



# AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST CLIMATE POLL 2022

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Stand for climate action now

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All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov. Total sample size was 15358 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 17th - 31st January 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Australian adults eligible to vote.

# Introduction

**By Kelly O'Shanassy**

**CEO,  
Australian Conservation Foundation.**

Right now, people across south east Queensland and northern New South Wales are living through the aftermath of catastrophic floods and landslides.

Just like the Black Summer of 2019–20, these floods have shown how people living in Australia are experiencing first-hand the devastating consequences of inaction on climate change. More than two years after the bushfires, communities are still recovering from the personal loss, health impacts and economic costs. In the aftermath of these recent floods a similar story will almost certainly be told.

The world's leading climate scientists have been warning us for many years. Climate change — fuelled mostly by burning coal, gas and oil — is making dangerous weather events like floods and bushfires more extreme and unpredictable. The science, and our own experiences, are telling us the time for greater action is now.

As we did in August 2021, ACF wanted to take a temperature check on Australian resident views about global warming. Last year, we asked respected pollsters YouGov to conduct the biggest and most in-depth survey ever undertaken of adult opinion on climate change.

Now, in March 2022, we have asked people living in Australia about the cost of climate action and the results are optimistic.

Australia's Biggest Climate Poll 2022 has confirmed a majority of people in every federal electorate believe the long-term economic benefits of climate action outweigh any costs involved — shattering the myth that climate action is viewed as bad for the economy.

People living in this country understand action on climate change will result in better economic and health outcomes for them personally and the entire country.

People across Australia have revealed in this poll that they are not convinced by the Prime Minister's net zero by 2050 plan. There's a growing tide of people who think the strategy is too little, too late.



**Australia is a diverse nation, but we are united in our desire for climate action. The latest science shows we need to get to net zero emissions in the next 15 years. 2050 is too late.**

This survey was conducted just before the devastating floods. It's important to contemplate how Australians would answer now. But either way, the results from both polls make it clear that concern about climate change will be influential on how people vote on election day.

Australia is a diverse nation, but we are united in our desire for climate action. The latest science shows we need to get to net zero emissions in the next 15 years. 2050 is too late. **What matters is slashing emissions this decade.**

# Executive summary

**This polling reveals how people living in Australia feel about the cost of climate action and the general consensus is optimistic.** Across Australia, 7-in-10 people **(69%)** recognise that taking meaningful action on climate change will deliver long term economic benefits.

**People who live in areas which have fossil fuel industries are mostly positive about the economic benefits of switching from coal and gas to clean energy in their communities.** More than half of people living in the electorates listed below are positive about the economic benefits of climate action.

**NSW:** New England **(55%)**  
Parkes **(54%)**  
Hunter **(61%)**  
Calare **(55%)**

**Qld:** Flynn **(61%)**  
Capricornia **(60%)**  
Maranoa **(57%)**  
Dawson **(58%)**

**NT:** Lingiari **(69%)**  
Solomon **(71%)**

**SA:** Grey **(61%)**

**WA:** Durack **(67%)**

**A majority of people in every electorate support action on climate change.** Almost half of all people **(48%)** say the benefits outweigh the costs to them personally, while another **(19%)** support greater action even if it costs them in the short term. Just 1-in-10 people **(11%)** believe the costs of climate action are too high, while less than that number **(9%)** don't support action on climate change regardless of the cost.

**People understand greater climate action will lead to better health outcomes now and in the future.** A majority of people in all 151 federal electorates believe taking great action on climate change will lead to health benefits for them personally.

**Almost two-thirds of people (63%) in regional and rural Australia believe greater action on climate change will result in health benefits for them.**

A majority of Australian citizens also believe stronger action to tackle climate change this decade will create future opportunities for young people. More than half **(52%)** of the Baby Boomer generation say more action on climate will be good for young people.

**The federal government's net zero by 2050 policy has failed to convince Australians that it will do enough to stop climate damage.** 6-out-of-10 Australians are not convinced the PM's commitment to net zero by 2050 is enough action.

