



MEETING DEMAND IN THE SHADOW OF THE DELTA OUTBREAK: COMMUNITY SECTOR EXPERIENCES

DEMAND SNAPSHOT, AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SECTOR SURVEY

DECEMBER 2021



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Executive summary

Community service organisations have played a critical role in helping people endure COVID-19. Indeed, Australia's overall response to the health, economic and social impacts of the pandemic has greatly depended on the skills, expertise and capacity of the community sector to support people experiencing increases in poverty, disadvantage and hardship. During a chaotic year, the community sector went above and beyond to ensure as few people as possible were left behind. Yet not only have services struggled to meet increasing demand through 2021, they observed a worrying increase in the complexity of need within their communities.

At a time beckoning for a strengthened, more collaborative partnership between government and the sector to address urgent challenges, public policy measures that made a significant short-term impact on poverty, such as the Coronavirus Supplement and the JobKeeper wage subsidy, were removed. These had temporarily alleviated poverty in 2020, and community members and sector leaders called for their continuation.¹ However, these crucial supports were instead withdrawn in early 2021. Their withdrawal left a policy vacuum in the national agenda, namely the absence of an equitable recovery plan to tackle the economic and social disruption caused by COVID-19.² All the while, sector leaders urged governments to address long-term systemic challenges placing community services under strain, such as inadequate funding, insufficient flexibility, and short funding cycles.³

In June 2021, the Delta variant outbreak swept through Australia, especially the two most populous states. This in turn triggered repeated and prolonged lockdowns and border closures in the context of initially low vaccine supply. As this report demonstrates, community organisations have continued to face significant pressures since these outbreaks emerged. Even in locations not subject to repeated or long lockdowns, community service delivery has been increasingly characterised by rising demand and complexity of need, and significant challenges in particular relating to housing and homelessness, and mental health.

This report provides evidence from the Australian Community Sector Survey (ACSS) 2021. The survey was conducted in September 2021 by the Social Policy Research Centre at UNSW Sydney in collaboration with the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the network of Councils of Social Service of Australia (COSS Network), supported by Bendigo Bank, Australia's better big bank. It is the latest in a series of studies that seeks to give voice to the collective issues and priorities affecting the community sector, and to reflect the rich diversity of experiences and perspectives within community organisations.⁴

¹ Cortis N and Blaxland, M (2021) *Meeting community needs in difficult times: experience of Australia's community sector*. Sydney: ACOSS. ; Bradbury, B and Hill, P (2021) *Australian income support since 2000: Those left behind* ACOSS/UNSW Sydney Poverty and Inequality Partnership, Build Back Fairer Series, Report No. 2, Sydney.

² Cortis N and Blaxland, M (2021) *Meeting community needs in difficult times: experience of Australia's community sector*. Sydney: ACOSS.

³ Blaxland, M and Cortis, N (2021) *Valuing Australia's community sector: Better contracting for capacity, sustainability and impact*. Sydney: ACOSS.

⁴ For associated reports, see <https://www.acoss.org.au/australian-community-sector-survey/>

The survey was completed by 1,828 community sector staff, including 513 organisational leaders (CEOs and senior managers), 301 co-ordinators or team leaders, 640 frontline practitioners, and 374 staff in other roles. This is the largest ACSS response received in recent years, and highlights the eagerness and willingness of the sector to articulate the incredibly trying circumstances within which they continue to operate, as well as the need for change.

Information about participants and the survey method is in Appendix A. Several survey questions were asked in order to examine how community sector organisations were positioned to deal with demand for their services in 2021. These questions captured levels of demand for services in the community; changes in population and community needs, and sectoral capacity to meet these needs.⁵

Responses received to the survey conveyed a clear set of messages.

The community sector rose to the task of supporting communities throughout Australia in the face of the enormous challenges posed by COVID-19. Many organisations continued to reach those in need by offering services remotely, making greater use of technological supports. This type of adaptation meant the community sector strengthened Australia's pandemic response by helping mitigate the worst effects on the people suffering the most. Even with this extraordinary effort, demand for services has escalated. People experiencing poverty and disadvantage are trying to survive on low incomes despite inadequate income support, rising cost of living pressures, housing insecurity and inadequate funding of essential services. This means the sector continues to face rising demand without sufficient resources and supports to meet it.

This dilemma was neatly encapsulated by one manager, who explained:

The community sector has played a phenomenal role in supporting the community during bushfires, COVID pandemic and now in supporting vaccinations. This is often done without adequate funding or resourcing, and with little fanfare or attention. The community, policy and the sector would benefit greatly if government recognised this significant contribution, funded it, and worked collaboratively with the sector in tackling some of our most challenging issues. This includes working with the sector early when crises emerge.
Senior manager, legal, advocacy and peak body service, NSW

It is not too late to correct the course. In 2022, Australia faces another year of grappling with the realities of COVID-19, including successfully completing the vaccination rollout, continuing to deal with new variants and potential virus outbreaks, ensuring public health and safety measures equitably and fairly protect everyone, and developing a set of targeted and impactful economic and social policies to help affected people recover their lives. A more collaborative and dependable partnership with government would enable the community sector to help even more people experiencing poverty and disadvantage, strengthening the country in the process.

⁵ Further information from the Australian Community Sector, which includes information about funding, advocacy and workforce issues, will be available in early 2022, with reports made available at <https://www.acoss.org.au/australian-community-sector-survey/>

Key findings

Services are confronting increased poverty and disadvantage in the community

Around three quarters (73%) of community sector staff, including CEOs and managers, reported that in 2021, levels of poverty and disadvantage have increased among the groups they support. This is likely due to the prolonged effect of the pandemic and the impacts of service disruptions in 2020, as well as inadequate financial supports for households. Very high proportions of workers observed rising poverty and disadvantage in people accessing housing and homelessness services (84%), financial support and counselling services (82%), and child, youth and family services (80%).

A total of 81% of workers report growing complexity of need among service users during 2021. This was highest among those focused on child, family and youth services (89%) and housing and homelessness (86%).

Demand for community services has increased in 2021

Four in five participants (80%) reported that levels of demand for their main service increased. Again, this was higher among those delivering housing and homelessness services (88%) and among those supporting children, young people and families (85%). Problematically, a quarter of participants (24%) reported decreased availability of funding to support their work. Only 1 in 8 organisational leaders (CEOs or senior managers) said that in 2021, funding enabled their organisation to meet demand.

Ability of community services to meet demand fell in 2021

In 2021, just 6% of participants said their service was 'always' able to meet demand. This proportion has plummeted from 2020, when 19% of participants agreed. Agreement was even lower in housing and homelessness services (where only 3% of participants agreed) and in migrant and multicultural services (2%).

Almost 3 in 5 participants (58%) reported increases in the numbers of clients their service was unable to support. Increased unmet need was especially high in housing and homelessness, where 76% said there had been increased numbers of clients the service could not support.

While often difficulties in meeting community needs arose because those needs had increased, participants also reported that the pandemic had reduced capacity; that options for referral were limited; and that there were insufficient resources to hire the staff required to deliver services.

Despite these challenges, the sector has strengthened Australia's recovery

Although the community sector encountered profound challenges during 2021, it adapted service delivery to navigate changed circumstances, making a significant and essential contribution to Australia's COVID response. Almost half (46%) of survey participants said that in 2021 there were increases in how effectively their service was able to operate during COVID lockdowns, and 36% reported increases in their access to technology to engage with clients and communities. In addition to undertaking core operational work assisting service users, the community sector has also helped increase vaccination rates, promoted digital literacy and access to technology, and provided urgent emergency relief and financial support. This is an invaluable contribution to the community that reaffirms the importance of the sector to people in need across the country.

1. Poverty, disadvantage and complexity of need grew in 2021

By September 2021, the community services sector had experienced two tumultuous years. Devastating and widespread bushfires followed immediately by COVID-19 meant levels of community need had escalated. Increased need was in part associated with job losses, separation from support networks, and the emergence of new groups within communities requiring support. Some people delayed accessing services during this time, which in turn deepened and intensified their needs.⁶ The withdrawal or reduction of temporary increases in some income support payments also contributed to rising levels of disadvantage and complexity of need.

