisations delivered 5.4 services, based on the categories listed. Figure 3.3 shows the proportion of responding organisations which delivered each category of service. More detail is in Supplementary Tables (see Table A1). Most frequently, disability services were selected (31.3% of respondents), followed by community development (27.1%).

Figure 3.3 Proportion of organisations delivering each service type (n=166)
### 3.3 Main service type

Table 3.2 provides a breakdown of organisation’s main service type. Some types of service, such as community development and policy advocacy, while common overall, were the main service type for few services. To compare across service types, organisations’ main service types were classified into five broad categories, as per the table subheadings. These broad categories group together broadly similar types of services, but cannot reflect the diversity and hybridity of service types, organisations’ unique mix of services, and commonalities across categories. Nonetheless, the five broad categories are helpful for showing variations in experience between broad types of services provided in the ACT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2 Main service type</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability, ageing and carer</strong></td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>(19.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability and carer support services</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential care for older people</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential aged care (including retirement homes)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child, youth and family</strong></td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>(16.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family, relationship and parenting services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s services (including ECEC)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic and family violence service</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health related services</strong></td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>(21.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health condition specific</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention and promotion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other health</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy, information, legal and peaks</strong></td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>(19.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak body</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, advice and referral</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer advocacy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic and policy advocacy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td>(23.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-help</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community housing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobseeker, training and social enterprise</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-informed services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural, migrant, refugee and asylum seeker services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency relief and financial support</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>166</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Due to small numbers, some categories have been combined.
There were some differences between the main service types of those organisations which operated in the ACT only, and which also operated in other jurisdictions. Figure 3.4 shows that while 11.7% of organisations with only ACT operations said their main service type was disability, ageing and carer services, this was the case for 25.8% of those which also operated outside the ACT. There was also a relatively high proportion of organisations whose main service type was information, advocacy, legal and peaks, among those which operated in the ACT only.

Figure 3.4 Main service type of organisations operating within and outside the ACT, by main service type

3.4 Non-profits and for-profits

Of the 166 responding organisations, 148 (89.2%) were non-profit, and 18 (10.8%) were private for-profit businesses. Among for-profit organisations, the most common main service type was disability services (7 for-profits). Three for-profits reported that their main service was health specific, and the remaining eight were spread over eight categories of main service. Compared with non-profits, for-profits offer a narrower range of service types. On average, for-profits said their organisations delivered 2.9 types of service, which was roughly half the number selected by non-profits, who reported 5.7 service types, on average. No for-profits were involved in systemic or policy advocacy, whereas 40 non-profits (27.0%) were involved in these activities. Similarly, only one for-profit (5.6%) was involved in consumer advocacy, compared with 35 non-profits (23.6%). Two for-profits (11.1%) said they performed community development, compared with 43 non-profit community service organisations (29.1%).
3.5 Registered charities

Of the 148 non-profits in the sample, 121 (81.8%) were registered charities. Among the 27 non-profits which were not registered charities, seven said their main service type was ‘peak body’, four reported their main service type as ‘community development’ while three each selected ‘self-help’ and ‘systemic / policy advocacy’, and two said ‘information, advice and referral’.

3.6 Involvement with NDIS

As indicated above, almost a third of responding organisations (31.3%) selected disability services as their main service type. Of all 166 responding organisations, 51 (30.7%) were registered as providers with the NDIS. Around 1 in 4 non-profits were registered for the NDIS (38 organisations, or 25.7%), whereas 3 in 4 responding for-profits were NDIS-registered (13 of 18, or 72.2%).

Figure 3.5 Organisations registered for NDIS (%; n=166)

3.7 Annual income

Annual income was measured for the 2015-16 financial year. Respondents were asked to provide an estimate in dollars, and to include income related to their operations in the ACT only. The 10 respondents who chose not to answer the question were directed to a subsequent question inviting them to provide an estimate of income in ranges, or to select the option ‘I prefer not to say’ (which was selected by five respondents). Prior to analysis, the reported information was checked and cleaned. Based on the resulting data, organisations reported mean annual income of $2.7 million.

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3 Seven respondents reported that they were unsure. However, these were checked against the ACNC Register and corrected.

4 In the survey, 50 reported that they were registered for the NDIS, and nine said they were unsure. However, the nine organisations which were unsure were checked against the list of registered providers held by the NDIA, and recoded accordingly.

5 Total income figures were imputed for five organisations which reported their income in ranges, five which did not report their income, and 12 which reported incomes under $1000, but which reported having paid staff. For those which reported their income in ranges, total income was assumed to be at the mid-point of the range. For the five organisations which did not report their income and for the 12 which reported incomes under $1000 but had paid staff, in each case we estimated income using the median income for organisations with similar numbers of paid employees.
However, this average was skewed by the 15 organisations with more than $10 million. This is reflected in the median figure of $438,000, which was much lower than the mean.\(^6\)

**Income deciles**

Income levels in each decile are reported in Table 3.3. This shows that the smallest 10% of organisations in the sample operated with less than $5,000, and the smallest 20% of responding organisations had less than $25,000 in income, which may reflect the circumstances of some of the volunteer-run community and self-help groups that participated. At the other end of the distribution, the largest decile (16 organisations) each reported total incomes of more than $8.2 million, whilst the largest 20% of organisations reported more than $3.5 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile</th>
<th>Income range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1(^{st})</td>
<td>$0 – $5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(^{nd})</td>
<td>$5001 – $25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(^{rd})</td>
<td>$25,001 – $75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(^{th})</td>
<td>$75,001 – $204,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(^{th})</td>
<td>$204,001 – $438,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6(^{th})</td>
<td>$428,001 – $750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7(^{th})</td>
<td>$750,001 – $1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(^{th})</td>
<td>$1,500,001 – $3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9(^{th})</td>
<td>$3,500,001 – $8,150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10(^{th})</td>
<td>$8,150,001 – $38,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Categories based on total income**

The size of community service organisations can also be understood by examining the proportions with income in particular ranges. The proportion of organisations with income in each category is provided in Figure 3.6. This shows that 22.9% of responding organisations reported income which was very low (under $50,000), while 16.2% had incomes over $5 million, most of which had incomes over $10 million.

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\(^6\) The median indicates the mid-point of all incomes: half of organisations have an income lower than the median, half have an income higher. This differs from mean income which is the average determined by adding all incomes then dividing by the number of organisations who provided income data.
Figure 3.6 Proportion of organisations in each income category (%; n=166)
Volunteers enrich and extend community service delivery, and help build communities and fulfil need. In 2013, it was estimated that volunteers in the ACT contribute $1.5 billion to the economy each year (Altman and Harris, 2013, p5). While most volunteers were in the areas of sport and recreation and education and training, around a fifth of ACT volunteers were engaged in community services (Altman and Harris, 2013, p15, citing ABS, 2010).

This section examines the numbers of volunteers engaged by community service organisations in the ACT, how organisations support them, the challenges they face in attracting and managing volunteers, and how the sector’s capacity to support volunteering could be strengthened.

4.1 Numbers of volunteers

Survey respondents were initially asked how many volunteers were involved with their organisation in the last year, including volunteers on Management Committees or Boards. Of the 166 responding organisations, 138 (83.1%) reported that there was at least one volunteer involved in their organisation and 16.9% reported no volunteers (see Figure 4.1). While 9.6% of organisations had between one and five volunteers and a further 20.5% had between six and 10, there was also a significant number of organisations with very high numbers of volunteers: 6.6% engaged between 51 and 100 and 13.9% engaged more than 100. The nature of this involvement, such as whether it was sustained or episodic through the year, is not evident from the data.

Figure 4.1 Numbers of volunteers engaged (%; n=166)

Respondents in organisations with volunteers were asked whether the organisation had a dedicated coordinator or manager for volunteers. Overall, around 2 in 3 organisations did not have a dedicated coordinator or manager for their volunteers (Figure 4.2). As would be expected, organisations with larger numbers of volunteers were more likely to have a volunteer coordinator (although these organisations weren’t necessarily larger in terms of annual income). Whereas only 18% of those with less than 10 volunteers had a dedicated coordinator, 67.6% of those with more than 50 volunteers had one. However, even among organisations with over 50 volunteers, 1 in 3 organisations did not have a dedicated coordinator or manager for these volunteers.
4.2 Engagement of volunteers with lived experience

Organisations which engaged volunteers were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed that their organisation engaged volunteers with lived experience of disadvantage, or experience as service users. Of the 134 which answered, most agreed or strongly agreed (58.9%).

Figure 4.3 provides a breakdown by whether or not the organisation had a dedicated volunteer coordinator. Respondents in organisations with a volunteer coordinator were most likely to agree or strongly agree that their organisation engages volunteers with lived experience: 70.2% of these organisations agreed or strongly agreed, compared with 52.8% of those in organisations without a dedicated coordinator for volunteers. While in some cases this may be because volunteer coordinators help engage volunteers with lived experience, it may also reflect the larger volunteer pools of organisations with volunteer coordinators.
4.3 Experiences of engaging volunteers

Overall, almost half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is becoming harder for their organisation to recruit volunteers. While having a volunteer coordinator could make volunteer recruitment easier for organisations, the presence of a coordinator made little difference to the proportions that agreed or disagreed with the statement that it is becoming harder to recruit volunteers (Figure 4.4).

Only 2 in 5 respondents (41.4%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘We are adequately resourced to involve volunteers’. However, higher proportions of organisations with a volunteer coordinator agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, compared with other organisations (see Figure 4.5). More than half of those with a dedicated coordinator agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (53.0%) compared with 34.9% of organisations without a coordinator.

Figure 4.6 shows that those with a dedicated volunteer coordinator were also more likely than other organisations to agree or strongly agree with the statement ‘Our staff have the knowledge and training to manage volunteers effectively’ (77.1%). In contrast, a little under half of organisations without a volunteer coordinator agreed with the statement (48.8%).
Figure 4.4 It is becoming harder to recruit volunteers (n=135)

Figure 4.5 We are adequately resourced to involve volunteers (n=135)

Figure 4.6 Our staff have the knowledge and training to manage volunteers effectively (n=134)
4.4 Improving supports for volunteering

Respondents were given an opportunity to describe, in their own terms, the supports they would like to see introduced for volunteering, by answering the open-ended question: ‘What else could be done to support volunteering in your organisation?’. Of the 75 organisations that provided an answer, the most common responses related to improved financial resources (18), better management or administrative systems (15), more staff (12) or training for volunteers (12).

Usually, respondents described how funds were needed to enable organisations to better attract and support volunteers and improve service delivery, including through ensuring their location and office space was attractive to volunteers, and that their organisation had capacity to train volunteers and conduct associated administration. For example, an organisation serving the ACT from outside Canberra explained:

We find it difficult to attract volunteers to come out to our office…With additional financial resources, we could open an office in Canberra. This would allow us to attract more volunteers and to better service our clients. (Medium organisation, 21-30 volunteers)

Others said simply:

We need sufficient funds to train the volunteers. (Small organisation, 11-20 volunteers)

As an organisation with no paid staff, it would be useful to have funding to employ a part-time admin person. (Small organisation, 1-5 volunteers)

Seven organisations reported that improved administration, planning or management systems would help volunteering in their organisation. They provided examples of what would help support volunteering:

We need to look after our volunteers more carefully and engage them better. All our volunteer coordinators are themselves volunteers and may or may not have management backgrounds. (Medium-sized organisation with over 100 volunteers)

Shortening the time it takes to have volunteers traverse through the application process and checks for clearance. (Small organisation, over 100 volunteers)

Another respondent, from an organisation with between 21 and 30 volunteers, felt that across the sector: “We need a volunteer strategy”. A couple of organisations explained how they were already developing new management practices for their volunteers, and a couple of others said that support or training would help them develop their administrative capacity to support volunteers, for example:

I think producing a "kit" that enables small organisations to set up a volunteer management system that is tailorable to their situation and covers off on legislative requirements, information and data collection systems and beneficial management practices would be useful. (Small organisation, over 100 volunteers)
A more specific, interesting idea was raised by a service for children:

It would be helpful to have an affordable insurance product similar to workers compensation. (Large organisation, over 100 volunteers)

Twelve organisations felt that improved access to training was important for volunteers. Their suggestions included training for volunteers themselves, for example in working with clients or managing difficult behaviour and also training for the organisation in the recruitment, management and support of volunteers.

