

# Trends in Civic Engagement in Australia

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**P O L I S**  
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In early 2024, the Resilience Democracy Data and Research Network was established as a collaboration between Australian researchers, civil society leaders and government agencies. The network is designed to encourage interdisciplinary, collaborative and actionable research seeking policy-relevant insights that measure, diagnose and assess pathways strengthening Australia's democratic resilience. The network is dedicated to making research findings and insights widely available. This paper has been written to prompt ideas for future collaborative research of the network.

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## Abstract

A longstanding debate concerns whether civic engagement is in decline in the advanced democracies and whether this forms part of a crisis of democracy. This paper situates Australia within this debate by providing a broad overview of the state of civic engagement in Australia. To do so, this paper analyses data from the World Values Survey with a focus on voluntary association memberships. The results show that civic engagement in Australia is high in comparison to other democracies around the world. Although civic engagement is relatively high, it has declined to some degree over the past few decades. There is considerable variation in who participates in civic life, with the university-educated and those on higher incomes more likely to be members of associations. This suggests that the benefits of civic engagement are not distributed evenly across the population. Ongoing data collection is needed to continue to track Australia's civic engagement over time, in comparison to other countries, and across different indicators of engagement.

## 1 Introduction

There has been much discussion as to whether the quality of democracy in Australia is in decline.<sup>1</sup> Citizens' declining engagement in democratic politics has been a central concern. There are two dimensions to this: one relates to the *attitudes* citizens have about politics and democracy; the other relates to the degrees of *participation* citizens have in politics and society. Much of the discussion on democratic concerns in the Australian context has focussed on citizen attitudes, including an observed decline in political trust and satisfaction with democracy (e.g.: Dassonneville and McAllister 2021; Cameron 2020; Biddle and Gray 2023). These attitudinal measures form just one component of citizens' relationship with democratic political institutions. Just as important, are indicators of civic engagement – citizen participation and engagement in politics and society. This paper focusses on civic engagement in Australia to understand this important dimension of democratic and societal health. While civic engagement is a multi-faceted concept, this paper will focus on trends in voluntary association memberships as one key indicator of civic engagement.

To understand the state of civic engagement in Australia, this paper analyses data from the World Values Survey (WVS). Analysis of the WVS data enables Australia to be placed in comparison to other democratic countries.<sup>2</sup> The results show that civic engagement in Australia is high in cross-national comparison. Although still high overall, there has been a downward trend in civic engagement over time. In the 1990s almost 90 percent of Australians were association members, by 2018 this had declined to 81 percent. While civic engagement is relatively high in Australia, this engagement is not evenly distributed across the population. It tends to be those who are better off in society, those with a university education and on higher incomes, who are more engaged.

This paper proceeds in seven sections. The second section provides an overview of key themes and debates on civic engagement, drawing upon comparative cross-national research. This discussion is then connected to the Australian case in the third section. Fourth, the World Values Survey data that are used in the analyses are introduced, including the measures of civic engagement. The fifth section presents the results of data analysis on civic engagement in Australia – situating Australia in comparison to other countries and in the context of trends over time. The paper concludes with reflections on the implications of these results for understanding the state of democracy in Australia and recommendations.

## 2 Understanding civic engagement

Civic engagement is a multi-dimensional concept which has been defined and measured in a range of ways (Adler and Goggin 2005; Strømsnes 2023). To give one example, Adler and Goggin described civic engagement as “the ways in which citizens participate in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future” (2005, 236). Other definitions go much broader to incorporate various kinds of social activity including sport and meetings with friends (Putnam 2000; Diller 2001). The varying uses of this concept – capturing all manner of social and political activity by citizens – have led to critiques of conceptual stretching (Berger 2009).

While there are varying uses of the term ‘civic engagement’, a common focus of many studies of civic engagement has been citizen participation in voluntary associations (e.g.: Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001; Wollebæk and Strømsnes 2008; Norris 2002; Putnam 2000). Voluntary associations can be understood as “groups of individuals who join together for a

common activity or cause, without coercion or being paid to do so” (Cameron 2023). There are a range of types of voluntary associations, including those with a political orientation, such as trade unions, political parties and environmental campaigning groups, as well as those with a more social orientation such as book clubs and sporting leagues (Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001; Uslaner and Brown 2005). Voluntary association membership is the specific aspect of civic engagement that this paper focuses on.

