

# Connected Commuters

A study into how access to  
broadband could impact the way  
we work

# Overview

Work, and the role it plays in our lives, is a fundamental driver for most adults, largely because it is intrinsically linked to human motivation.

Working life is an area where access to fast and reliable broadband through the NBN could deliver real benefits to Australian families and businesses.

This report details findings from NBN Co's "Connected Commuter" research which shows that with better quality internet connections, one in 10 Australians (i.e. one third of the people who have worked from home in the past) would work from home more if they had access to faster broadband. The findings also show that while three quarters of Australian workers surveyed believe the internet is important or vital to their job, half of those that have worked from home were frustrated with their current home internet connections.

It concludes, whether an employee, or self-employed, access to faster broadband could open up new ways of working to suit their desired work/home lifestyle, help improve their productivity and efficiency, and save them time and money.

# Research Summary

For many Australian employees, **work life without the internet** is unthinkable.

- 74% of workers (full time and part time) stated that the internet is important or vital to their jobs.

For people who had **worked from home accessing online content**, the importance was even higher:

- 93% considered the internet important or vital to their jobs (65% considered it vital).

**One third of Australian workers have worked from home** accessing online content – translating to a significant portion of Australia’s work base:

- 82% of this group had a household income of more than \$75,000 reflecting that “knowledge workers” are more highly paid. More of them live in metropolitan areas (34% versus 30% in regional areas).
- Of the people that worked from home, 76% are full time (24% part time).

# Research Summary

Workers said the internet **facilitates their ability to work remotely**, which delivers lifestyle benefits in three key areas:

1. They could spend more time with family/flexibility for parents, for example, the ability for parents to care for children and work at home;
2. Cutting the commute and saving on travel time/costs;
3. Access to new jobs/new work opportunities
  - Starting new businesses (includes retirees)
  - Ease of working from home e.g. remote access to work servers, cloud computing, information capture/storage.

Aussies who had worked from home accessing online content were **frustrated** with the quality of their home internet connections:

- 50% reported some level of dissatisfaction with their home internet service and reported frustration with speeds, buffering when watching video and drop outs when making video calls.

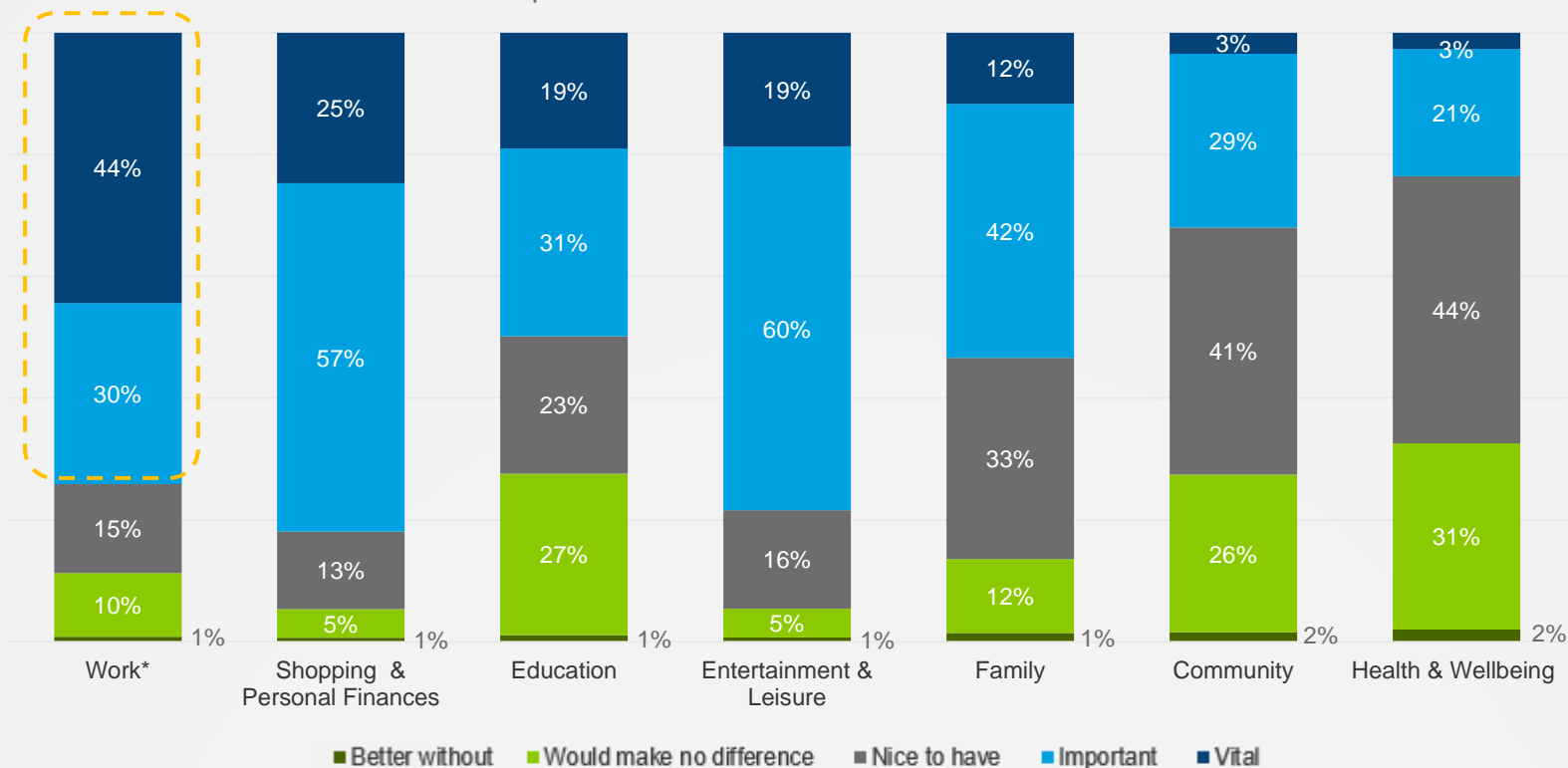
Nearly one third of people who had worked from home using the internet **would do so more often** if they had a faster, better quality internet connection:

