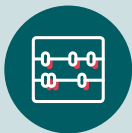


Privacy attitudes and experiences in Australia

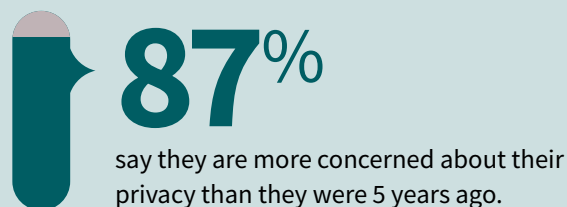
The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner surveyed 1,504 Australian adults in 2026.

This is what we found.



Relevance and accountability

Privacy remains a key issue.



Australians overwhelmingly expect organisations to minimise privacy risks.

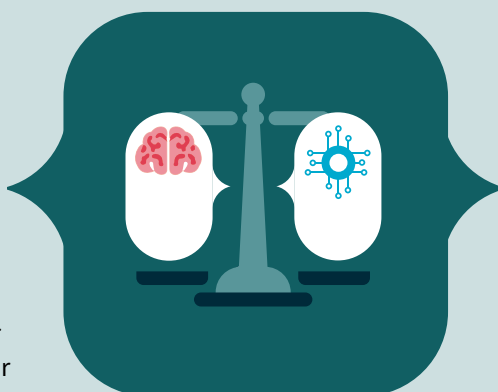
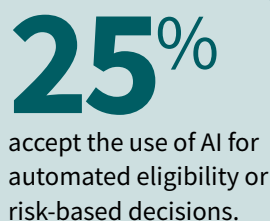
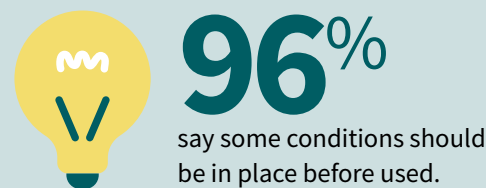
Almost all respondents (98%) say organisations that collect, use or share personal information should be responsible for protecting privacy even if no immediate harm occurs, with 86% viewing this responsibility as very strong.



Greater confidence in privacy practices would increase participation in digital services.

Around two-thirds (68%) say they would be more likely to use digital services requiring personal information if they believed their data was handled fairly and responsibly.

Australians remain cautious about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in decision-making that may affect them.



7 in 10

(71%) consider it **somewhat or very unacceptable** for organisations to use personal information originally provided for a service to train AI systems after that service has been completed.



Control and consent in practice

Most people feel they have limited real control.

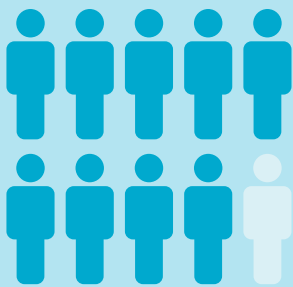
78% report very little or no control over how their personal information is collected and used.

52% say they accept sharing because they might otherwise miss out on essential services or opportunities.

Consent often doesn't feel like a genuine choice.

65% say sharing information rarely or never feels like a genuine choice and 68% say the same about consent.

Data collection is accepted when clear limits and choices exist.



Around 9 in 10 Australians (92%) say data collection can be acceptable under certain conditions.

69%

Particularly where the purpose is clear.

68%

Consent or opt-in is available.

66%

Collection is limited to what is necessary.

61%

Ability to opt out of non-essential collection.



Privacy policies are expected to do a lot, but are often skipped.

While people know what they want included,

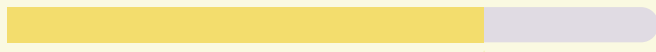
69% say they always or often agree without reading most or all of the policy.





Everyday concerns and impacts

Privacy concerns are widespread.



73%

(vs 64% in 2023) experienced a privacy concern in the past 12 months.



Marketing-related issues are common.



41%

The most common concerns were being unable to unsubscribe from marketing (41% vs 25% in 2023).



38%

had information used for unsolicited direct marketing (38% vs 21% in 2023).

