Office for National Statistics
Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

ONS Customer Satisfaction Survey 2014/15

July 2015

Background and methodology

• ONS run an annual customer satisfaction survey to gather feedback on our performance over the previous 12 months. The feedback helps us to understand how and why our statistics and analyses are used, and what our customers think about the quality of them and the services we provide. We use this feedback to improve our outputs and services to help meet customer need.

• A sample of approximately 1,500 known users is selected to take part each year. The survey is sent to both individuals and organisations.

• ONS "Key Account" organisations (primarily government departments) received a shorter version of the survey questionnaire for 2014/15 and were asked to submit a response on behalf of their organisation. Their feedback is included in the results unless otherwise specified.

• The 2014/2015 survey was sent to 1,506 individuals from 1,079 organisations.

• Comparisons with 2013/14 results should be made with caution due to some methodology changes in the analysis between the periods – for more information, please consult Annexes 1 and 2.

• Sectors with fewer than 10 responses are not included in the sector analysis; this includes the media and also national government for questions which do not include Key Account responses. Note these responses are included in the total figure provided for comparison.

Table 1: Responses by sector and respondent type

Sector	Respondents (n)	Respondents (%)	Individuals (n)	Organisations (n)	Not specified (n)
Sub-national government	92	37%	62	29	1
Academia	63	25%	57	5	1
National government	33	13%	9	24	
Business	22	9%	12	10	
Voluntary	13	5%	2	11	
Media / Journalists	7	3%	6	1	
Other	19	8%	8	10	1
Total	**249**	**100%**	**156**	**90**	**3**
			63%	*36%*	*1%*

Executive summary

Customer opinion of ONS remains very positive with customers continuing to value and trust the high quality, independent and reliable statistics and analyses we provide. Overall, there has been an improvement in satisfaction levels over the last 12 months although customers continue to feel ONS outputs could be easier to find. We would like to thank all the customers who shared feedback to help us improve our outputs and services and we will keep them informed of progress to address comments made.

Whole Survey Results

92% are **satisfied with the overall performance of ONS** as a National Statistics Institute;

96% **trust** ONS statistics and analyses;

83% would **speak highly** of ONS;

74% consider ONS statistics to be **helpful** in providing an evidence base;

91% are **satisfied with the quality** of ONS statistics and analyses;

69% consider ONS to be **innovative;**

89% believe ONS to be **independent**;

95% consider ONS statistics to be **important** to their work;

87% consider ONS statistics to **inform debate.**

Key Accounts

91% are **satisfied with the overall performance of ONS** as a National Statistics Institute;

100% **trust** ONS statistics and analyses;

86% would **speak highly** of ONS**;**

76% consider ONS statistics to be **helpful** in providing an evidence base;

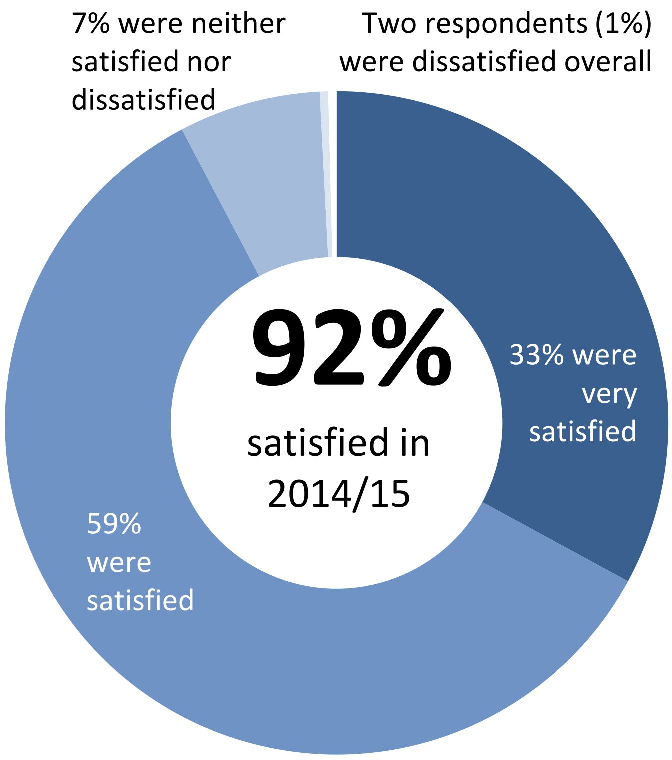
82% are **satisfied with the quality** of ONS statistics and analyses;

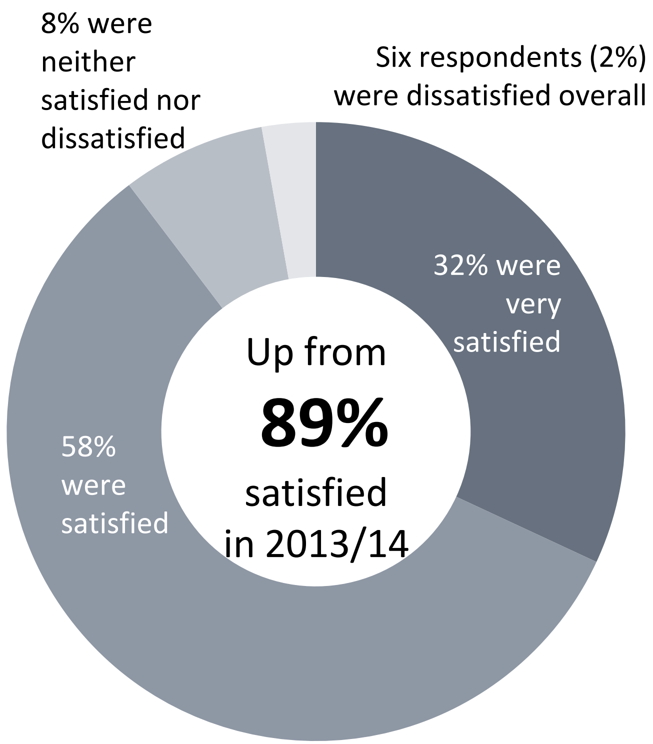
59% consider ONS to be **innovative;**

95% believe ONS to be **independent**.

Performance of ONS as a national statistics institute

- Respondents reported an increase in satisfaction with the performance of ONS over the last 12 months. An improvement in the level of quality and trust in ONS statistics was also reported.
- Feedback indicates that ONS provides “a good quality service” and “trusted data”, although accessing these outputs through the ONS website was identified as an area for improvement.

