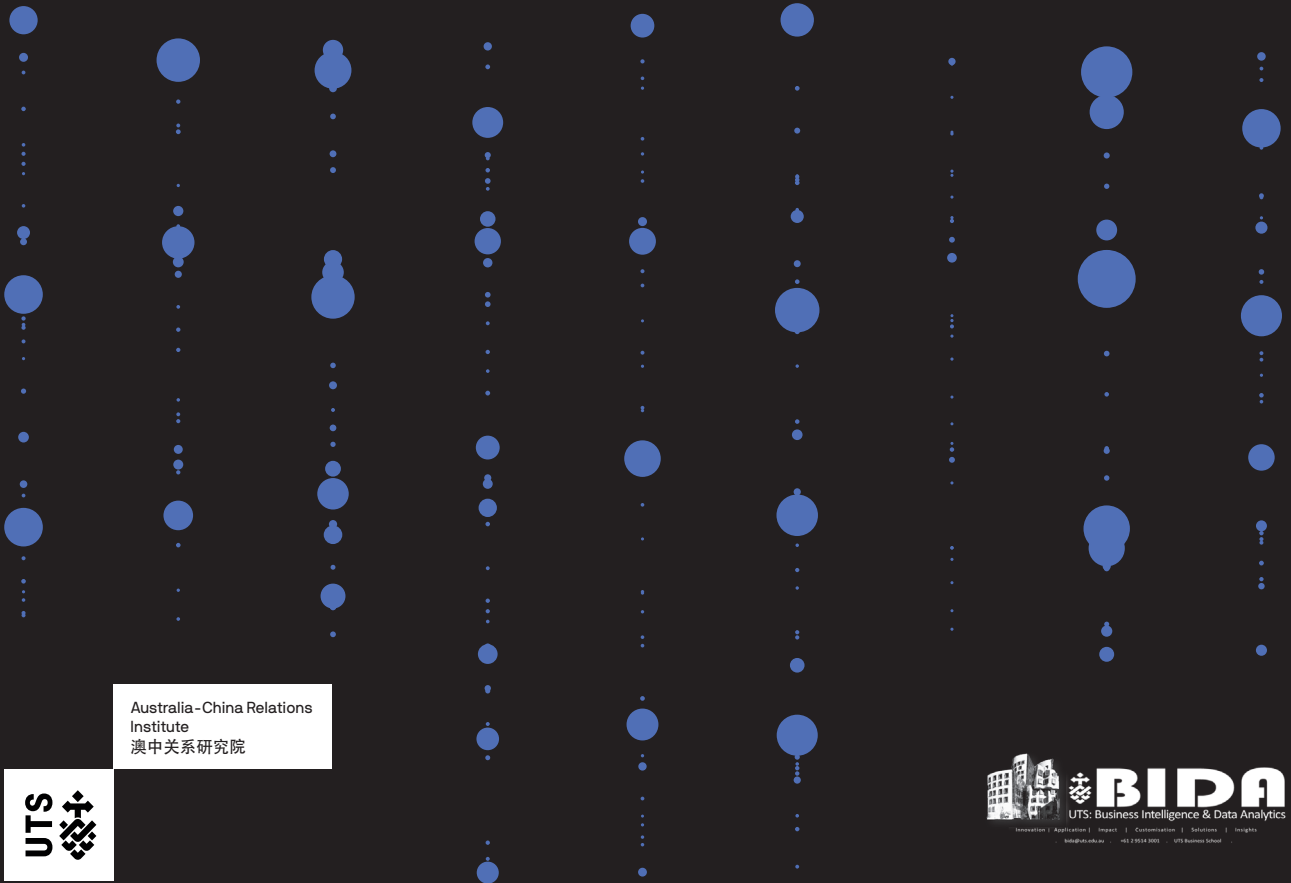


UTS:ACRI/BIDA Poll 2021

Australian views on the Australia-China relationship

Elena Collinson and Paul Burke

June 2021



Australia-China Relations
Institute
澳中关系研究院



The Australia-China Relations Institute (ACRI) is an independent, non-partisan research institute based at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). UTS:ACRI's mission is to inform Australia's engagement with China through substantive dialogue, and research and analysis grounded in scholarly rigour.

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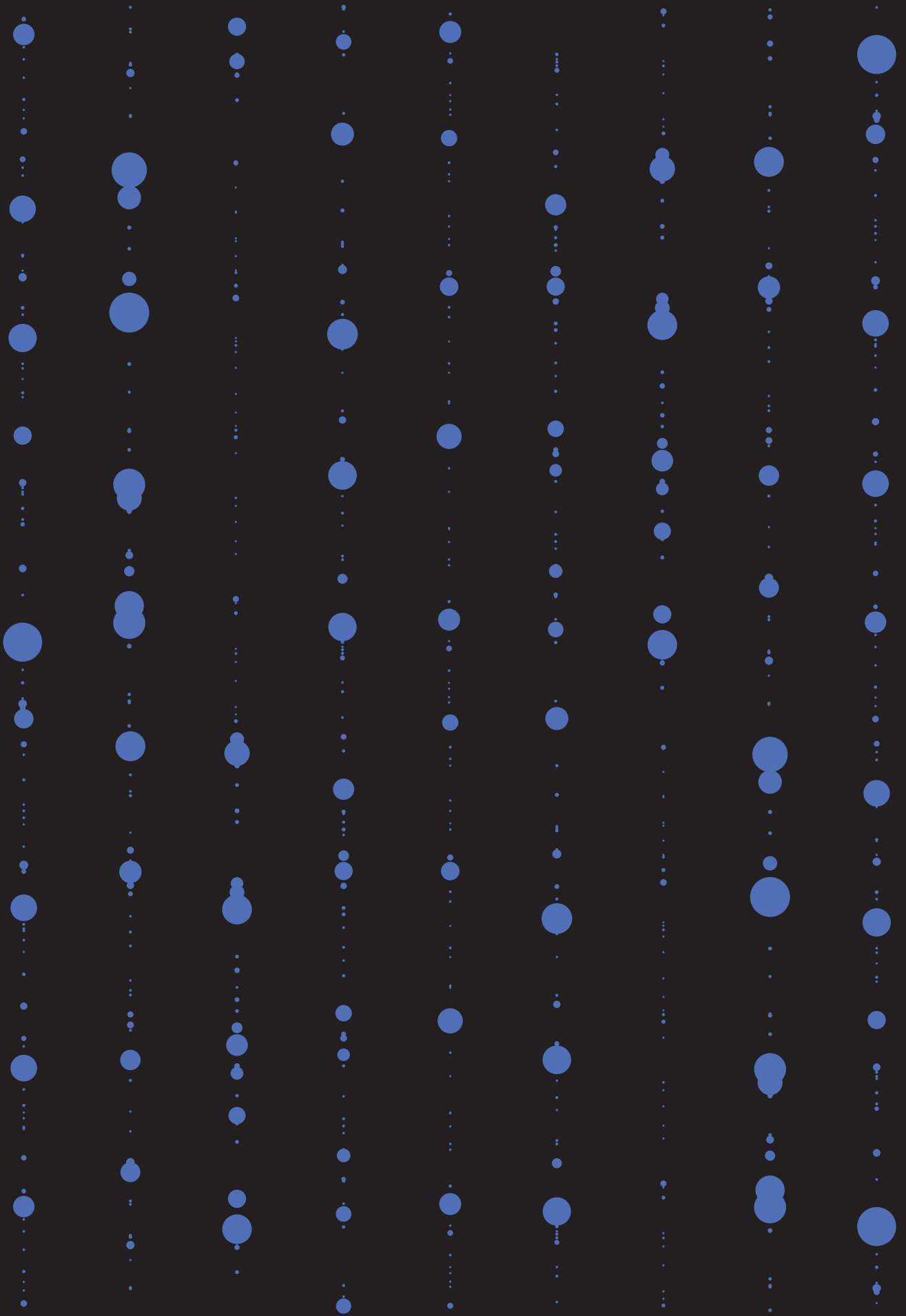


Table of contents

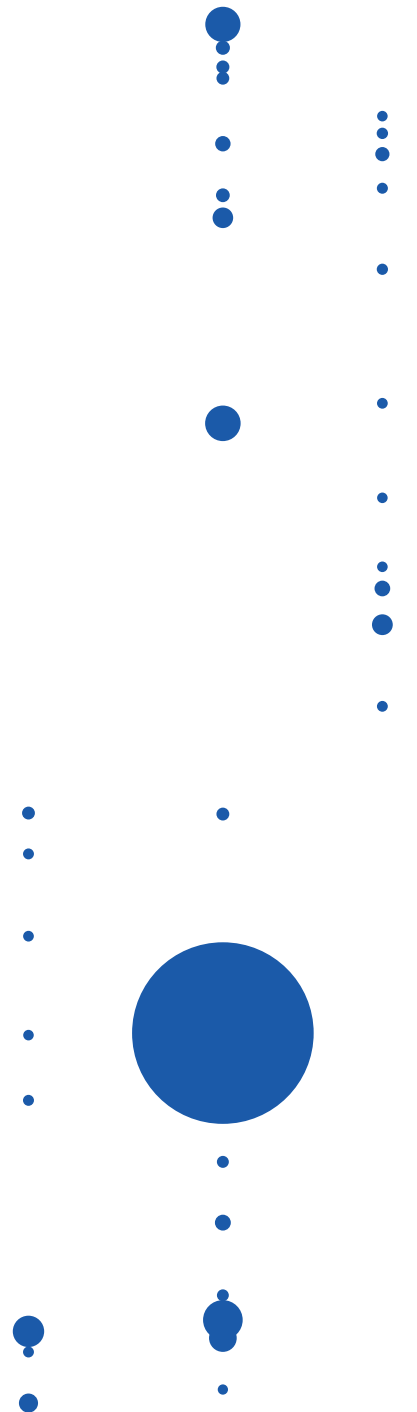
Executive Summary	1
Introduction	7
1. Overall views on the Australia-China relationship	9
1.1 Background	9
1.2 Building stronger connections and ties, a strong relationship	10
1.3 Concerns	12
1.4 Benefits	13
1.5 Mistrust of the Chinese government	14
1.6 The Australian government's management of China relations	15
1.7 A harder Australian government line on China	16
1.8 Changing views	17
1.9 Responsibility for improving the Australia-China relationship	18
1.10 Future outlook	19
2. Political communication	20
2.1 Background	20
2.2 Communication over areas of disagreement	21
2.3 Call for an international COVID-19 investigation	22
3. The United States	23
3.1 Background	23
3.2 Balancing Australia's relationships with the United States and China	24
3.3 Influence in the region	26
3.4 Economic punishment over political disagreements	27
4. Trade and investment	28
4.1 Background	28
4.2 The economic relationship overall	29
4.3 Trade case study: Tourism	31
4.4 Trade case study: Education	32
4.5 Foreign investment	33
4.6 Investment case study: Agriculture	34
4.7 Investment case study: Residential real estate	35
4.8 Business ties	37

5.	Military and security	38
	5.1 Background	38
	5.2 Security and stability	39
	5.3 Conflict over Taiwan	40
	5.4 Cybersecurity	41
	5.5 The Belt and Road Initiative	42
6.	Society	43
	6.1 Background	43
	6.2 The Australian-Chinese community	44
	6.3 Interference and influence	45
	6.4 Arbitrary detention	47
	6.5 International students	48
7.	University and research	49
	7.1 Background	49
	7.2 Freedom of academic speech	50
	7.3 Research collaborations	51
8.	Global and regional cooperation	52
	8.1 Background	52
	8.2 Global and regional cooperation	53
	Methodology	54
	About	56
	About the authors	57
	About the Australia-China Relations Institute	58
	About the Centre for Business Intelligence & Data Analytics	59
	Acknowledgements	60
	Appendix	62
	1. Overall views on the Australia-China relationship	63
	2. Political communication	67
	3. The United States	68
	4. Trade and investment	69
	5. Military and security	73
	6. Society	75
	7. University and research	78
	8. Global and regional cooperation	79
	References	80

Executive Summary

The Australia-China political relationship has been enduring significant difficulties since 2017, with the last year a particularly turbulent period. Chinese economic coercion has started to bite and Canberra's pushback against Beijing has reached a new intensity. In both Canberra and Washington there now appears to be a solid consensus across party lines on the need to respond to China's rise more forcefully. Against that backdrop, this poll by the Australia-China Relations Institute and the Centre for Business Intelligence & Data Analytics at the University of Technology Sydney takes the Australian public's pulse on current aspects of, and recent events in, the Australia-China relationship with a view to better understanding this immediate past and some of the trends which may shape its future.

A complicated picture emerges. Australians are clearly still trying to make sense of this period of tumult and understand a constantly evolving strategic situation. While Australians are concerned about both the downward spiral in relations and China's new assertiveness, they are not yet willing to give up on the relationship entirely, recognising some of its benefits. Only future polls will reveal whether these results precede a tipping point in one clear direction or whether this ambiguity can persist despite the current unprecedented strain.



1. Overall views on the Australia-China relationship

Support for building stronger connections and ties, a strong relationship: Approximately six in 10 Australians (61 percent) believe that Australia should continue to try to build strong connections and ties, and have a strong relationship with China.

Concerns: Approximately three-quarters of Australians (74 percent) express concerns about Australia's relationship with China.

Benefits: About six in 10 Australians (62 percent) also say they see the benefits of Australia's relationship with China.

Mistrust of the Chinese government: The majority of Australians (76 percent) express mistrust of the Chinese government.

The Australian government's management of China relations: A minority of Australians (32 percent) say that the Australian government is managing Australia's relationship with China well.

A harder Australian government line on China: Approximately six in 10 Australians (63 percent) believe that the Australian government should take a harder line with respect to its policies dealing with China.

Changing views: Australians' views on China have generally become more pessimistic over the last year, with the majority of Australians (62 percent) saying that their view 'has become more negative following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic'.

Responsibility for improving the Australia-China relationship: A clear majority of Australians (80 percent) agree that 'The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with both countries'. Pressed on an either-or proposition, more Australians agree that the responsibility lies with China (48 percent) rather than Australia (30 percent).

Future outlook: Australians are not optimistic about the short to medium term prospects for improvement in relations between Australia and China, with just over one-quarter of Australians (27 percent) saying that 'The Australia-China relationship will improve in the next three years'.

2. Political communication

A vocal stance: A minority of Australians (28 percent) say that 'The Australian government should not publicly call out actions by the Chinese government that Australia disagrees with'.

Call for an international COVID-19 investigation: About seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) agreed that 'The Australian government was right to publicly call for an international investigation into the origins of COVID-19'.

3. The United States

Balancing act: Most Australians believe that Australia can maintain good relations with both its key security partner and its largest trading partner simultaneously, with approximately six in 10 Australians (63 percent) saying that 'Australia can enjoy a good relationship with both China and the United States at the same time'.

Influence in the region: The majority of Australians (65 percent) believe that 'China has more influence than the United States in Australia's regional neighbourhood'.

4. Trade and investment

The economic relationship overall: A clear majority of Australians (80 percent) say that ‘Australia is too economically reliant on China’. About six in 10 Australians (63 percent) note that ‘Without close engagement with China, Australia would not be as prosperous as it currently is’. With respect to how to characterise the Australia-China economic relationship overall, Australians are fairly divided. Just over half of Australians (53 percent) say that ‘Australia’s economic relationship with China is more of an economic risk than an economic opportunity’. Australians are divided, too, about how the Australian government should approach the economic relationship, with almost half (49 percent) saying that ‘The Australian government needs to be supportive of having closer economic ties with China’.

Trade case study – Tourism: Approximately three-quarters of Australians (74 percent) believe that ‘Tourists from China provide a major economic benefit to Australia’. About six in 10 Australians (63 percent) believe ‘Australia should continue towards making Australia an attractive destination for Chinese tourists’.

Trade case study – Education: Just over three-quarters of Australians (76 percent) say that ‘International students from China provide a major economic benefit to Australia.’ But most Australians (81 percent) also say that ‘Australian universities are too financially reliant on international students from China’.

Foreign investment: While half of Australians (50 percent) agree that ‘Foreign investment from China has created job opportunities in Australia’, general support for foreign investment from China is lacklustre with approximately three in 10 Australians (29 percent) saying that ‘Foreign investment from China should be supported by Australians’. Just over half of Australians (51 percent) also believe that ‘Foreign investment from China is more detrimental than beneficial to Australia’.

Investment case study – Agriculture: Australians express concerns about Chinese investment into Australian agricultural assets. Sixty-five percent of Australians say that Chinese ownership of agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia is ‘more concerning than ownership by companies from other countries’, and a majority of Australians (70 percent) also believe that it ‘presents a threat to Australia’s food security’. A minority (29 percent) say that ‘Chinese ownership of agricultural assets is more beneficial than detrimental to Australia’s interests’.

Investment case study – Residential real estate: Australians also express concerns about Chinese investment into Australian residential real estate. About three in 10 Australians (33 percent) say that ‘Chinese investment in Australian residential real estate brings a lot of benefits for Australians (e.g., construction, new dwellings, jobs)’. A clear majority of Australians (82 percent) say that ‘Foreign buyers from China drive up Australian housing prices’. Approximately seven in 10 Australians (69 percent) say ‘Chinese investors in Australian real estate have made it difficult for first home buyers in Australia to enter the market’ and that ‘Chinese investors have negatively affected the rental market for residential real estate in Australia’ (69 percent). The majority of Australians (78 percent) believe ‘Australia should restrict the amount of investment in residential real estate that is permitted from Chinese investors’.

Business ties: Australians are generally supportive of business ties between Australia and China continuing to be forged. About six in 10 Australians (61 percent) say ‘Australian companies should continue to pursue business opportunities with China’. But Australians also express reservations, stemming from the Chinese government’s domestic policies, about business ties, saying Australia should not do business with China because of its ‘record on human rights’ (43 percent); ‘domestic censorship of media, internet and other forms of communication’ (42 percent); and ‘record on environmental practices’ (32 percent).

5. Military and security

Security and stability: Sixty-seven percent of Australians say ‘China is a security threat to Australia’. At the same time, just over half of Australians (52 percent) also contend that ‘Australia’s relationship with China contributes to regional stability and security’.

Conflict over Taiwan: Just over half of Australians (53 percent) say that ‘In the event of conflict between the United States and China over Taiwan, Australia should remain neutral’, with 29 percent undecided and 18 percent disagreeing. Pressed on whether Australia should lend military support to the United States in the event of conflict between the US and China over Taiwan, 45 percent of Australians agree with the statement, with 43 percent undecided and 13 percent disagreeing.

Cybersecurity: Half of Australians (50 percent) believe ‘Australia should ban Chinese-owned apps such as TikTok and WeChat’. Older Australians aged 55+ (57 percent) are more likely to agree and younger Australians aged 18-34 (36 percent) are less likely to agree.

The Belt and Road Initiative: Just over half of Australians (53 percent) believe that ‘The Australian government is right not to sign up to/participate in China’s Belt and Road Initiative’.

6. Society

The Australian-Chinese community: Approximately six in 10 Australians (63 percent) say that ‘Political tensions in the Australia-China relationship are negatively impacting Australians of Chinese origin’. About four in 10 Australians (39 percent) say they believe that ‘Australians of Chinese origin can be mobilised by the Chinese government to undermine Australia’s interests and social cohesion’. Thirty percent of Australians disagree with this statement, with 31 percent undecided.

Interference and influence: About seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) believe that ‘Foreign interference in Australia stemming from China is a major problem’. This is compared with about four in 10 (37 percent) who believe that ‘Foreign interference in Australia stemming from the United States is a major problem’; and about five in 10 (47 percent) who believe that ‘Foreign interference in Australia stemming from Russia is a major problem’. Almost half of Australians (46 percent) say ‘Australian values and traditions are being undermined by Chinese government influence in Australia’. Thirty-five percent of Australians believe that ‘The Australian government is successfully responding to Chinese government interference in Australia’.

