



Community perceptions on CCTV surveillance: Research report

City of Monash

17th August 2021



J W S R E S E A R C H



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Background, objectives and methodology



Background and objectives

The City of Monash operates and manages fixed closed-circuit television, or CCTV cameras, at 17 Council owned sites. The role of these CCTV surveillance systems is primarily to ensure public safety, more effectively manage risk and/or to protect Council assets.

Following a number of reported incidents in and around the Oakleigh Activity Centre, the State Member of Parliament for Oakleigh, together with Victoria Police, has requested the installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) in the Oakleigh Activity Centre, including live monitoring by Oakleigh Police.

- The State Government is willing to contribute \$50,000 for the purchase and installation of CCTV cameras.
- Additionally, it is requested that Council funds and conducts ongoing maintenance of the cameras. There is also an expectation of a live feed allowing for real-time monitoring by Victoria Police.

This request sits outside of Council's usual use of CCTV cameras in that it will be monitored by Oakleigh Police and is specifically used to monitor people's activity.

Given that there are many different views about CCTV circulating within the community, Council requires research to obtain an understanding of what the Monash community think about this proposal.

Specifically, the research was designed to investigate:

- Awareness of the existing use of CCTV in the City of Monash.
- Residents' perspectives on the use of CCTV as a tool to assist with community safety.
- The extent to which real-time monitoring and surveillance by Victoria Police and on-going funding of the maintenance of the cameras by Council is appropriate.
- The extent to which the community is comfortable accessing public spaces and areas with real-time CCTV monitoring and/or if they feel an invasion of their privacy.
- The extent to which residents support or oppose the installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre.



Research methodology

Quantitative Telephone Survey

A representative telephone survey of n=500 residents of the City of Monash

- The survey comprised n=100 residents of Oakleigh with the remainder from the rest of the City of Monash.
- 5 minutes in length.
- Survey quotas on age and gender, and weighting applied at the analysis stage to actual age and gender proportions based on ABS census data.
- The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=500 is +/- 4.4% at the 95% confidence level.
- Differences of +/-1% for net scores are due to rounding.
- JWS Research developed and administered the survey and conduct analysis and reporting.
- Fieldwork was conducted from 15th to the 18th July 2021.

Quantitative Online survey

An opt-in online survey of n=486 interested people

- 5 minutes in length.
- The survey was made available to people to complete, including on the Shape Monash website. Both residents and non-residents of the City of Monash were allowed to complete the survey.
- The City of Monash developed the survey (using the telephone survey as the core structure) and administered the survey.
- JWS Research undertook analysis and reporting.
- The survey was open from the 16th July to the 6th August 2021.

Note: Where results in a demographic cohort differ significantly from the average (at the 95% confidence interval), these are shown in green or red text, representing significantly higher or lower results.



Executive summary



Executive summary

Few residents are aware that there is CCTV surveillance in the City of Monash

A quarter of the residents (26%) of the City of Monash are aware that there is a Council operated CCTV surveillance system in the City of Monash.

- This is *significantly higher* among respondents to the opt-in only survey (56%) suggesting that some respondents here have participated in the survey because they have a particular interest or knowledge on the topic.

Very few residents (5%) are aware of the proposal to install CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (with monitoring of people as well as assets). This is higher in the opt-in survey (25%).

Overwhelming agreement that CCTV assists with community safety

Nine in 10 residents (91%) agree that CCTV is an appropriate tool to assist with community safety (including 60% who strongly agree).

- Among respondents to the opt-in survey, agreement is lower (71%), but remains in the vast majority.

There is also majority agreement that:

- It is appropriate to use Council assets and resources such as CCTV cameras for the real-time monitoring

and surveillance of people movement, activity and behaviour by Victoria Police (75% agree, 65% in the opt-in survey).

- Council funding the ongoing maintenance of the State Government funded cameras, estimated to cost between \$2,500-\$5,000 per annum, is appropriate (71% agree, 62% in the opt-in survey).

Most are not concerned about invasion of privacy or feeling uncomfortable

Around a third (or fewer) residents agree that:

- Real-time monitoring of CCTV in public areas would invade my privacy (29% agree, 33% in the opt-in survey).
- I would feel uncomfortable accessing public spaces and areas with real-time monitoring of CCTV (23% agree, 31% in the opt-in survey).

Clear and strong support for the installation of CCTV in the Oakleigh Activity Centre

Most residents (78%) support the proposal, including 46% who 'strongly' support it.

- Similarly, there is majority support among respondents to the opt-in online survey (68%), but with higher levels of 'strong' support (60%).



Detailed findings

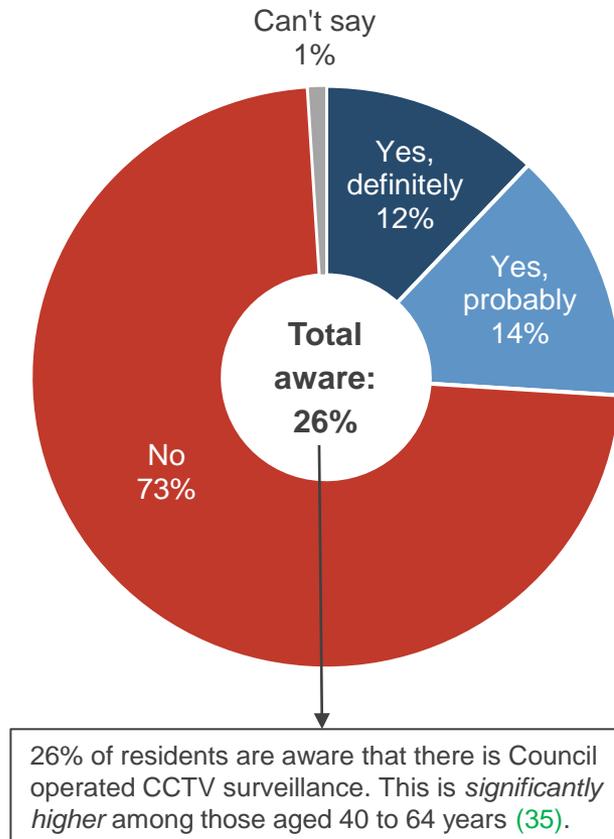


**Representative
telephone survey
findings**

A quarter of residents are aware that Council operates CCTV surveillance, the majority remain unaware



