

# 2017 COMPARING INTERNATIONAL ORGAN DONATION OUTCOMES



Australian Government  
Organ and Tissue Authority



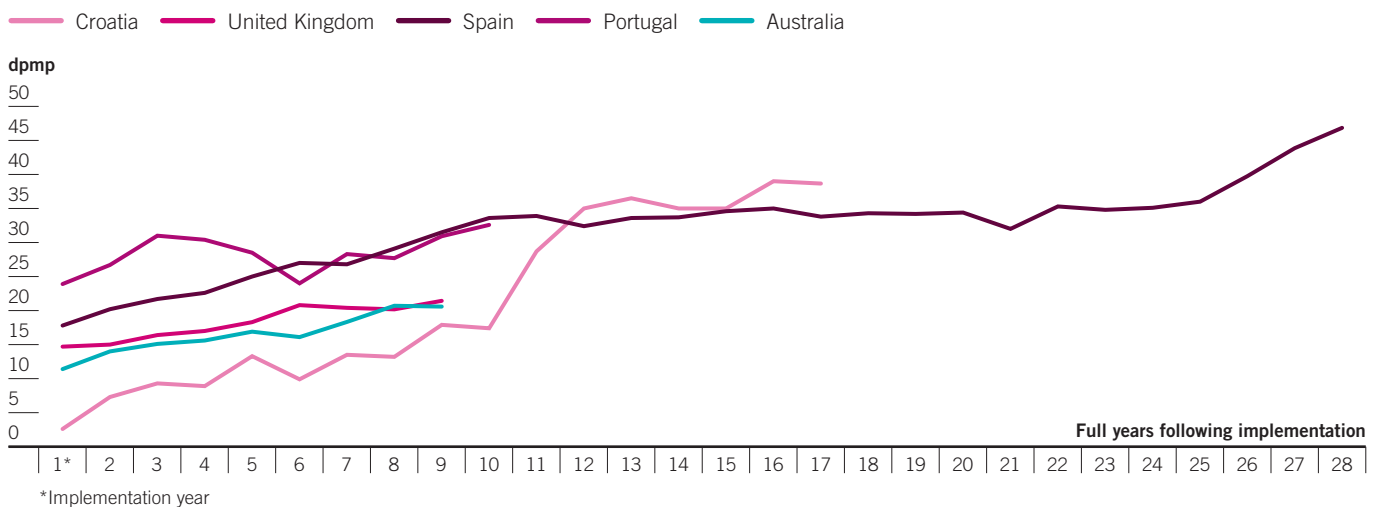
In response to the increased incidence of end stage organ failure and the corresponding need for transplants, several countries have successfully implemented programs to increase organ and tissue donation.

The Australian Government's national program is informed by international best practice models adapted to the Australian setting.

The accepted metric for measuring rates of deceased organ donation is donors per million population (dpmp). This measure does not account for the underlying size of the donor pool, which varies according to different rates and causes of death. Other factors that influence donation rates include healthcare systems and end-of-life care practices, community understanding and attitudes, and the relative starting points for national programs to increase donation.

The graph below compares the donation rates in Australia with other countries that have undertaken national programs to increase organ donation.

## Program outcomes



The graph shows that all countries with reform programs have experienced increases in deceased donation rates, although growth is not linear with fluctuations year by year.

**At the end of nine years of reform, Australia's deceased donation rate has increased by 82%.**

This percentage growth is higher than Spain (77%), the UK (46%) and Portugal (29%) at the nine year implementation of their respective reforms.