**Concern about climate change will be influential on how people vote on election day.** Climate change is in the top three issues for 1-in-3 people **(30%)** at the next federal election, alongside a combination of the following: cost of living, health and hospitals, managing the Covid-19 pandemic and the economy.

**For the 1.63 million young people aged 18 to 24 enrolled to vote, climate change is the second most important issue determining how they will vote on election day.**

# Key electorate results

Electorate level data in key electorates across the country shows strong support for climate action with benefits - to health, the economy and opportunities for young people - outweighing the costs.

## Vic

People in key electorates in Victoria support stronger targets for 2030, with significant numbers agreeing the government's 2030 target "too little too late" (Chisholm **43%**, Higgins **50%**, Kooyong **48%**). More than **70%** of people in each of these electorates believe climate action will deliver economic benefits as well as benefits for health and a majority foresee benefits for young people.

## NSW

People in key electorates in NSW see health benefits of climate action. Around half of people in Wentworth, Warringah, Eden-Monaro and North Sydney believe benefits of climate action would outweigh the costs with a significant majority being willing to absorb costs personally to them to address climate change. Cleaning up our transport is considered the highest priority climate solution in Wentworth and Warringah and in Eden-Monaro and North Sydney it's replacing coal and gas with renewable energy.

## SA

A significant majority (**72%**) of people in the key electorate of Boothby believe climate action will produce economic benefits. This includes a majority (**50%**) of people in Boothby who believe the benefits of action to them outweigh any costs they'd have to pay. Only **18%** believe the economy will be harmed by taking action on climate change.

## QLD

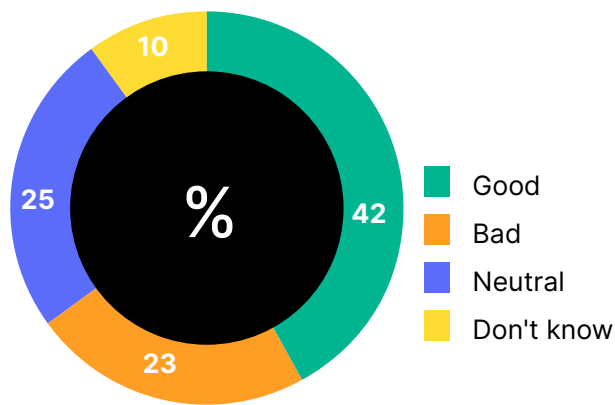
A significant majority of people in the electorates of Flynn, Bonner, Brisbane and Ryan believe climate action will produce economic benefit. Myths about climate action not being consistent with a strong economy in Queensland are busted with less than **26%** in each of these electorates believing climate action is bad for the economy in the long term. Most popular climate solutions in Brisbane, Bonner and Ryan is replacing coal and gas-fired power with renewable energy and battery storage and in Flynn it is powering government buildings with renewable energy.

# Poll results

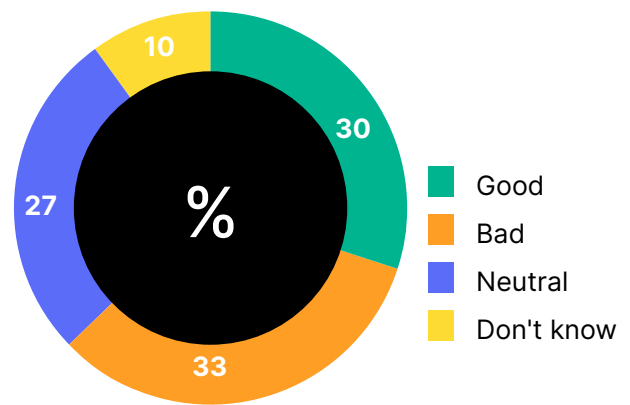
In your view, would more action by Australia on preventing climate change be mostly good or bad for each of the following?