- More than three quarters of this group predicted a need for faster and better quality internet in the future.

# Three quarters (74%) of workers considered the internet is important or vital to their work.

44% of workers ranked the internet as vital to their work. It was ranked of higher importance to work than other life domains such as shopping, personal finance education and entertainment.

Importance of the Internet to life domains



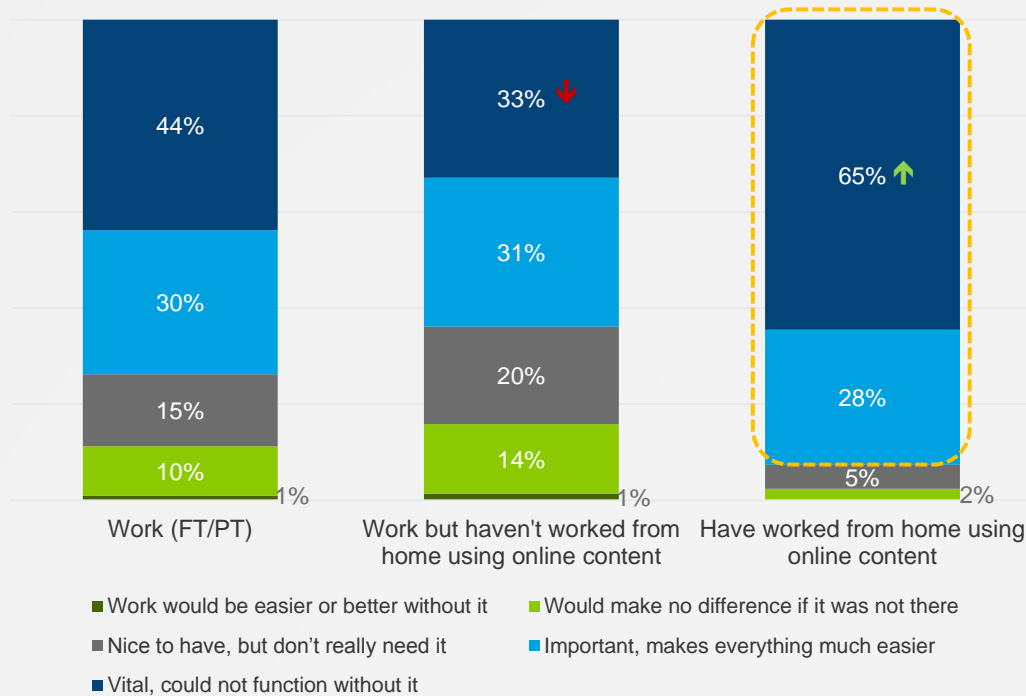
\* Work domain based to respondents Employed Full or Part Time

# The importance of the internet to work

## COMPARISON OF ALL WORKERS VS THOSE WHO WORK FROM HOME USING ONLINE CONTENT

93% of this group said the internet is important or vital and agree it makes everything easier or they could not function without it in their job.

