

RESEARCH DESIGN

Woolcott Research was commissioned by the IPC to investigate awareness of privacy, information access and data sharing rights amongst the general public of NSW.

A phone and online survey amongst n=800 NSW residents aged 18+ years was conducted in February 2021.

Quotas were set by methodology (telephone interviewing/online), location (Sydney/Regional NSW), gender and age; data was post-weighted by location, gender and age to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

Where possible, this report compares results from the 2014 and 2016 omnibus studies, as well as the 2018 and 2020 mixed mode survey.

Significant differences in results at the 95% confidence level are shown as follows:

- Results from 2022 that are significantly higher or lower than the total are shown in **GREEN** or **RED** respectively
- Differences between the most recent comparative year and 2022 results are denoted by asterisks (*)

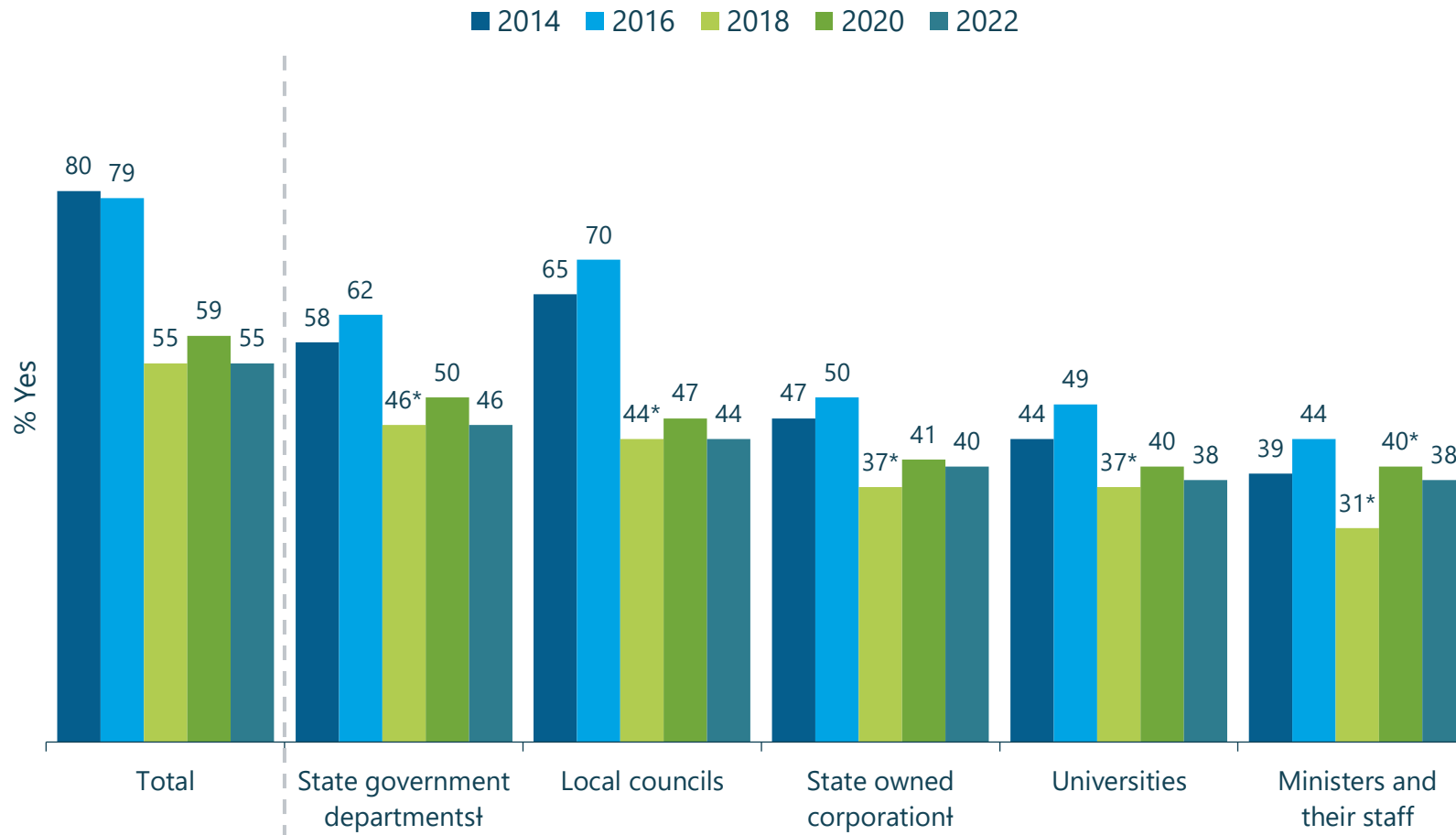


INFORMATION ACCESS





AWARENESS OF RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION UNDER NSW ACCESS TO INFORMATION LAW



- Awareness of the right to access information was fairly consistent with 2020, with just over half of respondents being aware of their right at one or more of the agencies listed.

Q15. Did you know, under NSW access to information law, you have a right to access information held by the following agencies?†

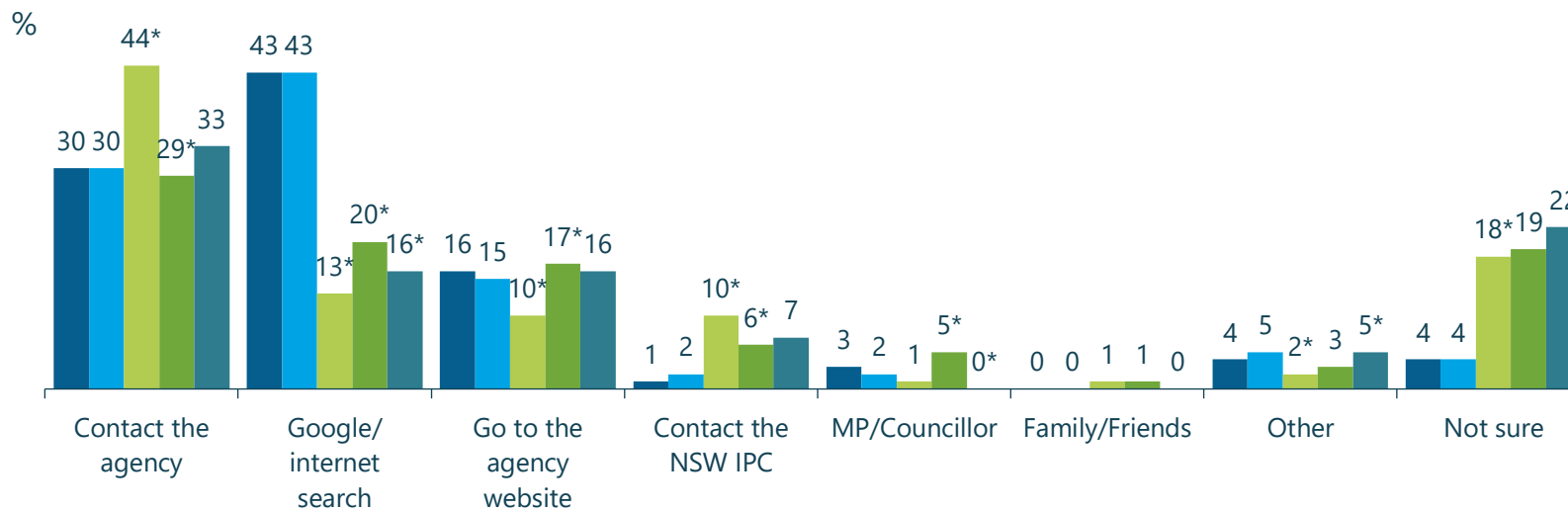
Base: All respondents (2014 n=340, 2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)

