



Monitoring community attitudes during refugee resettlement in Armidale, NSW

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The broader context: Increasing regional resettlement of refugees in Australia

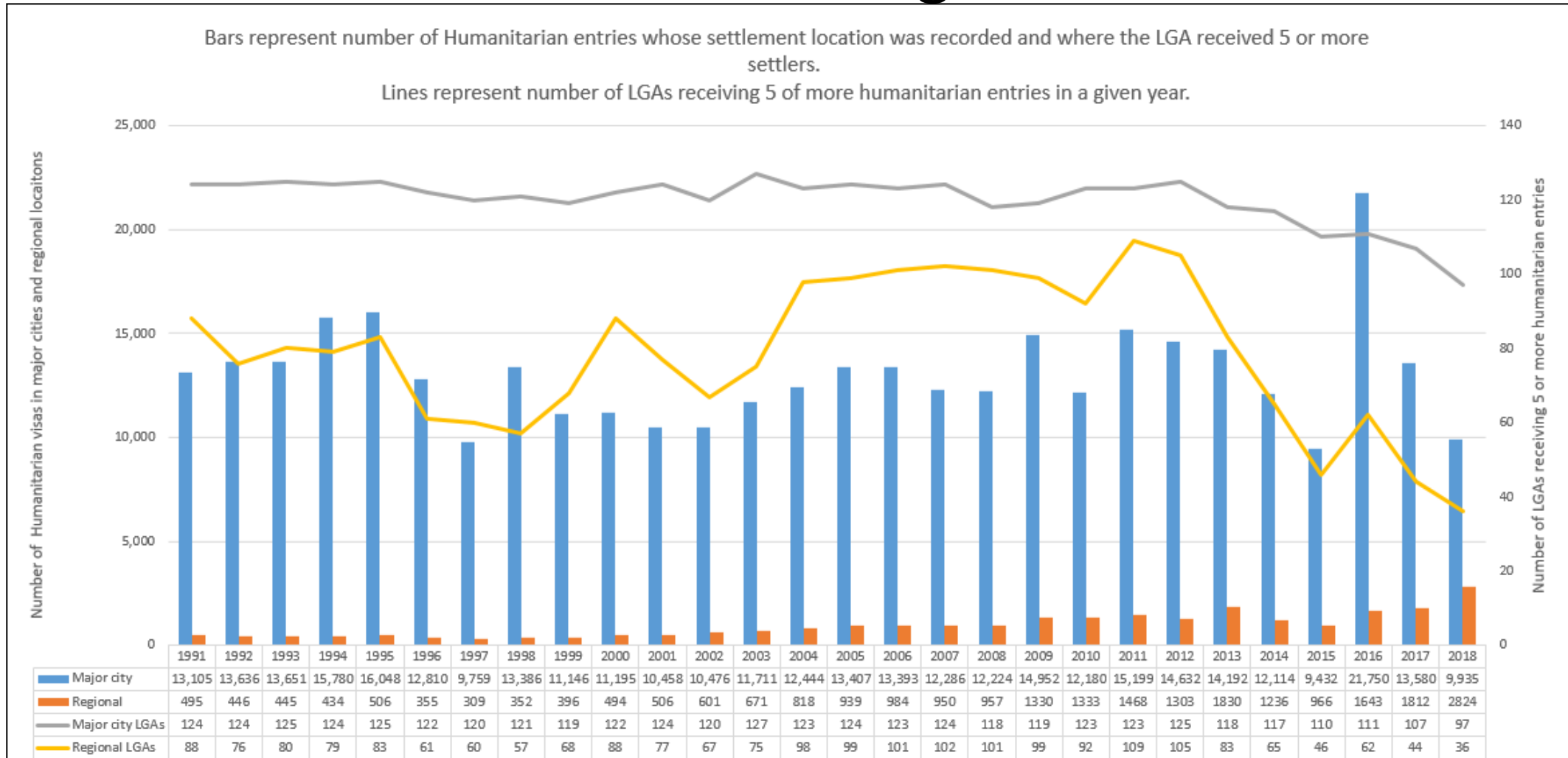


Figure prepared by Dr Sue Watt, University of New England

 Data from the DSS Settlement Database, June 2019.

Refugee Resettlement in Armidale

Armidale is Australia's first new refugee resettlement location under the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) in 11 years

- Presumably the first of several new regional settlement sites

“All eyes are on Armidale”

- What occurs here will influence future policies.

Refugees settle in the regions

GREG BROWN THE AUSTRALIAN 1:26PM August 11, 2017

Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce will welcome about 200 asylum seekers from Syria and Iraq into his electorate under a federal government push to encourage more asylum seekers to settle in the regions.

Mr Joyce said about 200 refugees will be settled in the NSW city of Armidale, about 500km north from Sydney.

Armidale was home to 38,000 people in 2015, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The first of the refugees will move to the town in February next year.

“Armidale is a good fit as a new regional settlement location for humanitarian entrants to Australia,” Mr Joyce said.

“It has a strong, welcoming community demonstrated by the fact that this push for the city to be a settlement location for refugees was driven by the community itself.”

“I have absolutely no doubt that Armidale will work closely with the refugees settling here to ensure they can take up all the opportunities available to those who choose to embrace the great lifestyle available in regional Australia.”

Initial public response

- Overwhelmed with generosity
- Some negativity
- Problem of “loud voices.” Need to understand what is really going on in the community.
- Effects of contact. How will attitudes develop over time?



Barlow, F. K., et al. (2012). "The contact caveat: Negative contact predicts increased prejudice more than positive contact predicts reduced prejudice." Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin **38**(12): 1629-1643.

Ezidis - A new group in Armidale.



Community Monitoring Research

Four cross-sectional community surveys during first 18 months, built on social psychology principles, and a fifth longitudinal survey.

- Understand the extent to which Armidale can be considered a welcoming community in terms of attitudes to refugees.
- Provide an analysis of trends over time.
- Audience segmentation: Identify different segments of the community, and the attitudes they hold, to allow service providers to target interventions to particular groups.
- Allows comparison with attitudes in regional Australia as a whole.

Method

Procedure

- Random dialling telephone surveys were used to gain a representative sample in terms of age and gender. The telephone interviews used a standard questionnaire, with some open-ended questions

Participants

- Diverse sample of 200 participants obtained in each cross-sectional survey. This sample size would produce an expected sampling error of 3-7% at 95% confidence interval. So, results are within 7% of each population parameter.

Materials

- Attitudinal measures, demographics, some items drawn from “Mapping Social Cohesion” for comparison with Australia more generally.