This situation was reflected in the experiences of the 1828 community sector staff who shared their experiences in the 2021 Australian Community Sector Survey.⁷ Among participants:

- 73% said levels of poverty and disadvantage among the groups they support had either increased (44%) or significantly increased (29%) through 2021 (Figure 1.1).

This figure was higher in some services (see Appendix Figure B.1). Increases in poverty and disadvantage were observed by:

- 84% of workers in housing and homelessness services;
- 82% of workers in services focused on financial support and counselling; and
- 80% of workers delivering child, youth and family services.

Lack of suitable housing means having to support people in short term expensive options or rough sleeping for months or years rather than weeks.
Senior manager, Housing and homelessness service, NSW

The demand for stable accommodation in WA far exceeds the supply. Consequently, we are seeing an increase in co-morbidity and demand for support in other areas affected by a lack of stable housing, such as AOD misuse, mental health and issues associated with poverty (food security, etc).
CEO, Housing and homelessness service, WA

In addition:

- 81% of participants said there had been either increases (45%) or significant increases (37%) in complexity of need among service users, during 2021.
- Increases were particularly high in the child, family and youth sector: 89% of participants in these services observed increases in complexity of need among service users (Figure B. 2).

When survivors of DFV were getting the COVID supplement they had the ability to plan to leave, to save some cash and leave safely. Now they are barely surviving. COVID has amplified homelessness caused by DFV as many women who previously could have rented privately are needing to access crisis accommodation or refuges as there is no affordable rentals.
CEO, child, family and youth service, QLD

- Growing complexity of need was also clearly evident among participants from the housing and homelessness sector, 86% of whom observed increases.

The vulnerability and complexity of needs has increased for clients and our service system is not adequately resourced to respond. Housing shortages, long waitlists for essential services and increased service demand are significantly impacting on our service capacity.
CEO, child, youth and family service, Qld

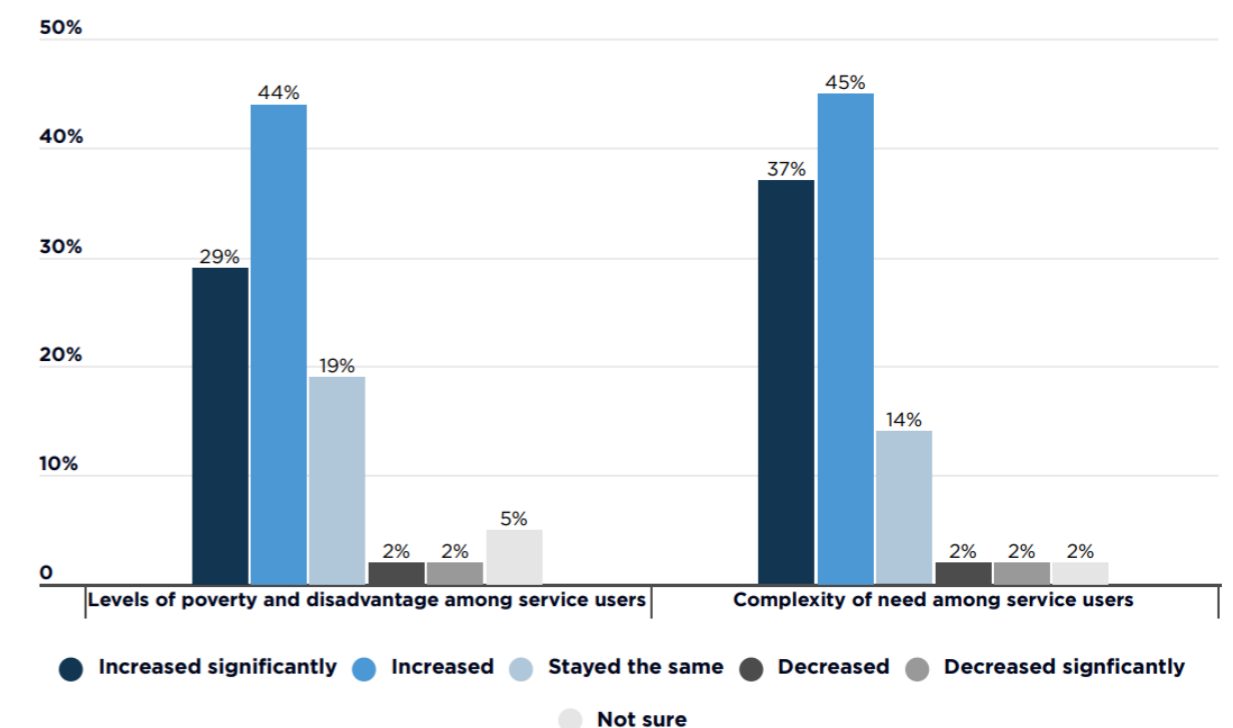
Service users and communities have confronted major economic challenges during 2021.

- 69% of survey participants said the people or communities their organisation supports were facing challenges relating to housing and homelessness
- 60% said their clients were facing cost of living pressures, and
- 40% noted inadequate Centrelink payments (Figure 1.2).
- 66% reported clients and communities faced challenges of social isolation, and
- 61% said they were supporting people affected by lack of access to mental health supports (Figure 1.2).

Complexity and levels of need of individuals and families in the community is dramatically increasing and so demands upon our member organisations is dramatically increasing.
CEO, legal, advocacy or peak body, ACT

We are currently funded for low to moderate needs clients. Most of our clients present with high to complex needs and our organization is under-funded to meet increasing demand.
CEO, child, family and youth service, NSW

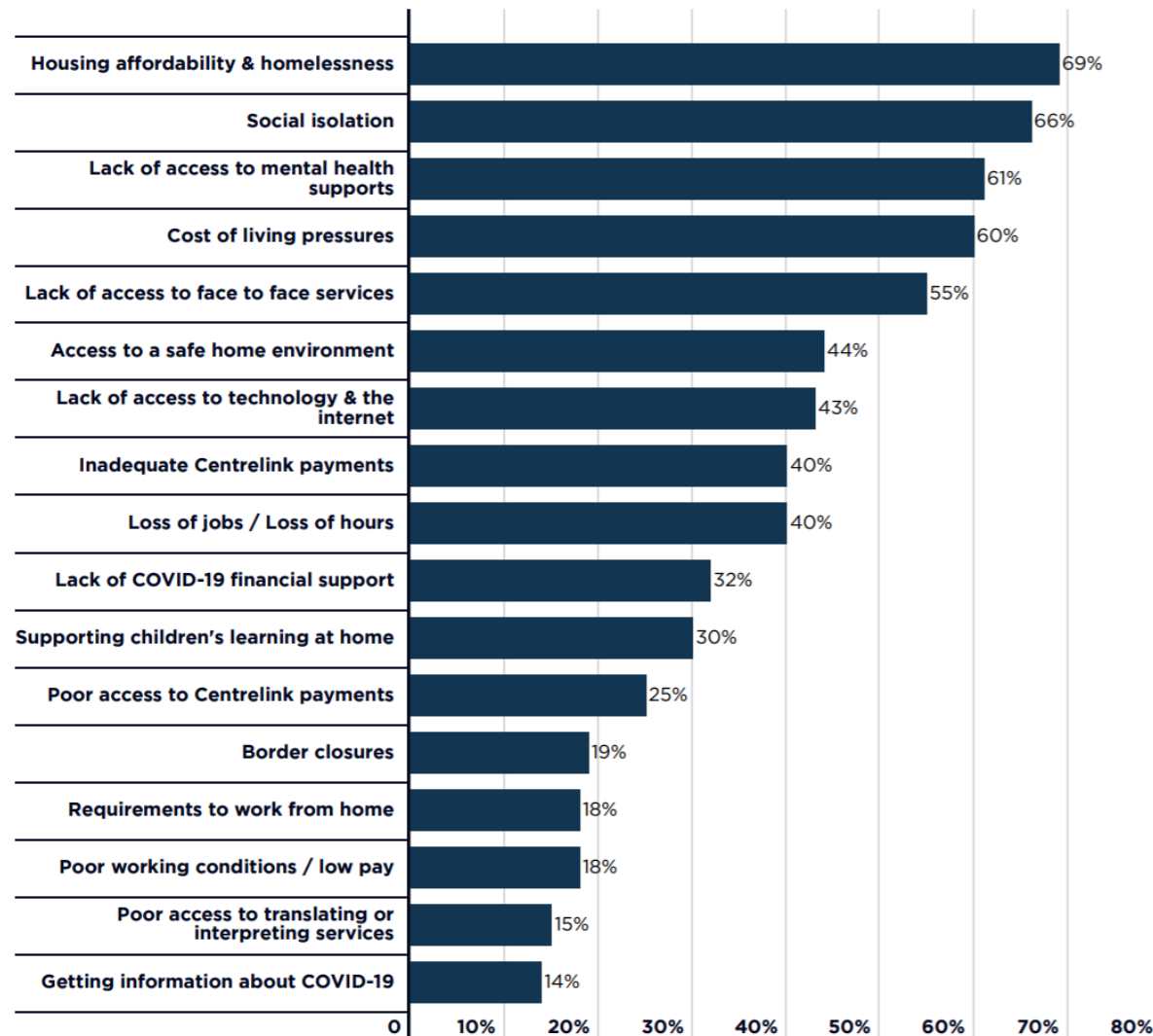
Figure 1.1 Increases in poverty and disadvantage, and complexity of need, 2021



