

MAV COUNCILLOR CENSUS July 2013

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this survey was to gather data on a range of demographic characteristics to provide a profile of elected membership of local government in Victoria. This exercise was conducted in 2003 (see MAV 2003 Councillor Census, August 2003), 2006 and 2009. In 2006 there were 467 completions. In 2009, there were 430 completions (from the population of 630 councillors), which is 68 per cent of councillors.

In 2013, there were 497 completions (from the population of 630 councillors), which is 79 per cent of councillors.

This report incorporates data from the 2006, 2009 and 2013 surveys and highlights changes over that period, where appropriate.

2 Methodology

Councillors were contacted via email inviting them to participate in the census online on 15 April 2013. Two reminder emails were sent over a period of three weeks. In week five, a paper questionnaire was sent to the councillor if they had not completed the census online. In week seven, a reminder postcard was sent to the councillors who received the paper questionnaire. In week nine, all non participating councillors were called up to three times to complete the questionnaire over the telephone, or to be reminded to complete online or via the paper questionnaire. At the end of the data collection period 334 councillors completed the census online, 79 completed the census in paper form and 84 completed the census over the telephone.

3 Summary of main findings

- The majority of councillors continue to be male but the trend over the period is a slight but steady increase in female councillors and a corresponding slight but steady decrease in male councillors
- The majority of councillors are above 46 years of age with 56-65 years old the most common age group. There are fewer councillors 25 and younger in 2013, as compared to 2009 but a greater number in the 26-35 age group
- The majority of councillors are born in Australia but more than 30 per cent have one or more parents born overseas
- 74 per cent of councillors are married in 2013
- Over 50 per cent of female councillors report they have caring responsibilities. This has risen over the period for females but fluctuated for males
- Most councillors are self-employed or working
- Most councillors work for a private company or are self-employed. The number employed by government has gone down
- The majority of councillors are managers or professionals
- Most councillors have a post school qualification and this has risen over time
- In 2013 the number of female councillors with undergraduate and post graduate qualification was higher than the number of males with these qualifications
- The majority of councillors earn above \$52,000 per year
- Over 40 per cent of councillors in 2013 are newly elected
- The majority of councillors still spend between 11-30 hours per week on council duties (unchanged over the period)
- About 23 per cent of councillors identify with no political party or are 'swing' voters (down from 29 per cent in 2009)
- About 28 per cent identify as Liberal (up from 23 per cent in 2009), 21 per cent identify as Labor (ALP) (down from 26 per cent in 2009) and Other party/independent has risen to over 15 per cent (11 per cent in 2006)

4 Council areas

The table below shows the number of respondents by council area. All areas have an increase in respondents in 2013. The largest increases are in inner and outer Melbourne.

The second table below shows the distribution of male and female councillor respondents by council area, comparing 2006, 2009 and 2013. The table shows row percentages, which adjusts for the difference in the number of male and female respondents. Inner Melbourne (like in 2006) has females over represented (as compared to males). In large rural councils females are under represented (even more so as compared to 2006 and 2009). While in 2013 there is little change in the percentage of females as compared to male respondents in outer Melbourne and regional cities.

	Survey year		
	2006	2009	2013
Outer Melbourne (including interface)	103	90	113
Inner Melbourne	72	74	97
Regional Cities	54	57	62
Large Rural	120	97	104
Small Rural	116	109	110
Not stated	2	3	11
Total	467	430	497

Table 1 Survey respondents by council area 2006, 2009 and 2013

		Inner Melbourne	Large Rural	Outer Melbourne	Regional Cities
2006	Male	18	36	29	18
	Female	27	32	30	11
2009	Male	23	33	26	18
	Female	23	26	33	18
2013	Male	24	32	27	16
	Female	29	21	33	17

Table 2 Type of council by gender, 2006, 2009 and 2013 (row percentages)

5 Gender

Figure 1 shows that in 2013, the majority of councillors are male - 63 per cent (67 per cent in 2009) and 36 per cent (33 per cent in 2009) are female. The trend is an increase in female councillors over the three periods with a corresponding decrease in male councillors.

In 2013, a third category, "Other, please specify", for gender was added. 0.6 per cent of councillors reported their gender as "Other, please specify" in 2013.

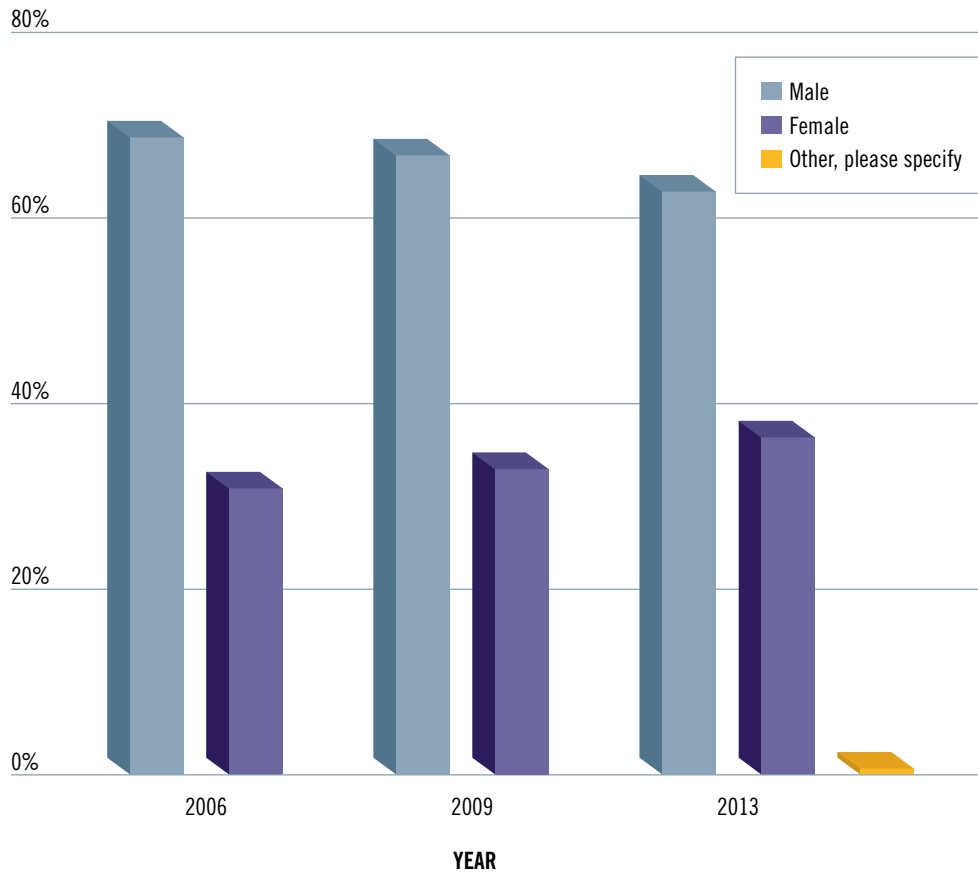


Figure 1 Gender profile, 2006, 2009 and 2013

6 Age

As in 2006 and 2009 the majority of councillors in 2013 are above 46 years old. In 2013 (like in 2009) the largest age group is 56-65. In 2013 it is worth noting the increase in the 26-35 year old group, as compared to 2006 and 2009.

The table below compares types of council areas by age profiles over the three periods. Rural councils have an older age profile as compared to metropolitan councils. Ages continue to become more evenly distributed in metropolitan councils, but not in regional councils.