## National results

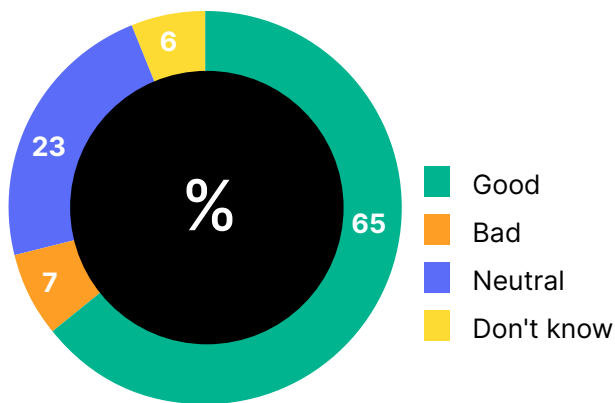
### The Australian Economy



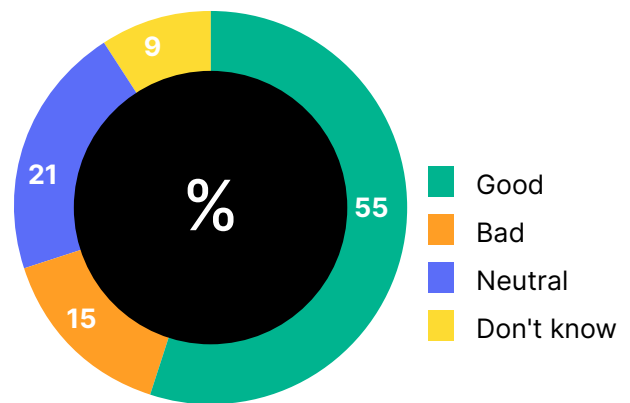
### Cost of living



### Your health



### Future opportunities for young people

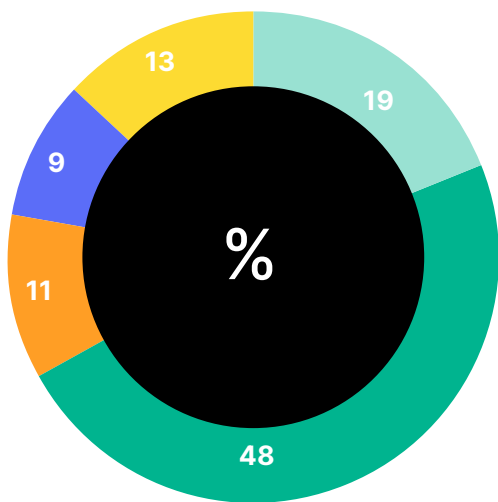




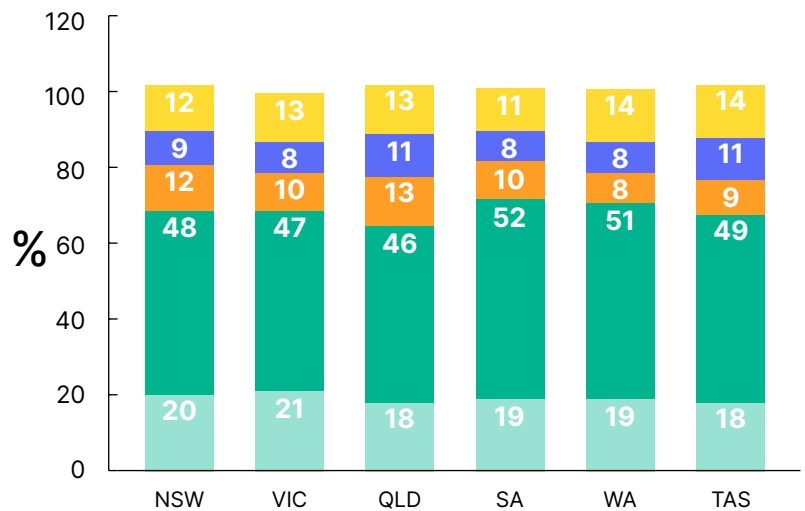
**The majority of people support action on climate change either if it costs them in the short term or because the benefits outweigh the costs.**