Arbitrary detention: About seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) say that ‘The risk of arbitrary detention is a concern when considering travel to China’. Approximately seven in 10 Australians (68 percent) also believe that ‘China is willing to detain/arrest Australian citizens without any legal basis to punish Australia over political disagreements’.

International students: While the majority of Australians (76 percent) acknowledge the economic benefits of Chinese international students studying in Australia, about six in 10 Australians (58 percent) also say that these students ‘help strengthen the people-to-people links between the two countries’. A minority (40 percent) express concern that students ‘are potentially reducing the quality of education at Australian universities’ although an effectively equal number (41 percent) disagree with this statement. Four in 10 Australians (42 percent) are concerned that ‘International students from China mean there are less places for domestic students to study in their choice of Australian university’.

7. University and research

Freedom of academic speech: Nearly half of Australians (48 percent) say that ‘Australian university ties with China compromise Australian freedom of speech’.

Research collaborations: Australians are not quite convinced (48 percent) that ‘Research collaborations between academics from Australia and China makes Australia more competitive internationally’. Pressed on scientific research collaborations in particular, approximately seven in 10 Australians (68 percent) say ‘It is beneficial for Australian scientists to have research connections to China’.

8. Global and regional cooperation

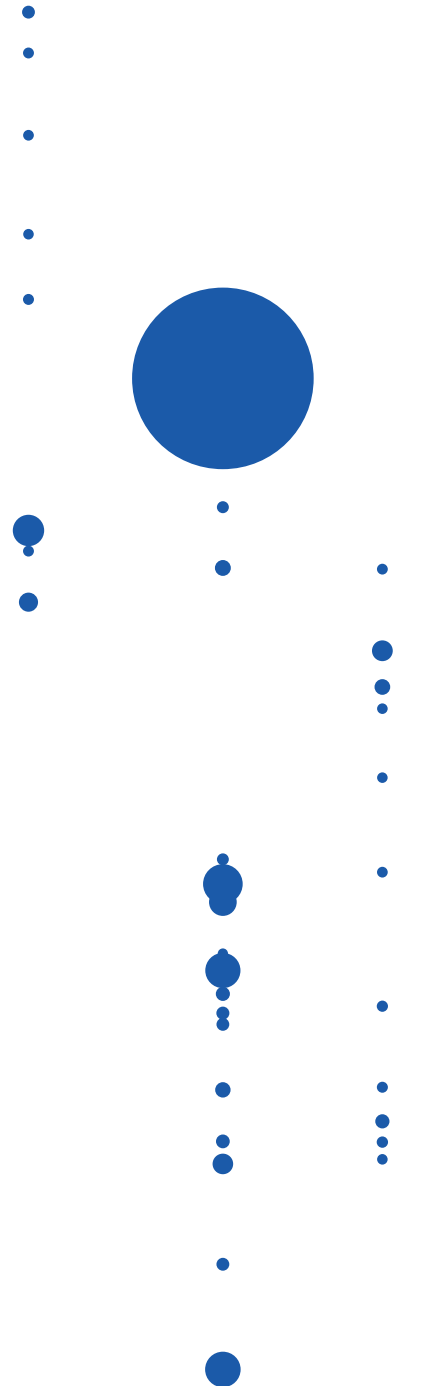
The majority of Australians see the benefits of Australia working cooperatively with China to tackle global and regional issues. Nearly three-quarters of Australians (74 percent) believe that ‘It is beneficial for Australia to work with China on global issues, such as climate change and global health’ and an almost equivalent number (72 percent) that ‘It is beneficial for Australia to work with China on regional issues, such as ending malaria in the Pacific’.



Introduction

The Australia-China political relationship has been enduring significant difficulties since 2017, with the last year a particularly turbulent period. Chinese economic coercion has started to bite and Canberra's pushback against Beijing has reached a new intensity. In both Canberra and Washington there now appears to be a solid consensus across party lines on the need to respond to China's rise more forcefully. Against that backdrop, this poll by the Australia-China Relations Institute and the Centre for Business Intelligence & Data Analytics at the University of Technology Sydney takes the Australian public's pulse on recent events in the Australia-China relationship with a view to better understanding this immediate past and some of the trends which may shape its future.

A complicated picture emerges. Australians are clearly still trying to make sense of this period of tumult and understand a constantly evolving strategic situation. At once Australians are concerned about both the downward spiral in relations and China's new assertiveness but not yet willing to give up on the relationship entirely, recognising some of its benefits. Only future polls will show whether these results precede a tipping point in one clear direction or whether this ambiguity can persist despite the current unprecedented strain.



1. Overall views on the Australia-China relationship

1.1 Background

The Australia-China relationship had been described by Canberra and Beijing as a ‘comprehensive strategic partnership’ since 2014. Recently, however, both governments have moved away from making reference to the descriptor. New developments in the deterioration of the relationship and associated commentary have been a fixture in the Australian press, and numerous areas of Australian society – not least industry and community – have felt the effects of bilateral tensions.

1.2 Building stronger connections and ties, a strong relationship

Approximately six in 10 Australians (61 percent) believe that Australia should continue to try to build strong connections and ties, and have a strong relationship with China. Twenty-two percent of Australians express neutrality and 17 percent disagree with the sentiment (Figure 1).

The biggest factor driving support for the sentiment was among survey respondents who acknowledged the benefits of the Australia-China relationship. Respondents who concurrently expressed concerns about the relationship were not precluded from also expressing support for Australia building stronger connections and ties, and having a strong relationship with China. While the level of satisfaction expressed at the Australian government's management of the relationship did not have any significant bearing on this sentiment, those who tended towards agreeing a harder line ought to be taken were less likely to support the view that Australia should build stronger connections and ties, and have a strong relationship with China (Figure 2).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses agreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported residing in the Northern Territory; completing a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education; their employment status as retired; earning a higher income (more than \$74,367.34 per annum); and voting for the Greens in the 2019 federal election (Table 1).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses disagreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported residing in New South Wales; completing a certificate/trade/diploma as their highest level of education; their employment status as unemployed; earning a lower income (less than \$74,367.34 per annum); and voting for a minority party in the 2019 federal election (Table 1).

Figure 1. Support for Australia building stronger connections and ties, having a strong relationship with China

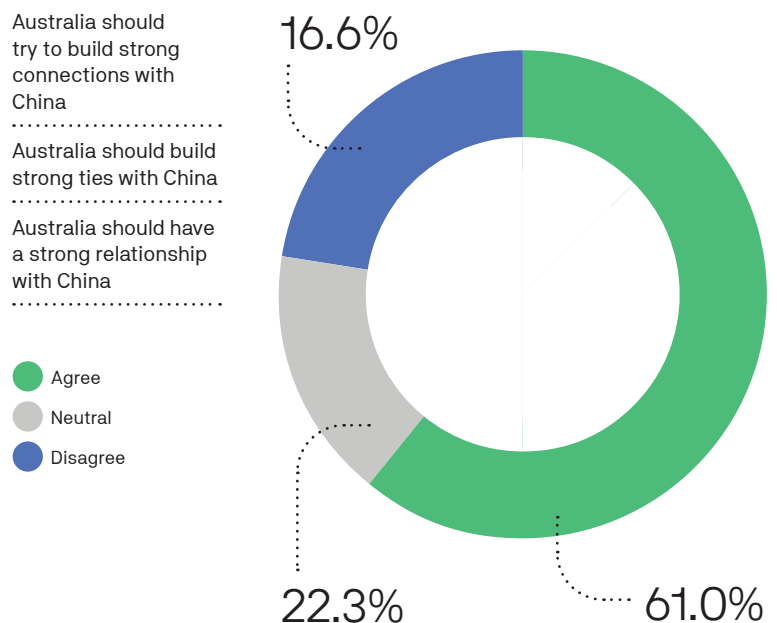


Figure 2. Predictors of support for Australia building stronger connections and ties, having a strong relationship with China

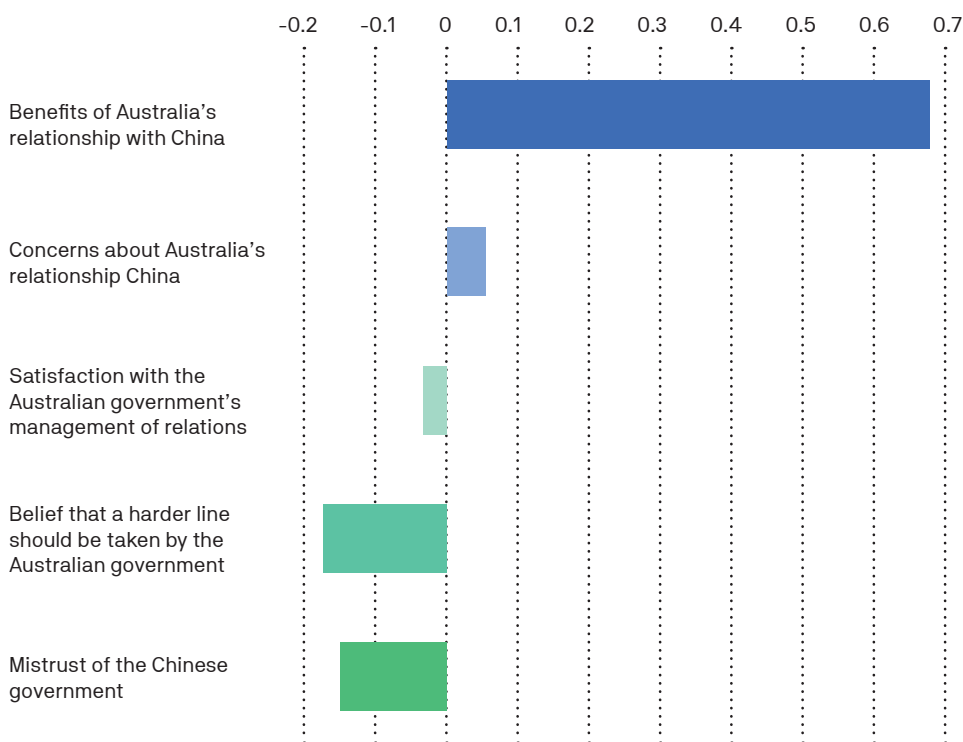


Table 1. Impact of latent factors on support for building stronger connections and ties, having a strong relationship with China

	More supportive	Less supportive
State	Northern Territory	New South Wales
Gender	-	-
Age	-	-
Location (Urban/rural)	-	-
Household type	-	-
Education (highest level)	Bachelor's degree	Certificate/Trade/Diploma
Employment	Retired	Unemployed
Income	Higher income (>\$74,367.34 p.a.)	Lower income (<\$74,367.34 p.a.)
Voting behaviour in the 2019 federal election	Greens	Minority party

1.3 Concerns

About three-quarters of Australians (74 percent) express concerns about Australia’s relationship with China. Eighteen percent express neutrality and eight percent disagree with the sentiment (Figure 3).

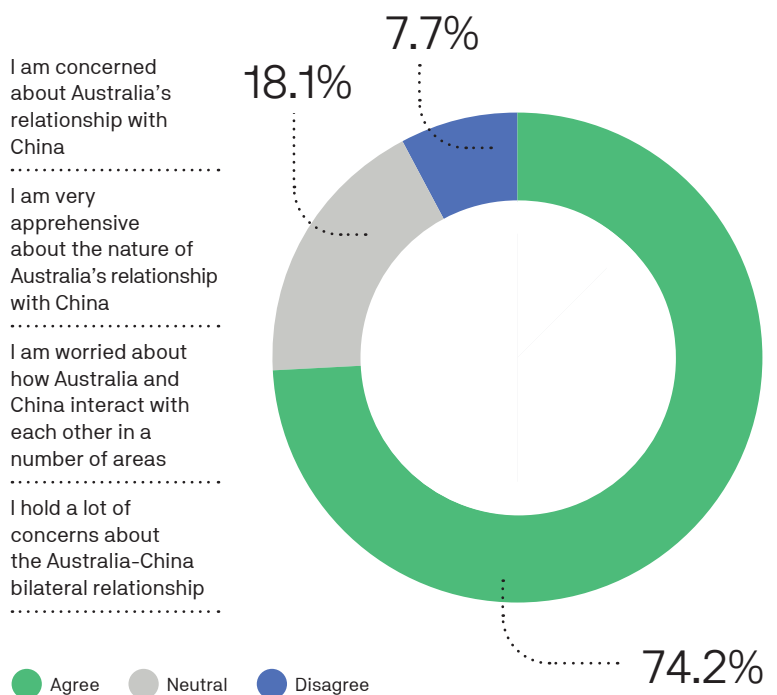
Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses in agreement with the sentiment were respondents who reported occupying an older age bracket (aged 47+) (Table 2).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses in disagreement with the sentiment were respondents who reported occupying a younger age bracket (aged 18-46); and not voting in the last federal election (Table 2).

Table 2. Impact of latent factors on concerns about Australia’s relationship with China

	More concerned	Less concerned
State	-	-
Gender	-	-
Age	Older (aged 47+)	Younger (aged 18-46)
Location (Urban/rural)	-	-
Household type	-	-
Education (highest level)	-	-
Employment	-	-
Income	-	-
Voting behaviour in the 2019 federal election	-	Did not vote

Figure 3. Concerns about Australia’s relationship with China



1.4 Benefits

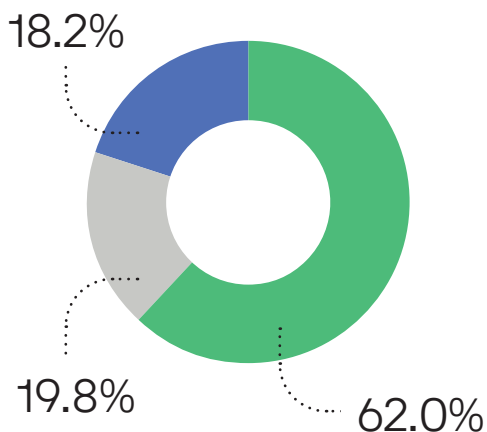
About six in 10 Australians (62 percent) say they see the benefits of Australia’s relationship with China. Twenty percent express neutrality and 18 percent disagree with the sentiment (Figure 4).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses agreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported residing in the Australian Capital Territory or Tasmania; completing a bachelor’s degree as their highest level of education; their employment status as retired; earning a higher income (more than \$74,367.34 per annum); and voting

for the Liberal/Nationals in the 2019 federal election (Table 3).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses disagreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported residing in New South Wales or Victoria; completing a certificate/trade/diploma as their highest level of education; their employment status as unemployed; earning a lower income (less than \$74,367.34 per annum); and either voting for a minority party or not voting in the 2019 federal election (Table 3).

Figure 4. **Benefits of Australia’s relationship with China**



- It is very beneficial for Australia to have a working relationship with China
- I believe the nature of Australia’s relationship with China is of great value for Australia
- I believe how Australia and China interact with each other in a number of areas provides many benefits for Australia
- Australia’s relationship with China is positive for Australia

Table 3. **Impact of latent factors on the benefits of Australia’s relationship with China**

	More beneficial	Less beneficial
State	Australian Capital Territory; Tasmania	New South Wales; Victoria
Gender	-	-
Age	-	-
Location (Urban/rural)	-	-
Household type	-	-
Education (highest level)	Bachelor’s degree	Certificate/Trade/ Diploma
Employment	Retired	Unemployed
Income	Higher income (>\$74,367.34 p.a.)	Lower income (<\$74,367.34 p.a.)
Voting behaviour in the 2019 federal election	Liberal/National	Minority party; Did not vote

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

1.5 Mistrust of the Chinese government

The majority of Australians (76 percent) express mistrust of the Chinese government. Sixteen percent express neutrality and eight percent disagree with the sentiment (Figure 5).

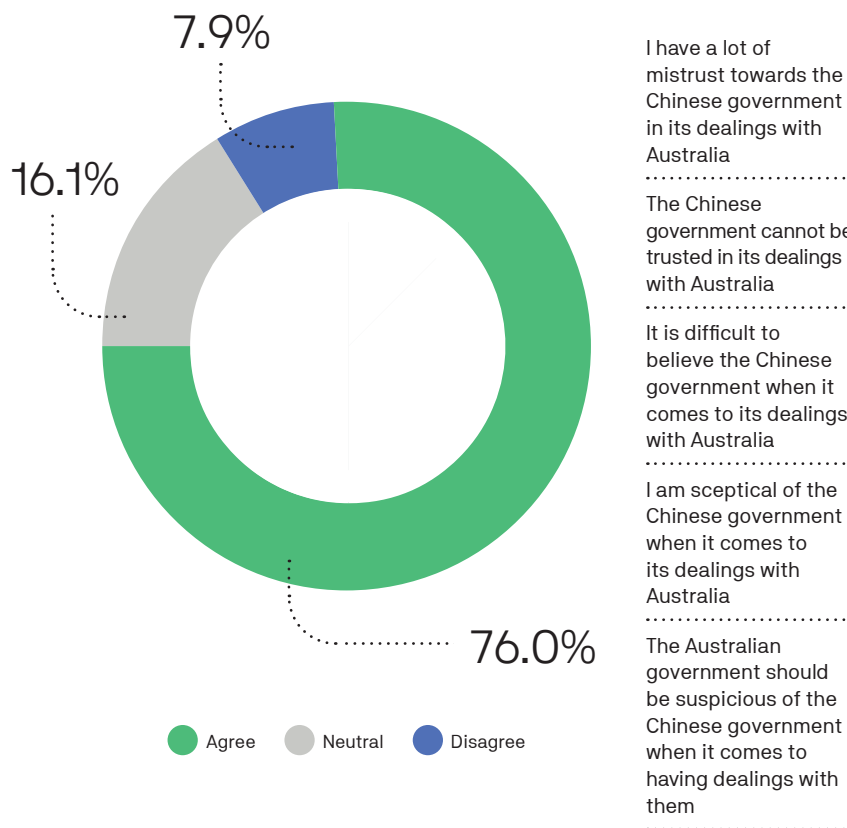
Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses in agreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported their gender as male; occupying an older age bracket (aged 47+); employment status as employed full-time; and voting for the Liberal/Nationals in the 2019 federal election (Table 4).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses disagreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported residing in the Northern Territory; their gender as female; occupying a younger age bracket (aged 18-46); and not voting in the 2019 federal election (Table 4).

Table 4. Impact of latent factors on mistrust of the Chinese government

	More mistrusting	Less mistrusting
State	-	Northern Territory
Gender	Male	Female
Age	Older (aged 47+)	Younger (aged 18-46)
Location (Urban/rural)	-	-
Household type	-	-
Education (highest level)	-	-
Employment	Employed full-time	-
Income	-	-
Voting behaviour	Liberal/National	Did not vote

Figure 5. Mistrust of the Chinese government



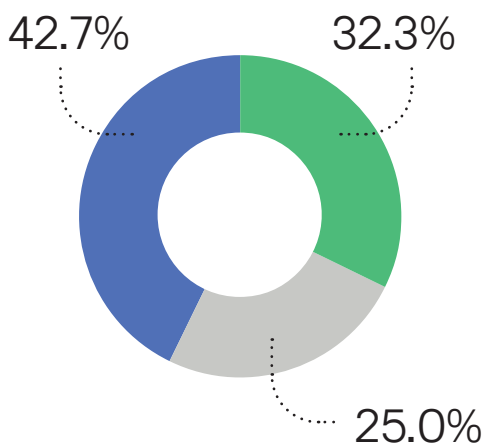
1.6 The Australian government's management of China relations

A minority of Australians (32 percent) say that the Australian government is managing Australia's relationship with China well. Twenty-five percent express neutrality and 43 percent disagree with the sentiment (Figure 6).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses agreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported their gender as female; occupying a younger age bracket (aged 18-46); their household type as parents; and voting for the Liberal/National Party in the 2019 federal election (Table 5).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses disagreeing with the sentiment were respondents who reported residing in Western Australia; their gender as male; occupying an older age bracket (aged 47+); their household type as a couple with no dependents; voting for the Australian Labor Party or a minority party in the 2019 federal election (Table 5).