† Slight wording change in 2020



FIRST OPTION TO ACCESS INFORMATION HELD BY AGENCIES

■ 2014 ■ 2016 ■ 2018 ■ 2020 ■ 2022

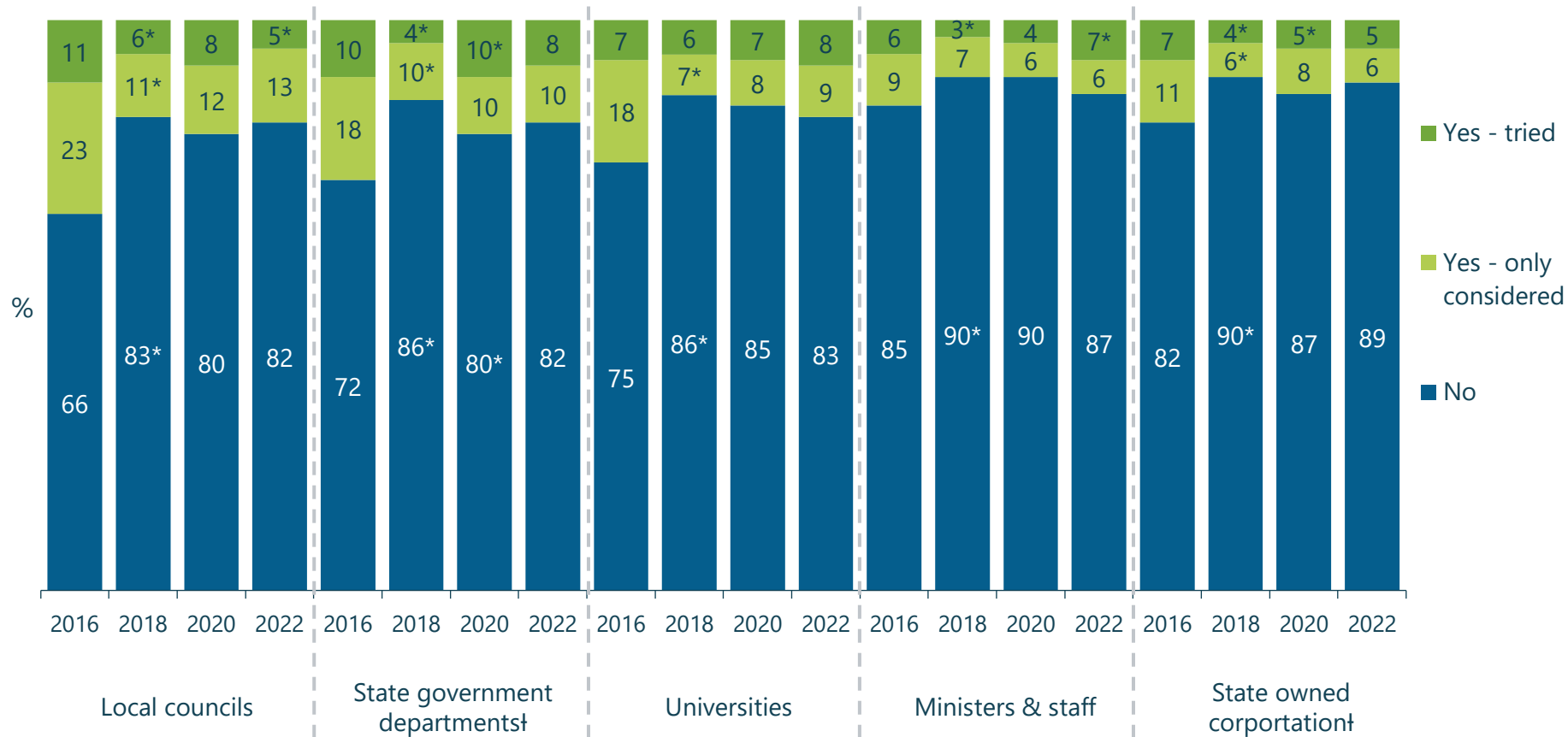


- One third of respondents reported that they would contact the agency they wanted information from, however internet searches and agency websites continued to be commonly cited sources of assistance.