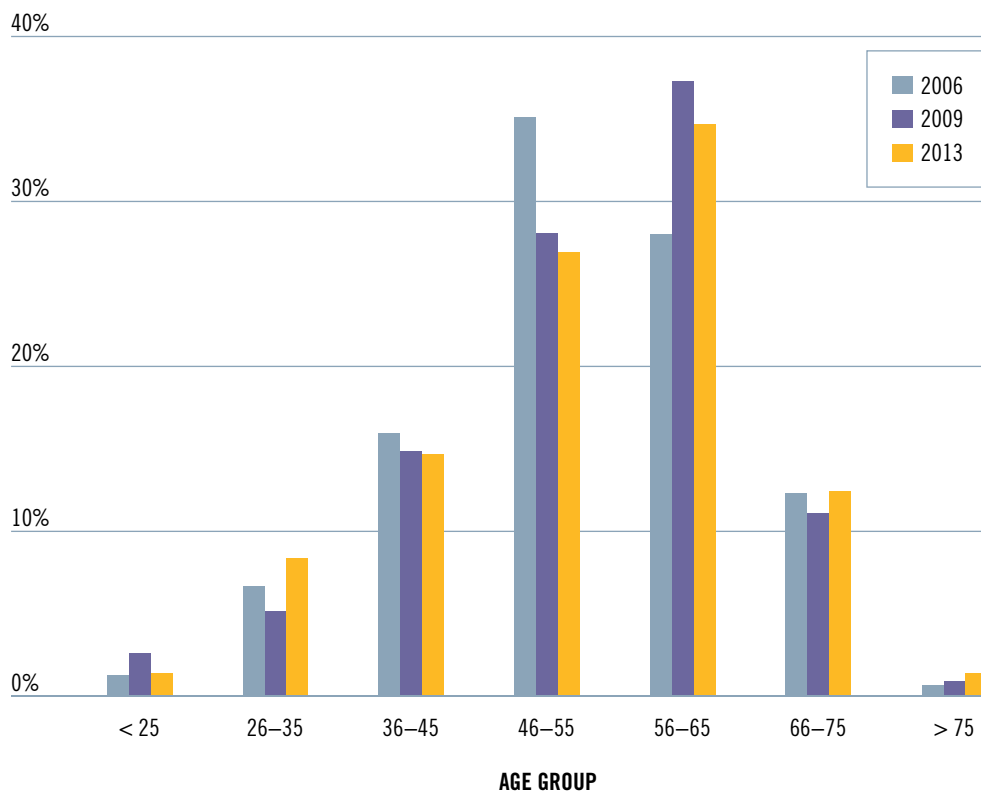


Figure 2 Age distribution of councillors, 2006, 2009 and 2013

		< 25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	> 75
Inner Melbourne	2006	4	11	21	43	19	1	0
	2009	9	12	23	22	28	5	0
	2013	3	14	27	24	27	5	0
Outer Melbourne	2006	2	13	23	34	14	15	0
	2009	1	6	19	34	30	8	2
	2013	2	10	18	28	28	13	1
Regional Cities	2006	0	11	20	33	31	4	0
	2009	2	12	20	23	36	7	0
	2013	2	5	12	33	37	12	0
Large Rural	2006	1	3	14	33	33	13	3
	2009	0	0	11	34	42	11	1
	2013	1	4	11	24	43	14	4
Small Rural	2006	0	0	6	34	40	20	0
	2009	2	1	6	24	47	19	1
	2013	0	7	6	27	41	16	2

Table 3 Age profiles across types of council areas, 2006, 2009 and 2013 (row percentages)

7 Country of origin

In 2013, 87 per cent of councillors are Australian born (with 13 per cent born overseas). This is approximately the same as 2009, when 85 per cent were Australian born.

When looking at councillors and their parents' birthplaces in 2013, 304 councillors reported both parents and themselves as being born in Australia, while 161 reported that either they or one of their parents were born overseas.

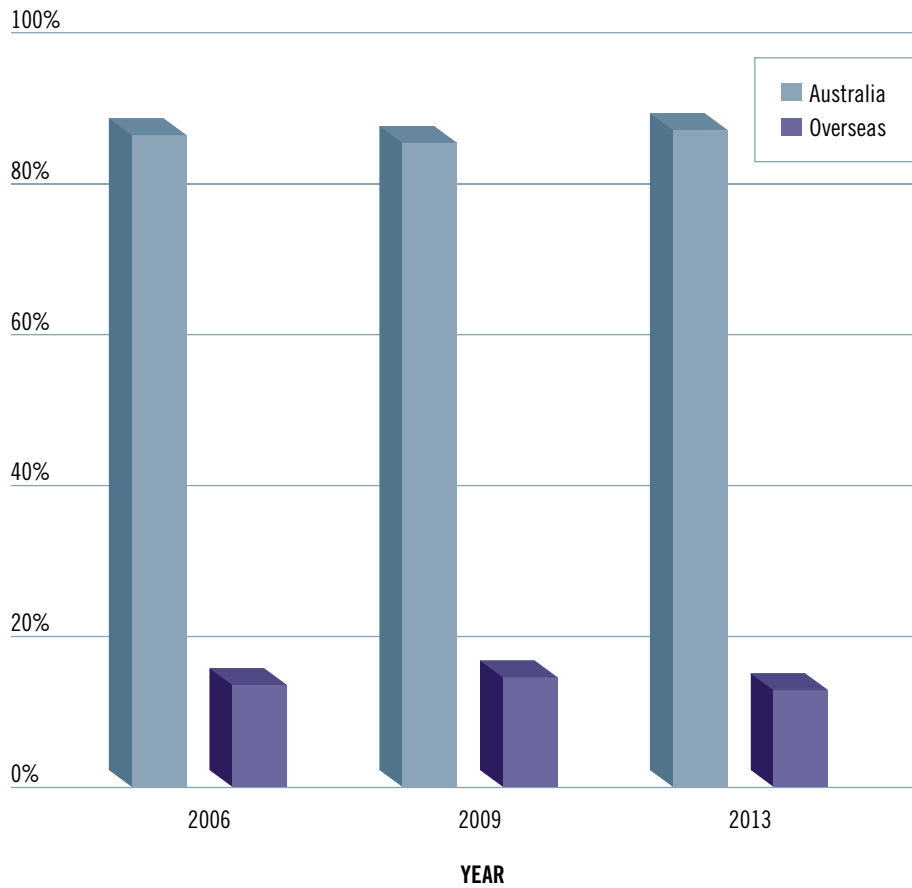


Figure 3 Birthplace of councillors, 2006, 2009 and 2013

Country of birth	Frequency
Australia	419
Overseas	62
Not stated	16
Total	497

Table 4 Birthplace of councillors, 2013

In 2013, 1.5 per cent of councillors identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This compares with 0.4 per cent in 2006 and 0.9 per cent in 2009.

	Survey year		
	2006	2009	2013
All Australian	311	296	304
Councillor born in Australia, both parents born overseas	37	33	44
One parent born in Australia and councillor born in Australia	46	34	59
One parent born in Australia and councillor born overseas	1	2	1
All born overseas	60	58	57
Not all birthplaces specified	12	7	32
Total	467	430	497

Table 5 Birthplace of councillors and their parents

8 Marital status

In 2013, 74 per cent of councillors were married compared with 71 per cent in 2009.