## Donation rate increase at the ninth year of implementation of their respective reforms

Australia

↑82%

Spain

↑77%

United Kingdom

↑46%

Portugal

↑29%



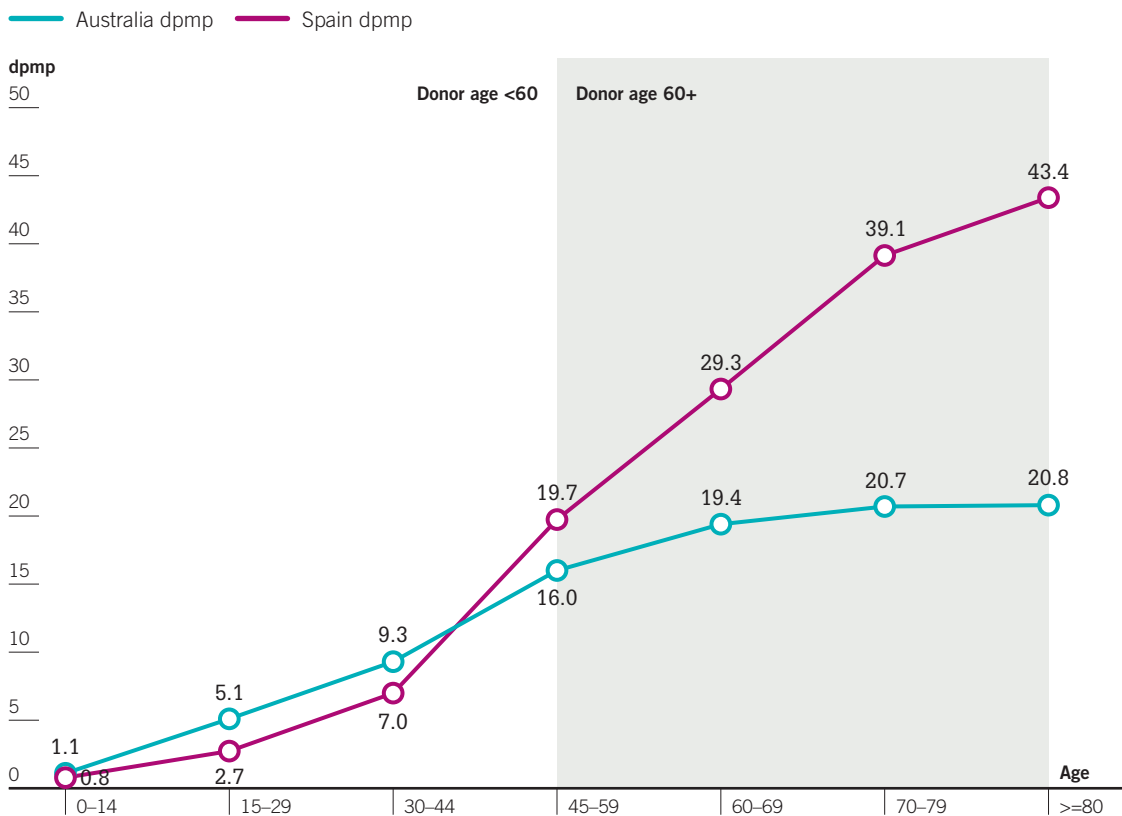
Given the pool of potential organs donors is limited by the number of people who die in circumstances where donation is technically feasible (fewer than 1-2% of people who die in a hospital), an important means to increase donation for transplantation is by broadening donor medical suitability criteria.

The consideration and acceptance of older donors is an important means for increasing donation rates and providing more people with access to transplantation.

A comparison of Australia and Spain, the recognised world leader in donation outcomes, is a comparison of two systems with very different donor age profiles.

In 2016, 55% of Spain’s donors were 60 years and over (including 20% 80 years and over), while in Australia 23% of donors were 60 years and over (with 1% 80 years and over).

### Donation rate (dpmp) by age



The graph shows that while Australia’s donation rate for deceased donors aged under 60 years is comparable to that of Spain, there is increasing divergence between Australia’s and Spain’s donation rates for donors over 60 years. Spain has a much higher donation rate for older donors.

The key lesson to learn from countries with high donation outcomes is that reform of both organ donation and transplantation systems is required and that change takes time and is incremental. Clinical reform to optimise donor identification, referral and family communication, along with building transplant sector capacity and processes to optimally use all available organs, as well as community education to increase consent rates, are all vital.