Figure 6. Satisfaction with the Australian government's management of China relations



The Australian government is managing Australia's relationship with China well

The Australian government is doing a good job in managing Australia's relationship with China

I am satisfied with the Australian government's management of Australia's relationship with China

Table 5. Impact of latent factors on satisfaction with the Australian government's management of China relations

	More satisfied	Less satisfied
State	-	Western Australia
Gender	Female	Male
Age	Younger (aged 18-46)	Older (aged 47+)
Location (Urban/rural)	-	-
Household type	Parents	Couple (no dependents)
Education (highest level)	-	-
Employment	-	-
Income	-	-
Voting behaviour in the 2019 federal election	Liberal/National	Australian Labor Party; Minority party

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

1.7 A harder Australian government line on China

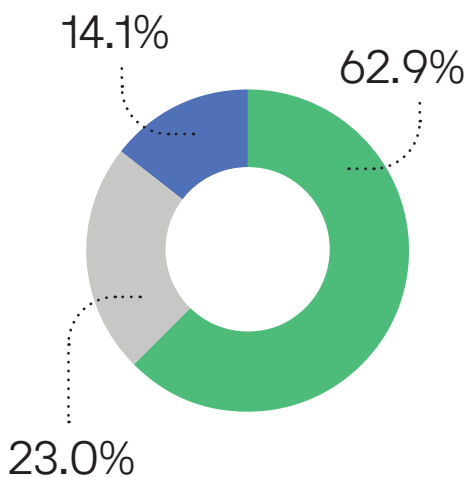
Approximately six in 10 Australians (63 percent) believe that the Australian government should take a harder line with respect to its policies dealing with China. Twenty-three percent express neutrality and 14 percent disagree with the sentiment (Figure 7).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses in agreement with the sentiment were respondents who reported completing a certificate/trade/diploma as their highest level of education; earning a lower income (less than \$74,367.34 per

annum); and voting for a minority party in the 2019 federal election (Table 6).

Latent factors that had the most significant impact on responses in disagreement with the sentiment were respondents who reported completing a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education; earning a higher income (more than \$74,367.34 per annum); and not voting in the 2019 federal election (Table 6).

Figure 7. Support for a harder Australian government line on China



I believe the Australian government should take a harder line with respect to its relationship with China

I believe the Australian government should take a harder line with respect to its policies dealing with China

Australia should be harder when it comes to dealing with China

Table 6. Impact of latent factors on support for a harder Australian government line on China

	More supportive	Less supportive
State	-	-
Gender	-	-
Age	-	-
Location (Urban/rural)	-	-
Household type	-	-
Education (highest level)	Certificate/Trade/Diploma	Bachelor's degree
Employment	-	-
Income	Lower income (<\$74,367.34 p.a.)	Higher income (>\$74,367.34 p.a.)
Voting behaviour in the 2019 federal election	Minority party	Did not vote

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

1.8 Changing views

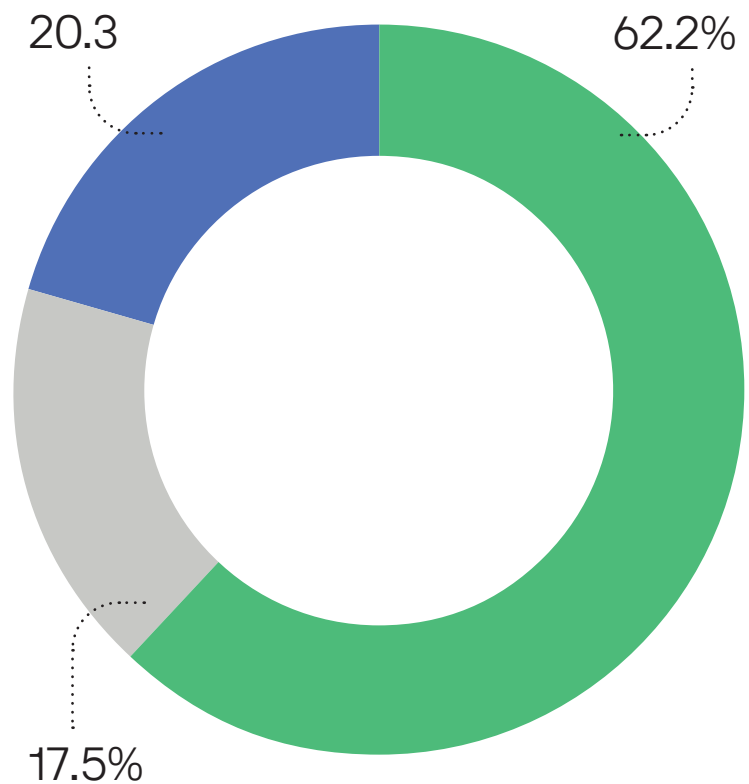
'My view of China has become more negative following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic'

About six in 10 Australians (62 percent) agree with this statement. Eighteen percent express neutrality and 20 percent disagree (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Changing views of China following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

My view of China has become more negative following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree



1.9 Responsibility for improving the Australia-China relationship

‘The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with both countries’

A clear majority of Australians (80 percent) agree with this statement. Fourteen percent express neutrality and seven percent disagree (Figure 9).

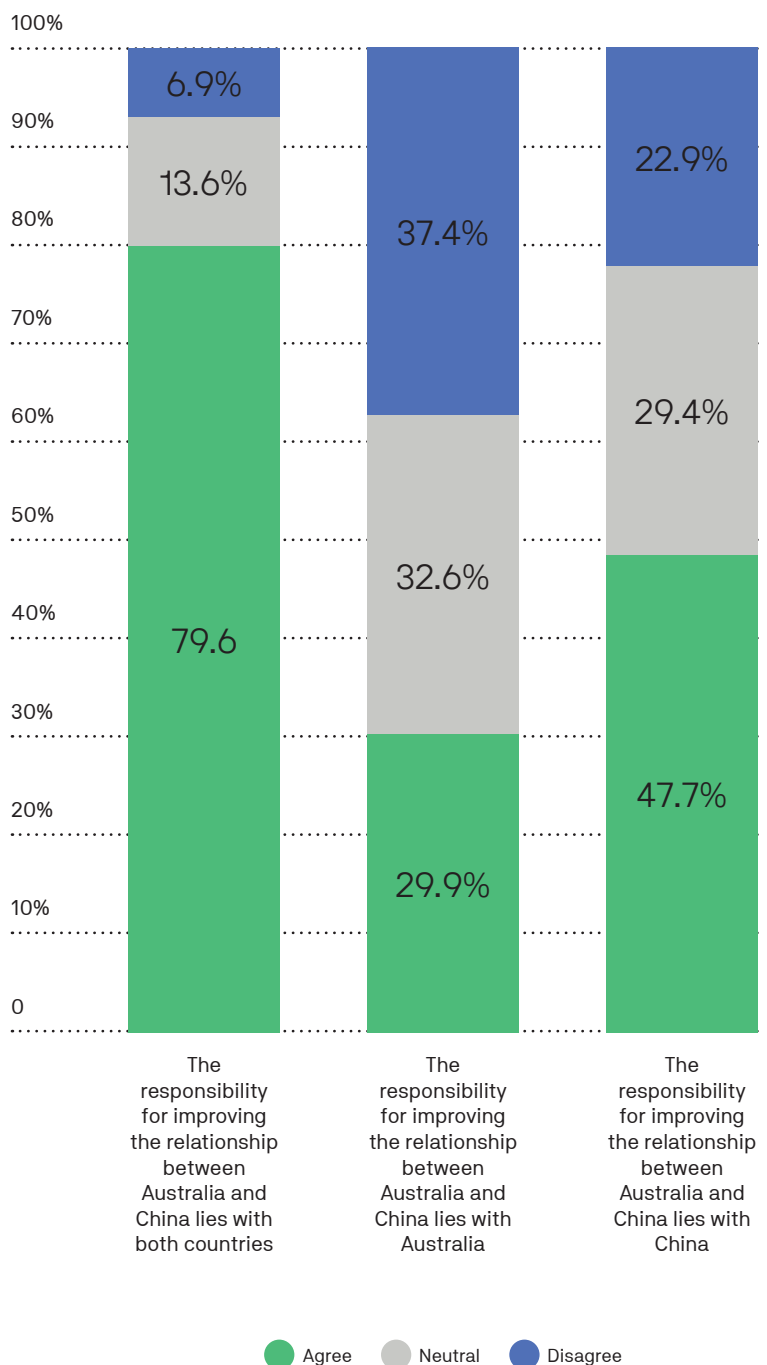
‘The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with Australia’

Three in 10 Australians (30 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-three percent express neutrality and 37 percent disagree (Figure 9).

‘The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with China’

Almost half of Australians (48 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-nine percent express neutrality and 23 percent disagree (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Responsibility for improving the Australia-China relationship



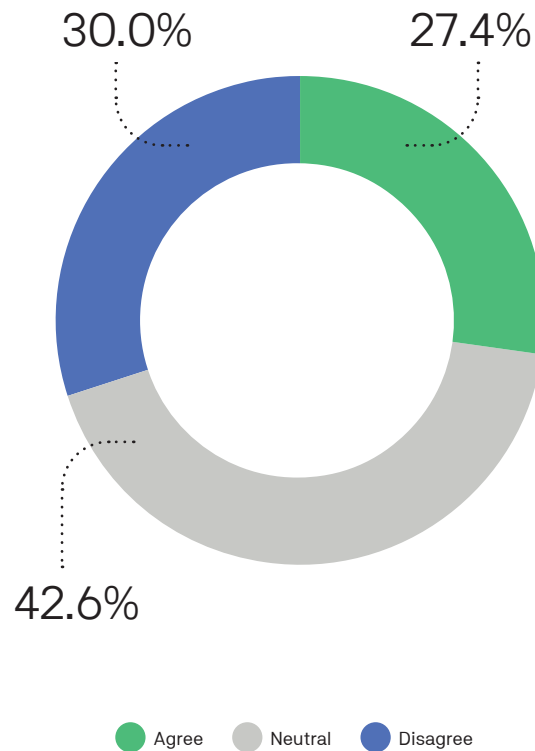
1.10 Future outlook

'The Australia-China relationship will improve in the next three years'

Just over one-quarter of Australians (27 percent) agree with this statement. Forty-three percent express neutrality and 30 percent disagree (Figure 10).

Figure 10. **Improvement of the Australia-China relationship in the next three years**

The Australia-China relationship will improve in the next three years



2.

Political communication

2.1 Background

As the Australian and Chinese governments clash in a number of policy areas, discussion in various sectors has turned to how political disagreements and areas of concern might be most effectively communicated by the Australian government (Hurst and Davidson, 2020; Jaipragas, 2020; Galloway, 2021). The Chinese Foreign Ministry and China's diplomatic representatives in Australia have been vocal in their criticisms of Australia (See, e.g., Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2021; Wang, 2021; Tillett, 2021) and so too have some Australian political representatives in their criticisms of China, particularly amongst the backbench (See, e.g., Hastie, 2019; Hurst, 2020). Australia's Defence Minister Peter Dutton in May this year said he wanted to have a 'more frank discussion with the public' about China's intentions (Galloway, 2021). In parallel, the availability of open lines of communication between the two governments are dwindling, with a lack of ministerial-level contact over the last two years and Beijing's suspension of fora such as the China-Australia Strategic Economic Dialogue.

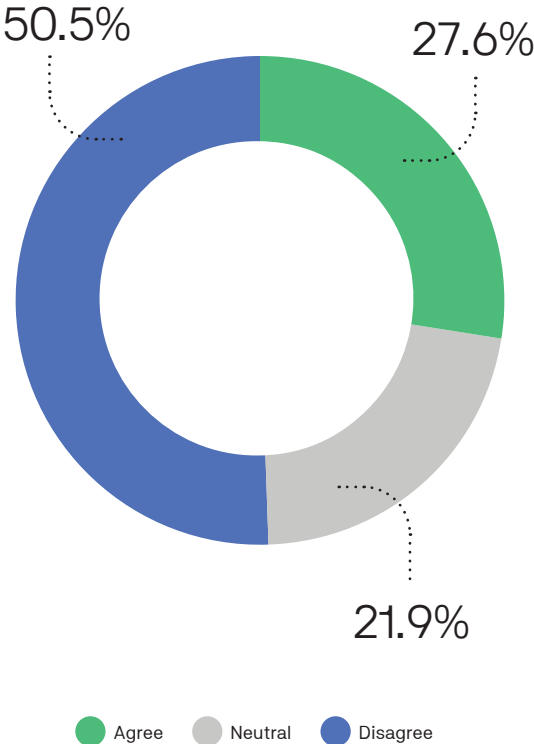
2.2 Communication over areas of disagreement

‘The Australian government should not publicly call out actions by the Chinese government that Australia disagrees with’

A minority of Australians (28 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-two percent express neutrality and 51 percent disagree (Figure 11).

Figure 11. **Communication by the Australian government over areas of disagreement**

The Australian government should not publicly call out actions by the Chinese government that Australia disagrees with



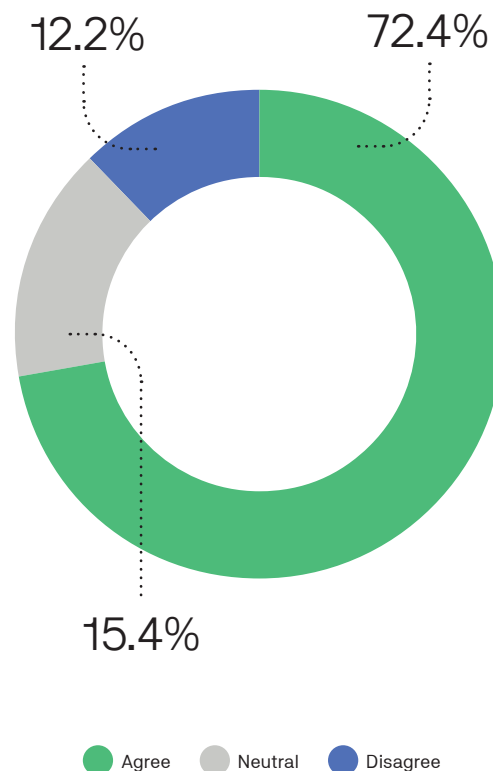
2.3 Call for an international COVID-19 investigation

‘The Australian government was right to publicly call for an international investigation into the origins of COVID-19’

Seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) agree with this statement. Fifteen percent express neutrality and 12 percent disagree (Figure 12). **An age divide:** Australians aged 35-54 (75 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (66 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (80 percent) or a minority party (74 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Greens (58 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 12. **Support for the Australian government’s call for a COVID-19 investigation**

The Australian government was right to publicly call for an international investigation into the origins of COVID-19



3.

The United States

3.1

Background

Since the mid-1990s, Australia has sought to balance its relationship with its key security partner, the United States, and its relationship with its largest trading partner, China. But as US-China tensions grow, Canberra's balancing act has become more complicated. As the United States seeks to leverage its alliances and partnerships in its strategic competition with China, and as China presses the line that Canberra does not act independently of Washington, Australia finds itself in an increasingly fraught geopolitical landscape.

3.2 Balancing Australia's relationships with the United States and China

'Australia can enjoy a good relationship with both China and the United States at the same time'

Approximately six in 10 Australians (63 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-one percent express neutrality and 16 percent disagree (Figure 13).

A state/territory divide: Western Australia residents (76 percent) are more likely to agree. New South Wales residents (51 percent) are less likely to agree.

'Australia's relationship with China weakens our alliance with the United States'

About three in 10 Australians (33 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-three percent express neutrality and 34 percent disagree (Figure 13).

An age divide: Younger Australians aged 18-34 (42 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (24 percent) are less likely to agree.

A state/territory divide: Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania residents (both 17 percent) are less likely to agree with the statement compared with residents in other Australian states and territories.

'The United States will eventually force Australia to choose between a close relationship with Washington or a close relationship with Beijing'

Approximately four in 10 Australians (39 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-four percent express neutrality and 27 percent disagree (Figure 13).

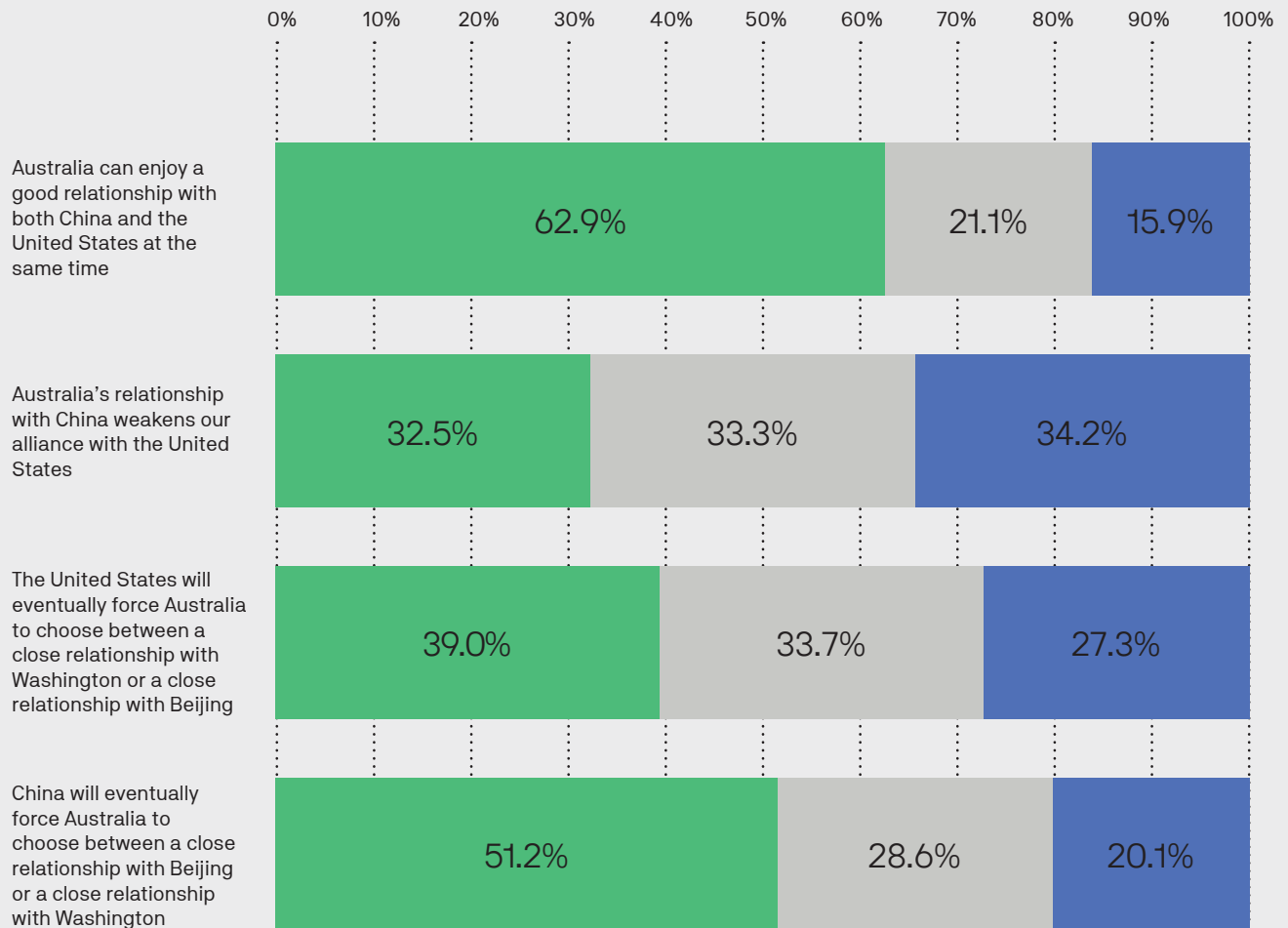
An age divide: Younger Australians aged 18-34 (45 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (33 percent) are less likely to agree.