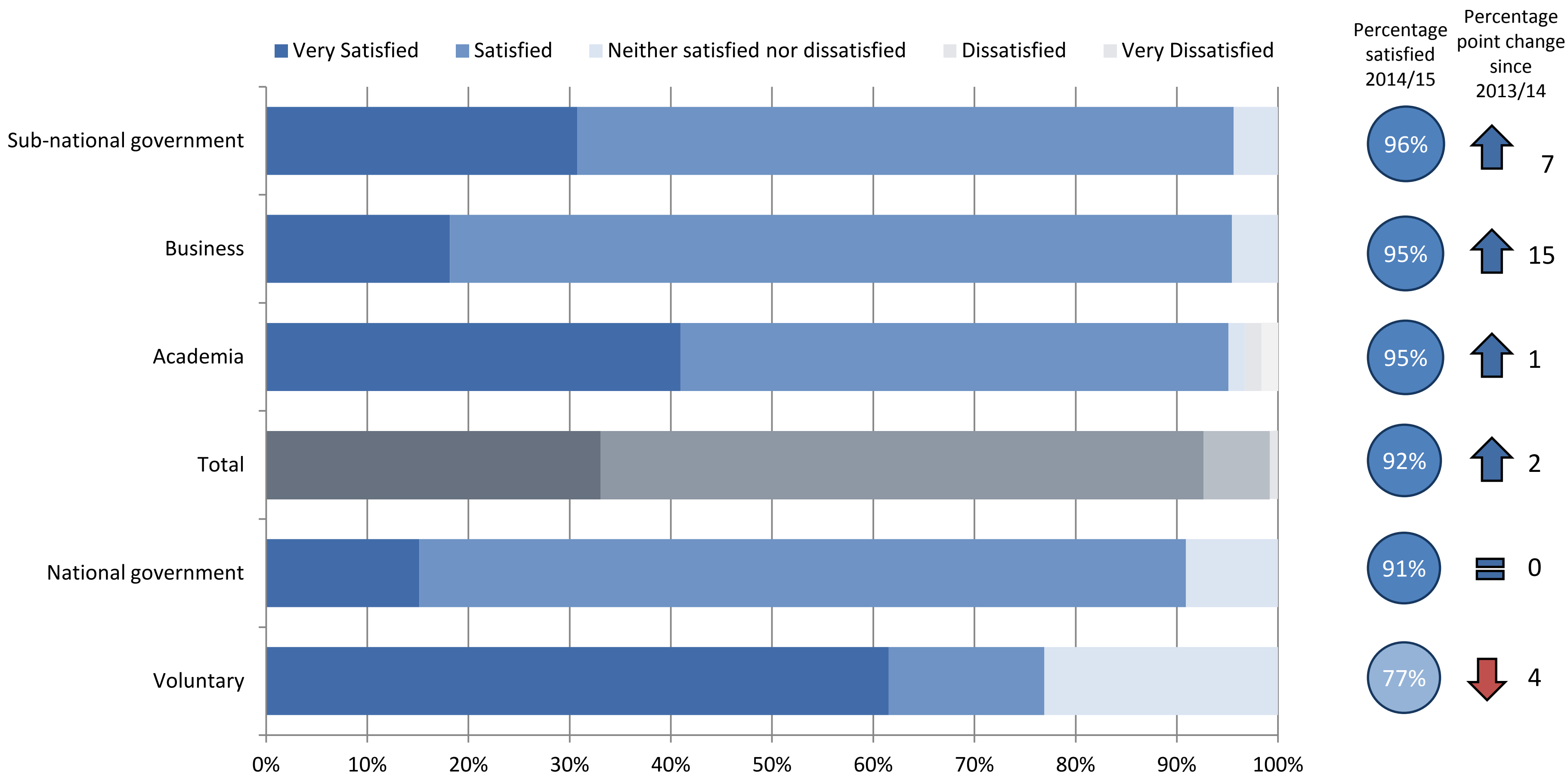




Overall satisfaction in ONS as a national statistics institute combines responses for “very satisfied” and “satisfied”.

Performance of ONS as a national statistics institute by sector

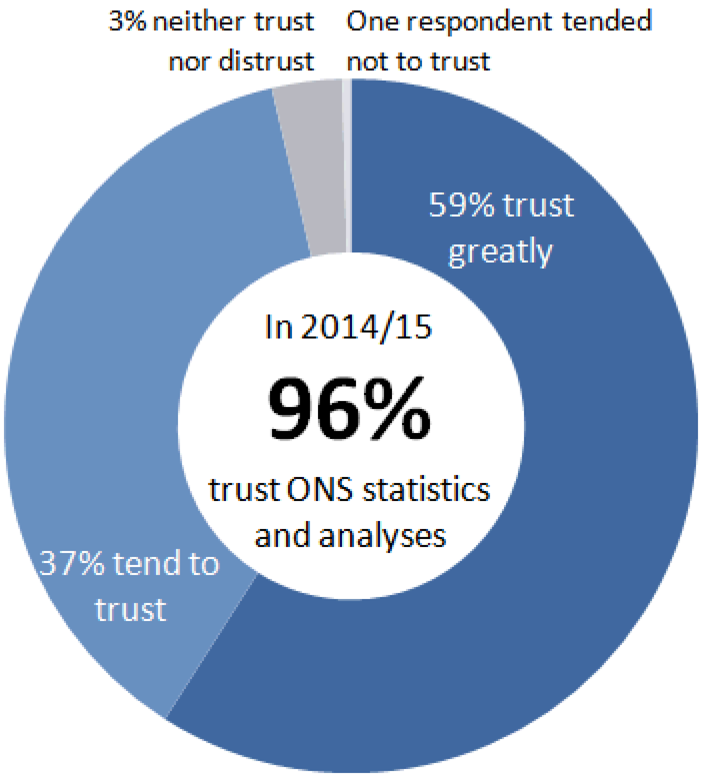
- Most sectors report an increase in their satisfaction with ONS performance over the previous 12 months.
- While the voluntary sector has the highest proportion of respondents stating they were "very satisfied" - the overall satisfaction rating is still the lowest of the sectors and has decreased slightly since 2013/14.
- The business sector has seen the largest percentage point increase since 2013/14.

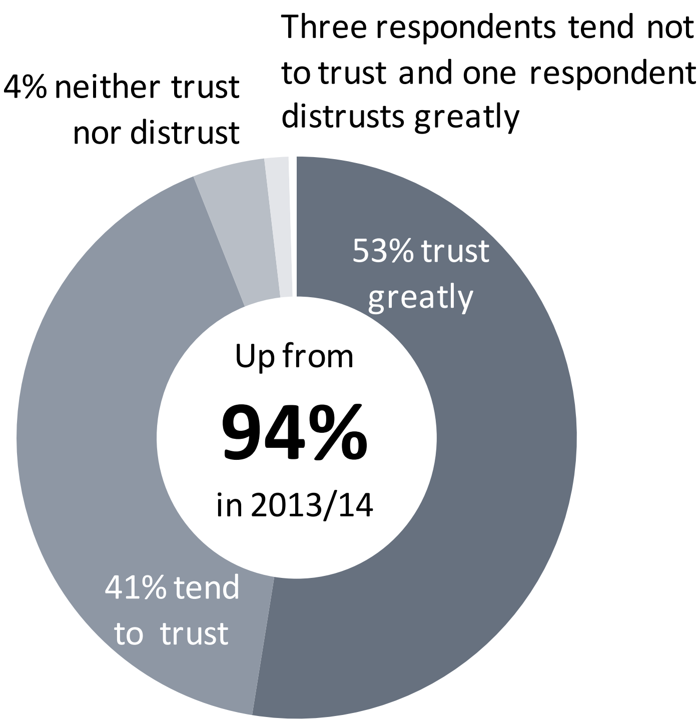


Overall satisfaction in ONS as a national statistics institute combines responses for "very satisfied" and "satisfied".

Trust in the statistics and analyses produced by ONS

- The proportion of customers reporting they greatly trust ONS statistics and analyses has increased by 6 percentage points to 59%.
- In 2014/15, no respondents reported they distrust ONS statistics and analyses greatly, and only one respondent tended not to trust them.