In addition to coordinating training, other respondents felt that volunteers could be coordinated across sectors. Their suggestions included shared volunteer databases, shared support systems for volunteers and shared promotion of the need for volunteers. Organisations with small numbers of volunteers were more likely to suggest improved coordination or collaboration across the sector as a means to improve how volunteers could be engaged in their organisation.
5 Paid staff in the ACT community service sector

The survey asked several questions about paid staff, relating to staff numbers, workforce diversity, recruitment and retention difficulties, and supports for professional development. As the ACT Long Service Leave Authority recently published workforce analysis for 2010-2015 using administrative data for the community service sector (ACT Leave, 2016), the survey did not cover some matters considered reliably captured from that source, such as the age profile of the industry, or salary levels. Instead, it sought to capture perspectives on staffing issues and challenges, including the impact of staff turnover, and what would help organisations attract, retain and develop staff. While all respondents were required to indicate their staff numbers, subsequent questions relating to paid staff were skipped for the 32 organisations (19.3%) which reported having no paid staff in the last pay period.

5.1 Numbers of paid staff

Respondents were asked how many full time and part time staff they had in the ACT. The survey software was programmed to sum these figures to provide the total number of employees for the organisation, which organisations could check. Employee numbers, rather than full time equivalent staff, were captured. Together, responding organisations employed 5,789 staff, most of which were part time (Table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% organisations with any</th>
<th>Mean number of paid staff</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the average number of staff in each organisation was 34.9, this figure was influenced by the small number of very large employers in the sample: eight organisations reported over 200 staff. More telling is the median figure of 6.5 staff, which indicates that half of responding organisations had 6.5 or fewer paid staff in total. The proportion of organisations with staff in each category is shown in Figure 5.1. Almost 1 in 5 (19.3%) had no paid staff.

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7 It should be noted however that as administrative data, the ACT Leave Scheme data is more comprehensive than that captured in the survey. In particular, it captures information about some service types not covered or under-represented in the survey, including children's services, and aged care.
Overall, 58.1% of staff in responding organisations were employed part time (Figure 5.2). This differed across organisations. In very small organisations, higher proportions of staff were employed part time. Organisations with incomes between $1 and $10 million had higher proportions of staff employed on a full time basis. Those whose main service type was ‘Child, Youth and Family’, or ‘Other’ had higher proportions of staff who were employed full time, compared with organisations with other main service types (see Figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.1 Proportion of organisations by total number of paid staff (%, n=166)**

![Figure 5.1](image)

**Figure 5.2 Proportion of staff employed full and part time, by organisation's annual income (n=134)**

![Figure 5.2](image)

**Figure 5.3 Proportion of staff employed full and part-time, by organisation's main service type (n=134)**

![Figure 5.3](image)
5.2 Contracts in the community service sector workforce

Figure 5.4 shows that across all responding organisations, around 2 in 3 employees were employed on a permanent or ongoing basis (66.7%), while 1 in 4 were employed casually (25.2%). Among organisations whose main service type was ‘Information, Advocacy, Legal and Peaks’, there were higher proportions of staff employed on a permanent or ongoing basis (73.2%). These organisations also had very low proportions of staff employed casually (4.9%). In contrast, among organisations whose main service type was health, relatively low proportions of staff were employed on a permanent/ongoing basis (52.7%), and more than 1 in 3 (34.8%) were employed casually.

Figure 5.4 Proportion of staff employed on a permanent, contract and casual basis, by main service type

5.3 Employees with lived experience

Around 7 in 10 respondents reported that at least one paid employee in their organisation had lived experience of disadvantage or experience as a service user. Figure 5.5 shows that community service organisations which were non-profits were more likely than for-profits to have paid employees with lived experience. Figure 5.6 shows that organisations registered to deliver services to participants of the NDIS were also slightly more likely than other organisations to employ a staff member with lived experience of disadvantage or service use.
5.4 Women in the community service sector workforce

Respondents who had paid employees were asked to estimate the proportion of their employees in the ACT who were female. Across the 133 organisations that answered, the average figure was 77%, and the median was 80%. The average proportion of female staff members was slightly higher for organisations whose main service type was in child, youth and family services. For these organisations, the mean was 87% and the median was 90%, indicating that more than half of child, youth and family services were more than 90% female.

Of responding organisations, there were 33 which reported that all their paid employees were female (24.8%). These 33 organisations had incomes ranging from under $50,000 to $5 million,
and were across the categories of main service type. Figure 5.7 shows that only a small proportion of respondents (8.3%) said that less than 50% of their employees were female.

**Figure 5.7 Organisations by proportion of female employees (n=133)**

![Graph showing proportion of female employees in organisations](image)

### 5.5 Female leadership in the ACT community service sector

Organisations were asked if the head of their organisation in the ACT was female, such as their CEO, executive director or regional manager for the ACT. Of the 132 organisations that answered, 90 said their organisation was led by a woman (68.2%). Organisations led by women tended to have higher proportions of female employees than did male-led organisations. In organisations with a female leader, on average, 82.7% of staff were women. In contrast, in male-led organisations, 64.5% of employees were female, on average. There was no significant difference in the average annual incomes of organisations led by women and men, nor in the distribution of male and female-led organisations across main service types.

### 5.6 Diversity in the community service sector workforce

The survey also asked whether organisations had any staff from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, from a culturally diverse background, and whether they had any paid staff with a disability. Table 5.2 attests to the diversity of the community service workforce. Of organisations with any paid staff:

- 7 in 10 employed at least one member of staff from a CALD background
- 4 in 10 employed at least one member of staff with a disability, and
- Over 3 in 10 had at least one member of paid staff from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. Organisations with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff operated across 18 of the 34 categories of main service type.

Figure 5.8 provides a breakdown by main service type of the proportion of organisations which employed staff from these target groups. This shows that relatively high proportions of organisations providing child, youth and family services employed staff from Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander backgrounds, and from CALD backgrounds. Those focused on health were generally less likely to employ staff from target groups.

**Table 5.2 Organisations with diverse workforce profiles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has any paid staff from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (n=131)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has any paid staff with a disability (n=125)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has any paid staff from an Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander background (n=127)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.8 Organisations which employed staff from target groups, by main service type (%)**

5.7 Employment strategies for target groups

In an open-ended question, the survey asked respondents to describe strategies they have in place to support the employment of target groups in the community. Responses indicate that this issue is a challenging one. However, some guidance might be found in the responses of organisations that have approached diversity in their workforce with considerable thought and reflection.

Of the 70 organisations who responded, just under half described policies or particular approaches to employing staff from target groups. These ranged from quite general statements of their practices, such as, ‘We do not have targets, simply employ the best person for the job advertised’ (Medium-sized mental health service), to specific descriptions of processes or details of strategies used to attract and retain staff from particular backgrounds. One described recruiting staff through agencies known to support candidates from target groups, for example:
Vacancies are advertised through agencies that encourage/assist candidates in the target groups and all are encouraged to apply. (Small consumer advocacy organisation)

Another described having identified positions, which were adapted to the needs of their target group, to ensure they were accessible. In doing so, they felt their organisation was able to show leadership around employment pathways for their client group.

A quarter of respondents to this question provided information about difficulties they had recruiting or retaining staff from particular target groups. Most of these were very small organisations employing less than five people. They felt that the needs of their service were too specific and that there were few people in the target groups with the required qualifications or experience. Quite a few organisations said that they did not have any strategies to employ staff from target groups because the number of employees was too small or the necessary qualifications too specialised. A couple of services identified an inability to alter the physical infrastructure of their workplace to ensure accessibility due to limited funding or opposition from property owners, and this was seen as a barrier to employing staff with disabilities.

Many organisations offered innovative and thoughtful strategies for recruiting and retaining staff from target groups, and these were common among middle-sized as well as large organisations. Some of the strategies they described were:

[We work] with a CALD programme to provide Certificate III to refugees seeking employment in the ACT. (Non-residential service for older people)

We have become an agency that is registered to employ people on particular visas. Particular programs have recruitment guidelines (eg: people who have done the program and are from the population group that program is working with) to increase the likelihood of participation by that group. (Family, relationship and parenting service)

a) We advertise in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander newsletters and other networks when recruiting. b) 64% of our staff are from migrant backgrounds and we recognise the need to accrue leave in order to fly overseas to visit family. c) We make reasonable adjustments to support staff who have a disability. d) There needs to be a 5-year period of abstinence before people with lived experience can apply for a position here…Supports, supervision, Employment Assistance Program and a self-care package are factored in to our employment. (Support service for alcohol, tobacco and other drugs)

Several organisations had developed a reputation as a good employer and were approached by people from target groups seeking employment. For example:

Our organisation is striving to implement a culture of diversity and commitment to reconciliation and person-centred support. We also have a very strong community development approach to our services which we have ramped up over the past 12 months. As a result, we have people from diverse backgrounds approaching us for work - for example we have doubled our number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff during this time. (Parenting, relationship and parenting service)
We are very lucky in that our organisation is well known to potential employees and volunteers as being a workplace which accepts and celebrates diversity, making us an attractive employer to those potential employees and volunteers. (Children’s service)

Paid staff usually commence as volunteers. We value and encourage culturally and linguistically diverse volunteers, and many of them are overseas students looking for work experience which we provide without discriminating against non-English speaking background people. In fact we value them for their language/interpretation skills. (Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisation)

5.8 Supporting staff development

The survey also asked leaders about staff development in their organisations. Figure 5.9 shows the proportion of organisations which said they had a budget to cover various kinds of staff development. Few reported having resources to cover any kind of staff development ‘all of the time’. More than half had resources ‘all of the time’ or ‘most of the time’ for professional or clinical supervision, or for training courses and conferences. Only a minority said they had resources to support staff to acquire university or vocational education and training (VET) qualifications ‘all’ or ‘most’ of the time. In fact, 38.1% said their organisations had budgets for this ‘none of the time’. While some organisations had resources to cover positions while staff attend training at least some of the time, more than 1 in 3 (36.6%) said this was the case in their organisation ‘none of the time’.
Figure 5.9 Proportion of organisations with budgets to cover staff development (n=134)
5.9 Registration for the ACT Portable Long Service Leave Scheme

The ACT is the only Australian jurisdiction with portable long service leave entitlements for workers in the community service sector.\(^8\) The Scheme, which commenced in 2010, allows employees to transfer accrued entitlements as they move between employers. The ACT Long Service Leave Authority requires employers to be registered, where nursing or medical care is not provided as a major service. The community service sector is defined for the purposes of the Scheme as the industry providing child care, residential and community aged care, residential corrective services for young offenders, disability employment, advocacy, and other non-care welfare services. Further information about workers covered by the Scheme is published by ACT Leave (2016).\(^9\)

Although the survey captured perspectives from a wider range of organisations than those subject to the Portable Long Service Leave Scheme, it asked some questions about the Scheme. It asked whether or not organisations were registered with the ACT Long Service Leave Authority. This provided a way to compare the characteristics of organisations which were registered and those which were not. It also asked about the impact of the Scheme, discussed in Section 13.5. As noted above, the survey included health-related community service organisations, and as such, not all survey participants were expected to be registered with the Scheme.