A state/territory divide: Victoria residents (50 percent) are more likely to agree compared with residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (37 percent) at the 2019 federal election are less likely to agree.

'China will eventually force Australia to choose between a close relationship with Beijing or a close relationship with Washington'

Just over half of Australians (51 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-nine percent express neutrality and 20 percent disagree (Figure 13). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (47 percent) are less likely to agree that Beijing would force Australia to choose between the countries.

Figure 13.
**Australia's relationships with the
 United States and China**



● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree

3.3 Influence in the region

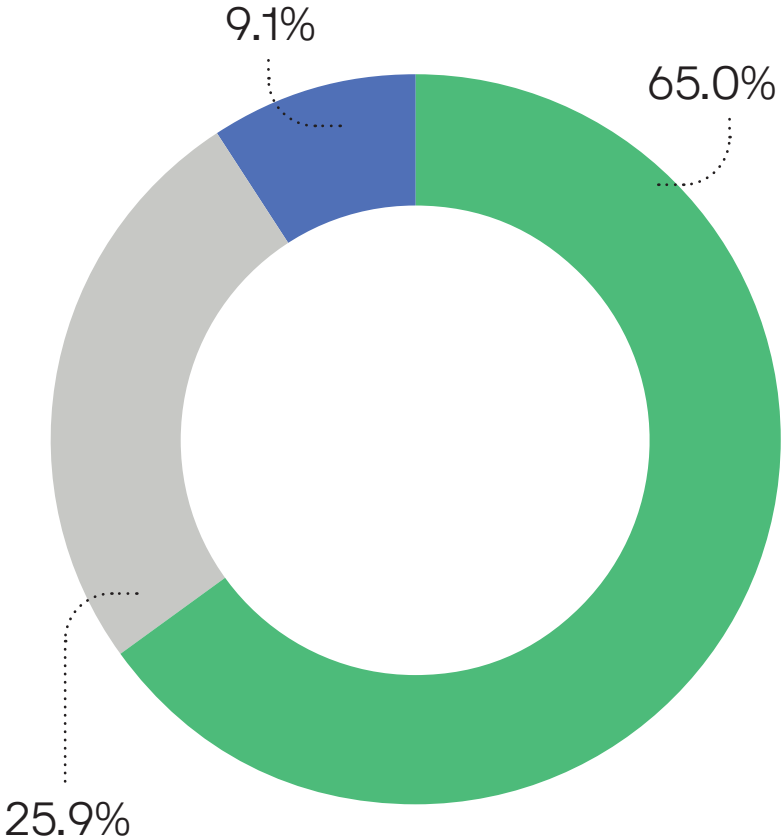
'China has more influence than the US in Australia's regional neighbourhood'

The majority of Australians (65 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-six percent express neutrality and nine percent disagree with this statement (Figure 14).

Figure 14. **The US and China's regional influence**

China has more influence than the US in Australia's regional neighborhood

● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree



3.4 Economic punishment over political disagreements

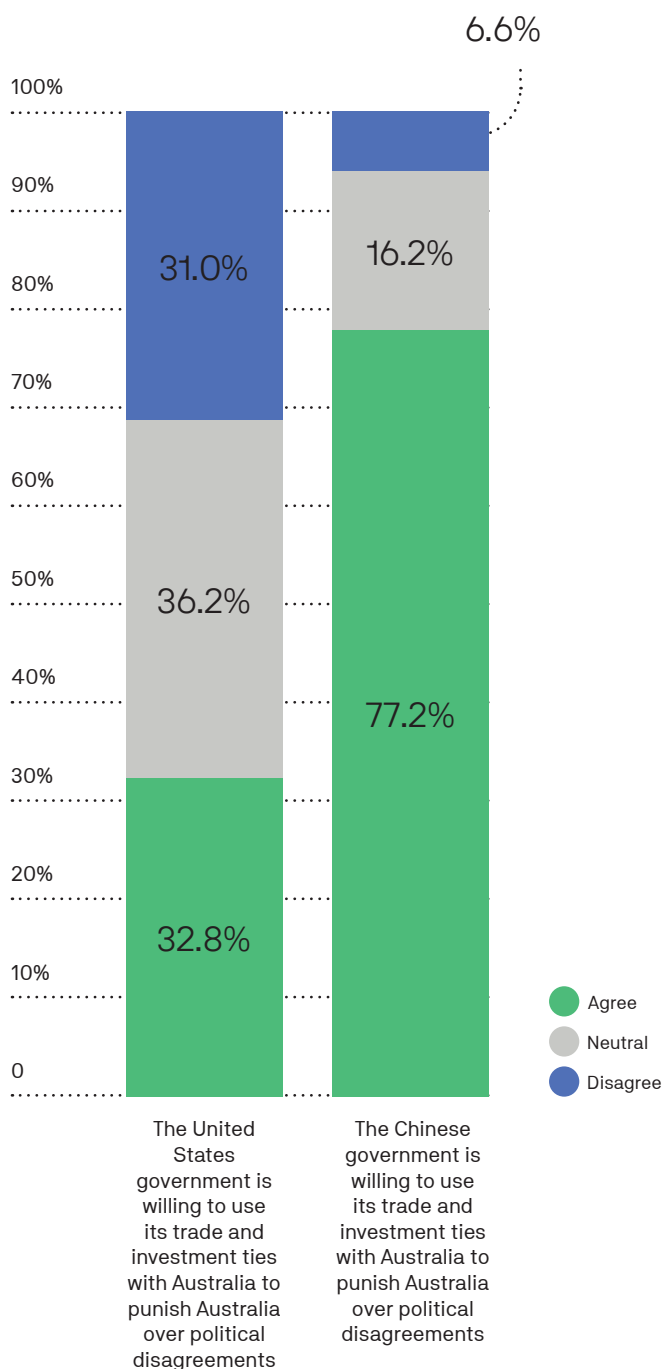
‘The United States government is willing to use its trade and investment ties with Australia to punish Australia over political disagreements’

About three in 10 Australians (33 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-six percent express neutrality and 31 percent disagree (Figure 15). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (30 percent) are less likely to agree compared with younger Australians.

‘The Chinese government is willing to use its trade and investment ties with Australia to punish Australia over political disagreements’

Just over three-quarters of Australians (77 percent) agree with this statement. Sixteen percent express neutrality and seven percent disagree (Figure 15). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (90 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (63 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 15. The US and China’s willingness to mete out economic punishment over political disagreements



4.

Trade and investment

4.1 Background

While the political relationship between Australia and China has been declining since the second half of 2016 (Collinson, 2017), spillage into the economic relationship had been largely minimal, at least through to the end of 2019. Since then, the Australia-China economic relationship has markedly deteriorated. Trade experienced significant disruptions, with Beijing introducing tariffs on, and suspensions of, Australian beef, timber, barley, wine, coal, and targeting other key Australian export industries such as seafood, education and tourism. While two-way trade in 2019-20 reached \$251 billion (up seven percent year on year) (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2021) this was significantly driven by iron ore. Investment also suffered, with Chinese investment in Australia dropping by 61 percent in 2020, a six-year low, and Australian investment in China falling by 25 percent (Australian National University, 2021; Wilson, 2021). Several Chinese investment applications were also rejected by the Australian Treasurer on national security grounds.

4.2 The economic relationship overall

‘Australia is too economically reliant on China’

A clear majority of Australians (80 percent) agree with this statement. Sixteen percent express neutrality and three percent disagree with the statement (Figure 16). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (89 percent) are more likely to agree compared with younger Australians.

‘The Chinese government’s recent placement of trade restrictions on Australian exports is extremely worrying’

Approximately eight in 10 Australians (78 percent) agree with this statement. Fifteen percent express neutrality and eight percent disagree (Figure 16). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (91 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18–34 (62 percent) are less likely to agree. **A state/territory divide:** Australian Capital Territory residents (87 percent) are more likely to agree. Queensland residents (68 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (89 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

‘Without close engagement with China, Australia would not be as prosperous as it currently is’

Six in 10 Australians (63 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-two percent express neutrality and 16 percent disagree (Figure 16). **A state/territory divide:** Australian Capital Territory residents (71 percent) are more likely to agree. Queensland residents (46 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for a minority party (55 percent) at the 2019 federal election are less likely to agree.

‘Trade with China has created job opportunities in Australia’

Sixty-five percent of Australians agree with this statement. Twenty-four percent express neutrality and 11 percent disagree (Figure 16).

‘Australia’s economic relationship with China is more of an economic risk than an economic opportunity’

Just over half of Australians (53 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-seven percent express neutrality and 20 percent disagree (Figure 16). **A state/territory divide:** Australian Capital Territory residents (41 percent) are less likely to agree compared with residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (41 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘The Australian government needs to be supportive of having closer economic ties with China’

Almost half of Australians (49 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-one percent express neutrality and 20 percent disagree (Figure 16). **A state/territory divide:** South Australia residents (24 percent) are less likely to agree compared with residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (58 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for a minority party (36 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 16.
Views on the Australia-China economic relationship overall



4.3 Trade case study: Tourism

‘Tourists from China provide a major economic benefit to Australia’

Approximately three-quarters of Australians (74 percent) agree with this statement. Sixteen percent express neutrality and nine percent disagree (Figure 17). **A state/territory divide:** Australian Capital Territory (86 percent), Queensland (85 percent) and Northern Territory (82 percent) residents are more likely to agree. New South Wales (65 percent) and Western Australia (63 percent) residents are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (80 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

‘Australia should continue towards making Australia an attractive destination for Chinese tourists’

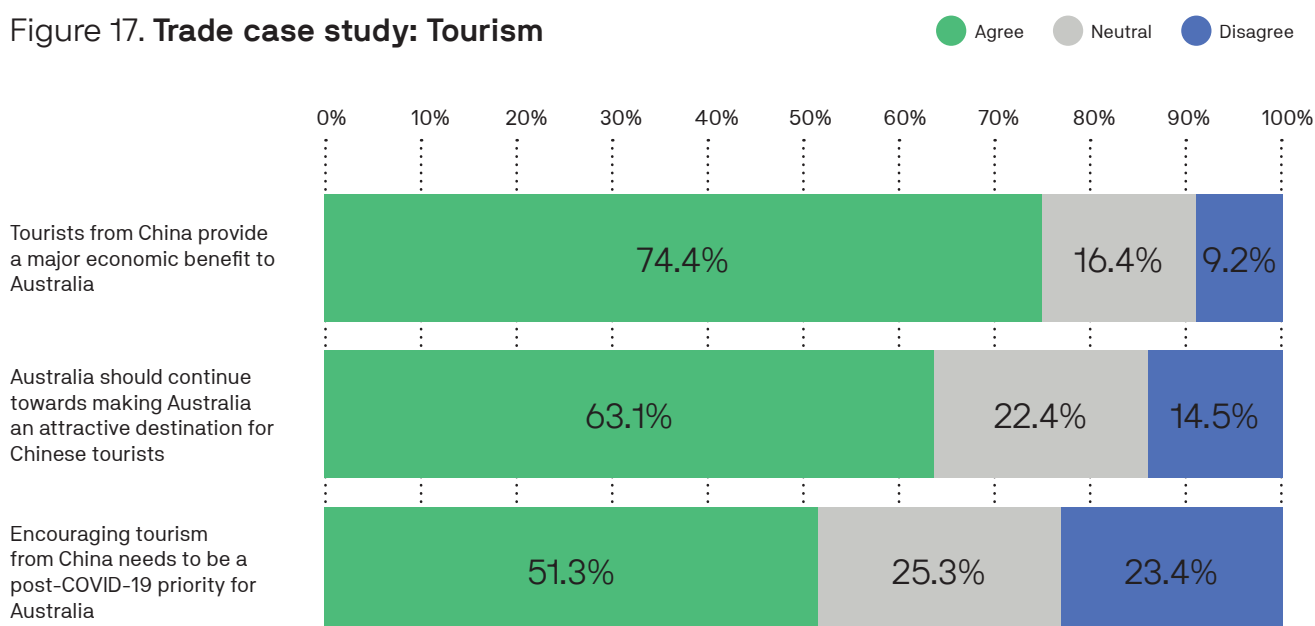
About six in 10 Australians (63 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-two percent express neutrality and 15 percent disagree (Figure 17). **A**

state/territory divide: Queensland (75 percent), Northern Territory (75 percent) and Australian Capital Territory (74 percent) residents are more likely to agree. New South Wales (55 percent) and Victoria (53 percent) residents are less likely to agree.

‘Encouraging tourism from China needs to be a post-COVID-19 priority for Australia’

Just over half of Australians (51 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-five percent express neutrality and 23 percent disagree (Figure 17). **A state/territory divide:** Queensland residents (67 percent) are more likely to agree compared with residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (65 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for a minority party (42 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 17. Trade case study: Tourism



4.4 Trade case study: Education

‘International students from China provide a major economic benefit to Australia’

About three-quarters of Australians (76 percent) agree with this statement. Sixteen percent express neutrality and eight percent disagree (Figure 18). **A state/territory divide:** Australian Capital Territory residents (96 percent) are more likely to agree. Queensland residents (69 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (100 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for a minority party (68 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Australian universities are too financially reliant on international students from China’

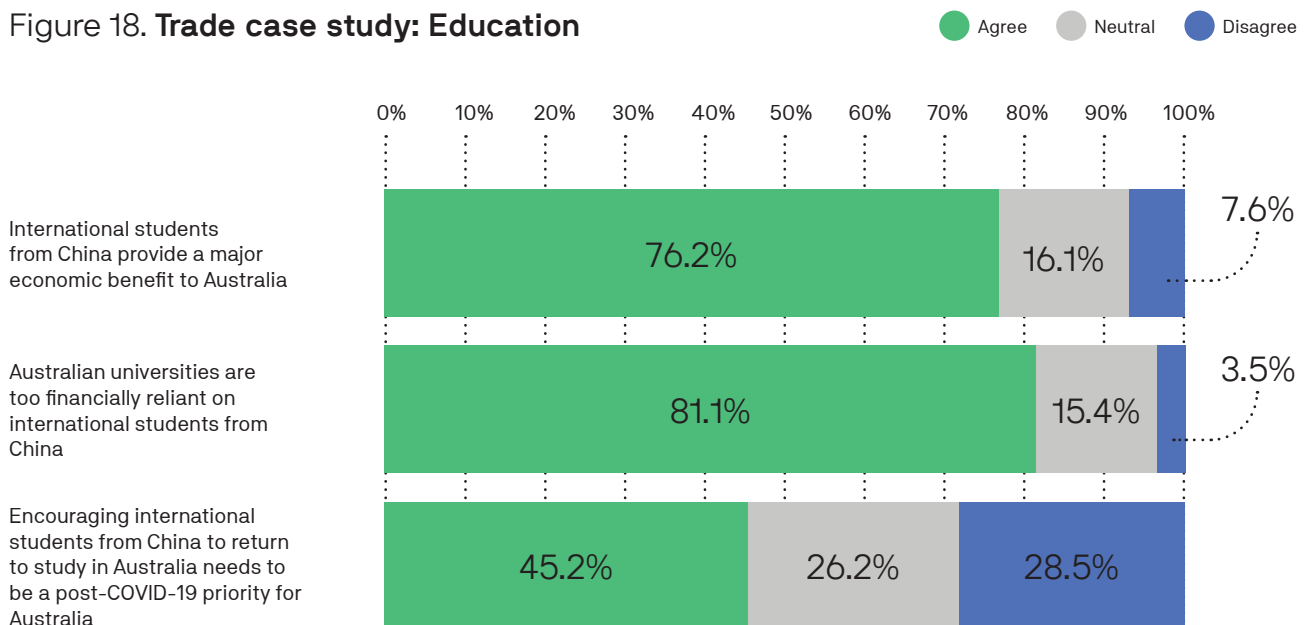
Approximately eight in 10 Australians (81 percent) agree with this statement. Fifteen percent express neutrality and four percent disagree (Figure 18). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (93 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger

Australians aged 18-34 (69 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (91 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

‘Encouraging international students from China to return to study in Australia needs to be a post-COVID-19 priority for Australia’

Forty-five percent of Australians agree with this statement. Twenty-six percent express neutrality and 29 percent disagree (Figure 18). **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (63 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for a minority party (29 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 18. Trade case study: Education



4.5 Foreign investment

‘Foreign investment from China has created job opportunities in Australia’

Half of Australians (50 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-one percent express neutrality and 19 percent disagree. **An age divide:** Australians aged 35-54 (56 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (46 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Foreign investment from China should be supported by Australians’

A minority of Australians (29 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-two percent express neutrality and 39 percent disagree (Figure 19). **An age**

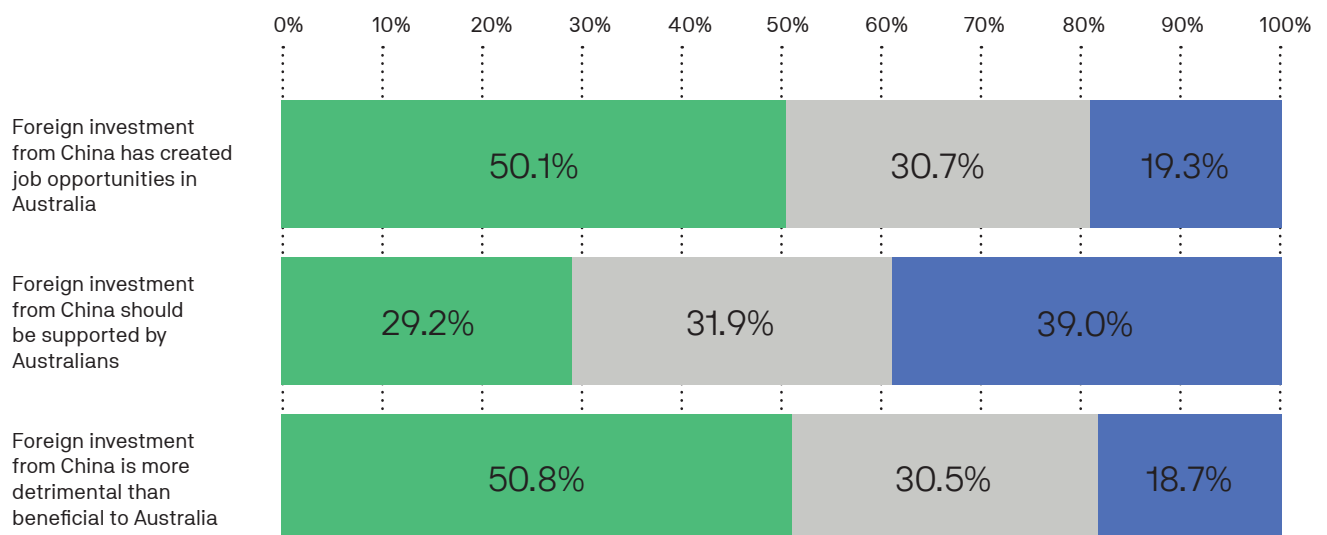
divide: Younger Australians aged 18-34 (31 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (23 percent) are less likely to agree. **A state/territory divide:** Victoria residents (33 percent) are more likely to agree. Tasmania residents (17 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Foreign investment from China is more detrimental than beneficial to Australia’

Just over half of Australians (51 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-one percent express neutrality and 19 percent disagree (Figure 19). **An age divide:** Australians aged 55+ (59 percent) are more likely to agree compared with younger Australians.