How important is the internet to your job?

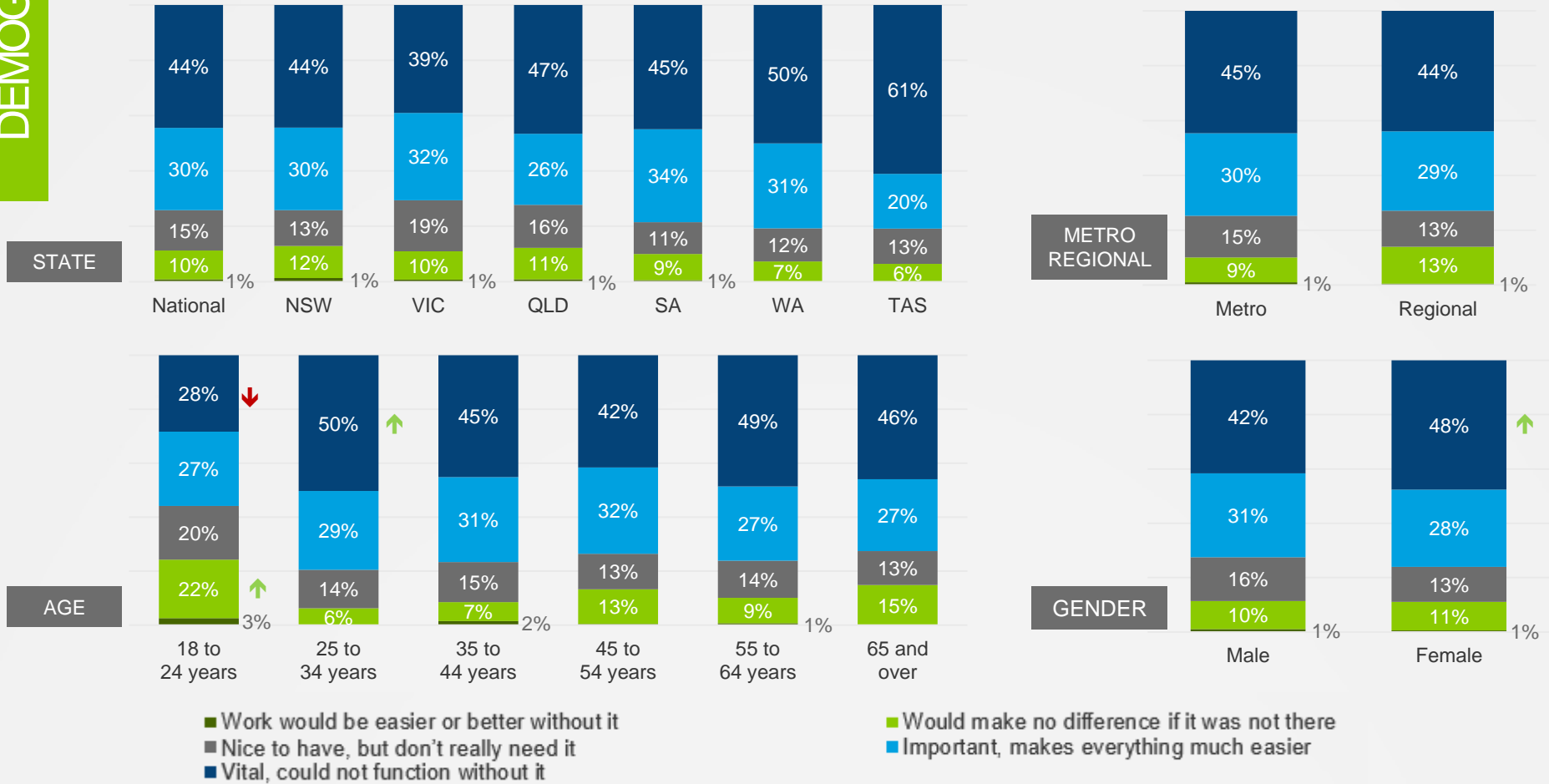


↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than other groups

# The importance of the internet to work

## ALL WORKERS

How important is the internet to your job?