Civic engagement is widely considered beneficial for democratic societies for a range of reasons. There is a demonstrated link between participation in associations and political participation (Teorell 2003). Participation in associations can also provide a training ground for those who may wish to go into politics – developing skills that may be useful in elected office (Diamond 1994). Some associations are political in their orientation, for example trade unions and environmental advocacy groups. Citizen engagement in these associations intersects directly with the political process through advocacy for certain causes. More broadly, Putnam argued that participation in associations, even those outside of the political realm such as a sport or art club, can develop norms of participation, trust and reciprocity which are beneficial for democratic societies (Putnam 2000; Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1993).

Cross-national research has highlighted how the country context shapes civic engagement (Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001). Countries that have a long history of democracy tend to have higher levels of civic engagement (Curtis, Baer, and Grabb 2001). This is as these countries have developed democratic political cultures over a long period of time, including participatory norms that facilitate civic engagement. Countries that have a relatively recent authoritarian past on the other hand, particularly the post-communist societies, tend to have lower levels of civic engagement (Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2013; Mondak and Gearing 2002). Religion has also been found to be an important factor. For example, societies that were historically Protestant tend to have higher levels of civic engagement than Catholic societies due to the culture of voluntarism associated with Protestantism compared to the more hierarchical nature of Catholicism (Curtis, Baer, and Grabb 2001). Economic conditions have an impact, with more prosperous societies having higher levels of civic engagement and voluntary activity (Cameron 2021; Curtis, Baer, and Grabb 2001). The institutional and policy environment also matters. Federalism may enhance citizen political engagement by providing multiple points of access (Inman 2007). Compulsory voting can generate norms of participation that affect activities other than voting (Engelen 2007). Government funding of the non-profit and voluntary sector can strengthen civic engagement, whereas regulation of the sector may constrain certain forms of civic engagement (Berry 2005; Goss 2010).

Beyond the country-context, there are also factors at the individual level that influence civic engagement. Those with higher levels of education are more engaged, as are those on higher incomes (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012, 1999). Participation in associations requires resources that not all citizens have access to (Wessels 1997). This tendency for those who are better off to be more engaged in civic life has been described as an “unheavenly chorus” (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Ideally, democracies should provide an opportunity for all citizens to have their voices heard, although reality falls far short of this. While there are numerous benefits to participation in associations, for society and for those who participate, these benefits are not evenly distributed among the population.

A major debate in the social sciences concerns whether civic engagement is in decline. Taking a broader definition of civic engagement, research has shown that voting, membership in political parties, and participation in a range of forms of civic life including voluntary

associations has declined in democratic societies over time (Putnam 2000; Whiteley 2011; Kostelka and Blais 2021; Painter II and Paxton 2014). Other studies have critiqued this narrative by presenting evidence that citizen engagement has not declined but rather transformed (for reviews see: Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Bermudez 2012). In particular, the internet and social media has provided new opportunities for citizens to engage in politics and society (Loader, Vromen, and Xenos 2014; Gibson and Cantijoch 2013; Vissers and Stolle 2014). Part of this debate has focussed on younger generations who are often less engaged in the more traditional forms of civic engagement, although are active in other ways online (Bermudez 2012; Vromen, Xenos, and Loader 2015). This research on the decline (or transformation) of civic engagement has formed part of a broader debate on whether democracy is in crisis (Merkel 2014; Ercan and Gagnon 2014).

This section has provided an overview of some of the major themes in the cross-national research on civic engagement. The next sections turn to analyse and understand civic engagement within the Australian case, first conceptually and then empirically.

### 3 Factors shaping civic engagement in Australia

Situating Australia within the above framework of drivers of civic engagement, Australia has a number of characteristics which support civic engagement. Australia has a long history of democracy and high level of economic development, both factors conducive to an engaged citizenry (Curtis, Baer, and Grabb 2001). Several features of Australia's political institutions also support a high level of civic and political engagement. The combination of compulsory voting, a federal system of government, and short federal electoral cycles means that Australians are expected to vote on a regular basis. This instils a culture of political participation which may have broader benefits for citizen engagement beyond voting (Inman 2007; Engelen 2007). Voting in the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum was also compulsory, and more broadly provided another opportunity for citizen engagement in politics. In segments of Australian society, there is a culture of volunteering, for example Surf Life Saving volunteers and 'democracy sausage' fundraising on polling days (Brett 2019).