Sampling Error

- Sample of 200 Armidale residents (at 95% confidence) = 3-7% Survey results are likely to be within approx. 7% of the actual parameter for the total target population.

April 2018, Baseline Survey

N = 201, 91% agreement rate from 1/6 connected calls (includes call backs and answering machines).

First refugees had recently arrived, but little mixing in the community.

Feb 2019, Survey 3

N = 203, 85% agreement rate from 1/8 connected calls.

About 294 Ezidis were present in Armidale, with more mixing and more language capacity

Sept 2018, Survey 2

N = 200, 91% agreement rate from 1/6 connected calls.

170 Ezidi refugees had arrived, visible in the community but had not yet started mixing with the community

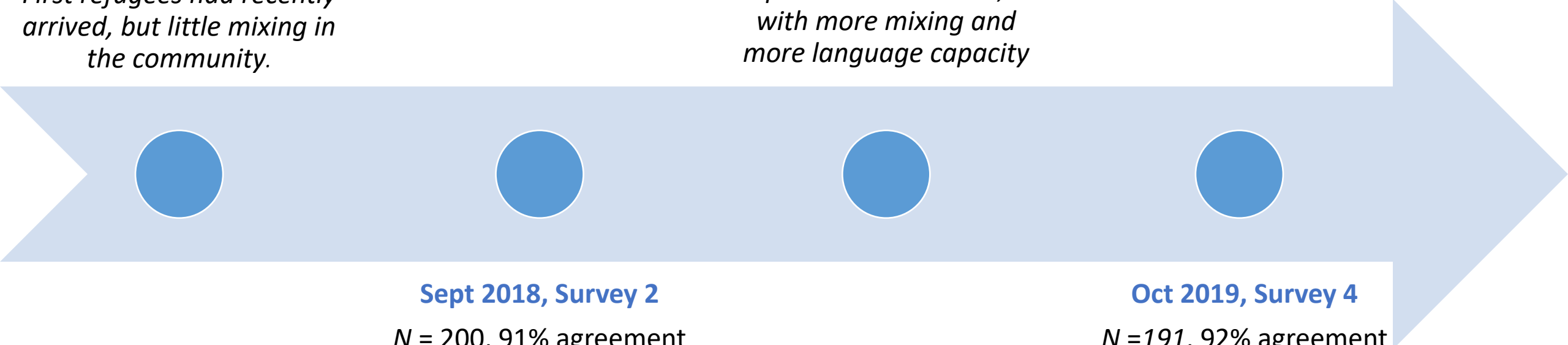
Oct 2019, Survey 4

N = 191, 92% agreement rate from 1/11 connected calls

Longitudinal Survey

N = 153 Ps, 92% take-up.

About 500 Ezidis in Armidale. Plenty of contact now occurring.

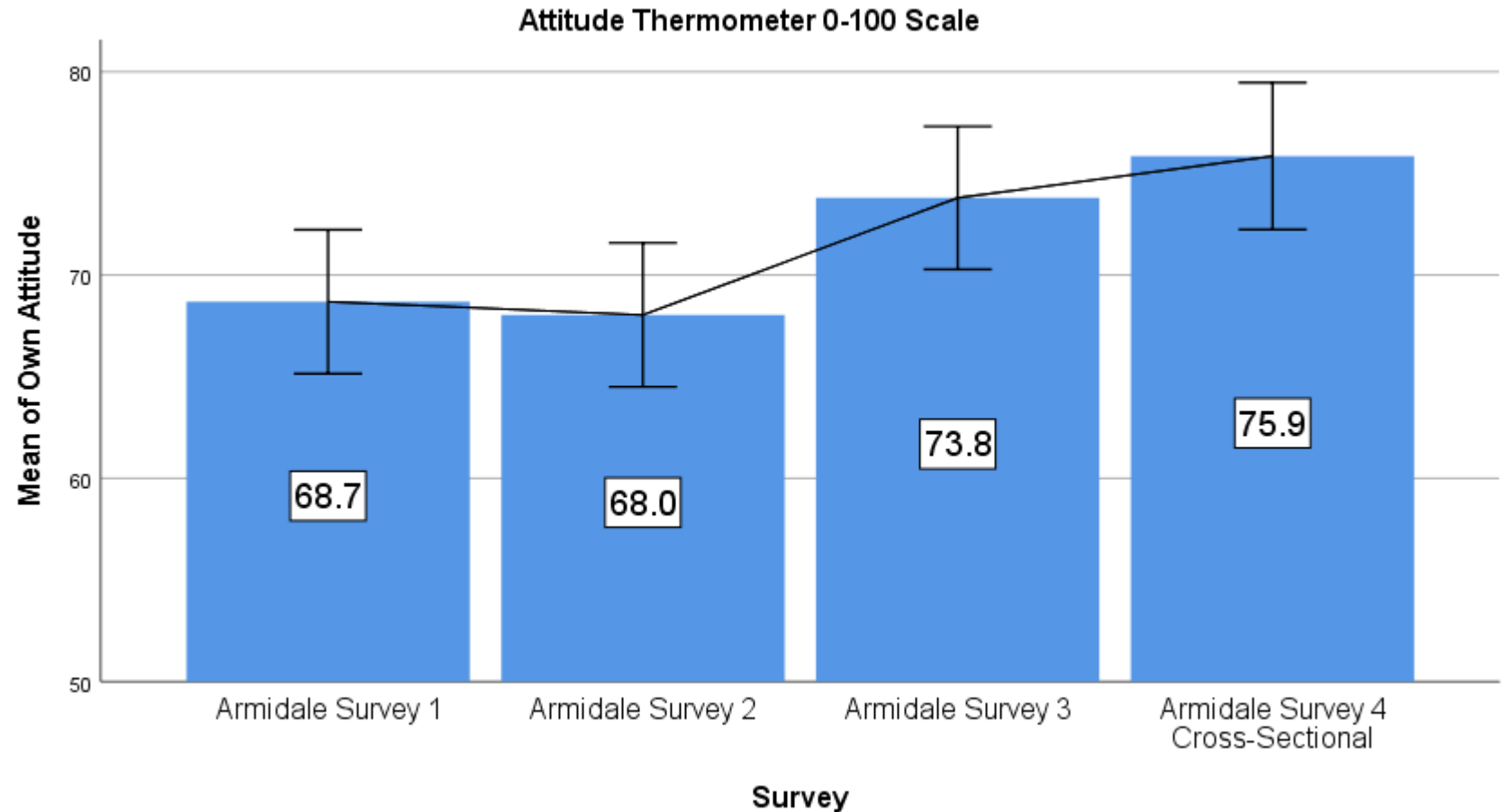


Attitude Valence

QN9a. How would you rate your overall attitude towards the refugees coming to Armidale – this time on a scale of 0 – 100, where 100 is extremely favourable, 50 is neither favourable nor unfavourable and 0 is extremely unfavourable?