Harms following data breaches remain widespread.



3/4

Around three-quarters (77%) of Australians whose data was involved in a breach experienced at least one form of harm.

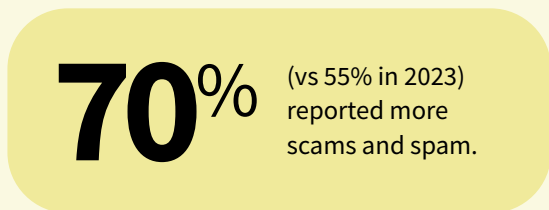


62%

reported the most common impact is increased exposure to scams and spam (62% vs 52% in 2023).

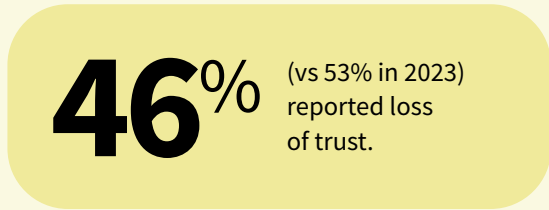
Impacts are felt quickly.

Among those who experienced a problem with how their personal information was handled in the past 12 months:



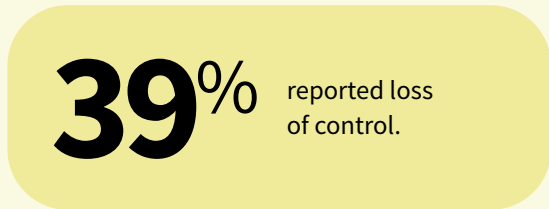
70%

(vs 55% in 2023) reported more scams and spam.



46%

(vs 53% in 2023) reported loss of trust.



39%

reported loss of control.





Fairness boundaries, collection limits and trust

Many Australians judge current data practices as unfair.



while



Secondary uses are a key 'red line'.



Around 9 in 10

say it is not fair and reasonable to use personal information for selling/trading personal information (96% vs 87% in 2023), online tracking, profiling and targeted advertising to children (96% vs 89% in 2023) or other vulnerable individuals (95% vs 88%), unnecessary location tracking (94% vs 87%), training AI models/products (93%), significant AI-informed decision (91% vs 70%), differential pricing (91%), or targeted advertising based on sensitive data (91% vs 84% in 2023).



Around 7 in 10

(71%) consider it unacceptable for organisations to use personal information provided for a service to train AI systems after the service has been completed.

Trust varies sharply across sectors and has declined across many commercial industries.

Trust remains highest for health service providers (74%) and government agencies (68%), but has fallen across insurance, telecommunications, technology, retail and real estate sectors since 2023. Trust is lowest for social media companies (3% vs 14% in 2023), data brokers (4%) and AI companies (4%).