Q16. If you wanted to access information held by agencies, what would you do to get it? (SR - Unprompted)
Base: All respondents (2014 n=340, 2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)



CONSIDERATION AND ATTEMPTS TO ACCESS INFORMATION

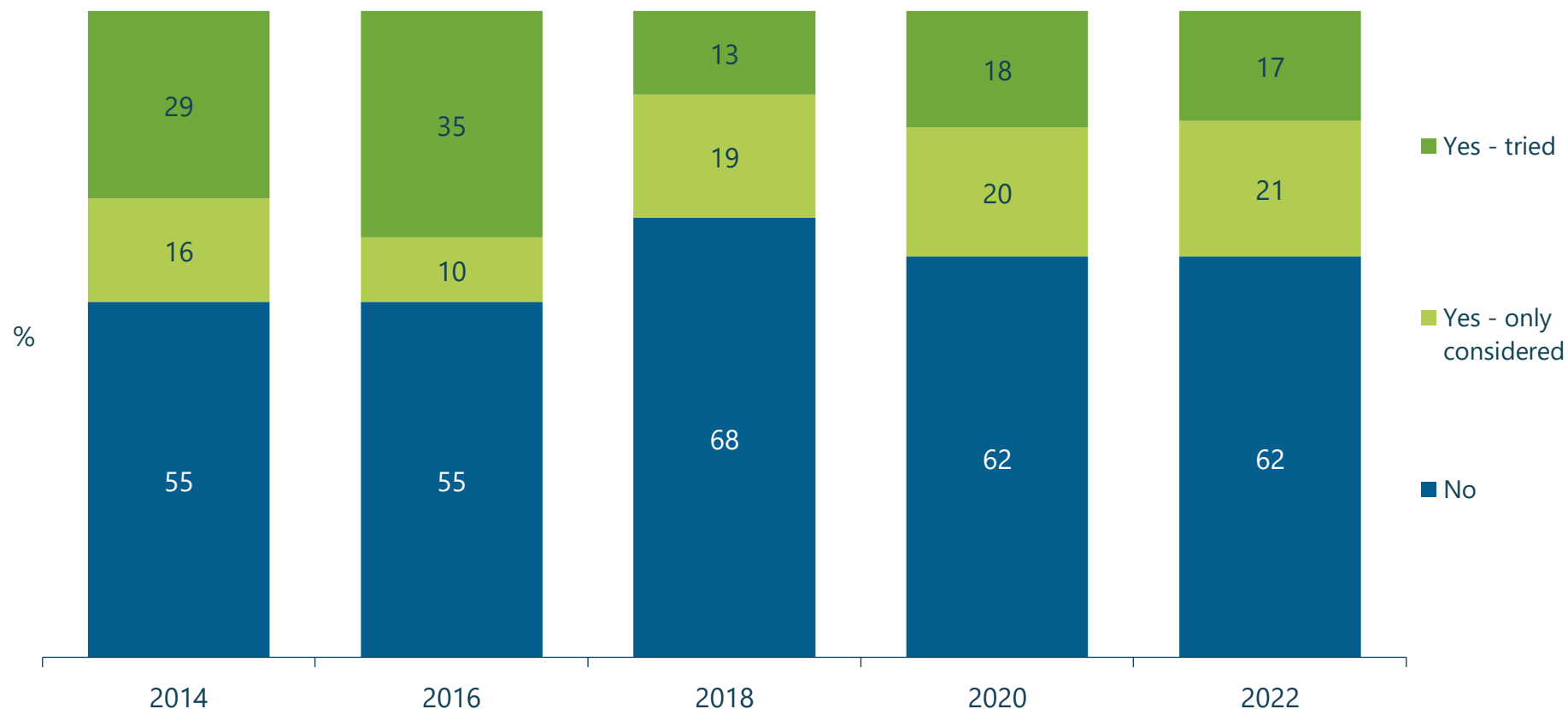


- Incidence of trying to access information held by local councils decreased slightly in 2022, while the proportion of respondents who tried to access information held by Ministers and staff increased slightly.