ANOVA
 $F(3,787) = 4.44, p = .004, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .017$

Linear contrast
 $F(1,787) = 11.20, p = .001$

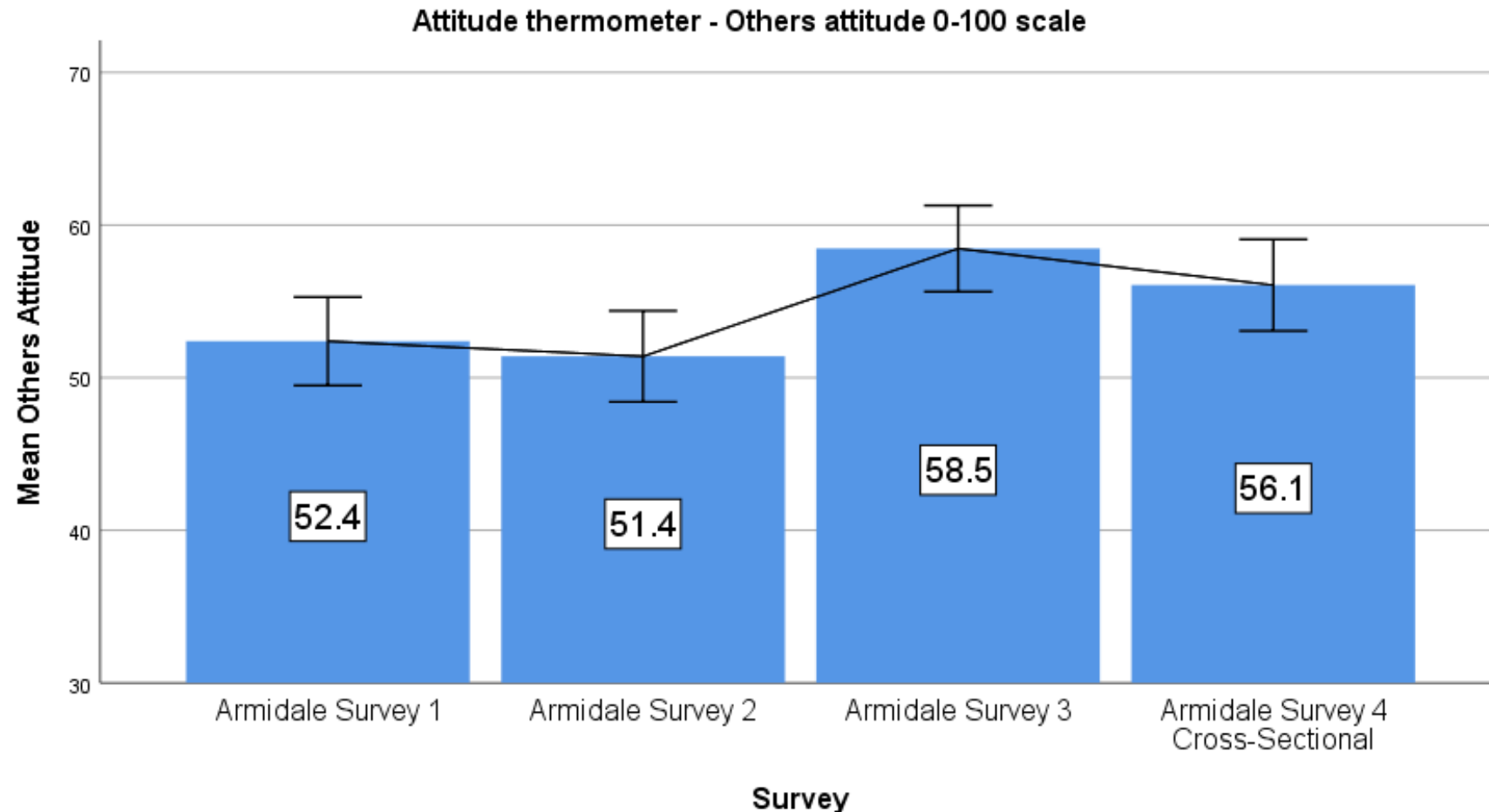


Others' attitude

QN9b. And on the same rating scale, what do you think is the typical attitude of people in Armidale regarding refugees coming to Armidale?