Figure 19. Views on foreign investment from China overall

● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree



4.6 Investment case study: Agriculture

‘Chinese ownership of agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia is more concerning than ownership by companies from other countries’

The majority of Australians (65 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-two percent express neutrality and 13 percent disagree (Figure 20). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (75 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (57 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (75 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Greens (51 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Chinese ownership of agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia presents a threat to Australia’s food security’

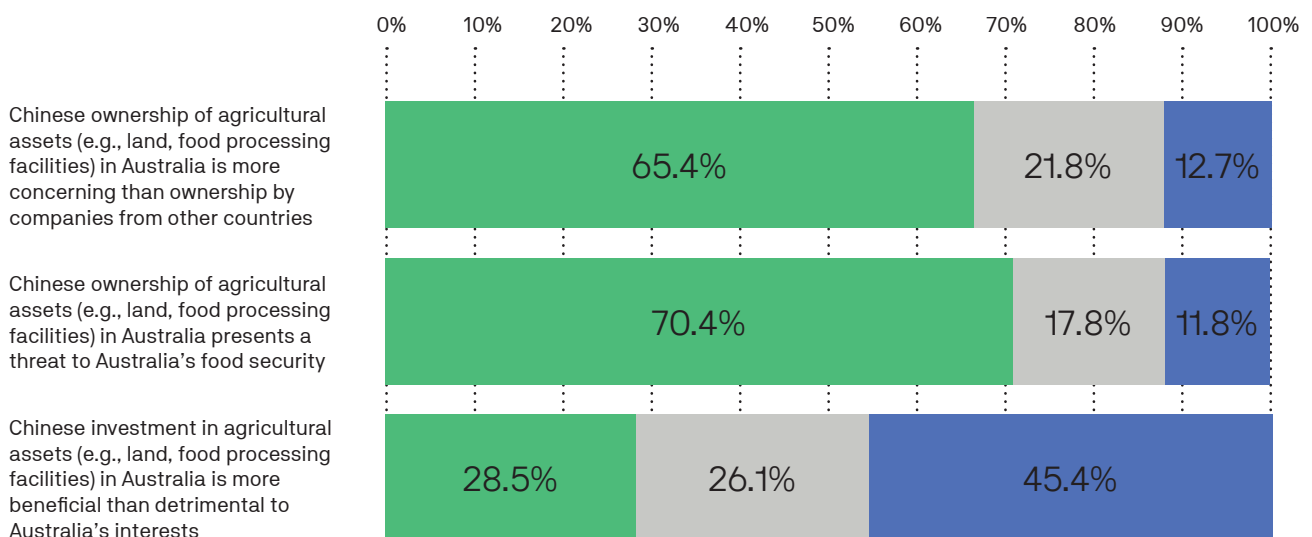
Seven in 10 Australians (70 percent) agree with this statement. Eighteen percent express neutrality and 12 percent disagree (Figure 20). **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (74 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Greens (58 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Chinese ownership of agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia is more beneficial than detrimental to Australia’s interests’

Approximately three in 10 Australians (29 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-six percent express neutrality and 45 percent disagree (Figure 20). **An age divide:** Younger Australians aged 18-34 (36 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (21 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 20. Investment case study: Agriculture

● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree



4.7 Investment case study: Residential real estate

‘Chinese investment in Australian residential real estate brings a lot of benefits for Australians (e.g., construction, new dwellings, jobs)’

Approximately three in 10 Australians (33 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-three percent express neutrality and 43 percent disagree (Figure 21). **An age divide:** Younger Australians aged 18-34 (38 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (24 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for a minority party (28 percent) at the 2019 federal election are less likely to agree.

‘Foreign buyers from China drive up Australian housing prices’

A clear majority of Australians (82 percent) agree with this statement. Ten percent express neutrality and eight percent disagree (Figure 21). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (88 percent) are more likely to agree compared with younger Australians. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (86 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

‘Chinese investors in Australian real estate have made it difficult for first home buyers in Australia to enter the market’

Approximately seven in 10 Australians (69 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty percent express neutrality and 11 percent disagree (Figure 21). **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (75 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

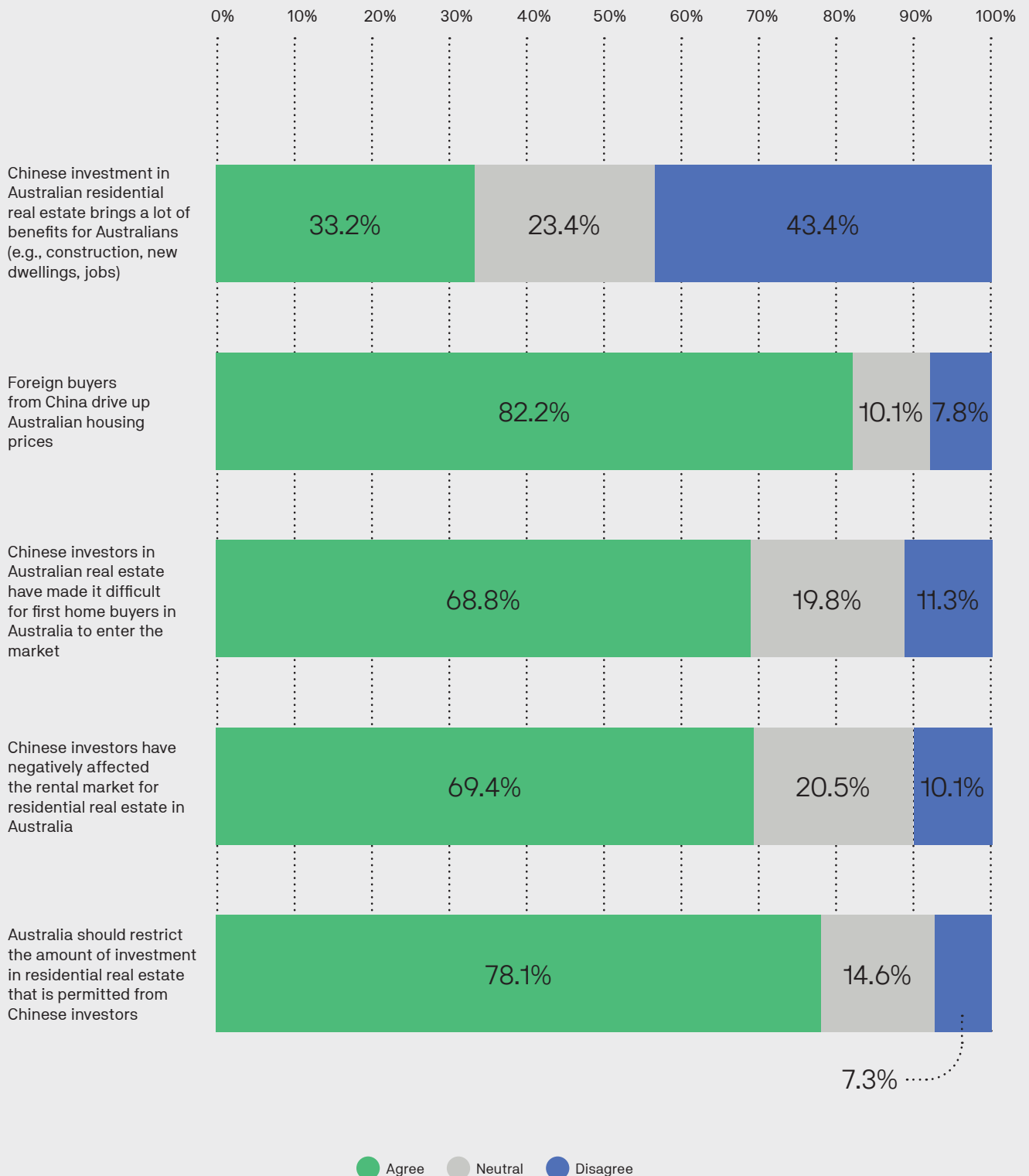
‘Chinese investors have negatively affected the rental market for residential real estate in Australia’

About seven in 10 Australians (69 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-one percent express neutrality and 10 percent disagree (Figure 21). **A state/territory divide:** South Australia residents (77 percent) are more likely to agree. Western Australia residents (52 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Australia should restrict the amount of investment in residential real estate that is permitted from Chinese investors’

Over three-quarters of Australians (78 percent) agree with this statement. Fifteen percent express neutrality and seven percent disagree (Figure 21). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (86 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (69 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (83 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

Figure 21.
Investment case study:
Residential real estate



4.8 Business ties

‘Australian companies should continue to pursue business opportunities with China’

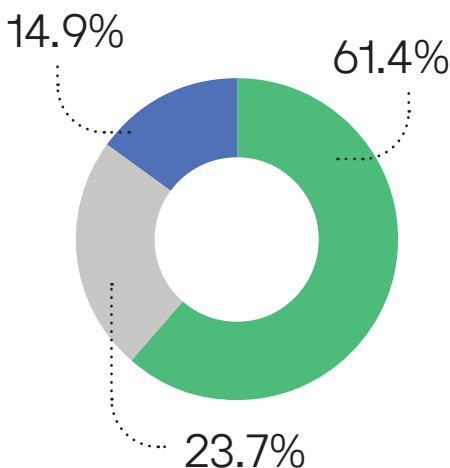
About six in 10 Australians (61 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-four percent express neutrality and 15 percent disagree (Figure 22). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (75 percent) are more likely to agree compared with younger Australians.

‘Australia should not do business with China because of their record on human rights’

Approximately four in 10 Australians (43 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-nine percent express neutrality and 28 percent disagree (Figure 23).

Figure 22. **Support for business ties**

Australian companies should continue to pursue business opportunities with China



‘Australia should not do business with China because of their domestic censorship of media, internet and other forms of communication’

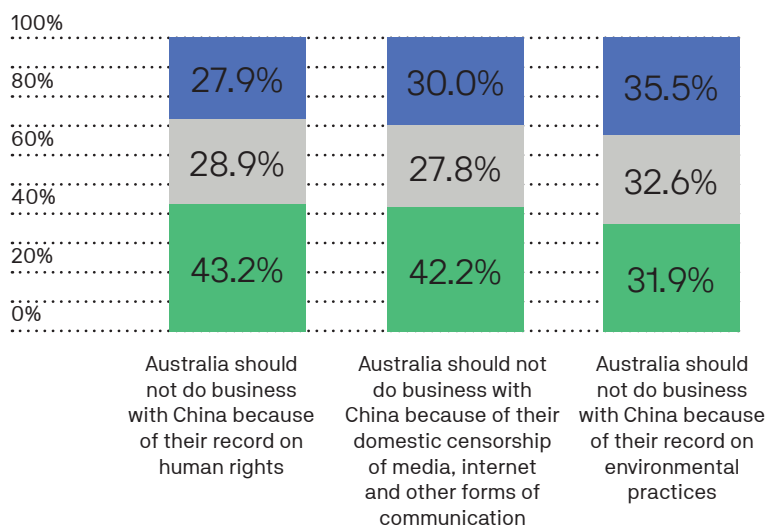
Forty-two percent of Australians agree with this statement. Twenty-eight percent express neutrality and 30 percent disagree (Figure 23). **An age divide:** Younger Australians aged 18-34 (49 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (36 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Australia should not do business with China because of their record on environmental practices’

About three in 10 Australians (32 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-three percent express neutrality and 36 percent disagree (Figure 23). **A state/territory divide:** Victoria residents (43 percent) are more likely to agree. Australian Capital Territory residents (23 percent) are less likely to agree.



Figure 23. **Concerns about business ties**



5.

Military and security

5.1 Background

China's increasingly assertive posture overseas has been the subject of much domestic discussion in terms of its longer-term implications for Australia. Of particular focus most recently is the possibility of military conflict over Taiwan and China's cyber capabilities. The 'Quad', comprising Australia, the United States, Japan and India, was revived in 2017 and has recently met at the leaders' level. In April this year, the Australian government effectively formally ruled out any support for China's Belt and Road Initiative, a focal point for China's foreign policy and its international economic outreach, by designating two agreements the state of Victoria had signed with China as 'inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy or adverse to our foreign relations' (Payne, 2021).

5.2 Security and stability

'China is a security threat to Australia'

Sixty-seven percent of Australians agree with this statement. Twenty percent express neutrality and 13 percent disagree (Figure 24).

'Australia should form trade and security blocs with other countries that deliberately exclude China'

Approximately four in 10 Australians (43 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-one percent express neutrality and 26 percent disagree (Figure 25). **An age divide:** Australians aged 35-54 (49 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (34

percent) are less likely to agree. **A state/territory divide:** South Australia residents (52 percent) are more likely to agree. Australian Capital Territory residents (32 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (54 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

'Australia's relationship with China contributes to regional stability and security'

Just over half of Australians (52 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-six percent express neutrality and 22 percent disagree (Figure 26).



Figure 24. China as a security threat

China is a security threat to Australia

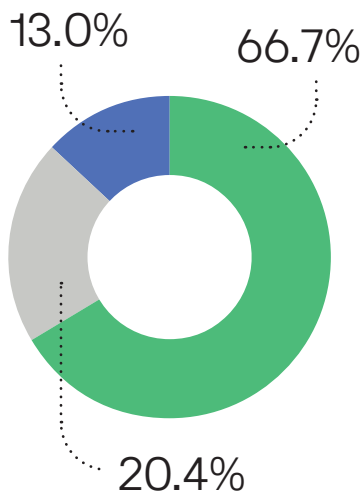


Figure 25. Trade and security blocs

Australia should form trade and security blocs with other countries that deliberately exclude China

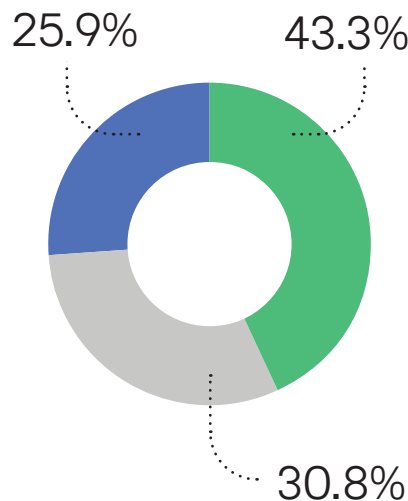
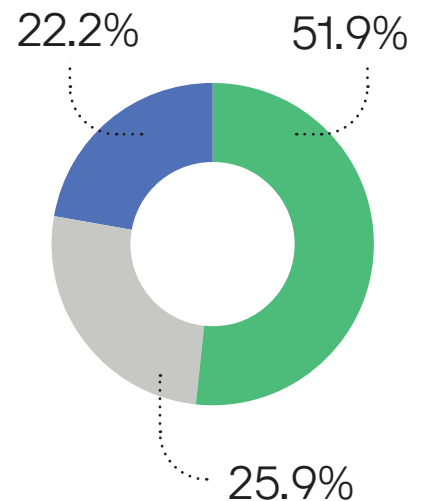


Figure 26. Regional stability and security

Australia's relationship with China contributes to regional stability and security



5.3 Conflict over Taiwan

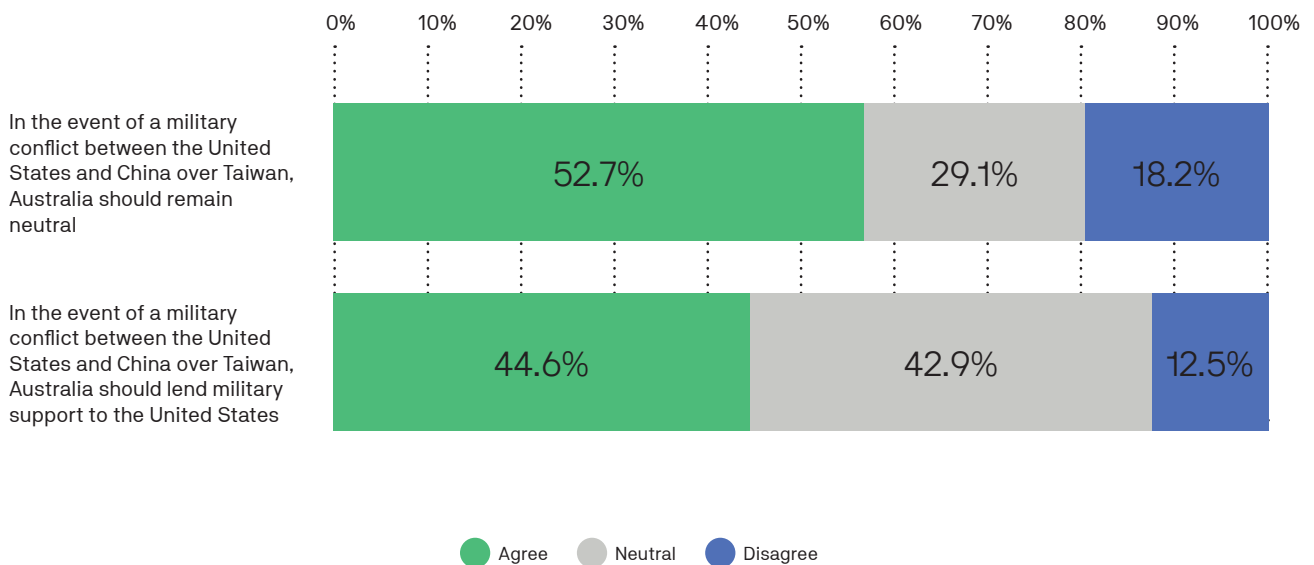
‘In the event of a military conflict between the United States and China over Taiwan, Australia should remain neutral’

Just over half of Australians (53 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-nine percent express neutrality and 18 percent disagree (Figure 27).

‘In the event of a military conflict between the United States and China over Taiwan, Australia should lend military support to the United States’

Forty-five percent of Australians agree with this statement. Forty-three percent express neutrality and 13 percent disagree (Figure 27).

Figure 27. Conflict over Taiwan



5.4 Cybersecurity

'I am suspicious that the Chinese government is behind cybersecurity attacks on Australia's digital systems'

Just over three-quarters of Australians (77 percent) agree with this statement. Seventeen percent express neutrality and six percent disagree (Figure 28). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (84 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (70 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (84 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

'The Chinese government is monitoring the communications of Australians closely with apps such as WeChat'

Nearly three-quarters of Australians (73 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty percent express neutrality and six percent disagree (Figure 28). **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (79 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

'Australia should ban Chinese-owned apps such as TikTok and WeChat'

Half of Australians (50 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-six percent express neutrality and 24 percent disagree (Figure 29). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (57 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (36 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (61 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Greens (38 percent) are less likely to agree.