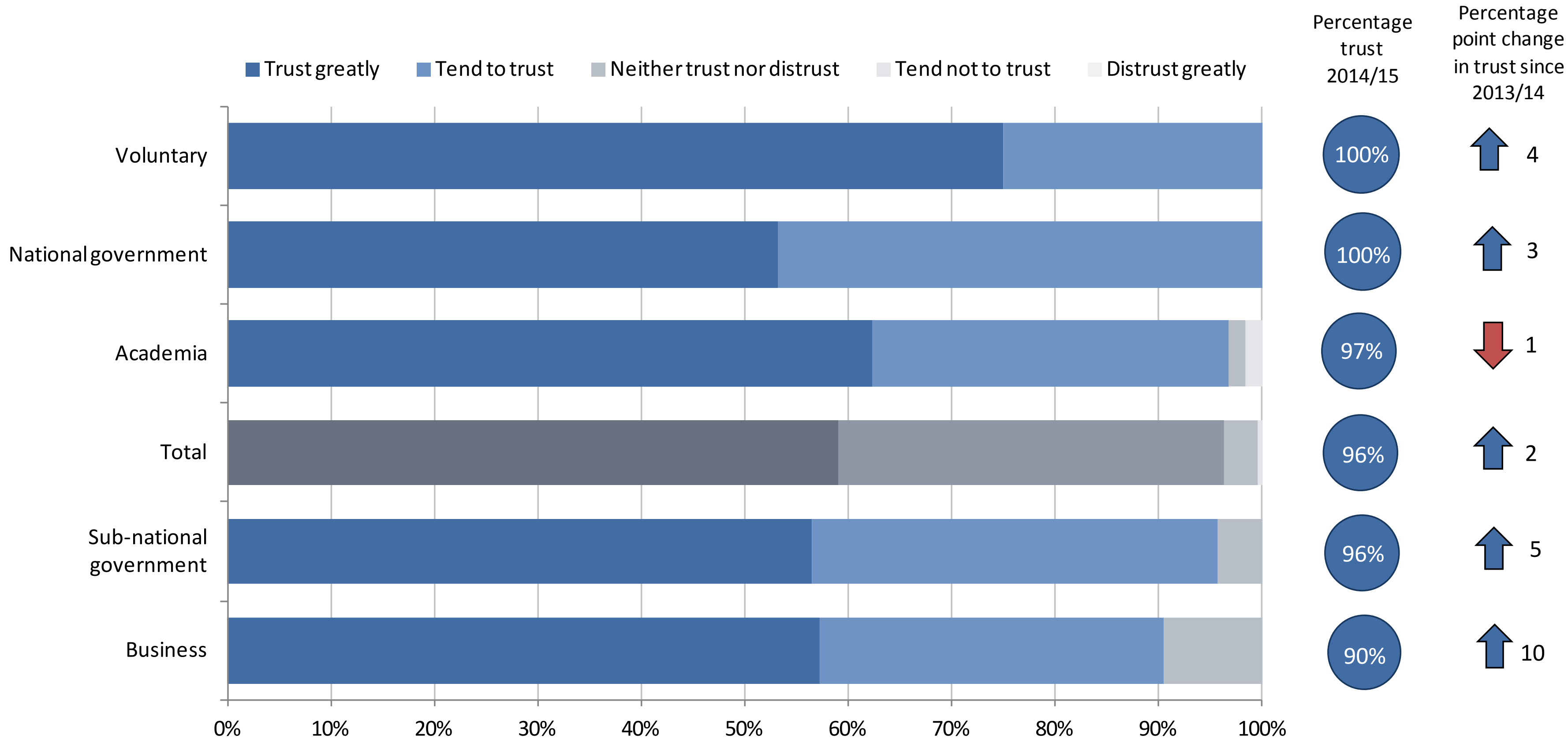


Overall trust in ONS statistics and analyses combines responses for “trust” and “tend to trust”.

Trust in ONS statistics and analyses by sector

- There has been an improvement in the levels of trust in ONS statistics and analyses across almost all sectors (the exception being academia/research organisations) .

- While businesses have the lowest level of trust, there has been a 10 percentage point increase in their overall trust since 2013/14.

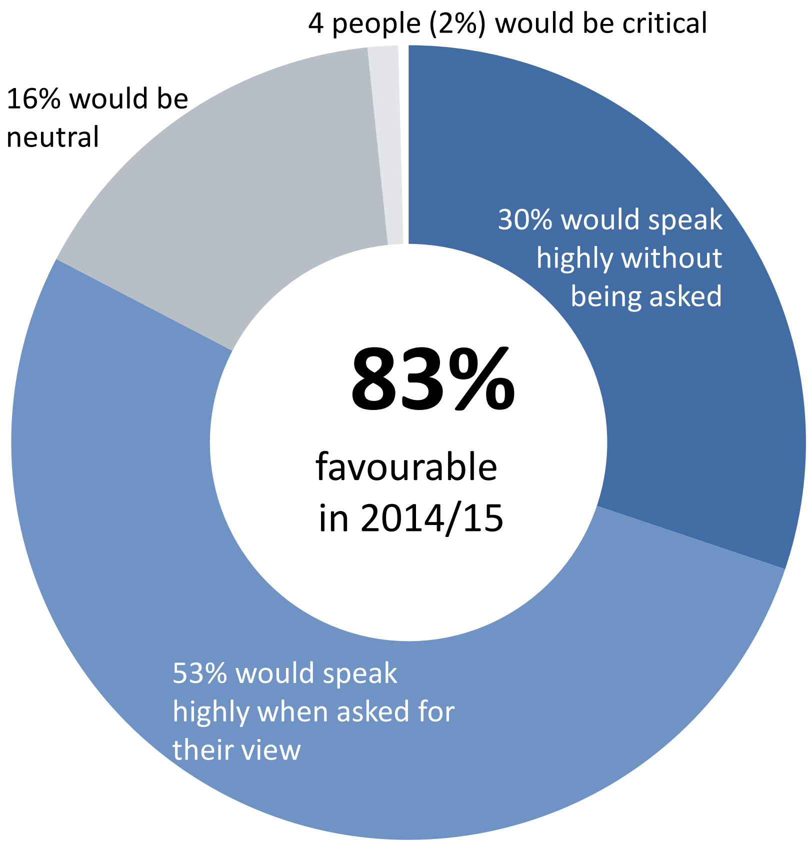


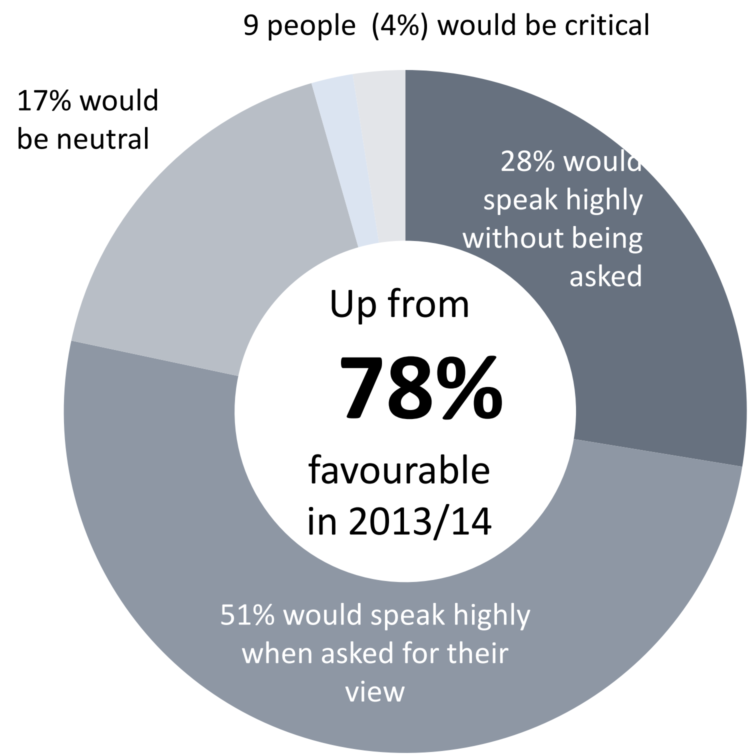
Overall trust in ONS statistics and analyses combines responses for “trust” and “tend to trust”.

Overall view of ONS

• The overall view of ONS has improved by five percentage points since 2013/14 with 30% of respondents indicating that they would speak highly of ONS without being asked.

• The number of people “likely to be critical” with or without be asked for their view has fallen by more than half, to 2% of respondents.