Q17. Have you ever considered accessing information held by...?
IF YES: And have you tried to access information held by... in the last year?
 Base: All respondents (2014 n=340, 2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)
 † Slight wording change in 2020
 Please note: Percentages have been amended so they add to 100%



TOTAL CONSIDERATION AND ATTEMPTS TO ACCESS INFORMATION



- Total consideration and attempts to access information were consistent with previous years.

Q17. Have you ever considered accessing information held by...?

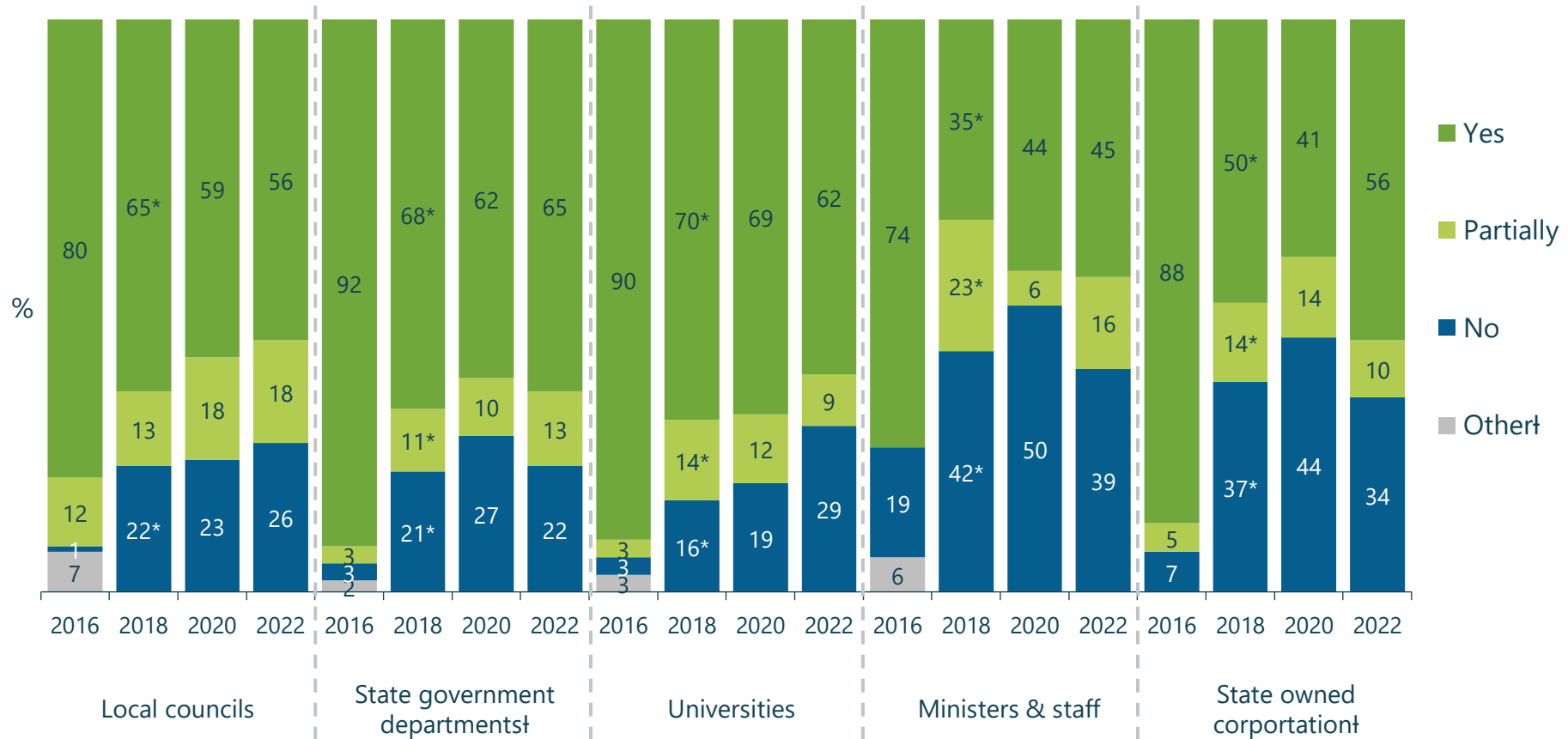
IF YES: And have you tried to access information held by... in the last year?