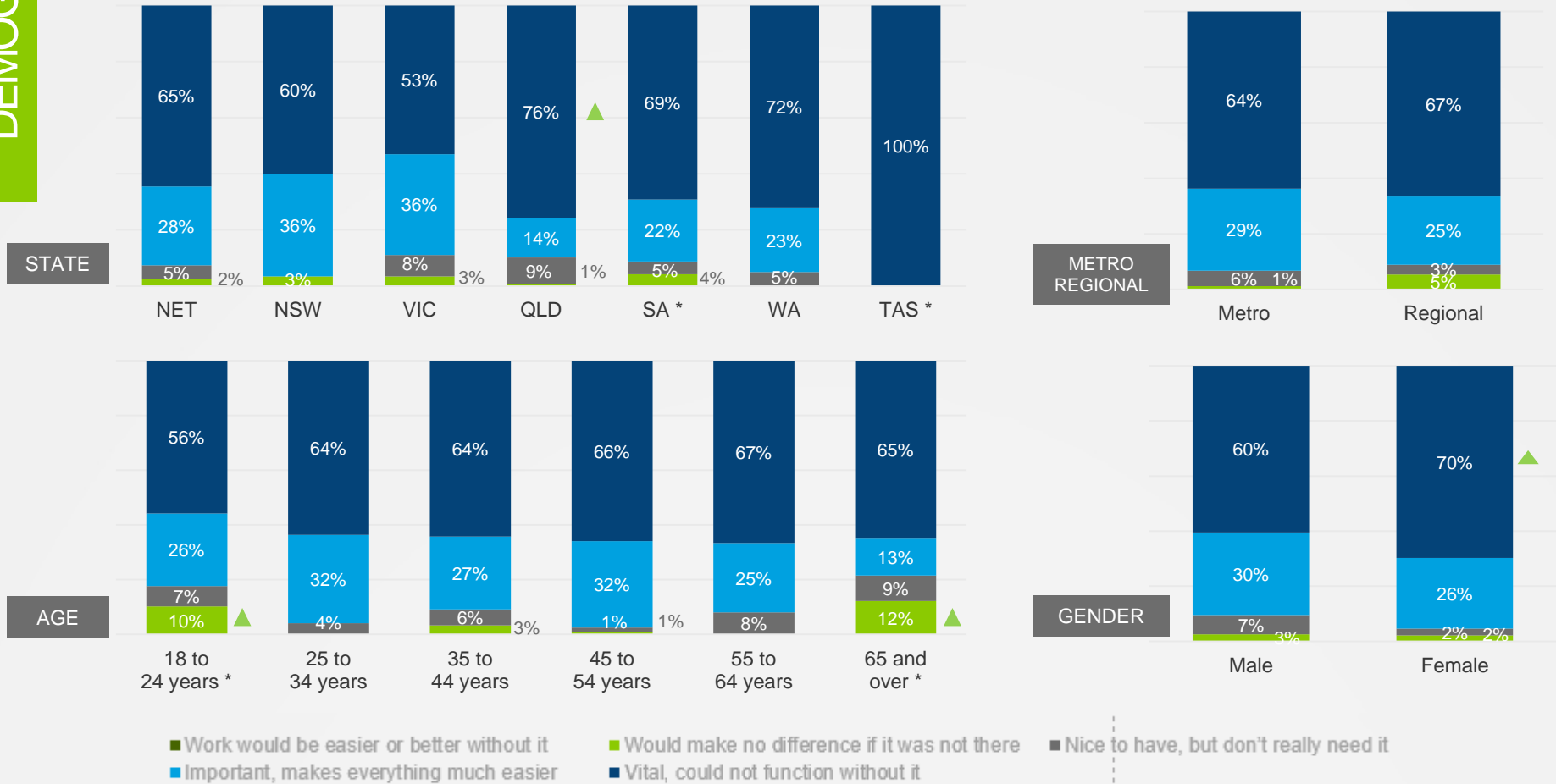


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# The importance of the internet to work

## HAVE WORKED FROM HOME USING ONLINE CONTENT

How important is the internet to your job?