Among responding organisations which had employees, around two thirds were registered with the Scheme (65.9%), while 25.0% said they were not registered, and 9.1% said they were not sure. This is shown in Figure 5.10. It is notable that:

- registration was universal among those with more than 50 staff (100.0%), and lowest among those with 1 to 5 staff (36.2%).

- Of the 33 organisations which had employees and which said they were not registered for the scheme, nine were health related services and five were disability services (which may not be required to register). The remainder were spread across main activity categories.

- Around half of the 33 which were not registered (16 organisations, or 48.5%) operated in other jurisdictions as well as the ACT. Nine unregistered organisations were private for-profits. This suggests possible areas to focus efforts for achieving comprehensive registration.

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\(^8\) A Victorian Parliamentary Committee, has recently conducted an inquiry into the portability of long service leave entitlements. The terms of reference directed the Committee included a focus on key components of a scheme for the community service sector (Parliament of Victoria, 2016).

\(^9\) It should be noted that our survey captured a slightly different group, as nursing and medical care may be involved in some health, ageing and disability services. Survey results are likely to differ from information held by ACT Leave.
Respondents in organisations with paid staff were asked whether they had experienced difficulties attracting and retaining staff in the last 12 months. Overall, while around 2 in 3 organisations had difficulty attracting staff in the last 12 months (68.7%), fewer had difficulty retaining staff (53.7%) (Figure 5.11). Notably, more than half of organisations in all categories reported recruitment difficulties, with 86.2% of disability, ageing and carer organisations reporting difficulty attracting staff. However, retention difficulties were less widespread, although they still affected half or more organisations in most categories of main service type.

Most commonly, organisations reported that practitioners (with or without degree level qualifications) were difficult to attract and retain (see Figure 5.12). However, some organisations also had difficulty attracting and retaining managers, and administrative staff.

A further question asked about respondents’ perceptions of the factors that helped or hindered their organisation’s capacity to recruit and retain staff (Figure 5.13). More than half (54.3%) reported that the salaries on offer made it more difficult to attract or keep staff, and only 18.9% found salary levels helpful. Job security and career paths were also more commonly seen to hinder rather than help recruitment and retention efforts. On the other hand, training and development opportunities, working hours, and work location were more frequently seen as helpful than a hindrance to recruitment and retention efforts.
Figure 5.11 Proportion of organisations (with paid staff) that reported difficulties attracting or retaining staff, by main service type (%), n=134

Figure 5.12 Proportion of organisations with paid staff that found it difficult to attract or retain particular categories staff (%), n=134

NB: Proportions do not sum to 100 as organisations could report difficulties attracting or retaining more than one category of staff.
Figure 5.13 Proportions of organisations that perceived various factors to help or hinder their capacity to recruit and retain staff (%, n=134)
Perspectives on attracting, retaining and developing staff

Responses to an open-ended question about staff recruitment and retention were in line with the results outlined above. When asked ‘What could be done to help your organisation attract, retain and develop staff?’, the most common response related to adequate remuneration. On the whole, respondents felt that they were unable to pay a sufficient wage to attract or keep the staff they needed. These were typical comments:

We need to have the best workers on the ground if we are going effect change and close the gap. To do this, I require the best skilled staff - we cannot match the money for this to happen. We continue to get what we pay for, which is not good enough - this places extra burden on the Management of the Organisation and it affects outcomes on community. We simply need more funding! (Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander service)

Being funded sufficiently in order to pay competitive wages. We have lost about three staff over the last year to ACT Government agencies who are able to pay better. (Health support service)

Retention of staff comes with relationship building and ensuring that staff have a sense of belonging and wages and conditions above the award...if we were paid to the same level as our male counter parts in other industries or professions- we would feel valued across all levels -for knowledge, skills and work that continues to go unnoticed and unappreciated. (Children’s service)

Often it was non-monetary benefits and supports that respondents felt would help with staff retention. Some of these included:

Increased access to clinical supervision, greater tax breaks, more attractive premises, more funds for staff collaboration time. (Family, relationships and parenting service)

Increase annual leave provisions. (Disability service)

Longer term funding, but perhaps more importantly when a funding cycle or period is coming to an end, having clear direction from funders well in advance - staff are often left anxious for months awaiting decisions re continuance of programs, and struggle with loyalty and hope in the face of the potential need to secure other work. (Peak body)

We are putting a large amount of time and effort into embedding our values within our organisation. We are certain this will help with our ability to attract and retain staff. (Disability service)

Tied to all of these was the need for greater funding and funding security due to difficulties associated with the cost of employing staff under good working conditions, with good wages and providing adequate training and professional development.

In addition, many organisations spoke specifically about the training needs of their staff. For example:
The Unit price offered by the NDIS [should] enable organisations to have a training and education budget. (Disability service)

Support for training - applicants do not always have required qualifications. (Family, relationships and parenting service)

Investment in training and development is key as is remuneration. (Peak body)

Greater coordination of training and development opportunities across the community sector would support staff development. (Peak body)

Staff turnover caused considerable difficulty for some organisations. The survey asked, 'Over the last year, in what ways has staff turnover affected your organisation (if at all)?' and 85 respondents provided an answer. Respondents wrote of the extra work that resulted for other staff members. This included the sharing of an extra workload after a staff member leaves:

The turnover of staff has placed extra pressure on existing staff members to fill the roles - affecting their ability to effectively work in their roles. (Disability service)

Vacant positions place further pressures on the remaining staff when needing to provide continued support to our clients. (Community development organisation)

Some connected this experience of overwork with that of staff being on recreation or sick leave, especially when this is over an extended time:

We lost a project officer at an inopportune time, which created an extended gap in project delivery (due to project funding uncertainty). In other words, we couldn't hire another one because we couldn't be assured of ongoing funding. A greater effect on the organisation has been an extended period of illness of the CEO. With insufficient funding…there is limited internal capacity and skills for someone other than the volunteer president to step into the CEO role. The president has a day job, so can only dedicate a certain amount of capacity to the organisation. (Organisation providing health-related services)

When a staff member is on leave either sick or annual there is no replacement. This puts strain on the two Management Positions that the organisation has. Constantly covering for on the ground staff members…is exhausting, the demand and expectation from our own community let alone Government Departments and funding bodies is beyond comprehension. We work after hours with community members as well. One staff down and we are in all sorts of chaos and covering. (Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander service)

Others pointed to the additional work that is created by the recruitment and training of new staff, especially, as it was for some, when this occurred frequently. Organisations with small staff numbers found it difficult to absorb the additional work associated with staff turnover:

Dramatic implications to our organisation as a very reduced number of highly overworked and underpaid staff, including the manager, have had to constantly recruit, provide induction and training, process all required employment obligations to many workers that
did not remain working for the organisation as the organisation cannot offer any employment stability. (Small service)

Recruitment and training has been time consuming and a lack of stability has meant a great deal more support has been required from senior management to new managers. (Large service)

A number of organisations were concerned that the extra work caused by the loss and recruitment of staff affected their ability to provide services. For example:

Positions vacant for longer than usual resulted in extension of waiting lists, loss of productivity and fee income, and underspends that had to be managed. (Large service)

[We] have had trouble recruiting sufficient people to meet the demand for services. (Large organisation)

[As a] small service with five staff, turnover significantly affects service capacity because of time when no staff to provide the service. And also time taken to train new staff affects capacity. (Small service)
6 Organisational governance

A series of survey questions explored governance issues across the sector, and respondents’ perceptions of governance arrangements in their organisations. Questions explored whether or not they had (and used) strategic or business plans, and the membership, functioning and effectiveness of Boards or Management Committees. Respondents had high confidence in their organisational governance, although many suggested ways it could be improved.

6.1 Organisations with a strategic or business plan

The vast majority of organisations reported having a current strategic or business plan, with 58.2% having one that they regularly referred to, and another 19.4% having one, although it was not referred to often (see Table 6.1). The 37 organisations which did not have a current strategic plan were smaller on average than organisations with plans in place. Organisations with a plan in place had, on average 43 paid staff (median = 9), and average annual incomes of $3.3 million (median = $619,000). In contrast, those without a plan were smaller, with seven staff on average (median=1), and average incomes of $726,000 (median = $72,000) (Table 6.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.1 Organisations with a current strategic or business plan</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a plan that is regularly referred to</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a plan but does not refer to it often</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not have a current plan, but have had one in the past</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not have a current plan and have not had one in the past</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.2 Size of organisations with and without a plan in place</th>
<th>Annual income</th>
<th>Number of paid staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a plan in place</td>
<td>$3.3 million</td>
<td>$619,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not</td>
<td>$726,000</td>
<td>$72,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>$2.7 million</td>
<td>$438,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.1 shows that organisations which were registered to deliver the NDIS in the ACT were more likely than other organisations to have a plan in place that they regularly refer to.
Figure 6.1 Whether organisations have a strategic or business plan in place by NDIS registration status (n=165)

Of the 166 responding organisations, 150 (90.4%) said they had a Board or Management Committee, while 14 (8.4%) did not and two (1.2%) were unsure. Those that had a Board or Management Committee were asked a series of questions about its functioning and composition detailed below.

6.2 Boards and Management Committees

Of the 166 responding organisations, 150 (90.4%) said they had a Board or Management Committee, while 14 (8.4%) did not and two (1.2%) were unsure. Those that had a Board or Management Committee were asked a series of questions about its functioning and composition detailed below.

6.3 Involvement of people with lived experience

In terms of Board membership, respondents were asked if they had a member with lived experience of disadvantage and/or experience of service use. A breakdown is shown, according to income categories, in Figure 6.2. While most organisations did have a member with lived experience on their Board or Management Committee (60.4%), the figure was higher among organisations with incomes under $1 million (see Figure 6.2) and among organisations whose main services were information, advocacy, legal and peaks (see Figure 6.3).

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10 Of the 16 who said they either did not have a Board or Management Committee or were unsure, 11 were private for-profit organisations.
The survey also captured indicators of board functioning. Respondents had high confidence in their Boards or Management Committees. Indeed, on all measures, the majority of organisations agreed or strongly agreed with the statements:

- Our Board/Committee has a good understanding of the issues facing the sector (82.0% agreed)
- There is good collaboration and two-way flow of information between our Board/Committee and management (78.7% agreed)
- We have a comprehensive set of policies and procedures relating to Board/Committee functioning (72.0% agreed)
- The Chair of the Board/Committee provides appropriate supervision to the CEO (64.4%)
- We have resources for Board/Committee members to undertake governance training (54.0%).