Awareness of Council operated CCTV surveillance in the City of Monash (%)



Significantly *higher* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

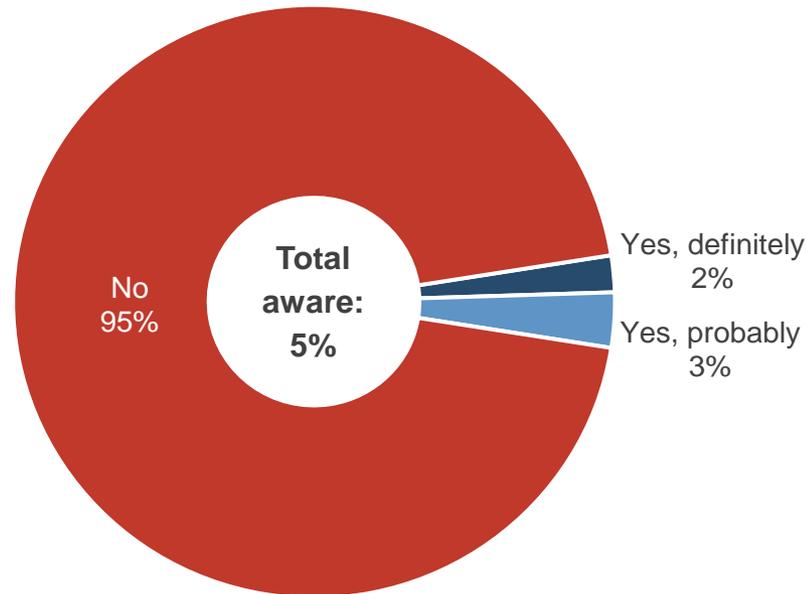
Q1. Monash City Council currently operates and manages fixed closed-circuit television, or CCTV cameras at 17 Council owned sites. The main role of these CCTV cameras is to protect Council assets. Before today, were you aware that there is a Council operated CCTV surveillance system in the City of Monash?

Base: All respondents in the representative telephone survey (n=500).

There is negligible awareness of the proposed installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre



Awareness of the proposal to install CCTV cameras in Oakleigh Activity Centre (%)