⁶ Cortis N and Blaxland, M (2021) *Meeting community needs in difficult times: experience of Australia's community sector*. Sydney: ACOSS.; Bradbury, B and Hill, P (2021) *Australian income support since 2000: Those left behind* ACOSS/UNSW Sydney Poverty and Inequality Partnership, Build Back Fairer Series, Report No. 2, Sydney.

⁷ For information about methods and participants, see Appendix A

Figure 1.2 Main challenges affecting clients and communities so far in 2021



We have seen a dramatic increase in homelessness and housing instability... Housing/rental prices have increased significantly and we have also seen an increasing number of people moving into the area from the larger cities without realising that the housing situation here is much worse.

Frontline worker, financial support service, ACT

2. Demand for services increased in 2021

Consistent with increased poverty, disadvantage and complexity of need, the vast majority of community sector workers have seen demand increase in 2021:

- Four in five (80%) reported that levels of demand for the main service they were involved with had either increased (46%) or increased significantly (34%). This was higher than in 2020, when only 61% of workers observed increased demand for their service (Figure 2.1).⁸
- Increased demand was observed by 88% of those delivering housing and homelessness services, and 85% of those supporting children, young people and families (Appendix Figure B.3).
- Despite this increased demand, a quarter of participants (24%) reported that the availability of funds to support their work decreased in 2021, with fewer (20%) reporting funding increases (Table B.2).
- Among CEOs and senior managers, only 1 in 8 agreed with the statement “Funding enables us to meet demand”. Funding was considered particularly tight among leaders of housing and homelessness services; legal, advocacy and peaks; and migrant and multicultural services (Appendix Table B.3).

My service provides support for 10 families. The referral list has 50 families on it.
Frontline worker, housing and homelessness service, SA

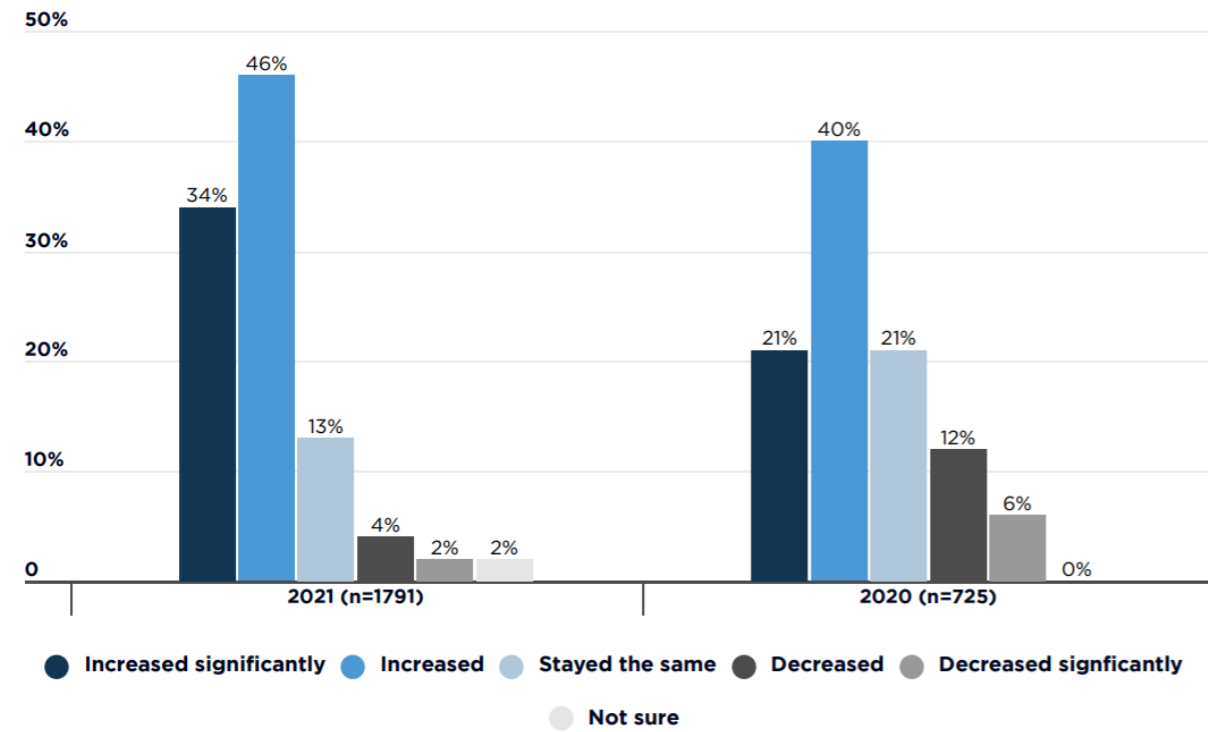
Demand for housing services and DV support grew significantly. We cannot service all clients who contact us as we don't have enough staff and the funding we receive won't cover more resourcing.
Project officer, child, youth and family service, ACT

Demand on services across our sector has increased significantly since Black Summer fires - exacerbated by floods & COVID lockdowns. Services are stretched to the limit; without any additional/surge funding to meet increased demand or backfill key positions, exhaustion & burnout are becoming endemic in the sector.
CEO, small legal, advocacy or peak body, NSW

We are seeing about 2.5 times as many clients as we are contracted to
Coordinator, housing and homelessness service, NSW

⁸ Cortis, N & Blaxland, M (2020): *Australia's community sector and COVID-19: Supporting communities through the crisis*. Sydney: ACOSS.

Figure 2.1 Changes in levels of demand for participants' main service



Every community service has been pushed to extreme levels since COVID.

Board member, large health related service, NSW

Need continues to grow but funding for additional staff does not.

Team leader, housing and homelessness service, Qld

There are not enough hands to handle the demand, due to lack of financial assistance.

Team leader, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service, QLD



Photo by [Mikhail Nilov](#) from [Pexels](#)

3. Ability to meet demand fell in 2021

Consistent with increased levels of poverty and disadvantage, increased community need and limited organisational resources, the ability of services to meet demand fell in 2021. Unfortunately, this was forecasted by organisational leaders early in 2021.⁹

- In 2020, 19% of participants said their service was 'always' able to meet demand, but in 2021, this plummeted to 6% (Figure 3.1). There were also increases in the proportion of workers who reported that their service could meet demand only 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'.