Very low proportions disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements, with the exception of the measure of resources for governance training: 24.0% disagreed or strongly disagreed that their organisation had resources for governance training.
Figure 6.4 Proportion of organisations which agreed with statements on board functioning (%, n=150)

- **Our Board/Committee has a good understanding of the issues facing the sector**: 82.0%
- **There is good collaboration and two-way flow of information between our Board/Committee and management**: 78.7%
- **We have a comprehensive set of policies and procedures relating to Board/Committee functioning**: 72.0%
- **The Chair of the Board/Committee provides appropriate supervision to the CEO**: 64.4%
- **We have resources for Board/Committee members to undertake governance training**: 54.0%
6.5 Difficulties recruiting Board members

An open-ended question gave respondents opportunities to describe any difficulties experienced in filling Board or Management Committee positions. Nearly all responses related to the challenge of finding a person with appropriate skills or lived experience. For a number of organisations, recruiting Board members with financial or legal knowledge was especially difficult. Others spoke of challenges attracting women, young people, people with relevant policy knowledge and people with lived experience. Examples include:

We have ongoing difficulties identifying and attracting appropriately skilled people with lived experience. There is a competitive "market" for the people with these skills and capacities...We haven't had difficulty filling organisational member Board positions, but those Board members often struggle to have the time to effectively contribute to the governance and strategic management of the organisation. (Peak body)

We have had great difficulty finding a Treasurer, which is required by law. This nearly meant our organisation could not continue. We were very lucky to find a company that encourages a young appropriately skilled volunteer to join us - she and we are finding it beneficial. (Self-help service)

Organisations sometimes sought volunteer Board members from among their members or service users. However, the nature of these pools could make recruitment difficult. For example, an organisation that supported people through a period of grief noted:

It is difficult to get members...to take committee positions....after going through their grief, [they] do not take on positions on the committee. [Without committee members, the organisation] will fold. (Self-help service)

Others drew on legal clients, older people, and families of pre-schoolers:

[We are a] small specialised service with one-off clients who are not likely to engage beyond their issue. (Legal service)

We face this challenge every year - we have difficulties with getting people to our AGM to fill positions on the committee. Again, this relates to the high turnover within our organisation as we deal with preschools and their committees, which change on a yearly basis. (Children's service)

Most of our members [are] 70 and over. Age and ill health erode our core of volunteers (on our Committee) and it is increasingly difficult to get replacements ready and able to provide the time and commitment. For this reason we are looking at structural change: at present we are an autonomous ACT-registered Branch of a national federal organisation with responsibility for our own administration, finances, recruitment & membership. The change would place less reliance on an ACT-based management committee for basic financial and membership administration. (Small organisation)
7 Collaboration among community service organisations

The survey asked respondents about their experiences and perceptions of collaborating with other community service organisations, their membership of peaks, and their experiences of sharing services or merging with other organisations.

7.1 Shared services and mergers

Around 2 in 5 organisations (39.8%) said that in the last 12 months, they had discussed the possibility of sharing services with another organisation, while 1 in 5 had actually made an arrangement to share services. A smaller proportion had talked about possibly merging (14.5%) while five organisations (3.0%) reported they had actually merged. Those who had merged, made an arrangement to share services or discussed doing so were of varied sizes and spread across main service types.

![Proportion of organisations which had discussed merging or sharing services (%)](image)

7.2 Peak body membership

Overall, 84.3% of organisations were members of at least one peak body. The vast majority of non-profit community service organisations were affiliated with a peak (89.2%), compared with less than half of private for-profits (44.4%). More than half of responding organisations were members of a national peak body (57.8%), or ACTCOSS (56.6%), while 36.7% said they were members of another ACT peak body.

7.3 Experiences of collaboration

The survey asked a series of questions about organisations’ experience of collaboration within the community service sector. Figure 7.2 shows that high proportions agreed or strongly agreed that they were collaborating more often than 12 months ago (60.4%), that they were collaborating more effectively than 12 months ago (60.4%), and that they were collaborating on policy and advocacy...
(58.3%). Smaller proportions agreed or strongly agreed that they collaborate to measure need and outcomes (40.2%), and that working together is becoming more complicated (39.0%).

Less than 1 in 3 organisations (31.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that governments support them to collaborate, and a slightly higher number (35.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Many respondents were unsure or neutral on these measures, around a third of respondents to each question. This may be because the people answering the survey (CEOs and other senior leaders) did not feel privy to full information about their organisations experiences of collaboration, or because experiences of collaboration were mixed across the organisation.

Figure 7.2 Proportion of organisations which agreed with statements on collaboration (n=164)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree or Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Neutral or not sure</th>
<th>Agree or strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are collaborating more often than we did 12 months ago</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are collaborating more effectively than we did 12 months ago</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We collaborate on policy and advocacy</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We collaborate to measure need and/or outcomes</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working together is becoming more complicated</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments support us to collaborate</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4 Initiatives to improve collaboration

The survey asked respondents to describe ‘What could be done to help your organisation work more effectively with other organisations?’ Most of those who answered this question wrote of a need for greater staff capacity, expanded financial resources and the challenges of finding the right organisation for collaboration.

Those who identified a need for improved staff capacity in order to collaborate more effectively, said that staff in the sector had limited time or insufficient skills and experience. Small organisations were especially likely to find this challenging:

   Overworked staff do not have time to think about collaborating when priorities of service delivery take over (Small service)

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11 Notably, more than half of organisations registered to provide NDIS in the ACT agreed or strongly agreed that working together is becoming more complicated (see Figure 67, Appendix A: Supplementary Tables).
There is no capacity for sparing staff to go to meetings. (Small organisation)

If we don't actively go out and seek interaction, some other organisations don’t even know that we exist. This is very difficult to do when there are only two staff members. (Small service)

Greater collaborative skills across the sector and government funders (Large service)

Many staff need more training. (Small service)

Often, constraints on staff’s time to collaborate was seen as a consequence of limited financial resources. Others noted that specific contractual arrangements limited opportunities for collaboration:

Services often lack capacity to assist us as a peak because their contracts/procurement arrangements have limited their funding to core services - this needs to be built back in to and recognised in service agreements. (Peak body)

A need for support for collaboration from government and peak bodies was identified by many respondents. A number of organisations wished that government would recognise the costs associated with collaboration and fund them accordingly:

Recognising the resourcing cost of collaboration and allowing it to be a cost in applications for funding. (Small service)

Others wanted networking occasions or regular opportunities to meet with other community service sector workers that are organised externally:

If there was a central organisation that could help with networking, this would make a huge difference. (Small organisation)

Form an overarching body that meets on a regular basis. (Small service)

Some services suggested support and guidance for the administrative and legal side of collaboration:

Access to more cost effective or pro bono legal advice to help set up structures for collaboration/partnerships where this is required. For some smaller organisations, legal advice is not only essential but is often unaffordable. (Medium-sized service)

Sector-wide support through something like a collaboration centre of excellence to provide a professional supervision and troubleshooting support would help. (Medium-sized service)

For a good number of years the ACT Government employed a person under the title Victims of Crime Coordinator. One of its roles was, I imagine, to coordinate all services providing support to victims of crime…Can we have another go at this role but this time perhaps actually have no other agenda but to bring together all non for profit agencies - so that resources can be shared and clients can benefit from the diversity of services available and resources can be thus used appropriately. (Small service)
8 Relationships with government

A key aim of the survey was to explore the sectors’ experiences and perceptions of their relationships with government. As such, it asked about types of contact with government, and perceptions of various aspects of relationships, including contract management and advocacy. Relationships with the ACT Government, and the Australian Government, were covered separately.

8.1 Contact with the ACT Government

Of the 162 respondents who answered the question, 132 (81.5%) reported having some kind of involvement with the ACT Government in the last 12 months. Most commonly, this involved:

- Having a service funding agreement with the ACT Government (86 organisations, 51.8% of all respondents)
- Advocating for clients and/or people experiencing disadvantage in the ACT (79 organisations, 47.6% of all respondents)
- Being asked by the ACT Government for advice (69 organisations, 41.6%)
- Receiving a grant (65 organisations, 39.2%)
- Contributing to policy development, such as writing submissions (59 organisations, 35.5%)
- In-kind support, for example the provision of accommodation (21 organisations, 12.7%).

Organisations with a service funding agreement with the ACT Government were more likely to be asked for advice. Around 2 in 3 organisations (66.3%) of those with a funding agreement also said they were asked for advice. By contrast, only 15.0% of those without a funding agreement reported that the ACT Government asked them for advice.

Organisations were also asked which ACT Government Directorates they had contact with in the last 12 months, then which Directorate they had most contact with.

Most commonly, organisations reported that they had had contact with the Community Services Directorate (100 organisations, or 60.2% of all survey respondents), or ACT Health (75 organisations, 45.2%), while smaller numbers had had contact with Justice and Community Safety (49 organisations, 29.5%), Education Directorate (44 organisations, 26.5%) or the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Unit (39 organisations, 23.5%).

Responding organisations were also asked which area of the ACT Government they had most contact with. Of the 132 who answered the question, Community Services Directorate was most common (62 organisations, or 47.0%), followed by ACT Health (39 organisations, or 29.5%). This is depicted in Figure 8.1.
FIGURE 8.1 Main ACT Government Directorate that organisations had contact with (n=132)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directorate</th>
<th>Contact Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Services Directorate</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Directorate</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Directorate</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice and Community Safety Directorate</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment and Planning Directorate</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2 Perceptions of relationships with the ACT Government

Figure 8.2 shows how organisations rated aspects of their relationships with the ACT Government. Most respondents rated their advocacy relationships as ‘excellent’ (16.2%), or ‘good’ (47.7%). Relationships around policy advice and development, communication and consultation, and cooperation and collaboration to deliver services were also seen as good or excellent by over half of services. Data sharing is an area for improvement: very few described relationships as excellent, and almost 1 in 4 (22.5%) described relationships in this area as ‘quite poor’ or ‘very poor’.

Respondents were given an opportunity to comment on their organisation’s relationship with the ACT Government. An open-ended question asked, ‘Do you have any comments about how relationships between community organisations and the ACT Government could be improved?’ Among the 43 organisations who responded, discussion of improved relationships most often centred on respectful collaboration and communication:

- Community organisations need to be routinely recognised and engaged as partners in the policy process, not just service delivery. ACT Government agencies need to work better with each other and present a real ‘One ACT Government’ approach. Have been talking about this for years, but progress is painfully slow. The Better Services [Human Services Blueprint] is showing some good early signs of good progress, but needs to be sustained. (Large children’s service)

- Attitudes towards the capacity of the non-government sector need to be more positive (particularly noting that the non-government sector is staffed by professionals with high levels of experience who can participate effectively in decision making) and most importantly the rhetoric about working together needs to be lived up to. The government agencies need to see themselves as partners with non-government agencies in achieving common goals, rather than as determiners or purchasers of services who get to determine what needs to be done in the absence of effective consultation with non-government agencies. (Large family, relationship and parenting service)
It would be great if we could have the government listen to us in relation to what is actually happening 'on the ground' rather than enforcing their opinion on what should be happening and ignoring what is happening. (Small children’s service)

Some were more interested in frequent opportunities to meet and share information:

More regular meetings with contract managers and respectful communications from the funding bodies. (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Service)

Even though there is quarterly meeting, we rarely get to speak to the ACT Government. (Small self-help organisation)

Continual opportunities to meet and maintain open communication pathways. (Medium-sized training service)

Some indicated particularly positive relationships with individuals in the ACT public sector:

In general most of the ACT government staff we work with are committed and knowledgeable about what we do, and who we are. We have long standing relationships and are able to navigate difficult waters or opposing positions. (Large disability service)

All government departments should have community liaison officers like Housing and Centrelink. These people are gold. (Medium-sized emergency relief service)

Often the responses demonstrated that the quality of relationships varied considerably depending on the Directorate that they were in contact with and the level within the organisation and the Directorate that they contact occurred:

Our relationship with Government varies depending on the level we work with and the Directorate. (Medium sized peak body)

Relationships appear to vary greatly across directorates/sub-sectors and contract managers. (Medium-sized peak body)
Figure 8.2 Perspectives on relationships with the ACT Government (n=129)

Advocacy (i.e. ability to speak publicly and independently) 47.7%
Reporting and compliance 43.4%
Policy advice and development 47.7%
Communication and consultation 48.5%
Co-operation and collaboration to deliver services 42.6%
Contract management 33.3%
Negotiating key performance indicators (KPIs) 34.9%
Data sharing 27.1%

- Quite poor / very poor
- Neutral / not sure
- Good
- Excellent
8.3 Perceptions of relationships with the Australian Government

The 63 organisations which reported that they had received or applied for funding from the Australian Government were asked a series of questions about their perceptions of these relationships. Overall, relationships with the Australian Government were described less positively than those with the ACT Government. There were smaller proportions of organisations who considered their relationships with the Australian Government to be good or excellent, and larger proportions reported relationships were quite poor or very poor. For example, 25.0% of the 60 organisations that answered the question reported that advocacy relationships with the Australian Government were ‘quite poor’ or ‘very poor’, compared to just 8.5% which rated advocacy relationships with the ACT Government in the same way (Figure 8.3).