Despite these factors that are conducive to civic engagement in Australia, there are also factors that present challenges for civic engagement. Like the rest of the world, Australia is experiencing shifts from offline to online forms of engagement (Halpin et al. 2018). This presents new opportunities for civic engagement, as well as risks, given the well-documented benefits of civic engagement that takes place in person (Putnam 2000; Diamond 1994). Australia had some of the most restrictive policies worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Melbourne reported to have had the longest lockdowns of anywhere in the world. Whilst civic mindedness underpinned the rationale for these lockdowns, to protect the community from serious illness, it nevertheless impacted how citizens engage in their communities in a broader sense. This period of tremendous social change could be expected to have accelerated a decline in face-to-face forms of civic engagement, alongside a rise in online activity. For example, university campuses have not returned to the hubs of educational, social and civic activity among young people to the degree they were prior to the pandemic (Cassidy 2024).

Government policy can also support or constrain civic engagement, for example through funding (or lack thereof) for the non-profit sector and volunteering. For example, in June 2024 the Albanese Labor government announced \$5 million in support for Volunteer Resource Centres (Rishworth MP 2024). There are also grant programs to increase participation in volunteering. Co-design initiatives are another way to increase direct citizen engagement in

policymaking (Briggs 2011). Co-design principles are increasingly being adopted by the government working with First Nations Australians in the development and delivery of policy (Butler et al. 2022). The *Strengthening Australian Democracy* report provides an overview of Australian and international civic engagement initiatives targeted at specific groups such as youth (Strengthening Democracy Taskforce 2024, 44-47). While there are many drivers beyond government policy that shape civic engagement, government policy has an important role to play supporting and facilitating civic engagement through funding and co-design initiatives.

## 4 Data

To analyse civic engagement in Australia this paper uses data from the World Values Survey (WVS) time-series dataset (Inglehart et al. 2022). The WVS is a major cross-national study of political behaviours and attitudes. The study has fielded surveys with the same set of questions in 120 countries from the 1980s to the present. While there are other valuable data sources that provide insights on civic engagement,<sup>3</sup> the WVS data has been selected for this paper for three main reasons. First, as this is a cross-national survey it enables Australia to be placed in comparison to other democratic societies, to better understand where Australia sits in relative terms. Second, the WVS survey has been fielded in Australia in five waves of the study spanning the 1980s to the late-2010s, enabling an investigation of how civic engagement has changed over time. Third, the WVS incorporates the most comprehensive set of measures on civic engagement, including membership in voluntary associations.

For analyses over time, this paper will utilise data from the surveys fielded in 1995, 2005, 2012 and 2018 (Waves 3, 5, 6 and 7).<sup>4</sup> The cross-national analysis will focus on the most recent wave (Wave 7) where surveys were fielded between 2017 and 2022. It will include all democratic countries for which data is available.<sup>5</sup> The Module 7 Australian survey, fielded in 2018, used probability-based sampling – drawing a random sample of addresses from the Geocoded National Address File.<sup>6</sup> The surveys were mailed out to respondents with an option to complete the survey online. The technical reports are available on the World Values Survey website (World Values Survey 2024). The analysis in this paper uses weights to adjust for known population characteristics.

While civic engagement is a multi-faceted concept, this paper focuses on voluntary association memberships as a commonly used measure of civic engagement. This is measured by a question battery which asks:

Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations. For each organization, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?

- Church or religious organization
- Sport or recreational organization, football/baseball/rugby team
- Art, music or educational organization
- Labor Union
- Political party
- Environmental organization

- Professional association
- Humanitarian or charitable organization
- Consumer organization
- Self-help group, mutual aid group
- Women's group
- Other organization

From this question battery, a number of measures can be developed (Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001; Norris 2002). One measure captures whether respondents are a member of any of these organisations, coded as '0' for those who are not a member of any associations and '1' for those who are a member of one or more associations. Another measure captures the number of association types a respondent is a member of, to better reflect different levels of engagement in voluntary associations.

A range of other measures are incorporated in the analysis to examine the effect of various socio-demographic characteristics on civic engagement. This includes whether the respondent has completed a university degree, their income, whether they live in an urban or rural area, whether they are an immigrant to Australia, their gender, and their age group. An attitudinal measure of social trust captures whether respondents believe 'that most people can be trusted' or 'that you need to be very careful in dealing with people'. The Appendix provides a table which includes question wording for all measures used in the analysis alongside how each variable is coded.