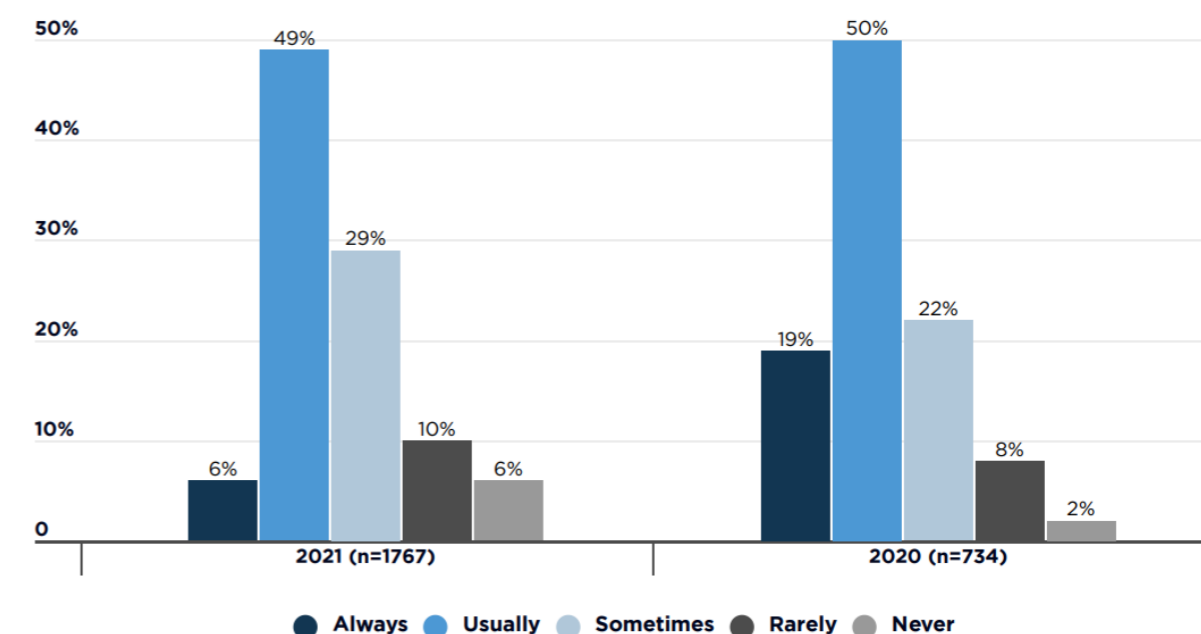
Lock downs had a big impact on our ability to meet demand. Reduced level of rescued food donations also impacted our ability to meet demand. Loss of volunteers due to Covid restrictions, significantly impacted our ability to meet demand
CEO, community development service, NSW

Lack of funding is a huge issue. We are unable to get staff and resources to cope with the community needs.
Frontline worker, child, youth and family service, Qld

Contracts have now been extended for 7 years without any increase in funding levels, so our service supports less and less people each year.
CEO, Ageing, disability and carer service, SA

- Capacity to 'always' meet demand was low across all jurisdictions, ranging from 4% among participants in the ACT to 8% among those working in NSW and NT. It is concerning that, in most jurisdictions, around a fifth of participants said their service could meet demand 'rarely' or 'never', and closer to a quarter in Tasmania at 24% (Table B.4).
- The proportion of participants who said their service could 'always' meet demand during 2021 was lowest for housing and homelessness (3%) and for migrant and multicultural services (2%). It was highest among those in services focused on financial support and counselling, and employment education and training, but even in these subsectors, only 1 in 9 said they could 'always' meet demand (11%) (see Figure B.4).
- Consistent with their falling ability to meet demand, 58% of participants reported increases in the numbers of clients their service was unable to support (Figure B.5).
- Increases in unmet need were much higher among participants in services focused on housing and homelessness, 76% of whom observed increased numbers of clients the service could not support. Unmet need was lower in employment, education and training focused services, but 40% of workers in these services reported increased numbers of clients they were unable to support (Figure B.5).

Figure 3.1 Ability to meet demand, 2020 and 2021



Often, it was difficult to meet needs because these needs had increased, and because there were limited options for referral or transition, especially into housing. The housing crisis, and lack of housing options, came up repeatedly, limiting capacity for services to move clients into more permanent arrangements, for example:

Our youth crisis accommodation services have been consistently full since the 2019 floods. We have over 200 young people that we are unable to assist...each year. With limited exit points, young people are staying in crisis accommodation for up to 18 months to 2 years.
CEO, housing and homelessness service, QLD

Other workers explained it was difficult to meet demands due to the difficulties of working in the context of the pandemic, for example:

High staff turnover and personal challenges for staff during COVID has reduced my team's capacity to meet demand. This has been combined with a huge increase in homelessness in our area which has increased the demand for support.
Frontline worker, Child, youth and family service, VIC

Others explained that funds did not extend to ensuring services were adequately staffed. This was reported by workers from across Australia and from all community service subsectors:

A lot more could be done if we had more funding in order to hire more staff. We sometimes have to limit what we can do because we don't have enough staff.
Policy officer, legal, advocacy or peak body, NT

Currently challenging to meet community needs in regional and remote areas due to lack of staffing.
CEO, child, youth and family service, WA

Limited funding often meant that services were unable to provide the support that their communities needed:

⁹ Cortis N and Blaxland, M (2021) *Meeting community needs in difficult times: experience of Australia's community sector*. Sydney: ACOSS.

Shortage of funding is a huge issue. We are unable to get staff and resources to cope with the community needs.

Frontline worker, child, youth and family service, Qld

Small amounts (in the context of government) of funding for the community sector could bring about huge improvements in outcomes for the people they service, and yet the penny pinching around funding for community organisations continues. Indexation doesn't keep up with costs. Services are underfunded for the outcomes demanded.

CEO, legal, advocacy or peak body, ACT

Some workers observed that additional short-term funding that had been provided earlier in the pandemic ended too soon, which in turn meant services encountered difficulties meeting ongoing community need:

Increased Commonwealth COVID-related funding gave us greater capacity, but it has finished now, so our capacity will decrease a lot going forward.

CEO, child, family and youth service, NT

Others were frustrated that funding restrictions placed limits on their ability to help people who present needing assistance, for example:

Within the scope of our funding we are able to meet demand, however more people would benefit from and need the support but do not meet eligibility criteria.

Team leader, health related service, TAS

Finally, some observed that it was only due to the extra unpaid work of staff that they came close to meeting community demand, for example:

The commitment of front line workers makes this possible, not the funding available. Workers are stretched beyond normal hours.

Frontline worker, child, youth and family service, Qld

Increase in need means staff are doing many hours volunteering

CEO, community development service, NSW

The commitment of front line workers makes this possible, not the funding available. Workers are stretched beyond normal hours.

Frontline worker, child, youth and family service, Qld

4. Strengthening Australia's COVID-19 recovery

The community sector has continued to make essential contributions to Australia's COVID-19 response, strengthening the national recovery from the pandemic in the process. Community organisations responded to the profound challenges presented by 2021 with innovation and resilience, determined to help as many people as possible from falling further behind.

Figure 4.1 shows that during 2021, almost half (46%) of survey participants said there were increases in how effectively their service was able to operate during COVID lockdowns, and over one third said their access to technology to engage with clients and communities increased in 2021. This builds on advances made to service delivery in 2020 where providers made massive changes to their models of engagement to meet demand earlier in the pandemic.¹⁰

Community sector workers and leaders provided numerous examples of the ways their service had contributed to the pandemic response, including in helping increase vaccination rates, promoting digital literacy and access to technology to support families with home learning, and providing emergency relief and financial support. Additionally, some respondents described how their service had continued to improve their models of remote service delivery to better provide mental health supports and address users' social isolation due to public health measures and mandated lockdowns. These and other improvements allowed services to provide clients with more service options as well as greater flexibility in accessing them.

We translated info on COVID and vaccines, [this] has helped immensely in our community, where vaccine rates are finally on the increase.