Figure 29. Support for banning apps such as TikTok and WeChat

Australia should ban Chinese-owned apps such as TikTok and WeChat

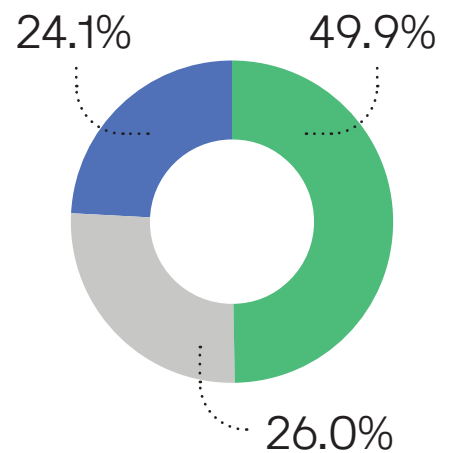
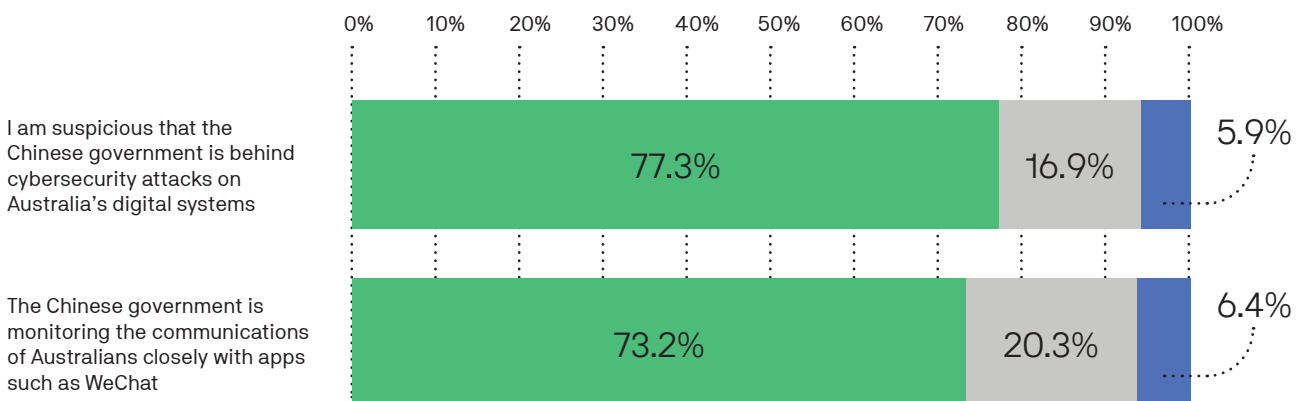


Figure 28. Cyberattacks and cyber surveillance



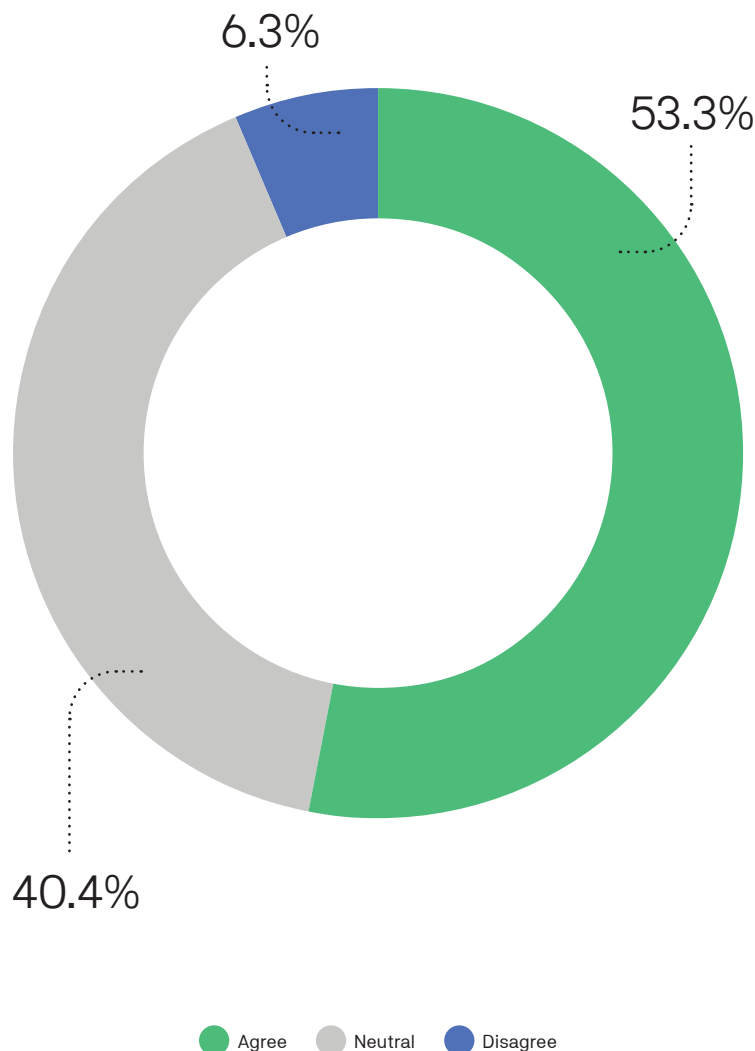
5.5 The Belt and Road Initiative

'The Australian government is right not to sign up to/participate in China's Belt and Road Initiative'

Just over half of Australians (53 percent) agree with this statement. Forty percent express neutrality and six percent disagree (Figure 30). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (68 percent) are more likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (39 percent) are less likely to agree. **A state/territory divide:** Queensland residents (45 percent) are less likely to agree compared with residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (62 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Australian Labor Party (47 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 30. **The Belt and Road Initiative**

The Australian government is right not to sign up to/participate in China's Belt and Road Initiative



6. Society

6.1 Background

Ruptions in the Australia-China relationship have been felt at the grassroots, community level. Amidst political tensions and the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in reports of Australians of Chinese origin experiencing discrimination (Handley and McCarthy, 2020), and a heightening of negative sentiment towards Australians of Chinese origin (Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, 2021). Foreign influence and interference in Australian society, especially stemming from the Chinese government, has been a major focus for policymakers and commentators. Legislation targeting the issue was first introduced in 2018,¹ and since built on. Since July 2020, the Australian government has had in place a travel advisory to inform Australian travellers of China's national security laws and the risk of arbitrary detention (Reuters Staff, 2020).

1 *The Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018 (Cth)* and the *National Security Legislation Amendment (Espionage and Foreign Interference) Act 2018 (Cth)*.

6.2 The Australian-Chinese community

‘Political tensions in the Australia-China relationship are negatively impacting Australians of Chinese origin’

Six in 10 Australians (63 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-seven percent express neutrality and 10 percent disagree (Figure 31). **An age divide:** Australians aged 35-54 (59 percent) are less likely to agree compared with younger Australians aged 18-34 and older Australians aged 55+. **A state/territory divide:** Tasmania residents (74 percent) are more likely to agree than residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (73 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for a minority party (56 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Australians of Chinese origin can be mobilised by the Chinese government to undermine Australia’s interests and social cohesion’

Approximately four in 10 Australians (39 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-one percent express neutrality and 30 percent disagree (Figure 32). **A state/territory divide:** New South Wales (46 percent) and Victoria (51 percent) residents are more likely to agree. Tasmania residents (31 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (54 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Greens (33 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 31. Impact of political tensions on the Australian-Chinese community

Political tensions in the Australia-China relationship are negatively impacting Australians of Chinese origin

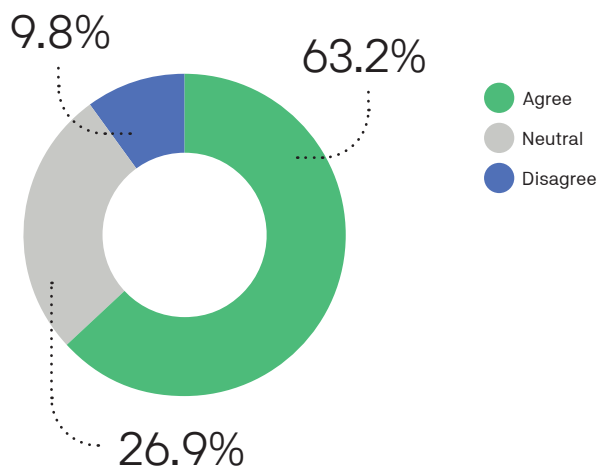
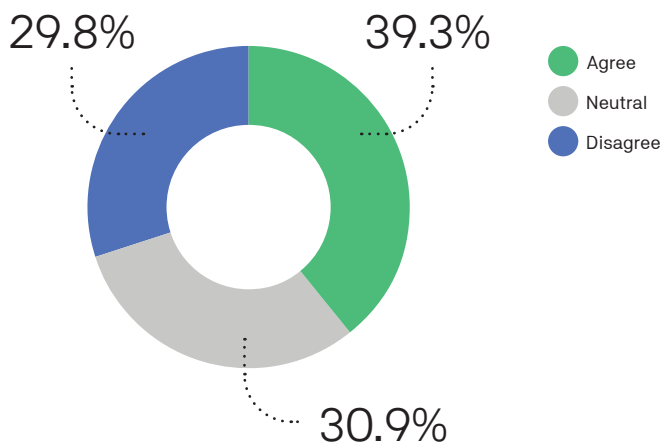


Figure 32. Perceptions of Chinese government influence on the Australian-Chinese community

Australians of Chinese origin can be mobilised by the Chinese government to undermine Australia’s interests and social cohesion



6.3 Interference and influence

‘Foreign interference in Australia stemming from China is a major problem’

About seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-one percent express neutrality and eight percent disagree (Figure 33). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (80 percent) are more likely to agree compared with younger Australians. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (82 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Australian Labor Party (68 percent) are less likely to agree.

‘Foreign interference in Australia stemming from the United States is a major problem’

Almost four in 10 Australians (37 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-four percent express neutrality and 29 percent disagree (Figure 33). **An age divide:** Younger Australians aged 18-34 (43 percent) are more likely to agree. Older Australians aged 55+ (36 percent) are less likely to agree. **A state/territory divide:** Victoria residents (51 percent) are more likely to agree. Australian Capital Territory residents (17 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (36 percent) at the 2019 federal election are less likely to agree.

‘Foreign interference in Australia stemming from Russia is a major problem’

Nearly half of Australians (47 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-eight percent express neutrality and 14 percent disagree (Figure 33).



Figure 33. Foreign interference – Country comparisons

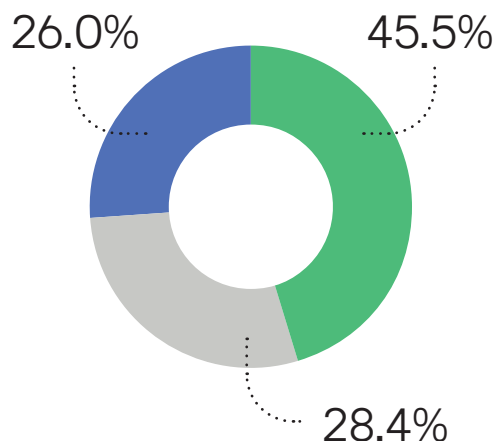


‘Australian values and traditions are being undermined by Chinese government influence in Australia’

Almost half of all Australians (46 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-eight percent express neutrality and 26 percent disagree (Figure 34). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (55 percent) are more likely to agree compared with younger Australians. **A state/territory divide:** New South Wales (55 percent) and Victoria (53 percent) residents are more likely to agree than residents in other Australian states and territories. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (60 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree. Australians who voted for the Greens (24 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 34. Perceptions of the impact of Chinese government influence on Australian values and traditions

Australian values and traditions are being undermined by Chinese government influence in Australia

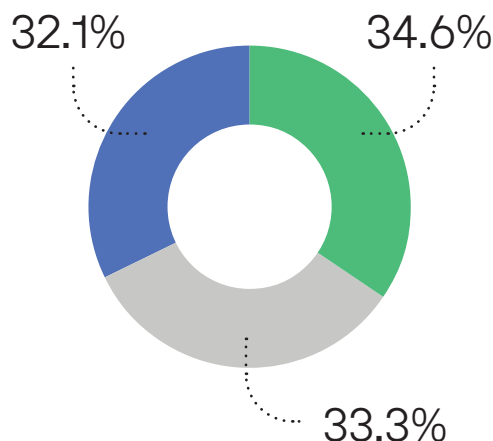


‘The Australian government is successfully responding to Chinese government interference in Australia’

Thirty-five percent of Australians agree with this statement. Thirty-three percent express neutrality and 32 percent disagree (Figure 35). **A state/territory divide:** New South Wales residents (42 percent) are more likely to agree. Tasmania residents (27 percent) are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Liberal/Nationals (43 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

Figure 35. The Australian government’s response to Chinese government interference in Australia

The Australian government is successfully responding to Chinese government interference in Australia



6.4 Arbitrary detention

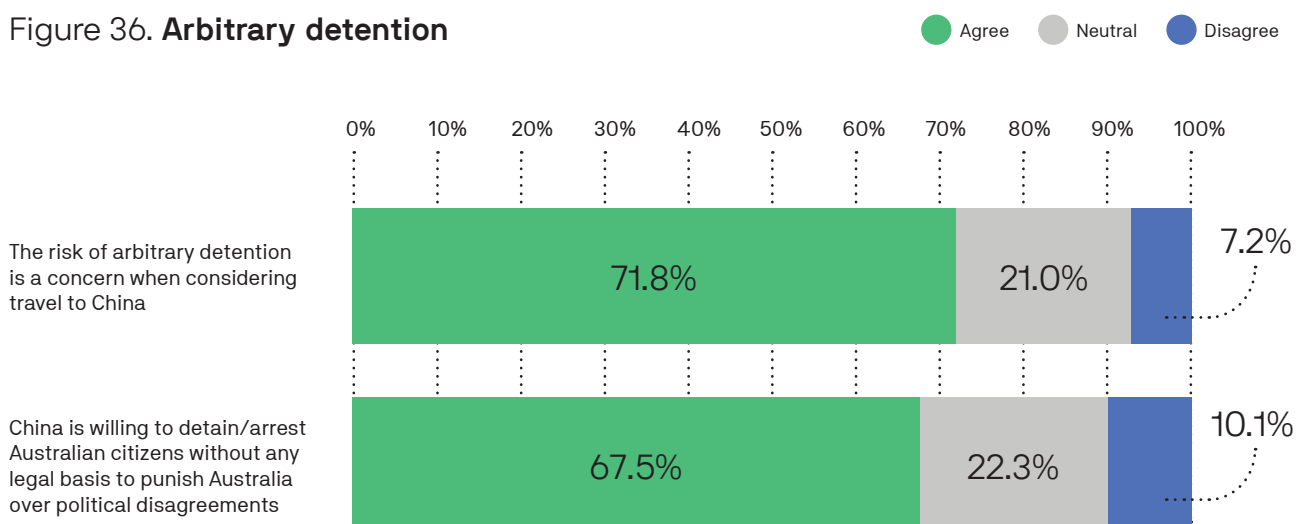
‘The risk of arbitrary detention is a concern when considering travel to China’

About seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-one percent express neutrality and seven percent disagree (Figure 36).

‘China is willing to detain/arrest Australian citizens without any legal basis to punish Australia over political disagreements’

Approximately seven in 10 Australians (68 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-two percent express neutrality and 10 percent disagree (Figure 36). **An age divide:** Older Australians aged 55+ (83 percent) are most likely to agree. Younger Australians aged 18-34 (53 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 36. **Arbitrary detention**



6.5 International students

‘International students from China help strengthen the people-to-people links between the two countries’

About six in 10 Australians (58 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-three percent express neutrality and 20 percent disagree (Figure 37).

‘International students from China are potentially reducing the quality of education at Australian universities’

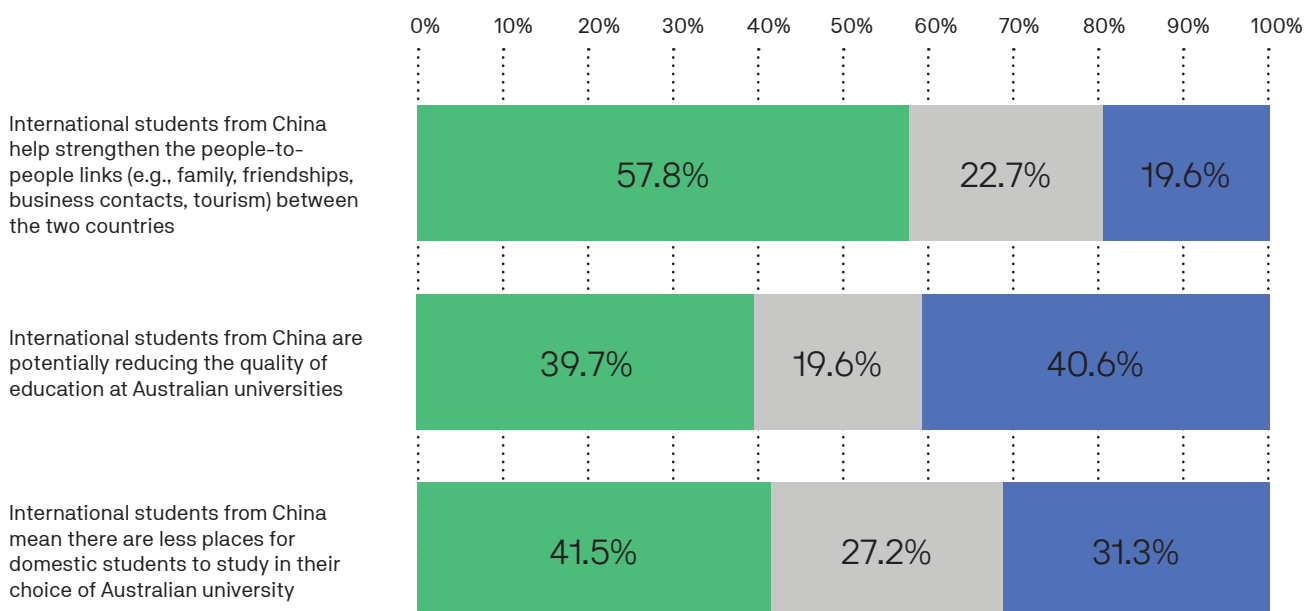
Four in 10 Australians (40 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty percent express neutrality and 41 percent disagree (Figure 37).

‘International students from China mean there are less places for domestic students to study in their choice of Australian university’

Approximately four in 10 Australians (42 percent) agree with this statement. Twenty-seven percent express neutrality and 31 percent disagree (Figure 37).

Figure 37. Views on international students

● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree



7.

University and research

7.1 Background

Australian universities' affiliations with China have been subject to scrutiny, particularly around issues concerning freedom of speech in academia – for example, whether or not censorship or self-censorship in areas of political sensitivity is occurring. Research partnerships, particularly in scientific fields, have also been accorded national security and ethical implications, with academic inquiry in China under tightening control by authorities.

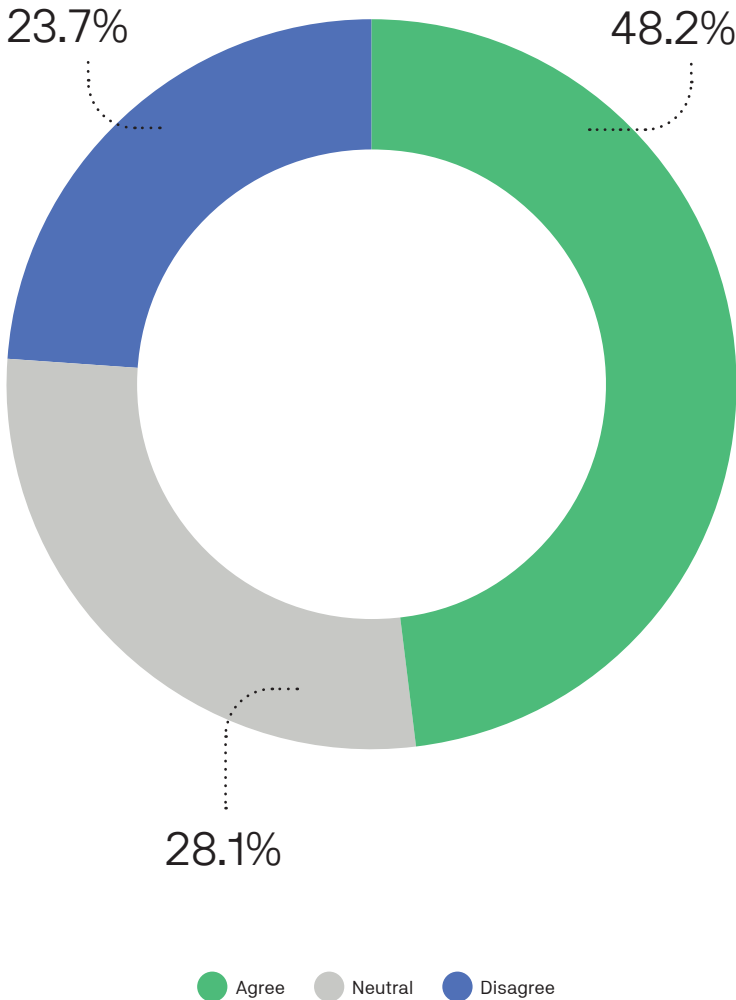
7.2 Freedom of academic speech

'Australian university ties with China compromise Australian freedom of speech'

Nearly half of Australians (48 percent) say that 'Australian university ties with China compromise Australian freedom of speech'. Twenty-eight percent express neutrality and 24 percent disagree (Figure 38).