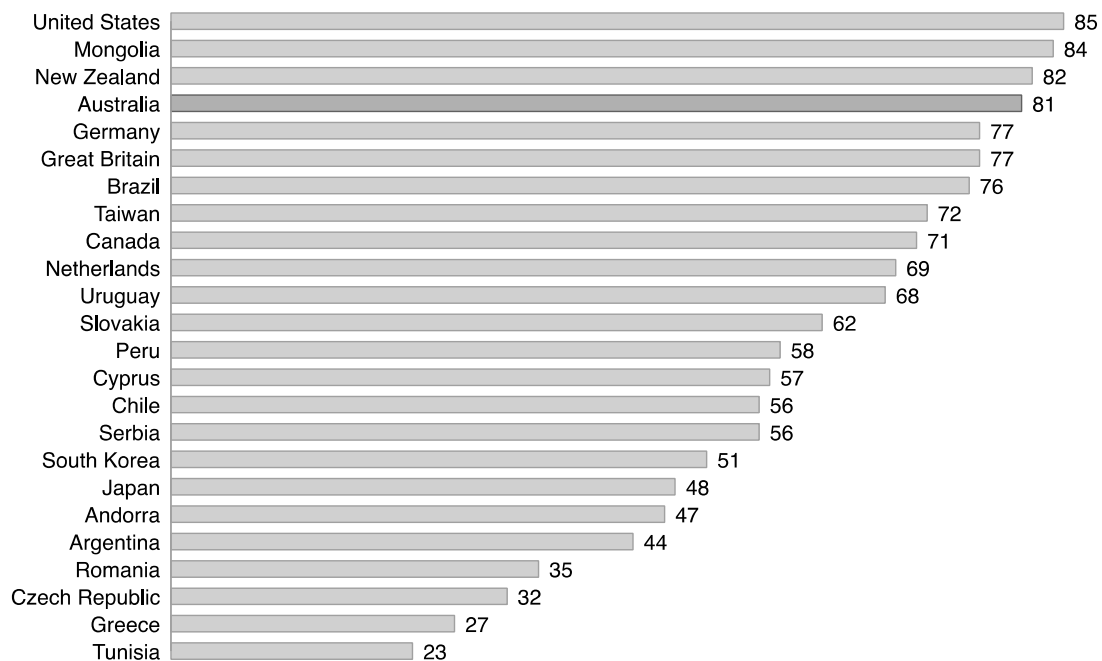
## 5 Analysing civic engagement in Australia

Drawing upon the cross-national research on determinants of civic engagement, three factors suggest civic engagement is likely to be relatively high in Australia. First, Australia is among the world's oldest democracies. Second, compulsory voting, which is relatively rare in cross-national comparison, facilitates norms of participation among citizens. And third, as an economically advanced society, citizens are more likely to have the resources to engage in civic life.

To test this expectation, civic engagement in Australia can be situated in comparison to other democracies around the world. Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents in each country who reported membership in one or more voluntary associations. This shows that Australia has high levels of association membership (81 percent) in comparison to most other democracies. Among this sample of 24 democratic societies which were incorporated in WVS Wave 7, the United States has the highest proportion of association members, at 85 percent, while the lowest is Tunisia, at just 23 percent. Australia has a greater proportion of association members than Germany, Great Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, South Korea and Japan, among others. Overall, countries with a long history of democracy are more likely to have high levels of civic engagement, while civic engagement tends to be lower in newer democracies.