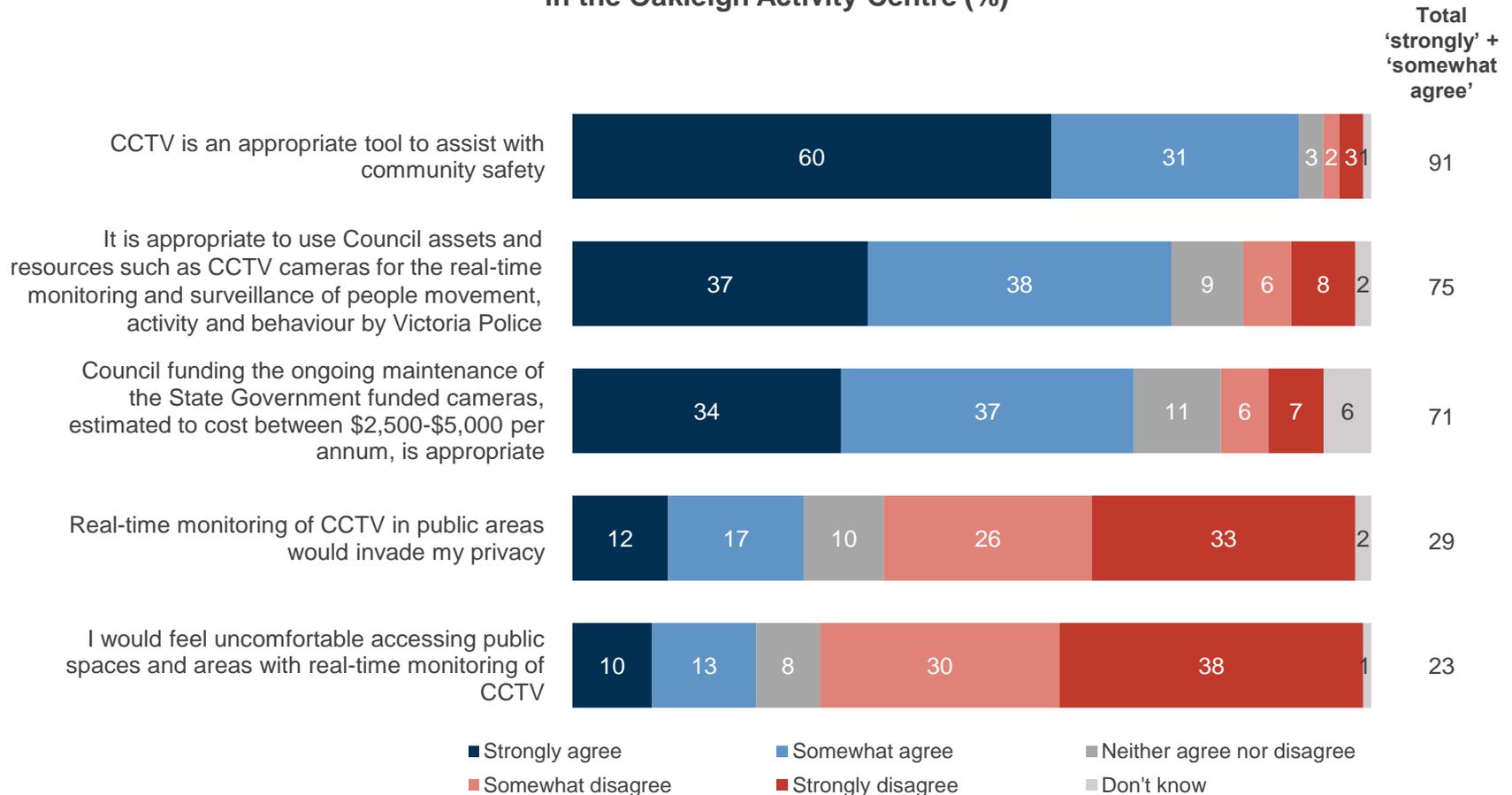


Q2. The State Government has offered to contribute \$50,000 for the purchase and installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre to include the monitoring of people as well as physical assets. There is also an expectation of a live feed allowing for real-time monitoring and surveillance by Victoria Police. Additionally, it is requested that Council funds and conducts ongoing maintenance of the cameras. As there are different views in the community about CCTV, we want to see what the Monash community thinks about this possible change. Before today, had you heard of the proposal to install CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre?
 Base: All respondents in the representative telephone survey (n=500).

Residents overwhelmingly agree that CCTV is an appropriate tool to promote community safety



Agreement with statements regarding installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%)

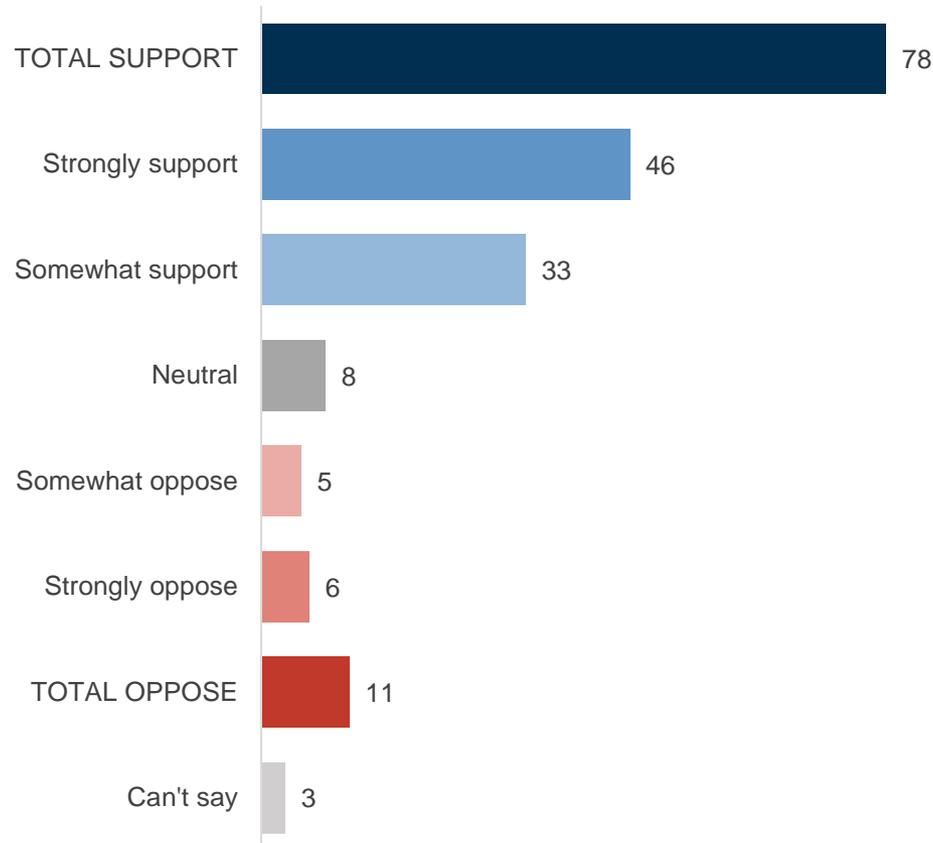


Q3. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements in relation to the installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre.
 Base: All respondents in the representative telephone survey (n=500).

There is strong support for the installation of CCTV in the Oakleigh Activity Centre



Support for installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%)