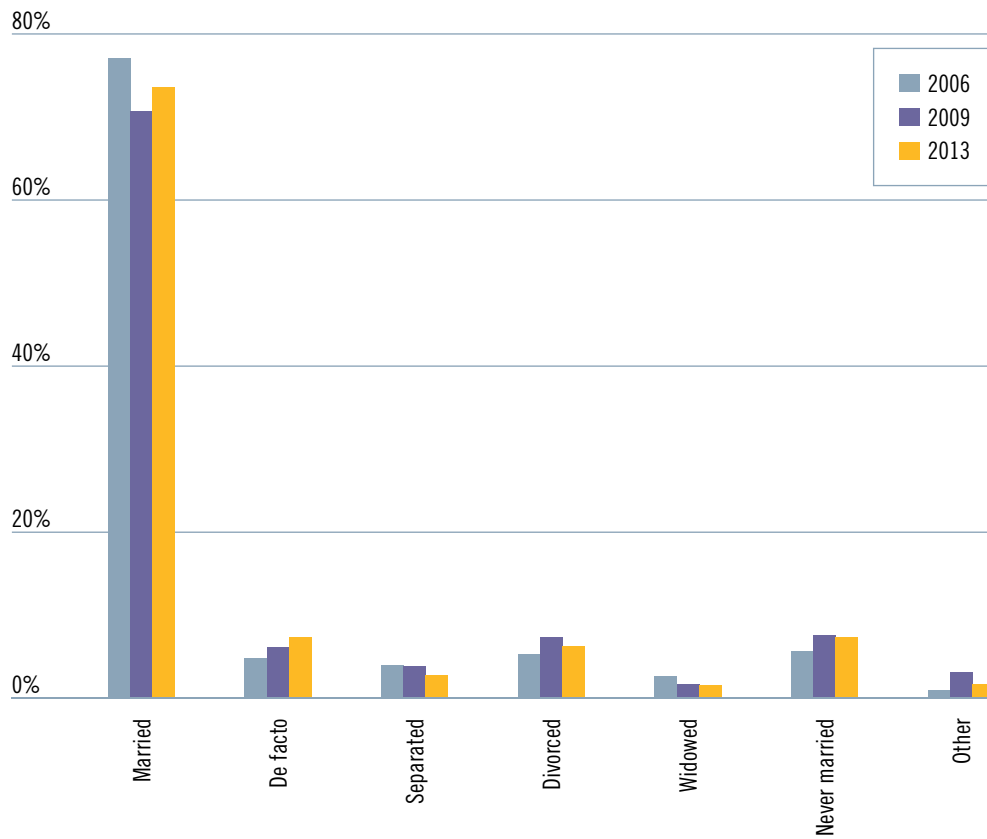


Figure 4 Councillors' marital status, 2006, 2009 and 2013

9 Living arrangements

There was little change in councillors' households over the period with the majority living with a partner or a partner and children.

	Survey year		
	2006	2009	2013
A partner	40	42	40
A partner plus one or more children	36	35	37
No one, you live by yourself	10	10	8
One or more children	5	5	4
One or both of your parents	1	2	2
One of both of your parents plus others	1	1	1
One or more adults who are neither your partner nor your parent	1	2	1
A partner plus other adults	1	0	1
A partner plus one or more children plus other adults	1	1	1
Not stated	3	3	4

Table 6 Councillors' living arrangements, 2006, 2009 and 2013 (column percentages)

10 Caring responsibilities

In 2009, 31 per cent of males reported caring responsibilities, compared with 35 per cent in 2013. By contrast, females reporting caring responsibilities increased from 47 per cent in 2009 to 51 per cent in 2013. The trend over the period is that the percentage of females with caring responsibilities is rising while the percentage of males with caring responsibilities has fluctuated over the period.

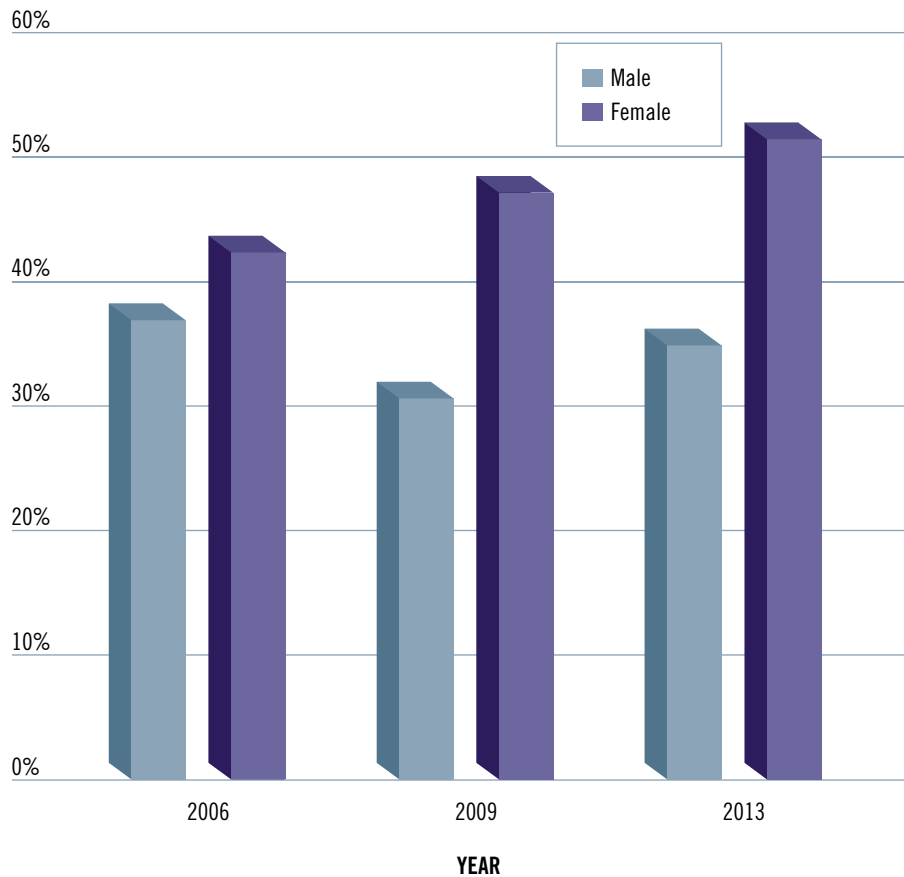


Figure 5 Percentage of councillors with caring responsibilities by gender, 2006, 2009 and 2013

11 Employment status

Employment profiles have remained fairly stable although 2013 shows a decrease in those working and an increase in those with household duties, helping family, a disability and studying.