Figure 38. **Freedom of academic speech**

Australian university ties with China compromise Australian freedom of speech



7.3 Research collaborations

‘Research collaborations between academics from Australia and China makes Australia more competitive internationally’

Approximately half of Australians (48 percent) agree with this statement. Thirty-seven percent express neutrality and 15 percent disagree (Figure 39).

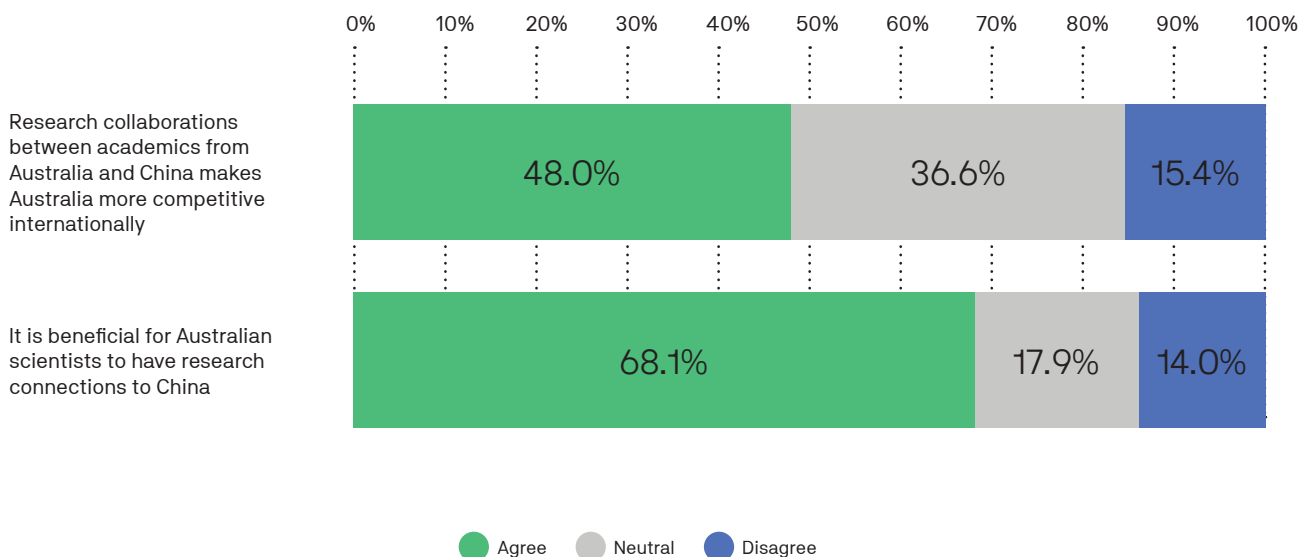
A state/territory divide: Australian Capital Territory residents (71 percent) are more likely to agree than residents in other Australian states and territories.

‘It is beneficial for Australian scientists to have research connections to China’

Approximately seven in 10 Australians (68 percent) agree with this statement. Eighteen percent express neutrality and 14 percent disagree (Figure 39).

A state/territory divide: Australian Capital Territory residents (81 percent) are more likely to agree compared with residents in other Australian states and territories. New South Wales residents (60 percent) are less likely to agree.

Figure 39. Research collaboration



8.

Global and regional cooperation

8.1 Background

Australia and China have a history of working cooperatively in multilateral fora on areas such as health, the environment and developmental matters despite irritants in the bilateral relationship.

Although the rhetoric of cooperation has not often featured in recent government statements, Australians continue to support joint efforts.

8.2 Global and regional cooperation

It is beneficial for Australia to work with China on global issues, such as climate change and global health'

Nearly three-quarters of Australians (74 percent) agree with this statement. Sixteen percent express neutrality and 10 percent disagree (Figure 40).

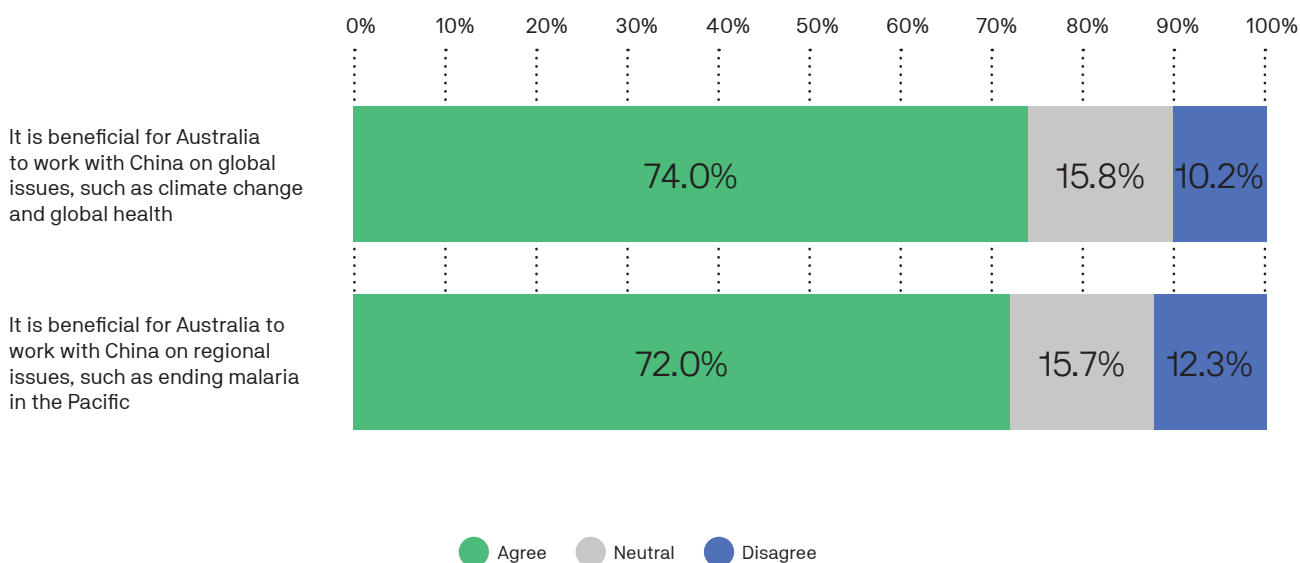
A state/territory divide: Australian Capital Territory residents (88 percent) are more likely to agree. New South Wales (66 percent) and Victoria (65 percent) residents are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for a minority party (64 percent) at the 2019 federal election are less likely to agree.

'It is beneficial for Australia to work with China on regional issues, such as ending malaria in the Pacific'

About seven in 10 Australians (72 percent) agree with this statement. Sixteen percent express neutrality and 12 percent disagree (Figure 40).

A state/territory divide: Australian Capital Territory residents (86 percent) are more likely to agree. New South Wales (60 percent) and Victoria (59 percent) residents are less likely to agree. **A political divide:** Australians who voted for the Greens (85 percent) at the 2019 federal election are more likely to agree.

Figure 40. **Benefits of global and regional cooperation**



Methodology

Sample

Responses were collected via an online survey with participants recruited via a commercial panel, the Online Research Unit (ORU). Responses were collected from Australian adults across all Australian states and territories with Australian Census-based quotas applied to age and gender. State quotas were set at obtaining a minimum of 200 responses from Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Western Australia, and South Australia, a minimum of 300 from Victoria and Queensland, and 400 from New South Wales. The total sample size consisted of 2000 complete responses. Responses were collected between March 22 2021 and April 11 2021. The median response time was 19.4 minutes.

Instrument

The survey consisted of several parts:

1. Respondents were first provided background information and an invitation to participate.
2. Screening questions were performed on age, gender and location.
3. Respondents then provided their level of agreement in relation to their concerns and benefits of the Australia-China relationship and support overall. Responses were gathered using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'.
4. An introductory task on ice-cream flavours was undertaken to familiarise respondents with the best-worst scaling task.
5. A best-worst scaling task was undertaken where respondents indicated the area of most concern in relation to the Australia-China relationship spanning 35 different areas.
6. Respondents were then asked to indicate their level of perceived level of agreement (on a seven-point Likert scale) about their concerns, benefits, or perceptions on specific dimensions of the Australia-China relationship. Respondents

were randomly allocated to complete three to six questions relating to six out of 19 areas surveyed.

7. Respondents then completed socio-demographic questions relating to their household type, education, employment status, income, voting behaviour, political orientation, and ethnicity.
8. Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback on any dimension of the Australia-China relationship.
9. Respondents then provided feedback about the survey on various dimensions such as difficulty and enjoyment.
10. Respondents were then returned back to the survey panel company's website to received credit for their completion.

Note: The poll instrument advised respondents that 'China' used throughout the poll referred to the People's Republic of China.

Analysis

Questions relating to the concerns, benefits and overall views were analysed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis followed by structural equation modelling. Reflective scales relating to latent dimension were evaluated in terms of reliability and discriminant validity with all factor scores being above a benchmark of .707. The resulting Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceed 0.5 in all cases to establish convergent validity, whilst the resulting Cronbach Alpha's exceed 0.75 and Composite Reliabilities all exceeded .78 to establish reliability. Discriminant validity was established by confirming the AVE exceeded the corresponding squared correlation between latent scores. The structural model relating concerns and benefits to overall support had a norm fit index of .961 above the acceptable benchmark of .9 to indicate incremental fit, with a standardized root mean square residual of 0.026, significantly below the suggested benchmark of .08.

About

About the authors



Elena Collinson

Elena Collinson is Senior Project and Research Officer at the Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney (UTS:ACRI).

Her work has been published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Guardian*, the *South China Morning Post*, *The Diplomat*, *The Conversation*, *Australian Foreign Affairs*, the Lowy Institute's *Interpreter*, the Australian Institute of International Affairs' *Australian Outlook*, and the Council on Foreign Relations' *Asia Unbound* amongst other outlets, and she has contributed chapters to edited volumes. Elena is editor of UTS:ACRI's commentary series, *Perspectives*, and lead of the Institute's Australia-China monthly wrap-up. She is a lawyer admitted to the Supreme Court of New South Wales and has previously held research and project positions in Australian departmental, ministerial and Senate offices, at state and federal levels.

🐦 @elenacollinson



Associate Professor Paul F. Burke

Dr. Paul Burke is Deputy Director of the BIDA and Associate Professor in Marketing at the University of Technology Sydney.

He is a leading expert in the field of applied market research, particularly quantitative methods utilizing experimental design, choice modelling, and best-worst scaling.

Dr Burke designs primary research projects using experimental design techniques and innovative survey approaches, such as best-worst scaling, as well as standard methods integrating hybrid choice, structural equation modelling (for attitudinal models), cluster and discriminant analysis (for segmentation), and regression analysis (e.g., probit). His work models consumer and human behaviour, including applications to product and service evaluation, social well-being and forecasting, with numerous projects involving mix-methods including those in health and well-being, education, employee, stakeholder and community preferences, and issues around rural and remote workforce participation.

🐦 @drpaulburke

About the Australia-China Relations Institute

The Australia-China Relations Institute (UTS:ACRI) is an independent, non-partisan research institute established in 2014 by the University of Technology Sydney. Chinese studies centres exist in other Australian universities. UTS:ACRI, however, is Australia's first and only research institute devoted to studying the relationship of these countries.

UTS:ACRI seeks to inform Australia's engagement with China through research, analysis and dialogue grounded in scholarly rigour.

australiachinarelations.org



About the Centre for Business Intelligence & Data Analytics

The Centre for Business Intelligence & Data Analytics (BIDA) is represented by a dynamic team of researchers working on multiple ARC and industry projects in areas such as transport, energy, labour, environmental and health economics. The primary focus of the Centre is to model individual or organisational decision processes via revealed preference data or stated choice experiments. The rationale for this type of research is to investigate why people or (community) organisations choose a product, a service or a project over another. Individuals can express their preferences and choices in specific situations; however, it is not always straightforward to say why they make that specific choice.

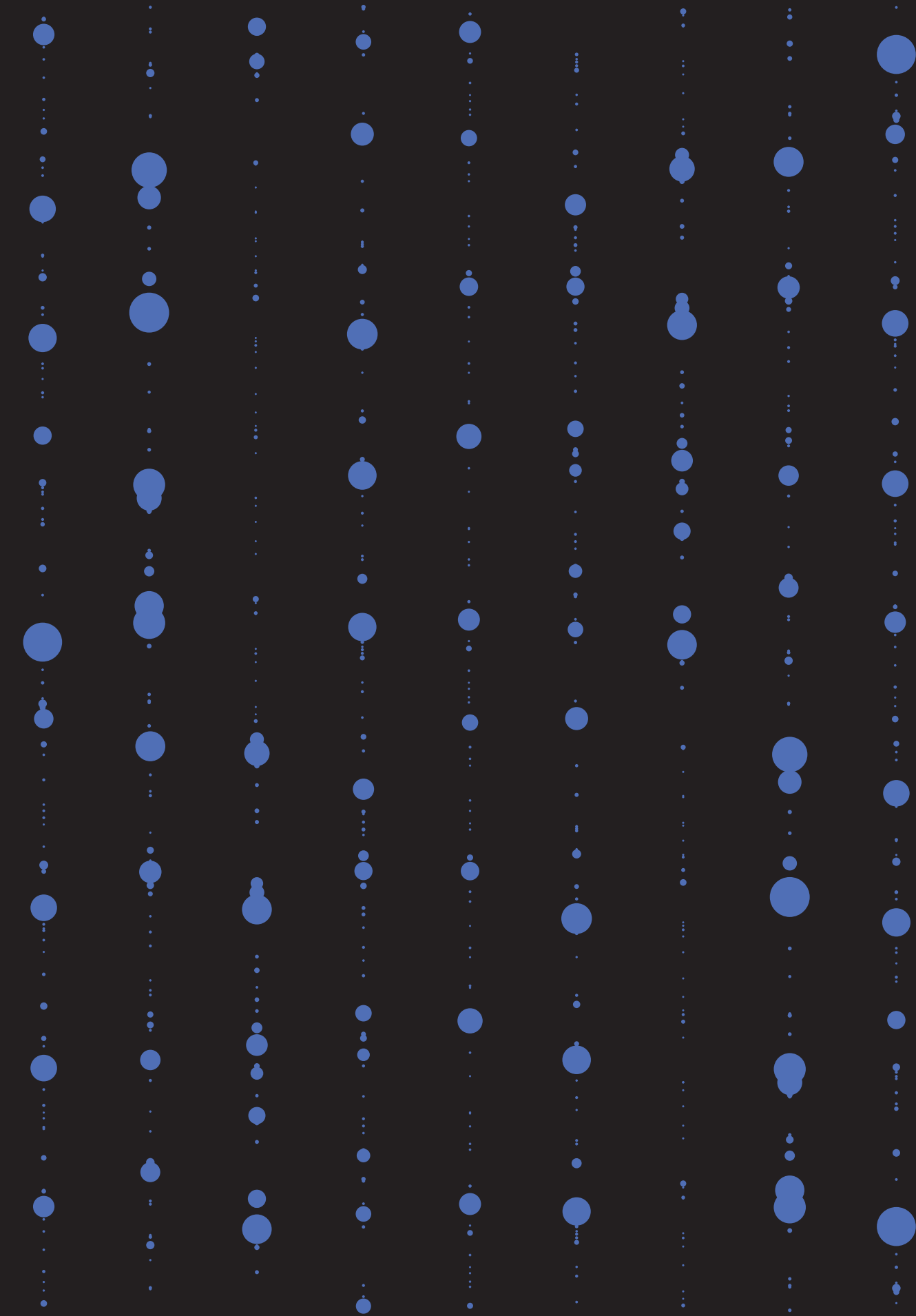
Choice modelling techniques explore the factors driving the choice in both real and hypothetical settings (revealed and stated experiments respectively). Understanding the antecedents of the choice may support public, private and community organisations' decision-making strategies. Furthermore, choice models can be used for planning the best product, project or service suggesting which characteristics really matters to the users. In addition, it is possible to predict the demand of the new product, project or service that is not available on the market yet, supporting organisations to make better business decisions and to create effective policies based on what people value.

Examples of recent engagement and research include working with the NSW Government on which projects to fund in regional areas, investigating citizens' preferences and an analysis of the NSW labour market in order to understand the drivers within the market to be used to better address school leavers to the right career path.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix

1. Overall views on the Australia-China relationship

Table 1A Support for Australia building stronger connections and ties, having a strong relationship with China

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia should try to build strong connections with China	4.5	4.8	7.1	21.5	27.6	27.2	7.2
Australia should build strong ties with China	4.8	5.5	7.9	24.2	28.1	22.5	7.0
Australia should have a strong relationship with China	4.0	4.5	6.9	21.3	28.3	27.3	7.7
AVERAGE	4.4	4.9	7.3	22.3	28.0	25.7	7.3

Table 2A Predictors of support for Australia building stronger connections and ties, having a strong relationship with China

	Impact on support overall	Importance
Concerns about Australia's relationship with China	0.052	3.38
Benefits of Australia's relationship with China	0.663	42.695
Mistrust of the Chinese government	-0.147	9.443
Satisfaction with the Australian government's management of China relations	-0.026	1.678
Support for a harder Australian government line on China	-0.169	10.885

Table 3A Concerns about Australia's relationship with China

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I am concerned about Australia's relationship with China	0.7	2.5	3.8	15.5	28.9	31.1	17.5
I am very apprehensive about the nature of Australia's relationship with China	0.8	3.2	5.5	22.8	29.9	23.9	13.9
I am worried about how Australia and China interact with each other in a number of areas	1.0	1.5	3.8	13.9	30.3	32.5	16.9
I hold a lot of concerns about the Australia-China bilateral relationship	0.8	2.6	4.4	20.2	28.7	29.6	13.8
AVERAGE	0.8	2.4	4.4	18.1	29.5	29.3	15.5

Table 4A **Benefits of Australia's relationship with China**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
It is very beneficial for Australia to have a working relationship with China	3.1	3.5	4.3	15.7	23.9	32.4	17.1
I believe the nature of Australia's relationship with China is of great value for Australia	4.2	6.8	7.9	19.5	28.3	25.3	8.1
I believe how Australia and China interact with each other in a number of areas provides many benefits for Australia	3.7	4.9	6.5	20.9	29.1	27.1	7.8
Australia's relationship with China is positive for Australia	5.7	10.3	11.9	23.2	27.1	16.8	5.1
AVERAGE	4.2	6.4	7.6	19.8	27.1	25.4	9.5

Table 5A **Mistrust of the Chinese government**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I have a lot of mistrust towards the Chinese government in its dealings with Australia	1.6	2.8	4.3	16.0	23.5	26.1	25.7
The Chinese government cannot be trusted in its dealings with Australia	1.2	3.1	5.5	19.3	23.4	21.9	25.6
It is difficult to believe the Chinese government when it comes to its dealings with Australia	1.0	2.2	4.0	15.4	24.6	27.2	25.7
I am sceptical of the Chinese government when it comes to its dealings with Australia	0.8	1.5	4.0	14.1	24.1	28.6	27.0
The Australian government should be suspicious of the Chinese government when it comes to having dealings with them	0.9	2.2	4.7	15.7	25.1	25.6	25.7
AVERAGE	1.1	2.3	4.5	16.1	24.1	25.9	25.9

Table 6A Satisfaction with the Australian government's management of China relations

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The Australian government is managing Australia's relationship with China well	9.0	14.7	19.8	25.9	17.3	10.1	3.3
I believe the Australian government is doing a good job in managing Australia's relationship with China	8.1	14.0	19.6	24.0	19.4	11.5	3.5
I am satisfied with the Australian government's management of Australia's relationship with China	8.1	15.3	19.7	25.0	17.2	11.4	3.3
AVERAGE	8.4	14.7	19.7	25.0	18.0	11.0	3.3

Table 7A Support for a harder Australian government line on China

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I believe the Australian government should take a harder line with respect to its relationship with China	2.0	4.6	7.7	23.4	26.3	19.0	17.1
I believe the Australian government should take a harder line with respect to its policies dealing with China	1.9	3.9	7.3	22.1	25.4	21.6	17.8
Australia should be harder when it comes to dealing with China	2.2	4.7	8.2	23.5	24.5	20.0	17.0
AVERAGE	2.0	4.4	7.7	23.0	25.4	20.2	17.3

Table 8A **Changing views of China following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
My view of China has become more negative following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic	4.7	7.6	8.0	17.5	20.1	20.5	21.7

Table 9A **Responsibility for improving the Australia-China relationship**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with both countries	1.9	2.2	2.8	13.6	21.2	32.7	25.6
The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with Australia	7.8	14.3	15.3	32.6	18.2	8.4	3.4
The responsibility for improving the relationship between Australia and China lies with China	3.0	9.1	10.8	29.4	23.1	15.2	9.4

Table 10A **Improvement of the Australia-China relationship in the next three years**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The Australia-China relationship will improve in the next three years	5.2	10.2	14.6	42.6	17.2	8.8	1.5

2. Political communication

Table 11A **Communication by the Australian government over areas of disagreement**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The Australian government should not publicly call out actions by the Chinese government that Australia disagrees with	16.9	15.9	17.7	21.9	14.9	8.9	3.7

Table 12A **Support for the Australian government's call for a COVID-19 investigation**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The Australian government was right to publicly call for an international investigation into the origins of COVID-19	2.6	3.1	6.5	15.4	19.3	21.3	31.9

3.