ANOVA
 $F(3,720) = 4.94, p = .002,$
 partial $\eta^2 = .02$

Linear contrast
 $F(1,720) = 7.29, p = .007$



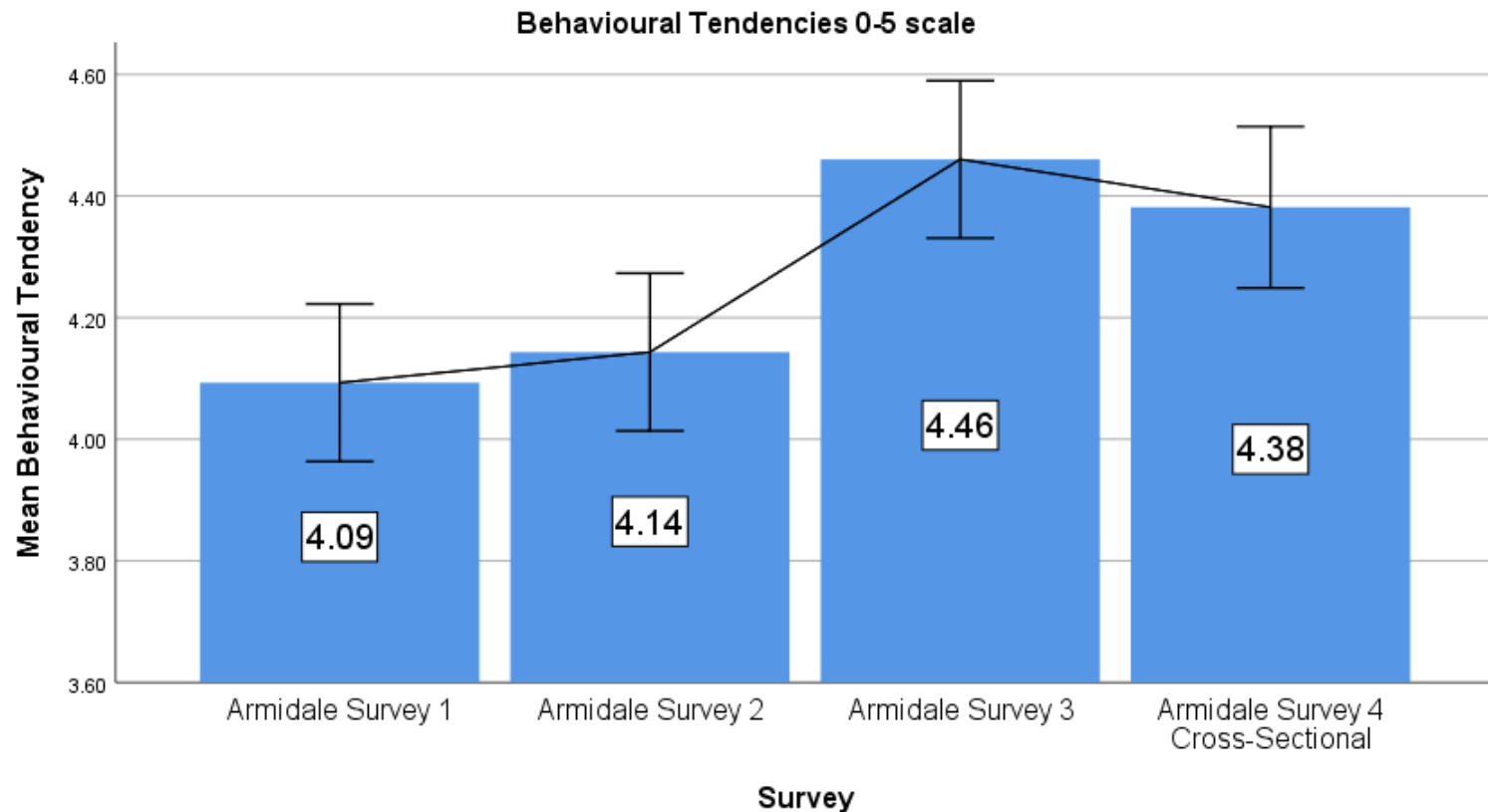
Behavioural tendencies

QN10. Imagine you are in the following situations relating to refugees in Armidale. How likely would you be to do the following (scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = very likely, 1 = very unlikely)

Statement	5	4	3	2	1	dk
a. Shop at their stores						
b. Share leisure time with them						
c. Avoid their businesses						

ANOVA
 $F(3,789) = 7.305, p < .001$, partial
 $\eta^2 = .027$

Linear contrast
 $F(1,789) = 13.195, p < .001$



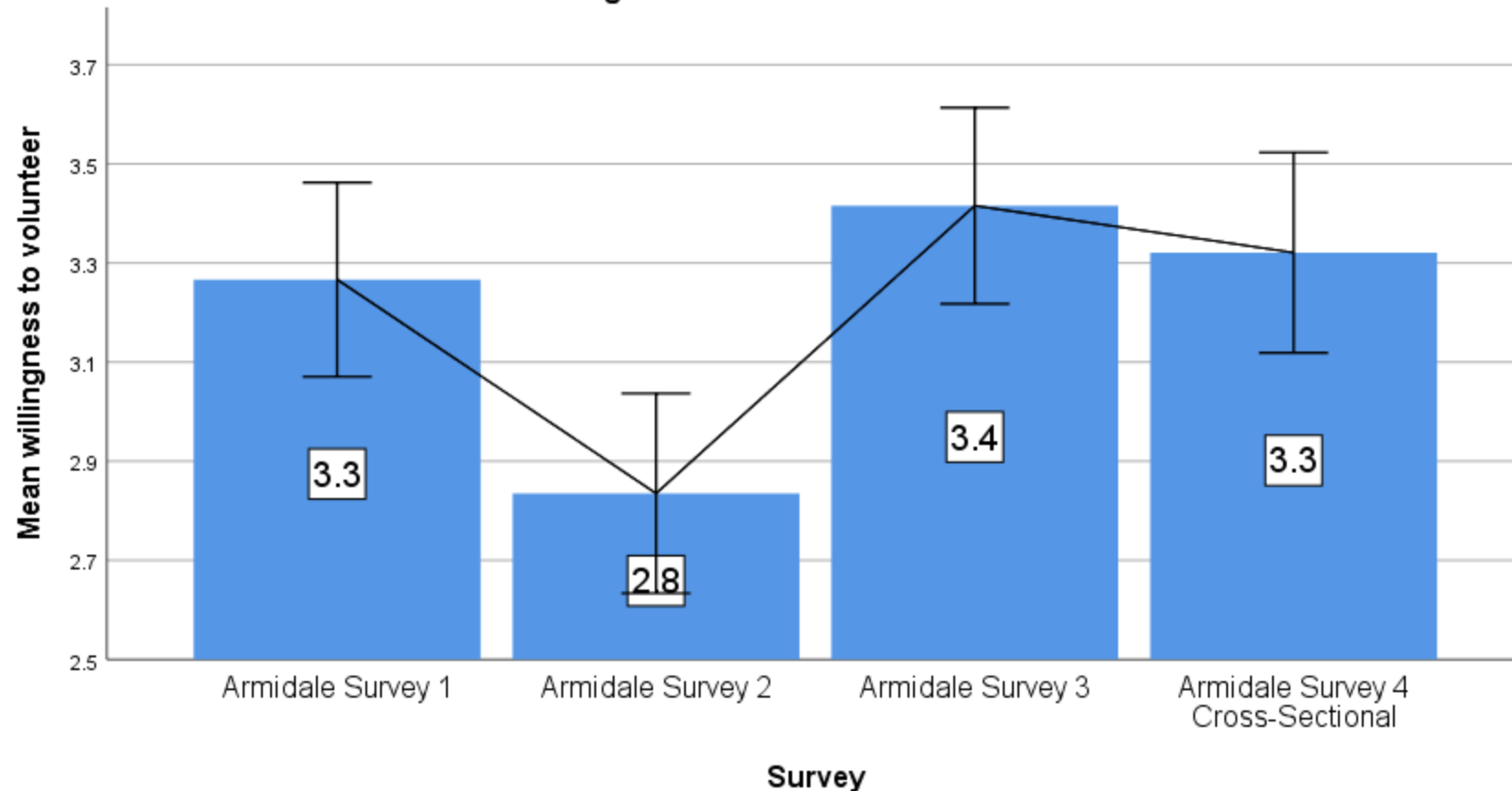
Volunteer time

Qn11. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = very much, 3 = unsure, 1 = not at all, how interested would you be to

b) Volunteer your time to help refugees?