Figure 8.3 shows that for data sharing, communication and consultation, negotiating key performance indicators, and cooperation and collaboration to deliver services, higher proportions organisations were more likely to rate relationships as poor than good or excellent. On measures of advocacy, contract management and reporting and compliance, higher proportions of organisations reported relationships with the Australian Government as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ than ‘quite poor’ or ‘very poor’. However, on each of these measures, more than double the proportion said relationships were poor than they did for the ACT Government.

Respondents were given an opportunity in an open-ended question to comment on how their relationship with the Australian Government might be improved. Only 14 organisations answered this question. One area which respondents felt could be improved was consultation over policy. Organisations felt that more meaningful policy discussions should be had with a wider range of services:

Policy development is only taken from the peak bodies and the larger service providers without seeking input from those who provide the vast majority of support services. (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service)

Sector can provide advice to Australian government on understanding community need scope and mapping of existing services and gaps. (Large family, relationships and parenting service)

Others said relationships were difficult to maintain due to changes to departments and staffing:

Need improved consistency between Commonwealth departments. Not helped by constant Machinery of Government changes. Need greater consistency within departments. (Large children’s service)

Unlike the ACT government, we have minimal relationship with the Commonwealth Government, they have high staff turnover and we often brief the new rep about what we do, to find we have a new contract manager 6 months later. (Large disability service)

Several commented on funding relationships, suggesting that longer contracts, better advice regarding funding outcomes, fewer funding cuts and simpler processes would be helpful. For example:
Longer contract periods. Certainty as to what processes are going to be put in place. (Small organisation providing support services regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs)

Simpler procurement procedures. (Medium-sized carer support service)

Reporting and compliance has increased. Renewal of contracts down to the last minute. (Medium-sized mental health service)
Figure 8.3 Perspectives on relationships with the Australian Government (n=106)

Advocacy (i.e. ability to speak publicly and independently):
- Quite poor / very poor: 5.0%
- Neutral / not sure: 31.7%
- Good: 38.3%
- Excellent: 25.0%

Contract management:
- Quite poor / very poor: 5.1%
- Neutral / not sure: 27.1%
- Good: 28.8%
- Excellent: 27.1%

Reporting and compliance:
- Quite poor / very poor: 6.8%
- Neutral / not sure: 30.0%
- Good: 30.0%
- Excellent: 28.8%

Policy advice and development:
- Quite poor / very poor: 5.0%
- Neutral / not sure: 30.0%
- Good: 30.0%
- Excellent: 27.1%

Data sharing:
- Quite poor / very poor: 3.3%
- Neutral / not sure: 38.3%
- Good: 41.7%
- Excellent: 18.3%

Communication and consultation:
- Quite poor / very poor: 5.0%
- Neutral / not sure: 28.3%
- Good: 43.3%
- Excellent: 22.0%

Negotiating key performance indicators (KPIs):
- Quite poor / very poor: 5.0%
- Neutral / not sure: 5.0%
- Good: 5.0%
- Excellent: 3.4%

Co-operation and collaboration to deliver services:
- Quite poor / very poor: 3.4%
- Neutral / not sure: 22.0%
- Good: 45.8%
- Excellent: 28.8%
9 Income from government sources

As reported in Section 3.7, responding organisations had average incomes of $2.7 million in the last financial year, with a median figure (or mid-point for all respondents) of $438,000. Respondents were also asked to report the proportion of the organisation’s income, which came from the ACT and Australian Governments, in the last financial year, and their responses are described in this section (Section 9.1). The report then presents respondents’ perceptions of ACT and Australian Government funding arrangements (Sections 9.2 and 9.3 respectively).

9.1 Income from Government sources

Proportion that received income from Government

Of the 162 organisations which responded to the question, most (76.5%) received some funding from a government source, while 38 organisations (23.5%) did not. A little over a quarter (44 organisations, 27.2%) received income from both the ACT and Australian Governments. Around a third received ACT Government funding only. This is shown in Figure 9.1.

**Figure 9.1 Proportion of organisations with income from the ACT and Australian Governments (%,**
n=162)

![Bar chart showing the proportion of organisations with income from the ACT and Australian Governments.](image)

**Government income as a proportion of total income**

Figure 9.2 shows the proportion of organisation’s total income which came from all government sources (ACT and Australian Government combined). Around a quarter of organisations (26.5%) received more than 90% of total income from government sources. Of these, there were 21 organisations (13.0%) which received all their income from public sources. These 21 organisations were spread across categories of main service type and income ranges.
Contribution of funding from the ACT Government

The contribution ACT Government funding made to organisation’s total income varied (see Figure 9.3). Sixty five organisations (40.1%) reported no income from the ACT Government. Figure 9.3 shows that 17.9% of organisations received more than 80% of their income from the ACT Government, while a further 10.5% received between 61-80% of income from this source. However, a substantial proportion of organisations received fairly small proportions of income from the ACT Government: 14.8% received between 1-20% of total income from this source.

Contribution of Australian Government funding

Less than half of responding organisations received funding from the Australian Government: 91 organisations (56.2%) reported no income from the Australian Government (see Figure 9.4). Nearly 1 in 5 organisations (18.5%) reported relatively small amounts of income from the
Australian Government (between 1-20%). Australian Government funding comprised more than 80% of total income for less than 1 in 10 organisations (9.3%).

**Figure 9.4 Income from Australian government as a share of total income (%)**, n=162

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No income</th>
<th>1 to 20 percent</th>
<th>21 to 40 percent</th>
<th>41 to 60 percent</th>
<th>61 to 80 percent</th>
<th>81 to 100 percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2 **Perceptions of ACT Government funding arrangements**

A series of questions were asked to assess the perceived adequacy of ACT Government funding arrangements, and perceptions of funding processes. Full data is in Table A5 (see Supplementary Tables).

**Funding adequacy**

Perceptions on funding adequacy are shown in Figure 9.5. While large proportions were neutral or unsure on all measures, there were larger proportions of organisations who disagreed with the statements than agreed. Figure 9.5 shows that there were large proportions of organisations (64.3%) who disagreed or strongly disagreed that ACT funding arrangements cover the true cost of delivering services, while only 14.7% agreed.

Funding is also widely perceived as inadequate to meet levels of demand in the ACT. Around 3 in 5 organisations (61.5%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that 'Funding enables us to meet levels of demand in the ACT', and only 13.8% agreed or strongly agreed.

More than half disagreed that funding enables purchasing of necessary capital, such as vehicles and equipment (53.8%). Further, a higher proportion disagreed (38.5%) than agreed (25.4%) that ACT funding enables maintenance of suitable facilities. Only a small minority of organisations agreed that funding enabled their organisation to innovate (10.8%), while 53.1% disagreed. Around half disagreed that funding enables the organisation to pay staff rates appropriate to their skills (49.6%), and 19.1% agreed. Many also disagreed that funding enables community strengthening activities (43.8%), while 19.2% agreed.
Funding processes

In terms of ACT government funding processes, areas for improvement include simplifying processes for applying for funding, and advising funded organisations well enough in advance of the renewal date. As shown in Figure 9.6, only 18.9% agreed or strongly agreed that processes for applying for funding were simple, while half disagreed or strongly disagreed (49.6%). Only 1 in 5 agreed or strongly agreed that they know enough in advance whether funding would be renewed, while around 2 in 5 organisations (42.5%) disagreed. Further, only 16.7% agreed or strongly agreed that ACT Government funders seek feedback on tendering processes and funding reform (although half were neutral or unsure), and only 17.7% of organisations agreed that funding processes enable continuity of service provision for clients.
Figure 9.5 Agreement with statements on the adequacy of ACT Government funding

- **64.3%** believe that funding covers the true cost of delivering services (n=129).
- **61.5%** believe that funding enables us to meet levels of demand in the ACT (n=130).
- **53.8%** believe that funding helps us purchase the capital we need, such as vehicles and equipment (n=130).
- **53.1%** believe that funding enables us to innovate (n=130).
- **51.5%** believe that funding covers the costs of data collection and evaluation (n=130).
- **49.6%** believe that funding ensures we can pay staff rates appropriate to their skills (n=131).
- **45.7%** believe that funding supports staff training and development (n=129).
- **43.8%** believe that funding supports us to undertake community development and build stronger communities (n=130).
- **38.5%** believe that funding enables us to maintain suitable facilities (n=130).
Figure 9.6 Agreement with statements on ACT Government funding processes

- Processes for applying for funding are simple (n=127): 49.6% Disagree, 42.5% Agree
- We know enough in advance whether funding will be renewed (n=127): 31.5% Disagree, 36.2% Agree
- We get timely information about tendering and procurement processes (n=127): 28.3% Disagree, 28.3% Agree
- Funding contracts are long enough to achieve outcomes (n=127): 32.3% Disagree, 33.9% Agree
- Processes enable continuity of service provision for clients (n=124): 17.7% Disagree, 50.0% Agree
- Funders seek feedback on tendering processes and funding reform (n=126): 16.7% Disagree, 42.2% Agree
- Funding arrangements safeguard our organisation’s independence and advocacy (n=128): 27.3% Disagree, 30.5% Agree
9.3 Perceptions of Australian Government funding arrangements

While the ACT Government is the main source of funding for community services in the ACT, many reported receiving Australian Government funding. These organisations were asked about their perceptions of Australian Government funding processes.