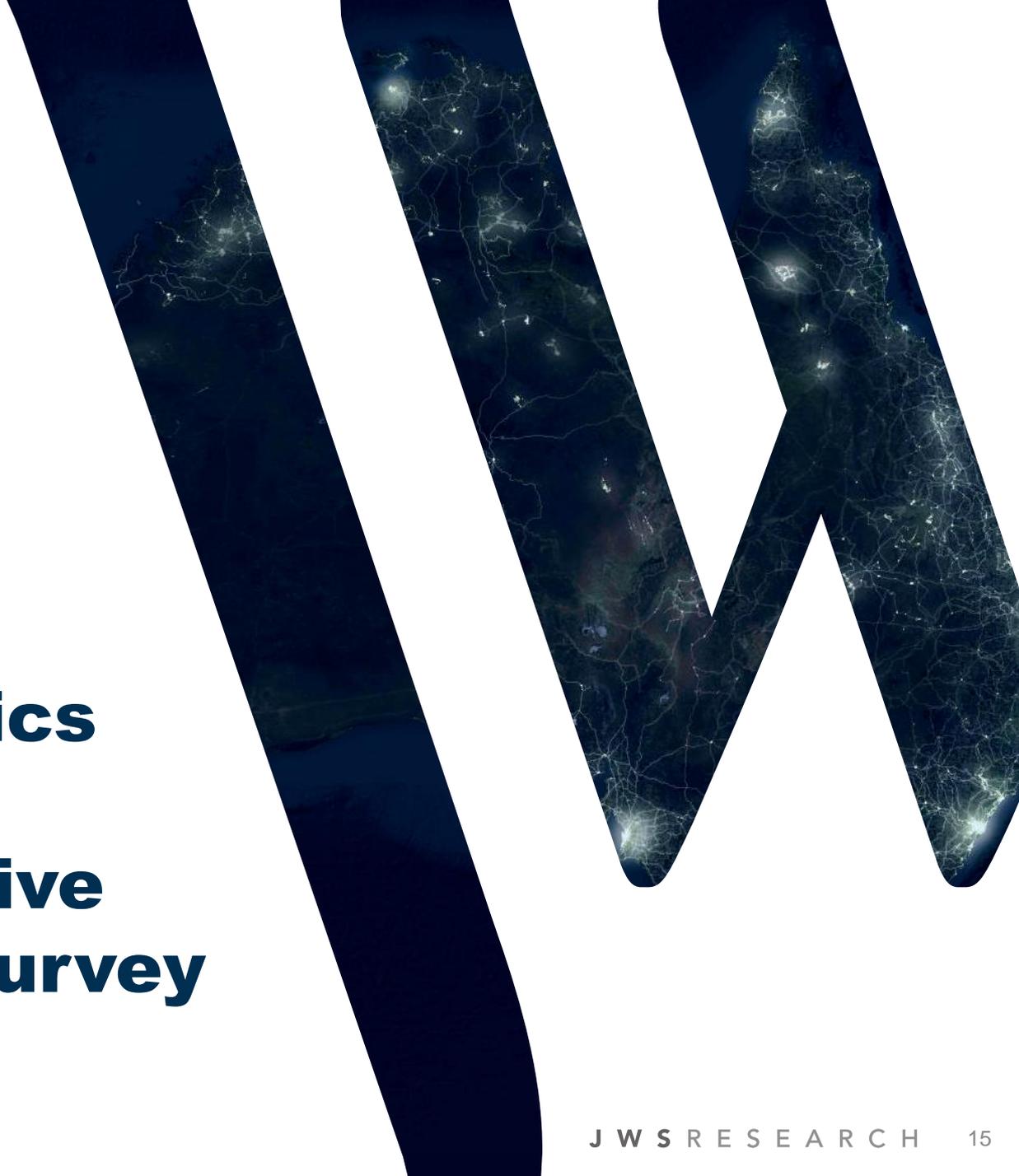


Support for the installation of CCTV cameras does not differ by demographic cohort



Support for installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%) by demographic segments

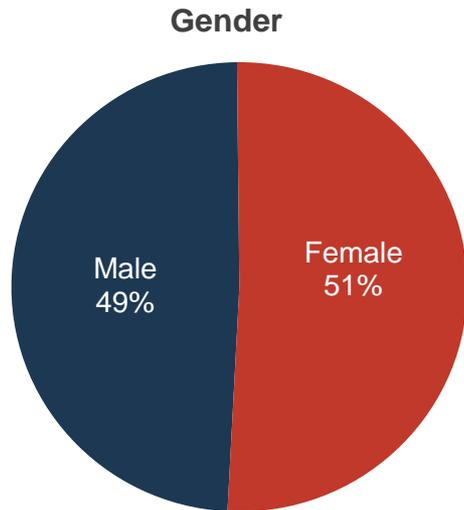
	Total (n=500)	Men (n=247)	Women (n=253)	Under 40 years (n=116)	40 to 64 years (n=238)	65+ years (n=146)	CALD (n=220)
Total support (‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat’)	78	76	80	75	81	79	80
Total oppose (‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat’)	11	11	10	10	11	10	10



**Demographics
for
representative
telephone survey**



Demographics: Gender and age



Age	%
18-29 years	16
30-39 years	26
40-49 years	14
50-59 years	14
60-64 years	9
65+ years	21

The data set has been weighted to reflect the demographic makeup (by age and gender) of the population of the City of Monash.

S1. Please indicate your gender.

S2. How old are you?

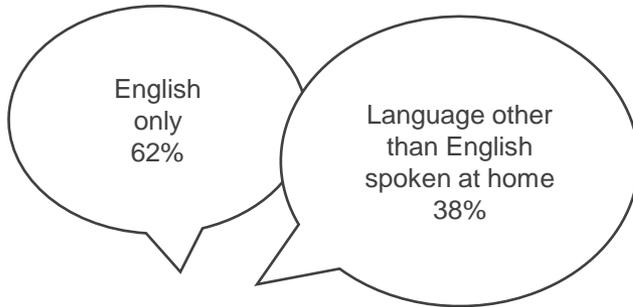
Base: All respondents in the representative telephone survey (n=500).

Demographics: Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people



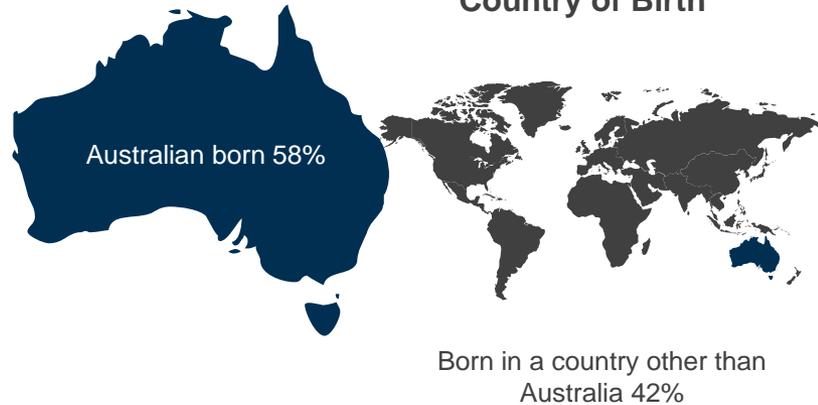
CALD: 48%

Languages



• Chinese	12%	<i>Note: This is not an exhaustive list of languages mentioned.</i>
• Greek	6%	
• Hindi	4%	
• Italian	2%	
• German	1%	
• Russian	1%	
• Vietnamese	1%	

Country of Birth



• China	9%	<i>Note: This is not an exhaustive list of countries mentioned.</i>
• India	6%	
• Other Asian	6%	
• United Kingdom	4%	
• Greece	2%	
• Other European	1%	
• New Zealand	1%	

D1. What languages, other than English, are spoken regularly in your home?
 D2. Could you please tell me which country you were born in?
 Base: All respondents in the representative telephone survey (n=500).