1 2 3 4 5 dk/unsure

Willingness to volunteer 1-5 scale



ANOVA

$F(3,765) = 6.317, p < .001,$
 partial $\eta^2 = .024$

Linear contrast is *ns*

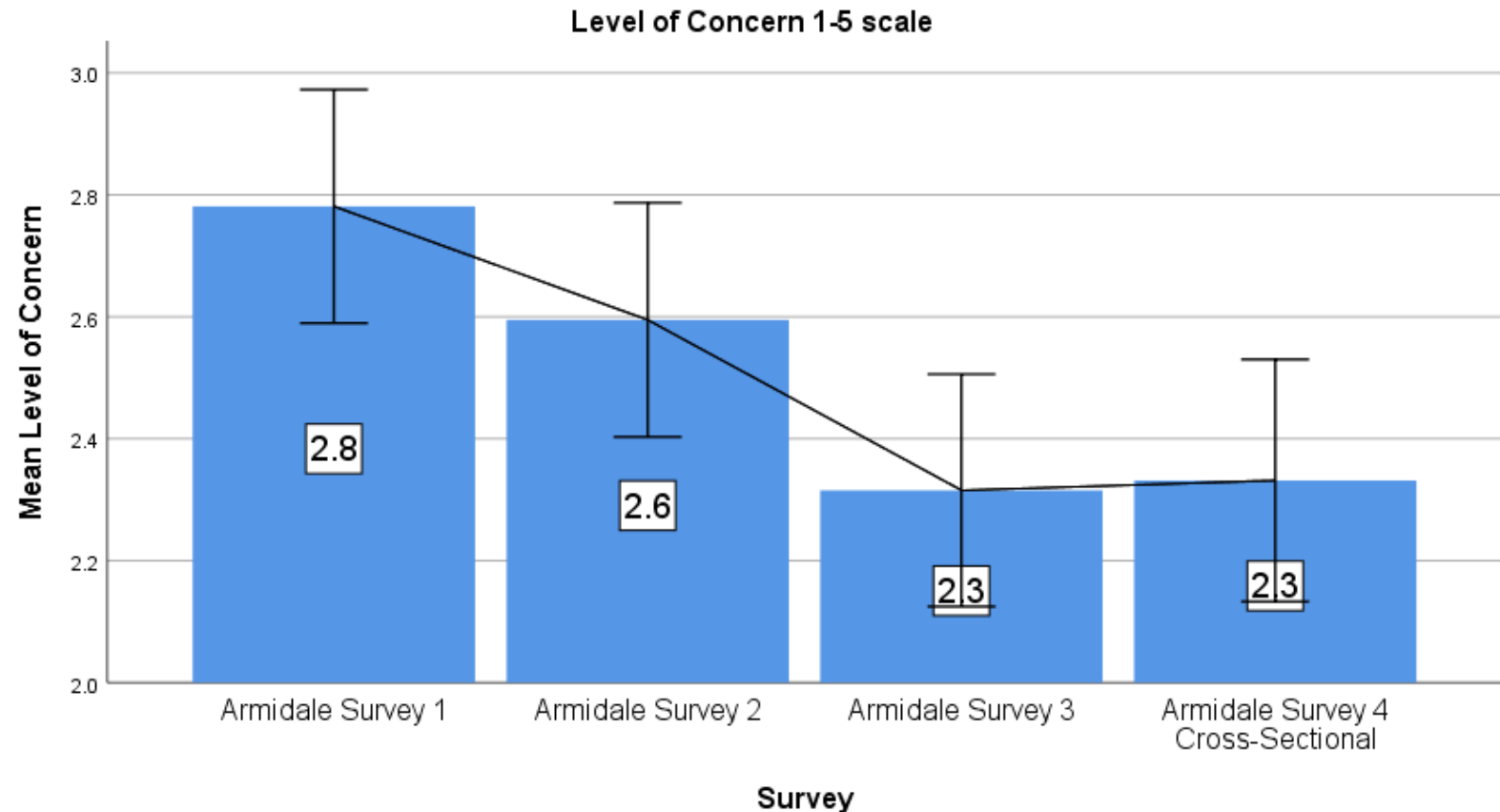
It is the dip from Survey 1 to Survey 2 and back again that is significant.

Concerns

Qn 8a: Do you have any concerns about the impact of refugees coming to Armidale – on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = very concerned, 3 = somewhat concerned, 1 = not concerned at all?

ANOVA
 $F(3,787) = 5.20, p = .001$, partial
 $\eta^2 = .019$

Linear contrast
 $F(1,787) = 13.48, p < .001$



And the reason for your rating?	Freq Survey 1 (out of 201)	Freq Survey 2 (out of 200)	Freq Survey 3 (out of 203)	Freq Survey 4 (out of 191)
There is not enough work in Armidale for the refugees OR Refugees will take/compete for our jobs	41	45	38	17
Armidale doesn't have enough support services for refugees	18	17	33	10
Concern that they will not integrate.	17	15	28	7
Refugees will bring cultural diversity	11	4		16
Armidale community will not accept them	6	6		
Cannot answer	5			
Concern that it will affect peaceful Armidale society	5			
The refugees will bring violence	5			
Refugees need a safe place to live	5			
Refugees will bring crime		4		7
Refugees will be good for the economy	5			
It is our duty to help refugees	5		6	
There is not enough housing in Armidale for the refugees	4			5
Refugees will not accept Australian ways	4			
Concern about "the unknown"	4			
Negative experiences of other places	4	4		
Refugees will not cause trouble	4			
Generic positive reason expressing no concern		22	19	32
Armidale has the capacity to take them		16	6	6
The number coming is too many		5	6	5
Positive experiences with refugees		4	5	7
Water, drought				8
They are nice/lovely people				10

Audience Segmentation

- A community holds a diverse set of opinions
- Understanding that diversity is useful for service providers interacting with community members
- And it is helpful for targeted interventions