Base: All respondents (2014 n=340, 2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)

Please note: Percentages have been amended so they add to 100%



SUCCESS IN ATTEMPTING TO ACCESS INFORMATION

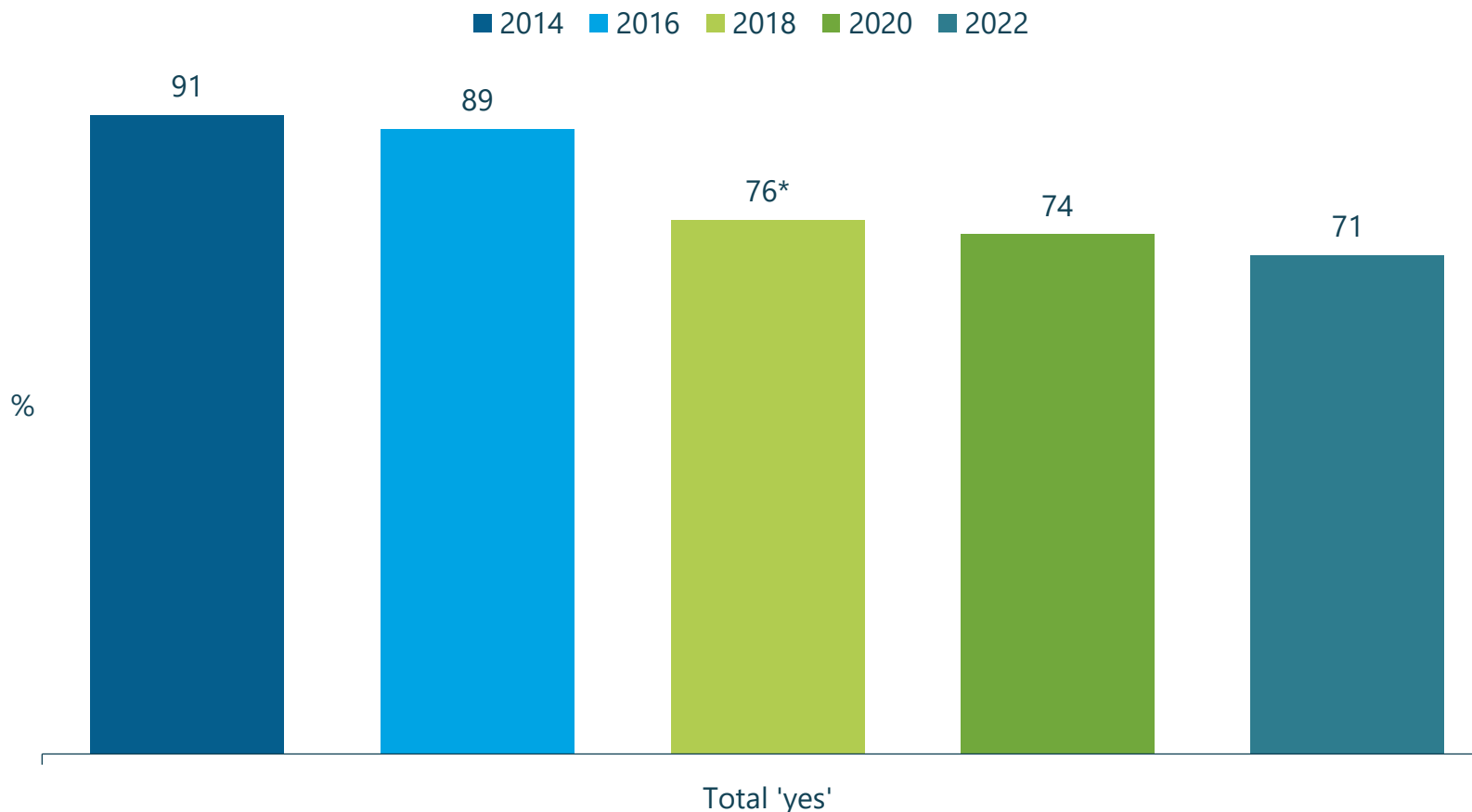


- Respondents were most successful at accessing information held by state government departments and universities, and least successful at accessing information held by Ministers and their staff.

Q18. Were you successful in accessing information from...?
 Base: Respondents who tried to access information in the last year
 (2016: Local councils n=77, State government departments n=62, Universities n=59, Ministers and their staff n=31, State owned businesses n=38)
 (2018: Local councils n=46, State government departments n=34, Universities n=50, Ministers and their staff n=26, State owned businesses n=28)
 (2020: Local councils n=62, State government departments n=77, Universities n=59, Ministers and their staff n=32, State owned corporations n=41)
 (2022: Local councils n=42**, State government departments n=68, Universities n=67, Ministers and their staff n=53**, State owned corporations n=38)
 † Not a code in 2018 or 2020 ** Please note: Significance testing was not performed on this data due to the significant differences in the base size from previous year
 Please note: Percentages have been amended so they add to 100%



TOTAL SUCCESS IN ATTEMPTING TO ACCESS INFORMATION



- Approximately seven in ten were successful in accessing information from at least one of the agencies they approached.

Q18. Were you successful in accessing information from...?
Base: Respondents who tried to access information in the last year (2014 n=51, 2016 n=119, 2018 n=83, 2020 n=144, 2022 n=133)



HOW AGENCIES ASSISTED INFORMATION REQUESTS

%	2020 (n= 144)	2022 (n= 133)
The agency told me the different ways I could access information	36	39
The agency helped me to clarify the information I was seeking	32	39
The agency followed up in writing	28	23