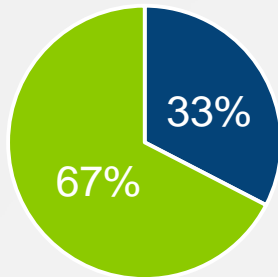




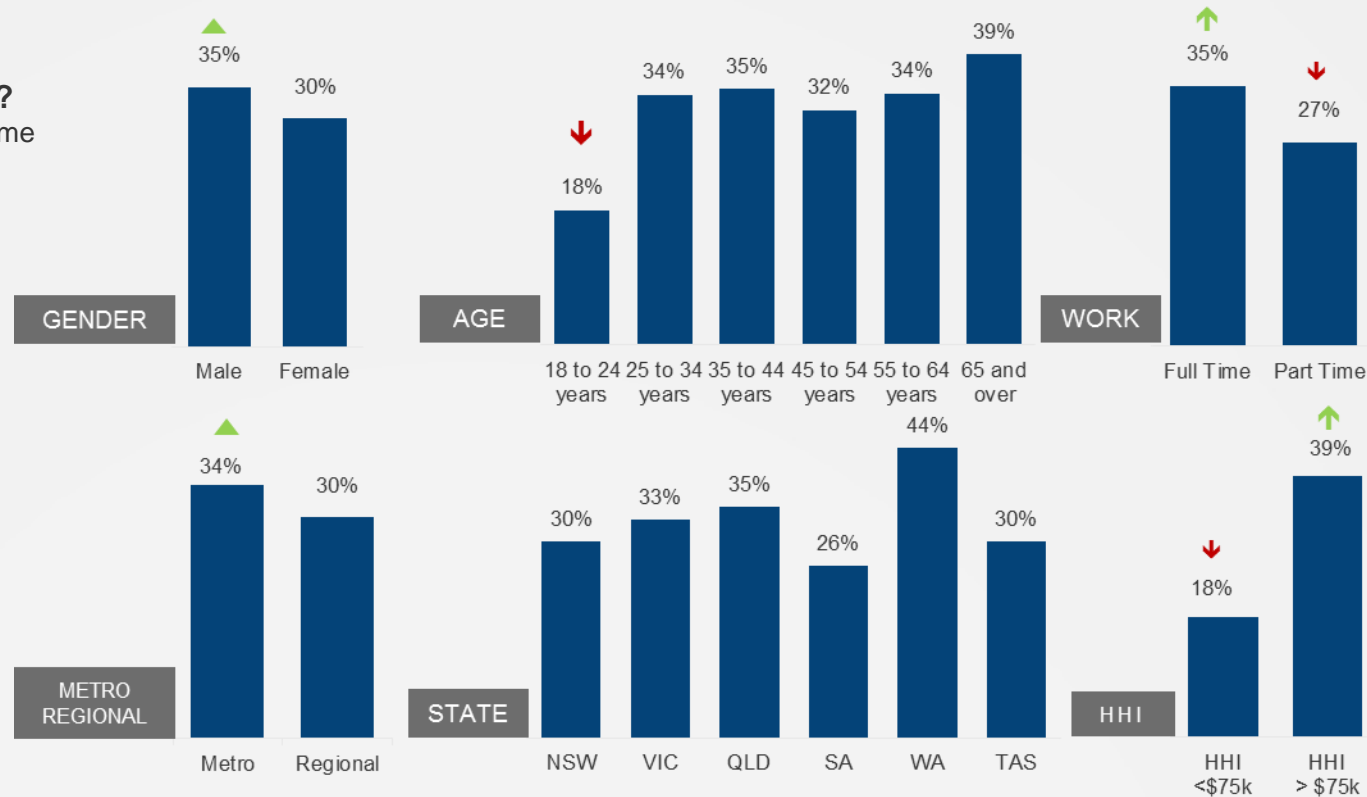
# One third of people who work full or part time worked from home using online content.

- Significantly more people with a household income (HHI) of over \$75,000 had worked from home than those with HHI of less than \$75,000 – knowledge workers are highly paid.
- Australians working from home using online content were also more likely to live in metro areas.