The United States

Table 13A **Australia's relationships with the United States and China**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia can enjoy a good relationship with both China and the United States at the same time	2.7	4.6	8.7	21.1	26.3	27.1	9.5
Australia's relationship with China weakens our alliance with the United States	4.6	13.7	15.9	33.3	19.0	8.5	5.0
The United States will eventually force Australia to choose between a close relationship with Washington or a close relationship with Beijing	3.7	11.0	12.6	33.7	23.1	11.4	4.5
China will eventually force Australia to choose between a close relationship with Beijing or a close relationship with Washington	1.9	7.9	10.4	28.6	25.1	15.4	10.8

Table 14A **The US and China's regional influence**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
China has more influence than the US in Australia's regional neighbourhood	0.9	2.5	5.7	25.9	29.5	22.8	12.7

Table 15A **Figure 15. The US and China's willingness to mete out economic punishment over political disagreements**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The United States government is willing to use its trade and investment ties with Australia to punish Australia over political disagreements	6.0	10.2	14.8	36.2	20.2	9.6	3.0
The Chinese government is willing to use its trade and investment ties with Australia to punish Australia over political disagreements	1.0	1.6	3.9	16.2	17.8	25.4	34.0

4.

Trade and investment

Table 16A Views on the Australia-China economic relationship overall

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia is too economically reliant on China	0.0	1.5	1.8	16.4	27.9	25.1	27.2
The Chinese government's recent placement of trade restrictions on Australian exports is extremely worrying	1.8	1.2	4.8	14.7	23.6	25.7	28.3
Without close economic engagement with China, Australia would not be as prosperous as it currently is	3.1	4.6	8.2	21.5	32.2	20.7	9.7
Trade with China has created job opportunities in Australia	3.0	3.4	5.0	23.8	24.0	31.2	9.7
Australia's economic relationship with China is more of an economic risk than an economic opportunity	1.5	6.6	11.4	27.2	24.4	19.5	9.4
The Australian government needs to be supportive of having closer economic ties with China	5.6	4.6	9.7	31.1	28.8	15.3	4.8

Table 17A Trade case study: Tourism

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Tourists from China provide a major economic benefit to Australia	2.4	3.7	3.1	16.4	27.9	32.1	14.4
Australia should continue to work towards making Australia an attractive destination for Chinese tourists	3.4	5.3	5.8	22.4	25.6	26.4	11.1
Encouraging tourism from China needs to be a post-COVID-19 priority for Australia	6.2	8.9	8.3	25.3	25.8	16.7	8.7

Table 18A Trade case study: Education

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
International students from China provide a major economic benefit to Australia	0.9	0.9	5.8	16.1	26.9	35.0	14.3
Australian universities are too financially reliant on international students from China	0.4	2.2	0.9	15.4	25.1	28.2	27.8
Encouraging international students from China to return to study in Australia needs to be a post-COVID-19 priority for Australia	10.4	9.5	8.6	26.2	21.7	16.7	6.8

Table 19A Views on foreign investment from China overall

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Foreign investment from China has created job opportunities in Australia	3.7	6.5	9.0	30.7	31.9	15.9	2.4
Foreign investment from China should be supported by Australians	12.0	11.6	15.4	31.9	20.7	6.7	1.8
Foreign investment from China is more detrimental than beneficial to Australia	2.1	4.7	11.9	30.5	22.2	16.1	12.4

Table 20A Investment case study: Agriculture

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Chinese ownership of agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia are more concerning than ownership by companies from other countries	2.1	4.5	6.2	21.8	21.2	22.9	21.3
Chinese ownership of agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia presents a threat to Australia's food security	1.8	4.3	5.7	17.8	26.6	21.7	22.1
Chinese investment in agricultural assets (e.g., land, food processing facilities) in Australia is more beneficial than detrimental to Australia's interests	11.9	15.6	17.8	26.1	14.3	6.8	7.3

Table 21A Investment case study: Residential real estate

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Chinese investment in Australian residential real estate brings a lot of benefits for Australians (e.g., construction, new dwellings, jobs)	13.2	16.5	13.7	23.4	21.9	8.5	2.7
Foreign buyers from China drive up Australian housing prices	1.0	1.8	5.0	10.1	22.9	31.2	28.1
Chinese investors in Australian real estate have made it difficult for first home buyers in Australia to enter the market	1.8	3.3	6.3	19.8	21.4	20.1	27.4
Chinese investors have negatively affected the rental market for residential real estate in Australia	2.3	2.5	5.3	20.5	24.6	23.8	21.0
Australia should restrict the amount of investment in residential real estate that is permitted from Chinese investors	2.0	1.5	3.8	14.6	16.9	23.7	37.5

Table 22A **Support for business ties**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australian companies should continue to pursue business opportunities with China	4.1	3.3	7.5	23.7	32.6	21.1	7.7

Table 23A **Concerns about business ties**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia should not do business with China because of their record on human rights	2.9	10.7	14.3	28.9	19.0	15.6	8.6
Australia should not do business with China because of their domestic censorship of media, internet and other forms of communication	2.4	11.6	16.1	27.8	23.3	11.8	7.1
Australia should not do business with China because of their record on environmental practices	5.0	13.7	16.8	32.6	18.3	6.2	7.3

5.

Military and security

Table 24A China as a security threat

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
China is a security threat to Australia	1.9	3.7	7.4	20.4	14.8	20.4	31.5

Table 25A Trade and security blocs

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia should form trade and security blocs with other countries that deliberately exclude China	3.4	10.0	12.4	30.8	18.9	12.1	12.3

Table 26A Regional stability and security

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia's relationship with China contributes to regional stability and security	3.7	1.9	16.7	25.9	27.8	16.7	7.4

Table 27A Conflict over Taiwan

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
In the event of a military conflict between China and the United States over Taiwan, Australia should remain neutral	3.6	3.6	10.9	29.1	27.3	18.2	7.3
In the event of a military conflict between China and the United States over Taiwan, Australia should lend military support to the United States	5.4	5.4	1.8	42.9	12.5	19.6	12.5

Table 28A **Cyberattacks and cyber surveillance**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I am suspicious that the Chinese government is behind cybersecurity attacks on Australia's digital systems	0.6	2.0	3.3	16.9	20.6	25.1	31.6
The Chinese government is monitoring the communications of Australians closely with apps such as WeChat	0.8	2.5	3.1	20.3	26.4	21.1	25.8

Table 29A **Support for banning apps such as TikTok and WeChat**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australia should ban Chinese owned apps such as TikTok and WeChat	4.3	9.2	10.6	26.0	17.0	13.3	19.6

Table 30A **The Belt and Road Initiative**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The Australian government is right not to sign up to/ participate in China's Belt and Road Initiative	1.4	1.4	3.5	40.4	14.8	18.1	20.5

6. Society

Table 31A Impact of political tensions on the Australian-Chinese community

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Political tensions in the Australia-China relationship are negatively impacting Australians of Chinese origin	2.3	3.8	3.8	26.9	30.3	21.2	11.8

Table 32A Perceptions of Chinese government influence on the Australian-Chinese community

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australians of Chinese origin can be mobilised by the Chinese government to undermine Australia's interests and social cohesion	6.4	12.7	10.7	30.9	22.1	10.0	7.3

Table 33A Foreign interference – Country comparisons

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Foreign interference in Australia stemming from China is a major problem	0.6	2.4	4.5	21.0	28.6	21.0	22.0
Foreign interference in Australia stemming from the United States is a major problem	5.1	9.0	14.3	34.4	20.6	11.8	4.7
Foreign interference in Australia stemming from Russia is a major problem	1.8	4.9	7.6	38.4	22.2	17.3	7.8

Table 34A Perceptions of the impact of Chinese government influence on Australian values and traditions

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australian values and traditions are being undermined by Chinese government influence in Australia	3.6	10.9	11.5	28.4	19.2	15.7	10.6

Table 35A The Australian government's response to Chinese government interference in Australia

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The Australian government is successfully responding to Chinese government interference in Australia	4.9	10.2	16.9	33.3	20.7	10.0	3.9

Table 36A Arbitrary detention

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
The risk of arbitrary detention is a concern when considering travel to China	1.3	1.5	4.4	21.0	23.1	26.2	22.6
China is willing to detain/arrest Australian citizens without any legal basis to punish Australia over political disagreements	3.4	3.4	3.4	22.3	21.6	25.2	20.8

Table 37A Views on international students

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
International students from China help strengthen the people-to-people links (e.g., family, friendships, business contacts, tourism) between the two countries	3.6	6.7	9.3	22.7	30.7	21.8	5.3
International students from China are potentially reducing the quality of education at Australian universities	9.6	14.2	16.9	19.6	14.6	10.5	14.6
International students from China mean there are less places for domestic students to study in their choice of Australian university	2.2	11.6	17.4	27.2	21.4	9.8	10.3

7.

University and research

Table 38A Freedom of academic speech

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Australian university ties with China compromise Australian freedom of speech	2.7	8.0	12.9	28.1	21.0	13.4	13.8

Table 39A Research collaboration

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Research collaborations between academics from Australia and China makes Australia more competitive internationally	2.6	5.3	7.5	36.6	27.8	15.9	4.4
It is beneficial for Australian scientists to have research connections to China	3.5	3.5	6.9	17.9	27.5	30.2	10.4

8.

Global and regional cooperation

Table 40A **Benefits of global and regional cooperation**

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
It is beneficial for Australia to work with China on global issues, such as climate change and global health	3.1	4.4	2.7	15.8	28.7	29.1	16.2
It is beneficial for Australia to work with China on regional issues, such as ending malaria in the Pacific	4.4	3.5	4.4	15.7	27.6	34.4	10.0

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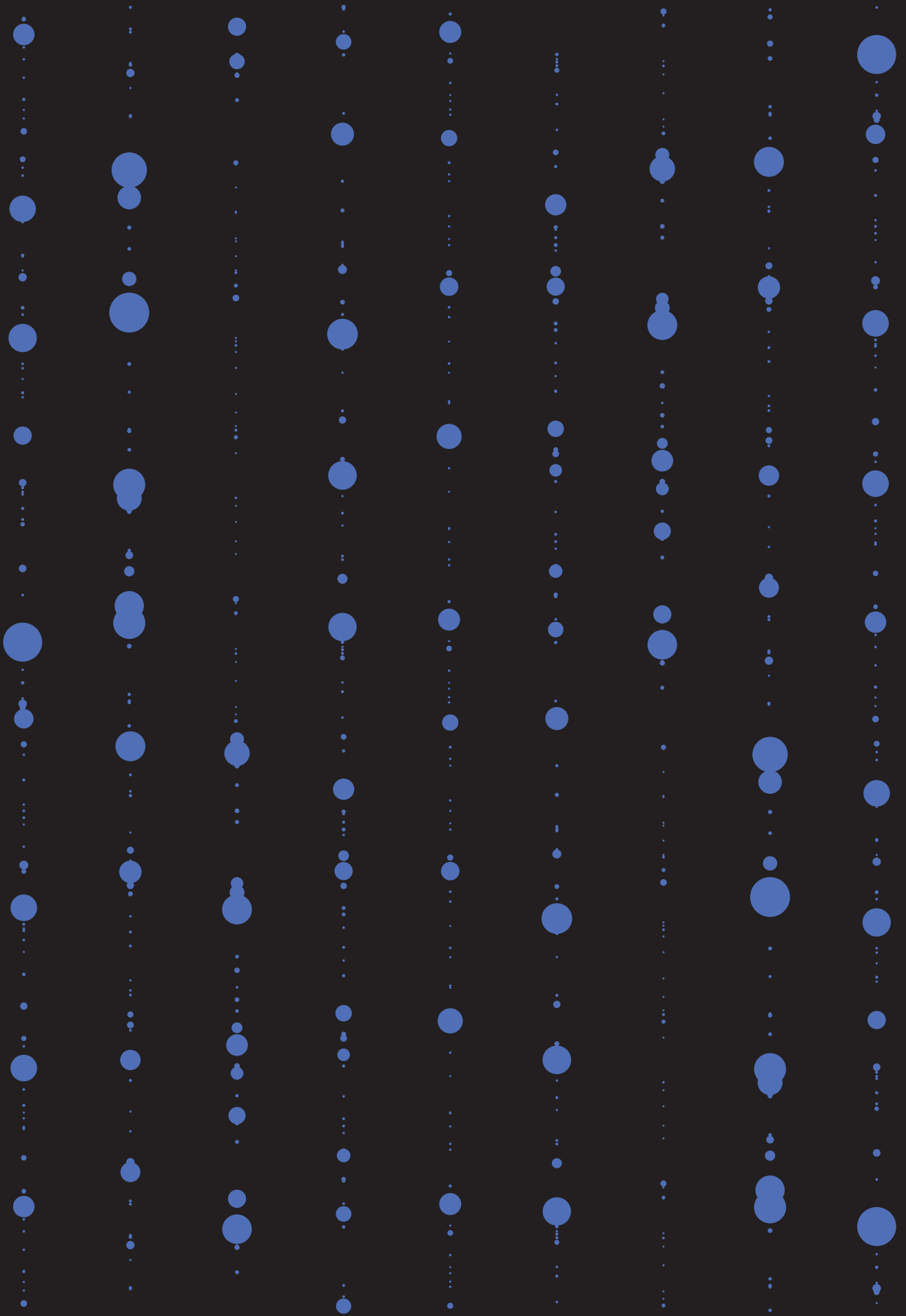
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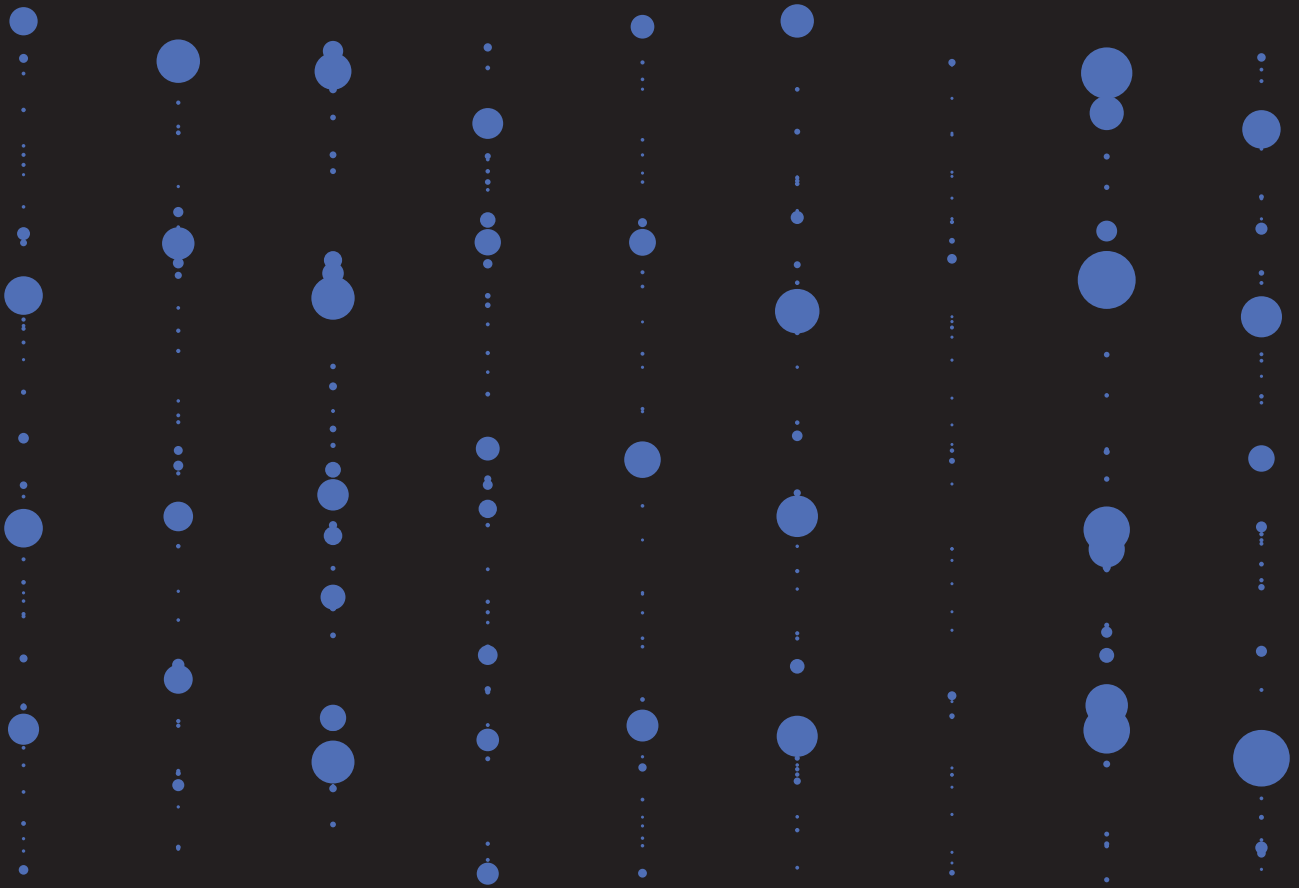
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