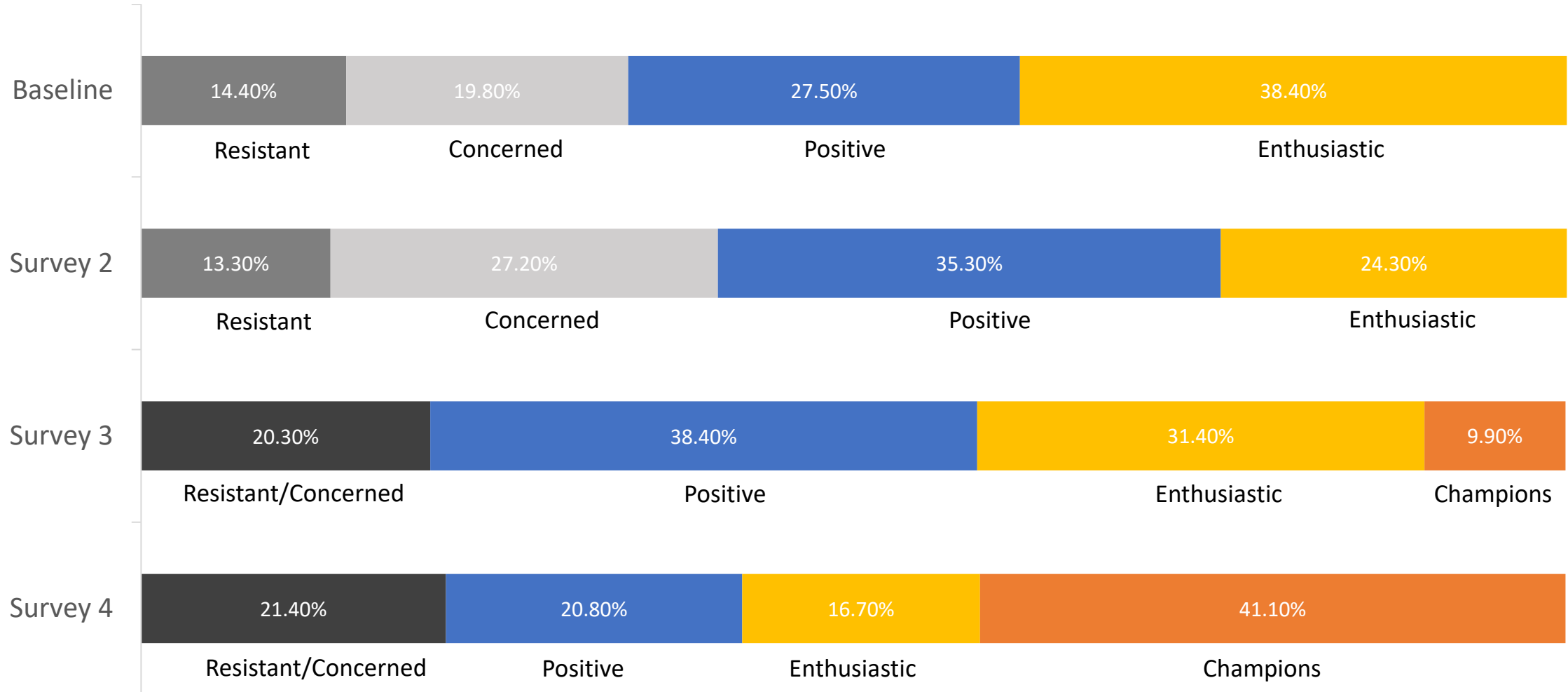
The standard solution

Identified six clustering variables that produced a useful 4-cluster solution in each survey.

- **Allophilia** (desire to mix with people of different cultures)
- **Armidale intake** (too high, about right, too low)
- **Level of concern**
- Belief that Australians should do more to **learn about the customs and heritage** of different ethnic and cultural groups in this country
- **Willingness to volunteer** to help refugees
- **Own attitude** (attitude thermometer)

Ran the same cluster analysis for each cross-sectional survey, forcing a four-cluster solution.

Cluster Results



Longitudinal results

We re-interviewed 153 participants from the three earlier surveys.