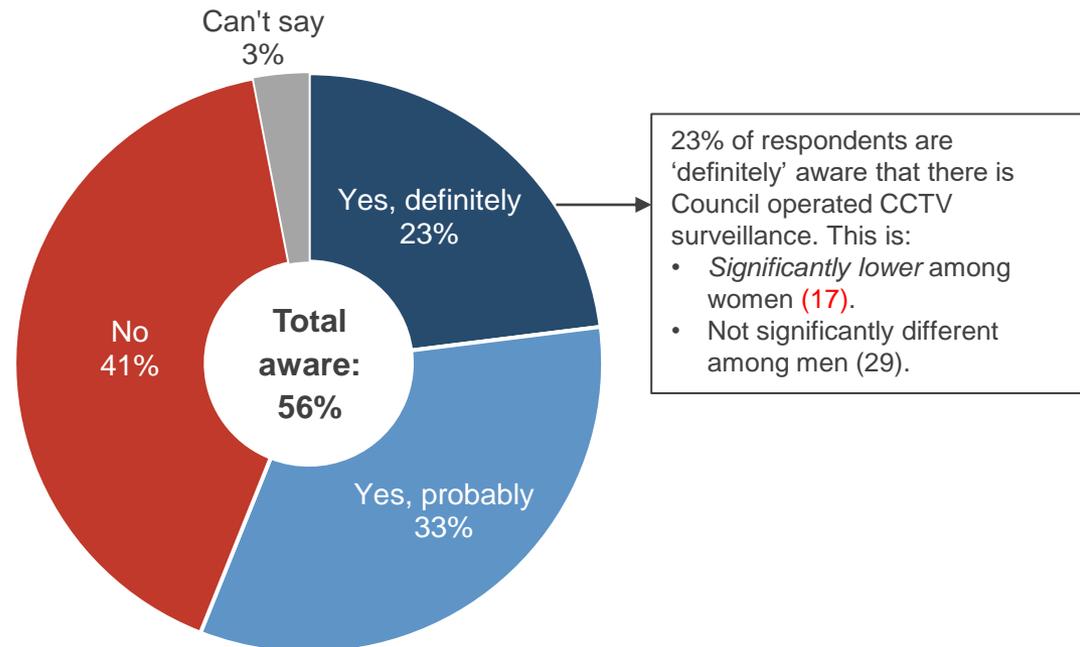


**Opt-in online
survey findings**

More than half of respondents are aware of the Council operated CCTV surveillance within their city



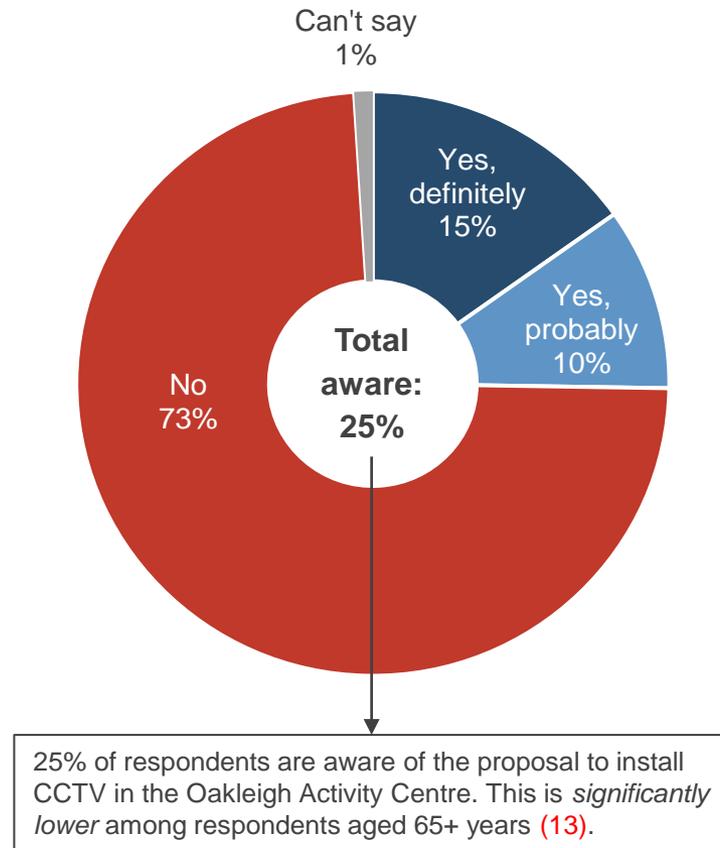
Awareness of Council operated CCTV surveillance in the City of Monash (%)



A quarter of respondents to the opt-in survey are aware of the proposed installation of CCTV cameras



Awareness of the proposal to install CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%)