**How many work from home?**  
Australians who work full or part time



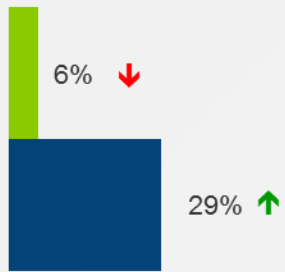
- Have worked from home using online content
- Haven't worked from home using online content



↑ Significantly higher than other groups  
↓ Significantly lower than other groups

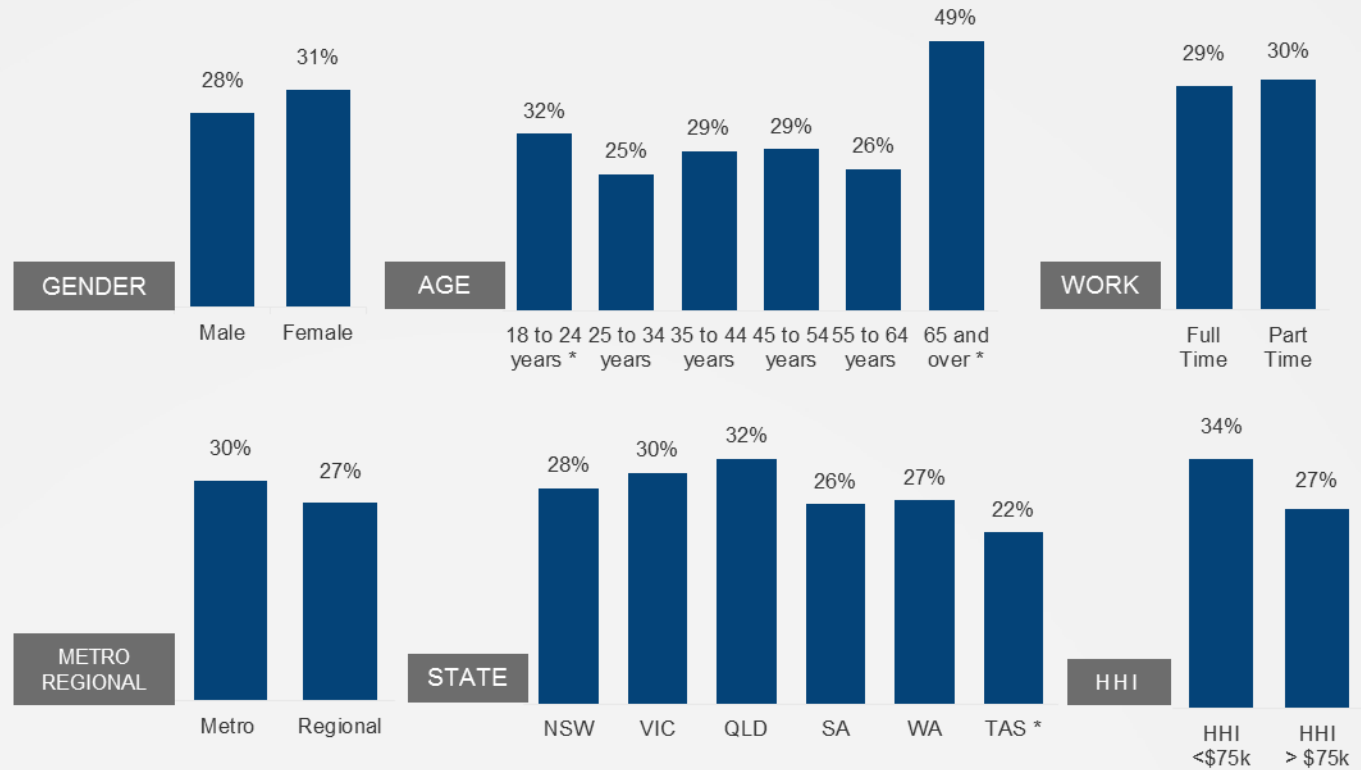
# 29% of Australians who had ever worked from home would do so more often if their internet was faster and better quality.

Australians who work full or part time  
**Proportion agreed they would work from home more often with a faster better quality internet connection**



- Haven't worked from home using online content
- Have worked from home using online content

Australians who work full or part time who have worked from home using online content  
**Proportion agreed they would do so more often with a faster better quality internet connection**

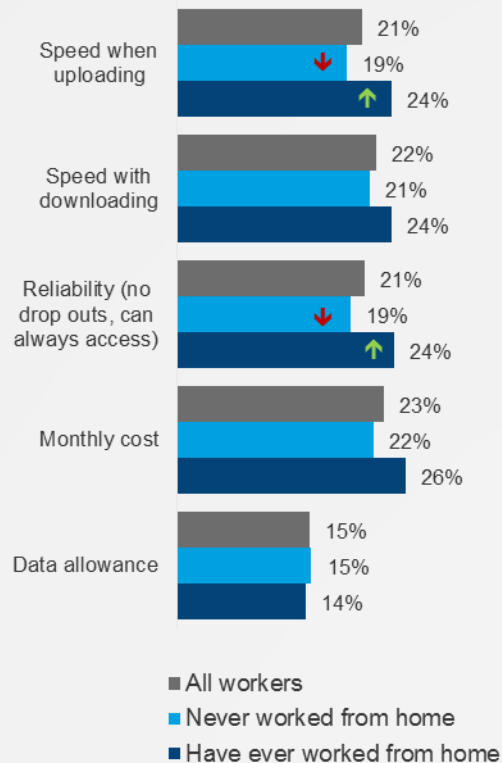


↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than other groups  
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 \* Caution sample size < 30