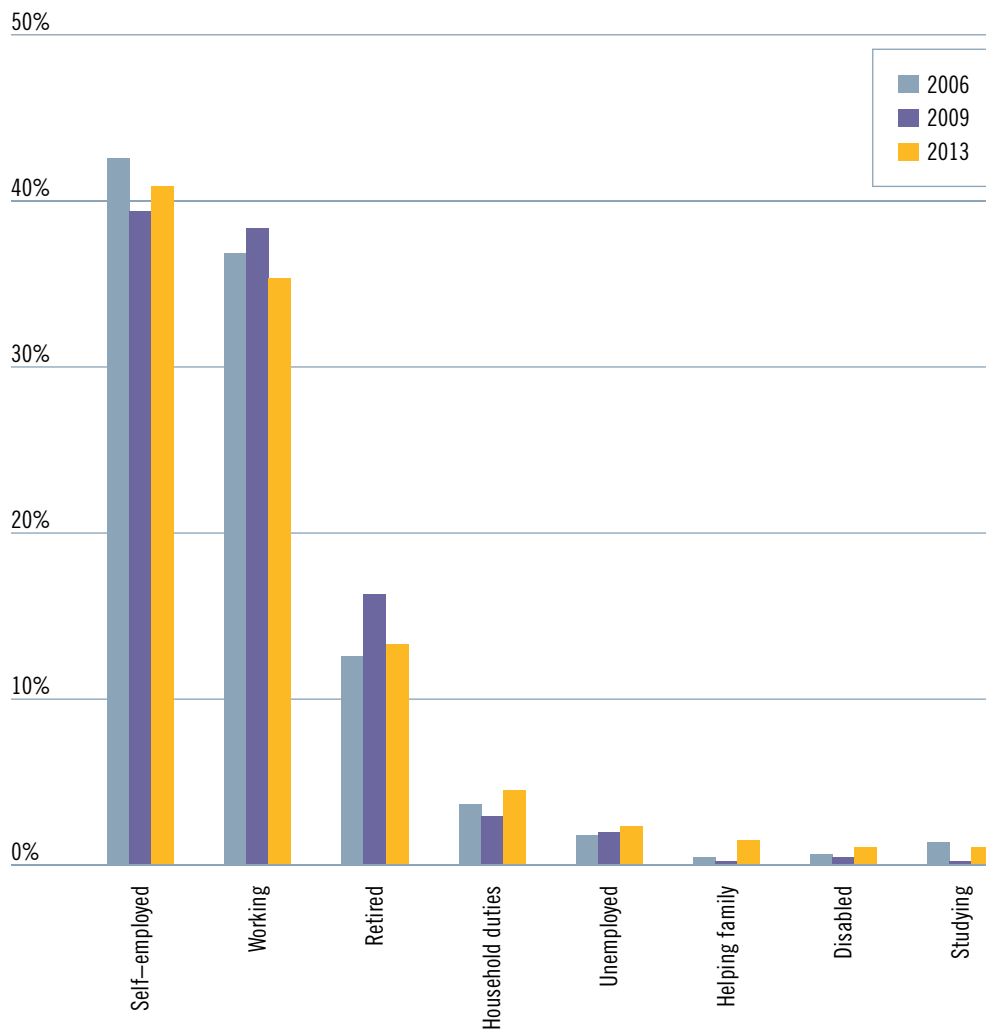


Figure 6 Employment profile of councillors, 2006, 2009 and 2013

12 Employment sector

Over the three periods (2006, 2009 and 2013), councillors were most likely to be employed by a private company. A change seen in 2013 is the next largest sector, self-employed without employees. The number of councillors employed by both state and local government has decreased and the number employed by charities has increased (and is closer to the 2006 figure).

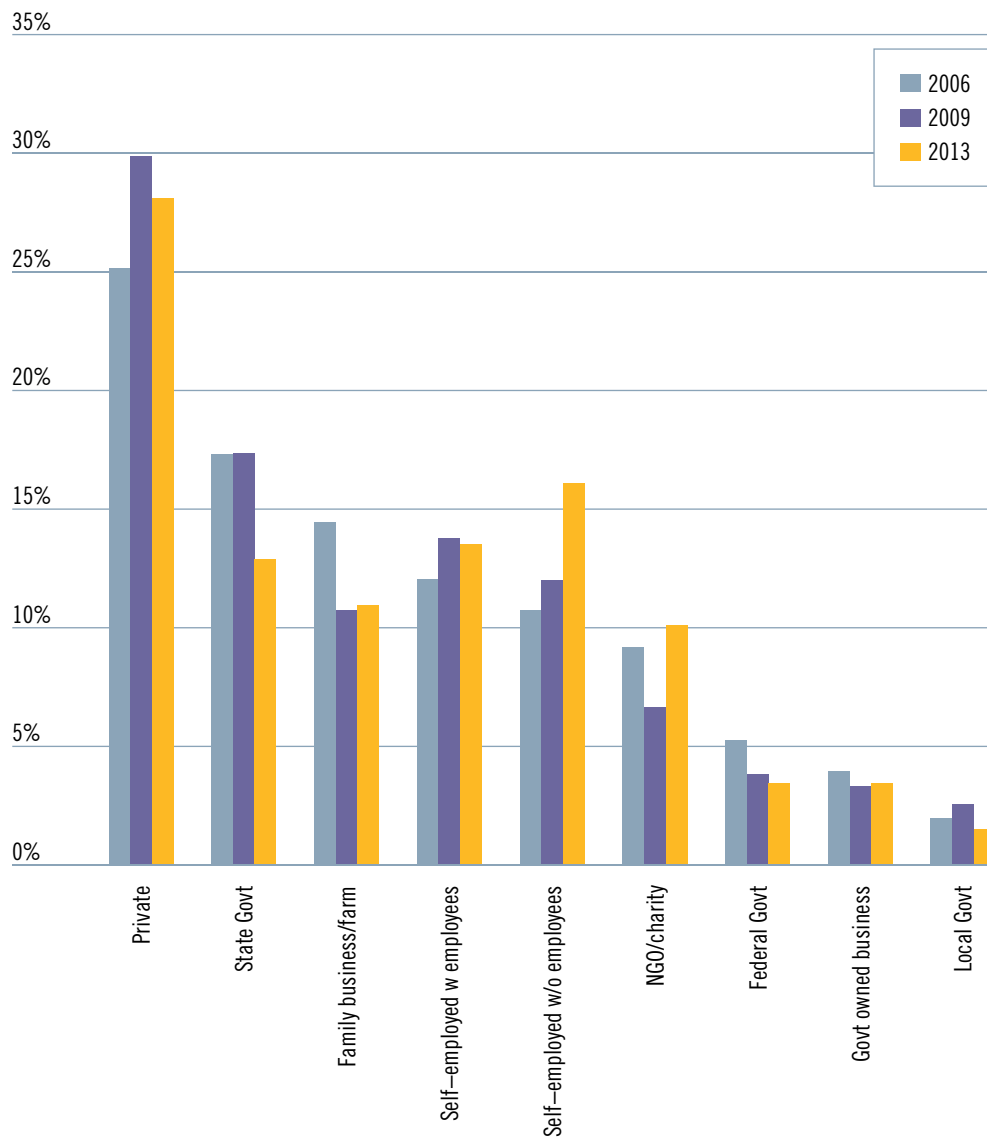


Figure 7 Employment sector, 2006, 2009 and 2013

13 Occupation

The largest occupational groups represented were managers and administrators, and then professionals. These two groups accounted for 74 per cent of the 2009 and 73 per cent of the 2013 sample.

It should be noted that some of the change in occupation (in particular the differences between professionals and associate professionals) could be due to a change in how the occupation data was collected. In 2006 and 2009 we asked councillors to match their job to a list of occupational categories (they 'self-selected' their occupation). In 2013 we asked respondents to write in their job title and main tasks (as text responses) and then these were independently coded to the occupational classification.