### Which is closer to your view?

#### National results



#### State results



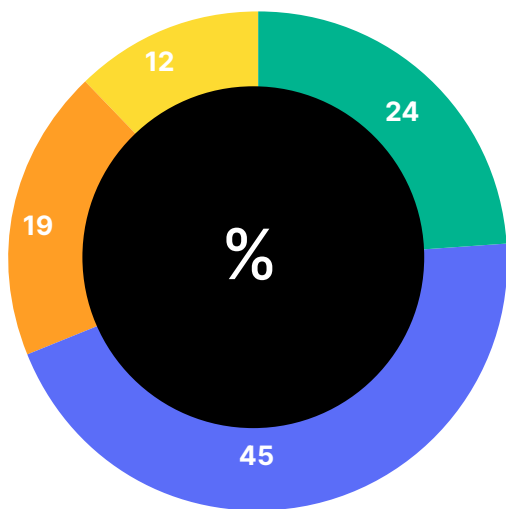
- I support action on climate change even if it costs me in the short-term
- I support action on climate change because the benefits outweigh the costs

- I don't support action on climate change because the costs will be too high
- I don't support action on climate change regardless of the costs
- Don't know

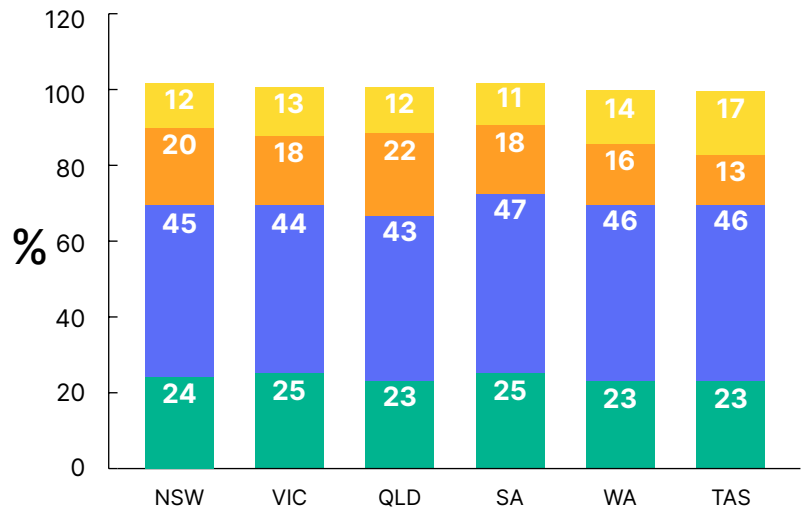
**Around 7-in-10 people recognise that action on climate change will deliver long term economic benefits.**

**Which of the following best reflects your view about the impact of action on climate change on the Australian economy?**