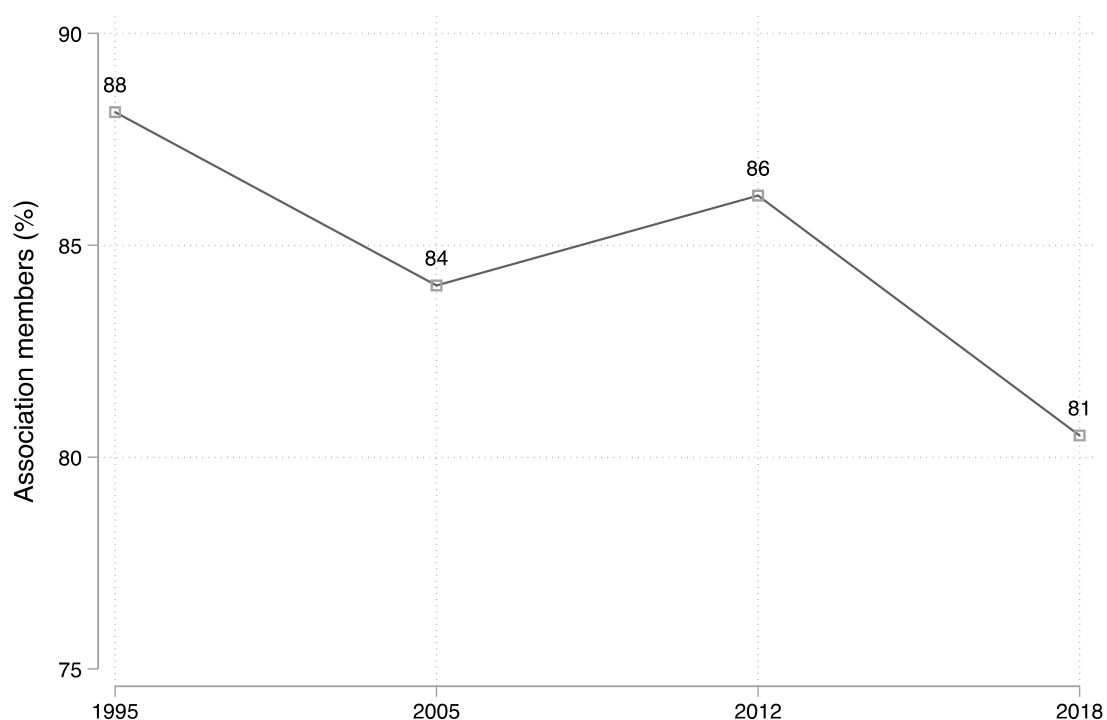
Figure 1: Association membership in cross-national comparison



Note: Bars show the percentage of the population who are a member of one or more voluntary associations.  
Source: World Values Survey Wave 7, fielded between 2017 and 2022.

A second consideration is whether voluntary association membership has declined over time. Figure 2 shows that although civic engagement remains high in Australia, this does represent a decline over the past few decades. In 1995, 88 percent of Australians were members of one or more associations, a figure which declined by 7 percent by 2018. Another way of looking at change over time is in the mean number of memberships. In 1995 the average number of associations Australians were a member of was 2.7, which declined somewhat to 2.5 by 2018.

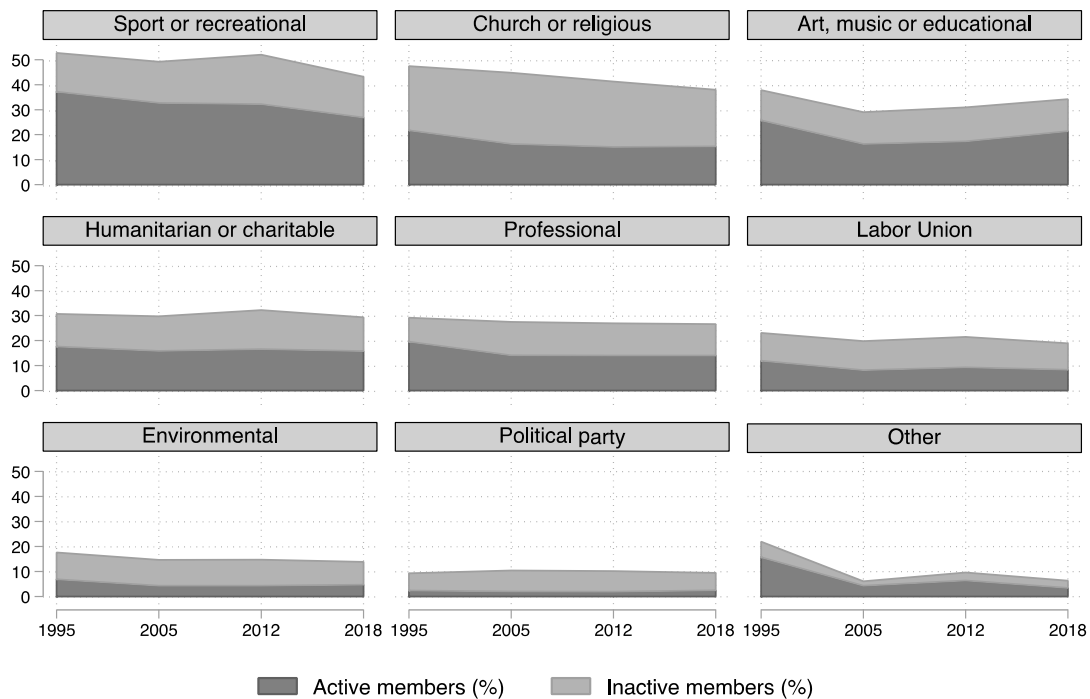
Figure 2: Association membership in Australia over time