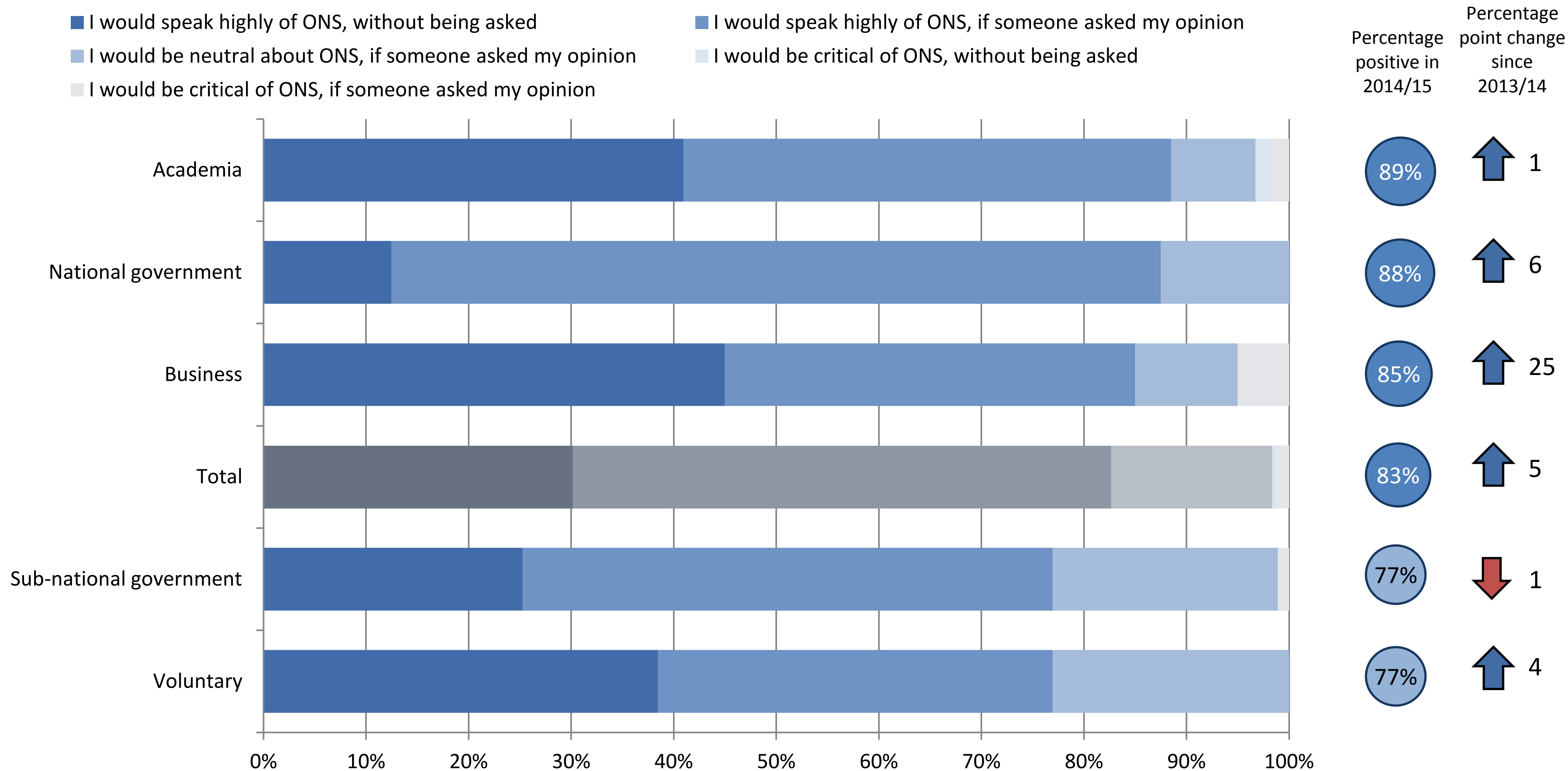




“Favourable” combines those who would speak highly of ONS either with or without being asked their opinion.

Overall view of ONS by sector

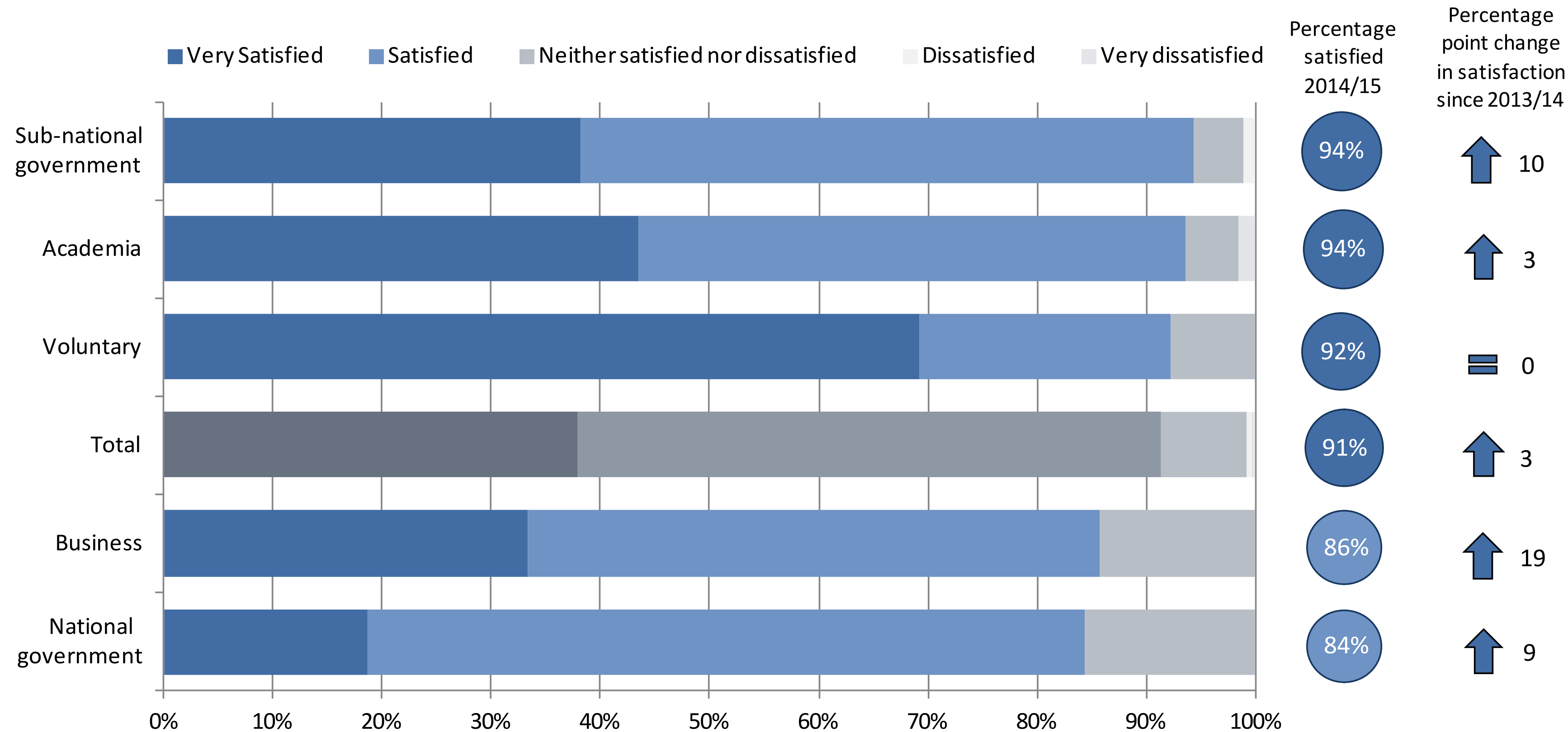
• Over 40% of respondents from the business and academia sectors would talk highly of ONS without being asked.
• There has been an improvement across most sectors, most notably from business customers with a 25 percentage point increase.



Positive responses combines those who would speak highly of ONS, either with or without being asked their opinion.

Quality of ONS statistics and analyses by sector

• Almost all sectors report an increase in their satisfaction with the quality of ONS statistics and analyses .
• When asked about the components of quality, respondents are most satisfied with the accuracy of ONS statistics and that they meet their needs. The comparability of ONS outputs and the ease of finding them received the lowest levels of satisfaction.