**National results**



**State results**

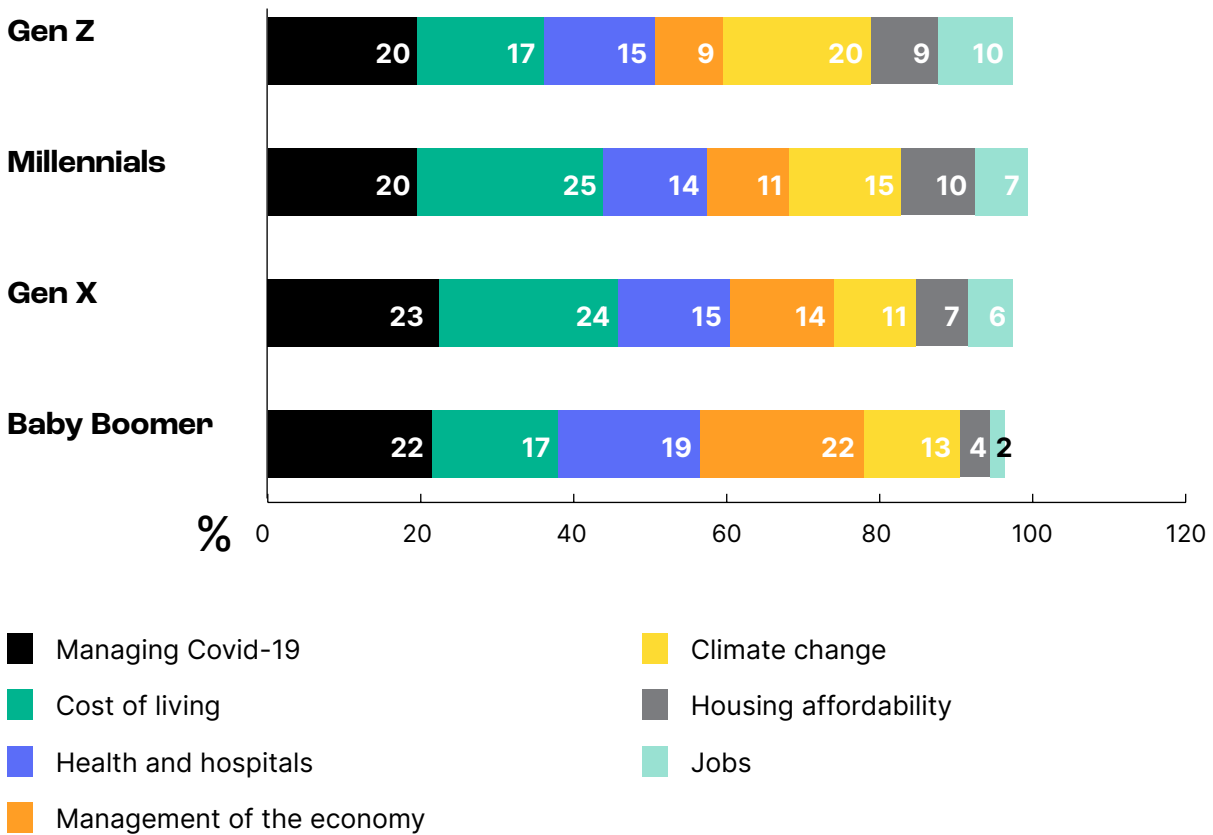


- Action on climate change will make the economy stronger now and in the long-term
- Action on climate change will produce some short-term costs but then long-term benefits

- Action on climate change will harm the economy both in the short and long-term
- None of the above

**Concern about climate change will be influential on how people vote on election day, especially for 1.63 million voters in Generation Z.**

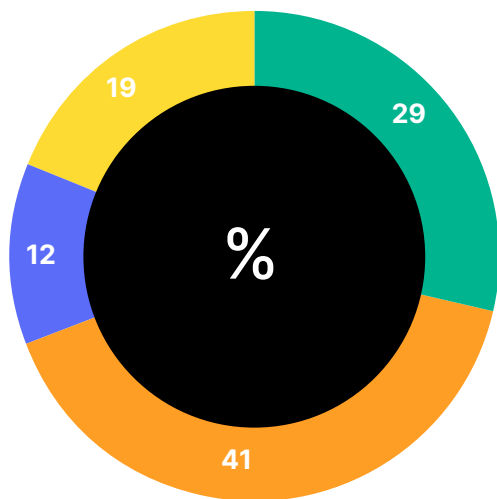
**Different people may prioritise issues differently when choosing who to vote for. Please rank the most important issues to your voting choice.**