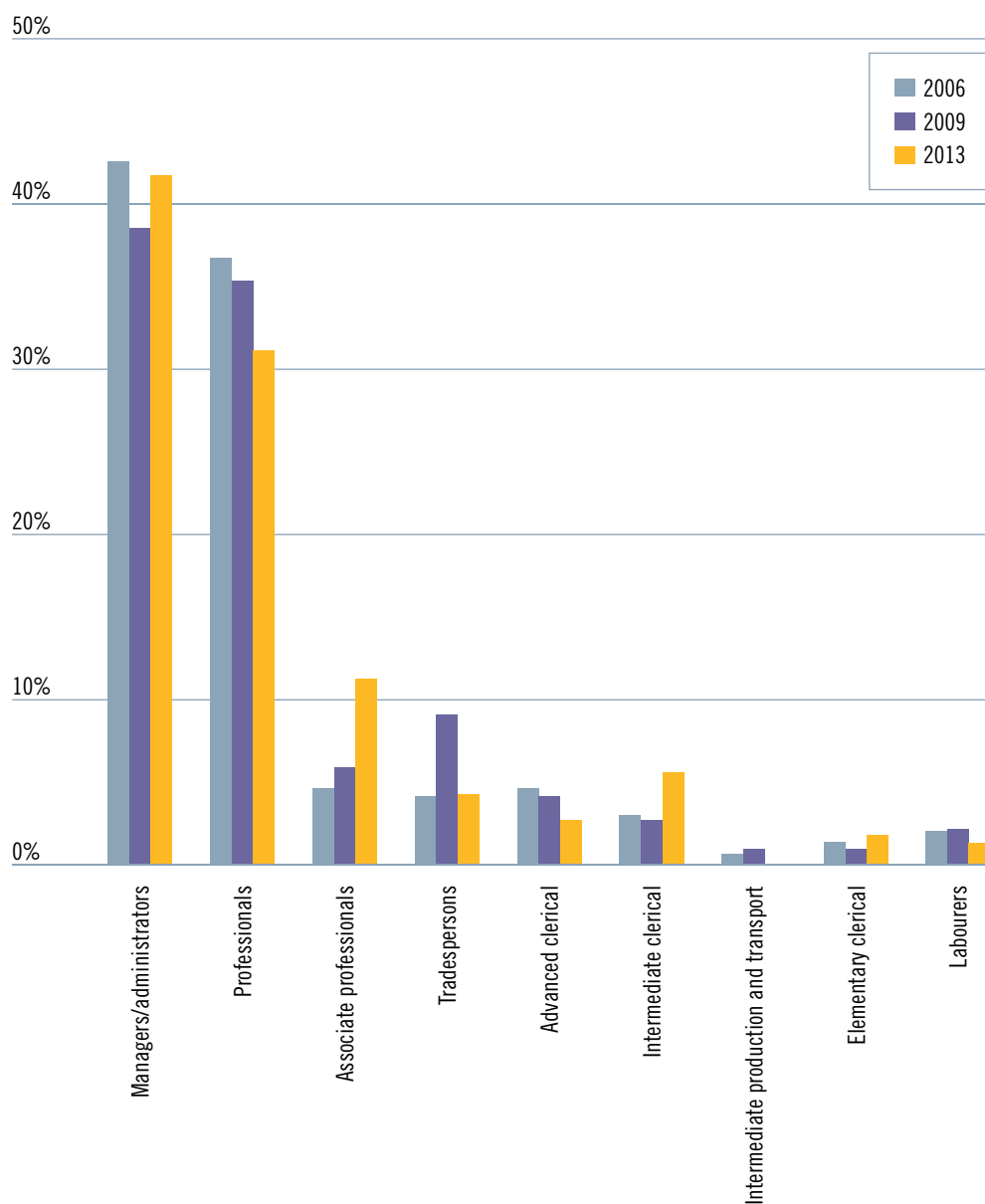


Figure 8 Occupation of councillors, 2006, 2009 and 2013

	Male			Female		
	2006	2009	2013	2006	2009	2013
Managers and administrators	44	43	42	40	31	28
Professionals	37	31	25	36	44	34
Associate professionals	4	6	10	7	6	9
Tradespersons and associated workers	6	12	5	1	3	2
Advanced clerical and service workers	3	2	2	9	8	3
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	2	1	4	4	5	7
Intermediate production and transport workers	1	1	0	0	0	0
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	1	1	2	1	2	1
Labourers and related workers	2	3	1	1	2	2
Not codeable	0	0	4	0	0	4
Blank	0	0	5	0	0	10

Table 7 Occupation by gender, 2006, 2009 and 2013 (column percentages)

14 Working hours

Councillors were asked how many hours per week they worked for pay. Among the 77 per cent of councillors in 2013 recording one or more hours a week (78 per cent in 2006 and 81 per cent in 2009) the average number of hours worked per week increased to 40.9 hours (up from 38.1 hours in both 2006 and 2009).

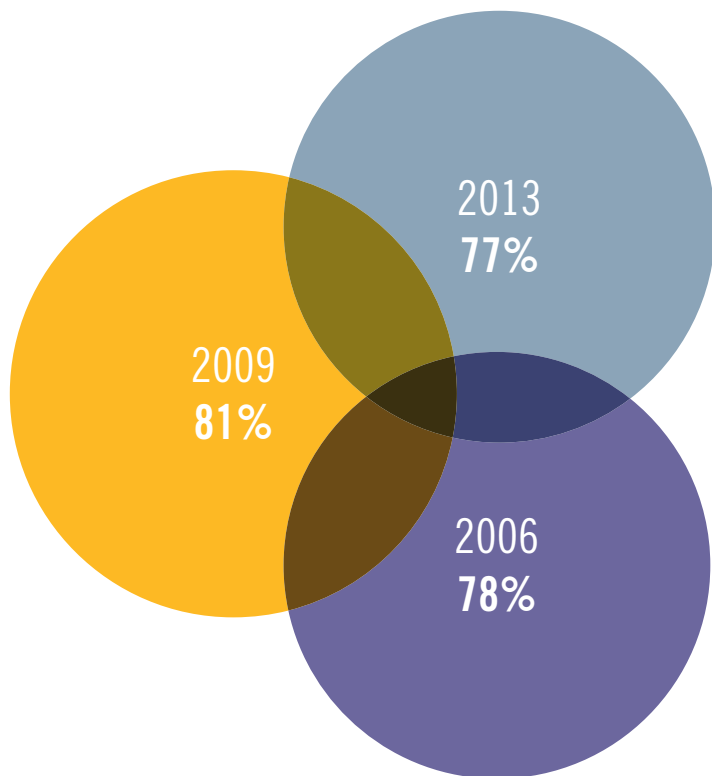


Figure 9 Percentage of councillors working one or more hours per week for pay, 2006, 2009, 2013

15 Level of education

Figure 10 shows the percentage of councillors that have completed various levels of education, while figure 11 shows this by gender. The general trend, shown in figure 10, is higher levels of TAFE and higher education completion. 2013 shows a slight decrease in undergraduate but this is offset by the increase in those with a postgraduate degree.

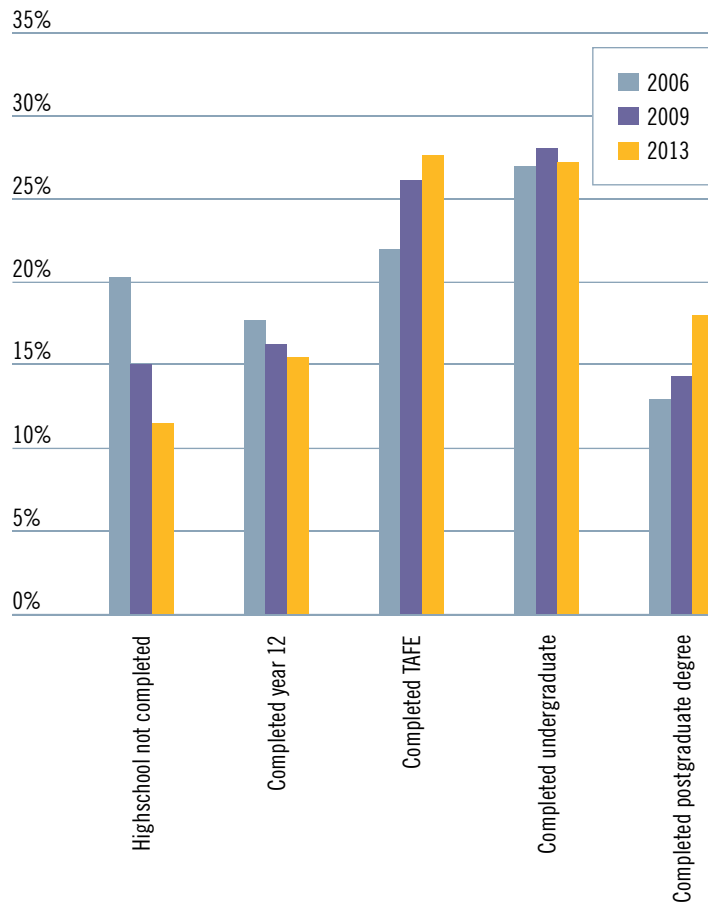


Figure 10 Councillors' levels of education, 2006, 2009 and 2013

Figure 11 shows the overall trend of higher levels of education. In particular, in 2013 there are higher numbers of female councillors with undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and male councillors with TAFE qualifications.