Significantly lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

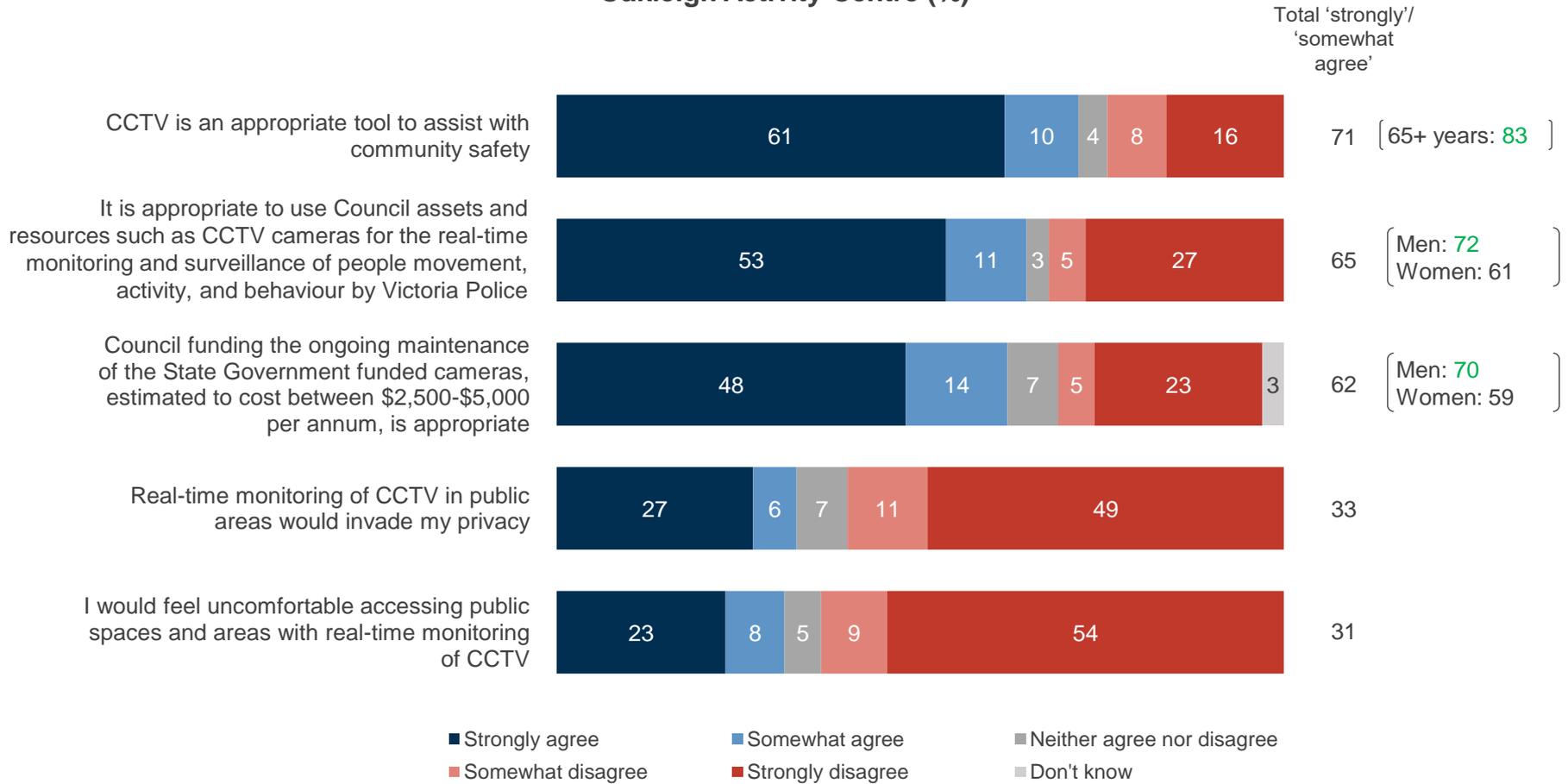
Q2. Before today, had you heard of the proposal to install CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre?

Base: All respondents in the opt-in online survey (n=484).

Respondents feel CCTV is an appropriate tool to ensure safety, most would not feel uncomfortable with monitoring



Agreement with statements regarding installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%)



Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence interval .

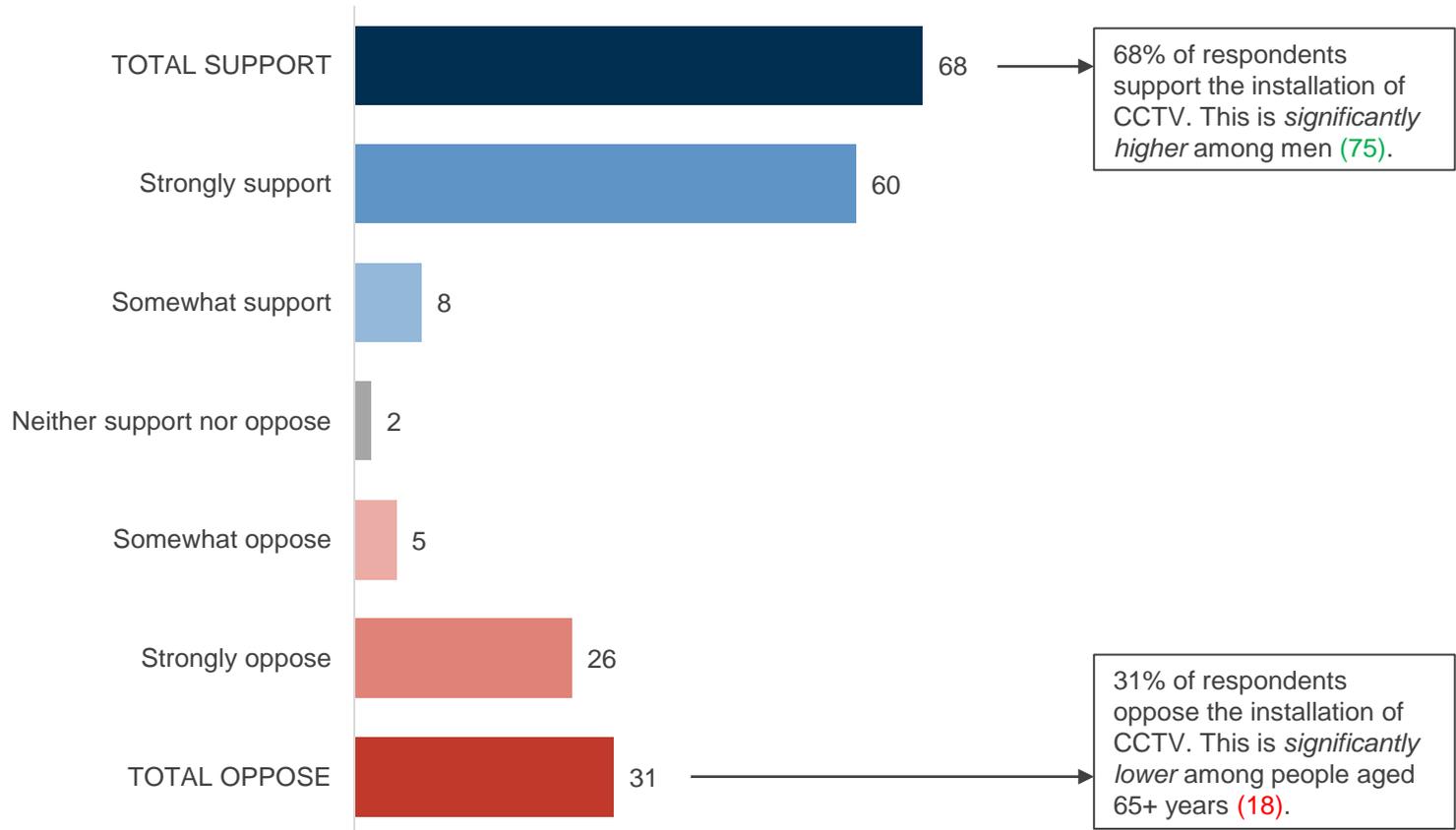
Q3. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements in relation to the installation of CCTV cameras.