Results (Figure 9.7) show considerable scope for improvement on all domains. Only 15.0% agreed that they know enough in advance whether funding will be renewed, while 58.3% disagreed with the statement. Similarly, more than half of organisations disagreed or strongly disagreed that Australian Government processes for applying for funding were simple (55.0%), while only 20.0% agreed. Only 11.7% said Australian Government funders seek feedback on tendering processes and funding reform, while many more (50.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. On each measure, higher proportions of respondents gave negative responses, disagreeing with the statements, than those who gave positive responses.
We know enough in advance whether funding will be renewed (n=106)
Processes for applying for funding are simple (n=106)
Funders seek feedback on tendering processes and funding reform (n=106)
Processes enable continuity of service provision for clients (n=107)
Funding contracts are long enough to achieve outcomes (n=106)
We get timely information about tendering and procurement processes (n=106)
Funding arrangements safeguard our organisation’s independence and advocacy (n=107)
10 Income from market sources

Of the 162 organisations which provided a breakdown of the share of income coming from various sources, 71.0% reported receiving some amount of funding from a commercial, or market source. That is, they reported some income from the following sources:

- client fees and charges (including social housing rents)
- membership fees, or
- business activities (including retail, events, and social enterprise).

On average, 27.1% of organisation’s income was from these sources combined (median of 7.5%). However, as for government income, there was much variation in the share of total income which commercial income constituted.

10.1 Market income as a share of total income

Around 7 in 10 (71.0%) organisations had some income from a commercial, or market source, and 3 in 10 organisations (29.0%) did not (see Figure 10.1). More than 1 in 4 organisations (27.8%) reported that commercial income made a very minor contribution to total income (between 1-10%). At the other extreme, almost 1 in 8 responding organisations were almost completely dependent on market income. That is, for 19 organisations (11.7%), commercial income sources constituted more than 90% of total income (see Figure 10.1).

These 19 organisations which were almost entirely dependent on market income were spread across categories of main service types, and included organisations whose main services were children’s services, disability services, community housing, peak bodies, advocacy organisations, health related services, and community development. The 19 organisations were spread across income categories. Around half (9, or 47.4%) had incomes under $250,000, and two had incomes over $5 million. Fourteen of the 19 (73.7%) received no income from government. Further, of the 19 organisations which derived more than 90% of income from commercial sources, 15 were non-profits, and four were private for-profit businesses.
10.2 Forms of market income

The most common form of market or commercial income was income from client fees and charges. However, more than half of organisations (55.6%) received no income from this source. This is shown in Table 10.1.

On average, client fees constituted 15.0% of total income. However, the median figure was 0%, as more than half did not receive any income from client fees. For 12 organisations (7.4%), more than 90% of total income came from client fees and charges. This included seven organisations for which client fees and charges constituted 100% of total income.

Table 10.1 Receipt of income from each market source (n=162)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Client fees and charges</th>
<th>Membership fees</th>
<th>Business activities (eg retail, events)</th>
<th>All commercial income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income from this source</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10%</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20%</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 40%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 60%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 to 80%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 to 90%</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 to 100%</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean share of total income (median)</td>
<td>15.0 (0.0)</td>
<td>6.6 (0.0)</td>
<td>5.5 (0.0)</td>
<td>27.1 (7.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Smaller proportions of organisations received income from other market sources. Around 1 in 3 responding organisations had some amount of income from membership fees (32.7%) and a quarter had income from business activities (25.9%). These market income sources also constituted a smaller share of total income. Only very small numbers of responding organisations received more than 10% of total income from membership fees or business activities (see Table 10.1).
11 Income from philanthropic sources

Of the 162 organisations which answered the question, 90 (55.6%) reported that they had some amount of income from a philanthropic source, defined as income from donations and fundraising, a grant from a philanthropic foundation or trust, or other private sector income (such as business sponsorship).\(^{12}\)

11.1 Philanthropic income as a share of total income

On average, 16.0% of organisation’s income was from philanthropic sources combined (median of 1%). The distribution of organisations, according to the share of total income constituted by income from philanthropic sources, is shown in Figure 11.1. Typically, philanthropic income made only a small contribution to total income. A quarter of organisations reported that less than 10% of their income came from this source (25.9%). Nine organisations reported that over 90% of their income came from philanthropic sources. These typically were small in scale. Six of the nine had less than $250,000 in annual income, and only one reporting income over $500,000. Eight were registered charities. Four reported their main service type was health related. Six of the nine had no income from government.

Figure 11.1 Income from philanthropic sources as a share of total income (n=162)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income from Philanthropic Sources as a Share of Total Income (%)</th>
<th>Number of Organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0% No philanthropic income</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% to 10%</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11% to 20%</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21% to 40%</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41% to 60%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61% to 80%</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81% to 90%</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91% to 100%</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.2 Forms of philanthropic income

The most common form of philanthropic income was from donations and fundraising. However, more than half of organisations (53.7%) received no income from this source, and those who reported income from donations or fundraising typically reported that it constituted less than 10% of total income. Around 1 in 3 organisations received grants from philanthropic foundations and funds, but amounts were also generally small. This is shown in Table 11.1.

\(^{12}\) The category ‘other private sector income’ may include income donated by the private sector or which was commercial in nature (other than income from client or member fees or business activities). However, as the example included in the survey was ‘business sponsorship’, we have classified it as ‘philanthropic’ here.
### Table 11.1 Receipt of income from each philanthropic source (n=162)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Income from Each Philanthropic Source</th>
<th>Donations and Fundraising</th>
<th>Grants from Philanthropic Foundations and Funds</th>
<th>Other (e.g. Business Sponsorship)</th>
<th>All Philanthropic Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income from this source</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10%</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20%</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 40%</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 60%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 to 80%</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 to 90%</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 to 100%</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Share of Total Income (Median)</td>
<td>11.1 (0.0)</td>
<td>3.5 (0.0)</td>
<td>1.4 (0.0)</td>
<td>16.0 (1.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12  **Financial status**

Information on expenditure and income captured in the survey, as well as responses to questions about financial reserves, financial performance and financial outlook, provide insight into the financial status of the ACT community service sector.

12.1  **Expenditure**

Information on the amount of money spent by the organisation in the 2015-2016 financial year was provided by 144 organisations. Together, these 144 organisations reported expenditure of $260 million. While the mean expenditure was $1.8 million, median expenditure was much lower ($323,000). While the lowest spending quintile spent under $12,000, the highest spending quintile spent over $1.4 million. Ten percent of organisations reported over $4.4 million in expenditure. A breakdown by deciles is shown in Table 12.1.

**Table 12.1 Expenditure deciles (n=144)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile</th>
<th>Income range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Up to $1,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>$1,131 – $12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>$12,001 – $45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>$45,001 – $140,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>$140,001 – $323,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>$323,001 – $500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>$500,001 – $750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>$750,001 – $1,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>$1,400,001 – $4,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>$4,400,001 – $34,379,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.2  **Margin**

For organisations which reported more than $1,000 in both income and expenditure, a measure of margin was calculated. This was calculated according to the net income for the year (income minus expenses), divided by total income. Margin is a common indicator of the short-term sustainability of the organisation (Prentice, 2015). While an appropriate margin will depend on individual organisation’s goals, strategies and operating context, examining levels across organisations provides an overall indication of sector sustainability and risk.
Results show that for the 125 organisations for which the measure of margin was calculated, 58.7% spent within 10% of their total year’s income, and 70.6% spent within 20% of their total income, for the 2015-16 financial year. That is, relatively few operated with a very large surplus or deficit.

In general, having a surplus means organisations can reinvest in the organisation or set resources aside to buffer against risk, such as unexpected costs, or funding reductions (ACNC, 2016). Organisations were more likely to have had a surplus than a deficit for the year: 28.6% had a surplus of more than 10% of income, and 21.4% had a surplus of more than 20% of income. Around 1 in 8 organisations (12.7%) had a deficit of more than 10%, and around 1 in 12 (7.9%) had a deficit of more than 20%.

Of course, these data should be interpreted with caution. They are for one year only, and do not reflect the timing of funding and expenditure, nor organisation’s asset base, longer term financial positioning or strategy, or performance in achieving organisational mission. Monitoring financial indicators for the sector over time however will provide insight into the proportion of organisations likely to lack capacity to reinvest or protect against risk.

12.3 Financial reserves

The survey asked how many months of spending the organisation usually holds as a financial reserve. This indicates the level of resources, relative to expenditure, available to an organisation to cover unexpected or sudden costs, or to reinvest in the organisation (ACNC, 2016). The proportion of organisations which hold reserves at various levels are shown in Table 12.2 and Figure 12.1, according to whether the largest source of income for the organisation came from government, philanthropic, or commercial sources.

While 30.5% of organisations reported usually keeping more than six months of expenditure in reserve, slightly more than this (34.4%) said they usually kept less than three months of spending in reserve. Notably, organisations for which government funding made the most significant contribution to total income tended to have lower reserves than others. Only 22.1% of these organisations had reserves of more than six months expenditure. This is likely to reflect usual requirements for full amounts of government funding to be expended. As such, it appears more difficult for organisations dependent on government to build up a financial safety net. Further, as reported in Section 9.2, organisations frequently find that government funding fails to cover the full costs of service provision, also precluding the build-up of a buffer.

Among organisations for which philanthropy was the most important income source, more than half (57.9%) had reserves to last six months or more. For those whose main income source was commercial, 37.5% had reserves of more than six months, but the same proportion of this group had less than three months of expenditure in reserve. Like organisations which depend on government income, it appears that a relatively high proportion of those which depend on commercial income (more than 1 in 3) are operating with limited capacity to cover unexpected costs.
Table 12.2 Financial reserves, by main source of income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main income source is</th>
<th>Less than 3 months of expenditure in reserve</th>
<th>3 to 6 months of expenditure in reserve</th>
<th>More than 6 months of expenditure in reserve</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government (n=95)</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>philanthropy (n=19)</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commercial (n=40)</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All (n=154)</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12.1 Proportion of organisations with financial reserves, by main source of income

12.4 Operating position over last three years

To capture organisation’s financial position over time, the survey asked respondents to indicate whether they operated a roughly balanced budget, or were in surplus or deficit in the last three financial years. Overall, 133 organisations reported their operating position for each year. Of these, 21.8% reported they had roughly balanced budgets in each of the last three years. About double this number (42.1%) had not operated a balanced budget in any of the last three years. Organisations were more likely to report surpluses than deficits over the last three years. Around a quarter (26.3%) had a surplus for three years, and 16.5% had a surplus for two out of the last three years. Relatively small numbers operated in deficit: 6.8% reported a deficit for three years, and 6.0% reported a deficit for two of the last three years. These data are shown in Table 12.3.
Table 12.3 Number of the last three years the organisation spent with a surplus, deficit, or roughly balanced budget (n=133)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years spent with a roughly balanced budget</th>
<th>None of the last three years</th>
<th>1 of the last 3 years</th>
<th>2 of the last 3 years</th>
<th>3 of the last 3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in surplus</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in deficit</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of organisations in surplus and deficit for each of the last three financial years is shown in Supplementary Tables, Table A10. This shows a growing proportion of organisations reporting a surplus or balanced budget since the 2013-14 financial year.

12.5 Financial outlook

Respondents were also asked to rate their organisation’s financial status over the next one year, three years and five years. Most (56.1%) had a slightly or strongly positive outlook for the next year. Fewer organisations had a slightly or strongly positive outlook for the next three years (45.7%) and fewer still reported a positive outlook for the next five years (40.0%). However, as many were neutral or unsure, the proportion of organisations with a positive outlook was much higher than those with a negative outlook.

Figure 12.2 Proportion of organisations with negative and positive financial outlooks
12.7 Changes in funding sources

Most organisations reported that compared with the previous financial year, in 2015-16 their income had stayed about the same. This was the case for funding from the ACT Government, which had been stable for 53.4% of reporting organisations, and for Australian Government funding, which had stayed the same for about 2 in 3 organisations (although fewer organisations received it). More than 1 in 5 organisations (22.4%) said their income from the ACT Government had increased, but a slightly higher proportion (24.2%) said it had decreased, with many of these (around a third, or 8.7% of all responding organisations) reporting a significant decrease. A substantial proportion of organisations reported their income from commercial sources had increased somewhat or significantly (29.1%). This was higher than those experiencing increases in any other funding source (Figure 12.3).