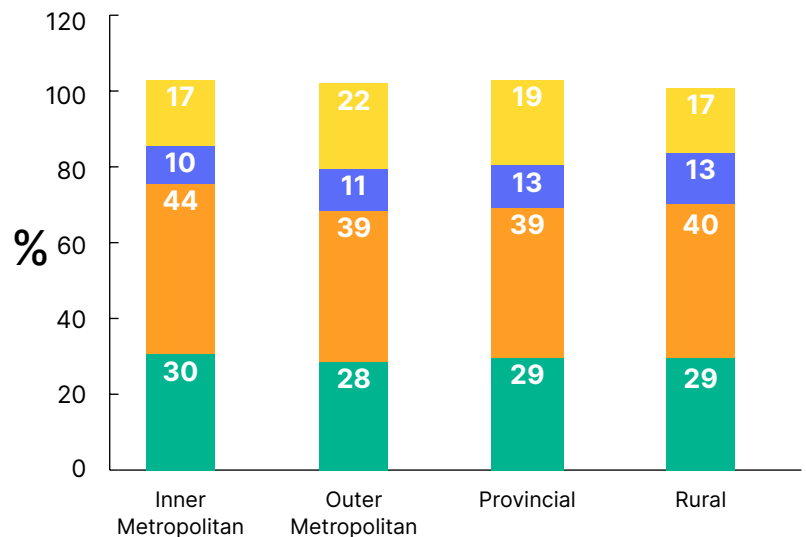
**Net zero  
by 2050  
is 'too little,  
too late'**

**The federal government has committed to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, which means no additional greenhouse pollution in the atmosphere by 2050. Which is closer to your view?**

### National results



### Regional and metropolitan results

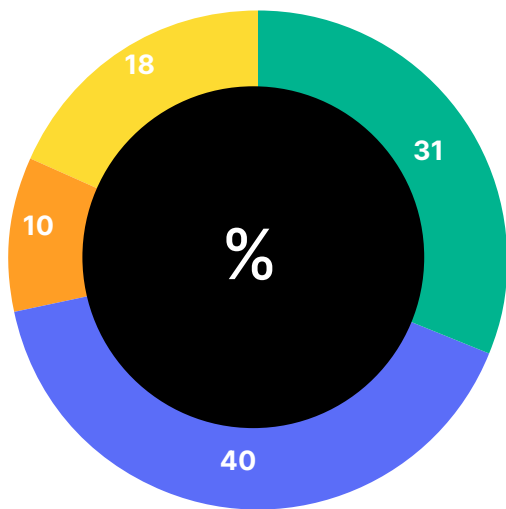


- Committing to reach net-zero by 2050 is doing enough to address climate change
- Committing to reach net-zero by 2050 is too much
- Committing to reach net-zero by 2050 is too little, too late
- Don't know

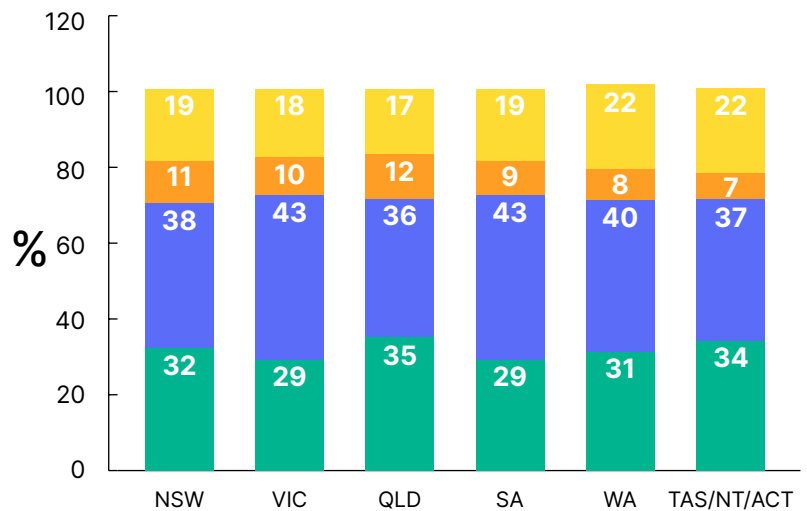
**A rising tide of people want the federal government to take greater action by 2030.**

**The federal government's current climate target is to cut Australia's emissions by 26-28% by 2030. Which is closer to your view regarding Australia's national target?**

**National results**



**State results**



- Cutting emissions by 26-28% by 2030 is doing enough
- Cutting emissions by 26-28% by 2030 is too little, too late