Base: All respondents in the opt-in online survey (n=479-486).

Majority support for the proposed installation of CCTV is even higher among men



Support for installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%)



Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
 Q4. On balance, do you support or oppose the installation of CCTV in the Oakleigh Activity Centre?
 Base: All respondents in the opt-in online survey (n=487).

In the opt-in online survey, support for the installation of CCTV cameras is significantly higher among men



Support for installation of CCTV cameras in the Oakleigh Activity Centre (%) by demographic segments

	Total (n=487)	Men (n=239)	Women (n=206)	Under 40 years (n=182)	40 to 64 years (n=229)	65+ years (n=72)	CALD (n=147)
Total support (‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat’)	68	75	65	63	69	78	72
Total oppose (‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat’)	31	24	33	36	30	18	26

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval .

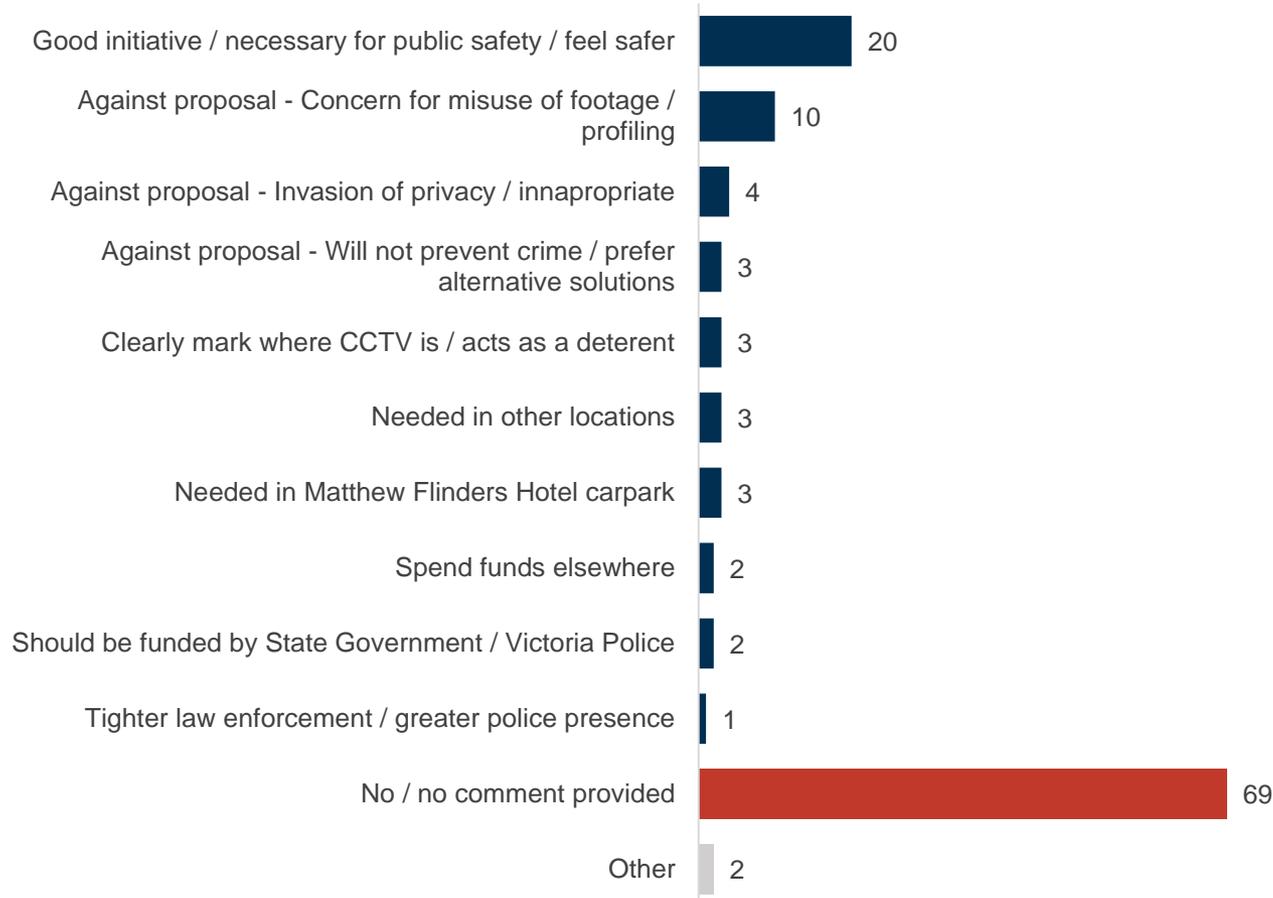
Q4. On balance, do you support or oppose the installation of CCTV in the Oakleigh Activity Centre?

Base: All respondents in the opt-in online survey (n=487).

A minority of respondents had further comments on CCTV in public areas



Other comments provided on CCTV in public areas (%)



Select verbatim comments demonstrating further feedback on CCTV in public areas



Other comments provided on CCTV in public areas Select verbatim comments

“Safety of the public is of the utmost priority, and these cameras are necessary.”