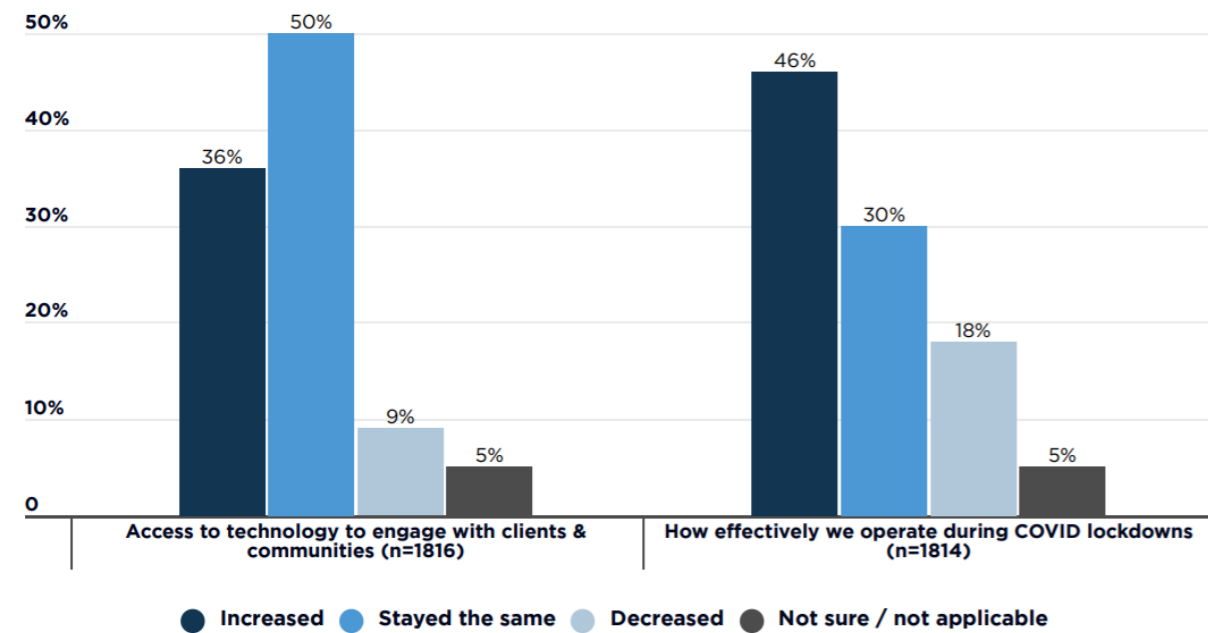
CEO, education, training and employment service, Vic

Tapping into the community 'bush telegraph' has increased vaccination rates, addressed misinformation and strengthened trust.

CEO, migrant and multicultural service, Vic

¹⁰ Cortis N and Blaxland, M (2021) *Meeting community needs in difficult times: experience of Australia's community sector*. Sydney: ACOSS

Figure 4.1 Changes in capacity to respond to the pandemic in 2021¹¹



Despite the effectiveness of the sector to recalibrate services to operate effectively during another year of COVID-19 and associated disruptions, it nonetheless faces ongoing structural challenges to best help people experiencing poverty, disadvantage and hardship. The short-term nature of COVID-19 funding for the sector presents a major source of insecurity for services, and for the workforce, as exemplified by the following survey response:

Our organisation received COVID-19 related funding to up our capacity, but that has caused negative flow-on effects as we now have to let go some of the staff brought in on fixed-term contracts, but COVID-19 isn't over.
Project officer, legal, advocacy and peak body services, VIC

Some services have had to meet community need by working in ways that are outside the remit of their funding. In addition, many commented that service activities have taken more time and resources to deliver due to COVID-19 protocols, with the further challenge of providing services remotely.

Trying to operate effectively during the pandemic while relying on short-term funding mechanisms creates other problems such as high turnover of staff, burnout and 'COVID fatigue' in the community sector workforce.

These survey responses highlight the fact that the national recovery from COVID-19 is still precarious. They point to the need for a coherent, overarching policy agenda to address increased levels of poverty and disadvantage in the community. Suitable levels of longer-term public investment in the community sector are required so it can help people rebuild their lives after two exhausting and gruelling years of dealing with COVID-19.

¹¹ Participants were asked: "So far in 2021, would you say these have increased, decreased, or stayed the same?" and presented with a series of statements including "Our service's access to the technology needed to engage with clients and communities" and "How effectively we operate during COVID lockdowns".

We've been able to support volunteer organisations by providing pandemic guides to operate their programs and training for volunteer managers. Our emergency volunteering platform was established to support spontaneous volunteering through bushfire, cyclone and COVID.

CEO, Community development service, WA

Many service users have increased their digital literacy to levels where they have higher confidence in accessing services via ZOOM, including telehealth and our services - especially during lockdowns.

Senior manager, Community development service, SA

To meet demand we had to adapt our service delivery to use a video conferencing application rather than face to face. This has worked well for most clients, and also allowed us to broaden our service delivery to clients outside of our region.

Frontline worker, child, family and youth service, QLD

Appendix A: Survey methods and participants

Survey methods

The findings in this report are drawn from the Australian Community Sector Survey 2021. The research was approved by UNSW Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HC190646). With the assistance of the Australian Council of Social Service and the state and territory Councils of Social Service, the survey was designed to capture information based on the experiences and perspectives of community sector staff and leaders.

The survey was conducted online using Qualtrics. As there is no national list of all relevant community sector organisations from which to draw a sample, we sought to reach respondents via COSS members, peak bodies, websites and relevant social media, to ensure the widest possible reach. The COSS network were asked to share the survey with organisations in their network, and to distribute the link to staff. In addition, we sought to encourage participation by offering an incentive in the form of an opportunity to go into the draw to win shopping vouchers. In total, 1828 community sector workers participated, however not all answered all questions, so responses are lower on some measures.

Material contained in this report relates to questions about demand, and capacity to meet demand only. The survey included a separate module of questions for organisational leaders only (CEOs and senior managers). These additional questions for leaders related to issues for the service overall, such as funding, advocacy and workforce issues. Further findings based on these topics will be reported in 2022.

Response analysis (role, gender, location, service type and organisational size) are provided in Appendix Table A.1 to Table A.3.

Table A.1 Participants' role and gender

	CEO (n=305)	Senior manager (n=208)	Team Leader or co-ordinator (n=285)	Frontline worker (n=623)	Communications, policy, project or research (n=163)	Administration, office support, facility support (n=78)	Other (incl. board member) (n=71)	All (n=1733)
Male	26%	21%	18%	17%	23%	12%	41%	20%
Female	72%	76%	79%	81%	72%	86%	55%	77%
Non-binary or other term	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	4%	1%
Prefer not to say	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

NOTE: Due to rounding, column totals may not add to 100%

Table A.2 Participants' locations

	NSW (n=335)	VIC (n=284)	QLD (n=722)	SA (n=124)	WA (n=119)	NT (n=67)	TAS (n=60)	ACT (n=117)	Total (n=1828)
Capital city	43%	51%	31%	57%	56%	34%	38%	75%	43%
Regional area	45%	32%	52%	19%	24%	16%	32%	11%	39%
Remote or Very Remote area	2%	3%	6%	8%	5%	42%	18%	3%	7%
All areas	10%	14%	12%	15%	15%	8%	12%	11%	12%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