Figure 12.3 Proportion of organisations experiencing change in level of government, commercial and philanthropic funding, in the last year
13 Perspectives on capacity and the operating environment

A series of questions were asked to capture service leaders’ perceptions of the operating environment, including perceptions of the adequacy of infrastructure; capacity to meet demand, measure outcomes and focus on early intervention and prevention; and their perspectives on policy settings in the ACT.

13.1 Adequacy of infrastructure

Many organisations feel existing infrastructure does not meet the needs of their organisation. Almost half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their buildings and facilities met their needs (47.4%). However, a significant proportion disagreed (34%). One in eight organisations strongly disagreed that their buildings and facilities met their needs (12.2%), and a further 21.8% disagreed (see Figure 13.1).

Arrangements for collecting managing and analysing data are also an area of concern for many organisations. Two in five organisations (41.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that data collection met their needs, but about the same number (40.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Half of organisations felt their information and communication technology arrangements meet their needs. However, a significant number (32.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. While 37.6% of respondents said they were not sure or the question was not applicable to them (presumably because they did not have fleet arrangements), around 1 in 5 disagreed that their fleet arrangements meet their transport needs.

Figure 13.1 Proportion of organisations who agreed that infrastructure arrangements met the needs of the organisation
13.2 Capacity to measure outcomes

The survey asked respondents to think about their main service type in the ACT and state how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘Our organisation was able to measure outcomes’. Overall, 2 in 3 organisations agreed they were able to measure outcomes, with 19.4% reporting strong agreement and a further 47.3% agreeing with the statement (see Figure 13.2). This differed slightly across categories of main service type. For example, 76.9% of respondents from child, youth and family services agreed or strongly agreed, compared with 59.0% of organisations in the ‘Other’ category. A relatively high proportion of organisations whose main service type was information, advocacy, legal and peaks disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (21.9%) while few whose main service type was health related did so (2.8%).

Figure 13.2 Proportion of organisations who agreed and disagreed with the statement ‘Our organisation was able to measure outcomes’, by main service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Service Type</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not sure / Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child, Youth and Family</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability, Ageing and Carer</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Advocacy, Legal and Peaks</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.3 Ability to meet demand

Respondents were also asked to think about their main service type in the ACT, and to state how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘Our organisation was able to meet demand’. Figure 13.3 shows that a little over half of responding organisations (51.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that they could meet demand. However, this was notably higher for organisations whose main service type was in the category of child, youth and family services, for which 38.5% strongly agreed and a further 34.6% agreed (73.1% in total).
Figure 13.3 Proportion of organisations who agreed and disagreed with the statement ‘Our organisation was able to meet demand’, by main service type

Figure 13.4 shows that the proportion of organisations which agreed they were able to meet demand also differed by main income source. Among those whose main source of income was from government, 43.8% agreed or strongly agreed they could meet demand, while about the same number (42.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Organisations whose main source of income was from market sources were most likely to agree or strongly agree they could meet demand (62.8%), and least likely to disagree or strongly disagree (14.0%), although relatively high numbers were neutral (14.0%) or said they were not sure or the question was not applicable (9.3%).
13.4 Emphasis on early intervention and prevention

Also in relation to organisation’s main service type in the ACT, respondents were asked to report how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘Our organisation was able to place enough emphasis on prevention and early intervention’. While almost half were neutral or said they were not sure or the question was not applicable (47.8%), more agreed than disagreed with the statement. While around 1 in 3 agreed or strongly agreed (32.5%), closer to 1 in 5 disagreed (19.6%). The proportion of organisations which agreed with the statement was highest in the field of child, youth and family services, and lowest for information, advocacy and peaks, and those in the ‘Other’ category, for which there were relatively large proportions who were neutral, unsure or said the statement was not applicable.
Figure 13.5 Proportion of organisations who agreed and disagreed with the statement ‘Our organisation was able to place enough emphasis on prevention and early intervention’, by main service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure / not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child, Youth and Family (n=25)</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability, Ageing and Carer (n=32)</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health (n=35)</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Advocacy, Legal and Peaks (n=32)</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (n=39)</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=163)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.5 Impact of policy settings

Perceptions of transition to the NDIS

As stated in the Market Position Statement for the Australian Capital Territory (NDIA, 2016), the NDIS has generated significant expansion in service provision, and employment opportunities, and is expected to continue to do so in the next few years. Associated, providers have refocused their practices to align with Scheme principles of choice and competition, and consumer directed funding arrangements.

To explore perceptions of the transition so far, survey participants were asked broadly to rate the impact they felt the NDIS has had on community services in the ACT. Of the 153 organisations that answered the question, 28.8% felt the impact has been positive or strongly positive, while 1 in 3 (33.3%) reported being neutral or unsure. Reflecting widespread concerns about the impact of the NDIS on the sector in the ACT, the largest proportion (37.9%) felt the transition to the NDIS had been broadly negative so far, with 21.6% reporting the impact of the transition to NDIS had been negative, and a further 16.3% reporting it had been strongly negative.

This was then examined separately for organisations who were involved in providing disability services (whether or not this was their main service type), and those who were not. Results are shown in Figure 13.6. It shows that disability service providers are much more polarised in their
opinions about the NDIS compared to other organisations. Nearly half of organisations who do not provide disability services were unsure about the impact of the NDIS, compared to just 8.2 per cent of disability service providers. Disability service providers were strongly divided in their opinion with over a half (55.1%) describing the impact of the NDIS as negative and over a third (36.7%) as positive.

While this survey did not ask specifically about the kinds of concerns respondents had about the NDIS, a consultation by the NDIA with 22 providers in the ACT and Southern NSW identified challenges relating to pricing, supply risks for specialists supports, workforce planning, recruitment and retention, hours of operation, transport options for participants, and complexity of working across states and territories.  

**Perceptions of the ACT Portable Long Service Leave Scheme**

Figure 13.7 shows the proportion of organisations (among those with employees only) which perceived the impact of the ACT Portable Leave Scheme to be negative or positive, depending on whether or not they were registered. While 32.1% of organisations not registered for the scheme saw it as positive and 60.7% were neutral or unsure, among those who were registered, 69.8% felt the impact was positive and 17.4% felt it was neutral or were unsure.

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Figure 13.6 Perceived impact of the transition to NDIS in the ACT, by whether or not organisations provide disability services

![Bar chart showing perceived impact of NDIS transition](chart.png)

Figure 13.7 Perceived impact of the ACT Portable Long Service Leave Scheme

![Bar chart showing perceived impact of ACT Portable Long Service Leave Scheme](chart.png)
Perceptions on other initiatives

The survey also asked about perceptions of other policy initiatives: Commonwealth Aged Care reform, the ACT Human Services Blueprint (2014) and the ACT Social Compact (2012). On each measure, very high proportions reported that the impact had been neutral or they were unsure. Results are shown in Table 13.1.

Table 13.1 Perceived impact of other policy initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commonwealth aged care reform (n=150)</th>
<th>ACT Human Services Blueprint (2014) (n=151)</th>
<th>ACT Social Compact (2012) (n=152)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly positive</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly positive</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral / unsure</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly negative</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly negative</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13.8 shows how respondents in the 23 organisations that provided residential or non-residential aged care services were less likely than other organisations to report they were unsure, or that Commonwealth aged care reform had a neutral impact. Rather, close to half of aged care providers felt reforms had had slightly or strongly positive impact (47.8% compared with 8.7% of respondents that didn’t provide aged care services). Further, 30.4% of respondents from aged care services thought the impact had been slightly or strongly negative, compared with 8.8% of organisations that did not provide aged care.
13.6 Priorities for the future

The survey gave respondents an open-ended question in which to list their top priorities for their organisation over the next three years. 143 organisations completed this question. Overall, comments were clustered around concepts such as workforce and volunteers, service delivery issues, finances and funding, service types and service users, and other organisational issues. This is depicted in Figure 13.9 and discussed in more detail below.
There was strong consensus among respondents that financial sustainability (raised by 106 organisations) and service delivery (86 organisations) were important priorities in coming years. Those who identified financial sustainability as important listed: securing and retaining government funding; diversifying funding sources through fees, philanthropic and community fundraising; and finding greater efficiencies in the organisation. Those who said service delivery was a priority tended to focus on: maintaining or expanding the service; ensuring quality service provision; and meeting community and client or consumer needs.

Sixty-six priorities related to specific groups or policy areas. The greatest proportion focused on the transition to the NDIS (19), followed by older people and aged care (10).

In order to ensure that services were appropriately delivered, many organisations also focused internally, suggesting priorities around:

- staff (28)
- volunteers (15)
- administration or governance (18)
- infrastructure (17)
- evaluation and data collection (9)

Staffing and volunteer issues mostly related to expanding the number of staff and volunteers, retaining staff and volunteers, providing training, workforce and volunteer development and engagement. Regarding administration and governance, most respondents said their priorities related to organisational leadership; strategic planning and organisational policy development and implementation; developing new systems and processes. The most common form of infrastructure related to installing new information technology systems. Evaluation and data collection was generally described as research, evaluation and evidence-based service delivery.

Twenty-one services wanted great promotion of their work to the general public or to potential service users. This included ensuring greater understanding of the organisation’s work; raising membership; and developing or maintaining a reputation. Twelve respondents focused on collaboration between services and throughout the sector, particularly by developing stronger working relationships and partnerships.
14 Conclusions

Community services in the ACT provide a diverse range of services, advocate for service users and for policy change, develop communities, and provide opportunities for participation through volunteering, in their paid workforce, and through their governing bodies. This report has provided a body of information, much of which has been collected for the first time, about the characteristics of the community service sector in the ACT. The data provides a baseline for sector monitoring, and for assessing the impact of the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy in coming years.

The findings attest to the strength of community service organisations in the ACT. Most community service organisations report engaging people with lived experience as paid staff, volunteers, and board and committee members. Organisations demonstrate a considered, reflective approach to promoting diversity in the paid workforce. However, many find it difficult to recruit particular groups of staff. Salaries, job security and career path continue to hinder recruitment and retention efforts across the sector.

Most organisations engage volunteers, and many have a volunteer co-ordinator. Those with a volunteer co-ordinator demonstrate greater confidence in their organisation’s capacity for volunteer engagement. Further inquiry could explore the roles volunteer co-ordinators are playing, and ways to spread best practice in co-ordinating and resourcing supports for volunteers.

The survey findings show organisational governance is a strength of the sector. While organisations generally see their boards or management committees to be functioning effectively, many feel there are barriers to developing and sustaining good practice. Many struggle to attract board or committee members with particular skills or from target groups, and have difficulties finding resources for governance training are common.

Survey findings provide insight into the resource base of the sector, and how it is changing. While government income remains the main source of income among community service organisations, many have concerns about the adequacy of government funding, and feel government funding processes could be improved.

Many organisations have experienced change in their income streams in recent years. A significant number of organisations have reported that market or commercial income sources are growing. Levels of dependence on non-government income sources, and the implications of this for organisational sustainability and for communities, should be tracked in coming years. Further, the small financial reserves of organisations, and uncertainty about medium and long term finances, represent threats to sector sustainability and growth. Initiatives to more closely assess the appropriateness of financial capacity across the sector, and to strengthen financial sustainability where risks are identified, are further areas for sector development.