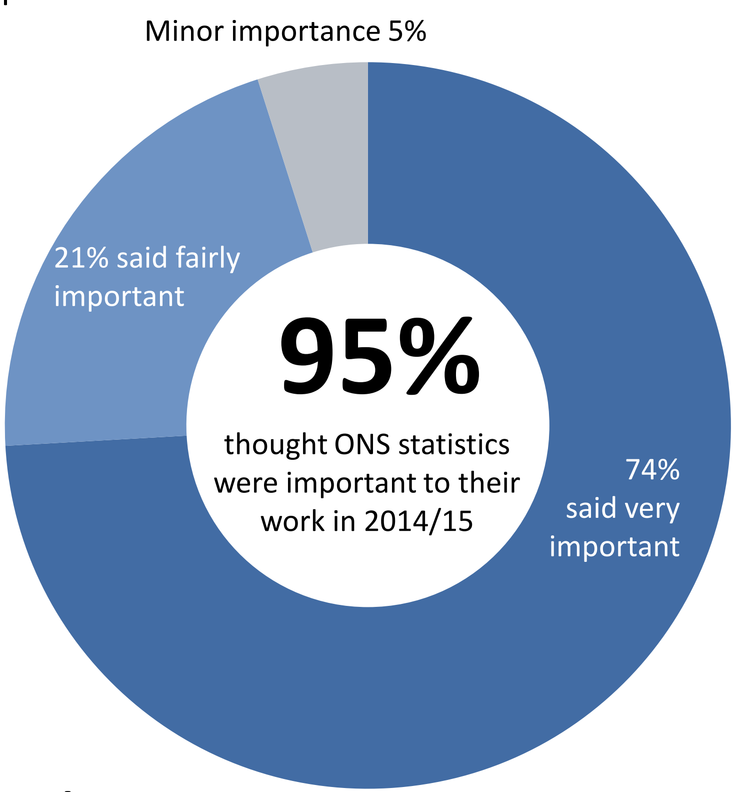


Overall satisfaction with quality of ONS statistics and analyses combines responses for “satisfied” and “very satisfied”.
Comparisons with 2013/14 should be treated with caution as this question was only answered by 51% of respondents last year.

The importance of ONS statistics and analyses to users

- The perceived importance of ONS statistics has fallen slightly by 2 percentage points (to 95%) since 2013/14. This may be attributed to the absence of this question in the questionnaire sent to our key accounts (in 2013/14, all key accounts stated ONS statistics were important).

- 74% of respondents considered our statistics to be very important. 5% considered them of minor importance, but no respondents considered them not at all important.

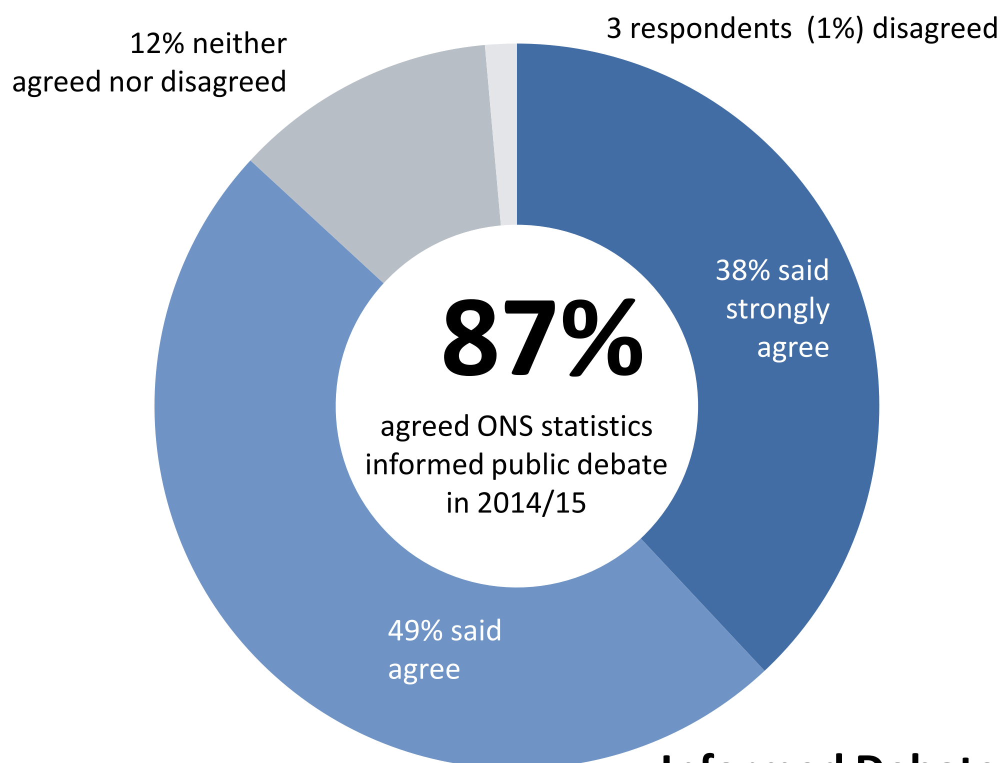


Importance

Extent to which ONS statistics inform public debate on issues affecting the UK's economy and society

- While the proportion of respondents considering ONS statistics to inform debate has decreased by 6 percentage points since 13/14, fewer customers reported a negative response.

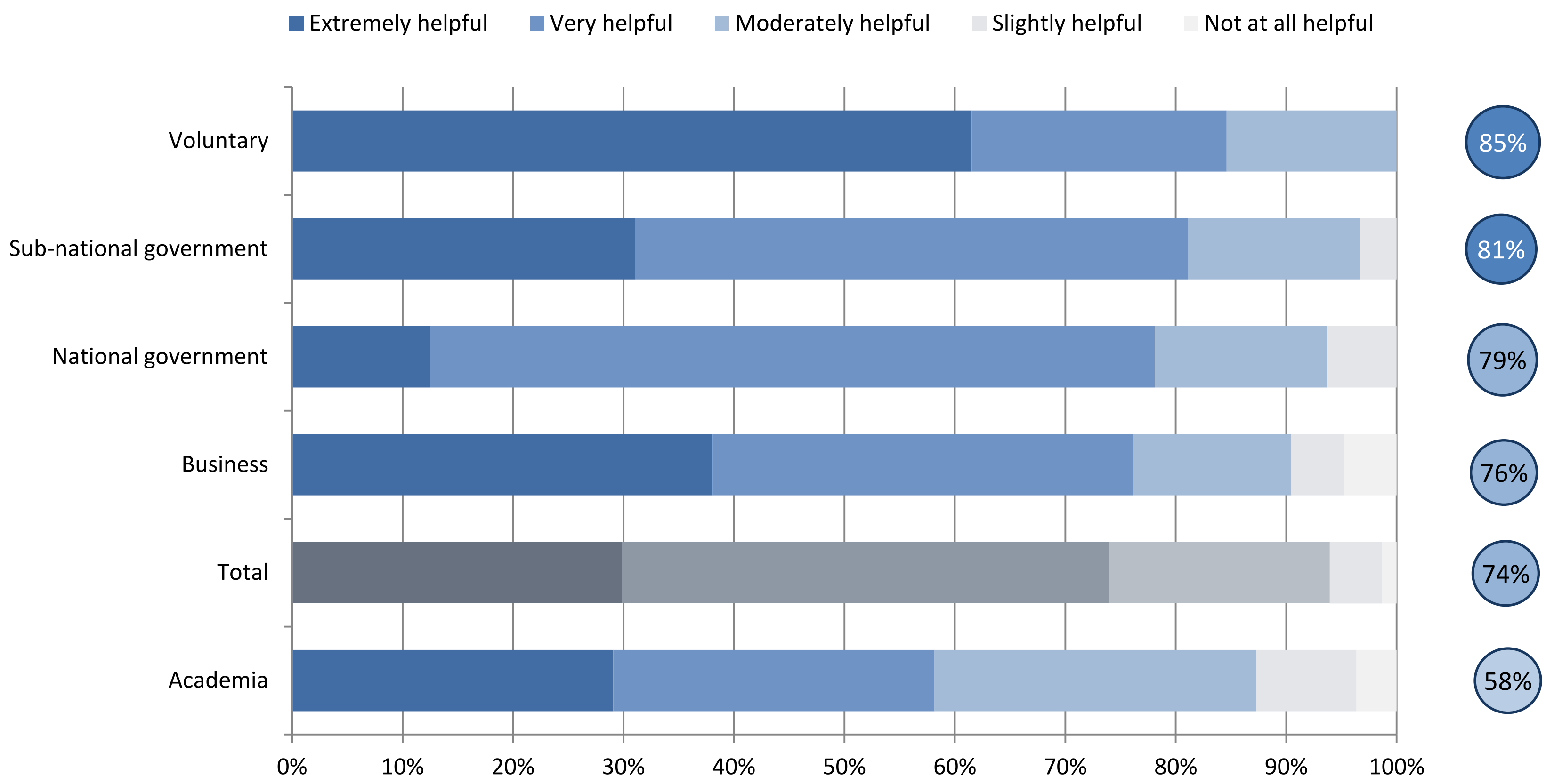
- The fall may be partly attributed to the absence of this question in the Key Account questionnaire (in 2013/14, all key account respondents stated ONS statistics informed public debate).