If they did not hold the information the agency told me who or what other agency to contact, including how to transfer my application	25	19
The agency explained what makes the application valid	17	17
The agency explained the process to obtain information by formal access application	28	15*
The agency told me about the Information and Privacy Commission and the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and my rights of review	8	3
None of the above	19	19

- Agencies continued to assist those who attempted to access information by telling respondents about different ways to access information and clarifying the information they needed.



HOW AGENCIES DID NOT ASSIST INFORMATION REQUESTS

%	2020 (n=144)	2022 (n=133)
The agency didn't explain the process to obtain information	33	30
The agency failed to answer my questions or did not respond by the required time	24	26
The agency didn't discuss with me the type of information I was seeking	30	21
The agency didn't follow up my outstanding questions	17	8*
None of the above	35	37

- Respondents reported that some agencies did not explain the process to obtain information and/or failed to answer their questions in a timely manner



HOW AGENCIES COULD HAVE IMPROVED ASSISTANCE

%	2020 (n=144)	2022 (n=133)
Explained the processes available to me to obtain information	41	37
Referred me to the agency's website to obtain information	29	25
Provided advice about how to access or seek access to information	40	23*
Talked to me about my request to access information	25	23
Told me what agency to go to obtain the information or helped me transfer my application	27	17*
Told me how to get information about my information access rights	22	11*
Provided me with an application form to seek access to information	18	9*
None of the above	21	24

- Suggestions for improvement somewhat varied from 2020, however many respondents still suggested that agencies should explain the process of obtaining information and refer them to the agencies website for more information.



SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

%	2020 (n=802)	2022 (n=800)
Increase awareness of ability to access information (e.g. on television, media)	14	7*
Make it easier/faster to access information (e.g. put it on agency website)	4	6
Be more transparent and/or open/about what happens to my information	4	6
Provide more/better instructions on how to access information NFI	5	3*
Improve standard of staff involved (e.g. knowledgeable, customer service)	4	3
Create specific platforms to access information (e.g. app, new website, hotline)	2	3
Improve websites/information online	3	2
Provide more/better instructions on who to contact about accessing	2	2
Provide more/better information NFI	3	1*
Connect through internet/social media/texts/emails/letters NFI	2	1
Other	13	6*
Don't know	6	4
No response	40	51*
No improvements needed/All good	7	4*

- Many respondents did not have any suggestions for improvement or felt that the process of obtaining information was good.

22. Do you have any suggestions about how NSW agencies could better provide citizens with advice and assistance to obtain information?
Base: All respondents (2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)



DEMOGRAPHICS



GENDER AND AGE



%	2014 (n=340)	2016 (n=340)	2018 (n=803)	2020 (n=802)	2022 (n=800)
Gender					
Male	44	49	48	50	50
Female	56	51	52	50	50
Gender neutral†	Not an option in 2014, 2016 or 2018			-	-
Prefer not to indicate†	Not an option in 2014, 2016 or 2018			-	-
Age					
18-24	12	15	15	18	18
25-34	12	20	21	11	12
35-44	8	16	17	13	18
45-54	17	18	16	19	12
55-64	12	12	12	11	7
65-74	38	20	10	14	13
75+			8	14	20

D1. Which of the following age brackets do you belong to?
 D2. Do you identify as being...?
 Base: All respondents (2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)
 †Options added in 2020
 Please note: Percentages have been amended so they add to 100%

WORK STATUS



%	2014 (n=340)	2016 (n=340)	2018 (n=803)	2020 (n=802)	2022 (n=800)
Working status					
Working full time	Not asked in 2014	89	39	34	34
Working part time			17	14	12
Retired		4	23	29	32
Student		4	9	12	11
Unemployed		3	5	6	5
Engaged in home duties		1	7	4	5
Refused		-	1	1	1

D3. Which of these categories best describes you?

Base: All respondents (2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)

Please note: Percentages have been amended so they add to 100%

MAIN LANGUAGE SPOKEN



%	2014 (n=340)	2016 (n=340)	2018 (n=803)	2020 (n=802)	2022 (n=800)
Main Language Spoken					
English	Not asked in 2014 or 2016		90	86	88
Cantonese/Mandarin			1	6	4
Korean			-	1	<1
Hindi			1	1	1
Arabic (incl. Lebanese)			1	1	<1
Indonesian			<1	1	<1
Other			6	5	6

D4. What is the main language spoken at home?
 Base: All respondents (2016 n=340, 2018 n=803, 2020 n=802, 2022 n=800)

INFORMATION ACCESS SUMMARY



Similar to the previous two studies, over half were aware of their right to access information from at least one of the organisations listed.

Few had tried to or considered accessing information held by the organisations listed, which was similar to previous years.

As with previous years, most of those who had tried to access information were successful in doing so.

Respondents who had tried to access information indicated that agencies assisted them by providing information about different ways to access data and clarifying what they were seeking.

Some of those who tried to access information felt that agencies didn't explain the process of obtaining information and/or failed to answer their questions in a timely manner.

Those who had tried to access information indicated that explaining the process and referring to the agency's website would have improved the assistance they were provided.

Respondents had a variety of suggestions for better providing citizens with advice and assistance to obtain information, however as with 2020, many did not provide a response.

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IPC COMMUNITY ATTITUDES
STUDY 2022 – INFORMATION
ACCESS

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