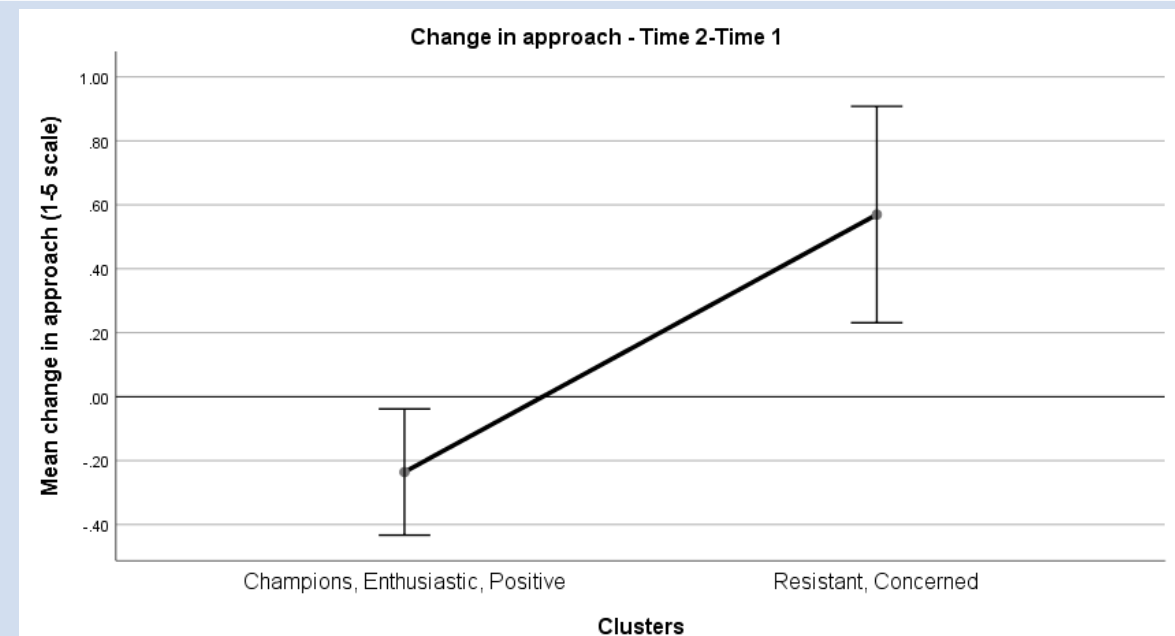
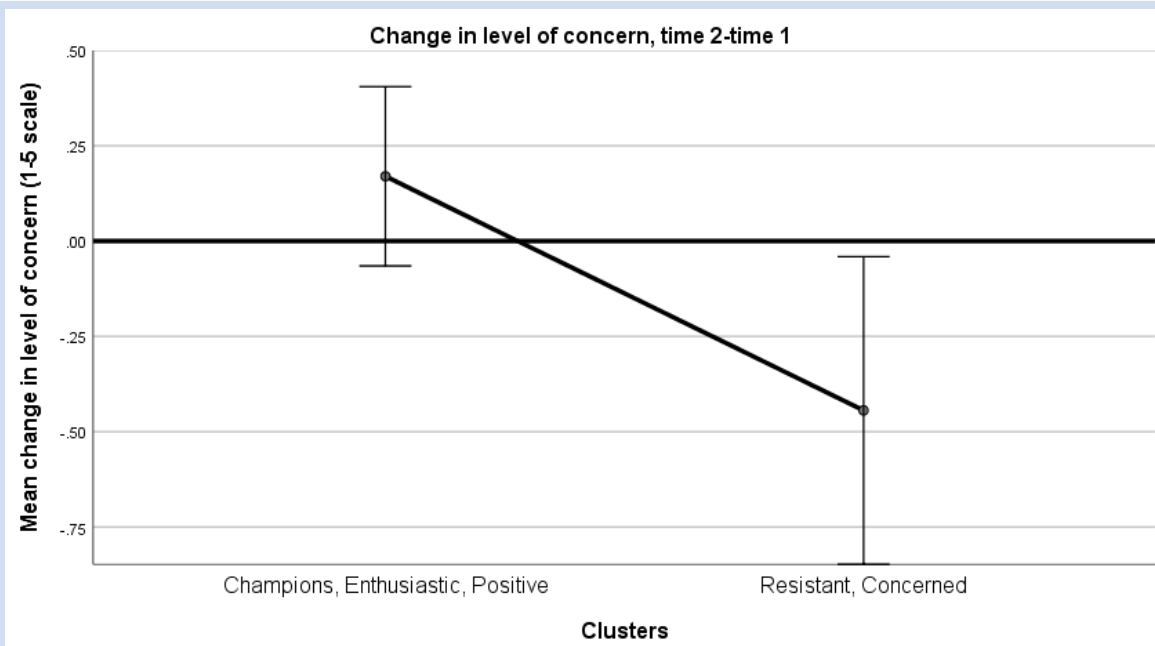
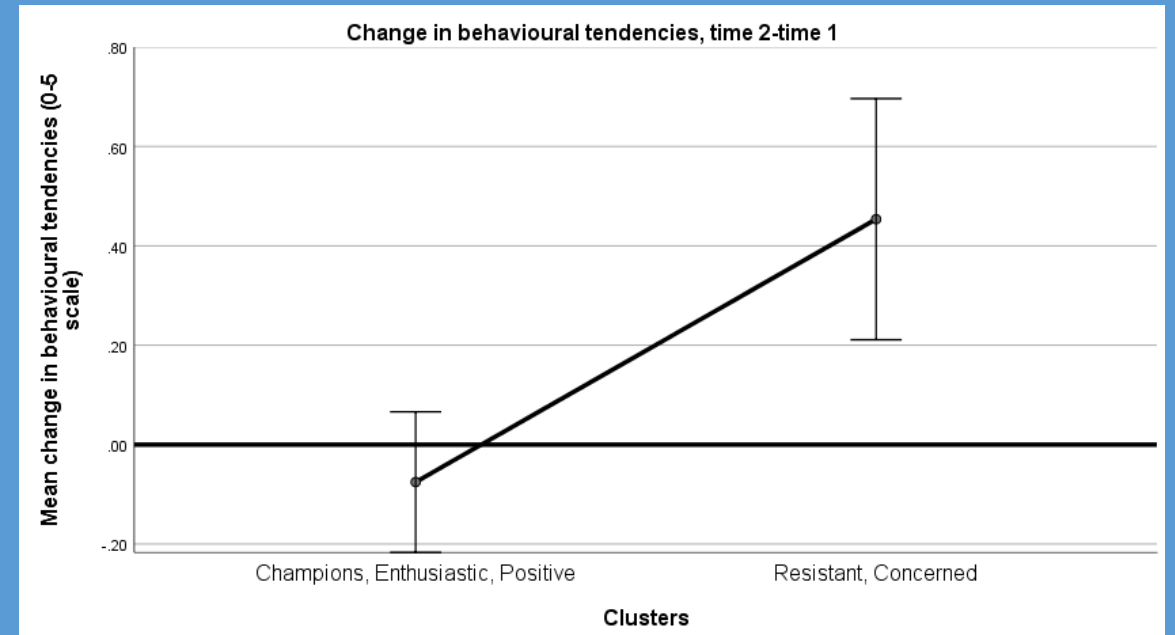
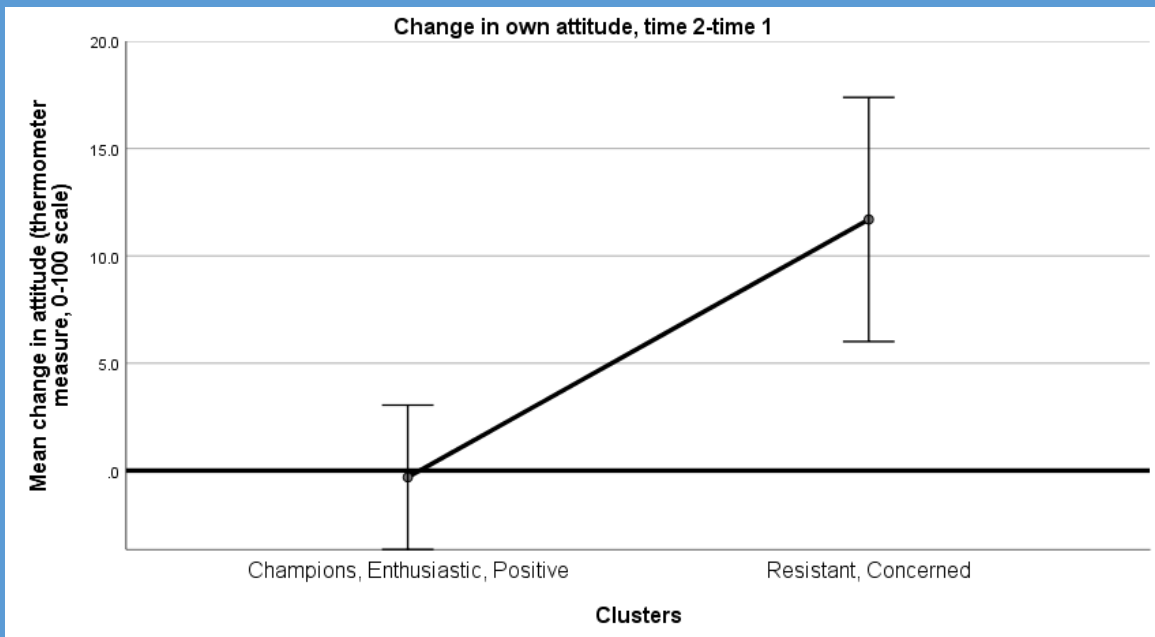
Purpose: to establish if effects in cross-sectional surveys could also be seen within-subjects. That would show us that individual's attitudes were changing.