NOTE: Due to rounding, column totals may not add to 100%

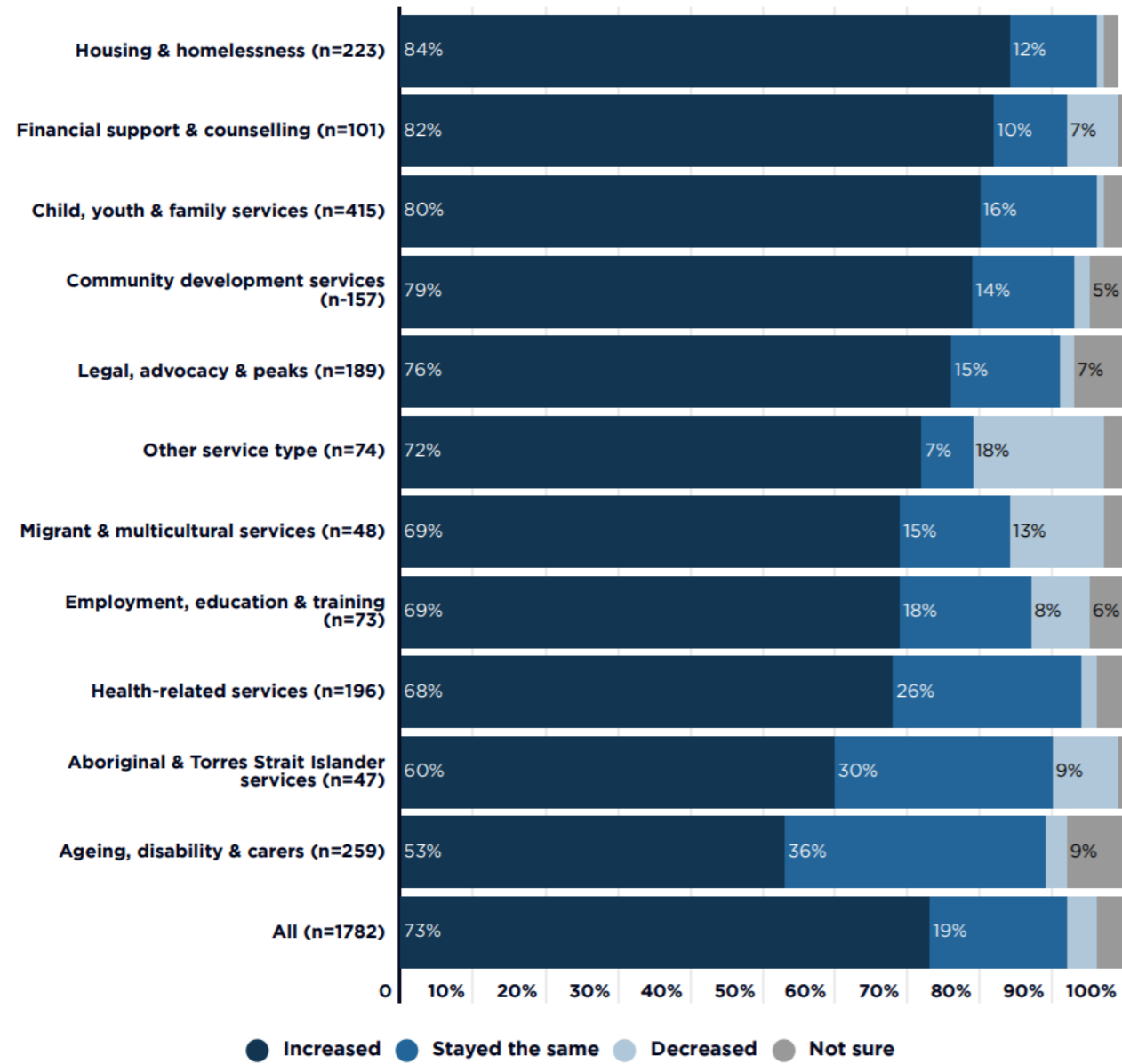
Table A.3 Participants' service type and size of organisation

	Small (<20 staff)	Medium (20 to <50 staff)	Large (50 or more staff)	Total
Ageing, disability and carers (n=266)	26%	14%	61%	100%
Health-related services (199)	29%	12%	59%	100%
Child, youth and family services (n=419)	28%	15%	57%	100%
Migrant and multicultural services (n=49)	22%	18%	59%	100%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (n=48)	29%	19%	52%	100%
Employment, education and training (n=75)	35%	15%	51%	100%
Housing and homelessness (n=230)	34%	26%	40%	100%
Financial support and counselling (n=104)	30%	17%	53%	100%
Legal, advocacy and peaks (n=191)	60%	23%	17%	100%
Community development services (n=159)	61%	11%	28%	100%
Other (n=83)	39%	12%	49%	100%
Total (n=1823)	36%	17%	48%	100%