JCGRG (Joint Community Government Reference Group) ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026, Canberra.


### Table A1 Number of organisations providing each service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ageing, disability and carer</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carer support</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability services</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential care for older people</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential aged care (including retirement homes)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture and ethnic-specific</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural services</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant, refugee and asylum seeker services</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment, training and financial support</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobseeker</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency relief</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child, youth and family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family, relationship and parenting services</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of home care</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s services (including ECEC)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth services</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic and family violence service</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health related services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health condition specific</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health promotion</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventative health</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palliative care</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s health</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual and reproductive health</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other health</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing and homelessness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homelessness services</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenancy support</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community housing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information, advocacy, legal and peaks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak body</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, advice and referral</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer advocacy</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systemic and policy advocacy</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gender informed services</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>LGBTIQ</td>
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<td>6.6</td>
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<td>Women’s services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s services</td>
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<td>9.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-help</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detainee / Prisoner support</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem gambling support</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social enterprise</td>
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<td>6.6</td>
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</table>
### Table A2 Agreement with statements about the functioning of Boards and Management Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure / not applicable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is good collaboration and two-way flow of information between our Board/Committee and management</td>
<td>65 (43.3%)</td>
<td>53 (35.3%)</td>
<td>10 (6.7%)</td>
<td>7 (4.7%)</td>
<td>1 (.7%)</td>
<td>14 (9.3%)</td>
<td>150 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have a comprehensive set of policies and procedures relating to Board/Committee functioning</td>
<td>51 (34.0%)</td>
<td>57 (38.0%)</td>
<td>19 (12.7%)</td>
<td>12 (8.0%)</td>
<td>4 (.7%)</td>
<td>7 (4.7%)</td>
<td>150 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Board/Committee has a good understanding of the issues facing the sector</td>
<td>54 (36.0%)</td>
<td>69 (46.0%)</td>
<td>14 (9.3%)</td>
<td>5 (3.3%)</td>
<td>2 (.7%)</td>
<td>7 (4.7%)</td>
<td>150 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chair of the Board/Committee provides appropriate supervision to the CEO</td>
<td>48 (32.2%)</td>
<td>48 (32.2%)</td>
<td>20 (13.4%)</td>
<td>6 (4.0%)</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>25 (16.8%)</td>
<td>149 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have resources for Board/Committee members to undertake governance training</td>
<td>33 (22.0%)</td>
<td>48 (32.0%)</td>
<td>21 (14.0%)</td>
<td>27 (18.0%)</td>
<td>9 (6.0%)</td>
<td>12 (8.0%)</td>
<td>150 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All values are rounded to nearest whole number.
### Table A3 Agreement with statements about collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure / not applicable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are collaborating more often than we did 12 months ago</td>
<td>38 (23.2%)</td>
<td>61 (37.2%)</td>
<td>42 (25.6%)</td>
<td>14 (8.5%)</td>
<td>3 (1.8%)</td>
<td>6 (3.7%)</td>
<td>164 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are collaborating more effectively than we did 12 months ago</td>
<td>32 (19.5%)</td>
<td>67 (40.9%)</td>
<td>43 (26.2%)</td>
<td>12 (7.3%)</td>
<td>3 (1.8%)</td>
<td>7 (4.3%)</td>
<td>164 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments support us to collaborate</td>
<td>13 (7.9%)</td>
<td>39 (23.8%)</td>
<td>44 (26.8%)</td>
<td>36 (22.0%)</td>
<td>22 (13.4%)</td>
<td>10 (6.1%)</td>
<td>164 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working together is becoming more complicated</td>
<td>15 (9.1%)</td>
<td>49 (29.9%)</td>
<td>56 (34.1%)</td>
<td>28 (17.1%)</td>
<td>9 (5.5%)</td>
<td>7 (4.3%)</td>
<td>164 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We collaborate to measure need and / or outcomes</td>
<td>18 (11.0%)</td>
<td>48 (29.3%)</td>
<td>52 (31.7%)</td>
<td>32 (19.5%)</td>
<td>6 (3.7%)</td>
<td>8 (4.9%)</td>
<td>164 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We collaborate on policy and advocacy</td>
<td>21 (12.9%)</td>
<td>74 (45.4%)</td>
<td>35 (21.5%)</td>
<td>20 (12.3%)</td>
<td>5 (3.1%)</td>
<td>8 (4.9%)</td>
<td>163 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table A4 Agreement with statement ‘Working together is becoming more complicated’, by NDIS registration**

<table>
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<th>Registered for NDIS</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure / not applicable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
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### Table A5 Perspectives on the adequacy of ACT Government funding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure / not applicable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding covers the true cost of delivering services</td>
<td>n: 6, %: 4.7</td>
<td>n: 13</td>
<td>n: 5, %: 3.9</td>
<td>n: 49</td>
<td>n: 34, %: 26.4</td>
<td>n: 22, %: 17.1</td>
<td>n: 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding enables us to meet levels of demand in the ACT</td>
<td>n: 6, %: 4.6</td>
<td>n: 12</td>
<td>n: 8, %: 6.2</td>
<td>n: 52</td>
<td>n: 28, %: 21.5</td>
<td>n: 24, %: 18.5</td>
<td>n: 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding supports staff training and development</td>
<td>n: 4, %: 3.1</td>
<td>n: 18</td>
<td>n: 20, %: 15.5</td>
<td>n: 39</td>
<td>n: 28, %: 21.5</td>
<td>n: 28, %: 21.7</td>
<td>n: 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding supports us to undertake community development and build stronger communities</td>
<td>n: 3, %: 2.3</td>
<td>n: 22</td>
<td>n: 20, %: 15.4</td>
<td>n: 33</td>
<td>n: 24, %: 18.5</td>
<td>n: 30, %: 22.9</td>
<td>n: 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding ensures we can pay staff rates appropriate to their skills</td>
<td>n: 4, %: 3.1</td>
<td>n: 21</td>
<td>n: 11, %: 8.4</td>
<td>n: 41</td>
<td>n: 24, %: 18.3</td>
<td>n: 27, %: 20.8</td>
<td>n: 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding covers the costs of data collection and evaluation</td>
<td>n: 2, %: 1.5</td>
<td>n: 17</td>
<td>n: 17, %: 13.1</td>
<td>n: 38</td>
<td>n: 27, %: 20.8</td>
<td>n: 25, %: 19.2</td>
<td>n: 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding enables us to innovate</td>
<td>n: 3, %: 2.3</td>
<td>n: 16</td>
<td>n: 17, %: 13.1</td>
<td>n: 42</td>
<td>n: 23, %: 17.7</td>
<td>n: 27, %: 20.8</td>
<td>n: 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding enables us to maintain suitable facilities</td>
<td>n: 5, %: 3.8</td>
<td>n: 28</td>
<td>n: 23, %: 17.7</td>
<td>n: 27</td>
<td>n: 31, %: 23.8</td>
<td>n: 24, %: 18.5</td>
<td>n: 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding helps us purchase the capital we need, such as vehicles and equipment</td>
<td>n: 3, %: 2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n: 11</td>
<td>n: 12, %: 9.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>n: 130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: n = 129, 100.0%
### Table A6 Perspectives on ACT Government funding processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure / not applicable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We get timely information about tendering and procurement processes</td>
<td>4 (3.1%)</td>
<td>32 (25.2%)</td>
<td>22 (17.3%)</td>
<td>33 (26.0%)</td>
<td>17 (13.4%)</td>
<td>19 (15.0%)</td>
<td>127 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes for applying for funding are simple</td>
<td>3 (2.4%)</td>
<td>21 (16.5%)</td>
<td>23 (18.1%)</td>
<td>46 (36.2%)</td>
<td>17 (13.4%)</td>
<td>17 (13.4%)</td>
<td>127 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding is received on time</td>
<td>11 (8.7%)</td>
<td>59 (46.8%)</td>
<td>16 (12.7%)</td>
<td>14 (11.1%)</td>
<td>5 (4.0%)</td>
<td>21 (16.7%)</td>
<td>126 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding contracts are long enough to achieve outcomes</td>
<td>5 (3.9%)</td>
<td>31 (24.4%)</td>
<td>21 (16.5%)</td>
<td>27 (21.3%)</td>
<td>21 (16.5%)</td>
<td>22 (16.7%)</td>
<td>126 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We know enough in advance whether funding will be renewed</td>
<td>4 (3.1%)</td>
<td>23 (18.1%)</td>
<td>21 (16.5%)</td>
<td>26 (20.5%)</td>
<td>28 (22.0%)</td>
<td>22 (16.7%)</td>
<td>126 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funders seek feedback on tendering processes and funding reform</td>
<td>4 (3.1%)</td>
<td>17 (13.5%)</td>
<td>18 (14.5%)</td>
<td>23 (18.3%)</td>
<td>15 (12.1%)</td>
<td>37 (29.4%)</td>
<td>124 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes enable continuity of service provision for clients</td>
<td>4 (3.2%)</td>
<td>18 (14.5%)</td>
<td>29 (23.4%)</td>
<td>28 (22.6%)</td>
<td>15 (12.1%)</td>
<td>30 (24.2%)</td>
<td>128 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding arrangements safeguard our organisation's independence and advocacy</td>
<td>8 (6.3%)</td>
<td>27 (21.1%)</td>
<td>32 (25.0%)</td>
<td>25 (19.5%)</td>
<td>14 (10.9%)</td>
<td>22 (17.2%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table A7 Perspectives on Australian Government funding processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>We get timely information about tendering and procurement processes</th>
<th>Processes for applying for funding are simple</th>
<th>Funding contracts are long enough to achieve outcomes</th>
<th>We know enough in advance whether funding will be renewed</th>
<th>Funders seek feedback on tendering processes and funding reform</th>
<th>Processes enable continuity of service provision for clients</th>
<th>Funding arrangements safeguard our organisation's independence and advocacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure / not applicable</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
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<td>13.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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## Table A8 Perceptions of effectiveness of relationships with the ACT Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advocacy (i.e. ability to speak publicly and independently)</th>
<th>Policy advice and development</th>
<th>Communication and consultation</th>
<th>Co-operation and collaboration to deliver services</th>
<th>Negotiating key performance indicators (KPIs)</th>
<th>Contract management</th>
<th>Reporting and compliance</th>
<th>Data sharing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>62</td>
<td>47.7</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>6.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.1</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6.2</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>129</td>
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Table A9 Perceptions of effectiveness of relationships with the Australian Government

<table>
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<th>Advocacy (i.e. ability to speak publicly and independently)</th>
<th>Policy advice and development</th>
<th>Communication and consultation</th>
<th>Co-operation and collaboration to deliver services</th>
<th>Negotiating key performance indicators (KPIs)</th>
<th>Contract management</th>
<th>Reporting and compliance</th>
<th>Data sharing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<td>5.0</td>
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<td>Good</td>
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<td>38.3</td>
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<td>30.0</td>
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<td>25.0</td>
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<td>23.3</td>
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<td>15.0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10.0</td>
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<td>8.3</td>
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<td>13.3</td>
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<td>11.9</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A10 Operating positions of organisations in the last three financial years

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roughly balanced</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>154</td>
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</tbody>
</table>