Note: Markers show the percentage of the population who are a member of one or more voluntary associations.  
Source: World Values Survey Waves 3, 5, 6 and 7.

Another way of examining the trends in civic engagement over time, is to break this down by the type of association. Figure 3 shows the trends in active and inactive membership for nine types of association.<sup>7</sup> This illustrates the differences in membership levels between association types, as well as how membership levels have shifted over time. The three most common types of association membership in Australia are: sport or recreational; church or religious; and art, music or educational. Involvement in a labour union, environmental group, or a political party is far less common. In some types of association there has been a decline over time while in others trends have remained relatively stable. Consistent with patterns of secularisation, membership in church or religious organisations shows the steepest decline, followed by sport.

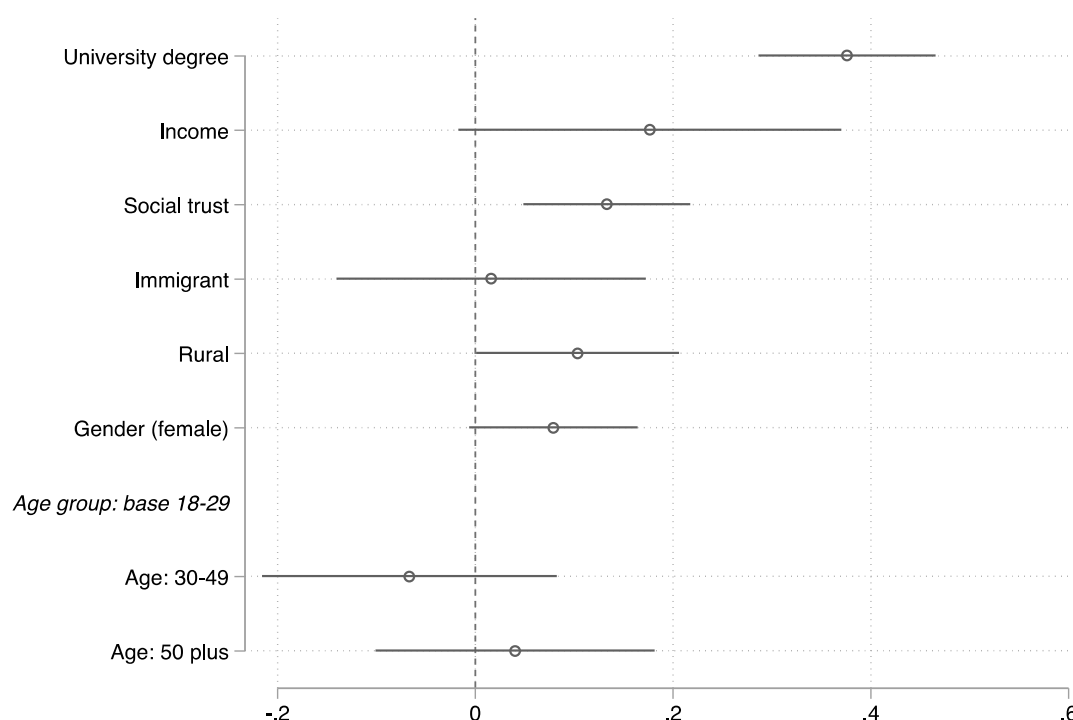
Figure 3: Types of association memberships in Australia over time



Note: Dark shaded area shows the percentage of respondents who reported being an active member of that type of association, the lighter shaded area adds to this those who reported inactive membership. Source: World Values Survey Waves 3, 5, 6 and 7.