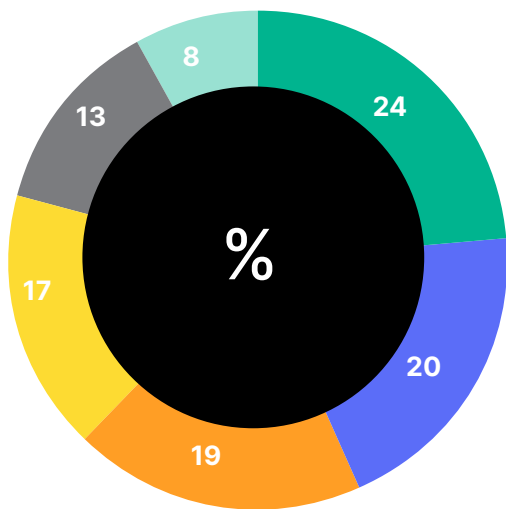
- Cutting emissions by 26-28% by 2030 is too much
- Don't know

**The top solution for greater action on climate change is replacing coal and gas-fired power with renewable energy.**

**Across Australia, people were asked what solutions they'd like the Government to take to help Australia achieve deeper cuts to greenhouse emissions in the next decade.**

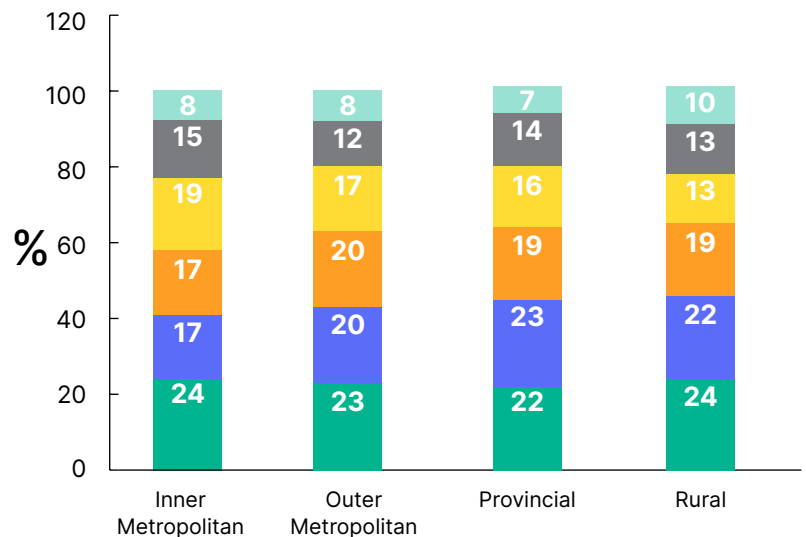
### National results

Most important solution



### Regional and metropolitan results

Most important solution



- Replace gas and coal-fired power stations with renewable energy and battery storage
- Power all government buildings – schools, libraries, hospitals etc. – with renewable energy
- Only allocate public money to support renewable energy and battery storage projects, and not coal and gas projects

- Introduce stronger federal laws to make forests, soils and native vegetation healthier and able to store more climate pollution
- Invest in clean transport – more electric buses and trains, and a national network of electric vehicle charging stations
- Make products for export such as steel, aluminium and hydrogen using only renewable energy

# Methodology

The poll was conducted on a nationally representative sample of more than **15,000** Australian residents aged 18+ and used multilevel regression with poststratification (MRP) analysis for the first time in Australia, after the technique's stunning success in predicting the results of the 2019 British election. The MRP tool combines census data such as population density, education and household income with polling data to construct an estimate of how issues would play out in that specific geographical area. It allows for the poll to be broken down by electorates as well as demographics in a statistically reliable way.

YouGov Head of Public Affairs & Polling APAC, Dr Campbell White said the MRP method is an innovative way of reliably mapping community sentiment across electorates. MRP is based on the understanding that people with similar characteristics behave in similar ways and it allows us to paint a much more detailed picture using our polling data.

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