“Safety is in my view, more important than a right to privacy. If you’re doing nothing wrong, you’ve got nothing to hide!”

“In light of recent crime rates, stabbing, etc., live feed cameras are a great idea and an excellent resource to help police and the community safety.”

“I would rather prefer to use that money to provide safety in isolated areas such as rail stations (at night) and car parks (at night).”

“In the last 18 months, I refuse to visit Oakleigh CBD, specifically Eaton Mall. I am sick of the trouble, the fights and the people that hang around the area. I do not feel comfortable bringing my family to an area which I once thought was fantastic.”

“The money would be better spent on social programs that actually help the community rather than monitor. When people have their needs met, crime goes down. Education, health (both physical and mental), and social security should be the priority over increased policing.”

“It is a significant step to override people’s privacy. The maintenance cost is quite significant to monitor assets.”

“CCTV can be used to racially profile and victimise citizens. It can have severe negative effects on the experience of marginalised people within their communities – especially if they are targeted by police despite doing nothing wrong. This can particularly be the case if groups of people of a particular ethnic group are gathered – often, people of colour in such groups are seen as suspicious, whereas groups of white people would not be viewed in the same way.”

“CCTV in public areas is an absolute must. Council are ultimately responsible for council areas, making sure any area covered by CCTV can only be a good thing for the public and valuable tool for local police. Police are under resourced, and I believe under appreciated by Council and members of the public. Oakleigh Mall is a beautiful public space and to have an opportunity to ensure the area is even safer should be grasped with both hands.”

“No evidence that CCTV in public spaces reduces crime. Studies have shown increases in crime after installation of public space CCTV systems, minor displacement of crime and a host of problems with monitoring, maintenance and system upgrades. Once installed, systems are rarely removed, necessitating a long-term financial commitment. Many crime prevention outcomes are best achieved through a combination of measures.”

“Given the availability of modern technology for the benefit of society, on balance, it would be foolish to ignore its benefit for the sake of privacy – what privacy, everything is public – private things are done in the comfort of your own home.”

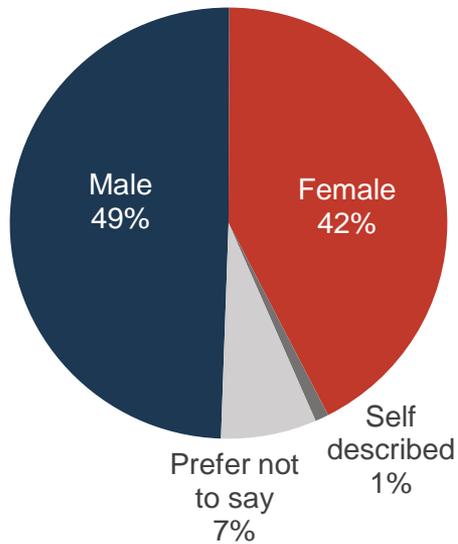


Demographics for opt-in online survey



Demographics: Gender and age

Gender



Age	%
Under 18 years	<0.5%
18-29 years	12
30-39 years	26
40-49 years	19
50-59 years	20
60-64 years	9
65+ years	15

Suburb	%
Oakleigh	37
Elsewhere in the City of Monash	51
Outside the City of Monash	12

Q6 What is your gender?

Q7. How old are you?

Q8. What is your suburb?

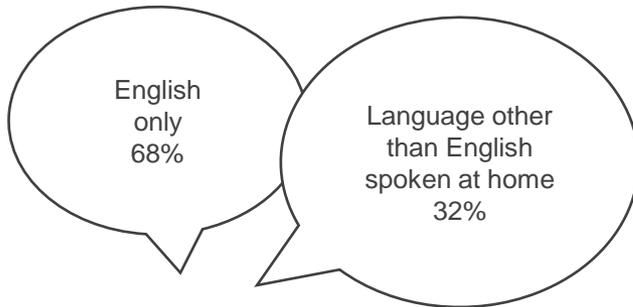
Base: All respondents in the opt-in online survey (n=482-486).

Demographics: Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people



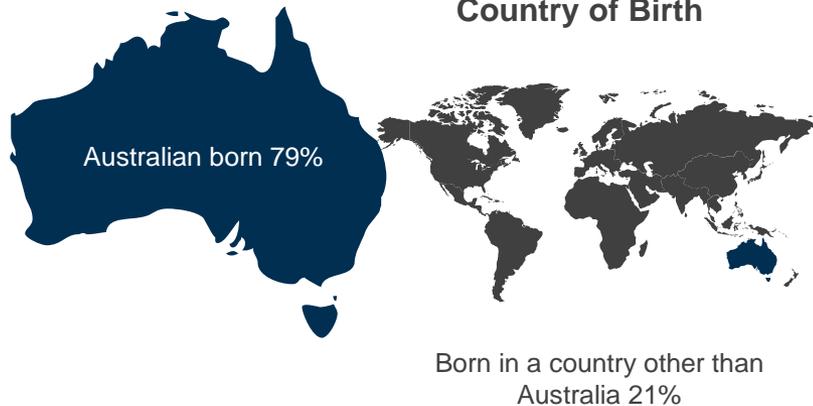
CALD: 30%

Languages



• Greek	10%	<i>Note: This is not an exhaustive list of languages mentioned.</i>
• Hindi	3%	
• Chinese	2%	
• Italian	2%	
• Sinhalese	2%	
• Vietnamese	2%	

Country of Birth



• Sri Lanka	4%	<i>Note: This is not an exhaustive list of countries mentioned.</i>
• New Zealand	3%	
• United Kingdom	3%	
• India	3%	
• Greece	3%	
• China	2%	
• Malaysia	2%	
• Vietnam	1%	

Q9. What languages, other than English, are spoken regularly in your home?
 Q10. Please tell us which country you were born in?
 Base: All respondents in the pt-in online survey (n=486).

**THERE ARE
OVER 200,000
PEOPLE
IN THE CITY OF
MONASH...**

**FIND OUT
WHAT THEY'RE
THINKING.**



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