The final part of the analysis turns to the individual level determinants of voluntary association membership. Figure 4 presents the results of a regression model to examine which factors are associated with voluntary association membership. The dependent variable is the number of associations respondents are a member of.<sup>8</sup> The markers show the coefficients and the bars the 95 percent confidence intervals. This analysis confirms the finding of the cross-national literature on civic engagement and voluntary association membership – that those better off in society are more likely to be engaged in voluntary associations. Having a university degree is the single most important factor in determining voluntary association membership. Those on higher incomes are also more likely to be association members.<sup>9 10</sup> Other factors found to be important include social trust – those who believe most people can be trusted are more likely to be association members. Also, those in rural areas are more active in associations than those in urban areas. Women are somewhat more engaged in associations than men.<sup>11</sup> Immigrants to Australia are overall no different to those born in Australia in terms of civic engagement, despite debates about the impacts of migration on civic engagement (e.g. see: Mansouri, Vergani, and Weng 2024). While there is a lively international debate about youth disengagement in democracy, the data here suggests that young people are no more or less engaged in associations than older people – a finding consistent with research on Australian youth by Chowdhury (2021). This is the case even though the measures presented here do not capture any explicit forms of online civic engagement. Compulsory voting, which compels young Australians to vote, is one factor that may explain high levels of civic engagement among young people in Australia.

Figure 4: Explaining participation in associations in Australia



Note: Chart plots coefficients and 95 percent confidence intervals for a negative binomial regression model where the dependent variable is the number of associations respondents are a member of. Source: World Values Survey Wave 7.

While the analyses above have focussed on the World Values Survey data on voluntary association memberships, other sources of evidence on different indicators of civic engagement suggest similar overall trends. Some indicators have remained stable, whereas others have declined. Australian Election Study data suggests that levels of conventional and unconventional political participation have remained relatively stable over time, albeit with online forms gradually replacing offline forms of communication (Cameron and McAllister 2022, 76-77). Just over one in five Australians say that they have “worked together with people who shared the same concern” to express views on “something the government should or should not be doing” a figure that has remained reasonably consistent over time (Cameron and McAllister 2022, 76). Levels of participation in protest demonstrations has also remained stable with around 14 percent reporting that they had joined a protest in the past five years (Cameron and McAllister 2022, 77). Volunteering Australia has tracked a modest decline in volunteering over the past two decades “from around one-third of adults in 2002 to around one-quarter in 2022” (Volunteering Australia 2024, 40). Union membership has seen declines from over 40 percent in 1990 to just 13 percent in 2022 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023). There have been declines in political party membership amidst growing disaffection with the major parties (Davies 2020; Cameron and McAllister 2022, 78). Yet recent years have seen a resurgence of grassroots mobilisation, centred around independent candidates rather than the major political parties (Hendriks and Reid 2023). Support for compulsory voting remains high, although there has been a modest decline in the proportion of Australians who say they would still vote if voluntary, from 86 percent in 1996 to 77 percent in 2022 (Cameron and McAllister 2022, 75). Taken together, the evidence from the World Values Survey, alongside these other sources, suggests some types of civic engagement are stable while others are declining.

## 6 Conclusion

Civic engagement is a topic of lively debate in the social sciences. Is civic engagement in decline, or is it transforming and taking on new forms? This paper has provided evidence on civic engagement in Australia, with data from the World Values Survey on voluntary association memberships. There are three main findings. First, civic engagement in Australia is high in cross-national comparison. As a country with a long history of democracy and political institutions that facilitate citizen participation (notably, compulsory voting), there is a participatory culture that facilitates civic engagement. Second, although still reasonably high, there are indications that association membership has declined to some degree over the past few decades. Third, while civic engagement is relatively high in Australia, it is not equal. It tends to be those who are better off, on higher incomes and with higher levels of education, who are more likely to be engaged in civic associations. As a result, the benefits of civic engagement and participation are skewed towards those in society who already have greater resources.

This contributes to our understanding of the health of Australian democracy. Citizens are key actors in democratic politics, and there are two important dimensions of citizen orientations towards government and democracy – attitudinal and participatory. In examining civic engagement, this paper has focussed on the latter. While there have been steep declines in political trust in Australia in recent decades (Dassonneville and McAllister 2021), the results examined here suggest declines in civic engagement have been much more modest. This indicates that while many Australians may be dissatisfied with politicians and how democracy is working in practice, they are still keen to be involved in politics and the community. An area of concern, which is not unique to Australia, is the underrepresentation of those of lower socio-economic status in voluntary associations. This has implications in terms of the voices that are heard in Australian politics and in the distribution of benefits that arise through participation in associations.