Informed Debate

The extent to which ONS statistics, analyses and advice have been helpful in providing an evidence base for policy and decision making

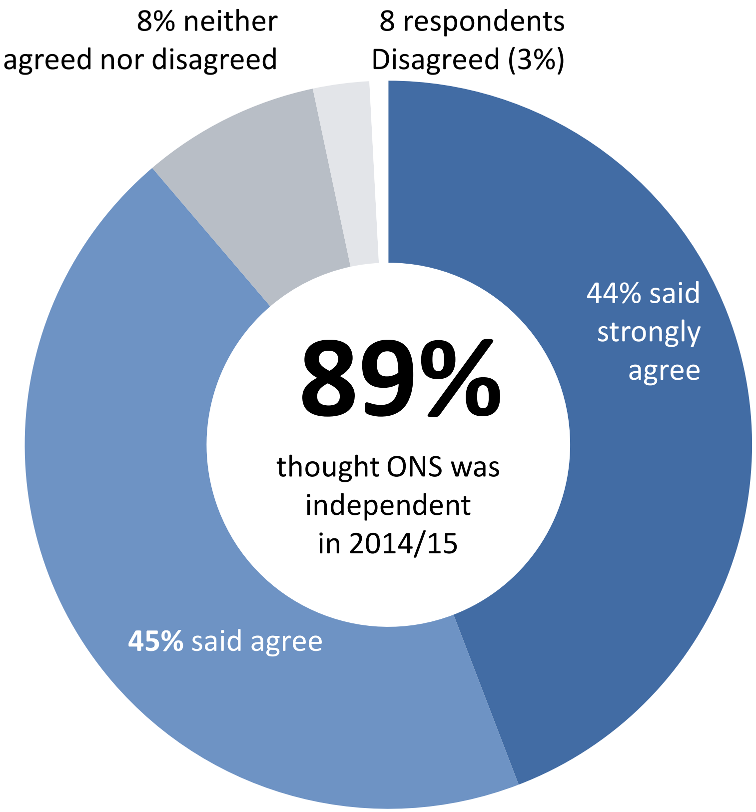
- **99%** of respondents said that they had found ONS statistics and analyses to be helpful to some degree.
- **74%** of respondents indicated that ONS were either “very” or “extremely helpful”.
- This is a new question for 2015, so there is no comparable data for 2013/14.

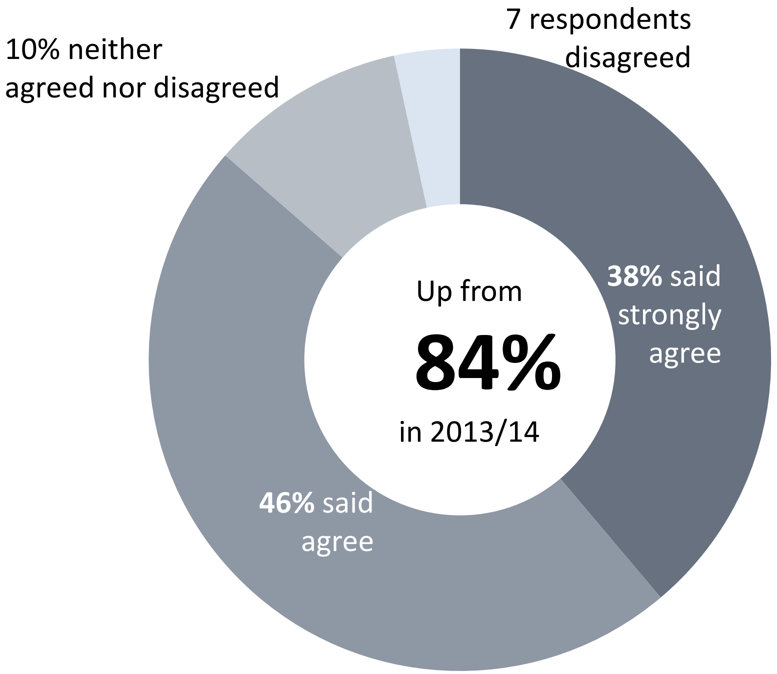


Overall helpfulness combines those who thought ONS statistics were “extremely” or “very helpful”.

Independence of ONS

- The proportion of respondents who consider ONS to be independent has increased by 5 percentage points.
- This shift has been driven by an increased proportion indicating that they “strongly agree” ONS is independent.





The overall number who think ONS is independent is the combination of respondents who “agree” or “strongly agree”.

Key Accounts: Introduction and summary

ONS works closely with a number of key stakeholders that are critical to our business and can help us deliver the UK Statistics Authority's Better Statistics, Better Decisions strategy. Each year, we ask these Key Account stakeholders including central government departments, the Bank of England, the Office for Budgetary Responsibility and research organisations, to assess our performance and provide feedback to help us improve the statistics, analyses and services we provide.

From 2013/14, this assessment was incorporated into the annual ONS Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS).

In 2014/15, Key Accounts received a shorter version of the CSS questionnaire to other customers as they were asked to submit corporate responses. 23 key accounts completed the survey (20 in 2013/14).

For further methodological information see Annex 2.

91% are **satisfied with the overall performance of ONS** as a National Statistics Institute;

100% **trust** ONS statistics and analyses;

82% are **satisfied with the quality** of ONS statistics and analyses;

76% consider ONS statistics to be **helpful** in providing an evidence base;

59% consider ONS to be **innovative**;

95% believe ONS to be **independent**;

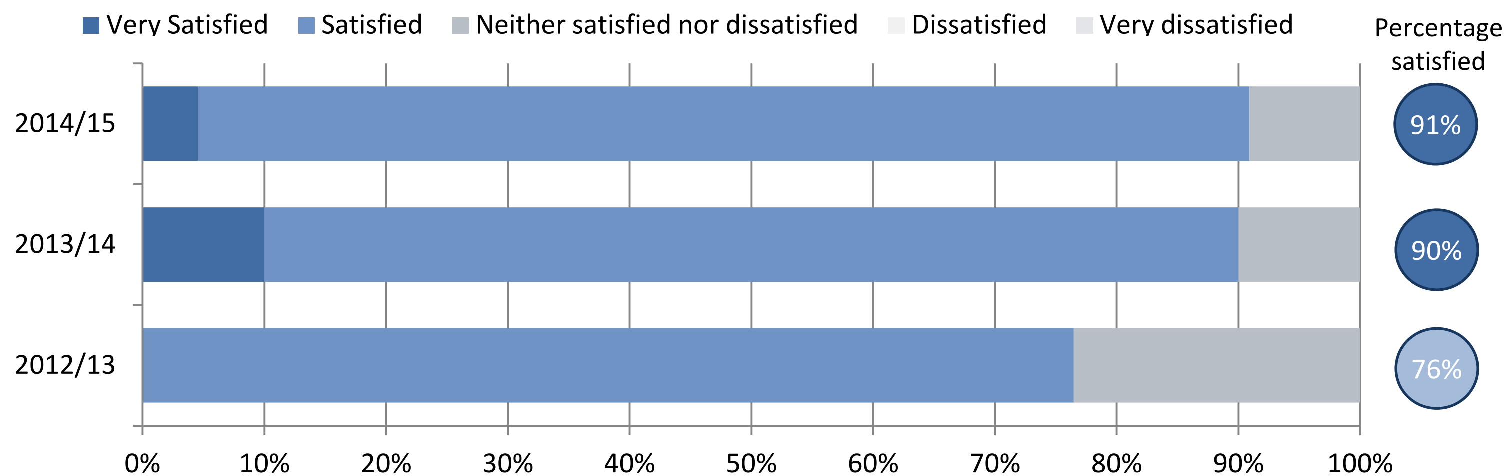
86% would **speak highly** of ONS.

Key Accounts: Overall ONS performance

• Overall satisfaction with ONS performance as a national statistical institutes has increased since 2012/13, with 91% of key accounts now describing themselves as either very satisfied or satisfied in comparison with 76% in 2012/13 and 90% in 2013/14.