NOTE: Due to rounding, row totals may not add to 100%

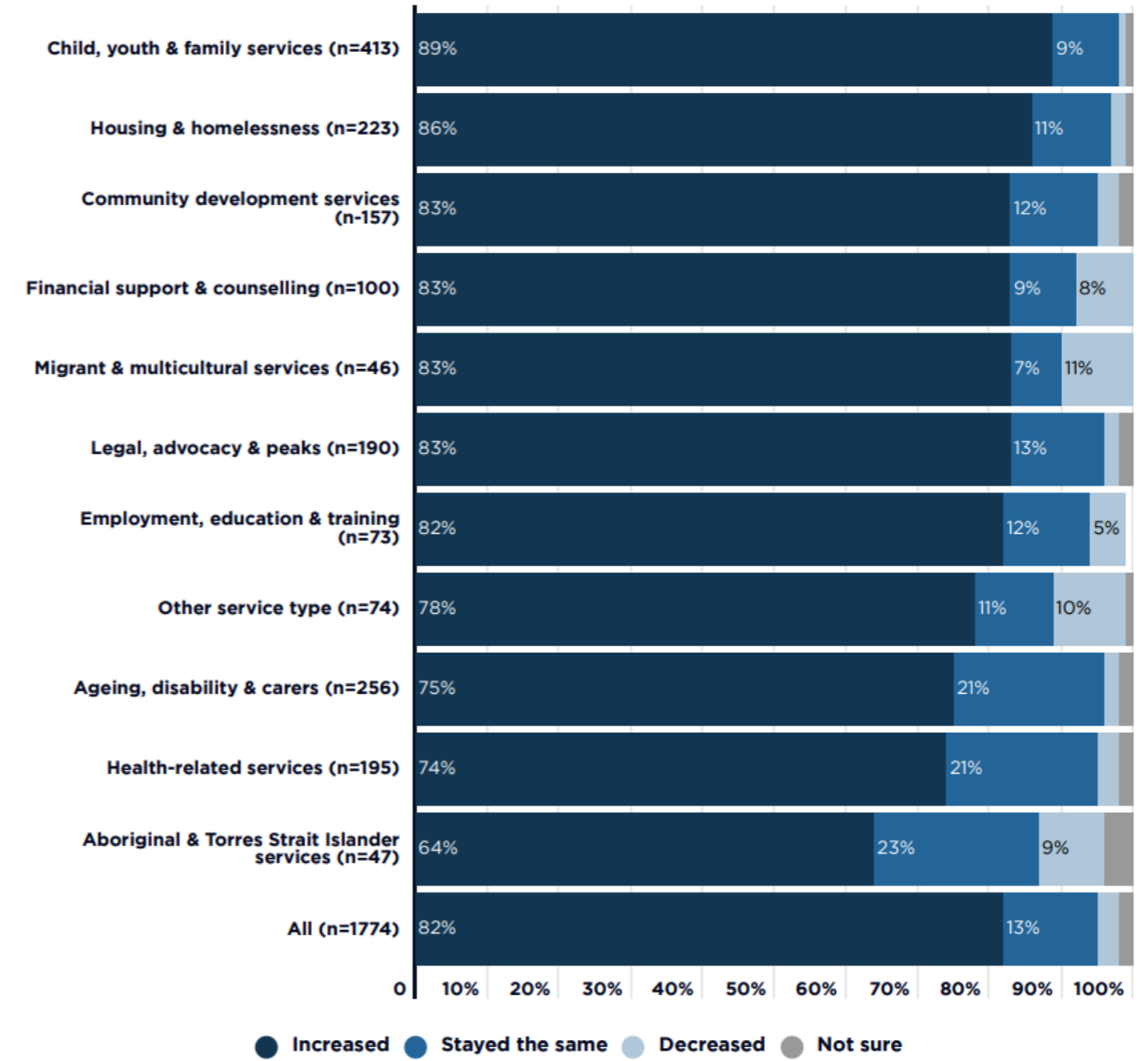
Appendix B: Supporting data

Figure B.1 Changes in poverty and disadvantage since the beginning of 2021



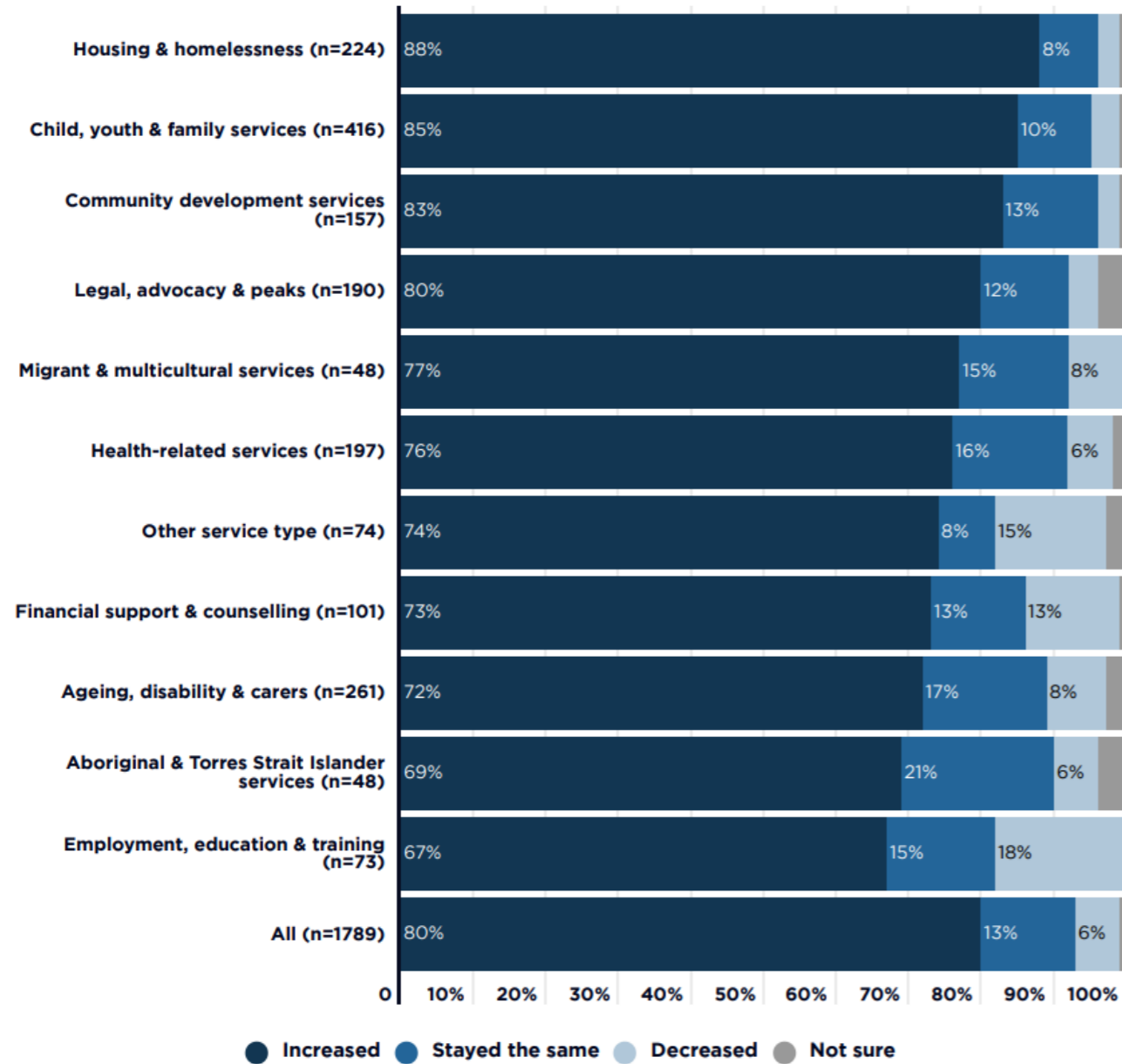
Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add up to 100%.

Figure B.2 Changes in complexity of need since the beginning of 2021



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add up to 100%.

Figure B.3 Changes in levels of demand for main service in 2021



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add up to 100%.

Table B.1 Whether “Level of demand in the community for what we provide” increased, decreased or stayed the same, by jurisdiction

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	NT	TAS	ACT	Total
Numbers									
Increased significantly	108	116	235	34	54	16	15	28	606
Increased	152	117	343	47	42	27	29	59	816
Stayed the same	37	23	97	18	11	15	9	16	226
Decreased	16	13	30	3	6	3	2	3	76
Decreased significantly	10	4	9	5	0	1	4	3	36
Not sure	7	5	6	7	2	1	0	3	31
Total	330	278	720	114	115	63	59	112	1791
Percentages									
Increased significantly	33%	42%	33%	30%	47%	25%	25%	25%	34%
Increased	46%	42%	48%	41%	37%	43%	49%	53%	46%
Stayed the same	11%	8%	13%	16%	10%	24%	15%	14%	13%
Decreased	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%
Decreased significantly	3%	1%	1%	4%	0%	2%	7%	3%	2%
Not sure	2%	2%	1%	6%	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

NOTE: Due to rounding, column totals may not add to 100%

Table B.2 Whether “Availability of funds for the work that we do” increased, decreased or stayed the same, by jurisdiction

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	NT	TAS	ACT	All
Numbers									
Increased	62	85	111	23	26	9	17	25	358
Stayed the same	160	115	375	47	58	25	31	54	865
Decreased	90	55	188	31	25	21	6	24	440
Not sure / not applicable	19	27	46	21	10	11	6	14	154
Total	331	282	720	122	119	66	60	117	1817
Percentages									
Increased	19%	30%	15%	19%	22%	14%	28%	21%	20%
Stayed the same	48%	41%	52%	39%	49%	38%	52%	46%	48%
Decreased	27%	20%	26%	25%	21%	32%	10%	21%	24%
Not sure / not applicable	6%	10%	6%	17%	8%	17%	10%	12%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