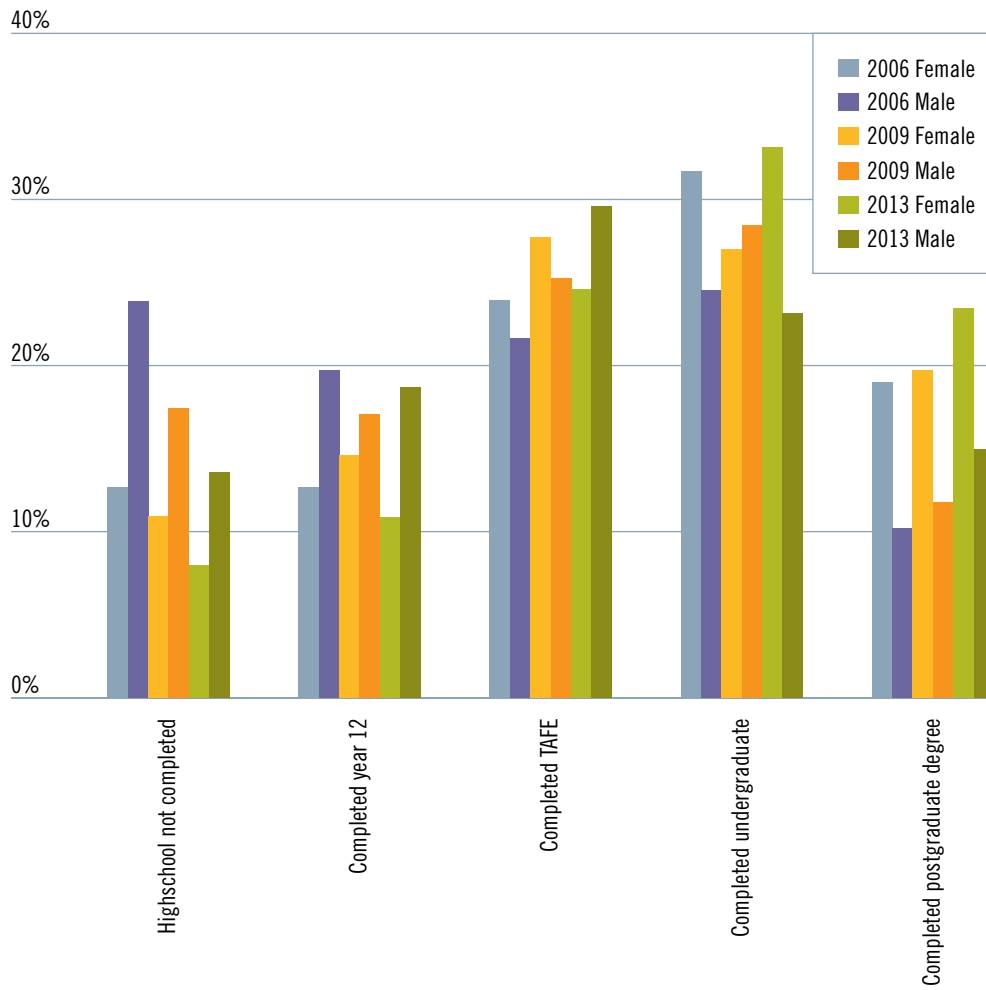


Figure 11 Education by gender, 2006, 2009 and 2013

16 Income

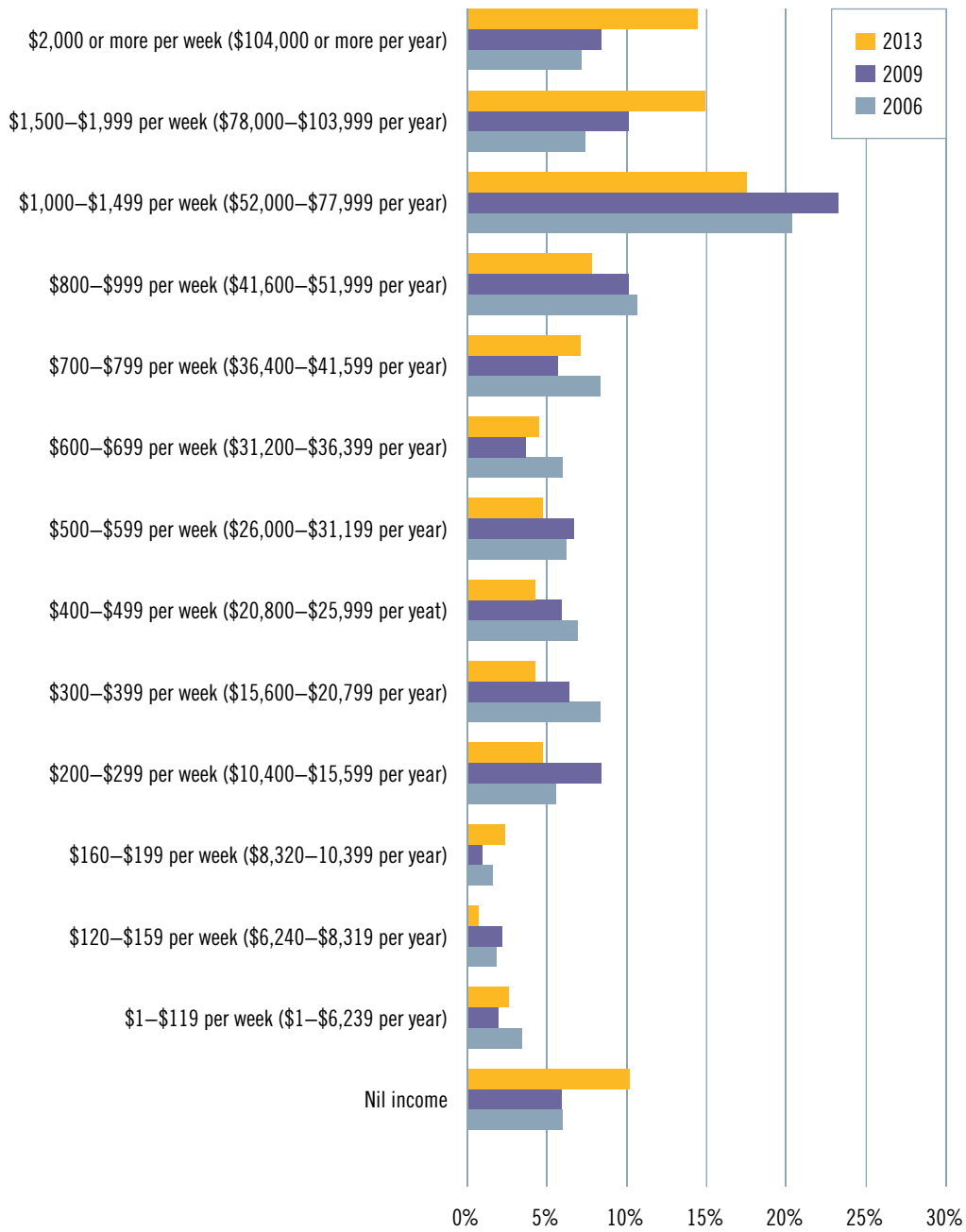


Figure 12 Income distribution, 2006, 2009 and 2013

17 Disability

In 2009, five per cent of councillors indicated they had a disability. In 2013, six per cent of councillors indicated they had a disability.