• One key account organisation was very satisfied with overall ONS performance in 2014/15 compared with 2 organisations in 2013/14.

• A number of key accounts reported improvements in ONS engagement and innovation as contributing to their greater satisfaction.



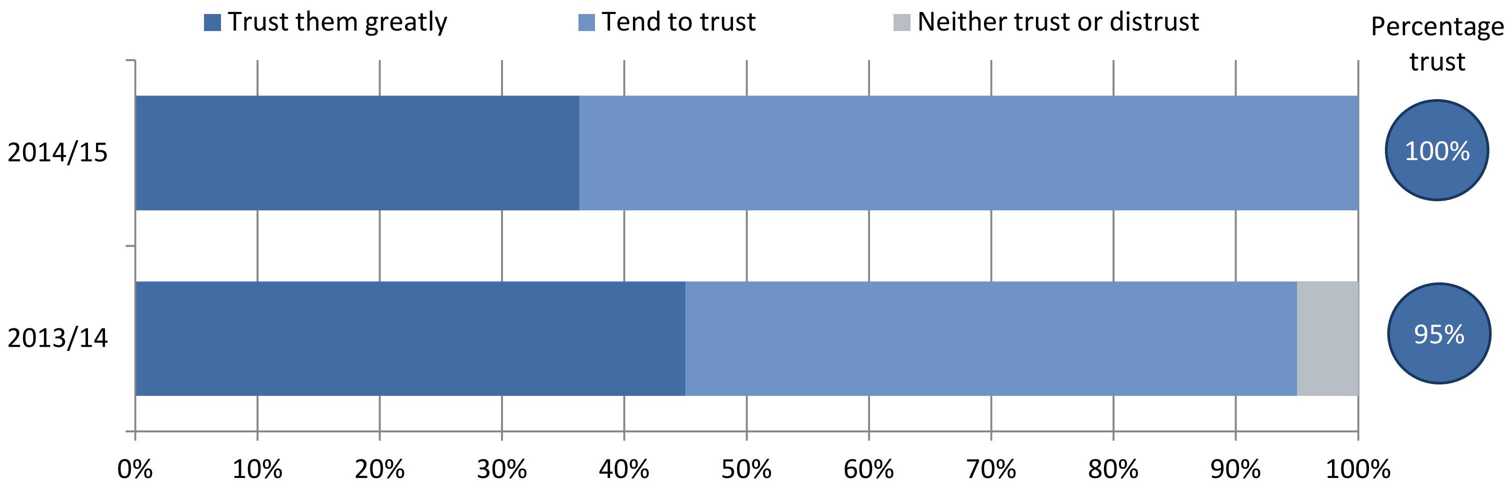
Overall satisfaction in ONS as a national statistics institute combines responses for "very satisfied" and "satisfied".

Key Accounts: Trust

• 100% of key accounts trust (trust them greatly or tend to trust) ONS statistics, analysis and advice in 2014/15. This compares with 95% for 2013/14.

• The proportion of key accounts who trusted them greatly fell from 45% in 2013/14 to 36% in 2014/15.

• Key accounts trust in ONS was strongly related to their perception of the quality of ONS statistics.



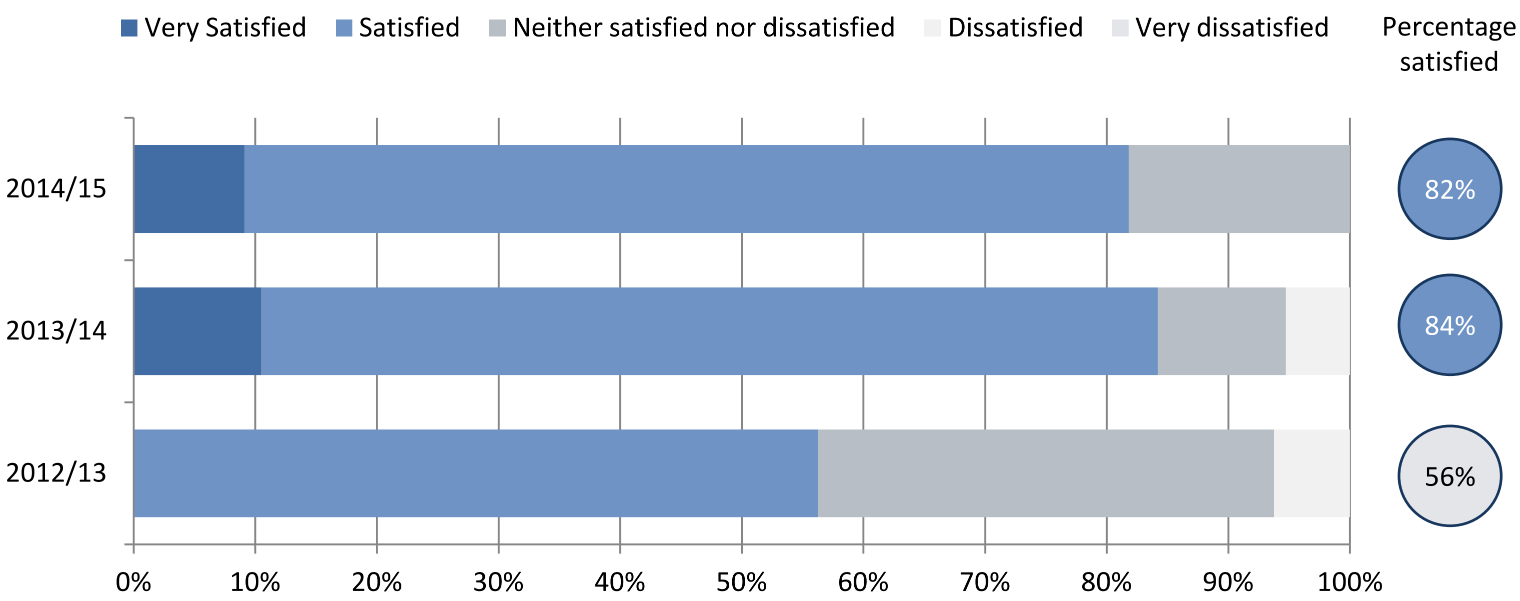
Overall trust in ONS statistics and analyses combines responses for “trust” and “tend to trust”.
No specific question regarding trust was asked in 2012/13 key account assessment.

Key Accounts: Quality

• Satisfaction with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice increased from 2012/13 to 2013/14, but fell very slightly in 2014/15. 82% of customers were either satisfied or very satisfied in 2014/15 compared with 56% in 2012/13.

• The high accuracy of ONS statistics was the component of quality most frequently mentioned by key accounts.