NOTE: Due to rounding, column totals may not add to 100%

Table B.3 Ability to meet demand during 2021, by jurisdiction

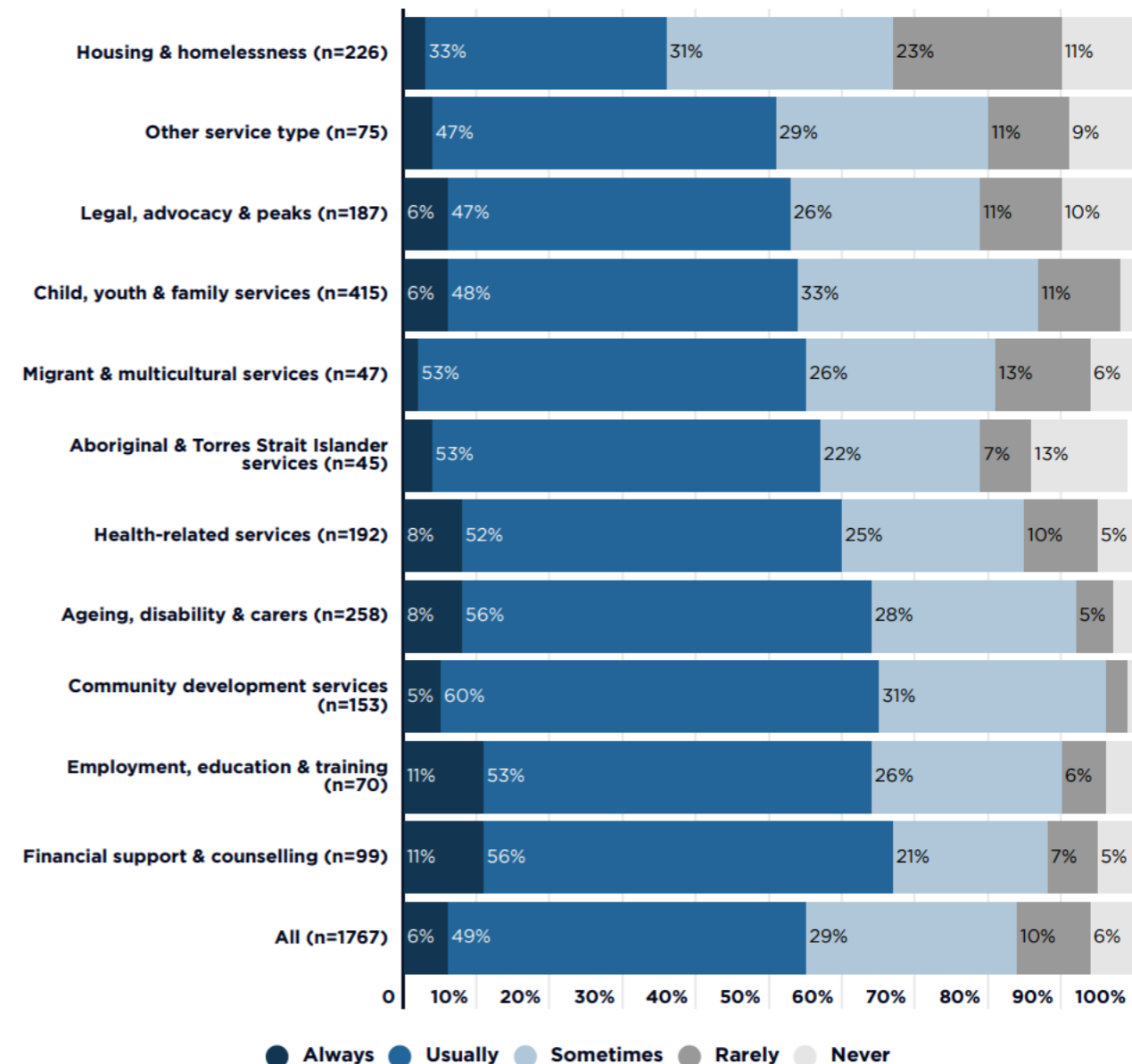
	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	NT	TAS	ACT	Total
Numbers									
Always able to meet demand	26	16	42	7	6	5	3	4	109
Usually able to meet demand	179	121	367	49	52	26	24	55	873
Sometimes able to meet demand	93	81	204	35	33	17	16	28	507
Rarely able to meet demand	21	43	70	6	16	7	7	11	181
Never able to meet demand	9	12	31	15	7	7	6	10	97
Total	328	273	714	112	114	62	56	108	1767
Percentages									
Increased significantly	33%	42%	33%	30%	47%	25%	25%	25%	34%
Increased	46%	42%	48%	41%	37%	43%	49%	53%	46%
Stayed the same	11%	8%	13%	16%	10%	24%	15%	14%	13%
Decreased	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%
Decreased significantly	3%	1%	1%	4%	0%	2%	7%	3%	2%
Not sure	2%	2%	1%	6%	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

NOTE: Due to rounding, column totals may not add to 100%

Table B.4 Whether organisational leaders agreed or disagreed with the statement “Funding enables us to meet demand”, by service type

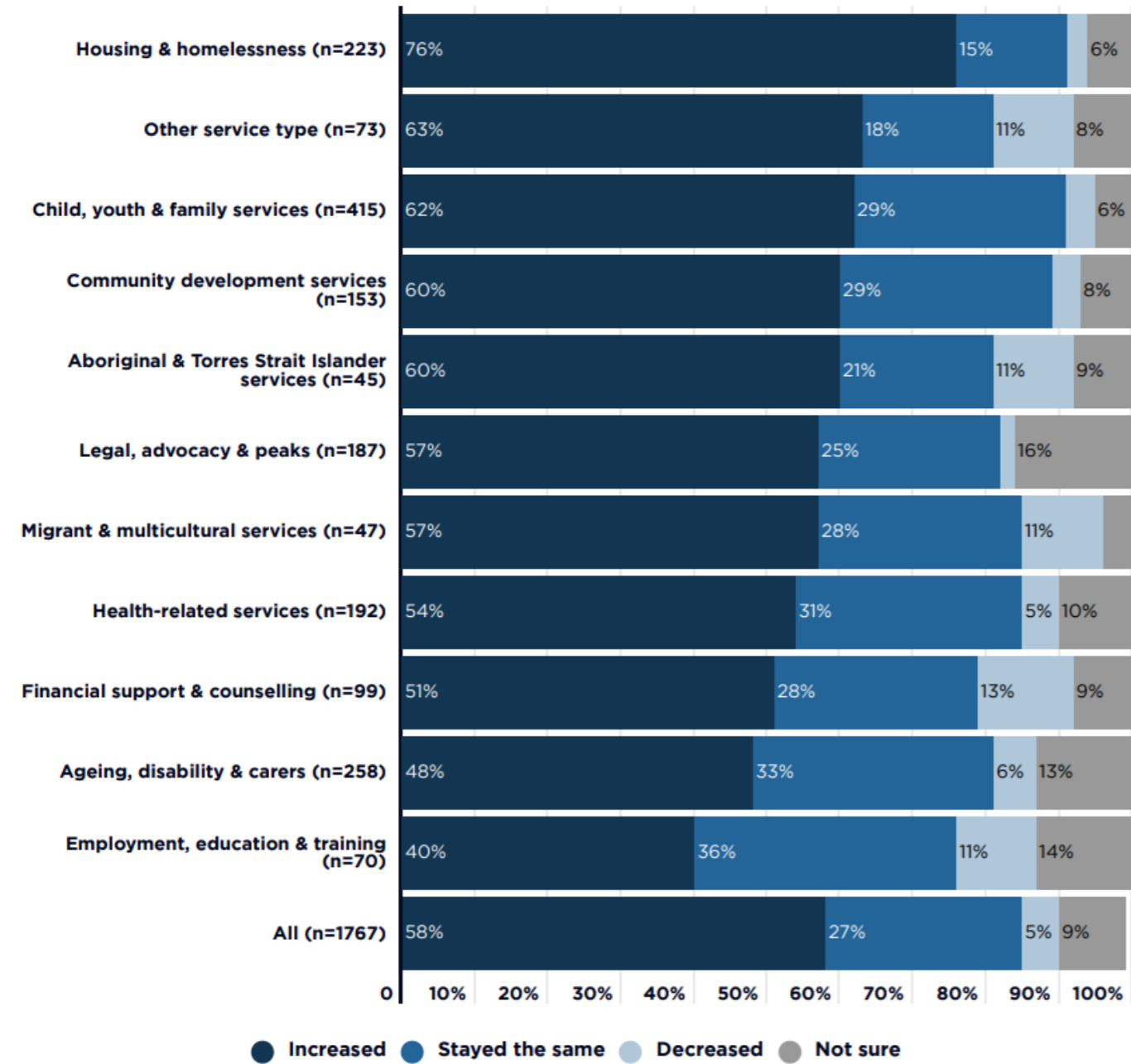
	Agree	Neutral / Unsure	Disagree	Total
Numbers				
Ageing, disability and carers	14	16	38	68
Health-related services	5	6	31	42
Child, youth and family services	10	19	82	111
Migrant and multicultural services	2	1	10	13
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services	1	2	4	7
Employment, education and training	6	5	11	22
Housing and homelessness	6	7	53	66
Financial support and counselling	4	1	13	18
Legal, advocacy and peaks	7	7	48	62
Community development services	7	14	48	69
Other service type	1	1	24	26
All	63	79	362	504
Percentages				
Ageing, disability and carers	21%	24%	56%	100%
Health-related services	12%	14%	74%	100%
Child, youth and family services	9%	17%	74%	100%
Migrant and multicultural services	15%	8%	77%	100%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services	14%	29%	57%	100%
Employment, education and training	27%	23%	50%	100%
Housing and homelessness	9%	11%	80%	100%
Financial support and counselling	22%	6%	72%	100%
Legal, advocacy and peaks	11%	11%	77%	100%
Community development services	10%	20%	70%	100%
Other service type	4%	4%	92%	100%
All	13%	16%	72%	100%

Figure B.4 Ability to meet demand in 2021, by main service type



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add up to 100%.

Figure B.5 Changes in numbers of clients services cannot support



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add up to 100%.



Photo by [Andre Ouellet](#) on [Unsplash](#)