Results

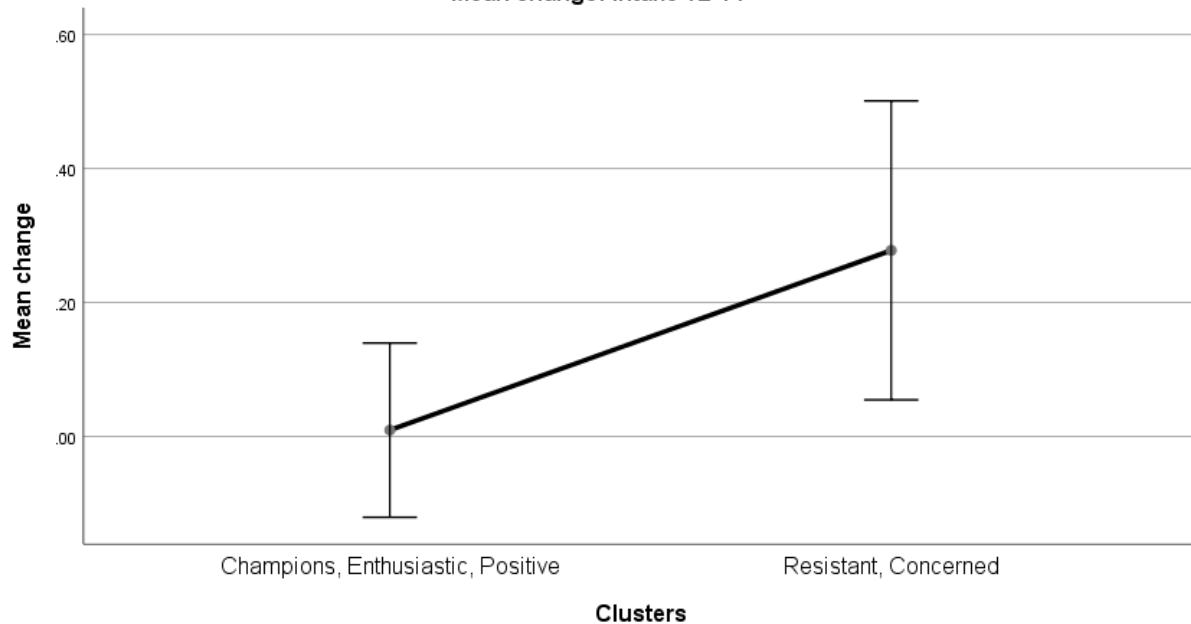
- No change when looked at the whole sample.

BUT, average commencing attitudes were significantly more positive ($M = 76.4$) than those who were not re-surveyed ($M = 70.4$).

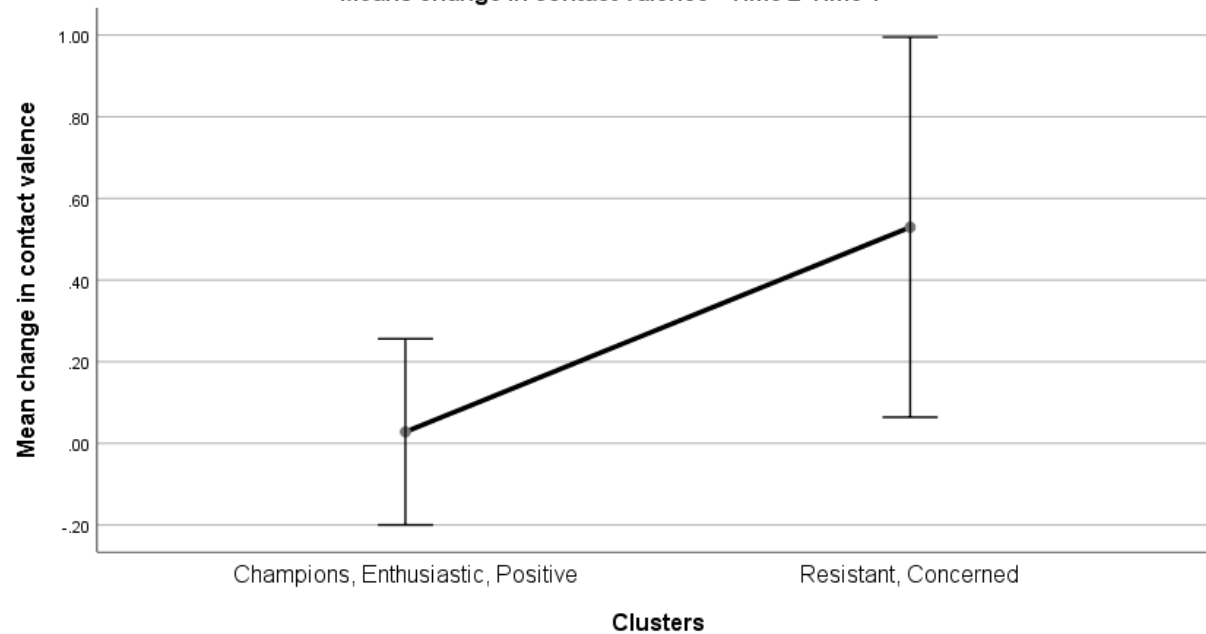
- Divided sample by initial attitude (positive vs negative clusters).
 - Significant improvement in attitudes was found for negative group and not the positive group



Mean change: Intake T2-T1



Means change in contact valence - Time 2-Time 1



QN7. Armidale has recently been named a refugee settlement region, with an intake of 300 refugees in 2018 and up to 370 in 2019. What do you think of the number of refugees coming into Armidale? Would you say it is...

- 1 Too high
- 2 About right, or
- 3 Too low
- 4 (No opinion/ don't know)
- 5 (Refused)

QN12a). How much experience do you have with refugees? 5 = a lot, 3 = some, 1 = not at all

1 2 3 4 5 dk/unsure

QN12b) (If rating more than 1) And how has that experience been? 5 = very positive, 3 = OK, 1 = very negative

1 2 3 4 5 dk/unsure

Longitudinal results

- Results of the longitudinal study corroborate those of the cross-sectional studies.
 - The attitude changes that are observed from survey to survey are also revealed in within-subjects changes.
- That positive changes were found in people whose initial attitudes were negative is very encouraging.
- People who started out positive remained so.
- Cross-sectional surveys – representative sample but cannot draw conclusions about people's attitudes changing
- Longitudinal survey – self-selection bias means that it is not representative but we can show within-subject changes.



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refugee settlement in Armidale, NSW

November 2019



All in for Armidale: A whole-of-community approach to Ezidi settlement

Settlement Services International