## 7 Recommendations

- Australia's continuing participation in the world's leading international survey projects provides an excellent resource for tracking the health of civic engagement in Australia. This includes, for example, the World Values Survey, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, and the Asian Barometer Survey, among others – all of which capture important aspects of democratic and civic engagement. These surveys enable civic engagement in Australia to be benchmarked in comparison to other democracies. In addition, the longevity of these projects enables change to be tracked over time across a wide range of indicators. Investment in this key infrastructure is needed for civic engagement in Australia to be tracked and monitored on an ongoing basis.
- Over the past few decades there has been a transformation in the way citizens engage in society, with a shift towards online forms of participation and engagement. This shift is particularly marked among younger generations. This raises questions around the equivalency of online forms of civic engagement, in terms of the societal benefits and risks. There is a need for further research on the consequences of this transformation.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has had major impacts on how people engage in society. Beyond the short-term impacts during the peak of the pandemic, there is a need for better understanding of the medium to long-term impacts of COVID-19 on civic engagement. Changes that were intended to be short-term have in many cases resulted

in long-term changes in how people participate in society, with potential implications for the health of civic engagement.

- Strengthening connections between research and policymaking. Policy solutions to strengthen Australian democracy can be connected to evidence on what is driving challenges, as well as an evidence base on potential solutions. In doing so, it is important to distinguish the drivers of civic engagement, from factors influencing attitudinal indicators such as political trust.
- Policies to strengthen civic engagement can be focussed on those individuals and groups who are less likely to be engaged already, including lower socio-economic status groups.

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## Appendix

**Table A1. Variables, question wording, and coding**

Variable	Question wording	Coding
Voluntary association membership (Figures 1 and 2)	Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations. For each organization, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?	0 = not a member of any organizations, 1 = a member of one or more organizations.
Voluntary association membership (Figure 4)	Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations. For each organization, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?	0-12 = count of the number of organizations the respondent is a member of.
University degree	What is the highest educational level that you... have attained?	0 = no, 1 = yes. (yes includes Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees)
Income	On this card is an income scale on which 1 indicates the lowest income group and 10 the highest income group in your country. We would like to know in what group your household is. Please, specify the appropriate number, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in.	10 point income scale, rescaled so that: 0 = lowest, 1 = highest.
Social trust	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?	0 = need to be very careful, 1 = most people can be trusted.
Immigrant	Were you born in this country or are you an immigrant to this country?	0 = born in this country, 1 = an immigrant to this country.
Rural		0 = urban, 1 = rural.
Gender (female)		0 = male, 1 = female.
Age group	Can you tell me your year of birth, please?	0 = 18-29, 1 = 30-49, 2 = 50 plus.

**Source:** World Values Survey, questionnaires available from: <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Examples in the media include: ‘Australians are losing faith in democracy – most of us look at politics and recoil in horror or sullenly disengage’ in The Guardian (Lewis 2024); and ‘Rising public disengagement heralds crisis in democracy’ in The Australian (Dusevic 2020).
  - <sup>2</sup> For other indicators of civic engagement in Australia, see also the Australian Election Study: [www.australianelectionstudy.org](http://www.australianelectionstudy.org)
  - <sup>3</sup> See also the Australian Election Study.
  - <sup>4</sup> Although the WVS was also fielded in 1981, the 1981 data is not included in the analysis as there were differences in the categories of association memberships which mean that the 1981 data is not comparable to the later waves of the study.
  - <sup>5</sup> The comparative analysis incorporates only democratic countries which fielded the WVS in Wave 7, as indicated by a Freedom House ‘Free’ rating (Freedom House 2024).
  - <sup>6</sup> Earlier survey waves in Australia used a very similar methodology, with random sampling from the electoral roll.
  - <sup>7</sup> This includes all association types which were consistently included in the surveys over time.
  - <sup>8</sup> Negative binomial regression is used which is appropriate for the structure of the dependent variable – which is a count of the number of associations the respondent is a member of.
  - <sup>9</sup>  $p=0.07$ , narrowly short of statistical significance at  $p<0.05$ .
  - <sup>10</sup> While the overall trend clearly shows that those better off participate more, the extent to which these socio-demographic factors matter can vary by association type. For example, counter to the overall trend on income it is those on lower incomes, but with high levels of education, who are more likely to be members of an environmental association.
  - <sup>11</sup>  $p=0.07$ .