74%

health service providers



68%

government agencies



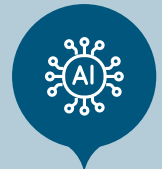
3%

social media companies



4%

data brokers



4%

AI companies

92%

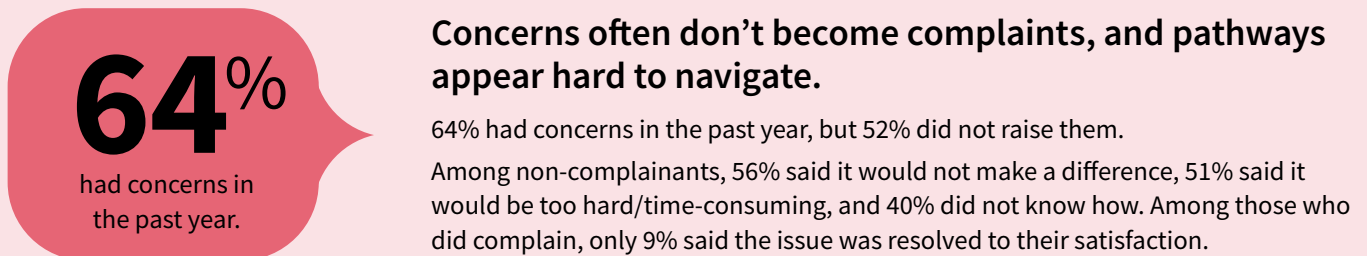
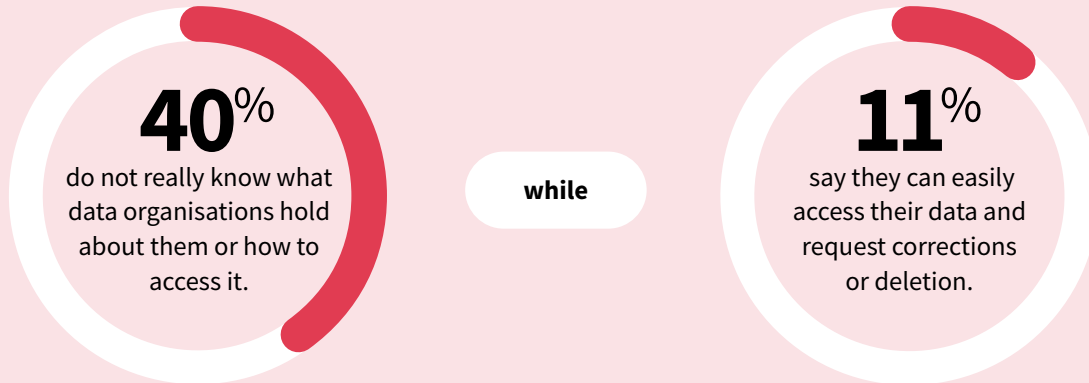
People distinguish between necessary and excessive collection.

Individuals view the provision of basic identifiers to access a service as reasonable, but 92% say there are some types of information organisations should never collect. Information about sexual orientation (72%) and biometrics (71%) feel excessive or unjustified in most situations, regardless of the organisation or purpose.

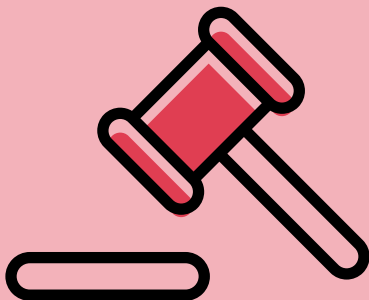
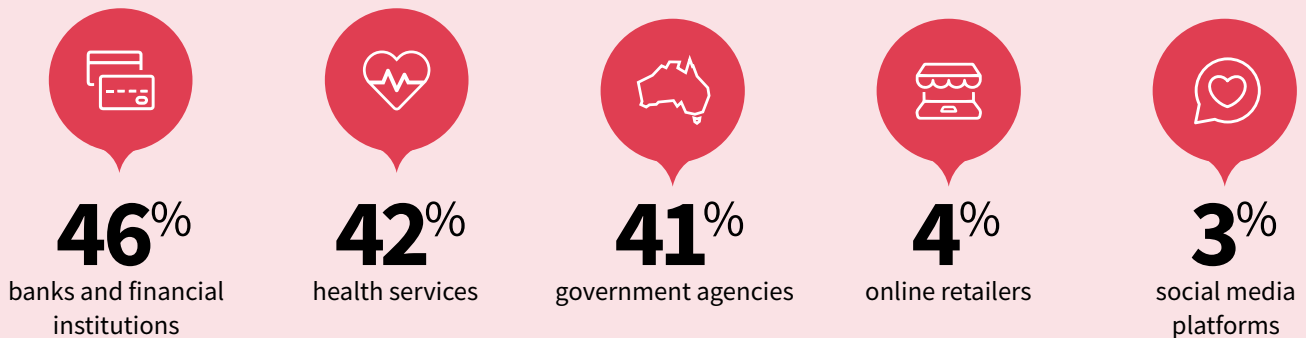


Rights, redress and support for stronger protections

Many people don't feel equipped to use their rights.



Confidence in privacy complaint handling varies by sector.



Support for stronger rights and broader coverage is very high.