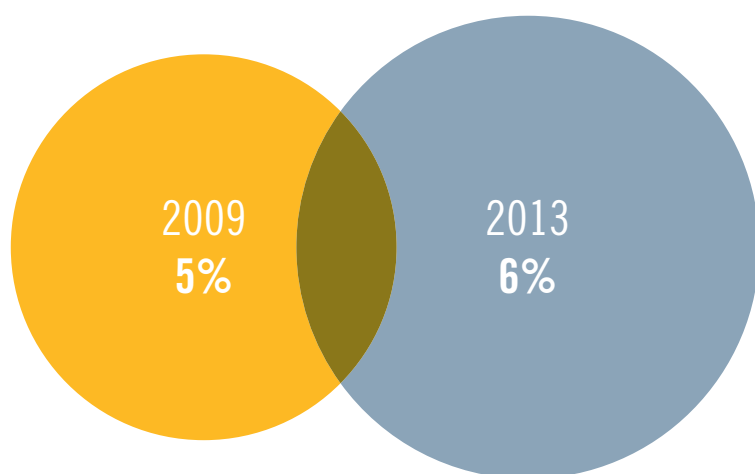


Figure 13 Percentage of councillors with a disability, 2009 and 2013

18 Councillor service and duties

Figure 14 shows that 44 per cent of councillors were newly elected in 2013. As compared to 2006 and 2009 fewer have served two to three years. Those that have served four to six years has gone up slightly over the period.

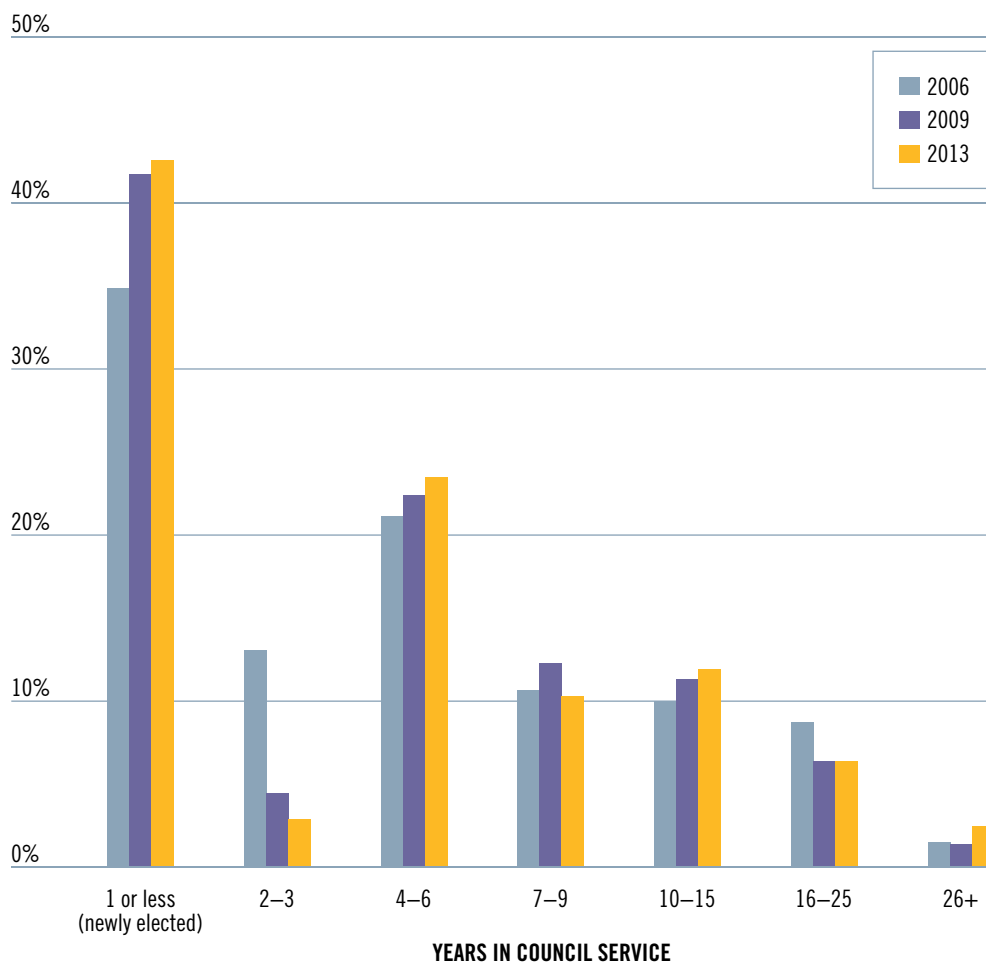


Figure 14 Years in council service, 2006, 2009 and 2013

	2006		2009		2013	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1 year or less (newly elected)	30	45	38	49	40	48
2-3 years	12	16	5	4	2	5
4-6 years	20	22	21	25	24	21
7-9 years	12	7	11	14	9	12
10-15 years	12	5	14	6	13	10
16-25 years	11	4	9	2	9	2
26+ years	2	1	2	1	3	1

Table 8 Length of service by gender, 2006, 2009 and 2013 (column percentages)

The number of newly elected councillors has gone up slightly for males and remained relatively stable for females. Longer serving councillors (over 10 years) are more likely to be male.

Figure 15 shows that the majority of councillors spend 11-30 hours in their council duties (this is largely unchanged), with the second largest group spending 31-50 hours.