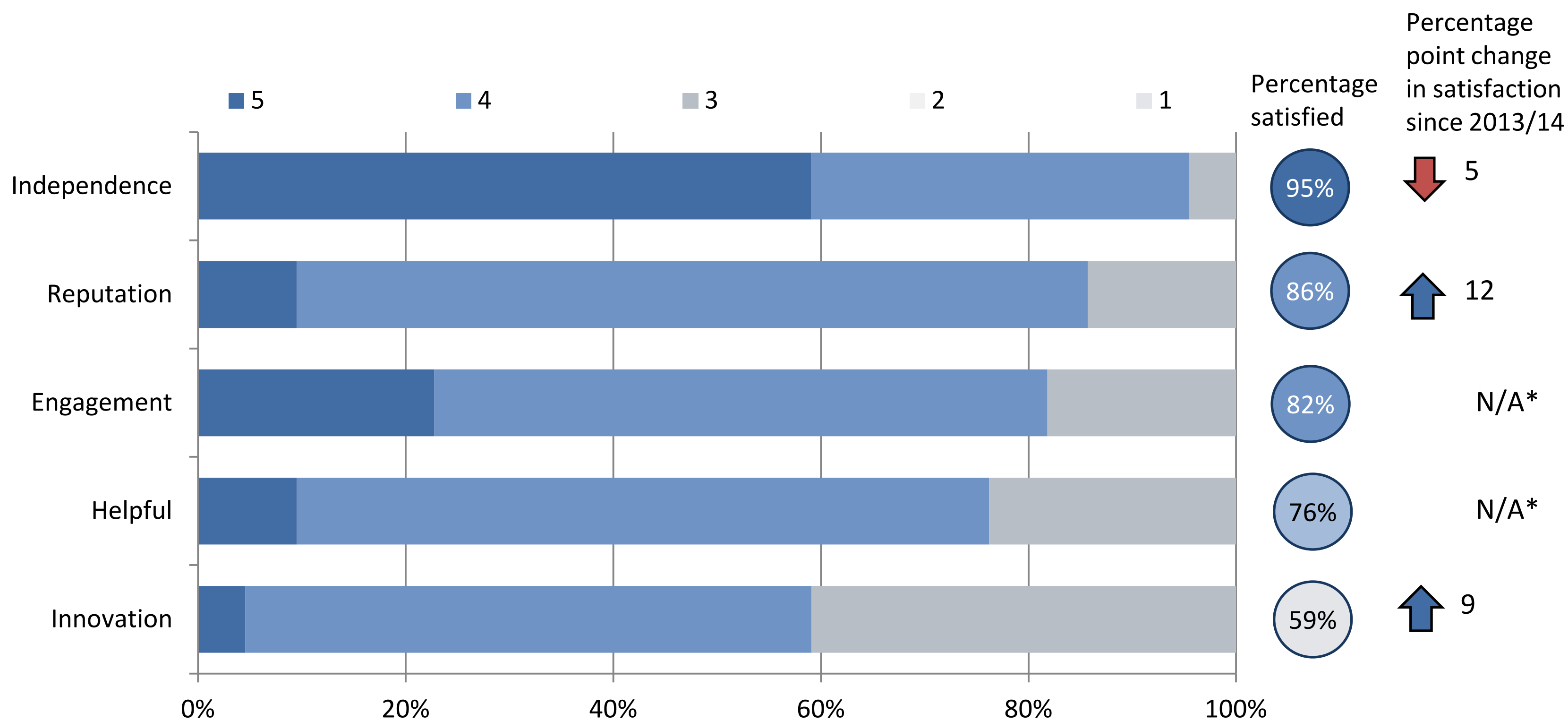
• Consistent with previous years, several key accounts stated they would welcome improvements in the ease of access to ONS statistics, with the website and access to ad hoc statistics highlighted.



Overall satisfaction with quality of ONS statistics and analyses combines responses for “satisfied” and “very satisfied”.

Key Accounts: Other indicators 2014/15

- 95% either agreed or strongly agreed that ONS acts independently.
- 86% would speak highly of ONS to others (76% if asked, 10% even if not asked).
- 82% would describe themselves as satisfied or very satisfied with ONS' engagement with them.
- 76% found ONS statistics, analysis or advice very or extremely helpful in informing their decision making or policy decisions.
- 59% agreed or strongly agreed that the ONS is innovative in its response to statistical needs.



*Comparison of Engagement and Helpful scores with 2013/14 is not possible as the questions have changed over time.

What we are doing well

In addition to the high quality, trustworthiness and importance of ONS statistics and analyses, and their production free from political influence, customers frequently highlighted their satisfaction with:

- their direct communication with ONS staff; and
- improvements made to ONS metadata, statistical commentary and data visualisations.

Communication

Customers told us that they feel informed about ONS outputs and services. They are very complimentary about their direct engagement with ONS (e.g. statisticians, customer help lines, events) and comment that ONS staff have been very helpful and professional.

Data visualisations and communicating our statistics

The developments in this area have drawn new users to ONS and made our statistics and analyses more accessible, relevant and interesting. Our customers have told us that improvements to the metadata and commentary supporting our statistics and analyses have helped to explain trends and make the outputs easier to understand.

"I work mainly with survey data, and am always impressed by the quality of not only the data coding, but also the **documentation** (e.g. user guides)"

"I have been really impressed with the **communication** I have had with individual ONS staff members."

"We think **the infographics are excellent**, drawing us into the analyses and helping us excite others"

What we should focus on

Customers highlighted the outputs and services they feel ONS needs to develop further.
They focused on:
• the ONS website and access to ONS outputs;
• Ad hoc statistics produced by ONS;
• responding to user feedback

ONS website and access to ONS outputs
• There has been a drop in the level of customer satisfaction with the ONS, NOMIS and the Neighbourhood Statistics websites. Customers report difficulties in finding the ONS statistics and analyses they need and this can be a barrier to using them to inform their decisions, planning and policies. We are redesigning the website and a beta version of the new site will be available soon.

"The ONS **website** is labyrinthine and difficult to use"

Consistency in presentation
• Users told us that they would welcome greater consistency in the presentation of data (e.g. layout and style) in spreadsheets and ad hoc statistics. They also commented that we could do more to publicise ad hoc statistics and the methods used.

"There is a large **variation in the layout** and styles of spreadsheet across the ONS."

Communications
• In 2014/15, 56% of customers who expressed a view, felt ONS listens and responds to feedback (compared with 46% in 2013/14). We have introduced a number of improvements over the year, but acknowledge we need to do more to ensure our customers feel that we are listening and responding to what they tell us.

Next steps

- ONS welcomes all feedback to help us continuously improve and develop our outputs and services and we would like to thank all respondents to this survey.

- We will be taking action in response to the findings of this survey and will be publishing an updated response by the end of the year setting out how we have acted upon the feedback received.

- If you would like to find out more about our statistics and services, please email us at info@ons.gsi.gov.uk or call us on 0203 684 5069. If you wish to be kept up to date of the latest ONS news and outputs, please email ons.communications@ons.gsi.gov.uk and we will add you to our ONS Update mail list.

Annex 1: Customer Satisfaction Survey Methodology

The analysis includes combined responses to the customer satisfaction survey questionnaire and Key Accounts questionnaire.

Only sectors with ten or more responses are shown in the analysis by sector; however, all responses are included in the 'Total' category in the sector charts.

Key Accounts were asked fewer questions than the survey customers. Where Key Accounts are not included for a specific question, National Government is excluded from the analysis by sector due to small numbers of respondents.

Comparisons with 2013/14

Comparisons with 2013/14 should be treated with caution due to a change in the treatment of duplicate responses from organisations:

- In2013/14, only one response was taken from each organisation to avoid double-counting (11 responses were excluded)
- In 2014/15, a new question was added to identify whether respondents were individuals or representing an organisation
- In 2014/15, all individual responses were included in the analysis, including where more than one individual had responded from the same organisation
- In 2014/15, only two responses were excluded from the analysis where the same organisation provided two organisation responses. The removed response was agreed with them

In 2013/14, there were two versions of the online questionnaire, a short form and a long form.

Comparisons for overall quality of ONS statistics and analyses and satisfaction with individual components of quality should be treated with caution because:

- Satisfaction with overall quality of ONS statistics was only asked on the short questionnaire (51% of respondents)
- Satisfaction with components of quality was asked for individual types of statistics on the long questionnaire, and for all statistics on the short questionnaire which were combined to give an overall rating for each component of quality
- In 2014/15, all respondents were asked about satisfaction with overall quality and satisfaction with components of quality for all statistics

Annex 2: Key Accounts Methodology

Throughout this report the definition of Key Accounts includes those organisations that ONS have a key relationship with.

Where respondents have provided multiple scores for questions rather than providing a single rating, the following decision has been taken: When two scores have been given, the lowest score has been taken as the overall score; when three or more scores have been given to the same question, the median score has been taken as the overall score. Any half scores given have been rounded down.

2014/15 analysis

In 2014/15 The Home Office provided written letter feedback and an indicative overall score only. Given suggestions in their letter, this score has not been included within the analysis. However, their written comments are included within qualitative analysis.

Comparisons with 2013/14 and 2012/13

There is a slight variation in the previously reported 2013/14 results as two late responses from last year (not included in the 2013/14 report) have been included in the analysis for 2013/14 reported in this year's report.

Copies of the questionnaire sent to Key accounts in 2014/15 and 2013/14 are available to download from the ONS website.

Analysis for 2012/13 is based on 16 key account responses only. There was no ONS annual customer satisfaction survey before 2013/14.