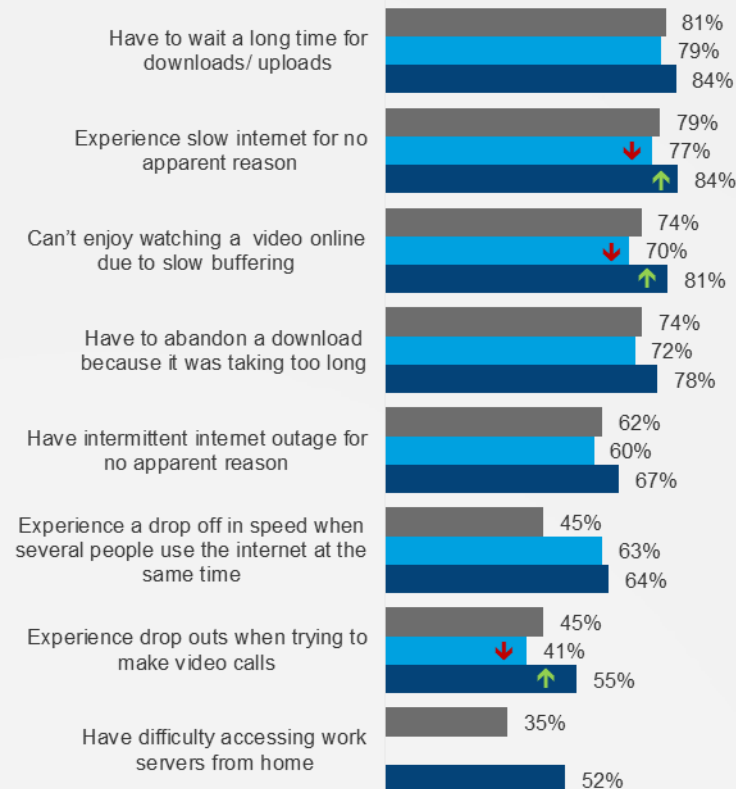
# Australians who work from home using online content reported higher levels of dissatisfaction with their home internet experience.

- 50% of full and part time workers who had worked from home using online content reported some level of dissatisfaction with their home internet connection. This compares to 45% of workers who had never worked from home using online content.

**% Dissatisfied with home internet connection**



**Frustrations experienced with home internet connection**



↓↑ Significantly higher/lower than other groups

# The internet enables workers to have flexible lifestyles

## Flexibility for parents

It allows people to work from home, **allowing mums to look after their children while working as well.**

**Allows me to work from home 2 days a week.**

Can connect from wherever you are - there's no need to be in the office all the time. I can work from home using technology - and **see more of my family.**

## Eliminates commuting time and saves in travel costs

**I can live where I want and "work" somewhere completely different, using teleworking.**

**I can work from home or anywhere in the world**

**Allows me to work from home for company located in different state.**

## Access to new jobs or work opportunities

**I have been working with some colleagues on starting a new online business.**

**The internet enables information to be found and captured for storage, reference and usage within my small home office environment.**

**Set up a business to run from home as I am now retired**

**In a rural area, online banking and bill paying saves on cost of fuel and my time. I can contact work by email when I'm not at work. Saves my time and keeps me informed.**

# About the research

NBN Co engaged Evolve Research to undertake research amongst Australian internet users in order to uncover insights about how Australians use the internet and how having access to higher quality internet connections impacts, or is likely to impact, the way we live.

- The first phase of this research involved a consumer survey amongst a representative sample of Australian internet users.
- **Field Dates:** 4 – 22 June 2014
- **Total sample size: n = 4,098.** Sections of the questionnaire were rotated to allow maximum content within a reasonable questionnaire duration, as such the sample size per section is approximately 2,000.
- Data has been **weighted** to represent the population according to ABS estimates on age, gender, state and metro / rural areas.