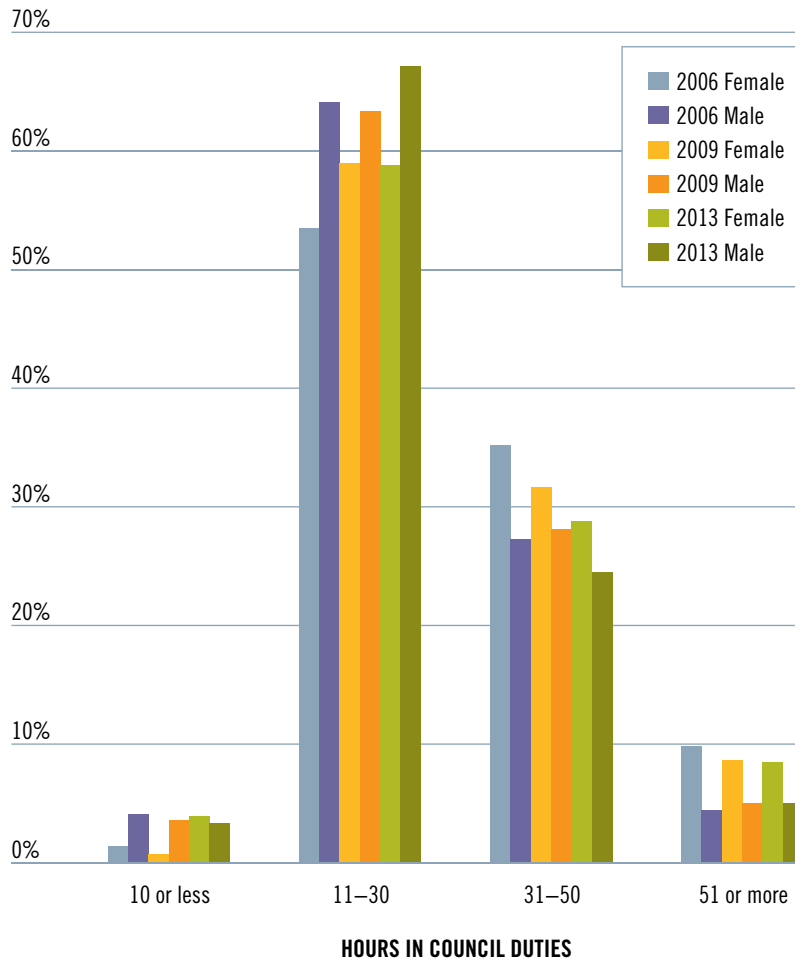


Figure 15 Hours spent in council duties by gender, 2006, 2009 and 2013

19 Political party membership and identification

Figure 16 shows that in 2013 there was some change in political party membership with an increase in affiliation with Liberal, a drop in Labor (ALP) and an increase in other party/independents. About 23 per cent report no party or that they are a 'swing' voter.

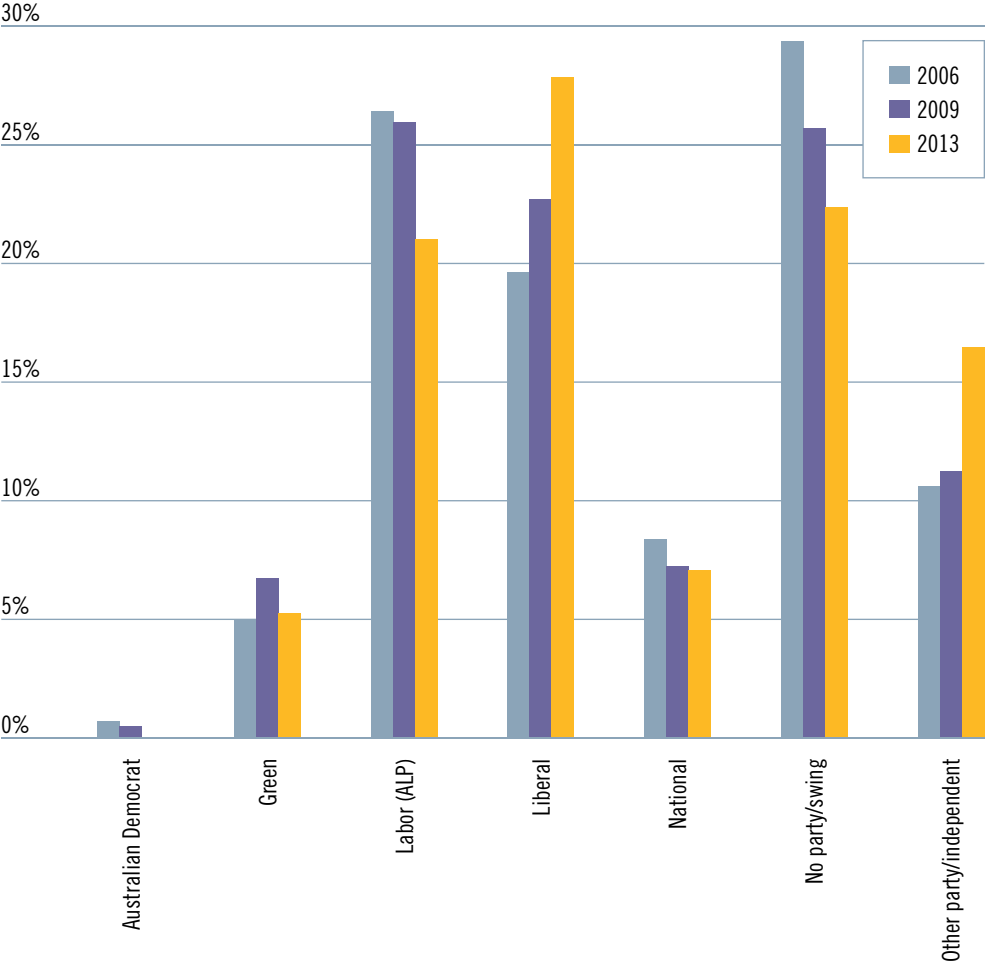


Figure 16 Political party allegiance, 2006, 2009 and 2013

20 Councillor ancestry

The table below shows councillor ancestry. The question used to gather this information was: What is your ancestry (provide up to two ancestries only): English, Irish, Scottish, Italian, German, Chinese, Australian, Other, please specify (open text). The table below lists the combinations of those selected (or ticked) with 'other'. This table shows the diversity of ancestry among councillors. The largest numbers are English, Scottish, Irish and Australian combinations. The details of the 'other' combinations of ancestries are contained in Appendix 1.

Ancestry	Frequency
English	79
English and Irish	53
Other	48
Australian	42
English and Australian	39
English and Scottish	38
Irish and Scottish	27
Irish	23
Scottish	23
English and German	18
Italian	17
English and Other	14
Irish and Other	9
Irish and Australian	7
Scottish and Other	6
Australian and Other	5
Chinese	5
Scottish and Australian	5
Irish and Italian	4
Scottish and German	4
Chinese and Other	3
German	3
Italian and Australian	3
German and Other	2
English and Irish and Scottish	1
German and Australian	1
Irish and Scottish and Other	1
Italian and German	1
Italian and Other	1
Scottish and Italian	1
Not stated	14
Total	497

Table 9 Councillor ancestry, 2013

21 Appendix 1

As in 2006 and 2009 the majority of councillors in 2013 are above 46 years old. In 2013 (like in 2009) the largest age group is 56-65. In 2013 it is worth noting the increase in the 26-35 year old group, as compared to 2006 and 2009.

The table below compares types of council areas by age profiles over the three periods. Rural councils have an older age profile as compared to metropolitan councils. Ages continue to become more evenly distributed in metropolitan councils, but not in regional councils.

Ancestry	Frequency
Greek	14
Dutch	9
French	9
Welsh	6
Maltese	4
Polish	4
Russian	4
Danish	3
Macedonian	3
Austrian	2
Cambodian	2
Chilean	2
Lebanese	2
Sri Lankan	2
Turkish	2
American	1
Bulgarian	1
Croatian	1
Egyptian	1
Hungarian	1
Indian	1
Jewish	1
Lithuanian	1
Maori	1
Native American	1
New Zealander	1
Norwegian	1
Portuguese	1
Prussian	1
Slovakian	1
Slovenian	1
South African	1
Swiss	1
Ukrainian	1
Vietnamese	1
West Indies	1
Not stated	
Total	89

Table 10 Councillor ancestry specified

MAV 12/60 Collins Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Phone 61 3 9667 5555
Email inquiries@mav.asn.au
Web www.mav.asn.au

The MAV Councillor Census 2013 has been prepared by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). Academic Surveys Australia, the survey arm of the Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated (ACSPRI), was engaged by the MAV to prepare and conduct the survey. It follows on from the earlier census conducted by the MAV in 2009 and 2006.

The efforts of Academic Surveys Australia, ACSPRI are most appreciated.

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